

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

As I prepare the May column, my thoughts reflect the Red River of the North and the tremendous effort from the Fargo-Moorhead communities and the thousands of volunteers who prepared 3.5 million sandbags to save our towns. It made me very proud to live in Fargo and North Dakota. The months of May and June include considerable travel for me with our GRHC outreach programs in Germany, Ukraine and North Dakota.

On 14 May, I leave Fargo for Berlin, Germany and will meet the Journey to the Homeland Tour group in Frankfurt on 21 May. We travel together to Odessa, Ukraine for May 22-26. The group includes people from California, Idaho, Missouri, North Carolina, North Dakota, Washington and Wisconsin as well as from Austria. They will visit their ancestral former German villages including: Alt Posttal, Beresina, Mintschuna, Tarutino, Kolatschowka, Kulm, Kurudschika and Teplitz (Bessarabia); Neu-Strymba, Alt-Sarata, and Scholtoi (near Kischinev, Moldova); Baden, Elsass, Kandel, Mannheim, Selz and Strassburg (Kutschurgan District).

From May 26-30, the tour group is in Stuttgart, Germany. In Stuttgart, we will visit the museums and archives of the Landsmannschaft der Deutschen aus Russland and the Bessarabien Heimatmuseum. We will have a one-day bus tour to Alsace, France to see the Alsatian historic villages where many of the German families lived before immigrating to South

Russia (southern Ukraine). Our 16th Journey to the Homeland Tour is scheduled for May 20-30, 2010.

Jessica Clark, Acacia (Jonas) Stuckle and Andrea Mott will conduct two oral history workshops: May 16, Napoleon, ND at the Downtowner and May 30, Richardton, ND at the Sacred Heart Monastery, both from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. They are free and open to the public. Cookies and refreshments will be provided. Lunch is not included, but it will be available on-site for a fee. If you wish to register for lunch on-site, call Stuckle by May 11 for Napoleon and May 25 for Richardton.

“Our project only focuses on Germans from Russia, yet there are plenty of other groups out there with rich histories – histories that should be documented and preserved,” Clark said. “So, we are hoping by sharing our techniques and our methodology, individuals will be able to conduct their own histories regardless of their ethnicity.”

The workshops are sponsored by the Dakota Memories Oral History Project, Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, NDSU Libraries, NDSU Extension Service and NDSU Extension Service Center for Community Vitality.

The GRHC will have displays and information tables at the 125th Anniversary Quasiquicentennial at Napoleon, ND, for Friday, June 12 (10 am-6 pm) and Saturday, June

13 (10 am-4 pm) at the Fire Hall. Debra Marquart, a Napoleon native, and well known author of the book, *The Horizontal World: Growing Up Wild in the Middle of Nowhere*, will be autographing her book at the GRHC tables.

On June 27, I look forward to attending the 50th anniversary event at Assumption Abbey, Richardton, ND, for Brother Placid Gross, a Benedictine Monk. Brother Placid, a longtime colleague, is a native of the Kintyre, ND area and is well known for collecting and preserving the dialect and folklore of the Germans from Russia.

The Dakota Memories Heritage Tour is scheduled for September 18-20 to Germans from Russia sites in south central North Dakota. We invite you to join us, space is limited. For further information, contact Acacia Stuckle at 701-231-6596 or Acacia.Stuckle@ndsu.edu. The webpage is: www.ndsu.edu/grhc/dakotamemories.

For further information about the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, the Dakota Memories Heritage Tour, the Journey to the Homeland Tour 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).

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