

looking forward

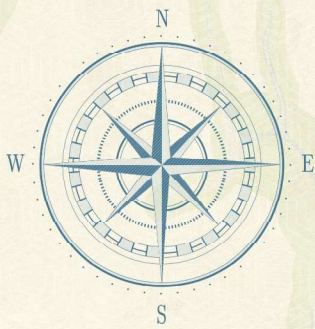
WRITTEN BY **MARY WANSE**

No discussion of Jacksonville's history would be complete without the mention of what is called The Great Fire that began on Friday, May 3, 1901.

Just after noon, a spark from the chimney of a small dwelling drifted to the nearby Cleveland Fibre Factory at the corner of Beaver and Davis Streets in the downtown business district. The blaze raged for nearly nine hours, carried by wind and encouraged by a recent drought. Despite the numerous telegrams that solicited assistance from surrounding departments, no bucket carried by man was big enough and no horse-drawn, steam-powered pumper was quick enough to extinguish the flames that had turned the city into an inferno. With the exception of very few structures, the fire laid to ruin 466 acres of homes and hotels, churches and schools, banks and businesses. Lives were lost. Survivors were homeless.

As a testament to the indomitable spirit of Jacksonville, rebuilding began on Monday, May 6.

But Jacksonville's historic districts aren't only about looking back; they're about looking forward. So, after learning the rich roots of each of eight unique neighborhoods, add to your bucket list places and events to look forward to while you're here. Whether you're a new neighbor or a passing visitor, become a part of history by immersing yourself in the specialness of Jacksonville. See you there!





AS IT IS TODAY,
BOATING ON THE
ST. JOHNS RIVER
WAS A FAVORITE
PASTIME DURING
THE SUMMER IN
THE EARLY 1900S.
(FROM THE LEAH
MARY COX PHOTO
COLLECTION)

ORTEGA

Ortega might be the least known historic neighborhood in Jacksonville, but it also has a reputation for being one of the wealthiest. And it is rumored to have housed several notorious gangsters.

Ortega is a 2,000-acre peninsula, a former plantation. It used to be called Maxton's Creek Island. In 1770, after Spain surrendered Florida to England, the land was granted to Abraham Jones by King George III. Within

ten years, Jones had left. In moved Colonel Daniel McGirtt—a farmer, a British loyalist until he switched sides, a cattleman-turned-bandit. A boulevard in the neighborhood is still named for him.

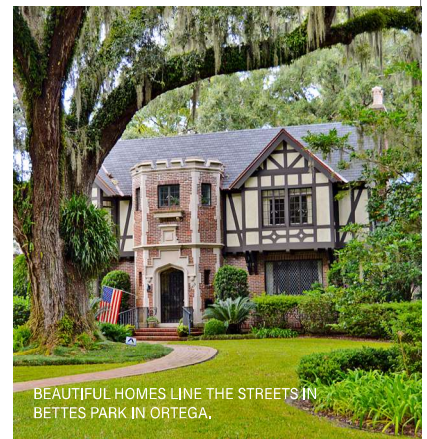
In 1783, the state was given back to Spain, and in 1792, McGirtt's land changed hands multiple times into the early 1900s. In 1906, John N.C. Stockton, head of the Ortega Company, with the help of Henry Klutho, the



SOME OF THE
GRANDEST HOMES
IN JACKSONVILLE
CAN BE FOUND
ON SADLER POINT
IN ORTEGA.

respected architect, platted the land. Over the next three years, the wooden Ortega Bridge was in operation with trolley service, providing the new development with easier access to Jacksonville at large. Land lots were sold with a starting price of \$100, including water. Many of the bungalow-style homes built at that time remain standing today, as do many stately homes in Colonial, Mediterranean, and Tudor Revival styles, which are worth millions now.

The early developers of Ortega controlled property by deed restrictions in keeping with the original plans of a residential community. That hasn't changed much. If it's a small-town feel and a serene atmosphere you crave, Ortega is for you. Today's residents of Ortega have enjoyed an influx of new families, both local and from out of town, who enjoy the slower vehicular traffic that provides pedestrian safety. The easy strolls under tree canopies are a regular routine for many, as crossing the Ortega Bridge often affords some of the most beautiful sunsets in the city, not to mention, the view of the downtown skyline.



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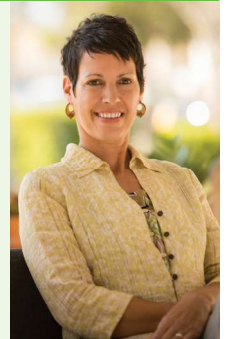
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BUCKET LIST

SURROUNDING ORTEGA

Investigate the surrounding Ortega area. Notice that the peninsula is bisected by Roosevelt Boulevard. To the west is Ortega Forest, to the east is Old Ortega, and a section to the northeast is Old Ortega Historic District. Discover the grid-patterned street system with themed names—many for Native American tribes, some for Ivy League schools, others for architectural column styles.



MCGIRTS BLVD.

STOCKTON PARK

Visit Stockton Park on the riverfront of the St. Johns at 4021 Ortega Boulevard. The land was platted in 1909 as Ortega Park by John N.C. Stockton and Henry Klutho. In 1965, the parkland was expanded and renamed for the neighborhood's developer. Improvements made in 2005 lend to what's become one of Jacksonville's favorite spots for fishing for trout and redfish and cast netting of mullet, picknicking and the annual Easter Sunday sunrise service.



STOCKTON PARK

LOCAL PARKS

C – Community Park
N – Neighborhood Parks
S – Specialty Park

Baker Point Park ^(N)
📍 4045 San Juan Ave.

Bettes Park ^(N)
📍 3800 Bettes Cr.

Columbus Park ^(N)
📍 2850 Iroquois Ave.

Cortez Park ^(N)
📍 4260 Baltic St.

DeSoto Park ^(N)
📍 3970 Baltic St.

John Stockton Park ^(C)
📍 4827 Carlisle Rd.

Lakeside Park I & II ^(N)
📍 4190 Lakeside Dr.

Seminole Park ^(N)
📍 4170 McGirts Blvd.

Stinson Park ^(C)
📍 4050 San Juan Ave.

Stockton Park ^(N)
📍 4021 Ortega Blvd.

Yerkes Park ^(N)
📍 3927 McGirts Blvd.

LOCAL SPORTS

Navy Ortega Lakeshore Little League
📍 P.O. Box 7331,
Jacksonville FL 32238
🌐 noljax.org

Timuquana Yacht Club River Rats
📍 4028 Timuquana Rd.
☎ (904) 388-2664
🌐 rcsl.org

Venetia Athletic Club
📍 4300 Timuquana Rd.
☎ (904) 735-7465
🌐 vacjax.com

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 4028 Timuquana Rd.
 (904) 388-2664
timuquana.net

Ortega River Club
 4165 Lakeside Dr.
 (904) 389-2284
ortegariverclub.net



TIMUQUANA COUNTRY CLUB

In the 1920s, a concrete drawbridge replaced the wooden one to accommodate growing marine traffic. It also provided easy access to the then up-and-coming Avondale community. Now, the bridge has one staffed tender house, has been deemed a historic landmark, and is estimated to open 7,000 times per year. Commuters find the skyline views from the bridge breathtaking.

