Preserving the Abundance-

New Bremen's Food Legacy



The picture on the cover shows the making of apple butter by George Fledderjohann and his wife Emma Knierim Fledderjohann. Cooking apple butter was one of the ways of preserving the abundance of apples for the winter months. Recipes for apfelkraut, as it is known in German, were brought with the immigrants from the "old country". They knew the long, slow cooking and the addition of spices would significantly extend the shelf life of apple butter.

This picture was chosen for the cover because it represents the way preservation of food was an important job that involved both family and friends. People often came together as a community to get these jobs done. This is especially true in the labor intensive jobs such as apple butter cooking. The preparation of the apples, long cooking time and constant stirring of the big copper kettle required many hands. However this time spent working together also was a time to visit and made the job go faster. This theme of working together to preserve the abundance is one we found often in our research. It is part of our historical identity and has become a local tradition.

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Preserving the Abundance:

New Bremen's Food Legacy

Genevieve Conradi

Joyce Ruedebusch

Delores Stienecker

Our goal in writing this book was to describe the provision of food for a family living in or around New Bremen during the last 100 years.

We began by researching how town and farm families obtained their food in the early 1900s. We then found that major events in world history such as WWI, "The Great Depression", and WWII impacted food preparation in New Bremen.

We hope our book will help to preserve New Bremen's food history. Our sincere thanks are given to all who have shared memories, family histories and recipes.

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Early 1900s

...The grocery list on the farm was not very long because we grew most of our own food at home. We raised our own meat and chickens. We had our own lard. Eggs came from our chickens. The garden was full of vegetables. Our fruit came from our apple, plum and peach trees and the grape vines. We got our flour from the Lock Two Mills. We purchased coffee, sugar, baking powder, cocoa, and coal oil for the lamps.

...Marjorie Gieseke Conradi Lietz



Marge on the farm in 1935.

The Germans who settled New Bremen brought their food preferences from the "old country". Since early times, Germany has had an abundance of meat and dairy products. Fertile ground produced large crops of fruits and vegetables. Simple but hearty foods were the staples of their cuisine. These culinary traditions continue to influence our way of cooking today. We have a legacy of foods which combined the "old country" tastes with regional ingredients from Ohio.

In 1900, typical families in New Bremen or on nearby farms had large gardens, berry bushes, fruit trees, and grape vines in their yards. The recipes that follow are some that used the bounty of gardens and orchards.



The Mueller family picking berries. Photo courtesy of New Bremen Historic Association.

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My mother cooked her currant jelly the old-fashioned way. She used one cup of currant juice to one cup of granulated sugar, never making more than four glasses of jelly at a time. The jelly was clear, bright red, and tangy. Try a dry piece of homemade coffee cake, spread with homemade currant jelly topped with "gritz" for good eating.

...Marjorie Gieseke Conradi Lietz.

Grandma's Ketchup

1 gallon tomato juice
1/8 tsp. red pepper, 1 tsp. black pepper
1 tsp. allspice, ½ tsp. nutmeg, 2 tbsp. mustard
2 onions
½ pint vinegar, 1 ½ tbsp. salt, ¾ cup sugar
Cook several hours until thick and then bottle.

...Sophia Tostrick Topp

13 Day Crock Pickles

Put medium sized pickles in a brine made of 1 quart salt to 1 gallon of water. Let stand a week. Pour water off. Cover with boiling water and let stand for 24 hours. Pour off water and cover again with boiling water, with 1 tablespoon alum for each gallon of water. Let it stand for 24 hours. Pour it off again and cover with boiling water for 24 hours. Then drain. Boil together the sugar and vinegar. 2 Cups sugar, 1 quart vinegar to cover the pickles. Split each pickle before putting vinegar and spices to taste on pickles. Boil vinegar for 3 days and add 1 cup sugar to each quart of vinegar for 3 days. Pour vinegar on hot. May be put in cans or leave in crock and store in a cool place.

...Leola Dicke Tangeman

Sauerkraut

Shred the cabbage fine. Line the bottom and sides of a small keg with the green cabbage leaves. Put in a layer of the shredded cabbage about three inches thick. Cover with four ounces of salt and pound down well. Then place another layer of cabbage and salt and so on until the keg is full. Put a board on top of the cabbage and on this a heavy weight, and stand in a moderately warm place to ferment. The cabbage sinks when the fermentation begins, and the liquor rises to the surface over the cover. Skim off the scum and stand the keg in a cool dry cellar, and it is ready to use. Cover it closely each time any is taken out. When you use it, wash it in warm water, and boil it with corned beef or salt pork the same as cabbage.



Slaw cutter and cabbage chopper used in the production of sauerkraut. Courtesy of New Bremen Historic Association.

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Alma Heil Lietz

Red Beets

¾ cup vinegar, ¾ cup sugar, ½ cup water, ½ tsp. mixed spices
Let beets come to a boil in the syrup and can hot.
This is for one quart of beets.

Rhubarb Sauce

For each pound of rhubarb, add ¼ cup water
Cook covered in a heavy pan until barely tender, about 5 minutes
Add ½ to 1 cup sugar to taste, cook until sugar is dissolved.

Strawberry Preserves

1 pint strawberries, 1 pint sugar, boil together for 10 minutes.
Add another pint of strawberries and another pint of sugar.
Boil 10 minutes more. Allow to stand until cold. Pour into jars or glasses and seal.
…Alma Heil Lietz

Tomato Preserves

Peel tomatoes, squeeze out excess seeds and juice
1 cup tomatoes to ¾ cup sugar
Boil about 30 minutes until gelled.
Cover, refrigerate over night.
…Marjorie Gieseke Conradi Lietz

Each summer my mother did a lot of canning. She had a large garden and canned all sorts of vegetables such as yellow and green beans, pickles, and red beets. She usually made a sweet and sour thickening for the green beans. She canned dill pickles, bread and butter pickles, and pickled beets. She also made crock pickles. Each year Mom cooked strawberry and cherry jam and plenty of grape jelly. After the jam and jelly had cooled in the glass jars, she would pour paraffin on the top of the jam and jelly to seal the jars. Mom and Dad often talked about making apple butter years ago. They said the whole family helped peel the apples. Dad liked apple butter on his bread when he ate summer sausage.

…Bonnie Topp Heidt

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The Early Kitchen

The kitchen in the early 1900s was used primarily for cooking but also served the family in many other ways. Meals were eaten around the oak pedestal table and dishes were washed in the dry sink.

My dad (A.C.Gieseke) was a factory worker who punched a time clock, so our meals had to be prompt. Dinner was served at 12:00 Noon and supper was served at 5:00 PM.

When I lived on the farm (1935-1944) meals were served at 7:30AM, 11:30AM and 4:30PM with lunches at 9:00AM and 3:00PM.

...Marjorie Lietz



Dry sink in the New Bremen Historic Association museum. Photo courtesy Gen Conradi.

The kitchen was truly the heart of the home and most socialization occurred there. It also served as the laundry center and weekly bath area. In the winter the room was warmed by the faithful woodstove and in the summertime the heat producing activities were moved to the summer kitchen, a separate building from the house, to keep the living quarters cooler.



Summer kitchen behind the New Bremen Historic Association Museum. Photo by Gen Conradi.

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Noodle soup was a way of life at our house. It was easy to prepare on washday. Simmer a small beef roast until tender. Season with salt and pepper. Have enough broth to serve 4 or 5 people. My mother made her own noodles. She combined flour and two eggs. She would fill the large bread board with this dough and then placed it on top of the wardrobe in her bed room to dry. At about 11:00 A.M. she would roll the dough in a long roll and make thin slices. She then let the noodles dry another 15 minutes. The noodles were put into the broth and simmered. She sprinkled a little dried parsley on top.

...Marjorie Gieseke Conradi Lietz



Carl Conradi standing near the woodpile. 1935

The woodstove provided heat to cook the food and heat the water for laundry and bathing. Cooking with a woodstove was quite different from the modern type of stove. The old woodstoves did not have temperature gauges. On the stovetop, the hottest area was over the fire box. To regulate the heat, pans were moved around the stovetop. The oven needed about an hour after the fire was started to heat to the proper temperature for baking. If the oven temperature was tested and found to be too hot, the cook would prop open the oven door slightly until it cooled. Cooking on a woodstove required planning, practice, and patience.

