

# NEWSLETTER



Ripon Historical Society

March 2026

## COLLECTING & SHARING RIPON'S HISTORY

Each year, the Society receives records and artifacts relating to Ripon's history that were collected by families and individuals over decades, or found by chance. We are grateful to those who ultimately choose to entrust us with these valuable pieces of Ripon's history so that we can share Ripon's story with the local community and beyond.

Recently, we received a treasure trove of Ripon Foods memorabilia, records, and photographs collected by Verlys Marquardt (1940-2023), of Markesan, during her time as an employee at Ripon Foods Cookie Factory from February 2, 1959 to the day she retired on August 12, 2005.

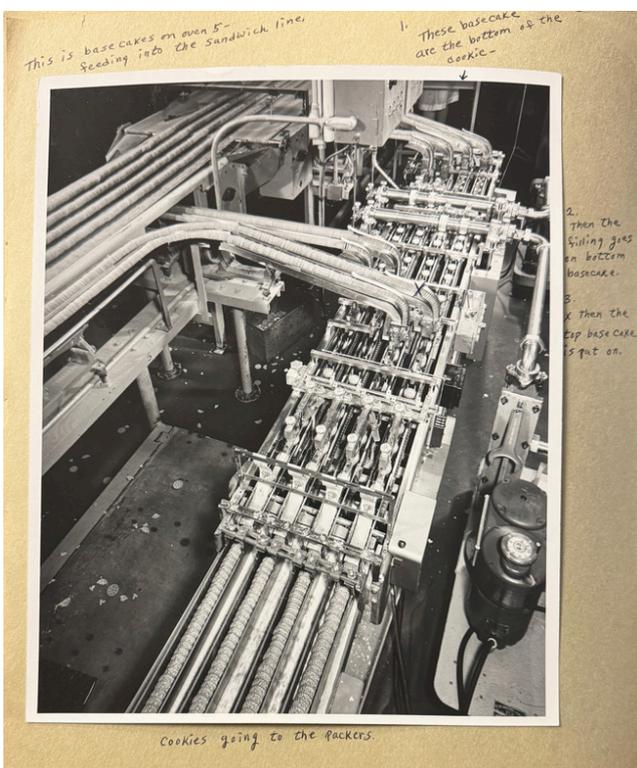
Verlys kept a scrapbook documenting her time at Ripon Foods. Unlike many scrapbooks that we receive at the Society, each one of her photographs is labeled with detailed descriptions. One page of her scrapbook has a photo of the mixing room at the north end of the factory. In the caption below, she writes, "We walked through here from our parking lot to our lockers in the wash room." (Top, left)

Another scrapbook page has a photo of the "base cakes" on oven 5, "feeding into the sandwich line." Verlys give a step by step account of how the sandwich cookies were put together before they went to the packers. (Bottom, left)



Photographer: Michael n. Conte... Ripon  
Mixing room @ North end of factory...

We Walked through here from our parking lot to our lockers  
in the Wash Room...



Like Verlys, many Riponites have fond memories of the cookie factory. Her memories contained in the scrapbook are now part of the Society's permanent collection.

On the day of her retirement,  
Verlys' employee classification  
was "Packer East, Line E1."



Left: Verlys  
Marquardt on  
her last day at  
the cookie  
factory, 2005

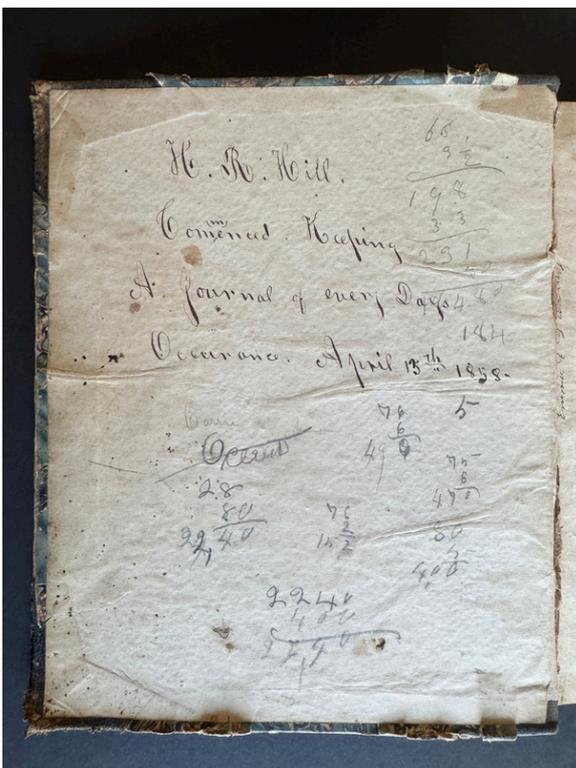
## COLLECTING & SHARING RIPON'S HISTORY CONTINUED



In January, the Society received a generous donation from Steve Davis of **Sky Shots Ripon**. Davis is no longer flying drones, and he has provided the Ripon Historical Society with more than 450 photos and 90 video clips of the Ripon area.

