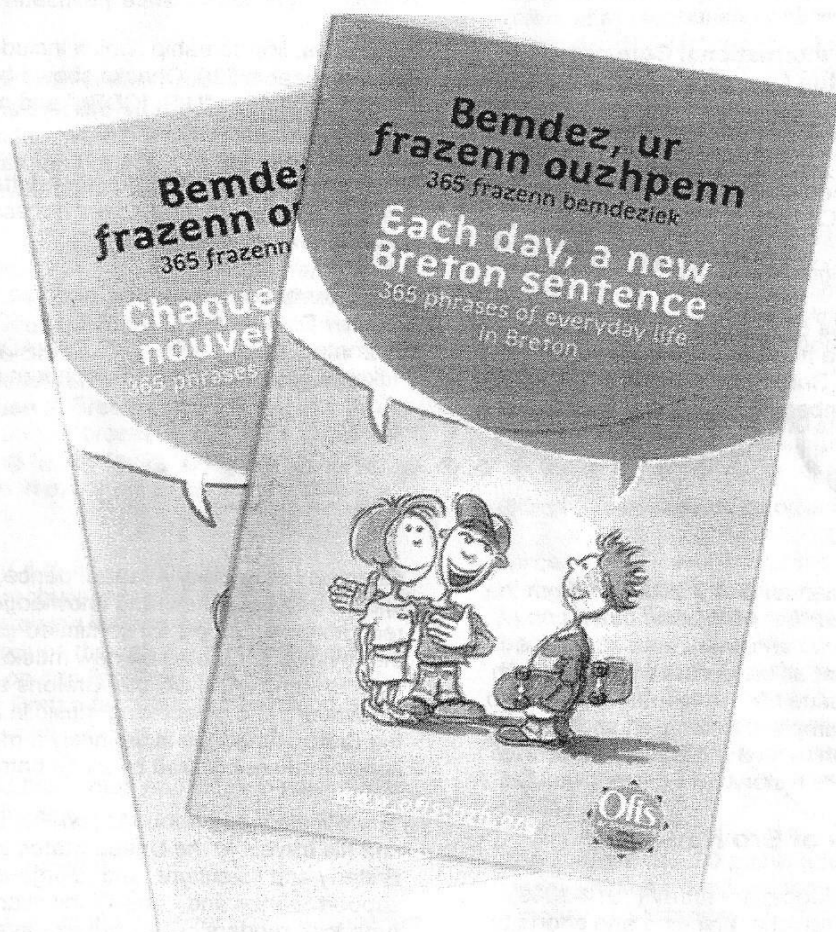


# BRO NEVEZ

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



KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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

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## On The Cover . . .

... is the cover illustration for a new brochure from the Ofis ar Brezhoneg: *Bemdez, ur frazenn ouzhpenn / Each day, a new Breton sentence*. Read about this new publication and get all the phrases for the month of September in this issue of Bro Nevez. You will also learn about another pamphlet for English speakers put out by this organization to give a basic introduction to the Breton language, its history, and current vitality.

## Also in this Issue of Bro Nevez ....

... You will read about Joseph Martray (1914-2009) who was a pioneer in regional planning and efforts to build a coalition of Breton leadership to plan for economic development for Brittany. In Brittany cultural vitality has been a key element in economic development – the strong identity and wealth of cultural expression in Brittany makes it an attractive place for those seeking to build a business in a dynamic society. In this issue of Bro Nevez, you will read about the entrepreneurial initiatives Bretons have taken in the past fifty years in both economic and cultural areas. And you will learn about the initiative

Dastum is taking to work with cultural organizations and individuals to insure that the immaterial cultural patrimony of Brittany – music, dance, traditional sports, and know-how and knowledge - gets the recognition and tools for continued growth. As always the reviews and notes on new music CDs and books from Brittany will show that Bretons are creating, innovating, and celebrating music in all styles. ... and the Breton language is definitely a medium for new songs that are inspired by a rich patrimony.

You will also read about Anatole Le Braz (1859-1926) and his travels to the United States to teach us about Brittany and its culture, and to urge the U.S. to support France and enter World War I. While many American readers of Bro Nevez have probably heard of some of his books on Breton lore and customs, you may not know the depth of his attachment to this country.

As always, Jean Pierre Le Mat provides a provocative look "Deep Inside a Breton Skull," in this case, reflecting on Bretons, drinking, and wine.



# Some New Resources for English Speakers form Ofis ar Brezhoneg

Presented by Lois Kuter

## Brezhoneg, ur yezh en Europa / Breton, a European Language

Ofis ar Brezhoneg has produced two new pamphlets to introduce Breton to English speakers and to help them learn some phrases. An attractive 4 x 6 inch folder was widely available at festivals this summer – with a version also in French - and includes the following topics effectively summarized in both Breton and English:

*Ar Brezhoneg, ur yezh keltiek / Breton, a Celtic language:* affirms that Breton is indeed a real language, related to five other Celtic languages. This section also notes the presence of four dialects of Breton and a newer common language learned in the schools.

*Ar Vretoned o tiazazañ e Breizh / The settlement of Britons in Armorica:* This second section gives a brief history of the Breton language – the migration of Celtic peoples to Brittany in the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> centuries, the changing presence and linguistic borders within Brittany as the use of Breton retreated westward. For tourists picking up this brochure, the quick explanation of the meaning of “plou,” “gwik,” “lann,” “tre,” “lez,” and “bod,” found in many place names in Brittany will be of interest.

*Ur yezh virvidik / A thriving language:* The third main section of this brochure presents the Breton language as a living and growing language. While it is not possible to reproduce the colorful map which gives a sense of where one can find Diwan, public and Catholic schools offering Breton teaching, the following is the text from this section.

I have alternated the Breton and English paragraphs that make up this section.

### Ur c'hemm er speredoù

*War zigreskiñ ez a c'hoazh an niver a vrezhonegerien evit ar mare. Niverusoc'h-niverusañ eo ar re yaouank gouest da vrezhonegañ avat, a-drugarez da gresk ingal an niver a skolioù divyezhek. War dachennoù all evel an dañs, ar c'hoariva pe ar c'han (kan-ha-diskan) e vez adkavet ar yaouankiz hag a birvilh sevenadurel-se. A-du gant ar brezhoneg emañ an darn vrasañ eus an dud ha graet e vez gantañ muioc'h-mui er vuhez foran.*

## A new attitude

The number of Breton speakers is still decreasing but, thanks to the growing number of bilingual schools, there are more and more young people who can speak the language. In the same way, activities like dancing, acting, singing (kan-ha-diskan) are full of life and cultural enthusiasm. The Breton language has wide support and it is used more and more in public life.

### Ar brezhoneg evel yezh kelenn

*Meur a wech, adal an XIXvet kantved, e voe klasket lakaat ar Stad da gemer e kont c'hoant ar bobl e vefe kelennet ar brezhoneg er skolioù. A-enep e savas an Deskadurezh Stad bep tro. O welet kement-se e voe savet ar skolioù Diwan, skolioù zo ar brezhoneg o yezh kelenn pennañ, gant tud skolidi. E 1977 e oa bet digoret ar skol gentañ. Da heul beuzh ar skolioù-se e voe digoret klasoù divyezhek en deskadurezh publik (1982) ha prevez (1991).*

*E distro-skol 2008 e oa bet tizhet 12,000 bugel skoliataet e brezhoneg, en ur gontañ an holl hentadoù (Diwan, publik, prevez). Ar C'huzul-rannvro en deus lakaet da bal en e steuñv politikerezh yezh tizhout 20,000 bugel skoliataet en hentadoù-se ac'hann da 2010*

*A-hend-all e oa e-tro 18,000 skoliad oc'h heuliañ kentelioù brezhoneg e 1999.*

### Breton as a medium of education

Since the 19<sup>th</sup> century Bretons have struggled for the recognition of their language by the ministries, according to the wishes of the people, but they have been confronted to [by] the refusal of the Minister of Education. Parents then decided to create their own schools where Breton would be the means of education. The first Diwan school opened in 1977. Breton-French bilingual classes were then opened in public schools (1982) and in private Catholic schools (1991).

The figure of 12,000 pupils educated in bilingual classes (Diwan, public schools, Catholic schools) was reached in September 2008, The Regional Council of Brittany, has develop[ed] a plan to enhance the use of the language, and want[s] that figure to be 20,000 in 2010.

Besides, around 18,000 pupils are taught Breton as a subject.

### Un dra ouzhpenn evit kavout labour

*Berzh bras a ra ivez ar c'hentelioù hag ar stajoù evit an dud deuet heuliet gant e-tro 5,000 a dud. Abaoe un*

*nebeud bloavezhioù e sikour gouzout brezhoneg evit kavout labour. Ouzhpenn 1,000 post-labour zo liammet ouzh ar brezhoneg bremañ, en deskadurezh, er mediaoù, e bed ar c'hevredigezhioù, e gennad ar servijoù, er strollegezhioù lec'hel ...*

### **A professional asset**

Breton classes for adults are quite popular too and they concern almost 5,000 people. Recently, knowing Breton has become a professional asset to get a job. More than 1,000 jobs now require some knowledge of Breton, either in schools, in the media, in associations, in services, in local jobs...

