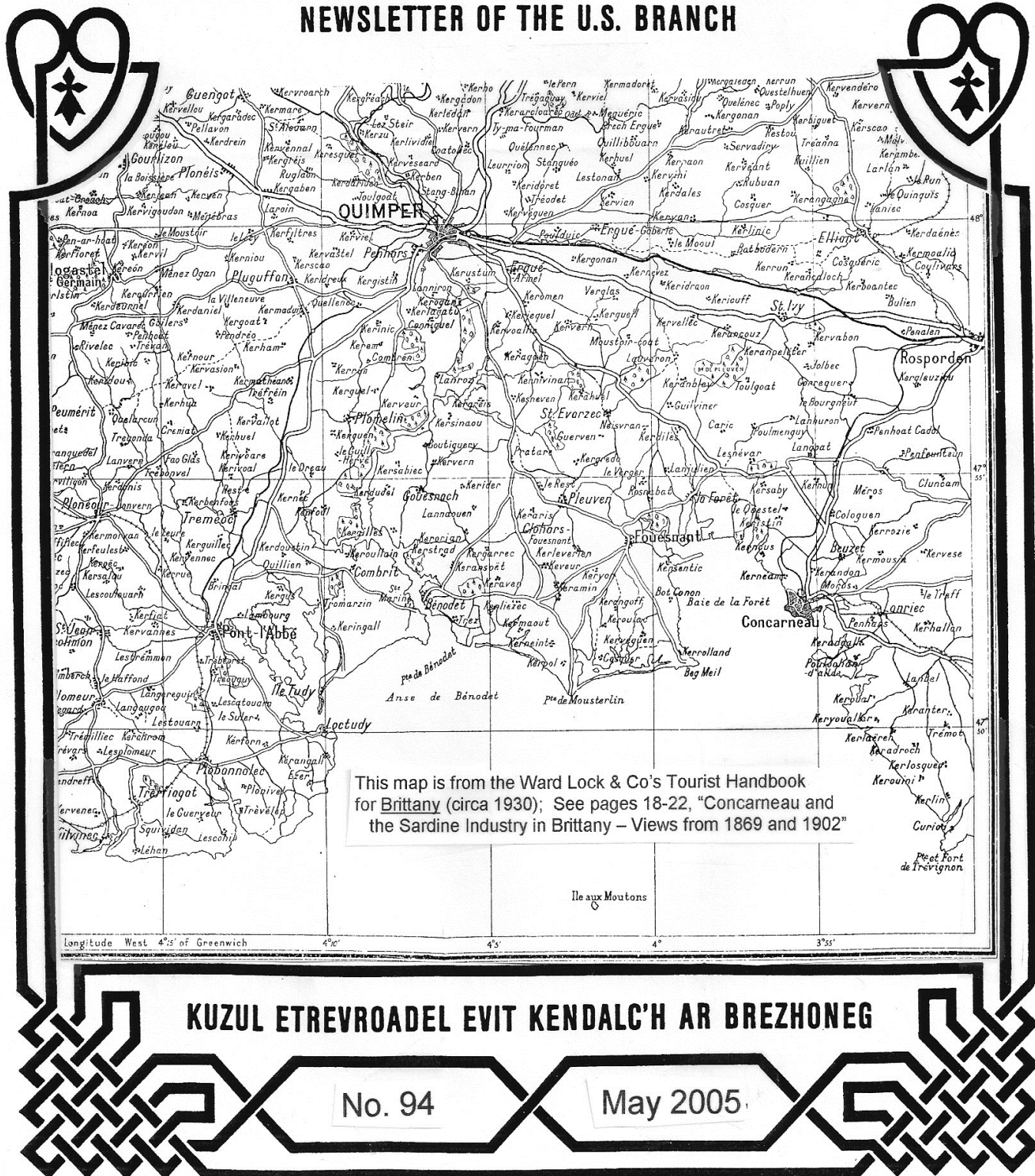


BRO NEVEZ

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



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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

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## FROM THE EDITOR - Lois Kuter

This issue of Bro Nevez is being mailed towards the end of the month of May just as it tends to be mailed at the end of every month of production (February, August and November) because I run out of time. As I did with the February issue, I invite you to help me out with short articles for Bro Nevez: a quick review of a website about Brittany you found particularly useful or interesting. A website about Brittany that had lots of information in English!! A book review (old or new). A CD review (an old favorite or a new release). A Breton recipe. A note on an event in Breton history. A note on a favorite place in Brittany - your favorite travel destination. Travel tips for first-time visitors to Brittany (must see places or events). A great Celtic festival you went to this summer where Breton culture had some presence. How about a paragraph or two about you? It would be lovely to feature a different member of the U.S. ICDBL with each issue. Don't be shy.

**Membership renewals** - Thank you to all those who have sent in your dues for the coming year. If you find a membership/subscription form with your newsletter that means you still owe dues/subscription payment. If you have any questions about your membership status feel free to contact me.

# The DIWAN Schools

Lois Kuter

Diwan held its annual meeting in April and, on the whole, the prospect for the future growth of these Breton-language immersion schools is good. While there is little hope that the National Education System will integrate the Diwan schools into the public system, and tightening budgets for all schools means that finances will be tight and new projects like a technological training stream at the Diwan high school level may need to be put off, the financial crisis of the past is over. Diwan has built strong public support and good relations with the Regional Council of Brittany and other departmental councils. Diwan hopes to grow from 2,800 students to 3,000 with a steady yearly increase in students and the opening of at least two new schools per year. There are now 33 schools, 3 middle schools (at 5 sites) and a high school.

The co-presidents Patrig Hervé and François-Gaël Rios have gained the confidence of the staff and parents to reestablish good internal communication and relations, and while finances and expanding teacher training will remain challenges, Diwan should have plenty to celebrate at its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2007.

To keep up with the latest on Diwan and other news about the Breton language, consult the Diwan website: [www.diwan.org](http://www.diwan.org).

## “OUR” DIWAN SCHOOL Skol Diwan Landerne

Since 1992 when I was invited to become its “godmother” the U.S. Branch of the ICDBL has maintained a special relationship with Skol Diwan Landerne, the Diwan pre and primary school in Landerneau. Contributions from members have been sent to support Diwan as a whole, but also to Skol Diwan Landerne where they have been used for special projects – beautification of the school, the purchase of playground equipment, or basic classroom equipment. And when possible, members of the U.S. ICDBL have had the good fortune to travel to Brittany and meet with teachers, children and parents of the school. Kathi Hochberg, a member of the U.S. ICDBL since 1992 who currently serves on our Board of Consultants, was the latest to visit the school. She is a French teacher who lives in Harrison, New York. With family in the St.

Brieuc area of Brittany, Kathi has traveled there frequently, but most often during school vacations when arranging a trip to the Landerneau school (or the thriving Diwan school in St. Brieuc) has been impossible. There were a few challenges in arranging this trip, and Kathi tells of her adventure in the following account

## My Visit to Landerneau

Kathi Hochberg

I thought that I was finally going to visit Skol Diwan Landerne in April without worrying, for once, that my school vacation would coincide with theirs. Easter had been almost a month earlier, so I thought I was safe with my dates. I contacted Lois for the email address of their directrice, Anne Caër. Lois received an email about a week later from Hélène Conan, Présidente de l’association des parents d’élèves (President of the “PTA”), which she forwarded to me. I was extremely disappointed to read that the students would be on vacation during the time I would be in France. The email asked that I visit before April 19, which was impossible.

Upon receipt of Hélène’s news, I wrote to express my extreme disappointment and indicated that I would have to postpone my visit for another time. Two weeks passed with no further communication and I was resigned to visit family in Brittany and relax during my short five day stay.

A few days prior to my departure I received an email from Hélène telling me to come to Landerneau during my stay. Not all of the parents were leaving the area with their children for vacation. The mayor had even been contacted and would be there for a “pot amical.” (“friendly cup”).

The time and date were set for April 23, 11:00 a.m. at the school.

In anticipation of my visit, and wanting to say something intelligent in Breton, on Saturday I called some family members who I thought could help me. The first call to a cousin’s husband taught me “red wine.” I didn’t find that too appropriate. That was the extent of his language skill. A second call to another cousin’s husband was equally unproductive. A third call to another cousin suggested I try to find someone in Guingamp who spoke Breton. Several hours in stores, lunch in a local restaurant, a visit to the town hall and two bookstores on Friday got me a phrase book for any occasion, a

bookstore owner who knew a few words, and a publicity flyer from a Breton whiskey distillery that would tell me everything I wanted to know about Breton in a bistro. What were these people going to think about this American French teacher???

Armed with my few words, I arrived in Landerneau a little later than anticipated due to rain and a traffic jam in the center of town. The mayor, Jean-Pierre Thomin, Hélène, Anne, parents, students and newspaper reporters were there to warmly greet me. Having been Ambassadrice to Mongeron, a suburb of Paris, from 1992-1997 during the Harrison, NY/Montgeron, France Sister Cities Program, I was expecting a more formal reception. I was relieved that this was much more relaxed than the politically driven sister cities program in which I had been involved.

After a few words from the mayor, my short speech thanking them for their warm reception, and a picture for the newspaper, I visited the school. It is bright and cheerful thanks to the parents who tirelessly painted and spruced up the new location. Hélène and Anne proudly showed me the outdoor bikes, wagons and scooters as well as the new furniture purchased for the classrooms with our financial support. Some of the 48 currently enrolled children were in the school courtyard enjoying these playthings.

My visit concluded with a “pot amical” and I was afforded the opportunity to speak with many of the parents. They have a long road ahead of them to keep the Skol Diwan Landerne a productive educational institution. Given their dedication and enthusiasm, the support of the mayor, and the continuing support of the U.S. ICDBL, I have little doubt that they will succeed.



### **Thank You from the Landerneau School Kids**

Kathi transmitted to me a very colorful letter from children of Skol Diwan Landerne thanking us for our financial support for the school. This was written in at least eight different colors of pen. A very colorful ink blot on the side of the letter obscured a few words, which I have filled in with my best guess. Here is the letter translated from the French version sent to me:

Landerneau, March 10, 2005

Bonjour Lois,

We thank you for your check. Here things have changed: we have moved to a new location. It is so much better here!

Our school is always just as active. We had a nature class in September, we played in a theater piece for the inauguration of our new school, we are in the process of writing a book which will be published, and we are actively preparing to participate in a Breton dance contest. In addition, we will participate in an art contest on the theme of linen. We have just set up some scooters to play in the schoolyard and the class for the youngest students will get some new furniture thanks to the sale of jewelry made by our mamas and our teachers. Thanks again for your support.

