



Welcome to Noyal-Pontivy
Degemer mat a Noal-Pondi



Presentation of Noyal-Pontivy

Noyal-Pontivy – in breton Noal-Pondi – is located in the center of Britain, at the East of Pontivy. Surrounded by the villages of Pontivy, Saint-Gérand, Saint-Gonnéry, Gueltas, Kerfourn, Neulliac, Evellys and Saint-Thuriau, it has an area of 5 345 ha at 137 meters of altitude. The commune dominates the eastern slope of the Blavet and the agglomeration of Pontivy. Noyal-Pontivy, limited to the north by the canal from Nantes to Brest, is crossed by the Signan (called also Niel) and the Belle Chère, tributaries of the Blavet.

Its history is particularly rich. In the writings, history and legend co-exist, interlock. It is sometimes difficult to separate them !

During the feudal period, Noyal-Pontivy depended on the Duchy of Rohan, the deanery of Porhoet, and the seneschals of Ploermel.

The administrative organization was modeled on the religious organization and for a very long time Noyal-Pontivy had been the largest parish of Brittany and therefore the oldest. It was verified that the importance of a parish was linked to its seniority.

Until the 15th century, the center of the parish was in Sainte-Noyale. The moving of the center may be attributed to the presence of the “La Motte” castle which is now the town hall.

Noyal-Pontivy has a rich religious heritage, the parish church classified as a Historic Monument, several chapels including Sainte-Noyale and Sainte-Barbe also classified as Historical Monuments, the site of “ Les Trois Fontaines” and many calvaries, ovens, fountains, manors and wells.

The presence of health professionals as well as a range of shops and services provides the Noyalais with all the services of daily life on site. There are more than fifty associations that make Noyal-Pontivy dynamic and the municipality is equipped with satisfactory and attractive equipments.

Noyal-Pontivy (3 776 inhabitants in 2018, the last census) is the second commune of the communes' community of Pontivy, called “ Pontivy Communauté ”. It has eight business parks on which many companies are oriented towards agribusiness.

This economic activity, generating more than 2 000 jobs, makes Noyal-Pontivy an important link in intercommunal cooperation.



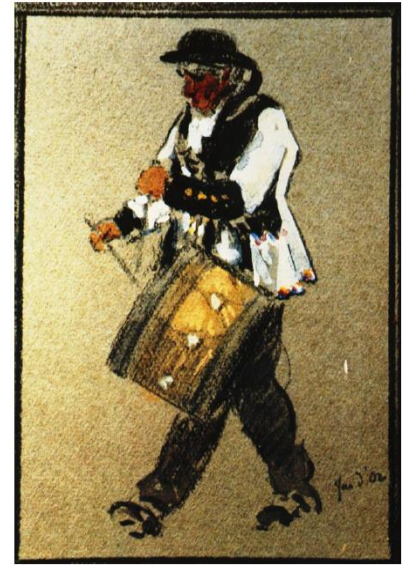
History and culture

Noyal-Pontivy is part of the country of Pontivy also called the country of the « White Sheep » or « Deñved gwenn » in connection with the men's dress of the country at the end of the XIXth century.

The two main pieces of this costume are the waistcoat closed at the bottom by five or six buttons, and the jacket in white woolen cloth decorated with black velvet.



The municipality of Noyal-Pontivy is geographically and historically located in the Rohan's duchy, hence the coat of arms "de gueules aux macles d'or", emblem of the Rohan's family, and Sainte Noyale the patron saint of the parish.



"White sheep" of Noyal by Jac d'Or

According to legend, Saint Noyale lived in the VIth century: coming from England, she was in search of a hermitage in Armorica. She was decapitated by a dismissed Armorican leader. Stoic, she took her head in her hands and sought a burial. She rested at the bottom of a valley; the legend says that three fountains sprang from the tears she poured. Then she went to die in a deserted and uninhabited place at that time, where the village that took its name now stands. On his tomb was erected the chapel of Sainte-Noyale.



Site of Sainte-Noyale



The site of Sainte-Noyale HM

Classified as a Historical Monument since May 1965, the Sainte-Noyale chapel was built from 1423 on the site of the former parish church which was the center of the parish until the XVth century.



