

THE TOWPATH

Published Quarterly
January-April-July-October
NEW BREMEN HISTORIC ASSOCIATION
July 2021



See and learn about this Church Bell.



Don Gagel added finishing touches to footlights rescued from the old high school stage. Read all the names.



Check out this plow. NBHA President Dave Maurer with Dennis Barga from Versailles, Ohio. Mr. Barga recognized this New Bremen plow and decided it needed to be returned to New Bremen. Thank you, Dennis Barga!

VISIT YOUR NEW BREMEN MUSEUMS

OPEN HOUSE

1:00 – 3:00 PM

at the Luelleman House and
the Pape House

4TH Sunday of each month

May 23, June 27, July 25,
August 22, September 26

Or by Appointment
Call any Board Member

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

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Board meetings are held the first Tuesday of each month.

Membership Dues

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

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

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

**Joann Zwiep
Constance Boesel Frericks
Kris & Donna Kuffner
Ron & Irma Schmitmeyer
NEW LIFE MEMBERS
Kris & Donna Kuffner
Ron & Irma Schmitmeyer**

MEMBER DEATHS

5/7/2021 **Thomas Fricke**

(CM=Charter Member LM=Life Member)

DONATIONS

**Gary & Kathy Hirschfeld
Bill & Edythe Henschen**

MEMORIALS

In memory of Gary Farley by Jim Mozer, Ronald & Diane Moeller, Mary Phlipot, Joe & Nancy Ritter, Jane Schnelle, Tom & Joyce Holdren, Lawrence & Marlene Egbert, Bob & Cindy Phlipot, & Anonymous.

Monthly Raffle Winners

April-\$100.00-Kay Shapiro (NC), \$75.00-Niles Harris (SD), \$50.00-Hal Opperman (TX).

May-\$100.00-Lester Settlege (OH), \$75.00-John Clune (NB), \$50.00-Mary Eyink (NB).

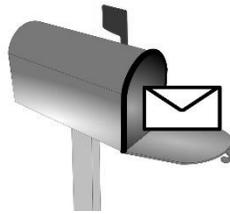
June-\$100.00-Joe Hamberg (NB), \$75.00-Ned Koenig (NB), \$50.00-Josh Ziegenbusch (CA).

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

Class ring by John Wierwille, Zion Church records, wall plaques, bell by Ted Wagner, NB plow by Dennis Barga, Jack Moeller autobiography by James Moeller, thirty plus NB items by Steven & Joyce Schroer, Historical newspapers by Margaret Seyfried, Huenke genealogy books, photos by Bill Wenthe, Small pocketknife Bremen hatcheries by Joyce Ruedebusch, newspaper article about Herbert Garmhausen by Don & Sue Kettler, Two Luelleman rocking chairs, glass negatives by Jan Luelleman, Pew from Holy Redeemer Church by Rob Ziegenbusch.

LETTERS



I just received the NBHA April 2021 newsletter and read most of it. You continue to produce the area's most outstanding historical society quarterly publication. Congratulations on another historical document that will be treasured by many members and future generations. With best wishes, - **Mary Ann Olding. (OH)**

Just finished reading the April Towpath. Enjoyed all the articles. And this is the first time I ever made the "front page."
- **Kathy Topp (NB)**

For those of you who remember when WOWO was THE radio station of choice back in the 50s and 60s. With personalities such as Bob Sievers, Bob Chase, and Jack Underwood doing record hops at places like the Union Hall in St. Marys and Bledsoe's Beach on Lake James...and if you lived on a farm, you always had Jay Gould at "The Little Red Barn" with Nancy Lee & The Hilltoppers, plus all the latest farm news, playing on the radio out in the barn...BTW, in the early 1950s, my dad & I were interviewed on air, by Bob Sievers, when we stopped by the WOWO studio in Ft. Wayne to donate some clothes for a Christmas project they were promoting. It was amazing, to a 10-year-old, to see the real person behind that voice, as well as all the radio accoutrements in the studio.

Ah, those were the days, my friend!
Now you have me hunting for the Pimwe book! Those stories were my favorite in 4th grade Social Studies book. I read them over and over. Always wanted to make a dugout canoe...I used to get my "jungle fix" listening unfailingly to a radio program called Jungle Jim (I think). It was on several times a week around 5:00 PM Amazing how we used to listen to radio programs and actually use our imaginations, isn't it? - **Larry Roettger (OH)**

I saw a picture of my grandmother Helen (Nano) Schmidt in the last Towpath. I basically was raised by Doc and Nano Schmidt and was also born in their home. That all seems so long ago now, and I guess it was! - **Constance (Boesel) Frericks (MN)**

I guess it was my lucky day. I should have bought a lottery ticket---maybe I could have been a million or billionaire! Glad the NB Historic Association can use the money. I truly enjoy reading about the old hometown in the newsletter. **Hal Opperman (TX)**

Thank you for your service as the editors of "The Towpath." Having both been raised in New Bremen and graduated from NBHS in 1969, my wife Linda (Dietrich) and I always enjoy reading each issue and look forward to their arrival.

