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MUSEUM located at 122 N. Main St.
(The Luelleman House)

THE TOWPATH

Published quarterly
(January - April - July - October)

NEW BREMEN HISTORIC ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 73 - New Bremen, Ohio 45869-0073
(Founded in 1973)

VISITING HOURS: 2:00-4:00 p.m. Sundays - June, July, August
(Or anytime, by Appointment)

MEMBERSHIP: \$10.00 / Year - \$5.00 Spouse

(Life: \$100.00 / \$50.00 Spouse)

April - 2003

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Gen Conradi (e-mail: dengen@nktelco.net)
Susie Hirschfeld, Membership Archives ----- 419-629-2133

MEETINGS ARE HELD FIRST TUESDAYS

7:30 p.m. at the New Bremen Library

◆ THE TOWPATH ◆

Lucille Francis, Editor & Membership ----- 419-629-3148
Susie Hirschfeld, "Towpath" Bulk Mailing ----- 419-629-2133
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THE TOWPATH is a historical reflection of New Bremen and the surrounding area - researched, written, and/or edited by Lucille (Topp) Francis, EDITOR, and published quarterly by the New Bremen Historic Association. Any stories and/or pictures that our readers are willing to share are welcomed.

COMPLIMENTARY COPIES

With each quarterly mailing of *The Towpath*, a number of Complimentary Copies are sent to folks who might be interested in reading one or more of the articles in that issue. If you are one of these people and would like to continue receiving future issues, please send the appropriate amount of dues (subscription) to the above address. (P.O. Box 73)

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

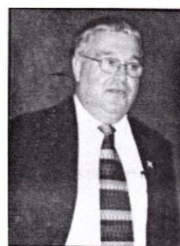
Memorial donations are welcomed in any amount. When donations for any one person or couple have reached \$100.00, a brass plate engraved with their name(s) is attached to the Memorial Plaque.

ANNUAL DINNER Held March 17th

The Annual Dinner/Meeting of the New Bremen Historic Association was held at 6:30 p.m. Monday, March 17, 2003 in the auditorium of St. Paul's Church Educational Building.

Program

Railroads of Auglaize County

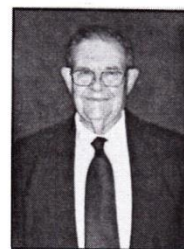


Daniel Meckstroth, a native of New Knoxville, gave a video presentation of the history of the railroads of Auglaize County, especially the Nickel Plate Road, including pictures of scenes dating from the early 1900s to the late 1950s. Mr. Meckstroth, a retired school administrator and insurance agent and avid railroad historian, has written several articles for railroad historical journals. He graduated from Ohio Northern

University and taught school in Wapakoneta. During the summers he worked as a locomotive fireman for the Norfolk & Western Railway in Lima. He is a collector of railroad memorabilia, railroad literature and model trains and had some of those items on display.

John Tomhafe of New Bremen, a retired locomotive engineer from the Nickel Plate, Norfolk & Western and Norfolk Southern Railroads, showed some of his slides of the New Bremen railroad track.

Also on display as table decorations were items from Dennis Dicke's collection of model trains and other railroad memorabilia.



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UPCOMING EVENT

5th Annual Community Picnic

WHEN? - Sunday, June 1, 2003 - 12:00 Noon to 4:00 p.m.

WHERE? - Museum Grounds - 122 N. Main St.

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HAVE YOU PAID YOUR DUES FOR 2003?

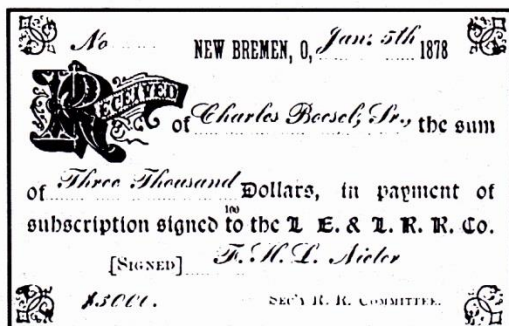
If the top line of your address label shows "2002" and is highlighted or circled in red, this means we have not yet received your dues and this may be your LAST ISSUE of "The Towpath".

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LAKE ERIE & WESTERN RAILROAD

The Lake Erie & Western Railroad had its beginnings in 1873 as the Fremont & Indiana. Due to financial difficulties, it was reorganized as the Lake Erie & Louisville, which built the extension from St. Marys to Minster in 1877, with intentions of reaching its namesake city. It never got any further south, however, and the route from St. Marys to Celina and westward into Indiana and Illinois became known as the Lake Erie & Western. The second railroad in Auglaize County, it connected Lima and St. Marys and crossed 7 of the 14 townships in the county - St. Marys, Noble, Moulton, Logan, Duchouquet, German, and Jackson Townships. In 1880, the length of the main track was given as 16.204 miles, the branch was 9.945 miles, & sidings were 4.473 miles.

When the L.E. & L. extended its line from St. Marys to Minster in 1877, the citizens of New Bremen and Minster contributed \$40,000 and the right of way. The new extension helped the various industries, and furnished an outlet for business trade and for the surplus of crops raised by the farmers in the surrounding area.



"There has been a good deal of railroad talk this week (about extending the L.E. & W. Railroad to Piqua). When it comes to shelling out for a good cause, New Bremen doesn't take a back seat for any town. New Bremen subscribed and paid over \$32,000 to the L.E. & L. Railroad (in 1877-1878), and what sort of a road did we get? We had men then who laid down a cool \$3000 for the road. Committees were appointed who hustled for the right of way and cash. "Squire" Nieter was the secretary and his writing is seen in the receipts that were filled out by him (see above). Minster has done the same kind of work and will no doubt respond with old time vigor and enthusiasm in this present undertaking."



Below is a portion of the subscription list circulated in the winter of 1877-1878:

[N.B. Sun - 11/18/1898]

		<u>\$100 SUBSCRIPTIONS</u>
\$3000	Charles Boesel, Sr.	Wm. Barth
2000	Boesel & Kunning	Mary Brueggeman
2000	C. Schmidt & Son	R. Bunke
1500	Bakhaus & Kuenzels	Wm. Fahrenhorst
1000	J.H. Boesche	John Fark
1000	Speckman & Nieter	J.L. Hoffman
700	Wm. Rabe	L.F. Kettler
500	J.H. Mesloh	J.F. Koop
500	F. Vogelsang	Sophia Kuenzel
400	A. Brueggemann	J.H. Lanfersieck
400	Geo. Greiwe & Dierker	Wm. Lutterbeck - N.K.
400	F.P. Jung	Ph. Maurer
400	Schlesselman & Henke	Wm. Ruedebusch
400	F.I. Steinberg	H.W. Schowe
200	H.W. Bockemoehle	Wm. Schulenberg
200	Wm. Buss	Hy. Sunderman, Sr.
200	L.F. Wellman	Fred Wellman
200	Katie Wiemeyer	H. Wiehe
150	G.H. Knost	Anna Wiemeyer
150	Wm. Schulte	Wm. Wiemeyer
150	W.F. Wood	A. Wierwille - N.K.
125	August Boesel	H. Wierwille - N.K.
125	Peter Tomhafe	

"Quite a large number of smaller contributions were also made, a contribution of \$1300 being made by Cincinnati merchants. The total amount of cash donations was \$25,000 and the total amount given in right of ways was \$7444.75 making a grand total of \$32,444.75."

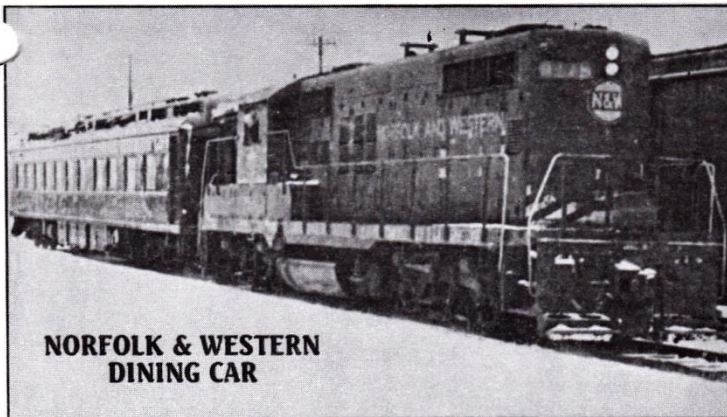
"The donors no doubt labored under the impression that the road would be extended to a southern outlet, but were disappointed. The Lake Erie & Louisville changed its mind and its name and was built westward instead of southward. That the interests of New Bremen and Minster have suffered from lack of shipping facilities is beyond question. We have prayed loud and long for a railroad that would give the accommodations and facilities required, but our prayers have been in vain. We must repeat our former efforts by giving another gift, for that is the only way we will ever get the road. Now then, Minster, what say ye?"

[N.B. Sun - 11/18/1898]

In 1922, several companies merged into the Nickel Plate Railroad (New York, Chicago & St. Louis.) In 1964, the Nickel Plate merged into the Norfolk & Western. New Bremen and Minster bought the Minster branch as an electrical easement route after it was abandoned in 1989. Since then, R.J. Corman has leased that track and the other Norfolk & Western routes for operation as a short line railroad.

RALPH MAY REMEMBERS

"When I saw the picture of the old depot being moved to the James Dicke (Crown) farm in September 1970, I couldn't help but reminisce about the days when I was a boy in N.B. and quite frequently visited the depot. The 'Dinkey' (as we called the train) came into New Bremen shortly after noon from St. Marys and the depot was a great gathering place for us boys. The inside was quite interesting, with the posters on the wall, the potbelly stove, the click-click of the telegraph and the handwriting on the telegraph form."



**NORFOLK & WESTERN
DINING CAR**

"The **NORFOLK & WESTERN 'DINKEY'** is bringing this 1925 railroad dining car, which was later converted into a business and sleeping car, into New Bremen where it will find a permanent home. Crown Controls Corporation acquired the sleeping car to expand the guesthouse facilities of the Crown farm where the firm's business guests are housed. The recently refurbished car was moved from the railroad crossing on the west edge of New Bremen along St. Rt. 274 (West Monroe St.) to the Crown Farm by workmen from the Muth Brothers Moving Firm of Dayton."

