

# **1775 – 2025** TU Clausthal

## THE HISTORY OF THE UNIVERSITY

PART 2: 1919 TO 1959 – EXPANSION OF THE UNIVERSITY AT THE SPITTELWIESEN CAMPUS

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Overview of the campus Spittelwiesen with the auditorium, the swimming pool, professors' houses and the Mining Institutes in the Erzstraße.

Many buildings at the Spittelwiesen were constructed under the master builder and architect Leopold Rother, who later developed projects in Colombia that attracted worldwide attention. The assembly hall was completed in just 16 months and within budget.

#### 1919 RECTORATE CONSTITUTION



Willi Bruhns

After the First World War, the Mining Academy experiences an upswing. The number of students increases. The desire for independence from the Clausthal Mining Authority leads to the transition from a directorate to a rectorate constitution. As is customary at scientific universities,

the professors now elect a rector from among their number, who takes over the management for two years. Willi Bruhns was the first to be elected in 1919. In this year, five women enrolled at the Mining Academy for the first time.



Clausthal success story: At the beginning of the 20th century, Friedrich Wilhelm Küster (1861 to 1917) was Professor of Chemistry at the Mining Academy. In Clausthal, he developed the traditional textbook "Calculating tables for chemical analytics". After his death, his Clausthal student Alfred Thiel continued the book. This irreplaceable reference work for laboratory work is now in its 109th edition. It was probably under Prof. Küster in 1900 that the first female scientist came to Clausthal in 1900. Clara Immerwahr, the first German woman to obtain a doctorate in chemistry, spent several months carrying out experiments in Küster's laboratory.

#### 1920

#### FULL RIGHT TO AWARD DOCTORATES

After the transition to the standard constitution of a scientific university, Clausthal Mining Academy was also granted the right to award doctorates from 1920. Previously, doctorates had only been possible in cooperation with the Technical College in Berlin. The struggle for these rights lasted a quarter of a century.



At last! Since 1920 it is possible to obtain a doctorate in Clausthal.

#### 1921

## FOUNDATION OF THE ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS

"Once a Clausthaler, always a Clausthaler". This saying reveals the deep connection that graduates feel to their Mining Academy. Out of this special feeling, alumni founded the Association of Friends in 1921, which would not only help the Mining Academy through the difficult times after the First World War. Today, the network has more than 1,500 members and supports the university in many different ways.



Committed to tradition and the future: the Association of Friends

### 1925 INDUSTRY SPONSORS THE MINING ACADEMY

During the 150th anniversary celebrations, the lack of space in Clausthal also becomes apparent to representatives of the industry. Neither enough hotel capacity nor a sufficiently large event room are available in Clausthal. To remedy the situation, industry pledges its financial support to the university. The visionary planning of a campus on the Spittelwiesen picks up speed.



In the 1920s, plans were developed for the expansion of the former Mining Academy.



The number of students increases after the First World War, shown here are lessons in mining surveying.

### 1927 INAUGURATION OF THE AULA ACADEMICA

Classicist on the outside, expressionist in parts on the inside: the Aula Academica is a landmark of Clausthal University of Technology with the charisma of a palace. The extraordinary domed hall presents itself like a "cathedral of science". The 14-metre-high room impresses with an imposing interplay of color, form and light. This architectural inspiration from the late 1920s can largely be traced back to the architect Leopold Rother. In addition to the state, the coal and steel industry contributed to the financing of the assembly hall, which initially consisted of the domed hall and a gymnasium. Today, the building, once conceived as the spatial, cultural and social heart of the university, is the focal point of the university's events.



Longitudinal section of the auditorium building with the imposing domed hall.

Sacred in appearance: At a height of 14 meters the 16 columns of the domed hall converge in a star shape.



Until 1995, the large hall in the auditorium building was used as a gymnasium, today it is used as a venue for conferences, exhibitions and concerts.



### INFOBOX

Students: International students: Female students:

Professors: 12 Rector of the Mining Academy: Prof. Georg Spackeler,

913
3.5 % of new enrolments female students have been enrolling since 1919 – number not yet statistically recorded
12
Prof. Georg Spackeler, followed by Prof. Lothar Birckenbach

#### 1928/29 INDOOR SWIMMING POOL, SPORTS **CENTER AND SKI LODGE**

The Art Nouveau swimming pool, which is connected to the Aula Academica via an underground 25-meter corridor, opens in 1928. However, austerity measures by the Prussian government lead to the closure of the pool just one year later. It was only under pressure from the city and its population that the swimming pool was reopened in 1931. In 1928 and 1929, the Chemical Institute and the Institute of Mechanical Engineering were built as an ensemble with the assembly hall. Also under the direction of architect Rother, a double professors' house, the ski lodge on the Brocken and finally, in 1930, the changing house on the sports field at the Pfauenteichen were built.



The Art Nouveau swimming pool, completed in 1928, is open to teachers and and students until 2007.



Interior view of the 25-meter indoor pool and diving board.

emy on the western slope of the Brocken.

