

BRO NEVEZ

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



Here is just one of many drawings presented to U.S. ICDBL Members Richard and Valerie Herr when they visited Sol Diwan Landerne this September. See page for a report .

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 produced by the U.S. 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 Editor. 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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|------------------------|-------------------------|
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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 to show our support for their work. Your Membership/Subscription allows us to do this. In some instances we are also very happy to establish an exchange of publications.

* * *

The **Canadian Branch of the ICDBL** was relaunched January 1998. That branch of the ICDBL publishes 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.

A Few Notes from the Editor

Time to Renew Your Support for 2000

Here it is, the end of November, and another issue of Bro Nevez is out! With this issue you will find a membership/subscription renewal form for 2000. If you have already renewed I have noted that on the form and I thank you for your continued support. The rest of you probably already know the importance of your support.

Time to Help Us Find New Members and Subscribers

With this issue of Bro Nevez I have included a basic brochure as well as an "Introduction" I have drafted to respond to the letters, telephone calls, and e-mail inquiries I receive about our work. I encourage you to use these to spread the word about the U.S. ICDBL (feel free to photocopy them!) We operate on a very small budget and all the work that goes into Bro Nevez, our web site or other projects is entirely volunteer. The more members we have, the more work we can do to reach out to a wider number of Americans (i.e., do some marketing). And a larger membership will allow us to widen our show of support to organizations and individuals active in Brittany working at the grass-roots level for the Breton language and culture. We do this by sending Bro Nevez on a complimentary basis, and one membership or subscription fee covers the cost of doing this for one organization or individual.

U.S. ICDBL 20th Anniversary

While the U.S. Branch of the ICDBL was not officially incorporated as a non-profit organization until 1981, our origins date to 1980 when the first core members were recruited and a newsletter was launched. So, with the millenium, we will be recognizing 20 years of work on the part of U.S. ICDBL members to support work in Brittany for the Breton language and to help Americans discover the rich culture of Brittany. There are many obstacles that remain in the way of a healthy future for the Breton language, and our anniversary offers us the chance to mobilize new support for the years of work ahead.

Plans are moving forward for an ICDBL gathering in June (10 & 11) at the Potomac Celtic Festival. Brittany will be the featured country at the festival in 2000, and the ICDBL will have an expanded tent site which will serve as a gathering place for ICDBL members and anyone interested in Brittany. We have absolutely nothing in the ICDBL budget for this party, but that shouldn't stop us from getting together for a feast on the Saturday night of the festival. And we don't need a budget to enjoy some Breton music and dancing at the festival As we know more, we will send out detailed information. As a group that has been active for 20 years, it seems time to have a gathering of members (and newsletter subscribers) where we can actually meet each other face-to-face! While travelling 3,000 miles from the west coast or 1,000 miles from the center of this vast country may not be practical for everyone, consider organizing a more regional gathering of members!

You will be hearing more from me, and I hope to meet some of you in the coming year! Save the dates of June 10 & 11 and consider a trip to lovely Leesburg, Virginia.

Lois Kuter

BRETON IN THE SCHOOLS OF BRITTANY

Lois Kuter

Information for the following reports was gleaned primarily from Kannadig Diwan Breizh (Nov. 159, Gwengolo/ September 1999), Kannadig Unvaniezh ar Gelennerien Brezhoneg (Niv. 62, Gwengolo/September 1999 & Niv. 63, Here/October 1999), Keleier Skolaj Diwan ar Mor-Bihan (Niv. 4, Gwengolo/September 1999), Bretagne/Breizh Info (No. 142, 10 septembre 1999, No. 143, 17 septembre 1999, and No. 144, 24 septembre 1999).

DIWAN -- A New School Year Begins

For the third year in a row Diwan has added 250 new children to its schools—a growth of 13% from 1,996 last year to 2,251 children enrolled this year. 1,763 are in the pre-school and primary school level and 488 are at the middle school and high school levels. This continued growth of Diwan (as well as the bilingual programs in public and Catholic schools) is in contrast to an overall decline in the school population of Brittany (a drop of 0.5%). The biggest growth for Diwan schools are in the areas where there have been the fewest Diwan schools (Morbihan up 21% and Loire-Atlantique up 30%).

The dynamic growth of Diwan where the school population has doubled since 1993 is in sharp contrast to the slowness in negotiations with the National Education system for a public statute for Diwan (which now operates under a contract as an “association”). Diwan schools are officially *private* schools, but they have operated since their beginnings 22 years ago as *public* schools open to all who want to enroll. Negotiations continue but there seems to be no hurry on the part of the French government to take any action on the case for public status brought before it by Diwan administrators.

As noted by Diwan’s President, Andrew Lincoln, the slowness in progress of negotiations is also in contrast with the unusual speed of court action by the French government to annul a subvention of 1 million francs given by Brittany’s Regional Council to the city of Carhaix to proceed with work to renovate the buildings there which now house the Diwan high school (see below). The court’s decision to annul the subvention was recommended by the Prefect of the Region in view of the “Loi Falloux” enacted in 1850, which states that such a subvention cannot exceed 10% of the annual expenses of private schools thus supported. The court also annulled a contract between the Region of Brittany and the town of Carhaix which agreed to put the Kerampuilh site at the disposition of Diwan for a period of at least 15 years.

Work goes on to renovate the former retirement home and classroom space, and the Regional Council has filed an appeal. With the Diwan high school as a centerpiece for the development of a major center for cultural/economic development in the Carhaix region, there is strong support from the city of Carhaix and the Regional Council to continue to move forward.

The Diwan High School Opens

On September 6th 88 high school students began their year at the partially renovated site of Kerampuilh. Renovations will not be completed before January 2000, so in the meantime, the students must travel across town for cafeteria meals, and have done without hot water in their lodgings for several months. Classes are being held in temporary “mobile” class rooms. The conditions are Spartan but Diwan high school students are capable of “toughing things out,” as they have been in the past years when they have been squeezed into inadequate space with inconvenient lodging and meal arrangements. Hope is on the horizon, and when completed the new high school will offer all the comforts and resources a high school should have.

Breton in the Schools – continued

A New Middle School for Diwan also Opens – Skolaj Diwan ar Mor-Bihan

September 6th was also the opening for the new Diwan Middle School which serves students in Loire-Atlantique and Morbihan. There are currently middle schools in Ar Releg Kerhuon (outside Brest), Kemper, and Plijidi (near Guingamp). Seventeen students began this year at the new Skolaj Mor-Bihan, and the numbers should double for the coming year and grow to 150 in the next five years. For this first year, the middle school is renting space in the Cultural Center, Amzer-Nevez, in Ploemeur (just outside Lorient), with the gracious assistance of Amzer Nevez to make this temporary location work for the students and their teachers. Delays in renovations for the proposed middle school site in Vannes is linked to the difficulty of raising necessary funds. This is certainly impacted by the same problems caused by Diwan's lack of official public status which has slowed the growth of the high school in Carhaix, and forced parents at the Vannes Diwan school to build a new cafeteria building on their own. But, the parents, teachers, administrators, and the active support group working for the Morbihan middle school are very determined. With the strong growth of Diwan pre-school and primary school students in Morbihan and Loire-Atlantique, there will certainly be a growth in the students choosing to attend the Diwan middle in this part of Brittany.

New Openings at the Primary and Preschool Level Also

Two new Diwan pre-schools opened this year in Auray and Guérande (with 15 and 16 children respectively). Such openings are not without problems, and parents and teachers needed to mobilize in Guérande to win access from the Mayor's Office to the nearby municipal cafeteria space. In Auray some manual labor was required of parents to bring the classroom space up to code.

A New School Year for the Public and Catholic Schools of Brittany ... A Solid Growth in Bilingual Classes

In the Public Schools

For the 1999/2000 school year bilingual classes in the public school system saw a 21% increase with an enrollment of 1,942 (up from 1,609 last year—an increase of 333). This year there are 1,007 children at the preschool level, 686 and the primary school level, 194 at the middle school level and 55 at the high school level. Bilingual classes can be found in 36 communes of Brittany with particularly strong numbers in the cities of Lannion, Rennes, and Lanester.

While one can applaud the continued strong growth of bilingual classes in the public schools, it is important to know that only 65% of the demand on the part of parents for such classes was met. An additional 87 children were not able to enter a bilingual program because the French National Education system refused to open new classes. This was the case for example in Landelo where 16 children were signed up, L'Hôpital-Camfrout where 22 were signed up, and in Mauron where 26 were signed up—all sufficient numbers to justify the creation of a class. In several other schools demands for the addition of a third bilingual teacher due to large classes sizes were refused. This was the case for Landerneau where there are 57 children (33 at the preschool level and 24 in the primary level) and at Guipavas where there are 54 children (32 at the preschool level and 22 at the primary school level).

As the demand grows each year for new bilingual programs, it is clear that the French educational system is incapable of meeting parents demands. There is limited budgeting and a shortage of teachers for the expansion of programs due to inadequate recruitment and training on the part of the National

Breton in the Schools – continued

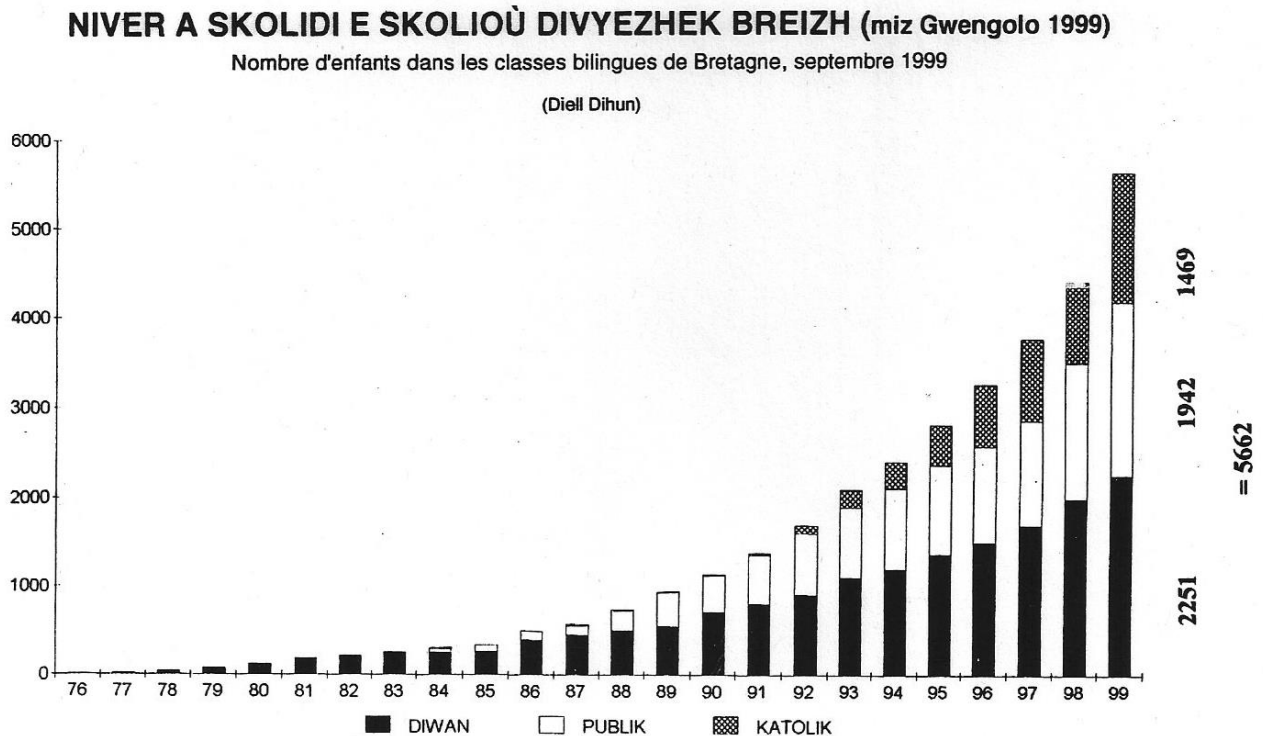
Education system. This means that “supplemental” teachers are hired who travel to several different schools to fill gaps in bilingual programs. These teachers receive a lower salary and do not get the full benefits of full-time teachers.

