



# RIPON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

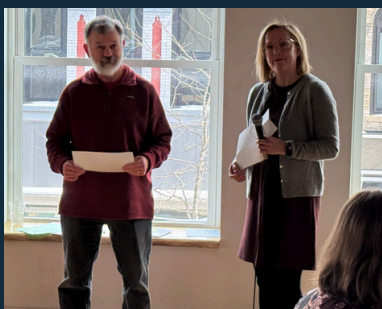
## QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2025

### SOCIETY RECEIVES WEBSTER FOUNDATION GRANT FOR \$2,000

The Ripon Historical Society has received a grant from the Webster Foundation for the **Exhibit Development Experience Internship Program**. The grant application was written by Ripon Historical Society Director, Caron Sisko. The grant supports an initiative to partner with Ripon College, prepare Ripon students to pursue advanced degrees or employment in museums, and to benefit the greater Ripon community.

The Society is committed to further strengthening both the internship model and the quality of exhibits. The money will be used to purchase a new printer, women's dress forms, a good quality mat cutter for making labels, display stands for books and documents, and a picture rail hanging system. All purchases are durable goods that will not only aid in effectively teaching museum studies students about exhibit installation but also benefit the internship program for many years to come.



Webster Foundation Board Member, Dave Schoff, presents check to Caron Sisko at the 22nd Annual Grant Presentation on February 19th.



### EXCITING NEW PROJECT LAUNCHING IN MAY!

#### "YOUR STORY, RIPON'S STORY"

The Ripon Historical Society is launching a new project called, "**Your Story, Ripon's Story**," that celebrates the power of storytelling through objects. The project will showcase objects from community members that tell the history of Ripon. Participation in "Your Story, Ripon's Story" is designed to be open to anyone who wishes to share the story of an object that carries special meaning related to their personal experience.

We will encourage participants to submit objects that make them think of Ripon or feel like a Riponite. These can range from quintessentially Ripon objects that were made in Ripon or have the name of Ripon on them, to objects that tell a hidden story about their connection to Ripon, like a cherished object connected to a previous generation in their family who lived in Ripon.

**(Continued on next page.)**

## YOUR STORY, RIPON'S STORY

CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

**"YOUR STORY, RIPON'S STORY"  
IS ABOUT STORYTELLING  
THROUGH OBJECTS.**

**EACH STORY WILL HELP TO  
DEEPEN OUR UNDERSTANDING  
OF THE HISTORY OF RIPON AND  
ITS PEOPLE.**

Participants will be asked to select an object that's meaningful to them with a connection to Ripon's past. They will then describe the object, answering questions like: What is it made of? Where was it made? Who made it? When was it made? We will ask participants to think about how the object connects to Ripon's history and why the object is important to them or their family.

Beginning in May, participants will be able to submit their story through a submission form on our website. From there, photographs can be submitted, along with a paragraph describing the object. Submissions will be entered into the **Your Story, Ripon's Story Community Archive**, which will be accessible online to the public on our CatalogIt HUB. We also plan to have submission examples available on our website to serve as a guide.

### **Storytelling Through Objects Front Page: Ironstone Pitcher**

Donor, Kathryn Lang, says the pitcher belonged to her grandmother, Bertha Louise Swick Stolfuss (1888-1975), and the story is that it came with the Swick family, from Germany. Bertha was born in Princeton, daughter of Gottlieb and Ernestine Brown Swick, who came to America in 1885. She was married to Fred Stolfuss in 1902. She lived in Princeton and rural Ripon most of her life.

