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BRO NEVEZ

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The Newsletter of the U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language is published quarterly: February, May, August and November. Contributions, letters to the editors, and ideas are welcome for all readers. See the back page for subscription and advertising information.

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

A Few Words from the U.S. ICDBL President

Although the ICDBL has accomplished a number of important things in its short life, I think it is undoubtedly the newsletter, Bro Nevez, that is our perduring contribution to the Breton cause. A quarterly passport to Breton culture and life for North American subscribers, it is also a reminder to Bretons and others that people outside of their native Brittany are not only interested in their history and contemporary struggle, but are also committed to helping them maintain their cultural and linguistic integrity. The newsletter adds another voice to the chorus of peoples around the world resisting the extinction of regional and ethnic diversity. While further back-patting would only be self-serving, I nevertheless urge ICDBL members to reflect at this time on the impact of our quarterly publication on readers both here and in France and on its varied educational and informational mission.

We have played, and can continue to play, a role in raising people's consciousness about the Breton situation. At the same time, our very existence is a reminder to French officials that outsiders do not necessarily view France as a unicultural or unilingual state, nor that they subscribe to that view as an ideal one. As we move into our sixth year, I hope that all present members of the ICDBL will think about what they can do in the coming year to increase our membership in order to ensure that Bro Nevez does not go under; for with it would go the mainstay of our support to the Breton movement.

Lenora A. Timm
President, U.S. ICDBL



A Re-Introduction to the U.S. ICDBL

Lois Kuter

What is the ICDBL?

The ICDBL was founded in 1975 in Brussels, Belgium as a support group for the Breton language, composed in the majority of non-Bretons who for a variety of reasons felt that the Breton language and culture should be given a chance to survive. The U.S. Branch of the ICDBL is one of the newest of almost 20 branches, officially established October 1981. Most members of the U.S. ICDBL have never been to Brittany and have never heard a word of Breton spoken, but all share the conviction that this language is a part of the world's cultural heritage that is worth defending.

Origins of the U.S. ICDBL

The history of the U.S. ICDBL can be traced back to just a few individuals. While in Brittany doing research for a doctoral thesis on the subject of Breton identity and the renaissance of Breton music, I was asked if I would try to start a branch of the ICDBL in the United States. I had certainly become well aware of the problems threatening the Breton language's future, and it appeared that Breton language speakers could use all the support they could get. The central committee of the ICDBL in Brussels agreed that I should try to launch a branch in the U.S.

THE U.S. ICDBL - cont'd.

After my return to the United States in 1979 after a year's stay in Brittany, I sent approximately 100 letters to addresses I had collected for people active in Celtic and French organizations in the U.S. - I did not know at that time if I would remain the sole member of the U.S. ICDBL, but the response to my initial letter was good and soon there were several dozen members. The first newsletter of the U.S. ICDBL was mimeographed in July 1981. A President, Secretary, and Board of Directors were elected, and we were officially incorporated in Indiana as a non-profit educational corporation on October 20, 1981.

Since our beginnings in 1981 our membership has grown from several dozen members who paid annual dues of \$1 to approximately 150 members who now pay \$10 for their membership.

How the U.S. ICDBL Works

The U.S. ICDBL has two officers: a President, Lenora A. Timm, and a Secretary-Treasurer, Lois Kuter. Additionally, we have an elected Board of Directors: six members with the responsibility of overseeing our operation and guiding our actions: Current Board members are Reun ar C'halan, Christine Forster, James W. Kerr, Dennis King, Alec Kyle, and Nathalie Novik.

The U.S. ICDBL is quite unique as a non-profit group in that we do not meet as a group. Although it would be nice to hold at least one annual meeting where all members could meet one another and exchange ideas, the expense of gathering people from all corners of the U.S. is simply too great. Our work has depended on the initiative of individuals who undertake projects single-handedly with only written or telephone support from fellow-ICDBL members. In regions where ICDBL members are concentrated, there have been occasional meetings and projects, but for the most part, members meet each other through the pages of our newsletter, Bro Nevez, which has become the focus of our work.

All work for the ICDBL is done on a voluntary basis. Neither the officers nor the Board of Directors are paid for their services. The expense of the newsletter and other activities are paid through annual membership dues, contributions, newsletter subscriptions and minimum charges for materials distributed. A sign of growth for the U.S. ICDBL has been a steady growth not only in our income but also in the money we spend. In past years, the expenses tended to be higher than our income, but in 1984 we managed to balance our budget and pay off old debts. In 1985 and 1986 we have counted on a very modest income of \$2,000 to fund all our activities.

ICDBL Activities

All branches of the ICDBL have activities which reflect the skills of their members and the role they are best suited for in the particular country in which they are found. Some branches, for instance, have done translations of Breton language literature into the language of their own country--two notable examples being Gwyn Griffiths in Wales and Jan Deloof in Flemish Belgium. Other ICDBL branches have concentrated on a lobbying role by writing frequent letters to French government officials or working with European Community agencies. In all cases, the ICDBL branches serve as a contact point in their country for people interested in learning more about the Breton language and culture.

The basic task of the U.S. ICDBL has been to introduce the Breton language and culture to Americans who have in many cases never heard of Brittany before. We have

THE U.S. ICDBL - cont'd.

found that most Americans have only a fuzzy notion of cultural diversity within France, and most are quite surprised to learn that there are places in France where the native language is not French. Our efforts to help bridge the information gap have concentrated on Bro Nevez, our 40-45 page quarterly newsletter. Additionally, we have produced a series of "working papers"--practical guides, bibliographies or descriptive works on Breton language learning materials, Breton cultural organizations, Breton music, Breton history, the basic structure of the Breton language, the Diwan schools, and a guide for travelers to Brittany.

Because U.S. ICDBL members are dispersed across our huge country--from Hawaii to Alaska, from Florida to New Hampshire--we have counted on our newsletter as a basic link. On both a formal and informal level ICDBL members have served as a source of information for people of all backgrounds who are curious to learn more about Brittany. Several members of the ICDBL have lectured for Celtic or French organizations, and we have sponsored information stands at festivals and conferences in California, New York, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania and Indiana. As Secretary for the ICDBL, I answer many letters from students, teachers, or individuals planning a trip to Brittany, or just curious about the Breton language and culture. The task of helping Americans learn more about the Breton language and culture has made up about 90% of our activity.

Our practical aid to language activities in Brittany has been more limited. Since its beginnings the ICDBL has worked to make people aware of the work of the Diwan schools, urging members and readers of the newsletter to support Diwan through financial contributions. Starting in 1985, membership renewal forms included a check-off box for a Diwan contribution. Through the generosity of many ICDBL members we have been able to send Diwan over \$1,000 for their programs. But, this is just a drop in the bucket. It is, of course, up to Bretons to save the Breton language from extinction. We hope that our modest activities in the United States show people in Brittany that we consider Breton to be a language of the world. It will make a difference to people in the U.S. if it is lost.

Who Joins the U.S. ICDBL

As Secretary for the U.S. Branch since its beginnings in 1980, I have corresponded with over 200 people who have at one time or another joined the ICDBL or written for information. In most cases I know nothing about members beyond their name and address, but in looking at letters and membership records some interesting patterns emerge.

Geographically 31 of the 50 states in the U.S.A. are represented in the 1985 and 1986 membership, with the largest representation on either coast. The geographical range of membership is surprising given our limited means of spreading information about the ICDBL. We have certainly not been the subject of nationally broadcast radio or television programs! Most people learn about the ICDBL through friends or relatives who might mention the ICDBL in a conversation or letter. A small number of people discover us at Celtic cultural events where we make brochures available. Many others have learned of our existence through short notes in Celtic or French-American publications. Each year a mailing goes out to names collected, and this brings a response from two or three individuals.

ICDBL members come from a variety of occupations: university professors number well over two dozen, including those who teach French, and scholars of ancient Celtic languages and literature, among other subjects. Among our members are also students

THE U.S. ICDBL - cont'd.

and secondary school teachers, accountants, printers, artists, writers, musicians, secretaries, computer programmers, and retired people who feel it is never too late to learn new things about the world.

One would expect the membership of the U.S. ICDBL to include Bretons, and we do indeed have support from Bretons who have made the U.S. their home. Approximately one-fifth of our member were born in Brittany or have some Breton ancestry. At least half of the remaining members have discovered Brittany through their Celtic heritage or participation in an Irish, Welsh or Scottish organization. A good dozen of our members are fluent Irish Gaelic speakers, another dozen are speakers or learners of Welsh, and we also have a few fluent speakers of Scottish Gaelic among our members.

To an increasing degree, we have found that many members are initially introduced to Brittany through Breton music. Among our members are a number of musicians as well as people who have a strong interest in Breton music as listeners. Alan Stivell helped to introduce the Breton language and culture to many young Bretons in the 1970's, and through his tours in the U.S., also introduced Brittany to Americans. In the past five years, the group Kornog has been particularly effective in making American audiences aware of Brittany and its unique culture through their tours in the U.S. Tours by Dan ar Bras and Bleizi Ruz in the U.S. have also helped more Americans become aware of the musical heritage of Brittany.

The Celtic network in the U.S. has provided good support for the ICDBL, but equally important is support from the Franco-American network. At least five of our members regularly visit Brittany through secondary school or university French programs, and these members work to include an introduction to the Breton language and culture in these programs. Native or fluent French speakers number at least 25 in the U.S. ICDBL membership, and a good number of our active members originally discovered the ICDBL through their interest in learning more about France and its diverse cultures.

