



# NEWSLETTER

JUNE 2026

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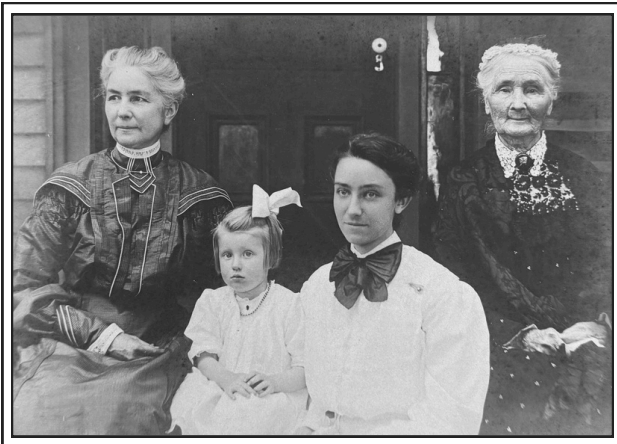
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Left: Peonies in the Ripon Historical Society Garden

## "DEAR RIPON"

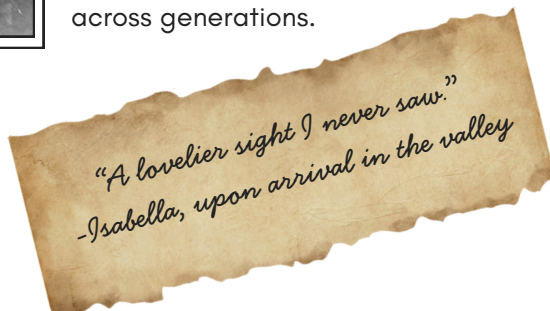
A New Exhibit Coming in August



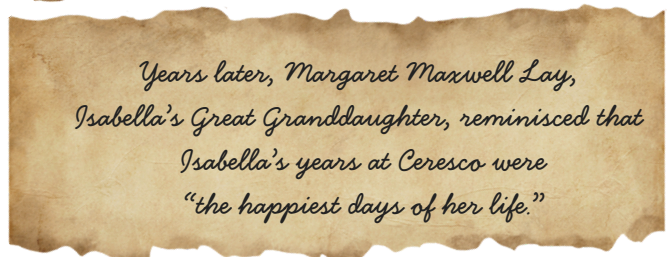
Above, right: Isabella Clarissa McKay Town Hunter, who married Phalanx member Nathan Hunter (1820-1894) in 1845, and their daughter Arabella Hunter Maxwell, above, left, (1847-1914) who was the first baby girl born in Ceresco.

Visitors will explore themed displays highlighting important chapters in Ripon's past, including the development of the railroads, the story of the Ceresco settlement, the significance of Silver Creek, the evolution of local schools, and the industries that became icons of the city's identity.

"Dear Ripon" is a new exhibit coming in August that will invite visitors to step into the rich and personal history of Ripon through the voices of the people who helped shape the community. Designed to resemble a collection of handwritten letters, the exhibit will feature excerpts from journals, correspondence, and written accounts by local historical figures, offering an intimate glimpse into everyday life across generations.



*"A lovelier sight I never saw."  
-Isabella, upon arrival in the valley*



*Years later, Margaret Maxwell Lay,  
Isabella's Great Granddaughter, reminisced that  
Isabella's years at Ceresco were  
"the happiest days of her life."*

Above: The words of Isabella Hunter.

“DEAR RIPON”  
(continued from page 1)

By combining personal storytelling with historical artifacts and immersive displays, “Dear Ripon” will celebrate the people, places, and traditions that continue to define the community today.

The exhibit will also feature an interactive component for children, debuting in the fall. There will be 9 x 7 story cards on various topics placed throughout the exhibit. With a family membership subscription, cards will be free for children to collect. New cards will periodically be introduced over time, so that children may continually expand their collection of Ripon stories.



What's New in the Collection?

Stickney Dairy Photographs

During the late 1800s and early 1900s, farms like the Stickney Dairy were pioneers in Ripon's sweeping agricultural shift from wheat production to dairying. The Society received photographs of Otis L. Stickney and his wife, Maude, who resided at 567 Metomen St. They were the owners of Stickney Dairy, which was located at 314 Scott St. The Dairy is listed at that location in the local directory from 1926 to 1948. In 1952, it is listed in the directory as at the rear of 400 Scott St. Shown right are Maude & Otis and the 1930s dairy truck used for their business, along with a Stickney Dairy parade float.



