

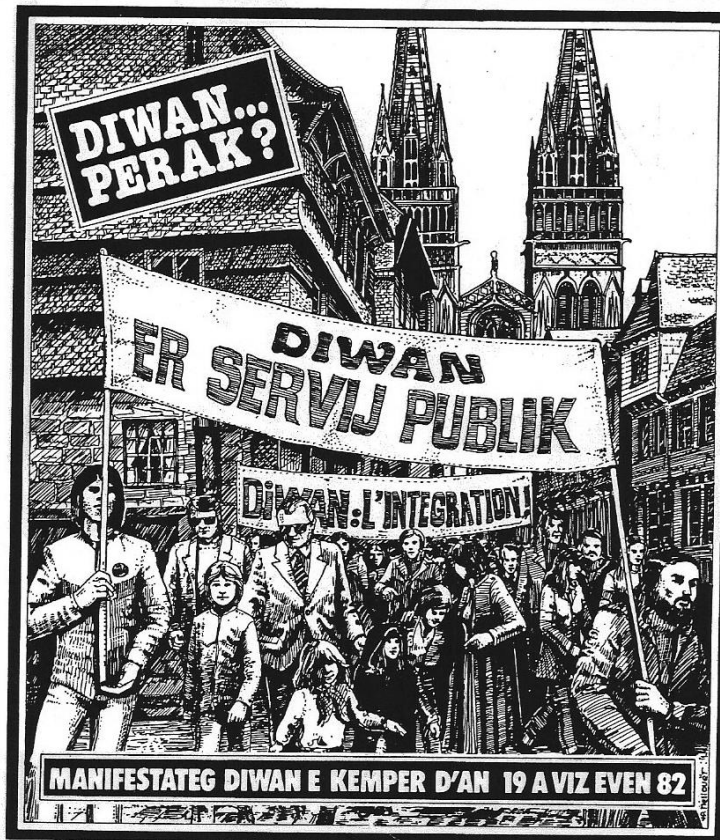
# BRO NEVEZ

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

## AN HAD

KELAOUENN DIWAN

Niv 5



KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

No. 81

February 2002

---

**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: [jdkoneill@sympatico.ca](mailto:jdkoneill@sympatico.ca)). Telephone: (416) 422-0748.



## FROM THE EDITOR

As our American Members and subscribers to Bro Nevez know, we have been forced to raise the membership dues and subscription costs for the first time in a long time (just the second time in our 20+ years of existence). So now to be a member of the U.S. ICDBL or a subscriber the cost is a flat \$20 (subscription is included in membership). This increase is necessary to meet the ever-rising costs of U.S. postage and an even more drastic rise in international fees where "printed matter" rates have been eliminated—doubling overseas costs for small newsletters like us. While your \$20 does not get you a slick and glossy magazine, your fee insures that we can continue to send Bro Nevez free of charge to Breton organizations and individuals who are actively advancing the cause of the Breton language and culture. This is a big part of our job to show international support their work, and I can assure you that Bro Nevez is very well received and read in Brittany. So thank you to all those who have continued to support the U.S. ICDBL over a number of years.

## ON THE COVER

Once again I have pulled an image from an old copy of Diwan's magazine called An Had, this one published in **1982**. Here it is twenty years later, and Diwan school children and parents must still stage big street demonstrations to demand integration into the public school system. The fight goes on. See page 2.

# News of the DIWAN Schools ... the Saga Continues

Lois Kuter

## **A very quick reintroduction ... if anyone needs one (From Bro Nevez 80, Nov. 2001)**

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. This system means that the Diwan schools have been very effective in giving children the means to learn Breton and use it as a living language. 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.

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. Efforts to gain incorporation into the National Education system have been spurred in more recent years 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, and several agreements were worked out with the French Education system during the spring and summer of 2001 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, the French government (Conseil d'Etat) suspended this agreement for public integration of Diwan. This was in part due to pressure 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.”

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. This constitutional argument also blocks France’s adoption of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. 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.

## **New Developments ...**

More fuel has been added to the fire of those intent on burning down Diwan. In considering various articles of finance laws for 2002, the Conseil Constitutionnel (a high court of France) did not find that the article 134 concerning the integration of Diwan teachers and personnel into the public system to be contrary to the French Constitution. But in its December 27<sup>th</sup> decision on this matter, the Constitutional Council clearly stated that the immersion style of teaching Breton is contrary to the Article 2 of the French Constitution.

Here’s how the Council states things: “The usage of a language other than French cannot be imposed on students in establishments of public education in the operation [life] of the establishment or in teaching subjects other than the language in question.” This not only eliminates the use of Breton as the language for playground or cafeteria communication, but also as a language used to teach math, science or history—a restriction which could also impact regular public school bilingual programs where such subjects are taught through the medium of Breton.

It is the immersion system of using Breton as the medium for all activity at a school that is troublesome. Yet, it is this use of Breton for the life of the school that so effectively allows the youngest children (preschool and primary school) who do not come from Breton-speaking families to master the language and use it naturally. The whole point of enrolling one’s child in a Diwan school is to get such immersion (which is chosen and not “imposed”). Thus any



proposal for public school integration that compromises this is not acceptable to Diwan.

What's next? Given the continued opposition from the French government, there has been division within the Diwan community and there are parents and teachers who feel that Diwan should not pursue the fight for public school integration, but continue to work as a "private association" that is open to all the public. And one might wonder if all the energy spent fighting for integration – and an integration that fully protects Diwan's unique pedagogical style – could be better spent otherwise. But, the fight offers an important opportunity to mobilize all Bretons behind the cause of forcing France to live up to European standards of linguistic rights. France should not be allowed to stifle the growth of language immersion schools that clearly carry no threat to the health of the French language and have a proven track record of high academic quality.

At its General Assembly on January 26<sup>th</sup>, 160 delegates from the Diwan schools (parents and staff) voted to continue to work toward public school integration. This includes going to the Council of State (Conseil d'Etat) to demand that the protocol adopted in May be unblocked and funding approved for salaries. And action will include working with elected officials to get them to put pressure on the government to make necessary constitutional changes and to insist that France ratify the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. One can be sure that Diwan will be an issue in any upcoming elections. Action may also include taking France to court – the European Court for Human Rights, if all else fails. As work continues on integration, work will also continue to get the financial support needed to keep the school thriving and growing.

To keep fully up-to-date on developments in the integration fight, and to find news about the Diwan schools and their many interesting projects, consult Diwan's web site: [www.diwanbreizh.org](http://www.diwanbreizh.org)



## **BLAZ PRODUKTION AND THE A-HED AR C'HANTVED PROJECT**

Our association was founded in February 1998 around the « A-hed ar C'hantved » (throughout the century) project. Our aim was to record in digital video testimonies of Breton native speakers around 6 major themes (rural life – wars – women – school – emigration – industry and trades).

Our standpoint is clearly revivalist, not conservationist, as we believe promotion of the Breton language should be based on our main resource: the important number of Breton native speakers. Language acquisition is in our mind mainly a matter of imitation and reproduction of sound phonetic and syntactic patterns, that only native speakers can provide. Not to mention the mass of information (historic, social, musical, ethnographic...) thus collected.

Out of this 300-hour fund, we have developed 5 dialectal compilations, based on the same pattern : about 30' of short interview extracts, followed by a short film. Our 6<sup>th</sup> compilation (Bro Gwened) is due out before Summer 2002.

These are distributed through all schools providing Breton teaching in Brittany (about 800) by TES, as well as libraries and a number of adult-teaching bodies : associations, universities....

All cassettes come in **PAL** format, with MSWORD files attached (short biographical notice and full transcript of all dialogues, for teaching and self-learning purposes).

### **Available :**

1. Hent Menez Are : 30mn interviews followed by 10' film : « dre Gervrug gant Marcelle ha Louise »
2. Bro-Vrest : 46'
3. Treger Bihan : 34' + 20' film: « Kudenn Ebet ! » (« Gouel ar Filmoù » award - Douarnenez Film Festival 2000)
4. Va zour dantelezet : 42' interviews around Saint-Pol de Léon + 10' film : « Bazichen »
5. Traoù Kerne : 41' interviews in South Cornouaille + 9' film : « Brizh-du : an distro ? »

In preparation : Bro Gwened

Each individual cassette (+ texts) costs □ 50 ; 5-cassette bundle □ 200. Mailing costs on top (yet to be worked out between France and USA/Canada).

Our collecting work goes on. We tend to concentrate on our own area (Menez Are) while training people and promoting the creation of similar workshops around Brittany. We are also currently working on two 52' documentaries (Brittany before and after 1945), based on our recordings + important archive fund from the Cinémathèque de Bretagne. All in Brezhoneg, needless to say. These will be subtitled.

