

THE GERMANS FROM RUSSIA IN COLORADO STUDY PROJECT:  
A PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENT REPORT, 1975-1978

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## PROGRESS AND ACHIEVEMENTS, 1975-1978

The Germans from Russia are the second largest ethnic group in Colorado and one of the most important contributors to the historic development of the state. Arriving around the 1880's, they became primarily the mainstay of the sugar beet growing and processing industries. Within two generations, they rose from field hands to fill leading positions in business, education, culture, and the political life of the state. Their remarkable advance from immigrant status to community leaders is one of the great American "success stories" of the twentieth century, and contemporary descendants of these hardy pioneers take justifiable pride in their cultural legacy.

Because this legacy was in danger of being lost to the ravages of time, in the summer of 1975 the Germans from Russia in Colorado Study Project was established at Colorado State University to augment the important work already underway for many years by the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia. Bringing to bear the resources of a -modern university, the purposes of the Project were to: (a) conduct scientific research; (b) promote teaching at all levels; (c) publish and disseminate information; (d) assist historic preservation; and (e) provide public service.

Building on the important foundations laid by the AHSGR, the Project counts among its achievements the creation of a special collection of German Russian materials to support research and teaching at CSU. Together with the excellent, extensive collection of materials maintained by the AHSGR in the Greeley Public Library, these two archives comprise the single richest library resource relating to German Russian history and culture in the western world.

Until now the Project has been supported by the CSU Experiment Station, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and contributions from chapters of the AHSGR and its International Foundation, as well as private individuals and other organizations. This year the Project becomes entirely independent of university funding.

Activities during the first three years include:

1. An oral history program that has conducted nearly fifty interviews with members of Colorado German Russian community; only some of these have been transcribed.
2. The library collection, in addition to oral evidence, has accumulated hundreds of books, documents, and photographs to support Project research and teaching at CSU.
3. Scores of surveys, reports, and papers have been produced dealing with the history, locations, occupations, culture, and contributions of German Russians in Colorado and with resources within and outside the State for the study of German Russian history and culture. Public information reports, including newspaper, radio, and television releases, have been issued.
4. Publications including:

Kenneth W. Rock, Germans from Russia in America: The First Hundred Years

James W. Long, Russian Language Sources Relating to the Germans from Russia

Clara Hilderman Ehrlich, My Prairie Childhood

Information Bulletins, Nos. 1-5 (1975-1978)

German Russians in Colorado (University Microfilms International)  
Articles, papers, and reports written by staff members. published in various scholarly journals, newspapers, and other media

5. Papers, panels, and illustrated presentations have been given by staff members to schools, community groups, public and private organizations, and chapters of the AHSGR.
6. Sponsorship of visiting scholars and lecturers at Colorado State University.
7. Sponsorship of a course on "Colorado's Germans from Russia" at CSU.

Ongoing projects include a comprehensive history of the Germans from Russia in Colorado; continuation of the oral history interviewing program; comparative linguistic, anthropological, cultural, and sociological studies of the German Russians in the United States, Canada, South America, and the USSR; cooperation with the Immigration/Ethnic Studies program at CSU; the sponsorship of courses, lectures, special programs, and visiting speakers and scholars; development of a photographic archive; sponsorship of an international conference of specialists on German Russian studies; the preparation of a comprehensive guide to published and documentary sources on the German Russians; and other activities related to the research, teaching, and dissemination of information.

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ORGANIZATIONS

International Foundation of AHSGR  
Colorado High Plains Chapter of AHSGR  
Denver Metropolitan Chapter of AHSGR  
Northern Colorado Chapter of AHSGR  
Southeastern Wyoming Chapter of AHSGR  
Berthoud National Bank, Berthoud, Colorado  
Citizens State Bank, Keenesburg, Colorado  
The Dobbins Foundation, Denver, Colorado  
The Eaton Bank, Eaton, Colorado  
The Farmers State Bank, Fort Morgan, Colorado  
Larimer County Planning Office, Fort Collins, Colorado  
United Bank of Fort Collins, Fort Collins, Colorado

INDIVIDUALS:

Mrs. Glendon R. Anderson, Fort Collins, Colorado  
Mr. and Mrs. Fred Felte, Windsor, Colorado  
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Mr. and Mrs. Hubert L. Krug, Fort Collins, Colorado  
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Mr. and Mrs. Charles J. McDonald, Greeley, Colorado  
Mr. E. R. May, Glendale, Arizona  
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Mr. Herb Poppke, Denver, Colorado  
Mr. and Mrs. Henry Salzman, Jr., Greeley, Colorado  
Dr. and Mrs. S. R. Schneider, Fort Collins, Colorado  
Mr. and Mrs. Jacob Zeiler, Wheat Ridge, Colorado



## THE GERMANS FROM RUSSIA IN COLORADO STUDY PROJECT

was established at Colorado State University in 1975. Its purposes are:

(1) research; (2) teaching and training; (3) publication and dissemination of information; (4) historic preservation; and (5) public service.

Among the activities of the Project are the creation of a Special Collection and Archive for the history of the German-Russians in Colorado; cooperation with historic preservation and restoration programs in the state; and the support of research by CSU faculty and students and by other scholars elsewhere.

The Project is part of the University's programs in International and Intercultural Education and in Russian and East/Central European Studies. It is supported jointly by the University, the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, and public and private organizations.

### STAFF MEMBERS

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## PROJECT OBJECTIVES

In keeping with the University's objectives of education, research, and service, the Germans from Russia in Colorado Study Project has as its specific goals:

### 1. RESEARCH, STUDY, AND PUBLICATION

- a. Bibliographic research and study
- b. Library and field study
- c. Publication of results of study through articles, books, bibliographies, guides, collections of documents, readings, translations of original works, etc.
- d. Reports and papers for professional meetings
- e. Information bulletins, newsletters, feature stories for the media

### 2. HISTORIC PRESERVATION AND RESTORATION

- a. Collection and preservation of documentary materials
- b. Collection and preservation of museum materials
- c. Collaboration with historic preservation and restoration projects, with the State Historical Society of Colorado, with the American Historical Society of Germans from Russia, and with other similar organizations and projects

### 3. DOCUMENTATION AND DISSEMINATION OF ETHNIC LEGACY

- a. Oral history recording of experiences, folkways, customs, etc.
- b. Recordings of music, folklore, dialects, oral traditions, etc.
- c. Filming or videotaping ceremonies, rites, dress, etc.

### 4. TEACHING AND TRAINING

- a. Infusion of findings into graduate and undergraduate curriculum
- b. Involvement of graduate and undergraduate students in research, study, and writing
- c. Sponsorship by Project of special speakers, exhibits, festivals, demonstrations, films, performances, and other enrichment programs
- d. Encouragement of and participation in interdisciplinary instruction on ethnic studies

### 5. PUBLIC SERVICE

- a. Dissemination of information of general public interest
- b. Encouragement of and assistance to various private individuals and organizations interested in the Germans from Russia or related immigration, ethnic, or historic study
- c. Service to and cooperation with various community groups interested in Centennial and Bicentennial celebrations, local and state history, the history of agriculture, urbanization, language and cultural studies, etc.
- d. Cooperation in all of the above with other colleges and universities in and beyond Colorado