



30th Anniversary of the Austrian Canadian Council

At the Residence of the Austrian Ambassador to Canada 9 Crescent Road, Rockcliffe Park

June 14, 2025 13:00 h - 16:00 h

Programme

- H.E. Andreas Rendl welcomes the visitors
- Roland Pirker greets VIP visitors and a short ACC overview
- Musicians from "Music & Beyond", under the leadership of Julian Armour, play music by Johann Strauss



Ottawa

Dear Members of the Austrian Canadian Council,

Dear friends of Austria.

It is a sincere honour and pleasure for me to extend, on behalf of the Austrian Embassy my heartfelt congratulations on the 30th anniversary of the Austrian Canadian Council.

Since its founding in the summer of 1994, the Council has served as a vital bridge between Austria and Canada — both as a national voice and as a home for Austrians and friends of Austria across the country. As an umbrella organization for more than twenty Austrian clubs and societies in Canada, it has fostered a vibrant community where culture, identity, and lasting friendships can flourish.

Through its commitment to promoting Austrian studies, the arts, literature, and academic exchange —most notably through the establishment of the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies at the University of Alberta — the Council has made a lasting contribution to the Canadian cultural and intellectual landscape. Just as importantly, it has helped preserve and celebrate Austrian heritage in Canada, and has shared it with future generations in a spirit of openness and mutual respect.

Even in the short time since my arrival in Canada, I have already been deeply impressed by the warmth and vitality of the Austrian-Canadian community, and the many ways it brings people together through culture, dialogue, and shared traditions. We greatly value the longstanding partnership the Council continues to offer to the Austrian Embassy and the Austrian Cultural Forum.

I would particularly like to express my gratitude to the Council's President Roland Pirker for his longstanding dedication and visionary leadership.

May this anniversary not only be a moment to reflect on past achievements but also an inspiration for future collaboration. I look forward to developing meaningful initiatives and joyful celebrations together.

Andreas Rendl

Ambassador



THE HONOURABLE / L'HONORABLE

DAVID McGUINTY

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR OTTAWA SOUTH DÉPUTÉ D'OTTAWA-SUD

June 14, 2025

As Member of Parliament for Ottawa South I am delighted to congratulate the Austrian Canadian Council on 30 years of incredible service.

I understand that the Austrian Canadian Council was established in the fall of 1994 as an umbrella organization for more than 20 Austrian clubs and societies across Canada.

The Austrian Canadian Council continues to lead the way, informing Canadians about Austrian culture and giving them an appreciation of Austrian studies, performing arts, and literature.

I applaud your commitment and dedication to sponsoring Austrian academic and cultural activities across Canada.

Thank you to the organizers and volunteers who have worked so hard to arrange this terrific celebration and a very warm welcome to everyone as you gather for this milestone occasion.

Congratulations on your 30thAnniversary and wishing you every future success!

Sincerely,

The Honourable David McGuinty, P.C.

Member of Parliament, Ottawa South

Constituency

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111 Justice Building Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0A6 Tel.: (613) 992-3269 Fax: (613) 995-1534



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AUSTRIAN CANADIAN COUNCIL

1391 Cavendish Road Ottawa, Ontario, K1H 6B8

Ottawa, June 14, 2025

Your Excellency Ambassador Rendl and Mrs. Eva Fuchs-Rendl dear Members of the ACC, participants, friends and guests,

Thirty-one years ago in 1994, H.E. Dr. Walther Lichem, the former Austrian Ambassador approached me to create a national charitable organization called Austrian Canadian Council (ACC) for Austrian immigrants in Canada. No one would have anticipated the positive response it had received from Austrian Canadians across our beautiful country. This is all due to the many Austrians compatriots who volunteered and made this organization what it has become today. I am, therefore, very grateful to all the members for their tireless efforts and support they have given me all these years.

I would also like to thank the many representatives of our Austrian Clubs across Canada who took part in our inaugural meeting at the Sheraton Hotel in Toronto in 1995 which was inaugurated by the Austrian Federal Chancellor, Dr. Franz Vranitzky.

Our appreciation also goes to the Wirth family. After reading our magazine "OeCulture", about the Austrian Centre for Central European Studies (University of Alberta), Dr. Manfred Wirth donated in 1999 a 1.3 million dollar Endowment Fund to the ACC. To this day the Austrian Centre, now called the Wirth Institute, has greatly expanded and is continuously doing so.

