

1907

Golden Anniversary

1957

# School Of Organic Education

FOUNDED 1907

MARIETTA JOHNSON, FOUNDER

DECEMBER 12, 1957

## Mrs. Marietta Johnson - Founder Of School Of Organic Education

### First Classes Started In April 1907 With Mrs. Johnson As Teacher

Mrs. Marietta Pierce Johnson was born in St. Paul, Minnesota, October 8, 1864 — died December 23, 1938 in Fairhope, Alabama. One son, Clifford Ernest Johnson, now resides in Florida and another son, Franklin Johnson, died at an early age. She married John Franklin Johnson in 1897.

Mrs. Johnson was educated in the St. Paul Schools and taught in Moorhead Normal College of Minnesota and the Mankato Normal School. She was dissatisfied with the teaching method used then, so with Mr. Johnson went to North Dakota, Montana, Mississippi and finally on to Fairhope, Alabama, where they decided to spend the winter. That winter of 1903 Mrs. Johnson took over the public school teaching, organized a Parent's Meeting and presented new ideas at the Teacher's Institute, from the teachings of C. Hanford Henderson and Oppenheim. The public school that year



MRS. MARIETTA JOHNSON

was very successful with sixty-two pupils and thirteen graduates, the first class formally graduated in the county.

The Johnsons decided to settle on a pecan farm at Barnett, Mississippi, not far from Meridian, Mississippi, in the spring of 1904. Mrs. Johnson would spend short periods of time in Fairhope to conduct a Teacher's Institute, and it was during this time that Superintendent Lambert appointed her as Normal Instructor to the teachers of the county. In 1906 she conducted a four weeks summer school with Mrs. L. J. N. Comings as Secretary and Manager.

In 1907 the Johnsons settled in Fairhope, and in April of that year opened, in a small way, the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education. Mr. Johnson worked with her in the school until his death in 1919.

In 1922-1925-1927-1933, Mrs. Johnson was sent to Europe to represent American education before the leading educators of Europe. This was a great honor as only two or three educators have been so selected.

## WHAT IS ORGANIC EDUCATION?

### Excerpts From Mrs. Johnson's Explanatory Speech

Education is life; growth! Therefore the school program, to be educational, must be life-giving to body, mind, and spirit — the complete organism. The child is a reacting organism; he reacts to his environment. The test of the environment is the way he reacts. Hence all true education is ORGANIC, that is — designed to meet the needs of the growing organism; to secure the child's best development.

Following is a statement of these needs:

1. Music and rhythm, dancing, singing.
2. Fullest self-expression through an abundance of hand-work.
3. Nature study, which may be called science in later years.
4. Stories of history and geography that later become the social studies, literature and languages.
5. Fundamental conceptions of numbers which naturally grow into all mathematical work.

Our experience, and the resulting beliefs, justify the following practices in our school:

1. Nothing which violates the order of development of the nervous system, may become a part of the school program. Therefore a great mass of the closer formal work is postponed until the child reaches the age of 8 or 9 years, since these subjects require too mature a control of the nervous system of young children.

2. No child may be unduly accelerated — pushed ahead — without danger to his nervous system. To prevent acceleration our school groups children according to chronological age, giving to each group the subjects and activities which our experience has shown to be suitable; special attention is given to individual needs. This grouping also prevents self-consciousness.

3. The interests of children must be respected if they are to develop fine thinking power. This requires experiences vital to the child himself. All children are interested in things of the senses, things to do, things to create. Therefore the shops occupy a large place in our curriculum and on our grounds. Singing, dancing, dramatics, stories, and nature are also vital experiences and are given a prominent place.

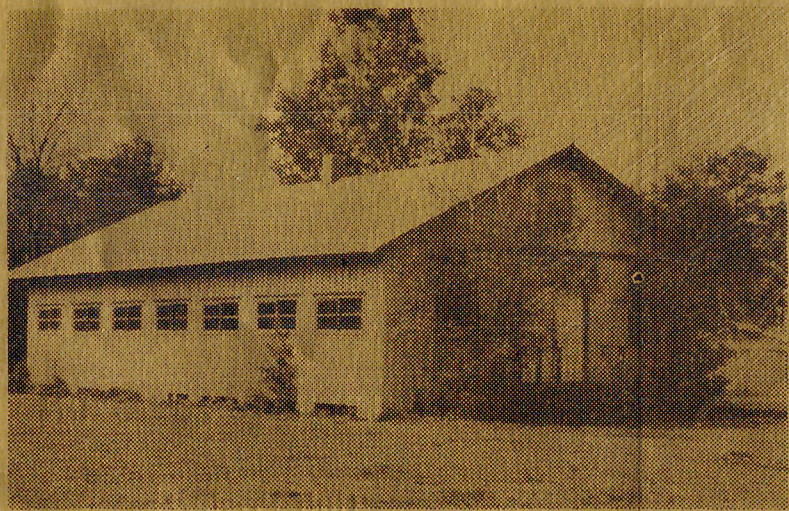
4. The foundation of character and spiritual development is sincerity. This means singleness of purpose. Working for grades, marks, promotions, or for some other reward than the joy of learning, develops double motives. Instead of the child's attention being concentrated on the subject, allowing him to enjoy the process of learning, he is more often concerned with the superficial thing, the record, the grade, the passing, the prize.

