

# BRO NEVEZ

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

*The Seven Saints – see page 10*



Reprint of a 1514 engraving from *Grande Chroniques de Bretagne* by Alain Bouchard as reprinted in *Ar Men* No. 97, September 1998, for the article "En route pour le Tro-Breiz" by Gaële de La Brosse

KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

No. 91

August 2004

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

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. Membership (which includes subscription) for one year is \$20. Checks should be in U.S. dollars, made payable to "U.S. ICDBL" and mailed to Lois Kuter at the address above. Dues and contributions can also be sent electronically via the U.S. ICDBL web site – see below

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

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**U.S. ICDBL website: [www.breizh.net/icdbl.htm](http://www.breizh.net/icdbl.htm)**

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### FROM THE EDITOR

**e-mail alert** -- It is with sadness that I announce the death of my home computer. It has been in failing health since early August so please be aware that I have not been able to retrieve any e-mails since the first week of August. I am shopping for a new computer, and I will keep my current e-mail address, but if you have an urgent message for me, please send it the old-fashioned way using the postal service or call me. I hope to have a computer up and running again very soon.

I hope the summer is going well for all of you. I know that some U.S. ICDBL members have had the chance to travel to Brittany - I would love to have a quick article for Bro Nevez if you can put some impressions down on paper. Please keep in mind that contributions to Bro Nevez are always welcome. A favorite recipe? Quick note on a good book about Brittany or a CD you've heard? Biographical notes? An event in history you think is interesting? Please keep Bro Nevez in mind.

And, we would definitely welcome some new members to the U.S. ICDBL. I have included in this issue a shorter version of a flyer for you to give away to a potential member. This is the last page of this issue. It has the advantage of having the table of contents for this issue on the back so that the person you give this to will get an idea of what Bro Nevez is like. Keep in mind that memberships can start at any time of the year!

## The U.S. ICDBL Writes a Few Letters

Earlier this spring of 2004 Cymdeithas Cymru-Llydaw (Welsh-Breton Association), which promotes links between Wales and Brittany and helps Welsh people learn to speak Breton, contacted the U.S. ICDBL as part of a larger campaign they were waging in Wales to urge political leaders, universities and cultural groups to contact counterparts in Brittany to urge them to support Diwan and other measures for the Breton language.

Following the lead of the Gwynedd Council of Wales and Dafydd Iwan, President of the Welsh party Plaid Cymru, the U.S. ICDBL wrote letters to seven newly elected Breton Deputies, the President of the Regional Council of Brittany, and the Presidents of the General Councils of each of Brittany's five Departments.

While this letter was signed by me, Lois Kuter, as Secretary on behalf of the U.S. ICDBL, it was drafted (in French) thanks to the work of the U.S. ICDBL President and seven members of our Board of Consultants: Lenora Timm, President (Davis, California), David Brûlé (Millers Falls, Massachusetts), Richard Herr (Berkeley, California), Kathi Hochberg (Harrison, New York), Jim Kerr (Easton, Maryland), David Pugh (Fairfax, Virginia), Nathalie Novik (Anchorage, Alaska) and Greg Stump (Lexington, Kentucky). While our geographical spread means it is impossible to hold meetings, the U.S. ICDBL leadership team can mobilize to take on a special project such as this letter-writing campaign to make our concerns known to Breton leaders.

In the past the U.S. ICDBL has written letters to the French President, Prime Minister or the Minister of National Education to express our concern with French language policies. Contacting leaders of Brittany is perhaps more effective in letting them know that people in the U.S. are also interested in the secure future of the Breton language. In some cases the Deputies and Counselors we wrote to have been strong in their show of support for Breton, and we can hope that in their positions of leadership they will continue to fight for measures to protect and strengthen this language.

Here is the text of our letter – roughly translated back into English from the French language letters we sent.

*In the name of the U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language I write to you to express our concern about the Breton language and the limits France has placed on its development.*

*Since 1981 we have followed the progress (and lack of progress) of the Breton language in the schools, media and public life of Brittany. It is clear that Brittany can be proud of its vibrant culture which is open to the world. Breton music is well known here in the U.S. as it is*

*worldwide. It's languages – Breton and Gallo – are an inseparable part of the heritage of Brittany.*

*But, there are indications that France continues to insist on following words spoken in 1955 by the National Minister of Education, A. de Monzie: "For the linguistic unity of France, the Breton language must disappear."*

*Here are some troubling indications:*

- *The non-ratification of The European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages.*
- *Use of Article 2 of the French Constitution to stifle and criminalize support of the Breton language.*
- *Refusal to give Diwan the means to continue its development, unless Diwan gives up its pedagogical method of immersion education which has worked successfully for 25 years.*
- *The suppression of a significant percentage of Breton classes in high school and middle schools of Brittany.*
- *A decrease in the number of posts offered in the CAPES teaching degree for regional languages.*
- *The absence of a Breton public television channel where one can hear more than an hour per week of Breton language programs, and which reaches all of Brittany.*

*We, Americans who love Brittany and the Breton language, ask you the following question: What will you do to end the linguistic politics of France which is in the process of killing the Breton language?*

*The time is long overdue to act instead of beating around the bush, and we hope that you will do your best to protect the rich linguistic heritage of Brittany – a heritage which belongs to all of France, Europe, and the world.*

*Please accept our best wishes ...*

This letter was sent not only to the officials to whom it was addressed, but copies were sent to over a dozen leaders of Breton language and cultural organizations. Our letters were made known to many more Bretons by being reprinted in three publications of Brittany: the July issue of Keleier Ofis ar Brezhoneg (Nov. 57) – the 100-page publication of press clippings put together on a quarterly basis by the Office for the Breton Language; the May issue of Kannadig (Niv. 89) a quarterly publication put out by Unvaniezh ar Gelennerien Brezhoneg (Union of Breton Teachers); and in the June issue of Armor Magazine (No. 413).



Just two responses for the thirteen letters we sent at the end of April have been received so far. Claudy Lebreton, President of the General Council of Côtes d'Armor chose to give us a positive account of the support that department has given to Breton language initiatives, including Diwan. \* In contrast, Jacques Le Guen, Deputy from Finistère to the National Assembly of France, outlines well – and in no way challenges – the constitutional and legal blocks France has put into place to insure that Breton does not receive legal protection. He echoes others French government opinions that Diwan is to blame for its own financial problems since it refuses to charge tuition (i.e. give up being a public school) or give up the immersion system (give up being Diwan) and take the rational approach of becoming a bilingual school (equal portions of French and Breton at all times) which could be supported by the government.

There is hope in Brittany that changes in leadership of the Regional Council of Brittany brought by this spring's elections will mean advances for the Breton language. Yves Le Drian takes over presidency from Josselin de Rohan, and Yann-Ber Thomin has been appointed as head of the Commission for Culture, Sports and Language. Current Mayor of Landerneau, Thomin has shown strong support for the Breton language throughout his public career and seems ready to work to make some real advances. As a native speaker he has not been shy about using Breton at public events.

There is clearly much work to be done to insure the future growth for the Breton language and this requires the strong support of Breton political leaders. We hope that our letter campaign has helped to encourage those Breton leaders already active for the Breton language to continue working, and to express to those who are not active that the world expects them to protect their Breton heritage.

\* Kathi Hochberg, U.S. ICDBL Board of Consultant Member, was able to transmit our thanks to M. Lebreton through a telephone call to his office while in Brittany this August.

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## DIWAN

There's some good news for Diwan. Fund raising effort have succeeded in bringing in much needed money to fill the gap in budget deficits. Bretons have "stepped up to the plate" and during this past year contributions to Diwan have nearly doubled, as 3,630 donors have contributed 584,791 euros.

The 2004 year is looking good, but the National Education system always seems to find a way to make things more difficult than they already are. The Ministry of National Education which funds many Diwan teachers' salaries through a contract of association, will be dropping four

teaching posts in the 2004 school year (the equivalent of 80,000 euros). Diwan must find these extra euros to keep those needed teachers, and more euros to continue to open new schools where salaries are not funded by the State until the school has functioned for five years. There are plans for new schools in Paris (see below), Loudéac, in the Bigouden region, and a second school for Nantes, as well as need for a middle school in Loire-Atlantique.

In the spring two new co-presidents were named for Diwan: Patrig Hervé from Paimpol (Côtes d'Armor) and François-Gaël Rios from Arzano (Finistère). Diwan's address remains:

Diwan Breizh  
BP 142, Z.A. St. Ernel  
29411 Landerneau cedex

Diwan has an excellent website to keep up with news:  
[www.diwanbreizh.org](http://www.diwanbreizh.org)

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## DIWAN OPENS A SCHOOL IN PARIS

Paris has long had a strong population of Bretons who have fostered Breton music and dance in the capital city through social clubs and Celtic Circles, bagadoù, festoù noz and concerts. Breton classes have been widely available in Paris and Bretons have had access to Breton language radio programming through Radio-Pays which has bilingual programs not only for Bretons but also for the Flemish, Alsatian, Basque, Catalan, Corsican and Occitan emigrant communities in Paris.

It is not surprising then, that Bretons in Paris would mobilize to establish a Diwan school for their children. Thanks to years of very hard work on the part of a fundraising group a Diwan school will become a reality in September 2004 (and its budget will be covered thanks to the continued work of this group). Located in the Montparnasse quarter (XIV arrondissement) where the Breton community has had a very strong presence, the school will be at 7 rue du Moulin Vert (near the métro Alésia stop).

Parents and supporters of the school will need to continue aggressive fundraising. You can help by sending a contribution to the U.S. ICDBL made out to "U.S. ICDBL" and earmarked Diwan Pariz, or directly to the following address:

Skoazell Diwan Pariz  
374 rue de Vaugirard  
75015 Paris  
[diwanparis@free.fr](mailto:diwanparis@free.fr)

Find out more about the Diwan school in Pariz at  
<http://diwanparis.free.fr>.



## PRIZES FOR BRETON LANGUAGE ADVANCES

### Prize "Dazont ar Brezhoneg" (Future of the Breton Language)

This spring 2004, for the third year, Ofis ar Brezhoneg (Office of the Breton Language) sponsored the Prize for the Future of Breton. Of 130 candidates, 41 were in the first cut, 10 were then nominated for the prize, and of these 4 selected as winners.

In the "Individual Category" the winner was Philippe Basciano-Le Gall (from Vannes) who has developed technologies for people to work through the Breton language on their computer, including a Breton spell-check and adapted keyboard. See his web site: [www.drouizig.org/drouizig](http://www.drouizig.org/drouizig)

In the "Association Category" there were two winners. Dorn ha Dorn, one of three bilingual daycares in Brittany (located in Gouesnou) was cited for its use of Breton in working with children as well as with staff and parents. The organization Miks Diviks (in Brest) was recognized for its work to encourage the use of Breton by teens through workshops, movies, concerts, and publications, including a workshop on doing hip hop music in Breton.

