

# Historian



Established 1984

www.nktelco.net/historicalsociety

Our Focus and Goal Is to PRESERVE OUR HERITAGE

Spring 2015

## Retired professor to shed light on immigrants to western Auglaize County

*Dinner and annual meeting set for April 9*

Richard Grupenhoff, professor emeritus from Rowan University in New Jersey, will be the guest speaker at the historical society's annual meeting to be held Thursday, April 9, with a meal beginning at 6:00 P.M.

Dr. Grupenhoff will speak about the German migration in the early 1830's from Cincinnati to New Knoxville, New Bremen and Minster to farm and work on the Miami-Erie Canal.

### THE MEAL

The meal for the evening, catered by Main Street Station, is beef or chicken, mashed potatoes and gravy, green beans, cole slaw and roll. Water, iced tea, lemonade and coffee and cookies are included.

### COST AND TICKETS

Tickets cost \$12.00 and can be purchased at the Village Market or the New Knoxville Library by April 2. Anyone from out of town who would like to come for the dinner may contact Edythe Henschen by phone at 419-753-2104 or by e-mail at beep@nktelco.net.

Anyone not wanting to attend the dinner may attend just the business meeting and hear the speaker for the evening.

### RICHARD GRUPENHOFF

Dr. Richard Grupenhoff spent 35 years teaching film history and film production. Born and raised in Cincinnati, Dr. Grupenhoff joined the Navy out of high school, and when he returned, he at-

tended Xavier University, where he earned his B.A. in English. He holds an M.A. in American studies from Purdue University, and a Ph.D. in theater and film from the Ohio State University.

As an historian, Dr. Grupenhoff did pioneering scholarship on the history of African-American independent filmmaking in the U.S. from 1915 to 1950. He published a biography, *The Black Valentino: The Stage and Screen Career of Lorenzo Tucker* (1988).

In the late 1990's he became interested in his German heritage and family genealogy. He found his roots in Osnabrueck, Germany, which he has visited numerous times. In his research he soon came to realize that many Germans in Ohio came from this northern Germany region. Recently he began researching the movement of newly-arrived Germans from Cincinnati to the towns of Minster, New Bremen and New Knoxville.

Two years ago, on a trip to this area, Dr. Grupenhoff conceived of an idea to write an article on the German migration to the area. It is in relation to this article that he will speak.

## Please consider a membership

The New Knoxville Historical Society is looking for new members. This newsletter is mailed to all members, but maybe you know someone who would be interested in becoming a member, or you are receiving a complimentary copy.

A membership helps to support an organization that strives to preserve our community's heritage. Your membership also allows you to have a say in how this organization spends its money and how we celebrate our heritage.

Membership is relatively inexpensive, considering a single lifetime membership costs just \$50. Yearly memberships are also available.

One of the best ways to promote interest in our heritage is with a student membership—just \$1 for anyone in grade or high school.

Joining is simple. A request for membership and a check to Edythe Henschen (address below) is all that's required. So, please, consider joining the New Knoxville Historical Society.

**MEMBERSHIP: Single - \$10/Year \$50/Lifetime**

**Couple - \$18/Year \$100/Lifetime Student - \$1/Year**

Checks may be mailed to Edythe Henschen, 07652 St. Rt. 219, New Knoxville, OH 45871

### FACEBOOK IS HERE

The historical society has ventured into the world of social media.

You can now find us on Facebook at

[www.facebook.com/newknoxvillehistoricalsociety](http://www.facebook.com/newknoxvillehistoricalsociety)

# June open house brings back Freedom train

## Victims of 1849 cholera epidemic also honored

Gary Katterheinrich and his Freedom Train returned for the June open house and gave attendees a trip around town that featured local businesses, especially those that existed in the past. Many buildings throughout the village once housed different businesses from what are found there today.

Janean Oberlander narrated both trips. The first, a short one, traveled down

town.

