

BRO NEVEZ

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



The very first Diwan class
with teacher Denez Abernot in 1977.

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 a newsletter for both the U.S. ICDBL and the newly formed Canadian Branch of the ICDBL. It is published quarterly: February, May, August and November. Contributions, letters to the Editor, and ideas are welcome from all readers and will be printed at the discretion of the Editors. Suggested deadlines for receipt of contributions for Bro Nevez are: January 20, April 20, July 20, and October 20.

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

Membership in the U.S. Branch of the ICDBL includes subscription to Bro Nevez:

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The U.S. ICDBL provides Bro Nevez on a complimentary basis to a number of language and cultural organizations in Brittany; in some instances we are also very happy to establish an exchange of publications.

NORTH AMERICANS SHOW SUPPORT FOR THE BRETON LANGUAGE

A New Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language is launched in Canada

The ICDBL was first established in 1975 in Brussels, Belgium, to support the repeated demands of Bretons that their native language be given the recognition and place in the schools, media, and public life of Brittany that it needs to survive. The ICDBL was founded by and continues to count on the support of non-Bretons who show through their membership that, while the future of the Breton language does not directly concern them, it is a matter of world importance.

The **U.S. Branch of the ICDBL** was founded in 1981 and publishes a quarterly 35-page newsletter called Bro Nevez (primarily in English with some Breton and French). Membership includes a subscription to Bro Nevez (\$18 for voting membership; \$17 for non-voting membership). Or one can subscribe without being a member (\$15 for U.S./Canada; other destinations: \$20 surface mail; \$25 airmail). The U.S. ICDBL also publishes a number of "working papers" and guides on the Breton language, music, and history. Contact: Lois Kuter, U.S. ICDBL, 169 Greenwood Ave., B-4, Jenkintown, PA 19046, U.S.A. Telephone: (215) 886-6361.

In January 1998, the **Canadian Branch of the ICDBL** was relaunched. This branch of the ICDBL will publish a newsletter called Brittany (trilingual in English, Breton, French). Canadian Membership including Brittany is \$15 (Canadian dollars). A Canadian Membership which includes both Brittany and Bro Nevez is \$30. A subscription to Brittany without membership is \$10 for the U.S. and Canada and \$20 by surface mail elsewhere. Contact: Jeffrey D. O'Neill, 58 Century Drive, Scarborough, Ontario, M1K 4J6 CANADA (e-mail: jdkoneill@sympatico.ca). Telephone: (416) 264-0475.

Show your support for the Breton language by becoming a member of the U.S. or Canadian Branch. Or subscribe to one or both newsletters to keep up to date on the situation of the Breton language in Brittany, and for a wealth of information on the Breton culture, as well as reviews of new books and recordings.

TELL PEOPLE ABOUT US AND JOIN US!

News from Brittany – Some Short Notes

European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages

On April 4th demonstrations were held in several cities of France to show support for regional languages and to urge France to sign the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (Charte européenne des langues régionales ou minoritaires). In Rennes and in Bayonne (Basque country) an estimated 3,000 to 4,000 people hit the streets. About 100 to 150 demonstrated in Strasbourg. A conservative estimate for the total would hover around 7,000—if one were to take the figures given by the organizers of the demonstrations the figure would be closer to 10,000—a very strong showing either way. Perhaps more telling of the support in Brittany for the Charter's signing is the strong support on the part of Breton elected officials. The Charter has been supported by the Regional Council of Brittany, the General Councils of all five departments of Brittany, municipal councils of major cities such as Rennes, Nantes, Lorient, and Quimper, and by a majority of Breton Deputies.

So far a total of 18 counties in the Council of Europe have signed the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. Seven of these have gone on to ratify the Charter and it went into effect in those countries in March.

The People of Loire-Atlantique continue to affirm their Breton identity

According to a survey taken by Sofres, 62% of those surveyed (who live in Loire-Atlantique) feel that the Department of Loire-Atlantique should be reattached to Brittany. The question read: "Personally, do you want to see the department of Loire-Atlantique, which is currently attached to the region Pays-de-la-Loire, reattached to the region of Brittany?" 33% responded "yes, absolutely", 29% responded "Yes, mostly," 16% responded "No, mostly," 18% responded "No, not at all" and 4% had no opinion.

21st Festival of Cinema of Douarnenez

This year the Douarnenez Cinema Festival moves to July 7-14 (from its usual time of September). Each year this major film festival focuses its attention on a particular people of the world (Native Americans, Irish, Australian Aborigines, Palestinians, gypsies, etc.) and this year's festival will feature Wales. This means classic and new movies and documentaries from Wales as well as lectures and discussion panels about Wales, its language and culture, and the impact of Welsh-language television. Brittany will also have its place at the festival as new productions are shown and judged for awards. "Festival" also means music and dancing each evening.

A Native Son Recognized

Didier Squiban received a "granite disc" (as opposed to a gold disc) from the Mayor of the island of Molène on May 12th in recognition of his CD called "Molène" (see review in Bro Nevez 65, February 1998). On this island with a population of just 270 he sold 672 copies of the CD!. Present to celebrate this recognition were Manu Lann Huel, Stephan Eicher, and Michel Thersiquel (who did the wonderful photos for the CD jacket).

A Breton Enterprise in the U.S.

Did you know that for ten years Guy Cotten, Inc., has been based in New Bedford, Massachusetts, and that this Breton company ranks second in the U.S. in the production of clothing for the maritime profession. Perhaps there aren't that many fishermen in the U.S., but this company also ranks second in the world in the production of maritime work gear and sportswear with sales on every sea. So all your sailors out there, keep your eye out for this Breton product.

Diwan Celebrates 20 Years of Public Education in the Breton Language

This May Diwan held a festival to celebrate 20 years of service to provide Breton-language education to the children of Brittany. This marked 20 years of very hard work on the part of teachers, parents, and supporters, as well as students to make the Diwan schools a success ... and a success they certainly are! The following article by Fanch Olivier presents the early days of Diwan very nicely (it has been pulled from the web site for the newspaper Le Télégramme, May 3, 1998, edition, from the weekly Sunday supplement "100 days of the century"). Today the Diwan schools are widely viewed as a viable alternative choice for a good education, but in 1977 and 1978 when the first schools opened they were viewed as the work of dreamers and fanatics--just a very short term experiment. The "experiment" has worked, and we wish Diwan success in its next 20 years of work to give children the tools to keep Breton a truly living language. LK

1977: Diwan invents a name to re-awaken a language

Shaking up the references of the education world, five families weary of waiting for a commitment from the State opened a nursery school on May 24, 1977 in Lampaul-Ploudalmézeau, where the teacher only spoke Breton to the students. This was the first Diwan school.

Today, there are 1,750 students being taught in Breton in 25 nursery schools, 26 primary schools, three middle schools and one high school.

To maintain this system of teaching and to respond to demand, Diwan ("seedling" in Breton) has demonstrated stubborn obstinance. The establishments survived via volunteer help and private donations before being progressively, but partially, put under the charge of State and regional authorities.

"Nobody believed anymore in the will of the French government to introduce teaching in Breton in the schools. So we decided to do it ourselves", stated Reun L'Hostis, one of the founders of the first Skol Diwan (a nursery school), in the Télégramme in June 1977.

A man of backbone, this Reun L'Hostis. A Breton speaker until the age of five, he spent three years in the Navy, had a sojourn in Paris and then returned to Brittany where, as a naval repairs technician and political militant, he rediscovered the language that he, like thousands of children, had been forbidden to speak.

In clown make-up

In Brittany, at the same time, the re-claiming of culture was taking shape in the wake of Emgleo Breiz and of Galv to save a language that was dying: more than a million Breton speakers in 1950, three times less 25 years later...

It's now or never, said certain militants who wanted to create nursery schools, along the lines of the Basque "ikastolas", where one would speak Breton. The association baptized itself Diwan in reference to a Breton word which translates to "seed".

The story goes that this word was impressed on the mind of Gweltaz Ar Fur, founder of the school at Quimper and the first president of the federation (and also a musician and founder of the Ar Bed Keltiek stores), during a

trip to London where a similar term (of Turkish or Persian origin) was displayed on the sign of a store...

Meanwhile, throughout the regions of Cornouaille and Léon, the pioneers were going from door to door recruiting students. Already preparing for the future, the parents in the Abers region were even counting the pregnant women of the area.

At the end of 1976, five families asked officially to lease the old school of Lampaul-Ploudalmézeau, closed for many years. The mayor helped the project and the municipal council gave, by secret ballots, its blessing by nine votes for and two abstentions.

The parents decided to open the school after Easter. For a long time contacts had been made with an unemployed militant who had been waiting for three years for a cafeteria job at the public school at Lannilis. She got the job two days before the expected opening of the school and Diwan found itself without a teacher!

On Sunday morning, contact was made with Denez Abernot, a comedian with the Breton-language theater troupe "Ar Vro Pagan", who came right away still in clown make-up...he accepted the post until the summer vacations.

Monday, the 24th of May, the school opened with eight children.

Many sacrifices

In development for two years, the creation of an "unauthorized" nursery school in Breton nonetheless created a storm of public opinion. The revolutionary idea of teaching children in Breton was viewed badly at the time, since French had been for the preceding generations the obligatory passage to social promotion. To make this devalued language a means of teaching appeared to be a "utopian" vision.

Nevertheless, the work of spreading information throughout Brittany, notably by Yann Trelu, bore fruit. His foremost action was to conquer the reticence of certain parents who feared compromising the future of their children. He was also able to reduce the fears of public school teachers, numerous in the Breton cultural movement, who wished to keep the confidence of the national education system.

The parents of Quimper opened a second Diwan nursery school in October 1977 with seven students from five families. Those in the Monts-d'Arrée region (of Relec in Plounéour-Ménez) opened theirs in November. In 1978, it was an explosion: Lorient, Brest, Lannion, Saint-Pol-de-Léon, Rennes et Nantes. The public and Catholic schools didn't start their bilingual classes until some years later. Much sacrifice was required of the families and the militants who helped assure the functioning of these schools, whose survival was a daily gamble.

At Lampaul-Ploudalmézeau, the teacher was in charge of transporting the students; the meals were prepared by one of the mothers in her home. The school was free, the financing was exclusively from the action of volunteers. The most important part of the school budget (36,000 Francs per year) was consecrated to the teacher's salary (1,200.50 Francs monthly).

Little by little, in each school, stable financing in the form of automatic bank transfers supplemented the actions of the militants (at least one per month: fest-noz, events, festivals and sales of all kinds) and private donations, some of which came from afar.

An example: during its second school year, the receipts of a small school like Relec grew to 44,815 Francs in 1980, of which 65% came from the action of militants, 16% from donations and 17.5% from automatic monthly bank transfers ranging from 10 to 100 Francs.

Demonstrations and Negotiations

At the same time, Diwan was structuring itself. Reun L'Hostis, who had become president, and Yvon Abiven, treasurer, made Diwan a veritable enterprise. The baton was passed in 1984 to André Lavanant, an outstanding manager and negotiator, who presided with great effectiveness over the association for 13 years before being replaced last year by Andrew Lincoln.

Diwan has grown along with the students it welcomed: the first primary schools in 1981, the first middle school in 1988 and a high school in 1994. The network has extended throughout Brittany where 1,750 students are being taught in Breton in 1998, at 27 sites.

In parallel, important work has been undertaken regarding the pedagogy of early immersion (methods, materials) to guarantee true bilingualism in the students. The growth of Diwan has been in rhythm with the demonstrations and the negotiations with the national education system (which gave its first grant in 1982) and the local authorities, who have become much more open.

The association has nearly had to fold many times, notably in 1987 and 1993. This last crisis led Diwan to accept the status of private schools under contract to the state, but the association continues to reclaim, as it has from the beginning, recognition as a "public service of the national education system".

The Diwan graduates

"This is only the first step. We have the intention in some years to assure education up through high school graduation", said Reun L'Hostis in June 1977 without anyone taking him very seriously...20 years later, it's done!

The first Diwan high school graduation took place in 1997: 12 students were presented for examination, 12 students received their diplomas. The candidates re-drafted their exams in French (except for history and geography), but they did all their work, including mathematics and physical sciences, in Breton. How long ago it seems that the rumor was circulated that the little Breton speakers wouldn't ever speak French correctly...



A Quimper, le 19 juin 1982, Diwan descend une nouvelle fois dans la rue. Ils sont trois mille à fouler le pavé pour obtenir simplement le droit de choisir. De nombreux groupements culturels, politiques et syndicaux sont là. Ce sera une véritable bouffée d'air pour le mouvement. Chaque échec dans les négociations avec l'Education nationale entraînera de telles manifestations.

From Ar Men No. 32, January 1991

Brittany Loses A Cultural Warrior: Vefa de Bellaing (1909 to 1998)

This April Brittany lost a major figure in the defense of the Breton language and culture, Vefa de Bellaing. But, through her efforts to encourage young people in their studies of Breton, her work will certainly live on and her kindness and ability to teach will be remembered. I was one to benefit from her generosity and wisdom. I met Vefa de Bellaing only briefly while in Brittany in the late 1970s, but when I sent her a draft outline for my doctoral dissertation on Breton identity in 1979, she sent pages of comments and helpful information to me. Like many other people I met in Brittany, it did not matter that I was just some student from America. Help was given generously by Vefa de Bellaing—especially to young people--despite many other demands for her time and energy. From the first issue on, I sent Bro Nevez (at first just called "Newsletter of the U.S. ICDBL") to Vefa de Bellaing, and she did not fail to send words of encouragement in the development of our newsletter. And I know that she often passed copies of Bro Nevez along to English speakers—American or not—that she might encounter. Vefa de Bellaing worked her full lifetime to serve the Breton language and culture. She was a remarkable woman, and will be remembered by the thousands of people she taught and inspired.

The following biographical sketch was written by another remarkable defender of the Breton culture, Yann Bouessel du Bourg (1925-1996), and was published in the February 1986 issue of Bro Nevez (No. 18).

VEFA DE BELLAING

*By Yann Bouessel du Bourg
translated by Reun ar C'halan*

Geneviève Charbonnier de Sireuil was born September 12, 1909, in Carhaix. She was three when her parents moved to Quimper in 1912. It was there that she spent her childhood years and studied at Notre-Dame d'Espérance.

She was, she says, a "poor student," not hard-working, but she was attracted to music. At the age of sixteen, in 1926, she started to study the violin at the Conservatoire of Nantes, but she stayed only one year, because of her father's sudden death one year later. Her brother, a naval officer, was far away, and her sister was married. Her mother chose to call her back near her, in Quimper, and in 1929 she married Jacques de Bellaing with whom she had two children, Hoela and Bruno-Tremeur.

