The Radôme

An immersive visit

The time of your immersive visit to the Radome is indicated on your ticket.

Please arrive at the entrance to the Radome 5 minutes before the indicated time.

To reach the entrance to the Radome, go to the first floor and then go out.
The Radome is then in front of you. Go straight and at the end of the alley, turn left, then right.

The Radome is a big white balloon. It protects a large antenna that looks like an elongated horn. On the 11th of July 1962, the antenna received live television pictures from the United-States via the Telstar satellite. It was a world first!

The Cité des Télécoms offers you an immersive visit under the Radome to let you re-live this historic event.

The access door to the Radome acts as a time machine.
The revolving door only begins to turn at the time indicated on your ticket.

WAITING AREA

While you wait to enter, simulated television reports are offered

A journalist shows a balloon appearing during the night. Soldiers prevent access to this balloon.

For 9 months, the tranquillity of this area has been disturbed. Surveyors are seen first. The land has been bought from the owners. Equipment has been put in place.

Many staff have been hired: premises, persons coming from other regions in France. Several Americans have joined the worksite!

If the residents of Pleumeur-Bodou are used to this worksite, no-one could imagine that this ball, 50m in height would see the light of day!

The residents are interviewed. Most people have no idea what the ball is for. Only one lady says that the ball is there to protect an antenna. She thinks that the antenna is for communications ...

The revolving door begins to turn.
Bon voyage in time!
On the other side of the door, you will be on the night of the 10th to the 11th of July 1962.

DESIGN OFFICE *1st room*

An engineer welcomes you into his office, several minutes before the commissioning of the antenna that will allow for the 1st time, to establish a television link between 2 continents by satellite.

During his intervention, the engineer has to answer the telephone several times. During these periods, you can use a dial telephone and enter the numbers proposed to obtain more information. Some numbers allow you to have content in English. Take the opportunity also to discover the room, open the drawers, look at the plans, etc.

The engineer must leave and check the calculations of the new Telstar trajectory. He invites you to go into the control room.

On the 10th of July 1962, the work on the site finished only 3 days ago. The test to check if everything was working correctly couldn't all be done.
The engineer receives the message from the American teams warning that the Telstar satellite had drifted in its orbit. They have to send new coordinates for the satellite. The engineer hopes that they will not make a mistake with their calculations ... The success of the project relies on these rules ....

France is in competition with the English. The English have built a parabolic antenna at Goonhilly Downs in Cornwall. France chose the American technology that has been proven: the horn-antenna. The Pleumeur-Bodou site is an exact copy of the American site at Andover in the state of Maine.
This project is very complicated ... The Telstar satellite orbits the Earth at a speed of 24,000 km/h so makes a complete rotation of the Earth in 2h40. To receive the images, the antennas must capture the satellite simultaneously ... But the satellite is only visible by the American and European antennas for 20 minutes and only 2 or 3 times a day.

CONTROL ROOM *2nd room*

The control room lights up, while the lights of the design office slowly die out.

A female voice informs you that the reception of the images will begin in 5 minutes.
A double-glazed door allows you to perceive the silhouette of the engineers who go back and forth.

2 engineers stop. One asks if the Radome is holding up. The other replies that all is OK as the overpressure in the Radome is 4 hectopascals.

An electronic vacuum tube failed ¾ of an hour ago but the teams are repairing it so that all will be ready in time.

The team has just received the new coordinates of Telstar. You hear the antenna begin to move to orient itself correctly. Suddenly, an alarm sounds: the antenna stops.
Behind the double-glazed door, the silhouettes of the engineers run in every

A female voice invites you to go into the reception centre.
The access door to the Radome opens.

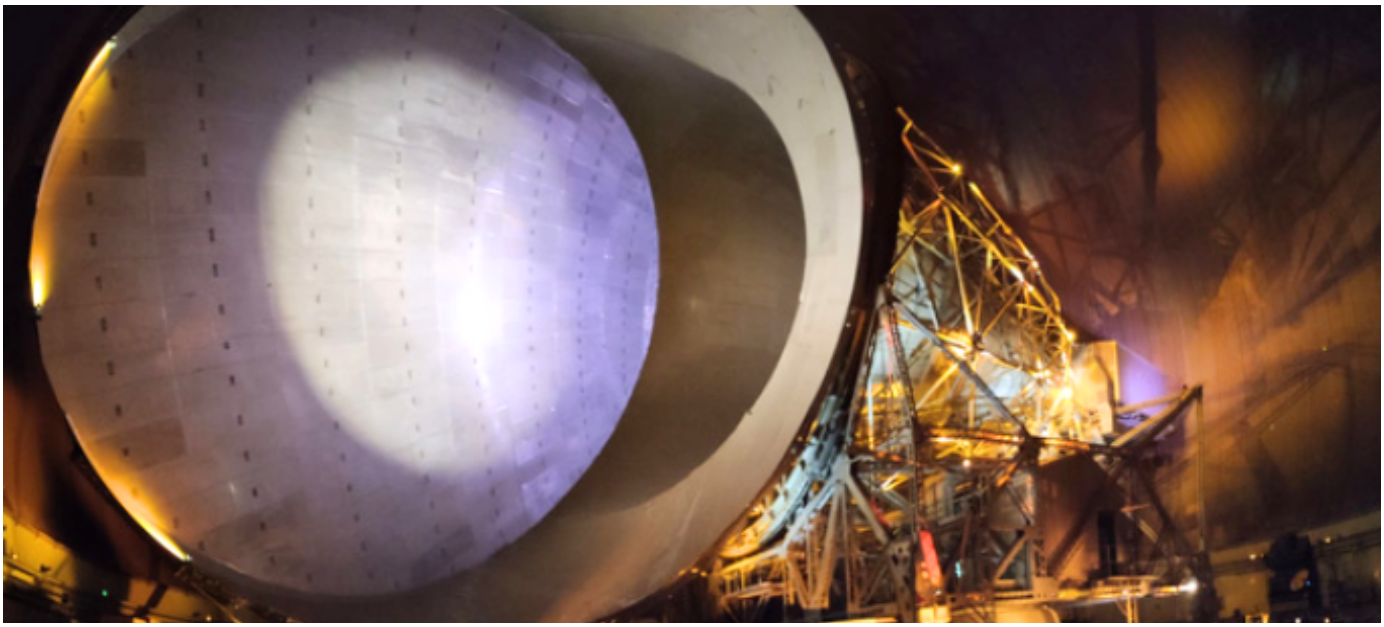
RECEPTION CENTER

Take your time to look at the antenna: 54 m long, 30 m high, 340 tonnes.

A voice invites you to go to the viewing centre where there are 3 television screens.

message “waiting for the signal” passes on the screens ... A man’s voice asks if we have received anything. A man replies “no” ...
Suddenly snow appears on the screens as well as pictures.

A man’s voice tells us that we are the 1st pictures re-traseeingnsmitted live by satellite. This is a 1st in history: the beginning of a technological revolution. This man asks himself what can be done in the future.
Look at the summit of the Radome: images are projected showing the technological evolution since the 1960’s.



The exit from the Radome is via an airlock.

Only the staff of the Cité des Télécoms are authorised to open the airlock.

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