

## History

**The imposing maritime fortress called "Castle of the Bull " was named after a small islet situated at the mouth of the river of Morlaix. The reason why this small island was called the island of the Bull remains unknown.**

### **1522-1680 : A fort to protect Morlaix**

A foray of the English fleet into the town of Morlaix in 1522 showed the necessity to install a military defence system at the entrance of the estuary. A fort was therefore built on the rocky islet of the Bull. The building was a sort of rounded wall of low stature. Working and maintenance costs were borne by the inhabitants of Morlaix and represented a great sacrifice for them.

### **1680-1745 : The mark of Vauban**

With the arrival of Louis XIV, the King's military administration took possession of the Castle; that is why he sent his military engineer, Vauban, to modernize the fortification. The works were spread over some 45 years. The building essentially constructed in granite from the nearby Callot island, has an oblong shape which follows that of the rock. It is 60 m. long by 12 m. wide and 12 m. high for a total surface area of 1450 square metres.

### **1721-1871 : A jail in the middle of the sea**

As the harbour of Morlaix declined, the military mission assigned to the Château du Taureau became once and for all one of dissuasion. Thus, from 1721 the fortress is diverted from its initial vocation and used as a jail.

After 1789, during the revolutionary period, it was used exclusively as a political jail, and a very harsh one indeed for it became overcrowded with a huge number of prisoners. Royalists, Chouans, non-juring priests were detained in sometimes inhuman conditions. After the fall of the Directoire and from the time Bonaparte came to power, the Castle recovered its original vocation, becoming a stronghold again with a purely military role which it kept until it was definitively closed down in 1889.

### **XXème siècle : Quiet holiday resort and water sports centre**

Abandoned by men, the castle gradually plunges into a long sleep. It was listed as an historic building in 1914, but its doors remained shut.

In 1930, it became a private holiday home.

Then the war breaks out and the castle is taken over by the German DCA. Once peace returns, it sinks into oblivion once again.

From 1960 to 1980, after important works are carried out, the Water Sports Centre of the Bay of Morlaix sets up its sailing school in the castle;

In 1989, local authorities join forces to save the castle from ruin.

After a 20<sup>th</sup> century of uncertain destiny, the castle will now return into the public domain. Its opening is scheduled for 2006.