



THE TOWPATH

Published Quarterly
January-April-July-October
NEW BREMEN HISTORIC ASSOCIATION
October 2026

NEW BREMEN SUMMER CELEBRATIONS



**Reading the
Declaration of
Independence-
250 Years!**



NBHA Open House



Firemen's Picnic 105 Years!



BREMENFEST

**Gilberg
Furniture 100
Years!**



**New Bremen
Foundation
30 Years**



Class Reunions



(NBHS Class of 1976...see page 5)

“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 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

**Ned & Lee Koenig
Dale & Mary Grillot
Matthew & Leslie Kreig
Louise Wieggers**

NEW LIFE MEMBERS

**Ned & Lee Koenig
Dale & Mary Grillot
Matthew & Leslie Kreig**

MEMBER DEATHS

(6/7/2026) **Rob Tangeman (LM)**
(6/23/2026) **Lester Settlege (LM)**
(7/1/2026) **David Fogt**
(7/4/2026) **Norman Jacoby (LM)**
(7/5/2026) **Terry Wagner**
(7/8/2026) **Donna Topp**
(7/23/2026) **Linda Fortkamp (LM)**
(CM=Charter Member LM=Life Member)

Monthly Raffle Winners

**July-\$100.00-Jack Thobe (NB), \$75.00-Melinda Clark (NB), \$50-Karen Smith (NB).
August-\$100-Bill Wente (OH), \$75.00-Mark Tangeman (NB), \$50.00-Megan Larger (NB).
September-\$100-Chris Evers (NB), \$75.00-Shirley Sollman (OH), \$50.00-Jeff Paul (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

Wm. Rabe scrap book, Early NB schoolbooks of Marie Schowe Rabe (*Kathy Schwartz*). Dish with imprint STAMCO entrance, WWII Chesterfield cigarettes (*Joyce Ruedebusch*). 1946 Wapak phone book, folder of news clippings 1980s (*Marlene Ahlers*). Pins-Stamco 25-year club & WOW, photos of STAMCO employees, shop, news clippings, Booklet with memories of 25-year club members (*Carol Hittepole Wilson*). NB FNB notebook, Rump key case, Lock Two pencil (*Doug Slattery*). Rexall 1924 magazine, White Mountain Creamery milk settlement slip, 1951 & 1953 calendars, ration book holder, Lock Two business card, NB Sun 1960 supplement (*Rodney Suchland*). NBHS Jr. band uniform 1930s worn by Norman Ruedebusch (*Susan Ruedebusch McCarty*). NB advertising items, FNB, Rump, Bremenfest (*Evelyn Wenning*). German notebook 1897 belonged to Cornelius August Niemeyer (1886-1955) (*Barbara Grimm*). STAMCO Machine Nameplate used ca.1920-1989 (*Lois Wahoff Westerheide*). FFA Jacket of Don Luedeke, 1913 picture of St Paul Confirmands (*Shirley Luedeke*).



NBHA LETTERS & NEWS

...This website and all the research are amazing! Thank you to those who have preserved the information.

I was born and raised in Pettisville, Ohio (Fulton County), north of New Bremen, Wapakoneta, and Lima. I am writing a story about our ancestors' migration from Europe and stumbled across this site while researching the Great Black Swamp. I especially appreciate Carolyn V. Platt's article.

<https://newbremenhistory.org/en/content/70-the-great-black-swamp>

In my research, I discovered our ancestors, when they wanted to own land, had to register in Wapakoneta, Ohio. It looks like that's a 17-mile drive from New Bremen. For my ancestors in Fulton County, though, who were probably walking, that's a long way to go. Then I discovered that a canal was built in the 1800s that went through New Bremen. I did not know that before today.

Thanks very much.

Renee S. Nofziger Quistorf (Washington)

From the Editors: In the last issue of *The Towpath*, we published an article about an early entrepreneur-- "Anna Kuest had a Zest for Life." Anna and her family sold baked goods on Friday and Saturday each week from their home on E. Monroe Street. Here are some of Anna's pictures from 1968 showing satisfied customers.



#1

Esther Paul



#2

?



#3

Art Heil



#4

Paul Headapohl



#5

Can you identify #2 customer? Please, give us a call if you know the name. (Hint: The original photo (#2) is labeled- "one of Paul Pape's boys.")

Irene Wellemeyer & daughter Wendy

On July 18, 2026, we received this note from George Brose: I hope you are not being overcome by that Canadian smoke. Might have to stay inside for another day or so. Here we've had lots of rain, but also lightning which is a big risk of starting more fires. Fortunately, none of consequence on Vancouver Island this year.

I'm attaching an article I wrote a number of years ago that I found cleaning out old files. Might or might not be of use for the Towpath. Also, I'm attaching some old photos from New Bremen Speedway that I think my Dad may have taken. I enlarged and added some color. I have no way of knowing what color those cars were, just guessed from the tone of the B&W photo. Take care, **George Brose**

...Read George's story on p. 8.

On page 10 of this issue, we have an article about three generations of **the Ekermeier family** with a total of nine medical doctors that were important in the growth of New Bremen. Below is a picture of two Ekermeyers who do not live in New Bremen but have fond memories of visits. Edward and Martha are the children of Dr. Ernest and Louise "Liepe" (Conradi) Ekermeier. Their grandparents are Dr. Edward & Augusta (Grothaus) Conradi and Dr. M.S. & Martha (Schmidt) Ekermeier.



Siblings Edward Conradi Ekermeier and Martha Ekermeier Drake, with cousins Genevieve Conradi and Edythe Conradi Henschen.

AMERICA 250

On July 8, 2026, at 6:00 PM, the Declaration of Independence was read aloud at the Lockkeepers House by a group of eight as part of the **250th Celebration** of the Anniversary of the Independence of the United States of America.

The original Declaration was read by Colonel John Nixon to the public in the yard of the Pennsylvania State House in Philadelphia on July 8, 1776.

(Photos by Karen Eckert)



The readers of the Declaration of Independence in New Bremen on July 8, 2026.

