

# 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 write this July column, Acacia Jonas Stuckle, GRHC special collections associate, and I look forward to seeing many colleagues and friends at the 41st Germans from Russia Heritage Society International Convention at Spokane, Wash., from July 20-24. Acacia and I want to express our appreciation to the many visitors at Bowdle, S.D. and Rugby, N.D. who visited the GRHC displays during the 125th community celebrations.

At the GRHS Convention, the GRHC's new hardcover book, "Bessarabia: German Colonists on the Black Sea," authored by Ute Schmidt and translated from German to English by James T. Gessele, becomes available. We are deeply grateful to James Gessele of Minneapolis, a native of Mercer, N.D., for this major translation project which began in the fall of 2008, and to those involved to make this impressive book become reality. We are deeply appreciative to the many financial donors who provided the major funding to publish the book.

Allyn Brosz of Washington, D.C., writes: "When I read the book in German, I knew instantly that 'Bessarabia: German Colonists on the Black Sea,' should be in the personal library of all who are interested in the long and fateful history of the Bessarabian Germans. The book is, without question, the authoritative history of the Germans in Bessarabia. Now this powerful translation by James Gessele makes the book widely available to North American readers."

Alex Herzog of Boulder, Colo. comments: "As a translator of a variety of books and articles on the history of the Germans from Russia, I consider 'Bessarabia: German Colonists on the Black Sea,' among the very best—a beautifully illustrated and a comprehensive record on the Bessarabian Germans in particular, and the Black Sea Germans in general. For a few survivors of the 1940 evacuations and the numerous descendants now living in Germany and in the Americas, this book is an invaluable and readable record, and it is bound to serve as a useful reference."

Dr. Elvire Necker-Eberhardt of Calgary, Alberta, writes: "With Ute Schmidt's 'Bessarabia: German Colonists on the Black Sea,' we have been given an immense source of information, a reference book for any historical, economic, cultural, spiritual and social question of this group of Germans from Russia. The author follows the Bessarabian Germans from their original the beginning and development in Bessarabia, to their tragic scattering in 1940 and beyond."

Carol Just of St. Louis Park, Minn., comments: "While 'Bessarabia: German Colonists on the Black Sea' is regional in title, anyone with roots to Russia will benefit from this well researched volume containing sources rarely use in books currently available in English. In this volume there is new information about

agricultural practices, animal husbandry, vine culture, social structures, inter-ethnic communications with many other nationalities, textile and farm equipment manufacturing, and early establishment of orphan funds."

Dr. Nancy Herzog of Boulder, Colo. shares: "Through bountiful illustrations, well-grounded historical scholarship and clear writing, Ute Schmidt tells the sometimes heroic, sometimes tragic story of German people who came to live in a part of the Russian Empire known as Bessarabia. English-language readers will find James Gessele's expert translation of Ute Schmidt's German text a pleasure to read."

For further information and to secure the new book, 'Bessarabia: German Colonists on the Black Sea,' call 701-231-6596 or <http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/general/bessarabia.html>. The Dakotas have many families with Bessarabian German ancestry.

For further information about the Friends of the GRHC, Dakota Memories Heritage Tour to south-central North Dakota (September 15-18, 2011), 18th Journey to the Homeland Tour to Odessa, Ukraine and Stuttgart, Germany (May 17-27, 2012), 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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