

# Oberlin Heritage Center E-Gazette – November 2011

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## The Coming of Emancipation

Commemorating the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War, Oberlin College Professor of History **Gary Kornblith** examines why the United States, unlike most other nations, ended slavery through a massive war rather than by peaceful means. Kornblith's illustrated presentation takes place on **Wednesday, November 16 at 7:15 p.m.** in Heiser Auditorium at Kendal at Oberlin. There are several puzzles to consider, including the fact that President Abraham Lincoln and Congress insisted in 1861 that the North was not fighting for abolition, just for the perpetuation of the Union "as it was." In presenting his analysis, Kornblith draws on new research on the role of insurgent Southern slaves in forcing a shift in Northern war aims and on Lincoln's reluctant transition from colonizationist to "Great Emancipator." The event is free and open to all.

## Retiring, Yes. Leaving, Fortunately, No!

All are invited to come and salute **Pat Holsworth** as she retires from the Oberlin Heritage Center after serving ten years on the staff as Financial Assistant (and prior to that she served on the Board and was Board President from 1998-2001). Join friends from the community on **Saturday, November 19 from 3:30 to 5:00 p.m.**, for light refreshment and warm hugs at First Church in Oberlin, U.C.C. (corner of Main and Lorain Streets). We're so glad that Pat plans to continue stopping by the Heritage Center on a regular basis to volunteer in the Resource Center and to help with Oberlin family genealogical research.

## Music Moved Us: A Look Back at Oberlin High School's Billingsley Bands of the 1960s

Music, fun, pride and affection are all wrapped up in the new book, "Music Moved Us," by native Oberlinian **Pat Gorske Price**. Learn more about the top-rated, small-school band which wowed audiences at home and on the road, under the direction of band leader, Jim Billingsley. Fellow band member, **Steve Johnson** (who later became the OHS band director and is now an OHC Trustee) also takes part in this upbeat presentation on **Wednesday, November 30 at 7 p.m.** Location: Oberlin Public Library. Free and open to all.

## Liz's Links: Connecting Students of Higher Education to the Heritage Center

You may already know that the Oberlin Heritage Center is a popular destination for elementary school groups, yet are you aware we're developing strong ties to many places of higher education, thanks to the good work and creativity of Museum Education & Tour Coordinator, **Liz Schultz**? Not only is the story of Oberlin College a tour standard, staff are delighted to be able to work with student interns and volunteers each year, and also collaborate with Oberlin College Archives staff and professors on various projects. This fall, Liz is working with two graduate students of Youngstown State University, **Roger Juntunen** and **Jane Spies**, who are doing research on outspoken Oberlin women (a possible program topic for next spring – stay tuned!). In October, students from **Huron University College in London, Ontario** came to learn more about how the Underground Railroad operated in Oberlin and how it related to historic and current African American communities in Canada. They had an extra special treat when Liz invited Honorary Trustee **Thelma Quinn Smith** to stop by and share her own family history, which traces free and enslaved family members from the south to Oberlin and up to Canada. Liz has more connections planned in 2012, with a lecture program scheduled at **Lorain County Community College** in January and **Bowling Green State University-Firelands** in February. She is preparing a spring program about **Early Schooling in Ohio**, expanding upon a presentation she made last month to neighboring **Pittsfield Township Historical Society**. We'll whet your appetite for hearing more about "Early Schooling," which was by no means humdrum, as evidenced by this gem that Liz credits to James Fairchild, later president of Oberlin College, "The spelling rivalry was perhaps too intense at times to be wholesome." ☺