The second tour took riders down Mill Street to Hoge Street. It was noted that original lots were 66 feet wide and 132 feet long. There were eight lots per block with an alley intersecting them. Some houses occupied two lots. (**The Centennial book, available at the historical society includes a plat map of New Knoxville.**)

The tour included travels past Hoge

became Henkener's Service Station.

Tour riders learned about the history of today's community library. The building was originally built by Robert Kuck in 1949 as **The Dairy Bar** and later housed a T.V. and appliance business and the telephone company, which still owns the business.

Along Main Street, **Katterheinrich Motor Sales**, continuously operated by the Katterheinrich family for 100 years, has seen facelifts, but basically remains the same, but one of the biggest changes is seen on the east side of the next block. First National Bank now owns the property where the **Eversman home** and **Meat Market** used to stand. The town parking lot now occupies the space that once housed the **J.L. Headapohl Saloon and Hotel**. In 1924 **Eversman's Cities Service Station** took the place of the saloon, whose owners moved the building back farther and turned it at an angle on the corner. Gas pumps were added under the roof, allowing a drive to enter from one street and leave at the other street.

The tour also passed the former **Adolph's Restaurant**, arguably the best known landmark in the village. It was built as a mercantile store in 1902 by **Ben Cook**, grandson of Henry Venneman who operated one of the first mercantile establishments in the town. On the top floor, the **New Knoxville Telephone Company** was first housed in 1905.

The only restaurant in New Knoxville is located across the street. **Main Street Station** was originally a **Taste Freeze**, opened in 1953 by Leroy and Rachel Kruse. It has had various owners and was even a video store for a short time.

The tour concluded around the block, passing by the location of many other early businesses.

**Information about these early businesses can be found in the centennial and sesquicentennial books and in the house and barn at the Heritage Center.**



Gary Katterheinrich turns his Freedom Train onto St. Marys Street as riders get a good view of First Church, the village's oldest church building, constructed in 1894. Diagonally across is the site of the first Meth-

odist Church building, a log house of worship on the southwest corner of the A. H. Stienecker residence. A barn the once sat on the residence is now located at the Heritage Center as one of its five buildings.

Main Street, turning at West Bremen Street and then St. Marys Street to see the different locations of early churches.

On German Street the train passed by one of the oldest surviving buildings of the village. The structure, which now has apartments, once housed the **Henry Venneman House and Mercantile, built in 1856.**

The tour ended at the end of West Street, the current location of **New Knoxville Telephone Company**. The building originally housed New Knoxville Cement and Tile.

Also at the end of West Street is the German Reformed Cemetery, the community's oldest cemetery, where nine members of the H.H. Fledderjohann family that died of cholera are buried. The descendants of the only surviving son, H.H. Jr., held a ceremony and placed a stone in memory of those who died in three homes west of

**Lumber Company**, one of the oldest companies in the village; the original site of the **Auglaize Tile Company**, where German POWs worked during WWII; and the original site of **K and K Lumber**, which later



Following the ceremony honoring those who died of the cholera and were buried at the old Protestant Cemetery, Myron Fledderjohann shared with listeners more about the descendants of the H.H. Fledderjohann family.

## From the president

Our year has been a productive one. We continue to see the need to keep our grounds updated and look for ways to keep the historical society relevant for our members and the community.

**Regular maintenance** required trimming of the old oak tree on the property, sealing of the log cabin, mulching and edging along the east side of the house, repairing the roof of the doctor's office and the replacement of a screen door on the house.

One addition we were excited about is **new trustee Leslie Stienecker Krieg**, who is completing the term of Ali Carpenter, who resigned. A secretary at the school, Leslie keeps us informed about activities there as well as brings ideas about how to view the society from a younger person's point of view.

**Our biggest loss** was the death of trustee **Bob Feldwisch**. Bob replaced his father a few years ago and brought to the board his knowledge of Germany and its language. **We so appreciate the many donations given to the historical society in his memory.** **Doug Hoelscher** has agreed to complete Bob's term.

During the summer months we spent some time at each meeting brainstorming ideas for improving the society. We narrowed down a list submitted by board members. From this list came **new bro-**

**chures** telling about the society, the establishment of a **Facebook page**, which has seen numerous visits, and the approval to store some of our larger items in the Hoge Brush building.

