

# THE TOWPATH

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THE NEW BREMEN HISTORIC ASSOCIATION

OCTOBER 2015

## A SPECIAL DAY AT THE PAPE HOUSE MUSEUM

The barn on this property is also a historic structure. Built in 1878 it is thought to be the oldest remaining barn in New Bremen. Don Pape remembers shooting sparrows here when he was a boy.



**Don Pape & family with Roger & Cheryl (Pape) Barlage on their way to visit the Pape House**

It was a special day when 92 year old Don Pape toured the house built by his Great-Grandparents-Ernst Wilhelm & Sophie (Thieman) Pape. His Great-Grandfather Ernst had just returned from the Civil War in 1865 when he built the house that served as both his residence and tailor shop. This is the house that has now become a museum of the New Bremen Historic Association.

Although the 150 year old house has had many owners, the name Pape House was chosen for its original owners. After the Pape family lived there for 35 years the Neumann family also had a lengthy ownership between the years of 1906 and 1930. Many people remember when Amanda Quellhorst Fark lived in this house from 1967 until her death in 1988.



**Don Pape by the Pape House Museum barn**

In addition to visiting the museum, Don was kind enough to share his family photos and memories of growing up in New Bremen. The following pages contain these photos and memories.



**236 N. Main Street "The Pape House" in 2015**

Frederick Pape, the grandfather of Don Pape, was the youngest child of Ernst Wilhelm and Sophie Pape. Frederick was 10 years old in 1865 when the Pape House was built. He lived in this house until his marriage in 1880.



**Don Pape's Grandparents on his father's side: Frederick and Wilhelmina (Heil) Pape with their four children: Adolph, Linda, Carl and Alvin.**

The son of Carl and Hilda (Dicke) Pape, Don was the second born of four boys. Carl, Jr., the oldest was born in 1919, Don came along in 1923, David in 1925 and James in 1928.



**Carl & Hilda (Dicke) Pape with sons Carl and Don.**



**Don Pape's Grandparents on his mother's side: Frederick and Martha (Wuebbenhorst) Dicke with their four children: Hilda, Edwin, Herbert and Della.**

The Carl Pape family lived at 318 N. Main, on the southeast corner of Main and Pearl Streets, and Don has many happy memories from this location. He remembers the Lone Pine and the large fields that now sport new houses. He also remembers a large structure on the property that had been built in 1865 to serve as the church building for Zion's congregation. This early building was converted to be a barn in 1896 when Zion's congregation built a new brick building at the corner of Main & First Streets. Don remembers that the barn had a large door added for the automobile.

Don graduated from NBHS in 1941. There were 11 boys and 23 girls in his class. He fondly remembers many details about his classmates and marvels that he has outlived most of them. After graduation he found employment in Cincinnati where he worked as an electrician.

In 1943 he joined the army and spent two years in Europe in service to his country.



**James and Don Pape standing in their yard on N. Main St. In the background is the barn that had been the Zion Church building.**

After his wartime Army service he returned to Cincinnati and married Marilyn Boggs. They became the parents of three children, Don Jr., Martha Pape Fowler and Gary.



Don Pape with his son Don Pape, Jr. and grandchildren Asher & Malia, daughter and son-in-law Martha & Craig Fowler

**More pictures from the Pape Family albums:**



Don & Carl Pape - Don says he remembers this day very well and that he did not like that goat!



Dave, Don & Jim Pape

**The Frederick Pape Family in 1954**



1<sup>st</sup> Row: Hoverman boy, John Pape, Jim Pape, Hoverman (2) Boys, Fred Pape. 2<sup>nd</sup> Row: Carolyn Pape, Ned Metzger, Mariann Pape, Adolph Pape, Linda Hoverman, Unknown woman with girl, Alvin Pape, Carl Pape holding Cindy Pape Dicke, Magdalena (Hon) Pape, Gene Phyllis Hoverman. 3<sup>rd</sup> Row: Paul Pape, Everett Schmidt, Barbara Pape Schmidt, Mary Ellen Pape Ketzler, Mary Lou Pape, Margaret Pape, Unknown, Estella Dick Pape, Marjorie Metzger, Dave Pape, Paul Ketzler, Jim Pape, Richard Pape, Betty Hoverman (John Roger Hoverman's wife.)

We were so happy that Roger and Cheryl (Pape) Barlage arranged this special day for their Uncle Don at the Pape House Museum.

From left: Roger & Cheryl (Pape) Barlage, Don Pape, Jr., Asher, Malia, Martha (Pape) Fowler and Don Pape, Sr.



## A NEW BREMEN NOTABLE

### Charles "Carl" Boesel

#### Is featured as a New Bremen Pioneer

Born in Lauterecken, Germany in 1814 he emigrated in 1833 with his mother and four siblings.

In Cincinnati they met with the City of Bremen Society and traveled to the new town of Bremen. However, there was no work for 19 year old Charles Boesel, so he went to Ft. Wayne, to find employment as a shoemaker. In the spring of 1835 he returned to New Bremen hoping that the town had grown and he would be able to find work. This was a choice that brought good fortune to Mr. Boesel and New Bremen. He began an illustrious business and political career.

In the 1933 New Bremen Centennial book, C. A. Schrage called Charles Boesel *the real leader of the pioneers* for his political service as well as his successful business affairs.

#### Business Affairs

His business ventures began in 1836 when he started a dry goods and hardware store later known as Boesel & Kunning. The first warehouse in New Bremen was built by him along the new Miami & Erie Canal. (This later became Rairdon's Livery.) He was appointed Superintendent of the Miami & Erie Canal for three years. He established the Boesel Bank in 1872.

Charles Boesel's business affairs expanded continuously and he soon started trading in wheat and the buying and packing of pork. Thereby, New Bremen won the reputation of being an important trading post and the town grew in proportion to its business activity. The work on the Miami & Erie Canal had already made New Bremen the headquarters of this part of the canal and when the canal was opened in 1842-3, everything was transported via the canal because of the lack of other transportation means. In a short time, New Bremen controlled the entire grain trade of the area and well into Indiana. New Bremen became an important trading post and developed its business opportunity in a way which would have done honor to a larger city. It soon became necessary for Boesel to give up shoe making. He no longer had the time to make shoes.