Ortega is also home to the Florida Yacht Club, the fourth oldest surviving yacht club in the country. It started in 1876 and found its permanent home in Ortega in 1928, a few years after the founding of the Timuquana Country Club in 1923, which has hosted numerous prestigious golf tournaments. Marinas and other facilities in the area cater to the boating needs of the Ortega community from Lamb's Yacht Center to Sadler Point Marina, Huckins Yacht Corporation, Lakeshore Dry Storage and the Marina at Ortega Landing.

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AVONDALE

Avondale is one of Jacksonville's most popular historic neighborhoods. It is upscale and sophisticated.

Avondale is built upon former plantations that existed on granted land with recorded history dating back to 1815. The area was originally an extension of Riverside until the early 1920s when the district began to come into its own identity divided by Seminole Road, though some locals

insist the demarcation is King Street, while others say it is McDuff Avenue.

Developed by the wealthy northern investors of Telfair Stockton and Company, Avondale was named for a community in Cincinnati where James Challen, a key investor for whom Challen Avenue is named, had lived. Avondale was the first Jacksonville neighborhood with homes designed



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to incorporate garages and carports to accommodate automobiles that were becoming a popular transportation mode at that time. The new enclave was marketed as “Riverside’s Residential Ideal,” a residence for the “correct” and the “well-to-do.” Lots were not even offered for sale until after sidewalks and utilities had already been put in place.



LOCAL PARKS

C – Community Park
N – Neighborhood Park
S – Specialty Park

Boone Park ^(S)
& **Tennis Complex** ^(S)
📍 3730 Park St.

Boone Park Playground ^(S)
📍 3725-3735 St. Johns Ave.

Belvedere Park I & II ^(N)
📍 Belvedere Ave.

Edgewood Park I & II ^(N)
📍 1466 Edgewood Ave. S.

Fishweir Park ^(C)
📍 3925 Valencia Rd.

Hollywood Park ^(N)
📍 Hollywood Ave.
near Remington St.

James and Downing Park ^(N)
📍 1061 James St.

Lechlade Park ^(N)
📍 Lechlade Cr.

Native Park I & II ^(N)
📍 Park St. &
Avondale Ave.

LOCAL SPORTS

Jacksonville Fencing Club
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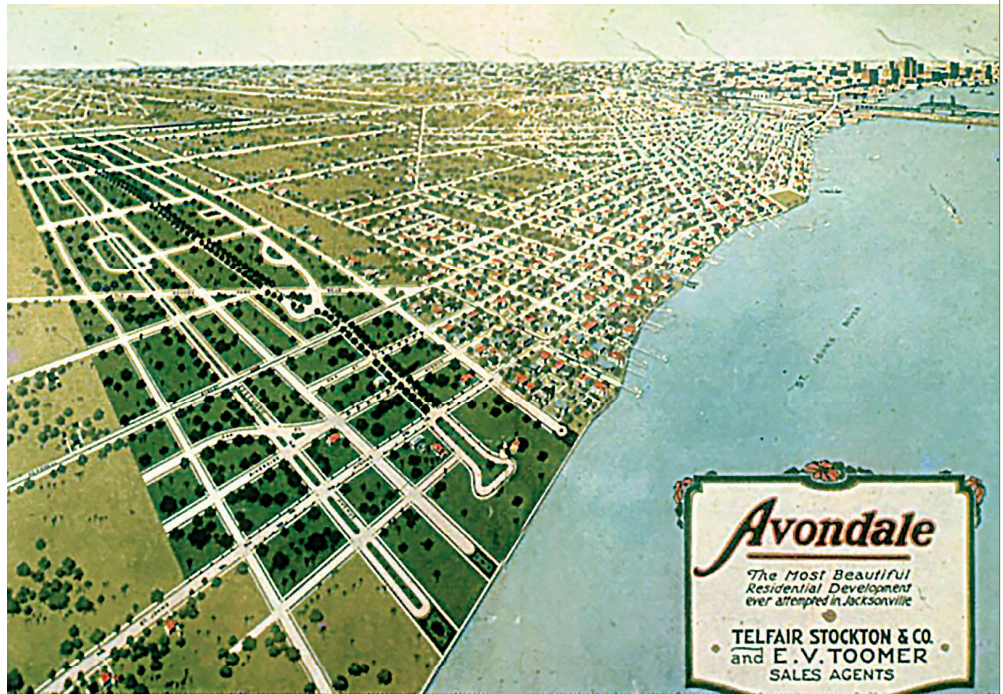


NEIGHBORHOOD: AVONDALE

Stretching along the west bank of St. Johns River were the plantation lands of Dell's Bluff and Magnolia Plantation.

Originally granted by Florida's Spanish government to Philip Dell in 1801, Dell's 800 acres of land ran from McCoy's Creek to a point between Barrs Street and King Street.

Later purchased by James Winter, the area remained a plantation until purchased in 1868 by Florida Times-Union Editor Edward M. Cheney on behalf of Boston developer John Murray Forbes, who platted the area into what is now Riverside.



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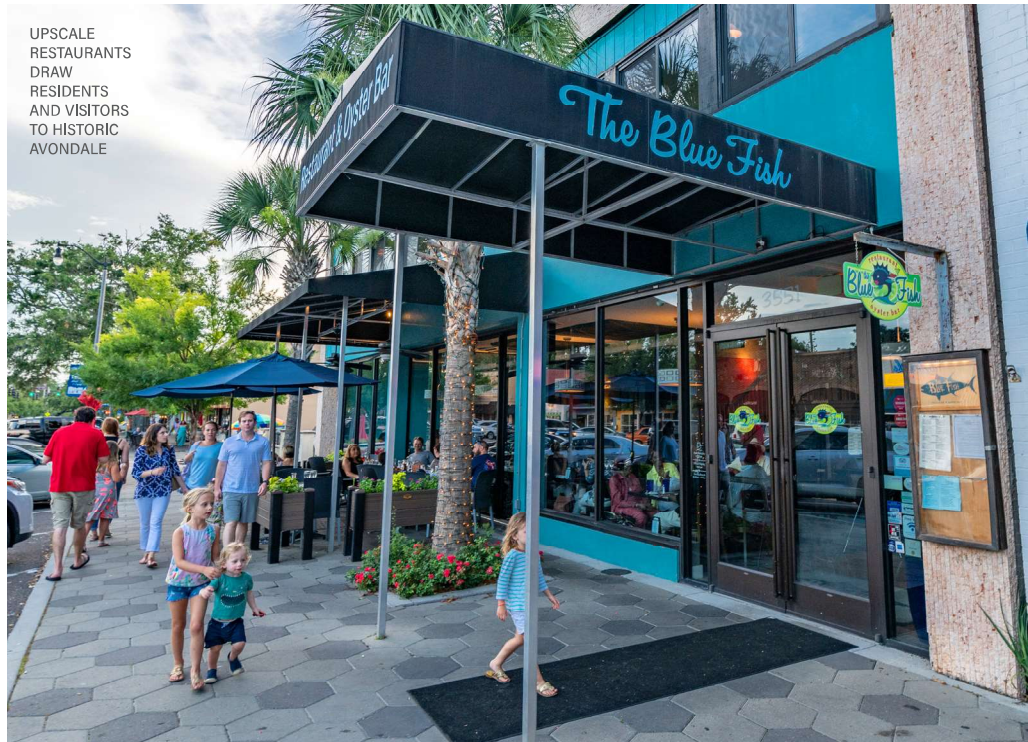
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Architecturally, Avondale homes are formal, mainly of Mediterranean Revival, yet the Colonial design influences of New England are also found throughout the neighborhood. There are exceptions; one of note is a riverfront mansion in the Tudor Revival style that stands at 3730 Richmond Street. It was built for Edward Wood Lane, Sr., the founder of Atlantic National Bank. William Towers, a mortgage banker and developer, was the second owner. Hence, the estate is called Lane-Towers House despite subsequent turns of ownership. It is said that behind a particular piece of paneling there is a secret room that can be accessed by use of a bobby pin, and there's a gold leaf ceiling in the breakfast room.

