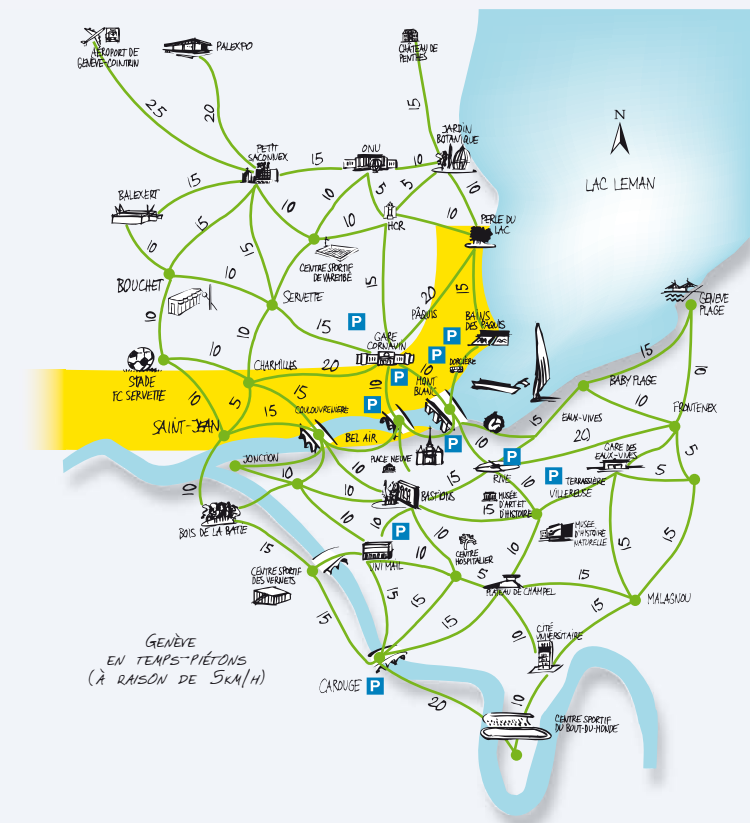
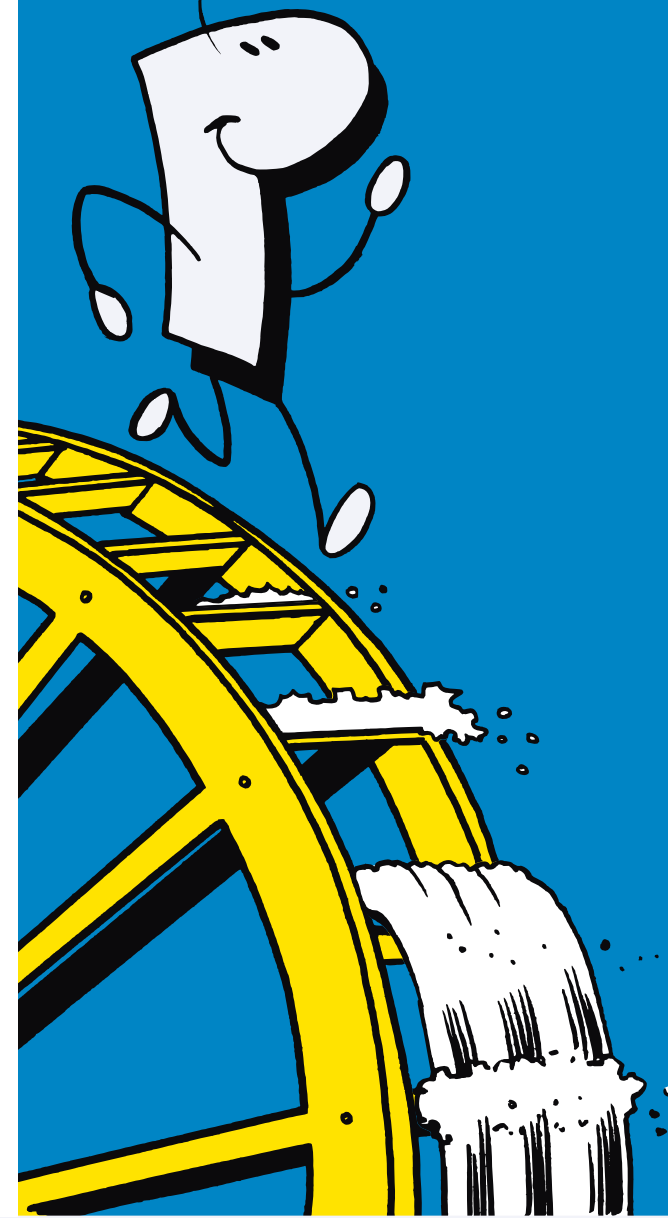


Walking Downstream



CAUTION

- Estimated walking time: 4 hrs
- The paths shown on this map may occasionally pose some inconveniences which we've called your attention to (see symbols below).

PLEASE, BE CAREFUL AGAIN...

