

In Touch with Prairie Living

May 2006

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.

From May 23 to June 2, 2006, the 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: Friedntstal 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).

We will be at the Harvey Public Library on Friday, June 30 from 12 noon to 5 pm and Saturday, July 1 from 1 to 4 pm with our GRHC displays. Dr. LaVern Freeh, author of "Child of the Prairie, Man of the World," will autograph his book from 2-4 pm on June 30 at the Harvey Library. Harvey, ND celebrates its Centennial for June 30-July 2, 2006.

The Dakota Memories Oral History Project continues in 2006. Interviews will be done in May in the Linton/Strasburg/Hague 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. Family names for these interviews include: Boschee, Brosy, Buck, Dewald, Fercho, Fischer, Haerter, Hartmann, Herman, Heyne, Janke, Kasemen, Kauk, Kleingartner, Klundt, Long, Meidinger, Mueller, Miller, Presler, Schaffer, Schlecht, Schott, Wanner and Zimmerman.

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. 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 produced the DVD, "Germans from Russia Food Pantry" which 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 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. I look forward to attending these important 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 the May, 2007 tour, 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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