

7 Rope factories and the Pierre-à-l'œil

The places chosen for the establishment of rope factories followed the town's development, contrary to the flow of the river. In front of you is la rue des Cordiers, along which remains the enclosing wall of the last paimblotine rope factory, which closed in 1962. Created in 1895 by two inhabitants of Nantes, the trader René Leroux and the rope maker Jules Delhomme, it became for a time the Society of Rope –makers and Filatures of Paimboeuf.

They made ropes, cables, threads and bags.

Behind the campsite, a short walk will lead you to the turret of Pierre-à-l'œil or Pierre-à-l'aigle. Built in 1780, it is one of the most ancient elements of the channel's system of makers. This system followed the left bank of the Loire until 1889.

Rendered useless, by the decline of the sail maritime business; it is now partially buried from now on in the embankment of the former dry dock, as is the dry stone road which connected the dry dock to the bank.

8 The Éole Quay and the Town Hall

On your right, the Éole Quay bordered the harbor, which today has been filled-in. The construction of the quay in the first half of the 19th century removed the river-side houses and entailed the possibility of acquiring a small garden opposite. The town encouraged people to re-built according to the new alignment.

This quay continued at that time the last section of the major road Paris-Paimboeuf, which ended at the town's riverbank.

In front of you, the former HQ of the sub-prefecture built in 1864 according to the plans of the Department's architect Gustave Bourgerel. It has harbored since 1934 the offices of the Saint - Nazaire city hall, having taken the title of sub-prefecture from Paimboeuf in 1926.

Picture: Behind you, the four cannons of the French warship "Le Juste " remind us of the Anglo-French conflicts during the Seven Years war.

The ship sank at the forefront of Chemoulin, located at the mouth of the Loire, in 1759 during the Cardinals' battle.

9 La Chaussée neuve and the lighthouse

In front of you, built between 1778 and 1782, by order of the bursar of Brittany and according to the plans of the chief engineer of the Roads and Bridges, Mathurin Groleau, the "New Road" succeeds a former road damaged by ices. It allowed access to the strand to load or unload boats run aground in low tide.

With the sides sloping to the water at 45°, twelve stair-cases facilitated the work. The architectural quality of the work is remarkable, particularly the brickwork of the granite facings.

At the end of this road: The Lighthouse. Intended to aid navigation of the estuary at night and put to work in 1855, it is still in service. Built more than ten kilometers from the coast, it is, according to the department of Lighthouses and Beacons of Saint-Nazaire, the only lighthouse constructed inland.

Electric since 1913, it has view ranging 3/4 of the horizon, a beam carrying for approximately twenty kilometers and is 7.15 meters high.

