



Leopoldina

news

Deutschen Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina –
Nationale Akademie der Wissenschaften

Halle (Saale), 16 December 2011 **05/2011**

Handover ceremony of the Leopoldina's new headquarters



Ceremonious handover of the keys: architect Romy Fuchs, President Jörg Hacker, Secretary General Jutta Schnitzer-Ungefug and architect Norbert Hippler (from left). Photo: Markus Scholz

The refurbishment of the new headquarters of the German National Academy of Sciences Leopoldina in Halle is complete. In a symbolic gesture, President Prof. Dr. Jörg Hacker ML and Secretary General Prof. Dr. Jutta Schnitzer-Ungefug received the keys to the new headquarters on 13 December in the presence of numerous representatives from the spheres of politics, science and society. The Leopoldina will be operating in its new headquarters at Jägerberg 1 from January 2012.

Norbert Hippler of the architectural office RKW Rhode Kellermann Wawrowsky said he was “almost reluctant” but also delighted to hand over the keys in the banquet room of the new building. In his

earlier welcoming address, Leopoldina President Jörg Hacker had emphasised that the refurbishment was a superb achievement. “After a construction period of just over a year, the Leopoldina now has freshly refurbished, impressive headquarters that are custom-tailored to its needs.” Despite a few unexpected obstacles, the ambitious time schedule was met, and the new building can now be filled with life. “The Leopoldina wants its new headquarters here in the heart of Halle to become a centre for international dialogue and exchange between science, politics and society.” Thanks to the architects and planners, we now have the ideal conditions for this vision

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**Dear members
and friends of the Leopoldina,**

a busy and eventful year is drawing to close. In 2011 the Leopoldina spoke out on important



issues and contributed its scientific expertise to numerous social debates and political decision-making processes. Its position papers on preimplantation genetic

diagnosis and on energy research following the natural disaster in Japan are just two examples. The Leopoldina also represented the German Scientific Community at international level, participating, for example, in drawing up the recommendations for the G8 summit in Deauville. Another highlight was the Leopoldina Annual Assembly, which this year examined the question “What is life?” from a broad range of perspectives and disciplines. 2011 was a varied and exciting year for the German National Academy of Sciences and it is not over yet. Between Christmas and the New Year, the Leopoldina will relocate within Halle to new head office situated opposite Moritzburg castle. The prestigious building is ideally suited to become a place of encounter and lively international exchange. So we have good reason to look forward to 2012. And on that note, I wish you a wonderful festive season and a very Happy New Year!

Kind regards,

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View of the gleaming white facade and the landscaped grounds on the day of the handover ceremony.

Fotos: Markus Scholz



The Leopoldina's new banquet room, where the handover ceremony took place, followed by the traditional Leopoldina Christmas Lecture. This year's lecture was held by Prof. Hans-Joachim Meyer on "The Purpose of Multilingualism in the Sciences".

to become a reality." President Jörg Hacker also expressed his thanks for the generous financial support from the federal and state governments. The German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development provided € 15.8 million from the second economic stimulus package for the extensive redevelopment, and the State of Saxony-Anhalt contributed almost € 1 million, also from the second economic stimulus package, towards the purchase of the property. The Leopoldina's Secretary General, Jutta Schnitzer-Ungefug, thanked partners such as the architectural office RKW and Arcadis, the company that managed the project, as well as supporters from politics and science, and tradespeople from numerous businesses in the region. She

also expressed the Leopoldina's gratitude to the Weltkugel Stiftung, the foundation from which the Leopoldina bought the former Masonic lodge that will serve as its new headquarters, and in particular the Leopoldina Academy Circle of Friends, which provided funding for most of the building's lighting system.

The opening addresses at the handover ceremony were given by the State Secretary for the German Federal Ministry of Transport, Building and Urban Development, Rainer Bomba, and the State Secretary for the Ministry of Science and Economics of the State of Saxony-Anhalt, Marco Tullner. Rainer Bomba congratulated the Leopoldina on behalf of the federal government and called the refurbishment of the building an "ext-

raordinary success" in which all requirements had been met. The economic stimulus package had provided a total of € 500 million in funding for around 700 projects, of which the Leopoldina was the largest single project. Referring to the name "White House", as the locals have dubbed the building on account of the colour of its facade, State Secretary Marco Tullner said that this was a "White House of the intellect rather than one of power". He went on to say that the state of Saxony-Anhalt and the city of Halle would play their part to ensure that the Leopoldina would feel truly at home on the Jägerberg for many years to come.

