

Photo of the month - April 2022

The Rudolph Karstadt AG factory building



The brick building of Rudolph Karstadt AG, completed in 1926, is still part of Bocholt's townscape today.

The historical photo of the month, presented every month by the Bocholt city archive, shows the four-storey brick building of Rudolph Karstadt AG in April 2022. Built as the company's manufacturing and storage building, it now houses a large part of the city administration.

After the goods shed on Kaiser-Wilhelm-Straße was presented in the previous episode, the photographer changes sides of the street and goes to the intersection with the entrance to the goods station. His gaze inevitably falls on the imposing factory building on the corner of Frankenstraße, built in the style of industrial architecture of the 1920s.

The four-storey brick building was built by the management of the spinning and weaving mill of Rudolph Karstadt AG for its branch in Bocholt. It was a manufacturing and storage building for which the building application was submitted on 2 March 1925.

Six weeks later, the municipal building authorities approved the plans. Nine months later, the building shell was approved, and in the course of 1926, the completed building could finally be put into operation.

The building, as it still exists today, is 82 metres long and 17.70 metres wide. Its height is 17.44 metres. At that time, the ground floor was used for the packing department, the straightening department and the sewing department. The packing and sewing departments were located on the first floor.

New building for 840,000 Reichsmarks

The warehouse was located on the first floor, as well as in the basement, while the warp winding and warping departments were located on the third floor. Finally, the top floor housed the weft winding department. At the time, the company invested around RM 840,000 in the new building.

If you look to the right into Frankenstraße, you can see the sizing plant, the boiler house, the 75-metre-high factory chimney and a cooling tower next to it behind the factory tower. Immediately in front of its factory and warehouse building, where the distance between the street and the building line was only 8.50 metres, the Karstadt company had a siding that ran across Kaiser-Wilhelm-Strasse and connected the factory site with the railway site opposite. However, this rail connection had already been approved by the predecessor company Gebr. Braunschweig at the end of 1918.

In the course of the world economic crisis, Rudolph Karstadt AG and its 1,200 employees closed down in October 1931. The factory buildings were sold off one by one. The factory building was taken over by the Siemens and Halske company from Berlin in 1941. At present, it houses a large part of the city administration.

The **photo of the month** is presented once a month by the Bocholt City Archive.

Photos and text information come from the holdings of the city archives. The contributions to the picture are written by the following employees of the city archives.

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The picture series was launched at the Bocholt Culture Day 2006 and showed the first photo with the "Meckermannin *Langenbergpark*" in October 2006.

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