

# THE TOWPATH

NEW BREMEN HISTORIC ASSOCIATION  
120 North Main Street - P.O. Box 73  
New Bremen, Ohio 45869

JULY, AUGUST, SEPTEMBER – 1994

THIS NEWSLETTER IS  
PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

Membership Dues:  
\$3.00 per year  
Life Membership \$50.00

Regular visiting hours:  
Sunday afternoons - June, July, August  
2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

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## MY HOMETOWN

My hometown is a friendly place  
Where a smile is found on each kindly face;  
A door thrown wide and a welcome true  
For anyone who is passing through.

My hometown is where real folks live  
Where hearts are ready to help and give;  
The sun shines there and the days are sweet  
And everything is so bright and neat.

My hometown is a treasured spot  
Where friends and neighbors forget us not;  
It's all in the world that a town should be  
My hometown is the place for me.

*[Ideals magazine]*

**IT DIDN'T SEEM THE SAME AT FIRST WHEN I WENT BACK TODAY -  
THE OLD HOMETOWN WHERE I WAS RAISED AND WHERE I USED TO PLAY.**

TEAMWORK: Karl Mesloh and Paul Lietz have been busy getting pictures ready for you to enjoy this summer. Karl is an artist at cutting glass and Paul repairs frames and makes new ones when needed.

The grass grew pretty fast in early spring and we appreciate the work done by Mark Gaerke and Craig Griesdorn. We now have hired Aaron Egbert to mow the lawn as needed.

Thank you to all who have been donating artifacts for the Museum. Lately we have received some old photos, baby clothes, news clippings, funeral cards and even a couple of chairs.

Four boxes containing obituaries and funeral cards have been placed in the New Bremen Public Library for your convenience when researching family trees. A copy machine is available at the Library for a small fee.



**NOTE: THE THEME OF THE 1994 CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL WILL BE "THE GAY NINETIES".**



PLAY BALL: Here is featured one of New Bremen's baseball teams of the middle twenties. The year is about 1925. Thank you to Bob and Louise Weinberg who identified the ball players.

TOP: Walter Strohmeyer, Louis Kohl, George Greber, Ted Scheer, Wilbur Fricke, William Donnerberg, Alvin Pape, Emil Donnerberg, Harold "Skip" Schaefer, Robert Haveman, Elton Landwehr, Albert Schmidt.

BOTTOM: Frank Moots, Ferd Ahlers, "Skinny" Schwartz, Carl Arkenberg, Bat boy - Harold Schroeder, Frank Walsmith, Elmer Rump, Arnold "Pete" Waterman.

[The photo and clipping below are from "THE STAMCO STORY" - JANUARY 1962.]

The Stamco 25 Year Club held its annual meeting and dinner on January 17, 1962, in the New Bremen Legion Hall.

A total of 787 years is represented by the membership which now totals 23 members after having received the four new 1962 25-year clubbers. The four new members received were presented with Hamilton watches in appreciation of their service by President Lee P. Harmony. The four new members are Elton W. "Pitt" Bruns, Harold Hittepole, Robert Weinberg Jr., Steve Wahoff.

The member with the longest employment at Stamco is Louis Kohl who came with the firm in April 1912, making him a double 25-year member.



FOUR NEW MEMBERS ADDED TO STAMCO 25 YEAR CLUB

President Lee D. Harmony and the four new 25 year club members:  
Harold Hittepole, Steve Wahoff, Elton W. Bruns, Robert Weinberg



LOCATION: BY THE PLUM STREET BRIDGE - 1937

The William Combs residence across from the swimming pool. The Combs family sold ice in New Bremen for many years. The ice barns and the ice pond were south & west of this home. Mr. Combs was a former canal boat captain.

(See August 1985 issue of "The Towpath".)



Mr. Combs at work with shovel and sand bags along the bank of the canal. The Minnichs now (1994) own and live in the house across from the swimming pool. For many years, the Minnich family carried on the sale of soft drinks and candy. Every child in town knew "Minnich's Candy Store!"

Photos furnished by Dorothy (Frey) Baer of Dayton, Ohio and Karl & Evelyn Warner of New Bremen. Thank you !

