

This document has been produced by the committee of fides in collaboration with the municipality.

The information has been principally taken from two works written by a colleague of authors and published under the Cahiers du temps :

Périers-sur-le-Dan, past and present (2005)
A Norman village Périers-sur-le-Dan (2010)

These books are available in the mayor's office as well as a booklet entitled / Promenade historique à Périers-sur-le-Dan (2009) written by a resident.



January 2016

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- 8 Protestant church

<http://fides-periers.blogspot.fr>

www.periers-sur-le-dan.fr

6 - The dovecoat

This property is an old farm, with the date 1616 figuring on the front. The actual dovecoat, the pond, the reinforcements to the barn, have been added in the 20th century.

The Dan passes behind the house but is sometimes dry, even when there is water in the pond at the same time. There is a private Protestant cemetery behind the house as well.



On the other side of the road, La ferme Mont-Joie, constructed in 1640, has been owned by the same family since 1834. It was specialised in the raising of horses destined for the army.

The farmyard was the place of life for the stablemen; the main house was constructed to the side for the owners. It can be found at the corner of "rue du Temple" and "rue de Mathieu".

Throughout the Second World War, the farm was one of the only buildings struck by a bomb, which destroyed part of the house and the bread oven.

7 - The grocery and Tobacco Store

This house was one of three telephone posts for the commune. A postcard dated 1916 shows the telephone post. The grocery was to the left, with a barrel of cider. To the right, was a room where people played dominos. The grocery was closed in 1971.



8 - The protestant church

From 1557, the inhabitants of Périers were adhering in number to Protestantism. After the church building (of Saint Ouen) was returned to Catholicism in 1792, it was necessary to give a new place for the Protestant faith, which represented about half of the population.



In 1817, some ground was made available and a construction was completed thanks to donations by the Protestant community. The Protestant church building was closed in 1954. The last marriage there was celebrated in 2015. It is currently owned by one of the residents.

Périers sur le Dan A village to discover



A brief history

Built in the little vale where the Dan, a small and discrete, but sometimes capricious stream flows, the peaceful nature of Périers-sur-le-Dan would not lead you to guess of its rich and tumultuous past.

Aerial viewpoints have revealed the existence of a large protohistoric plot on the village high ground. Some Gaulois vestiges are also present. A Roman road linking Bayeux to Rouen has been identified to the north of the Catholic church building and traces of habitation have also been found around this area.

Archaeological excavations too have evidenced a settlement from the Merovingian age. Furthermore, Périers-sur-le-Dan is closely linked to all the events of war that have had an impact on Normandy; from the 100 years war to the liberation of 1944. The village also contains traces of the terrible struggles between Catholics and Protestants through more than two centuries and which have contributed to its current character.

1-The mayor's office and the old school house



Elise Cogniard
1890 - 1976

First female
mayor in France,
elected in
November 1944

A free Protestant school was created in 1866, which then became mixed (both by sex and faith) in 1880. The school was to become public, state-funded and obliged to follow the laws of Jules Ferry, with the commune acquiring the premises in 1883. The school was closed in 1999 and the mayor's office currently occupies the premises.

2-The former presbytery

The former presbytery, built from 1660 onwards, was destroyed along with its archives, by a fire in 1782. It was then reconstructed on the same site. The large house was self sufficient: a garden, a little livestock farm, a dairy and a boulangerie allowed the parish priest to live there very comfortably. It was put up for sale in 1791 after the flight of the priest (the priest having refused to take the oath of allegiance to the civil constitution - see below).



3-The church of Saint Ouen

Classed as a historical monument in 1914, the church building was the centre of life in the commune since the 8th century, when the walling of the nave in a herringbone fashion began to be used.

Today this part of the building is open-air, but the chancel of the 13th century remains intact with its pointed form and high bay windows with lancets that accommodate exceptional 13th and 14th century mural paintings, of which very few examples are known in Normandy. The paintings, of which a dozen frames remain, mostly depict the life of Saint Ouen, patron of the Catholic church in Périers.

The church building has experienced a number of vicissitudes across the centuries starting with the first



From the 16th century the Protestant faith became widespread and the church building fell under the control of Protestants who removed the statues and covered the mural paintings with whitewash.

The Catholic faith was reestablished in the church building at the end of the 17th century with the counter-reformation and the chorale was thus decorated with a remarkable altarpiece.

All through the 18th century the wars of religion carried on with many Protestants being forced in to exile. Indeed they still had their own cemeteries up to the middle of the 19th century, when a Protestant section was created in the communal cemetery beside the church building.

At the end of the 18th century, the parish of Périers had been suppressed because the previous priest had refused to take the oath swearing allegiance to the civil constitution of clergy (passed on 12 July 1790) and had taken flight (which led to the sale of the old presbytery - see above).

At the time of the liberation of the commune by the British' 3rd infantry division, the 6th and 7th of June 1944, the building was struck by a number of bullets.

At the start of the 1970s mass was celebrated regularly but it was necessary to again close the church building for safety reasons in 1977, as the vaulted roof was at risk of falling in.

The association to safeguard the church was created in 1978 and works of high importance were carried out to allow the church building to be returned to service. From the start of the 2000s, the mural paintings were restored.

4- The château

Built around 1760, the chateau was in reality a manor house with an adjoining farm. The current owners have restored it with the help of the "Fondation du patrimoine".

Occupied by the Germans during the war, the owners have this kept a journal that can be consulted in the museum Memorial in Caen.



Facing the chateau is a beautiful wooded alley and at number 15, buildings quite representative of the farms of the region: farms on a large courtyard, which seems opulent if one considers the size of the domestic quarters. After the D-Day landings, Field Ambulance 223 (British Military Red Cross) installed an advanced medical station

5-The cemetery of Hauterue

Some vestiges of the Protestant cemetery have been found in 17 properties in the commune. Those of the Hauterue farm were surrounded by an enclosed low wall. It houses the graves of one of the large families of the village, of which one is that of Guillaume Jules Houël (1832-1886), a grand mathematician and physician, who was doctor of sciences at 23 years of age.



The Dan is a « vitouard » : a water course with intermittent surges. Its source is taken from the pond of Anisy, a village a few kilometres from Périers. Another source that strengthens it is the level of the pond at the Hauterue farm. During wet periods, it flows uncovered along the "rue de l'église".