Pastor Leslie Krieg, Mayor Robert Parker, Sharon Schnell, Larry Tangeman, Scott Bertke, Johanna Schroer, Barb Lemmon, and Dan Condon.

NBHS CLASS REUNIONS DURING BREMENFEST 2026

72 YEARS...



NBHS Class of 1954

Seated: Roseann (Schaefer) Meyer, Joyce (Quellhorst) Gilberg, Joyce (Inman) Holdren, Anna Louise (Schmidt) Hoelscher. **Standing:** John Koeper, Lloyd Schroer, Tom Braun, Tom Holdren.

(Those unable to attend were John Gilberg, Harold Stammen, Louise Erhardt, Joann (Neuman) Williams, Eugene Topp, Mary Ellen (Schemmel) Kurtzman.



NBHS Class of 1954 with Special Guests

Seated: Joyce (Quellhorst) Gilberg, Roseann (Schaefer) Meyer, Sharon Leffel, Joyce (Inman) Holdren, Anna Louise (Schmidt) Hoelscher. **Standing:** Ginny (McCollum) Braun, Shirley Luedeke (Don Luedeke), John Koeper, Lloyd Schroer, Tom Braun, Tom Holdren, Juanita Bruns (William Bruns).

65 YEARS...



NBHS Class of 1961

Seated: John Tostrick, Lois (Wahoff) Westerheide, Marvin Moeller, Allen Paul. **Standing:** Dennis Wint, Genevieve Conradi, Judy (Scheer) Wiehe, Ned Scheer, Barbara (Kuck) Dill, Doris (Topp) Carr, Emily (Grothaus) Reisner, Dennis Dicke, John Bornhorst.

60 YEARS...



NBHS Class of 1966

From left: John Turner, Rich Gilberg, Joann (Wittenbrink) Boyer, Bill Lampert, Betty (Brandenberg) Magoto, Jack Bielefeld, Jim Valentine, Deanna (Sollman) Anderson, Barb Valentine, Mike Suchland, Donna (Dicke) Jacoby, Marlene (Wiehe) Ahlers, Bill Meiring, Dru (Luedeke) Meyer, Jim Scheer, Bob Niekamp. (Dennis Bushman attended but is not in picture.)

55 YEARS...



NBHS Class of 1971

Seated: John Dicke, Dave Albers, Cindy (Wissman) Newman, Charlotte (Pape) Schwabero, Jim Staton, Bill Young. **Back Row:** Mike Homan, Ken Poeppelman, Linda (Leshner) Forry, Barry Mousa, Dot (Philipot) Scheer, Nick Will, Peg (Lampert) Will, Ed Thobe, Jeff Dillion, Gary Topp, Don Krieg, Bob Philipot, Ron Schwartz.

50 YEARS...



NBHS Class of 1976

Front Row Kneeling: Donna (Schwartz) Kremer, Linda (Brown) Piper, Teresa (Westerbeck) Legg, Sharon (Jess) Mortenson, Karen (Schwartz) Brandewie, Mark Hipple. **Second Row:** Dave Eckert, Ed Rump, Chris (Schoenlein) Pavelka, Cindy (Will) Young, Tom Suchland, Trish (Dicke) Hoying, Diana (Elking) Hartwig, Rick Quellhorst, Deb (Fledderjohn) Hirschfeld, Linda (Heitkamp) Huber, Barb (Applegate) Brodbeck, Janet (Gruebmeier) Eilerman, Kim (Slattery) Daughtery, Brenda (Hittepole) Utz, Donna (Wente) Mueller, Deb (Philipot) Scroggins, Teresa (Lukac) Roode, Dave Erwin, Lori (Poeppelman) Hallisey, Tim Garman, Ken Boyd. **Top Row:** Tim Quellhorst, Jim Moore, Dave Jarvis, Travis Hartwig, Duane Schnelle, Dave Hirschfeld, Ted Brady, Dan Lucac, Keith Dabbelt. (Bruce Keifer attended but is not in picture.)

45 YEARS...



NBHS Class of 1981

Row 1: Kent Henschen, Bruce Bergman, Curt Anderson, Deb (Schroer) Prater, Kim (Maurer) Hemmelgarn, Julie (Rump) Ehemann, Kelli (Topp) Walker, Teresa Joyce. **Row 2:** Bruce Miller, Larry Buscher, Pam (Brockert) Houseworth, Diane (Friemering) Bornhorst, Joyce (Art) Elking, Steve Koenig, Deb (McCollum) Dues, Gordon Luedeke, Allan Schulze, Jeff Scheer. **Row 3:** Jeff Elking, Kevin Barlage, Gary Schmitmeyer, Tim Bertke, Greg Heitkamp, John Schwartz, Steve Pulskamp, Steven Meyer, Ralph Westerbeck, Mark Schwartz.



THE STAMCO 25 YEAR CLUB MEMBERS REMEMBER THEIR FIRST DAYS OF WORK

*(EXCERPTS from a booklet of
memories published by STAMCO's 25 Year Club circa
1961)*

Louis Kohl— Class of 1912

On April 18, 1912, I made an inquiry at the office of the O.O. Poorman Company for work. I was interviewed by Mr. Lewis Wessel, Mrs. Ed. Ziegenfelder, and Mr. Frank Poorman. I was hired and reported for work the following morning.

My first work was at the side of Mr. George Beeler who was an excellent mechanic. He was building a roll roofing machine. One piece was bored out too large, and he told me to bush it. After doing this, I checked it and told him there was a 1/16" taper in about 1-1/4" inch length. He told me to fix it which I did, after which he checked it. He told me I would make a good mechanic which pleased me very much. I worked with him for about three months until he quit. He wanted me to go with him and promised to take care of me, but I told him I liked it here. He said I would make good wherever I worked...

George Greber— Class of 1917

I started long ago, in fact before the O. O. Poorman Company moved from Piqua to New Bremen. I helped build the first shop building while I was still employed as a carpenter by Herman Schaefer. I framed the roof around the cupola or the melting stack of the foundry and also built the stairway from the shop to the Engineering Department, which is still there.