It was her father, an ardent Breton patriot, who taught her to love Brittany and her language. He did not know Breton, and he had tried to learn it, but in those days it was not easy. She followed in his footsteps, and she loved her country, always on the breach, always in the first line in the midst of those soldiers who are never relieved. It will not be possible to write the history of the Breton cultural movement without seeing her name popping up everywhere.

It was around the years 1932-1933 that she learned Breton with "Skol Ober" and Marc'harid Gouraouen, who she would replace for a while at the head of this organization. At the end of World War II, together with Xavier de Langlais and Ronan Huon, she created

the “Kampoù Etrekeltiek ar Vrezhonegerien” (Interceltic Camps of Breton Speakers), which were a mixture of summer schools and meeting places, and which exerted such a powerful influence. She is also a member of the Jury for the Xavier de Langlais Prize in Breton literature. Under her married name, V. de Bellaing, she has published in Breton, in Al Liamm, articles and studies, mostly on music and literature (“Paol Ladmirault,” “Paol Le Flemm,” “Lennegezh Bro-Japan,” “Ar beder flac’h roet dezho ar Priz Nobel a lennegezh”), short stories, translations, memoirs, and, under the pen name Soaz Kervahe (between 1966 and 1970), six poems which lead us on tiptoe to the threshold of a soul whose mystery had remained a secret, even for those who had known her many years. Self-sacrifice and courage, fiery tenderness, love of life, of this beauty of the world over which we are meant to keep watch. Did not a single sonnet ensure the fame of the Chevalier d’Arvers?

Some lines of these six poems, simple and unaffected, without false ornamentation: “Distro” [Return], “Pedenn” [Prayer], “Memento,” “Ene dianav” [Secret Soul], “Joa d’an Anaon” [Joy to the Departed Souls], “Buhez kent” [Former life], rank among the most beautiful, the most moving ever written in our language.

Under the pen name Herve Huiban, since June 1979, Vefa de Bellaing has been writing for Armor-Magazine, under the title “Tra pe dre” [This and that], a most eclectic Breton column (“Vakañsoù ha traouachoù” [Holidays and things], “Ur Bruderezh dibar” [Publicity without peer], “Ha gouest e oa ar merc’hed da votiñ?” [Were women able to vote?], “Chaseal ar frip” [Hunting for waste], etc.

In the same journal, she has also published, under her own name, a few biographies: “Claude Dervenn,” “Paul Le Flem,” P. Ladmirault” (“Une mess en état de grâce” [A mass in the state of grace].

“The list of my works is rather slim,” the author writes with great modesty, “I have spent many years typing texts written by others ... and I did not find the time to write for myself.”

She has also reread [proof read], tirelessly, for many years, the texts of Al Liamm and of books published by Al Liamm, always ready to accept the tasks which no one else wanted to assume.

Let us hope that she will, in spite of it all, find the time to tie together the multicolored threads of her memories, and to pursue to the end a labor which she has undertaken, the writing of her memoirs which are also one of the richest pages in our history.

* * *

I do not know if memoirs of Vefa de Bellaing have been completed, but it is certain that since the writing of that article by Yann Bouessel du Bourg in 1986, she continued to write. And it was her passion for music that led her to publish the Dictionnaire des compositeurs de musique en Bretagne in 1992. This was the fruit of many years of work and is a key reference work for music of a more classical style by Breton composers, or inspired by Brittany. The review I did of this work in Bro Nevez 43 (August 1992) is worth reprinting here to reintroduce this remarkable book.

Vefa de Bellaing. **Dictionnaire des compositeurs de musique en Bretagne.** Nantes: Ouest Editions, 1992. 280 pages. ISBN 2-908261-11-1.

Brittany has long had a reputation for the richness of its traditional music and dance. That is what is most unique to visitors, but Bretons have been extremely active in exploring all genres of music—from rock and jazz to opera and symphonic music. This dictionary of Breton composers is the result of at least five years of solid research, and for the first time, the extent to which Bretons have contributed to what we call “classical music” is thoroughly presented.

Best known of the early 20th century Breton composers are Guy Ropartz and Paul Le Flem who trace their influence to César Franck, and Paul Ladmirault who is linked with Gabriel Fauré. In more recent years Jef Le Penven stands out for his activity and particular use of Breton and Celtic themes in his compositions. In 280 pages Vefa de Bellaing presents over 200 artists who are not as well known or often performed in Brittany, but who testify to the fact that Brittany is a very musical place.

Vefa de Bellaing is passionate about music and has an ear not just for classical styles but also for traditional Breton music and innovative arrangements of it. She is best known, however, for her decades of work for the Breton language. Now in her 80s, this modest and youthful woman is the author of articles, short stories, memoirs and poetry in the Breton language—published in Al Liamm and other magazines – under her own name or a pen name. She learned Breton only as an adult—through Skol Ober—and has helped many others in Brittany since to learn Breton. She served for a period as the director of Skol Ober and has been one of its correspondents. She was also a co-founder and remains active with the Kamp Etrekeltiek ar Vrezhonegerien.

Vefa de Bellaing is not one to seek center stage, but her lifetime of work has by no means gone unnoticed. In March 1988 she was awarded the Order of the Ermine—an honor accorded each year by the Cultural Institute of Brittany to Bretons who have made exceptional contributions to the Breton culture. She shared the honor in 1988 with Polig Monjarret, Henri Queffelec, and Pierre-Roland Giot.

One can be guaranteed that Vefa de Bellaing’s Dictionary of Breton Composers is a masterpiece of scholarship. Besides biographical information on each composer, entries include lists of their works, bibliographical notes, and record notes. The dictionary also includes non-Breton composers inspired by Brittany, a list of prizes awarded to Breton composers, works for the organ transcribed into braille, a vocabulary guide, and a general bibliography. Ninety illustrations and photographs complement the text.

NEW BOOKS FROM BRITTANY

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

Bernard Le Nail. Explorateurs et grands voyageurs Bretons. Editions Jean-Paul Gisserot. (Les Universels Gisserot 19). 1998. 128 pages.

The author of this book, Bernard Le Nail, has been the director of the Cultural Institute of Brittany since 1983, and he has published a number of wonderful articles on Bretons and world exploration—contributing an article called “Names of Breton origin throughout the world” to *Bro Nevez* (translated from French by our member Genevieve Ray and printed in issues 19 & 20, May and August 1986).

This little paperback contains biographical presentations of some 200 Breton explorers whose travels took them to nearly all continents. Bernard Le Nail points out in his forward that in the 16th century Brittany was a major sea power, and although Portugal is better known for its exploration in the late 1500s, Brittany had a comparable population and a larger maritime force. Navigational maps prepared by Bretons in the 15th and 16th century were recognized as the best available, and used by the likes of Sir Francis Drake. Bretons were on the crew of both Magellan and Columbus. The “discoverer of Canada,” Jacques Cartier, was a Breton. Anyone who has taken an introductory anthropology class has read Malinowski’s Argonauts of the Western Pacific about the Trobriand Islanders. These New Guinea islands were named after a Breton explorer, Jean-Joseph Trobriand de Kerédern (1765-1799) who first explored them in 1793.

This book is a mine of information on Breton explorers active primarily in the late 18th century through the 19th century, with the inclusion a dozen or more from 5th through 16th century. With Brittany’s loss of independence by the late 16th century, many of these Bretons were soldiers and sailors for France, engaged in military battles and the colonization of new worlds. Others were independent explorers and adventurers or scientists out to document the natural world. And then others were missionaries off to bring Catholicism to the rest of the world.

At least 20 of the 200 individuals presented in the book explored North America. A few of these are worth citing briefly. Canadian explorers include Joseph Quesnel (1749-1809) who is credited with writing the first lyrical music work of Canada—a musical comedy called *Colas et Colinette* (1790). His son, Jules Maurice Quesnel was a fur trader who accompanied Simon Fraser in his exploration of the Rocky Mountains and Columbia River. A town, river, and lake in British Columbia bear the name Quesnel. François Dupont-Gravé (1560-1629) was an early explorer of the St Lawrence River (1599-1600) as well as what are now Maine and New Hampshire. He also explored the Canadian maritime provinces with Samuel Champlain. His son, Robert Gravé du Pont (1585-1621) also explored the

maritime provinces and worked as a fur trader, but had some difficulties obeying the laws and had to flee and live among the Indians for his misdeeds for a time. René de Bréhant de Galinee (about 1645-1678) and Francis Dollier de Casson (1636-1701) crossed the border from New France into the future U.S. to explore the Mississippi Valley and Great Lakes region in the late 1660s, producing one of the first maps of the Great Lakes.

In the United States, Charles-Bonaventure de Breil de Rays (1832-1893) participated in the California Gold Rush, crossing the continent from Georgia in the 1850s. He also traveled to Madagascar, Senegal, Indochina and New Guinea. Jean-Baptiste Bénard de la Harpe (1683-1765) was seduced by land dealers and bought land along the Red River in Louisiana only to arrive in 1718 with 46 other Bretons he recruited to find swampland. He became an explorer of the Red River and set up forts along it. Using Fort Breton, or Fort Malouin, as headquarters he explored much of Arkansas and some of Oklahoma. Dom Urbain Guillet (1764-1817) landed in Baltimore in 1803 with the hope of establishing a Cistercian Monastery. He explored possibilities in Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri and Illinois, returning to France in 1814 without really making a foothold. In 1848 Bretons from the Abbey of Notre-Dame de Melleray (north of Nantes) finally succeeded in founding an abbey south of Louisville, Kentucky: Notre-Dame de Getsemany. While Antoine Gilbert de Voisins (1877-1939) traveled primarily to China and Africa, he was a good horseman and spent some time touring with Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show.

Those are just a few of the characters you follow throughout the world in this little book. Bernard Le Nail does an excellent job of detailing the travels of these Bretons, and while there are lots of dates and place names to follow, the reading is pleasant, and one gets a sense of the difficulties these travelers often encountered. Not surprisingly, some of the native populations they met were less than friendly, and poor diet and hard physical conditions took a toll. Few of these Bretons retired to a quiet old age at home. Besides basic facts about the birth/death place and date of each explorer, each entry also lists some of their travel writings and other sources of information about them. A general bibliography is also included.

This is a fascinating book which shows quite well the international outlook and spirit of adventure still characteristic in Brittany today.

* * *

Emmanuel Salmon-Legagneur (project director). Les noms qui ont fait l'histoire de Bretagne—1000 noms pour les rues de Bretagne. Coop Breizh and Institut Culturel de Bretagne. 1997. 445 pages. ISBN 2-84346-032-8.

This wonderful new publication is intended to help Bretons become more aware of their own history, with the hope that when the opportunity comes up, they might draw names from Brittany's rich history to name public streets and spaces. The book is the work of an interdisciplinary group of scholars gathered by the Cultural Institute of Brittany who tried to include representation from all fields in the choice of names. And included in this book are social, cultural, religious, and political actors who made an impact on Brittany's history from the earliest Breton kings to the present. Besides biographical entries, the book includes a brief history of how streets have been named in Brittany and how the authors went about choosing the names to include. The book includes, in fact, 1,055 names. Of these, 995 are names of people, 35 are important places, and 26 are major events.

Each entry includes birth and death date/place, and a brief indication of occupation (writer, philosopher, king, singer, labor leader, etc.). A short biography (just one or two paragraphs in most cases) is followed by a list of towns where that individual already has a street named for him/her. Indexes in the back are very helpful if you are searching for ideas for a street name. You can look by historical period and "occupation" (dukes, duchesses, noble families, etc.), or you can look for particular types of "heroes" (maritime, explorers, military officers, etc.). You can look for soldiers, religious leaders, various cultural/art categories (writers, musicians, poets, painters, etc.), or professional categories (doctors, inventors, industry leaders...). If you live in or visit a particular town, an index will give you the names most closely related to its history. Also included is a list of people who were Breton speakers and another list of famous women of Brittany. A section is included on the "etiquette" of naming streets, and a short bibliography to guide one to other reading is also included.

While this book has a practical side for use by Bretons to make the names of their history more visible and better known, it is a book of strong appeal to anyone interested in getting a better grip on Breton history. Because names (and events) listed are alphabetical, it is an easy way to look up a name you recognize but have only a fuzzy knowledge of. And this book would make a nice guide to take along as a tourist to add a little spice to travels in Brittany.

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Jean Le Tallec. La vie paysanne en Brtagne centrale sous l'Ancien Régime. Spezet: Coop Breizh. 1996. 254 pages. ISBN 2-909924-50-5.

While the two books cited above focus on the famous sons (and daughters) of Brittany, this book on pre-Revolutionary (pre-1792) Brittany tries to bring to light the life of everyday people. As the author, Jean Le Tallec, notes in his introduction there are not many solid historical studies of the everyday man, and there are lots of romantic images of the happy peasant of olden times. He also notes that the lack of books on this topic is not due to a lack of information available to historians. The archives of Brittany are rich with materials ready to be studied.

Le Tallec spent eight years sorting through a mass of details to put together this book. He used the archives of the Seigneurie de Corlay because these were relatively complete, this was the area of his own family, and it was an interesting area geographically. The types of documents available to him included "aveux"—a feudal document where peasants declared their status as a vassal and which included a description of land, agricultural buildings and homes. Also very useful were inventories taken at the time of death of household goods. Church registers of baptisms, marriages and funerals were also key documents. While other life events were harder to track, the author found that legal depositions made by those called before the court were revealing since they described what the individual was doing at the time of the "crime." Added to these resources was a reading of various travel writings by visitors to Brittany in the 17th through early 19th century. While one would not expect a dictionary to be a source of key information, Le Tallec found the annotations and notes in Grégoire de Rostrenen's 1732 *Dictionnaire Français-Breton* to be very helpful. Last, but not least, the publication of drawings of Olivier Perrin done in 1793-94 depicting Breton rural life and customs (from birth, through childhood and adult life) served to add a visual illustration of information found in other texts. A newer edition of this in 1835 (*Breiz-Izel, ou la Vie des Bretons d'Armorique*) added texts by Alexandre Bouët. A large number of Perrin's wonderfully detailed drawings are found in this book, as are photographs and reproductions of documents.

Le Tallec uses a great number of examples drawn directly from his sources (sometimes with a bit of rewording to make them intelligible) to illustrate each topic, and a good half of the text in this book is this original material. Thus, when he talks about houses and their furnishings, he includes a number of inventories (taken at death) which detail furniture and the smallest utensils. When he talks about the importance of a man's hat he draws on court records which emphasis the theft of a hat as an important complaint. He also quotes the observations found in travel writings to add further "meat" to a description of any particular aspect of rural life. The strength of Le Tallec's work is that

he does not count on one source to form a conclusion and clearly alerts the reader to possible differences in interpretation or the need for more information. This is an honest work not meant to be the final say on peasant life in 16th-18th century Brittany.