Contact : Association Blaz Produktion  
La Gare – 29690 Locmaria-Berrien  
Tel/Fax : (33) 02 98 99 81 95  
e-mail : [christian.lebras@club-internet.fr](mailto:christian.lebras@club-internet.fr)



# Radios in Brittany

Paul Chérel

*The following article was kindly submitted to us by Paul Chérel who lives in Plouharnel, Brittany. Understanding how media operates in different countries is always confusing, so I think this article will help you understand how things work in Brittany and some of the various radios stations which are working to offer Breton programming. - LK*

If by chance you, American citizens or expatriated Bretons, are travelling in Brittany, you will possibly have the desire to hear something unique to the country on your portable radios. Don't try to ask people in the streets for the right frequencies nor look for this information in newspapers! You will be automatically directed to the official broadcasting system (France Inter, France Culture, France Musique, France Bleues, Franc tra la la) or to the commercial business (RTL, Europe 1 and 2, NRJ, Fun, Sky, and all that sort of thing) which cover the whole "national" territory of France.

The reason is that the use of the Hertzian waves in France, theoretically free since only about 20 years ago, is quite restrictive in spite of official declarations. A national authority called CSA regulates everything which relates to the diffusion of thought, including as far as the radio is concerned the delivery of frequencies, the authorized power of emission as well as the financial resources. A special tax called "redevance" is for the exclusive benefit of the "State" radios while the "commercial" radios have to appeal to advertising for their subsistence.

Nevertheless, "local" radios exist thanks to the courage and obstinacy of some "volunteer" radio lovers, offering programs somewhat different than those proposed by the "Big" radio stations. Of course, these radios are limited in power of emission (their covered territory rarely exceeds several dozen miles), and they have no rights to seek "advertising" except from small local tradespeople and within very small percentages of their global financial resources which come from members' contributions and grants from local authorities. Furthermore, they are intentionally ignored by the big newspapers, the subsistence of which depends largely on State aid.

In Brittany some of these "local" radios have associated their efforts in defending the Breton culture and identity--essentially language, music (Breton and Celtic), festivals, exhibitions and book editions--constituting a veritable network of exchanges of programs and emissions through CORLAB (Coordination des Radios Locales et Associatives de Bretagne).

If, therefore, you want to become acquainted with the "real" Brittany or to renew old "memories", don't hesitate to connect on the following frequencies, depending on the region you travel. You will hear good typical music--traditional or contemporary--and you will receive local news instead of the "pensée unique" prevailing in France. And you will perhaps familiarize yourself with "Brezhoneg" used partly in the various emissions.

- North Finistère (Penn ar Bed): Region of Brest, Morlaix (Montroulez): Arvorig FM: 91.7 Mhz
- South Finistère: Region of Quimper (Kemper), Pont l'Abbé (Pont-n'-Abad), Quimperlé (Kemperle): Radio Kerne: 90.2 Mhz.
- South Finistère: Region of Douarnenez: Radio Kerne: 92 Mhz.
- Center Finistère: Region of Huelgoat: Radio Kreiz Breizh: 106.5 Mhz.
- Côtes d'Armor (Aodou an Arvor): Region of Callac (Kallag): Radio Kreiz Breizh: 102.9 Mhz
- Côtes d'Armor: Region of Guingamp (Gwengamp): Radio Kreiz Breizh: 99.4 Mhz.
- South Côtes d'Armor and North Morbihan: Region of Loudéac (Loudieg), Pontivy (Pondi): Radio Bro Gwened: 101.7 Mhz.
- South Morbihan: Lorient (An Oriant), Auray (An Alré), Vannes (Gwened), Carnac (Karnag), Quiberon (Kiberen), Questembert (Kistreberzh): Radio Bro Gwened: 97.3 Mhz.
- Ille et Vilaine (Ill ha Gwilen): Region de Rennes (Roazhon): Radio Gwagenn: 94 Mhz.
- Loire-Atlantique (Liger Atlantel): Region de Nantes (Naoned): Radio-Alternatives: 98.1 Mhz.
- Loire-Atlantique: Region de Saint-Nazaire (Sant-Nazer), La Baule (Ar Baol), Guerande (Gwennrann): Radio-Alternatives: 91 Mhz.

Good luck and "Degemer mat e Breizh!" (Welcome to Brittany).

## **BRETON PLACE NAMES THROUGHOUT THE WORLD – A Book Review .. and More**

**Bernard Le Nail. Noms de lieux bretons à travers le monde.** Rennes: Les Portes du Large. 2001. 240 pages. ISBN 2 914612 05 2.

A Presentation and Question for Americans from the author, Bernard Le Nail (translation Lois Kuter)

This original work is an alphabetically arranged dictionary with over 800 entries which document over 1,000 place names all over the world with a Breton origin or given by Bretons. This is the first inventory ever made and published of all the place names of the world which evoke Brittany or the memory of Bretons who have traveled there. One finds the Kerguelen and Kermadec Islands (New Zealand/Australia) as well as the town of Saint-Brieux in the Canadian plains, but also hundreds upon hundreds of unexpected names, many of which have roots in Brittany's Vannetais area (Bro Gwened).

One thus discovers cantons of Auray, Josselin and Trécaillon in Quebec, and one finds a Cape Allaire, Cape Rohan, Port-Noval, a Quiberon Cove and Gulf of Morbihan in the Kerguelen Islands. There's a Lake Blavet in Quebec, and an Island of Groix (written as Groais) and a Belle-Isle in Newfoundland. One discovers that the capital of Mauritius (ex Ile de France) off of Madagascar owes its name Port-Louis to the city of the same name in Morbihan, and that one of the principal docks of its commercial harbor is named Caudan. In the small island of Saint-Barthélemy ("Saint-Barth") in the Antilles, Lorient is the name of a town as well as a point on the coast, a cove, and a 173 meter hill, the Morne Lorient. Place names evoking the names of Breton men and women from Morbihan are also very numerous throughout the world.

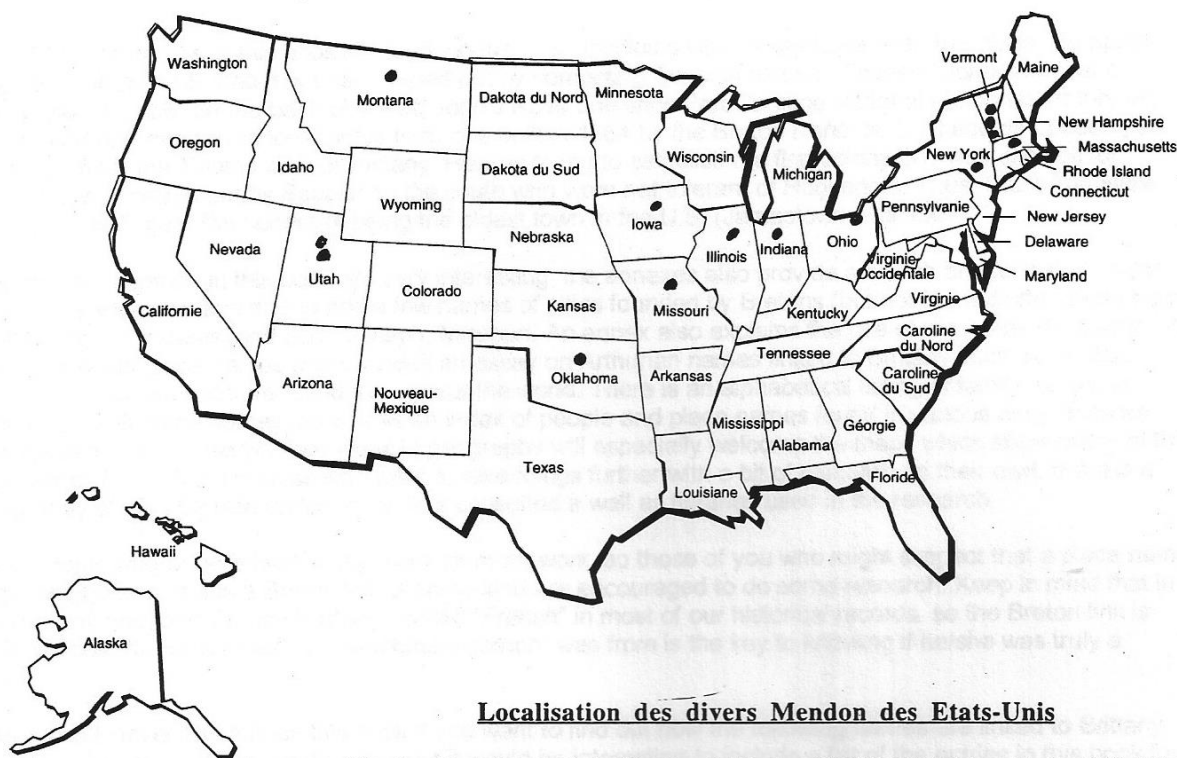
Prudently, the author did not include place names where the Breton origin was not certain, or when cited, it has been indicated that these were homonyms (such as Brest, ex Brest-Litovsk in Belarus) or names having a common origin, such as Bangor in Belle-Isle which is a name found in Ireland, Wales, U.S., Canada and Australia. Thus the name Mendon was not included; and while not found in Canada or Australia, it is found in a dozen states in the U.S.: Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, Montana, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Utah, and Vermont. The name is given to various types of locations including a town of over 4,000 inhabitants, two small rivers, and two mountain peaks: Mendon Peak in the Appalachian Mountains in Vermont which is 1,170 meters, and Mendon Peak in Utah in the Rocky Mountains which is 2,672 meters high.

