

# BRO NEVEZ

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



## KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR YEZH VREZHONEG

### International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language

NEWSLETTER OF THE U.S. BRANCH NUMBER 1 JULY 1981

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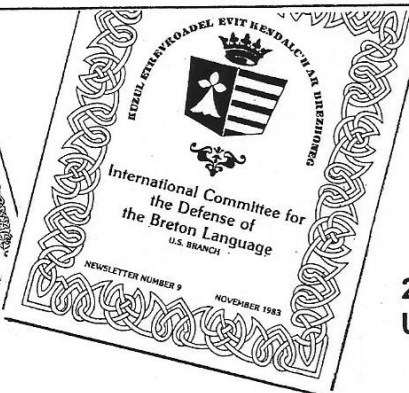
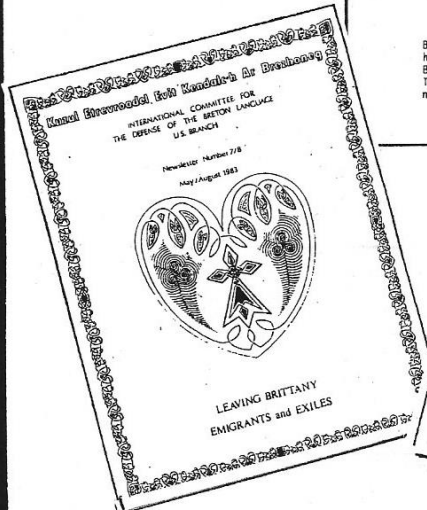
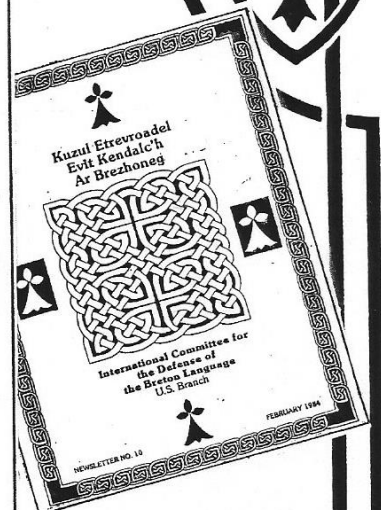
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should be directed to the secretary:  
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312 West Dods St.  
Bloomington, IN 47401

The International Committee for  
the Defense of the Breton Language  
was set up at the beginning of the  
1975/76 school year to support the  
repeated demands of the teachers  
and people of Brittany that their  
language be recognized at long last,  
taught and accepted as a fact of  
daily life by the French authorities.

This Committee, with more than 500  
personalities representing 40 different  
nationalities, was set up on  
a voluntary basis by non-Bretons  
who in this way show that, while  
the issue does not personally concern  
them, they consider it to be  
one which merits the disinterested  
support of men and women of good  
will. The Committee, which is concerned  
purely with the defense of the  
cultural rights of the individual,  
is non-political and non-ideological.

Branches of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language  
have been established in Canada, France, Spain, Switzerland, the Netherlands,  
Belgium, Italy, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, England, Wales, Norway, and Austria.  
The newest branch of the ICDBL is our own, that of the United States, which is  
now in the process of being formed.



20<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY for the  
U.S. Branch of the ICDBL

KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

No. 73

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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:

Voting Membership:	\$18.00 (calendar year)
Non-Voting Membership:	\$17.00

Subscriptions:	\$15.00 U.S. and Canada first class mail
	\$20.00 overseas by surface mail
	\$25.00 overseas by airmail (printed matter rate)

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.

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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.

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## 20<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE U.S. BRANCH OF THE ICDBL

*Bruxelles, le 2<sup>nd</sup> of April 1980*

*Dear Miss Kuter,*

*Following your letters of January 19 and March 17, 1980, the executive Board of the [ICDBL] Committee has reached the conviction that your willingness to help and your knowledge of Breton language and culture are quite decisive elements to designate you as the Committee's representative in the U.S.A. On behalf of the members of the Board in Brussels, may I therefore congratulate you for the choice which was made unanimously here and assure you of our gratitude ...*

*Henri Lecuyer*

Anyone who has seen my apartment knows that I keep every scrap of paper, but I cannot seem to find those letters of January 19 and March 17, 1980. However, I did find a letter I wrote to Claude Sterckx who is currently the President of the ICDBL and who was just stepping out of the role of General Secretary when I wrote to him in September 1979 to offer my services for the ICDBL. I had just returned from a year in Brittany doing doctoral research as an Anthropology/Ethnomusicology graduate student, so I was pretty fired up about the cause of the Breton language. I had no idea where things would lead from that letter written over twenty years ago. I think those who know me will enjoy reading it.

*September 26, 1979  
Bloomington, Indiana*

*Dear Mr. Sterckx,*

*I was given your dossier several weeks ago by Jakez Josset at Ti Kendalc'h, Saint-Vincnet-sur-Oust, Brittany. At that time he told me you were in search of representation for the committee in the United States. I will try to introduce myself to give you an idea of why Jakez Josset gave me your dossier (and why I took it).*

*I am a graduate student in anthropology at Indian University (Bloomington, Indiana) now starting to write my doctorate thesis on the topic of Breton identity and music in Brittany. I have just returned from a year of research in Brittany (5 months at Ti Kendalc'h and 7 months near Carhaix) to collect information for the thesis. I had previously spent a summer in Brittany (1975) making initial contacts and starting a study of Breton (which I did not have the opportunity to greatly advance during my September 1978-79 stay unfortunately). I have also done as much research as possible in the U.S. (Indiana in particular) in terms of searching our meager library holdings on Brittany. Although my knowledge of Brittany is just at a beginning I feel I have a fairly solid grasp of the political, economic as well as cultural issues which explain why an International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language is necessary.*

*I will be happy to apply my knowledge to helping your committee in its efforts to defend the Breton language as best I can. I will be a little isolated in terms of location in the wilds of southern Indiana and due to the fact that I have as yet no links with the Breton community in the United States. I will, however, make an effort to locate any other interested people who might be in a better position than I to work for your committee.*

*I would appreciate it if you could send me several copies of your dossier or other information on your organization as soon as possible. I am now a fluent French speaker and reader but English is my native language and the language I will use here to tell others of Brittany so I would appreciate information in English if possible. ...*

20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary -- continued

*I thank you in advance for your response to my request for information and I hope I may be of some service to your organization and to the Breton language.*

*Best wishes,  
Lois Kuter*

I am not sure the U.S. Branch of the ICDBL fulfills all the expectations of the main office of the ICDBL in Brussels, but we can certainly say that we have done some interesting and important work during the past twenty years.

It would be nice to report that things are going so well for the Breton language in Brittany that the support of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language is no longer needed and we can disband. There has been a great deal of change for the good in the past twenty years since the U.S. Branch of the ICDBL was founded. I find the tremendous change in attitude on the part of the Breton population from one of rejection or indifference to a true desire to see the Breton language flourish as perhaps the most important change. The yearly growth of enrollment in the school's bilingual programs, the Diwan schools and Breton classes for adults are also cause for optimism. But, there is still much work to be done. If you look through the past several issues of Bro Nevez, this will certainly be clear to you. France still needs to be dragged kicking and screaming into any real action that will offer even the most minimal of support for languages such as Breton. And if you read the "Call from Carhaix" you will see there are some very important steps still to be taken to insure a future for the Breton language.

All those who have supported the work of the U.S. ICDBL during the past twenty years can be proud of the part you have played in encouraging Bretons to continue their fight.

I would like to recognize here some of our current Members who have remained faithful supporters of the ICDBL during the past twenty years. The following Founding Members of the U.S. ICDBL responded to a letter I sent out in 1980 to any address I could find (especially people active in Celtic language studies or teaching) or to notes I was able to get published in the newsletters of Irish, Scottish, Welsh, Manx, Cornish or French organizations in the U.S.

## U.S. ICDBL FOUNDING MEMBERS

Daniel Calvez, Easley, South Carolina  
Gweltaz Hamel, Santa Cruz, California  
Javan Kienzle, Rochester, Michigan  
Lois Kuter, Jenkintown, Pennsylvania  
Genevieve Ray, Fountain Valley, California  
Edgar Slotkin, Cincinnati, Ohio  
Thomas L. Standeven, Jr., Wilmington, Delaware  
Lenora Timm, (U.S. ICDBL President) Davis, California  
Amy Varin, Berthoud, Colorado

In looking at the founding of the U.S. Branch of the ICDBL it is important to also site the work of Reun ar C'halan who was an active contributor to our newsletter and who served on our board of consultants for nearly fifteen years. In late 1994 Reun ar C'halan asked to retire from service with the ICDBL so he could devote his time and energy to writing in the Breton language. And what better way to support the Breton language than to write outstanding poetry and essays in it!

In these times where so many local and international issues and causes cry for our attention, I find it remarkable that the U.S. ICDBL has held a core of members who have supported us for five and ten years. I think it is appropriate to also recognize those current members here as well.



20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary -- continued

### U.S. ICDBL Members with ten or more years of support

David Brule, Millers Falls, Massachusetts (1985)	Serge Lainé, Austin, Texas (1984)
Jay Callahan, Putney, Vermont (1983)	Jean and Huguette Le Gall, Athens, Georgia (1983)
Doris Creegan, Delmar, New York (1984)	Dinah LeHoven, Los Angeles, California (1982)
Stephen Paul DeVillo, Bronx, New York (1983)	Cheryl Mitchell, Hyattsville, Maryland (1986)
Nancy Dorian, South Harpswell, Maine (1983)	Allen Murphy, Brownsburg, Indiana (1988)
Anne Enslow, Hoboken, New Jersey (1986)	Paul and Elizabeth Nedwell, Wappinger Falls, New York (1983)
Robert Felix, Columbia, South Carolina (1988)	Natalie Novik, Anchorage, Alaska (1983)
Brian Frykenberg, Andover, Massachusetts (1984)	Liam Ó Caiside, Alexandria, Virginia (1986)
Neil Garrity, Rocky River, Ohio (1986)	Judith Pendleton, Mt. Pleasant, South Carolina (1986)
Roger Griffin, Seneca Castle, New York (1984)	Mary Primel, Cumming, Georgia (1988)
John Hanly, Arlington, Virginia (1983)	Mike Rackers, Cincinnati, Ohio (1990)
Lani Herman, Richmond, California (1985)	Jan Robinson, San Francisco, California (1989)
Kathy Hochberg, Harrison, New York (1992)	Kenneth Rogers, Kingston, Rhode Island (1987)
Roderick Jacobs, Honolulu, Hawaii (1982)	Lee Savary, Albuquerque, New Mexico (1982)
Ruta Jancys, Woodbridge, Illinois (1990)	Gregory Stump, Lexington, Kentucky (1983)
James Kerr, Easton, Maryland (1983)	Jan Zollars, Houston, Texas (1990)
Alexei Kondratiev, Flushing, New York (1983)	
Leon and Barbara Kuter, Ambler, PA (1985)	

### U.S. ICDBL Members with five or more years of support

Susan Baker, Gaithersburg, Maryland (1993)  
 Bob Carre, Inverness, Florida (1993)  
 Matthew Cosgrove, Ozone, Florida (1994)  
 Nan Donald & Nancy Shilepsky, Cambridge, Massachusetts (1994)  
 Robert Doriss, Watkins, Colorado (1993)  
 Donald Firth, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada (1991)  
 Mahlon Henderson, Fort Meyers, Florida (1991)  
 Richard and Valerie Herr, Berkeley, California (1993)  
 Gerwyn Jones, Summerside, Prince Edward Island, Canada (1994)  
 Phyllis Kadle, Hamilton, Ohio (1991)  
 Ellen Kelly, Evanston, Illinois (1991)  
 Christine Leahy, Wilmington, North Carolina (1991)  
 James MacKillop, Syracuse, New York (1994)  
 Richard Moraux, Glenside, Pennsylvania (1991)  
 Gordon Peters, Rexford, New York (1991)  
 Ray Price, Santa Cruz, California (1995)  
 Kevin Rottet, Whitewater, Wisconsin (1995)  
 Edward Suppe, Muncie, Indiana (1994)  
 Anthony Sutherland, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania (1991)  
 John Trexler, Charlotte, North Carolina (1992)  
 Terry Wren, Campbell, California (1995)  
 Gei Zantzinger, Devault, Pennsylvania (1993)

As you can see from the places listed above, U.S. ICDBL members come from every corner of the U.S. In fact, during the past twenty years we have had members or Bro Nevez subscribers in 46 of 51 States plus Puerto Rico and Washington D.C. (not to mention Canada and overseas subscribers). The only states we have not yet touched are Arkansas, Idaho, Oklahoma, West Virginia, and Wyoming! The geographical distribution of the U.S. ICDBL members shows that an interest in the future of the Breton language is not just limited to a few big cities or particular regions.