"The car, which brings back nostalgic memories to many railroad buffs, was made in 1925 for the C & O Railroad. In 1944 the car was purchased by the Nickel Plate Railroad, which was later acquired by Norfolk & Western. It was originally built as a dining car, but in 1937 it was converted into a combination business and sleeping car. The self-containing car houses an observation room, 4 bedrooms, dining room and kitchen and is designed to accommodate 9 people."

"The car is 85' long, 10¼' wide and 14½' high. It was taken out of service 2 months ago where it was serving the engineering department of the Norfolk & Western Railroad."

"The sleeping car has been placed on a short section of railroad track adjacent to the Nickel Plate railroad station (depot) which was moved to the Crown farm in September 1970 to save it from being disposed of and to preserve a part of New Bremen's history."

[Evening Leader - 1/26/1971]

Photo by Hoverman & Son



WRECK OF THE L.E. & W.

"The northbound L.E. & W. train in charge of conductor E.H. Perry jumped the track about 2½ miles north of New Bremen this afternoon, wrecking the engine and 2 loaded freight cars. Engineer John Fellows and fireman Fred Stuckey saved their lives in jumping from the cab just as the locomotive was turning over on its side. They were both considerably injured, the engineer on the left thigh and the fireman on the right ankle."

"The train was composed of 7 cars and the caboose. The first 2 cars are completely wrecked, being torn off the trucks and dumped into the ditch, while 4 cars are derailed. The engine was running backwards, and at a spread of the rails, the tender jumped the track, with the engine and 2 cars following."

"A St. Marys ambulance was at once telephoned for and the injured men removed to their homes. Conductor Perry and brakemen J.F. Critten and O. Sweigart were not injured but thoroughly jolted. Many people from here were out this afternoon to view the wreck. Phil Hoffman and his Reo were the means of conveyance of the *Sun* reporters."

[N.B. Sun - 5/15/1908]

N.B. LADIES AT THE DEPOT - 1923

Elsa Mueller, Maud Ekermeier, Emma (Koenig) Schroer, Hilda Huckriede, Viola Mueller, Irene Ekermeier.



AS OTHERS SEE US - 1899

A Celina Editor Speaks Highly of New Bremen



The following is what appeared in "last week's" issue of the *Celina Democrat*: [N.B. Sun - 7/28/1899]

"Ye scribe paid his first visit on last Friday to New Bremen and was most agreeably surprised at the thrift and business industry visible in all quarters. The place is a model little village in neatness and up-to-dateness. The streets are kept clean and the buildings are a credit to any town in tidiness. Their appearance plainly indicated that they were actually inhabited by real live people.

The town is handsomely lighted by electricity, the plant being the property of the village and a paying investment. New Bremen has several factories that are running full blast employing over 200 people the year round, and they are all home enterprises now.

The machine shop was head over heels behind with orders. The broom factory, 2 sash & door factories, and the woolen & flouring mills are running overtime to meet the demands made upon them. This is the state of affairs with all their industries.

The furniture factory employs some 40 people and is a great financial success. This is a stock company and the stockholders work in the concern. Besides drawing regular salaries, a dividend of 19% was declared the past year.

The public school building is a beauty and would do credit to a place 4 times the size of New Bremen. From appearances on all hands, there is nothing too good for the hustling people of that little city, and they are not contented until they get it.

Empty buildings seem as scarce as feathers on the floor of Herman Laut's bowling alleys. The businessmen work together and, strange as it may appear to some of our readers, the bankers there are always in the thickest of the push when it comes to doing anything for the business improvement of the town. Julius Boesel is president of one bank and his brother Charles the president of the other, and no public improvements are made or contemplated but what they take an active part in helping to make them a success.

The men of means of New Bremen are almost a unit in its up-building and see something else in this world besides the color of their own dollars and the interest they can squeeze out of them. The hustle and push of that little village might prove an object lesson to some of our misers if they could be induced to muster up courage enough to stray that far from home and see how real live men make a town.

The *Democrat* believes that it would be money well spent if the city (of *Celina*) would take a portion of the proceeds from the sale of their improvement bonds and send a few of its "over-conservative slows" to New Bremen and have them inoculated. Business of all kinds is well represented and all report this one of the busiest years in the history of the place.

We made a brief call on Editor Buss of the *Sun* and he was busy putting the finishing touches on 2500 copies of the premium list for their approaching fair. Mr. Buss is also the village postmaster and has his post office located just above his well-apportioned printing office, connected by a stairway, which enables him to divide the time between the places without inconvenience.

Editor Buss puts out a good paper, barring its politics, and is doing a good business. He has more home advertising than any *Celina* paper can boast of. All the businessmen treated us cordially and New Bremen will be on our route oftener in the future." [N.B. Sun - 7/28/1899]

DECORATION DAY 1891

Observed in Grand Style in New Bremen

On Saturday afternoon, May 30, 1891, the business of the town of New Bremen was generally suspended. The people diverted their minds from their routine business to the triumphs and glories of the American soldier.

The Little Six Band and the (Civil War) soldiers assembled at the Post Office (on South Washington St.). Promptly at 1:00, the signal for a parade was given. The soldiers, rusty in the practice of arms, were given a little preparatory drill by Lieutenant Henry Finke, and under his commands, they marched in line headed by the Little Six Band. The line of march proceeded south on Washington Street to Front Street, east to the Cataract Fire Company's engine house, on to Walnut Street, north to Monroe Street, and left on Monroe Street to the Odd Fellows hall (at the corner of Monroe & Washington), picking up each organization along the way. They continued west on Monroe Street and turned right on Main Street, picking up the Alert Hook & Ladder Company at their hall. The parade then proceeded north to Second Street and west to Franklin Street where they received the members of the (St. Paul's Church) Mannerchoir at their hall. From there they continued south on Franklin Street to the Central School building, where the children of the different schools filed in line under charge of their respective teachers.

Continuing south on Franklin Street, east on Vogelsang

(Plum) Street, north on Washington Street, west on Monroe, and north on Main Street, the parade then headed out to the (German Protestant) cemetery. The order of march to the cemetery was: Little Six Band, Schools, Soldiers, Odd Fellows, Mannerchoir, Drum Corps, Cataract Fire Co., Alert Hook & Ladder Co., citizens on foot, carriages with the Mayor, clergy and speaker, and citizens in carriages bringing up the rear.

Arriving at the cemetery, the soldiers and the decoration committee strewed vast and beautiful wreaths and bouquets of flowers on the graves of the heroes. A wagon bearing a pyramid of flowers and drawn by two black horses of Fred Neuman was a beautiful sight and attracted some attention. The soldiers fired a salute to signal the end of the fieldwork.

The crowd then gathered at the speaker's stand. Dr. Michael Stone acted as chairman, Rev. M. Buerkle offered prayers, Mayor Purpus gave a model Decoration Day speech, and Clarence Kettler, son of soldier Henry Kettler, delivered a declamation entitled "Barber Fritsche." Voluntary speeches were delivered by Wm. Schulenberg (in German) and by Dr. Stone. The Mannerchoir sang two songs, one in German and one in English. The Little Six Band played some of their select pieces going to and coming from the cemetery.

It was a splendid day and the people returned to the homes about 5:00 p.m. The business houses along the principal streets were gaily decorated with flags and bunting. Decoration Day was never before so extensively observed in New Bremen. [N.B. Sun 6/6/1891]

THE LYCEUM

The Lyceum Movement, a 19th century trend in adult education in the United States, was named after the school near Athens, Greece where Aristotle lectured to his students. The first American lyceum was opened in Millbury, Massachusetts in 1826 by American educator Josiah Holbrook and was a local association of men and women with some schooling who wanted to expand their own education while working to establish a public school system.

The purpose of the lyceum was to spread useful information by means of lectures and debates. It reached its peak before the Civil War and was the model for other adult education systems such as the Chautauqua movement. It also helped promote the establishment of libraries and museums.

The old Lyceum Bureaus used to provide many small towns with a program of lectures and diversified entertainment during the late fall, winter and early spring months. We always had a lecture course at Boesel's Opera House where we sat in the old seats and listened attentively to what these lecturers had to say, or to the musical notes that emanated from the stage. This was long before radio or TV brought the same thing into our living room, and we could meet people from distant places who brought the world nearer to us in our isolation during the winter months.

Some of our winter courses included a men's quartet, one of which was from Ohio State University with New Bremen's own Albert Boesel as a member of the group.

The lecture course usually wound up with two well-known New Bremen musical organizations – Hengen's Orchestra and the Citizens' Band, both under the direction of Professor C.M. Hengen.

[Ralph May Remembers – pg. 67]

Playing in these 2 groups were Adolph Boesel (1st cornet), Otto Boesel (2nd trombone), Charles Fark (1st alto), Miss Mary Helmstetter (piano), C.M. Hengen (baritone/1st violin), Fred Hengen (snare drum/traps), Paul Hengen (1st/2nd clarinet), Roy Hoverman (2nd clarinet), Benjamin Klute (2nd alto/2nd violin), Clarence Laut (bass/basso), John Laut (1st/solo cornet), Melville Laut (2nd cornet), August Mueller (solo/1st clarinet), Adolph Pape (1st trombone), Louis Smith (bass drum), James Taylor (3rd clarinet).

[N.B. Sun – 4/9/1909]

THE CHAUTAUQUA

The Chautauqua was an adult education movement founded in 1874 by American Methodist Episcopal Bishop John Heyl Vincent (1832-1920), who set up a summer training program for Sunday school teachers designed to "utilize the general demand for summer rest by uniting daily study with healthful recreation." The movement was named after Chautauqua Lake in New York where the first of the Chautauqua schools combining education, recreation and religion was founded.