In September 1917, I started to work at the O. O. Poorman Company and at that time under the supervision of Louis Wessel and Ed. Kiefer as shop supervisor. It was to be a job for the winter to make molding flasks for the foundry, but it led into all sorts of jobs. I remember very distinctly about the second or third day a carload of coke came in loaded in a box car and I had the pleasure of hauling it out of the car on a wheelbarrow and stacking it along a building. It came in cordwood lengths, which I had never seen before. But it was a job in support of my family...and why not, I was getting 25cents an hour for the work...

William J. Donnerberg, Jr. - Class of 1920

Forty years with STAMCO seems like a long time. However, when I look back it does not seem nearly that long.

Yes, it has been more than forty years since Mr. Streine asked me to come in and get a job. That was in

1918. He took me to Mr. Ed. Kiefer and said, "Ed, give this man a job." Then, he went back to his office. Ed started to ask me some questions. However, Mr. Streine returned in a few minutes and again said, "Ed, give this man a job." Ed answered, "I am, but I want to find out what he knows." Then Mr. Streine shouted back in a loud voice, "He don't know nothing!" Truer words were never spoken...

L. D. Harmony — Class of 1928

One of the things that I remember most at STAMCO actually happened on the very first morning of my starting to work at The Streine Tool and Manufacturing Company. This was on October 28, 1928. I had previously visited the plant with Mr. Walter Strohmeyer and learned what I was supposed to do and was advised to come to work on the next Monday morning at eight o'clock. Therefore, on Sunday I packed my trunk and brought it to Mrs. Walters on South Main Street where I was intending to board. I returned to Sidney for a football game and then had a tremendous time getting to New Bremen.

I found that the only way that one could get to New Bremen in any reasonable time would be either by walking or by automobile. To take a streetcar from Sidney to Wapakoneta to St. Marys to New Bremen was an all-day affair. I finally arrived at Mrs. Walters about midnight on Sunday night and was locked out. I had quite a time rousing the house and getting my room. However, this all transpired happily and the next morning I reported for work...

Wilson A. Westerbeck - Class of 1929

Approximately a year before I started working at the then- Streine Tool and Manufacturing Company, I was asked by Dr. W. J. Stappe, a local veterinarian who also had the Chevrolet Agency, what I would like to do after graduation from high school. I expressed a desire to work in a machine shop. On Friday evening in January 1929, he called saying that he would like to speak to me about a job.

As it all came about, Joseph Fisher who was chief draftsman at that time bought a new car from Mr. Stappe and he asked Joe if could use a young man in his department. After an interview I was hired...

L. W. Landwehr — Class of 1935

...Jobs were scarce in those years; and when I met Lee Harmony at Harry Schroeder's hardware store, he told me that there was an opening at the shop. I went immediately there. I sat in the lobby waiting for an interview when the excitement began. Ed Kiefer came running out of the shop to the outside where he learned that Bill Scheer had been working on a transformer and had been injured. After the ambulance had come and Ed had everything cleared up, back into the office he came, spied me, and said, "What do you want?" I told him, "Looking for a job," and he quickly

replied, "You can start at 1:00 p. m. (June 13, 1935)". Since that time, I have been steadily employed...

Frederick Luedeke – Class of 1935

...I remember so very well the circumstances that led to my first day as an employee of STAMCO on August 20, 1935. As all of us remember, those were depression days. I had applied for a job during the summer of that year, but nothing was available at that time. One day I made arrangements to go to Dayton to look for a job. I arranged to get a free ride in the Lock Two Milling Truck which made regular runs to Dayton. We had been hauling hay on that day, and it was on this particular day that Mr. Lee Harmony came out into the hayfield looking for me to ask me to report for work the next day. You can imagine my pleasant surprise that night when I came home tired and discouraged from Dayton...

As I write these words, I can still see that old dinner bucket shaking in my hand as I walked home that first night after wrestling around with that big air hammer all day...

Certainly, as I look back over my 25 years with the company, I cannot help but feel gratified for the security STAMCO has given me and my family...

Robert Weinberg – Class of 1936

The exact day I started working at STAMCO, Incorporated, has been lost as far as records go; all I remember is that it was the second week of August in 1936. At that time, I was working for the local creamery driving a truck and happy to be working, for jobs were still very hard to find. It was Mr. Ed Kiefer who asked me one day to come and talk with Mr. Frank Dine about a job and it was through this meeting that I had started as a blueprint boy in the Engineering Department.

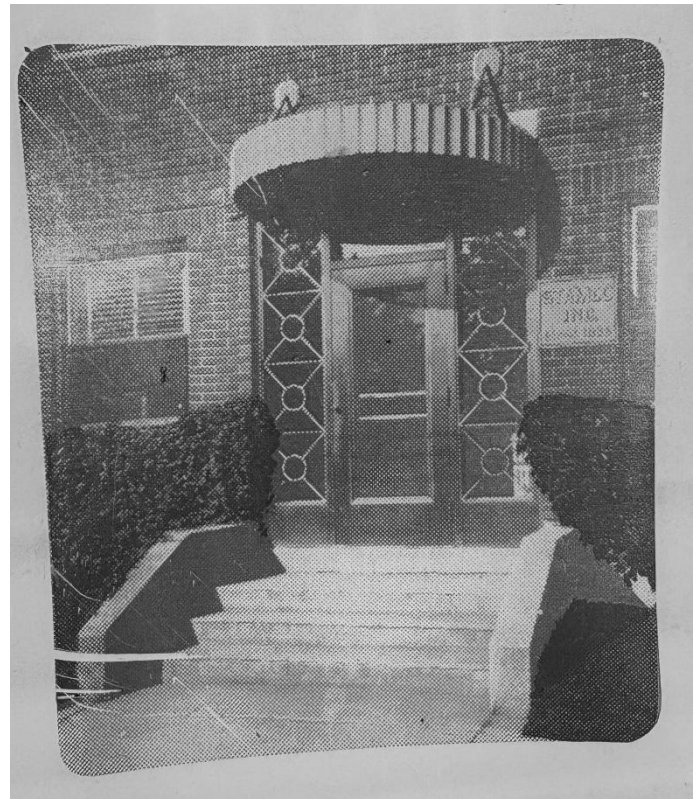
As I think back over the years, there were many incidents that happened that I will always remember and one of these happened about six months after I started working. William Martersteck was the chief engineer at the time and one morning I asked him for a raise, since I had been promised one after a few months. He asked what I made and I told him 25, meaning 25 cents per hour. He promptly went down to Mr. Dine and asked to have my wages raised to 30 dollars a week. You can imagine what Mr. Dine said and, in a few minutes, I was called down to the office. To make the story short, I did get a raise, but it wasn't 30 dollars a week. I think that was the first and last time I ever asked for a raise.