The book is divided nicely into different topics, starting with the feudal structure—what was the relationship between vassals and lords and what rights did each have? The second chapter describes the house and farm buildings and their layout, and the third chapter details the furniture and belongings one would find. Food and eating habits form a chapter of their own followed by a description of daily labor. Family life is also described (births, baptisms, schooling, marriage, and death). The chapter on community life includes the interesting topic of crime and disputes among neighbors. The happier side of community life (dance, music, sports and festivals) is given a separate chapter. The two final chapters contain some of the most fascinating information about comportment and attitude. This includes people's appearance (dress, long hair of men, hats) and language and gestures. Also documented are notions of hospitality, superstitions and customs, attitudes about dance and sport, violence, and drinking.

All the rich detail in this book adds up to a fascinating image of what life *might* have been like in earlier times. It is not always pretty, and certainly not a nostalgic view of a "good old days." But a very human face is presented from the mass of documents Le Tallec has studied.

* * *

Ranka Bijeljic and Roland Breton. Du Langage aux langues. Découvertes Gallimard - Sciences. 1997. 128 pages. ISBN 2-07-053268-2.

I would like to thank Jean Kergren for sending me this remarkable little paperback about language. One is first struck by the visual attractiveness of this book which includes over 130 colorful photos, illustrations, and maps to help document what might be a very large and dense topic—language and what it is. Broken down into little sections, this book is full of fascinating insights about language and how it works—first, physically how we make languages work and how they are structured, and then how language functions socially, culturally and politically.

The authors are well suited to tackle such a vast topic and present it succinctly in a highly readable way. Ranka Bijeljic was trained in biology with a specialty in neuropsychology and psycholinguistics. She teaches at the University of Poitiers and has researched language acquisition by babies and lexical organization by bilingual children and adults. Roland Breton is specialized in geolinguistics and has studied languages

throughout the world. He has published dozens of books and articles on the geography of languages, minority languages, and political and social factors impacting language communities.

This book draws examples from all over the world in presenting the phenomenon of language and languages. The first chapter describes how language is specific to human beings, including topics such as why chimpanzees can't really speak a language like humans do, and how deaf-mute people communicate. Chapter Two explains the acquisition of language—how children learn to make sounds and organize them, theories about man's first acquisition of language and the evolution of languages with the evolution of mankind. Also explored is bilingualism and the human ability to handle more than one language.

Chapter Three enters into the social realm of how language marks one socially and culturally, and how language use changes with population movement. This chapter also describes plurilingualism and the different roles several languages play when spoken by an individual. Topics include diglossia, creole and pidgin languages, the transfer of languages from one generation to another ... or not, and language as an ethnic marker.

Chapter Four is entitled "Why these thousands of languages?" and describes how dialects develop, and how we define different language groups. Chapter Five deals with geopolitics, the domination of languages by others, efforts to eliminate languages, and how some languages succeed in developing while others do not. This theme is continued in Chapter Six which discusses the death of languages, the threatened state of others, and the growth of some. Also treated in this chapter is the identification of language families and the evolution of languages from common roots. The political use of language groupings such as "Aryen" is also explored.

In just 100 pages, all these topics are presented, and complex notions are clearly explained for the non-linguist in an interesting manner. A large appendix is added which includes short texts (2 to 4 pages) on a variety of topics: how parents speak to babies, language and brain structure, the evolution of the French language, the spread of English throughout the world, linguistic politics in India, how people perceive and comprehend speech, and the art of translation. A glossary, bibliography and index are also included.

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The European Bureau of Lesser Used Languages Series on European Languages

Since 1994, the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages has been publishing a series of 40-45 page booklets on “lesser used” languages of Europe. The first three of the series focused on the Vallée d’Aoste, Scotland and North Frisia. The latest three in the series are described below. All are available in several languages and are written by experts on a particular language who are usually speakers of the language in question. The booklets are very well written, basic introductions to language communities aimed at a general public. An amazing amount of information about the complex history and current situation of each language is presented in a very small number of pages.

Bojan Brezigar. Between Alps and Adriatic—The Slovenes in the European Union. European Languages 4. 1996. 44 pages. ISBN 90-74851-32-0.

The Republic of Slovenia (Slovenija) is a new state, dating back to 1991. The first really independent territory that could be identified as Slovenia dates back to the 7th century AD, and by the 8th century it was already losing independence to its neighbors. Today’s Slovenia was formerly part of Yugoslavia, but Slovenes are also found across the border of this new state in Italy (the northeast provinces of Trieste, Gorizia and Udine), in Austria to the north of Slovenia, in Hungary to the east, and in Croatia to the south. The disparity between political and cultural borders is a reflection of the complex history of this language group, and this is well presented in this booklet (and a good map clearly shows the borders).

Although a brief historical overview is very helpful, the aim of the booklet is to present the situation of the Slovenes and their language today. The focus is on the Slovene communities in Italy and in Austria, and in both countries these language groups had to fight for survival. In the 1920s in Italy, Slovene associations and cultural groups were shut down, place names and surnames of people were Italianized, Slovene teachers were transferred to other areas, and a large number of Slovenes emigrated to Yugoslavia or overseas. Today things are different and this booklet clearly describes the place of Slovene in the schools and media, and looks at the economy and place of the church in the Slovene community. The Slovenes in Austria fared a bit better historically in terms of linguistic tolerance, but by the 1920s this was also starting to slip, and the elimination of Slovene culture was clearly an aim of Nazi Germany when they took over this region in the 1940s. A deportation of Slovenes began in 1942 and all Slovene cultural expressions were banned in the schools, and cultural centers were destroyed. In the post-war period Slovenes rebuilt their institutions and the booklet describes cultural activities, schools, the press, economy, and the church. Linguistic rights for the Slovene language are also addressed for Italy, Austria, and the Republic of Slovenia. A list of addresses for further information is also included. Throughout the booklet are photos of people and countryside to further enliven the highly readable text.

Irja Seurujärvi-Kari, Steinar Pedersen, Vuokko Hirvonen. The Sámi—The Indigenous People of Northernmost Europe. European Languages 5. 1997, 45 pages. ISBN 90-74851-39-8.

This very informative booklet begins with a discussion of the concept of “Sámi” and “indigenous.” Indigenous is defined as meaning that a particular people inhabited the area where it lives before the establishment of the present day state which governs them or before colonization from the outside. In applying international charters on human rights this can be a key concept. As for “Sámi,” this denotes the people, the language and the area of settlement of the Sámi (and the booklet notes that the indigenous word is “Sápmi”—why don’t we use that instead?). Some readers may know these people as “Lapps” which has pejorative connotations for the Sámi.

In taking a census of this population in Norway, Sweden, Finland, and the Kola Peninsula (in Russia), the definition of who is “Sámi” has been primarily linguistic and there are an estimated 70,000 to 101,000 (out of 19 million total population in these states). Once again, this booklet has an excellent map to show where the Sámi population is based.

A very useful section of this booklet is the description of where Sámi fits into the language family. It is in fact not one monolithic language but better described as a group of languages with considerable diversity within. Sámi is part of the Uralic (Finno-Ugric) language family which also includes Finnish, Karelian, Hungarian, Mordvin and Mari (found in Russia), and Estonian. The booklet nicely traces the history of the relation between these languages and the peoples that speak them.

Also included in the booklet is a description of the Sámi land base and a history of its “invasion” by outsiders, the impact of state borders on division within the Sámi population, and the codification of rights for the Sámi. The Sámi flag (adopted in 1986) is shown and the words (in English only) are given for the Sámi anthem. Other sections of the booklet describe religion and economic livelihoods before moving on to a presentation of the different subgroups of Sámi languages (including a good map). Sections of the booklet also present Sámi cultural and political institutions, a history of education (including discussion of assimilation policies of the past and the current state of the language in Sámi school), the use of Sámi in the media, literature, and other arts.

A short bibliography ends the booklet and throughout it are lots of photos of people and landscape.

* * *

Nathan Weinstock, Haïm-Vidal Sephiha, with Anita Barrera-Schoonheere. Yiddish and Judeo-Spanish—A European Heritage. European Languages 6. 1997. 41 pages. ISBN 90-74851-46-0.

The Forward to this booklet nicely presents the subject at hand: *The living languages Judeo-German (Yiddish in English) and Judeo-Spanish (Apniolit, Judezmo, Judyó, Jidyó or Spaniol) are two remnants of the ancient language forms from which they are derived (Middle High German on the one hand and 15th century Spanish on the other). Both have two forms, one of which is a calque and is not spoken (used essentially for liturgical and pedagogical purposes, mainly in books for children and women) and the other, the vernacular which is spoken.*

The booklet then presents each of these Jewish languages, tracing first the origins of Yiddish, its role as a language of fusion to adapt to languages around it (Polish, Dutch, Alsatian, Slovak, Hungarian, Ukrainian ...), the crystallization of dialects, and the relation to Hebrew. Also described is the development of a Yiddish literature from the Middle Ages to the present and the support of a written tradition by socio-cultural associations. The loss of Yiddish speakers with World War II is clearly addressed. As noted in the booklet, on the eve of World War Two, 11 million people spoke Yiddish (three-fourths of the world's Jewish population). Some 6.8 million of these were in Eastern Europe and 317,000 in Western Europe. The Holocaust wiped out nearly all of the European population. This was followed by the Stalinist purge in the late 1940s which closed down Soviet Yiddish cultural institutions, newspapers, theaters and institutes. The loss of Yiddish as a language of the home has also added to its decline. The booklet describes well the difficult future faced by Yiddish today and efforts to insure its survival.

Judeo-Spanish is presented in the second half of the booklet. This is the language of Jews who refused to convert to Catholicism and were expelled from Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella (in 1492 when they also decided also to send Columbus to America). Nearly 200,000 Spanish Jews went into exile in Portugal, northern Europe and along the entire Mediterranean basin (and a nice map shows the basic migration routes). The name Sephardim or Sepharades is given to these people and is the Hebrew name for Spain (although the booklet notes that this name is applied also to other Jews who follow Sephardic rites but are not of Judeo-Spanish origin).

The booklet goes on to trace the history of Judeo-Spanish and its evolution, the particular characteristics of the language, and spelling. Ladino is the written language of the Sephardim and is "a word-for-word translation of Hebrew or Aramaic biblical or liturgical texts made by the rabbis in the Jewish schools of Spain," a language which is "Spanish with a Hebrew Syntax." The booklet describes well the development of both liturgical and secular literatures.

In looking at the current situation and future survival of Judeo-Spanish, the impact of the Holocaust is clearly described. Of the 365,000 Sephardim counted in 1925 in Europe, about 160,000 perished in the Holocaust. Today there are approximately 378,000 Sephardim (at least): with 300,000 in Israel; 40,000 in France, Belgium and England; 15,000 in New York City and the U.S.; 15,000 in Turkey; 3,000 in Bulgaria; 3,000 in northern Morocco; and 2,000 in Greece.

While the future of Judeo-Spanish is threatened, there has been a renaissance in literature and in university study, and cultural activity in a few communities in larger European cities. For both the sections on Yiddish and the Sephardim, the authors have included useful addresses for further information and a short bibliography.

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Living Languages Series

Besides the series of booklets on specific languages of Europe, the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages has also published a series of booklets called "Living Languages." These focus on topics and pull examples related to those topics from various language communities. This series, like the "European Languages" series is introductory in nature, includes lots of photos and illustrations, and bibliographies and addresses for further information.

The series is briefly presented below:

Living Languages 1: The Sound of Europe. Siân Wyn Siecyn. 1993. 39 pages.
The focus of this booklet is on bilingualism and plurilingualism in Europe, and bilingual education and the acquisition of languages by children.

Living Languages 2: Language rights, individual and collective. Silvia Carrel. 1994. 43 pages.
This booklet focuses on lesser used languages in public administration, including some of the European resolutions to support this, and examples of public presence.

Living Languages 3: Images of Europe. 1995. 46 pages.
This booklet presents television and the use of lesser used languages.

Living Languages 4: Feeling at home in your language. 1995. 46 pages.
This booklet focuses on inter-generational transmission of language and how languages are used in the home in bilingual situations.

Living Languages 5: The Diversity Dividend. Adam Price. 1997. 39 pages.
This booklet focuses on the link between language and economy and the benefits a distinctive cultural and linguistic "mark" can bring.

Traditional dance in Brittany: a guide for the summer visitor

by Matt Cosgrove

If you are traveling to Brittany this summer you will surely want to see or, even better, participate in some of the traditional dancing which is a hallmark of Breton culture. Opportunities abound as July and August are replete with festou-noz, festivals, workshops and dance competitions. Here are a few suggestions to help get you started. Happy dancing!

Fest-noz

Think of Brittany, and "fest-noz" (night festival) is one of the first images that comes to mind. An evening of music and dancing, in its original form the fest-noz was a strictly local affair meant to provide fun and refreshment after a long day spent working at collectively-shared agricultural tasks. The popular modern version is a more commercial event, often sponsored by schools, athletic clubs or cultural organizations, and may attract participants from every part of Brittany.

Going to a fest-noz is a good way to learn a few dances (it's how most Bretons learn them). It'll give you a taste of Brittany's unique and dynamic popular culture. Most of all, it's tremendous fun: the energy at a good fest-noz is irresistible and the feeling of dancing in (more or less) perfect unison with several hundred other people is exhilarating.

Festou-noz (pl.) are generally held on Saturday nights but in July and August they can often be found during the week as well. They usually begin around 9 p.m. with music and dance virtually non-stop until the early hours of the morning. (Festou-deiz or "day festivals", which generally attract an older crowd, last from early afternoon to early evening, usually on Sundays). A fest-noz is also an occasion for general socializing; there will almost certainly be a bar, and crêpes, pastries or other food may be available. The atmosphere can vary tremendously from one fest-noz to the next: you may be dancing in a community hall, huge auditorium, tent or the open air; there may be a few dozen other dancers or a few thousand; the music may be provided by a handful of local musicians or a long list of bands from throughout Brittany. Generally speaking festou-noz fall into one of two categories: those emphasizing singers, traditional music formations such as bombarde/biniou or paired clarinets, and local dance styles; and those emphasizing groups using a variety of instruments in non-traditional combinations

and a "pan-Breton" dance repertoire. Most organizers include elements of both categories.