20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary – continued

## COMMEMORATING 20 YEARS OF WORK

The most logical way to celebrate our 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary is to continue with the work we do to introduce the Breton language and culture to Americans. For the past five years the ICDBL has set up an information stand at the Potomac Celtic Festival in Leesburg, Virginia. And individual members have set up stands at Celtic/Irish/Scottish/International Festivals everywhere from Alaska to Ohio and Pennsylvania ... to name just a few I know of. This has been a very good way to help people learn about the work of the ICDBL. While I encourage ICDBL members throughout the U.S. to organize regional events where you might be able to gather members more locally, we hope that the U.S. ICDBL will have a strong presence at the Potomac Celtic Festival this June. The festival rotates a focus on a particular Celtic country each year, and this year it will be Brittany. As you will read in the press release which follows, Alan Stivell and the Bagad de Lann-Bihoué have been lined up, and Nolwenn Monjarret will be returning with her wonderful voice. We hope to double our tent size and really make Brittany and the ICDBL presence known.

While a half dozen or so ICDBL members have had the chance to meet during the festival each year, we would like to see dozens of you descend on the festival and we need volunteer help at our tent. You will find with this newsletter, a sign-up sheet so we can know who will be coming to the festival, and so we can offer free passes to those willing and able to volunteer at the tent! We hope to have some special activities at the ICDBL tent to attract new members and to make the festival a memorable one for all of you who plan to come. Start planning a trip now!

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## PRESS RELEASE

### THE POTOMAC CELTIC FESTIVAL: SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE!

Most of us in the United States can claim Celtic blood. Come celebrate that heritage at the seventh annual Potomac Celtic Festival, which will take place Saturday, June 10 from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. and Sunday, June 11 from 10 a.m. - 6 p.m., 2000 at the Morven Park Equestrian Center, one mile North of Leesburg, VA on Rte. 15. Sample internationally acclaimed musicians, dancers, storytellers, and poets on eight stages, activities for children of all ages, the wares of 65 juried craft exhibitors and import vendors, 2000 years of historical reenactment, marching pipebands, Highland athletics, genealogical research by clans and societies, whisky tasting, fine ales, wines and cider, and food for every palette.

Spotlighting Brittany (France) in 2000, the Festival features the Celtic cultures of all seven Celtic Nations, which also include Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall, the Isle of Man, and Galicia (Spain), as well as their transplants in the New World. Set in the stunning backdrop of the rolling hills of Virginia's piedmont, the Festival is one of the prime attractions of Loudoun County, an area rich in historical sites, fine wineries, and spectacular estates.

**ENTERTAINMENT:** The Festival boasts four stages of continuous live music, including a family stage with children's entertainment, and a rollicking, sing along Pub stage. There are also an interactive dance stage, at which audiences are encouraged to participate, an intimate storytelling nook, and two stage areas featuring poetry and workshops covering all aspects of Celtic culture. Headliners at the 2000 Festival include Brittany's ALAN STIVELL, one of the prime instigators of the renaissance of Celtic music, the BAGAD de LANN-BIHOUE, a Breton pipe band, NOLWENN MONJARRET, Brittany's foremost female singer, the POOR CLARES, an outstanding, high energy band from New Orleans, the Mid-Atlantic's premier pan-Celtic group, IONA, Scottish balladeer ED MILLER, and the Galician dance troupe and pipe band, ANDURIÑA.

Potomac Festival Press Release -- continued

OTHER ATTRACTIONS include: a Children's activity area; a Juried Craft Market featuring 50 fine artists and craftspeople, many of whom demonstrate their craft, as well as Vendors of Celtic imports, musical instruments and recordings, books, and a Specialty Market, the Historical Reenactment of Celtic life from the 2nd Century B.C. to the 20th Century A.D.; 100 Clans and Societies to assist with genealogical research; Marching Pipebands from several Celtic Countries, featuring a Massed Bands presentation each day, Highland Athletics with children's games and a Masters' Competition; a wide variety of Celtic Foods and Family Fare; and, of course, an appropriate selection of Ales, Cider, Wine and Single Malt Whiskey Tastings. Shuttle Service between all Festival attractions will transport spectators all weekend.

There will also be a Concert and social gathering (Ceilidh) at 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, June 10 in the Ballroom of the Best Western Leesburg-Dulles at 726 E. Market St., LEESBURG, VA. Tickets may be purchased in advance through the Loudoun Museum, at the Festival, or at the Ceilidh for \$10.

DIRECTIONS AND INFORMATION: The Morven Park Equestrian Center is located on Rte. 15 at Tutt Lane, one mile North of Leesburg, VA, convenient to nearby Dulles Airport. From DC: Take I-66 to 267 (Toll Road) to Leesburg. Take 15 North. Turn Left on Tutt Lane immediately after 15 rejoins Business 15. From Points South: Take 7100 (Fairfax County Parkway) to 267 (Toll Road) West to Leesburg. Take 15 North. Turn Left on Tutt Lane immediately after 15 rejoins Business 15. From the North: I-70 to 340 S. to 15 S., or Rte 28 to White's Ferry to 15 S. Turn Right on Tutt Lane just before the Leesburg by-pass.

INFORMATION about the Festival is available through the Loudoun Tourism Council at 1-800-752-6118. Or check out the website: [www.PotomacCelticFest.org](http://www.PotomacCelticFest.org). DISCOUNTED ADVANCE TICKETS may be purchased through the Loudoun Museum (703-777-0099), using Visa or MC or by check. A one day adult ticket in advance is \$10 (\$12 at the gate), child age 6-12 in advance - \$5 (\$6 at the gate), a family ticket for 2 adults and up to 4 children in advance - \$30 (\$36 at the gate), and a two day pass is \$20 for adults and \$10 for children. Children under 6 are free. NO PETS PLEASE.

FESTIVAL UNDERWRITERS currently include the Barnaby Council for Celtic Studies and the Embassy of France. SPONSORS are US Airways, returning for a sixth year, Guinness, WMAL-AM, The Dulles Greenway, and All National Bank of Maryland. FESTIVAL PRODUCTION is by the Barnaby Council for Celtic Studies, a non-profit, virtually volunteer organization that promotes education about our Celtic heritage, and Barnaby Productions, Inc.

Barbara Ryan, President  
Barnaby Productions, Inc.  
PO Box 11160, Burke, VA 22009-1160  
(703) 451-4492

## Ag Cuimhniughadh ar Alan Heusaff Remembering Alan Heusaff (1921-1999)

Cúis bhróin mhóir damh an bás mo shean-chara, Alan Heusaff i nÉirinn ar na mallaibh. Ó Lois Kuter, Secretary General, U.S. ICDBL, a fuair mé an sgéal ar thús.

Gidh nach bhfaca mé Alan le fada, ba dhoiligh dearmad a dheanamh de'n chéad lá a casadh orainn ar chéile i mBaile Atha Cliath, Éire 'sa bhliain 1969. Ba cosamhail é le croisbhealach beag i mo shaoghal. Ag an am sin, ní rabh mé ach i ndiadh tús a chūr le foghlaim fá'n Bhriotáin agus a teanga dhúchais, Brezhoneg-An Bhriotainis agus ag machtnamh go mb'fheidir gur de sliocht Briotanach mé féin. D'éirigh muid an-mhór le chéile i ndiadh sin. Is minic a bhinn istigh aige mar cuairteoir nuair a bhí sé 'na chomhnaidhe i mBaile Atha Cliath. An Ghaedhilg teanga a theaghlaigh agus bhí Alan, a bhean, Brighid agus na páistí uilig an-íomhtha. Níor labhair Alan Béarla liom-sa ach uair amháin nuair a bhí mo cholceathar i láthair.

S'iomái na litreacha a ba ghnáthach liom a sgríobhadh chuige ag iarraidh chuidighthe ar cúrsaí na teangaidh Bhriotáinise agus ní rabh na freagra daobhtha i bhfad ag teacht go díreach. Ar amhráin ar an tsean nós a bhí cuid is mó de mo chuid ceisteanna air, cuir i gcás: "Gousperoù ar Raned" (Easpairt na bhFroganna), Kanouennoù Santel (Amhráin Diadha) no sean-amhráin a fuairtheas ó mo chuid cáirde i nUhelgoad na Briotáine, Youenn agus Suzig Gwernig agus a gcomharsa, Valentin no "An Eostig" (An Filiméala). Bhíodh na foclaí Bhriotainise sgríobhtha go slachtmhar ag Alan agus Gaedhilg bhlasta curtha ortha uilig. Níl a fhios agam goidé mar thiocfadh le duine comh gnaitheach leis-sean an cineal oibre seo a dheanamh ach dheanfadh Alan an t-am! Tá achán litir a fuair mé uaidh i dtroscair ar leith agus ma bhíonn corr-aiméar agam, athleigim cuid aca. Cúis iongantais mhóir damh i gcomhnaidhe an meid eolais a bhíodh le faghail ionnta agus é comh cruinn agus a bhí sé. Thig le duine a rabh sean-aithne aige ar Alan Heusaff a radh gur mar seo a bhí sé maidir le rud ar bith a rinn se ar feadh n-a shaoghail.

Beidh cumhaidh mór orm-sa 'do dhiadh, a chara mhóir! Ní bheidh do leitheid aríst ann.

Guidhim Sólás Dé ar a bhean, Brighid agus a theaghlach.  
Grásta ó Dhia ar a anam uasal.

Thomas L. Standeven, Jr.

(See next page for a translation)



Alan Heusaff -- continued

## Remembering Alan Heusaff

### *Translation:*

*I was greatly saddened by the death of my old friend, Alan Heusaff, in Ireland recently. It was from Lois Kuter, Secretary General of the U.S. ICDBL, that I first received the news.*

*Although I have not seen Alan in a long time, it would be hard to forget the first time we met in Dublin, Eire, in 1969. It was like a small turning point in my life. At that time, I was only beginning to learn about Brittany and her native language, Brezhoneg (Breton) and reflecting on my possible Breton ancestry. We became close friends after that. I would visit him often while he was living in Dublin. Irish was the language of his household--Alan, his wife, Brighid, and all the children being very fluent. Alan spoke to me in English only once when my cousin was present. I would write many letters to him requesting assistance on matters of the Breton language and these were directly answered. Most questions were on traditional songs, for example: "The Frog's Vespers," Sacred Songs, or old songs gotten from my friends in Huelgoat, Brittany, Youenn and Suzig Gwernig and their neighbor Valentin or "The Nightingale." Alan would have the Breton lyrics neatly written and translated to fine Irish. I do not know how anyone as busy as he could do this kind of work but Alan would make the time! Every letter I received from him is in a special file and when I have an occasional opportunity, I re-read some of them. It is always a great wonder to me the amount and exactness of information found in them. Anyone who knew Alan Heusaff well would say that he was this way about everything he did in his life.*

*I will miss you, great friend! Your likes will not be seen again.*

*I pray the Solace of God to his wife, Brighid, and to his family.  
The Grace of God on his noble soul.*

*Thomas L. Standeven, Jr.*

Editor's Note: Those interested in learning more about Alan Heusaff are referred to the Winter 1999-2000 issue of Carn (no. 108) which includes six pages in tribute to him.

