

Oberlin Heritage Center E-Gazette – August 2015

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Good Wishes Abound as One Chapter Ends and Another Begins

All are invited to a casual, come-as-you-are community gathering on the grounds of the Little Red Schoolhouse **Saturday, August 8 from 3-4:30 p.m.** to extend thanks and best wishes to **Pat Murphy** on the occasion of her retirement later this month following 22 years of leadership at the Oberlin Heritage Center. Guests also will have the opportunity to give a warm welcome to **Liz Schultz** who steps into her new role as the organization's Executive Director following Pat's departure. Liz already is well-known to many OHC members and friends, having served as the Heritage Center's Museum Education and Tour Coordinator for the past eight years. Plan to join us for light refreshments, good company, wonderful memories, hugs and handshakes, along with a few brief remarks (presented at 3:30 p.m.) In case of rain, the event will be moved into the Schoolhouse.

Family Fun at the Oberlin Heritage Center

Oberlin's long-time summer tradition of **Family Fun Fair** takes place throughout the downtown and on the Heritage Center grounds on **Saturday, August 8 from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.** Try your hand at old-fashioned games on the lawn at the Little Red Schoolhouse, or step back in time to explore the first floor of the 1866 Monroe House on a self-guided tour. (Because of the special event being held on the OHC grounds at the end of the day, self-guided tours will end at 3 p.m.) Don't miss the chance to sign up at the Heritage Center's info table to win a Family Fun Bag filled with treats and surprises from OHC, **Radio Station WOBL/WDLW** and **The Tuck Shop** in Oberlin. In addition to the free Fun Fair activities, the Heritage Center will host its regular Saturday morning **Freedom's Friends (Underground Railroad) History Walk at 11 a.m.** Reservations and fees apply to the History Walk; visit www.oberlinheritagecenter.org for more information.

Your Summer "To-Do" List: Enjoy an OHC Themed History Walk!

If you've been meaning to take one of the Heritage Center's summer History Walks – now is the time! The **Scholars & Settlers (Tappan Square) History Walk** will be offered **Sunday, August 2 at 1 p.m.** (*last time this season!*). The popular **Freedom's Friends (Underground Railroad) History Walk** takes place **Saturdays, August 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29 at 11 a.m.** In September, enjoy the fall foliage and spirited stories of the **Radicals & Reformers (Westwood Cemetery) History Walk** on **Saturdays, September 5, 12, 19 and 26 at 11 a.m.** Later this fall, as part of Oberlin College's Parents Weekend, the Heritage Center will offer encore presentations of the **Freedom's Friends History Walk on Friday, November 6 at 3 p.m., Saturday, November 7 at 11 a.m., and Sunday, November 8 at 11 a.m.** as well as **One Step More: Oberlin Women's History Walk on Saturday, November 7 at 3 p.m.** All history walks are open to the public, and advance reservations are required and may be made at www.oberlinheritagecenter.org or by calling (440) 774-1700. The fee is \$6/adults; free for OHC members, college students and children (best suited for ages 9 and older). (Please register in advance even if you are eligible for a free history walk.)

Coming Soon – OHC’s Fall/Winter Events Calendar

We’re putting the final touches on the Heritage Center’s schedule of community events for the remainder of the year – look for a calendar to be sent to OHC members in the next few weeks. Highlights include a one-man show about social reformer and orator Frederick Douglass, new research on Oberlin’s Underground Railroad, guided walking tours of Westwood Cemetery and a new do-it-yourself tablet tour on Oberlin’s abolitionist history. For all the latest news from the Heritage Center, be sure to visit www.oberlinheritagecenter.org or call (440) 774-1700.

B&B Volunteer Hosts Needed for Growing Waiting List

The Heritage Center has a waiting list of at least 7 families of incoming first-year Oberlin College students who are looking for a simple, convenient place to stay during one or more nights of New Student Orientation, taking place **Monday, August 24 through Wednesday, August 26** (with the greatest need on Monday and Tuesday nights). Presently there are 18 OHC volunteer host homes, and we still could use several more. This is a fundraiser for the Oberlin Heritage Center and a great way to be an Oberlin community ambassador as well (even if you live in a nearby surrounding community!). If you can offer a private bedroom (double or twin beds) and a private or shared bathroom, with a light breakfast in the morning, let us know by e-mailing Board Vice-President and B&B coordinator **Gail Wood** at OHCbnb@gmail.com.

Destination Oberlin: OHC Visitors Come from Near and Far!