The hill on which the building is located is part of a rampart that was constructed as a fortification for Moritzburg castle in the 16th century. The name "Jägerberg" is derived from a hunting lodge that was built there in the 17th century. The Masonic lodge "Zu den Drei Degen" bought the property in 1792 and added several extensions to the building over the years. During the Third Reich, the lodge succumbed to pressure from the Nazi government and transferred ownership of the property to the city of Halle, which used it as an event venue and rented out some of the rooms. After 1945, the Soviet military administration used the building as a cultural centre. From 1952 on it served as an auditorium building for the university of Halle. The building was sold to the Weltkugel Stiftung, the legal successor to the Masonic lodge in 1998, and was vacant until 2009, when it was bought by the Leopoldina. Reconstruction work began in 2010. (mab)

International Issues

Global exchange at the STS forum in Kyoto

High-profile meeting defined key areas for action on energy and world health

This year, the eighth meeting of the Science and Technology in Society (STS) forum took place from 2 to 4 October 2011 in Kyoto in Japan, in the presence of the Japanese crown prince. The STS forum was launched on the initiative of Koji Omi, a former finance minister in the cabinet of Shinzo Abe. Around 800 delegates from the fields of science, technology, politics, business and media, travelled from all over the world to participate in the event. Attending on behalf of the Leopoldina were President Prof. Dr. Jörg Hacker ML, former President Prof. Dr. Volker ter Meulen ML, Vice President Prof. Dr. Ursula Staudinger ML and Secretary General Prof. Dr. Jutta Schnitzer-Ungefug. German Federal Minister Prof. Dr. Annette Schavan gave one of the opening speeches at the forum, which was chaired by Koji Omi.

The STS forum discussed issues of global significance, such as energy and the environment, and focused particularly on nuclear energy security and possible further developments in this field. These key topics were chosen in response to the earthquake and tsunami in Japan, which devastated Fukushima prefecture

in March 2011. A key point of agreement among the delegates was that the future global energy supply must be built on a broad foundation, meet the highest security standards, and be as compatible as possible with the environment and society. For this to succeed, more international cooperation in these areas is required.

Another key topic on the agenda was global health challenges. Given the advances in genome research, one proposal was to attribute greater importance to personalised medicine. The aging population, at least in most industrialised nations, was also discussed at the forum. Delegates talked about how to keep older people active in society for longer and how to improve quality of life for the elderly.

Important in-depth discussions also took place in the discussion rounds, which ran in parallel to the plenary sessions. In 2011, these focused on the following themes:

- Energy and mobility; renewable energies; nuclear technology
- Personalised medicine; the science

- of aging; infectious diseases
- Nanoelectronics; nanotechnology in healthcare; new materials
- Collaboration between science, industry and governments; science and engineering education in the 21st century; new university models for the 21st century
- Water; sustainable forests; sustainable oceans
- Smart cities; capacity building in developing countries; human living space and adaptation in response to the effects of climate change
- The role of the media in science and technology; human behaviour in a sustainable world

Leopoldina representatives were actively involved to these discussion rounds. On the initiative of the Science Council of Japan, a meeting was also held for academy presidents or their delegates. This provided an opportunity for exchange as well as a chance to present the activities of the Leopoldina at both national and international level. (jsu)

New organisation for European science

The new organisation Science Europe was founded in Berlin on 21 October 2011. The organisation brings together 50 European research organisations and will be based in Brussels. The President of the Leopoldina, Prof. Jörg Hacker ML, attended the inaugural celebrations. Science Europe aims to coordinate the research activities of its member organisations and to establish a European Research Area in cooperation with the European Commission. The process to found Science Europe was primarily

supported by the European Heads of Research Councils (EUROHORCS) and the European Science Foundation (ESF). EUROHORCS was dissolved in the course of the founding of the new organisation. ESF and Science Europe are planning to work in close cooperation. Both the President of Leibniz Association, Prof. Karl Ulrich Mayer ML, and German Research Foundation DFG, President Prof. Matthias Kleiner ML, will serve on the governing board. Prof. Paul Boyle, President of the Economic and Social Research Council

(ESRC) and the Research Council UK will act as President. The Vice Presidents are Prof. André Syrota, General Director of the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research (Inserm), and Prof. Pär Omling, former General Director of the Swedish Research Council. (mab)

► To find out more, visit:
www.scienceeurope.org



Leopoldina President, Jörg Hacker, Federal Minister of Education and Research, Annette Schavan, and the former President of EASAC and the Leopoldina, Volker ter Meulen, in Brussels. Photo: Felix Kindermann

