

## **“Our Ancestors’ Past —Our Future” 2024 GRHS Convention Presentations**

The GRHS 53rd International Convention of 2024 will be held in Mandan, North Dakota at the Baymont Inn & Suites on July 17-20, 2024. Convention registration information has been emailed to online members and is available to view and download at <https://www.grhs.org/pages/Conventions>. The registration forms and preliminary agenda have been sent out to all members. As changes or corrections occur, a new file is put online. So keep checking in case there are changes. Contact GRHS at (701) 223-6167 for information on information or registering for the convention. Registration forms can be found on the website at [grhs.org](https://www.grhs.org).

The silent auction will be held again this year and will be in Pier 7. The money raised goes to the GRHS Endowment. So, if you are planning to come to the convention, please bring an item for the auction. If you have an item that relates to Germans or German-Russians, that would be good (i.e. family history or town books, scythes, canned jellies, etc.). However, any item you think would be of interest is welcome.

Go to the GRHS website <https://www.grhs.org/pages/Conventions>, to view the Convention presentation and schedule listed on the registration forms for in-person presentations.

A Pre-Convention Bus Tour kicks off the 2024 Convention with a tour to the Fort Lincoln-United Tribes Technical College and the University of Mary with the Annunciation Monastery.

The tour includes a presentation by Dennis Neumann on the history of the Fort Lincoln and United Tribes Technical College. The 230-acre campus lies in close proximity to the site of a historic encounter between military troops and Tribal People. Fort Lincoln was once used as a Citizen’s Military Training Camp and regional headquarters for the work program Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC). During World War II (1941-1946), the fort was used as an internment camp. Many Germans, Japanese nationals, and American citizens were interned here during the war. The site was later used by the Army Corp of Engineers during construction of the Garrison Dam and Lake Sakakawea.

In 1966, the military declared it excess property the property containing 87 former Fort Lincoln buildings and 106 acres of land was transferred to United Tribes for education training.

After the tour of the United Tribes Technical College the tour moves on to the University of Mary which the Benedictine Sisters of Annunciation founded in 1947. Lunch will be here before touring Annunciation Monastery.

The Dakota Pioneer Chapter will host a German Dinner at the Mandan Eagles Club.

This year we have lined up 5 cooking demos plus an interesting history and art of making “Pysanka.”

On Thursday, the Regional Interest Groups (RIGS) are holding their annual meetings. This year we brought back a time to meet the Village Coordinators (VCs) & Regional Interest Group (RIGs) Spokespersons. They can help you with questions you have on your ancestral village or those brick walls.

Friday night we will be entertained by “The 5th Dementia.”

Saturday night ends the convention with a dance with “Hugo and Julie Lee Ternes and the White Rose Band,” Fargo, ND.

### **Thursday**

10:15 am **Beresan RIG-Valerie Stewart**

#### **The Last Green Valley - Mark Sullivan (presented once)**

A true story of the Martel family’s journey with their two sons as they leave Ukraine for the land of freedom.

#### **ND State Germans from Russia to GRHS –In Narrative and Photos – Karen Retzlaff**

Karen tells the story of how and where the Germans from Russia Heritage Society began.

- 12:45 pm **Grossliebental RIG – Valerie Stewart**  
**Crimea RIG-Matt Klee**  
**Growing up Rural in the 1950's – Part 1 – Marilyn Kratz**  
 Marilyn takes you back to the days of feed sack dresses, party lines, rural school and Christmas programs. Her stories tell of a simpler time when the egg money had to stretch far.
- Death Demystified – Robyn Morales**  
 Dive into using death certificates and alternative records for researching your family history.
- 2:00 pm **Kutschurgan RIG – Dennis Roth**  
**Bessarabia RIG & Presentation: The Lives of Women in Bessarabia –Lonny Brakel**  
 The presentation is about the lives of women in Bessarabia interwoven with specific narratives and anecdotes about ancestors and family members. It touches on the emigration story of Lonny's great-grandmother.
- Thoughts on Genealogy, Genocide and Collective Guilt – Ron Vossler**  
 Ron will discuss how genealogy—in light of his research about the Germans from Russia—can lead to uncomfortable findings.
- The Irony of it All: German-Russia Cousins in WWI – Randy Entzminger**  
 Follow Private John Mayer, a young German-Russian Immigrant from Basic Training, Infantry Training, and into battle in France near the end of WWI.
- 4:00 pm **HOP RIG – Harry Harsch**  
**Schlitz Kuechla- Cameron Nicklaus**  
 Learn how to make Schlitz Kuechla. Made from a sweet dough and sometimes called Twisted doughnuts, Elephant ears, or fry bread. Which is it? Taste this sweet delicacy.
- Some Immigrated to Mandan a Century Ago, but What Happened to Those Who Stayed Behind in Katharinental? – Leo Rung**  
 Leo's presentation tells the story of his Rung ancestors who emigrated from the Rhineland to South Russia in 1817, becoming a founding family of Katharinental, a Catholic village in the Beresan Colonies.
- Friday:**
- 10:15 am **Growing up in the Shadow of Winchester Butte- Pete Silbernagel**  
 Join Pete as he shares stories of his German-Russian/Emmons County heritage
- Why Did Your Ancestors Leave Their Homeland and Emigrate to Russia? Germany in the 18th Century – Ulrich Merten**  
 Ulrich presents the conditions and the many reasons to emigrate aside from war: pestilence, poor harvests due to bad weather, etc.. The most important reason was the lack of land that peasants couldn't afford to buy.
- Growing up Rural in the 1950's, Part 2 – Marilyn Kratz**  
 Marilyn's stories, excerpts, and poems will highlight what it was like growing up when the highlight of your week was going to town on Saturday night. Relive your childhood through the stories she shares.
- 12:45 pm **Founding and the 1st Difficult Years of the Crimean Colony of Kronental – Matt Klee**  
 This presentation tells the story of the founding and establishment of the Crimean colony of Kronental. It includes the difficulties colonists faced, both human and natural, encountered in those first years as well as the oversight provided by the Welfare Committee.
- Some Immigrated to Mandan a Century Ago, but What Happened to Those Who Stayed Behind in Katharinental? – Leo Rung**