### **Ar brezhoneg, yezh an XXIvet kantved**

*Strollegezhioù lec'hel niverus a gas war-raok programmoù divyezhekaat ar pezh zo en o dalc'h. E blas a gav ar brezhoneg war tachennoù nevez evel ar c'henwerzh, ar mediaoù, ar bruderezh, an urzhiaataerezh, ar bankoù ivez ... An Ofis, gant e goulzad "Ya d'ar Brezhoneg," a dalvoudeka hag a ro lañs d'an oberoù-se, ken er gennad kenwerzhel, ken er strollegezhioù lec'hel. Aet eo ar brezhoneg war-raok war dachenn an teknologiezhioù nevez ivez: 1añ yezh keltiek war Wikipedia eo, troet eo bet ar mezialtoù OpenOffice, Skype, Mozilla FoxFire ha Thunderbird...*

### **Breton, a language for the 21<sup>st</sup> century**

Some local authorities are engaged in programs to promote the use of Breton in their fields of power. The Breton language conquers new areas, like trading, media, advertising, computing, banking... Ofis ar Brezhoneg, with its "Ya d'ar Brezhoneg" campaign, encourages and enhances those initiatives, in the private sector as well as among local authorities. Breton is the main Celtic language used on Wikipedia, which shows that the language is well established in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. OpenOffice, Skype, Mozilla FoxFire and Thunderbird softwares all have Breton versions.

### **Bemdez, ur frazenn ouzhpenn / Each day, a new Breton sentence**

Besides a nice brochure to quickly introduce the Breton language to English speakers, Ofis ar Brezhoneg has translated its popular calendar of phrases (Breton-French) into English. So now English speakers can pick up a new phrase in Breton each day. While this may not help you learn how to pronounce your new phrase, coupled with any number of other learning possibilities (classes, CD ROMs, or internet resources), this is a fun way to pick up more vocabulary and string it together in short, useful phrases.

You can download the Pdf file from Ofis ar Brezhoneg ([www.ofis-bzh.org](http://www.ofis-bzh.org)) and get all of the months. Since by the time you receive this issue of Bro Nevez, we will be heading from August into September, I have reproduced the phrases for Gwengolo below!

### **GWENGOLO / SEPTEMBER**

- 1 - Er sizhun-mañ emañ an distro-skol.  
The new school year starts this week.
- 2 - Dav eo din kaout labour. Dilabour on.  
I need a job. I'm jobless.
- 3 - Bemdez ez an da labourat.  
I go to work every day.
- 4 - Selaou a ran sonerezh.  
I listen to music.
- 5 - Sellet ouzh ar skinwel ne blij ket din.  
I don't like watching TV.
- 6 - Krog eo an a  
The weather is cold.
- 7 - Warc'hoazh e vo koumoulek.  
Tomorrow it will be cloudy.
- 8 - Glav a ra.  
It's raining.
- 9 - Lugachenn pe kaouadoù ?  
Drizzle or showers ?
- 10 - Avel zo.  
It's windy.
- 11 - Gwisk da chupenn, fresk eo.  
Put your coat on, it's coldish.
- 12 - Gleborek eo an amzer.  
The weather is wet.
- 13 - Latar zo.  
It's foggy.
- 14 - Ur banneig glav zo oc'h ober.  
There are a few drops on.
- 15 - Dimeziñ a raio warc'hoazh.  
He/she 's getting married tomorrow.
- 16 - Hiziv ez eomp d'un eured.  
Today, we are going to a wedding.
- 17 - Ma welez anezhañ, kas ma doare dezhañ !  
If you see him, give him my regards.

- 18 - N'emaomp ket o vont d'ar porzh, glav a ra.  
We're not going to the port as it's raining.
- 19 - Demat deoc'h ! Ho tro eo ?  
Good morning/afternoon/evening ! Is it your turn?
- 20 - Demat Itron/Aotrou ! Petra a yay ganeoc'h ?  
Good morning/afternoon/evening Madam/Sir !  
Can I help you?
- 21 - Ur c'hilo per,mar plij.  
Two pounds of pears, please.
- 22 - Me'm bo ul lur kerez.  
I'd like a pound of cherries.
- 23 - Un dousennad krampouezh,mar plij.  
A dozen of crêpes/pancakes, please.
- 24 - Lakait din pemp kilo avaloù-douar !  
Give me five kilos of potatoes !
- 25 - Lakait din 750 gramm fav-glas ouzhpenn.  
Add one pound and a half of green beans.
- 26 - Me a yay ganin un hanter dousennad vioù hag ul lur amann.  
I'd like half a dozen of eggs and a pound of butter.
- 27 - Pegement eo koustet dit ar penn-yar er sizhun-mañ ?  
How much was your chicken (worth) this week?
- 28 - Pegement e koust ar vegetenn ?  
How much is this baguette ?
- 29 - Ur sukrinenn azv (darev),mar plij.  
A ready-to-eat/ripe melon, please.
- 30 - Un hanter vegetenn a garfen kaout, posupl eo ?  
Is it possible to buy half a baguette ?\



## And for French and Breton Speakers who want to Learn English?

### Brit'Mag – Bringing People Together

The organization “Bringing People Together” has developed an immersion language learning experience for French (or other language speakers) who want to live within an English-speaking

household in Brittany. For the cost of 250 euros a weekend or 450 euros for a week, you can immerse yourself in the English language. There are an estimated 15,000 English-speaking households in Brittany – retirees and families who have moved to Brittany from the British Isles.

Supported by the Comité Régional du Tourisme, this initiative has at its origin Christine Prédery, the founder of the magazine Brit'Mag whose readers include not only English speakers living in Brittany but French speakers who use it as a learning tool.

To get an idea of this monthly magazine visit the website [www.brit-mag.com](http://www.brit-mag.com). You can get a flavor of the contents from the website and the editorial posted for the current issue (No. 32), but you will need to subscribe to get more information. Subscriptions for those living in Brittany/France are 25.90 euros. Overseas subscriptions are 48.90 euros.

### Central Brittany Journal

In August the 62<sup>nd</sup> issue of this colorful magazine was published. Like Brit'Mag, this is a magazine that helps English-speakers living in Brittany find resources and become better integrated into their new community. Central Brittany Journal is loaded with advertising to help one find everything from a plumber and dog groomer to the local teashop. There's a strong focus on gardening and nature, so there is always an article or two on local plants and animals, gardening tips, countryside to be explored, and menhirs to be found. Regular features usually also include a Celtic tale, notes on Breton history, business and computer tips, and a listing of events. While geared to English speakers living in Brittany this is also a magazine that would have an appeal (and usefulness) for tourists who might find it on a news stand. You can find out more about this colorful and interesting publication in Bro Nevez 100 (November 2006) or visit their website: [www.thebcj.com](http://www.thebcj.com).

### News from Diwan



The Diwan Breton language immersion schools have elected three presidents who will split up duties to focus on specific regions of Brittany as well as the oversight of finances, developing support for Diwan, pedagogy, and the growth of the secondary level. The new presidents are Serge Guégo, François-Gaël Rios, and Catherine Guérin.

Diwan currently has 45 school sites with 100 supporting organizations (parents and support committees) and 500 employees. They hope to open two new schools each year; two new preschools and



elementary school levels are slated to open in Riantec (Morbihan) and Savenay (Loire-Atlantique) this fall. This should bring the number of Diwan's students up from 3,076 to 3,200 in the coming year. This past spring 67 of 68 students at the secondary level succeeded in receiving their baccalaureate.

While Diwan continues to grow and the schools are very successful academically, finances continue to be the big challenge – especially since for its first five years of existence new schools must be fully funded by Diwan with no government support. U.S. ICDBL members and subscribers are encouraged to continue to support Diwan in sending a check directly to Diwan or to the U.S. ICDBL.

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## KENTEL 14 / LESSON 14

By Natalie Novik

### GERIADURIG / VOCABULARY

#### a) Collective plurals

We have seen in Lesson 12 how to form the plural with nouns, and it is useful to understand a little bit more about Breton culture by studying irregular plurals, and in particular what are called "collective" or "general" plurals. They stem from the fact we are dealing with a rural culture, where some things are seen more often as a whole than as individuals.

The form in which they are commonly used is a singular-looking form, but it actually is used to mean a plural. We do the same in English when we say in Alaska "the moose are out at dusk" (we don't mean one particular moose, we mean all the moose in general and the verb is plural, which does indicate it is actually a plural noun).

#### Some examples:

Kezeg	horses (any gender, any age)
Saout	cows (same thing, applies to bulls, cows, oxen, etc.)
Gwez	trees
Koumoul	clouds
Krampouezh	pancakes (Breton-style)
Stered	stars
Roz	roses
Per	pears
Sivi	strawberries
Kelou	news (exactly like in English)

#### b) Dual plurals

Many other languages around the world use duals, which usually concern anatomical parts that come in twos. The word for two in Breton is either daou (masculine) or diou (feminine), and then you add the anatomical part that comes in two. Beware, you need to know if the word is masculine or feminine to determine if daou or diou (sometimes abbreviated as di) will be used. And note that not all paired body parts come as duals (troad = foot, is usually used as treid, not daoudroad).

