

# BRO NEVEZ

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



KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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**Editor:** Lois Kuter  
169 Greenwood Ave., B-4  
Jenkintown, PA 19046 U.S.A.

(215) 886-6361  
kuter@netreach.net  
website: [www.breizh.net/icdbl.htm](http://www.breizh.net/icdbl.htm)

The **U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language (U.S. ICDBL)** was incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation on October 20, 1981. **Bro Nevez** ("new country" in the Breton language) is the newsletter produced by the U.S. ICDBL. It is published quarterly: 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.

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.

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



The **Canadian Branch of the ICDBL** was relaunched January 1998. For information about the Canadian ICDBL contact: Jeffrey D. O'Neill, 1111 Broadview Ave. #205, Toronto, Ontario, M4K 2S4, CANADA (e-mail: [jdhoneill@sympatico.ca](mailto:jdhoneill@sympatico.ca)). Telephone: (416) 422-0748.



On behalf of the members of the U.S. ICDBL I would like to thank all those in Brittany who sent us letters of concern and support following the September 11 terrorist attacks on the World Trade Buildings in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. I have circulated the notes I received to all of our Members and subscribers, but I know that a number of them also received notes from friends in Brittany. Your thoughts have been very important in a time of sadness. We thank you for them.

The cartoon on the front cover is by a Breton named Nono whose cartoons have been featured in a number of Breton magazines. It depicts a Diwan school child who encounters a number of obstacles (skoilhoù) on his way to school. This cartoon appeared in Diwan's magazine called An Had in **1980**. Here it is over twenty years later, and Diwan school children and parents must still fight monsters who try to block their way. We hope they will be as successful as the child of this cartoon in successfully defeating them. See page 2.

# News of the DIWAN Schools

Lois Kuter

## A quick reintroduction

For those new to the ICDBL, the Diwan schools teach through the medium of the Breton language—what is called an “immersion” system where social activities, recess and lunch, are also the place for the Breton language. Because the Diwan schools have been very important in giving children the means to learn Breton and use it as a living language, the U.S. ICDBL has tried to support it over the years. While we have not sent huge sums of money, our moral support has been important.

French is gradually introduced during the primary level and by the time children reach middle school they are fully bilingual and have begun studying English. With the overwhelming presence of French in the media and everyday life of Brittany, students certainly master French as fully as their peers in monolingual schools where no Breton is present. This fall, a total of 2,613 children are enrolled in Diwan schools—from pre-school through the end of high school. See statistics which follow for more details.

As drawn from a document Diwan prepared in 1998 (and translated and printed in Bro Nevez 72, November 1999) the following “Objectives of Diwan” give a good idea of the flavor of this schooling system.

- To offer an entire schooling in Breton, from preschool to the Baccalaureate (high school graduation)
- To draw on a culture rooted in a living environment. Many people, especially in Lower Brittany, speak Breton in their daily lives and many students have in their family one or several people for whom Breton is the mother tongue.
- To allow children to learn their history, from its roots in the language of their ancestors.
- To favor psychological, intellectual and a rich social development through early bilingualism, and to effectively prepare them to master several languages, which will be a necessity for tomorrow’s Europe.
- The role of the school is not only to transmit knowledge but also to allow each child to build his or her own personality. To be free, that’s to know who one is in order to recognize others. A strong cultural identity gives a point of reference, something that is often missing for many youth today. This reference point is a factor in socialization based on tolerance and a desire for exchange.

For those who read French (and Breton) you can find excellent up-to-the-date information about the Diwan schools as well as a presentation of Diwan and its history on their web site: [www.diwanbreizh.org](http://www.diwanbreizh.org)

## A Public School System Attempts to Become Public ... New Wrinkles in the Plans

Because the public schools of Brittany have only until recent years (1980s) incorporated a limited amount of bilingual programming, Diwan was founded in 1977 as an independent system—but has always been fully public in that admission is open to all and free of charge. In the early 1990s Diwan negotiated with the French Education system to get a particular statute as a “private” school which meant that some teachers salaries would be covered by the State. But Diwan has counted on year after year of hard work on the part of teachers and parents to raise funds for salaries as well as basic building operations. Since its founding Diwan has worked to gain recognition as a public education system. Efforts to gain incorporation into the National Education system have been spurred by the recognition that this would greatly ease the burden of raising sufficient funding each year for the survival and growth of the schools.

A plan to integrate Diwan (and its immersion style) into the public school system was signed in May 2001 by the Minister of Education, Jack Lang, who traveled to the Diwan school in Rennes for the ceremony. And

several agreements have been worked out with the French Education system during the spring and summer concerning the nuts and bolts of putting all this into place. Just as things were starting to jell for the budgeting of teachers and facilities to be fully in place for the opening of the Fall 2002 school year, it now appears that the French State has nullified this agreement for public integration of Diwan. This comes in the wake of pressure on the Conseil d'Etat from a federation of public school teacher and parent organizations who feel that the immersion system of Diwan "attacks the principle of equality and unity of the [French] Republic."

Yes, the protocol signed on May 28<sup>th</sup> by the Ministry of Education for the integration of the Diwan schools into the public education system has been suspended by the Conseil d'Etat (Council of State) of France. This also blocks two texts enacted during the summer and in early September for the implementation of the plan. This action is the result of petitioning by the Comité National d'Action Laïque (CNAL) which includes teacher unions and parent organizations of the public education system. \*

These protectors of the French Republic claim that they are for the development of teaching regional languages, but only when French is given equal time with another language. In their eyes, the Diwan immersion system treats French as a foreign language. Clearly the teachers and parents so concerned about the "exclusion" of French from Diwan schools have no idea how the Diwan schools work to insure that children have equal skills in French to any compatriot in France. Students graduating from Diwan high schools are at ease using Breton as their everyday language, but they have as much—if not more—competence in written and oral French as any graduate of any other high school. With the dominance of French in the media and around one everywhere in Brittany, fears that French could become a "second language" are ludicrous. Are these protectors of "France one and indivisible" really afraid that Bretons exposed to Diwan schools will forget how to speak French or decide they don't want to speak it? Are they afraid that Diwan students—who are a very small percentage of the total school population—will inspire the Breton population to rise up and say "No more French!"? The bizarre thinking such people seem to have is almost impossible to comprehend. What are they thinking?

A sticking point for those who seem to confuse uniformity with unity of the French state is the French Constitution which states in Article 2 that "French is the language of the Republic." Diwan's immersion system of teaching through the Breton language appears to be against the French Constitution to those who feel that the more time one spends speaking French, the better a citizen one will be. This sounds pretty silly but the constitutional argument also blocks France's adoption of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages (see past issues of Bro Nevez for a running commentary on this). This Charter was signed by France in May 1999 but is yet to be ratified so that the meager protections it affords to languages like Breton can be put into place.

The reaction to the Conseil d'Etat's suspension of the agreement for Diwan to enter the public school system has been strong. Jack Lang, the Minister of Education, has vowed that he will work to get the agreement back on track and find legal means to insure that the 2002 school year will not be disrupted and that teacher recruitment and training will continue as planned. The suspension of the Diwan integration has been viewed by Lang and many others as an insult to all the Breton parents and children who have chosen bilingual education as well as the Diwan system.

In solidarity with Diwan, the major actors in the bilingual education programs of Brittany joined in calling for a demonstration in the streets of Quimper on November 10. The demonstration was supported by the Cultural Council of Brittany and involved not only Diwan supporters but also Div Yezh—parents of public school students, Dihun—parents of Catholic school bilingual students, and Unvaniezh ar Gelennerien Brezhoneg—Breton language teachers. These groups outlined five basic points to be resolved: the establishment of Diwan in the public school system by the 2002 school year, the immediate enactment of the agreement to create expanded training for Breton language teachers, a true investment in bilingual education in the "contrat de plan" which designates funding, and the modification of the French Constitution and adoption of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.

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\* UNSA-Éducation (ex-FEN), Fédération des parents (FCPE), Ligue de l'enseignement, Syndicat des enseignants (SE-UNSA), Fédération des délégués départementaux de l'Éducation nationale (DDEN)

On November 10 an estimated 4,500 to 8,000 demonstrators (police vs. organizer's estimates) hit the streets of Quimper, including parents, children, cultural leaders, political and union leaders, and those who have been angered and insulted by the suspension of the Diwan integration. The demonstration was a clear show of support for bilingual education and the legitimate place of Diwan and an immersive style of teaching Breton in the public education system,

There will be more to follow on this story, and the best place to keep up to date with it is the Diwan web site: [www.diwanbreizh.org](http://www.diwanbreizh.org).



## **A New School Year for the Breton Language**

Lois Kuter

It always takes a bit of time to gather statistics on the new school year but the following should give you an idea of the status of the Breton language this year in the schools of the five departments of Brittany. These numbers are drawn from Kannadig 76 (October 2001), the publication of Unanvreizh ar Gelennerin Brezhoneg (Union of Breton Teachers), as well as from the Diwan Breizh web site ([www.diwanbreizh.org](http://www.diwanbreizh.org)). I take full responsibility for any misinterpretations I may have made of information presented.

### **BRETON LANGUAGE IN THE SCHOOLS FROM PRESCHOOL THROUGH HIGH SCHOOL**

Total students in all three school systems this school year (2001-2002): 7,369 – up from 6,554 in 2000-2001, a little over a 12% growth.