The banks of the Rhone are part of a highly valued habitat feature. A walk of this kind naturally implies abiding by certain rules so as to not disturb the wildlife. These banks are a veritable biological corridor through the Canton and home to many animal species. You will be able to witness in awe the different species of birds that depend on the river nesting along its banks or, in winter, the thousands of ducks that hibernate in this region.

So, may your passion for nature lead the way with respect!

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Map reproduced with authorization from the Geneva Land Registry, March 29, 2000.

LEGENDE

- Games
- Telephone
- Restroom
- Beverages
- Public Transportation (TPG)
- Train station
- Lake Geneva General Shipping Co. (CGN)
- Mouettes Genevoises passenger ferry
- Car park
- Sport, stadium, pool, paddleboats, tennis
- Shoppingcenter
- Allotted gardens
- Petting zoo, aviary
- Steps
- Slope
- Underpass
- From 1 to 39, suggested itinerary for this walk
- Alternative route
- Boat route



Givaudan Roure workshops around 1950 (Givaudan)



Chèvres factory around 1896 (MB)



Chèvres factory around 1896 (MB)

IMPRESSUM

- Concept
- Texts
- Historical Advisor
- Proofreader
- Translation
- Photos
- Illustration (cover)
- Design
- Flash
- Printed by
- Circulation
- Ville de Genève
- Rafael Matos
- André Corboz
- Maryvonne Maître
- Daniel Steffen
- Maurice Burnod (MB)
- Centre d'icongraphie genevoise (CIG)
- Service d'urbanisme (SU)
- Gilles Calza
- Coux d'en face, Geneva
- Art Pub S.A., Geneva
- Imprimerie Genevoise S.A. Geneva
- 50,000 copies / June 2000

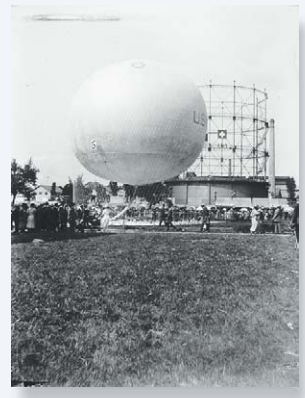
PRACTICAL INFORMATION

- "Plan piétons" Internet site www.ville-ge.ch/plan-pietons
- Commune of Vernier Internet site www.vernier.ch
- Municipal information point 1, pont de la Machine, Tel. 311 99 70
- Mouettes Genevoises passenger ferry (reservation) Tel. 732 29 44
- Lake Geneva General Shipping Company (CGN) infoline: 0848 811 848
- Public transportation (TPG) Tel. 308 34 34
- Taxi Tel. 33 141 33
- Cornavin train station Tel. 157 22 22
- Weather conditions Tel. 162

0 120 240 360 480 600 720 m
Scale 1:12 000



Mill at Vernier - 1880/90 (CIG)



Gordon Bennett Cup and gas holder - August 1922 (CIG)



Washerwomen along the banks of the Rhone (MB)



Mills and water wheels of the Sous-Terre district around 1870 (CIG)



Rhone Dam around 1890 (MB)



BFM and Quai du Seujet around 1910 (MB)



John Branchu passenger ferry around 1900 (CIG)



Construction of the Butin Bridge - 1925 (CIG)



Quai du Seujet around 1910 (MB)



Tower of the Island before 1909 (SU)



Baths at the Bridge of the Machine around 1890 (MB)