In proportion to the expansion of Boesel's businesses, which caused him to become well-to-do, he also gained more respect from his fellow citizens. His friendly relationship with others, his prompt carrying out of all his duties, and his meticulous honesty made him generally beloved by all. In addition to many other small offices, he was the first clerk of New Bremen. As early as 1838, his friends nominated him as candidate for treasurer of Mercer County...In 1840, under the administration of President Martin Van Buren, he became postmaster of New Bremen and held this position for nine years. Also in 1840, he was elected as commissioner of Mercer County and served two terms (6 years) in this office.

*-The Towpath, Lucille Francis, October, 2005*



#### Political Career

His political career in the state government began in 1861 when he was elected to the Ohio House of Representatives. Then in 1869 he was elected as Senator. He served 4 years in each branch of the state legislature. In 1876 he was named by Governor Rutherford B. Hayes as a member of the Ohio Welfare Administration.

Mr. Boesel was a great promoter of New Bremen as evidenced by this article he wrote during his term as Senator.

#### Charles Boesel's Summary of New Bremen

*As already mentioned, the Miami & Erie Canal, which connects the two cities of Cincinnati and Toledo, passes through the middle of New Bremen. The town therefore has a direct connection with these two very important cities during the entire year, with the exception of two to three winter months.*

*The Dayton & Michigan Railroad, which passes 10 miles east of town, is used in the winter for the transportation of absolutely necessary articles and these can be transported thereto and therefrom easily by wagons.*

*In addition to the daily mail connection with Piqua, there is an omnibus (hack) line to Botkins, the nearest railroad station.*

*For storing of grain, which is purchased during the entire year in very substantial quantities, there exist at the present time 7 large warehouses in the town. For example, in the winter of 1867, 9500 hogs were slaughtered and in previous years, this had actually attained the number of 12,000.*

*The woolen mill erected by Messrs. Finke, Meyer & Co. several years ago contributes substantially to the development of the town.*

*In addition to 7 or 8 dry goods stores which all do a good business, there are a furniture factory, a flax factory, an oil mill and a plow factory which is operated by the Lanfersieck brothers, whose products enjoy such a high reputation that only plows of their manufacture are used in a radius of many counties and are being sent even as far as Illinois and Missouri.*

*Certainly it is fair to say that within the state of Ohio, there is hardly a town of the same population which excels New Bremen with reference to business activity. With respect to activity and ambition of the citizens, cleanliness of the streets, etc., New Bremen may be designated as a model town.*

*-Carl Boesel, 6/1/1869*

### The Carl/Charles Boesel Family

In 1836, Charles married Sophia Wilhelmina Carolina Maurer. They lived at 5 N. Main in a house that he had built. In this building he began a general store in 1838. Charles and his wife Sophia had two sons.

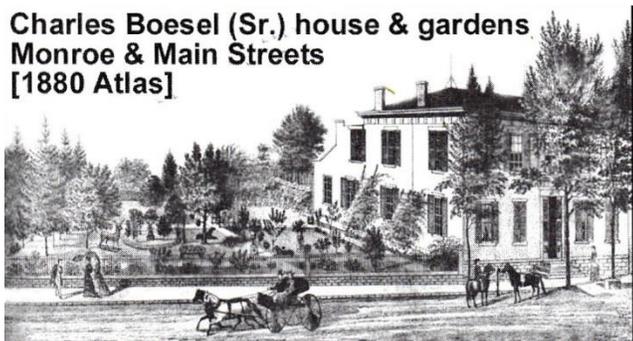
- Carl **Jacob** Boesel
- Carl Adam Boesel, Jr.

Sophia died in childbirth with Carl Adam. In 1844 Charles married his first wife's sister, Dorothea Scharlotte Maurer. Their children were:

- August Boesel
- Sophia Wilhelmina Carolina Boesel (married John Mesloh)
- Dorothea Boesel (married John Jacob Frey)
- Marie **Rosine** Louise Boesel (married Henry Schmidt)
- Gustave Adolph Boesel
- Julius Boesel
- Marie **Emma** Boesel (married William Schmidt)

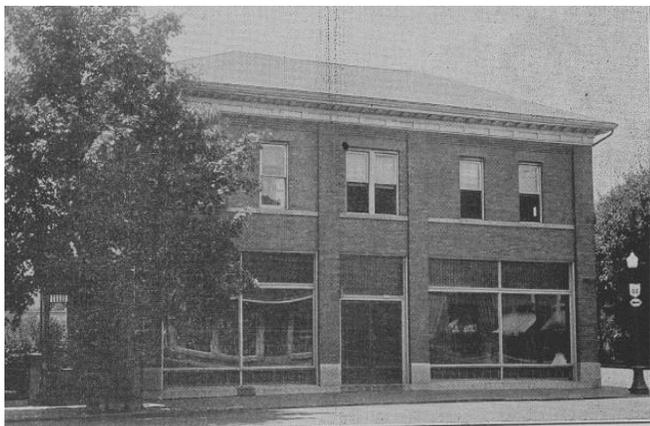
Dorothea died in 1874 from a dog bite. Charles married a third time to Mary Schroeder and had two more children:

- Franklin Fernando Tilden Boesel
- Clara Louise Elizabeth Boesel (married John Koenig)



**Charles Boesel (Sr.) house & gardens  
Monroe & Main Streets  
[1880 Atlas]**

Charles Boesel owned all the land on the south side of Monroe from Main St. to Water Street. He built this house at the corner of Main & Monroe.



**In later years the Boesel home became the City Building and U. S. Post Office. (New Bremen Centennial booklet, 1933)**

### Carl, Karl or Charles?

Karl Mesloh (great-great-grandson of Charles Boesel) has offered this information: *Carl, spelled with a C is the ancient spelling. Karl with a K is more modern (from about the 1500s) Charles is the anglicized spelling.*

Another explanation is that Carl was more common in northern Germany and Karl in southern Germany.

The spelling and choice of name also depended on who was recording the information. An English speaking person would more likely record the name as Charles or Karl while the German speaking person would choose Carl.

