

7th SCAR History Workshop

"Antarctic history: probing the unknown"

Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study, Stellenbosch, South Africa

26-29 July 2011

Call for papers

Thanks to Professor Steven Chown's generous invitation and support, the 7th workshop of the SCAR History AG, "Antarctic history: probing the unknown," will take place at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study of the Wallenberg Research Centre in Stellenbosch (South Africa) from Tuesday to Friday 26-29 July 2011, in connection with the launch of a database of primary resources concerning South African Antarctic research.

The aim of this workshop is to critically evaluate how historians with Antarctic interests can most fruitfully use the growing accessibility of diverse source material. Historians have long been aware that published materials present the constructed face of an expedition, recording events as participants wished to have them known. Archival records – from personal correspondence and institutional records to government documents – provide access to alternative viewpoints that may often significantly challenge our understanding of events. Non-textual materials, most notably photographs, are also increasingly used as evidence rather than decoration. Oral history is also becoming a more rigorous pursuit.

But the digital age presents another challenge. As more and more collections are made available online, the range of potential scholars increases. Anyone with internet access will soon be able to conduct research of a kind that until recently, only scholars with resources and reputations could be confident of pursuing. What will this mean for the future of polar history? With so much data available, historians will be pushed toward asking more challenging 'why' questions rather than being able to find novelty in reconstructing the 'how' of polar history. We also may look forward to a greater number of specific investigations. Finally transnational studies will become logistically easier.

The structure of the workshop is designed to showcase different aspects of these new challenges and opportunities. Two days of scholarly presentations will be followed by a day of discussions focused on new online history sources – principally South Africa's ongoing digitization of its polar records – and a fourth day divided between outreach and brainstorming the future of the SCAR History AG, when it will be upgraded to a SCAR Expert Group. The outreach aspect of the workshop possibly will involve local high schools, and provide a unique opportunity for scholars to go beyond the normal audiences for an academic workshop. Papers addressing all aspects of Antarctic history are welcome, and the organizers will look particularly favourably on papers that engage with methodological issues related to the themes outlined above.

Abstracts of not more than one page, single space twelve point Times New Roman, may be submitted via e-mail attachment to **C.Luedecke@lrz.uni-muenchen.de**

Abstracts must be received by **30 April 2011**.

The workshop is generously supported by the South African National Research Foundation and by SCAR. There will be no registration fees. Thanks to a deal from the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study all meals except breakfast will be covered for 20 attendees during the workshop.

Besides we can pay for travel and accommodation of two guest speakers and give some travel support to other speakers on request. Your application for travel support can only be considered if submitted not later than **15 April 2011** together with an estimation of travel costs and your abstract

The organizers will arrange transport from Cape Town airport to Stellenbosch nearer the date of the workshop. Participants will receive more information about the programme during the second week of May 2011. The programme will be also posted on the SCAR homepage.

For information about Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study, please visit
<http://www.stias.ac.za>.

The following B&B accommodations are recommended, which are all centrally located, reasonably priced and within easy walking distance from both campus and centre town:

Roland's Guest House (from R390.00 ppn) <http://www.rolands.co.za/>

Malan's Guest House (very affordable rates are offered during low season - from R290 ppn)
<http://www.malansgh.de/>

Fynbos Villa (from R450 ppn) <http://www.fynbosguesthouse.co.za/>

Rustenbosch Guest House & Apartments (from R450 ppn for B&B but also offer very reasonable low season rates on fully equipped S/C apartments)
<http://www.rustenbosch.com/>

For a comprehensive listing of accommodations in Stellenbosch, please see the "Stellenbosch accommodation" link on our website: <http://academic.sun.ac.za/cib/>

or see Stellenbosch Tourism Information Bureau

<http://www.stellenboschtourism.co.za/accommodation>

for up to date rates and availability with the option of booking online at discounted rates.

Do not hesitate to contact me, if you have any further questions about the workshop.

Cornelia Lüdecke
Chair SCAR History AG

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