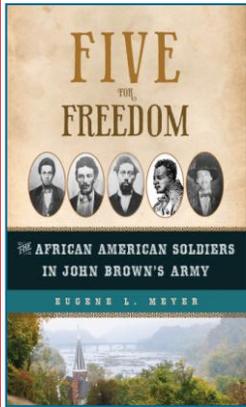


Oberlin Heritage Center E-Gazette February 2019

MPO 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.

Five for Freedom Program with Author Eugene Meyer Tuesday, February 12 at 7:00 p.m.



Award-winning journalist, author and historian **Eugene L. Meyer** will present a free community program about the five African American men who joined John Brown on a raid of the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry in 1859, a venture that they hoped would jumpstart a grassroots revolt and sweep across the country to end slavery. Two of those men, John Copeland and Lewis Leary, were from Oberlin and paid the ultimate price for their participation. Meyer's book, *Five for Freedom: The African American Soldiers in John Brown's Army*, was published in 2018 and conveys how the men came to join

Brown, the events and aftermath of that fateful day, and how the African American participants were treated differently both at the time and by historians. Attendees will have the opportunity to engage the author in a Q&A session following the program, as well as in the book signing to follow. Copies of *Five for Freedom* can be purchased in advance at the Heritage Center and also will be available that evening at the program. This free community event, which is supported in part by a grant from The Community Foundation of Lorain County, takes place at the Meeting House of The First Church in Oberlin, United Church of Christ (106 North Main Street) and all are welcome. Meyer also will be talking with students at Oberlin High School during his visit to Oberlin. Find out more by visiting www.oberlinheritagecenter.org.

Love Oberlin History?

Learn to Share it with Others at OHC's Docent Training Workshop

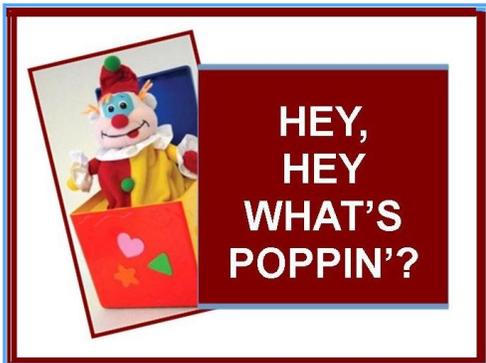
Volunteers are invited to a free introductory workshop with tips and techniques for presenting the Heritage Center's 75-minute "Upstairs Downstairs" Tour that leads visitors through the site's three historic buildings, which serve as backdrop to stories of the community and college from their 1833 founding through the turn of the 20th century. Training takes place on **Saturday, March 9 from 9:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.** and begins at the Monroe House (located at 73½



South Professor Street, at the back of the Conservatory of Music parking lot). If you have never experienced a guided tour, you can arrange for a complimentary tour in advance to see what being a docent is all about. To register for training or reserve a free advance tour, contact Museum Education and Tour Coordinator Amanda Manahan by calling (440)774-1700 or e-mail tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org by February 23.

Populate the Pop-Up Museum

Sunday, March 10 from 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.



Be a curator for a day! The Oberlin Heritage Center and **Oberlin African-American Genealogy and History Group** are co-hosting a two-hour Pop-Up Museum. What will be in this museum? What YOU bring to it. Take a look at what you have that fits the event theme "*Older Than I Am*" and bring something to the event to show to other participants and visitors. It can be an object, photo, document, quilt... anything and it does not have to be Oberlin related! Who can do it? Anyone! The only requirements are that you are able to

carry your item in and out on your own and that you come early at 1:30 p.m. to get your item ready for display and write up a quick information label. Register in advance so we can have enough tables ready. All it takes is a one-sentence e-mail to

ohcbiz@oberlinheritage.org, a one-minute phone call to (440)774-1700, or a quick sign up through our website event page at

www.oberlinheritagecenter.org. Don't have an item? Be a museum guest, meander through and enjoy all the objects and their stories, and join everyone for refreshments and socializing. What does it cost? Nothing!

Location: The First Church in Oberlin, U.C.C. Fellowship Hall (106 North Main St).