We love welcoming visitors to the Heritage Center and meeting people from all corners of the globe. In the past two months alone, we’ve hosted plenty of folks from northeast Ohio as well as from **23** states in the U.S. (from Alaska to Florida and from Maine to Texas!) and from as far away as France and the United Kingdom. Many visitors make Oberlin a destination trip because they are interested in learning more about the Underground Railroad activity in the area. Summer is a particularly good time to meet cyclists following the Underground Railroad. We always look forward to the annual visit of the **Bronx Lab School’s Underground Railroad Riders** – a group of New York City high school students making a 280-mile biking trip through Ohio. This is the 7th year for the trip, and every year, the students express appreciation for their visit to the Heritage Center by leaving a framed and signed group photo to remember them by. Read about their adventures by visiting the students’ travel [blog](http://www.blurr.us) at www.blurr.us. We also enjoyed meeting another extraordinary cyclist and blogger in **David Freeze** of China Grove, NC, who stopped by the Heritage Center en route from Mobile, Alabama to Toronto, Ontario, Canada. David was covering about 2,500 miles over the course of 35 days this summer and blogging daily about his journey for his hometown newspaper, the *Salisbury Post*. Read about [his visit to Oberlin](#) in the July 21 edition at www.salisburypost.com.

Lightning Strike Hits OHC Building – and Budget!

Just like any residential homeowner, the Oberlin Heritage Center has to be prepared for any number of unplanned property damages, breakdowns, or accidents – times three (buildings)! In late June, for example, the second-floor air conditioning unit at the Jewett House stopped working, and a service call identified that the unit needed a new motor. The motor was replaced, yet just two weeks later, the air conditioning went out once again. This time, the malfunction was due to a power surge which melted a plug supplying power to the unit’s condenser – the most likely cause being a nearby lightning strike. This was a much more expensive fix, requiring the replacement of the whole unit (which actually was less costly than simply replacing the condenser). We’re keeping fingers crossed that insurance eventually will help cover part of the expense. Meanwhile, the repairs were covered by OHC general operating funds – a tough hit for a nonprofit with a very tight annual budget. Building maintenance is always a huge area of concern as anything can happen when caring for three century-old buildings –

whether emergencies or simple wear-and-tear. The organization's next Strategic Plan will give a high priority to increased funding for historic preservation at the Heritage Center. The new plan, which has been crafted over a year-long process with input from staff, volunteers, members, and interested community representatives, is set to be approved by the Board before the end of the year and will be a roadmap for the organization to follow over the course of the next three years.

OHC Staff, Board, Volunteer and Intern News

Congratulations to **Kaitlyn Goss** upon her engagement to long-time beau, **Josh Donaldson**. Kaitlyn will complete her AmeriCorps/Local History Corp one-year assignment at OHC in late August, and the Heritage Center will prepare to welcome a new AmeriCorps member in September (more in next month's E-Gazette). We're delighted that Kaitlyn plans to remain in the area at least for the time being. She has been hired by the **Lorain Historical Society** as a Digital Consultant to organize and digitize the LHS photo collection. This is a six-month position, beginning September 1, which has been funded by a grant from The Nord Family Foundation.

Museum Education and Tour Coordinator **Liz Schultz** welcomed American artist **Fred Wilson** and Allen Memorial Art Museum's Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art **Denise Birkhofer** on a tour of the Heritage Center recently. Board member and docent **Ron Gorman** joined the group for lunch. This was part of an exploratory visit to Oberlin by the artist whose powerful "Mining the Museum" exhibit at the Maryland Historical Society in Baltimore in the early 1990s stirred much discussion and new ways of thinking about how museums influence community attitudes, both by what they show and what they do not show.

Liz Schultz was interviewed the other day by **Peter Comings** for the latest **Oh, Oberlin** podcast. Comings' in-depth conversation with Liz runs the gamut from her early interest in archeology to the idea that modern technology has its own items that one day will appear in museum collections. Listen to the interview at www.ohoberlin.wordpress.com/. You can also join the **Oh, Oberlin Facebook Group** by visiting <https://www.facebook.com/groups/ohoberlin/>.

Don't miss the timely new research by **Ron Gorman**, OHC volunteer docent and Trustee, whose latest blog [August 1 – the original "Juneteenth"](http://www.oberlinheritagecenter.org/blog/) tells the story of West Indian Emancipation Day, an occasion of celebration and hope in early Oberlin and other abolitionist and African American communities. To learn more, visit www.oberlinheritagecenter.org/blog/.

