



THE TOWPATH

Published quarterly

January – April – July – October

THE NEW BREMEN HISTORIC ASSOCIATION

JULY 2013

“YOU HAVE A WONDERFUL MUSEUM HERE!”

That was the statement we often heard visitors say during the BE A TOURIST IN YOUR OWN HOMETOWN weekend held on May 4th & 5th. This event provided a great opportunity to explore the historical treasures of Auglaize County. The following museums were open to the public: Mooney Museum in St. Marys, Wapakoneta Museum and the Historical Society Museums of Cridersville, Minster, New Bremen, New Knoxville and Uniopolis. Other participating sites were Fort Amanda, Armstrong Air & Space Museum, Bloody Bridge on SR66 north of St. Marys and in New Bremen the Bicycle Museum of America and the Miami-Erie Canal Heritage Center.



A new standing seam roof by Cotterman & Co. has been installed on the barn and the outhouse.

PROGRESS REPORT ON MUSEUM MAINTENANCE & REPAIR

Your NBHA donations have been used for necessary maintenance and repairs. Thanks to the people who have contributed to our local treasure.



Tidy, Fresh Look for the Museum

The old and original storm windows had deteriorated and fell apart when removed during the siding project. The doors had also deteriorated beyond repair. With the expertise of Preferred Builders and Hoge Lumber, all the doors have now been replaced. The windows have been reglazed and painted by John Hoffman and now the new storm windows are ready to be put in place.



Board Members pitched in to clean the Museum and grounds for visitors.

As you can see we have been hard at work getting the Museum ready for visitors. The Museum will be open to the public each Sunday from 2-4 PM during June, July and August. Plan to visit your wonderful museum!

“THE TOWPATH” is a historical reflection of New Bremen and the surrounding area published quarterly by the New Bremen Historic Association. We welcome stories, pictures and suggestions of topics from our readers.

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Board meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month

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 to assure uninterrupted delivery of The Towpath

All levels of membership receive “The Towpath”

MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Dennis Dicke, Recorder)

NEW MEMBERS

Rodney & Abigail Suchland

Melba Idle

MEMBER DEATHS

1/21/13 Gene Engle (LM)

4/6/13 Dr. Ronald Riebel (CM)

4/13/13 Carrol Fischbach

4/21/13 Norman Meckstroth

4/22/13 Edna Tontrup (LM)

5/5/13 William Frey (CM)

5/10/13 Patricia Nearingder

ITEMS RECENTLY DONATED TO MUSEUM

3/23/2013

Bicycle Museum newspaper article by **Susie Hirschfeld**

STAMCO banquet photos by **Joyce Holdren**

Peg Ritter Knost's yearbook staff sweater emblem by
John Knost

Fireside Pub menu by **Stan & Dona Mae Kuenning**

White Mountain textbook covers, White Mountain digging permit, White Mountain calendars 1929, 1932, 1938 and the Creamery Patron magazines 1911-1916 by
Mary Phlipot

Cookbook from Nieter store by **Nancy Kettler Price**

STAMCO booklets by **Robert Schroer**

Roosevelt Theater poster by **Chris Steinke**

Fireside Pub menu by **Lisa Dicke Weigandt**

STAMCO photos by **Bill & Pam Went**

White Mountain Creamery photo 1914 by **Joe Whitney**

William Thieman memorial card by **James Wilson**

Richard Wissman's WWII uniform/ photo by **Helen
Wissman**



Interview With Aurelia "Susie" (Fark) Hirschfeld

We were happy to interview Susie Hirschfeld when she shared her Kuck Oil article. Aurelia Ann "Susie" Fark was born in 1929 to Edwin and Amanda Quellhorst Fark. She is the youngest of their six children. Named for her aunt Aurelia Quellhorst she grew up on the family farm and graduated from New Knoxville High School. Her first job after graduation is the subject of the following article.

In 1950 Susie married Merlin Hirschfeld and they became the parents of four children-Michael, Kay, David and Dean. Now their family also includes nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. The Hirschfelds were blessed to have 55 years together before Merlin's death in 2006.

After her first job at Kuck Oil, Susie also worked at the American Budget before staying home with her children. When Dean was in school she worked as a receptionist for Dr. Beech and Dr. Riebel. Then for 17 years she worked in the New Bremen Utilities office. When she started the office was downtown on Monroe Street and later moved to South Walnut Street.

Susie credits Anna Mae Hudson for getting her involved in the New Bremen Historic Association in 1982. For many years Susie was in charge of the membership list which was needed for each mailing of *The Towpath*. In those days it took four people working over two days to prepare the mailing. *The Towpath* was folded and stuffed in the envelope. All the envelopes then were sorted according to zip codes before going to the Post Office.

We thank Susie for her work on behalf of the New Bremen Historic Association and for sharing her history and Kuck Oil story with us.

KUCK OIL COMPANY

By Aurelia "Susie" Hirschfeld

After graduating from New Knoxville High School in 1946, my first job was in New Bremen at the Kuck Oil Company. The company sold both Sinclair gasoline and oil products and International Harvester farm machinery. This business was located on W. Monroe Street, by the railroad tracks and immediately south of the Nickel Plate Depot.



