

BRO NEVEZ

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE DEFENSE OF THE BRETON LANGUAGE
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KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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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.

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

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From the Editor:



This design on the cover is for a sign to welcome tourists (and others) to the town of Carhaix that was proposed by this town in 2006, only to be censored by the Prefect of Finistère. The figure to the left is perhaps a depiction of Sebastien ar Balp, leader of the Bonnets Rouge. Or it could be any other resident of the Carhaix area active in this rebellion. Ar Balp was the troubling image for the Prefecture.

Also rebellious is the image of a rock guitarist on the right who is part of the annual Festival des Vieilles Charrues which attracts tens of thousands of music lovers to Carhaix each summer. This festival features international stars but also musicians of Brittany and serves to show that Brittany is both rooted in tradition but open to world musics of all styles. The old half-timber house can still be found in Brittany and many other cities and towns, and the Roman urn in the center of the image refers to the important role Carhaix played as a transportation crossroads during Roman occupation.

Old and new, rebellious or not, Bretons are proud of their history and regret that children do not have the chance to learn much of it in the schools. And it seems that tourists are not welcomed to learn much either!

See the article by Jean-Pierre Le Mat later in this issue to learn a bit about the Bonnets Rouges and Sebastian Ar Balp.

Lois Kuter



Legal Protection for the Breton Language?

It appears that France continues to try to "talk the talk" but not "walk any walk" when it comes to support for the Breton language and other languages within its borders. In this case the talk isn't even encouraging as the Minister of Culture, Frédéric

Mitterrand, noted in an interview while visiting the *Festival du Chant Marin* in Paimpol that there is no need for an official statute to recognize regional languages and that France is already doing a lot to support regional languages. This is a reversal of his position taken just in June when he announced he would support a law to give recognition to regional languages. He seems to be proposing now that each language be studied individually to see where there are needs, and to do a sort of “triage” to care for those closest to extinction. The Minister of Education, Luc Chatel shares the view that there is no need for a law since the schools already allow for parents and children to enroll in a bilingual program.

Bretons would disagree that the regional languages do not need a legal statute to protect them, and they definitely disagree that France is already doing enough to support the Breton language. On the occasion of the Minister’s visit to a harp concert during the Inter-Celtic Festival of Lorient on his tour in Brittany this August, he was met by a very quickly organized protest to his remarks that legal protection for regional languages is unnecessary. His response was that the newspapers were not reporting his views correctly ... hmm.

Brittany Loses a Life-Long Defender of the Breton Language

Per Denez

February 3, 1921 to July 30, 2011

Lois Kuter



Per Denez at the Ceremony for the Order of the Ermine in 1989

Per Denez was born in 1921 in Rennes, a city in eastern Brittany where the Breton language did not have roots and was not spoken by many. Per Denez (Pierre Denis) became fascinated with this language of his country at the age of 13 and started to learn it on his own through the correspondence course Skol Ober. During a

serious illness from the age of 18 to 24 he devoted his time to the study of Breton literature and to writing poetry and translations of works – from Shakespeare to Edgar Allan Poe – into Breton.

He began studies of English in 1945 at the University of Rennes and spent a year at King’s College of the University of Aberdeen in Scotland, before being employed as an English teacher in Quimper. For his pro-Breton sympathies and association with Breton language writers like Roparz Hemon during the World War II period, he was exiled to southwestern France for a short period before returning to a teaching post in Douarnenez. He would remain there for twenty years and meet his wife, Morwena Steven, a native Breton speaker who assisted him in his research of the Breton of the Douarnenez area. These studies would be the subject of a doctoral thesis completed in 1978 and a dictionary of the Breton of Douarnenez published in 1980.

In 1968 Per Denez was appointed to a university post at the University of Rennes where he would become the director of the Section of Celtic Studies. He worked diligently and successfully to expand the place of Breton studies and to implement State degrees that would empower students to find teaching posts – the Licence in 1981, the CAPES for Breton in 1983, and the DEUG in 1989. He would retire in 1990.