We're thrilled to welcome the newest member of the OHC family: little **Melody Anne Clifford** was born July 17, making first-time parents of OHC graduate student intern **Melissa Clifford** and her husband, **Justis**.

OHC intern (and rising Oberlin College senior) **Rand Zalzala** just returned to Oberlin following participation in a 6-week architecture and design learning program at Harvard University. Rand told us she loved every minute of the Harvard Graduate School of Design Career Discovery program even though it was like experiencing one full semester of graduate school condensed into a six-week period! Rand has designed her own individual major in architecture and design at Oberlin College, and OHC is lucky to have her sharing her knowledge and enthusiasm this month as she helps **Liz Schultz** present the popular Architecture summer camp for kids.

It was great fun to hear from former OHC intern **Gideon Crevoshay** (OC 2005) who was in Oberlin last month as part of a 10-stop Midwest tour with a teen traveling music camp under the umbrella of [Village Harmony](http://www.villageharmony.com/), an acclaimed Vermont-based teen singing ensemble. Now a professional musician, Gideon was as one of the leaders of the group, which featured ethnic song traditions from around the world in a public performance hosted by **The First Church in Oberlin, U.C.C.**

Former OHC Museum Fellow (2003-2004) **Maria Surovy** returns to Oberlin this month to lead the Heritage Center's **Artists in Their Time** camp for kids. Maria now works in teacher education for Lake Erie College, and continues to set aside at least one week per summer to teach in OHC's summer camp programs. We're always delighted to welcome Maria back!

OHC student volunteer, **Annalee Sekulic** (a rising senior at Western Reserve High School), returns from her year abroad in Finland this month as part of the Rotary Youth Exchange program. We can't wait to welcome back to the Heritage Center our award-winning intern (recipient of OHC's Youth Community Service Award in 2013) and hear all about her wonderful experience. Save the date of **Tuesday, December 8 at 7:15 p.m.** when Anna will offer an illustrated presentation about her overseas adventure in **Ansku: American in Suomi**, a free public program at Kendal at Oberlin's Heiser Auditorium.

Members' Update

Welcome to new OHC members **Julius Reder Carlson** (Oberlin) and **Barbara Meade** (Washington, DC). OHC is grateful to new Endowed Life Members (ELMs) at the Copper level: **Craig & Barb Enos** as well as to current ELMs who increased their endowment commitments to reflect new levels of giving: **Scott & Ellen Broadwell, Jeanne McKibben, MD** and **Jane Ross Moore** (moving to the Aluminum level) and **Mrs. William R. Anderson, Walt & Marge Edling, Dan & Marlene Merrill, and Cathe Radabaugh** (increasing to the Silver level). Membership support is *essential* to the continued good health of the organization and its mission to preserve and share Oberlin history. [Join](http://www.oberlinheritagecenter.org) OHC today at www.oberlinheritagecenter.org and help keep that nationally significant history alive for future generations.

Also of Interest

Oberlin College and community's **Environmental Dashboard Project** is conducting an [online survey](#) to test the effectiveness of messages appearing on public display screens regarding water, electricity and community. The survey is part of a larger research project underway by faculty at Oberlin College. Please help by providing your feedback – the survey takes no more than 15 minutes, and **as a thank-you for your time, the Environmental Dashboard team will donate \$3.00 to a local nonprofit of your choice (including the Oberlin Heritage Center)**. For more information, visit https://oberlin.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_6PEDxPsDUPZSDel.

Hale Farm & Village in Bath, Ohio will host one of the largest [Civil War Reenactments](#) in the state, **Saturday August 8** and **Sunday, August 9** (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.) Meet soldiers, cavalry and civilians. Hear the sounds of battle and smell the gunpowder (battle reenactments on Saturday at 10:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m.; Sunday at 2 p.m.). Shake hands with President Lincoln or shop for a hoopskirt. Don't miss the excitement! For more information, including admission fees, visit www.halefarm.org or call (330)666-3711, ext. 1720.

Dine like a President is a fundraiser for the **Friends of James A. Garfield National Historic Site** taking place **Thursday August 27** at Mentor Harbor Yachting Club. Chef John Moeller, White House chef to three presidents will prepare a "State Dinner" for guests and entertain with a presentation about his most memorable moments cooking for three First Families. Moeller also will sign copies of his 2013 memoir/cookbook "*Dining at the White House: From the President's Table to Yours.*" For more information, call (440) 257-7214.

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