In the "Business Category" the SARL Skrid of Plougastel-Daoulas was cited for its work as a publishing house (under the name Deliou) to help businesses, organizations, and individuals print professional materials (publicity, letterhead, brochures, etc) in Breton for a competitive price.

Congratulations to all the winners of this prize as well as to all the candidates who have been incorporating Breton into their daily lives.

### "Priz ar Yaouankiz" / Prize for Youth – A Novel Novel-Writing Contest

For kids in the 11-15 age range who speak or are learning Breton – some 1,200 potential readers – there are just nineteen novels in Breton now available. To fill the gap in reading material, Fanny Chauffin, a Diwan teacher and President of the Association Formation-Education-Animation (FEA), and Yann Fañch Jacq of the Keit Vimp Beo publishing house have launched a contest for novels in Breton for youth (especially middle-school students). This is supported by the General Council of Brittany and the Department of Jeunesse et des Sports.

The novel should be 70 pages, in pocket book format, written in a first-person style or in the form of personal journal, on themes and contemporary issues that appeal to youth today.

Those in the competition were to sign up by the end of May and have until August 31 to complete their work. Six books will be selected by the organizers which will then be made available via internet or at schools for youth themselves to judge. Three winners will then be selected and published by Keit Vimp Beo in time for Christmas.



## TEACHING BRETON TO ADULTS

### Deskiñ d'An Oadourien (DAO)

Since 2001 DAO has regrouped the variety of associations in Brittany who have organized classes for adult learners of Breton. There are an estimated 8,000 adults learning Breton through evening classes, weekend workshops, week-long training sessions, or correspondence courses. Working in several subgroups, DAO hopes to assist teachers with professional development, curriculum geared to adults, improved working conditions, collaboration in ideas at all levels, and better advertising of adult learning options. Long the domain of dedicated volunteers, the development of professionalism in this area means not only teacher training but teacher salaries and financial support to build classes and make them attractive, accessible and successful.

As Lan Tangi, a teacher of adults with the organization Roudour, rightly points out, it is all well and good to give awards to those who promote Breton in some way, invest money in studies of terminology or place names, and to enroll one's children in bilingual programs or Diwan schools. But, if adults do not themselves make the effort to learn Breton and use it in their lives, Breton has little chance of surviving long. ("Apprenons le breton!" Bretagne Hebdo 97, 3-9 mars 2004).

The growth of adult classes is only to be encouraged in Brittany and hopefully the work of DAO will support continued development.

Deskiñ d'An Oadourien  
Hent / Route de Berrien, BP4  
29690 An Uhelgoad / Huelgoat  
[dao.breizh@wanadoo.fr](mailto:dao.breizh@wanadoo.fr)



## BRETON SPEAKERS OF THE WORLD UNITE

Eric-Pianezza-Le Page who edits the supplement to Armor Magazine called Horizons Bretons/Dremmwel Breizh has put out a call via internet to set up a system of communication between Breton speakers living outside of Brittany. Here's my translation of the call that went out in French (and will hopefully find a voice in Breton in the coming weeks):

Hello to all / Dematoc'h-holl,

I am now trying to put together a listing of Breton language promoters and practitioners in the Breton diaspora.

### 1. Geographic scope of the list

Geographically this is aimed at people residing in France (outside of the five Breton departments) and in the rest of the world.

### 2. Aim of the list

The goals of the list are as follows:

Goal 1 – Get to know ourselves, zone by geographical zone.

Goal 2 – Evaluate our size

Goal 3 – Communicate with each other in Breton (with the help of French, if necessary, according to the capabilities of each, as Montaigne said of Gascon in the 16<sup>th</sup> century).

This exchange could take place:

- face to face for people in a specific geographical sector.
- by mail between those who wish
- via internet by a means to be determined (at a certain site or a listserve; monolingually or bilingually – to be determined once needs are known)

Goal 4 – Encourage us to use Breton as part of our daily life (with tools such as calendars, checks in Breton ... and in leisure activity: books, recordings, cassettes...), at an intensity and frequency specific to the individual.

### 3. Division of the Listing

The list would have two bodies

- Breton speakers (or "Brittophones")
- Non Breton speakers interested in supporting the Breton language, whether they are French speakers, English speakers or others. This second group would include the action of the International Committee for the Breton Language, valiantly lead by our American friend Lois Kuter, who we can only support in this work.

### 4. Following up on the list

The follow up to constitute this list will be done by means of

- written press in Horizons Bretons, the supplement focused on the Breton diaspora produced by the OBE which appears in the monthly magazine Armor.
- on radio, on the station Radio Pays/Radio Bro, the Parisian radio of the seven linguistic minorities of the hexagone: 93.1 MHz.
- on the internet with the help of the forum [Bretonsdumonde@yahoogroupes.fr](mailto:Bretonsdumonde@yahoogroupes.fr)

### 5. Signing up on the List

To sign up, you can send me the following information:

- a. Family name, first name, and address (post office and e-mail)
- b. Pays/Bro and town in Brittany of reference (where you were born, have family, etc.)
- c. Breton language acquisition – of birth, or learned later
- d. Level of Breton language mastery (spoken, reading, writing)
- e. Your desires for information about learning Breton, practicing it, or promoting it.

As is the practice in such actions, there is no fee for signing up, but any contribution towards the expenses of operations would be welcome. (5 Euros is suggested). If you can contribute, please make out a check to Horizons Breton and send it to my address:

Eric Pianezza Le Page  
Editor in Chief, Horizons Breton  
106 Chemin de la Côte du Moulin  
F 78620 L'Etang-La-Ville  
France

Tel.: 01 39 58 48 86

[Eric-pianezza@netcourrier.com](mailto:Eric-pianezza@netcourrier.com)

### 6. Use of funds

The contributions received could be put to the following uses:

- Edit and distribute the list to those who want a "paper" version.
- Create a badge allowing Breton speakers to recognize each other when they meet.
- Give a financial contribution to the first school of the Breton diaspora for the Breton language, [Skol Diwan Pariz] to open in Paris on September 2004.

### 7. Proposed Contest

In order to send a Breton version of this call to action I'm looking for someone to write this and send it to me at the address above. On September 1 I will reveal the name of the first person to send me the translation (a correct one), and for his/her efforts I will send a book or magazine in Breton.

D'ar vrezhonegerien dudiet da respont din a-benn bremañ!

Eric Pianezza Le Page  
Paotre Plonevez-Porze

# NEW BOOKS FROM BRITTANY

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

**Hervé Gourmelon. Le Chevalier de Kerlérec (1704-1770) – L’Affaire de Louisiane.** Les Portes due Large / Keltia Graphics. 2003. 512 pages. ISBN 2-914612-11-7.

This is a book that presents in detail the life of the last governor of Louisiana for France, Louis Billouart de Kervaségan, the Chevalier de Kerlérec. After a brief overview of the life of this Breton nobleman, the bulk of the book is written in the form of a first-person account, with liberal use of excerpts from letters and reports written by Kerlérec.

Born in Quimper in 1704, the Chevalier de Kerlérec was a seaman from the age of 14 and fought in a number of battles at sea against the English where he stood out for his bravery and determination in situations where the French fleet was badly out numbered and out gunned by the superior English fleet.

He was appointed in 1752 by Louis XV to be governor of Louisiana where he served from 1753-1763 when Louisiana was turned over to both Spain and England at the end of the Seven Years War between France and England.

Before his 10-year stay in Louisiana Kerlérec had already traveled there as part of a military campaign in 1730 to punish the Natchez Indians who had massacred French settlers after sacred lands had been taken from them. In alliance with other Indian tribes of the region, the campaign led to the death of some 430 Indians and the intended destruction of the Natchez tribe.

This first four to five month stay in Louisiana did not leave Kerlérec with a positive impression of this far away colony and its capital New Orleans

*We stayed for a time in New Orleans in order to prepare for the ocean voyage back to France. I desired to return as quickly as possible since the three-month winter campaign in the cold and rain of an inhospitable country gave me a rheumatism that would torment me on and off for a long time. I didn't much like the capital of Louisiana, subject to the caprices of the Mississippi River which would regularly flood its streets, leaving a nauseating residue. It is inhabited by an incongruous population, with dissolute customs, who complain rightly of very hot summers which are hard to bear, of epidemics which decimate families, and tornadoes which blow away roofs. (p. 33 – my translation).*

The naming of Kerlérec as governor of Louisiana by Louis XV in 1752 took him by surprise. He had spent as much time at sea (with 23 naval campaigns) as on land, and while honored by this nomination he had apprehensions about his abilities to take on such responsibilities. He also had apprehensions about living in this land of hostile Indians, bayous infested with snakes and alligators, torrential rains, and the unpleasant city of New Orleans. But Louisiana was an important colony for France and this was an adventure he and his family chose to pursue.

By the 1670s France had established colonies in Canada along the Saint Lawrence River and the next step was to keep moving through the Great Lakes to establish forts and claim land from Michigan down to the mouth of the Mississippi – connecting the Atlantic Ocean to the Gulf of Mexico. Nine other governors had served in Louisiana before Kerlérec, starting in 1702.

Kerlérec had been right to have apprehensions about his life in Louisiana. The role of governor was a challenging one to say the least, and he would find that staying in touch with France and getting the support the colony needed would be extremely frustrating. In this day of instant communication with telephone and e-mail it is hard to imagine waiting six months (or even several years) to receive news or a response to an “urgent” request for help that was sent by a ship that might be captured by the enemy.

France was constantly at war with England even before the Seven Years War was declared in June 1756. In order to keep England from taking control of the Louisiana Territory, Kerlérec had to understand and negotiate with dozens of Indian tribes --Cherokees, Arkansas, Choctaws, Miamis, Houmas, to name just a few. Maintaining alliances with Indians was key in insuring a buffer between the English and French settlers. In this territory which is taken up today by some 16 states (approximately 1/3 of the U.S.), Kerlérec estimated a population of some 100,000 Indians and 110,000 non-Indians – 7,000 Europeans and 3-4,000 slaves. The Indians had some 15-16,000 warriors, three-fourths of which Kerlérec thought to be on France's side. France had just some 2,000 soldiers of variable quality – many were deserters sent from France or wild sons sent by their families to cool off before they depleted family fortunes or honor. Army moral was bad, chances for promotion and honors very limited, and supplies of arms never enough despite persistent pleas from Kerlérec to France to send more. Keeping supplies coming to the distant colony was also key in maintaining Indian alliances. The



English always seemed to have better trade goods, and their naval superiority made it easy to block incoming ships and outgoing trade of pelts, tobacco and indigo from Louisiana.

