



Alexander von Humboldt

KULTURFORUM

Schloss Goldkronach e.V.

Life and Work of Alexander von Humboldt

The gold mining industry in Goldkronach is associated with one of Germany's greatest personalities: Alexander von Humboldt, known as the last polymath of his kind among Europeans, was born 1769 and died 1859 in Berlin. He worked in Goldkronach from 1792 to 1795, first, as a Prussian Mount Assessor and later as a Head Mining Master and Head Mining Administrator for the Prussian government. At the mere age of 22, after a nine-month education in mining in Freiberg, Saxony, Alexander von Humboldt was sent by a ministerial decree to inspect the mining and iron works of the then newly established Prussian province Ansbach-Bayreuth.



Alexander von Humboldt in the uniform of a Prussian Head Mining Administrator, painted by Rafael Salas (1871).

Picture credits: TU Bergakademie Freiberg

Photo: Torsten Mayer



In this house in the village Goldmühl near Goldkronach Alexander von Humboldt lived part of the time during his work in Goldkronach.

www.humboldt-kulturforum.de

Humboldt's report of this inspection tour, as well as his suggested plans to increase mining in the Goldkronach region, led to his promotion as "Royal Head Mining Master and Chief Headmaster of Practical Mining" for all three mining offices in Bayreuth.



A miner's equipment at the time of Alexander von Humboldt.



Today's "Hotel Meister Bär" in Goldkronach was a former dwelling of Alexander von Humboldt.

As a result of intensive case studies of the mining specifics in the Bayreuth region as well as an exchange of experiences with the Tauern mining offices in Salzburg, Humboldt developed an effective plan to further develop the gold mining in this area.

When Humboldt asked the Prussian King in 1795 to release him from the office of Head Mining Master to pursue his youthful dream of research travels around the world, he had already restructured the mining in this region effectively and helped it in becoming profitable once again.



Today a sign remembers Humboldt's former workplace, the Goldkronach Mining office.

About the Alexander von Humboldt Cultural Society at Goldkronach Castle:

The non-profit accredited society "Alexander von Humboldt-Kulturforum Schloss Goldkronach e. V." was founded in March 2008. Since then it has been the society's main task to honour the life and work of Alexander von Humboldt, who lived in Goldkronach from 1792 to 1795.



Goldkronach Castle today

Further intention of the Alexander von Humboldt Cultural Society is to explore and document the history of Goldkronach Castle as the former official residence of Bayreuth's Margrave administration and the alternating history of owners and inhabitants of the castle in later times.

Through this, the society wants to illustrate the multi-faceted Fichtelgebirge as a Margrave estate and economic resource as well as an inspiration for the cultural work, in the city of Bayreuth. To this end, the society organizes events and projects to support the arts and cultural work in general, to promote mutual understanding among nations and enhance international cooperation and exchange in the areas of culture and science.



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Since 2011 the work and life of Alexander von Humboldt has been documented in an exhibition at Goldkronach Castle, where detailed information on the universal genius Alexander von Humboldt is presented on 10 panels. The exhibition is located in the basement of Goldkronach Castle, but can also be found online at the website of the Cultural Society.

Further information about the Cultural Society and Alexander von Humboldt is available at www.humboldt-kulturforum.de



A bust of Alexander von Humboldt created by the artist Hans Dressel, Forchheim.