

# In Touch with Prairie Living

October 2003

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.

We have prepared a listing of items of highly recommended books, maps, videotapes, and cookbooks on the subject of Germans from Russia. The list provides valuable items suggested for families, schools, and libraries for research and reading. We can send you this listing or you can go to this website page: <http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/files/recommended.pdf>.

Important archival photography collections have been processed by GRHC staff. The Victor Knell Collection was donated in April, 2002 by Victor Knell, Fargo, a native of Hazen, ND.

The collection includes photographs, letters, maps, and documents. The Knoell family lived near Stuttgart, Germany, immigrating in 1817 to Teplitz, Bessarabia, and later moving in 1892 to Friedensfeld, Bessarabia.

Jacob Knoell came to the Canadian port of Quebec in 1905. He went to Winnipeg and then to St. Paul. From there, Jacob went to New Salem, ND. His brother, Johannes, met him there and took him to Mercer County, ND, where he worked for farmers to pay off his passage to the United States. The Victor Knell Collection also includes the Breitling family who lived in Beresina, Bessarabia; the Oster family of Freudental, Odessa Region, Russia; and the Adolf family of Brienne, Bessarabia. All of these families settled in the Hazen, ND area.

For website pages of The Victor Knell Collection, go to: [library.ndsu.edu/grhc/history\\_culture/photo/knell\\_photos.html](http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/history_culture/photo/knell_photos.html).

If you have family collections for donation, we invite you to contact GRHC about these materials.

GRHC staff will have a booth at the following Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcases events: November 8-9, ND Fairgrounds, Minot; November 15-16, Alerus Convention Center, Grand Forks; November 22-23, Centennial Hall, Civic Center, Fargo; and December 6-7, Convention Hall, Civic Center, Bismarck. Saturday times are 10 am - 5 pm and Sunday times are 12 noon - 5 pm. Kristi Krebs Brink, Michael M. Miller, and volunteers will handle the booth. Visit us at the GRHC booth for the 2003 Holiday Showcases!

GRHC has published a new cookbook, "Sharing Our Best Recipes: Members and Friends of United Methodist Churches, Medina and Tappen, North Dakota." A German-Russian ethnic section includes recipes for: Fleisch Kuechla, Knoepfla soup, Holapsie (pigs in the blanket), Borscht (vegetable) soup, Ribble (milk) soup, Strudels, hot German potato salad,

homemade noodles, dumplings, Spaetzle (tiny egg noodles), cheese buttons, Kuchen, Baska (Easter bread), Pfefferneuse, Blatschinda (pumpkin pockets), and much more. Recipes come from the kitchens with these family names: Bitterman, Bittner, Eisenbis, Enzmingler, Falk, Guthmiller, Harr, Hillius, Hofmann, Hoersch, Ketterling, Kinnischzke, Kuck, Mayer, Messer, Mittleider, Moos, Moser, Reich, Roemmich, Roesler, Schmallinger, Schlecht, Sprunk, Staiger, Wasmuth, Wolsky, and Zimmerman. The cookbook is available by contacting GRHC or at: [library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/cookbooks/sharing.html](http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/cookbooks/sharing.html).

German Food & Folkways: Heirloom Memories from Europe, South Russia, & the Great Plains (2002) by Rose Marie Gueldner continues to be one of GRHC's most popular books available.

GRHC has recently published, "Escape by Troika: The World War II Chronicle of a Bessarabian German," by Oskar Zimmermann, Anaheim, CA. Mr. Zimmermann has many

Zimmerman relatives in south-central North Dakota. The book is available at [library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/general/escape.html](http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/general/escape.html).

Prairie Public's award-winning "Prairie Crosses, Prairie Voices: Iron Crosses of the Great Plains" is receiving a terrific response from viewers. Be watching for this third documentary of PPTV's Germans from Russia series on other PBS stations in 2003. Iron Crosses stand as sentinels on the prairie landscape, framed by vast expanses of grass and sky. Although they stand silent, behind each cross is a story.

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 draw much viewer interest and have been shown on many PBS stations. Each videotape includes bonus video footage not shown in the one-hour documentary.

For further information about Germans from Russia heritage, donations to GRHC including books, videotapes, cookbooks, tours, and the new Recipe Index Search, 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: [library.ndsu.edu/grhc](http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc)).

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