Daoulagad	a pair of eyes (from lagad = eye)
Divronn	a pair of breasts (from bronn = breast)
Daouarn	a pair of hands (from dorn = hand)

Now, you could ask yourself what happens with hands when the teacher asks the students to raise a hand: then the regular plural of dorn will be used = **dorniou**, but if a bank burglar screams "hands up", then he will use **daouarniou** (the little used plural of daouarn), because he wants all the bank employees to raise both hands! There aren't that many banks being held up in Breton these days, but it's always a useful tip...

### YEZADUR / GRAMMAR

#### Personal pronouns and adjectives

S1 (singular 1) corresponds to **I** in English, S2 to **thou**, S3m to **he**, S3f to **she**, P1 (plural 1) to **we**, P2 to **you** and P3 to **they**.

	Personal pronoun	Personal adjective (my, yours etc.)
S1	Me	Ma (or 'm)
S2	Te	Da (or 'z)
S3m	Eñ	E (or en)
S3f	Hi	He (or hec'h)
P1	Ni	Hon (or hor or hol)
P2	C'hwí	Ho (or hoc'h)
P3	I (or int)	O

The alternate forms of the personal adjective are dictated by the initial letter of the word that follows

- **hec'h and hoc'h** when the word starts with a vowel or the letter h;
- the **hon, hor and hol** forms correspond to what we have already seen with the definite article **an**, which becomes ar or al, depending on the word that follows;
- the **'m and 'z** forms are dictated by the prepositions that precede them (particularly da and e). This is a more complicated part that we will study in a further lesson.

For the time being, try to memorize not only the personal pronouns but also the corresponding personal adjectives. Find words that start with a vowel and see how you need to change the **he** and **ho** to reflect that fact. Practice the use of **hon** with words that start either with an r or with an l, to see how to change the ending of hon. Very often, it will flow all by itself. These rules seem complicated until you read the words aloud, and then you understand that the changes are simply the result of natural laziness: compare saying **hon levr** (our book) with saying **hol levr**, and you will see what I mean.



## A Pioneer in Regional Development: Joseph Martray (1914 to 2009)

At the age of 95 Joseph Martray passed away this June 1, and Brittany lost an ardent defender of Breton identity and culture. Throughout his life Martray worked to gain a more powerful role for Brittany in determining its own economic, social, and cultural development.

As a young journalist working for the prefecture in Saint Briec he helped found a Breton cultural center for that city with writer Louis Guilloux. As president of the *Union Folklorique de Bretagne* Martray was named as a representative to the *Conseil Consultatif de Bretagne* put into place in 1942 by the Prefect of Brittany Jean Quenette. He worked with several Breton newspapers supported by the Vichy government in the early 1940s. Unhappy with that government's treatment of Brittany and hostile to the collaboration with Germany of Breton separatists seeking independence for Brittany, Martray became active in the Resistance Movement, *Défense de France*, until the liberation of Brittany in 1944.

In the post-war period he continued his career as a journalist and as a promoter of Brittany's economic and cultural interests. In Paris he published the

newspaper *Vents d'Ouest* for the Breton community there. In 1947 until May 1949 he directed the monthly magazine, *Le Peuple Breton*, whose name would be given to the journal still published today by the Breton political party, *Union Démocratique de Bretagne*. Martray helped create the *Union des Fédéralistes de Bretagne* in the fall of 1947 and served as its secretary general for a year. In November 1949 he created a monthly magazine called *La Vie Bretonne* in preparation for the launching of the organization *CELIB (Comité d'étude et de liaisons des interest Bretons)*.

CELIB was founded on July 22, 1950, with Martray as a co-founder and he served as its secretary-general until 1967 and as a vice-president from 1967 until 1972. CELIB was a federation of Breton economic leaders and organizations to lobby for more regional based decision-making for Bretons in economic development and to develop plans for such development (see below). As the French government made its own plans for the regionalism, CELIB would lose clout but served as a powerful model for regional planning throughout France. Martray would be active in the late 1960s and 70s in a number of groups working on regional reform and economic initiatives: the *Mouvement national pour la décentralisation et la réforme régionale*, the *Commission de développement économique régional* (CODER), and the *Conseil Économique et Social*.

Joseph Martray had a strong interest in Brittany's role as a maritime country. In 1979 to 1981 he was the founder and served as president of the *Centre national de documentation et de recherche sur les pollutions marines*. In the 1980s and 90s he held a leadership position in the *Institut français de la mer* and directed their revue *Nouvelle revue maritime*. He remained active as a journalist throughout his life, regularly contributing to *Armor Magazine* since 1992.

While Joseph Martray is best remembered for his work to mobilize Bretons in the fight for decentralization and regionally based power for economic development, this certainly did not exclude militancy for the Breton language and culture. In a speech he made on receiving the Ordre National de Mérite in May 1997, he stated the following:

*"Brittany must also be a cultural model. She brings to Europe not only an opening on the sea, but also a style of life, a conception of man in natural communities, which carries with it the respect of all diversity, in drawing on Celtic values which are those of most ancient Europe. It's also a matter of keeping the languages which express these values – in particular our own, the Breton language, a patrimony for humanity."* (my translation, from "Joseph Martray, le fondateur du Célib" *Armor Magazine* 329, juin 1997).

Martray was also very active in promoting the idea of a European federation of peoples where these groups – and not just “nation-states” could determine their own destiny. He is credited with creating the *Union fédéraliste des communautés et régions européennes* in April 1948.

In recognition of all his work for Brittany, Joseph Martray was inducted into the Order of the Ermine in 1990.

### **A little More about CELIB**

The *Comité d'étude et de liaisons des intérêts Bretons* was created on July 22, 1950 by Joseph Martray with René Pleven and Joseph Halléguen. This committee worked primarily on economic development for Brittany (all five departments). It created development plans (industry, transportation, energy) and gathered support from Breton political leaders of all parties as well as unions, chambers of commerce, universities and cultural organizations of Brittany. While most of its proposals were not adopted by the French government this organization was key in providing a model for regional development and in provoking government plans for the decentralization of regional planning.

A few books:

CELIB, *Bretagne, une ambition nouvelle*. Presses Universitaires de Bretagne, 1971 (« Livre Blanc »)

Jean-Pierre Cressard. *Quand la Bretagne s'est réveillée, CELIB 1950-2000*. Coop Breizh 2000.

Joseph Martray, *20 ans dui transformèrent la Bretagne. L'épopée du CELIB 22 juillet 1950- 2 février 1969*. Editions France-Empire, 1983.

### **A little more on the Federalist Union of European Ethnic Communities**

2009 marks the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of this organization founded in April 1949 by Joseph Martray. Today there are 44 member organizations and 40 “observer members” from 13 different countries of Europe representing many more ethnic communities. From France you have Bretons, Flemish and Alsations. A number of groups represent minority peoples who are across a political border from a larger community – Germans in Denmark, Polish in Germany, etc.

The Federalist Union seeks a Europe of regions rather than “nation states” where peoples have more power to govern their own destiny. This organization was at the origin of the European Charter for Regional or

Minority Languages adopted and ratified by most of the member states of the Parliament of Europe (France has signed, but not ratified). Bretons have always been active in this organization. Joseph Martray was its secretary general from 1949 to 1952 and Pierre Lemoine served as vice president from 22 year and then president from 1986 to 1990. On the occasion of their 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary this organization will meet in Brussels on September 30<sup>th</sup> to October 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### **A New Initiative for the Protection of Brittany's Immaterial Cultural Patrimony**

*The following is my translation and summarization of information from the Dastum website where a Call is on line for cultural organizations and individuals working for the Breton culture to show support for the adoption of the UNESCO Convention on the protection of immaterial cultural patrimony. My apologies for any misinterpretation of the materials presented by Dastum. – Lois Kuter*

In 2006 France ratified the Convention for the Protection of Immaterial Cultural Patrimony adopted by UNESCO in 2003. Aware of the new perspectives opened by this convention, Dastum (the Breton archives for oral traditions) and the IRP (Institut régional du patrimoine) organized a gathering in Rennes in December 2008 – called *Rencontres du Patrimoine culturel immatériel de Bretagne*. This gathering drew over 200 people and benefited from the support of numerous governmental, scholarly, and cultural leaders of Brittany. Following these meetings a working group was formed, piloted by Dastum, and now all the organizations and people who are working for the immaterial cultural patrimony of Brittany are asked to sign a common appeal for the recognition of this patrimony. The text of this appeal as well as other background information can be found on the Dastum website: [www.dastum.net](http://www.dastum.net).

Two days to present this initiative are scheduled for organizations and individuals active in promoting Breton culture. The first will be in Quimper on September 19<sup>th</sup> (at the Centre du Patrimoine oral de Cornouaille-Dastum Bro Genre at Ti ar Vro). The second will be in Ploërmel on October 30. The Call and the collected signatures will be presented to Breton elected officials on a day in December yet to be scheduled.

This Call takes up the principles outlined in the UNESCO Convention, calling for the recognition of immaterial cultural patrimony and the implementation of the UNESCO Convention in political action on the part of elected officials of Brittany (all five departments). The Call is also a text where those



signing on become partners in public policy and in defending patrimonial values, whether they are material or immaterial. These actors will also create working groups to determine elements of Breton patrimony to be identified for UNESCO.

Themes which can be used to define the immaterial culture of Brittany include oral traditions and expressions, including the languages which support them, performance arts, social practices, festive and ritual occasions, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the world around one, and knowledge related to traditional arts and crafts – all supported by a community.

