18th ANNUAL CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

The 18th Annual Christmas Tree Festival was held on December 5th and 6th, with Rev. Lawrence Holmer as Chairperson. He had many willing helpers and to all of you we say "Thank You!"

This event opens the Christmas season in New Bremen, inviting everyone to come to the Museum and see all the beautiful Christmas displays and hear the old familiar carols. A special treat was to enjoy the good home-baked Christmas cookies and the hot spiced cider. Seventy two children received a candy cane from Santa Claus and left their Christmas lists with him. Door Prizes won were: Wreath, Dorothy Hertenstein; Apron, Lewis Bertke; Mini Mail Box, Jerry Newman; Fruit Basket, Brenda Philpot; Door Knob Hangers, Bernard Schroer; Tissue Box Cover, Alan Fenters.

COMING SOON – N.B.H.A. ANNUAL DINNER MEETING

Monday, March 15th, 1993 is the date set for the Annual Dinner Meeting, to be held at St. Paul Church at 6:30 P.M. There will be entertainment by the "MIAMI ERIE BOYS" and a program, "Remember Old New Bremen". Tickets will go on sale March 1st at Schwieterman's Drug Store and also at the Cornerstone Shop.

Frosty is the morning, but the sun is bright, flooding all the landscape with its golden light. Hark the sounds of laughter and of voices shrill. See the happy children coasting down the hill.

[McGuffey’s Second Eclectic Reader – donated by Marie Taylor.]
NEW BREMEN’S BLIZZARDS

FEBRUARY 3, 1888: SLEIGHING GONE - SLIPPERY WEATHER - LOOK OUT!

30 YEARS LATER - SNOW BOUND NEW BREMEN INCLUDED IN PATH OF BLIZZARD.

JANUARY 18, 1918: A fierce blizzard of thirty six hours duration, and perhaps the worst one in the history of this section of the country, struck New Bremen Friday night, January 18th, shortly after 10:00 P.M. and had it not been for an ample supply of fuel that had been secured by the citizens during the previous two weeks, there would surely have been much suffering!

The thermometer registered as low as 23° below zero with a gale sweeping over the country at the rate of 30 to 40 miles per hour. With drifts so high, roads were impassable and the snow was packed almost as solid as ice!

IN THE HOMES, water pipes in great numbers were caught by the cold and burst. IN THE COUNTRY, farmers were busy looking after their livestock, the latter suffering very much because of the intense cold! Then, 8 to 10 inches more snow before the weather became more moderating. Sleighing became fine - the younger people are taking advantage of the opportunity.

(from the New Bremen Sun)

ALL ABOUT SNOW

A soft thick cover has been laid
On meadow and the pond;
And there are downy featherbeds
Upon the slopes beyond.

The hungry sparrows plead for food
On every windowsill;
And misty halos hide the crest
Of every snowcapped hill.

What love dear Mother Nature has
For with one winter storm
She creates beauty for us all
And keeps the good earth warm!

(Ideals magazine)

60 YEARS LATER - THE WORST BLIZZARD IN MANY YEARS! OHIO BATTLES BACK FROM THE KILLER BLIZZARD.

A 1978 BLIZZARD PHOTO (ABOVE) TAKEN THE DAY AFTER THE STORM. A VIEW OF SOUTH HERMAN STREET. WORKERS WERE FORCED TO STAY HOME, SOME HIGHWAYS WERE “OFF-LIMITS”, GROCERY STORES WERE OUT OF BREAD, HIGH DRIFTS, TERRIFIC WIND.

JANUARY 26, 1978: It started to snow on Wednesday, January 25th, then no let-up on Thursday. It was a watch and wait situation. Wind gusts up to 70 MPH lashed the area sending the chill factor at times to -70° (below zero!). Rescue efforts were hampered by the howling wind and near zero visibility but as time went on, law enforcement units, rescue units, power companies, etc. began to swing into action. Much credit can be given to the CB RADIO, the SNOWMOBILE, and the 4-WHEEL DRIVE VEHICLE. Dramatic rescue stories followed: a doctor arrived on a snowmobile to deliver a baby, entire families were being brought from their snowbound homes by snowmobilers, deliveries of food to isolated households - all deserve recognition! And then the snow, caught by the strong winds, began to form deep, deep drifts. The Ohio National Guardsmen became the delivery boys for Mercer and Auglaize Counties.

[The Evening Leader]

A PRECIOUS PICTURE FROM YESTERYEAR!

THE YEAR IS 1923. THE GROUND IS COVERED WITH SNOW AND THESE YOUNG LADIES ARE GATHERED AT THE DEPOT IN NEW BREMEN READY TO TAKE A “FUN TRIP” TO VISIT A FRIEND. WHAT CAN WE TAKE ALONG FOR FUN?” THEIR ATTICS AT HOME FURNISHED THE MATERIAL FOR THEM - OLD WICKER HAMPERS, WORN OUT UMBRELLAS, AND EVEN AN EMPTY BIRD CAGE!

NOTE: THE LADIES ARE WEARING FOUR-BUCKLE BOOTS - THEY WERE CALLED GALOSHES!

L-R: ELSA MUELLER, MAUD EKERMEYER, EMMA KOENIG (SCHROER), HILDA HUCKRIEDE (LUDWIG), VIOLA MUELLER, AND IRENE EKERMEYER.
WHO REMEMBERS THE OLD TOWN PUMP?

