

**Possible Local National History Day Topics for the 2010 Theme:
Innovation in History: Impact and Change**

Subject	Significance
The Aluminum Revolution	Charles Martin Hall invented the process for mass producing aluminum (1886).
Telephone Patent Dispute	Elisha Gray submitted a patent for the telephone the same day as Alexander Graham Bell. Gray's model would have worked while Bell's initially had problems.
The Written Word	Platt Spencer created a penmanship style that was popular throughout the nation. At one time he taught his method at the Oberlin Business School.
Women in Higher Education	Oberlin College was the first co-educational college in the nation (1833). The first women to graduate with college degrees earned them in 1841.
African Americans in Higher Education	Oberlin was the first college in the U.S. to have a policy of accepting all students regardless of race. John Mercer Langston, one of the nation's first African American's elected to public office, graduated in 1849. The first African American woman to earn a 4-year college degree was Mary Jane Patterson (Oberlin College 1862).
The Graham Diet	Sylvester Graham created a diet system in the 1800s that most in the town of Oberlin tried to adopt. Brown bread and water were recommended.
Ice Cream Entrepreneurs	Jerry Greenfield graduated from Oberlin College in 1973 and is a co-founder of Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream.
Broadway Hits	Julie Taymor graduated from Oberlin College in 1974 and went on to direct the Broadway musical hit "The Lion King."
Water Works	Oberlin developed the first water softening plant of its kind in 1903. Having pure water was an important concern throughout the nation during the Progressive Era.
Stanley Cohen	Biochemist, Nobel Prize winner, and graduate of Oberlin College (1945). He collaborated with other scientists to create the first recombinant DNA and discovered cell growth factors. His work has influenced modern genetic engineering.