

## **Elaine interviews : Julie Rubiella from the Fête de la Faux**

**Elaine** So Julie, nice to see you this afternoon and what a lovely day, and here we are sitting out in the sun listening to bird song. So tell me, when did you first become interested in using traditional tools?

**Julie** The first time I used a scythe was in 2018. I was travelling in England and I end up at Monkton Wyld Court which is a community. They have three Jersey cows. We were milking by hand and it was middle of June, haymaking season and I start to mow there with a scythe, and I just found the experience great and I think that sort of changed a bit my life.

**Elaine** Yes, it's the calmness and the quiet isn't it?

**Julie** Yes.

**Elaine** I think it's when you're doing something by hand and without a machine.

**Julie** Yes. There was that, but there was also the feeling of working with the community because you are not making it on your own. You are making it also for the cow, knowing that you will feed them for winter, and there were these things happening that...early morning we wake up, we go in the field, we were mowing. After, we stop. We had a quick breakfast and it was time to milk the cows, and after making cheese, and at the end of the day... well during the day turning the hay, and at the end of the day just having a nice meal together. So it was really like working for people, with people, in a sort of circle.

**Elaine** So as you said it's the spirit of community, which gets lost these days when people are constantly on either their phone or a computer and they're not actually talking to anybody.

**Julie** Hmm. Yes.

**Elaine** So I believe there's a big event now, coming up in July? Can you tell us something about this?

**Julie** Yes. It's the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> of July, Saturday and Sunday. There is the second 'Fête de la Faux'. It is outils conviviaux – which means scythe fair and convivial tools fair. It's a two-day workshop, talks, music, championship. Things around scythes and different tools.

**Elaine** There seem to be... I've looked at the website and the programme... and there seem to be a lot of activities going on and being organised. Where do the people come from, who will be running these events?

- Julie Most of them are coming from Brittany, all around Brittany, from all sides... and also there are people coming from the South of France to sell tools. Le Contrat de la Faux and La Frontier. Yes most of the people are coming from Brittany.
- Elaine So how do you get people involved in such an occasion?
- Julie I think scything interests a lot of people because, just, the grass is everywhere. So, at some point in the year everyone is like trying to do something with the grass, and more people want to use non-fossil fuel tools. So, just talking to people, and bringing the idea of 'well maybe we can have a fair where we can share knowledge and skills and just have the time to exchange things'.
- Elaine Well it seems today, it seems to be a very busy programme and obviously you've got, on the Saturday night a Fest Noz.
- Julie Yes. Yes.
- Elaine With music.
- Julie Yes.
- Elaine Fantastic. So it's going to be a very busy, exhausting, weekend... but do you have many volunteers?
- Julie Yes... yes we have volunteers. We're still looking for volunteers. In the team we have... we people coming from a bit of everywhere. From the South of France, also in Brittany. Some people coming from England, especially for the event. So, yes.
- Elaine Excellent. What about funding though, because I notice that basically they don't seem to be charging people for it, or anything.
- Julie So the event is made just by the money we have in the Association. We don't get any subsidies for that. We don't want to... and the idea is the entry is free donation price. Even the workshops are quite cheap because we want it that everyone can access to it. It's 5 euros but you can give more in order to sustain the event... to support the event. There will be, in the entrance, all the information of what is the cost of everything and... if you want to choose a free donation price in function of what...
- Elaine And, obviously, I mean I notice that there's going to be refreshments available.
- Julie Yes.
- Elaine A creperie.
- Julie Yes. Yes. Yes.

Elaine Amongst others... and cider no doubt.

Julie Yes. It's on... the farmer who holds the event is a sheep and apple and pear juice farm. So they also make cider there... so there will be many things.

Elaine Sounds very tempting. Now, for anybody who misses the fête, because it's at the beginning of July, how can they contact you if they're interested in joining your Association or your project?

Julie Well, any person interest in scything things – you can find all the information on the website from Brittany, which is called [www.faucher.bzh](http://www.faucher.bzh) and on the page you will all the information you will need to contact everyone, and the main Association, who is leading the fair this year, is called 'Autour de la Faux' and we are located in between Côtes d'Armor, Finistère and Morbihan.

Elaine Thank you very much Julie, that's very informative, and we'll put further details out on the website. Thank you.

Julie Thank you.