

THE TOWPATH

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NEW BREMEN HISTORIC ASSOCIATION
APRIL 2026



A crowd of 150 filled the American Legion Post 241 on March 16, 2026. They gathered for the Annual Dinner Meeting of the New Bremen Historic Association (NBHA). The delicious meal was prepared by Speedway Lanes. After dinner a short business meeting was held to elect trustees. David Maurer, Mary Moeller, and John Turner all agreed to serve another term and were duly elected.



This year our speaker was Tim Eiting, our local realtor and auctioneer. He began by showing us some of his collection of vintage radios. Then beginning with a timeline of the history of radio, he made the presentation delightful by including New Bremen stories. We heard many comments thanking Tim for his contribution to the program.



David Maurer, NBHA President with Tim Eiting



“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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- Genevieve Conradi, Historian’s Scrapbook

Board meetings are held on 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**

Visit our website www.newbremenhistory.org for more historical information.

NEW NBHA MEMBERS

- Mark & Barb Brodbeck
- Mark & Diana Froning
- Chris & Pam Houseworth
- Howard & Patricia Overman

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- Brian Wenning
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MEMBER DEATHS

- 12/17/2025 Delores Stienecker (LM)
- 1/13/2026 Ann Young
- 1/19/2026 Lois Rabley (LM)
- 1/20/2026 Barb Koeper (LM)
- 3/11/2026 James H. Scheer (CM)

(CM=Charter Member LM=Life Member)

DONATIONS

Gregg & Jean McCollum, Kathleen Boykin, Dennis Wint, Mary Ann Rempe, Holy Redeemer Church, Auglaize County Commissioners, Jason & Lori This, Lisa Thobe, Bill & Cindy Young, Howard & Emily Reisner, Bonnie Elsass, Jane Knost, Bob & Betty Dietrich, First National Bank.

Monthly Raffle Winners

**January-\$100.00-Lori This (NB), \$75.00-James Moore (CA, \$50-Elaine Poppe (OH).
February-\$100.00-Jim Elking (OH), \$75.00-Connie Koch (NB), \$50.00-Jean McCollum (NB).
March-\$100.00-Mark Topp (OH), \$75.00-Carol Wilson (NB), \$50.00-Joe Hamburg (NB).**

We sincerely appreciate your participation. All the proceeds help pay for our insurance, utility, and maintenance bills. So, it is always a pleasant surprise when winners return their prizes.

Items recently donated to NBHA

Photos (2) (*Ted Wagner*); Postcards (35), photos (3), 1927 class play program, WWII uniform Orville Ruedebusch, ration books, army shoeshine kit, US Post Office blazer, Kuenzel Mills date book, recipe book (*Joyce Ruedebusch*); Work Gloves from Mueller’s Men’s Wear (*Deb Kramer*); Horse Flynet (*Fred Piehl*), Lion’s Club pin, vintage eye glasses (2), various news articles, photo past WOW queens, Bremenfest bracelet, photo Woodman Drill team, several church directories (*Bev Plattner*); Photo Herman Schmidt & Henry Landwehr (*Max Fledderjohann*); 1868 campaign medal, Photo Levi & Mary Neuman, 1928 NBHS yearbook (*Darlene Neuman*); Big Bear paper bags, NBHS class of 1960 photo (*Greg Paul*), NBHS Yearbook 1935, vintage school books, carpet beater, Arcade and Rump yardsticks, Barth Brooms (2), numerous New Bremen business advertising items, shadow box with mementos of Paul Lietz (*Genevieve Conradi*).



NBHA LETTERS & NEWS

We enjoy and love reading about New Bremen History. -Rick & Marlene Froning (OH)

Interesting issue (*January 2026*) especially about the different schools. Easy to forget that this is ancient history today. My mother led the bond drive for our “new” school. She had a speaker bureau address every meeting to drum up support. Joke was that the bonds were voted in to shut her up. Must admit I was not happy to be stuck in the same room all day in 8th grade.

Suggestion for next year: it would be fun to see the growth of the village laid out on a series of maps of the present town. I expect the original settlement was around St. Paul but I’m not sure. -Emily (Grothaus) Reisner, NC

Editor’s Note: Thank you for your suggestion about a series of maps to show growth of our town. I have asked a number of people if they know the original location of our town. Many of the younger folks do not have a clue. See article on p.4 for the answer.

My great-grandfather was Conrad Gruebmeier (1845-1916). In 1867 at the age of 21, he immigrated to the USA from Schinna, Germany along with his sister Dorothea and brother Wilhelm. His brother Harry had arrived in America the previous year. Harry owned a grocery store in Harlem and later in Brooklyn. Conrad went to Piqua, Ohio where he worked at the stone quarry. He lived with his Aunt Wilhelmina Caroline Koeper Cruse.

In 1879 Conrad purchased a farm on Botkins Road for \$4100, financed by the brothers John, Henry, and Cord Dicke. Conrad was related to the Dickes through his mother, Maria Sophia Dorothea Auguste Koeper, whose mother’s name was Dicke.

In 1880 Conrad’s parents immigrated to the USA and came to live with him in Ohio. Conrad’s father died in 1890 and is buried in German Protestant Cemetery. Conrad’s mother then moved to New York to live with her other children. She died in 1902 and is buried in the Lutheran Cemetery in Queens New York.

In the 1890s oil or gas wells were discovered on Conrad’s farm. He earned enough money from the wells to purchase another farm on Lock Two Road. Eventually his son Henry inherited the farm on Botkins Road and his son Fred the farm on Lock Two Road. As a young person, my father, Wilson Braun, worked on the Gruebmeier farm in the summer. He said that Conrad wore wooden shoes when he worked in the barnyard.

In 1898 another Conrad Gruebmeier immigrated to the USA. He had a son Fred (later changed his name to Fred Meyer) who moved to Portland Oregon and was very successful in the grocery business. When he died in 1978 his net worth was 63 million. He set up a trust called the “Meyer Memorial Trust.” The Trust is still in existence. Fred had a brother Henry who became President of Piggly Wiggly Co. Grocery. This grocery chain was located primarily in the American South. This Conrad I am sure is related to my Great-Grandfather since they were from the same village in Germany.

-Tom Braun (New Bremen)

Editor’s Note: Tom Braun has served as genealogist for the NBHA for many years and has a wealth of information to share about family trees. Tom would like to help you gather your family history. Please call, email, or write to him with your questions. (419-629-8902, tomandginnybraun@gmail.com), NBHA, P.O. Box 73, New Bremen, OH 45869-0073

History Mystery - Memories 2003



Annual Dinner Meeting in 2003. Who do you recognize?



Pie Baking Contest 2003. That is Tim Eiting congratulating the winner. Who was winner that year?

Where was the Original Site of New Bremen?

