Letter from the Director

It is with pleasure, that I share my message to "Friends of the GRHC." I wish to extend my personal appreciation for your gift. Your financial contribution is important to document, record and preserve the heritage and culture of the Germans from Russia.

May I encourage persons who provided a financial donation in 2009, to renew their gift for 2010 as a "Friend of the GRHC." Donors of $100 or more receive a complimentary 2010 North Dakota Horizons calendar.

Pam Burkhardt began working part-time for the GRHC in December to assist with processing our growing number of special collections. Pam was Curator for many years at the Clay County Historical Society, Moorhead, MN. Professional archiving of these collections is very important for researchers, scholars and webpage access.

I look forward to speaking on February 20th at 2 pm in the Berea Lutheran Church, Richfield, MN, to the North Star Chapter of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia and the Germans from Russia Heritage Society. My presentation is "GRHC - The Mission & Goals." For those of you able to attend, please join us and inform others of this event.

On March 4th, Debra Marquart, author of the book, The Horizontal World: Growing Up in the Middle of Nowhere, will speak at the NDSU Alumni Center in Fargo at 7 pm. Following Marquart’s presentation, there will be a book signing. Debra is a Professor of the Department of English at Iowa State University, Ames. Growing up on a farm near Napoleon, ND, Debra received the 2009 Iowa Author of the Year award. She will also speak to the Literature & the Environment class at NDSU. Sponsors of these events are the NDSU Libraries, Institute for Regional Studies and the North Dakota Humanities Council.

Travel plans for the 16th Journey to the Homeland Tour for May 20-30 are being completed. I am pleased that we already have a number of tour registrations. While in Stuttgart, some tour members and myself will be attending the Bessarabian Bundestreffen at Ludwigsburg, Germany on May 30.

Prairie Public Television in cooperation with the GRHC is completing a new documentary with the premiere planned for July 2010. This forthcoming documentary will focus on the assimilation of the Germans from Russia in American society. Researchers and scriptwriters are longtime colleagues and dear friends, Dr. Donna Reeves Marquardt and Dr. Lewis Marquardt of Austin, Texas. Bob Dambach, director of television at Prairie Public Broadcasting, is the producer.

Finally, the coordinator of the GRHC’s Dakota Memories Oral History Project, Jessica Clark, PhD doctoral student in history, will be graduating in May 2010. From 2009-2010, Jessica completed her fifth year with the Germans from Russia History Doctoral Fellowship funded by the GRHC. Her impressive work, organization, training and leadership for this project has been remarkable and outstanding. Jessica’s doctoral dissertation focuses on the childhood memories of the Germans from Russia.

With kind regards,

Michael M. Miller
Joining the Journey to the Homeland tour group in Stuttgart, will be James Gessele, who has completed the English translation of Bessarabien: Deutsche Kolonisten am Schwarzen Meer (Bessarabia: German Colonists on the Black Sea). While in Germany, Gessele and Miller plan to meet with the author, Ute Schmidt, PhD.

According to Gessele: “Book translations ‘don’t just grow on trees,’ to borrow from an old maxim. They are scarce and come about only with close scrutiny of the original work’s standing and its potential to inform. With its compelling and highly readable narrative, its breadth of topics and wealth of photos, Ute Schmidt’s latest work—Bessarabia: German Colonists on the Black Sea—far exceeds the test on both counts. For the reader, this handbook is sure to provide several ‘Aha!’ moments. GRHC staff’s unflagging interest and support, the kind support and assistance from the author and the German Kulturforum, the collaborative input from three excellent editors have all combined to make this a unique publication.”

The GRHC successfully led a three-day tour to south-central North Dakota, September 18-20, 2009. The tour was sponsored by NDSU Libraries’ Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, NDSU Extension Service, Center for Community Vitality, Center for Heritage Renewal and Prairie Public.

The GRHC tentatively plans to offer another Dakota Memories Heritage Tour in 2011.

Visit www.ndsu.edu/grhc/ to view more photographs from this tour.

As part of their outreach program, the GRHC had booths at the Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase events in Fargo, ND (November 20-22, 2009) and Bismarck, ND (December 4-6, 2009). This is our most important annual outreach event with display tables and exhibits.

“UNREAL OPPORTUNITY TO SEE AND EXPERIENCE THE HISTORY AND CULTURE OF THE GERMANS FROM RUSSIA IN ND.” 2009 TOUR PARTICIPANT

Prairie Public Pledge Drive

Michael Miller along with fellow NDSU Libraries’ staff volunteered their time to help out at Prairie Public’s Pledge Drive on December 1, 2009.

