

"THE TOWPATH" – JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER - 1989

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

SUPPORT YOUR MUSEUM: Membership dues are \$3.00 per year. Life Membership is \$50.00
Donations, either material or monetary, are always welcome!
"The Towpath" brings you some history of New Bremen - your article is welcome.
Visiting hours are Sunday afternoons during the summer from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

1989 SLATE OF OFFICERS & TRUSTEES

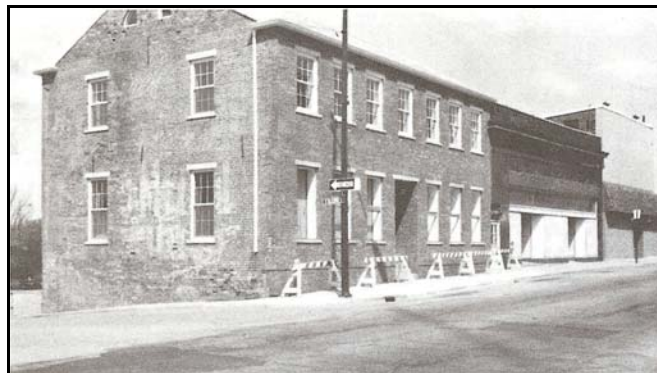
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THIS LARGE BRICK BUILDING WAS ONCE KNOWN AS THE BOESEL BUILDING. IT IS LOCATED ON THE NORTH SIDE OF MONROE ST. ACROSS FROM THE HOTEL BAR. THIS MAGNIFICENT STRUCTURE WAS BUILT DURING THE CANAL ERA.

THE BUILDING, NOW (IN 1989) OWNED BY CROWN CONTROLS / EQUIPMENT CORP., IS BEING REPAIRED AND REMODELED.

MANY BUSINESSES HAVE BEEN HOUSED IN THIS BRICK STRUCTURE OVER THE YEARS. SOME FROM 1920 ON WERE TAYLOR'S STUDIO, ERHARDT'S DRY GOODS, HAINES' MILLINERY, DR. BRATTON (M.D.) DR. BURK (DENTIST), THE PEACOCK BEAUTY SHOPPE (AGNES HARDWICK), CROWN CLEANERS (VERLIN HIRSCHFELD), AND IN LATER YEARS, SMALL APARTMENTS FOR LIVING QUARTERS.

A LITTLE EAST OF THIS CORNER BUILDING AND PARTLY ON THE SIDEWALK WAS A PLACE TO EAT - "ICY" HIRSCHFELD'S HAMBURGER STAND. IT WAS SMALL - NO SEATING ARRANGEMENTS. THIS WAS A BUSY PLACE FOR THE YOUNG AND THE OLD IN THE 1920s. NEW BREMEN WASN'T VERY BIG THEN - OLD FASHIONED STREET LIGHTS, BRICK ROADS, A CURFEW, AND IN THE SUMMERTIME, THE TOWN WAS BUSY WITH THE WATER SPRINKLERS KEEPING THE STREET DUST DOWN.



ON JUNE 3RD, WE HAD "WORKDAY" AT THE MUSEUM. THE WORKERS CAME WITH BROOMS AND DUSTCLOTHS TO GIVE THE ROOMS THEIR SPRING CLEANING! SOME NEW LIGHTS HAVE BEEN PUT IN SOME OF THE ROOMS. A FUSE BOX WAS ALSO INSTALLED AND WE FOUND OUT THAT PLASTER DUST IS STILL HARD TO CLEAN UP!

WORK CONTINUES AT THE MUSEUM. OUR CO-CURATORS, VERNITA SCHEER AND DOTTIE BOESEL, HAVE BEEN BUSY INDEXING ARTICLES GIVEN TO THE MUSEUM. THEY HAVE ALSO BEEN RE-ARRANGING FURNITURE AND PUTTING SOME NEW DISPLAYS IN THE DISPLAY CASES. WORK AT THE MUSEUM WILL CONTINUE DURING THE SUMMER MONTHS HOPING TO MAKE THIS AN INTERESTING "STOP AND VISIT" PLACE FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY.

GETTING READY FOR A PARADE



In this picture, we see Reuben Wissman, Florus Wissman, Clarence Heil, Melville "Plucky" Laut, Adolph Pape, August Mueller and Clarence "Mickey" Laut.

Note the seven musicians are dressed alike - white shirts, dark trousers, suspenders and identical plaid ties - a fine-looking group. The year of this photo remains a mystery - perhaps 1933, which was the 100th birthday of New Bremen - our Centennial Year!