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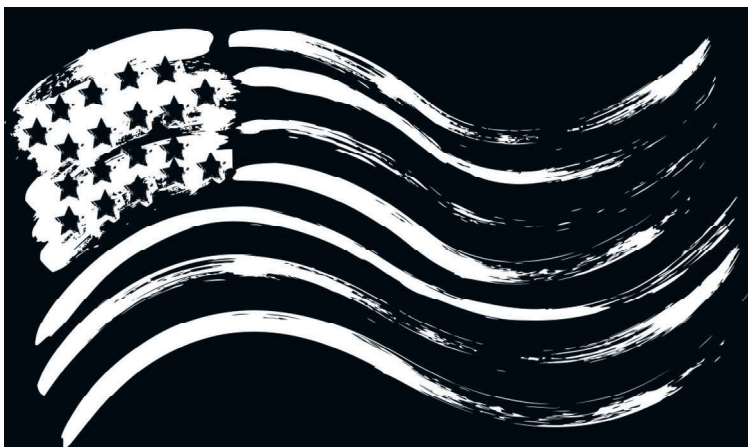
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NEIGHBORHOOD: AVONDALE

Avondale's landscape owes its original design to William Chase Pitkin, Jr. of Cleveland who mapped out curved property lines rather than gridded, winding streets rather than straight, and plenty of public parks.

Avondale was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1989, four years after Riverside was awarded the designation. Shortly after, began an annual tradition that is now more than three decades old: Christmas in Avondale, which features family-friendly food, fun, and festivities.

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NEIGHBORHOOD: **AVONDALE**

BUCKET LIST



HISTORIC AVONDALE

Along St. Johns Avenue, you'll find one of the areas thriving commercial districts, Historic Avondale. Here, specialty boutiques, upscale restaurants, and art galleries abound. Among them, you'll find the oldest store in Avondale—Hooshang Oriental Rug Gallery, continuously run since 1977 by Hooshang Harvesf, a doctor of economics from Persia whose storefront window has been credited as the most visited one at holiday time because of its display of nutcrackers from around the world.

THE GIANT SWING

At the end of Edgewood Avenue South, there's a right-of-way that offers a grand view of the St. Johns River. There, in the grass, is a stand of trees, among which is a grandfather oak. From one of its limbs hang two long ropes that support what has affectionately come to be known as The Giant Swing. It's somewhat of a secret spot for those raised in Avondale, but it's not so secret anymore. Generations know of it.

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ROBERT E. LEE HIGH SCHOOL BAND, YEAR UNKNOWN.

RIVERSIDE

Riverside is one of Jacksonville's oldest neighborhoods and the first to be added to the National Registry of Historic Places. It was platted in 1869, near the same time as Springfield, by John Murray Forbes, a developer from Boston. The original plans included for a 14-acre park,

which required enfencing to keep out roaming cattle and the labor of city prisoners to clear the underbrush.

In the 1880s, many streets in Riverside were named to honor engineers who assisted in dredging and jetty work near St. Johns Bluff. Gilmore, Post, and Lomax are examples.

Like Springfield, Riverside was annexed by Jacksonville in 1887 and its development flourished after The Great Fire of 1901. Within a decade, more than 50 mansions had been built along a section of Riverside Avenue and dubbed “The Row.” The Riverdale Inn, a bed and breakfast establishment today, is one of the original structures still standing. The Cummer Museum of Art, though not the initial Row structure, is built on the site of the original mansion and includes some of its clay roof tiles.

In addition to homes, schools of Riverside add voice to its history. John Gorrie Junior High was erected in 1923. Its namesake was a physician credited with the invention of artificial ice, which he used to cool feverish patients. That building still stands in Riverside, but not as a school; its classrooms have been renovated into condominiums.



THE DUCK POND IN RIVERSIDE PARK



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AT NIGHT, PARK STREET IN 5 POINTS BUSTLES WITH ACTIVITY AS A MAJOR COMMERCIAL CENTER IN RIVERSIDE. AS THE CORRIDOR'S "MAIN STREET," MANY EATERIES, BOUTIQUES, AND FORMS OF ENTERTAINMENT CAN BE FOUND ON PARK STREET, WHICH EXTENDS FROM RIVERSIDE PARK TO THE FAMOUS BEACON, WHICH ANCHORS JACKSONVILLE'S MOST FAMOUS INTERSECTION BEFORE CONNECTING WITH LOMAX AND MARGARET STREETS.

Robert E. Lee High School, built in 1928, is the second oldest high school in all of Jacksonville, it has since been renamed Riverside High as of June 2021. Gary Rossington was a student at Lee and a founding member of the rock band Lynyrd Skynyrd. He had been reported to the principal and suspended in the 1960s for having long hair. Later, he dropped out to devote full time to his band, which he named for the Lee gym teacher, Leonard Skinner, who had reported Rossington to the principal for defying regulations.

