



## Oberlin Heritage Center February 2023 Gazette

### Help OHC Make History!

# OBERLIN HERITAGE CENTER STRATEGIC PLANNING PUBLIC FORUMS

HELP US CONNECT THE PAST TO THE PRESENT & FUTURE



What kinds of history interest you? What historic resources or workshops would be useful to you? What roles can OHC play in making Oberlin a better community? Please join with others at one of three public forums to share ideas for OHC's next strategic plan. We want to hear how the organization is (or is not) serving you, what else we should try, and what we can do better. All are welcome and encouraged to attend - OHC members and non-members, youth and adults, long-time supporters and first-time participants, Oberlinians and regional residents. Each forum will last approximately 60-75 minutes and involve easy, open questions and conversation. Refreshments will be provided and attendees will be eligible for an Oberlin gift certificate. Please register for your selected date at [bit.ly/3GwyZyw](https://bit.ly/3GwyZyw) or by calling our office at 440-774-1700.

Available forum dates:

- **Monday, February 27 3:00 p.m.** at the Oberlin Public Library (65 South Main Street)
- **Thursday, March 2 5:30 p.m.** at Mt. Zion Baptist Church Fellowship Center (81 Locust Street)
- **Saturday, March 11 2:00 p.m.** at Prospect Elementary School (36 South Prospect Street)

The forums will be facilitated by the Center for Community Solutions. If you are not able to attend but would like to share your thoughts or speak to an OHC strategic planning member, please email [director@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:director@oberlinheritage.org) or call 440-774-1700. Later this month we will also be mailing a survey to a sample of area residents and sharing the same survey online so that everyone can provide feedback.

## Upcoming Events

### **Virginia Proctor Powell Florence: A Life, A Legacy**

*Tuesday, February 21, 6:30 p.m. at the Oberlin Public Library*



Join the Oberlin Heritage Center for a program about Oberlin College alumna Virginia Proctor Powell Florence, who was the second African American and the first African American woman to earn a professional degree in librarianship. Born in Wilkensburg, Pennsylvania, Powell Florence graduated from high school in Pittsburgh and then followed her mother's footsteps to Oberlin College where she graduated in 1919. She then earned a Bachelor of Library Science degree from the Pittsburgh Carnegie Library School. Her 40-year career included positions in public libraries and schools in New York City, Washington, D.C., and Richmond, Virginia. During her lifetime she faced discrimination in her choice of studies and career opportunities and was active in Civil Rights organizations.

The program presenter, Eboni Johnson, is the Outreach and Program Librarian of Oberlin College and has championed research and recognition of Virginia Proctor Powell Florence. Johnson earned a BA from Oberlin College and MLIS from Kent State University. She loves empowering students to conduct their own research and is interested in diversity and social justice in libraries, including creating frameworks to help underrepresented people be more visible in library and archival collections.

This program, offered during Black History month, is free and open to the public. Refreshments will be provided by the Oberlin Public Library

*Photo: Virginia Proctor Powell Florence in the 1920 Hi-Oh-Hi Oberlin College Yearbook.*

## Field Trip to ICA Conservation Lab!

*An OHC Members-Only Offering, Monday, February 13 at 2:00 p.m.*

Spaces are still available for OHC's members to visit ICA (originally known as the Intermuseum Conservation Association). ICA is the oldest, full-service art conservation laboratory in the country and was founded right here in Oberlin in 1952! This visit, expected to last about 75 minutes, will include a history of the organization, tour of their new labs, and a first-hand look at some of their current projects. The fee for this experience is \$15 per person and, thanks to ICA's blessing, the fee entirely supports OHC's programs and services. Space is limited to 20 people for this visit, so please register soon!



Guests will be asked to remove their coats, bags, and handbags in the lab space. Some chairs will be available but the majority of the visit will be spent standing and walking around the lab. The space is wheelchair accessible but please let us know in advance so ICA's team can move things to improve the experience.

ICA is located within the Pivot Center for Art, Dance, and Expression at 2937 W. 25th Street, Cleveland, OH, 44113. The entrance to the lab is on the second floor, via the elevator inside the main entrance and to the right. Participants are expected to meet at ICA by 1:55 p.m. Parking is available off of Castle Avenue, which runs alongside the property. A limited number of carpool spaces, for an additional fee, are available with OHC staff, who will be leaving from Oberlin at 1:00 p.m. Contact Executive Director Liz Schultz at 440-774-1700 or [director@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:director@oberlinheritage.org) for details.

