



## Every Good Story has a Plot

### Living History Tours at Oberlin's Westwood Cemetery October 11-13



**Camille Hamlin Allen** (left), **Dennis Cook** and **Judy Cook** portrayed three historic Oberlin figures in the Westwood Cemetery tours presented in October 2017. Each returns in newly created roles and are joined this year by **Joseph Peek** and **Pat Gorske Price** for *Every Good Story has a Plot*. Make a reservation soon to hear their stories.

Enjoy the changing colors of the season in a picturesque, historic setting with this new tour created by Oberlin Heritage Center staff and volunteers. The non-scary, one-hour guided stroll through Westwood Cemetery (429 Morgan Street) features early Oberlin business owners and tradespeople of days-gone-by as portrayed by costumed interpreters.

Participants will be introduced to innkeeper and dry goods store owner **Marx Straus** (aka volunteer Dennis Cook), tea shop proprietor **Rachel Brightman Rawdon** (Judy Cook), milliner **Marie de France** (Camille Hamlin Allen), insurance company owner **Helen Gorske Sperry** (portrayed by her niece Pat Gorske Price) and formerly enslaved 19th century civil rights advocate and entrepreneur **Henry Lee** (Joseph Peek). Reservations are required in advance; tickets are \$10 for adults and \$5 for children (\$8 adults/\$4 children for OHC members). This is a family-friendly event and most likely enjoyed by ages 7 and up. If it is raining at tour start time, fee will be refunded or you may transfer your reservation to another available date. Find out more at [www.oberlinheritagecenter.org](http://www.oberlinheritagecenter.org).

## AMAM in the AM

### Heritage Center Tour Accompanies Art Museum's *Black Atlantic* Exhibit



The Oberlin Heritage Center will be a guest presenter for one of the programs in the Allen Memorial Art Museum's ongoing *AMAM in the AM* series this fall. Heritage Center docents will lead a free outdoor history walk on **Friday, October 18 at 10:15 a.m.**, coinciding with the theme of the art museum's *Afterlives of the Black Atlantic* exhibition. The exhibit features artwork and activities in observance of the 400th anniversary of the beginnings of slavery in the United States.

The *Oberlin and Abolitionism* tour highlights historic events that reveal both Oberlin's progress and setbacks in race relations. The tour date happens to coincide with the 160th anniversary of John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry, and participants will learn more about Oberlin's strong ties to that event among other stories shared

## **AMAM in the AM continued**

on the 45-minute tour. The tour is open to the public. Dress for the weather and meet in the King Sculpture Court just inside the main entrance to the Art Museum (87 North Main Street).

Find out more about the *Afterlives of the Black Atlantic* exhibition by visiting [www.oberlin.edu/amam](http://www.oberlin.edu/amam).

**Photo credit:** William E. Smith (American, 1913-1997), **Black History, Nighttime**, from the suite **Latí Ilé si Ilé**, 1971, black ink and sepia on paper, Allen Memorial Art Museum gift of Patricia and Donald Oresman (OC 1946), 2001.23 H

## **Save the Dates**

**Add these Upcoming Tours, Programs, Events to Your Autumn Calendar!**

**ONE LAST BIG HISTORY WALK WEEKEND** / Oberlin College's Parents & Family Weekend (**November 8-10**) is OHC's final outdoor tour weekend of the year. History walks are open to the public as well as to campus visitors and include opportunities to participate in the **Freedom's Friends Underground Railroad and Abolition History Walk** (Friday and Saturday at 3:00 p.m.), the **Scholars & Settlers (Tappan Square) History Walk** (Saturday at 11:15 a.m.), and the **Oberlin Architecture History Walk** (Sunday at 11:00 a.m.). **Sneak Peek: Oberlin Origins** mini-tours will be offered throughout the weekend as well. Visit the Heritage Center's website to find out more about fees and starting locations. Advance reservations are recommended and may be made at [www.oberlinheritagecenter.org](http://www.oberlinheritagecenter.org).