Per Denez was active in a number of organizations outside of the university, often in leadership roles. In the early 1970s he was an active member of CELIB and helped negotiate the Charte Culturelle de Bretagne (1978-82) which would bring resources to support the work of key cultural organizations in Brittany. He was an active member of the Cultural Institute of Brittany (Skol Uhel ar Vro) since its founding in 1982. He served as the president of the Institute’s *Conseil scientifique et d’animation*. He served a President of the Cultural Council of Brittany from 1983-1997. Always interested in inter-Celtic relations, Per Denez was also active with the International Celtic Congress.

Per Denez helped to found the journal *Ar Vro* (in 1957) and Breton language journals *Kened* (which would become part of *Al Liamm* in 1949), *Hor Yezh* (with Arzel Even in 1954), and *Skrid* in 1974. In 1980 he founded the Breton language publishing house Mouladurioù Hor Yezh with Tereza Desbordes. He served for a number of years as the president of Kuzul ar Brezhoneg, a federation of Breton language organizations – primarily publishers.

Per Denez was the author of the very widely used Breton learning method *Brezhoneg Buan hag Aes* in 1972, which would be adapted into English, German and Welsh. The English version by R. Delaporte, published by Cork University Press in 1977, remains one of the few texts available for English speakers.

While a great deal of his time was spent working with others in the Breton movement to promote the Breton language and culture, Per Denez was able to produce a body of short stories, poetry and novels to enrich a growing body of modern Breton literature.

For his lifetime of work for Brittany, Per Denez was inducted into Brittany's Order of the Ermine in 1989. He was elected Breton of the Year by *Armor Magazine* in 1981. His scholarship and contribution to the defense of minority languages and cultures was also recognized by several prestigious awards elsewhere. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by the University of Wales and the National University of Ireland. He received the Cross of San Jordi by the Generalitat de Catalogne in 1993 as well as the International Ramon Llull prize in 1990.

In 1999 a 740-page "festschrift" for Per Denez was published with contributions from a wide range of scholars whom he had influenced and inspired during his career. This volume reflects the wide interests of this influential Breton writer:

Breizh ha pobloù Europa / Bretagne et peuples d'Europe - Pennadoù en enor da Per Denez / Mélanges en l'honneur de Per Denez (Hor Yezh / Klask, 1999)

Works by Per Denez (not complete)

Brezhoneg Buan hag Aes (Paris, Omnivox, 1972)
Komzit ha Skrivit Brezhoneg (Paris Omnivox, 1973)
Brezhoneg Bemdez (Paris, Omnivox, 1977)

Étude structurale d'un parler breton : Douarnenez. 3 volumes. Doctoral thesis (Rennes, Université de Rennes, 1977)

Diougan Gwenc'hlan (Brest, Al Liamm, 1979)

Glas eve daoulagad c'hlas na oant ket ma re (Brest, Al Liamm, 1980)

Geriadur brezhoneg Douarnenez / Dictionnaire du breton parlé à Douarnenez (Lesneven, Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 4 volumes, 1980, 1981, 1985)

Hiroc'h eo an amzer eget ar vuhez (Lesneven, Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1981)

Evit an eil gwech (Lesneven, Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1982)

Mont war-raok gant ar brezhoneg (Lesneven, Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1987)

Eus an amzer 'zo bet (Lesneven, Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1991)

En tu all d'an douar ha d'an neñv (Lesneven, Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1993)

Kenavo ar c'hentañ er joaioù (Lesneven, Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1994)

An Amzer a ra e dro (Lesneven, Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1995)

Da rouz an noz (Lesneven, Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1998)

Brittany – A Language in search of a future (Brussels, European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages, 1998)

Yezh ha bro, Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1998) – essays on a variety of topics of an autobiographical nature.