New Bremen became a town 193 years ago and in just a few years it will celebrate its Bicentennial anniversary. In this article we want to begin the discussion of how New Bremen became a town in the state of Ohio and describe its original location.

Timeline of Events which led to the settlement of the Northwest Territory and Statehood:

- 1763-1787 American Revolution.
- 1783 Treaty of Paris ended the war but pushed the Indians farther West.
- 1785 Land Ordinance developed a system of surveying land. Began in Ohio.
- 1787 Northwest Ordinance prepared a territory to become a state.
- 1787 US Constitution replaced Articles of Confederation.
- 1795 Treaty of Greenville designated a boundary between the lands of the United States and the Indian Lands in the Ohio Territory. It also provided safety on the portage (Auglaize Trail) between Fort Loramie and St. Marys.
- 1803 Ohio became the 17th state.
- Land in northwest Ohio was surveyed and ready for purchase during the 1820s.
- 1830 The Indian Removal Act granted lands west of the Mississippi to the Indians in exchange for the lands in Ohio.

...Societies were formed in Bremen (Germany) which organized the immigration of Germans to the new land in America. Sometimes groups of people were all from one village or were related to each other. A major reason the people from Hannover left Germany at that time was for the opportunity for available land and increased economic advantages. Most left from the port at Bremen and sailed to the harbor at Baltimore which took about two months. They traveled by land across Pennsylvania, often on the National Road to Wheeling, West Virginia. There they journeyed on the Ohio River which was much simpler than overland travel. When the immigrants arrived in Cincinnati, the gateway to the west, they found other German-speaking people who were eager for a new start. One of these groups, the City of Bremen Society, drew up a charter among 33 members on July 23, 1832. The Actum (an enactment), which was signed in Cincinnati, contained eight articles. It authorized the purchase of 80 acres of land in Ohio to found a Protestant town.

According to the account of Charles (Karl) Boesel, an early New Bremen settler, the Society sent out two scouts, A. F. Windeler and H. F. Schroeder, to search for suitable land to found a community. In the Land Grant records, an entry shows that H. F. Windeler purchased from the government 80 acres in Section 10, Township 7, Range 4, on August 4, 1832. This land was almost at the center of the portage between Fort Loramie and St. Marys. It was prime land along the Auglaize Trail at the summit which was later to become Lock One going north on the Miami-Erie Canal. ...The plat of Bremen with 102 lots was officially recorded on June 11, 1833...

(Excerpted from *Founding of New Bremen, New Bremen Sesquicentennial Reflections (1983)* written by Mary Ann Olding.)

Though all of the events listed in the Timeline above contributed to the site chosen for New Bremen, the Treaty of Greenville probably had the greatest influence. Northwest Ohio was densely forested with swampy land at that time. The Treaty allowed a piece of land six miles square beginning at a point near Loramie's store to the St. Marys River (the portage route) safe passage. The two scouts, Windeler and Schroeder, also found that a portion of the portage route was partially cleared for an Indian camp and they chose this site for their new town. In addition, The Miami & Erie Canal was being built at this time and would follow the portage route through German Township.

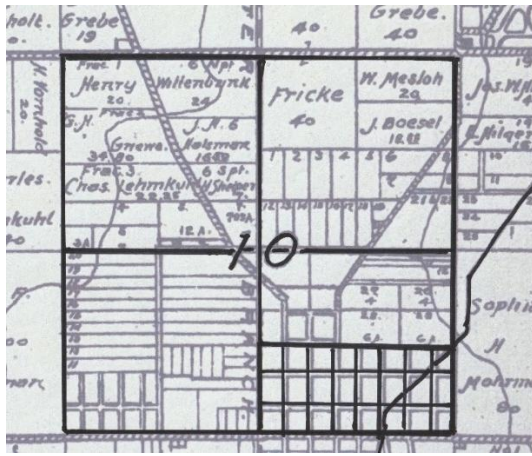
The drawing below of Section 10, German Township is from the 1898 Auglaize County Atlas. It shows that each Section within a Township is made up of four quarters, and each quarter represents 160 acres, thus all of Section 10 contains 640 acres.

Treaty of Greenville August 3, 1795

extract

ARTICLE III. The general boundary line between the lands of the United States, and the lands of the said Indian tribes, shall begin at the mouth of Cayahoga River, and run thence up the same to the portage between that and the Tuscarawas branch of the Muskingum; thence westerly to a fork of that branch of the great Miami river running into the Ohio, at or near which fork stood Loromie's store, and where commences the portage between the Miami of the Ohio, and St. Mary's river, which is a branch of the Miami, which runs into Lake Erie; thence a westerly course to Fort Recovery, which stands on a branch of the Wabash; then southwesterly in a direct line to the Ohio, so as to intersect the river opposite the mouth of Kentucke or Cut-tawa river. . . the said Indian tribes do hereby cede and relinquish forever, all their claims to the lands lying eastwardly and southwardly of the general boundary line now described; . . . the said Indian tribes do also cede to the United States the following pieces of land; to wit. 1. One piece of land six miles square at or near Loromie's store before mentioned. 2. One piece two miles square at the head of the navigable water or landing on the St. Marys River, near Girty's town. 3. One piece six miles square at the head of the navigable water of the AuGlaize river. . .

and the said Indian tribes will allow to the people of the United States a free passage by land and by water, as one and the other shall be found convenient through their country, along the chain of posts hereinbefore mentioned; that is to say, from the commencement of the portage aforesaid at or near Loromie's store, thence along said portage to the St. Mary's, and down the same to fort Wayne, and then down the Miami to lake Erie; again from the commencement of the portage at or near Loromie's store along the portage from thence to the river at Au-Glaize, and down the same to its junction with the Miami at fort Defiance; again from the commencement of portage aforesaid, to Sandusky river, and down the same to Sandusky bay and lake Erie. . .



The original site of New Bremen is in the southern half of the southeast quarter of Section 10, German Township.

The original site for New Bremen is the South half of the SE quarter of Section 10 and consists of 80 acres. The 80 acres for the town were surveyed and platted into 102 lots with streets and lots laid out parallel with the section lines. Inside the original site, there are 7 vertical lines that represent the streets that run north & south.

- ✓ The vertical lines represent Herman, Franklin, Main, Water, Washington, Walnut, & Jefferson.
- ✓ Inside the rectangle are 2 horizontal lines. They represent 1st and 2nd streets.
- ✓ The original boundary to the south was Plank Road, now Monroe Street.

The choice lots, 1-36, were offered to the members of the Bremen Society. Lots 37-102 were smaller lots and were available for purchase by others. The lots sold quickly and additions were needed to the original site of New Bremen. North Street addition added Ash and Pearl Streets which connected with what is now Ohio Route 66-A and followed the path of the portage (Auglaize Trail) to St. Marys. A south addition was platted in 1837 that ran from Front Street to South Street on the east side of the canal with Walnut Street as the eastern boundary.