The GRHC works closely with Prairie Public Broadcasting for film documentaries and radio programs.

Prairie Public Pledge Drive
**Dakota Memories Oral History Project**

Since the last Friends of the G RH C Newsletter, the DMO HP staff has continued preserving the history and heritage of the second- and third-generation Germans from Russia on the Northern Plains. They have worked diligently on processing archival materials, attending and hosting public events, and producing radio programs.

**Fall 2009 was an extremely busy semester for the DMO HP staff. It started with Jessica Clark (coordinator), Andrea Mott (2009 oral historian), and Acacia Stuckle (outreach coordinator) hosting two public forums: one in Richardton, North Dakota and one in Napoleon, North Dakota. At both events Clark introduced the communities to the DMO HP objectives, techniques, and methods. Then, Mott followed with an entertaining and enlightening paper presentation. In “My Adventures in German-Russian Country,” Mott recapped her experiences in south-central and western North Dakota. She took people through a descriptive play-by-play of her experiences—trying rhubarb for the first time (and, then many times throughout her trips), getting pegged by a flying rock in a state fleet car, and running for cover as the sky opened up during a cemetery walk. It was apparent that Mott not only learned a great deal, but had many interesting experiences in the German-Russian heartland.

Back on campus, the G RHC executive staff hired new NDSU students to help process the material collected by Mott and Neall Pogue (videographer) during the summer months. The DMO HP office hired three new NDSU freshmen and brought back three returning NDSU students (a junior and two sophomores). “We are truly lucky to have such a talented group of students,” Clark says. “Our current staff is dedicated to helping us preserve history. One of our employees, Kendra Thompson,” Clark continues, “started her third year with the DMO HP this fall. Recently promoted to office manager, Thompson is an integral part of our team.”

Thompson, a Hatton, North Dakota native had this to say about working for the DMOHP: “As the office manager, I oversee many of the tasks in our office—including scheduling interviews, assisting with the production of archival DVDs and radio programs, editing web pages and family histories, and much more. I really enjoy reviewing projects, as well as working on the radio programs.”

In November the DMO HP staff, in cooperation with Prairie Public, launched the seventh radio program using narratives from the DMO HP oral histories. “German-Russian War Memories” aired on Veteran’s Day (November 11th) in honor of the servicemen and women and their families. It featured narrations from twelve narrators, including the late Rupert Kleingartner (a World War II veteran) from Gackle, North Dakota. Mott, who is also a trained public historian, added the scholarly commentary.

When asked about her experience recording her first radio program, Mott replied “I was incredibly nervous about the prospect of recording commentary for this program. As it turns out, there was nothing to worry about. The staff at Prairie Public was professional and easygoing; they explained the recording process before we ever sat down. Still, even my familiarity with recording and interviewing equipment did not prepare me for the massive microphone that they use in the recording studio. By the time we finished my nervousness had worn off, and I was complimented on having ‘a good radio voice.’”

The DMO HP crew has also been editing the 2009 video footage from the scholarly residencies in Napoleon and Richardton/Dickinson, North Dakota, processing location footage from all seasons (2005-2009), and processing the archival documents from the 2008 and 2009 field seasons.

For more information, contact: Jessica Clark, Coordinator Dakota Memories Oral History Project (701) 231-8419 jessica.clark@ndsu.edu
This spring semester, Jessica Clark (DMO HP coordinator and PhD Candidate) launched the first online course sponsored by the GRHC. HIST/EDUC 600: Dakota Germans from Russia is an online course (a course eligible for recertification credits). Participants in this course will review a variety of material - articles, documentaries, radio programs; participate in online discussions; and create a lesson plan. This course is approved for 3 professional development graduate credits (HIST/EDUC 600) through North Dakota State University’s Distance and Continue Education.

For more information, contact Jessica Clark at Jessica.Clark@ndsu.edu.

The GRHC Launches Online Class

(left to right) Genevieve (Kraft) Petry, Marlene Ann (Kraft) Smith, Eyvonne (Kraft) Guilen, Richard Kraft, Marla Sather, Opal Sather, Bonnie Sather, Boyd Sather, Sharon Selvig, and Larry Selvig [circa 1943–44]

Friends of the GRHC

Germans from Russia Heritage Collection

Enclosed is my gift of: ☐ $100 ☐ $250 ☐ $500 ☐ $1,000 ☐ Other $ ______

☐ My (or) ☐ My spouse’s employer will match this gift.
Name of employer: ____________________________

Name: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
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___ Check ___ Credit Card: ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover

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Signature ____________________________ Exp. Date ______