

"THE TOWPATH" – APRIL, MAY, JUNE - 1993

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

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This issue is dedicated to this small business enterprise
that flourished in New Bremen from 1910-1928,
NIETER'S GENERAL STORE".

N.B.H.A. ANNUAL DINNER

The New Bremen Historic Association held its Annual Dinner Meeting on March 15, 1993 in the St. Paul Church Assembly Room. A well-known area cook and her helpers served a steak dinner and the dessert was homemade pie. 81 tickets were sold for this event and it was great!

The white linen covered tables were decorated with a beautiful display of spring flower arrangements made by Paul & Viola Headapohl.

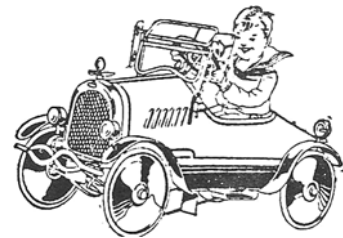
Craig Hoffman was recognized for his many years of fine service on the Board of Trustees and was presented with a plaque. He promised he will come back and work with us again in the future.

Entertainment followed in the Auditorium with music by the Miami-Erie Boys + One, a reading of a Ralph May letter by Donna Warner, and then Stan & Dona Mae Kuenning and John Gilberg gave talks, testing our memories of old New Bremen. It was a fun time and made us feel good to think that we are a part of this wonderful town!

The co-curators, Vernita Scheer and Bea Young, along with Paul Lietz, had memorabilia and photos of old New Bremen on display for all to enjoy.



WHERE DID YOU PLAY WHEN YOU WERE A CHILD?
TELL ME - WHERE WERE YOU BORN?
DID YOU RUN ON THE PRAIRIE, FREE AND WILD,
AND HIDE IN THE ROWS OF CORN?
DID YOU OPEN YOUR EYES TO A MOUNTAINTOP?
DID YOU WIGGLE YOUR TOES IN THE SAND?
DID YOU PLAY HOPSCOTCH IN FRONT OF A SHOP?
OR DID YOU LIVE CLOSE TO THE LAND?
WHERE WERE YOU BORN AND WHERE DID YOU PLAY?
TELL ME, AND I SHALL KNOW,
FOR YOUR PAST IS A PART OF YOU STILL TODAY,
AND YOUR YOUTH YOU WILL NEVER OUTGROW.



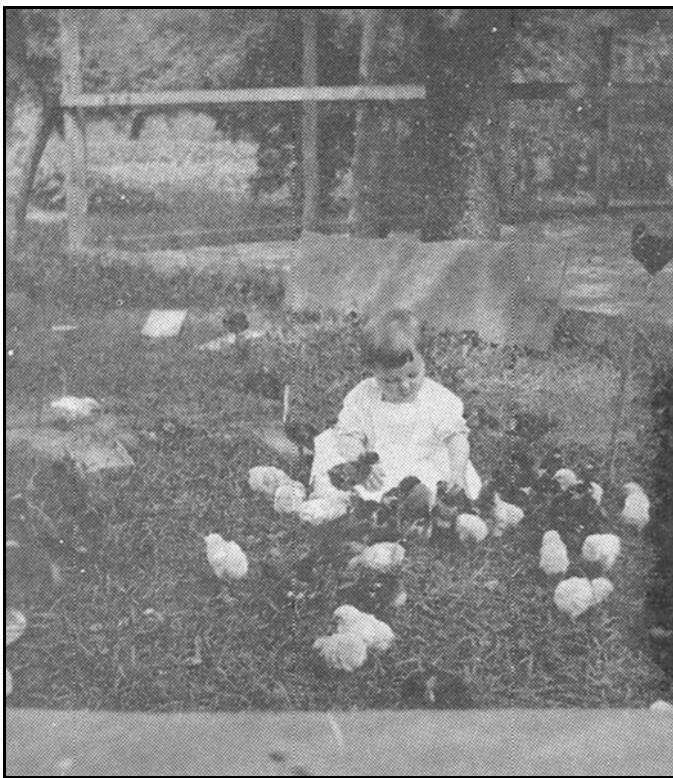
Eleanor Graham Vance



3rd Grade in 1935 – Miss Bertha Schowe, teacher



Water fountain in New Bremen – Early 1960s



Springtime in New Bremen in the 1920s



"PLAY BALL!"