Aurelia Fark Hirschfeld in 1947 at Kuck Oil

The Kuck Oil Company was owned by brothers Rinehart "Sky" and Ferd "Stub" Kuck. There were huge storage tanks for regular gasoline, ethyl, fuel oil and kerosene. Two delivery trucks went out daily to farms and service stations.



Rinehart "Sky" Kuck Ferd "Stub" Kuck

Elmer Wittenbrink and Carl Pape managed these routes and Ferd took care of the fuel oil customers. On completing their routes they either checked out their sales and cash or I would. Ralph Schwaberow and Alvin "Pete" Wagner were the garage mechanics repairing farm machinery. When "Pete" Wagner left, Frederick Gilberg

took his place. After the New Knoxville Tile Company closed, brother “Boss” Kuck became the yard man and took care of the machinery parts.



From left: Ralph Schwaberow, Ferd Kuck, Carl Pape, Susie Fark Hirschfeld, Elmer Wittenbrink, Alvin Wagner, Sky Kuck

Our office equipment was before the computer age. We did have an electric adding machine and manual typewriter. Daily cash receipts and accounts receivable were recorded by hand. The accounts receivable were recorded in a huge 3 or 4 inch thick ledger. As office manager I did all the banking, paid the bills, sent statements, answered the phone and kept the office clean. In other words, I was in charge and it was a good place to work.

During my school years the teachers and most classmates called me Aurelia, my given name. When I began working at Kuck Oil, “Sky” said that my name was too long. I told him my nickname was “Susie” and he said, “Good, I’ll call you Susie.” I had good and memorable times working my first job, some I can still remember 66 years later. These are a few of my memories:

- The year 1946 being the first year after WWII, machinery became available again and my husband’s brother bought the first tractor available. A Farmall M and we still have it.
- Kuck Oil had one gas pump to service customers at 19 cents a gallon. One day I waited on a gentleman and ran the meter a trifle longer. When he came in to pay I asked for \$2.00. He left and came back about an hour later and asked if the price had gone up. I explained I had run the pump a little too long and he did have a trifle more than ten gallons. He told me he only wanted ten gallons. I gave him ten cents. He left happy. I told “Sky” and he just laughed and said, “You did the right thing.”
- When answering a phone call the farmer asked me to send Elmer out because he needed a delivery. Presuming the farmer

needed the delivery to keep working in the field, Elmer made an extra trip after he had completed his daily route. The next morning Elmer came back to reload his truck and told me the call was for five gallons of kerosene so the farmer could go “coon” hunting! Needless to say Elmer was a little disturbed.

I was hired to replace Lodema (Egbert) Knost. Other employees I know of were Emil (Flip) Fledderjohann and Marjorie (Westerbeck) Schmidt.



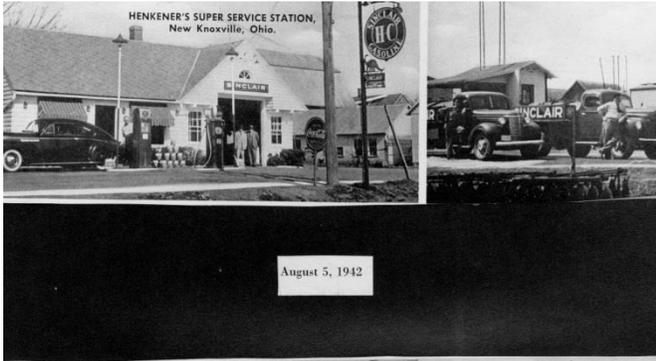
Emil Fledderjohann in 1940

The brothers sold the business to the Marathon Oil Company in Findlay, Ohio in 1949 but all employees were retained. Then in 1950 I was offered a transfer to the Findlay office because they did not have ladies in bulk stations. I was dating Merlin and did not want to leave Auglaize County. I declined and began working at the American Budget. After I left, Fred Gilberg became office manager and Ralph Schwaberow a truck driver. The International Harvester part was sold to other dealers.

I am sharing this part of New Bremen history because many have never heard of Kuck Oil Company-Sinclair and I am the only survivor of the owners and employees.



Kuck Oil Company – Sinclair



Kuck Oil Office and Oil Tanks

Sinclair Stations serviced by Kuck Oil in 1942



Location of Kuck Oil in New Bremen
(Between the railroad tracks and Herman Street)

Kuck Oil Business Card



Susie in new uniform

(Thanks to Tom & Max Fledderjohann for sharing the photos.)

Did I Hear a Bell Ring?



Northern Fire Department on N. Main Street

Fire Bells

The first bell in New Bremen was probably the town bell. The bell, cast in 1859, was rung to alert the volunteer firemen that a fire was in progress. The bell was later placed in the belfry of the engine house for the Northern (Westside) Fire Department. Built in 1866 it was located on the site of the present day post office. The bell was saved by Professor Elmer Ende when the building was demolished in 1959. According to Professor Ende the bell was cast in Europe and had been tolled upon the death of Abraham Lincoln.



Original 1859 Town Bell displayed at Municipal Building

In 1966 the New Bremen Men's Garden Club with the help of the Volunteer Fireman, placed the 1859 fire bell in the park area near the canal between First and Monroe Streets. It was moved in 1982 to the new Municipal building built on N. Washington St. to stand in front of that building.

