



Musée de L'Etang Neuf

Claudie The museum opened in 2012 on the site of the Maquis de Coatmallouen - the site the Maquis had chosen. It was not too far from Guingamp because most of them lived near Guingamp and it was a wood as well. There was a wood where they could hide and organise their resistance.

Elaine So in 2012 I gather there was a new museum.

Claudie Yes a new museum was created, nothing existed before. In the past there was a small museum in the town hall in Saint-Connan.

Elaine So how old was the Maquis when he set up the movement?

Claudie Well in fact there were small groups of people fighting here and there around Guingamp, but they gathered in the wood in the beginning of July 1944.

Elaine And where did the artefacts, the actual items that are featured here, come from? Are they on loan or are they permanent?

Claudie Well they come from a private collection, and it's a permanent exhibition. The owner of the collection and the association of the Anciens de Coatmallouen have signed an availability contract.

Elaine And so how is it actually financed?

Claudie The building belongs to the Communauté de Communes Kreiz Breizh and the association which is called AGPAMEN (which means Association de Gestion du Pôle Artistique et du Musée de l'Etang Neuf

Elaine That's a mouthful!

Claudie ...pays the rent and AGPAMEN has two employees. It is financed by the state, by the region, by the department of Cotes d'Armor, the CCKB and the towns and villages around. And besides, AGPAMEN would like to develop cultural patronage.

Elaine So, is further evidence of the work of the Resistance, still coming to light?

Claudie Yes, in fact there are new things coming. Volunteers collect information from the veterans or their families, but also from the inhabitants and new elements come to light thanks to visitors sometimes as well. And the veterans are disappearing so the idea is to pass on that history.

Elaine So are there any participants that are still alive, because I know at the time obviously they were very young.



Claudie Yes, 2 or 3 participants are still alive and their families are involved in the organisation and especially they have to prepare the ceremony which takes place on the 27th July which is the anniversary of the fights, every year, and near the monument.

Elaine Because that was a particular day of action wasn't it?

Claudie It's the day when they fought against the Germans.

Elaine Where do most of your visitors come from?

Claudie Well most of them are Breton or French, but they also come from Great Britain, Germany, Belgium, and even Canada, the USA, New Zealand, Australia. So you see, all around the world.

Elaine All the world. What is the way forward?

Claudie Well there are several exhibitions and lectures every year and soon there will be an exhibition and it will deal with communication and radio transmission in the Resistance. It will take place from April 12th to September 27th, and several lectures will be given on that issue as well, and the lectures take place on Sunday most of the time and usually at 3pm. There is information in the papers anyway.

Elaine Absolutely, and online. Yes. Is it necessary to book in advance?

Claudie Well the museum is open to the visitors all the year round from Wednesday to Sunday, but if you want a guided visit you need to book in advance.

Elaine Obviously. So, just finally, how did you become involved as an English guide?

Claudie My husband is a volunteer and an ex-history teacher and so he guides the groups from time to time, especially students. Well as I know the museum, when it is necessary, I help.

Elaine Well I have to say there has been huge feedback because there were 3 visits from AIKB I think in a matter of days, even weeks, and everybody has come back with a very positive response, saying they so much enjoyed not just looking at, and hearing about, things, but the little anecdotes.

Claudie Ah, we are very pleased with that.

Elaine So thank you very much for your time Claudie, and do continue the good work.

Claudie You're welcome.