The project was so successful that other religious denominations soon joined in. Features such as lectures, concerts, readings and social entertainment were added, and the program was opened to the general public. The Chautauqua Literary and Scientific Circle was set up in 1878, designed to give year-round service to local study groups. In 1882, a correspondence school

was established. By 1886, there were at least 50 Chautauqua schools throughout the country.

The Traveling Chautauqua

The first traveling Chautauqua appeared about 1904. The traveling lecture series and summer schools took place in the summer months and gave 3-7 day programs in circus tents in small towns and villages. The programs included popular lectures, music and dramatic entertainment.

The original Chautauqua is now the Chautauqua Institution, a cultural center near Jamestown, New York, attracting thousands of people to its annual summer meetings, festivals and operas.

Lincoln Chautauqua, one of the oldest and largest Chautauquas, is located in Brainerd Park in Lincoln, Illinois.

Theodore Roosevelt was a big supporter of the Chautauqua and called it "the most American thing in America." President Harding also gave the Chautauqua a fine endorsement in 1923. He at one time was a lecturer for the Redpath Chautauqua.

The Chautauqua in New Bremen

The first (Lincoln) Chautauqua came to N.B. in September 1914 (see the January 2003 issue of "The Towpath"). In 1920, the Redpath Chautauqua came to town and was compared favorably with the national Lincoln Chautauqua system. New Bremen residents helped to provide lodging and meals for the entertainers. A large tent was put up on the Central School playground, west of the school.

Margaret (Koop) Künning related that her husband, then 21-year old Richard Künning, got a job as "tent-boy" that year. He had just gotten out of the army after W.W.I, and for 6 months he took care of the shipping and putting up and taking down of tents. He started out in Louisiana in January and worked his way through the southern states until fall, when he enrolled at Ohio State University. He had to round up men at every stop to help with the tents and load them on the flatcars to travel to the next place. He saved money by sleeping in the tent.

[see Marge Lietz's July 1988 issue of "The Towpath"]

Howard R. Hoffman, a New Bremen native who became a Hollywood actor, performed with both the Lyceum and Chautauqua organizations.

[N.B. Sun – 4/7/1932]

OHIO CHAUTAUQUA 2003

OHIO CHAUTAUQUA 2003 will be presented in six Ohio communities this summer (June & July) and is supported by the Ohio Humanities Council and the Ohio Bicentennial Commission. The theme is "The Ohio Frontier" and one of the places where the Chautauqua will be presented is at the Piqua Historical Area State Memorial (937-773-2522) on June 25-29, 2003.

A CHAUTAUQUA 2004 is also being planned. The theme for that presentation is "The Roaring Twenties." For more information, you can call 1-800-293-9774.

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HOWARD R. HOFFMAN



Howard Ralph Hoffman was the youngest of five children born to J(ohn) L(awrence) Hoffman and Anna Margaret Koester. He was born on 11/4/1893, the first child to be born in the building his father had built the year before on the northeast corner of Washington and Monroe Streets – the J.L. Hoffman Drug Store.

Howard graduated from N.B.H.S. in 1911 and shortly thereafter went to New York to study dramatics. He attended Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh

and then went on to vaudeville, stage, radio, movies, and television. He lectured on the Lyceum and Chautauqua circuits and had several radio shows in Chicago, one of which was "The Deacon Speaking" on WGN, on which he read his own poetry and presented inspirational messages. This program lasted 9 years, during which time it drew over 100,000 letters a year from listeners. Howard created the role of "Chandu, the Magician" in Chicago. He also appeared on radio soap operas such as "Backstage Wife", "Helen Trent", "The Guiding Light" and others.



He portrayed a Justice of the Peace in the movie "A Summer Place", starring Troy Donahue and Sandra Dee (he has only 1 or 2 lines in the last 15-30 minutes of that show), appeared in "The Littlest Hobo" and also as Silas Jason in the horror movie "Macabre". He appeared on "Playhouse 90", Lux Theatre, "NBC Matinee", "Perry Mason", "Manhunt", "Father Knows Best", "Wild Wild West", "Bob Hope Show", as the



◀ Sheriff on "Death Valley Days", and also played the role of the doctor in an "I Love Lucy" episode in which Lucy pretended to be pregnant and visited the doctor's office. He appeared most often as a doctor, lawyer or judge. In 1966, he played a judge in the "Run For Your Life" series with Ben Gazzara.

In 1967, Howard moved to Manatee County, Florida and broadcast a radio show from his own cabana

(Florida's version of "the old front porch back home") over Bradenton's WBRD as "The Voice of the Senior Citizen." He lived there for a year and then moved back to Hollywood, California.

On 6/26-27/1969, Howard Hoffman died suddenly at his apartment in Hollywood. Funeral services were held at the Forest Lawn Mortuary in Hollywood Hills. [L.A. Times – 6/30/1969] His body was to be cremated and his ashes were to be buried in the family burial plot in Forest Hill Cemetery at Piqua.

Letters from Howard Hoffman

The N.B.H.A. Museum is in possession of several Christmas notes written by Howard Hoffman to Fred & Pearl Zint of Cincinnati. Fred Zint was a native of Wapakoneta and died in 1964. He and his wife, Pearl, knew Howard Hoffman due to their mutual pursuit of "showbiz" careers in the 1920s. The Zints' son, Fred Zint, lives in Wapakoneta.

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Dear Fred & Pearl: California - Christmas 1963

I certainly wish you were out here. We could have some good times together. I was back in Chicago to do some TV commercials and had planned on going back from May until next Christmas, but took ill when I got back here. Don't know what I will do in 1964 – I may decide just to take it easy from here on out. I am getting a bit weary bucking up against all these young directors. They definitely belong to another school. Wasn't the President's (JFK's) death tragic – I am still not over it! Looking forward to hearing from you. Howard

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Dear Pearl: California - Christmas 1968

I haven't been in good health since my recent bout with the Hong Kong flu, so am entering the hospital after the first of the year to see if they can find out what the difficulty is. Have moved recently – please note my new address. We are having beautiful weather here, but I miss the good old-fashioned winters we had in Ohio at Christmas time. Howard R. Hoffman – Hollywood

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To Ralph May: 2/21/1969

So sorry they tore down the Thompson (lock-keeper's) house (in 1968). I was thinking one time of buying it. What a delightful story could be written about the house and the Miami-Erie Canal. Remember the time little Do-Do Thompson drowned in the lock? It was during a political torchlight parade. I was in second grade then and occupied the seat behind him. [see July 1997 "Towpath"]

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To Luther Schroeder: ca. 1968-1969

I have never been the same health-wise after spending a year in Florida. I had my own show on the air down there and my contract called for my writing it also. It was just too much for me. I should have known better at my age.

Let's forget our troubles and worries, go down to Schmidt's barn, get that old nag, and go to the reservoir as we used to do as kids back in New Bremen.

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Dear Mrs. Zint:

January 1970

Your Christmas greeting to my Uncle Howard Hoffman was forwarded to me. I am very sorry to tell you our dear Howard passed away very suddenly on June 26th at his apartment in Hollywood.

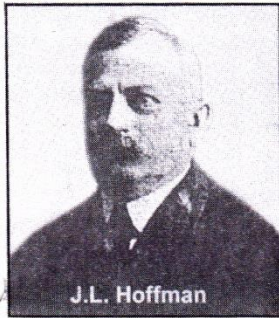
Lillian (Hoffman) Hinsch – Scottsdale, Arizona

Photos on preceding page are from the
Bradenton Herald Sunday Magazine
Bradenton, Florida – 6/18/1967

Photo at right was Howard Hoffman's
publicity photo.



J.L. HOFFMAN, N.B. DRUGGIST



J.L. Hoffman

John Lawrence Hoffman was born in Piqua, Ohio on 4/26/1849, the oldest child of John P. Hoffman and Anna M. Schneyer, both natives of Saxony, Germany. A sister, Mary E. Hoffman, married Charles Wood(s) and resided in Piqua.

John P. Hoffman was a brewer in Germany and immigrated to America in 1847, about 3 years after his marriage to Anna. After 9 weeks on the ocean, the Hoffmans landed in the harbor of New York City and from there came directly to Findlay, Ohio, from where they traveled by wagon to Piqua, passing through a very new and wild country. John Hoffman worked as a brewer for some time, but later bought a small farm. He died in 1880 at the age of 58. Anna Hoffman died sometime after 1892.

J.L. Hoffman attended the Piqua schools, and when 16 years old, he began clerking in a dry-goods store in Piqua. Later, he clerked in a grocery store, and in 1869 he started clerking in a drug store, remaining there for 3 years. In 1872, he went to Cincinnati, where he again clerked in a drug store for a short time. In 1874, he came to New Bremen where he purchased a drug stock and started out in business for himself for the next 41 years. (His first drug store may have been located on the northeast corner of North Main and First Streets. All buildings are now gone from this corner lot.)

On 11/14/1873, J.L. Hoffman married Anna Margaret Koester, also a native of Piqua. She was the daughter of John and Margaret (Schowe) Koester, who emigrated from Hannover, Germany. Mr. Koester was a Piqua grocer. The Hoffmans had 5 children: (1) John August (10/17/1873-9/22/1914), who was a druggist in Cincinnati and had a daughter, Lillian (Hoffman) Hinsch; (2) Lillian, who married Alex G. Boesel on 6/6/1900 and had a son, Lyman Boesel; (3) John Lawrence (9/23/1881-10/4/1931), a druggist in North Baltimore, Ohio who had a son,

Kenneth Hoffman; (4) George Walter (lived in St. Marys in 1931, Minster in 1933), who assisted his father in the drug store in New Bremen and also assisted F.W. Bruns in the Post Office (N.B. Sun-4/24/1903); and (5) Howard Ralph (11/4/1893-6/27/1969), who became a Hollywood actor and never married (see previous article).

