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Explore Historic Oberlin during College's Commencement Weekend

The public is invited to explore historic Oberlin and the Oberlin Heritage Center as part of Oberlin College's Commencement/Reunion Weekend Friday through Sunday, May 19-21. Whether visitors have an afternoon or only a half-hour to spare, the Heritage Center offers guided tours and history walks for a wide range of interests and schedules. Advance reservations are required for most Heritage Center guided tours and may be made online at www.oberlinheritagecenter.org or by visiting the OHC office in the Monroe House at 73½ South Professor Street. Free parking is available near 20 West Vine Street in Oberlin.

The Oberlin Heritage Center's main site features three beautifully preserved buildings including the Monroe House (1866), the Little Red Schoolhouse (1836), and the Jewett House (1884). Together the buildings and the stories they hold within offer visitors a glimpse into Oberlin's past and the nationally significant impact of both community and college from their beginnings in 1833 through the next 100 years. Guided mini-tours of the first floor of the Monroe House will be offered every half hour from 1:00 to 5:30 p.m. on Friday, May 19; 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Saturday, May 20; and from 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Sunday, May 21. Walk-ins are welcome. Admission is \$3 per adult; free to OHC members, college students and children.

Music in the Home is a one-hour guided tour of the historic house museums featuring musical artifacts and sounds of the time. Participants will learn how music was used for entertainment, fellowship and teaching in 19th and early 20th century homes. The tour will be offered Sunday, May 21 at 1 p.m. Advance reservations are encouraged due to limited space. The fee is \$6 per adult; free to OHC members, college students and children under 18.

Reservations are required for the thematic neighborhood history walks led by Oberlin Heritage Center docents throughout the weekend. The Oberlin Women's History Walk will be offered both Saturday, May 20 and Sunday, May 21 at 10:30 a.m. This guided walking tour features powerful stories of 19th and early 20th century Oberlin women who helped shape what it meant to be a woman in a small town and across America. Should you be unable to attend this weekend, it also will be offered on the first Saturday of each month in June, July and August at 1 p.m.

The Freedom's Friends History Walk includes stories of abolition and the Underground Railroad in Oberlin as visitors travel through the square and end at Martin Luther King, Jr.

Park. This history walk will be offered Saturday, May 20 and Sunday, May 21 at 3 p.m. If you miss taking part this weekend, this history walk will be offered on Saturday mornings at 11 a.m. beginning in June and continuing through the end of August.

The Scholars & Settlers History Walk focuses on the early history and architecture surrounding Oberlin's downtown 13-acre campus of Tappan Square. This guided walk will be offered Sunday, May 21 at 4 p.m.

Each history walk is \$6 for adults; free to OHC members, college students and children accompanied by adults (please note that even when walks are free, reservations still must be made in advance). The Heritage Center's guided walks are approximately 90 minutes and most likely to be enjoyed by ages 9 and up. In case of rain, the neighborhood history walks will be cancelled and refunds provided.

The weekend also is an ideal time to experience the Heritage Center's self-guided tablet tours that are convenient and adaptable to individual interests. Simply borrow an iPad from the Oberlin Heritage Center between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m. (to be returned by 5:30 p.m.), and learn about Oberlin in a "do-it-yourself" format. The **Freedom's Friends: Underground Railroad/Abolition** tour allows participants to move at their own pace through town and campus to learn about local monuments and discover new stories connected to Oberlin's early civil rights history. The **Picture the Past: Historic Downtown Oberlin** tablet tour covers a one block radius extending from the corner of Main and College Streets and is filled with fun facts, historic photographs, and more! The fee is \$5/hour or \$20/day per tablet, with a 20% discount for OHC members.

The Heritage Center's Museum Store will be open from 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Friday through Sunday offering a variety of Oberlin-themed and history-related mementos and gifts.

For more information about the Heritage Center Commencement/Reunion Weekend schedule or its summer calendar of tours, kids' camps, and community events, visit www.oberlinheritagecenter.org, or call (440) 774-1700 or e-mail members@oberlinheritage.org.

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