Now & Then in Ripon ... Looking back with the Ripon Historical Society

60th anniversary of JFK's assassination: How Ripon reacted

youngest brother.

Woodlawn Cemetery.

hear the latest developments.

of this city, the Commonwealth

Press takes this opportunity of ex-

pressing on behalf of all its citizens

the shock and sorrow of our late

president's passing. ... This vital

and young leader's death created an

overwhelming spirit of reverence

that arose throughout the land as

some rich cord. ... Silently and to

themselves, Americans seemed to

rededicate themselves to the love

of their country. This appears to be

the remarkable and only rewarding

phenomenon of Mr. Kennedy's

School class of 1971, remembers

being in fifth grade at Central

School (now the Central Park

Apartments at 517 Newbury St.).

His teacher told the class of the

assassination and Heatley said,

"everyone sat in shock. It was

like a member of the family died."

He added that "the rest of the day

Lynn Heatley, Ripon High

this happens."

families.

This year marks the 60th anniversary of the death of President John F. Kennedy.

November 23, 2023

At 43 years old, Kennedy — the 35th president — was the youngest to be elected to this office. He

was also the first and only Roman Catholic president until current President Joseph Biden was elected in 2021.

Just before noon on Friday, Nov. 22, 1963, Kennedy was assassinated as he rode in a motorcade in Dallas, Texas.

The death of Kennedy filled the front page of the Thursday, Nov. 28, 1963 edition of the Ri-

pon Commonwealth Press.

The paper noted "residents of the Ripon community listened with disbelief early Friday afternoon when they heard the report that President John F. Kennedy had been shot and killed by an assassin. ... Mayor John P. Adamski (1913-1971) officially proclaimed a week of mourning for the late President Kennedy and called for closing of business places and all city offices

Monday. In addition, all schools in Ripon closed that Monday, and most churches and Ripon College held memorial services.

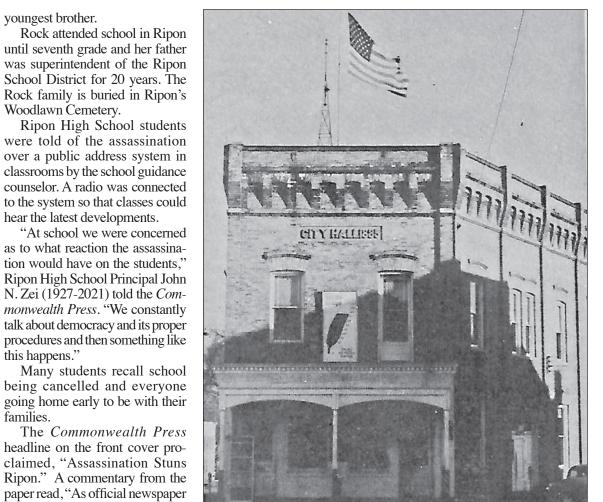
Former Ripon resident Phyllis Rock (1927-2002)worked in Washington, D.C. and was the secretary to Sen. Wayne Morse of Oregon. She was one of the first to hear the

news of the assassination when it came over the "teletype wire."

She gave the report of the assassination to the official senate messenger, who then informed Sen. Edward Kennedy, the president's



John F. Kennedy



THE FRONT PAGE of the Nov. 28, 1963 Ripon Commonwealth Press features this photograph of Ripon's City Hall with the American flag at half-mast. All flags in the community were lowed to half-mast for 30 days to mark the assassination of President John F. Kennedy the week before. submitted photo

Ripon resident Chris Wiegand remembers thinking "how could that possibly happen?"

Ripon Historical Society President David Sakrison recalls his teacher crying upon the announcement, and his older sister — who was on the brink of voting age feeling that Kennedy's assassination crushed the political hope of many young people.

David Carley, a chemistry professor at Ripon College who lived at 529 Fairview Ave., was spending a year in Washington, D.C. at that time. Carley, along with his wife and two teenage children, was part of the large crowd of people who lined Pennsylvania Avenue

to watch the funeral procession in which Kennedy's body was transported from the White House to the Capitol rotunda.

'It was an extremely impressive sight," Carley said. "You felt you were living history. With 300,000 people watching there wasn't a sound...This awesome hush is hard to describe."

The Ripon Historical Society is the oldest continually operating historical society in Wisconsin. It is open Fridays and Saturdays 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

For more information follow us at Facebook/riponhistory or www. riponhistory.org



THE CAPTION ON this photograph from the front page of the

Nov. 28, 1963 Ripon Commonwealth Press reads, "Downtown Ripon was almost entirely deserted during memorial services for the president on Monday morning. Businesses closed and citizens attended services in city churches. This was the scene looking south on Watson Street from the intersection of

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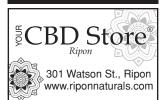
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