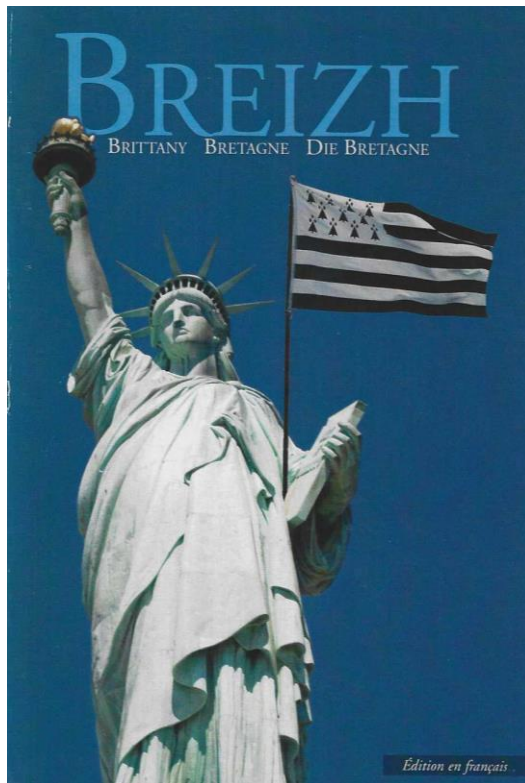


# BRO NEVEZ

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE BRETON LANGUAGE  
NEWSLETTER OF THE U.S. BRANCH



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KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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The U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language (U.S. ICDBL) was incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation on October 20, 1981. Bro Nevez ("new country" in the Breton language) is the newsletter produced by the U.S. ICDBL. It is published quarterly. Contributions, letters to the editor, corrections, and ideas are welcome from all readers and will be printed at the discretion of the Editor.

The U.S. ICDBL provides Bro Nevez on a complimentary basis to a number of language and cultural organizations in Brittany to show our support for their work. Your Membership/Subscription allows us to mail print copies. Membership (which includes subscription) for one year is \$20. Checks should be in U.S. dollars, made payable to "U.S. ICDBL" and mailed to Lois Kuter at the address above.

**This newsletter can be sent as a PDF file attached to an e-mail instead of the print version. Just let the Editor know how you would like to receive it.** The e-mail version is much more colorful than the photocopied print copy!

Back issues of Bro Nevez can be found on the U.S. ICDBL website

*Ideas expressed within this newsletter are those of the individual authors, and do not necessarily represent ICDBL philosophy or policy.*

**Editor's Note:** Unless otherwise indicated, I take responsibility for all content in this issue of *Bro Nevez*. I would welcome contributions from others for future issues! – Lois Kuter

## The Cultural Council of Brittany and the Breton Language

As reported October 25<sup>th</sup> on the *Le Télégramme* website, the Cultural Council of Brittany expressed its impatience and anger that the Convention signed in March 2022 for the transmission of the Breton language has still not been applied. This has meant that teaching in the Breton language has stagnated. While there have been some advances for the Gallo language, there is still much progress to be made there too. Also, efforts to increase the public presence of Breton and Gallo are insufficient. This continued dissatisfaction with work promised for the Breton language was also expressed by Breton language teachers who feel that the lack of bilingual teachers must be addressed.



## Conference on the Culture and Breton Language in Cornouaille / Azezoù Sevenadur Breizh hag ar Brezhoneg e Kerne

This November 25<sup>th</sup> a day-long conference was held to assess the state of the Breton language and culture in the Cornouaille area of Brittany.



This began with a welcome by Albert Billon, President of the Development Council, and an introduction by Rozenn Milin, President of the Cultural Council of Brittany.

A roundtable discussion gathered diverse actors for the Breton language and culture including Rozenn Milin, Jean-Louis Caradec (Mayor of Peumerit and VP for youth and culture of the Haut Pays Bigouden), Yannick Poeys (President of Ciutat), Yannig Menguy (Director of Mervent), Béatrice Macé (VP of the Regional Council for culture, cultural rights and artistic and cultural education), Christian Troadec (VP of the Regional

Council of Brittany for languages of Brittany and Bretons worldwide), Nolwenn Korbell (musician and actress) and Paul Molac (Deputy and regional councilor).

This was followed by three workshops:

#### *Governance – how to renew teams and the structure of associations*

Led by Yannig Bigoun (Mouvement associative de Bretagne) and including Delphine Le Doze (Director of the Maison des Associations), Anaëlle Le Pann (Emgleo Bro Douarnenez) and Maria Daouphars (President of Sonerion).

#### *Power and weaknesses of our structure / economic models and institutional support*

Led by Loïc Philippon (Co-president of Mervent and VP of Ti ar Vro Kemper), and including Anna-Vari Chapalain (Quimper Mayor's associate for the Breton language), Eric Vighetti (Director of the Quimper tourism office), Nicolas Amaury (Bretagne Culture Diversité) and Ludwig Bétim (Director of Sonerion)

#### *Imagine the future of the Breton language and culture in Cornouaille*

This was led by Albert Billon (President, Development Council), with Anne Gouérou (documentary filmmaker and co-president of the audiovisual branch of Douarnenez Cornouaille), Gwénolé Larvol (teacher and researcher, UBO), Nathias Ouvrard (embroiderer and sculptor) and Belen Riquelme Sandoval (actress and director).

During the day artists had the opportunity to present their work.

## A Loss for Brittany

### Per Le Moine (1927-2023)

Per Le Moine was born in Maël-Carhaix on August 4, 1927 and passed away on October 19, 2023, at the age of 96. He was known for having joined his brother and father at the age of 16 in the Resistance during German Occupation of Brittany during World War II. Per Le Moine insisted that he was no hero, but during times when Breton nationalists were assumed to all be Nazi collaborators, his role during the war served to show that Breton nationalism is much more complex.

Per Le Moine studied architecture in Paris and set up an architectural firm in Brest in 1954 and then in Quimper in 1959. He learned the Breton language through the Skol Ober correspondence course with Marc'harid Gourlaouen as well as at Ker Vreiz in Paris. He was active for a period of time with Kamp Etrekeltiek ar Vrezhonegerien with Vefa de Bellaing, Xavier de Langlais and Ronan Huon. This camp conducted in the

Breton language is still active today. Also in the area of the Breton language, Per Le Moine was active in the administration of Kuzul ar Brezhoneg at its founding in 1952 and for some twenty years following.

He was a co-founder of the nationalist magazine *Ar Vro* and then *Jeune Bretagne* in 1955. Per Le Moine worked with Yann Fouéré in 1954 to found *Projet d'Organisation de la Bretagne* which would become the *Mouvement pour l'Organisation de la Bretagne (MOB)* in 1957 and would create its journal *L'Avenir de la Bretagne* in 1958. He also contributed articles to the magazine *Armor*.

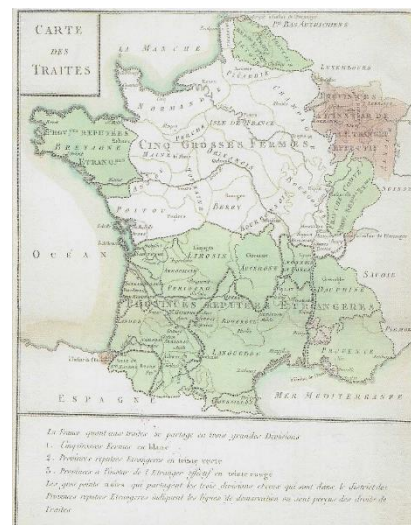
In the 1960s Per Le Moine was active with the *Front de Libération de la Bretagne (FLB)* and was imprisoned with some sixty others in January 1969 for suspected roles in bombing symbolic targets of French oppression (tax offices, police stations...), attacks which carefully avoided human injuries. Le Moine served six months in prison before being amnestied. Although he had discovered the Isle of Jersey in the 1950s, he would move there after the FLB period to avoid harassment. He would also reside in Glomel and split time between the two locations.

My correspondence with Per Le Moine began in November 1979 when he learned of my PhD research on Breton identity through Alan Al Louarn who I had met during my stay in Brittany (1978-79). In Per Le Moine's first letter he identified himself as the President of the *Comité d'Action Régionale*, founded in the late 1950s or early 60s to work for a special statute for Brittany outlined in a *Projet de Loi* of the late 1970s which he sent me.

In the mid-1980s Per Le Moine would send letters on the letterhead of the *Federal Union of European Nationalities* on which he served as president from 1986 to 1990 (Vice President from 1980-86, and Honorary President as well as a representative to the European Council from 1990 to 2008). FEUN was founded in 1949

by Joseph Martray to defend the rights of minority cultures throughout Europe.