The woodstove required a large supply of wood to burn each year.

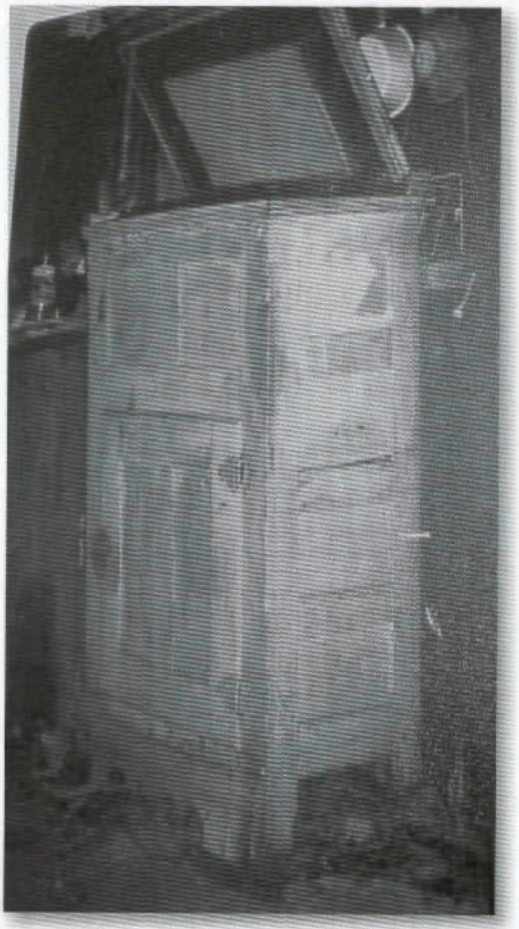


Woodpile on Conradi farm. 1935.

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Most families had fruit cellars and ice boxes for preserving food items in the early years. The fruit cellar was usually beneath the summer kitchen and was used to store the home canned fruits and vegetables. Potatoes, apples, and cabbage were stored in the fruit cellar for use during the winter months.

The ice box required replacement of blocks of ice once or twice a week. A drip pan collected the melting ice. Ice was harvested over a three to five day period each year from large ponds near the canal and kept in an ice house. The chunks of ice were cut into 22 inch squares at the time of the harvest. The ice squares were seven to nine inches thick. The block was cut into quarters at the house and this size block would slide into the ice box. Ice sold for about a penny a pound and was delivered to the customers. The last ice harvest in New Bremen occurred on December 19, 1932. By that time most families had electric refrigerators in their homes.



Ice box used to preserve food prior to refrigeration. Photo from article "The Ice Industry" written by Janet Fledderjohann in 1974.

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Eggs and Milk

While most food was used or preserved as it became available, other items were collected daily. Families in New Bremen and on the farms had chicken coops and raised chickens for meat, eggs, and the use of feathers for pillows and featherbeds. The care of chickens and cows yielded eggs and milk for the family and extra income when sold in town.

Carl and Gertrude Conradi moved to a farm just east of New Bremen in 1865. The house was set back from the road. There was a dug well, a log barn, and a small building for chickens. Gertrude would take eggs into New Bremen to be sold. The road at that time was a mud road with deep ruts and not easy to walk on. Gertrude, however, would roll a towel in a circle, place it on her head, then set the basket of eggs on the towel and walk to town. She took her knitting with her and knitted the whole way.

...Marjorie Lietz as told to her by Clara Conradi Luedeke

I loved to gather the eggs each day on the farm. We ate a lot of eggs- fried, easy-over, scrambled, poached and hard boiled. I soon learned that fresh eggs from the hen house tasted much better than the eggs from the store. One day I saw a chicken lay an egg. I was baking a cake and needed one more egg for the batter. I went to the chicken stable and just then one of our Plymouth Rock hens stood up and laid her egg. I took the egg and she cackled. It was the freshest egg I had ever held in my hand. *...Marjorie Lietz*



Clara and Walter Conradi feeding the chickens, 1903. Photo courtesy Genevieve Conradi.



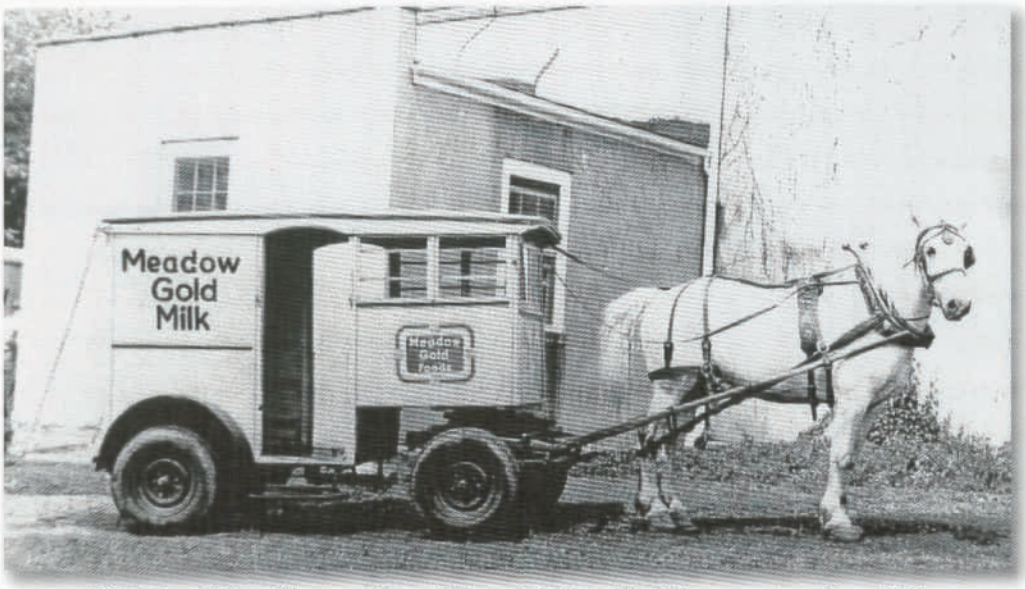
Mueller family chickens and chicken coop. Photo courtesy of New Bremen Historic Association. Circa 1930.

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Families on the farm had cows to provide their milk. Some families in town also had a cow for milk. Other families depended upon milk delivery from the local creamery. In 1884, Louis and Henry Huenke established the first creamery in northwestern Ohio in New Bremen. They pioneered the system of cream collection and the first butter factory, thus forming a link between the farm and the city. In 1894 the business was known as the White Mountain Creamery.



H. Blanke delivering milk in early New Bremen.
Photo courtesy of New Bremen Historic Association.



"Dolly" and the milk cart. Henry Westerheide's milk delivery system circa 1950.
Photo courtesy of New Bremen Historic Association.

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Daily Bread

Another food staple that needed constant replenishing was the provision of baked goods. If the baked goods became stale, they were not discarded but were made into zwieback which translates as "twice-baked". In our research, we found the toppings added before the second baking varied as each family had their favorite. Some cooks added a powdered sugar glaze sprinkled with cinnamon while others used a mixture of cinnamon and sugar.



Luella Blumhorst Topp

Every Friday morning my mother, (Luella Topp), baked coffee cakes and cinnamon rolls. While the dough was rising, she would stir up a batch of cookies and bake them in the oven. The hot oven warmed the kitchen and helped the coffee cakes and rolls to rise. In the afternoon when I came home from school, our house smelled like a bakery. I would treat myself to a freshly baked cookie and help Mom make vanilla icing for the cinnamon rolls. Then all of us would eat Mom's freshly baked rolls at supper.

...Bonnie Topp Heidt



Amanda Topp Hirschfeld

The aroma of fresh, home-made bread still brings back fond memories! Mom (Amanda Topp Hirschfeld) would bake once a week, and among her many loaves of white bread would be one delicious rye loaf. How I loved that bread. Still warm from the oven and spread with real butter, it was a meal in itself. Here's hoping this recipe brings as much enjoyment to you as it did to me.