NIETER'S GENERAL STORE - AS I REMEMBER IT

[by Leota Nieter]

Come with me on a nostalgic tour of my parents' store which they started in 1910. In the photo (front page), the left front window was filled with summer umbrellas and the right front window with canned goods. These windows were changed from time to time with various items - yard goods, trimmings, and various grocery items. Later on the window background was changed to a painted white wooden latticework, hinged for easy window changes.

From the front entrance the dry goods counter ran along the left side, and was filled with sheeting materials, muslin, calico, gingham, pique, cotton voile, organdy and crepe de Chine. There was a Butterick pattern book and patterns for the home seamstress. Marjorie (Gieseke) Lietz told me that her mother purchased yard goods at the store and sewed matching dresses for her and her sister Dorothy. Cade Schulenberg, proprietor of Schulenberg's Store, always called them "The Geez Twins" - that was short for Gieseke.

There was also the "Delineator" magazine, featuring dresses, sewing hints, recipes, stories and excellent articles. I have a scrapbook of the interesting and inspiring articles by Celia Caroline Cole. This delightful magazine gave the reader a view of the wider world.

My mother was a very good seamstress and could copy dresses and juggle patterns to make pretty clothes for me. I remember the one time when her birthday was coming up on June 18th, I decided to give her material for a nice blouse. Laura Wuebbenhorst was working at the store and I asked her to measure enough yardage of a lovely soft green crepe de Chine. Laura was very reluctant to cut yardage from this expensive material, since she did not know if I had asked my father's permission. I had not asked my father, but I was insistent so she complied. I cannot remember any parental reprimanding, so it must have been all right.

In the notions area were sewing items for trimming and mending, and button molds. Thread was in a cabinet which sat on the counter. The cabinet had shallow drawers and white porcelain pulls, displaying O.N.T. spool cotton and colorful shades of mercerized thread.

In the notions area was a dummy figure without head and arms to display corset covers. The bottom of the stand was covered with an ivory satin-like skirt with ruffled trimming. I always admired this skirt and when the dummy stand was no longer used, I got the skirt for playing dress-up. When we played movie star time, I would wear the satin skirt and purple dyed lace curtain, my mother's shoes with heels, and climb up on the mounted cannon in the nearby park (located in the area back of the present Post Office). What fun!

On the right side of the store was the glass candy counter - my favorite area. Occasionally I waited on the children who came in clutching their penny, pressing their noses against the glass case, and taking a long time to make their big decision. Maybe they chose a piece of licorice, which would be placed in a small brown paper bag. The penny would be dropped in the new bright metal National Cash Register.

Hard tack candy and peanut brittle came in wooden buckets, and chocolates in five pound boxes. One of my favorites was chocolate-covered nougats. Opera chocolates were oval shaped and had white cream centers. When my Uncle Oscar Dammeyer was on a honeymoon with his new bride, Anna Luelleman from Fort Wayne, friends and relatives decided to do a "belling" upon their return. The newlyweds were going to live in the other half of the double where we were living, the corner of North Main and Pearl Streets. Their place was furnished and ready for their return, so we were outside making noises by ringing bells and hitting pie pans with a metal spoon. Another fun thing - someone had taken some Opera creams, shaved off the chocolate, covered the creams with black pepper, and then re-dipped them into the melted chocolate. They were placed on a nice dish for a nice "surprise" sweet for the newlyweds!

I had a sweet tooth myself and my father always said I ate up the profits. One Easter he made a deal with me - he offered me five dollars if I would give up candy during Lent. I agreed, collected, and felt very rich!

Occasionally, in the summer Gypsies would stop in New Bremen and I don't know where they came from. They were colorfully dressed and talked in a foreign tongue. When they came in the store, they were closely watched as rumors were that they had taking ways.