In addition to longer letters Per Le Moine would send short cards in Breton and French with notes of encouragement for the publication of *Bro Nevez* which he received from its start in 1981. Many mailings from Per Le Moine included



a post card he created with an Alsatian colleague showing a map of France. Typed on the back of one of these was the explanation: "Ancient map with France represented in white. Countries shown in green and red represent French conquest through wars, massacres & ethnocides in the last 2 centuries only."

During the 1990s Per Le Moine continued work with FUEN as well as the Association International pour la Defense des Langues et Cultures Menacées (AIDLCM) founded in the mid 1960s to fight for the rights of European minority languages and cultures. By the early 1990s the letterhead used by Per Le Moine would also include that of the Association Bretonne de Culture (established in 1961). In 2009 Per Le Moine sent me a copy of the condensed history of Brittany – *Breizh/Brittany/Bretagne/Die Bretagne* - written by Louis Mélenec for the Association. Produced in several languages, I have a version in French from 2009 which includes a forward by Per Le Moine in Breton, French, English and German. It seemed fitting to include the English language version below of his forward.

Letters and notes from Per Le Moine included lots of news about the work of all of the organizations in which he was active – especially FUEN and work in Europe to defend minority cultures. Letters sometimes also included short notes on the whereabouts of his five children and it was evident that Per knew everyone in Brittany active in some way in support of language, culture, or political autonomy. In his letters he would mention his action with the French Resistance during World War II and would report on heart problems that plagued him most of his life but never seemed to slow his action.

Per Le Moine was also active with Skol Uhel ar Vro, the Cultural Institute of Brittany, serving on the International Relations section. He was inducted into the Order of the Ermine in 1994 in recognition of his life-long commitment to Brittany.

*FORWARD to Breizh / Brittany /Bretagne / Die Bretagne (Association Bretonne de Culture, 2009)*

*For its sixtieth anniversary, the Federalist Union of the European Communities (FUEN/UFCE/FUEV) will be holding its Congress in Brussels during the autumn session 2009 of the European Parliament.*

*In order to involve Brittany in this important historical gathering for minorities across Europe, the "Trust for Brittany" has decided to publish this booklet that outlines the events which led our country, one of the most prosperous in Europe at the time of its annexation, to become a mere minority community.*

*To recall, the FUEN was founded by a Breton, Joseph Martray, who passed away in May of this year [2009] at*

*the ripe old age of 95. His life was dedicated to the defense and support of Brittany as well as to all European minority communities.*

*It is thanks to Joseph Martray that the FUEN exists today, which is now an official non-governmental organisation (NGO) with over 150 member organisations in 42 European countries. Due to both its participative and consultative status with the Council of Europe, the United Nations and the Organisation for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the FUEN remains at the forefront of European and international claims, resolutions, recommendations and directives in favour and for the protection of minority languages and cultures that are often threatened with extinction.*

*At a time when many of the smaller European countries, which have recently gained their independence and freedom, are demanding and being given permission to join the European Union, it seems an opportune moment to ask: is it in the interest of Brittany and the Bretons to exercise their right to be a self-determining sovereign state within the European Union?*

*Those Bretons and Europeans who read these words will be able to freely and calmly judge what they have never been able to do before due to the revised, selective and falsified history that is taught in French schools and universities, which together with the pensée unique that France imposes domestically as well as in its territories and former colonies have robbed them of their prestigious past.*

*We no longer want to hear about surveys that reveal incomprehension at where or what exactly Brittany is, nor do we want to be confused with Great Britain, whose name simply shares the same Celtic origins as Brittany.*

*Geographically, Brittany is a peninsula situated at the extreme western point of Europe. It covers an area larger than 35 000 square kilometers and has a population of 4,4 million inhabitants that rises to 10 million if you include expatriate Bretons. Irrespective of Brittany's historical status as an independent kingdom or sovereign duchy, its borders remained unchanged for more than 15 centuries until its bloody annexation following the French Revolution in 1789 into five French administrative departments that occurred without prior popular consultation.*

*Until the middle of the 16<sup>th</sup> century (1532), Brittany was a highly prosperous country and one of the strongest maritime nations in the world, if not the most powerful. But it was coveted by its two more populous albeit poorer neighbors, France and England. We should also remember that at the time of the annexation Brittany had one of the longest coastlines in Europe that was on par with Scotland and Spain.*



*Brittany was annexed by France after numerous demands, political manoeuvres and massacre of local populations following a war of invasion, which today would be considered as genocide and therefore subject to condemnation by the International Court of Justice. This war was lost by the Bretons against a numerically superior French army that had recourse to mercenary forces, while the forced marriage of the legitimate heiress to the Duchy of Brittany – despite the fact that she was already married to the Emperor of Austria – sealed Brittany's subjection to France.*

*Yet, in spite of its annexation and assimilation into a country on the brink of bankruptcy that weighs Brittany down with disproportionate and illegal taxes, what is its role and importance in Europe today? Although it may surprise many people, Brittany is more than able to keep its own and we can answer in the affirmative to the question asked by Professor Kohr, the eminent professor and economist of the twentieth century: "Is a free Brittany viable?"*

[2009 analysis]

- *Brittany's average GDP per inhabitant is 4-10 times higher than that of any of the 12 countries that have been recently admitted into the European Union.*
- *Brittany's balance of trade is positive and is in surplus year after year.*

*Similarly, we need only refer to numerous sovereign European states that are smaller than Brittany (the list would be ten times longer if we were to include all independent countries throughout the world):*

- *Belgium; Slovenia; Luxembourg; Montenegro; Cyprus; Albania; Moldavia; Lithuania...*

*Or those European countries which are less populated:*

- *Bosnia and Herzegovina; Macedonia; Republic of Ireland; Estonia; Kosovo; Luxembourg; Lithuania...*

*Or, finally, those countries that are poorer than Brittany:*

- *Armenia; Croatia; Macedonia; Kosovo; Bosnia and Herzegovina...*

*Brittany has also seen a quarter of its historical land surface and population lost by partition to French due to a decree during the Second World War imposed under the German occupation (and which was the only decree from that period that was not subsequently repealed by the Republic of France, the self-proclaimed champion of human rights). Brittany now demands the repeal of this dictatorial and historically illegitimate decree in order to enable it to enter into the community of European nations with its head held high.*

*And now, for our "true" history to be revealed, we cede place below to the erudite professor Louis Melennec, who has kindly agreed to coordinate this collection.*

*Per Le Moine, Architect  
Former President of the FUEN*



## New Members of Brittany's Order of the Ermine

On September 27, 1972, CELIB, at the initiative of Georges Lombard, Mayor-Senator of Brest and newly elected CELIB president, with the support of Joseph Martray, decided to symbolically honor the out-going president, René Pleven, by bestowing on him a most ancient symbol of distinction: the Collier de l'Hermine (Chain of the Ermine). CELIB (Comité d'études et de liaison des intérêts Bretons) played a major role in the 1950s to 1975 in the cultural and socio-economic development and planning for the territory of Brittany.

One of the oldest military/honorific orders of Europe, the Order of the Ermine was created in 1331 by the Duke of Brittany Jean IV and was exceptional in its inclusion of women and commoners. The Collier de l'Hermine fell into disuse when the Duchess Anno of Brittany (1477-1514) substituted for it the "Belle Cordelière."

The renaissance of the Collier de l'Hermine has continued since 1972 to recognize individuals in all fields of endeavor doing exceptional work for Brittany. Since 1988 the Cultural Institute of Brittany has taken on this task with the support of the Regional Council of Brittany. Thus, three to six personalities are identified and receive the "collier" during a ceremony held each year in a different department which make up historical Brittany – the current departments of Finistère, Morbihan, Côtes d'Armor, Ille-et-Vilaine and Loire-Atlantique.



This year four new members of the Order of the Ermine were inducted in October in Dinan. This always offers an opportunity to introduce Bro Nevez readers to extraordinary people who devote their lives to serving Brittany.

The following information is drawn from information provided by Skol Uhel ar Vro. Included is the Breton text as well as my translation from the French. I take all responsibility for any errors in translation. – LK



### Monique le Boulc'h

Born at Kerihoué in Inguiniel in 1945. Monique Le Boulc'h continued to assist her parents on the family farm after her schooling while also working in the BTP [Batiment et Travaux Publics]. The language spoken in her home was the Vannetais Breton of the Scorff valley, "En ar Skorù" as it is called by the specialist Pier er Go. It is there that Monique was identified by the organizers of Kan ar Bobl [song contest] in the 1980s to put together the different local contests and the final at Lorient.

In 1989 Monique came to Radio Bro Gwened (Pontivy) and created the broadcast *Kreiz Mintin* which is still aired today. During a dozen years she would collect the memories of some 2,000 people in the Breton language (bits of life histories, traditional songs ...) which built their trust in her. One finds her as a member of traditional song contest juries and among the singers at pardons of the Pourlet Pays. Since her retirement she has continued her involvement, especially at pardons, local festivals, and diverse contests, putting together a collection of information which she puts at the disposal of all those who love the Breton language and culture. She is open to responding to questions of researchers who come to ask about Breton (Bas Vannetais) or customs of the Pourlet Pays she knows through the oral tradition.