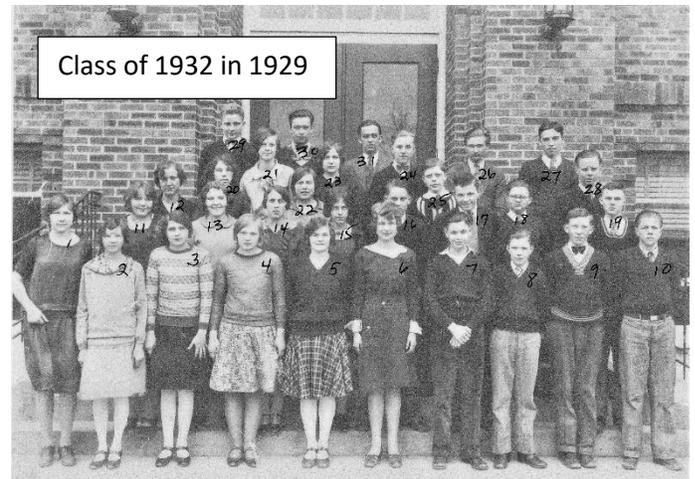
The back page of the latest issue asked, "Can you identify more members of the NBHS Class of 1932." Linda recognized her mother, Louise G. Haines Dietrich, as the fifth woman from

the left in the first row in the plaid skirt, and her father, Ralph H. Dietrich, as the fourth man from the right in the second row. They didn't date in high school but got together after Ralph returned to New Bremen after his Army service in World War II, including at the Battle of the Bulge. He brought back a set of dishes from Germany for his mother, and at her suggestion, showed them to

Louise and her mother. Linda still has that special set of "match-making" dishes, which ultimately resulted in their marriage and their children, Robert (who married his NBHS classmate, Betty Meckstroth and still lives in New Bremen) and Linda. We enjoy the special Miami-Erie Canal connection that New Bremen has to Cincinnati, where Linda and I have lived for the past 44 years. -**Michael A. Hirschfeld (OH)**

I can add two more names to the members of NBHS Class of 1932 for certain, as marked in the enclosed copied photo. The others I marked are my best guesses based on pictures in Mom's Senior Class Picture scrapbook. I've also enclosed a copy of the Commencement Program for the NBHS Class of 1932.

Appreciate and enjoy all your hard work on the "The Towpath." - **Bob Dietrich (NB)**



Identified: 3-Bertha Schowe King, 5-Louise Haines Dietrich, 7-Frederick Luedeke, 8-Don Kettler, 9-Verlin Egbert, 15-Viola Hirschfeld Headapohl, 16-Ralph Dietrich, 18-Harold Ahlers, 19-Webster Geib, 24- Richard King, 25-Stanley Bienz, 27-Louis Topp, 28-Woodrow Braun, 29-Thomas Laut, 31-Franklin Coss.

Thanks to all our readers who have written letters and participated in the *History Mystery* items in the recent issue of The Towpath -Kathy Maurer, Diane Paul, Carl & Dianne Schwartz, Jeanette Pahl, Karen & Randy Eckert, Tom Braun, Marvin Heitkamp!



**"I AM FEELING JUST
FINE AND HOPE THAT
YOU ARE THE SAME"
WWII Letters from Paul**

Going through boxes of family relics can yield new information about family members. We knew facts about the early life of New Bremen native Paul August Lietz and his later life after WWII. Recently we found more information in letters Paul wrote home during his Army service. Paul rarely talked about that time in his life, but luckily his mother saved all his letters.

We will begin with some background information. Paul was born 100 years ago this month in the brick house at 34 S. Herman Street, the son of Herman and Alma (Heil) Lietz. During the first 20 years of his life, he acquired his education, learned his craft of cabinet maker, pursued his hobby of photography, and went fishing as often as he could. During these years he also earned the nickname of "Pickle" when he always ordered a "pickle sandwich with a little hamburger" from Louie's Restaurant.

Paul graduated from New Bremen High School in 1940 and worked with his father in the Lietz Furniture Shop. Soon after the United States entered WWII he was drafted. Paul was sworn in on June 30, 1942, one day before his 21st birthday, at Fort Hayes, in Columbus, Ohio. He was tested for intelligence and aptitude and was assigned to the Signal Corps Detachment.

During a brief visit home before basic training, his father discussed with Paul what his absence might mean to his mother. His father, concerned about his own health, asked Paul to be sure to care for his mother in the future.



Paul with his parents Alma & Herman Lietz

Paul traveled to Camp Crowder, Missouri, home of the Midwestern Signal Corps to receive basic training.

His next post was Los Angeles, California to begin Radio Technician School. Letters to his parents reveal that he made friends easily, enjoyed the classes and did well on the necessary tests. In his free time, Paul explored the city and visited his Uncle Emil Lietz. He completed the course of study and was then sent to Camp Murphy, Florida for further training.



Paul visited Emil & Elizabeth Lietz in Los Angeles.

This is what we learned in researching Camp Murphy. When Camp Murphy opened, it was to be...*a school where young men with an electrical bent and a willingness to learn, can quickly acquire a working knowledge of the important secret weapons that play a great part in today's warfare...* Soldiers experienced in radios and electronics were selected to learn the military operation and repair of the highly technical equipment, including radar. The facility and operations of Camp Murphy were top-secret. There was to be no discussion of operations by anyone in the program. If the soldier was questioned off grounds about the facility, he was to say that he was in radio school.

Paul arrived in Camp Murphy in November of 1942, completed the five-month course, and took his oath of secrecy seriously. Being very aware of censorship, his letters never revealed secrets of his schooling as a radar technician. This was also true in his later letters. Paul never gave his location or any information that needed to be censored. In fact, all his letters were marked passed by the army examiners with no deletions.

From Camp Murphy he was shipped to the Asiatic-Pacific. He arrived in Brisbane Australia in April 1943 and within one month he received word that his father had died. He was not able to return home for the funeral. He was not able to be present for his mother as he had promised his father. His mother, a gentle soul, had suffered many losses in her lifetime but rose to the

challenge of keeping in touch with her son through letters.