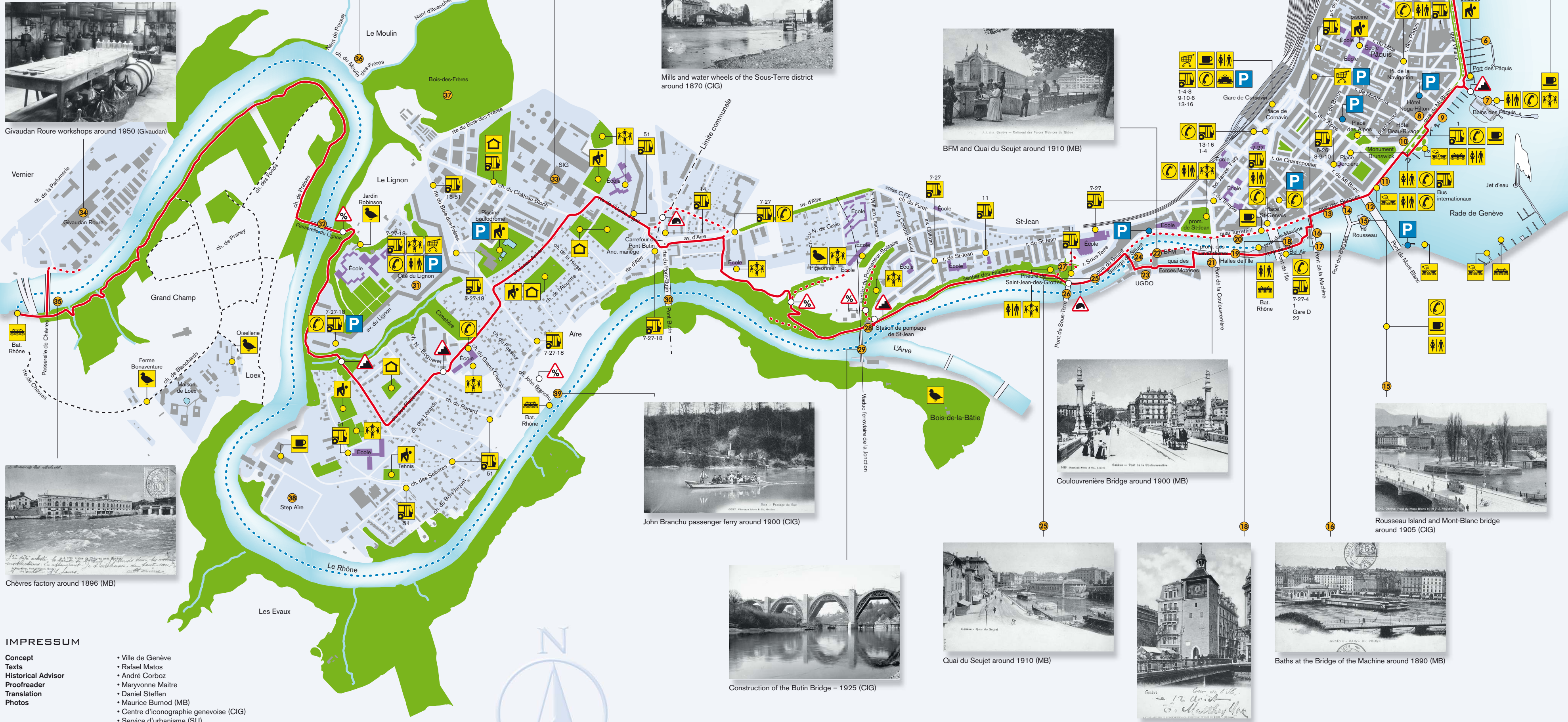
Rousseau Island and Mont-Blanc bridge around 1905 (CIG)



Coulouvrenière Bridge around 1900 (MB)



Baths of Pâquis around 1932 (SU)



TECHNOLOGY AND NATURE

This newest course is a mix of technology and nature. Dams, bridges, pumping stations, baths, factories, tanks... water and more water at man's service.

We will go from the Pearl of the Lake to the Chèvres footbridge, strolling the length of the quay and following the banks of the Rhone for 15 miles along this "impetuous river" (Celtic meaning of Rhone), which winds through the communes of Geneva and Vernier. For the return, why not board one of the boats along the Rhone and take in its gentle stream?

Water is omnipresent along this walk. The very name Geneva comes from the Celtic words "gen," mouth, and "ava," water. The name Vernier also evokes water, deriving from "verne," meaning the alder, a tree particularly partial to river banks and wetlands. The coat of arms of Vernier is even more telling: the rippled midsection symbolizes the Rhone, the trout fishing, and the wheel the mills. Nature and technology are inextricably linked. The presence of the Rhone helped bring about the industrial boom in Vernier and the increase in its population.

The waters from the lake and the Rhone have been used every day since man first settled the Geneva region: to quench thirst and prepare food, to produce energy, and recently as a bonus for tourism.

Technology and Nature, Nature and Technology, our hearts totter. All along this course, we see how this dichotomy influenced the evolution of Geneva, this City that belongs to all of us. Technology helped us progress, and today we begin to realize that nature is at the root of our survival.

Now, let the sites do the talking as they guide us along these marvelous waters... through pranks and high tides.

TO LEARN MORE...

- Broillet, Philippe (Ed.) (1997), *La Genève sur l'eau*, Bâle, Editions Wiese, coll. Les monuments d'art et d'histoire de la Suisse, 89.
- Lescaze, Bernard et Tahani S. Khalil (1997), *Un opéra sur l'eau ou la révélation d'un lieu. L'usine des Forces Motrices de la Coulouvrenière à Genève*, Genève, S. Hurter.
- Mayor, Jean-Claude (1995), *Bestiaire genevois*, Genève, Slatkine.
- Mayor, Jean-Claude (1996), *Genève nostalgique*, Chapelle-sur-Moudon, Ed. Ketty & Alexandre.
- Pittard, Pierre (1975), *Profil de Vernier. Des champs aux cités*, Vernier, Mairie de Vernier.
- Vernex, Jean-Claude (1996), *Histoire des bains. Cents ans de baignades dans nos lacs. Annecy, Bourget, Léman, Genève*, N. Junod.

FOR ANOTHER POINT OF VIEW...

- Association genevoise pour la protection de la nature et al. (1996) *Parcours découverte - Genève-Verbois au fil du Rhône*.
- Descombes, Julien (1995), *Le Fil du Rhône*, Genève, Ville de Genève, Fonds municipal de décoration.
- Tranchet, Véréne (1999), *Petit guide historique du promeneur*. Association des commerçants de la rue du Village de Vernier.
- Muséum de Genève - Histoire naturelle et Mouettes genevoises navigation, *Descente du Rhône en bateau jusqu'au barrage de Verbois* (Genève).