## BRETONS UNITED TO PUSH FOR CHANGE The "Call from Carhaix"

Since the end of October 1999 nineteen people have been working on efforts to unit Bretons of all political and social backgrounds for action to achieve five basic goals that will allow Brittany to advance on a cultural, social and economic level. The "Call from Carhaix" was formally launched in December with a meeting of the nineteen organizers plus a hundred or more others adding their names to an impressive list of supporters. The following is a translation of information printed in the December 17, 1999, issue of Bretagne/Breizh Info (no. 156). It is my translation - LK

### *L'Appel de Carhaix* *Collectif Breton pour la Démocratie* *B.P. 103* *29270 Karaez*

*During the past years in Brittany, aspirations have been expressed with a certain forcefulness for cultural and linguistic emancipation, the management of the Breton territory, respect for nature, and economic development. They have been expressed, without reserve, in a new way by a large part of the population, active or not.*

*This would lead one to expect institutions and the political class to satisfy such expressed demands according to the democratic rules put into place in a Republic.*

*The force of inertia, promises with no future, and delaying talks have most often replaced a response. Such demands have sometimes even been met with contempt and insults.*

*One can talk of a deficit of democracy, with serious consequences which risk to become even more so in the future.*

#### *The call of the collective*

*The Breton Collective for Democracy was founded October 28, 1999, in Carhaix at the initiative of a group of citizens from the whole of Brittany. It proposes that all those who give life to Brittany today join its call.*

*This call is made In respect of the fundamental principles of democracy, the Rights of Man, and attachment to the diversity of cultural expression of all peoples. The call does not concern anyone who shows racism or an intolerance of cultural differences through his/her actions or words.*

#### *We will not accept*

*That Breton society be closed into a cycle of violence that we refuse, or in the smothering political debate of the classic process of provocation-repression.*

*That we will incessantly hit brick walls in achieving Brittany's legitimate aspirations.*

Call from Carhaix – continued

We affirm

*That the satisfaction of these aspirations reveals again an urgent and vital necessity for democratic life.*

*That these aspirations, including the emancipation of the Breton people's own cultural expression which is living and open to the diversity of humanity, arise from a political choice which involves all those involved in the social life of Brittany.*

*That these aspirations cannot find satisfactory political responses unless there is an unambiguous rejection—notably on the part of Breton elected representatives—of the logic of confrontation desired by the State.*

We demand

*The satisfaction, without new delays, of the following five aspirations which are inextricable, one from the other, listed without any order of precedence.*

- *The establishment of a regional public statute for the Diwan schools—the first step towards recognition that teaching in/of Breton is a relevant mission of the public school service in Brittany.*
- *The modification of the Constitution of France to conform to European and international commitments of France (European Charter for Minority Languages, International Convention for the Rights of Children, Article 30, ...)*
- *A true power on the regional level to expand political decision making and financial means of the Regional Council of Brittany in the areas of territorial planning, culture, environment, and economic development, ...*
- *The administrative reunification of Brittany [to include Loire-Atlantique].*
- *The adoption of a structural framework to take control of the development of the Breton economy to meet challenges of the internationalization of the marketplace.*

Those initiating the Call from Carhaix were: Angèle Jacq, Riwanon Kervella, André Lavanant, Christian Troadec, Jean-Charles Perazzi, Charlie Grall, Yann-Fañch Kerneis, Jakez Bernard, Pascal Boccou, Jean-Do Robin, Gérard Gautier, Claudie Poirier, Jakez Fulup, Daniel Kernaleguen, Filip Mell, Loeiz Le Bec, Louis Bocquenet, Emile Granville, and Jean-Yves Mevel. Those signing on for the Call include people of all occupations and political persuasions, showing that Bretons are ready to be united in achieving some very basic aspirations which are key to a healthy cultural and economic future. Now that the Call has gone out and has been answered, work will continue to establish smaller groups commissioned to take action on specific areas.

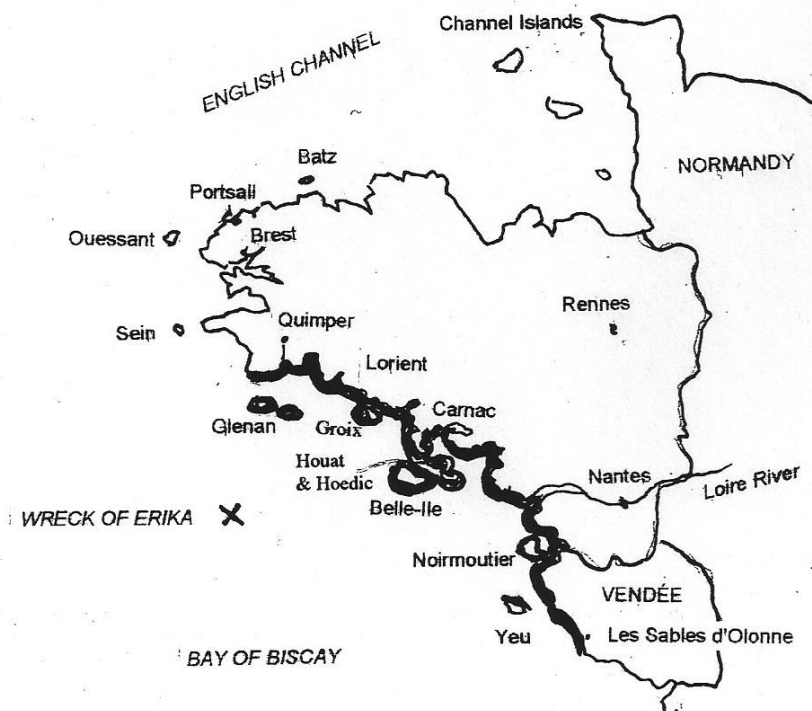
## THE "ERIKA": THE LATEST OIL SPILL IN BRITTANY

Report by Natalie Novik, with some additional notes by Lois Kuter

On December 12<sup>th</sup>, the "Erika," a 25-year old tanker registered in Malta, on its way from Dunkirk to Livorno, Italy, broke up in a winter storm south of Penmarc'h, Brittany. The waves were 30 feet high, the winds blowing at 60-70 miles per hour, and the ship sank 40 miles off of the Breton coast with 30,000 tons of heavy fuel in its hull.

The 21 Asian crew members—unaccustomed to Breton waters and storms--were rescued from the wreck by French and British Navy helicopters, and the French Navy immediately towed the rear half of the boat away from the coast, to let it sink at sea with half the load still in its hull. Efforts were made immediately to deploy booms to contain the fuel which had escaped from the prow of the ship, but fiercely stormy seas prevented their deployment.

The remaining 10,000 tons started a slow drift southeast, while the French Navy, assisted by an international flotilla, tried to pump and eliminate the fuel at sea. However, the viscosity and thickness of the fuel kept clogging the equipment. That's when a hurricane force storm hit the area on December 24<sup>th</sup>, with winds clocking at 110 MPH; the drifting fuel broke into smaller plates that landed on shore. Over 300 miles of coastline, from Penmarc'h in Brittany to the Vendée area south of the Loire River have been hit by gooey pellets or plates, particularly difficult to extract from rocks or clean off beaches.



Map adapted by Lois Kuter from one found on the Ouest France internet report (see reference at end)



## Oil Spill – continued

Just after the ship sunk, its captain was detained in Brest for about a week to testify. It appears that he thought all the certificates confirming the ship was seaworthy were in good order. However, early February, the insurance company, RINA, finally released its paper trail, which shows the ship underwent heavy but incomplete repairs in 1998 in Yugoslavia, had been reinspected by RINA in September, and given authorization to navigate only until January 2000. It is not clear whether the insurance company limited or defined the type of cargo the ship could carry during this time. From the deposition of the captain, it also appears that he had no clue he was headed for a force 9 gale; when the ship started breaking up, he first sent a request for assistance to the CROSS (a rescue headquarters) in Brest, which he canceled after temporarily correcting the list of the tanker. Nevertheless, six hours later, the ship broke in two, and the crew was rescued in very dangerous conditions. Most of the rescuers were Bretons with a vested interest in preventing this tragedy.

The French Navy sent remote-controlled robots to inspect the sunken hull, check if any fuel is leaking and fix the wreck to prevent fuel from escaping. However, as of this writing, the fishermen in the St. Guenole area confirm that they find traces of leakage at sea. The French government has placed the responsibility of pumping the remaining oil on the shoulders of the oil company TotalFina. However, pumping operations will not start before the spring, perhaps even the summer.

The fuel released by the tanker is classified as Fuel No. 2, a heavy type of fuel used for power plants. While a laboratory in the south of France claims that the fuel is toxic and that the volunteers should stop the clean-up until they have sufficient protection, its toxicity is denied by the oil company. It belongs to TotalFina, the largest oil company in France, who has pledged to pay for the damage. The three areas affected so far by the spill--Brittany, Pays de la Loire (part of Brittany, but officially not recognized as such) and Vendée-Poitou—are filing a class action suit against the owners of the tanker, the oil company, and the insurance company. They held a meeting in mid-January with the President of TotalFina, Thierry Desmarests, who lectured those attending on his company's excellent environmental record, promised to help, but refused any dialogue and left before the regional representatives could get answers to their questions.

Thousands of volunteers showed up to help clean up the shores. The fuel sticks like peanut butter to everything it touches. While the beaches are now relatively clean, the rocky coast is still a problem, and new arrivals of fuel are still reported daily along the coast. For example, on February 2<sup>nd</sup> the coasts mostly spared near Carnac (Locmarquer, Saint-Philbert and Trinité-sur-Mer) faced the arduous task of shoveling up the oil. On February 7<sup>th</sup> the Larmor and Ploemeur beaches near Lorient faced a second arrival of globs of oil. While army troops have been called out and local fire companies have gotten the brunt of work to shovel up the oil, it has been primarily volunteers who have descended on the coasts of Brittany after each arrival of oil. This is indeed a disheartening task. The volunteers lack proper protection, and equipment is not always adequate. The recuperated oil is sent for retreatment to Donges, near Nantes.

Several oyster parks have been contaminated, but overall, the oyster producers guarantee that the oysters on the market are totally safe. The media have naturally sensationalized the spill and most agencies in Brittany and Vendée are trying now to reassure the public in order to attract visitors to the area this summer and keep selling fish and seafood from the area. However, so far, 35,000 oiled birds have been found. Since this spill affects migrating birds at sea, and most of them probably drown, the

Oil spill - continued

real total could be somewhere between 150,000 to 300,000 birds. The French government also issued a decree on January 10<sup>th</sup> forbidding any fishing from shore and digging for clams along a 200 mile stretch in Brittany.

One million dollars was released by the French government on January 11<sup>th</sup> to be paid to the fishermen, oyster cultivators and other victims of the spill. A generous Breton donor gave five million dollars to clean up the three islands (natural preserves) most hurt by the fuel, Belle-Ile, Houat and Hoedic. And on February 4<sup>th</sup>, the French government released \$25 million to provide additional assistance to the clean-up efforts.

This latest oil spill comes after a dark series in the 1970s and 80s when six major oil spills hit Brittany, the largest one being the Amoco Cadiz in 1978, which spilled over 253,000 tons of fuel. Amoco finally paid after a lengthy lawsuit that lasted over ten years.

On February 5<sup>th</sup>, 30,000 people demonstrated in Nantes against the laxness of the authorities in checking the certification of offshore registered ships, and against the arrogance of the oil companies who show little or no concern for the polluted region and its inhabitants. In early February, a delegation from Alaska (the Regional Citizens' Advisory Council, based in Valdez) visited with the Syndicat Mixtes in Brittany, and saw for themselves the devastation in Belle-Ile Island and several harbors. They discussed the need to create similar citizens' committees in Europe, and to coordinate international information and action in order to prevent such disasters from happening again.

The above information has been retrieved on the Internet from the following sites:

[www.ifremer.fr/cedre](http://www.ifremer.fr/cedre)

[www.france-ouest.com/naufnage-erika](http://www.france-ouest.com/naufnage-erika)

The web site for the newspaper Le Télégramme (like that of Ouest-France noted above) also has a good supplement to chronicle the oil spill: [www.bretagne.com/supplements](http://www.bretagne.com/supplements)

\* \* \*

By Way of Background: here are six other "black tides" which have polluted the Breton coast in the past 14 years: January 1976, the "Olympic-Bravery," carrying 250,000 tons of oil, broke in two off the Island of Ouessant. Only some of this oil reached coasts, but three months of clean-up were necessary to contain the damage. October 1976, the "Boehlen" got into trouble off the Island of Sein; 9,800 tons of oil reached the coasts of Finistère. March 1978, the infamous "Amoco Cadiz" hit rocks off of Portsall, and 250,000 tons of oil polluted 360 kilometers of Brittany's northern coast. This is the sixth largest oil spill to date in the world (in 1989 the "Exxon Valdez" left 44,000 tons of oil on the Alaskan coasts—and we know the impact of that!). In April 1979, "Gino" collides with another ship, spilling 750 tons of oil off Ouessant. In 1980 "Tanio" breaks up off the island of Batz; 8,000 of its tons of oil reach the coast of Finistère and Côtes d'Armor. "Erika" has left an estimated 12,000 tons on the Breton and Vendée coasts.