For Brittany one can identify patrimonies of song, storytelling, dance, musical instruments, play and sport, festivals and rituals, traditions related to coastal and inland waterways, artisan and industrial “savoir-faire,” knowledge about the countryside, and knowledge of healing...

### **A Brittany which is Singular and Plural**

The second half of the twentieth century marked the last stage in the transformation of a civilization of oral tradition in Brittany where the rural and maritime worlds were preponderant. At the same time an urban civilization was asserting itself. Faced with this inversion, Bretons undertook a number of initiatives – some of which were copied on a national level and in other countries. Let us cite the most striking on structural levels:

- The creation of CELIB during the 1950s to promote economic, social and cultural development of Brittany - grouping in one body elected officials, representatives from businesses, and associations for the defense of the Breton language and culture.
- Putting to work the dynamic of “pays” in the 1970s where territorial solidarities were created and allowed for Breton society to adapt to contemporary growth opportunities.
- The Cultural Charter signed by Breton elected officials with the State (France) in 1977, and the “tools” that followed which favored the support and spread of Breton culture in all its forms. In particular this gave a new place to the Breton language (Diwan in 1978 and the Ofis ar Brezhoneg since 1999, etc.) and enhanced recognition for Gallo (recognized as one of two languages of Brittany since 2004 by the Region of Brittany).

At the same time Brittany succeeded in keeping a large part of its traditional and popular patrimony alive

by creating and developing new means of transmission and meaning adapted to modern times and carrying strong social values:

- The invention of new contexts allowed a place in everyday life to be given to festive musical practices, collective and community expression, nourished by the oral traditions, such as the modern fest-noz (since 1955), and then local radio programming and café-cabarets, and most recently countryside walks, oral jousts, and meals where singing is featured.
- New practices in dance and Breton music (Celtic Circles, Bagads, musical ensembles ...) have sustained the growth of large festivals for traditional and popular musics (Fêtes de Cornouaille, Inter-Celtic Festival of Lorient, Carrefour de la Gallésie...).
- The creation of the first federations for dance and music (Kendalc’h, War’l leur, Bodadeg ar Sonerion ...) in the 1950s.
- The revitalization of traditional games and sports of many types was launched in the inter-war years and has been pursued since the 1970s with a new dynamic for their transmission.
- Brittany created the first eco-museum in France was found in Ouessant in 1968.
- Founded in 1972, Dastum was the first organized center for sound archives accessible to the general public in France devoted to conserve and encourage the diffusion of oral and musical patrimony of a region.
- The emergence of a concept of maritime patrimony and culture – especially through the construction of (full scale, working) replicas of traditional boats. This is at the base of the creation of the first large maritime festivals (Brest, Douarnenez...).

These expressions, driving innovation and creation, have generated a real cultural economy especially in the areas of associations, creative arts, research and teaching, tourism and publishing.

For more detailed information, check out the Dastum website: [www.dastum.net](http://www.dastum.net)

# Book Review: Anatole Le Braz and America

Lois Kuter

**George Le Moël. *Anatole Le Braz et l'Amérique*.** Published by Georges le Moël ([georges.lemoel@orange.fr](mailto:georges.lemoel@orange.fr)), 2008. 235 pages. ISBN 2.9513165.

For English language readers Anatole Le Braz (1859-1926) is one of the best known of Breton writers – a collector of Breton tales and lore, a poet and writer – whose more popular works were translated into English as well as other languages. His book *La Légende de la Mort en Basse-Bretagne*, published in 1893, has been reedited a number of times and remains a classic. Thanks to his English friend Frances Gostling, *Au Pays des pardons*, first published in 1894, became well known to English language readers as *The Land of Pardons* (first published in 1906 and reedited a number of times).

Anatole Le Braz was a gifted and much-sought after speaker who traveled to give lectures in England, Ireland, Wales and Switzerland. In this new book, George Le Moël focuses on the numerous trips Le Braz took to the U.S. (and Canada) as a speaker for the Alliance Française which was founded in 1863 to support the French language overseas through schools and activities such as the speaker tours Le Braz would take to numerous chapters of this organization in the U.S.

Le Braz took seven trips to the U.S. starting in 1906 – each lasting months at a time and loaded with engagements for Alliance Française meetings, evening banquets, or at universities. His first trip in 1906 started at Harvard University. During his second trip in December 1906 he met with President Theodore Roosevelt. The third trip was in October 1910 and the fourth in early 1912. His fifth trip was in 1915, the sixth in 1917, and the seventh in 1920. One wonders given the length and intensity of these speaking tours how he ever had time to write the many books and articles he produced.

The travel was not just to the big cities of the east coast. Besides New York, Boston, Philadelphia and Washington D.C., Le Braz traveled to Quebec and Montreal in Canada, Falls River (MA), Providence (RI), New Haven (CT), Pittsburgh (PA), Baltimore (MD), Chicago (IL), New Orleans (LA), Detroit (MI), Cleveland and Cincinnati (OH), Minneapolis (MN), Milwaukee (WI), Buffalo and Albany (NY), San Francisco, Los Angeles and Berkeley (CA) – to name many, but not all cities where he spoke.

His lectures were in French on a number of topics – most linked in some way to Brittany. Some titles were: “Brittany and its literature,” “Aspirations of the young French generation,” “Chateaubriand and Brittany,” “Brittany, its literature, its language,” “Women in French literature,” “The role of Brittany in the history of the French nation and Celtic tradition in the French spirit,” “Victor Hugo, national poet” ...

In this book Le Moël takes us with Le Braz on his trips to America and the periods in between back in Brittany and in France where he gave talks on his impressions of America. Through excerpts from letters to and from Le Braz as well as his journals, one gets a feel for this period in history. Although Le Braz is wine and dined by American high society, university presidents, diplomats and the well-off, he sees the grittier side to America of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century – including injustices to Native Americans and the often brutal segregation of African Americans.

Through the pages of this book one is introduced to Le Braz's family, his American friends and the many movers and shakers in the Breton literary and art world of the period. His family history is not without tragedy. Born in 1859, Le Braz loses his mother when he is 10. In 1901 he loses his father and mother-in-law, four sisters, two brothers and a nephew in a shipwreck. In 1916 his only son is killed in the war (he has two daughters Reine-Anne and Maggie who marry in 1913 & 14). It is during his first trip to America in 1906 that Anatole Le Braz loses his first wife Augustine-Jeanne Donzelot who had brought three boys to the household from a previous marriage. Anatole Le Braz would remarry an American, Henrietta Spencer Porter, in November 1915 only to lose her in April 1919. In 1921 Anatole Le Braz remarries with another American, Mary Lucinda Davison, who would die in 1936, ten years after the death of Anatole Le Braz in 1926. During his travels to and from America, Le Braz is also saddened by the death of two beloved Breton women from whom he collected tales – Marc'harit Fulup (1837-1909) and Liz Bellec (1829-1911). He would also mourn the loss in 1918 of a fellow writer and collector of tales, American Ange Mosher, who he met on both sides of the Atlantic (see the article which follows).

Anatole Le Braz was a fluent speaker of Breton, having grown up in rural areas where this was the language of everyday life, and he spoke out in its defense. He wrote very little in Breton and in embracing the mission of the Alliance Française, he clearly loved the French language and France itself. While he considered himself first and foremost a Breton and Celt, Le Braz was an ardent French patriot. With its strong focus on the World War I period of Le Braz's travels to America, this book gives a very interesting perspective on this period. Through Le

Braz's letters and those he receives from others, you feel his frustration as the war of the trenches declared in 1914 and its massive loss of life (including his son) grinds on and America remains neutral. Le Braz attributes this in part to the strong presence of people of German (and Italian) origin in the U.S. as well as the strong Irish-American population who might not be quick to support the English allies of France in their war with Germany. He sees hostility to the war among Americans first-hand. He records his joy in being present in the Congress session in Washington on April 2, 1917, when President Woodrow Wilson announces the entry of the U.S. into the war. Le Braz would speak up to defend the honor of France as newspapers spoke of the need of American assistance to a weak and bleeding France – a description he found deeply insulting. The war would come to an end in 1918. Le Braz would take his last trip to the U.S. in 1920 to teach at Columbia University. He would die at the age of 67 in 1926.

While one can get a bit lost in the maze of names and dates presented in this book, an appended chart of key dates and family genealogy are very helpful in keeping on track. Some fifty photos of Le Braz, family and friends and documents help to bring the people presented in the book to life. This is a passionate work on an important figure in Breton history, and this book is a great companion piece to the book by Yann-Ber Piriou *Au-delà de la légende – Anatole Le Braz* (Terre de Brume, 1999 – see *Bro Nevez* 73, February 200, for a review). Piriou's book, which is also rich in excerpts from journals and letters, gives a broader overview of Le Braz as a writer and looks at his engagement (and lack of it) in Breton cultural and political action. Le Moël's focus on Le Braz and his American connections provides yet more details and a different interpretation of Le Braz and his influence on the world around him.