Paul and his mother exchanged many letters during the two and one-half years that Paul was overseas. She carefully saved each letter and noted the date she received it on the envelope. In turn, Paul tried to address each question she asked. In one letter he answered her question about what kind of work he was doing. ...*You said you wondered what my work was like, well sometime when Geciena (Halsema) or one of the Kuest girls go to work (telephone operators in New Bremen), go along with them, and take a look in the back room, or frame room, where all the wires are, and you will get a good idea of just what my job is like. I'll bet you would never find through a mess like that. Even if it is only half that much you can see why there is a lot of work. Once in a while, I'll work the switchboard, and they are just like the ones back there, but I wouldn't want to do that all the time. So, write and tell me what you think of that, that is the best way for you to get an idea of what it is all about...* And his mother reported that she did visit the telephone office and looked in the back room with all the wires!

He also tried to reassure her that he was OK and that she should not worry about him. About halfway through his overseas duty he wrote ... *I never wrote very much of this in any of my other letters, but I will have to give you all the credit in the world. You see when I first got overseas, I was worried as the devil about you. After a little while I started getting letters from you, how you were making the best of everything, and how good you were getting along. And I received letters from a lot of people and learned that you were OK. Well, I knew then that I would not need to worry about you, and that sure makes things a lot easier for me.* He closed each letter to her with...*I am feeling just fine and hope that you are the same. With love, Paul.*

Paul's address and APO changed often as he helped carry out the mission of the 5th Air Force in the Pacific. During all his time overseas, Paul was a member of the Signal Corps Wing of the 5th Air Force. Part of their job was to provide ground and air communications. They also were given the task of repairing all the communication equipment used by the 5th Air Force, including radar. His letters home indicated he was proud of his participation in their mission.

From April 1943 until October 1945, he had frequent moves from Brisbane to Townsville, Australia and to New Guinea. Then moved to the Philippines- Luzon & Clark Field and finally to Okinawa. Paul's letters home never gave his location, but with research of his changes of address/APO, we were able to trace his movements.

Though he never revealed the activities of missions, he did leave a photo album of his travels. ...*All the pictures that I have taken and sent home so far, I am going to put in one album, and that album I am going to put away somewhere. All those pictures will remind me of the army and when I get out of this uniform, I want to forget all about the army and all that has any connection with it...* After each photo passed censorship, he would send it home in a letter. The following photos are from his album.



1943. The radar team in Brisbane, Australia with Paul on right. Brisbane was the major port of entry for supplies and reinforcements from the U.S.

Radar was a war-winning advantage for the Allies in the Pacific. Radar teams were well-trained in both radar and radio work. Paul often wrote home that though he was very busy he liked the work that he was doing.

His letters say the same group of guys formed a team that worked together. Knowing Pickle's penchant for giving people nicknames, we read that he often worked with his pals, "Mo" and "Sunshine." He also said he was able to use his skills as a cabinetmaker to build as well as his radio-radar installation and repair skills. It seems his team was sent wherever their skills were needed and when the job was completed, they would return to the 5th Air Force home base.



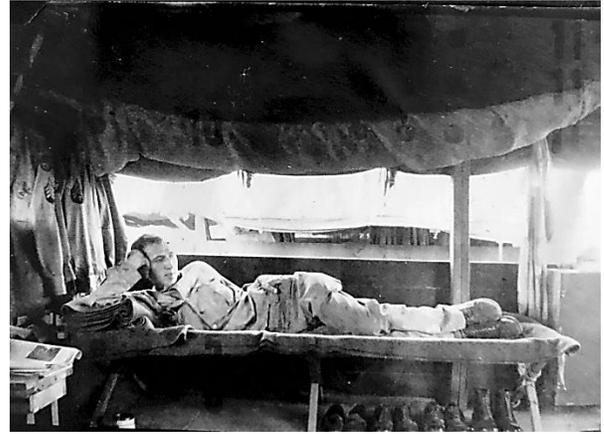
"Mo" & Paul with 6-inch Japanese gun.



1943. This photo shows Paul and his team at the 4th Air Depot near Townsville, Australia. Townsville, located on the northeast coast was a major air transport center during WWII. It was the main shipment point to New Guinea. They were based there off and on for several months. He wanted his mother to share his new address so he would keep getting mail from relatives and friends. He liked to keep up with New Bremen news and asked for a subscription to the *New Bremen Sun* newspaper.



The Townsville, Australia Local Train.



August 1944. "Sacktime" with Paul and lots of mosquito netting. Townsville, Australia. Paul often mentioned in his letters that he liked to stay busy to make the time pass quickly. He did this with his work but also stayed busy during his spare time. He went to Townsville to many shows and dances. But he also liked to listen to the radio that he built for himself, talk with the boys, and write letters.

Paul's next move was to Biak Island, located off the northeast coast of New Guinea. The island is mostly covered with jungle but there is a coastal plain suitable for airfields. The Japanese occupied the island from 1942 until the Battle of Biak which began May 1944. By August 20, the island was considered secure. The secured airfields were used by the 5th Air Force in the drive to liberate the Philippines.



Waiting in line for Coca Cola at Biak, Netherlands, East Indies October 1944. Paul wrote...*The line for Coca Cola was long but it sure did taste good. It only cost 8 cents...*

May 1945. Paul with co-worker, at Luzon, Clark Field, Philippines.



5th Air Force





September 2, 1945. Paul and buddies were in Okinawa on the day of the formal surrender of Japan. Okinawa is an island on the southern end of Japan. At the end of the long campaign of island-hopping to defeat Japan, the Battle of Okinawa (April-June 1945) was the last major battle of WWII in the Pacific.



