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(The Luelleman House)

# 2-05 THE TOWPATH

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(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**  
(Other Appointments, Call 419-629-1014 - Tuesdays, 9:00-11:30 a.m.)

**MEMBERSHIP: \$10.00 / Year - \$5.00 Spouse (Life: \$100.00 / \$50.00 Spouse) April - 2005**

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Dru Meyer, Mary Paul

### ASSOC. MEETINGS ARE HELD FIRST TUESDAYS

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

### ◆ THE TOWPATH ◆

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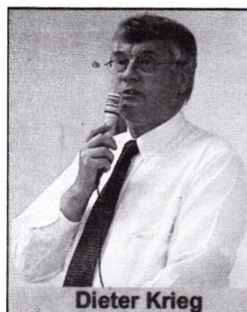
**THE TOWPATH** is a historical reflection of New Bremen and the surrounding area - researched, written, and/or edited by Lucille (Topp) Francis, EDITOR, and published quarterly by the New Bremen Historic Association. Any stories and/or pictures that our readers are willing to share are welcomed.

### 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)

### N.B.H.A. ANNUAL DINNER

The New Bremen Historic Association held their Annual Dinner on Monday evening, March 21, 2005 at the Holy Redeemer Church Fellowship Hall. The tables were decorated in an Easter theme. Guests were greeted by the lively music of Bret and Wendy Rochotte and their sons, Drew, Aaron, and Marc. Ruth Krieg prepared a delicious roast beef dinner. The Youth of Holy Redeemer and their advisor, Robin Goettemoeller, assisted with serving the meal.



Dieter Krieg

Dieter Krieg was the speaker following the dinner. He described the political situation in East Germany after the Russian takeover following W.W.II and shared his memories of his father's imprisonment, the family's escape to West Germany, and their life in refugee camps before coming to the U.S. in 1955. His gratitude for freedom and opportunity in the United States was evident and he reminded the group that early settlers in our community probably experienced

similar issues. At the close of the talk, Johann Klein stood and shared some of his memories in agreement with the speaker.

A short business meeting was held to elect three trustees. Those re-elected to serve another three-year term were Lawrence Egbert, Dru Meyer and Mary Moeller.

The evening ended with visiting and talking among the guests and speaker.  
(submitted by Gen Conradi, Historian)

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### 7<sup>TH</sup> Annual Community Picnic Sunday, June 5, 2005 - 12-3 p.m.

Pie baking contest starts at 10:30 a.m. - winner receives 2 tickets to a 2005 Christmas Candlelight Dinner of their choice.

#### Canal Boat Excursion at Johnston Farm - Piqua, Ohio Saturday, July 30, 2005 - 6-8 p.m.

If possible, a bus will leave New Bremen at 6:00 p.m. - 34 tickets are available. The trip will last 1½ hours & we will return to N.B. at approximately 8:00 p.m. Wine & cheese will be served.

**For more information on either of the above, call 419-629-3495.**



-2-

**To Lucille Francis,  
"Towpath" Editor & N.B.H.S. Classmate**

Dear Lucille: 1/18/2005  
I always enjoy *The Towpath* and the New Bremen Speedway edition was excellent. However, a letter to the Editor from a very nice lady who was shocked about the St. Paul's Church cemetery, aka the "church ball park" on Herman Street, caught my attention. Maybe I should be ashamed or feel bad about people being shocked about an old cemetery that now is a ball park. I do not want to judge - I'll just explain my memory of both the cemetery and the ball park.

It was a cemetery when I first noticed it. It became a ball park after serious consideration by a group of kids who were on a mission to have a ball park in "Cheese Quarters" (*the west end of town*). "Frog Town" (*east of the canal*) had a ball park - why shouldn't the kids in "Cheese Quarters" have one? That was our plea.

I was too young at the time to understand the meaning of leadership and can't reconstruct in my memory just who was the leader of that group of future adults. Eugene Topp, Tom Holdren, Bill Bruns and John Gilberg (*all members of the class of '54*) are definite possibilities. Tom Holdren, who lived across the street from me (*on North Herman St.*) was definitely my hero because he was the big kid who also had sisters and, like me, Tom had no brother. Besides, he tolerated me. However, I have some memory that Bob Finke, who lived within a block and was older than any of us (*class of '52*), could ride a bike without touching the handlebars, could talk like Donald Duck, and was likely involved in the process of converting the cemetery to a ball park.

My involvement was public relations oriented. In retrospect, I think it was more a matter of sending the littlest kid into the church to ask for permission because no one else wanted to get yelled at and I was so naive I wouldn't realize the possible reaction when asking the church for permission to play ball in the cemetery. On the other hand, all those guys were pretty smart and they knew that Leona Poppe was the "Church Parish Worker". Today a person with her education would be called a youth minister. To me, she was "Aunt Leona".

The guys coached me to give a little speech, which pointed out that we didn't know for sure that it was a cemetery. We did see three little flags on the edge of the property that in other years had been out in the field but now were lined up where the lot could be mowed without moving the flags. Therefore we thought that playing ball would be okay since, except for foul balls, those flags wouldn't be bothered. My Aunt Leona said "Okay" and we started playing ball.

It wasn't just a grass field we wanted. We wanted a ball park like Crosley Field which some of the older kids had actually seen. We started using a hoe to mark the base lines, but as I recall we would work a little, then play a lot, and the grass paths were more worn from our running the bases than from digging with hoes.

**NEW BREMEN FANS TO CROSLLEY FIELD**

Among the New Bremen fans at Crosley Field for the Tuesday, July 14, 1953 All-Star game were Carl Pape Sr., Carl Pape Jr., David Pape, Jim Schnell, Lloyd ("Pete") Blanke, Leander Landwehr, Larry Landwehr, Bill McCollum, John Koeper, and Bill Bruns.

Also visiting in Cincinnati on Monday, July 13, 1953, were Mr. & Mrs. Don Kettler and their 12-year old son, Jim. They stopped at the Netherlands Plaza, where young Jim was startled to see a great big hulk of a man step out of a crowd and approach him with outstretched hand. Jim responded as manfully as he could but was awed beyond words when he learned he was holding hands with Yogi Berra, famed New York Yankee catcher, in Cincinnati for the All-Star game!

(N.B. Sun - 7/16/1953)

Today's youth would not recognize the value of that ball park. Baseball games were played every day. All ages played together, with the older players teaching the younger ones and each player rotating from the outfield to the infield, then becoming a batter until you made an out. When a player made an out, he or she then returned to the outfield. (Most girls didn't play, but Betty Tangeman and Janet Fledderjohn were better than most of us.) When your mother called (yelled), you automatically lost your place and had to start back in the outfield when you came back.

Bill Bruns was a Yankee fan and his fantasy always was to be a Yankee slugger, but most of us were Reds fans and Ted Kluszewski was who we emulated by pushing up our T-shirt sleeves when we batted.

Years later, in the 1950s, the ball diamond became a church league softball field, and without much forethought, became a part of the Civil Rights movement in a very unusual way.

In 1948, when I was 10 years old, my father, Arnold Poppe, took me with him over the Christmas holiday to Hope, Arkansas (later to become famous as the home of Bill Clinton). We brought back to our woods at Bremco Alfalfa Mills three men - William ("Hawk") Marshall, Pat Easter and Willie Polk. Mr. Polk had been the labor leader for a Black Migrant labor group from Hope, Arkansas, who worked in the tomato fields in Mercer County during the summer months.

For the next few years, the black families and workers who worked in our business and lived in our woods had difficulty doing business and being in the community. They usually had to go to Lima or Piqua to buy clothing. Even groceries were a problem to buy except for a very few places where they were welcome if no one else was in the store at the same time. Irvin ("Butch") Heinfeld had a little store on the edge of town (*Knoxville Ave.*) where they were not only welcomed, but even extended credit and that very small store was the main source of their purchases. However, Arnold Poppe wanted the community to know the men and make them welcome. To accomplish that, he started the MEDOGREEN DEHYDRATING SOFTBALL TEAM.

Even though the name MEDOGREEN reflected the color of the product Bremco Mills produced, it was in fact an all-black softball team except for the left-handed second baseman - me. As the boss's son, I knew and had worked with all the men and was very happy to play ball with such a good group of athletes. The reason I was on second base was because they recognized that I wasn't good enough to play first base and they could cover up my errors on second base.

William ("Hawk") Marshall had played center field for the Kansas City Monarchs and had been a teammate of Satchell Paige when he was with the Monarchs before going to Cleveland. Hubie Whitmore, Melree Morrison, Scott Davis, Glenn Whitmore, Billie Matlock, "Snake" Carter, and the manager, Rufus Estes, were all very good ballplayers. It wasn't long before people started attending our games just to see the "colored boys" play.

