**Page Title: Sainte Genevieve – her story and her town**

**Links:**

General Information

* http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/thumb/b/b3/Sainte\_Genevieve\_fa%C3%A7ade\_Saint-Etienne-du-Mont.jpg/577px-Sainte\_Genevieve\_fa%C3%A7ade\_Saint-Etienne-du-Mont.jpg
* http://www.theparisblog.com/the-patron-saint-of-paris/
* http://www.oldandsold.com/articles08/paris-travel-8.shtml
* http://www.oldandsold.com/articles29/paris-info-5.shtml

Peter Vagt photographed the stained glass window that shows Ste. Genevieve in the Church of Ste. Genevieve. Visit his website here:

* www.petervagt.com

See the sanctuary of the Church of Ste.Genevieve:

* http://valle.mo.schoolwebpages.com/education/components/scrapbook/default.php?sectiondetailid=2321&sc\_id=1180478457

Listen to The Bells of St. Genevieve, by Marais:

* http://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL520F890345D66887&feature=plcp

**Her Story:**

Sainte Genevieve lived in France for her entire life. In 437 AD, at age fifteen, she became a nun, and devoted herself to prayer and fasting. When Attila, the Hun, was on the way with his armies to attack the city of Paris in 451, many people decided to flee the city. Genevieve was able to convince a large group of women to join her in a desperate prayer for help. Indeed, Attila’s attack never arrived and Genevieve was credited with prayerfully and prophetically affecting the city’s deliverance.

Her long relationship with the Franc king, Clovis, resulted in his conversion to Christianity. He ordered the Church of St. Peter and St. Paul to be built over the ruins of the Roman pantheon in Paris in which Genevieve was buried in 512. She was canonized in 522. So many people visited her tomb that the chapel in which it was located was renamed the Church and Tomb of Ste. Genevieve. In 550 the famous blacksmith, St. Eloy, made a sarcophagus in which her remains were placed.

This sarcophagus was carried in a procession through Paris in 1129 to combat an epidemic of ergot poisoning. This disease is characterized by hallucinations, convulsions, diarrhea, itching, headache, nausea, and even gangrene of the fingers and toes. Known also as St. Anthony’s Fire, it is caused by eating grains that have been infected with the *claviceps purpurea fungus*. The epidemic ended after the procession of Ste. Genevieve’s relics.

Ste. Genevieve’s remains were placed into a new reliquary made of gold by the renowned goldsmith, Bonnard, in 1242. By the middle of the eighteenth century, in spite of her continuing fame and many visitors hoping to receive some miraculous touch upon visiting her tomb, the Church of Ste. Genevieve was badly in need of repairs. King Louis XV commissioned the building of a new domed church in her honor. The new church was commandeered by the French Revolution in 1791 and its name reverted to the Pantheon.

Ste. Genevieve’s bones were burned in disgrace by the Revolutionists at the Place de Grève in 1793, the same year that King Louis XVI and his wife, Marie Antoinette, were executed by the guillotine. The Place de Grève is the first harbor on the Seine River in Paris. It was the site of many hangings and public executions. The Pantheon was restored to the church in 1821, secularized again in 1831. In 1885 it was re-consecrated to Ste. Genevieve although what was rescued of her remains is enshrined in the neighboring church of St. Etienne du Mont.

**Her Reputation:**

Sainte Genevieve is known as the patron saint of Paris and the protector against fever, plague, disaster, and according to M. de Felcourt and J. de Richoufftz, authors of *France, Terre de Sainteté*, the protectress against floods as well.

**Ste. Genevieve, Missouri:**

The town of Ste. Genevieve sits on the west bank of the Mississippi River across from the heads of one of the three Catholic jurisdictions of Louisiana, Kaskaskia, which was assigned to the Jesuits until the British took it over following the French & Indian War in 1763. While exceedingly fertile from the residue deposited during frequent floods, the town of Ste. Genevieve was nicknamed “Misère” perhaps because of the prevalence of malaria there. Appealing to Ste. Genevieve as its patron saint would have been logical in this place which was fiercely Catholic, royalist, and prone to both floods, and fevers.

Statue of Ste. Genevieve:

A beautiful statue of Ste. Genevieve is on display in the Linden Parlor at the Bolduc House Museum. It is a gift from Mrs. Pierce Powell, a member of The National Society of the Colonial Dames of America in the State of Missouri, which owns and operates the Bolduc House Museum.

**Metatags:**

Sainte Genevieve, Marais, relics, patron saint, Paris, Catholic beliefs, French Revolution

Photos:

* Peter Vagt – Ste. Genevieve Window in the Church of Ste. Genevieve (photo)
* Peter Vagt – Detail of above (photo)
* Statue in the Linden Parlor
* Statue’s face – detail of above

Photo: By Peter Vagt. This is a detail of the image of Ste. Genevieve located in the Church of Ste. Genevieve in a stained glass window.  The following hoto, also by Peter Vagt shows the entire window. 

