



Kalon Menez Are

Welcome to BOTMEUR

A MUNICIPALITY IN THE ARMORIQUE
NATURAL REGIONAL PARK

★ Unspoilt nature all around you

The slippery Eurasian otter
is mainly active at night,
sometimes leaving some
traces of its passage along
the way (droppings,
paw prints, etc.).
So keep your eyes peeled!



The end of the road

The summit of **Tuchenn Kador** (385 m elevation), the line of ridges and the view of Saint-Michel Mountain are captivating in any season.

On sunny days, take a moment to admire the **sunset** from the lakeshore.

The Kalon Menez Are also cuts across lesser-known places where you'll feel like you're at the **end of the world**. The sunken lanes, woodland edges and old, forgotten farms that stand alongside wide open spaces have convinced some visitors to permanently settle in the village.



Togetherness

Be forewarned: here, the 230 residents cultivate **happiness** together. And they categorically insist that you must go to the community café/corner shop O P'ti Boneur if you really want to penetrate the soul of the village.

Even though **pilhaouers** – the ragmen who criss-crossed the land selling their wares and spreading the latest news – no longer exist, this is still the place where locals of all ages meet up to chat and share their idea of happiness with visitors passing through.



Land of legends

Tuchenn Kador is just a few centimetres shy of being Brittany tallest peak! But record-breaking or not, it's already the pinnacle in terms of colours and legendary characters.

Nature is everywhere, so take advantage of **ADDES**, an association that brings it to life along storytelling walks and hikes, where magic is revealed every step of the way. You will come to understand how these spots were able to inspire powerful imaginings that still haunt the **Yeun Elez Basin** today. After all, legend has it that this is the gateway to hell!



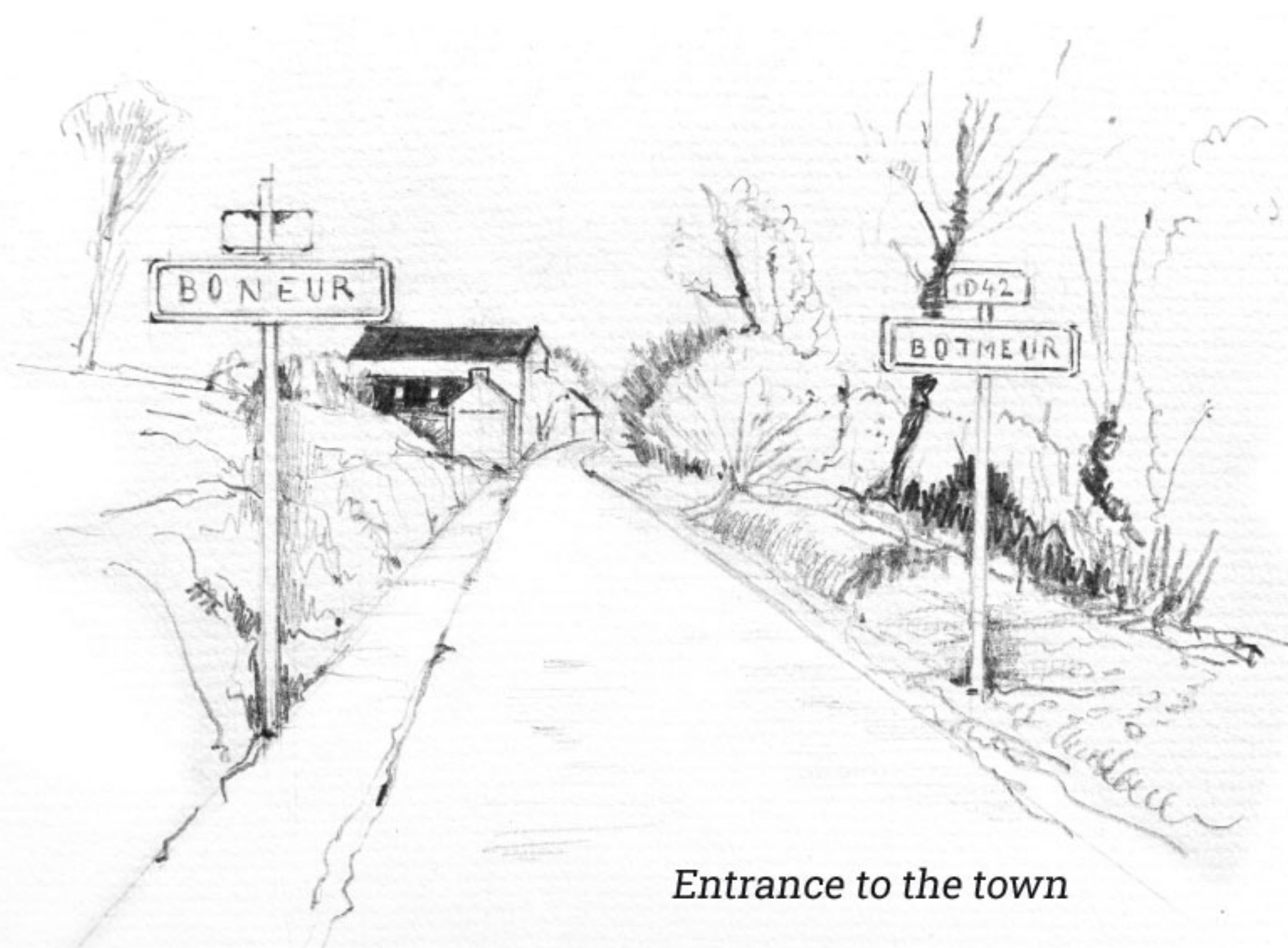
Peat and peat bogs

It's impossible to talk about Botmeur without mentioning peat, which has traditionally been used as fuel, and even employed in horticulture for a while. **Peatlands are now protected** across the EU as a natural habitat that needs to be preserved.

Peat remains **rooted in the memories** of local elders, and its smell is associated with coming home. Recalls Marie-Corentine, a resident of Botmeur, "When I started to smell burnt peat in the air, I knew that the coach bringing me back for the weekend from boarding school in Morlaix would be stopping soon. It smelled like Botmeur. I was home."



At the summit of Tuchenn Kador
© C. Darley, Armorique Park



Entrance to the town

Did you know?

A stroll through town tells the tale of the village and the poet Fañch Abgrall, born in Botmeur in 1906. A walking guide is available at the town hall.



Meet Follen the Korrigan on a walk with ADDES
© X. Bourgois - The other life, Armorique Park



A plank helps keep you dry while crossing the peat bog
© D. Kermel, Armorique Park

Did you know?

In the 1960s, Roger Vadim shot several scenes of his film *Spirits of the Dead* with his then wife, Jane Fonda, in Botmeur. Rumour has it that, when the actress fell off her horse during one take, her body left a lasting imprint in the peat.



Kalon Menez Are

Welcome to BRASPARTS

A MUNICIPALITY IN THE ARMORIQUE
NATURAL REGIONAL PARK

Unspoilt nature
all around you

Sundew grows in the peat
bogs of Brasparts.
It may be pretty, but this
plant is carnivorous.
Careless insects, beware!