Groceries and food items were in the rear of the store. The pot-bellied stove was the warm spot, and a few chairs nearby, but not enough for a comfortable long stay. Hanging nearby, when in season, was a stalk of bananas, which gave off the fragrant aroma of that tropical fruit. Oranges came in wooden crates. Seasonal fruits, like peaches, were in bushel baskets. In the grocery area, the showcase had a glass front showing a limited amount of the various items in the drawer bin. When the customer asked for some item, the clerk put a scoop into the bin, barrel or burlap bag, and out it came full of loose rice, beans or coffee. When my father put a scoop of Old Reliable coffee beans in the hand-turned grinder - oh, what a lovely aroma. Flour came in cloth sacks, and the sacks would be saved and used for towels. Bulk sugar was placed in a paper bag and weighed on the TOLEDO scale. Meats and cheeses were kept in a large icebox. Dried beef was always on hand.

Marjorie Lietz said, "My favorite memory of the store was Edgemont Crackers. They came in bulk form or you could buy a round tin. Your dad would package them in a brown bag and tie them two ways with a cord string, which was very handy for little fingers to snack a cracker or two on the way home."

Various salesmen called at the store and my mother helped with the buying of yard goods and items of interest to homemakers. Other items were ordered from the Butler Brothers wholesale catalog.

Outside of the store, at the rear, were hitching posts to tie your horse. There were a few farmers who came in their horse and buggy. My father bought a Model T Ford for delivering groceries to regular customers - it also served as our first family car.

One of the community sports in New Bremen was softball, played on the baseball field on the northwest end of town. My father had a scoreboard built that displayed the Nieter's Store identification. This was my mother's idea – a good marketing technique for those days!

The store was open six days a week, and longer hours on Saturdays. One summer my parents took off Wednesday afternoons for dancing lessons at Gordon State Park at St. Marys. That was a beautiful ballroom, and the orchestra that summer was from New York. I also remember those delicious pork barbecue sandwiches from the boardwalk!

I remember many people who worked at the store as clerks. One of the first ones was my mother's sister, Frieda (Dammeyer) Schroeder. Her parents had sold their farm and moved into a house on North Main Street, next to the store. Aunt Frieda had started in New Bremen High School in 1908, but in the beginning of her Junior year she developed typhoid fever and had to drop out of school. At that time my parents bought the HENRY DICKMAN GENERAL STORE and offered her a job. This gave her the chance to earn money and not have the humiliation of having to ask her parents for money. She quit school, and finished her education many years later, graduating from New Bremen High School. Other clerks were Laura Wuebbenhorst, Helen Luelleman, Paula Vogelsang, Paul Kettler and Amelia (Kyburz) Conradi. Every Monday, Amelia walked to the Vornholt Boarding House for lunch and always had vegetable soup and custard pie!

IN 1928, IT WAS DECIDED TO GO OUT OF BUSINESS, partly due to a new grocery store - Kroger's, downtown on Monroe Street. My father hired Mr. Weisenborn, a professional going-out-of-business salesman. There was a big bargain sellout of the merchandise. Mr. A.H. Albert, a local funeral director, purchased the building as a storage area for caskets. And so ended the era for Nieter's General Store. I finished my Junior year in New Bremen Central High School and joined my parents in Dayton, Ohio.

-by Leota Nieter

FROM GENERAL STORE TO CHURCH TO RESIDENCE

EDITOR'S NOTE: From Alberta (Collins) Steinebrey and Margaret (Kluge) Greene, both formerly of New Bremen, we learn that the Nieter Store building was built by George Calvin Steinebrey and Henry Dierker, grandfather of Margaret Kluge Greene. The building was built for George Greiwe to operate a general store - the year is unknown.

In order to acquaint you with the location of Nieter's General Store:

Formerly the Henry Dickman General Store, the store was purchased by Edwin Nieter and his wife, Adelia (Dammeyer) Nieter in 1910. The store faced the east and what is now (1993) "Bolly's Restaurant". Only the street and sidewalks were in between. At the present time (1993), a business named Precision Reflex is located on this site.