Kenavo,  
Liza, Aziliz, Edern, Valentin, Benoît, Anaïs, Erwan,  
Elena, Roman, Christopher & Erell



### **COMING ATTRACTION**

**Rebuilding the Celtic Languages**, a new book by  
Diarmuid Ó Néill and Marcel Texier

For three years, Diarmuid Ó Néill, the head of the Canadian Branch of the ICDBL, has been laboring on a book to document the state of the Celtic languages and to look at them in the context of sociolinguist Joshua Fishman's work “Reversing Language Shift.” Given the diverse histories and current political, social, economic and cultural contexts in which each language is found, this has been a monumental task. The completed book covers not only Welsh, Breton, Cornish, Irish (in both the Irish Republic and Northern Ireland), Scottish Gaelic and Manx, but also the state of Welsh in Argentina and Scottish Gaelic in Nova Scotia. While Ó Néill is the instigator of this project, his co-author for the publication is Marcel Texier, who has long been active with the ICDBL in France.

Those interested in the Celtic languages will find this a mine of information and also a provocative look at what needs to be done for the Celtic languages to survive and thrive in the future. I will be doing a review for the August issue of Bro Nevez. In the meantime, for more details you are welcome to contact Diarmuid Ó Néill: [jdmac@spring.ca](mailto:jdmac@spring.ca) or 416 913-1499.

## BRETON OUTSIDE THE SCHOOL WALLS

A language can only thrive if it is used outside of the classroom, as a living language for communication and conversation. There are a growing number of activities and projects Bretons have launched to encourage this. As is the case for music and dance creating a contest can work very well to encourage creativity. There are a number of prizes to reward and encourage Breton writers ... and readers. Here are just a few examples (from information gleaned from Musique Bretonne 189 (mars/avril 2005), Armor 422 (mars 2005), Ar Men 145 (mars/avril 2005) & Keleier Ofis ar Brezhoneg Niv. 61 (meurzh 2005).

### Prizioù 2004 – France 3 Ouest

The France 3 television station in Brittany has awarded prizes on an annual basis for creative work in the Breton language in a variety of art forms. Here are the winners for 2004 in these categories:

Breton of the Year: the association A-Bouez-Penn for their 3-CD set *A veg da veg*, the fruit of a wide-reaching collection project to document song and stories in Bro Gwened, and to link young and old.

Best “bande dessinée” (comic book): Sorserezed Breselien 3: Klask ar Gral, by Bruno Bertin, translated into Breton by Jil Penneg, and published by Edition P’Tit Louis of Rennes.

Best internet web site:  
[www.europeoftales.net/site.bre/index/html](http://www.europeoftales.net/site.bre/index/html) for its presentation of Breton legends and tales and the European tradition more widely.

Best film: *Gouloù en noz*, by Thierry Compain, a documentary on Breton taxis who take seamen of Brittany to the ports of Le Havre and Rouen.

Best CD: Marcel Le Guilloux, *Un devez ‘ba Kerc’h Morvan*, featuring kan ha diskan, gwerz, and storytelling by this master of Breton traditional music (see the review in Bro Nevez 91, August 2004).

Best book: Jeffrey Shaw for his novel *Daerou dre ar goueleh*. I noted this book very briefly in the last issue of Bro Nevez (“New Books In and About the Breton Language – Short Notes”) and it was pointed out to me that there were several errors in my note. First of all my translation of the title was incorrect, and in English the title should be “Tears through the dessert”. I also

inadvertently put the page number at 1764 instead of 174. Most importantly I stated that “Canadian Jeffrey Shaw has mastered Breton well enough to use it creatively as an author...” I meant that to be an understatement, and apologize if it implied that this author had merely an adequate knowledge of Breton. In fact Jeffrey Shaw has mastered Breton, is an avid reader of Breton language works of all kinds, and has written two novels previous to this prize-winning one. He is also working on two dictionaries, both in KLT and the Vannetais dialect. It is no small accomplishment for a Canadian whose mother tongue is English to master the Breton language, but Jeff is also a master of French, Gaelic, Cornish and Manx. A young man in his early 40s we can look forward to many more fine books in Breton from Jeff.

### Priz ar yaouankiz for Breton language novels for youth

For the second year a contest has been launched for Breton language novels for youth. This was initiated by Yann-Fañh Jacq of the Keit Vimp Beo publishing house and Fanny Chauffin of the association Formation, Education, Animations (FEA) in view of the lack of leisure time reading materials for young people. With the support of the General Council of Finistère and Department of Youth and Sports as well as the Regional Council of Brittany, it is hoped that authors will take up this challenge to add to a much needed growth in Breton language literature for this age group. A panel of judges will select six texts (three for 11-13 year olds, and three for 14-16 year olds) and these will then be judged by students in the Diwan schools and the public and Catholic school bilingual programs. The deadline for books for this year is passed but you can get more information at <http://afea.free.fr> or by contacting [fannychauffin@laposte.net](mailto:fannychauffin@laposte.net).

### Kann al Loar prize for short stories in Breton

The Kann al Loar (Full Moon) festival of Landerneau is renewing a contest it initiated in 2001 for short stories in four categories – stories in Breton or French for adults or youth. Texts should no longer than 15 pages, of a Celtic or Breton inspiration, and must include the expression “kann al loar.” For more information: [kann-al-loar@wanadoo.fr](mailto:kann-al-loar@wanadoo.fr)

### Some other ways Breton is being promoted outside a classroom

These are just a few types of projects I have read about in the magazines and press clippings I have received from Brittany. It is very clear that the variety of activities now

being offered through the medium of Breton (and also Gallo) continues to grow.

“Dictées” – Dictations in Breton. These were launched some nine years ago by Emgleo Bro an Oriant for both children and adults, and are increasing in popularity throughout Brittany. A text is written especially for the occasion and is read aloud as contestants write it down. The text is in several parts with increasing difficulty with each part. Different ages advance to different levels, and winners are decided at the event based on the accuracy of their writing of the text.

“Veillées” – These are evening or afternoon gatherings to listen to storytellers, singers, or to see short skits in Breton. These are often “open mike” where anyone present can offer a funny story, recite a poem, or sing a song, and a small town can fill a room with 200 or more participants and listeners.

Theater in Breton – There are a number of amateur theater groups in Brittany who perform in Breton (and French) for both adults and children. While not as popular a medium as Breton music and dance, theater has a strong following. The professional troupe, Strollad Ar Vro Bagan celebrates its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2005.

Outings in Breton – Numerous cultural organizations have created one-day events and activities where Breton is used as the medium for conversation – bird watching and nature walks in the country, a day learning recipes in the kitchen, a tour of local architectural treasures, etc.

Public lectures in Breton – the “Groupement d’action culturelle de Landerneau” has launched a monthly (and sometimes bi-monthly) series of discussions inviting a panel of Breton speakers to discuss various topics. They launched this with two gatherings on rivers and fishing and the life of farmers in the 1950s. This is a chance for Breton speakers to share experiences – the audience is part of the discussion – and for learners to listen to native speakers, learn new vocabulary on a range of topics, and practice a more conversational style.

Television – I was surprised to read in the March/April issue of *Ar Men* magazine that Americans in the Philadelphia, PA, area can tune into a Gaelic language “soap” called *Ros na Rún*. As a resident of the Philadelphia area I was already aware of this opportunity to soak in a bit of Irish Gaelic (spiked often with English) in this entertaining drama series which is subtitled in English. The appearance of Gaelic on my TV is not a surprising development because WYBE – the station which carries the program created by the TG4 television

station of Connemara – also carries lots of other non-English language programming: news and drama series in Korean, Polish, Armenian, Greek, Serbian, Ukrainian and Italian, not to mention Japanese, Urdu, German, or French in subtitled films. The *Ar Men* article cited this example of a Celtic language reaching American TV screens to point out that in Brittany, American TV programming can now be heard in the Breton language thanks to TV Breizh. Starting on March 2, Bretons have the opportunity to tune into 26 episodes of the classic courtroom drama, Perry Mason (the later years of programming). Thanks to the dubbing of the organization Dizale, Perry, Della and the whole cast of characters speak Breton fluently.

Devez ar Brezhoneg – Day for Breton – In the late 1980s up to 1999 Brittany had a mini-festival called Gouel ar Brezhoneg which promoted Breton in a variety of media throughout a day of activities. A new association called Dazont ar Yezh has taken up this event once more (with the help of the Ofis ar Brezhoneg and the Cultural Council of Brittany) and it will be held for the second time on June 5 in Carhaix. This day-long event will include everything from a church mass, games, sports, theater, art exhibits and mini-conferences to music, dance and guided tours -- all conducted through the Breton language. The day is intended to show off the vitality of cultural activities related to the Breton language, and there is no doubt that there will be much to show off and enjoy.

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## **Skol Uhel ar Vro The Cultural Institute of Brittany**

The Cultural Institute of Brittany was created in 1981 to foster scholarship and education about Brittany. It is composed of 17 sections focused on various topics (history, maritime heritage, Inter-Celtic relations, oral and written literature, prehistory and archaeology, music and dance, etc.) And each of these sections includes individuals who collaborate on workshops and publications (and a website) to promote interdisciplinary research on Brittany and its culture.

Each year the Institute becomes more and more visible as it organizes public events throughout the five departments of Brittany on a variety of topics and in partnership with a number of institutions.

On May 28 the Institute will host its first “festival” to bring together its members and the general public with workshops and a variety of activities – including more formal presentations, but also a display of books and

artwork, films, presentations of traditional sports and games, and music. It has always been a challenge for the Institute to make its work known to a wide public, so this festival is a way to open doors.

Other events throughout the year offer amateur and professional scholars the opportunity to sink their teeth into a number of topics:

*“La patrimoine technique et industriel, de l’héritage à la valorization”* (Technical and industrial patrimony – from heritage to promotion)

March 19 in St. Théo (Côtes d’Armor)

An exploration of knowledge, buildings, machines and products of Brittany’s industrial past. This conference not only presented this heritage but also discussed ways to preserve and present it to the public.

*“Journée du mégalithisme”* (Megalith day)

April 9 in St.-Vincent-sur-Oust (Ille et Vilaine)

A presentation of megaliths (standing stones) around the world and in France and Brittany, including a look at current archeological work and a tour of megaliths in the area of the conference.

*“Rencontres pluri-disciplinaires en Presqu’île de Crozon”* (Interdisciplinary look at the Presqu’île de Crozon area)

June 11 & 12 in Crozon (Finistère)

An inter-disciplinary look at the unique geology, geography, architecture, agriculture, maritime tradition, art, social identity and history of the Crozon peninsula, including a look at the economic future for this region.