Festou-noz are advertised in a number of ways. Most common are posters, which you will find along roadsides, on storefronts, and especially at other festou-noz. Stores that specialize in Breton music and literature (such as the Coop Breizh in Rennes, or Ar Bed Keltiek in Brest and Quimper) frequently display posters. The weekend editions of the regional newspapers (*Ouest-France*, *Le Télégramme*) include listings of local festou-noz. You can also look in magazines devoted to Breton culture: "*Musique bretonne*", published by *Dastum* (16 rue de la Santé, 35000 Rennes, tel. 02 99 30 91 00), and available by subscription or at the stores mentioned above, has many listings. An excellent way to find out what's going on is to obtain a copy of "*Canal 35*", a monthly newsletter (available by mail only) listing many of the festou-noz, festivals and other cultural events in Brittany. In 1997 the price for a single issue was about \$5. Info: *Canal 35*, 7 rue Trasbot, 35000 Rennes. Tel. 02 99 31 11 79.

How to choose between the different festou-noz? If you want a more "traditional" experience, find a fest-noz with singers and "*sonneurs*". If you're interested in a particular dance, head to the part of Brittany from which that dance comes. Although the dance repertoire at most festou-noz is quite varied, the chances are good that you'll find, for example, a preponderance of *gavottes* in western Brittany, or *ridées/tours/ronds de St. Vincent* in the southeast region. Most people probably decide where to go based on where their favorite musicians will be performing. By the way, this is another strategy for locating a fest-noz: if there is a band that you like, contact them to find out where and when they play next. Phone numbers are often noted on CD jackets; some bands even have their own web sites.

If you do go to a fest-noz with the intention of learning dances, please observe a few simple rules of etiquette. First, before enthusiastically diving-in, take a couple of minutes to watch and get a sense of the basic rhythm and steps. When you do join the chain or circle, let yourself be guided by the dancers on each side of you. Most people are more than willing to help the novice who is sincerely trying to learn (and who doesn't insist on swinging his arms every way but the right way). Second, when joining a chain, don't separate a couple. It isn't necessary to arrive with a partner and, in fact, relatively few of the common fest-noz dances require one. However, some popular dances (*plinn*, *fisel*, *Loudéac*) are actually suites comprised of first a round dance, then a couple dance, and finally a second round dance. A couple which has begun the initial round dance together will want to stay together for the couple dance which follows; therefore, since the woman is always on her partner's right, enter a chain to *her* right.

Classes and Workshops

While it is certainly possible to learn the basics of many Breton dances simply by imitating others at a *fest-noz*, there are some limitations to this approach. The more difficult dances (e.g. *fisel*, *kost ar hoet*) can be hard to follow; even in the case of simpler dances nuances of style are likely to escape one's attention. In addition, the complete beginner has no way of determining who is or is not a good dancer. Finally, the dances commonly encountered at most *festou-noz* represent only a fraction of the many dances that exist in Brittany. For these reasons those who wish to explore Breton dance in more depth might want to consider attending classes or workshops.

Brittany is fortunate in having more than 100 cultural groups called "Cercles Celtiques" whose purpose is to foster a knowledge and appreciation of Breton dance, music and other elements of traditional culture. Individual groups may have only a dozen members or as many as several hundred but virtually all offer instruction in dance and selected traditional instruments; the larger groups may also offer classes in traditional singing, the Breton language, embroidery, and other arts. Often the group, or a section of it, will perform Breton dance choreographed for the stage at festivals and other events in Brittany, elsewhere in France, and abroad. Classes don't usually meet during the summer months but, if you should find yourself in Brittany during the school year, participating in a class offered by the local Cercle Celtique would be an excellent way to pick up some dance skills.

Most Cercles belong to one of two larger associations: *War'l leur*, with groups concentrated in Finistère, and *Kendalc'h*, with groups throughout Brittany. For more information: *Kendalc'h*, 12 rue Nationale, BP 20, 56250 Elven. Tel. 02 97 53 31 35. Fax 02 97 53 30 44.; *War'l leur*, 9 rue du Chanoine Moreau, 29000 Quimper. Tel. 02 98 90 82 31. Fax 02 98 90 82 32.

A more practical option for the casual visitor might be to attend an intensive workshop or "*stage*". Generally lasting between five and seven days, a workshop can provide you with a solid base of dance skills as well as a wealth of related information. There are many workshops offered in Brittany during the summer; the following three may be of particular interest to aspiring dancers. All provide in-depth instruction in a variety of dances from different regions of Brittany, as well as an introduction to the history and evolution of the dances and information on traditional costumes and music. Classes take place during the day with evenings devoted to *festou-noz*, concerts or other entertainment.

Ti Kendalc'h, in southeastern Brittany close to Redon, offers a weeklong session at the end of August. Meals (vegetarian available) and dormitory accommodation in a beautiful wooded setting are included in the price. Info: *Centre Per Roy-Ti Kendalc'h*, 56350 St.-Vincent sur Oust. Tel. 02 99 91 28 55. Fax 02 99 91 39 09.

Amzer Nevez, near Lorient on Brittany's south coast, offers a similar program at the beginning of August. Meals and dormitory accommodation are available for those who desire them. Info: *Amzer Nevez, Soye*, 56270 Ploemeur. Tel. 02 97 86 32 08. Fax 02 97 86 39 77.

The association *Kanfarded ar Vilin Gozh* offers a weeklong workshop in dance (Breton or Irish option) in mid-August in the heart of the Trégor region in north-central Brittany. Free campsites are provided, some accommodation is available. Info: *Association Kanfarded ar Vilin Gozh, Mairie*, 22140 Berhet. Tel. 02 96 35 81 29. Fax 02 96 35 92 44.

Festivals

There are an amazing number of festivals in Brittany every summer. Best known is the huge "*Festival Interceltique*", held in Lorient at the beginning of August, but there are many other (and better) festivals, big and small, and new ones are being created all the time. Find them the same way that you'd locate a fest-noz: posters, flyers, newspapers, Breton magazines, *Canal 35*. Also, in this case tourist offices can be of help, at least for the larger festivals. Ask for their brochure "*Fêtes traditionnelles en Bretagne*", which lists the dates and locations of many popular (though touristy) events. They may also be able to provide detailed programs for certain festivals. Check the Internet, too; a few festivals may even have their own web sites.

Festivals offer many activities of interest to the Breton dance enthusiast. In addition to all the concerts, music sessions, exhibits, etc., there will most likely be a dance performance of some kind featuring some of Brittany's Cercles Celtiques, often preceded by a parade (*défilé*) of all the dancers and musicians in traditional costume. There will probably be a fest-noz in the evening or a fest-deiz during the day. Workshops in Breton dance may be offered.

One festival with special appeal for fans of Breton dance is the "*Fête de Cornouaille*", held in Quimper in southwest Brittany at the end of July. *La Fête de Cornouaille* is one of the most popular (i.e. crowded with tourists) festivals in Brittany, but don't let that stop you from going as there are plenty of worthwhile activities, a great atmosphere,

and a wonderful setting in the heart of one of Brittany's most beautiful cities. This festival lasts for a week with a large number of concerts, performances, and other events in multiple locations throughout the day and evening. Quimper is an excellent place to watch demonstrations of Breton dance, as many of the best Cercles Celtiques will be present on the main stage for a performance always scheduled for Sunday afternoon. Sunday morning is when the famous parade of dancers and musicians takes place: several *thousand* performers, all dressed in traditional costume, dance and play their way through the streets of the city. Every afternoon free introductory classes in Breton dance are given in the garden behind Quimper's cathedral, and every evening a fest-noz (also free) is held in the open air. It's also possible to participate in daylong advanced workshops (you must already have a good background in Breton dance); each day, or half-day, is devoted to the study of the dances of a particular, usually lesser-known region (e.g. *pays glazig*, *pays rouzig*, *Plougastel*). These are just some of the regularly scheduled events; there will almost certainly be many additional opportunities to dance, or to watch dance, in each year's program. For information on the festival or accommodations: *Festival de Cornouaille*, 41-43 rue de Douarnenez, BP 1315, 29103 Quimper cédex. Tel. 02 98 55 53 53. Fax 02 98 55 35 60; *Office du tourisme*, Place de la Résistance, 29000 Quimper. Tel. 02 98 53 04 05. Fax 02 98 53 31 33.

A list of all the other interesting festivals would be virtually endless. We'll briefly mention just two with a strong regional flavor: the "*Fête des Brodeuses*" and the "*Festival Digousk Ba'r Vro Pourlet*".

The *Fête des Brodeuses* is a well-known festival that takes place in Pont l'Abbé, in southwest Brittany, during the second week of July. Pont l'Abbé is the capital of the "*pays bigouder*", an area of Brittany with particularly distinctive styles of costume, music and dance. A parade, dance performances, festou-noz and other events are scheduled over several days. Of special interest is the *gavotte bigoudène* competition held on Saturday afternoon; this is a gavotte danced by couples rather than in a circle or chain. Info: *Office du tourisme*, 29120 Pont l'Abbé. Tel. 02 98 82 37 99.

The *Festival Digousk Ba'r Vro Pourlet* is a newer, smaller and more local festival. It's held at the beginning of August in Le Croisty, in south-central Brittany in the heart of the "*pays pourlet*". This is the region celebrated for the *gavotte pourlet*, a difficult dance characterized by intricate footwork and spectacular leaps. The festival lasts for several days; the activities include festou-noz, a parade, dance workshops and dance performances. Outstanding examples of the *gavotte pourlet* guaranteed. Info: *Syndicat d'initiative*, 1 rue de Quimper, 56320 Le Faouët. Tel. 02 97 23 23 23.

Dance Competitions

Perhaps most interesting for the serious Breton dance enthusiast are the numerous dance competitions which take place in Brittany every year. These are of two kinds: traditional, in which individual contestants display their skills in a single dance style, and a more recent form in which *Cercles Celtiques* compete with each other in both traditional and choreographed dance styles. Dance contests have always had their place in Breton society, a fact reflected in the Breton names for certain dances (such as the "*dans ar butur*" or "dance of the tobacco", referring to the tobacco given out as prizes). It's perhaps partly due to these competitions that a high standard has been maintained in certain dance styles.

If you want to see some of the best dancers in Brittany, this is the place to do it. Competitions are open to anyone; there are usually several categories divided according to age and gender; you sign up just before the contest begins. Even if you don't participate in the contest you can learn a great deal about dance style and technique simply by watching.

Two of the oldest and most prestigious competitions are those for the *dans plinn*, held in Danouët (near Bourbriac) in the Trégor region on August 14/15 (Info: *Syndicat d'initiative, 12 Place du Centre, 22390 Bourbriac. Tel. 02 96 43 46 03.*); and the *dans fise*, held in Rostrenen in central Brittany on the last weekend of August (Info: *Syndicat d'initiative, 4 Place de la République, 22110 Rostrenen. Tel. 02 96 29 02 72.*). In both cases the dance competition proper is part of a larger event lasting for several days and encompassing many other activities including a competition for musicians playing in the *plinn* or *fise* styles, an introductory dance workshop, and *festou-noz*. These are two of the most popular events of the summer with Breton devotees of traditional dance and the atmosphere is perhaps more "authentic" than at certain other festivals.

Other contests held during the summer months include a *gavotte* competition in Hanvec at the end of June, the aforementioned *gavotte bigoudène* competition in Pont l'Abbé in July, and competitions for such dances as the *kas a barh*, *laridé*, and various *en avant deux*. *Canal 35* is one good source of information.

The *Cercles Celtiques* belonging to the association *Kendalc'h* are ranked in several different categories determined by regional competitions held during the school year. The half dozen or so groups in the first category compete further in a final contest held during the "*Fête de la St. Loup et de la danse bretonne*" in Guingamp in mid-

August. The Cercle Celtique winning this contest becomes the new Breton national champion.

The contest is divided into three parts. In the first part each group must perform a traditional dance, selected in advance (a new one every year), the same dance for every group. In the next part the groups perform different traditional dances selected at random from a list of six or seven possibilities. The last and, for the casual spectator, most interesting part is devoted to each group's own creations: choreography based on traditional dance and music but limited only by the imagination of the choreographers.

Unlike a traditional contest, which rewards the prowess of an individual dancer, here the focus is on the harmony, skill and precision of the group as a whole. These are some of the best dancers in Brittany and the standards demanded of them are quite high. The costumes are beautiful (all the dancers compete in traditional costume), and the original and frequently brilliant presentations during the choreographed part of the contest are sure to impress.

As mentioned above, this competition takes place during the *Fête de la St. Loup*, a weeklong festival whose many other offerings include concerts, performances, festou-noz, an enormous parade of traditionally costumed musicians and dancers, and the famous "*dérobée de Guingamp*". Info: *Office du tourisme, Place Champ au Roy, 22200 Guingamp. Tel. 02 96 43 73 89. Fax: 02 96 40 01 95*

Music/Books/Videos

We'll conclude by briefly mentioning some audio/visual materials that could be useful to anyone with an interest in Breton dance. Look for them at the *Coop Breizh* in Rennes (17 rue de Penhoët, BP 2542, 35036 Rennes cédex. Tel. 02 99 79 01 87. Fax 02 99 79 43 52) or the *Ar Bed Keltiek* stores in Quimper (rue du Roi Gradlon, 29000 Quimper. Tel. 02 98 95 42 82. Fax 02 98 95 24 73) and Brest (6 avenue Clemenceau, 29200 Brest. Tel. & Fax 02 98 44 05 38).

All three stores have a fabulous collection of books and music and you'll receive expert, friendly advice. You can also order by mail, phone and fax or, in the case of *Ar Bed Keltiek*, through the Internet (www.arbedkeltiek.com). Other places to look in Rennes include the *FNAC* (part of a national chain), and *Dastum* (16 rue de la Santé, 35000 Rennes. Tel. 02 99 30 91 00).

Finding recorded music to dance to is easy as there is a huge and constantly expanding choice of excellent cassettes and CDs. Recordings by groups such as *Storvan*, *Skolvan* or *Skeduz*, or "sonneurs" such as *Le Féon/Lehart* or *Baron/Anneix* will provide you with music for a wide variety of dances. There are also recordings devoted to the principal dance or dances of a single region. An example for the *dans plinn* would be "*Bro dreger III-dans plinn-biniou bombarde*"; for the *suite de Loudéac*: "*Rondes du pays de Loudéac: chants et musiques*"; for *ridées/tours/ronds*: "*Les chanteurs du pays de Vilaine: danses en rond, danses en chêne*". A recording intended specifically for the dance student is the two volume "*Bal breton: musiques pour l'apprentissage des danses bretonnes*", by celebrated accordionist Alain Pennec. Each cassette contains tunes for about twenty popular dances played at a tempo and rhythm appropriate for the beginning dancer.

