

# 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

With the new year of 2010, I want to extend my best wishes to the many readers of the In Touch with Prairie Living column. I am deeply appreciative of the positive comments received regarding these monthly columns. We invite readers to become a Friend of the GRHC.

In reviewing 2009, the GRHC was busy with various projects and outreach events. The 15th Journey to the Homeland Tour to Odessa, Ukraine and Stuttgart, Germany was in May. In June, we had displays at the Napoleon, ND and Leola, SD, 125th events. The Dakota Memories Heritage Tour to south-central North Dakota in September was most successful. In November/December, the GRHC had our well-received booth at the Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase events in Fargo and Bismarck.

With the GRHC's Dakota Memories Oral History Project, the summer season included interviews in June and July in the Napoleon and Richardton area of North Dakota. Oral History Workshops were held in May and Public Forums in August in these same communities with funding from the NDSU Extension Service.

During 2009 in cooperation with Prairie Public radio, the GRHC completed three CDs: 1) *Home Grown: German-Russian Farm Kids Remember*; 2) *Red, White, & Blue: German Russians Remember Independence Day* and 3) *German-Russian War Memories*.

On Saturday, February 20, at 2 pm in the Berea Lutheran Church, 7538 Emerson Avenue South, Richfield, MN,

I look forward to speaking to the North Star Chapter of the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia and the Germans from Russia Heritage Society. My presentation is titled: "GRHC - The Mission and Goals." The North Star Chapter Library will be open at 10 am. At 12 noon, there will be a North Star Soup Luncheon with a free-will offering. The event is free and open to the public. For those of you able to attend, I look forward to seeing you. For further information, visit [www.northstarchapter.org](http://www.northstarchapter.org).

The GRHC has a new book available, *Cry out of Russia*, by Anna Fisher, Medicine Hat, Alberta. Anna Fisher was born in Johannestal, Ukraine in 1926, where she lived until 1944. During World War II, she fled with her family to the West and arrived in Poland. Later she was transported by train to West Germany. In 1951, Fischer immigrated to Medicine Hat. Fischer writes: "My childhood are memories of fear and poverty in my hometown of Johannestal. Living under Communist Regime, struggling with the day to day brutality which was bestowed on the German people. Men, women and children being sent off to Siberia to hard labor camps, often never to be seen or hear of ever again. Going through the times of food rations for a whole day of work. In 1944, we were ordered to pack up our belongings and leave our homes. The villagers traveled the country side on foot, one by one, on the long wagon trail to West Germany. When

the war was over, we located missing family members, and now I was off to a fresh new beginning on Canadian soil."

Anna Fischer shares her memoirs and her challenging life story. I visited with Anna Fischer at the Germans from Russia Heritage Society Convention, Rapid City, SD, in September, 2009. In the company of her noticeable German accent, I had a wonderful conversation with Fischer about her youth and life in Johannestal and her immigration to Alberta.

Limited space is still available for the 16th Journey to the Homeland Tour is May 20-30, 2010. The tour includes May 22-26 in Odessa, Ukraine visiting the former Bessarabian, Black Sea and Crimean German villages. The tour group also travels to Stuttgart, Germany for May 26-30 including a day tour to Alsace, France, and visits to the German-Russian museums in Stuttgart. Detailed tour information and costs are at this webpage: [www.ndsu.edu/grhc](http://www.ndsu.edu/grhc) at "Homeland Tours."

For further information about the Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, Friends of the GRHC, 2010 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](mailto:Michael.Miller@ndsu.edu); the GRHC website: [www.ndsu.edu/grhc](http://www.ndsu.edu/grhc)).

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