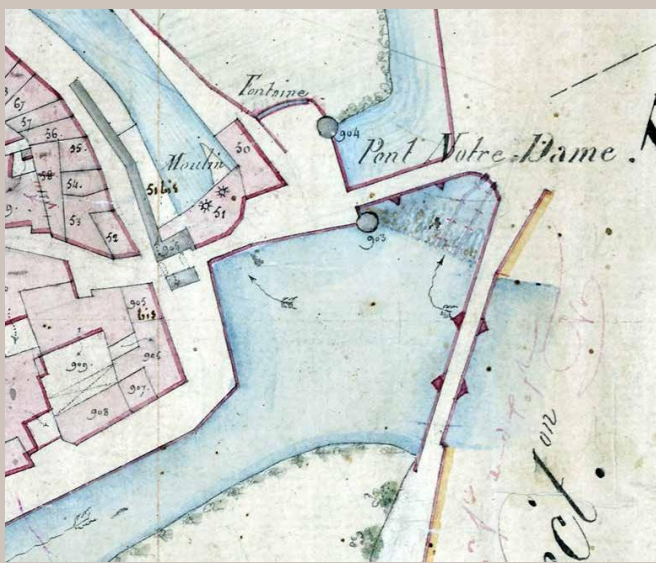


The Bassin de Bouïgas



Bouïgas, from the Provençal word *bouleguer* (to move fast or mix), is a reference to the agitation of the water at this location. Famous for its old rampart gate and pond, the district of Bouïgas or Villeneuve appeared in the early Middle Ages and is an extension of the original town.



The pond and medieval fortifications on the 1828 cadastral map

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Jousting on the Sorgue circa 1900

Édition J. Bascon - L'Isle-sur-Sorgue



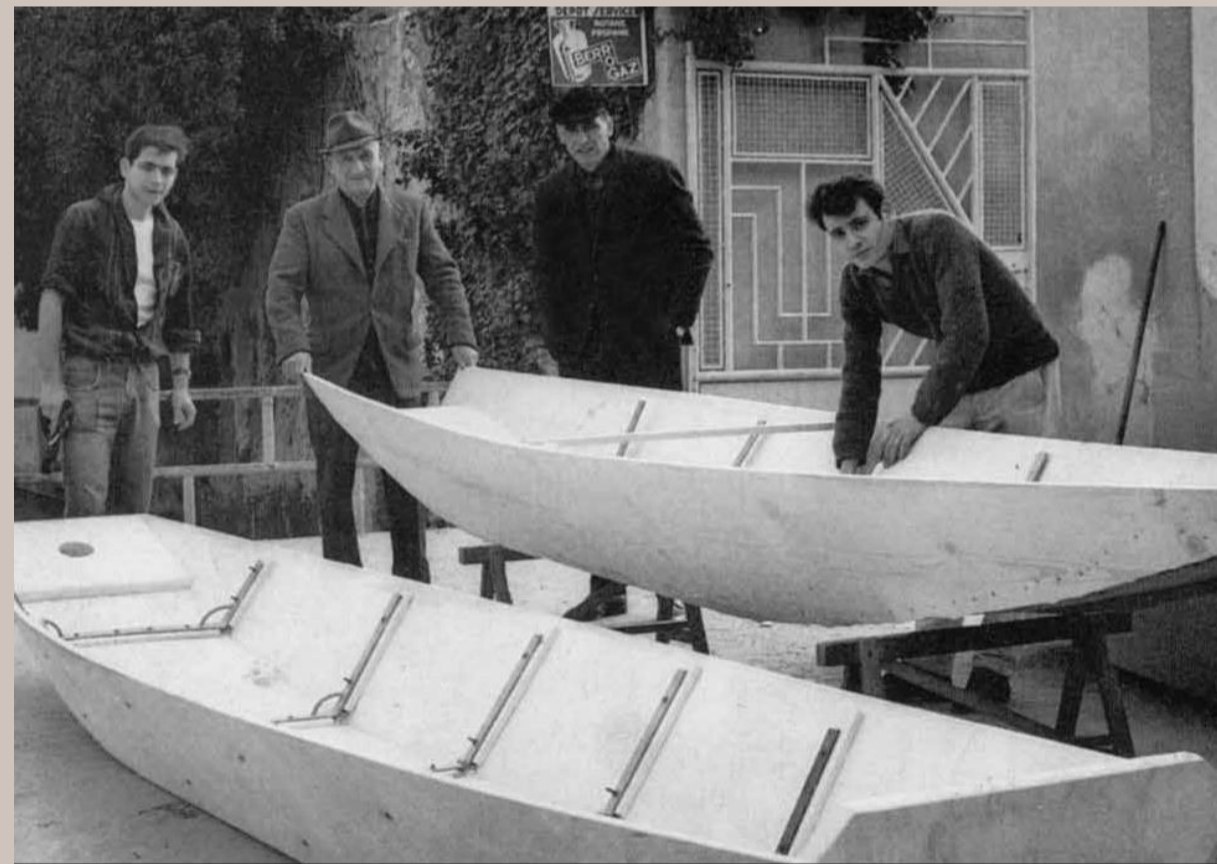
Lead *bull*a (seal) of the consuls of L'Isle (late 12th century)
SIGILLUM : CONSULUM : INSULE
= Seal of the consuls of L'Isle