*“Les Bretons et la Séparation, la laicization de la société bretonne dans l’événement et la durée (1795-2005)”*

(Bretons and the Separation, secularization of Breton society at the time and since)

September 15 to 17 in Tréguier (Côtes d’Armor)

An international colloquium on the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Separation of Church and State in France to examine the impact of this in Brittany, France and Europe. The colloquium looks at the topic of secularization of schools and society and the impact of this in France in the past century and today. This is a politically charged and complex topic that will be examined from many angles during the three days of this conference.

Another one-day conference on November 26 will be held in Nantes to focus specifically on this area: *“Catholicisme et laïcité en Bretagne, un siècle d’histoire (1905-2005)”*

*“L’Or bleu du littoral Breton – rencontres sur les conserveries de poissons du XIX<sup>ème</sup> siècle à aujourd’hui”*

(The blue gold of the Breton coast – a conference on the fish canneries of the 19<sup>th</sup> century to today)

September 23 to 24 in Locudy (Finistère)

A look at the importance of the canning industry for sardines set in a town with a significant heritage. The colloquium presents all the traditions associated with the industry – including song and the fabrication of special baskets – and explores means to preserve and present this important part of Brittany’s maritime history.

This is also the annual meeting for the Cultural Institute and included will be the annual presentation of new members inducted to the Order of the Ermine for their lifetime of work in support of Brittany and its culture.

*“Le monde celtique et la mer dans l’oeuvre de Jules Verne”* (The Celtic world and the sea in the work of Jules Verne)

November 5 in Saint-Nazaire

Throughout 2005 Brittany will hold a number of events in honor of its native son, Jules Verne, to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his death. This conference will discuss Celtic and maritime themes in his work.

### **Ti an Istor – House of History**

This subgroup of the Cultural Institute has thrived in the past few years with the building of a resource center of some 6,000 works and plans to produce CD Roms and cassettes of some 20 presentations on Breton history. Ti an Istor has also gathered information on historical sites throughout Brittany and is compiling information on battle sites of importance for those who want to visit these sites. And, Ti an Istor continues to build resources on its website: [histoire-bretagne.com](http://histoire-bretagne.com) where you can access the on-line magazine *Dalc’homp Sonj* for in-depth articles and short notes.

The Cultural Institute of Brittany often serves as a resource for visitors to Brittany – business groups or members of a twin city exchange. Since 2001 the Institute has organized workshops for elder hostel groups from the U.S. with a series of twelve presentations in English to introduce participants to all aspects of Breton history and culture. The Institute is working on a “Breton Cultural Passport” – A one-half hour DVD and accompanying brochure in several languages to present the essentials of Brittany to visitors.

For more information consult the website:<http://www.institutcultureldebretagne.org>  
Or <http://www.skoluhelarvro.org> (in Breton)

## A NOTE ON BRETON NICKNAMES

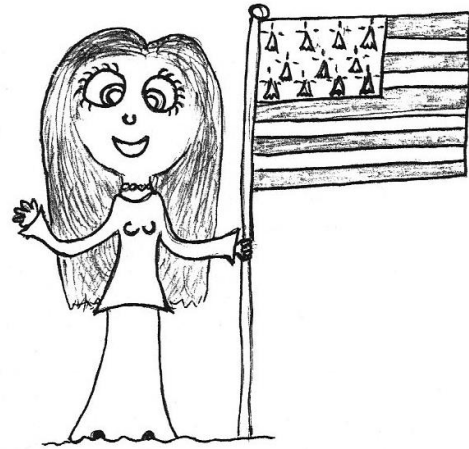
*The following is an excerpt from a letter I received from Mikael Madeg, a prolific author on legends and lore, and place names and peoples' names -- especially for the Leon region of northwestern Brittany. I met his wife Mari and son Edern and daughter Anna quite a few years ago on a visit to the Landerneau Diwan School where mom was very active in supporting the school (and helping to host my visit) and the kids were in the beginning years of primary school. Edern is today a stamp collector so if you have any interesting or beautiful stamps you would otherwise throw away, send them my way and I will pass them along to Edern. Anna enjoys writing and drawing and sent her greetings to us via the design you see here. Both are now in middle school at the Diwan Skolaj Ar Releg-Kerhuon - fluent in both French and Breton.*

*Mikael Madeg introduces his work in this letter and also passes along some interesting notes about Breton language nicknames. - Lois*

I must thank you for a bit of very unexpected help. One of the fields I specialize in, and write books about, is Leon legends. I have a collection of more than 600 of them so far, and six books, all of them in Breton, published giving them. So I was most interested by one which was included in the last February issue of Bro Nevez. As you know, I'm sure, Ouessant is in Leon and the legend on page 22 was totally unknown to me.

Actually this is not the first one I find was published in English and never in either French or Breton, as far as I know.

I might add a few words about my own writings. Although I write more in Breton, I write in French too, and, surprisingly enough, I now am a publisher as well... to publish some of my own texts in French. Those in Breton are easier to publish otherwise. In Breton I write mostly short stories and novels, and then about legends and research generally. I specialize in names, mostly place-names and nicknames. So far I've had about 80 of my books in Breton published. In French I've published only about my pet subject: nicknames. So far I've had fifteen collections of nicknames published, seven in Breton, eight in



Salud deoc'h, Tudoù !

Anna.m



French. They're usually books which contain about 500/600 individual nicknames, and not only Breton ones; one of my books is about Scottish Gaelic nicknames. I collected them over there and that was the only time I ever had a research scholarship: it had to come from Scotland!

Just recently I've given the final touch to a book about Christian names which was pieced together by two collaborators and I. To give it a bit of inter-Celtic touch I wrote a few pages from my own experience and research in both Wales (where I lived two years, and I still can speak Welsh fluently, if faultily) and the Scottish Gaidhealtachd (I can manage enough Gaelic to do research in English!).

My own angle of research is usually the spoken tradition: nicknames, and as far as official names are concerned, their spoken versions. We collected quite extensively in Leon and the book I've just finished giving the last articles for contains just that: the oral forms of first names.

Actually I had to give some mention, oddly enough, of the English traditional system as well. Because both Welsh speakers and Gaelic speakers are heavily influenced by it (as French speakers have been, more recently).

The funny thing about it is that, comparing Breton, Welsh, Scottish Gaelic (and Irish) systems, the one which in itself is closest to English is the Breton one! I'm not totally sure it's a coincidence.

In both Breton and English (on either side of the Atlantic, of course) there is a very heavy trend to shorten names. It is far less so with Welsh and Gaelic. And I may say the French, although they shorten their names, have a system of their own (where they double syllables).

The similarities are really striking. In both Breton and English the first step is shortening to one syllable, usually the stressed one (which is quite understandable from a phonetic point of view).

For instance in English you'll have "Wil" for William, "Rob" for Robert, etc. In Breton this is extremely common. For instance, my own name Mikael (stress on the "kael," actually "kêl" in most dialects) will be shortened to "Kêl" in "Kerne," just as "Michael" (stressed in the first syllable) becomes "Mike." Another Breton example is "Sant" for "Alexander" where we stick, again, to the stressed syllable which accounts for "Alex" or "Alec" in English.

Then we quite often modify this shortened form. Just as you transform "Wil" into "Bill", in English, or "Rob" into "Bob", in Breton "François" (=Francis) can become "So" (or "Soig") or "Sa(ig)" or "Fañch", or the French official name "Guillaume" (=William) can become "Lom" or "Laou."

More striking still is the extensive use of one ending in both languages, although alternatives exist. In English this is "-y" (Billy, Mickey, Sally, Kathy, etc.) which is very much used - many of these spoken English forms being fashionable in French!

In Breton we quite often use "-ig". Most Christian names in Leon we collected such forms of derived from them. For example: French "François" can be in spoken Breton "So", "Sa", "Frañsa", or "Fañch", but more often still it is "Soig", "Saig", "Fañchig". The feminine equivalent "Françoise" is either "Soaz" or "Seza" (or "Seha" or ....), but just as often it becomes "Soazig" or "Sezaig", or even "Zaig", equivalent to Fanny in English.

This seems obvious to speakers of English and Breton, but the general picture is very different in French, and just as different in both Welsh and Gaelic. The Welsh shorten but they don't add any ending, or very rarely so. The Scottish Gaels don't even shorten, in most cases, and although they have a diminutive ending, it's hardly used at all, with a couple of exceptions for feminine ends (for example Mòrag, Bellag).

The French system, of doubling one syllable, which was prevalent during my youth, is terribly old fashioned now. They had "Mimi" for "Mary", or "Bébert" (=Albert), "Jojo" (=Joseph). Now they pick out their names from Hollywood-made fashions!



*Those who are interested in learning more about the research and many publications by Mikael Madeg are very welcome to contact him directly: Embann Kêredol, Kêredol, 28900 Saint Thonan, Brittany, France. / 02 98 20 32 20 (evenings)*

*Most of Mikael Madeg's writing is in Breton, but here are a few recent titles in French (all from the publisher Embann Kêredol):*

*Legendes d'Ouessant - published in 2004, this 200-page book brings together over 50 legends concerning the island of Ouessant gleaned from manuscripts and the oral tradition.*

*Noms de Lieux du Domaine Maritime d'Ouessant. Working with Per Pondaven, Madeg presents a complete listing of Breton language maritime place names of Ouessant (650) - the result of systematic research from some 70 informants.*

*Surnoms Bretons des Cantons de Saint-Renan, Ouessant, Plouzane. This presents some 400 Breton nicknames with French translations.*

*Surnoms Bretons du Pays "Chelgenn". This is a collection of 700 nicknames collected between 1975 and 2000 in the area of Landivisiau and 23 other communes of the "Chelgenn" region.*

## Deep inside a Breton skull 6 - The Barenton fountain

Jean-Pierre Le Mat



The evening air was quiet. The last beams of the sun bounced on the gleaming leaves of the oaks. The forest of Brocéliande waited for the night freshness.

The group of walkers had known a long journey. They travelled today through the Valley of No Return; they passed through the village of Trehorenteuc and the hamlet strangely called "lunatic-thought". They just arrived at the fountain of Barenton.

Who were they? Young men and women training for Breton independence? Poets fascinated by the Breton past? Friendly people from the new world, coming here to meet the ghosts of the ancient one? I am not able to answer precisely.

