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Conference Report: International Polar Research Symposium and Awarding of the Georg-von-Neumayer-Medal to Prof. Dr. Leonard Johnson

Kurzfassung

Vom 24. bis 26. Juni 2001 versammelten sich in Bad Dürkheim/Deutschland auf Einladung der POLLICHIA mehr als 30 international renommierter Polarforscher aus sieben Staaten zu einem Symposium über Perspektiven der internationalen Polarforschung, verbunden mit der Verleihung der Georg von Neumayer-Medaille an Prof. Dr. Leonard Johnson (USA). Der Beitrag informiert über die Tagung, mit der die POLLICHIA aus Anlass des 175. Geburtstages von Georg von Neumayer auch im internationalen Wissenschaftsbetrieb Akzente gesetzt hat.

Abstract

From 24 to 26 June 2001 POLLICHIA invited to a symposium about "Perspectives of International Polar Research" in Bad Dürkheim, Germany. More than 30 internationally renowned polar researchers from seven countries joined the meeting. During the convention the Georg-von-Neumayer-Medal was awarded Prof. Dr. Leonard Johnson (USA). The report gives information about the convention that was held to celebrate Neumayer's 175th anniversary and to bring together outstanding experts of polar research.

Résumé

Sur l'invitation de la POLLICHIA, plus de 30 explorateurs des régions polaires venant de sept pays et fameux dans le monde entier ont pris part à un congrès sur les perspectives de l'exploration internationale des régions polaires. Lors de ce congrès qui a eu lieu à Bad Dürkheim/Allemagne du 24 au 26 juin 2001, la médaille de Georg von Neumayer a été décernée au professeur Dr. Leonard Johnson (USA). Cet article informe du congrès ayant lieu à l'occasion du 175e anniversaire de Georg von Neumayer et lors duquel POLLICHIA a donné une nouvelle orientation aux scientifiques internationaux.

Keywords

Neumayer Research, Georg-von-Neumayer-Medal, Neumayer Declaration

1. Introduction

The discussion of "perspectives of modern polar research" and the awarding of the Georg-von-Neumayer-Medal made scientists from all over the world meet in Bad Dürkheim from 24 to 26 June 2001.

For two days lectures on polar research were given. Further the Georg-von-Neumayer-Medal was awarded to Prof. Dr. Leonard Johnson (Glenn Dale, USA) by Hendrik Hering (Secretary of State in the Ministry for Environment and Forestry, Government of Rhineland-Palatinate).

The national and international status of the convention has been documented in the present conference report. In addition to that the status of POLLICHIA as Society of Natural Sciences and Protection of the Environment has been emphasized.

2. Georg-von-Neumayer-Medal

Georg-von-Neumayer-Foundation dates back to 1906. It was named after one of the most important companions of POLLICHIA. The first Neumayer-Medal was awarded to Georg von Neumayer himself.

Information about Georg von Neumayer, the history of Neumayer-Foundation and all medal holders can be found in SPUHLER (1965), PREUSS (1990), KRETZER (2001), KREMB (2001) and KRETZER (2002 in this book).



Fig. 1: Awarding of the Georg-von-Neumayer-Medal to Prof. Dr. Johnson

3. Scientific Symposium

Prof. Dr. Jörn Thiede, president of Alfred-Wegener-Institute for Polar Research and Oceanography in Bremerhaven was the initiator of the first international symposium of polar research in Bad Dürkheim. POLLICHIA welcomed his idea to integrate the awarding of the Georg-von-Neumayer-Medal into an international polar research symposium to attract more international attention to the celebration. Prof. Dr. Ehlers, president of the Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency supported the project. His office has a very close relationship to Neumayer as it is the successor of the former "Deutsche Seewarte", that was founded by Neumayer.

In close cooperation with the partners mentioned POLLICHIA organized the convention and prepared the awarding of the Neumayer-Medal. Experts from seven countries participated in the symposium, among them representatives of renowned scientific societies such as Prof. Dr. Eugen Seibold, former president of the German Research Foundation (DFG), and Prof. Dr. Georg Kleinschmidt, president of the German Society for Polar Research. Their lectures give evidence of the high quality of the meeting.

Of course, many scientists came to Bad Dürkheim to meet Prof. Dr. Leonard Johnson but also Georg von Neumayer's scientific works were always present.