Yet another approach to the U.S. ICDBL has been an interest in bilingual education or minority language issues. And why not have members who are active defenders of Frisian, Sicilian, Samish, Ukrainian, or Native American languages? The problems which face Bretons are all too familiar to people in the U.S. who speak another language besides English.

Thus, the U.S. ICDBL membership includes people who each have a unique reason to support the Breton language. The motivation may merely be the fact that they spent a vacation in Brittany once, or it may be based on a sense of inter-Celtic solidarity or inter-ethnic solidarity. No matter how different in background and interests, all U.S. ICDBL members feel that the future of the Breton language is worth fighting for.

And, we will continue to support people in Brittany who insist on speaking their language and who work to keep the Breton language alive. We have no illusions about the future of the Breton language. The outlook is not good. But, it is important to try to make it better. It would be wonderful to have a world where we did not need organizations like the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language. But, in a world which seem to find it "impractical" to maintain the variety of beautiful heritages which make our cultural life today so rich and interesting, we still have a role to play.

I personally thank all the Americans who have supported the U.S. ICDBL in its first five years. I hope we can count on your continued support for the years of work to come.

A Salute to the Founding Members of the U.S. ICDBL

Almost one-third of the current members of the U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language have been members for five years or more--joining before our official incorporation as a non-profit educational organization in October 1981. Roughly 15% of the rest of our members have been with the U.S. ICDBL for four years and 15% more for three years. An additional 15% have been members for two years and 20% of the 1986 members are new this year. This indicates that, while we have a very solid core of faithful supporters, we also attract a good percentage of new members each year.

It is appropriate with this fifth anniversary of the U.S. ICDBL to pay a special tribute to those among our current members who are Founding Members--people who joined the ICDBL in 1980 and early 1981, and who have renewed membership each year to show their commitment to supporting the Breton language. Without this solid base the U.S. Branch would have disappeared long before a fifth anniversary could be noted.

U.S. ICDBL FOUNDING MEMBERS

| | | |
|---|--------------------------------------|--|
| Howard Allen California | John S. Hennessey, Jr. California | Joseph McCloskey, Jr. New Jersey |
| Reun ar C'halan. Massachusetts | Morgan Hoover, Jr. Maryland | Tom and Pat McVey California |
| Norman Beach Massachusetts | Jeffery Huntsman Indiana | Barbara Morgan Maryland |
| James J. Blake New York | Edwin M. Jones Maryland | Evan J. Parker Maryland |
| Daniel J. Calvez South Carolina | John M. Jones New Jersey | Charles B. Quinn New York |
| Margot de Chatelaine and Kevin Gilligan Massachusetts | Robert Kennedy New York | Genevieve M. Ray California |
| Réal de Mélogue Illinois | Javan Kienzle Michigan | Michel Roy Wisconsin |
| Morgan Desmond New York | Dennis King California | Sean Scanlan New York |
| Sanford G. Etheridge Louisiana | Lois Kuter Pennsylvania | Edgar M. Slotkin Ohio |
| Christine Renée Forster Connecticut | Richard Laliberte New Hampshire | Thomas L. Standeven, Jr. Washington |
| Anne Habermehl New York | Roy and Alice Leake Indiana | Amy Varin New York |
| Gweltaz Hamel California | Claudine Le Moal California | Marie-Louise Villamizar Louisiana |
| | Barbara Martin Louisiana | |

In addition to the Founding Members who joined the U.S. ICDBL before it was officially incorporated, we have eight ICDBL members who have been with the U.S. Branch for five years. We salute them also for their support.

| | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| James Kerr Florida | René and Corinne Fachetti New York | Richard Stevenson Alabama |
| Alastair Kyle Pennsylvania | Seamus Metress Ohio | Mary Wilson California |
| Mary Jessie Cosnard des Closets Connecticut | Yvonne Smith Illinois | |

FIVE YEARS FOR THE BRETON LANGUAGE

Lois Kuter

The following chronology should document very well the advances—and lack of advances—for the Breton language during the past five years. While there have been some significant victories for Bretons who have invested many years of work in the establishment of Breton as a "normal" language in Breton education, media and public life, there is quite a bit of unfinished business remaining. The French government has yet to live up to its words of support for the regional languages and cultures of France.

July 1981 – The "Licence" is Won for Breton Teachers

A "Licence" for Breton is granted after ten years of requests for the creation of this teaching degree in the universities of Brittany. During the 1981/82 school year 343 students enrolled in the Licence program, followed by 254 in 1982/83 and 116 in 1983/84 before numbers began to level off. A major problem in sustaining the licence program has been the continued lack of other Breton degrees leading to Licence work (the DEUG is still missing), and certification that would qualify those in the teaching program for a teaching post (the CAPES was finally granted in 1985).

Of an estimated 50,000 secondary school students requesting Breton classes in 1981 only 20% had the possibility of taking a class.

October 1981 – Support from the European Community

The European Community was active drafting a Bill of Rights for "lesser-used languages" in 1981. In October 1981, John Hume, member of the European Parliament, sums up the spirit of European Community members in a statement at a conference sponsored by Gael Linn in Dublin, called "The Lesser Used Languages of the European Community":

Regionalism and the revival of interest in regional cultures and languages are no longer a peripheral affair, an anachronistic exception in a Europe bent on centralization, and uniformization. On the contrary, these two phenomena are now an important central factor in the evolution of the Europe of the future.

April 1982 – The French Government and Breton

The French government also spoke out in favor of Breton and regional languages of France, but action has been slow to follow. Robin Brendan Mackey, then President of the U.S. ICDBL expressed our feelings in a letter to French President Mitterrand:

As members of an organization created in the United States in October 1981 to support Bretons who want to speak their native language, we are encouraged by the declarations of the Minister of Culture and the Minister of Education, as well as your own. However, we are concerned to see that these words have not been followed up by actions in favor of the Breton language . . .

You have already received persistent requests on the part of Bretons themselves concerning necessary actions. We support Bretons in their demands for the implementation of the necessary tools for the defense of the Breton language in Brittany. Why, for example, not accord a significant increase in Breton language programming on the radio and television, and why not now? Because the future of a language depends on children, we are also in agreement with Bretons in their demands that Breton be given a place in the schools of Brittany—at all levels from preschools through the university. We also hope that the

FIVE YEARS FOR THE BRETON LANGUAGE - cont'd.

French government will make all possible efforts to finance the Diwan schools or to integrate them into the public educational system. Those of us who have spent time in Brittany can attest to the serious efforts made by Diwan parents and teachers to guarantee the quality of education given in these schools. While pleased with the authorization allowing the establishment of Breton degrees at the University of Haute-Bretagne, we deplore the absence of efforts to create teaching positions corresponding to the enrollments in these training programs. When will the children of Brittany have the right and the possibility to learn their language in the schools of Brittany? . . .

June 1982 - The Three-Year Plan for Breton in the Schools

French Minister of Education, Alan Savary announced a three-year program for regional languages and cultures in the schools. While this was important as an official recognition of regional languages, the program had a very limited practical effect. Lois Kuter wrote as follows in a report for Newsletter 4/5 (August/November 1982, p. 5):

Teaching Breton will remain the work of volunteers: teachers trained to teach other subjects who happen to know Breton or who have a smattering of training. With the excuse that the training of specialized teachers for Breton language and culture would contribute to a "ghetto", the Ministry of Education will keep the Breton language and culture (and other languages and cultures within the State of France) in a peripheral position.

It seems hard to believe that Mr. Savary can have the respect he claims for Breton and other "regional" languages when he limits their place in the schools to 1 to 3 hours a week. Surely he cannot believe that this will insure the survival of Breton or any other "regional" language in France. From the Le Monde reports, one gets the impression that Mr. Savary doubts that Bretons really want their language to be given a place in the public school system. It is hard to understand how he can choose to so easily ignore the long history of petitions for Breton in the schools, starting in 1870 with one co-authored by the great-uncle of General Charles de Gaulle. It is hard to understand how he can so lightly dismiss the work of thousands of Bretons to create and participate in correspondence courses, night schools and vacation camps to learn Breton. The growth of Diwan schools, the unity of support behind them, and the self-sacrifice on the part of thousands of Bretons to keep these schools open, underlines the serious desire for education in Breton.

September 1982 - Diwan Continued to Grow

In 1982 Diwan opened 16 preschool classes and two primary school classes, and made plans to open the cultural center Oaled Diwan in Treglonou.

1983 - A Public Presence for Breton

Stourm ar Brezhoneg, a splinter group from Skol an Emsav, began their road sign campaign for bilingual signs in Brittany. During 1984 and 1985 members of SAB destroyed over 2,500 road signs to bring attention to the continuing need for bilingual signs. During 1983 Skol an Emsav had "rewritten" a good number of signs, laying the groundwork for more extensive action by SAB.

1984 - Grass-Roots Support for Breton

Breton mayors and local elected officials created a committee called "Strollad ar vaered hag an dilennidi vrezhonegerien" to promote the use of Breton in schools and public life. Actions

FIVE YEARS FOR THE BRETON LANGUAGE - cont'd.

of this ongoing organization have included the implementation of bilingual signs, development of Breton use in local government offices and on forms and documents, promotion of the Breton language and culture at festivals and in schools, and encouragement of inter-Celtic cultural exchanges and the twinning of cities.

1985 - The CAPES

Hailed as "the first professional teaching certificate in a regional language", the creation of a CAPES for Breton, Fall 1985, was indeed a big step forward. Although this teaching certification requires a double specialization—Breton and a second subject—it marks a landmark in symbolizing the first recognition by the Ministry of Education of Breton teaching as a legitimate profession.