In the Catholic Schools

The demand for bilingual classes has also continued to grow in the Catholic schools of Brittany. For the 1999/2000 school year bilingual classes increased by about 20% with an addition of 328 new students for a total of 1,469 (versus 1,141 in 1998/99). 752 are at the pre-school level, 654 at the primary school level, 60 at the middle school level and 3 are in high school.

In All

If you total the students enrolled in all three Breton language streams (Public and Catholic bilingual classes and Diwan immersion classes) the total comes to **5,662** students, a growth of 916 students from the 1998/99 school year. This spectacular growth (despite a lack of sincere support on the part of the National Education system) is clearly presented in the chart below (from Kannadig Unvaniezh ar Gelennerien Brezhoneg (Niv. 63, Here/October 1999).



Breton in the Schools – continued

Adults are Going Back to School to Learn Breton

While the continued growth in demand for Breton language education for children is certainly clear, there is also a boom in Breton classes for adults. A report from the Ofis ar Brezhoneg (Office de la Langue Breton) printed in Keleier Ofis ar Brezhoneg (Niv. 21, Gwengolo/September 1999) notes that some **9,300** adults took Breton language classes during the 1998/99 school year. 74% of them (6,700) took evening classes, 19% (2,000) took intensive week-long classes (normally for several weeks), and 7% (600) studied Breton using a correspondence course. Of those taking evening classes, 5,500 were in Lower Brittany (82%) and 1,200 were in Upper Brittany (18%).

For the 1999/2000 school year some 165 evening classes are being offered: 27 in Côtes d'Armor, 59 in Finistère, 14 in Ille-et-Vilaine, 7 in Loire-Atlantique; and 30 in Morbihan. Outside of Brittany some 28 organizations are offering Breton classes (15 in the Paris area).

More precise figures for both the 1998/99 and 1999/2000 years will be available from the Ofis ar Brezhoneg which has reedited a directory of all the organizations offering Breton classes, Kentelioù brezhoneg d'an oadourien/Cours de breton pour adultes (available for the cost of postage): Office de la Langue Bretonne, 10 rue Nantaise, 35000 Rennes. Telephone: 02-23-44-04-30; Fax: 02-23-44-04-39; e-mail: ofisr.bzh@wanadoo.fr.

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A (RE)INTRODUCTION TO DIWAN

The following information is from a publication produced in 1998 by Diwan, designed to introduce its schools and pedagogy to prospective parents; or to others interested in better understanding its operation. Since the U.S. ICDBL has supported Diwan for many years, and is personally linked to a particular pre/primary school (Skol Diwan Landerne), it seemed a good idea to give Bro Nevez readers a new introduction to this unique and successful school system. I have translated approximately half of the information found in the Diwan booklet, and in some cases synthesized or rearranged a bit of the information: I would be very happy to provide a photocopy of the complete text (in Breton or French) to anyone interested. *Lois Kuter*

SOME KEY DATES

| | |
|------|---|
| 1977 | Creation of the first Diwan preschool. |
| 1980 | First primary school class. |
| 1988 | The secondary school level first opens |
| 1994 | The Diwan high school opens in Relecq-Kerhuon (Brest) in September. |
| 1995 | A second middle school opens in Plijidi (Plésidy) (Côtes d'Armor) |
| 1997 | Successful graduation (baccalaureat) for the first Diwan high school students. Opening of a third middle school in Kemper. |
| 1999 | In the Fall, a fourth middle school, Skloaj Diwan ar Mor-Bihan, opens in temporary housing with a projected move to Vannes, and the high school opens in Carhaix with 88 students |

Diwan - continued

DIWAN IN NUMBERS (1998)

130 employees (teachers, trainees, secretaries, director, coordinator and trainer)

25 preschools; 24 primary schools; 3 middle schools and a high school

In the 1998/99 school year there were 1996 students enrolled in Diwan schools.

For the 1999-2000 school year, there is an enrollment of 2,251—an increase of 13% (1,763 in the preschools and primary schools and 488 in the middle schools and high school)

WHY DIWAN?

Inspired by the Ikastolak (of the Basques) and Meithrin (of the Welsh) Diwan's first preschool opened in 1977 in Lampaul-Ploudalmézeau. Diwan means "sprout" in Breton and is an *association loi de 1901*.

The Breton Language

There are Diwan schools because there is Breton—a living language with a unique oral culture and literature growing out of a European Celtic line going back 2000 years. It is the language of a nation that was independent until the 15th century and spoken up to the 9th century throughout the Armorican peninsula.

In 1900 Sébillot estimated that there were 1,300,000 Breton speakers; today we are at 400,000. That is still a lot if one compares Breton to the minority language of western Europe (of which there are some 40!) which range from 150,000 for the least spoken up to 2 ½ million for the most widely found. Some with less speaker than Breton, but with official recognition, have ceased to decline and are even developing.

The survival of the Breton language will be played out through Diwan. The possibility of transmitting our language to future generations will require a positive political will in the area of the media and in public life in Brittany. If not, the race against the clock could be definitively lost and one of the most important elements of the Celtic patrimony will be no more than a curiosity in the archives. But beyond Breton, it is fundamental democracy and its respect that will be stuck down. To defend Breton is to chose diversity over uniformity, variety over monotony.

The Objectives of Diwan

- To offer an entire schooling in Breton, from preschool to the Baccalaureat (high school graduation).
- To draw on a culture rooted in a living environment. Many people, especially in Lower Brittany, speak Breton in their daily lives and many students have in their family one or several people for whom Breton is the mother tongue.
- To allow children to learn their history, from its roots in the language of their ancestors.

Diwan – continued

- To favor psychological, intellectual and a rich social development through early bilingualism, and to effectively prepare them to master several languages, which will be a necessity for tomorrow's Europe.
- The role of the school is not only to transmit knowledge but also to allow each child to build his or her own personality. To be free, that's to know who one is in order to recognize others. A strong cultural identity gives a point of reference, something that is often missing for many youth today. This reference point is a factor in socialization based on tolerance and a desire for exchange.

THE DIWAN CHARTER

Article 1. The Diwan association is open to all families desiring the assurance of an education for their children through the Breton language, without socioprofessional, philosophical or political discrimination. The schools are free of charge and open to all.

Article 2. Diwan exists because of the deficiencies in the National Education system which does not give its proper place to the Breton language. It demands that the schools be taken charge of in a democratic and renewed public education service in Brittany, allowing the use of Breton as the language of teaching from preschool to the university in all areas of learning.

Article 3. Diwan is independent of any philosophical, religious, political, syndical, or other formation. In consequence, Diwan affirms that its fight requires that the religious, philosophical or political convictions of all of its members be respected, whatever their range as long as they are not contrary to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This indispensable tolerance leads Diwan to defend and promote an undenominational character in its teaching and to guarantee the liberty of thought for each person.

Article 4. Diwan establishes a democratic teaching with the effective collaboration of parents, local collectives, and teachers. Diwan asks parents to create a climate conducive to expression in the Breton language in the daily life of the home.

Article 5. Diwan takes upon itself the encouragement of the use of Breton within the association at all levels. Additionally, Diwan promotes a cultural development in the Breton language giving each child the maximum opportunities to forge his or her own future, permitting children of Brittany to take charge of their natural, social and economic environment.

Article 6. Diwan declares its hostility to all linguistic uniformization and is supportive of diverse forms of cultural expression, affirming that only in being complimentary can they be a source of unity, and of mutual and collective enrichment. The Breton taught in the Diwan preschools is that used in their geographic and human environment.

Article 7. In conformance with the inalienable rights of people to express their own culture, Diwan calls on all people who love democracy, Breton cultural organizations, and unionized groups—especially of teachers—to fight with her for more justice and against all forms of cultural dominance.

Article 8. Diwan declares its solidarity with all peoples who fight for their cultural identity, including immigrant workers, affirming that their diversity contributes to the enrichment of the human patrimony.

Diwan – continued

THE OBJECTIVE: EARLY BILINGUALISM

The Strategy: Immersion

Scientific research has shown the importance of all the early learning that takes place in acquiring knowledge and skills through one's schooling. The child in its youngest age is, in fact, in the optimal conditions for learning. Because, it's during early childhood that most of the development of the brain and intellectual capabilities are developed. The richness and variety of external stimulations play an important role in each individual's capacity to develop certain areas of knowledge. In fact, it is between birth and 6 years old that most learning must be awakened. This is the age during which the child is very receptive and learns without effort. What is true for learning anything is true for learning most fundamental skills and for learning languages.

Thus, learning another language must be introduced very early. The ideal being that this learning starts in the family.

Early bilingualism needs one or the other of the following combinations to succeed:

- Father or mother speak Breton (for example: the father speaks Breton exclusively to the child and the mother speaks French).
- Parents speak Breton or it is present in the external environment
- Parents speak Breton or it is the language of preschool.

Immersion teaching which has been experimented with for thirty years in Canada provides a satisfactory answer to meet our objective: to foster early bilingualism in a linguistic situation (ours) characterized by a total imbalance between the two languages of the larger community. The exclusive use of Breton in school up to elementary school classes has the goal of correcting this imbalance. The fundamental learning is done without recourse to French (i.e., without translating) which would unnecessarily complicate the work of the child to learn. This is the paradox of immersion: one becomes bilingual through monolingualism.

The very principal behind immersion is not to teach a language as a goal in itself, but to use the language as a means of learning in various areas of activity. A child will not willingly learn a language when he does not see what this serves. His attitude is different when the language becomes a tool to acquire knowledge.

The other aspect of teaching by immersion which meets our objective of early bilingualism is its intensive character. The ineffectiveness that one often regrets to find in the teaching of foreign or secondary languages is linked in large part to its spread-out character: few hours of classes over a span of seven years. We are not mistaken here; the objective of such teaching is not to produce bilingual individuals.

THE DIWAN PEDAGOGICAL SYSTEM

As outlined in its Charter, the Breton language is used as the language for teaching from preschool through high school. The pedagogical plan put in place by Diwan takes into account:

- The unequal balance of Breton and French languages in the family, public life, and media.

Diwan – continued

- Scientific research in the area of child development, language acquisition, and learning mechanisms.
- The state of research in the area of bilingualism and its use on a large scale (Wales, Catalonia, Canada).

The Preschool

The only language used by the teacher is Breton, in the method of *immersion*. At the beginning of preschool the child uses either French or Breton if he or she already uses it. In the case of children starting with French, the use of Breton comes progressively at the individual's own rhythm. This "natural" system of teaching by immersion has been practiced successfully in Canada for 30 years.

One looks at three stages of development in the acquisition of a language:

- **The threshold of understanding** is generally achieved rapidly in preschool through daily use of a vocabulary directly related to the children's' interests.
- **The threshold of communication is next achieved.** The exchange between child and teacher can be made in Breton. The language takes on a real sense as a tool for obtaining knowledge. The rapidity in achieving this level is linked to different parameters: the use and motivation for Breton in the family, the sense given by the child to one language or the other, external linguistic influences (such as television). Immersion allows a mitigation in part of the imbalance between the two languages for children who do not speak Breton at home.
- **The threshold of conceptualization** (generally achieved before the end of preschool) allows for a complex use of the language as a tool of communication, thought, mathematical reasoning, and creation. The child is thus ready to take on fundamental training: reading, writing, math.

Benchmarks in the Diwan Linguistic Strategy

| | | | | |
|---------------|-------------------------|--|---------|----------------|
| 2 years old | Preschool | Language for teaching | Breton | 26 hrs |
| 6 years old | CP | Language for teaching | Breton | 26 hrs |
| 7 ½ years old | CE | Language for teaching | Breton | 24 hrs |
| | | Introduction to the dominant language | French | 2 hrs |
| 10 years old | CM2 | Linguistic and scholastic achievement equal for both | Breton | 17 hrs |
| | | | French | 6 hrs |
| 11 years old | Collège 6 th | Introduction to a 3 rd language | English | 6 classes/week |
| | | French & Breton as languages | Breton | 22.5 classes |
| | | For teaching | French | 6.5 classes |

| | | | |
|--------------|--------------------------|---|--|
| 13 years old | Collège, 4 th | Oral and written competency in 3 rd language, now used as language for teaching Introduction of a 4 th language Spanish or German | English 5.5 classes Spanish/Ger. 4 classes |
| 14 years old | College 3 rd | 3 languages used as languages for teaching Oral and written knowledge of A 4 th language | Breton 18.5 classes French 8 classes English 6.5 classes Spanish/Ger. 4 classes |

Elementary School:

In CE1 (7 ½ years old) French is introduced. Mechanisms acquired in Breton are rapidly transposed. At first it is a matter of becoming competent in learning different spellings for certain phonemes. Very rapidly, one moves to the study of the language and its oral and written use. At this level many concepts can be transposed from one language to the other, directly or by comparative study. The time reserved for French progressively increases until the end of the primary level in the following way: CE1 has 2 hours, CE2 has 6 hours, CM1 has 6 hours and CM2 has 6 hours.

