

2016 Convention Report

The 18th SGGEE Convention and Annual General meeting was held at the Radisson Hotel in Calgary, Alberta Canada with the convention theme "Pack Your Research Toolbox". This year a special emphasis was placed on Volhynian research as two of our guest workshop speakers Dr. Mykhajlo Kostiuk and Alex Brzhyzyskyi came to Canada from the Ukraine.

Professor Kostiuk has written several books tracing the history of Germans who lived in Volhynia prior to the 1915 Russian deportations. In October 2015, Dr. Kostiuk organized the first international convention on the history of Germans in Volhynia held in Lutzk, Ukraine.

Alex Brzhyzyskyi has led "Volhynian Adventure Tours" for the past 12 years. Many SGGEE members have traveled with him and visited their German ancestral villages, along with other sites of interest in the Ukraine. Alex also supervises the SGGEE Volhynian indexing project in the Zhitomir, Rowno and Lutzk Archives.

Special thanks go out to Mabel Kiessling who selected and made arrangements with the Radisson hotel; to Rita and Steve Lyster for their generosity in sponsoring Dr. Kostiuk's trip to Calgary and Peter von Lipinsky who donated handmade Kashubian bookmarks as door prizes.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank the many members and volunteers who once again shared their genealogical expertise that created a helpful and supportive atmosphere during the convention; to Board Director Edie Adam for her creativeness and support in planning and developing our program guide and advertising materials; to Rose Ingram for her active involvement in assisting our speakers, overseeing the registration process and working out numerous details with the hotel and to Publicity chair Helen Gillespie for her diligence in advertising our convention.

The following is a listing of the workshops presented:

- The Changing Maps in Europe--John Althouse
 - German Communities in Volhynia-- Mykhajlo Kostiuk
 - "Like Sowing Winter Wheat" Introducing Genealogy to Children and Youth--John Althouse
 - Tracing your Ancestral Roots in the Volhynian Archives--Alex Brzhyzyskyi
 - DNA and Genealogy--Earl Schultz
 - Using DNA to Solve Genealogical Problems--Earl Schultz
 - The Volhynian Church and Religious Life of the Colonists-- Mykhajlo Kostiuk
 - Eastern Europe in Time and Space--Brenda L. Smith
 - Conserve the Treasure: What Photographs Need from Us--Brenda L. Smith
 - "They are Still There" Locating Villages and Deciphering Script--Uwe Krickhahn
 - Your Family Tool Kit--Brenda L. Smith
- Banquet Speech: A Photo Journey of our Ancestral Homeland-- Alex Brzhyzyskyi

Respectfully submitted, Bill Tucholke, SGGEE Convention chair