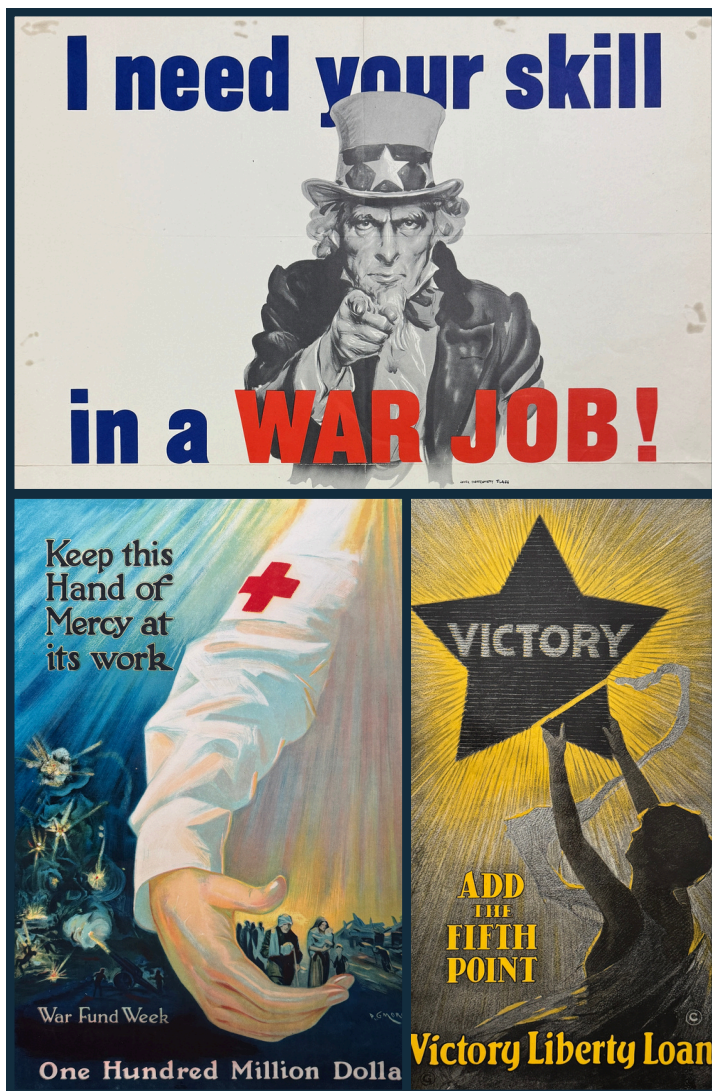


### **COMING UP: KURT DIETRICH**

**March 13, 2025. Presentation about jazz in Ripon and east central Wisconsin. Ripon Historical Society, 508 Watson St., Ripon, WI. 7 pm.**

Kurt Dietrich retired as Professor of Music and Barbara Baldwin De Frees Professor of Performing Arts at Ripon College at the end of the 2018-19 school year, where he taught since 1980. Dietrich graduated from Lawrence University, where he studied with Marge Irvin, Derald DeYoung and John Harmon and played in the band of the legendary Fred "Prof" Schroeder. He received his master's degree from Northwestern University, where he studied trombone with another legend, Chicago Symphony trombonist Frank Crisafulli. He earned his doctorate from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. His first book, ***Duke's 'Bones: Ellington's Great Trombonists***, was published in 1995. His second book, ***Jazz 'Bones: The World of Jazz Trombone***, appeared in 2005. His recent book, ***Wisconsin Riffs: Jazz Profiles from the Heartland***, was released in April 2018 by the Wisconsin Historical Society Press. His latest book, ***Never Givin' Up: The Life and Music of Al Jarreau***, also from WHSP, came out in late summer 2023.



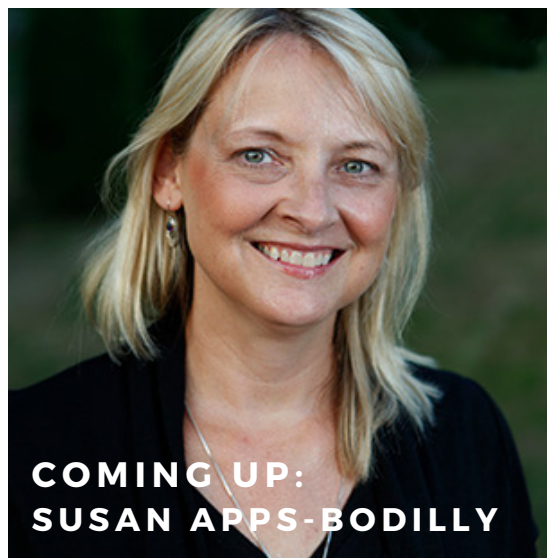


## OUR ENTIRE COLLECTION OF WORLD WAR I AND II PROPAGANDA POSTERS IS NOW ONLINE VIA THE CATALOGIT HUB.

The use of posters as propaganda took off during World War I, and some of the most iconic images from this era are still in use today. One example is the image of Uncle Sam pointing at viewers and saying, "I WANT YOU," created by James Montgomery Flagg. The iconic Uncle Sam image dates from 1916 and was subsequently used throughout the rest of World War I, repurposed for World War II, and is still identifiable to many people today.