## JULY 1937 CLOUDBURST CAUSES MUCH DAMAGE IN NEW BREMEN

### Farmers Suffer Heavy Losses As Storm Ruins Crops

[from the "New Bremen Sun"]

Damaged buildings, flattened fields of ripening grain, and broken trees remain as mute but convincing evidence of the havoc brought to this area by a severe rain and windstorm Wednesday afternoon. The storm, which rode on the heels of unusually heavy rains in recent weeks, broke in all its fury at 2:00. It lasted fully two hours and caused every stream for miles around to leave its banks. The canal raised rapidly, so rapidly, in fact, that it overflowed its banks in many places long before the downpour ended.

The first serious break in the canal was threatened near the William Combs residence in the south part of town. Volunteer workers, however, succeeded in holding the water in its course by piling sand bags along the top and at weakened places in the bank.

The basement of the Kuenzel flour mills was flooded for the first time in its history. Basements in all sections of the town also were flooded. Long stretches of several streets remained under water for hours. At Pearl and Herman streets the water caused a large American Auto Transit truck to crash against the curb.

Heaviest damage is believed to have been caused by a break in the canal bank near the Ewald Beickman farm, 1½ miles north of town. Fences were carried away, trees uprooted and grain and corn beaten to the ground as the water surged through the break and inundated hundreds of acres of land.

The heavy wind which accompanied the storm laid low many fields of growing corn which otherwise might have escaped. Fortunately, it is felt the crop still may be saved. Alfalfa fields also presented a sorry picture, the receding waters leaving their deposits of mud and debris scattered over the crop.

A second storm struck yesterday evening, but was not as severe and caused but little damage.



Gertrude (Gilberg) Thielker, Lillian Grothaus,  
Fernando William Bruns (see next page)

This photo was taken on a workday in the 1920s at the Auglaize Furniture Factory (on Vogelsang / Plum Street) where all three persons were employed.

In the background stands the Central Grade School building and on the far left one can see part of the 1920 High School building.

Central School (1877-1957)  
High School (1920-1929)

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These landmarks, yes, of other years  
Have all but been erased.  
And dreams of them I have today  
Appear as dreams misplaced.  
But still there linger in my thoughts  
The days that used to be  
As here again in my hometown,  
I live in memory. (Ideals)

## A NEW BREMEN HISTORIAN

Fernando William Bruns was born August 29, 1872 in New Bremen, Ohio. He was confirmed April 3, 1887 in St. Paul Church. A bookkeeper by trade, he was Secretary-Treasurer of the Citizens Building and Loan Company and Secretary-Treasurer of the Auglaize Furniture Company, both of New Bremen. Later he conducted his own Insurance Agency. Fernando Bruns also had an interesting hobby – writing articles about early New Bremen and his pen name was SNURB – Bruns spelled backwards. Following are excerpts from one of his articles published some years ago in the local *New Bremen Sun* called “DO YOU REMEMBER?”.

### LEHMKUHL HOTEL

The old Lehmkuhl Hotel, a 2 and 3 story building, fronted on North Main Street and was the first 3-story structure to be erected “probably 100 years ago” (1840s).

The writer’s mother, Magdalene (Buckloh) Bruns, was employed by the Lehmkuhls during her girlhood days as a dining room waitress. I recall Mother Bruns saying that she was employed there for several years.

Adjoining the dining room, located in the center of this structure, was a lager beer saloon. After the Lehmkuhls discontinued the business, the room was occupied by Herman Meyer who conducted the place for several years and later “let the third story for dances and other entertainment”.

In the south side third story of the building was the meeting place of New Bremen’s Masonic fraternity. The lodge prospered quite a few years.

The Inman family – Albert G., wife Ollie, and children Carl & Joyce took title to this landmark, the Lehmkuhl house, a year or more ago (August 5, 1946) from Edwin Barth. This was really an old time hostelry erected by the father of the late Cort and Carl Lehmkuhl, J. Albert Lehmkuhl, “probably 90 years or more ago” (1846, 1858). It was a favorite stopping place for farmers, who engaged in butchering hogs in the wintertime from December 1st to February 1st and hauled and slaughtered porkers from as far west as Fort Wayne, Indiana via horse-drawn wagons. If the roads were covered with a solid bed of snow, bobsleds were brought into service.

The Lehmkuhl house was their favorite stopping place for many years. The Lehmkuhl family was ideal in extending hospitality to their patrons and thus prospered for many (24) years. The family consisted of Mr. & Mrs. Lehmkuhl, who were the parents of a bevy of girls who assisted their parents in conducting the business on a successful scale.

The south one-third of the building was used for saloon purposes, the center portion for living quarters. This was a long room with the kitchen in the rear, while the north section served as sleeping quarters for overnight patrons, as did also the entire second story of the building.