Today we are not only celebrating 30 years the Austrian Canadian Council, we are also celebrating 60 years of the Austrian Official Residence in Rockcliffe Park. In 1965 the government of Austria purchased this building from the Southam Family. Since then it has been the home of our Austrian Ambassadors. This Residence has a truly great historical musical past. In this magnificent building, Serge Rachmaninoff, one of the world's renowned composers and pianist, played for the Southam Family on January 10, 1923. We are here today to celebrate these historical events. May the celebrations begin....

Sincerely,

Roland K. Pirker

President.

Austrian Canadian Council

Present ACC Board members, meeting October 26th, 2024



ACC meeting 1391 Cavendish Road, Ottawa

Attendees: left to right:

Silvia Tobien (Treasurer Austrian Society Ottawa), Burgie Pirker (hostess), Barbara Till (Treasurer Friends of Austria Ottawa), H.E. Andreas Rendl (Austrian Ambassador), Heidemarie Kelly (Notary & Legal Advisor), Lena Brabec-Steiner (ACC Board of Director), Prof. Dr. Alex Carpenter (Director Wirth Institute-Edmonton), Inga Michalek (ACC Past President, Board of Director & 2nd Secretary), Rick Bonner (ACC National Honorary Chair & 1st Secretary), Chris Welling-Gilette (ACC Board of Director), Roland K. Pirker (ACC President & Treasurer) and Franz Plangger (ACC Board of Director)

30th Anniversary Celebrations (a short historical overview)

The Austrian Canadian Council (ACC) was established in the fall of 1994 as an umbrella organization of the more than 20 Austrian clubs and societies across Canada. Its mandate is to inform Canadians about Austrian culture and offer opportunities to appreciate Austrian studies, as well as Austrian visual and performing arts, intellectual life and literature. The ACC also sponsors Austrian scholarly and cultural activities in Canada. The founding Directors were: Gerhard (Garry) Bonner, Otto Heberlein, Hans (John) Raschke and Roland Klaus Pirker.

On February 14, 1995, the Austrian Canadian Council held its inaugural meeting. The meeting was opened by Austria's Chancellor Dr. Franz Vranitzky and the Austrian Ambassador H.E. Dr. Walther Lichem.

Here are just some of the achievements of the Austrian Canadian Council:

- In 1996, the Austrian Canadian Council, the Department of Canadian Heritage, the Austrian Embassy, the Embassy of Israel and B'nai Brith of Canada sponsored the North American premiere of the opera "The Emperor of Atlantis" by Viktor Ullmann at the National Arts Centre in Ottawa.
- In 1998, the Austrian Canadian Council played a major role in establishing an Austrian Chair in Austrian history, politics and economics at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. The Canadian Centre for Austrian and Central European Studies was opened on September 8, 1998, in Edmonton Alberta by the then Austrian Minister of Science and Transportation, Dr. Casper Einem and his Canadian counterpart, Secretary of State for Science, the Honourable Ronald Duhamel.
- 1998 to 2008: The ACC established thesis and dissertation prizes in Austrian Studies to encourage scholarly work in the field of Austrian Studies at Canadian universities. These included the sponsorship of a Ph.D. thesis prize of \$1,000 and M.A. thesis prizes of \$500 (up to a total of \$1,500) in the field of Austrian Studies; that is, all social sciences, humanities and related fields. A selection committee of three eminent senior Canadian professors of Austrian Studies was established.
- In 1998, the ACC launched its "OeCulture magazine", which covered all of Canada. It was distributed to Canadian politicians, academics, arts and culture leaders, ACC members, and Austrian club and society members across Canada. The magazine informed readers of Austrian academic and cultural matters and the contributions of prominent Austrians. The magazine was a joint project of the ACC and the Austrian Embassy, with funding mainly from the Austrian Society Ottawa and the Friends of Austria Ottawa Inc.