Gothic style, this building flanked by a massive tower surmounted by a slate arrow and its twelve gilded bells is unique throughout Brittany.

To the south, **a magnificent porch** welcomes visitors. Inside, restored completely from 1974 onwards, the **remarkable painted panels of the vault** of the XVth century illustrate the history of martyrdom.



Outside, a few meters away, **an oratory** devoted to Saint Jean-Baptiste always receives the faithful during the pardon of Sainte-Noyal, in the open air. It was built in the first half of the XVth century. On its three sides, movable shutters allow, once withdrawn, to follow the pardon conducted inside during the great pardons.



In front of the oratory, there is **a small calvary**. It is fairly simple and consists of a slightly inclined barrel resting on a square base at the top of three steps. On the summit is a crucifixion to the west and a Virgin and Child to the east. The date of its construction is known by an inscription (partly erased today) which also delivers two names : 1424, « C. Le Bras and M. his wife » donations of Basse-Bretagne.



On the other side of the road, **an imposing calvary with three wooden crosses** dating from 1871 and restored in 1947.



Not far away, in the greenery area,

a wash house arranged and sported by the town in 2007.



Outside, to the south of the chapel, a gothic fountain has preserved its statue of Sainte Noyale. Its waters enjoy, in the eyes of the pilgrims, many curative properties. Ste Noyale is renowned for curing headaches.

Pardon of Sainte-Noyale

The angel appeared for the first time at the end of the XIXth century, he descended the night of the 23rd of June. The pardon took place on the day of Saint Jean, which was honored in the oratory until 1909.

The native peasants put their cattle under the protection of Ste Noyale : some thirty cattle were offered to the parish and sold at auction. Then the pardon evolved towards the blessing of the horses after the mass, followed by a race around the site. The horses becoming scarce, the tractors took their sequel for a few years until this custom disappeared in its turn. Today, the pardon takes place on the Sunday after 24th of June. Since 2009, the angel descends again after mass three times, from a very beautiful bell tower decorated with curious bells to light the bonfire below, not far from the gothic fountain.



Descent of the angel pyrophoric, a procession led by the priest of Noyal, tantad (bonfire) and a big party with meals and puck competitions (2017).

The chapel of « Petite Sainte-Noyale »

It is located in the town, near the entrance of the old presbytery. It is a building of the early 18th century. The sanctuary was blessed on 23rd of December 1708 by its builder, the rector Joseph du Bouétiez, who was also the canon of the cathedral church of Vannes. It is to distinguish it from the parish church and the great chapel - both also dedicated to Sainte Noyale - that it is then called " Petite Sainte-Noyale ".

The following year, on 26th of May 1709, the rector blessed the bell of the chapel named François-Jeanne. His noble godfather was François Anthron, lord of Bellechere, notary of the Duchy of Rohan at Pontivy, Senechal of the Gué-de-l'Isle-Naizin and clerk of the Waters, Woods and Forests, residing in the town of Noyal and for honorable godmother Jeanne Sivien, wife of Thomas Nicot.



The chapel of Saint-Arnould

It is located near the village of the same name, on the left of the road D2 towards Rohan. The patron saint would be Saint Arnoul or Arnulf (580-640), bishop of Reims around 610. By his son Anségisel, father of Pepin d'Héristal, he was the ancestor of the carolingian dynasty.

The chapel is an edifice in the shape of a latin cross, which was rebuilt on the site of an ancient sanctuary in 1842. From this old chapel the right transept and its window with mullions in fleur-de-lys have been preserved. The furniture includes some beautiful statues: St Arnulphe, St Patern, St Jean the Evangelist and Notre-Dame of Deliverance.



In the chapel, *the banner*

The fountain dated from 1611 *The calvary* was realized in 1806

Cows and eggs

Formerly, in the neighborhood, many farmers raised a cow in honor of Saint Arnould. The proceeds of the sale of his butter went to the factory to put all the stable under the protection of the Saint. The mothers whose children were slow to walk were about to place the eggs chosen among the most beautiful of the chapel.

But people are wicked: had hardly the donor turned her back that an unclean hand stole the present and transformed into a juicy omelet what should have been a rosary of blessing.



Each year the association "le comité de Saint-Arnould" valorizes the site of the chapel with a pardon followed by a country meal, a competition of "boules bretonnes" and other activities, mid July.



