

# THE TOWPATH

Published Quarterly  
January-April-July-October  
NEW BREMEN HISTORIC ASSOCIATION  
April 2022

## 2022 ANNUAL DINNER MEETING



The New Bremen Historic Association held their 49<sup>th</sup> successful organization meeting on March 21, 2022.



**NBHA Board members, Rob Ziegenbusch and Dennis Dicke greeted all those attending.**

The Holy Redeemer Fellowship Hall was filled with NBHA members and friends ready to enjoy a delicious dinner catered by Speedway Lanes. Desserts were provided by NBHA Board members.

Dinner was followed by a short business meeting to recognize members of the board. Larry Tangeman, Dennis Dicke, and Max Fledderjohann were re-elected to another term on the board.

The speakers for this year's meeting were Jerry Maxson and Gary Stueve, both former teachers in our school system. Reminiscing, they entertained the audience with many stories and information about their teaching and coaching experiences.



**Jerry Maxson and Gary Stueve**



**Mary Philipot enjoyed the company of her family at the dinner meeting. Standing: Ned Moeller, Bob Philipot, Cindy Philipot, Nancy Ritter, Joe Ritter, Jane Philipot, Ron Philipot Seated: Susie Moeller, Mary Philipot, Jane Schnelle.**



**A Youth Group from Holy Redeemer served beverages.**

“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.

**NBHA Membership Dues**

**\$25.00 per year (includes spouse/S.O. at same address)**

**Lifetime membership - \$250.00**

**NBHA, P.O. Box 73, New Bremen, OH 45869-0073**

It is now possible for you to access the most recent issues of *The Towpath* online. To do this we will need your email address to set up your account for online access. So, send an email to info@newbremenhistory.org and request online access. This email goes to Jack Gilberg, our webmaster, and he will set you up with a temporary password in a reply email giving you login information and instructions how to access the *Towpath*.

**NEW MEMBERS**

**Joanna Zwiep  
Dr. Jennifer Bock  
George & Marie Brose  
Jane Egbert Exley  
Robert & Brenda Huenke  
Mathew Dawson  
Michelle Finke  
Eric Kuck**

**NEW LIFE MEMBERS**

**Joanna Zwiep  
Mathew Dawson  
Eric Kuck**

**MEMBER DEATHS**

4/28/2014 **Ruth McKay (LM)**

12/11/2021 **Roland Luedeke**

12/21/2021 **Ned Dammeyer (LM)**

12/21/2021 **Nancy Cattell (LM)**

12/23/2021 **Dorothy Koeper (LM)**

1/2/2022 **Barbara Schroer**

1/2/2022 **Nancy Hack Hagens (CM)**

1/22/2022 **William (Bill) Tostrick**

1/31/2022 **Scott Kuenning (LM)**

3/8/2022 **Sandra Frey (CM)**

(CM=Charter Member LM=Life Member)

**DONATIONS**

Jack & Becky Dicke, Ed & Rosalind Ekermeier, Jon Carter, Jason & Lori This, Howard & Emily Reisner, Bill & Cynthia Young, John & Joyce Gilberg, Mary Ann Rempe, First National Bank, Curtis & Ruth Brookhart, Thomas Thieman, Karl & Ethel Mesloh, Roger & Cheryl Barlage.

**Monthly Raffle Winners**

**January-\$100.00-Pat Overman (NB), \$75.00-Mike Suchland (NB), \$50.00-Phyllis Palmer (FL).**

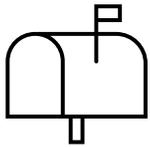
**February-\$100.00-Ruth Ann Brewer (NB), \$75.00-Anthony Cook (VA), \$50.00-Janet Stienecker (NB).**

**March-\$100.00-Kaye Wint (NB), \$75.00-Craig Griesdorn (NB), \$50.00-Gilberg Furniture (NB).**

*Thank you to all for supporting the raffle and an extra thank you to those winners who have chosen to increase the profits by returning their winnings.*

**Items Recently Donated to NBHA**

New Bremen blanket (Donna Lane), Bobbleheads (Jay McCollum & Rodney Suchland), Base from old ballfield on Plum St. (Rob Ziegenbusch), Arcade yardstick (Dennis Wint), Bremco & Schwartz garage photos (Janet Shaffer Henschen), School cap worn by Milton Jack Brose NBHS Class of 1930 (George Brose), 1910 Ohio Farm Laws (Duane Dammeyer), Klanke table, kitchen tools, photos, clock shelf (Tricia Allenby), Prom program (Niles Harris), Arcade photos (Emily Grothaus Reisner), 1983 NB Sesquicentennial bumper sticker (Rebekkah Fry), Drafting set, carvings, photo of Ernest Tomhafe (Bill Bush), New Bremen Speedway tickets (Mary Metzger).



## Comments & Letters

We always welcome comments and letters from our readers.

### **Barb Ziegenbusch and Johanna**

**Schroer** gave us a “good job on the *Towpath*” for the January 2022 issue. **Tom Fledderjohann** said he enjoyed seeing the birthday party picture in *History Mystery*. He says that he has another photo taken at Emily’s birthday party with the neighborhood children. Tom said that he also enjoyed reading the article about Herb Garmhausen and Lock Two and wonders if anyone knows what the New Way Manufacturing Company (mentioned in the article) made in Lock Two. Please let us know if you have an answer for Tom.

**Julie Grothaus Zerbe (Colorado)**, the birthday girl in the *History Mystery* photo wrote *I kind of sort of remember it! One clear memory I have of those childhood birthday parties is that my Aunt Marie Rabe, who worked in Lima at the time, always brought pretty birthday cakes for us from a Lima bakery. They had lots of icing flowers and fun little ornaments on top. My Mom saved those ornaments for years. Thanks for the January Towpath-very interesting as always.*”

**From Betty Garmhausen Hunter (New York):** *Such fun to read about Herbert Garmhausen in the most recent issue...Many thanks for all you do!*

**David Heinfeldt (Georgia)** writes: *Thank you and the staff for the Herbert Garmhausen and Lock Two article in The Towpath (1) 2022. I can recall the General Store, Machine Shop, Grain Mill, Park in the Round About, Canal Area and especially the home of my Grandparents. Memories today of bicycling through Lock Two into New Bremen, landscape, then.*

**Marvin Heitkamp (Florida)** called about a picture in the Snow Memories article. He recognized Marge Lietz in the picture standing next to the large pile of snow that was in front of his house at that time. He said when Larry Wissman, village employee, came with the skid loader to remove the snow, he told him to be very careful because Jerry Tontrup’s car was under the snow!

**Rodney Suchland, Tom Braun, and Jim Scheer** recognized the house at 211 S. Franklin Street in the background of photo #1 on the *History Mystery* page. They were not able to identify the boy, though.

Thank you, **Kathy Nedderman, Marlene Hittepole, and John Knost**, for your comments also.



