

In Touch with Prairie Living

By Michael M. Miller

Germans from Russia Heritage Collection
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GERMANS FROM RUSSIA
GRHC
HERITAGE COLLECTION

With the new year of 2012, I want to extend my best wishes to the many readers of the “In Touch with Prairie Living column.” I am deeply grateful for the positive comments about these monthly columns since November 1996. We invite readers to become a Friend of the GRHC. The year 2012 begins the 34th year of the NDSU Libraries’ Germans from Russia Heritage Collection, 1978 – 2012. This year also marks my 45th year of work at North Dakota State University.

Bob Dambach, director of television, Prairie Public Broadcasting in Fargo, and I leave on January 30th for Buenos Aires, Argentina, returning on February 28th. We will visit many settlements and families in Buenos Aires, to the north in the Province of Entre Rios where the Volga Germans immigrated.

We will also visit the Province of Coronel Suarez, south of Buenos Aires, where Black Sea and Volga Germans settled. In Curitiba and southern Brazil, we will meet and film settlements and families of Volhynian German, Bessarabian German, Mennonite German and Volga German ancestry.

Plans are to complete the final documentary filming in South America in 2013. This new documentary is part of the award-winning Germans from Russia documentary series of Prairie Public Broadcasting – <http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/order/tapes/prairieindex.html>.

In reviewing 2011, the GRHC was busy with various projects and outreach programs. I joined the 17th Journey to the Homeland Tour to Odessa, Ukraine and Stuttgart, Germany in May. In June and July, we had displays at the 125th celebrations at Bowdle, S.D.

and Rugby, N.D. The second Dakota Memories Heritage bus tour to south-central North Dakota in September was most successful. In November/December, the GRHC had our well-received booths at the Pride of Dakota Holiday Showcase events in Fargo and Bismarck.

The GRHC received national honors as the recipient from the American Association of State and Local History for the 2011 Award of Merit and the WOW Award for exceptional work in preserving and sharing the culture of the Germans from Russia on the Northern Plains. The nomination for these awards was made by the State Historical Society of North Dakota (SHSND) which has been a longtime partner with various projects of the GRHC. The awards were presented to the GRHC by Merlan Paaverud, Director of the SHSND on December 2 at Bismarck. The SHSND accepted the awards in Richmond, Va. on behalf of the GRHC in September.

Merl Paaverud, writes: “The work of Michael M. Miller and Acacia (Jonas) Stuckle at North Dakota State University Libraries’ Germans from Russia Heritage Collection has received much deserved national recognition. The work of the GRHC has been instrumental in preserving and presenting the German-Russian heritage and cultural for generations to come. The preservation projects have been extensive and impressive from translating and publishing books, producing documentaries, developing collections, producing exhibits, offering tours to the homeland and regionally, and offering outreach programs via the web. The American

Association of State and Local History’s national awards, especially the WOW Award, acknowledged the quality and depth of their work. The GRHC has for decades and will continue on to give North Dakota a national presence in the field of history.”

In 2011, the GRHC published the new hardcover book, “Bessarabia: German Colonists on the Black Sea” authored by Ute Schmidt, translated from German to English by James T. Gessele. The book would not have become reality without the generous financial donations from the Friends of the GRHC. We continue to be impressed with the interest and positive response to one of the most important books ever published in the English language for the Germans from Russia community.

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. Interested persons need to contact Michael Miller by March 1st.

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).

Note: The Events Calendar relating to the Germans from Russia is at http://library.ndsu.edu/grhc/outreach/travel_dates/index.htm.

January 2012 column for North Dakota and South Dakota newspapers.