## DASTUM is now Online

And a Wealth of information on Breton Music Comes with it.

This December 1999 Dastum celebrated the opening of its web site: <http://www.dastum.com>

And for those who love Breton music—especially the traditional styles that form the basis for all new innovation—this is indeed cause to celebrate. With time, this site will allow internet users access to thousands of hours of music, songs, and stories as well as rich visual documentation of Brittany's musical heritage. But it is not simply access to the wealth of music collected by Dastum volunteers since 1972 that will make this site of international interest, but also the wealth of information and up-to-date notice of events and resources such as new recordings, books and magazines. Of great importance will be access to the internet version of Dastum's Guide de la Musique Bretonne (see review which follows) which includes addresses for thousands of Breton musicians and organizations supporting Breton music. Unlike the print version, the internet listing can easily be kept up-to-date and augmented.

As presented in past issues of Bro Nevez, Dastum was founded in 1972 with the mission of collecting and making accessible recordings of Breton song, music, storytelling and oral traditions from all five departments of Brittany. Begun by a handful of young musicians, Dastum has continued to grow through the work of volunteers and has 7 active branches of operation and has worked to get funding necessary for a small permanent staff. Besides some 30,000 sound recordings and 2,000 lps, CDs and cassettes, the Dastum archives include today some 30,000 song and story texts and 1,500 books, as well as a collection of some 25,000 photos documenting everyday life in Brittany. Dastum insures not only the collection of a vast amount of resources, but also insures its maintenance, and organization so that materials are accessible to all who want to hear or see them. Additionally, the various Dastum branches organize a number of events to encourage the performance and teaching of music, and they create exhibits and publish books and richly documented CD recordings. Dastum is not just a dusty archives but an organization which has always intended to use collection as a means of insuring that the Breton heritage continues to be passed along to new generations.

The new web site greatly expands Dastum's outreach, although it does not replace the face-to-face interaction of musicians fostered by each Dastum branch.

Although I do not have the software necessary to tap into the sound accessible on the Dastum site, I have taken a quick tour of what is presented. As someone who is not yet really at ease with the electronic world of computers, I have to say first of all that the Dastum site is extremely easy to use and it was easy to move from one topic area to the next to get a taste of the wealth of information already available and planned for the future. Each main section of the site has quite a few more specifically targeted subject areas. In the "Infos-Actualités" section, you find recent and upcoming festivals, contests, workshops, exhibits, concerts, festoù-noz, and workshops. This seemed quite up-to-date, with short but good descriptions of events and practical information to pursue more detailed information. This section of the Dastum site also listed radio and TV programs, new CDs, and a summary of new books and magazines. In the "calendar of events" section one could do a search for a particular time period, type of event or geographic area.

Also in the "Info-Actualités" section you could find "classified ads"—instruments for sale, musicians for hire, etc. This section also presented a summary of the latest issue of Dastum's magazine, Musique Bretonne as well as information about events at each of the seven Dastum branches. A good "links" section included an excellent selection of Breton music sites.

Dastum On Line -- continued

A second main section of the Dastum web site will consist of the archive materials that can be consulted. Actual access to sound recordings as well as song texts and photos from the Dastum archives is still being prepared. A mechanism is in place so that one can search for particular performers, style of dance, song title, collector, language, geographic area, etc. in narrowing down the selection of thousands of hours of recordings that will be available.

As mentioned above, a section of the site devoted to "addresses" will provide the information now available in Dastum's new Guide de la Musique Bretonne. As the review below shows, this is a very comprehensive guide to thousands of musicians and musical resources in Brittany.

The Dastum web site also has a section called "Panorama" which is a presentation and introduction to various performers, musical instruments, song styles, types of events, etc. with sound samples and visual images. Thus, if you wanted to know the history of the "fest noz" this would be a place to get a well researched and good introduction. Or, if you wanted to get a sense of the unique styles found in a particular region of Brittany, this would also be the place to consult.

At the "Presentation -- Editions" section of the web site, Dastum presents its own work—history, mission and objectives, activities and classes at the seven Dastum "annexes," how and why collection work is done, what is involved in conservation and documentation of the materials collected and a description of the many excellent books and recordings Dastum has produced. In briefly exploring bits and pieces of each section of the Dastum web site, I was impressed by the clarity of the presentation and the wealth of information available....and this was without the wonderful addition of sound samples which will be an important feature throughout the site.

While there are many many web sites which present some aspect of Breton music and musicians, one has to sometimes wonder at the accuracy of information and in many cases, presentations are very superficial. Dastum has the advantage of having behind it solid and reliable scholarship which is certainly important in using the internet where you are at the mercy of anyone who can say anything—no matter how outrageous or inaccurate. If you want to truly understand Breton music and its roots in Brittany's vibrant oral tradition, explore the Dastum site. This will take you to the heart of the matter.

\* \* \*

## LOOKING FOR A BRETON MUSICIAN??

### Dastum's Guide to Breton Music can help you

Dastum. Guide de la Musique Bretonne—Musique-Chant-Conte. 3<sup>rd</sup> revised and augmented edition. 1999. 446 pages. ISBN 2-908604-06-X.

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

This is the third edition of a guide first published in 1990 (by Serge Moëlo) with a second edition in 1993 (by Goul'hen Malrieu). This third edition has no one author, but is the work of a team of Dastum staff who have greatly augmented the listings to reflect the tremendous wealth of music in Brittany.



## Dastum Guide to Music – continued

No one is better placed than Dastum for such a project. With its central office in Rennes, Dastum has six other branches spread throughout Brittany—in Nantes, Lannion, Carhaiz, Pontivy, Ploemeur, and Lesneven. The Rennes office contains the entire collection of archived recordings, texts and photos while each branch has a more regional focus. The branches are also active in organizing performances, exhibits, and the publication of special recordings and books.

Dastum's focus is on the oral tradition of Brittany, but this guide reflects a clear recognition that musicians are a creative lot who are usually not limited to one particular style of performance. It is worth presenting this extremely useful Guide to musicians and music in Brittany section by section. In contrast to the first two editions, this one lacks texts and a "dictionary" of terms (i.e., descriptions of the "fest noz," "treujenn gaol," "kan ha diskant," "plinn," etc. This type of basic presentation for those not familiar with Breton music was particularly rich in the first 1990 edition. But, there is much less need for such basic information today with a greater number of books on Breton music now available, web sites like the new Dastum site, and with the growth of wider public familiarity with traditional music. That's very good.

The Guide for 2000 is designed with a practical eye to organizing information for those looking for a particular musician or performance style—i.e., if you want to hire a musician for a fest noz or wedding, find a storyteller for a festival, or find out where to learn Breton dances, this is your Guide! And certainly this new guide makes it easy for musicians to contact each other as well. Each section has a short introduction to explain what is included in a particular listing, and sometimes to present some interesting comments on trends in Breton music.

The first 173 pages of the Guide contain an alphabetical listing of individual performers. Depending upon how they filled out Dastum's questionnaire, you can find a lot or relatively little information. In the most complete cases, you find a mailing address, telephone, fax and e-mail address. After most names an A or a P appears to designate "amateur" or "professional"—a distinction based on earning one's living rather than quality of music provided. The large number of P's indicate to me that Brittany is not a bad place to make your home if you are a musician or singer. Also noted is an individual's instrument(s) or vocal style (i.e., kan ha diskant, children's music, response style song or melodies from Upper or Lower Brittany). A "genre" is also noted to indicate general style—traditional, arrangements of traditional melodies or tunes, rock, jazz, composer of music or song texts, choral music, etc. Next one finds the type of performance event that musician or singer can do—fest noz, concerts, school workshop, weddings, cabarets, etc. Following this is an indication of a particular regional emphasis in the repertoire. If the individual is part of a group, the name of this group or groups is listed. Finally, a note is made if the musician teaches and with what organizations or school. For most individuals listed you have a nice capsule of information and the means to contact them.

The next basic listing includes 376 "groupes", and this provides a really interesting profile of the variety of ways musicians combine in small ensembles to arrange Breton music (and music from other parts of the world as well). Included in each entry in this section is the basic "genre"—traditional, maritime, arrangements of traditional (by far most often listed), choral, classical, etc. The type of event a group can do is also noted—fest noz, concert, cabaret, etc.—and the repertoire is also indicated—blues, rock, world music, Irish, Scottish, reggae, jazz, and jazz flamenco being a few of the specialties mentioned. A contact person is also noted with address or at least a phone number if not fax or e-mail. One can always find this person in the first section listing individuals for more complete information. For most groups, the names of the members and their instruments/vocal style is also listed. Finally the date the group was created is indicated, and it is interesting to find that of the total 376 groups at least 60 have been created in the past two years—a sign of the arrival of new young musicians on the scene as well

## Dastum Guide to Music - continued

as the ability of Bretons to create new groups. But dates also show an impressive number of groups that have ten or more years of experience.

The third section of the Guide—new to this edition—is a listing of smaller groupings of musicians and singers: duos, trios, biniou-bombarde couples, and paired singers (for dance music). While one might find little difference in profile between some of the duos and trios from the “groupes” in the previous section of the guide, this separation is intended to separate more traditional pairings of instruments and voices. Each entry in this section gives the names of the individuals in the duo or trio as well as contact information, genre, basic repertoire, etc. Further details are found by referring back to the listing of individuals in the first section of the book.

By page 270 of the Guide, we arrive at the listing for fifty storytellers and five associations which promote this oral tradition. Each listing provides the basic contact information as well as genre (traditional or composed stories, in Breton, Gallo or French) and performance event (veillées, school workshops, outdoor festivals, etc.)

The next section of the Guide includes eleven choral groups with a specific Breton repertoire, plus the name, town and Department for an addition seventeen who can be contacted via the cultural federation called Kendalc’h. For the first eleven choral groups the Guide includes the name of the President and/or Director as well as contact information.

If Dastum’s Guide to Breton Music were to include specific information on each bagad (nearly 90) and each “Cercle Celtique” (over 200), this book would no doubt need an additional hundred or more pages. If you consider that a bagad normally includes at least 20 musicians and a Cercle Celtique probably includes at least as many dancers and a half-dozen musicians, then listing all these individuals would indeed be a challenge. Instead the reader is referred to the three organizations which oversee these groups—Bodadeg ar Sonerion for the bagadoù, and Kendalc’h and War’l Leur for the Cercles (and information about these federations is found later in the Guide). The bagadoù are listed by category—1 through 6 (1 being the highest level achieved through competitions). The Cercles Celtiques are broken down by their affiliation with either Kendalc’h or War’l Leur and then listed by Department with the name and city of the Cercle.

The next section to the Guide includes 34 “luthiers” or musical instrument makers. Besides the name and contact information of the maker, each entry includes a good listing of the instruments made or repaired by the maker.

For those of a scholarly bent, the next section is of great interest, including “chercheurs” and “collecteurs.” Often musicians themselves, these are 70 individuals and 12 organizations who are experts or resource centers for various topics—for example, traditional song of a specific region, particular musical instruments, children’s traditions, or a particular historical period. So that these scholars and resource centers can be contacted, you find an address, telephone/fax and e-mail information as well as some specific information on the particular topic of expertise. Reference to any affiliation with a particular institution is often included for the individuals listed.

Of a practical nature for those more interested in organizing a concert or seeking a recording studio is the following section listing “sonorisateurs”—34 companies, studios, and individuals who do all the technical work to amplify or record music.