The Ober Bremen (Cataract, Eastside) Fire Department on Washington Street also had a bell. The first engine house and town hall of Ober Bremen was located on the south side of Front Street between Washington and Walnut Streets. This building was condemned and torn down in 1896 and a new state-of-the-art engine house was built and dedicated in 1897. Mayor

Gustave Boesel and J. H. Grothaus went to Cincinnati to purchase a bell for the engine house. The bell was purchased from the E.W. Vanduzen Company at a cost of \$122.00.



Cataract Fire Department on S. Washington Street circa 1897

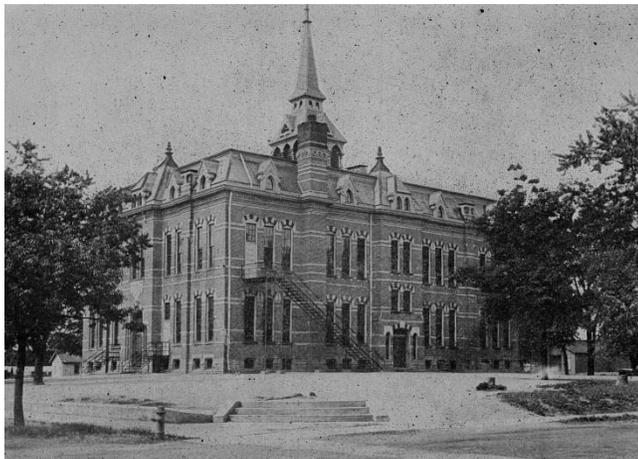
A steam whistle powered by the boilers at the town's power plant was introduced as a warning device in the early 1900s but did not prove reliable if the boilers were down. The town and firemen continued to rely on the bell and in 1914 the bell tower of the Cataract engine house was raised so that the bell could be heard more clearly. This bell also served as a curfew bell to remind the children to be off the streets.



Bell Tower was raised in 1914 so bell could be heard better

An electric siren mounted on a water tower between Walnut and Washington Streets replaced the bell circa 1920. The bell and belfry were removed in the 1970s when the building was renovated. Further renovation by Crown Equipment Corp. in the 1990s replaced the belfry and the bell.

School Bell



Central (Union) School 1878-1957 on S. Franklin Street

The Central (Union) School unified New Bremen, Ober Bremen and Vogelsangtown when the merger of these towns occurred. The gothic-style building had a large belfry and the bell could be heard all over town. The bell rang to call the children to school and alert them to recess. The school served many children for almost 80 years but was closed in 1957 and the bell was placed in storage in the 1929 High School building on Walnut Street.

It was rediscovered in 1973 when the high school music room was being renovated. The bell was carried to the roof and mounted in a six by six enclosure to serve as a "Victory Bell." In 2002 the Victory Bell was moved to the athletic complex at the new high school. An inscription on the bell reads "Van Hausen and Tift, Cincinnati, Buckeye Bells Foundry, 1878."

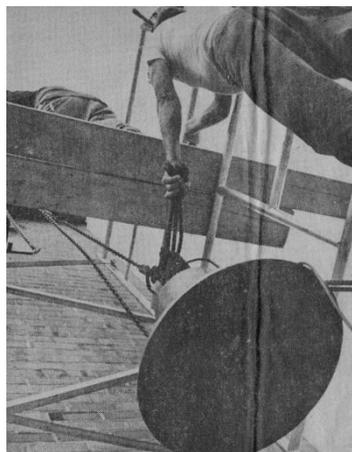


1878 School Bell is Victory Bell at High School

Church Bells

The bell used in the New Bremen Catholic church from 1872 to 1893 was placed in storage when the church closed. For over 50 years the bell remained in storage in a barn belonging to George and John Thieman near Minster. It was given to Fr. Boeke in 1948 when the Holy Redeemer Church was founded on North Herman Street. It was not used in that building and was returned to storage in the parish house garage.

In 1970 Father Will found the bell and wanted it placed in the new church building on South Eastmoor Drive. He sent it to the I. T. Verdin Co. in Cincinnati to be cleaned and serviced. The bell is 20 inches high, 23 inches in diameter and weighs 169 lbs. It has no markings to identify its maker.



The 1872 Bell was placed in the Holy Redeemer Church in 1970

I Remember the 4:30 P.M. Church Bells

In New Bremen you could set your clock by the church bells that rang every Saturday afternoon at 4:30. There were three Lutheran churches and the custodian of each was always on time. By then everyone was supposed to have their duties of the week taken care of. The bells said that tomorrow was Sunday, the day to go to church. This custom was still in practice in 1928, and since Marguerite Koop and Richard Kunning were married at 4:30 PM on Saturday June 28, 1928, they became our wedding bells.

In 1971 we were spending some time in Germany with our daughter and our two grandchildren. One Saturday we were walking about in the village of Landstuhl when all the church bells began to ring. We checked the time and it was 4:30. At that moment we were "young" again and back in New Bremen, Ohio. —Marguerite Koop Kunning. *The Towpath*, January 1989

St. Paul Church, established in 1833, moved into a new brick building with a bell tower in 1891. The building was consumed by fire in 1897. The church was rebuilt the same year. The two bells in the tall bell tower ring each half hour. Carillon Bells were placed in the belfry in 2012 by a generous donation from Edith Wissman and Ethel Mesloh for the enjoyment of all.