It was an enlightening experience for me. The first time I batted, the first pitch was higher than my head and the umpire (the preacher) said "Strike One!" The next pitch bounced in front of the plate and "The Man" said "Strike Two!". I was angry and started to get in the umpire's face. Rufus yelled and summoned me. He said "Johnny, you now playing on a colored team against white folks. There ain't no balls, only strikes. There is them you can swing at and hit, and them you can swing at and miss, but you ain't never gonna hear no umpire say "Ball Four". For the rest of the season, I followed Rufus's instructions and swung at every pitch just like every other player on our team.



Sometimes you hit 'em, sometimes you missed 'em, but you never heard "Ball Four".

We understood that to be safe at first base, you had to be one step beyond first base. Conversely, to get an opposing player out, we had to have our throw be at first base while the runner was still at least one full step away from first. In spite of the handicap bigotry gave us, we won a great many games simply because we had Luther Dixon on our team – a man who picked tomatoes in Mercer County and who was a really good fastball pitcher. He was often late, but when he arrived, it was usually the end of scoring for the opposing team.

In spite of the bigotry we felt from the umpires at the start of the year, the play was fun. The games were a great benefit to the community because the crowds who came to see the games soon knew the players by their first names and there was not a merchant, businessman



Ethel  
Hendrix  
Dawkins  
N.B.H.S.  
1958

or service that did not welcome them to do business. William ("Hawk") Marshall's daughter, Ethel Hendrix, graduated from N.B.H.S. in 1958. I'm sure her life was difficult, but not nearly as difficult as it would have been if that cemetery turned ball park had not existed. Melree Morrison lived in the community until he retired after working nearly 40 years at Bremco. He returned to Hope, Arkansas where he gardens on part of the 10 acres he owns.

Who knows what is right, what is good, or what is shameful. Only time will tell. However, no one ever meant to be sacrilegious. We were just kids wanting to play ball. The majority of people in New Bremen didn't know any black people until they saw "Hawk", Hubie, Rufus, and Luther playing ball at the church diamond.

One thing about history – everyone knows some, but until it is written, it is likely to be forgotten and buried. That is probably how ball parks get to be cemeteries, and cemeteries get to be ball parks. Everything has its season.

John A. Poppe, Atty. – Wapakoneta, Ohio

#### NEW BREMEN SOFTBALL LEAGUE IS ORGANIZED

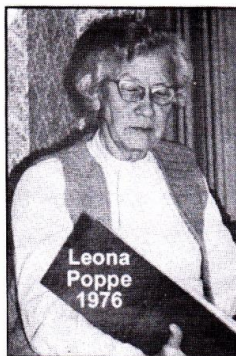
At a meeting in the St. Paul Church assembly room on April 15<sup>th</sup>, plans were made for the 1958 season of the New Bremen Softball League. Jim Cooper was elected president and Kenneth Greiwe was elected secretary-treasurer. The following teams will play and managers are as indicated:

ST. PAUL CITY, Jim Meyer; ZION-ST. PETER'S, John Rinehart; RAMBLERS, Leroy Heinfeldt; MEDOGREEN, Hubie Whitmore; COLLEGIANS, Bob Finke; ST. MARYS, Ron Wietholter.

League play will begin on June 2<sup>nd</sup> and games will be played on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday evenings. Softball Association membership tickets are now on sale. It is hoped that many individuals will evidence their interest in this recreational program by purchasing such memberships. Proceeds are used to maintain the field in proper condition and thus afford players and spectators alike some really enjoyable summer evenings.

(N.B. Sun – 4/24/1958)

#### LEONA POPPE



Leona  
Poppe  
1976

Leona Poppe was the second daughter of John H. & Flora (Quellhorst) Poppe. She and her older sister, Lorma (Althoff), were born on Lock 5 Road (today known as Southland Road), 1½ miles east of the Miami-Erie Canal in Section 25 of St. Marys Township. In 1907, the family moved to a farm near Bluff City, Kansas (southwest of Wichita) where Arnold was born in 1908. After a few years, the family moved back to Southland Rd.

Leona Poppe (born in 1901) graduated from the 3-year high school in New Knoxville, and in 1923 went to Cincinnati where she finished her high school education and attended the Oakwood Institute, the first school for women, sponsored by the Evangelical Church. There she began her training for missionary and parish work. She was commissioned into the Christian Education field on June 30, 1930.

Leona's first assignment as a director of Religious Education was in Texas. During the following years, she introduced Sunday School lesson programs all across the country and also spent many years representing the Evangelical & Reformed Synod.

In September of 1944, Leona returned to St. Paul Church in N.B. where she served as their first Parish Worker with Rev. John Melchert until he left in June 1947 and then with Rev. Emil Bassler. On August 1, 1950 she resigned to become a field worker for the National Board of Christian Education of the Evangelical & Reformed Church. In 1972, she retired as part-time Christian Education Director for the Northwest Association. In her later years, Leona became a correspondent for *The Evening Leader*. She passed away in 1987 at the age of 85.

Leona maintained her residence in New Bremen in the gray brick house at 108 North Franklin Street across from St. Paul's Church – the former parsonage which had been moved from across the street in 1909-10 after the new parsonage was built.

#### NEW BREMEN PLAYGROUNDS

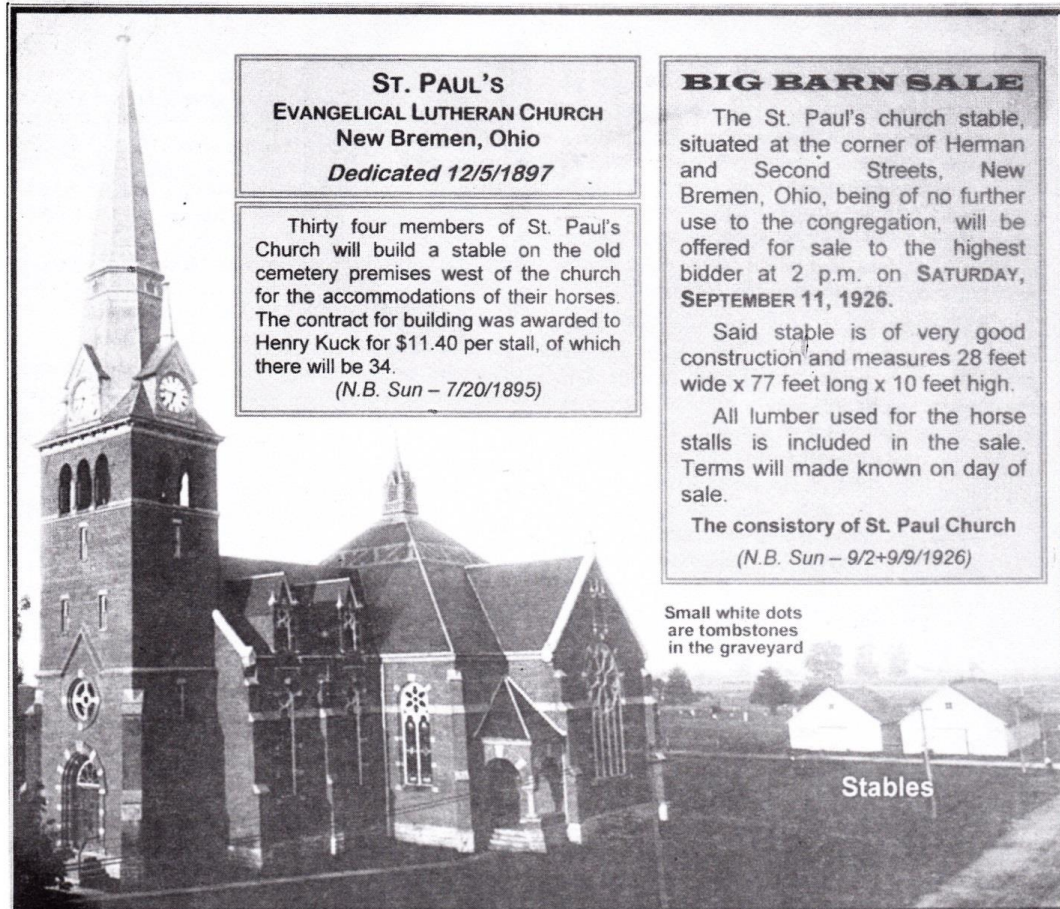
Formal opening of the playground season is set for June 16, 1947. Several plats in different parts of the village are already in excellent shape to lend themselves to exactly such a program as is being planned by the Park Commission. Included are the swimming pool park, the athletic field at the high school, the playground at the grade school, and the recently acquired plot where formerly was located the municipal dump. (5/22/1947)

