

# In Touch with Prairie Living

April 2004

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.

Many thanks to persons who attended the recent concerts at Bismarck, Jamestown, Harvey, and Strasburg, ND performed by the Jamestown College and University of Mary choirs. Filming was done by Prairie Public Television for the 2005 Germans from Russia music documentary.

We are pleased to announce that GRHC staff will be at the centennial celebrations of Gackle, ND and Fredonia, ND with displays and resources about the Germans from Russia: 1) Gackle at Senior Citizens Center, June 25 (1-6 pm) & June 26 (10 am-4 pm); Fredonia at Fredonia Oil Company on Main Street; July 2 (1-6 pm) & July 3 (10 am-4 pm). I look forward to meeting folks at Fredonia and Gackle!

A new partnership has been launched with the "Germans from Russia Oral History Interview Project". Cooperating sponsors at North Dakota State University, include the Department of History, Department of Communications, & the NDSU Libraries as well as Prairie Public Broadcasting. The project will begin in the summer of 2004 with videotaping elderly German-Russians in central North Dakota.

The NDSU History Department and GRHC are pleased to announce the Theresa Mack Germans from Russia History Assistantship. The recipient will be enrolled in NDSU graduate doctorate program in History beginning with the 2004-2005 academic year.

Theresa Mack Wald, Grand Forks, ND, writes: "My gift for the assistantship is to preserve the heritage and culture about the positive aspects of the Germans from Russia. I want to provide a living legacy for the scholarly

study of my heritage of which I am very proud. My parents, John G. Mack born in 1888 and Katherina Deringer born in 1890, lived in the Catholic Black Sea German villages of Elsass and Neu Schloessel, Kutschurgan District, South Russia (today near Odessa, Ukraine). My father was 14 years and my mother was 24 years when they came to America."

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Two excellent popular and highly recommended books are: 1) "North Dakota: Every Town on the Map and More: A Pictorial History" documenting 700 location on film from Ashley, Wishek and Venturia to Balta, Orrin and Rugby; 2) "North Dakota Place Names" chronicles the stories of more than 3,000 towns identifying origin, anecdotes and folklore.

"The Way It Was" series of five books about North Dakota continues to be popular. The series includes: 1) The Sod-Busters; 2) Norwegian Homesteaders; 3) The Cowboy & Ranchers; 4) Germans from Russia Settlers; 5) Native People. These North Dakota books are available from GRHC. The "Germans from Russia Settlers" includes these family stories: Franz & Margaret (Thomas) Baumgartner; Johannes & Margaretha (Braunagel) Baumgartner; Jakob & Helena (Ripplinger) Fischer; August & Christina (Rieker) Flegel; Minnie Sperling Freitag; Johann & Rosina

Opp Gutschmidt; Simon Hille; Gottlieb & Christina (Beich) Isaak; Max & Julianna (Webber) Keller; Adolf Klebe; Gottfried Kurtz; George & August Leitner; Christian Maier; Johann Miller; Philip & Eva (Meyer) Mosbrucker; Balzar Thomas; and Morris & Nellie (Winchel) Weisgarber. These North Dakota books are available from GRHC.

GRHC has published an important new cookbook, "Cookbook for the Germans from Russia", by Nelly Daes, translated from German to English by Alex Herzog, and edited by Janice Huber Stangl who writes: "This book contains not only recipes, but also humorous and heart-wrenching anecdotes from the German Russian diaspora. It is essential addition to every household." The new cookbook is available at: [library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/cookbooks/das.html](http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/cookbooks/das.html), or contact GRHC.

The 10th Journey to the Homeland Tour sponsored by the NDSU Libraries to Odessa, Ukraine and Stuttgart, Germany is June 1-14, 2004. The 2005 tour is schedule for May.

The award-winning documentary videotapes, "The Germans from Russia: Children of the Steppe, Children of the Prairie" (1999); "Schmeckfest: Food Traditions of the Germans from Russia" (2000); and "Prairie Crosses, Prairie Voices: Iron Crosses of the Great Plains" (2002) 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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