

— Castle of Chavaniac-Lafayette —

The Preventorium of Chavaniac-Lafayette

JULY, 4 - NOVEMBER, 7 2022



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THE
FRANCO-
AMERICAN
FRIENDSHIP TO
THE RESCUE OF
CHILDREN

chateau-lafayette.com



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EDITORIAL

Located in the heart of Auvergne, in the Department of Haute-Loire, the castle of Chavaniac-Lafayette is best known as the birthplace of Lafayette, French hero of the American War of Independence.

But the Franco-American history of this "Manor of Two Worlds" does not end here. In 1917, it was bought and saved by the Lafayette Memorial, an American Foundation, which took in orphans and war refugees, before establishing a Preventorium which welcomed tens of thousands of children.

Owner of the castle since 2009, the Department of Haute-Loire, through its social abilities, is in line with the humanistic values carried out by the previous and illustrious owners of the place.

The 2022 temporary exhibition, dedicated to the history of the Preventorium, is thus the opportunity to highlight two key elements of the identity of the castle of Chavaniac-Lafayette : Franco-American friendship and philanthropy. It also fills a gap in the museum trail, devoted essentially to the character of Lafayette, even though everything in the castle's domain still evokes the Preventorium today : the American-inspired architecture of the buildings, the modern facilities of the 1920s...

The Department of Haute-Loire also intends to respond to the former residents' need for information and the search for their own history, so often evoked by them and by former staff members of the establishment, who return to Chavaniac as to recall a significant passage of their lives.

Four years before the commemoration of the 250th anniversary of the independence of the United States, at the origin of the Franco-American friendship, this exhibition invites visitors to (re)discover the extraordinary epic of the Lafayette Memorial, a tribute given by the Americans for Lafayette's commitment, through their help having cared for vulnerable children in France and Europe.

Marie-Agnès Petit,
President of Haute-Loire



The exhibition approaches the remarkable history of the Preventorium of Chavaniac-Lafayette, a social and medical institution born during the First World War, on the castle grounds.

Created in 1917 by the Lafayette Memorial, the Preventorium is an American Foundation which inherited Lafayette's philanthropic ideals and is a shining symbol of the Franco-American friendship. Unique in France and of extraordinary scope, the establishment, whose form evolved over the years, welcomed, cared for, and educated tens of thousands of children until 2008.

Through more than 200 objects and documents from the castle of Chavaniac-Lafayette and the Departmental Archives of Haute-Loire, the exhibition will reveal the little-known history of the Preventorium, which profoundly changed the life of the castle and of the village in the 20th century.

The Department of Haute-Loire seizes the opportunity given by the exhibition to launch a national call for testimonies as to intensify the compilation of this institution's living memory, which has already been undertaken by the Departmental Archives for several years.

Composed of ten labels, a small tour for children is integrated to the visit, to make the exhibition accessible to the youngest.



The creation of the preventorium

The Preventorium was created in 1917 under the impetus of an American Foundation, at first called the FHLMF (French Heroes Lafayette Memorial Fund) which then became Lafayette Memorial, devoted to the philanthropic ideals inherited from Lafayette and involved in wartime works. After purchasing the birthplace of the "hero of the two worlds" in Chavaniac, the Memorial continued its charitable work by taking in child victims of the war in an orphanage which then became the Preventorium, given the precarious state of health of the young children taken in.

Landing of Gen. Lafayette
Plate

This plate in earthenware was made for the occasion of the triumphal tour of Lafayette in the United States, from 1824 to 1825. Since his participation in the War of Independence of the United States, the *Marquis*, a true hero, was invited in the United States by President Monroe, and was then celebrated by a profusion of festivities. Countless products were then declined in his effigy, such as this plate.