**Connie Boesel Frericks (Minnesota)** sent us a picture from the early 1900s of her grandparent’s home at the northwest corner of Walnut & Monroe Streets. She remembers it as a beautiful house...*My great grandfather (Schmidt) built the house. My grandparents lived there when I was born there in the front bedroom. It was a beautiful house inside and out. A winding staircase led from the living room to the upstairs. There were also stairs to the upper level from the kitchen. There was a gorgeous two-sided wood burning fireplace open to the living room and to dining room. There were four bedrooms upstairs and hardwood floors throughout the house.*

**From Jon Carter (Idaho):** *I was pleasantly surprised to open my mail on Saturday to find your letter of the 8<sup>th</sup> notifying me of my winning the December raffle drawing and the enclosed check. I think this is just about the first time in my eighty-two years that I have won something! My thanks to you and the Association for this very pleasant surprise. Only last week as I was preparing to send my 2022 Association dues, I decided to include a donation to the Association. This will be coming from our bill paying service and you should receive it shortly.*

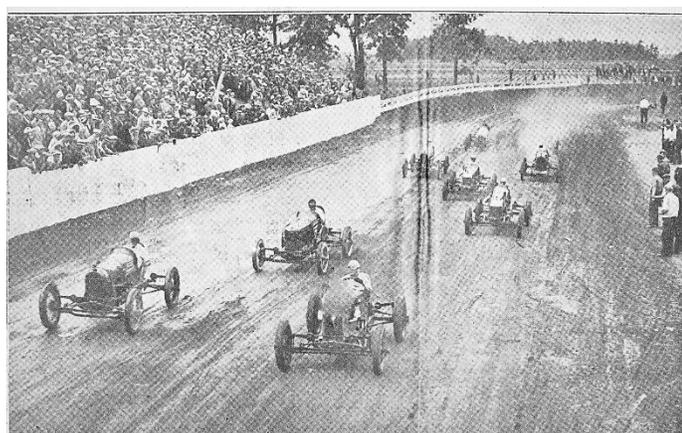
*As “Carter” is not a very German nor very “New Bremen” name, allow me to introduce myself. My mother was Wilhelmine Kuenzel, whose family operated the Kuenzel Mills for many years in New Bremen. We always had Kuenzel Mills blankets on our beds at home. I had the pleasure of visiting your museum some years ago on a trip east. This was the first time I had ever been to New Bremen, although over the years I’d heard much about the town from my mother and uncles.*

*I would enjoy very much seeing information about and history of the Kuenzel Mills in the Towpath at some time. I would appreciate your passing this on the editors. I am also working on the genealogy of the Kuenzel and Finke families and the connections between them, as my father had a Finke in his family. If anyone in the Association is working on genealogy of New Bremen families, I would be pleased to hear from them. Best regards.*

*(Editor’s note: So glad to hear from you! Please see Kuenzel history in this issue.)*

**From George G. Brose (British Columbia, Canada):** I would like to become a member of the New Bremen Historic Association. My New Bremen heritage is through the Brose and Nolte families who lived there from 1867 to 1952. I visited my grandmother Justine Brose quite often in the early 1950s and my father Milton “Jack” Brose grew up there. As a teenager he worked for Leo Huenke and was very active at the New Bremen Speedway. When Leo bought the property, my father had just completed his class in geometry and helped figure out how to fit a half mile track onto the land. He calculated the length of the straightaways and radius of the turns. I’m interested in any archives that you have to continue family research. Looking forward to this contact.

(Editor’s note: Milton “Jack” Brose graduated NBHS Class of 1930.)



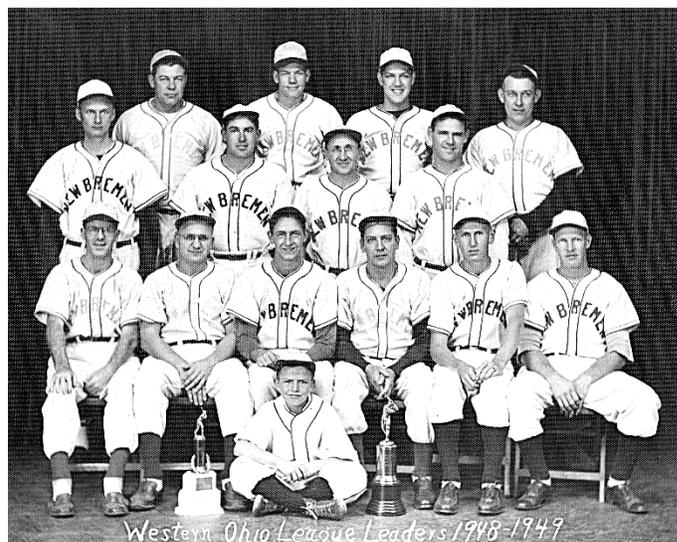
The above picture shows the nine machines and drivers rounding the north turn at the New Bremen Speedway just before starting the 20-mile feature event on June 8, 1930. Frank Sweigart, Indianapolis, who was driving in third position at the time this picture was taken, won the race in 18 minutes and one second. The next races at the speedway will be held Sunday, July 13, 1930. (New Bremen Sun 7/3/1930)

**From James Kettler (Michigan)** Baseball was very important to a kid growing up in New Bremen in the early ‘50s. The great “town team” with PP, Johnny, Red, Farmer, Les, Pete, Roger, and other local greats pretty much kept us interested in the game on Sunday afternoons. One Sunday PP nailed a pitch which bounced off the bus garage doors in two hops. Such is the stuff that stays in a youngster’s head.

In May of 1953, we had the opportunity to “rub shoulders” with two of the greatest at what they did in the baseball world. Si Burick, sports editor of the Dayton Daily News, and eventual member of the Baseball Writer Hall of Fame was the featured speaker at the annual St. Paul’s Brotherhood Dinner. But, also speaking was one of the greatest of all time, George Sisler, inducted in the Hall of Fame in 1939. Sisler held many records, but the

most amazing, in retrospect, was in 1920 when he collected 257 hits, a record which stood for 84 years until broken by Suzuki in 2004.

The talks were inspirational in nature and have faded with time, but the autographed baseball lives on. As kids in a small town, we were accorded the chance to be in the presence of and influenced by two of the best at what they did. One of several such lessons.



Western Ohio League Leaders 1948-1949  
**Back Row:** Paul Pape, John Wissman, Stan Kuenning, Richard Pape. **Center Row:** Roger Busse, Frank McCune, Les Blanke, Mgr. Vernon Westbay. **Bottom Row:** Merle Belton, Les Howe, Carl Inman, Don Coble, Jerry Brown, Ed Moore, Bat Boy Bill McCollum.

**KUDOS TO CHLOE SCHWARTZ,** NBHS, Class of 2017. After high school, she went on to the University of Cincinnati and graduated with her degree in Nursing. Chloe is now a Registered Nurse at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center. She has always been interested in dance and her skills allowed her to be chosen as a Cincinnati Bengal cheerleader. Chloe had the opportunity to cheer her team in the 2022 Super Bowl! Congratulations, Chloe!



## The Kuenzel Mills 1867-1956



### BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MILLS THAT PRODUCED THE NEW BREMEN BLANKET & GOLD LACE/GOLD STAR FLOUR

In the heart of New Bremen, along the flourishing Miami & Erie Canal, a mill was built and became an important business in our community. Organized under the name of Finke, Bakhaus & Kuenzel, the mill opened shortly after the Civil War ended. It operated as a partnership until 1869 when it was incorporated as the The Bakhaus & Kuenzel Company. In 1914 the name was changed to The Kuenzel Mills Company.

This company operated both a Woolen Mill and a Flour Mill. The main product of the woolen mill was The New Bremen Blanket, an all-wool blanket well known for its superior quality. The mill also produced a woolen cloth known as Kuneta Cloth. In the 1930s the woolen mill's annual production was equivalent to 35,000 standard double bed blankets with sales approximating \$250,000.

Products of the Flour Mill in the 1930s included flours, meals and feeds. An all-purpose flour under the trade name Gold Lace and a soft winter wheat flour called Gold Star were their main products. The mill produced 15,000 barrels of flour annually in addition to its other products, with a total sales value of \$80,000.

The milling business declined in the 1950s and then closed. The buildings sat empty for a few years and began to deteriorate. The canal lands which held the old mill buildings were deeded to New Bremen Village in 1967 for park and recreational purposes. The old buildings in which so many quality products had been made were removed but not forgotten. Now the land has been repurposed into a beautiful park area.

Our community is proud to display the New Bremen Blanket, one of the quality products produced by the Kuenzel Mills in New Bremen, Ohio.

*The Evening Leader, January 13, 1968*

### NEW BREMEN HISTORY AT A TURNING POINT

#### Deeding of Canal Lands to Village Marks New Era (Article written by Mrs. Jerome (Doris) Wissman)

With the sale of the last section of the property of Kuenzel Mills to Crown Controls this week, New Bremen's history marks a turning point.