Currently the St Peter CCC church (1843) on N. Franklin Street and the Faith Alliance Church (formerly Christ Church, 1907), located on the New Bremen-New Knoxville Road, ring their bells for Sunday services.

The old Zion's Church, now abandoned, was established in 1865. It was built at the corner of N. Main and 1st Streets in 1897 with a belfry. The bell rang for services and Carillon bells could be heard from the belfry in the evening during the 1950s.

Carl Ekermeier and the Mystery Pool

By Edward Conradi Ekermeier

Do you have a picture of a close relative you never met? As you examine the photograph, does your relative appear to be looking at you? Do you know how, when, where and why the picture came into your possession? From family conversations, is there a second narrative to the photograph, a bit of historic trivia? Do you know one or more of your relative's siblings and his or her descendants?



Carl Ekermeier in the backyard of the Ekermeier house on South Washington Street sometime between 1938-1940.

The answers to these questions are part of my family's New Bremen connection and a bit of trivia to the town's history. The man in the picture is my Uncle Carl. He is the brother of Esther, Maud, Irene and Ernest Ekermeier, my father. They were born, raised and with the exception of Ernest, resided in New Bremen. Carl also was a physician there until he died in 1941, just 21 days after my birth in Tallahassee. I do not recall when, where, why or how the photograph came into my possession.

Yes, a second narrative is part of the photograph, taken probably between the summer of 1938 and the summer of 1940 by my Aunt Maud. Carl is inside a wall amongst flora. The wall behind him is curved and forms an oval pool with a swamp-like floor. According to family tradition, the pool was built to house an alligator that had relocated to New Bremen.

Carl and his son, Craig, visited my parents after 1938. Ernest and Liepe Conradi Ekermeier moved in 1938 to Tallahassee from Xenia. Was the pool constructed before the visit? I do not know, but it could have been. Upon their return, the little alligator that came north with them could not roam the streets of New Bremen, seeking playmates, swimming in the canal or foraging for food. The pool would be his New Bremen home.

I am confident my Aunts Maud and Irene did not approve of the resident reptile in their backyard. The grin on Uncle Carl's face suggests to me that he co-conspired with his teenage son to transport the alligator across state lines. From the late 1940s to the mid-1980s, my sister,

Martha (Ekermeier) Drake, and I heard the story of New Bremen's resident reptile, but saw the pool as our Aunts' flower garden and weed patch. Our Aunts forbid us to play inside its walls.

An unspoken question that requires an answer: How many winters did the alligator enjoy in New Bremen? Alligators survive the North Florida winters. The winter temperatures around Tallahassee can plunge to the twenties Fahrenheit and one December the low reached 10 degrees. In 1898, the lowest recorded temperature was minus 3 degrees Fahrenheit. But the cold nights and days usually vanish within 48 hours and the alligators have plenty of the sun's rays to warm their bodies.

To try to answer the question, I suspect that as long as the alligator was small and could be brought inside a house or garage-my cousin Craig would have made that happen-the reptile could have survived at least one winter. An adult alligator would have a difficult time in an Ohio winter. Martha and I do not know what happened to the New Bremen resident reptile-to a zoo perhaps-or if not, where he or she was buried.

Oh. Where were the pool and the picture taken? 120 South Washington Street. Does the pool still exist in the backyard? I wonder...



120 S. Washington St.

Built in 1893 by Dr. M.S. Ekermeier as his home and office for his medical practice.

(Editor's note: I looked in the backyard. There is no pool now and I did not see an alligator.)



Edward Conradi Ekermeier is a descendant of New Bremen families that migrated to Tallahassee, Florida during the early 1900s. His mother, Liepe, was the daughter of Edward Conradi and Augusta Grothaus. His father, Ernest, was born and raised in New Bremen, the son of Dr. M.S. Ekermeier and Martha Schmidt. The author retired from the Air Force as a Lt. Colonel, having served in top secret military intelligence. He graduated from Florida State University with a degree in History and earned Masters Degrees from Boston University and Wesley Theological Seminary. Since birth, New Bremen is like an ancestral home to him, where his favorite cousins live.

From Forest to Farmland

Have you ever wondered what the area around New Bremen looked like when those first German settlers came in 1832 and why they chose this site? One of the early history accounts reports this location was chosen because a clearing was found which showed signs of a previous Indian settlement. Also, the area was on the Auglaize Trail (now Route 66) and the search party was probably aware that a canal was planned through this part of Ohio.

Exploring the area they found land which had been leveled by glaciers leaving a till plain of fertile soil. In this part of Ohio the bedrock is covered by a thick layer of glacier deposited soil called till. Till is composed of a mixture of materials that range in size from clay to gravel and even some boulders.



A granite boulder recently emerged in the Conradi field just east of New Bremen. Boulders of this type have their origin in Canada and traveled with the glacier that covered portions of Ohio thousands of years ago.

New Bremen and German Township are located on a gravel ridge known as the St. Johns Ridge. In addition to depositing a fertile soil the glacier also created an almost level terrain well suited to agriculture after being cleared. But all around this location was thick forest.