Collection of the Chavaniac-Lafayette's castle



The founders

Driven by this common goal to contribute to making the world a better place, three benefactors joined forces to carry out this ambitious creation of an orphanage-preventorium. Francophiles at heart, two great fortunes created the FHLMF: Beatrice Chanler, an American artist and wife of a deputy, became the president of the foundation, and John Moffat, a Scottish-born businessman, its chairman. Director of the institution, Marie-Louise Le Verrier was the last key figure of the founding trio of this organization.



John Moffat and Beatrice Chanler

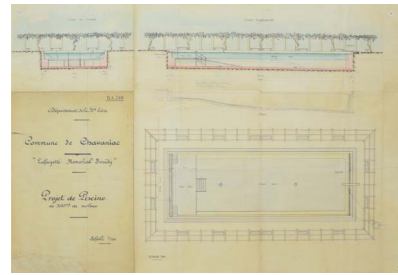
Photo, around 1920
The two founders of the FHLMF working, on site or remotely, to raise funds through their American social networks, to finance and provide for the material needs of the Preventorium. A regular resident of the Chavaniac castle and particularly active in the operation of the Memorial, John Moffat was the central figure in the life of the foundation and the castle in the 20th century.

Departmental archives of Haute-Loire, 233 J 349

Extensive restoration work

The Memorial quickly undertook extensive restoration and construction work on the castle grounds to rehabilitate this historic residence, which was in a poor state of repair, and to accommodate hundreds of children in poor health. The castle was equipped with the most modern utilities, under the direction of John Moffat who would often reside there, bringing the American way of life to Chavaniac.

At the same time, buildings for housing, education, sports, and childcare were quickly erected to form an exemplary infrastructure that was unique in France at the time.



Plan « project of a swimming pool of 300 square meters »

First half of the 20th century
To ensure the wellbeing and the physical development of the children, sports equipments were progressively added to the site within the available sources of the Memorial, such as a big swimming pool and playing fields (tennis field, football field, mini-golf course...).

Kept at the Departmental Archives, many of these plans, such as this one, testify of this fast development period of the Preventorium.

Departmental Archives of Haute-Loire, 233 J 254

An autonomous organization

Concerned about its self-sufficiency, the Memorial set up a clever internal organization to quickly ensure the autonomy of the Preventorium thanks to the development of premises necessary for the life of the institution. To meet all these needs, the foundation employed staff with a wide range of professional qualifications and from different professions.

A real economic manna, the strong activity of the Preventorium boosted and shook the demography and urbanism of Chavaniac and its surrounding rural villages.

Ingenious financing

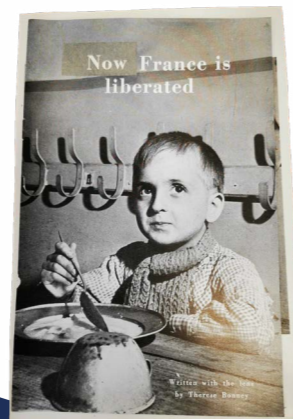
As to meet the heavy expenses of the Preventorium, a solid funding system based on patronage was established by the foundation, which was based in New York. Through the regular mailing of countless promotional brochures to the United States, the foundation mobilized a formidable network of patrons on the other side of the Atlantic, consisting of more than 150,000 donors. Donations in kind or in money and the « sponsorship » of children ensured that the Preventorium was almost financially independent. Thanks to this remarkable autonomous organization, the institution was presented as a reference on a European scale.

Brochure « Now France is liberated »

Year 1920

This is one of the promotional brochures produced by the Memorial in English and distributed to the United-States to appeal for charity. Donations from Americans were collected by the New York committee and then transferred to the Foundation's headquarters in Paris, which was responsible for redistributing the funds allocated to the operation of the preventorium of Chavaniac.

Collection of the Chavaniac-Lafayette castle



Major actions of the Memorial : fostering

Before becoming the Preventorium, the first vocation of the FHLMF was to welcome in young civilians affected by the First World War, starting in 1917, in Chavaniac, but also in the department with the temporary creation of five « colonies » acting as relays in Haute-Loire.

