

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 Germans from Russia as an important part of the northern plains culture.

Special holiday regards and the best in 2006 to readers of this column!

We appreciate the warm receptions we received at Gackle and Wishek, ND, for Dakota Memories Oral History Project Public Forums. This was a heart-warming experience to be with the interviewees, families and our Germans from Russia communities. We were impressed with the attendance and the interest at these events.

It was interesting to review the family names of the attendees: Aberle, Ackerman, Bauer, Becker, Bitz, Boschee, Bradner, Burlack, Deile, Dewald, Diegel, Dockter, Drefs, Eiseman, Eszlminger, Fercho, Fiechtner, Fischer, Gackle, Graf, Gross, Hauck, Herman, Heupel, Heyne, Iszler, Janke, Just, Kaseman, Kauk, Ketterling, Kleingartner, Klundt, Kramer, Lacher, Lippert, Meidinger, Miller, Mueller, Neu, Nickisch, Pressler, Rath, Remboldt, Rieger, Schaffer, Schauer, Schilling, Schlecht, Schlenker, Schott, Vossler, Walth, Wanner, Wiest, Woehl, Ziegenhagel and Zimmerman.

We look forward to the spring and summer of 2006 when Jessica and Will Clark travel to central North Dakota for additional interviews with our Germans from Russia community.

GRHC is pleased to announce The Thomas J. Hoffman Collection available with an index search. GRHC became beneficiary of this valuable historically significant donation upon the request of the late Thomas Joseph Hoffman, a native of Mandan, ND. Hoffman's primary research and publishing interests related to the Beresan Colonies of South Russia (today near Odessa, Ukraine). The collection focuses on the Catholic Beresan villages and families. Many of these family from Beresan Colonies immigrated to North Dakota especially

in the Mandan and Dickinson/Flasher/Richardton/Mandan/St. Anthony areas of central and western North Dakota. The Hoffman Collection website is: library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/thc/intro.html.

Jay Gage, GRHC exhibits and textiles curator, writes: "Thomas Hoffman's genealogical vision reflects an extensive undertaking of seeking and integrating various archival sources, thus providing a rare overview of family relationships, often with generational lineage charts".

The new book, "The Old God Still Lives: German Villagers in Czarist and Soviet Ukraine Write Their American Relatives, 1915-1924", by Ronald J. Vossler, teaching at UND, Grand Forks and a Wishek, ND native. These letters chronicle a substantial and on-going correspondence between the ethnic Germans who left Ukraine between 1873 and 1914, and who sent much money, food and clothing to those wishing that they had left South Russia also.

There is much in this new book for persons who desire to learn more about villages which were the source of one of North Dakota's most distinct, and most numerous, ethnic groups. There are 150 letters where were translated from the old German script to English, published in five German language newspapers in North Dakota. Families receiving these letters include: Boschee, Morlock, Wanner, Schauer, Dockter, Bender, Ketterling, Ackermann, Doerr, Kurtz, Bohlander, Schock, Mindt, Wiest, Schoepp, Schaible, Wacker, Bauer, Kessler, Frank, Schaeffer, Rohrich, Wolf, Heinle, Stockburger, Hieb, Spitzer, Huber, Rueb, Sauter, Ammon, Schweigert, Rohrbach and Wentz.

Prairie Public Broadcasting has announced a new DVD, "Germans from Russia Food Pantry" which brings combines three award-winning public television favorites that have been broadcast throughout North America. Enjoy "Schmeckfest: Food

Traditions of the Germans from Russia" and "Recipes from Grandma's Kitchen: Food Preparations and Traditions of the Germans from Russia, Volume I and II".

The DVD documentary and performance CD, "A Soulful Sound: Music of the Germans from Russia" are available. In the 18th and early 19th centuries, thousands of German-speaking peoples established major German settlements in Russia, first along the Volga River in the north, and secondly along the Black Sea in South Russia and nearby Bessarabia. Eventually, many German colonists migrated yet again - this time to North and South America. Throughout their travels, these Germans - now Germans from Russia - maintained their traditional religious music, their lullabies and folk songs, as well as their vocal and instrumental music.

Also, Prairie Public Broadcasting has produced a DVD which includes these two award-winning documentaries: "The Germans from Russia: Children of the Steppe, Children of the Prairie" and "Prairie Crosses, Prairie Voices: Iron Crosses of the Great Plains."

The 12th Journey to the Homeland Tour, sponsored by the NDSU Libraries is scheduled for May 23 - June 2, 2006. The tour includes Budapest, Hungary; Odessa, Ukraine and the former German villages; Stuttgart, Germany; and Alsace, France.

For further information about the Thomas J. Hoffman Collections, Germans from Russia heritage, donations to GRHC including books, documentaries, CDs, DVDs, 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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