A Few More Personal Reflections

I began a long correspondence with Per Denez in 1975. I introduced myself and asked for information on Breton language classes I could take during a summer stay to explore the feasibility of doing a doctoral dissertation on Breton identity and music. I received a long letter referring me to the important work of Dastum and pointing out some learning materials and the possibility of taking a summer course at the University of Rennes. I also received warm encouragement on my ideas for a dissertation topic.

I ended up enrolling in the Rennes "crash course" for Breton (the first held) for a week of intensive Breton learning – made all the more intensive since I was staying in a dorm with some of the teachers and tagged along for some evening bar visits and breakfast coffee – all in Breton, *evel just*.

I would continue my correspondence with Per Denez upon return from my summer stay in Brittany to share my thoughts on the crash course (too short, but a good start). I would also send Per Denez news clippings from American newspapers on French government promises to address Breton concerns. Empty promises, I thought, and Per responded: "As you rightly guess, the French government does not fall heels over head in their haste to give us something – even some very little thing. The struggle goes on. Nothing can stop it now."

Our correspondence would continue on and off – always in English – since I failed to keep up much study of Breton despite the best of intentions. I would return to Brittany in the fall of 1978 to pursue my

doctoral research on Breton identity and its expression in music and language. I met Per only very briefly during the year-long stay in Brittany, but kept him informed of my dissertation plans once I returned to Indiana University. He was always very encouraging and even offered to serve on my dissertation jury! Impossible, but how nice that would have been since my Anthropology Department professors had very little knowledge of European minority language issues and a lukewarm interest in my dissertation topic.

I would continue correspondence with Per and keep him informed of the progress of the newly created U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language which had its birth in Bloomington, Indiana, while I was fishing up my dissertation in 1980. Per would send me names of American and English speakers he and other Bretons had met or knew of who might be prospects for membership. We continued to exchange letters and news – particularly concerning the fight to get a Breton Licence, CAPES and DEUG in the 1980s. The U.S. ICDBL would help circulate a petition here to collect over 900 signatures in support of the CAPES.

Despite his very busy schedule, Per would send long letters with news clippings. His letters were always full of praise for the work of the U.S. ICDBL and our newsletter, *Bro Nevez*. His letters would include news of his activities, struggle with health which sometimes sent him to spend a winter in the south of France, and he would often speak of the need to lay down some of his many leadership roles in Breton organizations so that he could spend more time writing. One of his last longer notes to me dates from July 2006 in which he wrote: "I am trying to write as much as I can. I feel my memory getting poor. And I want more than anything [to] keep alive the memory of those non-famous people who worked noiselessly, courageously, every day, for our country!"

Like many Bretons who have invested an enormous amount of time and energy in the defense and promotion of the Breton language, Per Denez would become frustrated with the road blocks set up by the French government. He would also be the victim of attacks from those who were determined to vilify the memory of Roparz Hemon and anyone associated with this important Breton scholar and writer. But, Per Denez was an optimistic person who kindly and patiently encouraged others to do their best to support the Breton language. He was acutely aware of the lessons to be learned from history, but was most interested in the future. And he inspired others to work for the creation of a future where the Breton language could thrive and serve to express peoples' hopes, joy, and creativity.



Introducing Four New Members of Brittany's Order of the Ermine

Lois Kuter

The Order of the Ermine was first created by Duke Jean IV in 1381 and is one of the oldest chivalric orders of Europe. It stood out in its day in its inclusion of women and commoners. It was revived in 1972 by CELIB (Comité d'Étude et de Liaison des Intérêts Bretons). In 1988 it was made truly active by the Cultural Institute of Brittany (Skol Uhel ar Vro) which has added new inductees annually.

Each year four, and sometimes five, individuals are recognized for their life-long contributions to Brittany. This can be support for Breton culture and language, or social justice, or economic development. In all cases it represents a continued responsibility for service to Brittany rather than the culmination of a lifetime of work. This year the ceremony was held in July during the Festival de Cournouaille in Quimper.