#### Public Opinion on School Playground Sought

Public reaction to the plan for making a playground out of the plot behind the high school building was sought today by Supt. Roger L. Downing & other interested persons. The ground would be approximately 90'x110' and would have an asphalt top over a 5" base of stone. On it would be 2 tennis courts, shuffleboard flats, outdoor basketball & volleyball courts, and other playground features. (7/29/1948)

Another playground project is currently planned by St. Paul Church. Leveling, grading and seeding of the play field behind the church was begun in August. This project is sponsored by the Church's Christian Home Class under the direction of Rev. E.H. Bassler. Grading was done by Richard Eschmeyer of New Knoxville, with the help of many church members. A softball diamond is being planned, together with volleyball and horseshoe courts. Ovens will be built for picnickers. This project is open to the public. Anyone wishing to reserve the ball field for their use, contact Leroy Heinfeldt. (7/29/1948-6/9/1949)





**ST. PAUL'S  
EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH  
New Bremen, Ohio  
Dedicated 12/5/1897**

Thirty four members of St. Paul's Church will build a stable on the old cemetery premises west of the church for the accommodations of their horses. The contract for building was awarded to Henry Kuck for \$11.40 per stall, of which there will be 34.  
(N.B. Sun - 7/20/1895)

**BIG BARN SALE**

The St. Paul's church stable, situated at the corner of Herman and Second Streets, New Bremen, Ohio, being of no further use to the congregation, will be offered for sale to the highest bidder at 2 p.m. on **SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 1926.**

Said stable is of very good construction and measures 28 feet wide x 77 feet long x 10 feet high.

All lumber used for the horse stalls is included in the sale. Terms will made known on day of sale.

The consistory of St. Paul Church  
(N.B. Sun - 9/2+9/9/1926)

Small white dots are tombstones in the graveyard

Stables

#### ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD

From "Phillip Jacob Maurer & his descendants in America"  
by Dorothea (Dicke) Maurer (born 1886) (pub. 1968 - pgs. 19, 76)

My great-grandfather, Phillip Jacob Maurer, died 9/9/1833, just a month after he and his family arrived in New Bremen. His 2<sup>nd</sup> son, Friederich, died 2 days later, on 9/11/1833, and his 3<sup>rd</sup> son, Johannes Friederich, died on 2/13/1835. They were buried in the southeast corner of the old cemetery west of St. Paul's Church.

In 1849, there was a cholera epidemic in New Bremen. It was carried there by canal boats. It is not known how many died in New Bremen, but St. Paul's Church lost 122 members, and they were buried in St. Paul's Churchyard. The Churchyard was completely filled after this epidemic, and the German Protestant Cemetery was established (Est. 12/1/1865).

In 1900, a notice was placed in the paper, asking all members of families who had tombstones to remove them if they wished to keep them. I asked my mother, "Why do they desecrate this place where your grandfather is buried?" She said, "It has become a dangerous place. People go there with children to pick the lovely flowers, and the ground is alive with snakes."

Jacob Maurer, grandson of Phillip Jacob, moved the stone (before 1921) of his grandfather & uncles to the lot of his father, Phillip Maurer, in German Protestant Cemetery (where it leaned against Phillip's stone until 1995, when it was replaced with a replica by the James Dicke family.)

#### From St. Paul's 1983 sesquicentennial book - pg. 19

In September 1948, plans for a ball field and playground area west of St. Paul's Church on Herman Street were outlined. This involved a great deal of work and money, as this was the site of the original church cemetery. Because there was a real need in the community for a ball field and park area and since the church cemetery could no longer be used for burials because of a village ordinance passed in the 1860s prohibiting burials within the corporation, it was felt this would be an excellent use of this church-owned property.

A notice was released for families having loved ones buried there to have the right to relocate those "graves". A few (headstones?) were relocated, however the majority of the remaining headstones were buried on top of each respective grave and leveling of the area took place. This project was sponsored by the Youth Fellowship at a cost of approximately \$1300. The New Bremen Lions Club helped with this project and covered about half of the expenses. Because of the time allotted for relocating "graves" and the need to raise funds for expenses involved, this project was not completed for several years. The Village of N.B. supplied the ball field lights.

[There are fewer than 20 markers in German Protestant & Willow Grove Cemeteries that show death dates prior to these cemeteries' existence of 1865-1866. Many of these, however, are not original stones that were "moved" from the churches' cemeteries. Rather, they are newer stones that match other family members' stones on the same lot.]



## CIVIL WAR MEMORIES

### Recalled by N.B.'s Last Surviving Veteran

(N.B. Sun - 2/11/1932)

"Tomorrow" is the 123<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth in 1809. Henry Schaefer, Sr., New Bremen's only surviving veteran of the Civil War, remembers Lincoln's speeches against slavery, his nomination by the Republicans as their candidate for President in 1860, and his election over Breckenridge, Bell and Douglas. Then followed in rapid succession the secession of a group of southern states, Lincoln's inauguration, the firing on Fort Sumter, and the Union call for volunteers which presaged 4 years of bitter warfare between the states.

While he never saw Lincoln in life, Mr. Schaefer looked upon the martyred President in death after he had been fatally shot by John Wilkes Booth while attending a performance in Ford's Theatre in Washington, D.C. on the evening of April 14, 1865.



Henry Schaefer - 1895

Henry ("Cap") Schaefer was born 6/28/1842 in a log cabin in German Township (northwest of New Bremen on what in 1935 was the "Blanke farm"), the oldest son of Herman Victor & Dorothea (Stroefer) Schaefer. He had 3 brothers, Victor Herman, Fred, and Louis. Their father, a German immigrant, was employed in building a section of the Miami and Erie Canal. When Henry was 2 years old (1844), the family moved to Cincinnati, but returned to New Bremen 3 years later. His father died there 9/28/1854 and was probably buried in the church cemetery (see picture at left). His mother remarried, on 1/17/1856, to Friedrich Gerhard Staas. Their adult children were William Staas (father of 5 children, including Herb Staas) and Mrs. Mike (Juliane Staas) Winemiller of Galion, Ohio. Henry's step-father died 6/28/1883. His mother died 6/17/1909.

At the age of 15 (1857), Henry went back to Cincinnati, determined to make his way in the city. Part of the trip, from New Bremen to Troy, was made on an old canal boat and the remainder of the trip was made by rail.

Upon his arrival in Cincinnati, Henry was aided by relatives who advised him to apprentice himself to a locksmith, a red-headed Irishman by the name of Pat Smith. He was thus employed for 3 years, receiving at the start the munificent sum of \$2.00 per week, 50¢ of which was held back each week for the first 6 months.

In 1860, after serving his apprenticeship, Henry returned to New Bremen. Soon thereafter, on August 25, 1862, he enlisted in the Union Army. He had been working as a farmhand for a Mr. Johnson near Montezuma. Mr. Johnson offered Henry \$1000 if he would wait long enough to go in Johnson's place if he were drafted, but Henry did not go along with the delay. A few days after his enlistment he was assigned, along with 13 other New Bremen volunteers, to the 37<sup>th</sup> Ohio Volunteer Infantry, at that time stationed at Gaulley Bridge, West Virginia.

Late in the fall of 1862, after a monotonous period of camp life, the Ohio outfit went by train to Charleston, West Virginia, and from there down the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers to join General Grant's Army at Vicksburg, Mississippi.

Early in the spring of 1863, after all efforts to flank the right of the Vicksburg defenders' position had failed, Gen. Grant determined to establish part of his forces at Grand Gulf, approximately 90 miles below Vicksburg, preparatory to launching a new march and attack on the fortifications. The 37<sup>th</sup> O.V.I. was assigned to this sector.

Not only did the beleaguered Confederate Army under Gen. Pemberton repulse the Union assaults with heavy losses to the attacking forces, but they also poisoned all the wells in the territory so that Grant's army frequently was compelled to go for long periods at a time without water. One of the fiercest attacks participated in by Mr. Schaefer was made under the command of Brig. Gen. Ewing.

It was at Vicksburg, serving with Co. H, 5<sup>th</sup> Battalion, that Henry Schaefer received a wound, on 5/19/1863, which left him incapacitated for active service the remainder of the war. While scouting with a detail of Union soldiers, he was shot in the heel by a Confederate sharpshooter. Several days later he was sent to a military hospital at St. Louis, making the trip up the Mississippi on a boat filled with smallpox patients. Fortunately, he was not stricken with the disease.

From St. Louis he was to be transferred to Cincinnati, but because of the crowded conditions of the hospitals there, he was moved to a hospital at Madison, Indiana. This time the trip was made in a cattle car. His wound being of such a nature that it refused to yield readily to treatment, Henry was compelled to remain in the hospital for almost a year. Finally, however, on January 10, 1865, he was able to report for duty with an invalid corps on guard duty at Camp Morgan at Indianapolis, where some 30,000 Confederate soldiers were held prisoner. Henry remained at Camp Morgan until the war ended, being mustered out of service in July 1865 after 2 years, 11 months of army life. He returned to New Bremen almost immediately afterward. As a member of the Grand Army of the Republic, he attended many of their encampments.

