

Early cultural uses for redundant churches

At a time when many churches especially timber-framed ones stood empty in Hessen/Germany, threatened by demolition or decay, the Förderkreis Alte Kirchen e.V. (Marburg) (FAK) in the first years after its foundation in 1973 demonstrated and tried out various possible cultural uses at a time when they were not yet generally acceptable to conservative rural populations: exhibitions, puppet theatre for children, concerts, bazaars etc. Here some examples of such uses in the 1970s in endangered redundant churches, all near Marburg.

(Angus Fowler)



Exhibition “Wald und Wild” (Forest and wild animals in it) 1974 in the Church in Bürgeln (for saving which the FAK was initially founded in 1973). (above and right)

Art exhibition 1977 by FAK founder member, Prof. Adolf Schröter in the ancient church in Altenvers with a horse-shoe shaped apsis from Carolingian times. (right and bottom right)



Puppet theatre for children by the famous Puppet Theatre of Maribor/Drau (now Slovenia), partner town of Marburg, in the European Year of the Architectural Heritage 1975 :

In the late 18th century church in Niederweimar. (right)

In the church in Bürgeln (medieval and late 17th century). (below and left)

