

THE TOWPATH

Published quarterly
January-April-July-October
THE NEW BREMEN HISTORIC ASSOCIATION
January 2012



The 37th Annual NBHA Christmas Tree Festival

The 37th Annual NBHA Christmas Tree Festival was held at the Lockkeeper's House this year. Businesses, organizations, families, children or adults were invited to trim a tree or create a Christmas display. Completed trees and displays filled the three floors of the Lockkeeper's House. Display set-up times were held during the last two weeks of November and opened to the public on December 1st at 6:30 PM. when the village tree was lit and the holiday season began in New Bremen.

Individuals and groups who trimmed trees and created displays this year were: Abloom Flower & Gifts, Alco, Barb Ziegenbusch, Bicycle Museum of America, Capabilities Country Club, Chamber of Commerce SW Auglaize County, Dana & Lydia Blanchard, Dennis Dicke, Diane Paul, Faith Alliance Church, Family of Marcia Meyer, Fireside Pub, Gen Conradi, Gilberg Furniture, Greg Paul, Jackie Love, June Frantz, LaPiazza, Lois Moeller, MariaAna, Rogan & Colten Muether, Rianna & Taylor Paul, Maria Stein Animal Clinic by Dr. Mitch, MECCA, Minster Bank, New Bremen Girl Scouts, New Bremen Historic Association, New Bremen Kindergarten, New Bremen Public Library, Paul Chiropractic & Health Center, St. Peter's Church, Serendipity Preschool, Stan Hertenstein, Susie Hirschfeld.

A special Open House with refreshments and music by Rita Heitkamp was held on Sunday December 4 from 1:30 to 4:00 P.M. The public viewed the displays and voted for their favorites throughout the month of December.



New Bremen Kindergarten Tree



Happy Faces at the Festival



Diane Paul & Barb Ziegenbusch, NBHA Board Members and Coordinators for the 2011 Christmas Tree Festival

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

◆ **"THE TOWPATH"** ◆

"THE TOWPATH" is a historical reflection of New Bremen and the surrounding area published quarterly by the New Bremen Historic Association. Any stories and/or pictures that our readers are willing to share are welcomed.

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Diane Paul (chairman), Barb Ziegenbusch,
 Jim Tontrup

ASSOC. MEETINGS ARE HELD FIRST TUESDAYS
7 PM at the Lockkeeper's House

MEMBERSHIP DUES

\$25.00 per year (includes spouse/S.O.)
Lifetime Membership - \$250.00 (includes spouse/S.O.)
 Payment is required by January of each year
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Check the line above your name
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- ★**PD 12** – Means you are **P**aid through Dec. 2012.
- ★**LM P-11** – Means you **P**aid for a **L**ifetime **M**embership in 2011.
- ★**LM D-11** – Means you are a **L**ifetime **M**ember and made a **D**onation in 2011.
- ★**CM P-76** – Means you are a **C**harter **M**ember and **P**aid \$75 for such by July 4, 1976.
- ★**CM D-11** – Means you are a **C**harter **M**ember and made a **D**onation in 2011.

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

How the Museum Started

When a group of people held a friendly gathering in a backyard on the evening of Thursday, September 27, 1973, they discussed the sad loss of the Thompson Hotel and Livery at Lock 1 on the canal. They determined that another such building that was soon to be remodeled by its owner, Bruce Scheer, should be preserved. They approached Mr. Scheer about the possibility of buying the house for use as a landmark and museum. Thus the New Bremen Historic Association was organized as a non-profit group dedicated to the collection and preservation of the history of New Bremen and German Township.

The twelve-room, two-and-a half story house on North Main Street became the immediate subject of a community restoration project. The "Luelleman House", so named because that family purchased it in 1868 and lived in it for more than seventy years, is one of the first non-log cabin structures in the original plat of 1833 in Bremen (as it was then called.) The building is believed to have been constructed about 1837, with an addition about 1846, and renovations about 1876 and in the 1930's.

On Sunday, September 30, a second meeting was held at the library which was attended by Mary Ann Brown, Jerry & Sue Maxson, Jeanette Hellwarth, Carl & Melba Roediger, Greg Parrott, Mrs. Elmer Ende, Miss Marie Schrage, and Nancy Hack. It was decided to contact the major industries and to talk to as many individuals as possible.

On Wednesday, October 3, another meeting was held and a motion was passed to form the New Bremen Historic Association. Holly Riebel, Emil Fledderjohann, and Jerry Maxson were appointed to a committee to draft by-laws. A steering committee was set up to take care of finance and membership. Appointed were John Poppe (also the voluntary legal advisor), Jim Dicke II, Melba Roediger, Sue Maxson, and Greg Parrott as a consultant.

On November 5, eighteen people signed up for membership and an election of Officers and Trustees was held.

FIRST OFFICERS OF HISTORIC ASSOCIATION
1973/74

- President/2-yr. TrusteeVictor Maurer
- Vice-President/3-yr. Trustee.....John Hoffman
- Secretary/2-yr. Trustee.....Melba Roediger
- Treasurer/1-yr. Trustee.....Jeanette Hellwarth
- Trustee/1 year.....Emil Fledderjohann
- Trustee/1 year.....Sue Maxson
- Trustee/2 years.....Holly Riebel
- Trustee/3 years.....Mary Ann Brown
- Trustee/3 years.....Mary Wint
- Curator.....Greg Parrott

On December 3, a finance committee was named: Jim Moeller, John Gilberg, Les Blanke, John Poppe, Jim Dicke II, Vic Maurer, Emil Fledderjohann, John Hoffman, and Holly Riebel. They were to contact all businesses to seek pledges.

On December 28, 1973, a letter was sent to the citizens of New Bremen, asking for pledges to meet the initial purchase price of \$15,500. Over \$7500.00 had already been pledged by local businessmen.

By the January 15, 1974 meeting, a total of \$17,021 in pledges had been received from 40 businesses and 169 pledge cards.

On December 16, 1974, Irene Bay accepted the position of Corresponding Secretary. Marjorie Conradi was to be contacted about becoming the Historian. On October 20, 1975, Ollie Inman took over the job of keeping the Historian's scrapbook.

At the annual meeting on January 20, 1975, three new Trustees were named: Dave Anthony, Lois Moeller, & Fred Wellemeyer. They replaced the departing 1-year Trustees.

In May, 1975, Greg Parrott resigned as Curator and was replaced in September by Janet Fledderjohn.

On February 17, 1975, it was decided that anyone who contributed \$76.00 or more by July 4, 1976, would be considered a Charter Member and his/her/their name would be placed on the Founders "Spirit of '76" Plaque in the museum. As of November 17, 1975, 138 people had pledged \$75.00 or more.

On October 20, 1975, a motion was passed to offer Life Memberships for \$50.00.

On July 4, 1976, as the United States celebrated its 200th birthday, the town of New Bremen turned out to dedicate its museum which was completely paid for by pledges from over 130 interested people.