Another goal is to **revamp our displays**. This is a major project, and we hope to revamp a single location each year.

Another goal is to provide more guidance for visitors to the Heritage Center. **There is so much to see and read at the museum.** We hope the addition of self-guided brochures might help you when you visit.

**Thanks goes to Todd and Sylvia Spieles**, who again this year planted flowers beside the summer kitchen and on the south side of the house.

**Congratulations to Dean Frankenburg**, who received the German Club-Historical Society scholarship. Dean attends Tiffin University.

**The fourth printing of the 1936 Centennial book** has just been completed. This addition includes a table of contents and **poems**, which describe people, places and events of New Knoxville during the twentieth century, written **by Matilda Kiefer**. **The book sells for \$10.**

**Other items are on sale at the museum. In the next column is a list of a few items and books and their prices.**

### **Ladbergen to America - \$24**

Translated by the late Dean Hoge, this book includes a discussion of the immigrants to Minster, New Bremen and New Knoxville and would be an excellent companion piece to the speaker at our annual meeting.

### **Our Times - \$20**

Published for the village's sesquicentennial, this book tells about New Knoxville, especially in the years since the centennial of 1936.

### **Memoirs - \$5.00 from 1950-2000+**

We have a large supply of these. We also have a few from the 1940's for \$10.

### **New Knoxville Afghan - \$39**

This beautiful throw in brown and cream pictures landmarks from early 20th century New Knoxville.

### **Sesquicentennial Plate - \$5**

### **New Knoxville Monopoly-style game-\$5**

Other books and items are available and information can be found on our website.

As I said earlier, we are moving toward using more social media to communicate with others. Our website has been in existence for some years and our experiment with Facebook has proved successful. Another step is an attempt to use **email**.

If you use email, you can get our newsletter emailed to you instead of through the mail, if you prefer. Providing us with your email address will also allow us to remind you of events happening at the historical society.

**If you would like to share your email address with us, email me your address to me at [joberlander@nktelco.net](mailto:joberlander@nktelco.net).**

The 13 other people who make up the historical society board and meet every month have done a wonderful job of making this year a good one, but you can help. Any ideas or help you can give us throughout the year would be appreciated.

**This society is run by volunteers. Join in. Be a volunteer. Let me know how you can help.**

Janean Oberlander

## *Six heritage Sundays scheduled for this summer*

Plans to recognize New Knoxville's civic organizations are being developed for our **August 30** open house. Through the years volunteers have added to New Knoxville's success, and we want to honor those people and organizations.

If you have any documents or memorabilia from one of these groups—from the scouts to the NYKAA and beyond—let Janean Oberlander or any other board member know as we prepare for this open house.

Our annual Autumn Heritage Day, **September 27**, will once again offer Mike Neuman's open kettle chili and another band concert. We are also working on a special children's open house for that day, so look for information in the future.

Recent discussions about our open houses led to the decision to focus on one

building a month. Guided tours and information about each particular building will be available during the following open houses.

**May 31:** The doctor's office

**June 28:** The log cabin  
and the summer kitchen

**July 26:** The barn

**October 25:** The house

**All heritage Sundays run from 1:00-4:00.**

**The third annual "Be a Tourist in Your Own Hometown" is being planned for May 2 and 3. Sponsored by the Auglaize County Historical Society, these days allow residents to visit a number of historical sites in the county.**

**Check local media closer to the date for details**



# Local artists and artisans share works at summer open houses

August and September open houses gave local and area artists and artisans a chance to display their handiwork.

The old school gymnasium was once again open for an artisan showcase of local and area work, both past and present. Displays ranged from handmade furniture, soap and cards to silverware sculptures and paintings. Fifteen artisans had items for sale, two artisans gave demonstrations, and eight others offered items for display only.

The Historical Society also displayed items from its collection, including carved wooden items, quilts, a locally made quilt frame and cross stitch.