The following biographies are from Skol Uhel ar Vro which hosts the Ceremony and maintains information about the Order of the Ermine on its website www.culture-bretagne.org. You can also find videos presenting some of members of the Order of the Ermine on this site – including these four newest.

For the biographies below I have retained the Breton tests and added my English translations (of the French). My apologies for any misinformation based on poor translation – I was a bit at a loss for legal and business terminologies.

Andrea AR GOUILH



Andrea AR GOUILH en
he bugaleaj, ha pa oa
krennardez muioc'h
c'hoazh, rak e Pluguen,
koulz en ti hag en iliz, e
pep degouezh e veze
kanet, er pardonioù, en
eureujoù hag all...

N'he deus ket bet morse
kanerez a vicher.
Stummet eo bet evit ober
war-dro bugale yaouank,
bugale skolioù-mamm :
«Jardinière d'enfants

spécialisée» eo bet he micher. Er bloavezh 1955 he
deus heuliet gouelioù ar «Bleun-brug» ha kemeret
perzh er c'henstrivadegoù aozet gantañ. Gounezet

he deus teir gwech da heul ar priz kentañ : e 1956, 57,58.

Er bloavezh 1958 eo aet da Baris e-pad daou vloaz studi. Talvoudus-tre eo bet ar mare-se eviti dre an darempredoù : ezel deus ar J.E.B. (Jeunesse Etudiante Bretonne) e oa hag ivez deus kelc'h keltiek «Jabadao». Aze he deus dijoloet ar «Barzaz Breiz» ha kanaouennoù hengounel Bro Wened gant tud ampart evel Donatien Laurent, Yvon Palamour, Gwenole ar Menn ... Kejet he deus ivez gant George Cochevelou, tad Alan Stivel, hag en deus goulennet ganti kanañ, heuliet war an delenn gant e vab. Ur bloaz warlec'h e teue er-maez ar pladennoù kentañ ti «Mouezh Breizh».

Abaoe ar prantad-se he deus kanet, e Breizh hag e meur a vro, gwerzioù ar «Barzaz Breiz» evel just, met ivez kanaouennoù all skrivet gant Roparz Hemon, Abeozen, Pêr-Jakez Helias, war sonerezh Jeff ar Penven pe Polig Monjaret. Kan a ra ivez Glenmor ha Youenn Gwernig.

Kanet he deus e bro Japon e 1976, met dreistholl e broioù keltiek : Iwerzhon (Celtavision e Killarney), Kembre, Skos, e kendalc'hioù keltiek, hag ivez e bro Suis, Alamagn, Austria, Tchekia, hag er bloavezh 2007 e Kyzyl, kerbenn Republik Touva e Siberia. Evit ar wech he deus kanet

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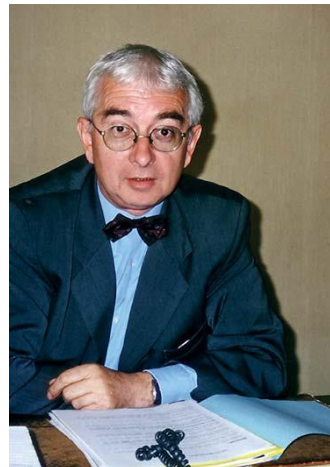
Andrea Ar Gouilh was already singing when she was a child in Pluguffan, and sang even more as a teen, as much in the house as at church and at every occasion like pardons or weddings, etc.

She was never a professional singer. She studied to become a caretaker for young children, children in pre-schools; she was a "Jardinière d'enfants spécialisée." In 1955 she went to the Bleun-Brug festivals and participated in [song] contests that were organized as part of those. She won the first prize three years in a row: in 1956, 1957 and 1958.

