



Oberlin Heritage Center E-Gazette

January 2021

PO Box 0455, Oberlin, OH 44074 (440) 774-1700

To subscribe to the free E-Gazette, visit www.oberlinheritagecenter.org or send e-mail to members@oberlinheritage.org.

Thank you for supporting OHC in 2020!

A heartfelt **THANK YOU** to the 300 plus donors who contributed to the Oberlin Heritage Center's 2020 Annual Fund campaign. Together, we raised more than \$60,000.00 in the last few months of 2020, and exceeded our original goal. We are extremely grateful for this, as it will help us make up for shortfalls during the past year! The campaign received the support of 54 percent of the organization's membership, with 100 percent of the OHC staff contributing. To share how grateful we are, we've created a short, year-end video that you can view here: <https://youtu.be/b3Ws0DgNjU0>.



Thank you, again! The generosity of our members and friends has helped to ring the New Year in on a high note. We are excited to continue our mission in 2021, and to provide even more inclusive programming, innovative outreach options, and virtual connections than ever before to our supporters. Happy New Year, from all of us at OHC!

OHC Remains Closed to the Public until Further Notice

OHC will remain closed to the public as the new year begins, both for the safety of the staff and community. Although we can't welcome visitors to our campus right now, we look forward to seeing you virtually. We encourage you to connect with us on social media, or sign up for one of the new online programs that will be debuted this coming year.

To learn more about upcoming events and online resources, visit www.oberlinheritagecenter.org.

Secrets & Scandals in Two Parts: January 12 and 26 at 5:15 p.m.



Join us for one or both free 25-minute programs, with time for a Q&A session afterwards. Advance registration is required using the links in the descriptions below. Registrants will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Tuesday, January 12: *Secrets & Scandals: Oberlin Women*

A kiss? Forgery and deceit? This program will explore town and gown reactions to two scandalous events involving women of Oberlin's first century. To register for Part 1, please visit: <https://bit.ly/3INJHVI>.

Tuesday, January 26: *Secrets & Scandals: Oberlin Men*

Trouble in "paradise"? Theft and fraud? This program will *unmask* stories and perceptions of Oberlin during its infancy. To register for Part 2, please visit: <https://bit.ly/3kPowRP>.

HistoryForge Trainings Scheduled for January 21 and 30

This year, the Oberlin Heritage Center is partnering with HistoryForge to create an interactive web environment which uses census records and historic maps to explore the history of Oberlin in 1910. We need the help of volunteers to transcribe census data to make this project possible. If you are interested in learning



more, join one of our two virtual training sessions this month to see how the process works and to connect with other volunteers! The first session will take place January 21, from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m., and the second session is scheduled for January 30, from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m. To register for either of these free training sessions, click the links below. If you have any questions or concerns, contact ohcamericorps@oberlinheritage.org.

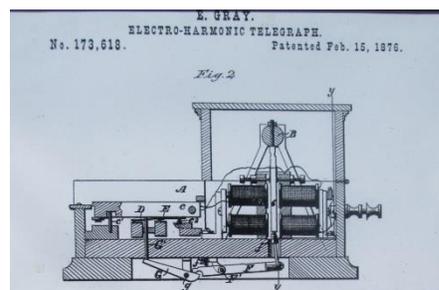
Sign up for session one on January 21 at 6:30 p.m. at: <http://bit.ly/3rCyb2Q>.

Sign up for session two on January 30 at 2:00 p.m. at: <http://bit.ly/38L0vre>.

HistoryForge is an innovative digital history project led by The History Center in Tompkins County in Ithaca, NY. The project is generously funded by a two-year grant for Public Engagement with Historical Records from the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) of the National Archives (NARA). To learn more about HistoryForge, visit their website at: www.historyforge.net.

The Life and Times of Elisha Gray: Oberlin Inventor and Electric Music Pioneer

Last month, Roderic Knight, Professor Emeritus of Ethnomusicology at Oberlin College, presented a virtual “tour” of Elisha Gray’s life and times. Gray was an Ohio native who attended Oberlin College in the 1860s and who became a successful inventor/entrepreneur before returning to Oberlin College as a Professor of Dynamic Electricity from 1880-1900. Gray was also the inventor of the world’s first electric musical instrument, among other things. We recorded Professor Knight’s program, and are including the link here for those who were not able to tune in during the virtual session: <https://youtu.be/vtDQIYRXnbA?t=204>.



Many thanks to Professor Knight for hosting such an electrifying evening for us all!