A description of the forest circa 1835 is given by Liwwät Böke in the book compiled by Luke B. Knapke (Minster Historical Society) about her pioneer life after she arrived in this area.

...Of the forest...I am imprisoned, swallowed deep in its gloomy throat. In these wooded depths there is not dimension or direction, so dreadfully quiet, so damp, dark, cool. Behind, below, above, in front are the brush, the weeds, and two million unbending trees. Their branches, their boughs clutch at me at each step, and there is no path except by the old branchless trees (p. 99)...on each acre there stand 65 to 100 huge thick trees. With all the thistles and thorns, and stones under the

brush, this means that 3 acres is all Natz and I can clear with luck in one summer if I am not with child (p. 117)...in spring the children play in the warm forest, scurrying about and looking about, and carelessly they get turned around, don't recognize the surroundings, are lost...spring brings trouble, so we carefully use necessary precautions. This concern is always needed for going about too boldly in the forest is unsafe (p.115)...

In 1870, Christian Gieseke made his home in Hopewell Township in Mercer County, just west of New Bremen. The land was purchased at a \$1.00/acre and it was all woods with a small log house which the Indians had occupied at one time. Here Christian made his home with his new bride, Amelia Bakhaus. In later years, their daughter Ida Gieseke Heinfeld remembered how her father marked the trees through the thick wooded area so that she could go to school and not get lost in the woods.

After buying land, the first priority for the early farmers was to expand the area that could be cultivated. To do this they had to move the stones and brush, then cut and burn the larger trees. This task could take several years to complete since they worked with only simple tools and safety was always a concern. An average farm at that time was 50 acres.

Today on the Amsterdam Road between Route 66 and Kettler Road there are wooded areas on both sides of the road that have been undisturbed for many years. In the summer it is possible to see only a little way into the woods because the growth is so dense. The tree trunks are wide in diameter to support the lofty branches. The ground beneath the trees is wet and boggy and the air is cool. When I pass these woods I think that this is probably how the forest looked when the early settlers arrived.

I encourage you to take a walk this summer along the Towpath to the Kuenning-Dicke Natural Area and think about the monumental task of clearing the land that was done by the early farmers. They had a vision for the future that was true because today agriculture is still the most important land use in Ohio.



Kuenning-Dicke Natural Area on Lock Two Road

Gypsy Stories

Around 1900 seeing colorful Gypsy caravans was a picturesque part of life in the Miami Valley area. According to a 1931 Dayton Daily News article by Howard Burba, in 1856 Owen Stanley and his wife came to the United States and soon settled in the Dayton area. They were known as the King and Queen of the Gypsies. The Stanley family bought land 5 miles northeast of Dayton. From there they and their heirs were said to direct the travels of the Gypsy caravans for many years. So it is no surprise that many times those caravans with their brightly painted wagons visited the New Bremen area. Here are four stories about that part of our history.

Bernice (Doenges) Dilger (1905-1998) told a couple of gypsy stories in 1993 when interviewed by her neighbor Terri Bargeman.

In the early 1900s gypsies were quite common in western Ohio. They were not well liked and when they were around everyone locked their doors at night. Whether they were all thieves is hard to say, but enough of them were to earn them a bad reputation.

One morning when my dad and the neighbor men were breaking up the lock (removing the wood that made up the canal lock for firewood), a gypsy girl came wandering by and became quite friendly with them. Most of them didn't pay any attention to her, but one of the men working behind the woodpile was able to get a good view of the situation.

One by one she picked the men's pockets clean. Her undershirts were full of pockets and that is where she stashed their wallets. He watched quietly, chuckling to himself at just how slick she was. He let her have her fun and then he came around the woodpile and strolled her way. She was using all her charm on him when he gave her the surprise of her life-he picked her up and held her upside down, shaking her as hard as could. She kicked and screamed like a wildcat caught in a trap, but it did no good. Some of the other men were about to come to her aid, when their wallets started dropping out of her petticoats. Convinced that her pockets were finally empty, the neighbor stood her on her feet again and sent her on her way with a chuckle. The men gathered round to collect their wallets and watches. They ended up with more money than they'd lost themselves, but they figured that was pure profit.

One cold winter night we heard the faint sound of a tinkling bell that seemed to be coming from somewhere north of the house. Father went outside to investigate and discovered a gypsy wagon parked by the creek at the bend of the canal road. It seemed awfully quiet there and Mother finally went to inquire if all was well.

Things were anything but well. They had so little.

Their horse had died shortly after they parked. Also, there was a new baby and both the mother and baby were doing poorly. Mother offered to take the baby to our house and care for it. With the baby gone, the husband was able to look after his wife. Mother prepared hot nourishing meals and my sister, Lenora, carried them down to the wagon.

The mother and child improved steadily. Once they were well enough to travel again, the neighbors all chipped in and gave them a new horse. Mother had gone through all of my baby clothes, bundled up those that were still nice and gave them to the new mother. Who knows, maybe we had entertained angels unaware! (The Towpath, January 2004)

Dorothy Gieseke Kah (1915-2006) also remembered the gypsies and told this story.

