

Heidelberg Exchange – Elisabeth-Von-Thadden Schule



Heidelberg is an intact, historic city in the Rhine Valley. It is said that, because of its legendary beauty, it was not bombed during WWII. There is still a castle there, as well as many historic sites. It is near Strasbourg, in the “Alsace” region of France. (Virtual Tour 14 minutes):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O72SR6V9CdU>

Elisabeth von Thadden—Rescuer, Educator, Hero

(1890- September 8, 1944)



The Protestant educator Elisabeth von Thadden established a boarding school for girls at Schloss Wieblingen near Heidelberg in 1927. She kept Jewish teachers and students there until the school was shut down by Nazi authorities in 1941. Elisabeth von Thadden criticized the Nazis' crimes in private, kept school in session in secret, and provided help for persecuted Jews. She was betrayed by a Gestapo informer on September 10, 1943. Elisabeth von Thadden was arrested on January 13, 1944, imprisoned in Ravensbrück concentration camp, and sentenced to death by the People's Court on July 1, 1944. Her time in the concentration camp and the death sentence did not affect the strength of her convictions, and she continued to write about humanitarian issues. Elisabeth von Thadden was executed on September 8, 1944.

After the war, the school reopened under her name, and honors Ms. von Thadden's memory in its everyday humanitarian ideals, progressive curriculum and teaching, and a semester exchange with an Israeli community. We have opened a cultural and historical exchange with them starting in February of 2016. Five students (primarily tenth graders) will travel to Heidelberg and stay with their host families from February 14-24 (Feb break and then some), and von-Thadden students will visit us at the beginning of March (through March 9).

Please encourage your tenth-grade students to attend an informational meeting on Thursday, November 12 in Room 2N5. Please feel free to come and learn more! If students are interested but can't make the meeting, please have them contact Maggie Favretti.

In the meantime, here are a couple of videos so you can have a mini-tour of the school and virtually meet some of their students.

Videos: This overview of the school is in German, but you can pretty much tell what's going on.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YgkP5ng7Qhk>

This is an introduction to their English Drama Club: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b4QVYXcjdQ>