© V. Dupont,
Armorique Park



Unflattenable Brasparts

*Tri zra n'hall ket an Aotrou Doue ober :
diveinañ Berrien, kompezañ Brazparzh,
diradeniñ Plouie.* This Breton saying claims
there are three things God cannot do:
clear the stones from Berrien, make Brasparts
level, or remove the weeds from Plouyé.
Here, this is because the village hugs
the foothills of the Arrée Mountains,
treating hikers to trails along rolling hills.

One such path leads to **The Wedding Party**,
a 300 metres long alignment of nearly
100 Neolithic standing stones.
According to legend, this alignment was once
a wedding procession that was turned to stone
for failing to show respect to a priest on his
way to giving the last rites to a dying man.



The Wedding Party • © R. Louessard, 2020
(Departmental Archaeology Centre,
Finistère Department)



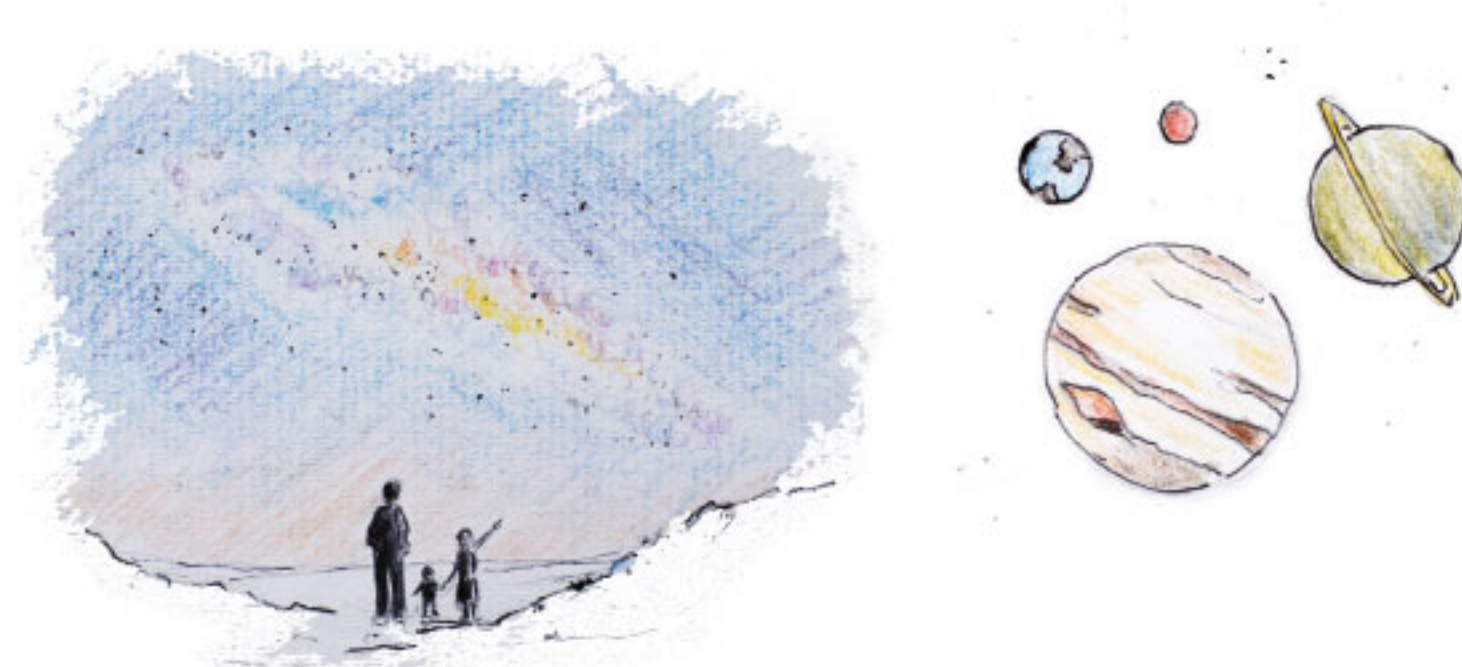
Science and nature

It was in Brasparts that France's **first green
classes** were taught in the 1960s.

This desire to share knowledge of nature
continues today, at **Ti Menez Are's**
environmental discovery centre.
Local students are also committed to nature.
For their **educational land area***, they have
a Land Council where they study and protect
a small, natural space close to their school.

Scientific culture is honoured here. Astronomy
enthusiasts are treated to a view of the stars
far from any light pollution.

* Part of a broader national programme



★ Did you know?

MISS Arrée, the immense model of
the solar system in the Arrée Mountains,
invites visitors to take a walk through
the solar system on a one to one billion
scale (where 1 mm = 1,000 km).
The sun is located in Espace Frédéric
Le Guyader, across from the town hall.



Starting off on the right foot

While dancers usually start the gavotte line
dance with their left feet, they start with
their right between the Aulne and Elorn Rivers,
especially in and around Brasparts.
This tradition was perpetuated by Celtic circles,
just like the traditions of storytelling and
singing (for example at the **Kan ar Bobl**,
or "Song of the People" competition),
of celebrations and of language classes provided
by local associations.

Traditional **Brasparts costumes**, as seen in this
photo, are still worn in dancing circles today.



© François Joncour,
Yves Nézet Collection,
departmental archives

Did you know?

Local man
François Joncour was
a photographer and
postcard publisher.
His work was a reflection
of village life at the turn
of the 20th century.



Do you know Germaine?

"Germaine" does not refer to one of
the elderly ladies in the village.
No, it's a delicious apple variety that is part
of the area's heritage. **Germaine de Brasparts**
appears prominently in many plant nursery
catalogues.

The cousins of this apple, which is best
when eaten raw, are C'hwerv Ruz
("bitter red"), C'hwerv Gwenn ("bitter white"),
Kroc'henn Ki ("dog skin") and Aotrou Person
("mister parish priest"). Local residents
today continue to use these to make a hardy
"mountain cider". But we still don't know if
they do that while humming the "cider song"
written by Frédéric Le Guyader, an author
born in Brasparts in the late 19th century.



Germaine
de Brasparts
apples



Kalon Menez Are

Welcome to BRENNILIS

A MUNICIPALITY IN THE ARMORIQUE
NATURAL REGIONAL PARK



Unspoilt nature all around you

Multiple families of **beavers** – an animal that is mainly active at night – can be found in Brennilis. Make your way to the Venec Nature Reserve's Visitor Centre to learn all about this amazing dam-building mammal!



Between nature and culture

A land of bocages and peat bogs, Brennilis also possesses remarkable remnants of a megalithic dwelling. **The Ti ar Boudiged dolmen** (also known as the "House of the Fairies") bears witness to ancient human activity. This Neolithic tomb (about 5,000 years old) is considered to be a major archaeological site, owing to its monumentality and its state of conservation.

In the centre of town, there are two must-visit sights: the 15th century **church**, which is a listed Historic Monument and the **Nature Reserve and Beavers Visitor Centre**.



Ti ar Boudiged
("House of the Fairies"), a Kreizy
Archéo archaeological site

Did you know?

The **Brennilis Nuclear Power Plant** is one of France's oldest. For most locals, it is part of the landscape and history of their town. It is currently in the process of being dismantled.