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Fishermen

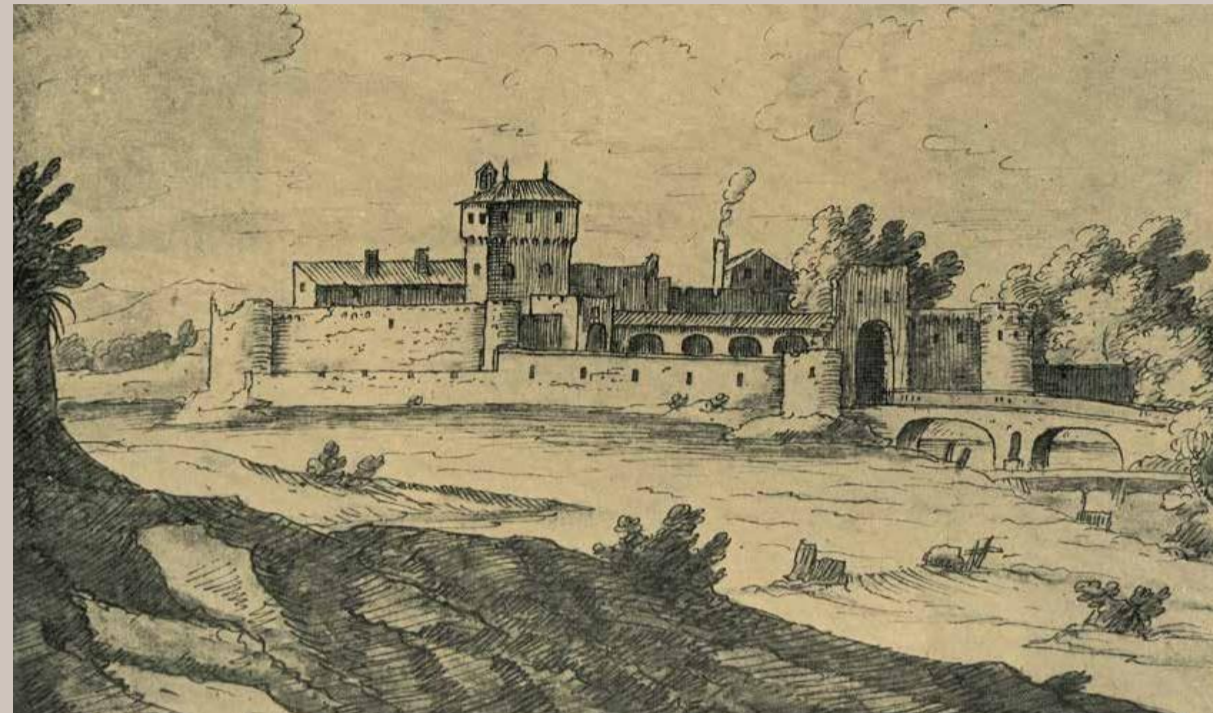
The River Sorgue has long been renowned for its abundance of fish. Local tradition would have it that the first inhabitants were fishermen who lived in huts built on stilts. Together with industry and agriculture, fishing was a significant activity for the town. From the 12th century, fishermen were granted privileges by the count of Toulouse, an arrangement that continued up to the French Revolution. From their flat-bottomed boats (*Nego-chin*), local fishermen would catch trout, eels and crayfish with their nets and pronged spears (*fichouire*).

Today, fishing is still practised on the Sorgue, and a fraternity for fishermen from L'Isle-sur-la-Sorgue (*Pescaire Lilen*) is still very active.



Construction of '*Nego-chins*' in 1966 (Private collection)

Pond and fortifications



The Bassin de Bouïgas and fortifications in the 17th century.
(Drawing from the Laincel album. Fondation Calvet)

The Bassin de Bouïgas is the second point at which the waters of the Sorgue divide. From here they become the Sorgue de Montclar, Sorgue des Jardins and Sorgue du Portalet. An ingenious system of reaches and conveyances once supplied water to the mills. A complex defence system was built on this site in the 12th century, which was then improved in the 14th century with the construction of a ravelin. The remains of this extension of the fortification can be seen from the small observation deck – the foundation comprises the base of one of the two adjacent towers. Although the gate was destroyed in 1831, the towers remained standing until 1842.

Cours Fernande Peyre

The construction of Cours Fernande Peyre – also known as Cours Salviati and Cours de la Pyramide in the past – was part of a road improvement project in the Comtat Venaissin called for by the vice-papal legate, Grégoire Salviati, in the 18th century. At the time, this kind of avenue was becoming popular in towns still surrounded by fortifications as a place for inhabitants to take walks. Three rows of elms completed the landscaping of the avenue in 1765.

It was restored between 1809 and 1811. On this occasion, the 'Pyramid' (an obelisk) was erected. In 1835, the promenade was widened, and 304 plane trees were planted to replace the elms. In 1947, the avenue adopted the name Fernande Peyre, in homage to this female Resistance fighter. It has been a protected site since 1979.

The 19th-century plane trees succumbed to canker stain in 2010 and were replaced by hackberry trees. A widespread public fundraising campaign was launched in 2013 to help the City finance the project. Each donation was symbolised by a road stud embedded at the foot of the tree.



Entranco to the avenue circa 1900