It is difficult at this point to know the origin of the name Mendon in the U.S., but one must direct research first to New England, the area more early settled by Europeans, since names in the west are more recent and often have an origin in a place name already in the east. This is the case for the town of Mendon in Utah (population 684). The first two inhabitants were two brothers, Alexander and Robert Hill, who arrived in the spring of 1855. They were Mormons like most of the pioneers coming to the region of the Rocky Mountains in that period, and the settlement was baptized Mendon in honor of the Mormon leader ("the Apostle") Benson who was born in the town called Mendon in Massachusetts.

If there is a link between the Mendons of the U.S. and Mendon in Brittany, this has not yet been established. It could be tied to the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes (1685). In fact, nearly 5,000 Bretons of the Protestant religion emigrated at that time. Many headed to England via the Anglo-Norman Islands (Jersey, Guernsey...), and some continued on to English colonies. This is probably the origin of towns named Berrien in the U.S. It is possible that a Breton Huguenot from Mendon adopted this name as a family name in crossing the Atlantic, or might have given this name to the land where he settled in New England at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

The author would very much welcome any information anyone might be able to provide on a link between the name Mendon in the U.S. and (Locoal-) Mendon in Brittany. (See map which follows)

Bernard Le Nail  
Editions Porte du Large  
9 rue Duclos  
35000 Rennes



#### Localisation des divers Mendon des Etats-Unis

Mendon (Iowa), comté de Clayton, latitude : 43° 01' 09" N, longitude : 91° 12' 13" O  
 Mendon (Illinois), comté d'Adams, lat.: 40° 05' 18" N, long.: 91° 17' 01" O  
 Mendon Church (Indiana), comté de Madison, lat.: 39° 57' 09", long.: 85° 46' 02" O  
 Mendon (Massachusetts), comté de Worcester, lat.: 42° 06' N, long.: 71° 38' O  
 Mendon (Michigan), comté de St. Joseph, lat.: 42° 00' 23" N, long.: 85° 27' O  
 Mendon (Missouri), comté de Chariton, lat.: 39° 35' 23" N, long.: 93° 08' 04" O  
 Mendon (Montana), comté de Judith Basin, lat.: 46° 54' 20" N, long.: 93° 08' 04" O  
 Mendon (New-York), comté de Monroe, long.: 42° 59' 52" N, long.: 77° 30' 17" O  
 Mendon (Ohio), comté de Mercer, lat.: 40° 40' 24" N, long.: 84° 31' 08" O  
 Mendon Post Office (Oklahoma), comté d'Alfafa (coordonnées inconnues)  
 Mendon (Utah), comté de Cache, lat.: 41° 42' 36" N, long.: 111° 59' 05" O  
 Mendon Peak (Utah), comté de Cache, lat.: 41° 40' 57" N, long.: 112° 01' 49" O  
 Mendon (Vermont), comté de Rutland, lat.: 43° 39' 05" N, long.: 72° 55' 39" O  
 Mendon Brook (Vermont), comté de Rutland, deux ruisseaux de ce nom  
 Mendon Peak (Vermont), comté de Rutland, lat.: 43° 35' 42" N, long.: 72° 50' 48" O

#### **More about this book ... Presentation by Lois Kuter**

This new book, *Noms de lieux bretons à travers le monde*, is indeed a "dictionary" of place names and in reading each entry one gets a fascinating view of Breton emigration and world exploration. A large number of the place names cited are from Canada—especially Quebec. My rough count showed 280 names in Quebec and 120 in the rest of Canada. Another world area with a large representation is Australia and New Zealand and the islands of the surrounding oceans (some 160 names). There are also a scattering of names in Europe, South America, Asia, and Africa, not to mention Antarctica. Bretons have not only left a trace on every continent on earth, but also on the moon! The Moigno Crater is named after the Abbé François Moigno from Guéméné-sur-Scorff (1804-1884).



Over 100 place names in this book are found in the U.S., including what might have been the oldest European settled town in the U.S. had it not been wiped out by competing Spanish settlers. Sixteen kilometers east of Jacksonville, Florida, on the bank of the St. John's River one finds Fort Caroline National Memorial. At this site one can find part of a fort reconstructed from one built in 1564 by the Breton René de Goulaine de Laudonnière who hailed from the Nantes area of Brittany. He was trying to establish the first colony on American soil for France but was driven out by Spanish to the south who were not tolerant of Huguenots. Thus, Saint Augustine, founded in 1565, gets the honors of being the oldest town in the U.S. (Jamestown was 1607).

While the main entries in this book are very interesting, the annexes also provide a wealth of information to put things into a wider context and to add a few names of cities founded by Bretons (but not named after them) such as Little Rock, Arkansas, and Saint Joseph, Missouri. An annex also explains the use of the words "Bretagne" and "Breton" in world place names and provides an essay on Arthurian names linked to Brittany such as Avalon, Lancelot, Merlin, etc, that are found throughout the world. There is an alphabetical listing of family names in Brittany found in place names, as well as an index of people and place names found in various entry texts for cross referencing. Those who are weak in geography will especially welcome the maps which show many of the place names cited. And for those who want to take things further with a bit of research on their own, there is a bibliography of over 60 references the author consulted as well as libraries used in the research.

This is a topic where there is certainly room for more work, so those of you who might suspect that a place name in your neighborhood has a Breton link of some kind are encouraged to do some research. Keep in mind that in the U.S., any one from France is always called "French" in most of our historical records, so the Breton link is never obvious. Knowing where a "Frenchman/woman" was from is the key to knowing if he/she was truly a Breton.

While you will have to purchase this book if you want to find out how the following names are linked to Brittany and Breton explorers or emigrants, I thought it would be interesting to include a list of the entries in this book for U.S. place names. Perhaps you live in or near one of these places!

Alexandria Bay - NY	Brittany Farms/Highlands - PA	Moreauville - LA
Aubry - KS	Brittany Forest - GA	Pepin Lake - WI
Audrain Branch - MT	Brittany Lake - OR	Port-Royal - SC
Audrain Co. - MO	Brittany Meadows - CT	Poydras, Poydras Bayou/ Crevasse/Revetment - LA
Audrain Lake - CA	Brittany Woods - MS	Renan - VA
Audrain Prairies - MO	Castorland - NY	Riou Bay, Point Riou - AK
Audubon - LA, NJ, IL, MN, IA, MO, PA, CO, ND	Caumont Bay & Caumont River - NY	Robidoux, Robidoux Branch - MT
Belle Isle - LA	Crozet - VA	Robidoux Creek - KS
Berrien, Berrien County, Berrien Spring - IL	De Langle Mountain - AK	Robidoux Pass - WY
Berrien Co. - GA	Fort Caroline - FL	Rohan Knob - KY
Bottineau - ND	Guenoc - CA	Rubidoux - CA
Bottineau Field - MN	Guillou - NM	Saint Landry - LA
Brest & Brest Bay - MI	Jacques Cartier State Park - NY	Tanguy - PA
Breton - KS, KY, LA	Jekyll Island - GA	Theresa - NY
Breton Bay - MD, VA	Jud - ND	Trappist - KY
Breton Beach - MD	Judson - ND	Tremel Islands - AK
Breton Canal, Breton Island, Breton Sound - LA	La Harpe - KS, IL	Verne - KY, OK, TN
Breton Creek - MT	Lamoare & Lamoare Co. - ND	Verne Lake - GA
Breton Woods - NJ	Le Bars Ranch - CA	Cape Vincnet - NY
Bretona Creek - CA	Lebec - CA	
Bretones, Isla de - FL	Camp Lejeune - NC	
Bretonville - PA	Lenoir - NC	
Bretton - SD	Lenoir City - TN	
Bretton Heights (Trench Hill) - CT	Le Ray - NY, MN	
Bretton Woods - NH, GA, MD	Leraysville - PA, NY	
Brittany - LA	Lesage - AZ	
Brittany Bay Park - FL	Lesage Lake - MI	
Brittany Farms - VA	Limantour Beach - CA	
	Monti Bay - AK	
	Morbihan - LA	

# Breton Authors and Books for Children and Youth

## Another Book Review

Lois Kuter

### **Jacqueline and Bernard Le Nail. Dictionnaire des Auteurs de Jeunesse de Bretagne.**

Keltia Graphic/Editions des Montagnes Noires. 2001. 330 pages. ISBN 2-913953-16-6.

One might dismiss children's literature as a lesser art than literature for adults, but this would be a mistake. Who can deny the strong impact books can have on a child or young adult. Don't we all remember a book or two that we loved as a child? And certainly one cannot doubt the wide impact a book can have after the successes of the Harry Potter books and renewed interest in Tolkien's Lord of the Rings. Clearly children today are not as glued to the TV or video games as we fear.