A trip to the lake

Also known as Lake Saint-Michel, **Lake Brennilis** was created by the dam that was completed in 1937 to power the Saint-Herbot hydroelectric plant. In spite of its artificial character, the alternating feel of a seaside resort and a wilderness area along its shoreline provides a walking experience that is highly appreciated by visitors and locals alike.

The lake is also known to be **teeming with fish** (particularly pike, perch and trout). In fact, the Rencontres Halieutiques Bretonnes, a sporting event dedicated to recreational boat fishing, is held there each year.



The Yeun Elez hiking trail (15 km) goes all the way round Lake Saint-Michel
© Monts d'Arrée Community



Local life

Both residents and visitors benefit from the lake's direct proximity. And for fans of Breton dancing and music, the traditional **fest-noz**, or night festival, takes place each year in mid-August, on a dirt floor inside a hangar in Ploénez, a hamlet attached to Brennilis.

To encourage **families** to settle here and keep classes local, key actors in the Arrée Mountains have teamed up to create a district educational group involving the schools in Brennilis, Loqueffret and La Feuillée.

Did you know?

Brennilis and the surrounding area were once the land of **pilhaouers***, peddlers that travelled the countryside exchanging household goods for used rags, which they would then sell to paper manufacturers. In the 19th century, that extra income was essential, because farms did not provide enough to feed a whole family.

* Pilhou is Breton for "rag"



Venec Nature Reserve

Venec is home to Brittany's **last raised peat bog still in activity**. Its five metres of peat contain 5,000 years of accumulated plant materials! With its national reserve status, it is a real **sanctuary for biodiversity**, which visitors can explore on guided tours led by the conservation organization, Bretagne Vivante. A river near Venec provides shelter to species whose presence may seem surprising, like Eurasian **beavers** and **freshwater pearl mussels**.



Marshland in the Venec
National Reserve
© E. Holder

Did you know?

Peat bogs are among the planet's most efficient carbon sinks. They also play an important role in water storage and conservation.



Kalon Menez Are

Welcome to COMMANA

A MUNICIPALITY IN THE ARMORIQUE
NATURAL REGIONAL PARK

Unspoilt nature all around you

The scything of moorland
is great for iconic species like
the Eurasian curlew and the
hen harrier, which need barren
moors to nest and feed.

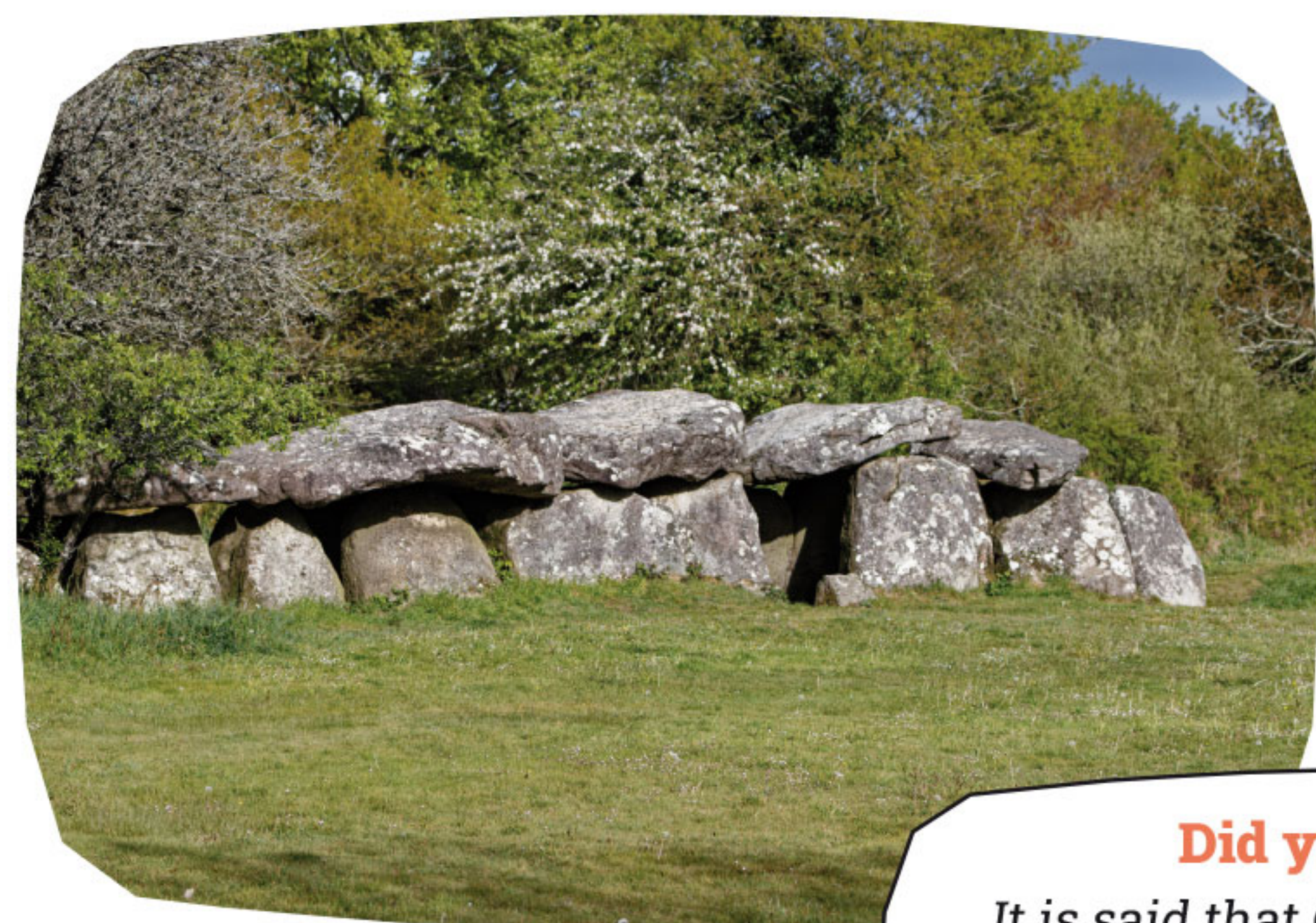
© Les Fasces
Nébulees



Of stones and water

The **megaliths of Mougau Bihan** and **Lake Drennec** are musts when you visit Commana! The covered passageway (actually a Neolithic tomb) will remind you of the human settlement that was here so long ago.

As for the lake, it is an example of the imprint left on landscapes by human activities. Despite its very natural appearance, it is actually a reservoir that was created from scratch to supply water to part of Finistère. But that doesn't stop the town's residents from meeting up there as soon as the weather turns warm.



Mougau Covered Passageway
© M. Laviee

Did you know?

It is said that Commana's church has the most beautiful **altarpiece** in all of Brittany and that, on that spot, the builders found a plate engraved with the image of **Saint Anne**. And that is how the town supposedly got its name, from the Breton **komm** ("plate") and **Anna** ("Anne").