5. Grades and marks also develop self-consciousness; that is, the child is thinking of what others are expecting of him rather than of what he, himself, is trying to do. This self-consciousness is a subtle form of fear, and fear is always weakening, undermining to health, and interferes with clear thinking. Often it tends to destroy moral integrity.

The aim of the work in our school is to provide activities and exercises that will minister to the health of the body, develop the finest mental grasp, and preserve the sincerity and unself-consciousness of the emotional life.



### LIBRARY-SCIENCE BUILDING



The School Library and Science Department

### TODAY AND TOMORROW

The Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education, a tax exempt corporation, is operated today by a 15 man Board of Managers to serve students from the kindergarten through the high school level. Today there are some two hundred students in the school instructed by a faculty of eighteen on a campus mellowed by continuous living for fifty years. The school "home" for it is known by that name today and has been thus designated for over so many years, houses boys and girls of all ages. Comings Hall, that hallowed center of community culture, is today being reworked and is being made truly habitable for the many activities germane to school and community life.

The Campus, bounded by Fairhope Avenue, School Street, Morphy, and Bancroft, shows daily new life from Rabold Field on the South to Comings Hall on the Northwest.

Projects of lighting and amplification of instructional space are arising because of the growth of classes at all levels.

Folk Dancing, the Annual Field Day, the growth of the Pan-American idea, the yearly Spring Festival, as a culmination of the total participation of the year's physical outlets — all are reminiscent of the old days, love and loyalty of the older groups — prophetic of the many to come.

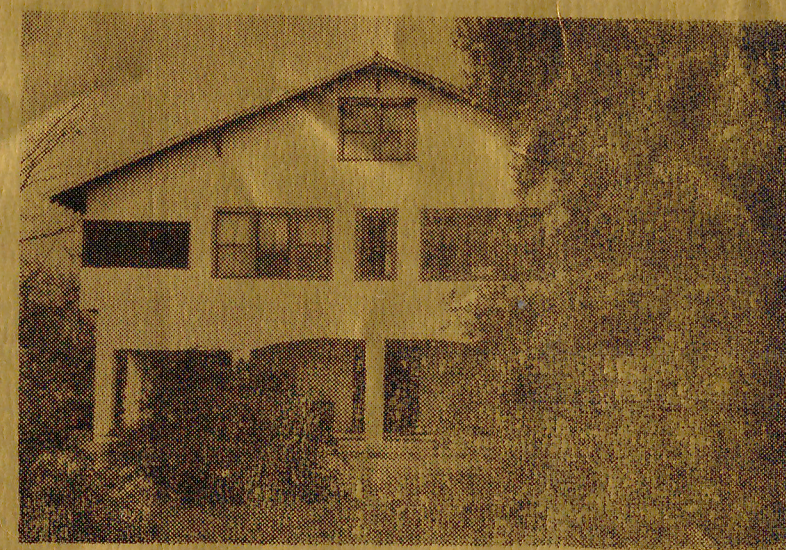
We hope properly to continue to furnish adequate backgrounds for responsible citizenship, complete fundamentals for the scientific and mathematical developments which are arising so rapidly in this day of ours and criteria for individual development and behavior. To implement such objectives, we shall need that complete cooperation which has been so character-

istic of this existing institution. The necessity of a strong drive for future expansion thus becomes readily apparent.

We look to an ever broadening purpose and usefulness — a purpose which, arising from the convictions of the people, their concepts and their folk ways, call to us, conditioned by our half century, to renewed devotion to our youth in a changing world. May we produce the youth which learns to make wise decisions independently — and thus carry on those wise decisions made fifty years ago by an intellect and a heart imbedded in devotion.

Many, many thanks to the fine folks of the round table of the School of Organic Education who have been so helpful in making this golden anniversary edition possible.

