

Oberlin Heritage Center E-Gazette – February 2013

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Black History Month Program for Teens

The Oberlin Heritage Center and the Oberlin Public Library's Community Technology Center at "The Bridge" are offering a special "Backspace" program for teens on **Thursday, February 21 at 4:00 p.m.** Join us at **Backspace Block Print** for a brief discussion of anti-slavery newspapers and historic broadsides, and then have fun inking-up to make your own block print! Registration preferred – contact The Bridge at (440) 774-3820 or thebridge@oberlin.net. Free and open to teens in grades 6 through 12. Location: The Bridge (82 South Main Street).

Cultural Heritage Management Capacity Building in Libya

Learn about a challenging – yet rewarding – transcultural historic preservation program when the Oberlin Heritage Center presents Oberlin College professors **Susan Kane** and **Sam Carrier** in an illustrated presentation of their work assisting the Department of Antiquities in Libya with the modernization of cultural heritage records and documentation of archaeological sites. The event takes place **Wednesday, February 27 at 7:15 p.m.** and is free and open to the public. Kane and Carrier's work spans the past eight years, building bridges between American and Libyan archaeologists, and enabling westerners to develop a better understanding of the country's spectacular cultural remains. Location: Kendal at Oberlin's Heiser Auditorium (600 Kendal Drive).

Travel the World in OHC's New Home-School History Series

Registration is underway for "Cultures of the World," an engaging, educational hands-on-history series offered weekly beginning **Wednesday, February 27 and continuing through March 20 (1-3 p.m.)**. Led by OHC's Museum Educator, Liz Schultz, boys and girls ages 8-13 will explore the Incan, the Viking, the Indian, and the Australian Aboriginal people through fun activities and discussions of language, art, food, religion and more. Fee is \$45 for the four-class series or \$40 for children and grandchildren of Oberlin Heritage Center members. Register online at www.oberlinheritage.org or call (440) 774-1700 for a registration form. Location: Oberlin Depot (240 South Main Street).

Love Oberlin History and Want to Share it with Others?

The Oberlin Heritage Center will host several opportunities this spring for volunteers to learn more about Oberlin's nationally significant history and how to pass it along to others. Consider taking part in one or more of these upcoming docent training workshops: **Introductory Docent Training Workshop March 16** (12-4 p.m.) acquaints you with the original guided tour of OHC's three on-site historic buildings; **Freedom's Friends History Walk Training April 14** (1-4 p.m.); **Scholars & Settlers History Walk Training April 28** (1-4 p.m.); and **Sneak Peek – Oberlin Origins Tour** (Monroe House mini-tour) **May 4** (12-2 p.m.). Talk to Museum Education and Tour Coordinator Liz Schultz to arrange to take a complimentary tour ahead of time to see whether becoming a volunteer docent or history walk guide is your "cup of tea" before registering. For more, visit www.oberlinheritage.org or contact Liz Schultz at (440) 774-1700 or tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org.

Con Artist Invited to OHC's Annual Meeting?!!

Save the date of **Wednesday, April 3** (5-8:30 p.m.) and plan to attend the **Oberlin Heritage Center's Annual Meeting and Banquet** featuring costumed historical educator **Charlene Connors** portraying the infamous, outrageous, and notorious early 20th-century Oberlin and Cleveland con artist, **Cassie Chadwick**

(1859-1907). Ms. Connors is part of *Women in History*, a non-profit educational organization based in Lakewood. In addition to portraying Cassie Chadwick and numerous other notable women in living history vignettes (see our "Also of Interest" section at the end of this newsletter for another local performance), Ms. Connors is a volunteer tutor in the Cleveland Public Schools and she resides in Lorain. The evening includes presentations of the Oberlin Heritage Center's **12th Annual Community Awards** and a brief OHC business meeting. More information will be sent to members and friends soon, or visit www.oberlinheritage.org for details. Location: Oberlin Inn (7 North Main Street).

So Glad You Came to Visit!

OHC loves visitors! In 2012 we welcomed **2,221** guests on tours of the Heritage Center and history walks around town. In addition to people coming on regularly scheduled tours, we welcomed **41** different groups, including church groups, family reunions, schools, childcare centers, and fans of antique cars. **46%** of visitors were children and college students, many of whom toured for free. **43%** of OHC's tour visitors come from within Lorain County, with the remainder coming from elsewhere in Ohio, in addition to **29** states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and countries as close as Canada and as distant as Japan. We also connected with over **3,100** people through outreach programs, special events, youth camps, and evening lecture programs. Thank you to all of the volunteers and friends who helped make these results possible!