September 5, 1945, Okinawa

Dear Mom, Well if the camp paper is right, then from now on there is no more censorship. I am at work and will fix phones if needed.

This is the first letter that I have written to you, that I can tell you where I am. The dangers are gone now, so you will not have worries. From now on you will be able to ask all the questions that you want, and I will be able to give you the answers. I never wrote too much before because I didn't want you to get the wrong ideas and then worry your head off for no reason at all.

There are a lot of things that I will tell you when I get home. There are a lot of funny things that have happened here and there are a lot of things that I want to forget. I have had things pretty rough in some of the places this past year. Your prayers back there must have done some good, though, and the good Lord must have been with me. Those are all worries of the past now.

I have come a long way since I got off the boat in Brisbane, Australia, April 17, 1943. The worst or most discouraging time was when I was in Port Moresby with the 912th Signal Company. Things weren't going so good then. I was lucky that I got to spend as much time in Australia as I did. I went north just at the right time to get in on and get credit for the different campaigns. Leyte

was the worst mud hole that I have ever been in, in all my life. From there we went to Mindoro, and it was a lot better. The best place of all was Luzon. There I was stationed at Clark Field. It has been a long way and a lot of things have happened in all that time...I am feeling just fine and hope you are the same. Love, Paul

Paul with his mother Alma (Heil) Lietz(1888-1973)



Paul returned to the U.S. on October 10, 1945. He was glad to be home in New Bremen. Now he could accomplish the plans he had made while away. He often wrote about his plans to reopen the Lietz Furniture Shop, take care of house repairs for his mother, and resume his hobbies.

In later years, Paul married and with his wife Marge became an integral part of the NBHA preserving the history of his hometown.

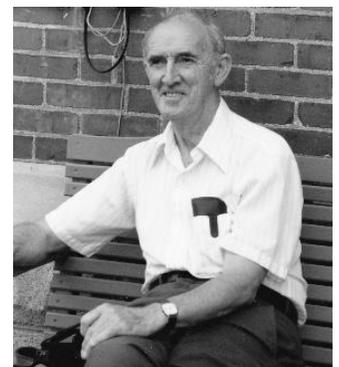


Paul & Marge enjoyed their role as Bremenfest Grand Marshals in 1989.

We are grateful that we found the letters and photographs saved for over 75 years, for they gave us insight into this chapter of Paul's life during WWII and life on the home front in New Bremen.

By Joyce Ruedebusch & Genevieve Conradi

**Paul August Lietz
1921-1996**



NEW BREMEN HAS ALWAYS BEEN HOME TO ME!

On a bright sunny spring day, my daughter and I visited with Becky Cooper and her daughter in Celina. Becky met us at the door with a smile and cheery welcome and led us to the kitchen table. Gathered around the table, she began her story...



Arnold & Ora Westerbeck and daughters.

“My parents, Arnold and Ora (Schlegel) Westerbeck had four daughters and I am the youngest, born in 1937. My mother always said that I was the best baby and the biggest!” Becky and her three older sisters, Evelyn, Kathryn, and Ruth were each born three years apart.

She then explained that her real name is Janet Rebecca, and she was named for her Grandmother Rebecca Boesel Westerbeck, a descendant of the New Bremen Pioneer Boesel family.



Becky with her dog. Grandma Rebecca Boesel Westerbeck is standing in doorway.

The name-change from Janet to Becky began in the first grade when Miss Loy declared that having two Janets in her classroom would be too confusing and would not work. Miss Loy asked her family to help solve this problem and they suggested she be called by her second name of Rebecca or Becky. To this day most people know her as Becky.

Becky loved school. She enjoyed being with her friends, studying, learning, and achieving. She remembers that Mrs. Dorothy Harlamert was her 2nd grade teacher and Mrs. Helen Smith was her 3rd grade teacher. She then became a student at the Westside School for the 4th, 5th, and 6th grade. There, teacher Miss Bernice Luedeka, insisted she be called by her given name of Janet. She has fond memories of her three years at Westside School (and attended the Special Recognition Day for Bernice Ludeka in New Bremen in 1983.)

Becky’s high school days began in 1949 in New Bremen when she entered the 7th grade. Her love of school continued, though, now she recognizes that the opportunities for sports or clubs for girls was limited at that time. She did play the bells in band under the direction of Miss Sproul and became a cheerleader for the boys’ basketball team.



Cheerleaders - Becky Westerbeck second from left.

Each school day, Becky was one of the high school students who hurried to the grade school cafeteria on South Franklin Street for lunch. The high school lunch cost 25 cents and Principal Myrl Smith always spread the butter on the bread that was served. While she was in high school, she remembers that a milk dispenser was placed in the Home Economics room for



students and helped serve as a lunch substitute.

To this day she remembers that Mr. Houshower, the School Superintendent, told their class that he believed in UFOs. Becky received her high school diploma from New Bremen High School in 1955 with 28 graduates in her class.



Becky dated Jim Cooper, her classmate, in high school, and they married in July 1957. They first lived on Washington Street and then purchased a house on South Franklin Street and soon their babies began to arrive, Laura, Ellen, Eileen, Lynda, and Robert. Within five years, there were five babies.



By that time, Jim was the Police Chief and Street Commissioner, and life was very busy. Phone calls for Jim came to their house. She recalls that then she would put all the children in the car, and they would be off to find Jim. She said she never minded this because then she and Jim got to see each other. A very large garden also kept her busy. She remembers that they planted 5 rows of everything with each child having a row.

