

# A castle in the making

Dear virtual visitors,

The construction site reopened two months ago and time has flown by. We couldn't have wished for better weather, but we could do with more hours in the day! The new double-drummed treadmill winch has been fine-tuned and is now in action daily, supplying the masons on the great tower with the stones needed to build the rib-vault. Five times as much material can be hoisted as compared with the previous cranes.

Work on the rib-vault is well under way with the final *formeret* arch under construction and the hope is that the keystone will be in position by the third week of June.

In order to share the whole of this experience with our visitors, a camera has been installed above the great tower, relaying live images of the vault's construction onto a screen in the ground-floor storeroom.

Other news: Guédelon has gone over to the Darkside - we have a Facebook page! Although we're certainly not short of friends who support our venture, the Facebook page will help keep everyone involved in the project up-to-date.

But surely, there is still no better way to share in the adventure than a visit to the site itself!

Maryline Martin – Managing Director

Castle from the south-east



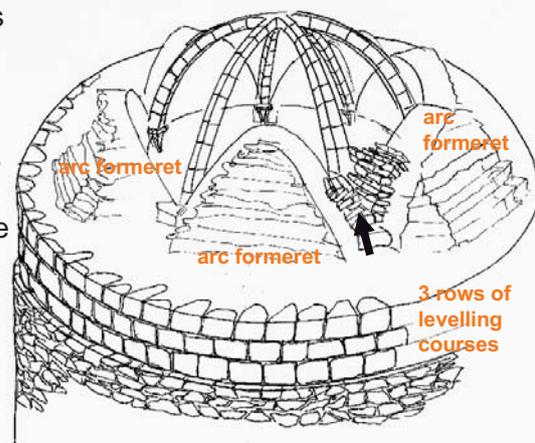
## The Season in Close-Up

### The great tower

Of the 6 **arcs formerets**\* under construction, five are complete and the masons have started on the final one. At the same time the masons are building up the outer facing walls of the tower and the rubble walls behind

the *arcs formerets*. The walls here are 2.73m thick and the masonry is needed here to strengthen the arches which will in turn support the weight of the vault.

**arcs formerets**: the wall arches where the webbing above the vault meets the walls.



## The Great Tower (continued)

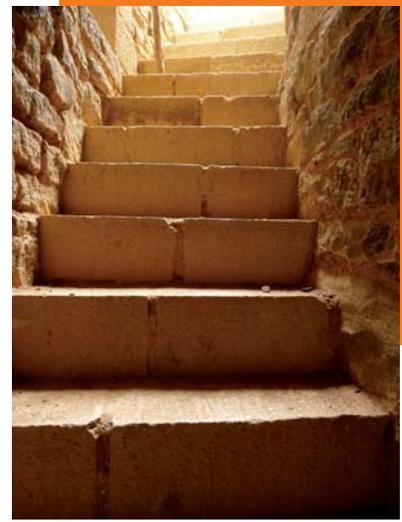
The masons are also building the **vaulted mural stair\*** which leads to the tower's first floor. This stair is built into the thickness of the tower itself, and therefore has to be built at the same time as the rest of the tower. The tower forms a cylinder which is built up in "layers", the construction of which demands that the different elements (outer facing walls, rubble cores, window, mural stair, *arcs formerets* etc.) be built up simultaneously.

**Mural stair:** a stair built into the thickness of a wall

## East Curtain Wall

Limestone mural stair ➤

Another team of masons are working on the curtain wall and on the eastern corner tower. The aim is to bring all the walls up to 1.5m above the level of the courtyard. Up until now the basement of this tower has been used to stock supplies of lime putty which are used in the making of mortar on the near-by mortar boards. But this will no longer be the case as work progresses; the first floor joists have been positioned and covered with a layer of mortar to form this tower's ground floor. The first four jambs of the door into the tower are also in place.



The base of the corner tower is filled with lime putty



The door leading into the corner tower



The white line indicates the level of the masonry course

East curtain wall

## The North Range

At the beginning of the season, sandstone flags were laid on a 1.2m-wide strip at the base of the north range. These flagstones help to evacuate all the rainwater from the roof into the courtyard and then away towards the guttering spouts and the castle's water cistern.



Flagstones

## The Carpenters' Lodge

The carpenters have built the roof timbers of a new workshop for school groups which will be up and running in 2012.

A part of the timber-framed workshop for school groups.



## A new arrival

His name is Oscar, an 8 year-old Comtois, and he belongs to our carter, Laëtitia. Oscar has very quickly fitted into his new role.



He will be replacing our Percheronne, Idole, who is taking a well earned rest.

## French Invasion at Bodiam Castle!



Members of Guédelon's team invaded Bodiam Castle in East Sussex, UK on the 28/29/30 May. This was a follow-up to our successful voyage to Corfe Castle last year and it was an incredible opportunity to talk about our unique project in a spectacular setting. We look forward to creating further links with the National Trust.

**NT members please note: your membership card entitles you to a reduction at Guédelon.**

## British *Bâtisseurs*

Every season, hundreds of members of the public actively participate in the construction of Guédelon castle. These “trainee master craftsmen” come from all over the world, and the opening of Guédelon's 2011 season was marked by the presence of a group of Applied Architectural Stonework and Conservation students from Bournemouth University, (Weymouth College, UK).

This was a trail-blazing experiment for Guédelon as this was the first group to include non-French speakers. For the students it was an opportunity to try their hand at using traditional tools, techniques and materials, and language didn't prove a barrier. “Everyone has been really friendly and welcoming,” said final-year student Luke.

For fellow student Josephine Crossland it was a chance to take on new challenges, “I was quite nervous about working in the quarry and it's great to have overcome that.” After finishing her block, Josephine also had to design her own stonemason's mark; a mark which will stand in the castle for hundreds of years. “It's exciting to help build something that will last,” she said.

As for their teachers, “it has been a brilliant learning experience. I hope we can make this a yearly project!” declared Rebecca Friesleben, teacher at Weymouth College.



Also present on the site this season are four Building Surveyors students representing the University of Glasgow. “By partaking in such a creative and distinctive project we will gain valuable experience which will have a profound effect on our professional careers. It is of great importance to gain hands on, realistic experience of this particular type of construction, especially with a combined interest in Conservation work, techniques and elements.”

**If you are interested in bringing a group of students to participate in the construction project, or if you would like to participate yourself, details of all our courses are available on our website: [http://www.guedelon.fr/en/participate-in-the-building-of-guedelon-castle\\_07.html](http://www.guedelon.fr/en/participate-in-the-building-of-guedelon-castle_07.html)**

## Guédelon in 3D



On the weekend on the 7/8 May, some distinctly un-medieval machinery was present on the site. The Canadian film production company Parallax was filming scenes for a forthcoming television series *Battle Castle* hosted by British historian **Dan Snow**. The crew shot also shot scenes with a 3D camera and the whole team is impatient to see the finished results some time in 2012.

For more information about the show: [www.battlecastle.com](http://www.battlecastle.com)



## Coming soon: *Guédelon: a castle in the making*

Written by Guédelon's co-founder, Maryline Martin, and master-mason, Florian Renucci, this book examines the evidence currently available about medieval castle-building as well as considering the new insights into medieval masoncraft offered by findings made at Guédelon.

Editions Ouest-France, Histoire collection. Texts: Maryline Martin and Florian Renucci.

Photographs: François Folcher. 128 pages • 180 photos. RRP €17.90.

On sale from late June in the Guédelon bookshop, from the website [www.guedelon.fr](http://www.guedelon.fr) and from leading retailers.