Nieter's General Store was in business from 1910-1928. After the going-out-of-business sale in 1928, the building was purchased by a local funeral director, A.H. Albert, and used for casket storage.

Sometime later, the building was purchased by Arnold Poppe and was used as the office of Bremco Mills.



Photo above: Church in process of being moved.

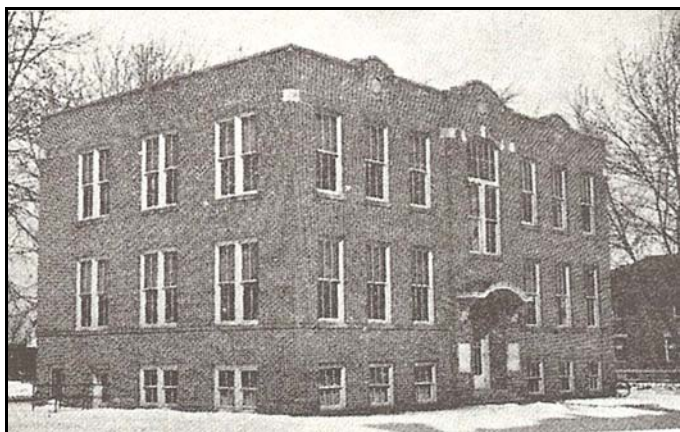
Then, in the spring of 1948, the building again changed hands and this time was purchased as the home of HOLY REDEEMER CHURCH for their services.

During the church's ownership, the building was moved to the northwest edge of town, remodeled, and enlarged for the Catholic congregation. The location now (1993) is just north of the Steve and Diana Hartwig residence, corner of Pearl and North Herman Streets. Just a little further north, across the street, is the Sanders Bowling Alley.

Now, in 1993, the building is owned by Jamie and Sheila Kuhn and in the near future will be their newly remodeled home!

[Photo courtesy of Holy Redeemer Church –added in 2009]

THE BUILDING HAS A RICH HISTORY AND IS TRULY A PART OF NEW BREMEN.



THE CENTRAL HIGH SCHOOL
SE Corner of South Herman & Poplar Streets
Completed in 1920: Cost - \$20,500.29

How many of you remember this building? I am sure it will bring back memories!

It was often referred to as "The Cigar Box".

The building, abandoned in 1929-1930, was sold to contractors for \$2600.00 and part of the material was used in the new Walnut Street High School.

Supt. S.M. Archer, who served in the New Bremen Schools from 1926-1933, said: "Forward always, never backward, save for reminisce, to profit by the past!"

AS THE VILLAGE OF NEW BREMEN GREW, the school attendance grew, and the citizens of New Bremen were kept busy finding adequate school facilities for the students. Various buildings were rented in New Bremen to accommodate the growing enrollment, however the buildings had to meet the state laws.

On May 14, 1918, at a special election, a bond issue for \$20,000 carried for a new High School. A building of brick construction was erected on the northwest corner of the school property, facing east. The building was a two-story structure with two rooms on each floor and a basement consisting of two rooms.

It was true – even the new building could not provide enough room for all the classes. The large Central Grade School provided some room for the High School students. The Agriculture and Home Economics classes were held in the basement of this grand old building built in 1877-1878. The small Library was located in a room that led off the stairway landing. It was a small room, but here Principal Otto C. Doenges held his German class for High School students.

The new High School helped the crowded conditions for some time and then one day there were rumors that the south wall of the building was beginning to "settle". Hearsay – some said "quicksand". The Board of Education and the Faculty were very much concerned about what could happen. Plans had to be made for a safe school building.

[Information source: 1933 Centennial book and graduates of the Central High School.]

In November 1928, at a regular election, a bond issue for \$80,000 carried for erecting a new High School. The building, when complete, would house four High School classes, have a gymnasium and a stage. There would be rooms for a study hall, laboratories, rooms for typing, bookkeeping, stenography, cooking, sewing, agriculture / farm shop, showers, restrooms and locker rooms.