EASAC marks its 10th anniversary in Brussels

Anniversary celebrations of the European Academies Science Advisory Council focus on policy advice – statement on solar power

On the evening of 7 November, the Palais des Académies of the Royal Academies of Belgium in Brussels played host to celebrations marking the 10th anniversary of EASAC – the association of the national science academies of the EU Member States. Official speeches were given by Prof. Dr. Annette Schavan, German Federal Minister of Education and Research, and Lord May of Oxford, former Chief Scientific Advisor to the British Government and former President of the Royal Society. Both speakers addressed the question of how scientific advice can be useful to politics, but from different perspectives: Schavan spoke as a politician, and Lord May as a scientist. Schavan stressed that politics and science should not try to monopolise each other: “European science policy is responsible for ensuring that scientific work has the necessary autonomy and scope for action. Science, in turn, must ensure that policymakers have the necessary expert knowledge at their disposal.” Lord May of Oxford said that, ideally, science sets the stage for a process of democratic debate and choice.

After the speeches, EASAC presented its latest report for the EU institutions.

The report explores the possible role that concentrating solar power could play in reaching the EU’s climate change targets. According to the team of experts appointed by the EASAC member academies to compile the report, concentrating solar power can make a major contribution to a sustainable energy supply for Europe. The authors call on the EU to include and support the technology in its energy planning. Prof. Robert Pitz-Paal from the German Aerospace Center in Cologne headed the working group that compiled the study and presented the group’s recommendations; afterwards, the audience had the opportunity to put questions to the members of the working group. The event ended with a reception for the more than 200 guests, comprising European scientists, EU politicians and representatives of European scientific institutions. (csd)

► Further information, the speeches and the EASAC report on concentrating solar power are available at: www.easac.eu

Cooperation between EASAC and the Joint Research Centre (JRC) of the European Commission

On 18 October in Brussels, the European Academies Science Advisory Council (EASAC) and the Joint Research Centre (JRC) presented their first joint report, entitled Impact of Engineered Nanomaterials on Health: Considerations for Benefit-Risk Assessment. The JRC is a department of the European Commission, tasked with advising the Commission on questions relating to science and technology. The report contains state-of-the-art knowledge on nanomaterials and the risks they entail. It therefore addresses a topic that has the potential to play a major role in economic growth in Europe. Among other things, the report emphasised the need for a harmonised regulatory framework to rule out potential risks to health and the environment. The EASAC and JRC experts also say that the successful further development of nanomaterials will require stronger interdisciplinary collaboration between scientists.

Due to the success of this joint initiative, the two organisations have now drawn up a Letter of Intent on closer cooperation over the next three years. EASAC President Prof. Sir Brian Heap, and Director General of the JRC Dominique Ristori signed the Letter on 18 October, after the presentation of the nanomaterials report. The JRC hopes that the new partnership will facilitate interaction with outstanding scientists in the EU, and make it possible to address important new scientific issues quickly. For EASAC, the exchange will provide improved access to the political institutions of the EU. (csd)

► For more information, visit: www.easac.eu

Leopoldina Human Rights Committee examines the ethics of biosciences

Fundamental human rights such as freedom of opinion and assembly are essential to academic work. At the same time, researchers must also tackle human rights issues – for example in the field of medical ethics. At the Second European Symposium on Human Rights and Science, held on 8 and 9 September, the Leopoldina's Human Rights Committee (HRC) discussed these aspects from both perspectives with European scientists, scholars and representatives of academies and international organisations. This year's symposium was held at the Council of Europe in Strasbourg – a fitting location, since the Council works to promote democracy and human rights throughout Europe.

The ethics of biosciences were the main focus of the HRC symposium. Top-level staff of the Council provided participants with details of its activities and agreements in the field of bioethics. Particular attention was given to the Oviedo Convention, an agreement drawn up by the Council of Europe to protect human rights in biomedicine.

BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH IN FOCUS

The symposium then shifted its focus to research practices. Prof. Dr. Elmar Doppelfeld, Chair of the Group of Specialists on Biomedical Research at the Council of Europe, started his speech by highlighting the close relationship that exists between human rights and biomedical research. He went on to present evaluations of the protection of human beings in biomedical research. Symposium participants were also extremely

interested in the presentation given by Prof. Dr. Ludger Honnefelder, a member of the North Rhine-Westphalian Academy of Sciences, Humanities and the Arts. He illustrated how the concept of human rights could be used to address the challenges of modern scientific research. An international perspective was provided by Prof. Dr. Matija Horvat of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts, and Prof. Dr. Valeria Csépe of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Their presentations addressed end-of-life decisions in critically ill patients, and respecting human rights in neuroscientific research.

