VITA of Thomas D. (Tom) Isern

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Fields of Expertise	History and folklore of the North American plains; history of agriculture; Australia & New Zealand. Scholarly research and writing deals mainly with agricultural life in the plains environment, including grassland regions of other nations.
Education	BA Bethany College, Lindsborg KS, 1974. MA Oklahoma State University, Stillwater OK, 1975. PhD OSU, 1977. Academic honors: National Merit Scholar; summa cum laude graduate of Bethany College; Phi Alpha Theta.
Major Employment	Following graduate education and two short-term appointments, served 1979 to 1991 on faculty of Emporia State University, Emporia, KS. 1992 commenced service at North Dakota State University as Dean, College of Humanities and Social Sciences. 1995 relinquished deanship and became Professor of History.
Honors & Awards	Grants and fellowships from American Philosophical Society, Beveridge Fund of the American Historical Association, Kansas Committee for the Humanities, Canadian Embassy, Bush Foundation, North Dakota Humanities Council, North Dakota Department of Transportation, State Historical Society of North Dakota, National Park Service, National Endowment for the Humanities Office-holder in Western Social Science Association, Agricultural History Society, Western History Association, and other scholarly associations Roe R. Cross Distinguished Professor, 1987-88, ESU Senior Fulbright Scholar, Alexander Turnbull Library, New Zealand, 1991 Phi Alpha Theta Book Award, best subsequent book, 1991 Peltier Award for Innovative Teaching, NDSU, 1999 University Distinguished Professor, NDSU, 2007- Gold Medal for Midwestern nonfiction, Independent Publishers Association, 2019, as well as the gold for Western nonfiction, Independent Press Association, 2019 Joseph S. Height Literary Award, Germans from Russia Heritage Society, 2020
Publications & Presentations	*Custom Combining on the Great Plains: A History*. University of Oklahoma Press, 1981. (With Jim Hoy) *Plains Folk: A Commonplace of the Great Plains*. University of Oklahoma Press, 1987. (With Raymond Wilson) *Kansas Land*. Gibbs Smith, 1988. *Bull Threshers and Bindlestiffs: Harvesting and Threshing on the North American Plains*. University Press of Kansas. 1990.

Publications & Presentations cont.	(With Jim Hoy) *Plains Folk II: The Romance of the Landscape*. University of Oklahoma Press, 1990. *Dakota Circle: Excursions on the True Plains*. Institute for Regional Studies, 2000. *Pacing Dakota*. North Dakota State University Press. 2018. Editor, *History & Memory in German-Russian Country*. North Dakota State university Press, 2025. In press: *Of Land and Sky: History at the Grassroots of the Canadian Prairies*, Texas A & M University Press Some fifty articles in historical and literary journals, chapters contributed to scholarly books. Recent ones include: "Heroes of German-Russian Country: Making the Most of Our Narrative Heritage," *Heritage Review* 49 (October 2019): 22-26; "Happy as a Clam: The Origins and Evolution of 'Little Old Shanty on the Claim,' the Anthem of the Plains," *South Dakota History* 52, no. 2 (Summer 2023): 166-77; "The Stern Old Bachelor, Arthur L. Stokesberry, and His Ballad: Reigniting Research in Great Plains Folksong," *Kansas History* 46, no. 3 (Autumn 2023); "A Genuine Granger Song: Reverend Knowles Shaw and 'The Farmer Is the Man.'" *Great Plains Quarterly* 43, no. 4 (Fall 2023): 403-18. Presenter of papers at more than seventy professional meetings, including the Western History Association, the Western Social Science Association, the Canadian Historical Association, the International Council for Canadian Studies, the New Zealand Historical Association, and the Agricultural History Society. 2009 keynoter, New Zealand Historical Association. About a hundred published reviews in scholarly journals; articles in a variety of popular and agricultural magazines; and (since 1983, with Jim Hoy), the weekly syndicated newspaper feature, *Plains Folk* (which ceased with the passing of Dr. Hoy, December 2024) Public lectures—hundreds, in a variety of forums ranging from full university convocations to afternoon study clubs; mostly historical societies, educational organizations, and agricultural associations.
Public Persona	Writer & presenter of *Plains Folk*, weekly radio feature devoted to history, folklore, literature, and life on the Great Plains of North America, heard statewide in North Dakota via Prairie Public radio and offered worldwide as a podcast via NPR One - more than 1100 radio features written and voiced Writer & presenter of the *Willow Creek Folk School*, every third Friday livestream (Facebook Live) performing and explicating ballads & folksongs of the Great Plains - 194 hour-long features so far
Roots	Active partner in a 150-year-old family farm in western Kansas