



# GRINDSTONE AWARD



**1967**

**Otto Mahler**

Otto Mahler, the first person to be named Berea's Outstanding Citizen of the Year, was born in Marinette, Wisconsin, in 1900. Upon the death of his mother, 9-year old Otto and four brothers and sisters moved to Berea and into what is now the Methodist Children's Home.

Always active and skilled in athletics, Otto excelled in baseball and basketball at Berea High School and Baldwin-Wallace College, from which he graduated in 1925.

He taught in high school for several years before purchasing Gray's Candy Kitchen on Berea's Triangle, where he had worked while in high school. He owned this Berea landmark for 43 years until the riverside of the Triangle gave way to Grindstone-Heritage Park. The present bell tower in the Park stands close to the former site of Gray's Candy Kitchen.

Otto Mahler's civic contributions have been many and varied. He is an active member of the Board of Trustees of the Methodist Children's Home. He has served

as a Berea councilman and is a charter member of the Berea Chamber of Commerce, where he has served on its board for many years. A 38-year perfect attendance badge adorns his Kiwanis pin.

A lesser known, but very important contribution Otto has made to this community is his work with youth. He helped organize Berea's first Recreation Commission. His thoughtfulness, encouragement and understanding helped many a Berea youth over a difficult hurdle, and his fatherly advice was always delivered with kindness, wit and humor. Many Baldwin-Wallace Students will testify to Otto's generosity in helping them finance their educations.

In 1975, Otto and Mabel Mahler made a most significant contribution to Berea, with the establishment of the Berea Historical Museum on East Bridge Street. The Mahler's challenge gift made it possible to acquire the building and property for this important civic asset.

The Mahler's live on Adams Street.

Presented April 11, 1967

Strosacker Hall, Baldwin-Wallace College