DISCUSSING STRATEGIES ON GOVERNMENT OPPRESSION

One of the HRC's core tasks is to support researchers around the world who are being oppressed because of their academic activities and for exercising their fundamental human rights. Prof. Dr. Hans-Peter Zenner ML, Chair of the Human Rights Committee, said: "Our work is important. We show those affected that we have not forgotten them." He reported on the case of Prof. Dr. Mehmet Haberal, a transplant surgeon and rector of Baskent University, who has been in prison since April 2009. Haberal is accused of being involved in plotting a military coup to bring down Turkey's current government. According to information from the International Human Rights Network of Academies and Scholarly Societies, no credible evidence exists that would justify such an accusation. The HRC therefore wrote a letter to Turkey's President Abdullah Gül, urging him to release Mehmet Haberal. The Committee is also planning to visit Haberal in jail. On

the basis of this case, the symposium participants discussed strategies for exerting influence in cases of oppression of scientists and scholars.

OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES IN OTHER ORGANISATIONS

The HRC symposia offer academic organisations the opportunity to present their human rights activities and approaches. For example, Prof. Dr. Leonid F. Evmenov from the Institute of Philosophy at the National Academy of Sciences of Belarus, talked about the role of human rights in the Belarusian government and legal system. He explained that it is difficult to implement democratic standards and human rights in Belarus. Although they are mentioned in various parts of the constitution, they are really only "poorly realised or even unrealised possibilities". Representatives from the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic, from the Swiss Academies of Arts and Sciences, and from the International Council for Science presented their human rights activities at the symposium.

At the end of the event, HRC chair Hans-Peter Zenner drew a positive conclusion and underlined the important contribution that each of the presentations had made to the human rights debate. The next Human Rights and Science symposium will be held in Berlin in autumn 2012. It will address the issue of dignity and of human rights in the neurosciences. (jn)

Events

January

12 to 14 January
7:00 p.m.

LEOPOLDINA SYMPOSIUM:
"PERSONALIZED MEDICINE"

Österreichische Akademie der Wissen-
schaften, Dr. Iganz Seipel-Platz 2, 1010
Vienna/Austria

► Scientific organization: Georg Stingl
ML (Vienna), Martin Röcken ML (Tübingen)

17 January
4:30 p.m.

SEMINAR ON THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE:
DR. GUNHILD BERG, KONSTANZ:

"EIN SKIZZENBUCH DER EXPERIMENTAL-
PHYSIK. DIE EDITION DER DYCKERHOFF-
NOTIZEN ZU G.C. LICHTENBERGS VORLE-
SUNG ÜBER NATURLEHRE 1796/97"

Leopoldina, Jägerberg 1, 06108 Halle
(Saale)/Germany

29 January to 25 March

EXHIBITION:

"GART DER GESUNDHEIT. BOTANIK IM
BUCHDRUCK VON DEN ANFÄNGEN BIS
1800"

Franckesche Stiftungen zu Halle,
Historian Orphanage, House 1, 06108
Halle (Saale)/Germany

February

7 February
4:30 p.m.

SEMINAR ON THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE:
PROF. DR. HEINER FANGERAU, ULM:
„ANERKENNUNG UND WISSENSCHAFT:
NETZWERKE IN DER WISSENSCHAFTS-
GESCHICHTE DER BIOMEDIZIN IM FRÜHEN
20. JAHRHUNDERT"

Leopoldina, Jägerberg 1, 06108 Halle
(Saale)/Germany

16 February to 14 April

LEOPOLDINA EXHIBITION:
"NEW IMAGES OF AGE(ING)"

Bremische Bürgerschaft, Am Markt
20, 28195 Bremen/Germany

March

6 March
4:30 p.m.

SEMINAR ON THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE:
PROF. DR. MICHAEL GRÜTTNER, BERLIN:
"DIE BERLINER UNIVERSITÄT IN DER WEI-
MARER REPUBLIK"

Leopoldina, Jägerberg 1, 06108 Halle
(Saale)/Germany

22 to 23 March
6:00 p.m.

