



Conference Celebrating the Fall of the Berlin Wall: 20 Years Later

RIAS Berlin Commission Delegation



Claudia M. Drexel

Claudia M. Drexel works as a reporter for NDR and ARD German Television in Hamburg. She contributes mainly to “Tagesschau,” the most important German news program, with an average of nine million viewers. Drexel covers both, national and international politics. During the last U.S. presidential election campaign, she supported the ARD Studio in Washington, D.C. She also spent several months in Mexico and Turkey to learn more about the background of immigrant groups in America and Germany. Drexel has a master’s degree in American studies, political science and communication studies. She studied in Mainz, Germany, Dijon, France and at New York University, U.S.A. Drexel grew up in West Germany. With the fall of the Berlin Wall, not only her country, but also her family was united again.



Karl Hinterleitner

Karl Hinterleitner currently holds the position of editor/reporter with ZDF in Munich. His focus is Munich-based, reporting on political and economic topics happening there and in all of Germany, as well as connecting to the world-wide coverage. Hinterleitner’s recent focus has been the banking crisis — reporting on the consequences of the financial turmoil both on Germany and Europe. Hinterleitner is also interested in how industries cope with this economic situation, focusing primarily on German-based companies including the automotive industry. He also has experience in corporate reporting, for example he produced a documentary on the Siemens 2008-2009 corruption affair. Hinterleitner’s interest in U.S. issues started when he was a high school foreign exchange student in Texas. Since then, he has regularly worked in the English-speaking world. He spent 3 years as a foreign correspondent in London and has worked in the U.S. frequently, including serving as a “flying correspondent” in ZDF New York and Washington Offices. Hinterleitner has also spent a year in Sao Paulo, Brazil.



Tobias Hauke

Tobias Hauke was born in 1974 in Eisenach, Thuringia, in the former German Democratic Republic, and he witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall and German unification as a teenager of 15-16 years. After getting his high school diploma in 1994, he immediately went into journalism and worked for several radio stations before joining the public MDR Saxony station in 2003, where he still works as a permanently employed TV editor today. He is an expert on unification issues and on problems still existing twenty years after the fall of the Berlin Wall.



Tim Gerrit Koehler

Tim Gerrit Koehler, born 1981, graduated as a Master in Media Studies from the University of Cologne in 2006. During his studies, he completed various internships and worked as a freelance journalist for newspapers, radio, and television stations throughout Germany. From 2006 until 2008 Koehler completed an editorial internship at the North German public broadcasting station, NDR, in Hamburg. Since 2008, he has lived in Munich and works as an editor and presenter at B5 aktuell, the news radio of the Bavarian public broadcasting Bayerischer Rundfunk.



Rainer Hasters

Rainer Hasters is the Executive Director of the RIAS BERLIN KOMMISSION, which was established in 1993 to keep the name of the famous RIAS Berlin station "Radio In The American Sector" alive. The establishment of the RIAS BERLIN KOMMISSION was a direct result of the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and German unification in 1990, when RIAS Berlin "the free voice of the free world" had accomplished its mission to overcome the German division in freedom and democracy. Since 1993 more than 1000 American and German journalists have participated in the information programs of the RIAS BERLIN KOMMISSION. In April 2006 the Radio and Television News Directors Foundation (RTNDF) honored Rainer Hasters with the Barney Oldfield Distinguished Service Award. Hasters is an economic journalist by training and has covered economic and political issues for the public stations Radio Berlin-Brandenburg (RBB) and Westdeutscher Rundfunk (WDR).



Hildegard Boucsein

Hildegard Boucsein works as a political consultant in Berlin with a background in different political and federal and executive and legislative positions like senior consultant in federal and European Affairs with the Berlin Senate responsible for coordinating Berlin's external relations with the European Commission in Brussels and the German Federal Government (in the Bundesrat, the second parliamentary chamber). She also is a member of the Executive Board of the Aspen Institute Berlin and the Shephard Stone Foundation (Stone was U.S. High Commissioner's John McCloy's Assistant in Postwar Berlin) and she is a Rotarian. Boucsein graduated from Düsseldorf University in 1983 with a doctorate in philosophy and education. She also studied at Texas Christian University in Fort Worth, Texas. Her dissertation was entitled "John St. Mill and the Idea of Solidarity." Following her academic education she became head of the personal office of the Mayor of Berlin, Eberhard Diepgen, from 1984 until 1989. At the time when the Berlin Wall came down, she joined the Berlin Aspen Institute as deputy director. She is also closely involved with other German and American institutions that maintain and intensify trans-Atlantic or East-West relations, such as the German Marshall Fund, the RIAS BERLIN Commission, and the Checkpoint-Charlie Foundation, a U.S.-German exchange organization to thank the American people for protecting the freedom of Berlin.