

40 years CCH-Congress Center Hamburg

Major events coming up in anniversary year 2013

Hamburg, 22 February 2013 – After 40 years of event history, CCH-Congress Center Hamburg remains one of the global players in the conference business. Major events at CCH in this anniversary year include big medical meetings such as the 8th World Congress of Melanoma, and other leading conferences. The really big mega-events this year are the 34th Convention of the German Protestant Church with more than 100,000 participants, and the 96th Lions Clubs International Convention Hamburg 2013 with expected attendance of 25,000 people – they will put CCH and the adjacent fair site at the centre of two enormous events which will have a tremendous impact on the whole of the city of Hamburg.

The idea of building a big conference centre in Hamburg dates back to the 1960s, and the final decision to build was made by the Hamburg Parliament in 1969. “There is no conference centre anywhere in the world that has a comparable situation in terms of its setting and its transport infrastructure,” said Prof. Dr. Herbert Weichmann, then Mayor of Hamburg, at the topping-out ceremony for the CCH in 1971. And Caesar Meister, who was Construction Minister in Hamburg at the time, described the building of the CCH as a “bold project”. It comprised construction on 18,000 square metres, for the five-storey CCH building plus two basement levels. The plans were drawn up by architects Jost Schramm, Gerd Pempelfort und Partner. A total of 38,000 cubic metres of concrete and 4,800 tonnes of steel were used in the project. When the CCH was opened in April 1973, it was unmatched in Germany in terms of its size and complexity, and it was subsequently used as a planning model for new conference centres throughout Europe.

“We are proud of the fact that CCH has been playing continuously in the ‘Champions League’ for the last 40 years,” says Edgar Hirt, CCH Division Manager. “CCH has always maintained its leading position in the conference sector, hosting a wide range of internationally important events. A total of 130 world congresses have been held at CCH so far.” The top conventions include the World Cancer Congress 1990 with 10,000 participants, the ASTA World Travel Convention 1990 with 7,000 delegates, the COSPAR International Scientific Assembly (space research) in 1994, the World Computer Congress 1994, the UNESCO International Conference on Adult Education 1997 and the International Postal Union Congress 1984, which was the longest meeting ever held at CCH, lasting 40 days. A lot of attention was attracted last year by the 20th World Congress of Psychiatric Genetics, by Bio Europe 2012 (Europe’s biggest biotechnology conference), and by the 10th German Senior Citizens’ Convention, with speakers including Chancellor Angela Merkel and Federal President Joachim Gauck, attracting more than 18,000 visitors to CCH from 3 to 5 May 2012.

One of the outstanding events in the CCH anniversary year is the 34th German Protestant Kirchentag (Church Convention), to be held in Hamburg from 1 to 5 May 2013 with some 100,000 participants. The CCH and the fair site will be at the heart of the various Hamburg venues, with the “Market of Opportunities”, and numerous spiritual and cultural events and exhibitions.

Another very special event, and a first for Germany, is the 96th Lions Club International Convention, to be held in Hamburg from 5 to 9 July 2013. The CCH and the exhibition halls will be at the centre of activities. The exhibition halls will be the central meeting point for the expected 25,000 participants from all parts of the world. There will be seminars, workshops, an exhibition of winners of the Peace Poster Competition and the International Photo Competition, exchange stands, and the support organisation for delegates.

Other events worth mentioning are the 8th World Congress of Melanoma from 17 to 20 July 2013 with 1,200 participants, the 13th EURETINA (Congress of the European Society of Retina Specialists) from 26 to 29 September 2013 with 3,000 participants, and the 4-day conference of the Chaos Computer Club (held annually at CCH) with more than 5,500 participants.

CCH also has an amazing record in the cultural sector over the past 40 years, with major balls, banquet events, and in particular concerts. With an incredible record of world stars, from A for ABBA to Z for Frank Zappa. They include Joan Armatrading, Leonard Bernstein, Joe Cocker, Phil Collins, Sammy Davis jr., Deep Purple, Brian Ferry, Genesis, Keith Jarrett, Cyndi Lauper, Luciano Pavarotti, Queen, Diana Ross, Santana, Tina Turner, UB 40 and Neil Young. And the series of stars at CCH continues – the concert agenda for 2013 already features Katie Melua, Sarah Connor, Paolo Conte and Roger Whittaker.

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