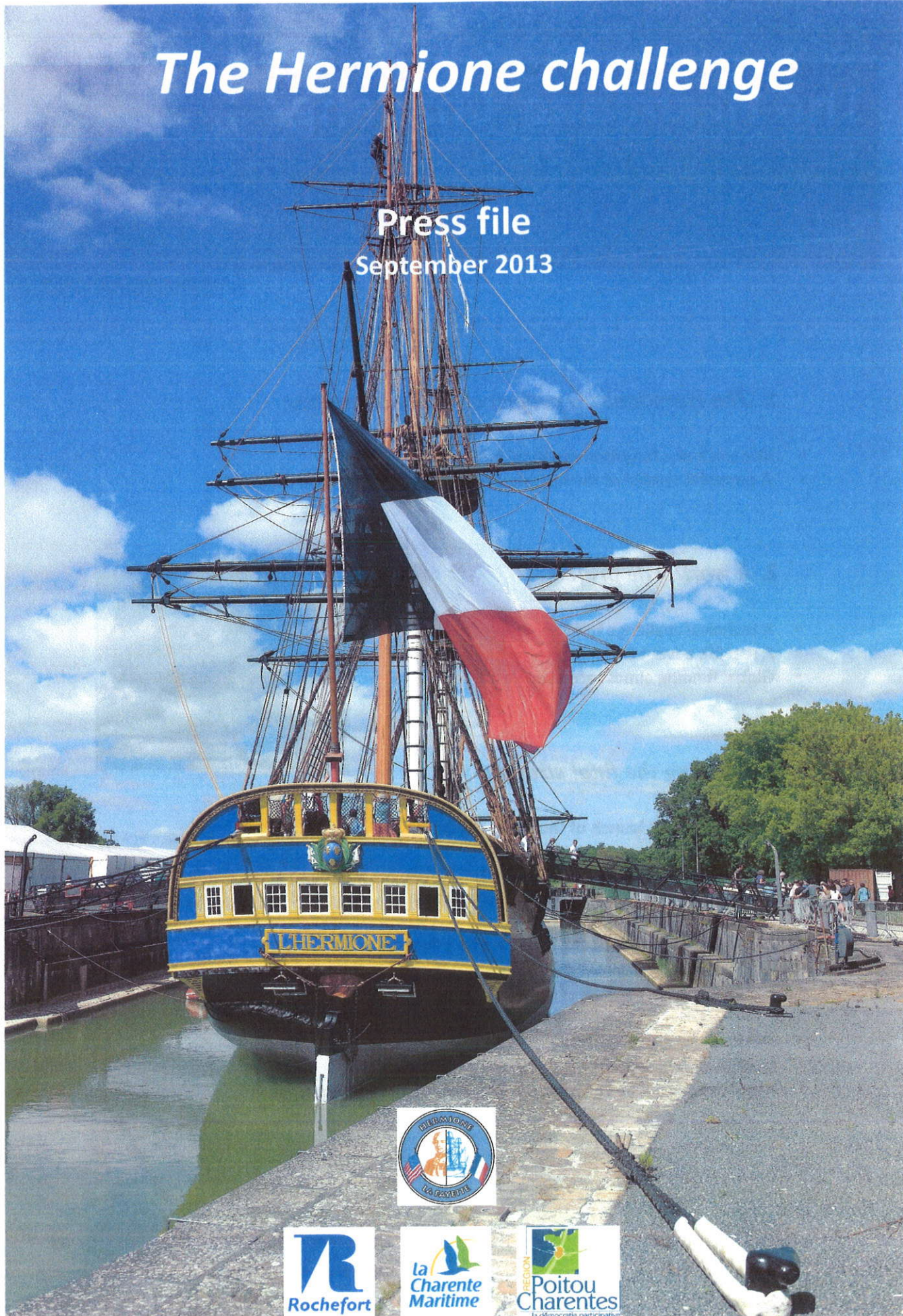


# *The Hermione challenge*

Press file  
September 2013





# The Hermione Challenge

## Summary



### *1. The Hermione : a project of national interest*

- The trace of a forgotten maritime héritage
- A powerful symbol of the historical ties between France and the U.S.A

### *2. A worthwhile project*

- A technical challenge fulfilled
- A real life adventure
- Global funding almost acquired



### *3. Entering the final straight*

**6th July 2012 launch of the hull**

**Next targets :**

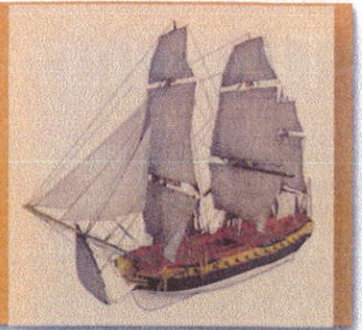
- 2013 : Finishes of the ship & crew recruitment
- 2014 : sailing tests at sea
- 2015 : Crossing the Atlantic in La Fayette's footsteps
- 

### *4. The Hermione in America*

- The financial challenge
- Mobilizing new support
- Friends of Hermione La Fayette in America, US not for profit

# The Hermione

A project of national interest



## The trace of a forgotten maritime heritage

As opposed to other great maritime countries, France has neither kept nor rebuilt a pre 19<sup>th</sup> century vessel. This "French exception" will end with the launch of the Hermione, scheduled for 2012.