In 2017 she received the Hervé ar Menn prize for her work in sharing and safeguarding the Breton language, especially through her daily broadcast on the airwaves of Radio Bro Gwened. For her profound engagement in service to the Breton language, her roots in the Breton speaking population to whom she wisely listened to and allowed to express themselves, Monique Le Boulc'h is honored in receiving the Medallion of the Ermine.

### Monique le Boulc'h

Ganet eo Monique e Kêrihoue, tost d'an Ignel e 1945. Goude bout bet er skol, e chom da sikour get he zud da zerc'hel o zachenn, en ur gemer ivez ur labour er BTP. E Kêrihoue e veze komzet e mod ar re a chome e flangenn ar Skorv, mod an « àr Skorv » evel ma lâre ar skrivagnour Pêr ar Go. Er bleadoù 80, setu-hi dibabet get renerion « Kan ar Bobl » da ginnig an traoù er c'henstrivadegoù aozet rac'h dre ar vro, hag en Orient, evit devezh bras ar c'han. Bamet an holl selaouerion !

E 1989, setu-hi e tigouezh e Radio Bro Gwened (Pondy) hag e roiñ lusk d'un abadenn nevez, *Kreiz mintin*, a zo atav bev hiniv an deiz. E-pad un dek vlez bennak, e vo gwelet e vonet a vourc'h da vourc'h, evit aters an dud diwar o buhez pemdeziek ha goulenn gete kaniñ pe displeg ur sorbienn bennak. Ouzhpenn 2000 a

vrezhonegerion a lako en he boest evel-se ! Kavet e vez Monique er lec'h ma vez dober : e kas enderviadoù Kan ar Bobl, e varniñ kanerion ha kanerezed er c'henstrivadegoù, e kaniñ er pardonioù hag e gouelioù ar vro Pourlet. A-c'houde mand eo àr he leve, ne c'hell ket paraat ag enrolliñ « evit an amzer da zont » rac'h kement darvoud sevenadurel e dremen en he c'hornad, hag hi prest d'o zreuskas d'ar ré a gar hor bro hag he sevenadur. Gwezhavez e ta klaskerion a ziabell d'he aters diwar he brezhoneg (gwenedeg izel) pe diwar hengoun ar vro Pourlet a anav biskoazh kement arall.

E 2017 ema bet roet dezhi priz Herve Ar Menn, evit he zrugarekaat ag ar pezh he deus graet eit miret hor yezh hag he streviñ riget dré wagennoù Radio Bro Gwened. Bemdez e vez c'hoazh Monique àr hentoù Breizh, e tastum pennadoù e brezhoneg hag e roiñ ar gomz d'ar re na weler ket kalz dirak ur mikro ! Rak-se e c'hellehe bout gouzougadet a Urzh an Erminig.



### Ronan Le Coadic

Born in 1962, Ronan Le Coadic became conscious of his Bretonness at the age of five. In fact the occupation of his father (sea commerce) took the family of

Paimpol to live for several years in Provence where his family name and accent brought some teasing. In 1975 he learned Breton ad met Anjela Duval who urged him to become a militant.

From 1975 to 1980 he abandoned his studies to become engaged in the Breton political combat. Involved in the FLB-ARB he was sentenced at 17 years old by the Cour de Sûreté de l'État. But the shock of the death of his grandfather led him to take up his studies again. After a masters and a DEA, he got a diploma at Sciences Po Paris in social sciences, then a doctorate enabling him to direct sociological research.

A high school teacher of economics in 1989, he also taught Breton and in 1991-1992 had joint direction of Breton programming for FR3 Bretagne. Then he laid the cornerstone for the first pedagogical Breton language publisher, TES [Ti-Embann ar Skolioù Brezhonek] which he directed from 1993 to 1999. He is the president-founder of various associations: since 1998 Mignoned Anjela which published the complete works of the poet; In 2000 Levraoueg ar vro, which unsuccessfully aimed to create a large media center for the Breton language; in 1999 Identités et démocratie which put together a colloquium in 2002 in Rennes with the presence of Nobel Peace Prize winner John Hume which was followed by nearly 1,000 people; and finally Bretagne-Culture-Diversité from 2012 to 2015.

Teacher-researcher since 1999 he was first a lecturer at the IUFM of Brittany and then, since 2010, professor at the Université Rennes 2. From 2002 to 2018 he created

and led the pluridisciplinary research group Ermine on national minorities which put together some 130 seminars on Brittany and minority peoples and which published a half-dozen collective works.

In 2012 he reopened the university diploma for Celtic Studies (created in 1911 by Anatole Le Braz), open to all for the study of Brittany and the Celtic countries. He has published several works, including *Identité bretonne*, a key book of reference. He has put Brittany in perspective with national minorities of the world. He is currently studying nationalism in general and French nationalism in particular.

### Ronan Le Coadic

Bet ganet e 1962 ez emouezas Ronan ar C'hoadig ouzh e vreizhadelezh pa ne oa nemet pemp bloaz. Gant micher e dad e oa bet rediet e familh da guitaat Pempoull da vont da chom e Provañs ma voe graet goap outañ abalamour d'e anv familh ha d'e bouez-mouezh. Deskiñ a reas ar brezhoneg e 1975 ha kejañ gant Anjela Duval. Douget e voe ganti da stourm evit Breizh.

Adalek 1975 betek 1980 e tilezas e studioù evit en em ouestlañ d'ar stourm politikel breizhat. Barnet e voe evel ezel an FLB-ARB gant lez-varn surentez ar Stad pa ne oa nemet 17 vloaz. Stagañ a reas gant e studioù en-dro e 1980, pakañ ur vestroniezh hag un DEA, tapout diplom Sciences Po Paris, skolveuriegezh skiantoù sokial, hag un doktorelezh war ar sokiologiezh.

Anvet da gelenner war an ekonomiezh e 1989 e kelennas Ronan ar C'hoadig brezhoneg ivez. Dont a reas da vezañ eil rener ar raklunioù brezhoneg e Frañs 3 Breizh. Dileuriet e voe gant ar rektordi evit sevel ti embann pedagogel kentañ e brezhoneg, TES, a voe renet gantañ etre 1993 ha 1999. Perzh a gemeras e buhez ar c'hevredigezhioù en ur grouiñ ha ren Mignoned Anjela—embannet eo bet gantañ oberennoù klok ar varzhez e 2000—, Levraoueg ar vro, Identité et Démocratie hag erfin, Bretagne Culture Diversité eus 2012 da 2015.

Adalek 2010 e voe Ronan ar C'hoadig kelenner e Skol Veur Roazhon 2. Krouet ha buhezset e voe gantañ ar strollad klask liesdiskiblezhel Ermine en ur sevel tro 130 bodad-studi war danvez Breizh hag ar pobloù minorelaet hag embann c'hwech'ha levr a- stroll.

Krouiñ a reas en-dro e 2012 an diplom ar studioù keltiek (krouet e 1911 gant Anatole Le Braz) a ginnig e Roazhon 2 ur stummadur diwar-benn Breizh hag ar broioù keltiek digor d'an holl.

Embann a reas levrioù liesseurt diwar-benn Breizh, evel *L'Identité Bretonne*, un dave evit ar poent. Ledanaat a reas goude-se e breder en ur lakaat Breizh e diarsell

gant ar pobloù minorelaet dre ar bed. Labourat a ra er mare-mañ war an vroadelouriezh dre vras, hag hini Bro C'hall peurgetket



### Nathalie Beauvais

A passion for Breton good taste

Remarked by and highly praised by Jean-Luc Petitrenaud and Joël Robuchon, and nicknamed “the fairy of Morbihan” by

Gilles Pudlowski, Nathalie Beauvais is a chef with a passion for the cuisine and products of Brittany.

Born in 1965 in Lorient Nathalie only left her town to learn her trade! After the baccalaureate she enrolled in the Lucée hotelier of Dinard where she met Arnaud [her husband].

In 1986 she moved to Paris to perfect her culinary knowledge. In particular, she had the opportunity to get involved with the teams of two great Parisian culinary centers: with Christiane Massia at L'Aquitaine (one star Michelin) and with Alain Dutournier at Caré des Feuillants near the Concorde (two stars Michelin). After more than three years of Parisian adventure, she found her Brittany again and with Arnaud opened their restaurant, Le Jardin Gourmand, in Lorient in 1990. She has since never ceased to be inspired by all the beautiful and good products of her beautiful region.

They surrounded themselves with their own team of great gourmards with the arrival of their three children who were equally passionate: Émilie (restaurant sommelier/wine keeper), Louis (architect), and Liza (globetrotting teacher).

