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Vignettes about Growing Up in Oberlin, 1900-1940

What was it like to grow up in Oberlin in the early part of the twentieth century? Enjoy hearing the varied personal experiences of a diverse group of individuals from Oberlin's past, born between 1883 and 1924, whose stories were recorded in interviews conducted as part of the Oberlin Oral History Project. Brief vignettes specifically about growing up in Oberlin nearly a century ago have been extracted for this special presentation made by Oberlin Heritage Center Oral History Committee members Priscilla Steinberg, and Mary Van Nortwick. The event takes place on Tuesday, March 17 at 7:15 p.m. at Kendal at Oberlin's Heiser Auditorium. The program is free and open to the public.

The Oberlin Oral History Project began in the early 1980s as an offshoot of the Oberlin Historic Preservation Commission; in the mid-1990s the Oberlin Heritage Center became responsible for the project. Oberlin Heritage Center volunteers spent several years completing what had been started earlier and carrying the project forward with a renewed commitment to make the collection more accessible to family members, researchers, and others. In recent years, new interviews have been added to the collection, and others are being planned. To date, more than 100 interviews have been recorded and transcribed, providing a multi-dimensional perspective of the community's history. Oberlin Heritage Center Board member, Dina Schoonmaker, presently chairs a very active committee of Oral History volunteers including Fran Baumann, Ann Fuller, Nancy Gray, Pat Holsworth, and Jeanne McKibben, in addition to Steinberg and Van Nortwick.

Stories collected from the Oberlin Oral History Project have become a community resource as rich in individual and family history as in town and national history. A wide variety of subjects have been documented, among them: race relations, city politics, downtown development, recreation, school experiences, and the relationship between town and gown. The Oberlin voices in this collection are black and white, men and women, business and college people, farmers and laborers. Tonight's vignettes about growing up in Oberlin come from the memories of Foster Bows, Magdalene Jackson Cox, Stella Mallory Dickerman, Corinne Durand Dudley, Mary Wright Fisk, Harold Gibson, Maynard Gott, Mildred Morris Haines, Glenn Hobbs, Lewis Ives, and Robert (Bob) Thomas.

For more information about the Oberlin Heritage Center or the Oberlin Oral History Project, visit www.oberlinheritage.org or call (440) 774-1700.

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