Sport and solidarity

While Commana's famed horse and cattle fair no longer exists, two events continue to attract locals and visitors alike to this day. The first, the **pardon held each August**, is a matter of tradition. The second blends an athletic challenge with respect for nature and socializing. The **Ultra Trail des Monts d'Arrée (UTMA)** is a race involving hundreds of volunteers from nearby towns and more than a thousand runners. Each year, a portion of the proceeds from the race goes to regional associations and a nationwide cause.



On your marks! • © M. Laviee



© Village of Commana



Flax farming

For flax to grow, it needs wind and temperatures no higher than 25°C. Commana meets both of these conditions, yielding a thriving flax industry from the 16th to 18th centuries. In fact, it was thanks to the prosperity of **linen farmers** that the town's remarkable **parish close** was built.

Now that Brittany wants to revive its flax industry, that lovely plant could write the next page in local business history, with some fields already beginning to be covered with the blue flowers in summer.



Flax flower

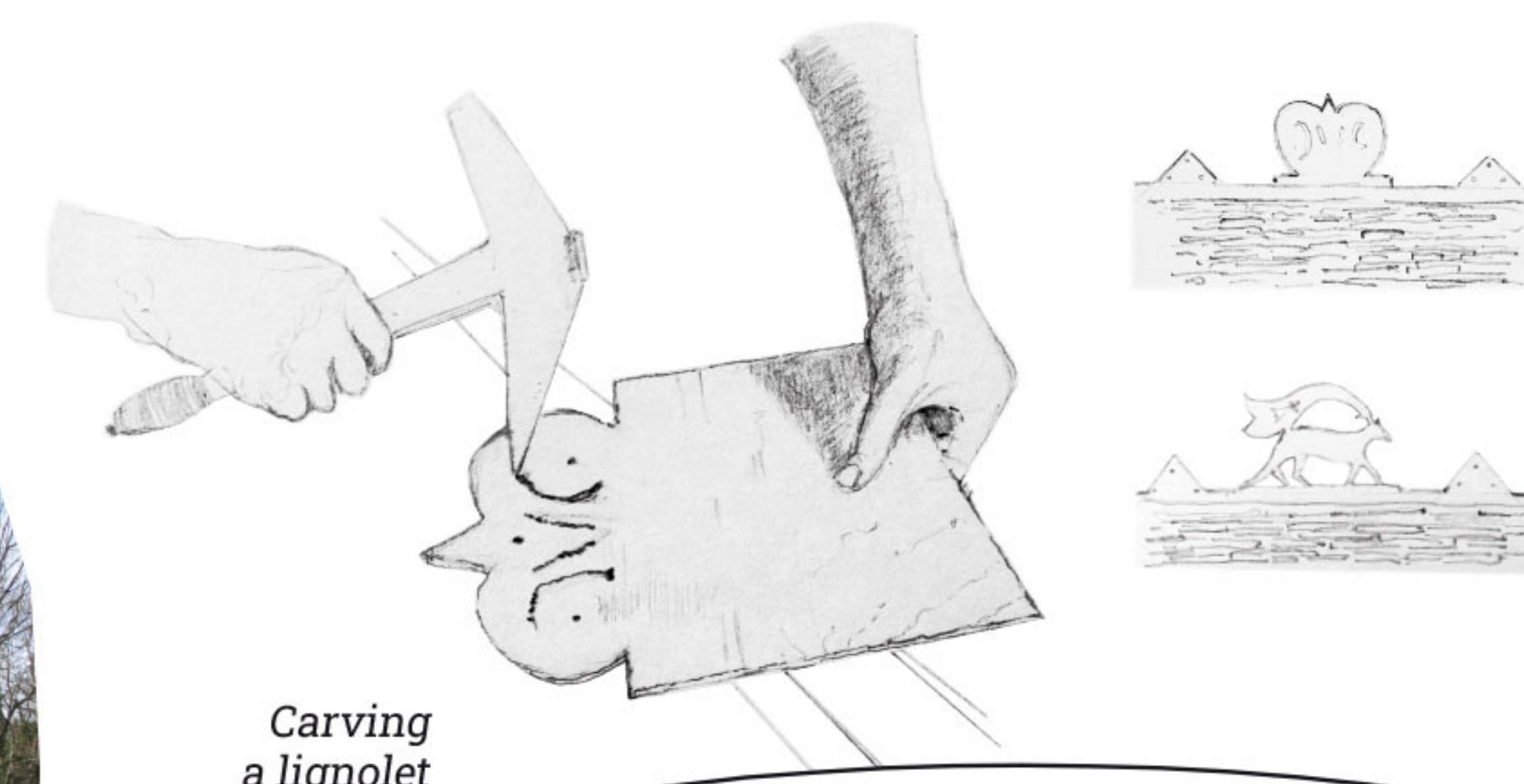


Kanndi of Rozonoual in Commana. The ruins of another kanndi (linen bleaching house) can be seen along the route of the Kalon Menez Are.
© D. Queinnec



Blue stone

The Arrée Mountains are inseparable from **slate**. In Breton, that rock from the schist family is called *Mein Glaz*, or "blue stone". The traces of its mining are everywhere in the area's landscape and built heritage. The quarries may have shut down, but roofers today are maintaining a rare expertise in working with "**mountain**" or "**rustic**" slate by reusing old slate tiles. That is the very expertise that enabled the restoration of the roof of Saint-Michel Chapel following a devastating wildfire in 2022.



Carving
a lignolet

Did you know?

Roof ridges in the Arrée Mountains are sometimes adorned with decorative tiles called **lignolets**, which can be illustrations of the owner's tastes, or else of the roofer's personality (or sense of humour!). Be sure to look up for examples of these along the Kalon Menez Are trail!



Kalon Menez Are

Welcome to HUELGOAT

A MUNICIPALITY IN THE ARMORIQUE
NATURAL REGIONAL PARK

★ Unspoilt nature all around you

Huelgoat Forest is home
to 11 species of bats.
Five of those are European
protected species,
including the **greater
horseshoe bat** and
the **western barbastelle**.



A mysterious forest

Huelgoat, or “**high forest**” in Breton, wears its name well. The village itself is inseparable from its **mysterious forest**, which can be reached on foot from town.

Behind the old school, at the forest's edge, the **Théâtre de Verdure** serves as an outdoor concert venue in the summertime.

A granite block field, a river and archaeological remains all contribute to the site's magical atmosphere, inspiring a **bountiful imaginary world** whose stories locals love to tell.



Main events

The **Thursday market** is a key part of village life here. Set up on the central square, you can buy regional products there but, above all, it's a place to meet up for a coffee and a chat.

The village is full of energy, thanks to its various associations and festive events. These include **Les Roc'h des Monts d'Arrée**, a now legendary race in which thousands of cyclists take part, as well as an annual hog roast on Assumption Day (15 August), which hosts around 500 guests each year.



Arts and crafts

The charm of Huelgoat stems from the **magic** of the forest, as much as it does from the town's peaceful, genuine character. Many artists, painters and writers have found inspiration while spending time here.

For example, **Paul Sérusier** (1864-1927) created multiple paintings in Huelgoat in the late 19th century.

Nowadays, **art galleries** having opened in town, and many artists live and work here. Many of them have gathered in collectives, drawing inspiration from the village and contributing to its vitality.