Nathalie shares her passion during trips on which she is invited to represent Brittany (Canada, Australia, Italy, Czechoslovakia, China, England, Germany, gastronomical crossroads of Ponant...) but also through cuisine classes given to individuals and professionals during fifteen years before Covid obliged her to recenter on the restaurant and editorial activity.

She called her first book *La Bretagne Gourmande* in 2004. Since then she created her own publication house for cuisine, *Trop Mad*, with her husband Arnaud and his brother Pierre. Over 110,000 books sold, with an edition for youth *Majiknath* and several card games with a Breton accent, *Ar Seizh Bigoudenn*, *Tenzor Ar Roue Korrigan*.

And the culinary adventure continues as they prepare the release of the 16<sup>th</sup> book of recipes *Bon & Breizh pour la planète!* In October 2023.

## Nathalie Beauvais

Entanet gant blaz ar vro.

Remerket ha lidet gant Jean-Luc Petitrenaud ha Joël Robuchon, lesanvet Korriganez ar Morbihan gant Gilles Pudlowski, ur penngeginerez eo Nathalie Beauvais, sot gant ar c'heginañ hag aozadoù debriñ Breizh.

Bet ganet en Oriant e 1965, kuitaat a raio he c'her nemet evit deskiñ he micher ! Goude ar bac, ebarzhiñ a ra e Skol Otel Dinard. Kejañ a ra aze gant Arnaud.

“Pignat” a ra d'ar ger-benn e 1986 evit gwellaat hec'h anaoudegezh kegin. Kevanekaet a ra dre chañs ouzh Brigadennoù div gegin vrudet eus Paris : hini Christiane Massia, e preti L'Aquitaine (1 steredenn e sturlevr Michelin), hag hini Alain Dutournier e Carré des Feuillants (2 steredenn e sturlevr Michelin). Goude ouzhpenn tri bloaz e Paris, distreiñ a ra d'he Breizh evit digeriñ asamblez gant Arnaud o freti en Oriant Le Jardin Gourmand.

Ne baouez ket da vezañ awenet gant an holl aozadoù-debriñ eus he bro gaer, ken mat ha brav ma'z int. Kresket eo o skipailh lipourien gant o tri bugel gant Emilie (gwinourez ha pretiourez), Louis (ti-savour) ha Liza (kelennerez foeterez bro).

Atav o rannañ he entan eo Nathalie, dre he beajoù graet ganti evit bezañ a-berzh Breizh (Kanada, Australia, Itali, Tcheki, China, Bro Saoz, Alamagn, morvaleadenn vouedoniezh er Ponant...). Kelennet he deus ivez ar c'heginerezh da hiniennoù pe da dud a-vicher e-pad ouzhpenn 15 vloaz, araok bezañ rediet gant ar COVID d'en em greizañ en-dro war ar preti hag an embannadurioù.

Sinañ a ra he levr kentañ « La Bretagne Gourmande » e 2004. Abaoe eo bet savet ganti he zi-embann levrioù keginouriezh « Trop Mad » asamblez gant he gwaz Arnaud hag he breur Pierre. Ouzhpenn 110 000 skouerenn a zo bet gwerzhet ; evit ar re yaouank ez eus bet gwerzhet ivez Majiknath ha c'hoarioù kartoù mod Breizh Ar seizh Bigoudenn, Teñzor ar Roue Korrigan.

Kendalc'h a ra an troioù-kaer keginañ. Aozañ a reont o 16vet levr « Bon & Breizh pour la planète ! » hag a vo embannet e miz Here 2023.



### Joël Cornette

Joël Cornette, born October 14, 1949, in Brest, former student of the upper/higher teacher training school of Saint-Cloud, university graduate, emeritus professor of the Université Paris 8, is a Breton

historian and specialist on Louis XIV and the Absolute Monarchy on which he has devoted numerous works.

Since 2005 he also published a great deal on the history of Brittany, challenging the French version of the Union [of Brittany to France].

Joël Cornette is an activist for the teaching of Breton history. Notably, he declared that “The fact that this history today in 2023 is not taught at all – neither in primary or secondary schools – isn’t that revealing of its particular identifying character, considered by some as ‘subversive’?” Joël Cornette has equally spoken out in favor of the administrative reunification of Brittany, deeming this separation to be “a historical absurdity.”

In 2006 he received from the Académie française the grand prize in history for his *Histoire de la Bretagne et des Bretons* (2 volumes, Le Seuil, 2005; reedited by Point-Seuil, 2008), and for the whole of his works. In 2008 with Éditions Tallandier he published *Le Marquis et le Régent, une conspiration bretonne à l'aube des Lumières* with the collaboration of Eva Guillourel and the association Dastum. This book is accompanied by a CD with 16 versions of the gwerz [Breton language ballad] of the Marquis de Pontcallec (Gwerz Maro Pontkalleg) part of which is from the collection made during the 1950s by Donatien Laurent. In 2015 he received the Prix Triskell Ar Vro from the Salon du Livre en Bretagne of Vannes for his *Histoire illustrée de la Bretagne et des Bretons* (Seuil, 2015). In 2018 he directed *La Bretagne, une aventure mondiale* (Tallandier). In 2012 he received the Trophée de la Biographie Gonzague Saint-Bris for *Anne de Bretagne* (Gallimard, 2021). And also, in 2022, the Prix du livre d'histoire Provins-Moyen Age for *Anne de Bretagne* (Gallimard, 2021).

In 2022 *L'Histoire de la Bretagne pour le Nuls* appeared (Paris, First Éditions, 2022), a major work of 700 pages, an enormous work over ten years. In this book, Joël Cornette definitively abandons the notion of a “treaty of union” for the annexation of the Duchy to the kingdom of France. He recognized also that Renée, the daughter of Anne de Bretagne, was the legitimate inheritor of the Duchy.

This year in 2023 he published anew on Brittany: *Une brève histoire de l'identité bretonne – de Himilcon à nos jours* (Paris, Tallandier, 2023).

### Joël Cornette

Joël Cornette, ganet e Brest d'ar 14 a viz Here 1949, a zo bet studier e Skol Normal Uhelañ Saint-Cloud. Agregad skol-veur, kelenner emerit skol uhel Paris 8, un istorour breizhat eo, arbennigour war Louis XIV hag an unpenniezh hollveliek. Skrivet en deus levrioù niverus gouestlet d'an danvez-se. Abaoe 2005 en deus embannet kalz levrioù diwar-benn istor Breizh ha taolet ar bec'h war ar prezeg gall diwar-benn an Unaniezh.



Stourm a ra Joël Cornette evit ma vefe kelennet istor Breizh. Lavaret en doa peurgetket : «Ne vez ket kelennet tamm ebet hiziv e 2023 an istor-se, nag er skolioù kentañ derez, nag en eil derez. Un arouez eus identelezh Breizh an hini eo ha setu perak eo sellet evel gourzhtroüs gant tud'zo. Joël Cornette en deus lavaret e soñj evit ma vije adunanet departamant Liger-Atlantel ha Rannvro melestradurel Breizh, ha kavet a ra dezhañ eo diskiant e keñver an istor o disrannadur.

Enoret e oa bet e 2006 gant priz istor Akademiezh Frañs evit e levr *Histoire de la Bretagne et des Bretons* hag evit e oberenn a-bezh. Embann a reas e Ti-embann Tallandier e 2008 *Le Marquis et le Régent. Une conspiration bretonne à l'aube des Lumières en ur genlabourat gant Eva Guillourel hag ar gevredigezh Dastum*. Asambles gant al levr ez eus ur CD gant c'hwezek stumm eus Gwerz Marv Pontkalleg, unan anezho a voe dastumet gant Donatien Laurent er bloavezhioù 50.

Resev a reas priz Triskell ar vro e 2015 e Saloñs al levrioù Gwened evit e *Histoire illustrée de la Bretagne et des Bretons* (Seuil, 2015). Sturiañ a reas e 2018 bodad skridaozañ *La Bretagne, une aventure mondiale* (Tallandier). E 2021 e voe roet dezhañ Maout ar buhezskrid Gonzague Saint-Bris evit *Anne de Bretagne* (Gallimard, 2021). Hag e 2022 priz levr istor Provins- Moyen-Âge evit *Anne de Bretagne* (2021). Embann a reas e 2022 *L'Histoire de la Bretagne pour les Nuls*, ur mestr levr a 700 pajenn. Dek vkoaz a kabour. El levr-se e tilezas da vat Joël Cornette meizad ar feur-emglev unvaniezh evit disklêriañ e voe un destagadur gant Bro-C'hall e gwirionez. Anavout a ra ivez e oa Renée, merc'h Anna Vreizh, hêrez reizh an dugelezh.

E miz Genver 2023, ez eus bet embannet gantañ ul levr diwar-benn Breizh en-dro : *Une brève histoire de l'identité bretonne. De Himilcon à nos jours*, Paris, Tallandier, 2023.



