

Oberlin Heritage Center E-Gazette – December 2012

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Sleigh Bells Ring at the Oberlin Heritage Center

The recent donation of a child's Victorian sleigh to the OHC collection has added a festive touch at the Oberlin Heritage Center this holiday season. The sleigh, a family heirloom that was used by the family of **Stella Mallory Dickerman** since the early 1900s, is a gift from Mrs. Dickerman's children, **William Dickerman** of New Hampshire and **Marianne Dickerman Caldwell** of Oberlin. The darling wood stroller-sleigh is currently exhibited in the Monroe House back parlor, along with a circa 1980 photograph of Stella giving a ride to one of her granddaughters. Known for her artistry, Stella added the sleigh to her 1981 watercolor, "After the Blizzard," depicting a very snowy downtown Oberlin. The watercolor has been reproduced in a delightful notecard that is available this season in the Heritage Center's Museum Store. Stop in and check out the Museum Store and the sleigh which will be exhibited through the end of December.

Alternative Gift Fair: An Annual Oberlin Tradition!

Looking for something different for the people on your holiday shopping list? Don't miss Oberlin's **Sixth Annual Alternative Gift Fair** and help contribute to a more just, value-filled, and healthy world. The Fair takes place **Monday through Friday, December 10-14 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.** in the **Oberlin College Science Center's Bent Corridor**, corner of Woodland and Lorain Streets, and **Saturday, December 15 from 12:00 noon to 4:00 p.m.** at **First Church in Oberlin**, corner of Lorain (SR 511) and Main (SR 58) Streets. The Alternative Gift Fair offers an array of holiday gift giving opportunities from local nonprofits. All proceeds benefit the nonprofit participants and make a difference in their work serving others. Stop by the Oberlin Heritage Center's table to say hi and pick-up some uniquely Oberlin gifts for the season. You'll find something for everyone at the only-in-Oberlin Alternative Gift Fair!

Holiday Memories from the Monroes

The widower **James Monroe** married **Julia Finney** in 1865 and brought his new wife and his four children (ranging in ages from 7-17 at the time) to Rio de Janeiro, where he was serving as American consul in South America. Monroe's daughter, **Emma Monroe Fitch**, later shared memories of the Monroe family's Christmas at that time when she penned "In Memory of Our Step-Mother Julia Finney Monroe." The Monroes celebrated Christmas together in Brazil during the years 1866-1869. Emma writes of their tropical celebration: *We had to become accustomed to a mid-summer Christmas. There was no chimney for Santa Claus to climb down from. Nevertheless, mother entered into the spirit of the day and filled our stockings with gifts. Of course, it was a holiday and father came home early from his office. We had a special Christmas dinner, with a real English plum pudding and some little entertainment was provided for us.*

2013 Events Calendar Begins with Inaugural Program

How fitting that the Heritage Center kicks-off a new year of community programming with an "Inaugural-themed" presentation – one with a historic twist of course! "**What a Way to Become a President! Becoming Chief Executive in the 19th Century**" will be offered by **Allison Powell**, Park Ranger at the James A. Garfield National Historic Site in Mentor, Ohio. The illustrated program takes place **Wednesday, January 23 at 7:15 p.m.** in Kendal at Oberlin's Heiser Auditorium. Save the date and make plans to attend this free event, which is open to the public.

OHC Presents New Home School Series: Cultures of the World

Children ages 8-13 will enjoy this engaging new educational series. Sessions meet weekly at the Oberlin Depot (240 South Main Street) on **Wednesdays from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m., beginning February 27 and concluding March 20, 2013**. Each week, Museum Educator **Liz Schultz** will lead participants in an exploration of diverse cultures including the Incan, the Viking, the Indian, and the Australian Aboriginal through hands-on activities and discussions of language, art, food, religion and more. Fee is \$40 for children or grandchildren of Oberlin Heritage Center members and \$45 for children of non-members. Register at www.oberlinheritage.org by January 16 and receive the early bird discount of \$5 off the fee! Questions? Contact Liz Schultz at (440) 774-1700 or e-mail tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org.

Who Will Be the Heritage Center's Next Community Award Recipients?

