

2013 Annual Report

In February 2013, the University of Heidelberg Archives celebrated their 625th anniversary; their first mention as an archive appeared on 8 February 1388 by the founding rector of the University of Heidelberg, Marsilius von Inghen, whose charters were consigned to a small archival chest (*parva archella*) in the university coffers (*archa universitatis*) placed behind the main altar of the Church of the Holy Spirit (*Heiliggeistkirche*) in Heidelberg.

Today the University Archives stores 1,800 vellum documents from the Late Middle Ages through the Modern Era and a total of 4,500 linear meters of records. In addition, there are various collections that contain around 15,000 images from more than 600 years of the university's history, plus several thousand new photos, 6,000 broadsheets, 300 medals, and coins, as well as over 200 seals and replicates of seals. The implementation of modern archive and image databases since 2012 has worked to improve the research accessibility of these holdings on the internet. The business of modern archiving in 2013 also included the processing of 1,800 inquiries, both domestic and international. Almost 800 users entered the reading room and for a few hours, several days, or even weeks at a time gained insight into the archival materials and the approximately 3,800 volumes, plus newspapers, of the service library. Along with the visitors numbered also 17 seminar groups, primarily from the Center for European Historical and Cultural Studies (*Zentrum für Europäische Geschichts- und Kulturwissenschaften*), whereby the numerous guests of the 12 public presentations were not counted.

Among the public presentations were also those of the one-day lectures that took place in February 2013 to mark the beginning of the Archive's anniversary. Thus was the first mention of an archival chest in 1388 at the oldest university in Germany occasion for a conference in Heidelberg on the history, collections, and projects of the university archives of the state of Baden-Württemberg. The anthology that was produced during the conference contains not only the presentations of which it consisted, but also provides through additional articles from other university archives in southwest Germany a kind of handbook overview of the collective lineages and diverse characteristics of these archives. After depictions of the university archives in Freiburg, Heidelberg, Hohenheim, Karlsruhe, Konstanz, Mainz, Mannheim, Saarbrücken, Stuttgart, and Tübingen follow short descriptions of large-scale projects undertaken with the holdings of the University of Heidelberg Archives: [Universitätsarchive in Südwestdeutschland. Geschichte—Bestände—Projekte. Tagung anlässlich des 625-jährigen Jubiläums der Ersterwähnung einer Archivkiste der Universität Heidelberg zum 8. Februar 1388 \(=Heidelberger Schriften zur Universitätsgeschichte 1\), hrsg. von Ingo Runde, Heidelberg 2013](#) (University Archives in Southwest Germany).

This volume is the beginning of a new line of "Heidelberg Publications on University History." Therein appear academic monographs or anthologies that examine different aspects of the university's history from its beginnings through the recent era. These monographs serve to process unique characters and key sources in the university's history, as well as departmental and university histories. The oldest university in today's Germany can stand either as an epicenter of the region or as part of a comparative study with other university sites. And so develops a view of Heidelberg's fundamental structures and developments in the national as well as international university network.

The conference and its anthology alike were part of an outgoing incentive by Heidelberg for a reinforced collaboration between the universities in southwest Germany. This incentive is especially meaningful to fields such as that of "Long-term Digital Archiving." In addition to the University of Heidelberg Archives' participation in a national taskforce of higher education archives, a collective solution will also be developed in which several university and research archives from across Baden-Württemberg hope to take part. At the bedrock of these collaborations is the online journal [DiMag](#), developed by the state archive of Baden-Württemberg in cooperation with the state archives of Bavaria and Hessen, whose joined efforts for higher education archives will be tested in 2014.

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