

Special Supplement to the Newsletter in honor of New Bremen's 175th Birthday

The founders of New Bremen were 33 German immigrants from Hanover and Bavaria who, upon arriving in Cincinnati, formed a company to establish a Protestant town in America. This company sent out two scouts, who searched throughout Ohio and Indiana before making their selection. They chose land partially cleared for an Indian camp at the edge of the fertile Black Swamp and on an existing trail. This land was on a great dividing ridge that separates the flow of water to the north and south. The scouts and company were probably aware of the plan to locate a canal through this site, which would place this new town about midway between the major ports of Cincinnati and Toledo. The Village of Bremen was platted June 11, 1833, and contained 102 lots. The name was changed to New Bremen in 1835 to eliminate confusion with other towns of the same name.

Construction of the Miami & Erie Canal began in 1825 and was completed through New Bremen in 1845. The canal supplied jobs during construction and brought prosperity to the whole area by giving businesses and farmers an economical way to transport their goods to market. Mills, lumber companies, ice companies, and breweries rapidly appeared along the canal. Hotels, rooming houses, and saloons were built to accommodate the influx of people. New Bremen became a burgeoning town, exporting slaughtered hogs from five plants in New Bremen and a sixth plant in Lock Two. Large warehouses were constructed for storing grain, enabling New Bremen to become the principal market for farmers not only in its immediate territory but as far as 40 miles away.

The platting of New Bremen left little room for expansion, so other towns arose nearby. Amsterdam, platted in 1838, was located between New Bremen and Minster. It was devastated by the cholera outbreak in 1849 and no trace remains. Mohrmansville was platted one-half mile north of New Bremen. Ober Bremen was platted in 1853 east of the canal. Vogelsangtown was platted in 1856 on the west side of the canal south of New Bremen. Lock Two was north of New Bremen at the canal's second lock. By 1877 these towns had merged to form New Bremen as we know it today.

Within a generation the German pioneers turned the wilderness into a successful farming community. The completion of the Miami & Erie Canal between Cincinnati and Toledo brought people and trade to the region. Further

impetus to industrial growth was provided in 1871 by the railroad's arrival in New Bremen, with more than half the cost of construction raised by local businessman.

The types of businesses in New Bremen have changed over the years, but the town remains prosperous with new industry. Its German heritage is reflected in the style of buildings and the cleanliness and orderliness both of the town and surrounding farmland. New Bremen looks forward to the future as a thriving trade center as well as a peaceful residential community.

New Bremen History:

1833-1899

80 acres platted for town. First business: Kuennen General Store. Canal opens from Cincinnati to Toledo. Pork packing becomes major industry. Several mills are established, powered by canal. Cholera epidemic ravages community. New Bremen and Ober Bremen merge. Central (Union) School is built. Klanke Furniture opens. White Mountain Creamery becomes largest in Ohio. Railroad arrives.

1900-1950

Canal era ends. New Bremen becomes noted for Bridge Company. Arcade Department Store is established. O.O. Poorman becomes Streine Tool (and later STAMCO, a world leader in coil processing). Klanke Furniture is destroyed by fire and becomes Auglaize Furniture. Dierker Building explodes and is replaced by First National Bank. Auglaize Furniture closes and New Bremen Rubber Company begins production on that site. The New Bremen Speedway opens. Crown Controls, now Crown Equipment Corporation, with world headquarters in New Bremen, emerges as largest employer.

1951-2008

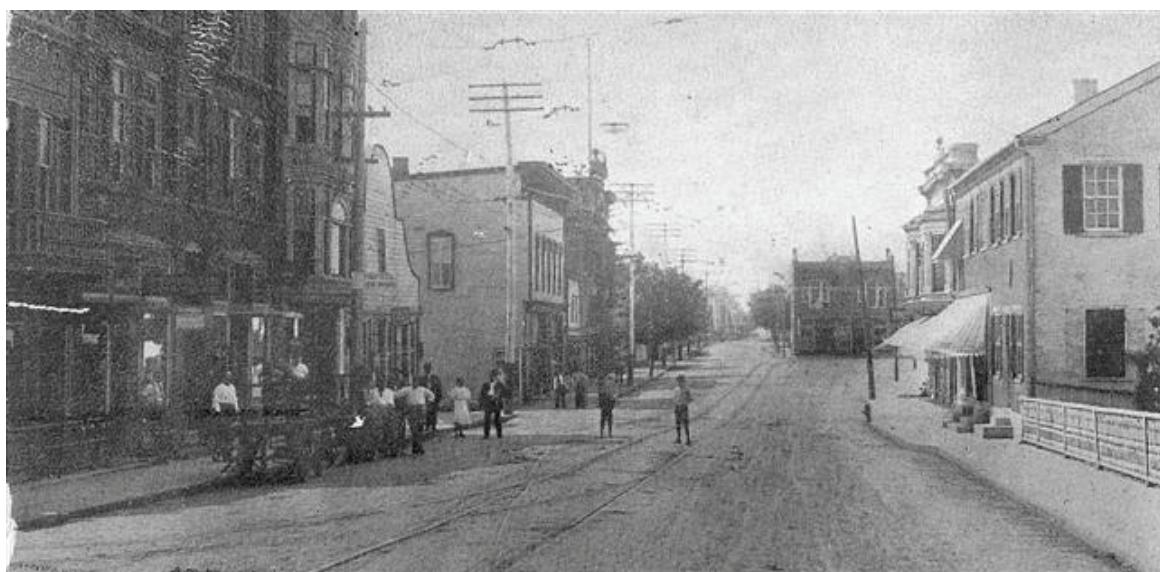
Due to increasing population, new schools, housing developments and parks are built. Expansion of the business district and the industrial park occurs. Additional village improvements include the establishment of the New Bremen Historic Association Museum, the New Bremen Library, Bicycle Museum of America, and the Southwestern Auglaize County Chamber of Commerce. The Canal and Lock One are refurbished.

Thank you to Genevieve Conradi for the history and photographs of New Bremen!

This page: (top) the Hotel, c. 1920, and (center) today, as well as (bottom) Monroe Street looking east, c.1930.

Opposite page: Monroe Street looking west, in 1908 (top), 1910 (center), and 2008 (bottom).







More scenes from New Bremen today: Monroe Street looking west, Lock One, and the New Bremen Historic Association Museum.