At the end of the primary school level children in the Diwan schools should have a knowledge and a competence in French which is equal to that of children coming out of the unilingual school system, and their competence is equal in both languages.

The teaching material follows the official programs of the National Education system

Middle School and High School

The Diwan Middle Schools are the outcome of the work of some fifty people who have been working since 1985 to elaborate study programs and create school books in Breton. This allows for teachers today to work with a solid base and to use modern teaching materials.

The Diwan Secondary level is also the fruit of the work of parents and children who have all thought through and laid out the basic lines of the educational project.

Diwan Cocktail: 1/3 French and 2/3 Breton

The two languages are languages of learning and study.

In Breton: History, geography, physics, natural sciences, math, art, sports, music and computer.

In French: Civics, technology, math (one third of the program is studied in French in the 3rd level and exercises to use math in French are used at other levels)

Diwan – continued

English—a third living language:

Because students are already bilingual when they arrive at the middle school level. English is a third language for them. To accelerate the learning of English, the students have six (45-minute) classes a week. As is done with Breton, English is approached as a language for discovery and interaction and not as a “scholarly material.” Radio and television programs in English are used for teaching as are correspondence and exchanges with a Welsh middle school, and travel in Great Britain.

English—a language for teaching

Subjects taught in English are: History and geography of Great Britain (in the 4th level) and Natural Sciences in the 3rd level (the official National Education curriculum). When students reach the 3rd level (14 years old), English becomes a medium for teaching alongside Breton and French. This program put into place with English-speaking teachers, allows for English to become a truly living language and readies students for the Europe of tomorrow. In the same spirit, the study of a second foreign language is begun (Spanish or German).

The rhythm of the school program

Classes are 45 minutes long to take advantage of student’s attention span. Days are lengthened two times a week with a long break at noon to allow students to participate in various leisure activities: radio production, theater, sports, Welsh classes, music, etc.

Dynamic and active Middle and High School students

It’s their school, and they have worked with adults to prepare it during their primary school years. Today they live it with passion and enthusiasm through sports competitions, participation in various daily tasks, in School Council meetings, and at a regular weekly meeting with the principal of the school.

The Pedagogical and Educational Team

To form a team means you must have the same goals, the same preoccupations and you must work together. At the middle schools and high school, the teachers and those that manage school life (animateurs) – often the same—are part of the same team and work together so there is no gap between daily life and teaching. Two times per month the team meets to take stock and put new projects in place—educationally and pedagogically. These meetings have allowed them to decide how to put programs into place to support students, or to create new classes or methodology, but also to individualize the path of students, providing tutoring, for example.

Now, the High School

The Secondary level began in September 1994 with the 1st level starting in 1995 and the final level completing the Diwan schooling in 1996 to arrive at the doors of the university. In 1997 Diwan high school students took (and successfully passed) their Baccalaureat exams for the first time.

Diwan – continued

QUESTIONS POTENTIAL DIWAN PARENTS ASK

Isn't it artificial to school a child in Diwan for whom the family language isn't Breton?

For over 50% of Diwan children the two parents are not Breton speakers. Nevertheless, all become bilingual. The aptitude of the child to manipulate two languages is natural. It's no more artificial to give a bilingual education to a child than it is to teach them piano when the parents are not musicians.

Yes, be bilingual, but why in Breton?

Because Breton makes up part of the environment and the culture which surrounds the child. The daily practice of two languages allows comparison, and the questioning and good comparison of rules of construction of a language. It is thus an extremely effective preparation for the learning of a third and then a fourth language at the middle school level.

Can I enroll my child in Diwan after completing preschool in French?

Yes, this is possible with the inclusion of some precautionary measures. Discuss this with the Diwan teacher.

What happens if the family moves to another region (of France)?

A child who interrupts his schooling at the beginning of primary school could have some passing weaknesses in French. Collaboration with the new teacher and follow-up work at home will regulate the problem quickly enough.

Won't my child mix the two languages?

This happens. But, more than other children, he will be conscious of the arbitrary nature of linguistic signs. In contrast to many monolingual adults, he will understand that there is no natural link between, for example, the word "ti" and the thing (a house) that could just as well be called "maison", "house", or even "Haus." In short, the effort he will make to not mix two languages will facilitate his learning of other languages. When you have such questions do not hesitate to discuss them with your child's teachers.

Will my child have difficulties with French?

The national tests (at CE2 and 6th levels) show the contrary. The results of students in Diwan schools were overall superior to national averages.

Won't my child have difficulty getting along with other monolingual children?

He will seek naturally to meet up with friends from his class. He will be proud to know how to express himself in two languages, but he will not feel different from neighborhood children with whom he will go swimming or to music lessons.

Won't there be too much Breton for my child?

Let's count up the total for a week: 7 days of 24 hours totals 168 hours, of which 70 hours are sleep. 98 hours remain. 26 of those hours per week are in school (in Breton with French at the primary level). 72 of those hours are with family and friends, etc (very frequently in French). Thus 25-30% of the waking hours are in Breton.

We are not Breton speakers. Will we be able to follow the schooling at the primary level?

Experience shows us yes. In your school parents have lived through this and can talk to you about it. The teachers can consult with you. There is tutoring (in the evening) in some schools. Ask the Parents Association at the school. And since you are demanding that your child make an effort to learn, you must make one too. That will be worth your while and your child will thus see your full support of the choice you have made in schools.

NEWS FROM OUR DIWAN SCHOOL – Skol Diwan Landerne

Lois Kuter

For the benefit of newer members of the U.S. ICDBL and subscribers to Bro Nevez I will begin by noting that in 1992 I was asked to become the "marraine"—a sort of "god mother"—to the Diwan school in the city of Landerneau. I not only happily took on this special relationship, but I brought the entire U.S. Branch of the ICDBL into it as well.

While I have had the chance to visit the school several times since 1992 (in 1995 and most recently in November 1998), I am pleased to report that two other U.S. ICDBL members had the opportunity to visit the school this September.

Richard and Valerie Herr from Berkely, California, had the opportunity on September 9th to visit our Diwan school and meet parents, children and teachers. Richard is a Professor of History Emeritus at the University of California in Berkely where he taught history of Spain, France, and western Europe for thirty years. He first spent time in France when he reached Paris a few weeks after liberation in October 1944 with the U.S. Army headquarters. He stayed in Paris after the war to study at the Sorbonne in 1945-46. He and Valerie go to Normandy each year to the summer home of a friend whose parents took Valerie into their family as a high school student in 1954. That created a lifetime of love of French language and culture for Valerie.

This year, the Herrs decided to take a side trip from their stay in Normandy with the specific aim of seeing some of Brittany and visiting our Diwan school. Despite the relatively late arrangements, the school's principal, Patrica Quere, graciously received the Herrs and arranged for a "reception" at the end of the school day so they could meet some of the parents and talk more with the teachers. During the afternoon the Herrs were given a tour of the classrooms and children presented them with many drawings (and some hugs). The Herrs enjoyed a long song in Breton sung by Enora Le Mat (7 years old). The Herrs also had the chance to see first-hand the 10th anniversary banner made by the U.S. ICDBL for the school (to which they had contributed a letter). The Herrs were especially appreciative of the chance to stay at the home of one of the Diwan families—Gilles and Dominique Faurot, whose children Ian and Clemence attend the school.

Taking advantage of the presence of Americans from as far away as California, the school called in the press and Valerie and Richard spoke in length with a reporter from the local paper. Richard pointed out that in a country like France where everyone is so concerned about preserving historical monuments, they should be even more concerned about saving their minority languages since these are the richest possible historical monuments, being the product of a whole people, preserving a past but changing over the course of millennia. France is making great efforts to preserve French at home and internationally in the face of the onslaught of English and should support Breton speakers in the interest of consistency. Richard also noted that his childhood in Mexico made him aware of how natural it can be to be bilingual. The idea that people cannot be fluent in more than one language (spoken or written) is outmoded and multilingualism should be

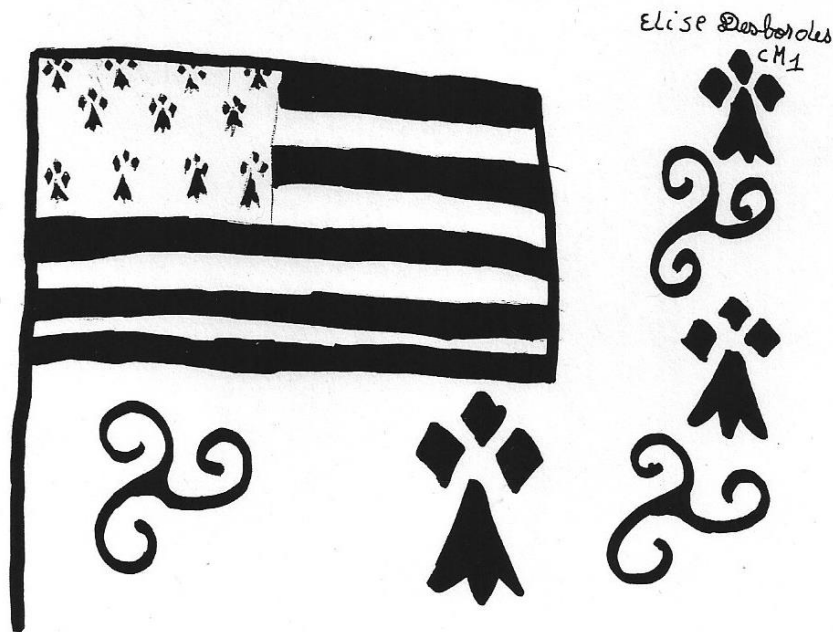
Skol Diwan Landerne – continued

the rule in many countries. Countries like France should seek to enhance the wealth provided by minority languages by encouraging children to be educated in their own language (such as Breton) as well as the language of the state. As is often the case, the very short article and photo appearing in *Le Télégramme* only skimmed the surface of what the Herrs had to say (while the Herrs don't speak Breton, their French is fluent).

Richard and Valerie not only had the chance to see first hand the work done in the Diwan School of Landerneau and deliver our encouragement to the children, parents, and teachers, but they had the pleasant task of delivering part of the money contributed by U.S. ICDBL members this year for Diwan. Thank you to all who added an extra contribution to your dues. You can be assured that Skol Diwan Landerne will put the 3,000 francs (approximately \$500) to very good use.

A little presentation of Skol Landerne Diwan

65 children are enrolled in the 1999/2000 school year at Skol Diwan Landerne. Annie Corlosquet teaches 17 pre-schoolers with help of Gwenaëlle, a teaching assistant. Luce Poho teaches 17 children in the "Big Section" which includes the ages of 6 through 8 (French levels of "Cours Préparatoire"). Anne Caer and Murielle (who is new to the school on a half-time basis) teach 20 children in "Cours Élémentaire 1 and 2"—roughly 8-9 year olds. And Patricia Quere teaches 11 children from 10 to 11 in the "Cours Moyen 1 & 2".



Congratulations to Four New Members of Brittany's Order of the Ermine

Each September, the Cultural Institute of Brittany (Skol-Uhel ar Vro) recognizes four Breton individuals for their exceptional work for Brittany by inviting them to join the Order of the Ermine. First founded by Breton Duke Jean IV in 1381, this honorary order was unique in Europe for its election of women and commoners to its ranks in recognition of their service to Brittany (mostly the service of defending Brittany from attack by France). Reestablished in the 1970's by the Cultural Institute of Brittany, the Order of the Ermine today still recognizes exceptional service in support of Brittany and the Breton culture. The "collier" (medallion) given to each new member of the order is modeled after that of the 14th century, and includes the inscription "d'am buhe" (Breton for "for my life"). Indeed, this honor recognizes Bretons (and a handful of non-Bretons) who have worked for Brittany during a lifetime—or in the case of younger inductees, will take on that responsibility for their life.