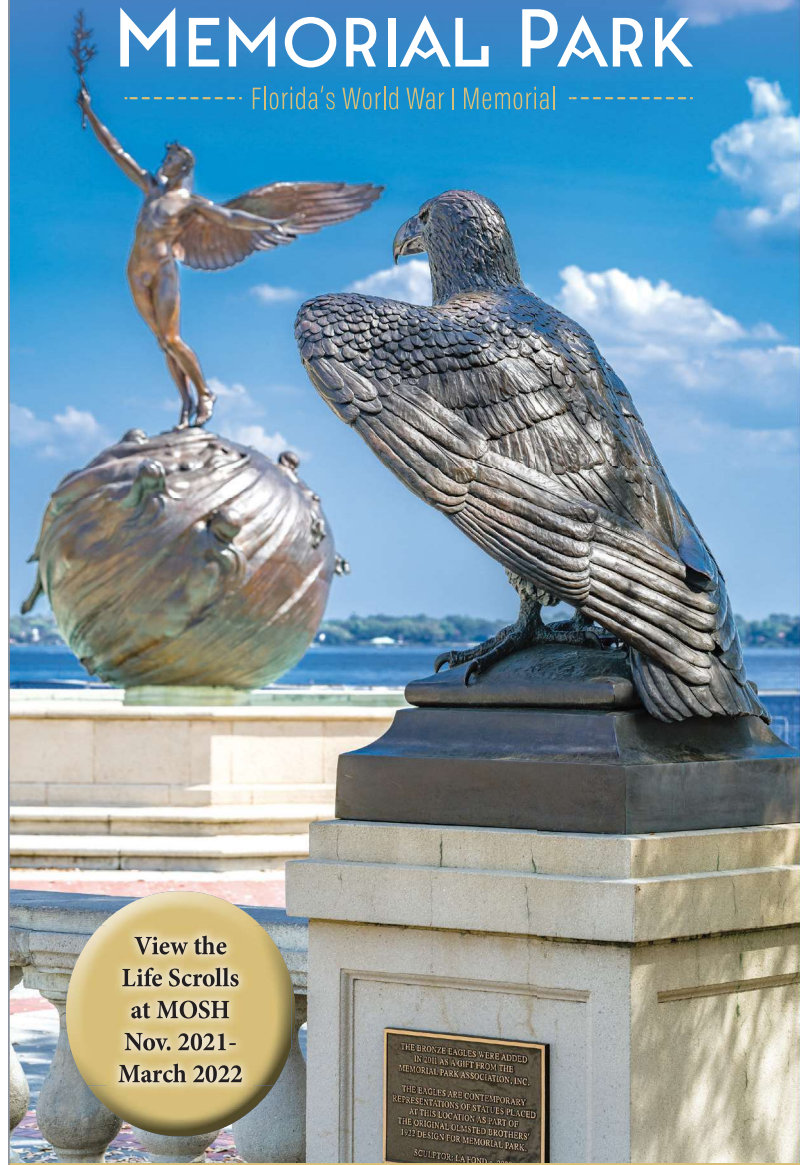
Riverside is popular today for its diversity in people and places. Residents include senior citizens as well as millennials, single professionals living alongside growing families. A range of architectural styles can be found, too, from Gothic Revival to Early Modern and more.

Riverside's eclectic mix of old and new is particularly apparent in its southeastern section of 5 Points. Aptly named for five streets that feed into a main intersection, it's a place of historic feel with bohemian flair where you'll find a variety of restaurants and bars, antique shops and vintage clothing stores. Also there is the Sun-Ray Cinema, though renamed over the years, the first in Florida to show talking pictures.

Every great city has a great park. For Jacksonville, that is

MEMORIAL PARK

----- Florida's World War I Memorial -----



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Designed by the famed Olmsted Brothers and dedicated on December 25, 1924, Memorial Park is the only park in the state dedicated to all Floridians who lost their lives having served in World War I. Listed on the National Register of Historic Places, the park is also a WWI Centennial Memorial as designated by the United States World War One Centennial Commission.

Memorial Park Association (MPA) is a nonprofit organization working since 1986 to enhance, promote and preserve Memorial Park—the premier historic park in Jacksonville and a vibrant destination for the community and visitors alike.

Today MPA is implementing a master plan to restore the park to the former grandeur of its original landscape design. In partnership with the City and through private donations, MPA carries out projects and beautification not covered in the City's budget. Your gifts for current initiatives and for the Memorial Park Association Endowment at The Community Foundation for Northeast Florida enhance our city and make Memorial Park *the* park to visit, enjoy and play.



**Memorial Park is located at
1620 Riverside Avenue, Jacksonville, FL 32204**

*(Between Margaret Street and Memorial Park Drive in Riverside
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Learn more about Memorial Park and Memorial Park Association by visiting
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BUCKET LIST

MEMORIAL PARK

Though one of several, Memorial Park in Riverside is the premier historic city park in Jacksonville. Planned in 1919, Memorial Park was opened to the public in 1924 to honor 1,220 Floridians who died in service during WWI. On Christmas Day of that year, the honorees' names were inscribed on a parchment scroll that was placed inside two metal boxes, one within the other, and sealed with a copper lid. The container was then buried under bricks and covered with a plaque at the base of the bronze Life statue, a Jacksonville monument. Though the box has since been unearthed, the nude statue still stands and is a popular photo opp. The park was designed by the Olmstead brothers, the pair who had designed New York's Central Park. Stroll its nearly six acres. Picnic, play, fish, or catch a beautiful sunset framed finely along the river.



CHARLES ADRIAN PILLARS 'SPIRITUALIZED LIFE' SCULPTURE

RIVERSIDE ARTS MARKET

RAM, as it's known, has been a weekly community tradition since 2009, one you will not want to miss. Every Saturday, rain or shine, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., in the shade of the Fuller Warren Bridge that overlooks the St. Johns River, countless vendors line the paved esplanade. They are local chefs, artisans, farmers, and musicians who gather to sell their wares, showcase their talents, and strut their stuff. Expect unique, as no mass-produced or resale items are allowed. The weekend event is produced by RAP, the Riverside Avondale Preservation Society. In a word, Wow!



RIVERSIDE ARTS MARKET

LOCAL PARKS

C - Community Park
N - Neighborhood Park
S - Specialty Park

- Cherry Street Park** ^(N)
📍 1865 Cherry St.
- John Gorrie Dog Park** ^(S)
at Riverside Park ^(N)
📍 753 Park St.
- Memorial Park** ^(C)
📍 1620 Riverside Ave.
- Riverside Avondale Community Garden** ^(S)
📍 2840 Park St.
- Riverside Park** ^(C)
📍 753 Park St.
- Willowbranch Park** ^(N)
📍 2870 Sydney St.
- Windsor Place Park** ^(N)
📍 Windsor Place and Sydney St.
- Yacht Basin Park** ^(N)
📍 2941 St. Johns Ave.

LOCAL SPORTS

- Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd Swimming Pool**
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MURRAY HILL

Murray Hill is the most urban of Jacksonville's historic neighborhoods. The area is found quite attractive by young families looking for affordable starter homes that offer small-town coziness within a city vibe.