### Obituary for Charles Boesel

#### *Stern des Westlichen Ohio- 4/23/1885*

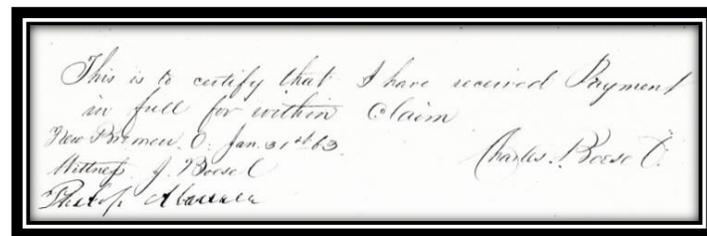
The Honorable Charles Boesel, Sr. died on Friday, April 17, 1885 at 10:30 PM after 3 months of painful suffering from a liver enlargement, at the age of 71 years, 2 months and 16 days.

Mr. Boesel was rewarded in great measure by his fellow citizens with many positions of honor, etc. In politics, Mr. Boesel had an outstanding position and was a rock-ribbed Democrat ever since he became a citizen of the United States.

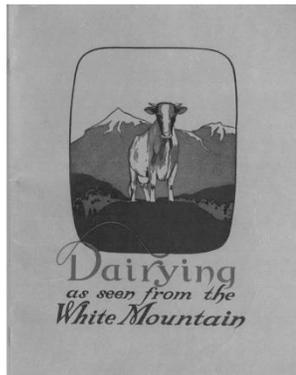
That his name had a good reputation everywhere and that he was known and respected far and wide as an honest man was proved by the large attendance at his funeral. Participants arrived from all areas. The funeral procession was the largest which had ever been seen in this part of the United States. In addition to the large number of pedestrians, the procession contained 213 buggies. Pastor Buerkle gave the funeral oration which was in every way outstanding and did honor to the departed in every way.

Mr. Boesel left a widow and 11 children – 6 sons and 5 daughters. Four young daughters preceded him in death.

A good husband and father; an upright, just citizen; a benefactor of the poor and abandoned has gone home. May the earth be light on him.



In 1854 my great-grandfather, Carl F. W. Conradi, borrowed \$115.65 from Carl Boesel for the purchase of land in New Bremen. Above is the signature of Charles "Carl" Boesel in 1863. (Submitted by Genevieve Conradi)



*Dairying as seen from the White Mountain*, published in 1927, tells the story of the pioneers who settled Northwestern Ohio and the dawn of a new industry, *The White Mountain Creamery and Dairy Companies*. A copy of this booklet has been placed in our museum courtesy of James F. Dicke, Sr., Tim Eiting, Stan Kuenning and Frank Kuenning.

The second installment of this booklet follows.

## **Marketing Farm Products in Early Canal Days**

Farming became a real business for there was now an outlet and a market for whatever was grown in excess of the family's needs.

Hogs had always grown and multiplied in this country, getting considerable nourishment from the oak and beech mast, that was so abundant in our forests. It was therefore only natural that New Bremen, where the canal boats docked and water power was plentiful, should become a thriving pork packing center, second only to "Porkopolis," as Cincinnati was sometimes called.

One would see on a winter's day, from November until March, caravans of from 50 to 70 sleigh loads of dressed hogs coming into New Bremen from the pioneer farms of Northwestern Ohio and Indiana to be delivered to one of the five packing houses. The farmers came from a radius of 75 miles, delivering 10,000 hogs annually. Here the pork was packed and in the spring sent down the canal to the market in Cincinnati.

There was traffic congestion in New Bremen in those days, sleighs jostled each other and it was not an uncommon sight to see the streets about the five hotels so lined and packed with riggings for the carriage of pork that passage was almost impossible.

For fifteen years a stage coach drove over the unspeakable, indescribable corduroy, stone and mud roads between New Bremen and Piqua, which boasted the nearest express office. People must have been very honest in those days. It was often night before the stage coach reached Newport with the money to pay the farmers and meat packers for their pork, and, although there was probably not a man, woman or child on the whole 23 mile trip who did not know that the stage coach carried a satchel full of money, it was never molested.

## **The Passing of the Meat Packing Industry**

The telegraph preceded the railroad in New Bremen and a private line to Botkins connected with the lines on the Cincinnati, Hamilton & Dayton, (now the B&O.) Many an important pork and grain quotation was delivered over this line for 20 cents. It was only a couple of years, however, until the coming of the railroads and New Bremen received a new impetus; faster, more economical transportation facilities were provided for the shipment of farm produce and the receiving of manufactured goods.

As the Canal succeeded the oxen years before, so the railroad succeeded the canal; affording a better means of transportation for passengers, produce and mail. With the passing of the canal, passed the pork packing industry and the

stage coach from New Bremen. With the railroads came the meat buyers from the larger cities, buying pork and beef on the hoof, which was shipped out alive. Distant markets were available for the farm and woodland produce of the fertile lands of the Miami and Maumee.

Progress was everywhere evident and although much activity passed from New Bremen with the closing of the canal and pork packing industries, there was no interruption in the steady march of progress, for New Bremen was soon to see the founding of a new industry which would offer new opportunities, new developments and markets, and return to the farmers of Northwestern Ohio a hundred times the yearly profit received from the porkers. The lands had been cleared to a very great extent, and the farmers were in position to entertain a new idea – the raising of dairy cows for the production of milk products – when a young man, son of one of the pioneers of New Bremen, who had helped to build the canal, conceived the idea of a creamery business.

## **And the Dawn of a New Industry**

"Meat to eat and leather for the cobbler"- Milk to drink and a little cream for butter – for many years these had been the only things of value obtained from the beef or dual purpose and scrub type cows found on the Northwestern Ohio farms in the early 1880s.

Hogs, sheep, cattle and grain-raising for nearly fifty years had been the main source of income. On many farms, cattle and horses were kept in barns and stables that were low, dark and poorly ventilated. Staggering rail fences enclosed the fields and pastures. Good crops were raised but hauled over poor roads to poorer markets and the average income was small in consequence. On most farms a few dairy cows were kept, but they were of the scrub variety and few farmers took any interest in the improvement of their herds.