THE PEDESTRIAN PLAN COLLECTION

This itinerary forms part of the Pedestrian Plan collection of walks conceived by the Planning Office of the City of Geneva.

- Walking in Geneva...
 - Geneva by foot. It's quick and easy.
- From estate to estate
 - Geneva - Bois-de-la-Bâtie - Jardin Botanique
- From site to museum
 - Geneva on foot - in the heart of its heritage
- From quay to runway
 - Geneva on foot - between travel and nature
- From city to city
 - Geneva on foot - From the lake to the Arve



1 VILLA BARTHOLONI

The banker François Bartholoni financed my construction, which was completed in 1830. Some twenty Italian artists worked on the Pompeian trimmings. In 1923, upon seeing the beauty and panorama that surrounds me, Mrs. Wilsdorf, spouse of the founder of the Rolex company, exclaimed, "This is the pearl of the lake".

Since 1964, I've housed the Museum of the History of Sciences, the only one of its kind in Switzerland. Geneva's scientific past is explained through scientific instruments and rare documents, including the devices that Horace-Benedict de Saussure used during his ascent of Mont Blanc in 1787.

■ *Intersection with "from estate to estate" walk.*



2 VILLA MON-REPOS

I could boast that Casanova once organized erotic evenings at my home, but please, let's be serious. In 1877, Philippe Plantamour set up a limnological station in the annex and showed that the lake was indeed subject to neap tides.

The Plantamour family bequeathed me to the City in 1898. The museum of ethnography was housed here between 1901 and 1939. In 1954, the French Swiss TV network got its debut here with the broadcast of a show covering the Festival of Geneva and Escalade (annual historical celebration in Geneva). The first images from these events were produced on this very spot, at the Experimental Television Center. Now, I am home to the headquarters of the Henri-Dunant Institute.

3 SOLAR-LASER CLOCK

I am the "right bank" little sister of the flower clock. My face measures 20 feet in diameter and is made of stainless steel and laminated glass. I am younger, and have only been telling time since 1997. My maker, Klara Kuchta, fused her knowledge of ancient tradition with the latest laser technology. At night, a fiber-optic system lights up the 198 stars of the astronomical map on my face. Am I not worthy of Geneva, this "watch with four ruby holes" as Théophile Gautier once said?



4 THE PRIEURÉ Water Treatment Plant

In 1959, a water treatment plant was built on this site of the Prieuré following degradation in the quality of drinking water in Geneva. The original was replaced in 1986. I can treat 800 gallons of water per second, which is pumped up from 100 feet below the lake's water level. Six pumps allow me to channel the water to the Arquebuse plant where the water is redistributed. I operate entirely automatically, but I am controlled from distance by the headquarters of the Geneva Gas, Water and Power Company. The quality of the water is continuously monitored.



5 PALAIS WILSON

Ever since my inauguration in 1875, I have always been one of the gems along the Quai Wilson (except of course during my restoration after the ravaging fire of 1987).

In the beginning, I was called the Hotel National and was the largest and most prestigious palace along the quay. In 1920, my 225 rooms were converted into offices after I was chosen to house the League of Nations, established in Geneva the previous year. In 1924, I was renamed Palais Wilson in honor of the League's initiator, Woodrow Wilson, who died earlier the same year. Today, the palace houses the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and various travelling exhibits.

6 THE PORT OF PÂQUIS

I am the result of the "Harbor Project" designed by Léopold Blotnitzki following the advent of the railroad and the boom in merchant trading.

My shape has changed since first being put into service in 1860. At the end of the 19th century, most of the surfaces once used for storage and traditional trades such as shipping and fishing gave way to leisure activities.

I was quite proud of my first lighthouse, designed by Elie-François Wartmann, which rose out over my jetty. It used to work on electricity which was exceptional for that time. Alas! the tests, hardly conclusive, were stopped and the lighthouse was entirely rebuilt in 1896.



7 BATHS OF PÂQUIS

My ancestor, a structure measuring 60 x 60 feet, was erected here in 1868, although 1889 marks my real birth. The first baths located here were intended for workers, yet a few hours were reserved for women, who were allotted their own space in 1907. In 1922, a sand beach was put in, finally making it possible for the entire family to use the baths. I was reworked in 1932 and enlarged one year later.

Cultural and neighborhood associations played a major role in my recent renovation between 1992 and 1995. Today, people come in numbers to take in my old-fashioned charm and the magic of the site. The age of hygienic baths are days gone by.



8 THE NOGA-HILTON HOTEL

My construction was completed in 1980 when I replaced the Kursaal, built by John Camoletti in 1885. In spite of strong protest by some, this casino, which was demolished in 1969, became one of Geneva's most cherished attractions with its theatre, concerts and café.