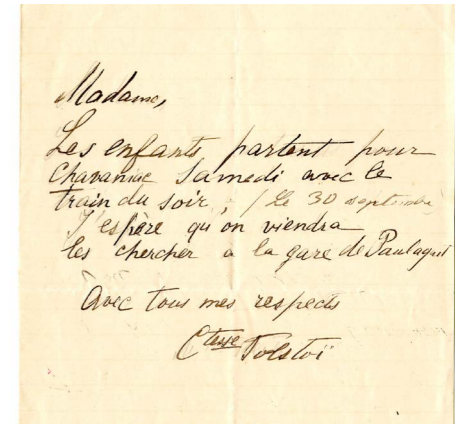
Far from limiting its charitable work to the borders of France, the Memorial organized the reception of children from all over Europe, but also Asia, and formed a true international community in Chavaniac !

Letter from the Contess of Tolstoï

Year 1920

In this letter, the Contess of Tolstoï informs the Memorial, in all simplicity, of the imminent arrival of the two grandsons of the famous writer Leo Tolstoy at the Preventorium of Chavaniac. Like many «White Russians» who had emigrated following the 1917 Revolution, the two Tolstoy brothers, along with several members of their family, fled Russia and found refuge in France. Several Russian children were sent to Chavaniac where they had the opportunity to be well taken care of and to receive a good education.

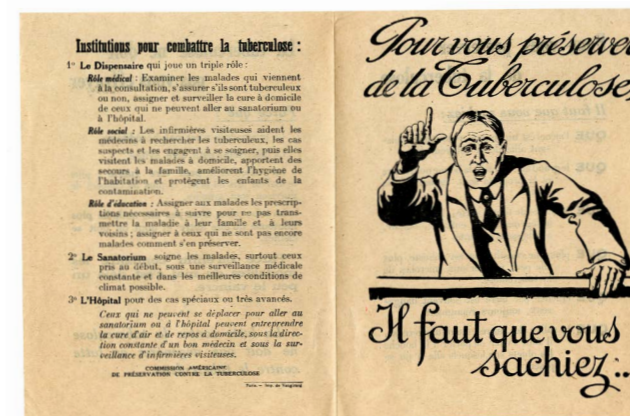
Departmental archives of Haute-Loire, 233 J 148



Major actions of the Memorial : preventing illnesses

As soon as it was created, the orphanage evolved into a Preventorium in view of the fragile state of health of the children taken in at Chavaniac. The establishment first treated orphans, then more widely and mainly young people predisposed to tuberculosis, a contagious disease affecting the lungs, which was very widespread in the first half of the 20th century.

Thanks to avant-garde hygienic and dietary measures and the practice of modern medicine imported from the United States, the Preventorium of Chavaniac was considered an outstanding health care facility, recognized in the medical world on a national and international scale.



Leaflet of the American Commission on Prevention of Tuberculosis

20th century

The medical care provided at the Preventorium is directly inspired by the methods used in the United States, which were very advanced in the fight against tuberculosis. In the absence of medical treatment - which only appeared in the 1940s - the only remedy was prevention, which meant following a few simple rules of life, the aim of which was to strengthen the children's immune systems.

Departmental archives of Haute-Loire, 233 J 149

Major actions of the Memorial : to educate

The Memorial made a point in providing education to the children welcomed at the Preventorium. Thus, the establishment quickly became a school, then a college between 1926 and 1931. A teaching team used an innovative pedagogy, inspired mainly by the United States, which left a great deal of room for outdoor activities, necessary for the recovery of children with deficient health.

Classical school programs and manual training were taught to the young people who thus had the opportunity to find their professional path, according to their tastes and aptitudes.

Major actions of the Memorial : to entertain and ensure the welfare of the children

Aware of its essential role in the development of its young boarders, the foundation took great care of their well-being.