## The Underground Railroad & Abolitionists of Northern Ohio (Bicentennial Speaker Series)

*Sunday, February 19, 3:00 PM*

Ohio was a significant part of the network of safe houses and hiding places that became known as the Underground Railroad. Lorain County, in particular, was important for a number of reasons. Prior to the Civil War, as many as 3,000 African Americans passed through or lived in Oberlin after escaping from slavery. The town was once said to be second only to Canada as an asylum for freedom seekers. Learn about the historic decisions that shaped Oberlin's growth as a station and highlight the individuals and events that marked Oberlin as one of the most active stations of the Underground Railroad. Stories will include Oberlin College's acceptance of African American students, the famous ship Amistad, men who volunteered for John Brown's violent raid on Harper's Ferry, and local efforts to thwart slave catchers. Stephanie Bohnak, the Museum Education & Tour Manager at the Oberlin Heritage Center, will give this illustrated program via zoom on Sunday, February 19 at 3:00 PM. The program is free but registration is required. This event is presented by OHC as part of LCHS's monthly speaker series to commemorate Lorain County's Bicentennial.

Register Here: <https://bit.ly/3DyнкP4>

## News From OHC

### Foiled Again Returns in March!



Do you enjoy mysteries? Do you like science or puzzles? If so, Foiled Again! The Aluminum Mystery Experience is perfect for your families, friends, teams, or clubs! Join us at the Oberlin Heritage Center and book this private mystery experience where your group will have a chance to help Professor Jewett solve the mystery of where his aluminum science notes went inside the Jewett House. Immerse yourself in the late 1800s as he helped his student, Charles Martin Hall discover the Aluminum Reduction Process. This

teamwork-based activity is best suited for detectives over the age of 9. We recommend groups between 3-8 participants.

Detectives will meet at the Jewett House after booking their group online via our [events page](#). This experience is \$20 per group, but OHC members receive a 10% discount. Groups are private once booked. Inquiries regarding additional dates can be directed to the Museum Education and Tour Manager at 440-774-1700 or via email [tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org)

See below the following dates available for booking:

Thursday, March 9, 2023 at 6:00pm  
Saturday, March 18, 2023 at 2:00pm  
Thursday, April 13, 2023 at 6:00pm  
Saturday, April 22, 2023 at 2:00pm  
Saturday, May 13, 2023 at 2:00pm  
Thursday, May 18, 2023 at 6:00pm

### Michael's Stamp Collecting Starter Kit

This opportunity was brought to our attention by retired Oberlin Conservatory Professor Michael Lynn.

Free Stamp Collecting Starter Kit – for children or adults! Stamp collecting is a wonderful hobby which many people stay involved with for a lifetime. It is a terrific way to learn about history, as most stamps either commemorate an important person or event. More than 700 different countries have issued stamps, with some going back to the 1840s.



Each kits contains:

- 50-60 stamps in a worldwide random assortment on a stock sheet – 2 sides
- some stamps, still on paper, so people can try soaking off the stamps
- a small assortment of stamps from one country of your choice (as available).
- 1 US postal card or envelope
- 2 First Day Covers

- 1 plate block
- an assortment of US stamps including a couple over 100 years old
- a very brief introduction to collecting stamps

These kits are totally free of charge. If you are interested, please email Michael at [usstamps@mac.com](mailto:usstamps@mac.com) and he will then ask you a few questions and prepare a Kit for you.

## Museum & Members Update



OHC Museum Education & Tour Manager Stephanie Bohnak has revealed via her Docent News feed that the spring docent field trip will be to the historic Burrell Homestead in Sheffield which served as a stop on the underground railroad. This trip is only available to docents and/or volunteers working with the Oberlin Heritage Center. If you are interested in participating in events like this one in the future, consider volunteering with OHC or becoming a docent by contacting Stephanie at [tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org](mailto:tourinfo@oberlinheritage.org) or calling 440-774-1700.

With great sorrow we note the passing of Linda Isabell and extend our condolences to others in the community who are mourning this loss.

*Photo Credit: Chris Light*

## Also of Interest:



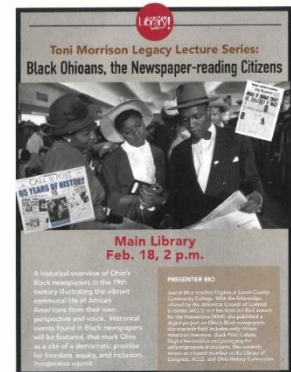
### Telling New Stories About Black History in Oberlin:

The Oberlin Wellington Theater Project and Wilson Bruce Evans Home Historical Society are sharing updates for Black History Month on Saturday, February 4 at 4pm.

Those interested can attend via <https://oberlin.zoom.us/j/83929956787> (Visit this link at the allotted event time).

