

# The Falkland Society

[www.falklandsociety.org.uk](http://www.falklandsociety.org.uk)

7:00 p.m., Friday 15 February 2019

The Chapel Royal, Falkland Palace

(by kind permission of The National Trust for Scotland)

*All welcome, but there will be a retiring collection to cover the costs of the evening, which promises to be an exceptional event.*

## Professor Dr Axel Klausmeier: the Berlin Wall Memorial, a place of uncomfortable heritage and reconciliation

**Axel Klausmeier** studied Art History, Modern and Medieval History in Bochum, Munich and Berlin. From 1999 onwards he worked at the Foundation for Prussian Palaces and Gardens Berlin-Brandenburg (an organization akin to our Historic Royal Palaces agency) and then at the Department of Heritage Preservation at the Brandenburg Technical University in Cottbus. At the request of the Berlin Senate, he researched the remains of the Berlin Wall in collaboration with his research director, Professor Leo Schmidt: they published their results in 2004 as a book.

In 2006 Axel moved to the Institute for the Preservation of Historic Monuments in Zurich. He was called back to Berlin to participate in a major research project entitled *The Berlin Wall as a symbol of the Cold War: from the key instrument of GDR domestic politics to being a monument of international standing*.

In 2009 he was appointed Director of the Berlin Wall Foundation, a role he has held with distinction ever since.

[www.stiftung-berliner-mauer.de/en/](http://www.stiftung-berliner-mauer.de/en/)



**The Berlin Wall** symbolized the divided world until the end of the Cold War, when the decision was made to clear away the hated border surrounding West Berlin as thoroughly as possible. Official demolition began in June 1990, and was largely completed by 3 October that year, the day of German reunification. Today not much is left of its 155-kilometre long structure.

Berliners and politicians had mostly tried to forget the time of division and ignore the remnants and scars of the Wall, but the early 21st century has seen the rise of a new awareness of the Wall's significance, culminating in celebrations of the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Wall. By 1992, seven sections of the Wall and other border installations had been listed and preserved as Historic Monuments. By 2011 this number had risen to 27, following intensive field research in and around Berlin.

Today the *Stiftung Berliner Mauer* (Berlin Wall Foundation) is responsible for looking after four prominent former Wall sites with a total of approximately 4 million visitors a year.

How are these precious physical remains being treated? What stories are being told in a world of an ever-greater number of new walls? What does the Berlin Wall stand for today?