(See the picture below of Henry and two of his sons at the Grand Rapids, Michigan encampment in September 1927.)

Two years after he was mustered out of service, on 10/3/1867, Henry married Louise Brune and took over the family farm - 80 acres in the e½ of the sw¼ of Section 32 in St. Marys Twp. Henry & Louise were the parents of 14 children. Those who lived to adulthood were: Herman Schaefer, Mrs. Henry (Flora) Blanke, Edward Schaefer, Mrs. William (Emma) Weinberg, Henry Schaefer Jr., Mrs. William (Laura) Waterman, and Mrs. Herbert (Martha) Kellermeyer Sr.

In 1917, Henry turned the management of the farm over to his son-in-law, Herbert Kellermeyer, Sr. Henry's wife died there on 11/12/1918. Henry died there on 10/27/1935 at the age of 93, New Bremen's oldest citizen, and was buried with military honors. The farm (at 1195 Clover 4 Road) was eventually taken over by Herbert Kellermeyer, Jr. & his wife, Leota.

[See the July 2000 issue of "The Towpath" for more about N.B.'s part in the Civil War, Mexican War, and Spanish-American War.]



Ed Schaefer, Hy. Schaefer Sr., Hy. Schaefer Jr.  
[Photo courtesy of Leota (Roettger) Kellermeyer]



**BREMCO ALFALFA MILLS, INC.**

Arnold H. Poppe-1955

**ARNOLD POPPE'S OWN STORY**  
*[written in 1981, 1984]*

Arnold Poppe's father, John H. Poppe, died in 1925 when Arnold was just a teenager. Arnold attended Elmhurst Academy in Illinois and graduated in 1927 after which he followed the harvest from Oklahoma through South Dakota, worked in a machine shop, and then started farming on the 80 acre family farm.

On March 19, 1931, he married Irene Rismiller. After their marriage, the Poppes decided that farming was not for them. They sold eggs at 5¢ a dozen and 4 prime hogs for less than \$25. By November 1935, they decided to quit farming, had a sale and sold everything except a truck. The bank paid Arnold \$10 in advance to haul a cow to the Cincinnati Stockyards. This \$10 was their start.

Arnold drove from Cincinnati to Jackson, Ohio, bought a load of coal at 25¢ a ton and hauled it back to the woolen mill in New Bremen. He sold it for \$4.25 a ton, then went back and hauled two more loads. After that he had enough cash to buy his first load of second-cut baled alfalfa hay which he sold in the coal fields of eastern Kentucky. From that time on, the Poppes were in the hay business, hauling and selling hay in the coal fields of West Virginia and eastern Kentucky.

The Poppes moved twice in 1936 – first to Piqua, then to Lock Two. In February 1936, they bought their second truck and Irene was the driver. At that time many roads were almost impassable. A 28-mile road between Louisa & Paintsville, Kentucky always took at least 4 hours to pass. By late 1936, the Poppes had 5 trucks hauling hay and coal. Every miner had his own cow and all the general stores sold baled hay.

In 1937, the New Bremen Broom Co. asked Arnold to manage an alfalfa grinding operation called Bremco Mills Inc. at their plant on South Herman St. The installation consisted of one small hammer mill and the entire operation consisted of grinding baled hay which was supplied by the local farmers. The Broom Company deal did not work out, so after about a year the business was sold to Poppe. The Poppes moved from Lock Two where John was born in 1938 to a double house at 224 N. Herman St. in New Bremen and started a retail coal yard in the back yard. Their office was in the north side & they lived in the south side of the house.

By this time, Irene's uncle, Harry Kelch of North Star, Ohio, who had a portable mill (a mill mounted on a truck that could move from farm to farm to process the alfalfa) started grinding all the alfalfa that Poppe could buy with his portable grinder. He



- 1943

had been grinding hay and grain into feed for the area farmers & suggested that Poppe buy the alfalfa and let him grind it. Kelch worked for the firm until he retired in 1964.

Bremco had a fleet of trucks hauling alfalfa meal and baled hay to the Ohio River area feed mills, wholesale grocers, coal mines and timber camps. They would return with coal that was sold in the New Bremen area.

Bremco Alfalfa Mills - 1939  
(original plant)

In 1939, a rail siding and one acre of land owned by Lock Two Mills on the Lock Two Rd. one mile north of New Bremen was leased. A building and alfalfa grinder were installed. The first sun-cured alfalfa mill ("dry" mill, built in 1941 on the south side of the road) produced 60-75 tons a day. The first 100 tons of ground alfalfa was sold to Early & Daniel, bagged & delivered to Cincinnati.

In 1943, the adjoining farm, which surrounded the acre and was owned by the Fricke heirs, was purchased, making room for expansion. That same year, Early & Daniel asked Poppe to find more alfalfa, so they moved a portable mill to Cozad, Nebraska and started another alfalfa operation there known as the Poppe Alfalfa Co. In 1944, they added a dehydrator plant and a sun-cured grinding plant in Cozad.

In 1946, Poppe sold the Cozad plant to a company later known as Nebraska Farm Products, and came back to New Bremen to revamp & enlarge the plant there. In the spring of 1946, he built the first dehydrator plant on the north side of Lock Two Rd. east of the L.E. & W. railroad track. This equipment allowed the plant to purchase green hay directly from the fields, artificially dry it with natural gas heat, and then grind it into a fine dehydrated meal. It required 3 "stout men" to fork in the green alfalfa. This provided a product much higher in protein and Vitamin A than the sun-dried alfalfa and also allowed for its use in the manufacture of more diversified types of feed.



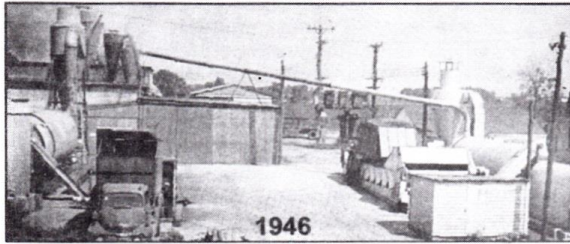
ca. 1946

Over the next 4 years, Poppe built a frame mill building, a sack storage building, a garage & repair shop, and also extended the rail siding. The company maintained its own garage and staff of mechanics to keep the truck fleet in top working condition. The office at that time was located in the former Nieter Grocery Store building on the northwest corner of



-7-

North Main & 2<sup>nd</sup> Streets (201 N. Main) which had more recently been used by undertaker, A.H. Albert, as a warehouse for his coffins. This building was sold in 1948 to the newly organized Holy Redeemer Catholic Church for \$10,000 and was vacated by Bremco on June 7, 1948 when they moved into their newly-built 4-room mill office on Lock Two Road.



In February 1947, the Bremco Alfalfa Mills and Poppe Alfalfa Co. were combined and incorporated, thereafter being known as Bremco Alfalfa Mills, Inc. (N.B. Sun - 2/13/1947)

In 1950-1951, a complete alfalfa blending plant was installed in the warehouse and Bremco started blending sun-cured and dehydrated alfalfa from the Imperial Valley of California and the Platte Valley of Nebraska with local alfalfa to produce a product they called MEDOGREEN ALFALFA, producing 10,000-12,000 tons per year. They also introduced 50# paper bags. Before that, burlap bags had been used. Bremco was the first to use paper bags in Ohio. The MEDOGREEN product was shipped all over the area, also to New England and the Southeast.

In 1952, a laboratory was established & equipped in the farm house/office. Ralph Maby, a graduate of Purdue University in agriculture chemistry, was plant manager and in charge of quality control. Each lot of alfalfa meal was analyzed to determine protein and Vitamin A content. Maby also directed the planting, fertilization and harvesting of the alfalfa. Farms were leased for a period of 4 or more years on which to grow alfalfa.

In 1953, a second dehydrator was added, doubling Bremco's annual production of dehydrated meal to approximately 3500 tons. It took a crew of three men in the bagging room on each of the 3 daily shifts to keep ahead of the dryers. Alfalfa harvested from Indiana, Michigan, Northern Ohio and Canada was trucked into this plant for processing into meal and pellets.

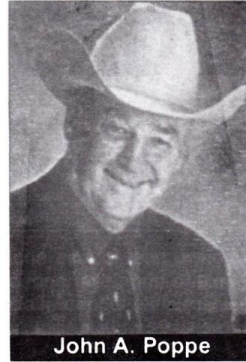
In the fall of 1956, a pellet mill was established, one of the first in Ohio. This mill was another modernization step which allowed the plant to ship in bulk instead of using individual bags, saving on the cost of the bags and also on labor. Before the pellet mill, alfalfa meal was a dusty product to bag in burlap or paper. Bremco was the leader in the state to produce a dust-free alfalfa. Pelletizing brought on much-improved working conditions. Poppe's son-in-law, Tom Block, operated the pellet mill at this time, after being discharged from the Navy.