...Shirley Hirschfeld Luedeke

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Old Fashioned Rye Bread

4 cups rye meal (not flour)
¼ cup cane molasses
3 round tablespoons brown sugar
1 scant tablespoon salt

Mix and pour over enough boiling water stirring and add water until all is well moist but not runny. Set aside to cool.

Mix 2 packages dry yeast to ½ cup warm water.

When mixture is warm, but not hot, add 1 cup milk and yeast. Mix well and stir in 3 cups white flour. Turn on baking board and knead 2½ or 3 cups more flour into mixture. Put back into bowl, grease top and let raise 1 hour or until double in bulk. Turn back on board, well floured, and form into loaves. Grease top of loaves and let raise about 1 hour.

Bake 1 hour at 400 degrees. Grease loaves to make soft and delicate crust. Freezes well.

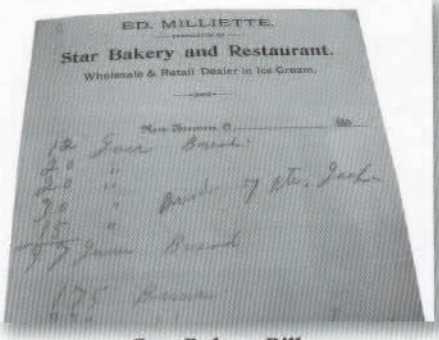
...Amanda Topp Hirschfeld

Mr. and Mrs. Wilbur Dicke donated a brick bake oven to the New Bremen Historical Association. The outdoor oven was originally constructed about 1910. Three hours after the fire was started, the inner brick walls turned a rosy red and the outer brick walls were warm to the touch. Jane Jackson baked the bread first because it needed the hottest temperature, then rolls and zwieback last.



Jane Jackson baking bread in the outdoor oven at the museum in New Bremen. 1978.

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ED. MILLIETTE.
Star Bakery and Restaurant.
Wholesale & Retail Dealer in Ice Cream.

Star Bakery Bill.
Photo courtesy of Delores Stienecker.

Some people depended upon local bakeries for their baked goods. The Star Bakery was one of the early bakeries in New Bremen.

The Fark Bakery located on Main Street was another bakery especially known for their peanut butter roll.

This recipe has been in my family as long as I can remember. It was first made at the Fark Bakery years ago. The Farks were relatives of my father, Arnold Luedeke. We use the basic sweet dough recipe for coffee cake, buns, and Fark's famous peanut butter roll.

Basic Sweet Dough

2 cups warmed milk, 1 cup potato water
½ cup shortening
1 cup sugar, 3 eggs
1 ½ tsp salt
2 pkgs. yeast
8 cups flour

Peanut Butter Roll

Roll out basic dough after it has risen into a rectangle.
Spread butter and peanut butter in the middle of the rectangle of dough.
Sprinkle with brown sugar, pour on corn syrup.
Fold it into thirds, pinch edges, let rise.
Bake like coffee cake.
Ice with powdered sugar, shortening, peanut butter, milk mixture.
… *From the recipe files of Norma Luedeke. Courtesy of Dru Luedeke Meyer.*

Another popular bakery was the Knipple Bakery on South Washington Street.



Photo from the Knipple Bakery. Pictured are Ray Knipple, Leona Laut Headapohl, Esther Moore, Petty(Louise) Knipple circa 1940.

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The following coffeecake recipe came from Knipple's Bakery. Grandma Leola (Dicke)Tangeman used this recipe for at least 60 years. This recipe makes 29 coffeecakes. Her daughter and granddaughters carry on the tradition with a day each year devoted to baking coffeecakes.



Diane Applegate Schwartz, Beverly Tangeman Applegate, Lisa Dicke Weigandt, Donna Applegate Kuffner, Barbara Applegate Brodbeck. Photo by Gen Conradi.

Knipple's Bakery Coffeecake

The night before baking: Boil 4 medium potatoes. Do not add salt to water. After cooking potatoes, drain and reserve the water that the potatoes were cooked in. Set aside. Use some of the same water to mash the potatoes.
In small bowl, combine:

2 tbsp. sugar, 2 tbsp. flour, 1 tbsp. salt.

Add this mixture to the mashed potatoes and add the remaining potato water. Add water to make about 4 to 5 quarts of liquid.
Dissolve 2 packages of yeast in ¼ cup lukewarm water. Add yeast to potato and water mixture. Use a large dishpan to mix this in. Cover and let stand overnight.
In the morning:

Beat 3 eggs until light and fluffy
Add 1 ½ cups sugar
Add 1 cup melted shortening

Add this mixture to the potato-water-yeast mixture.
Add flour. Use about 10 lbs of Robin Hood flour. Knead dough and place in two large greased pans. Cover and let rise about 2 hours. Punch down. Put back in greased pans to rise. Cover. Let rise 1 hour. Punch down, knead, adding flour as necessary. Roll out enough dough for each cake with rolling pin and place in greased pie pans. Cover and let rise for 1 to 1 ½ hours. Spread melted butter on top of each cake, sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon.
Bake at 400 degrees for approximately 20 minutes. Makes 29 coffee cakes.

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Threshing day with the Gieseke family in the early 1900s. Photo courtesy Genevieve Conradi.

Threshing

Threshing was an important fall activity on the farm and shared by the neighbors because the work was difficult. Threshing consisted of harvesting the grain crops. One farmer usually owned the threshing machine and the threshing crew consisted of friends, neighbors and hired men to bring in the crops. Young boys were also hired to help and children brought water to the workers.

The sheaves of wheat or oats were brought from the fields to the threshing machine on wagons. The sheaves were fed into the threshing machine to separate the grain from the straw. The straw would then be blown into the barn or onto a stack nearby. The grain would come out of a chute on the threshing machine directly into a cloth bag. This bag had to be carried into the granary to be dumped. Young strong men were usually given the job of carrying the heavy grain bags. After the grain was dumped the bag carrier would get in line ready to carry the next bag.





This was a big cooking day to feed all the hungry workers. The tables would be set to feed the men first. The women served fried chicken, home-canned beef, mashed potatoes and gravy, vegetables and lots of pie and cake. The women and children ate after the men were served. Photos courtesy of Vernita Scheer.

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Fried Chicken

The chicken was cooled in cold water. Each piece was patted dry and rolled in flour. We used two large heavy iron skillets that were heated on the range with a good helping of lard in each one. The pieces of chicken were browned in the grease, salted and peppered and then left to fry slowly. After an hour or so, all the chicken was piled in one skillet. Gravy was made in the other skillet by browning the flour in the grease, adding water, salt and pepper. At dinner time the chicken was piled on a meat platter, the gravy placed in a bowl, and the remaining grease put in the gravy. It was so good and we ate lots.

...Marjorie Gieseke Conradi Lietz

Pie Crust

Mix 2 cups flour with 1 teaspoon salt.
Whip 2/3 cup lard and 1/3 cup boiling water, shape in ball.
Roll out between 2 pieces of waxed paper. Makes two crusts.

...Alma Heil Lietz

Apple Pie

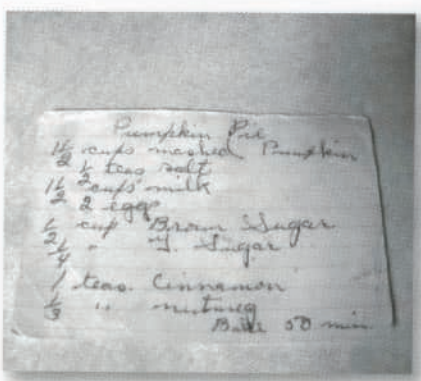
6 to 7 cups pared and sliced apples
¾ to 1 cup sugar, 1 tsp. cinnamon, dot with butter
Place in pie shell, add top crust, bake 45 to 55 minutes at 425 degrees.
Pour ½ cup cream through slits in top crust 5 minutes before pie is done baking.

