

In Touch with Prairie Living

March 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.

In March, Prairie Public will broadcast a fascinating new series of local oral histories. "Growing Up German Russian: A Radio Series" is a collection of narratives gleaned from the oral histories collection of the Dakota Memories Oral History Project.

The 3-6 minute narratives will air in the "Dakota Datebook" time slot each Monday and Friday at 8:35 a.m., 3:50 p.m., 6:30 p.m. and 7:50 p.m. beginning in March and continuing through April. This radio series will also be available on the Web at www.prairiepublic.org/radio.

Jessica Clark, project coordinator, explained that these interviews are designed to preserve the precious history and heritage of Germans from Russia on the Northern Plains. "These narrators contain vivid childhood memories - memories of learning to drive a tractor, witnessing a prairie fire, adopting a little colt, listening to German funeral songs, and growing up on the prairie during the Dirty Thirties," Clark said.

The radio series is part of a larger project that will record numerous narratives for study and archiving. The project is sponsored by Prairie Public, the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, and the North Dakota State University Libraries. Partial funding for this series was provided by the North Dakota Humanities Council.

This series will feature the following narrators: Adam Boschee, West Fargo; Alice Ruth (Miller) Buck, Streeter; Marvin L. Hartmann, Fargo; Marvin G. Fiechtner, Wishek; ElRoy and Ruth (Dockter) Fischer, Gackle; Emil E. Schaffer, Gackle; and James Vetter, Fargo.

To find the Prairie Public radio

frequency in your area, visit www.prairiepublic.org/radio or call 800-359-6900. The North Dakota Humanities Council, Prairie Public, and GRHC have provided funding for Growing Up German Russian: A Radio Series. A CD version of this series will be available for purchase later this year.

The Dakota Memories Oral History Project will continue this year (2007), conducting interviews in North Dakota. For more information, visit our website at library.ndsu.edu/grhc/dakotamemories/index.html. To contact Jessica Clark (Project Coordinator) call 701-231-8419 or email jessica.clark@ndsu.edu.

We are making final plans for the 13th Journey to the Homeland Tour to Odessa, Ukraine and Stuttgart & Wiesbaden, Germany for May 17-28, 2007. The tour includes 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. The dates for the 2008 tour will be May 20-30. Tour members from Alberta, California, Florida, Hawaii, Michigan, Montana, North Dakota and Washington will be visiting their ancestral German villages: Rosental (Crimea); Bergdorf, Glueckstal, Kassel, Klein Neudorf, Marienberg & Neudorf (Glueckstal District); Fruedental, Gueldendorf & Hoffnungstal (Odessa District); Lichtenfeld & Worms (Beresan District); Arzis, Borodino, Eigenheim, Kloetstitz, Mannsburg, Plotzk & Tarutino (Bessarabia). Please contact me for further information and registration for the 2007 or 2008 tours.

GRHC has reprinted and has available an outstanding cookbooks: "Favorite Recipes: Lehr, ND" (1961); "Favorite Recipes: Lehr Thimble Bee, Lehr, ND" (1973); "Grace Baptist Church Jubilee Cookbook: Lehr, ND" (1979); "Grace Lutheran Church Cookbook: Lehr,

ND" (1983); "Kulm, ND Centennial Cookook" (1992); "What's Cookin' in Lehr, North Dakota, King Homemakers Club" (1967); and "What's Cookin' in Wishek, North Dakota" (1979). For more information, contact GRHC.

The award-winning DVD documentaries: "Germans from Russia Food Pantry"; "Heaven Is Our Homeland"; "We'll Meet Again in Heaven"; "The Germans from Russia: Children of the Steppe, Children of the Prairie" & "Prairie Crosses, Prairie Voices: Iron Crosses of the Great Plains" are available.

The California Germans from Russia Heritage Fest is April 14, 2007, Los Angeles Lutheran High School, Sylmar, California. The American Historical Society of Germans from Russia Convention is June 11-16, 2007, Holiday Inn, Hays, KS (www.ahsgr.org); the Germans from Russia Heritage Society Convention is July 19-22, 2007, Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck, ND (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 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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