

Aluminum pioneer honored

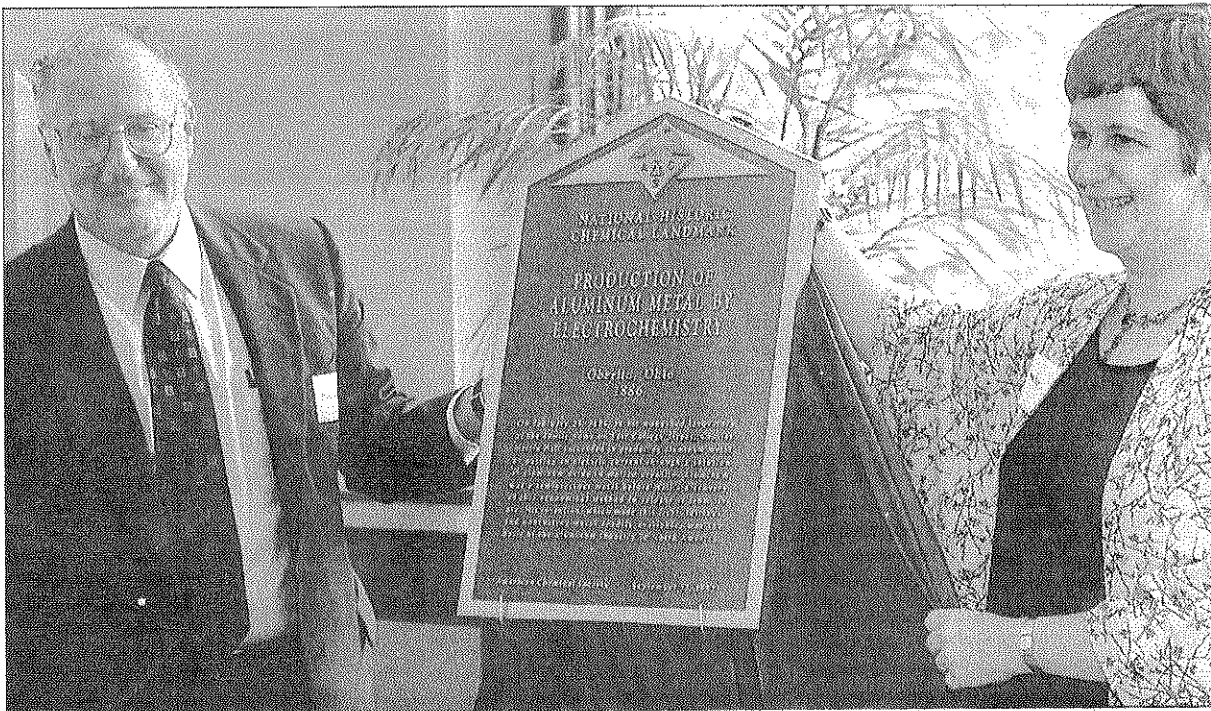
Jane Trager
The Chronicle-Telegram

OBERLIN — An 1885 Oberlin College graduate who discovered the commercial process of extracting aluminum from its ore was honored Wednesday.

Charles Martin Hall made his discovery in 1886, while experimenting in a woodshed behind his family's home at 64 E. College St. after graduation. The site of the discovery was recognized as a National Historic Chemical Landmark by the American Chemical Society at a reception at the college.

Hall went on to become one of the founders of Alcoa, a major producer of aluminum products.

Members of the American Chemical Society and Charles Hall Acton Jr., Hall's great-great nephew, were at the college to pay him tribute. Also at the afternoon reception was Bernard Guest, the grandson of Paul Heroult, a man who made a comparable discovery in France at about



DIANA McNEES / CHRONICLE

HAIL HALL: Events at Oberlin College on Wednesday honored Charles Martin Hall, an Oberlin alumnus, for discovering the process for commercial production of aluminum. Paul Anderson, president of the American Chemical Society, and college President Nancy Dye showed a metal landmark plaque that will be placed in Oberlin. The plaque is made of aluminum, naturally.

the same time as Hall's work.

Acton confessed he really didn't know very much about his great-great uncle. But he characterized Hall as "a person of great focus and perseverance."

Acton said Hall might not have been an intellectual, but "his interest in education — his own, and others' — was clear."

Hall was also "a model of American ingenuity," said Frank

Lederman, vice president of technology at Alcoa.

Nancy S. Dye, president of Oberlin, was presented with a plaque — fittingly made of aluminum.