The druid was there. Unlike his brand image, he did not wear a white gown, but a dark-blue duffle-coat, bought probably in a Landerneau supermarket. He was sitting quietly on the edge of the fountain and the people made a circle around him. They sat down on the ground, their backs against the tree trunks.

- What happened here formerly makes me pensive, says the druid. I remember the tale of Kynon, one of the knights of King Arthur. His story has been reported by the medieval chroniclers.

"I walked until I reached the height of the slope. And there, I found what the Black Man had described to me. I went towards the tree and below I found the fountain. There was there the marble curb, and the cup of silver attached with a chain. I took the cup, filled it, and threw the water on the paving stone.

The thunder clapped then, more violent than the Black Man had told me. After the thunder came the shower, and really there is neither man nor animal which can bear this shower and remain alive. Not one of these hailstones could be stopped by the flesh or by the skin, because they penetrated to the bones. I turned my horse towards the shower, and placed the point of my shield over its head and neck, whereas I kept the top over my head. So I resisted the thunderstorm. When I looked at the tree, there was not a single leaf any longer there. The sky became clear again.

At this moment, a knight on a black horse appeared, dressed in black velvet. We assailed each other. The attack was furious, and it was not long before I was knocked down ... "

So begins the narrative of Kynon which preceded us here, near the fountain.

- Will we have to throw the water on the curb, we too, to trip the storm? asked a keen young girl.

- I can trust you for that, was the answer. The game is attractive, and it is why you are here. According to our subtle psychoanalysts, the water is an image of the collective unconscious. It seems that the Breton depths appeal strongly to you. It is in that water that King Arthur threw Excalibur, the sword of Celtic sovereignty. If you dive more deeply, you will find Ker-Ys, the damned city, sunk by God's wrath and waiting for redemption. You will meet there Dahud, the ancient priestess, daughter of King Gradlon. But be aware, the storm is coming. Those who stir the water of the Barenton fountain must be ready for battle against unknown forces.

- And what will happen if, contrary to Kynon, we could win the fight against the Black Knight? asked a dreamy eyed teenager

The druid stayed silent. He stared at the young person, striving to know her destiny. He answered then:

- If one of you can succeed where so many others were defeated, this one will see his name engraved on precious stones. But he must know that the fountain must be protected. He will have to take the place of the Black Knight, and wear his armour. He will be the Great Defender, for the rest of his stay on Earth. Nobody can back out of this Law. Otherwise the ancient treasures, and the sense of million Breton lives, would be lost forever.

- All those tales are only legends, deceits... said another, half reassured.

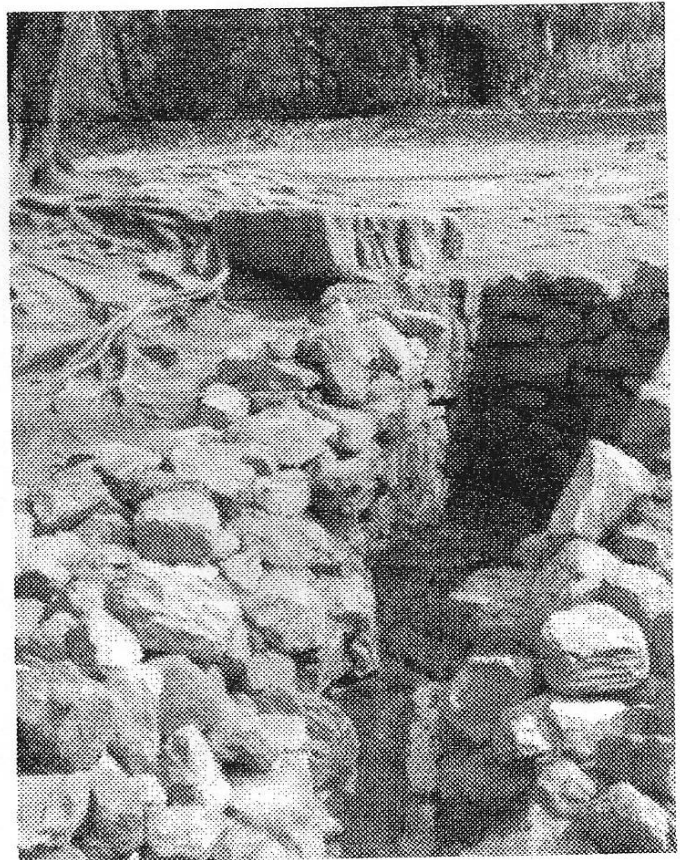
- True, said the druid with a mild smile. These are only legends; And today people scorn at what is sunk in water. Excalibur, Ker-Ys are for them lies, illusions; inventions... But how many husbands killed their wife for a lie? How many conquests have been launched for the sake of a dream? How many wars have been declared because of illusions?

It is possible to neglect the roots of murders, conquests or wars. But you are taking then a major risk, when you live in a human world...

- Excalibur would be of no use for us, and Ker-Ys is too old. Why bother about the past? Why focus on old sunken things, whereas we dream of happiness and freedom, here and now?

- Oh, my friends, I will not prevent you speaking nowadays with a nowadays language. I can do that, I too. But you are not only the women and the men of nowadays. You are also one link in a long chain which had begun to be forged long ago. This chain passes through deaths and births of ancestors and parents. These other links are people who lived before, and who looked like you more than you can imagine. During centuries they nurtured in their hearts and set into golden legends what you call today happiness and freedom.

In this heritage, you must be able to make the difference between what is really dead and what is sunk in water, and can reappear one day. Then, you will understand these patient Breton folks you are linked with. Deep inside their skull, they wait silently for somebody to come, hero, poet or foreign knight, and stir the water of the Barenton Fountain.



# Wales (and Brittany) Lose a Friend

## Gwynfor Evans

1912-2005

The following article from the Eurolang website ([www.eurolang.net](http://www.eurolang.net)) pays homage to a key figure in the promotion of the Welsh language and of Wales. Gwynfor Evans was also a friend to Brittany and ardently supported the cause of the Breton language. In 1984 in the wake of his invitation to Philadelphia to receive the Robert Morris Award for Distinguished Accomplishment from the Welsh Society of Philadelphia, I initiated a short correspondence with him. He was very pleased to learn of the efforts of Americans to support the Breton language, and he expressed some despair at the nostalgic view of Wales that most Welsh Americans took and regretted that there was no similar effort on their part to defend the Welsh language. While I have not maintained a correspondence with Gwynfor Evans, I have continued to send him Bro Nevez, knowing of his keen interest in Brittany and the fate of the Breton language. -- Lois Kuter

### **Gwynfor: Cymru a'r Gymraeg yn colli arweinydd amlwg**

Dafydd Meirion, Penygroes 4/24/2005

Mae Cymru a'r Gymraeg wedi colli un o'i arweinyddion mwyaf carismatig. Bu farw Dr Gwynfor Evans, cyn arweinydd Plaid Cymru ac aelod seneddol cyntaf y blaid, ar 21 Ebrill 2005. Cafodd ei alw yn "Gymro mwyaf yr ugeinfed ganrif a'r ffigwr gwleidyddol cenedlaethol Cymreig mwyaf erioed".

Cafodd Dr Evans ei eni yn 1921 yn nhref Seisnig y Barri ac ni ddysgodd y Gymraeg nes oedd yn y brifysgol yn Aberystwyth. Pan fu i lywodraeth Thatcher yn yr 1980au wrthod sefydlu sianel deledu Gymraeg a hynny wedi iddi addo un yn ei manifest, gwnaeth penderfyniad Dr Evans i ymprydio fwy na dim i newid meddwl y llywodraeth Geidwadol ac arwain at sefydlu S4C.

Bu i Dr Evans arwain Plaid Cymru o 1945 i 1981 - cyfnod a welodd newid mawr yn hanes y blaid. Roedd y blaid yn isel iawn wedi'r Ail Ryfel Byd. Roedd llawer o'i aelodau ar y dechrau wedi gwrthod ymuno â'r Fyddin Brydeinig - cofrestrodd Dr Evans fel gwrthwynebydd cydwybodol a bu'n heddychwr ar hyd ei oes - a chafodd llawer o Gymry eu tynnu i jingoïstiaeth y rhyfel yn erbyn Natsïaeth.

Yn raddol aildrefnodd y blaid gan sefydlu trefn effeithiol. Arweiniodd brotestiadau yn yr 1960au yn erbyn boddi Tryweryn ond er yn aflwyddiannus arweiniodd hyn at dwf sylweddol mewn cefnogaeth i'r syniad o hunanlywodraeth i Gymru.

Daeth y blaid i'r amlwg pan enillodd Dr Evans sedd Caerfyrddin oddi wrth Lafur mewn is-etholiad yn 1966. Arweiniodd hyn at nid yn unig ethol dau aelod seneddol arall i Blaid Cymru ond hefyd i ethol Winifred Ewing fel aelod seneddol cyntaf Plaid Genedlaethol yr Alban. Collodd Dr Evans ei sedd yn 1970 ond bu iddo'i dal eto rhwng 1975 a 1979.

### **Gwynfor: Wales and the Welsh language lose a hero**

Dafydd Meirion, Penygroes 4/24/2005

Wales and the Welsh language has lost one of its most charismatic leaders. Dr Gwynfor Evans, a former Plaid Cymru –the Welsh nationalist party - leader and its first member of parliament, died on 21 April 2005. He has been called the "greatest Welshman of the twentieth century and the greatest Welsh national political figure of all time".

Dr Evans was born in the anglicized town of Barry in south Wales in 1912, and did not learn the Welsh language until he went to university. When the Thatcher government, during the 1980s, refused to establish a Welsh language channel after having promised one in its manifesto, it was Dr Evans' decision to go on hunger strike which did more than anything to change to Conservative government's mind and which led to the establishing of S4C.

Dr Evans led Plaid Cymru from 1945 to 1981 - a period which saw a great change in the fortunes of the party. The party was at a low ebb after the Second World War. Many of its members had at first refused to join the British Army - Dr Evans himself was excused as he was a conscientious objector and lifelong pacifist - and many Welsh people had been drawn into the jingoism of the war against the Nazis.

He slowly rebuilt the party and established an efficient structure for it. He led protests during the 1960s against the drowning of Tryweryn, a Welsh speaking valley, to provide water for Liverpool and although unsuccessful it led to a surge in the support for the idea of independence for Wales.

The breakthrough came when he won the Carmarthen seat from Labour during a by-election in 1966. This led not only to the electing of two other Plaid Cymru MPs but also to Winifred Ewing winning the Scottish Nationalist Party's first MP. Dr Evans lost his seat in 1970 but held it again between 1975 and 1979.