In 1882, J.L. Hoffman joined the Ohio State Pharmaceutical Association. In 1886, Hoffman and H.J. Negus erected a grain elevator near the railroad track and dealt in grain until the fall of 1887, when Hoffman sold his interest to Jay & Co. He also owned stock in the N.B. Tri-County Fair Association, and was a member of the Knights of Pythias and the Independent Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.).



In April 1892, J.L. Hoffman purchased Lot #102 on the northeast corner of Washington & Monroe Streets from J.H. Boesche and started building a new building for his drug store business. By September, the brickwork on the building had been completed.

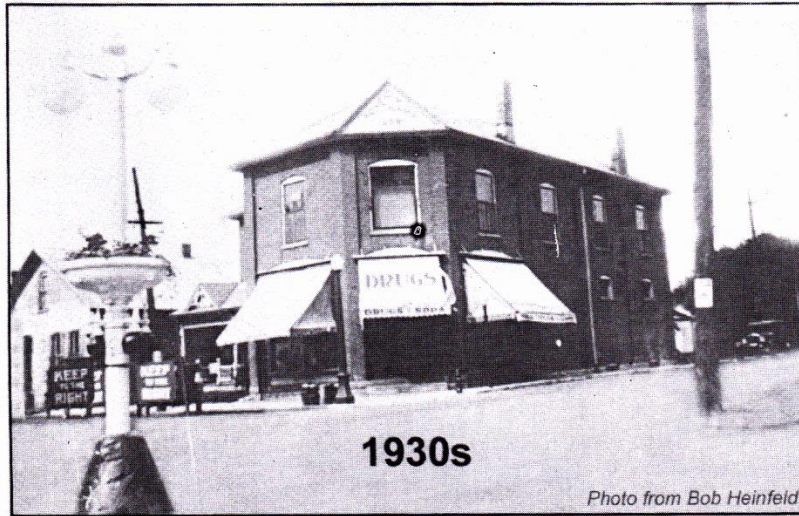
The hod carrier at Hoffman's new store building carries a load of mortar almost 100 pounds heavier than man himself. N.B. Sun – 9/10/1892

By November 1892, Hoffman was moving his goods to the new store. In February 1893, he added the top shield with his name in gilt lettering. In June 1901, the lettering was re-gilded by Tschudy and Heiligenstein. In March 1903, a new double wall was put in on the dwelling side of the building and the interior of the store was improved.

On Wednesday night, June 9, 1915, J.L. Hoffman died suddenly while seated in his chair in the drug store. When he failed to come upstairs by 10 p.m., his wife went down and found him. On Sunday, a funeral was held at the residence, with Rev. W.F. Henninger conducting the service, after which the remains were taken to Forest Hill Cemetery in Piqua, Ohio on a special Western Ohio interurban car that had been chartered by the Knights of Pythias and the Oddfellows lodges.

Anna M. Hoffman (b. 2/22/1855) died 11/15/1933 while sitting in a rocking chair at her residence and was found by her son, Howard, when he returned home from visiting a neighbor. She was also buried in Piqua. Pallbearers were H.F. Schroeder, Cade Schulenberg, Melville Laut, U.J. Schwieterman, Orlando Gilberg and Herman J. Laut.

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SCHWIETERMAN'S DRUG STORE

U(rban) J(ohn) Schwieterman (3/2/1897-9/7/1945), a farm boy from St. Sebastian, moved to Cincinnati to live with his sister so he could enroll at Withrow High School. After graduating from high school, he went to the Cincinnati College of Pharmacy and graduated with his degree in pharmacy in 1915. Late in 1916, he purchased the J.L. Hoffman Drug Store business in New Bremen and officially opened it under his own name in 1917.

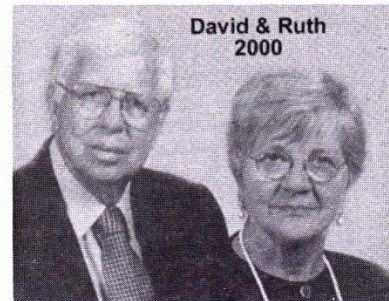
On 6/27/1928, U.J. Schwieterman married Corinne Anna Woehrmyer (12/31/1901-5/12/1991) of Minster. The Schwietermans ran the drug store successfully through the Depression and W.W.II. In 1934, they purchased the drug store building.

U.J. Schwieterman this week acquired the Hoffman building, Monroe and Washington Streets, through purchase from the Hoffman estate. Mr. Schwieterman is one of N.B.'s best-known businessmen. He came here 19 years ago this fall from Cincinnati and purchased the drug store operated by the late J.L. Hoffman. Since then he consistently has expanded the business and improved the store until today it is known as one of the best Rexall stores in the district. (N.B. Sun - 7/6/1934)

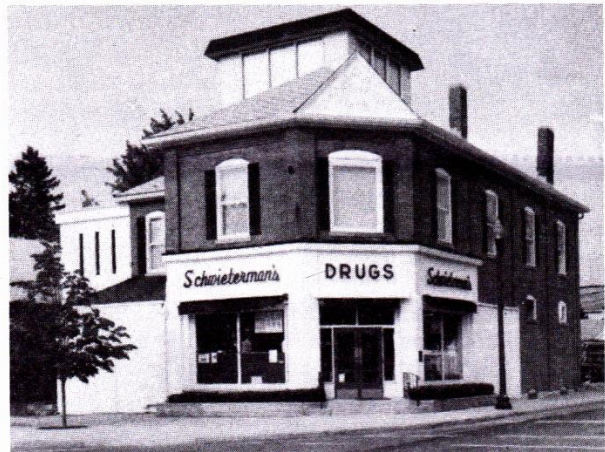


After Urban Schwieterman's sudden death from a heart attack in 1945 at the young age of 48, Corinne took over the management of the pharmacy and hired Walter Rosselit to be the pharmacist. Corinne was thus able to put all four of her children through college - David, who took over the drug store; Donald, who became a physician and had his practice in Maria Stein; Betty Jo (Gormley), who became a nursing home supervisor in Anne Arundel County, Maryland; and Trudy (Kuenning), who became an elementary school principal in New Bremen.

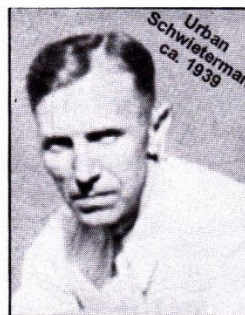
In 1951, David Schwieterman graduated with a degree in pharmacy from the University of Cincinnati. He went into the Army and after his discharge, worked for Davis Drug in Lima for a while. In 1953, he came home to New Bremen to run the family drug store.



On 2/8/1964, David married Ruth Ann Kremer of Maria Stein, and in 1965, he purchased the drug store business from his mother. David and Ruth set up housekeeping above the store and later added a penthouse above that. They now have the best "lookout post" in town!



David Schwieterman expanded the one original drug store into five, with branches located in St. Marys, Wapakoneta, Coldwater and Minster. Schwieterman Pharmacies was incorporated, with managers Mark Dominik of St. Marys and Linus Zumberge of Coldwater becoming stockholders. About 10 years ago, David retired and sold his interest to them.



It is of interest to note that this building has served continuously as a drug store for over 110 years. Only two families have owned it during that period. Four children were

born here: Howard Hoffman and David, Donald, and Betty Jo Schwieterman. Trudy was born in a hospital. [Urban's photo courtesy of David Schwieterman]

BITS & PIECES

Related to previous items in this issue

- G.B. Pampel had the first drug store in town.

[Adam Helwig letter - 2/9/1933]

- Kellermeyer had a shoe-maker's shop where the drug store is now (northeast corner of Washington & Monroe).

[Adam Helwig letter - 10/6/1933]

- A meat market was once conducted (1870s-1880s) by Theodore ("Butch") Dinkel in a frame building that was located on the northeast corner of Washington & Monroe Streets - where the drug store was later built (1892).

[F.W. Bruns in "Do You Remember" - 9/8/1933]

- J.L. Hoffman operated a branch drug store in a building at the corner of Main & First Streets. Charles Volp (brother-in-law of August Dierker - 9/15/1933) was in charge.

[F.W. Bruns in "Do You Remember" - 6/23/1933]

NEW BREMEN ELEVATOR CO. Negus & Hoffman, Proprietors

Highest Market Price Paid for
ALL KINDS OF GRAIN

[1887 Business Directory]

- H.J. Negus, former conductor on the L.E.&W. Railroad, left Monday this week to accept a position as

conductor on the Chicago & Eastern Illinois Railroad. Mr. Negus still has money invested in the elevator here and will make occasional visits.

[N.B. Sun - 2/4/1916 - "28 Years Ago-1888"]



J.L. HOFFMAN
PHARMACIST
Washington St.

[1887 Business Directory]

- Though he has been in the drug business for over a quarter of a century, J.L. Hoffman had an experience last Saturday evening the likes of which he doesn't care to have repeated. He had taken a large bottle containing carbolic acid in crystallized form and set it upon the kitchen stove to let it dissolve. When Walter, who was

assisting his father in the store, casually cast his eyes into the kitchen, he saw a sheet of flame shoot up on the wall and over the stove. A couple of basins of water and a hasty application of the garden hose soon had the flames under control ere a great amount of damage had been done.

[N.B. Sun - 10/2/1908]

NEW DISCOVERY

A Sure Cure and Preventative for
CHICKEN CHOLERA

DR. H. SCHMIDT & J.L. HOFFMAN
Manufacturers of the latest improved
CONDITION POWDER

Warranted to Give Satisfaction

<OFFICE IN CITY DRUG STORE>

[1887 Business Directory]

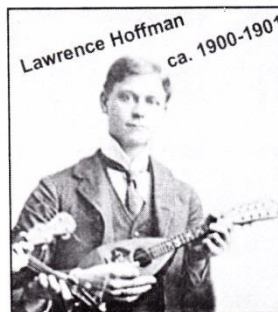


- J.L. Hoffman & son, August, left Tuesday for Cincinnati, where August contemplates to assume a business position.