## Rivers Family Tombstone Finds Resting Place

The staff at the Oberlin Heritage Center handles all sorts of community questions and research requests from week to week, and we love a good story and a happy ending such as this one. Last month, the owners of a house

on East Lorain Street brought to the Heritage Center a small tombstone that had been found in a well on the property. The marker was that of a child, Polan Rivers, who had died at 1 year of age in August 1861. Could the Heritage Center shed any light on this finding? Collections Assistant and OHC super sleuth, **Prue Richards**, with help from genealogist **Pat Holsworth**, set out to learn more. Prue discovered that Mary Louise (D'Anglas) and Augustus Josiah Rivers were married in 1849 in Oberlin and later resided at that Lorain Street address from 1883-1943. In 1861, when little Polan died, Oberlin's original cemetery at Morgan and Professor Streets was deemed "full" and ground was being cleared for the new Westwood Cemetery. It is unclear where the child actually was buried and why this tombstone was brought to the Lorain Street address later. However, evidence that Polan is one of three children lost by A.J. Rivers and his wife is sufficiently convincing to merit placing this stone in the D'Anglas Heirs family plot at Westwood. Soon, the stone will be cleaned by the City of Oberlin's Cemetery staff and installed in a real home (again?) at last.

## **Oberlin Heritage Center 2010 Annual Report**

"**Designing a Roadmap for Success**" is the theme of the Heritage Center's 2010 Annual Report, and may be reviewed by clicking [here](#) or by visiting [www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org) and clicking on "Annual Reports" under the "Events and News" main menu and pull-down tabs. A limited number of paper copies are available upon request; OHC members who would like a hard copy mailed to them can send an e-mail request to [members@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:members@oberlinheritage.org) or call (440) 774-1700. Remember to include your mailing address with your request. The Annual Report of the preceding year is printed each fall, so that it may include a financial audit summary of the year just past (which becomes finalized in the summer). We work diligently to include the names of all donors and volunteers in the Annual Report as an expression of thanks for their warm support. Apologies to anyone whose name was inadvertently omitted (and please let us know who you are!).

## **Welcome New Members**

The Oberlin Heritage Center extends a warm welcome to new members **Dr. Nicole Barnett** (Fairfield, CA), **Teresa Barnes** (Champaign IL), **Estelle Dobrow**, **Col. Kenneth W. Jewett** (Lexington, VA), **E. Gaye Laurell**, **Leadership Ohio** and the **Shaker Square Area Development Corporation** (Cleveland). Members are from Oberlin unless indicated otherwise. New members are vital to the continued success of the Heritage Center. Current members – we'd love for you to tell us why being a member is important to you, so we can share your thoughts and encourage newcomers to join! Send your comments to [members@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:members@oberlinheritage.org). Meanwhile, if you are not yet a member, **please join!** Visit [www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org) to join online or call (440) 774-1700 ([members@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:members@oberlinheritage.org)) to request a membership brochure be sent to you.

## **Honor Someone Special with a Gift to the Annual Fund!**

We're in full-swing with the Oberlin Heritage Center's once-a-year, end-of-the-year campaign for annual operating support. This year's goal is \$35,000, and we've received \$23,500 from 183 donors to date. Consider honoring a family member or friend (or salute OHC's retiring Financial Assistant, Pat Holsworth) with a tax-deductible gift to the Annual Fund. Gifts "in honor of" or "in memory of" are treasured by their recipients and greatly appreciated by the Heritage Center. Donate online at <https://secure.oberlinheritage.org/donation.shtml> or mail your gift to the OHC Annual Fund, P.O. Box 0455, Oberlin, OH 44074. The Annual Fund campaign continues through December 31, 2011. Your donation is especially needed at this time to help end a very lean year in the black. OHC truly is grateful for every contribution!