Before that, on this same spot, called La Niotte at the time, the short-lived Faïencerie des Pâquis (1789 – 1796) used to host activities here. I was once surrounded by fields, gardens, vineyards and even a carp farm.



9 GENEVA MOUETTES Sté des Mouettes Genevoises Navigation SA

I have been in existence since 1898. I used to run a "floating bridge between Pâquis and Eaux-Vives", which Edward Church, businessman and United States consul to France, created in 1825. This horse-powered boat (a paddleboat powered by horses that turned in a circle on the deck of the boat) was slow and noisy and did not remain in commission very long.

Today, my 14 vessels carry more than 700,000 passengers per year. A lover of light technologies, I go hand in hand with the notion of the "solar harbor". The Nautilus and the Star run on biodiesel and the Bécassine on solar energy. Solar-powered screens connected to the Internet use GPS tracking technology to display the boats' positions.



10 BEAU-RIVAGE HOTEL

I accommodated my first guests in 1865, and as early as 1873 was home to the first elevator in Geneva, perhaps even all of Switzerland. The Journal of Geneva described the hydraulic lift as follows, "The elevator consists of a charming little room, including a rug, sofa mirrors and four buttons indicating the floors; one only has to press the button of the number of the floor where one wants to go and the elegant machine is quick to carry the passenger to that floor". Could it have carried Sissy, the Empress of Austria, shortly before she died in one of my rooms following the attempt on her life in 1898?

■ *Intersection with "from quay to runway" walk.*



11 CGN Lake Geneva General Shipping Company

I was born in 1873. Today, my 16 boats travel 180,000 miles and carry 1.5 million passengers annually. I have the largest fleet of paddle wheelers in Europe, including the Lausanne, the largest vessel sailing in European fresh waters.

When Church (him again!) arrived in Geneva in 1821, there were 300 steamers navigating in Europe, but not one in Switzerland. Church put an end to this void in 1823 with the William Tell which could carry 200 passengers and sail 8 miles per hour. The vessel had English machinery but was built in Bordeaux and assembled in Eaux-Vives. People were awed by this symbol of modernity that made it easier to discover the lakeside landscape.

■ *Internet: www.cgn.ch*



12 MONT-BLANC BRIDGE

I was put into service in 1862. Much like the Coulouvrenière Bridge, I was built to connect the busy outlying thoroughfares of the city which resulted from the demolition of the city's fortifications in 1849. With my construction, the symbolic border between the lake and the Rhone was moved upstream.

In 1903, I was rebuilt in steel although my piers were spared. I grew from 50 to 60 feet in width, making room for 2 tramway lines. On the centennial of my inauguration, divers reinforced my piers and my width was expanded to 80 feet. Over time, the successive improvements caused me to lose my embellishing ornaments.



13 QUAI DES BERGUES

In the 18th century, the calico industry (the making of printed cotton fabrics) made up the 2nd main industry of Geneva after watch-making. During its heyday, more than a dozen calico manufacturers were located along the banks of the lake, which provided a good source of water for the rinsing process.

The events leading up to the French Revolution put an end to this industry, but the biggest of the printers, Fazy, was originally located here. In 1827, it was sold to the Bergues company who built 25 luxurious apartment buildings and the Hôtel des Bergues (1834), the first grand hotel built in Switzerland. Guillaume-Henri Dufour, the first city planner of Geneva and future general, planned and oversaw the improvements to the area.



14 THE BERGUES BRIDGE

I was open to traffic in 1834. The style of construction using chain suspensions under the deck of the bridge was an imperfect and never-before seen method at the time. Jean-Daniel Colladon had to repair me the very year I was inaugurated.

My beauty was not tarnished, however, as suggested by a pamphlet from 1834 wherein I finally spoke my mind, "Foreigners, attracted by my elegance and the beauty of my location, naturally prefer me", (referring of course to the bridges of the Isle). In 1882, Albert Odier gave me a steel structure. In 1970, while being enlarged, I was unfortunate to loose my neo-classical balustrades. Cars and motorcycles parted ways with me in 1980.



15 ROUSSEAU ISLAND

In 1583, I was surrounded by walls and served as a bastion on the lake. I was later renamed the Island of Barques (French for "boat") after being converted into a shipyard in 1628.

Around 1830, my destiny would cross paths with Jean-Jacques Rousseau when a citizen's committee looking to reclaim him as part of the city's heritage set its heart on me. Earlier, Geneva had condemned Rousseau to exile and publicly burned his works in 1762. In 1833, I was given the smallest park of the city and connected to the Bergues Bridge with the first asymmetrical suspension bridge ever built. A statue of Rousseau, the work of Pierre Pradier, was erected 1835.

I am also associated with swans. Introduced in the beginning of the 19th century, the swan has become the token gift that Geneva gives its VIP visitors. In 1936, city officials fortunately decided not to get rid of my swan park.



