

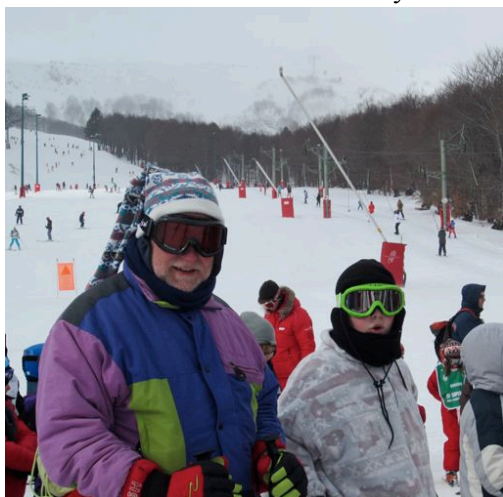


SPRING IS IN THE AIR !

O yes ! in November and even December we spoke about the Indian Summer in the Vendée and after that January was very mild. Everywhere the Mimosa trees started to bloom en premature is it can be, we already started to thing about Spring !

And than February came. The thought of still going for a ski-holiday in the Auvergne even seemed a bit bizarre with those temperatures. But suddenly King Winter decided not to pass unnoticed, and how. With a Siberian cold that even touched the Vendée. We took the precaution of cutting the water off from the wood log houses and our *stabulation*, and than we packed our bags, to head to Besse/Super Besse in the Auvergne.

We asked neighbor Jacques to keep an eye on things and to light the fireplace the morning of our return, because ever since we had a three day during electric breakdown after a storm some 4 years



ago we don't use electrical heating anymore. Except for the small roads in our neighborhood, the track was clean of snow and he weather was sunny.

When we arrived in Besse and got out of the car, we were hit with a minus 18°C temperature and a blizzard like northern wind, that provoked a wind chill factor beyond imagination !

This extreme cold, urged extreme measurements so for as long as "we" are



pleased the extra isolation layer on the chin of the gentlemen on the photo stays on.

In the ski-lift a young french girl asked her mother if i was Father Christmas, so I said: Ho ho ho !

When we came back, it seemed that despite our precautions 3 tabs were frozen in the wood log houses, but in our house the fire was burning. Its kind of remarkable, in the



years we live in the Vendée, friends are telling us each winter that this winter is very exceptional ! According to them it never snows in La Vendée, well in the nine years we are here we had snow at least tree winters let alone the temperatures below zero, and not even only at night ! But than again, it is heart warming to see how our French copains try to make us feel at home.

Okay, back to work ! After the cold wave the nice weather made us forget very quickly, and we passed on to more serious business. My friend Hans with whom (in an other live) I was in high-school, came with his two son's, Lennart and Matthijs, to help us again.





They continued the work that was started by Irene and Sander, taking the *pierres* from the ground that had served as paving in the two *écuries*, the parts where the cows were held. They also made and enlarged the openings in the East facade, where the doors and windows will come. Notice that the walls we talk about have a thickness of 50 centimeters. Have a try !!



As a matter of fact, that's what Jelle and "Angry" Bert did. This second (odd) Job Team completed the removal of the *pierres* and after that they took care of the openings in the West facade. It was nice to see, that with the growing respect for their "opponent" the awareness of the best "attack plan" matured. Shortly after the job was done.



After a serious attempt to split the logs still drying, but not dry enough yet, in the field of neighbor Gilles, they took care of the logs stocked in front of the *stabulation*. To end the week Jelle painted the fence at the entree and "Crazy" Bert started to hammer out the joints of the *Grange* walls.



STOP-PRESS !

Rumour is that Disney is considering another attraction-park. This time in Longeville.

Mickey was spotted on the site...



WELL, AT LEAST WE STILL HAVE THE PHOTO'S !!