Becky recalls that Donna Watkins, teacher and Principal of the Auglaize School, asked Becky to be a bus driver for the school, after witnessing Becky's ability to transport many children to school in her large station wagon. This experience served her well because she found that she enjoyed the job and was able to continue this work when they moved to Oklahoma.

The decision to move to Oklahoma occurred in 1978 when a friend asked Jim to join him in the construction business. Jim had owned and operated a construction business in New Bremen after the years he served as New Bremen's Police Chief and Street Commissioner. He looked forward to a change in scenery. They had a lovely home in Ponca City, stone with fireplaces, both inside and outside, ivy-covered, and round doors. Besides her big garden each year she also had three freezers to preserve the bounty.

Becky soon found a job as an aide at the Opportunity Center in Ponca City for developmentally disabled clients. She was able to use her bus driving skills, learned in New Bremen, but refused to drive on the dirt roads there. They had a good life in Oklahoma and were happy, but they said that New Bremen would always be their home.

Jim died in 2009 and their son Robert died in 2015. Becky returned to New Bremen in 2016 to be near her daughters. She plans to have a big garden again this year and fill her freezers. She also bakes bread regularly and cans tomatoes, tomato juice, applesauce, and peaches. One of her specialty meals is vegetable soup. It was truly kind of her to share her recipe with us:

Becky's Vegetable Soup

- 1 jar homemade canned beef
- 1 jar homemade canned tomatoes
- ½ head of cabbage
- 2 bags frozen baby lima beans
- 1 package cut sweet corn
- ¼ cup sugar

You may add any other vegetable you prefer.
Simmer until hot.

JACKSON'S JEWELRY

By Mariann Jackson Sanders & Teresa Jackson Williman

When Dad decided to become a jeweler, we doubt he ever imagined the life it would bring him. After serving in WWII, Dad went to school on the GI bill to learn the trade of becoming a jeweler and a watchmaker. He began his career in New Castle, IN, and also did work for years for a jeweler in Portland, IN.



Jane & Bill Jackson just after purchasing jewelry store in New Bremen.

In 1960, while working for Hartley's Jewelers in Hartford City, IN, Dad saw a sale advertisement for the jewelry store in New Bremen, OH, and went to see it. He liked the size of it and the town and also the owners, Mel and Leona Laut. Teresa recently found a note from Leona to our parents upon their retirement where Leona wrote "32 years ago, you moved into Laut Jewelry Store by the back door. Leona and Mel walked out the front door wishing you success in your new venture."

We can only imagine the emotions of both of our parents and the Laut's on that day. Mel and Leona were always a part of our family until their deaths. They came to holidays, weddings and just to visit. When Teresa's son, Michael, was born in 1979, Mel, who was 88, held his first baby. She'll never forget the look on Mel's face nor the tears in his eyes.

The jewelry store was first owned by Fred Ende, a music professor who played numerous instruments and also sold musical instruments at the store. Mom and Dad found tin advertising signs in the attic of the store and had their friend, Paul "Pickle" Lietz, make frames for them and all of us. They still hang in our homes today or have been passed down to the grandchildren.

Dad also found an octagon shaped, white glass ceiling light in the attic by stepping through one of the panels! They were told it was the first electric light in New

Bremen. Fortunately, they were able to get the glass panel replaced and it hung for many years over their dining room table.



Dad lived in the back of the jewelry store for a year while mom and the three of us, Rosamond, Mariann and Teresa, lived in Indiana. Dad would come home after the store closed on Saturday and then leave Indiana late Sunday evening to get ready to begin his week again in New Bremen.



Front of jewelry store.

When we moved to New Bremen, our first home was the apartment house/utility office just west of the jewelry store. It was a two-bedroom apartment, and the back of the store was our yard. We were 12, 8 and 3 years of age when we moved.

Teresa grew up downtown and her first friend was Scott Kuenning, whose parents, Stan and Dona Mae owned the hardware store. They had big adventures going to visit Leona and Rosemary, who worked for the utility department, to the hotel for a small Coke, across the highway to Schwieterman's to get a cherry Coke and look at the comics then back across the highway to the 5 & 10 for penny candy. Teresa remembers that they often built forts out of appliance boxes from the hardware store or rode their tricycles. Mom used to tell her that if they (Scott and Teresa) didn't show up to visit one of the above-listed places, they would often call to see if the kids were ok.



Bill & Jane in the store.

Mom and Dad both worked in the store. Dad took classes to keep up with technology and further his expertise and still worked for other jewelry stores making repairs on their watches. Mom did the engraving, jewelry repair, bookkeeping and loved waiting on customers. At Christmas, when we were old enough, we would help out after school and on Saturdays until Christmas break and then we worked every day. We would order meals from the Hotel Bar or Wint's so that was always something to look forward to. The jewelry store's trademark wrap was a shiny white paper with homemade bows. Both the wrapping and the bows had to meet Dad's approval. Mariann worked at the store even after graduating college during Christmas and every Saturday during the year until her son was born. She would boast that she had made thousands of bows in her career.

Going to the jewelry and gift shows was always a memorable occasion. The show limited participants to four per business so we took turns going with Mom and Dad. Sometimes we could invite a friend. The shows were in Columbus, and they could see the latest and most fashionable jewelry and gifts available. It was always so amazing. Afterwards, we would go out to eat at some special place.



Teresa has the grandmother clock lovingly displayed in her living room.



Randy Clark, former band director of New Bremen High School brought Dad a clock which was found in a storage closet in the band room. He asked if Dad could repair it. Dad worked many hours on the clock because it was entirely made by hand by Fred Ende. Fred had made the wooden case complete with cannons because he was a Civil War enthusiast. He also made the entire movements including the hands. The clock has an "F" on the end of the minute hand and an "E" on the end of the hour hand. He even made the pendulum.