Propaganda posters were visual tools used by various organizations to influence public opinion, rally support for the war effort, encourage recruitment, promote conservation of resources, and generally instill a strong sense of patriotism and national unity among citizens. They were critical in mobilizing the home front and maintaining morale throughout the conflicts.

Want to view the collection? Click [here](#).



## COMING UP: SUSAN APPS-BODILLY

April 10, 2025. Timber! A Northwoods Story of Lumberjacks, Logging, and the Land. Ripon Historical Society, 508 Watson Street, Ripon, WI. 7 pm.

Susan R. Apps-Bodilly is a retired educator who taught in elementary and middle schools. She has a degree in Curriculum and Instruction and a master's degree from UW-Madison. She is the author of *One Room Schools*, *Stories from the Days of 1 Room*, *1 Teacher, 8 Grades* and *Seeds in Soil: Planting a Garden and Finding Your Roots*, as well as the co-author of two books with Jerry Apps: *Old Farm County Cookbook* and *Timber! A Northwoods Story of Lumber, Logging, and the Land* (all published by Wisconsin Historical Society Press).

She appeared in a PBS Wisconsin television show: "**Jerry Apps, Food and Memories**," that featured the cookbook. Susan encourages writers of all ages to share their stories. She lives in Madison, Wisconsin, and is available to give presentations on topics related to her books to groups of all ages.



**Above:** Professor Matzke's Public History class from Ripon college in front of the reed organ, along with Director, Caron Sisko.

**Left:** Playing cards from the *Melodies in Time* scavenger hunt game.

## RIPON COLLEGE STUDENTS LEARN ABOUT OUR ORGANIZATION, LOOK AT ARTIFACTS, AND PLAY SCAVENGER HUNT GAME

On February 4th, Ripon College Professor Becky Matzke's Public History class visited the Society. Director, Caron Sisko, presented on the history of the Society, what the society does, and the various people involved in running the organization. Students also toured the exhibits and the archive. In preparation for their research papers, they also looked at artifacts related to World War I & II, Civil War letters, Ripon Knitting Works, and the history of railroads in Ripon. The artifacts on display were meant to inspire students to think about their paper topics.

On February 24, Professor Travis Nygard's Museums, Artifacts, and Cultural Heritage class visited the Society. Students received a behind the scenes tour of the storage areas and also toured the exhibits. The students also had fun playing the scavenger hunt game that is a feature of the *Melodies in Time* exhibit.



**April 24, 2025. Presentation about tax credits for rehabilitation of historic homes. Location TBA, 7 pm.**

Paul Porter has been in historic preservation for 30 years, having earned both bachelor's and master's degrees in historic preservation. He's worked on interior restorations on 8 different homes over the that time period. He has spent the last 15 years in state government in various historic preservation roles. Porter manages the state and federal tax incentive programs for income producing properties and historic homeowners. His passion is helping others to take care of their properties and get a return on their investment. Owners of historic residences in Wisconsin may be eligible for income tax credits that can help pay for their home's rehabilitation. The Homeowners' Tax Credit program returns 25 percent of the cost of approved rehabilitation (of eligible historic homes) as a Wisconsin income tax credit. The Wisconsin Historical Society's State Historic Preservation Office administers this program. Your home does not have to be currently listed as a historic home to apply. You won't want to miss this opportunity to learn about the tax credit program!





## COLLECTORS OF HISTORY

The Society has some new items on display in the permanent exhibit space, featuring Belle Lawson and Samuel Pedrick. Both Sam and Belle were collectors of history and influential figures in the history of the Society. Belle bequeathed her home at 515 Ransom to the Ripon Historical Society upon her death. Upon moving to Ripon, Belle and her mother (pictured above) attended the Congregational church, where they reportedly felt right at home because their friend, Sam Pedrick was the usher.

Belle was an active member of the Ripon Historical Society and was an avid collector and recorder of history. She accumulated an extensive button collection, having started the hobby in 1941. Belle Lawson's button collection consists of 115 cards with buttons sewn on. Every button has a story. Lawson kept detailed notes about each button in spiral notebooks. She collected buttons until 1973. Card #1 is on display with buttons belonging to Belle's mother, Melissa. In her notes, Belle writes, "These buttons were all my mother's. No. 1 shows a hunter, with his dog and gun. The striped pearl ones were on her black silk dress. The oriental design ones were on a brown, lace-bunting dress. Several nice jets."

