CHRISTMAS AT THE MUSEUM - 2006

Decoration of the museum began in late November in preparation for Christmas at the Museum. Wreaths were hung in the windows, trees were trimmed, and displays were arranged. The candles twinkled and glowed as the guests arrived for a dining experience. Punch and hors d'oeuvres were served in the living room. A tasty Vidalia onion dip, tangy meat balls, and cucumber tea squares graced the table while guests mingled before dinner.

The dining room door was then opened and a delicious meal was served. The meal began with cream of broccoli soup, followed by a tossed fresh salad with homemade dressing. The main course was loin of pork with an apricot sauce, garlic roasted potatoes, and green beans almandine. A choice of desserts, blueberry angel food cake or chocolate ramekins with coffee, finished the meal. The meal was prepared and catered by Kathy Flinn of Creative Catering in St. Marys.

A variety of entertainment followed each meal. Barbara Lesher played the keyboard, a Barbershop quartet from Wapakoneta, "Chordiality", sang, Joyce Harrison and her friend Sharr, "Dulcie Daze" played music on the dulcimer, and Rachel Barber sang Christmas songs.

On Sunday December the tenth, Santa Claus and Mrs. Claus arrived at the Museum to visit with the children and hear their Christmas lists. Rita Heltkamp played her guitar and sang for the children and their parents. Cookies and punch were served in the kitchen.

[photos & story by Gen Conrad]
THE TOWPATH 2007 - 1

**THE TOWPATH**

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

Lucille Francis, Editor & Membership: 419-629-3148
[printed & mailed by Messenger Press – Carthage, Ohio]

WEBSITE - www.newbremenhistory.org
Joanna Schroer - Webmaster

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Delores Stineacker, Curator: 419-629-2685
Delores Stineacker (e-mail: sjen@roadrunner.com)
Joyce Holdren, Curator: 419-629-3474
Joyce Holdren (e-mail: tjhold@roadrunner.com)
Joyce Ruedebusch, Corresponding Secretary: 419-629-2946
Joyce Ruedebusch (e-mail: jrd@nktelco.net)
Genevieve Conradi, Historian’s Scrapbook: 419-629-2764
Gen Conradi (e-mail: dgen@nktelco.net)
Susie Hirschfeld, Membership Archives: 419-629-2133

**WAYS & MEANS COMMITTEE**
Mary Paul (Chairman), Joyce Holdren, Dru Meyer, Delores Stineacker

ASSOC. MEETINGS ARE HELD FIRST TUESDAYS
7:30 p.m. at the New Bremen Library or Museum

MEMBERSHIP DUES
$12.00 per year ($6.00 extra for spouse)
Lifememeber - $120.00 ($60.00/spouse)
Payment is required by March 15th of each year to assure uninterrupted delivery of "The Towpath".

Check the line above your name on your address label for your

**MEMBERSHIP STATUS CODE**

**PD 06** - Means you are Paid through Dec. 2006.
**LM D-06** - Means you are a Lifetime Member and made a Donation in 2006.
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**CM D-06** - Means you are Charter Member and made a Donation in 2006.

Please keep us informed of any address changes. Sent to P.O. Box 73 – New Bremen, OH 45869

New Bremen Historic Association

Thomas Braun, Treasurer

ASSETS AS OF JANUARY 1, 2006
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>C.D.s [$15,000 @ 3.00%-12/3/06], [$10,000 @ 3%-9/4/07]</td>
<td>$26,271.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL ASSETS</td>
<td>$29,870.90</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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INCOME

MEMBERSHIP: Regular yearly dues
4,726.00
Lifememeber
2,040.00
Membership Donations
520.00
MEMORIAL Donations
4,370.00
DONATIONS: Bequest
1,000.00
DONATIONS: Miscellaneous (Visitors, etc.)
311.57
GRANT & MATCHING FUNDS
775.00
INTEREST: Certificates of Deposit
911.74
ANNUAL DINNER (106 ticket sales @ 10.00 ea.)
1,080.00
COMMUNITY PICNIC (Food, Ice Cream, Pie Auction, etc.)
759.25
CHRISTMAS DINNER (64 ticket sales @ 25.00 ea.)
1,592.00
MERCHANDISE SALES: "Monroe Street" color prints
1,760.00
"Interurban on North Main St." color prints
415.00
"N.B. Speedway" color prints
350.00
"Then & Now" books
322.03
"The Towpath" back issue collections
300.00
Miscellaneous mdse.
470.10
OTHER INCOME: Garage sales & sale of unsold table
343.00
S/h charged on merchandise mail orders
55.00

TOTAL YEARLY INCOME
$22,110.69

EXPENSES

UTILITIES: Electric (N.B. Utilities)
300.16
Water (N.B. Utilities)
40.00
Gas (Vechten)
1,454.32
Telephone (Verizon)
354.24
Internet fee + Long Distance (N.K. Telico)
155.40
INSURANCE: Property
703.00
IMPROVEMENTS/MAINTENANCE: Summer Kitchen
3,684.45
Renovations to barn interior
3,466.62
Indoor painting, etc.
968.05
Furnishings (25 folding chairs)
425.00
Misc. improvements & maintenance
498.57
CURATORS: Supplies
477.57
OFFICE EXPENSE: P.O. Box Rent
72.00
Other Office & Misc. Expenses
115.13
New Dell computer, mouse
802.34
TOWPATH: Printing, including dues envelopes
1,820.64
Mail Preparation (insertions + addressing)
500.28
Bulk Mailing (incl. permit) + 1st Class Forwarding, etc.
849.94
ANNUAL DINNER expenses
715.38
COMMUNITY PICNIC expenses
338.44
CHRISTMAS DINNER expenses
1,519.72
MERCHANDISE purchased for resale + signing of prints
1,906.75
Postage on mailed mdse. sales
37.41
State sales tax on mdse. sold + $100 report fee
382.44
ADVERTISING: Augusta Co. Fair Rides (Golf Cart)
350.00
MEMBERSHIPS: (Chamber/Commerce, Mecca, Visitors Bureau)
165.00
MISCELLANEOUS EXPENSE: Gifts, Flowers, etc.
183.15

TOTAL YEARLY EXPENSES: $22,284.98

ASSETS AS OF DECEMBER 31, 2006
<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<td>$27,182.97</td>
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<td>TOTAL ASSETS</td>
<td>$29,696.61</td>
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NEW BREMEN FIRE DEPARTMENTS & other significant happenings

3/25/1846 (pg. 2): Resolved that two strong ladders be bought with small wooden wheels at the top and strong iron pins at the bottom, which ladders shall be 30 feet long and shall be used when a fire should break out in our town - also, two strong fire hooks with two iron rings fixed into the shaft to be used for the same purpose and two ladders 15 feet long with hook at the top. Resolved that the above named implements should be given to the lowest bidder at an auction to be held by the Marshall on April 3, 1846. Friedrich Schulenburg, Clerk

5/14/1866 (pg. 134): It was resolved to build an Engine House & Town Hall. A committee of five (all the members) was appointed to ascertain whether the necessary funds could be borrowed. A committee of H. Brinkmeyer, H. Schmidt and L. Wellmann was further appointed to ascertain the probable cost of this building.
J. Boessel, Recorder

5/21/1866 (pg. 135): (1) It having been ascertained that sufficient funds for building an Engine House and Town Hall could be procured, it was resolved to proceed at once with the same. (2) The Auditor was requested to levy a special tax of $500 on the taxable property in the Village of New Bremen for the addition of the Engine House.
H. Schmidt, Recorder

6/16, 18, 19/1866 (pg. 137, 138): Council awarded contracts for building Engine House to H. Brinkmeyer - carpenter work for $1050 and C. Langhorst - masonry work for $2200. H. Schmidt & Carl Gilberg were appointed as Building Committee.
J. Boessel, Recorder

6/22/1866 (pg. 138): Mayor Grothaus and Henry Schmidt were appointed as a committee of two to proceed to Wapakoneta and examine the old records on file there to ascertain whether the Council has a right to build the Engine House on the east half of lots 9 & 10 in the town of New Bremen.