## Dastum Guide to Music – continued

I cannot begin to underline the important role associations, cultural centers and Breton music schools have played in promoting the renaissance of Breton music and dance. Dastum's Guide includes 145 such institutions—large and small. Now, when someone asks me where they can find a class to learn bombarde or dance, I can provide a good set of leads for them to follow. Each entry in this section provides an idea of the mission and activities of the organization, its full address and contact staff, and particular classes, activities or publications it produces. For music schools, one can often find the names of teachers and an indication of the timing of classes. While this is an extremely practical listing for those seeking classes or basic information, it is also a portrait of the immense amount of work done to support and promote Breton music and culture by grass roots, non-profit organizations in Brittany who often begin or operate through volunteer efforts.

Those travelling to Brittany will find the next section of the Guide to be invaluable in planning ahead—a description of 65 major (annual) festivals, music contests, and concert series. Each entry provides a description of the focus of the festival (particular instrument or dance style featured for example) which is supplemented by information on the event's "content"—workshops, contests, concerts, and music styles to be found. A note on the "cultures represented" shows just how international many festivals can be even if they center on the Breton tradition. Listings also give dates to be expected, the duration of the festival (ranging from one to ten days), the organization sponsoring it, contact names and addresses, and location.

While the next section of the Guide may not be helpful to those of us on this side of the Atlantic Ocean, it is extremely helpful for those looking for radio and TV programming for Breton music, language and culture more generally. Nineteen radio stations are described and two television stations are presented (showing how extremely limited TV programming remains for now). For the radio stations an address and name of a contact person is given as well as the number to find the station on your radio dial. The geographic range for the station is noted (and, for the most part, we are looking at a relatively local broadcast range). Of most interest is a description of the specific program, its broadcast time, and content.

For those who prefer the print media, the next section includes a listing of 28 magazines—those specializing in music, those which are more general but regularly include articles about music or CD reviews, and those published by specific cultural organizations. The information in this listing includes addresses, but little more. I suspect this is the fault of editors—like me—who failed to provide information to Dastum! Bro Nevez is included in this listing and I thank Dastum for keeping us in the Guide despite my lack of communication.

While very short (including just a contact name and address), a listing of 15 publishers is found in the next section. This would be of interest to authors or readers in search of reading material or a publishing house. Complementing this is a listing of 11 recording labels which note the musicians produced by the label in addition to basic contact information.

A listing of less use to foreigners, but valuable to musicians is the next section on "official structures"—universities or state-recognized music associations or institutions which might be potential sources for information or even financial support for Breton cultural projects.

In the last 70 pages of Dastum's Guide you find various indexes which help locate information more easily than reading through the listings in each section. For example, some 360 bombarde players can be found in the Guide, but not all will be located in the listing of paired "sonneurs de couple." So, the



Dastum Guide to Music – continued

first index you find lists musicians alphabetically by instruments, so you can find bombarde players or guitar, accordion, clarinet or bass players, as well as performers of kan ha diskan or those who specialize in the melodies of Vannetais Brittany. To get the details you simply find the name in the first section of the book which lists individual musicians. The second index lists musicians by Department, including some found outside of Brittany. There is also a very useful index of teachers by instrument or vocal style they teach which notes the particular school or cultural center where they teach or the fact that they can teach individuals one-on-one. Teachers are also listed by Department. Another index lists associations, cultural centers, and music schools by Department, and Festivals are indexed both by Department and by the month in which they take place.

Perhaps you did not want to hear all the details of the rich content of Dastum's new Guide to Breton Music, but if you are interested in Breton music and are seeking information, this will surely set you on the right path. While the internet version on Dastum's web site will be especially valuable in updating changing addresses, I have enjoyed paging through the print version to get a portrait of the music scene in Brittany today. And when I want an address I will find it faster to pull this wonderful book of the shelf than to crank up my computer.

Congratulations to Dastum for an invaluable tool for both musicians and those who love Breton music.

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## A NEW BOOK ABOUT ANATOLE LE BRAZ

Yann-Ber Piriou. Au-delà de la légende... Anatole Le Braz. Terre de Brume/Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 1999. 364 pages. ISBN 2-84362-063-5.

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

I always had the idea in my head that Anatole Le Braz was merely a collector of folktales and an author of some gentle books about the quaint customs of 19<sup>th</sup> century Breton peasants. I knew from my research of 19<sup>th</sup> century travel literature about Brittany that he was widely read in England and America at the turn of the century. Sometimes one could recognize bits of his work in travel accounts by authors who tried to include colorful and exotic customs in their writing even if they might not have witnessed them first-hand. And Le Braz was a good friend of two women writers of the early twentieth century: the American Anne Mosher and the Englishwoman Frances M. Gostling. He wrote the introductions for Mosher's The Spell of Brittany, published in 1920, and Gostling's The Bretons at Home, published in 1909. Frances Gostling translated two of his books into English: The Land of Pardons in 1906 and The Night of Fires and Other Breton Studies in 1912.

These books as well as other short articles in popular magazines of the day were the means by which many English language readers learned about Brittany. But Anatole Le Braz was also a prolific public speaker, making seven trips to the U.S. between 1906 and 1920 to go on lecture tours for the Alliance Française and to teach. His very popular lectures introduced Brittany to thousands of Americans in that period. The Alliance Française was founded in 1883 to propagate French language and letters abroad, and Le Braz had no difficulty focusing his lectures specifically on just one part of France—Brittany—and in particular on Breton literary figures and folklore.



Anatole Le Braz – continued

Yann-Ber Piriou's biographical presentation of Le Braz reveals that this man was much more than a personable folklorist and lecturer. The book strings together excerpts from the vast correspondence Le Braz kept with his family, friends and colleagues, and draws from a vast wealth of documents such as the notebooks Le Braz kept himself. This gives a wonderful sense of Le Braz's personality and spirit of open-minded exploration. Not only was Le Braz a prolific reader, but he traveled extensively. In his work collecting songs and folktales, Le Braz must have become familiar with most of Lower Brittany and certainly knew every little byway of the Tregor where his family was from and where he made one of his homes: the village of Port Blanc on the northern coast. He saw more of the U.S. in his seven trips (which often lasted five or six months) than most Americans ever see, and he also traveled throughout Europe and to Egypt. He was a natural observer and chronicled some of the nastier sides of what he found in America—child labor in cigarette factories in Pittsburgh, the Chicago stock yards, segregation and lynchings of African Americans in the South, and the poor treatment of Native Americans. But he also liked America and felt at home here.

In his travels Anatole Le Braz enjoyed meeting people and he was a collector of tales at all times—a good listener who truly enjoyed and appreciated the tales and songs of rural Brittany and who enjoyed hanging out with artists and writers in Paris and Rennes (where he taught at the university). In Piriou's presentation of Le Braz, one also meets his large family and you suffer through a number of tragic losses for Le Braz—he loses ten family members including his father and a very close sister in a shipwreck, he loses his first wife in 1906 and his son never returns from service in World War I. But, Le Braz makes many new friends in all his travels—including his second and third wives—both Americans.

While this book gives a very personal look at Le Braz as a family man and world traveler, it also places him in the context of a very interesting period in Breton history where he crosses paths with nearly every writer, scholar, and artist of Brittany. In his collection of tales and songs, he works with François-Marie Luzel, and his studies and university teachings bring him into close contact with a number of famous Breton scholars and activists of the day: Charles le Goffic, Maxime Maufra, Fañch Gourvil, Jules Gros, Emile Masson, and François Vallée, to name a few. Later in his life he will meet the next generation of militants and intellectuals who are part of Seiz Breur and the launching of the important literary movement around Gwalarn. And in his travels he also meets some pretty interesting people in Ireland—members of the Gaelic League, writers like John Millington Synge, and Douglas Hyde. This is a very interesting period in Irish history which Le Braz follows very closely.

The portrait of Le Braz as a Breton militant is a complex one, and I wished I had boned up a bit on the history of the Breton Movement before reading this book. He was very much a Republican with no desire to see Breton independence. Yet, with le Goffic he founded the Union Régionaliste Bretonne in 1898 which pushed for decentralization in France. Later he would distance himself from this Union because of its inactivity and what he felt was a preoccupation with a dead past. While Le Braz loved old tales and songs, he was definitely a forward-looking man. He did not always agree with other militants of his time, but was always pleased to see younger Bretons taking action to fight for Brittany in any way, and he read every new magazine that was created—especially those which offered a new medium for the Breton language. Le Braz felt that all children should learn to speak French, but he also felt strongly that Breton should be taught in the schools of Lower Brittany so that children could learn to use it as a modern language and express themselves as eloquently as the singers of gwerzioù he had met. He had no problem with the idea of bilingualism in the schools.

This book is not easy to read and I would recommend that you first read up on the history of the Breton Movement to get familiar with the key players during this period. Three chronologies in the back of the book help very much in keeping track of dates: one is focused on events in Le Braz's life (1859-1926), another lists his publications (1887-1928), and the third presents key events of the period (1852-1925). While this book gives a very personal picture of Anatole Le Braz, it also presents a very interesting picture of the Breton Movement of the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

Anatole le Braz - continued

## ANOTHER PORTRAIT OF ANATOLE LE BRAZ

From time to time in the pages of Bro Nevez I have included excerpts from travel writers of the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> Century. These often include interesting observations of countryside and people of Brittany at a particular period of time. They are also usually rather stereotypical in their depictions and contain all the prejudices of their time period and subjective views of their authors. The following is a combination of a travel account and interview with Anatole Le Braz. In view of the biography reviewed above I thought it would be interesting to reprint this article from 1909 which shows well his views that the Breton language was not just an old language for folktales and song, but one that should serve to express a modern people. (Spellings are those of the original article).

### M. ANATOLE LE BRAZ AND THE AWAKENING OF BRITTANY

Ernest Rhys (*The Contemporary Review*, Vol. 95, March 1909)

*We took boat for St. Malo one autumn evening after running through a gusty rain-storm on the way from London, that promised a bad crossing. But as we steamed down Southampton Water the wind dropped with the sun, the sun set in splendour, and before we went cast the segment of a double rainbow on the southern clouds. The moonrise that followed as we turned the corner of the Isle of Wight made the Needles look like new-cut marble. This experience was, had we known it, a first sign of the rare brilliancies we were to see afterwards on the Trégorrois coast; but we had set out expecting the proverbial grisaille of the country, and with it a people still wrapped in the haze of the Middle Ages. We thought to find in the Bretons the last conservatives of France, and it was the end of our pilgrimage to go and see M. Anatole Le Braz, author of "Le Pays des Pardons," one of the finest and subtlest interpreters their fantasy and their Celtic conservatism have had in our time. The result of our impressions of the country, its weathers and its people, was to confirm what was once said by a sentimental traveller, that Brittany was "the country of the unforeseen." We found brilliant azure skies, fair seas and cloudless suns, where we had expected mists, at Gaudet and Port Blanc; and surprised the echoes of the new spirit in the remotest fishing hamlets and the drowsiest farmhouse kitchens that we penetrated.*

*That night we slept in an old inn at Guingamp. It is a town of extreme peace and respectability now; but it has ballad-making memories, and one imagines the stain of the red hand lingers on some of its quiet doorposts, and a smell of fire mixes with the smell of the bark it collects for tanning. The shadow of that half-fabulous captain of war, Dénombra, lurks in the doorway of its most beautiful church, Notre Dame de Bon-Secours. The old Breton ballad of the siege of Guingamp makes him say as he enters the church, after dooming the young girls of the town he has taken to worse than death:*

*"Oh, Holy Marie, be content!  
We'll make thy chapel here our stable!  
Thy sacristy, our wine-cellar!  
Thine altar-top, our kitchen table."*

*These memories send one searching the shops for the old Breton books and ballad-sheets that might serve to recall them. But we could not get a single book in Breton; although copies of M. le Braz's "Pays des Pardons," and M. le Goffic's "L'Ame Bretonne," recalled the voice, distinctive and individual, with which Brittany is uttering herself to-day at the barriers of France. We got copies of three papers, too, Ar Bobl, the Nouvellists de Bretagne, and the Réveil, the last a socialist organ conducted with immense spirit by Dr. Paul Boyer, at St. Brieuc. Now St. Brieuc used to be, and still is, a publishing centre of Breton literature; and as I read the Réveil*

Anatole Le Braz - continued

*in the street of Guingamp, the effect was rather as if the dread captain Dénombra himself had come to life there, and was reciting his fierce litany at the door of the great church.*