The CAPES was the product of a long fight by Breton university professors and students. The ICDBL can be proud of having been a part of the fight. In June 1982 we joined in a postcard campaign. In March 1983 our current President, Lenora A. Timm, coordinated a letter campaign by American university professors, collecting over 50 signed letters representing more than 30 institutions throughout the U.S. from Maine to Hawaii. In March and April 1984, the U.S. ICDBL joined an international effort in circulating petitions for the CAPES and the DEUG. Close to 1,000 signatures were collected from 19 different states from people of all occupations and cultural heritages. Petitions were sent with a letter to French President Mitterrand. While the eventual granting of the CAPES is due to the persistent work of Bretons, our efforts to show American interest in this project were certainly not in vain.

October 1986 - The DEUG for Breton Still Missing

The fight for the DEUG degree for Breton—a degree which qualifies on to go on for a Licence in Breton—goes on. The following letter from Per Denez of the Celtic Studies Department at the University of Rennes II - Haute Bretagne, reports on the recent refusal of the DEUG by the Ministry of National Education.

Rennes, 6 October 1986

I have just received from the Minister of National Education—under the signature of Mr. C. Philip, Director of Higher Education (with copies to the Recteur d'Academie de Rennes and the President of the Université de Haute-Bretagne)—a document informing me of the Ministry's refusal to grant a DEUG for Breton and Celtic to the Université de Rennes II - Haute Bretagne. This document was accompanied by an appendix which reads as follows:

Appendix Université de Rennes II

D.E.U.G. 'Breton and Celtic'

This project was not approved for the following reasons:

- *the area covered by this teaching is much too narrow, the DEUG being in principle a diploma for general and pluridisciplinary studies.*
- *the flow of students it promises seems much too big given the ultimate openings [for jobs] possible.*

The reasons advanced by the Ministry to justify its refusal to accord our university the means to offer a Breton and Celtic DEUG call for the following comments:

FIVE YEARS FOR THE BRETON LANGUAGE - cont'd.

- 1 - *The pedagogical content of a DEUG (Diplome d'Etudes Universitaires Generales) cannot be the object of one's imagination. It is fixed by Ministerial regulations and by established university practices. The model of the Breton and Celtic DEUG proposed to the Ministry for approval matches the DEUG programs for English, Spanish, German, etc., perfectly. It responds with exactness to norms fixed by the Ministry for this "diploma for general and pluridisciplinary studies".*
- 2 - *The area covered by the Breton DEUG is no more narrow than that covered by DEUG's for Corsican and Catalan which have been given the Ministry's approval.*
- 3 - *The flow of students expected matches, on the average, the flow of students for the Breton 'Licence' in the last five years.*
- 4 - *The Ministry has been constantly reminded that students in the Breton 'Licence' program prepare, or have already prepared, at the same time a second Licence. This will be the same for students in the Breton DEUG program who will thus not depend exclusively on the Breton DEUG in their search for an occupation.*
- 5 - *In any case, in a demographic conjuncture which brings a diminishing number of students combined with pedagogical politics which do not foresee a reduction in the student/teacher ratio, it is evident that access to the teaching profession will be more and more difficult. Recruitment will soon be limited essentially to the replacement of personnel at the end of their career. Thus, new openings can only take place in disciplines which have been up until now absent from the schools-- such as computer sciences and Breton.*
- 6 - *It has been equally underline in the Ministry's correspondence that the Breton DEUG is necessary to permit:*
 - *normal access to the Licence*
 - *the training of competent teachers, whose need is cruelly felt.*
- 7 - *Since it is the Ministry that regulates "ultimate possibilities for [job] openings" through the slant of its programs, do the arguments developed by the Ministry reveal that, at the highest level, decisions have been made to put brakes on education for Breton -- education which responds as much to requirements for development as it does to an imperative of justice?*

Per Denez
October 6, 1986

1986 - Also Still Missing: Action from the National Council of Minority Languages and Cultures

In contrast to past centuries of oppression and scorn, the French government of the past five years has been quite vocal about support for the regional languages and cultures of France. To prove its sincerity, in 1985 a National Council of Minority Languages and Cultures was created --a consulting body to work with the government on projects to insure the protection of cultural diversity in France. Perhaps that "sincerity" is most clearly expressed by the fact that this council has met only once since its creation. The following letter sent to the French

FIVE YEARS FOR THE BRETON LANGUAGE - cont'd.

Prime Minister by the Breton Deputy from Morbihan, Jean-Yves le Drian, presents very well the impatience felt by Bretons with government inaction.

Created by the preceeding government in September 1985, the Conseil national des langues et cultures minoritaires met for the first time at the Matignon Hotel last January 27th.

Article 5 of the decree [setting up the council] stipulates that it must meet at least twice a year. But, no proposal has been put forward for a second meeting.

Made up of personalities from diverse horizons--all chosen because of their competence in the cultural realm--this council should be able to play an essential role in the promotion of regional languages and cultures.

... The creation of this structure was met with great interest in Brittany, so that all profoundly regret that the present government has not yet given it the necessary means to realize its objectives.

*(Jean-Yves le Drian, quoted in La Bretagne à Paris,
17 October 1986, p. 7)*

The Future for the Breton Language

The continued resistance of French government officials to giving Bretons the tools they need to support Breton in the schools, media and public life continues to be an important factor in keeping Breton in a peripheral position. This is linked with apathy or frustration on the part of Bretons who find it abnormal to speak their native language in Brittany. While attitudes continue to grow more positive towards the Breton language and culture, Bretons themselves seem to accept the idea that their native language is "impractical" or "obsolete". The future for Breton is uncertain, but it is clear that many Bretons who continue to speak the Breton language and who continue to fight for its right to exist will persist in their efforts to keep the Breton language alive and healthy. As long as there are Breton speakers and Bretons unwilling to accept "impracticality", the ICDBL will continue to work in its modest way to support the Breton language and culture.



The French STATE and the Breton LANGUAGE

For the past five years the French state has backed up its words in favor of regional languages and cultures by providing a very meager financial support to small non-profit organizations working for Breton culture. While this has not been a large amount of support, it has provided some annual stability to allow organizations to train volunteers and work beyond mere survival.

As the following report describes, the French State seems unwilling to hand over promised funding in support of Breton cultural organizations. The ICDBL has expressed its views on this matter to the French Minister of Culture. Our letter follows the press release by the Cultural Council of Brittany which explains the situation as of early September 1986.

THE REGIONAL DIRECTOR OF CULTURAL AFFAIRS IN CONFLICT WITH THE BRETON CULTURAL MOVEMENT

At the initiative of the Cultural Council of Brittany, representatives of large Breton cultural federations--Kendalc'h, Bodadeg ar Sonerion, Emgleo Breiz, Skol an Emsav, Kuzul ar Brezhoneg, Ar Falz/Skol Vreizh, Diwan, War'l Leur, Bretagne Gallèse, Union des Enseignants de Breton, Fédération des Amis de la Lutte et des Sports Athlétiques Bretons (FALSAB)--met in Douarnenez on August 28, 1986, to examine the situation provoked by the refusal of the Regional Director of Cultural Affairs in Rennes to honor the contract plan which provides for financial aid to the cultural associations of Brittany.

The importance of the associative movement and the devotion of the thousands of volunteers who have for many years worked on the development of the Breton culture is well known. The 'Charte Culturel de Bretagne', signed by President Giscard d'Estaing in 1978, recognized the importance of this action by deciding that financial support would be given to it each year. This aid--infinitely small in view of the State's total cultural budget--is important for the development of our culture by regularly assuring the functioning of the associations to which are linked a non-negligible number of jobs. Half of this support comes from the Region and half from the State.

In May, a letter addressed to the associations from the President of the Regional Council, Mr. Yvon Bourges, let it be known that under the terms of a cooperation between Region and State, the contract plan would once again be honored. The Region has informed the associations of their part of the subvention. But, it appears that the Regional Direction of Cultural Affairs in Rennes (representing the State) refuses to give their part of the subvention, with the exception of that given to the Fédération des Sociétés Savantes (which includes, for example, historical/archeological research groups).

To our knowledge, the State has not changed its politics concerning Breton culture. To the contrary, Mr. de Charette, Delegate Minister, has, according to an August 5th press release, confirmed the will of the State to pursue the State-Region contracts.

The Regional Director of Cultural Affairs, showing surprising hostility to the Breton culture, has taken a position that the Breton cultural movement cannot accept. The Breton cultural associations demand that the representatives of the State respect the commitments made.

In Douarnenez a common position was defined by the delegates of the Breton cultural movement. First, they demand an urgent meeting with the Regional Director of Cultural Affairs, and ask for an appointment with the Prefect of the Region and the President of the Regional Council of Brittany.

Kuzul Sevenadurel Breizh
Conseil Culturel de Bretagne

FRENCH STATE VS. THE BRETON CULTURAL MOVEMENT - cont'd.

U.S. ICDBL ACTION

To show our support of the Breton cultural movement in their efforts to make the French State live up to its commitments of support for regional languages and cultures, the following letter was sent October 10 to the French Ministry of Culture.



International Committee for the
Defense of the Breton Language
U.S. Branch
143 Plymouth Road
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462
USA
10 October 1986

M. François Léotard
Ministère de la Culture
3, Rue de Valois
75042 Paris - Cedex
FRANCE

Monsieur le Ministre,

We were shocked and dismayed to learn of the decision by the Directeur Régional des Affaires Culturelles de Rennes to withhold finances from the State for the support of Breton cultural associations. The failure to come through on this financial commitment in the face of statements by the government in support of regional cultures and traditions will strike many observers as hypocritical and callous. In so impairing its own credibility, the State loses respect in the international community and arouses hostility and anger among those segments of its citizens adversely affected by this unfortunate decision not to lend financial assistance to worthy cultural organizations.

