

"THE TOWPATH" – JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER - 1992

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.

Regular visiting hours are Sunday afternoons during June, July, August from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.
Other days and hours by appointment.

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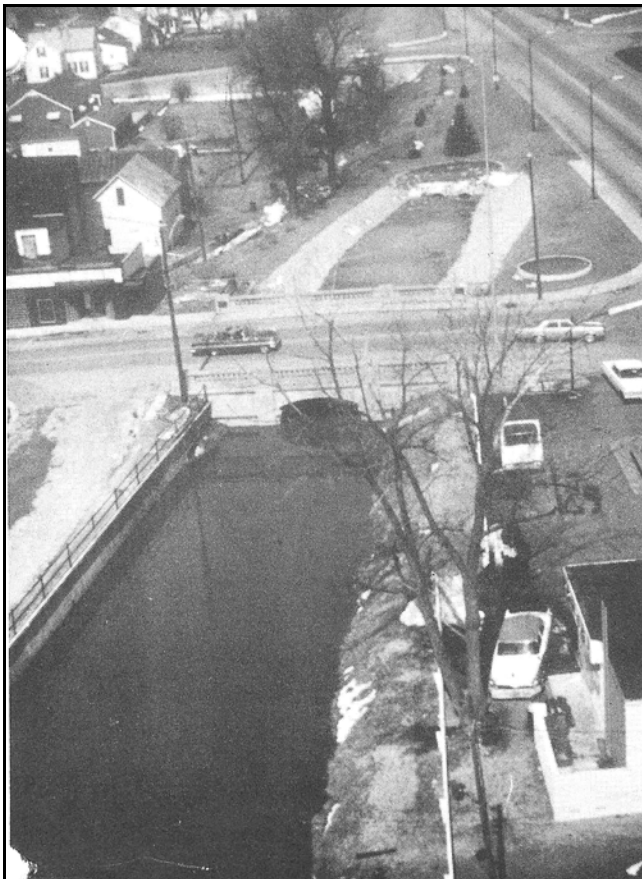
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Come and Visit our Museum!

The picture on the right shows the old Monroe Street concrete bridge before it was taken down in the late 1960s.

Now in 1992 Monroe Street is undergoing repair – new lines, new curbs, new sidewalks, new blacktop.

Jim Cooper took this picture from atop the old Kuenzel Mills silo.



"Hometown is more than just a town; it is a way of life, a place of peace and quiet, and when I return, it is as if I have never been gone; and in my heart I have not!" (*Ideals magazine*)

THE WEHMEYER FAMILY COMES TO AMERICA

by Mrs. Arthur (Margaret Wehmeyer) Shroyer of Kettlersville, Ohio - N.B.H.S. Class of 1937

In the fall of 1885, the Wehmeyer family in Germany was astir and excited as never before. The family was father and mother and seven children. They had just gone through the process of converting everything that could be sold into "cold cash" in order to pay for their passage across the Atlantic. What to keep and what to sell was a big problem, but they kept on selling until the required sum was reached. Family keepsakes, things inherited, even some personal effects, had to go! Thereupon, father Wehmeyer put the money safely into his pocket, went to the Steamship Ticket Office, and "laid it on the line" for their tickets to America! "Now help us God", he prayed – and so Mother Wehmeyer prayed, and so the children prayed, for this was the big event of their lives.

Returning to their almost barren home, father Wehmeyer laid the tickets on the table, all that he had to show for their worldly possessions. But those little tickets were their passport to America!

The trip across took only 12 days, remarkable speed for those times. All those old enough to remember were all eyes and ears on their way across. But all nine also became desperately seasick. Son Fred was 15, and couldn't speak a word of English. But he had a half-brother, William Weber, in the coal business in New York, who had come over several years before. He was in the German section of the city. He brought the rest of the family to New Bremen, but Fred remained in New York to seek his fortune there. (His mother had an uncle living in New Bremen.) →

FRED WEHMEYER IN NEW YORK

Fred found employment with a German grocer. He had been working in a grocery in Germany while still there and so was delighted at this opportunity. In Germany he had received the equivalent of \$11.00 a year plus some clothes, but now he was to receive the sum of \$5.00 a month plus board and wash. After 3 months of diligent labor, his wages had been raised to \$15.00 a month, which was truly something to write back to Germany about. His hours were from 5:00 A.M. until 9:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. On Saturday he had to work until midnight and on Sunday until noon.