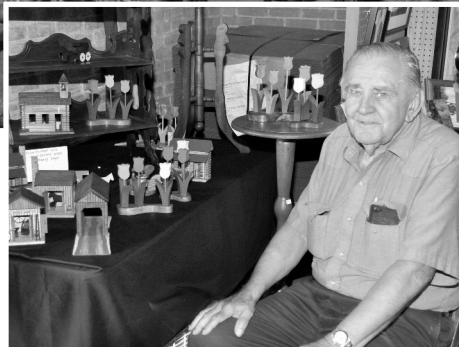
The availability of the Hoge Brush building proved to be beneficial as rain dampened the day's activities.



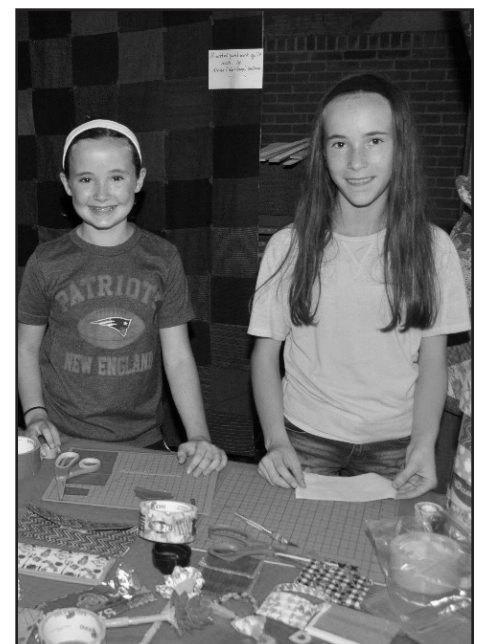
**Above,** Rebecca Gilland sits behind her mosaic flower pots. In addition, she sells hand-made jewelry, including bracelets, necklaces, rings and pins. Behind her is a 1913 quilt made by Mary Fledderjohann and owned by Roberta Tanzini. **Left,** Terry Lukac is joined by son Dylan Koenig as they demonstrate working with soapstone carvings. Lukac learned this artisan skill by taking classes. Larry Niemeyer showed how he makes stained-glass pieces.



One corner of the old New Knoxville gymnasium provided a display of items once belonging to the community's earlier artisans. Included was a sesqui-centennial quilt composed of individual pieces designed by businesses and organizations for the 1986 celebration, a Hoge Lumber-made quilt frame owned by Dora Meckstroth and used by her quilting group to make numerous quilts, a 1987 cross-stitch picture by Ruby Hoelscher titled "My Home Town," a spinning wheel made by Don Henkener, hats belonging to Ben Cook and made in New Knoxville, and a treadle Domestic sewing machine. Also hanging behind today's artisans was a variety of quilts that were either hand-quilted or hand-knotted.



Age wasn't a factor when it came to artisans' displays. **Left,** Mrs. Willis (Ruth) Henschen works on her needlepoint pins, which are in the shape of Ohio. **Above,** Henry Sager offers his hand-carved and hand-turned wood pieces. These included small buildings as well as larger pieces like umbrella stands. **Right,** the youngest artisan, Elaine Roby, is joined by her friend Lauren Blich as she displays her items made with duct tape.





The weather was not a problem for the September Heritage Day, when once again visitors enjoyed Mike Neuman's open kettle chili and a concert by the local high school.

The sunshine and light breeze allowed an outdoor display of artwork from the students of the three art teachers New Knoxville has employed since 1962-63: Joyce Titus, Marilyn Sailor Kohler and Sharon Wittler. Mrs. Titus was New Knoxville's first teacher to offer a high school art class. She arrived in the fall of 1962 with a bachelor of fine arts degree from The Ohio State University. In her first years Mrs. Titus taught home economics and art K-12 and advised Future Homemakers of America, the prom and the class play make-up crew. Mrs. Titus came to New Knoxville having worked as an interior decorator with Blanche Markley Interiors in Lima.

By 1987 Mrs. Titus had developed the art program enough that another teacher was hired to teach home economics so Mrs. Titus could concentrate on art. She retired in 1993 after 31 years at New Knoxville. Mrs. Titus died in 2003.