The community life and the numerous playground equipment offered an environment conducive to leisure activities. The afternoons were devoted to sport activities, a perfect illustration of the diffusion of sports from the United States. A multitude of cultural activities (cinema, theater, etc.) were also offered to the young people. The diversity of the leisure activities offered aimed at providing a happy interlude for these sick children who were welcomed at the Preventorium of Chavaniac.



John Moffat's tennis racket and its removable frame

Wilson's brand

This tennis racket is intended to exclusively be used by John Moffat, as the inscription demonstrates. It is made from natural elements (wood, gut, leather) and its removable frame maintains the structure of the sieve and limits twisting. It is not surprising that the American chairman of the Preventorium, a sports enthusiast, encouraged the intensive practice of sports activities among the children welcomed at Chavaniac.

Collection of Chavaniac-Lafayette's castle

1917 - 2008 : results and continuity of the Preventorium

After becoming independent in 1937 and reaching its peak of activity - up to 400 beds - the Preventorium saw its numbers decrease from the 1960s onwards thanks to the progress of antibiotic treatments, which led to its closure in 1974.

After this date, the establishment kept its social vocation and continued its activity of taking in and helping children in difficulty. The institution was then managed by several structures which replaced one another until its final closure in 2008.

The living memory of the Preventorium

Over the years, the Preventorium has been a place of life and gathering for tens of thousands of people. Made with the accumulation of all these fragments of existence, its very rich history is above all human.

Today, what remains of it in our memories ?

Some of the « Preventorium alumni » have spoken to journalists and writers. Others have even taken up the pen to tell their personal story of the Preventorium, as Gisele Naichouler Feldman did in her book *Saved by the Spirit of Lafayette*.

Preservation and valorization of the Preventorium

Since the transfer of ownership of the Chavaniac's castle and part of its estate to the Haute-Loire Department in 2009, the collectivity has been greatly involved in the immense mission of preserving and promoting the Preventorium.

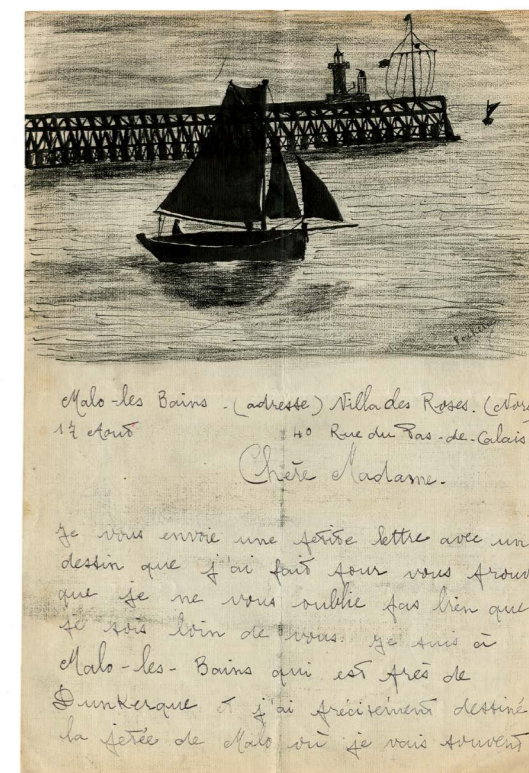
Particular attention is paid to the maintenance of the buildings, the conservation of the collections and archival documents, as well as to the promotion of this precious heritage, a witness to the rich history of Chavaniac in the 20th century.

Letter of Pierre Pochelu to Marie-Louise Le Verrier

17th of August

Many letters have been written by former boarders of the Preventorium to Marie-Louise Le Verrier and are kept at the Archive Department. They constitute a direct and rare testimony of the children who lived at the institution. They also demonstrate the profound attachment of the children to the director of the Preventorium who wrote to her to give her news, as demonstrated in this letter of Pierre Pochelu, a former boarder, in which he writes about his holidays.

