

The Mark and Gail Appel Program in Holocaust and Antiracism Education

Learning from the Past Teaching for the Future

Guide to the February 2008 Symposium in Toronto

We're very much looking forward to having everyone together again for the next phase of our project. Here is some information relating to the 2008 Symposium:

1. The Program

We'll have a detailed program for you on February 7. Here is an overview of the program as it now stands (please note that it can and probably will change in some respects):

Thursday Feb. 7	Afternoon Evening	Arrival of "out-of-towners" Welcome get-together for everybody at York
Friday Feb. 8	Morning Afternoon Evening	Workshops at York Workshops at York Optional visit to synagogue; dinner at Michael Brown's with talk by Sara Horowitz
Saturday Feb. 9	Morning Afternoon Evening	Free Same as morning Public Conference at York (see below)
Sunday Feb. 10	Morning Afternoon Evening	Free (opportunity for Church) Group Brunch + Public Conference at York Group Dinner (program to be announced)
Monday Feb. 11	Morning Afternoon Evening	Workshop at York: Conversation with survivor Excursion to Niagara Falls Dinner in Niagara Falls, Ontario
Tuesday Feb. 12	Morning Afternoon Evening	Bus outing to ethnic communities in the area Same as morning Program and Reception at Polish Consulate General
Wednesday Feb. 13	Morning Afternoon Evening	Visits to Toronto area schools Preparation time for project presentations Presentations, Session I

Thursday Feb. 14	Morning Afternoon Evening	Presentations, Session II Presentations, Session III Presentations, Session IV
Friday Feb. 15	Morning Afternoon Evening	Travel to Hidden Valley Resort near Huntsville (200 km north) Workshop Dinner with talk by Michael Brown
Saturday Feb. 16	Morning Afternoon Evening	Free Closing Workshop Farewell celebration
Sunday Feb. 17	Morning Afternoon Evening	Free (with opportunity for church) Travel to Toronto Fly home

We will discuss the schedule in detail when we are all together, but there are two points we want to mention here:

- The public conference on Saturday evening, February 9 and Sunday afternoon, February 10 focuses on the topic: Difficult History, Diverse Audiences: The Holocaust and Antisemitism in Contemporary Perspective. You will receive a separate schedule on February 7.
- Please note that on Friday, February 17, we are going as a group to the Hidden Valley Resort near Huntsville for the weekend (<http://www.holidayinnhuntsville.com/>). We expect that it will be significantly colder than in Toronto, and that there will be more snow. So please bring appropriate boots and clothing (see Section 14 below).

2. Flight Tickets

We have arranged for Lufthansa tickets (sometimes in combination with LOT) for those coming in from Europe. For those flying on February 7, you are all on the same flight from Frankfurt to Toronto. We have already emailed the electronic tickets and mailed the paper tickets (for those coming from Poznań, Dr. Aleksandra Boroń has already gotten them). When you receive them, please check to ensure that everything is correct. And please let us know by email that they have arrived.

It may seem unnecessary to say this, but please make sure that you have written the dates and times correctly, and that you are on time for the flight.

The seats for the transatlantic flight have been assigned by Lufthansa. We have tried to order special meals in accordance with your wishes. Please check to see if this has been done correctly.

The tickets have been paid for, and assuming that there are no errors, any changes you might want to make will be your responsibility, both in terms of arranging them and paying for them. There is no insurance on the tickets, so please take care to be on time!

3. Getting to the Airport in Europe

You are responsible for getting to the airport in good time for your flight. More thorough security checks mean that lines are longer and it takes more time to check in and get through security. Please allow plenty of time, and please keep all receipts for taxis and public transit to the airport.

If for some reason you miss your flight or are refused boarding, we regret that we cannot pay for a replacement ticket.

For those traveling to/from the Frankfurt airport by train or private car, we will reimburse you for your travel expenses, but you will need to provide us with the originals of all receipts (tickets etc.) in order to be reimbursed. In the case of cars, we'll need the number of kilometres.