Mrs. Kohler came to New Knoxville as Marilyn Sailor in 1993, teaching art for four years. When she returned to her

hometown of Jackson Center, she had married and become Mrs. Kohler.

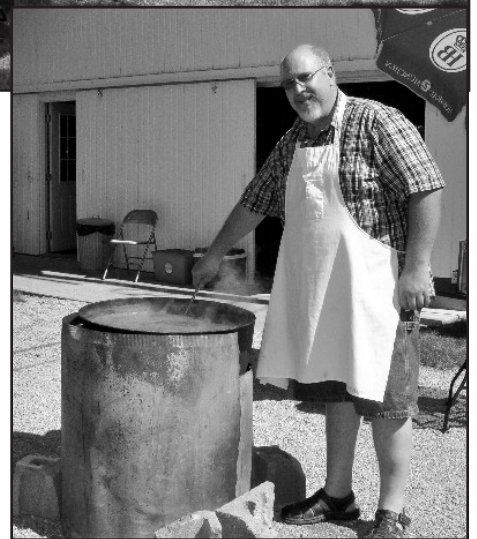
Mrs. Sharon Wittler is completing her seventeenth year of teaching at New Knoxville and has been responsible for helping many students go into art-related fields. Her students have been recognized in regional and statewide competitions.

Work by students taught by all three of these women was on display at the open house. Even one of Mrs. Titus's art pieces was brought for display by Rose Cline Thompson, one of her first students. She painted the scene of German Village (right) while a student at The Ohio State University.



Twenty-five high school students displayed artwork using various media, including photography, acrylic painting, computer graphics, photo printmaking, linoleum print, Sharpie drawing, ceramics sculpture, 3-D mixed media geometric and painting on fiber.

Eight New Knoxville alumni brought their high school works to be part of the display, including Ryan Tinnerman, who works in the art field. All of his high school art was lost when his basement flooded, so he shared drawings of some of famous people that have influence him, especially Walt Disney.



Once again the New Knoxville high school band, under the direction of Cory Canan, provided a concert of pep band music for the listeners while Mike Neuman provided his open kettle chili for the September visitors. Cider, donuts, corn bread and cookies were also on the menu.





## Wayne York speaks at annual meeting

The second annual dinner meeting was held at the American Legion on April 10, 2014.

A large crowd attended and enjoyed the dinner catered by Main Street Station. Following a brief business meeting, Wayne York, one of two remaining founders of the Ft. Wayne Railroad Historical So-

ciety, spoke about railroads in western Ohio.

York also displayed various railroad artifacts, including pictures of Engine No. 765. To show the difficulty drivers have in steering through the mountains, York also showed a video of a trip through West Virginia.

York was responsible for helping to activate Engine No. 765, which was made by the Lima Locomotive Works in 1944. Today, he helps plan a variety of excursions throughout the eastern United States.



## SLATE OF OFFICERS & BOARD MEMBERS

**President** - Janean Oberlander

**Vice President** - Allen Schroer

**Secretary** - Diane Fledderjohann

**Treasurer** - Edythe Henschen

### Trustees

**2014-2017** - Myron Fledderjohann and Kirk Stienecker

**2013-2016** - Leslie Krieg and Doug Hoelscher

**2015-2017** - Mike Neuman and Bill Henschen/Todd Spieles

### Board Members

**Display Curator & Cataloging** - Rusty Elsass

**Farm Items** - Myron Fledderjohann

**Membership, Web Site, and Historical Records**

Larry and Karen Niemeyer

**Historians & Memorial Plaque**

Myron Fledderjohann, Roberta Tanzini, Kirk Stienecker

**SPEAKER AVAILABLE**

Myron Fledderjohann - Genealogy and History

**Tours available upon request.**

**Contact any board member or officer.**

## Historical society receives monetary gift from New Knoxville's third graders

As part of their social studies class, third graders study local history. That unit includes a trip to the historical society for a tour of the five buildings, led by Myron Fledderjohann and Diane Fledderjohann.