(Information gathered by Lucille Francis from NBHA Minutes, Sesquicentennial book and early NBHA newsletters.)

Opening a Museum in New Bremen

Opening a museum required a vision and plan by leaders of the group. The opening of a museum also required a great deal of time and effort by volunteers who were willing and able to follow the plan. An item in the second newsletter, **September, 1975**, describes some of the restoration process completed by community volunteers.

Through the efforts of 30 volunteers, the latter part of July, wallpaper was removed and the walls were washed down in nine of the twelve rooms...only one to go! The kitchen cupboards were transferred to the garage. The partial wall in the southwest room was removed as well as a closet. When the closet came out an outside window

close to the northeast corner was discovered. We have reason to believe that there was an original smaller structure (perhaps just one room) and then the rest of the house was built very soon afterwards. With the walls stripped, it is a bit easier to see the original layout of the house but there are still a few unanswered questions.

The next phase of museum restoration will be the removal of the bathroom, two more closets, wallboard from the upstairs areas, completion of wallpaper removal, sanding of floors, prime coating of some walls and chimney repair.

If NBHA funds are available for securing matching funds in spring, 1976, new siding can be installed and the major renovation can be effected – adding another front door, relocation two windows, removal of four windows upstairs and one downstairs, prime and finish coating interior walls – to match the earliest picture of the Luelleman house about 1900-1905. New wiring is also required for exhibits in addition to gas lines for heating.

...NBHA Newsletter, September, 1975

Rosemary Heitkamp Remembers Working at the Museum



In October, 2011, Rosie Heitkamp, NBHA volunteer, graciously agreed to talk with us about her museum memories.

Rosemary (Koeper) Heitkamp began her volunteer work in May of 1977 as Assistant Curator. She learned the various aspects of museum work – cataloguing and classifying artifacts, researching, arranging displays and handling correspondence by working with Janet Fledderjohn. Rosie spent about 25 to 30 hours each week working for the NBHA. She took over both jobs as Curator and Newsletter Editor in 1978 when Janet went back to school.

Rosemary remembers carrying buckets of water and rags from her house on Washington Street to the museum

Continued: Rosemary Heitkamp Remembers...

on North Main Street because the museum needed to be cleaned and there was no water supply. As newsletter editor she researched tax records at the County Courthouse to compile a list of landowners in German Township in 1848 and published this information in the Nov. – Dec., 1977 newsletter. She also gathered items of interest from the early New Bremen Sun newspaper 1888- 1910 and indexed the items by both topic and name. The items contain information about land transfers, businesses, personal information and village maintenance. This project took over one year to complete.

Another project that Rosie helped with was the cemetery work coordinated by Mary Wint. Mary, Rosie and Irene Bay spent several years transcribing the inscriptions from tombstones at all the cemeteries in German, Washington and St. Marys Townships. She remembers scrubbing the stones and crawling on the ground in order to read the inscriptions. Other persons who helped with this project were Cindy and Kim Bushman, Jill Wierwille, Robin Helwarth and Ken Ahlers.

In appreciation for her volunteer work, this poem was published in the 1979 NBHA Newsletter.

To Rosie Heitkamp

Rosie, Oh Rosie, we've appreciated you
And all of the work you have done.
The museum is silent without you
And no curating at this point is being done.

In May the museum will be housecleaned
And open on Sundays to anyone
And the recording and cataloging you started
By someone may eventually get done.

You've done such a fantastic job, Rosie,
You deserve more than these lines of credit,
It will be very hard to replace you in being curator,
cataloguer, death record recorder, newsletter writer, New
Bremen Sun recorder, museum caretaker, et cetera, et
cetera, et cetera.

To Rosie Heitkamp: The New Bremen Historic
Association says THANKS for a job WELL DONE!!!!
...NBHA Newsletter, 1979

New Bremen Library Bookcase Made By Reuben Thiesing

There is a bookcase in the New Bremen Library that was constructed by Reuben Thiesing about 20 years ago. Reuben Thiesing, born and raised in New Bremen, was a third generation woodcarver and craftsman. He had his own business and enjoyed remodeling houses and

crafting unique projects. The wood in this bookcase is very special and we are fortunate that Reuben chose to donate it to the Friends of the New Bremen Library.



Reuben Thiesing (1915-2000) (Photo by Paul Lietz)

"The Miami & Erie Canal was dredged four times in my lifetime...The last dredging (done in 1984) was the best for it scraped all the leavings together and removed them. It was this process which found the muck hole that contained the logs... For some unknown reason, two white oak logs, one nine feet and the other 18 feet long, got in the canal and became waterlogged. They sank and the canal current swept them along until they make their way to the muck hole and lodged there. I was there when they uncovered the first log and I asked the contractor about getting them. The canal dredger contractor gave me the logs, knowing that I work on old wood and was interested in experimenting with them. I contacted the Hoge Lumber Company (in New Knoxville) and they agreed to saw the logs, as they are also interested in the logs' history. They sawed and cured the logs for me, for which I am very grateful..."For six years or so, Thiesing let the lumber cut out of the log remain in his basement. "I knew right away I wanted to make something for posterity...these logs are history."

...Reuben Thiesing as told to Wayne Wenning, Evening Leader, 1991

From the 6/13/1891 *New Bremen Sun*: "The shipping timber which has been gathered from our forests the past winter is now being rafted down the canal to Toledo. Most of the timbers are shipped to Europe"

Could this be the source of the white oak log found in the canal that was used to build the bookcase?

Continued: New Bremen Library Bookcase...

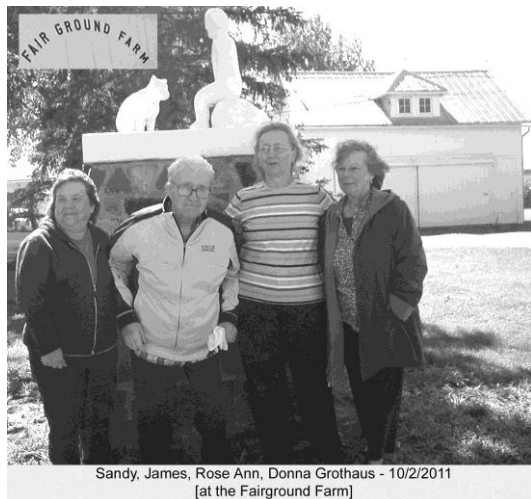


Shelli Parker, Branch Supervisor, New Bremen Library with the Bookcase made by Rueben Thiesing

On your next trip to the Library, be sure to take a closer look at this special bookcase made from those historic logs. (For more information about Reuben Thiesing, see *The Towpath*, October, 2002 and January 2003.)

Grothaus Family Visits New Bremen

Special visitors came to New Bremen on October 2, 2011, to see the Christian Grothaus house at Fairground Farm and visit the cemetery. The group consisted of James Grothaus, the 83 year old grandson of Christ Grothaus, his two daughters, Sandy and Rose Ann from the Toledo area and Donna Grothaus, widow of Larry Grothaus who was also a grandson of Christ Grothaus.