In 1958 she went to Paris for two years of studies. This was a very fruitful time for her in terms of the contacts she was able to make. She was in fact a member of the J.E.B. (Jeunesse Etudiante Bretonne) and the Celtic Circle "Jabadao." She discovered the *Barzaz Breiz* and traditional songs of the Vannetais region thanks to people like Donatien Laurent, Yvon Palamour, Gwenole ar Menn ... She also met George Cochevelou, the father of Alan Stivel, who asked her to sing with the accompaniment of his son on harp. A year later the first records on "Mouezh Breizh" would appear.

Since this time she has sung in Brittany and other countries – the *gwerzioù* (ballads) of the *Barzaz Breiz* of course, but also other songs written by Roparz Hemon, Abeozen, and Pierre-Jakez Hélias to music composed by Jef Le Penven or Polig Monjaret. She has also interpreted Glenmor and Youenn Gwernig.

She sang in Japan in 1976, but especially in the Celtic countries: in Ireland (for the Celtavision in Killarney), Wales, Scotland, and at the Celtic Congresses. She has also sang in Switzerland, Germany, Austria, Czechoslovakia, and in 2007 in Kyzyl, the capital of the Republic of Touva in Siberia.



Yann CHOUCQ

1946 e Naoned, naonedad ha kargiad e zad, gerveuriad ha mestrez-skol e vamm. E Naoned ez a d'ar skol kentañ derez, e Talence, adskol al lise G. Guist'hau. Eus 1955 da 1960 eo harluet da vro ar Waskoned el ec'h ma zizolo an okitaneg, graet « patois » anezhañ, hag er memes

tro e vreizhadelezh dre bouezh-mouezh disheñvel e gamaladed vihan.

Kenderc'hel a ra e harlu e rannvro Pariz etre 1960 ha 1976. Heuliañ a ra e studioù e lise Lakanal e Sceaux ha tapout a ra e vachelouriezh e prederouriezh. Dizoloiñ a ra ar stourmerezhezh vreizhat a drugarez da vBernard Audic. Kemer a ra perzh e krouidigezh kelc'h keltiek Sceaux « Da Virviken ». Kenderc'hel a ra e studioù Gwir e Pariz en ur kemer perzh, er memes mare, er strollad Sav Breizh. E 1969 e krou Skoazell Vreizh gant Gwenc'hlan Le Scouezec, Xavier Grall ha gant sikour Erwan Vallerie, Per Roy hag un nebeud tud all, goude un toullad stourmerien bezañ bet serret. Kejañ a ra an dro-mañ gant Henri Leclerc a zo e gefridi difenn anezho. Touiñ a ra e le d'an 8 a viz Kerzu 1971 ha dont a ra breutaer e Pariz. Serret eo adarre stourmerien Breizh e miz C'hwevrer 1972 ha mont a ra e-barzh kuzulva Henri Leclerc evit ober war-dro an teuliad en e gichen. E miz Here 1972 emañ e touez ar vreutaerien a zifenn stourmerien Breizh dirak Lez Surentez ar Stad, hag etre 1972 ha 1975 stourmerien Euskadi ha Katalonia oc'h emgann a-enep renad Franco. Kas a ra da benn ivez kefridioù e Amerika Latin dindan urzh Kevread Etrebroadel Gwirioù Mab-den.

Adalek 1976 e teu da vezañ breutaer e Naoned ha ne ro paouez ebet ken da zifenn stourmerien Breizh war an dachenn gastizel, kaset maz'int da Lez Surentez ar Stad ha goude Lez-Asizoù Ispisial Pariz ha Lezioùkastiz e Breizh. Ezel eo e 1980 eus Kuzul urzh ar vreutaerien e Naoned. Kastizet eo ar memes bloaz gant Lez-varn Kemper evit bezañ merket dezhi ne oa ket bet kaset dezhi unan nemetken eus ar vanifesterien a-enep kreizenn nukleel Plougoñ serret an deiz-mañ, homañ o vezañ neskarn unan eus pennvarnerien al lez-varn. Nullañ a ra lezvarn galv Roazhon ar c'hastiz goude harz-labour hollek ar vreutaerien. Kouezhañ a ra an disoc'h e 1982 gant adreizh le ar vreutaerien ha berzhañ ar varnerien ouzh en em emellout e kastizañ ouzh ar vreutaerien.