16 THE MACHINE

I am the neo-classical building located upstream from the bridges of the Isle. Before 1898, I was used to pump water and provide energy for the city. The first machine on the island was built by Joseph Abeille in 1708 for supplying the city's fountains with water. A second machine, designed by Jean-Marie Cordier, was installed under my roof in 1843, along with the first dam. The left and right-hand annexes date from 1862 and 1868, respectively. In 1870, I housed the first hydraulic turbine on the Rhone in Geneva.

The first experiments in public lighting in Geneva took place atop my pinnacle in 1876. In 1887, I became home to the first electric plant in Geneva, powered by a high-pressure water line running back upstream from the Forces Motrices building.



17 THE BRIDGE OF THE MACHINE

I was born in 1843 and got a new dam with floodgates in 1887 as part of the regularization of the lake's water level. Much later, the dam was replaced but I was spared.

If you don't think bridges save time, just listen to a banker at that time: "If 14,000 people go across the bridge each day, that makes no less than 5,110,000 crossings per year; the time saved by each of these individuals can be estimated at around 30 seconds to 3 minutes; using the basis of 1 Franc per hour, that means the city will save 8,333 Francs per year, and the bridge—which cost 60,000 to build—will be paid off in 7 years time" (Hentsch, 1845).



18 THE BRIDGES OF THE ISLE

Before the end of the Middle Ages, I used to be the only bridge connecting the two banks between the Lake and Lyons. My Genevan monopoly came to an end with the Bergues Bridge in 1862. In 1874, I was converted into a double-width steel bridge. Twenty years later, the Hennebique system was applied to a Geneva bridge for the first time.

The cityscape of the Isle was dense up until the middle of the 19th century. Along with houses built on stilts, there were many industries including a mineral water plant. Around 1780, the German-born Jacob Schwegge started making "artificial waters" in Geneva using a process from his invention, called the Geneva system. His first factory of carbonated drinks was later founded in England, but the origins of this purely British institution are actually from Geneva!



19 THE HALLS OF THE ISLE

I am located on the downstream end of the Island and date from 1848 when I served as a slaughterhouse. Along with the stench which filled the air around me, one could also take in the groaning of the beasts being butchered here... all that in front of the girls school located just across the way.

The city used to keep eagles in captivity for display on this spot, much like Bern still does with its bears. The caging of this symbol of the city, and an icon of freedom, caused a general mood of indignation among the Genevans, so these "living coats of arms" were finally set free when the slaughterhouse was moved.

In 1876, I was converted into a market hall and Albert Odier built the steel footbridges for the comfort of pedestrians. The bridge on the right bank was demolished in 1937. Long after the market closed down, I was turned into a cultural center.

■ *The Bateaux du Rhone company (Tel: 732 29 44) offers boat rides leaving from the Quai des Moulins (located next to the Halls) during the spring and summer months, weather permitting.*



20 QUAI TURRETTINI

I bear the name of Theodore Turrettini, a politician and engineer who was even involved in the construction of the hydro plant at Niagara Falls.

Maurice Braillard designed my concrete steps, which were inaugurated in 1939. The two figures on horses, the work of Frederic Schmed, represent the Eagle of Geneva and the Dove of Peace. I am dominated by the Hotel du Rhone, which was designed by Marc-Joseph Saugey and opened in 1950. In 1953, it was equipped with solar installations in order to heat water.

Up until the end of the 19th century, this bank of the river was the site of a variety of activities and industrial installations. Dyeing factories, craftsmen, mills, wash boats, raft-like baths, ferries and "épisseurs" (docks extending out over the river making it easier to fetch water) all competed for this space along the Rhone.



21 BRIDGE OF THE COULOUVRENIÈRE

I replaced a footbridge in 1874. I used to be a work of splendid beauty but my decorations were removed when I was enlarged during the 1970s. I was reworked again in 1995 for the tramlines. In fact, I owe my moment of glory to this form of transportation: in 1896, I was rebuilt to take visitors from the Cornavin train station to the site of the National Exposition via steam tram.

My name comes from the French word couleuvrine (the origin of "culverin" in English) which was a kind of canon with a long, narrow barrel. The land running along the Rhone at this spot used to belong to the Exercice de l'Arquebuse, which is one of the oldest shooting societies in Geneva.



22 BFM

The Forces Motrices (Power Station) Building

Turrettini was in charge of my construction between 1883-1892. Over the course of my life, I supplied the city with water, provided energy in the form of water and electricity, and helped regulate the water level of the lake. I was closed down in 1986. Since 1995, I've been a beautiful wood-lined concert hall with room for 1000 spectators.

Did you know I was at the origin of Geneva's water spout (Jet d'eau)? At the end of the workday, too much water pressure would be built up in the system. It was decided to relieve this pressure by releasing the water out a valve located at the end of the long wing of the building. The result was a column of water that spouted nearly 100 feet into the air. City officials, keen to spotting tourist attractions, moved the fountain to the Rade in 1891.



23 UGDO

The Gold Refinery Factory

I am rather shy and stick just to the basics. Founded in 1880, I was used for melting and refining gold and its different alloys. I had to be rebuilt in 1915 following a fire. Today, I have become a center for underground culture and go by my nickname of "l'Usine" (the factory), which fits me quite perfectly.