Sandy, James, Rose Ann, Donna Grothaus - 10/2/2011 [at the Fairground Farm]

Donna Grothaus, from the state of Washington, met Lucille Francis through the Find-A-Grave website and has corresponded with her all summer to learn more about the family connection in New Bremen.

Christian Grothaus was the son of Rudolph and Karoline (Becker) Grothaus. Christian was born in Germany and came to Ohio when he was nine years old.

Christian was married twice, Sarah (1881-1907) and Cosie (1892-1940). Christ had four children, Rudolph (Harry), Oliver, Robert and Violet.



Added by: Donna Burkert Grothaus

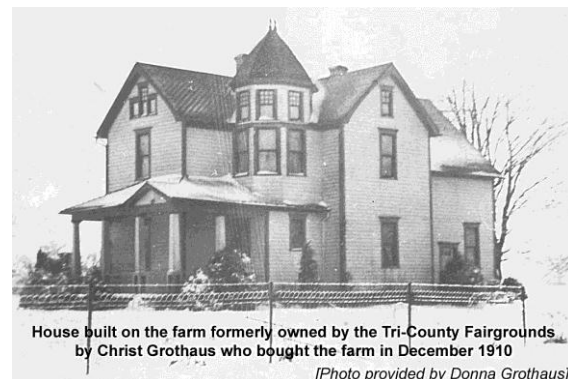
Christian and Cosie (Caywood) Grothaus

Christ Grothaus purchased the Fairground Farm in 1910 (after the fair closed in 1907) and built the house that still stands. He also created the sculpture of the “man and his dog” that stands near the front of the house.

We enjoyed your visit and hope you will come and see us again soon.



Early picture of Christ Grothaus House Supplied by Rose Grothaus Letherby



House built on the farm formerly owned by the Tri-County Fairgrounds by Christ Grothaus who bought the farm in December 1910 [Photo provided by Donna Grothaus]

THE NEW BREMEN TRI-COUNTY FAIR

by Oscar O. Raberding - 1964 (excerpted)

(For more about the Tri-County Fair, see the July, 1989 "Towpath")

The New Bremen Tri-County Fair existed for twenty years, from 1888 through 1907, on forty acres in the northeast quarter of Section 14 of German Township, one mile east of New Bremen on what came to be called The Fairground Farm. The last owners of this farm were Mr. & Mrs. Emil Schroer, and subsequently their son and daughter-in-law, Mr. & Mrs. James Schroer, who sold the farm in December 1992 to Crown Equipment Corp., and Crown is the owner today.

The stately monuments of native stone at the former main entrance to the grounds, and the present entrance to the farm were built by Christian H. Grothaus. He and his first wife, Alice (Schoettley) Grothaus, were the former owners. (Mr. Grothaus suffered an untimely death in February of 1934 after being attacked by a bull.)

Included on the fairgrounds was a race-track, a ball park, and also a band-stand in the barnyard. In 1891, the fair had a local 25-musician Tri-County Fair Band. There were also fortune wheels where many coins were dropped on the ground, to be found years later by the Schroers and others.

The fair in 1891 was held from Tuesday, September 1st through Friday, September 4th, this being the week before Labor Day. The Auglaize County Fair that year was held later, on Tuesday, September 29th thru Friday, October 2nd.

There were four dug wells, each 75 feet deep, which were dug by a contractor from Indiana for a total cost of \$300.00. They were dug by old-fashioned rotary horse-power and were masterpieces of engineering for that day.

A story that was told was that a cask of wine being used by the threshers accidentally slipped into the water and sank to the bottom of one of the wells. Many people would drink from the well and on one occasion during prohibition, one of the groups, upon learning about the lost cask, broke out singing, "How dry I am - How dry I am - Nobody knows how dry I am."

The Directors of the fair were: Henry Hellbusch, president; Louis Huenke, vice-president; Fred Wiemeyer (and later, Clifford Huenke), secretary; and William Nieter, Sr., treasurer. Members of the Executive Committee were: H.F. Kuenning, Herman Brune, and Joseph Woehrmeyer. In charge of Finance were: Louis Huenke, Fred Vogelsang, and M.S. Ekermeier. On the Board of Directors were: Henry Hellbusch, Conrad Doenges, E.M. Ekermeier, Henry Koop, E.H. Meckstroth, Herman Brune, Peter Braun, Louis Huenke, Henry Roettger, Ben Grieshop, Henry Lochtefeld, Henry Schaefer, H.F. Kuenning, F. Vogelsang, and Joseph A. Woehrmeyer. The Marshall was Louis Ley. Superintendent of feed and forage was William Conradi.

At the last fair in 1907 (August 13-16), two of the advertised events were diving horses and a sliding pony. The Humane Society, however, put a stop to the sliding pony attraction.

Officials for the final fair in 1907 were: Frank Kuenning, president; August Huenke, vice-president; and Theodore H. Tangeman, secretary. The Directors were Frank Kuenning,

Henry Brockmann, August Huenke, August Schnelle, Julius Wuebbenhorst, Fridolin T. Purpus, Joseph Kolpin, and Henry Wiedeman. Harry Kahn, who was associated with the Auglaize County Fair for many years later on, played in the band in 1907.

On the east side of the fairgrounds was a shady grove of trees in which the horses were hitched to keep cool. The race-horse barns were also there. The horses and other animals would be shipped in on the L.E.& W. Railroad as much as a week before the fair.

Many people would come to the fair in a hack, one of which was driven by Morris Bessel, who had a team of mules. This ride would cost 5¢ or 10¢.

Some of the neighbors thought the fair was an abomination, since they would always find chickens and eggs missing.

After it became certain that there would be no more fairs at the Tri-County Fairground (Auglaize, Mercer, and Shelby Counties), the remnants were auctioned off. The grandstand, with the lunch stand and beer stand underneath, was sold to the Auglaize County Fair Board for \$400. It was dismantled piece by piece and hauled to Wapakoneta and was re-assembled there as the south grandstand, where it stood until 1976-77, when it was torn down and replaced with a smaller concrete grandstand.

The New Bremen Tri-County Fair Company was organized in 1888 and during the month of July began advertising the first exhibition. Henry Hellbusch and Gustave Boesel served as the first President and Secretary of the organization.