Alonzo Barnard and the Oberlin Band of Missionaries in Minnesota Update!

Local historian and OHC Member **Lynn Youngblood's** November 28th Heritage Center program about Alonzo Barnard's experiences as a missionary on the Red River Indian Mission in northern Minnesota in the 1840s and 1850s drew not only a huge crowd but rave reviews and intriguing follow-up comments. Long-time OHC member **Jack Clark** recently shared a copy of a letter sent by Alonzo Barnard from northern Minnesota to the members of the Female Sewing Society of Pittsfield Township thanking them for the clothing they were creating for "*the good of these poor neglected sons and daughters of the wilderness.*" He appealed to the members of the sewing society to further support the mission by sending things that would be most needed, specifying "*The Ind's are very destitute, almost anything in the shape of clothing good and worth transportation..colored flannels & colored yarn are in great demand also sheeting shirts calico and cotton needles and thread of all description.*" Alonzo Barnard concluded his letter with a P.S. to the members of the sewing society to remember his wife who "*will be seventy miles from any white woman in the wilderness*" and stated that since the members cannot visit he requested that each write his wife a letter.

OHC Staff, Volunteer and Intern News

Pat Murphy spoke last month to Conservatory of Music Professor **Joanne Erwin's** winter term class about nonprofit management and strategic planning. **Liz Schultz** talked with the Elyria Noon Rotary Club about *Oberlin Perspectives on the Civil War*. **Richard Donegan** and **Liz Schultz** will judge History Day projects at the Christian Community School on February 14. **Prue Richards** is speaking about OHC to Oberlin's United Methodist Women's Club meeting on February 18.

A warm "Welcome Back" goes out to fourth-year student intern, **Erin Swenson-Klatt** (Minneapolis, MN), who spent first semester in Stockholm, Sweden studying the Swedish language and immersing herself in the culture. Erin reports "Between classes at Stockholm University and spending time with my wonderful host family, I was able to travel around Sweden and Europe. *Vilken resa!* What a trip!"

Second-year intern, **Cesar Palacio** (Dallas, TX), took part in Oberlin Conservatory's Panama Project, a long-standing Winter Term project that Oberlin has offered for more than 25 years. He and five other Conservatory students worked as guest artists with the National Association of Concerts in Panama, performing in one of Panama's National Theaters and teaching in the national Youth Orchestra's summer music camp.

Congratulations to Winter Term student intern **Brittany Craig** who just accepted a position with the Schuler Foundation. Following her Oberlin College graduation this spring, she'll begin working with the Chicago area nonprofit whose mission is to help high potential youth gain access into the most selective colleges and universities in the country. Find out more about what Brittany learned during her Winter Term at the Oberlin Heritage Center by reading her [blog entry](#) at www.oberlinheritage.org.

Thank you to volunteer **Terry Hobbs** for designing and constructing three oak easels customized to fit on the stair steps leading to the second floor at both the Monroe House and Jewett House. The easels cleverly and quietly re-route visitors from wandering upstairs unaccompanied during big events, and also display additional information such as signs, notebooks or photo albums. Our hats are off to Terry – an ingenious craftsman who seems to be able to build anything we can think up!

Heritage Center Roots Run 110 Years Deep

This month, the Oberlin Heritage Center commemorates 110 years since the organization's roots were first established in the community. On **February 16, 1903**, the first meeting of the **Oberlin Village Improvement Society**, an early predecessor of our modern-day OHC, was called to order by **General Giles Shurtleff**. The gathering took place in the Sunday school room of Second Church (located on West College Street where the Conservatory of Music stands today). Some of the early projects of the Society included the placing of waste paper receptacles on street corners, stopping people from cutting across privately owned lawns, and promoting home gardening projects among school children. The group also sponsored various informative lectures by respected speakers, such as the February 1907 presentation by an entomologist who gave a "very acceptable lecture on the enemies of trees," and the April 1915 discussion by the state fire marshal on techniques of fire prevention. In 1964, OVIS merged with the Oberlin Historical Society to become the Oberlin Historical & Improvement Organization, now known as the Oberlin Heritage Center.