Davis donated his 1st 3D Robotics Solo drone, his DJI Inspire 1 drone (left), and a laptop computer for viewing the photos and videos. If you have an interest be sure to stop in and enjoy views of Ripon from the air during our open hours, Friday and Saturday from 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.

The Society also received two diaries belonging to Belle Lawson (1874-1973), covering the years 1966 to 1972. (left) Belle bequeathed the Pedrick-Lawson House at 515 Ransom St. to the Society in her will. She lived in the home for over 50 years. The diaries primarily concern her daily routines at home and visits from friends during the last few years of her life.



Recently, a donor from Madison gave the Society a journal written by the hand of Hazen R. Hill (1836-1903), of Ripon, in the year 1858. The donor came across the journal at Paul's Book Store on 670 State St., in Madison. The book was purchased for \$25 with the intention of eventually donating back to the place it originally came from.

Hazen R. Hill's family came from Ohio and settled Ripon in 1849. The family built the second house in the City and had 7 children. Hazen was educated in the public schools and his journal entries document his time at Ripon College, then known as "Brockway College."

Hazen writes about how grateful he is to be going to school, and that there were 45 boys and 35 girls. He also writes about how hard his Composition class is and how difficult it is to get up on stage before a lot of boys and speak. Hazen clerked for D.P. Mapes and David Greenway. He was sheriff of Fond du Lac from 1876-1878. For a time, he was proprietor of Spring Grove House on the southern shore of Green Lake. In his later years, he lived in a house on Scott St.

"H.R. Hill Comenced Keeping A Journal of every Day Occurance April 13<sup>th</sup> 1858" (Above, quoted with spelling his errors.)

**More information on these artifacts to be featured in future *Now & Then in Ripon* articles.**

## GRANT AWARD

The Ripon Historical Society is thrilled to have received a \$2,000 grant from the **Webster Foundation** and a 2,000 grant from the **Oshkosh Area Community Foundation** on February 18th. The grant money will be used for the publication of the first in a series of little history books about Ripon, geared towards the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> grade levels.

Right: Sample double-page spread for first book in the 2<sup>nd</sup> grade series titled, "The Dreamers of Ceresco." Watercolor of Ceresco Prairie by Dick Folse

Artifacts and art from the Society's collection will be featured in the books, along with art by local artists. Society Director, Caron Sisko, and retired teacher and volunteer Rhonda Cameron will lead the project. The Society plans to release the publication in in the fall.

Right: From the Society's art collection, watercolor of Ceresco by Margaret Jennie Dellinger Fish, 1937.



## CLASS VISITS

Last month, Ripon College students visited the Society on two occasions. Society Director, Caron Sisko, presented to Professor of Art, Travis Nygard's class, *Museums, Artifacts and Cultural Heritage*. Students learned about how the museum and archives operate and what the Society collects.

Nygar's Museum Studies class, along with Professor Ursula Dalinghaus' Anthropology class, also visited to view artifacts related to money and banking in Ripon. Students viewed a variety of artifacts, such as coin banks, money bags, Confederate money, and money from the first bank in Ripon.

Left: Nygard and Dalinghaus discuss the artifacts on display with students.

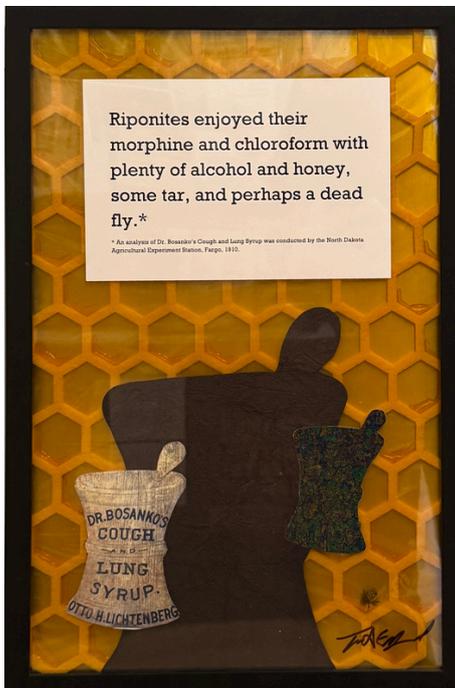
# BUY ART!