Fred had to feed, curry and harness the grocery-man's horses first thing in the morning and thereafter he had to haul supplies, make deliveries and assist in waiting on customers. The owner and his wife, plus three full-time clerks, plus Fred, constituted the staff.

Once during the early days he got lost, mistakenly driving Dobbin in the wrong direction while his boss was anxiously waiting for the case of lemons which he had been sent to get!

Later he worked at another grocery located on 6th Avenue. There he had to deliver by push-cart in the immediate neighborhood, including coal. Coal was sold in bags and was part of the regular stock in every grocery store. Everybody burned hard coal then, and the coal had to be screened before they were allowed to sell it. There were so many German-speaking people in New York at that time that he got along very well, even before he learned to speak English. After three years of this, his health failed and he was advised to go west so he came to New Bremen to be with his family, and his older brother August went to New York.

By this time his parents had acquired their farm (southeast corner of St. Rt. 66 and Southland Rd.) and Fred worked at home when needed and worked out when not.

-Margaret (Wehmeyer) Shroyer



THE WEHMEYER FAMILY

Pictured here are Henry and Sophie Wehmeyer with their younger children (approximately 1889). The youngest child is Louis.

Heinrich Fredric Wilhem Christian Wehmeyer was born at Dierstord, Hanover, Germany, on February 8, 1833.

Sophie Marie Caroline (Berghorn) Weber Wehmeyer, was born in Friestorf Province, Hanover, Germany on March 11, 1842. She was first married to William Weber who died in 1862 and they had a son, William Weber.

The Wehmeyers were married in 1867. They had seven children born in Germany - August, Fred, Minnie, Sophie, Lena, Herman and Dora.

Young William Weber came to the United States a few years before the

rest of the family. After years of very hard work with a coal company, William Weber, his son-in-law John Bunke, and a friend formed the Weber, Bunke and Lange Coal Co. They became the largest and richest coal company in New York City. He liked it in the U.S. and wanted his mother, step-father and the rest of the family to come to this land of opportunity.

Henry and Sophie and their seven children sailed for the U.S. on November 8, 1885 and arrived at New York City on November 20, 1885. Henry, Sophie and family stayed in New York City a short time, and then moved and settled down on a farm near New Bremen, Ohio.

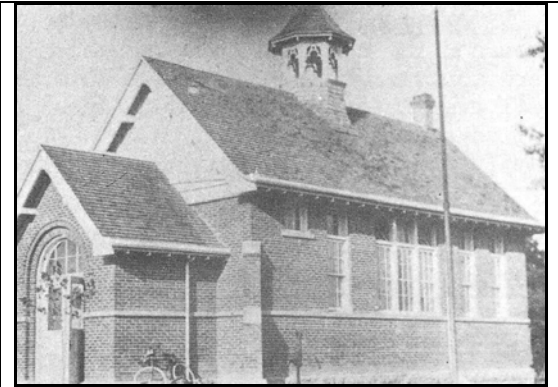
On March 10, 1887, Henry Wehmeyer applied for U.S. Citizenship papers. Henry's becoming a citizen on May 9, 1891 automatically made the entire family American citizens. Henry and Sophie had another son (their only child born in the United States) named LOUIS Wehmeyer. Louis was the father of the late Robert Wehmeyer and the author of this article, Margaret Shroyer.

Henry Wehmeyer died of pneumonia on March 3, 1902 at the age of 69 years. Sophie died of asthma and pneumonia on December 2, 1915 at the age of 73 years. Both are buried in the German Protestant Cemetery near New Bremen.