**TRIVIA NIGHT** / **Friday, November 15, 6:00-8:30 p.m. (doors open at 5:30 p.m.)** This friendly competition tickles your brain cells with a variety of categories including sports, pop culture, science and much more. The evening includes plenty of food, side games, raffles, prizes and spirited play for all! Start gathering a team together now and be thinking of a clever name for your entry! Special thanks to **Herrick Jewelry** and the **Ohio Educational Credit Union** for being co-sponsors of this year's event. Registration is now underway; call (440) 774-1700 or visit [www.oberlinheritagecenter.org](http://www.oberlinheritagecenter.org) for more information. Location: Fellowship Hall of The First Church in Oberlin, U.C.C. (106 North Main Street).

**FROM MILLING TO MANUFACTURING: THE MODERNIZATION OF OBERLIN INDUSTRY** / **Tuesday, November 19 at 7:15 p.m.** Oberlin Heritage Center Museum and Tour Coordinator **Amanda Manahan** offers a free public program on Oberlin's industries from the early 20th century to the present day. Manahan picks up the theme where she left off in a preceding presentation last fall, sharing stories from OHC's Oral History Collection that shed light on the small mills of early Oberlin up through the years to the modern local industries of today. Location: Kendal at Oberlin's Heiser Auditorium (600 Kendal Drive). All are welcome; no reservation is needed.

## Oberlin College Libraries and OHC Partner on The Oberlin Sanctuary Project



Collaborators on the Oberlin Sanctuary Project include (from left): **Katie Merikallio** OC '20, Professor of Comparative American Studies **Gina Perez**, Associate Professor of Africana Studies & Comparative American Studies **Meredith Gadsby**, Oberlin College Archivist **Ken Grossi**, Azariah Smith Root Director of Libraries **Alexia Hudson-Ward** and Oberlin Heritage Center Executive Director **Liz Schultz**.

In recent years, the Oberlin Sanctuary Project has become a local resource on the history of the college and community in providing security, acceptance and encouragement for diverse groups during uncertain times. The Oberlin College Libraries received a grant this past year from the Council of Independent Colleges (with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation) to expand its work into a public humanities project in partnership with the Oberlin Heritage Center. Future plans for the Project include a traveling exhibition, expanded digital resources and a series of lectures by Oberlin College professors Meredith Gadsby and Gina Perez.

This new phase of the Sanctuary Project was launched with a public reception at the Oberlin Public Library last month. In her remarks at the event, OHC Executive Director **Liz Schultz** shared the following:

*Oberlin's history is rich with efforts to provide sanctuary, whether it be to freedom seekers prior to the Civil War, immigrants hoping for refuge, students looking for meaning in times of turmoil, or anyone seeking peace and opportunity just to be who they are.*

*The strengths of the Oberlin Heritage Center as they relate to this project lie particularly in our ongoing research of abolitionism and Underground Railroad activity in Oberlin, as well as our collection of oral histories with community members. We look forward to this opportunity to look deeper into these sanctuary activities, reach out to more people to document them, and reflect on their meanings yet today.*

To assist with the project, Oberlin College senior **Katie Merikallio** has been hired for 10 hours/week, splitting her time between the College Archives and the Heritage Center. It is a pleasure to welcome Katie to the OHC intern team this fall. She comes to Oberlin from Santa Cruz, California and is a double major in History and Creative Writing. Katie is looking forward to helping to conduct new research for the Sanctuary Project and update its website.

For more, visit the Oberlin Public Library (65 South Main Street) and view the exhibit *Pathway to Hope and Opportunity: Oberlin as Sanctuary* or go to <https://sanctuary.oberlincollegelibrary.org>.

## History Minute

### Collections Manager Maren McKee Spotlights OHC's Teaching Collection

In 2019, the Oberlin Heritage Center conducted an inventory of the Teaching Collection as part of an ongoing effort to make the collection more functional and accessible for staff to use in educational programming. While taking inventory, Collections Volunteer **Steve Johnson** and I reacquainted ourselves with some of the interesting items in the collection such as children's clothing from the 1890s, an 8-inch floppy disk, and many wonderful but unidentified photographs.

## History Minute continued...



Also included in this collection is an F&M check-writing machine that was used in the **Oberlin Ben Franklin** store for many years. Machines such as this were designed to prevent fraud. When the lever is pulled, the check writer embosses the check and forces indelible ink into the fibers of the paper, resulting in checks that are extremely difficult to alter. Since it was donated to OHC in 2015 by former shop owner **Marianne Cochrane**, the check-writing machine has been displayed at several community programs, including the Pop-Up Museum held earlier this year, where members of the public had the opportunity to try the machine for themselves (as seen in the photos here).