On a sad note ... This past April 2009, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Anatole Le Braz's birth (April 2, 1859) was celebrated by the Amis d'Anatole Le Braz, of which the author George Le Moël is president. On this date a ceremony was held at the Statue of Le Braz in St. Brieuc followed by a conference. Anatole Le Braz's granddaughter Laure Weymouth (daughter of Reine-Anne Le Braz and Ambroise Bouchage) attended. Born in 1920 in Port-Blanc in the Côtes d'Armor, Laure married American Admiral Ralph Weymouth and they lived in New Hampshire where they had eight children (Yann, Reine-Anne, Martina, Danielle, Lani, Létitia, Laura and Loric). The couple moved back to Laure's birthplace in Brittany three years ago. Laure Weymouth was delighted to be a part of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary, but suddenly fell ill at the ceremony this past April and died several hours later at the age of 89.

## Anatole Le Braz, Ange Mosher, and Marc'harit Fulup

The following is excerpted from the Introduction written by Anatole Le Braz February 15, 1920, to the 1920 edition of *The Spell of Brittany* by Ange M. Mosher.

It is two years now since Mrs. Ange M. Mosher has passed away, but there is not one of her many friends in whose memory she has not remained actively present, as an example and a vital principle; for her whole existence, it may be said, has been a magnificent homage to the value and beauty of life.

As for myself, I consider it a unique privilege to have known her. A short time before her death, she recalled to my mind the circumstances through which I first made her acquaintance, about twenty years ago.

The Union régionaliste bretonne, which dreamed then of creating, in our Armorican Brittany, national demonstrations analogous to those of the Welsh Eisteddfod, had chosen that year, for the place of their meeting, the little town of Guingamp. I went there from my home by the sea, upon one of those beautiful September days which, in this extreme western country of France, have such sweet, luminous charm – days already touched with the languor of autumn.

The afternoon meetings, to which the public was invited, were held in a kind of barn, improvised for the occasion into an assembly hall. The decorations were rather ordinary; at the end of the room a platform had been made of rough boards to take the place, as well as possible, of a stage. A large number of spectators in true Breton fashion, that is to say, with a democratic spirit, were crowding one another on the plain wooden benches borrowed from some neighboring inn.

As I pushed my way into the room, the audience was listening spellbound to a peasant singer whom, by her voice and manner, above all by the umbrella pressed tight under her arm as an indispensable attribute to her person, I recognized from the doorway as my old friend, Marc'harit Phulup ...

I was not long in noticing before me, near the front row of seats, the exquisitely beautiful face of a woman; it was evident that she was somewhat advanced in years, but below the waves of her silvery, white hair she had a look of unfading, youth-ful freshness. The black lace mantilla around her head, the long floating cape of black silk that descended from her shoulders to her feet, in fact her whole appearance, indicated that she was a stranger. She was small of stature, and age had visibly rounded her form, but a glance was sufficient to be attracted by her supreme air of refinement and distinction. This

foreigner, of whatever nationality, was undoubtedly a notable-looking personage. I asked the poet, Le Goffic, by whose side I was sitting, who this lady could be.

"I know nothing about her," he said, "except that she is an American, and this morning, at the hotel, she expressed a desire to be allowed to follow the exercises of our reunion.:"

She followed them apparently with the deepest interest. Her clear blue eyes, shining with excitement and enthusiasm, did not leave the fact of Marc'harit Phulup for one instant... Unable to follow the sense of her words, which were in the Breton language, she nevertheless imbibed, so to speak, with her attentive ears, the peculiar accents of the Celtic melody to which the uncultivated voice of the ballad-singer lent a primitive, almost wild character which was the more confusing.

When Marc'harit had finished, Mrs. Mosher, not content with mere applause, wished to shake hands with her. This was the moment that Le Goffic introduced me. I was then far from foreseeing the role that America would play in my life; like many of my compatriots, I had very vague ideas about it, and they were, for the most part, erroneous. America seemed a long way off, and neither did I have for me that mysterious attraction that distance often lends; I thought that I should never have the opportunity of going there, and I did not even have the desire to do so; in short, America remained beyond my moral as well as my physical horizon; and now, behold it was suddenly revealed to me through one of its most charming incarnations! ...

We passed the rest of the day together; and when I took leave of her, at the approach of the evening, we had the conviction when we parted, that the words exchanged during these short hours had woven between us a woof of affection strong and durable, that neither the passage of time, nor even death itself could ever break,

The subject of our conversation may be easily divined. What else could it be if not about the Brittany we both loved so well? From one thing to another, Mrs. Mosher told how, and at what critical turn in her life she had, according to her own expression, "The un hoped-for happiness of discovering Brittany." ...

Mrs. Mosher married young, and soon became a widow; she was left with three daughters upon whom she lavished her whole affection, which she esteemed the chief duty of her life. But, as the children become older, their wings begin to grow; the time arrives when they aspire to fly; so, one sad day, Mrs. Mosher found herself upon the edge an empty nest. ... "Free now to live for myself, after having lived so long for others,"

she said, "I began to wonder, not without some anxiety, what would be the best usage I could make of my freedom ...

"My eldest daughter was then studying art in Paris. I joined her there one summer, and we were both asked to pay a visit to one of her friends, a young American, an artist like herself, whose parents had rented for the season the Château de la Grand' Cour, near Dinan. You must remember that I was ignorant, then, of Celtic Brittany even to its name. ... One evening, as I was searching among the books in the library of the old Château for something to take to my room to read, my hand, by one of those providential chances, fell upon a large volume of which the size was really too important for my inclination, but its worn binding tempted me ... This book was: La Bretagne by Pitre Chevallier. A superannuated work, perhaps, but it breathed a passionate love for the Breton-land, its ancient race, history, manners, customs and traditions."

Mrs. Mosher read and re-read this book until she had well digested its contents. From this time forth, her great desire was to know the country described in the book; it haunted her continually, until she, at last, took up her staff, one day, and began to make most ardent pilgrimages through Brittany. Rarely did two consecutive summers pass without her appearance there. At regular intervals, the most humble, isolated, lost villages of Armorica saw alight from a public carriage or hired wagonette and to install herself in some little hotel of the place, a gentlewoman with a long black silk mantle, who, it was said, had come from a foreign land. But she soon ceased to be a stranger to the Breton-folk; she was so kind to everybody, and so anxious to win all hearts; as for her own, the Bretons had conquered it the very first day ...

... "Yes," it pleased her to say, "I have literally given myself to Brittany; and how graciously and delicately has Brittany welcomed the gift of myself to her! You know how many times I have gone through the country year after year, discovering a little more each time, and consequently loving it more and more! ... I wanted to know all about the Breton people and Breton things; but, with all that, nobody took it amiss; nobody grew angry; on the contrary, it always stirred up a rivalry among them as to who could give the most information, and be the first to make it known. These men and women of the people instinctively felt that, if I were eager to know the detailed history of their past and present, it was not through the idle curiosity of a mere tourist, but through the inspiration of a more noble desire to penetrate deeply into their souls so as to make them more intimately mine. Ah! What marvelous spiritual riches they have permitted me to accumulate in that way! How can I ever repay them! They have given me a hundred-fold more than I have

ever given them; but the one to whom I owe the most, the human creature who has disseminated the most poetry and novelty into my life is, as you may divine, Marguerite Philippe – old Mac'harit ...”

Marc'harit Phulup! How can I describe her in a few lines! Try to bring before your mind a poor Breton peasant with one arm maimed. She had less than ordinary intelligence, was completely lacking in education, not knowing how either to read or write, but for that very reason, perhaps, gifted with a wonderful memory. It was sufficient to sing a song before her only once, and she would retain both the air and the words. Now in Brittany they sing a great deal; during the day, in the open air in the fields; in the evening, around the fireside at the farms; and, as Marc'harit was incapable of working – that is, of using her hands to work – she earned her living, moving about from place to place, making pilgrimages from chapel to chapel for the sick who had need of the intercession of some saint to cure them (*un saint-guérisseur*) who was supposed to cure this or that malady. The occasions were not wanting, as she fulfilled her various missions to these chapels, to increase her repertoire of ballads. And so she finally arrived at the point of storing up in her memory a prodigious number of *gwerziou* and *soniou* (the two types of poetry the most common and popular among the Breton-folk). She boasted of being able to sing unceasingly for three months without repeating a single song. Perhaps she may have exaggerated a little; but it is nevertheless quite true that she had a great genius for singing these ballads - the spirit of the song dwelt within her soul. \*

I have already related under what circumstances Mrs. Mosher heard her the first time at Guingamp. That same evening, she asked Marc'harit to go to the hotel and dine with her, and afterwards to sing for her alone in her room. From that moment, a strong, touching friendship sprang up between the poor peasant woman of Trégor and the American lady; in one of them it took the form of simple adoration, in which, however, there was no feeling of servility; in the other a complex sentiment – a mingling of protective tenderness and sincere admiration with a deep sense of gratitude ...

... During the bloody struggle of the late World War, and even up to the hour of her death, which came, alas! before she [Mrs. Mosher] could rejoice at the dawn of peace, her heart was always with her Bretons. Constantly, she followed them in thought; on land, on sea, wherever their duty to France called them – their duty to the world; wherever they fought and fell for the salvation of the civilization of the soul, for which the Celts have ever been the true champions.

It chanced that I was sent on a mission to the United States in the latter part of the year 1917; and, at the beginning of 1918, I had the opportunity of staying several weeks in New York. Mrs. Mosher was then living with her daughter, Mrs. Wood.