Departmental archives of Haute-Loire, 233 J 148



Malo-les Bains - (adresse) Villades Roses, Cotard
17 août 1917
40 Rue du Pas-de-Calais.
Chère Madame.

Je vous envoie une petite lettre avec un dessin que j'ai fait pour vous prouver que je ne vous oublie pas bien que je suis loin de vous. Je suis à Malo-les-Bains qui est près de Dunkerque et j'ai précisément destiné la lettre de Malo où je vous salue

CHRONOLOGICAL BENCHMARKS

- 1757** Birth of Lafayette at the castle of Chavaniac
- 1777** Commitment of Lafayette in the American War of Independence
- 1916-1917** Purchase of the castle by the *French Heroes La Fayette Memorial Fund* to Gaston Pourcet de Sahune du Motier de La Fayette
- 1917** Official American entry in the First World War with the famous declaration « Lafayette, here we come ! » of the colonel Stanton from the Marquis' grave at the cemetery of Picpus (Paris).
Reception of the first youngsters taking refuge at Chavaniac
- 1919-1925** Restoration of the castle and building of the Preventorium and the school on the castle grounds
- 1925** Official inauguration of the Preventorium by the Lafayette Memorial
- 1937** Evolution of the Preventorium to an institution under the name of Lafayette Preventorium
- 1966** Death of John Moffat
Evolution of the Preventorium into a bronchology center, named « Lafayette center ». Dissolution of the American Committee of Lafayette's Memorial. Creation of a cultural center at the castle
- 1974** Closure of the Preventorium and its transformation into a Health and Social Action Center (CASS in French)
- 1988** Sale of the Preventorium of the Memorial to the CASS
- 1993** Evolution of the CASS to an associative status: ACASS
- 2007** Merger of ACASS with the Pupils Association of Public Education - Haute-Loire delegation (ADPEP 43) and its transformation into a Therapeutic Education and Pedagogic Institute (ITEP in French)
- 2008** Definite closure of the site and restructuration of ITEP into different centers distributed through the Haute-Loire department
- 2009** Transfer of property of the Chavaniac-Lafayette's castle to the Haute-Loire Department.
Dissolution of the French Committee of Lafayette's Memorial

