

# Oberlin Heritage Center E-Gazette – May 2011

MPO Box 0455, Oberlin, OH 44074 (440)774-1700 [www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org) [members@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:members@oberlinheritage.org)

## Summer of History 2011

More than 20 Northeast Ohio historical organizations are planning special events for this upcoming summer as part of a joint endeavor to celebrate the history of the Western Reserve through 1865. The “Summer of History 2011” initiative launches with a “Travel Rally” hosted by Positively Cleveland on Tuesday, May 10 from 11:30 a.m. - 1:30 p.m. in Tower City in downtown Cleveland.

Representatives of participating organizations will be in attendance to talk about their groups and the activities they have planned from now until October 1. As part of the kick-off week, the Oberlin Heritage Center will offer **FREE tours** of its three historic buildings at **10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, May 10, 12 and 14**. Also on **Saturday, May 14 at 11:00 a.m.**, a **FREE Freedom’s Friends History Walk** will be offered. Registration for all tours is requested. To obtain a free calendar of some of the events being offered throughout the area this summer, contact Karyn Norwood at the Oberlin Heritage Center at [CW150@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:CW150@oberlinheritage.org) or (440) 774-1700.

## Oberlin Pride Day at the Heritage Center

You are invited to drop by to volunteer with Pride Day activities at the Oberlin Heritage Center on **Saturday, May 21, from 9 a.m. to 12 noon**. Meet at the brick crossroads (behind 73 South Professor Street) to work throughout the Heritage Center’s grounds to get it ready for the summer visitor season. Wear your work clothes and gardening gloves and bring your favorite weeding tools if you wish. This annual clean-up, spruce-up effort is one of many events taking place on Lorain County Pride Day. “*Many hands make the load lighter*” is never more true than on Pride Day, and we are grateful to all our volunteers who keep the Oberlin Heritage Center grounds looking so neat and inviting!

## Commencement/Memorial Day Weekend at the Heritage Center

Spend some quality “down time” this holiday weekend, or entertain your family or out-of-town guests, with one of the many activities going on at the Oberlin Heritage Center from **Friday, May 27 through Monday, May 30**. The Museum Store will have extended hours from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Friday, Saturday and Sunday. In addition to regularly scheduled guided tours of the Oberlin Heritage Center’s three historic buildings onsite at 10:30 a.m. and 1:30 p.m. on Saturday, there will be a number of History Walks, including:

The **Scholars & Settlers/Tappan Square History Walk** is offered **Friday, May 27 at 11:00 a.m.** *This is one of the only times this summer, other than by group appointment, that this particular walk will be offered, so make sure you join us this weekend if you’d like to know more about the early history and architecture surrounding Tappan Square!*

The **Freedom’s Friends Underground Railroad History Walk** occurs **Friday, May 27 at 3 p.m., Saturday, May 28 at 11 a.m., Sunday, May 29 at 3 p.m., and on Monday, May 30 at 1 p.m.**

The **NEW Soldiers & Civilians Civil War History Walk** will debut on **Saturday, May 28 at 3 p.m.** and will be offered again on **Sunday, May 29 at 11 a.m.**

Members, children and college students receive free admission to onsite tours at the Oberlin Heritage Center and discounted admission for History Walks (\$6 for non-member adults; \$5 for members and college students). Children also receive free admission to History Walks; tours and History Walks are likely to be enjoyed most by ages 9 and up. Walk-ins are welcome for the onsite tours. Advance reservations are required for the History Walks; register online at [www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org).

### **Soldiers & Civilians History Walk Training**

This is a NEW tour developed by the Oberlin Heritage Center to commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War. We're now looking for volunteers who wish to learn more about Oberlin's participation in the War, both on the battlefield and at the home front, and how to present it in the format of a 75-minute walking tour. Join us for this free training workshop on **Sunday, May 22, from 1-4 p.m.** Training begins at the Monroe House (73½ South Professor Street) and moves on from there. Register by May 18 online at [www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org) or by phone at (440) 774-1700 Questions? E-mail Elizabeth Schultz at [tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org).