6/23/1866 (pg. 139): Present were Mayor Grothaus and Messrs. Wellmann, Schmidt, Backhaus and Brinkmeyer. It was resolved that the Engine House, Town Hall And Village Prison shall be built on the center of the east half of Lots 9 & 10, fronting on Main St. on a line with the other buildings, to be and remain as a market space of the town of New Bremen.

10/20/1866 (pg. 140): C. Laut was requested to make the pavement in front of the market space.

12/8/1866 (pg. 141): (1) It was resolved that the Marshal be authorized to offer for sale the highest bidder the old Engine House hose carriage. Terms of sale on Engine House: half cash and half in 6 months, with security. (2) Resolved that the charge for keeping prisoners from other corporations shall be $1.00 each 24 hours or under for one or more prisoners, besides Marshal fees. (3) Resolved that the charge for use of Hall shall be $5.00 for each night – Public Meetings, free. (4) Resolved that the building committee be instructed to furnish Hall and prison cells.

4/26/1867 (pg. 144): F. Vogelsang was appointed to repair fence around the market space.

5/10/1867 (pg. 145): Free use of the Town Hall was granted to the New Bremen Gesang-Verein, except when it would interfere with meetings of the Council or when public meetings were to be held.

5/29/1867 (pg. 146): (1) It was resolved to build a cistern on Franklin St. between F. Gilberg & Carl Heil, to be completed by September 1st. The job lost to C. Wenslau & C. Heil for $150. (2) F. Gilberg & F. Vogelsang were appointed as committee to construct railing and sidewalk along the bridge dam.

3/8/1868 (pg. 153): F. Vogelsang was appointed to superintend the fence around the market space until his successor is appointed.

4/16/1868 (pg. 155): It was resolved that all public cisterns be covered with a lid and secured by a lock.

6/7/1869 (pg. 164): (1) The Marshal was authorized to procure additional keys for the Engine House and cells for the use of the Marshal, also to have a bedstead put up and procure necessary bedding for one of the cells. (2) L. Wellmann was authorized to have the engine and hose carriage painted and repaired.

6/3/1873 (pg. 205?): Councilman George Grewe reported that the steeple on the Town Hall had been painted.

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Northern Fire Dept., North Main St. [built in 1866]
12/7/1875: The captain of the fire department was authorized to buy 3 lanterns for $22.15. A bill was presented for $6.25 for bed ticking & blanket.

5/4/1875: Be it resolved that the fence around the market place be repaired and a new latch fence be constructed in front of same.

12/7/1875: Committee to confer with German Twp. Trustees in regard to most convenient way to lodge "tramps" for the coming winter. The township was to furnish the room or hall and to defray all other expenses.

1/6/1876: The clerk was authorized to purchase 3 balls of 24 lbs. & 1 of 40 lbs., with the necessary attachments (chains). The Marshal to be allowed 35c per meal for boarding prisoners.

2/6/1877: Township trustees will no longer defray the expense of boarding & lodging the tramps, whereupon the Marshal was instructed to take care of them at the expense of the corporation, but to give them no other victuals than bread & water.

9/5/1877: The Marshal was instructed to notify the Centennial Band to cease ringing the fire bell & tying knots in the ropes of the same, and if such orders were not satisfactory, they were to leave the hall.

2/6/1878: Four lantern lamps were purchased to be placed as follows: one in front of each engine house & one at each end of the canal bridge. Citizens could buy their own lamps (no more than 3 within a square) and they would be furnished with oil and taken care of by the corporation authorities.

4/17/1880: Henry Koepo was appointed to take care, light & extinguish street lamps at $120 per year.

6/6/1881: The Improvement Committee prescribed plans and specifications for the proposed privy to be erected on the market space.

6/5/1883: (1) Resolved that four firemen's rubber coats be purchased @ $6.28 for the Cataract Fire Co., also 250-300 feet of good hose. (2) Examined Northern Fire Co. & have confirmed what distance & what amount of water the engine throws. Should think the same inadequate in case of a large fire. We should therefore purchase a larger & better engine.

3/12/1884: New fire engine, hook & ladder truck & hose purchased for $2745.

4/1/1884: Hook & Ladder Co. allowed 16 members.

4/17/1884: Northern Fire Co. allowed 40 members if necessary. (also had the Cataract Co.)

12/2/1884: Old fire engine sold to Kettlersville for $100.00.

10/6/1885: Marshall was instructed to stop the baseball playing on the market place.

5/20/1886: Mayor called special meeting to ascertain rates to Firemen's Convention in Defiance May 25th & 26th. From St. Marys to Defiance via Fostoria by rail = $2.50 each. St. Marys to Defiance by canal = $1.55 each. Recommend delegates go by canal.

6/1/1886: G. Waterman appointed to take care, light & extinguish the (coal oil) street lamps on the west side of the canal & 1 lamp in the Engine House at 30c per month for each lamp. The street commissioner was instructed to put 2 holes in the floor of the Monroe St. canal bridge for use of the fire engine. The fare of $31.60 was paid for the firemen's delegation to Defiance.

8/3/1886: The Fire Dept. committee reported that 2 new fire cisterns are necessary – one on the corner of Ash & Herman Sts. and one on South Jefferson St.

9/11/1886: The contract for building 2 fire cisterns was awarded to Fred Schoettley at a cost of $286.50.

The Fire Department had an old hand-pumper - that's all they had. The Fire House was where the Post Office is now (on North Main St.). On Saturday evenings, when the men got home from work, they would go down after supper and get that pumper out and try it out to keep it in working order. They would always go down to St. Paul's Church - there was a deep cistern there in the intersection of Franklin and Second Street. They would put their hose down in there and pump the water out and they would try to hit the church clock with that stream of water - that's what they aimed for. Occasionally they would hit it! Sometimes if they were a little short of help, they'd allow us boys to help pump. I don't think they could ever have gotten much of a fire out with that old thing! (Henry Ludeska - 3/17/1997)

4/11/1888: Gerd Waterman was reappointed to care for the street lights on the west side of the canal and Henry Koepo on the east side at the same price until the natural gas will be used.

6/19/1888: The N.B. Natural Gas Co. proposes to furnish gas for the street lamps and light & extinguish the same for $8 each per year for 5-10 years, provided there will be not less than 3 lamps in a square. Jacob Boesel, Pres.- A. Steinebrey, Secy.
12/4/1888: The village paid the N.B. Natural Gas Co. $177.50 for the first natural gas used for street lighting and heating the Town Hall & other public buildings.

3/19/1889: Whereas the village was visited by a destructive fire on March 15, 1889 at the Bakhaus & Kuenzel Woolen Mill, it was found necessary to ask for the aid and assistance of the Minster Fire Dept., who promptly responded. Therefore be it resolved that the sum of $25 and a vote of thanks be tendered to the Minster Fire Dept. for their brave and efficient services rendered.

3/1/1891: The committee on street lighting reported that the gas company refuses to make a reduction on street lighting for moonlight nights.

2/7/1893: A petition signed by 37 citizens prayed for the construction of an electric light plant.


12/20/1893: The village entered an agreement with Reliance Machine & Tool Co. of Cleveland to furnish the village with one complete "electric light outfit". Ninety incandescent lamps placed upon and used for street lighting are to be 32 candlepower. Total cost is not to exceed $5116.65 cash.

6/5/1894: The committee on improvements was instructed to buy 1 dozen benches for the park.

9/3/1895: A fire cistern is to be made at the corner of Walnut & Cherry Streets. It is to be 25' deep, with 12' inside wall and 6' thick arch, arch to begin 6' from top.

9/11/1895: Louis Waterman's bid was $248.75 for construction of the cistern. He was awarded the contract.

11/21/1895: Water wells are to be drilled by L.H. Neely of St. Marys - not more than 3 wells, 300' deep if necessary, at locations designated by council, 8'-10' pipe, at a price of $200 each.

East Side Engine House - South Washington St.

9/15/1896: Council purchased 33' frontage on Washington St. from Herman Laut for $700 for erecting thereon the East Side Engine House Fire Dept. Six $500 bonds ($3000) were issued @ 6% to cover cost of new Engine House.

11/13/1896: Wm. Rabe's bid of $3050 for building the Engine House was accepted, work to be completed by 6/1/1897.

2/2/1897: The New Bremen Telephone Co. was granted permission to erect and maintain poles and lines in the village.

