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City history

City history: The "Lichtburg" movie theater

Bocholt City Archive presents the historical "Photo of the Month"

The "Lichtburg" is still a familiar name to many Bocholters. The city archive now recalls the cinema in its monthly review of Bocholt's history.

Until the destruction of the city of Bocholt in World War II, there had been two movie theaters in the city: the Apollotheater in Neustraße and the Capitol in Ravardstraße. Both were lost in the bombing raid on March 22, 1945. It was primarily the British occupation forces that attached great importance to the establishment of cinemas to educate the population and to convey new world views, and in the post-war years they initially had movie theaters set up in existing halls in the city.

One of the movie theaters that was built from scratch at the beginning of the 1950s was the "Lichtburg" run by Josef Bresser and Heinz Nienhaus from Borken. After initially searching in vain for a suitable location, they succeeded in acquiring the Lühl rubble site next to the Benölken house on Kaiser-Wilhelm-Strasse in the fall of 1951.

Opening in 1953

In January 1952, when the competing Capitol Theater owned by Wilhelm Nieling was already being rebuilt, they submitted the building application. According to the plans of the architect Karl Jansen from Bocholt, a cinema with a large auditorium seating 1,048 people was built on the Aa River. At the opening of the "Lichtburg" on January 17, 1953, Mayor Otto Kemper conveyed the city's congratulations and thanked all the companies involved for creating a house for the relaxation and recreation of the working population.

First film: "Im weißen Rößl"

The first film to be shown was the German color film "Im weißen Rößl". In 1956, an extension with a theater stage was added to the rear of the "Lichtburg". The city of Bocholt used it as a municipal stage house until 1977. In terms of attendance figures, the "Lichtburg" outstripped the Capitol Theater. Although the number of tickets sold declined rapidly, as in the other houses from 1967 onwards, the "Lichtburg" ultimately remained stronger than the Capitol.

Renovation in 1986

In 1986, the cinema was renovated, equipped with the latest technical equipment and converted into a "Kino-Center Lichtburg" with four modern theaters. At the end of the nineties of the 20th century, however, the end of the "Lichtburg" was announced, because plans for the construction of a large shopping center were on the table and almost all buildings in the area of Kaiser-Wilhelm- and Hohenzollernstraße had to give way. After the last screening, the cinema closed its doors forever on October 28, 1998, and demolition took place three weeks later.





*Von 1953-1998 war die "Lichtburg" der Anlaufpunkt für Kinofans in Bocholt.
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