#### Students in Diwan schools (immersion in Breton for teaching and all school activities)

Total of 2,613 - up from 2,414 last year for a gain of 199 students

Students are found at 32 preschool and primary school sites, 4 middle schools, and 1 high school.

Students by age group:	1,031 in the preschool level
	1,010 at the primary school level
	461 at the middle school level
	111 at the high school level

The first Diwan school opened in 1977. By 1993 the number of students had reached 1,095, and has grown steadily ever since.

#### Students in the Bilingual program of the public schools:

Total of 2,628 - up from 2,289 last year for a gain of 339 students.

Students are found at 44 preschool & primary sites, 13 middle school sites, and 5 high school sites.

Students by age group:	1,404 in the preschool level
	919 at the primary school level
	222 at the middle school level
	83 at the high school level

It is important to note that bilingual programs in the public schools date back only to 1982 when there were just 18 students in such programs. By 1995 the number reached over 1,017 and has grown steadily since.

### Students in the Bilingual programs of the Catholic private schools

Total of 2,128 - up from 1,851 last year for a gain of 277 students.

Students are found at 38 preschool and elementary school sties, and 9 middle schools/high schools.

Students by age group:           1,100 at the preschool level  
  906 at the primary school level  
  122 at the middle school/high school level

The Catholic schools started bilingual programs only in 1990 but have grown very quickly. By 1998 there were 1,141 students enrolled.

## **THE BRETON AT THE UNIVERSITY LEVEL**

It is more difficult to find statistics for the number of university students studying Breton, but I will try to get some information on this for the next issue of Bro Nevez. Anyone who can help with this is very welcome to contact me.

## **ADULT LEARNERS OF THE BRETON LANGUAGE**

Ofis ar Brezhoneg has done a great deal of study of adult learners and a very good profile can be found for the 2000-2001 year. During that year some 8,500 adults took Breton classes of some kind: 10% studied using correspondence classes, 29% were enrolled in more intensive weekend or weeklong courses, and 61% attended evening classes. For the 2001-2002 year there has been a growth in the number of organizations offering classes as well as locations where one can find a class.

Evening Classes. In 2000-2001 some 190 groups offered evening classes (70 of these from the Finistère Department). Classes could be found in 159 communities (63 in Finistère). The breakdown in levels of learners shows that nearly half were at the beginning level (2,396 of a total of 4,888 in Brittany, and 299 of a total of 498 outside of Brittany—primarily in Paris) and an additional 27% were just at the next level. From the 1999-2000 year to the 2000-2001 year there was a significant drop (about 9%) in evening class students. This is credited to the fact that evening classes are not highly structured and teachers are often volunteers who have limited time. It is hoped that work to professionalize evening classes and better train teachers will help keep up with demands from adults for classes.

"Stages" – Weekend or weeklong courses. In 2000-2001 there were 23 organizations in Brittany offering courses for adult learners, four of which offering "continuing education" classes for credits. 12 of these organizations are located in Finistère, resulting in the fact that 67% of the students enrolled took courses in that department. A total of 2,345 adults were enrolled in these courses. This was down just slightly (2%) from the previous year

Correspondence Classes. 6 organizations offer correspondence classes for Breton. Approximately 800 adults took such classes – with over 60% enrolled with Skol Ober which is the best known of the organizations. Skol Over was founded in 1932 and includes some 70 volunteer teachers.

# Some Short Notes on Events in Brittany

Most of the information below was drawn from news clippings reprinted in Keleier Ofis ar Brezhoneg (No. 42, October 2001). I claim all responsibility for any misinterpretation in reporting. - Lois Kuter

## Brittany of Five Departments

The Committee for the Administrative Unification of Brittany (CUAB)\* has been knocking on the doors of political leaders in Brittany to solicit their signature on a charter expressing support to the General Council of Loire-Atlantique and the Regional Council of Brittany for their votes to bring the Department of Loire-Atlantique back into the official Region of Brittany. The Charter also demands that the French government launch procedures to incorporate the reintegration on the regional elections of 2004. So far there are few surprises in those stepping up among the first to sign the Charter: for example, Jean-Yves Cozan, Vice President of the Region of Brittany; Christian Guyonvarc'h, leader of the Union Democratique Breton; and Christian Troadec, Mayor of Carhaix. Also signing are Deputies Pierre Méhaignerie of the UDF party and François Goulard of the DL party; Regional Counselors Jean-Pierre Thoman (PS) and Marc Le Fur (RPR) and two Loire-Atlantique leaders, Joel Guerriau, Vice President of the General Council of Loire-Atlantique and Patrick Mareschal, President of the Socialist Group and long-time supporter of reintegration.

\* Comité pour l'unification administrative de la Bretagne

## Ronald MacDonald is learning to speak Breton!

Two MacDonalds restaurants in Brittany (in Morlaix and Carhaix) have chosen to put menus and signage into Breton (bilingual French/Breton). Of the 870 MacDonalds fast food chains in France these are the first to feature a language other than French. Congratulations to manager Georges Kervars for this innovative move in partnership with Ofis ar Brezhoneg (see the following note).

## Ya d'ar Brezhoneg (Yes to Breton)

As reporte din the last issue of Bro Nevez (79, August 2001), the "Yes to Breton" initiative by Ofis ar Brezhoneg was intended to foster a wide public use of Breton. The idea was for businesses and industries, banks, health care centers and hospitals, stores and supermarkets, sports teams and stadiums, media, and cultural organizations to sign on to a plan to make the Breton language more visible in their workplace and public spaces. Even before the campaign was launched on October 5, 125 different institutions had signed on. While the many educational and cultural groups were no surprise, there were also a number of businesses and stores (including MacDonalds)

that will help make Breton more a part of the everyday landscape of Brittany. These include five Intermarché and SuperU supermarkets, two Peugeot sales sites, the Crédit Mutuel de Bretagne bank, and Armor Lux, as well as a number of Breton beer, cider and wine makers (Brasserie Lancelot, Brasserie de la Soif, Britt Brasserie de Bretagne, Coreff, Cidre Kerne, and Domaine Viticole Coraud) whose use of Breton will certainly not hurt marketing.

## TV Breizh Marks its First Year of Operation

It seems like only yesterday that this initiative got off the ground, but it's been a year of work for this "cable" station to provide programming focused on Brittany and its culture, and to provide as much as possible programming in the Breton language (with an option using a "switching" system to choose either French or Breton). While subtitling is one thing, and there are a number of documentary films produced in the Breton language, providing a full range of Breton language options—from soccer game commentary to sitcoms—in Breton requires finding the right talent (and funding for a significant investment of labor). While some have expressed impatience with the lack of Breton available on TV Breizh, with time this channel has the potential to provide a much fuller choice of programming. Work is underway to expand children's cartoons in Breton especially, so in the future you will find Spirou and Asterix speaking Breton. In the meantime petitioning continues to improve the place of Breton language programming on the public TV channels.

## Congratulations to Radio Bro Gwened

There are a number of prizes awarded each year in Brittany to encourage those working for the Breton language. One of these is the Prix Hervé Le Menn (which began in 1988). This is awarded by the Entente Culturelle Bretonne to an individual or organization working for the Breton language or culture. This year the award went to the radio station Radio Bro Gwened. This radio provides regular Breton language programming and promotes the Breton culture through a number of programs featuring Breton music, as well as programs focused on the life of the Morbihan area where this radio broadcasts.

## Negotiating the Internet in Breton

Those who use computers and the internet here in the U.S. will no doubt be familiar with Microsoft's Internet Explorer and Netscape Communicator—the biggest computer servers in worldwide use. But in third place is a server called Opera which now is available in the Breton

language thanks to the work of the Carhaix branch of Ofis ar Brezhoneg. They were asked by the European bureau for Lesser Used Languages to adapt the server for Breton and the EBLUL has also gotten versions in Welsh, Scottish Gaelic and Irish Gaelic. Indeed, the "Celtic" version of Opera 5.02 allows you to switch between these languages as well as French and English so you can get your menus, error messages, and other screen communication in any one of them. The Breton version can be downloaded by going to the site [www.opera.com](http://www.opera.com) and choosing "download," "change," "windows," "celtic" (with or without Java), and then "download now." Or you can go to the site for the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages: [www.eblul.org/dart](http://www.eblul.org/dart). (I haven't tried any of this but the news clippings give those instructions.)

Ofis ar Brezhoneg has also worked to help with the translation of a number of web sites (at least partially) into Breton. Some of these are:

<http://www.bretagne.com/telegramme/subscribe.htm>  
A synthesis of daily news from the Le Télégramme daily paper (you can also get a synthesis in English)

<http://www.erdr.citeweb.net/accueil/bzh.htm>  
A personal web site for the town of Chapelle-sur-Erde.

<http://www.alan-stivell.com/framesbz.htm>  
The official site for Alan Stivell.

<http://perso.wanadoo.fr/parc.regional.naturel.armorique/breizh.htm>

The site for the Parc Naturel Régional d'Armorique

<http://www.eurobreman.tsx.org>  
90 terms for banking in the Breton language.

## The "Hello" Referendum

Last spring the newspaper Le Télégramme worked with the Jeunes Chambres Économiques to conduct a survey to find out what Bretons felt was the best way to say "hello" in the Breton language. A referendum was organized in ten larger cities and 14,651 votes were cast (11,327 by internet).

