

In Touch with Prairie Living

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By Michael M. Miller

Germans from Russia Heritage Collection
North Dakota State University Libraries, Fargo



GERMANS FROM RUSSIA

GRHC

HERITAGE COLLECTION

The Germans from Russia Heritage Collection (GRHC) at the NDSU Libraries in Fargo reaches out to prairie families and former Dakotans. In various ways, it affirms the heritage of the Germans from Russia as an important part of the northern plains culture.

The Germans from Russia Heritage Society's 30th Anniversary Convention is July 13-16, at the Radisson Hotel, Bismarck. For more information and registration, contact GRHS at 701-223-6167, or visit their website at <http://www.grhs.org>.

From July 18-26, I will be traveling with Prairie Public Television staff to Saskatchewan for videotape documentary filming of historic sites of German-Russian settlements. We travel to areas around Regina, Allan, Saskatoon, Tramping Lake, Luseland and Leader. Many German-Russians live in Saskatchewan who have relatives in the Dakotas.

On Saturday, August 5, 2000, I will be in Devils Lake, ND, for a Chautauqua presentation. The event takes place at 3 pm at St. Joseph's Catholic Church. I will speaking about the Germans from Russia of the central Dakotas and the settlements in north central North Dakota.

GRHC's traveling exhibit, "The Kempf Family: Germans from Russia Weavers on the Dakota Prairies," is on display at the Harvey, ND Public Library until November 1. Harvey's library has a fine collection of books on the Germans from Russia.

The NDSU Library features the exhibit until November 1, "Germans from Russia Weddings: From the Steppe of South Russia & Ukraine to the Dakota Prairies." The exhibit is featured in the new display cases as part of the Marie Rudel Portner Germans from Russia Room at the NDSU Library which was dedicated in May, 2000.

I am pleased to announce that GRHC has published this important book, "Marienberg: Fate of a Village,"

by Johann Bollinger, Wuestenrot, Germany, and Janice Huber Stangl, Sterling, VA, native of Bowdle, SD. The book is published in one volume both in the English and German languages. Many families from the daughter colony of Marienberg (Glueckstal District) immigrated to the Dakotas.

Author Janice Huber Stangl writes: "The book is a chronicle describing the fate of all the peoples of South Russia during the first half of the twentieth century. Through two world wars, two major famines, as well as the terror and executions during the imposition of Communism, their society, as the Germans in Russia once knew it, was completely destroyed. Despite this, the spirit and heritage of the Marienbergers has survived and lives today in its descendants in America and Western Europe. Therefore, the plea of Christine Schnabel Ahl to Johann Bollinger that 'they should at least be on a bit of paper,' has been fulfilled in this book."

Translator Dr. Homer Rudolf, University of Richmond, VA, and Wishek, ND, native, writes: "The book includes the rich collection of letters published in the 'Eureka Rundschau' between 1916 and 1932. One cannot help but grieve when reading the stories of hunger and want, as well as being truly grateful for those in the United States who were able to help their relatives in Marienberg. In addition to providing genealogical information for many families, other interesting items are included regarding everyday lives of the people remaining in Marienberg and immigrants homesteading in eastern Montana. A special treasure is the small number of humorous stories in dialect that were submitted for publication by Jakob Ahl, the official correspondent for many years from Marienberg to the 'Eureka Rundschau,' Eureka, SD."

The award-winning 1999 documentary videotape, "The Germans from Russia: Children of the Steppe, Children of the Prairie," and the

new videotape, "Schmeckfest: Food Traditions of the Germans from Russia," continue to be well received throughout North America. To secure the videotapes, contact Prairie Public at 1-800-359-6900. "Schmeckfest" has recently received the "Bronze Telly Award" as one of America's best documentaries in 2000. The videotapes can also be secured by going to this GRHC website at "Videotape Documentary & Other Projects." The videotapes include 20-minute bonus video footage, not shown in the one-hour documentary. See many interesting pages about the documentary at the Prairie Public Broadcasting website: <http://www.prairiepublic.org>.

For further information about donations to the collection, including family histories, textiles and clothing, exhibits, outreach programs, the new book, "Marienberg: Fate of a Village," videotape documentaries, Journey to the Homeland Tour including Odessa, Ukraine and Stuttgart, Germany (late May/early June, 2001) and German-Russian heritage, contact Michael M. Miller, NDSU Libraries, PO Box 5599, Fargo, ND 58105-5599 (Tel: 701-231-8416; E-mail: Michael.Miller@ndsu.edu; GRHC website: <http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc>).

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