Other small towns within a half mile or mile of New Bremen began to appear. The town of Amsterdam, between the Auglaize Trail and the canal, south of New Bremen was platted in 1837. This little town disappeared after the Cholera epidemic of 1849. Mohrmansville, just north of New Bremen on the canal, was platted in 1838.

In the 1850s three more towns appeared with Ober Bremen in 1853 which consisted of a town on the east side of the canal and included the south addition of New Bremen. Vogelsangtown, platted in 1856, was located on the Frederick Vogelsang farm just south of the original plat of New Bremen. By 1865 Volelsangtown was annexed to New Bremen and became a prime residential area. Lock Two, known then as New Paris, was platted in 1859. All of these small towns became part of New Bremen about the same time as the school building on S. Franklin Street was completed in 1878.

Actum Cincinnati. On the 23rd of July, 1832.

We the undersigned, after careful consideration, have reached an agreement to good understanding to establish, with the permission of the state, a town for Germans of Protestant faith. We would like therefore to acquire in common 80 acres of congressional land in the state of Ohio (Ohio). And to prevent future disorders and arguments, we are among ourselves establishing rules as set forth in the following articles:

- Article 1** - The purchase of the land will be carried out by 3 men elected from the assembled membership. They will with unselfish effort, having the common interest of the association in mind, select the most suitable land site for the 80 acres.
- Article 2** - Of this purchased land, allocation shall be made for a church, school, and cemetery in a suitable location as determined by the membership.
- Article 3** - One part of this land shall after the purchase be divided into lots, so that each member of the group may receive one whole lot, which will contain not more nor less than one acre.
- Article 4** - Should the quality of the lots vary, then higher values should be assigned to the better, and lower values to the poorer lots and the ownership determined by a drawing.
- Article 5** - The rest of the land not divided into lots will remain in the ownership of the entire association until such time when further division will be required for new prospective members.
- Article 6** - The organized membership assumes the holy responsibility to themselves and their descendants to admit no others but Protestants as members into their closed organization.
- Article 7** - Any person wishing to join the closed association, now or in the future, must be known to the members as a good law-abiding man, otherwise permission to join shall not be given.
- Article 8** - Anybody who wishes to become a member of this association will be herewith required to provide in cash an equal part of the money needed to cover the purchase price and other expenses incurred at the acquisition of the 80 acres.

After all the above articles have been loudly and clearly read to the gathered membership, and no changes have come forth, it is agreed that these articles are binding to each member thru his own handwritten signature:

Signatures on the Actum, Cincinnati, on July 23, 1832:

1. F.H. Schroeder
2. Friederick Siemer
3. Johann Heinrich Siemer
4. Johann Heinrich Buck
5. Heinrich Evers
6. Phillip Reiss
7. Hermann Friederich Mohrmann
8. Albert Freiderich Windeler
9. August Tiemann
10. Christian Karrman
11. Diedrich Strausburg
12. Johann Heinrich Willanbruch
13. Alrend Heinrich Schreiber
14. Dietrich Timmerman
15. Friederich Linneweber
16. Johann Hermann Mesker
17. Freiderich Christian Nieter
18. Johannes Hermann Mohrmann
19. Johann Wippenhorst
20. Andrew Kiefer
21. Gerd. Heinrich Mohrmann
22. Johann Heinrich Stöver
23. Johann Diedrich Meyer
24. Herman Heinrich Speckmann
25. Behrend Hinrich Harms
26. Johann Heinrich Künning
27. Johann Koch
28. J.P. Kestner
29. Behrend Mohrmann
30. Friederick Dickman
31. Fr. Blhmann
32. Heinrich Kramer
33. Jacob Reiss

Translated from the original by: George Chochoms, Wallingford, Connecticut.

Above is the translated charter drawn up by the City of Bremen Society. The 33 members signed the charter and planned to live in their new town. They controlled the purchase of land and the plan for settlement of the town.

It is believed that the Miami-Erie Canal reached New Bremen from the south in 1838. The Deep Cut near Spencerville delayed passage north for about eight years. The canal opened fully from Cincinnati to Toledo in 1846 and brought prosperity to New Bremen. In the next issue of *The Towpath*, we will describe how the Canal Town grew.

THE HISTORY OF THE MODERN BIRTHDAY PARTY BEGAN IN GERMANY

Birthday celebrations including cakes, candles, and gifts developed from the *German Kinderfeste*. In this event, which dates back to the Middle Ages, children's birthdays were celebrated with a cake called a *Geburtstagstorten*. On the cake were candles, one for each year. The candles represented the "light of life." This tradition later evolved into the child making a wish before blowing out the candles to make the wish come true.

The *Kinderfeste* was brought to America and from the late 1800s to early 1900s there was a rise in popularity of birthday parties. These early parties were usually arranged by parents and were formal events intended to teach manners and social etiquette.

In the 1920s children began to have more input and parties became smaller informal friend-oriented events.



Birthday party invitations from the 1920s.

During the Great Depression of the 1930s birthday parties became rare. The day was usually just celebrated by the family. This extended into the WWII years.

Post WWII better economic times led to commercialization of birthday party supplies. There was also an emphasis on age-appropriate parties. The decorations, games, and activities were made suitable for the child's age. Often school mates were invited to parties. A Birthday Party was a social event that was reported by Anna Schwepe, the New Bremen reporter in 1956:

On Sunday afternoon, Jerry Koeper, son of Mr. & Mrs. Richard Koeper, celebrated his tenth birthday anniversary to which he invited some of

his schoolmates who spent the hours of one to five o'clock. Several games were played, after which a birthday supper was served by his mother, Mrs. Richard Koeper. Jerry also received some nice gifts which he gratefully accepted. Those present were Stanley Topp, Larry Gruebmeier, Mark Froning, Robert Kuck, David Wenning, Edward Dicke, Terry Schwarck, and the honor guest Jerry Koeper. (New Bremen Sun, 9/26/1956)



Ed Conradi's Birthday Party with schoolmates circa 1950. Do you recognize anyone at the table? Eddie is at the far end of the table, standing with his arm raised. Who are the other boys?



Joyce Ruedebusch's Birthday Party in the 1950s. Joyce is the second from the left. Who are the other girls?

During the 1980s many parties moved outside the home, as destination parties became popular. Today instead of going to local stores such as the Dime Store on Monroe Street for party supplies, there are many on-line options. Party stores offer a huge selection. However the party is presented, it is sure to bring many happy moments and good memories. As Anna Schwepe would often report, "A good time was had by all."