Consider nominating an outstanding individual, organization, or business whose accomplishments in serving the community are in keeping with the Oberlin Heritage Center's mission *to preserve and share Oberlin's unique heritage and to make the community a better place to live, learn, work and visit*. Award Categories include:

- *Community Historian* - an individual who adds to the knowledge of the history of Oberlin through research, writing, and/or educating others
- *Heritage Guardian* – an individual or group dedicated to the ideals of conservation and preservation and who serves our community as a leader in preserving history, historical records, or historic buildings
- *Oberlin Heritage Center Volunteer of the Year* – a volunteer who makes extraordinary contributions of time and talent to the Oberlin Heritage Center
- *Community Teacher of the Year* – an area educator who inspires his or her students to get involved in community service
- *History Teacher of the Year* – an area educator who inspires his or her students to learn more about history
- *Keep Oberlin Beautiful Award* – an individual, business or organization that helps to enhance the aesthetics and appearance of the community.

Download an [entry form](#) by visiting the “What’s New” sidebar at www.oberlinheritage.org. and submit your nomination by February 1, 2013. Award winners will be announced and saluted at the Oberlin Heritage Center's Annual Meeting on April 3, 2013.

Oberlin Civil War Soldiers Database

Richard Donegan, AmeriCorps member and Local History Corps volunteer in northeast Ohio, has been doing research on soldiers who lived in Oberlin or attended Oberlin College just before or during the Civil War. To date he has compiled information on 400 soldiers and expects to have more than 800 names in the database before completion. Along the way, Rich has uncovered some great stories including this one that further adds to what we know about the connection between the Copelands of Oberlin and John Brown's family:

In December of 1859, **John A. Copeland** of Oberlin was hanged for participating in John Brown's raid on Harpers Ferry. Prior to his execution he wrote to **his brother Henry** that the failed raid to free slaves was “no less honorable and glorious” than the American Revolution. As John and Henry's father was born into slavery, they heard first-hand accounts of the institution. Once the Copeland family moved to Oberlin from North Carolina in 1839 they assisted people escaping along the Underground Railroad. After the Civil War began, Henry went with **John Brown Jr.** to carry on the fight against slavery in Kansas. Out west, Henry Copeland joined one of the first “unofficial” African-American units under John Brown Jr. He is even mentioned in January 1862 in a letter from John Brown Jr. to his wife as the head of a “colored party, armed and mounted under command of Mr. Sloat and Henry Copeland to bring in some slaves from about 9 miles

out.” Henry Copeland later served in the Independent Colored Kansas Battery and the 1st Kansas Colored Volunteers.

OHC Staff News

OHC Executive Director (and American Alliance of Museums Accreditation Commissioner) **Pat Murphy** was the speaker at a celebration marking the re-accreditation of the Springfield (OH) Museum of Art on November 29. The event was hosted at the museum by the local Chamber of Commerce. She also recently returned from the Accreditation Commission's fall meeting which was held at the Ringling Museum in Sarasota, Florida. The meeting included visits to Historic Sandy Point, the Florida Holocaust Museum, and the Dali Museum. She took part in a reception for Florida museum professionals designed to help introduce them to AAM's new Continuum of Excellence and new membership programs designed to provide the entire museum field with programs and resources to support, motivate and recognize museums that pursue and uphold standards and best practices. For more information, visit www.aam-us.org or contact Pat directly at patm@oberlinheritage.org or (440)774-1700. Murphy also enjoyed visiting the nation's only Frank Lloyd Wright designed college campus, Florida Southern University in Lakeland, where construction is underway on a Usonian house that was designed for the site but never built. It will serve as a visitor orientation center.

A wonderful story from **Liz Schultz**, Museum Education and Tour Coordinator, provides insight on why we love welcoming young people to the Heritage Center! As she led a group of cub scouts on a tour last month and began talking about the community's founding and Oberlin College being the first coeducational college in the nation, Liz found the children having a difficult time guessing who could typically go to college in the 1800s and who couldn't. The boys were quite surprised to find out that *girls* usually didn't go to college. Then one youngster raised his hand and mentioned a recent event – that of the young Pakistani girl Malala Yousafzai who had been shot and seriously injured because of her outspoken views about the Taliban and girls' education in her own country. “What a great teaching moment,” Liz recalled, “as the children connected past social norms in the U.S. to current thoughts in the wider world!”

Welcome New Members

The Oberlin Heritage Center extends a warm welcome to new members **Mark Akeson** (Santa Cruz, CA), **Margaret Gueulette**, **Tom Janczura** (Brunswick Hills), **Phyllis Lawson**, **Candace McChesney** (Upper Arlington), **Chris Trinacty & Emily Troiano**, and **Patrick R. Verlotti** (Wellington). BIG thanks to **Terry & Karen Hobbs**, the Heritage Center's newest Life Members! OHC has welcomed 55 new members to the organization in 2012 – your support really keeps the Heritage Center a strong and vibrant organization. We appreciate each and every Oberlin Heritage Center member!

One Size Fits All: Gift Membership!

