



# Blegny mines



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# ABSTRACT

## Overview

The Blegny Mine has been recognized as a UNESCO World Heritage Site (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Culture Organization) since July 1, 2012 in conjunction with three other major mining sites in Wallonia: Grand-Hornu near Mons, Bois-du-Luc at La Louvière and Bois du Cazier in Charleroi.



Le grand-Hornu

Le Bois-du-Luc

Le Bois du Cazier

In the 15th century began the exploitation of coal under the impetus of the the abbey of Val-Dieu monks, owners of coal lands. The presence of this coal in the Liège basin was the origin of the establishment and the development of its steel and glass industry.

In 1779, this industrial exploitation began, thanks to Gaspard Corbesier who acquired the BlegnyTrembleur concession. His descendants also acquired the neighbouring concession, that of Argenteau. The two concessions totaled 879 hectares and were reunited in 1883, but the company was liquidated in 1887. All activity then ceased for 30 years.

A new company, the S.A. The Argenteau Coals run by the Ausselets, was founded in 1919. Production was growing rapidly: it had already reached 84,000 tons per year in 1931 (compared to 10,000 tons before the first closure).

WWII led to the destruction of the Well tower No. 1 and the washhouse. The extraction continued via the second well, the Marie Well, but at a markedly slow pace. From 1942 to 1948, the Well tower no.1 and the laundry yard were rebuilt. Production continued to grow. It reached its peak in 1970, with 232,000 tons, for a workforce of 680 people.

In 1975, the Ministerial Committee for Economic and Social Coordination decided to suspend state subsidies for Walloon coal mines. The various Liège headquarters closed their doors one after the other; that of Argenteau-Trembleur enjoyed the sad privilege of closing last, on March 31, 1980, before reopening two months later ... as a museum!





[vidéo : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GB\\_1t2pSQg8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GB_1t2pSQg8)

## Opportunities for complementary activities

In addition to the guided mine tour, other activities are possible such as a guided tour of the permanent exhibition, a tourist train drive, a guided audio walk or a Liège-Visé cruise.

## Special event

The last 15 years, during the first weekend of June, an event called "La Giornata Italiana" (« Italian Day ») happens at the site of Blegny. This is an opportunity to celebrate Italians on their way.

The "Giornata Italiana" is one of the biggest Italian events in Belgium where visitors can attend concerts, talent contests, tastings and sometimes even gladiator fights!



<http://www.lagiornataitaliana.be/>