ANOTHER MUSICAL ORGANIZATION in our little town was the "Little Six Band." They had 'eight' members and were well liked in town and the surrounding area. The members were 1) August Wehrman, 2) Henry Weinberg, 3) Christ Laut, 4) Ferd Laut, 5) Theobald Steinebrey, 6) Herman Mohrman, 7) John Laut and 8) Fred Pape. Popular before the turn of the century. SORRY, WE DO NOT HAVE A PHOTO!



ANOTHER GROUP OF NEW BREMEN MUSICIANS



A special "Thank You" to Miss Jeannette Wagner and Mrs. Leona Laut of New Bremen who loaned us this picture for publication in *The Towpath*. This photograph was probably taken at a studio in New Bremen.

[Names and instruments were provided later by Miss Marie Mueller and Wilbur J. Garmhausen. This band was known as the St. Peter's Church Band and was a 2-family organization.]

Standing: Herbert Garmhausen (flute), Edward Conradi (violin), John Mueller (clarinet), August Mueller (cornet).

Seated: Henry Mueller (cello), Charles Garmhausen (violin)

These were the "good old days" when the words promenade, do-si-do and allemande were very popular!



MRS. MINNIE WITTE (3/20/1865-8/24/1941)



17 SOUTH MAIN STREET (1989 PHOTO)

IT WAS INTERESTING TO SPEAK WITH FORREST NEDDERMAN ABOUT THE ABOVE PICTURED HOME BECAUSE IT WAS HERE THAT HIS GRANDMOTHER WITTE HAD HER BOARDING HOUSE FROM APPROXIMATELY 1915-1940. FORREST REMEMBERS WELL WHEN HIS GRANDMOTHER MOVED FROM NORTH MAIN ST. TO THIS LARGE RED BRICK HOUSE (NOW PAINTED WHITE!) - HERE THERE WOULD BE MORE ROOM.

Mrs. Witte was a busy lady - cooking, washing and ironing clothes, and cleaning for the boarders in her home. When evening came, she pulled the treadle sewing-machine away from the wall and sat down to sew - sometimes a wedding dress for a new bride-to-be. Her canary bird loved those evenings and sang as long as the sewing machine was in action! When the sewing machine stopped, the canary bird stopped too! When the workmen in the area came in to eat their noon meal, there was water, soap and towels waiting for them on the back porch, much like a threshing crew....

A LITTLE HISTORY OF THE HOUSE: The above building was built by Fred Vogelsang in the years 1856-57 and is very typical of the large canal-related buildings that sprang up along the canal banks! The whole area was a meadow and was known as Vogelsang's farm. The barn was built across the road closer to the canal and burned in 1967.

In 1989 the large brick house is owned by Joe Ritter, grandson of Paul and Ruth Ritter. Joe lives in Georgia. The house looks much the same only now it wears a coat of white paint with green trim.

REMEMBERING MY SUMMER JOB AT MRS. WITTE'S BOARDING HOUSE



It was summertime in the early "thirties". Mrs. Witte asked if I would help her with a little cooking and cleaning as she would be having the work crew that was working on the road between New Bremen and Minster stay with her.

I would arrive at the boarding house at 8:00 in the morning. She already had served breakfast and was busy baking pies. I helped clean up the kitchen, peeled potatoes, and set the dining room table for dinner and then, along with a broom, dustpan and dust rag, went upstairs to make the beds and clean.

The rooms were a mess - bed clothes all tangled up, mud all over the floors, and the men literally dumped their pockets on the dresser-tops - change, cigarettes and bits of mud! I tried to dust the dresser-tops without disturbing their belongings too much so that they wouldn't think I had been "snooping".

Back downstairs, Mrs. Witte and I would finish up dinner as the men came in shortly after 12:00 noon. They were a loud, happy-go-lucky bunch and how they could eat - meat, potatoes, gravy, vegetables, bread and butter, and pie disappeared in a short time! Mrs. Witte "set a good table" and how they loved it! After dinner Mrs. Witte and I would clean the floors and wash the dishes.

I was finished for the day then and Mrs. Witte always took a short rest in the afternoon. She was a bundle of energy in so small a person and a delight to work for, always kind and helpful. *by Dorothy (Gieseke) Kah of Sidney, Ohio*

AND FROM ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE HISTORIC ASSOCIATION: Ruth (Gilberg) Ritter says: "I used to love to play with the Jagoditz children who lived at Mrs. Witte's Boarding House. There were two stairways in the big house and we played 'Hide and go-Seek'. Mrs. Witte never complained - she was a good lady." The house holds many memories for Ruth and Paul Ritter, because they owned and lived in this big house before they sold it to their grandson, Joe.



THE TRI-COUNTY FAIR

ON YOUR LEFT is a copy of the front cover of the Tri-County Fair Book printed in 1890. This year would mark their 3rd exhibition.