## OHC Annual Fund Campaign Underway

Goal is \$45,000 by December 31



It's time for the Heritage Center's year-end campaign for annual operating support. While memberships, tour fees, and fee-for-service projects help pay the bills, they do not fully cover the basic costs of operations. The Annual Fund is a planned once-a-year appeal to aid in filling the gaps and keeping the organization healthy and strong. Last year, the Heritage Center shared history with more than 5,000 program and event guests, some 2,300 tour visitors, and nearly 17,000 website questers. Your gift this year is needed and appreciated and will go far in continuing the work of connecting people with Oberlin history in many different ways.

Make a gift today by visiting [www.oberlinheritagecenter.org](http://www.oberlinheritagecenter.org) and clicking on the "Make a Gift" button at the top of the home page.

## What's New at the Museum Store

New Titles by History Comic Book Creator Bentley Boyd



Just in time for your holiday shopping, the Heritage Center has added to its shelves new history comic books by **Bentley Boyd** (creator of the *Oberlin: Origins & Onward* comic). *The World War I Web* (2014) provides an engaging history lesson on The Great War (and is excellent accompaniment to Boyd's 2005 comic on *World*

*War 2 Tales*, also found in the Museum Store). The latest addition to the *Comix with Content* series is *Honest Abe* (2018), which introduces readers further to one of our nation's most multitalented and complicated presidents. Each of Bentley Boyd's history comic books sell for \$6.95 plus tax (10% discount for OHC members) and may be purchased online or in the Monroe House's first-floor Museum Store, open Tuesday through Saturday from 10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. The soft-bound books make great gifts for readers of all ages.

## Members Update



Welcome new members: **Rita Bowen** (Elyria), **Tom Hoadley & Cindy Lombardo** (Richfield), **Corinne Petrie** (Lakewood), **Mary Price, Shirley Taylor, Robin Root Wallace** (Plymouth) and new business member **Oberlin Lakeside Banquet Hall (Robin Rudolf)**. So glad you joined as members of the Heritage Center! A special thank you goes to **Barb & Joyce Benjamin** who joined the Heritage Center as new Endowed Life Members (ELMs) at the Copper Level last month. (Members are from Oberlin unless indicated otherwise.)

OHC members hail from 150 different communities around the globe, representing 28 states and the District of Columbia, as well as five foreign countries. If you are not yet a member, please consider joining this worldwide circle of supporters who help to preserve Oberlin's significant histories. Become a member today by visiting [www.oberlinheritagecenter.org](http://www.oberlinheritagecenter.org) and clicking on the "Join Now" button at the top of the home page.

## Staff, Intern and Volunteer News



Welcome back to Oberlin College student interns **Colby Fortin** (OC '22), **Logan McDermott-Mostowy** (OC '22), **Wesley Patterson** (OC '21) and **Joshua Rhodes** (OC '20). Wes is returning for his third year at the Heritage Center, while the others are beginning their second year at OHC. And a warm welcome goes to **Sydney Murphy** (OC '20, *pictured at left*) who joins the intern team this year. Sydney hails from Chicago and is an Africana Studies major at Oberlin College with minors in Sociology and Philosophy. She plans a career in museum studies. Be sure to learn more about OHC's Sanctuary Project intern, **Katie Merikallio**, in a separate feature in this month's newsletter.

The Heritage Center welcomed Oberlin College Associate Professor of History Ellen Wurtzel's *History 299: Introduction to Historical Methods* class last month. During their visit, students toured the Monroe House with OHC intern **Wesley Patterson**, got a behind-the-scenes look at OHC's collections storage area with Collections Manager **Maren McKee**, and finished up with a group discussion in the Little Red Schoolhouse that focused on public history and the role of historic house museums.

Museum Education & Tour Coordinator **Amanda Manahan** presented lessons on the Underground Railroad to more than 100 area schoolchildren at the Pioneer Craftsmen Experience held last month at Mill Hollow / Vermilion River Reservation and hosted by the Lorain County Metro Parks. The event is offered annually to introduce area students to many aspects of 19th century Lorain County history.