The chapel of Sainte-Barbe HM

It is located in the village of Poulvern, on the southern edge of the town, near the D767 Pontivy-Locminé. It is a 15th century building, built in large and medium-sized form on a rectangular plan, and decorated with flamboyant decoration. The eight paintings of the paneling depict scenes of Sainte Barbe and Sainte Noyale. Several beautiful 15th century statues decorate the sanctuary: Sainte Barbe, Saint Patern, Saint Adrien, Sainte Catherine, the Virgin Mary and Sainte Marguerite. It used to be said that Notre-Dame de la Houssaye sometimes came at night to visit Sainte Barbe. Several persons have seen her pass through the valleys of the neighborhood, sometimes in the form of a white lady, sometimes under that of a pale gleam...

The fountain and the trough date of 1601

The calvary of Poulvern date of 1635

The fear of thunder

According to Jean Markale in « Le Christianisme Celtique », the fear of the storm has always been intense in our campaigns. Humans tried to protect themselves from the effects of lightning by talismans, amulets, such as lightning stones, which are often prehistoric axes. The fear of storm has always been alive in our countryside.

The Christmas log is also a talisman against lightning. In the Middle Ages, the role of Sainte Barbe became paramount in protection against fire and especially the storm. Formerly, in some cantons of Brittany, in the event of a storm, thunder was symbolically attached by two woolen threads, one blue and the other white. It was said that one of the threads was in the hand of Sainte Barbe and the other in the hand of Sainte Fleur. And we recited this incantation known even in the gallo country:

Sainte Barbe, Sainte Fleur,
The crown of my lord,
When the thunder will fall
Sainte Barbe will protect us
Sainte Barbe is the firefighters'
patron saint.



The chapel of Sainte-Barbe,
Historical Monument since 2018



Poulvern's pardon is
celebrated every year at the
end of May-beginning of June.



The site « les Trois Fontaines »

Fountains exist at Noyal-Pontivy near the chapels of Sainte-Barbe at Poulvern, Saint-Arnould and Sainte-Noyale. But the three most beautiful are grouped at the place called "les Trois Fontaines" 1.5 km north of the village.

The legend says that three fountains sprang from the tears Sainte Noyale poured, decapitated and holding her head in her hands, fell as she went to the place of her death.



“Les Trois Fontaines” were restored in 1818.

The date 1600 is inscribed on one of the crosses. The calvary of “Trois Fontaines” was erected in 1961. It is a great granite ornament marked on the back “J.L. Ayoul 1833-1910” and it was offered to Noyal by Miss Ayoul de Malestroit.



The wash house



The stone would have served as a bed for Saint Noyale and she would have knelt on it to pray; this stone, it is said, would have preserved the imprint of his knees and elbows.



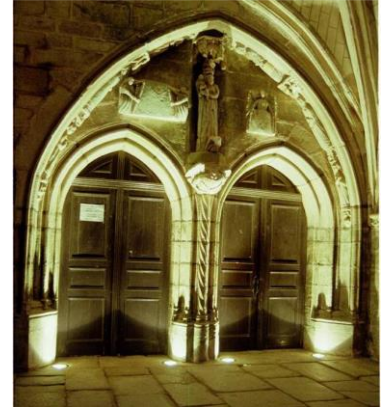
The parish church HM

Before the church, here stood a romanesque chapel which was probably destroyed during the wars of succession in the XIVth century. Rebuilt during the XVth century, the church has been listed as a Historic Monument since 1927.



The tower contains four bells with a total weight of 3739 kg, which were blessed on 23rd of October 1887.

It is accessed from the south side by a **magnificent porch** with a great richness of sculptures. On both sides, are aligned statues of characters that are not all identifiable.



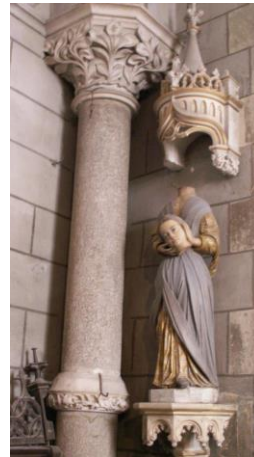
The entire furniture of the church is rich and interesting. A very beautiful lectern with liturgical eagle is placed in the choir. One of the pillars supports a beautiful polychrome Pietà. The statues are numerous:

- modern: Ste Thérèse, the Sacré-Cœur, the Virgin Mary, Ste Noyale
- or - old: St Julien, St Pierre, St Paul, Ste Anne and the Virgin, the Assumption and Ste Noyale.