CALL FOR TESTIMONIES

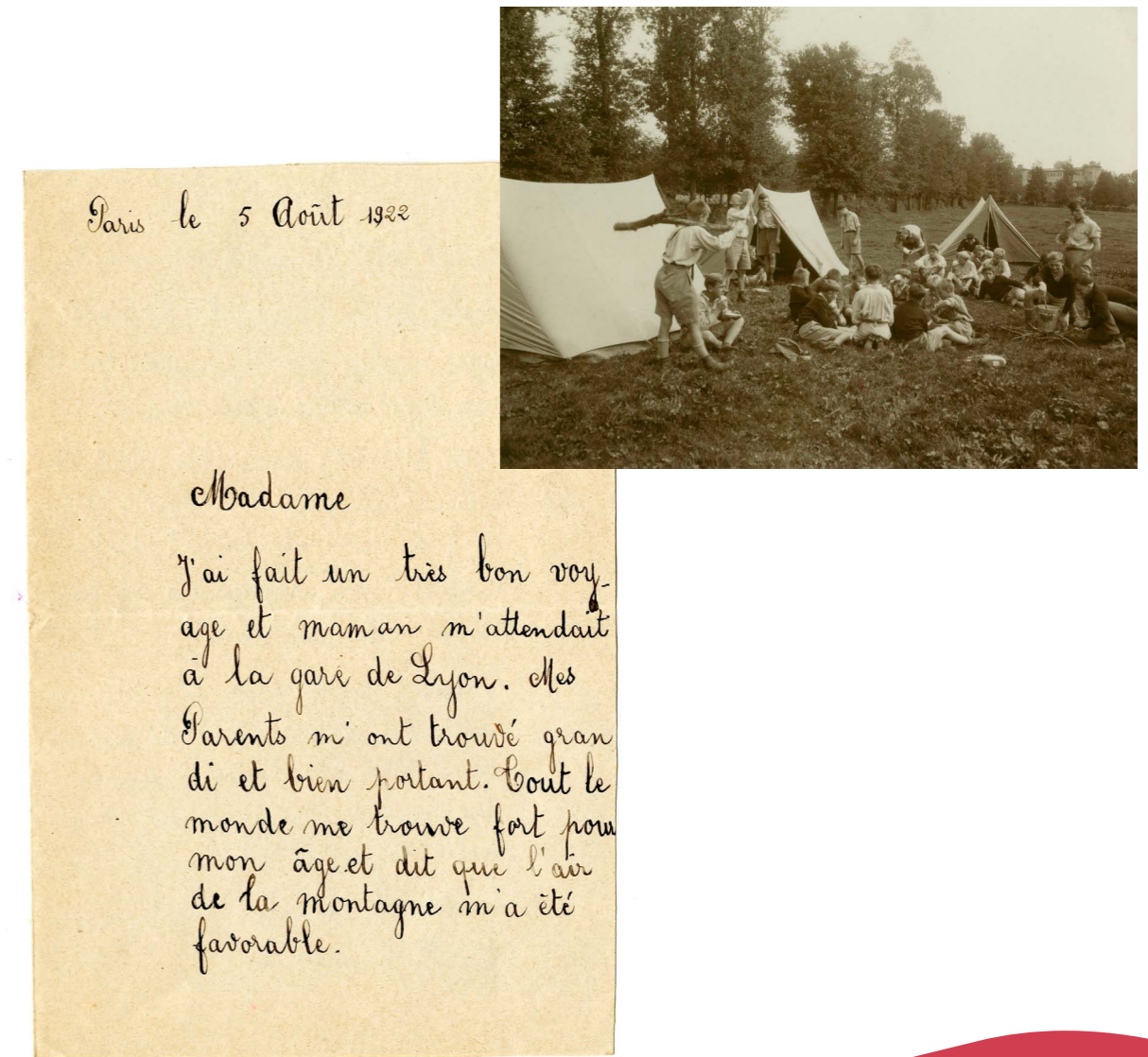
The Departmental Archives of Haute-Loire preserve the memory and history of the Department and its inhabitants.

Since 2008, the Departmental Archives have held the archives of the Chavaniac-Lafayette Preventorium, a reception and care facility for French children or those in exile as early as 1917. The Archives wish to enrich the written sources already preserved, related to the operation, activities, and life of the institution by collecting the testimonies of those who attended the Preventorium.

Did you stay there ? Did you work there or were you in relation with the institution ? Do you have memories that you would like to share or pass on ?

Do not hesitate to let us know by contacting us via the contact form on the Archives' website* !

This collection project will be conducted from summer 2022 to summer 2023.



*www.archives43.fr

GUIDED TOUR

Date : every Thursdays in July and August, at 10:30 A.M.
Price : supplement of 2 €€
For groups, reservation is needed

ACTIVITIES FOR YOUNG PUBLIC GROUP

Non-school groups

• The American life at Chavaniac

Activities around the discovery of American culture imported at Chavaniac-Lafayette during the 1920's.
Day program : sport activities, nature outing and visit of the temporary exhibition
Dates : 26, 27, 28 & 29th of July 2022
Price : 4 €
Reservation is required, limited spots

School public

• Educational activity « To live at the Preventorium in the 20th century » (cycles 1 - and 2)

Using photographs illustrating scenes from the lives of children in the Preventorium, students imagine and reconstruct a typical day. Activity with the visit of the temporary exhibition.

• Educational activity « Life course of the children at the Preventorium » (cycle 3)

After visiting the temporary exhibition, in small groups, the students retrace the lives of several children from the Preventorium using archival documents.
Dates : from 19th of September to 21th of October 2022
Price : free for students until their 9th year
Reservation is required

EVENTS

• Archives Reading

Let yourself be told the little stories of the Preventorium through a strolling reading of archival documents conducted by the Mobile Company.