February 23: Save the Date for a Very Special Program



Lewis G. Clarke

Author Carver Clark Gayton will be joining OHC for a virtual presentation about his ancestor, Lewis G. Clarke, whose personal life in slavery and freedom informed parts of Harriet Beecher Stowe’s writing of *Uncle Tom’s Cabin*. This free Zoom program will take place virtually, and in the evening. Stay tuned for more details as they develop!

***Behind the Basement Door* Program Offers Two Sneak Peeks into the OHC Collection in March**

OHC is offering two special, virtual sneak peeks into our collection next month!

First peek: March 12, at 3:30 p.m.

Second peek: March 26, at 3:30 p.m.

Did you know that only 60 percent of OHC's collection is on display? From photographs to clothing, OHC's collection is filled with interesting artifacts that are not often seen by the public. Join OHC's Collections Manager, Maren McKee, for a virtual public program that explores some of the rarely seen objects from OHC's collection.

This program will be broadcast live on OHC's Facebook page in two 15-minute parts. You don't have to have a Facebook account to be able to view the Oberlin Heritage Center's page and watch this event. Just go to:

<https://www.facebook.com/oberlinheritagecenter> at the time of the program. (If Facebook asks you to join, you can just select "Not Now.")

The theme of the March sneak peeks will incorporate Women's History Month!

OHC Receives Bequest from Shirley and Oliver Shubert



The Oberlin Heritage Center was honored to receive a gift from the estate of Shirley and Oliver Shubert, who were long-time supporters of the organization. Shirley served as a devoted trustee and was active on the Membership Committee. Oliver, who was a student at Oberlin College, lived in what is now known as the "Jewett House." His maroon and gold earmuffs help furnish the recreated student room of the house.

The Shuberts did not restrict their gift, which allowed the OHC board the flexibility to dedicate the majority of this gift to long-term investment in support of OHC's perpetual mission as well as a portion to much-needed technology upgrades. OHC is touched to be a part of the Shubert legacy.

OHC Thanks Local Grantmakers for Their Support



OHC was once again awarded a gift from the Nordson Corporation in support of our education outreach, youth activities, and Junior Internship program. Thank you to Cecilia Render and everyone at Nordson for their ongoing commitment to these community services.

We also extend a deep and heartfelt “thank you” to The Community Foundation of Lorain County and the Jane and Eric Nord Fund for a grant of \$25,000 that will support ongoing programming, enhanced interpretive tools, new collaboration initiatives in the community, and critical general operating expenses of the Heritage Center.

The Oberlin Heritage Center Continues to Document History as it Happens

This past year, OHC launched a new collecting initiative to document the Covid-19 pandemic in Oberlin. Since then, community members have donated photographs, oral histories and even original poetry. These contributions have been added to OHC’s permanent collection where they will help tell the story of the pandemic for years to come. It is not too late to add your story to this growing collection! OHC continues to actively collect photographs, writings (such as journals), and other material related to Oberlin’s shared experience of living through a pandemic. If you would like to participate but are unsure of where to begin, here are a few prompts to get you started for writing or photos:



- The holidays looked a little different for many of us this year. How did your family modify their celebrations?
- If you are a student, what does your school day look like? How is it different from last year?
- If COVID-19 has touched you or someone close to you, describe your experience with the illness.

If you are interested in learning more about this project or would like to donate please contact OHC’s Collections Manager, Maren McKee, at history@oberlinheritage.org. Include your full name and a phone number where you can be reached.

History Minute: The Oberlin-Wellington Rescue Monument



In the spring of 1859, 20 Oberlinians went to jail for the crime of rescuing John Price from slavery. With all their comrades in the Abolitionist Cause, they kindled hopes of freedom for us all.

So reads the inscription on the Oberlin-Wellington Rescue Monument, which stands in Oberlin's Martin Luther King Jr. Park. Designed by former Oberlin College Professor of Art Paul Arnold and built by local mason Burrell Scott, the monument was placed and dedicated in the spot in which it now stands in May 1990.

The monument commemorates the brave actions of a group of Oberlin men (and their Wellington counterparts), who rescued John Price—a freedom seeker residing in Oberlin—from the hands of slave catchers after he was captured outside of the Oberlin town limits. Price was incarcerated in a hotel in Wellington, and the rescuers first attempted to negotiate his freedom peacefully. When that was not successful, the group stormed the hotel and overpowered Price's captors, allowing him to get away and return back to Oberlin, where he was hidden until his passage to Canada could be arranged.