Six different possibilities were proposed by the Ofis ar Brezhoneg for the vote (the percentage voting for each follows it):

- "Demat" (49%)
- "Mont a ra mat ganeoc'h" (12%)
- "Penaos eman ar bed ganeoc'h" (24%)
- "Mat ar jeu" (7%)
- "C'hoari a ra" (1%)
- "Salud deoc'h" (6%)

The short and simple "demat" garnered the largest percentage of the vote, and this is not surprising since this is the most commonly taught "hello" in schools and texts for learners. And one would guess that Breton learners rather than older native speakers would be more likely to vote on such a referendum (given its urban focus). The referendum sparked some interesting debate about the best way to greet others in Breton (and there are certainly quite a few other phrases one could propose), and it certainly served to get people talking and thinking about the Breton language.

## News From PREDER Publications

*Digor eo load Internet Preder abaoe ar c'hentañ Du 2001. Gouestlet eo da Embannadurioù PREDER ha dreist-holl d'an imbourc'hioù renet e-sell da arnevesaat ar brezhoneg. An erbarioù diawelet da ziorren al load a zle disoc'hañ er mizioù ho tont. Donemat war load Internet Preder.*

*We are glad to announce that our Internet site is open since November 1st. It is devoted to the activities of the publisher PREDER and the researchers working for the renewal of the Breton language. The site is planned to be developed, hopefully in the next few months. Have a look and enjoy.*

<http://www.preder.net>

I have indeed taken a look and recommend that others who are interested in the Breton language and the development of new terminology in Breton also check it out. The site is trilingual: Breton, Breton, and English. The site lists a number of publications Preder has produced. I thought it would be useful here to introduce Preder, and what better way than to borrow their own introduction as it is found on the web site. I have reprinted below just the very beginning of the introduction, so visit their web site to find out much more about their history and raison d'être.

*Preder was founded in 1958 as a journal of science and philosophy and became the PREDER Publications in 1970. A non-profit-making organization, PREDER has the following aims:*

- to retrieve the linguistic wealth of Breton and the other Celtic languages,
- to promote Breton as a modern language by developing this wealth within the contemporary world,
- to make teaching manuals available in this modern language,
- to publish scientific, philosophical, linguistic and philological texts based on this recovering / recovery and development of the language.

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

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

This September four people were inducted into the Order of the Ermine in recognition of their diverse and considerable contributions to Brittany. This gives me the opportunity to present to Bro Nevez readers four people who are doing important work for Brittany's future. The following brief biographical notes are my translation from the French text printed in Sterenn no. 18, Fall 2001).

### Pierre Toulhoat

Born September 1, 1923, in Quimper, Pierre Toulhoat did his secondary studies at the Likès school of Quimper, studies which were crowned with a baccalaureate in philosophy in 1940. A designer at Ponts and Chaussées during the Occupation (WWII), he participated in the underground struggle with the FFI of Finistère. Enrolled in the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs in Paris in 1947 (in sculpture), he worked at the same time with the Keraluc ceramic studio from its founding, created jewelry for Kelt, designed scarves and textiles for Le Minor, and created stained glass windows for the Le Bihan-Saluden workshop. He also taught ceramics and sculpting at the Beaux Arts in Quimper.

Since 1956 he created his own studio for stained glass windows and worked with his wife Yvonne Lucas (daughter of the founder of Keraluc) with a jewelry studio. He has created over a thousand models for jewelry, medallions, pins (insignia) and pieces of religious gold and silver work.

### Brother Marc Simon

Born June 19, 1924 in Plounevez-Lochrist, Brother Marc (François) Simon completed his secondary studies at the Saint-Fraçois school in Lesneven between 1934 and 1941, before entering the Seminary in Quimper. Ordained a priest on July 1, 1947, he served for ten

years with the diocese of Quimper and Léon, primarily as a priest-teacher in the private schools. In 1957 he entered the monastery of Kerbéneat, whose community was getting ready to move to Landevennec. After employment in a variety of teaching roles, in 1970 he was put in charge of the Chronique (the quarterly publication) of Landevennec, and then in 1983 he succeeded Father Grégoire Ollivier as the head of the Breton Library of the Abbey. He still has this role while he also does historical research on the abbey.

## Rozenn Milin

Born in 1960 in the countryside of Léon, brought up in a family of Breton speaking farmers, Rozenn Milin began at an early age to fight for her language and culture. When she was 15 she began to perform in Breton language theater and taught Breton language and dance. She completed studies in Brest (Licence in History in 1980 and Maîtrise in 1996), in Rennes (Licence in Celtic Studies in 1988) and Paris (DEA in History at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in 1998). She did her research work on "The Celts and Death in Antiquity Documented in Greek and Latin Texts" and "Celts and Human Sacrifices in Antiquity".

On the professional level, since 1978 she has traveled in both Breton and French between radio (Radio Armorique, then RBO) and television (FR3 Bretagne et Pays de Loire) where she worked as a journalist, speaker, producer, and even bilingual announcer. In 1986 she emigrated towards New York where she took up studies in theater. She has appeared on stage and on television in English, Welsh and French, in New York, Great Britain and France. Settled in Paris from 1990 to 2000, she worked also as a journalist, primarily for Welsh television. During all these years she alternated between periods of intense work and then long travel to the four corners of the earth: North and South America, Middle East, Central Asia, China, the Soviet Union, Africa ...

These travels came to an end in September 1998 when Patrick Le Lay asked her to take the reins of a Breton television project which came to light on September 1, 2000. Since then Rozenn Milin has served as the General Director of TV Breizh, the first regional and bilingual television station in France.

## Dan ar Braz

Born in 1949 in Quimper, Dan ar Braz started off as many did, as a musician in dance halls. From the beginning of the 1970s he worked with famous artists such as Jacques Higelin and especially Alan Stivell with whom he toured for five years. In search of new horizons he joined the mythic English group Fairport Convention, but his longing for Brittany brought him back with an album in the works: Douar Nevez. At the low point in the folk movement during the decade of 1980 to 1990 he took his music around the world. During the Festival de Cornouaille in Quimper in 1993 he worked with 70 musicians to create "l'Héritage des Celtes." The CD produced from his has reached a huge audience. A major tour ended in triumph at the Zenith theater in Paris. He has been twice awarded the Victoire prize for his music.

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

\* now deceased.



## A GIFT OF POETRY from Jan Deloof

In past issues we have printed poems in Breton, Dutch and English contributed by Jan Deloof, the ICDBL Representative for Flemish who lives in Belgium. For this issue of *Bro Nevez*, Jan Deloof offers us a profile of a Breton poet and long-time defender of the Breton language, Tugdual Kalvez, who has worked with Jan on a number of Breton-Flemish projects. It seems fitting to follow the brief profiles of new inductees to the Order of the Ermine with this eloquent introduction to another equally remarkable Breton warrior.

### *Tugdual Kalvez*

The Breton poet and philosopher Tugdual Kalvez (born in 1937) is one of those unyielding men who - imperturbably - go on trying to seal the breaches while the whole world is drowning. In a never ending race against decline, this now retired teacher of philosophy and Breton language has assumed the most divergent tasks in the Breton Movement. With the early group An Namnediz, created in the mid-1960s, he has been a pioneer in the modernization of Breton folk music which would take a strikingly high flight, with people like Alan Stivell, Yann-Fañch Kemener, Denez Prigent and so many others. He has been the inspiring president of the Union of Breton Language Teachers, he pioneered in the field of the neglected Breton toponymy, wrote poetry in both French and Breton, etc. Nowadays he is finishing a dictionary of Breton philosophic terminology.

His poems are short moments of reflection and sharp observation, written in an extremely precise language, interwoven with scarcely translatable Breton idiosyncrasies. His poem "Desket 'm eus" (I've learned), for instance, presents in a nutshell the whole linguistic scene in Brittany (with the four main dialects) and the obstacles that a Breton writer has

to envisage before he/she can even think of beauty and achievement. In “Diarvar” (Certitude), Tugdual Kalvez points to his lifelong personal program by first expressing his doubts and then telling what he is certainly not. Both poems are good examples of his unique contribution to the literature in Breton.

### *Desket ‘m eus*

Desket em eus ar c’herneveg  
ganit ma mamm, war da varlenn

Desket em eus al leoneg  
en ur glask gout skrivañ ha lenn

Desket em eus ar gwenedeg  
‘vit komz gant ma amezeien

Desket em eus an tregerieg  
da vezañ ampart da gelenn

Desket em eus ar brezhoneg  
eus pep korn-bro, eus pep tachenn  
evit kompren kan un ene  
‘vit dazont yezh ma bugale  
(23.09.1981)

### *Diarvar*

Skrivañ ‘ran. N’ouzon ket ha skrivagner  
on.  
Kanañ ‘ran. N’ouzon ket ha kaner on.  
Prederiañ ‘ran. N’ouzon ket ha prederour  
on.  
A-dra-sur, ar pezh n’ouzon ket a ouzon:  
na skrivagner gall,  
na kaner gall,  
na prederour gall,  
nag analer gall...  
En ur vro all e vevan.  
Ar bed brezhon a vev ennon.  
(Bruges-in-Flanders 01.09.1988)

### *I’ve learned*

I’ve learned the tongue of Cornouailles  
my mother dear, as a child on your lap

I’ve learned the tongue of Leon  
wanting to be good at reading and writing

I’ve learned the tongue of Vannes  
wanting to associate with my neighbors

I’ve learned the tongue of Tregor  
to be authorized to teach my  
mothertongue

I’ve learned the Breton language  
of every corner, every hearth  
wanting to grasp the song of a soul  
for the future of my children’s word

### *Certitude*

I write. Don’t know whether I’m a writer.  
I sing. Don’t know whether I’m a singer.  
I think. Don’t know whether I’m a  
thinker.  
But I know for certain what I am not:  
not a French writer,  
nor a French singer,  
nor a French thinker,  
nor a man breathing in French...  
I am thriving in another land.  
It’s the universe of Brittany that lives in  
me.

