

The house of the Josephites

Also known as Duchauffour House.

Around 1660, Prince Armand de Bourbon-Conti (1629-1666) constructed this house to use as a school. On a journey from Lyon, the Prince had seen members of a religious order preaching in the countryside. The order, founded in 1643 by Jacques Cretenet, was called the Missionaires de Saint-Joseph (the Joséphites). The Prince invited two members of the order to come to L'Isle-Adam and four others followed later.

The Joséphites carried out religious services and maintained the church, the château chapel and the Saint-Lazare sanatorium. They also taught the children of the town.

In addition, their responsibilities included the upkeep of the library, with its 2,500 books and the management of civil and legal documents.

Members of the order ran the school for 129 years, right up until the French Revolution. On the 18th August 1792 the Joséphite order was abolished and in 1793 the house passed into the hands of the French people. One of the last Joséphite priests was Jean-Baptiste Martin, who was named parish priest of L'Isle Adam when Jean Auzias stepped down in 1789.

Monsieur Bérard de Favas acquired the house which was known as the 'priests' house'. In 1842, it was bought by the priest Louis-Antoine Dumouchel who wanted to make it a presbytery but the project never came to fruition. The property passed into the hands of Alfred Duchauffour, a solicitor in L'Isle-Adam from 1838 to 1858. This is how the house came to be known as Duchauffour House.

The house was subsequently acquired by the town. It was first used for administrative purposes, but in 1951, the former school became the Louis Senlecq Art & History Museum – named after its founder. Collections donated by the municipality were displayed to the public in several rooms within the building. In 1965 the façade of the House of the Joséphites was restored. In the 1990s an extensive refurbishment program, brainchild of the mayor Michel Poniatowski, saw the museum extended to all three levels of the building. In 2006 the rooms had become too dilapidated and the museum was closed and the collections rehoused in the current Jacques Henri Lartigue Art Centre.

Coordonnées

Maison des Joséphites
Rue des Joséphites
95290
L'Isle-Adam