We therefore urge you in the strongest terms to honor your financial commitment to such organizations in Brittany so that they may continue their important work--work that serves as a model for peoples throughout the world who value cultural diversity. There is perhaps no better way to fight the standardizing effects of the mass media (all too often "made in the USA") than to contribute to the maintenance of authentic regional cultures within France.

Although the French state's aid to Breton cultural associations constitutes but a fraction of its overall budget for cultural activities and events, this aid is nevertheless critical to the functioning of many small organizations that are working for the preservation of Breton culture.

We conclude by enjoining you to recommit monies to the State-Region contracts in financial aid to Breton cultural associations. This would serve not only the cause of justice to those organizations that have been preemptorily stripped of anticipated funding, but would also help lift the veil of hypocrisy that clouds the French state in its dealings with regional cultures.

Respectfully,

Lenora A. Timm
President
ICDBL, U.S. Branch

The Breton Language and the Radio in Brittany

Lois Kuter

Bretons have been at work for decades to establish a place for Breton in the schools of Brittany. And, in more recent years, work to create public visibility for Breton has been intensified, as shown in the work for road signs by Stourm ar Brezhoneg, and in the grass-roots work by Breton-speaking mayors and local officials to use Breton on the job.

Another major area where Bretons have worked to give the Breton language a public presence is media--radio and television. Reports on progress for Breton in this area do not give one cause for great optimism. Information for the report which follows is based, in great part, on materials kindly provided by Bernez Rouz of Radio Breiz Izel.

In contrast to the United States, where the AM and FM radio bands offer dozens of commercial and non-commercial programs, French radio has, until recent years, offered only a very limited choice of programming. Brittany was served, like all other areas within France, but just a few stations "made in Paris". Some programming specifically oriented to Brittany was offered, however, on **Radio Armorique**, a regional division of FR3 which included television and radio. In 1983 **Radio Armorique** was renamed **Radio France Armorique** and increased its hours from 4 to 13 per day. Programming decisions for this "Breton" radio have been ultimately made in Parisian offices, and **Radio Armorique** has, on the whole, sounded just like all other stations despite a few hours of excellent programming in Breton or specifically focused on Breton topics. These programs have had no assurance of continuity. For example, in July and August, Breton news broadcasts are very often replaced by those in English or German for the benefit of tourists.

In 1982 a second regional station was created for Brittany: **Radio Bretagne Ouest**, or **Radio Breizh Izel** (in Breton), based in the city of Quimper. This radio station serves western Brittany today, while **Radio Armorique**, based in Rennes, has been cut back to serve only eastern Brittany. A third regional station, **Radio Loire Ocean** is based in Nantes and serves southeastern Brittany. There is no one station today for all of Brittany since these three divisions of Radio France can be heard only in specific geographical areas.

1981 is a milestone in radio history in France with the legalization of local non-commercial radio stations. This has opened up new opportunities for community-based programming, specifically oriented to Breton interests--in the Breton language, Gallo or French. But, such programming has been severely limited by the tiny budgets available to these stations, and by the fact that most rely solely on volunteers for staffing and programming.

Local radios have remained the work of dedicated amateurs--people with varying skills, trained only by experience in most cases. Today, less than a dozen local radios offer one or more programs per week in the Breton language. While a few local non-commercial stations have provided excellent Breton programming to serve their communities, in most cases development of such programming is blocked by a lack of studio facilities or equipment, or lack of skilled manpower.

A look specifically at **Radio Bretagne Ouest (RBO)**, which was hailed as a major step forward when it first came on the air in 1982, reveals some of the obstacles that continue to block Breton language use in the media.

Radio Bretagne Ouest/Radio Breizh Izel

In June 1986 Breton language programming on RBO was as follows:

RADIO - cont'd.

Daily news broadcasts in Breton:

"Keleier Breizh" - 8 minutes, 7:15 am
5 minutes, 8:20 am
10 minutes, 7:30 pm

Daily programs in Breton (Monday-Friday):

"Serr noz" - 7:20-8:20 pm (including news program listed above)

"Bonjour villages" - 1:30-2:00 pm (a bilingual Breton/French program)

Weekly programs:

"Etrezek an noz" - 7:20-9:00 pm
Saturdays

"Beilhadeg" - 7:20-10:00 pm
Sunday

This totals approximately 12½ hours per week of Breton language programming out of a total air time of 126 hours, or 10%.

This may not sound horrifying, but it is an alarming drop from RBO's beginnings in 1982 when one heard Breton on five different programs each day instead of only three. While daily and weekly Breton language programs have remained at about the same level, there has been a drop in bilingual programming where speakers use both Breton and French. These were unique to RBO in its early days, and were particularly attractive to people learning Breton or native speakers of Breton whose dialect did not match that of the radio speaker. In 1982 RBO had 21 hours of bilingual programming per week; in 1986 it has had only 2½ hours per week. The drop in bilingual programming is due in large part to the fact that the directors of this radio station have not made an effort to train or locate bilingual staff people to replace those who have moved on to other jobs--for instance, in television.

The drop of Breton language programming is not justified by RBO's own surveys of listeners. These indicate that approximately 450,000 people listen to RBO at

least once a week. 200,000 of these are regular listeners. 80,000 people listen to morning Breton language news broadcasts, and 30,000 listen to evening Breton language programs. Radio France's surveys show that approximately 650,000 people in Brittany know Breton, while 450,000 use it on a daily basis.

Lack of commitment to Breton programming on the part of RBO directors seems to be a major factor in the backward slide in Breton language programming. In its beginnings, RBO's policy was to hire Bretons to staff its station (although these were not necessarily Breton speakers). Today the RBO programs use 53 people on a regular basis--only 11 are fluent Breton speakers; 7 others understand some Breton, and the remaining 35 know no Breton at all. The four station managers are in this latter category, and the director is not from Brittany. This, in part, accounts for the attitude on the part of program decision-makers that there is already enough Breton on RBO.

The already limited place of Breton on the radio is today faced by a new threat --a reorganization of the regional radios by the French government. It is difficult to know what impact this will have on the regional radios such as Radio Bretagne Ouest and Radio Armorique, but it is not likely to help Breton language programming since financing the radio would be a major preoccupation. Breton, viewed as a concession rather than an integral part of normal programming, has not been considered practical. Thus, its place is likely to be even further reduced in the future for 'economic' reasons.

Like programs in schools or public institutions, winning a place for Breton in the media has required an exceptional effort. The battle does not end there, since it has required continuous work to maintain the very small advances won over the years. Despite continued hard work, and creative work, of Bretons to build a Breton language media, prospects for the future do not encourage optimism.

* * * * *

UR SKRIVAGNER GWENEDEK: Roperh er Mason (1900-1952)

Reun ar C'halan

Ne ouie ket Roperh er Mason brezhoneg a-vihanik: ret e oa bet dezhañ addeskiñ yezh e hendadou. Un ofiser a vor e morlu Bro-Ch'all e oa anezhañ, met karout a rae e vro c'henidik, hag abred e drogas da labourat evit ar brezhoneg. Sevel en doa e oberenn gentañ, barzhonegoù Chal ha dichal, e brezhoneg Gwened, met komprenet en doa e vefe gwelloc'h evit dazont ar yezh ober implij eus ar brezhoneg peurunvan. An hevelep dibab a voe graet gant ur gwenedour all, Langleiz: e-mesk ar re o deus poaniet ar muiañ da beurunvaniñ ar yezh emaint o daou.

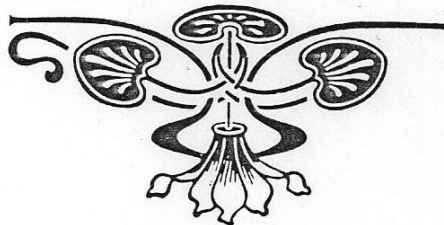
Roperh er Mason a oa diskennet eus "Bretoned rok, Chouaned tér." Klevet en doa judenn e hendad Matelin, bet lazhet gant ar C'hallaoued da vare an Dispac'h, ha gwelet en doa "kamm-droieu en hent bras / Léh ma voé stlejet Matelin / Get ar ré c'hlas / Ar lerh ur har / Leh ma skuillas / Ar vol en doar / É oèd abéh hep difronkein!" Spered Matelin a verve c'hoazh e gwazhiennoù an emsaverien, evel m'eo bet lakaet anat gant Roperh er Mason en e romant Evit ket ha netra. Penntudenn ar romant, Fant, a zispleg penaos ez eo deut d'an Emsav. He zud a zo bourc'hizien a ouenn gozh. Deut int da vezañ gallekaet penn kil ha troad, evel kement all a vourc'hizien e Breizh. Ne vagont nemet dispriz ouzh henc'hizioù ar bobl, ouzh yezh ha gwiskamantoù ar gouerien. Breur Fant a zimez gant ar plac'h yaouank eus an Argoad. Eno e tizolo Fant ur bed nevez, teñ-zorioù e yezh, pinvidigezh e sevenadur, ha taolioù-kaer e istor. Kregiñ a ra da labourat evit an Emsav. Evel-se e vez dezrevellet istor an Emsav e-kerz ar bloavezhioù tregont, ha displeget menozioù an emsaverien yaouank hag o friziañs e dazont o bro. Displeget e vez ivez obererezh an Emsav e-pad an eil brezel-bed, hag ar reuzioù a zeu war e lerc'h, da vare an Dieubidigezh. An oberour a gemer poan da lakaat anat ne oa ket an Emsav a-du gant an Alamaned. Un nebeud hepken o deus roet dorn dezho, unan hepken e Bro-Wened a-bezh. Setu barnadenn an oberour: "O kregiñ neuze en ur c'henlabour en devoa en em ziwallet dioutañ an Emsav betek bremañ, e kemeront saer an Alaman evit en em deurel en ur brezel foll enep o

ROPERH ER MASON - cont'd.

breudeur hag ar maki ..." Hag e benntudenn: "Ur fari mantrus o deus graet ar geneiled se, a lavaran da Weltaz. Kemer gwisk-amant ar re nazi! Euzh evit kristenion! Ha lazhañ Breton a-ouenn . . . Amoedaj ha torfed!" E sigur o fazi e vo kaset da get labour an Emsav. Heskinet e vez ar vrogarourien: lod a zo drouklazhet, lod a zo taolet en toullbac'h, ar re all a zo dindan dec'h. Ne zistan an heskinerezh nemet pa zeu Gelted tramor da sevel o mouezh enep an hande gall e Breizh. Ret e vo adkregiñ gant al labour evit ma ne vo ket poanioù an emsaverien "evit ket ha netra".