Roedd diwedd y 1960au a dechrau'r 1970au yn gyfnod o brotestiadau mynych gan Gymdeithas yr Iaith ac er bod Dr

Evans yn cefnogi nod y Gymdeithas roedd yn bryderus y byddai'r protestiadau yn erbyn arwyddion ffyrdd a ffurflenni Saesneg yn cael eu defnyddio gan elynion ei blaid ac yn andwydol i'w gobeithion mewn etholiadau.

Ond er i elynion y blaid ddefnyddio gweithgareddau'r Gymdeithas yn erbyn Plaid Cymru - ynghyd â gweithgareddau treisgar Byddin Rhyddid Cymru a grwpiau eraill - cynyddodd aelodaeth y blaid a'i chanran mewn etholiadau yn ystod y cyfnod yma, yn bennaf oherwydd arweinyddiaeth garismatig Dr Evans.

Talodd Dafydd Iwan, arweinydd Cymdeithas yr Iaith yn ystod yr 1960au a'r 1970au ac sydd rwan yn llywydd Plaid Cymru, i Dr Evans. "Yn ystod blynyddoedd gwan yr 1950au a'r 1960au, mi wnaeth Gwynfor Evans ar ben ei hun arwain Plaid Cymru ac mae'n wir dweud heb Gwynfor Evans wrth y llyw, na fyddai Plaid Cymru wedi goroesi i weld llwyddiant etholiadol mewn blynyddoedd diweddarach."

Dywedodd yr Arglwydd Elis-Thomas, cyn aelod seneddol Plaid Cymru sydd rwan yn llywydd y Cynulliad Cenedlaethol, fod Dr Evans wedi "pwysleisio fod Plaid Cymru nid yn unig yn fudiad cenedlaethol neu fudiad protest ond hefyd ei fod ynglyn â gwleidyddiaeth etholiadol, nid ynglyn â phrotestio yn erbyn Tywysog Cymru ond ynglyn â mynd allan ac ennill etholiadau". Nid yn unig mae sefyllfa Plaid Cymru yng Nghymru, fel yr ail blaid yn ôl nifer ei haelodau seneddol ac yn y Cynulliad a'i chanran o'r pleidleisiau, yn deyrnged i Dr Evans ond mae hefyd y sianel deledu Gymraeg.

"Roedd pawb yn cydnabod os oedd o wedi dweud ei fod am gynnig ei fywyd mewn dull di-drais fel protest mi roedd o'n hollol o ddifrif ynglyn â hyn. Mor o ddifrif fel i Lywodraeth Haearnidd Mrs Thatcher, oedd ddim yn un a wnâi dro pedol yn aml, sylweddoli na allen nhw ddim ei wrthwynebu," meddai Dafydd Wigley, cyn lywydd Plaid Cymru a chyn aelod o Senedd Llundain a'r Cynulliad Cymreig. Ychwanegodd mai "personoliaeth Dr Evans oedd wedi cadw'r mudiad cenedlaethol ynghyd am dros hanner canrif ac wedi trawsnewid Plaid Cymru o fod yn grwp bach o bobl i fod yn rym sylweddol yng ngwleidyddiaeth Cymru."

Ychwanegodd ei fod yn ystyried Dr Evans fel "Cymro mwyaf yr ugeinfed ganrif a'r ffigwr gwleidyddol cenedlaethol Cymreig mwyaf erioed ... Roedd yn ysbrydoliaeth i'n cenhedlaeth ni a rhoddodd arweiniad cadarn i Blaid Cymru i geisio hunanlywodraeth i Gymru. Gwnaeth hyn drwy ddulliau cyfansoddiadol, wastad mewn dull democrataidd oedd yn cario pobl gyda ni".

Mae Dr Evans yn gadael gwraig a saith o blant, sy'n cynnwys Meinir fu yn aelod amlwg gyda'i gwr o Gymdeithas yr Iaith am dros ddeng mlynedd ar hugain a Dafydd fu'n aelod o'r grwp roc Cymraeg cyntaf erioed, Y Blew. (Eurolang © 2005)

The late 1960s and early 1970s was a period of nearly daily protests by Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg (Welsh Language Society) and although Dr Evans supported the aims of the society he was fearful that these protests against English road signs and forms would be used by the party's enemies and harm its election chances.

Although Cymdeithas yr Iaith's activities were used against Plaid Cymru - as well as the direct action activities of the Free Wales Army and other groups - the membership and the party's percentage of votes grew during this period, due mainly to Dr Evans charismatic leadership.

Dafydd Iwan, leader of Cymdeithas yr Iaith during its heyday in the 1960s and 1970s and now president of Plaid Cymru, paid tribute to Dr Evans: "During the lean years in the 1950s and 1960s, Gwynfor Evans single-handedly guided Plaid Cymru and it is true to say that without Gwynfor Evans at the helm, Plaid Cymru may not have survived to see electoral success in later years."

Lord Elis-Thomas, a former Plaid Cymru MP and now Speaker of the Welsh Assembly, said that "he emphasised [Plaid Cymru] was not just a national movement or protest movement but was also about electoral politics, not just about protesting at the Prince of Wales but getting out and winning elections". Not only is Plaid Cymru's present position in Wales, being Wales's second political party in terms of MPs and AMs and its share of the vote, that is Dr Evans's legacy but also the the Welsh television channel, S4C.

"Everyone recognised that if he said that he was prepared to lay down his own life in a non-violent manner in protest he was entirely serious about it. So serious that the iron government of Mrs Thatcher, not renowned for its U-turns, realised this was something they dare not take on," said Dafydd Wigley, former president of Plaid Cymru and former member of the British Parliament and Welsh Assembly. He added that it was Dr Evans' "personality that kept the national movement together for half a century and transformed Plaid Cymru from being a small group of people to a major force in Welsh politics."

He continued that he regarded Dr Evans as the "greatest Welshman of the twentieth century and the greatest Welsh national political figure of all time ... He was an inspiration to our generation and gave Plaid Cymru a firm lead in seeking self-government for Wales. He did so by constitutional means, always in a democratic manner that carried people with us."

Dr Evans leaves a wife and seven children, including Meinir who has been a prominent member of Cymdeithas yr Iaith with her husband for over thirty years, and Dafydd who was a member of the first ever Welsh language rock group, Y Blew. (Eurolang © 2005)

## New Music from Brittany - Heard of, but not Heard

Noted by Lois Kuter

The following notes on new CD releases in Brittany are based on information gleaned from reviews in the following Breton magazines: Ar Men 145 (mars/avril 2005); Armor Magazine 421 (fevr. 2005), 422 (mars 2005), 424 (mai 2005); Musique bretonne 188 (janv./fevr. 2005), 189 (mars/avril 2005), 190 (mai/juin 2005).

### Apprenez les danses - Volume 7: Pays Mené Loudéac & Volume 8: Bal à Dinan. Coop Breizh.

These are the latest in a series of CDs designed to provide music and instructions for those who want to learn dances specific to various regions of Brittany.

### An Avel. Craie. Self-produced.

This is a concert recording and DVD of an "orchestra" composed of 27 musicians and music teachers (violins, accordions, clarinets ...) conducted by Erick Lavarec. They interpret both dances and slower airs from Brittany and Ireland.

### Bagad Pañvrid. Skipailh war raok. Self-produced VOC 193 (bagad-panvrid@france.com)

25 years (and more) of music making are celebrated by this bagad originating at the Pommerit-le-Vicompte school in the Tregor region. The CD includes suites from recent competitions where this bagad has moved into the highest ranked category - "Beaj Bro Dreger," "Morlarje Landreger" and "Soubenn al laezh".

### Les Baragouineurs. De sang, de sueur, et d'amour. Abakad Productions 0501.

Gilles Evilaine and Claude Darmor adapt traditional songs and dances of Gallo Brittany to an electro-pop rhythm. Can those be their real names?? You'll hear polkas, laridés, ronds de Loudéac and ronds de St.-Vincent-sur-Oust with a twist.

### La Bouëze / L'Epille. Chansons traditionnelles recueillies à Plénée-Jugon, Sévignac, Rouillac. EPL 009.

This is the 9<sup>th</sup> collection of traditional songs and dances from Upper Brittany - each focusing on a very specific grouping of towns and villages. For those who love the "less polished" side of traditional music, these recordings provide the "roots" and some treasures from the rich Gallo tradition. This includes 33 selections of songs and tunes (and some stories) collected between 1970 and 2005. (for more information [www.laboueze.com](http://www.laboueze.com))

### Bugel Koar. Nebaon! An Naer Produktions. An Naer 802.

A duo composed of the magnificent traditional voice of Marthe Vassallo and button and piano accordion and bandoleon by Philippe Ollivier (who is also a fine singer). Traditional song texts as well as new compositions on all topics are often of a dark and somber mood. Sophisticated arrangements and a technically well produced sound, with a graphically beautiful jacket, are noted in the review which gave this CD very high marks.

### Cercle Celtique Brug ar Menez Spézet. Mozaïk.

This is both a CD and DVD - all the better to see the dancers of the Celtic Circle of Spezet - champions of contests for these ensembles in both 2001 and 2002. They are accompanied by 11 musicians and this is a good example of the powerful performances of these beautifully costumed dance troupes in Brittany.

### Chants de Marins, chansons de mer - L'Anthologie, Vol. 2. Coop Breizh 961

This is a second anthology of maritime music - both traditional and contemporary compositions - performed by a variety of artists. This is as much a book as a CD with its 64 pages of hardbound text which form the CD jacket. Like the previous anthologies devoted to bagads, harp, and the first volume on maritime music, this is beautifully produced with illustrations and photos as well as song texts and detailed notes.

### Forzh Penaos. Deus ganin.

A fest noz band featuring - naturally - dances of Brittany: gavotte, plinn, hanter dro, kas a barh, kost ar c'hoat, an dro and others.

Gwendal. War-raog. Stern STE 265682 / Sony Music. Gwendal is a band that has been around for many years, but which gets relatively limited notice in Breton publications. Their newest CD, inspired by the music of Ireland as well as Brittany, gets a good review as a mix of energetic dances and ballads. The CD includes 14 selections composed by Youenn Le Berre, a founding member of the group, performed on bagpipes, bombarde, flutes, fiddle, guitars, electric bass and percussion.