Dad repaired the clock and called Randy. Randy explained he had not

wanted the clock returned. After thinking about the homeless clock, Dad took it to Georgiana Laut, Fred's widow. She told Dad that she believed that the clock should be with a watchmaker and said she would like him to have it. It hung in their home for many years and is still keeping time in Mariann's home today.



Bill in front of store during the closing sales.

When it came time for our parents to retire, it felt like we were also losing a piece of our lives. We literally grew up there, worked there, saw our parents grow and thrive there and there were so many memories that occurred between that back door and front door. But more than anything, we wanted Dad to have the freedom to go fishing on a Monday if he wanted to and for them to go see the rest of the United States in their camper and drink Manhattans at every camp site.

The sale was bittersweet, but you could see they were ready. What began for them in 1960 ended in 1992. And while the building is gone now, the grassy lot cannot erase the history of the store – from Fred Ende to Mel and Leona Laut to mom and dad.

We love when people share stories of our parents, of picking out their engagement ring, jewelry they still have and wear, getting their ears pierced and sweet memories of spending time with them. Dad made the perfect choice when he chose to be a jeweler and to move to New Bremen.

Thank you to the New Bremen Historical Association for asking us to write this article about the jewelry store. We hope you enjoyed a little peek back in time.

The NBHA is indebted to Jane Jackson for her assistance and energy in the early years of the organization. Jane served on the Board for 11 years with four of those years as treasurer.

Beginning of Basketball in New Bremen

In 1980, Jerry Brown, New Bremen High School Principal, with the help of his wife Mary Ann, Richard Kunning, Lester Blanke, Carl Watkins, Frank Kuenning, and Teresa Homan, gathered all the information available and published a booklet about the New Bremen High School boys basketball program from its inception in 1915 to 1980. The following letter contains information about the first teams and is a reprint from the published book.

LETTER FROM RICHARD KUNNING

March 24, 1980

Replying to your request for information regarding the formation of the first New Bremen basketball team may I say that I am more than pleased to cooperate. May I say that it pleases me very much that you are taking the time and trouble to gather this information.

I will start at the beginning: During the winter of 1914 I was invited to visit my brothers who were attending Ohio State University at the time. They took me to see my first basketball game, Ohio State vs. University of Chicago. To say I was fascinated was to put it mildly. At a later date I was talking to Jacob (Jake) Maurer about it and he also became interested. The following summer Jake went to Ohio Northern University to take entrance examinations as well as a course in math. He also checked into the basketball situation and picked up the rudiments of the game. When he returned, he immediately contacted me and we made plans to set things in motion.

My cousin, Miss Ruby Heinfeldt, previously had gone to Ohio Northern and played basketball on the Summer School team. She was my second-grade teacher, so I do not remember the year. She was interested to the extent that she purchased two basketball ball nets (they were the same as are in use today) and tried to organize a young ladies team in N. B. but failed. In the interim she had married Dr. I. H. Boesel who was a doctor in New Bremen at that time. While talking with her one day, I mentioned the fact that we were going to organize a basketball team that fall after school started. Imagine my surprise when she told me about the nets and offered them to me on the spot. I called Jake and told him of our good luck.

The next thing we had to do was to get enough lumber and hardware to build the backboards. I went to my grandfather, Mr. William F. Rabe, owner of the Rabe Lumber Company, and told him of our problem. He immediately assured me that he would furnish us everything we needed. So far so good.

The next step was to find a hall to play in and also appoint a manager. We went to see the Laut Brothers,

Emil and Frank. They had just finished building the Laut-Schulenberg building, across the street from their pool room. After a little dickering they said they would rent the hall to us under the following terms: We could practice one month before the season for free. Rental during the season was to be \$4.50 per week plus an extra \$5.00 on game night. This included heat, game night only. What a deal! The only trouble then was that we did not have the \$4.50. Naturally, this was before Carter and inflation.

School started in September, and we called a meeting to all those interested. Seven showed up as well as Albert Jung, a Junior. Albert immediately got the manager's job. He was a good one. Albert not only did all the work, but he kept score, made up the games, paid all the bills and did the writeups for the paper.

Starting Oct. 15, 1915, we made and put in position the backboards, drew the lines on the floor and were open for business. There was just one fly in the ointment. We did not have a ball. When we found out that a ball at that time cost \$3.50 it almost put us out of business before we started. We went to the school board and got just what we expected, a lusty "No thank you." We finally got permission from Superintendent Garman to take up a collection, starting at fourth grade. After two days of work, we finally collected a grand total of \$4.15. Imagine, our first surplus.

After a month of hard practice, we finally developed a smattering of a team under the direction of Wesley H. Mast, now coach and math instructor. Wesley had never played basketball but knew the game. He had watched it while taking a teacher training course at Kalamazoo, Michigan. Incidentally, all of our practice was done in the late afternoon and without heat or shower. Heat was available during game time only.

Our first game finally arrived. On Nov. 30, 1915, we played against New Knoxville, Ohio. They had only started playing the previous year. After two thirty-minute halves we managed to beat them 21-11. We later found out that the halves were to be twenty minutes with a twenty-minute rest. It made a difference. The other games we played are listed and covered in the reprint you sent to me so I will not go into detail. Suffice it to say that schools were not graded at that time and we played with whoever we could get a game. Other towns we played in the area, not listed in the paper were Celina, Lima Catholic, Piqua Catholic, Jackson Center, Greenville, and Ansonia. These were their first teams. Celina gave us a great deal of trouble and I remember beating them only once.