This September four people were inducted into the Order of the Ermine in recognition of their diverse and considerable contributions to Brittany.

Denise Delouche was born in Rennes in 1935 and earned a degree in history/geography before specializing in art history and helping to institute its teaching at the University of Rennes-2. She earned her doctorate degree in 1975 with a thesis called *Les Peintres de la Bretagne avant Gauguin*. She is considered today the foremost scholar of Breton painting and painters, and she has published a number of books and articles on Breton art and artists.

Riwanon Kervella was born in 1950 in Treguier and is the daughter of the Breton grammarian Frañsez Kervella and Vetig an Dret-Kervella (inducted into the Order of the Ermine in 1994). Riwanon Kervella, a mother of three children, is a farmer and raises sheep, but she has also taken on the direction of Skol Ober, Brittany's oldest and largest correspondence school for Breton learners (founded in 1932 and including today 65 teachers and some 500 students). She also serves as the president of the Breton branch of the International Celtic Congress and secretary for Skol an Hanternoz which supports evening Breton classes in the Côtes d'Armor.

Patrick Malrieu was born in 1945 in Amboise and grew up outside of Brittany, studying at the Ecole Estienne in Paris and working in the printing business in Paris before coming to Brittany to pursue this career first in Châteaulaudren for ten years. He is currently head of printing for Ouest-France's newspapers and supplements. Like many Breton emigrants he was active during his childhood and youth in various "Celtic Circles" through which he learned both the bagpipes and Breton language. In 1972 he put his enthusiasm and knowledge of Breton traditions to work as one of the cofounders of Dastum and served as its president for 23 years. Dastum is an "archives" to collect and encourage the performance of traditional music in Brittany, and today includes some 50,000 recordings of song (see Bro Nevez 69, February 1999). In 1998 Patrick Malrieu received his doctorate degree with a thesis on traditional song of Brittany. Like Riwanon Kervella he has three children.

Jean-Bernard Vighetti was born in 1943 in Pontchâteau (Loire-Atlantique) and like Denise Delouche studied history/geography, earning a doctorate with a thesis on the origins and development of tourism in the region of Guerande. He moved to Redon in 1969 as part of the Comité de Coordination pour l'Aménagement des Pays de Vilaine. He has worked to promote cultural tourism in the Redon area and founded l'ABRI to promote hiking in 1974, "Petites

Order of the Ermine – continued

Cités de Caractère” in 1975, and the Association Régionale des Fermes Auberges in 1977. He also helped create the Groupement Culturel Breton des Pays de Vilaine and was instrumental in launching the now famous Bogue d’Or song contest in 1975. Since 1980 Jean-Bernard Vighetti has been the Director of the Office of Tourism in Rennes where he founded the annual festival of Breton arts and music called Les Tombées de la Nuit. He also serves as Mayor of the town of Peillac (Morbihan) and continues to promote Breton culture and its performance in new and creative ways.

These four remarkable Bretons join forty-eight others inducted into the Order of the Ermine since 1972: Anna-Vari Arzur, Vefa de Bellaing*, Jacques Briard, Herri Caouissin, Per Denez, Vetig an Dret-Kervella, Jean Fréour, Charlez ar Gall, Pierre-Roland Giot, Yvonig Gicquel, Glenmor*, Pierre-Jakez Helias*, Jean-Jacques Hénaff, Ronan Huon, Yvonne Jean-Haffen*, Dodik Jégou, Goulc’han Kervella, Lois Kuter, Pierre Laurent, André Lavanant, Raymond Lebossé, Joseph Lec’hvien, Robert Legrand, Pierre Lemoine, Pierre Le Treut, Jean L’Helgouac’h, Louis Lichou, Georges Lombard, Pierre Loquet, Henri Maho, Ivona Martin, Joseph Martray, Jean Mévellec*, Polig Monjarret, Rita Morgan Williams, Bernard de Parades, Gabriele Pescatore, Michel Philipponneau, Yann Poilvet, Jordi Pujol, René Pleven*, Henri Queffélec*, Maryvonne Quéméré-Jaouen, Loeiz Ropars, Naig Rozmor, Alan Stivell-Cochevelou, Albert Trévidic, Jean Tricoire*.

* now deceased.

* * *

A Loss for Brittany and the Breton Language

Alan Heusaff

(1921-1999)

It was with great sadness that I learned of the death of Alan Heusaff on November 3rd. Alan Heusaff was born in 1921 in Sant-Yvi (Saint-Yvi), a village located between Quimper and Rosporden. A native speaker of Breton he was one of the most prolific journalists in Breton, contributing hundreds of articles to magazines including Gwalarn, Galv, Arvor, Al Liamm, Breman, an Amzer and Carn. In 1996, he published Geriaoueg Brezhoneg (Hor Yezh)—a 340 page study of the vocabulary of spoken Breton of Sant-Yvi as found fifty years before when he was a young man. Alan Heusaff’s more journalistic contributions were primarily in Breton, he was also fluent in French and became a native speaker of English and Irish which has been the language of Alan Heusaff’s home during the past fifty years. Like other Bretons active in the Breton nationalist movement during the World War II period, Alan Heusaff was forced to find exile in Ireland in the post-war years. There he married and raised a family, and earned his living as a meteorologist.

Alan Heusaff – continued

I can think of no one in the world who has done more than Alan Heusaff to make Brittany and the Breton language known outside of Brittany. In 1961 Alan was a founding member of the Celtic League and served as its General Secretary until 1981. Since its beginnings in 1973, Alan has been a major contributor to Carn, the quarterly magazine of the Celtic League. With articles in all the Celtic languages as well as English, this publication is an extremely rich source of information on events in the Celtic countries with news about language and culture, but also politics and economics. The Celtic League has not been shy about speaking out publicly on a number of political, economic and environmental issues. Alan almost always had at least one long article in Breton in Carn which might be about events in Ireland or Brittany. He was knowledgeable on all topics and on all the Celtic countries and his short news items in Carn could be counted on for factual accuracy and a focus on key issues and events.

I met Alan Heusaff just twice, both times very briefly. I remember almost nothing of my first meeting in Dublin in December 1978 when I was in Ireland over the Christmas holidays. My second meeting was in New York when Alan spoke at the 10th Anniversary Conference of the U.S. Branch of the Celtic League in May 1983. It was a very busy day and he was the guest of honor with many people to meet. I never got to know Alan Heusaff personally, but I will very much miss a long correspondence with him which began in 1974 when I was just discovering Brittany and preparing for a trip to explore future research there. During the past twenty-five years Alan's letters have been full of encouragement for the work I was doing and full of ideas and answers to my questions. He has been a generous teacher to me and always seemed to have a few provocative and challenging thoughts. In looking back over this correspondence, it is evident how very up-to-date he always was on events in Brittany, despite living in Ireland. The distance did not stop Alan Heusaff from being on top off everything that seemed to be going on, from political issues to cultural events, new books, and music.

Alan's letters often began with an apology for being too busy to write a long letter. In looking back at his letters, however, most were at least a page long, and toward the end of the letters the writing would often grow smaller and smaller to squeeze more in. There would often be a post script or two added, and a gentle but firm reminder when subscription money was due for Carn (I always seemed to be late with my check). Even when Alan tried to limit his notes to a smaller bit of paper, it was always jammed to the margins with information. While our correspondence became less frequent in the 1990s, it was always a pleasure to find a little note tucked into Carn. I know that Alan must have kept up a very large correspondence with friends in Brittany and all over the Celtic world. I feel privileged to have had the chance to exchange ideas and news with him.

Brittany can be grateful for the incredible work Alan Heusaff did to educate Celtic cousins and non-Celtic friends of Brittany about his native land and language. His efforts to help forge inter-Celtic cooperation and to help people everywhere better understand Brittany, its history and unique culture have been nothing less than heroic.

Lois Kuter

NEW BOOKS FROM BRITTANY

A Few Books on Breton Music and Dance – Reviewed by Natalie Novik

La Danse Bretonne (Breton dancing)

by Alan Pierre and Daniel Cario, Coop Breizh, 1999

This soft-cover small book, easily tucked in a pocket, is actually an encyclopedia of Breton dancing, written by two professionals, Alan Pierre from «War'l Leur» and Daniel Cario, the organizer of «Kalon ar Dans», with a foreword by Alan Stivell, and published by Coop Breizh this last summer. It is only available in French.

The purpose of their book is not a manual to teach Breton dances, but rather a very exhaustive review of all the components of Breton dancing. Abundantly illustrated with maps, high-quality color photos and reproductions, the book retraces the history of the dances, gives a concise technical description of each dance and its regional variations, and describes the fest-noz tradition and the music itself (instruments and voice). But where the book becomes very interesting is where the authors analyze the comeback of the fest-noz, its contemporary evolution, and the tendencies found among the «Cercles Celtiques» like the enlargement of the repertoire of each village to dances outside a specific «pays».

Their conclusions might seem a bit harsh for those who are not used to traditional, structured dancing: they see a danger in letting those who have no clue about the required steps enter the dance, because it disturbs the dancers, and as a result, beginners with the best intentions might be discouraged by the dancers from joining. They also point to the genuine problem created by those who take the lead in chain dancing without being asked (the penn-danser position, or maout), a position traditionally reserved either to the best dancer in the group, or to someone who was being honored. Or they stress the fact that more often than not, today's dancers do not get in place while the dance is being called, but rush into a chain or a circle when the musicians have reached the right rhythm, thus disrupting the normal pace of the dance. The authors believe these problems are definitely the result of an evolution of society, even

in the very communal Breton villages, where the interests of the group are now fading behind individualistic tendencies.

The last part of the book is dedicated to a listing of Breton dance associations, a description and a calendar of dance contests—all useful information that needs regular updating.

Their conclusion? no, Breton dancing is not the endangered species it was at the end of World War I, and it is not either the very traditional art that was preserved in isolated villages. It is alive and evolving, and they thank the many activists of the Breton cause for their role in its survival.

In conclusion, I would say it is a wonderful book if you read French fluently. But it is still very entertaining and informative if you are not that fluent, simply because it is so well presented and illustrated.

Danses traditionnelles de Bretagne pour les enfants by Kendalc'h, 1990

For those of you who are looking for the nitty-gritty of Breton dance steps, this is probably the easiest book to use. It contains 40 technical descriptions of dances, according to the Guilcher method, i.e. with diagrams showing the steps, the movement of the dancers, the arm and leg movements and a sample of the music. There is an audio cassette that goes with it, to illustrate the music used as samples. If you are not very fluent in French and still want to learn the steps, I warmly recommend this little manual: there is very little text, and it is easy to match the diagrams to the music if you know how to read music or play a cassette....

Les plus celebres chansons de marins (The most famous sailor songs)

Editions Jean-Paul Gisserot, 1999

This is a small soft cover book, with lots of color and black and white photos and illustrations to go with each song. It features 36 songs in French (most sailor's songs in Brittany are in French actually), like «Jean-François de Nantes», «Pique la baleine», «Il était un petit navire» and many other classics. One warning: this is not, I repeat not, a song book for children, unless you feel like explaining some very adult situations to your kids. Another interesting note: the author took most of the photos on board of

New Books – continued

the Russian tall ship «Sedov» and the nice guys you see on the photos are actually Russian sailors. They look very Breton anyway, if it had not been for the pale blue color of their collars I would have thought they were locals... Every song features the full wording (sometimes real long), the music, and many photos of Brittany harbours, tall ships, etc. A nice gift for anybody who loves the sea.

* * *

A Book for one of Breton's "Sister Languages" – Reviewed by Lois Kuter

Tim Saunders. **The High Tide—Collected Poems in Cornish, 1974-1999** (with English translations by the author). London: Francis Boutle Publishers. 1999. 198 pages. ISBN 0 9532388 6 5.