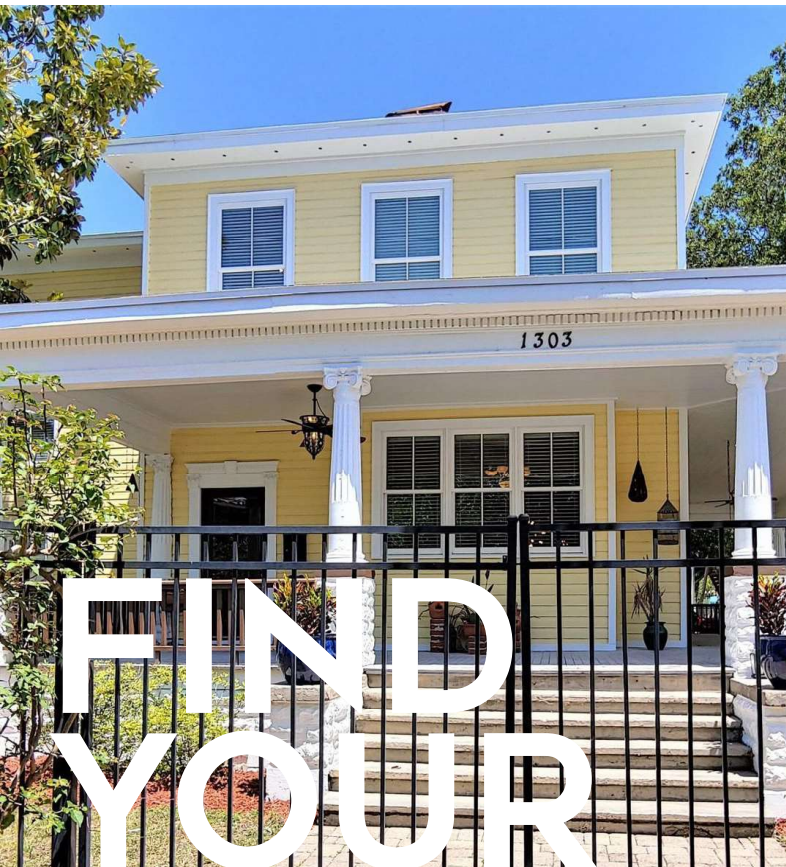
Located between Cassat Avenue and Roosevelt Boulevard, the area was platted as a working-class suburb in 1906, north of Avondale and west of Riverside. By 1916, it had incorporated as a town with its own government leaders; the

establishment of the Florida Military Academy in Murray Hill during WWI and the expansion of a trolley line to connect with downtown Jacksonville helped the neighborhood along. Many of the houses built at that time were from kits distributed by Sears, Roebuck and Company. Unfortunately, by 1925, the small rural cattle-roaming town had hit "Murray Bottom," as it's called, and was annexed by the City of Jacksonville, which caused Jacksonville to surpass Tampa as Florida's largest city.



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NEIGHBORHOOD: **MURRAY HILL**

BUCKET LIST

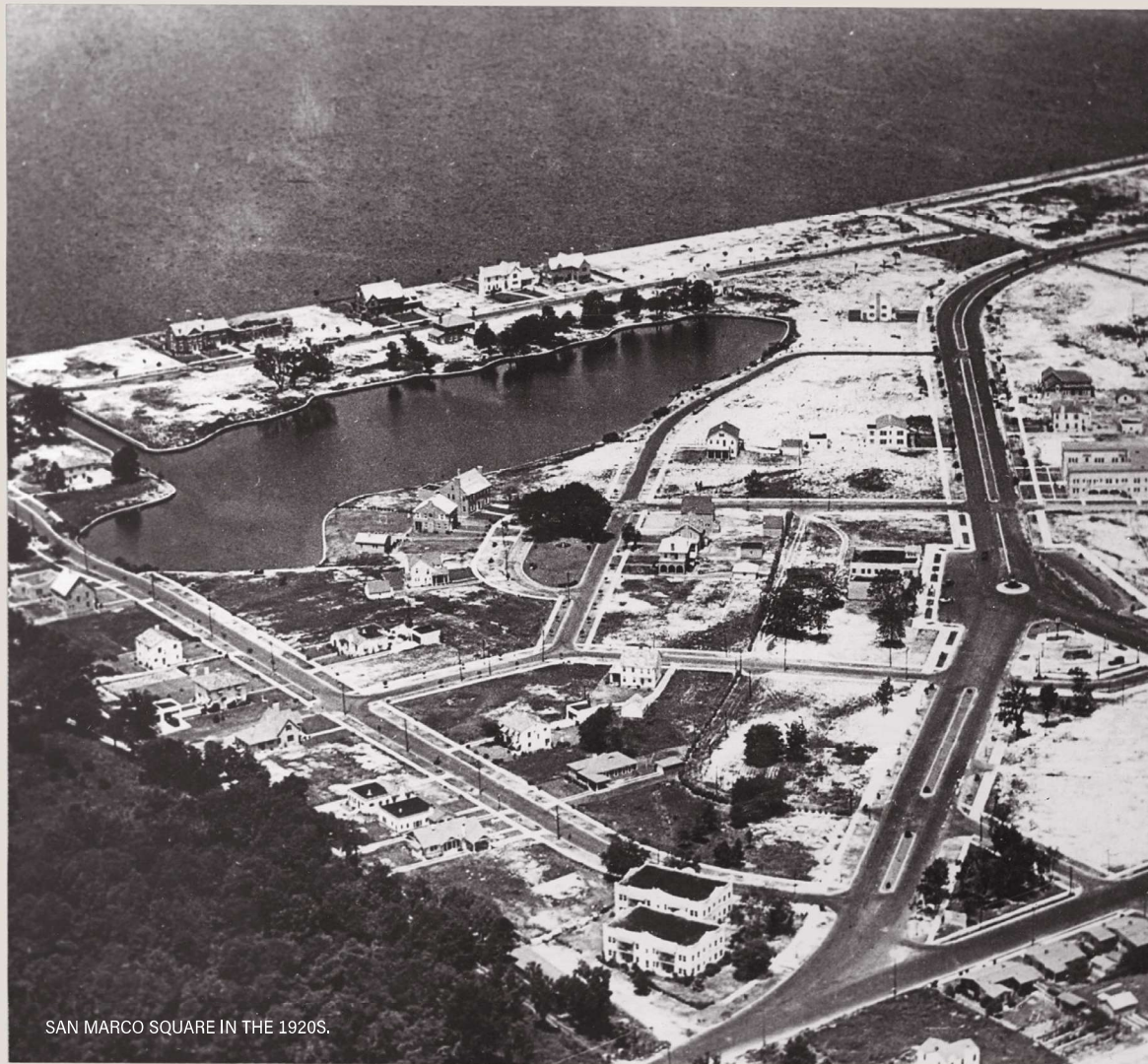


MURRAY HILL-O-WEEN

Murray Hill residents love October! The month brings with it the annual Murray Hill-O-Ween festival, a local tradition hosted by the Murray Hill Preservation Association since 2016. Join your neighbors in Jacksonville's largest Halloween party, including a costume parade down Edgewood Avenue and a yard decorating contest. The event is so popular that it even has its own website and Facebook page. Get spooky!