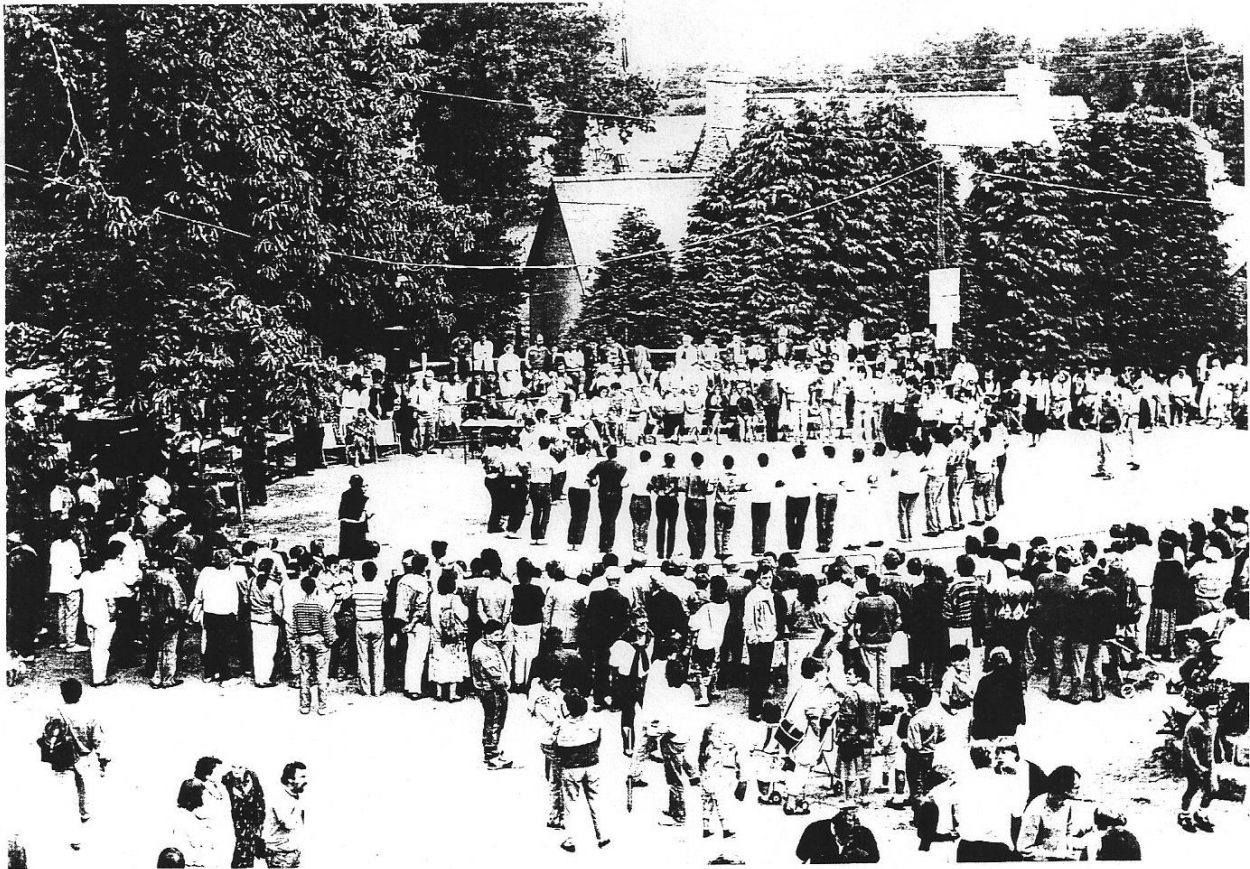
As a visual reference for the dances, there is nothing better than the collection of videos, "*Danses de toutes les Bretagnes*", produced by the association *Kendalc'h*. Each video in the series presents the dances (approximately 20-40) of a particular region, performed by the members of local *Cercles Celtiques* or other dance groups. *Kendalc'h* hopes to eventually document the dances of all of Brittany; at the moment the collection includes the following regions: *le Penthièvre, le Poher, le Léon, le Coglais et Rennais, le Poudouvre/Penthièvre, le pays de la Mée*. Although wonderful as a visual guide these tapes do not contain any verbal explanation of the dances and are not intended to be instructional videos. Please also note that you will need a VCR which can read tapes recorded in SECAM.

Good books on Breton dance are few and far between. There is one work, however, which in its thoroughness and comprehensiveness largely makes up for the scarcity of other materials. Widely acknowledged to be *the* reference on Breton dance, it's the monumental "*La tradition populaire de danse en Basse-Bretagne*" by Jean Michel Guilcher. Based on research begun in 1945 and lasting nearly two decades, this is an extraordinarily detailed guide to the dances of Lower Brittany as they existed in traditional Breton society. It's a mine of information on most of the dances that you would be likely to encounter at a *fest-noz*. The beginner may find the technical descriptions difficult to follow, but chapters on the social context, evolution, and historical antecedents of the dances should prove both interesting and illuminating.

In a more practical vein, it is also possible to find booklets of actual dance instructions or "*fiches techniques*". Unless you already have a solid background in Breton dance these might prove inadequate for learning totally new dances, but they could serve as helpful reminders for anyone who has participated in a workshop or been to a few

festou-noz. Unfortunately, several of the collections that have appeared in the past are now out of print. One current title is "*Danses traditionnelles de Bretagne pour les enfants*", by the association *Kendalc'h*. Well-known musicians/dance teachers Yves Leblanc and Patrick Bardoul have written others; check with the stores mentioned above for information on what's available.

Finally, don't overlook the information contained in the booklets that frequently accompany Breton music CDs and cassettes. Although necessarily concise, they can nevertheless be a source of interesting details. The booklets produced by *Dastum* are particularly well done. "*Fête plinn du Danouët*" and "*Clarinettes et anciennes danses populaires du Trégor*" are the titles of two cassette/booklet sets that include some dance information; contact *Dastum* for the names of others.



(photo G. Le Gall)

From: *Fête plinn du Danouët*, Dastum 1993.

NEW RECORDINGS FROM BRITTANY

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

Francis Mounier. **L'Occidentale de Fanfare**. Sud Productions/Coop Breizh CD 878. 1998. 56'54.

When you spend too much time listening to Breton music (too much?), you lose sight of the rest of the world – and in particular the fact that elsewhere in France some very interesting things are going on in the music world. This new CD will open your ears to the vitality of traditions in Gascony (find Gironde in the south of France) where older traditions are being reinvented and musicians are combining traditional roots with other world influences to compose new music. In this case, musicians of Brittany and Gascony/Gasconha join forces in an enjoyable, sophisticated and jazzy reinvention of tradition.

From Brittany you get the bombarde and the distinctive style of the bagad. From Gascony you get the sound of a traditional ensemble called the ripataoulères—a combination of fife, tenor drum and bass drum. From the jacket notes and accompanying press packet, you learn that the fife (of Swiss-German origin) was introduced to France at the end of the 15th century. Combined with a military style drum and bass drum it was well entrenched in Gascony by the end of the 19th century, and the ripataoulères had a major presence at any major public event and at dances. Its importance was much like that of the paired bombarde and biniou, and like those instruments, it lost its luster by the end of World War II when jazz band came in to provide music for more popular dances and people seemed concerned with “modernization.” With some incentive from the academic world whose studies underscored the importance of the ripataoulères, musicians of Gascony renewed the ensemble, and once they remastered traditional styles, have moved on to innovative uses of this fife and drum ensemble. While the Breton revival of the bombarde/biniou pair might have been a bit earlier and more grass-roots in nature, the changing fortunes of Brittany’s unique musical heritage has a very similar ebb and flow.

The health of tradition can perhaps be measured in its ability to absorb innovation rather than disappear in the face of new musical influences. The expanding uses of the bombarde, not only in the bagad which is a relatively new tradition to Brittany, but also for use in rock and jazz bands find a parallel in the way the fife is used by musicians of Gascony for new music. And this CD shows well how similar the bombarde and fife are when it comes to versatility and a very powerful presence.

The strength of this recording is in the 18 individual musicians who have been gathered to form this unique band. Despite a young age (seven musicians are in their 20s), the group gathers a wealth of experience. Short biographical sketches of the musicians cite a range of musical backgrounds—including participation in traditional ensembles such as bagadou, jazz groups, classical music, rock, funk, street performance, burlesque, and theater improvisation. Francis Mounier, who heads up the group and provides the artistic direction and compositions/arrangements, seems to have done everything possible with saxophone. Other musicians of the group may come from a more traditional start, but all have experimented with other genres of music. And such

versatility is definitely necessary in keeping such a group on the same page of music, while allowing for a great deal of freeness in performance.

Musicians from Brittany in the band include bombarde player Jean Louis Le Vallégant (who was key in the formation of the ensemble), Nathalie Drant (bombarde and sole woman of the group), Ronan Le Gourriec (bombarde), Christian Méhat (tenor bombarde), Gwendal Clériver (bagpipes), and Tangui Bodin and Lionel Le Guyader (snare drums). They are outnumbered by the Gascons in number if not impact. Besides the ring leader Francis Mounier (clarinet and baritone saxophone), musicians include Jean Pierre "Pinos" Bertin (fife), Sylvain Roux (fife), Maurice "Momo" Fari (drums), Jérôme Martin (percussions), Francis Bourrec (soprano and tenor saxophones), Richard Ducros (soprano and tenor saxophones), Guillaume Thomachot (alto saxophone), Joël Versavaud (tenor and baritone saxophones), Pierre "Kropöl Gauthé (trombone), and Christophe Renaud (tuba).

Such a combination of reeds, wind, brass, and percussion may seem headed for trouble, but the combination works – thanks to the directional skills of Mounier and the considerable talent of each musician. There are moments of intended dissonance (purposeful squeals and screeches from saxophones and brass, and some tweeting from the fifes), but the flavor of the CD is jazzy and joyful—freewheeling dances and tunes that take surprising twists and turns with new combinations of instruments you thought you'd never hear (bagpipe/tuba duos, low baritone sax and very high pitched fife).

Besides a good introduction to the band and its roots in Breton and Gascon music traditions, the CD notes include some good photos of the musicians in performance. While the energy of live performance is well captured on the CD, I imagine that actually seeing this group perform would be quite an experience. For those who love the power of the bombarde and are interested in discovering the even more powerful sound of the fife, I can highly recommend this new CD for its rich texture of sounds and rhythms. Bravo to the band for a highly innovative and successful combination of musical styles and traditions.

* * *

Championnat de Bretagne des Bagadoù – Épreuves de Lorient, Vol. 1. Arfolk CD 447. 1998.

It should no longer be necessary to introduce the bagad to readers of Bro Nevez. Although created just 50 years ago, this unique band composed of Scottish style bagpipes, bombardes and a drum section has established a firm tradition in Brittany. Today some 60 bagadoù (plural for bagad) compete ferociously each year for the coveted title of best of Brittany. They meet twice, with the final test at the Inter-Celtic Festival of Lorient. And at these competitions the bagadoù perform what they do best—long suites of dance tunes and melodies, drawn from Brittany's tradition or newly composed, or even borrowed from the rest of the world, from Bulgaria to China.

This CD presents the performance at Lorient of the top five bagadoù in the 1997 competition: Bagad Kemper (from Quimper, Finistère), Kevrenn Alre (from Auray,

Morbihan), Bagad Ronsed Mor (from Lokoal Mendon, Morbihan), Bagad Bro Kemperle (Quimperlé, Finistère), and Bagad Cap Caval (from Plomeur, the Bigouden area of Finistère). In listening to the outstanding performances on the CD, one can feel the excitement of the competition (I love live recordings), and one has to wonder how the judges can possibly rank the bands. There are no false notes, although there is some range in style and creative license.

In fact, there are some very precise guidelines for the competition of bagadoù (outlined in the magazine Ar Soner): how long the performance must be, the make up of the bagad (minimum number of bombardes, maximum number of other instruments pulled in), percentage of the suite devoted to dance tunes, etc. There are judges for the drums, for the pipes, and for the bombardes, as well as judges to look at the ensemble as a whole (in all, ten judges for the first category of five levels of bagadoù competing). The gap between the first and fifth place is indeed slim. Out of 20 points, the average for the first place winners, Kemper, from both contests was 17.82. For the fifth place band, Cap-Caval, the average was 15.87. That is a long way of saying that all five of the performances on this new CD are excellent.

The notes to the CD are also very good, including an introduction to the organization Bodadeg ar Sonerien which has fostered the spectacular growth of the bagad since its founding in 1943. The history of competitions is also briefly described, from a modest start with just two bagadoù in 1949 to the 1997 competition where over 60 bagadoù competed. Each bagad is presented in one page with a list of the tunes on the CD, a short history, and notes on performance highlights of its recent years. A photo of each bagad (or at least a section of it) in performance is a nice addition. A short discography allows one to find more recordings of each band.

This is a CD that can be recommended without reservations as an excellent introduction to the unique sound and creativity of the Breton bagad.

For those who want to follow the progress of the bagadoù of Brittany, the magazine Ar Soner is a great source of detailed information about competitions, and includes news of piping workshops, as well as CD reviews, notes on festivals, world-wide piping events, and frequent articles on traditional Breton music or musicians. Transcriptions for tunes are always included. Five issues are published each year and a subscription can start any time in the middle of a year (140 francs for this side of the Atlantic). Contact: Ar Soner, 13 rue Louis de Montcalm, 29000 Quimper. (This is also the address for Bodadeg ar Sonerien).

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Black Label Zone. **"Toufed vil"**. CD Audio BLZ-DEM-01. 1997.

While we're on the topic of bagpipes, Black Label Zone is the name of an eight-man "ensemble" (it sounds more like eighteen) made up of two bagpipers, a bunch of percussionists and some electric guitars. I have received what appears to be a sample CD with just three 5-minute selections: "Baby Elephant walk," "Top Level," and "Hell Bound Train" from a longer (?) CD called "Toufel vil." The slick and glossy folder which

came with the CD (which was in a plastic sleeve rather than case) noted that the CD sold over 3,000 copies when it came out in 1997.

The musicians of Black Label Zone come from the Briec, Guingamp, Kemperle and Lamballe bagadoù, The piping is Scottish in style (general tune structure and grace notes), and judging from the photos on the folder that came with the CD, the Scottish motif is carried over in the kilts (of all colors) worn by the band. But the sound of the compositions performed here is predominately rock with lots of driving electric guitar.

In looking up words in my Breton dictionary, “toufed vil” seems to translate as “vile smells,” and given the very high energy of the performances here, the musicians of Black Label Zone might well work up a good sweat when they play. So much for literal translations. But, the music of Black Label Zone is far from vile—these are great musicians who seem to really have fun with their music. They would definitely put on a good show in concert. Any bagpipe fan will enjoy “Toufed vil.”