Thank you to **Angela Cecil** and **Linda Gates** who help out weekly as volunteer front desk receptionists and assist the staff with a myriad other projects. (And hats off to volunteer **Nancy Harper** for filling in the gaps in the front office when needed.)

## Also of Interest

**Wednesday, October 2 at 4:30 p.m.** - The **Honorable Robert L. Wilkins** (U.S. Circuit Judge for the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit) presents *The Mary Church Terrell Connection to the National Museum of African American History and Culture*. Judge Wilkins is the author of *Long Road to Hard Truth: The 100 Year Mission to Create the National Museum of African American History and Culture*. A book sale and signing follow the lecture. The event is hosted by the Oberlin College Libraries, the Office of the President, and the Friends of the Oberlin College Libraries. Location: Hallock Auditorium, Adam Joseph Lewis Center (122 Elm Street, Oberlin).

**Thursday, October 3 through Sunday, October 6 (various times) - Oberlin Public Library's Fall Book Sale.** A pre-sale event takes place Wednesday, October 2 for members of the Friends of the OPL (new members can join at the door). Questions or want to volunteer? Call book sale co-chair **Annette Grdijan** at (440) 935-6056 or e-mail [FOPL.Oberlin@gmail.com](mailto:FOPL.Oberlin@gmail.com). Location: Oberlin Public Library (65 South Main Street).

**Monday, October 14** - The annual observance of **Indigenous Peoples' Day in Oberlin** takes place beginning at 12 noon with a one-hour vigil on Tappan Square (corner of Lorain & College Streets). Participants are encouraged to bring a sign or use one provided at the site. A community-wide celebration follows on the Square from 3:30 p.m. until 7:00 p.m. Activities include music, drumming, educational talks, vendor booths, and more. All are welcome. Questions: **Contact Jean Foggo Simon** at [foggo@oberlin.net](mailto:foggo@oberlin.net) or **Cindi Byron Dixon** at [xcindilou@live.com](mailto:xcindilou@live.com).

**Wednesday, October 16, 2019 beginning at 6:30 p.m.** - Firelands Archaeology will host the **10th Annual Ohio Archeological Dinner** featuring guest speaker **Bradley Lepper, Ph.D.**, Manager & Curator of Archaeology at the Ohio History Connection, presenting a program on the icon of ancient Ohio, *Serpent Mound*. Tickets are \$25/adults and \$20/students. Reservations must be made in advance via **Brian Scanlan** at (440) 258-7775. Location: Vermilion-On-The-Lake Club House (3780 Edgewater Blvd., Vermilion).

**Saturday, October 19 beginning at 4:00 p.m.** The **National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (Oberlin Unit #3196)** hosts the **2019 Freedom Fund Banquet** featuring **The Hon. Melody J. Stewart**, Ohio Supreme Court Justice. Tickets are \$40 donation/adults; \$20 for children ages 6-12; \$10 under 6 years. Contact **Mrs. Lillie Faye Taylor** (440-775-7395) or **Mrs. Claudia Jones** (440-960-1612) for tickets. Location: The Hotel at Oberlin (10 East College Street).

**Thursday, October 24 from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Leadercast Women**, hosted locally by the **Oberlin Business Partnership**, provides an opportunity to meet, learn and network with a diverse group of women. This year's theme is *Take Courage*, highlighted by a panel of four CEOs from Lorain County hospitals and healthcare organizations sharing their own Take Courage journeys. The day also includes the chance to hear from nationally recognized speakers on the stage at Leadership Women in Atlanta, Georgia. Register in advance at [www.oberlin.org](http://www.oberlin.org); reservations are \$99 (includes breakfast and lunch); \$79 for young adults ages 16-21. Location: New Russia Township Lodge (46300 Butternut Ridge Road, Oberlin).

The **Oberlin Weekday Community Meals** program is looking for volunteers who can help from 4:45 to 6:00 p.m. weekly, bi-weekly, monthly or whenever convenient for you. Tasks include serving and cleaning up; the atmosphere is fun and uplifting. Contact [volunteercoordinator@gmail.com](mailto:volunteercoordinator@gmail.com). Location: Parish Hall of Christ Episcopal Church (162 South Main Street, Oberlin).