

Orange Oracle

An Electronic Update from the Orange County Historical Society

Christmas Gift Ideas



A gift membership to the Orange County Historical Society- Membership has many benefits including discounts at the Society's book store which you can access either in person or online at www.orangecovahist.org.

Books and DVDs- There are limited numbers of the latest documentary "Unqualified Promise" on DVD. This ideal Christmas gift is available for sale now at the Research Center, as well as many other documentaries, books, and publications.

Don't Forget to Renew Your Membership

From our membership committee chairman, Mike Saxton, we learn that we now have 323 active members. That's 134 more memberships than we had at this time last year, representing a 71% increase in one year.

However, as of mid-December, about 30% have not yet renewed for 2023.

Your Society Working for You in '22

By Ray Ezell and Phil Audibert

2022 has certainly been a busy and productive year for the Orange County Historical Society. With this in mind, and before we turn our attention to the coming year, it is appropriate to provide a synopsis of how the Society has delivered its mission over the past 12 months.

For starters, the Society played a key role in the preparation and execution of the Town's 150th anniversary celebration.

- We provided brief historical vignettes that were placed around the town highlighting notable people, places, and events in Orange history. The Society also worked closely with Love Orange (Orange Downtown Alliance, Inc.) to provide historical photographs and contexts for some of the town's historic commercial structures.
- Society president, Ray Ezell, delivered a keynote speech highlighting the origins of the town at the Sesquicentennial celebration opening ceremony.
- The Society assisted the town in collecting memorabilia which was placed in the 150th time capsule.
- The Society also conducted oral history video interviews of 25 friends of the Town of Orange. These "Memories and Visions" were edited and released on the Society's History-to-Go YouTube channel.



"Unqualified Promise" screening
Nov. 20.

Membership renewal is easy to do, even if you misplaced the form that came in the mail a few weeks ago. Simply go to orangecovahist.org and click on "About Us" to bring up a link to the OCHS Membership Form that you can print.

You can even renew by phone (540-672-5366). Call during regular business hours (1-5 pm, Monday-Friday) and charge it to your credit card.

If you have not renewed your membership for 2023, please do so no later than the end of the year so we can continue to fulfill our mission.

Call for Volunteers

We are recruiting a small **Audio Visual Team** to help determine final AV equipment choices for our auditorium.

This team will also learn to use this equipment so we can record and live-stream programs in the future. If you are interested and/or have any questions, please email Volunteer Coordinator, May Saxton at

OCHistVolunteers@gmail.com

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting of the Society is **Sunday, Jan. 29, 2023 at 3:00 pm** at the Research Center on Caroline Street. Four new Board members will be nominated and elected and officers will be named. A program, to be determined later, will be presented.

*We wish you all the best
this holiday season
and a Happy New Year*

- The culmination of the town's Sesquicentennial year was the production of "Orange, Virginia: Unqualified Promise," a new video documentary chronicling the development of the Town of Orange. The documentary premiered at a special event attended by more than 140 Society members and friends.

Also in 2022-

- Several new custom bookcases were installed and library reorganization was begun.
- The columns out front were repaired and reinstalled
- Great progress was made in organizing and sorting the Orange Review negative collection. All negatives have been put in chronological order under their respective year. An index of this collection will be completed in 2023.
- Live, in-person presentations began anew at the Society. The first program of the post-Covid era was Phil Audibert's "Roads, Taverns and Mills: Cornerstones of Community." Programs were also held at Blue Run Baptist Church, the Orange County Airport, the historic Waverley gardens, Maplewood Cemetery, and Taylor Park.
- We have made considerable progress scanning historical files into our digital database. These will ultimately be made available for remote online access.
- Our social media page on Facebook continued to grow and engage members and friends locally and abroad on the history of the people, places, and events of Orange County.
- The Society published 12 issues of the electronic newsletter, the *Orange Oracle*, plus a 12-page Spring issue of our printed newsletter, *Record*, and a second 12-page issue due out in a matter of days.
- Ten new History-to-Go episodes were uploaded to the society's YouTube channel.
- We raised funds to equip the auditorium with audio visual equipment, with the eventual goal of having live stream capability in a fully renovated auditorium.
- The Board adopted a Five-Year Strategic Master Plan.
- Lastly, our educator support program broadened and intensified its resources for Orange County social studies and history teachers, who now enjoy a complimentary Society membership. The Educator Resources page on the Society's web site features more than 100 articles about local history.

The coming year looks to be a busy one, with many opportunities to engage the public and our members with our county's rich history.