Consider the gift of an OHC membership for family and friends who enjoy being part of a good thing! Members receive free admission to tours, reduced prices on Oberlin Heritage Center children's summer camps, community events and educational workshops for which there is a fee; discounts at the Museum Store; and complimentary benefits in a network of historical sites and museums throughout the United States participating in the Time Travelers Network (currently there are 208 participant institutions located in 41 states). Most of all, members will know that they are making a difference and helping to preserve Oberlin's unique, nationally significant history. Visit www.oberlinheritage.org to purchase a gift membership online or call (440) 774-1700 (members@oberlinheritage.org) to request a membership brochure be sent to you. If you wish the recipient of your gift to receive a gift card before December 25th, please purchase your gift membership by December 18th.

Annual Fund Progress

Memberships, tour fees, and fee-for-service projects help pay the monthly bills, but they do not fully cover the basic costs of operating the Oberlin Heritage Center. The Annual Fund provides essential income needed

to balance the budget each year. **To date, the 2012 Annual Fund has raised \$24,000 from 200 donors.** If you have not yet contributed to this once-a-year, end-of-the-year appeal, the Heritage Center needs your support to reach its goal of \$35,000. In addition to a tax receipt, you'll get OHC's assurance that your donation will be used effectively to preserve and share Oberlin's important history. Make a gift online or mail your donation to the OHC Annual Fund, P.O. Box 0455, Oberlin, OH 44074. The Annual Fund campaign continues through December 31, 2012.

Also of Interest

Music in Celebration of Religion, Ritual, and Performance in the Renaissance combines discussion and a concert in the Allen Memorial Art Museum Sculpture Court on **December 6, 2012 at 5:15 p.m.** A brief talk on music, art and literature offered by Oberlin faculty **Kathryn Montoya** and **Nicholas Jones** (1st Vice-President of OHC's Board), and AMAM Director **Andria Derstine** precedes the concert at 6 p.m. A reception concludes the event sponsored by the AMAM and the Department of Historical Performance, Oberlin College & Conservatory. For more information, visit www.oberlin.edu/amam.

The Department of Theater and Dance at Oberlin College presents **Man of La Mancha**, one of the great classic plays of the American musical theater in Hall Auditorium (67 North Main Street) **December 6-8 at 8 p.m. and December 9 at 2 p.m.** in Hall Auditorium. Oberlin Heritage Center Bonner Scholar student intern **César Palacio** is a clarinetist in the orchestra for this inspirational production. For more information, visit www.oberlin.edu/artsguide.

Full-time K-12 history and English language arts teachers are invited to apply for the **Gilder Lehrman Institute's renowned Teacher Seminars**. Led by eminent historians at major educational and historical institutions, these one-week interdisciplinary seminars give educators the opportunity to deepen their knowledge of topics in American history and literature while they gain practical resources and strategies to bring these subjects to life in the classroom. New for 2013: Coursework and focus will align seminar content with Common Core State Standards, and for those who prefer to stay close-to-home, there even are two Online Teacher Seminars with daily live lectures by leading scholars, virtual field trips and real-time discussion. Deadline for summer seminar applications is February 15, 2013. For more information, visit www.gilderlehrman.org and click on the Educators and Teacher Seminars tabs.

Enjoy a fascinating tour, holiday music and cookies baked from pioneer recipes when the **Sheffield Village Historical Society** and **Lorain County Metro Parks** team up to offer **guided tours of the Burrell Homestead in the Victorian Christmas Tradition** on **Saturday, December 22 from 12 noon to 2 p.m.** The Burrell Homestead is located on East River Road about ¼ mile south of the Colorado Avenue (SR 611) intersection. Tours are free and begin at the French Creek Nature Center (4530 Colorado Avenue) with transportation provided to the Homestead. Pre-registration is requested by calling 1-800-LCM-PARK (526-7275) or make a reservation online at www.MetroParks.cc.

Learn first-hand about modern day Mayan culture in a rural setting by taking part in **Oberlin SEPA's (Santa Elena Project of Accompaniment) annual delegation to Guatemala**. The trip brings together Oberlin College winter-term students and other interested adults for a memorable experience on **January 3-26, 2013**. Participants will live and study Spanish (or the Mayan language Q'eqchi', if fluent in Spanish) in two Mayan communities, help teach English to elementary and middle school students, and take part in many activities and traditions. For more information, contact the nonprofit SEPA organization via John Gates at (440) 774-5484 or jfgates@oberlin.net.

The Board and Staff of the Oberlin Heritage Center wish all members and friends a Happy Holiday season! The office will be closed December 24 – 26 and January 1.

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