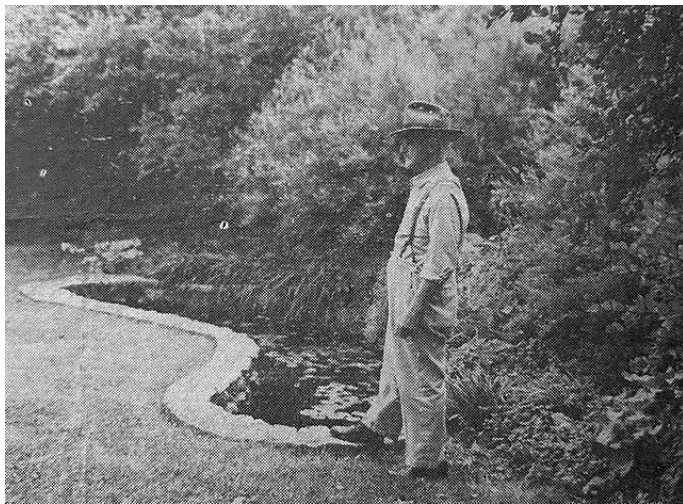
A NEW BREMEN GARDENING HOBBY IN 1949

Reprint of article from the New Bremen Sun

Traveling through New Bremen, on South Washington street, near the edge of town, you will pass a garden—perhaps the most beautiful in this area. It is small, but you can't miss it. Its beautiful blooms and sweet-smelling scents reach out and extend a silent invitation to tarry a while. It is neat and well kept.

It is the garden which adjoins the home of Mr. and Mrs. Oliver H. Boesel, who themselves love plants of any kind.

Having a frontage of three full lots, it is abundant in trees, bushes, and flowers. It has a beautiful kidney-shaped pond, where, each year, Mr. Boesel raises a new crop of goldfish. Baltimore Oriole, Cardinal, Catbirds, Song Sparrows, Brown Thrasher, and Wrens, nest and raise their young in the thick foliage of the trees. Mr. Boesel regrets, however, that he has never been able to entice Martins to nest there, despite the fact that he has an elaborate home built for them. As a whole, the entire garden is a beauty spot which attests to the skill and patience of its owners.



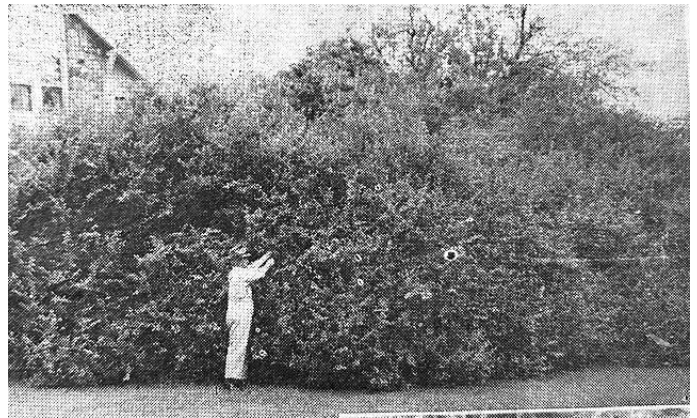
Oliver H. Boesel standing next to his goldfish pond in 1949.

As Mr. Boesel puts it, “Raising a garden of trees, shrubs and flowers requires plenty of time, hard work, and patience. It requires almost a lifetime.”

To prove his point, Mr. Boesel stated that he began his hobby in 1915—that's 34 years ago. As an example, he told the story of how, many years ago, he came across a very small sprout, no larger than a wheat stalk. Unable to recognize its species, he transplanted it “to see what it would turn out to be”. Pointing to a sturdy sycamore tree, he remarked, “This is it.”

The most unusual plant in Boesel's garden is the gigantic Tartarian Honeysuckle bush. Planted in 1916, it is immense. It measures over 36 feet in diameter and is about 20 feet tall. The trunk is as big around as a tree.

“Actually,” said Mr. Boesel, “it is several bushes together.” It is a sight to behold when in full bloom. It is white and yellow and its scent carried by the breeze, can be detected all over the neighborhood.



Mr. Boesel tending his 33-year-old Tartarian Honeysuckle Bush that measured 33 feet in diameter and 20 feet high.

Another unusual plant is a Magnolia tree which blooms in early spring. Blossoms are extremely large and are white and pink in color. The scent is “lemon-like,” as Mr. Boesel describes it. Weeping Willows and Northern Birch trees also add grace and beauty.

Other Unusually beautiful plants include several varieties of Syringa, or as it is better known, “Mock Orange.” And a series of Kerria, a hardy shrub. There are many others of the more common variety.

The garden is in the height of its beauty in early spring, according to Mr. Boesel, when the apple trees are in full bloom and the earth is awakening.

“Apple blossom time is certain to bring with it the Baltimore Oriole and this particular time of year is the most beautiful,” said Mr. Boesel.

As the poet Keats wrote, “A thing of beauty is a joy forever”, --so it is with the Boesels—they have derived naught but joy and pleasure from the many long years of toil and patience which is so well evidenced in the little garden about their home. *(New Bremen Sun, 9/15/1949)*

- Oliver H. Boesel (1871-1956) was the son of August & Catherine (Kuenzel) Boesel.
- Oliver (1871-1956) & Anna Mary (Watermann) Boesel (1872-1967) had two sons Marion Waterman Boesel, an internationally known entomologist, Professor at Miami University for 43 years and Glen Oliver Boesel who died at the age of 2 years.
- Oliver's paternal grandparents were Charles “Carl” & Dorothea (Maurer) Boesel.

\$75,000 Dollars Estimated Loss Sustained by Broom Company in Early Morning Devastating Blaze

Thirty People Thrown Out of Work Employment by Fire of Undetermined Origin. Neighboring Fire Departments Aided

Upward of thirty people were thrown out of employment, early Wednesday morning, last week when the plant of the New Bremen Broom Company became a mass of ruins within a space of three hours due to fire of undetermined origin which was fought by the combined efforts of the New Bremen, Minster, and St. Marys fire departments. The loss to the company is variously quoted at from \$50,000 to \$75,000, including the main factory building, finished stock and materials at hand.

Although two warehouses and the office building stood in close proximity to the spacious two-story brick factory building, they were miraculously saved from the flames barring dangerous scorching on the sides toward the factory. It is questionable whether despite the heroic work of the fire department these could have been saved had the main building, which was a seething furnace by the time the department was called, not been of brick construction with slate roof.

The outside fire departments, who readily and hurriedly responded were called when it was noted that sparks and burning embers were being carried by the wind and the air currents set up by the heat all over the neighborhood endangering other factories and nearby dwellings. However, the flames were confined to their original hearth. The alarm was given about 4:15 [a.m.] when the attention of residents in that section and shop watchman was called to the smell of smoke and at 7:30 the power pumpers were returned to their station in the fire house on South Washington street, the men well exhausted from the three hours hard labor in the below freezing temperature. It was the hardest battle the fire department has had since the theatre fire, several years ago.