Leo's presentation tells the story of his Rung ancestors who emigrated from the Rhineland to South Russia in 1817, becoming a founding family of Katharinental, a Catholic village in the Beresan Colonies.

**Plachinda/Blachinda – Cameron Nicklaus**

Savory or sweet? Onions and pepper? Some like it hot, some like it cold, but the power of the pumpkin unites us all! Come participate in making and sharing a German Russian favorite. And, of course, the taste testing comes afterward.

**Alsace Lorraine Research Made Easier – Robyn Morales**

Robyn will be able to help you dive into French records using the example of her Senger family who went from Alsace to Strassburg in the Kutschurgan Colonies, and then to the Dakotas.

2:00 pm **Family Tree Maker – Yvonne Haefner**

Learn what software programs are available to use off-line or online to build your family tree. Learn the menus that make up Family Tree Maker and how to use the menus, and writing sources.

**Growing up in the Shadow of Winchester Butte – Pete Silbernagel**

Join Pete as he shares stories of his German-Russian/Emmons County heritage.

**Kase Knoephla Cheese Buttons – Luella Gomke**

Luella will demonstrate how to make the noodle dough, the filling, and how they are cooked. Then have a taste of those delicious cheese buttons.

**War & German Immigration to Russia 1760-1820 – Wayne Garman**

Wayne will describe four wars and their aftermaths during the period 1760 to 1820 plus their impact on the German rural population including our ancestors.

4:00 pm **Basic Beginning Genealogy – Yvonne Haefner**

Come prepared with facts on your family as Yvonne delves into the beginning of your family tree. Learn how to use the different forms for documenting your information.

**Bessarabia Resettlement—June to October, 1940—Allen Konrad**

Learn how World War One affected what was going to happen to Bessarabia in the future; the German-Soviet Agreement in Moscow in 1939 setting the stage for Bessarabia to become part of the Soviet Union; how World War II afforded the Soviet military to take over Bessarabia in 1940.

**Hochzeit Schnapps (Red Eye) – Margaret Ternes (presented once)**

Learn how Red Eyes is made. Then have a taste of the brew served by many Germans from Russia at weddings.

**Saturday**

8:45 am **Family Tree Maker- Yvonne Haefner**

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**War & German Immigration to Russia 1760-1820 – Wayne Garman**

Wayne will describe four wars and their aftermaths during the period 1760 to 1820 and their impact on the German rural population including our ancestors.

**Kuchen – Luella Gomke (presented once)**

Luella will demonstrate how the sweet dough is made for Kuchen, and how to press the dough into the pan in preparation for the fruit and custard filling. Then have a taste of the sweet treat.

10:15 am **Art and history of the Ukrainian Egg "Pysanka" – Kathy Cline**

Kathy will present the history and demonstrate the art of making Pysanky. She began making pysanky at an early age and did so until life became busy during high school.

**The Lives of the Women in Bessarabia – Lonny Brakel**

The presentation is about the lives of women in Bessarabia interwoven with specific narratives and anecdotes about ancestors and family members. It will touch on the emigration story of Lonny's great-grandmother

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Ulrich presents the conditions and the many reasons to emigrate aside from war; pestilence, poor harvests due to bad weather, etc., but the most important reason was the lack of land that peasants could afford to buy.

**The Wolf Chasing: Humorous Stories and Jokes from a Lifetime of German-Russian Writing – Ron Vossler**

Ron will pick and choose, depending on what the audience wants to hear, from humorous, interesting, or even startling anecdotes about growing up in Wishek, ND as well as incidents from his subsequent writing career, travels, and research.

**Alsace Lorraine Research Made Easier – Robyn Morales**

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