Date : 16th of July & 17th September 2022
Time : 3 P.M.
Price : 2 € on the 16th of July / free on the 17th of September as part of the European Heritage Days
Reservation : 04 71 77 50 32



• Sunset in Chavaniac !

Writers of the « *Lost generation* » jazz at the castle !

On the program :

- 2 : 30 P.M. : guided tour of the temporary exhibition (mandatory reservation, price 2 €)
- 4:00 P.M. : conference, Americans in Chavaniac, shock of two universes, by Martin de Framond, former director of the Archive Department of Haute-Loire
- 6:30 P.M. : musical aperitif provided by Swing Road. Four musicians will share their fun. Vincent the bass player, Jean-Francois the drummer, Olivier the pianist and Gérard on tenor saxophone.
- 8:30 P.M. : reading of excerpts from texts by writers of the «Lost Generation»: E. Hemingway, Gertrude Stein, F.S. Fitzgerald, accompanied by improvised jazzy music (Marie Aubert and Lionel Alès: actor-readers; Pierre Marcon: musician)

In partnership with the festival « readings under the tree », between Haute-Loire and Ardèche, on the plateau of Vivarais-Lignon, readings and meetings in the heart of nature around contemporary poetry, from the 13th to the 20th of August 2022.

Catering on the spot possible
Date : 13th of August 2022
Place : castle of Chavaniac-Lafayette (alternative solution proposed in case of rain)
Information : 04 71 77 50 32
Price : guided tour : 2 € / other animations : free



• Conference

Theme : In the « *spirit of Lafayette* », thousands of children come to be a part of the history of the castle of Chavaniac-Lafayette in the 20th century.

By Anna Philippon, former teacher of Chavaniac, who has been invested for a long time in the preservation of the memory of the Preventorium.

Date : September, 18th 2022
Time : 11 A.M.
Place : festival hall of Chavaniac-Lafayette
Price : free as part of the European Heritage Days
Mandatory reservation : 04 71 77 50 32

**Please note that all the activities proposed are in French*

**For groups, it is possible to book guided tours in English*

THE CHAVANIAIC-LAFAYETTE'S CASTLE

History

It was in 1708 that the manor of Chavaniac, whose origins go back to the XIVth century, entered the family of La Fayette by the marriage between Edouard Motier de Lafayette, baron of Vissac and Saint-Romain, and Marie-Catherine Suat de Chavaniac.

Gilbert du Motier, Marquis de La Fayette, and future hero of both worlds was born there on September 6, 1757. He lived there until he was eleven years old, surrounded by his grandmother and his two aunts - his mother living in Paris and his father having died on a battlefield when Lafayette was two years old. He returned regularly, especially after his triumphant return from America in 1783 and 1786, when he took possession of the seigneurie of Langeac. In 1791, in the midst of the turmoil of the Revolution, he entrusted the modernization of the castle to the architect Ambroise Laurent Vaudoyer and the painter Albert Ancica.

Given to his son Georges Washington Lafayette, then to his grandsons, Oscar and Edmond, the estate was finally sold in 1917 by his descendant Gaston de Pourcet de Sahune du Motier de Lafayette. The French Heroes Lafayette Memorial Fund, created in New York, acquired it in memory of the General, hero of the American War of Independence. Thus began the history of the American Memorial and the Preventorium, which is highlighted in this temporary exhibition. During the first half of the 20th century, the castle was extensively restored, transformed, and modernized by the activities of the foundation.

After the death of John Moffat, active chairman of the Memorial, in 1966, the social activity of the Memorial was taken over by the DASS (Directorate of Health and Social Affairs) and a French committee took over the cultural activities. The latter was dissolved in 2009, when the ownership of the castle and its park were transferred to the Haute-Loire Department.