During their tour last May, they presented the Heritage Center with \$100, part of the profits from a hands-on economics unit.

With their teachers, Mrs. Janet Eshelman and Mrs. Kim Crow, the students learned about economic decision-making, opportunity cost, consumers, goods and services, markets and budgeting.

The class decided to sell farm-related novelties such as

pencils, small toys, erasers, suckers, tattoos and stickers. They had to determine cost per each item, set prices to insure a profit and project the profit after subtracting the initial investment.

Each student helped sell the items, added the receipts and made change. The project made a profit of \$251.25, and the class decided to donate \$100 to the historical society to show appreciation for the annual tours. The rest of the money was used to buy books for the school library.

Pictured above right, historical society treasurer Edythe Henschen accepts the check from third grader Allie Topp.



*If you happen to be at the Ohio Statehouse, check out the Auglaize County historical display, located at the Worthington Center through May 21. We chose NK Telephone Company to represent New Knoxville in the display, whose theme is Auglaize County at work and play.*

On October 14 Myron Fledderjohann leads a tour of the barn at the museum for German guests from Lengerich and nearby Ladbergen, Germany. The Germans spent about a week with residents of Wapakoneta, Lengerich's sister city. The visitors had a full two-day tour of various locations in Auglaize County including lunch at the Wooden Shoe in Minster. During the tour Fledderjohann's Low German was understood by many of those there.

## Memorial Plaque honors members who died during past year

The following names will appear on our Memorial Plaque in our Heritage Museum.

Thomas Gabel	March 9, 2014
Michael Rohrig	April 10, 2014
Norman Wierwille	June 19, 2014
Martin Rehmert	August 9, 2014
Robert Feldwisch	October 19, 2014
Rachel Wierwille Kruse	January 23, 2015
Constance Koepke Hardacre	January 30, 2015
Lenora Niemeyer Gritzmaker	February 16, 2015

## New Lifetime Members

Allison Brady, New Bremen, Ohio  
 Donna Elshoff Brown, Scottsdale Arizona  
 Louise Davis, Celina, Ohio  
 Leslie Krieg, New Bremen, Ohio  
 Brenda Meckstroth, New Knoxville, Ohio  
 Dwain Meckstroth, New Knoxville, Ohio

## Yearly Members

Cynthia Eversman, Oregon, Ohio  
 David Eversman, Oregon, Ohio  
 Debbie Eversman, Oregon, Ohio  
 Hayley Eversman, Oregon, Ohio  
 Jeff Eversman, Oregon, Ohio  
 Denise Testa, Leroy, New York  
 Barb Wibbeler, Wapakoneta, Ohio  
 Ned Wibbeler, Wapakoneta, Ohio

## Student Members

Lana Bizet, New Knoxville, Ohio  
 Dylan Koenig, New Knoxville, Ohio  
 Dakota Koenig, New Knoxville, Ohio  
 Katelyn Lochard, Wapakoneta, Ohio  
 Dana Miles, New Knoxville, Ohio  
 Kyle Prenger, Minster, Ohio

*We would like this newsletter to reflect our readers' interests and knowledge of New Knoxville's past. If you have any pictures or other information to share, contact Janean Oberlander at 419-753-2077 or [joberlander@nktelco.net](mailto:joberlander@nktelco.net) or any board member.*

*In addition, ideas for speakers for future annual meetings or themes for open houses are welcomed.*

Visit us during our open houses in 2015.  
 They are held the last Sunday of the month,  
 May through October from 1:00 to 4:00 P.M.

Sunday, May 31	Sunday, June 28
Sunday, July 26	Sunday, August 30
Sunday, September 27	Sunday, October 25

A special county-wide tour of historical societies in Auglaize County is scheduled for May 2 & 3.