*One Boyerist sentence in the Réveil struck upon our ears with the disturbing effect of a pistol shot. It ran: "C'est pour s'affranchir d'une religion trop mélancolique que le breton boit et devient alcoolique." The counterpart to this was the speech of a fisherman, Yves B\_\_\_\_, in whose boat we were sailing one day on the Gaudet estuary. As we sailed, we heard a bell chime from the church above. G. asked him if he went to mass there?*

*"No; he went to the larger one at Ploulech."*

*"Was not his religion a great solace to him, now that his youth was gone like the sardines, and old age and rheumatism pressed hard on his bones?"*

*"Yes" said he. "It helped pass the time."*

*"But was it not a comfort to know that his devotion now would win him eternal blessedness in the world to come?"*

*"No" said he again with a laugh, as he brought the boat's head round, "no great comfort!"*

*"What, no comfort in the sure sense of a world to come? What was to be there after this life?"*

*"Nothing! After?—c'est fini. Voilà tout!"*

## II

*The other side of the medal was such a scene as you may see any feast day or at any Pardon in Brittany. We were at St. Michel-en-grève on the day of the Feast of the Assumption—a Saturday. After a brilliant but insecure morning the day turned to rain half an hour before the time for the procession, which had eventually to be given up. But the occasion was only made more impressive by that mistimed deluge. The church was crowded inside and out by the multitude, chiefly women, many of whom knelt in the rain, their faces full of rapture and adoration. The singing of the service within, now sweet, now harsh, seemed to answer the uncomfortable drip of the rain and the clatter of sabots without as some late worshippers arrived; but the effect of the whole function was profound.*

*At Gaudet we lived for a time the everyday life of the people. We had to forage for our own provisions, buy our own faggots, and live on the plainest fare: loaves as big as boulders, home-fed bacon, potatoes, cabbage, mackerel and "andouilles." The last, a highly composite kind of Breton sausage, we risked eating in spite of the ballad that we had heard sung of how a priest at Lannion was poisoned by one.*

*During our stay there we learnt to know and love well that one stretch of country and its people in all their contradictory moods, in their poverty, hospitality, piety, superstition, economic starvation and chronic alcoholism. We did not end by agreeing with Dr. Boyer that the latter grew out of their melancholy religion; it was the result of their want of nourishment, their anaemia, and their stunted lives and stunted development. But everywhere we became aware of the change, too, that was going on silently in their midst.*

*After Gaudet, Port Blanc. There we had the good fortune of being able to talk of the two Brittanys, old and new, with more than one native interpreter. One of them was the sociologist, socialist and anti-militarist, M. Hamon, whose house bears the strange name of Ty-y-Diaul ("The Devil's House"—a name first given it by the country people in horror of the owner's opinions, and then ironically adopted by him) But M. Hamon, who has with his*



Anatole Le Braz -- continued

wife lately been translating Mr. George Bernard Shaw's plays into French, is too much of an internationalist to feel much belief in any national future Brittany may have. Her future is France's future, and France's future is Europe's, and Europe's is that of the United States of the world.

With M. Anatole le Braz it is another take. A poet and a romancist, he has been one of the intellectual leaders of young Brittany now for many years past. He has loved her in her strength and in her weakness, has voiced her emotions, and found the artistic terms in which to express them. He is a professor of the University of Rennes, was first president of the Breton Regionalist circle, and in the South was made an associate of the Provençal Fibrige by M. Mistral and his colleagues. His books have shown him tender to the old tradition, loving with a kind of idolatry the forest countryside where he was born, near Duallt, and his later "patrie d'élection" as he has called it, which lies around Port Blanc on the Trégorrois coast, where we found him.

### III

At Port Blanc, it may be said, the shifting lights and shades of Breton life, as it is to be seen to-day, are arrested at a most tell-tale angle. Some twelve or fourteen years ago M. le Braz drew a sketch of the place (in his "Funerailles d'Été"), with its village street abutting on the beach, its two or three inns, and its vagarious paths leading off to Penvenan, or to Paradise, as its poorest district is called. Since then, it has grown; the old hostelry beloved of Breton painters and writers, the "Hôtel des Roches Grises," has built on additional rooms, and a new hotel and other alarming improvements have appeared on the "plage." Worst sign of all, the "Pardon" of Port Blanc, which takes place on September 8<sup>th</sup>, and which we saw last autumn, is in danger of being transformed from the simple religious function it used to be into a kind of tourists' fête. But these changes are mainly on the surface; the real character of this Trégorrois fisherman's port is untouched. As for its seaward environs, its magic Sept Isles to the north-west and its isle of St. Gildas opposite and all its intimate archipelago—those look to-day in a blue September calm just as they did when Gildas lived, and will so look, let us trust, to the end of time.

One cannot talk to M. le Braz about Port Blanc without finding that he has a quite special accent in speaking of it. You may chance to talk to him on questions of art and letters, or on men and affairs in France, and he will answer you according to the tune you happen to set; but talk to him on his hopes and fears for Brittany, and it is another matter. Then his theme holds him and drives him, with a vehemence that leaves you little surprised if the old Catholic party, who hate change and wish to see Brittany kept close, try to prevent their students from attending his classes at Rennes.

The whole circle of politics there may be said to turn on a tell-tale pivot—the language question. Why has the party whom one may venture to call the "New Bretons," but who fondly love the old tongue, been driven out of the camp? Why is it that Breton is not used anywhere, as it ought to be, in the schools of Bretagne Bretonnante, to teach the children the right use of their mother-wits and their other tongue of France?

"Because," said M. le Braz, "the ostensible champions of the Breton language hold it to be that of a people that, alone in the parliament of nations, does not change or grow, but is to remain the same for ever. They forget that a living race can only exist under conditions of change, and so for them, most unluckily, Breton has become an instrument of reaction. These, too, are the very classes who have an interest in keeping the Breton people as they are: first, the nobles, who possess the land; then the older priests, who mistaken determination it is that the race should not develop. These are the reactionaries who, being out of sympathy with the whole forward movement here and abroad, would put Breton into an eighteenth-century mould, and bind it there. Needless to say, the younger Breton Catholics do not accept this doctrine; the then the younger priest, who has ideas in Brittany, is under a ban. Malheur au prêtre qui se cultive!"



Anatole Le Braz -- continued

"See now," continued M. le Braz, "what is happening. This noble and admirable tongue of ours, that might be an instrument of culture and serve to develop the soul of the Breton people after its own genius, is in danger of being punished by the same ostracism as the dead party that has espoused it. And the men who are men of the new generation, men of progress who wish that Breton people should march, live and fulfil its destiny according to its proper temperament and its special gifts—they are prevented from associating themselves with the language movement, because the very soul of it has been tied to a dead body. For ours is an idealistic people. Capable of living for an idea, and of dying for it; designed, therefore, to be the soldiers of the ideal in a civilization that is too material. What a fatal overtaking is it that the natural instrument of this people should be forbidden by its present interested partisans—that 'dead party' which cares only for a past that is dead—to fill its true rôle, the rôle of every living tongue, to be the vehicle of the real life of the people. As it is, these reactionaries only use the Breton tongue for putting the Breton people to sleep among the shadows, or even among the lies of the past. The latter are the things that a factitious romanticism may insist upon, but they are none the less historically false. Beside these false shadows of a shade, there are those things that were once really alive and operative, but have the misfortune of being like the horse of Roland—"

"The horse of Roland?"

"Precisely! Which was dead! . . . Well, there you see the position of the New Bretons who wish to deliver Brittany from her sleep of centuries, and who cannot join hands with those who wish to keep her still asleep. The New Bretons would love to see their noble mother-tongue expressing the hopes and aspirations and troubles of the people, as these were expressed once in the 'Gwerziou'—the true 'Gwerziou'—not those polished and beautified and falsified by a Villemarqué. He, it is fair to say, was working according to his lights, for he wrote in the glamour of the old Romantic movement, and was influenced by Macpherson. But you must not turn to him for the true 'Gwerziou'; turn instead to the unsophisticated originals, as you have them collected by M. Luzel, and you will see how the people poured out their very souls, yes—all their sad lives and histories, in them. And what is that history? The history of the oppression they have had to bear from the ancestors of the very men who to-day would drag them back to the same past, and which these men delude them by calling the good old times! It is of a part with the rest of this reactionary programme to insist upon the manufacture of a false Brittany, to please the tourists and deceive and divert the holiday public. The upholders of this black flag do not know, however, the real spirit of the people, nor that we have come to the verge of a great change."

"You mean that Brittany too is going to achieve her revolution?"

"I mean that for nearly twelve centuries," said he, "Brittany has been in bonds, and if the sentiment of justice has not been killed in her children, it is because this sentiment is indestructible in noble souls. During all these years this people has known so little justice from men, that it has been obliged to create for itself the remarkable cult of 'Saint Yves de la Verité.' They have found no true judge on earth, and have looked for one in heaven and in a man of their own blood. They have said to him: 'Set the right there, where it is; and the wrong there, where it is,' calling down even death on themselves should they be on the side of the wrong; and in this saying of theirs, you will agree, is involved the finest conception of justice ever formed by man. For all these ages the Bretons have suffered. Now they begin to realize there should be justice for them on earth; they who have so long been famished begin to clamour at last for the bread of justice, and refuse to wait any longer. . . ."

"In another twenty years, do you know what the Breton people, who still tremble at the recollection of the wrongs of the past will be doing? They will be marching straight for Socialism. Who is the most powerful and terrible of the Parisian socialists? M. Hervé, a pure Breton. The Bretons, it is true, will be socialists of a particular pattern. They will be, if one may use the paradox, individualist-socialists, insisting upon the rights of the individual in the common law of all. They will, moreover, be 'socialists mystiques,' because the true Breton cannot have any conception, whatever it may be—literary, social, political—unless it be quickened by his religion."

Anatole Le Braz -- continued

*"You see, at length, what our real predicament is today, and what difficulties there are for the Bretons who wish to see their fellow countrymen using their national inheritance and their ancient tongue to work out their modern development—not to hamper and delay it. For what is wanted is to help this race, still primitive, to evolve itself freely and fully. That can only be done by means of an individual apostolate, which shall reach and Evangeline the people and the individual souls, one by one."*

*"But will not that be a very slow process?"*

*"Slow no doubt, but it has the economic change working with it all the while. That is at the root of the matter here, as it is in Ireland, whose plight is so very much like Brittany's. What the new Catholic movement may be in Ireland I do not know; but here one of the significant things is that the young priests are tending to become reformers too."*

*"And yet it is true that the clerical authorities have taken away the students from your classes at Rennes?"*

*"Alas, yes! But they cannot stop these students from thinking. I tell you we bring new ideas to our new generation. The day has begun for Brittany, and you cannot hold the day back. St. Yves de la Verité proclaimed it formerly' and now the transformation and the new deliverance that he in his own day foretold, are going on slowly, but irresistibly."*

#### IV

*As we left the door of M. le Braz's house at Port Blanc that evening, we saw the star of St. Yves shine very bright in the night-sky. Brittany resisted the French Revolution long ago with a Chouan fury; her own revolution is still to come. Rather, if M. le Braz is right, it has already begun. Let us hope with him it will achieve the new, without losing what is good in the old Celtic order.*

## MUSIC--NEW RECORDINGS FROM BRITTANY

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

**Albert Poulain. *Y'a rien de plus charmant***  
Tradition Vivante de Bretagne 12. Dastum DAS 136.  
1999. 73'51. 60 page booklet.

Albert Poulain! What a wonderful surprise to receive this new CD devoted to one of my heroes and favorite Breton singers. But calling Albert Poulain just a singer is a terrible misrepresentation. He is many things—besides a passionate singer, he is a remarkable storyteller and “*raconteur*” of bits of wisdom absorbed from the oral tradition of Gallo Brittany, and in particular his native area of Pipriac. Albert Poulain is also an artist and expert on the details of rural architecture—from farmhouses and stone walls, to wells, fountains, old bake ovens, road-side crosses and chapels. In short he is a fine observer and chronicler of every detail of the rural culture in which he lives—and most importantly he is an active force in passing along the wisdom and beauty of oral traditions he has gathered from masters for the past forty years.

