

A-Z of the Communes in the Deux-Sèvres...

by Sue Burgess

LA FERRIERE EN PARTHENAY

La Ferriere en Parthenay is a commune on the edge of the Deux Sèvres bordering on the Vienne.

The inhabitants of la Ferriere-en-Parthenay are the Ferrariens and the Ferrariennes. The main road from Poitiers – Nantes, the N149 crosses the commune.

The river Vendelogne crosses the commune.

La Ferrière gets its name from the richness of its soil in iron. Right from the earliest times, itinerant founders worked on the iron and later the iron was used to supply the forge at La Peyratte.

The existence of a Roman camp probably gave its name to the farm of le Châtelier. In the forest of Magot, where there is a tumulus, a flint axe has been discovered.

The church of La Ferrière was given between 1037 and 1039 to the abbey of Cormery, by a certain Simon of Parthenay Archevêque. He got important privileges for the creation and the expansion of the market town around the church. The church that we can see today was rebuilt in the 1830s.

At the edge of the Forest of le Roux, the hamlet of **la Verrerie** reminds us of the glassmakers of La Ferrière who in 1466 obtained from the Abbess Sainte Croix of Poitiers the permission to cut the ferns used for their ovens on her lands at Vasles. There were two open quarries for iron which were exploited for a long time. A stone quarry occupied a few workers and the tile and brick works at Magot supplied the local masons. Two lime kilns were working in La Ferrière in 1860.

La Forge à fer (the Iron Forge) at La Peyratte owes a lot to La Ferrière. La Ferrière supplied the iron and the wood for burning which was cut from the local woods. Famous woods which welcomed hunters like Louis XI in spring 1470 or François 1st in 1543.

Today the châteaux and manor houses are private residences.

A VOIR / MUST SEE

- The Church. Dedicated to Saint Vincent, the patron saint of wine-growers. The three bells are called Vincent Léonce, Maire

and Rémy. A legacy from Monsieur Bertrand Arthur allowed a clock to be installed in August 1917.

- The Town Hall, which was built in 1875 as the boys' school.
- The Wash-houses. Lavausseau wash-house was built in 1858. Access is by a small sloping pathway. It was renovated in 1997.
- La Cacault wash-house is closer to the centre and easier to get to. It was built in 1909. Its roof was restored in 1999.
- La Salle des Fêtes. The old salle des Fêtes nicknamed «La Baraque» (the shed) was built by the Germans during the war and used as a canteen. After they left, dances, films and wedding breakfasts rythmed its life until 1970. The present salle des Fêtes was inaugurated in October 1969. It is currently undergoing complete renovation and refurbishing.



More **A-Z of the Communes of Deux-Sèvres** next month...

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