...Delores Schroer Stienecker

My Mother's Hickory Nut Cake

1 cup butter, 2 cups sugar, 3 cups flour, 1 cup sweet milk
Whites of 7 eggs and yolks of 2
4 teaspoons baking powder
1 pint hickory nuts (sprinkled with flour)
Beat the egg whites stiff, separate from yolks.

... Mildred Browder courtesy of her daughter Sue Maxson





Cornelius Heinfeld with a load of pumpkins. Photo courtesy of Vernita Scheer.

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Butchering

There was home butchering of pork when the weather cooled in fall and beef in early winter. Each family would have their own recipe for sausage, gritz, blood pudding, head cheese, pickled pigs feet, sour tongue, and summer sausage.

Gritz

12 lbs. beef (can have some bone)
15 lbs. fresh pork shoulder
5 lbs. fresh pork side
3 lbs. pin oats (or steel cut oats)

Cook beef in one kettle. Cook pork in another kettle. When the pork is done, put some broth in a good sized kettle and put in pin oats—need quite a bit of broth as the pin oats swell. Put in oven at 300 degrees to soften. When meat is cooked, put it through a meat grinder. Mix and add the pin oats. Then put in baking pans and set in 300 degree oven for a while- until some of the fat shows around the edges of the pan. (need to use pork broth for the pin oats or it will not brown well when fried.)

This amount makes around 31 lbs. of gritz. The rule is- use twice as much pork as beef. Most people like to eat bread with sorghum molasses with gritz.

...Ruth Meckstroth

Blood Pudding

½ gallon blood
1 ½ cheeks of hogs or ½ gallon of speck (cut in small pieces)
½ gallon of meat water (meaning the water the speck was cooked in)
A good quart of rye meal
3 regular handfuls of salt
Pepper to taste

Put the blood and rye meal, salt, and pepper into the broth with speck. Cook until thickens. Put in containers or casings.

... Ruth Meckstroth



Ruth Mesenbrink Meckstroth

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Homemade Summer Sausage

20 lbs. beef
100 lbs pork
1 tablespoon saltpeter – put in warm water and soak
Mix with ground meat.
2 lbs. bulk salt (coarse)

1-2 boxes of mustard seed, depending on preference
Mix thoroughly, stuff into cleaned pork or beef casings. Tie tightly.
Hang to smoke. We use liquid smoke (2-3 applications). Let dry 6 to 8 weeks in smokehouse before eating. *...Dianne Dicke*

This is a traditional recipe from the Ralph Dicke family from Ralph's mother, Laura Bertke Dicke. The hogs are no longer butchered on the farm. We buy the cuts of meat we need from Winner's Market. However the mixing of ingredients, the cleaning of casings, and the stuffing are all still done as in the olden days. The sausage is smoked with hickory bark from the hickory nut trees which grow in the woods on the family farm which once belonged to the Bertke family.

Today we invite family and friends to participate in the summer sausage making. There is always lots of good food including a smorgasbord of homemade pies. We have a good time and keep our family's heritage. ...Larry and Dianne Dicke



Anna and Bill Topp's smokehouse on farm near Route 66.

In January my parents would butcher hogs and make summer sausage, frying sausage, and gritz. Several days before, my parents would clean the casings for the sausage. Butchering day was a busy day and the whole family, including Grandma Blumhorst, would be at our home to help. Dad always stuffed the sausage. He knew the exact amount of meat to put in the casings so that they would not burst. For supper the entire family ate fresh frying sausage. Dad would cure the bacon and hams later that night. ...Bonnie Topp Heidt



Antique stuffer used in making sausage. Courtesy of New Bremen Historic Association.

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Paul August Lietz, 1940

In the mid twenties, before I was in school, we went out to my cousin's home on Route 219 to help with the hog butchering. Bundled up, against the cold weather, I watched the men cut up the hogs and put all the squares of fat into a large kettle. The hog fat sizzled and cooked over a wood fire and then I watched them press out the lard and I even got to eat one of the cracklings. It was fun to watch the men mix up all the meat that had been ground up like hamburger. While they were mixing in the salt and pepper, they kept tasting the meat. Finally, my cousin put some of the ground meat in his hand and made a big round patty. If he could count 14 grains of pepper in the patty, then the meat was seasoned just right…My dad liked homemade summer sausage. He would buy pork shoulders, a hind quarter of beef and have it ground up. Then in the basement, we would mix up the meat, season it, and stuff the sausages. Dad built a little smokehouse in the backyard to smoke the sausages. *…Paul A. Lietz*



August Heil on the far left, grandfather of Paul Lietz, with two helpers on butchering day in the early 1900s.



Butchering with the Heil's and Lietz's in the early 1900s.

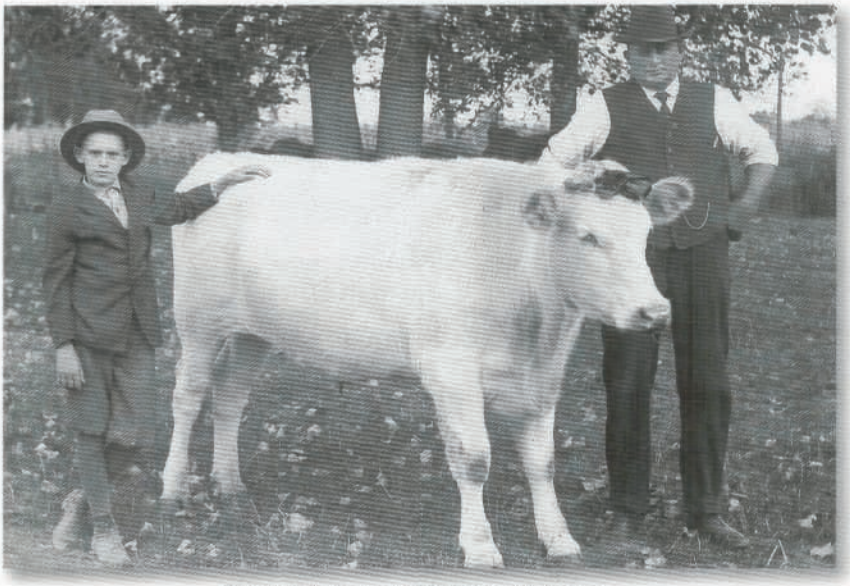
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Some butchering was done at the slaughterhouse. One of the slaughterhouses was owned and operated by Heinrich Casper Schelper from 1866 to 1895 in New Bremen. He had learned the trade in Germany from his grandfather. His original slaughterhouse and meat market were at the corner of Water Street and 2nd Street. The slaughterhouse later moved north of town. The meat market was moved downtown to Monroe Street.



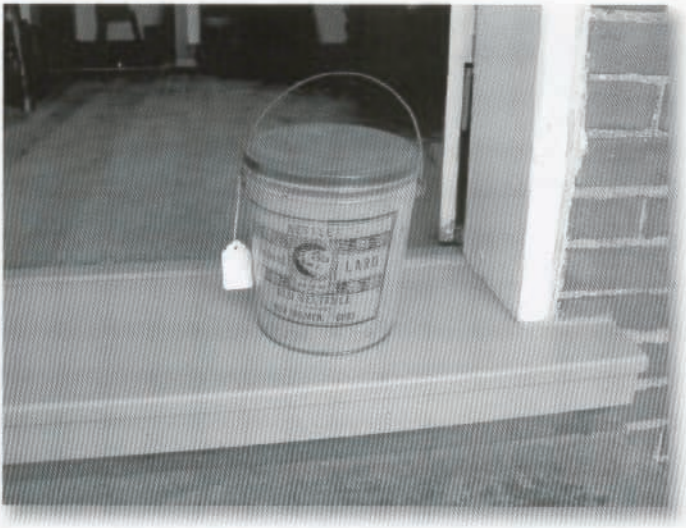
Schelper's slaughterhouse north of New Bremen on Route 66A.

William Schelper, the son of Heinrich took over the business in 1897 and added a grocery to the Old Reliable Meat Market in 1932. William's nephew, Elton Schelper, continued the business until 1957 when he sold the grocery to Tom Moeller.



Elton Schelper and William Schelper.
Photo Courtesy New Bremen Historic Association.