It was springtime and word went around that the Gypsies were in town. I remember the colorful wagons and clothing of the Gypsies. We were not allowed to leave home alone because our parents were afraid the Gypsies would snatch us. We were instructed to come right home from school.

When I was in the second grade, two Gypsy wagons passed me on my way home from school. I was fearful that they would take me with them but I was also fascinated with the life that they led. Then with wings like a bird I ran all the way home to tell my mother what I had seen.

The Gypsies usually camped along the canal near the Lock Two road. We lived on Second Street, east of Jefferson Street and we could see their camp from our house. In the evening they would build a large bonfire and would cook their meals. Then they would play music and sing. We sat on out on our porch and listened to the music with excitement in our hearts for the different way of life.

During the day the Gypsies would come into town and beg for food at the stores and houses. I do not remember them stealing but heard from my uncle Milton Gieseke, a store owner, that they did.

I always felt a little sad when I looked over to the canal and saw that they had left and traveled on.

Marjorie Gieseke Conradi Lietz (1918-1999) wrote that during the time of the TriCounty Fair on the corner of Route 274 and Kettler Road, the Gypsies camped on the south end of Kettler Road and farmers lost chickens, eggs and other items that were not under lock and key.

Lawrence Tebbe (1901-1972) was one of ten children born to John and Elizabeth (Thaman) Tebbe. He grew up in an area approximately six miles from Minster, six miles from New Bremen and about three miles from Kettlersville. The closest public high school was in New Bremen.

When Lawrence decided he was going to attend New Bremen High School, he befriended a New Bremen veterinarian, Doc Schmidt. Doc talked to Lawrence about a short cut to school through the woods. Back then, that was a dangerous journey. Gypsies often took over the woods and did not like people passing through on their turf. Doc Schmidt came up with a plan.

Lawrence should barter with the gypsies for safe passage to and from school and in exchange, Doc Schmidt would care for their horses with free meds. This worked out quite well for Lawrence and the gypsies. They kept their bargain with him and Doc Schmidt cared for their horses and would occasionally bring them food items such as bread and grain. Lawrence in using this shortcut was able to attend High School in New Bremen without fear of the gypsies and he actually befriended them. *(This information is from an interview with Norma (Tebbe) Gutmann about her brother Fr. Lawrence Tebbe by Connie Butcher and Anne Johnston, February 5, 2009.)*

More about Lawrence Tebbe

Lawrence J. Tebbe graduated from NBHS with the class of 1919. At the commencement program he gave an oration titled "The Reward of Toil." He continued his education at the Ohio Wesleyan University intending to major in engineering. According to his sister's interview, during his time there he and three Methodist minister friends would discuss the ministry. They would gather in Tebbe's room to study scripture and that changed his life. He transferred to the University of Dayton and completed his education there.

After seminary he was ordained to the priesthood in 1929. A plaque in The Church of the Holy Redeemer in New Bremen states that Father Tebbe was their first priest son. For nine years he served churches in Kansas and Ohio, worked with the Catholic Social Services and taught school at Elder High School. Then in 1938 he was assigned to the church in Fryburg, Ohio and remained there until his death in 1972.

During those years of his very successful pastorate in Fryburg, Father Tebbe also found success in other areas. He continued to be a public speaker and author. Some of his work was published in the Wapakoneta newspaper under the pen name "Si Sawbuck Sez". In 1950 he wrote a Jubilee Remembrance Book on the history of St. John's Church and a sequel in 1968. He was well known as an artist and several of his paintings are in the collection of

the Shrine of the Holy Relics in Maria Stein. Also at this Shrine are examples of his work as a brick and stone mason.

Sunday evening marks the annual baccalaureate services at St. Paul church, for the graduating class of the New Bremen High School. Dr. Homer B. Williams, president of Bowling Green State Normal School having been secured to deliver the address of the occasion. The Class of 1919 is composed of twenty-four members, fifteen girls and nine boys, and according to records attained the individuals of the class stand well in rank with the usual product of the New Bremen High School. Besides the address by Dr. Williams there will be other numbers on the program, and the school patrons and friends are urgently requested to be present at the services. *New Bremen Sun, May 23, 1919*

NBHS 1919 Graduation Program printed in the *New Bremen Sun*

Program
of the
New Bremen High School
Friday Evening, May 30, 1919

March—		
Invocation.....	Rev. Henninger	
Salutatory.....	Lyman Boesel	
Piano Solo.....	Katherine Rabe	
	"Rustle of Spring" — Christi Sinding	
Symposium—"Women in the War"		
Women in General.....	Elizabeth Grothaus	
Jane A. Delano.....	Marie Woehler	
Edith L. Cavell.....	Helen Nieter	
Quartet.....	"The Flowerets Close at Eve"	
	Vera Weinberg, Norma Vornholt, Mildred Boesel, Hedwig Nieter	
Costume Reading.....	Dorothy Kunning	
	"Laureame, the Marble Dream"	
Violin Solo.....	Frances Bruns	
	"Minuet in G" — Beethoven	
Oration.....	Lawrence Tebbe	
	"The Reward of Toil"	
Piano Solo.....	Catherine Speckman	
	"Minuet" — Paderewski	
Symposium—"Heroes of the War"		
Eddie Rickenbacher.....	Chester Trautwein	
Whittlesey.....	Lawrence Heil	
Lufberry.....	Raymond Froning	
Vocal Solo.....	Mildred Boesel	
	"The Lass with the Delicate Air"	
Valedictory.....	Ione Schulenberg	
Class Song—		
Presentation of Diplomas.....	Supt. Elmer W. Jordan	