E 1982 e kemer perzh e krouidigezh al luskad politikel Emgann. Etre 1982 ha 1994 e tifenn stourmerien Euskadi an Norzh. Dont a ra e 1986 da vezañ merour Kreizenn Stummañ ar Vreutaerien eus Lez-galv Roazhon evit strollad breutaerien Naoned. Kemer a ra perzh e 1986 e kentañ Kendalc'h ar Broadoù hep Stad en Europa, ha kenderc'hel a ra betek hiriv.

Kenlabourat a ra ingal gant ar CIEMEN (Centre Internacional Escarré per a les minories ètniques i les nacions) e Barcelona en e labour meizata ha brudañ gwirioù ar pobloù hag ar sevenadurioù. E 1993 ha 1994 eo ezel eus burev broadel Sindikat Breutaerien Frañs. Eus 1998 da 2000 eo prezidant CRFPA Roazhon (Centre Régional de Formation Professionnelle des Avocats). Kemer a ra perzh e 2007 ha 2008 el luskad a-enep an adreizh evit tennañ al Liger-Atlantel eus kartenn lezvarnel Lez Roazhon. E miz C'hwevrer 2011 e kemer perzh e-barzh Egorenn Gwirioù Stroll ar Pobloù e Forum Sokial ar Bed e Dakar.



Yann Choucq was born April 11, 1946. His father was a businessman from Nantes and his mother a teacher from Belle-Isle. It was in that city that he went to primary school at Talence, an annex to the G. Guist'hau high school. From 1955 to 1960 he was exiled in Gascony where he discovered the Occitan language, called "patois," and at the same time he discovered his Bretonness through the difference in accent he had from his little classmates.

The exilement continued from 1960 to 1976 in the Paris region. He did secondary studies in the Lakanal high school in Sceaux and got a baccalaureate in philosophy. Thanks to Bernard Audic, he discovered Breton militancy. He participated in the founding of the Celtic Circle of Sceaux "Da Virviken." He pursued law studies in Paris while participating simultaneously in the group Sav Breizh. In 1969, with Gwenc'hlan Le

Scouezec, Xavier Grall and the close help of Erwan Vallerie, Per Roy, and others, he participated in the creation of Skoazell Vreizh following a wave of arrests of militants in Brittany. On this occasion he met Henri Leclerc who would take charge of their legal defense. On December 8, 1971 he took his vows and became a lawyer at the Bar of Paris. A new wave of arrests took place in Brittany in February 1972, and he entered the firm of Henri Leclerc to follow the dossier with him. In October 1972 he participated in the defense of Breton militants before the Cour de Sûreté de l'État, then, between 1972 and 1975, that of Basque and Catalan militants in armed conflict against the Franco regime. He also undertook missions in Latin America under the mandate of the International Federation for Human Rights.

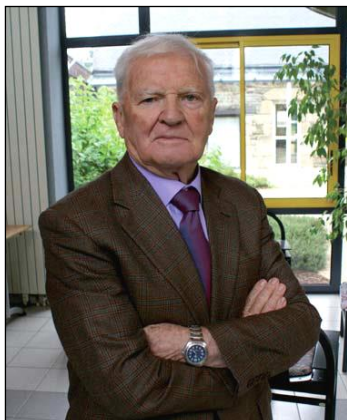
From 1976 on, the year he entered the legal Bar in Nantes, he never ceased in his legal defense for Breton militants pursued for their action by the Cour de Sûreté de l'Etat and then by the Cour d'Assises Spéciale de Paris and the Tribunaux Correctionnels de Bretagne. In 1980 he became a member of the Conseil de l'Ordre des Avocats of the Bar of Nantes. This same year he was sanctioned for a flagrant offence of the court by the Tribunal of Quimper for remarking in court that the only demonstrator against the nuclear plant in Plogoff arrested that day who had not been charged was a close relative of the Magistrate of the prosecutors office. The Court of Appeals of Rennes annulled the sanction after a general strike of the lawyers. This led in 1982 to a reform of the lawyer's oath and the prohibition of judges to meddle in disciplinary pursuits against lawyers.