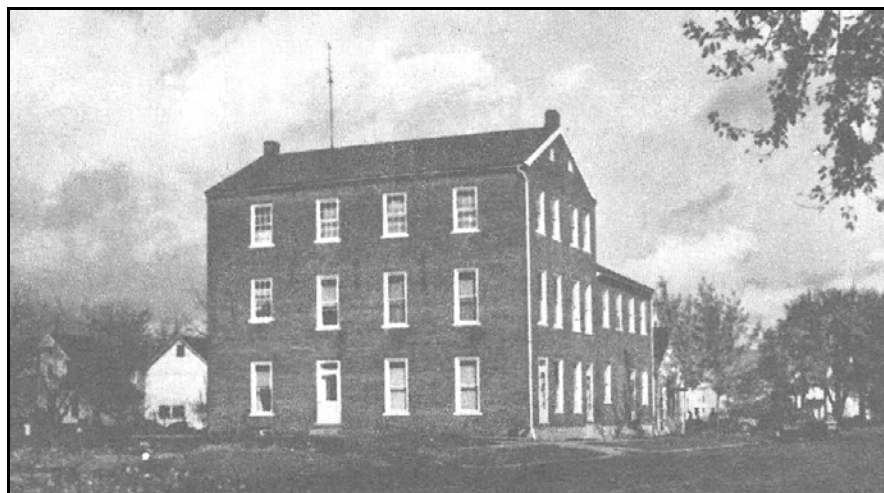
-SNURB

**ANOTHER PERSON** who knew the Lehmkuhls well was former resident of New Bremen, Esther (Fearing) Quist. The Lehmkuhls were her great-grandparents. In a letter quite a few years ago, she wrote:

“Where the Inmans live now, my great-grandfather built that 3-story brick. It was an inn and travelers came from miles around and lodged there. All of my mother’s sisters and brothers were born there and Mother lived there until she was 16 years of age.

Back of the house stood a large outdoor bake oven and Mom told me: ‘Here the bread was baked and eggs were boiled by the bucketful.’ I can show you quilts my great-grandmother pieced and quilted on that third floor. This all happened many years ago when life was simpler.”

-Esther (Fearing) Quist



This building was known as the Lehmkuhl Hotel in the 1840s. Then, in 1906, it became BARTH'S FLAT. In later years, it was owned by the Inman family. It was razed in 1983 and was an empty lot by January 17, 1983. The lot was purchased by the New Bremen Bank.

[Photo date 1959]



### **N.B.H.S. CLASS OF 1937**

On May 8, 1931, our teacher, Miss Enola Huenke, took pictures of our class. Classes are much larger now in the 1990s, but to "Old Timers", the class of 1937 will always be the "big class" – 51 young men and women, strong of body, rich in mind...

### **CLASS OF 1937**

Norman Barth, Robert Beachler, Ruth Becker, Dorothy Block, Lucille Buckloh, Helen Burmeister, Mary Jane Coss, Richard Dammeyer, Medella Egbert, Robert Fark, Vernon Fark, Georgia Fenneman, Richard Fischbach, Robert Fledderjohn, Frederick Frey, Vernon Greber, June Hartman, Vernita Heinfeld, Margaret Henning, Margaret Hespe, Lucille Hirschfeld, Robert Hirschfeld, Deloss Jordan, Mildred Jung, Nelson Jung, Howard Kettler, Lucille Kettler, Henry Kuest, Chester Ley, Frederick Maurer, Lowell McNett, Marion Meyer, Thomas Moeller, Laverne Niemeyer, Carl Pape, Paul Pape, Lucille Poppe, Ruth Rabe, Dorothy Ruedebusch, Pina Schnelle, Lillian Schowe, Howard Schultz, Lawrence Schwartz, Grace Sollman, James Sunderman, Harold Tangeman, Grace Thiesing, Wilhelmine Topp, Margaret Wehmeyer, Elizabeth Wiehe, Paul Wint.

### **MIDDLE PHOTO**

STANDING: Helen Burmeister, Medella Egbert, Lillian Schowe, Georgia Fenneman, Wilhelmine Topp, Mildred Jung, Grace Sollman, Laverta Strasburg, Dorothy Schroeder.

MIDDLE: Dorothy Ruedebusch, Grace Thiesing, Virginia Gast, Marion Meyer, Pina Schnelle, Margaret Henning, Ruth Rabe, Margaret Hespe, Vernita Heinfeld.