The first fair was held Sept. 18-19-20-21, 1888. The old Lake Erie & Western (L.E.& W.) Railroad (called the natural gas route), ran excursions from points east and west all four days of the fair. (N.B. Sun - 7/29/1938)



AT THE TRI-COUNTY FAIRGROUNDS

(I.D. s by Ralph May & Charlie Weinberg)

FRONT (sitting):

1. Frank Huenke (vest)
2. H(erman) Lietz (between)
3. _____ Thompson (vest)
4. _____ ? (bowler hat)
5. Grover Wissman (drinking)
6. _____ ? (mouth under tap)
7. Adolph Pape
8. _____ Ziegler (boy)
9. _____ Weseli

BACK (standing):

1. Ed Deitemeyer (boy)
2. _____ ? (boy left of pole)
3. _____ ? (boy in front of pole)
4. Lawrence Hoffman (holding keg)
5. Fred Schroeder (holding keg)
6. _____ ? (hand on spigot)
7. _____ ? (mug to mouth)
8. Irvin Wissman

Severe Weather over the Years in New Bremen

The Ohio Historical Society has an online exhibit titled Severe Weather in Ohio at www.ohiohistory.org. This exhibit showcases 25 of the most extreme weather events that impacted Ohio. Several of these events also affected the New Bremen area. The earliest was the state wide **Snowstorm of 1910** which brought 20 inches of snow on Feb.17 and 18.

Next was the **Blizzard of 1918**. The headline of the January 18, 1918 issue of the *New Bremen Sun* announced "**Snow Bound-New Bremen included in path of thirty-six hour blizzard**". The article describes how the snow and 30 to 40 mph winds created huge drifts while the temperature registered as low as 23 degrees below zero. "Farmers were kept busy looking after their livestock, the latter suffering very much because of the intense cold. Butcher Schelper lost three valuable porkers one night, not as a result of the cold but rather because they were smothered by the other fellows piling on top of them in order to keep warm."

The storm that surprised our area and the rest of Ohio was the **Great Thanksgiving Snowstorm of 1950**. The *New Bremen Sun* reported in the November 30 edition, "It all started Thanksgiving night when a cold wave swept in abruptly from the north through Ohio. And when the storm was over the ground was covered with snow varying in depth from 16 to 18 inches."



Washington Street after Snowstorm in 1950



North Main Street 1950 Snowstorm

It was during this storm that the famous Ohio State - Michigan Snow Bowl was played. The *New Bremen Sun* also covered that event in the same issue." A large group

of New Bremen fans got more than their tickets called for when they attended the Ohio State -Michigan football game Saturday at Columbus. Played under the most adverse weather conditions imaginable, the game ended in a 9 to 3 victory for Michigan.

That in itself was something that wasn't in the pre-game book. After the game, the traffic conditions were so bad most of the local fans didn't get back to New Bremen until Sunday morning. Some even came limping in at a late hour Sunday afternoon."



Monroe Street after 1950 Snowstorm

The Blizzard of 1918 held the record for the worst winter storm in Ohio history for 60 years. The storm that currently holds the record is the **Blizzard of 1978**.

The Blizzard of 1978 came on January 26. Nobody really believed it was coming. The TV weatherman told us to buy groceries and get prepared because we were in for a storm. And then it came. The wind howled and it blew. We played records so we wouldn't hear the howling and blowing of the wind. And the snow drifted. It was the worst in history and we were ordered to stay home. We couldn't see the trees in our yard with the wind and blowing snow. The wind was so bad.

...Marge Lietz, 1978

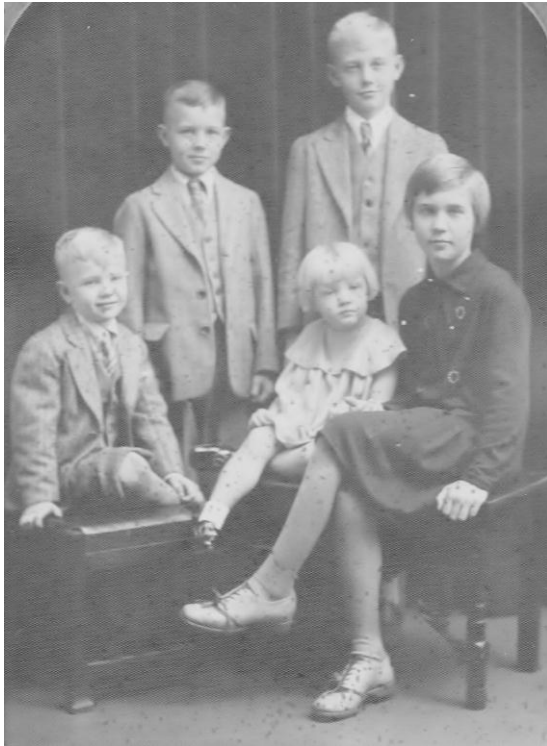


Marge Lietz and 1978 Snow Drift

Personal Interview

P. James Moeller Talks about his Life

Born in New Bremen in 1921, Jim is the son of Raymond (Caddy) and Alfrieda (Vornholt) Moeller. He was the middle child of five.



Jack, Jim, Tom, Pauline (Dunham), Louise (Hay) Moeller in 1928.



The Moeller family circa 1950.

Standing: Pauline (Moeller) & Vernon Dunham, Caddie Moeller, Jack Moeller, Alfrieda (Vornholt) Moeller, Charles & Louise (Moeller) Hay, Ruth Moeller, Tom Moeller, Verneda (Dammeyer) Moeller, Hilda Moeller, Jim Moeller

Jim's parents came from large families. Both the William Moeller and the Ben Vornholt families had eight children.



The Vornholt family in 1941.

Row 1. Don Sharp, Joyce Tecklenberg, Kay & Jane Gilberg, Jay Sharp, Judy Sharp, Alice & John Gilberg

Row 2. Joan Conradi, Jean Schulenberg, Herman Vornholt, Ben Vornholt, Anna Vornholt, Mildred Schulenberg, Frieda Moeller, Ted Schulenberg

Row 3. Pauline Moeller, Richard Freytag, Esther Freytag, Norma Sharp, Pauline Gilberg, Frances Vornholt, Holtreich Vornholt

Row 4. Jack Moeller, Harris Sharp, Elton Schulenberg, Roger Tecklenberg holding Steve Tecklenberg, Helen Tecklenberg

Row 5. David Vornholt, Bill Schulenberg, Louise Moeller, Paul Gilberg

Row 6. Jim Moeller, Herman Freytag

Jim's early memories are of living on South Washington Street above the bakery that his father owned and operated. The ovens were in back of the bakery and were fired with coal. A walkway between Wint's Restaurant and the bowling alley led to the ovens and the coal supply. He remembers that his mother would be up early in the morning to wrap the fresh baked loaves of **Caddy's Bread**. The bread was delivered by horse and wagon.

Jim began working at an early age. At age 13 years he worked before and after school as a clerk at the Kroger store. On Saturday he put in extra-long hours working from 7:30 in the morning until 10:00 at night earning five cents an hour. He worked at Schelper's store when he was a senior in high school. He also helped Verlin Hirschfeld at Crown Cleaners soliciting dry cleaning jobs.