5/11/1897: Newly elected Mayor, Gustave Boesel, and one council member will act as a committee to purchase a fire bell. They are to go to Cincinnati and buy a good bell for $100-$200 for the new Engine House.

6/1/1897: Bell bought for $122.

11/2/1897: A number of citizens expressed their wishes that a water-works plant would be a good thing for the village and urged the council to take steps in that direction.

9/9/1899: The School Board asked the council for use of the West Side Town Hall, the present school building accommodations being inadequate. Council gave the Board permission to use the Town Hall for the term of 1899-1900. The School Board is to pay 2/3 of the gas consumed during the school term.

10/2/1901: Phil Hoffman's bid to paint the West Side Engine House for $34 was accepted.

From N.B. Council Records (researched by Louise Dietrich & others)

6/3/1903: Plans and specifications for construction of a water works pumping station presented by J.P. Force were accepted and adopted.

6/30/1903: 18 bids received - decided to take bid of R.C. Brooks & Son of Jackson, Michigan and Rabe Mfg. Co. of N.B. for material for wall houses, etc.

11/27/1905: Public Affairs Board of Trustees decided to blow water station whistle daily at 12:00 noon except Sundays.

12/17/1905: Motion was made to blow station whistle on Saturdays only at 5:00 p.m. after January 1, 1906.

6/18/1923: Board of Public Affairs instructed to illuminate the dial of the town clock.

7/3/1923: Vogelsang Street's name changed to West Plum Street.

7/6/1925: Paid $3123.17 for installation of 17 boulevard lights.

1/7/1927: Council met to open sealed bids to purchase motorized fire equipment.


10/4/1927: Village purchased east 1/2 of lots 77 & 78 (on North Washington St.) for purpose of locating building to house village tools, machinery, etc.

1/2/1929: Motion that 8 active firemen be allowed not to exceed $2 per month providing they answer roll call once each month.

9/3/1929: Council unanimously agreed to dispose of a team of horses.

10/1/1929: Motion accepting bid of the Permatite Co. of NYC for construction of a water softening plant.
9/30/1930: Motion that Engineer Simon be authorized to prepare plans & specifications for sand filter type disposal plant.

7/7/1931: Ordinance #870 granted D.P. & L. a gas franchise.

8/4/1931: Resolution passed for $40,000 for sewage disposal improvement – resolution #179 determining to proceed to construct sewer.

9/4/1934: Operator of Sewage Disposal Plant hired for $15 per week.

11/3/1942: Due to the ever increasing amount of work required of the rationing board, it was agreed that the Mayor should appoint additional members to take care of the rationing of gasoline and other commodities that might follow.

May 1947: New fire truck purchased & received.

June 1947: Woodmen Lodge granted permission to hold festival on N.B. streets for first time.

July 1947: Purchased electric automatic remote-controlled fire siren.

December 1949: Decided to purchase street signs for village.

December 1950: Clifford N. Harris accepted the responsibility of Director of Civil Defense for village.

December 1954: Telephone service switched to dial service. Plat of L. Scheer subdivision approved.

1/21/1957: Estimated cost to transfer electrical house services from front to rear and to revamp old street lighting circuits in order to allow removal of all old lines from streets is $10,000.

May 1957: Final acceptance of South Haven subdivision.

December 1957: Eastview Addition annexed to village of N.B.

October 1958: Consented to relocation of State Route 66.

1/9/1959: Lots #39 & #40 (North Main St., formerly Town Hall site) sold to First National Bank.

Demolition of the old Northern Fire Co. Engine House & Town Hall took place in July 1959.


11/13/1962: Council accepted the new fire truck & authorized clerk to complete transaction for sale of 1926 Pirsch fire truck to Cridersville.

Cleanup of South Washington St.


4/9/1968: Motion to permit Central Western Fireman's Association to destroy old Thompson house during 2-day practice session April 27-28, 1968.

10/9/1972: Contract awarded for building of library on corner of Washington & Front Sts., to be completed before next school year.

7/10/1973: Library practically completed & is being used by the Library Board.


2/12/1974: Council accepts deed from Crown Controls, a gift of property for purpose of constructing water tower.

12/30/1974: Permission to conduct an annual festival known as Bremenfest.

4/8/1975: Council agreed to donate the bell tower from above the 1897 Fire Dept. to the New Bremen Historic Association. [NOTE: The bell has since been returned to its rightful place above the fire department building on South Washington St.]

In 1966, the New Bremen Men's Garden Club, with the help of the Volunteer Firemen, placed the 1859 fire bell from the old Main Street Fire Station (Northern Fire Co.) in the park area north of the canal, between Monroe and First Streets. This bell had been saved during demolition of the old fire house in 1959 through the efforts of Professor Elmer Ende, and according to Professor Ende, was cast in Europe and had been tolled upon the death of Abraham Lincoln. When the new municipal building was built on North Washington St. in 1982, the bell was moved to stand in front of that building.

2/10/1976: New water tower is in use. The newly organized Emergency Squad will house their vehicle in the South Herman St. village garage.

5/24/1976: Contract awarded to flume Plum Street bridge.

5/22/1976: Pipe brought in for drilling of new well - will start next week on land leased from Rod & Gun Club east of village.

3/15/1982: New municipal building on North Washington St. open house will be held 5/16/1982. The new building houses fire dept., police, emergency squad & utility offices. It cost $365,375 to build, with no indebtedness - funding from local income tax.

-FIRE & WATER INFORMATION FROM SANBORN FIRE INSURANCE MAPS-

1892 (Population - 1500): Streets not paved, gas lights, water from canal & cisterns (60-100 bbls. each), Fire Dept: 4 volunteer fire companies, 3 steam fire engines drawn by hand, 1 hook & ladder truck, 3 hand hose carts, 3000' 2½" cotton hose.

1899 (Population - 2500): Graveled streets; Fuel: natural gas, wood, coal; Light: incandescent electric & natural gas; Water: cisterns & canal; Fire Dept: 3 volunteer engine companies, 1 hook & ladder company (120 men); 3 hand engines (no steam), 1 hook & ladder truck, 3 hose carts, 2000' standard hose.

1907 (Population - 2000): Streets: macadamized & paved with brick; Electric street lights; water works installed in 1903-1904; 2 drilled wells, 90,000 gallon cistern, 40,000 gallon water tank 110' above ground, 2 pumps into mains (500,000 gal/day); Fire Dept: 2 companies (97 men), 2 hand engines (no steam), 1 hook & ladder truck, 3 hose reels, 2600' 2½" rubber-lined hose.

1914 (Population - 2000): 1 mile of paved streets, electric lights, water works installed in 1903-1904, 3 drilled wells, 40,000 gallon water tank on 80' trestle, 46 double hydrants; Fire Dept: 2 volunteer fire companies (100 men), 2 hand engines, 1 hook & ladder truck, 16 fire pails, 3 chemical extinguishers, 3 hose reels, 2200' 2½" hose, fire alarm, bells on fire stations, whistle at pumping station.

1933 (Population - 1492): Water: wells; 100,000 gallon cistern, pumps, water softeners, 40,000 gallon tank, 53 double hydrants; Fire Dept: 1 chief & 6 men (partly paid), 32 volunteers, 2 stations (partly motorized), alarm by siren.

1-South Washington St. station: 1 auto truck, 2 chemical tanks, 150' chemical hose, 1200' 2½" hose, 1 hand hook & ladder truck in reserve.

2-North Main St. station: In reserve: 1 hand hose reel, 750' 2½" hose, 2 hand engines in storage.

-7-

**Record Book Found for Early N.B. Fire Co. (TWICE!)
[from the N.B. Sun - 2/4/1932]**

Records were "recently" found by Lida? W. Kellermeyer of the proceedings of 6/20/1857, the date the Ober Bremen-Cataract Fire Co. was organized. A pledge was signed on that date by 29 (31) men to act as firemen for the town of Ober Bremen and who agreed to attend the regular out-turn with the Ober Bremen fire engine or to pay a fine upon default of that pledge. Fines were to be used for the fire company only.


The second recorded meetings were those of 8/10-11/1865. G. Knos was named captain, with the other officers being Her. Lammersiek (assistant captain), A. Koop (clerk), and F. Keuthan (treasurer), Wm. Schowe, P. Dick, C. Kettler, H. Wiegman & J.D. Polsdorder were appointed head directors and Nieman & J.H. Boesche were appointed as men.