- In December 1999, the ACC set up the "Manfred Wirth Endowment Fund" to exclusively benefit the Canadian Centre for Austrian and Central European Studies at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. Dr. Manfred Wirth graciously donated to the ACC \$1.3 million for the endowment fund. For 10 years, the ACC was the custodian of this fund. Then, it was handed over to the Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies in 2010.
- In 1999, at a conference in Albuquerque, New Mexico, Austrian councils in Canada, the United States and Mexico established the Austrian Councils of North America. In attendance were Roland K.Pirker and Garry Bonner of the ACC, Juliana Belcsak of the AAC, and 150 other participants. They discussed pressing issues that have arisen in North America's Austrian communities, such as rapidly aging membership in our Austrian clubs and the low levels of immigration from Austria to North America. Together, national presidents and council representatives considered how our cultural identity could be passed on to the next generation of Austrians on this continent.
- In 1999, the ACC was the sole sponsor of the first "Austrian Music Workshop for Youth and Master Classes on Austrian Schrammel Music" for students from Ontario and Quebec. It was held at the University of Ottawa.
- In January 2001, the Austrian Canadian Council set up the ACC Awards Program to recognize people within and outside the Austrian Canadian Council's membership for outstanding contributions in promoting the work of an Austrian-Canadian club or society and in furthering the aims and purposes of the Austrian Canadian Council, or in helping to promote Austria. The ACC also wanted to honour individual members of Austrian Clubs across the country for their outstanding contributions, for having worked tirelessly and silently in the background without ever having received much recognition. The Awards Program became an instant success due to the Austrian Clubs' pent-up demand for it. Since its inception in 2001, 150 Gold, 173 Silver and 47 Bronze medals have been awarded across the country. (See our website: Austrian-Canadian-Council.ca).
- In September 2002, Roland K. Pirker, President of the Austrian Canadian Council, was voted by the Austrian expatriate community at large to represent the Austrian Community of Canada as a fully recognized (AÖWB) board member at meetings of the Auslandsösterreicher-Weltbund in Austria.
- The ACC supported six important Educational Projects with the Austrian Embassy and McGill University in Montreal, McMaster University in Hamilton, Carleton University in Ottawa, the Art Gallery of Ontario and the University of Toronto.

- The ACC and the Austrian Society Ottawa co-sponsored three documentaries with CBC Radio Two. The documentaries were on "Johann Strauss", "The Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra" and "Robert Stolz".
- The ACC co-sponsored the exhibition of "Great Masters Drawings from the Albertina" at the Art Gallery of Ontario with the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Embassy of Austria.
- In June 2000, the ACC contributed funds towards the Heritage Garden Foundation to construct this symbolic "Milestone in the History of a People" on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of Confederation.
- In July 2000, the ACC co-sponsored a book launch and photo exhibit together with the Canadian Museum of Civilization of Canada and the Austrian Embassy. Eugen and Gretl Kedl, Austrian immigrants from Burgenland then living in Quebec City, Eugen presented his book Canada in a Thousand Pictures and exhibited photos from that book at the Museum of Civilization.
- In November 2001, the ACC unveiled a plaque to commemorate 50 years of Austrian migration to Canada at Pier 21 in Halifax.
- In 2003, the ACC supported the International Hugo Wolf celebrations with a symposium organized by Jean-Jacques van Vlasselaer. Several concerts were held in Ottawa, Edmonton and Toronto.
- In 2007, the Austrian Canadian Council, The Wirth Institute at the University of Alberta and the Austrian Embassy held a Symposium devoted to commemorating the Austrian victims of the Holocaust and honouring Jewish refugees from the Nazi regime. The symposium, "Exile and Dispersion of a Culture", was held at the Austrian Ambassador's Residence in Rockcliffe Park. Speakers included H.E Dr. Otto Ditz, Dr. Franz Szabo and Hanna Lessing, Head of the National Fund of the Republic of Austria for Victims of National Socialism.
- The ACC was instrumental in three large International Symposia:
 - * May 19-21, 1995: the International Symposium on "Austrian Immigration to Canada" was held at Carleton University in Ottawa. The ACC played a significant role in sponsoring this conference, together with Carleton University, the Austrian Embassy, and Heritage Canada. It was attended by 150 people from across the country and many officials and scholars from Austria.
 - * May 16-23, 2005: the Austrian Canadian Council, Wirth Institute for Austrian and Central European Studies and the Austrian Embassy sponsored and organized the

Austrian Celebrations & Symposium, which were held at the University of Ottawa. More than 300 people from Europe and North America took part. The Mayor of Ottawa officially proclaimed it "Austrian Week". The following milestones were recognized during that Austrian Week:

- 150 years of diplomatic relations between Austria and Canada
- 50 years of the Austrian State Treaty
- 60 years of the 2nd Republic of Austria
- 10 years of Austrian membership in the European Union (EU)
- 150 years of the City of Ottawa
- 40 years of the Austrian Society Ottawa
- 30 years of the Ottawa Schrammel Quartet
- 10 years of the Austrian Canadian Council
- The work of Austria's Composers, presented by Raffi Armenian and Agnes Grossmann.
- May 19-27, 2015: the Austrian Canadian Council, the Wirth Institute and the Austrian Embassy sponsored and organized the Austrian Celebrations & Symposium, which were held at the University of Ottawa. It was attended by 280 people from Europe and North America and the Mayor of Ottawa officially proclaimed it "Austrian Week". Milestones and topics of discussion were:
 - * Austria and the World: Migration and Immigration
 - * Reconsidering Heimat: Transcultural Identities and Relations
 - * Austrian Mountaineer Conrad Klein
 - * 20th Anniversary of the Austrian Canadian Council
 - * 50th Anniversary of the Austrian Society Ottawa
 - * Jazz Concert by the Löscher Duo and screening of the film, The Dark Valley
 - * "Gartenfest" at the Ambassador's Residence and Männer Quintett Klagenfurt-Ponfeld.
- On November 25, 2014, the Austrian Canadian Council, the Austrian Embassy Ottawa, and the Friends of Austria Ottawa worked with the Conflict Research Centre to present: "The First World War a Century later -- Reflections on Peace and Conflict". The lectures by Anna Sheftel and Jean-Francois Rioux, as well as a dramatic performance by Bertha von Suttner, were held at Saint Paul University in Ottawa.
- In 2014 and for another eight years, the Austrian Canadian Council financially supported "January Winter Celebrations at Rideau Hall", home of the Governor General of Canada.
- In 2014, to encourage research and studies in Austrian culture and history, the Austrian Canadian Council established the ACC Garry Bonner Dissertation Prizes for graduates at the University of Ottawa in the field of Austrian Studies.

- In 2017, Marianne Rauscher's book, The History of Austria, for the World Federation of Austrians Abroad, the AÖWB in Vienna, was translated into English by Prof. Dr. Robert Kyserlingk in Ottawa and was paid for by the Austrian Canadian Council and the Austrian Society Ottawa.
- Since 2017, the Austrian Canadian Council helps look for young people in Austria, 9 to 16 years of age, who qualify to become "Future Achievers". The program is organized by the University of Ottawa and sponsored by Cynthia and Yves Bled. It aims to develop leadership and interpersonal skills that will help children pursue their studies and contribute to a world where there is increasing interaction among countries and cultures. The program awards up to \$3,000 to help with post-secondary studies, plus \$100 to \$150 in a yearly scholarship until they satisfactorily complete high school.
- On December 10, 2018, a special film screening was held to mark the 200th anniversary of the song, "Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht" ("Silent Night"), written and composed in 1818 by Austrians Franz Gruber and Joseph Moor. The film, "Das Ewige Lied", was shown at the Ottawa Arts Court by the Austrian Canadian Council, the Austrian Embassy and Ambassador Dr. Stefan Pehringer. Since the film was only available in German, the Austrian Embassy approached the Austrian Canadian Council to fund English subtitling to make the film accessible to North American audiences. The ACC, the Friends of Austria Ottawa and the Austrian Society Ottawa funded the translation. Once the producer ORF completed the project, DVDs of the English version were distributed Austrian Clubs across Canada and the US.
- In 2018, the Austrian Canadian Council represented family members in our Austrian-Canadian community, who were descendants of victims of Austrian National Socialism, in applying for their Austrian Citizenship. We are happy to report that all citizenship applications were granted.
- On April 5, 2019, a lecture was held at the University of Ottawa on "Austria's know-how -- the Building of the Brenner Base Tunnel". The Austrian Canadian Council, the Austrian Embassy and the Faculty of Engineering at the University of Ottawa organized the lecture, which was attended by 150 students, engineers, members of the public, as well as City of Ottawa staff and councillors. The guest speaker, Dr. Konrad Bergmeister, is a world–renowned Austrian scientist and CEO of the Brenner Base Tunnel project. He came on the invitation by ACC's President Roland K. Pirker and all the costs were covered by the Friends of Austria Ottawa.
- On May 27, 2022, at the Austrian Ambassador's Residence in Rockcliffe Park,
 H. E. Sylvia Meier-Kajbic held an event commemorating "70 years of diplomatic relations between Austria and Canada" with the Federal Minister for the EU and the

Constitution at the Federal Chancellery, Karoline Edstadler, in attendance. The Austrian Canadian Council funded the performance of the classical music group "Music and Beyond".