As early as 1757 Kerlérec asked to be relieved of the governorship. Pleading bad health and tormented by the isolation and lack of news and support from France for the colony, he was anxious to leave this job which was not only taxing his health but also depleting his and his wife's wealth. Maintaining discipline in a ragtag army during a state of war with England, insuring shipments in and out of New Orleans, and maintaining critical alliances with Indians were worrisome enough. Kerlérec also had the challenge of maintaining a working relationship with the Ordonnateur ("manager") for the colony, the Comte de Rochemore, who fought Kerlérec's authority from the day he arrived in Louisiana in 1758. The rivalry for power got increasingly ugly as years went by, and Kerlérec would blame Rochemore for fiscal mismanagement and insubordination, getting him sent back to France along with military officers who sided with him.

In April 1763 a letter would arrive announcing that hostilities between France and England had ended on November 30, 1762. The Louisiana Territory was to be ceded to Spain and England. What about the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 when the U.S. purchased the Louisiana Territory from France? While France had ceded Louisiana to Spain and parts to England in 1762, through a secret treaty of San Ildefonso (1800) the French regained the area. Napoleon had hopes of building an empire in the western hemisphere, but failure to control Hispaniola (thanks to Toussaint L'Ouverture's uprising of slaves in Haiti) meant this was not to be. As it had been during Kerlérec's governance, Caribbean islands were a key link in maintaining trade with Louisiana. Napoleon had plans for Europe and needed funds and soldiers there, so Louisiana was sold to the United States to the joy of President Thomas Jefferson.

Whatever nation was to ultimately control Louisiana, Kerlérec was saddened that France had not tried harder to develop the potential of this colony. Indian nations who allied with France were equally unhappy and noted that the King of France had no right to transfer their land or dispose of them like cattle.

Kerlérec would sail back to France in November 1763 with lots of regrets:

*I leave overwhelmed, ill and without the slightest wealth. I am the unhappy and last governor of Louisiana for the King of France, a colony which goes under English and Spanish domination. Without the war [between France and England], even with an incompetent, conceited and hostile Ordonnateur, I could certainly have succeeded in keeping*

*the friendship of the Indian nations and making of this beautiful province a rich and welcoming territory that Louis XV would certainly never abandon to foreign lusts. I believe that my life and that of my family would have been happier if I had remained in France as a ship captain for the King in Brest – near the family homes and in healthy climatic conditions. The rough life of a sailor would be preferable to the fallacious honors and heavy responsibilities of a colonial administrator (page 300 – my translation).*

Back home, penniless and in deep debt, Kerlérec would find no peace as he goes to battle in court to fight a case brought against him by his nemesis Rochemore, and after Rochemore's death in 1763 continued on by Madame Rochemore with even more determination and vindictiveness. Kerlérec would lose the case in which he is found by the King to have "exercised tyrannical power" in his governance of Louisiana. All his other accomplishments forgotten by the Court of France, Kerlérec would die in 1770 a ruined man, bitter about the ingratitude and injustice shown to him by the King he served so long and loyally. Kerlérec's family would continue to fight for his honor, but France was uninterested.

The 500 pages of this book offer a fascinating window on a specific period of time in U.S. history as well as French history. In presenting this history through the eyes of the Chevalier de Kerlérec, Hervé Gourmelon takes the reader on the journey to Louisiana to walk side by side with Kerlérec as he takes on the impossible job of governing a distant colony unloved by France.

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**Marcel Texier. La Bretagne n'a pas dit son dernier mot.** Yoran Embanner. 2004. 248 pages. ISBN 2-9521446-0-5.

This book collects essays written over a period of some 20 years (1983 to 2003). They cover a range of topics, but the main theme is Breton identity and independence for Brittany. Marcel Texier includes Loire-Atlantique in Brittany so the issue of reunification is not absent in these essays. Sixteen of the fifty-five short essays (two to five pages) focus specifically on the Breton language, including a nice series on Breton language authors. The majority of the articles were published in the magazine l'Avenir de la Bretagne – in which Texier continues to have a regular column.

Marcel Texier has a degree in English and has taught French in England, Sweden and the U.S. (1968). For twenty years he has been a professor at the École Nationale Supérieure d'Arts et Métiers where he has served as a liaison for relations with English language countries and Northern European countries. He lives and works in the Paris area but

is a native of Gallo Brittany which has not prevented him from becoming an ardent defender of the Breton language (which he has learned to speak – admittedly without perfecting it, yet).

It is Texier's international perspective which informs many of the essays here, and he has a great deal of knowledge and experience to draw from when it comes to "minority" languages and cultures. From 1978 to 1982 he served as General Secretary of the Association Internationale pour la Defense de Langues et Cultures Menacées (AIDLCM). He has also been an active member of the Union Fédéraliste des Communautés Ethniques Européennes (UFCE) and served on the Consultative Council of the Institut International pour le Droit des Groupes Ethniques et le Régionalisme (INTEREG). As a Breton expatriate he has been vice-president of the Organisation des Bretons de l'Extérieur (OBE) and as a language teacher has served as vice president for the Association Européennne de Linguistes et Professeurs de Langues (AELPL).

As has been the case for many Bretons, Marcel Texier's experience living and traveling outside of Brittany has reinforced his sense of Breton identity. And like many Bretons, Texier is quite comfortable defending his Breton identity while exploring and appreciating other cultures of the world. This allows him to look beyond France and imagine a different future for Brittany.

*To get rid of French reflexes, to refuse to allow oneself to become swallowed up in French political categories, to no longer be hypnotized by Paris – that's the beginning of wisdom for a Breton. Let's think for ourselves, leave the French to their "model." As for us, if in order to avoid reinventing the wheel, we try to take advantage of the experience of others, we have everything to gain in looking beyond the Hexagon. (p. 189; my translation)*

That paragraph is used to introduce an article on the autonomy of the Aland Islands – islands with a Swedish culture but politically part of Finland. This is just one example of how Texier looks outside of France to see how culturally distinctive nations (like Brittany) can survive being within larger political states. And he discovers that while not the case of Brittany and France, such small nations can even be aided by those large states of which they are a part. He finds some models that Brittany might examine in Denmark's relation to the Faeroe Islands, in most of the rest of Europe outside of France, and even in the U.S. with its federation of states. And Texier also looks at the independence of Slovenia in 1991 for some ideas.

In many essays Texier brings up the abnormality of France's construction of a "nation" built of artificially created "regions" – like Brittany without the department of Loire-Atlantique. France is a "nation" maintained by a bizarre insistence on cultural uniformity. In looking at the history of

other European countries it is hard to understand France's fear of such notions as "autonomy," "federalism," or – Heaven forbid – "independence" for Brittany. In looking at other European models, especially in Scandinavia, Texier argues persuasively that both France and Brittany would be better off if Brittany were independent. France could spend more time solving real economic problems instead of wasting energy on worrying about Breton separatists. The two countries could work together productively as allies. Texier realizes that it is of course more complex than that, and independence for Brittany does not guarantee an idyllic life.

But, he asks that Bretons think big and not accept an unimaginative and narrow French model when there are other more interesting possibilities. What would happen if Brittany gained the kind of independence granted to Scotland and Wales? Would this be the end of Civilization as the French know it?

*Independence for Brittany is simply a right it lost at the end of the 15<sup>th</sup> century following a military conquest which must be restored. In reality it means the reestablishment of a normal situation which would end, for our country [Brittany], a subjection which cannot be justified – a permanent source of misunderstanding and a diffuse malaise, sometimes concealed and sometimes sharp, and an obstacle to truly harmonious relations between this country and France (p. 231; my translation).*

What angers Texier is that Francee brags about its role as a land of human rights while squelching Bretons' rights to promote their own culture and language. What angers Texier even more is that Bretons all too often accept the "French model" of how the world must work, without exploring other options.

In his conclusion to this collection of essays, Texier makes it clear that the language and culture of France are not the enemy. But, France is stifling Brittany's economic, cultural and human potential. Brittany needs the chance to breathe.

These essays are intended to provoke thought, and they succeed well in doing that.

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## FOR LANGUAGE LOVERS

The publishing house Yoran Embanner has put out three new mini-Breton dictionaries:

Geriadurig / Minidiccionario –  
Brezhoneg / Spagnoleg – Español / Breton  
Geriadurig / Mini-Disionario –  
Brezhoneg / Italianeg – Italiano / Breton

Geriadurig / Woordenboekje –

Brezhoneg / Nederlandeg – Nederlands / Bretons

These are added to the Breton/French, Breton/German and Breton/English mini-dictionaries already published. Please be reminded that Lois has a number of the Breton/English dictionaries available for purchase. Contact her for price.



## New Breton & Gallo Language Books Briefly Noted

The following short notes are based on information in Al Liamm 343 (ebrel 2004) and 344 (mezheven 2004), Keleier Ofis ar Brezhoneg 57 (gouere 2004), Ar Men 140 (mai/juin 2004) & Bretagne Hebdo 98 (10-16 mars 2004) and 99 (17-23 mars 2004).

Abécédaire en Gallo et Breton. Lez emóleriy au sórgarr. 2004

ABC cards produced by the new Gallo language publishing house, Lez emóleriy au sórgarr, with a word (and pronunciation) in Gallo on one side and in Breton on the other. This is a great way for kids to learn a bit of vocabulary in both Breton and Gallo.

A-demórr, Le Gallo – une langue bretonne à (ré)découvrir. 2004. Book and CD

This is the first Gallo text for learners to come with a CD. The text includes 17 lessons. A-Demórr is an association founded in 2001 to offer correspondence classes in Gallo or at locations in Guichen, Redon, and Vannes ... among other options. For more information: [sorgarr@yahoo.fr](mailto:sorgarr@yahoo.fr) or consult the web site: <http://ademorr.free.fr>

52 gontadenn a-raok mont da Gerhun. Alternatives FM (BP 31615, 44316 Nantes cedex 3). 60 page booklet and CD.

52 short stories written by middle and high school students in the Nantes region which are recorded on a CD by Studio Alternatives radio. Each story is between two to three minutes long and will be enjoyed by children as well as adults learning Breton.

Denez, Per. Angerdd angheuol, tair stori fer gan Per Denez. Adran Gymraeg. Pryfysgol Cymru. Aberystwyth. 2004. 102 pages.

This is a selection of three stories written in Breton by Per Denez and translated into Welsh by Rhisiard Hincks, Jenny Pye and Gwenno Sven-Myer. They were published

originally in 1992 in *Eus un amzer zo bet* and in 1996 in *Da rouz noz*.

Favereau, Jacqueline. Main blanche main noire / Dorn gwenn dorn du. Editions l'Harmattan. Bilingual story in French and Breton for children, but perhaps also for adults.