-Margaret (Wehmeyer) Shroyer



ORIGINAL NORTH SCHOOL – BUILT IN 1857, TORN DOWN IN 1898
EMIL G. CONRADI, TEACHER (LATE 1890s)
Note slates and McGuffey readers.



The NORTH SCHOOL, better known as the LOCK TWO SCHOOL, built in 1898 and abandoned in 1923. Location: Northeast corner of Quellhorst Road (now New Bremen-New Knoxville Road) and Lock Two Road.

Some of the teachers who taught at the Lock Two School were Edgar Wierth, Emil Koenig, Emil Conradi, Wilson Behm, Esther Kuck (Mrs. Leo Kuhlhorst).



THE NORTH SCHOOL aka THE LOCK TWO SCHOOL-1908

←BACK ROW: Ora Garmhausen, Florie Lutterbein, Amanda Schultz, Aurelia Dicke, Hilda Huckriede, TEACHER Wilson Behm, Fred Kuenning, Royal Tangeman, Alma Topp, Herman Heinfeld, Daniel Grothaus, Ferd Dicke, Elmer Oberwltte.

MIDDLE ROW: Hulda Kuenning, Mildred Garmhausen, Olga Schrolucke, Lenora Doenges, Elmer Fricke, Harry Koeper, Harry Schrolucke, Leonard Maurer.

SITTING: Mabel Tangeman, Aurelia Heil, Wilson Maurer, Elmer Wittenbrink, Ernie Koeper, Wilhelmine Grothaus, Marie Lutterbein, Edgar Donnerberg, Arlie Dicke, Herbert Piehl, Rinehart Piehl, Wilbur Garmhausen, Ernie Heinfeld.



THE NORTH SCHOOL aka THE LOCK TWO SCHOOL-1922

←TOP: Marvin Fark, Norma Fark, Orville Ruedebusch, Elvira Dicke, Henry Wittenbrink, Lilas Heitkamp, TEACHER Edgar Wierth.

2ND ROW: Lawrence Heinfeldt, Howard Ruese, Inez Heitkamp, Lela Mae Scheer, Marcella Nieter, Earl Meckstroth, Howard Wiehe.

3RD ROW: Edward Roettger, Ralph Scheer, Richard Roettger, Paul Ruedebusch, Leroy Heinfeldt, Walter Wittenbrink.

BOTTOM: Harold Wissman, Robert Bambauer, Paul Geib, Milford Kettler.



THE NORTH SCHOOL aka LOCK TWO SCHOOL

The North School, or New Paris School, better known in later years as the Lock Two School, was erected in 1857 on the northeast corner property at the crossing of the New Knoxville and Lock Two roads, southwest of the German Protestant Cemetery, or in the southwest corner of Section number two of German Township. This land was donated to the German Township School District for school purposes by the late Christ Toetgenhorst by deed filed in 1857.

In 1898, the original North School was torn down and a new school was erected at a cost of \$1453.00. Fristoe & Vornholt were the contractors. In 1923 the North School, then generally known as Lock Two School, was abandoned and the children attending that school were transported to the Central School building in New Bremen. This building could not be sold if abandoned for school purposes, but it was finally disposed of in the year 1928, when through an understanding with the original heirs the property was permitted to revert to them and upon the sale of the land the purchaser also purchased the building.

In connection with the sale of this school house the following article appeared in the *New Bremen Sun* on April 19, 1928: "An interesting real estate deal involving the transfer of a deed filed in 1857 was consummated this week when Frank Schneider purchased the one-room Lock Two Schoolhouse maintained for many years as a part of the New Bremen school district and located one mile north of town. Erected on land donated by the late Christ Toetgenhorst, the school was operated for more than half a century before it was closed in August 1923 by action of the Board of Education. Its suspension followed inauguration of the present tendency for centralization in school affairs. Mr. Schneider purchased the building for a consideration said to have been \$100.00 and also acquired title to the land on which it stands. The real estate was bought from Mrs. Minnie Kuhlhorst and Leo Lietz, representing the heirs of the Toetgenhorst family, as the original grant provided that the land was to revert back to the family in case it was no longer needed for school purposes."