### 34<sup>th</sup> Festival of Books of Brittany in Carhaix / 34vet Gouel al levrioù e Breizh

Each year since 1990 Carhaix has hosted a book festival on the last weekend of October. This October 85 publishing houses were present from all five departments of Brittany to show off books in Breton as well as French. Close to 200 authors were also present to meet with readers.

This year's festival had a Scottish theme to much of the programming with five films set in Scotland, about Scottish history or portraying Scottish life and people, an interview of three Scottish novelists (Lin Anderson,

Kristin Innes and Doug Johnstone), and a roundtable discussion on Scottish literature.

Other events of the festival included a discussion of literature in Breton for children and youth, two storytelling sessions with Yann Quéré and Marine Ginod, an interview with Alan Stivell about his new autobiography and his work for Brittany, and a concert by Soïg Siberil featuring selections from his album *Les Sentiers partagé* which won the Académie Charles Cros prize of 2022.

During the course of events prizes were also awarded as they are annually:

The Priz Xavier Langlais was awarded to Herve Ar Beg for his book *Amiraled Kab Horn* (An Alarc'h). The Prize for Novels by the town of Carhaix (created in 1999) went to Sylvie Le Bihan for *Les Sacrifiés*. The prize for a book on the history of Brittany was created last year and is cosponsored by Bretagne Culture Diversité, the Fesitval du Livre du Carhaix and Poher Hebdo. This was awarded to Julien Bachelier for *Histoire de Fougères*, and the prize for short stories in the Breton language from the town of Carhaix went to Kristian Braz for *E penn ar wern*.



### Festival of Books of Brittany in Guérande

While the book festival of Carhaix is one of the largest, there are others in Brittany which might focus on a particular theme. Created in 2004 by Pêr Loquet to highlight Breton books and culture of the Guérande area and the department of Loire-Atlantique, the 19<sup>th</sup> edition of this festival was held November 17-19.

### Skol Vreizh

Linked to Ar Falz which was founded in 1933 by Yann Sohier, Skol Vreizh has been a publishing house based in Morlaix for some fifty years, and one is sure to find it at the book festivals of Brittany. It has published some 350 books in French and Breton on a range of topics – fiction and non-fiction – and also organizes conference, exhibitions and Breton language classes. Find out more and explore their catalog on their website: [skolvreizh.com](http://skolvreizh.com)

Here are just a small sample of books from 2023 and 2022.



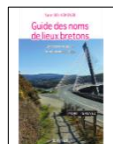
**François de Beaulieu. *Le Loup en Bretagne – hier et aujourd'hui*.** 2023. 184 pages. ISBN 978-2-36758-158-3.

François de Beaulieu has published over 70 books on Brittany's natural and cultural patrimony. This book is the history of the wolf in Brittany – an animal spotted several times in recent years but missing from the landscape for many years before.



**Fañch Rebours. *Fest-noz, la dernière danse*.** 2023. 280 pages. ISBN 978-2-36758-148-4.

This is a novel about the “last fest-noz” in the wake of the 2020 Covid shutdowns and the fate of young dancers and musicians passionately attached to this uniquely Breton celebration.



**Yann-Bêr Kemener. *Guide des noms de lieux bretons – un trésor à préserver, un patrimoine à partager*.** 2022. 164 pages. ISBN 978-2-36758-140-8.

This book introduces Breton placenames arranged by themes with lots of illustrations to encourage Bretons to explore their surroundings and enjoy the meaning of Breton language names, and to insure they remain part of Brittany's patrimony.



**Francis Favereau. *Histoire du breton écrit des origines au XVIII<sup>e</sup> siècle*.** 96 pages. ISBN 978-2-36758-141-5.

Francis Favereau has done extensive research on the Breton language and here he provides a history of Breton language texts – religious and secular – from the earliest times to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.



**Goulc'han Kervella. *Kambr va zonton Youn*.** 104 pages. ISBN 978-2-36758-161-3.

This is a novel based on the life of the author's uncle Youn, born in 1914, who worked in a range of jobs (seaweed collector, farm hand, fisherman...). Told in Breton through the voices of various family members this presents Uncle Youn's life from the 1930s to 1960.



***Bremañ* 444 – A Special issue on Breton Language Publishing**

*Bremañ* is a bi-monthly magazine (30 pages) in the Breton language which has been produced since 1980 by Skol an Emsav (skolanemsav.bzh). Each issue includes short notes and articles (usually two pages) on a range of topics – history, architecture, sports,

publishing and book reviews, cinema and the arts, and recipes ... While the focus is on Brittany – often featuring a certain location or city – the coverage is worldwide, as the subtitle to *Bremañ – Breizh hag ar bed* (Brittany and the world) implies.

The November-December 2023 issue (number 444) was an exception to this with its focus on Breton language publishing, including interviews with publishers as well as authors. First to be presented was Kuzul ar Brezhoneg which was created in 1952 and is presided by Riwanon Kervella. This organization has served as a sort of “federation” of Breton language publishers to support and promote their work.

Also presented was Al Liamm, the oldest still active publisher founded in 1945. Its journal has featured short stories and essays by over a thousand writers and it has a healthy catalog of books in the Breton language as well. Other publishers included in the *Bremañ* issue are Al Lanv, founded in 1954 and directed by Padrig an Habask, which also produces a magazine as well as books. And the publisher Skol Vreizh was also presented with an interview with its current president Paolig Kombod. This publishing house for books in both Breton and French has been in operation for over 50 years – see above for some recent publications.

Prizes awarded annually to authors (in French and Breton) serve as an incentive to keep writing. Included in the *Bremañ* issue is an interview with author Fanny Chauffin who explores the impact of prizes for Breton language books for children and youth – the Priz ar Vugale and the Priz ar Yaouankiz.

While it is easy to order books directly from publishers, book stores play an important role in getting Breton language materials into the hands of readers. The store l'Encre de Bretagne in Rennes is presented as one such store.

The *Bremañ* issue also presents several Breton language authors: Kristian Braz, Jerom Olivry and Loeiza an Duigou, who talk about different genres of literature – translations from other languages, fantasy, and books for youth. And the blog about Breton books called AlLenn,createin2009 is also presented in an interview with Sarah Chedifer. Last but not least, there is a presentation of the Welsh Books Council – Cyngor Llyfrau Cymryu, created in 1961 to foster Welsh language publishing.

As is always the case with the *Bremañ* magazine there are colorful photos of people and books throughout this issue. While my very limited knowledge of Breton did not allow me to do more than skim the surface of these articles, Breton language readers will appreciate the interviews which delve into the successes and challenges for Breton language publishing.

## An Online Library for Brittany

**Bibliothèque Numérique of the Institut de Documentation Bretonne et Européenne**  
bibliotheque.idbe.bzh

The following information is drawn from an article published by Agence Bretagne Presse, November 10, 2023, and from the website of IDBE.

The online library of the Institute of Breton and European Documentation was created by its administrative council headed by Erwan Fouéré. It is built on the vast holdings of Yann Fouéré (see *Bro Nevez* 120, November 2011) and includes some 15,000 documents freely accessible online.

These documents range from one-page fliers to books with over 1,000 pages and also includes post cards and other types of documents. Some 1,700 authors are indexed – Breton, French or other (including me!) with strong representation from the Celtic countries.

Nearly every topic imaginable can be found and one can search the library holdings by these topics.

542 magazines, journals and newspapers are accessible in Breton, French or other languages. This includes a large number of issues of *Bro Nevez*.

Hundreds of local magazines and publications can be found such as municipal bulletins and monographs about specific sites.

Topic areas include:

Agriculture (160 documents)  
Arts (270 documents) – architecture, painting and sculpture, embroidery and costumes ...  
Economy (200 documents) especially on the period since 1946  
History (over 1,000 titles)  
Religion and cantiques (450 documents)  
Breton language texts not in other books or journals (over 1,200 documents)  
Childrens' publications (103 documents)  
And other topic areas include literature, legends, the Breton diaspora, Ireland, nations of Europe, minority rights, maritime life, science, sports ...

While this library does not include everything ever published about Brittany, it is an amazing resource especially for older publications.



## New Books from Yoran Embanner

Reviewed by Lois Kuter



**Bernard Rio. *La forêt sacrée des Celtes – du paganisme au christianisme*.** Yoran Embanner, 2023. 448 pages. ISBN 978-2-36747-100-6.

I still feel sad weeks after neighbors cut down two magnificent beech trees in their front yard. So I can imagine the sorrow in Brittany with the loss of many huge old trees as Hurricane Ciaran roared through November 1-2. Brittany suffered wide power outages lasting a week or more and extensive damage to farm buildings not to mention homes. And, I could not help thinking about the trees of Brittany as I read this new book by Bernard Rio on the sacred significance of trees and forests.