The "end of an era" began about four years ago, but came to a reality on June 13, 1967, when House Bill 525 was signed by Governor James Rhodes. At the request of the New Bremen Village Council and citizens, legislation was introduced by Robert Wilhelm, state representative, *which asked that the canal lands be ceded to the village* for park and recreational purposes. The bill deeded all canal land within the corporation lines of New Bremen to the village.

*The deed described in section one of this act shall be made to the village of New Bremen for purposes of creating a park and recreation area, for beautification of Ohio's historic canal site, and for other public and municipal purposes.*

*Upon the termination of its use for such purposes all rights, titles and interest in such land shall revert to the state.*

The major part of the Kuenzel Mills' buildings are situated on the former canal lands near the locks and became the property of the village under the state legislation.

The New Bremen Lock is the first one going north in the Miami-Erie Canal. The towns of Minster and New Bremen are located on the summit of the divide which separates the waters of the Ohio River from the waters of Lake Erie. A way was required for the canal boats to go "over the hill" from Cincinnati to Toledo. According to early history, the Ohio River at Cincinnati is 456 feet above sea level; Toledo, 573 feet. In order to negotiate the 512 feet of rise between Cincinnati and the summit in Auglaize County, 53 locks were required in the course of the canal, a distance of 100 miles. The summit occupies a distance of a fraction more than 21 miles and from its northern dip to Toledo is about 123 miles. This latter stretch required 52 locks to take up the fall of 395 feet, and to preserve a constant source of water for the canal "feeder," reservoirs became necessary. There were 13 locks between St. Marys and New Bremen. St. Marys is about 100 feet lower than New Bremen.

#### EARLY RECORDS

Preceding the flouring and woolen mills, on November 1, 1844, the state granted to John F. Bosche and W. F. L. Koop, a 30-year lease with right of renewal to certain canal land described as from the north line of the South Addition, Ober Bremen (Upper Bremen), and stakes of the Canal Land, then east 175 feet to the center of the state road, Piqua to St. Marys (now State Route 66), thence north 375 feet, thence west 95 feet to the canal and south to the point of beginning.

"Ober Bremen" was the reference given to New Bremen (Bremen until 1835) east of the canal. The town was literally divided by the canal – forming an East side and West side. The East Side was known as "Ober Bremen" or Upper Bremen with

the canal being much lower than the natural terrain. The bank on the west side of the canal had to be built up considerably.

The lease passed through ownership of various individuals, singly and jointly. Names appearing on early lease transfers include names familiar in early New Bremen history, those being: George Cordell, W. H. Koop and Conrad Tangeman, F. Vogelsang, Augustus Koop, A. F. William Meyer and William Finke, before the lease was transferred to Bakhaus and Kuenzel, forerunner of the Kuenzel Mills.

The lease transfer in 1877 of Finke's part of the lease to Bakhaus and Kuenzel, co-holders of the lease, with him includes the appurtenances thereon, described as a woolen mill and flouring mill.

Henry Finke, secretary of the Kuenzel Milling Company, died in 1911. He was born in New Bremen on January 14, 1843, son of William and Elizabeth (Kuenzel) Finke. His father was born in Germany and trained in the milling business. William later merged the flouring mill he operated with the operations of the woolen mill, the concern that came to be operated under the firm of Finke, Bakhaus and Kuenzel.

His pioneer flour mill proved a great convenience to the settlers.

Henry was a Civil War Veteran. He "mustered out" of the 37<sup>th</sup> Ohio in August of 1865. He then took part in the erection of the woolen mills. He was married to the former Louise Wehrman.

Other records show transfer of the north half of outlet 1 in New Bremen, earlier referred to as Ober Bremen, to Fred Bakhaus and the Kuenzels.

### MANUFACTURING ERA

The manufacturing era began in the early 1860s with the people involved being among the earliest settlers – in the days when industries were established with water wheels to operate the machinery.

The Kuenzel Mills had their beginning shortly after the Civil War and continued to play an important part in the New Bremen Community until the last decade. The mills closed their operations some years ago after nearly a century of business.

In the early days the mill was powered by water from the canal. The canal at that time was dug with a 50-foot clearance at the top, 26 feet at the bottom and of a depth to carry five feet of water. The locks were 90 feet in length, 15 feet wide and of an average depth of about nine feet.

The water wheel in the mill building was made of metal and lay in a horizontal position with water flowing on it – more modern than the wheels which turned into water. It was about ten feet high and had about 40 horsepower. After the water turbine, the mills used steam and later diesel power and electric.

Two brothers, John A. and John C. Kuenzel, were instrumental in the beginning of the mills here. John A. was the grandfather of Felix Kuenzel, who with his wife, the former Helen Bienz, reside at 31 South Main Street in New Bremen.



**Mr. and Mrs. Felix Kuenzel in 1968**

Felix and his wife, along with mounds of news clippings, history books, advice from legal authorities and *The Evening Leader* Editor, Miss K. C. Geiger, have been an invaluable source of information for this column.

John A. was nine years old when his parents immigrated from Germany. Felix's father was Godfrey who was president of Kuenzel Mills in 1923; the time the *History of Auglaize County* written by William James McMurray was published from which much information in article was taken. John Adams Kuenzel, Felix's grandfather was a brother to John C. Kuenzel who established the tannery in the New Bremen neighborhood at the point which came to be known as Amsterdam, but which long ago lost its place on the map.

John A. became a valued assistant to his father in the operations of that pioneer tannery and later became engaged in the boot and shoe business at New Bremen. After the Civil War he became connected with the woolen mill enterprise, adjoining the flour and feed mill, in partnership with Fred Backhaus and Henry Kuenzel.

Some years later the firm bought the adjacent flour mill and later they were operated together. The partnership was dissolved in 1899 and the firm incorporated. The company reorganized in 1914 as the Kuenzel Mills Company, and the younger son, E. C. Kuenzel, was named secretary and treasurer of the company with Godfrey as president.

E. C. Kuenzel, father of David Kuenzel, who now resides at 209 South Perry Street, St. Marys was secretary. Julius Gilberg was manager of the flour mill, while Godfrey (Felix's father) was president.

When the woolen mill was started it was operated simply as a neighborhood custom mill, its product being confined to satinetts, flannels, jeans, yarn, and batting. As its operations expanded it began to develop outside trade and gave special attention to the manufacture of blanket cloth, with its "Kuneta" cloth being in wide demand.

Stoves were used in each of the rooms in the three and half floors of the woolen mills. There were four chimneys in the building. The picking and mixer machines were on the third floor. Cording and spinning was done on the second floor. The first floor held the weaving room, the warping machinery and 22 looms. The basement contained wet and dry machinery, the

dyeing and washing facilities. Materials were sent down to other floors by gravity through chutes.

Raw wool was brought from the farmers and turned into the finished product. The wool was washed, picked, corded, spun, woven, napped, and finished before it was dyed. Wool's fiber is like a telescope, which gives it warmth. Wool only shrinks after it is woven, Mr. Kuenzel said.

In the early twenties, forty- seven persons were employed in the woolen mill and eight in the flour and feed mill which made the well-known "Gold Lace" flour. The mill at one time employed more than 100 people.

Julius Gilberg, father of the late Orlando Gilberg, was a son-in-law of John C. Kuenzel. Orlando in later years was production manager. The late E. C. Kuenzel was secretary and office manager. David was in charge of sales and Felix was superintendent.

