

The Schellingwouderkerk

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| Date of building | Cornerstone laid on 11 June 1866, commemorative plaque beside the entrance. Building sum: 6,797 Dutch guilders |
| Design | Gerrit Kater (Inspector at Public Works) |
| Restoration | 1999 |
| Today | The church can be rented for festivities. For more information please call +31 20 5200090 |

The village of Schellingwoude



Schellingwoude in a drawing from 1816 made by Gerrit Lamberts

Nearby archaeological findings appear to indicate that Schellingwoude was founded as a reclamation village in the period before the IJ came into being. This inlet came into being around the end of the 12th century. The tiny village of Schellingwoude is therefore probably older than Amsterdam. After all, the capital's first traces of habitation date from after that period.

Waterland, the area where Schellingwoude is situated, consisted of six jurisdictions since the Middle Ages. The six 'main villages' of these jurisdictions, Landsmeer, Ransdorp, Zunderdorp, Zuiderwoude and Schellingwoude, closed the Waterland Union on 23 November 1619. Through this union, the villages decided to share advantages and disadvantages and to act together against possible breaches of their rights.

In general, this situation remained the same until the French era. When Waterland was divided into eleven municipalities in 1811, the Union was discontinued. Schellingwoude formed the municipality of Nieuwendam, which was part of the district of Monnickendam, along with Nieuwendam and Zunderdorp. After the French era, in 1816, Schellingwoude became an independent village, but in 1857 it became part of a larger municipality, Ransdorp. This municipality also comprised Durgerdam and Holysloot. This situation remained unchanged until the annexation of 1921, when the municipality of Ransdorp became a part of Amsterdam.

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The earliest record of a church in Schellingwoude dates back to 1334-1335. In an invoice from the suffragan of Utrecht, an item called 'the consecracione ecclesie in Scillingwoude' [for consecrating the church in Schellingwoude). On sixteenth century maps, a church is plotted in Schellingwoude and in 1658 Hendrik Soeteboom mentions in his History of Waterland that the village, though small, has 'a church and tower', but we do not have any further details on this church. In the eighteenth century, several prints of the church appear. The direct predecessor of the current church probably dates back to the first half of the eighteenth century, but we do not have absolute certainty on this. However, in 1862 this church was dilapidated to the extent that an engineer from Public Works advised to build a new church rather than to restore the current church, since this would be considerably cheaper. As the engineer wrote in his report: 'Building a new church is by far preferable from an economical point of view.'



the church in 1950

The Schellingwouderkerk today

In the nineties of the 20th century, the number of members of the congregation of the Schellingwouderkerk dropped significantly. Since there was another Reformed church nearby - in Nieuwendam - it was decided to concentrate all activities in this church, which is located in the middle of the village and has several annexes. In 1995, talks between the Reformed congregation and the Amsterdam Monument Foundation [merged with Stadsherstel at the end of 1999] started on the possibilities of a different way of using the church building in Schellingwoude. The point of departure was that the church would retain its public function. In the fall of 1999 the conveyance took place for the symbolic amount of one Dutch guilder. In the same year the restoration started, which lasted over a year. The Schellingwouderkerk was adapted for its second life as a venue for cultural activities and festivities. However, the original interior was left intact as much as possible. During the renovation, the 17th century gravestones, that were covered with a wooden floor, appeared. The pulpit that dates back to 1619 and had been used ever since, was put back again as well.

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