SUMMARY

Like Langleiz, Roperh er Mason was from the region of Vannes. Both came to the conclusion that the future of the Breton language would best be served by unifying the four main dialects. Roperh er Mason's first poems are in the Vannes dialect, but his novel about the Breton Emsav in the thirties and the forties, Evit ket ha netra (For nothing at all), was written in unified Breton.



"Breton album"

As a token of appreciation for the work of the U.S. ICDBL, Jan Deloof, an ICDBL member in Belgium, has translated poems by the Flemish poet Fernand Florizoone for our newsletter. It is a great pleasure to include these beautiful poems which, in Jan Deloof's excellent translation, have retained the musicality of the Flemish originals. L.K.



The road (to Kiberen)

On the asphalt-paving
rides a chain of hurry
in a thousand cars.

From the verge of the road
a cricket sings out
his stationary summer,

but the city glides
in motorized haste
towards Breath-on-the-Sea.



Pentedr

Time has discovered land
between two seas,
carrion-crows and pine-trees
stress the silence,
the momentarily mollified sea
plays with humans on the beach.
There is a station with a single track
along the road to the end.

Camping-ground at Pentedr



The tents are stretched
like patches
of the sky-blue wind,
the sun
loves the beautiful mothers,
the city
is a far-away forgotten island
canned for colder days,
only air and breath exist
in which we hang the blankets
and break the bread
in scents of seaweed, cider, pines.
The plain has no door,
there is no clock, no traffic
coming from the right has right of way,
the humans
stack their days in sky-blue tents
and play like lovers

The little houses of Kerhostin

Wind and rain
two quarrelsome sisters
spoil the azure water
and the greenish pine-tree song,
the little houses of the village
turn arm in arm
their back upon the row,
are looking out for sun
- white with spleen.

Menhirs

From horizons of far-away times
they move past in rows,
are they monks or priests
emerging from the haze of frankincense?
They are silent in their speaking shape,
put down their vestments made of shadow
in accordance with the rite of sun and light.
Moving past the mortals
they enter upon far-away time.



When the cloud descended

When the cloud descended
on the flowering tree
April dawned in my uninspired sheets,
all the vowels turned into beetles
with sonorous tiny microphones,
they tied the consonants together
to a bunch of butterflies and bees.
When I was sitting there
a giddy bug fell from the tree and
step-danced giddy on my sheet. And
wrote.

Beach

Does God feel younger
on the beach
where every token sets a man in blossom?
Every being stands a chance
of turning into sun,
a thousand names do realize
the patience
that the earth expects.



There is a cricket-sun

There is a cricket-sun at Kerhostin
close to the white cricket-front
in every month of August,

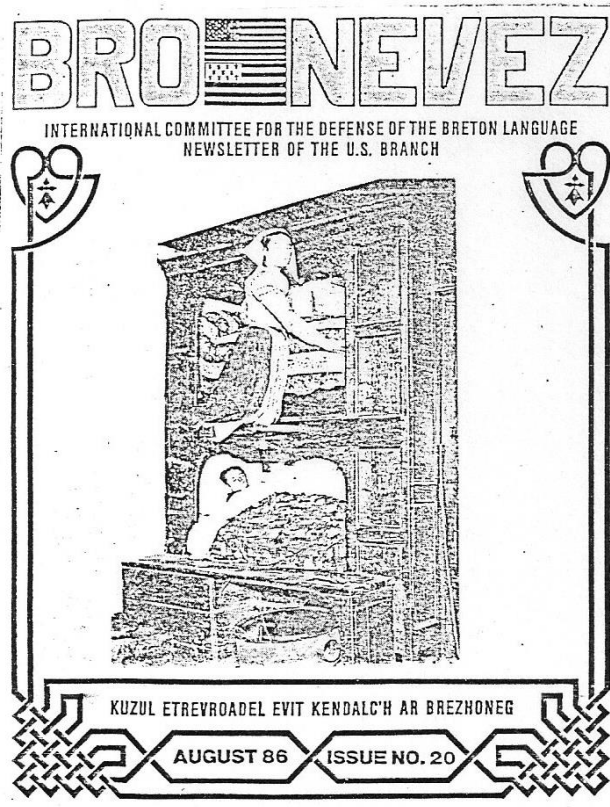
There is a tamarisk at Kerhostin
a tamarisk along the cricket-road
close to the summit of the summer-night,

there is a cricket verse at Kerhostin,
the caravan didn't hear a sound,
caravan and summer went silently away.

Fernand Florizoone

1976

translated by Jan Deloof



A NOTE ON THE COVER OF BRO NEVEZ 20:

In response to our request for information concerning the double-decker 'lit clos' featured on our August cover, we received a very interesting response from the Breton organization **Multi-Collectionneurs de Documents Bretons et Celtiques** (2, Allée de Cancale, 35000 Rennes). Mr. Guillaume Bécharde informs us that the post card photo was taken by the Breton writer Charles Geniaux, probably in Treguier or Tregardrec in the Tregor area of Brittany. The company which edited the post card is Neurdein--and the Vice President of **Multi-Collectionneurs**, Marie-France Motrot has done a study of their series of Breton cards.

We thank this organization for their informative response.

LEGENDARY BRITTANY: *The Legend of the Dourduff gold*

Pierre Jakez Hélias

translated by Gabrielle L. Caffee

Many long years ago, a pirate ship carrying a load of doubloons sank to the bottom of a small bay of the **Dourduff*** at the mouth of the Morlaix River. Since that time, when the wind rises and the waves billow, parts of a wreckage can be seen in the depth of the chasm. It is then the phantom captain appears on the top of a high black rock keeping watch over the sunken treasure. Don't ever try to climb up there for you will be given a great shove into the deep and you will find yourself joining the gold doubloons. He is known as **The Pusher of Dourduff** and one good shove from him can be fatal for anyone thirsting for gold. You can be sure you wouldn't be his first victim.

It is said that at one time there stood a gloomy manor nearby where an elderly nobleman lived with his only daughter. She was called Igilt. Great was her beauty, a brunette with misty-blue eyes, but even greater was her ambition. Her father wished to see her married to a good man of means, but unless born a prince or at least a duke, there was no hope of anyone slipping a wedding ring over her finger. She held nothing but disdain for ordinary suitors. It was rumored that she was a sorceress, for frequently she could be seen standing on the rock of the phantom captain, and never would anyone else have dared to venture there.

Many eligible young men would sail their barques past the Dourduff in the hope that a glance from her misty-blue eyes might stray their way with the slightest glimmer of pleasure. But, for her they were no more than the pebbles on the beach. A few of the more courageous became bold enough to seek her hand. She would lead the bewildered suitor to the black rock where the leaden waves pounded below and say:

*"There at the bottom lies my wedding basket,** somewhere in the hull of the wreckage. Go fetch the gold for me and I will be yours. This is the only thing that can win me."*

The poor unfortunate would plunge headlong into the whirling waters with the hand of the phantom pusher well-placed between his shoulders. No one ever returned. As time went on, the young people feared and avoided her, so Igilt, the brunette with the misty-blue eyes became known as the **Betrothed of the Dead**.

After much watching and waiting for a prince, the day arrived when one sailed in from afar. He came from Hibernia and was called Yvor.*** Upon orders from his father, a very wise mentor was always at his side to allay any youthful indiscretion. Igilt, the hard-hearted, the prideful--yes--Igilt of the misty-blue eyes, was in love.

For three days in a row, she listened to Yvor's sweet words as they met upon the high black rock. She had forgotten all about her wedding basket.

* Dourduff is a section of Brittany located on the north shore between the city of Morlaix and the English Channel. It is a rocky, bleak and inhospitable place which has lent itself well to fearsome legends and stories. The designation of Dourduff only appears in old tales and ancient historical documents.

** A Wedding Basket is comparable to the American Hope Chest used for the accumulation of domestic furnishings in anticipation of marriage.

*** Hibernia was the name given to Ireland by the ancient Greeks and Romans.

LEGEND OF DOURDUFF - cont'd.

During those three days, Yvor's wise mentor had been listening to loose talk as he travelled between Dourduff and Morlaix. Then, he went to see the old nobleman:

"Prince Yvor would like to marry your daughter. His father, the king, however, demands a dowry of a thousand doubloons. You might start thinking about collecting them."

"Alas, I only own this old manor. If only I had as many gold pieces as I have crows in my tower!"