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Schelper's Old Reliable Meat Market lard can. Photo courtesy New Bremen Historic Association.

During butchering all parts of the animal were used, including the fat which was rendered into lard for cooking, frying and soap making.

How to make soap

Take a stone jar and add 1 quart rain water and 1 tablespoon borax and stir. Then add 1 can of lye and let cool. Add 5 lbs. melted lard or tallow and 4 tablespoons of bottled ammonia and stir until as thick as honey. Pour into pasteboard box lined with heavy paper or cloth. When cooled, cut in squares. Two batches can be made at one time.

...Dorothy Nuesmeyer Hertenstein



Frieda Helr Nuesmeyer, mother of Dorothy Nuesmeyer Hertenstein

When my Mom made home-made soap, my sister and I were not allowed to be near. She made the soap in a room between our house and the summer kitchen. Our kitchen's back door had a big window, and we could look through the window to watch her make the soap. When she was finished, she would pour it into cardboard boxes. When it was cold, she would cut it into bars. She used this soap to wash our clothes.

...Dorothy Hertenstein

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Meat for the family also came from hunting and fishing. A favorite recipe was hasenpfeffer.

Hasenpfeffer

1 teaspoon mixed spices in a cloth bag.
Equal parts vinegar and brown sugar
Salt and pepper
Gravy if needed
Dip rabbit in flour and brown.
...Emma Kuest Ruedebusch
Lock Two Fire Department Recipe



Ed Niekamp and Arnold Gieseke rabbit hunting in the early 1900s. Photo courtesy Genevieve Conradi.



Unknown fisherman. Photo by Paul Lietz.

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...Emma Kuest Ruedebusch
Lock Two Fire Department Recipe



Ed Niekamp and Arnold Gieseke rabbit hunting in the early 1900s. Photo courtesy Genevieve Conradi.

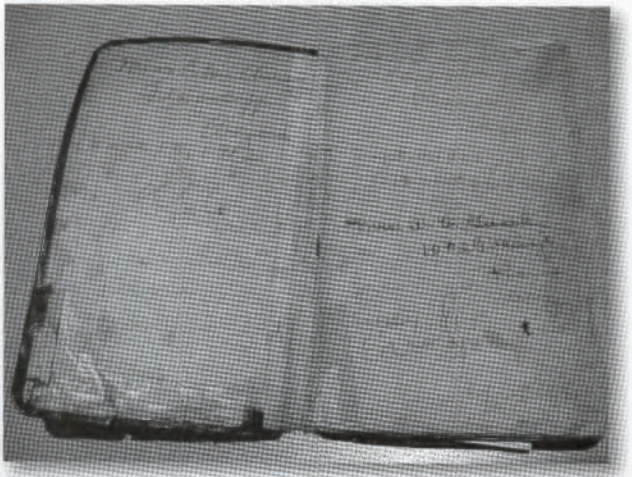


Unknown fisherman. Photo by Paul Lietz.

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Sharing the Abundance

Ideas on how to use this abundance of food have evolved into recipes shared by family and friends. Many families are lucky to have preserved their favorite recipes.



Elsie Awrey Gieseke's "Red Cookbook" which she began writing September 18, 1912 in Flagstaff, Arizona. She continued to write recipes in this book after she arrived in New Bremen in 1915. Photo by Gen Conradi.

Ida May (Faehl) Nieter was a neighbor and friend of Elsie (Awrey) Gieseke. Elsie made many sugar cookies using this recipe. Elsie included this recipe in her handwritten cookbook.

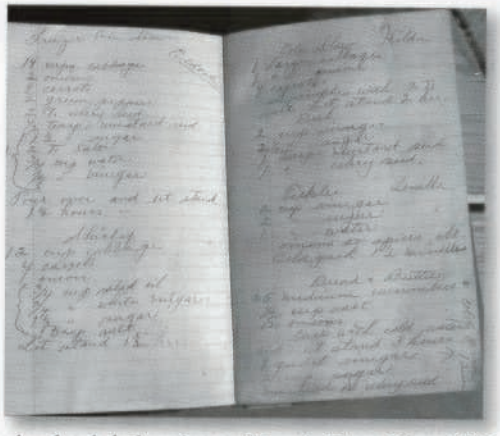
Mrs. Nieter's Sugar Cookies

2 cups sugar
3 eggs
¾ cup lard
½ cup sweet milk
3 tsp. baking powder
Nutmeg and a pinch of salt
Enough flour for a soft dough



Elsie Awrey Gieseke with her daughter Dorothy Gieseke Kah in 1916.

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Recipe book belonging to Mandy Topp Hirschfeld.



Recipe book belonging to Matilda Fledderjohn Lammers.
Courtesy of Tom and Diane Fledderjohann

My mother, Luella Blumhorst Topp, was a great cook and baker and usually did not even need a recipe. Her measurements were a "pinch", a "handful", or a "lump" and she tried to remember these amounts when she was teaching me to bake.

...Bonnie Topp Heidt

Some of these recipes have precise measurements while others have sentimental value but are imprecise. The following recipe for rye bread can not be used because the "brown bowl" is gone.

Rye Bread

½ ***brown bowl*** *of yeast*
2 cups brown sugar
½ cup molasses
Not too much rye meal.
Rest of yeast for coffee cake

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Margaret Ruedebusch Slattery gave this recipe to her classmate Marjorie Gieseke Conradi Lietz in 1935.

Butterscotch Cookies

3 cups brown sugar firmly packed
4 eggs, 1 cup lard (may substitute with shortening)
2 teaspoons baking powder, 1 teaspoon baking soda, 5 cups flour
1 teaspoon vanilla, walnuts

Mix and shape into rolls. Slice with sharp knife and ice with thin powdered sugar icing before baking. (part sugar and water) Bake at 375 degrees. Don't overbake.

Sponge Cake
(From Mrs. John Scheer to Lorraine "Toots" Laut Blanke)

4 eggs yolks, 1 ½ cup sugar, 2 tbsp. cold water
Beat together until very light
Add ½ cup boiling water and continue beating
Add 1 tsp. vanilla
1 ½ cup flour, sifted and then measured, 2 tsp. baking powder, 1 pinch salt
Lastly, fold in the egg whites, beaten light with ¼ tsp cream of tartar
Start to bake in a cold oven, gradually increase heat
Finish baking at 325 degrees
...Edith Blanke Wissman

Potato Pancakes
(This recipe has been shared by five generations of our family.)

10 medium potatoes, peeled and grated
1 ½ tbsp. flour, ½ tbsp. baking powder
2 eggs, plenty of salt
¼ cup sugar, ¼ cup milk
Stir all together and fry.
...Beverly Tangeman Applegate

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Major Events and Sacrifices

Major world events that changed food preparation in New Bremen began when the United States entered World War I in 1917. This war had an impact on New Bremen because this was the first war fought with Germany. The United States government had concerns for loyalty to America, especially among German-Americans. To "sell" the war and avoid compulsory rationing of food, the government asked for voluntary support of conservation efforts. Posters and slogans urged citizens to eat more corn, oats, and rye and less wheat, meat, sugar, and fats to save for the army. The Royal Baking Company published a cookbook in 1918 entitled *Best Wartime Recipes*. This book featured recipes that conserved wheat flour. New Bremen citizens supported the war effort and many young men served their country.



Benjamin Gieseke in uniform of US Army. World War I.



Gustave Ruedebusch in uniform. World War I.

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The Great Depression

We had hard and lean years during the "Depression." The stock markets fell in 1929 and little towns like New Bremen started to feel the "crunch" soon after. My mother used all the fruit from our seven cherry trees, one Bartlett pear tree, a few purple plum trees, a mulberry tree and four rows of currant and gooseberry bushes. Pears and cherries were canned for desserts. The rest of the fruit was made into jelly, jam, and preserves, cooked by my mother, the old-fashioned way without Sure Gel. The kitchen would be hot, with no fan or air conditioner as the steam rolled from the big pots on the stove.