Dairying was not a special branch of agriculture, and the only markets established for dairy products were the local stores, where butter, cottage cheese and eggs were traded at very low prices for groceries.

Nearly everyone in the towns kept a cow or two, the door yards and roadways were the common pastures, butter was "homemade" and creameries were unknown, when in 1884 Louis Huenke established at New Bremen the first creamery in Northwestern Ohio. This was the humble beginning of the giant business later known as the White Mountain Creamery and Dairy Companies.

The establishment of the creamery furnished an incentive for better herds, better housing for dairy cattle, better feeding, fencing and care, and in all these things Mr.Huenke blazed the way.

It is a credit to New Bremen that it has produced from pioneer stock, a man who has always had the interests of the farmer at heart; who with his associates struggled for years to establish a business that would profitably supplant the loss of the meat packing industry, once the farmers' greatest source of income.

## **Louis Huenke Begins Forging the "Link"**

It was amid unattractive, uninspiring and unpromising local dairy conditions that Louis Huenke bought in 1882, the Bunke farm, belonging at one time to the Schroeder lands, and began

the sale of milk and butter to the few families in New Bremen who were becoming “citized” and wished to part company with their bovine friends.

There is a decided contrast between the one “Huenke milk wagon” of 1882, with its high wheels, over which ran leather “fenders” or mudguards, with soap box crates filled with individual looking tin pails, and the spotlessly clean White Mountain wagons of today, drawn by carefully groomed gray horses over scores of routes, leaving annually at thousands of homes in Northwestern Ohio, 50,000,000 pints and quarts of pasteurized milk, in sterilized glass bottles.

With the beginning of the local milk route, Louis Huenke began the improvement of his herd. Production increased, local markets became inadequate and a factory to care for the milk and churn the cream into butter became necessary. Louis Huenke was joined by his brother Henry and they planned the first creamery built in this section of the state. The foundation was laid for the erection of a modern plant. The last nail was driven in 1884. The first power churn to be used in this part of the State was installed and Louis Huenke and his efficient co-worker, Mrs. Huenke, viewed with pride their first big butter producing plant, measuring exactly 24 x 24 feet equipped to manufacture fifty pounds of butter daily.

To economically operate this big local plant more cream was necessary than that produced by the Huenke herd, so men were hired to call at the nearby farms to collect cream for manufacture into butter at the Huenke plant. Thus began the systematic collection of cream at the farmer’s gate which has grown into the largest organization of its kind in the world.

Realizing that competition would develop, that organized companies would build factories and compete for the producers’ cream, Mr. Huenke prepared to meet it with a fixed and definite policy of *paying cash for the cream, with one price to all*, and manufacturing a product so uniformly high in quality that it would bring the highest market price and permit him to pay more for his neighbors’ cream than they could obtain from any other source. This policy, evidently so fair in its conception, which Mr. Huenke followed, and which the present organization inherited and now embraces, has proved the most acceptable policy to the producer. The soundness of this policy is evidenced by the continuous growth of the White Mountain Creamery and Dairy Companies during the forty-four years they have operated as “the link between the farm and city,” and by the continued patronage during the past twenty-five years of hundreds of farmers, their number increasing with the years.

The first butter shipped from what was then considered the modern creamery at New Bremen, was made from cream for which Mr. Huenke paid ten cents a pound when the local market price for butter was only eight cents. The first “batch” weighing 113 pounds was packed in tubs stamped “Huenke Bros. Creamery Butter,” and shipped, without knowledge of the Eastern market quotations, to F. C. Barger, New York City, wholesale distributor.

Enthusiasm ran high with the receipt of the check for this first shipment of butter, for it had brought a net price of eighteen cents a pound, ten cents more than the local market price! The proportion of profit per pound on that first shipment was far greater than the *fraction of a cent of profit per pound*

received on White Mountain butter today. Only economical operation, cooperation and fidelity can secure the assured market, the uniformly high quality, and price which are now accorded White Mountain products.

It was well for Mr. Huenke and his patrons that his first venture into foreign markets was profitable for he was to need this encouragement. News of his success, so typical of the times, spread abroad and competitive “skimming stations” and butter factories were erected, until in 1894 ten such plants had sprung up within a radius of fifteen miles of New Bremen. Unfair competition arose, various prices were paid by competitors in order to obtain cream, and products of poor quality were manufactured, bringing butter from the whole region into disrepute and disfavor. These were gaunt, lean years, without profit, but because he was determined to merit the good will and patronage of those who trusted his judgment, Mr. Huenke would not acknowledge defeat.

With his cheerful helpmate ever ready to lend willing hands and brain, he and Mrs. Huenke persevered, holding rigidly to their policy of fair dealing and quality.

It was during these days that an idea was adopted which helped in a large measure to establish a permanent market for butter made from the cream of Huenke Bros. patrons. One day,

acting on the suggestion of the Eastern marketers, who deemed Huenke butter equal to the best produced in the then great dairying section amid the White Mountains, a shipment of butter left the Huenke plant, packed in New England cedar tubs bearing a new name – a name which was to become familiar to thousands of housewives, symbolic of the clean, pure butter it identified. The name White Mountain was adopted and placed upon all dairy products manufactured at the New Bremen plant. Thus a name, characteristic of Huenke ideals and products, representative of purity, uprightness, fair dealing and ruggedness, was placed on dairy foods as unchanging in their high quality as the mountains from which they derive their name. The name was to win for the White Mountain Creamery and Dairy Companies, a reputation as good as their product.

The dairy business grew and prospered. One by one competitors with their flexible policies disappeared. The constructive policy of serving faithfully both producer and consumer continued. Thus from the toil and unwavering course of a one town, one man business, the formation of “the link between farm and city” was begun.



Scene from White Mountains. With characteristic industry and integrity, in 1884, New England folk produced, even under somewhat unfavorable conditions, dairy products of the highest quality. Louis Huenke made, with New England conscience, a New England product in Northwestern Ohio, and made it known by a New England name.

