

# In Touch with Prairie Living

January 2007

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. January begins the 11th year of this column published in North Dakota and South Dakota weekly newspapers.

The West Acres Shopping Center in Fargo features the Annual Cookbook Festival on Saturday, February 3, 2007; from 10 am to 9 pm. GRHC will have its many cookbooks available at this event.

My thanks to the many persons who visited the GRHC booth at the Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase events in November at Fargo and in December at Bismarck. We look forward to these events in 2007.

GRHC has published an important new book, "Death of a Past Life" by Robert N. Reincke, North Hollywood, CA, a true story of an elite German-Russian family's horrific experience of the St. Petersburg Bloody Sunday Massacre of 1905, the desperate evacuation to the Caucasus, and to Berlin, Germany, finally ending in an impoverished immigration to Ellis Island in 1949.

Actual photos of this family illuminate the era they live in as they experience the horrors created by their country's leaders and followers. It is fraught with the external chaos caused by no less than two World Wars and a Revolutions that threw an entire civilization into fear and flight. The chapters are based by the experiences of the author's grandmother, Omi, who was 100 years old on December 12, 2006. The author, his grandmother and mother used a little black book that his grandfather kept, which dated events that occurred during and after the Siege.

I am pleased to announce the dates for the 13th Journey to the Homeland Tour to Odessa, Ukraine and Stuttgart, Germany for May 17-28, 2007. The tour will include four days in Odessa

visiting the former German villages, and six days in southern Germany. Tour members will attend the large Germans from Russia gathering called the Russlanddeutschen Bundestreffen, at Wiesbaden on May 26-27, 2007. Please contact me for further information and registration.

GRHC has available an outstanding new cookbook, "Favorite Recipes" prepared by the Southern Nevada Chapter in Las Vegas of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia. It is one of the best German-Russian ethnic cookbooks available. Recipes include Grandma's Halupsy, Kaseknepfle, homemade noodles, dumplings, Dampf Nudede, Bessarabian Halushka, Kuchen, Platchenda, and many other recipes. For more information, contact GRHC.

Debra Marquart, a native of rural Napoleon, ND, and an associate professor of English at Iowa State University, Ames, has authored an impressive new book, "The Horizontal World: Growing Up Wild in the Middle of Nowhere: A Memoir". From the earliest age, Marquart knows she wanted out - out of the milking barn, out of the nearly empty nest her farmhouse home had become once her four older siblings moved away, out of the harvests and the blizzards and the long dusty summer days full of nothing but hard work. But even after she got good at leaving, she kept coming back. It is this process of flight - from both the landscape and the family and the return that Marquart writes about so exquisitely.

The Dakota Memories Oral History Project continues in 2007. Plans include interviews for these areas of North Dakota: Beulah/Hazen, Bismarck/Mandan, Devils Lake/Rugby and Dickinson/Richardton. Jessica Clark, Germans from Russia history doctoral fellow, is coordinator of this project. For further information about the Dakota Memories Oral History Project, go to [library.ndsu.edu/grhc/](http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/)

[dakotamemories/index.html](http://dakotamemories/index.html), or contact Jessica Clark at 701-231-8419; [jessica.clark@ndsu.edu](mailto:jessica.clark@ndsu.edu).

The new DVD documentary, "We'll Meet Again in Heaven" funded by GRHC is narrated by Ronald Vossler, UND, Grand Forks. Vossler guides the viewer from the small North Dakota town where he found the first letter, down the "blood-dark corridor of ethnic history" to former German villages in Ukraine and Moldova that were the source of numerous immigrants to the American prairie frontier.

The award-winning DVD documentaries: "Germans from Russia Food Pantry" and "The Germans from Russia: Children of the Steppe, Children of the Prairie" & "Prairie Crosses, Prairie Voices: Iron Crosses of the Great Plains" are also available.

The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia Convention is June 11-16, 2007, Holiday Inn, Hays, KS ([www.ahsgr.org](http://www.ahsgr.org)); the Germans from Russia Heritage Society Convention is July 19-22, 2007, Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck, ND ([www.grhs.org](http://www.grhs.org)).

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 June, 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](mailto:michael.miller@ndsu.edu); GRHC website: [library.ndsu.edu/grhc](http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc)).

*January, 2007 column for North Dakota and South Dakota newspapers*