### **Early Bird Discount For Summer Camp**

**Register by June 10** for the Heritage Center's summer camps for kids to receive \$5 off per child for each full week camp and \$2 off for the Junior Docent camp. This year's schedule kicks off with the **Junior Docent Workshop** for teens (13-17 years) on **June 20-21** from 9:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Jewett House. Boys and girls ages 8-13 can attend three week-long camps including: **Soldiers & Civilians: Civil War Era Camp for Kids** the week of **July 25-29**; **Kids & World Cultures Camp** the week of **August 8-12**; and **Architecture Camp** the week of **August 15-19**. Kids' camps run from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. and are held at the Oberlin Depot. Register online or find out more at [www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org) or call (440) 774-1700 to request a summer camp flyer. Camps are reasonably priced at \$95 for the week, or \$50 for the Junior Docent workshop (and note the reimbursement incentive for volunteer hours worked later in the year). Keep in mind that children and grandchildren of OHC members receive an additional members' discount.

### **May is National Preservation Month: "Celebrating America's Treasures"**

Throughout our nation's communities there are significant places that have contributed to our American experience – whether it is a house museum, place of worship, monument, battlefield, or ship. There is a lot you can do to help support the places that preserve our nation's stories, such as: Become a volunteer and assist with a community preservation project; Include historic sites or hotels on your next vacation to learn about our country's past; Join as a member of your local preservation organization ([www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org)) or if you already are a Heritage Center member, consider membership in the National Trust for Historic Preservation ([www.preservationnation.org](http://www.preservationnation.org)). **By taking action, you're acknowledging that saving our heritage isn't someone else's job.** Ensure that our nation's great heritage will be protected for future generations and spread the word this May by celebrating Oberlin's or another favorite community's treasures!

## **National Underground Railroad Conference To Be Held in Ohio**

Thousands of African Americans journeyed through Ohio in their quest for freedom and this year the **National Underground Railroad Conference “Pathways to Freedom”** will be in Cincinnati/Clermont County, **June 15-18**. **Museum Education and Tour Coordinator Liz Schultz** will present during the panel discussion “Reimagining Legends of the Underground Railroad,” focusing on some of the common legends of the underground railroad that are challenged during the Heritage Center’s Freedom’s Friends History walk. This conference is open to all and participants can register by visiting <http://ugrconference.com/ugrc/Home.html> and downloading a conference schedule brochure. There is an Early Bird discount for registering prior to May 13.

## **Oberlin Heritage Center’s Newest Claim to Fame!**

We’re super-proud of the Oberlin Heritage Center’s recent achievement as the first history museum and historical organization in Ohio, and the first nonprofit organization in Lorain County, to receive the **Ohio Association of Non-Profit Organization’s Standards for Excellence certification**. Only about 30 of Ohio’s estimated 45,000 nonprofits have achieved this “Seal of Excellence.” Standards for Excellence certification entails a conscientious and lengthy review of a nonprofit organization’s program operations, governance, human resources, financial management and fundraising practices. “It takes great dedication to undergo the certification process. We are proud to give this honor to the Oberlin Heritage Center. Their work shows the commitment they have to those who benefit from their programs, their contributors and to the public,” said Jennifer Williams, Executive Director of the Ohio Association of Non-Profit Organizations. The award will be presented in a ceremony at the Ohio Statehouse on May 5.

## **Endowment for History Education Update**

At the Annual Meeting on April 6, Board Member and Development Committee Chair **Mary Van Nortwick** announced the **launch of a \$400,000 Endowment for History Education campaign**. The new fundraising effort is the second phase of a two-part campaign to support the salary of the full-time Museum Education and Tour Coordinator staff position at the Heritage Center. The first phase of this campaign was successfully completed in 2007, which allowed the Heritage Center to hire Elizabeth Schultz in the position. To date, 100% of the Oberlin Heritage Center’s Board and staff have committed approximately \$35,000 to kick-off this phase of the organization’s latest financial endeavor. Remember that any contributors (individuals or couples) whose past and/or present giving to the endowment totals \$2,000 or more are recognized as *Endowed Life Members*. A commitment to the Endowment for History Education may be payable over several years. **THANK YOU to Elisabeth M. (“Betty”) Mahjoub and Ed and Anne Wardwell** who are the newest people to join the growing circle of 81 Life Members at the Heritage Center. We’d love for YOU to consider joining this wonderfully supportive group of members, too! For more information, visit the Oberlin Heritage Center’s [website](#) and click on the “Join” tab, call the office at (440) 774-1700, or contact Patricia Murphy ([patm@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:patm@oberlinheritage.org)) or Mary Anne Cunningham ([members@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:members@oberlinheritage.org)).