Excerpt from: *Dairying as seen from the White Mountain: An historical account of the Development of Agriculture in Northwestern Ohio, Dairying in Particular, and the Importance of the “Link” between Farm and City.* Published by The White Mountain Creamery Co. and The White Mountain Dairy Co., 1927. **(To be continued)**

## My Move to a Canal House

By Marjorie Gieseke Conradi Lietz (1996)

I was 10 years old in 1928 and we were living in a rented house on East 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in New Bremen. We liked the house, the neighborhood, the gardens, and the yard. My parents wanted to buy the property but Sophia Mohrman Vanderhorst would not sell because the house had been a gift from her parents.

My dad's first cousin, Raymond Hartwig and his wife Mildred would often come to visit us on Sunday afternoons. During one visit they told about a house on South Franklin Street owned by Raymond's Uncle William Ellerman that was for sale.

Raymond and Mildred wanted my dad to buy the house. It was one of the first houses in New Bremen and fashioned like the canal houses of that era. The house had at one time been owned by Raymond's grandmother and then his aunt and uncle.



Raymond Hartwig & Grandmother Mary Wuebbeling Hartwig ca 1915

My dad was hard to persuade, but soon things began to happen. There would be a first mortgage at the local Building & Loan Co. and a second mortgage to William Ellerman with the agreement that the necessary remodeling changes would be made. Mr. Ellerman hired a local carpenter, Herman Schaeffer, to do the remodeling.

**I have made a sketch of the house and property as it was in 1928 before it was remodeled.**

I can remember how we helped our mother get ready for the move. My sister Dorothy and I both had Topsy dolls that our mother had made for us. We gave those dolls to the



Marjorie, Evelyn & Dorothy Gieseke

Poppe children, who were our neighbors at that time, as we were preparing to move. Now as I write this, I think of how I loved that doll and this memory of the move stands out in my mind.

On the happy side, Dorothy and I were used to walking a mile to school, now we would be only a block away. We could see the school bell from our backyard. Then came the big moving day when we moved from one side of town to the other. There was no moving van, the relatives helped and probably a truck was rented to haul the heavy pieces. We said our goodbyes and then I can remember riding to our new home in our 1923 Model T Ford.

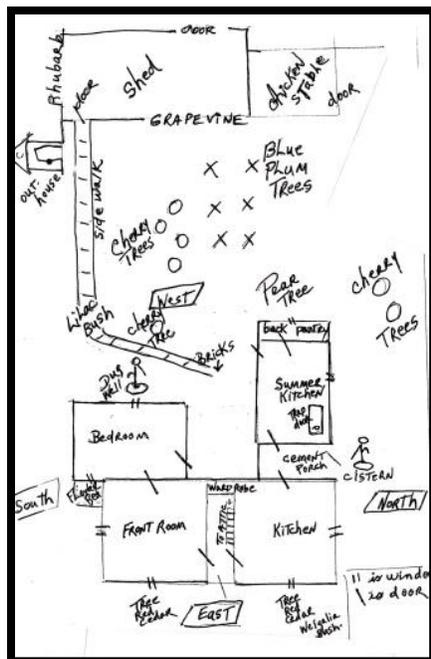
The two main rooms facing the east were brick. The brick walls went down in the ground and served as the foundation. We soon found the walls drew dampness and the water would run down onto the floor. My mother placed oilcloth on the lower half of the wall to combat this moisture. It was good for some time and then the oilcloth would rot and need to be replaced. In the 1960s, after a furnace was installed in the house the walls were much drier and I was able to remove the oilcloth and paint the walls.

When we moved in the woodwork was painted a lavender-pink color and we lived with that until my mother painted all the woodwork white. Some new wallpaper was hung by the Knost brothers.

Former renters had used the well water for household purposes, but we were given permission to get our drinking water from the Ellerman home. It was my job to get the water. At first I used the north faucet on the Ellerman house but then they requested that I come to their basement and get the water. This was a longer trip for me.

In our new house we now had electricity. A single cord hung from the ceiling in each room. There were no lamps to fill, no wicks to trim, no smell of the coal oil and the light was bright. My mother would be able to use the iron that she had won some years before at the Fireman's Picnic.

We used all our same furniture in the kitchen. Our Kalamazoo range was placed along one wall in the kitchen. The table and chairs were in the middle of the room. The big glass cupboard that our Dad bought on the Strasburg sale was placed in the southeast corner of the room. In front



of the east window was the gas meter. Years later my Uncle Virgil Horn and my Dad built a wooden box to fit over the meter and it served as a seat for years. I remember that mom and dad put the old dark blue patterned linoleum that had been in our front room of the rented house in our new kitchen. Our kitchen utensils were adequate, we knew them all by name, the iron fork, the mixing spoon, the bread knife, the steel to sharpen the paring knife. Then the Klanke kitchen cupboard and another cupboard with tin doors found their corners and that was the kitchen in 1928.

The Front Room faced the east and was sunny with a south window. We had a heating stove in this room. I can remember Grandpa Gieseke coming over for a Friday fish dinner and when I came in the door from school, he had his feet propped on the stove. The smell of his pipe filled the whole house. We were not used to tobacco smoke.

The library table with the book shelves on the side was placed in the middle of the room. A cord coming from the ceiling brought the electricity to the table lamp. There were straight back chairs, highly varnished that our Dad had bought from Elmer Thielker. The little oblong stand with rollers under the feet came from Grandma Josephine Gieseke. The army cot served as a couch by day, a bed by night. Grandma Gieseke also gave my mother a sewing rocker. It was called this because there were no arm rests on it. Many times the ladies used this kind of chair to diaper their babies. We had one rocking chair and when you rocked, it walked. It would be some time before our parents could afford a living room suite.

The summer kitchen was a nice room even though the cellar trap door took up the northeast corner. We had a little laundry stove in there to heat the wash water. All the cistern water had to be carried in and then carried out at the end of the day. The washing machine was there with the rinse tubs. In the summertime we rinsed the clothes outdoors close by the dug well. The rinse tubs had one tub plain and one tub with bluing.

After washday was over, we were allowed to entertain our friends in the summer kitchen. We played a lot of school and decorated the walls with our art work. The summer kitchen held many secrets at Christmas time when someone was making the Christmas gifts to give to the other members of the family.