This 448-page book is not an easy read and one will find few photos or illustrations to lighten the density of the text. Rio examines the significance of trees and forests from pagan times through Roman conquest and occupation of Brittany and ancient Gaule. And then looks at the arrival of Christian missionaries in the 3<sup>rd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup> centuries who, like the Romans, hoped to destroy pagan practices – which were certainly linked to forests.

Rio provides a wealth of documentation from written manuscripts of or about druids, Roman and Christian occupation of pagan Celtic lands, not just Brittany but Ireland and Wales and Europe more widely. Rio also examines observations and writings from botanical, medicinal, religious, philosophical and political perspectives. And he also draws on geography and place name analysis as well as archeological evidence to illustrate the spiritual significance of trees and forests for Celts. And then there is also an enduring oral tradition of tales, beliefs and practices related to them.

Depending on the perspective, the forest was a place for spiritual renewal or refuge, or it could be a threatening place full of challenges and danger. It was a link to other worlds and the supernatural.

In Chapter 1 Rio explores how ancient Greeks and Latins looked at barbarian forests of Gaule, and the presence and significance of trees and forests in the more urban world of Roman occupation vs. the rural world of pagans and druids. Chapter 2 looks at the arrival of early Christian missionaries and their work to attack pagan practices. As Celtic and Germanic peoples especially persisted in the cult of trees, Christianity transformed pagan sacred places into Christian sites. Chapter 3 examines Celtic perspectives on forests in a study of place names and etymology of words as well as tales and mythology. The significance of fruits like the

apple is explained as is the power of wooden rods and sticks. Like many others, my idea of a “magic wand” was a little metal rod that stage magicians used to pull rabbits from a hat. In the Celtic world sticks and branches from certain trees carried all sorts of power.

The following chapters explore the survival of pagan beliefs and practices related to trees in folklore and popular traditions. Also explained in detail is the nature of the forest as a sacred place and a sanctuary. Rio details the different associations of particular trees with the otherworld, divination, magic and cures. Especially important to the Celts are the oak, yew, elder, hawthorn and apple tree, not to mention mistletoe and other fruits and nuts.

I have to admit that the detailed documentation was a bit overwhelming for me, but this is surely an important work of scholarship for those interested in Celtic history and the ongoing relation of Celtic (and other) peoples to the natural and supernatural worlds.

Bernard Rio is the author of some sixty works on the religious patrimony of Brittany, folklore and legends, and the spiritual significance of rivers, trees, and fountains in Brittany. He has published over a dozen guides for those who want to travel (by foot or bicycle) to special sites of Brittany. I have enjoyed his series of contributions in the pages of the bi-monthly magazine *Ar Men* since the beginning of 2020 which draw on his books *1200 lieux de légende en Bretagne* (Coop Breizh 2019) and *Mystères de Bretagne: ballads ayu pays de légendes* (Coop Breizh, 2018).



**Jean-Yves Le Moing. *Noms de lieux bretons de Haute-Bretagne*.** Yoran Embanner. 2023. 495 pages. ISBN 978-2-36785-055-9.

This is a book for those who want to take a deep dive into the history of the presence of the Breton language in Haute Bretagne, the eastern half of Brittany where some claim Breton was never spoken.

Through analysis of place names and peoples' names from censuses, land survey listings, early maps and the work of other scholars, Jean-Yves Le Moing has analyzed where the Breton language has left its mark in place names and how this can show the changes in the presence of Breton speakers in eastern Brittany. This is no easy task, requiring a careful study of Breton language words, Gaulish remnants, and Gallo-Roman origins. The author details the challenges of correctly identifying Breton language names.

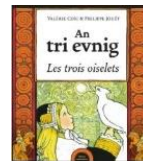
The list of over 6,000 Breton place names takes up 140 pages of this 495 page book. These are the earliest forms of names and the list specifies names of communes as well as other locations, noting dates and

sources of early forms, variants, and partial etymologies. Other chapters describe how percentages of Breton place names for areas of Haute Bretagne were calculated, how a database of names was created, methodologies and the relation of Breton, Gallo-Roman, Gallo and Gaulish terms.

Chapters are also devoted to the evolution of Breton names (for example, palatalization of k and g, loss of specific vowels or consonants...). A long chapter is devoted to an analysis of early Breton “prefixes” (names with Bré and Bren, names with Run, for example). Another chapter looks at suffixes (names ending in “euc” or “oet” for example). Names of people are also explored.

Information provided by maps is perhaps of easier access to us non-linguists. Opening the book is a map showing areas of different shading where Breton language place names can be found as 5-20% of names, 20-50%, or more than 50%. Thirty-two maps present specific breakdowns for the presence of Breton language place names with black bar of different widths showing the degree of presence – for example place names with the prefix “car” or a person’s name such as “Gicquel” or “Samson.”

This study springs from earlier university research by Le Moing on Breton language place names in Haute Bretagne. With his degrees in Celtic Studies and experience as a computer engineer, Le Moing has undertaken a massive research project (which he admits is not finished) and makes a valuable contribution to research of the history of the Breton language and its presence in eastern Brittany.



**Valérie Coïc & Philippe Jouët. *Ar tri evnig – Les trois oiselets*.** Yoran Embanner, 2023. 64 pages. Hardback. ISBN 978-2-36785-063-4.

This childrens' book is the bilingual – Breton/French – story of three little girls and three birds gifted to them by their grandfather. A red bird is for Izeot who has red hair, a white one for blond Nolwenn and a black bird for the black-haired Vefa. As the story unfolds the three birds eventually sing one by one to the delight of the girls. The red one sings at dawn, the white one at noon and the black one at midnight. The birds disappear but leave behind magical feathers.

The tale of the three sisters is followed by text (in French) about the significance of the three colors – red, white and black – and of magical animals of the Celtic world. A beautifully illustrated list of the animal names in French and Breton also includes a short note about their particular powers and symbolism such as the butterfly (papillon/ar valafenn) which is a messenger of souls, or the snake (serpent/an near) who keeps secrets and



gives wise medical or other advice. Plants are also noted and a very brief history of the ancient peoples of Europe and the Celts is given.

The story itself is fun, but it is the illustrations of the books that make it a delight. The three very pretty girls are dressed in Breton-inspired dresses, shawls, aprons and embroidered bonnets. The house and its interior are also based on traditional Breton style. The birds are as fantastic in design as their particular roles in Celtic mythology. Each page is bordered by colorful interlacing and illustrations incorporate Celtic design such as the triskell with the three birds.

One encounters in the illustrations the household cat, and for scenes outdoors you also find rabbits, hedgehogs, birds and squirrels as well as the drawings of all the animals, insects and plants noted in the last section of the book. Although not integral to the story, mice pop up on most pages, sometimes in Breton costumes, sometimes playing a binou and bombard, or in other roles related to the story.

This is the first collaboration of writer Philippe Jouët and illustrator Valérie Coïc. One can hope for more. There cannot be too many books for children learning Breton, and this one will be one enjoyed by their parents as well who may also be learning Breton.



**Lulu Moisan & Marc Sinic. *Les merveilleuses rencontres de Maela*.**

Yoran Embanner, 2023. 63 pages.

Hardback. ISBN 978-2-36785-049-8.

This collection of three stories for young people in French is centered on 10-year old Maela, born on the night of Samain (October 31) in the marshlands of Moustierline in the Pays Fouenantaïs. The korrigans of the marshes gave her the power to talk to animals and here she gets acquainted with creatures of the sea and seacoast.

First is the story of Valentine the langoustine (prawn) who has been hiding in a lobster crate pulled up by Maela and her grandfather. In a long story told to Maela one learns of the life cycle, movements, habitat and what a langoustine eats and what eats it.

In the second story Maela meets Norbert, a green crab, who tells the tale of his efforts to remove Soizig the bernique (limpet) who has attached herself to his back. He enlists the aid of two different types of crabs - Kousker (dormeur) and Rederez (étrille) – as well as Stered-mor glas (blue star fish) and Kistin Mor (oursin, or sea urchin). With each encounter you learn about these animals. In the end Soizig is removed and grateful for the opportunity to travel to new places with Norbert the crab.

The third story is about Rouanez korriganed ar mor (queen of the sea fairies) and an orca whale. The action takes place on the coast of Brittany and Glenan Islands (and a nice map is provided to locate these). While the queen of the sea fairies first thought the orca was trying to eat her, thanks to the intervention of Maela she learns that it only wanted her help in freeing other orca entangled in fishing nets. All the creatures of the sea are enlisted to help and in recounting this one learns their name and a bit about them. The tale ends happily.

All three stories are full of adventure, but also serve as educational introductions to Breton sea life. A glossary of words is helpful but English language speakers may be challenged to find equivalents for the French names of creatures even though those familiar with maritime life will readily recognize animals from their drawings.

The author Lulu Moisan pulls from her childhood experience in the marshlands described in these stories and has written a number of books for young people featuring the flora and fauna of Brittany.