This vessel will also be a living memory and homage to France's great maritime past, whose sailors travelled the Atlantic coasts of the New World, from Newfoundland to the Caribbean, Florida and Brazil, as early as the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

## A symbol of the Franco-American friendship

A friendship founded at the start of the American independence and forever symbolised by La Fayette, who engaged in the war of independence right from its beginning. The Americans themselves consider La Fayette to be one of the heroes of this war.

When rebuilt, The Hermione will be a « permanent ambassador » of the Franco-American friendship.

The Hermione's voyage to the U.S.A. and Canada scheduled for 2015 will be a powerfully symbolic rendezvous, promoting amongst today's Americans France's historical affection for the U.S.A.

### La Fayette a the core of History



In 1779, when he returned from America, where he had volunteered himself for the American cause, the young Marquis of Lafayette managed to convince the King of France to grant military and financial aid to General Washington's troops who were fighting for their independence.

La Fayette set off for Rochefort where, on March 21<sup>st</sup> 1780, he boarded a brand new frigate ship, The Hermione. After a 38 day crossing he joined General Washington to inform him of the imminent arrival of French reinforcements. The Hermione fought in this American campaign for over eighteen months until the final victory.





# The Hermione

## A worthwhile project



### A technical challenge fulfilled

**Reconstruction of the *Hermione*** involves building a vessel measuring over 65m long, carrying three masts and 2 200 m<sup>2</sup> of sail area. It also entails restoration of the hull made entirely of oak reaching 1 metre thickness in certain areas (planking, lining, moulding), inconceivable today but used in the 18<sup>th</sup> century to withstand enemy cannonballs.

### Three watchwords

**Authenticity** Reconstruction is carried out based on archive documents.

A historical committee guarantees the exact reconstruction of the vessel.

**Seaworthiness** The Hermione must be able to navigate in deep and ocean seas.

**Sustainability** Construction will ensure optimal sustainability of the vessel

### The main stages of the project

1993-1996	Stage 1: preliminary studies.
1997-2000	Stage 2: wooden framework construction
2000-2008	Stage 3: superstructure and deck construction
2009-2011	Stage 4: planking and caulking of the hull; rig manufacture.
2012	6th july Launch of the hull
2012-2013	Final stage: End of rigging –masting-sails.
2014	Trials at sea
2015	Departure for the voyage to America

*Carpenters and metalworkers, sail makers, rope makers, caulkers, sculptors, cabinetmakers...the shipyard has mobilised « Companion » workers and craftsmen from all over France and beyond*



### Hermione, the figures

400 000 wood and metal construction parts

a main mast 54 metres above the keel

2 000 oaks selected from French forests

1 000 pulley blocks

1 ton of Baru for the caulking

26 canons firing 12-pound cannonballs from the gun deck and 8 canons firing 6-pound cannonballs from the forecastle deck.

### A window on traditional trades and skills

The Hermione shipyard is a wonderful place to discover traditional techniques and skills. This ambitious project has thrown light on traditional shipbuilding trades from engineering and naval carpentry to the art of linen sail making and wooden rigs

# The Hermione

## A worthwhile project



### A real life adventure

#### A project led by a team of enthusiasts

A team of enthusiasts launched the Hermione project over 15 years ago. The original pioneer group along with the author, Erik Orsenna, have been joined by several thousand others within the Hermione-La Fayette association.

More than one hundred volunteers and employees are in attendance daily in the Hermione shipyard.

#### An extraordinarily popular success

Visitor statistics: Over 3,7 million visits since 1997  
250 000 annual visitors  
Yearly 20 000 students and schoolchildren

*The Hermione: a real life  
history lesson!*



#### A shipyard theatre

Film shooting, television programmes, photo reports in top magazines... This wooden cathedral has been attracting photographers and cameramen for over 15 years.

*A living shipyard  
watched by thousands  
daily*



#### Milestone celebrations for the shipyard

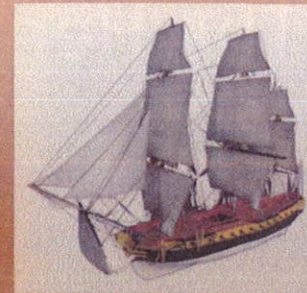
Each major stage of the building work is celebrated : installation of the framework's transverse beams, the keel, the stern and launching of the first longboat and of the hull.





# The Hermione

## A worthwhile project



### Funding almost acquired

#### An original funding model :

This funding has been made possible primarily through:

- Public funding (visitors and members);
- French public local authorities, the town of Rochefort, the « Charente Maritime » county and the « Poitou-Charentes » region, who gave their support right from the beginning;

Further funding has been raised by regional, national and American sponsors and Patrons: Crédit Agricole, Moët Hennessy, Galeries Lafayette Group, The Florence Gould foundation, and the support of thirty SME's within the "Hermione club".