On the west wall of the summer kitchen was an unfinished pantry. We named it the back pantry. A large cupboard just fit snug on the south end. Here was our reading material. Mom saved all the magazine stories from the *Grit*, *Redbook* and comics and we read them over and over. The rest of the space was used for storage.

When the small bedroom was finished for Dorothy and me, it held our brass bed, a chest of drawers, and a chair. A few years later Dorothy made a dressing table with a ruffled curtain around it and mirror overhead.

There was one window to the west and when it was really hot, we slept at the foot of the bed.

My happy thoughts go back to 1928 when the main part of the house had shutters and no storm windows. Coming home from school, when the wind was blowing and it was starting to snow, I found the kitchen warm and friendly, the shutters tightly shut and it was a cozy feeling. Soon it would be suppertime, with perhaps corn bread and fresh side meat.

It was home, sometimes a little crowded, but we were a happy family.

### Epilogue by Gen:

Dorothy, Marjorie and Evelyn married and moved away from the little canal house on South Franklin Street but they returned often to visit their parents. Marjorie's husband, Carl Conradi, died suddenly and unexpectedly in 1944. She with her two young children returned to the little house to be with her parents. And that is how I came to live there because I was one of those young children.

As a child I did not know what a unique and historic house I was living in. It never occurred to me that the house was over 100 years old in the 1950s. By that time a few changes had been made. A bathroom had been added. We also had a refrigerator and gas stove in the kitchen as well as an automatic washing machine. The steps to the fruit cellar were relocated to allow the summer kitchen to become a bedroom that my mother and I shared.

Some things did not change. There was still no central heat and I remember the frost on the windows and the super cold floor in the wintertime. I helped my Grandmother carry coal from the little shed in the backyard for the heating stove in the kitchen. The fruit trees and bushes and grapevine in the backyard continued to produce lots of fruit. I helped pick cherries, currants, gooseberries, pears and grapes when they ripened. The tall cedar trees continued to drop needles on the front sidewalk and my grandmother would ask me to sweep them away.

I cherish these memories because I still enjoy taking care of the yard, seeing flowers and plants grow and helping others like I helped my grandmother. And I think that *sometimes the house seemed a little crowded but it was home* and I am thankful to have had the privilege to grow up there.

Edward & Genevieve  
Conradi in 1947



## New Bremen Citizens participated in the California Gold Rush

It is interesting that several local men included seeking their fortunes in California in their biographies published in *The History of Western Ohio and Auglaize County* by C. W. Williamson, 1905. Those who mentioned the Gold Rush were Johan Garmhausen, William Grothaus and F. H. L. Nieter.

Some background history shows the discovery of gold in California caused the largest mass migration in US history. More than 300 thousand people made the trip hoping to strike it rich. The gold seekers could reach California overland or by sea. In the spring of 1849 many wagons left Missouri bound for California. Those traveling by sea could sail the long route around the South American Cape Hope or take the shorter but more strenuous route from the Atlantic across Panama to the Pacific.

The majority of travelers were young men making the trip with friends from their area. They frequently organized into groups and signed compacts to travel together. Many had earlier emigrated from Germany in much the same way. However they would find that the trip to California was more expensive and took longer than one from Germany. In 1850 several groups bound for California organized in Cincinnati. The cost of transportation was 100 to 300 dollars. The overland route was cheaper than ship but was more rigorous. Time to travel was 4 to 6 months. Once in California they needed to endure long hours of hard labor along with high costs for food and lodging. Many left mining for other jobs using skills from former occupations. Overall even those who left mining did better than average for laborers in the United States.

That seemed to be true for **William Grothaus**. Born in Germany in 1824, he was in Cincinnati when the excitement over gold was at its height. He decided to go to California in 1850 by sea via Cuba and Panama. Mr. Grothaus stayed for 3 years and according to his biography "his adventure was crowned with success bringing much of the precious yellow metal with him."

Coming back to Ohio he purchased land nearby in Shelby County which he farmed for several years. In 1856 he married Marie Elizabeth Lanfersieck and raised a family of 10 children. After moving to New Bremen he had a cigar business and became a prominent part of the community. He held several public offices including being elected mayor for 9 years.

His obituary in *Stern des Westlichen Ohio* stated he was a respected citizen of New Bremen who was held in high esteem as evidenced by his terms as mayor and other public offices.



His biography emphasized he was an advocate of learning and good schools as he learned much from experience and travel.

**Johan Garmhausen** was an 18 year old German immigrant in Cincinnati in 1850. He joined one of the groups who made the trip to California overland. After working in the gold fields for two years he decided to return to Ohio. Opening a general store was his next venture. The site he chose was in Lock Two near the busy canal.



His obituary in *The Sun* gives this information: *He started the general mercantile business, of course, on a small scale but the business grew on his hands and after a few years he found it advantageous to enter into the grain and pork business. Soon he found it would be profitable to his business to also buy the existing flour and saw mills thereby operating practically every industry in the burg. Conscientious in all his dealings and upholding what seemed to be just and right won for him the respect of all who knew him.*

In 1856 Mr. Garmhausen married Mary Strasburg and they became the parents of 9 children.

**F. H. L. (Ferdinand Herman Ludwig) Nieter** was working as a cooper in New Bremen in 1851 when he decided to go to the California gold fields. Before he could make the trip he got typhoid fever and had to abandon his plan. Still it was a turning point in his life that he wanted included in his biography.

Mr. Nieter recovered his health and went back to his work as a cooper for Fred Speckman. They later became partners in a barrel making company named Speckman and Nieter. This was just the beginning of their partnership as their company also ran a grocery, saloon and an auctioneering business. In 1876 Mr. Nieter became a partner in the new dry goods store named Speckman, Son & Company. In addition he worked in the insurance business, was a Justice of the Peace, a Notary Public and served as Ober Bremen's mayor for 16 years.

Mr. Nieter was a New Bremen pioneer coming to the town as a child with his parents in 1834. As soon as he was old enough he was sent to the first school which at that time was a log structure serving as both church and school.

In 1855 Mr. Nieter married Sophia Hellbusch. They were married for almost 50 years and had a family of 10 children.

F.H.L. Nieter was a self-made man who was successful in his many business ventures and was not deterred by illness or misfortune.