## New Publications in the Breton Language

The following short presentations are drawn from notes in *Bretagne des Livres* 59 (October 2001), *Ar Men* 123 & 124 (August & September 2001), and *Al Liamm* 327 & 328 (August and September 2001).

### **From a writer closer to home ...**

Jeffrey Shaw. *An Tan a zo krog en ti* (The Burning House). Ar Skol Vrezoneg/Emgleo Breiz. 2001. 202 pp. ISBN 2-906373-88-5.

Jeffrey Shaw is no stranger to the ICDBL and as a Canadian in Toronto, Ontario, has worked with Jeff O'Neill, the Canadian ICDBL Branch representative, on a number of projects. Jeffrey Shaw is also a Breton (and French speaker—one of those guys who is fluent in several other Celtic languages as well. He has become eloquent enough in Breton to publish not only short articles, but novels. His first work was called *Er Vro Nevez* (published by Emgleo Breizh in 1996). This told the story of Scottish farmers emigrating to Canada. This latest work is also set in Canada. As Jeffrey Shaw described it in a letter to me: "The story itself takes place in British Columbia, mostly on the remote Queen Charlotte Islands. It's a novel comprising suspense, murder, deceit and betrayal, with a strong supernatural undertone, all this played against the beauty that is British Columbia. In essence, the novel attests that the Breton language is well capable of describing environments and situations on an international scale and, moreover, written by a North American."

### **Two new magazines:**

**Aber** is a new journal for Breton literature. Like *Al Liamm* it includes a variety of styles: poetry, short stories, essays about literature, etc. It comes out quarterly at a cost of 220 francs per year. (Address: Aber, 115 Kergareg, 29870 Landeda)

**Rouzig** is a new magazine in Breton lunched by Keit Vimp Beo for children from 3 to 6 years old. This follows the creation a year ago of the magazine called *Louarnig* for 7 to 12 year olds (see *Bro Nevez* 76, November 2000). (address: eti Vimp Beo, Kern vorn, 29520 Laz)

### **Other new publications** (alphabetical by author)

Job an Irien. *Gwenn ha du hag a beb liou*. Minihi-Levenez. 2001. 176 pp.

Job an Irien directs the Breton language Catholic Center at Minihi Levenez (Tréflévenez) and has worked to renew a liturgy in the Breton language. This book includes a number of columns he has contributed to the weekly newspapers *Courier du Léon* and *Progrès de Cornouaille*. They are on all themes, about his travels, thoughts, and include poetry as well as essays. The French translation is provided.

Herri ar Borgn. *Glav Bev*.

Skrid/Mouladurioù hor Yezh. 2001. 107 pp.

A collection of poetry in all styles and on all topics in the Vannetais dialect of Breton.

Nikolaz Davalan. *Brezhoneg Oulpan 2*, with CD. Skol an Emsav. 2001. 261 pp. ISBN 2-903365-15-6.

Second in a series of four texts for Breton learners, from beginner to advanced levels. Includes a CD for oral practice.

Jeff Gedez. *Tiriadoù ar gwalarn*.

Embanadurioù Hor Yezh. 2001. 156 pp.

Tales of a young man infatuated by the works of James Fenimore Cooper and James Oliver Curwood who travels up the Hudson River and across Canada for a year, meeting various Native American peoples along the way.

Per-Jakez Helias. *Mojennou Breiz*.

Emgleo Breiz. 201. 208 pp. ISBN 2-911210-22-0.

This is a collection of various folk tales in Breton from Lower Brittany.

Hergé. Bravigoù ar Gastaflorenn. (translation Divi Kervella) Collection Tintin. 2001. 64 pp. ISBN 2-86843-228-X. Breton translation of Bijoux de la Castaflore—one in a series of “comic books” featuring Tintin.

Meriadeg Herrieu. Dictionnaire Breton/Français (Vannetais). Emgleo Breiz. 2001. 232 p.

A dictionary specifically focused on the Vannetais dialect of Breton by the son of the famous writer Loeiz Herrieu. The dictionary includes some 15,000 words and expressions, pulling strongly from popular expressions.

Kaledvoulc'h (Erwan Berthou). Lemenik skouer ar varzhad.

Mouladurioù hor Yezh. 2001. 126 pp. The life of Yann ar Fastig (1855-1910), who was an archdruid in Brittany's Gorsedd of Bards, as told by Erwan Berthou. This book was first published in 1914.

Goulc'hen Kervella. Peziou-c'hoari nevez, Jakez Krohenn ha Gwillou Vihan. Brud Nevez. 2001. 165 pp. ISBN 2-906373-90-7.

This book includes theater pieces composed for and aired on radio by Pierre Jakez Helias as well as a piece in the same style by Kervella on the theme of the wreck of the Erika oil tanker.

Xavier Langlais. Enez ar Rod.

Hor Yezh. 2001. 310 pp. Langlais was at the core of the artistic circle founded in Brittany in 1924 called “Ar Seiz Breur.” He is best known for his engravings, but was also a fine writer. On the occasion of the anniversary of his death, Hor Yezh has published one of his major literary works in the Breton language—a novel of fantasy.

Yann Lukas and Joël Rolet. Breizh-Karvegadoù ha maenadoù kaer.

(translation, Divi Kervella). An Here. 2001. 128 pp. A guide book with abundant photos to the rocks and minerals of Brittany. Included is a history of mining in Brittany.

Mikael Madeg. Eur leoriad lesanoioù euz Bro-Dreger ha Bro-Oelo.

Ar Skol Vrezonég. 2001. 123 pp. ISBN 2-906373-94. A sample of place names collected in Treger and Goelo during studies from 1980 to 1985.

Les Noms de communes et de Pays / Anoioù brezoneg ar parrezioù hag a broioù.

Brud Nevez. 2001. 100 pp. ISBN 2-86775-200-0. French-Breton and Breton-French listing of community names for Lower Brittany.

Anne Pouget-Tolu. L'arbre d'or / Ar wezenn aour. (translation, Patrick Béchard, Rozenn Morvan).

L'Harmattan. 2001. 14 pp. ISBN 2-7384-9909-0. A bilingual French-Breton story about a sculptor's reconstruction of a tree with gold leaves after a 1990 fire devastated part of the Broceliande forest.

Maria Prat. Gwele kolaig ha peziou-c'hoari all (VII). Ar Skol vrezonég. 2001. 130 pp. ISBN 2-906373-96-6.

A collection of writings, including theater pieces by Maria Prat who was long active with the Breton language theater troupe Beilhadegoù Treger in the Lannion area.

Eneour Puilh-Stefan. Beaj Eneour.

An Here. 2001. 136 pp. ISBN 2-86843-186-0. The diary of a teen who spent a school year on board the sailing ship Fleur de Lampaul which traveled to South America.

Bernezh Tangi. Rod an Avelioù.

Mouladurioù Hor Yezh. 2001. 78 pp. A collection of poetry from one of Brittany's younger generation – always interesting and challenging.



# New Recordings from Brittany

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

**Kerhun & Les Gnawa. Lila-noz.**  
L'OZ Production. L'OZ 35. 2001. 42'24

For many years Breton musicians have been traveling throughout the world, exploring other cultures and musical traditions. The incorporation of Bulgarian, Irish or Galician tunes on a CD was something one could count on from most Breton bands. In recent years, however, Breton musicians have not just been borrowing tunes and melodies to rearrange, but have been working with musicians themselves from very different musical traditions to perform together, creating a mixture of sounds where both traditions are respected. Erik Marchand stands out in combining traditional Breton song with Middle Eastern lute and percussion from India, or the taraf, a Rumanian gypsy ensemble (as well as a number of other interesting combinations). As far back as 1980 Alan Stivell was on a similar track in incorporating Berber singers, Indian sitar, and South American flutes into his "Symphonie Celtique."

On this new CD the partnership has been formed between Brittany and the Gnawa tradition of Morocco. Kerhun is a Breton group from North Finistère composed of Christian Loaëc (bombarde, tin whistle), Annie Labiau (flute), and Stephane Gourlay and Stephane Paugam (on a variety of African percussion and struck bells). Invited Bretons on the CD include singers Raymond Le Lann and Laurence Landry, and another percussionist, Yves-Marie Berthou.

Les Gnawa is a pairing of Moroccan singers, and their Arabic songs dominate the CD (or is it some other language? - the CD notes give no clue). Essaïd Salmane, who is also a healer and ceremonial leader in his country, plays a traditional instrument called the guenbri—a guitar-like instrument with a carved out wooden body with skin stretched over the hollow opening. While this instrument is about the same size as a guitar and is played in a similar way, the sound is more reminiscent of a plucked bass fiddle. Jbara is also immersed in the traditions of his country, but

also participates in a more popular music culture and is considered one of the leading players of electric guitar in Morocco. While some of the techniques of playing electric guitar come from American and European culture, this instrument is nicely adapted to the beat of Moroccan traditional music. One of the highlights of the CD for me is the duet of Essaïd Salmane with the low earthy thump of the guenbri and Jbara with the higher wail of electric guitar in the final piece on the CD, "Kicomba."