Natural wonders

Granite block fields are the product of magma that formed tens of kilometres below the Earth's surface. Hundreds of millions of years of alteration and **erosion** then moulded them into these fantastic shapes.

These rocks are home to **ferns** and **mosses**, including some very rare and protected species.

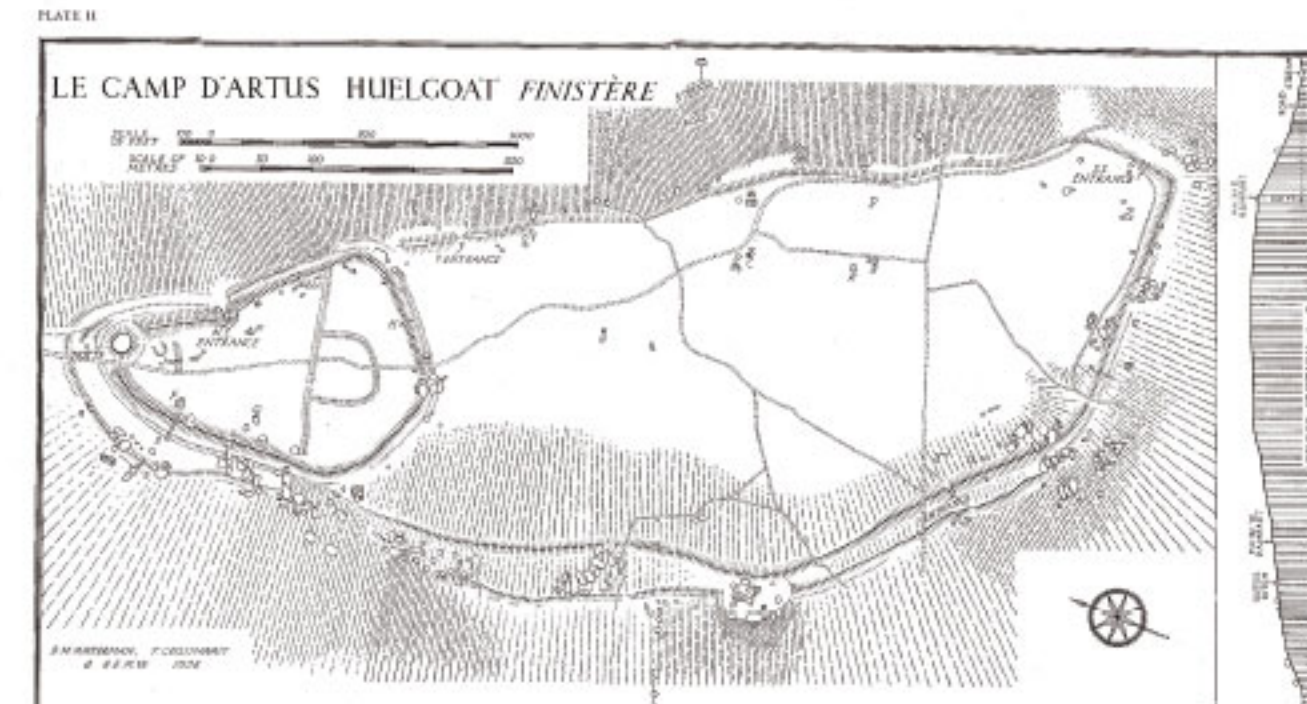
It is important to show respect for this **self-effacing flora**, which plays a vital role in the water cycle and provides shelter to many small animals.



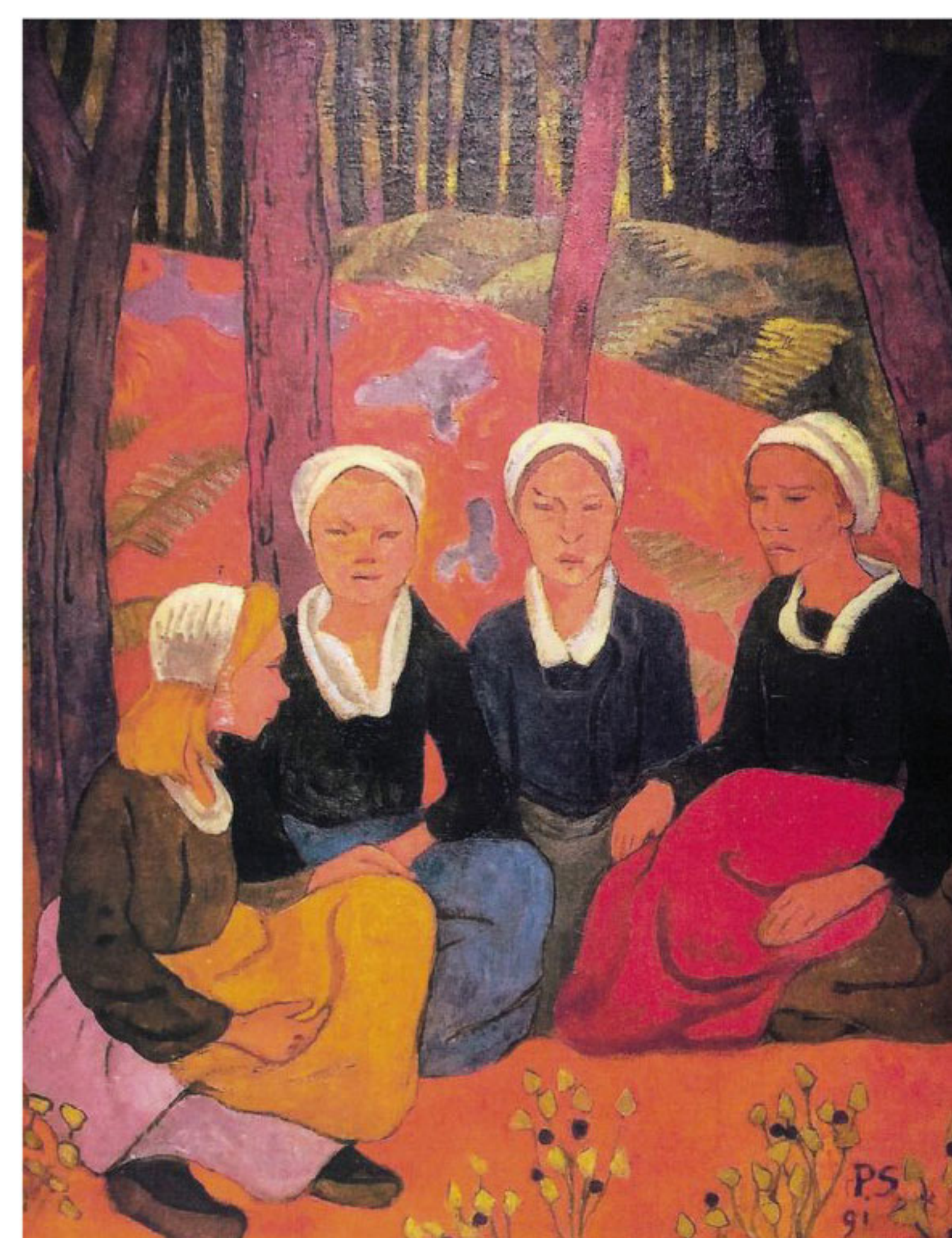
Huelgoat Block Field,
a source of wonder
© V. Dupont,
Armorique Park

Did you know?

