I am pleased to share this message to “Friends of the GRHC.” This is the first of our newsletters.

Thank you for your financial support, we are most appreciative. Your gift helps to preserve the rich heritage and culture of Germans from Russia. The Germans from Russia Heritage Collection began in 1978.

Let me share with you some of the activities of the G RHC in recent months. Our outreach programs included a GRHC booth at the Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcases in Fargo and Bismarck in November and December 2008; the Cookbook Festival at West Acres in Fargo, February 2009; and the Higher Education Showcase, State Capitol in Bismarck, March 2009.

We were pleased to join the festivities with our new GRHC display at the 125th anniversaries in Napoleon, ND (June 12-13) and in Leola, SD (July 3-4). In Napoleon, Debra Marquart autographed her book, A Horizontal World: Growing Up in the Middle of Nowhere: A Memoir.

We had a wonderful reception from our Germans from Russia community at Napoleon and Leola. We are looking forward to having the G RHC display at the Germans from Russia Heritage Society International Convention, in Rapid City, SD (September 9-13, 2009) and at the 100th Centennial in Elgin, ND (June 18-19, 2010).

The 15th Journey to the Homeland Tour (May 20-30, 2009) was a memorable experience visiting Odessa, Ukraine, the former Bessarabian and Black Sea German villages, Stuttgart, Germany, and Alsace, France.

Thanks to sponsorship from NDSU Extension Service, Center for Community Vitality, Center for Heritage Renewal, Prairie Public and NDSU Libraries, the G RHC is able to offer the first Dakota Memories Heritage Tour on September 18-20. This tour provides an excellent opportunity to visit the heart of German-Russian country in south central North Dakota in Logan, McIntosh and Emmons counties.

The tour will focus on German-Russian sites in south-central North Dakota and the importance of heritage tourism.

This will be a homecoming for me visiting Strasburg and Sts. Peter and Paul Catholic Church where I was baptized, confirmed and a Mass Server. I still have memories of my youth when part of the sermon was in the German language.

Dr. Allan Ashworth, Dr. Thomas D. Isern, Jessica Clark and Bob Dambach will give public presentations during the tour.

The Dakota Memories Oral History Project has become one of the most important activities ever developed by the G RHC. This year marks the fifth season of collecting oral histories, as we visited Napoleon, Richdardton and Dickinson, ND.

Regards,

Michael M. Miller
15th Journey to the Homeland Tour

This year marked the 15th Journey to the Homeland Tour led by Michael M. Miller to Germany and the former German villages in Ukraine.

The GRHC has been able to sponsor at least one trip per year since 1996.

Wanda (Volk) Archer of Washington shared her observation. “This tour was an amazing experience. The villages are very interesting. It was an incredible experience to be in the churches where my family celebrated Mass, Baptisms, etc. Also to be walking on the same roads and seeing the same countryside as my family. Very Special!”

Archer was one of six members in the Volk family with roots to Devils Lake on 2009 tour.

Sharon Dobler Vegas of Idaho and her sister, Carol Dobler Harris of North Carolina, said: “In 1884, Christian Dobler left southern Ukraine (Bessarabia) hoping to find a better life for his family. In 2009, two great-granddaughters returned to Teplitz, Bessarabia, his birthplace.

We were surprised to find the town looking much the same as described in records from the 19th Century. People we met with the help of our interpreter, Galina, and driver, Vladimir, remembered German times. They helped us locate plots of land that had belonged to the Doblers. In the cemetery, we found two headstones with the Dobler name. The inscriptions were badly deteriorated but one seems to be that of Georg Adam Dobler, the father of Christian.

It is exciting and moving for us who have lived the good life they sought to see where it all began.”

Michael M. Miller, tour leader, shares the importance of the trips for tour members.

“The Journey to the Homeland Tours to Odessa, Ukraine and Germany provides a memorable experience for persons to visit the former German villages of their ancestors near Odessa, Ukraine, as well as locations in southern Germany and Alsace, France where families lived before immigrating to South Russia and Bessarabia. Persons see the steppe and prairies, the construction of the German clay brick houses, and the beautiful churches built in the villages.

For many of the tour members, returning to the homeland villages has been an emotional and rewarding experience. They treasure the experience of walking the streets, visiting the houses and churches where their ancestors once lived before immigrating to Canada and the United States.”

Interested in joining the 16th Journey to the Homeland tour?

When?
May 20-30, 2010

How?
To register for the 2010 tour or for more information, please contact:

Michael M. Miller
Director & Bibliographer
Telephone: (701) 231-8416
E-mail: Michael.Miller@ndsu.edu

For complete tour cost information, visit: www.ndsu.edu/grhc and click “Homeland Tours.”

“It was a rewarding experience on many different levels…”

Janice Wiesz Piotrowski
During the Fall of 2008, the DMOHP staff began processing the video footage and archival materials collected during the 2007-2008 academic year.