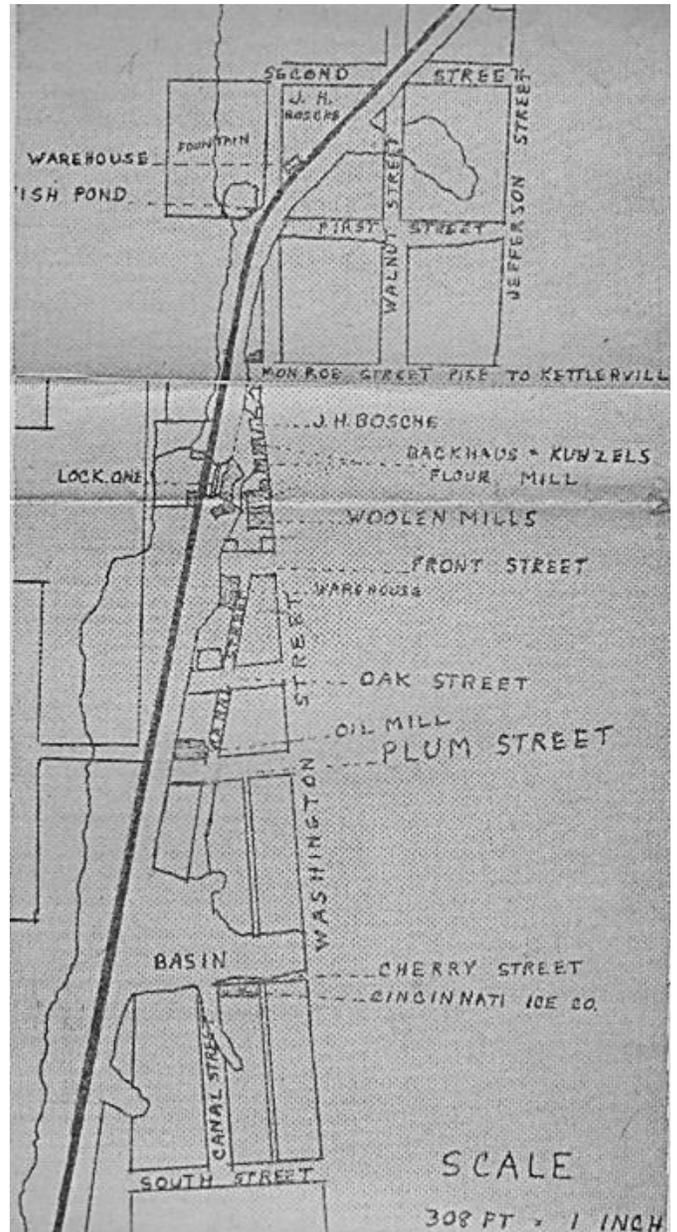
As can be seen in the map, taken from the 1880 county atlas, the water from the canal at certain spots flows directly under part of the woolen mill to operate the water turbine. Walls in the area are six feet thick. Beams in the building are hand-hewn.

The company was flourishing during World War I when it received government orders for the khaki or olive drab blankets. Blankets for the government were also made in World War II during which time swatches of the New Bremen blankets were taken to other mills throughout the country for samples.

Felix Kuenzel recalls the fire on the third floor of the brick building in 1889. He said there was another fire later in the same location which prompted the installation of a sprinkling system and cement floor since the fires were in the area where the cotton mix went through the picker.

In 1956, synthetic products resulted in less business for the woolen mills, as was the case in many other mills throughout the country. The mills closed their operations after nearly a century of business. The water wheel had long since been out of operation. The machinery was sold. The buildings stood empty with the hope of the stockholders to be able to sell or lease them out for future industry on the land leased from the State of Ohio. This was not to be. The lease terminated and the canal land was turned over to the Village.

**Canal Lands as They Appeared in 1880**



The map above shows the canal lands as they appeared in an Atlas of 1880. The heavier black line running from the top or north to the south is not according to scale but identifies the tow path which the mules used when they pulled the canal boats through New Bremen.

The tow path is along the west bank of the canal. Most of the business was done on the east side. The line to the west or left of the canal is a creek.

The basin, which is now park area, was used primarily as a turning point for boats and to unload supplies for a sawmill. Here the boats also waited in case another was coming through the lock from the other direction.

The basin was also used as a skating pond and later served as the village dump. Now (*in 1968*) the area is the site of the State Hy. Bldg., recreational, picnic and festival area, created with the cooperation of New Bremen organizations.



**Kuenzel Mills buildings (S. Washington Street) in 1968.**

*New Bremen Sun May 15, 1947*

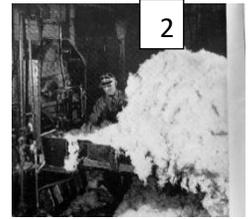
**NEW BREMEN BLANKETS APPRAISED BY KUENZEL MILLS COMPANY IN ATTRACTIVE BOOKLET: Story of the Famous Product told in Word and Picture**

A little brochure of 20 pages containing 21 photographic reproductions of as many various machines and stages which figure so prominently in the manufacture of their well-known blankets has been compiled by officials of the Kuenzel Mills Company and henceforth a copy of this pamphlet will be enclosed with each blanket.

On the front cover of the booklet appears a facsimile of the blanket mill's woven sheep label which has been used on every item of manufacture that has left their plant during many years since the manufacture of woolen blankets has been a stable item of New Bremen's industry, while the succeeding pages tell the story of the blanket in picture and in word. About two dozen of the employees are recognizable as they operate and supervise the machines in the making of the blankets and photographed for the neat publication...

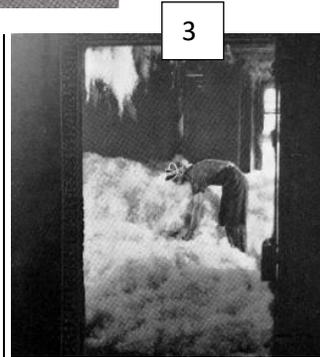


The long and fine wools are skillfully blended and are run through the Mixing Picker, **Photo 2**.



This machine "Opens up" the wool, thoroughly mixing and replacing the natural oil removed in the original washing before shipping.

**Photo 3** shows the Mixing Room, where the various lengths of wool fibres are thoroughly blended by strong air currents before being sent to the Carding Machines. Here the raw wool begins to take form...and **photo 4** shows the soft fluffy wools, fresh from the Mixing Room.

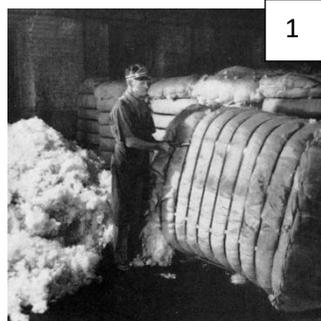


**The following text and pictures are a reproduction of a booklet prepared by the Kuenzel Mills Company in 1947.**

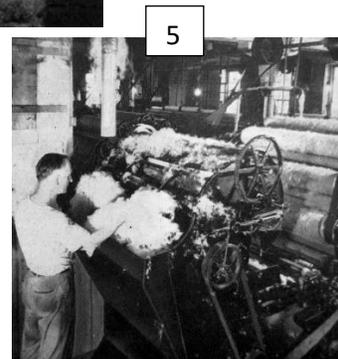
**In 1867 the Kuenzel Mills Company** established their blanket mill in New Bremen, Ohio...the locality later to be recognized as the "Heart of Blanket Valley."

The Old Masters in the art of making quality blankets set the high standards of perfection by selecting only the finest Imported and Domestic Virgin Wools. They foresaw the importance of color, and at that early date, secured the country's outstanding color specialist, Frederick Ende. He became the first dyer in the Kuenzel Mills Company and established the meticulous standards of beautiful lasting color.