The ruins kept smoldering all day Wednesday and Thursday and required watchmen upon the scene for several days. Though the walls of the two wings at the west end seem to be in fair condition it is readily seen that the higher walls will not serve for repairing. The south wall was completely shattered and a good part on the north and east also crumbled, while the west wall came down with a crash Thursday night. Supplies on hand within the shop, finished products on the second floor and all the machinery are considered a complete loss.

The two warehouses, one of which fell victim to the severe windstorm, early last spring but was rebuilt fire-proof, contain a considerable store of broom straw and handles, and the company's records in the office also are saved.

The New Bremen Broom Company which had its inception over fifty years ago with the late Henry Dierker, William Bruns, Fred Vogelsang, and Louis Huenke, after having been in operation for more than a half century under the direction and guidance of local men was purchased last October a year ago by Robert Gunther and Walter Hensel of Cleveland. For a term of sixteen years the plant has been managed by Mayor R. H. Dickman until the sale was made a year ago.

In view of this great fire loss and the wind loss last spring, Mr. Gunther, manager of the plant, expresses hopes that plans for a rebuilding program may be adopted soon. The conflagration last week has thrown approximately thirty men and women out of employment with no present assurance that their jobs will again be available in the near future.

The loss is reported to be amply covered by insurance.

(New Bremen Sun, 12/4/1947)



**Broomshop on Herman Street after the fire on November 26,
1947.**



Broomshop before the Fire.



Making Brooms in New Bremen before the fire.

Both articles on this page were printed on the front page of the *New Bremen Sun* on October 23, 1947. The first describes in a winsome and charming way the breakdown of the church clock and its absence. The second article tells what really happened and includes how the clock kept time during the great fire in January of 1897 that destroyed the building. The church building was rebuilt the same year.



TOWN CLOCK AGAIN STRIKING THE HOUR AFTER FOUR MONTHS DEATHLY SILENCE

Necessary Repairs Made On Time- Piece Of Almost Three Score Years

After a deathly silence, day and night, for a period of about four months the faithful old clock in the St. Paul steeple, Friday afternoon began again to peal forth the hours and half-hours with the same familiar sound and regularity to which New Bremen citizens and the rural folk for miles around had been accustomed to listen for over 50 years.

The interruption came about when along the later part of June an inspection of the clock revealed that the cable on the weights had become affected and required replacement. Not only was the inside construction of the tower put in jeopardy but the safety of the worshippers as they went in and out also came into question, wherefore, Oscar Hirschfeld, custodian of the church property, immediately stopped the clock and caused the defective cable to be removed. This at the same time halted the movement of the time piece and as it required considerable time to procure a new cable, the clock was out of service until Elra Hudson of St. Marys and Mr. Hirschfeld, Friday made the necessary corrections and started the work a-going.

The old clock, which was installed when the brick church edifice was erected about 55 years ago, is evidently of good construction as it has weathered the years without let to this time, even continued its regular time announcement while the main building was being laid in ruins, a half century ago, by the fire demon, even while the flames were leaping and the embers were soaring sky-high through the midnight air, the clock solemnly and above the din of the populace and the stentorian commands of the fire department heads, loudly pealed forth, telling with each stroke that time was fleeting and frail man was approaching eternity so much nearer with every resounding stroke.

Older citizens remember—even though there seems to be no official record to that effect—that the “town” clock was procured by means of a fund to which members of all the churches and nonmembers as well in town and contiguous territory contributed quite generously. The burden of the original cost of the time telling unit was thereby lightened for the congregation which was at that time in the midst of an expensive building program.

Well, anyhow, folks are glad to hear the sonorous peal of the hours and half-hours as of you, especially if they are obliged to lie awake during the long night without other knowledge of the nearness of the morning hours.

(New Bremen Sun, 10/23/1947)

YE OLD TOWN CLOCK

Many of the best things we take for granted – the old and tried friends, the loving wife, the considerate husband, the comfortable bed, the cozy home. Too seldom do we give these a thought, less often offer a prayer of thanksgiving. Then comes the day when one or the other cheers and blesses us no more. How we do miss the old friend, the friendly house, the old shoe, the old pipe!

For many a year the Old Town Clock has faithfully and uncomplainingly served our community. And then one day her iron tongue remained mute. No more did she announce the hour of the day and the long watch of the night was no more broken by the welcome announcement of the onward march of time. How we missed the friendly voice of the Old Town Clock!

But the Old Town Clock had not died. She merely wanted to rest a while from the unintermittent labor of many decades. And so there came a day not long ago when she yawned and stretched herself and returned to her task. Now once more does her sonorous voice stride through the noisy bustle of the day and the silent darkness of the night. Again she announces to the mothers of the town that hungry little folk are on the way home from school. She tells the weary toiler that it's time to lay aside the task and tool for the day. The sleepless passenger of the night she informs that another long and weary hour has passed and that another step toward the eagerly awaited morn has been taken.

We hail you, Ye Old Town Clock! We bless your endless vigil! We rejoice that you have again found the voice we missed so much. Ring on! Strike on! till with the men and women of New Bremen your task will someday be done. -**Theo. G. Papsdorf.**

(New Bremen Sun 10/23/1947)

(Rev. Theo. G. Papsdorf was pastor of St. Peter's church in New Bremen from September 1, 1929-1948.)

BUTTER—One of the Oldest of Foods Is Made on Big Scale In Local Plant

(This feature of New Bremen's Creamery appeared in the *New Bremen Sun*, September 15, 1949.)

One of the oldest foods known to man is Butter. Its recipe, practically unchanged, has been handed down through the ages. It is mentioned early in the Bible, Genesis XVIII, verse 8, "And he took butter, and milk, and the calf which he had dressed, and set it before them: and he stood by them under the tree, and they did eat." Butter was used as medicine as well as a food. The Greeks probably learned of it from the Scythians or Thracians and the Romans learned of it from the Germans. It was made from the milk of sheep and goats and later from cows, the method of making being to churn it in skin bags or pouches.

Centuries later, inventive genius produced the old-fashioned butter churn which was as laborious as it was practical. The old-fashioned churn is well remembered by many of the town's older residents and is still being used by a few here and there who make their own butter.