Harold Hittepole - Class of 1936

It was back in 1936, and I had been working at the furniture factory, which was ready to close up, when Bill Nieter – who was the town marshal at that time – asked me what I was going to do. I told him I did not have a job in sight, and he told me he would see what he could do for me. The following week he told me to see Ed Kiefer at The Streine Tool and Manufacturing Company on Saturday

morning. I went in that morning, and Ed put me to work right away in the bridge shop checking and moving shafts and bar stock, which was covered with about ½ inch of dust. I was surely glad it was only half a day...

But to be more serious, it hasn't been but a very short time for me since I started here 25 years ago. Two things, I believe, make this possible. One is a well-managed, reliable, and prosperous company and the second is a bunch of good, honest, reliable fellow workers. And I feel thankful and proud to have played a small part of it.



An early picture of the entrance to STAMCO on S. Herman Street. The door is also featured on the STAMCO 25 Year Club Pin shown on the previous page.

For more information about STAMCO:

The "Story of STAMCO" can be read online in the July 2002-(3) issue of *The Towpath*.

www.newbremenhistory.org

Thank you to Carol Hittepole Wilson for donating the STAMCO 25-Year Club booklet of memories and 25-year pin.



The Tracks of Memory

By George Brose

An Essay on Trains, Family, and Growing Up in Ohio

My first memory of trains was watching from two blocks by my maternal grandmother's house in Northeast Dayton. I wasn't allowed to go beyond that corner, but from there I could make out the cars as they rolled between foundries and factories on their way north, maybe to Toledo or perhaps Detroit. Trains going directly east would have required taking the tracks running parallel to Third Street. Yes, I'm sure those trains were headed north. I could stand on that corner formed by Chapel St. and Milburn Ave. and look as long as I liked, but there was a crack in the sidewalk I dared not pass alone. That was in 1947, and I was four years old, conscious that there was a greater world beyond that crack, but not explorer enough to risk the penalties of transgressing that line in the concrete.

Halfway down Chapel St. to the tracks sat Falb's Cafe, a working man's bar where my father took his afternoon beer on hot summer days. He often brought me along with him and sat me at a table in the back room, the afternoon sun roasting the windows on the west wall and filtering the tubes of light that worked their way through the darkened room. I could see the cigarette smoke soaring from the tables up through those light rays and returning downward in cloud-like patterns over my arms, and I could touch them and disturb them and feel the difference in temperatures between the smoke-filled rays and the sheltered darkness of the room. We shared a waxed paper bag of potato chips. My father had his bottle of beer; I had a Tru-Ade orange drink. He drank a ratio of two to my one. We both drank straight from the bottle, my hands holding steady on the raised bumps of the bottle covered with the cold wet moisture condensing on it. We contested every day who would find the biggest chip in the bag. Somehow, even when he found it, I would get to eat it. We never stayed for more than two beers and one orange, then it was back to the house where supper would be ready by five.

My father worked in those factories although his was across town. He left home early each morning driving one of several cars that seemed to pass through the family. The one I remember distinctly was Josephine, a 1937 Dodge Coupé, black, with running boards on the sides, a two-seater with a high wobbly gear shift between the two passengers. There was a recess in the gear shift knob with a place for a picture to be attached. Patrick, one of my father's hunting dogs from between the wars,

could be seen on that knob. My place in that car was the shelf in front of the rear window. I could stretch out

George Brose standing next to the family car.

comfortably on it and see out all the windows. I could sleep if we were returning from somewhere late at night. I don't recall ever riding on the passenger seat, because sitting there, I could not see where we were going. A unique feature in Josephine was a crank on the dashboard that when turned would allow the windshield to open slightly on the bottom edge, giving better ventilation in summer. We opened it occasionally, but the windshield always leaked afterwards in wet weather.

We took that car occasionally to visit my paternal grandparents and drove a seemingly endless fifty miles north of Dayton on the major north-south artery running from Detroit to Florida, Route 25, a two-lane thoroughfare that crossed Route 40, the old National Road in Vandalia, Ohio, making it one of the true crossroads of America. We travelled up through the farmlands passing through Troy, Piqua, switching to Route 66 and carrying on through Houston (pronounced House-tun), then Fort Loramie (I dreamed of a great rampart to protect the settlers from Indian attacks), Minster, and then the family homestead on West Monroe St. in New Bremen, where people who were born there still spoke German and had strange-sounding names like Fledderjohann, Lanfersieck, Mesenbrink, Dietrich, and Dammeyer. The names around us in Dayton had been more of an East European nature and the accents of my grandmother, a Dombrowski from Lithuania, more indecipherable when I heard them spoken with Mrs. Andrechik when they visited in each other's homes.

The Nolte Family in front of their home on W. Monroe Street in New Bremen.

This is where George's Grandmother, Justine Nolte lived. She is in the front row on the left in this picture with her parents and siblings.



The common tie between these two places were the trains. A small rural line connecting a few of the farm towns in West Central Ohio provided a daily freight service. I was lucky beyond belief. The railroad ran right beside my grandmother's house, and I could stand in the vacant lot between her house and the tracks and see the trains so closely that the engineer quickly became a familiar face to me. He must have been a man who liked children, because each day as he passed slowly going south, he would throw candies or lollipops to the two or three kids who stood by the line. Just across the road was a dairy where the train turned off on a spur to deliver equipment or pick up milk, and on one occasion the engineer brought us ice cream from the plant.