With painstaking care the first blanket was created, its perfection and quality a fitting tribute to the ingenious planning of the founders. It was highly proper that this fine blanket should be named the **NEW BREMEN BLANKET** for over Three Generations...this name has stood as your guarantee of **Beautiful, Warm, Long Lasting Quality Blankets.**

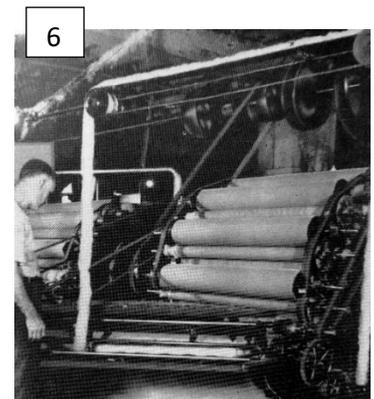


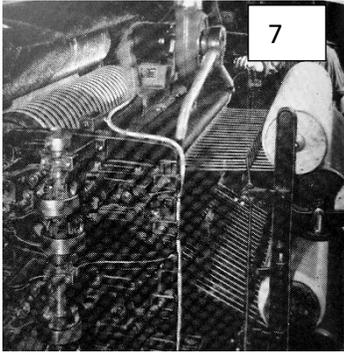
The raw wool arrives in large bales, **photo 1**. Samples from both imported and domestic wool receive careful checking and testing.



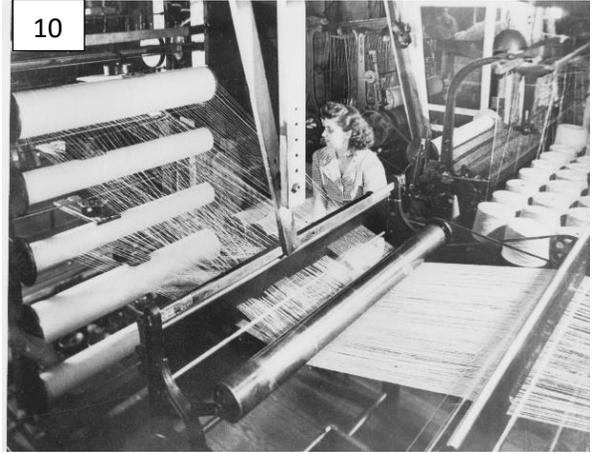
**Photo 5** shows the beginning of the Carding Operations. The wool is fed into the Hopper where it is automatically weighed in grains (7000 grains to the pound) and is uniformly fed into the Carding Machine.

In the Card, the wool is combed, and the fibres laid out, so they are running parallel, **photo 6**. The wool is transferred in a long, loosely twisted strand from first to second Carding Machine becoming more refined and stronger as each machine completes its functions.

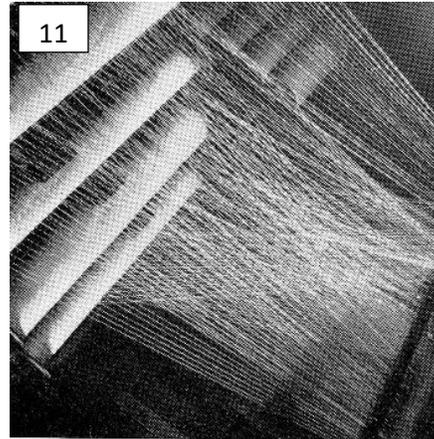




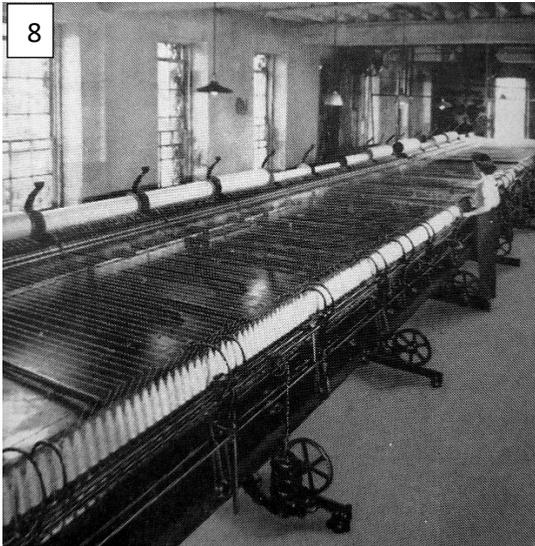
**Photo 7** shows the wool coming off the third Carding Machine, a very fine “roving” with the fibres all laid out even and smooth in uniform strands ready to be spun into yarn,



**Photo 10** shows how several spools of yarn are blended together. **Photo 11** is a closeup view of this delicate operation, showing how the individual strands of yarn are carefully channeled and guided into a greater density on a smaller area, which provide strength and body to the yarn while being run onto the large drum.

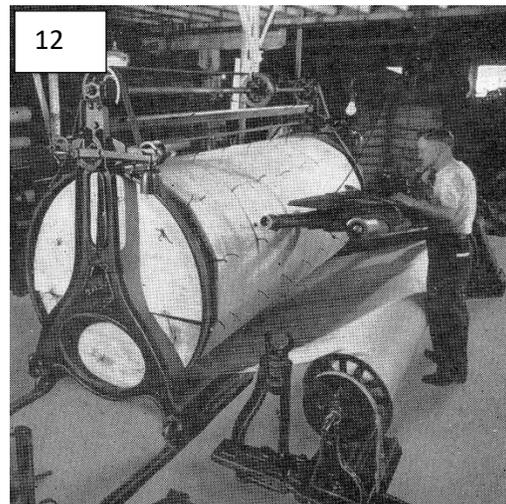
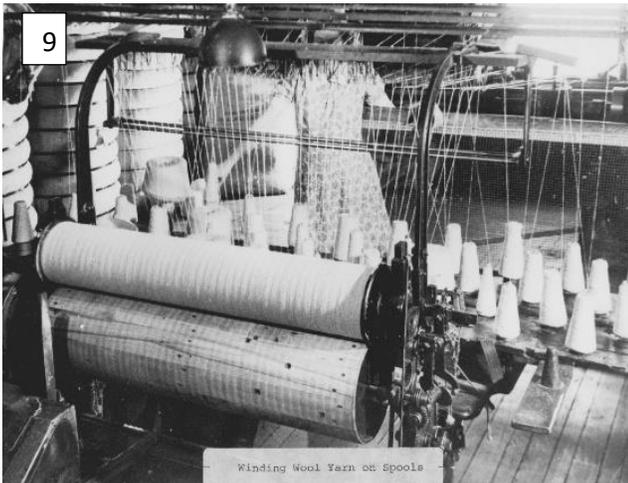


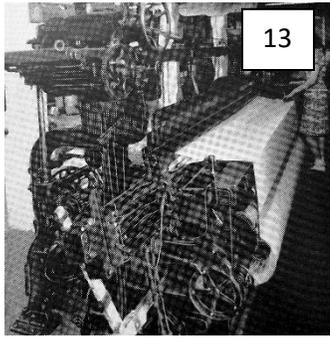
**Photo 12** shows the yarn being transferred from the large drum to the individual loom warp beam, each containing approximately 500 pounds of yarn, ready to go to the looms for weaving.



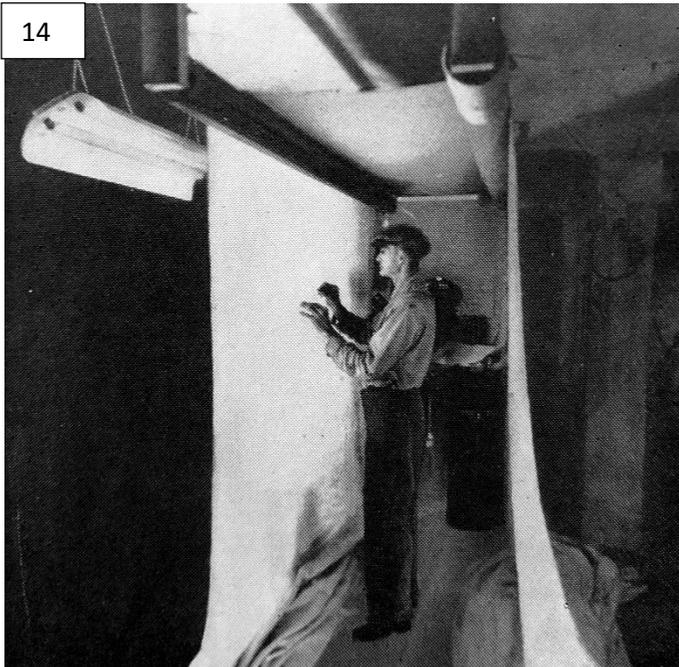
**Photo 8** shows the “Mule,” the first step in the spinning. This machine draws out the “Roving” from the large rolls at the back of the machine, spins, and twists to give smoothness and strength, then winds it onto the “bobbins” at the front of the machine.

