

Museum Notes

for the week of June 21 – 27, 2026
by Bridget Van Beckum, assistant curator

The Fourth of July is next weekend already! If you're still looking for something to do to celebrate our country's 250th birthday, make sure to stop by the annual Marcia Andrew Memorial Strawberry Shortcake Social at the Sherry-Butt House any time between 1 and 5 pm.

The Historic Sherry-Butt House Museum is at 795 N. Main Street, conveniently located right next to the fairgrounds where there are a number of other July 4th events going on. So, if you were already planning on going to the fairgrounds to enjoy the rest of the festivities, you can take a short walk over to the house for a sweet treat and some live music, too – without having to worry about parking again!

For a donation of only \$6, you'll get a bowl of strawberry shortcake (with homemade shortcake and frozen custard from Culver's), a beverage, entertainment, and a tour of the historic house, which was built in 1870 for Civil War Colonel Cyrus M. Butt. Inside the house, there will be a quilt show displaying several patriotic quilts from the Vernon County Piecemakers Quilt Guild. And, new this year, there will be a variety of games to play outside on the lawn, including cornhole and a tic-tac-toe bean bag toss. Live music will be provided by the Viroqua Community Band at 1:00 and Kickapoo Joy Juice at 2:00. In case of rain, the house will still be open for tours, but food will be take-out only. Funds raised during the social will go toward the upkeep of this historic home.

If you still want to celebrate America's 250th even after the Fourth of July, join us on the north lawn of the Vernon County Museum & History Center at 5 pm on July 8 for a public reading of the Declaration of Independence. There will be refreshments as well as a rare chance to tour the museum outside of our usual daytime hours. The reading starts at 5 pm, so be sure to come earlier if you'd like to see the exhibits first! In case of rain, the reading will take place inside the museum.

This reading is part of a nationwide program called "Sharing the Spirit of America," started by the Hawai'i America250 Commission. Americans in all 50 states and on all 7 continents (yes, even Antarctica!) will read the Declaration of Independence at the same time to mark the 250th anniversary of its first public reading on July 8, 1776. To see a map of all locations participating in this event, visit <https://hawaiiamerica250.org/reading-locations>. This is a special opportunity, to read our country's founding words "together" with Americans throughout the county and around the world, and I'm sure it will be very memorable.

We hope to see you at the Sherry-Butt House on July 4 or at the museum on July 8! As always, if you have any questions about any of our programs, you can contact us at museum@vernoncountyhistory.org or (608)-637-7396.