“Come as often as you have a moment to spare,” she said; and I arranged to go to see her nearly every afternoon; she was then eighty years old. Did she have a presentiment then that the conversations of this winter would be the last that we would ever have together? I had, at all events, the impression that she purposely filled them with questions and confidences, as if to leave me as much as possible of herself, and to gain as much as she could from my presence. There was a secret solemnity about these hours passed together, and in spite of ourselves our words took a tone so grave that the effects of them were prolonged mysteriously, long after we had separated. Oh! Those talks on Park Avenue – those talks so full of deep feeling that I had with the most intelligent and hospitable of friends! They will be present to my mind as long as I live.

I usually found Mrs. Mosher knitting socks for the soldiers; when I left New York she was knitting the three hundred and twenty-sixth pair. Of course it was natural that the first subject we discussed was the war; then, by some sudden break in the conversation we escaped into the past. Mrs. Mosher took me back with her over the years of her life ... She told me of the liberal education she had received in her native town of Warsaw; how she rode horseback; how she learned to shoot in company with four or five brothers; how, under the guidance of her father, one of the judges of the country, she became fond of nature, music and books ...

One day in February, as I crossed the threshold of her door, she handed me a copy of the North American Review, in which she had just read a touching incident about a young Breton of Ile et Vilaine, by the name of Louis Malivet, then convalescing in the American Hospital at Neuilly, after having a leg and arm cut off. The nurse, who had him in charge, did not have enough words to express her praise of his resignation, his serenity, his gentleness, the unique quality of his “Breton smile.”

“I want to do something for Louis Malivet,” she said.

And she immediately began a correspondence with him in order to find out in what way she could be the most useful. He did not have extravagant wishes, this poor mutilated soldier of the war! His whole ambition, once out of the hospital, was to have the means of taking up his primary studies (we had forced to leave them when he was thirteen years old to go and work in the field) and to prepare for his examinations as a teacher. Needless to say that Mrs. Mosher raised the



necessary money, and now, over there, at Ile et Vilaine, in Brittany, there is a school-master who blesses her memory. When he wrote to thank her, she replied: "The only thing that I ask for in return, is to teach your pupils to love Brittany."

... It was on Wednesday, February 13, 1918, that I had, with my good friend, the conversation which was never to be followed by another. I left for Cincinnati in order to rejoin my wife, to whom Mrs. Mosher loved to apply these lines of Browning: "A spirit, a fire, a dew."

Upon the point of leaving behind me the apartment on Park Avenue a strange melancholy seized my heart.

...

\* Editor's Note: An article in a recent issue of *Musique Bretonne* (No. 214, May-June 2009) describes the notebook Marc'harit Fulup kept which lists 259 song titles (noted down at her request by someone else). It is estimated that just half of these songs can be found in printed song collections or in the oral tradition of Brittany today, while half have probably been lost forever with her death in 1909.



## Other New Books from Brittany

**Salvador Rodriguez. *Galice-Bretagne: D'un Finistère à l'Autre – Entretiens avec Carlos Núñez*.** Adapted from Galicien by Elisabeth Laconjarriat-Cléran. Yoran Embanner. 2009. 158 pages. ISBN 978-2-916579-20-7).

First published in the Galicien language in 2003 (*Entre Fisterras, Conversas con Carlos Núñez*), this translation into French will be welcomed by the many fans this master of the Galician bagpipe, the gaita, has gained in Brittany since he first appeared at the InterCeltic Festival of Lorient in 1984. The book will also be of interest to those who have followed the transformation of Breton, Galician and Celtic music during the past 25 years. You will meet many well-known musicians of the Celtic world and you will be introduced to poets, writers, pipers and intellectuals in the Galician cultural movement you probably never heard of before.

This is a book about Carlos Núñez and his inter-Celtic travels and influences (they have been mutual), and especially about the relationship between Galicia and Brittany. You finish this book having learned a little about the many complexities of Celtic and Galician identity. You may be a little frustrated, but you are definitely tantalized by all that is left to be said on these topics. You definitely feel like you have personally met Carlos Núñez. The book succeeds

nicely in capturing a bit of his personality and passions. Brittany is definitely one of those passions.

The preface to the book by its translator, Elisabeth Laconjarriat-Cléran, provides a very brief but useful introduction to Galicia, and some of that is worth repeating here, since many American readers of Bro Nevez may be unfamiliar with this Celtic land. Galicia is situated just to the north of Portugal and to the west of Asturias and Léon in Spain. Like Brittany, Galicia is at the "end of the earth" (Fisterras/Finistère/Pen ar Bed), sticking out into the Atlantic Ocean. With three million people, a land area of 30,000 square kilometers and 1,200 kilometers of coastline, Galicia has been an autonomous community of Spain since 1981. It has four provinces which bear the name of their principal cities: A Coruña, Lugo, Ourense, and Pontevedra. Santiago de Compostela – well known for the pilgrimage of Saint James – is the capital and Vigo is the largest city. You learn in this preface that the city with the most Galician inhabitants is Buenos Aires and the cemetery where you can find the most Galicians is found in Havana, Cuba. While people of Galicia speak Castilian Spanish, they also speak Gallego which is co-official and taught in the schools. This language is closest to the Portuguese spoken in Brazil.

In his opening conversations with the author Salvador Rodriguez, Carlos Núñez speaks of his family – especially his father who was active in creating the twinning of Vigo and Lorient in 1983 and who introduced him to Breton music. There also an interesting discussion in the opening chapter of the different flavors of inter-Celtic festivals in the Celtic countries and the sometimes difficult introduction of Galicia (and Asturias) into these in the late 1970s and 80s. And, Carlos Núñez speaks about his first trip to Brittany in 1981 at the age of 13.

A great number of people and topics are woven into the conversations in this book, and some familiarity with the Breton music scene and Celtic traditions is helpful in reading between some lines. Núñez talks about his meeting with Gilles Servat and his interest in Breton druids and oral traditions. Galicians and Bretons share some beliefs and lore – like the dangerous washerwomen of the night, and omens of death and the presence of the dead among the living. Núñez discusses the Galician versions of Arthurian tales and the fascination dating back to the 19<sup>th</sup> century with Celtic elements of Galician culture, the Galician version of the Saint Branden story, and the affinity of Jules Verne for Galicia and other Celtic countries for settings in his books.

You get a good sense of the Breton and Celtic musicians who have influenced Núñez and who have been influenced by him as well – his studies in Ploermel with Breton pipers Patrick Molard and Jean-

Luc Le Moign, concert tours with the Chieftans, conversations with Polig Monjarret (who had been in contact with Galicians as early as the 1950s, bringing Breton pipers to perform in Galicia in the 1970s). You learn that Núñez drank his first glass of Guinness at his first fest noz in Brittany. And you see how his participation with Dan ar Braz in the Héritage des Celtes opened up encounters with many of the greatest musicians of the Celtic world. ... and Núñez himself is in this pantheon of the “best of.”

The book is also very interesting in its discussion of the Breton bagad and various formations of bagpipe (gaita) ensembles in Galicia, and the creation of music schools for traditional music, arts and culture. Conversations about Galician pipers and scholars of Galician tradition give insight into the history of Galician piping and challenges to the transmission of this music. Núñez shares his philosophy on music teaching, performance and artistry, and the research of Galician traditions.

The book closes in evoking the Breton-Galician maritime heritage and environmental threats such as the 2002 oil spill of the Prestige on the coast of Galicia – a disaster Bretons and other Celts have experienced with numerous wrecks of oil tankers off their coasts over the years.

Anyone who has enjoyed the music of Carlos Núñez will find this a very interesting read with its insight into his thinking about music, Brittany, and the Celtic world more broadly. For those who might want to explore Núñez’s attachment to Brittany beyond words, his 2003 CD *Un Galicien en Bretagne* is highly recommended. For more information about this artist, check out his website [www.carlosnunez.com](http://www.carlosnunez.com).



## New Music From Brittany

***Telenn – l’Anthologie de la harpe. Vol. 2.***  
Coop Breizh CD 976.

Reviewed by Natalie Novik

The long-awaited volume 2 of Celtic Harp Anthology by the Coop Breizh finally came out as announced in the previous issue of Bro Nevez, and as Lois Kuter pointed out, it includes more young talents than the previous one. I have some reservations however, and I would say that, compared to volume 1, this one is uneven.

There are some outstanding moments, like Soazig Muller making the most of a “Stivell” harp by Camac, a truly resounding instrument with fabulous bass strings.

Another very rewarding example is with Mathilde Walpoel, whose impeccable technique, remindful of the Scottish “Sileas” harpists, compliments warm and sensuous vocals.

But, unfortunately, some of the greatest names in the Breton harp world are not at their very best in this CD, and you wonder who decided on the choice of pieces. What is very interesting in this CD is the second disk, featuring contemporary compositions for the Celtic harp. Atonal or dissonant compositions prevail, and when they are played in the upper range of the harp, they might not be as pleasant as they could be on a pedal harp where the vibration of the string lasts longer. My understanding also with this Anthology is that we are talking here about the Celtic harp, so I expect more Celtic inspiration on the part of the chosen composers. In this regard, “Fulenn e zud” by Pierre Nicolas, interpreted with brilliance by Soazig Chouinard is probably the best of the selection, slightly reminiscent of Didier Squiban’s works, mixing jazz and traditional Breton tunes.