10 The "Big horseshoe" hold of and the quays

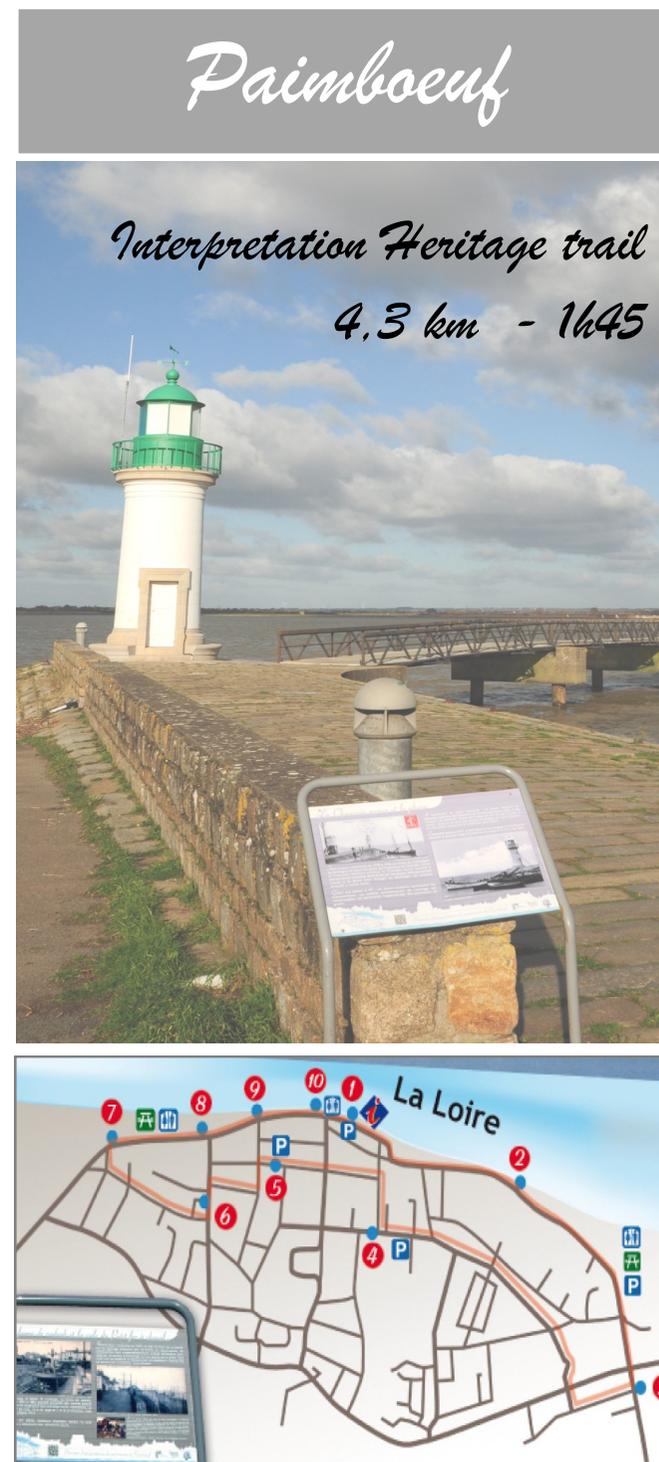
At the dawn of the 19th century, the construction of a quay downstream from the already built breakwater was launched. The works were appointed according to a plan signed in 1806 by the engineer Duboys-Dessauzais. An oblique quay interrupted in the center by a big hold in the shape of horseshoe, in front of which you find yourself now.

This remarkable hold was partially covered up by two later projects: the construction of the Quai des Messageries used as landing stage for the line Nantes-Paimboeuf-Saint-Nazaire and the extension of the Sadi Carnot quay in 1883.

The transport of the passengers and the goods has been assured since 1822 by steamship.

190 meters long, the platform Sadi Carnot Quay, on your right, was approved by the state in 1871. This quay met the needs of the harbour users who demanded, in vain, a vertical platform to facilitate their work.

It allowed for the anchoring of vessels off the coast and put back as close as possible to the channel, he thwarted the difficulties posed by the tide. Finished in 1883, it was soon connected by a railroad to the network of Pays-de-Retz.



1 Paimboeuf, The outer harbour of Nantes

One of the kingdom's major commercial ports in the last century of the *ancien regime*, Nantes is not able to harbour large, long-distance ships. The irregularity of the Loire's course led, from the 17th Century, to the establishment of an outer harbour as close as possible to the sea: Paimboeuf on the left bank of the estuary. A natural harbour known as the 'Four Ropes Harbour' soon began to accommodate ships at anchor between the river bank and the shipping navigation lane.

In the middle of the 17th Century, only a few houses occupied this former island, which had become in part property of the Duke of Retz. A century later, this rural landscape gave way to an important harbour-town, of which the population (both fixed and passing-through) approached 9000 people at the time of the Revolution.

Paimboeuf, whose city status is recent, became a sub-prefecture at the dawn of the 19th Century. However, this title did not protect the town from the impact of decisions taken from the first decade of the century onwards, which approved the creation of a new outer harbour. The selection of Saint Nazaire, where traffic began in 1856, heralded the gradual decline of the harbour at Paimboeuf.

The shipbuilding industry has continued at Paimboeuf and was joined in the 20th Century by an important chemical industry.

2 The dry dock and the 'Little Horseshoe' hold

Behind you, the dry dock, built between 1853 and 1862, could accommodate ships of up to 300 barrels, for their maintenance and repairs. The hold - 70m long, 16m wide and 7m deep - has, since 1991, been no longer in use. During the 20th Century, several shipyards succeeded one another there for the construction of new vessels.

In front of you, built in 1857, the 'Little Horseshoe' hold has this surprising semi-circular shape. Its construction probably proved necessary to maintain a docking space on part of the river bank. It was overcrowded at the time by the many ships produced by the Baudet shipyard.