...Marjorie Gieseke Conradi Lietz

Every Saturday morning my mother (Luella Blumhorst Topp) baked a pie for the family. She made many different kinds of pie but she usually used the fresh fruit that was in season. She would make a small apple dumpling with leftover dough. She never threw good food away because she had lived during the Great Depression and had learned that lesson.

...Bonnie Topp Heidt

We ate mock turtle soup at least once a week during the depression. This soup with homemade bread and butter was filling. In 1930 we bought a small beef roast for 25 cents. Rinse off the roast and simmer until done. Pick off the meat from the bone and grind with a small table grinder with a coarse blade. Put in the soup pot with 4 or 5 cubed potatoes and enough water for 5 servings. Add salt, pepper and t tablespoons of pickling spice. Put the spice in a small cheesecloth bag or a tea ball. When you are ready to serve, float some saltine crackers on top.

My mother also made bean soup frequently. She used marrowfat or great northern beans. Some people used small navy beans. Good bean soup is made with smoked ham. You may add chopped onion and cubed potatoes if you like. This was a real depression dish. It was filling and nutritious. It was served with homemade bread and butter. I always put ketchup in my bowl of soup.

...Marjorie Gieseke Conradi Lietz

I remember my grandparents, Sophia and Henry Topp, setting up lunch stands at auctions after they lost their farm during the Depression. My aunt and uncle, Hilda and Bill Klute, would assist with the cooking, baking and sales.

The lunch stand consisted of fried hamburgers, soup and homemade pie. The soup was prepared the day before the sale. The aroma of the soup was spicy. Everything was transported to the auction and the first item to be started was the soup. The tomato juice would be added along with the rest of the macaroni. It was hot and tasty and usually sold out early in the day.

...Delores Schroer Steinecker



Henry and Sophia Tostrick Topp.

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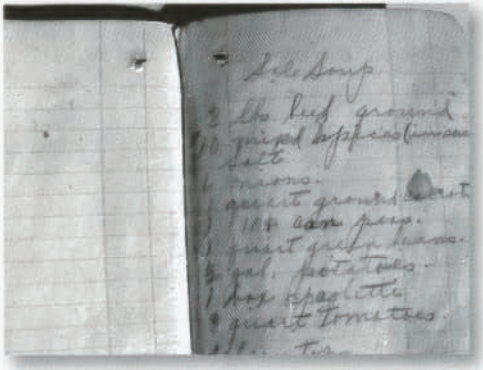
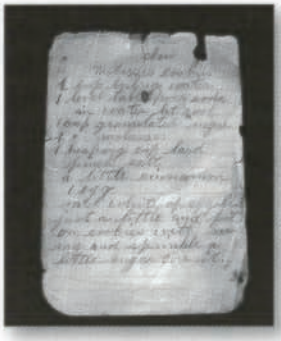


Photo of recipe from the handwritten cookbook of Sophia Tostrick Topp. Sophia was born in Germany in 1867 and came to New Bremen in 1870. She enjoyed cooking throughout her life and died in 1959 at the age of 92 years. This treasured cookbook is now in the possession of her proud granddaughter, Delores Stienecker.

Sale Soup

3 lbs. ground beef
10 cents worth mixed spices(in a cloth sack)
6 onions chopped, 1 quart ground carrots,
1 can peas (add last), 1 quart green beans
½ gallon potatoes, 1 box shell macaroni
3 quarts of tomatoes and celery tops
Start the beef in cold water so it will not clump
Add the cooked macaroni and peas last after the other vegetables are done
...Sophia Tostrick Topp



Another favorite recipe from Sophia Topp's handwritten cookbook.

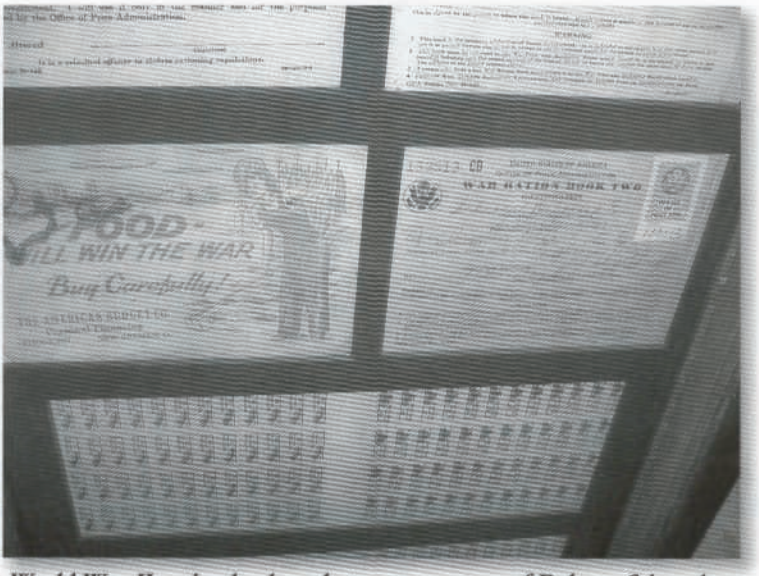
Molasses Cookies

½ boiling water
1 level tbsp. soda in boiling water, let cool
1 cup granulated sugar
1 cup molasses, 1 heaping cup lard
Pinch salt, a little cinnamon
1 egg – save a little of the white of the egg and beat with just a little of the sugar and put on cookies with a small rag before they are baked. Bake at 350 degrees for 10 to 12 minutes. Sprinkle additional sugar on warm cookies.
...Sophia Tostrick Topp

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World War II

The Depression ended in 1941 when the United States entered World War II. This war also had an effect on New Bremen and the provision of food. Once again the citizens of New Bremen joined the war effort. Victory gardens flourished and recipes changed to reflect the foods and materials in short supply. Recipes and "victory substitutes" came from cookbooks such as, *Victory Cookbook - Wartime Edition*, published in 1943 by Consolidated Book Publishers, Inc.



World War II ration book and stamps courtesy of Delores Stienecker.

Rationing was instituted in 1942 to ensure that each person could get a fair share of items that were in short supply. Ration books were issued to each member of the family. The Office of Price Administration issued rationing coupons for sugar, butter, gasoline, shoes, and tires. The coupons or stamps would allow purchase of the items in limited supply. The stamps did not guarantee that the item rationed would be available for purchase. For example, people would put their names on a list at my parent's small grocery store on Washington Street to reserve the butter. Our allotment did not always meet the demand, so the list continued each month.

The stamps were to be used by the person to whom the book was issued, but there was trading among families and neighbors. Some families did not have a car and would trade gas and tire coupons for sugar and butter. Larger families always traded stamps for shoes. On the cover of the ration book was the logo, "Food will win the war. Buy carefully." People had to be creative to cook items with non-rationed ingredients.

...Delores Schroer Stienecker

Mayonnaise cake became popular because the mayonnaise replaced the rationed butter.

Mayonnaise Cake

1 cup sugar
1 cup mayonnaise
2 tsp. baking soda
2 cups flour
3 tbsp. cocoa
1 cup water
Mix together. Pour into a large dish
that has been greased and floured.
Bake at 350 degrees for 30 to 35 minutes.

Icing

2 cups brown sugar
2 tbsp. flour
7 tbsp. milk
Piece of butter the size of a walnut
Dash of salt
Boil 1 minute
Cut a Milky Way candy bar into pieces,
add to the mixture and mix well.
Spread icing on cake.
... Clara Topp Schroer



Clara Topp Schroer



White Mountain Creamery in the early years.
Photo courtesy of New Bremen Historic Association.

Powdered milk was a staple for the men serving in the military. My father worked at the Creamery in the "roll dryer" department making powdered milk. The dryer ran 24 hours a day. The milk would be sprayed onto a hot rolling drum. The milk dried into sheets on the drum and would then be scraped off before it burned. After the war the powdered milk became available to the public as a convenience food.