Ralph Kuenning, my second cousin from the other branch of the Kunning-Kuenning family, became our second manager, years 1916-1917-1918. Ralph did a

good job and besides doing all the work he hustled up money from whatever source. He finally helped promote dances with the Laut Brothers which were held after the home games. These dances were the highlights of the winter social season. Laut Brothers furnished the “punch” after the games. I cannot give them enough credit for all the help they gave us. Ralph kept us solvent from this time forward.

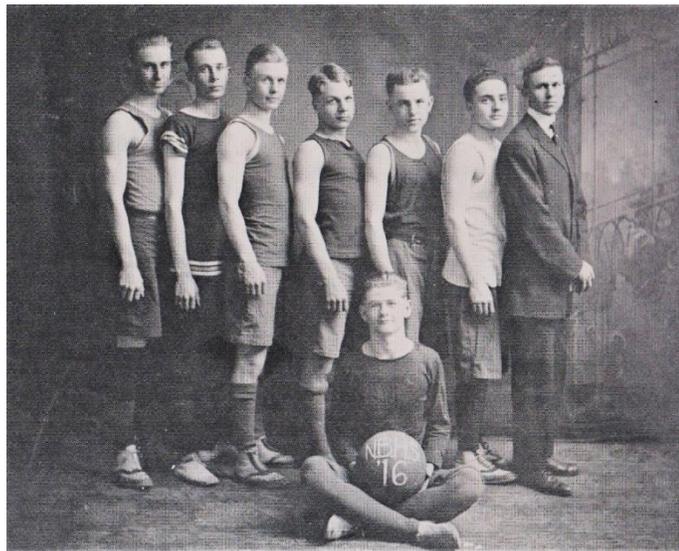
We finished the last season by winning most of our games. Our last year was an especially good one and we were invited to Northern Ohio Championships played at Defiance, Ohio. To my knowledge, Lloyd Laut and I are the only ones living of these teams.

Commenting on the style of playing, I would have to say that we placed a great deal of emphasis on the defensive end of the game. Hence the scores were small, games were very rough as not too many fouls were called. Shooting for field goals was much different than at present. We had to place more emphasis on banking shots other than the present high lob shots as the ceilings were not high enough.

And “that was the way it was in 1915-16, 1916-7, 1917-18.”

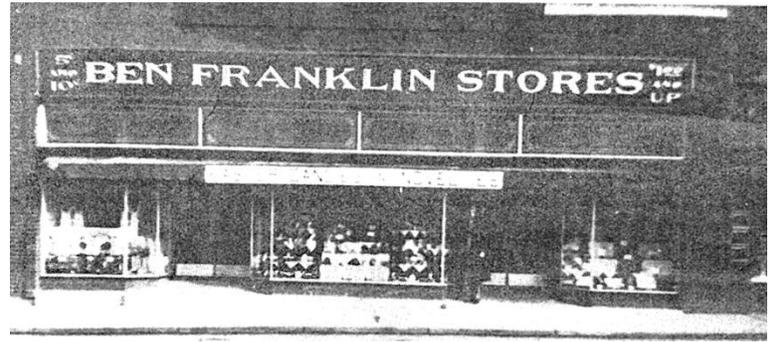
Sincerely yours, Richard A. Kunning

Please excuse the errors. My fingers are not as nimble as they were in 1918. Incidentally, I took one half year of typing at NBHS in 1915.



1915-16 First Boys Basketball team

L to R: Jacob Maurer, Homer Isern, Richard Kunning, Edgar Nieter, Howard Langhorst, Herman Laut, Coach Wesley Mast. Seated: Edgar Wierth. (Substitutes not in the picture: Larry Luedeke, Harold Ebbs.



The Laut-Schulenberg Building (1912) served as the indoor basketball court for the first New Bremen team. It housed the 5 & 10 store from 1939-1975.

The following list of Songs & Yells was recorded in a scrapbook by **Ione Schulenberg Schaefer** (1901-1992). Ione was the daughter of Herbert & Lula Taylor Schulenberg. Her two older brothers were Cade and Elton. Ione was a NBHS Class of 1919 graduate.

Songs & Yells

Juniors alas! Juniors alas!
Seniors! Seniors! That’s the class!

Strychnine! Quinine! Powder! Dust!
Where we are, there is a fuss!
Skull and cross bones! We are bold,
Brain and brawn for the Crimson and Gold!

Owie! Zowie! Zing-a-ling-a-lie!
New Bremen High School! Ki! Yi! Yi!

Stand ‘em on the head!
Stand ‘em on the feet!
New Bremen High School
Can’t be beat.

Sauerkraut and wieners,
Schnitzel, beans, and pie,
New Bremen High School
Always up high.

Rattle on the tin shop,
Pennyroyal tea,
New Bremen is your team straight?
Yes-sir-ee!

The early New Bremen basketball team and other teams did not have a mascot name in 1915 or in 1919 when the above “yells” were in use. The rise of mascots in schools seems to have happened in the 1930s. In 1933, the NBHS Mirage shows that a cardinal appeared on the jackets of the basketball team.

Recollections from a Small-town Barber

By Walt Schmitmeyer (2021)

I graduated from Andrew-Columbus Barber College in 1958. After graduation, I barbered for one year in Troy, Ohio. In 1960, I came to New Bremen and took over the barbershop that my older brother John owned. He had purchased it from Grover Wissman, who had been a barber previously for many years. The shop was located at 16 South Washington Street, as part of the American Budget Company building.