SUPPORT LOCAL ARTISTS AND THE SOCIETY

The exhibit, "Gimme A Sign!" is ongoing and there are several pieces of art still available for purchase. Artists drew inspiration from signs in our collection for their works. Be sure to stop by and see artifacts & art during open hours, Friday & Saturday, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm. Art pieces were created by members of local artist organization, Art MidWisconsin. The Society receives a percentage of the sales, so every art piece sold helps to support our mission!

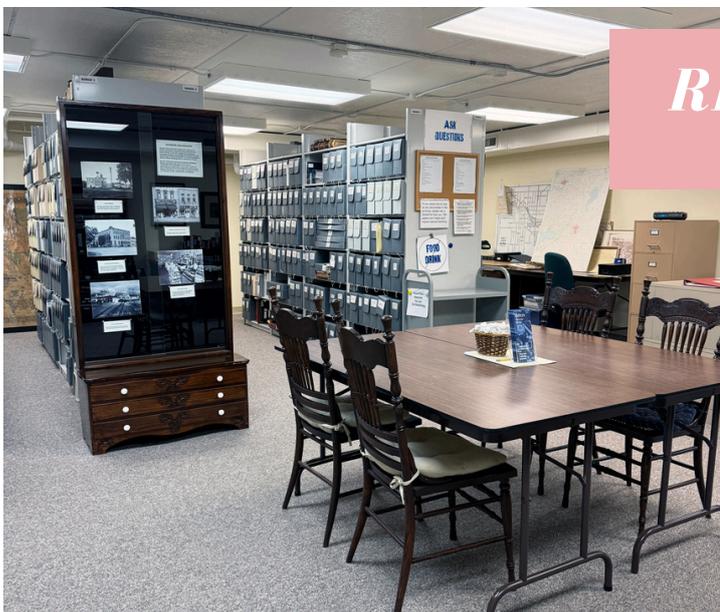


Above: "Truck Stop," by Beverly Christ, \$125 (Framed Photograph)



Left: "Don't Fall In," by Beverly Christ, \$125 (Framed Photograph)

Left: "Patent Medicine in Ripon," by Travis Nygard, \$200. (Mixed Media)



## RESEARCH OPEN HOUSE

SATURDAY, MAY 30, 10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

The Ripon Historical Society is hosting a **"Research Open House Day"** on Saturday, May 30, with extended open hours from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm. Several volunteers and staff will be available to assist you with any of your research needs. Are you looking for information on your historic home? Would you like to research any family history related to Ripon? We're here to help! Stop in and see us and we will do our best to connect you with the information you need.



## *SPRING CLEANING*

*LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS*

The Society is looking for volunteers to help us with garden maintenance this spring. Areas of the garden require weeding, mulching, and pruning. Our archivist, Carol Sachen, oversees care of the garden but upkeep is by no means a one person job! Do you like to garden? Do you enjoy working outdoors? Would you like to volunteer a couple hours of your time to help keep the Society's grounds looking beautiful for visitors? If you are interested, please email Director, Caron Sisko, at [riponhistsoc@gmail.com](mailto:riponhistsoc@gmail.com).

Left: Peonies, photo taken by carol Sachen

### **Board of Directors**

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**Vice President & Secretary - Ian Stepleton**

**Treasurer - Dani Moore**

**Lara Grant**

**Matt Koski**

**Lee Prellwitz**

**Eric Przybyl**

**Joe Walker**

**Chris Wiegand**

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## *FRIENDS OF THE SOCIETY*

The Society would like to express gratitude for the local businesses that have become FRIENDS of the Ripon Historical Society.

**RIPON HISTORY ADVOCATES \$250**

**Alliance Laundry Systems**

**Diedrich Jewelers**

**Golden Rule Community Credit Union**

**Hy-Vee**

**BELLE LAWSON SUSTAINERS CLUB \$500**

**Butzin-Marchant Funeral Home**

**THANK YOU, FRIENDS!**