"Horrible Histories and Promising Progress" - Intriguing New Camp for Boys and Girls Ages 8-13

Register by March 1 to Receive "Early Bird" Discount on Camp Fee



The Heritage Center will offer two weeks of Spring Break camps this year to accommodate area schools' calendars. This year's theme looks at people and events in history that made us shudder, yet also were catalysts for improvements and change in the world. Choose either the week of **March 25 - 29** or that of **April 22 - 26**; each session runs Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. daily and will be held at the Oberlin Depot (240 South Main Street). The camp fee is \$110 per child

(\$100 for children and grandchildren of Oberlin Heritage Center members). Anyone who registers by March 1 receives a \$5 "early bird" discount. Scholarship assistance is available to those who qualify for their schools' free or reduced lunch programs. Visit the OHC website at

www.oberlinheritagecenter.org to register online or to download a registration form. Contact Museum Education and Tour Coordinator Amanda Manahan by calling (440)774-1700 or e-mail tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org to request a form, ask additional questions, or inquire about scholarship assistance.

Save the Date for Annual Meeting and Community Awards!

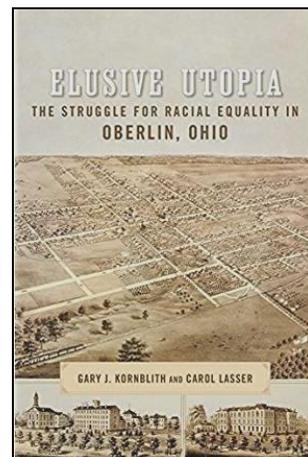
Tuesday, April 2 from 6-8:30 p.m. (Social Hour begins at 5 p.m.)



Photo Credit:
Tanya Rosen Jones

Join us for a one-of-a-kind evening of history and camaraderie at The Hotel at Oberlin (10 East College Street). Be sure to note that this year's event has been switched from the traditional "first Wednesday" to a **Tuesday** night this year. Our featured program presents historians and authors **Gary Kornblith** and **Carol Lasser**, sharing insights from their new book ***Elusive Utopia: The Struggle for Racial Equality in Oberlin, Ohio*** (Louisiana State University Press, 2018). Kornblith and Lasser are long-time Heritage Center Endowed Life members and former recipients of the OHC Community Historian Award. They have lived in Oberlin for

nearly four decades; each taught American history at Oberlin College during most of this time. Separately and together, they have published on a wide range of topics, including slavery, women, the coming of the Civil War, industrialization, and teaching American history. The evening also includes a brief business meeting and the presentation of the 18th Annual Community Awards. Invitations with further details will be mailed to OHC members in mid-February. All are welcome. Add your name to the mailing list by sending an email to members@oberlinheritage.org. *Elusive Utopia* is now available for purchase in the Heritage Center museum store.



History Minute

A "Timely" Feature from Executive Director Liz Schultz



In December of last year the Oberlin Heritage Center offered a special "Tour Through Time" that featured the clocks and timepieces in the collection. While each has an interesting history and is fun to marvel at mechanically, I picked one to highlight for a mini feature. The clock pictured to the left was owned by Richard Ralston Hill, who graduated from Oberlin High School in 1945 and Oberlin College in 1950. The Hill family was well known in Oberlin for owning a clothing store and then insurance and real estate companies. John and Florence Hill managed to weather hard times during the Depression thanks to her continued work as a teacher. Their son "Ralston" Hill was an American stage actor and singer but you are more likely to recognize him from the hit movie as the often-frustrated Congressional Secretary Charles Thomson. According to family, Hill was gay and always "was himself," but added that during that era, he was most comfortable living in New York City. He died in 1996 and is buried in Westwood Cemetery in Oberlin.

Continued on the next page

History Minute (continued)

The clock itself might be called a mantel or shelf clock. Thirty-hour clocks like this had to be wound once a day or so (every thirty hours), which put them at a lower quality than eight day clocks. The fact that it was made by Welch, Spring, and Co. of Connecticut and that it has a strike train (meaning it chimes; look for two winding holes on clocks – one for time and one for the strike) puts it in a slightly higher class of clocks. It was probably made in the 1870s, a date that fits well with the small, almost invisible label on the back indicating that it was sold at the jewelry and clock shop of Charles Tuttle right in downtown Oberlin. *P.S. Thanks to Oberlin College student volunteer Lucy Haskell (class of 2020) for researching material for this tour.*