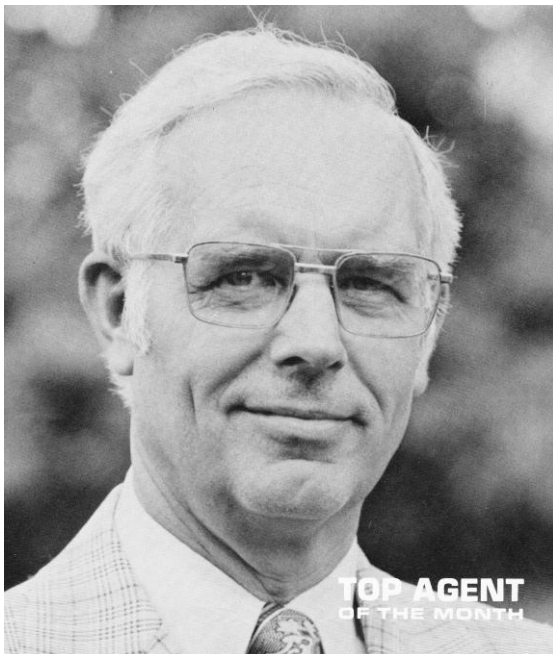
Jim graduated from NBHS in 1939. After graduation he landed a job at Streine's (later known as STAMCO).

He planned to work for two years, save his money and attend Ohio State University. He made it to OSU and began his studies but WWII interfered with his long term plan and he enlisted in the Air Force to serve his country. He entered the air force in February of 1943 and served 17 months overseas in France and Germany as a Company Clerk for the 1709th Signal Corps.



Jim Moeller

He returned to STAMCO in 1945 and also added the sale of insurance to his resume. In 1951 he married Verneda Dammeyer. Jim retired from STAMCO in 1983. His wife died in 1994. He sold his last insurance policy in 2004 at the age of 83.



Jim was named Top Agent of the Month in 1975 as a Leugers associate with Columbus Mutual Life Insurance Company.

Through the years Jim has been active with community affairs. He served on the Village Council for seven years from 1962 through 1970 and helped make many of the important decisions that shaped the future of New Bremen's downtown area. He also served as a Director on the First National Bank Board of Directors from 1971-1991.

Jim is now fully retired and happy to be a leader with the Ohio Snowbirds organization. He has remarried and enjoys the winters in Alabama and the summers in New Bremen with his wife Pat. In spite of his travels, his heart will always be in his home town of New Bremen. He is close with a large group of family and friends here. His high school classmates still have a reunion each summer and he was a member of the same card club for over 50 years.



Class of 1939 Reunion on 9/17/2011. Wilbur Warner, Jim Moeller, John Dicke, Roger Busse, Ruth (Burmeister) Luelleman, Betty (Waterman) McGowan.

Pinochle Card Club in 1987



Clockwise: John & Edith Wissman, Merlin & Susie Hirschfeld, Jim & Verneda Moeller, Willis & Bernice Wittenbrink, Norm & Althea Ruedebusch.

Low German --- Plattdeutsch

An Anchor to our Past and Heritage

Low German or Plattdeutsch is a language that originated in the northern part of Germany. This area of Germany is a low lying coastal plain hence the term Low German for the language. The language used in the southern plateau and mountain area is High German or Hochdeutsch. These two divisions of the German language existed as spoken languages for centuries until High German became the basis for the written German language. It then became the standard language used in church, state, education and literature. Low German continued to be used in the north to speak with family and friends.

In the mid 1800's immigrants from northern Germany, including many who settled in our area, brought with them their native Low German as well as High German. When they came to this country they also needed to learn English. It took several generations for the switch from Low German to English to occur. The younger generations who were taught in English had less incentive to learn Low German especially if it was not spoken in the home. I remember hearing Low German frequently when the adults didn't want the children to understand. It also was used when my grandparents couldn't think of the English word and would switch to Plattdeutsch. So though I heard it spoken I never learned the language of my immigrant ancestors.

Low German today is an endangered but not extinct language. It is recognized by the German government as a dialect of the standard High German language. It is still used for entertainment, especially story-telling. The German people seem to have an interest in learning and preserving the language. In 2011, I found on the net an announcement for a course in Plattdeutsch at an adult education center in Harpstedt, the northern German town from which my relatives emigrated. There is also interest in preserving the language in this country. Again a search of the net shows Plattdeutsch societies in several states. These groups meet to talk or "schnack Platt".

"Kannst du Platt schnacken?" The people in these pictures can. These are some members of a local Plattdeutsch group that meets monthly. They were kind enough to let us interview them during their November dinner meeting. All said they learned Low German at home since it was the language spoken by their family and friends, especially the older adults. They also agreed that like all skills if it is not used it is lost. So these meetings give them a chance to again speak Plattdeutsch. Some told us they did not speak English until they entered school. The members do not all use the same Low German words. The areas around the towns of New Bremen, New Knoxville, and Minster each have their own dialect. But the differences are minor and all seem to understand. We applaud them for using their Plattdeutsch language skills to keep this anchor to our past alive. (By Joyce Ruedebusch)



Plattdeutsch Dinner Meeting at K-Ville Restaurant

From Top: Ruth Kettler, Irene Howe, Don Isern, Sam Katterheinrich, Paul Rudemiller, Rev. Jim Egbert, Joann Katterheinrich, Virginia Miller, Dave and Beverly Kuck, Vernon and JoAnn Feldwisch.

History Mystery Page

Thank you, everyone, for your phone calls, e-mails and letters! Are you ready for the new challenge? Remember to write, call or e-mail your answers...

Who are the members of this card club?



These Women worked at STAMCO. Who are they?



(Hint: We found the two pictures above in Jim Moeller's photo album.)

What is it?



(Hint: This item is displayed in the Museum.)

Who is this mighty warrior?



(Hint: Photo was taken by Paul Lietz in 1963)

Please drop a line to us at *The Towpath-NBHA*, P.O.Box 73, New Bremen, Ohio 45869 or call or e-mail your answer to Gen at gen@nktelco.net or Joyce at jdr@nktelco.net.

October History Mystery

Answers

Thank you, Towpath readers for all your comments and answers for our History Mystery Page! Ron Hittepole and Emma Opperman Pleiman drew on early memories and named the group and members. Emma wrote: *It was called the Knit & Sit Club. I think the normal membership was 12. If someone dropped out members made suggestions as to who would become the newest member...the women brought any kind of sewing...darning socks, patching clothes, embroidery. Of course there was lots of conversation throughout the evening (do I dare call it gossip?) with refreshments served by the host member at the end of the evening.*

Ron agreed that this was the Knit & Sit Club. Max Fledderjohann remembers that he and his brother Tom would lie on the floor and listen to the conversation through the floor transom when the club met at their house.



Front: Mabel Kettler, Ludeen Fledderjohann, Hulda Wiehe Rear: Margaret Warner, Mary Wehrman, Annabelle Wagner, Erna Schrage (holding dog), Dorothy Ruedebusch, Carol Opperman, Leverta Hittepole.