Régis Huiban Quartet. Sans-sommeil. Avel Ouest. Huiban is one of the relatively rare masters of piano/chromatic accordion who focuses on a Breton repertoire. He has collaborated frequently with bombarde/sax master Roland Becker, but this is his first solo recording. His influences include not only traditional Breton music, but also jazz, swing and blues - especially the styles of the 1930s as performed by accordion player of that era, Yves Menez, to whom the CD is dedicated. The quartet features Huiban's accordion but also Philippe Gloaguen on guitar, Loïc Larnizol on drum set, and Julien Le Mentec on bass fiddle.

Kelenn. Chantier de nuit. Self-produced. This is a group from the Bigouden region of southwestern Brittany but their dance repertoire spans all of Brittany with fisel, an dro, plinn, rond de Saint-Vincent and other dances typically found at a fest noz.

Erik Le Lann. Origines. HM Productions HM 01 / Avel Ouest/Coop Breizh CD10. Jazz and trumpet player Erik Le Lann explores Breton music with guest singers Manu Lann Huel and Marthe Vassallo.

Erik Marchand & Rodolphe Burger. Before Bach. Dernière Bande, Wagram. Traditional singer Erik Marchand has sought extraordinary encounters with master musicians from all over the world - Eastern Europe, India, the Middle East, and beyond. Here he joins with a singer/guitarist, Rodolphe Burger, who is described as "rock atmosphérique," and by electric oud player Mehdi Haddad. This is a long "jam session" sure to be of

interest to those who love creative cross cultural encounters.

Les Oisives. L'Intangible. Pudding Production PED 2005/1

A duo of Sylvie Jourdain (text and music composer, singer and accordion player) and Soazig Le Lay (cello, guitar and singer for one cut). Their compositions touch on a variety of themes and feature cello/accordion duets as well as fine singing.

Pevar Den. Dek vloaz. Coop Breizh CD 960. Pevar den = "four guys" in Breton and these play a variety of instruments: fiddle, veuze, bombarde, binioù, guitar, flute and trumpet. Dek vloaz = "Ten years" in Breton, noting the ten years this group has been composing music and arranging traditional airs and dances of Brittany.

Benedict Riou and Jean-Paul Moreau. The Three Hand Reel. Self-produced VOC 197.

This is a harp and accordion duo devoted to the traditional music of Ireland who interpret airs and dances on this CD.

Jean Rouxel. Chants traditionnels du Pays d'Oust-et-Vilaine. Groupement Culturel Breton du Pays d'Oust et Vilaine.

This CD pays homage to Jean Rouxel - a living encyclopedia of poetry, song, and stories and an expert on the traditions of his native Redon area. This CD selects 17 of some 150 songs in his repertoire interpreted by those who have benefited from his teachings - well known Gallo singers as well as up and coming youngsters. The CD is accompanied by a booklet rich in information about Rouxel and the music on the CD.

Gilles Servat. Sous le ciel de cuivre et d'eau. Singer Gilles Servat has been on the Breton music scene for 35 years and this is his 20<sup>th</sup> album. Invited performers include the Bagad de Lokoal-Mendon and some Diwan school children.

Tri Bleiz Die. Milendall. Avel Ouest TBD 004. This is the third CD by this group from Nantes - a "rock" band whose songs are in Breton. Strong

instrumental arrangements with roots in traditional sounds enhance the appeal of this CD which supports the Breton language as a language for all styles of musical expression.

La Valise. Bon Bagay! L'Igloo 132232

This is a group from the Nantes area aptly named "the suitcase" who perform a mix of music with world-wide influences - jazz, java, rock, tango, and Eastern European rhythms. Song texts are in French but also Rumanian and Haitian Creole.

Yao. Porspaul. Self-produced.

A trio with sax/clarinet, accordion and guitar with music for Breton dances.

## TWO BOOKS OF NOTE

Alan Stivell & Jean-Noël Verdier. Telenn: La Harpe bretonne. Editions Le Télégramme. 2004. 158 pp.

Described in reviews as a "reference work," this is a well documented and richly illustrated book on the harp in Brittany. The first part of this work focuses on the history of the Celtic harp - its origins, decline, and reintroduction - and examines how the harp has been depicted in literature and illustration. The second part focuses on the reintroduction of the harp in Brittany, and Stivell is certainly well placed to write about that as the instigator and still-central player in innovative uses of the harp to interpret Breton and Celtic traditions.

Thierry Jigourel. Harpe celtique - Le Temps des enchanteurs. Celtics Chadenn. 2004. 144 pp.

Reviews describe this as the fruit of research and questions posed to harp players, teachers, and makers of the harp in Brittany and elsewhere. It is focused on the renaissance of the harp in Brittany, including the influential Telenn Bleimor of Paris of the 1950-60 period. It provides a portrait of harp players of today in Brittany and the Celtic countries and nicely complements the work of Stivell and Verdier.

## SOME LOSSES IN THE BRETON MUSICAL FAMILY

Lois Kuter

The following notes are based in part on information in Musique Bretonne 189 (mars/avril 2005), as well as a variety of other magazine notes and CD reviews.

### DENISE MEGEVAND

Originally from the Savoy region of France, Denise Megevand lived in Paris and studied harp with Lily Laskin. Denise Megevand was a master of classical harp who fell in love with Celtic music and became a pioneer in teaching Celtic harp and developing arrangements for aspiring students, including young Alan Stivell and others in the Paris-based Telenn Bleimor in the 1950s and 60s. She not only arranged traditional airs of Brittany, Scotland and Ireland, but also composed new pieces. She was a champion of the Celtic harp and its music long before it became widely popular in Brittany and had an immeasurable impact on its future.

Recordings of the 1960s and 70s:

Prestige de la harpe celtique. Arion ARN 38245  
Vingt-quatre pieces du folklore Breton. Adès 10006  
La harpe celtique des Iles Hébrides. Arion ARN 33351.  
Musique contemporaine pour harpe celtique SFP 1054 (1979)

Suite irlandaise. Denise Mégevand, harpe celtique, Orchestre de Chambre de Toulouse. Auvidic A4738.

### CHRISTOPHE CARON

A master of the bombarde who was just in his 40s when he passed away this January, Christophe Caron was well known in Brittany as both a musician and a teacher. Like many of Brittany's best traditional musicians he explored other musical styles and encouraged his students to both know their roots in Breton music and develop their own style.

As director for the traditional music department of the Conservatoire National de Région in Nantes, and as

a teacher at the music school in Guérande, he touched a large number of students in Loire-Atlantique and was actively engaged in the culture of this region.

He is perhaps best known for his pairing of bombarde with organ and recorded two LP records in the mid 1980s with organist Louis Yhuel who had pioneered this type of duo with his partner Jean-Claude Jégat (Musique sacrée: cantiques Bretons vannetais, Escalibur 418, and Prestige de la bombarde, Escalibur 814). With organist Hervé Rivière he recorded Bombarde et Orgue à Guérande and then paired with Christian Métayer on piano for the CD Gwennrann in 2000.

But Christophe Caron played in a number of groups with other instruments: Tourmenté à l'Amour with singer Mathieu Hamon and accordion player Ronan Robert, Burn's Duo with Ronan Robert, and the Ronan Robert Reunion which took a jazzier route including trumpet, trombone, piano, bass fiddle and percussion as well as Caron's bombarde and Robert's accordion.

I had the pleasure of hearing Christopher Caron when he came to the Mystic Seaport Sea Music Festival in 1990 (Mystic, CT) with fiddler Pierrick Lemou and button accordion player Yann Dour. They also toured in the New England area doing some workshops in schools. So we can thank Christophe Caron not only for great performances and a legacy of teaching in Brittany, but also for introducing the bombarde to some no doubt startled children on this side of the Atlantic.

## ARNAUD MAISONNEUVE

Like Christophe Caron, Arnaud Maisonneuve was just in his 40s when he died in February. He is known both as a fine singer (both in Breton and French) and as a master of the guitar.

I first heard him on the 1984 recording Chants de Bord des baleiniers et long-courriers - part of the wonderful Chasse-Marée series, Chants de Marins, which included a who's who of Breton singers recreating traditional ballads and work songs from Brittany's maritime heritage (John Wright, Catherine Perrier, Michel Collet, Erik Marchand, Christian

Desnos, Denez Abernot, Gilbert Bourdin, among others ...). With some of these singers Maisonneuve was a mainstay of the maritime group Cabestan which was launched in 1985.

Arnaud Maisonneuve never strayed too far from the coast in his music and produced a CD with John Wright and Marie-Aline Lagadic called Kost ar mor, featuring songs of the Bigouden area of southwestern Brittany. In 2001 he worked with Patrick Audouin and Bernard Quillien on another CD with a maritime theme, War vord ar mor. Maritime songs were certainly not absent from his 1990 CD of traditional songs from both the Bigouden and Vannetais regions, Eur zon hervez ma zantimant.

Perhaps one of Maisonneuve's most unusual recordings was Quilet men deulagad (1996) which fused traditional songs in Breton from the Vannetais region with blues guitar. While one might not consider Maisonneuve's vocal style "bluesy" as we know it here in the U.S., he had definitely mastered blues style guitar using tunes by Blind Boy Fuller and Fred McDowell.

Maisonneuve had a unique voice and a true passion for Breton music and culture that will be missed.

## EMILE HOUËIX and HENRI GRAND

These two traditional singers from the Gallo tradition of eastern Brittany have not made a name as recording artists or toured for concert performances. Their names are not known throughout Brittany, but they have left a deep impact as teachers and mentors - singers who chose to pass their music down to new generations. Both participated in the Bogue d'Or song competition which is held each fall through a series of preliminary contests in small towns and villages, heading to a final contest in Redon. And both have taught in workshops at the Fête de Chant in Bovel. And, most importantly, both have graciously welcomed young singers into their homes to share their lifetime accumulation and love of traditional song and their friendship.

## Potomac Celtic Festival

June 11-12, 2005 - Leesburg, Virginia

[www.pcfest.org](http://www.pcfest.org)

For the 12<sup>th</sup> year The Barnaby Council for Celtic Studies is organizing a Celtic Festival, and for the 12<sup>th</sup> year the U.S. ICDBL will be there. From a single card table at the first festival we have grown to multiple tables and tents with colorful poster displays, lots of information about Brittany and the Breton language to give away, coloring activities for children, and our friendly presence to answer questions. The 2004 festival attracted over 15,000 attendees during its two days – despite some challenging weather. Not all of them come to our tent, but we have the chance to introduce Brittany to hundreds of festival-goers.