## Lorain Public Library System announces 2023 Toni Morrison Legacy Lecture Series

The Lorain Public Library System has announced an annual lecture series in honor of Toni Morrison called the "Toni Morrison Legacy Lecture Series". Their goal in this series is to promote African American contributions to American culture, much as Toni herself did during her life.



Jewon Woo, an associate professor of English at Lorain County Community College and a recipient of fellowships from the American College of Learned Societies and the National Endowment of Humanities for her digital project on Ohio's black newspapers, will present a lecture at the Main branch of the Lorain Public Library System on Toni Morrison Day, **February 18, at 2 PM**. The lecture, "Black Ohioans, the Newspaper-reading Citizens," will offer an overview of the vibrant communal life of African Americans from their own perspective and voice. Black newspapers, like various print matters produced by African Americans in U.S. history, can help us rethink ideas and practices on citizenship, civil rights and freedom in the constellation of our interconnected lives through their victorious achievements even when the government failed to regard them as full-right citizens. Dr. Woo will explain historical events found in Black newspapers that mark Ohio as a site of a democratic promise for freedom, equity and inclusion.

Pre-registration is required. For questions, please reach out to Cheri Campbell at [ccampbell@lpls.info](mailto:ccampbell@lpls.info).



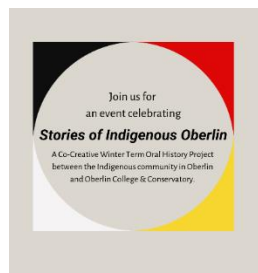
### History of Civil Rights in Cleveland Webinar

Join Nishani Frazier, an Associate Professor of History and American Studies at the University of Kansas on Tuesday, Feb. 21 at 12:00 p.m. for a webinar presented by the Cleveland Restoration Society on the civil rights movement in Cleveland. In conjunction with the **Cleveland Civil Rights Trail**, Frazier will cover the long arch of political activism among Black Clevelanders from around

the city's founding to the modern civil rights era, and document how this rich history relates to the present day. Come celebrate Black History Month by learning about the history of Civil Rights in Cleveland.

Registration is Free & Required

Register Here: <https://bit.ly/3WUcee2>



### Celebration of Stories of Indigenous Oberlin at OPL

There will be a community celebration of Stories of Indigenous Oberlin on Sunday, February 5, 2.30pm, in the Oberlin Public Library Community Room. The celebration is a 2023 Winter Term project of Oberlin College and Conservatory in partnership with Oberlin's Indigenous community.

There will be a presentation about the project, including comments from both community participants and students about what the

project has meant for each of them. The presentation will be followed by a reception. All are welcome, including kids, family members, friends, colleagues and any news reporters you would like to invite.

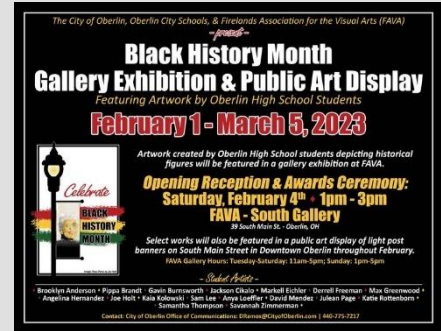
The project was sponsored by the Winter Term Office, the Bonner Center for Community-Engaged Learning, Teaching, and Research, and supported by Oberlin College Libraries.

Please contact either Jennifer Fraser (jfraser@oberlin.edu) or Megan Mitchell (msmitche@oberlin.edu) with any questions about the event.

### Black History Month Gallery Exhibition at FAVA

The Oberlin High School Art department is collaborating with the City of Oberlin and Firelands Association for the Visual Arts to (FAVA) to coordinate an art exhibition of portraits depicting historical figures in celebration of Black History Month 2023. Selected portraits will be displayed on the light post banners in downtown Oberlin.

Visit the [FAVA Website](#) for More Details including about the reception on February 4 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.



### OPL Welcomes Their New Director

The community is invited to welcome David Fausnaugh, the new director of the Oberlin Public Library, during an Open House on Wednesday, February 1 from 3:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. in the OPL Community Room. Before joining the Oberlin Public Library, David was library director of the Pickaway County Library in Circleville, Ohio. Light refreshments will be served.

### Performance of Honey and Rue - Feb 24

There is a performance planned for February 24 in Finney Chapel at Oberlin Conservatory in which voice professor and soprano, [Katherine Jolly](#), and the Oberlin Orchestra will be performing *Honey and Rue*, a work commissioned by legendary opera singer Kathleen Battle in the early 90's, having been inspired by Toni Morrison's *The Bluest Eye*. The work was composed by André Previn and set to poetry commissioned for the work by Toni Morrison. This will be the **Oberlin premiere** of the work.

Stay tuned to Oberlin College official releases for more information.



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