DREAMETTE

Dreamette is a walk-up ice cream window built in 1948 at 3646 Post Street, just off Edgewood Avenue. More than seven decades later, not much has changed other than the name. It was called Creamette by its original owner, Johnny Nettles. It is written that more than 1,200 cones were scooped on opening night. The shakes, cones, and banana splits are still ranked favorites. The fruit toppings are believed to be a secret recipe passed down from one owner to the next. You'll not want to skip this beacon of Americana.



SAN MARCO

This general area of land was first populated in the 1700s. Through the following century, it was dominated by plantations owned by Jacksonville families of distinction. After the Civil War ended in 1865, the plantations were split up and sold off, including the Hendricks plantation. A portion of that one was bought and platted by Harrison Reed as South Jacksonville; another portion was retained by family member Elizabeth Hudnall Hendricks and platted in 1882 as Oklahoma, what we know today as San Marco.

In the early 1900s, the only transportation to and from this area from downtown was by ferry or by the Florida East Coast Railway Bridge. It wasn't until the 1920s that the suburb flourished with the help of the 1921 completion of the St. Johns River Bridge, now called the Acosta Bridge, which was the first automobile bridge over the St. Johns River. Then, Telfair Stockton developed the area with an Italian Renaissance Revival theme in mind shortly after he had established Avondale. Winding streets, large lots, and grassy medians were

NEIGHBORHOOD: **SAN MARCO**

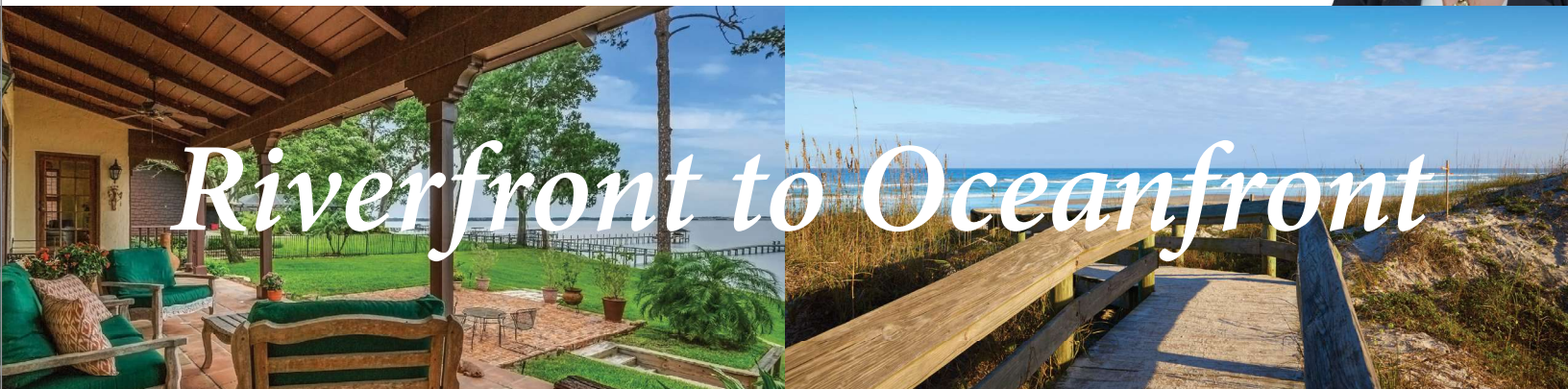


COLORFUL UMBRELLAS AND FANCIFUL ARTWORK BY LOCAL ARTISTS MAKE THE AREA NEAR SAN MARCO TRAIN STATION AND UNION HALL A "COLORFUL LIVING ROOM." THE AREA NEAR ASHCO HEADQUARTERS ON HENDRICKS AVENUE PROVIDES A MIX OF NEARBY RESTAURANTS AND IS A FUN PLACE TO HANG OUT, HAVE ICE CREAM AND ENJOY THE OCCASIONAL OUTDOOR CONCERT.

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NEIGHBORHOOD: **SAN MARCO**

LOCAL PARKS

C – Community Park, N – Neighborhood Parks
S – Specialty Park

Alexandria Oaks Park ^(N)

📍 1620 Marco Place

Angelina Danese Park ^(N)

📍 3310 St. Augustine Rd.

Balis Park ^(N)

📍 1999 San Marco Blvd.

Belmonte Park ^(N)

📍 1440 Belmonte Ave.

Brown L. Whatley Memorial Park ^(N)

📍 Alexandria Place S.

Colonial Manor Park ^(N)

(Known as the Duck Pond)

📍 3625 San Jose Blvd.

Fletcher Park ^(S)

📍 1652 Atlantic Blvd.

Friendship Fountain Park ^(S)

📍 1015 Museum Cr.

Granada Park ^(N)

📍 3960 Alcazar Ave.

Greenscape Celebration Park ^(N)

📍 801 LaSalle St.

Historic Kings Road Park ^(N)

📍 1972 Kings Ave.

Jessie Ball duPont Park ^(N)

(Known as Treaty Oak Park)

📍 1207 Prudential Dr.

Jim Rink Park ^(N)

📍 801 Cedar St.

Joe Davis Memorial Park ^(N)

📍 2545 Larsen Rd.

Landon Park ^(N)

📍 1800 San Marco Blvd.

Largo Well Park ^(N)

📍 1964 Largo Rd.

Lillian S. Davin Park ^(N)

📍 2311 River Rd.

River Oaks Park ^(C)

📍 1000 River Oaks Rd.

Riverfront Park ^(N)

📍 1800 River Rd.

Southbank Riverwalk ^(S)

📍 1001 Museum Cr.

Southside Park & Tennis Complex ^(C)

📍 1539-1541 Hendricks Ave.

points that made the neighborhood quite desirable. In 1925, the requests for lots were triple the number available. In 1926, the main commercial square was laid out at the intersection of Atlantic and San Marco Boulevards, including Mediterranean-style buildings and a fountain.

In 1932, San Marco was annexed by the City of Jacksonville and continued to develop and expand into the 1940s. But suburban sprawl took its toll, and in 1975, the San Marco Preservation Society formed as a nonprofit organization to protect the integrity and charm of the residential neighborhood and to encourage and enhance the vitality of the business district.

One of the Society's major renovation projects was San Marco Preservation Hall. The structure was built in 1888 as St. Paul's Episcopal Church but is now used as a reservation banquet hall. In 2020, *Jacksonville Magazine* voted it the Best Historic Venue. Beside it stands another historic structure, Stockton Cottage, which was built in 1915 and used as Telfair Stockton and Company's sales office. Nowadays, it's used as a bridal changing room for those renting the Hall.

You'll find San Marco to be vibrant and walkable, quaint and casual. It offers a plethora of parks and a variety of housing options.

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BUCKET LIST

SAN MARCO SQUARE

The focal point of San Marco is its Square, named for Piazza San Marco in Venice, Italy. At its heart is Three Lions Fountain, which in 1997 replaced the original compass-themed fountain. Smaller, playful sculptures also decorate the area. You'll find eateries, galleries, and shops here in addition to the San Marco Theatre that first opened in 1938 and was named one of the 10 best classic cinemas in the country by *USA Today*. San Marco Square is the gathering spot for community events, including the annual Christmas tree lighting.

