

The Aa tit on a long journey



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Eröffnungsfahrt der Aa-Meise nach der Renovierung Juni 1986

Lord Mayor Günther Hochgartz spoke of a memorable moment on 9 July 1977. His wife Margarete had just hurled a bottle of champagne against the side of a pleasure boat, which was given the name "Aa-Meise".

With the handover of this pleasure boat at Schwanenstraße, the town of Bocholt was enriched by a major attraction.

Tourist attraction

The city's press and advertising office had developed this initiative to promote city tourism together with the local hotel and catering association.

In the first few years of its operation, the "Aa-Meise" proved to be quite an attraction for tourists, companies, clubs and societies. At that time, the town recorded around 70 groups a year travelling back and forth between the landing stage on the Uferstrasse and the ironworks in Liedern. In 1984, the number of bookings fell to 40, and in the summer of 1985, the now privatised city information office only counted the registration of a single club.

A year later, a Bocholt innkeeper bought the "Aa-Meise" and restored it at his own expense. The boat was given a new coat of paint and a modern 50 hp outboard motor. The photo shows Helmut Rolke (left), managing director of the town information office, and the innkeeper Ludger Büning when the boat set off again on 13 June 1986 under the motto "Leinen los" after renovation. By this time, 15 boat trips had already been booked. In addition, during the summer

holidays, the city information office offered family and coffee cruises on Sundays.

Accident and final end

On New Year's Day 1987, however, the "Aa-Meise" was wrecked and partially sank. The prevailing high tide had lifted the bow of the boat onto the embankment at Nevelkamp. When the river level normalised again after the locks were opened, the bow remained on the bank and the water from the Aa flowed into the lower-lying stern. A cargo crane finally lifted the 15 metre long and five metre wide excursion boat onto the bank.

Repaired and launched again, the "Aa-Meise" proved to be outdated, obsolete and a technical failure according to experts in 1989. On 16 June 1990, the ship sank again and was finally abandoned after being salvaged.

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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