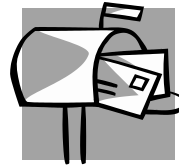
Jane Moore was the first to identify the slaw cutter. She remembers pushing the cabbage back and forth and helping her mother can sauerkraut every year. Jacqui Kuck said that her great-grandparents used it to make sauerkraut and slaw.

Judy Meckstroth, Helen Tangeman and Lois Westerbeck Stammen also correctly identified it.



This is Irene Kettler Blanke Ruedebusch, Aunt of Nancy Kettler Price. She was identified by Susie Hirschfeld and Ron Hittepole. Nancy says that her Aunt Irene was the daughter of Ben Kettler, pictured in the July *Towpath* article about the Kettler House in Lock Two. Irene's brothers were Paul, Donald and Robert and her sister was Grace Kettler Scheer

From the Mailbox



Enclosed is a picture of our **Class of 1942** reunion (held on September 16, 2011). Our class is getting smaller all the time but we still enjoy each other's company. Those present were **Don Isern, Dottie (Fark) Haupt, Dottie (Dunlap) Koenig, Rosie (Landwehr) Gerling and Charles Vornholt.**

Thanks for the wonderful Towpath. You all do such a good, good job.

Sincerely, **Dottie Haupt**, Englewood, Ohio (10/19/11)

To Whom It May Concern:

Just finished reading my last issue! Everything stops when it comes. I read it cover to cover...

...Enclosed is my donation to cover costs. Would miss the Towpath so much if it was discontinued.

Sincerely,

Lois Westerbeck Stammen (10/21/11)

Dear Lucille,

John and I just finished reading the October "The Towpath." We add our congratulations on having completed such a superb job as its editor.

I remember so very well how smart you were in grade school bringing home straight 4's with each report card. You have used your knowledge well.

Enjoy your retirement.

Sincerely, **Joyce Gilberg** (10/10/11)

Dear Gen and Joyce,

Loved the October Towpath. Very nice job. In the list of donated items I was listed as giving the STAMCO playing cards. They were actually given to me to give to you by Joan Scheer (Mrs. Jack Scheer). Jack used to own the carry-out next

to what is Wendy's today. He was later employed at STAMCO...

Thanks, **Erline Garman** (10/11/11)

Thank You

I would like to thank all those who have made such nice comments in regard to my 'retirement' as Editor of *The Towpath*. I appreciate your interest and support over the past 15½ years. It looks like Gen and Joyce will have plenty to say in the future. Also, Mike Staton is keeping you informed regarding new acquisitions to the museum.

As Gen told you in the last issue, I am spending my time these days contributing information to the FindAGrave website. It is such fun and so rewarding to see families fall into place. It is also interesting how this brings me into contact with so many people from all over the country, many of them with New Bremen connections.

I recently had the pleasure of meeting one of these people all the way from Washington state, Donna Grothaus (see story and picture elsewhere). My access to cemetery records of German Protestant, Willow Grove, Schwaberow and Plank Road cemeteries, to the birth, marriage and death records of St. Paul Church, and various obituary files are all helpful in providing information to add to the FAG website. Here is where to institute your own search on this website:

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gs&>

Lucille Francis



CURATORS' YEAR-END 2011 REPORT

Over the past year there have been some changes with the NBHA museum curators. Joyce Holdren and Delores Stienecker have retired as curators. We would like to thank Joyce and Delores for the great job they have done. We appreciate the many hours they have spent working on the museum displays and all the behind the scene jobs. Great job, ladies!

We have taken over as curators and are still learning about the museum-where things go and where things are located. We are hoping to increase the display areas in January. Beginning in February we plan to be at the museum Wednesday afternoons from 3:30 to 5:00 P.M. to be available to accept donated items. Please call the Museum at 419-629-1014 to be sure we are there. Feel free to call us at home to set up a time to meet us at the museum to drop off items.

Mike Staton 419-629-2693

Rob Ziegenbusch 419-629-0727

Thanks, Rob & Mike

Items Recently Donated to Museum

Correction: Scales, receipt book used by Dr. Fledderjohann (1903-1908) in New Bremen. (**Martha Britt, August 16, 2011**)

Butter Churn, Wapakoneta, 1882 – Herbert Edward & Martha Schaefer Kellermeyer & her father Henry Schaefer. Clothes Dryer-Ludwig Jakob Lorenz Roettger & Alvena Wilhelmina Dorothea Hegemeier. They came from Cincinnati on Canal. Doll Cradle made by Lawrence Roettger, father of Leota Roettger Kellermeyer at the Auglaize Furniture Factory. Sled, steel- Herbert Kellermeyer Family. (**Leota Kellermeyer, October 2, 2011**)

Booklet-Fallout Shelter Plan for Auglaize County. 1968 Booklet, Nuclear Energy. (**Joyce Ruedebusch, October 2, 2011**)

Photos (8) Bloody Barn, Lock One Mill, Mueller's Mens Store, Parade Queen, 1900 Musicians. Books-1968 German Festival, STAMCO. Thermometer, Rabe Manufacturing Co.. 1976 wooden nickel. New Bremen Sports Programs, Trophy, various newspaper clippings. (**Calvin Slattery, October 2, 2011**)

Photos (4) Lock One, Bridge & lockkeeper's House. (**John Tomhafe, October 2, 2011**)

Elmer Ende Collection of postcards, photos, songbooks, prints, booklets. (**New Bremen Library, October 2, 2011**)

Handmade quilt frame, Meat Grinder. (**John & Larue (Meckstroth) Dicke, October 7, 2011**)

1930s Sunoco billing slip, 1920s Novelty Furniture Co. billing slip. (**Duane & Alice Hegemier, October 26, 2011**)

Membership Report

NEW MEMBERS THIS PERIOD

| | |
|----------|--------------------------|
| 10/10/11 | Louise Davis |
| 10/17/11 | Rose (Grothaus) Letherby |
| 12/15/11 | Steven A. Meyer |

ADDITIONS TO LIFE MEMBERSHIP ROSTER

| | |
|----------|--------------------------|
| 10/24/11 | Carol Heinfeldt |
| 11/30/11 | David & Christine Maurer |
| 12/12/11 | Patricia L. Holmer |
| 12/15/11 | Steven A. Meyer |

MEMBER DEATHS THIS PERIOD

| | |
|----------|------------------------------|
| 11/17/11 | Marian (Frey) Engle |
| 11/18/11 | Eileen (Greber) Bortner |
| 11/24/11 | Charles "Bud" Hay (LM) |
| 12/6/11 | Dr. Kenneth Ziegenbusch (LM) |
| 12/7/11 | Rev. Roger D. Perl (CM) |
| 12/7/11 | Ned Glass |

Current News about the New Bremen Historic Association

The NBHA Board of Trustees reviewed expenses recently and discovered that expenses to publish *The Towpath* and operate the Museum exceeded their income. The Board sent a letter to each member of the Association explaining the situation. **NBHA members deserve a pat on the back because they opened their**

checkbooks and showered the Association with donations. We are pleased to announce that expenses of publishing *The Towpath* will be covered this year and plans to maintain and provide upkeep of the Museum will be possible.

