



POMPAIRE

by Sue Burgess

Situated on the road between Parthenay and Saint-Maixent, several documents make reference to the existence of the commune of Pompaire including Cassini's map and the Napoleonic land registry. The spelling of the name 'Pompaire' has not changed much - Pompeyre, Pomperre and today Pompaire.

The names of the commune's roads tell the story of the history of the commune...

The main avenue of the town centre (avenue de LAUZON) refers to the Lauzon family and in particular to Joachin De Lauzon who was born in 1699. He was lord of the Roulière (commune of La Chapelle Bertrand) and the Parish of Pompaire. He is buried in the church at Pompaire.

La rue du Bailli Ayrault (right in the centre), honours the last baillif of the Duke of Parthenay (1747-1789), appointed by King Louis XV and who held judiciary functions. He was nominated judge at the tribunal in Parthenay in 1780 and his nomination was renewed in 1792.

Rue de la Dame Quivois: Dame Quivois owned the Logis de Chaumusson and was a benefactor of the church of Pompaire.

There is another person who has played an important role in local history and this was Robert le Chouan (François-Augustin) who was born in Pompaire on the 25th July 1795 and died in Azay-sur-Thouet on the 31st December 1868. His family were in service for the De Lauzon family, François-Augustin continued this tradition by working one of the farms belonging to Mademoiselle De Lauzon which was situated in Saint-Pardoux. Robert le Chouan disliked Louis-Philippe and was an ardent partisan of the Duchess of Berry. He participated in the Chouannerie movement in the region. (movement opposing Royalists and Republicans).

Pompaire town council is today made up of 19 town councillors including the mayor and four assistants. The council sends two representatives to the Communauté de Communes Parthenay-Gâtine.

The Place du Bailli d'Ayrault brings together the church, the Croix Hosannière and the village war memorial (see photo, top of page).

Le logis de Chaumusson is an old fortified manor house. It is privately owned today and not open for visits.

La Maladrerie at the Northern side of the commune was the place where the poor and sick were cared for. It was also open for travellers. Nothing remains of this establishment today except for the name 'Maladrerie'. The full name of the establishment was la maladrerie de Sainte-Catherine de Parthenay. There used to be a chapel, dedicated to Saint Catherine of Sompport, several houses with no outbuildings, a cemetery, a well and large areas of land.

It is said that the monks of Parthenay-le-Vieux founded la Maladrerie in 1093, but this cannot be proved. The establishment received an income of 300 pounds during the 17th century. Little is known about the founding of the establishment, its statutes and the name of its benefactor, but it is known that people suffering from leprosy lived there in the 14th century.

In 1391 Jean I, Archbishop of Parthenay, accused the lepers of poisoning the waters in the springs and the Maladrerie was closed. It was opened again once things calmed down but it was more austere and disorganised. The establishment managed as well as it could, sometimes threatened by the English, sometimes helped by generous people. That was how on 22 December 1398, Jehan Gaillard, vassal of Parthenay, gave the feudal rights to land and fruit.

By 1416, there were no longer any lepers at Saint Catherine. The building became the home of a monk, who was given the title of Chaplain because he would serve the chapel of the sick.

The earliest known chaplain, Guillaume Barrède, tried to make a profit from his lands by letting them for farming.

A VOIR / MUST SEE

- **The Rose Garden**

La Roseraie de Pompaire – the Rose Garden has over 400 varieties of roses - ancient, botanical and English roses. Surrounded by parkland with farmyard animals, the educational farm and the lake, you can come here to rest or to fish. The Rose Garden was created in 2013.

The opening dates are not yet released for 2018 so check before visiting but on opening days, which are usually from June onwards, visits are between 10h and 12h and 14h and 19h. The farm is situated on the Parthenay – St Maixent road at La Merlatière. It is possible to picnic or even to have a barbecue and stay and camp. Cut roses are on sale. Rooted cuttings of ancient varieties of rose are on sale from October and it is possible to order grafted roses which come from Holland.

- **Croix hosannière (funeral monument)**

The funeral cross, made of granite, can be seen on the square near the church and was restored in 1999. The cross stood in the centre of the cemetery until 1923.

The 'éco-musée de la maison du Patrimoine' is situated in the heart of the village just behind the church and houses a collection of agricultural machines from the 19th and the beginning of 20th century, as well as household objects and an important collection of photographs which show the history of the commune.

The museum can be visited on the following Saturdays from 15h to 18h, 24 Feb 2018, 24 March 2018, 28 April 2018 and 16 June 2018
Tel: 05 49 64 51 39 ~ Email : ajygalais@orange.fr

- **St Pierre's Church**

The church of Pompaire depended on the Prior of Saint Paul of Parthenay who nominated the priest until the Revolution. In 1649 important repairs and renovations were carried out. The church had 2 chapels. One was dedicated to Mary and one to Saint Blaise.

The structure of the church was consolidated for a second time in 1777. The cemetery used to lie around the church and was moved in 1923. A section of the cemetery was reserved for Protestants. The main altar has a 17th century wooden tabernacle. St Pierre is featured in a stained glass window in the choir. Other stained glass windows depict Saint Radegonde, St Joseph and Mary. There are several statues. The church has three bells which were blessed in 1873 and later replaced in 1925. There is a black and white war memorial listing the 34 men of the commune who died in the Great War.

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