* * *

Trio Roland Becker. **L’Orchestre National Breton**. Oyoum Muzik/Arfolk CD 448. 1998.

One of the most creative and talented musicians in Brittany has to be Roland Becker—a master of the bombarde and a jazzman who is at home with saxophones and reeds of all kinds. It takes someone with very firm roots in the Breton tradition to successfully play with new arrangements, and Roland Becker has used his strong knowledge of traditional Breton music and its history in a variety of highly innovative and wonderful ways. For many years he has been a main force in directing and arranging music for one of the top bagadoù of Brittany—the Kevrenn Alre. He is a champion in competitions of the paired bombarde and biniou, and he is also a scholar who published (with Laure Le Gurun) a great little introductory guide to Breton music called La Musique bretonne (see review in Bro Nevez 51, August 1994). Both Becker’s scholarship of traditions and mastery of the bombarde are shown off beautifully in two recent CDs. En Bretagne Morbihannaise (1993) features the bombarde and has some of the most extensive and interesting jacket notes I’ve ever read (see Bro Nevez 46, May 1993). Jour de fête & fête de nuit is a wonderful documentation of country sounds (noises from the environment and music). Called a “sound film” this CD truly evokes strong visual images for the listener (see review in Bro Nevez 57, February 1996). Then there is his jazzy side, shown off in recordings such as Fallaen (1982) and Gavr’inis (1992).

This new CD—just a 20 minute sample—is reminiscent of the bombarde/biniou/drum trio found on Jour de fête. Included on this CD are dances (en dro, hanter-dro, bal and laridé) from early collections by Joseph Mahé (1760-1831). His collection of 232 tunes from before 1825 is the oldest found. The trio of bombarde, biniou koz and military style drum are called “the national orchestra of Brittany” by Becker because these instruments were described that way by early 19th century writers Jacques Cambry, François Habasque, Alexandre Bouët, and Théodore Hersart de la Villemarqué. With this CD and live performances of the Orchestre National Breton, Roland Becker attempts to recreate what those early observers of Breton life might have seen and heard. What the Orchestre National Breton does is not just music, but a kind of street theater. Like all

the other productions by Roland Becker, this is impeccably done. While I have only seen very intriguing photos of the trio, the sounds on the recording show that this group is not only visually interesting, but musically very strong—besides Becker on bombarde, the trio includes Fabrice Lothodé on biniou and Cédric Hergault on the drum called tamboulin.

The Trio has created two “musical theater pieces”. The first, called “Breiz Izel,” was created in 1996 and presents tableaux of Breton life depicted in the well known engravings of Olivier Perrin (1761-1832). The second piece was created in 1998 and is called “Le Saigneur de Kervaleet” and evokes the image of the piper as a diabolical driver of dance—with scenes reminiscent of the paintings of Bosch and Bruegel, featuring Breton bagpipes (biniou, bombarde and veuze).

While the CD gives just a sample of the sound, documentation from the Trio Roland Becker nicely depicts in photos what one might see in performance. From what I can see and hear, Roland Becker brings 19th Breton life back to life in a very creative and lively way, inviting all those present to dream and imagine in new ways.

The Trio Roland Becker would welcome the opportunity to perform at festivals in North America (and this would not just be “folk” festivals). If you know of any possible performance opportunities, please let me know, or contact the Trio directly for their beautiful “press packet” which introduces their work:

Trio Roland Becker
Oyoun Muzik
3. rue du Vieux Moulin
56230 Questembert
Brittany, France

Fax: 33 2 97 26 11 82

Roland Becker can also be encountered on the internet: www.bmol.infini.fr

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Cabestan. **Femmes de Marins**. Keltia Musique KMCD 81. 1998.

Cabestan is one of a number of groups in Brittany that specialize in maritime music—both traditional sea chanteys as well as new compositions on the theme of maritime life with songs about the hard life of fishermen at sea, about women who wait on shore for their men to return, about leaving one’s loved ones behind on shore, and longing to get back into the arms of one’s love. As one has come to expect from Cabestan, the CD offers a variety not only of themes with traditional and newly-composed songs in both French and Breton, but the musical accompaniment is also quite varied from the Quebecois swing brought by Bernard Simard (from Quebec) to a hard rock sound with electric guitar and percussion provided by guest artists Claude Ziegler and Michel Santangeli. Most accompaniment is more acoustic, including guitar, fiddle, accordion, cello and veuze. I particularly liked the wonderful veuze provided by Thierry Moreau in accompaniment to the song “L’Adieu aux filles.” The plaintive sound of the veuze suited the lovely melody of this song which has many versions in both Quebec and France.

While Cabestan has always provided interesting instrumental arrangements to back up songs, it is the vocal strength of this group which stands out. Both Christian Desnos and Arnaud Maisonneuve have strong and distinctive voices that are well suited to maritime song. Bernard Simard has a "sweeter" voice which adds a nice contrast. All five members of the group (Desnos, Maisonneuve, Simard, Moreau, and Jean-Luc Creac'h) are veterans of the Breton music scene who are masters of the instruments they play but strong singers as well (which means that you find great choruses on many of the songs).

Those who already know and love the group Cabestan will find some new sounds on this CD but the same high quality and interesting arrangements that made you a fan to begin with. For those who like maritime music in general, this is a great introduction to one of Brittany's best groups specializing in this area.

HEARD OF BUT NOT HEARD ... OR SEEN

Other new Books and Recordings from Brittany

Information for these short notes was drawn from: Musique Bretonne 147 (janvier/février 1998) & 148 (mars/avril 1998); Ar Men 92 (mars 1998), 93 (avril 1998), 94 (mai 1998).

Gwerin 8: Dastumad Pengwern, dornskrid 92. 1997. 158 pages. (70 francs).

Gwerin 9: Dastumad Pengwern, dornskrid 93. 1998. 196 pages. (80 francs).

Lesneven: Editions Hor Yezh. (Yann Desbordes, 1 plasenn Ch.-Peguy, 29260 Lesneven)

Thirty years ago the publisher Hor Yezh edited a series of publications focused on Breton language oral traditions of Brittany. In the series called Gwerin were a number of song texts collected by one of Brittany's earliest collectors, Jean Marie de Pengwern. Happily, Hor Yezh has taken up this series again and has published two new volumes of manuscripts found today in the National Library of Paris. Manuscript number 92 includes historically important texts collected by Mme de Saint Prix beginning around 1815-1820 in the areas of Callac and Morlaix which were copied by Pengwern.

Maurcie Duhamel. **Musiques bretonnes, Gwerziou ha soniou Breiz-Izel.** Editions Dastum. 1998.

Dastum has republished a long out-of-print collection of traditional music by Maurice Duhamel who worked from 1909 to 1912 in the Tregor, Cornouaille and Leon areas. This collection includes 432 tunes, with a majority from Tregor. While Duhamel's transcriptions may force the music in rhythms and scales of a more classical nature, the work is a mine for traditional musicians and singers of Brittany today who want to expand their repertoire. Included in this re-edition is correspondence between Duhamel and his famous contemporary Anatole Le Braz, a biography of Duhamel, and a list of his works.

Loeiz Herrieu and Maurice Duhamel. **Guerzenneu ha sonnenneu Bro-Guéned (Chansons populaires du pays de Vannes)**. Lorient: Editions Eromi. 1998.

Loeiz Herrieu, "peasant bard," not only collected songs from the rural world of the Vannetais area of Brittany where he lived, but founded the Breton language magazine called Dihunamb—a first for the Breton language which attracted over 3,000 subscribers in its time (1905-1944). For this collection of songs first published in 1911, Herrieu scrupulously noted the song texts while Duhamel worked out transcriptions. The reedition of this important work was made possible through the support of the Inter-Celtic Festival of Lorient.

Kerrieu—Villages entre Scorff et Blavet. Eromi 058. 1998. Diffusion Coop Breizh.

This CD is intended to accompany the collection cited above by Herrieu and Duhamel. Various traditional singers and musicians perform 15 selections, bringing a few of the transcriptions to life.

Bro Dreger II: Gwerziou ha sonioù—Mélodies chantées du Trégor. BD 002. 1998.

This is the second CD in a long series of cassette/booklets produced by the Kreizenn Sevenadurel Lannuon since 1988. Those interpreting traditional songs from the Tregor area include Ifig Troadeg as well as a number of more locally known singers.

Bro Dreger III: Dañs Plinn, Biniou-Bombarde. BD 003. 1998.

Traditionally the dañs plinn has been powered by kan ha diskan singers or clarinet (treujenn gaol), but this dance is now a main-stay in the repertoire of biniou and bombarde pairs. This is a re-edition of a 1990 cassette and includes some great pair players such as Daniel Le Féon and Gilles Léhart, and Yann Bars and Daniel Philippe.

Fest-noz en Poher: "Kan ha diskan". Dastum Kreiz Breizh. 1998.

This CD features kan ha diskan singers recorded live at the Fêtes de Duault. A 16-page booklet of notes includes song texts in Breton with French translations.

Nantes en chansons. Dastum. Tradition Vivante de Bretagne 7. 1998

This CD includes 21 songs about the city of Nantes and its history and surrounding region. In contrast to the usual traditional focus of Dastum productions, this CD includes a variety of styles, including traditional song, but also pop, rock, and swing. As is customary for Dastum, the notes are probably great.

Reuz a Brest mem'—Fest noz. EOG Production DD-EOG103. 1998.

This CD features six fest noz bands from the area of the city of Brest: Didwell, Forzh Penaos, Kaskerien et Distro, the Padellec and Pronost biniou/bombarde pair, and paired singers An Hejer and Al Lae.

Les Pires. **"En piste"** Boucherie Production/Accousteack BP 9421. 1998.

Les Pires is described as a rock/gypsy group, and includes some great Breton musicians.

Erik Marchand & Nolùen Le Buhé. **Chansons dorées de Bretagne à chanter et danser.** Le Petit Ménestrel. Ades 655. Diffusion Musidisc. 1998.

This CD seems to include classic Breton songs for children presented by two great traditional singers of Brittany with accompaniment by a few friends.

Paolo Fresu, Jacques Pellen & Erik Marchand. **Condaghes.** Silex Y225067. Diffusion Auvidis. 1998.

This is a collaboration of a Sardinian jazzman and trumpet player (Fresu), a Breton jazzman and guitar master (Pellen), and traditional singer (Marchand). This is well worth a listen if it is half as interesting as the other work by Pellen and/or Marchand I've heard.

Patrick Molard. **Biniou braz.** Cinq Planètes/Calen Distribution. 1998.

Biniou braz is the Breton word for the Scottish style bagpipes adopted in Brittany in the 20th century. This CD presents one of the world's masters of this instrument with 13 solo selections of Breton dances and new compositions.

Maryvonne Berthou & Peirre Prigent. **Trouz-Didrouz.** Ti-Embann ar Skolioù Brezhonek (TES). 1998.

TES publishes Breton language materials for all the schools of Brittany. This CD, accompanied by a 50-page booklet, is about the environment of sounds—weather, the house, family, work tools, music, the body, and travel—as depicted in proverbs and sayings and song.

Hirio. **Troiad ar Bed.** Eromi 061. 1998.

This group has traveled widely in the world to serve as ambassadors for the Inter-Celtic Festival of Lorient. And all of the musicians of Hirio are great for this role: Herbert Raud (bagpipes), Alain Kerneur (bombarde), Alain Pennec (accordion), Mariannig Larc'hanteg (harp), Catherine Bonlogne (alto saxophone) and Stéphane Barbier (percussion).

The Apple Ciders of Brittany

by John Bessey

One of the joys of visiting Brittany is the opportunity to partake of what could be considered the regional beverage, sparkling apple cider. Cider, which has only started to become popular in the United States within the last few years, has been made in Brittany for centuries. A naturally carbonated beverage of alcohol level around 5%, or about the same as the typical microbrewed beer, the ciders of Brittany provide a benchmark for cider quality. In fact, the French authorities have recognized the particular quality of Breton cider by allowing the formation of the first Appellation d'Origine Contrôlée for a beverage derived from a fruit other than grapes. The AOC is a designation previously reserved for grape wines and some distilled grape spirits, indicating that the particular beverage met requirements laid out for grape types, production yields, fermentation practices and other elements of the winemaking process. The Appellation Cidre de Cornouaille Contrôlée was approved in the spring of 1996 for ciders produced in the Cornouaille area in the southwest of Brittany.

Cider in Brittany has a long tradition. It was the original “drink of the people” in the days during and after the Middle Ages when storage and transport costs meant only the wealthy could afford wine. Brittany and Normandy are too far north and too cool to have developed a grape growing culture,* but the climate is perfect for apples. Add to the mix the tendency in every culture toward the development of fermented beverages and cider was born. As a local beverage it could be enjoyed near the location it was produced. And as with the wine industry in warmer regions, the process of manufacture evolved from initially primitive beginnings to a sophisticated beverage with traditional manufacturing methods fine-tuned over several centuries.

The process of making cider, from the growing of the apples to the bottling of the final product, is strikingly similar to the process of making wine. The basic elements of the process are the same: growing high quality fruit, pressing to retrieve the juice, fermentation to produce alcohol from natural sugars and bottling in a classic style of bottle. In fact, cider is essentially an “apple wine”, the lower alcohol content resulting from the lower sugar level of the apples compared to grapes. In addition, the slight carbonation of a sparkling cider results from the same process as the one that produces the carbonation of champagne: the fermentation of a small amount of residual sugar in the bottle after bottling.

The process begins with apples. There are numerous varieties of apples used specifically for cider. They fall into four general categories of sweet, acidulous, bitter and bittersweet. Most ciders are a blend of several varieties (sometimes 20 or more). The apples are harvested in the fall (October to December). They are washed and then pressed to get their juice. The juice is left to settle for a couple days. Then it is pumped into large fermenters, either stainless steel tanks or well-used oak foudres, where it then ferments on the small amount of yeast left in the juice. The fermentation is carried out during the coldest part of the winter. This results in a very slow fermentation that causes a nearly complete fermentation without losing the flavors of the apples. The cider is transferred between tanks to stop the fermentation. Almost all of the yeast remains in the original tank.

The cider is bottled in champagne bottles with a low level of residual sugar. The very small amount of yeast in the bottled cider ferments this sugar, causing the slight natural carbonation

typical of natural ciders. This yeast also settles in the bottle as a slight sediment. The highest quality ciders are not filtered to remove the sediment. This way they retain all of the favor of the cider. Many are also not pasteurized. This heat treatment stabilizes the cider but again causes a change in the flavor.

