

"THE TOWPATH" – JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH – 1988

THIS NEWSLETTER IS PUBLISHED QUARTERLY BY
 THE NEW BREMEN HISTORIC ASSOCIATION
 P.O. Box 73 – New Bremen, Ohio 45869
 Marjorie Lietz, Editor

Yearly membership dues are payable in January - \$2.00/Adults, \$1.00/Students. Life Memberships are \$50.00
 MEMBERSHIP in the New Bremen Historic Association is open to all persons interested in the history
 of New Bremen and the surrounding area. Donations, either material or monetary, are also always welcome!

This publication keeps you up-to-date on happenings at the Museum
 and also brings you some interesting history of our little town.

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LOCK NUMBER ONE LOOKING NORTH
 SCHWIETERMAN DRUG STORE AND AMERICAN BUDGET

CONTRIBUTION PLAQUES

Memorial Donations - \$100.00
Room Plaque - \$2000.00

HAPPY NEW YEAR! We hope the New Year will be good to you. The New Bremen Historic Association was happy to see so many of you come to the Christmas Tree Festival. The rooms were full of lovely Christmas displays. Christmas carols filled the air in the museum and we thank all of you kind folks who gave of your time and talent to make this a real Christmas festival. Thank you to our chairmen - Karl and Ethel Mesloh, Fred and Kay Harmon and all those who helped with this event! Some of you baked cookies - beautiful decorated cookies and they were so good! Some of you made the hot cider and coffee and some of you helped clean the Museum before and after the festival! A big THANK YOU!

MUSEUM CALENDAR OF COMING EVENTS

There 's going to be a play given at the "Old Opera House", now the American Legion Hall, on March 5th ,1988. It is a melodrama with two acts and features 8 to 10 men actors and a few women actresses. Would you like to help? We need people for on stage and back stage when we give "THE SHAKY TALE OF DR. JAKEY", by I. E. Clark. AUDITIONS will be held January 19th and 20th at 7:00 P.M. in the Auglaize School Auditorium. TICKETS will go on sale February 1st at Schwieterman Drug Store and also the Cornerstone Shop. For more information, call Jacqui Kuck at 629-2566 or Wayne Ziegenbusch at 629-2030.

THE ANNUAL DINNER MEETING of the New Bremen Historic Association will be held on Monday, March 14th at 6:30 P.M. in the St. Paul Church auditorium. There will be a travelogue given by David Schwieterman. TICKETS will be available at the Cornerstone Shop and Schwieterman Drug Store or call Anna Mae Hudson at 629-2365.

The New Bremen Historic Association received a generous donation in memory of Norma (Vornholt) Sharp of Sldney, Ohio. Norma was a "New Bremen girl", and her family wanted her to be remembered in her hometown. The gift was given by her family and close relatives. Thank you.

ATTENTION READERS! Do you have an interesting article about EARLY NEW BREMEN that you would like to have published in "*The Towpath*"? if so, send it to me - Marjorie Lietz, 34 S. Herman St. - New Bremen, Ohio 45869.

WINTER WEATHER IN THE OLDEN TIMES

(by Marge Lietz)

Mostly it was cold! Very few houses had central heating or storm windows! We didn't have heavy drapes either to help keep the cold air out. Lace curtains and green blinds on rollers were in fashion then. The blinds had to last for years and when the bottom part showed wear, it was cut off and re-hemmed at the bottom. As long as you did not want to use it full length, the blind served its purpose. During the winter most every window was covered with frost. Sometimes it stayed most of the winter. Mom always said that Jack Frost painted the windows during the night! He must have been a very busy little man. The patterns in the frost were exquisite - ferns, fronds and beautiful leaves, all woven together in a design that was breathtaking! It was truly frosted glass.

Some folks had baseburners that burned hard coal or coke and the red coals showed through the isinglass windows. School children were bundled up in woolen coats and warm caps and mittens. Galoshes and leggings were also a part of winter apparel as they walked to and from school - morning, noon and night. There was no cafeteria. The warm wooly smell of outdoor garments drying on the radiator was in every classroom. There were after-school chores to do - feed the chickens and haul in the wood and coal. Then it was suppertime, and time to do your homework lessons by lamplight! *(mll)*

A WINTERTIME HERITAGE - ICE SKATING ON THE CANAL

(by Marge Lietz)

Lock One in New Bremen was a gathering place for ice skaters! Because New Bremen is a canal town, the children had a splendid opportunity to learn how to ice skate. It was Dad or Grandpa who drilled the small round hole in the ice to measure the thickness, and when he put the folding rule back in his pocket and smiled, then you knew it was time to get your skates ready! One of the first jobs was to sweep the snow off the ice. There were good places to skate back of Rairdon's Garage and Tony Schwieterman's Blacksmith Shop or further south by Long's packing house near the Plum Street bridge. Word spread rapidly through the village. *(mll)*

I REMEMBER THE CANAL IN WINTER

[by Marguerite (Koop) Kunning]

When winter came we waited for the word to go around school that the ice on the canal was "safe". Our skates were ready and waiting. They were the kind that clamped and strapped on our high shoes and were usually hand-me-downs. If they fit right, you were lucky! The swing bridge down from the lock, going south, was the gathering place. Here there was a wooden platform to get onto the ice and to sit on to put on your skates. A short piece up the canal, south, there was a large pond on the left known as Rabe's Pond. Here the boys had their hockey games with a tin can for a puck and home-made sticks. All of the skating was done between the swing bridge and the Amsterdam bridge. Some of the older finer skaters would go as far as Minster. On winter evenings the boys would build a bon-fire on the west bank for light and occasional warming-up. What wonderful winter fun the old canal provided for us year after year.

