

In Touch with Prairie Living

August 2007

By Michael M. Miller

Germans from Russia Heritage Collection
North Dakota State University Libraries, Fargo



GERMANS FROM RUSSIA
GRHC
HERITAGE COLLECTION

I write this August column having returned from a memorable experience in Bismarck attending the 37th Annual Germans from Russia Heritage Society (GRHS) International Convention. I was most impressed with the focus of developing interest with younger generations, including the GRHS Youth Essay Contest.

The workshops I attended were excellent such as; Kenneth Voegel, Homer Rudolf, Ronald Vossler, Sharon Chmielarz, and Alex, Nancy and Michael Herzog. Merv Weiss of Saskatoon, SK, gave a heartwarming and emotional speech on finding his long-lost relatives who presently live in Germany. They were sent to Siberia in 1945 and experienced a difficult life in the former Soviet Union.

The first joint convention of GRHS and the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia will be at the Parkway Place Hotel, Casper, WY, July 29-August 3, 2008. The 2009 GRHS Convention will be in September at Rapid City and July 2010 at Bismarck.

Acacia (Jonas) Stuckle, GRHC Special Collections Associate, shared her thoughts about the GRHS convention. "I met many people from the German-Russian community during my first GRHS convention. I also enjoyed finally seeing the faces of several people I have corresponded with the past few years through email. The workshops were very interesting and insightful. I am excited to continue working with everyone in preserving the German-Russian culture and heritage."

GRHC is pleased to announce the newest addition to our website. Beginning in September, GRHC will host a blog at our website. Be sure you check our website often to visit the blog.

The private archival libraries of Gwen Pritzkau and Walter and Alice Riedlinger Essig were donated to GRHC in 2006. In honor of their memory and dedication for genealogical and family research, these two "special collections" are being displayed with a visual exhibit

during July 15 through October 1 at the Marie Rudel Portner Germans from Russia Room, NDSU Libraries, Fargo.

Prairie Public broadcasts a new radio series, "Voices of the Heartland: German-Russian Memories," which is a collection of fascinating life stories collected by the Dakota Memories Oral History Project. North Dakota State Senators Tim Mathern and Robert Erbele are doing the commentary for the series.

"Voices of the Heartland" will begin Monday, July 30 and air until October 8 every Monday (excluding Monday, August 27) and Friday at 8:35 am, 3:55 pm, 6:30 pm, and 7:55 pm on Prairie Public Radio.

Jessica Clark says, "This series showcases the unique and fascinating stories that the DMOHP preserves. Although the DMOHP focuses on childhood memories, many narrators share important life stories. This series features some of these stories—stories about going to college, living through the Civil Rights Movement and remembering the tragic events of 9/11."

Radio broadcasts from Prairie Public Broadcasting are funded by the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection and can be heard on 90.5 fm Bismarck, 89.9 fm Dickinson, 91.9 fm Fargo, 89.3 fm Grand Forks, 91.5 fm Jamestown, 88.9 fm Minot, and 89.5 fm Williston.

The "Voices of the Heartland Radio Series" CD will be available for purchase in the fall of 2007.

This summer the Dakota Memories Oral History Project is in its third season of interviews. Cassie Ptacek and Tyler Simonson will end the season by visiting Dickinson/Richardton August 1-10.

Jessica Clark is pleased with the success of their recent trip to south-central North Dakota. "Will and I just spent a fabulous week in the Edgeley/Lehr/Kulm/Wishek area. We've interviewed some fascinating people - people who've shared their

memories of the Dirty Thirties, World War II, and the Korean War. We also have been treated to some tasty platchenda and kuchen. This trip has been simply wonderful."

To contact Jessica Clark (Coordinator) call 701-231-8419 or email Jessica.Clark@ndsu.edu. Also, visit the Dakota Memories Oral History Project on the web at www.ndsu.edu/grhc/dakotamemories.

For further information about the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, Dakota Memories Oral History Project, Journey to the Homeland Tour, and donations to GRHC such as family histories, contact Michael M. Miller, NDSU Libraries, PO Box 5599, Fargo, ND 58105-5599 (Tel: 701-231-8416; Email: Michael.Miller@ndsu.edu; GRHC website: www.ndsu.edu/grhc).

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