The traditional ciders are divided into several classes based on the level of sweetness and residual sugar after fermentation. The sweetest, cidre doux, are generally around 2 to 3% alcohol. The dryer cidre brut are higher alcohol, to 5 or 6%. Several other descriptions also apply. Bouche is used by many cideries as a designation for their highest quality cider. Tradition fermière (farm tradition) describes cider processed entirely by the producer in a small farm setting.

The best ciders of Brittany retain the crisp fresh flavors of the apples. Although most are blends, some cideries produce ciders from one variety only. A side-by-side comparison of the flavors of the cider and the apple demonstrate the unique ability of the long slow cold fermentation to retain all of the flavors of the apple in the resulting beverage.

Cider is a Breton tradition, used in cooking and as a beverage. The movement toward a more urban culture after World War II resulted in a significant decrease in consumption as the society adopted more sophisticated ways and wine became the beverage of choice. A concerted effort by producers and trade groups to improve quality and increase awareness is resulting in a new renaissance throughout France.

* EDITOR'S NOTE: Brittany does in fact have a long tradition of wine-making in the region south of Nantes. The dry, fruity, white wine from this area of Brittany is called Muscadet and is available here in the U.S. It is especially good with shellfish.

* * *

A NOTE ABOUT THE AUTHOR AND BREKILIEN CORPORATION

John Bessey is the president of Brekilien Corporation of Redondo Beach, California. Formed in 1996 to import apple cider from Brittany, Brekilien currently represents three quality cideries. We are interested in expanding the awareness of Breton cider in the US and would appreciate suggestions for retail outlets that might be interested in carrying Breton cider. Because of the terms of our license we can not sell directly to consumers, but we are interested in expanding our contacts. Customer request remains an excellent source of retailer information.

Brekilien is also a distributor for the books and records of Coop Breizh. We carry a small stock and will order anything they carry. We also offer a discount to ICDBL members. You may contact us or request a catalog by contacting us at 520 Meyer Lane, Redondo Beach CA 90278, phone (310) 849-0001, fax (310) 798-0897, e-mail "brekilien@worldnet.att.net".

The U.S. ICDBL at the Potomac Celtic Festival

For the past four years, I have traveled to Virginia to set up a stand for the U.S. ICDBL at an inter-Celtic festival called the Oatlands Celtic Festival. With a change in location, this two-day festival changes its name to the Potomac Celtic Festival, but it hasn't changed its commitment to presenting the cultural wealth of all of the Celtic nations...although Ireland and Scotland tend to dominate.

I hope those readers within travelling distance will consider coming to the festival to visit the ICDBL stand. We do our best to provide thousands of festival visitors with information about the Breton language and culture. And the festival is lots of fun, with good music, dancing, and a variety of interesting workshops. The press release below will provide you with a few details. LK

Potomac Celtic Festival at the Morven Park International Equestrian Center Leesburg, Virginia

June 20 & 21, 1998

The Fifth Annual Potomac Celtic Festival (formerly Oatlands Celtic Festival) has moved 7 miles north on Rout 15, to the Morven Park International Equestrian Center, one mile north of Leesburg, Virginia. It take place on Saturday, June 20, from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. and Sunday, June 21, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. The Festival celebrates the cultures of all seven Celtic Nations: the Isle of Man, the featured country for '98, as well as Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, Brittany (France), and Galicia (Spain), as well as their transplants in the New World. Headliners at the '98 Festival include Scotland's *Jean Redpath*, Irish fiddler and guitar accompanist, *Martin Hayes and Dennis Cahill*, Isle of Man's singer and harper, *Emma Christian*, and sword dancer *Paul Bradford*, Brittany's chanteuse, *Nolwenn Monjarret*, the *Poor Clares*, high energy band from New Orleans, Northern Virginia's premier pan-Celtic group, *Iona*, and the Galician dance troupe, *Anduriña*.

Other attractions include: *a Juried Artisan Market and vendors of Celtic Imports*; the *Historical Reenactments of Celtic life* from the 2nd Century B.C. to the 19th Century A.D.; *Clans and Societies* to assist with genealogical research; *Highland Athletics*; *Celtic Foods and Family Fare*, and a *Pub Tent*. *Children's Activities* abound everywhere.

Directions and Information: The Morven Park International Equestrian Center is located on Route 15 at Tutt Lane, one mile north of Leesburg, Virginia. Information about the Festival is available through the Loudoun Tourism Council at 1-800-752-6118. Advance Tickets may be purchased at a 20% discount through the Loudoun Museum (703-777-0099), using Visa or MC or by check. A one-day adult ticket at the gate is \$12, child aged 6-12 is \$6, a Family ticket for 2 adults and up to 4 children is \$36, a two-day pass is 20% off for adults and children. Children under 6 are free. No pets please!

For further information you could also contact: Barnaby Council for Celtic Studies, P.O. Box 11160, Burke, VA 22009-1160. Telephone and fax: (703) 451-4492. Or try the web site: www.shirenet.com/pcf/

An American Welsh Choir to Travel to Brittany (and Wales)

As the article reprinted here from *Y Drych* (March 1998) reports, the Côr Cymraeg Rehoboth from Delta, Pennsylvania, will be taking their music to Wales and Brittany this June and early July. While most of their time will be spent in Wales, the choir will cross the channel by ferry to Roscoff and perform in the town of Dirinon (near Landerneau). Travelling with the choir (indeed, singing with it!) is Cheryl Mitchell, who has been an active member of the U.S. ICDBL since 1986 and an ardent supporter of the Welsh language. We wish her a good journey and a good (if very short) stay in Brittany!

Côr Cymraeg Rehoboth plans Celtic concert tour

By Glenn Grove

On June 22, Côr Cymraeg Rehoboth of Delta, Pa., will depart for Great Britain, where the entourage will initiate its concert series by presenting the Choral Evensong with appropriate anthems at Peterborough Cathedral near Cambridge.

Blaenau Ffestiniog is the next location, with a joint concert with Côr Meibion Brythoniad. Aberystwyth will be the scene of the next event. The U.S. group will help Cymru Ar Byd celebrate its 50th anniversary there.

Traveling southward (with a stop-over at St. David's Cathedral for some impromptu singing), the next destination will be Swansea, Sketty, where a Sunday evening concert will be given at a large Welsh chapel. After Swansea, singers will head for the Rhondda where hosts will be members of Côr Meibion Pendyrus. There will possibly be concerts there and in Pontypridd. Leaving South Wales, the itinerary continues even further south, with Plymouth the final destination. Here we'll board the night ferry for Brittany.

An early morning arrival in Roscoff will begin the choir's stay on the Continent. In Brittany, Côr Rehoboth will be hosted by M^{me}. Annie Le

Men (mayoress) and the city council of Dirinon, site of St. Non's resting place and shrine. (Non was the mother of St. David.) Choristers will be staying with Breton families! Two concerts will be given there.

As the tour draws to a close, the choir will leave for sight-seeing in Paris, singing at Notre Dame Cathedral and a possible full concert at the "American Church." Then we will leave July 8 for London via the Chunnel, and finally home. It will be a dual privilege and honor to represent both America and Wales!

Since the choir ceased giving concerts after Christmas 1997 in order to focus entirely on musical preparation for the trip, funds will be depleted. A Bon Voyage Concert is scheduled for Sun., June 14, 3 p.m., with the venue to be announced.

All organizations or any individuals wishing to make a donation would be recognized in the tour program. Make checks payable to Côr Cymraeg Rehoboth, Box 248, Delta, PA 17314. Further details of the trip will be reported as plans are finalized. If you wish more information, write to the above address or call Glenn Grove at (717) 456-7379.

Surfing to Brittany - Part 3

By Mary Turner

Well, it's getting out of hand, I just can't keep up with all the links. Those snobs in Paris who think Bretons are a bunch of peasants are going to have a big surprise when those Bretons take over France in the information revolution. Instead of Enarques it'll be the Breizhoos runnin' the country. This is the direction to go!!

(All opinions expressed in this column are those of the author alone, who did not take her medication today, and do not necessarily reflect those of the ICDBL or its management. -ed.)

As usual, send corrections or additions to maryt@southwind.net. The designations E, F, B indicate the languages available at the site: English, French, Breton.

First and Foremost

<http://www.breizh.net/icdbl.htm>

E We now have a homepage for the US and Canadian branches of the ICDBL! Hosted by our friends at Breizh.net. Please send Lois or I any suggestions you have for the page, and see the presentation which follows later in the newsletter.

Breton Language, Culture and History

<http://webbo.enst-bretagne.fr/~derrien/Diwan/index.htm>

F/B Official Diwan schools site, mostly in French (!) with some Breton. See their list of links too.

<http://www.bzh.com/keltia/galleq/histoire/preuves/bretagne/preuves.htm>

F Historic documents (marriage contracts of Anne of Brittany, the treaty of 1532 uniting Brittany with France, etc), letters and other writings about the history of Brittany.

<http://www.bretagnenet.com/div-yezh/>

F The website for Div Yezh, the association of Parents for the teaching of Breton in public schools.

<http://www.ac-rennes.fr/tes/>

F/E/B The homepage of TES, who create multimedia materials in the Breton language for schools

<http://www.francenet.fr/~perrot/breizh/dico.html>

F/E/B A small on-line dictionary French-Breton-English with on-line translator! Maintained by the homesick Gildas Perrot (see Personal Pages).

<http://webbo.enst-bretagne.fr/~derrien/bzhg.html>

B A listing of Breton-language web-pages in Breton!

<http://www.bretagnenet.com/kalondour/>

F A site collecting the reflections of Bretons on the moment they realized they were "Breton".

<http://www.chez.com/buan1/>

F/B A great new site with lots of Breton history and information

DiwanRH.skolaj@wanadoo.fr

The students of the Roparz Hemon Diwan middle school (Skolajidi Skolaj Diwan Roparz HEMON) are looking for Breton language email pen-pals worldwide (KLASK A REOMP KENSKRIVERIEN E BREZHONEG ER BED A-BEZH), write them at the above address.

Music and Dance

<http://www.mygale.org/04/olivierm/DBavecFr.htm>

<http://www.mygale.org/04/olivierm/regards.htm>

F A new Breton Dance site, in progress, and a nice photo album of Brittany, both by Olivier Montmeat.

<http://www.bretagnenet.com/tri-yann/>

F A BIG site devoted to the Breton group Tri-Yann with some Breton history and culture

<http://www.mygale.org/~kanbzh/index.html>

F/B A new site under construction about the Breton musical style Kan ha Diskan

<http://www.bretagnenet.com/diaouled/>

F The homepage of Diaouled Ar Menez (the Devils of the Mountain), a Breton band for 25 years. Lots of fun, music links and information.

<http://perso.club-internet.fr/asimov/festnoz.html>

F A Breton dance page

<http://www.chez.com/egwin/>

F A site devoted to the musician Gilles Servat

<http://www.isdnseattle.net/rayprice/mailling.html>

E Join the Breton-French Dance mailing list (maintained by Ray Price)

<http://www.mygale.org/~patou/>

F A new Breton dance site under development by Patrick Le Poutier. Your browser must be compatible with Java AWT 1.1. Among the browsers compatible are:

- Netscape Communicator 4.04 with the add-on package AWT 1.1 (you can pick it up at www.netscape.com)
- The latest version of Internet Explorer 4.0
- The browser HotJava, available at java.sun.com/products/hotjava/

<http://members.aol.com/YannFanch/>

F The homepage of Yann-Fañch Perroches of the Breton group Skolvan (with a link to the Skolvan page)

<http://members.aol.com/bepseurt/>

F A new Dance page under construction by Yann-Fañch Perroches (see above)

<http://www.afair.fr/vosweb/jplang/lesev.html>

F/E/B A cool site about the Breton group Les EV

<http://www.oaktree.net/breizh/bmol/index.html>

F/E/B Bretagne Musique On Line - information about Breton musicians (more being added all the time), dance, fest-noz etc.

Publications

<http://www.eurobretagne.fr/ARMOR/>

F Armor Magazine

Brittany and Tourism

<http://www.mygale.org/05/carmes/>

F A very nice site about the chapel of Notre-Dame de Carmès, in the village of Neulliac close to Pontivy in central Brittany. See their links for other sites around Pontivy and Morbihan.

Surfing – continued

<http://www.rennet.org/>

F/E A web server for Rennes with cultural, tourism, economic and current events information.

<http://wwwperso.hol.fr/~logonna/>

F A fun website about Logonna Daoulas (near Brest) and lot of other things.

<http://www.chez.com/hirbec/>

F A nice site about the Côte de Granit Rose in northern Brittany, with lots of photos.

<http://www.tourisme-bretagne.com/>

F/E A Breton Group Tours site

<http://www.brittanytourism.com/BRET/pages/som1.htm>

F A nice page for tourism in Brittany, with a good list of festivals.

<http://www.cotesdarmor.com/gb-heber.html>

E Tourism information for the Côtes d'Armor, in English

<http://www.interresa.ca/ts/bretagne/region/index.html>

F More tourism information for the Côtes d'Armor, in French

<http://www.essi.fr/~nedelec/>

F/E A site about the Pays Bigouden maintained by Thierry Nedelec

Shopping

<http://www.imaginouest.com/>

F/E Imagin Ouest, tourism and other Brittany information, and on-line shopping for British and Breton products of all kinds. Based in Rennes.

<http://www.bzh.com/>

F More Breton infos, and some shopping (you can't order on-line though).

<http://www.bretagne-brittany.com/>

F/E/B A new Breton shopping and forum site

<http://www.schoenhofs.com/>

E Schoenhof's Foreign Books (Massachussetts) - they have a lot of Breton language materials

NOTE: You can get a wide variety of breton materials at Dusty Strings acoustic music shop in Seattle, WA. 206-634-1662. They import directly from Coop Breizh.

Associations

<http://www.insa-lyon.fr/Associations/BZH/>

F A site created by Breton students living in Lyon

<http://www.idiom.com/~argouarc/bronc.html>

F/E The association of Bretons of Northern California!

Personal Pages

<http://www.francenet.fr/~perrot/breizh/>

F The Breton page of Gildas Perrot, a homesick Breton in Paris.

<http://homepages.strath.ac.uk/~nap95321/brittanny.html>

F A homepage with lots of Breton links

Surfing – continued

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/TangiO/Choilang.htm>

F/E/B Another Breton site with a variety of information

<http://www.lefourneau.com/>

F A fun site based in Brest

<http://inferno.cs.univ-paris8.fr/~drieu/>

F A homepage devoted to Brittany

Germany (!)

<http://members.aol.com/BHNHamburg/index.html>

German For those of you who speak German, here is a website devoted to Brittany

<http://www.webcom.com/galileo/breta/welcome.html>

F/B/E The Center for Celtic Languages and Cultures in Bonn, Germany. They are giving immersion courses in Breton!