In 1958, the company installed five giant storage bins on the north side of the mill building, each with a capacity of 35 tons of dry alfalfa meal. The meal from each dehydrator was weighed in an automatic weighing basket, then placed directly into the bins. This operation, eliminating the bag-filling process, also eliminated the need for a night force.

Also in 1958, a plant was started at Lake Placid, Florida, which was to have its own dehydrator. Most of the feed to go through this location was to come from a 15,000 acre ranch at Lake Placid and was to be blended with that of the New Bremen mill to produce feed to be distributed throughout the south. A sales office was opened in Lake Worth, Florida and baled hay, alfalfa pellets and meal were sold to the Florida market. Later, chopped alfalfa in bags was also sold to the Florida dairy farms.

In 1958, Bremco was buying \$500,000 worth of alfalfa from the fields per season which provided many farmers in the surrounding communities with added income. During the peak summer season, the 35 employees received wages totaling up to \$3400 weekly. General Manager of the plant was Ralph Maby, Mill Superintendent was Bob Treon, Hay Buyer was Cornelius G. Heinfeld, and Mrs. Anna Rump was in charge of the office, then located in the farm house which was moved in the mid-1970s to the northeast corner of St. Rt. 66 & Lock Two Rd. where Mr. & Mrs. Poppe resided for a number of years.

In 1962, Arnold & Irene's son, John A. Poppe, purchased 1/2 of the company's stock, became president, and actively managed the business. More storage facilities were added, along with an extra dehydrator and other more modern & efficient equipment. John's sister, Barbara (Poppe) Block, was also on the board and attended annual meetings in Florida.



Bremco Farms Inc. was formed in 1965 with George Heitkamp as president and general manager. His wife, Evelyn, was secretary and treasurer.

In May of 1965, a \$150,000 fire curtailed operations to some extent.

In 1971 Bremco became a supplier of High Feeds, product of Honneger's Inc. of Fairbury, Illinois. Ken Paul was named manager and Russell Kyburz was the assistant in this division.

In the spring of 1972, a third dehydrator and a second pellet mill were installed, and in the spring of 1973, the dust control system was installed. All bagging operations were discontinued and only bulk pellets or reground bulk was sold to the customers.

In November 1975, the company researched the possibility of drying garbage and conforming it into a useable low cost fuel for industry and possible power plants. Using Bremco equipment the experiment was conducted by Black-Clawson Fibre Claim, Inc. of Middletown. The results were deemed successful.

In 1976, Nick Pleiman was the manager, Mark Doenges was assistant manager, Don Wynn was office and sales manager, and Melree Morrison was the foreman, assisted by Lavern Meyers. Field foremen were Lester Vondenhuevel and Herb Schoenlein. Their assistants were Steve McNeilan and Ed Dicke. Don Dicke and Louis Bruns were seasonal workers and Robert Shaffer made deliveries.

In 1976, 3300 tons of MEDOGREEN alfalfa pellets were shipped overseas, first being loaded on barges in Cincinnati and then reloaded in New Orleans for the European market. Also, the production of a long fiber "cube" was started. This made it possible for the dairyman or horse farm manager to feed only cubes of hay. For this the largest pellet mill available was purchased, along with a horizontal pellet cooler and other items.

After experimenting with several other various products in the late 1970s, Bremco Alfalfa Mills Inc. ceased operations in the early 1980s.

(N.B. Sun, 4/24/1958 - The Evening Leader, 10/18/1976)  
[History of Auglaize Co., 1979 - Eastern Feed Merchant, Dec. 1955]  
[portions provided by Barbara (Poppe) Block - Rockford, Illinois]



**CLOVER FOUR FARMS**

In the mid-late 1940s, my brother David and I, together with Arnold Poppe, Omer Tangeman, and Eddie Wehrman bought an airplane and formed a flying club, with our plane being housed at the Treaty Airport at Greenville. Most of our flying was just recreational and was a lot of fun.

One time we did "hit" *The Evening Leader*, the St. Marys newspaper. I flew one plane with Stan Kuenning as a passenger. The second plane was piloted by Carl Wuebbenhorst with, I believe, John Tomhufe as a passenger. We flew to Cleveland, Niagara Falls, Pittsburgh, Cincinnati, and then up to Chicago, Ann Arbor and back home. I don't remember how long the trip took.

It was during this period that I took the aerial photo above of the "Clover Four" farms. The farm at the bottom (1) is the original Fred Dicke farm where my mother, Hilda (Dicke) Pape was born. The house is in the trees and is not visible. This farm was passed down to my uncle, Herbert Dicke, then to his son, John & LaRue (Meckstroth) Dicke, and is now owned by their daughter & son-in-law, Donna & Norman Jacoby.

The farm at the left (2), with the house showing, was the William Dicke farm, later passed down to his son, Willis & Helen Dicke. Willis passed away last November and his wife, Helen (Holtzhauer) still lives there.

The farm at the top (3) belonged to my uncle, Edwin Dicke, at the time this picture was taken. It later belonged to Kenneth Dicke, son of Albert & Marie Dicke and grandson of Gustave Dicke. It now belongs to veterinarians Mark & Michelle (Michalak) Hardesty.

The farm at the right (4) was the Bertke farm, occupied in the 1940s by Lester & Marie Bertke.

I can remember a 1-room elementary school (Liberty Special) about a mile to the west of the Clover Four. I remember going there on several occasions with my cousins. My cousins on the north side of Clover Four Rd. (2,3) were in St. Marys Township and went to high school in St. Marys. The kids on the south side (1,4) went to high school in New Bremen.

I also remember when the neighbors got together and helped each other when they butchered the cows or pigs. My mom would help. Kids nowadays, especially in cities, don't have a clue about life on the farm.

**Keep up the good work and GO, CARDINALS!**

*James F. & Mary Lou (Wagner) Pape – Homeland, California*

**"CLOVER FOUR" History**

Friedrich Johann Diedrich Dicke, his wife, Wilhelmine Dorothea (Meyer), and the first five of their 10 children came to America in 1853. They made their way to New Bremen where other family members had already located and Friedrich worked on the canal until he had enough money to make the initial payment on a 46-acre tract of uncleared timberland in the northwest corner of Section 6 in German Township, about 5 miles northwest of New Bremen. (Farm #1 at left)

In time, he cleared and improved the land and acquired more land from the adjoining sections – Section 31 of St. Marys Twp. in Auglaize County and Section 1, Marion Twp. & Section 36, Franklin Twp., both in Mercer County. These additions, some occupied by several of his 6 living adult children, formed an almost perfect square resembling a four-leaf clover with the Little Chickasaw Creek running north-south between the 2 farms to the west and the 2 on the east. Thus the farms became known as the Clover Four farms. The road separating the north and south farms became known as the Clover 4 Road and extends from U.S. Route 127 in Mercer County to St. Rt. 66 in Auglaize County.

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**THE DICKE ROAD**

**THE DICKE CONTRACTORS** gave an outing to their employees at the completion of the road bearing the Dicke name. [Dicke Road is approximately 1½ miles long, extending north from Clover 4 Road to State Route 219 and is in Mercer County.]

A crowd of about 75 people were invited to the pretty country home of Gustave Dicke and family on Sunday to enjoy an afternoon of fun and pastime. The picnic was given by the Dicke brothers, Gustave, John and Edward, who were the contractors on the Dicke Road west of Clover Four. All men employed on this road received an invitation. The afternoon was spent playing games, and a ball game between the old men and the young men was played. Music was furnished the entire time.

Late in the afternoon, large tables were spread on the beautiful lawn where lunch consisting of sandwiches, coffee cake and ice cream was served. Cigars were also handed out.

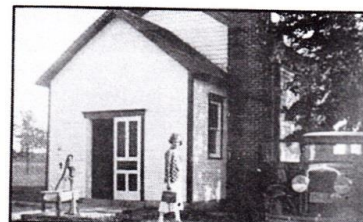
(*The Evening Leader?* – 10/18/1922-23-26?) (submitted by Wilton Dicke)

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**LIBERTY SPECIAL SCHOOL CHILDREN – ca. 1927**

**FRONT:** Julia (Dammeyer) Fark, Vernon Roettger, Frederick Dammeyer, Wilton Dicke, \*John Dicke, Melba Schierholt, Dennis Schierholt, Ruth Dicke. [*cousins of James Pape*]

**BACK:** \*Leola (Dicke) Tangeman, Ralph Dicke, Willis Dicke (forward), \*Franklin Dicke, \*Richard Dicke, Willis Schierholt, Richard King, \*Woodrow Dicke, \*Robert Dicke, James King, Wilhelmina (Dicke) Dammeyer.

