

## Escape and Arrival in Lokstedt, Niendorf, and Schnelsen

**Our society has been shaped by migration for centuries. However, migration plays a negligible role in the public culture of remembrance in Lokstedt, Niendorf, and Schnelsen: the names of streets, squares, parks, and important buildings almost never refer to migrant, "foreign" influences. One of these exceptions is the (Alte) Franzosenheide (“(Old) French Heath”) in Schnelsen, named after people who fled here around 1800 from the French Revolution.**

### Global Trade and Colonial Structures

Two names inspire reflection on neighborhood stories of escape and arrival: Both the Amsinck family and the Berenberg family were forced to leave their homeland in what is now the Netherlands and Belgium, respectively, as Protestant religious refugees in the late 16th century. They found refuge in the trading city of Hamburg. Over the centuries, these families, with their global trading relationships, brought considerable wealth to the Hanseatic city—and ultimately to Lokstedt and Niendorf. With their wealth, they settled in well here. Streets and buildings named after them still bear witness to this today.

The global trade system of which they were part created more than just wealth: Even if the colonial dimensions of their trade(s) are rarely discussed, it is historically documented that European colonialism created structures of inequality and exploitation worldwide. Because of these structures, many people continue to flee their homeland today. Their stories of (non-)arrival are also part of our history.



The Amsinck family on the occasion of Wilhelm Amsinck's 80th birthday in front of what is now known as the Amsinck Villa in Lokstedt.

Collage from 1901; Staatsarchiv Hamburg

### Lippertsche Villa Community Center

The Lippertsche Villa in Niendorf tells some of these stories. Today, it serves as a social district center for both new and long-time residents of Niendorf. Here, people learn German together, cook, sew, garden, and socialize. Sabrin H., for example, came to Niendorf from Afghanistan in 2018 with her husband and children. She quickly started

working in the tailor's workshop, learned her first German words, and then began an integration course. Very soon, she completed further courses and passed her first school-leaving exam in 2024.



Painting of Lippertsche Villa by Susann Behnken, n.y.

For Sabrin H., who was only allowed to attend a Koranic school before fleeing, this was a big step. The family now lives permanently in Niendorf Nord; the eldest daughter is top of her class and is supported by a foundation for gifted children, and the two younger children attend elementary school. Sabrin's husband has a permanent position at a large company, and she is beginning an apprenticeship.

The stories of the Amsinck and Berenberg families, and Sabrin H., show that migration and cosmopolitanism can be enriching in very different ways.



Community center in Niendorf  
Photo: Hinrich Schultze, n.y.

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