NOW and THEN

**Think about the winter time and what it means to you,
Then turn your thoughts to childhood days to things you used to do.
Lean against the icy wind in your heavy clothes,
Break off brittle icicles, strike a fencing pose.**

**Catch some snowflakes in your hand, taste their frosty lace,
Brush a pair of angel wings, tramp a circle chase.
Coasting down the nearest hill, steer your homemade sled,
Skate around a tiny pond with flailing arms outspread.**

**Build a snowman, build a fort, with snowballs stacked in mounds,
Clear a place to slide upon, play at Fox and Hounds.
Run for home to help with chores, hear the old clock chime,
Live again and know again the joys of wintertime!**

(Mary A. Selden -Ideals)



THE MUSEUM NEEDS SOME CHRISTMAS TREES

Do you have an artificial Christmas tree packed away in the attic that you no longer use? If so, are you willing to donate it to the museum? The trees will be used at the Christmas Tree Festivals held each December at the museum. Please call Carol Stauffer at 629-3334 and she will pick up the tree. THANK YOU.

WHEN THE WINTER EVENINGS LENGTHEN AND THE DAILY CHORES ARE DONE,
THEN WE GATHER ROUND THE FIRESIDE FOR A BIT OF FAMILY FUN.
LOGS OF APPLE WOOD LIE BURNING IN THE FIREPLACE EMBERS BRIGHT,
HEAPS OF POPCORN SLOWLY DRIBBLE FROM THE SPIDER, GLEAMING WHITE!
(Elva Weber – Ideals)

THOUGH IT'S EVER SO OLD, IT SEEMS EVER NEW,
THE LOVE THAT I HOLD IN MY HEART FOR YOU.
BE MY VALENTINE!



There's a lot of friendly sentiment tucked in this Valentine,
For someone I am proud to call a special friend of mine!

February is "VALENTINE" month. February 14th is a special time for loving and remembering someone special! Valentines have no age limit! It was Mueller Brothers' Store who sold menswear that saved the big round hat boxes for the "school kids". Each room in the grade school had a Valentine box, gaily decorated with snowy white paper and red hearts. The lid of the box had a slot cut in, so we could use the box like a mailbox. You were lucky if you were the owner of an outdated wallpaper book from Schulenberg's Store or Schwieterman Drug Store because homemade Valentines were in fashion. These two stores along with the Arcade also sold Valentines - beautiful lacy hearts with cupids, doves and flowers. Prices ranged from "two for a penny" on up. When the afternoon recess was over, it was a Valentine party for the lower grades!



PASSING NEWSPAPERS IN NEW BREMEN

by Elton ("Pitt") Bruns – N.B.H.S., 1925

My first and only paper route was the "Cincinnati Post". My competitor at the time was Bill Moeller with the "Cincinnati Times Star". Our routes pretty well covered the entire village so that at times we, he on one side of the street and I on the other, passed each other's papers.

Our route began when we picked up our papers at Schulenberg's "Drug" Store (later Gilberg's Furniture Store), then the Western Ohio Interurban Station and waiting room.

Our car was the 4:50 which arrived anywhere from 4:50 to 6:00 p.m. Our route took us west on Monroe to Main, then north on Main to Vogelsang's (in 2005, Craig & Melinda Hoffman's), then back south on Franklin to Monroe and then west to the White Mountain Creamery, where we stopped for free buttermilk which was always on tap - sometimes ice cream, if the right people were on duty, then back east to Franklin and Main and south to Plum and the Wooden Shoe Brewery ice houses, then home where, if we were not too late with the paper, we sometimes received a free Sarsaparilla.

Then we went south on Washington, past Rabe's lumber yard & mill, a block past South Street to Oliver Boesel's and Peter Erb's, where we were sure to receive a lecture and a hunting story from Pete. Typically, his feats were capturing or shooting multiple game birds with a single shot, i.e. six pigeons on the same limb. He took careful aim and split the limb and trapped all birds by their feet. The next week, it would be similar except he inserted his ramrod in the rifle barrel, took careful aim and impaled all six on the ramrod.

Then back north on Washington and Walnut, past Rabe's Store, the Arcade, the Kuenzel Mills, the First National Bank and several canal warehouses to Second Street. Then, east to the last house on Second Street to Arnold ("Fat") Gieseke's where Mrs. Gieseke (Elsie, mother of Marge Lietz) usually gave us a cookie. She was such a pretty and nice lady. It was a pleasure to be near the end of our routes.

It must be remembered that New Bremen in 1917-1919 was much smaller than now, also the number of subscribers was low in proportion to population. Our combined routes had no more than 60-70 customers.

The winter of 1918 was an especially severe one, with temperatures below zero and very heavy snows. There was practically no motorized traffic on the streets and no salt was used. Once down, the snow stayed on a long time so that we were able to load our papers on a sled and sometimes get a pull from a horse-drawn sled or sleigh. It was a wonderful sensation on a wintry night with the only sounds being dogs barking and sleigh bells jingling, one which I will never forget.

My father, F.W. ("Pitt") Bruns wrote many articles for the "New Bremen Sun" under the name of "SNURB" (Brun's spelled backward).

SNURB, II