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Milligan represented at German celebration

MILLIGANCOLLEGE, — Dr. Ted N. Thomas represented Milligan College at a celebration of Germany's oldest university, Heidelberg's Ruprecht-Karls-University. The university celebrated the beginning of its 625th year on Saturday, June 25.

Ted, a professor of humanities, history and German at Milligan, and wife Jane-Anne, are Heidelberg alumni who returned to Germany for a sevenweek visit this summer to continue their research on Hermann Maas, a Heidelberg pastor who saved the lives of thousands of Jews during the Holocaust.

"We were so pleased that our visit coincided with this historic celebration for Ruprecht-Karls-University," said Thomas. "While in Heidelberg for the festivities, Jane-Anne and I had a brief visit with the head of the university, Dr. Bernhard Eitel."

The Thomases presented Eitel with a letter from Milligan President Dr. Donald R. Jeanes, congratulating Eitel and the university for reaching this milestone.

The letter from Jeanes praised Ruprecht-Karls-University for "setting an example and establishing high expectations" in the 14th century, while also being recognized as No. 1 among Germany universities in the 21st century.

Accompanying the letter was a gift to the university's library system. The Thomases presented Eitel with "The Gospel of John in the Sixteenth Century: The Johannine Exegesis of Wolfgang Musculus" (Oxford University Press, 1997) by Dr. Craig Farmer, professor of history and humanities at Milligan.

"An electronic search of the libraries of the University of Heidelberg revealed that they did not own Dr. Farmer's book, which highlights German Reformation figure Wolfgang Musculus, who once considered teaching at Heidelberg," Thomas said.

In addition, Thomas presented Eitel with a short academic paper he wrote about Maas.

"The article I wrote r e c o u n t s t h a t w h e n the Americans closed the University of Heidelberg in 1945 for de-Nazification purposes, Pastor Maas was still able to gather with three members of the theological faculty and about 60 students to continue lectures," Thomas said. "Maas was on the Americans' 'white list' because of his strong antifascist reputation.

"The University of Heidelberg's motto is 'Semper Apertus' —'the book of learning is always open.' But in the summer of 1945, it would not have been open if Pastor Maas had not been able to keep teaching."



Special to the Citizen Tribune

Dr. Ted Thomas (left), a professor at Milligan College, presents a gift to Dr. Bernhard Eitel, the head of Germany's oldest university, Heidelberg's Ruprecht-Karls-University.