[N.B. Sun - 10/3/1891]

- While little (6 year old) Lawrence Hoffmann, son of the druggist, was riding on his velocipede Tuesday along the sidewalk near Speckman Son & Co.'s store, he accidentally fell down the cellar stairs and cut a severe gash over his right eye, also slightly fracturing the frontal bone. He is doing well and will shortly be able to be around again. Dr. M.S. Ekermeier is the attending physician.

[N.B. Sun - 6/1/1888]



- J. Lawrence Hoffman (see pg. 7) helped his father in the J.L. Hoffman Drug Store in his early youth. Even though he did not graduate from N.B.H.S., he completed a course of study in the college of pharmacy at Ada Normal University, now known as Ohio Northern University.

After graduation from there, he became

connected with a drug store at West Mansfield, Ohio and later purchased the store. However, after a few years, he established a business in North Baltimore, Ohio. When he died in October 1931, he was buried at Zanesfield, Ohio.

[N.B. Sun - 10/8/1931]

[The picture above was cut from a larger picture of New Bremen's "Athletic Club" - see "The Towpath" - January 2000]

- Preliminary arrangements have been completed by members of Zion's Reformed Church for the presentation of a Christmas pageant, "Spirit of Peace." The rehearsals will be under the capable direction of Howard R. Hoffman, professional coach, who is making his home in New Bremen. (This was just a week after the death of his mother.)

Howard Hoffman is nationally known as an actor and interpreter, most of his work having been on the Chautauqua stage and in light opera. Until a year ago, he maintained studios in Newark, New Jersey and New York City. The pageant will be presented Christmas night, Monday, December 25th.

[N.B. Sun - 11/24/1933]

- C.M. Hengen, after being located at Rockville, Indiana the last 3 years, has again taken up his residence in this city to enter upon his duties as instructor and director of New Bremen's new musical organization, the Citizens' Band, which is now being organized from among the members of the old Laut band and some new material.

[N.B. Sun - 6/7/1907]

- Funeral services for C.M. Hengen, 71, were conducted yesterday afternoon at Versailles and were followed by burial in a cemetery near that city. Mr. Hengen's death occurred Monday at his home in Versailles. His wife and two sons, Fred & Pearly Hengen, both of Youngstown, survive.

The Hengen family resided in New Bremen for many years. Mr. Hengen was a well-known musician and for a long period of time was the leader of the New Bremen Citizens' Band. For a number of years he also directed the Rockford, Illinois band.

[N.B. Sun - 6/22/1934]



Theodore & Elizabeth Dinkel –1863-64

[photo courtesy of Betty (Gast) Roberts]

DINKEL'S MEAT MARKET

Theodore Dinkel (4/18/1839-10/12/1905) was born in Sisseln, Canton Aargau, Switzerland. In 1864 he came to America, stayed for a few years in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, and later joined his brother in Cincinnati where he pursued the butcher trade which he had learned in Switzerland. On June 26/28, 1867, he married Elizabeth T. Diehm (9/1/1842-11/26/1900), who had been born in Halsdorf, Kurhessen, Germany, and had immigrated to America in 1852.

On May 5, 1871, Theodore and Elizabeth Dinkel came to New Bremen on the Miami-Erie Canal. Theodore ran a butcher shop in a little frame dwelling on the northeast corner of Monroe and Washington Streets where J.L. Hoffman later had his drug store (now Schwieterman's Drug Store). Later, Theodore moved the meat market to the south side of a building (later occupied by Gilberg & Hegemier's Radio Shop) on North Main Street (5 N. Main), next to the office of *The New Bremen Sun* (now Howell's IGA).

In March 1899, Theodore Dinkel sold his butcher shop to John Huelsman.

John Huelsman bought Theodore Dinkel's butcher shop and will continue the business at the old stand. Phil Dinkel will assist Mr. Huelsman for some time. Mr. Huelsman lives a mile north of town on the St. Marys pike and intends to sell his property to move to town.

[N.B. Sun – 3/31/1899]

Upon Theodore Dinkel's death in 1905, the butcher shop on North Main Street was being conducted by Henry A. Koeper.

[N.B. Sun – 10/20/1905]

In April 1899, Theodore sold his butcher business to August Broerman and Gustave Greiwe who moved the butcher shop to the Lanfersieck-Grothaus building on South Washington Street in May-June 1899.

Theodore & Elizabeth Dinkel had 3 children: (1) Philip Dinkel (7/28/1868-1/30/1938), who married Alvina Moeller and had 4 children: Irene (Gast), Edna Kay (McCallum), Roland and Howard Dinkel; (2) Katherine Dinkel (1871-9/25/1927), who married Philip Hoffman and had 3 children: Margaret (Buckingham), Theodore Hoffman, Marie (Schmehl); (3) Amanda Dinkel (11/25/1879-8/19/1972), who married August Wm. Mueller and had a daughter, Marie Mueller.

TRUTH OR FICTION???

In January 2000, a letter was forwarded to our genealogist, Tom Braun, which had been written to Mayor Deloris Fischbach of New Knoxville. The letter was from Siegbert Zehnle von Bodmann of Osnabrück, Germany. He wrote:

♦"In the neighbour-town from you, New Bremen, is born the princess sulkowska. She was married in Osnabrück and had a mausoleum here. Please give this letter to the people from New Bremen, that they can give me information and perhaps proofs from the birth of Antoinette Sulkowski."

This request prompted a search of earlier N.B.H.A. newsletters (Jan./Mar.1979) and the *New Bremen Sun*, as both Tom and I remembered having read something about this "princess" before. The following is what we found:

♦♦♦

NEW BREMEN, OHIO

Figures in Romance Published in Chicago Paper

♦Mr. H.C. Boesche, formerly of N.B., and presently engaged as assistant cashier of the Van Wert National Bank, sent a clipping from the *Chicago Daily Tribune* of 7/22/1909 – a short story published by that paper, but copyrighted by the Brentwood Co., in which a "fictitious" history is given of an old noble family of Austria whose recent descendants, because of family troubles, are said to have settled in New Bremen, Ohio. The name of the family is supposed to have been Sulkowski. Louis, the fellow in question, is related to have deserted his duchess and gone to America where he settled in New Bremen, Ohio, and in a short time married a German-American woman by the name of Marie Gemperle, a native of New Bremen. The eldest son, Prince Alfred, so the story goes, will upon death of his half-brother, succeed to the dukedom of Bielitz and to the vast entailed estates.

Now it is up to our citizens to discover Prince Alfred so that he may not miss his vast opportunity awaiting him in the old country. And by the way, it would be a very interesting diversion to locate Marie Gemperle, as it might be of interest to her to know that her son is heir to a dukedom. Might Prince Louis have been Professor Louis von Redding?

Of course, Mr. Boesche does not care, the *Sun* does not care, yet after all, the matter tends to arouse considerable interest, as the affairs of a real live up-to-date little country town are seldom now-a-days wound into romances in newspapers, only when the tales are true.

[N.B. Sun – 8/6/1909]

♦♦♦

MEMBERS OF GERMAN ROYAL FAMILY ONCE LIVED IN N.B.

♦Evidence that German Royalty once lived in New Bremen was revealed in an unexpected manner this week when a postal addressed to the Registrar's Office, Catholic Parsonage, New Bremen, arrived here from Berlin, Germany. The card will be turned over to Rev. Vitus Schuette, C.P.P.S., St. Augustine Church, Minster, as it is believed records of the former New Bremen Catholic church may have been merged with those of the Minster parish.

Written by Marie de la Vigne and sent by airmail from Neutemphof, Berlin, the card contains the following information and request:

"Would you kindly send me the birth certificate and certificate of baptism of my grandmother, Anna Antoinette, princess Sulkowska, born February 12, 1858 at New Bremen. She was the daughter of Ludwig, prince of Sulkowska, and his wife, Antoinette Gemperle. I want the papers for my marriage. I should be very grateful for your sending these papers as soon as possible per airmail, calling in your taxes." Marie de la Vigne – Neutemphof, Berlin, Germany

[N.B. Sun – 4/24/1936]

♦♦♦

AND NOW, over 60 years later, a third request was received by the people of New Bremen for information about a "Princess Sulkowska", who is supposed to have lived in New Bremen at one time. Does this all stem from a "fictitious" story published in 1909 in *The Chicago Tribune* or is there really some truth to this story??? Or does everyone feel as those back in 1909 when they said, "We do not care"?

Tom Braun sent the above news articles to Mr. Siegbert Zehnle von Bodmann, but never received a reply. We will probably never know if there is any truth to these stories.

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HENRY SCHWERS SPITS OUT BULLET

"Some 30 years ago (*in the early-mid 1880s?*), when Henry Schwerts conducted a saloon down on North Main Street in an old building on the site of the 'present club room between August Aue's shop and Herman Tangeman's residence', a fellow came in one day and got into an altercation with Schwerts, finally pulled a gun and shot at the saloon-keeper, the bullet entering his mouth below the jaw, where it was intercepted by the teeth and promptly spit upon the floor by Mr. Schwerts.

The 3/13/1917 issue of the *Piqua Leader-Dispatch* contained the following interesting item:

'The arrival of the body of Dr. Aaron R. Greer at Versailles where it was interred Sunday, recalled to the older citizens of this vicinity a murder which was committed in the vicinity of Osgood in August 1885. The victim was Fannie Graham, colored, who lived with her husband and family. Having an aversion to the residing there of colored people, a number of citizens took it upon themselves to harass the Graham family until it would leave the community.'

'One of the parties engaged in this effort was Dr. Greer. In the hope that the Graham family might be frightened away, a shot was fired into the house. By chance the bullet struck Mrs. Graham and killed her instantly. Greer was arrested and placed in jail awaiting trial. Within a few days, Greer's wife came to see him and the sheriff gave the couple the liberty of a room in the "residence". Greer escaped and his wife kept up a loud conversation to deceive the sheriff. Greer went south and changed his name and was never again heard from until he died a few days ago at the age of 70 years.'

While this news item was being discussed, several men whose memory seems to be true and correct attested that the old doctor who was buried at Versailles was the identical man who shot Henry Schwerts.