LEOPOLDINA SYMPOSIUM:
"THE CIRCADIAN SYSTEM: FROM CHRONO-
BIOLOGY TO CHRONOMEDICINE"

Goethe University, Campus Westend,
Hörsaalzentrum, Grüneburgplatz 1,
60323, Frankfurt (Main)/Germany

► Scientific organization: Horst-Werner
Korf ML (Frankfurt)

April

17 April
4:30 p.m.

SEMINAR ON THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE:
DR. SILVIA SCHÖNEBURG, HALLE:
"MATHEMATIK IN FORSCHUNG UND LEHRE
AN DER UNIVERSITÄT WITTENBERG IM 16.
UND 17. JAHRHUNDERT"

Leopoldina, Jägerberg 1, 06108 Halle
(Saale)/Germany

May

8. May
4:30 p.m.

SEMINAR ON THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE:
DR. EKKEHARDT KUMBIER, ROSTOCK:

"HELMUT RENNERT - PROTAGONIST DER
PSYCHIATRIE IN DER DDR?"

Leopoldina, Jägerberg 1, 06108 Halle
(Saale)/Germany

June

12 June
Beginn 18:00 Uhr

SEMINAR ON THE HISTORY OF SCIENCE:
PROF. DR. MARGIT SZÖLLÖSI-JANZE,
MUNICH:

"NATURWISSENSCHAFT UND DEMOKRA-
TISCHE PRAXIS: FRITZ HABER - ALBERT
EINSTEIN - MAX PLANCK"

Leopoldina, Jägerberg 1, 06108 Halle
(Saale)/Germany

People

Deceased Members

David Joseph Apple ML

14 September 1941 – 18 August 2011

Sullivan's Island/USA

Section Ophthalmology, Oto-Rhino-Laryngology and Stomatology

Apple was a co-founder of the Center for Intraocular Lens Research at the University of Utah and of the Center for Developing World Ophthalmology at the Storm Eye Institute, Salt Lake City. He excelled in the field of refractive surgery, particularly in treating cataracts with intraocular lenses. He was appointed a member of the Leopoldina in 2003 for his significant contribution to the international development of intraocular lens surgery.

Albrecht Dold ML

5 August 1928 – 26 September 2011

Neckargemünd/Germany

Section Mathematics

Working with fellow mathematician René Thom, Albrecht Dold proved the Dold-Thom theorem about the infinite symmetric pro-

ducts of a space. His most important work related to the fields of algebraic topology and functional analysis. Following international recognition of his contribution to the study of topology, he was made a member of the Leopoldina in 1985.

Siegfried Herzog ML

10 December 1918 – 15 October 2011 Greiz/Germany

Section Chemistry

The Leopoldina elected Herzog as a member in 1968 in recognition of his studies of oxidation states in transition metals. He specialised in the redox reactions in these states, as well as in stabilising low valency metals.

Philippe Matile ML

20 January 1932 – 29 October 2011 Zurich/Switzerland

Section Organismic and Evolutionary Biology

In his research, Matile focused on the study of cellular compartments. He is considered a co-discoverer of plant lysosomes in the

mould neurospora, as well as the discoverer of meristem cells in plants. He also investigated signs of aging in plant organisms. He became a member of the Leopoldina in 1977.



Leopoldina
Nationale Akademie
der Wissenschaften

Deutsche Akademie der Naturforscher Leopoldina – Nationale Akademie der Wissenschaften

Emil-Abderhalden-Str. 37

06108 Halle (Saale)

Telefon: +49-345/4 72 39 – 0

Telefax: +49-345/4 72 39 – 19

presse@leopoldina.org

Editors

Prof. Dr. Jutta Schnitzer-Ungefug (jsu)

(responsible according to the German Press law)

Prof. Dr. Dr. Gunnar Berg ML (gb)

Manuela Bank (mab)

Verena Möwes

Other authors in this issue:

Dr. habil. Susanne Behrens-Kneip, Senior Scientific Coordinator (sbk)

Dr. Jutta Eckle, Leopoldina-Edition „Goethe. Die Schriften zur Naturwissenschaft“ (je)

Nadine Flerlage, Assistant of the Press and Public Relations Department (ndf)

Dr. Kathrin Happe, Scientific Officer, Department of Science – Policy – Society (kh)

Norman Heenemann, Scientific Coordinator (nh)

Dr. Marina Koch-Krumrei, Head of the International Relations Department (mkk)

Ruth Narmann, Scientific officer, Department International Relations (rn)

Jan Nissen, Scientific officer, Department International Relations (jn)

Sophia Schemel, Assistant, Department of Science – Policy – Society (sms)

Annika Ströfer, Assistant, Department International Relations (as)

Caroline Wichmann, Head of the Press and Public Relations Department (cw)

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Abbreviations

ML = Member of the Leopoldina