1928 NEWS ITEMS

DAYTON FLORIST TO BUILD GREENHOUSE HERE THIS SUMMER



TWO OF THE SOUTH FRANKLIN STREET LOTS BELONGING TO THE LATE CHARLES BOESEL ESTATE WERE PURCHASED YESTERDAY BY JOHN GRISCEL OF DAYTON, OHIO, WHO EXPECTS TO LOCATE IN NEW BREMEN EARLY NEXT FALL.

MR. GRISCEL IS AN EXPERIENCED FLORIST AND PLANS TO ERECT A MODERN GREENHOUSE HERE. WORK ON THE BUILDING IS TO BE STARTED WITHIN THE NEXT FEW WEEKS. MR. GRISCEL AND HIS FAMILY WILL PROBABLY MOVE TO NEW BREMEN THE LATTER PART OF SEPTEMBER, MR. GRISCEL HAVING PURCHASED THE WILLIAM WOLFRED RESIDENCE ON SOUTH WASHINGTON STREET SOME TIME AGO. THE RESIDENCE IS NOW OCCUPIED BY MR. & MRS. HENRY ELBERT, WHO RECENTLY ACQUIRED THE CLIFFORD BARTH HOME ON WEST MONROE.

(NEW BREMEN SUN)

The Griscels came to New Bremen with a family of four – John, his wife, son Bud, and the Grandma. It was exciting for the town to watch a greenhouse being built at 303 South Franklin and the adjoining lot to the south. The day came when the final coat of whitewash was painted on the glass and then the long benches were placed in rows reaching from east to west. The front doors opened to South Franklin Street.

The work area was a long room on the west end of the building. Here the cuttings of the flowers were taken, potted in flats, then small pots, and carried to one of the large benches to grow.

Neighborhood children and their little friends were welcome to come and visit and play in the sand piles under the benches. The greenhouse had such a good fragrance, especially during the winter months.

The Griscels were members of St. Peter's Church, with Mr. Griscel teaching a Sunday School class. His wife was an invalid and spent many hours in a rocking chair.

They tried hard to have a thriving business but the big depression came in 1929 and soon our little town felt hard times too, and there was no money for flowers!

Let's go along together, down the road to yesterday,
To live again the memories that the years have stored away.
(Ideals magazine)

MORE 1928 NEWS ITEMS

JUNE 14, 1928: There were over 12,000 persons attending the AUTO RACES on Sunday with Paul Bost of Detroit being first in all three events. There was free car service over the Western Ohio (interurban) from New Bremen to the speedway provided by the management in the hope that many would thus be induced to park their machines in town.

Visibility was very poor due to the dust. Thousands were turned away at the gates, the roads leading to the speedway being crowded with machines three abreast an hour before the races were scheduled to start. The policemen were unable to cope with the crowds and traffic. (New Bremen Sun)

NOVEMBER 8, 1928: Opening of the Southside Service Station located at South Washington and Cherry Streets. Irvin Koeper and Albert Schmidt opened the fourth filling station here in town. The other stations are Refiners on the corner of Washington and Monroe, Lone Pine at Pearl and North Main Street, and the Johnson Station on North Herman Street.

DEAR FRIENDS:

Our mailing list for *The Towpath* is growing! Every three months we mail approximately 400 newsletters to members in the area and to various states in the USA. It is rewarding to receive letters from our readers telling us of their fond memories of New Bremen. Some of you were born here, while others have had the pleasure of calling New Bremen "home" for a few years or for many years. We would like to share some of the memories with you...

January 1992: My mother, lone (Hartman) McVey and the entire Hartman family lived and went to school in New Bremen in the teens, twenties and thirties and have many fond memories of life in your town. My grandparents, J. Christian Hartman and Anna Laura Malinda Waterman, had seven children - Irvin, Bernice, Earl, lone, Howard, Edward and June. My grandfather worked for the White Mountain Creamery, my grandmother raised chickens and sold them to the Hollingsworth Hotel, and my mother, lone, worked at the Hollingsworth while she was in High School. The Hartmans lived in a house at 118 Franklin St. and also in a house next to the Creamery on West Monroe.