"Well, then perhaps your daughter will know where to find her dowry," answered the wise mentor.

When Igilt heard about the condition upon which her happiness rested, she knew her day of reckoning had arrived; she lost her head. Down to the rocks she ran madly. To her, it seemed she could see the reflection of the doubloons on the moon as they shone from the bottom of the water. Desperately, she plunged down and returned with a handful of sand, then she slid down once again and returned with her hands full of worthless gravel: *"Soon"*, she gasped, *"I will have the entire amount!"* And then, the sea swallowed her.

At the bottom of the inlet of the Dourduff, the **Betrothed of the Dead** rests among her suitors on a bed of doubloons. And, on the high black rock, the phantom captain has resumed his night watch.

* * * * *

A NOTE ON PIERRE-JAKEZ HELIAS

Pierre-Jakez Hélias is best known to Americans for the book The Horse of Pride (1980)--a translation of Le Cheval d'Orgeuil: Mémoires d'un paysan bigouden (Plon, 1975). This author has been active for many years collecting folklore and customs of the Bigouden area of Brittany. He is an eloquent 'native ethnographer' of a way of life that is quickly disappearing in Brittany. But he is also a creative writer--in his native Breton language or French--who recognizes the enduring spirit of Breton culture. His works include poetry, drama and novels, but Hélias is best known for his collections of folktales and legends. The following are a few of his collections from the Breton countryside and sea.

Published by Editions Jos le Doare (small books beautifully illustrated with photos and drawings):

Contes Bretons du Sabot à Feu
Bretagne aux Légendes de la Mer
Contes de la Chantepleure
De Grève en Cap
Contes Bretons du Pays Bigouden
Légendes du raz de Sein

Les Autres et les Miens (Plon, 1977). [collected from Bigouden storytellers]
Compère Jakou (Ed. Galilée, 1979).
Esprit du Rivage (Gallimard, 1981).

BOOK REVIEW

Roger Hervé and Yann Poupinot. Atlas Historique de Bretagne. Editions Historique de Bretagne/Dalc'homp Sonj, 1986. 17 plates, 31 x 44 cm.

Review by Hervé Thomas

Early in 1986 Lois handed me a promotional flyer from Dalc'homp Sonj, an organization in Brittany which produces, among other things, a high quality quarterly magazine on Breton history.* The flyer presented L'Atlas historique de Bretagne (The Historical Atlas of Brittany)--a project undertaken by two Breton scholars in 1943-1947: Roger Hervé, a historian/geographer and curator in the maps department of the Bibliothèque Nationale, and Yann Poupinot, a professional cartographer and a major figure in the Breton movement (deceased in 1976).

I have for a long time wanted an atlas like the one described on the flyer as a time-saving and comprehensive point of reference, and could find none. So I ordered the atlas and got a gem. For an 18-page book it contains an amazing quantity of information. Seventeen large plates** of maps, charts and graphs cover all the physical, socio-political and historical aspects of the Breton nation.

Most of the plates are full sized maps with smaller inserts putting Brittany in the context of the rest of France and Europe. Starting with a descriptive geological introduction (Plate I), the atlas describes social, geographical and political changes and transformations since prehistory (1500 BC) up to 1940 AD (Plate XV--"Brittany under the Third Republic").

Plate XI locates origins of famous Bretons--explorers and sailors, soldiers, intellectuals, artists and writers, churchmen, and diplomats and politicians--including dates of birth and death for each name cited and an indication of their importance on a local, European, or international level. Plate XVII is a world map which presents routes of famous Breton explorers and church missions. It shows, for example, the explorations of Canada by Jacques Cartier in the 16th century and the first airplane trip around the world by the Vannetais aviator, Le Brix, in 1927-1928. Also very interesting is a map relating to Celtic migrations (Plate V) which is unique for its clarity. An amazing description of Brittany from 1789-1871 is found in Plate XIV which details political events as well as economic and industrial developments in Brittany from the French Revolution to the Second Empire--a period too often left in the dark when it comes to Breton history.

The editor of the Historical Atlas asks readers to consider the atlas as an imperfect and criticizable document. However, I find very little to criticize in what I consider a phenomenal piece of work. As an active member of the graphic art world, I am well aware of the time and effort it takes to produce a single unit (one plate) let alone a whole book.

* See Bro Nevez 12, August 1984, for a description of the work of Dalc'homp Sonj. The magazine, Dalc'homp Sonj, is available in the U.S. only through subscription (70 French francs per year). This publication is always interesting and certainly a useful tool for serious researchers and students alike. It is in French with some Breton articles and notes. Dalc'homp Sonj has an extensive catalog of books, posters, post cards and decals related to Breton and Celtic history and culture. Contact Lois Kuter or Dalc'homp Sonj directly for a copy (see address following this article).

** The size of the book is 31 x 44 cm (12-1/2" x 17-3/8") and is also available in unbound packaging--loose sheets folded in an envelope, suitable for framing or public presentations (folded size: 32 x 22 cm, or 12-5/8" x 8-6/8").

L'Atlas Historique - cont'd.

The research required is in itself a tedious and time-consuming chore, and the production and lay-out of a chart is no less tedious since it requires scientific precision. Even if more recent historical discoveries have shed new light on certain concepts relating to Breton and Celtic history, it does not make such a document obsolete. I am certainly glad that this atlas was printed as the authors designed it, for any graphic changes or "embellishments" could only be minor. The atlas has, as a whole, a modern look to it (comparing it to the maps and charts included in the school books of the late 1950's and 1960's), so I thank the publisher for not corrupting this magnificent work. One could complain about the light weight of the publication's cover--easily destroyed if one puts the atlas to a lot of use. A stronger backing would be ideal, but considering the price for the atlas (less than \$20), one can hardly complain. I consider myself fortunate that such a work has been published.

The text is in French, but the maps are largely self-explanatory--accessible to people of different linguistic backgrounds. The type is by today's standards a bit old-fashioned and light, but highly readable. Although printed in a limited edition of 1,000 copies, I urge anyone interested in Brittany and its history to acquire this document, for there is not much else around that will give a quicker and clearer idea about the place of Brittany among the world's nations. Congratulations to the people of Dalc'homp Sonj! Keep up the good work.

To order L'Atlas Historique de Bretagne:

contact Dalc'homp Sonj
36, rue Emile-Zola
56100 Lorient
FRANCE

Specify "livre format" (bound copy) or "cartes libres" (unbound plates in an envelope) and enclose a check (in French francs) for 150 francs. Price includes postage--surface mail.

* * * * *

Gwynfor Evans e Breizh. Lesneven: Hor Yezh, 1986. 200 pages.

Review by Lois Kuter

Readers active in Welsh-American affairs should need no introduction to Gwynfor Evans, former president of Plaid Cymru and leader in a long and hard fight in Wales to give the Welsh language a place in the schools and public life. Gwynfor Evans is also well known in Brittany as one of a solid core of Welsh men and women who have forged inter-Celtic links between Wales and Brittany.

Bretons know Gwynfor Evans best for his role in the fight for SC4--the Welsh language television channel created in 1980. The campaign for Welsh language television was an inspiring one for Bretons who have yet to see more than five hours a week on television. After many years of campaigning and research, a Welsh channel had won wide support from politicians and community leaders in Wales. Programming

seemed assured, but campaign promises of 1979 were broken. The Welsh population responded with strong action to reverse government decisions. This included numerous petitions and letters from university, community and local government leaders in Wales and elsewhere; civil disobedience in the form of refusal to pay television taxes on the part of some 2,000 people who faced fines and jail sentences; and, the destruction of television antenna and ransacking of offices. The seriousness of Welsh intentions to win their campaign was underlined by Gwynfor Evans' courageous decision to go on a hunger strike--to death, if necessary. The government reconsidered, and made good its earlier promises. Today the SC4 Welsh language television channel has proven its worth.

Gwynfor Evans e Breizh - cont'd.

The Hor Yezh publication called Gwynfor Evans e Breizh documents the television campaign of 1979-1980 with press clippings as well as commentaries--in Welsh, Breton, French and English--by the well known Breton writer Per Denez and Gwynfor Evans himself. Interesting biographical material on Gwynfor Evans is included in a section documenting the involvement of the Breton group Kuzul ar Brezhoneg in the 1980 campaign. A particularly interesting section of this 200-page book is devoted to a three-day trip to Brittany by Gwynfor Evans, November 17-21, 1980. Numerous photos as well as official speeches by

Breton officials make up a large part of this section. Gwynfor Evans' own speeches from this trip are eloquent statements on the long and hard struggle of both the Welsh and Bretons to save their national heritages. He has some sobering thoughts on the situation of Breton:

"It seems to a person looking objectively at the Breton situation from the outside that the word to describe the French attitude toward Brittany is tyranny; and that the word to describe French policy is genocide."

Those words of 1980 are, sadly enough, still relevant today.

* * * * *

SKOL VREIZH - NEW PUBLICATIONS

Review by Lois Kuter

Skol Vreizh, which is subtitled "The Breton School", is an organization long active in producing books on Breton history and culture for use in schools. The magazine called Skol Vreizh is a mine of information for teachers and students--or anyone else interested in Brittany. Starting in May 1985, Skol Vreizh shifted from a magazine format to the production of small books (7-3/4" x 8-3/4" in size). Beautifully printed and full of color, these paperback publications are directed to a wider public, but retain their pedagogical value for school use. Drawings and photographs are plentiful, supporting well-written texts which present a wealth of information in a succinct and interesting manner. The first two publications of the Skol Vreizh series were outstanding: No. 1 - Albert Deshayes, Noms de famille bretons, May 1985, and No. 2/3 - Daniel Giraudon, Chansons populaires de Basse-Bretagne sur feuilles volants, December 1985 (see Bro Nevez 18, February 1986 for a review of both). The two Skol Vreizh issues of 1986, reviewed below, are also excellent.