This new dictionary of authors for children and youth by Jacqueline and Bernard Le Nail features some 280 writers who hail from Brittany or whose family is Breton. In some cases the authors spent relatively little of their lives in Brittany, but the selection for the dictionary was based on the fact that their work reflects an attachment to Brittany in some way. While the authors admit a study of authors who incorporate Breton characters or use Brittany as a backdrop for their writing would be interesting, the line had to be drawn somewhere. The only exception is found in a short essay at the end of the dictionary on the infamous early 20<sup>th</sup> century character, Becassine.

Each entry in this dictionary includes basic bibliographic information about an author and a quick analysis of the importance of their work. For each author a bibliography of their publications is also included, and when applicable, books about that author are also cited. Photographs of authors and illustrations from books are found on nearly every page. Of the 280 authors included 35% are women. I found it interesting to look at the period of activity - when the bulk of each author's books were published. While some spanned a long period a rough breakdown goes as follows. 16 authors published in the 18<sup>th</sup> or early 19<sup>th</sup> century. 48 were most active in the second half of the

19<sup>th</sup> century; 30 were active at the turn of the century (1890 to 1910); 16 published most of their work in the period of 1900 to 1920; 44 were active from the 1920s through the 1940s; 48 were active from the 1950s to early 1970s; and 78 have published works since the 1970s—many of these in the 90s. Thus, there is a nice spread in time periods represented, although nearly half of the authors cited have been active in the past 50 years.

Just 24 of the 280 authors used Breton as their language for books. This is hardly surprising given the fact that schooling in Breton has only become available in the last two decades. Without the means to learn to read or write in the Breton language, one cannot expect to suddenly find a wealth of literature. Hopefully the next decades will produce more Breton language authors for a growing number of young readers.

Also included in the book are an additional 90 biographies (much shorter) for Breton illustrators for children's and youth literature, as well as 47 profiles for designers of "bandes dessinées" or comic books. The index includes the real names of the authors as well as all the pen names, so you can easily find someone by the name on a book's cover. A bibliography includes over 100 citations for books about Breton literature or literature in general, bibliographic dictionaries, works about children's and youth literature, publishers of children's books, catalogs, and books about comic books, illustrators, and collections of legends. In short, this is a mine of information for those with a scholarly interest in children's literature.

For those who are not scholars of literature, the book offers an interesting introduction to great and lesser known Breton writers. Those who like biographies have the opportunity to meet some colorful personalities, including the famous Jules Verne whose entry is by far the longest in the book. It is clear in paging through the 300 plus pages of this book that it is the product of careful research and will serve as a key reference for those interested in Breton literature.

## ANOTHER GIFT OF POETRY from Jan Deloof

As introduced in the May issue of Bro Nevez Jan Deloof is an ICDBL representative for Flanders who lives in Zwevegem, Belgium. He has made a significant contribution to the Breton language through the translations of a number of poems and short stories by some of the best 20<sup>th</sup> century writers of Brittany. On the occasion of his 70<sup>th</sup> birthday, Jan Deloof published a little collection of poems (primarily in Dutch with Breton translations). And, he kindly sent me a copy of these and provided some English translations so we could print a few in the pages of Bro Nevez. So, here is another poem from the collection In de Achteruitkijkspiegel / Er C'hilvelezour.

### STRAED MA BUGALEAJ

Da bPer Diolier

Uhel war an orjalennoù  
emañ ar gwennili balc'h  
en un emvod trouzus trawalc'h.  
Richanañ 'reont o argred  
etre chom ha mont.  
En em chabousat 'reont, marteze?

Hunvreer kaezh, simboloù zo re hewerzh  
'vit talvezout da nadoz-vor.  
E pep korn da empenn ez eus  
fotoioù kalz resisoc'h  
eget sorbiennoù sor.

Da skouer war ar prad.  
En-dro en em gavan etre bodoù raoskl  
ha braouac'h et eo ma maeronez  
a-greiz-holl.  
Tad-kozh en em laka da douiñ Doue  
rak  
dousik ma galv  
- o chaseal 'mañ e donder ar ganol lor -  
ma mari-vorgan feal.

Nann. Biskoazh n'eo bet  
pelloc'h  
an diskoulm ken klasket.  
Prennomp buan  
an empenn-se.

### DEERLIJKSTRAAT

Hoog op hun draden  
zijn de zwaluwen verlaan.  
Ze kwetteren  
hun weifelen tussen gaan  
en blijven.  
Hoor ik ze blijven?

Ouwe dromer, zinnebeelden zijn  
te koopbaar om kompas te zijn.  
In alle hoeken van je brein  
liggen fotoboeken  
die veel accurater zijn.

Bijvoorbeeld op de bleek.  
Ik sta weer tussen aalbesstruiken  
en meter is van streek.  
Peter staat te vloeken.  
Hoog, heel hoog daarboven sjeest  
met klapperende doeken  
de varende vrouwe door de lucht,  
jaagt me weer de verten door de geest  
en door de kuiten.

Nee. Nooit is uitkomst  
minder evident geweest.  
Laat me dat brein maar  
sluiten.

(see next page for English version)



## THE STREET OF MY CHILDHOOD

High on their wires  
the proud swallows are  
in a rather noisy meeting.  
They chirp their wavering  
between stay and go.  
Are they quarreling, perhaps?

Old dreamer, symbols are too bribable  
to be a compass.

In every corner of your brain  
there are photographs more accurate  
than giddy dreams.

For example: on the bleaching-ground.  
I'm standing again between currant-bushes  
and my godmother is  
most upset.

Grandfather starts swearing  
because  
stealthily my mari-morgan (legendary water-  
ghost)  
- chasing through the depths of the dark canal -  
is calling me.

No. The so eagerly pursued solution  
has never been  
farther away.  
Let's quickly close  
that brain of mine.



### BARZHED BREIZH EN UN DASTUMADENN ETREBROADEL E NEDERLANDEG

Ar gelaouenn flamank "Kruispunt" zo o paouez  
embann un niverenn isipisial etrebroadel  
gouestlet d'ar varzhoniezh. Bodañ a ra enni 32  
skrivagner eus 12 bro disheñval (Breizh,  
Katalonia, Danmark, Alamagn, Bro- Saoz, Frañs,  
Gresia, Noervegia, Portugal, Spagn, Tchekia,  
Sweden), o kinnig 97 barxhoneg.

Goude kinnigadur pep oberour e vez embannet  
an testennoù en o yezh orin, heuliet gant an

droidigezh e nederlandeg. Bez' ez eus c'hoazh ur  
pennad war an droerien e fin al levr, 338 pajenn  
ennañ.

Kregiñ a ra gant barzhed Breizh, da lâret eo  
Anjela Duval ha Tugdual Kalvez, troet e  
nederlandeg gant ar skrivagner flamank Jan  
Deloof, anvet mat gant al lenneien brezhoneger.  
Degasomp da soñj eo bet primet hon daou  
oberour evit o barzhoniezh, Anjela Duval et  
1973 (Priz Yann-Ber Kalloc'h) ha Tugdual Kalvez  
e 2000 (Priz Xavier Langleiz).

Tu zo da brenañ levr "Kruispunt Internationaal"  
evit 19,83 euro, ar mizoù-kas e-barzh; nivrenn  
kont bank: 121-0403911-81, West-Vlaamse Bank  
(A. Willaertstraat 9, B-8000 Brugge), e anv  
Kruispunt -- Brugge.

### BRETON POETS IN A DUTCH INTERNATIONAL ANTHOLOGY

The Flemish journal "Kruispunt" has recently  
published as special international issue of  
poetry. This includes 32 authors from 12  
different countries (Brittany, Catalonia,  
Denmark, Germany, England, France, Greece,  
Norway, Portugal, Spain, Czechoslovakia,  
Sweden), and presents a total of 97 poems.

After an introduction of each author, the texts  
are printed in their original language, followed  
by their translation in Dutch. The translators  
are presented at the end of the volume, making  
it a large publication of 338 pages.

The work opens with Breton authors, principally  
Anjela Duval and Tugdual Kalvez, translated into  
Dutch by the Flemish writer Jan Deloof, well  
know to Breton language readers. One points  
out that our two authors have received prizes  
for their poetry, Anjela Duval in 1973 (Priz  
Yann-Ber Kalloc'h) and Tugdual Kalvez in 2000  
(Priz Xavier Langleiz).

One can get this book, "Kruispunt  
Internationaal" at the price of 19,83 euros  
(shipping costs included); bank number 121-  
0403911-81, West-Vlaamse Bank (A.  
Willaertstraat 9, B-8000 Brugge. Check should  
be made out to Kruispunt -- Brugge.

# The U.S. ICDBL and the Celtic Traditions Lose a Loyal Friend

Lois Kuter

Thomas L. Standeven, Jr.  
December 9, 1931 - January 1, 2002

On January 1<sup>st</sup> Brittany lost one of its most devoted American friends: Thomas L. Standeven Jr. Tom was one of the “founding members” of the U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language, and an internationally known and respected musician—particularly on the Irish uilleann pipes. He was not a “professional” musician in the sense of earning a living from his art, but traditional Irish music and the Gaelic language were truly his passions and he was a master of both. Tom was first and foremost a teacher who inspired and encouraged hundreds of students and friends who shared his love for Celtic languages and traditional musics. He fought a spreading cancer for over a year, but was unable to defeat it and died on this New Year’s Day at the age of 70 .