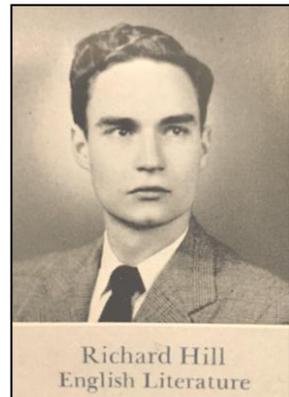


Photo credit: Oberlin College Hi-O-Hi yearbook, 1950

OHC By the Numbers

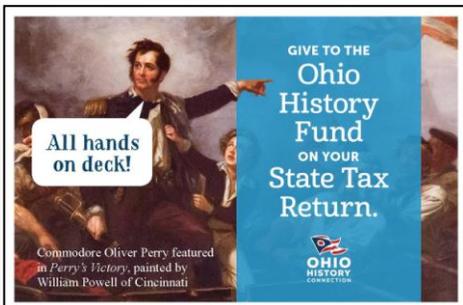
What Is YOUR Favorite Way to Connect with Local History?



The start of the New Year is always a great time to look back at the hard work and accomplishments of the previous year. While OHC saw a drop of about 500 tour visitors from the previous year, there was over a 1,000-person increase in program and event attendance! Annual flip-flops like this are why OHC tries to offer a variety of services (camps, outreach, lectures, events, workshops, publications) – so schools, clubs, residents, and visitors can connect with history in the way that works best for them. In 2018, OHC hosted 21 days of youth camps, 92 on-site & off-site youth programs, 53 group tours, and 28 programs & workshops for adults. OHC was also busy answering research requests, facilitating volunteer and internship opportunities, caring for four historic buildings, working with community collaborators, and continuously monitoring the historic and informational collections of the museum. Thanks for being part of it all!

Your Ohio Tax Return Continues to Make History

State Tax Return Donations Can Fund Local History Projects



The Ohio History Fund is one of the only grant programs in the state solely for history projects and it is almost entirely funded from Ohio taxpayer contributions on their state tax returns. To donate, just look for "Ohio History Fund" on your state tax return (line 26e) and designate a dollar amount. That's it! The more money the Fund receives, the more and larger grants the History Fund can make. In 2019 the program will have \$90,000 to grant.

Just \$9 donated by about 11,120 Ohioans who file tax returns this year (out of over three million

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Tax Return (continued)

receiving refunds) will help the Fund reach its goal of \$100,000 for next year. Projects funded throughout the state have included historic roof repairs, HVAC systems, program development, assessments, collections care, exhibits, and more. Your tax-deductible donation in any form will strengthen local history throughout Ohio! Learn more at <https://www.ohiohistory.org/about-us/ohio-history-fund>.

Membership Update

A hearty welcome goes out to new Heritage Center member **Robin Laurén** of Oberlin. We're so glad you joined OHC!

We mourn the loss of 25-year member **William Gorman** (Wooster, OH), the father of OHC Assistant to the Director **Mary Anne Cunningham**. How grateful we have been for Bill's warm friendship and support through the years.

THANK YOU for the generous support of **ALL** of OHC's members! If you are not yet a member, give yourself a sweet reward this Valentine's Day and join the Heritage Center – you'll love being part of this great community nonprofit that helps keep Oberlin history alive for future generations. (And we'll love you, too!) Join or renew your membership online at <https://secure.oberlinheritage.org/membership.shtml> or call (440) 774-1700 and request a membership brochure.

OHC Board, Staff and Intern News

Despite some blustery weather and frigid temperatures, OHC is bustling behind the scenes:

Maya Colman (OC '21), **Olive Hwang** (OC '21), and **Cady Stoloski** (OC '22) have wrapped up their Winter Term projects and developed new interpretive materials and costumes for OHC education programs.

AmeriCorps Member **Riley Thomas** has been busy crafting Facebook posts about Oberlin's temperance history for January and about local champions of black feminism for February. On Martin Luther King, Jr. Day she joined other Ohio History Service Corps members in cleaning Columbus Global Academy, a public school for child immigrants and refugees.

Nancy Li has begun volunteering at OHC, translating recently donated photo books of Oberlin from Chinese to English.