BREEZY JAZZ HOUSE

Great jazz, great food, and great times can be found in San Marco at Breezy, Jacksonville's premier elite jazz house, echoing those found in New York, Chicago, and London. Breezy Jazz House used to be located downtown and was chosen multiple times as one of the official locations for the annual Jax Jazz Fest After Dark, an event music lovers will want to mark on their calendars for every May, although in 2020 the date had to be postponed until October due to the coronavirus pandemic. A full-glass roll-up wall guarantees that guests who prefer outdoor seating won't miss a note of the music from inside.



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SAN JOSE

Of all the historic districts in Jacksonville, San Jose is the one that was originally planned to function independent of the city. The 1,000 acres just a few miles outside the city limits that had been a Spanish plantation were believed by Claude Nolan of the San Jose Company in 1914 to be a wise investment due to the growing popularity of the automobile. Nolan envisioned a thriving suburban community. But then came WWI.

Nearly a decade later, after the post-war recession, once paving of San Jose Boulevard was complete, the San Jose

Estates Company headed by Charles W. Strickland purchased the acreage and began extensive building. The plan was that the area be a self-contained suburb with an abundance of public amenities. In 1925, the Spanish-style San Jose Hotel and the Mediterranean Revival-style San Jose Country Club with an 18-hole golf course for the hotel's guests were built, the first two huge projects in addition to housing. In 1927, on a site meant for a Vanderbilt Hotel, the duPont's Epping Forest mansion was built, named for an English forest where ancestors of Mrs. Jessie Ball duPont had lived.

The estate contained underground tunnels and a lion's head fountain. It's no wonder that San Jose was viewed at that time as Jacksonville's most exclusive neighborhood. But then came the Great Depression, followed by WWII.

The 1914 vision for San Jose and the plans set in motion ten years later had faltered. Only a fraction of the homes and amenities had been built. The San Jose Estate Company's executive offices at San Jose Boulevard and St. Augustine Road, which originally included a casino and gas station on site, eventually became part of San Jose Episcopal Church and Day School. The San Jose Hotel became part of The Bolles School campus that would be called by *Architectural Digest* nearly a century later the most beautiful private high school in Florida. In 1984, the Epping Forest residence, gardens, boathouse, and river-front property were converted into a yacht club by the president of Gate Petroleum Company. An additional section of the estate was developed into a gated community with houses and condominiums. The San Jose Country Club is the only structure from the original development



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that retains its intended function, continuously being renovated and expanded.

True to Jacksonville resilience, San Jose is active and thriving today. The area retains its Spanish influence in many of its stucco and tile homes and in several of its street names, like St. Augustine Road. San Jose Boulevard serves as the neighborhood's Main Street. Residents appreciate its flat terrain and shade covering amenable to bicycling, walking, and jogging. Nearby, you can find kickboxing and yoga studios.

LOCAL PARKS

C - Community Park
N - Neighborhood Parks
S - Specialty Park

Alejandro Garces ^(C)
Camp Tomahawk Park
📍 8419 San Ardo Rd.

Baker Skinner Park ^(C)
📍 7641 Powers Ave.

Crabtree Park ^(N)
📍 1704 University Blvd. W.

Goodbys Creek Preserve ^(S)
📍 9145 San Jose Blvd.

Nathan Krestul Park ^(C)
📍 2001 LaVaca Rd.

San Jose Acre Park ^(N)
📍 2965 Caballero Dr.

Verona Park ^(N)
📍 2901 San Fernando Rd.

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NEIGHBORHOOD: **SAN JOSE**

BUCKET LIST



GOODBYS CREEK PRESERVE

Goodbys Creek is a tributary of the St. Johns River, roughly dividing San Jose from Mandarin. The stream was formerly known as Azza Creek, later both Goodmans and Goodbys Lake. In the late 1900s, amid explosive residential and commercial development, the City of Jacksonville and its non-profit partner, The Trust for Public Land, sought preservation of the site. In 2002, they succeeded, acquiring 39 acres along the southernmost point of Goodbys Creek and dubbing it Goodbys Creek Preserve, a vestige of the 18th century Beauclerc Bluff Plantation. There you will find a boat ramp and picnic area.

VERONA PARK

Don't miss the slice of green between San Jose Boulevard and St. Augustine Road. At just under 10 acres, locals find the narrow strip of Verona Park an ideal space for daily dog walks and evening strolls. Aside from the children's playground and benches at the east end, Verona Park remains in its natural state, which helps protect the creek that runs westerly through it toward the St. Johns River. Stands of trees provide an attractive backdrop for family photos and selfies.

NEIGHBORHOOD: **SAN JOSE**

LOCAL SPORTS

Epping Forest Lion Fish

📍 1830 Epping Forest Dr.
📞 (904) 739-7200
🌐 rcsl.org

Jewish Community Alliance

📍 8505 San Jose Blvd.
📞 (904) 730-2100
🌐 jcjax.org

Jewish Community Alliance

Mako Sharks

📍 8505 San Jose Blvd.
📞 (904) 730-2100
🌐 rcsl.org

San Jose Athletic Association

📍 7641 Powers Ave.
📞 (904) 737-1177
🌐 sanjosejaxbaseball.com

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ST. NICHOLAS AERIAL SHOT IN 1957.



ST. NICHOLAS

East of San Marco on the river's south bank is St. Nicholas. This is the area where a Spanish military post, Fort San Nicholas, stood in the 1700s to protect the river crossing from the British and other groups. At the time of its largest expansion, the fort is said to have been surrounded by a wooden wall and a moat. In 1817, the quarters were abandoned, and the land was turned into farms for growing corn, sweet potatoes, and oranges. The fort is no longer there, but at Atlantic Boulevard and White Avenue, there's a marker that points to its former location, which is now the site of

the athletic field of Bishop Kenny High School, one of the oldest private schools in the area.

In 1839, sections that had previously been given to Francis Bagley and Reuben Hogans by Spanish land grants were combined through the marriage of family members and divided into smaller parcels. One of these is what's known today as the Palmer Terrace neighborhood of St. Nicholas.

Other notable names that have called St. Nicholas home include George Olaf Holmes and his son George Jr., both famous Jacksonville architects; Judge Thomas Olaf Holmes,



A VIEW FROM THE MOUTH OF MILLER'S CREEK IN ST. NICHOLAS

Justice of the Peace for South Jacksonville for 24 years; and Jean Palmer Holmes, a pilot who was a founder of National Airlines, which later transformed into Pan American Airlines. The Holmes Subdivision is named for this family as is Holmesdale Road.

This neighborhood houses the Historic St. Nicholas Cemetery at the corner of Olive Street and Linden Avenue. It was originally a burial ground for pioneer families. The first person ever buried there was William Darius Ferris, Sr. in 1849. His great-grandson, William Darius Ferris IV, was the last, in 2007. The first nurse to graduate from St. Luke's Hospital is there. Ironically, two white Confederate soldiers are buried beside a black Union soldier, Henry Liggins.