**LIBERTY SCHOOL**

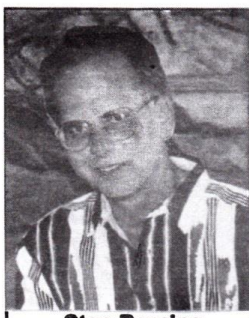
Norma Stienecker (left), 1923 N.B.H.S. graduate, taught at the Liberty Special School from 1927-1933.

[These pictures were taken from the 1988 Chickasaw sesquicentennial book.]



## NEW BREMEN NATIVE'S ARTWORK FEATURED IN MOVIE AT LOCK ONE THEATER

A movie called "Off the Map", directed by Campbell Scott, son of actor George C. Scott, was shown at the Lock One Theater in New Bremen from March 25-31, 2005. Central to the theme of this movie is the artwork, a 40'-long abstract watercolor on wallpaper, created by New Bremen native, Stan Berning, now a resident of Santa Fe, New Mexico. The movie tells the story of a man who dips his brush in paint and pours his feelings out on canvas, discovering a long-hidden talent for artistic expression. Sam Elliott is one of the actors in the movie.



**Stan Berning**

Stan Berning is the youngest child of Herbert & Dorothy (Howe) Berning. His only brother is Jim and his wife, Carol (Vogelsang), of Fort Loramie. His 5 sisters include Lois & Don Dicke, Marlene & Ron Hittetpole, Barb & Kermit Freewalt (all of New Bremen); Norma & Jerry Lunney of Delaware, Ohio; and Joanne & Ray Meckstroth of Soldotna, Alaska.

When Crown Equipment Corp.'s Lock One Theater was to open on December 6, 2003, Stan's sister, Barb Freewalt, a 34-year employee of Crown, was put in charge of finding movies to be shown there. [see the April 2001 & January 2004 issues of "The Towpath" for more information about New Bremen's theater history.] When Stan came "home" to New Bremen for Christmas 2003, he told the family about his part in creating the artwork for a movie and Barb told about her part in getting movies to be shown in Lock One Theater. They thought it would be great if, when the movie was released, it could be shown in New Bremen. Stan attended the world premier of "Off the Map" held at Lincoln Center in New York City on March 1, 2005. The film opened at Lock One Theater with a private family showing on Good Friday, March 25<sup>th</sup>.

[This story was taken from articles written by Katy (Berning) Gilbert, a cousin of Stan & Barb, and a staff writer for local newspapers, "Community Post" of Minster, and "The Evening Leader" of St. Marys.]



### N.B. MOVIE STAR

Lois Hardwick (left) was the daughter of Stanley and Agnes (Langhorst) Hardwick. Her grandparents were Ed and Anna Langhorst of New Bremen.

Lois starred as "Mary Jane" in 26 Buster Brown comedies in Hollywood.

[This photo was published in January 1930 in Wapakoneta & Lima's "The City Loan Circulator" & was provided by Bob Heinfeld of Ada, Ohio.]

## CURATORS' REPORT

### NEW ACQUISITIONS

[submitted by Joyce Holdren - 1/25/2005]

**DONOR: Elodie (Lanfersieck) Sollman**

- OLD NEWSPAPERS: N.B. Sun (1973), Evening Leader (1952-53-54)
- ST. PAUL CHURCH items:
  - (2) 1933 Centennial books + Centennial program
  - (2) Interior Church photos: 1933-1958 & 1958-2002
  - (1) 1983 Sesquicentennial book
  - Miscellaneous programs & historical papers
- RELIGIOUS PICTURES: 1) The Last Supper, 2) The Good Shepherd, 3) The Light of the World, 4) Gethsemane
- NEW BREMEN CENTENNIAL booklet (1833-1933)
- GERMAN FESTIVAL book, by Jean (Bessel) Harris - 5/4/1968
- HARVEY'S ELEMENTARY GRAMMAR book, belonged to Christian Sollman in 1877.
- BAPTISM CERTIFICATES: Mortimer Klanke (1894), Lendor Friedrich Heinrich Sollmann (1904), Arlon Sollmann (1907).
- CONFIRMATION CERTIFICATES: Flora Anna Sollmann (1868), Maria Sophie Sollmann (1871), Emma Margarethe Fricke (1872), Mortimer Warren Edward Klanke (1909), Lendor Sollman (1919), Arlon Edward Christian Sollmann (1921).
- OHIO 4-H CLUB booklets & pictures
- HANDMADE ITEMS: prom dress, child/adult aprons, dust caps.
- CHILD'S CHOIR CAPE

**DONOR: Dorothy (Schrolucke) Prueter (niece)**

- MILITARY ITEMS BELONGING TO HERBERT KLUTE: Military uniform photo, dog tags, General John J. Pershing's general orders of 2/19/1918, honorable discharge papers from U.S. Army on 2/29/1919, patches & medals, (5) German coins, (5) Iron Crosses, Argonne cemetery booklet & postcards, (4) American Legion Auxiliary pins belonging to wife, Alice (Schrolucke) Klute, black fabric with 5-point star (handmade).

**DONOR: Marilee (Sunderman) Besanceney**

- LEO F. SUNDERMAN ITEMS: 11/28/1917 Sunday School teacher's certificate, 5/24/1907 Diploma for Ohio pupils' reading circle, school notebook & tablet pages of homework.

**DONOR: Thomas Braun**

- WILSON BRAUN SALES STATEMENTS: N.B. Village, Lyons Electric, Roman Stueve, Wissman Sheet Metal, Bruns Construction, Don Luedeke, Lietz Furniture Shop, Roger Henkener.

**DONOR: Eudine Waterman**

- Curtain stretcher

**DONOR: John Tomhafa**

- (3) photos of circus train passing Brockman Coal Yard, 2005 Nickel Plate Railroad calendar.

**DONOR: Robert G. Heinfeld**

- New Bremen Broom Co. clothing brush

**DONOR: Nancy (Kettler) Price**

- Photo of N.B. Grade School teachers (see Jan. 2005 Towpath)

**DONOR: Unidentified**

- CONFIRMATION CERTIFICATE for Heinrich Johann Oberwitte
- RECEIPT BOOK for house rent from E. Patterson to Perry Heritage, 1906-1909.



# From the Mailbox



-10-

Dear Lucille:

1/11/2005

A belated thanks for the complimentary copy of the October 2004 issue of *The Towpath*. I was so delighted to see all the real estate transactions on page 5 concerning my grandfather, Henry Kruel, relating to his saloon business – also the birthday party notice for Irma Black's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday in November.

The trip I made to New Bremen in July 2000 with Irma and her ex-daughter-in-law, Audrey Black (*no relation to me*), was one of the most interesting days of my life. I have learned more about the Kruel family from you than I did in a lifetime.

The last residence of my grandfather, Johann Heinrich Kruel, was at 212 S. West St. in St. Marys where he had lived for over 25 years. After his death on 7/1/1939, my grandmother (his 2<sup>nd</sup> wife, Marie Prinzhorn, whom he had married in 1898 on a trip back to Germany) continued to live there until the last year of her life when she came to Dayton to be cared for by my mother, Wilma (Kruel) Mulford/Corrello/Minkner, where she died in July 1948 of leukemia.

When I was a kid, I lived with my grandparents in St. Marys every summer and remember coming to German Protestant Cemetery to place flowers on the graves. My grandmother always laid one flower on the grave of her husband's first wife, Emma Bruns, who had died on 6/27/1896.

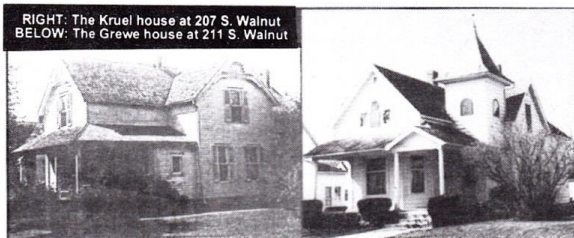
My uncle, Fred Kruel (1899-1955), lived at home until his marriage in later years to Norma Catterlin, after which they lived next door to my grandmother (at 220 S. West St., I think). Uncle Fred worked for the B. & O. Railroad as a mail clerk. He was a government employee and would be away for 2 weeks and home for 2 weeks.

My grandfather never drove or owned a car. My uncle had a "machine", but I think they all mostly walked. I remember walking all over St. Marys.

[Marlene (Mulford) Black – Centerville, Ohio]

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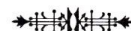
Henry Kruel came to the United States when he was 17 years old (ca. 1883) along with his sister and future brother-in-law, Anna Kruel & William Grewe. They located in New Bremen where Henry became employed as a turner in the Klanke Furniture Factory. Later he engaged in the saloon business in New Bremen (see the October 2004 *Towpath*). After moving to St. Marys, he became variously employed, finally conducting a cigar store in the Limbacher block for a number of years before retiring.



