

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.

On May 23 to June 2, 2006, our 12th Journey to the Homeland Tour group will leave for Prague, Czech Republic; Odessa, Ukraine; and Stuttgart, Germany. Tour members are from California, Idaho, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Oregon and Washington.

Tour members will be visiting the former German villages including: Friedentstal in the Crimea; Bergdorf, Glueckstal, Hoffnungstal, Kassel and Neudorf (Glueckstal District); Baden, Elsass, Kandel, Mannheim, Selz and Strassburg (Kutschurgan District); Berlin, Franzfeld, Gueldendorf and Neuberg (Liebental District). We will also travel to Alsace, France to visit the villages where many Germans left around 1804 for South Russia (today southern Ukraine near Odessa).

The Dakota Memories Oral History Project continues in 2006. Interviews will be done in May in the Linton/Strasburg/Hague/Zeeland area. and in July in the Rugby area of North Dakota. A grant was received from the Embassy of Canada to complete interviews in July of German-Russians in central Saskatchewan with family roots to North Dakota. Saskatchewan locations include Allan, Regina and the Tramping Lake/Luseland/Unity area.

We designed this project to document the heritage and culture of the German-Russians. This project focuses on childhood memories and family relationships, specifically, what it was like growing up German-Russian on the northern plains. For further information, go to library.ndsu.edu/grhc/dakotamemories/index.html.

The 2005 interviews are available from GRHC on DVD. They include 31 interviews, including more than 60 hours

of video. For more information, go to: library.ndsu.edu/grhc/dakotamemories/order/index.html.

GRHC has published this historic new book, "The Centennial of St. Andrew's Catholic Church, Zeeland, North Dakota and the Spiritual Heritage of St. John's Catholic Church, Rural McIntosh, North Dakota", authored by Father Andrew Jasinski.

Father Andrew writes: "Telling the story of St. Andrew's necessarily involves telling the story of the Germans from Russia and of St. John's the Baptist Church, which one stood five miles north of Zeeland, the first Catholic Church in North Dakota to serve the Germans from Russia." This book is the story of the courage of a people who came to the New World, bringing with them a faith deeply rooted in their history, supporting them on their journey, and which continues to be nurtured among their children. This book is but only one story of the Catholic faith uprooted, replanted, and bearing fruit, in order that it be transplanted to other places and people."

The Zeeland, ND, area was heavily settled by German-Russian immigrants from the Catholic Kutschurgan District villages, today near Odessa, Ukraine - Baden, Elsass, Kandel, Mannheim, Selz and Strassburg. Contact GRHC to secure this book or go to library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/nd_sd/zeelandnd.html.

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.

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 Festival of Germans from Russia will be Saturday, April 22, at the First Baptist Church, 267 Mills Street, Lodi, CA; the Germans from Russia Heritage Society Convention (www.grhs.org) will be July 12-16, Airport Holiday Inn, Portland, OR; the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia Convention (www.ahsgr.org) will be August 13-19 at Lincoln, NE; and the Festival of Germans from Russia, October 13-15, Leader, SK. Join us for these festive events!

For further information about Germans from Russia heritage, Dakota Memories Oral History Project, donations to GRHC including books, events, 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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