Class Roll		
Harry Ahlers	Lyman Boesel	Mildred Boesel
Frances Bruns	Ferdinand Clausing	Raymond Froning
Elizabeth Grothaus	Charlotte Haines	Lawrence Heil
Marguerite Koop	Dorothy Kunning	Helen Nieter
Hedwig Nieter	Katherine Rabe	Ione Schulenberg
Catherine Speckman	Richard Sunderman	Lawrence Tebbe
Chester Trautwein	Norma Vornholt	Italia Wierth
Marie Woehler	Ernst Wuebbenhorst	Vera Weinberg

Class Motto
Our Aim: Success — Our Hope: To Win.

Class Colors Crimson and White	Class Flower Red Rose
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SHARING MEMORIES



**Dorothy (Bambauer) Graham
and Wilbert Gruebmeier**

Cousins Dorothy (Bambauer) Graham and Wilbert Gruebmeier met recently to reminisce about their younger days. Both born in 1918, they shared their memories of growing up; Dorothy in Lock Two and Wilbert on the family farm. They remembered many happy gatherings over the years because their mothers were sisters. Flora Gruebmeier and Amelia Bambauer were two of the eight children of William and Mary (Egbert) Wehrman. They kindly shared these family pictures.



**Katherine (Bambauer) Schmieder, Wilbert Gruebmeier
and Dorothy (Bambauer) Graham in Lock Two**



Ed & Amelia Bambauer, Dorothy, Katherine, Robert



Wilbert Gruebmeier with New Boots

LIFE STORIES AND MEMORIES

Last June we began to record life stories and memories of individuals and families. We would love to add more stories and memories to our collection. Please contact any member of the NBHA Board and we will schedule a time for you. We will assist you in telling your story. There are no set topics and we will provide you with suggestions if you are not sure what to talk about. You will receive a copy of the interview on a CD for your use.

We thank the following people for sharing their stories:

- Dennis Dicke
- Ed Rump & Bev Rump Plattner
- Carolyn Pape
- Larry Dicke
- Wallace Hirschfeld
- Roger & Leota Busse
- Annabelle Wenning
- Robert & Mary Finke
- Delores Stienecker
- Melba Bender (from Fort Loramie)
- Diane Paul
- Helen Tangeman
- Leonard & Carmel Williams
- Lloyd Schroer
- Don Isern
- Jerry Maxson
- Susie Hirschfeld
- Dorothy Bambauer Graham & Wilbert Gruebmeier

The life stories and memories have been recorded for future generations and we are taking suggestions for the best way to share these recordings.

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...



This picture of the first Kindergarten class in New Bremen (1953) was submitted by Nancy Kuenning Wetzler. Can you name the members?



The STAMCO Girls softball team (1948-1949) picture was submitted by Stan Kuenning. How many of the people can you identify?



Della Williams Conradi found this tintype photo in the attic of her house on N. Main St. in New Bremen. Does anyone know who they are?



This tool was submitted by Susie Hirschfeld. It belonged to her Great Grandfather Fark. Can you name its use?



Do you recall where this basket was used? Photo submitted by Tom Fledderjohann.

History Mystery Answers for the April 2013 Issue



**Stan Kuenning in 1933
sitting on the City Park cannon**



**Verlin Hirschfeld, Myrtle (Noland) Belton,
James F. Dicke circa 1965**



Knights of Pythias hat



**The two businesses represented are Advance Auto
and Hoffman Decorating.**

**From left: Tom Kuenning, Henry Hoffman, Paul
Hoffman, Lawrence "Maggie" Roettger, Harry
Wiehe, Clifford Bay, Ed Roettger, Ward Pape**

**In this photo, John Hoffman is standing next to his
father Paul Hoffman.**

From Our Readers:

Sarah Belton identified Verlin Hirschfeld, Myrtle Belton and James Dicke, Sr.

Donna Conradi identified Verlin Hirschfeld, James Dicke and Myrtle Belton and says she enjoys reading *The Towpath*.

Stan & Dona Mae Kuenning identified Verlin Hirschfeld, James Dicke and Myrtle Belton. They also named the two businesses in the photo as Advance Auto and Hoffman Painting.

Bob Finke identified Verlin Hirschfeld, Myrtle Belton and James Dicke. He named the two businesses and 5 of the 8 people in the picture.

Dru Meyer identified Verlin Hirschfeld and James Dicke. She also recognized the Knights of Pythias hat and the Advance Auto Business location.

Daryl Koenig identified Verlin Hirschfeld and James Dicke and identified the two businesses as Advance Auto and Hoffman Painting. He named Tom Kuenning and Henry Hoffman in the photo.

Denny Burnell recognized the two businesses Advance Auto and Hoffman Decorating. He also said that he enjoyed the article about the carbide cannon because it brought back memories of some of his childhood adventures.

Jim Rempe named the two businesses and says that he enjoys *The Towpath* and looks forward to each issue.

