



73½ South Professor Street
P.O. Box 455
Oberlin, OH 44074-0455
Phone: 440-774-1700
Fax: 440-774-8061
Website: www.oberlinheritagecenter.org

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Contact: Patricia Murphy, Executive Director, (440) 774-1700 or patm@oberlinheritage.org

Twenty Years of Progress at the Oberlin Heritage Center

In 1993, the Oberlin Historical & Improvement Organization, fondly referred to as O.H.I.O., transitioned from the all-volunteer group it had been for the past 90 years, to one led by a professional staff. With the hiring of **Patricia Murphy** as Executive Director, the “sleeping giant” – known today as the Oberlin Heritage Center – began to awaken. Pat’s assistant, **Mary Anne Cunningham** came on board shortly thereafter. Enjoy a fun review of two decades of progress made by this nonprofit organization in an upbeat program, *Time Flies When You’re Having Fun – 20 Years at OHC*, presented by Mary Anne Cunningham and Pat Murphy on **Tuesday, December 17 at 7:15 p.m.** The event takes place at Kendal at Oberlin’s Heiser Auditorium (600 Kendal Drive) and is free and open to the public.

The high-energy, forward-moving, community-supported organization has come a long way from those early days when Pat sometimes worked with the Monroe House front door purposely open to encourage visitors to enter! In the past year alone, more than 10,000 people have taken part in Heritage Center activities or visited the museum complex located just south of Tappan Square in downtown Oberlin. With its mission to preserve and share Oberlin’s nationally significant history, the organization is widely recognized today across the state and around the country as a model small museum, historical society and historic preservation group.

In an era of much job-turnover in the non-profit sector, it is very rare to have a non-profit organization's first two professional staff members still on board after two decades. Pat Murphy and Mary Anne Cunningham have worked together to help the organization develop a tour program, a calendar of public events, educational outreach to schools and educators in the region, and membership, volunteer and college intern programs. Pat also has provided leadership in strategic planning, development, master planning, and accreditation. She currently serves on the American Association of Museums Accreditation Commission and is an accreditation and Museum Assessment Program peer reviewer. Pat graduated from Grinnell College in history and French, and received her Master of Architectural History degree from the University of Virginia. Mary Anne Cunningham, Assistant to the Director, manages the Heritage Center’s membership program which has grown to exceed 700 members, and orchestrates OHC's work in the areas of fundraising and public relations. Mary Anne earned a bachelor’s degree in history from Kenyon College and a master of gerontological studies from Miami University.

For more on this Oberlin Heritage Center program or other upcoming events, please call (440) 774-1700 or e-mail members@oberlinheritage.org. **###End**