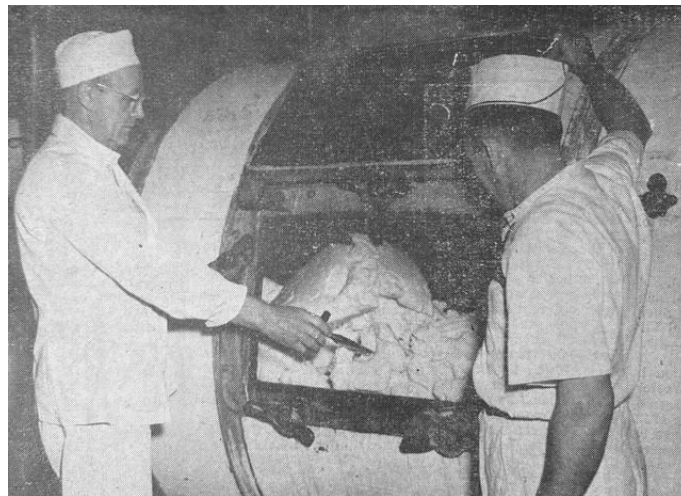
A far cry from the ancient skin bags and antiquated churns is the modern-day butter manufacturing plant, such as Meadow Gold's plant in New Bremen, where butter is being churned seven days a week and the peak daily output exceeds 20,000 pounds -or one carload. Not only is this entire section of the state supplied with butter from New Bremen's Creamery, but about two-thirds of its output is sent via refrigerated truck to Boston and New York for further distribution on the East Coast. If you should eat a meal in New York City, it is possible that the butter served you was made in New Bremen. Several truckloads are sent to the east weekly.

The 1947 production of butter was estimated at 1,700,000,000 pounds and the average consumption was 11.5 pounds per capita for 1947.

Butter-making is a comparatively simple process, yet it is an art. It requires exacting degrees of temperature and moisture content. The entire process begins with the milking of tuberculin-tested cows. The cream is purchased by the Creamery, hauled in trucks from an area nearly 60 miles in radius. When delivered here, the cream is weighed, tested, and pasteurized at 190 degrees F. to insure destruction of any harmful bacteria. From here it is pumped to a cooler where it is chilled to 40 degrees. Prior to being pumped to the churn, it is placed in 300-gallon "holding vats" and held for a period of several hours to properly temper the butterfat.

There are three churns at the local plant, each having a capacity of 1,200 pounds. In churning, the formulation of butter is brought about by crystallization of the fat, in the fat globules and by coalescence of these solidified fat

globules into butter granules. It requires about an hour and a half from the start and the finish of a churnful of butter. While churning, Superintendent Carl Quist and Buttermaker Pete Stovlbeck keep an "eagle-eye" on the



Superintendent Carl Quist, left, and Buttermaker Pete Stovlbeck, stop the churns, temporarily, to check the moisture content of the butter with an instrument. There are about 1,200 pounds of butter piled up in the churn. It is a beautiful golden color.

proceedings, frequently stopping to check temperature and moisture content. Each churn has been making from 6 to 8 "churnfuls" a day.



Meadow Gold's Churning Room with butter ready to be packed into 65-pound parchment-lined boxes in which it will be taken to Printing Room for cutting, wrapping and packing. Left to right: Walter Vondenhueval, Carl Quist, Walter Soelman, James Baker and Pete Stovlbeck.

Butter contains approximately 80% fat, 16 ½% moisture, 2 ½% salt and 1% curd and ash. When the time is right, the churns are stopped and the butter taken out by scoops and paddles, and placed into 65-pound corrugated, parchment-lined boxes in which it is sent to the "Printing Room". According to Mr. Lewis Komminsk, assistant manager of Meadow Gold's Plant, no satisfactory method has yet been devised for removing the butter from the churn. Considerable experimental work is now in progress in an attempt to perfect a continuous process of butter manufacture, which will eliminate much of the physical labor in connection with the manufacture of butter.

In the printing room, the butter is cut into ¼, ½, and full pound shapes, wrapped and boxed. From here it is ready for the table of the consumer which may be local or a thousand miles away.



Part of the Printing Room where the butter is cut into quarters, halves, and full pound sizes. It is wrapped, boxed and cartoned ready, for shipment. Busy wrapping and packing are, left to right, Mrs. Fred Bolenbaugh, Mrs. Mary Philpot and Miss Mary Ann Hausfeld.

Nourishing, healthful butter has survived the centuries since the beginning of time, and in all probability, will remain one of man's most popular foods for time immemorial.



And here's the finished product on the consumer's table (or in this case highchairs). Twins Kathie and Kay Kettler are about to begin their breakfast with toast, generously spread with butter.

Editor's Note: The Kettler twins are the oldest of four daughters of Howard and Lucille (Schwieterman) Kettler. Kathie and Kay were born in 1948 when Howard "Bud" Kettler was the owner of the Sun Printing Company and editor of the *New Bremen Sun* newspaper.

For more information about Howard "Bud" Kettler, see The Towpath issues July 1995, January 2000, April 2017 online.

www.newbremenhistory.org

CHECK OUT THE FOOD PRICES IN 1948 AT KROGER

March 7, 1948

Introductory Offer!

THIS COUPON WORTH **5¢**
on the purchase of any size package
KROGER SODA CRACKERS
Clip coupon, present at any Kroger Store.
Save 5¢ on any purchase of Kroger Soda
Crackers.
ONE COUPON PER PACKAGE
OFFER ENDS SAT. NIGHT, MAR. 13, 1948

ONE POUND 23¢
2 lb. box 45¢

Bigger savings! Better value! Finer, whiter.

Pillsbury or Gold Medal Flour 25 lb. bag 1.89	Kroger Bread 2 Big 1¼ Lb. Loaves 27¢
Pure granulated Sugar 10 lb. bag 89¢	Big Silverware offer . . . glamorous Princess Patterns. Build a complete set. Get complete details at your Kroger.
Clover Valley, Quality APRICOT Preserves 1 lb. jar 19¢	Spotlight Coffee lb. 40¢ 3 lb. bag 1.15
Our Mother's Cocoa 2 lb. box 33¢	Hot-dated, fresh ground. "Mountain Blend." Vacuum pack French Brand lb. 46¢ Kroger Coffee lb. 50¢

Popular Brands. Save at Kroger.

Cigarettes Carton 1.59
Indiana Kathadins. U. S. No. 1 Size "A"
Potatoes 50 Lb. Bag 1.69
Keen smoked flavor . . . light, lean slices.
Kingan's Reliable SLICED Bacon Lb. 59¢

Texas Seedless Grapefruit Large 70 size. Sweet and juicy. Better buy. U. S. No. 1 Fancy California Medium to large size. 2 lbs. 39¢	Kroger. Five luscious fruits. Fruit Cocktail No. 1 can 23¢
Carrots U. S. No. 1 Fancy California 2 lbs. 23¢	Kroger. In tempting tomato sauce. Pork & Beans 16 oz. cans 25¢
Cauliflower U. S. No. 1 Fancy California, snow-white lb. 15¢	Fresh off-the-cob flavor. Niblets Corn 12 oz. cans 35¢
Celery Fancy California Pascal . . . jumbo stalks. lb. 15¢	Kroger. Sweetened . . . First press. Grapefruit Juice 46 oz. can 19¢
Apples Fancy box Washington Winesap 5 lbs. 49¢	Kroger's Avondale. Tender Sweet Peas 2 No. 2 cans 25¢
	Keeps whites Rinso white. Rinso 1 lb. pkg. 35¢

Thank you, Karen (Dicke) Voress for sharing this March 7, 1948, newspaper advertisement.