Favereau, Francis. Lennegezh ar brezhoneg en XXvet kantved – Eil levrenn (1919-1944) Anthologie de la littérature bretonne aux XXe siècle – Tome 2 (1919-1944). Editions Skol Vreizh. 576 pages. 2004.

Second volume of a series available in Breton or French on Breton language authors. This volume covers the period of 1919-1944 and writers who were active contributors to two literary magazines of the period: *Feiz ha Breiz* and *Gwalarn*. Biographical information is included as well as excerpts from their works. Authors in this volume include Jules Gros, Loeiz Herrieu, Fañch Elies-Abeozen, Debauvais, Xavier de Langlais, Youenn Drezen, Frances Vallée and Roparz Hemon.

Hélias, Per Jakez. Lagad an tan / L'Oeil du feu. Brud Nevez.

A collection of some 15 bilingual short stories by Per Jakez Hélias selected by Chanig ar Gall from four previously published works by Hélias: *Maner Kuz*, *Ar Mên du*, *An tremen-buhez*, and *Amsked*.

Kervella, Divi. Geriaoueg luc'hajoù ar brezhoneg / Vocabulaire argotique breton. An Alarc'h embannadurioù. 2004. 96 pages.  
A presentation of slang and non-standard uses of Breton.

Levrig ar buhezour. Ubapar. 2004. ISBN 2-906 220-20-5. This is a guide for the use of Breton in play activities for children put together by a team of experts. Contents include notes on pedagogy, child behavior, vacation camp regulations, as well as a wealth of activities for children. A section is also included on resources to learn Breton, bibliographical references, etc.

McDonagh, Martin. Billy Paogamm. Emgleo Breiz. 2004, 183 pages.

This is a theater piece – a comedy – by Irish writer Martin McDonagh put into Breton by Remi Derrien for performance by the Breton language theater troupe Theatr Brezoneg Penn ar Bed.





# DEEP INSIDE A BRETON SKULL

## 3 – The seven saints

Jean-Pierre Le Mat

Who are they, and why are they a team of seven ?  
We can feel the answer, but it is difficult to formulate it clearly.

According to the apocryphal gospel of Nicodemus and the Acts of Pilatus, another apocryphal text, largely read and interpreted in western Europe during the early christian times, the peninsula was christianised first by Joseph of Arimathea. Together with Joseph was his son Galahad, his brother-in-law Broon, his friend Cedon, and three others. The fifth was Josuah, son of Broon, and ancestor of Pelles, the mysterious Fisher King. Lancelot, during his love meeting with the daughter of Pelles, fathered a son named Galahad who, according to some versions of the Arthurian cycle, was the discoverer of the Holy Grail.

Another gang of seven saints are seven brothers, the sons of a widow living in the town of Daoulas. According to the legend, this Christian family was persecuted by the pagan population for their religion, and the seven boys took refuge in Brest, twenty miles away. They are still honoured in Brest but, strange enough, not for any positive actions but only for being harassed by the Pagans.

The most exotic team of seven saints in Brittany is the one honoured in the chapel of the Seven Saints near Plouaret, in the Tregor country, not far from the town of Lannion. There, the seven saints are the "sleeping saints" of Ephesus (now in Turkey), who were buried alive in 252 BC and found alive in their cave two centuries later. These holy men are honoured by the oriental Christians, but also by the Muslims. The story is evoked in the Koran (surate 18, verse 8 to 25).

The Breton "pardon" of the Seven Saints is now a ceremony attended by Christians and Muslims together. But another religion, older than these two ones, is under this story. The old chapel of the Seven saints is build on the top of a buried dolmen.

Religious meetings in this forested place must have been established long ago. The obstinate Breton people changed their gods and religious leaders, but they did not change their places of worship.

There is also a team of seven healer saints, the seven Breton medicine men (and women). Eugenie and Yvertin heal headaches. Houarniaule (or Hervé) heals the fearful and depressed people. Meen heals madness. Mamert heals stomach ache. Lubin heals rheumatism. Hubert helps in case of rabies. The chapel of this amazing team is situated just near a megalithic barrow. Why does it need seven Christ warriors to cure the human plagues and to exorcize the pagan ghosts ?

But the dream team, the seven glorious saints of Brittany, those who are known and renowned by us, are seven bishops. They are the "Seven Brothers", the spiritual fathers of the Breton people. They are historic characters.

Kaourintin or Kaou (Corentin in French, Corentinus in Latin) was born around 375 in Brittany. He lived as an hermit until Gradlon, King of Kerne, south western part of Brittany, gave him large estates. Saint Martin, archbishop of Tours, consecrated him as a bishop. Kaou established and built his cathedral in Quimper. He died presumably around 460.

Paol (Paul Aurelien in French) was born in Glamorgan, Wales, around 480. He arrived in Brittany around 517. My ancestors saw him killing a dragon on the Island of Batz, north western Brittany. He created the bishopric of Leon and the main town, Kastell Paol (St. Pol de Léon in French), is named after him. He retired in 553 on the island of Batz and died around 580.

Tugdual came from Devon, Britain. He landed in Brittany with 72 companions and founded the monastery of Lann-Treger (Treguier in French) in 535, on the north-coast of Brittany. He was named

bishop by the Frankish king Childebert 1st. He died in 553. Tugdual made a lot of miracles. According to my ancestors, he could have become God like Jesus, but he did not want this position.

Brieg (Brieuc in French, Briocis in Latin) was born in Cardigan, Wales. Around 550, he contributed to the christianization of Britain. Brieg landed in Brittany around 565. He established a bishopric in the north of the country, east of Tugdual estates, with the help of his cousin Riwall who reigned over the kingdom of Domnonea. He must have been a very authoritative character. My ancestors told that he succeeded in having the wolves kneel before him.

Samson (Sampsonis in Latin) was born in Dyfed, Wales, around 500 BC. He was established bishop of Wales, but preferred to leave for "Britannia minor", Brittany. He founded a monastery-bishopric in Dol, in the north east of the peninsula. Samson was involved in the political agreements between the Frankish king Childebert 1st and the Breton king Judikael. He died in 565.

Malo (Machlovus or Machutus in latin) was born in 501, probably in Britain. He was reared by Saint Brendan and travelled with him during seven years. Then Malo went to Brittany. He stayed on an islet in front of a village which is now the town of Saint-Malo. He then became bishop of Aleth (now the town of Saint Servan) in 541. When he died, he was more than 100 years old.

Patern is a true Breton. He wandered in Britain and Ireland for religious reasons before coming back to his native city of Vannes, south of Brittany. He was named bishop and created a bishopric in 465. Patern took part in the Treaty of 497 between the Frankish king Clovis and the Breton kings.

During all the Middle Ages, the pilgrimage through the seven bishoprics, the "Tro Breizh", had the same value for the Breton church as the pilgrimage to Rome, Jerusalem, or Compostella. It was possible to walk the road through the seven Episcopal cities (about 350 miles) in one month or more.

Old stories... But today, every year, the Tro Breizh is followed by thousands of people, from one bishopric to another. It is limited to one week every year, so

you can carry out the whole pilgrimage in seven years. If not, the old traditions are clear : a true Breton who does not follow the Tro Breizh during his life would have to perform it during his death. But he would move forward every year only the length of his coffin. Well, anyway, eternity is a long time...

*PS : If you are part of the Breton stock, genetically, culturally, sentimentally or spiritually, you can follow the Tro Breizh during your life.*

Information:

Les Chemins du Tro-Breiz  
Place de l'Evêché, BP 118  
29250 St-Pol-de-Léon  
Brittany, via France.  
Tél: (33) 2 98 69 11 80 Fax: (33) 2 98 19 13 52  
mail : trobreiz@free.fr / [www.tro-breiz.com](http://www.tro-breiz.com)



## CELTIC LEAGUE CALENDAR FOR 2005

Each year the Celtic League American Branch publishes a calendar that spans the Celtic Year: November 1 to October 31. So you can start your New Year early with this very interesting calendar which is loaded with information. Each day features dates in Celtic history and each month is in a different Celtic language (Breton, Cornish, Welsh, Irish Gaelic, Scottish Gaelic or Manx) with a little proverb included. At the back of the calendar you'll find the list of the months in all of these languages as well as days of the week and numbers from 1 to 20. Instead of glossy photos of scenery each month features the imaginative artwork of Laurie Fraser Manifold depicting scenes from Celtic mythology or a folk tale from the various Celtic lands.

To order your calendar send \$10 to the Celtic League:

Celtic League Calendar  
Box 20153 Dag Hammarskjöld Center  
New York, NY 10016

For more information about the American Branch of the Celtic League look at their web site:  
[www.celticleague.org](http://www.celticleague.org)

## NEW MUSIC FROM BRITTANY

Bagad Kemper. Sud - ar su. Keltia Musique  
KMCD 151. 2004. 55'45. ([www.bagad-kemper.org](http://www.bagad-kemper.org)  
[www.keltiamusique.com](http://www.keltiamusique.com))

When the bagad was invented in Brittany in the 1940s it was a simple matter of adding bombardes to a Scottish style pipe band including bagpipes and snare, tenor, and bass drums. While modeled on Scottish pipe bands, the bagad has been anything but simple with a repertoire and style rooted in the interplay of the paired biniou and bombarde and traditional Breton song but open to influences of music from all over the world and adaptable to new compositions and collaboration with jazz, rock, and classical musicians.

In recent years instruments of all kinds have been added to bagad concerts. One wonders "what next" with each new CD from the bagadoù of Brittany. And Bagad Kemper does not disappoint in adding something new with each CD it produces.

A brass section is used to pump up the intensity in dances, and the gaita, a bagpipe of Spain, is laced in for music of Galicia. An electric guitar adds a low boom to the percussion, and saxophone and accordion have a very nice duet in the slower lead-in to the "Ton bale eured" before the full bagad and electric guitar arrive full force for this wedding march from the Pourlet region of Brittany. Sax and trumpet and then biniou and bombarde work in pair in the beautiful gwerz (ballad) "Ar plac'h manked" to be joined by accordion and a larger ensemble of bombardes from the bagad.

Although the "south" of the title dominates, this CD travels in a number of geographical directions. Bretons have often looked to Celtic neighbors to the north for inspiration and tunes to add to

their repertoire, and have had a love affair with the complex rhythms of Eastern Europe. Their journey south has often been to Africa, but here the south is to South America and Brazil in the opening cut "Mas que nada." The Latin American flavor is also found in the composition "Manolo" by brass section leader Pierrick Poirrier.