Jean-Pierre Menez and others. Johnnies du Pays de Roscoff hier et aujourd'hui. Skol Vreizh No. 4, février 1986. 78 pages.

Tourists to Brittany may know the town of Roscoff as the port for Brittany Ferries--a ferry line which goes to Cork in Ireland and Plymouth, England. Since the Middle Ages, Roscoff has been an important port for Breton commerce, taking Bretons to Spain as well as the British Isles. "Onion Johnnies" began in Roscoff in 1828 through the initiative of one individual, Henry Ollivier, a 21 year-old farmer who loaded a boat and sailed for Plymouth with three friends to sell his produce during the slow winter season. He came back with-

out his onions and with a pocket full of money. The three to four month trip to sell onions door-to-door in England, Cornwall, Wales and Scotland soon became a regular part of the agricultural cycle in Roscoff. From 200 in 1860, the number of "Johnnies" grew to 1,500 in the 1920's. Interrupted by the World Wars and the economic crisis of the 1930's, the seasonal trips continue to the present, but the "Onion Johnnies" are disappearing.

Johnnies du Pays de Roscoff, the product of collaboration among a half-dozen

Johnnies du Pays de Roscoff - cont'd.

researchers, "Johnnies", and a school class, details the history of this trade. The book describes origins of the "Onion Johnnies" and their growth, the place of this trade in Roscoff economy and impact on Roscoff society, the organization of the work and preparation for trips, conditions of work, and the product itself--the pink onion of Roscoff.

The hardships of this occupation are clearly presented in the text, and underlined in a section describing the

shipwrecks which took the lives of men returning to Brittany with their hard-earned income. Particularly interesting are interviews with "Johnnies" who recount their experiences and feelings. François Gallou tells his story in Breton (accompanied by a French translation in the text). He started work in 1936 in Wales at the age of 12. Yves Gallou began in 1947 at age 14 and continues today. The photographs throughout this 78-page book are fascinating supplements to a very interesting text. This book is a beautiful tribute to men and women of Roscoff and northern Brittany who worked hard to make their lives better.

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Jean-Christophe Cassard. Vikings en Bretagne. Skol Vreizh No. 5, juillet 1985. 82 pages.

From Hollywood movies we have come to view Vikings as barbaric hordes sweeping across Europe to massacre, pillage and destroy civilization itself. We should know by now that Hollywood movie writers are not always the most careful historians. In this 82-page book, Jean-Christophe Cassard explores the history of the Viking presence in Brittany--by no means romanticizing the bloody invasions of the 9th and 10th centuries, but examining medieval chronicles and archeological evidence to present a more complex picture of the Vikings and Breton history.

The author and collaborators in the research for Vikings en Bretagne do not give us final conclusions about the Vikings and what they were like, but they are very successful in presenting Brittany of the 9th to 11th centuries and the impact of Viking invasions and settlements. This is an excellent book to begin a study of this period of Breton history and to start learning about the Vikings, as Bretons viewed them during this turbulent period of history and as they continue to be depicted in Breton history and folk memory. Brittany and Europe were not like the Hollywood movie sets.

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Skol Vreizh, Commission 'Histoire'. Histoire de la Bretagne et des Pays Celtiques de 1532 a 1789: La Bretagne province. Vol. 3, 3rd revised edition, 1986.

The third of five volumes produced by Skol Vreizh on Breton history from prehistory to the present has just been revised and reprinted. As one would hope in a revision, it is even better than previous editions.

All five Skol Vreizh history books draw strength from the fact that they are put together by a team of historians and researchers. The expertise of each collaborator is combined in a cohesive volume which gives a capsule history of

Brittany, examining not just events and important people, but demography, economy, art, language, literature, oral traditions and religion. The text is clear and to the point, but not overly dry. Perhaps the strongest point of the history volumes is the generous use of maps, photos, drawings and charts to supplement the text and bring it to life.

Volume 3 of the Skol Vreizh series on history focuses on a period of change--the 16th to late 18th century when

La Bretagne province - cont'd.

Brittany was being drawn more and more into France. P. Grall, J. Guiffan, Ch. Robert, J. Tanguy, Y. B. Piriou and the coordinator of the project, J. J. Monnier, tie together cultural, economic, political, social and religious changes of this period in Breton history.

Three chapters of the book deal with the economy of Brittany during the 16th to late 18th century. This was a period of prosperity for Brittany linked to maritime development, but it was also a period of growing problems as Brittany became drawn more and more into the French system. The different industries of Brittany as well as maritime growth are well presented in these chapters. Politics is always closely linked to economics; two chapters of the book detail Breton conflicts with French governments and the internal politics of Brittany. A chapter on changes in Breton society nicely outlines different social classes and urban-rural contrasts in life style. Culture is not forgotten, and a chapter

is devoted to the arts as they are linked to religious change in Brittany. A completely new chapter in this reedition focuses on Breton language literature in the 16th to 18th centuries. In this chapter Yann-Ber Piriou also includes a discussion of the rich oral traditions of Brittany.

In each of the Skol Vreizh history volumes, at least one chapter is devoted to the other Celtic countries, allowing the reader to compare and contrast Brittany with Irish, Scottish, Cornish, Manx and Welsh history. In just 14 pages the authors of this third volume present a very useful summary of the 16th to 18th centuries, focusing on the relation of the Celtic countries to England.

This newly revised volume--and each of the other four volumes of the Skol Vreizh history series--is highly recommended to anyone interested in Breton history. (For information on the series and the work of Skol Vreizh see Bro Nevez 12, August 1984, pp. 10-12.)

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BOOK REVIEWS AND BRO NEVEZ

Lois Kuter

In compiling an index for the first 21 issues of Bro Nevez, it has been gratifying to find that we have included within our pages a nicely balanced selection of book reviews. The following statistics show that we have not only maintained a balance of books in Breton, French or English, but we have covered a wide range of topics in our reviews.

Of a total of 47 books reviewed, 12 were Breton language publications, 24 were French (or bilingual French/Breton in the case of dictionaries and Breton learning materials) and 11 were in English. While particularly strong in non-fiction literature (12 reviews), we also included Breton language studies and learning materials such as grammars and dictionaries (7 reviews), Breton history (8 reviews), folklore and oral traditions (4 reviews), bilingualism and minority languages (4 reviews), ethnography, social and economic analysis (3 reviews), music (3 reviews), sports (2 reviews), cinema (1 review) and children's books (1 review).

But, this is just the tip of the iceberg when it comes to the role Bro Nevez has played in introducing its readers to publications from and about Brittany. Several articles in Bro Nevez have focused on well known Breton language authors, poets or playwrights (Loeiz Herrieu, Vefa de Bellaing, Naig Rozmor, Roparz Hemon, Anjela Duval, Reun ar C'halan, Youenn Gwernig, Meven Mordiern, Tangi Malmanche). Special feature articles have also focused on the publication of children's books in the Breton language and Breton publishing in general.

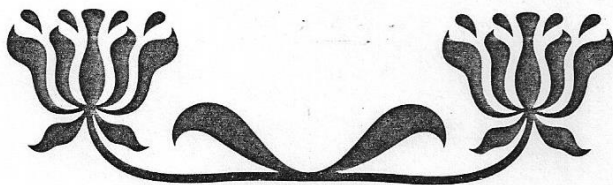
BOOK REVIEWS AND BRO NEVEZ - cont'd.

Perhaps of most value to readers in the United States who have no other means of learning about new publications from Brittany, have been the short books notes which regularly appear in Bro Nevez. Through descriptions ranging from one sentence to a paragraph, a total of 138 books were introduced in the pages of the U.S. ICDBL newsletter in its first 21 issues. Half of these were Breton language books noted in Reun ar C'halan's regular column "Recent Breton Publications". Of the rest, some 30 were bilingual Breton/French books, another 40 were French language publications, and 7 were English language books.

Topics which came up only once or twice in book notes included folklore, nature, tourism, cooking, architecture, emigration, theater and bibliographies. Four books on bilingualism and minority languages were noted, and four on the other Celtic nations were given mention. Also included were 6 Breton history books, 11 books on Breton society and economy, 11 biographical works, oral histories or collections of memoirs, 13 books on Breton music, and 30 Breton literary works. Through several feature articles, nearly 50 books for Breton language learners were presented (dictionaries, grammars, linguistic studies, etc.).

Additionally, we noted or reviewed 46 Breton magazines and journals and described the work of a dozen major Breton publishers. All in all, Bro Nevez has provided an excellent source of information on publishing activity in Brittany. This is an activity which has flourished in the past five years in Brittany, but which remains hidden to North Americans since Breton books and magazines are rarely visible on bookstore shelves. Outside of the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C., and the Harvard University Celtic studies collection in Massachusetts, most university libraries in the U.S. carry only a tiny sample of materials available from Brittany. Only the largest of the public librairies (New York City, for example) carry any books at all on Brittany.

Readers can be assured that we will continue to work to keep you informed of new publications and the important work of Breton and French or Gallo publishers in Brittany.



News of non-Celtic Languages

Lois Kuter

Bretons are by no means alone in their struggle for linguistic and cultural survival. In the United States multilingualism is today threatened by "English-Only" laws enacted by local and state governments. On the national level, an "English-Only" lobby has been active for several years to make English the exclusive official language of the United States. This encouragement of monolingualism, disguised sometimes as American patriotism, is indeed sad in a world where international trade and communication make it so important for Americans to speak a second or a third language. No one can deny that it is important for all citizens of the U.S. to master the English language, but this does not need to be done at the expense of other languages spoken in the home and by communities who contribute to the rich cultural heritage of the United States.