Cornish is a language brought back from the dead with its disappearance as an everyday spoken language by the end of the 18th century. But Cornish is back today as a language spoken in the home by several hundred people and as a language used to varying degrees of fluency by several thousand more in Cornwall. The revival of Cornish has brought with it a revival of literature in the Cornish language, Poetry has been an especially rich area of expression and this new book is a wonderful collection of Cornish language poems by Tim Saunders.

Tim Saunders was born in 1952 in Northumberland and he attended primary schools in England and Cornwall. His studies also included years at King's College in Taunton, Christ Church in Oxford, University College of Wales and the University of Middlesex. He is fluent not only in Cornish but also Welsh, Breton, Irish, French and German, and has published a number of essays and articles in Welsh and Irish (and English). He is co-editor of The Wheel, An Anthology of Modern Cornish Poetry 1850-1980 to come out this fall. (Francis Boutle Publishers).

The High Tide includes 67 poems in Cornish with a literal English translation by Saunders himself. While he warns that the English versions are prose with no claim to literary merit, they are quite interesting to read in and of themselves and give a good sense of

the mood and topic of the poem to those who understand no Cornish. They would certainly guide those with a limited knowledge of Cornish to better understand each poem. The poems are quite varied in length and structure with some just a few lines long and others that take on more epic proportions. Topics also vary greatly from portraits of people and reflections on natural surroundings to political and historical topics. Several pages of notes in the back of the book help readers understand the allusions to particular historical events and people.

Not being able to really enjoy the sounds of Cornish and the rhythm of these poems, I had to make do with the English versions, although my very limited knowledge of Breton allowed me to pick out some words and short phrases. Someone who could read Breton would be able to fully enjoy the Cornish without too much of a struggle given the relative closeness of these two languages. A very nice part of this collection is the author's introduction which gives a bit of biography and a very good sense of Saunders' growth as an author/poet. This introduction is particularly effective in giving a sense of how Saunders learned to write in Cornish and the many influences which have directed his literary development.

This is indeed a book that proves beyond all doubt that Cornish is certainly not a dead language, but a living modern language—like Breton, Welsh, Manx, Irish and Scottish Gaelic—used by authors and poets today to express their unique view of the world around them.

* * *

NOTES ON SOME NEW BOOKS IN THE BRETON LANGUAGE

(from Ar Men 106 (Sept. 1999), Bretagne des Livres 48 (Oct./Nov. 1999), and Mouladurioù Hor Yezh catalog sheet from October 1999)

Yeun ar Gow. Diwar Dorgenn Karreg-an-tan. Mouladurioù Hor Yezh. 1999. 179 pp. ISBN 2-86863-113-4.

Yeun ar Gow is one of Brittany's most important Breton language writers. This collection includes some unedited works found after his death as well as short stories already published in a number of journals. Also included are some tales from his childhood.

New Books – continued

Alan Botrel. Orea ha danvelloù all. Mouladurioù Hor Yezh. 1999. 174 pp. ISBN 2-86863-111-8.

This author and university professor at the Université de Rennes 2 is known for his poetry, literary critiques and translations of contemporary Greek authors. This book is a collection of short stories set in Wales, Greece, Brittany and other parts unknown.

Yvonne Briant-Cadou. E skeud daou dour ar barrez. Emgleo Breiz/Brud Nevez. 1999. 234 pp.

This is the life history of a woman born in 1916 in La Trinité-Plouzané, in Bro Leon.

Per Denez. Yezh ha Bro. Lesneven: Mouladurioù Hor Yezh. 1998. 166 pp. ISBN 2-86863-108-8.

This book gathers articles by Per Denez scattered in various journals over the years. Various topics are included ranging from an analysis and/or reflections on the state of the Breton language and its teaching to presentations of various writers and their contribution to Breton literature.

Louis Élégoët. Istor Breizh. TES Editions. 1999. 225 pp. ISBN 2-912905-03-06.

A book on the history of Brittany (for high school students) translated from the original French version into Breton.

Guy Etienne. Geriadur a Gorfadurezh hervez an destiadur etrevroadel P.N.A et teir yezh: galleg, latin, brezhoneg. Preder. 1999. 240 pp. ISBN 2-901383-36-X.

Dictionary of anatomical terminology in French, Latin, and Breton.

Thierry Gauthé. Kartenn voger. Ar bed politikel—Europa ar yezhoù. TES Editions. 1999. ISBN 2-912905-06-0.

Designed for schoolroom use, this is a map of the politically defined world in Breton, with the other side showing the languages of Europe.

Jef Gedez. Breizh-Heol. Mouladurioù Hor Yezh. 1999. 150 pp. ISBN 2-86863-112-6.

Jef Gedez learned to write Breton only when he reached retirement, but he carries the language he knew orally into this book which draws on memories of his childhood.

Anne Guillou; translation by Hervé Danielou. Gisèle, pe ar vuhez adavet. Ar Skol Vrezoneg. 1999. 196 pp.

This is the story of a woman of Léon who overcomes alcoholism first published in French by sociologist Anne Guillou.

Tugdual Kalvez. Blaz ar Vuhez. Mouladurioù Hor Yezh. 1999. 71 pp. ISBN 2-86863-115-0.

Tugdual Kalvez has already published a number of poems in French or in bilingual editions, but this is the first entirely in Breton. This book includes 58 poems of various styles and lengths written over the past 30 years.

Frañsoaz Lermen. Geriou kroaz ar Vretoned. Al Lanv. 1999. 112 pp. ISBN 2-9511721-2-5.

This book collects 103 crossword puzzles and 24 word games in Breton.

Anna Mouradova. Un Dornad Kraoñ-Kelvez. Mouladurioù Hor Yezh. 1998. 148 pp. ISBN 2-86863-109-6.

Fluent in Breton and the author of translations of Russian authors, Anna Mouradova here presents her own original writing on life in Russia.

J.-Y. Rosny the Elder. (translated by Marsel P.-J. Keraveg. Helgvor ar Stêr C'hlas. Mouladurioù Hor Yezh. 1999. 233 pp. ISBN 2-86863-110-0.

A trip to prehistoric times to follow the adventures of Helgvor and his friends, two dogs and a child, as they travel down a river. Nineteen illustrations by Jean Chièze bring the text to life.



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☛ (à retourner avant le 31 décembre 1999)

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Je soussigné

NOM.....

Prénom.....

Rue.....

Code Postal..... Ville.....

Pays.....

Souscris à :

| nombre d'exemplaires | titre | au prix de | soit |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------|------|
| | L'imprimerie Lédan | 180 FF | FF |
| | Glossaire cryptologique | 340 FF | FF |
| | Châlons | 550 ou 390 FF | |
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| | Cantiquou (1642) | 550 ou 390 FF | |
| | Notes de L. Fleuriot | 340 ou 260 FF | |
| | Tragedien sacr | 320 ou 250 FF | |
| | ar Varn diwezhañ | 920 ou 730 FF | |
| TOTAL | | | FF |

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October in Brittany

by Mary Turner

Editor's Note: In case you wonder why this article refers to so many accordion players, be aware that Mary has become a learner of this instrument. And as the web site guru for the U.S. ICDBL, she also met many once-virtual friends in her hectic travels which combined business (in Belgium) with pleasure (in Brittany). Lois

Yes, my favorite time of year in my favorite place in the world. I'd not been to Brittany in a little over two years, and in that time I've had the good fortune to make many friends there via the internet, so finally getting to meet them all 'en vrai' was a real treat. In fact, on this trip every person I saw was an internet friend or introduced to me by them. I didn't manage to see any of my previous Breton friends at all this time!

I arrived at the Lorient airport on October 4th to beautiful, mid-60s weather and was picked up by internet pal Yann-Fañch Perroches (for those who don't know him, he's one of the best diatonic accordion players in the world, founding ex-member of the great fest-noz band Skolvan). He and his companion Soaz generously welcomed me into their beautiful home in the countryside near Lorient, to use as my 'home base' while running around Brittany (with a side trip to Brussels on business).

I got to know Yann-Fañch after I (uncharacteristically for me) emailed him to tell him how much I loved the Skolvan "Swing & Tears" CD. He soon had me helping him a bit with the English for his webpage (hometown.aol.com/YannFanch) and that led to translating the newsletter for the Collectif des Accordéonistes Diatoniques de Bretagne (cadb.ifrance.com) which led to making many more diato-playing friends...in fact,

after reading so much about the diato and having so much fun with these people, I decided I had to try it myself! So I picked up my beautiful new diato made by Bernard Loffet (diato.org) the day after I arrived, as Bernard's home/workshop is only about 8 kilometers from chez Perroches.

Bernard and his wife Gaëlle are both accordion players--he on the diato and she on a big chromatic--but unfortunately I never got to hear them play together...next time. But I DID get to see my favorite baby, their 9-month old daughter Maillys. And I got to meet Gaëlle's father and Bernard's mother, who lives near Brussels and is a wonderful artist (see the link on Bernard's page). Had a great meal of Raclette at their house too!

Next stop, diato-playing friend Patricia Gendre, who is a schoolteacher and very talented writer and lives on a beautiful old farmstead south of Carhaix. I spent a lovely afternoon with Pat, husband François and sons Pierre and Guillaume, playing with their tiny herd of Ouessant sheep and walking for a couple of km along the Nantes-Brest canal which is just down the hill from their house. (I'll ask Pat if we can reprint her wonderful story about her first fest-noz in the next Bro Nevez.)

Then off to Brest to see old internet pal Bernez Boulc'h, whom many of you might know as the owner of the Ar Bed Keltiek store in Brest (but he sold it back to Gweltaz ar Fur at the beginning of this year; he still works there part-time and is now pursuing an internet career). I not only got to see Bernez and his delightful girlfriend Valérie le Roux, but the rest of the Breizh.net crew too (www.breizh.net) including Paul Divanac'h, Erwan Lanchec and Erwan's mutt Grouj. (Breizh.net is the

Travels in Brittany - continued

host of our ICDBL webpage.) Since I am an honorary member of Breizh.net, after a brief pit-stop at the small-in-size, large-in-ambience bar 'Petit Montmartre' (owned by Didier Squiban's very nice girlfriend Jackie), we had an association meeting at Erwan's apartment, with lots of good food and drink including a bit of Paul's father's home-brewed cider (killer stuff, makes Everclear seem a bit mild...

After a too-short night at Bernez and Valérie's apartment, it was back 'home' to get ready for the long-anticipated trip to the island of Sein, off the Pointe du Raz in Finistère. Yann-Fañch has been telling me about this place and his friend Brigitte's lobster ragout ('best thing to eat in the world') for a long time. Now, YF loves good food and is an excellent cook himself, but I am NO gourmand, I'm happy with a PB&J sandwich, and I have never eaten seafood in my life ('too ugly and smelly to eat'). But I decided to eat anything that was put in front of me on this trip (life's an adventure, hein?)

So after an early-morning drive to Audièrne to catch the Enez Sun on its daily trip to the island, and a nice 1-hour boat ride, we reached this tiny outpost of Brittany with a full-time population of around 300, where nearly everybody knows how to speak the Breton language (as does YF, he taught himself starting in college). We were met at the dock by Brigitte and went to her bar/restaurant/hotel for some coffee and catching up between the two of them (Chez Brigitte, Quai des Paimpolais). Then YF and I set off to explore the island.

WARNING: don't go to Sein if you are an excitement junkie! Exploring the island takes a couple hours tops, and that's if you're movin' slow. The remaining time on the island is spent wandering from bar to bar, sipping drinks and chatting up the locals or just watching the water. I'm a

pretty quiet person and I have no problem spending time alone, but it took a little getting used to, I had to borrow YF's cell phone and call the office the first day. I did settle into doing NOTHING, which is a good thing to do once in a while, and enjoyed our stay very much, the island has great rugged beauty and a rich and fascinating history (if you read French I recommend the book 'Sein: Ile des Cormorans Bleues' by René Pichavant).

I did eat some seafood too, some I didn't care for, and I found I do like crab and lobster (but geez! special tools and lots of work for such a little payoff! But I never did get to try the lobster ragout, after such a buildup by YF! I guess I'll just have to go back...with pleasure. If YOU get a chance to go to the island, look up Brigitte and give her a big kiss from "Kansas" Mary...she is a delightful and generous person, you couldn't make a better friend than her. PS-look for the movie 'Elisa' with Gérard Dépardieu and Vanessa Paradis, half of it was filmed on the island, and Brigitte has a brief appearance in the scene at the fish market, that's her, the blonde with the raucous voice, yelling in the background...