It would appear that Coop Breizh considers these two volumes as final when it comes to the Celtic harp in Brittany. This would be a pity, since Alan Stivell and his teacher, Denise Megevand, are not featured in the collection, when both of them are behind the revival of the harp of Brittany. Megevand, with her style, compositions and her obstinate pursuit of an instrument that was considered as doomed even before World War II, was seen as the “Grande Dame” of the Celtic harp. And I don’t need to go over Stivell and his genius in making the harp a symbol of Brittany’s cultural renaissance, and inspiring a whole generation of young harpists to follow his lead.

The second “post-Stivell” generation is with us now, and I would like to pay a tribute to the man who can be credited with two generations of enthusiasts, Joel Garnier, the founder of Camac harps, a Breton company manufacturing some of the most popular Celtic harps in the world. In the 70’s, Joel noticed the investment problem facing harp students who did not want to start with a small lap harp, but with a real instrument. He devised a leasing system which enabled teachers to rent or lease the harps, and in no time, his company found itself at the center of a cultural explosion, the return of the Celtic harp in Brittany. He devised very innovative harps, and his successors continue this tradition today. With few exceptions, the harps played on this CD and the previous one are Camac harps, the company being also one of the sponsors of the Anthology.



**Gwennyn. *Mammen / Matrice*.** Keltia Musique  
RSCD 292. 43'08. [www.gwennyn.com](http://www.gwennyn.com)

Gwennyn is of a younger generation of Breton language singers – and song text composers – who give one hope that there is indeed a bright future for the Breton language. And this is a CD that would certainly inspire one to work harder to master the Breton language. Nine of the eleven songs on this CD are in the Breton language – seven composed by Gwennyn and the other two by poets Maodez Glanndour and Naig Rozmor. Two texts in English composed by Gwennyn are also included.

The music is composed by Gwennyn with Patrice Marzin who is also the producer/studio engineer as well as performer on guitar, mandolin, bass and keyboard. Other musicians are Patrick Boileau on drums, Philippe Turbin on keyboard, Jacques Moreau with percussion, Pierre Bloch on fiddle (who also co-arranged one of the songs), Mikael Gozien on bagpipes and Youenn Manchec on flute and bass clarinet. Jean-Charles and Fred Guichen are guest artists on accordion and guitar for four selections. The music and instrumental mix is as varied as the mood of the songs and complement Gwennyn's voice perfectly.

As well as being a gifted poet, Gwennyn has a great voice – at times bluesy, at others ethereal or soaring, and always highly expressive. Soulful. The texts are not simple ballads with a clear storyline, but poetry full of imagery – sometimes joyful, plaintive, and mysterious – requiring a careful listen and use of one's imagination. "Mammen" (matrix) opens the CD with a rock beat and text evoking Breton goddesses, sacred sites, Avalon and mysticism. "We can plinn" also has a strong rhythm which morphs into a quite recognizable beat for the dance plinn towards its end. As is the case with other songs, this one expresses a mix of hope and an inevitable forward movement.

As translated in the jacket notes:

We can plinn  
He had a dream  
Of a free people  
The wheat rises silently from the soil.  
The world's wheel turns  
Harvesting, participating  
In Humanity's great forward march  
Believe we can  
The struggle goes on.

"Ene tan" (Soul of Fire) evokes a forward march in what I interpret as an anti-war song about the blind trooping of soldiers to the battlefield with the blessing of God and Allah. "Gololai" is a lament of a woman alone and veiled in misery ... with perhaps some

dreams to unveil. Of a more hopeful tone is the "Cyber fest noz" celebrating the celebration one only finds at a fest-noz. And indeed, the cyber fest-noz is a world event celebrated in Saint Malo, Bamako, Chicago and Tokyo, as the song text suggests. "Kenavo/Salut" is also set to a joyful beat and in the spirit of Jack Kerouac (perhaps?) celebrates the freedom of hitting the road for adventure and love. "A Galon/DeCoeur" has a soaring melody in celebration of love:

I've traveled the ocean wide  
Along the wild coast to the Pointe du Raz  
My heart and soul wrenched back and forth  
By the push and pull of love  
At one  
And my heart with you.

The two songs composed and sung in English by Gwennyn involve a mix of hope with a tinge of doubt thrown in. In "The Child and the tree" a mother helps her child to climb high in a tree to explore freedom. "We are here" is a philosophical reflection on the passing of time and the fulfillment of dreams in the future.

The poem by Maodez Glanndour (1909-1986), "An Enved" (the birds), is set just to guitar and is plaintive in tone – fitting to the dark text:

Nothing sang, nothing survived, only the North  
Wind blew  
The mean wind, the bitter wind  
And at the hands of the howling ice giant  
A thousand birds met their death.

The poem by Naig Rozmor, "Daouarn ma zad" (My father's hands) is also simply set to piano – a soaring anthem to the memory of a peasant father with his rough, but gentle hands – "Worker's hands, cracked and craggy, as the fissured earth."

The CD notes provide all the song texts with French translation and short English excerpts (drawn from in this review). The pages are colorful, but the print – especially for the French translations – is sometimes so tiny as to be unreadable. And, at least in my notes, the print quality for white letters on a black or dark background is poor enough to make the effort very frustrating. A small complaint.

In both the eloquence of the song texts and their enhancement in creative musical arrangements this is a CD that is very welcome to my collection.



## Heard of, but not heard

The following short notes on new recordings from Brittany are drawn from notes and reviews in the following publications: *Ar Men* 171 (July-August 2009), *Armor* 473 (June 2009) & 274/275 (July-August 2009), *Musique Bretonne* 215 (July-August 2009) and the *Coop Breizh* website.

**Ampouailh. *Fest-noz ar gêr wenn*.** Coop Breizh. This is the first CD by this fest-noz band rooted primarily in central Brittany. They perform all over Brittany, and this CD reflects the variety of dances and melodies in their repertoire – suite plinn, rond de Saint-Vincent, kost ar c'hoat, laride, suite gavotte, polka, circle circassien.

**Bagad Bro Kemperlé. *Da bep lec'h*.** VOC 1252 One of the oldest bagads of Brittany celebrates its 60<sup>th</sup> birthday in 2009. This CD includes recordings of suites from bagad competitions from 2003 to 2008 in Brest and Lorient with a nice mix of traditional dances and airs as well as original compositions.

**Bagad Landi. *50 ans! Hanter Kant Vloaz*.** Coop Breizh. This is the third CD by this bagad from Landivisiau which celebrates a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It includes suites from bagad competitions and concerts as well as a few performances in combination with organ or the groups Gwelloc'h and Forzh Penaos.

**Ciapolino-Conq. *En concert*.** Coop Breizh CD UTTN 01.

Arnaud Ciapolino on flute pairs with Roland Conq on guitar with arrangements of traditional Breton as well as Scottish and Irish music. These accomplished musicians have played in pair for seven years, but this is their first CD.

**Comptines et berceuses de Bretagne.** Comptines du Monde No. 9. Didier Jeunesse, 2009. CD & 58-page booklet. This collection was co-produced with Dastum and is the ninth in a series of books/CDs of children's "songs" - sayings, lullabies, dandling songs, counting games, and other expressions. Rather than "field recordings," the songs here are reinterpreted in a new way by the singers. On this CD you'll hear Eugénie Duval, Annie Ebrel and Yann Fañch Kemener among others. Most are in the Breton language but the Gallo tradition is also featured. There are 28 selections on the CD which is accompanied by a very colorfully illustrated booklet with the texts.

**Fred Ka. *Fred Ka et le couer d'Agokonie – Terre sacrée – le reggae en Bretagne*.** Mass Production. Fred Ka is a musician based in Rennes originally from Burundi. He performs with musicians from Brittany and Burkina Fasso in a reggae style with various other influences – jazz, blues, funk and Afro beat. He uses traditional African instruments as well as guitar and electric bass for this CD with the subtitle "Reggae in Brittany."

**Régis Huiban Quartet. 1732.** Coop Breizh.

Accordion player Régis Huiban builds an interesting CD around the ballad of Louis Le Ravellec which recounts in remarkable historical accuracy a murder committed in 1732 (sung here by Gildas Le Buhé). This is a carefully crafted CD where Huiban's accordion improvisations and the Orchestre de Jazz de Bretagne are not at all out of sync with the performance of a centuries-old gwerz.

**Gwenaél Kerleo. *Pevar*.** Kerleo Gwenaél. CD & DVD. Singer and Harpist Gwenaél Kerleo performs in various combinations with six musicians (accordion, fiddle, clarinet, uilleann pipes, guitar and percussion).

**Myrdhin. *D'île en île - Odyssée d'une harpe celtique*.** BNC Productions.

Inspired by islands ranging from Skye and the Aran Islands of Scotland, to Bréhat (Brittany), La Réunion, and Java, Myrdhin brings a mix of the world's musical flavors to his always-innovative performances.

**Pascal Lamour. *Avais-je rêvé?*** BNC Production. CD & DVD 1018.

This ninth recording by Pascal Lamour is a mix of rock, blues, kan ha diskant, electronic sound systems and traditional Breton dance rhythms. Lamour – himself a singer, musician and composer – has a talent for mixing a variety of styles. Here he engages Louise Ebrel, Nolwen Korbell, André Le Meut, Mourad Aït, Abdelmalek, Iwan Calvez, Marcel Jaffré, Jo Le Sergent and the Bagad Lokoal Mendon in the « electro-traditional Breizh » mix. CD notes include texts to all the songs and the DVD includes an interview with Lamour and his performance "Kornig an Diaoul."