The Ankou

Old and modern Sainte Noyale



The church of Noyal is one of the few to be endowed with a statue of Ankou, central character of the legends of the death in Brittany. Since the 15th century, the statue of Ankou welcomes visitors and believers.

This workman of death has been feeding Breton legends for nearly a thousand years ...

The sculpture, which represents a skeleton draped from a shroud, raising an immense hoe, is an evocation of death. The origin of the word Ankou thus comes from two Breton words: ankoun which means forgetfulness and anken, grief.

It is said that the one who sees the Ankou will die in the year and that the last death of the year, in a parish, will come the Ankou for the following year. Finally, when there are more deaths than usual, it is said that he is a wicked Ankou. He reminds humans of the end to which no one can escape.

The manor of Verger : the town hall

Built or rebuilt by the Auffredic family in 1639 (date engraved in a stone of the staircase), the manor of Verger would have replaced the old castle of Noyal called " La Motte ". At the beginning of the XVIIIth century, the manor of Verger was occupied by officers of the Company of the Indies, whose seat was Lorient. Around 1760, the Verger became the property of Joseph Le Gallo, Lord of the Verger and Lamouhic, captain of the Indian Company.

The courtyard



Since 1766, M. Coudé, sieur of Kermarquer, of Kerrio and Matival, father of the future Admiral, settled in the manor house of the Verger giving him the name of " Porh Coudé ". His descendants kept the manor until 1875.



He then belonged to Adolphe Stot, then to his son Louis. In 1912, M. Julien Le Bellour, co-founder of the "Moutons Blancs" of Noyal, bought it. His heirs sold the building to the municipality, which transformed it into town hall in 1962.

The wells



Noyal-Pontivy,
flowery village
with distinction
« trois fleurs »



Calvaries and crosses

« The calvary and crosses mark out the space, stand at the crossroads of the paths of pilgrimages, spot the forgotten monastic lands. Turning towards the ocean, they point out to the sailors the Christian land.

At the heart of the villages, the image of the crucified Savior, and on the reverse of that of a virgin mother or Pietà, familiarly inhabit the hamlet near tractors and hay sheds.

On the town's place, a great historian's ordeal presents the infancy, passion and resurrection of Christ at the four cardinal points. Thus the evangelical scenes mingle with rural life. "

Extract from the Prestige collection of the regional Council of Brittany.

Twenty one calvaries or crosses mark the commune of Noyal-Pontivy.



Calvary of Kroeze Person



Calvary of Kerguistin



Calvary of Salut



Calvary of Net



Calvary of the "Cité de la Croix"

**Calvary of
la Croix du Guer**



**Calvary
of Kergat**



The calvary of Kerscomard



The calvary of Kerscomard is one of the most beautiful.

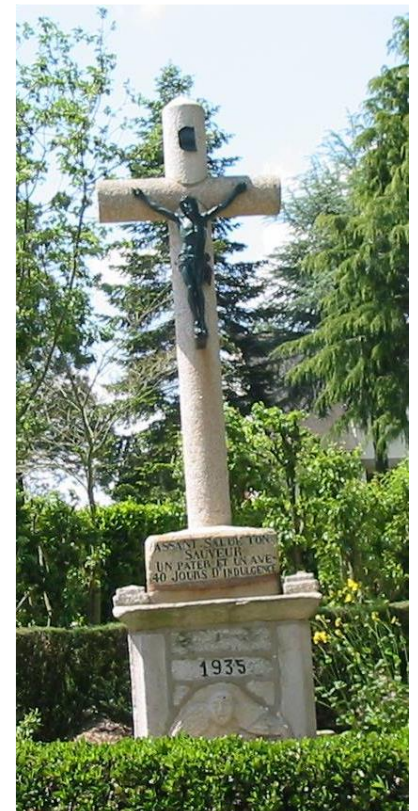
The stone barrel disappeared, probably when moving from the roadside of Locminé to the bottom of the village. The Christ in stone, very fine, remains, reassembled on a base formed of heaped stones.