After the Civil War, St. Nicholas became a popular vacation site and retirement area for the wealthy. Some of those homes still remain. Part of the appeal of the area was the quick boat ride away

from the growing downtown section of Jacksonville, so, urban convenience minus the congestion. Another attraction was the water views that St. Nicholas allowed.

In time, this neighborhood came to accommodate business endeavors within its residential borders. During WWI, the Merrill-Stevens Drydock & Repair Company built US warships here. In 1957, Ira M. Koger developed Koger Center, one of the first suburban office parks in the country. Today it's known as Midtown Centre, a landmark business park.

St. Nicholas currently maintains a strong sense of community. There are residences to accommodate a variety of income levels—from mansions to masonry—and it's not unusual to meet folks who grew up in the area, moved out of state to attend university, and came back to buy a house and raise a family.

BUCKET LIST

ST. NICHOLAS TRAIN STATION PARK

Just for the history of it, pack a picnic and head to the south side of Atlantic Boulevard, west of the overpass. The one-room structure that sits there amid picnic tables is over 100 years old and has survived two moves. It was a depot that marked the St. Nicholas stop of the Florida East Coast Railway. During the Great Depression, the rail line was removed, and the structure was relocated to a property near Linden Avenue. In 2004, thanks to the efforts of local preservationists, the depot was moved a second time to its current location in Traymore Park, which has been in existence since 1940. The park was renamed St. Nicholas Train Station Park in 2008 to honor the historical structure.

ST. NICHOLAS TOWN CENTER

The social hub of St. Nicholas is its Town Center where Beach and Atlantic Boulevards meet, where hints of Art Deco architecture are still visible in the curved lines of buildings. The Curry-Thomas Hardware Store, there since 1946, offers hometown personal attention unmatched by any franchise chain. St. Nick's Lounge, since 1950, is one of the oldest pubs in Jacksonville; it is rumored that, in the 1970s, it was a popular gathering place for local government officials after council meetings. The Mudville Grille, a sports bar with an American menu, has been a Jacksonville favorite since 1994. For an ethnic experience in St. Nicholas, try Havana JAX, a full-service Cuban restaurant that serves pressed sandwiches, empanadas, and paella. To burn off the calories afterwards, next door is Cuba Libre Lounge, featuring Latin Salsa dancing between happy hour cocktails.

LOCAL PARKS

C – Community Park
N – Neighborhood Parks
S – Specialty Park

Bee Street Park ^(N)

📍 720 South Shores Rd.

Lillian Saunders Center ^(C)

📍 2750 Bartley Cr.

Marjenhoff Park ^(N)

📍 1955 Southampton Rd.

Palmer Terrace Park ^(N)

📍 Palmer Terrace

St. Nicholas Playground ^(N)

📍 2260 Spring Park Rd.

St. Nicholas Train Station Park ^(N)

📍 2564 Atlantic Blvd.



SPRINGFIELD & DOWNTOWN

Springfield is Jacksonville's oldest neighborhood. Reuben A. Hogans came to possess this land that had been given the name Hogan's Donation by Spanish grant around 1817. It was titled to his son, John R. Hogans, in 1820 and renamed Springfield in 1869 by Calvin L. Robinson, a local merchant, for the spring water that ran fresh through a field that is now West 4th Street.

By 1871, the building of a planned residential community had begun by John H. Norton, head of the Springfield Development Company. In 1879, a horse-drawn streetcar line and brick streets were installed. When displaced citizens of The Great Fire needed a new place to live, many went north to Springfield, and so it became a popular suburb of the city. The residential area was spared from the flames of destruction by Hogan's Creek, a tributary of the St. Johns River, that separates it from the downtown business district. Housing construction in Queen Anne, Colonial Revival, and Prairie School styles rocketed to a rate of 50 per week.

In 1887, Springfield was incorporated into Jacksonville. Six years later, the city's first zoo opened at 1st and Laura Streets before it was moved in the 1920s to Heckscher Drive.

In the dawn of the 1990s, before the emergence of Hollywood, Jacksonville was known as the Winter Film Capital of the World. Scenes from *A Florida Feud*, a 1909 silent film produced by Kalem Company and directed by Sidney Olcott, were shot in Springfield.

Allowing businesses to build in the purely residential area proved a poor idea from 1925 forward. Property values plummeted. In 1974, the Springfield Preservation and Revitalization Association (SPAR) was founded. Within five years, the organization successfully had reversed commercial zoning back to residential. With approximately 1,800 historic structures standing, mostly houses, Springfield made it onto the National Register of Historic Places in 1987.

The January 2010 issue of *Southern Living* magazine named Springfield one of the South's best comeback neighborhoods. Young families continue moving into the area, bringing with them a flair for the up-and-coming along with an appreciation for the by-gone. Microbreweries, First Friday events, and the restoration of historic houses highlight the mix of new and old found in Springfield.

BUCKET LIST

PORCHFEST

An annual tradition since 2015, PorchFest is a free and fun event for the whole family, including pets. On an afternoon in November, streets are closed, and dozens of musicians from an array of genres perform live on the front porches in Springfield's historic district. Stroll from porch to porch. Lounge on lawns. Dance! Food, drinks, and art are available for purchase from vendors.

KLUTHO PARK

Henry J. Klutho Park, formerly Springfield Park, was renamed to honor the influential architect who lived and planned in Springfield. The largest of Hogan's Creek Park System, Klutho Park is home to an 18-hole disc golf course and modern sculptures. There are walkable paths, picnic areas, and ball fields. It is the site of music concerts and other Springfield community events.



LOCAL PARKS

C – Community Park
N – Neighborhood Parks
S – Specialty Park

Confederate Park ^(C)

📍 949 Hubbard St.

Confederate Dog Park ^(S)

📍 Confederate St.

Henry J. Klutho Park ^(S)

📍 204 W. 3rd St.

John N. McPherson Park ^(N)

📍 526 W. 8th St.

Julius Guinyard Park ^(S)

📍 1359 Jefferson St.

Liberty Park ^(N)

📍 1938 Liberty St.

Manson "Bull" Felder Park ^(N)

📍 1045 Fuller Ln.

Robert F. Kennedy Park ^(S)

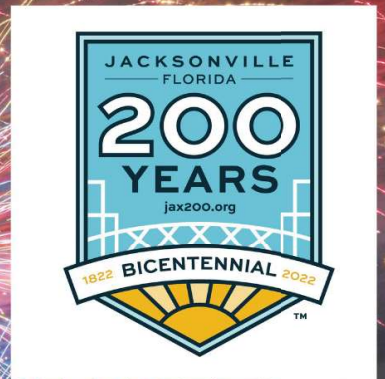
📍 1133 Ionia St.

Warren W. Schell Jr. Memorial Park ^(N)

📍 510 W. 6th St.

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