...Delores Schroer Stienecker

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After the War

After the war new convenience foods appeared such as powdered milk, instant coffee, oleo margarine. Oleo margarine was a product developed because of rationing. It was sold in a bag and was white. The lack of color made it look like lard and not butter. Legally the manufacturer was not permitted to color the oleo. Instead the manufacturer placed a small colored capsule in the package. The buyer then broke the capsule and kneaded the oleo and coloring until the product looked like butter. This made the product look more appealing to the buyer. *...Delores Schroer Stienecker*

Prosperous times after the war brought more money to eat at local restaurants. Wint's Restaurant was originally a saloon run by Fred Kamman. Ferd Wint operated it from 1919 to 1946. Dining was added in 1930. Ferd did the cooking and his wife Georgianna made the pies, homemade sauerkraut, and pickles. Paul and Laverne Wint operated the restaurant and saloon after the war. Sunday was a big day for dining out because of the New Bremen Speedway. People had a meal before or after the races.



Wint's bar in the early years.
Photo courtesy New Bremen Historic Association.

Wint's Chili

Brown 1 ½ pounds hamburger and drain
Add ¾ cup finely chopped onions and simmer
Add 3 cans (15 ounces) tomato sauce
Add 1 can red kidney beans (15 ounces)
Juice of one lemon, 2 tablespoons sugar, 1 teaspoon chili powder
1 teaspoon celery seed, 1 teaspoon minced garlic, 1 ½ teaspoons oregano
½ teaspoon salt, ½ teaspoon pepper
Simmer about a half hour
...Ferd Wint

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Wint's restaurant on Washington Street in the 1950-1960s. Wint's had two doors. The north door led to the dining room while the south door entered the bar. Wint's dining room was a popular gathering spot for teenagers after basketball games. Photo courtesy Paul Lietz Collection.

Louie's Restaurant was also a popular gathering place for young people in New Bremen. It was located on North Main Street next to the former Howell's IGA in a building that is no longer there. Hamburgers were "5 cents" at Louie's and served with pickles. In fact, that is where Paul "Pickle" Lietz got his name. Paul always asked for a "pickle sandwich" with a hamburger on it.



Ted Purpus, Louis Landwehr (holding "Bobby Lietz"), Rosemary Landwehr and Betty Ann Behm. Louie's restaurant, 1937. Photo by Paul Lietz.

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The Grille, a restaurant located on Monroe Street has a long history. It began as two businesses, a Hotel and a Bar in the 1890s, owned by Henry Laut and his brother Herman Laut. In the early 1900s Franklin Hollingsworth purchased the hotel. Emil and Frank Laut continued to operate Laut's Bar. In 1945 an expansion was made to the hotel and Laut's Bar was purchased and added to the business. The buildings were remodeled in 1972 by the Schnell's who then owned the business. Duane Hartwig and his son Dean purchased the business in 1977 and operated it as the Hotel Bar and Restaurant until 1990. Alice Hartwig shared these favorite recipes of the customers.

Barley Soup
(Hotel Recipe)

Beef roasts
Broth from roasts
3 boxes of barley
1 jar beef bouillon
2 – 46 ounce cans of beef broth
1 can celery flakes, 2 handfuls dried onion, 3 carrots, grated
½ lb. oleo, 6 potatoes, cubed
...Alice Gilberg Hartwig

Strawberry Pie

1 box (3 oz.) strawberry jello
1 cup sugar, 4 tbsp. corn starch, 2 cups boiling water
Cook until thick. Use 4 cups cleaned strawberries per pie. Makes two pies.
...Alice Gilberg Hartwig



Hollingsworth Hotel Annex opening on March 7, 1945.
Photo courtesy of Alice Hartwig, copied and enhanced by Lucille Francis.

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The postwar years found more women working outside the home. There was more money with which to buy convenience foods and other timesavers. Fewer women were concerned with canning foods. There was a greater use of home freezers. Some families rented freezer locker space in the basement of Schelper's Market on Monroe Street.





Schelper's Grocery Store on West Monroe Street circa 1940s.
Photos by Paul Lietz.

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New cook books were available which emphasized quick and easy cooking. But some of the old recipes have continued as local favorites. These foods are tied to memories that remind us of New Bremen. Gritz and sour tongue are difficult to find in other areas of our country but these items are still prepared and sold at Howell's Market.



Howell's Market in the Amsterdam Center. Photo by Gen Conradi.

William Scheer and Wesley Howell purchased the former Kroger Grocery on the corner of Main and Monroe Streets in 1949 and remodeled it into an IGA Store. Wesley and Orville Lampert formed a partnership and functioned as the Corner IGA Market until 1959. Wesley and Margery Scheer Howell then took their son Dick into the business as a partner. Dick's son Tom is now owner of Howell's IGA located in the Amsterdam Center. The following recipes have been in the family for years and have been graciously shared by Dick.

Gritz (Howell's Recipe)

20 lbs. pork
10 lbs. beef

Put in double boiler or roaster. Cover with water and cook for four hours or until done. Let cool and grind. Use broth from meat and add to 10 lbs. steel cut oats or pin oats. Oats will swell up. Cook for 1 ½ to 2 hours, adding water when needed. When oats are done, add meat to it. Season with salt and pepper and mix thoroughly. Let cool overnight. Slice. Ready to fry and enjoy.

...Dick Howell

Sour Tongue

6 to 8 beef tongues

Boil about four hours. Peel skin from tongues while still warm. Refrigerate overnight and slice the next day.
Put the sliced tongue in brine. Brine: 1 gallon cider vinegar, ½ gallon water, 2 cups sugar, pickling spice, sliced onion.
Let set for two weeks in the brine. Enjoy.

...Dick Howell

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Other local favorite foods such as pork and kraut and sweet rice were often part of the school menu in New Bremen in the postwar years.

Pork and Kraut

2 or 3 lbs. fresh pork
1 quart sauerkraut
Water
Salt and pepper

Put pork in large stew pan and cover with cold water. Cook slowly for one hour. Add the sauerkraut making sure there is enough liquid in the pan to cover. Cook slowly for another hour. Season to taste. Serve with mashed or boiled potatoes.

Sweet Milk Rice with Cinnamon

½ cup uncooked rice (not instant)
Sugar to taste, ¼ tsp cinnamon, ½ tsp. salt
2 ½ cups milk

Combine all ingredients in top of double boiler.
Cook covered over boiling water until rice is tender and milk is almost absorbed, about 1 hour, stirring frequently. Makes 6 to 8 servings.



Emily Grothaus Reisner and Genevieve Conradi on their way to school. Central School on South Franklin Street in background. Circa 1955.

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The Woodmen of the World (WOW) organization hosted a festival each year beginning in the 1940s. Food was an important feature of the festival and hamburger barbecue was a favorite of the crowd that attended.

Woodmen of the World Hamburger Barbecue

20 lbs. freshly ground hamburger
Brown with salt and pepper.
1 ½ lb. ground onion
1 bunch celery, chopped
4 (#2) cans tomato puree
5 cans Campbell's tomato soup
4 (#2) cans carrots
1 cup cracker meal
May add Worchestershire Sauce.
Put in roaster and cook until done.
...Susie Fark Hirschfeld



This picture shows the inspection of the Woodmen food service area at the festival. Dorothy Lietz Ruedebusch, Joyce Ruedebusch, Peggy Ritter Knost, Katie Cooper Knost and Paul Koehl, County Health Sanitarian. Circa early 1950s.

Favorite foods, often referred to as comfort foods, bring back many memories and are a link to our past. The following recipes represent a sampling of our food legacy. Can you remember the aroma and taste of these dishes?

Windkucken (Wind Cake)

2 tbsp. sugar, 1 egg beaten
½ tsp. salt, 2 tbsp. melted butter
About 3 cups flour
1 tsp soda
1 cup buttermilk
Fat for frying. Fry just like donuts, only don't roll out.
...Johanna Ahlers Conradi

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Apple Dumplings

Pastry for two crust pie
4 medium sized baking apples
1 ½ cups sugar, 1 tsp. cinnamon, 2 tsp. butter

Heat oven to 425 degrees. Roll out pastry to about 1/8 inch thick. Cut into 7 inch squares. Peel and core an apple for each square. Fill the apple with a mixture of the sugar and cinnamon. Dot with butter. Wrap the pastry around the apple and seal. Place in baking dish.