The Bretons of Kerhun and Moroccans of Les Gnawa met up at an international music festival and Kerhun then traveled to Morocco to learn more about the music they had heard there. They invited the two musicians of Les Gnawa back to stay in Brittany to record together. It appears that these musicians worked together very successfully since this CD does indeed present an interesting pairing of Breton melodies and rhythms with those of Morocco. There is a certain sameness to the style of many of the ten selections on the CD with their thick layer of percussion keeping a steady beat, overlaid with freer vocals sometimes interwoven with Breton dance tunes. But, the combinations can be surprising—as in the selection where the very familiar Irish tune "The Foggy Dew" surfaces from time to time. The unmistakable beat of the derobée, "gavotte," and "plinn" are also found in this mix where the transition from Morocco to Brittany and back flows seamlessly.

The jacket notes include colorful reproductions of five paintings by the Breton artist Bernard Morinay which depict people and scenes of Morocco. Unfortunately the notes give almost no other information except a very brief introduction to Les Gnawa and Kerhun. There is no information about the songs other than a title. All are listed as "traditional" --- but are they traditional to Morocco or Brittany, or both? One can guess from the titles, but more information about the songs would be welcome beyond the two short texts by Essaïd Salmane which are translated into French. It's one thing to enjoy exotic sounds, but quite

another to understand just a little about their origins and meaning to the people who make them.

But the lack of jacket notes is the only real weakness I can find in this CD which presents an interesting and unique combination of sounds from two very different cultures. As has been the case with other Breton initiatives, this type of experimentation and collaboration between musicians from different parts of the world with strong roots in their native traditions brings rich rewards. This is what I consider true "world music."

**Dominic Bouchaud. L'ancre d'argent.**  
Keltia Musique KMCD 127. 2001. 65'40.

This CD includes twenty selections of melodies, marches and dances for performance on the Celtic harp. Except for his own two compositions on the CD which are very interesting, Dominic Bouchaud's arrangements are not wildly exotic, but they are well crafted and he clearly has mastery of his instrument. In its inclusion of a wide variety of melodies and rhythms, and in its combination of voice and other instruments with single harp and multiple harps, this is a highly enjoyable CD. One finds some very familiar songs (Silvestrig, Gwerz Maro Pontkalleg, Soubenn al laezh) but also less well known melodies. While slower airs dominate, dances include derobée, kas a barh, mazurkas, and schottishes.

I especially liked the two compositions by Bouchaud included on the CD. "l'ancre d'argent" is inspired by the story of Marie-Job Kerguenou from Anatole Le Braz' famous collection of legends and customs related to death in Brittany, La Légende de la Mort. Unlike his neighbors, Marie-Job Kerguenou drove a squeaky cart at all hours of night. Because the cart made a noise like that of Brittany's "Grim Reaper", the Ankou, Marie-Job was safe from late-night robbers. The second composition on the CD, "Arcanes" is a very original and more daring composition where a clothespin is used to create an interesting musical effect. Its avant-garde and dissonant sounds contrast with the "prettier" melodies that seem to dominate the CD.

Fifteen of the twenty pieces on the CD are drawn from the Breton tradition, but also included is a melody from Cape Breton Island ("If you were mine," composed by Maurice Lennon) and a Turlough O'Carolan composition, "Sir John O'Connor." The Irish repertoire is also represented with the melodies "Green Glens of Gweedore" and "Chanter," and the CD closes with a very nicely done "Brian Boru's March."

While nine of the selections are solo performances by Bouchaud, there are a number of duos and ensembles of instruments. Bouchaud is joined by singer and harpist Anne Auffret for three songs in the Breton language. "Ar prins yaouank" tells of a young prince who goes off to war, leaving his sweetheart his diamond and gold cross. This story ends tragically (as many Breton ballads do) when he returns to find she has been unfaithful to him. The song "Ar plac'hig hag ene he mamm" tells of a girl's search among a procession of souls of the dead for her mother's soul. "Botou-koad" is a nice arrangement of a march and song about a young man who wears out his wooden sabots unsuccessfully courting his sweetheart.

The harp is also paired with the fiddle of Odile Ribeyre in two selections in an interesting combination of strings where the sound of the fiddle blends very well with the harp. One also finds bombarde, played by Christian Faucher, in duo with harp for a melody and gavotte suite from the Pourlet country. I found the harps of Bouchaud and Anne Postic just a bit "plodding" in contrast to the bright and crisp sound of the bombarde, but the contrast of reed and strings was a nice one. For several selections some simple percussion was also provided by Gwenn Le Doré and this also worked well in providing new texture to the music. Of all the combinations, however, I liked best the rich harmonies and solid sound of the ensemble of harps, Telenn Kemper—a group of ten harpists based in Quimper.

Notes to the CD by Dominic Bouchaud are trilingual (French-English-Breton), and give a short but good description for each selection. In an introductory section, the notes capture well the essence of Brittany's oral song tradition in just a few paragraphs. A slightly longer essay on the harp in Brittany gives a good presentation of the little

bit of history that is known of its use in Brittany in the Middle Ages. Because the harp disappeared from Brittany after the Middle Ages—without trace of any surviving instrument or musical notes—its revival in the 60s (thanks in large part to Alan Stivell and his father Jord Cochevellou) is somewhat of a miracle. As the notes point out, the popularity of the Celtic harp in Brittany has continued to grow and today you find this instrument in all musical contexts, including the *fest noz*.

Bouchaud is definitely one of Brittany's foremost harpists and this CD shows off well the capability of the instrument for both slower airs and fast-paced dances.

### **Les Goristes. Bretagne is BeautyFuel.**

Keltia Musique KMCD 126. 2001. 56'31

Now here's a CD that does not export very well—unless you happen to hail from Brest and you've spent a lot of time in bars there following the careers of the Goristes—a band of eight fifty-something men who have been bringing song, conviviality and good humor to their fair city for quite a few decades now. This is not to say that this is a band of drunkards or you have to be drinking to appreciate their signing. This is a band of very talented singers and musicians who compose songs which document the life of their city and Brittany in some wickedly satiric verses which poke fun at government workers, tourists, and the adoration given to sports heroes, as well as those who spend a lot of time in the bars of Brest—to name just a few subjects on this particular CD.

While humorous, most of the songs also have a serious side, and some are more serious than others such as “Brest est rougie de leur sang” (“Brest is red with their blood”) which tells of the old prisons of Brest whose prisoners—sometimes in for very small crimes—served as slave labor to build much of the port. And then there is the song that gives its title to the CD: “Bretagne is BeautyFuel”—no translation needed. This tells of the oil companies repeated assurances that “it will never happen again,” and Bretons repeated and dutiful rush to the shores with bucket and shovel to clean up oil slicks from grounded oil tankers.

The tone is angry, and the politicians and insurance agents—along with the oil company executives—do not come up smelling like roses in this song.

Many of the texts on this CD are hard to follow for those who are not tuned into the life of Brest and Brittany, and the French is in many cases not exactly the same language a American studies. The recitation of a version of the tale about the “Hare and the Tortoise” offers a particular challenge, even with the full text provided in the jacket notes. The jacket notes, in fact, provide the full texts for all the songs which is extremely helpful since the pace is fast and furious on some songs. And these are texts that merit a bit of a study for those who might not be listening carefully.

But, even if you miss many of the subtle jokes—or even the crudest of the jokes—it is obvious that the texts are well crafted and delivered very carefully with a range of interesting, well-tuned, voices and musical styles best suited to bring out the humor or satirical edge to any particular song. In poking fun at Brest's efforts to promote tourism, you hear of the trials and tribulations of a Bavarian tourist stumbling into the wrong part of town to the beat of a German ump-pah band. Other songs are delivered to a Latin beat, military march, Cajun swing, stereotypical Russian dance, or a disco beat complete with a singing style reminiscent of the Village People. At other times you feel like you are listening to a Gilbert and Sullivan operetta. Clearly there is some silliness in the songs, but on the whole, the texts provide a strong commentary on human foibles and societal problems—most of which are not confined to Brest. The fine points will be lost on us foreigners to the land of the Goristes, but I can well understand how this group has built a strong following in Brest and Birttany.

### **Heard Of, But Not Heard**

Notes for the CDs noted on the following pages were drawn from information in reviews found in Musique Bretonne 168 (September-October 2001) and Ar Men 123 & 124 (September & October 2001).

Anne Auffret, Daniel Le Féon, Loïc Le Griguer. Pardonioù, Vol. 1: Les Plus beau cantiques de pardons. Coop Breizh CD 919. 2001

The first of more to come of recordings featuring the “kantik”—religious hymns from Brittany’s Catholic tradition. This CD features those one would hear at “pardons,” the feast day celebration of Brittany’s many saints. Eleven cantiques from the Haute-Cornouaille, Tregor and Goelo areas are sung by Anne-Auffret with the bombarde of Daniel Le Féon and organ by Loïc Le Griguer.

Carré Manchot. Degemer.

Ciré Jaune (diffusion Virgin) 810 579 2. 2001. It has already been 15 years for this fest noz band which, like most others, gets better with time. Reviews note that they haven’t lost any of their pizzazz as they age.

Accordéon diatonique en Haute Bretagne.

Keltia Musique KMCD 116. 2001.

This recording includes six players of the button accordion. Three were born around 1910: François Delaunay, Victor Coignard and Joseph Rousseau, and the younger three were born in the 1950s: Christian Le Mouée, Etienne Grandjean and Christian Anneix (better known as a biniou player).