Twice we were given rides with my father and aunt in the caboose down to Minster and back, a round trip of four miles, but an adventure that seemed like a lifetime in duration to me. On one run back to New Bremen, they brought us into the cab of the locomotive, a steam engine that probably finished its active days on that country line that ran from Lima each day to Minster.

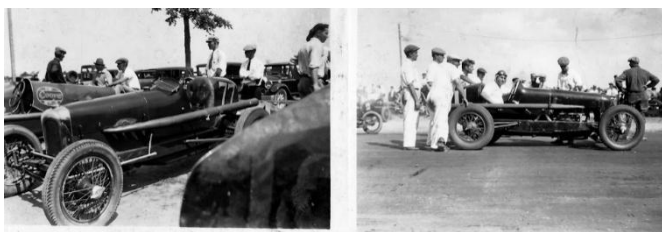


**Justine (Nolte)
Brose, Dorothy (Nolte)
Dietrich, and Milton
"Jack" Brose.**

**(George Brose's
Grandmother, Great
Aunt, and Father.)**

**His father, Jack,
graduated from NBHS
in the Class of 1930 and
served in the Army Air
Corp during WWII.**

**George also shared these photos of the New Bremen
Speedway, probably taken by his father.**



Bill Chittum 1929

**This is Patrick, one
of Jack Brose's
hunting dogs.
George Brose shared
this picture because
he remembers it
being attached to the
gear shift in their
1937 Dodge and
because it shows the
Komminsk home in
the background.**



Al Miller 1929



Al Miller 1931

**For more memories about the Brose family, read
George's article in *The Towpath*, July (3) 2024.**

www.newbremenhistory.org.

All *Towpath* issues are archived on our website.

A FAMILY OF DOCTORS WHO INFLUENCED THE GROWTH OF NEW BREMEN

By Genevieve Conradi



This article will identify the three generations of Ekmeyer doctors and the home of Dr. M. S. Ekmeyer.

The house is on South Washington Street and is over 100 years old. It is cared for by its current owner, Crown Equipment, Inc.

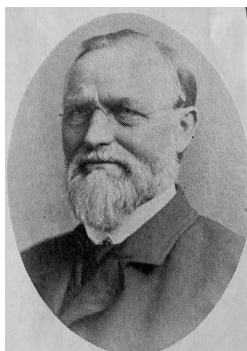
First generation William Ekmeyer left Germany in the 1840s, at a young age, and traveled alone to the United States because he did not want to serve in the German army. He wanted to be a minister. His first job after arrival, was as a baker's helper which allowed him to study for the ministry by candlelight in the evening. He reached his goal and became an Evangelical minister. He then married and began to study medicine.

He attended the Eclectic Medical Institute of Cincinnati. The program focused heavily on botanical remedies, clinical independence, and vitalist healing. He completed his medical degree in 1864 and first served in the Cincinnati area. He was then called to New Knoxville, Ohio to serve two years as a minister in the Methodist Church.

From there he moved to New Bremen in 1866 to serve as pastor at St. Peter's Church. It is reported in *The Centennial Book of St. Peter's Church* (1945) that: *During the first 26 years 11 pastors served the church, averaging only a little more than two years each. Four ministers served only one year each. Of these 11 ministers only Rev. Ekmeyer served five years.* The book also describes how he helped the congregation quell bickering and instead focus on their purpose as a congregation. By May of 1867 he had organized the first Sunday School program for the congregation. He continued to practice medicine during this busy time.

Rev. William Ekmeyer

It is reported that Rev. Ekmeyer carried on the joint professions of Doctor of Medicine and the Ministry for 47 years in Ohio. Three of his children also followed the profession of Doctor



of Medicine; his two sons Dr. Charles William Ekmeyer, Dr. Mathew Simpson Ekmeyer and his daughter Dr. Katharine Ekmeyer Astler. His daughter Katharine also married a physician and two of their sons followed in this profession.

Second Generation Dr. Mathew Simpson Ekmeyer, born in Zanesville, Ohio, chose to return to New Bremen in 1883, after his graduation from Medical School. In 1885, he married Martha Schmidt, the daughter of Henry & Lucy (Boesche) Schmidt. As Dr. Ekmeyer's practice grew, his wife Martha was always regarded as his kind and faithful assistant.



Dr. M. S. Ekmeyer

In 1893, Dr. M. S. Ekmeyer built the home pictured on this page patterned from one he saw at the Chicago World's Fair. All the construction materials were shipped to New Bremen by rail. The house served as both his home and office.



Dr. M. S. & Martha Ekmeyer Family (Ca. 1912)

From Left: Maud, Martha, M. S., Esther, Irene.

The three boys in front are first boy unknown, then Ernest, & Carl

Their five children, Esther, Irene, Maud, Carl, and Ernest, were all born in New Bremen and graduated from New Bremen High School. The oldest daughter, Esther, became interested in the practice of medicine but became quite ill and died in 1915 at the age of 23 years. Then Dr. M. S. Ekmeyer died in 1919, unexpectedly, at the age of 58 years. Maud and Irene were in their early 20s when their father died. Carl was 19 years and Ernest was 13 years.

Dr. M. S. Ekermeier's obituary described him as someone who ... *took an interest in all things that made for public welfare and when any movement was on foot that suggested public spirit, he was among the first to offer his support. Fraternally he was identified with the Independent Order of Odd Fellows, his membership dating over a span of 32 years. In February of 1892, he became a charter member of the Knights of Pythias order and was also a prominent member of the Cataract Fire Department. As regards to his medical profession he had become the trusted family physician of many a household, his clientele extending many miles distant from New Bremen and in late years his time was so much taken up in answering calls that his leisure hours were few and far between, which undoubtedly made inroads on his health. For many years he had also been a member of St. Peter's church, where his father formerly served as minister... The following was contributed by an intimate friend of the doctor, and it so thoroughly covers his life's history that it is herewith reproduced:*

In every community there are some characters who seem to link the present with the past and connect the newer generations with the old. And we pass among them day by day unmindful of their presence or the part they play. The young think of them as having always been here, and the old expect them to live a few years more. And so, in the death of Dr. Ekermeier the city and community of New Bremen have lost a landmark. For, coming as he did, when New Bremen was a little country hamlet he grew along with the town and became a part of it.