The calvary of Kerlan

A first wooden calvary had been erected in 1883. It was in ruins when it was decided to replace it in 1935. The new calvary was inaugurated on 7th of April 1935 by the parish priest of Pontivy, M. Guillon, delegated by Mgr Tréhiou.

The new calvary of Kerlan is in stone, adorned with a metal Christ made by the workshops of Vaucouleurs.

The inscriptions of the base:
« 1935 »,
« passant salue ton sauveur »,
« un pater et un avé »
and « 40 jours d'indulgence ».



The calvary on the road of Grand Ménec



The Calvary Grand Ménec stood near the barn of Mr. Joseph Le Guevel. He fell during the storm of October 1987. It was reassembled and restored in 2010. It is dated 1835.



The calvary on the road of Kerboquet



The calvary of Kerboquet is placed at the corner of the Rohan road and the road leading to Kerfourn. The pedestal and the shaft are modern, but the stone Christ and the Pietà to which he turns his back are ancient and date from 1557. He's wearing the Rohan's crest.



The calvary of Guerjouannic

Sometimes, **the calvary of Guerjouannic's farm** was called the calvary of Kerjoly or Faven.

This beautiful granite calvary was placed at the edge of the road D2 Pontivy-Noyal. It was erected in 1834 on their lands by Sebastian Le Jéloux and Marie Videlo, his wife, who had vowed to build it if Heaven gave them children. They had four and kept their word.



The subjects collapsed during the storm of October 1987, and the rest of the monument was dismantled by the DDTM in 1992 when the access to the Pontivy bypass was improved. The assembly was reassembled near the end of the work.

In the past, two hawthorns grew on each side of this calvary and the people around them said they had the power to cure pertussis.



The calvary of Rescourio



The cross of Rescourio is a calvary of granite with a beautiful Christ.

The base bears an inscription

« Fait faire du temps de Yves Le Tallec, recteur de Noyal ».

Yves Le Tallec was in charge of the parish in 1607.

Another date "1789" appears on the monument and would probably be the date of a restoration.

The fountains

Noyal has seven fountains.

« Fountains, small stone buildings built directly on springs with virtuous waters, very often adjoin rural chapels. They shelter the statue of their patron saint and it is not uncommon to see shining in their clear waters some pieces launched by a visitor. The beliefs that have been attached to it have been discussed many times and have been intended to refer to either the survival of pagan cults to the divinities of the waters or the expression of a popular Christian faith in the benevolence of the saints.

However, it may be said that they belong profoundly to the Breton religiosity, for there are only so many of them here.

According to tradition, their waters have two great powers: that of healing and, to a far lesser extent, that of prediction.

In order to obtain their protection, they are offered modest presents when they go there in procession on the day of pardon. They are emptied, cleaned, and portrays the murmurs of water when it fills this pool. Above all, the little children's clothes are placed on the water of the fountain; if they float, the fate is favorable.

Places of devotion, they always respond to human suffering, and remain forever places of dream and poetry. " *Extract from the Prestige collection of the Regional Council of Brittany*



Fountain of Saint-Dré

restored in 1980

by M. Sado and M. Le Mouëll

Ovens, wash houses and wells

On the commune, three ovens, four washhouses and several wells enrich our heritage.

Until the Middle Ages only the lords held the right to build ovens.

Their farmers were obliged to cook the bread there for a fee, called the right of supply. This fee was generally in kind (flour or bread). This "banality" (or usage tax) on so-called "banal" ovens disappeared after the revolution of 1789 and the abolition of privileges by the Convention of 1793; the banal ovens then become communal. Moreover, each one can build own oven. It is from this period that our oldest rural ovens date, belonging to a family or a village.



Well of Saint-Dré

Wash house
on Pontivy's road

Oven
in Noyal's centre

Finally, several private manors set up their old stones in Noyal and its villages.





Design : Communication service

Mairie de Noyal-Pontivy Place du Manoir

56 920 Noyal-Pontivy

 *02 97 38 30 66 - Fax 02 97 38 27 67*

For further informations, please contact

Christelle Hersant c.hersant@noyal-pontivy.fr

Website www.noyal-pontivy.fr



Mairie de Noyal-Pontivy