On 6/28/1871, the company accepted an invitation to help celebrate the 4th of July. They voted down wearing straw hats and recommended instead wearing black hats and black pants with boot legs being exposed. [Apparently, these were the first uniforms mentioned in the 6/21/1907 article, next page.]

Five years later, on 7/4/1876, the company took part in the country's centennial celebration. Members who took part in the parade that day were: Jacob Dick, Clamer Fuelling, John Goll, August Heil, Ludwig Kettler, Herman Klute, G.H. Knos, Henry Lammersiek, F.H.L. Nieter, Wm. Rabe, Adam Schnetzer, August Schneider, Ben Schulenberg, Wm. Schulte, Hy. Wiegman. Substitutes filled in for Henry Albers, Peter Erb, Henry Finke, Fred Knippel, Franz Lindenber, D. Schroeder, Johannis Steinbrey, Leopold Tecklenburg.

In preparation for the election of officers to be held on 8/10/1877, the company voted to purchase a keg of beer "to be paid out of the treasury". The firemen must have thought their meetings to be uninteresting unless a keg of beer was on tap since there were many instances where the company ordered the purchase of a keg or so, along with a generous supply of crackers, cheese and sausage.

Secretaries whose names were found in the book were: H.W. Bockmoehe, Christ Ellerman, H. Kleebooker, A. Koop, Henry Kuenzel, J.B. Menke, H. Nieman, F.H.L. Nieter, and Wm. F. Sueltel.

**EDITORS NOTE:** In May 2005, the old book containing these minutes for the Ober Bremen/Cataract Fire Engine Co. dating from 6/20/1857-8/2/1884 was sent to the New Bremen Library by Real Estate Appraiser, Jeffrey A. Hanson, of Kingston, Washington. The Library passed it on to the New Bremen Historic Association.

Tom Braun corresponded with Mr. Hanson at the time and asked him if he knew who had lived in the house where he found these records. He responded that he had found them 30 years before and had no idea whose property they might have been, however it seems almost certain that former Mayor of New Bremen and one-time publisher/editor of the New Bremen Sun, Emil G. Conrad, and his second wife, Lucy Green, must have taken the book with them when they moved to Seattle, Washington in 1952-53. The article written in 1932 (above) was probably written by Mr. Conrad. Emil died in 1964 and Lucy died in 1971, both in Seattle.
OBER BREMEN / CATARACT FIRE COMPANIES
(from the N.B. Sun - 6/21/1907)

Ober Bremen Fire Engine Co. - 1857

The Cataract Fire Co. was organized on 6/20/1857 with 31 active members, 8 of whom were still living when the company celebrated its “Golden Jubilee” in 1907. The still-living members were: Fred Speckman Sr., John H. Boesche, Fred Knippel, William Rootgter (all of New Bremen), Philip Antoni of (Fort) Loramie, Henry Ellerman of Piqua, Henry Metler of Chicago, and John H. Polsdorfer of Evansville, Indiana.

At the time of its organization, the company was called "Ober Bremen Fire Engine Co." Officers elected were: Commander Fred Speckman Sr., Secretary (Christian) Ellerman, Nozzleholder Henry Rabe, and Tambor Major F(red?) Tecklenburg.

After the necessary funds had been subscribed, J.H. Boesche and J.H. Polsdorfer were appointed as a committee and instructed to make the trip to Cincinnati to buy a fire engine. They purchased the engine known then in Cincinnati as the "Old Mohawk" and had it shipped to New Bremen by canal boat. After a thorough trial, the engine was accepted by the company and it did valuable service until "several years ago" (April 1905 - N.B. Sun) when it was sold to the Village Council of Unipolcus, where it was still being used in 1907. [Unipolcus used it until 1943. - Aug. Co. Atlas]

The company, being without a hose-cart and needing more hose, which at that time was of the riveted leather kind, Fred Knippel, then a member of the company, was instructed to build a cart. This was also in use by the company until "several years ago" when it was also sold.

Regular minutes and records of the transactions of the company were not kept until 3/5/1859, nor were the outlines regular. From then on, however, the members apparently became more interested and minutes and records were kept, which showed plainly that the company was in a flourishing condition until 1863, when several of its members left to serve in the army during the Civil War.

Hard times then came for the remaining members. On 4/4/1863, donations were made to several families of members who were in distress to relieve their temporary wants. This, together with loss of membership, seemed to have a depressing effect on the remaining members.

Other troubles arose and the Ober Bremen Council failed to give the company the proper kind of recognition and even refused to purchase 3 lanterns which the company needed. These and similar troubles continued until 8/10/1865, when several new members joined. The company was thus again placed upon a solid basis and thereafter continued to prosper.

Records of the company were recorded in the record book of German Township on 12/8/1868, pages 256 & 257 by the township clerk, the Honorable J.H. Mesloh.

Name Changed to Cataract Fire Co. - 1873

The first uniforms of the company were purchased in 1871 and were made by tailor, William Fahrenhorst, who was at that time a member of the company. On 5/3/1873, the name of the company was changed to "Cataract Fire Co."

The affairs of the company moved smoothly for many years, the "Old Mohawk" doing good service until 3/24/1886 when a blaze occurred in the Herman Laut building on Washington St. The necessity of a better and stronger fire engine was then detected. On 4/7/1888, a petition was presented to the Village Council asking for the purchase of a new #3 "Button" hand engine (which was calculated to throw water 200 feet) for $1300. The request was granted and the engine was purchased and delivered the same year. This engine was in use and did satisfactory service until the installation of the waterworks system in 1903-1904.

After that time, it was held in reserve in case of emergency. In that same year (1888), the company also expended over $600 for new blue uniforms.

New Uniforms - 1907

In 1907, the company again purchased new (cadet blue) uniforms in honor of their Golden Anniversary. The boys made a fine appearance when out on parade under the direction of their able leader, Captain M.S. Ekermeyer.

Officers in 1907 were: Dr. M.S. Ekermeyer (captain), Henry Finke (assistant captain), Dr. F.W. Everist (secretary) and William Grewe (treasurer). The following were the 40 members in 1907: Morris Bessel, Charles Block, Dr. M.S. Ekermeyer, Dr. F.W. Everist, Henry Finke, Charles Goll, William Grewe, Clarence Heil, August Heinfeld, Fred Kamman, August Kellermeyer, Herman Kellermeyer, Lafe Kellermeyer, Ben Klute, William Koepfer, Henry Kruel, Ferd Kuhnhorst, Henry Lehmkuhl, Clarence Laut, Emil Laut, John Laut, Fred Nieter, Valenus Nieter, William Nieter, Henry Peters, F.W. Rabe, Albert Schoettel, Archie Schoettel, Fred Schoettel, August Schroeder, John Thiesing, Herbert Trautwein, Joseph Vanderhorst, Gerhard Waterman, Fred Wehman, William Weinberg, Henry Wiegman, Christ Wissman, Gust Woehler, and John Wolters.

Golden Anniversary Celebration

On 6/20/1907, the town of New Bremen celebrated the golden anniversary of the founding of the Cataract Fire Co. At 7:00 pm, the Citizens’ Band gave a short street concert after which all invited guests, including the city officials and honorary members and their families, repaired to the Cataract’s (upstairs) hall where addresses were given by Captain Dr. Ekermeyer, Mayor E.G. Conradi, Solicitor Theodore Tangelman, Fire Chief Henry Weinberg and ex-chief Wm. Schulenberg. Hegen’s orchestra and a select male choir furnished music.

After the exercises, the gathering repaired to the spacious room below from which the hose carts and engine had been removed to make room for several large tables which had been decked by the ladies with all the viands that go to tickle the palate of a king and a fireman. After a few more hours of social intercourse, the guests departed with many pleasant recollections of the day.

[This published history was compiled from notes furnished by Captain M.S. Ekermeyer at the time of the golden anniversary of the Cataract Fire Co.]
THE NORTHERN FIRE COMPANY
(from the original record book, as researched by Gen Conrad)

6/9/1857 - The Northern Fire Co. was duly organized by authority of the Council of New Bremen Village.

8/7/1875 - The company was presented with a silk flag, costing nearly $80. There is a list of 28 donors.