THE FAIR GROUNDS were located just one mile east of New Bremen (now State Route 274) on the home farm of Mrs. Emil (Esther Kuest) Schroer and their son, James and family. The grounds were spacious, with plenty of large shade trees. There was room for horses to be hitched along with the buggies, surreys and spring wagons while their owners enjoyed the Fair.

IN NEW BREMEN, hacks were lined up at Hoffman's corner, the corner we know as Schwieterman's Drug Store, ready to transport folks out to the Fair Grounds. The price was right, probably only five or ten cents for the ride but you had to wait until the hack filled up with passengers. THE ROADS were very dusty, but who really cared - after all it was going to be a fun day, a day at the Fair!

COMPETITION ran great at the Fair - the ladies vied for first place in their culinary arts, especially baking bread and preserving fruits. A DAY AT THE FAIR was sometimes the only vacation that the farmer or the factory laborer had in the "Good Old Days".



MORRIS BESSEL'S HACK

EVERYONE HELPED TO GET READY. Mother packed a big basket of food for the day - fried chicken, breaded veal, potato salad, pickles and chocolate cake! Then she closed the little huts that housed the hens with chicks to keep them safe from varmints and a sudden thunderstorm. The children were sent to the granary to hide the extra "ready cash" deep down in the oats bin. Dad had the team ready and the family was off to the Fair!

Family Tickets were \$1.00 and single tickets were 25¢.

Now in 1989, there are many stories to enjoy of The New Bremen Tri-County Fair, the Wheel of Fortune, The Jesse James sideshow, the horse races, the steam-driven Merry Go Round and the Gypsies that followed the Fairs!

Our co-curator, Vernita Scheer, furnished us with this picture of Morris Bessel's hack. It is from her mother's (Mrs. Cornelius Heinfeld's) photo album.



TRI-COUNTY FAIR - 1906

I REMEMBER THE TRI-COUNTY FAIR! ONE OF MY VERY EARLY RECOLLECTIONS IS A DAY AT THE TRI-COUNTY FAIR WHICH WAS HELD EACH YEAR AT THE FAIRGROUNDS ONE MILE EAST OF NEW BREMEN. THE DAY I REMEMBER WAS ABOUT THE YEAR 1906 AND IT WAS THE DAY OF THE BIG SULKY RACE. I PARTICULARLY RECALL BEING A PART OF A LARGE GROUP OF RELATIVES SITTING IN A GRANDSTAND, ALL OF WHOM WERE STANDING TO CHEER FOR PAPA SCHMIDT (DR. H.J. SCHMIDT, D.V.M.) WHO WAS DRIVING HIS OWN PACER, JOHN McLEAN IN THE SULKY RACE AND WINNING FIRST PLACE!

ANOTHER BUILDING NEARBY IS WHERE WE WENT TO LOOK AT ALL THE HAND-WORK ENTRIES. THIS IS WHERE MAMA SCHMIDT WOULD GET FIRST PRIZE FOR HER AFGHAN AND HER BATTENBURG DOILIES. NEARBY WAS A BUILDING FOR SERVING FOOD. THIS CONCESSION WAS RUN BY MY AUNT AND UNCLE, MR. AND MRS. LOUIS HUENKE. THEY WERE JUST STARTING THE MILK-DELIVERY PROJECT FROM THEIR FARM HOME AT THE WEST END OF TOWN AND NO DOUBT WERE TRYING TO RAISE EXTRA FUNDS TO SEE IT CONTINUE. IT DID! IT BECAME THE WHITE MOUNTAIN CREAMERY CO. WHICH IS NOW BEATRICE FOODS. NO GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE IN THOSE DAYS!

THE TRIP HOME WAS ALMOST AS EXCITING AS THE HARNESS RACE! IT WAS MADE IN THE SCHMIDT CHILDREN'S PONY-CART DRIVEN BY LEONARD SCHMIDT (LATER DR. L.H. SCHMIDT, D.V.M.). AT THE TIME, HE WAS ABOUT FIFTEEN YEARS OF AGE. AFTER THE PONY, "LARK", HAD BEEN TIED TO A TREE FOR HOURS, HE WANTED TO HEAD FOR THE BARN! HE WAS ALLOWED TO PASS ALL BUGGIES EVEN IF IT MEANT CUTTING THE DITCH NOW AND THEN!

IF ONE WAS FORTUNATE, THERE MIGHT BE SEVERAL OTHER DAYS AT THE WEEK-LONG FAIR, BUT NONE OF THEM WERE EVENTFUL ENOUGH FOR ONE TO REMEMBER.

by Marguerite (Koop) Kunning