

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 this November text, I am reminded of my first experience of writing this column back in November 1998. This is the 180th monthly column written in 13 years. I appreciate the positive comments and continued interests from readers.

Thanksgiving regards to you and your family. We can be thankful that our ancestors immigrated to these Dakota prairies from their former German villages in South Russia. When I visited with tour members in May 2011 near Odessa, Ukraine, I was reminded of the life challenges these villagers experience each day for their personal survival, health and livelihood.

The GRHC had a wonderful experience at the 86th Sauerkraut Day at Wishek, N.D. on October 11. Acacia Jonas Stuckle, GRHC special collections associate, a native of Fredonia, N.D., brought the GRHC displays to the event. Acacia writes: "Wishek's annual Sauerkraut Day is truly impressive. It's great to watch an entire community come together to continue an important tradition, not to mention it's delicious!" Photographs from Sauerkraut Day can be seen at the webpage: <http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/outreach/activities/sauerkraut11.html>.

The Tri-County Tourism Alliance for Emmons, Logan and McIntosh counties in south central North Dakota, have developed a very interesting project, "Preserving the food culture of the

Germans from Russia with recipes, stories and photos." They are looking for recipes and traditions that are particular to the Germans from Russia culture such as how grandmother made sauerkraut, watermelon pickles, ice cream, special holiday treats, dough foods, sausages, head cheese, pickled pigs feet and so forth.

For further information about this Tri-County Tourism Alliance special cookbook project, contact Sue Balcom at 701-537-5169 or by email: DasGuteEssen@hotmail.com, or Carmen Rath-Wald at 701-254-2504 or Carmen.Rath.Wald@ndsu.edu. The GRHC is working closely with this project. The goal is to have the book published for the 125th Anniversary for Ashley, N.D. in June of 2013.

The GRHC's most important outreach program event is the Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcases sponsored by the North Dakota Department of Agriculture (www.prideofdakota.nd.gov). The Fargo Holiday Showcase is at the Centennial Hall/Civic Center (November 18-19-20), and the Bismarck Holiday Showcase is at the Convention Hall (December 2-3-4). The schedule is Friday, 6-9 p.m.; Saturday, 10 a.m-5 p.m.; Sunday 11 a.m-5 p.m.

At the Holiday Showcases, we will have many new items with more cookbooks available for purchase.

New cookbooks include "Mennonite Girls Can Cook," "There Is Always Room for One More: Volga German Stories and Recipes," and "Family Heritage Recipe Book." New books featured will be "A Man Called Andreas," "True Accounts of a Cruel Time: The Life of Edward Schmidt," "Bessarabia: German Colonists on the Black Sea," "Sundogs and Sunflowers," "Gentle People: A Case Study of Rockport Colony Hutterites," and "Tales of a Community that was... Krassna, North Dakota, a Memoir." New CD's available are "German-Russian School Memories" and "German-Russian Food Traditions."

Limited reservations are available to join the 18th Journey to the Homeland Tour schedule for May 17-27, 2012, with visits to Odessa, Ukraine and Stuttgart, Germany.

For further information about the Friends of the GRHC, the 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; the GRHC website: www.ndsu.edu/grhc).

November 2011 column for North Dakota and South Dakota newspapers.