### 1933 TO 1945 IMPACT OF NATIONAL SOCIALISM

Student numbers, which declined in the second half of the 1920s, continue to fall after 1933 for a variety of reasons. Existing student corporations are disbanded and assigned to pro-Nazi comradeships. From 1937, Mining Academy events in the assembly hall lose their academic and scientific character. Rector Hans Grothe promotes the influence of the National Socialist state conception and implements the Führerprinzip at the Mining Academy. With the outbreak of the war in September 1939, classes at the Mining Academy are initially suspended, as the majority of the staff and students were called up for military service. After a brief closure, studies continued as far as possible until the end of the war.



Between 1937 and 1945, events in the auditorium were influenced by the Nazi regime.



Students on the sports field at Clausthal Mining Academy.

#### 1937 ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS DONATES PROFESSORS' STALL

The podium in the auditorium is redesigned following criticism from Reich Minister Bernhard Rust. A 20-seater, tall professorial stall, made by the wood sculptor Rudolf Nickel in Goslar and financed by the Association of Friends, is installed. The carvings depict scenes from the miner's work, Harz customs and Nazi symbolism. The latter was largely removed after the war. After the most recent restoration, which returned the auditorium to its original state from 1927, parts of the stall are used as exhibits.



Detail of the professor's stall, which was installed in the domed hall in 1937.

#### 1944

#### HOCK PROCEDURE IS PUBLISHED



Prof. Heinrich Hock

Heinrich Hock, Professor of Fuel Chemistry and Technology, becomes known worldwide with Hock's phenol synthesis. As a scientist at Clausthal University of Technology (from 1927 to 1958), he and his assistant develop an organic chemistry process in which cumene is converted to phenol and acetone in a radical chain reaction with oxygen. It is used for the industrial production of phenol. Hock, who was awarded the Grand Cross of the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1964, is as a pioneer in the production of plastics.





950

## INFOBOX

Students:	721
nternational students:	15 %
emale students:	12
Professors:	16

Rector of the Mining Academy: Prof. Günter Wassermann,

1950 followed by Prof. Friedrich Johannsen

#### 1946

#### RECOMMENCEMENT AFTER THE WAR

After the end of the war, the professors and employees are dismissed and the Mining Academy is closed. The institutes are largely undamaged. Reconstruction begins in 1946 by the three professors Heinrich Hock, Gerhard Krüger and Günter Wassermann. They get teaching back on track in the summer semester of 1946. The lectures run from June 12 to September 14. The British military government permits 200 students. They are informed: "Accommodation will be provided, as far as possible, by the Mining Academy. Bringing bedding and woolen blankets is absolutely necessary."



Historischer Hörsaal im Institut für Anorganische und Analytische Chemie.



In the book "From the steel helmet to the swastika - people and events at the Mining Academy Clausthal in the twenties to forties of the 20th century", former rector Prof. Georg Müller has reappraised the period of National Socialism at the university. The book was published in 1995.

### 1952 INAUGURATION OF THE NEW MINING INSTITUTE

The first major construction project after the Second World War are the new buildings for the mining institutes. The buildings in the Erzstraße are inaugurated on November 29, 1952. They are financed by the state government of Lower Saxony and the industry with the Association of Friends as trustee. By the end of the decade, the Institute of Ferrous Metallurgy (now the Institute of Metallurgy) on the Robert-Koch-Straße and the Institute of Non-Metallic Materials (now the Institute of Non-Metallic Materials) in the city center follow as further new buildings.



# PROUD OF 250 YEARS

Clausthal University of Technology, founded in 1775 as the Clausthal Mining School, celebrates its 250th birthday in 2025. Under the motto "traditionally innovative", we are commemorating this major anniversary with numerous scientific, cultural and sporting events.

- $\rightarrow$  Our anniversary year runs from September 2024 to the end of 2025.
- $\rightarrow$  The highlight is the festival week from June 15th to 22nd, 2025.

#### Celebrate with us!



Further information: www.250-jahre.tu-clausthal.de/en

#### Here you will find our university history in four parts:

Part 1: Main building of Clausthal University of Technology, Adolph-Roemer-Straße 2a, Clausthal-Zellerfeld

- Part 2: Aula Academica, Aulastraße 8, Clausthal-Zellerfeld
- Part 3: University Library, Leibnizstraße 2, Clausthal-Zellerfeld
- Part 4: EnergyCampus Goslar of Clausthal University of Technology, Am Stollen 19a, Goslar

#### IMPRINT:

Press, Communication and Marketing Office Editing: Christian Ernst; Layout: Melanie Exner Content support: Teresa Haars (University Archive), Dr. Nadja Wischmeyer and Vanessa Jakubus Financial support: Association of Friends of Clausthal University of Technology





The historical presentation of Clausthal University of Technology and its predecessor institutions makes no claim of completeness. The texts are based on publications on the history of the university by Prof. Georg Müller, Dr. Peter Kickartz and Prof. Peter Dietz, on commemorative publications on the 175th and 200th anniversary of the university and on other sources from the university archives. For detailed information, please contact the Press, Communication and Marketing Office.

## www.250-jahre.tu-clausthal.de