The oppidum at **Camp d'Artus**, which was excavated in the 1930s, was a fortified settlement that undoubtedly controlled the nearby silver-lead mines. It is proof of the presence of the **Osismii**, a Celtic people living on the Armorican Peninsula.



Plan of Camp d'Artus, 1938
(in M. Wheeler, *Hill-Forts of Northern France*,
1957), a Kreizy Archéo archaeological site



Four Breton Girls in the Forest by Paul Sérusier,
Huelgoat period (1891-1893)



An extraordinary
wealth of moss
growing on the rocks
© E. Holder

Did you know?

Huelgoat's **granite quarries** were mined beginning in the 15th century, but especially from the 19th century through the first half of the 20th. Even now, that rock is extracted at a quarry in the neighbouring town of Brennilis.



Kalon Menez Are

Welcome to Saint-Cadou, SIZUN

A MUNICIPALITY IN
THE ARMORIQUE NATURAL
REGIONAL PARK



★🌙 **Unspoilt nature
all around you**
Invisible during the day,
with its ground-like camouflage,
the **European nightjar** reveals itself
at dusk with a characteristic cry.
Some say it sounds like a moped!
So keep your ears open!



Along the trail

Between the forest and its traditional buildings, Saint-Cadou has all the atmosphere of a mountain foothill.

Along the Kalon Menez Are trail, the village's scenery will treat you to lovely contrasts, from **mountain crests** looking out onto sweeping panoramas to more intimate **forest paths**. Whether you're surrounded by sunshine or mist, you'll get your fill of sensations.

The **legends of Breton** mythology still inhabit the area, where the slightest rustling seems to reveal a covert presence.



Forest path under the winter sun
© N. Crenn



Freshwater reservoir

The Kalon Menez Are trail is an invitation to ramble alongside **Lake Drennec**, which is fed by several waterways. This freshwater reservoir, created in 1981 by the construction of a dam on the Elorn River, supplies drinking water to nearly 400,000 Finistère residents. Although it is man-made, the lake is still one of **France's biggest trout fishing holes**.

As for the Elorn, it plays host to a large **salmon** population. Paradise for fans of both nature and fishing!



Did you know?

The **Elorn River** stretches 56.4 km in length, making it the third longest coastal river in Finistère, after the Aulne. The boundary line between the Arrée Mountains to the south and Léon to the north, it springs out of the base of Tuchenn Kador. Its many tributaries are preferred breeding areas for **trout** and **salmon**.



Quarries and quarrymen

Slaty schist ridges emerge along the Kalon Menez Are.

Saint-Cadou is a **land of quarrymen**: from the mid-19th century to the 1950s, local life was marked by family-owned slate quarries. Then came the rural exodus and quarry closures. **Rustic slate** continues to be a part of daily life here, demanding constant care, as recalled by the old adage, "In Saint-Cadou, bring nails with you to lance the boils", which encouraged pilgrims to bring nails with them to help maintain the church's roof by replacing its slate tiles.

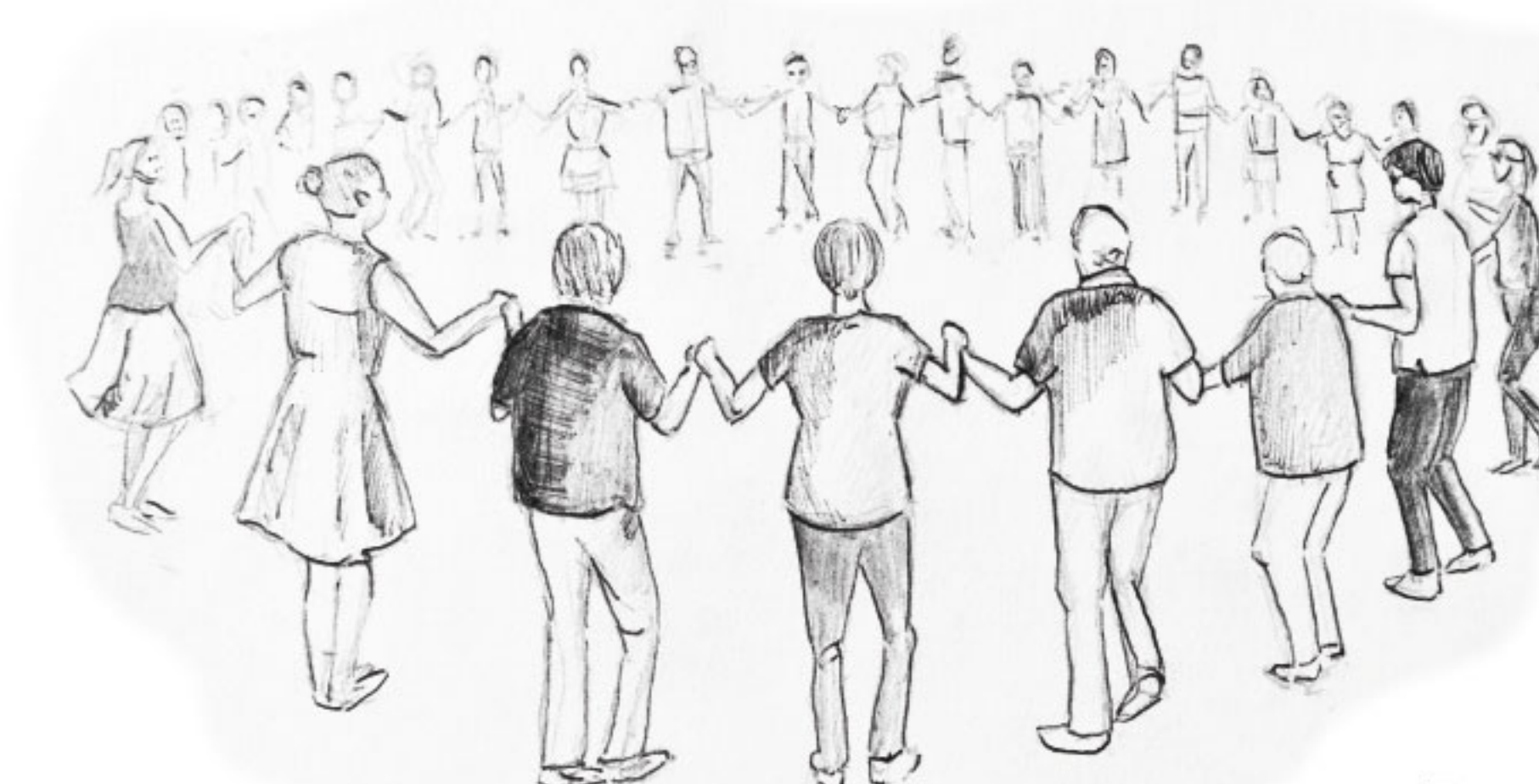
Mountain slate
© D. Kermel,
Armorique Park



Community life

Saint-Cadou has its own character, and a strong one at that. A wealth of community projects happen here, and the annual calendar is dotted with **great events** organized by local groups, including a spring fête, *fest-noz* for local and community supported agriculture.