Oddly enough I do not recall the exact year I first met Tom Standeven, although I believe it was 1968 or 69, but I recall vividly the event. It was the Lenape Park Fiddler’s Picnic held in Chester County , PA. This was a gathering of musicians from the Irish tradition and “old-timey” bluegrass traditions—fiddlers being featured, but other instruments welcome. While there were some stage performances, most of the music took place in small informal circles of musicians who found a spot in the park to informally “jam.” I was already playing Scottish Highland bagpipes and was discovering the dozens of other varieties of bagpipes found in the world (thanks mainly to the Anthony Baines, Bagpipes book). Rick Moraux, a fellow member of the Montgomery Highlanders Pipe Band, was with me at that event. We were both astounded and delighted to find right there at the Fiddler’s Picnic one of the more “exotic” of the pipes catalogued by Baines - the Irish uilleann pipes, played by Tom Standeven, who was a regular at the event. Rick decided immediately he wanted to learn uilleann pipes. I was more cautious and decided to start with tin whistle and flute. It was then a matter of meeting with Tom and setting up a time to go to his house (then in Haddonfield, NJ) to talk to him. I have little recollection of that first visit, but Tom decided to take us on as students and lent us the instruments we needed to start. I do not recall how long it took me to get up the courage to ask to be taught the uilleann pipes (or perhaps it was Tom who decided), but I recall taking a practice set off with me to graduate school at Indiana University in 1973.

“Lessons” at Tom Standeven’s house were my introduction to what an oral tradition was all about. Since I was accustomed to reading sheet music, both for playing classical flute and Scottish bagpipes, learning by ear was a new experience for me, and at first Irish tunes all sounded alike, as they do for any new-comer to them. It took time to develop an ear. But learning music from Tom was not just a matter of learning notes and technical skills on an instrument. There was conversation about music of all kinds, stories about people one had met, and little lessons in the Irish language. Tom believed firmly that to understand Irish music—particularly the slow airs—one must know Gaelic. He is right. I am not a gifted language student, and my Gaelic has not much progressed beyond a few phrases, but the melody of the language is certainly a part of traditional Irish music. Tom always spoke Irish with us (and I often visited him with Rick Moraux and/or Eoghan Ballard who had already been a student with Tom for a number of years when Rick and I “discovered” him). And Tom’s letters to me always opened with a paragraph in Irish. But, he did not insist, and was tolerant of us slower-witted Gaelic students. Spending most of my time away from the Philadelphia area during the 1970s (undergraduate studies at Oberlin College from 1969-73 and graduate studies at Indiana University,

spanning from 1973 to 1981) I had to settle for holiday and summer visits east to spend some time with Tom. His move to Washington State for a new posting with the U.S. Customs Service from about 1980 to the mid-1990s when he retired also made get-togethers rarer for his east-coast friends. Nevertheless his impact remained great on us, and Rick Moraux, Eoghan Ballard and I could feel his spirit chide us when we got together regularly and made excuses to each other for not practicing as much as we should. We would polish the pipes for Tom's visits east to make up for rusty fingers, but Tom never noticed the polish and clearly savored the opportunity to get together and play some tunes with three of his longer-standing students.

Understanding the social nature of learning Irish music (and culture more broadly) with a teacher like Tom Standeven was critical to me in later being able to appreciate and understand music-making in Brittany where a strong oral tradition of transmission from teacher to student (friend to friend) persists. I can thank Tom Standeven for first introducing me to Brittany, Breton music, and the Breton language. He never failed to encourage my developing interest in Brittany, and we often talked about this area of mutual passion. The first Breton person I ever met was in Tom's house in the late 1960s in Haddonfield, NJ—Annaig Gwernig. Tom had developed a friendship with Youenn Gwernig during Youenn's exile years in New York City, so he also knew the whole family, and kept up a correspondence with Youenn all his life. He spoke very fondly of his memorable visit(s) to Brittany (in the mid-1960s?), and his visit to the Gwernig household in Locmaria-Berrien. While Tom spoke only a few words of French, he could carry on some conversation in Breton he learned through the medium of Irish Gaelic with tapes and booklets prepared by Alan Heusaff (Rummad Kentelioù Brezhoneg Eeun, based on the Buntús Cainte series for Irish). Alan and Brid Heusaff were longtime friends of Tom's and he would visit them whenever he could during trips to Ireland.

Tom's interest in Brittany did not stop with the Breton language. He had an avid interest in the traditional song (kan ha diskan and gwerzioù) as well as the paired biniou and bombarde, and the bagad. He played both biniou koz and bombarde although the lack of musicians on this side of the Atlantic to play with and learn from limited his use of these instruments. I believe his instruments were from Dorig LeVoyer for whom he had a profound respect. Also on Tom's list of Breton "heros" was Polig Monjarret who has played so important a role in encouraging the piping traditions of Brittany. As with Irish music, Tom's interest in Breton music was focused on the more traditional styles, with a knowledge of but less appreciation for jazzier groups. He was particularly fond of cantiques and had numerous recordings of Eliane Pronost as well as Anne Auffret (a favorite).

In a period when few people had ever heard of Brittany and Breton music, Tom was already an avid fan and promoter. But, he had an interest for all things Celtic. Long before the Scottish Gaelic traditions of Cape Breton Island became hip, Tom was learning Scottish Gaelic songs and visiting—even purchasing at one point a small piece of land which he later sold. But Tom was a very international person and was way ahead of his time in his love for "world music." As a young man, neighbors from Turkey sparked his interest in the Middle East and Tom learned some Turkish as a teen. He would later add Greek to his languages, and could communicate to some degree in other Eastern European languages. And Tom would surprise friends with Mandarin Chinese—a linguistic interest sparked perhaps by his love for and talent in cooking Chinese cuisine. Tom had a knack for meeting some of the most talented and interesting masters of traditional music no matter what culture he explored.

While Tom had met and knew some of the great masters of Irish music (and other musics) he was no snob. He was not interested in "hot-shots" and while he admired the musical skills some of his students obtained, he gave equal time to those of us who were not destined to be great musicians. To be a student of Tom Standeven you needed only to have a sincere interest in learning and in passing your learning along—in some manner—to others. You did not need to be brilliant—just an eager



student, willing to listen, and able to appreciate what you heard. Tom had a tremendous amount of knowledge to share with his students and friends and he was one of the most generous people I have ever met—always encouraging us, never asking a cent for his teaching, and always able to find an instrument to lend or give to students.

Tom Standeven did not talk a great deal about himself, so all of his students have gotten a small picture of his life. One of the best biographical presentations I have seen has been prepared by his long-time friend and student, Seamus Taylor. With his permission I reprint a bit of it here to take readers a bit further than my own personal reflections about Tom.

Tom was born in Philadelphia, PA in 1931. He began music studies in school. He enjoyed church choir, especially Gregorian chant and the pipe organ. He also became interested in Greek and Turkish folk music at this time. At 17, he became acquainted with Irish traditional music. Station WTEL in Philadelphia began broadcasting live musical programs featuring Austin Kelly and his All-Ireland Irish Orchestra. Tom began what became a lifetime of Irish musical and linguistic learning. In 1949, he began learning the Irish language, later getting instruction from Mickey Carr (Donegal) and Frank O' Hagan (Derry) beginning about 1951. He earned the "Fainne Oir" (Gold Ring) from Connradh na Gaeilge, signifying fluency in Irish in 1961.

He began lessons on the button accordion from the late Dan Smith of Galway in 1954. In 1957, he began learning fiddle from the late John Vesey, and that Fall, began learning uilleann pipes from Thomas Busby of Fermanagh. His "piping lineage" extends back through Mr. Busby's teacher, the late Michael Carney, to the great "Patsy" Touhey, to Touhey's father and grand-father, and on back over 200 years (See the biography of Touhy in O'Neill's "Irish Minstrels and Musicians."). In 1958, he began learning the tin whistle, and later the flute, with help and encouragement from the late Ed Cahill. [Note that while from Ireland, his teachers were all living in the U.S. when he was studying from them—part of a vibrant Irish-American community here].

In 1963, he began teaching Gaelic and uilleann pipes, first at home, and later at the Commodore John Barry Club (Irish Center) in Germantown, Philadelphia, PA. In 1969, he competed at the Oireachtas (the Irish cultural competition). He won the "Craobh-chorn Eamonn Uí Cinneide ar son Piobaireachta Uilleinne Sinsearachta", (Eamonn Kennedy Award for Senior Uilleann Piping). Tom was the first American born outside of Ireland to win this award. Martin O Tailtigh, an adjudicator, later told Tom that the tune that "clinched" the award was "An Raibh Tu Ag an gCarraig?" (Were You at the Rock?), a haunting air from Penal Times, learned from the playing of Seamus Ennis. (This can be heard on the album "John Vesey, Sligo Fiddler." This important set of archival recordings from Tom's personal collection has been issued as a tribute to his friend and mentor.)