In 1982 he participated in the founding of the political movement Emgann. From 1982 to 1994 he defended militants from the northern Basque country. In 1986 he became an administrator for the Bar of Nantes at the Center for Professional Training of Lawyers for the Court of Appeals of Rennes. In 1986 he participated in the first conference of Stateless Nations of Europe, and continues that participation to this day.

He has continuously collaborated with CIEMEN (Centre Internacional Escarré per a les minories ètniques i les nacions) in Barcelona in work to conceptualize and promote the rights of peoples and cultures. In 1993 and 1994 he was a member of the Bureau National du Syndicat des Avocats de France. From 1998 to 2000, he was president of CRFPA (Centre Régional de Formation Professionnelle des Avocats) in Rennes. In 2007 and 2008 he participated in the movement against the reform of the judicial map which sought to remove Loire-Atlantique from the Court of Rennes. In February

2011 he took part in the Espace des Droits Collectifs des Peuples at the Forum Social Mondial in Dakar.

Joseph LE BIHAN



Ganet eo bet Joseph AR BIHAN d'an 12 a viz Meurzh 1930, tudigoù a oa e dud marteze met troet davet ar skol hag ar studioù. Krog e oa da zeskiñ ar galleg pa oa 7 bloaz en ur vont d'ar skol kentañ derez e Lokarn.

Kendalc'het en deus gant e studioù eil

derez er skolioù katolik ha lik. Gant skoazell un « diasporafamilh bihan » en deus kaset da benn studioù skol veur e Roazhon ha dreist-holl e Pariz, e Ensavadur ar Studioù Politikel (rann etrevroadel), e Skol Pleustrek ar Studioù Uhel (6 vet rann istor) hag erfi n en Ensavadur ar Stadegoù (ISUP).

Krog eo e red vicher o labourat en EBEL (Ensavadur Broadel evit an Enklask el Labour-Douar – rann Armerzh). Rener krouer an arnodva evit an enklak diawel staliet e Massy gant ur c'hant kenlabourer bennak eus 1965 da 1973. E-pad ar prantad-se en deus kaset de benn meur a gefridi en estrenn-vro, evel arbennigour stag ouzh Kummuniezh Europa, an OCDE, ar FAO ha gouarnamant Hungaria e 1962 zoken !

E 1973 e cheñch red e vicher. Goude ur c'helc'hiad stummadurioù er Rand (USA), ez a tre Skol ar Studioù Kenwerzh Uhel (HEC), evel kelenner e framm program MBA an ISA, ha da c'houde evel kelenner kenurzhier evit ur stummadur arbenik war an etrevroadel evit ijinourien an aferioù. Eus 1975 da 1990, en deus kemeret perzh e stummadur tro 200 skoliad ur skiant-prenet micherel ganto dija, un drederenn anezho o tont eus an estrenvro (Sina, Korea, Israel, Maroko, Kanada peur-vuiañ).