Marc Sinic is an artist with experience in the bande dessinée style (“comic strip”) and his drawings here capture well the animated character of Maela as well as realistic drawings of ocean life. Some of the many illustrations also mix in photography of landscapes, the sea and sea life.

## Seattle-Nantes Sister City Association

As described on their website, Seattle-Nantes Sister City Association was founded in 1980. “We are a nonprofit citizen diplomacy network creating and strengthening partnerships between Seattle and Nantes in an effort to increase global cooperation at the municipal level, promote cultural understanding, and support educational exchanges.”

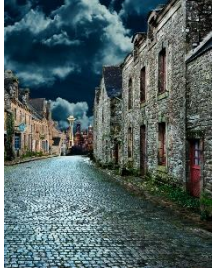
An exploration of the website – [seattle-nantes.org](http://seattle-nantes.org) – shows a remarkable amount of activity by this association. Nantes Park was created in 2006 from the former Alki Substation and in 2020 to commemorate 40 years of connection between Seattle and Nantes the park was upgraded and art was installed to link the park to the Jardin de Plantes in Nantes and other art projects. An art connection was also made with the display of the work of two Native American artists – Peter Boome, Upper Skagit, and Alex McCarthy, Makah – at the natural history museum of Nantes.

In 2020 a collaboration of beer makers in Nantes and Seattle (Lantern Brewin and Bubar Brasserie) began to create a beer called 8000 km. Included in the Seattle Sister Cities Cookbook are recipes from Nantes as well

as the other 19 cities twinned with Seattle all over the world.

At their annual general meeting in November Seattle-Nantes hosted a performance by Bara Gwin, a remarkable American band of the Seattle area which has mastered Breton dance music. – see below.

You can find out more about these and other projects of Seattle-Nantes Sister City Association on their website: [seattle-nantes.org](http://seattle-nantes.org).



## Bara Gwin – American Musicians and Breton music

[Bara-gwin.com](http://Bara-gwin.com)

As described on their website in English as well as Breton and French:

*Bara Gwin is a musical group based in Seattle, WA that performs Fest Noz (Night Party) music from Brittany, France. The group uses powerful instrumentation, complex arrangements and a generous serving of original material – adding jazz, rock, blues, and other spices to their Breton recipe.*

*Ur strollad divoas eo Bara Gwin e bed sonerezh Breizh. O vezañ ma n'eo ket gwall vrudet muzik Breizh en Amerika, ne vez sonnet ailes gant an nebeud strolladoù o oar anezhañ. Un dra sirius eo ar muzik-se evit Bara Gwin, ha kempenn a ra e donioù gant soutilded na nerzh. Soñjal a ra dimp ez eo ken pouezus ha ken difer sonerezh Breizh evel un tamm mat a stiloù sonerezh a blij d'ar bed a-bezh, evel an rock pe ar jazz.*

Also from the website

*Bara Gwin performs Breton music at full tempo and full volume, with daring and imagination. We believe that the music of Brittany is as significant and distinctive as other great musical genres of universal appeal such as tango or jazz.*

*'Bara Gwin' is a Breton term for 'food and drink' that gave rise to the French word 'baragouin'. Baragouin, originally a contemptuous reference to Breton, means in French: outlandish unintelligible speech, incomprehensible language, gibberish.*

Members of this group are:

Sona Greenberg on chromatic accordion who has years of experience as a jazz pianist and symphonic oboe player. She added accordion to her talents with the group The Splendour Girls and now with Bara Gwin.

Daniel Casado provides bass and electronic instruments drawing from a range of influences including jazz, rock, electronic music and classical music.

Ron Reed is a woodwind player (no pun intended in his name). With Bara Gwin he plays the bombard as well as the tarogato, a modern woodwind originally from eastern Europe. Ron Reed has long had an interest in and solid knowledge of Breton music and was a member of the U.S. ICDBL in the late 1990s.

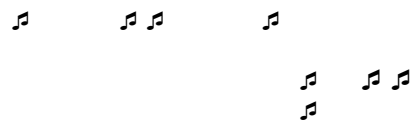
Check out the website to learn more about this group and to hear samples of their music which captures the rhythm and swing of Breton dance and shows off the creative talents of this trio.

## The All Things Breton Website

[allthingsbreton.org](http://allthingsbreton.org)

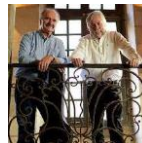
Ron Reed of Bara Gwin has been an active contributor to this website which features articles on Breton music and culture. Currently highlighted is an article on the history and political significance of the Breton flag (Gwenn ha du) from the North American Vexillological Association, a note on Coop Breizh and the challenges of continuing to produce CDs in the digital age, Breizh 5/5 and the promotion of reuniting Loire-Atlantique with the rest of Brittany, an introduction to the bombard and some of its masters, and a reprint of an article about me, Lois Kuter, from the Breizh Amerika website.

The website is visually beautiful and a great source of information for English speakers.



## Heard of but not heard – 11 new CDs from Brittany

Information for the following short notes were drawn from Ar Men 256 (Sept-Oct. 2023) and 257 (Nov.-Dec. 2023), the Coop Breizh website, and a number of other internet site. In most cases you *can* access sound samples for these recordings.



**Brou-Couton. La belle à la tour.** Self-produced BC03.

Roland Brou is a master of the song tradition of the Nantes area and Patrick Couton accompanies him on guitars, banjo and autoharp. They are well known in the Breton music world and while they have not recorded many albums, they have been active at concerts and festoù-noz.



**Celtic Social Club. *Live at Vieilles Charrues*.**

The Vieilles Charrues music festival is one of the biggest of Brittany and features music of many styles with big names from around the world, as well as some of the best of Brittany. One of the acts at the 2023 festival was the Celtic Social Club and this CD includes 13 selections from their performance. The group is made up of Manu Masko (drummer and founder of the group), Taylor Byrne (vocals, guitar), Goulven Hamel (guitars, banjo, mandolin, vocals), Celine Rivaud (fiddle), Mathieu Pequeriau (harmonica), Pierre Stephan (fiddle), and Richard Puaud (bass).



**Colline Hill. *In between*.** Hill & Lake Productions 023001.

Colline Hill is from Plumelec in the Morbihan area of Brittany but her repertoire of song comes from blues, folk and country of the U.S. In one review her voice is described as being between Tracy Chapman and Joan Baez. She composes all of her songs in English and accompanies herself on guitar.



**Ivarh. *Huñvre*.** Paker Prod 0038.

This is a quartet who draw from the Breton language song tradition with new arrangements as well as compositions of their own. The group includes lead singer Eloan Le Sauze, Erwan Couriaut on saxophones, Pablo Molard on guitar, Benjamin Bessé on electric guitar and synthesizer, and Tomas Bessé on percussions.



**Line Marnée – *Chanteuse de Plouguerneau / Ur ganerez eus Tremenac'h e Plougerne*.** Dastum, Tradition Vivante de Bretagne 22.  
This is the latest in a series of CDs

produced by Dastum featuring traditional song and music of Brittany. This 22<sup>nd</sup> edition features singer Line Marnée and the Breton language repertoire of the Plouguerneau area of northwestern Brittany recorded in the 1980s. Other singers from more recent years who have been influenced by her are also found on the CD of 21 selections in the Breton language.



**Carlos Núñez. *Celtic Sea*.** Keltia Producións & Arfolk AR 1208

Carlos Núñez is no stranger to Brittany having participated in countless Breton festivals and musical collaborations. This new CD of 14 compositions is described as a “concept album” on the sea as it is linked to Núñez’s native Galicia and other parts of Spain and the Celtic world. It was produced to celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Brittany Ferries which has played an important role in connecting Celtic countries. Besides Carlos Núñez, a

master of the Galician bagpipe gaita and flutes, the CD involves a dozen musicians from Spain and the Celtic world with a range of string, wind and percussion instruments. For a detailed review see the Culture et Celtie L'e MAGazine.



**JB Samzun & Charles Monod. *Augharvinna – Irish Traditional Music from Doolin, Co. Clare*.** Self-produced.

Like many Breton musicians, fiddle player JB Samzun and concertina player Charles Monod have a passion for Irish music and spent many months in Co. Clare perfecting their mastery of Irish dance and melodies. They take turns in solo performances with accompaniment of Vincent Fogarty on bouzouki or the guitar of Alan Wallace for some selections.



**Marc Thouénon. *Un bouzouki pour la danse*.** Self-produced.

This is the second album by this guitarist and bouzouki player who has performed with groups Boys of the Gap and Loëned Fall. This album features the bouzouki and layered arrangements of dances of Brittany.



**Trunks. *We dust*.** Il monstro, l'Autre Distribution.

Rennes has fostered a rock music world and here's a newer band. The group includes the voice of Laetitia Shériff, guitarists Florian Marzano and Stéphane Fromentin, drums by Régis Boulard, and saxes by Daniel Paboeuf – well known for this long and varied presence on the Breton music scene.



