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Oberlin Heritage Center Dedicates Restored Bridge Railings

Celebrating National Preservation Month

The Oberlin Heritage Center will celebrate National Preservation Month and help raise awareness about the power that historic preservation has to protect and enhance homes, neighborhoods, and communities by dedicating the former Morgan Street bridge railings in a brief ceremony on Friday, May 15 at 5:00 p.m. The circa 1880s iron railings now stand as a decorative fence gracing the south side of the Heritage Center's Jewett House property at 73 South Professor Street. The event will take place on the Jewett House front lawn, and it is free and open to the public. (In case of rain, the program will be moved into the Jewett House.)

Prior to their restoration last fall by a team of dedicated Oberlin Heritage Center volunteers, the railings lined the Morgan Street Bridge over Plum Creek, slightly south and west of the Jewett House. The City of Oberlin had removed the old railings and replaced them with new ones, offering the historic railings to the Oberlin Heritage Center for re-use. Hundreds of hours of volunteer labor were put into the project of refurbishing the railings and reinstalling them on the Oberlin Heritage Center's grounds. Volunteer George Clark played a key role in rescuing the railings after they had been removed from the bridge. OHC Trustee and volunteer Walt Edling headed up the project, assisted by several others including Dick Holsworth (Honorary Trustee), Bert Latran (Trustee), and Charles Pope (Heritage Center member). The muscle power of several members of the Oberlin High School football team also was enlisted along the way. The end result is a beautiful and eye-catching new use for the railings, just a few blocks from their original location. The Morgan Street bridge railing is probably the biggest thing in town apart from historic buildings themselves that has been recycled for a creative and functional new use. The project demonstrates how historic preservation and going green can work together.

For more information about the Morgan Street Bridge Railings dedication, please visit www.oberlinheritage.org or call the Oberlin Heritage Center at (440) 774-1700. To learn more about National Preservation Month, visit the National Trust for Historic Preservation's website at www.preservationnation.org.

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