The Grewes and the Kruels built homes side by side on South Walnut Street. In 1899, William Rabe built a house at 211 S. Walnut St. for the Grewes for \$1520. In 1903, Rabe Mfg. Co. built a house at 207 S. Walnut St. for the Kruels for \$1625. In 1908, the Kruel house (at right) was sold to Christ Church for \$2500 and has been used as a parsonage ever since. [For more information about the Grewes, see the July 1997 *Towpath*]

In October 1901, Henry & Marie Kruel & their son, Frederick, moved back to Germany and planned to live there near other family members, but changed their minds and came back to New Bremen in July 1902. After selling their house on S. Walnut St. in 1908, they moved to Decatur, Indiana, where their daughter, Wilma (mother of Marlene Black), was born in 1909. (Mrs. Fred Kamman, wife of Henry's business partner, was Wilma's baptismal sponsor.) The Kruels moved back to St. Marys and after Wilma graduated from St. Marys High School, the family again went to Germany, but came back to St. Marys to live out their lives.

Wilma Kruel went on to graduate from Miami-Jacobs Business College. She was a 15 year retiree of Gallagher Drug Stores and a 33 year employee of Bettman's Pharmacy in Dayton. She died in Dayton on 12/7/1997 at the age of 88.



Dear Lucy:

1/19/2005

I really enjoyed the January 2005 issue of *The Towpath*. You answered my question about when the last Farmers' Picnic was held at Kuenning's Grove. I knew there was one in 1928 after the New Bremen Speedway Co. had bought the property, but didn't know what had developed after that.

I would like to clarify an item on page 8 about the catwalk over the racetrack. It was used for the flagmen and for Doc Schmidt with his megaphone. The overhead walkway for spectators that was spoken of never became a reality. When the judges' stand was toppled in the 9/20/1931 riot, the catwalk went with it and ended up on the track. Carl Schrage was in the judges' stand at the time and had to jump to safety.

Dave Kramer did an excellent job of writing about the New Bremen Speedway. As you know, I have been wanting to write my own book about the speedway. My Grandfather Arnd Heinfeld's farm was directly east of the Kuenning farm across the L.E. & W. railroad track and I spent a lot of time during my early childhood watching the racetrack activities from there.

In regard to Molly (Künning) Brown's letter on page 20 about the old St. Paul Church cemetery on North Herman St., this is what I remember about the cemetery. As a very small child, my father and I were driving past there in his Model T and I remember seeing a large wrought iron entrance gate sitting on an angle on the southeast corner (now the location of home plate) with pieces of fence remaining on either side of the gate. There were three flags stuck in the gate and my dad explained to me that these flags were in memory of the three Civil War veterans who were buried there. [William Schucraft, Frank Staas, William Vick]. I don't remember ever seeing any markers in the cemetery. If there were, they were all hidden by the unkempt brushy, weedy overgrowth.

Frank Mueller, a W.W.I veteran, told me that the Civil War veterans of New Bremen were very adamant about decorating the veterans graves. This job was later turned over to the American Legion's W.W.I veterans. [The G.A.R. Memorial Day ritual was dropped in 1937 for the first time since the Civil War.] In the early 1930s, each year for Memorial Day the Legion would select one veteran's grave to be honored and would place a big wreath on it. I remember one year I saw this man with a long black coat, black pants and a big black hat. Commander Ray Knipple handed the wreath to this man to place on a grave. Lewis Poppe later told me that the man in black was New Bremen's last surviving Civil War veteran, Henry Schaefer, Sr. (see pg. 5). So, I got to see one Civil War veteran in my lifetime.

Robert G. Heinfeld – Ada, Ohio





November 13, 1919

## St. Peter's Church Confirmation Class

**BACK:** 1) Liebert Luedeke?  
2) \_\_\_\_\_  
3) Wilbur Garmhausen  
4) Rev. Von Rague  
5) Wilson Maurer?  
6) \_\_\_\_\_  
7) \_\_\_\_\_

**FRONT:** 1) \_\_\_\_\_  
2) Omer Tangeman?  
3) Pearl Garmhausen  
4) Hedwig Paul  
5) Irma (Frevert) Black  
6) \_\_\_\_\_  
7) \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDITIONAL NAMES (Unidentified):**  
Lester Fark, Gaylord Heinfeld, Adiel  
Mueller, Theodore Pohlman, Benjamin  
Pohlman, Wilbur Strasburg.

[This photo was donated to the N.B.H.A. by the family of Irma (Frevert) Black. Irma passed away 3/10/2005 after having celebrated her 100<sup>th</sup> birthday last November.]

Lucille:

1/27/2005

The article you wrote on the old Wint's Restaurant in the October 2004 issue was well written and brought back a lot of memories from the mid 1940s and later. Parts of the article from before the '40s, I never knew or had forgotten. You can imagine the old stories that came back – again a great job and thanks a lot.

*Ferd C. Wint (son of LaVerne & Grace Wint)*

*Ferd C. Wint (son of LaVerne & Grace Wint)*

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*EDITOR'S NOTE: Since the October 2004 issue of "The Towpath" was mailed, Ferd's uncle, Paul K. Wint (who had celebrated his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday this past summer), passed away (on 1/10/2005). He is survived by his wife, Mary; 2 sons, Dennis & David Wint; and his sister, Doris Everts*

Also, as "The Towpath" went to press in early October, it was learned that Mrs. Paul (Virginia) Rosenbeck, who had purchased Wint's Restaurant in 1981, had also just passed away. She was preceded in death by her husband.



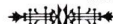
Ladies/Gentlemen:

1/25/2005

Enclosed please find a check for \$100 for a Lifetime Membership. Could you please send me a copy of the January 2005 issue of *The Towpath* that included the history of the New Bremen Speedway? As a youngster in the late 1950s, I sold many a program at the races.

The work of the Historic Association is very much appreciated. Sincerely,  
Jacob F. Froning - London, Ohio

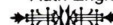
*Jacob F. Froning – London, Ohio*



Thank you for the complimentary copy of the January 2005 issue of *The Towpath* with the great (12/12/2004) picture of Chick Hale, Dave Kramer and Dave's daughter at the New Bremen Speedway. Chick and I had a great visit at the speedway and got to go around it again. We also had a great visit at the Historic Museum's open house with Dave Kramer and Pat Wietholter, the artist who painted the N.B. Speedway picture. Enclosed are memberships for myself and Chick. Thank you.

Ruth Engle – Brookville, Ohio (2/4/2005)

Ruth Engle - Brookville, Ohio (2/4/2005)



To: *The Towpath*

2/16/2005

Enclosed is a check for \$10.00 for a year's subscription for my mother, Veronica Kuether. She read two previous editions of *The Towpath* and was very enthused with the materials. I, myself, also enjoyed them - a very good job on compiling information of the past. Thank you very much.

*Donald J. Kuether – Covington, Ohio*

**Lucille Francis, Editor:**

2/24/2005

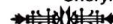
Thank you for the complimentary copy of the January 2005 issue of *The Towpath*. I thought this issue was so interesting about the Farmers' Picnics and the New Bremen Speedway. I remember going out to the Speedway years ago when my dad (Hal Hott) worked there as an auxiliary deputy. He met the race car drivers and I even remember Dad drove us around the track one time. IT WAS EXCITING!!!

I've read (from past memberships) interesting articles about New Bremen in years past. I especially remember an article about Rabe's Pond that I hadn't even known existed in New Bremen. I also remember the elementary school on Franklin Street. When I was there, Mrs. Rinehart was the 4<sup>th</sup> grade teacher and Mr. Blanke taught the 5<sup>th</sup> grade.

Some of my special summer memories are of the spectacular pool productions at the old swimming pool on West Plum St. in the early-mid 1950s. IT WAS AWESOME! – the colored spotlights, the music and the synchronized routines of the swimmers. They did a fantastic job at those “Pool Shows” back then.

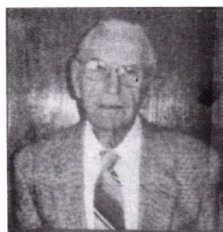
Thanks again.

Cheryl (Hott) Long – St. Marys, Ohio



## OUR OLDEST "NEW" MEMBER

You're never too old to become a member of the N.B.H.A. and subscribe to *The Towpath*! Bill Opperman turned 104 last August and still enjoys reading about the past, according to his friend, Robert Nedderman, who signed him up for a 2005 membership.



G. William Opperman - 1995

**G William Opperman - 1995** Bill was a farmer, plumber, electrician, beekeeper, and also enjoyed working on machinery. He worked for the Kettlersville Well Association for several years and drove a school bus for the Anna School District for 30 years. He and his wife, Rozella (who passed away in 2001), lived at 7576 Lock Two Road, Botkins, Ohio and had 2 sons and a daughter.