**Tusques-Robbe. *Sans détours*.** Gwirick production GWIR 03.

François Tusques is a pioneer of free jazz in France who has collaborated with Breton musicians since the 1970s. He pairs here will fellow pianist Fabien Robbe for duets which draw from the dances of Brittany but are clearly in the realm of contemporary jazz.



**Jean-Michel Veillon & Jean-Mathias Petri. *Petri*.**

Jean-Michel Veillon is well known on the Breton scene as a master of the wooden flute and has played in a number of groups (Kornog, Barzaz, Pennoù Skoulm) as well as in innovative collaborations with other musicians. Here he pairs with Jean-Mathias Petri who plays metal flutes including a huge octobass. Who knew flutes could be so varied. They perform a varied repertoire of different moods and rhythms – drawing from Brittany and Breton musicians like Kristen Nogues but also including arrangements of Béla Bartok and Maurice Ravel.



A charcoal-burner in the Forest of Camors

## Travels in Brittany in 1930 – the Forest of Paimpont

from *Enchanted Brittany*, by Amy Oakley with Illustrations by Thornton Oakley. (NY: The Century Co., 1930)

*Thornton Oakley (1881-1953) is the better known of this American pair who collaborated on a number of travel books. He was a noted artist who studied*

*with Howard Pyle, founder of the Brandywine School in Pennsylvania. He married Amy Ewing (1881-1963) in 1910 and she provided the texts for books he illustrated.*

*The following excerpt is from Chapter XXI of Enchanted Brittany – The Forest of Brocéliande. It will not tell you much about the forest trees, but provides a humorous account of arduous travel to reach the forest sites.*

The forest of Paimpont, the Brocéliande of Arthurian romance, may be visited by motor from Rochefort. It is wise to make an early start, in order to pause at Malestroit (with memories of its sire and the “New Arabian Nights”!) and at Ploërmel, scene of Meyerbeer’s opera “Le Pardon de Ploërmel,” both of which towns are justly famed for examples of domestic architecture of long-gone centuries.

Approach the forest via Trécesson; at Beauvais venture afoot to the Val sans Retour; when and *if* you return, lunch at Paimpont, where sun-time reigns, man not having tampered with the clock; after lunch drive back to the Haute Fôret and on to the Etang des Forges and the Etang-Neuf, where you will find Arthurian oaks, with mighty trunks and spread of limbs, mantled with moss, ferns growing in crotches; then hasten home by way of Guer to Rochefort-en-Terre. These instructions are for the romantically minded, to whom this privately owned and exploited remnant can by aid of imagination’s magic once more become the vast forest haunt of druids and knights of the Round Table – the Armorican Brocéliande where, having withdrawn from Arthur’s court, the enchanter Merlin to this day lies spellbound by the incantations of Vivian.

The witchery of Brocéliande began for us without the forest’s borders, at the Château of Trécesson. Even as I write the word I wonder if Trécesson can actually exist in the twentieth century in this our workaday world. Trécesson would seem to be the creation of a dream did not my guidebook clearly state “Château de Trécesson, 15<sup>th</sup> century, owner the Comte de Prunelaie”! The exquisite residence of Monsieur le Comte rises, as might a fairy castle, from the quiet surface of a lake. I see again in memory the ivy-clad turrets mirrored in still

waters, the drifting white waterfowl – ducks, geese, and swans – the bucolic pastures with grazing cattle, the magnificent allées of Breton oaks.

It was at Beauvais, an insignificant hamlet, that we secured a guide (for so he styled himself) to Merlin’s prison, the Val sans Retour. This guileless youth wore ragged woolen socks and ill-fitting sabots which slipped on the dry grass. At regular intervals he was forced to remove his foot-gear in order to extract thorns from his horny toes. Following his lead, we passed a deserted manor where the path narrowed, climbed over a bristling hedge, and, to our amazement, plunged into an almost impenetrable thicket. After floundering amid gorse, brambles, and holly, stopping often to save eyes and disentangle clothing, hoping always to regain a path, we came upon a trail of sufficient height for a wild board but so choked with briars as to necessitate our bending double. Having completely lost faith in the ability of our witless youth, and possessing no magic by which to reduce in size, we thought at one juncture that we might stick head-foremost in a blackberry bramble, repeating the misfortune of Merlin shut spell-bound in a hawthorn bush.

“The Valley whence None Return; why came we hither?” So spoke Monsieur.

“The spell is powerless,” I replied, “save in the case of false lovers. Have no fear.”

After a stubborn uphill climb, torn and tousled, we did arrive at a vantage-point. From the rocky ridge our eyes wandered over the desolate moor to the mysterious Bois Guillaume. At our feet lay the silent valley which told no tales of how many faithless lovers it held enthralled.

That we did not encounter a wild boar on this expedition was a bit of good fortune, for a forester’s wife, with whom we chatted at Haute Fôret, told us there are many about. Frightened by the huntsmen and their dogs, the boars often become ferocious; one had killed a woman only the month before. We had driven through a part of the forest where men were felling firs, to the woody Carrefour de Haute Fôret; here five routes converge. This was the culminating altitude. As we looked over the undulating country which rolled away to the horizon, we were startled by the apricot hue of the sky.

Yes, the forester’s mate informed us, the toll of trees lost by fire is heavy; the foresters, her husband among them, were fighting flames at that very moment in the direction of Roche-Plate, pray God that the monster beech be spared. Often, she told us, fires have started with the charcoal burners.



Have you ever, O gentle reader, known the joy of coming, after days of fruitless search, upon the clearing of a charcoal-burner? Such was our luck in the forest of Camors, near Baud. Two smoldering mounds, formed like mammoth ant-hills, showed gleaming signs of hidden fire. The charcoal-burner told us of the work's routine. His patron would buy a grove of oaks; yes, always oaks – oh the pity of it! After the wood-choppers have had their sway, come the tanners with hides, to use the bark, and, last, the charcoal-burners.

And should we like to see his *loge*? And, as we beamed our pleasure, "It is not forbidden to enter," said he, pointing a sooty finger at a larger mound with earth-covered roof festooned with ivy. The young wife received us graciously, offering cider and displaying the bairns. She, too, loved the forest life. Oh yes, the fires must be tended during the night.

At Paimpont the genial keeper of the inn queried with quizzical interrogation:

"You found the Val sans Retour somewhat invaded by vegetation?"

"somewhat!"

He told us that in this canton of Brécilien, and indeed elsewhere in Brittany, it is not unusual to hear a peasant remark in Breton when the wind blows, "King Arthur is riding through the forest with his men."

No time had we to regain youth at the Fountain of Jouvence; nor to test the magic powers of Merlin's spring of Barenton, once haunted by a black-mailed chevalier; nor yet to visit all of the fourteen lakes or trans, nor the rough dolmen known as Merlin's tomb – but we know better, for at time of the Saint-Jean does not Merlin still meet his Vivian?

"Alas!" writes the chronicler, "he [Merlin, son of a nun and a demon] met near Barenton the gentle Vivian, daughter of the Seigneur de Comper, to whom he taught his art of sorcery. Shut he lies in the Valley without Return till Judgment Day."

Let him who would sleep beneath a hawthorn tree beware the snare of that fay Vivian!



## Holiday Greetings

The Breton Culture Center / Ti ar Vro Treger-Goueloù based in Cavan is active year-round with workshops, concerts, festoù-noz and a range of other activities.

Each year they share holiday greetings in the Breton language in a newsletter during December. Check out their website: [www.tiavro22.bzh](http://www.tiavro22.bzh) and enjoy using the greetings below (I have added the English language equivalents).

### *The basics:*

Nedeleg laouen  
Joyeux Noël  
Merry Christmas

Bloavezh mat  
Bonne année  
Happy New Year

Bloavezh mat ha yec'hed mat  
Bonne année et bonne santé  
Happy New Year and good health to you

Nedeleg laouen ha bloavezh mat  
Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année  
Merry Christmas ana a Happy New Year

Nedeleg laouen ha bloavezh mat e 2024 a hetomp  
deoc'h  
Nous vous souhaitons un joyeux Noël et une excellente  
année 2024  
We wish you a Merry Christmas and an excellent 2024  
year

Gwellañ hetoù  
Meilleurs vœux  
Best wishes

Yec'hed mat d'ho mignoned ha d'ho familhoù  
Une bonne santé à vos amis et vos familles  
Good health to your friends and family

### *And a bit more poetic:*

Bloavezh mat da beb hini  
Ha yec'hed e-leizh an ti  
Une bonne année à tous  
Et la santé à toute la maisonnée  
Happy New Year to all  
And good health to the household

Ur bloavezh nevez a hetomp deoc'h  
Korf e yec'hed, kalon e peoc'h  
Nous vous souhaitons une bonne année  
Un corps en pleine santé et un cœur en paix !  
We wish you a Happy New Year  
A body in full health and a heart at peace!

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