There is a local end to this story. After reading the preceding account in the 3/17/1917 issue of the *Wapakoneta Daily News*, Joseph Drexler, caretaker at the Court House in Wapakoneta, exhibited the bullet that figured in the shooting affair at New Bremen. Mrs. Drexler is a daughter of Henry Schwerts, and was quite young when the incident occurred, but remembers it. Those who remember the incident state that it was Dr. Aaron R. Greer of Osgood who did the shooting. Dr. Greer's remains were interred at Versailles on 3/11/1917, having been brought back to Darke County from the south, where he fled after shooting a Negro woman in the vicinity of his home in 1885.

The bullet that wounded Mr. Schwerts was kept by Mrs. Schwerts, and later given to Mrs. Drexler. It is of a caliber known as 22-short, and was fired from a small pistol. Mr. Schwerts' assailant shot him after he had been refused a drink at the Schwerts saloon on North Main Street in New Bremen. He was pursued by a number of people and apprehended at a short distance away from town. He was in danger of being lynched, but cool heads prevailed upon the posse to permit the law to take its course, and the accused was placed on trial and

sentenced to 3 years in the penitentiary. The small bullet, almost perfect in form despite its contact with Mr. Schwerts' jaw and teeth, is preserved in a celluloid capsule, at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Drexler."

[N.B. Sun - 3/16+23/1917]



WHERE WAS HENRY SCHWERTS' SALOON?

In 1877, Henry Schwerts, along with Herman E. & Anna Meyer, purchased the west ½ of Inlot #22 (old number) on North Main Street. In the mortgage deeds, the property was described as "known as the Brewery Property of M^c (Michael) Vossler."

On 9/7/1882, a Quit Claim Deed for Lot #52 (new number) was filed by Herman E. & Anna Meyer, relinquishing their interest in the property for \$1252.50, paid by Henry Schwerts. The next day, a Mortgage Deed was issued in the names of Henry & Sophia Schwerts, who had married on 6/9/1881. This deed was canceled on 7/10/1885.

Henry Schwerts died 3/22/1899. His wife, Sophia Wilhelmina (Aue) Schwerts died 12/2/1907. The property was transferred to their unmarried daughter, Amelia Schwerts (born 11/14/1882). After Amelia died 9/13/1928, the property was transferred to Anna M.S. (Schwerts) Drexler, wife of Joseph Drexler of Wapakoneta.

On 9/9/1937, the south ½ of the Schwerts property (212 North Main Street) was transferred to Milton J. Gieseke, who had a grocery store there. On 9/9/1942, it was transferred to Virgil & Fern Hirschfeld, who also ran a grocery store called "The Little Store." On 9/30/1954, this property was transferred to Myron Eversman and on 9/23/1957, it was transferred to Richard & Annabelle Tontrup. From the description given at the beginning of this article, it would seem that this is where Henry Schwerts had his saloon. The building was demolished in 1982 and a garage was added to the south side of the brick house on the north.

On 9/9/1937, the north ½ of the Schwerts property was transferred to John A. Brown, who was a barber (*this was the father of our own Jerry Brown - see the October 2000 issue of "The Towpath"*). On 4/7/1955, it was transferred to Richard & Annabelle Tontrup and on 5/30/1973, the house at 214 North Main Street was transferred to Thomas & Ruth Keller, who live there at the present time.



AND NOW.... The Rest of the Story

In April 2002, I received a call from a Ted Schweitzer of Phillipsburg, Ohio. He had come to New Bremen and stopped at the Village Office to ask for help in finding information about his great-grandfather, HENRY SCHWERTS. Tom Braun and I met with him and his wife at our public library and he showed us the bullet, still being kept in the celluloid capsule. I was allowed to remove it from the capsule and actually held it in my hand!

From the Mailbox



Dear Lucille:

12/31/2002

I am amazed at every issue of *The Towpath* that comes out. It is so full of historical and genealogical information. I can't believe that there is anything else in the country like it. Your dedication is phenomenal.

I am sending an obituary about my mother-in-law, Eunice (Boesel) Brucken, who died at the age of 95 on 1/21/2002 and was buried in German Protestant Cemetery beside her husband, Harold Brucken. Tom can put this in the obituary files at the library.

Eunice was the daughter of Adolph & Ida (Havemann) Boesel and was also known as "Judy" during her school days. One of her girlfriends was known as "Punch", leaving to our imaginations what this pair was up to.

Thanks, Mrs. John (Eleanor) Brucken - Brecksville, Ohio



Dear Mrs. Francis:

1/28/2003

Thank you for the item in the January 2003 issue of *The Towpath* identifying my late aunt, Mildred/"Mit" (Boesel) Greenberg/Wolfe. I recalled that she was for a period connected with the traveling Chautauquas, but you gave many details not known to my brothers & me.

My parents, my brothers and my own family have long spent summertimes at the Chautauqua grounds at Lakeside, Ohio. I recall Aunt "Mit" visiting us there too. Memorable was the evening she and Uncle Bill Wolfe joined us for dinner at the staid Hotel Lakeside. The conversation turned to her many adventures, and one subject was about her visiting someone in jail in Chicago. She entertained the other diners by speaking loudly about the conditions of the Chicago jail, as if she had been confined there, and to top it off had Uncle Bill show off the gun he carried in a shoulder holster. (It was properly licensed, but that's another story.)

I am the son of Harold and Eunice (Boesel) Brucken, both 1924 N.B.H.S. graduates.

Best wishes, Robert M. Brucken - Shaker Heights, Ohio

EDITOR'S NOTE: See article on page 5 for more information about the Chautauqua.



Dear Tom:

1/4/2003

Thank you so much for sending the genealogy records I requested from the library. Ted and I both admire so much what the Historic Association has done for New Bremen, not the least the ever-expanding "Towpath".

We spent part of our "Christmas in New York" with Val and Sue (Schulenberg) Rabe (Ted's cousin). All three were born the same year (1930) and talked of old times, relatives and friends. I am so glad they have re-connected.

Sincerely, Janet Schulenberg - Kerrville, Texas

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Dear Towpaths:

1/27/2003

What a great publication!! My hat is off to you who spend countless hours and days searching for every little tidbit of New Bremen history! Thanks for helping to preserve "our heritage!"

My Life Membership dues and fees for both of the "Towpath" books (advertised in the January 2003 issue) are enclosed. Walt "Koolie" Kuhlhorst (class of '46) - Van Wert, OH



Lucille:

2/1/2003

I surely enjoy *The Towpath*. I read it to my Mom and to my grandkids. Enclosed is a check for another 2 years membership and a 1-year membership for my cousin, Peg Herring. I am sure she will enjoy the paper too.

I am also ordering some "quilt raffle tickets" and both of the "Towpath" books. I am sure to enjoy them. I am looking forward to receiving them, also the next issue of *The Towpath*. You are all doing a good job.

Louise (Schaefer) Jones - Cassopolis, MI



Dear Lucille:

2/3/2003

Enclosed is a check for 5 copies of "Memories of Marge." Grandma Marge (Conradi/Lietz) always told me she would like to write a book - well, I guess now in a way she has! Keep up the terrific job you are doing with *The Towpath*. Sincerely,

Elaine Marjorie (Conradi) Eustis Corbin, Kentucky



Dear Mrs. Francis:

1/30/2003

I am enclosing a copy of a "School Souvenir" booklet for the Kapple School in Van Buren Township in Shelby County, ca. 1920-1923. The teacher was my mother, Elizabeth Grothaus. She graduated from N.B.H.S. in 1919.

The cover of the booklet is bi-color with a small photo of my mother glued on it, so one wonders if there were funds available as a P.R. effort. As far as I know, this school no longer exists, and I am curious if any of the students are still living. Edwin (Jim) Tebbe (deceased) married my cousin, Louise Freytag, who still maintains a home in Findlay, Ohio.

My father, Herman Freytag, was a W.W.I veteran who was a masonry contractor in Fort Loramie. I was born in 1925 and my mother died of pneumonia in 1930 at the age of 28. She is buried in the Geib plot in Schwaberow Cemetery east of New Bremen. My grandmother, Mrs. Henry Grothaus, was Minnie Geib, so I am a distant cousin to Webster Geib & Dorothy (Geib) Harlamert.

The Protestant Freytags attended church at Zions Evangelical & Reformed Church in New Bremen and could have walked - or maybe they drove the 1913 Hupmobile my grandfather owned. (Mrs. Hupp and a daughter were next-apartment neighbors to my wife and me when we were first married and living in Highland Park, Michigan. The Depression finished off the company in the 1930s and I often wondered about the change in their social status.)

Sincerely,

Richard Freytag - Royal Oak, Michigan



KAPPEL SCHOOL 1909-1910

Harry Stork, teacher

BACK: Edgar Fischbach, Clara Stienecker, Louetta Kolthoff, Omer Ruese, Alma Ruese, Emil Schwaberow.

FRONT: Esther Brandt, Clara Fischbach, Lillian Bushman, Hilda Stienecker.

The Kappel School (School No. 2) was located 3 miles east of New Bremen, in Section 8 of Van Buren Township in Shelby County, on the northeast corner of St. Rt. 274 and St. Rt. 29 (to the north – Schmitmeyer-Baker Rd. to the south), across the road from the Kappel farm.

KAPPEL* SCHOOL District No. 2 Van Buren Twp., Shelby County, Ohio ~~~~~ **ELIZABETH GROTHAUS, Teacher** ~~~~~

PUPILS (ca. 1920-1923)

Edna Grothaus	Rose Tebbe
Wilbur Hegemier	Lester Jung
Harry Schroer	Elmer Sollman*
William Bushman	Olga Stienecker
Orville Gruebmeier	Irbin* Lentz
Dorothy Geib	Mary Tebbe
Viola Schroer	Alice Wierwille
Ferdinand Bushman	Victor Jung
Esther Westerbeck	Elmer Stienecker
Grace Gruebmeier	Alice Bushman
Edwin Tebbe	Richard Bushman
Webster Geib	Paul Fishback*
Marie Mesenbrink	Marie Westerbeck
Vernon Tebbe	

W.E. Partington, County Supt.
Frank Niederkorn, Asst. Supt.