The castle, looking towards the future

Since 2009, the first interventions of the Department have consisted in the restoration of the roofs and exterior woodwork of the castle, necessary prerequisites for the safeguarding of the building as it is more than three hundred years old, partially classified as a Historic Monument since 1989.

Since then, the Department has been involved in the reconstruction of the property of the former 18th-20th century estate, with the acquisition of the laundry house, the preventorium middle school, and very recently, the solarium, the infirmary, the Preventorium and the former kitchen garden.

Today, it is working, with the help of local partners, to define a project for the cultural, tourist and economic development of the estate, which, in addition to restoring all the buildings, will make it possible to spread the humanist values held by the illustrious owners of the site and to participate in the promotion of the French-American friendship, which is so prevalent in Chavaniac-Lafayette.



A 2022 SEASON AROUND THE CASTLE

Since 2016, the Department and its partners have been offering an annual cultural season which combines historical discovery, live performances, and awareness of the richness and fragility of local natural heritage.

In addition to the program around the temporary exhibition, guided or dramatized tours are also offered during the summer to discover the castle.

At the end of July, the event «A weekend in the 18th century» - a new highlight of the season - will invite young and old alike to discover life in the century of Lafayette, between live shows and historical animations.

Finally, musical events and an enriched offer of new activities for families will provide everyone with great moments of sharing throughout the season

You can find the complete program of the season on the website : www.chateau-lafayette.com



A few steps away from the castle are...

The gardens of the "Conservatoire Botanique National du Massif Central", an awakening to botanical curiosity

A botanical garden to discover in complete freedom

Looking for serenity and greenery? Come and discover the wild flora and natural spaces of the Massif Central in the gardens of the National Botanical Conservatory! Since 1998, this public institution has been inventorying and helping to preserve the wild flora and vegetation of the region. Within the framework of its activities, it cultivates more than 600 rare, endangered, or emblematic plants of the Massif Central, as well as numerous regional varieties of trees and fruit bushes, in an area of 9 hectares.



The gardens are open all year round, including during the weekends, with free access! Before your visit, download the interactive application (<https://jardins.cbnmc.fr>) on your cell phone which will allow you to choose and follow your route or get the visit map available at the reception of the Conservatory.



You can find the whole program on www.cbnmc.fr and on their Facebook page !

PRACTICAL INFORMATION 2022

OPENED

From the 1st of April to the 7th of November 2022

OPENING HOURS

From April to November (every day except on Tuesdays) from 10:00 to 12:00 A.M. and from 2:00 to 6:00 P.M..

In July and August (opened everyday) from 10:00 AM to 6 P.M.

ENTRANCE FEE 2022

CASTLE & PARK with audio guide :

Full price : 8 €

Group price (starting at 10 people) : 6 €

Reduced price : 4 €, young from 11 to 18 years old, more than 65 years old, students, job seekers

Free : children under 11 years old, teachers, journalists, cultural profession, Icom cards owners, accompanying adults and disabled.

PARK ONLY with audio guide : 4 €

Price visit of the castle with a guided tour : supplement of 4 €

TEMPORARY EXHIBITION :

Price : included in the entrance fee of the castle / 2 € for access to the temporary exhibition only

Price for a guided tour of the temporary exhibition : supplement of 2 €

RESERVATION / INFORMATION

04 71 77 50 32

www.chateau-lafayette.com

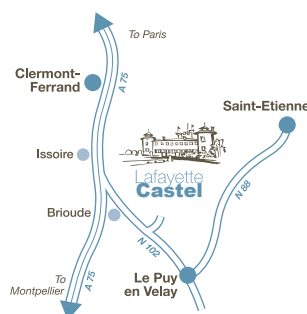
CONTACT

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04 71 07 43 71



40 mins from the Puy-en-Velay
1h15 from Clermont-Ferrand
2h from Saint-Etienne

