

PRESS RELEASE

WINTERSHALL DEA FOUNDATION SUPPORTS BOOK AND EDUCATIONAL PROJECT ON JEWISH CEMETERY

- Group with descendants and pupils research and document the Jewish cemetery in Bad Wildungen
- Cemetery to be made more usable as an extracurricular place of learning
- Foundation wants to help secure the memory

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The Jewish cemetery in the North Hessian town of Bad Wildungen is the only remaining place of former Jewish life in the spa town - and a very special one at that: Unlike all other Jewish cemeteries in the Waldeck-Frankenberg district, Jewish spa guests are also buried here. They were mainly from Eastern Europe and visited the former cosmopolitan spa of Wildungen, especially during its rise in the last third of the 19th century. To date, however, the role of the cemetery has not been professionally researched. A project group led by Johannes Grötecke, a history teacher from Bad Wildungen, and the Waldeck Historical Society wants to close this gap with a documentation project. The Wintershall Dea Foundation for Democracy and Diversity is supporting this project with a printing grant of 1,000 euros.

Descendants of former Bad Wildungen Jews are involved in the project, including Eva Flörsheim (Norway) and Richard Oppenheimer (USA). They are actively participating in the reappraisal because it is close to their hearts that the Jewish heritage of the town is not forgotten. In addition, an employee of the Commission on the History of Jews in Hesse and a class of 10th-grade-students of the Alte Landesschule Korbach



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are also involved. "It is a mixture of historical research and educational project," explains history teacher Johannes Grötecke, who is coordinating the project.

The plan is to document the Jewish cemetery and especially the many grave inscriptions, which are increasingly weathering and becoming illegible, especially on the red sandstone. The aim is to publish a book that will not only contain illustrations and German translations of all the gravestones (from Hebrew). It will also provide the reader with an introductory essay on the history and structure of the cemetery as well as with information on the educational use of such special extracurricular places of learning. The project presentation is planned for the end of 2023/beginning of 2024.

Foundation supports important project for history education

"Eight decades after the end of the Second World War, the number of contemporary witnesses who can tell of the persecution of the Jews by the National Socialists is becoming smaller and smaller. That is why the collection of knowledge about this time is becoming more important," says Michael Sasse from the Board of Directors of the Wintershall Dea Foundation for Democracy and Diversity. "The book project will enable future generations to learn about the history of the Jewish community and its visitors in Bad Wildungen using the example of the historical site. We are very happy to support this project because it makes an important contribution to



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democracy education and helps learners gain an understanding of the importance of an open, diverse society in which all people can feel safe and accepted."

Other supporters of the book project are the Waldeck-Frankenberg district, the Waldeck-Frankenberg Adult Education Centre, the Protestant church community and the Waldeck Historical Society.