## COME EXPLORE NEW BREMEN



We feel our town is truly a gem worth sharing and the dedication of our hard working citizens makes it shine. These friendly people are responsible for the hospitality found in our stores and restaurants. They, along with many other residents, embrace our rich history while also supporting projects which will enhance our future. You will find many examples of this spirit of community as you explore our village. Here are some suggestions for your 2015 tour.



**Luelleman House**



**Pape House**

Discover our heritage by visiting these historic sites. The New Bremen Historic Association has three locations- The Luelleman House Museum, The Pape House featuring furniture made in New Bremen, and The Lockkeeper's House on the Miami and Erie Canal. The Bicycle Museum of America contains a large collection of bicycles with always changing exhibits.



**Kuenning-Dicke Natural Area**

Next follow the paved towpath north to The Kuenning-Dicke Natural Area just off Lock Two Road. This natural area contains over two miles of trails to explore native plants and trees, a three acre pond for catch- and-release fishing and a primitive campsite. There are also several memorials honoring veterans.



Return to town and do some shopping in our many fine stores. If you are looking for a place to eat we have more than ten places that serve something for everyone's taste. The New Bremen Coffee Shop is in its new location in the Boesel Opera House building. This is an excellent example of repurposing a historic building for modern use.



**New Bremen Coffee Shop**

After shopping and a delicious meal wander south along the towpath to the Pavilion. Soon a new park will fill the space between the Pavilion and the Lockkeeper's House becoming another example of repurposing an area. A lion family sculpture will greet you at the entrance to the Komminsk Legacy Park. Several trails, a water feature and a slide are also being developed as part of this interactive park.

More information is available on these sites at the Chamber of Commerce office located in the Lockkeepers House Visitors Center.

Come explore New Bremen and see why we are so proud of the past, present and future of our village.



## NEW BREMEN HIGH SCHOOL REUNIONS

On August 15, 2015, the New Bremen High School Class of 1955 held their 60<sup>th</sup> Reunion at John & Merrily Hoffman's home in New Bremen.



**Left to Right: Dick Howell, Ralph Quellhorst, John Rinehart, Lois Berning Dicke, Lee Wissman, Evelyn Bassler Baur, John Hoffman, Phyllis Nedderman Fledderjohann, Roland Luedeke, Ken Dicke, Emma Opperman Pleiman, Stan Quellhorst, Jim Rempe, Dale Schaefer, Bill McCollum, Ken Schroer. (Attended but not in picture Ron Hittepole)**

A memorial fund was given to the New Bremen Historic Association from the attending classmates for the nine deceased class members. The deceased class members are:

Don Poppe, Harry Brewer, Janet Fledderjohn Wiesner, Vivian Mohrman, David Paul, Richard Roediger, Trudy Schwieterman Kuenning, Bill Campbell, Carl Richey.

---

### “I Love Lucy”

The senior class will present their version of “I Love Lucy” Friday, April 1 and Saturday, April 2. Although the cast is the same, we are putting it on two nights so that more people will have a chance to see it with the best seats available. There will be no side sections on the main floor.

Tickets for reserved seats are now on sale for 50 cents. They may be purchased from any of the members of the senior class.

The following committees have been organized:

Ticket Committee – Emma Opperman, Chairman, John Rinehart, Lois Berning and John Hoffman.

Program Committee – Janet Westerbeck, Chairman, Janet Fledderjohn, Shirley Fischbach, and Kenneth Schroer.

Stage Manager – Lee Wissman and Dale Schaefer.

Ushers for Friday night – Emma Opperman, John Hoffman, Shirley Fischbach, Quentin Woehler, Bill McCollum, John Rinehart, Dale Schaefer, and Stan Quellhorst.

Ushers for Saturday night – Janet Westerbeck, Jim Cooper, Don Poppe, Lois Berning, Harry Brewer, Jim Rempe, David Paul, and Dick Howell. Stage Setting – John Hoffman and Dale Schaefer. Properties – All seniors.

The whole class is working its best to put on a wonderful play for you to see. Everyone should come –You won't regret it!

*-The New Bremen Sun, March 24, 1955*



(Photo by Randy McCune)

The **NBHS Class of 1965** held their 50<sup>th</sup> Reunion during the Bremenfest weekend in August. We do not have the names of the individuals in the pictures, but seeing all the smiling faces we are certain that they had a wonderful time.

The members of the **Class of 1965** are listed below:

**Elaine Ahers, Judy Ahlers, Mary Anthony, Jon Belton, David Bergman, Joyce Brockman, Larry Busse, Howard Campbell, Delores Cummins, Sandra Cunningham, Robert Dietrich, Michael Elking, Kathy Fark, Barbara Forwerck, William Frey, Richard Froning, Ann Gossette, Gary Greiwe, Dennis Gross, Dean Harlamert, Lynne Harris, Diane Headapohl, Roger Henschen, John Hespe, Gary Hirschfeld, Joyce Isenberger, Helmut Judt, Jay Kettler, Mike Kitzmiller, Bradley Klose, Jack Knost, John Knost, Roger Kremer, Ronald Kremer, Lois Kuck, Nancy Lampert, Wayne Maurer, Randy McCune, Betty Meckstroth, Nancy Moeller, Phyllis Mohrman, William Moore, Gary Mussett, Connie Nedderman, Ronald Paul, Warren Rempe, Linda Rupert, Sharon Saum, Thomas Scheib, Wanda Schneider, Hope Schwarck, James Schwartz, Roseann Schwartz, Michael Shelby, Donald Siegel, Jill Sprinkel, Roberta Strahm, Janet Stueve, Bonnie Topp, Donald Topp, Judy Voress, Beverly Wehmeyer, Carolyn Weinberg, Beverly Widau, David Wint, Mary Wissman, Terry Wissman, Thomas Young.**



## Letters from our Readers

So enjoy The Towpath and do not want to miss an issue or give you added expenses, so am enclosing our new address. Thanks. **Vera & Guy Schmidt, (Celina)**



named Adolph who was about the same age as Roy. We thought the picture might be of Adolph but the Pape family says it is not. They think the picture is of Roy, but they have no other photos to compare. We will put the photo with the F.W.Greber collection.