Tom also served his country honorably in the Air Force, and later as a Customs officer, finishing his tour in Lynden, Washington. His retirement was strongly attended. One of his peers said that he was the most professional officer he had ever known.

He lived in Wilmington, Delaware, after his retirement. Tom spent his retirement as he had spent his vacations and free time for years - traveling to see friends both at home and abroad, teaching, and playing Irish music as well as the music of the Middle East, Balkans, and elsewhere. Typically, he made his last trip to Ireland partly to accommodate a new student from Greece who was fascinated with the Irish music and language.

Tom Standeven will be sorely missed by his students and friends who still had much to learn from him and music to share with him.

## NEW MUSIC FROM BRITTANY

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

Compil'oz. L'OZ Production. L'OZ 38. 2002. 58.30.

For its seventh anniversary, the OZ recording label has put together a nice compilation of some of the artists who have recorded with them. Compilations are always a nice way to sample a lot of different artists, and this selection has a rich variety of styles represented. And, the artists presented are certainly some of the most creative on the Breton music scene. All but one of the 14 selections are drawn from the 37 other CDs in the OZ catalog.

You will not find the traditional styles like the paired biniou and bombarde or a capella ballads on this CD. All of the performances here are "new" in the sense of being compositions inspired by Brittany or innovative arrangements of the rhythms and melodies of Breton tradition with a jazzy edge or world beat. Thus you find the Breton group Kerhun working with the Gnawa of Morocco and the Bagad Men ha Tan working with African drummers from Senegal and jazz musician Henri Texier. Also included are several fine "singer-songwriters" (for lack of a better term): Manu Lann Huel, Melaine Favennec, and Perry Rose (and Irishman transplanted to Brittany). You also get some classic maritime music with the group Guillemer. Pianist Didier Squiban is featured in solo, in pair with traditional singer Yann Fanch Kemener, and with two selections from his "Symphonie Bretagne," a grand orchestral work with choir. In a composition by Squiban, accordion player Alain Trévarin also has a selection. In the one selection not pulled from a CD, Ronan Le Bars is featured on uilleann pipes. The longest selection on the CD (7 minutes) features Patrick Molard on Scottish Highland pipes from one of my favorite CDs of all times, Deliou.

While a compilation is a nice way to sample a number of artists that may be totally new to you, one selection isolated from a carefully crafted CD does not always have the same impact as listening to it in its original context where its placement in a sequence can make some difference. I felt this was the case for the long selection by Patrick Molard which seemed a bit dreary out of context of the CD where a variety of pipes and musical styles are featured. And, obviously drawing two short selections from a the longer symphony by Squiban gives one just a flavor of the whole.

This is a very interesting selection of some of Brittany's more innovative artists, but to hear the true talents of the singers and musicians featured, indulging in the entire CD from which their sample was drawn is highly recommended. And I know that those who put together compilations are wholly in agreement.

Congratulations to this small record label for its consistent production of very high quality CDs. To find out more and to sample the OZ catalog, try their web site: [www.loz-production.com](http://www.loz-production.com).

Soig Siberil. Gitar. Coop Breizh CD927. 2001. 45'20.

As the title implies this is a CD featuring guitar and it includes a very nice mix of new compositions by Siberil and innovative rearrangements of traditional marches, dances and melodies of Brittany. There are a number of swinging marches, but dance is predominant with lively arrangements of *gavotte pourled*, *an dro*, *ronde de Loudeac* and *hanter dro*. And some of the rest of the Celtic world is represented with Irish reels and jigs, Scottish reels and scottisches, and an Asturian air. Soig Siberil's sources for airs and tunes are as varied as the rhythms, and the CD notes cite traditional singers, paired biniou and bombarde players, accordion and concertina players, and pipers among the performers from whom Siberil has learned tunes. Like all great Breton musicians listening to lots of live performances and jamming with other musicians (from many traditions) is a key.

One gets a good idea of just how technically skilled Soig is as an acoustic guitar player in the seven solo pieces (of 13) on the CD. But technical ability to do literally anything with this instrument from slow airs to speedy dances does not imply that this is a musician who simply has nimble fingers (and you will find his finger work amazing). This artist puts heart into the music. You'll want to get up and dance and you'll find the slower melodies beautiful and full of expression.

Soig Siberil has played in a number of Brittany's best bands—Kornog, Gwerz, Ours du Scorff, Orion (Belgian-Breton!)—and has recorded three other solo CDs: Digor (1993), Entre ardoise et granit (1996) and Gwenojenn (1999). In doing "solo" recordings, Siberil has always managed to surround himself with some of Brittany's best musicians—frequently working with Patrick and Jacky Molard, Jacques Pellen or Alain Genty, to name just a few of the more regular partners. For this CD he finds four new collaborators and adds a bit more electric feel with Jean-Félix Lalanne (guitar), Jean-Loup Cartés (piano and keyboard), Patrice Marzin (guitar, keyboard, programming) and Sylvaine Guichen (fiddle). One would think that all the "strings" would get a bit twangy, but the sound quality on this CD is crisp and very clean (even on my limited CD player). There is no muddling of musicians, even if duets of guitar blend impeccably. Although only featured in one selection, I liked the higher thin sound of the fiddle with the lower more centered

melody from the guitar for a beautiful melody from the Tregor and a march composed by Siberil.

There is a great deal of variety in the textures produced by the various combinations of instrument, but one has to say that Soig Siberil is a one-man-band in the richness of sounds he gets out of an acoustic guitar in his solos. With just six strings and ten fingers one would think you would run out of options. This is a musician who just keeps getting better, and this CD will knock your socks off with its strong energy and creative edge.



## HEARD OF, BUT NOT HEARD

Short notes for the following new CDs from Brittany are drawn from reviews found in Musique Bretonne 170 (Jan.-Feb. 2002) and Ar Men 125 (Nov., 2001) and 126 (Jan. 2002).

**Apprenez les danses bretonnes. Vol. 1: Leon & Tregor; Vol. 2: Terroir Bas-Vannetais; Vol. 3: Terroir Nantais.** Coop Breizh CD 922, 923 and ?.

These three CDs—in a series of more to come—are aimed to assist those learning (or practicing) Breton dances. Included with each CD is a bilingual (French/English) booklet with instructions for each dance.

**Bleizi Ruz. An Teuz.** Ciré Jaune. CIR 194. 2001

This is an old band (going on 30 years) with a new look and sound. Eric Liorzou and Jean-Luc Roudaut provide vocals with binious and sax by new-comers to the group Christian Sarreau and Gaël Nicol.

**Bro Dreger XII – Daou ha daou.** BD 012. 2001.

The Kreizenn Sevenadurel Lannuon (Cultural Center of Lannion) has produced a long series of excellent recordings featuring various singers and musicians, focused on a particular theme or genre. This new CD features four pairs: Michel Savidan & Daniel Launay (bombarde-biniou), Cathy Bertrand & Michel Bussière (fiddle-clarinet), Philippe Ribaut & Jean Sabot (bouzouki-harmonica) and Jean-Luc Thomas & Pierrick Tardival (flute). These are all new interpretations of traditional music from the Tregor area of northern Brittany.

**Meriadec Goriou. La Boîte du diable.** Coop Breizh 2002.

The “devil’s box” is the accordion, and here you have a great diatonic (button) accordion player from the group Gwenfol going solo.

**Gwelloc’h. Dañs ganeomp.** Self-produced. CW 001. 2002

The three brothers in this group—Eric, Fabrice and Olivier Beaumin—have experience with the bagad but add strings and piano (as well as other instruments) to the bombarde for dances in their first CD.

**Hamon Martin Quartet. Allume.** Coop Breizh CD 926. 2002.

This young group focuses on the rich dance and song traditions of Upper Brittany. Ronan Pellen (cistre) joins the original trio: Mathieu Hamon (vocals), Jannik Martin (accordion) and Erwan Hamon (bombarde and flute).

**Kerlenn Pondi. Champion de Bretagne des Bagadoù** 2001. Coop Breizh 2001.

To win a bagad championship in Brittany demands not only technical perfection but a creative and artistic edge over ferocious competitors. This is a can’t miss for bagad lovers.

**Kevrenn Alre. 50 ans.** Coop Breizh/Kevrenn Alre KA 2001.

To celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, this top bagad has chosen selections from competition performances which feature the best work of some of the musical directors working with this band. Another can’t miss for bagad lovers.

**Kohann. Don.** Menehom. 2002.

This is a “rock band” described also as “techno-Breizh” whose songs are in Breton. The group includes Michèle Gaurin (song), Sylvère Morisson (piano) and Davic Bellec (guitar).

**Grégory Le Lan & Germain Desbourlet. La bataille du roi Morvan, bombarde & orgue.** CD Renouveau Bombarde et Orgue FB 02 – DB5X2. 2001.

There is a classical style to this composition for organ and bombarde which evokes Breton history and wars between Breton and French kings.