After the yarn is spun, **Photo 9**, it is boxed, “setting” the twist. Then the “filling” yarn is sent to looms; the “warp” yarns go to the warping department.



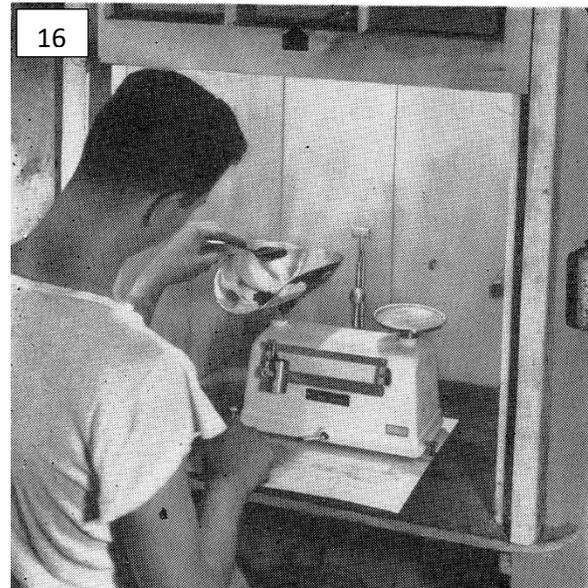
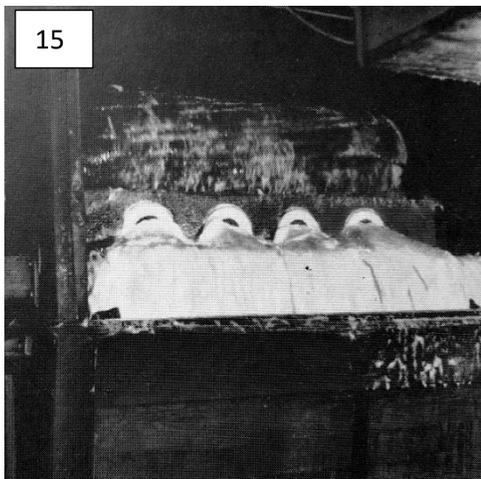


**Photo 13** shows the actual weaving. The "Shuttle" containing yarn is shot back and forth across the loom at express train speed, interlacing or weaving together the warp and filling yarns, producing the blanket fabric ready for the finishing processes.



**Photo 14** show the inspection of this blanket fabric for weight, width, length, etc. The width is 98" which, through the "fulling" process is shrunk to 72", guaranteeing a closer, denser texture and greatly reducing the possibility of shrinkage in home laundry or dry cleaning.

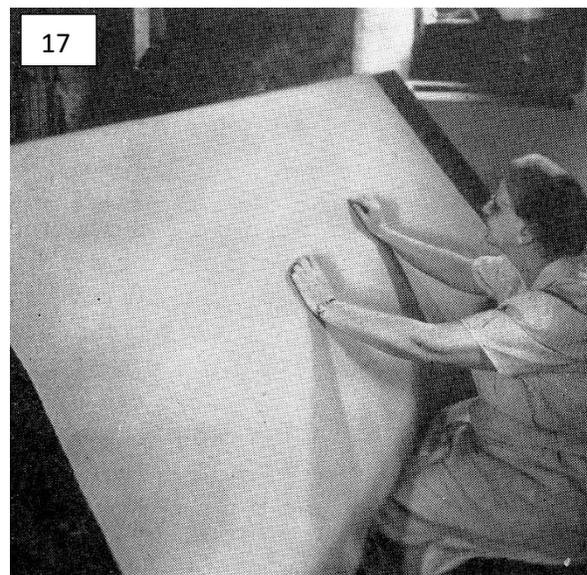
The finest quality, pure soap and lukewarm soft water is used in the double washing and rinsing of these blankets, as shown in **photo 15**.

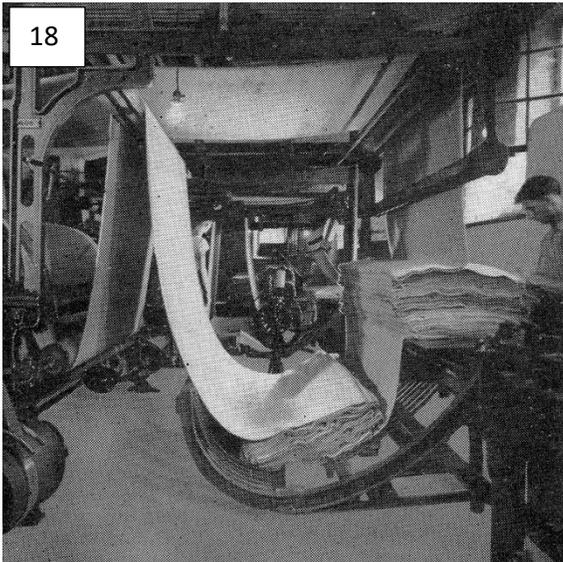


Only the finest "fastest" dyes are used in New Bremen Blankets. The Dyer, **Photo 16**, carefully weighs the dye in grains on a scale so delicate it can record the weight of a pencil line on paper. The correct portion of each color dye is used in relation to the exact weight of the blanket.

Constant supervision and uniform high temperatures are maintained while the blankets are being run thru the dye machines. This is necessary to assure the delicate, lustrous, and uniform shades that are in demand by the most color-conscious decorators. After the blankets are dyed, they are *thoroughly* dried, removing *all moisture*...so that the weight of a New Bremen Blanket is the true weight of actual wool content, not an inflated weight caused by the addition of a large amount of moisture.

**Photo 17** shows the "Burling" operator inspecting the blanket for perfection in every step of its manufacture, before the blanket is sent to the "napping" machines.



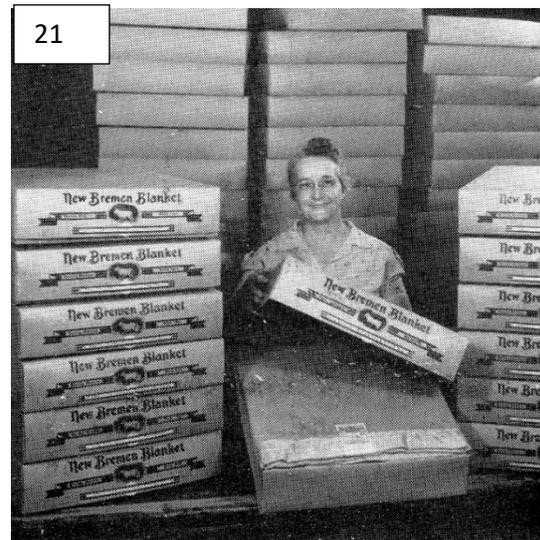
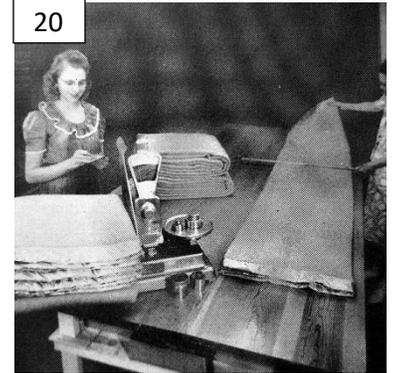


**Photo 18** shows the “double napping” process used on all New Bremen Blankets. They are first run on single “nappers” that bring the ends of the long fibred wools to the surface and brush them out in one direction. This operation forms millions of tiny air cell on both sides of the blanket. The blankets are then run on the “Double Napping Finishing” machines, brushing the already raised nap in two directions. These nappers have two series of brushes, one revolving and brushing in one direction, the other revolving and brushing in the opposite direction, deeply kneading, and meshing the surface of the blanket, locking in the millions of tiny air cells already created that serve to “trap” body warmth in the blanket for greater sleeping comfort.



