

# *Gazette*

## Ogle County Historical Society 2014 RECAP

Last year the Historical Society was open 50 Thursday mornings, 22 Sunday afternoons, and 5 Saturdays. We had nearly 1100 visitors, among them the following groups: DLR Seventh Graders, OPD Day Campers, and OES Fourth Graders. The Ogle County Genealogical Society met here seven times.

On April 12 we had a talk and book signing by Stan “Tex” Banash, author of Roadside History of Illinois, the 22<sup>nd</sup> volume in Mountain Press Publishing’s Roadside History series. There is a copy on our shelves which members may check out.

Our first Living History Craft Faire was held on June 21 with over a dozen craft booths, 2 food stands, and our Living History presenters. In addition, the full size clay model of the tenth sculpture in the Community Arts Legacy series was displayed in the Annex for the day.

Once again we co hosted, with Friends of the Library and Rock River Center, a program at RRC. Historian and documentary filmmaker Bill Jamerson spoke (and sang) about the Civilian Conservation Corps to an audience of about 100 on October 1. There were 2 CCC camps in Ogle County in the late 30’s and early 40’s.

The Junior Docent program continues to grow. Three students remain from previous years, and between early May and late August we added 7 more, although 2 have dropped out.

Society members Tim O’Rourke, Jon Barnhart, and Bill Bailey led 6 Oregon Park District historic walking tours in September and October.

Attendance at the museum on Saturday of Autumn on Parade was down due to bad weather, but we had a float in Sunday’s parade for the second year in a row. Candlelight Walk in November featured an old-time Christmas tree with candles in our annex, along with live music by Brushwood.

Our presence on social media is expanding, with nearly four times as many Facebook friends as in 2013. Now we just need to start converting “friends” into members and volunteers.

## RECENT ACQUISITIONS

The influx of donated items has slowed considerably since the last column, but that has given us time to do some catching up in our record keeping. No matter what documents or artifacts are donated to us, if we don't take down the necessary information and keep good, accurate records, the items will not be as useful in telling the story of Ogle County as they should be.

On October 23, the day of the visit of the DLR seventh graders, we also had a visit from Ray Schwartz of Rochelle. He graciously donated a copy of his book, A History of St. Patrick Catholic Church, Rochelle, Illinois, 1856-2012, which was published by the church. This gives us additional information to add to what can be found in the history of the Rockford Diocese which we received a few years ago. Both books are now together on our research shelves.

Member Beth Simeone donated some U. S. Geological Survey maps that she had purchased at a sale. Although they are centered on the Dixon and Sterling areas, the southern portions of Ogle County are shown. In mid-October we exchanged some information on the orphan trains with Judith Lampert, a volunteer at the Hudson IL Public Library, whose grandfather was an orphan train child who lived in Ogle County. We now have a little more information in our orphan train file, in addition to the four books on our research shelves.

Our last acquisition of 2014 was from the estate of longtime Historical Society member Margaret Knight of Lindenwood. She was a school librarian in Park Ridge IL for many years before retiring back to Lindenwood. The donated items include a WWII military surplus typewriter which Margaret used on the job and bought from the school district when she retired, a guide to the 1933 Chicago World's Fair which the family attended, and WWII

ration books and other Office of Price Administration documents issued to the family. Also included were about three dozen letters written to Margaret's mother, Viola Knight, by several Lindenwood area soldiers with whom she corresponded.

So far this year we have received, from Judy McNett, a box of letters and documents that belonged to Robert Mann, one of the sons of Heathcote "Hec" and Ellen Mann of Mt. Morris. Many members of the family worked in the printing and graphic arts business, long a staple of Mt. Morris' economy, but now long gone. Bob was a WWII veteran who died in a car accident nearly 60 years ago, leaving no family of his own. We haven't yet had time to go through the items, but his Army memorabilia will compliment the (full) Navy footlocker we received a few years ago from the family of his brother Eric.





## 2015 WINTER PROJECT

The two quilts shown above and on the previous page are among the items involved in our winter project. Twelve quilts and counterpanes are currently in a turndown in the living room. The glass-doored cabinet which houses them has been lined with acid-free tissue and they will soon be refolded and returned to their home, with identifying signs.



# JUNIOR DOCENT PROGRAM

As stated in the 2014 Recap on the front page, the Junior Docent program has expanded greatly this year. We currently have 8 junior high and high school students at varying levels of participation depending on their personal schedules and willingness. More than half of them live within walking or biking distance of the museum, which makes it easier on everyone. Some of the older ones have recently started to voluntarily take on a leadership role in our projects; this eases the pressure on the adult volunteers who supervise the program.

A few of the Junior Docents volunteered over 100 hours apiece here last year, and as a group the total was close to 600 hours. Many of them also get volunteer hours from other organizations.

