

In Touch with Prairie Living

By Michael M. Miller

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



GERMANS FROM RUSSIA

GRHC

HERITAGE COLLECTION

This is an exciting time for the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection. We have launched the "Friends of the GRHC." Our goal is to sustain and expand one of the most comprehensive collections of Germans from Russia resources in the world. May I invite you to join the Friends of the GRHC by making a financial donation and help us keep alive and enhance the heritage and culture of the Germans from Russia. As a Friend of the GRHC, you will receive our newsletters to keep you current on our activities and projects. Visit the "Friends of the GRHC" webpage: <http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/aboutus/friends.html>. For further information, contact me.

Acacia Jonas Stuckle, GRHC special collections associate, gave birth to a new son, Henry, on February 1. Acacia began her full-time position at the NDSU Library in 2007. She worked as a student assistant from 2002 to 2006 graduating from NDSU in Speech Communications. Acacia grew up at Fredonia, ND, graduating from Kulm High School. She is familiar with the German-Russian foods and traditions. Her position was established with the Marie Rudel Portner Germans from Russia Endowment at the NDSU Development Foundation.

On March 4 at the State Capitol in Bismarck, the public colleges and universities in North Dakota feature

table displays while the legislature is in session. North Dakota State University's display featured the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection and the Institute for Regional Studies/University Archives of the NDSU Libraries. We were pleased to meet many of North Dakota's state legislators and visitors.

A new book titled *How the East Was Won* authored by Alfred Opp of Vancouver, BC, is a collection of stories and memories that represent many aspect of Opp's life. Opp was born in the village of Teplitz, Bessarabia. He recalls the life and culture he enjoyed as a child. Cook stoves were fired by corn stalks, Misch and wood scraps. Wagon axles were hammered out by blacksmiths who knew how to work with an anvil. But when the Iron Curtain descended in 1940, the villagers of Teplitz packed up their household goods and began the long and difficult Trek to the Fatherland. They had no idea what awaited them. Transported to occupied Poland in 1940, these Bessarabian Germans were deposited among wary neighbors ready to rise up against the occupiers. This book is an epic story of a journey that began halfway around the world. Opp writes: "These stories and memories I have kept in my heart, and now I have them with you. Through the many

challenges of life, I have found that my ancestors carved my walking stick well." Contact the GRHC to secure this book.

Peter Goldade of California, a native of Pierce County, ND, has authored another important book, *The Sander Family History with Memories of the Village of Selz and Russia*. Goldade is author of these additional books: 1) *The Goldade Family History*; 2) *The Jundt Family History*; 3) *The Migler Family History*; and 4) *Our Relatives: The Persecuted*. All of these books are available from the GRHC. In his books, Goldade shares the hardships endured by his ancestors' long and brutal journey. He shared how they thrived in the village of Selz, what kind of life they had in Russia and how they achieved a better living atmosphere. His books relate the endurance, hope, heroism, death and freedom.

For further information about the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, the Dakota Memories Oral History Project, Journey to the Homeland Tours and donations to the GRHC (such as family histories), contact Michael M. Miller, The Libraries, NDSU Dept. #2080, PO Box 6050, Fargo, ND 58108-6050 (Telephone: 701-231-8416; Email: Michael.Miller@ndsu.edu; the GRHC website: www.ndsu.edu/grhc).

March 2009 column for North Dakota and South Dakota newspapers.