9/14/1875 - The company purchased 28 dress-parade hats for $163.25.

8/7/1878 - The company had a cash capital of $734.80. It was resolved to declare a dividend of $30 for each member. There were 19 members at this time.

10/10/1879 - The first dress parade uniform purchased by the Northern Fire Co. was a blue jacket with red trimmings. They purchased 27 dress-parade blue shirts with red trimmings at a cost of $2.50 each.

Early 1881 - Dress-parade pants - blue with red stripes - were purchased.

8/27/1881 - The company started from the engine house with the engine and hose reel, running a distance of 760' to the fire cistern at the Charles Boessel, Sr., residence (Main & Monroe Sts.), throwing water in 1 minute, 57 seconds (01:57).

12/19/1883 - An ash pole of 52' above ground was erected to be used as a hose dryer.

10/27/1900 - The company received from Henry Elbert, tailor, 32 dress suits for $13.50 each.

12/1/1883 - Listed is a record of 128 members, including when they enlisted, resigned, were expelled, died, etc.

There is also a record of 94 fires which occurred during the existence of the Northern Fire Co., beginning with August 1862 through April 20, 1922.

In the July 2004 issue of "The Towpath," the following item appeared, as remembered by Adam Helwig in the 6/16/1933 issue of "The New Bremen Sun."

"You asked last week if anyone could recollect Rabe's sash factory when it burned. I can remember every fire - Klanke's fire, the flax mill fire, Heilkamp's furniture factory, Langhorst's tile yard, the woolen mill fire, and the Lock Two fire.

Everyone worked hard at the woolen mill fire. The men played out and the women pumped to save the mill, but the upper story burned. The balance was saved.

The Heilkamp factory was the worst fire. Where Gast Implement Co. is now located, there was a furniture factory operated by (William) Heilkamp which made a lot of furniture. It later burned down. There being no fire department then, a bucket brigade was formed. They dipped water from the canal and handed the bucket to the next one in line until it reached the fire. The building burned clear down. Sparks flew all over town. Mohrman's fence caught fire (on the east end of town) and so did my mother's house, the last house on East Monroe Street, but we got it out with a few buckets of water. Wiemeyer's place across the street from Heilkamp's also came near to being burned but was saved by the bucket brigade.

Even though the Northern Fire Co. was organized on June 9, 1857, both companies have the same date of organization on these badges - June 20, 1857.

6/13/1927 - With the arrival of the new motorized fire fighting equipment at New Bremen last week, the old Northern Volunteer Fire Co., with 120 members, passed out of existence. The company was organized under authority of the town council 70 years ago on June 8 (9), 1857.

In 1875, the company flourished, buying that year a silk flag for $80 and also 28 parade dress hats for $163. The records for 1878 showed that the company had funds amounting to $734. During the 70 years, a total of 106 fire calls were answered. The worst fire was at Lock Two on March 19, 1892, when 5 buildings burned. Henry Hartwig lost his life in that blaze. The company used a hand-operated pump, with men as well as women frequently lining up to keep the pump going.

(from the Wapak Daily News, courtesy of Vernon Doenges)
NEW BREMEN FIRE DEPARTMENTS
[More excerpts, from "The New Bremen Sun"]

6/29/1888 - Resolution No. 21 dated 6/8/1888 declares necessity of purchasing a No. 3 Button Hand Fire engine at a price not to exceed $1300 - signed by William Bruns, Mayor, and J.H. Grothaus, Clerk. The old engine is altogether out of gear and does not meet exigencies of a fire company. The new engine for the Cataract Fire Co. will arrive August 15 for a 60 day trial.

8/31/1888 - The Cataract Fire Co. received their new engine on the noon train Monday. It is valued at $1300 and is calculated to throw water 200 feet. It was given an immediate test and met with satisfaction.

10/26/1888 - Early Tuesday morning (10/23/1888), the people of this town were rapidly brought to their feet by an alarm of fire - the depot was on fire! Before any help could be administered, however, the building was enveloped with flames. For the first time did our two fire engines work side by side. They were promptly at the scene, but owing to the remoteness to fire cisterns, could not render immediate help. The best they could do was to remove railroad cars standing close by, and guard the elevator. They do their work well and all can feel proud of the well-equipped fire department.

7/19/1889 - A new fire company ("Old Reliable") is being organized. They will use the old Cataract engine and headquarters will be in the building adjoining Boesche's warehouse.

8/9/1889 - The reorganization of the "Old Reliable" Fire Co. took place last week. Officers elected were: M. Vossler, Foreman; Thomas Fleck, Asst. Foreman; Theodore Rabe, Secretary; J.L. Hoffman, Treasurer.

NOTICE: The members of the different fire departments are to meet at the Town Hall next Tuesday evening for the purpose of taking steps to organize a Firemen's Mutual Aid Association.

8/16/1889 - At last Tuesday's meeting, a constitution for the Firemen's Aid Assoc. was prepared and adopted. A permanent organization will be made on September 2. The building of Bakhaus & Kuenzel on Washington Street will be fitted for an engine house for the "Old Reliable" Fire Co. Council has granted them use of the old Cataract engine.

At a special meeting of the Cataract Fire Co. last Thursday, the following officers were elected: Henry Finke, Foreman; George Waterman, Asst. Foreman; J.H. Knost, Jr., Secretary; John Goll, Treasurer; Fred Schulz, Foreman of Hose.

9/6/1889 - At a meeting of the various fire departments at the Town Hall last Monday, directors for the new Firemen's Aid Association were elected. We have four Fire Departments and about 120 firemen. These will all, with some exceptions, join the Association for their mutual aid.

Directors chosen from the Hook and Ladder Co. were: H.W. Aue, August Finke, Gregore Gast. From the Northern Fire Co. were: Henry Dierker, Henry Kassen (Kasten?), Ernst Elshoff. From the Cataract Fire Co. were: John Goll, Henry Kuenzel, George Waterman. From the Old Reliable Fire Co. were: J.L. Hoffman, Godfrey Kuenzel, August Lanfersieck. These will meet at the Town Hall Saturday evening for organization.

9/13/1889 - The "Old Reliable" Engine House is being put up near the Woolen Mills store. Directors elected last Monday for the Firemen's Aid Association were: August Finke, President; John Goll, Vice-President; Henry Kuenzel, Secretary; Henry Dierker, Treasurer.

3/19/1892 - Henry Hartwig, a member of the Northern Fire Company, was killed in an explosion while fighting a fire at Garmhausen's Store in Lock Two yesterday morning. The store and five houses were destroyed.

(See the January 2004 issue of "The Towpath").

5/20/1893 - The Old Reliable Fire Co. purchased new caps through Fred Wiernmeyer, clothier. They bear letters "O.R." in gilt.


New Bremen is one of the best fire-equipped towns around - has 3 fire engines.

8/14/1896 - The Cataract Engine House (located on Lot 354 on Front St. - most recently the Paul & Viola Headaupl property) was torn down this week, after having been found unfit for occupancy by J.W. Knauf, Chief Inspector of public buildings and workshops. The engine is now housed in August Heinfeld's Carriage Shop (on the southwest corner of Front & Washington Sts., later the Gast Implement Co.) and the old fire bell was fitly commemorated at its present resting place, suspended from two tall posts nearby, which resemble a French guillotine. This is causing considerable comment.

8/28/1896 - At the special election called by Mayor Christian Langhorst, to be held at the Town Hall on Monday, September 7th, let every citizen signify his concern in the well-being of the Cataract and Old Reliable Volunteer Fire Companies by voting on the question of issuing and selling bonds in the amount of $3000 for the purpose of building an Engine House on the east side of the Miami-Erie Canal for the use of the Fire Department. (Resolution No. 38, filed by Clerk William Nieter.)

9/11/1896 - At last Monday's election, there were 183 votes for, and only 24 votes against, building a new Engine House for the Cataract and Old Reliable Fire Companies. The City Council is now authorized to issue $3000 in bonds. The Improvement Committee, composed of Messrs. Waterman, Ekermeyer, and Grothaus, bought Herman Laut's lot (part inlot 345) on South Washington Street for $700, to be used as a building site.