SCHOOL BOARD

Henry Harlammert*, President	
Albert Westerbeck, Director	
	Julius Kettler, Clerk
Roy Roettger	Louis Nolte
Walter Maurer	Ben. Lehmkuhl

*[*spellings are as listed, even if incorrect]*

The last of the above students to die was Victor Jung, who just died 12/20/2002. Spouses of several of the students are still living. The school is thought to have been torn down in the 1960s. A modular home now sits on the Kappel School corner.



The picture above and this cover from the 1916 Kappel School Souvenir booklet were furnished by Lawrence Egbert. Lawrence's mother was Lillian Bushman, pictured in the top picture. The teacher pictured here was Alma D. Heil, who married Irwin Westerbeck.

VAN BUREN TWP. PUBLIC SCHOOL – Dist. No. 2 – 1916

1st GRADE: Olga Stienecker, Ferdy Bushman, Elmer Soelmann, Orville Gruebmeier

2nd GRADE: Marjorie Brandt, Lester Jung, Leonard Rain

3rd GRADE: Edna Grothaus, Arnold Westerbeck, Henry Lentz, William Bushman

4th GRADE: Wilhelmina Westerbeck, Julius Rain

5th GRADE: Norma Stienecker, Frances Ruese, Helen Brandt, Irene Roettger, Oscar Fischbach

6th GRADE: Lillian Bushman, Clarence Rain

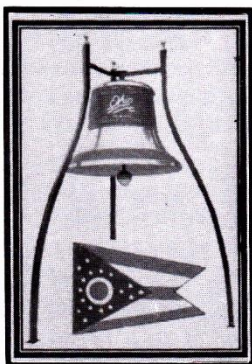
7th GRADE: Emil Schwaberow

8th GRADE: Hilda Stienecker, Clara Fischbach, Esther Brandt

SCHOOL OFFICERS: Henry Harlamert, Mr. Eschmeyer, Jake Metz, Joe Kettler, E.J. Boesel

DIRECTOR: Louis Ruese *[Evening Leader – 6/28/1994]*

AUGLAIZE COUNTY'S BICENTENNIAL BELL



STATE of OHIO

★ 1803 - 2003 ★

Bicentennial Bell

Dedicated To The Citizens of
Auglaize County

Cast August 2 & 3, 2002

A personalized bronze Bicentennial bell measuring 2 feet high and weighing 250 pounds is to be cast on-site by the world's only "foundry on wheels" in each of

Ohio's 88 counties as a commemoration of the 17th state's 200th birthday of March 1, 2003. The bells are presented to each county by the state and the Ohio Bicentennial Commission. The casting of the first 47 bells took place in 2002 and will conclude with the 88th bell in October 2003 in Franklin County.

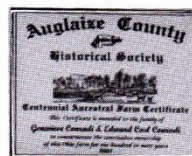
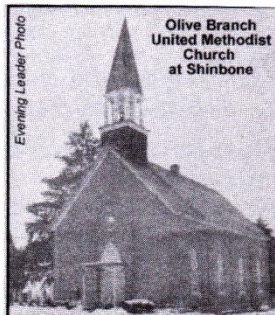
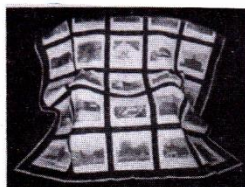
The Verdin Company of Cincinnati is combining old-world processes with modern technology to make this project possible. The casting process takes just two days at each site. The first day, the bronze ingots are put into the mobile furnace. After several hours, the furnace has heated to more than 2000°. The molten bronze is then poured into a mold and left to cool overnight. The next day, the mold is broken and the bell is cleaned and polished. At the end of this 2-day event, the bell is dedicated, presented to the county and rung for the first time. The public is then invited to join in the ringing of the bell. Auglaize County's bell was cast and dedicated during the Auglaize County Fair on August 2-3, 2002. Ten centenarians participated as a group in ringing the bell for the first time.

The County Commissioners are taking the Auglaize County Bicentennial bell to various functions in the county so that everybody has a chance to see it. They took it in our Bremenfest parade in 2002 and will have it on display at our museum on June 1, 2003 at the N.B.H.A.'s 5th Annual Community Picnic.

We will also be raffling off our "Bicentennial quilt" that day. Tickets are available at \$2.00 each or 6 for \$10.00.

The quilt measures 88" long x 74" wide. There are 29 historical New Bremen scenes surrounding a picture of an Ohio Bicentennial barn★. These pictures are printed on unbleached muslin, and are separated and surrounded by maroon "calico" strips. The quilt is edged & backed in white.

★Another project to commemorate Ohio's bicentennial was to have a barn in each county painted with the bicentennial logo.



CENTENNIAL FARMS

In observance of Ohio's 200th anniversary of statehood on 3/1/2003, the Auglaize County Historical Society recognized 32 families whose members have owned the same ancestral farms continuously for 100 years or more. On Sunday, March 2nd, 24 brass plaques (paid for by the recipients @ \$25.00 each) and 39 Centennial Ancestral Farm certificates (shown above) were presented for the 34 farms which qualified, with 12 of the 14 townships being represented.

We hereby recognize members of the New Bremen Historic Association who were among the recipients. They are:

(1) Genevieve Conradi (our historian) and her brother, Edward Carl Conradi. Their land is located in Sections 12 & 13 of German Township and was purchased by their great-grandfather, Carl Friedrich Wilhelm Conradi, in 1865.

(2) Don Isern, whose land is located on the south side of Amsterdam Road in Section 22 of Jackson Township and was purchased by his great-grandfather, Fred Isern, shortly after immigrating in 1839-40.

(3) David & Christine (Davis) Maurer, who own and farm 96-98 acres in Section 1 of German Township. Their farm is a part of the 960 acres originally purchased by Philip Jacob Maurer in 1833 for \$1.25 per acre.

(4) James & Judy (Bowers) Waesch, who still own and farm the land in Section 21 of St. Marys Township along Dowty Road which was purchased by Jim's grandfather, Herman J. Waesch, in 1896.

Centennial Farm recognition began in 1970 in response to a questionnaire sent out by the County Historical Society to county farm owners, requesting information regarding the date of acquisition, size and past & present owners of the farmland. There were 6 presentations that first year. With the addition of these 34 new farms, 190 farms have been recognized. [ACHS]

THE NAME SHINBONE

We have often been asked from what did Shin-Bone derive its name. By an interview with an old pioneer, we learn the following:

[from the Botkins Herald]

"In the latter part of the 1820s-1830, there lived near the present site of Shin-Bone an old hunter by the name of Robert Shin. As he was hunting along the creek one day, he was confronted by a large and savage-looking Indian in war paint by the name of Chief Big Bone, who accused Mr. Shin of robbing him and his tribe of their land and challenged Shin for a duel. Shin, having his hunting knife, accepted, and the conflict commenced - the Indian with his tomahawk and Shin with his knife. The fight was long and bloody but Shin pressed his enemy to the earth and thrust his knife deep into Chief Bone's heart and killed him. For some time the place was called the Battle Ground of Shin and Bone, but later generations call it Shin-Bone for short."

[N.B. Sun - 10/31/1902]

SHINBONE has recently been in the news since the congregation of the Olive Branch United Methodist Church (formerly the United Brethren Church) consisting of 20-25 members, only 6-7 of whom last met in the church on 12/30/2001, has donated the old building to the Auglaize County Historical Society. Shinbone is located along the north side of St. Rt. 219 four miles east of New Knoxville in Section 24 of Washington Township. "This brick church was constructed in 1896, the third to be constructed on the same plot. The first (log) church was constructed in 1841 on ground donated by Ben Stiles, the second (frame) church and the cemeteries were on property donated in 1854 by Shadrach Montgomery. Montgomery settled on the border of the old Indian reservation in 1830, the first white settler in Washington Township. Shinbone's 1-room school (No. 7) closed in 1938. The last burial in the church cemetery was in 1965 - graves east of the church date back to 1845. A blacksmith shop was also located in Shinbone. [Ref: 1979 History of Auglaize County - by Kermit McCullough Sr.]

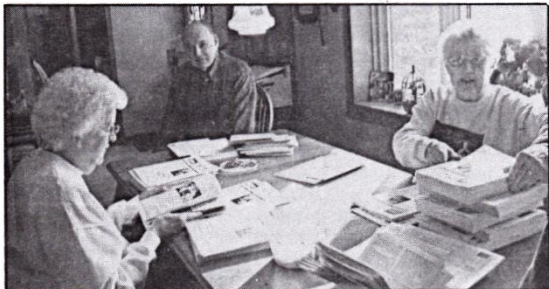
THE MAILING OF "THE TOWPATH"

I wonder how many of our readers know how much time and effort goes into the mailing of 800 copies of *The Towpath* every quarter. Included here are some pictures of the operation in progress in January 2003.

(1) Labels need to be printed in zip code+4-digit order (i.e. 45869-1234) to make the mailing easier to sort and in order to mail at bulk-mailing rates.

(2) The labels are then put on the envelopes (by Susie Hirschfeld). She sorts, counts and labels each bundle according to the bulk mailing specifications of the Post Office.

THE "CHECKERS"



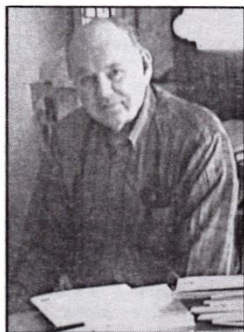
Erline Garman, Merlin & Susie Hirschfeld

(3) When the *Towpaths* are delivered by the printer (Lee's Printing), they are checked for occasional "loopers" such as blank or blurred pages and counted out in lots of 25. These are then folded by using 2 special "sit-on" folding apparatuses, the first of which was designed by Paul Lietz. Merlin Hirschfeld made a second "folder" so that two people could share this job. Merlin & Rev. Larry Holmer have been "folding" *Towpaths* since April 1997. Since Rev. Holmer has moved from our midst, Lowell Francis has volunteered to help Merlin fold future mailings.

