

# *Gazette*

## Ogle County Historical Society

### 2017 RECAP

Last year the Ogle County Historical Society was open 51 Thursdays, 21 Sundays, and 5 Saturdays. One of our Saturday openings was in conjunction with Oregon's first Rockin' River Fest. Our tour groups were down from last year. After several years of visiting us, the 4<sup>th</sup> grade classes from OES did not come this year, so the DLR 7<sup>th</sup> graders were our only school tour. Members of a camping club from Algonquin IL who were spending a few days at Lowden State Park visited us in early June. We had a total of about 600 visitors during the year.

Our college intern, Kasia Majewski, ended her time with us in mid-January, and wrote an article on the Umzoowees which appeared in the April issue of the Gazette. It was interesting to see a young person's viewpoint of something from county history. In May, Blaise McGlenn, who joined our Junior Docent program in April 2012, graduated from Oregon High School, becoming the first student to stay with the program all the way through high school. The Junior Docents gave the society about 110 volunteer hours in 2017.

New memberships are just about keeping pace with the loss of our older members, but we could always use more. A lot of people are following our Facebook page; now we just need more of those people to become members, and more of the local ones to volunteer.

Continued p.2

We received donations of books, documents, and artifacts from 39 individuals and organizations last year. In addition to 29 books, we obtained 14 Oregon and Rochelle High School yearbooks to fill in some of the gaps in our collection. Several photos and documents were received digitally, and other items ranged in size from a large wooden sign advertising Three Sisters Rocks Resort, which was located on the east side of the Rock River just south of Oregon, to a pencil from Ukulele Station America, one of Oregon's newer businesses, which repurposes and reuses a historic stone building.

Member Bill Bailey led an Oregon Park District historic walking tour of North Fifth and Sixth Streets in August.

We are looking forward to 2018 and hoping for more activities, more visitors, more members, and more volunteers!

***THANK YOU!***

For the fifth or sixth year in a row, the Northern Illinois Antique Dealers Association has donated a portion of the proceeds of their annual antique show and sale to the Ogle County Historical Society. Thanks again, NIADA!

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## RECENT ACQUISITIONS

Books predominated among the items we received in the last few months. The University of Iowa Press sent us a review copy of Mary Jane's Ghost: The Legacy of a Murder in a Small Town by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Ted Gregory of the *Chicago Tribune*. Several of our members have read it, and all agree that it's a very fair, objective, and well-balanced treatment of Oregon's 1948 unsolved murders. Member Dotti Bowers donated a copy of Blackhawk the Great Indian Chief of the West by Benjamin Drake.

Lyn Sherwood, granddaughter of Eugene de L'Horbe, sent us his copies of Both Sides of the Garden Gate, a book of poetry written by his mother, Augusta, and Blueberry Moon, by Edith Andrew Burchell. Also included was a plant fossil found in the old quarry at Sunset Hill in 1960. In early November, Grand Detour historian Duane Paulson dropped off copies of two of his books, Grand Detour Stories and Grand Detour 2014 Driving Tour.

The Scott Township/Davis Junction Historical Society sent us a 1989 OCHS brochure listing our officers, board members, and committees from that year. We also received a copy of a play, Apple Stars and Family Trees, written by Leaf River author Esther Buskohl. Thanks to Joanne Pennock, Esther's daughter, for bringing it in. Melody Welty, whose father, Walt Spangler, and several uncles served in World War Two, gave us a four CD set of the music of WWII.

Dale Doughty, who lives on the west coast, emailed us digital copies of the Civil War records of his ancestor, George Doughty. The family lived in Ogle County from 1844 until around 1900. George served in the 34<sup>th</sup> Illinois Infantry and was killed at Stone's River, while his brother William was in the 92<sup>nd</sup> Illinois. These two regiments contained over 25% of the Ogle men who served in the war.