FRONT: Elizabeth Wiehe, June Hartman, Lucille Buckloh, Dorothy Block, Mary Jane Coss.

### **BOTTOM PHOTO – TEACHERS**

Dow McGilvary (8th grade), Miss Clara Eschmeyer (2nd grade), Miss Margaret Shaw (5th grade), Miss Alberta Collins (4th grade), Miss Nettie Loy (1st grade), Mrs. Arminta Grimes (3rd grade), Mrs. Marie Laut (7th grade), Miss Enola Huenke (6th grade).

Thank you to Mrs. Roger (Vernita Heinfeld) Scheer for furnishing these photos.



### **FROM THE 1937 "MIRAGE"**

1925 to 1937: What wealth and duty those twelve years have encompassed! September 1925 a group of small, shy children started school...

The sixth grade was a great year for us. We gained four new pupils. "East is East and West is West", but the twain met in New Bremen. A girl from Wyoming and a boy from New York joined our class that year. Remember the "bad-English hospital" and how we hated to have our name on the board when we used poor English? Who can forget the Jerry Todd books?

During our eight years in school our class gained new members and lost old ones. Our knowledge grew in the same classroom and our bodies gained strength while playing the same games - jumping rope, playing rabbit, boys catch the girls (wasn't that fun?), take-a-way ball, baseball, volley ball, basketball, and when it snowed we played fox and geese. What would we take in exchange for those years? – Nothing!



## **AUGUST 1925: ONE-DAY FAIR ATTRACTS THOUSANDS**

### **ELEVENTH ANNUAL FARMERS' PICNIC FAVORED BY IDEAL WEATHER**

More than 15,000 is the estimated attendance at the annual New Bremen Farmers' Picnic Saturday afternoon and evening when Kuenning's Grove north of town was dotted with numerous exhibits and attractions usually found only at County Fairs.

One of the added attractions that had not previously been announced was the whistling of Charles Leroy Wells of Sidney who entertained the crowds during the afternoon with his famous interpretations of various birds. Mr. Wells is famed throughout the central states as a whistler and frequently has been heard on radio programs. He is appearing at the Banner Fair in Celina this week.

CREDIT FOR THE SUCCESS OF THE PICNIC IS DUE TO THE FOLLOWING OFFICERS & COMMITTEE MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION:

Charles Geib, President; Al Westerbeck, Vice President; Cornelius Geib, Secretary; Cornelius Heinfeld, Treasurer; Emil Hoeper, Oscar Moeller, Frank Ahlers, Allen Ruese, Ben Schroer, John Thieman, Omer Ruese, Frank Quelhorst, August Niekamp, Charles Eberhardt, Walter Althoff, Henry Hirschfeld, Charles Kah, Walter Nieter and Albert Huenke.

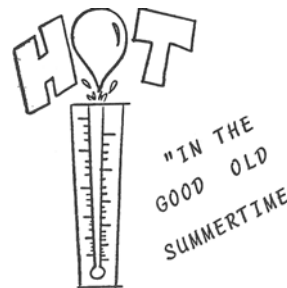
PRIZES IN THE PARADE WERE AWARDED AS FOLLOWS:

- \$10.00 - Best decorated truck – White Mountain Creamery.
- \$5.00 - Best decorated truck – Blue Ribbon Hatchery, New Knoxville.
- \$15.00 – Best decorated automobile – Ed Boesel.
- \$10.00 – Best decorated automobile – Carl Roettger.
- \$5.00 – Best decorated automobile – Sunshine Girls, Kettlersville.
- \$10.00 – Most comical truck – Kuenzel Mills
- \$15.00 – Most comical automobile – Bomholt Garage, St. Rose.
- \$10.00 – Most comical automobile – Ben Utz, Minster.
- \$5.00 – Most comical automobile – Marvin Sollman.

BRING OUT THE PICNIC BASKET AND THE JUG FOR LEMONADE,  
THE SALAD AND THE BAKED BEANS AND THE SANDWICHES ARE MADE.  
THE CAKE IS NEARLY FROSTED AND WILL SOON BE SET TO GO;  
BRING UP TWO JARS OF PICKLES FROM THE CELLAR SHELVES BELOW.

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WHEN WE ARE OLDER, WE WILL REMEMBER THE LOVELY TIME WE HAD. (*Ideals*)



**THERE ARE HUNDREDS OF LANGUAGES IN THE WORLD, BUT A SMILE SPEAKS ALL OF THEM.**