South Washington Street before 1970.



Walt in
his first
New
Bremen
barbershop.

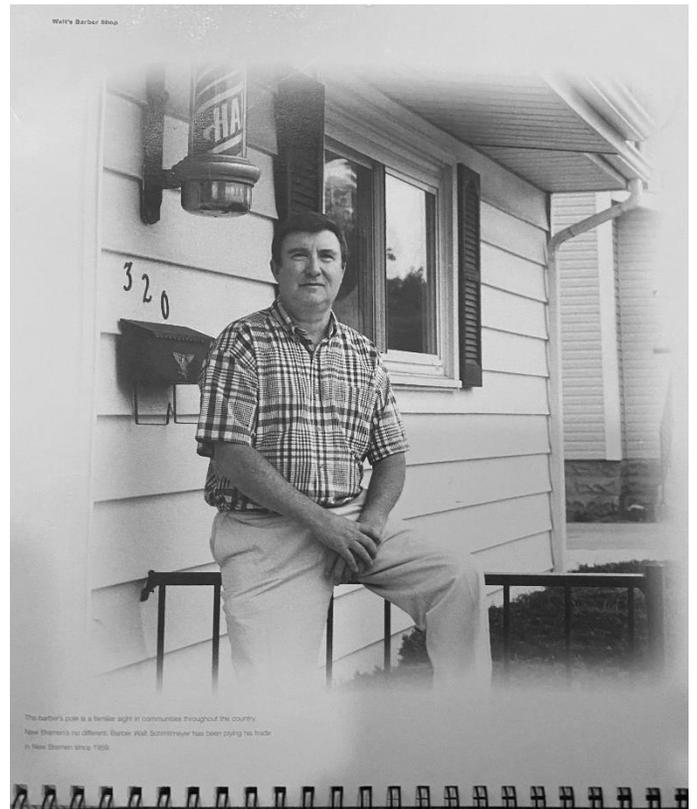
SHAVES & SHOWERS

When I first started barbering in New Bremen, in addition to haircuts, I offered shaves and showers. I had a shower in the back of the shop that I used to sell showers for 40 cents. You needed to bring your own towel. The showers were very popular when the carnival was in town and workers would use them, sometimes the girls and guys together. Face shaves I sold for 75 cents. I only sold showers for a few years but continued to sell shaves longer.

BREAKTIMES

During the workday, there would be times when I and the other barber on the street, Ernie Philipot, did not have any customers. During those times, we would head across the street and play horseshoes at nearby courts. Since both of our barbershops were within viewing distance, we could play until one of us had a customer walk in.

In 1973, I was notified by Lloyd Laut and Charles Wierwille, that they would like to expand the American Budget, and use the space that I had been using. They were very gracious in working with me, to continue barbering there, until I had a new location. That location was 320 West Monroe Street, a building owned by Bob Marshall and used by him to house a craft shop.



MOVING TO THE NEW BUILDING

When moving to the building on West Monroe Street, it became evident that many of the furnishings would not fit. I was fortunate that one of my regular customers was Jim Dicke I, owner of Crown Controls. Jim said that he

would purchase some of the furnishings to put in the old train depot located near the farmhouse, a facility that Crown used for guests. Some years later I was called by another good customer, Jim Dicke II, to cut his hair at the depot. That was a lot of fun!

PAUL & MARGE LIETZ CONNECTION

One of my fondest recollections, when at my new shop, was dealing with Paul & Marge Lietz. I would cut both of their hair. When it came time for their appointments, I would see them walking down the sidewalk hand-in-hand. It was at that time I would grab my guitar, and start singing the Tennessee Waltz, as they walked into my shop. They would then proceed to waltz around the shop. True love.

I continued to cut hair full-time in New Bremen, until the year 2001, at which time I sold the barbershop to Glen Sheib, who continues to barber there.



These are just a few of the many recollections I have while barbering in New Bremen. I had a great clientele and appreciated all of their business over the many years. Many I consider and call my friends. I still maintain my barber license and continue to cut hair for family members, including my sons, grandkids, and now great grandkids.

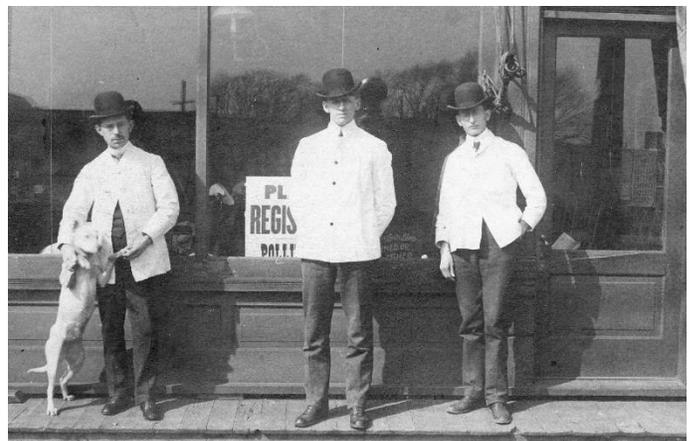
A Brief History of 16 S. Washington Street



Joseph Lanfersieck Barber Shop at 16 S. Washington Street, early 1900s



Joseph Lanfersieck



Grover "Dooley" Wissman in the middle. Other men are unknown.

For more information about Grover "Dooley" Wissman (1886-1977) and other early barbers in New Bremen, read *The Towpath*, October 2000 at www.newbremenhistory.org

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

New Bremen, Ohio 45869-0073



NBHA Museum – 120 N. Main St.

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**Do you remember writing on the blackboard when
you were a child?**