Long before it became fashionable, the Potomac festival has attempted to include something to represent all the Celtic countries: Scotland and Ireland are always well represented, but Brittany, Wales, Isle of Man, Cornwall, Galicia and Asturias are also present in music, dance or information tents. While a number of musical acts include a bit of Breton repertoire, like Moch Pryderi (whose musicians are all supporters of the U.S. ICDBL), this year there are no musicians from Brittany. BUT, Jan Zollars (another U.S. ICDBL member) will be doing dance workshops so you can learn and practice a few Breton dances.

This year's festival features Wales (a different country is featured each year), so you will have the chance to hear some good Welsh music. Some of the performers lined up for this year's festival – for Welsh and other music - include: Coyote Run, Iona, Tinsmith, Beth Patterson, Ffynnon, Battlefield Band, Gráda, and the McDades. For more details about the festival check the website listed above.

As well as a half dozen stages for music and dance performances, the festival hosts workshops to learn a few words of the Celtic languages (Welsh, Scottish Gaelic, Manx), poetry and storytelling, children's activities, Scottish athletics (tossing the caber), pipe band performances, and re-enactors of a span of 2,000 years of Celtic history. Bring some money because there are lots of great booths to buy crafts, jewelry, books, etc. The food hasn't been the same

since the crêpe chefs left the festival, but you'll find plenty to eat ... and drink.

We would love to meet anyone planning to come to the festival (look for the Breton flags flying over our tents), and we can offer a free ticket if you want to pitch in and volunteer some time at the U.S. ICDBL information tent during the weekend. (Contact Lois right away about volunteering).

### Other Inter-Celtic Festivals in the U.S.?

A growing number of Irish and Scottish festivals have started calling themselves Celtic festivals, and this is not just because the word "Celtic" has a certain marketing appeal – often these festivals are very pleased to include representation of all the Celtic countries. It is not easy to find Breton musicians in the U.S., or to bring them over from Brittany, but if you hear of any touring musicians or festivals where Brittany is represented, it would be great to note them on the U.S. ICDBL website.



## Geography of Brittany – A new website to explore [www.breizh-bzh.net](http://www.breizh-bzh.net)

Here's a nice little website for those seeking maps of Brittany and some basic geographical information. You'll find over 20 colorful maps depicting various subdivisions of Brittany – historical provinces, departments, Breton language dialects, etc. The site also shows you various flags of Brittany and for different regions and cities. You'll also find examples of bilingual signs – from boats to shops to road signs. A basic description is given of the various sub-regions of Brittany and their history, and you can find statistics for population, rivers (length), forests (area), mountains (height) and islands. You can also access lists of towns and villages according to various regions within Brittany. And, you'll find that geographic names are given in both Breton and French. A nice little site to get some basic facts.

## **Concarneau and the Sardine Industry in Brittany – Views from 1869 and 1902**

*The following accounts are extraordinary in travel literature for the amount of detail brought to the description of a particular and once very important industry in Brittany: fishing and canning of sardines.*

**Mrs. Bury Palliser. Brittany & Its Byways: Some Account of its Inhabitants and its Antiquities.** London: John Murray, Albemarle Street, 1869, pp. 143-48

Concarneau proper is on a rocky island, surrounded by fortifications, with eight or nine towers and thick walls, and communicating with the mainland by means of a drawbridge. This is called the “Ville Close.” It consists of only one street. ...

Opposite the island is the faubourg Sainte Croix, which is more populous than the Ville Close, and where all the business of the place is carried on. The sardine fishery, from June to November, occupies two-thirds of the population. From three to four hundred vessels are employed with five men to each boat. Calm weather is most favorable for fishing. The sardines are taken in large seine nets, one side floating with corks on the surface of the water, the other falling vertically. The sardines, attracted by the bait, try to force themselves through the meshes of the net, and are caught by their gills. The bait used is called “Rogue:” the best is composed of the roe of the cod-fish, pounded and steeped in salt water for several days; sometimes the roe and flesh of the mackerel is used. Rogue is made in Norway and Denmark, but principally in Drontheim, and is very expensive, costing about sixpence the lb.; hence an inferior bait is substituted, composed of shrimp and other small crustacean, with fish salted, and the heads of anchovies, all pounded and putrefied together. But this kind of decomposed bait is forbidden by fishery laws. The employment of it accounts for the rareness of good sardines, as the remaining of such substance in the body of the animal cannot fail of corrupting it. It is a pretty sight to behold the little fleet employed in the sardine fishery return in the evening, laden with the results of the day’s work. The fish, when landed, are counted out into baskets, shaken in the water, and taken up to one of the curing-houses: of these there are about

sixty in Concarneau. In the first shed we saw above fifty women employed in taking off their heads – “detêter” it is called – an operation they effect with great dexterity. With one cut at the back of the neck the head is separated and the fish “éventré” at the same time.

The sardines are next placed in little wire trays, with divisions like a double gridiron, and fried or dipped in boiling oil, an operation principally performed by the women of Pont l’Abbé, who are supposed, like the Germans of our baking and sugar-refining houses, to be peculiarly constituted to resist heat. The gridirons are then hung up to drain. The sardines are next packed in tin boxes, cold oil poured over them, and the boxes soldered down. From 800 to 900 boxes are placed in a boiler and boiled for half an hour to test the boxes, and those which leak are put aside. They are of English tin, and the making of them is the winter’s occupation. Finally, the boxes are stamped with the name of the establishment, and packed in deal cases for exportation. The sardine is a very delicate fish, and easily decays. It is only taken out of the net with a race (*raquette*); in summer, numbers are spoiled from being heaped in the boats, and at whatever hour the boats come in the fish go through the whole process of curing, as they will not keep till the next day. Concarneau exports from 15,000 to 20,000 barrels of sardines annually. Only a part are “anchoitée,” that is, preserved like the anchovies of the Mediterranean, the others are salted in casks; and quantities only slightly salted, are packed in baskets, to be sent to the provincial markets. It is estimated that twelve hundred million fish have been caught this year. The sardine fishery extends along the whole western coast of Brittany from Douarnenez to the Loire.

One of the curiosities of Concarneau is its aquarium, under the direction of M. Guillon. It consists of six cisterns, made by the blasting of the solid rock, and comprising an area of large extent, within a walled enclosure. In these cisterns the water is renewed at each turn of the tide through narrow openings in the wall. Three of these reservoirs are reserved for fish, the others for crustacean – lobsters and langoustes. Of these they keep from 10,000 to 15,000 at a time, and send them off daily, when fattened, to Paris and the principal markets of France. It was curious to see the dread shown by the common lobster to the langouste. They all were adhering to the sides of the reservoirs as if afraid to encounter their more powerful companions. Quantities of turbot, also reared for sale, were in one of the cisterns, darting with the greatest rapidity in the water when the

keeper threw in pieces of sardines for them to eat. At the end of these cisterns is a building, with every arrangement for the culture of fishes – rows of little troughs, and other vessels, to contain them. Many of the fish are so tame, they came immediately to the keeper on his making a noise in the water with his fingers. Here are fish of every description, and naturalists have every facility of studying their habits. Among others, we saw the graceful little sea-horse or hippo-campus, a native of the seas of Brittany as well as of the Mediterranean.



**Hugh M. Smith, “Brittany: The Land of the Sardine,”** National Geographic Magazine XX(6), June 1909

Hugh M. Smith is identified as the Deputy Commissioner, U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, and this article was first a presentation given to the National Geographic Society on March 26, 1902.

*The Silvery Sardine*

... the leading produce of the waters of Brittany is the sardine. This country has its own peculiar attractions for the artist, the archeologist, the linguist, and other specialists, and even ordinary tourists are often impelled to extend their travels thither; but the feature which appeals most strongly to the greatest number of Americans affects not their esthetic, artistic, or scientific tastes, but their gastronomic, through the medium of the canned sardine. Other countries and other parts of France produce sardines, but the sardine par excellence comes from Brittany.

Brittany is the center of the sardine fishery, and has all of the numerous establishments for the canning of the fish. In an average season the Brittany sardine fishermen number 25,000 to 30,000 and catch 100,000,000 to 150,000,000 pounds of sardines, for which they receive \$1,500,000 to \$3,000,000, while the shore industries dependent on the fishery give employment to 20,000 other persons, mostly women and girls. So important is the sardine that in many communities in Brittany every person is directly or indirectly supported by it, and the failure of the fish to come means ruin, starvation, and death to many people in the more isolated places.

The sardine fishery dates back many years, and even in the early part of the fifteenth century it was quite extensive, but it attained its greatest

importance as a result of the perfecting of canning methods and the advent of the railroad in the fishing districts.

A great deal of unnecessary uncertainty and misinformation has existed and still exists with regard to the French sardine. It has long been known that the little fish canned in France is not a species per se, but is simply the young of the pilchard, which is one of the most valuable and abundant fishes of the south coast of England. The range extends from Sweden to the Madeira Island and includes the Mediterranean Sea. The name “sardine,” as you have no doubt surmised, has reference to the island of Sardinia, about whose shores the fish is abundant.

Sardines are found on the coasts of Brittany throughout the year, but occur in greatest abundance in summer and autumn. The small fish, in demand for canning purposes, have been hatched from eggs laid in the previous summer at a considerable distance from the land, and go in schools at or near the surface. As many as 100,000 have been taken at one time in one net from one school, but the usual size of the schools is not remarkably large.

*The Prosperity of Brittany Depends on the Sardine*

Like other free-swimming oceanic fish, of which the mackerel, bluefish and herring are conspicuous examples, the sardine varies in abundance from year to year, and at times has been exceedingly scarce on the French coasts. Thus, from 1887 to 1890 there was an alarming scarcity, but after this four-year period the fish returned in as great numbers as ever. Again, from 1902 to 1906 the sardine disappeared almost as completely, only to be followed by a period of great abundance.

All sorts of theories have been advanced to account for these periods of scarcity, which appear to be coming more frequently than formerly, and are giving the French government and people much concern. Among the causes assigned are over-fishing, the ravages of other fishes and of whales, the explosion of submarine mines and torpedoes in the French naval maneuvers, and divine providence.

.... The fishery is conducted with small, wide-beam, open boats, carrying two rather tall masts, each with a large, square lugger sail. The boats are propelled also by oars, which are of an exceedingly clumsy type, the blade being small and narrow, while the shaft is square and four inches in diameter. The length of the oars is extraordinary, averaging 33 feet,

and as only one man plies each oar, we often find heavy stones tied on the butt in order to counteract the weight of the long shaft and blade.

In the early days of fishery, nets were employed to surround the schools of sardines, and then stones were thrown to frighten the fish into the meshes. In this way large catches were often made and the markets were glutted, so the method came into disrepute and is no longer followed. Fishing is now done exclusively with gill-nets made of fine cotton twine; the nets are 45 yards long and 500 meshes deep, and the complement of each boat is 10 nets, representing 3 degrees of fineness adapted for small, medium and large fish. The nets are kept in position in the water by means of numerous cork floats and a few large stone sinkers.