South also means a trip to Spain to Brittany's Celtic neighbor Galicia for a xota, a traditional dance of Galicia. This is performed by Susana Seivane, a rising star in the world of the Galician bagpipe, the gaita. "Jota Chaconneada de Sanabria" begins with a virtuoso slow solo warm-up on chromatic (piano) accordion by Alain Trévarin, another guest artist for the CD. The bagad joins the Seivane's gaita and a percussion section gets to show off some in this selection. Another tune from the Castille region of Spain is the selection "Arribes" - in reference to the region of les Arrives del Duero which borders Portugal and Salamanca.

"War Roudou vro Guelteig" (On the road to Celtic lands) is a composition by Jean-Louis Henaff, the artistic director and "penn soner" (head bombarde player) of the Bagad Kemper, and this pays tribute to travels north and south to Celtic lands.

Although there is a southerly theme to the CD the Bagad Kemper does not forget its Breton roots, as heard in the gwerz and march noted earlier, but also in some spirited Breton dances. The already high energy of the dans plin on the CD is intensified by the addition of trumpets and trombones. Brass is also added to the "Dans an diaoul" (dance of the devil), a suite of bals and jabadao from the southern part of the Cornouaille/Kernew region of Brittany. This starts innocently enough with the traditional pairing of biniou and bombarde and then the full



bagad comes in with an additional puff of rhythm from the brass ensemble for emphasis. The scottisch - a dance found especially in eastern Brittany - called "Tournez le jupons" shows off well the powerful force of the full bagad at work.

This is a very high energy CD and you get the feeling that both performers and audience in this live performance are having a great deal of fun. This is certainly evident in the arrangement of a pop tune "Sally" made famous by the British singer Carmel in the 1980s. This is not a great masterpiece of music, but Bagad Kemper makes it interesting and the bombardes shine as they do throughout the CD in making use of the higher octave and some fancy fingering.

Notes to the CD introduce the idea behind the performance (with a summary in Breton and English). The performers are all listed - 9 guest artists, as well as the 23 bombarde players, 18 pipers, and 11 percussionist in the bagad. A short note on each selection is included - in French with a few lines in English. Photos of the performance add a nice touch.

Bagad Kemper is one of the best of Brittany. The arrangements here are highly creative and the performances impeccable and powerful.



**Marcel Le Guilloux. Un devezh 'ba Kerc'h Morvan. Coop Breizh CD952. 2004. 51'46.**

This is a rare recording of an important singer of Brittany - Marcel Le Guilloux. He is important not because he is an international superstar (although he has traveled widely) but because he is a key link in the transmission of traditional Breton language song and story. Now in his 70s Marcel Le Guilloux grew up with traditional song and storytelling around him. In the post war period of the 1950s when the fest noz was being reinvented he learned to sing songs for the dans

plinn and fisel of his home area of central western Brittany. And he naturally learned slower melodies as well.

Marcel Le Guilloux is not a high profile guy, but he has made an impact in being a generous teacher and mentor to younger singers. On this CD he pairs up in kan ha diskan singing (the unique "call and response" style of unaccompanied song for dancing in western Brittany) with three of Brittany's best known "younger" traditional singers (now in their 30s or 40s): Erik Marchand, Annie Ebrel and Yann Fañch Kemener. They pair with him for fisel, plinn and dañs tro (a mix of plinn and fisel).

Saying that Marcel Le Guilloux is not a high profile guy does not mean that he is not well known in western Brittany where he lives and performs most often. He's just not the kind of guy to seek notice and very little of his voice can be found on recordings. The only other recording I know of where he is featured is in duo with Yann Fañch Kemener (then Jean-François Quémener) on a 1982 Lp called Kan ha Diskan on which they perform two suites for the plinn and two for the fisel (Arion 34702). A CD devoted to this master of the song tradition is thus overdue.

Included on this CD are the three dance suites, but also two slower songs and three stories (19 minutes of the CD). Le Guilloux is a great singer, but he is also an excellent story teller - even without the benefit of the theatrical side of a storytelling performances where gestures and facial expressions are important.

This is a CD for those who love the Breton language and related traditions of song and storytelling. It is a CD that can be best appreciated by those who have some fluency in Breton. There are no notes or texts to tell you what the songs or stories say - even in summary. Just as singers like Le Guilloux learned their repertoire through an oral tradition, this is a CD

where Breton learners must hone their listening skills without the crutch of a written text. If you have the minimal Breton skills I have, you will understand very little of the content, but you will hear great singers who are masters of their art .. and maybe this CD will give you the incentive to learn Breton so you can enjoy Marcel Le Guilloux's stories.



Les titres Essentiels - Bretagne. Marzelle 582 415-2. 2003. 2 CDs. Approx 67 and 69 minutes.

Here's a two-CD set with thirty-three selections presenting groups which compose and also rearrange traditional songs and melodies in rock and pop styles. Most are drawn from CDs released in the late 1990s. Some of the selections are indeed "classics" and certainly the selection of artists allows a nice overview of many (if not all) well known rock and pop style performers on the Breton scene at this period. Included are Soldat Louis, Alan Stivell, Gilles Servat, Tri Yann, Dan ar Braz, Yann Fañch Kemener and Didier Squiban, Kern, EV, Ar Re Yaouank, Liyannaj, Red Cardell, Armens, Añjel I.K., Glaz, Carré Manchot, L'Occidentale de Fanfare, Yann Honoré and Bleizi Ruz. An electric rock sound has a bit of an edge over the more acoustic groups, and no truly traditional song or instrumental styles are included in these "essential" titles.

I liked the fact that there was an equal mix of songs in French and in Breton (eleven each) including the "Bro Gozh ma zadoù," Brittany's national anthem, in a great Tri Yann arrangement. And you also found a Hebridean waulking song in Tri Yann's arrangement "I rim bo ro" and African singers in a fusion with Breton dance by Liyannaj ("Doudou"). There were two songs in English - a rendition of Youenn Gwernig's poem "Identity" by Yann Honoré ("La ridée du temps perdu") and a very bluesy translation of a well known Breton

gwerz "Eliziza" arranged by Dan ar Braz and sung by a female vocalist never identified - perhaps Karen Matheson or Elaine Morgan with whom Dan ar Braz has worked with the Heritage des Celtes productions.

The five instrumental selections and some of the vocals include some quite danceable traditional dances of Brittany - an dro, plinn, kost ar c'hoat, kas a-barh, rond de St.-Vincent ...

Too bad there are really no notes other than a list of groups and song titles. Because no CD titles are given, if you like a particular selection it would take some work to track down the recording it came from. Not insurmountable, but frustrating. But all in all, this includes an interesting selection of music and song from great performers of the late 90s in Brittany.

## HEARD OF, BUT NOT HEARD

Short notes for the following were gleaned from Musique Bretonne 184 (May-June 2004) and 185 (July-August 2004).

Bodadeg ar Sonerien. Concours de Brest 2004. BAS.

This is a CD of the contest performances by Brittany's top level bagadoù. This is available both in CD and DVD format.

Breizh génération, les standards du la chanson bretonne. Edenways Rec. 73196-2.

A compilation of previously recorded selections including Soldat Louis, Ti Jaz, Yann Honoré, Carré Manchot, Babords Amures, Bleizi Ruz, Ar Re Yaouank.

Dastum Bro Dreger. Ar Gourenerien - Vie d'lutteurs. Dastum Bro-Dreger EST 03.

This is the third CD in the Encyclopédie Sonore de Trégor - a series of spoken (Breton language) accounts and oral histories. This one focuses on gouren and the practitioners of this Celtic style of wrestling.

**Jacal. Jacal.** Kerig Productions.

The duo of Yves Le Blanc on clarinet and Mike James on accordion adds a biniou and bombarde pair for dances from all over Brittany.

**Gwenaël Kerléo. Yelen.** Coop Breizh.

Compositions for harp and voice which evoke a trip on the Aulne River. No rapids on this river but a series of tranquil pieces.

**Pascal Lamour. Shamans of Brittany.** BNC Productions.

Pascal Lamour has mastered the piping tradition of Brittany and is a Breton speaker from the Vannetais area. This CD features an electronic direction in compositions with reference to Brittany's oral and musical traditions.

**Ma Bretagne.** Edenways Rec. 73185-2.

This compilation of previously recorded selections includes Yann Fañch Kemener, Didier Squiban, Tornaod, Diwall and FMB .. among others.

**Mouez Paotred Breizh. Dre ar bed.** Self-produced MPB 0504 (Distribution Coop Breizh)

A male choir of Brittany directed by Jean-Marie Airault with selections in Breton from Brittany, but also songs from Poland, Wales and the U.S.

**Noz Paris-Breizh.** De Bretagne et d'ailleurs CDBP 01 (Distribution Coop Breizh)

This is a selection of fest-noz bands from the Paris region where Breton emigrants have long kept music and dance traditions alive and well.

**Plantec. Reverzhi.** Créon Music 579 752-2.

Four young Bretons take up biniou, bombarde, guitar and bass guitar in a new fest noz band.

**Quatre Jean. À Nantes, la grande ville.** Alan Pennec Ed./L'Autre Distribution. CAP 22.

Breton "folk-rock" with a focus on Nantes as the theme for this CD

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**AN AUGUST RELEASE for a double CD by DANIEL PHILIPPE & DANIEL LE FÉON**

**C'hwezh ur vro / Le souffle d'un terroir.**

Dastum Bro-Dreger. 2004

On the occasion of the Plinn Festival in Bourbriac on August 15, a double CD is being released to document the paired bombarde and biniou playing of Daniel Philippe and Daniel Le Féon. Philippe has won five championships at the annual Gourin competition for paired "sonneurs" (twice with Dédé Thomas and three times with Le Féon) and is an important link to an older generation of performers in Brittany.

Philippe and Le Féon are masters of the Plinn area's repertoire which is featured on these two CDs. Despite this pair's renown in the piping world of Brittany, almost no recordings exist. Yes, it's always best to see performances live, but recordings offer future generations the chance to study the unique style of a performer, so this is a very welcome CD for pipers of Brittany.

The CDs contain public recordings from contests such as that of Gourin and the Trophée Matilin an Dall, as well as from festivals like the Plinn festival of Danouët and the Fisel festival of Rostrenen. While the quality of the recordings is not always the best, the spontaneity of a live performance is a good trade-off for the colder sound of a studio recording where there is no audience - or dancers.



**FÊTE DU CANAL DE L'UNITÉ 2004**

**Festival of the Canal of Unity 2004**

There are dozens of festivals throughout Brittany each summer (and at most other times of the year) so it is impossible to present them all in the pages of Bro Nevez, but the Fête du Canal de l'Unité is worth a quick note.

This unique one-day festival on September 19, 2004, travels the length of the canal that goes from Nantes to Brest. Completed in 1840, the canal is 360 kilometers long with some 237 locks. While an



important shipping route in earlier days, today its use is recreational and the canal offers a great setting for this festival. At various stops Bretons of all ages will celebrate with music and dance, but also with activities focused on the environment and architectural patrimony of Brittany.

