

In Touch with Prairie Living

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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.

Eureka, SD's "Germans from Russia Schmeckfest Days" are September 18-19, 2004. I look forward to coming to Eureka on Saturday, September 18 from 9 am to 5 pm with German-Russian displays. The "Life" magazine issue of August 2, 1937 states: "Eureka, S.D. was the wheat capitol of the world. With 42 grain elevators handling 4,000,000 bushels a year, Eureka became the Milwaukee railway's most profitable station, with earnings of \$100,000 a month. Eureka became the funnel into which the wheat fields of the Dakotas emptied. Into this prairie terminal came also trainload after trainload of Russian-born German immigrants.

Of fine farm stock, intelligent, sturdy and pious, these pioneers, who for three generations had withstood the efforts of the Czar to Russianize them, found in South Dakota the freedom they coveted. They staked out their claims, build sod houses and broke the prairie soil. In their new-found freedom they thrived, grew well-to-do, raised large families, husbanded big farms. So prosperous was the community that 32 commission houses had agents there to buy in the grain crop."

For the complete "Life" article including photographs, go to: library.ndsu.edu/grhc/articles/magazines/articles/life1.html.

The new 60-minute documentary available in videotape or dvd format, "Heaven Is Our Homeland: The Glueckstalers of New Russia and North America", has been well received with premieres in July at Modesto, CA and Bismarck, ND. The documentary was privately funded by the Glueckstal Colonies Research Association (GCRA) (www.glueckstal.net). GCRA has

published the 790 page hardcover book, "The Glueckstalers in New Russia and North America: A Bicentennial Collection of history, Genealogy & Folklore". I highly recommend securing both the Glueckstal documentary and book from GRHC.

GRHC has published a new book, "The Last Link: Dakota Territory, Logan County 1887 - Old North Dakota Memories & The Weispenning's & Muellers: Our Early American Experiences in Dakota Territory", by Thomas G. Mueller, Jamestown, native of Napoleon, ND. Mueller shares: "While I was writing my family history story, 'The Last Link', I realized that I had hundreds of stories I could tell, especially about my time spent on my Aunt Hulda and Uncle Martin Ehmann's farm, southeast of Gackle, ND. The author includes: 1) the clay brick house; 2) farming the old-fashioned way; 3) stacking hay on the prairie; 4) shocking oats in the 1950s; 5) receiving the German Brauche; 6) Otto & Mathilda's wedding dinner; 6) the flat white cooking rock; and 7) Gravewitching for Great Uncle Joahnn Weispenning. "The Last Link" is available by contacting GRHC or go to library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/nd_sd_mueller.html.

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 an essential addition to every household." The new cookbook is available at: library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/cookbooks/das.html, or contact GRHC.

Three award-winning documentary videotapes are still available: "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). Each videotape includes bonus video footage not shown in the one-hour documentary.

The 11th Journey to the Homeland Tour, sponsored by the NDSU Libraries is scheduled for May 26 - June 6, 2005. The tour includes Budapest, Hungary; Odessa, Ukraine and the former German villages; Stuttgart, Germany; and Alsace, France.

For further information about Germans from Russia heritage, donations to GRHC including books, documentaries, 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: library.ndsu.edu/grhc).

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