**Pierrick Lemou and Christian Peloil. Musique bretonne pour violons.** Ed. Alain Pennec (Bains-sur-Oust).

This is in fact a book with fiddle tunes and introductory notes on technique and style but include a CD with dances and melodies played both at regular speed, then at a slower speed for learners. While the repertoire is Breton, the style is heavily influenced by Irish fiddling.

**Mouezh Paotred Breizh. Ganet eo bet!** Coop Breizh. 2001

This is the second CD by a choir created in 1983, including 56 men from a variety of mixed choirs of Brittany. Directed by Jean-Marie Airault, the repertoire is composed of both Breton language and Welsh songs.

**Quatre Jean. Que de mensonges.** CD AL4AS. 2001

This is one of Brittany’s premier groups, and one which focuses on the repertoire of Upper Brittany. Included are Roland Brou (vocals), Alain Pennec (accordion) and Jean-Luc Baudet (guitar) among others not named in the review I found.

Continued next page



**Bernez Tangi. Eured an Diaoul.** An Naer Produksion. Naer 501. 2002.

Bernez Tangi is perhaps first of all a poet, and that guarantees that his song texts are always interesting. His language is Breton and his music has a variety of influences – rock, reggae, kan ha diskan ...

**Termajik. Termajik.** Ciré Jaune CIR 120 (206?). 2001. This is a new fest noz band with masters of the treujenn gaol (clarinet) Christian Duro and Jean-Claude Le Lay, joined by accordion player Jean Le Floc'h. There is a focus on the dance repertoire of central western Brittany—plinn and fisel featured.

**Ti Jaz. Live in ar Vag.** Ciré Jaune. CIR501. 2001. This is a live recording of a band that's been around for quite a few years. The focus is on dances, with accordion and bombarde leading the melodies with a heavy dose of saxophone for harmony and rhythm and a shot of electric guitar for some strong energy.



## FESTIVALS IN BRITTANY

### A Note from **Goueloù Breizh**

(Federation of Committees for Traditional Festivals of Brittany) – my translation LK

Traditional fêtes and festivals are very important for Brittany—culturally but also socially and economically. In fact, they are indisputable factors which make Brittany one of the principal tourist regions of France and one of the strongest destinations for tourists worldwide.

Thus, since 1967, the Federation of Committees for Traditional Festivals of Brittany, called "Goueloù Breizh," has included 80% of traditional fêtes and festivals in all of historical Brittany (all five departments). It works to federate the maximum of festivals in Brittany. Today, 35 committees incorporating at minimum three Celtic Circles or bagads are members of Goueloù Breizh, including the Inter-Celtic Festival of Lorient, The Festival of Cornouaille of Quimper, the Festival of the Saint-Loup of Guingamp, Kann al Loar of Landerneau, Festival of Filet Bleu of Concarneau, and the Festival Anne de Bretagne of Loire-Atlantique.

In close collaboration with various traditional Breton dance and music, federations Goueloù Breizh has as an objective the regional, national and international promotion of its own members—notably through a calendar of festivals edited in brochure form (with 200,000 copies printed) and as a poster (2,000 printed). Additionally, it serves as a vector of contact and coordination between member festival committees.

The Federation has hired a staff person (through the youth employment program) with the urging of its

president, Hervé Sanquer (also President of the Festival des Hortensias) who was elected for the third consecutive year at the General Assembly on November 11 in Landreneau.

François Cornic, *sonneur* from the Lannion region and member of Dastum Bro Dreger, is at the service of member committees to help them with information directly concerning festivals of Brittany and to enhance the dynamic role of the federation in and beyond Brittany.

New members are invited to join. The Federation can be contacted at its new address:

Goueloù Breizh  
Fédération des Comités de Fêtes Traditionnelles de Bretagne  
1, Rue de la Poste  
22700 Perros-Guirec  
tel/fax: 02 96 49 08 92  
e-mail: [federationfetesdebretagne@wanadoo.fr](mailto:federationfetesdebretagne@wanadoo.fr)



## FESTIVALS IN THE U.S.

### Save the Date !!

Each year the U.S. ICDBL puts up an information stand and display at the **Potomac Celtic Festival** in Leesburg, Virginia. This year the festival is set for Saturday and Sunday, **June 8 and 9**, and we will be there again.

The festival organizers work hard to provide a great lineup of musicians representing *all* the Celtic nations (including Asturias and Galicia) and there are also workshop, quality vendors tents, and food and drink ... among other diversions. Details are not yet confirmed for the major musical acts to be at the festival, but you can get more information via their web site as things are firmed up: [www.potomaccelticfest.org](http://www.potomaccelticfest.org)

Plan to come to meet with other ICDBL members (and help out with our great information tent.

More information to come in the May newsletter ...

### OTHER FESTIVALS ...

While we don't have the budget to rent tent space at festivals (the Potomac Festival is my gift to the ICDBL), we can provide basic flyers and information you can use if you want to set up an information table at a festival. Festival organizers are often eager to have some representation from Brittany, and sometimes table space is free if you are not selling things, so let me know if you want help with basic information. - Lois

## Travels in Brittany: An American Perspective on Weddings (and Wakes) in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century

From: Ange M. Mosher. *The Spell of Brittany*. NY: Duffield and Co., 1920.

*Ange Mosher was an American who made many trips to Brittany, becoming a friend of Anatole Le Braz, one of the most prominent collectors of Breton legends and folk customs, whose popularized books and magazine articles were very widely read and translated. Ange Mosher was an ardent admirer of Marc'harit Fulup, a ballad singer who died in 1909 and who had been a major source for many of the song texts in the important collections by François-Marie Luzel. (see Bro Nevez 49, Feb. 1994). Like many travel writers of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Mosher no doubt drew some of the details of her descriptive material and "facts" about Breton customs from the writings of authors such as Le Braz. But her writings indicate that she was a good observer in her own right, and her book, *The Spell of Brittany* (published two years after her death in 1918) provides an interesting and respectful look at Brittany and Bretons of the pre World War I period.*

*Here is Ange Mosher's description of "A Breton Wedding", Chapter XVII, of her book:*

In Brittany when we meet a young man and maid walking along the country road with their little fingers intertwined, we know that a wedding will soon follow. The locked fingers furnish the announcement of the betrothal of the pair. How many such couples have I encountered—all smiles and blushes—proclaiming the announcement "au petit doigt" as it is called.

In Lower Brittany the wedding involves much of curious custom and naïve sentiment. The wedding occurs soon after the betrothal. But for many years the wedding chest has, by slow installments, been made ready by the mother of the bride. Often the coffer has been carved, on winter evenings, through many years by some relative of the family. These coffers and the *lit clos* (the armoire bedstead) and sometimes a massive armoire constitute the *lares et penates* of thrifty Breton families. As the time fixed for the wedding approaches, there is a commotion in the family, the excitement of which spreads through the parish. The wedding gown is made—the linen, stored for many years, is whitened in the fields, the carved bedstead, armoire and coffers are waxed and polished, all the brass and copper utensils are made to shine like gold. Then on a Saturday evening comes the betrothal supper to the

intimate friends. The next day at high mass the bans are published, after which the invitations to the wedding are given. On the morning of the wedding crowds of friends gather to join the procession to the church, which the bridegroom leads with the chosen best man; after the religious ceremony the procession passes to the house of the bride, the binious playing vociferously. The house (more often than otherwise consisting of one room) has been hung with white linen sheets with wreaths and bouquets attached to their surface. Tables are spread inside and outside the house. The feast consists of everything within the means of the family to provide. Be sure that cider, the national beverage, flows freely. Eating, drinking, songs sung by the ambulant singers, and dancing fill the afternoon and night hours. (During the repast the binious go on playing, and a dance now and then, by way of *entrée* between courses, is in order.) Numerous beggars are sure to be present, and the poorest of these dances with the bride, as this is sure to bring good luck to the newly-married. The ceremony of the *soupe-au-lait*, difficult to describe here, is still a custom in the mountains. In certain parts of Finistère the festivities last three days. The final event is the ceremony of carrying the bride's armoire to the house of her new husband. We may be sure this

armoire is shining like a mirror and its brasses like gold, and bouquets adorn the four corners. Placed upon a wagon drawn by horses decorated with ribbons and flowers, it is finally placed in the corner prepared, in the midst of bravos.

At Plougastel all the marriages take place on two days of the year, one of these being the twelfth day—always at nine in the morning. Before daybreak the town is filled with carts and carriages bringing kinsfolk and friends, and the streets swarm with men and women in their fête costumes—and the costumes of Plougastel are of more vivid colors than elsewhere in Brittany. All the couples are ranged on the altar rail, the bridegrooms being led up by their best men, and the brides by their fathers. A tall, lighted candle is placed before each couple. After the joining of these many pairs of hands and the benediction, the anthem is sung and mass follows. Bride and groom do not leave the church together, but are sure to find each other shortly after—at least I have never known any of them to get lost!

I am going to speak in some detail of the most recent and also the most important wedding I have attended in Brittany.