PICTURES, PICTURES, PICTURES

From My Mother

By Genevieve Conradi

Over the past few months, I have been sorting pictures that my mother, Marjorie (Gieseke) Conradi/Lietz, had placed in albums, boxes, and envelopes. She became interested in taking pictures at age twelve when she received her first camera and this interest continued for the rest of her life.

She never ran out of themes for her photography. When my brother and I were still home she took pictures of us. When the grandchildren arrived, the number of photographs increased.

With her marriage to Paul Lietz in 1975, they were never without cameras, and the volume of photos quadrupled. They took pictures of New Bremen buildings, people, and festivals. They recorded new buildings being built and information about the buildings razed. They captured snowfalls, beautiful flowers in the garden, birds at the feeder, and scenes at Lake Loramie.

Then in those days before iPhone, scanners, and digital cameras, she began to copy photographs with her 35mm camera. She became quite adept at copying and enlarging photos. Soon, her friends asked her to copy their photos.

In this article I will share a few photos that she copied. These are photos from an envelope marked *Vernita Scheer*. I have had to do a little research to name the people in the photos. I hope that I have identified everyone correctly. I do not know the names of the people with Vernita and the goat cart. I hope someone can help me identify the people in the picture. Delightful photos!



Oberwitte Family

Standing: Emma (Oberwitte) Hirschfeld, Flora Oberwitte, Elmer Oberwitte, Grover Oberwitte, Wilhelmina (Oberwitte) Scheer

Seated: J. Henry Oberwitte, Anna (Soelman) Oberwitte

(Picture taken ca. 1909)



Heinfeld Family

Back Row: Adeline, Rose, x, Martha, Cornelius, x, Carrie
Front Row: Dora, Edward, Rosina & Orville, Ernst,
Grandma Heinfeld & Viola, Reinhard, Alvina.



Vernita Heinfeld Scheer is in the barrel!



**Marian Meyer, Lucille Buckloh, Margaret Henning,
Vernita Heinfeld, Margaret Hespe, Ruth Rabe**



**TOM BRAUN
REMEMBERS THE
POLIO EPIDEMIC!**

Britannica AI describes polio as *an acute viral infectious disease of the nervous system that usually begins with general symptoms such as fever, headache, nausea, fatigue, and muscle pains and spasms and is sometimes followed by a more serious and*

permanent paralysis of muscles in one or more limbs. The paralysis commonly associated with polio actually affects fewer than 1 percent of infected persons. For those who become infected, there is no cure; however, between 5 and 10 percent of infected persons display only the general symptoms outlined above, and more than 90 percent show no signs of illness at all.

There was a polio epidemic in the United States in the late 1940s and early 1950s. The number of cases was so severe in Auglaize County that the county looked for assistance from the National Foundation for Infantile Paralysis for assistance. Through their *Mother's March on Polio*, later known as *March of Dimes*, the Foundation raised monies to fund research, education and pioneered vaccine research to help eradicate polio.

Many area residents helped with the fundraisers. One resident, Vernita (Heinfeld) Scheer contracted polio during the epidemic of 1949. She worked diligently to overcome paralysis that affected her left hand and right leg. Both she and her husband then became active in raising awareness of the disease and funds to assist with rehabilitation and the search for a cure through active participation with the March of Dimes.

Locally the *March of Dimes* had fund drives to help pay the medical bills incurred by polio patients for hospitalization, rental of iron lungs, crutches and other treatments. Back then, many families did not have health insurance that would have covered these expenses. Tom Braun, NBHA Board member, reports that his mother Delilah Braun was treasurer of the Polio Foundation in Auglaize County and at that time was quite busy paying bills.

Tom also remembers that he received both the Salk vaccine and the Sabin oral vaccine. People were so afraid of polio, there was no questioning whether receiving the vaccine was the right thing to do. But it was the right thing to do.

As the polio epidemic subsided, his mother's job was reduced to paying bills for a teenager from Wapakoneta who had contracted polio.

It is important to remember that the polio epidemic was serious, scary, and changed many lives forever. Before the vaccine was developed, other methods of prevention were tried but were not successful. Parents would ban summertime activities like swimming or picnics with friends, in hopes their children would be safe. The Village Officials tried to spray insecticide to prevent the spread of polio as indicated in the following articles from the *New Bremen Sun*:

Chemicals Used In Fight Against Polio

For several hours Tuesday evening New Bremen was subjected to a heavy fog which had many gaping and wondering what was happening, even though it arrived on schedule. The fog, planned by the village officials as a health measure, was a chemical spray insecticide for flies and insects and to reduce possible danger of the outbreak and spread of communicable diseases here this summer. It was timed primarily to meet the threat of infantile paralysis, which usually reaches its peak of incidence in the next few months.

The spraying equipment was sent here by the Sidney Junior Chamber of Commerce Richard Slater of that city, was in charge. More than 60 gallons of chemical were used, the equipment being routed over every street and alley in the village.

Good results are expected by officials, although rain fell at noon the next day. A second application will be made within four or five weeks. (*New Bremen Sun, 7/20/1950*)

New Bremen Sprayed Second Time This Summer

New Bremen was sprayed with chemicals for the second time this summer. Tuesday evening, July 18th was the date of the first treatment.

Spraying equipment again was sent here by the Sidney Junior Chamber of Commerce. Every street, alley and open area was subjected to treatment, approximately 75 gallons of insecticide being used.

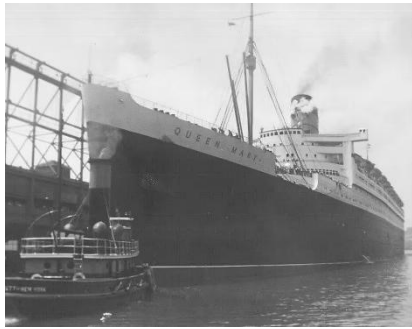
By destroying flies and other carriers it is hoped to eliminate the threat of any epidemic of communicable disease.

Officials believe the second application will be more effective than the first because there has been no rain for several days.

New Bremen was sprayed with chemicals for the second time this summer, Tuesday evening, July 18th was the date of the first treatment. (*New Bremen Sun, 8/22/1950*)

Polio could not be cured but it could be prevented. In less than 25 years after the release of the Salk vaccine in 1955 and the Sabin vaccine in 1961, the domestic transmission of polio had been eliminated in the United States. The vaccine prevented the infection.

For more information about polio in New Bremen, read The Towpath issues of October 1999 and July 2012. These can be obtained online at www.newbremenhistory.org.



Reunion on Queen Mary

A story about New Bremen's Orville Ruedebusch and the Queen Mary.

Queen Mary is a historic ocean liner, built in the United Kingdom and launched in 1934. It operated as a passenger ship in the North Atlantic Ocean. With the outbreak of WWII, Queen Mary was refitted as a troopship. She was able to carry 15,000 soldiers with a crew of about 950 with each voyage crossing the Atlantic.