THE "FOLDERS"



Rev. Larry Holmer



Merlin Hirschfeld

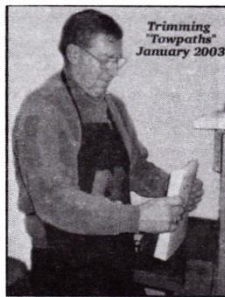
(4) After these jobs have been accomplished (9:00-11:30 a.m. on 1/24/2003), the second crew comes in to "stuff" the *Towpaths* into the envelopes, along with any inserts there might be. Coming in to help Susie on 1/24/2003 were Tom & Ginny Braun and Phyllis Cox (1:00-3:30 p.m.).

THE "STUFFERS"

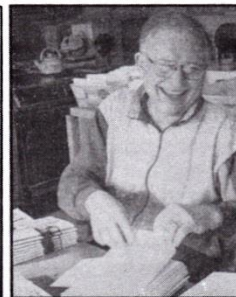


Phyllis Cox, Ginny Braun, Susie Hirschfeld, Tom Braun

(5) After all the envelopes have been stuffed and sealed, Susie does a final count for each mailing area and tallies the total mailing charges. She then takes the trays (six in January 2003) to the Post Office and *The Towpath* is finally put on its way to YOU. These people (especially Susie) deserve a hearty THANKS for their time and efforts.



Larry Kuhn (printer)

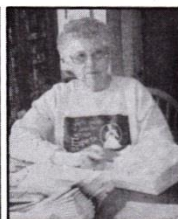


Tom Braun

THIS IS SO MUCH FUN!!



Phyllis Cox



Susie Hirschfeld



Ginny Braun

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

The following memorial donations have been received this quarter:

In memory of Ezra Hoffman

by his wife, Attilia Hoffman

In memory of Thomas H. Dicke

by his sister, Carole (Dicke) Ferguson

In memory of Larry Nedderman

In memory of Virgil Nedderman

by Mrs. Virgil (Loree Doenges) Nedderman

In memory of Hy. Wm. & Justine (Lamping) Hoewischer

by Kathryn (Hawisher) Almich

**MEMORIAL DONATIONS UPDATE**

Some of our readers might be interested in knowing what is done with the Memorial donations they give. An explanation of the Memorial Plaque was given in the January 1997 issue of *The Towpath*. Perhaps it is now time for an update.

In June 1974 a \$2000 donation was made that was designated for renovation of the kitchen. A plaque was placed in the kitchen in recognition of this donation.

In 1979, a Memorial Plaque was established, with the designation that any Memorial donations reaching \$100 or more for any individual (or couple) would be honored with a brass plate on the Memorial Plaque.

Although there is no separate account for a "Memorial Fund", a running tally is kept of the donations received and the money is kept in the regular checking account and/or investments.

Between 1979 and July 1998, a total of \$4325 had been accumulated. When the air conditioner was installed in July 1998 for a cost of \$3872, there was more than enough in Memorial Donations to cover that cost, with a balance of \$453. Since then, the amount has again built up, with a balance as of 2/4/03 of \$3533.

Since our patio renovation and sidewalk costs of 2002 totaled \$3533.84, I think it is of interest to note that these improvements, along with the air conditioner in 1998, were made possible because of past Memorial Donations.

You can be sure that these and any future Memorial Donations will be put to an equally good use.



Dear Association:

2/27/2003

My mother, Georgia K. Hollman, passed away on 1/25/03. She and my recently deceased (11/2/02) father, Kenny, certainly enjoyed reading your publication. As you may know, my father was born and raised in St. Marys. Both parents thus followed all the news from New Bremen, New Knoxville, Wapak and all the other little pockets of farmers and very nice people.

Ken Hollman, Jr. - Miami, Florida



Thank you for printing the "soda jerk" story in the January 2003 issue of *The Towpath*. I was fixing an ice cream sundae (in the picture). I still enjoy fixing the drinks for some of the same people each day and I also meet new ones all the time.

Thank you also for mailing copies of *The Towpath* to the members of my family.

Best wishes from Richard ("Soda Jerk") Huckriede.
Greensburg, Kansas (3/11/2003)

NEW MEMBERS THIS QUARTER (THRU 3/31/03)

[*Spousal Memberships @ \$5.00 or \$50.00/LM]

- 2/19/03 ^Belton, Merle - Lima, Ohio
- 2/1/03 ^Boesel, Irene M. - Deland, Florida
- 1/31/03 ^Conradi, William L., Sr. (LM) - New Bremen
- 3/25/03 ^Davis, Alice (Miles) - New Bremen
- 2/3/03 ^Dicke, Diane (Schmiesing) - New Bremen
- 2/3/03 ^Dickman, Sue (Thrasher)(LM) - Columbus, Ohio
- 2/4/03 ^Dunham, Vernon - Lansing, Michigan
- 3/11/03 ^Fark, Joan F. (Prueter) - New Bremen
- 2/5/03 ^Hartwig, Alice (Gilberg) - New Bremen
- 2/5/03 ^Hirschfeld, Linda (Dietrich)(LM) - Cincinnati, Ohio
- 2/12/03 ^Klinger, Darrin - Columbus, Ohio
- 3/1/03 ^Klingler, Dennis - New Bremen
- 3/18/03 ^Kuck, Cheryl A. (Frilling) - New Bremen
- 1/31/03 ^Mackebach, Joann (Dietrich) - Palos Verdes Est., Calif.
- 2/25/03 ^Mesloh, Mrs. William N. - Tehachapi, California
- 3/22/03 ^Meyer, Michael J. (LM) - New Bremen (REINSTATE)
- 2/1/03 ^Moeller, Lisa (Bergman)(LM) - New Bremen
- 2/1/03 ^Nedderman, Barbara (Meyer) - Celina, Ohio
- 2/4/03 ^Opperman, Carol (Hemmelgarn) - N.B. (REINSTATE)
- 2/14/03 ^Pape, Mary Lou (Wagner) - Homeland, California
- 2/5/03 ^Phlipot, Jeannette (Budde) - New Bremen
- 2/19/03 ^Poppe, Luella (Gierhart) - New Bremen (REINSTATE)
- 2/5/03 ^Scheer, Roger - New Bremen (REINSTATE)
- 2/3/03 ^Schulenberg, Janet (Bliss)(LM) - Kerrville, Texas
- 3/27/03 ^Steiner, Nancy (Baxter) - Lima, Ohio
- 2/5/03 ^Topp, Jane E. (Muter)(LM) - New Bremen
- 1/29/03 ^Westbay, Laverta (Hirschfeld) - Bellefontaine, Ohio
- 1/10/03 Brandt, Rodney (LM) - Lewistown, Ohio
- 1/7/03 Broy, Judith K. (Nieter) - Memphis, Tennessee
- 2/6/03 Durkee, Larry (LM) - St. Marys, Ohio
- 1/31/03 Fledderjohann, Skip (LM) - Dayton, Ohio
- 3/11/03 Gillman, Walter - Sidney, Ohio
- 1/17/03 Haller, Paul - Springboro, Ohio
- 2/1/03 Herring, Margret - Chicago, Illinois
- 1/18/03 Maurer, Christine (Davis) - New Bremen
- 2/1/03 Miles, Margaret - New Bremen
- 1/30/03 Otting, Dorothy (Mohrman) - Minster, Ohio
- 2/10/03 Quellhorst, Georgia (Fenneman) - Beavercreek, Ohio
- 1/29/03 Schmieder, Katherine (Bambauer) - New Bremen
- 3/7/03 Sikora, Lynn - Chicago, Illinois (TR from James Sikora)
- 2/5/03 Topp, Stanley L. (LM) - New Bremen

ADDITIONS TO LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

- 1/31/03 ^Conradi, William L., Sr. (new-spouse)
- 2/3/03 ^Dickman, Sue (Thrasher)(new-spouse)
- 3/15/03 ^Francis, Lowell J. (spouse)
- 2/5/03 ^Hirschfeld, Linda (Dietrich)(new-spouse)
- 3/22/03 ^Meyer, Michael J. (reinstated-spouse)
- 2/1/03 ^Moeller, Lisa (Bergman)(new-spouse)
- 2/3/03 ^Schulenberg, Janet (Bliss)(new-spouse)
- 2/5/03 ^Topp, Jane E. (Muter)(new-spouse)
- 1/10/03 Brandt, Rodney (new)
- 2/5/03 Brown, Steven A.
- 2/6/03 Durkee, Larry (new)
- 2/3/03 Ewing, Martha (Topp)
- 1/31/03 Fledderjohann, Skip (new)
- 2/8/03 Freeman, James
- 2/8/03 Koenig, Beverly
- 1/28/03 Kuhlhorst, Walter
- 2/24/03 Moore, Barbara (Harmony)(CMLM)
- 2/3/03 Moore, James E., II
- 2/14/03 Riebel, Dr. Ronald (CMLM)
- 3/5/03 Schroer, Janice (Topp)
- 2/5/03 Topp, Stanley L. (new)
- 1/31/03 Wierwille, Robert (CMLM)

MEMBER DEATHS THIS QUARTER

- 3/3/03 Anthony, David (CM) (died 3/3/03)
- 2/5/03 Dickman, Annabelle (Knost) (died 2/5/03)
- 2/17/03 Dickman, Reuben (LM) (died 2/17/03)
- 1/25/03 Hollman, Georgia (Travis) (died 1/25/03)
- 2/2/03 Jordan, Eugene (LM) (died 10/23/02)
- 1/ /03 Laut, Arnold (died 1/ /03)
- 3/24/03 Will, Rev. Carl G. (CM) (died 3/24/03)
- 3/17/03 Zodikoff, Delores (Utrecht) (died 8/31/02)