Like many Bretons—whether from the Gallo speaking heritage of eastern Brittany or the Breton-language heritage of the west—Albert Poulain became fully conscious of his Breton heritage while he lived in Paris for five years. When he moved back to Brittany he saw clearly that the treasures of the oral tradition of Gallo Brittany were still very much alive, but hidden by Bretons who had been convinced that these were old fashioned and worthless. Just as beautiful old furniture was being sold and replaced by Formica, old songs and stories were being moth-balled. While others might shrug and accept the inevitable dominance of TV and American style cultural standardization, Albert took action.

In 1959 he began collection work, lugging a huge and heavy tape recorder which cost him the equivalent of quite a few months of salary. Albert Poulain was a pioneer in collecting the rich oral tradition of Gallo Brittany (and between 1959 and the 1990s he collected some 1,500 songs). But this was not an end in itself. Collecting was a means of encouraging people to sing and tell stories and to dust off a hidden heritage and enjoy it.

Albert Poulain is not only a great singer and storyteller himself, but he is also a teacher and mentor who has inspired contemporaries and new generations of

singers and story-tellers who have not only done collection work but have created more and more occasions for performance. And I am grateful for the time he gave me when I was doing research in Brittany to help me get a glimpse of the richness of traditions in Gallo Brittany. My first introduction to Albert Poulain in November 1978 was a bit difficult. He barked and growled to the person trying to introduce me that he wanted no part of an American ethnologist studying Breton savages. But that wasn't my mission, so with some persuasion he agreed to meet with me. I don't recall the details of our conversation at his home in Pipriac. My French was still pretty rudimentary at that stage of my stay, so I don't think I had much success in describing my project to study “Breton identity.” Albert did most of the talking and I learned of his knowledge of and love for Brittany's architectural heritage as well as song when he showed me his boxes of old hinges, nails, and doorknobs. It was clear to me that I was in the presence of someone quite remarkable.

This CD has captured very well the unique and wonderful personality of Albert Poulain and his immense knowledge and talent. My congratulations to Charles Quimbert, Mathieu Hamon and Robert Bouthillier for a very fine job in collaboration with Albert Poulain himself to produce a fine visual and musical portrait.

While some twenty-five recordings of Albert Poulain are available on a variety of cassettes, CDs, and lps, this is the first recording to feature him and it must have been a major challenge to choose from hundreds of songs and stories in his repertoire. As the notes explain, a decision was made to focus on contemporary performance rather than a “historical” retrospective. When you have an artist who is still so active and in his prime as a performer, a “best of” recording can certainly wait until retirement. This CD does indeed take advantage of the power of live performances.

Included on the CD are ten melodies—especially the dramatic ballads called “*lamentables*” which make up a large part of Albert Poulain's vast repertoire. Well represented also are “*marches*”—one of my favorite genres found in both Eastern and Western Brittany in song and instrumental versions. Five marches are included here, recorded as people actually took a hike through the countryside—responding in chorus to

New Recordings -- continued

Albert Poulain's lead. I have never had the chance to go on one of these musical walks which are becoming more and more popular in Brittany, but the very non-military swing of Breton marches must make them extremely enjoyable. Just two dances (a *ridée* in 6 and a *pile menu*) are included on the CD -- reflective of the fact that such circle dances disappeared from the Pipriac area at the beginning of the century (although they are very much alive elsewhere). One rousing "chanson à table" is included -- recorded as people enjoyed themselves around a table -- no doubt one with good food and cider or wine. Two stories are included on the CD -- chosen for their short length (just 6 to 8 minutes). These give a flavor of the expressive power of Gallo and Albert's flair as a storyteller.

While the songs and stories on this CD give a nice sample of Albert Poulain's style, one gets a good sense of his humor and verbal talent in the notes he provides for each selection on the CD. These give quick portraits of the many singers from whom he learned his songs, and comment on an odd twist or unanswered question in a song text. As is always the case for CDs produced by Dastum, the accompanying documentation on this one is excellent. Nine pages of introduction for the 60-page booklet give an interesting and warm portrait of Albert Poulain and his work, as well as the process of making this CD. Each selection includes not only Albert Poulain's commentary, but the song text and reference to other versions found in the Laforte and Coirault-Delarue catalogs of traditional French song. A half dozen photos of Albert in action further brings him to life, and the inclusion of eight remarkably detailed drawings of doors, wells, and bake houses as well as a number of sketches of smaller architectural elements show just how fine an artist he is as well.

In just 74 minutes of sound and 60 pages of print and visual documentation, this CD succeeds very well in capturing the many sides of Albert Poulain. I am sure that anyone who has met this remarkable man will find that this CD does him justice, and those who have not had the pleasure of an encounter will meet a remarkable performer and champion of Gallo tradition.

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Nolùen Le Buhé. *Komz a Raer Din* --  
Sonennoù Bro Gwened/Songs from the  
Vannes Region. Coop Breizh CD 891. 1999. 49'41.

Nolùen le Buhé is of a new generation of singers who prove that traditional song remains of interest and meaning to young Bretons (she is just 27 years old). From a family of singers and musicians of Bro Gwened (Pays Vannetais), Nolùen has happily accepted her Breton language heritage and, like all great singers, is developing her own unique "sound." While there is a certain voice quality that characterizes Breton singers as a whole, there are also little things that allow one to recognize individuals the instant you hear them.

While Nolùen Le Buhé can be found on a few other CDs, this is her first solo CD and it features the Vannetais tradition with twelve songs. On five selections you hear the voice of two other women who seem to get no credit or mention anywhere on the CD, although there are two small photos that might intend to give one a hint of their identity. I recognized the photo and voice of Annie Ebrel for the dance "an dro" and for a march. In three other songs a second (and in one case third?) voice doubles with Nolùen and alternates in leading the song. My wild guess is that this is Sophie le Hunsec, but I do not know her voice as well as that of Annie Ebrel.

In most selections Nolùen is solo -- and unaccompanied by any instrument. Fifty minutes of a single voice might seem tedious, but Nolùen has the power of voice to keep you listening to songs in Vannetais Breton which depict every possible pitfall of love and marriage (falling in love with men you can't have, marrying a drunkard, having children before marriage, etc.).

Notes to the CD include a short introduction to Nolùen by Erik Marchand as well as texts in the original Breton and French translation for all the songs, with a short summary in English. While aesthetically pretty in print style and layout, the very pale grey print on a grey background is extremely difficult to read -- a challenge heightened by the small size of the print for me.

But no one buys a CD for the notes! Some young men may buy this CD based on Nolùen's photo alone which is found on the back, but anyone who loves traditional song will enjoy the CD for her great voice and the wonderful songs from Bro Gwened.



## New Recordings – continued

Frédérique Lory. Instruments du Diable, Musique des Anges – Tableaux sonores de Bretagne. Dastum. DAS 132. 1999. 45'25.

This CD is a sound-scape evoking the role of bagpipes and bombardes in Breton society from medieval times to the present. That sounds like a very ambitious thing to do with just a 45-minute CD, but the composer Frédéric Lory had a bit more to work with in creating the music on this CD. In fact, he was commissioned to compose music to accompany a museum exhibit created by Dastum in partnership with museum curators featuring photos of bagpipes and bombardes as depicted in architectural details and furniture carvings and in other depictions of the place of the piper in Breton society. This exhibit has been at the Musée de la Cohue in Vannes since June and is called *Instruments du Diable, Musique des Anges* (*Instruments of the Devil, Music of Angels*).

The exhibit is made up of four major spaces including a presentation of the instruments themselves, the depiction of bagpipes and oboes/bombardes in religious architecture, the presentation of these instruments as a part of rural village life, and finally more contemporary representations of these instruments. With such a rich visual presentation of these instruments, having the usual silence of a museum seemed unthinkable. And having heard this CD, I can certainly imagine how such music would have greatly enhanced a visit to the exhibit.

Rather than set pieces with clear beginnings and ends, the composition by Lory is a stream of sounds – not only music, but the noise of a village market place, including animals. I am reminded of Roland Becker's 1995 CD "*Jour de Fête et Fête de Nuit*" (see Bro Nevez 57, Feb. 1996) which had the same remarkable power (and intent) to evoke a visual image of a time and place in Brittany. This is a CD you can best enjoy by sitting back, closing your eyes, and letting your imagination go.

Lory's composition weaves a number of traditional songs and dances into new compositions and less-musical sounds of activity and animals. Lory succeeds quite well in keeping your interest as sounds shift from vocal to instrumental and to animals and birds, and credit must be given to the work of Tanguy Le Doré for

the more technical side of recording and mixing sounds. The inclusion of excellent musicians certainly doesn't hurt. The choral group Colortalea provides a medieval feel, and one also hears voices of Marthe Vassalo, Agnès Brosset and François Cornet with bits of traditional song. Bombarde is provided by Georges Bothua and Philippe Le Strat, and Didier Durassier plays biniou and veuze. Iltrud le Doré provides percussion and flutes and Antonin Volson plays drum. Composer Frédérique Lory plays organ. A more modern electronic style to close the CD reminds one that bagpipes and bombardes are thoroughly modern instruments.

There are unfortunately almost no notes with the CD, and I am sure it could be best appreciated after having actually viewed the exhibit where the rich images displayed would be in one's mind. But, even on it's own the music is provocative and enjoyable.

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Melaine Favennec. Nos îles nos amours. L'OZ Production. L'OZ 27. 1999. 43'48

Melaine Favennec is a singer and a songwriter ... or if one prefers, a poet who sets words to music. In contrast to the CDs reviewed above, this is not "traditional" music, but it is certainly Breton. The title to the CD notes that its theme is islands and love, and indeed if one had to choose just two words to describe the theme of the songs on this CD, islands and love would be the ones that work best. The texts composed and sung by Melaine Favennec describe some of the many islands off Brittany's shores and their changing character by night and day, in calm and rough seas, and in good and bad weather. The changing moods that come with love are also evoked in the complex poems (in French).

While I have to work pretty hard to enjoy poetry – especially in another language that I have yet to fully master – the musical setting of Favennec's song and his expressive and warm voice make it easy to enjoy the mood of each song, whether one grasps the full meaning of the words of each text. The musical accompaniment works extremely well to support the different rhythms of each text. Instruments used include electric and acoustic guitars, keyboard, bass and percussion as well as a string quartet. Dan ar Braz

## New Recordings – continued

not only provides guitar work for the CD but also served as the artistic director and one of the arrangers for the music which is composed by Melaine Favennec (except for one selection by ar Braz). The overall feel to the CD is calm and reflective, but these songs and their performance also have a definite musical swing and passion. Each of the eleven song texts has its own character and phrasing which is matched well in the rhythm of the music.

Those who enjoy song for the power of words and for the way a good singer can play with those words will enjoy this new recording by one of Brittany's best songwriters. Melaine Favennec is no newcomer to the Breton music scene, and his ability to bring out the fullest poetic power of song is evident on this CD.

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### Bretagne/Corse—Polyphonies corses et chants bretons. Coop Breizh CD 894. 2000. 40'27.

Here's a wonderful selection of traditional unaccompanied vocal music of both Brittany and Corsica, contrasting the unison character of Breton song with the rich polyphony of Corsica. This CD provides a very nice representation of 14 groups and singers in various combinations.

For Corsica you have seven groups of men, each with its own character and distinctive style: Chjami Aghjalesi, Surghjenti, Canta u Populu Corsu, Sinqui Sò, Confrérie de St. Jean-Baptiste de Furiani, Alte Voce. For Brittany you have a bit more diversity – and the presence of women! Don't women sing in Corsica? Representing Breton traditional song are: Annie Ebrel with a solo ballad ("Robardig"); Kanerien Pleuigner, a Vannetais Breton choir of men who sing in unison; Colortalea, a women's choir who recreate the Kyrie from the 15<sup>th</sup> century "Messe de Kenascleden"; Eugénie Goadec and Louise Ebrel with kan ha diskan for a gavotte; Yann Fañch Kemener and Valentine Colleter with kan ha diskan for a gavotte; Marié-Laurence Fustec and Brigitte Le Corre with kan ha diskan for a plinn; and Brou-Hamon-Quimbert (the only Gallos represented) with a song in French.