Alas, time to leave the island and for me to get ready for business in Brussels. YF dropped me at the Redon train station on the way to meet another musician and I caught the train to Rennes to meet two internet friends there. I met Nicolas Le Sourd when he wrote the Breton newsgroup for recommendations on a place to live in the Brest area, and I recommended the small town where another friend lives (Nicolas has since moved to Rennes), and I met Tangi Ollivier when he emailed me to ask if I would include his homepage in our ICDBL links (his entire family speaks Breton, his father publishes a bilingual Breton/French Catholic/philosophical revue, and Tangi is

Travels in Brittany - continued

now doing computer work for Dastum). They both met me at the train station and took me on a tour of the beautiful old medieval city (got to see Coop Breizh and the Breton Parliament building, and ate some good crêpes). Then off the next day by train to Brussels for the week...

I came back to Rennes at the end of the week to attend a concert by the Irish concertina-player Noël Hill (he's great, and very nice, go see him play if you get the chance!), followed by a CADB Diatobal, both taking place at Sel-de-Bretagne a little south of Rennes, which has a very active association for the promotion of Breton music and dance. This was my very first 'fest-noz'! I thought I would just watch the dancers this first time, but I got dragged out onto the dance floor, first by Bernard Loffet who made me waltz with him (OUF! I am a terrible dancer), and then to dance the Breton circle and chain dances... even though I was concentrating a lot on just doing the steps, I already felt a little of the magic I have heard so much about (see Ray Price's description of a fest-noz he attended where Skolvan played at www.isdnseattle.net/rayprice/fest-noz.html). Breton dance music has a whole new meaning for me now, and I understand YF's admonition to musicians that they will not be able to play the music unless they know how to do the dance. Do go learn these dances if you ever get the chance, either at a dance camp or festival/workshop in the US or, best, get to Brittany and go to fest-noz, as many as you can. You won't ever regret it! I didn't dance a lot, or well, but I am hooked for life!

I got to see several friends perform at the Diatobal, including YF who played in a duet with Stéphane Morvan, formerly of the group BF15, a very young and very talented player of the wooden traverse flute and other traditional wind instruments, and an all-around happy guy.

I caught a ride back to Rennes with Bernard, Patricia and another new CADB pal, Patricia Collette, at around 2:30 am (the music and dancing were still going when we left), as I needed to catch a train later that morning to Guingamp to meet another diato-pal, Roger Poitevin, who would drive me to his house in Lannion (there are no trains stopping in Lannion right now, they tore down the old train station and don't have the new one built yet).

WELL, I was very tired after the week in Brussels and the previous night, the big board said the train towards Brest would be on track 3, I saw the name 'Guingamp' on the electronic panel on the car, I got on the TGV, there was nobody in my assigned seat, I sat down and... we started moving. Too early. Uh oh. "Isn't this the train to Brest?" I asked. "Oh no madame, this train is going to Paris!" AAARRRRRGGGGGHHHH! Luckily the TGV to Paris makes ONE stop, at Laval, about a half hour into the trip. I walked up and down the train until I found a guy with a cell phone, called Roger to tell him of my little 'erreur', got off at Laval, got the next slow regional train back to Rennes, and sat around the Rennes station for 3 hours waiting for the next train that would stop in Guingamp! Roger will never let me live this down. Never.

Well poor Roger, wife Soaz and son Pierre tried to make up for lost time, taking me on a flying tour of the beautiful Granite Rose coast, then to meet Pierre Lavanant, former president of Diwan and currently involved in the Breton-language TV project. Unfortunately I was so wacked-out by that time I couldn't think of a thing to ask him about, we just looked at pictures from their visit with our fearless leader Lois in Pennsylvania last year (first time I ever saw a picture of Lois too...she's a long-haired hippie-girl!) I feel terrible that I missed

Travels in Brittany - continued

such a great opportunity to talk to Pierre, but he is so nice I'm sure he'll forgive me. Next time I'll be prepared!

Then off to a great restaurant in Lannion, Le Tire Bouchon (corkscrew). Fun eclectic décor, wonderful food and great service, down in the old part of town. And at the bottom of their business card, in French, "no ketchup, no fries". Hilarious. We then went to a fest-noz in a small town whose name I can't recall, towards Guingamp, where I got to meet another diato player and CADB member, Philippe Olivier, very funny guy and fascinating player to watch (he's with BF15).

The next day we all went down to Patricia's home near Carhaix for a little CADB luncheon in my honor (thank you very much! They even had little American flags for the cheese! Then home with Yann-Fañch.

The next few days are a little fuzzy, but I recall having the privilege of listening (for the second time) to YF practice with ex-Skolvann fiddler Fañch Landreau, for their short tour of the American south they made at the end of October/beginning of November (see below), and YF took me to Pont-Aven to meet an artist friend of his whose work I love (Yvonnick Jacquier, who did the cover for YF's CD 'An Droug Hirnez'). Great, funny, talented, and TALKATIVE guy (his webpage-in-development is at www.pont-aven.org). I'm now translating for him too (as if I needed more to do).

I also went back to Carhaix to visit Patricia again, and we drove through the beautiful Monts d'Arrées region to the town of Commana to look at the nice bronze-age stone tumulus, and the nature-walk in development across the road that her husband is creating the signs for. On the way back through Carhaix we stopped at

the site of the controversial* Diwan high school to see how the renovation work was progressing, but I was not organized enough to make an appointment to tour the place so we only got to see the outside. Happily, classes are in progress there despite the work.

(in case you hadn't heard, the funds voted by the city of Carhaix and the region to help pay for the building renovations and other work for the high school and Breton-language media center had to be withdrawn for the moment, as the prefecture lodged a complaint that their funding in that amount of a 'private' institution was illegal under French law...thereby leading to many protests and calls for a 'statute' to be written for the Diwan school system to allow them to be funded in the same manner as public schools.)*

The next evening I had the pleasure of attending one of a series of classes Yann-Fañch is giving on Initiation in Musical Analysis at the Amzer Nevez ('new times') center in Plomeur. The building itself is a nondescript modern school-type affair, but it is constantly filled with classes for all kinds of Breton traditional music, instruments, dancing, language and arts, and people of all ages attending them, a wonderful sight to see.

I went back to Brest for my last weekend in Brittany, with a fast side train-trip to St. Brieuc visit my friend Hervé le Bevilion who runs the Bretagne-Brittany internet Celtic Boutique (www.bretagne-brittany.com). I got to have lunch with his very nice family and see the 'celtic boutique' in action (thanks Hervé for all the nice gifts and the 2000 Diwan calendar!) Back in Brest, I got to see my favorite Breton singer Denez Prigent perform to a packed house at the Quartz (he's got a fabulous hurdy-gurdy player in the band, he got me interested in that instrument now too...). And I spent a

Travels in Brittany – continued

wonderful Sunday with Bernez and his family (my new 'nephews' Brieg and Gwenaël), and was most delighted to be able to meet both the great Breton singer/lyricist Manu Lann Huel (who's recovering from some broken ribs from a fall) and the great pianist/composer Didier Squiban, both good friends of Bernez.

All in all, a WONDERFUL trip thanks to all these wonderful people I met through the web. Ain't technology great?

And that's not the end... as I said, YF and Fañch did a little tour in the US, flying to Houston the same day I flew home (October 26). They played a gig in Houston at the famous Mucky Duck pub, then the (nearly rained-out) Celtic Festival in New Orleans on Halloween weekend (quite a wild intro to the US , then the Austin Celtic

festival in Austin, Texas the first weekend in November, which I drove down for. We had a great time, AND I got to finally meet fellow ICDBL member Jan Zollars, who , among many many other things has been the US liaison for the Interceltic Festival in Lorient for the last 10 years. Jan is not only a great Breton dancer and dance teacher, but very funny and a great storyteller! I hope you all get a chance to meet her too.

PS-YF and Fañch will be recording a CD together starting today (as I write this on Nov. 16), and they are looking for a distributor for it... if you have any ideas or leads for them, drop YF a line at YannFanch@aol.com!

Kenavo!
Mary

OFIS AR BREZHONEG – Office of the Breton Language – Opens in Carhaix

This November the main office for the "Office of the Breton Language" was inaugurated. Congratulations to the new President, Lena Louarn, and the Director, Olier Ar Mogn. In fact, this is not a new organization, but an outgrowth of the "Service de Langue Bretonne" which functioned within the Cultural Institute of Brittany (Skol Uhel ar Vro) in Rennes. The new main office in Carhaix will move to the "cultural/technology campus" to expand at the site of the Diwan high school. Rennes will remain as an annex and a second satellite will open in Nantes in the coming years.

As outlined in an article in [Bretagne Info](#) (no. 152, 12 november 1999), the Office of the Breton Language will have four principal areas of work. The "Observatoire de la Langue Bretonne" will study sociological aspects of the Breton language, providing data (eventually available on a web site) that can be used for political planning. Information already available to the public includes a publication of news clippings, [Keleier Ofis ar Brezhoneg](#) (which I find extremely useful in keeping up with what is going on in Brittany). A second focus is on the study and preservation of Breton names—particularly place names—through the "Commission de Toponymie." This Commission will collect information on traditional place names in the Breton language, and will also study specific vocabularies for various trades or activities that are part of the Breton patrimony. A third direction of activity is found in "TermBret," which looks at changing terminology and the creation of new words as the use of Breton expands to new technologies. This branch of action also assists with translations and consults with businesses and organizations who have questions about the use of Breton for road signs, public documents or advertising, to name just a few areas of work. And a fourth area of activity is concerned with communication—for example, helping people learn about Breton classes, or expanded job opportunities for those fluent in Breton. In all its work, the Office of the Breton Language strives to link generations by finding ways to pass along the wealth of knowledge from older native Breton speakers to the new generations of learners, speakers, and readers.

For more information: Ofis ar Brezhoneg, 8 bis straed Félix-Faure, 29270 CARHAIX-PLOUGUER
E-mail: ofisk.bzh@wanadoo.fr

PRODUIT EN BRETAGNE / MADE IN BRITTANY

An Association of Breton Enterprises
for the Economic Development of Brittany



The following information is a translation of material received in a press packet from "Produit en Bretagne."
Some liberties have been taken in rearranging press packet information. – Lois Kuter

A unique initiative serving the regional economy

Created in January 1995, the association "Produit en Bretagne" mobilizes industries, distributors and service companies cooperating for a common objective: the economic development of Brittany. A unique initiative in all of France, it works to create a generally favorable climate for Breton products by mobilizing communication, publicity and institutional work for their promotion. Thanks to press partners and the support of the Regional Council of Brittany, the association hopes to make its logo known and recognized by a maximum of Bretons.

The whole region backing a logo

The industrial partners of the association are all mobilized to jointly promote the know-how and dynamism of the region's enterprises and to place the logo "Produit en Bretagne" in a permanent manner on all the products assembled or produced in the region. Right now the logo is found on more than 1,600 agricultural/food products made or assembled in Brittany and approved by a commission charged with the selection of the products. The logo is also found on certain clothing and shoes, books, compact discs, and videos produced in Brittany.

The partnered service businesses and distributors have put into place a communication plan in their sales network to promote the purchase of products with the "Produit en Bretagne" logo. This includes banks, insurance companies and transport businesses as well as distributors who promote products in their branches or service sites.

A single ambition—the creation of jobs

Because Breton enterprises cannot remain passive in view of the invasion of international brand names, they hope to unite to develop the distribution of regional products. The engagement is twofold—to promote their know-how and to favor the creation of jobs in the region thanks to the very favorable presence in the market from which local products now benefit.

An association turned to the future

The Association "Produit en Bretagne" intends thus to federate all Breton economic actors in the defense of the economy and in the creation of jobs, involving a maximum of partners. In its development, the association foresees opening its action to the whole of the Breton economic sector and promoting the value of its know-how outside the region thanks to logo recognition. "Produit en Bretagne" will thus constitute the largest Breton economic network.

To give an idea of the scope of this association, the following chart from their press packet lists the companies and associations currently engaged in "Produit en Bretagne."