In the centre of town, many activities encourage the pooling of knowledge, ideas and projects. There is plenty of entertainment here throughout the year.



Fest-noz

Did you know?

Saint-Cadou's pardon takes place the last Sunday in September, in homage to Saint Cadoc, a 6th century Welsh abbot whose feast day is 25 September.



Kalon Menez Are

Welcome to LA FEUILLÉE

A MUNICIPALITY IN THE ARMORIQUE
NATURAL REGIONAL PARK

Unspoilt nature all around you

Here, farmers continue
to scythe the moors.
This age-old practice is
favourable to the presence
of **hen harriers** and
Eurasian curlews.



Take to higher ground

With its 275 metres of elevation (where the church stands), La Feuillée is **Brittany's highest** municipality! Close to the Kalon Menez Are trail, you will find the archaeological site of **Goarem-ar-Manec'h**. That fortified village was probably founded during the High Middle Ages. Registered on the List of **Historic Monuments** and regularly excavated, it could have been a monastic foundation linked to the Order of Knights of the Hospital of Saint John of Jerusalem that cared for pilgrims and the sick.

La Feuillée, whose name is suggestive of foliage, is also marked by a landscape of bocages and meadows, in contrast to the aridity of the "mountains".



Lively traditional festivities

Each year, the village holds two pardons, one in honour of Saint Houardon on the first Sunday in September and the other in June, for the Feast of **Saint John the Baptist, the patron saint of the Knights Hospitalier**. The procession begins with a child from La Feuillée under the age of 5, called the "Little Saint John". A little girl played that role for the first time ever in 2024.

While you're here, don't miss out on **La Feuillée's flea market**, which attracts locals and visitors alike each year on Mother's Day (typically the last Sunday in May).



Cold lands and ragmen

There is little that grows on the acidic, "cold lands" of the Arrée Mountains. In the 19th century, demographic growth forced farming families to seek out a secondary source of income.

Like in Brennilis, Loqueffret, Botmeur and Berrien, the men of La Feuillée became **travelling rag-pickers**. Those **pilhaouers*** would swap crockery or scrap metal for used rags that they would then sell to paper manufacturers. Travelling the land and spreading the latest news, those figures could be seen as either pleasant, worrying or simply symbolic of the difficult living conditions of the times.

* From the Breton pilhoù, or "rag"



A symbol of local life

Auberge de la Crêpe is an institution here. It is typical of the rural architecture of the Arrée Mountains and of the **houses with apoteiz** (Breton for "porch") that emerged in the 17th century.

Its external staircase and combination door-window-fireplace are hallmarks of those structures. Serving first as a weaver's home, and then an inn, town hall and school, it encapsulates the town's history and how life has changed here over the years. These days, people come from far and wide to enjoy this hot spot for fine Breton cuisine.

House with apoteiz
(porches)

Did you know?

Saint John the Baptist's pardon procession follows a child leading a sheep down the street. For the occasion, "Little Saint John" wears a sheath made of animal skin enhanced with flowers.

Saint John the Baptist
procession in 2024
© C. Fouillard



© Guy Denning,
2026

Did you know?

Guy Denning is an international urban artist and resident of La Feuillée. This fresco on the wall of the school celebrates the iconic figure of the pilhaouer, to which locals maintain strong attachments.

Did you know?

The "**spud train**", a slow train on the Rosporden-Plouescat line that transported market gardening produce and slate to the coast (1912-1932), passed through La Feuillée.



Kalon Menez Are

Welcome to SAINT-RIVOAL

A MUNICIPALITY IN THE ARMORIQUE NATURAL REGIONAL PARK



Unspoilt nature all around you

The **ermine** is an iconic mammal in Armorica. Each winter, its fur changes colour from brown to white, making it even more inconspicuous!

© Les Fâces
Nébulees

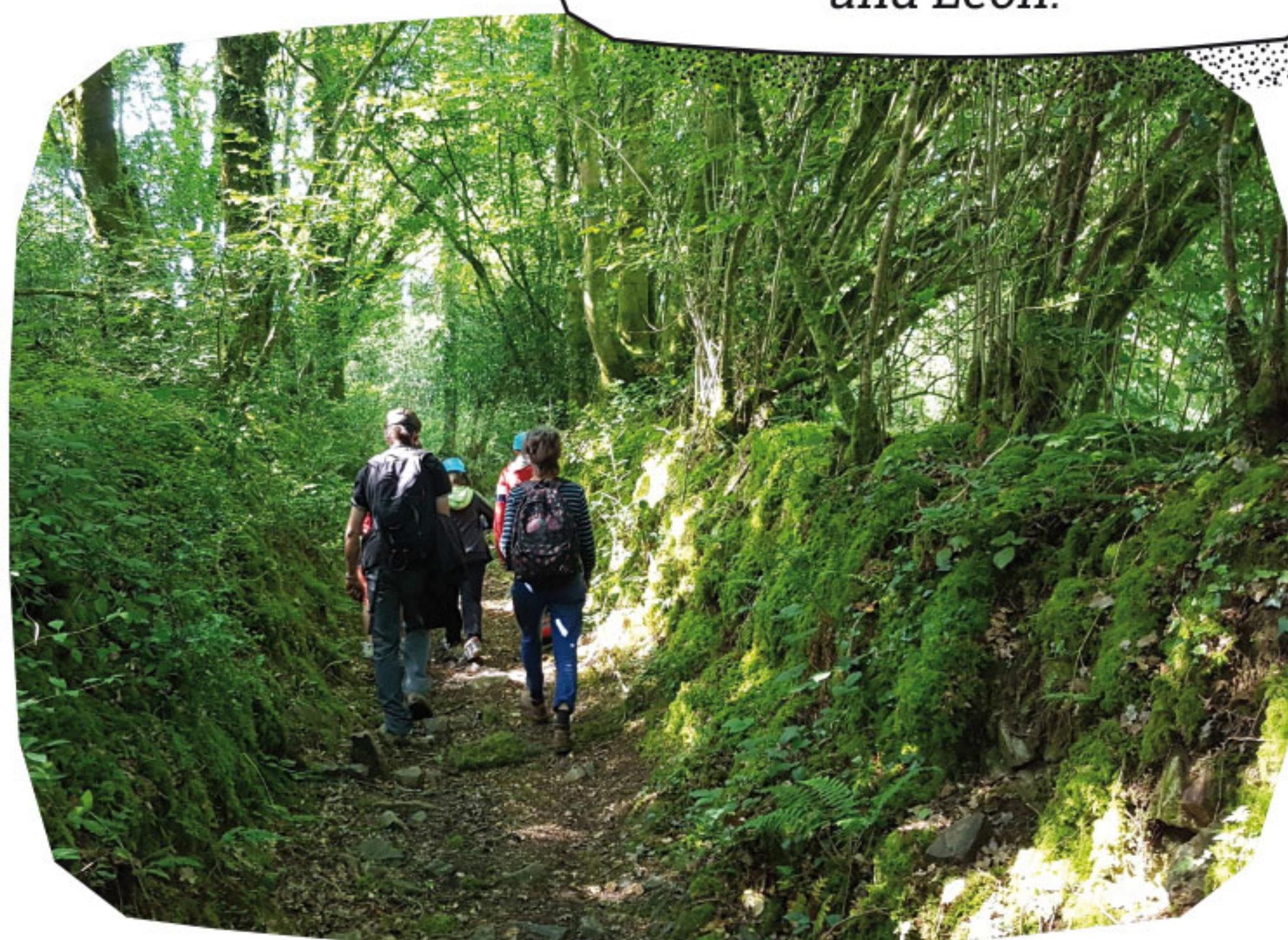


Sunken lanes

The Kalon Menez Are features a wide **diversity of paths**, ranging from rocky and panoramic ridges to extremely deep valleys. The **sunken lanes** of Saint-Rivoal are remarkable for their **embankments**, which can rise up to several metres tall in places. Here, you will learn that you are **taking the ribines** when you are following small back roads rather than a main road. A **ribine** was originally the narrow line on top of an embankment on which you could walk when the road was too muddy.

