

PRESS RELEASE
MAY 2018

ALONG THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY ROUTE IN BURGUNDY-FRANCHE-COMTE



Heritage

For three and a half centuries, 15 million Africans were dragged from their lands and enslaved on the plantations of the Americas. Launched in 2004, the « Abolition of Slavery Route» reminds us of the struggle led by Abbot Grégoire, Toussaint Louverture, Anne-Marie Javouhey, Victor Schoelcher and those unknown people of Champagney against this cruel servitude. It forms an integral part of « The Slave Route », an international project supported by the UN and UNESCO focusing on our duty to remember. Three major sites in Burgundy-Franche-Comté allow you to delve deeply into this subject: « the recognition of the black slave trade and slavery as a crime against humanity ».

THE HOUSE OF NEGRITUDE - CHAMPAGNEY

On 19th March 1789, a few months before the French Revolution, in a small village of Haute-Saône in the north of what is now Burgundy-Franche-Comté, **the local people drew up a charter of grievances in which they expressed their solidarity with black slaves**. Veritable pioneers, they wrote to the King of France: «The inhabitants and community of Champagney cannot think of the ills being suffered by Negroes in the colonies, (...) without feeling a stabbing pain in their hearts ».

This was a drastic and courageous act that we can fully appreciate the visionary significance of at the House of Negritude and Human Rights thanks to **a reproduction of a slave ship** and numerous African and Haitian objects that illustrate negritude (or the values of black civilisations around the world). www.maisondelanegritude.fr

CHATEAU DE JOUX; THE PRISON OF TOUSSAINT LOUVERTURE - PONTARLIER

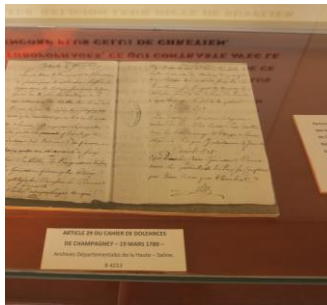
On the summit of a rocky outcrop at an altitude of 1000 metres, the Château de Joux guards entry to the water gap at Pontarlier, a natural thoroughfare into Switzerland. From 1690 to 1815 it was a State prison and, **in 1802, became home to Toussaint Louverture (1743/1803), who was jailed under the orders of Napoleon Bonaparte for having opposed the reintroduction of the black slave trade**. This former slave who had become Governor of the Island of Santo Domingo (present day Haiti) and ringleader of the Santo Domingo rebellion, died a few months after his incarceration here. Today, the cell that held Toussaint Louverture, situated on the ground floor of the dungeon, welcomes countless visitors that come to pay tribute to this predecessor of Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela, a symbol of the emancipation of peoples. www.chateaudejoux.com

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THE MAISON ANNE-MARIE JAVOUHEY - CHAMBLANC

« **Negroes are not deaf to the voice of morality nor to that of civilisation; children of God, they are men just like us** » *Anne-Marie Javouhey*



Heritage

It was in 1805 that Sister Javouhey founded a religious congregation that was soon called to the missions in the French Overseas Territories. There it would become the very first order of female missionaries. In 1817 these sisters set off to the Islands and to Africa where they would bear witness to the black slave trade. **After an initial stop in Senegal, in 1838 Sister Javouhey oversaw the emancipation of more than 500 black slaves seized aboard slave ships in Mana, Guyana.**

Besides the family home of Anne-Marie Javouhey and a museum space located in the school that currently bears her name, the remembrance forest, made up of 150 trees each named after one of the first freed Africans, keeps alive the memory of the liberation of the slaves in Guyana.

These three main sites form part of the National Remembrance Hub of the Grand-Est that brings together all the French remembrance sites and historic figures involved in the abolition of slavery. It includes the sites of Toulon-sur-Arroux and Charolles (71), where the charter of grievances demanding the abolition of slavery was drawn up, the Ursulines Museum in Mâcon and the Château de Lamartine in Saint-Point (71), which preserves the memory of Lamartine, a signatory of the French decree abolishing slavery that gave more than 250,000 slaves in the French colonies their freedom on 27th April 1848.

More information: www.abolitions.org & <https://patrimoine.bourgognefranche-comte.com/>

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