9/25/1896 - The Alert Hook and Ladder Company last night tore down the old dilapidated ice house near the pond. The ice house belonged to Minster's Star Brewing Co. and it was at their bidding that it was torn down. Agent Henry B. Schwepe remembered the boys by treating them to a keg of beer.
10/2/1896 - Herman Laut's barn was torn down and cleared away from a portion of the site to be occupied by the new Engine House.

11/20/1896 - William Rabe was given the bid to build the new Engine House.

4/16/1897 - Work was started on the Engine House Tuesday by contractors Vornholt and Fristoe of St. Marys.

5/14/1897 - Mayor Gustave Boesel and J.H. Grothaus went to Cincinnati to purchase a bell for the new Engine House.

5/21/1897 - New bell for new engine house purchased from Buckeye Bell Foundry Co. @ $122.

NEW ENGINE HOUSE DEDICATED
from the New Bremen Sun - 8/13/1897

Saturday, August 7, 1897, was a day of celebration in New Bremen when the new Engine House on South Washington Street was dedicated. The townspeople laid aside their daily business in order that they could attend the ceremonies.

The exercises were begun with a parade in which all four of the Volunteer Fire Departments took part. All of the engines and the hook and ladder truck were drawn by horses. The Mayor, the Chief of the Fire Department, and the entire City Council rode in carriages. The Little Six Band led the procession and a large line of New Bremen cyclists brought up the rear. The members of the four fire departments wore their different suits. The spectacle was dazzling on this pleasant day and the exercises were interesting and enjoyable.

The parade moved along the principal streets of town and halted in front of the new building, where a stand was erected for the outdoor exercises. The new building was decorated in red, white, and blue, and the magnificence of its proportions impressed itself upon the public eye. It is the handsomest building in New Bremen, and reflects great credit upon its architect and builders as well as its projectors.

After a short prelude by the Little Six Band, Mayor Boesel addressed the crowd and handed over the ceremonial gift key to the Fire Chief, William Schuilenberg. The band then rendered an interlude after which the Chief of Fire Departments responded to the dedicatory address, accepted the gift, and pledged that it would never be dishonored nor tarnished except by the hand of time.

The doors of the building were then thrown open and the Cataract and Old Reliable Fire Companies took their respective engines into their new home amid the cheering of the people.

After the ceremonies, a picnic was given in honor of the event in Rabe's Grove. The young danced to the music of Laut's Orchestra and the old amused themselves in looking on. Everybody was in good cheer and the day will ever be fondly remembered.

8/20/1897 - Fire bell on east side engine house can be run by means of a pump handle arrangement. The apparatus is behind one of the large swinging doors and directly on a line beneath the bell. Anyone who knows how to pump water out of a well can operate it.

9/3/1901 - Officers elected for Old Reliable Fire Co.: Godfrey Kuenzel (Foreman), August Faehl (Asst. Foreman, Treasurer), H.A. Schrage (Seyc), G.A. Kunning (Foreman of Hose).

7/3/17/1903 - Old Reliable Fire Co. dissolved.

814/1903 - Lock Two has large fire - elevator, flooring mill and saw mill burned. (see "The Towpath" - January 2004)

3/11/1904 - Fire Chief Weinberg asked for supplies. Cataract Fire Co. given permission to use Old Reliable Fire Co. hose cart.

11/4/1904 - Fire plugs have been ordered to be placed at both East & West side Engine Houses.

1/27/1905 - Dierker explosion.

4/7/1905 - Old Reliable fire engine sold to Uniopolis - First owner was Wooden Shoe Co. volunteer company from Cincinnati.

9/21/1906 - Old fire cistern on Main St. filled with dirt. Was old landmark.

6/21/1907 - Golden Jubilee (see page 8).

12/24/1909 - The Northern Fire Co. elected officers at annual settlement meeting: C.E. Wissman (Pres.), Gustave Fritz (Foreman), Fred Fohlm (Engine Director), Wm. Kettler (Hose Director), Barney Gerling (Seyc.), Julius Wuebbenhorst (Treas.), John Beam (1st Asst. Buttman), Christ Roettger (1st Asst. Buttman), Christ Dreier (2nd Buttman), Emil Hirschfeld (2nd Asst. Buttman), Wm. Landwehr (Color Bearer). Treasury balance = $348.65. Barney Gerling succeeded H.F. Jung as secretary. Jung had served for 16 consecutive years and had requested permission to retire.

1/24/1913 - The Fire Chief divided the town into 4 separate districts. Fire signals to be sounded by water works plant's steam whistle, replacing signals being given by the alarm bells in the towers of the engine houses. Each district to have different series of blasts as signals.

9/19/1913 - Klanke's Furniture factory fire.

5/17/1915 - Automatic fire alarm going to be attached in the Washington St. city hall and controlled by the local telephone girls. Gong has diameter of 18" and is supposed to give forth 300 strokes during each operation.

7/9/1915 - Council determined that some kind of alarm is needed to replace the fire whistle formerly used at the municipal power plant, which was discarded when the boilers were put out of commission. The automatic tapper tried several seeks ago proved unsatisfactory.

3/13/1924 – New Bremen’s 3 fire departments turned out full force Thursday evening for a blaze at Postmaster R.W. Kuck’s home, where the chimney was burning out, with fire shooting high in the air. There is probably no other village in Ohio that has a more numerous fire protection. The Alert Hook & Ladder Co., the Northern Fire Co. and the Cataract Fire Co. were on hand, and even a sprinkling of the Old Reliable Co. was on hand. (from the Wapak Daily News, courtesy of Vernon Doenges)

3/4/1926 – Fire Chief George Gast urged the purchase of a chemically-equipped fire truck for the fire department as the old equipment has outlived its usefulness and will have to be replaced soon.

9/9/1926 – Council approved bond election to provide funds for proposed motorization of the Fire Department. $8,480 will be required for purchasing and installing the motorized equipment and other fire fighting apparatus needed.

4/28/1927 – Pouring of concrete for the new floor in the Washington St. municipal building was started yesterday because the 30-year-old floor is suffering from dry rot. Present plans call for transferring the city jail from its present location on North Main St. to the Washington St. building, probably next month. A room on the lower floor of the building will also be available at a future date as a comfort station. Officials have recognized the need of a centrally located room for years.

6/9/1927 – New Bremen’s new triple combination fire engine, purchased from the Peter Pirsch & Sons Co. in Kenosha, Wisconsin, will be delivered tomorrow or Saturday and involves an expenditure of $6000. (Picture on page 5). The Peter Pirsch company started with the manufacture of wagons before the Civil War and later took up the building of fire-fighting equipment.

The Pirsch Special 500-gallon pump is powered with a 6-cylinder motor capable of developing 70 horsepower. The truck carries 2 chemical tanks, each holding 35 gallons. The hose reel is attached at the rear and underneath the truck body.

6/4/1931 – Fire Chief John Scheer announced that N.B.’s volunteer fire department will be represented at the Central Western Firemen’s Association’s first annual fire meet and convention on June 24th at West Milton. Counties covered by the association are Auglaize, Clark, Champaign, Miami, Montgomery, Preble, and Shelby.

1/3/1933 – Council minutes: Lafe Kellermeyer (see page 7) succeeds August Kellermeyer as janitor of the east side town hall. His duties include cleaning both 1st and 2nd floors, windows, etc. and to keep the motorized fire truck clean and polished.


1/30/1947 – Broom Co. fire.

5/1-9/1947 – The new municipal fire truck (1946 Darley) has arrived and now monopolizes the place of honor in the fire engine quarters on S. Washington St. Joint plans of the Village Council and German Township trustees were finally adopted whereby the village purchases the pumpers and houses & maintains it, together with the other village fire equipment. The old equipment is to be used in times of emergency as auxiliary to the new unit. While the village assumes ownership at present and makes the needed payments, the township will carry on the burden of the financial load.

The truck, a Chevrolet chassis, was procured through Advance Auto Co. The new truck is equipped with a 500 gallon tank and carries no chemicals. Its purpose is to wage open war with good streams of water on any rural conflagration.

The cluttered up condition of the old town hall building in the City Park on North Main St. was aired out slightly and suggestions were made as to what disposition could be made of the old hand fire pumps and the hook and ladder truck which have been accorded decidedly dishonorable retirement among other junk.

