We are pleased to announce the completion of the Herb Poppke Collection. Herb Poppke, a son of German Russian immigrants, was always a fervent supporter in researching and preserving his heritage. He was an avid writer, researcher and collector; especially of maps and books. Mavis Amundson, his niece, shared, “Herb’s genealogical research and his efforts to know more about German-Russians were a labor of love for him. He enjoyed every minute. He poured his heart into the research and into sharing what he learned with his family and others.”

I have fond memories of visits with Herb Poppke at the Germans from Russia Heritage Society conventions. Herb leaves a living legacy of his lifelong efforts to document and preserve the rich heritage of the Germans from Russia culture.

Throughout the years, Herb Poppke collected a large volume of books relating to the Germans from Russia. Included in his donations were over 200 books. Although, the bulk of the collection is maps. Poppke was well known for researching and collecting maps. With more than 400 maps; these include Russia, Poland, Ukraine, and some of the USA. Maps are in English, German and Russian languages.

Herb’s family shared, “The family of Herbert Poppke is very grateful to [the GRHC] for accepting [Herb’s] archival papers and photographs and creating the Herb Poppke Collection… His findings were a treasure to his family, and we believe the information may be useful source material for future researchers seeking to understand the demographics, geography and history of Germans from Russia who immigrated to the United States.”

Herb Poppke lived until age 91, passing away in August 2012. The extensive Herb Poppke Collection is available for research at the GRHC.

The finding aid (a descriptive summary) to the Herb Poppke Collection and the Poppke book listing are available at: http://library.ndsu.edu/repository/handle/10365/21776.

A new book available from the GRHC is “Strangers Before the Bench: A Historical Novel” by David Hecker. The book is a historical novel that demonstrates the value of studying lineage. One of the characters is George Schwartz who was born in Mandan, N.D., son of descendants of Germans from Russia. He completed his high school education in Mandan and graduated with a law degree from the University of North Dakota at Grand Forks.

April column for North Dakota and South Dakota weekly newspapers.