

Photo of the month - January 2023

Memories of the Lichtburg



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 the Second World War, there had been two cinema theatres in the city: the Apollotheater in Neustraße and the Capitol in Ravardistraße. Both were lost in the bombing raid on 22 March 1945. It was above all the British occupying power 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 initially had cinemas set up in existing halls in the city.

At the beginning of the 1950s, the "Lichtburg" run by Josef Bresser and Heinz Nienhaus from Borken was one of the cinemas that was built from scratch. After an initial futile search for a suitable location, they succeeded in autumn 1951 in acquiring the Lühl rubble site next to the Benölken house on Kaiser-Wilhelm-Strasse.

In January 1952, when the competing Capitol Theatre 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. At the opening of the "Lichtburg" on 17 January 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 colour film "Im weißen Rößl". In 1956, an extension with a theatre stage was added to the back 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 Theatre. Although the number of tickets sold declined rapidly from 1967 onwards, as in the other houses, the "Lichtburg" nevertheless remained stronger than the Capitol in the end.

In 1986 the cinema was renovated, equipped with the latest technical facilities and converted into a "Kino-Center Lichtburg" with four modern theatres. 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 centre were on the table and almost all the buildings in the Kaiser-Wilhelm- and Hohenzollernstraße area had to make way. After the last screening, the cinema closed its doors for good on 28 October 1998, and demolition took place three weeks later.

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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