In Nantes you can take a walking tour, kicked off by the Bagad de Nantes and stop at other points in the city to hear music and do some dancing. Through the afternoon the Marquis de Saffré Square will feature a series of performances and cultural organization will have information tables. Artists and photographers will also have a chance to display their work, and you can watch and learn about gouren, the Breton style of wrestling.

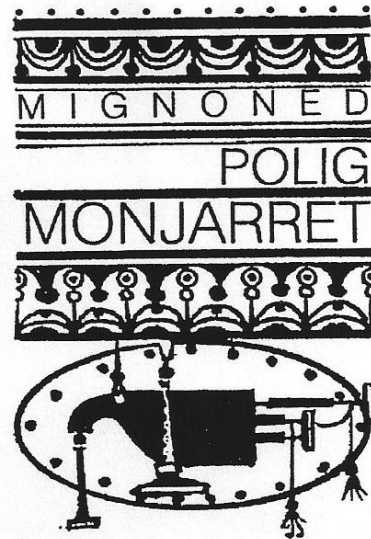
In the Redon region you can take a "singing walk" along the canal organized by the Cercle Celtique de Redon. Albert Poulain, a great singer and storyteller from the region, will be singing and also serving as a guide to traditional styles of architecture encountered on the walk.

In Pontivy you'll find activities in and along the canal organized by the canoe/kayak club and other local organizations, including the Canaux Breton association which is based there.

In Carhaix you'll start with a guided tour of the Château of Kerampuilh. There will be musical entertainment throughout the day as well as the presence of cultural associations. The festival here will also include an exhibit on houses of the Póher region, and Jean Kergrist will speak about the houses at the locks of the canal. Kergrist has also researched the prison labor gangs who worked on the canal so participants will have the chance to learn more about the huge expenditure of manpower (and loss of lives) in building the canal.

This is not a big festival and will not draw thousands of tourists. It is organized and run by volunteers who live along the canal and want to share their love of Brittany's natural, architectural and musical patrimony.

For more information see the website:  
[www.canaldelunite.com](http://www.canaldelunite.com)



## **Friends of Polig Monjarret Les Amis de Polig Monjarret**

On June 22, 2004, a public square in Lorient was officially inaugurated: Place Polig Monjarret. And on this occasion the Friends of Polig Monjarret association was launched. This organization has as its objective the realization of works of art in memory of Polig Monjarret (1920-2003) and his work.\* The first project will be a contest for Breton and Irish sculptors to create a statue of Polig.

The contest will be launched in September and an estimated 30,000 euros will need to be raised in the coming two years to complete the project with a statue placed in Lorient. The contest will be overseen by a committee composed of artists and art teachers with input on a final selection also made by those who make contributions. The sculpture should symbolize Polig Monjarret's most important work, especially in the areas of music and Breton-Irish relations.

A number of leaders of Breton organizations are on board the oversight committee for the project :

- Jean-Yves Le Drian , President of the Conseil Régional de Bretagne , and Deputy of Morbihan
- Loïc Le Meur , Mayor of Ploemeur , General Councillor
- Norbert Métairie , Mayor of Lorient , General Councillor
- Luc Offredo , President of Bretagne-Irlande
- Bob Haslé , President of Bodadeg ar Sonerien
- Marcel Kerloc'h , President of d'Amzer Nevez
- Jean Yves Le Poëc , President of War'l leur
- Nadine Urvois , President of Emglev Bro an Oriant
- Ivonig Le Merdy , President of Emglev Bro an Oriant
- Patrick Malrieu , President of the Conseil Culturel de Bretagne

- Yvonig Gicquel , President of the Institut Culturel de Bretagne (Skol Uhel ar Vro)
- Pierre Le Padellec , President of Kan ar Bobl
- Jacques Michenaud , President of Dastum
- Lena Louarn , President of the Office de la Langue Bretonne (Ofis ar Brezhoneg)
- Yann Jestin , President of the Elus Bretonnants
- Jean Michel Le Viol , President of the Festival de Cornouaille
- Jean-Pierre Pichard , Director of the Inter-Celtic Festival of Lorient

and Alan Stivell, Carlos Nunez, Paddy Moloney, Gilles Servat, André Le Meut, Josik Allot, Guigner Le Henanff, les Tri Yann, Claude Huart, Donatien Laurent to name a few musicians involved.

If you want to make a contribution to this cause, send your donation to: Les Amis de Polig Monjarret, 32 rue François Le Levé 56100 Lorient, tel/fax : 02 97 64 12 76, e-mail: [lesamisdepolig@tiscali.fr](mailto:lesamisdepolig@tiscali.fr) .

\* See Bro Nevez 89, February 2004, for a presentation of Monjarret and his significant impact on Breton music and culture. The magazine Ar Soner, published by Bodadeg ar Sonerien, has put out a special edition devoted to Polig Monjarret (No. 372, January/February 2004). This features a number of biographical articles about him as well as earlier writings and interviews with him that give a good feel for his strong personality as well as an in-depth view of his pioneering work for Breton music and culture.



## In Memory of Maï TREVIDIC

This past winter Brittany lost a quiet but passionate defender: Maï Trevidic. Maï was not a famous personality nor was her husband Albert Trevidic who continues to fight for Brittany in his 80s in Carhaix as best he can despite challenges to his health. Both Albert and Maï were ardent defenders of the Breton language throughout their lives. Although Albert was the more "public" of this couple, they worked as a team in encouraging old and young to learn Breton and love it. Maï was with Albert every step of the way (or should I say "throw") in his promotion of *gouren*, a Breton style of wrestling with ancient Celtic roots. And she supported him and shared in teaching Breton history and culture, contributing generously to the Diwan schools even though they had no children enrolled in these schools.

As for music, Maï was with Albert in the founding of the Kelc'h Keltieg Ahes, the Celtic Circle of Carhaix, in

1946 and the Amicale des Festoù-noz des Montagnes which fostered the early renaissance of the fest-noz in the late 1950s and early 60s – a dance event now taken for granted as a part of every weekend throughout Brittany. Albert and Maï were fine connoisseurs of the Breton language (knowledgeable and appreciative of the fine differences from one area of Brittany to the next) and of the oral and musical traditions associated with it. Collections they made of song texts and recordings were an invaluable contribution to the Dastum archives. In all of these activities Maï and Albert helped to insure the transmission of traditional Breton music and the Breton language to future generations.

I met Maï and Albert when I lived in the Carhaix area in 1978 during a year in Brittany to do research for my doctoral dissertation on Breton identity and its expression in music and language. I have never met any two people who were so knowledgeable about and aware of what was happening in Brittany – on the political front as well as in terms of work going on to promote the Breton language and culture. They seemed to know everyone who was active in any way to defend Brittany – whether that was an "insoumis" who refused to serve in the French army, a Breton language teacher or writer, a youngster learning the art of Breton wrestling, or an elderly singer who needed a bit of coaxing to perform at a fest noz.

I continue to send Albert each issue of Bro Nevez but in recent years we have exchanged very few letters. The letters I received from Maï and Albert during the 1980s are full of detailed news – sometimes good and sometimes bad – about what was going on in Brittany. In 1990 Albert was most deservedly inducted into the Order of the Ermine in recognition of his life of service to Brittany. I am certain that for Albert this was an honor he shared with Maï, as he shared his work for Brittany over the years.

Both Maï and Albert Trevidic had (Albert still has) a deep passion and knowledge of Brittany and their quiet but very important work in defense of the Breton language, dance, sports and identity have made a difference. They both gave nothing but encouragement to anyone working in any way to defend Brittany and its language and culture – including me as I began work in 1980 to establish a U.S. Branch of the ICDBL. I will remember very fondly my visits to their home in Carhaix where I learned so much and was welcomed so warmly with a cup of coffee and cookies.

# An Introduction to Brittany for Young People in 1921

From Peeps at Many Lands: France, by John Finnemore. (London: A. & C. Black, Ltd. 1921).

*This book is one of a series which seem written for youth to introduce them to over fifty countries and regions as well as a dozen topics (especially pertaining to England). In just 85 pages the author tries to give readers a "flavor" of France and this book loads in quite a few stereotypes but also some interesting observations. This is not a traveler's account of what he actually saw in Brittany, but a patching together of bits of information to present a total image that packs in as many different features of "typical" Brittany as possible. Based on the activities of the family featured in this book, they seem to live both in the Leon country of northwestern Brittany and within twenty miles of the town of Auray on the southern coastal area of Morbihan! (Original spelling has been maintained.)*

## Chapter IV: In Brittany

In Brittany the West-Country Englishman or the Welshman finds himself quite at home. Sweeps of wild heath, wide barren stretches of moorland, rugged broken hill-sides, where masses of granite thrust themselves through the low bushes, gorse, and fern, and heather – all combine to form a familiar picture. In the lowlands there are pastures dotted by herds of little black-and-white Breton cows, the low thatched, one-storied cottages are scattered about among pine woods, and on the ridges stand quaint stone windmills.

To this land there come every year thousands of visitors from every part of Europe, and many from America. They wish to see the quaint old towns and villages which Brittany possesses in such abundance; they wish to see the strong, simple race of people who inhabit this picturesque corner of France, and to enjoy the strong sweet air that blows over the hills from the sea.

The Breton peasant is a distinct figure among the workers of France. He is proud, and brave, and independent. He loves liberty, and is his own master, tilling his plot of land or putting to sea in his own fishing-boat. The granite of his native hill-side seems to have entered into his blood, and made him hardy, strong, and stubborn in clinging to old beliefs. In Brittany we seem no longer to be in the twentieth

century, but to have wandered back among a people of the Middle Ages.

The Breton believes firmly in witches and warlocks, the evil eye, and the power of a favourite saint to work miracles. He kneels at the wayside shrines to say his prayers, and to each shrine an ancient legend clings. Brittany is a land full of old memories, full of old crosses, churches, cathedrals, stories of old pilgrimages to the shrines of saints, and of miracles devoutly believed in. But there are remains of a still more ancient past, of menhirs and dolmens which belong to pagan times, and speak of rites and worship long forgotten.

Menhirs are great stones set on end, sometimes alone, sometimes in lines and circles; dolmens are rude stone chambers; both, it is thought, were designed as places of worship or of burial, or in memory of some great events.

Brittany abounds with these strange and mysterious monuments, and the most famous of all are at Carnac, on the western coast. Here there are set up vast numbers of huge granite stones, forming avenues miles in length. None knows who set them up, none knows what they mean. They speak of a dim, far-off past, whose memory has perished save for these immense stones, many of them 18 feet in height, huge granite slabs hung with long white lichens, and hoary with age.