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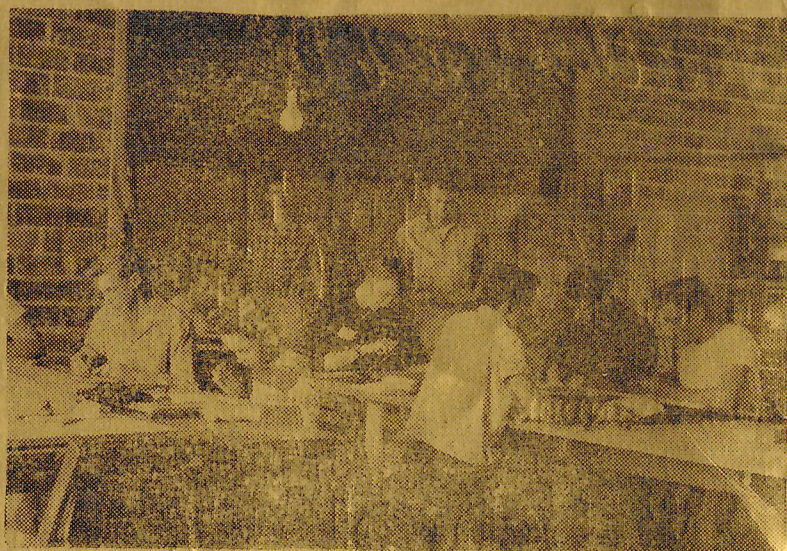
Doctors and Staff