ON PAGE 6 OF THE 1983 SESQUICENTENNIAL BOOK, "RALPH MAY REMEMBERS NEW BREMEN", THERE IS THIS PARAGRAPH ABOUT TOWN PUMPS:

"THERE WAS AN OLD WOODEN PUMP REMINDING ME OF HAWTHORNE'S STORY 'THE TOWN PUMP' PRINTED IN MCGUFFEY'S READER AND WITH WHICH MOST OF US WERE FAMILIAR. THERE USED TO BE SUCH A PUMP ACROSS FROM THE ARCADE CORNER NEAR THE OLD MILL HOUSE."

"THE TEAM OF HORSES WAIT TO UNLOAD AND THEN PERHAPS WILL GET A DRINK OF WATER FROM THE TOWN PUMP."

MAYBE THERE IS SOMEONE WHO WILL REMEMBER IT. IT PROBABLY WAS A DUG WELL USED PRIMARILY TO WATER THE TEAMS OF HORSES THAT PULLED THE WAGONS OF GRAIN TO THE MILL. MAYBE IT HAD A WOODEN WATERING TRough SIMILAR TO THE ONE THAT THE MCGUFFEY READER FEATURES. AND I THINK IT HAD AN OLD-TIME TIN CUP HANGING FROM A HOOK ON THE PUMP SO WEARY TRAVELERS COULD HAVE A DRINK OF WATER.

CAN YOU HELP? - THE MYSTERY OF GREAT-GRANDFATHER’S NAME CHANGE

BACKGROUND: My great-grandmother, Elizabeth Heil, was born in New Bremen, Ohio on September 3, 1852. Her parents' names may have been Charles and Elizabeth Heil. Her brothers and sisters may have been Henry/Heinrich Heil, Charles/Carl Heil, Edward/Eduard Heil, Flora/Florence Heil, Wilmina and Mary Heil.

Great-grandmother Elizabeth Heil married my great-grandfather Wilhelm/William Engelage on January 4, 1872. Their first four children were born between 1873 and 1878, carried the family name Engelage and were baptized at the Saint Paul Lutheran Church in New Bremen.

THE MYSTERY BEGINS: My grandfather, Oscar, was born in 1881 with the family name Blumhorst. Since there is no question that Wilhelm Engelage and Wilhelm Blumhorst are one and the same person, this means that sometime between 1878 and 1881, my great-grandfather, Wilhelm, changed his name. However, there is no legal change of name on record.

MY HOPE: That there may be some descendants of Elizabeth Heil who may have any information, fact or even rumor, as to why Wilhelm changed his last name. If you can be of any help, please contact me:

Thelma Ratchford - 4237 Glenayre Drive - Englewood, Ohio 45322 or call: 513-836-1165.

[2009 address: 1863 Sulky Trail – Miamisburg, OH 45342.]
THE FRENCH HOTEL

This is a line drawing from the 1880 Atlas of Auglaize County of the “French Hotel” – at one time a popular hotel for canal trade in New Bremen. As of this writing (12/31/1992), Homan & Stucke Construction, Inc. occupies this site at 26 North Main Street.

Many of you will remember this building from before it was taken down in 1932. The last business in this building was the Sunshine (Superior) Broom Co.

The accompanying article was researched and written by Mervin Niekamp of Burbank, California. Mervin lived in New Bremen as a youth and attended the New Bremen Schools. He is a Life Member of the N.B.H.A. and is interested in New Bremen history.

The hotel known as the DICKE HOUSE, and later as HOTEL FRENCH, was located on lot number 61 at the southeast corner of First and Main Streets in New Bremen, Ohio. I don't know when, or by whom, it was built. C.W. Dicke, my great-grandfather, owned and operated it from sometime in the early 1860s to the late 1870s. It was a three-story frame building. The third story was storage space. It was approximately 40 ft. wide and 120 ft. long. The second story had a porch or deck built over the public sidewalk on Main Street, facing west. When I was a boy I walked by this building many times and as I recall there were at least three doors which allowed outside access to some of the rooms on the north side. The hotel catered mainly to travelers and workers on the canal.

After C.W. Dicke quit the hotel, I don't know who took it over. J.H. Mesloh is listed as the owner of the property on page 66 of the 1880 Atlas of Auglaize County, Ohio.

In the 1880s the hotel was owned or operated by Alex Bourquin - probably it was he who changed the name to HOTEL FRENCH. In the sesquicentennial book, NEW BREMEN, OHIO 1833-1983, page 57, “Excerpts from the New Bremen Sun”, is this item dated February 8, 1889 – "THE LANDLORD OF THE FRENCH HOUSE INTENDS TO SELL OUT". On the following pages, 58-59, an item dated July 29, 1904 relates to happenings of 15 years before. One sentence in this item reads, “The Hotel French, which was at that time (1889) conducted by Alex Bourquin, has been closed.”

The building was last used for a broom shop. I remember seeing bundles of brooms being loaded from the second floor porch deck onto a wagon or truck parked on Main Street.

The building was taken down in the late 1920s or early 1930s (1932? – see above article). The lumber was salvaged and a home built from it in New Bremen. It sits on the corner of State Route 274 and Eastmoor Drive.

[The information as to the size of the building, when it was taken down, and the use of the lumber, I received from Leroy Schroer. In 1980, he and Clifford Quellhorst operated a garage that was built on the lot where the hotel stood.]

NEW BREMEN HISTORIC ASSOCIATION ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT - 1992

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Editor’s Note: Karl Mesloh of New Bremen, Ohio is retired and a Life Member of the N.B.H.A. One of Karl’s hobbies is the study of German surnames (starts on next page). He promises us more information on our names.

Thank you, Karl.

“The Towpath” – January 1993 – Pg. 4
GERMAN SURNAMES - THEIR MEANING & ORIGIN
(by Karl Mesloh - Part 1)