Tregeriz. Les Tregeriz chantent Anjela Duval.

Tregeriz. 2001.

This group has been around for some 30 years, but has not recorded or been highly public in the more recent decades. Included in the group are Sozig Noblet on harp and Louis Abrall on recorders (flutes), accompanying the voice of Franceza Riou. They have selected a dozen texts by the famous Breton language poet Anjela Duval who also hailed from the Treger.

Jean Sabot and Laors Dacquay. Harmonica, fiddle. Coop Breizh CD 915. 2001.

Here’s a combination you don’t hear every day in Brittany: harmonica and fiddle. But what is a harmonica, but a version of the accordion which is one of the most popular instruments of Brittany. Starting out with Irish and bluegrass music, this duo has incorporated a strong Breton repertoire in their performance. They are joined on this CD for a few tunes by Dominique Molard (percussion), Nicolas Quemener (guitar) and Ronan Pellen (ciste and cello).

Gérard Delahaye. Guillou (pour les intimes). Dylie Productions DY 210. 2001.

This is an album recorded in bits and pieces between 1997 and 2001 of 12 texts composed for the most part by Delahaye himself. In contrast to his reputation as a performer for children, this CD is aimed at an adult audience with carefully crafted poetry performed by Delahaye alone with voice and guitar. I like Delahaye’s warm voice, and if this CD is like others I have heard, the music is sophisticated and perfectly matched to interesting texts.

Paul Ladmirault. L’oeuvre pour piano.

Played by Louis-Claude Thirion. Skarbo DSK 1962. Ladmirault (who died in 1944) is one of Brittany’s better known composers in the classical style. This CD includes six piano pieces interpreted by Louis-Claude Thirion. The review for this CD notes that Ladmirault succeeded in interpreting traditional Breton melodies in his classical compositions without denaturing them.

Rasta Bagad. Kana Diskan. Griffe GRI 191492. (distribution Sony Music). 2001.

In the style of Bob Marley, this is music with a reggae rhythm and texts with a political edge. The seven members of this group hail from the Bigouden area of southwestern Brittany.



## Festival Bro Gwened

Who says November is a “black month” (miz du). When it comes to music in Brittany, every month seems to have an abundance of opportunities to hear great music and dance. The September-October issue of Dastum’s magazine Musique Bretonne lists over 20 festoù-noz in Brittany during November—lower than the nearly 40 listed for October, but certainly a rich offering of four or five every weekend to choose from.

While the summer is when most festivals occur in Brittany, the fall is by no means a wasteland. Festival Bro Gwened (Festival of the

Vannetais Country) took place November 9-11 and featured concerts by Kornog, Gérard Delahaye, the maritime group Gaillards d'Avant, the harp-song duo of Anne Auffret and Dominig Bouchard, and the Bagad Melinerion paired with a Brazilian percussion group, Batucada Batala. Saturday night also included a fest noz with Filifala, Follenn and Kamalata, and Sunday featured a contest for young musicians (under 20) followed by a fest deiz.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of this festival was the presence of a number of exhibits and mini-conferences: photographs depicting Breton wrestling; paintings of Breton women by artist Sophie Darley; a gathering of Breton novelists, poets, publishers and scholars to discuss contemporary Breton literature; and a forum of bilingual education associations and cultural groups of the Vannes region to present their work (including Dihun, Div Yez, Diwan and Kendalc'h). Sunday of the festival opened with a Mass in Breton, and the festival also included several speakers: Erwan Puillandre on Breton wrestling (gouren) and historian Loeiz ar Beg on the history and identity of Breton geographical territories.

The Festival certainly had something for everyone and I was impressed by the beautiful bilingual (Breton-French) flyer I received from Ti an Natur (La Maison de Nature) of the City of Vannes who worked on organizing the event. I have a few extra copies of the brochure if any would like to have one. For more information about the city of Vannes and to find out about the 2002 festival contact the following web site: [www.vannes-bretagne-sud.com](http://www.vannes-bretagne-sud.com).



## The Celtic Year has Begun

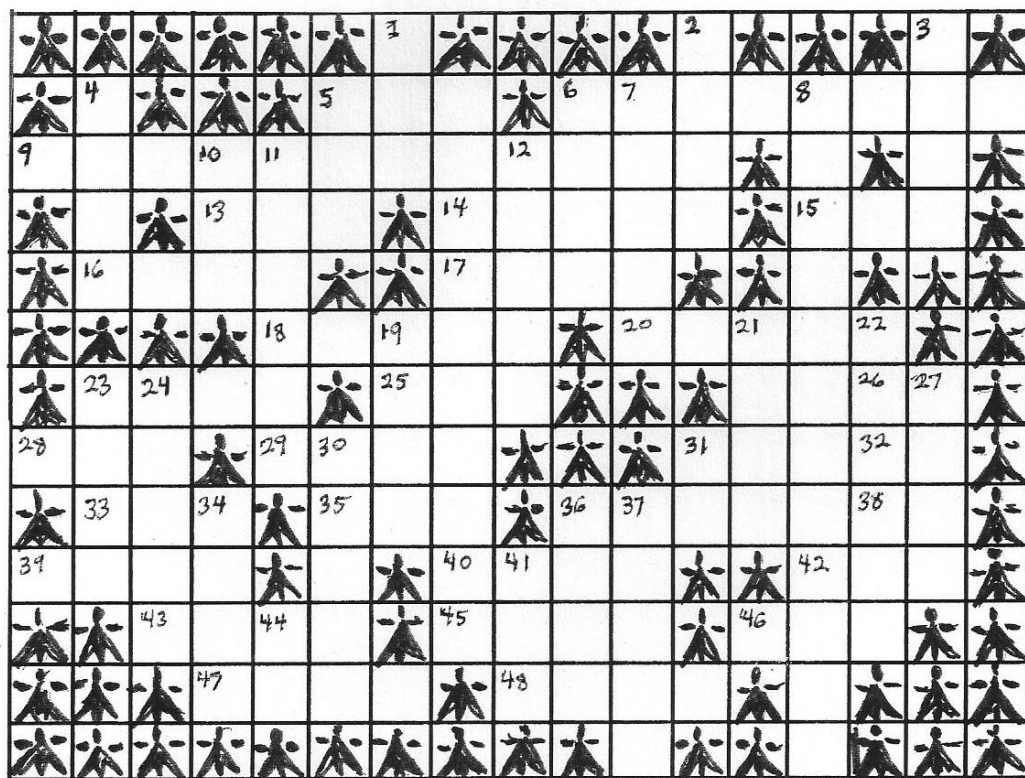
The Celtic League's "Celtic Calendar 2002" is out. Since the Celtic year begins November 1 with Samhain, that is where this unique calendar begins and it runs to October 31, 2002. All six Celtic languages are featured in two months of the year where the name of the month and days of the week are in that language and a proverb is also included. On each day of the year you can find a brief description for a minimum of two events that happened on that day in history (in English). For example on November 16, as I wrote this note, the calendar tells us that in "1745 the English army sets out from New Castle in vain attempt to top Scottish Jacobite invasion of England" and in "1985 - International Federation of Celtic Wrestling founded in Brittany." Instead of a glossy photo of some picturesque place in the Celtic world, one finds above each month artwork full of Celtic motifs presenting a moment in or personage of Celtic mythology—"the making of Blodeuwedd," "Manannán's chariot" or "the slaying of Baylor," for example. In the back of the calendar you find a brief description of all four Celtic "holidays": Samhain (November 1), Imbolc (February 1), Beltaine (May 1) and Lúghnasadh (August 1). There is also a page with the days of the months, days of the week, and numbers from 1 to 20 listed in all six of the Celtic languages.

November is nearly gone, but it's not too late to take advantage of the rest of the year. For more information about the calendar contact: Celtic Calendar, 2972 Valentine Avenue, Bronx, NY 10458 ([Alexeik@aol.com](mailto:Alexeik@aol.com) / phone 1-800-626-CELT). To find out more about the Celtic League and its active American branch, check out their web site: [www.celticleague.org](http://www.celticleague.org).

# Gerioù-kroaz / Crossword

It is one thing to try to solve a crossword puzzle, but in designing this one I found that it is infinitely more difficult to design one. I have to say that the hours I spent trying to fit words into a puzzle was certainly a good exercise for testing Breton vocabulary (and my Breton-English dictionary). I have tried to include some very basic Breton words and give ample hints so that even those with a minimal knowledge of Breton will be able to work on this puzzle. You will find quite a few of the Breton words elsewhere in the text of Bro Nevez. You will also find that I am looking for words in English (and in a few cases in French). I have tried to use italics when I am asking for the translation of a word.