4. Arriving in Toronto

At the Toronto airport (whose official name is "Lester B. Pearson International Airport"), those coming from Frankfurt on February 7 will probably arrive at Terminal 1. We will be waiting for you where you exit Canada Customs. If there is a problem, ask someone to call Mark's cell-phone: 416 427-6019 (but please note that sometimes cell phones do not work at Terminal 1). The phone number of The Canadian Centre for German and European Studies is 416 736-5695; you can also call Mark's home number: 416 482-5573. If you are arriving on an earlier date, we regret we can't meet you, but please check in by phone or in person when you have arrived.

While you are on the airplane, you will receive a declaration form for Canada Border Services. On the form, check, as your reason for coming to Canada, "personal." If the Border Services Officer asks you, you can say that you are attending a conference or visiting friends. You are not a student at York, nor are you attending courses at York, so you do not need a student authorization. You are also not employed while in Canada. If there is any question, ask the official to page one of us.

You are allowed to bring in 1.5 litres of wine or 1.14 litres of liquor and up to 200 cigarettes (but since you can only smoke outside and it can get very cold, your stay here would be a good time to stop smoking). Do not bring any meat, cheese, sausage, or other foods. Chocolate is fine!

Once you go through this first screening, you take your Declaration Card with you and go downstairs to collect your luggage. If for some reason your luggage has not made the journey with you, file a report with Lufthansa in the luggage area before leaving it, and give the Centre phone number (416 736-5695) or Mark Webber's home phone (416 482-5573) as the contact number.

After you get your luggage, and still holding on to your Declaration Card, you then go through a second check – the officer will tell you whether you are free to leave the customs hall or need to have your luggage looked at.

We'll be waiting for you outside the customs area.

5. Getting from the Airport to York University

If you are arriving with the group on February 7, we will arrange for transportation to York. If for any reason you are stranded or arrive at a different time, you can take a taxi to York – 4700 Keele Street. But please contact us by phone so that we can give you good directions.

6. Thursday at York

The group flight from Frankfurt is scheduled to land at 15:40 on Thursday, February 7. It will take a bit of time to go through Customs, get your luggage, and come to York; so that we expect we will be arriving at the university sometime before 18:00 (midnight European time).

At York, we will help you find your rooms and let you rest a bit. Then we'll rendezvous with the York students at the Canadian Centre for German and European Studies (Room 230 in the York Lanes building). We'll have a short briefing and some pizza and salad. We have booked the students into double and triple rooms, and the non-students into single rooms, in various York residences.

From February 10 through 17, most York residence students will be away, as it is "Reading Week" (which many York students use to go skiing or to travel to warmer climates). But there will be some York students in the residences. Please be aware that it is their home, too; but also that you need to be aware of security issues.

We'll explain all the technicalities when you are here.

7. Accommodations

We have booked rooms at York for all the European participants, beginning the evening of Thursday, February 7, and ending with check-out the morning of Friday, February 15. We ask your understanding for the fact that, if you are arriving earlier or staying later, you will be responsible for making the arrangements and paying for the extra nights.

When we check out of York to go to Huntsville the morning of Friday, February 15, those who are flying out of Toronto the afternoon of Sunday, February 17 should take all their luggage with them, as we will be going directly to the airport from Huntsville.

8. What's at York?

E-mail will be available through the Canadian Centre for German and European Studies, and we are exploring whether we can get you expanded privileges.

Breakfast and snacks are available at various restaurants on campus – you will receive a list of what is open when. There is also a bookstore, computer store, store to buy food and snacks, and various other amenities we will tell you about.

9. Money Matters

As was the case when we were together in Europe, we are paying for your travel to and from airports and across the Atlantic, for your accommodations, and for all group meals and activities, including transportation on chartered buses in Toronto and to and from Huntsville (more on that later).

You are responsible for drinks during meals (except when we tell you that they are included in what we are paying) and all incidentals, including phone calls, film, snacks etc.

Please keep a receipt for any expense you think might be eligible for reimbursement. This applies specifically to breakfasts, which you will buy on your own – we'll then reimburse you, but only if we have your receipt.

Please note: We need original receipts and ticket stubs for the university's accounting department – so please save everything relating to the Project.