After the war, the ship returned to passenger service until it was retired. In 1967 the ship sailed into the Pacific Ocean port of Long Beach, California and became a hotel and landmark tourist destination.

New Bremen native Orville Ruedebusch had the opportunity to board the Queen Mary twice. The first time was in 1943 and again in 1971.

Born in 1910 on a farm on the Amsterdam Road, Orville's family moved to Lock Two in 1915. He began his education attending Lock Two School and went on to graduate from New Bremen High School in 1928. Soon after graduation Orville began his career in Postal Service. He worked for the United States Postal Service for a total of 47 years. Most of the years of service were spent at our local Post Office. He worked as a carrier, clerk, and eventually as Postmaster from 1963-1975.

However, during WWII he left New Bremen for Army service. After basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, he was assigned to duty with the Army Postal Unit 591st. His unit was sent to the European Theater in 1943 aboard the Queen Mary. He wrote about his Army experience in a journal. The following is an excerpt from that journal:



Orville Ruedebusch standing second from right.

A FREE TRIP TO FOREIGN COUNTRIES

By Orville Ruedebusch

NOTE: Mr. Ruedebusch wrote a journal in the spring of 1945 while stationed in France during WWII. The following excerpt describes his trip overseas in 1943 on the ship Queen Mary. The rest of his story may be read in The Towpath, October 2010.

After spending a week or more in the staging area at Camp Kilmer, New Jersey, our order came to ship out at six o'clock on December 2, 1943. We had an early chow to give us plenty of time for that trip. We were briefed on everything, even how and where to place our gear while on the train. We shoved off promptly at six o'clock. It was dark because the blackout was still in effect on the east coast.

We were carrying full packs, rifles and a barracks bag which became plenty heavy. The special trains were on the sidetracks, so as soon as one was filled, it moved out to make way for another. The curtains and shades were all drawn, so no light could be seen from the outside although inside there was plenty of activity. It was a boisterous crowd because many of the fellows had partaken rather freely of strong drinks for one more fling at carefree life.



The train was making good time when all of a sudden, we heard sirens. It gave me a sickening feeling to hear them, but later we learned that they always had alerts when there were troop movements. The train rumbled to a stop on the Jersey side of the Hudson River which was a long walk to the ferry. After making several stops, we boarded the ferry and very shortly were on the move again.

During all this time nobody knew what ship we were going to take although there were plenty of rumors. Presently we could see the outline of a very big ship. As we came closer some of the fellows could read the word "Mary", so all doubts were removed and we knew it was the "Queen Mary." The gangplank was down and troops were going aboard single file. It seemed like an endless column plodding up the ramp. I'll never forget that sight and peculiar feeling to know that before very long I would be one of those images struggling up the plank.

The ferry stopped with a thud along one of the wharves. We moved off in short order. Inside the building was a band and the Red Cross with their coffee and doughnuts. By this time one of our boys was

dragging his barracks bag because it was so heavy and another fellow was sick, so things were pretty well messed up by now. Then we arrived at the gate where we gave our name and serial number, and went up the plank, just like thousands had done before us.

It was almost 11 o'clock that night when we went on board that grand ship. She was pretty well loaded, so we spent our first night sleeping on life jackets in the hold. Some of the fellows slept on tables with others in hammocks just above them. We had very close quarters with the indescribable stench of new military clothing, equipment, etc.

The next day we moved to D Deck with some British seamen that had been torpedoed off our east coast. We had comfortable quarters. The beds were of the three-deck type fixed with chains. D Deck was almost even with the water line. While on the ship we had two meals a day of British rations. I remember one in particular - kidney stew, bread, potatoes, and coffee. The PX was doing a great business with men buying Hershey bars and cookies by the box.

We worked on the mail for one day while on the ship and it was here that I received a money order from my sister Margaret, but it was too late to spend it in New York City.

Oh yes, I almost forgot about leaving the pier. At noon on December 3rd the little tugboats started pushing the big Queen Mary in the middle of the stream. Before long we moved out to sea with all the men lined up on the deck. Soon we passed the "Grand Old Lady" holding the torch, the Statue of Liberty. The secrecy of the day before must have been forgotten because all the horns were making noise that would break a person's ear drum. Soon we met a warship lying off our coast and a message was exchanged with the blinker lights. We saw one flying boat while enroute to England. Previously everybody thought that we would travel in the visual convoy, but we soon saw that we would make the whole trip unescorted.

The weather was bad for 24 hours. The waves were running high and the zigzag path that the ship followed caused the ship to roll quite a bit. One night something happened that has never been explained. The ship lurched forward as though being pushed. Soon the rumor spread that a submarine had been heard and the ship was running away from the danger spot. I knew we were traveling fast, but I never heard the official explanation.

Church services were held on board the ship. It was quite an experience to attend services in a zigzag manner and thus caused more commotion than we were used to while on land. It also became necessary to set our watches back one hour each day due to the change in time zones.

During the whole trip we always wore a kapok life preserver. This was a rule and strictly enforced. Every morning at 10 o'clock we had life-boat drills. When the siren sounded, we had to rush to one of the upper decks and have our life preserver adjusted correctly. After the drill we were usually free to do as we liked. We spent a lot of time on either the sun deck or the promenade deck.

When we got up on December 9th our ship was anchored in the Firth-of-Clyde. It was a pleasant feeling to see land even if it was only the jagged hills of Scotland. That morning our unit disembarked to the mainland...

In 1971, Orville Ruedebusch had his second visit to the Queen Mary. New Bremen's **Postmaster Ruedebusch** attended a convention of the National Association of Postmasters of the United States in California. He was able to tour the Queen Mary in Long Beach with other Postmasters who had sailed during the war years. They were able to have quite a reunion and shared many memories of those days and their trip to foreign lands.



In 1971, Army Unit 591st Postal, who departed in 1943 to Europe, met at Queen Mary during a Postmaster's Convention in Los Angeles. Orville Ruedebusch is in the second row, second from the left.

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



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History Mystery



This looks like the NBHS Class of 1957! Can you name the individuals?

IN THIS ISSUE

- NBHA Letters & News
- Where was the Original Site of New Bremen?
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- Butter-New Bremen's Creamery
- Pictures From My Mother
- Tom Braun Remembers the Polio Epidemic
- Reunion on the Queen Mary

UPCOMING EVENTS

- New Bremen Garage Sales April 23-25
- Community Clean-up May 2, 8:00-11:00 AM
- Firemen Picnic July 25, 2026
- Bremenfest August 14-16, 2026

**The Luelleman House and the Pape House
Museums will be OPEN on the 4th Sunday
April-September from 1:00-3:00 PM**

The Museums are also open at other times by appointment. Call any Board Member for an appointment.