## **Welcome New Members**

The Oberlin Heritage Center extends a warm welcome to new members **Ted Bartlett** (Norfolk, VA), **Gay Fischer**, **Judith King-Calnek** (New Rochelle, NY), **Bill and Faye Roniger** (Wakeman), **Micheal J. and Rebecca Ganzel Thompson** (St. Paul, MN), **Tommy Trice** (Elyria), **Dr. Delores M. Walters**

(Cranston, RI), and **Warren Wickes**. As you can see from our “newcomers list,” the Oberlin Heritage Center isn’t made up of folks only from Oberlin ☺ . In fact, 1/3 of our membership roster lives *outside of Oberlin*, with representation in 32 states and 1 foreign country! So, no matter where you live, if you are not yet a member, *please join us* by visiting [www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org) or calling (440) 774-1700 or e-mailing [members@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:members@oberlinheritage.org) to request a membership brochure.

## **Kudos Corner**

All good wishes go to the Oberlin Heritage Center’s graduating Oberlin College student interns **Barbara Percival, Brittnei Sherrod, and Preston Sundin**. We will miss these great helpers who have made their marks on the Oberlin Heritage Center and the Oberlin community, and we wish them well!

Bravo to OHC student intern **Erin Swenson-Klatt** (OC ’13), recipient of the Charles J. Ping Student Service Award, which recognizes and honors undergraduate students for their outstanding leadership and contributions to community service. Erin is one of five award winners from across the state who received a mini-grant of \$500 to be given to a community organization of the recipient’s choice. Erin is tremendously active in local agriculture and food programs, and chose the New Agrarian Center as the beneficiary of her award. Erin also interns with the Lorain County Food Policy Coalition, co-chaired Oberlin’s first Food Week in March 2011, and in the past year she traveled to Torino, Italy and Washington, DC in association with her good work on healthy, organic and sustainable food projects.

Congratulations to **Laura Laubenthal**, the Heritage Center’s Leadership Lorain County summer intern in 2010. Laura graduates from Bowling Green State University this month and recently was accepted into the Cooperstown Graduate Program (New York) for the coming fall, which is widely recognized as the premier program for the training of museum professionals in the United States. (This is the same museum graduate program from which our own Liz Schultz graduated!) We’re delighted that Laura will be re-joining the Oberlin Heritage Center staff this summer as a full-time assistant helping with membership, marketing, and development projects and taking part in many history education activities.

*Applause, applause* to Oberlin Heritage Center former student intern **Elena Rippel** (OC ’10) who recently was awarded a **Fulbright Scholarship** to teach English in a high school setting in Germany for the 2011-2012 academic year.

The Oberlin Heritage Center’s Executive Director **Pat Murphy** will be among the speakers at the American Association of Museums (AAM) national conference in Houston from **May 22-25**. Pat will speak about Museum Accreditation for Small Museums and also will assist with a workshop for AAM peer reviewers and other duties in her role serving on the AAM Accreditation Commission. The theme of the conference is “The Museum of Tomorrow.”

## **By Popular Demand: Anna Ernst’s Remarks following Community Awards Presentation**

Recent Oberlin College graduate **Anna Ernst** (OC ’10) was thrilled to be among the recipients of the Oberlin Heritage Center’s 10th Annual Community Awards presented at this year’s Annual Meeting. Her remarks were heartfelt and inspiring as she accepted the **Community Historian Award** for her research into the introduction of African American music and jazz to the curriculum of the Oberlin Conservatory. With her permission, we reprint an excerpt of Anna’s remarks here:

*I did this research because African-American students at Oberlin in the late 60s and early 70s worked hard to bring African-American studies to Oberlin, because Professor Wendell Logan pioneered Oberlin's African-American music program for more than 35 years, and because Frank "Count" Williams worked at Elyria's Harshaw Chemical Company for 30 years and then came back to school and finished his piano performance degree at the age of 62. I didn't know that I was doing the research for these reasons when I started it, but as I got into the archives and interviews I realized that the accomplishments of those whose stories I was learning were not without challenges to physical and emotional health. Those whose stories I researched sacrificed a lot, when others may have given up, and because of that I was and am humbled to be trusted with their stories, tell them, and receive this award tonight.*

*When declaring a Musical Studies major, an Oberlin College student must write an essay articulating a concentration and specific goals, including an idea for a capstone project to be completed senior year. My concentration was American Music History, and I wanted to do a project about Oberlin's music history because, as I wrote, "I have grown to love and care about Oberlin so much...I hope that when I complete my capstone project, I will have a historical resource that the college and community will be able to use to learn about and take pride in the music that shaped Oberlin." Professor Wendell Logan used to say that music is "experience transformed into sound," and I thank you all for recognizing the history of jazz and African-American music at Oberlin tonight because I believe you are recognizing and honoring the experience that has been transformed into the sounds we know as jazz. I also thank you on a personal level, because I know the award means that my dream of giving back that I articulated in my essay has come true.*