ANNEXE 3

LES ADHERENTS DE L'ASSOCIATION PRODUIT EN BRETAGNE

COLLEGE INDUSTRIELS : 75 membres

| | |
|---|---|
| ALTHO (Chips) | JP TALLEC (Salaisons) |
| A.M.O. (Minoterie) | KERMAD (Plats cuisinés surgelés) |
| ARMOR DELICES (Biscuiterie) | KOIGN AMANN BERROU (Biscuiterie) |
| BIANIC S.A. (Salaisons) | LA CREPE DE BROCELIANDE (Crêpes, galettes) |
| BIGARD (Abattage et transformation de viandes) | LA FERME DU JAUDY (Poissons fumés) |
| BISCUITERIE DE LA POINTE DU RAZ (Biscuiterie) | LAITA (Produits laitiers) |
| BISCUITERIE LE GUILLOU (Biscuiterie) | LAITERIE LE GALL (Produits laitiers) |
| BOUTET NICOLAS (Conserves de légumes) | LARZUL (Plats cuisinés) |
| BRETAGNE SAUMON (Poissons fumés) | L.D.C. BRETAGNE (Poulets) |
| BRIALYS (Brioche) | LE CAM (Oeufs) |
| BRITT - BRASSERIE DE BRETAGNE (Brasserie) | LE FILET BLEU (Torréfaction) |
| BROCELIANDE (Salaisons) | LE GLAZIK (Biscuiterie) |
| BRULERIE DES CHATEAUX (Torréfaction) | LES CELLIERES DE LA VILLE D'YS (Cidres) |
| CAFES ANDRE (Torréfaction) | LES DELICES DE LA MER (Soupes de poisson) |
| CAFES TANNEAU (Torréfaction) | LES DELICES DE ST LEONARD (Plats cuisinés) |
| CAPITAINE COOK (Conserves de poissons) | LES PLANTS DU LITTORAL (Fleurs) |
| CELTIGEL (Plats cuisinés) | LES SALAISONS DE L'ARREE (Salaisons) |
| CHARCUTERIES DU DON (Charcuteries) | LES SALAISONS DU JET (Salaisons) |
| CHANCERELLE (Conserves de poissons) | LES SALINES DE GUERANDE (Sel) |
| CIE ARTIQUE (Plats de la mer surgelés) | MICHEL CAUGANT (Charcuterie-traiteur) |
| CIE BISCUITIERE (Biscuiterie) | MOULIN DE CHARBONNIERES (Minoterie) |
| C.B.A. (Conserves de légumes) | NARVIK (Poissons fumés) |
| COBRECO (Conserves de poissons) | NEOCEA / KRITSEN (Plats cuisinés de la mer) |
| CONSERVES STEPHAN (Plats cuisinés) | NICOLAS DE MONTFORT (Salaisons) |
| CORALIS (Produits laitiers) | PANIER TANGUY (Biscuiterie) |
| CREPERIE LEBRETON (Crêpes industrielles) | PAUL CHACUN (Conserves de poissons) |
| CREPERIE LE VILLO (Crêpes et galettes) | PETIT BRETON S.A. (Crêpes, gâteaux bretons) |
| DOUX / PERE DODU (Volailles) | PETIT NAVIRE (Conserves de poissons) |
| ELQUIN (Salaisons et salades traiteurs) | PLANCOET (Eau minérale) |
| EVEN (Produits laitiers) | REGALETTE (Crêpes et galettes garnies) |
| FLIPI / ROLLAND S.A. (Crèmes glacées) | SAUPIQUET (Conserves de poissons) |
| GAELIC (Pâtisserie, viennoiserie industrielles) | SAVEOL (Fraises, tomates, fleurs) |
| GELAGRI BRETAGNE (Légumes surgelés) | SILL (Soupe de poisson, jus de fruits) |
| GRUEL FAYER (Semences) | TRISKEL (Salaisons) |
| GUYADER (Terrines et produits de la mer) | UNICOPA LAIT - Rippoz (Produits laitiers) |
| HENAFF (Plats préparés, terrines, saucisses) | VAL DE RANCE (Cidres) |
| HENRI LE NET (Salaisons, salades) | WARENGHEM (Spiritueux) |
| IROISE PLANTS (Végétaux de pépinières) | |

COLLEGE DISTRIBUTEURS : 9 membres

| | |
|-----------|-------------------|
| ALDOUEST | GEANT |
| CASINO | INTERMARCHÉ |
| CHARETON | SCARMOR / LECLERC |
| CONTINENT | SYSTEME U |
| CORA | |

COLLEGE BIENS D'EQUIPEMENT : 3 membres

| | |
|-------------|-------------|
| ARMOR LUX | DAVID OUEST |
| STE RIVALIN | |

COLLEGE SERVICES : 12 membres

BREIZ RESTAURATION
CAISSE D'EPARGNE DE BRETAGNE
C.I.O.
CREDIT AGRICOLE
CREDIT MUTUEL DE BRETAGNE
GROUPAMA BRETAGNE
KASTELL SERVICE
LES DEMENAGEURS BRETONS
TRANSPORTS LE CALVEZ
TRANSPORTS SOPITRA
TRANSPORTS TFE
VERLINGUE ASSURANCES

COLLEGE BIENS CULTURELS : 13 membres**10 membres adhérents :**

AN HERE
BYG PRODUCTION
CHASSE MAREE
COOP BREIZH
EDITIONS OUEST-FRANCE (EDILARGE)
KELTIA MUSIQUE
LES EDITIONS JACK
LES FILMS DU BALLADIN
LE TELEGRAMME EDITIONS
MASTER PRODUCTION

3 membres associés :

FESTIVAL INTERCELTIQUE
FESTIVAL DES TOMBEES DE LA NUIT
FESTIVAL DES VIEILLES CHARRUES

The “Foundation of Brittany”

Lois Kuter

The following is a translation from brochure material (in both Breton and French) provided to me. I would be happy to photocopy and send materials to anyone interested. Or you could contact them directly:

Mission “Fondation de Bretagne”
Ciel, rue du Gué Fleuri, B.P. 35
29480 Le Relecq-Kerhuon

Tel./Fax: 02 98 28 19 85

The Regional Council of Brittany decided to finance a feasibility study, to be done by the Cultural Institute of Brittany, of a project to create a Foundation of Brittany. This project comes out of proposals put forth jointly by the Cultural Institute of Brittany, the Cultural Council of Brittany, and the Agence Technique Régionale in the White Book “Une Culture bretonne pour le XXI^e siècle.”

This step forward is based on a powerful cultural force and inscribed in a rich and diverse Breton personality. The project corresponds to hopes and expectations in need of responsive action today. A private organization with no vested interests, the institution called a “foundation” is found widely in Europe and the United States where it plays a determinant role in the financing of artistic creativity and the material support of multiple forms of cultural activity. For example, the principle Catalan foundation distributes support in the area of a half-million francs each year, thus helping to give Catalonia its image today of dynamism and modernity.

The Foundation of Brittany, which would conduct its activities in the whole of historic Brittany, would concentrate its efforts principally on the live Breton culture. It would most favor innovative initiatives and creation on the areas of the arts, natural, historical or architectural patrimony, work for the Breton language, audio-visual communication, volunteer educational action (for example, evening classes in Breton language or history), the development of inter-Celtic and international relations, or the organization of Breton emigrant communities throughout the world. More generally it would be engaged in locating and networking isolated talents to help creators become known and successful.

Far from substituting for organizations (private or public) now charged with the distribution of funding, the Foundation would have as its sole ambition the function of providing necessary supplemental support in areas where the needs are substantial.

The Foundation of Brittany would serve as a base for interactions and constructive partnerships and would actively aid in marrying economy and culture. A potential benefit still largely unexploited, Brittany’s “cultural image” could soon become a decisive competitive driver for our industries. In return, these businesses must surely have it in their interest to actively participate through their donations in the birth and development of a Breton enterprise of patronage, while benefiting, of course, from attractive fiscal regulations (such as tax breaks).

A new tool for the 21st century, the Foundation of Brittany would be open to all Bretons as well as to faithful friends of Brittany. As soon as the first base of support is gathered from “big funders” (Regional Council, general and municipal councils, Chambers of commerce, businesses, financial institutions, universities and major cultural associations), a wide subscription can be launched with the aid of the media for Bretons of the peninsula as well as those of the diaspora in France and the rest of the world.

A tripartite council, including founding members of the Foundation, representatives from public organizations, and people coopted for their expertise, will administer the Foundation, aided by an elected Bureau. While functioning and making decisions independently, the Foundation will operate scrupulously, working within the laws and vigorous obligations set forth by the government for foundations in the public interest. Thus, you have the conception prevailing among the initiators of this “great work.”

New Recordings from Brittany

Les Frères Morvan/Ar Vreudeur
Morvan. Fest-noz Botc'ol.
Coop Breizh CD 893. 1999. 74'

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

Here's a welcome recording by traditional singers who have become nearly legendary in Brittany—Ar Vreudeur Morvan. François, Henri and Yvon have been singing all their lives. Now ranging in age from the mid 60s to mid 70s, their voices are perhaps not as sure as they were in earlier years, but there is a lot to be said for experience and you find a tremendous energy and power to their singing. The Morvan Brothers are masters of *kan ha diskan*, and one can be assured of great dancing when they sing for a *plinn* or *fisel*. This CD includes two suites for *plinn* and two for *fisel*, but also includes a *kost ar c'hoat*, *polka*, *pach pi*, *scottish* and *polka plinn*—all sung in the *kan ha diskan* style where one singer leads and another—in this case two—respond with a slight overlap of voices on the end of each phrase to launch to the next. And the response style is also carried over into the performance of two *gwerz*—slow ballads where lines of narrative song get repeated (although not always with an overlap on the repetition or the take-up of a new line).

In the variety of dances and the inclusion of slow airs, this is a nice selection of songs from the repertoire of these great singers who learned them from their father and especially their mother, as well as from a grandfather who brought home “broadsheets (*feuilles volants*) he bought at fairs. Jacket notes to the CD include a short introduction to the Morvan brothers and their repertoire as well as a short summery of the song contents. It is too bad that texts are not included—especially for the *gwerzioù* or a few of the more narrative songs for dancing, but perhaps these are already available elsewhere for those interested.

While the Morvan brothers have been highly visible performers at many *festoù-noz* and other occasions for dancing during the past forty or more years, their recordings are relatively rare,* making this CD all the more welcome. Some (all?) of the selections are recorded live which adds to the spirited nature of the dances. Those who like traditional unaccompanied song of Brittany will greatly enjoy this CD.

* See “Les Frères Morvan—et si on leur faisait la fête?” Musique bretonne 125, septembre 1993, for a very interesting interview by Patrick Malrieu and a complete list of recordings.

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Brou-Hamon-Quimbert. Trois p'tits oiseaux—Chants de Haute Bretagne.
Coop Breizh CD 890. 1999. 58'30.

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

This CD presents the Gallo tradition at its best with three great younger singers who are steeped in the song tradition of southeastern Brittany where they live and work. While Charles Quimbert, Mathieu Hamon, and Roland Brou have recorded before, their voices are scattered on a number of collections done primarily by Dastum or Le Chasse-Marée.

This CD includes a nice mix of songs for dances as well as slower melodies performed a capella with no instrumental accompaniment. Listen to these three guys and you will learn how spirited the dances of eastern Brittany really are (and some musicians from the west of Brittany could use a lesson). Included are two suites of songs for the *ridée*, a *tour*, *bal paludier* and *rond paludier*, and a *pilé-menu*. Much like dance in swing, but a bit more stately are the marches of Gallo Brittany which are also sung with a

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leader and responding singer or group of singers. Two nice ones are included on this CD.

Each singer shows off his stuff as well with a *complainte* or ballad which is the equivalent of the Breton language *gwerz*. The four on this CD cover all the usual topics of Breton song—bad marriages, the abduction of maidens, ship wrecks, murder and infanticide. Similar themes are found in four other songs which the three men sing in unison together—as one would hear in Gallo Brittany at gatherings around a table where everyone knows the same songs and takes pleasure in singing them. While songs for dancing can be less narrative in style, the texts also cover themes of lost and found love, bad marriages, murder and mayhem.