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## MECHANICAL DRAWING



High School Students at Work in Mechanical Drawing

## CLEAN-UP

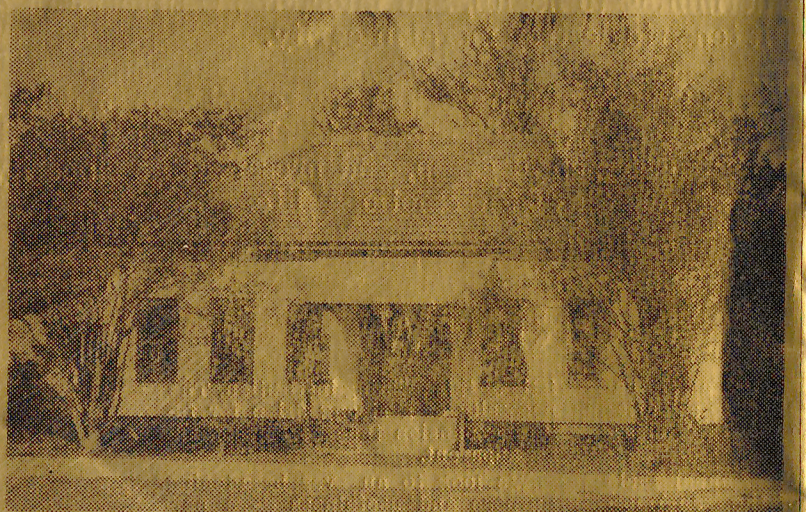


All Enter Into The Clean-up Activities on Campus and in Classrooms

## Alumni Of School Of Organic Education

1910	Anderson, Daphne (Brown) Bell, Jessie Irene Caldwell, Daisy Gaston, Cornelius A. Warner, Bessie (Littlefield) Worcester, Olive	Crowe, Catherine Dryer, Kathleen (Dickson) Gander, Mabel (White) Johnson, Clifford Ernest Roberts, Mildred (Wienand) Sauter, Louis Schuster, Ruth (Nevison) Hinkle, Dorothy (White) Bonnell, Camilla (Roberts)	Baldwin, Thelma Bigger, Margaret Davis, Howard Cramer, Gladys (Galbraith) Hedden, Stanton Kennedy, Frances McKenzie, Flora	Whited, Jewel Beiser, Carl
1911	Buell, Irene (Lucier) Caldwell, Eva Payne, Hazel (Williams) Barrett, Maude Sercombe, Leontine (Possien) Stewart, Lillian	1920 Lysen, Raymond Guthrie, Blachard Hadley, Ruth Rockwell, Louise (Porter) Hedden, Owen Lee, Mildred Mershon, Ronald B. Rivers, Edna Van Zandt, Mildred (Russell)	1926 True, Marie (Beiser) Berglin, Marvin Carter, Eloise Dyson, Sam Johnson, Elsie (Gilmore) Hanser, Lyle Hernberg, Ray Klingensmith, Thomas Winberg, Ethel (Davis) Thornton, George Ruge, Mildred Carter, Grace (Curtis) Dyson, Helen (Porter) West, Frances (Perkins) Tuttle, Robert	1931 Albers, Montith Cain, Dorothy (Beiser) Byrons, Clarice Simpson, Jean (Ems) Brubaker, Winthrop Kinnip, Dorothy (Fondren) Scott, Madeleine (Gibbs) Mooney, Dorothy (Hamill) Flagg, Homer Leupp, Francis Lloyd, Georgia (Brendt) Malito, Francis Johnston, Wellington Rabe, David F. Riegger, Harold Stapleton John Swedelius, Adele Sullivan, Cornelia (Tone) Gray, Claire (Totten) Rittenhouse, Dorothy (Tiffany)
1912	Clowers, Erma (Rockwell) McGill, Leah (Gaston)	1921 Carpenter, Wilma (Logston) Davis, Helen (Nevison) Pond, Mary (Lee) Hardy, Alice (Brady) Hedden, Lyman Gaston, Margaret (Nichols) Crowley, Mildred (Mershon) Quaries, Mary Huffman, Lorena (Nichols) Sheldon, Edwin A. Jr. Stimpson, Stanley	1927 Bart, Mrs. A. A. Torrey, Grace (Forster) Mead, Elizabeth Sandt, Philip Pates, Mabel (Steele) Swedelius, Carl Baldwin, Elizabeth (Thornton) Tucker, James	1932 Alexander, William Armagast, Robert M. Bean, Jennie Buell, Dexter Hedden, Walter McElreath, Preston Reynolds Fred Keller, Elizabeth (Rogers) Spater, Dorothy (Swedelius) Tilus, Robert John Vander Roest, William Wilkes, Anne (Vorisek) Zimmerman, Gerhardt Hall, Anna Laura (Winberg)
1913	No Class	1922 Beasley, Erma (Gilmore) Hess, Jack LaGrutta, Tessie LaNica, Ruth (Mershon) Mershon, Arthur Clyde Lord, Barnara Nichols, Lawrence Nichols, Marvin Berge, Victor Hunt, Wayne	1928 Baker, Mildred Cain, Kenneth Forster, Florence Herrman, Ellen (Hougesen) Reynolds, Isadore Ruge, Max Smith, Mary Wacht, Almona (Southernland) Lawrence, Lawrence Tiffany, Paul Outinger, Betty (Tone)	1933 Flagg, Raymond Joseph, Schuyler Radd, Fred Stubblefield, Anna C. (Skinner) Stubblefield, Richard Stubblefield, Lawrence Thompson, Clyde Robinson, Virginia (Thornton) Totten, Parker Larkin, Dorothy (Wallmark) Worsham, Dick Tone, David
1914	Anderson, Anna (Linder) Bealy, Irene (Edmundson) Call, Helen Brown, Augusta (Crawford) Higgins, Alice (Contant) Gaston, Arthur Kinnip, Minerva (Riel) Johnson, Hattie Mae Pearson, Anna Lowell, Elsie (Kerr) Patterson, Ford Taveson, Florence (Russell) Rockwell, Helen Bell (Lucier)	1923 Bartlett, Ethel Dougherty, Lemue Ellis, Ethel (Parsons) Green, Rowena Mills, Parker Slaughter, Elizabeth (Brandenburg) Wharton, Kirby Winberg, Glen	1929 Bell, Alvin Hamilton, Clay Sanford, Louise (Hammet) Hays, Gladys (Hedden) Henneman, Fred Lyngen, Vera Stuersel, Augusta Kamper, Irving Sandt, Samuel Keenen, Elizabeth (Shields) Stapleton, Jack Goswick, Susan (Swift) Brubaker, Josephine (Tone) Hedden, Dorothy (Vaisston) Wilson, Fred Mason, Lillie Jones, Lacy R.	1934 Albers, Francis Hunter, Helene (Beiser) Edwards, Kenneth Fuller, George Hooper, Kenneth Johnson, Charles Kier, Douglas Perry, Helen (Payne) Ponder, Maraget (Reynolds) Rockwell, Lucier Lawrence, Bernice (Starkey) Waller, Ed. Ems, Francis Swedelius, Joe Dyer, William Steele, George Taveson, George Mershon, C. L.
1915	Allen, Ethel Knox, Edna Davis, Bernice (Martin) Rockwell, Reuben Smith, Curtis	1924 Sandiford, Erma (Byron) George, Raymond Hawes, Norman Ingersoll, Sadie (Winberg) Clark, Constance (Lord) Green, Lavonne (Waimark) McCall, Aleck Toby, Smith Mitchell, Thelma (Tucker) Westwood, June Funk, Alice (Logston)	1930 Beck, William Edmundson, Cleo Rogers, Gladys (Gilmore) Shinneman, Dorothy Pagger, Blanche	(Continued on next page)
1916	Guthrie, David Ruge, Howard Wood, Raymond	1919	1925	
1917	Head, Loretta (George) Worcester, Rosa	Brown, Lucille (Wienand)	Armagast, Mrs. M.	

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