1878 CENTRAL GRADE SCHOOL



1929 HIGH SCHOOL – SOUTH WALNUT STREET

Ground was broken for this new High School on South Walnut Street in March 1929. Classes moved into this new school in January 1930. In 1956, an addition was built to house the elementary classes. The old 1878 building was sold at public auction to Stamco for \$15,000.

[NOTE: These last two pictures (and information about them) were added in 2009.]

GERMAN SURNAMES: THEIR MEANING & ORIGIN

PART TWO: MILITARY ROOTS

In the Jan-Feb-Mar 1993 issue of *"The Towpath"*, we saw that the olden German name was a single name, composed of two syllables, with each syllable representing a root and each root having a specific meaning. Root classifications are mainly Military, Terrain, Professional and Personal Characteristics (miscellaneous). In this issue, a look will be taken at names having at least one Military Root.

The early Germans lived in a tribal and agricultural culture but they also loved war. Cornelius Tacitus, a renowned Roman historian (55-120 AD) wrote in 98 AD that "the Germans were a rough, warlike barbarian people". (Incidentally, Tacitus recorded his observations on German life and customs in one of his histories titled "Germania", which is frequently quoted in numerous reference books. The German men hunted, fished and made war, and although the women tended the fields and cared for family needs, the German men had an extremely high respect for their womenfolk. This respect was mutual and the women often accompanied their men to the battle site and performed as "cheerleaders" from the sidelines. Early German women also had military names; not that they participated in the actual fighting but so they could pass along military virtues to their sons. Tribal battles were generally fought for three reasons: feuds, booty and for the acquisition and settlement of new lands.

North and central Germany had no natural barriers to protect their east and west boundaries such as that provided by the Alps in the south. Thus, armies could easily flow from east to west and west to east, and flow they did! From the west came the Celts, Romans, Gauls, and Franks. From the east came the Huns, Vandals, Goths (Visigoths and Ostrogoths), Langobards, and Burgundians to name a few of the more familiar invaders. With all the military action through the centuries, it is easily concluded that the earliest German names would be predominantly military ones and studies such as those Dr. Jones recorded in his book "German American Names" proved this to be the case.

Military names consisted of roots designating anything military such as weapons, military virtues, predatory birds and animals, victory, rule, fortresses, treasure, etc. Battle furnished the root "gund"; battleground, "wal"; battle axe, "bart"; spear, "ger"; sword, "ecke, bil, brand, schwert"; helmet, "helm"; eagle, "arn"; raven, "ram"; bear, "ber; boar, "ebur"; lion, "leuw, leon"; stag, "hirsch"; victory, "siege"; fortress, "burg"; rule, "wald, rich"; treasure, "od"; courage, "mut"; determination, "wille"; strong, "hart"; power, "macht"; etc.

Very little is known of German warriors earlier than 120 BC except for that related in epics, eddas and sagas; however, some information was preserved by Roman historians along with observations and comments by Julius Caesar prior to Tacitus's writing of his "Germania" history. It is known, however, that Julius Caesar (102 - 44 BC) recruited German cavalry men from the German tribes as they were expert horsemen. Such horsemen were named, "Reiters" or "Reuters" (in the Middle Ages, Knights were named "Ritters", a name reserved for the gentry). The German fighters were mostly armed with a shield, ("lind, rand, schild"), a spear ("ger"), axe ("bart") and sometimes a sword ("ecke"). During the Bronze Age, German smiths were excellent artisans and crafted magnificent, beautiful swords and battleaxes. Since bronze had to be imported, few such swords or battleaxes were carried as a result of their costliness; thus, spearmen outnumbered swordsmen. This is also seen from the list of *"Towpath"* names below where "spear" names outnumber the "sword" names 6-4. The expertise of the German smiths did not, however, carry over from the Bronze Age (1800-800 BC) into the early years of the Iron Age (1000 BC-1860 AD) and so their iron swords were not very strong or dependable, breaking rather easily. It was not until the centuries following Tacitus (100 AD) that swords became commonplace in the hands of German warriors.