The construction budget raises at a total amount of 25 millions euros, divided as following :

- Poitou- Charentes Region : 4,34 million euros
- Charente Maritime county : 4,38 million euros
- Town of Rochefort : 3,44 million euros
- European funds : 1,15 million euros

The global cost of the voyage is estimated at a total cost of 5 million euros :

- 3 million euros for the voyage itself (including the required contemporary equipment and crew expenses)
- 2 million euros to cover PR and communication expenses in the US.

This budget remains to be financed by French and US firms or donators, partnerships of the american voyage of Lafayette's frigate.



*Living show place the building site has been supported at 60 % by the entrance fees*



# The Hermione

Entering the final straight



## July 2012: the launch

Friday 6th July : Launch of the Hermione's hull on the Charente river

Nautical festival and night show.

Saturday 7th July : Early in the morning the Hermione was moved to the Napoleon III dock.

65 000 people present on the site attended the event in Rochefort

From that moment on and until the frigate's departure for its American voyage, work will continue before the eyes of the public.



The Hermione is now visited in its wet dock

## Targets

- Stages not yet completed : completion of masting, sails & rigging, also fitting of modern equipment
- 2013 : recruitment of the captain
- 2014: First trials at sea of the crew
- 2015: Crossing the Atlantic in La Fayette's footsteps

Departure from Rochefort scheduled in March 2015 for the Atlantic crossing with the support of the French and American navy.

From April to July 2015: symbolic ports of call on the East coast of the USA (Rochefort, Canarian Islands, Annapolis, Newport, New York, Boston, ...).

August 2015: return journey back to France.



# The Hermione in America



## The financial challenge

In order to keep work going and remain on schedule, the team needs a further 3 million euros in order to :

- Recruit the crew, and prepare sailing trials at sea
- Finance the voyage to America

Preparation and funding for the Lafayette's Voyage have already gathered forces on both sides of the Atlantic.

## Mobilizing new support

The Hermione imperatively needs new support to enter this final straight.

The Hermione team is pulling together :

- To extend public support: through membership to the Hermione-La Fayette association, by increasing online donations (exempt from tax) via the association's website [www.hermione.com](http://www.hermione.com)

## Friends of Hermione-La Fayette in America

Not for profit corporation 503 (c)

A not for profit charitable organization formed to recreate and support the voyage to America of the frigate Hermione and build an educational and exchange franco American program focused on the role of the ship, La Fayette, transatlantic travel during the 18<sup>th</sup> century and the relations between France and the United States over the last two hundred years.

Executive Chairman : Mr. Miles Young  
Worldwide Chairman and CEO Ogilvy and Mather  
Treasurer : Mr. Rémi Forgeas  
Secretary : Mr. Alain Bourdeaux

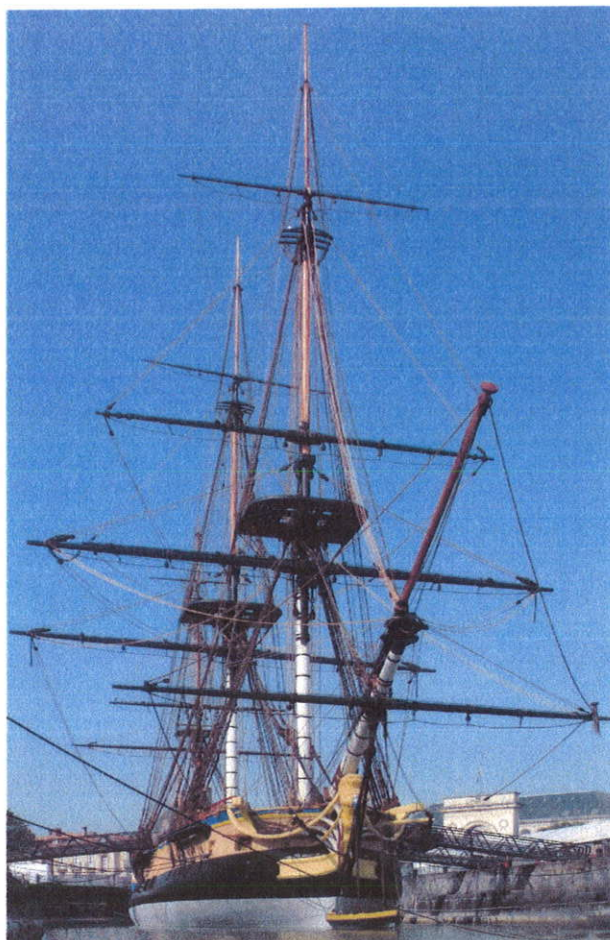
Website : [www.friendsofhermione.org](http://www.friendsofhermione.org)  
Contact : [info@friendsofhermione.org](mailto:info@friendsofhermione.org)



FRIENDS OF HERMIONE-LAFAYETTE IN AMERICA







**We thank then for their continuous support :**



**Our 3'900'000 visitors since 1997,  
7'000 members,  
and Partners firms and sponsors**

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**To learn more on Hermione-La Fayette project :**



[Le chantier Hermione Lafayette](#)



[www.youtube.com/hermione17300](http://www.youtube.com/hermione17300)