For who can think of the little city of New Bremen and not associate with it, Dr. Ekermeier? He represented that type of physician that is fast becoming extinct-the country Doctor - for whom the road was never too long or too bad, or the night - too dark or too cold. Whose only compensation often times, was the thought - of duty well performed and the gratitude of some poor soul in distress. In his medicine case there were two phials never empty, although frequently used. They were labeled Hope and Kindness, and he mixed large portions of each with his drugs. How many grown-ups remember as a child, the rides he gave on his bicycle or the packages of bon-bons he brought them when sick? And how many children today will miss the gifts from that spacious pocket which never failed? It is said that in life's summertime we are classed good or bad depending upon which quality has been most dominant and that a kind heart is the greatest asset in tipping the scales toward the good. Measured by such a standard the life of Dr. Ekermeier stands mightily to the good. Peace, sweet peace to his ashes.

The family stayed together with the mother's care and leadership. The youngest son, Ernest, graduated from high school in 1924. Both sons, Carl and Ernest, went to college and became physicians.

Third generation

NINTH MEMBER OF FAMILY TO GRADUATE IN MEDICINE-Ernest Ekermeier Receives Diploma from University of Cincinnati

Ernest Ekermeier, son of Mrs. Martha Ekermeier, South Washington Street, was one of the graduates to receive a degree from the college of medicine at the annual commencement exercises held Saturday at the

University of Cincinnati. Mrs. Ekermeier, Miss Irene Ekermeier and Miss Maud Ekermeier attended the graduating exercises, as did Dr. Carl W. Ekermeier and son, Craig Simpson Ekermeier, of Greenwood, Ind.

Dr. Ernest Ekermeier, who plans to spend a year as an intern at the Cincinnati General Hospital, can be said to come from a family of physicians, he being the ninth member to enter the profession. His grandfather, Dr. William Ekermeier, who also was a licensed minister and at one time served as resident pastor of St. Peter's church in New Bremen, graduated from the Eclectic College of Medicine, Cincinnati, in 1864 and was the first in the long line of family doctors.

The next to graduate in medicine were Dr. William Ekermeier's two sons, Dr. M. S. Ekermeier, and Dr. Charles William Ekermeier. The late Dr. M.S. Ekermeier, father of Dr. Carl W. Ekermeier and Dr. Ernest Ekermeier, continued his kindly ministrations in New Bremen for 36 years after coming here from Norwood, Ohio. Dr. Charles William Ekermeier, who is located at Montgomery, a small village near Cincinnati, has spent 52 years in the profession and is one of the oldest physicians in the state.

Dr. Carl W. Ekermeier, who for several years maintained an office in New Bremen, now is associated with his father-in-law, Dr. J. A. Craig, at Greenwood, Ind. Other physicians in the family include Dr. Catherine Astler, Cincinnati, a daughter of Dr. William Ekermeier; her husband, the late Dr. George Astler; and their two sons, Dr. Vernon Astler and Dr. DeWitt Astler. All have followed the profession with success, their combined practice approximating 220 years -truly a wonderful record. (New Bremen Sun 6/19/1930)



From
The Cincinnati Times Star
March 1939

EXPLORING NEW BREMEN BAND HISTORY

By Joyce Ruedeusch & Genevieve Conradi

Our early settlers brought with them a love of music and their musical traditions from Germany. These traditions included German classical music, folk songs and brass bands.

As New Bremen grew local bands were formed with one being the *Little German Band*. (Read more about these early bands in *The Towpath* April 2013.)



Little German Band 1887

This love of music had an impact on the daily lives of settlers and also their schools. Music education was included early in the school curriculum. Looking at historical records, the first mention of a school band/orchestra was found in the 1920 *Mirage* yearbook.



Back row (left to right): Harold Gobrecht, Ezra Hoffman, Lulu Bessel, Richard Haines, Isolde Henninger, Wilbur Garmhausen, Brunhilda Henninger, Adiel Mueller.
Front row: Reuben Wissman, Leon Stroefer, Walter Kuck, Theodore Kuenzel, Harold Schaefer. (1920)

THE ORCHESTRA

New Bremen High School is fortunate this year in having a large number of students possessing exceptional musical ability. It was therefore not difficult to find enough members to make up our orchestra. The orchestra was organized last fall and has been very successful under the leadership of Miss Helmstetter of St. Marys.

It has furnished music for the high school and at various public entertainments. The first public appearance of the orchestra this year was at the Farmer's

Institute. In February a concert was given in connection with the lecture "See America First." We are all proud of our orchestra and we hope that they will be as successful next year. (The Mirage 1920 yearbook)

There is no record of how this group was formed or the members' music instruction but perhaps the students began by playing the recorder. A recorder is a woodwind instrument often used in pre-band instruction. In the post-WWII era New Bremen students used the American invented plastic flutophone.

Through the years New Bremen school enrollment grew and so did the music education program. Since the Union/Central school on S. Franklin Street had no space available, musical performances were given at the Boesel Opera House on Monroe Street.

By 1929 a new and much larger high school was needed and with community support was built on S. Walnut Street. It was during these years that the popularity of marching bands in public schools increased. These bands were usually of a military style with brass, woodwind, and percussion instruments. The band was often led by a field director or drum major. By the 1930s New Bremen had formed a marching band.



Early 1930s NBHS Band. Drum Major is next to person holding the flag.

A Junior band was also formed and gave a well-received concert in 1934. The *New Bremen Sun* newspaper reported:

JUNIOR BAND PROVES HIT IN CONCERT THURSDAY EVENING Interesting Program Arranged By J. N. DuPere, Director

Those who attended the Junior Band Concert yesterday evening at the High School Auditorium enjoyed a treat far beyond their fondest anticipation. The band, composed of children in the lower grades, acquitted itself well in a program which demonstrated the genius of J. N. DuPere, director of instrumental music in the New Bremen schools.