10. Insurance / Liability / Next of Kin

Sorry to bring up potentially unpleasant things, but we have to remind you of the following:

As you remember, you signed a statement taking sole and exclusive responsibility for damages or injuries arising in any way from, or in connection with, your participation in the project. You also released York and its agents from all responsibility and liability for such damages and injuries. This release is still valid and in effect.

The Europeans also need to have arranged for sufficient insurance to cover them for illness, accident, liability, and loss of property incurred in connection with the project. Please either let us know the details of this insurance, or bring a copy of the policy with you.

Also, you told us before the Field Study who your next of kin; if anything has changed here, please let us know.

11. Health / Safety / Security

There is a fully-staffed doctor's office at York, but we hope you won't need it. There are lots of colds going around, however.

Toronto is a relatively safe city by North American standards, but like any large city it has its dangers and less safe areas. We will brief you on the situation when you arrive, but please do not wander around the campus or the city by yourself at night.

In all of North America, the emergency number for police, fire, and ambulance services is 9-1-1. You can dial this from any "normal" phone (including public phone boxes) for free.

The phones in York University offices and the rooms in which you are staying on campus are not "normal" in that they are connected to the university internal network. Thus, to make them into a "normal" phone (to get an "outside" line), you must dial "9" first. In addition, the university has its own security service – from a university phone the number is 33333.

12. Food – Allergies, Requirements, Preferences

From the Summer Field Study we have a list of peoples' allergies and dietary needs. If yours have changed, please let us know immediately.

While in Toronto, the meals that we have ordered as group meals (as well as the box lunches) will all be kosher. When you're ordering your own breakfast or on your own, you are of course free to order non-kosher food. As always, if you have a question, feel free to ask.

13. What to Bring

Please don't forget to bring with you everything you need for the presentation of your project.

As well, be sure to pack pictures and scrapbooks from the Summer Field Study.

To ensure you are eligible for all possible discounts, please be sure to bring a student identification card and to carry it with you throughout your time here.

On clothing, see the next section.

14. Weather / Clothing

As we write this it has turned cold after having been uncharacteristically warm – above freezing, but normally temperatures in Toronto in February are below zero and can go down to –20 C, with a “wind chill” equivalent to –36 C. Moreover, we are going “up North” to Huntsville for the second weekend. This is about 200 km north of Toronto and has lots of snow. Please bring warm clothing and boots. Be sure to include a warm hat and gloves. It is more effective to use layers of clothing than to bring super-heavy clothes, however. Also, we will have the opportunity to rent snow-shoes and to go “tubing” and sliding in Arrowhead Provincial Park north of Huntsville. So if you have snow pants, please bring them. (Regrettably, we won't have room for skis on the bus.)

On at least one occasion, we will be visiting a private home – we'll be having dinner at Michael Brown's house on Friday, February 8. It would be good for you to have slippers or an extra pair of socks for that occasion, as it is customary to take off your shoes when you visit a house. Having slippers and a bathrobe will also be good for living in residence, since the bathroom may be across the hall in some cases.

We are not going to any really “fancy” events. On Sunday, February 10, before the conference, we're having a brunch (combination of breakfast and lunch) to which some outside guests will be coming. On Tuesday, February 12, we are invited to the Polish Consulate General for a program and reception. Also, we will be visiting some houses of worship and you will also have the option of going to Christian and Jewish religious services. As long as you have some clothes that are suitable for these kinds of events (you don't need to “dress up”), you'll be fine.

15. York Students

Even though the Canadian students will mostly be living at home (except during the second weekend when we are all up North), they are still “on duty” with the project on a full-time basis, as are the European students. The York students are preparing some special activities for the group, about which they will tell us when everyone is together.

For the overnights in Huntsville, the bus will pick you up at York the morning of Friday, February 15 and take you back to York the afternoon of Sunday, February 17.

16. See You Soon!

Fly well. We're all looking forward to being together again and to continuing, extending, and deepening our discussions and explorations. We also welcome the opportunity to show you the same kind of hospitality we found in Germany and Poland. See you soon!