24 THE SEUJET DAM

Put in service in 1995, I fulfil the duties of a dam, hydro-electric plant and lock, all harmoniously united in one: my dam works to control the water level of the lake; electrical energy from my power plant covers all the canton's public lighting needs; and my lock lets boats go up and down the Rhone. 18,000 cubic feet can fill the lock in just 8 minutes. A footbridge and esplanade joining the two banks and a ladder for fish to pass through are finishing touches to the dam.



25 QUAI DU SEUJET

This district used to be a working class area that was razed to make place for me. The two buildings that line my bank now were built in two stages between 1972 and 1984.

In the old days, there used to be mills, a tannery and even a place for disposing chimney soot along here. Factories popped up in numbers during the 19th century. Next to a brewery, there were printers and a cork factory. The smokestacks extended as high as the houses perched above the cliffs. The term "seujet" might come from Old Provençal meaning "the craft of dyeing". Indeed, several dye workshops used to be located here. The term might also come from the word "sòdze" which means "willow tree" in the old local dialect. A footpath called the sentier des Saules ("willow way") on the other side of the bank lends itself to this possible meaning.

■ *At No. 20, take the public elevator to the 5th or 6th floor terraces for a panoramic view.*



26 SOUS-TERRE BRIDGE

I am ashamed to admit it, but I was put over the Rhone just to see if I would be profitable before eventually being handed over to the State. I was rebuilt in 1970 to make room for traffic. My curious name comes from being situated at the foot of the Saint-Jean cliffs.

Water wheels were installed in the area between 1734 and 1881 to help irrigate the vegetable gardens planted by the "plantaporrêts" (local dialect for "leek growers"). This was a system of steel buckets connected to a big wooden wheel that would spin around, dipping into the river and allowing water to be drawn up in the buckets. A sculpture not far from here on the left bank depicts one of these wheels.



27 PRIEURÉ DE SAINT-JEAN- DES-GROTTES (Saint-Jean-hors-les-murs)

I had to wait until 1969 before my vestiges would finally see the light of day. Beginning in the year 1000, a series of religious buildings were built on this spot situated along the gates of Geneva. The proximity of thoroughfares and the supposed miracles that took place here made me a place of pilgrimage. I used to own land and control churches such as the one in Vernier. My history was interrupted with the Reformation (1536) when the Calvinists either confiscated or destroyed church property. Many of my stones were used to strengthen some of the city's fortifications and, lo and behold, even the pillars for the gallows of Champell!



28 SAINT-JEAN PUMPING STATION

Built by George Brera, I am located just upstream from the viaduct of the Junction. In 1964, at the time of being put in service, I was the most powerful water pumping station in Europe. My pumps can handle 5,000 gallons of water per second, moving the city's sewage through 280-feet long pipes running under the bed of Rhone. The wastewater is then pumped 30 feet up where the giant sewers of the two banks meet. Next, by force of gravity, the water travels to the Aire water treatment plant.



29 RAIL VIADUCT OF THE JUNCTION

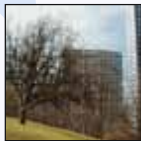
Pedestrians have benefited from this remarkable belvedere since 1946. I make up the line carrying merchandise between the Cornavin and Praille rail stations. This line is marked by tunnels, the longest of which, running under the Bâtie forest, is nearly one mile in length.

To my left, next to these woods so cherished by Geneva's inhabitants, is the quay where wastes are unloaded. Barges transport the wastes to the Cheneviers incineration plant (1966) located next to the Verbois reservoir. Updated in 1994, it treats 700 tons of waste per day.



30 BUTIN BRIDGE

I was named in honor of David-Lucien Butin. Upon his death in 1913, he bequeathed a million Francs to the State for the construction of a bridge in this spot, at the entrance to the commune of Vernier. Sixty-two different proposals were submitted, including plans by Robert Maillart and Charles-Edouard Jeanneret, later known as Le Corbusier. I tower more than 50 yards above the water and each of my piers supports 45,000 tons, all on rough terrain. The construction site, where 5 workers died, was a Sunday attraction. I was given two decks, one for rail lines. With the new station at Cornavin, the Swiss Federal Railway decided to modify the course by making a new, more direct line to the Praille station, which explains the origins of my neighboring rail bridge. After my inauguration in 1927, the redundant deck was used for shooting practice!



31 CITÉ DU LIGNON

If you go through the Aire district and cross the Bogueuret footbridge, it's impossible to miss me. I am made of two towers, 27 and 30 floors high, and a zigzag building 3,400 feet long. I am the largest housing complex in Switzerland with 2,750 housing units and 6,500 residents. My construction, which was completed in 1972, lasted 8 years, even though 6 new apartments were built every day!

In the beginning, I was criticized for my size, but today the tide has changed. I am located in the middle of the countryside giving my apartments a vast view over the landscape. I am also home to a number of services: a shopping center, pool, school, playgrounds, churches and the lovely Robinson Garden.