Using the DMOHP collection, Coordinator Jessica Clark also presented “Beauty on the Plains: Germans from Russia Remember Growing up on the Northern Plains” at the Northern Great Plains History Conference in Brandon, Manitoba. The DMOHP staff, in cooperation with Prairie Public, also launched its first radio program, A Holiday Special: German-Russian Childhood Memories.

Then, in the Spring of 2009, the DMOHP staff continued processing material, as well as launching some new programs.

In cooperation of NDSU Extension Service, the DMOHP organized and hosted two oral history workshops. These workshops taught participants how to conduct their own oral histories.

An anonymous participant from Napoleon, ND insists the most important thing he or she learned “everything! Lighting, sound, background. Questions to ask, how to ask questions.”

An anonymous Richardton, ND participant says, “preserving our ethnic history is a wonderful thing. I have always been interested in history and antiques. Just wish I would have done more years ago.”

Clark also attended two more conferences. She presented “The German-Russian Story: Reconstructing Identity through Oral Histories” at the Organization of American Historians Conference in Seattle, Washington and “Somebody had to Stay Home: Never-ending Chores and Responsibilities” at the Western Social Science Association Annual Meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

This spring the DMOHP’s second radio program, Home-Grown also aired on Prairie Public.

Lastly, in the Summer of 2009, the DMOHP staff continued processing oral history materials from the 2007-2008 academic year, as well as began adding new materials to the collection.

In addition, Clark, along with Acacia (Jonas) Stuckle, held an educational presentation in Casselton, North Dakota.

This year the DMOHP was able to hire two talented graduate students for the scholarly residencies in Napoleon and Richardton, North Dakota. Read about their experiences below:

Andrea Mott, interviewer, reflected on her interviews in south-central North Dakota. “One of the first things I came to recognize was the physical beauty of the surrounding countryside. The hills, the surprisingly large lakes, the enormous and beautifully scented lilac bushes, and the farmsteads were truly a joy to behold. The second thing I learned was that German Russian food wasn’t all that bad! I tried everything from sweet rhubarb pie and kuchen to head cheese and liver sausage. Surprisingly I liked them all! When it came time to return to Fargo, I began reflecting on my time in Napoleon. I had met many wonderful and fascinating individuals, all of who had unique, and often quite humorous, stories to share concerning their heritage.”

Neall Pogue, videographer, also shared his experiences from the same region. “The town of Napoleon and Braddock, North Dakota can boast of having as much history as it has in scenic countryside, which is quite a lot. As videographer for the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, I greatly enjoyed filming landmarks, homesteads, cemeteries, and was moved by the stories that complimented such beauty. I was especially amazed with the rock piles that are scattered around the fields, which are a true testament to the hard work and determination of the people who have farmed the area for generations.”

For more information, contact: Jessica Clark, Coordinator Dakota Memories Oral History Project (701) 231-8419 jessica.clark@ndsu.edu

Andrea Mott, interviewer, and Alexander Hutmacher, narrator, visiting the Hutmacher homestead.
New Items at the GRHC

About Myself and Repression of the Germans in South Ukraine
Leola, South Dakota: A Taste of 125 years, 1884 - 2009
Schmeck’s Gut!
Spanning 4 Nations: 1770-1985
Our Roots Grow Deep In the Russen Soil
Braddock N.D.: 1884 - 1984
Home Grown: German-Russian Farm Kids Remember CD
Red, W hite, & Blue: German Russians Remember Independence Day CD

Featured GRHC Books

About Myself and Repression of the Germans in South Ukraine

The author, John Philipps (93), describes his youth overshadowed by poverty and hunger. He experienced the deprivation of citizen rights and wrenching deportation of his family.

Philipps writes, “My writing is based on personal and experienced facts. The suffering of all other Germans in Russia following the October Revolution be it on the land or in the cities.” GRHC has published other books by John Philipps including The Germans Under the Tsars, Lenin, and Stalin and The Germans by the Black Sea Between the Bug and Dnjestr Rivers.

Schmeck’s Gut!

The Germans from Russia Heritage Collection has collaborated with the Ashley Arts Council to reprint this priceless cookbook, Schmeck’s Gut! This cookbook was originally published in 1988 in celebration of Ashley, North Dakota’s centennial. This cookbook is one of the most impressive German-Russian cookbooks ever printed.

Blatchinda, Fleish Kiechla, German Kuchen, Halupsy, Hasenflicken, Hilda’s Strudels, Kase Noodles, Knepfla, Pfef fernuesse, Red Eye, Schlitz Kuechla, Stirrum and Strudels are just a few of the recipes included in this important cookbook.

Friends of the GRHC

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Name of employer: ____________________

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Signature ______________Exp. Date ______

Contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law.

NDSU’s fiscal year is July 1 to June 30.
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022010

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