-David McVey of Marion, Illinois

March 1992: *The Towpath* has helped recall many instances of my early life in New Bremen that are very dear to me. As a former Mayor, I wish to congratulate your officers and members for their efforts in the continuing growth and perpetuation of the Association. A check is enclosed to assist in defraying the cost of publishing *The Towpath*.

-Lloyd J. Laut - New Bremen Ohio

April 1992: Our family was driven out of Dayton by the 1913 flood. We came up to New Bremen and lived across the street from St. Paul Church in 1913-1914. My grandparents, George & Mary Williams, lived on the same side and across the street from Zion's Church on Main Street. They lived there from 1910-1934. The Williams family, including my mother, Stella Bowman, are buried in the German Protestant Cemetery at Lock Two. Please send a subscription to my sister and me - what's left will fit in your cookie jar.

-W.S. Bowman - Shoreview, Minnesota

May 1992: Enclosed is a check for membership to the NBHA plus a donation. I am the grandson of H. William Grewe and Anna Catharina Engel Kruel, both formerly of New Bremen. My mother, Edna Fay (Saer) Cadle is the daughter of Lydia Grewe and Sheldon Saer. Could it be that relatives of the Kruels still live in the New Bremen area? I would like to get in contact with them.

-Gary Cadle - Medford, Oregon

June 1992: My mother was Mrs. William (Martha Bertram) Frey. Her brothers were Walter and Paul Bertram. My grandfather was W.F. Bertram and pastor of St. Paul Church in New Bremen from 1894-1906. My mother was the organist at St. Paul Church and also a telephone operator.

We were in New Bremen around Memorial Day and Betty Schroer took us through the museum. I was really surprised to see that Jack Moeller had written some German textbooks. Do you remember when they showed free outdoor movies against the south side of the old Post Office building? I remember the movie "The 13th Guest" because it was so spooky to us girls!

-Fondly, Marian (Frey) Engle - Crozet, Virginia

HAPPY 90TH BIRTHDAY to Wilbur "Garmy" Garmhausen. Mr. Garmhausen is a graduate of New Bremen High School, a charter member of the New Bremen Historic Association, has given a lifetime of service as a landscape architect and says "I believe there's beauty all about - people are becoming more aware of history and are trying to promote it."

-Wilbur Garmhausen - Chillicothe, Ohio

TWICE TOLD TALES

This is a beautiful family story written by Gladys (Koop) Walsch. She begins her story with her Grandfather Koop and his trip to America from Germany in 1837 at the age of 36:

“Grandfather came with a company of friends and relatives from the small town of Dreeke where his father owned a sizeable farm. The company immigrating to America were in a sailing vessel on the storm-tossed Atlantic for fourteen weeks. After landing safely in America, some of the group, Grandfather among them, traveled to Cincinnati where acquaintances from Germany were already settled.

In Cincinnati, he married Meta Adelheid Wuellenbruck, a young seamstress thirteen years his junior. The young couple left Cincinnati for a spot to the north – New Bremen in Auglaize County, where they received a government land grant of 80 acres. There I, their granddaughter, was born, played in the orchard, the garden, the woods, grew up...

My grandfather and his friends chose to settle in New Bremen for one very special reason – a new canal was being built (or dug) across western Ohio from Toledo on to the Ohio River, opening up great areas for transportation. It was called the Miami & Erie Canal and for years to come was the main channel for commerce in western Ohio.

New Bremen, being on the canal, and also having much fertile and level land for farming, grew and prospered in those days. The early settlers must have been wise and industrious men, with much foresight. There were locks on the canal so that boats could be raised or lowered according to the water level. New Bremen was located on Lock I.”

-Gladys (Koop) Walsch

I remember a town and a pleasant street where the maple trees flung high
Their shading branches through summer days beneath a calm blue sky.
I remember the children who ran and played on corners beneath the lights,
Their shrill young voices gay and sweet, those quiet starlit nights.

(Ideals magazine)