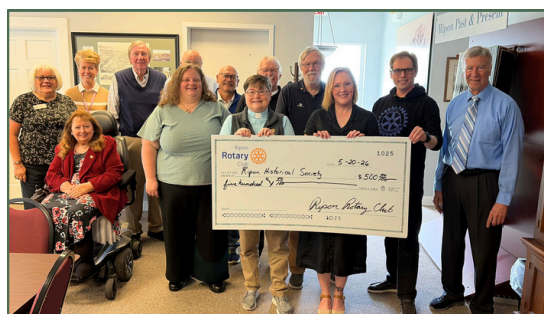
Photo Engraving

This First National Bank copper halftone letterpress block (right) is a relic from an old printmaking and publishing technique. A photographic negative of the interior at 114 Watson was etched onto a copper plate. The metal plate was then mounted onto a solid wooden block to make it "type-high," allowing it to be pressed simultaneously with text on a traditional printing press. Under magnification, there are fine lines and patterns that are the hallmark of the halftone process—a method used before the 1970s to translate continuous-tone photographs and artwork into printable, greyscale ink dots. The print block shown here is one of four recently acquired by the Society.



## Happenings

Last month, Ripon Rotary Club President Rev. Dr. Heather Brewer presented a \$500 check (Belle Lawson Sustainer’s Club level) to Ripon Historical Society Director Caron Sisko as other Ripon Rotarians looked on.



The Society hosted a research open house day on May 30<sup>th</sup>. Right: Lara Grant was on hand to assist visitors with family genealogy research, and Archivist, Carol Sachen, was also there to source information in the archives. Society docents Linda Budnick, Dale Baird, and Chris Wiegand spent the day chatting with visitors and working on projects. President Steve Riemer and Director, Caron Sisko were also there to answer questions and help out.



## What’s New in the Collection? (continued)

### Zobel Family Quilt

The Society recently acquired a quilt from the great-granddaughter of Herman and Pauline Zobel, a prominent family in Ripon. Herman came from Germany to America in 1860. Herman (1847-1911) ran a grocery store on Watson St. with his brother. He also ran several farms in Rosendale, Green Lake, North Dakota, and South Dakota. He married Pauline Kahl Zobel (1852-1930) of Marquette in 1878. They raised two sons, Edgar and Otto, and four daughters, Olga, Clara, Erna, and Lillian. Olga was the donor’s grandmother.

The quilt was made by Pauline Zobel out of pieces of fabric that came from Herman’s suits & clothing. The donor reached out to the Society to ask if we would take the log cabin style quilt as part of our permanent collection. We happily accepted the generous offer and the quilt was shipped to us from California.



**Zobel quilt and photo of the Zobel Family at 603 Watson St. Beginning second from left: Herman Zobel, then Olga, and then Pauline.**

As a child, the donor visited Ripon with her family every 3 or 4 years at 603 Watson St. “The house seemed huge to me. My sister and I would hide in all the rooms and play on the staircase,” she recalls. She also remembers family concerts in the music room and formal meals. As a violinist herself, she carries on the Zobel legacy of musical talent.

## “Gimme A Sign!” Exhibit Is Online

The Gimme A Sign exhibit is coming down during the month of June. The exhibit was a big success with several art pieces that were created for the exhibit having been sold. If you did not have a chance to stop by and see the exhibit you can view it online via our website under “Explore Our Collection.”

**A special thanks goes out to the participating artists and the local businesses that loaned the Society signs for the exhibit!**

### Right:

The Schultz Honey Farm sign served as the inspiration for Angel Rettler’s paintings, “Comb & Clover.” In Rettler’s artist statement about her work she wrote that the twin paintings,

*“Honor the enduring rhythm of the honeybee. Though the name has faded, their work continues humming through clover and comb. One feasts on white clover, the other tends golden honeycomb, a tribute to labor, renewal, and the sweetness of nature’s persistence.”*

Although the pair of paintings has sold, they may still be viewed online as part of the exhibit.



## RECENT LIFETIME MEMBERS

### & FRIENDS

The Ripon Historical Society would like to thank the local businesses & organizations 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  
Ripon Rotary (**New Friend!**)

The Ripon Historical Society would like to express sincere gratitude for our most recent Lifetime Members!

**Connie Jess**, *Ancestry.com*  
sponsor

**Chris Wiegand**, *Docent &*  
*Board Member*

Feel free to contact us!

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Please visit our website and be sure to follow us on social media!

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