It has been the aim of the "Non-Celtic Languages" column to acquaint Bro Nevez readers with some of the lesser known languages spoken throughout the world and with work to protect linguistic and cultural diversity.

We have presented, in fact, a good variety of languages and organizations in the first 20 issues of the U.S. ICDBL newsletter, including the following languages and the following organizations whose aim is to support non-English speakers in the United States: Alaska native languages and the work of the Alaska Native Language Center in Fairbanks, the Amish in Pennsylvania, Basque and the Basque Studies Program in Nevada, Esperanto, Frisian and the Ohio-based publication Frisian News Items, Hawaiian, Sicilian and the work of Arba Sicula, the Federation of American Cultural and Language Communities (a group leading the fight against the "English Only" movement, made up of representatives of major non-English languages spoken in the United States, such as German, Spanish, French, Italian, or Hungarian...), and the "Non-English Language Resources of the U.S.A." project by well-known sociolinguist Joshua Fishman. We have also strayed beyond the U.S. borders in articles on minority languages in China, Flemish in Belgium, the Sorbs in East Germany, and Ukrainian in Ukraine.

The active interest in Europe for the defense of smaller language populations has been presented in several articles on the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages, the Conference of Stateless Nations of Western Europe (CONSEO), and the landmark colloquium on bilingualism organized by Diwan, October 31-November 3, 1985.

The issue of bilingualism and multilingualism is certainly politically alive in the U.S. today, as it has been in Canada and Europe for many years. We hope that this column has helped readers gain a better understanding of the complexity of multilingualism in our own country and in the world.

Ar Gegin

Nathalie Novik

MUSSELS "MARINIÈRE"

(my mother's recipe)

Mussels are best bought fresh in October, November and December. The following recipe is a classic one, but it has specific Breton elements to it:

one large and deep pan, or a steamer
one dozen mussels (if you need more, select a pan accordingly)
3 to 4 shallots
one bunch parsley
one glass of dry white wine
water

Pour a little water in the pan, perhaps about 3/4" deep. Chop the shallots and the parsley, stir them into the water, and bring to ebullition (nearly boiling). Add the wine, which should slightly stop the water from boiling. As soon as it starts boiling, add the mussels. As soon as they open, i.e., 5 to 7 minutes, remove the mussels. The water from the mussels, combined with the boiling water and wine make a "marinière" sauce. Because there might be a little sand at the bottom of the pan left from the mussels, pour the liquid out carefully, leaving the sand at the bottom. Pour the sauce over the mussels and serve with white wine, thick slices of rye bread and butter.

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BRO NEVEZ AND FOOD

Lois Kuter

While we have not advanced at all on our plans for a cookbook, the newsletter has included in its first 21 issues a tantalizing array of recipes for soups, main dishes and desserts. The two editors for "Ar Gegin", Laurie Fadave and, currently, Nathalie Novik, have done an outstanding job in providing and soliciting interesting Breton recipes for this column. Featured also was a contribution on liquid specialties of Brittany--wines, chistr and chouchenn.

While we have only had one restaurant review so far, this is certainly a direction to be encouraged for future contributions since so many Breton emigrants to the United States have made their mark in the restaurant business. We also count on readers to add to the following list of recipes that have appeared in Bro Nevez in the past five years.

crêpes
gwestell ar
baelon
fish soup
kig ha fars
chicken à la
bretonne

fars (5 different kinds)
marble pound cake
Fisherman's omlette
roasted goose with
chestnuts
green peas à la nantaise
Pot-au-feu à la bretonne

kouign amann
apple omlette
pumpkin soup
crab au gratin
Saint-Malo
stuffed eggs Saint-Suliac

Discovering Brittany

Cultural organizations in Brittany have long been active in helping people learn more about their own history and culture. Today there are quite a few opportunities for Bretons--and for visitors--to discover Brittany beyond picturesque coasts and countryside. One such opportunity is offered through a joint project by **Multi-Collection-neurs de Documents Bretons et Celtiques** (a research group) and **Aneit** (a group to support the Gallo heritage of eastern Brittany). These two organizations are working with a continuing education association called **AGEACE** to schedule a week of activities for people interested in learning more about Upper Brittany. If you will be travelling in Brittany next spring (1987), consider the following program:

DECOUVERTE DE LA HAUTE-BRETAGNE

| | |
|--------------------------|---|
| Monday, June 29, 1987: | An introduction to the Breton and Gallo languages. |
| Tuesday, June 30, 1987: | An introduction to the natural world--animals and plants discovered through guided walking tours. |
| Wednesday, July 1, 1987: | Introduction to Gallo and French language literature of eastern Brittany. |
| Thursday, July 2, 1987: | History and architecture--introduced through visits to historical sites. |
| Friday, July 3, 1987: | An introduction to economy--agriculture and industry of eastern Brittany. |
| Saturday, July 4, 1987: | Collections: conferences on art and material culture of Brittany. |

Each day will include an introduction to the gastronomy of Gallo Brittany, including both the preparation and eating of local specialties.

Participation in this discovery session can be arranged for just one day (120 francs per day) or for the entire week (1,500 francs--including lodging). Reduced rates are available for children and families, so consult the organizers in advance.

Anyone interested in this opportunity should write directly to the following address for more information:

AGEACE
Formation Continue
Les Hairies
Étreilles
35370 Argentré du Plessis
FRANCE

the international championship of celtic wrestling

The first International Championship of Celtic Wrestling and Traditional Celtic Sports was held August 15, 16 and 17, 1986, in Lorient, Brittany, during the Inter-Celtic Festival of Lorient. During its annual ten days in early August, the Lorient Festival has served for a number of years as a gathering point for thousands of musicians, dancers, artists and sportsmen from the Celtic countries (including Galicia).* Hundreds of thousands of festival attenders have had the opportunity to see the best of traditional and contemporary Celtic expression at this festival. Thus, it was the logical site for the first championship of Celtic wrestling and sports.**

The first international tournament was, in fact, the culmination of many months of work by wrestlers and practitioners of other traditional Celtic sports. The International Federation of Celtic Wrestling, officially created in December 1985, has been particularly active in establishing a network of contacts between wrestlers who practice the Celtic styles in the Celtic countries or elsewhere.*** Despite a lack of interest, if not outright hostility, on the part of larger sports institutions in Great Britain and France, the International Federation of Celtic Wrestling has held a number of very successful workshops and tournaments gathering wrestlers from Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, Cumberland, Brittany and the Netherlands (Friesland). The August championship was the product of the groundwork laid by this activity.

During the three days of the August championship, wrestlers were required to test their skills in all three of the major styles of Celtic wrestling--Breton, Cornish and Cumberland. Four teams were present at this first international championship: Cornwall, Scotland, Cumberland, and Brittany, each with a team of six wrestlers (one for each weight category) who had been chosen through earlier competitions. Trophies went to individual wrestlers and to the team accumulating the most points during the three days of the tournament.

The U.S. ICDBL congratulates all those who worked for this important inter-Celtic event. A special salute to the champions of the first international championship of Celtic wrestling:

| | Cornish Style | Cumberland Style | Breton Style |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Feather-weights (62 kilos) | Fanch Maze (Brittany) | Andrew Davidson (Cumberland) | Donald Richardson (Scotland) |
| Light-weights (68k) | Hervé L'Her (Brittany) | Hervé L'Her (Brittany) | Hervé L'Her (Brittany) |
| Middle-weights (72k) | Benoit Foll (Brittany) | Seamus McCarthy (Cornwall) | Benoit Foll (Brittany) |
| Middle-heavy-weights (81k) | Simon Robson (Cumberland) | Simon Robson (Cumberland) | Franck Menguy (Brittany) |
| Heavy-weights (90k) | Jean-Pierre Jaouen (Brittany) | Trever Hodgson (Scotland) | Jean-Pierre Jaouen (Brittany) |
| Super-heavy-weights (90+k) | Bill McNeill (Scotland) | Jo Threlfall (Cumberland) | Bill McNeill (Scotland) |

(1 kilogram = approximately 2.2 pounds)

INTERNATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP OF CELTIC WRESTLING - cont'd.

The trophy for the best wrestler went to Breton Hervé L'Her who won all three styles of wrestling in his weight category. Cathal Hickey of Cornwall won a trophy for courage. Bretons have played a leading role in the creation of an inter-Celtic and international network for Celtic style wrestlers. **Gouren**, the Breton word for wrestling, has been particularly healthy in Brittany with thousands of young practitioners. The relatively strong place wrestling has had in Brittany was reflected in the team standings at this first international tournament. The team trophy went to Brittany with 58 team points, followed by Cumberland with 47, Scotland with 33 and Cornwall with 22.

- * See Bro Nevez 16 (August 1985) for notes about the Lorient Festival.
- ** We hope to include an article in a future Bro Nevez issue on traditional sports of Brittany.
- *** For further information about Celtic wrestling and the International Federation of Celtic Wrestling, readers are referred to the following Bro Nevez issues: 14 (February 1985), 15 (May 1985), and 19 (May 1986). Readers should also take note of two very interesting articles which appeared in the Summer 1986 issue of Dalc'homp Sonj: "La lutte bretonne et ses origines celtiques" by Guy Jaouen, and "Aux origines du sport en Bretagne et dans les pays celtiques" by Georges Cadiou.

