

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

In writing this May column, I prepare for departure on the 18th Journey to the Homeland Tour to Odessa, Ukraine and Stuttgart, Germany from May 17-27. We have tour members coming from Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Missouri, Minnesota, North Dakota, Ohio, Utah, Virginia, Washington, Wyoming, Alberta and Saskatchewan, as well as from Germany.

Tour members will visit the former German villages near Odessa, Ukraine between May 19-23 including: Johannestal, Karlsruhe, Kathariental, Rastadt, Speyer and Worms (Beresan District); Bergdorf, Glueckstal and Kassel (Glueckstal District); Baden, Elsass, Kandel, Mannheim, Selz and Strassburg (Kutschurgan District); Alexanderhilf and Freudental (Liebental District); Balmas, Beresina, Borodino, Dennewitz, Hoffnungstal, Krasna and Mathildendorf, Bessarabia.

Eileen (Klein) Krenzel of Castle Rock, Colo. a native of Rugby, N.D., shares: "I look forward to traveling with others whose family histories are so much like mine. North Dakota has remained 'home' to me. It is a gift to me to have a state university that values this important heritage and provides the opportunity for such a trip." Mark Mathern of Casper, Wyo., who grew up on a farm with 12 siblings near Edgeley, N.D., writes: "This trip is an opportunity to ground myself with the hopes, dreams, and hard work of all those who came before me. It is a humble, symbolic 'thank you' for all of us descendants to our ancestors for their daring to venture where their dreams took them."

The Preservation North Dakota 2012 Conference will be at Wishek, N.D. at

the historic WPA building, the Civic Center, May 18-20. The conference focuses on the Germans from Russia visiting historic sites, culture, foods and music. Featured speakers include Steve Martens, Associate Professor of Architecture, NDSU; oral historian Dr. Jessica Clark of Wyoming, presenting at the Lehr Tabernacle, "Germans from Russia: Remembrance through Landmarks of Places" and author Debra Marquart, Professor of English, Iowa State University, "Memory and Place in German-Russian Country." For more information and to register for the conference, go to www.prairieplaces.org.

I look forward to attending the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia (AHSGR) International Convention on the campus of Concordia University in Portland, Ore. from June 13-17. There will be a premiere of the seventh documentary in the award-winning Germans from Russia Series – "At Home in Russia, At Home on the Prairie." The researchers and scriptwriters are Lewis and Dona Reeves-Marquardt of Austin, Texas, longtime colleagues. They also completed the script for the 2010 documentary, "It's All Earth and Sky." At Portland, we will have meetings regarding the South American Germans from Russia documentary project for Argentina and Brazil. There will be also guests attending the convention from Buenos Aires, Argentina that I met in February. For further information about the AHSGR Convention, go to www.ahsgr.org.

The Germans from Russia Heritage Society International Convention is

July 18-22, at the Best Western Ramkota Hotel, Bismarck, N.D. For further information, go to www.grhs.org.

The new CD "German-Russian Folk Medicine: Old Docs, Prairie Women, and Healing Hands," is now available as part of the Germans from Russia Radio Series produced by Prairie Public Radio in cooperation with the GRHC. This program features fascinating stories about customary home remedies from mothers and grandmothers, hospital visits for broken bones or ailments, and the art of healing called Brauche. Carol Just, a German-Russian descendant and researcher, has provided context for these extraordinary memories.

This CD includes Alice (Woehl) Buerkley from Kulm, N.D., sharing her family's visit to the neighbor lady for treatment of ailments like ring worm and boils. Alice remembers the neighbor lady clipping a piece of hair to make salve to cure her ring worm. Money was never accepted as it was believe it would not work if money was taken to pay for the healing. Contact the GRHC to secure this new CD.

For further information about the Friends of the GRHC, the 19th Journey to the Homeland Tour to Odessa, Ukraine and Stuttgart, Germany (May 16-26, 2013), 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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