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## Oberlin Heritage Center Offers Warm-Weather History Walks

The Oberlin Heritage Center will offer a series of guided history walks on Saturdays at 11:00 a.m. from June through October. Each is led by a trained docent who shares stories of those who lived, worked and went to school in Oberlin in days gone by. Enjoy time outside and learn more about Oberlin's powerful history through these upcoming walks:

**Soldiers and Civilians History Walk. June-July.** The year 2011 marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the beginning of the Civil War, one of the defining events in the history of the United States. Oberlin men enlisted in over 30 regiments, white and black, from infantry to cavalry and participated in such battles as Kesler's Cross Lanes, Cedar Mountain, New Market Heights, and Petersburg. Residents formed relief groups and recruiting details, wrote letters, and continued the cry for abolition. On this guided neighborhood history walk, guests will see sites and photographs from the time while hearing stories of exhausting marches, the frustration of false news, longing for loved ones, struggles for equal treatment, moments of daring, and the loss of friends and family in the words of those who lived it.

**Freedom's Friends History Walk. August-September.** Prior to the Civil War, as many as 3,000 African Americans passed through or lived in Oberlin after escaping from slavery. The town was once said to be second only to Canada as an asylum for freedom seekers. This guided neighborhood history walk is about the historic decisions that shaped Oberlin's growth as a station and highlights the individuals and events that marked Oberlin as one of the most active stations of the Underground Railroad. Stories include Oberlin College's acceptance of African American students, the famous ship *Amistad*, men who volunteered for John Brown's violent raid on Harper's Ferry and local efforts to thwart slave catchers.

**Radicals and Reformers History Walk. October.** This guided tour through Westwood Cemetery promises a pleasing balance of scenic landmarks and stories of some of the many spirited men and women of Oberlin who simply refused the status quo. Find out which resident was remembered as "gentle, soft-spoken, tolerant and yet nobody's fool." Visit the headstone of the man who escaped from slavery (twice!) and later served on the Oberlin village council.

History walks also are a great way to entertain guests over the Memorial Day holiday weekend and the Heritage Center will offer several guided walks at various times during May 27-30, 2011, which coincides with Oberlin College's Commencement/Reunion Weekend. Visit [www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org) for the specific themes, dates and times of these holiday offerings.

Tickets must be purchased in advance through the Heritage Center's website ([www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org)) or at the Monroe House's Museum Store; tickets are not available at the starting point of the tour. The fee is \$6 per adult, with \$1 discount for OHC members and for college/university students with a current ID; free for children less than 18 years (most likely to be enjoyed by children 9 years of age and up). Each walk is approximately 60-75 minutes. History walks also are available to groups of ten or more by appointment.

Starting locations vary. Keep in mind that history walks may be cancelled and fees refunded if fewer than 5 people pre-register or if it is raining at the tour start time.

The Heritage Center welcomes volunteers who are interested in being trained to lead future history walks. A free docent workshop will be offered May 22 from 1-4 p.m. for those interested in learning how to lead the Soldiers & Civilians tour. A similar workshop will be offered July 10 for the Freedom's Friends tour and September 18 for the Radicals & Reformers Cemetery tour. Advance registration is required. For more information, contact Elizabeth Schultz, the Museum Education and Tour Coordinator at (440) 774-1700 or [tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org).

To make a reservation for any guided history walk, visit the Oberlin Heritage Center's website at [www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org) or stop by the Monroe House Museum Store at 73½ South Professor Street (parking available at the entrance to 20 West Vine Street), or contact Liz Schultz at (440) 774-1700 or [tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org).

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