

30. June 2022

City history

About the history of the municipal windmill

Bocholt city archive presents historical photo of the month

In 1979, the "Citizens' Action Windmill Square" was founded in Bocholt to redesign the neglected area diagonally opposite the Ludgerus School. After several months of work, a children's playground with modern, wooden playground equipment was created here. In the center of the triangular plot of land, a miniature replica of the former municipal windmill was erected, which stood there until 1930.

This is now recalled by the Bocholt city archive in its series "Historical Photo of the Month".

For centuries, the city of Bocholt had operated a windmill on its own at the gates of the city, which was usually leased for twelve years. The lease income flowed into the municipal budget. An early record is found in the town accounts of 1458, when a windmill was built on the Wecelo estate in front of the lock gate.

On April 4, 1558, the mayors and aldermen commissioned the town carpenter Johan van Dingden to build "eyne uprechte nye windemolle" of wood. This finally fell victim to a violent storm on December 8, 1703. The photo taken around 1915 shows its successor in a view from the southeast. Above the entrance door an inscription was placed, which reminded of the events at the beginning of the 18th century: "Anno 1703 den 8. Xbris wurf der grausam Wint eine Muhle aus Holt daernider. It stands here again from lime and stone." At the end of the 19th century the town gave up the windmill operation. The land was leased out as gardens in 1891, the wings of the windmill were removed and the grinder sold. Among the last windmillers was Martin Rütter (1813-1880), who together with his stepsons Johann (1839-1902) and Magnus Wink (1845-1936) maintained the mill operation until the end.

In the fall of 1912, the roof was removed because the Bocholt Gas and Waterworks used the structure for a year as a temporary water tower for the municipal water supply, which was under construction. 18 years later, the days of the municipal windmill were finally numbered, and it was demolished at the end of June 1930. It had become dilapidated and unfashionable, it was said at the time. The Verein für Heimatpflege Bocholt e. V. tried in vain to preserve this century-old building.





*In Bocholt stand bis 1930 diese städtische Windmühle.
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