

# 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.

In September, I joined Prairie Public Television videographers and Dr. Timothy Kloberdanz traveling to the central Dakotas for filming and interviews of the wrought-iron crosses. We visited locations at Fort Yates, Hague, Lefor, Richardton, Selfridge and Zeeland in North Dakota and Timber Lake and Glencross in South Dakota. Dr. Kloberdanz of the NDSU Department of Anthropology/Sociology, works with PPTV in the production of the documentary on the iron crosses expected to be featured on PPTV in the fall of 2001. In July, PPTV videographers were in Saskatchewan filming for the documentary.

In late September, I had the pleasure to join the Cultural Heritage Tour: Austria, Germany & Switzerland, sponsored by Prairie Public Broadcasting and the Germans from Russia Cultural Preservation Foundation. Then I spent days in Alsace, France, and Baden, Germany, where many of my ancestors once lived before immigrating to South Russia (today near Odessa, Ukraine). It was a pleasure to see longtime colleague Professor Jean Schweitzer of Strasbourg, France. He has visited North Dakota in 1989 and 1990. Prairie Public has announced the Cultural Heritage Tour: Capitols of Eastern Europe for September 2 to October, 2001. For further information, contact Prairie Public at 1-800-359-6900 or view their website: <http://www.prairiepublic.org>.

The Germans from Russia Heritage Collection has published "Fond 252: Odessa Office for Foreign Settlers in Southern Russia (1806, 1807, 1814-1834, 1843, 1850) Guide" compiled by Lilia Belousova, State Archives, Odessa, Ukraine. Not only does the new

publication help interested researchers locate valuable files but also the detailed descriptions of each of the file's contents will give the reader a better sense of the lives and events that concerned the German settlers in South Russia (today southern Ukraine). For further information go to the web page: [library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/general/fond252.html](http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/general/fond252.html).

The Institute for Regional Studies, NDSU Libraries, Fargo, has available the "North Dakota Biography Index" (NDBI), the best place to begin for information about North Dakotans, both living and deceased. Searching the index will enable you to quickly determine which publication to consult for biographical information. The total number of biographical sketches indexed is currently more than 138,000 found in some 540 publications. For further information about the "North Dakota Biography Index," go the Institute website: <http://dp3.ndsu.nodak.edu/ndbi/>, or contact the Institute staff: Tel: 1-701-231-8914; E-mail: [nulibarc@plains.nodak.edu](mailto:nulibarc@plains.nodak.edu).

The NDSU Library, Fargo, features, the exhibit, "Germans from Russia Wedding Traditions: From the Steppe of South Russia & Bessarabia to the Dakota Prairies" at the new Marie Rudel Portner Germans from Russia Room. The Marie Rudel Portner Germans from Russia Endowment has been established for the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection.

The award-winning documentary videotapes "The Germans from Russia: Children of the Steppe, Children of the Prairie" (1999), and "Schmeckfest: Food Traditions of the Germans from Russia" (2000), continue to be well received throughout North America. To secure the videotapes, contact Prairie Public at 1-800-359-6900. The videotapes can also be secured by going to this GRHC website at "Videotape Documentary & Other Projects". The videotapes include 20-minutes of bonus video footage, not shown in the one-

hour documentary. See many interesting pages about the documentary at the Prairie Public Broadcasting website.

Because of more interest developed from the "Schmeckfest" documentary, additional cookbooks including German-Russian recipes have been added to the GRHC web at the section, "Cookbooks."

For further information about donations to the collection, including family histories, outreach programs, videotape documentaries, Journey to the Homeland Tour (May 22 to June 4, 2001) for Odessa, Ukraine and Stuttgart, Germany; North Dakota Biography Index"; German-Russian cookbooks; GRHC's publications including recent books, "Fond 252," "Marienberg: Fate of a Village," "Open Wound," and "The Dark Abyss of Exile: A Story of Survival"; 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](mailto:Michael.Miller@ndsu.edu); GRHC website: <http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc>).

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