After receiving my copy of The Towpath today, I just had to write to let you know how much I thoroughly enjoyed the article written by JoAnne Meckstroth. I was having a harsh day and this article not only lifted my spirits but also almost made me “wet my pants!” I laughed until I couldn’t laugh anymore and tears were falling down my face. I even read the article out loud to my husband and we were both laughing.

While I was not in high school in 1957, I was in the NBHS system in the late 1960s and do not remember any guys in the class even then. I believe our Home Economics teacher at time was Mabel McClure? I can only imagine her face if a guy walked into the classroom at that time! And I do remember Miss Burk! As I was reading the *Basic Steps* at the end of this article to my husband, my husband said, “Gosh, it must have been nice to live in the 1950s.” I thought to myself, “Dream on my dear, it’s never going to be in your lifetime!” **Phyllis Topp Palmer (New Bremen)**

Hi, found you on the New Bremen website. I am also a Genealogist and found a photo by F. W. Greber of New Bremen, OH of a young boy, on a green-backed card with green bottom with gold. The photo is quite good; the boy is stunning and very sure of himself. Looks about 12, or so, in a three piece suit with a bow tie. He could be a CEO of some corporation from the look of him. The back of the photo says *from Adolph to Roy* in pencil.

If you would like, you are welcome to the photo for your Historical Society. I would like to send it home and would love to know who this Adolph is... **Julia Mitchel (Kentucky)**



*Editor’s Note: Mr. Greber had a studio in New Bremen from 1895 to 1905. He sold the studio in 1905 to John Hoverman, father of Roy Hoverman. Roy was photographer in New Bremen until the business was sold to James D. Taylor in 1910. Roy then went to Delphos to manage the photography business there. Roy Hoverman married Linda Pape in 1915. Linda had a brother*

...The Towpath is wonderful. Keep up the good work!  
Warm Regards, **Todd Moeller (California)**



### A Hoffman Family Reunion in 2015

**Front Row:** Linda Sayre, Amy Hoying, Lia Hoying, John Hoffman, Merrily Hoffman, Barb Stettler, Kathleen Boykins & her mother Selma Geib, Deb Campana, Kris Roege, Virginia Shaw, Hope & her mother Theresah Nickel

**Back Row:** Lana Hoffman, Douglas Hoying, Steven Hoying, Craig Hoffman, Mel Stettler, Brian Geib, Jon Campana & son Jay, Kathy Geib (Brian’s wife), Dick Shaw, Rob Nickel.



Selma Hoffman Geib and her nephew John Hoffman toured the Pape House this summer. In this photo Tom Braun is showing them **Furniture Made in New Bremen**. Selma will be 101 years old in November and we are honored by her continued interest in her hometown history.

**"THE TOWPATH"** is a historical reflection of New Bremen and the surrounding area published quarterly by the New Bremen Historic Association and mailed to all members. 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. at same address)

Lifetime membership - \$250.00 (includes spouse/S.O. at same address)

Payment is required by January of each year to assure uninterrupted delivery of *The Towpath*.

**All levels of membership receive "The Towpath."**

**MEMBERSHIP REPORT THIS QUARTER**

(Dennis Dicke, Recorder)

**NEW MEMBERS**

**Jerry Bertke**

**Karen Diffie**

**Leah Emmons**

**MEMBER DEATHS**

**David Schwieterman (CM) 6/16/2015**

**Paul Rempe (LM) 7/9/2015**

**Dorothy Komminsk Johnson 2014**

(CM=Charter Member, LM=Life Member)

**MEMORIAL DONATIONS**

In Memory of **Jeane Carnes** by Marty & Jim Carnes

In Memory of **Dorothy Komminsk Johnson**

by Catherine Schroeder Graf

In Memory of **Deceased Class Members** by the Class of 1955

In Memory of **Cletus Niekamp** by Joe & Caryn Niekamp

**NBHA RAFFLE WINNERS**

**JULY** - \$100.00 to **Sandra Turner** (Fairport, NY), \$75.00 to **Greg McCollum** (NB), \$50.00 to **Marilou Wuebbenhorst** (Wapakoneta).

**AUGUST** - \$100.00 to **Jacqueline Kuck** (NB), \$75.00 to **Robert Dietrich** (NB), \$50.00 to **Susan McDaniel** (NB).

**SEPTEMBER** - \$100.00 to **Jerry Bambauer** (NB), \$75.00 to **Jerry Lutterbeck** (Quincy, MI), \$50.00 to **James Moeller** (NB).

Board members have been very happy with the participation in the raffle. Profits from the raffle are used to cover insurance and utility bills at both museums. They especially thank those winners who have chosen to increase the profits by returning their winnings.

If you would like to lend your support in this project, you may enter the raffle by sending your name & address and a \$20.00 donation (or 3 names for \$50.00) to:

**The New Bremen Historic Association, P. O. Box 73,  
New Bremen, OH 45869-0073**

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

**New Bremen, Ohio 45869-0073**



**NBHA Museum – 120 N. Main St.**



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**Greg Parrott Visited New Bremen in August**

Greg Parrott, first curator for the NBHA Museum, visited with “his students” from the early 1970s.

**Seated: Janet Gruebmeier Eilerman, Phyllis Kremer Rose, Greg Parrott, Becky Freeman Waterman.**

**Standing: Julie Dicke Winner, Shelly Finke, Linda Brown Kuenning, Wayne Steineman**

**If you pay your dues each year, it is now time to pay your 2016 membership dues.** Payment is required by January of each year to assure uninterrupted delivery of *The Towpath*. The annual membership is \$25.00 and includes your spouse /significant other. Please renew your membership and consider a donation to the NBHA.

**Send your dues and donations to The New Bremen Historic Association, P.O. Box 73, New Bremen, Ohio 45869-0073.**

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

**Raffle Drawing at each NBHA Board Meeting  
(March, 2015 through February, 2016)**

**The Luelleman House Museum and Pape House Museum are open to the public by appointment.  
Call 419-629-2764.**

**December, 2015.....Christmas Tree Festival and Open House at the Lockkeeper’s House**