Other Servers and Search Engines

<http://www.bretagnenet.com/sommaire.html>

F/E BretagneNet server, lots of links

<http://www.breizhoo.com/>

F The Breizhoo search engine, a "Yahoo" for Brittany, with many categories of links presented as well.

<http://www.celt.net/og/angbret.htm>

F A big list of Breton links

<http://www.ensicaen.ismra.fr/~salem/breizh.html>

F/B/E A site with lots and lots of links and information

<http://www.webcom.com/galileo/breta/welcome.html>

F A list of Breton commercial links

Miscellany

<http://www.worldnet.fr/~pobl/>

F/E/B If you want to get political, this is the site for the Party for the Organization of a Free Brittany.

<http://www.enst-bretagne.fr/Campus/train/>

F For those who like railroad history, here is a site about the history of train travel between Paris and Brittany!

<http://www.caids.net/entraide/>

F If you are interested in doing some genealogical research for your Breton ancestors

<http://www.geocities.com/Vienna/Strasse/1558/>

E The homepage of the Bells and Motley Consort (John and Sondra Bromka) who play the music of, and travel in, many countries including Brittany

<http://www.sas.upenn.edu/~swinick/prof.html>

E The homepage of Steve Winick, who is working on his Ph.D. in Folklore and Folklife at the University of Pennsylvania. Lots of good Celtic links

<http://www.xe.net/currency/>

E A very handy site, a universal currency converter

For those who do not "surf" ...

An introduction to the Kervarker web site and some good ideas about where to go to learn the Breton language

Lois Kuter

Not everyone has access to the internet, so I thought it might be useful to show a bit of what you might find. This gives me the opportunity to modify the location of a site given to you by Mary Turner in the February issue of Bro Nevez. It is not uncommon for web sites to change their "address" slightly (that means changing the sequence of numbers or letters you punch into the computer), and I thank Mark Kerrain for noting the change in this one for us. The most recent site for Kervarker is:

<http://www.enst-bretagne.fr/Kervarker/>

I would not normally make a big deal of this, but the Kervarker site is one of the most important (perhaps, the most) for those interested in learning the Breton language. Breton lessons are available not only through French or English, but also through German and Spanish, and I would not be surprised if a number of other languages were added in the future.

But I will let this site speak for itself. First, you will read an introduction to the organization Sav-heol and the individuals responsible for the Kervarker site. This is followed by a trip to just one option of information to choose from: "How to learn Breton." This is a particularly timely topic, because you will find excellent advice on year-round and summer options to study Breton in Brittany (and via the Kervarker site).

* * *

What is SAV-HEOL?

Sav-heol is a society based in Rennes which teaches evening courses and promotes the Breton language. It works a lot to produce teaching material, such as this server. It is a member of **Kuzul ar Brezhoneg** and is registered in the **Mercator-Education's** data base.

The lessons you find here are based on the method of Mark Kerrain, a Breton teacher in secondary school and at the University of Haute-Bretagne and président of **Sav-Heol**.

This server is built and maintained by Romuald Texier, a former teacher at **Sav-Heol** and at the **Diwan** secondary school.

Sav Heol - 42 straed al lireu - 35136 Sant Jakez al lanneg - Breizh France

WEEK COURSES

Those are longer and more efficient.

Roudour organizes such weekly courses all through the year, in Centre Bittany or elsewhere. There is always a course going on. Ask for the list. Roudour, BP 24 Hent Berrien, 29-690 An Uhelgoad. - (02 98 99 75 81 (02 98 99 76 01.

The Université de Haute Bretagne in Rennes organizes a course for all levels every year during the first week of July, during the music and theatre festival called "Les Tombées de la Nuit". Contact Laurence Bessenay, SEFOCEPE, Université de Haute Bretagne, 35 000 Rennes.

Holidays centre An Oaled (29 214 Treglonou) has its course for adults in August, and children are welcome.

SUMMER IMMERSION COURSE

Immersion courses mean efficiency and KEAV, i. e. Kamp Etrekeltiek ar Vrezhonegerien, the Interceltic camp for breton speakers, founded in 1947. Every year about a 100 breton learners and teachers gather for 1 or 2 weeks (up to your choice) to practice the language in classes, walks or games, to sing, dance or just chat. Everybody has to speak breton, which anybody can do a little if he has studied for one year. Children who can speak the language are accepted if accompanied. Learn and practice is the rule, and best periods are not always the classes. It is the only place where you can speak breton the same day to Irish or Welsh Celts as well as to Americans, Japanese or Hungarians.

KEAV is generally held during the second half of July. This year, for the first time, there will be 3 weeks, from Sunday 12 th of July to Saturday 1st of August because too many persons could not be accepted during the 2 weeks last year. If you are really interested, apply as soon as possible. There might still be room for you! KEAV, Hent Moulouen, 29 000 Kemper.

You can find help in the TV programmes of F3, although there not very frequent, and generally suppressed during the summer, or the radio broadcasts (Radio Kreiz Breizh, Radio Bro-Gwened, Radio Armorique, Radio Bretagne Ouest).

You also can get help from:

- ☐ the short stories for learners published by Sav-Heol (42, straed al lireu, 35 136 Sant Jakez al Lann - (02 99 30 22 89): Erwan Lagadeg, soner piano (1996) Ur voutailh war an traezh (1997);
- ☐ the comics, Tintin for instance, published by An Here, (29 219 Ar Releg);
- ☐ a bilingual magazine, Evit ar Brezhoneg BP 24 29 450 Sizun;
- ☐ listening to records while reading the words of songs by Annie Ebrel, EV, Gilles Servat, Kemener, etc.

How to learn Breton

If you wish to learn breton, 6 main opportunities are offered.

COURSES FOR ADULTS

In most towns of Brittany classes for adults are organized, either in schools or in cultural centres, as in Rennes for instance where classes are organized by Sav-Heol.

Such classes exist in Nantes, Saint Nazaire, Lorient, Vannes, Brest, Quimper, Carhaix, Saint Brieuc, Lannion, Guingamp, Saint Malo, Redon ... and about a hundred other places either in Brittany or outside, in Paris or its surroundings for instance.

Mervent is a federation of about 30 of such night classes in Kerne, the Parc d'Armorique organizes about 20, and Gevred in the Mor Bihan area is a federation of about 20 others.

If there is no group in your vicinity, contact Sav-Heol.

KERVARKER COURSE ON INTERNET

You can study with our method, *Ni a gomz brezhoneg*, which is being published in French, English, German and Spanish, on the Web. You can listen to the dialogues too. When you finish the lessons, why not try the short stories for learners, or even better, join the summer course (see below)?

CORRESPONDANCE COURSES

Skol Ober has organized a correspondance school and gives free teaching on several levels.

At home, according to your will, you will study a handbook (Skol Ober proposes a choice of several) and listen to the tapes. Then you will send your homework to a teacher. He will correct it and give his advice and then send it back to you. You may want to learn fast or work slowly, it is up to you.

Ask Skol Ober 22 310 Plufur (((02 96 35 10 22) for free information.

WEEK-ENDS

A few courses are organized through the year at weekends. Some are intensive, others are not. They help you to learn faster and use the language.

The Kreizenn Klas Glas, (22 160 Ar Chapel Nevez), is one of those places where students gather for several language weekends courses.

The ICDBL on the Net ...

Thanks to Mary Turner we have been working with an association in Brittany called Breizh.net which maintains our very new site on the internet.

To put a face to them (although they are much more handsome than the photocopy shows!), I have reprinted an article from the newspaper Ouest France (January 23, 1998). Thank you Roland Laigo for sending me that article just in time to include it!

For those who struggle with French, the following page shows what you find if you get on the computer and find "Breizh.net." This explains quite clearly the mission of the association. While there are many ways to create a web site, some ways seem better than others. We clearly fall within the mission of Breizh.net, and they can make us very easy to find for those using the internet. We hope that our visibility on the web will bring new members to the ICDBL to support the work of those in Brittany fighting for the future of their language.

And, last but not least, you will find a copy of what the ICDBL web site actually looks like ... for now. We will continue to update it and add information about Bro Nevez as well as some meatier information and articles from Bro Nevez to entice people to join us. And I hope that other branches of the ICDBL throughout the world will also become visible at this site (once I contact them to make the invitation!). Your ideas as to what we might include on our site will be welcome.

Tous les termes informatiques traduits en breton sur un site

Breizh.net : le breton sur Internet

Comment dit-on «Internet», en breton? Et «ordinateurs en réseau»? La réponse est sur Breizh.net (1), le tout nouveau site lancé par trois bretonnants passionnés par Internet. Breizh.net veut promouvoir la Bretagne et la langue bretonne sur le Web, la toile mondiale.

En breton, «Internet» se dit «Ken-rouedad». Et «internaute», «gwia-der». «Urzhiaer-rouedad» désigne des «ordinateurs en réseau». Sur Breizh.net, on trouve ainsi un lexique anglais, français, breton, des principaux termes utilisés en informatique. Le travail de traduction, coordonné par Fulub Jakez, a été effectué par TermBret, la commission informatique de l'Institut culturel de Bretagne.

Logique du pauvre

Breizh.net propose aussi aux surfeurs bretonnants toute la procédure pour mettre en breton le bureau de Windows 95. Et petit cadeau: on peut capturer un économiseur d'écran qui ressemble aux fenêtres volantes de Windows, mais qui représente, bien sûr, un «gwen ha du», le drapeau breton.

Ce site est né de la rencontre



Les trois concepteurs de Breizh.net : Erwan Lanchec, Paul Divanac'h et Bernez Boulic'h.

entre trois bretonnants brestois passionnés par les nouvelles technologies: Bernez Boulic'h, un libraire, Paul Divanac'h, qui enseigne l'Internet dans une école supérieure, et Erwan Lanchec, superviseur de réseaux.

«On dit que la France a du retard sur l'Internet, explique Paul Divanac'h.

Nous ne voulions pas qu'il y ait aussi un retard breton dans le retard français.» «Tout le monde veut de la télé ou de la radio en breton, ajoute Bernez Boulic'h. Mais il y a aussi Internet qui est une logique du pauvre. Ce serait dommage de ne pas s'approprier cet instrument de diffusion d'une

communauté bretonne, vivante et dynamique.»

En juillet dernier, les trois Brestois ont donc créé l'association Breizh.net et travaillé à la construction du site lancé sur le Web samedi dernier. Breizh.net s'interdit d'intervenir dans le domaine commercial. L'association se propose d'aider tout le milieu associatif à s'afficher sur Internet, soit en aidant les associations à développer leurs pages, soit en les hébergeant sur Breizh.net. Sur le site, on peut ainsi faire connaissance avec les pages de Sked, la fédération des associations bretonnes de Brest.

D'autres associations, ou des individus, ont compris tout l'intérêt d'Internet pour mieux faire connaître la Bretagne, sa langue et sa culture. Un site, remarquablement bien fait, est entièrement consacré au pays du Léon (2). Sur un autre, Bretagne Musiques on line, on peut connaître toute la discographie celtique et écouter des extraits (3). À noter que nombre de ces sites sont bilingues, voire trilingues.

Yannig GUÉRIN.

- (1) www.breizh.net
- (2) www.bretagnenet.com/leon
- (3) www.bmol.infini.fr

The aim of the association " Breizh.Net "

Breizh.Net is an association which aim is to promote Brittany and the Breton language on the Internet.

Breizh.Net also designates the field of communication devoted to the association on the web.

The reservation of this generic term is non-profit-making; it is a means to help Breton associations to enter the world of information.

Breizh.Net's activity is directed neither towards business corporations and industries, nor towards local authorities or governments, which are already attributed specific proposal of benefits.

Breizh.Net's activity is characterized by:

- * The elaboration of common means for the promotion of Brittany and its language ;
- * A personalized support for all projects developped by every member association.

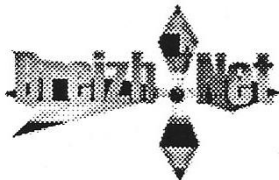
Why Breizh . Net for ?

Today, documents in French which are accessible on the web only represent 1,4% of the total number of documents (compared to 94% for the documents in English) ; the expression "French slowness" is another way to say that French is turning into a minor and local language.

Most important at the end of this century, the internet is a form of communication that eager people from Brittany should adapt to in order to better communicate the ideas of an open-minded and lively Breton community.

This work has already begun through isolate initiatives but these are not enough. Without a serious awareness and common efforts, Brittany might easily be another participant to the French slowness in the information sphere.

Breizh.Net is decided to be the stepping-stone of sensitization and activity in order to reach this goal.





I.C.D.B.L.
*International Committee for
the Defense of the Breton Language*



KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

The ICDBL was first established in 1975 in Brussels, Belgium, to support the repeated demands of Bretons that their native language be given the recognition and place in the schools, media and public life of Brittany that it needs to survive. The ICDBL was founded by and continues to count on the support of non-Bretons who show through their membership that, while the future of the Breton language does not directly concern them, it is a matter of world importance.



The **U.S. Branch of the ICDBL** was founded in 1981 and publishes a quarterly 35-page newsletter called *Bro Nevez* (primarily in English with some Breton and French). Membership includes a subscription to *Bro Nevez* (US\$18 for voting membership; US\$17 for non-voting membership). Or you can subscribe without being a member (US\$15 for U.S./Canada; other destinations US\$20 for surface mail, US\$25 airmail).



The U.S. ICDBL also publishes a number of "working papers" and guides on the Breton language, music and history.

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The U.S. ICDBL provides *Bro Nevez* on a complimentary basis to a number of language and cultural organizations in Brittany; in some instances we are also very happy to establish an exchange of publications.

Contact us for further information.



In January 1998, the **Canadian Branch of the ICDBL** was re-launched. This branch of the ICDBL publishes a newsletter called Brittany (trilingual in English, Breton and French). Canadian Membership including Brittany is CAN\$15. A Canadian Membership which includes both Brittany and Bro Nevez is CAN\$30. A subscription to Brittany without membership is CAN\$10 for the U.S. and Canada and CAN\$20 by surface mail elsewhere.



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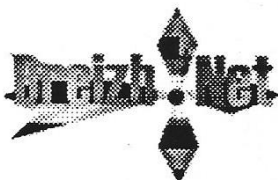
Show your support for the Breton language by becoming a member of the U.S. or Canadian Branch. Or subscribe to one or both newsletters to keep up to date on the situation of the Breton language in Brittany, and for a wealth of information on the Breton culture as well as reviews of new books and recordings.

TELL PEOPLE ABOUT US AND JOIN US!

U.S. Branch Activities

[Links](#)

ICDBL Worldwide



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