A peculiar thing about the nets is that by means of an aniline they are dyed a bright greenish blue. This is for the purpose of preserving them and of rendering them less conspicuous in the water. When the nets are suspended from the mastheads to dry, they add greatly to the picturesqueness of the fishing boats and the wharf scene.

Sardines are caught more or less throughout the year, but fishing is largely suspended from December to February, and the most extensive fishing is in summer and autumn. The boats start out early in the morning, so as to be on the ground when day breaks. The best fishing is then had, and the boats are often back to port by 9 or 10 o'clock with full cargoes.

When a boat arrives on the grounds, the rear mast is taken down and the craft is headed toward the wind. If there is no wind, the sails are lowered and the boat is rowed by the four members of the crew. A net is put overboard and is slowly towed behind the boat by means of a short line. When fish are abundant the fishermen often let one net go adrift when it is full of fish, trusting to pick it up later and put out another net. The sardines are often found in a compact body containing hundreds of thousands or perhaps millions, and the boats will be concentrated in a comparatively small area, at times so close together that the operation of the nets would seem almost impossible and the chance of catching fish very improbable. The entire fleet of a given port, consisting of several hundred boats, may be at work on one shoal at a time.

#### *Sardine Cannot Be Caught Without Bait*

There are several features of the fishery that are most exceptional, not to say anomalous. One of

these is that, notwithstanding the fish are caught in gill-nets, bait is used in largest quantities and is indispensable. In no other net fishery in the world is bait so extensively employed or so essential to the success. Various things have been and still are employed for this purpose, but the bait now in general use is the salted eggs of the codfish, although any other small eggs will answer just as well. The reason cod eggs are used is that they may be obtained in immense quantities.

The casting of the bait, on the proper use of which a great deal of the success of fishing depends, is always done by the captain, who stands on a little platform on the stern and, while directing the movements of the boat and the manipulation of the net, throws the bait to attract the fish to the surface and around the boat. When the fish are on one side of the net or the other, his next move is to cast the bait in such a way as to cause them to rush against the net and thus become gilled.

Considerable skill and experience are required in having the net hung properly in the water and not become folded or wavy, owing to currents or tide, for unless the net is straight or only slightly curved, it will be seen by the fish and avoided.

When a net contains fish it is hauled into the boat and the catch is removed by gentle shaking or by hand. The delicate fish are put in a compartment in the bottom and are handled with great care, so as to avoid crushing and bruising. As no ice is used for preservation, it is important that the boats reach port as promptly as possible, and almost invariably the fish are landed in excellent condition, and are often delivered at the factories within an hour or two after capture.

The sardines are sought and found rather close to shore, thus permitting the use of small boats, and the landing of the fish a short time after capture is insured. Most of the fishing is done inside the bays and within two or three miles of shore, and only rarely is it necessary to go as far as ten miles from land.

#### *The Success of the Sardine Fishing Season Depends Almost Entirely on Getting Bait From Norway*

Another remarkable fact regarding this fishery is that the indispensable bait is not a home product, but has to be imported at great expense, and therefore this most valuable fishery of France is absolutely dependent on the fishermen of other countries and its success is immediately related to

the outcome of fisheries for other species in far-distant waters.

The annual consumption of cod roe for bait is from 40,000 to 50,000 barrels, and for this the Breton fishermen pay about \$350,000. The greater part of the bait comes from Norway, where for at least two centuries the cod fishermen about the Lofoden Islands have been salting what would otherwise be a waste product and selling it at lucrative prices to the Bretons. Small quantities of the roe have been contributed by Newfoundland, Holland, and the United States; but efforts to induce the French cod fishermen in Newfoundland, Saint Pierre and Miquelon, Iceland and the North Sea to save this product have been futile, notwithstanding that as early as 1816 the government offered French fishermen a bounty of \$4 a barrel for roe bait prepared from fish caught by them.

How serious and anomalous this condition of affairs is may be judged when it is stated (1) that a season of great abundance of sardines may find the fishermen with an inadequate bait supply, which greatly reduces the catch and the profits of fishing; (2) that during periods of great scarcity of fish, when to even exist may be a difficult matter, the cost of bait may be almost prohibitive; (3) that the Bretons are apparently willing to pay to the Norsemen a heavy tribute, which during one entire decade in the nineteenth century was never less than \$32 a barrel and at times reached \$60 a barrel for cod roe; and (4) that the Norwegian government, by prohibiting the exportation of cod roe, could ruin the sardine fisheries of Brittany and place practically the entire population in a starving condition.

When the fishing boats begin to arrive the wharves, which have practically been deserted, assume a very busy appearance, and as the arrivals increase in number the bustle among the different classes of people becomes intense. The foreign visitor here witnesses some exceedingly interesting and picturesque sights – thousands of fishermen in their coarse blouses and flat caps, with trousers rolled up and their feet bare or in huge wooden shoes, unloading their fish and carrying them to the canneries; hundreds of women and girls in their short, dark skirts, white caps and collars, negotiating for sardines, receiving them from the fishermen, and dispatching them to the canneries; sardine boats, either sailed or rowed, entering the harbor in groups or singly and coming up to the docks already so congested that some of the boats must land directly on the beach; fish wagons going to and from the factories; and a mixed crowd of merchants, sight-seers, artists, and idlers. The

commingled noise of waves, boats, wagons, and tongues is under laden by the incessant rattle of wooden shoes on the stony pavements.

Soon after the boats reach port nets are spread for drying, being hoisted to the tops of the masts for this purpose. When all the fleet has arrived and the nets are hanging in graceful festoons, the view of the maze of masts, sails, and blue nets is most striking.

### *Peculiar Division of the Earnings*

It may be a matter of some interest to learn something about the financial side of the sardine fisherman's life. The prices received for the catch depend on supply and demand and on the size and quality of the fish. The fish of each boat are virtually sold at auction to the highest bidder, but there is little counter-bidding. As the prices offered from time to time by two or three canneries are adopted by the others and accepted by the fishermen. Some boats always sell to the same cannery, and all of them, to a greater or less extent, deal with particular factories.

The maximum price that factory operators can profitably pay for sardines is \$5.00 per thousand. Taking an average season through, the prices received by the fishermen would be \$3.50 to \$4.00 per 1,000 for the largest sardines (many of which are consumed fresh), \$1.50 to \$2.00 per 1,000 for the medium-size fish, and \$0.50 to \$1.00 per 1,000 for the smallest fish.

The fishermen are not paid in cash but with tickets or tokens that are redeemed weekly. The men fish on shares, and the appointment of their lots is complicated enough to puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer and to make expert arithmeticians of the entire population.

To illustrate: Each week the gross earnings of each boat are divided into 22 parts, or shares, of which 11 go to the owner of the boat and equipment, 2 to each of the four fishermen, 2 to the master, and 1 to the cook; but the master received a bonus of 10 percent of 2 shares, and to compensate for this the shares of each of the four fishermen are diminished by 2 ½ per cent. These are the very simplest terms in which I have been able to state this arrangement.

In ordinary seasons, boats that fish regularly will earn from \$400 to \$1,200, averaging, perhaps, \$600 or \$700.

### *Women Do Most of the Work in the Canning Factories*

It is not needful for us to look into the details of the sardine canning industry, but there are a few points of general interest to which we may devote a few words.

The construction of the first canning establishment dates from 1845, since which time the growth of the business has been uninterrupted and rapid. More than 100 canneries are now in operation, and the output in ordinary years is tremendous, the pack of some of the largest factories being 5,000,000 each.

Practically all the work about the factories is done by women and girls – at good wages. With deftness and expedition they remove the heads and viscera from the sardines, soak the fish in brine, place them in wire baskets or on wooden trays to drain and dry, immerse baskets and fish in boiling oil, pack the fish in tin boxes after cooling, insert spices of various kinds, then fill the boxes with oil, seal them, and put them in vats of boiling water for two hours (to complete cooking, soften the bones, and kill bacteria).

### *The Capital of the Sardine Industry*

The chief center of the sardine industry is Concarneau, a town of 10,000 people, of whom 3,500 are sardine fishermen and 3,000 are men, women and children in the sardine factories. Some of the canneries are operated by American citizens and with American capital, and representatives of foreign dealers in French sardines have their offices here.

Concarneau is a very ancient place and shows the scars of a checkered career. It has sustained sieges, bombardments, pillage at the hands of the British, and was occupied more than once by these hereditary enemies of the Bretons. In 1377 it was held by a British garrison, all of whom were put to death by the great Duguesclin.

In modern times the town has outgrown the wall and most that surrounded it and has spread along half a mile of water front, and it has become one of the most attractive places in Brittany for the tourist and artist. No art gallery is now complete without “A Roadside Well in Concarneau” or “A Street Scene in Concarneau” or a “Return of the Sardine Fishermen”; and some of our local artists have brought back some charming sketches. It is, I believe, a fact that no other fishing town in the world has, through the faces and figures of its people, been so extensively represented on canvas.

Perhaps the influx of Americans is due in part at least to the fact that an American woman wrote a novel with Concarneau for its setting. Patriotic feelings impel Americans to read the book, and to accept with credence all that the local guides are able to tell about the characters therein, not the least interesting of whom was the fair authoress herself, who appears to have been the autoheroine of the story.



### *Concarneau today?*

**Neil Wilson, Brittany.** Lonely Planet Publications, June 2002, p. 179

Concarneau  
Pop 18,600

Concarneau (Konk-Kerne in Breton), 24 km south-east of Quimper, is France's third most important trawler port. Its fortune was originally founded on the Atlantic sardine fishery, which collapsed at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Today, it is the home port for around 30 seine-netters, which hunt tuna as far afield as the coast of Africa and even the Indian Ocean, and another 250 boats that fish home waters for various species; you'll see hand-bills announcing the size of the incoming fleet's catch all around town. Concarneau has the refreshingly unpretentious air of a working fishing port, as well as the attractions of a walled old town perched on a rocky islet, and many good beaches nearby. ...

### *And whatever happened to that aquarium mentioned by Mrs. Palliser in 1869 ?*

Again from the Lonely Planet guide to Brittany ...

### *Other Things to See & Do*

On the southern point of the harbour is the more sober and serious Marinarium .... France's oldest institute of marine biology, founded in 1859, it has 10 large aquariums as well as exhibits on oceanography and marine flora and fauna.

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