



HUMBOLDT ASSOCIATION OF CANADA

The HAC Symposium on Fire

Alexander von Humboldt-Gedenkjahr 2009
In memoriam Alexander von Humboldt 1769 – 1859
Université d' Ottawa / University of Ottawa
Ottawa 28 & 29 May 2009

The 2009 Symposium on Fire, under the academic leadership of Dr. Henry Mantsch, will be the second National Symposium organized by the Humboldt Association of Canada (HAC). A combination of thematic presentations and open forums, it will serve the academic and scientific interests of HAC and its members. This Symposium, a Humboldt Kolleg, will be a scientific and academic showcase for the Humboldt Community in Canada.

Fire, once considered one of four basic elements, has shaped our Universe and molded our behavior from the beginning of time. Fire pervades the history of ancient civilizations as much as it affects our daily lives. Literature or history, anthropology or geology, art or basic science – all are replete with images and events that involve fire. Today's fires include the fire of rhetoric, the 'fire' at CERN's Large Hadron Collider (LHC), laser light shows and awe-inspiring works of art.

It is appropriate that just as the First Symposium focused on Water, the second national HAC Symposium focuses on Fire. Fire is at the core of Canada's largely untapped energy resources, it is integral to our historical involvement in nuclear energy, and it creates everyday risks to our forests and wooden homes. Equally, the temperaments of our artists, politicians, writers, musicians and scientists are sub-consciously and consciously linked to fire. The 2009 Symposium Program will engage this theme in its broadest sense, incorporating cultural, political and scientific interests from historical, current and futuristic perspectives.

The Symposium Programme will feature two prominent speakers from Germany, and several invited Canadian speakers. The first confirmed speaker is *literaturwissenschaftlicher* Prof. Dr. Christoph Heyl, Universitaet Frankfurt, who will speak about the dangers fire represented to the cities of the Middle Ages and the Early Modern Period. In addition, there will be sessions for proffered presentations and space for poster displays from HAC members, a scientific tour and ample time for social interaction.

The Symposium will promote the programmes of the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation (Bonn) to young Canadian scholars. Doctoral, post-doctoral and early career stage academicians are encouraged to attend, along with former Humboldt award holders in Canada, to create a intellectually stimulating atmosphere and to facilitate contact among members of the Humboldt Community.

For information, visit the HAC website, contact Hamid Jorjani (hjorjani@uottawa.ca) or any member of the Symposium's Organizing Committee.

Symposium Organizing Committee:

Co-chairs: Henry Mantsch & Hamid Jorjani

Local Members: Heidi McBride, Joerg Sack, Peter Finger, David Stevenson, Warren Wakarchuk

Ex officio: Dietmar Kennepohl, Anshuman Khare, Len Wiebe, Gernot Wieland