**Photo 19** shows the exceptionally fine quality Acetate Rayon Satin binding, in colors to exactly match each blanket, being folded and stitched to the blanket in one complete operation. At the opposite side of the table the ends of the blanket are being hand-sewn and the famous New Bremen “Sheep Label” is attached to the blanket.

**Photo 20** shows the finished blanket...being carefully folded, weighed, and recorded and the world-famous New Bremen ticket being attached next to the label.



**Photo 21** shows the blanket being placed in the individual boxes, ready to be sent to Fine Stores throughout the entire United States and to many foreign countries. The woman who is packaging blankets in this photo, has spent many years in weaving New Bremen Blankets. Note her pleasure in boxing this blanket, for she is thoroughly familiar with the fine quality materials and expert craftsmanship that is built into every inch of New Bremen Blankets.

This New Bremen Blanket is now ready for its long life of service as a living tribute to the many workers whose years of training and skill nurtured the wool from its raw stage through

the fascinating steps of manufacture. The most amazing outcome of this quick picture trip through the New Bremen Blanket Factory is the fact that a blanket of this high quality and painstaking manufacture can be sold for so little.

The three generations of Kuenzels who have manufactured these New Bremen Blankets have spared no efforts, no expense in the constant improvements of this blanket.





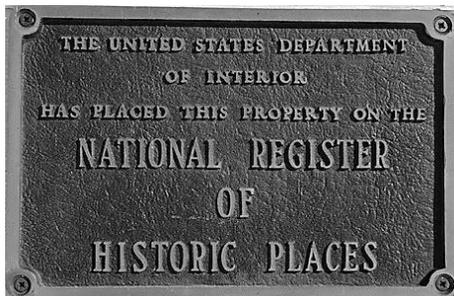
## New Bremen's History Preserved in Signs and Markers

Visitors can learn much about our history from the signs and markers on property around New Bremen.

### One of the Walking Tour signs

On a walking tour you will find plaques on buildings designating them as historically important to the development of our commercial district. The plaques tell of the old businesses that were previously housed there. These are a private contribution to our history donated by the current owners.

Another type of sign found on our museum designates it as a building listed on the National Register of Historic Places.



**The Luelleman House Museum.**

The National Register sign such as the one at the Luelleman museum designate places that are worthy of preservation for their significance in our history. These

places are listed on the National Register of Historic Places. This is a program of the National Park Service but is administered by each state. In Ohio the program is administered by the Ohio Historic Site Preservation Office. Much more information on the program can be found online at [www.ohiohistory.org](http://www.ohiohistory.org).

Also, an Ohio Historic Marker stands on the corner of Washington and Monroe Streets beside Lock One. This marker highlights New Bremen's Miami and Erie Canal history.



**Front of sign.**



**Back of sign.**

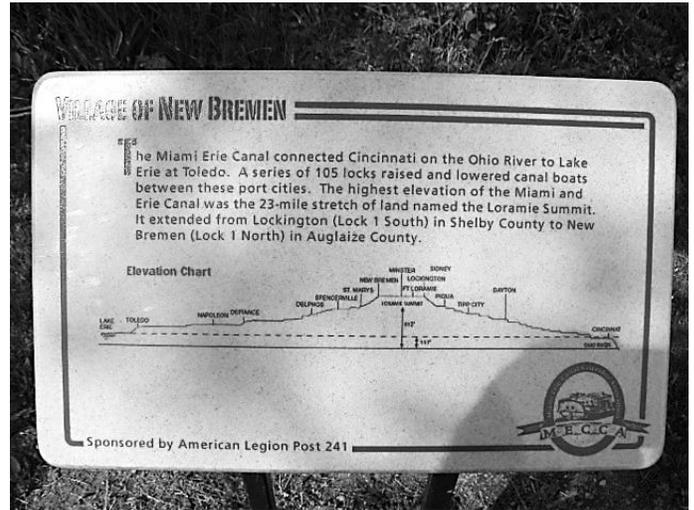
The Ohio Historic Marker program is responsible for the placement of our canal heritage marker. This program is administered by the Local History Services Department of the Ohio History Connection. This department in partnership with community sponsors place markers that are large enough to tell of events that shaped local history. The local sponsors submitted an application to the Ohio Historic Marker program telling of the impact of the canal on our history. The goal of this project is to tell Ohio's history as written by its communities. More information is available at the Historical Marker page of the site [www.ohiohistory.org](http://www.ohiohistory.org).

The importance of the canal to our history cannot be overstated. The canal brought prosperity to New Bremen. Prior to the building of the canal there was little opportunity for employment in our area other than clearing the land. Wages were about 35 cents per day for

that work. From 1825 to 1845 employment building the canal paid wages of 50 cents per day. Opening of the canal through this township in 1845 brought a business boom and greatly increased prosperity. Soon there were businesses lining the canal banks. Some used the canal boats to ship goods such as grain or pork while others used the packet boats as a means of travel. Still other businesses used the waterpower the canal supplied to run their flour and woolen mills. Even in the winter when the canal boats were not running the freshwater areas near the canal were used for ice harvesting.

The first 75 years of operation was the era of the canal boats. A disastrous flood in 1913 destroyed much of the canal system and the advent of the railroad meant the end of that era. However, through the next 25 years much of the business community still flourished along the banks of the water way. As the years passed progress meant the end of many of these businesses. Still in the years since it was built the canal has always been important to the town. Lock One and the Lockkeepers House have been restored and the towpath is used year-round as a hiking trail. A series of signs show the importance of the canal in our history.

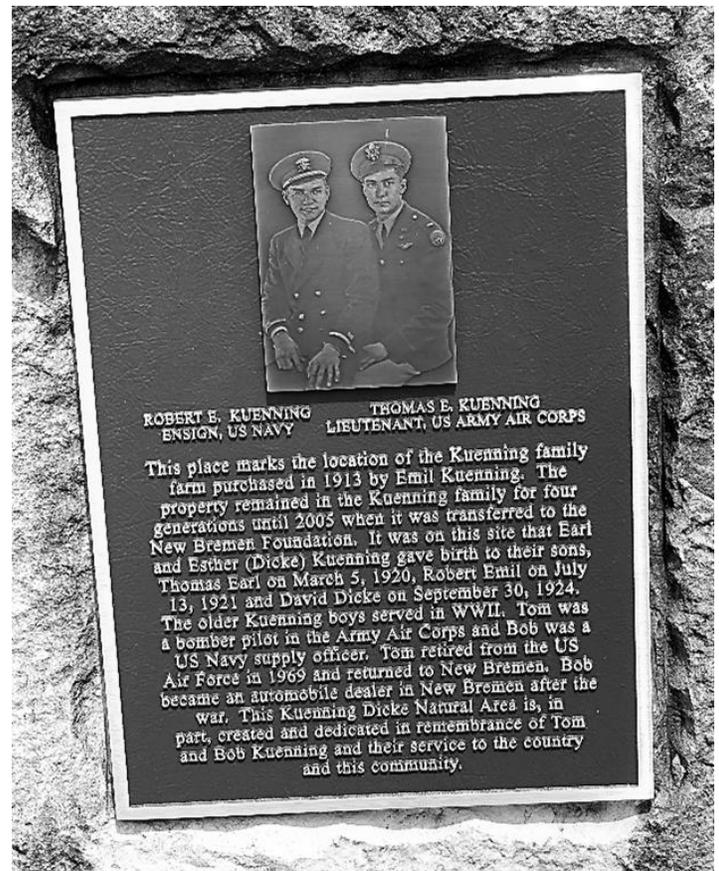
All of these signs and markers found around our town add to the goal of preserving New Bremen's heritage. Our residents can be proud of their community effort to achieve this goal.