One day when I was attending one of the Congresses of the Breton bards—in Carnac in Lower Brittany, a priest of a little parish in the northern part of Morbihan came to invite me to his sister's wedding. He also gave me the privilege of bringing with me any friend whom I would like to invite, adding naïvely that there would be abundant entertainment, as there were to be slain three beeves and seven calves in provision for the feast. Five hundred invitations had been given, and it was to be a three-day's affair. Rendezvous was made at Vannes—the capital of Morbihan—twelve miles from the place of the wedding—on the afternoon preceding the event.

It was already nine o'clock the next morning when we arrived at the place designated. The priest installed us at a Convent opposite the house of the bride, and shortly after brought his sister to greet us. She was already dressed for the ceremony, save for the orange flowers—a Parisian innovation seldom seen in Brittany. She wore the usual peasant gown of black—but heavily banded in

velvet and embroidery—an apron of gorgeous stuff, crimson satin with large mantle of heavy velvet thrown over it—and the usual coif of her parish. She was sweet and tranquil and offered both cheeks to be kissed all around—then returned home for the final touch—a small wreath of orange blossoms surmounting the top of the coif, and lastly white gloves—another Parisian innovation. At ten o'clock the bells began pealing and the procession marched to the church—the bride and groom leading. The wedding ceremony was, as always, in Breton. The wedding feast and dancing were to take place in a field near by. Thither the procession moved from the church, passing along a beautiful shady lane. At the wide-open gate of the field a halt was made, and immediately the chief cook and master of ceremonies advanced with a dish on which was a huge piece of beef—smoking hot from the cauldron. This was offered to the bridegroom who, taking from his pocket his knife (as all Breton peasants do), cut a morsel and offered it to the bride, who ate it, he cutting another for himself. Next came another man with a large loaf of bread. The bridegroom cut a bit from the loaf and served the bride and himself in the same manner. Lastly came dancing up a pair of handsome young Bretons, gaily decorated with flowers and ribbons, bearing between them a large two-handled vase or jug. We note the fine old Roman shape of the jug and recall that Caesar conquered Gaul and made headquarters in Morbihan where many of the Roman forms of pottery linger. The two wine-bearers—(only the wine is plain Breton cider) as they advance in dancing, rhythmic step, sing an ancient Breton drinking song. The especial duty of the wine-bearer is supposed to be to “cheer the bride.” They approach the young couple, always in this dancing fashion, and each offers a glass of cider to the pair. Afterward cider was offered to us, as we were placed next to the bride. Then the procession moved through the gate and into the field. Seven cauldrons—each in charge of a cook—the chef in charge of the whole—were steaming at one end of the field, and I recalled the beeves to be slain in the invitation. Two long tables—placed twelve feet apart, extended to the further end, and at the upper end connecting the two—a table covered with damask and decorated with bouquets, was arranged for the bridal company. Benches ranged along both sides of the tables furnished seats for



the company. The first course consisted of the soup of the *pot-au-feu*, the second, beef and vegetables. For the third we were served personally by the bride's mother, who displayed special pride in the ragout, which she informed us had been prepared in her own kitchen under her personal supervision. Mountains of bread placed at intervals on the tables completed the menu. But the wine-bearers were ever active, up and down—back and forth in the space between the two long tables they danced and sang and served—I begged from one of them a translation of one of the drinking songs—as it was sung in the Breton language. It was Horatian in sentiment, with a touch of Breton lugubriousness: "Let us drink and be merry to-day, for to-morrow we shall die and our bodies be food for worms—" Just how this could "cheer the bride" he did not attempt to explain. No dessert was offered at table, but women with baskets of cake and other sweets, which could be bought if desired, made their appearance in the field after the repast.

At the close of the feast the bride rose, turned her back to the table, the others following her movements—and then followed a most impressive incident—an aged woman, all her life a servant of the family, knelt on the ground at the feet of the bride and uttered a long prayer. It was a prayer for the dead—those of the family—whose presence at this marriage fête she invoked. For the Breton is never far removed from his lost ones, and each family fête and event is shared by them.

As the prayer ended the sound of the binious was heard, and in the centre of the field two players of bagpipes were stationed. The bride and groom with bridesmaid and best man began the dance—the gavotte being the favourite dance at weddings. Gradually the circle grows larger and presently the entire field is in movement—meanwhile the wine-bearers are always serving—the "cheering of the bride" seems to succeed in spite of the mortuary suggestions of the song. For when she leaves the dancing at five o'clock to join us at her mother's house for a farewell glass of wine, she seems radiant, and, although she has been dancing for five hours, she is unflushed by the effort. At the mother's house we all drink to the health of the newly married, and they to ours—the bride disappears for five minutes and returns resplendent in another apron—this time of pale

blue brocade; after all, why possess the trousseau of two aprons if the invited guests be unaware of the fact! And so we depart—another banquet, precisely like the first, is to be served and the dancing will go on until midnight; on the second day the programme will be like that of the first, and on the third day, given up to the poor, the final ceremony of carrying the bride's wardrobe to her husband's house will close the wedding fête.

The invocation of the dead at the wedding feast illustrates one of the strangest traits of Breton character—the cult of the dead—*voilà la Bretagne!*

On All Soul's Eve, in Breton homes, a bright fire is kept blazing on the hearth when the family retires for the night—a table covered with a white cloth ("article de luxe chez les Bretons") is set forth with cider and crips (a kind of wheat cake), all ready in case some family ghost chance to visit the familiar place, hungry! For on that night it is prudent to avoid going outside, as the dead are walking hither and thither on the highways, and like not to be interfered with, so the Breton prudently retires early—taking no chances of harm from any stray malignant ghost—but hospitably providing for the entertainment of his own family wraiths. If, however, a Breton is forced to go abroad on that night any implement of labor carried on his person serves as a protection—even a thimble or a needle suffices.

The Veillée with the Bretons is a becoming and dignified function—in other Keltic countries, notably in Ireland, the best-intentioned Wake has been known to come to an unworthy end. But with the Bretons the Veillée has retained its discreet and tender element. I have shared several such in Brittany. Near relatives and friends gather at nightfall and sit through the night—their dead in their midst—they talk of the departed—recall this or that deed or quality—recite souvenirs—now and then some one kneels and prays in silence. Sometimes certain songs are sung—all is tender, affectionate and sympathetic. At midnight coffee (never anything stronger) is served with simple refreshments, and the watch continues until dawn—and thus on each night until the burial takes place.

# Gerioù-kroaz / Crossword

## The solution

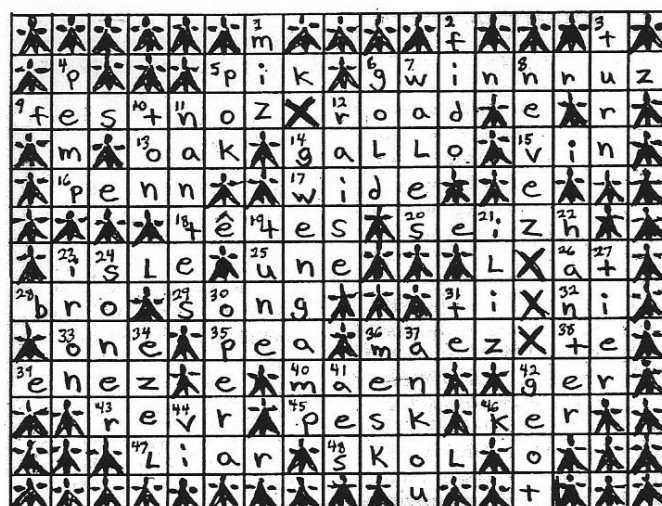
For those of you who might have played around with the crossword puzzle I put in the last issue of Bro Nevez (November 2001) here is the solution. I realize that I failed to fill in four boxes where no letters were required (now filled in with an X instead of the intended ermine symbol) – adding some unintended challenge to the puzzle. My apologies for that.

### 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].



**CONTENTS****page**

From the Editor	1
News of the Diwan Schools ... The Saga Continues	2 – 3
Blaz Produktion and the A-Hed ar C'hantved Project	3
Radios in Brittany – Paul Chérel	4
Breton Place Names Throughout the World – A Book Review and More: Bernard Le Nail, <u>Noms de lieux bretons à travers le monde</u>	5 – 7
Breton Authors and Books for Children and Youth – Another Book Review: Jacqueline & Bernard Le Nail, <u>Dictionnaire des Auteurs de Jeunesse de Bretagne</u>	8
Another Gift of Poetry from Jan Deloof	9 – 10
Breton Poets in a Dutch International Anthology: <u>Kruispunt Internationaal</u>	10
The U.S. ICDBL and the Celtic Traditions Lose a Loyal Friend: Thomas L. Standeven, Jr.	11 – 13
New Music From Brittany: <u>Compil'oz</u> ; Soig Siberil, <u>Gitar</u>	14 – 15
Heard of, But Not Heard – Short Notes on New Recordings	15 – 16
Travels in Brittany: An American Perspective on Weddings (and Wakes) in the Early 20 <sup>th</sup> Century – Ange M. Mosher, <u>The Spell of Brittany</u> , 1920	17 – 19
Gerioù-kroaz / crossword – the Solution from BN 80	20