## Your Valuable Donations Make Our Historical Society an Active Museum

### 2014-2015 Partial List of Acquisitions

- \*New Knoxville School yearbooks (1940's - 1970's)
- \*advertising items: signs, calendars, pocket knife, money boxes, post cards, nail apron, notepads
- \*local photos & newspaper clippings about New Knoxville
- \*large number of tin-type photos
- \*large number of N.K. Ranger school pins; \*N.K. Ranger cupholder
- \*N.K. sports notebook & booklets, '89-'90, '94-'95 sports programs
- \*N.K. volleyball and football T-shirts
- \*1995 photo of eighth grade trip to Washington, D.C.
- \*1995-96 boys' basketball, signed by New Knoxville players
- \*New Knoxville prom and commencement booklets
- \*New Knoxville class necktie; \*1922 senior class photo frame
- \*1944 K sweater
- \*church booklets from E. & R. Church and United Church of Christ
- \**The Organ at Church & in Concert* - sheet music and book
- \*Confirmation certificates: Elisabeth Fenneman (1854) & Adolph Eschmeier (1867)
- \**Down to Earth* - booklet by Clara Bode
- \*Pictures & plaques of Ladbergen, Germany, and its church
- \*1941 Christmas program from E. & R. Church
- \*1823 Christians' Duty hymn book \*1897 hymn book
- \*Centennial paper and programs from E & R Church
- \*Confirmation picture from United Church of Christ
- \*1888 History of Auglaize County
- \*1902-1903 Washington Township death & birth certificates book
- \*1992 Auglaize County cemetery inscriptions
- \*150-year Auglaize County Fair booklet
- \*1986 Sesquicentennial pins & buttons
- \*ceramic pieces from Grimes Ceramics
- \*items from Duhme store: coach & hag bolt chart, sales tax chart, special tax stamp certificates 1919-1929
- \*shopping basket from Ben Cook's store
- \*boxed color crepe paper from Adolph's store
- \*book of ration stamps \*Dee Fischbach campaign poster
- \*hand brace & drill
- \*pair of doors from early 1900's Blue Ribbon Chick Hatchery box wagon
- \*valentine cards; \*old shoe collection \*Brownie camera
- \*old collar boxes; \*old shaving mug, brushes & razor
- \*old leather & cotton gloves \*Freedy & Co. London men's hats
- \*E.&R. church and E.H. Katterheinrich ad fans
- \*notary seal stamp from People's Bank
- \*German books from 1835, '49, '60, '63, '73, '80, 83, '97, 1906, '12, '20, '28
- \**The Lord, Thy Healer* & Abe Lincoln stories - owned by B. E. Cook
- \*school & note books from 1886, 1907, '09-'22. '19, '31, '39, '40's, '50's

# **New Knoxville Historical Society**

107 E. German Street

P.O. Box 372

New Knoxville, OH 45871

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

Editor of Historian

Janean Oberlander

Photography

Larry Niemeyer

## **HISTORICAL SOCIETY ANNUAL MEETING**

**Thursday, April 9, 2015      New Knoxville American Legion**

**Dinner: 6:00 P.M.      Business meeting & Program: 7:00 P.M.**

**Speaker: Dr. Richard Grupenhoff**

**German Migration from Cincinnati to western Auglaize County**

### **AVAILABLE FROM THE NEW KNOXVILLE HISTORICAL SOCIETY**

#### **COMMEMORATIVE AND MEMORIAL BRICKS**

Bricks are available for \$50 each and provide financial and visual support from families and friends who desire to preserve our heritage.

Contact Betty Henschen at 419-753-2142 or  
101 Hanover Ct., New Knoxville, OH 45871.

#### **BOOKS AND GIFTS**

Books and gift items are available from our society and also at the community library. See p. 3 for a partial list and visit the museum or see our web site for all available items.

[www.nktelco.net/historical society](http://www.nktelco.net/historical%20society)

#### **ADDRESS CHANGE**

Notify Karen Niemeyer of a change of address in one of the following ways:

P.O. Box 301, New Knoxville, OH 45871 or phone at 419-753-2215 or e-mail at [niemeyer@nktelco.net](mailto:niemeyer@nktelco.net).

**Member of the Southwestern Auglaize County Chamber of Commerce**