Presidential Appointment Certificate Featured in Monroe Parlor

The Monroe House front parlor continues to receive finishing touches that further enrich visitors' understanding of the people who once resided in this home. In January, a display was added to the northeast corner of the parlor, saluting James Monroe's personal and political ties to national issues. Framed portraits of Abraham Lincoln, James Garfield, and Frederick Douglass surround a handsomely framed certificate signed by Abraham Lincoln, appointing Monroe as U.S. Consul to Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, a position he would hold for the next eight years. The impressive document, a reproduction of the original housed at the **Oberlin College Archives**, bears Lincoln's signature, as well as that of William H. Seward, Secretary of State. We are grateful to the Archives for making this historic certificate available to OHC. Thanks, too, to Board member **Scott Broadwell**, for hanging these reproductions. Museum Educator **Liz Schultz** offers this background story as to how Monroe came to receive the Presidential appointment:

It might be strange to think that James Monroe, local champion for abolition and equal rights advocate, would be absent during much of the Civil War. Company C of the 7th Ohio Volunteer Infantry was even nicknamed the "Monroe Rifles" in his honor. But James Monroe had different obligations. In February 1862, Monroe was serving as a state senator in Columbus when word reached him that his wife, fellow Oberlin College graduate Elizabeth Maxwell, had suddenly died. He and his four children mourned the loss of the cheerful 36-year old wife and mother. Monroe was soon forced to consider his own diminished health and how to support his children on his limited salary. For varied reasons, he put his name in for the soon-to-be vacant position of United States consul to Rio de Janeiro in Brazil. Secretary of the Treasury and former Ohio governor Salmon P. Chase and Secretary of State William H. Seward supported his request. Abraham Lincoln appointed James Monroe consul on October 1, 1862. Monroe left for his new post in December, leaving his children temporarily under the care of Reverend George Clark.

Membership Hail and Farewell

The Oberlin Heritage Center extends a warm welcome to new business members **General Plug & Manufacturing** (Grafton) and **Simply Elegant Candle & Gift** (Oberlin). An extra special thank you goes to Life Member **Carol Ganzel** who stepped up to the Aluminum level of Endowed Life Membership. Deepest sympathy is extended to the family of Life Member **Shirley R. Johnson** who passed away January 11, 2013 at the age of 95.

Also of Interest

Happy Birthday Cleveland Restoration Society! Cleveland's nationally recognized historic preservation organization, **The Cleveland Restoration Society** (CRS), celebrated its 40th anniversary at the Cleveland City Council Meeting on January 28th at Cleveland City Hall where City Council members presented proclamations marking both CRS's birthday and also CRS Executive Director/President **Kathleen Crowther's** 25th anniversary at the helm. Like the Oberlin Heritage Center, CRS is part of the **National Trust for Historic Preservation's Partners Network** of local and state historic preservation organizations. CRS extends its reach into Lorain County through its work with the **Lorain County Preservation Network**. **Pat Murphy** and **Keith Koening** represented OHC at the CRS anniversary celebration. Pat worked for CRS on various historic preservation and urban planning projects and programs way back when -- before she became the director of OHC (then O.H.I.O.) in 1993.

The **Quincy Gillmore Civil War Round Table**, through the assistance of the Ohio Humanities Council, hosts **George Dauler** as General U.S. Grant in a first-person presentation of "**The Vicksburg Campaign**," on **Monday, February 4 at 7 p.m.** The event is open to the public and takes place in Lorain County Community College's iLOFT Building, Room 207.

Celebrate family and community history on **February 16-17** as the **Western Reserve Historical Society History Center** in Cleveland's University Circle hosts a new "**Family History Festival**" providing opportunities to research your family history, discover more about your specific culture, and learn how to preserve family mementos, particularly photographs. Festivities include music, workshops, food tasting and more. For more information, visit www.wrhs.org.

On **Sunday, February 17, at 3 p.m.** members of the widely acclaimed **Apollo's Fire Baroque Orchestra** will present a concert at First Church in Oberlin, U.C.C. to benefit homeless families served by **Family Promise of Lorain County**. Called **The Bach Project**, the ensemble of four performers will play music of Bach and Haydn on baroque flutes, cello and harpsichord. For more information, contact carol.longsworth@oberlin.edu.

The Oberlin Heritage Center's Annual Meeting presenter, **Charlene Connors**, portrays Mary Todd Lincoln in a one-woman show on **Tuesday, February 19 at 7 p.m.** at Main Street Community Center in Amherst, Ohio (225 Park Avenue). The event is free and sponsored by the Friends of the Amherst Public Library. For more information, visit www.amherst.lib.oh.us or call (440) 988-4230.

Ohio Statehood Day is **Wednesday February 27** commemorating the date in 1803 when Ohio became the nation's 17th state. In celebration of Ohio and its history, the Ohio Historical Society and its partners invite you to join a broad coalition of history advocates at the Ohio Statehouse Atrium in Columbus for this year's program, luncheon and the opportunity to meet with local legislators. Registration through Friday, February 15 is \$25. For more information, visit www.ohiohistory.org/statehoodday.

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