This CD seems to be directed to an audience who wants to enjoy the sound of voices, but who has no desire to understand anything about the songs or their content. The notes give only a short introduction to the

performers, sometimes not even giving their names, as in the case for the kan ha diskan of Eugénie Goadec with her daughter Louise Ebrel who is mentioned only as the daughter Louise who got Eugénie singing again in public in recent years. It seems peculiar to me that the notes would not identify Brou-Hamon-Quimbert as Roland Brou, Mathieu Hamon and Charles Quimbert. No individual names are given for the Corsican groups. Song titles are listed only on the back of the CD case, and there is little in the notes to indicate what a song is about. A very short summery would have been interesting.

What is perhaps most amazing about the CD and its notes is that there is no mention whatsoever as to the source of the recordings – and they are all drawn from previously produced CDs. It is not unusual for a compilation to include previously released selections from a variety of CDs, and this is a good way to introduce new listeners to a variety of artists. I have never seen such a compilation that did not include at least a title of the CD from which a selection is drawn so that those who enjoy a particular performer can find more! There is no clue to those who might be discovering the artists on this CD for the first time, that they have ever recorded anything before. But perhaps in this age of the internet it is assumed that all the performers have web pages and those listening to the CD will rush to their computers to get more information.

The lack of helpful notes aside, this is a lovely collection of beautiful and interesting voices.

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### Didier Squiban. Concert – Lorient. L'Oz Production L'OZ 28. 2000. 57'42

Fans of Didier Squiban will welcome yet another recording of him – this one the live solo piano performance at the Festival Interceltique de Lorient on August 9, 1999. Included are six "Variations" on Breton tunes and Squiban's compositions, ranging from 4 to 17 minutes, and an encore. After so many recordings – solo or with singer Yann Fañch Kemener – I thought this would be a bit "old news." But, I was surprised by the newness of these arrangements where only occasionally I recognized bits of tunes he has performed in the past. The long "rambling" variations give Squiban the opportunity to play around, and there is a

## New Recordings - continued

free and calm feeling to the style overall. But, there are jazzy moments and the music does not serve well as "background" music. The music demands more attention than that, and you will find that you are drawn into the performance. This is a CD to sit back and enjoy.

For more information about Didier Squiban and his other recordings see Bro Nevez 54 (May 1995), 62 (May 1997), 65 (Feb. 1998), 69 (Feb. 1999) and 70 (May 1999).

## HEARD OF BUT NOT HEARD ...

*Some more recordings from Dastum*

Jean Coateval. Dañs tro Menez Arre. Dastrum Kreiz Breizh 03. 1999.

Jean Coateval is no longer with us, but in the past few decades he has had a considerable influence on younger musicians. This accordion player was a master of the gavotte and this recording includes gavottes recorded live or in a studio between 1969 and 1995.

Dastum Bro Ereg/Bugale Melrand. A pep tu d'er Blañoeh -- Chants traditionnels en pays de Melrand, Guern, Pluméliau, Baud, Bubry. Tradition Vivante de Bretagne 10. Dastum, DAS 134. 1999.

This CD includes six traditional Vannetais singers: André Malardé, André Drumel, Jo Le Sergent, Pierre Nignol, Marcel Jaffré and Claude Le Gallic. They perform 18 songs for a total of 75 minutes. Ballads are featured, but one also finds marches and dances and two compositions. The 72-page booklet with this CD include the texts in Vannetais Breton, a version in more standard Breton, and in French. The documentation also includes maps, photos and a general presentation of the song tradition of this area of Brittany.

Dastum (Bro Ereg?). 'Deo ket jaojapl ur seurt -- Histories en breton vannetais. Tradition vivante de Bretagne 9. Dastum, DAS 133. 1999.

This CD features seven storytellers and fifteen stories in Vannetais Breton recorded in live performance (a total of 73 minutes). A 52-page booklet presents each storyteller and his/her tales and includes the texts of the stories with notes on grammar and vocabulary.

Dastum. Chants à danser en presqu'île guérandaise. Tradition vivante de Bretagne 11. Dastum. DAS 135. 1999

This CD focuses on the southeastern area of Brittany -- the salt marsh region around Guereande. Included are 22 songs for dancing -- chosen from hundreds of recordings made in recent years (a total of 70 minutes). A 30-page booklet presents the singers and texts.

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## Other New Recordings

Ar Stobineller. Ar Stobineller hag e vignoned. Arstro, Diffusion Coop Breizh...

Ar Stobineller is a group including Violaine Mayer who plays metal strung Celtic harp, and Michel Masson, oboe professor at the Conservatory of Brest. This CD includes both Breton and Irish tunes and melodies.

Rip-d'ar Bourrabl. Emglev Bro-an Oriant (cité Allende, 56100 Lorient).

This is a sampler of various groups of the Lorient region, including bagadoù, bombare- biniou pairs, traditional singers, fest noz bands, and a harpist. While some performers are well established, others are newer to the music scene.



## BOOKS OF INTEREST

Mari C. Jones. Language Obsolescence and Revitalization: Linguistic Change in Two Sociolinguistically Contrasting Welsh Communities. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998. Pp. viii, 452.

Reviewed by KEVIN J. ROTTET  
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A much-needed contribution not only to the sociolinguistics of Welsh but to the study of endangered languages in general, Jones' study takes up several fascinating issues: whether Welsh is undergoing changes characteristic of dying languages; whether Welsh dialects are gradually being replaced by a more standard variety; and what role Welsh-language immersion schooling may be playing in the maintenance and evolution of the language. These issues are of course also of great interest for those interested in other minority languages such as Breton.

Chapter 1 introduces the study and describes different types of immersion education, which is important background information insofar as most of the children in Jones' study were enrolled in Welsh-medium schools. The reader learns that the study of Welsh has been compulsory in Wales since 1996, and that the number of immersion schools has steadily grown. It is inevitable then that schools play an increasingly important role in Welsh language maintenance. Jones reviews research from Canada where French-immersion education has been the focus of a number of serious studies. Particular attention is paid to whether children in immersion schooling speak a school dialect, one that is marked by deviations from the traditional norms of the language fostered by the school context.

Chapters Two and Three examine the findings from two communities, Rhymney, in south Wales, where only 6.7% of the village population speak Welsh, and Rhosllanerchrugog, in northern Wales, where 38.1% speak it. Jones' study is interested in two kinds of data: (1) linguistic features common to all varieties of Welsh, whose loss is therefore evidence of language death; and (2), features specific to a local dialect, whose loss indicates dialect death and/or standardization.

Jones' study identified numerous changes characteristic of language death in the speech of her young informants, such as loss of gender marking in nouns and adjectives, and loss of inflection of prepositions. She carefully points out that it is the socio-political situation of the Welsh language, rather than these changes as such, which identify them as tokens of language obsolescence. In addition, Jones found much evidence of dialect loss in progress; many dialect features abundant in the speech of older speakers are nearly or totally eliminated from the speech of school children. Convincing evidence is presented that Welsh-medium education is responsible for much of this dialect loss.

Curiously, Jones found that both Welsh mother-tongue and English mother-tongue pupils in Welsh immersion schools spoke a kind of school dialect not shared by adult learners, though more research is needed to confirm the tentative finding that the linguistic deviations in Welsh of children whose mother tongue is English may be rubbing off on the less numerous Welsh mother-tongue children in some schools.

In Chapters Four and Five Jones provides brief discussions of language death and of standardization, and then she compares the sociolinguistic situation of Welsh with that of its two closest relatives, Breton and Cornish. In an excellent literature review, Jones summarizes research on linguistic changes underway in Breton which are indicative of language death, and discusses why the outlook for Breton appears so much more negative than for Welsh. In Wales, a linguistic standard had fortuitously emerged from below, with the medieval bardic schools and



Books - continued

the 1588 publication of the Welsh Bible partially staving off dialect fragmentation and promoting a literary variety not overly based on any regional dialect. Standard Breton, on the other hand, has had to be artificially developed from above, by committees and language planners, since no standard had emerged naturally. Breton speakers are still divided over the selection of a single orthography, which is counterproductive for an already small minority language fragmented into divergent dialects. Attitudes also play a large role in the differing fates of Welsh and Breton. While Welsh speakers have a strong sense of Welsh identity that transcends the local region, Jones finds that many Breton native speakers tend not to think of themselves as Breton but have loyalties that are much more local, in part because Brittany does not exist as a political unit in modern-day France. Finally, the Welsh movement is being led primarily by native speakers whereas the Breton movement is spearheaded by intellectuals whose mother tongue is French. The Breton movement thus lacks the grassroots support characteristic of the Welsh movement.

Some of Jones' findings will be frightening to those interested in the survival of Welsh, for she shows convincingly that modern spoken Welsh is starting to succumb to the encroachment of English and to show signs of obsolescence even in its strongholds (e.g. Rhosllanerchrugog). Yet there are also reasons for optimism such as the fact that an increasing number of people learn Welsh as a second language every year and that the decline in number of Welsh speakers has more or less been halted.

Jones' book is a very welcome contribution to scholarship on the Welsh language and on the role of schools and of standardization in language maintenance.

\* \* \*

Divi Kervella. Emblèmes et symboles des Bretons et des Celtes. Spezet: Coop Breizh. 1998. 99 pp. ISBN 2-84346-044-1.

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

When I have gone to festival and set up an information table about Brittany and the Breton language, I find that I am asked questions not only about Brittany, but also about the other Celtic countries less familiar to Americans—Cornwall and the Isle of Mann. One of the questions that has always stumped me was the meaning of the three spurred legs arranged in a triskell shape on the Manx flag. Well, here is a book to give me the answer! The story given in this book is that the Celtic god Manannan metamorphosed himself into the three-legged triskell to roll down a mountain to scare off approaching Vikings in the Bay of Port ny h'Inshey. That's just one of the interesting little stories to be found in the pocket book.

The book covers the major emblems and symbols we associate with Ireland, Scotland, the Isle of Man, Wales, Cornwall and Brittany, and starts with a nice little demographic introduction to each of these countries. You will not find a great deal of detail, but you will find a large number of "typical" symbols presented quite well—from the plants we associate with the Celtic countries (leeks, shamrocks, thistle, etc.) and the major patron saints, to various animals with strong symbolism (ram, swan, dragon, griffon, ermine, unicorn, bear, lion, crow, salmon, wild boar, etc.). A little history of each flag is given and a number of symbols and designs are also explained (triskell, Claddagh ring, interlacing lines, peacock feathers—found in Breton embroidery—etc.).

Geared toward the beginner, this is a nice little introduction to a variety of familiar images and symbols that does not insult your intelligence. Those who want to pursue their knowledge can make good use of a concise but good bibliography of books in various languages. A translation of this useful little guide in English would probably be a big seller here in the U.S.

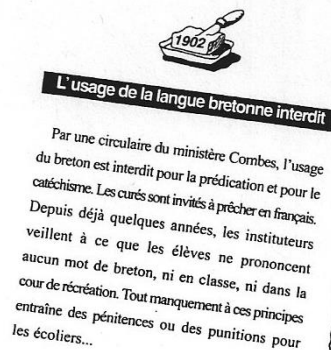
Books – continued

Trinka. Ce drôle de 20ème siècle en Bretagne. Miniac sous Bécherel: Des Dessins et des Mots. 1999. ISBN 2-9514441-0-9. 95 pages.

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

Of all the “best of the century” types of publications that have come out, this is perhaps the most enjoyable one I have seen. Although it is really more of a chronology of events than a selection of highlights. It is largely the work Breton cartoonists—headed by Trinka who conceived of the project and put it all together. Each page of the book covers an event in the last century in Brittany with a short text to describe the event and a cartoon to add some dark or light humor to 81 selected political, economic, sociological, sports, or cultural events. Eleven cartoonists illustrate the various pages: Nono, Schwartz, Gégé, Belon, Jiluk, Morvan, Tassuad, Nouveau, Bordier, Guérin and Grand. Trinka and these 11 are presented at the back of the book with a self-portrait and short description of their career. Not every year of the century is presented, but an interesting selection of events is certainly chosen. Although not dense with information, this book is an enjoyable way to get a very good sense of some of the changes that have taken place during the past century and the events which have influenced the evolution of Breton society.

From the first LeClerc “super market,” the origins of the bagad, and the first internet “cyber fest noz,” to the departures of soldiers for both World War I and II and the massive storm of 1987, this book covers quite a bit of ground. Although you will enjoy the humor found in the cartoons, this book can also teach quite a bit about Breton history. I would be happy to send more information and an order form to anyone interested.





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