When reviewing the following names, please keep in mind that the interpretation of such names is "generic"; one must know the circumstances under which the name was "coined" to know its accurate meaning. A good example of this is the name "Luedeke" which has 4 meanings: Loud Sword, Illustrious Sword, Loud Army or Illustrious Army. Was the sword of the original Luedeke wielded with such vigor that it "sang" when whirled or was its clamor loud upon contacting shield or armor? Was the sword wielded in an illustrious manner or was its beauty illustrious to behold? Was his army loud in battle or in victory or illustriously led? Such answers are necessary for an accurate interpretation; in lieu of such source specifics, namesakes are free, of course, to choose whatever interpretation they find most appealing.

TOWPATH MILITARY NAMES

Ahlers	: Noble & Bright
Bertke	: Brilliant & Loyal & Sword
Billger	: Battle Axe & Spear
Bordewisch	: Battle Axe & White or Meadow
Brandt	: Sword
Busse	: Protection & Strong
Casebolt	: Castle Crossbow Bolts Maker
Conradi	: Son of Conrad, Brave&Counsel
Dietrich	: Folk & Rule
Dilger	: Folk & Rule & Spear
Egbert	: Sword & Brilliant
Erhardt	: Honor & Strong
Frey	: Free
Gaerke	: Little Gearhard, Spear & Strong
Garman	: Spearman
Graf	: Count
Greber	: Official of a Free Community
Harrod	: (English) Mighty in Battle
Hartman	: Strongman
Hartwig	: Strong & Guard
Heinfeld	: Home & Master & Field
Hellswarth	: Army or Battle Blacksmith
Henkener	: Home & Master
Henning	: Belonging to Heinrich, Home and Master
Hoffman	: Courtier
King	: From Koenig meaning King
Koenig	: King
Kuenning	: Belonging to the Brave (Clan Tribe, Family etc)
Kuhn	: Brave
Kunning	: Belonging to the Brave (etc)
Lampert	: Land & Bright
Laut	: Loud, Lute
Ludka	: Loud or Illustrious Wolf
Luedeke	: Loud or Illustrious Sword or Loud or Illustrious Army
Lunz	: Fuze, Harquebusier
Mackenback	: Guardian of the Brook Boundary
Maze	: Mousehawk
Meckstroth	: Power & Straw
Philpot	: ?? Phillip's Messenger ??
Rabe	: Raven
Reiter	: Calvaryman, Rider
Reynolds	: Counsel & Rule
Ritter	: Knight
Roediger	: Illustrious & Spear
Roettger	: Illustrious & Spear
Schmidt	: Smith
Schweissguth	: Blood, Sweat & Property, Estate
Siferd	: Victory & Guardian
Smith	: From Schmidt meaning Smith
Thieman	: Folk & Man
Turner	: Tower Dweller, Tower Keeper
Victor	: Victor
Ward	: Watchman, Lookout
Warner	: Protection & Army, A Warner
Watkins	: Clothes & Battle & Army
Wehrman	: Defenseman
Weseli	: ?? Protection & Army ??
Wessel	: Protection & Army
Wierwille	: Determination & Fish Pond
Will	: Determination

LOCAL MILITARY NAMES (Of Interest)

Beer	: Bear
Bruns	: From Bruno meaning Bear
Burke	: Castle
Cron	: From Kron meaning Crown
Falk	: Falcon
Frysinger	: Belonging to the Free
Germann	: Spearman
Giere	: Gerfalcon
Hartings	: Army & Battle
Heinrich	: Home & Master
Heyne	: Home & Master
Homan	: Courtier
Hoying	: Belonging to the Guard
Kemp	: Champion
Kuckerman	: Cook & Army & Man
Leugers	: Lion & Spear
Manger	: Spearman
Ruppert	: Famous & Bright
Seitz	: Victory & Protection
Walter	: Rule & Army
Wenning	: Protection & Army
Wente	: Protection & Army
Willhoff	: Determination & Court



Karl & Ethel Mesloh

We thought you might like to see a photo of the person who is writing these very interesting articles on surnames.

There will be more on this subject in the next issues.

Karl also makes the mailing labels for "The Towpath" and keeps the mailing list updated.

In the July-August-September issue of "The Towpath", a look will be taken at those names composed of Terrain Roots.