John Hoffman provided more information about the picture of his grandfather and Tom Kuenning. He said:

This picture was taken by Taylor Studios of New Bremen, to be used in the Chevrolet Friends Magazine. To my knowledge it was never published. Tom Kuenning representing Advance Auto is presenting the title for the 1948 green Chevrolet Suburban to my grandfather Henry Hoffman of Hoffman Decorating.

My father, Paul, had a painting job in Wapakoneta and when he and the crew reached the house to be painted, they jumped out of the Suburban in their white painting outfits. A neighbor lady came over to ask if there was a sickness in the house or an accident, thinking the Suburban was an ambulance. She was reassured that they were just there to paint the house.

The truck was used for two years and then traded for a Chevrolet station wagon at Advance Auto. The Suburban was then purchased by Wesley "Freeze" Howell of Howell's IGA and later sold to Cliff Harris for his business.

(Thanks for the information and picture, John!)

*Keep those cards, letters, calls and e-mails coming.
We love to hear from you! - Gen & Joyce*

More Comments from Our Readers

Amy Scheer wonders how the Little Six Band got its name when it had eight members. She also wonders what “D & T Traction” is from the article about the 1913 flood. (*Dennis Dicke says that was a Dayton & Toledo interurban car.*)

Amy said that she enjoyed the articles by Bob Gilberg and JoAnn Meckstroth very much.



Correction: Herbert Garmhausen, Henry Mueller, Edward Conradi, August Mueller, Charles Garmhausen, John Mueller

Judy (Mueller) Jones wrote: *My sister, Joan, and I are August Mueller's granddaughters. We grew up knowing that Grandpa played the clarinet and had 3 different sized clarinets. My sister now has those instruments.*

So in the photo, the man holding the clarinet is labeled as John Mueller and the man holding the trumpet is labeled as August. We believe that these two names should be exchanged.

I really do enjoy reading the Towpath. I only spent about three years actually living in New Bremen, but visited often while I was growing up. As a family we moved around a lot, so visiting my grandparents there every summer (and often Christmas) made it seem like home.

Please keep up the great work with the Towpath.

(Thank you, Judy, for the correction! -Gen & Joyce)

Gene Topp from Ocala, Florida wrote: *Keep up the great work on the “Towpath.” The articles have stirred some great memories of “growing up” in New Bremen. This is my response to the request at the end of the “Our Miss Burk” in the last issue.*

Memories of Miss Burk? Yes and many of them flashed back when reading the article in the April Towpath. Graduating in 1954 put me in the middle of her influence realm of NBHS students. My Mother was in the 1930 graduating class and thus in the class of '30 picture.

Since both of my parents were former students of hers the reputation she enjoyed at that time was firmly impressed upon me before entering her 7th grade math class. Later teaching high school math for 35 years gave me an even greater appreciation of her great talent in the classroom and school.

One of my great memories concerns the Scholarship tests which were administered back then. After taking a preliminary state test locally, each school could send one student to compete statewide. After the local test my freshman year in Algebra I was not the top score in our class, but the person finishing first chose to take the test in another area so Miss Burk called me in to talk. She said if I was willing to put in some extra time that she would work with me. That involved going to her house at night with a lot of extra work. I do remember passing up those other lucky guys out there playing ball as I was on my way for a few hours of extra math. When the results came in I was second in the state in our class school! It was the result of her extra time and effort, as remember I was not New Bremen's best.

Her encouragement and influence followed when I went on to Heidelberg, majoring in math and education, and through the following years I spent teaching in public schools. How fortunate NBHS was to have her for those many years.

(Thank you, Gene, for sharing your memories of Miss Burk! -Gen & Joyce)

MEMORY CORNER

Please share your memories with us! Call, write or e-mail and tell us what you remember when you look at these pictures. Who is this? What service did he provide? What is the horse's name?



**New Bremen Historic Association
P.O. Box 73**

New Bremen, Ohio 45869-0073

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CM D-11 - Means you are a Charter Member and made a Donation in 2011

UPCOMING EVENTS 2013

JUNE, JULY AND AUGUST.... The **Museum** will be open each **Sunday from 2 to 4 PM**. Please plan to visit and bring your family and friends. We have lots of interesting things for you to see.

SEPTEMBER 28 & 29th.... Visit our booth at **Pumpkinfest**

DECEMBER..... **Christmas Tree Festival and Open House** at the Lockkeeper’s House

Spick and Span

Waste paper scattered about, upon the streets, furnished the topic for a short conversation with a prominent business man a few days ago. His comment was the effect that the waste paper scattered promiscuously about the streets attributes more to unsightliness in our otherwise spick and span village than any other thing, and he expressed surprise that the citizens in general do not manifest more civic pride along this line, in view of the fact that New Bremen has borne a reputation almost throughout the state for its cleanliness and well-kept lawns. - *New Bremen Sun, May 23, 1919*

Notice to Property Holders: To Clean Gutters, Sidewalks and Alleys

Notice is hereby given to all property holders to clean their respective gutters, sidewalks and alleys by June 1st, 1903. If this notice is not complied with, same will be attended to by the Street Commissioner at the expense of the property holder. By Order of Council, F. W. Bruns, Clerk - *New Bremen Sun 5/22/1903*