Cont. p.4

Sheri Semon, daughter of Glenn Bevington of Mt. Morris, gave us several U.S. military road maps which her father used when he was stationed in France in the mid-1950's, as well as a June 1957 *National Geographic* containing articles about American battle monuments in Europe and touring Europe by trailer caravan. Our last accession of the year was several local history books from the estate of Cliff Knapp, who taught at Lorado Taft field campus of NIU for many years. These included biographies of Lorado Taft and Margaret Fuller, an official guide book from the Margaret Fuller Festival of the Arts in 1993, and a coloring book of Rock River Valley history.

We have received two items so far this year. The first was a digitization of a photo, taken in 1967, of the CB&Q Blackhawk, which traveled overnight from Minneapolis to Chicago, at the Oregon Depot. Thanks to Rick Burn of Holland MI for remembering us when he was digitizing his old slides. Member Wayne Suter brought in a shoe stretcher made by Stamm Industries of Oregon in the 1970's.

We are still open every Thursday morning, and our Sunday afternoon hours start in May. Stop in and see "what's new in old stuff."

## **NEWS OF THE PAST**

### **Lorado Taft's Clay Talk**

This most popular Lyceum entertainment will be given Monday, April 30, at 8 p.m., at the Star Theater under the direction of the Women's Club of Oregon. While many of Mr. Taft's friends have seen him at work in the studio and on the platform, a large number of those who enjoy his acquaintance have never before had an opportunity to witness his skill and listen to his interesting and instructive discourse on the art of which he is a master. The sale of tickets will continue during the week.—April 25, 1923



**Left:** MILITARY HUMOR

FROM 100 YEARS AGO

**Below:** THE CB&Q

BLACKHAWK AT

THE OREGON

DEPOT--1967



## OGLE COUNTY IN THE CIVIL WAR

by Bill Bailey

#30—Anton Beck, Oregon

Anton Beck was born in the Kingdom of Wurtemberg (later part of Germany) on February 8, 1838. His father died ten years later, and in 1854 Anton and his mother came to the United States, settling in Pittsburgh PA. Anton moved to Orfordville WI in 1857 and to Oregon IL two years later. He studied the new art of photography, and engaged in that business in his new home.

Early in the Civil War, Anton Beck enlisted in Company A of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Illinois Volunteer Cavalry Regiment, which was mustered in to federal service on August 14, 1861. As mentioned in an earlier column, about two-thirds of the men in Co. A were from Ogle County. After the regiment finished training at Camp Butler in Springfield, the various companies were split up, with Pvt. Beck and the rest of Co. A, along with Co. B, being assigned as escorts, couriers, and scouts for Gen. E. O. C. Ord. In the late summer of 1862 the 2<sup>nd</sup> Illinois was one of the first cavalry regiments in the army to be re-armed with the Sharps breech-loading carbine (see photo on next page).

In late March of 1863, companies A and E were assigned as escorts to Gen. John A. Logan, a fellow Illinoisan, and served in that capacity until after the fall of Vicksburg in July. After serving as escort for Gen. John Stevenson during his expedition to Louisiana, Co. A was reunited with part of the rest of the regiment at Baton Rouge.

Anton Beck was one of the many Ogle County men in the company who chose not to reenlist in early 1864, so he and the others who had not stayed in Baton Rouge while the reenlistees went home on a 30 day furlough. On August 13 the soldiers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> who had not reenlisted

were discharged. Four days later, Anton Beck married Elizabeth Goll in New Orleans, and the newlyweds went home to Oregon.

Mr. Beck attempted to return to the photography business, but had to give it up due to vision problems caused by disease during the war. He then began gardening on land near the junction of Mix and Jackson Streets and gradually expanded until he was supplying produce, especially strawberries, grapes, and sweet potatoes, to a large proportion of the citizens of the city. By the time of his death in 1915, his son George, the fourth of his seven children, had joined the business and kept it up for many years. The Historical Society's Facebook page recently featured information on the Beck produce business and photos of George. In the 1880's, Anton's two daughters, Rosa and Mary, graduated from Oregon high School and taught for a few years. Anton Beck was one more Ogle County Civil War veteran who, along with his family, contributed much to the community following his service.



**Pvt. Anton Beck with horse and equipment,  
including Sharps carbine.**

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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