

OHA AT 150**A major general
draws a big crowd**

The Onondaga Historical Association is celebrating its 150th anniversary. Here's what was going on in 1863:

Major General Franz Sigel spoke in Syracuse at Wieting Hall (on Clinton Square) to a capacity crowd in support of the war's Union cause, the draft, and emancipation. According to the newspaper, 1,500 people were turned away at the door. Sigel, who was born in Germany, was used by Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War to secure the support of German immigrants living in the North. In the 1860s, Syracuse had a substantial German population. At the outset of his talk, he asked whether he should speak in English or German. Upon receiving mixed answers he decided to compromise and did the first half of his speech in English and the second half in German.

— *Daniel Connors of the OHA*