## **OHC Staff, Intern and Volunteer News**

We are pleased to welcome newcomer **Richard Donegan** to the Oberlin Heritage Center. Richard is an AmeriCorps member who is based in Oberlin through next August in a position supported through the Ohio History Service Corps program (a joint venture between the Ohio Historical Society and AmeriCorps). He will be busy helping the Heritage Center and other regional historical organizations plan and launch programs related to the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Civil War. Richard moved here from Villas, New Jersey with his wife, Lauren. He has a degree in Historical Studies from The Richard Stockton College in Pomona, NJ, and has worked previously at The Cape May County Historical Museum and Genealogical Society (Cape May Court House, NJ) as well as The New Jersey State Archives (Trenton, NJ). The Oberlin Heritage Center's participation in this

AmeriCorps program is made possible in part by a grant from **The Nord Family Foundation**. Click [here](#) or visit the Oberlin Heritage Center Facebook page to put Richard's face with his name.

## **Endowment Campaign Update**

The Endowment Fund for History Education is now at \$66,371 toward our goal of \$400,000 in Phase Two of the Oberlin Heritage Center's campaign to fully endow the Museum Education and Tour Coordinator staff position. Special thanks to current Endowed Life members **Norman and Ann Craig** who increased their support from the Copper to the Aluminum level of giving. We'd love **you** to consider joining the 86 Endowed Life members who have made gifts or pledges (payable over 5 years) of \$2,000 or more to the Endowment Fund for History Education. Contact Executive Director Patricia Murphy at (440) 774-1700 ([patm@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:patm@oberlinheritage.org)) or Board Member Nick Jones at (440) 774-3671 ([nrjones360@gmail.com](mailto:nrjones360@gmail.com)).

## **Your Holiday Shopping Can Benefit the Heritage Center!**

Use [ShopforMuseums.com](http://ShopforMuseums.com) whenever you shop online to create a FREE donation for the Oberlin Heritage Center. Just follow the quick and easy instructions on the Shop for Museums home page and shop at hundreds of stores nationwide including Amazon.com, Coldwater Creek, The Gap, Kohl's, Macy's, Office Depot, Old Navy, Oriental Trading Company, Sears, Wal-Mart, Zappos and many more – all the places you are likely to visit as the holiday gift buying season approaches. There is no extra charge to you and no cost to the Oberlin Heritage Center, which receives a percentage of your purchase amount. Together, we can make a big difference for the Heritage Center!

## **Also of Interest**

One of the most brilliant and wide-ranging American historians writing today, Stanford University's **Richard White**, will offer a free public program at Oberlin College on **Thursday, November 10 at 4:30 p.m.** "How Corrupt Were We, Really? Corruption and the Making of the Modern American Government" will be presented at Hallock Auditorium in the Lewis Environmental Studies Building (122 Elm Street). Professor White is the former President of the Organization of American Historians and has received numerous awards for his work in the fields of Native American history, the history of the environment and the history of the American West. His most recent book is "Railroaded: The Transcontinentals and the Making of Modern America (Norton, 2011). For more information, visit [www.oberlin.edu](http://www.oberlin.edu) or contact Oberlin College Professor of History, **Gary Kornblith**, at (440) 775-8526 or [Gary.Kornblith@oberlin.edu](mailto:Gary.Kornblith@oberlin.edu).

**Oberlin College's Mudd Library** hosts a display of rare architectural books replicating a collection that Thomas Jefferson acquired for his own library at Monticello. The collection comes from Oberlin College's Art Library, and was begun in the 1940s by Clarence Ward, Professor of Art History and Director of the Allen Memorial Art Museum. The **Jefferson architecture collection exhibition** has been prepared by Oberlin College students and **runs through November 11** in the Lemle Academic Commons on the main level of Mudd Center.

Congratulations once again to **LorMet Community Federal Credit Union** and **Mark Lesner Architect & Associates** for being recognized with the **2011 Ohio Historic Preservation Office Award**, the latest in a series of accolades received for the preservation and rehabilitation of the 1958 Peoples Banking Company building at 49 South Main Street in Oberlin. The award will be presented on **Saturday, November 12** at the Ohio Historic Preservation Office awards luncheon in historic Piqua, Ohio.

*Check out our [Flickr page](#) at [www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org) for fun photos of recent Heritage Center activities!*

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