One of a series of signs along the towpath, south of New Bremen, giving historical info about canal.



There are two signs at Lock One with information about the M & E Canal.



One of the signs in the Kuenning-Dicke Natural Area just north of New Bremen on the towpath.

## THE GERMAN PROTESTANT CEMETERY NEEDS YOUR HELP

In 1865 the German Protestant Cemetery Association was formed. For the last 156 years this cemetery has been the final resting place for the founders and generations of the citizens of New Bremen and beyond. The Cemetery is an important part of our community and is overseen by The German Protestant Cemetery Association board of trustees. This group is made up of individuals who own lots and have an interest in maintaining the grounds and making sure that this sacred place is well cared for.

One of the recent challenges faced by the cemetery is the restoration and repair of tombstones in the oldest parts of the cemetery. The board estimates there are approximately 150 stones that need to be restored. Since 2008 the cemetery association has embarked on a mission to repair and restore tombstones that are in need of repair.

Over the years some of the board members have been involved with classes and seminars on restoration techniques. In addition, a restoration specialist has been hired from time to time to take on the task of restoring many of the stones that are in the most need of repair. For 2022 the board has identified 20 stones that are scheduled for repair or restoration

In order to continue with this project, it has become necessary to set aside additional funds specifically targeted for tombstone restoration. The board has unanimously agreed that this project is a top priority.

If you drive through the cemetery particularly in the summer months, you can see that the board and those hired by the board work very hard to maintain the grounds. As with all things the biggest obstacle to achieving this goal is the cost. Therefore, the board is starting a fundraising campaign. The cost of repair can range from \$300.00 to \$800.00 dollars per stone. This project will take several years and a substantial financial investment.

This is where the readers of the *Towpath* can help. The board is asking you to consider a financial donation to the German Protestant Cemetery for the special purpose of restoring those tombstones that are literally falling apart. If you would like to be part of this project or for more information about how you can help, please feel free to contact any of the cemetery board members:

**Don Scheer (419-629-2792), Daryl Koenig,  
Dave Maurer, or Gene Topp.**

The German Protestant Cemetery Board wishes to thank you in advance for your consideration and generosity in maintaining this historical site.

The pictures are *Before & After* examples of tombstones that have been carefully repaired and restored in the German Protestant Cemetery.



**Donations may be sent to:**

**German Protestant Cemetery Association  
Don Scheer  
19 Rummel Creek Drive  
New Bremen, Ohio 45869**



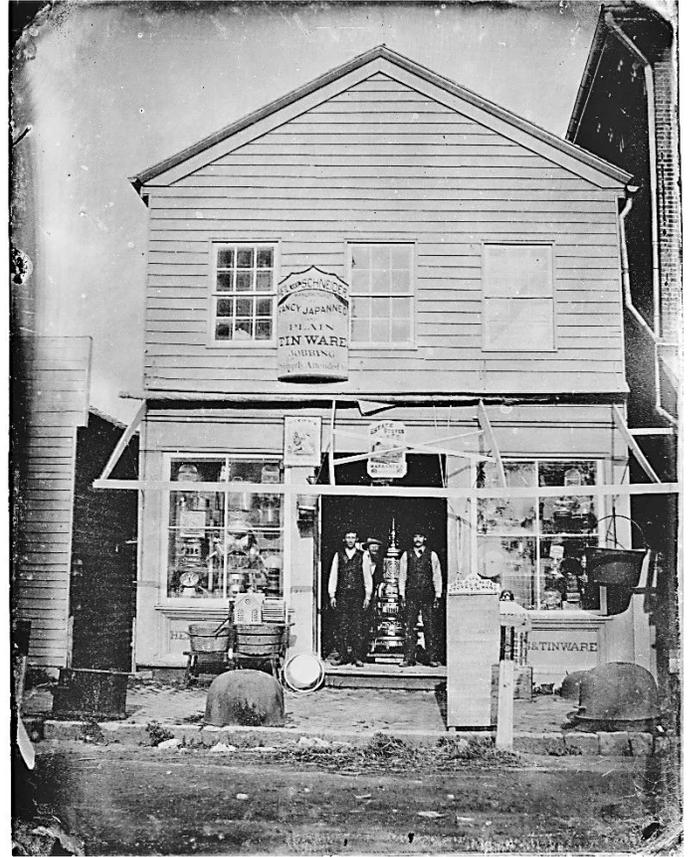
**NEW BREMEN TINTYPES**

Theodore Nieberg may have been the first photographer in New Bremen. Born in Germany, he arrived in USA when he was 15 years old. At age 20 years, while living in New Bremen, he enlisted in the Union Army, 37<sup>th</sup> OVI, Company C, on August 30, 1861. He was wounded near Chattanooga, Tennessee in November of 1863, but returned to his unit in 1864 and was discharged in 1865. Returning to

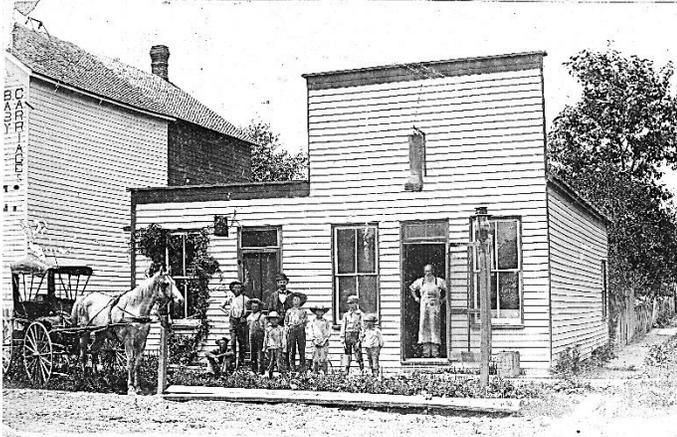
Auglaize County after the war, he married and was described as a *tintype picture shooter*. He developed a gallery of his work in a frame building at the corner of Main and 1<sup>st</sup> Streets and began working with F. W. Greber, who soon purchased the business. Theodore Nieberg left New Bremen after his wife died in 1888.

Tintypes were developed in 1856 and became popular because of their durability and low cost. They were replaced when technology introduced the paper images made from negatives.

The New Bremen images on this page have been scanned from tintypes and are amazingly clear and detailed after many years.



**Heil & Schneider Tinware**



**A Bootmaker's Shop**



**1863 Gertrude & Carl Conradi Wedding Picture**



**A Plow Shop**

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



**NBHA Museums – 120 N. Main St. and  
236 N. Main Street**

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**Permit No. 41**

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*PLEASE KEEP US ADVISED OF ANY ADDRESS CHANGES.*

## UPCOMING

**NBHA MUSEUM OPEN HOUSE**  
**Luellenman House & Pape House**  
**4<sup>TH</sup> Sunday of April thru September**  
**1:00 – 3:00 PM**

*(The museums can also be visited at other times by calling  
any NBHA BOARD MEMBER for an appointment.)*

**Bremenfest 2022**  
**August 19, 20, 21**

**VISIT OUR WEBSITE**  
**[www.newbremenhistory.org](http://www.newbremenhistory.org)**



New Bremen Blanket to be displayed at Lockkeepers House, courtesy of **Sara Topp**, Executive Director of the Southwestern Auglaize County Chamber of Commerce. The blanket display case was crafted and donated by **Tom Wente**.

**Read about Kuenzel Mills and the New Bremen Blanket in this issue of *The Towpath*!**