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# **Hidden gems: the Kruithuis**

**Maastricht University takes care of many distinctive buildings and art works that we all know. By giving them a new purpose, we preserve these icons and give them a new meaning, making them the vibrant heart of a bustling city.**

**Did you know that these buildings and art works also provide access to various special places and stories? Let yourself be surprised and join us in this series exploring the hidden gems of the university and the city of Maastricht.**

The School of Business and Economics is located in a former Jesuit monastery. This former Jesuit monastery has played many roles over the years. It was also the first building to belong to Maastricht University, then known as Rijksuniversiteit Limburg. Here, the initial 50 first-year students started their studies in September 1974.

In the pretty garden of the economics faculty stand two kruithuizen: gunpowder warehouses. These warehouses served as a storage repository for ammunition for the garrison and for gunpowder, to fire projectiles from the cannons on the ramparts.

In the upper garden stands a largely buried gunpowder warehouse that dates back from 1692. This gunpowder warehouse was later used as the municipal ice cellar.

On Bonnefantenstraat, the only preserved gunpowder house of the old fortress of Maastricht remains clearly visible. It was built in 1790 and served as such until 1868. Its metre-thick walls had to hold off enemy attacks. At the time of the Jesuits, priests used this gunpowder warehouse as a swimming pool. It is also said that towards the end of the Second World War, pigs were kept in the warehouse. The former gardener Juul had hidden a German gun among the pigs.

When the university was founded, the gunpowder warehouse on Bonnefantenstraat became a magnificent location for parties. The beer flowed bountifully during the many cantus (academic fraternity) gatherings. The university currently still uses this gunpowder warehouse as a catering location, aptly named Het Kruithuis (the gunpowder house).