Photo On the 1st of July, 1810, the frigate 'La Méduse' was launched. She was built by the Crucy shipyard, located in the district of the Haut-Paimboeuf, a few hundred metres upstream. This frigate sank on the 2nd of July 1816 off the coast of Mauritania, leaving the castaways on a makeshift raft. This episode inspired the famous painting 'Le radeau de la Méduse', by Géricault.

3 The industrial era and the workers' housing estate.

It was in 1895 that the Minister of the war, Alexandre Millerand, charged René Moritz, for the Department of Powders of Saltpetre, to create new factories of chemicals intended for the manufacturing of explosives (In front of you)

The buildings' construction was entrusted to the engineer Edmont Libert. He began by setting up a workshop of steel structures which would become in 1916 the EWP (Engineering workshops of Paimboeuf).

In 1937 a lead production unit and an anti-knock for the gasoline were created. This factory closed in 1998.

From 1939, a production of acid, fertilizer and ammonia completed this industrial group. The ammonia and fertilizer factories were destroyed in 1978. The production of sulphuric acid ended in 1991.

In 1979, to compensate the loss of jobs in other areas, a new metallurgical factory, making zirconium tubes for a nuclear power plant was built.

Behind you, the workers' housing estate was built by Ugine Kuhlmann in 1948. Ten semi-detached houses, each carrying the name of a flower, line la rue des Floralties.

From 1953, workers built their own houses in accordance with the Castor agreement. Twenty two houses identical to those of la rue des Floralties were built on la rue Raymond Berr.

4 The train station, the Hailaust and Gutzeit timber factories

Property of the company of the railroads of Nantes, a single-track train-line was opened on June 3rd, 1876 between Nantes and Paimboeuf, the last stage of the journey. The arrival of the railroad opened the city towards the south. A wide boulevard was dug out, the Dumesnildot Boulevard, and new railroads were planned, anticipating a development of the harbour. The construction of a new platform had just been approved, today's Sadi Carnot platform.

A second line opened on August 10th, 1906, which connected Paimboeuf to Pornic by the Jade Coast. It measured 31.2 kilometers and was used by the Morbihan company, then dismantled from 1938 onwards.

Founded in 1908, the Hailaust and Gutzeit timber factories whose dominance we see on the postcard (Three distinct sets of buildings connected by a railroad up to the harbour), occupied the site of the high school, the middle school and the residential buildings on your left (54 820 m²). This important joinery employed more than a hundred people in 1960.

5 The hospital, its chapel and the Marketplace.

Under the reign of Louis XIV, a ruling of the Council of State ordered in 1665 the foundation of a general hospital in Paimboeuf. The duchess of Retz granted the ground, in front of you, on which, during the 18th century, a modest building together with a chapel was built. This was then enlarged and especially made taller beginning in 1757 (Architect: Nicolas Portail)

The chapel, whose bell tower we perceive to the right was placed under the protection of Saint-Charles Borromeo. Inside, a picture represents him giving the communion to plague victims of Milan.

Reworked in the 19th century, then closed down recently, this ensemble of buildings nevertheless remains discernable from the little "Place du Docteur Daniel" on your right.

The Marketplace has existed in its current form since the middle of the 19th century. It should have integrated a major public building including the Halles, the offices of the court, the town hall and the sub-prefecture (Architect: M. Peccot, 1813). Two pavilions should have closed the Northern side of la Place, but only one, on the right, was built.

Paimboeuf had licence for a fair and a market since 1682. Les Halles were developed at first near the harbour before adopting their current position in the middle of the 19th century.

6 The church of Saint-Louis

Paimboeuf was established as parish in 1761. The village depended previously on the nearby parishes of Saint-Père-en-Retz and Sainte-Opportune and two (destroyed) chapels served the faithful: one raised in 1667 east of the town and the other one in 1706 on this site.

The parish church was reconstructed between 1877 and 1913 according to the design of the Nantais architects Lucien and Ludovic Douillard. Its impressive dome, together with the paintings in the choir and the nave, take their models from Byzantine architecture. Latin cruciform design replaced original design based on the greek Orthodox cross.

Inside, the principal altar, installed in 1908 comes from the abbey church of Buzay (Rouans). It was acquired as national property in the Revolution, shortly after its completion.

In the apse, a remarkable convar painted by Alexis Douillard in 1881, covers the vault. "Saint-Louis' death in Tunis" constituted the central element of an unfinished set.

The church was registered on the supplementary list of Historic Monuments in 2006.