Did you know?

The Chemin du Comte path, which you will cross along your way, forms the boundary line between Cornouaille and Léon.



Sunken lanes, where nature meets mystery • © M. Toullec



Cornec House

Residents of Saint-Rivoal often meet up in the outdoor sections of the town's **ecomuseum**.

To them, though, it's still "**the Cornec house**", after its longstanding owners. Because this **heritage site** is central to local life: it's where people come together to bake bread and pizza, where students explore nature and where locals chat with visitors passing through town. The community corner shop also speaks to village life here, where it's important to eat local and meet the producers of the goods you buy.

By the oven, the mill, the field or the garden, the **Arrée Mountains Ecomuseum** invites you to absorb and share knowledge and expertise through activities, workshops and other events.

The ecomuseum is part of Finistère's departmental properties and museums.



Celebrating Saint-Rivoal's 100th anniversary in 2025
© K. Guillou, Armorique Park

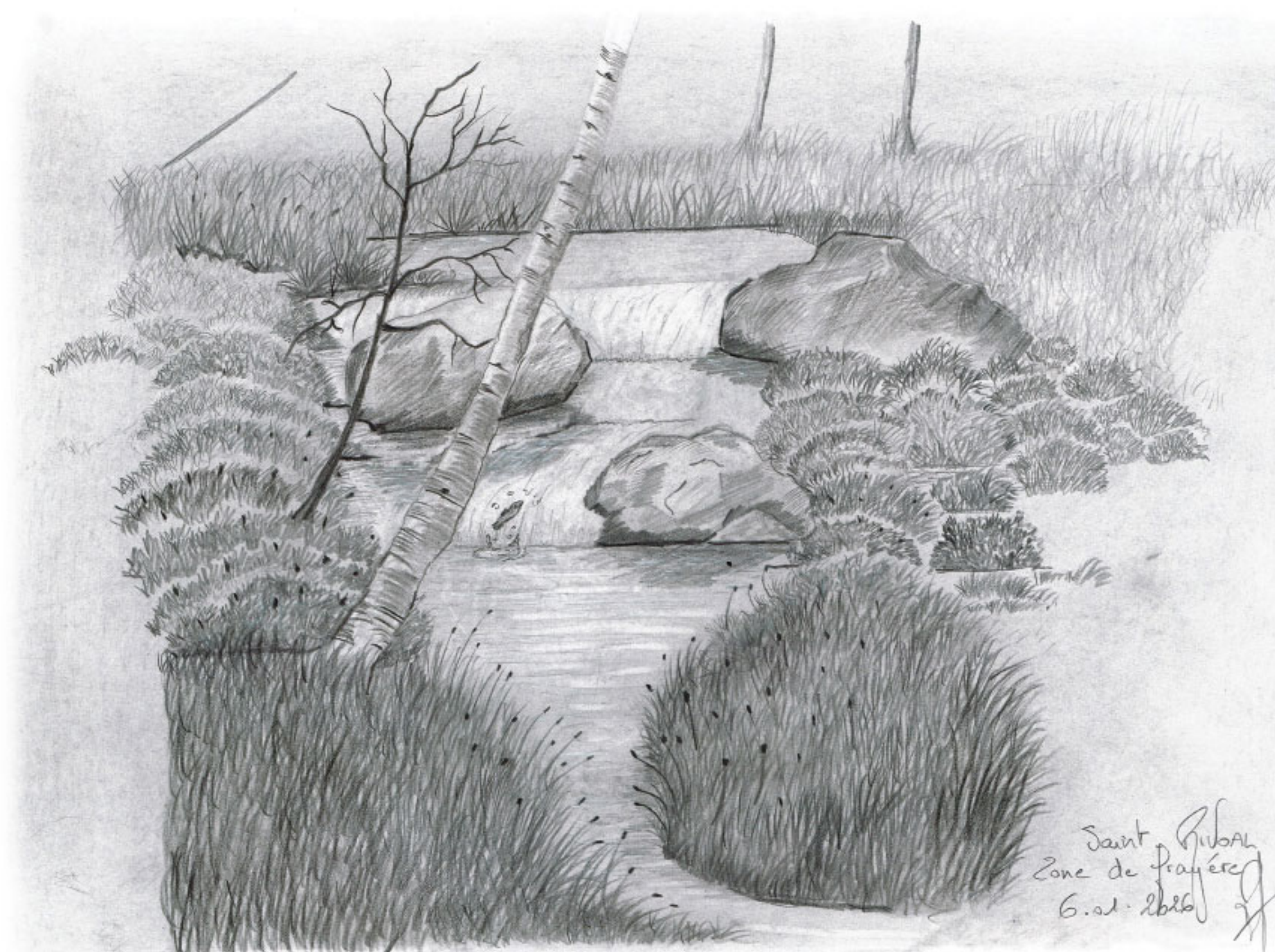


The toull of Saint-Rivoal

Saint-Rivoal is a town of **forests** and **moors**. It also has a steep-sloping area, labelled the "**toull**" of Saint-Rivoal, and is criss-crossed by **many waterways**.

Although residents may feel like the harsh winters that once isolated the village have gradually disappeared, Saint-Rivoal still grapples with the elements. For examples, the growing period for gardeners is shorter here than elsewhere, and "when the rooster looks at the valley", that means the weather is perfect for fishing on the Rivoal! So, be sure to keep an eye on the church's weathercock!

* Breton for "hole"



Spawning ground in Saint-Rivoal, where brown trout go to breed
© L. Rannou



A mountain culture

At an elevation of 172 metres for the village, compared to 380 metres for Saint-Michel Mountain, Saint-Rivoal has a real **mountain feel**.

Every detail contributes to this unexpected ambiance: the **winding roads** leading to the town, the **thick "mountain slate" tiles** on the rooftops, and the welcoming fireplaces featured in **traditional interiors**.

And although you can't see the iconic **Saint-Michel Mountain** from the village, the same can't be said of **Garreg Mountain**, which pupils climb at the end of primary school, in a joyous rite of passage before heading off to secondary school.



Mountain slate from schist quarries in the Arrée Mountains
© D. Kermel, Armorique Park

Did you know?

Saint-Rivoal's primary school was Brittany's first bilingual state school.