**CORRECTION**

On page 20 of the October 2004 issue of *The Towpath*, I inadvertently mis-identified the parents of letter-writer David Harry Schroeder as Harry & Frieda (Dammeyer) Schroeder. David and his brother John are the sons of Robert & Grace (Thiesing) Schroeder. Harry & Frieda were their grandparents.

Harry F. Schroeder & his brother-in-law, Oscar Dammeyer, were two of the organizers of the New Bremen Speedway Company in 1926. (Sorry for the slip-up.)

**IRVIN W. HARTMAN, 96**

(4/14/1908-12/11/2004)

Irvin W. ("Bucky") Hartman, age 96, of Fort Lauderdale, Florida, formerly of New Bremen, Ohio, and Mt. Pleasant, Michigan, passed away on December 11, 2004 at home in Fort Lauderdale. Burial was at Riverside Cemetery in Mt. Pleasant.

Irvin W. Hartman was born in St. Marys, Ohio, the first child of John Frederick CHRISTIAN and Malinda (Waterman) Hartman. In his youth, "Bucky" worked for the White Mountain Creamery, Friemering Grocery and Kroger's in New Bremen. He graduated from New Bremen High School in 1926 and from Bliss College in Columbus, Ohio. He married Velma Beisner on January 27, 1934. Throughout his 96 years, he treated all that he met with love and respect and received the same in return. As the song says, "To know him was to love him."

"Bucky" was a member of Christ Church United Methodist of Fort Lauderdale and First Methodist Church of Mt. Pleasant, serving on their boards and committees. He served the communities where he lived, including as mayor, city commissioner and school board member in Mt. Pleasant. He campaigned for the Republican party and actively supported various charities.

Bucky's chosen profession was oil and gas exploration, being president of several oil companies before striking out on his own in 1949. He participated in the oil industry with the same enthusiasm that he brought to everything he undertook.

"Bucky" is survived by his son and daughter-in-law, John and Deborah Hartman of Fort Lauderdale; five grandchildren: Melissa, Ashley, Kimberly, Matthew and Marcus of California; and his 86 year old "kid brother", Ed, of Albuquerque, New Mexico. He was preceded in death by his parents; his wife, Velma, in 2001; his daughter, Susan Taylor, in 2000; and five brothers and sisters: Mrs. Clifton (Bernice / "Bun") Steinebrugge, Earl G., Mrs. Earl (Ione) McVey, Howard, and Mrs. Robert (June) Kinsella.

Those planning an expression of sympathy may wish to consider a memorial contribution to the New Bremen Historic Association or a charity of their choice. *[obituary provided by the Hartman family]*

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** We appreciate receiving obituaries of New Bremen natives or of those with a New Bremen connection. Our genealogist, Tom Braun, keeps updating the obituary file at the New Bremen Public Library so that other genealogists can make use of this information.

**MEMORIAL DONATIONS**

The following memorial donations have been received this quarter:

**In memory of Thomas H. Dicke**

by Carole (Dicke) Ferguson

**In memory of Irvin W. & Velma (Beisner) Hartman**

by John E. & Deborah Hartman & family

**In memory of Herbert Kellermeyer, Jr.**

by Dennis & Andrea Kellermeyer

**In memory of Virgil & Larry Nedderman**

by Loree (Doenges) Nedderman

**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.

**NEW MEMBERS THIS QUARTER (THRU 3/28/05)**

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

1/11/05 Black, Marlene (Mulford) – Centerville, Ohio  
1/13/05 Conradi, Diane – Whitefish, MT (Rejoined)  
3/1/05 Dammeyer, \*Wanda (Browning) – New Bremen  
1/5/05 Deeg, Carol (Klein) – Carroll, Ohio  
1/13/05 Deschenes, Dr. Karen (Conradi)-Gresham, OR (Rejoined)  
2/22/05 Dicke, Beverly (Dingledine) – St. Marys, Ohio  
1/31/05 Dickman, \*Dr. Charles (LM) – Coldwater, Ohio  
1/19/05 Dillon, Doris (Klopfenstein) – New Knoxville, Ohio  
2/2/05 Duffy, Patricia (Kettler) – West Chester, Ohio  
2/8/05 Elking, James & \*Pamela – St. Marys, Ohio  
2/15/05 Elliott, Jane (Weber) – Botkins, Ohio  
2/7/05 Engle, Ruth – Brookville, Ohio  
1/19/05 Fark, Sue (Heitbrink) – New Bremen  
1/31/05 Froning, Dr. Jacob F. (LM) – London, Ohio  
2/7/05 Hale, Chick – Lewisburg, Ohio  
2/10/05 Harlamert, Dean (LM) – Eufaula, Alabama  
1/21/05 Harmeyer, Donna (Topp) – St. Marys, Ohio  
1/22/05 Heeter, Eugene A. – Eaton, Ohio  
2/7/05 Hildebrand, Jean (Moeller) – Lakeland, Florida  
2/1/05 Keller, Thomas – New Bremen  
1/24/05 Kettler, Donald E. – New Bremen  
1/21/05 Koeper, Dorothy (Dicke) – New Bremen  
1/26/05 Kuenning, W. Edward – Celina, Ohio  
2/22/05 Kuether, Veronica E. – Fort Loramie, Ohio  
2/25/05 Long, Cheryl (Hott) – St. Marys, Ohio (Rejoined)  
1/19/05 Meckstroth, Richard – St. Marys, Ohio (Rejoined)  
1/22/05 Moeller, Fred – New Bremen (Rejoined)  
1/28/05 Moore, \*Jane (Schulte) – New Bremen  
2/8/05 Opperman, William – St. Marys, Ohio  
1/26/05 Palmer, Phyllis (Topp) – San Diego, California  
1/20/05 Philpot, William – New Bremen (Rejoined)  
3/5/05 Rindler, Sharon – New Bremen  
1/28/05 Rinehart, John – Wyomissing, Pennsylvania  
2/8/05 Rohrbaugh, Marian (Lutterbein) – Westlake, Ohio  
1/27/05 Schmidt, \*Raymond – St. Marys, Ohio  
2/25/05 Schmitmeyer, John – St. Marys, Ohio  
2/7/05 Schroeder, Mrs. Bernard (\*Danelle) – Garnaville, IA  
1/20/05 Schroer, Kenneth – Bellefontaine, Ohio  
1/21/05 Smith, Steven (rejoined) & \*Teresa (Kemper) – N.B.  
2/25/05 Sudman, Kenneth – St. Marys, Ohio  
3/7/05 Tontrup, Ron & \*Kathy (Hay) – New Bremen  
1/19/05 Topp, Doug – New Bremen  
2/24/05 Topp, Dr. Herbert C. – Mechanicsburg, Ohio  
1/19/05 Topp, Robert – New Bremen (Rejoined)  
3/3/05 Tostrick, \*Karen (Moyer) (LM) – New Bremen  
1/19/05 Will, Gene – Minster, Ohio  
1/19/05 Will, Mike – New Bremen  
1/19/05 Will, Nicholas – Worthington, Ohio  
2/9/05 Ziegenbusch, \*Kitty-Hunt (LM) – Celina, Ohio  
1/19/05 Ziegenbusch, Julie (Miller) – New Bremen

**ADDITIONS TO LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP ROSTER**

2/19/05 Braddock, Wendy (Wellemeier)  
1/31/05 Dammeyer, Duane  
1/31/05 Dickman, \*Charles (rejoined)  
1/31/05 Froning, Jacob F. (new)  
2/4/05 Gamble, Charles  
1/24/05 Gossette, LaRose (Dicke)  
2/10/05 Harlamert, Dean (new)  
2/2/05 Maurer, Mary (Waesche)  
1/22/05 Reese, Frances (Kuck)  
3/5/05 Scheer, Jerry  
1/21/05 Stauffer, Robert  
1/21/05 Stauffer, Ronald  
3/3/05 Tostrick, John & \*Karen (new)  
2/9/05 Ziegenbusch, \*Kitty-Hunt (new)

**MEMBER DEATHS REPORTED THIS QUARTER**

1/25/05 Boesel, Mrs. John H. (Irene) – died 1/19/2005  
1/31/05 Fickenwirth, Dorothie – died 10/9/2004  
1/20/05 Hartman, Irvin W. (CMLM) – died 12/11/2004  
2/12/05 Poppe, William – died 2/12/2005  
3/20/05 Shroyer, Margaret (Wehmeyer) – died 3/20/2005  
1/27/05 Vitz, Rev. Richard – died 9/17/2004  
1/7/05 Weber, Marjorie (Fark)(LM) – died 1/7/2005