4/10/1958 – Village council assured clear title to land on which Northern Fire Co. engine house was erected in 1866 and is going ahead with plans for razing old structure now used only for storage purposes. Deed was given in 1837 by A.F. Windleier. (see page 6)

SOME OF THE PAST FIRE CHIEFS

7/1/1993: Fire chiefs were: Wm. Schenlenberg, Hook & Ladder Co.; Gust Wehman, Northern Fire Co.; Gust Lanferseick, Old Reliable & Cataract Fire Cos.

1884-1892 - W. Gerhard Schulte (died 10/2/1892)
1897 - William Schenlenberg
1907 - Henry Weinberg
1917 - Charles Block
1926 - George Gast
1931 - John Scheer (still in 1957)
Greg Gast, Sr.
Robert Gruebmeyer
Ross Rupert, Jr.
David Kuck
Rodney Miller (killed in truck accident April 1994)
Robert Kuck (present chief - 2007)

OLD NEW BREMEN FIRE EQUIPMENT RESTORED

by Wayne Wenning for "The Evening Leader" - 8/6/1996

Two pieces of New Bremen history are now on display in the old Fire Department building located on South Washington Street. An 1870s-era Ramsey & Co. hand pump and a hose cart, thought to have been built around the turn of the century and used by the Cataract Fire Co., have both been lovingly restored to mint condition by Crown Equipment Corp. and are located in the Fire Department on display to passersby. In the evenings, the two pieces of equipment are illuminated, giving a dramatic view that is even more striking than during daylight hours.

In 1995, Crown began restoring the fire station which had been built in 1897 and used by the New Bremen-German Township Volunteer Fire Dept. until February 27, 1982, when the new municipal building & fire station was completed on North Washington Street.

It was then (1995) that the two pieces of equipment were acquired from John Hoffman, who had bought them years ago and had them in storage. They were sent to Glazer? Pattern & Coach Works in Houston, Ohio for restoration. The project took about a year to complete. The hand pump is extremely ornate, with brightly colored curlicue designs, pin stripes, and even angels.

During the restoration of the Fire Dept. building, the old fire bell was also re-installed atop the building after having been in storage for many years at the Historic Association’s museum. This bell tolls each evening at 9:00 p.m. and can be heard in the quiet parts of town. After the fire bell, the alarm was sounded by a steam whistle, and then by an electric siren. Now the volunteer firemen are notified by pagers which are activated by the central dispatch office of the Auglaize County Sheriff.

DO YOU REMEMBER?

[written for N.B.'s Centennial – 1933 by Fernando W. Bruns]

New Bremen once had a juvenile volunteer fire company that went by the name of the Southern Fire Co. and held weekly practice meetings. Their fire-fighting apparatus consisted of a force pump mounted on a chassis.

Ed Brutsch was the captain and Gus Kunning was the first buttermilk. O'scar?? H. Booser, Fernando W. Bruns, Gustave Gilberg, Gustave Heil, Lafe Kunning, Emil Langhorst, Fridolin T. Purpus, Herbert Schenlenberg, and Herman Steinberg formed the pumping brigade.

(N.B. Sun - 8/4/1933)
NEW BREMEN FIRE DEPARTMENT – 1955
[1946 Darley Fire Engine in background, purchased in 1947]


Front: LaVerne Wint, Carl Knost, Wesley (Freeze) Howell, Gregore Gast Sr., John Wissman, John Scheer (Chief), Richard Wissman, Richard Pape, Paul Pape, Jack Scheer, Elmer Wittenrink.

Absent: Donald Cobel, Warren Topp, Eugene Woehler.

NEW BREMEN FIRE DEPARTMENT – November 1982
[New municipal building in background]

Standing: Bill Meiling (Sgt.), Tom Wente (Lt.), Bob Wissman (Sgt.), Steve Hartwig, Fred Opperman (Captain), Dennis (Barney) Gruebmeyer, Bob Kuck, Neal Hittepole (front), Doug Hartwig, Lee Kuck (Lt.), Charlie Garman (Assistant Chief), John Turner, Dave Kuck (Chief), Bob Moeller, John Pape, Everett Topp (Captain), Bob Ziegenbusch, Stan Kuennig, Dennis Klingler, Rodney Miller, Don Ruese, Dick Howell, Stan Quellhorst.


Absent: Greg Gast Jr., James Pape.
From the Mailbox

Dear Tom:  
12/20/2006

I enjoyed seeing the pictures I had sent you in the July 2006 issue of The Towpath. It came just as my brother was visiting from California. He, too, enjoyed seeing them and reading the articles you sent. Thank you!

Shortly after, I received a call from a lovely woman named Mary Ellen (Taylor) Patton. She said that her parents, N.B. photographer James & Rhea (Riley) Taylor, were best friends with my great-grandparents, Ferd & Laura (Garmanhause) Rabe. It was fun talking with her and hearing what she remembered about them.

I thought you might enjoy hearing another story. I’m sure there have been many of how people around the U.S. (probably the world) have connected through your publication. It’s wonderful!

Sincerely,  
Ann (Howell) Eisenhardt – Sedalia, Missouri  
(granddaughter of Dillon & Marie (Rabe) Howell)

Dear Lucille:  

Enclosed is a check for $100.00 as a memorial donation for my mother, Virginia (Wellons) Beal, granddaughter of John Franklin & Anna (Sunderman) Sohm and great-granddaughter of William & Christina (Katterheinrich) Sunderman. William Sunderman was born in New Bremen in 1840 and Christina Katterheinrich was born in New Knoxville in 1843. The family eventually moved from Ohio to Minnesota and both William & Christina died in Le Sueur, Minnesota in 1913.

My mother passed away October 10, 2006. About 15 years ago, we brought her to New Bremen and New Knoxville to see where her family established its roots in the new world. Her family and its history meant a great deal to her and she was very moved by her visit to your museum and community. I think she would be very pleased to be remembered in this way by your association.

Sincerely,  
Ann (Beal) Logan (L.M. – Oakville, Ontario, Canada

Hi Tom:  
1/1/2007

After I e-mailed your organization for information about the Tomhafte family back at Thanksgiving time, you asked me how I fit into the family.

Well, Eva Tomhafte and my mom, Margaret (Bush) Ross both went to nursing school in Lima and they became friends. Subsequently, Eva met Mom’s brother, Bailey Bush, and they married. My Mom lived with Eva and Bailey for a time after obtaining her RN license and then met my Dad (she was his private duty RN). So, Eva (Tomhafte) Bush is my aunt by marriage. She was the daughter of New Bremen barber, Ernest Tomhafte, and a sister to Paul Tomhafte. My Dad’s family was from the Greenville-Palestine, Ohio area and I still have an uncle living there. I have a cousin, Bill “Buster” Bailey Bush who lives in Tulsa, Oklahoma. He is the son of Bailey & Eva (Tomhafte) Bush.

I have a bed and sea trunk/chest which belonged to Eva & Paul Tomhafte’s grandmother, Sophie (Bakhaus) Meyer (1840-1909), 5th child of Margaretha/Trina (Dicke) Bakhaus (1806-1885), who brought it from Germany. Sophie married Wilhelm Meyer (1824-1877), who had 1 surviving child by his first wife. He and Sophie then had 10 children, 2 of which died at birth. One of the remaining 8 was Dorothea M. (Meyer) Tomhafte (1868-1924), who married Ernest Tomhafte (1869-1932). They were the parents of Paul & Eva. I’m so glad Aunt Eva wrote that all down for me! I keep it in the “secret compartment” of the sea chest so I’ll never misplace it.

I also have a “wall sweep” clock that belonged to Ernest Tomhafte, and some of his drawings. Eva said he would scout the nearby farms on Sundays and had an interest in clocks. She mentioned the woodwork on the front of this clock being related to the Catholic church. She couldn’t remember the significance of it, but apparently Ernest did notice something special about it and bought or traded for it. I am enclosing a picture of one of Ernest’s drawings dated April 4, 1909. Aunt Eva said her mother thought it to be too vulgar to be hung in the house and was placed in the attic where it became water stained over the years. Aunt Eva said her dad used a “strange little machine” that copied the outlines of drawings and then he shaded and filled them in with “detail”.

