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## **Oberlin Heritage Center Offers Black History Month Program**

“**Freedom’s Friends: Oberlin, the Underground Railroad, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Monument**” is the topic of a Black History Month program hosted by the Oberlin Heritage Center on Tuesday, February 23 at 7:15 p.m. at Kendal at Oberlin’s Heiser Auditorium. Oberlin is widely known as having served as an important station along the Underground Railroad in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. “As many as three thousand escaped slaves were said to have found a haven, at least temporarily, in Oberlin,” wrote Nat Brandt, author of “The Town that Started the Civil War.” Through an illustrated presentation, **Elizabeth Schultz**, the Oberlin Heritage Center’s Museum Education and Tour Coordinator, takes the audience on a virtual tour of the historic places in Oberlin that showcase this community’s significant role in the history of abolition and the Underground Railroad. Hear stories about Oberlin’s most famous freedom seekers and people known to have helped them make their way to freedom.

Oberlin’s history of activism and championing social causes, particularly those relating to human rights and freedoms, continues into the present day. A special highlight of the program will be personal commentary from **Paul Arnold**, Kendal resident and Oberlin College Emeritus Professor of Art, who will comment on Oberlin’s **Martin Luther King, Jr. Monument**, which he designed. The monument was erected in 1987 in Oberlin’s Martin Luther King, Jr. Park located at the corner of South Pleasant and East Vine Streets in Oberlin. The design honors the late Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968), a leader in the Civil Rights movement, winner of the Nobel Peace Prize (1964), and a recipient of an honorary degree of humane letters from Oberlin College (1965). During the late 1950s through the mid-1960s, King made several visits to Oberlin and spoke before overflowing crowds. Arnold will briefly discuss how he came to be involved in designing the monument and the process he undertook to bring it to completion.

This Oberlin Heritage Center program is free and open to the public. It will be repeated again (although without Professor Arnold’s commentary) at the Lorain County Metroparks’ Vermilion River Reservation (51211 North Ridge Road, Vermilion) on Thursday, March 4 at 7 p.m. For more information, visit [www.oberlinheritage.org](http://www.oberlinheritage.org) or call (440) 774-1700.

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