- On January 12, 2020, FoAO, ACC, ASO and Austrian Embassy staff members were invited, and attended, an Ottawa 67's hockey game at the Ottawa Lansdowne Arena. Austrian ice hockey player Marco Rossi from Vorarlberg was honoured with the ACC Gold Medal. Taking part in the ceremony were Austrian Ambassador Dr. Stefan Pehringer, the 1975 Ski-jumping World Champion Willi Puerstl and 90 Austrian-Canadians. Tickets were paid by the ACC and FoAO.
- On January 8, 2023, FoAO, ACC, ASO and Austrian Embassy staff were invited, and attended, an Ottawa 67's hockey game. Austrian ice hockey player Vinzenz Rohrer from Vorarlberg was honoured with the ACC Gold Medal. The Austrian Ambassador Mag. Sylvia Meier-Kajbic took part in the ceremony. The 80 tickets for participants were purchased by the ACC and FoAO.
- On May 11, 2023, the Austrian Embassy and the Austrian Canadian Council celebrated "EU Day" at Lansdowne Park, with music by Music and Beyond.
- On June 12, 2024, the Austrian Embassy and the Austrian Canadian Council held a lecture, "Where the clouds can go a tribute to Conrad Kain".

ACC Presidents:		Present ACC Board of Directors:		
Gerhard (Garry) Bonner	1994-1998	Lena Brabec-Steiner	(2023-present)	
Roland Klaus Pirker	1998-2002	Inga Michalek	(2002-present)	
Inga Michalek	2002-2006	Franz Plangger	(2001-present)	
Roland Klaus Pirker	2006-2022	Roland Klaus Pirker	(1994-present)	
Inga Michalek	2022-2024	Christine Welling	(2021-present)	
Roland Klaus Pirker	2024-present	_		

Former Board Directors:

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Franz Ohler (Board of Director ACC)

(2015-2023) († July 23, 2023)

Hans (John) Raschke (President, Canadian-Austrian Society Toronto)

(1994-2011) († June 2, 2011)

Regional Representatives:

Trudy Duller (Vancouver) and Peter Strausz (Winnipeg)

ACC Honorary National Chair:		ACC Treasurers:		
Frank Stronach	(1995-1998)	Otto Heberlein	(1995-1997)	
Agnes Grossmann	(1998-2005)	André Zeritsch	(1997-1998)	
Dr. Alfred Wirth	(2005-2019)	Frank (Franz) Marth	(1998-2002)	
Rick Bonner	(2023-present)	Ingrid Feil	(2002-2023)	

Roland Klaus Pirker

(2023-present)

ACC Secretaries:

(1995-1998)
(1998-2001)
(2002-2004)
(2004-2007)
(2007-2008)
(2008-2011)
(2011-2012)
(2012-present)
(2023-present)

ACC Vice-Presidents:

Hans (John) Raschke (1995-2011) († June 2, 2011) Christine Meyer (2011-2015) († Nov. 29, 2015)

Austrian Canadian Business Council (ACBC)

Franz Plangger 1998-2001

Awards Chairpersons: ACC Webmasters:

Roland Klaus Pirker 2002-present) Karl Mayer, Ottawa (1998-2003) Gerhard (Garry) Bonner (1998-2002) Jim Burgess, Munich (2003-present)

ACC OeCulture Editor:

Prof. Dr. Manfred Prokop, Edmonton (1998-2010) († 2024)

ACC Legal Advisor and Notary:

Heidemarie K. Kelly, Ottawa (1998-present)

Executive Director of the ACC Foundation Program:

Prof. Dr. Franz Szabo, Ottawa and Edmonton (1996-2001)

ACC Ex-officio Members: Directors, Wirth Institute

Prof. Dr. Franz Szabo (1998-2012) Prof. Dr. Joseph Patrouch (2012-2021) Prof. Dr. Alex Carpenter (2021-present)

ACC Ex-officio Members: Austrian Ambassadors

H.E. Dr. Walther Lichem (1993-2000)
H.E. Dr. Wendelin Ettmayer (2000-2003)
H.E. Dr. Otto Ditz (2003-2008)
H.E. Mag. Werner Brandstetter (2008-2012)
H.E. Mag. Arno Riedel (2012-2016)
H.E. Dr. Stefan Pehringer (2016-2019)
H.E. Mag, Sylvia Maier-Kajbic (2019-2024)
H.E. Andreas Rendl (2024-present)

Prepared by ACC Board of Directors Inga Michalek and Roland K. Pirker

Donation's Gladly Accepted			
I enclose a donation cheque of \$ 1391 Cavendish Road, Ottawa, ON K1H 6B8	_ payable to the Austrian Canadian Council,		
Name:			
Street:			
City and Province:			
Date: Signature:			