The very houses of Brittany seem quite apart from the modern workaday world. They are built of massive stones, cut from grey granite, and formed in quaint and ancient designs. In some of the towns are to be found streets whose houses stand now as they have stood for hundreds of years. Many of these old buildings are formed of heavy timbers, with one story projecting above another, until the houses almost meet across a narrow street. Each story rests on huge brackets, whose ends are carved in the strangest and most fantastic fashion – heads of monsters, grotesque human faces, and the like. But, for the main, the Breton builds his house of the granite so plentiful among his hills, and builds it in so solid a fashion that it lasts unchanged for century after century.



Let us enter a Breton house and see how the people live. Inside it is rather dark and close-smelling, for the window is small, and not often opened. The furniture, too, is dark – heavy tables, stools, benches, and dressers made of stout slabs of chestnut wood, and polished to glassy smoothness. In the open hearth smoulder a few logs, and above them hang a great pot, which simmers all day, and from which all the family meals seem to come. The roof is hung thickly with hams, bladders of lard, ropes of onions, bunches of herbs, and so forth. The house is at present empty save for little Nannic and her baby brother, asleep in his huge cradle, which has been put up on the settle out of the way.

Nannic herself is a quaint little figure in her strange Breton dress. She wears a petticoat of thick woollen stuff, a little apron, a blue bodice with a broad linen collar, a cap, and a pair of huge wooden sabots. The big wooden shoes look very clumsy and awkward, but in truth they are not so. They fit well, and the thick sock of leather and wool makes them easy to the foot. They suit the rough country over which they are to be worn, and if you were to put Nannic in shoes, she would not like them at all. She is in charge of the house, and has just finished clearing up, for girls are taught at a very early age to take their share in household labours. Now she will put on a big white cap over the small coloured one she has been wearing, for the great lace cap is not worn during work-time, but put carefully away.

The cap, or “coif,” is the great feature of every Breton woman’s costume. It is made of real old lace, and is looked upon as a very precious possession. It stands high above the head with wide wings and loops, and is of a different shape in different parts of Brittany. At a great festival as many as a dozen or fifteen shapes may be seen, and a Breton will tell you at once from which town or district a woman comes as soon as he sees her cap.

Now the workers come in from the field. And the men, too, are dressed in Breton fashion – round felt hats with long dangling ribbons, blouses or jackets with many buttons, very much bepatched trousers, and big wooden shoes. They sit down to cabbage soup, brown or black bread, cider, and dried fish. They eat hastily, and then hurry back to the field, for time presses, leaving Nannic to wash up the blue-and-white plates, and store them on a shelf.

If you make friends with Nannic she will show you her best dress. Now, best dresses are, of course, rather

important affairs anywhere, but in Brittany they are of the greatest consequence. For a best dress may be generations old, made of the finest and strongest dark-blue cloth, so richly embroidered and decked with gold tinsel that the original material is quite covered up. With this goes a brilliant silk apron, a cross of gold for the neck, a broad sash of velvet ribbon, a handsome lace cap and collar, and a gold chain with lockets and charms hung upon it.

Such a splendid costume is worn only on high days and holidays, and then with the greatest care. Thus it lasts for a long time, and is handed down from mother to daughter sometimes for 100 years.

Now the baby wakes under the great pile of clothes which has been heaped upon him, and Nannic chatters to him in Breton. She can speak French, but she never uses it at home, where all talk the native tongue. Nor would she like you to think of her as a French girl, for she is a Breton, and proud of it.

Her afternoon task is the making of ropes of onions, which have been grown in their fields. In a short time her father and some friends intend to load a fishing-lugger with a cargo of onions, and sail across the Channel to England. The Breton onion-sellers, in quaint felt hats, blue patched blouses, and huge sabots, are familiar figures in the South-West of England and in Wales, where they hawk their ropes of onions from door to door.

They feel more at home in Wales, perhaps, than anywhere else, for the Breton and Welsh tongues belong to the same family of languages, and a Breton and a Welshman can soon come to understand each other.

## Chapter V – The “Pardon” of St. Anne

If you were to ask little Nannic what was the greatest day in all the year, she would answer at once, “The *pardon* of St. Anne.” If you were to ask her what a *pardon* is, she would stare at you in great surprise, for surely everyone knows that the *pardon* is the great religious festival of the Breton year. It is the day when the Breton trudges to the shrine of his patron saint to burn a candle there as an offering of thankfulness, and to pray for the forgiveness of all his sins.

There are many *pardons* in Brittany. All the summer long, in this village or that, a local *pardon* is being held, and the neighbourhood gathers for the day of

prayer and festival. But the greatest of them all is the *pardon* of St. Anne of Auray.

Auray is a small town of Brittany, and St. Anne is its patron saint. The story runs that some 1,200 years ago St. Anne appeared to a Breton farmer named Nicolazic, and bade him dig in a certain spot in a field near at hand. He did so, and found an image of the saint. Then she commanded him to erect there a chapel to her memory. The chapel was raised, but that first shrine has long since disappeared. Several chapels have been built upon the spot, one after the other, and each has been finer than the last, until now a splendid cathedral stands there. This great church has been made very beautiful by those who wish to show their gratitude to St., Anne for favours which they believe they have received, or those who wish her to bless them in the future. The altar is decked with gold and precious stones, the walls are covered with costly marbles and pictures of great value.

The pardon of St. Anne is on July 25, and the dawn of that summer day sees thousands of people afoot and making their way towards Auray. Many have started before the day, for the Breton peasant thinks nothing of walking 100 miles to the pardon of St. Anne. If some one of the household is not there to pray before her shrine and burn a candle in her honour, that house will not prosper in the coming year. This is the devout belief of every Breton peasant, and so every road is crowded, every vehicle is filled.

Nannic does not need to start before the morning of the day, for she lives within twenty miles of Auray, and she and her parents are to drive there in the big waggon which belongs to their friend and neighbour, Alanik Rosel.

The first peep of dawn sees them afoot, and the sun is barely up when the big waggon rattles out of the village, packed with people and drawn by big fat horses, whose heads are decked with gay rosettes of pink, white, and blue, formed of tissue-paper. Upon the harness are fixed large round bells, which tinkle gaily as the waggon rolls along the dusty way.

Soon they reach the highway, and now the waggon must go slowly, for the broad road is packed from side to side. Crowds of peasants march along on foot, their big wooden shoes filling the air with a rattling clatter of sound, and every one holds in his or her hand a long thin white candle to burn at the shrine. Their faces are serious and their lips move steadily, and the air is filled with a low hum, for all are praying in soft

voices as they march towards the sacred place. Besides the people on foot and on horseback, there is a multitude of carts, waggons, carriages, diligences, packed inside and out, and then there are the beggars. Many of the latter are poor maimed cripples, drawn by a friend on a little wooden cart, or limping along on crutches. They beg of the crowd in high, shrill voices, and hold up their tin cups. Nor do they beg in vain, for the sous rattle into the cups in a steady stream.

At last a murmur of joy runs through the marching crowd, for they see the slender spire of the cathedral shoot up above a line of distant trees, and know that the shrine is at hand. Upon reaching the place many of the pilgrims push their way to the fountain of the saint. The water of this is believed to have miraculous powers, to heal the sick, to cure the halt, the maim, and the blind. The peasants eagerly bathe their heads, their hands, and their feet in the milky-looking liquid which fills the two stone basins, while others even drink it. Others, again, fill small brown bowls, and carry the sacred water away for those who are unable to reach the fountain. On the outskirts of the crowd there are hundreds of the old and feeble lying on the ground to rest after their long, toilsome journey. Some are asleep, some eat tough crusts of black bread, some bind up their torn and bleeding feet.

Nannic and her friends arrived at the pardon in good time and in great comfort, for their journey was not long, and had been made in Rosel's waggon. They went at once to the square in front of the church, where there were many stalls, the keepers of whom called upon the people to buy chaplets, little figures of St. Anne, wax candles large and small, rings, crosses, and rosaries. Nannic, though, did not look at one of the stalls until she had raised her eyes to the great shining gilded statue of St. Anne upon the tower, and had said her prayers.

At noon the square before the church was packed with close rows of kneeling figures. The tall white caps of the women spread like a sea of glittering white, broken by the dark heads of the men. Then trumpets sound, and there is the roll of a drum, and a great golden cross is borne through the doorway of the church. A procession is formed, and the shrine of St. Anne, an ark of gilded wood, is borne through the kneeling ranks of the peasants by a dozen long-haired Bretons. Finally, the Bishop appears upon a balcony and looks over the crowd. There is a swift roll of drums to call every one's attention, and the multitude gaze eagerly upon him. He slowly surveys the crowd

on every side, then he raises his hands in the attitude of blessing. He utters a prayer, and his hands fall to his sides. Out ring the trumpets, and the sweet clear voices of boys rise in a chant in honour of the saint, and a deep murmur of devotion runs through the vast crowd. The pardon has been said.

Now the scene changes with magic swiftness. Up to this moment the pardon has been a festival of devotion and prayer, now it becomes a fair, and the worshippers become gay revellers. Up spring a host of hawkers, who sell whistles and paper horns and long brightly-coloured paper tubes with plumes of tissue-paper at the ends. The young people buy these, and a babel of gay uproar follows. Jokes fly from mouth to mouth, and showers of coloured confetti dance in the air as the merry makers fling handfuls at each other.

As soon as the pardon is over, Nannic and her friends go to get something to eat. Beside the road there are long lines of tents, built in a very simple fashion by stretching canvas and coarse sacking over great hoops set in the ground. Inside are rude tables set out with dishes of bread, and a cider cask is in full flow. Before the tent is a fire of peat, and here fish is being broiled on stones.

When the simple meal is over, away goes Nannic with some young friends to the fair. There are rows of booths ready to tempt the sous out of the peasant pockets. The stalls are laden with gingerbread and sweets, with toys and presents, and a thousand trifles to amuse or adorn the purchasers. There are shows much the same as may be seen at an English fair – fat women, living skeletons, men without heads, jugglers, conjurers, sword-swallowers, acrobats, and snake-charmers.

But Nannic and her friends do not stay long in the fair, for they hear the shrill notes of the “binious,” the Breton bagpipes, which are sounding for the grand dance that closes every pardon. The way to the dancing-place is sown by the stream of girls and young men moving thither, and at times a young man takes the hand of a girl, and they dance along, keeping step to the music.

Soon a band of dancers forms in line for the stately gavotte of the pardon. This dance has a religious origin, and is performed with much ceremony. There is a ribbon of honour for the best dancer – a broad, bright blue ribbon with silver tassels, worn across the shoulder – and to gain it is a great feat.