The following scientists took part in the conference: Prof. Dr. Gerd Becker (Hamburg, Germany), Prof. Dr. Sergey Drachev (St. Petersburg, Russia), Prof. Dr. Peter Ehlers (Hamburg, Germany), Prof. Dr. Olav Eldholm (Oslo, Norway), Prof. Dr. Eckhard Friedrich (Landau, Germany), Prof. Dr. Dieter Fütterer (Bremerhaven, Germany), Dr. Karsten Gohl (Bremerhaven, Germany), Prof. Dr. Preben Gudmandsen (Lyngby, Denmark), Dr. Julian Gutt (Bremerhaven, Germany), Dr. Sirpa Häkkinen (Greenbelt, USA), Dr. Jürgen Hahn (Landau, Germany), Prof. Dr. John K. Hall (Jerusalem, Israel). Dr. Hans-Jürgen Hirche (Bremerhaven, Germany), Prof. Dr. Leonard Johnson (Glenn Dale, USA), Dr. Heidemarie Kassens (Kiel, Germany), Prof. Dr. Hans Kerp (Münster, Germany), Prof. Dr. Georg Kleinschmidt (Frankfurt, Germany), Hans-Jochen Kretzer (Neustadt, Germany), Prof. Dr. Yngve Kristoffersen (Bergen, Norway), Dr. Walter Lang (Erpolzheim, Germany), Dr. Dagmar Lange (Landau, Germany), Prof. Dr. Lawrence Mayer (Fredericton, USA), Prof. Dr. Naja Mikkelsen (Kopenhagen, Denmark), Prof. Dr. Eugen Seibold (Freiburg, Germany), Prof. Dr. Sergey Priamikov (St. Petersburg, Russia), Prof. Dr. Ian Reid (Copenhagen, Denmark), Oliver Röller (Neustadt, Germany), Prof. Dr. Peter Schlosser (Palisades NY, USA), Dr. Angela Sommer (Bremerhaven, Germany), Prof. Dr. Jack Sweeney (Manchester, USA), Prof. Dr. Jörn Thiede (Bremerhaven, Germany), Dr. Dieter Uhl (Münster, Germany), Susanne Uhl (Münster, Germany), Prof. Dr. Peter Wadhams (Cambridge, England).

Many more persons joined the ceremony and the awarding of the Neumayer-Medal to Prof. Dr. Leonard Johnson. Only some of them can be mentioned: members of the Neumayer family (Kaiserslautern and Munich), Hendrik Hering (Secretary of State in the Ministry for Environment and Forestry, Government of Rhineland-Palatinate), Georg Kalbfuß (head of the administration of the Landkreis Bad Dürkheim), Wolfgang Lutz (mayor of Bad Dürkheim) and Klaus Hartmüller (mayor of Kirchheimbolanden).



Fig. 2: 4th International POLLICHIA-Symposium: Perspectives of Modern Polar Research and 175th Anniversary of Georg von Neumayer in Bad Dürkheim



Fig. 3: In the POLLICHIA-Museum, Bad Dürkheim: A gift to Prof. Dr. Leonard Johnson (right). Prof. Dr. Jörn Thiede, director of Alfred-Wegener-Institute for Polar and Marine Research, Bremerhaven, and Prof. Dr. Georg Kleinschmidt, president of German Society for Polar Research, Frankfurt, in the background.

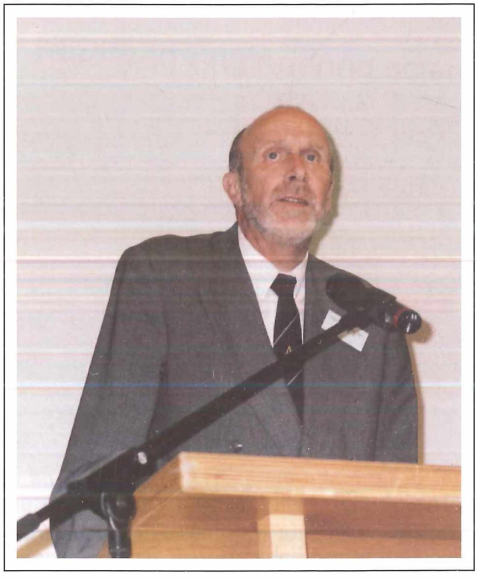


Fig. 4: Reflections about a predecessor: Prof. Dr. Ehlers, president of Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency, gives his lecture.

4. Neumayer Research within POLLICHIA

Just before Neumayer's 175th anniversary our POLLICHIA members Hans-Jochen Kretzer and Dr. Klaus Kremb published their works about Georg von Neumayer.

KRETZER, H.-J. (2001): Windrose und Südpol, Leben und Werk des großen Pfälzer Wissenschaftlers Georg von Neumayer. Neustadt a.d.W.: 88 pp., many figures.

This work written by the head of the Polar Archive in POLLICHIA Museum, Bad Dürkheim was first published in 1983. It copes with the life of Georg von Neumayer, an excellent scientist and well-respected man. After the success of the special exhibition "Windrose und Südpol", the second edition followed in 1984.

With the unveiling of Neumayer's bust in front of POLLICHIA Museum in Bad Dürkheim in 1990 the third edition was necessary. Just in time to meet Neumayer-Medal awarding and Polar Research Symposium in June 2001 the fourth edition was available. The work was published in German and English.

KREMB, K. (2001): Auf zum Südpol! Georg von Neumayers Beitrag zur Antarktisforschung 1855–1900. – POLLICHIA-Buch **40**, Bad Dürkheim: 120 pp., two figures.

