



FORMER CEMETERY OF THE PROTESTANT COMMUNITY

The area in front of the Hamtor gate was already used as a **burial ground** for fallen soldiers of the besieging army during the Burgundian siege in 1474/75. In 1597, this former “**Junkernfriedhof**” (nobleman’s cemetery) was assigned as a burial ground to the Protestant community in Neuss, which was initially tolerated during the Counter Reformation. After the Protestants were finally expelled from the city around 1620, the unprotected cemetery increasingly fell into disrepair. The cemetery was only used again as a **burial place** for the Protestant soldiers and their relatives from 1642, after the city was occupied by **Hessian troops** at the end of the Thirty Years’ War. The oldest surviving tombstone of the Protestant community in Neuss also dates from this time. Today, it is located in the foyer of the Christ church.



The area in front of the Hamtor gate during the capture of Neuss in the Truchsessian War in 1586, view from Braun and Hogenberg, 1586

With the departure of the Hessians in 1651, the Protestant community in Neuss also ceased to exist. A Protestant community wasn’t **re-established** in Neuss until 1804 during the **French period**. The chapel of the Marienberg monastery was the first church to be handed over to the community. Once again, the community used the old burial site in front of the Hamtor gate as a cemetery. The Protestant **cemetery** was also **abandoned** and the graves relocated with the establishment of the main cemetery on Rheydter Straße in 1873. In 1905/06, the **Christ church** was built on the site of the former cemetery. Some of the gravestones from the early days of the community that remained here were saved from decay in the 1980s and today are a reminder of the original use of the site.

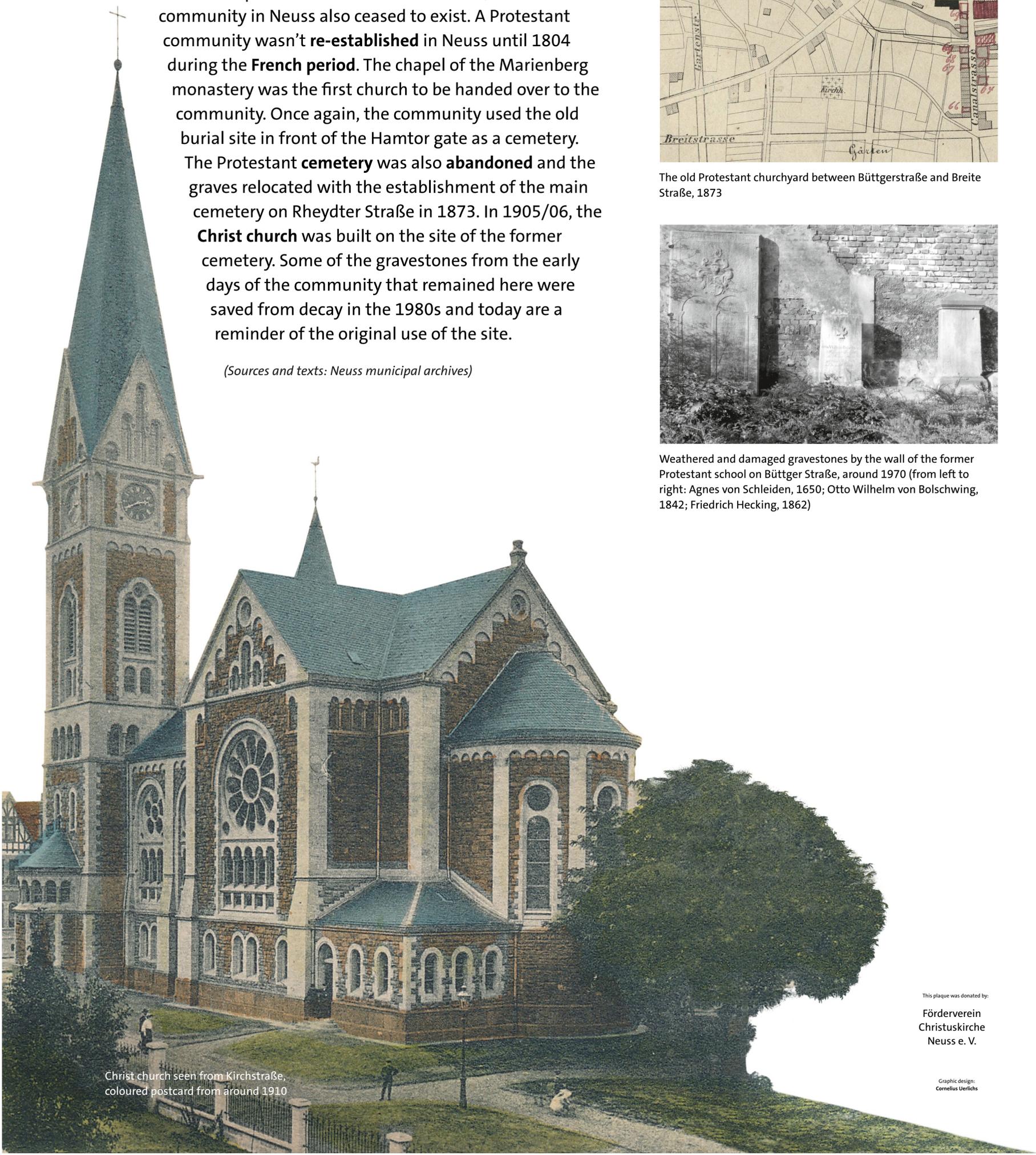


The old Protestant churchyard between Büttgerstraße and Breite Straße, 1873



Weathered and damaged gravestones by the wall of the former Protestant school on Büttger Straße, around 1970 (from left to right: Agnes von Schleiden, 1650; Otto Wilhelm von Bolschwing, 1842; Friedrich Hecking, 1862)

(Sources and texts: Neuss municipal archives)



Christ church seen from Kirchstraße, coloured postcard from around 1910

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