Right now there two 5<sup>th</sup> graders and one 4<sup>th</sup> grader who have visited here multiple times with school groups, park district groups, and parents and can't wait until they are old enough to join the Junior Docent program. That's something that should make all of us chronologically enhanced volunteers happy.



Remember 2012, when we had weather like this during spring break? A couple of these Park District Day Camp visitors from that week may become Junior Docents in the future.

## OGLE COUNTY IN THE CIVIL WAR

by Bill Bailey

### #18—34<sup>th</sup> Illinois Volunteer Infantry, pt.2

On December 27, 1862, the 34<sup>th</sup> Illinois, along with the rest of the right wing of XIV Army Corps, moved out of their camp near Nashville toward the town of Triune. After driving the Confederates out of town, they advanced on Murfreesboro and took part in the battle there, which was also known as Stone's River. Among the 21 men of the regiment killed in this "two-year" fight (Dec. 31, 1862—Jan. 2, 1863) were Archibald Pratt of Taylor Township, Charles Easton and Henry Willaby of Adeline, and John M. Smith of Mt. Morris. Col. Kirk, the regiment's original commanding officer, who had been promoted to general and given command of a brigade, was also killed.

Following the battle the 34<sup>th</sup> was on duty at Murfreesboro until June. During this time David H. Talbot of Lynville, who was Commissary Sergeant, in charge of distribution of rations for the regiment, was promoted to Lieutenant and made Regimental Quartermaster, being put in charge of wagons, tents, clothing, and all other equipment except food and ammunition. He kept a diary from May 25-September 4, a copy of which is in our files. Most of his entries deal with his duties, but he mentions several times going to visit his younger brother Prescott, who was in the 74<sup>th</sup> Illinois which was also stationed near Murfreesboro.

On June 24 the 34<sup>th</sup> and 74<sup>th</sup> Illinois and the rest of the Army of the Cumberland set out on what would become known as the Tullahoma Campaign, Gen. William S. Rosecrans' plan which forced Gen. Bragg's Confederate army to retreat over 100 miles, giving up Chattanooga TN and the most direct route between Virginia and the Mississippi River. The next day the regiment advanced through deep mud in a freshly plowed field to defeat the 2<sup>nd</sup> Arkansas Infantry, suffering 29 casualties. Alexander Merrill of Grand Detour was among those killed, and Avery Laphorn and Charles Miner, friends of Lt. Talbot's from Lynville, were wounded.

On July 4, three days after the capture of Tullahoma, David Talbot wrote in his diary, "The glorious Fourth of July was spent by us in a very quiet manner if we may except the roar of a National Salute of 35 guns. How natural it is for the mind to revert to past scenes when our land was undisturbed by the horrid ravages of war—God grant that another Fourth may find us in the enjoyment of an honorable peace—our country saved. The Union victorious."

On August 7 Col. Dysart of the 34<sup>th</sup> resigned his commission, leaving the regiment under the command of Lt.-Col. Oscar Van Tassell of Grand Detour, who had originally been the Captain of Company F. During this time the Ogle County men of the 34<sup>th</sup> were continuing to have their eyes opened to the fact that the freed slaves they encountered were people, not property. On August 9, David Talbot wrote: "Went to church in forenoon. Our chaplain preached—3 p.m. went to church and heard another sermon from an old negro who could not read or write. I never was so surprised in my life. His language was good, delivery excellent he was truly excellent. Eloquent. I had rather hear him than many college learnt ministers."

The 34<sup>th</sup> spent the second half of August on Provost Guard duty, and then guarded the pontoon bridge over the Tennessee River at Caperton's Ferry. Additional rear area guard details prevented them from losing more men at the battle of Chickamauga and the army's subsequent retreat back to Chattanooga, to which they returned in mid-November. After taking part in the battle of Missionary Ridge, the regiment was part of the East Tennessee expedition which eased Confederate pressure on Gen. Burnside's troops in the Knoxville area. They returned to Chattanooga on December 19. Three days later the 34<sup>th</sup> was mustered in as a Veteran unit, the requisite minimum of 350 men having signed re-enlistment papers, and on January 8, 1864 the regiment started for Springfield IL and their veteran's furlough.

THE STORY OF THE 34<sup>TH</sup> ILLINOIS AND THE OGLE COUNTY MEN WHO SERVED IN THE REGIMENT WILL BE CONCLUDED IN A FUTURE ISSUE OF THE GAZETTE.

The Ogle County Historical Society  
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Oregon, Il. 61061

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**Application for Membership**

\_\_\_\_\_ \$35 per household per year

\_\_\_\$5 per year for hard copy of Gazette

Renewals due in November for following year

Name\_\_\_\_\_

Street Address\_\_\_\_\_

City\_\_\_\_\_ State\_\_\_\_\_ Zip\_\_\_\_\_

Phone\_\_\_\_\_

Email\_\_\_\_\_

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