In the area of maintenance, we are concerned about the peeling paint on the Museum. The Museum was last painted in 2007 and now there are many large areas where the paint is bubbling and peeling. A committee has been appointed to gather quotes on the cost to fix this problem.

We are also looking into increasing the display areas within the Museum. Many interesting items have been donated and additional display areas would enhance the viewing of these items.

In addition the representatives from the Board have been actively involved in working with representatives from the Village, the Chamber of Commerce and MECCA (Miami and Erie Canal Corridor Association) to make the Miami & Erie Canal Visitors Center (Lockkeeper's House) the best that it can be.

There have been four meetings this year. Thus far the committee has developed a vision and mission statement and a list of priorities to address. At the top of the list is signage, to identify the building to the public. The next priority is to hire a manager for the Visitors Center. To have a successful operation it is essential that it has a dedicated leader to oversee and manage exhibit development, an operational plan, marketing, fund raising, facility booking and volunteer recruitment.

The committee representatives are excited and eager to assist in this new venture. A Visitors Center in New Bremen will serve as a portal or doorway for visitors to this region.. Now that the Lockkeeper's House is a reality we support the growth and development of the Miami and Erie Visitor Center as a benefit to all involved groups.

Donations Made By Life Members

Greg & Patricia Allenby, America Budget Company, Anonymous Donors (15), Evelyn Baur, Mark Besanceney, Sherry Biederman, Tom & Barb Block, Rodney Brandt, Bob Braun, Curtis Brookhart, Gerald & Deborah Brussel, Gary & Kathy Cadle, Rodney & Barb Carpenter, Hugh Casebolt, Paul Casebolt, Ralph Casebolt, Nancy Cattell, Donna Conradi, Genevieve Conradi, Ned & Nancy Conradi, Sandra Conradi, Anthony Cook, Doris Cook, Pat D'Alessio, Dorothy Dammeyer, Duane Dammeyer, Ned Dammeyer, Carolyn Deniston, Dennis Dicke, Jack & Becky Dicke, Kenneth Dicke, Roger Dicke, Tom & Mary Alice Dicke, John & Sue Dickman, Robert Dietrich, Barbara Dill, Dorothy Dunlap, Barbara Egbert, Myra Egbert, Ann Eisenhardt, Tim Eiting, Martha Ewing, Carole & Gerald Ferguson, First National Bank, Harold Fischer. David Friemering, Jacob Froning, Eric Furry, Don & Janice Gagel, Charles & Erline Garman, Rosemary Gerling, Gilberg Furniture, Gilberg-Hartwig Funeral Home, John & Joyce Gilberg, Nancy Hagens, Roberta Halker, Doug & Sue Harrod, Edward Hartman, Dorothy Haupt, Duane & Alice Hegemier, Blaine & Connie Heinfeld, David & Carol Heinfeldt, Gary & Kathy Hirschfeld, Lynn Hirschfeld, Mike & Linda Hirschfeld, Stanley Hirschfeld, Susie Hirschfeld, Lawrence & Patricia Holmer, Holly Hotchkiss, Brian

Kettler, Jim Kettler, Johann & Mary Klein, Gene & Norma Knapke, Jack & Susan Knost, Janet Koenig, John & Dorothy Koeper, Don & Jaqui Kuck, Robert Kuck, Matthew Kuenning, Scott Kuenning, Stan & Dona Mae Kuenning, Thomas & Shelley Kuenning, Walter Kuhlhorst, Mary Ellen Kurtzman, Connie Laasko, Rose Leffel, Mary Lirones, Alberta Loffer, Richard & Ruth Luelleman, Debby Lunz, Wayne & Kathy Maurer, Martha May, Gary Meyer, Dorothy Moehlenkamp, Lois Moeller, Ned & Susan Moeller, James Moore II, Cindy & Jerry Newman, Kathleen Noble, Mary Ann Olding, Hal & Gudrun Opperman, Carolyn Pape, Roger & Jeanie Perl, Kim Quellhorst, Mervin & Jeannette Quellhorst, Paul & Dorothy Quellhorst, Ralph & Sue Quellhorst, Dr. & Mrs. Alexander C. Reed, Frances Reese, Larry & Nancy Roettger, Carol Ruese, Mary Ann Sampson, Elizabeth Sauerland, Dale Schaefer, Amy Scheer, James & Lucille Scheer, Ned & Judy Scheer, Mark & Chris Schmidt, John Schroeder, Lloyd & Janice Schroer, Ted Schulenberg, William Schulenberg, Dave & Ruth Schwieterman, Mary Ann Seyfried-Clemmons, Carolyn Smith, Lois Stammen, Rob Stauffer, Ron & Joni Stauffer, Duane & Joan Sunderman, Mark & Stacy Tangeman, Tom & Sandy Thieman, Jason & Lori This, Edna Tontrup, Sheree Topp, James Utrecht, Pat Vessely, David Walters, Marcia Weadock, Bill & Pam Wente, Thomas & Joyce Wente, Rebekkah Whitten, Beverly Wilt, Edith Wissman, Pat Wourms, Marilou Wuebbenhorst, Thomas & Cynthia Young, William & Cynthia Young, Barbara Ziegenbusch, Joshua Ziegenbusch, Kenneth & Kitty Ziegenbusch, Rob Ziegenbusch.

Donations Made By Annual Members

Anonymous Donors (2), David & Thelma Arnett, Gale & Joan Beck, Doris Blanke, Michelle Broussard, Nancy Brucken, Nancy Busse, Jon Carter, Donald Clark, Daryl & Wanda Dammeyer, Keith & Martha Drake, Randy & Karen Eckert, Jim & Pam Elking, Matilda Elking, Howard & Sally Fark, Julia Fark, Gloria Goodwin, Rosemarie Goodwin, Niles Harris, Jeff & Anne Heckman, Gene & June Hegemier, Evelyn Hirschfeld, Eugene Hirschfeld, Christina & John Howard, Dorothy Huwer, Dorothy Johnson, Don & Sue Kettler, Robert & Brenda Klein, Dennis & Edith Klingler, John Knost, Ruth Krieg, Alma Kuest, Joann Lampert, James Melchert, William & JoAnn Mesloh, Fred & Barb Moeller, Mary Moeller, William & Jane Moore, Scott & Sharon Mueller, Robert & Donna Nagel, Bernard & Barb Nedderman, Larry Neuman, Donald & Gloria Olson, James & Carol Opperman, Terry & Janice Overton, John & Janet Pape, Nancy Parsons, Ron Philipot, Carl & Dorothy Poppe, Paul Poppe, Nancy & Robert Price, Brian Quellhorst, Susan Rabe, Howard & Emily Reisner, Beverly Roberts, Larose Roediger, Guy & Vera Schmidt, David Schroeder, Stanley Schroer, Steve & Joyce Schroer, Jay Sharp, Carl Solms, David & Nancy Steiner, Charles & Sue Ellen Swartz, Everet Topp, Mary Jo Vogelsang, Judy Voress, Dave & Jean Waterman, John Watkins, Annabelle Wenning, Wayne & Judy Wiehe, Lee & Rita Wissman, Thomas & Linda Wissman, Bob & Julia Ziegenbusch.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Shirley Schaefer by Jim Kettler