*This award is dedicated to the memories of Professor Wendell Logan and Frank "Count" Williams. Thank you!*

And thank you to Anna, and all of this year's Community Award recipients for the great work they are doing to preserve local history and serve the Oberlin community. Congratulations once more to **Bill Roniger** (History Teacher of the Year Award), **LorMet Community Federal Credit Union** (Keep Oberlin Beautiful Award), **Victoria Hardnett** (Youth Community Service Award), and **Charlotte Bosch** (Oberlin Heritage Center Volunteer of the Year). Start thinking about who you might want to nominate for next year's Community Awards presentations!

## **Also of Interest**

**Edgemeer or Edgemere?** If you are familiar with the neighborhoods of Oberlin, you have seen this lovely residential street's name spelled both ways. Which spelling is correct? We did a little informal research and found the street first listed as "Edgemeer" in the 1916 Oberlin City Directory (with only one person living on the street). It continues as "Edgemeer" for many years to follow...yet by 1979 it appears as "Edgemere" and remains so in current phone books. OHC Board Member and Edgemeer resident Nick Jones (also an Oberlin College Professor of English) tells us "I have tried to use Edgemere as it is more philologically accurate. 'Edge' is English, so is 'mere' (pond). But the USPS gives us Edgemeer (meer is German). So I've given up." ☺ Sounds to us like Edgemeer may be ahead for the moment – what do YOU think?

OHC Honorary Trustee, **Jean Foggo Simon**, offers this tip for fellow family genealogists: “**Kip Sperry** is a well-known professional genealogist, author and lecturer. He has created a list of his favorite genealogy sites. This is not a list of all the genealogy sites on the web, but rather a list of his favorite sites, and the ones he refers to often. You might find some good resources that are new to you at <https://sites.google.com/site/familyhistoryinternetsites/>” When we checked out the site ourselves at the Oberlin Heritage Center we were pleased to see the OHC’s Westwood database on Sperry’s list (under Ohio death records and cemeteries). For more on Kip Sperry visit [www.kipsperry.com](http://www.kipsperry.com).

**Did You Know the Western Reserve Has So Much To Offer?** Over the past two years the Western Reserve has been studied and discussed as a potential National Heritage Area, with many local residents and organizations gathering to describe the wealth of natural, historical, and cultural resources of the region. Federal review of the project indicates that the region may lack a cohesive national story and organizing entity at this time, but efforts to jump-start a regional initiative are underway. An [online report](#) outlining the many resources of the proposed Western Reserve National Heritage Area has been posted (<http://parkplanning.nps.gov>) and project organizers are seeking comments from residents and local leaders about the suitability of the region as a National Heritage Area. It's a wonderful read to learn more about the great places and stories in your back yard, and your voice will help carry the project forward. Comments will be accepted on the report website until May 6, 2011.

On **Thursday, May 12**, the Lorain County Metro Parks will host a perch dinner (served for a fee) at the Rose Café in Lakeview Park, Lorain from 4:00 – 7:00 p.m. Following dinner at 7:30 p.m., **Dr. Charles E. Herdendorf** presents “Shipwrecks and Gold,” an illustrated lecture sharing his experience in an exciting expedition that recovered the treasures of the *SS Central America*. The *Central America* was a Gold Rush steamer that sank in 1857 off the coast of the Carolinas, taking with it 425 lives and 21 tons of gold to the sea floor a mile and a half below. For reservations for the perch dinner and the presentation, please contact the Lorain County Metro Parks at 800-526-7275.

Explore *Freedom Riders* with free resources from *Facing History and Ourselves!* Facing History and Ourselves, in partnership with PBS’s flagship history series, “American Experience,” offers a free study guide and resource-rich website to accompany the PBS film *Freedom Riders*, airing **May 16**, in honor of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Freedom Rides. This film remembers more than 400 black and white college students who risked their lives in 1961 by simply traveling together on a journey through the Deep South. For more, visit <http://freedomriders.facinghistory.org>. Facing History and Ourselves is an international educational and professional development organization whose mission is to engage students of diverse backgrounds in an examination of racism, prejudice, and anti-Semitism in order to promote the development of a more humane and informed citizenry.

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