**Merzhin Moon Orchestra. *Merzhin Moon Orchestra*.** Adrenaline Productions.

Six members of the fest-noz band Merzhin with brass players from the salsa band De La Luna and a young virtuoso button accordion give this CD a "Latino-western" flavor with Breton roots. Sounds pretty interesting.

**Ar Vreudeur Morvan. *Un demi-siècle de kan ha diskant*.** Coop Breizh CD 1016.

The Morvan brothers are famous kan ha diskant singers in Brittany and if you want to learn how to dance (fisel, plinn or gavotte, especially) they will give you impeccable rhythm that makes it easy. Most selections on this double-CD are drawn from their past fifty years of performance but there are some selections not found on previous CDs – slower songs as well as kan ha diskant. And one can hear a gwerz sung by their mother Augustine Morvan from whom they inherited much of their repertoire.

**Plantec. *Plantec Live*.** DVD & CD. Créon Music. This is a fest-noz band of six with a live performance from the Yaouank Festival in Rennes. This is the fourth recording by this very popular group featuring Breton dance.

**Raggalendo. *Le Fricot*.** Rapedondaine Productions. CD RAG 02.

This is a mix of rap, hip-hop and more traditional Breton rhythms from four young cousins of the Goëlo area of Brittany whose song texts express contemporary life of Brittany. These young ladies dress in a striking combination

of colors, costumes and coiffes evoking the combination of old and new found also in their musical style.

**Red Cardell. *La fête au village*.** Keltia Musique KMCD 510.

This Breton rock band mixes in Celtic, Balkan and Spanish sounds for their latest CD which includes lots of guest artists – Dan ar Braz, Jim O'Neill, Fred and Jean-Charles Guichen, Louise Ebrel, Farid Aït Siameur and Sasha Stazhnykd.

***Rock e Breizh – 30 ans de rock chanté en breton.*** Mass Production.

This is a CD presenting 30 years of rock music sung in the Breton language. While singers of rock music in Breton are far outnumbered by those who sing in French, this is by no means a rare medium for great Breton language texts. Groups and singers featured on the CD include: Georges Jouin, Storlok, Brieg Guerveno Groupe, EV, Dom Duff, Daonet, Gimol Dru Band, Tri Bleiz Die, Plantec, Bernez Tangi, Kristen Nikolas, Club Hoggard, Fiskal Bazar, Lik ha Lik, Melmor, Les Ramoneurs de Menhirs, Trouz an Noz, Anken, Nolwenn Korbell, Gweltaz Adeux, and Denez Abernot.

**Didier Squiban. *L'Estran*.** L'OZ Production L'OZ 55. Squiban is a pianist who combines a jazz sound with Breton melodies and dances. He works here with a new jazz ensemble called "Breizh Connection." He has produced a number of fine recordings inspired by Brittany's islands, coasts, and the sea.

**Bernez Tangi. *Lapous an tan*.** Tarv Ruz TRO2 Bernez Tangi is a Breton language poet who was part of the groundbreaking band Storlok in the late 1970s. He has continued to write and perform uniquely in the Breton language. Here are 14 of his texts set to music with a blues-rock beat as well as the free style of a traditional Breton gwerz. Tangi has a unique voice and style, and his poetry is always evocative and provocative.

**Tribuil. *Le temps d'un bal*.** Tribuil Association/Coop Breizh. This is a fest noz band of four with a variety of dances and two marches from the Pontivy and Ploermel areas. Singer Marie-Hélène Conan joins them for this CD.

**Wig a Wag. *Ni zo*.** WAW Production. This CD is described as "world, folk and rock, Breton, French or Creole." Vocals are by Loïc Chavigny and Morgan Ji (from Reunion Island) with instruments including flute, accordion and bombarde in the mix.



## DEEP INSIDE A BRETON SKULL 23 – Blood and wine and dance for you, Sun

Jean Pierre Le Mat

Somebody said "God invented alcohol to prevent the Bretons from becoming masters of the world". I don't know if it is true; it cannot be proved. Anyway, the story of the relations between the Bretons and alcoholic beverages is a very long one.

One of the most ancient songs of the Barzaz Breiz, which could have been composed fifteen centuries ago, is called *Gwin ar C'hallaoued*, the wine of the Gauls. It relates the autumnal Breton raids against the nearby areas of the Loire Valley. According to the chronicler Gregory of Tours, the Bretons went to war, not only with weapons, but also with chariots and agricultural devices. They grabbed the wine when they found it and drank a lot on the spot. Otherwise, they picked the grapes to make the wine themselves, at home.

Gwell eo gwin gwenn bar  
Na mouar  
Gwell eo gwin gwen bar.  
Tan! Tan! Dir! Oh! Dir! Tan! Tan! Dir ha tan!  
Tann! Tann! Tir ha tonn! Tir ha tir ha tann !

Gwell eo gwin ar Gall  
Nag aval  
Gwell eo gwin ar Gall.  
Tan! Tan! ...

Gwin a goad a red  
Enn gefred  
Gwin ha goad a red.  
Tan! Tan ! ...

Goad ha gwin eviz  
Er gwall vriz  
Goad ha gwin eviz  
Tan! Tan! ...

Goad gwin ha korol  
D'id, Heol  
Goad gwin ha korol  
Tan! Tan! ...

The white wine from grape is better  
Than liquor of blackberry  
The white wine from grape is better  
Fire! Fire! Oh! Iron! Fire! Fire! Iron and fire!  
Oak! Oak! Earth and wave! Earth and earth and oak!



The wine of the Gauls is better  
Than apple  
The wine of Gauls is better.  
Fire! Fire! ...

Wine and blood are spread  
Together  
Wine and blood are spread  
Fire! Fire! ...

I drank blood and wine  
In the fierce fight  
I drank blood and wine  
Fire! Fire! ...

Blood and wine and dance  
For you, Sun  
Blood wine and dance  
Fire! Fire! ...

This savage song of our ancestors cannot be ours nowadays. Nevertheless, it shows the link between the obscure forces of nature and the bright forces of Heaven through the wine. The link between blood and wine and son of God is also present in the New Testament. Our Breton Christianity is not a negation, but a ramification of our old Celtic paganism.



There were grapes in Brittany long ago. Plants have been discovered, not far from Dinan, that could be the grandfather of the Merlot vine. Nowadays, the Breton wines are restricted to the Nantes area. The white wines are the best known: Muscadet and Gros-Plant, with their mineral flavours and their iodized touch.

There are also red wines, Gamay and Pinot noir. The first grapes of Pinot noir grown in Brittany were offered during the XVth century to the duke of Brittany by the duke of Burgundy.

Actually, until the XXth century, the Bretons were not considered as more addicted to alcohol than the other Europeans. They are described, not as heavy drinkers, but as people having a provisional but regular alcoholic behaviour, linked with religious celebrations or local festivities.

According to statistics, the quantity of wine and alcohol drunk by the Bretons increased during the first half of the last century, and particularly after the first

world war. Suicide, which was very scarce before, increased also. The level of suicide had been the lowest percentage among the French regions. At the end of the century, it was the highest.

Several explanations were given to that phenomenon. The denial of Breton identity and of our language, i.e. our means of expression by the Third French Republic (1870-1940), inclined the Bretons to feel hatred for themselves. Suicide and addictions are, everywhere in the world, symptoms of such situations.

Others say that there is in Brittany a matriarchal society. That is due to old Celtic social traditions and also to the fact that the men were not at home, sailing on the five oceans. The women had to organize by themselves. Once back, the men had nothing to do except boozing among themselves.

Psychoanalysts support the idea that two or three generations of Breton males were not able to have a solid image of the father, due to the death of sailors at sea, and heavy losses during the first World War. The percentage of Breton soldiers killed during this war is between 22% and 25% of the local conscripts; the French average is 16% and the Parisian average is between 10% and 12%. These losses of young men unbalanced the social life and created a negative image of manhood, composed of absence and death.

I don't know if these explanations are true or false. Old books told us that the first drunkenness of the child was organized by male parents. It was organized by the locals, as a rite of passage for the young Breton. After that, he was allowed to wear pants.

According to recent statistics, the alcoholic behaviour of the young Bretons is still more festive than in other parts of France or Europe. Is that part of our culture? In the big Breton festivals, like Vieilles Charrues or Interceltic festival of Lorient, the link between the contemplation of pop idols and alcohol is obvious among the young people. Wine and Dance for you, Sun! Old behaviours are coming back, without – fortunately – the attraction for blood and fighting.

Of course, it is difficult to justify such behaviours. In our times, a religion of individual health and wealth took the place of the old creeds. Alcoholic behaviour, festive or not, sacred or not, is considered as an evil.

Why is alcohol such an evil nowadays? Addiction, of course. Lack of self-esteem, probably. Maybe also the absence of the father. Maybe old matriarchal traditions. But I feel there is in Brittany something else. Something like an ancient song, a song celebrating the link between the terrestrial forces living in man or in nature and the celestial divinities.

A song far away from health or wealth anxiety.

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