

In Touch with Prairie Living

November 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.

May I extend special Thanksgiving regards to readers of this column. We can be most thankful that our ancestors immigrated from the former German villages of Russia and Bessarabia to settle here on the Dakota prairies.

This November, 2004 column of "In Touch with Prairie Living" marks the eighth year when this writing begun in November, 1996. All past columns can be read at: library.ndsu.edu/grhc/articles/newspapers/index.html. It has been a pleasure to prepare these columns each month with many positive comments from readers. My appreciation to the weekly newspapers in the Dakotas who have faithfully published this monthly column since 1996.

GRHC presents a booth at the Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase at the Centennial Hall, downtown Fargo, on Saturday (10 am-5 pm) and Sunday (12 noon-5 pm), November 20-21, 2004. This is our third year of attending this festive event.

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 Weispfennings & 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 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.

We are now in our seventh printing since 2002 of "German Food & Folkways: Heirloom Memories from South Russia, Germany & the Great Plains" (library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/cookbooks/gueldner.html).

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 music documentary of the Germans from Russia premieres on Prairie Public Television (www.prairiepublic.org) in March of 2005. I want to express my appreciation for persons who participated with the

filming on September 9 and 10, 2004, at Hague, Strasburg and Hull, ND. Additional filming of German-Russian wedding traditions and folksongs is included for the Germans from Russia music documentary. Previous filming was done in the spring of 2004 with the choirs of Jamestown College and the University of Mary as well as the Alive Gospel Choir.

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.

Plans are progressing with the Germans from Russia Oral History Project in cooperation with the Department of History, NDSU. We plan to have a history doctoral candidate in 2005 to work with the interview project with funding from the Theresa Mack Germans from Russia History Assistantship. We are also developing cooperative Germans from Russia projects with the Department of History, Northern State University, Aberdeen, SD.

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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