The language of the word to be put in the puzzle for any given clue is indicated in brackets to make that as clear as possible. This is not a particularly neat and tidy crossword puzzle, but I hope you enjoy it. The solution will be in the next issue of Bro Nevez, but if you are anxious to get it sooner, let me know and I will send it to you. Let me know what you think. I would welcome you to send word games for Bro Nevez. If you include Breton vocabulary, keep things at a beginner's level. Not everyone has a dictionary to find obscure words. Of course, a puzzle or word game in English about Breton history or culture would be excellent. -- Lois



## ACROSS

5. A dot or spot. [Breton]
6. A red drink not native to Brittany, but good with dinner. [Breton]
9. A late night dance in Brittany. [Breton]
12. *Hent* – you take the high one and I'll take the low one. [English]
13. *Derv* – a hardwood tree common in Brittany as well as the U.S. [English]
14. The unique language native to eastern Brittany [French]
15. A less specific name in French for the beverage referred to in 6 across. [French]
16. *Head* in the Breton language is also the name of a famous early Pennsylvanian. [Breton]
17. Not narrow. [English]
18. *Heads* in French. [French]
20. The number of dwarfs Snow White found; If you take off the first letter, you get the Breton word for *eight*. [Breton]
23. An *enez* is surrounded by water [English]
25. The Breton word *unan* is similar to it's French equivalent. [French]
26. A preposition to locate where you are – the equivalent of *da* in Breton [English]
28. *Country*; \_\_\_\_\_ *Nevez*. [Breton]
29. Verses set to music; A *kan* in Breton [English]
31. A home. [Breton]. Once you solve this, you will have the first two letters for 27 down.
32. *Us* or *we*. [Breton].
33. The French *une* in English [English]
35. A little round green vegetable [English]
36. *Outside* or the *countryside* [Breton]
38. A familiar way to say *you* [Breton]
39. The land surrounded by water – this time in Breton. [Breton]
40. Most houses in Brittany are made of this. [Breton]
42. *Word* [Breton]; Try the title to this page for some help.
43. Your *rear end* [Breton].
45. Sea creature that has been a big part of Brittany's economy. [Breton]
46. *Dear* or *expensive*; if you add a circumflex to the middle letter you get the word for *city*. [Breton]
47. What you're called if you don't tell the truth. [English]
48. The building children go to to learn [Breton]

## DOWN

1. *Month* [Breton]
2. A Latin name you might call your dog.
3. What a *tro* is. Dancers do it in the *an dro* and many other circle dances. [English]
4. The number of fingers on each hand. [Breton]
5. A kiss [Breton]
6. A precious metal; *aour* in Breton. [English]
7. A Celtic neighbor of Brittany [English]
8. *New*, as in Bro \_\_\_\_\_ [Breton]
10. A *tune* [Breton].
11. Anne of Brittany's capital city [French]
12. What you do to a flag or children. [English]
14. A town in north-central Brittany (Treger) which hosts one of France's top soccer teams. [Breton]
19. A *ton* [English] – see 10 across for help
21. Looks like it should mean *island*, but it means *church* [Breton]
22. *Half* – first part of the name for the Breton circle dance \_\_\_\_\_ *dro*. [Breton]
23. *Houarn* in Breton, or *fer* in Breton or French [English]
24. Name of the person who plays a biniou or bombarde [Breton]
27. Plural for *home* [Breton]
30. A musical drama – recently one was composed in Brittany about Anne of Brittany [English]
31. Equivalent of the French *Toi* [Breton]
34. A *limb* or *member* [Breton]
36. *Mix* [Breton]
37. Brittany's "Grim Reaper". [Breton]
41. *Easy*; You may have studied Breton using the book *Brezhoneg, buan hag* \_\_\_\_\_ [Breton]
42. The green stuff that you mow in the summer. [Breton]
44. It's oval and has a shell [Breton].

## Travels in Brittany: An Account from 1890

The following account is by an English man (or woman) who spent seven weeks in Cancal, near St. Malo, probably in 1889. One gets a lovely view of the pains and pleasures of travel to this part of Brittany over one hundred years ago.

“A Corner of Brittany” (no author)  
Chamber’s Journal, No. 340, Vol. VII, July 5, 1890

When we put ourselves into the steamer at Southampton [England] at eleven p.m. that fine night in August, we had fair hopes of a placid arrival at St. Malo twelve hours later, and thoughts of a little French luncheon before our final destination was reached; but, eheu! One o’clock, two o’clock, next day found us wobbling, sick and sorry, in front of St. Malo, gazing with unappreciative eyes on the bay, bristling with rocks and studded with islands. Nothing but inward miseries appealed to us; not the beautiful and picturesque old town; not the Hen and Chickens group of islets; not the lonely tomb of Chateaubriand on its desolate rock, iron-railed and cross-guarded. Neither the loveliness nor the dirtiness of St. Malo moved us that day, for when at last the tide allowed us to land, the fierce battle of the *douane* begun; yelled at by porters, assailed by cab-drivers, shouldered aside by officials, for a long hour we waited before our luggage was allowed to wear the mystic white chalk-mark which freed it from further inspection.

The kind landlady of the house, or rather *appartement*, which we have taken here, ten miles from St. Malo, had written to say that her farmer with his *char-à-banc*, would await our arrival; so for him and his conveyance we looked, for by this time all thoughts of the little *déjeuner* had been abandoned, as it would put the shelter and rest for which we longed at a greater distance; and who can eat when *mal de mer* still reigns? Too low for pride, too abject for despair, too stultified for surprise, we behold our chariot, a common, roughly-painted haycart, provided with movable, sometimes too movable, benches; the grilled back let down so as to be almost level with the floor of the wagon, and our luggage was piled up in it, and then we ourselves got in, and the two hours’ drive began. Our coachman wore a blue blouse, full at the throat, loose below the waist. His whip was of string, so also was the harness. Did it break? Yes, frequently; but then the farmer got down and tied it together again. We drove past Parramée, with its gay casino and beautiful sands, through St. Coulomb, whose church clock has not gone for twenty years. And why should it go? What need of a clock have they? Ask its inhabitants. They get up when they wake, eat when they are hungry, and go to sleep when they have done their work. This good, wholesome, Stock Exchange sort of rule gives the key to

much that passes in this breezy, healthy, unhurried country of the bright blue sky. Man dominates, not Time.

We passed through a little wood where, in the Great Revolution, many hundreds of poor refugees were concealed. The rich earth is richer for their graves; for dead and living were in close proximity, and the last soon became the first.

When the farmer urged the slow horse, the “Camille”—with whom we became so intimately acquainted later on—to an attempt at speed, we felt that our voyaging, for the time being was over; and when the *Grand Château* was pointed out, we rejoiced greatly, and uttered no disclaimer as to its title, but got down gratefully before the bleached, flat-faced house, whose long white shutters were tightly pinioned back at the side of each door and window. It was not exactly pretty, this hundred-and-sixty years’ old French farmhouse; but the door, which opened outwards, showed a very large square central room, in which we were received with utmost courtesy and kindness by Madame our landlady, and every available relation of hers. The prettiest possible little repast awaited us; but no cheery teapot gratified the eyes of the ladies of our party; that had to be added by them later on. The whole room was decorated with flowers and ribbons. The furniture was covered with dainty frilled white; and the freshness and cleanliness of everything was delightful. Then kind Monsieur L\_\_\_ signified his being at our disposal if we wished to see our other rooms, and we went with him into the kitchen, where our *cuisinière* Marie, of the smiling face and bolster figure, waited to welcome us. At one end of the kitchen was a large square cupboard. Monsieur L\_\_\_ opened it, and a rope thick as an arm and knotted at intervals swung out. Monsieur L\_\_\_ preyed us to ascend. Too weary to discern, in the semi-darkness, that the cupboard concealed a spiral staircase as well as the knotted rope, it was with many a wild inward tremor, with many a memory of ‘Curfew shall not ring to-night’ that we grasped the rope. But though ‘the way up to my chamber was up a winding stair,’ still, staircase there was. Not hand over hand was the ascent accomplished. It was a bad ‘getting up stairs;’ whilst for the descent, *facilis est, &c.*

The four large airy bedrooms were uncarpeted, save for occasional rugs, but sweet and clean, and contained a very comfortable bed, with pretty draperies, sweet semi-bleached linen sheets, and square monogram-embroidered

pillows, reposing outside, and bashfully covered with lace-trimmed squares. These are the principal rooms, and were ours to have and to hold as long as we liked. The inferior rooms, with a separate entrance, were tenanted by the farmer and his family. The small courtyard in front, the earth of which was white with shells, contained a poultry-run, &c.; the pretty tufted black and white Houdan cocks and hens were quite ornamental. Fields and orchards were all about us. We looked out upon a mass of *blé noir* (rye), growing under apple and pear trees. With this we made subsequent acquaintance in the form of the delicious *galettes* which Marie sent to table. She told us piles of the tempting-looking pancakes thus made were served out to the farm-labourers at harvest-time. Truly, we were pleased with our surroundings; and if bright brisk air, a country beautiful and wind-swept by ocean breezes, and a gashed and serrated coast, be charming, then indeed is Cancale full of charms.

In our unceiled rooms, big beams, twelve inches square, ran from back to front, coursed by smaller ones from side to side. In our kitchen, various fires cooked our modest repasts. There was a tiny stove, supplemented by a wood-fire on the hearth; also by a bucket of charcoal, set in the middle of the floor; and also by a little closed-in portable oven, standing only fourteen inches high. In this last reposed one of the pair of fowls in which we now and then indulged; whilst the stove roasted the other, no one receptacle being large enough to cook the two together. These fowls were stuffed with prunes and raisins; and very good they were. The food-supply was sufficient; ample, indeed, but did not admit of great variety. Meat was cheap, but a trifle coarse. We gradually drifted down to excellent *biftecks*, veal and lamb, both very good; but the lamb of Brittany is larger than Southdown mutton. Fish is plentiful; but the audacity of the demands of the fishwoman "who had come all this long way in the hope of pleasing Madame," was so great, that our refusal to entertain exorbitant prices was firm, and led to our being obliged to do without any for a few days, as we were not energetic enough to attend the seven a.m. fish-market. Fruit and vegetables were abundant and delicious; the apricots looked the incarnation of sunlight.