32 LIGNON/LOËX OIL FOOTBRIDGE

Since 1971, I have made it possible for petrol products from Marseilles to cross the river and reach the warehouses of Vernier. The curve of the pipeline fits perfectly with the winding pedestrian footbridge. The Nepal-like character of my suspension bridge is the only one of its kind in Switzerland. From this point, you can take beautiful strolls through the organic farms, vineyards and natural setting via the paths carved out by the commune of Bernex and the Geneva Association of Centers for Agricultural Studies (l'Association Genevoise des centres d'études techniques agricoles, Tel: 939 03 10).

Take a glance at the château of Poussy, the home of the former seignory of Verny, which dominates the abrupt side of the Vallières forest. The passing of the barges is also worth an eyeful, call 727 12 00 for times.



33 SIG

Geneva Gas, Water and Power Company

The SIG has been headquartered on this site since 1995. The cathedral-like building is the last remnant of the Châtélaine gas refinery which used to be here. If ever it were converted into a museum of energy, gas would occupy the main exhibit.

297 gas lanterns were put in service at Christmas of 1844, making Geneva the first city in French-speaking Switzerland to have gas lighting. It used a gas holder located at the Coulouvrenière which exploded in 1909 claiming 13 lives. The plant resumed its activities while waiting to be moved. The new plant, located in Châtélaine, saw its heyday in 1922 when it hosted the 11th Gordon-Bennett Cup, a prestigious world competition of gas balloons.

■ *Internet: www.sig-ge.ch*



34 GIVAUDAN ROURE CHEMICAL FACTORY

I hold a key place in the world of aromas and my presence in this location is due to Leon and Xavier Givaudan of Lyons.

Leon opened a lab in Zurich, but he was forced to leave by the baker next door because the bread would come out smelling like violets. While looking for a place in the suburbs, the two brothers came across this site, abundant in water and energy and nestled among the industrial know-how of Geneva. In 1898, the Givaudan company was established here where scents such as musk and violet were created.

The distillery of R. Maillart (1929) stands out the most of my 70 buildings. Other structures include the remarkable Rhone pumping station (1969).



35 THE CHÈVRES FOOTBRIDGE

Constant Butticaz built me in 1898. Except for one building from 1920, I am the only remnant of the Chèvres factory, which used to be a hydroelectric plant equal in status to that of Niagara Falls (1895) and Rheinfelden (1889). Put in service in 1896, it was actually the first major plant operating on the water level in Europe.

Turrettini made a giant step with the passage of water power to electricity. This factory accelerated the industrialization of Vernier and helped electrify public lights and the city's trams. It was demolished in 1947 because its output was too weak during certain times of the year.

■ *Return via boat leaving from the Chevres docks, réservation needed, call 732 29 44.*



36 THE VERNIER MILL (or Frères)

In the 16th century, I was located not far from the Rhone, near the outlet of the Avanchet "nant" (local word meaning little stream or brook). Two wheels were powered by water from three sources. Jean-Louis Gallatin ordered my demolition at the end of the 18th century and had me rebuilt along the Rhone where I ground flour until the end of the 19th century.

Nicolas Céard had initially thought to include me in a project which circumstances prevented from ever happening. He planned on digging a canal from Versoix that would run along the border of Geneva, then follow the same path as the stream before finally spilling into the Rhone.



37 BOIS-DES-FRÈRES

Before becoming the largest public park managed by the City of Geneva, I used to belong to the preacher brothers ("frères") of St. Dominic.

Located just outside my grounds along the Rhone is the water pumping station of Vernier, which would play the key role in the event of a fire in the area. Not far from here, at Renfîle, are reserves holding 25,000,000 cubic feet of fuels and combustibles. The first reservoirs were built here in 1918 since they were close to the rail lines. Coal makers set up shop here in the 1930's and oil companies started moving in after 1949.



38 THE AÎRE WASTE TREATMENT PLANT

As early as 1885, collection tanks for wastewater were installed along the banks of the lake from which drinking water was still directly taken.

My current structure dates from 1967. I am the key player in the canton's water purification plan. I treat 80% of the area's sewage, or 500 gallons per second. The future Aire II plant aims to reduce noise pollution, improve the quality of treated water and expand my total capacity.

My administrative building, a fine example of the influence of Le Corbusier, houses an exposition hall and a cafeteria. The curved concrete sculpture by Jean Baier (1967) came before the famous steel works which Richard Serra made in the same shape.

■ *My installations are open to groups and schools upon appointment, call 795 82 00*



39 THE JOHN BRANCHU FERRY

A ferry boat used to carry passengers between the two banks at this point as early as 1782. Its peak activity was between 1886 and 1927, following the initiative of John Branchu, local politician and proprietor of the Café du Bac (the "Café of the Ferry" demolished in 1975). I operated purely by the force of the current and a ferry cable. My days came to an end with the building of the Butin Bridge and John Branchu's passing away.