I have only one son who has no interest in antiques, nor do “Buster’s” kids, apparently. Buster and I agreed that if no one in the family wanted them and if I ever got rid of them, I should see if the Historical Museum in New Bremen would be interested in having them since his grandfather (Ernest) was quite well known in the area. I promised him that is exactly what I would do and would write it in my will.

It’s so nice hearing and reading about family, and I appreciate all those who help with keeping the history alive anywhere. I hope this helped in some way, knowing the history of the relationships and such. Perhaps we’ll meet some day soon.

Thanks again.  
Diana (Ross) Coates – Havre De Grace, MD

An Ernest Tomhafte drawing  
April 4, 1909  

Diana (Ross) Coates – Havre De Grace, MD
Curators’ Report

CORRECTION: In the October 2006 issue of “The Towpath”, the donation of a “Calunet” baking powder tin, “Rump’s Service Station” ice scraper, and “Mullers Menswear” nightshirt was incorrectly attributed to Drusilla (Luedke) Meyer. The donation should have been credited to Julitta (Nieter) Heinfel. (Thanks to Duane & Alice Hegemier for this correct information.)

CURATORS’ YEAR-END REPORT – 2006

The year of 2006 was another busy year for us. We have been very busy putting our entire inventory on our new computer. There is so much time spent on checking and re-checking. This gives us an opportunity to make sure it is correct.

We have had a good year for donations to the museum and these items need to be logged in and “Thank Yous” sent. The barn is being completely redone (it now has heat and better lighting) and we will be putting up new display areas. By doing this, you will be able to walk through and see the many different items.

The museum is getting ready for Dr. Snowflake’s presentation from January 23rd thru March 20th. This will be his second time here and he will have all new snowflakes to display.

We also have a display of museum articles in the window of the old Lyons’ Electric building on West Monroe St. (now owned by Crown Equipment Corp.)

Our new e-mail addresses are:
Delores Stienecker (stieri@roadrunner.com)
Joyce Holdren (tojoho@roadrunner.com)

RECENT DONATIONS

• Ice scrapers from “Rump’s Pure Oil” & “Joe’s Penzoll”, can opener from “Advance Auto” – donated by Esther Dicke.
• 1910 Quadrennial appraisal booklet for the Village of New Bremen – donated by Bernard Neddmer.
• Pictures of the Gross family taken while living in the lock tender’s house – donated by Rebecca (Gross) Marley.
• W.W.II Navy uniform, including top, pants and 2 hats, photo of Richard Wiederman in uniform – donated by Richard Wiederman.
• PHOTOS: Monroe St. winterurban, barn from old school on Franklin & Herman Sts. being moved down Monroe St. to Harold Opperman property on Cherry St., old (1920) high school on Franklin St. being razed due to its sinking into quick sand, Streine girls: Billie Streine and Carol (Streine) Opperman – donated by Emma (Opperman) Pielem.
• Wheel from mechanism used to release water in upper level of canal for flood prevention – donated by Wayne York, Village Administrator.
• Books, mostly German – donated by Gary & Karen Farley.
• Box of shell casings from 2006 military funeral of Carl Luellenman – donated by Richard Luellenman.
• Booklets from “Stamco” & “Monarch Machine & Tool”, “Knost Bros.” statement, warranty deed for Lot 431 from Fred & Melissa Behm to Elizabeth Schroeder dated 10/16/1901, new postcards for 4c, 5c, 13c, “Top Value” stamps, miscellaneous photos – donated by Eudine Waterman estate.
• Tee shirt from “Sanders’ Tasteie Scoop” – donated by Virginia Kuenning.
• Page from the 1/21/1956 “New Bremen Sun” showing 1955-1956 N.B. Cardinal basketball champs, newspaper picture & article of 1956 Auglaize County baseball champs (both shown on page 5 of the October 2006 issue of “The Towpath”) – donated by Larry & Judy (Thiemann) Looker.
• School and other books from the Schierholtz family collection – donated by Dale & Shirley Schaefer.
• Hand tools, 4/10/1940 Piqua Daily Call headline: “Four ships lost in furious battle”, Korean War overcoat, shirts, hats, dress outifts w/Eisenhower jackets – donated by Barbara Egbert.
• Green German police uniform with “Polizei” insignia on left sleeve – donated by Doug Harrod, N.B. Police Chief.
• Old softball, “Hotel Hollingsworth” baseball jersey, “Groisich” beer with stamp on bottle cap – donated by Jay Kitzmiller.

NEW MEMBERS THIS PERIOD (THRU 1/31/07)

(spousal memberships @ $60.00 or $80.00/ml)

12/1/2006 Belton, Jon - New Bremen
12/24/2006 Burns, Eileen (Navory) - St. Marys (TR)
10/25/2006 Carr, Doris (Topp) - Gladstone, Missouri
1/27/2007 Coates, Daina R. (Ross) - Havre De Grace, MD
12/19/2006 Conradi, Dr. Sandra (LM) - Mt. Pleasant, SC
12/14/2006 Evers, Joyce (Kein) - Bryant, Indiana
12/9/2006 Fritz, Janet (Niemeier) - Ocala, Florida
12/18/2006 Haesecker, Donald L. - DeKalb, Illinois
12/18/2006 Haesecker, Robert N. - El Cajon, California
12/9/2006 Hartman, Pam (Schott) (LM) - Yorktown, Virginia
1/29/2007 Heitkamp, Dale P. - New Bremen
12/14/2006 Klein, Donald - New Bremen
12/15/2006 Koeln, Mrs. Chas. (Betsy) - Columbus, Ohio
12/19/2006 Koepfer, John - New Bremen
11/14/2006 Scheer, David - Greer, South Carolina
12/27/2006 Staton, Michael S. (LM) - New Bremen

ADDITIONS TO LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

12/19/2006 Conradi, Dr. Sandra (new)
12/9/2006 Hartman, Pam (Schott) (new)
12/27/2006 Staton, Michael (new)

MEMBER DEATHS THIS PERIOD

12/24/2006 Burris, Douglas (died 12/24/06)
1/13/2007 Heil, Alvera (Schroe) (died 1/13/07)
10/29/2006 Kah, Dorothy (Gieseke) (died 10/29/06)
10/28/2006 Luedke, Fred (died 10/28/06)
1/17/2007 Stueve, Ruth (Borton) (died 1/17/07)

MEMORIAL / HONORARY DONATIONS

The following donations have been received this period:


In memory of Dorothy (Gieseke) Kah by Dr. Sandra Conradi

In memory of Virginia (Wellons) Beal (Sunderman family) by Ann (Beal) Logan

In memory of Eva (Tomhate) Coates by Diana R. (Ross) Coates (niece)
NEW BOOK: Daredevils on Dirt

by Robert G. Heinfield

The History of the New Bremen Speedway

from 1926 to 1931

[Hardcover coffee table book – 60 pages]

published by Orange Frazer Press – Wilmington, Ohio

Robert G. Heinfield’s grandfather, Gerhard Heinfield, owned the farm adjoining the New Bremen Speedway on the east and as a child, Bob had a front row seat to the early years of dirt track racing there.

Over the years, he had collected many pictures and lots of information and other memorabilia about the speedway. After working on it for 30 years or more, he has finally compiled the book, “Daredevils on Dirt.”

You can get your copy by sending your order to Bob at 117 Franklin Ave. – Ada, Ohio 45810. He is selling the books for $24.00 each, including S/H. You can also call Bob at 419-834-8879 and share your stories with him.

UPCOMING EVENTS

ANNUAL DINNER

March 19, 2007 – 6:30 p.m.

Faith Alliance Church

Speaker: Johann Klein

For more information and/or to order tickets,

Call 419-629-3495

Tickets: $10.00 per person

DR. SNOWFLAKE’S ART DISPLAY

Dr. Thomas L. Clark of Ann Arbor, Michigan has brought his display of snowflake cutouts back for a second time. He first brought them to our museum in 2004. His artwork will be on display through March 20th on:

- Tuesdays from 9:00-11:30 a.m.
- Sundays from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

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 address below.

(Membership Dues information on pages 1 & 2.)

CHECK OUT OUR WEBSITE

www.newbremenhistory.org

New Bremen Historic Association

120 N. Main St. - P.O. Box 73

New Bremen, Ohio 45869-0073

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