Mr. DuPere is an instructor who has had marked success with the children enrolled in his classes, and each year turns out a high school band of which New Bremen is justly proud. Even his staunchest admirers, however, probably were not prepared for the progress revealed by the children of the graded schools in their program yesterday evening.

The program follows,

March – “Here Comes the Band” – (Fred Jewel) – Band
 Baritone Solo – “Mabel Polka” – (Henry Hartely)-Esther Rabe
 Overture – “Festal Overture” – (Edward Hazel)- Band
 March- “Good Sports” – (Fred Jewel) -Band
 Alto Saxophone solo- “Golden Sunset” (G. Finder) -John Briggs
 Trombone Solo- “Polka Lily”- (H. Vander Cook) – Marjorie Pape
 March – “School Colors” – (F. Jewel) – Band
 Clarinet Quartet – “On to You” – Arr. By DuPere) -Beverly Huenke, Bonnie Schulenberg, Mildred Zahn, Howard Wellman
 Cornet Solo – “Dear Little Darling of Mine” – (C. Smith) – John Zahn
 Clarinet Duet – “My Heart at thy Sweet Voice” – (S. Saens) – Beverly Huenke, Bonnie Schulenberg
 Cornet Solo – “Militaire Polka” – (H. Hartley)- Norbert Roettger
 Overture – “Big Bass Drum” – (Paul Yoder- Band
 Piccolo Solo – “Meadow Lark”- (J. Brockheffer) – Kathleen Kuck
 Alto Saxophone Solo – “The Sax Queen” – (E. Chinetta) - Dorothy Komminsk
 Cornet Solo “Elena Polka” – (W. Kiefer) – Paul Wissman
 March – “Our Yell Leader” – (F. Jewel) – Band
 (New Bremen Sun 4/27/1934)

The 1934 Junior Band was composed of students in grades 5 through 8.

Cornets Norbert Roettger, John Zahn, Paul Wissman, Delmar Hickman, Willis Sudman, Betty Vitz, Orin Roettger, Norman Ruedebsch, Don Isern.

Clarinets Beverly Huenke, Bonnie Schulenberg, Mildred Zahn, Paul Stueve, Howard Wellman, David Koenig, Eugene Kuck.

Bass Walter Ahlers.

Altos Lucille Roettger, Lois Scheer.

Saxophones

Thomas Kuenning, Dorothy Komminsk, John Briggs.

Drums and Bass Robert Kuenning, Warren Knipple, Warren Heinfeld, Adrian Moeller.

Cymbals Warren Moeller.

Baritone Esther Rabe

Trombone Marjorie Pape

As this article shows, the New Bremen Community was proud of the bands. The families of the band members were also proud of their musicians. We found this to be true of the Ruedebsch family when a photo, uniform, and program were found that had been saved for over 90 years.

Norman Ruedebsch in 1934.

With the formation of the bands came the added cost of uniform. The community again showed their support through patronage of groups such as the early Band Mothers and now Music Boosters. In raising funds for the music program, these organizations have contributed greatly to their continued success.



Now the New Bremen Band program consists of the Cardinal Marching Band, the Symphonic Band, and the Pep Band.

NBHS Band Memories from 1950s-1960s

Band practice was held after school and during the summer to prepare for marching in parades or contests. Since there was no football field, we practiced on the streets by the school. Especially the corner of Walnut & Plum because turning the corner in formation was a skill that needed much work and practice.

Band uniforms in the 1950s and 1960s were made of wool. The uniforms were worn for all performances throughout the year. During the summer the Fair performances were very, very warm wearing wool. Band members were happy to find ways to cool off after the performance.

Joyce in Crimson & Gold uniform of the 1960s.



Please share your memories with us!

Genevieve in navy/gray uniform in the 1950s.



Kathleen Luedeke, Nancy Kettler, Genevieve Conradi after performance at the Fair and trying to “cool off.”



250 YEARS OF AMERICAN MILITARY RATIONS

By Joyce Ruedebusch

This history begins with the American Revolution. In 1775 the Continental Congress proclaimed the daily rations for the Continental Army would consist of 1lb. of meat, 1lb. of bread, 1 pint of milk, 1 gill of beans, and 1 quart of malt beer. There was no provision for cooking the food.

During the Civil War, food for both Union and Confederate soldiers had to be transported to armies on the march. So, food had to be preserved using salted meat and canned goods. A preserved dried biscuit called hard tack replaced fresh bread. During this war there was again no provision for cooking the food, so troops had to be their own cooks.

World War I was the first conflict where meals were provided with field kitchens and bakeries. The American Expeditionary Forces (AEF) in Europe were provided with cooked food and fresh bread delivered. Also, rations included candy and cigarettes. It was during this war that cigarettes became a military staple with each American soldier receiving a daily allotment. General Pershing, commander of the AEF, remarked that his forces needed tobacco as much as bullets to win the war. Individual emergency rations were introduced during World War I to sustain troops before resupply.

WWII saw improvements in rations supplied to the troops. During this war, United States Forces were supplied their food rations in several ways. A-Rations consisted of meals prepared in kitchens using fresh foods and were served in dining halls. B-Rations were prepared in field kitchens using canned and dehydrated foods. These meals were served to troops using mess kits.

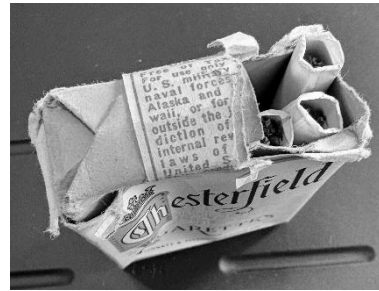


**Military Mess kit
WWII**

The C-Rations and K-Rations were packaged with canned and dehydrated foods available in individual portions. C-Rations were given to combat troops and contained actual cans of food. K-Rations were packaged without metal cans to be lighter in weight and used by more mobile troops like paratroopers. Soldiers preferred the C-Rations because there was more variety of foods that tasted better and contained more calories.