Susan Warner by Dr. Sandra Conradi

Janet Bliss Schulenberg by Anonymous

Paul & Viola Headapohl by Rob & Diane Paul

Bea Young by Nicholas & Sheryl Mesloh

Wilbur & Carabelle Dicke by Dr. Thomas Dicke

Ned England by Mary England

Herb Topp by Dorothy Koeper, Rose Leffel, Jim Kettler,

Judy Bowers Waesch

Dr. Kenneth Ziegenbusch by Flex Technology, Betty Scott & Family, Wayne & Margery Ziegenbusch, Josh & Monica Ziegenbusch, Adam & Andrea Ziegenbusch

PROPOSED REVISIONS FOR NBHA CODE OF REGULATIONS

The New Bremen Historic Association appointed a committee to review and revise the current Code of Regulations. (The Code of Regulations was last reviewed and revised in October 1999 and adopted at the Annual Dinner Meeting March, 2000.) The Committee met with Attorney Jason This and offered a list of proposed changes. **The Board has reviewed the suggestions and will ask for a membership vote at the Annual Dinner Meeting on March 14, 2012.** The proposed changes are:

In Article I -3, it is suggested that the date of the annual meeting be published in *The Towpath* and on the website rather than local newspapers, because the membership would have better access to the information.

In Article II-7, it is suggested that the indemnification clause be separate and listed as item number 8. This change is suggested for clarity.

In Article III -1, it is suggested that the term "etc." be removed and replaced with "members-at-large or other positions as needed by the Board to accomplish the goal of the organization."

In Article III-8, it is suggested that it is no longer necessary to affix a seal of the Association to documents and this terminology will be removed.

Article VI is entitled Certificates of Membership. Since the Board of Trustees no longer issues certificates of membership it is suggested that this article be eliminated. Membership will be included in the next article with dues and renumbered Article VI.

Article VI will be titled Membership and Dues. Item 1 shall read "The dues shall be determined by the Board of Trustees and shall be payable no later than March 15 of each year."

Item 4 will be added which states: "The membership list shall be maintained by the Treasurer and will serve as the basis for the mailing of the quarterly newsletter, *The Towpath*, to all members."

Article VIII will be renumbered Article VII with no other changes. Article IX will be renumbered Article VIII with no other changes.

Letters to Santa

The New Bremen Sun, 1908

Dear Santa: Please bring me a doll with curly hair, a go-cart like Aunt Laures, a singing top, a telephone, a ball with a string for kitty. ...**Dorothy Kuenning**

Dear Santa Claus: Will you please bring me a doll, a paint box, candy, oranges nuts, a set of chairs and a table and a Christmas tree. ...**Eleanor Purpus**

New Bremen Historic Association 2011 ANNUAL FINANCIAL REPORT Dennis Wm. Dicke, Treasurer

INCOME:

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Historic Association Annual Dinner | \$1550.00 |
| Historic Association Annual Picnic | 950.00 |
| Auglaize County Grant | 594.00 |
| Donations | 16,691.00 |
| Miscellaneous | 23.00 |
| Christmas Tree Voting | 67.09 |
| Life Members-New | 2850.00 |
| Membership Dues | 9760.00 |
| Memorials | 3098.00 |
| New Bremen Sun Digitization | 6300.00 |
| Pumpkinfest | 550.00 |
| Sales | 1029.63 |
| Start Up Cash Return | 800.00 |
| Total | 44,262.72 |

EXPENSES:

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|
| Historic Association Annual Dinner | 1554.24 |
| Historic Association Annual Picnic | 874.98 |
| Museum Cabinets/Furniture | 4090.71 |
| Dues | 134.00 |
| Grounds | 599.91 |
| Insurance | 740.00 |
| Lockkeeper's House Cabinets/Furniture | 3012.95 |
| Misc. Expenses | 1042.38 |
| New Bremen Sun Digitization | 6450.00 |
| Postage | 566.44 |
| Pumpkinfest | 250.00 |
| Start Up Cash | 800.00 |
| Taxes | 120.00 |
| Towpath Mailing | 985.57 |
| Towpath Printing | 3315.05 |
| Utilities | 1586.62 |
| Total | 26,122.85 |

| | |
|-----------------------------------------|------------------|
| Check Book | 39,895.97 |
| New Bremen Foundation Investment | 11,965.37 |
| Petty Cash | 25.00 |
| Total | 51,886.34 |

Reporting Period 1-1-2011 to 12-15-2011



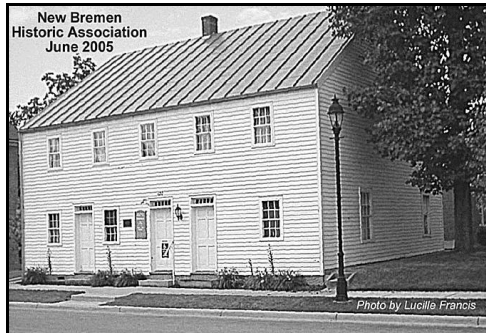
Dear Santa Claus: I would like to have a horn, a drum, a toy automobile, a knife, a pair of mittens, a pencil and tablet, a story book, and a new tie, a pair of shoes, and a fiddle. I will be a good boy. ...**Emmett Boesel**

New Bremen Historic Association
P.O. Box 73

New Bremen, Ohio 45869-0073

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NBHA Museum – 120 N. Main St.



PLEASE KEEP US ADVISED OF ANY ADDRESS CHANGES.

If your newsletter is “undeliverable”, it will be returned to us, costing us from **\$2.50-\$3.00** per copy postage!

Address Service Requested

ANNUAL DINNER MEETING IN MARCH

The New Bremen Historic Association **Annual Dinner Meeting** will be held on Monday **March 19, 2012** at 6:30 P.M. in the Faith Alliance Fellowship Hall. Shirley James will prepare a German meal. Our speaker will be Edith Wissman.

Mark the date on your calendar and plan to attend.

Call Diane Paul at 419-629-2856 for tickets.

UPCOMING EVENTS

**ANNUAL DINNER MEETING
MARCH 19, 2012
CALL FOR YOUR TICKET NOW!**

Diane Paul 419-629-2856

IMPORTANT

For those members who pay their dues annually...

Check your address label to be sure that your dues are paid for 2012.

(See page 2 for more information about your address label)