Museum Education & Tour Coordinator **Amanda Manahan** and Executive Director **Liz Schultz** spent time talking with Oberlin College Winter Term students in the Allen Memorial Art Museum's Practicum in Museum Education class.

Collections Manager **Maren McKee** and volunteer/trustee **Steve Johnson** have been making progress organizing and indexing collections, including photographs and local club records.

Paid Summer Internships for Students

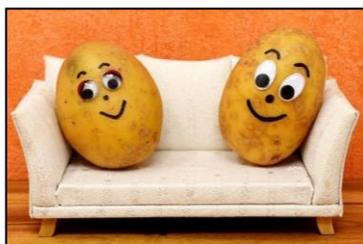
OHC Looking to Fill Three College and High School Positions

Student interns are essential team members at the Oberlin Heritage Center and we will be hiring three this summer! The deadline to apply for an internship at OHC through the Leadership Lorain County program is February 15. For more information, visit the LLC website at www.leadershiploraincounty.com/project/intern-program/

The Heritage Center also is hiring a Museum Tour and Research Assistant, a position that is open to a current college student or one graduating this May. This position is 20-40 hours per week for 10 weeks and applications are due March 15. The Junior Internship is open to a current Oberlin High School student or one graduating this May and is 25 hours per week for 10 weeks. Applications for the Junior Internship are due April 6. Visit the employment page on the OHC website at <http://www.oberlinheritagecenter.org/about/work> for more details and compensation information.

OHC Seeking a Retro Couch Potato

Volunteer from Your Own Living Room!



The Oberlin Heritage Center has about 50 VHS tape copies of “Conversations with Lothrop” interviews conducted by Dick Lothrop with various community members throughout the 1990s and early 2000s, filmed at Oberlin Cable Co-op. Before we can figure out the feasibility of a digitization project we need a volunteer (or two!) to watch these tapes and let us know what quality they are in after 15 years and how much content is on each tape. If you have a VCR, like watching community interviews, and can take notes, this is the perfect job for you! If you are interested, please contact Liz Schultz at director@oberlinheritage.org or by calling (440) 774-1700.

Also of Interest

Check out an excellent new article *How Perry Young Broke Aviation's Color Barrier* from the Smithsonian's *Air & Space* magazine (<https://www.airspacemag.com/history-of-flight/how-perry-young-broke-color-barrier-180971214/>). Young's family moved to Oberlin in 1929 for better educational opportunities and he graduated from Oberlin High School in 1937. He earned his pilot's license at 20 years old and trained black pilots at the Tuskegee Institute. Despite these successes, Young continually had to maneuver around and break through racist employment restrictions to stay in the air. His pioneering work opened the doors for others to follow.

The Oberlin African-American Genealogy & History Group's (<http://oaaghg.com/>) free public programs take place at the Oberlin Public Library (65 South Main Street) on the first Saturday of the month at 11:00 a.m. On **Saturday, February 2**, the program featured *History of the*

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Also of Interest (continued)

Founders of Alabama State University. Next month's program, on **March 2**, will be about *Oberlinian Mary Burnett Talbert*, first female recipient of the NAACP Spingarn Medal. All are welcome.

Mark your calendars now for two upcoming **FREE** genealogy programs in northeast Ohio!

- **Saturday, March 9, 9:00 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.** The African American Family History Symposium brings together nationally-known historians and genealogists from Cleveland and beyond to teach and inspire attendees to explore their African American roots. Featured speakers include LaBrenda Garrett-Nelson, Hollis Gentry, Deborah Abbott, and Tim Pinnick. Registration includes free lunch. Register by March 2 by calling (216) 386-1833 or online at <http://www.tinyurl.com/aafhs2019> Location: The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, 25000 Westwood Road, Westlake. Sponsored by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Days Saints in partnership with The African-American Genealogical Society, Cleveland Ohio and The Oberlin African-American Genealogy and History Group.
- **Saturday, March 30, 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.** African American Genealogy with Deborah Abbott is a morning seminar hosted by the Akron-Summit County Public Library (60 South High Street, Akron). The two sessions are *African American Genealogy: Leaving No Stone Unturned* and *It's a Needle in a Haystack: Slave Research*. To register or for more information, contact the Special Collections Division at (330) 643-9030 or speccollections@akronlibrary.org.



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