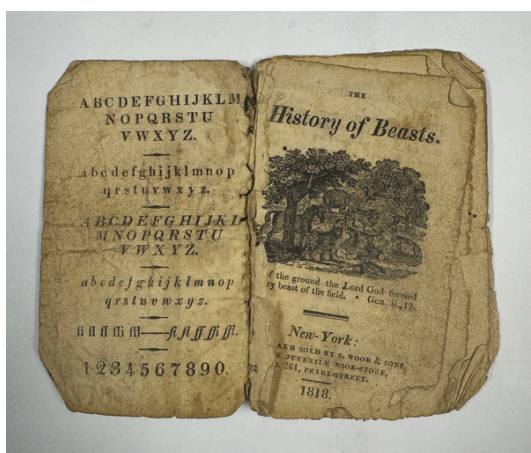
Samuel Pedrick spent 50 years researching and collecting material about the history of Ripon and its people. However, he was not only interested in the practice of law and local history, he was also interested in the arts and sciences, drama, music, good books and the great literature of the world. A few of his books and ephemera are on display, such as a pocket sized children's book, *The History of Beasts*, dated 1818. (Right)



## COMING UP: LARA GRANT

**March 8, April 5, May 31:  
Genealogy Class at Ripon  
Public Library: A three-part  
program. Saturdays, 1-3 pm.**

Beginning in March, a three-part genealogy program to help participants learn the steps of discovering their own family trees will take place at the Ripon Public Library, led by Lara Grant (above), the Ripon Historical Society's genealogist. In part one, participants will learn where to start your family history journey, the types of sources, and how to organize your findings. Resources available at the Ripon Public Library and the Ripon Historical Society will be the focus of the second part in April, and a more detailed look at online sources will be discussed in part three in May. Class size will be limited to 15 and registration is available through the library.





## **“NOW & THEN IN RIPON” ARTICLES AVAILABLE ON OUR CATLOGIT HUB!**

All of 2023 and 2024 “Now & Then in Ripon” newspaper articles, featured in the *Ripon Commonwealth Press*, have been catalogued and are now available online, via our CatalogIt HUB. The online catalog is easily accessible via our website. Just click on “EXPLORE OUR COLLECTION.” The articles are searchable by subject, using the search bar at the top of the HUB page.

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE:  
[RIPONHISTORY.ORG](http://RIPONHISTORY.ORG)**

**CONTACT US:  
[RIPONHISTSOC@GMAIL.COM](mailto:RIPONHISTSOC@GMAIL.COM)**

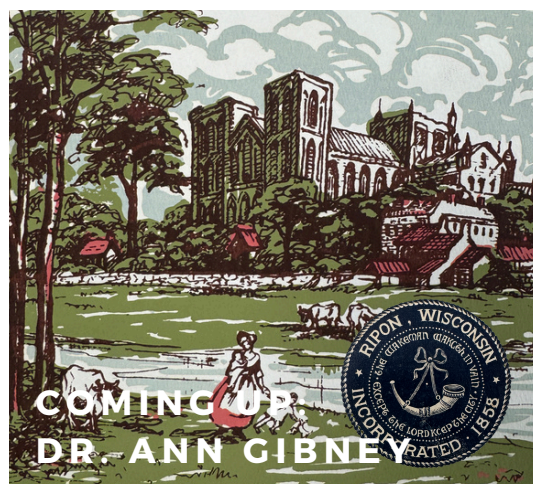
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**May 8, 2025. Dr. Presentation  
on “The Two Ripons.” Ripon  
Historical Society, 508 Watson  
Street, Ripon, WI. 7 pm.**

Dr. Ann Gibney will compare  
Ripon, WI with Ripon, Yorkshire,  
England.

The City's ties to England trace  
back to John Scott Horner, co-  
founder of the City of Ripon,  
whose family ancestry, on the  
side of his paternal grandfather,  
came from Ripon, Yorkshire, and  
settled in Maryland.

Ann Gibney was born in  
Davenport, Iowa, but spent her  
childhood part time in Green  
Lake and Ripon. Her family dates  
back to 1857 in Ripon. Dr. Gibney  
was educated in England ,  
following which she did research  
in satellite batteries. Later, she  
became an independent interior  
designer. She moved back to  
Ripon nine years ago and is  
reported to “love it here as much  
now as during my growing-up  
years.”

**All events are  
free and open  
to the public!**