Cancale is famous for its oysters; square fenced-in beds of them may be seen at low tide in the bay 'La Houle.' Unlovely they appear in their muddy parks; but they are excellent, albeit 'trailing no clouds of glory do they come.' Hideous are the low flat wood-fenced beds in which they are brought up, and which you are invited to inspect by women, who, dabbling in the mud hire out clumsy overshoes to render your walk to them less offensive. The baby oysters live far from shore—those ready for consumption close to it; between these two grades all stages of growth may be found. It is emphatically a fishing village. The coming in or going out of the boats is a sight

to be remembered; those boats in the bay, lying at peace under the light of the moon, a sight never to be forgotten.

Women seemed to do most of the work; men were scarce, for fifteen hundred of them were in far-off 'Terre-Neuf' (Newfoundland). When it was rumored about that we had arrived, we, the only English in the place, we had eager inquiries as to whether St. Pierre (in Newfoundland) was not quite close to England! so far off do both countries equally appear to this somewhat stationary population. In February the male inhabitants go to St. Pierre, only returning to wives and sweethearts in October; for this reason marriages are greatly more numerous in winter than at any other time. 'The men are here then, and there is not so much work to be done.' The marriages generally take place early in the day; and the wedding party, two and two, promenaded the town, headed by the bride and bridegroom. The pretty girl whom we saw leaning on the arm of her newly-acquired husband, was in black silk—black is the gala dress here—with a mass of white in front, a white veil with a wreath of orange blossoms, and an immense bouquet—all the gift of the jaunty bridegroom, who smilingly smoked a gay cigarette. It was pleasant to hear that this was a love-match; the girl had no *dot*; but her fiancé would not let that stand in the way, and himself provided wedding-feast and wedding-clothes.

Cancale boasts a fine church, marvelous as to size and solidity for so small a place; but it is not yet mellowed by age. A ship or two hang from the roof, gaily decked out with flags—a votive offering from some sailor on the eve of a voyage, or of some sailor's wife in hope of her husband's speedy and favourable return. On Sundays the church is filled to overflowing and never once, on other days, did we enter it without finding reverent peasant worshippers. At *le Verger*, a sandy beach about two miles off is another small, very pretty 'Church of the Virgin Mary.' It is built right on the sands, and is supposed to commemorate a shipwreck which took place there a thousand years ago. This is par excellence, the mariners' church, and hither barefoot, walk the sailors on their return from Terre Neuf, in winter, to testify gratitude if a favourable voyage has been granted. Hither too, on the 15<sup>th</sup> of August, the day of the 'Fête de Marie,' come all Cancale. A long procession was formed of priests and Sisters, and 'Filles de Marie' and 'Enfants de Marie,' and boys as choristers and as miniature seamen. The white road was gay with fluttering surplices, and the air melodious with 'Ave, Ave, Maria.'

The neat appearance of the peasants was striking; all are well shod, and walk well; pretty faces abound; the universal black dress is always fresh; and the black shawl, be it new or old, is put on with the utmost care. This universal and simple costume must surely save time and money, as well as prevent those outrages of colour

universal in a country where 'motley's the only wear.' The thrifty wardrobe can be replenished with ease when fashions continue the same year after year, and no 'favourite colour this season' has to be aspired to and obtained in some sorry material. Every peasant at her wedding has a large mahogany or rosewood *armoire* or wardrobe in which to keep her clothes, and these shining presses reflect the loving labour spent on them. A tall old-fashioned clock, too, often stands by the *armoire*; the brass-work of some is beautiful.

Peaceful harvesting operations went on all round us; we saw the old-fashioned flail, wielded by women as well as men. In many places we saw a horse going round and round, forming as it were, the outer circle of a huge wheel, on the center of which stood a blue-bloused man, urging on this steed with 'Hui done!' 'Va-t-on' &c. &c. They were thrashing out the corn. But not so pleasant was it to see that unfortunate horse who, to achieve the same end, mounted a terrible treadmill; tied up to the summit by a short rope; stoppage in that weary work task would lead to the breaking of his neck. Evidently, no Society for the Preservation of Cruelty obtains in Brittany; the cats and dogs are a wretched half-starved race, flying from the voice our touch of man.

We alone in Cancale were English; we alone spoke our language; echoes from the great home-country reached us deadened by a day's distance; but we were satisfied, 'wishing for nothing, quite content with sunshine and sweet air.' These we had in abundance. Fresh sea-breezes swept the land, and carried away the odours of the undrained streets; and we boiled and filtered our drinking water; lay down to rest in peace, and rose to remember with gratitude that there was but one post a day, and very late in the day too.

During our seven weeks' stay we saw but one case of drunkenness. Bunches of mistletoe over the doorways of the cafés denoted that cider was there sold. It is the great drink of the country, and not a ferocious tippie.

We took many a drive in the farmer's cart, passing the irregular picturesque fields, and watched the broad-leaved tobacco plant come to perfection. It was at last gathered, and hung up in long straight strips under extempore sheds, or beneath trees, gradually turning a genial brown. Great care has to be exercised in the drying, which must be neither too quick nor too slow; so it is carefully sheltered from heat or damp. Acres of this plant grow all about. It is never allowed to go to seed, lest a free supply of it should get into the hands of the people, to whom Government sells the seed, paying the grower twopence-halfpenny for every pound delivered. During the time of its growth, strictest watch is kept by Government inspectors, who count every plant and every leaf. Any deficiency in the

producable quantity is taxed with a fine of sixteen francs a pound.

The flora of this corner of Brittany is exquisite: honeysuckle, white, pink, lemon-coloured, hangs from the hedges; the ground is yellow with toad-flac and bedstraw; purple loosestrife abounds, rare ladies' tresses, orchids are beneath your feet, whilst ferns spring up everywhere. The country walks all round are practically inexhaustible, whilst sea-border leaves nothing to be desired. At every turn of the rugged coast you come upon some new little bay—'ports' as they are called—each differing in character, and each full of charm, from Port Briac—where we take daily baths, untroubled by bathing-machines, and finding excellent dressing-rooms in the rocks—to Port Guimorais, with its small cave and its passionate waves. Port Mer abounds with shells and with the lovely blue sea-thistle or 'chardon;' Port Verger has shifting sands, and its chapel; Port Guesclin is fortified, and has a beautiful double bay.

Everywhere one comes across wayside stone crosses, worn and rounded by age. Here and there, notably in Port La Houle, a crucifix may be seen, gigantic in size—a story of infinite love and sorrow, carved in wood.

For excursions, St. Malo and St. Servan, with their cathedrals and tempting shops, are near; so also Paramée, Dinard, Dinan, with its picturesque approach up the Rance. We drove, too, to Dol, taking care to go there on Saturday, market-day, when a variety of costumes may be seen amongst the peasants. The quaint cathedral is of itself worth a day's march, and is, we are told, unique. Then there is world-famous Mont St. Michel, built, so the legend runs, by angelic direction. It was used first as a monastery, then as a state prison; a marvelous erection. How were those huge slabs of stone, those wonderful pillars, those great arches, brought and built up here, miles and miles from civilization, on a little island—now connected with the mainland by a causeway—which rears itself straight up from the sea? It claims kindred with our Cornish St. Michael's Mount, to which it bears a strong resemblance, owning the same godfather. To see this marvelous place, it is well to sleep there for a night; it deserves two days for exploration. Its chapel is beautiful, its *oubiettes* horrible. Here you are shown the arch which formed the back of the iron cage in which perished the unfortunate Dubourg, a political prisoner. French gaiety and ferocity seem to meet when a pretty woman smilingly offers you a photograph of his rat-eaten body and other similar horrors. Amongst them, you may be struck by the calm refined *personnel* of the 'Man with the Iron Mask' with his half-veiled face. As to the authenticity of these portraits, who can vouch for, who deny it!

**HELP!!!**

**We need some help with the U.S. ICDBL website.**

Right now we have a good website, thanks to our web master Mary Turner, but it is in need of regular updates and we could do much more to make it interesting and useful to those seeking information about the Breton language and Brittany.

While the basic information about us does not change, there are certainly many additions we could make. Right now we have the "Guide to Music in Brittany" (a 20-page document that is part of our publication series). We can certainly add other documents we have prepared which will need updating from time to time. For example a guide to learning materials for Breton—especially those that are friendly to English speakers. We also have a chronology of history related to the Breton language that needs to be brought up to date. Someone with good graphic skills could certainly add some visual elements to these publications.

Because there is already a lot of excellent information available from Brittany via the internet, one of the most useful features of our web page is the links to other web sites. I use this annotated list frequently, and when I get requests for basic information from students who contact me, I frequently send them to it. Since web site addresses change and new ones are added, this is in constant need of updating.

And then there is always the possibility of getting Bro Nevez on line (as an alternative to the print copy). This could still be a subscription service, but since we would be saving postage, we could make the fee much lower. An archives of past Bro Nevez issues (or selected articles) is also a project that is worth considering.

There are many possibilities to expand our web site, both to add more basic information and to help people find other sources of information Bretons themselves have put on the net (why duplicate work that is already being done?).

BUT, Mary can't do this all by herself. She's a busy lady and just runs out of time.

If you would enjoy working with Mary on the website please e-mail her and discuss the possibilities. She will be delighted to hear from you:

**Marybzh@swbell.net**

If you haven't looked at our web site for a while, check it out: **[www.breizh.net/icdbl.htm](http://www.breizh.net/icdbl.htm)**

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