



Bethinking of Old Orleans

Vol. XXV

By C. W. Lattin, Orleans County Historian

No. 32

Oak Orchard-on-the-Lake

8/8/03

Oak Orchard-on-the-Lake, which is located on the west side of Oak Orchard Harbor, was first known as Lakeside.

During the first part of the 19th century, A. V. Clark purchased some 400 acres of land here. He built a hotel, which he kept, 'til it burned in 1850. By this time the place had become a summer destination for

picnics and parties.

The hotel was at once rebuilt by Clark, who carried on its management until 1866. Our photo taken from the long gone west pier at Oak Orchard Harbor, shows the Clark Hotel to the very far left.

In 1866, D.F. Daniels purchased the property and developed a race-track near the hotel. But in 1869 the

property reverted back to Mr. Clark who continued to attract pleasure seekers.

In 1883, the first summer cottages were erected along the lakeshore. These show to the very far right in our picture.

Then in 1892, a syndicate was formed which purchased the Clark estate, including 100 acres, which

were surveyed into lots for cottages. This corporation, known as the Oak Orchard-on-the-Lake Co.,^{INC}

erected an imposing frame hotel in the stick style that had a capacity for 150 guests. This four-story building with tower and companion buildings, including a dance hall, shown in the center portion of our picture.

The two little buildings to the left were bathhouses. However, by the 1910s, the hotel closed and was torn down, leaving Oak Orchard-on-the-Lake for the next 50 years as a resort of privately owned cottages.

The area has since become home to many year-round residents.

Thanks to Dan Conlon for prompting this article.