Dozens of men who participated in this action were charged with violating the law and some were eventually held in the Cuyahoga County Jail. Two of the rescuers were tried and found guilty. The Oberlin-Wellington Rescue Monument stands as a tribute to the brave people who fought against the injustices of slavery, and who risked their lives for the freedom of all people.

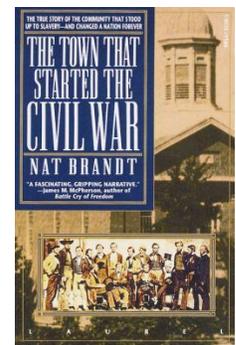
To learn more about this monument, you can visit our website and read a history feature by Alex Shaver, OHC's Visitor Services Assistant. Follow the link here:

<https://bit.ly/3gPAHxz>.

Book of the Month: *The Town that Started the Civil War*

Did the description of the events above pique your curiosity? If so, we have the perfect book for you! Nat Brandt's *The Town that Started the Civil War* details the events of the Oberlin-Wellington Rescue in 1858, as well as the social and legal turmoil that shook the nation in its aftermath, pushing our country toward civil war.

The book is available for purchase at the Museum Store, and can be safely bought online at:



<https://secure.oberlinheritage.org/store.shtml>. Museum members receive a 10 percent discount on store purchases. A perfect read for cold winter afternoons!

Welcome to our newest OHC Members!

The Oberlin Heritage Center welcomed 16 new members to the organization in 2020, many of whom live outside of Oberlin (and Ohio)! Our newest members include: Sue Angell, Barbara Wolfe Brown, Shelby Fickel, Laura Geller, Thomas Hopkins, Pam Horvath, Candyce Hughes, Melany Hughes, Richard Hughes, Lewis Sheridan Hughes, Jan MacKay and Associates, Charles Phillips, Doug Rutherford, Veronica Vanden Bout, Katrina Walker, and Nancy Wolfe. Thank you, all, for your support! Members are the very foundation of our organization. If you are not yet a member of OHC, please join today! Visit www.oberlinheritagecenter.org, call (440) 774-1700, or email members@oberlinheritage.org for more information.

Also of Interest:

Oberlin Community Calendar



Are you up to date with all of the community events happening around Oberlin? Or do you have an event that you wish community members were more aware of? The Oberlin Community Calendar is a resource that is available to all town and college residents. You can both upload events yourself as well as see a full list of events posted by other community members. There is also a free email subscription for a weekly newsletter that summarizes upcoming programs. Just enter your email address in the box on the right side of the homepage. To view the calendar, visit:

<https://environmentaldashboard.org/calendar/>. The Environmental Dashboard Team hopes that you use this free resource to become an active and informed Oberlin resident! To contact the calendar team, email: dashboard@oberlin.edu.

Cleveland Restoration Society Offers Virtual Book Discussion

Join Dr. Todd Michney, CRS Marketing & Events Specialist Stephanie Phelps, President Kathleen H. Crowther, and CRS staff on Zoom for the CRS Book Discussion of Chapter 2: Black Builder-Entrepreneurs Fulfill the Dream South of Miles from *The Making of Cleveland's Black Suburb in the City: Lee-Seville & Lee-Harvard*! Explore the past to help move us forward toward a more promising future—together. The virtual book club

will meet for discussion Thursday, January 7, 2021 from 7:30 to 8:30 p.m. More information is available on the CRS's website at:

<https://clevelandrestoration.charityproud.org/EventRegistration/Index/4863>.

Save the Date for a Special Valentine's Day Tea



It seems like it's harder than ever to make plans in advance, but one thing you can count on is the Lorain County Historical Society's annual **Valentine Tea**. Although the gathering won't take place in the beautiful rooms of The Hickories this year, the group assures us that there will be a Tea on Sunday, February 14. Stay tuned for more details about the menu, virtual programming, tickets, and pick up or delivery

options. Save the date to enjoy delicious treats along with the Hickories special blend of tea! More information is available online at: <http://www.lchs.org/>.

OHC is Keeping History Alive

The Oberlin Heritage Center is working harder than ever to fulfill its mission: to preserve and share Oberlin's unique heritage and to make our community a better place to live, learn, work, and visit. And although we have faced challenges this year, we want you to know that history is not cancelled! Throughout the pandemic, we've been busy behind the scenes writing history features, inventorying our collection, giving virtual programs, and working with the local schools. We'd like to take a moment to thank you again, for helping us continue with our work. Our members are the foundation of this organization, and your support helps keep the lights on! We appreciate every single one of you.



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