Jacket notes include song texts as well as notes on the source of the song—where and from whom they were learned. Indeed, the CD is a testimonial to the health of the oral tradition in Brittany where singers pass around a repertoire and younger singers like Brou, Hamon and Quimbert take advantage not only of the huge repertoire of older masters, but also printed text collections. As is common for Breton singers and musicians, Brou-Hamon-Quimbert have collected texts and melodies primarily from friends and neighbors in the area where they live. Roland Brou is a teacher in Nantes, Charles Quimbert is a psychologist living south of Rennes, and Mathieu Hamon is a farmer in the area east of Redon. An informative introduction by Robert Bouthillier to the singers and their repertoire is included in the notes.

For those who like their singing straight—without the distraction of accompaniment—this CD presents three wonderful voices and the sometimes overlooked richness of the Gallo song tradition.

* * *

Koun. *C'est en souhaitant bonsoir!*
Keltia Musique KMCD 97. 1999. 41'24

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

This CD provides an interesting and creative arrangement of nine songs and dances where the talents of six experienced musicians are put to very good use. Each member of Koun (Breton for “memory” or “remembrance”) has ample opportunity to show off with the lead on a tune or song, yet one finds a unique sound as a group with refreshingly new combinations of instruments and voice. I found an unusual variety in the use of instruments and their combination with song. Not surprisingly given the particular roots of the musicians, the Gallo dance tradition is favored with a *tour*, *ridées*, *rond de Saint-Vincnet*, *scottish*, and *hanter dro*, but the *gavotte* (ton doubl only) and suite for *plinn* are up to any dancer's expectations in quality.

While the jacket notes do not include information about the musicians of Koun, a press release accompanying the CD provided good biographical information to present them.

Véronique Bourjot has a solid grounding in traditional song of Gallo Brittany (and sings in both French and Vannetais Breton). She worked for a while with Dastum, but she has sung with a number of bands including work with Stivell in the 70s, and work with harpist Gwenola Ropars and a group specializing in an Irish repertoire called Froggy Stew. Her voice is lovely and contrasts nicely with the more raucous tone of Philippe Janvier's voice in response style singing for some of the dances. Outstanding for its melodic beauty is Véronique's interpretation of a song in Breton from the Pays Pourlet, “E Gerig hont kost c'hoad.” While less powerful, the second Breton language song (for the dance *hanter-dro*) has an interesting jazziness and sometimes sinister

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feel in line with the text about an encounter of a young woman with sailors on the streets of Paris.

Philippe Janvier also sings on the CD but his real strength is the bombarde and biniou. Paired with Jean-Luc Lemoigne, he has carried away several trophies for traditional paired bombarde and biniou. He was a member of the group Tammles and now plays with the group Katé-Mé as well as with Koun. His bombarde work on “Disput etre ur plac’h hag he mamm” is particularly nice. His name is also listed frequently as an arranger for the selections on the CD.

Alain Léon has brought his guitar to a number of fest-noz bands, and can be heard on the guitar compilation CD called Kerdenn (see Bro Nevez 67, August 1998). He has the opportunity to show of his skills quite nicely on the CD with the “Scottish” as well as the closing “P’linn.”

Pascal Martin, from the Pays de Guérande, plays biniou and studied uilleann pipes in Galway. He brings a solid performance on the instrument to the CD where the uilleann pipes add a nice rich texture to the music when combined with fiddle and bombarde.

Dominique Trichet brings a wealth of fiddling experience to the group. Like many Breton fiddlers he has spent time in Ireland and has played with several Breton groups featuring Irish music—Froggy Stew and Tullamore Dew. He has also explored eastern European styles of fiddling and plays with a group called Gwazigan which features music of Quebec.

Unfortunately there is no information provided for the sixth musician of the group, Pierrick Tardivel, but his bass fiddle is certainly an asset to the interesting arrangements in many of the tunes where it provides both rhythm and sometimes a haunting drone.

Jacket notes to the CD include a good photo of the group as well as basic information about each selection—its source and who arranged or composed it, etc. The texts of each song is provided with a French version for the two Breton texts. The relatively large black print on white paper is a welcome change from more artistic jacket notes where printing is obscured and sometimes obliterated by overlaid photos or designs.

This is a very enjoyable CD where the musicians of Koun truly sound like they enjoy the music and playing with each other. The group clicks, and while I especially enjoyed to fine voice of Véronique Bourjot, each musician has the chance to show off their considerable talent and creativity.

* * *

Kevrenn Brest St. Mark «Tu pe Du». Keverenn Brest St. Mark/Diffusion Breizh CD-KSSM 001: 1987. Reissued 1995.

Reviewed by Natalie Novik

«Tu pe Du» (this side or the other) is the nickname given certain saints in Brittany (“santig tu pe du”), who were believed to either perform miracles or on the contrary doom the requirer.

Here, “tu pe du” is described on the jacket as a way of describing a repertoire that shifts wildly from very traditional performances to real modern ones.

First of all, it is important to stress the quality of the recording. We owe it to Padrig Sicard, who has evidently mastered the art of combining extremes: the high, strident notes of the bombarde and the low drone of the Scottish piobaireachd.

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The arrangements can be surprising: Stivell's well known «Ar chas donv yelo da gouez» (The tame dogs will turn wild), which lacked depth and harmony in its original version becomes a rich, martial tune, with lots of variations. I will let the Scots and the Irish judge for themselves the interpretation of traditional airs like the «Suite Irlandaise»: they show well the versatility achieved by the bagad, while it seems to me they are very Breton in sound.

The other Breton tunes, including a brilliant «Cornwall March» composed by P.Y. Moign, and a very poignant «Heloise et Abelard» as the last piece, give the bagad a chance to elaborate with rhythm, harmonies, and color. They are obviously very much at ease in these tunes, and strive to give them flight, open horizons, discover new approaches. It works, the listener could even forget sometimes this is a bagad, it sounds almost like... a symphonic orchestra!

Alain Pennec. *Turbulences*.

Keltia Musique KMCD 101. 1999. 51'22

Reviewed by Pól Duffy

Editor's note: Here's a second review for *Turbulences* which I reviewed in the August 99 Bro Nevez. Pól nicely reveals the identity of the "Chapman stick" which was a mystery instrument for me -- Lois

Alain Pennec, one of Brittany's premier diatonic accordion masters, has just released his latest CD inappropriately called *Turbulences*. Inappropriate because, while considered his culture's answer to Phil Cunningham, this CD just never really grabs you, and this is likely to do with a triumph of technology over *huevos*, or whatever the appropriate Breton term is. Let me explain. This CD brings together the considerable talents of Aurore Breger on harp, Youenn Landreau on Chapman Stick and didgeridoo, and Stephane Barbier on percussion, and the problem is that the rhythm

section just doesn't pull off whatever it was aiming for, more than likely because their instruments may have gotten in the way of their sensibilities.

Mind you, this is a good album, well worth listening to, but considering the pedigree of the players and the solid performance on his first CD, Pennec's new one should have blasted the light clear off the laser reader. Instead, my Yamaha is as confused as I am about what was left encoded on the plastic disc. "Bals à quatre" get the proceedings off to a great start, and as Pennec launches into Bach's "Menuet" with Breger, you can just imagine how this whole effort will sound when the Stick and percussion kick in. But they don't. Now, for the purists, that is a good thing, if playing Bach on diatonic accordion is pure. However, among the many things Bach would certainly have dug is the Chapman Stick. It is an instrument whose range and adaptability in the right hands can deliver sonorous joys unthought of by mere mortals. Bach loved pushing the sonic boundaries of instruments and certainly, had JSB run into Tony Levin or Fergus Marsh, the western world's masters of aforementioned Stick, his prolific output may even have doubled!

But back here on Pennec's CD, it is by the numbers. You see, the Stick is an instrument (that looks like a guitar) that is played not so much by being picked, although you can, but by the touch sensitive qualities of the strings and their interaction with the neck. It can be programmed, and it offers the bassist a world of colors in the lower register that he may never have imagined. Unfortunately with Pennec's efforts, Landreau has not imagined them at all.

A number of the selections are executed competently, but nothing grabs you about them. And in some cases, the rhythm section's short-comings are noticeable. For example, the percussion in "Orgies nocturnes" is actually

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distracting, following as it does a reading of "La Soir La Brunette" that is no more than competent. Things pick up with "Taraf de Trentemouk," a piece that is reminiscent of gamelan era King Crimson; however, both Landreau and Barbier seem to be following the changes instead of driving them along. The same can be said of the band's take on "Cap Fergusson Strathspey Reels," which follow Pennec's version of a piece frequently in Phil Cunningham's repertoire, "The Abercairney Highlanders." Trouble is, when they get to the Cap part of the track, Barbier is merely predictable, the Stick solo goes nowhere and Pennec's own playing is so repetitious that your ear is taken off what the rhythm section might have been shooting for.

Yet, there are moments of real grace here. "Luna Llana" is strikingly beautiful, especially for the uncluttered flow of the harp and accordion. "La Dame Blanche" creates its own spell as well, but the spell is broken by the percussion when "Valse Clog" begins. Barbier is no Bill Bruford, and for that reason, "less is more" is a theory that would have served him and the music better here and throughout. "The White Petticoat" set works perfectly—somehow they figured it all out and you get a real sense of what this band could do once they were clear on where they were going. "Suite Plinn" is another brilliant set, yet I can certainly imagine what Bruford and Levin would do with this if they were playing behind Pennec and Breger. The album finishes with an extraordinary duet between Pennec and Irina Sarolea. The playing is so marvelous that this track and the aforementioned "Luna Llana" really salvage the CD altogether.

Breger is the standout artist on this CD. She acquits herself beautifully on each track, her contributions add creatively, not just sonically, to the progression of the tracks. Over all, the trouble with *Turbulences* is that it just does not compel you to listen. It is sometimes an ill-conceived amalgam, at other times a brilliant

evocation of the Breton spirit, and at other times still just monotonous. If Landreau was looking, as some great Breton musicians do, for a jazz-like direction to his accompaniment, perhaps a 5-string bass or even double bass might have served the purposes better. Certainly, the Stick is not exploited to any creative effort throughout the CD and I cannot tell you which track might have featured the didgeridoo. As for Barbier, he needs to collect the complete Bill Bruford, Elvin Jones or Roy Haynes, reconsider the difference between being busy and being inventive, and then woodshed for a very long time. Pennec himself needs to do better for a third CD or his own star will certainly begin to fade.

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HEARD OF, BUT NOT HEARD

Notes drawn from information in *Ar Men* 106, septembre 1999.

Instruments du diable, musique des anges - tableaux sonores de Bretagne. Dastum 132, Dif. Coop Breizh. 1999.

This CD accompanies an exhibit this fall at the Musée de la Cohue in Vannes featuring representations of bagpipes and oboes/ bombardes in Breton art from the 14th century to today. It is an evocation not only of the music pipers play but also of "sounds of the times." As one might expect from Dastum, this exhibit was surely worth a visit and the CD would offer a wonderful enrichment to the visual images.

Chansons traditionnelles recueillies à Molac, Larré, Le Cours et Pluherlin. L'Épille EPI 004. 1999

The fourth cassette produced by L'Épille featuring the best of traditional singers of these particular areas of Gallo Brittany.



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Y2K CELTIC CALENDAR

Folks wondering about the origin of Sadie Hawkins Day or just looking for something that makes each new day special can turn to the Celtic Calendar published by the Celtic League American Branch. The calendar now lists over 900 birthdays, feast days, and anniversaries of notable people and events from the six Celtic nations of Scotland, Brittany, Wales, Ireland, Cornwall and the Isle of Man. There is at least one entry for each day of the year -- including the Y2K Leap Day on February 29th.

In addition the calendar is illuminated with thirteen black and white panels of original Celtic artwork by noted artists Brian Mór and Mark Evans illustrating themes and stories from Celtic lore and mythology. And each month is named in one of the six Celtic languages, along with a proverb in that language and English.

This unique calendar also follows the traditional Celtic year beginning on November 1st, 1999. So if the lights really do go out on Y2K the Celtic Calendar will already be up and running and on your wall.

The Celtic Calendar is available in bookstores and gift shops, or for \$10 postpaid per copy from Celtic League Calendar, 2973 Valentine Avenue, Bronx, NY, 10458.

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