Boil 1 cup sugar, 2 cups water, 3 tbsp. butter, ¼ tsp cinnamon for three minutes. Pour this hot syrup around the apple dumplings. Bake 40 to 45 minutes or until the crust is browned. Test with fork to be sure apple is done.

...Gen Conradi

Chili Soup

2 cans light red kidney beans (rinsed)
1 can tomato puree
Brown 1 lb. lean ground beef in oven with 1 chopped onion
Mix together with 3 to 4 cups of water
Simmer at least 1 hour
Add spices, chili powder and red pepper.

... Elsie Awrey Gieseke

Divinity Fudge

3 cups granulated sugar
1 ½ cup water
1 cup white Karo

Boil until it crackles in water. Pour it on the beaten whites of 2 eggs stirring constantly. When it begins to get stiff, add 1 cup nut meats and flavor to suit. Beat until stiff, then pour on buttered plates.

...Dorothy Lietz Ruedebusch

Hash

1 cup chopped cooked beef(or chicken,turkey, ham)
1 cup chopped cooked potatoes
1 onion, minced
Salt and pepper to taste

Combine all ingredients. Place a little fat in a heavy skillet. The skillet should be hot enough to brown the hash quickly. Over medium heat, spread the hash in the skillet. Cook 10 to 15 minutes. Add milk or water, cover and cook slowly until crisp, about 10 minutes.

...Joyce Ruedebusch

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German Hot Potato Salad

¼ cup sugar
1 tbsp. flour
2 tsp. salt, ¼ tsp. pepper
¼ cup vinegar
2/3 cup water
¼ cup butter
2 tbsp. onion, chopped
4 slices crisp fried bacon
1 quart cooked potatoes, sliced
1 hard boiled egg, sliced

Combine sugar, flour, salt, pepper, vinegar, water, and butter. Cook until thickened. Add onions and crumbled bacon. Pour over potatoes and eggs. Serve hot.

...Delores Schroer Stienecker

Deviled Eggs

6 hard cooked eggs, shell removed and cut in half
Place yolks in bowl and mash
Add ¼ cup mayonnaise, ¼ cup mustard, salt and pepper to yolks
Fill each egg with mixture
Chill.

...Delores Schroer Stienecker



Delores Schroer Stienecker serving food at the museum. Photo by Gen Conradi.

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Wiener Schnitzel

4 slices of boneless calf cutlet
3 tablespoons flour
1 egg
Bread crumbs
Bacon fat or shortening
Salt, pepper, lemon, parsley

Beat the cutlets to tenderize them. Then salt and pepper them. Beat the egg. (Water or milk may be added if desired.) The egg must remain liquid. Dip cutlet first in egg, then flour, then in the bread crumbs. Put enough shortening in a frying pan to keep the schnitzel from burning and let the pan get hot. The schnitzel must be cooked until brown on both sides and crisp dry. Serve the schnitzel with lemon slices and parsley.

...Mrs. Elton Bruns

I make "Johnny Marzetti" for my granddaughters. I brown the ground beef in the oven with a little chopped onion in a small amount of shortening. Cook the spaghetti for about seven minutes in water. Then put the spaghetti, beef, and tomato sauce into a baking dish. Stir in about two tablespoons of ketchup. Bake for 35 minutes in a 350 degree oven. My mother made this occasionally with cubed round steak for my Dad.

...Marjorie Lietz

"Johnny Marzetti" was created in the 1940s by the owner of Marzetti's Restaurant in downtown Columbus, Ohio.

Mince Meat

2 cups meat
4 cups apples
2 tsp. salt, 1 tbsp. cinnamon, 1 tbsp. allspice
2 cups sugar, 1 cup raisins, 1 cup currants
1 ½ cup wine

...Orville Ruedebusch



Orville Ruedebusch

The making of mincement for holidays was a family tradition. My Dad would make the mincemeat using wine his brother-in-law Paul Lietz made. Then Grandma Alma Lietz would bake the pies.

...Joyce Ruedebusch

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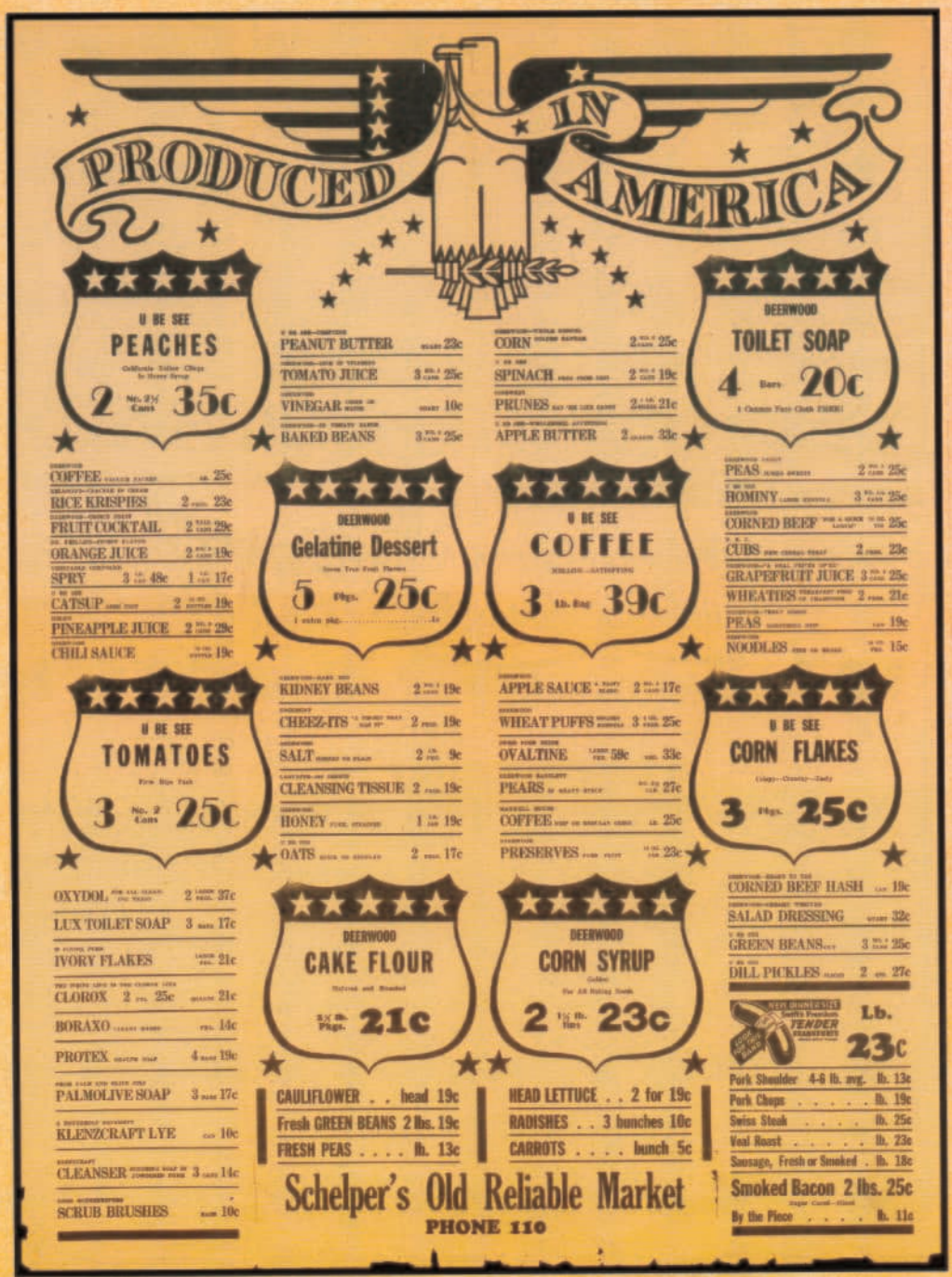
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Researching this book has shown us the strong sense of the past that still exists in our community. We applaud those that are keeping these traditions alive. We hope this book reinforces our link to those who have gone before us and to those who will follow.

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Newspaper advertising for Schelper's Market, April, 1940.

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