Also, the development at that time of instant coffee and chocolate candy that would not melt enhanced the packaged rations shipped exclusively to the troops. As in WWI, cigarettes were also treated as essential military supplies. Standard packs were issued free when they

included an Armed Forces label. Mini-packs were included in C- and K-Rations along with waterproof matches. Brands included Lucky Strikes, Camels, and Chesterfields.



Orville Ruedebusch's cigarette ration from WWII (now on display in the museum)

Chewing gum was also considered so important it became a standard

part of field rations. Wrigley's, Beechnut, and Dentyne companies were the main suppliers. Military personnel often shared their rations with civilians.



In his WWII journal, Orville Ruedebusch wrote: *Marks Hall England, December 1943. ... On Christmas we decorated our tents with holly and attended a special program for the English children from the Marks Hall community. It*

was grand to see how these children enjoyed things that they had been deprived of for four years or more. They especially liked our chewing gum, that was included in our daily rations. We would often hear them ask, "Got any gum, chum?..."

Now modern individual rations are known as Meals, Ready-To-Eat (MREs). They are self-contained field rations designed by the United Department of Defense. They have a shelf life of 5-10 years. These rations, in addition to mobile field kitchens for group rations, show the progress made during the past 250 years.



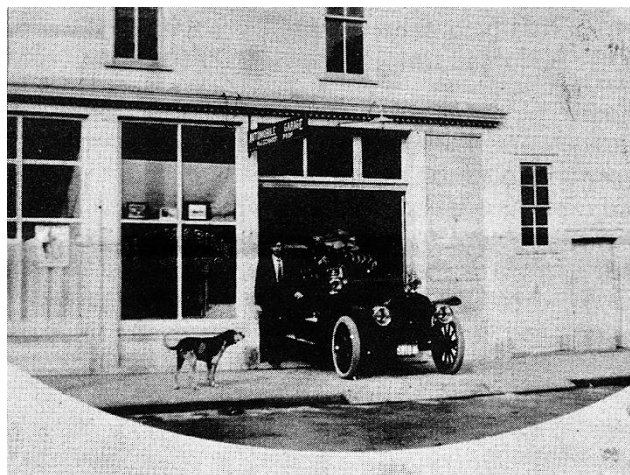
LEO HUENKE – A BUSINESSMAN WITH MANY INTERESTS

Leo Huenke is best known as the man who founded Huenke's garage and Leo's Place on North Main Street over 100 years ago. However, in doing research we found he also took part in several other businesses over his lifetime.

His background was farming. Leo was born in 1880 on a farm north of New Bremen. His parents were William and Sofia (Frevert) Huenke. Leo was born into one of the oldest families of New Bremen. His grandparents, Henry Huenke and Louise Stroefer, both German immigrants were married here in 1843 and raised a family of nine children.

Leo's father William was also a farmer and purchased his farm in 1878. William and his wife worked on this farm and raised their family there until it was time for retirement. After they moved to town, their only son Leo took over the farm. Leo married Amanda Dammeyer in 1902, and their daughters Lola (Dietrick) and Enola (Montague) were born there.

Things changed when cars came into mass production and became affordable for the public around 1915. Leo saw the opportunity for a new business venture. By 1920 he had moved his family to town and was operating an auto dealership and garage on North Main Street. *(More information about this business from Tom Braun at the end of this article.)*



HUENKE GARAGE
AGENCY FOR
FORD CARS
AUTOMOBILE ACCESSORIES
LEO HUENKE, PROPRIETOR CORNER MAIN AND SECOND
NEW BREMEN, OHIO

Another thing Leo was known for was his interest in auto racing. He was one of several who began the New Bremen Speedway in 1926. Then in the 1933 New Bremen Centennial book we found him listed as the secretary of the Arcade Department Store company.

In the building next to the garage, Leo initiated another business venture when he opened a sandwich

café called Leo's Place. This café has had several owners but is still open today doing business as "Bolly's."

After working through all these interests, he still found time to serve as a New Bremen council member. Leo Huenke died in 1961 at the age of 80 years. During those years he certainly was a New Bremen businessman with many interests.

More Information from Tom Braun

My father, Wilson (Bill) Braun (1908-1992), worked as mechanic for Huenke's Garage in the late 1920s and these are some of his memories of that experience. The garage was owned by Leo & Amanda (Dammeyer) Huenke. They had the Dodge dealership and also repaired used cars. Leo and Amanda lived in the second-floor apartment above the business. After they ordered a new vehicle for a customer, they would drive to the Detroit factory to drive it back to New Bremen.



One time a customer purchased a car from Leo but then returned it after only a few days. The customer explained that when he wanted to take his wife for a drive he could not because she was too heavy. He said, "When you get married you do not know what you are getting. When I married her, she weighed 107 pounds."

During his work experience at Huenke's Garage, My Dad also became a school bus driver. The school system did not own buses to transport students in the 1920s. Leo bought a bus to pick up students north of New Bremen, deliver them to school and then return them at the end of the school day. The parents paid Leo for this service. My father became the school bus driver. One student was a particular problem for my father so one day he had enough of the behavior. He stopped the bus, grabbed the kid and threw him off the bus. Then drove off.

In later years Leo & Amanda opened a restaurant called "Leo's Place" next to the garage. This same restaurant became known as "Scheer's Café" for a time and now "Bolly's."



New Bremen Historic Association
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History Mystery



Schwieterman's Drug Store was an important business with the opening in 1917. Read more about it in *The Towpath* April 2003-(2). During its long history the Schwieterman family served New Bremen with the help of many employees. Can you name these?

UPCOMING EVENT

Christmas Tree Festival at the Lockkeepers House

Set-up Nov. 2-Nov. 20

Call the Chamber to arrange a time to decorate your tree. (419-629-0313)

Decorated Trees may be viewed at the Lockkeeper's House through December

The Luelleman House and the Pape House Museums are open by appointment. Call any Board Member and schedule a time to visit.

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