The volume deals with Georg von Neumayer's contribution to international Antarctic research from the 1850ies to 1900. It focuses on reprints of lectures given by Neumayer and show his lasting commitment to Antarctic research.

The reprints have been extracted from the out-of-print book "Auf zum Südpol!", that was published in 1901 and contained Georg von Neumayer's fundamental contributions to that subject, among them especially lectures on German and International Geographical Congresses. Klaus Kremb's contribution completes and explains those reprints.

Another publication of POLLICHIA is this symposium report, in which nearly all lectures given in our scientific conference are published.

These Proceedings are printed in the "Mitteilungen der POLLICHIA" and as an independent supplement. The renowned POLLICHIA periodical, well known in German scientific libraries has so gained access to international academic life.

5. Neumayer Declaration – Future Views

The International Polar-Research Symposium and the awarding of the Georg-von-Neumayer-Medal to Prof. Dr. Leonard Johnson in Bad Dürkheim in 2001 has brought about many impulses and the prospect of an International Geophysical Year (IGY) in 2006/2007.

During the symposium in June 2001 the scientific subjects of the IGY have been summarized in the so-called Neumayer-Declaration:

Neumayer Declaration

An IGY Program

Scientific Themes:

Using new technologies to determine:

1. Causes and effects of climatic variability (air–sea–ice interactions)

2. Lithospheric dynamics – Evolution and history of crust and sedimentary cover

Bad Dürkheim, 26 June 2001

Prof. Johnson lately published these themes internationally (JOHNSON 2001). Another common subject of POLLICHIA and its partners Alfred-Wegener-Institute for Polar and Marine Research and Federal Office for Ocean Shipping and Hydrography is to organize the second International Polar Research Symposium in Bad Dürkheim in 2007 and to award the Georg-von-Neumayer-Medal to an outstanding personality of international academic life with great merits in polar research.

Symposium Melds Past and Future Polar Research

An international symposium, Perspectives of Modern Polar Research, was convened in Bad Dürkeim, Germany, to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the birth of Georg von Neumayer, the noted polar explorer and facilitator of German and international polar science. Neumayer, who lived from 1826 to 1909, began his career as a seaman in the merchant marine. Through his skill in geophysics and meteorology, he rose to become the founder and director of the Flagstaff Observatory in Melbourne, Australia, hydrographer to the German Navy, and director of the Hamburg Oceanic Observatory. He was instrumental in organizing the first International Polar Year (IPY) in 1882–1883.

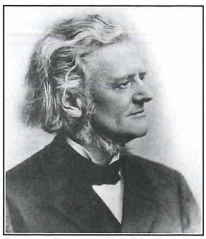
Symposium participants came from Denmark, Germany, Norway, Russia, the United Kingdom, and the United States. Presentations covered a wide range of topics, including Arctic biomass calculations, effects of ice scouring on benthic communities, tectonic issues, the life of the Norse settlers in southwestern Greenland and the enigma of their disappearance, plus Arctic circulation and North Atlantic decadal variability.

Arising from the participant discussions was a strong consensus that a program should be formulated to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the initial IPY in 2007. After another IPY in 1932, the IPY evolved into the International Geophysical Year in 1957. Renewing the IPY concept would require applying to the International Council of Scientific Unions or some other appropriate body for sponsorship, participants noted.

The program envisioned for 2007 would investigate the role of air/sea/ice interactions in climatic variability. It would also probe lithosphere dynamics, defined as the evolution and history of crust and sedimentary cover. This would require modern interdisciplinary/international science using new technologies such as sea floor observatories and new platforms. The proposed European research ice breaker *Aurora Borealis*—with dual moon pools, dynamic positioning, and scientific drilling capability—is the prime example of such a platform. Participants made clear that science planning must start now and emphasize coordination with existing programs, such as Study of Arctic Environmental Change (SEARCH), as necessary components, with joint platforms where possible, and development of automatic equipment. According to the Neumayer Declaration adopted at the meeting, the geographic focus of the program would be the Polar regions.

The symposium was sponsored by Pollichia, a scientific organization founded in 1840 to promote the study of natural sciences in the Rheinland-Pfalz region of Germany. Currently, Pollichia has 3000 members and supports a multi-faceted research program. Additional support was provided by the Bundesamt für Seeschiffahrt und Hydrographie and the Alfred-Wegener Institute für Polar und Meeresforschung. Proceedings will be published as a special edition by Pollichia in the spring of 2002.

Perspectives of Modern Polar Research was held June 24–26, 2001.



Georg von Neumayer, chief of the Deutsche Seewarte in Hamburg. Photo courtesy of Pollichia.

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Fig. 5: "Symposium Melds Past and Future Polar Research": Leonard Johnson's essay in EOS, Trans. Amer. Geophys. Union, **82** (2001).

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