The biniou-players now begin to sound the long-drawn notes of the dance, and the dancers, who have been standing hand in hand, break into fours and begin the dance. They who dance the longest will win the prizes, and as couple after couple drop out, exhausted and breathless, the excitement rises steadily. Nearly an hour passes, and now only two couples are left. The peasants surround these, and their friends shout wild cries of encouragement. But at length one couple can do no more, and they stop. The other pair swing each other through the final figures of the dance, and are then hailed as victors. The girl is crowned with a wreath of tinsel and flowers, and the young man receives the ribbon.

Nannic and her companions join in the shout of applause which salutes the winners, and then return to the square. It is high time for them to do so. There is Alanik Rosel blowing his whistle and ringing loudly the bells on his harnessed team, while a friend roars the name of their village. It is the signal for departure. With sighs of regret little Nannic and her companions climb into the waggon. The square is full of merry uproar as the departing peasants shout gay farewells to each other. How different from the murmur of prayers or devout silence of the morning! But now Alanik whips up his horses, and the huge waggon rumbles heavily away down the dusty road in the evening light. The cathedral and its spire are lost to sight behind a veil of trees. The pardon of St. Anne is over.



## Some Famous Bretons

On the pages which follow you will find very brief presentations of fourteen famous Bretons – and in some cases people with somewhat dubious or distant Breton ancestry. This was prepared for a poster used at the Potomac Celtic Festival this June in Leesburg, Virginia, where the U.S. ICDBL has had an information tent. While there are many famous Bretons that could have been featured in such a flyer/poster board, I chose some that I felt Americans were more likely to recognize, and tried to include a variety of time periods and occupations .. explorers, sports stars, writers, political leaders, etc.

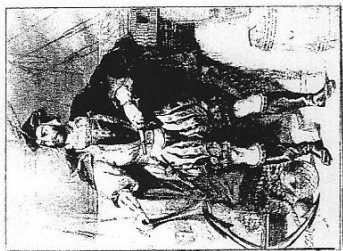
Besides various poster displays, including a large map with all the Celtic nations (including Galicia and Asturias), we have a number of hand-out flyers about Brittany and the Breton language. And we also raise a bit of money for Diwan at the stand (this year close to \$200). My thanks to U.S. ICDBL members who helped with the information tent during the two days we were at the Potomac Celtic Festival.



## FAMOUS PEOPLE OF BRITTANY

### Jacques Cartier (1491-1557)

Born in Saint-Malo, this famous navigator, the "Columbus of Canada" made three expeditions to North America. The first voyage in 1534 was financed by French King François I to discover a new route to the west. Cartier found Newfoundland and the Bay of Gaspe which he claimed for France. On the second (1535) and third (1541) voyages he explored the Saint-Lawrence River.



### Louis L'Amour (1908-1988)

This American novelist might not have claimed a Breton identity, but he is a descendant of Judson La Moure, a French Canadian explorer, whose family hails from the Ile de Batz in Brittany. Louis La Moore would become a prolific author using the name L'Amour. He wrote over 100 novels and collections of short stories set in the early American west.



### Armand de la Rouërie (1751-1793)

This Breton gentleman born in Fougères volunteered to serve in the American Revolution, arriving before the more famous Lafayette in 1777. He shined at the Battle of Yorktown when he got his name "Colonel Armand" and was inducted into the Order of Cincinnati. Some 450 soldiers and sailors from all parts of Brittany served the American revolutionary cause from 1777 to the end of the war in 1784. Back in Brittany in 1784 Colonel Armand fought for Breton rights and organized an unsuccessful counter-[French] revolutionary group called the Association Bretonne.



### Mary Stuart, Queen of Scotland (1542-1587)



The Stuart family which ruled Scotland from 1371 to 1714, were descendants of a Breton, the Seneschal of the Count Riwallon of Dol, of the 11<sup>th</sup> century. This Seneschal whose name was Alan had three sons, Alan, Riwallon and Flaad, who left Brittany for England. Flaad (who died in 1114) had a son who was named Alan (known as Alan Fitzflaad) who received land in Owesty from Henry I. His oldest son was named William Fitzalan. One of William's sons, Walter Fitz Alan, went to Scotland and became the "Steward" of King David I. This title ("Steward") became hereditary and was later changed ("Frenchified") to "Stuart." In 1314 Walter III Stewart who fought with Robert the Bruce at Bannockburn was given the Bruce's daughter Marjory's hand in marriage. The son of Walter and Marjory was Robert who became king in 1371 as Robert II, the first king of Scotland in the Stuart dynasty.

### A Few Breton Cycling Pros



#### Jean Robic (1921 - )

Robic, whose family was from the Morbihan department of Brittany, was the very popular winner of the first Tour de France organized after World War II in 1947. He retired from cycling in 1961.



#### Louison Bobet (1925-1983)

From Saint-Méen-le-Grand in the Ile-et-Vilaine Department, Bobet was the winner of three consecutive Tour de France cycling championships in 1955 - among numerous other world and European championship races.



#### Bernard Hinault (1954 - )

Born in Yffiniac, near Saint-Brieuc, "the badger" won the Tour de France five times in 1978, 1979, 1981, 1982 and 1985. He had second place in 1984 and in 1986 (behind Greg Le Mond), the year he retired at age 32.

## Yves Rocher (1930 - )



Born in La Gacilly (Morbihan) where he bases his cosmetics industry, Rocher began his work to develop plant-based medicines and beauty products in 1960. Today he employs some 15,000 people in 88 countries, and you find his products here in the U.S. He is active in the civic life of his native town of La Gacilly (pop. 2,300) which is the headquarters for the world's largest natural beauty care company.

## Trobriand de Kéréderm

### Jean-Jospeh de Trobriand de Kéréderm (1765-1799)

Jean-Joseph was an explorer who gave his name to the Trobriand Islands discovered on one of his expeditions in 1793. These islands of Papua-New Guinea have been made famous by Bronislaw Malinowski's anthropology classic, Argonauts of the Western Pacific.

### Philippe Régis Denis de Trobriand de Kéréderm (1816-1897)

This member of the Trobriand family moved to the United States in 1841, marrying the daughter of a rich merchant in New York, and served in the Union Army during the Civil War. He distinguished himself at the Battles of Fredericksburg and Gettysburg, and was named Major-General in 1865.



### Jules Verne (1828-1905)

This writer was born in Nantes, but traveled all around the world. His science fiction novels were an immediate success in the 1860s when he first published them. Some 800 translations in 83 different languages (including English) have been made of his books, which include Around the World in 80 Days and 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea.



## Jean-Jacques Audubon (1785-1851)



Pioneer in the ornithology of American and in France, the Audubon Society is named after John James Audubon. He was born in Les Cayes, Santo Domingo, the illegitimate son of a marine officer from Nantes and a young Breton woman from Touches. At the death of his mother at age five his father took him to Nantes where he was adopted by the Audubons.

He came to America to take charge of his father's property just outside of Philadelphia but was a better artist than businessman and traveled widely to pursue his drawings of birds and mammals of America. Images from his Birds of America, first published in 1827, have been widely reproduced.

## Jack Kerouac (1922-1969)

This writer of the "Beat Generation" was born in Lowell, Massachusetts, to a family of French Canadians who had emigrated there. Author of On the Road, Kerouac unsuccessfully tried to track down his ancestors in Brittany. Later research traces his family back to Urbain-François Le Bihan who moved to Canada in 1721 to escape arrest. The family is from the town of Lanmeur – more specifically a site named Kervoac – in central western Brittany where a street has been named for Jack Kerouac.



## Napoléon Bonaparte (1769-1821)



Although you won't find it in any history books, it is believed by some that Napoleon was not born in Corsica, but at the chateau of Count Marbeuf in Sainte-Seve, near the town of Morlaix, in Brittany. Marbeuf, a Breton noble who served as governor in Corsica, was madly in love with Leitzia, the future Emperor's mom and it is thought that Napoleon is his son. This theory is strengthened by the fact that Marbeuf financed and pulled strings to insure Napoleon's military schooling and other early steps in his career. Napoleon was the Emperor of France from 1769 to 1821.

# JOIN US in supporting the Breton language and culture

*Your Membership in the U.S.  
ICDBL will send a clear signal to  
the people of Brittany and to the  
world that the future of the  
Breton language is a cause with  
international support.*

The Breton language is a Celtic language closely related to Welsh, Cornish, Manx, and Irish and Scottish Gaelic. It is the everyday language of an estimated 250,000 people in Brittany, the far western peninsula of France. But Breton is threatened with extinction. The Breton language is no longer forbidden in schools or totally hidden from public view, but France continues to withhold the resources necessary for its development as a healthy living language, despite demands from an ever widening Breton population for its support and growth in the schools, media, and public life.

## ***What the does the U.S. ICDBL do?***

A major role of the U.S. Branch of the ICDBL is to simply introduce the existence of Brittany and the Breton language to the American public.

With Members of the U.S. ICDBL dispersed in 35 of the 51 States of the U.S.--from Maine to Florida, from Hawaii to California and even Alaska, and lots of states in between--we do not hold meetings or have the ability to carry out many projects as a group.

Our central activity is the publication of a quarterly newsletter called Bro Nevez (which means "new country" in the Breton language). The 25 pages of this publication include current information about what is going on in Brittany related to the Breton language, and short articles on a range of topics, from music and dance, to sports, travel, the economy, or history.

The U.S. ICDBL has its own internet site which contains a wealth of information and links to Breton web sites.

[www.breizh.net/icdbl.htm](http://www.breizh.net/icdbl.htm)

The Secretary assists people from the U.S. and all over the world who write, e-mail or telephone with requests for information about the Breton language and culture. ICDBL Members throughout the U.S. have been spokesmen for the cause of the Breton language by distributing information at Celtic cultural events and music festivals or concerts, and by simply discussing their concerns with friends and acquaintances.

## ***More direct support for the Breton language ...***

The U.S. ICDBL has supported Diwan--Breton language immersion schools--for over

ten years with a small annual contribution from our Members. We have maintained a personal link with the children of one particular Diwan school--Skol Diwan Landerne--since 1992 when Lois Kuter, the U.S. ICDBL Secretary, was invited to become the school's "godmother."

As is the case for all branches of the ICDBL, our support of the Breton language is mostly symbolic--the fact that outsiders care at all offers encouragement to people in Brittany who are working to sustain the Breton language and find new and creative ways to use it. When we have felt it would have an impact, we have circulated petitions in support of the Breton language, and have written letters to French government officials to express our concern about the lack of support given to the Breton language and culture.

## **PLEASE JOIN US IN PROMOTING THE FUTURE OF THE BRETON LANGUAGE AND CULTURE**

Annual Membership can start at any time of the year, and is just \$20 (U.S. \$) including a subscription to our newsletter Bro Nevez. Send a check made out to the "U.S. ICDBL" to:

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Secretary, U.S. ICDBL  
169 Greenwood Avenue, B-4  
Jenkintown, PA 19046 U.S.A.

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