

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.

When I visited Lodi, CA, late in February, I was most impressed with the large German-Russian community in the area. At the First Baptist Church, the program was attended by close to 400 persons. I found that many had relatives in the Wishek-Ashley area of ND and the Eureka, SD area. We look forward to returning someday to the Lodi/Sacramento area.

In February while attending the Salt Lake City Winter Olympics, I had a wonderful experience meeting with staff and touring the Family History Center, a world treasure for family historians and genealogists. Their work is of global importance.

GRHC information tables and display will appear at the following North Dakota centennials: 1) Strasburg: June 27-29, 10 am-5 pm, Strasburg High School classroom 2) Zeeland, July 5-6, 10 am to 5 pm, Zeeland High School classroom; and 3) Flasher, July 19-20, 10 am-5 pm, Community Credit Union Meeting Room.

I look forward to my visiting folks at Strasburg, Zeeland, and Flasher this summer and to share the history and culture of the rich heritage of the Germans from Russia. It will be a homecoming for me, having graduated from Strasburg High School. Join us at these centennials where visitors will have a chance to review the award-winning videotape documentaries, photo displays, maps, books, and other materials.

The new videotape, "Recipes from Grandma's Kitchen: Germans from Russia Food Traditions & Preparations", was well received in film premier showings at Arizona and California gatherings. The NDSU Libraries

partnered with the Germans from Russia Cultural Preservation Foundation to jointly produce this videotape. Review the Foundation's mission and projects at: www.grculture.org.

The videotape includes these persons cooking in their kitchens and reminiscing: Millie Doll Hauck, Dickinson, ND; Helen Gefroh Fischer, Hague Cafe, ND; Bernadine Lang Kuhn, Owatonna, MN; Erica Lang Wangler, Bismarck, ND; and Alma Janke Schott, Gackle, ND.

Traditional foods, savory recipes, and folk memories are important in the history and culture of the Germans from Russia community. The videotape includes vignettes of culinary memories that feed the soul and warm the heart.

The GRHC is pleased to announce publication of this outstanding new book, "German Food & Folkways: Heirloom Memories from Europe, South Russia & the Great Plains", by Rose Marie Gueldner, Anamoose, ND. The book is available at this website: library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/cookbooks/gueldner.html or by contacting me.

Dr. Timothy J. Kloberdanz, NDSU, writes: "Although there are German-Russian cookbooks currently on the market, this one is quite unusual because of the way it interweaves background history, ethnic heritage, and so many mouth-watering Old Country recipes. If the German-Russians have a Martha Stewart anywhere in North America, it may very well be Rose Marie Gueldner"!

Brother Placid Gross, German-Russian folklorist, Assumption Abbey, Richardton, ND, writes: "This book is the crowning achievement of all cookbooks. It is a great and wonderful tribute to our pioneer mothers who knew how to hold body and soul together with hard work and creativity to make a banquet with the simplest of basic ingredients".

GHRC's new book, "We'll Meet Again in Heaven: Germans in the Soviet Union Write Their American

Relatives: 1925-1937", by Ronald J. Vossler, selected many letters translated from German to English including these family names: Boschee, Dockter, Eckman, Feiger, Goehring, Graf, Heupel, Hochhalter, Ketterling, Kirschmann, Kramer, Lang, Morlock, Opp, Rudolf, Ruebl, Schauer, Speidel, Stock, Viel, and Wanner. Vossler writes: "The family names clearly show a direct link, one of old love and also of family ties, between the Dakota pioneers and those unfortunate family members who remained in Russia".

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. Each videotape includes 20-minutes of bonus video footage not shown in the one-hour documentary. To purchase the videotapes, contact PPTV at 1-800-359-6900, or contact GRHC.

For further information about Germans from Russia heritage, donations to the Collection including family histories, books, videotapes, cookbooks, and tours, 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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