E karg ivez eus kelennoù an difenn armerzhel en SSK –ISA e framm ur gevrat gant SSDB (Skol-Uhel Studioù an Difenn Broadel), Joseph a zo bet e-pad pemp bloaz Kenurzhier Europat evit labourioù an National strategic information Center e framm Skolveur Georgetown (Washington) o plediñ gant "Kelc'h Argos evit ar c'helaouiñ etrevroadel" arc'hantaouet gant embregerezhioù meur Europa. War ar memes tro, ez eo bet karget eus stummañ an danvez frammidi treuzkaset e framm ar K S R E (Kreizenn Stummañ ar Renerien Embregerezhioù) e

Jouy-en-Josas war diazezoù ar sevenadur etrevroadel.

Bet eo bet ivez rener enklaskoù e Skol-Veur Paris IX Dauphine, skol-veuriekaet evit ren tezennoù doktorelezh war ar marketing etrevroadel. Erfi n, ez eo bet un ezel oberiant eus rummad kentañ Arbenigourien rouedad KKM (Kevredigezh evit Kas war-raok ar Management). E-keit-se, en deus kaset da benn ez-reoliek kefridioù embrougañ an embregerezhioù gall en estrenvro, en ur kemer perzh e stummadurioù war verr dermen e skolioù-meur estren : Republik Korea, Japan, Egipt, Irak, Maroko, URSS, RDA, USA, Kanada ha dreist-holl Mec'hiko.

E dibenn ar prantad etrevroadel oberiant-tre-mañ, ha da heul marv e vamm, Joseph a ziviz distreiñ da Vreizh evit rannañ gant danvez embregerien Breizh ar grommen skiant-prenet dibar bet savet gantañ. Se daze penn orin un avantur-all gant kenlabour un avanturer-all, Jean-Pierre Le Roch, he deus disoc'het war groudigezh Ensavadur Lokarn.

Ar benveg-mañ a zo bet ledanaet ha kadarnaet dindan renerezh Alain Glon ur mestr avanturerall evit respont d'an daeadennoù o tont. Evit ar poent, n'eus ket mui nemet da adtapout an daleoù, met da zont tre raktresoù nevez hag arbennik. Blaz an avantur a-vremañ e zeu muioc'h eget bizkoaz gant an awen krouiñ hag eus ar galon, hag eus an herder zoken. Hiziviken, ez eo ret krediñ ober.

©

Joseph LE BIHAN was born March 12, 1920 in Locarn in a family of modest means, but open to schooling and education. He learned French at the age of seven in the primary school of Locarn.

He pursued his secondary studies in public and Catholic schools. Thanks to the support of "a micro-diaspora of relatives" he continued his studies in higher education in Rennes and then especially in Paris at the Institut d'Études Politiques (international section), at the École Pratique des Hautes Études (6th section for history) and finally at the Institut de Statistique (ISUP).

He started his professional career at the l'INRA (Institut National de la recherche agronomique – section Economie). He was the founding director of the Laboratory for prospective research lodged in Massy which comprised some hundred collaborators from 1965 to 1973. During this period he completed numerous missions overseas, notably as an expert for the European Community, the OCDE, FAO and even the Hungarian government in 1962.

In 1973 he changed his professional trajectory. After a full training cycle with Rand (USA), he rejoined the École des Hautes Études Commerciales (HEC) as a teacher in the MBA program of the ISA, then as coordinating Professor for an international specialization for business engineers. From 1975 to 1990 he contributed to the training of some 200 students who already had some beginning professional experience, of which about a third were from foreign countries (China, Korea, Israel, Morocco, and Canada, in the majority).

Responsible also for the Enseignements de défense économique at HEC ISA through a convention with the IHEDN (l'Institut des Hautes Etudes de défense Nationale), during five years Joseph was the European Coordinator of work for the National Strategic Information Center of Georgetown University (Washington) focused on the "Cercle Argos d'information internationale" financially supported by large European companies. Parallel to this, he was in charge of introducing international culture to future expatriated business leaders through the CRC (Centre de Recherches des Chefs d'Entreprises) of Jouy-en-Josas.

He was also director of research at the Université de Paris IX Dauphine, counsel for the direction of international marketing doctoral theses. Finally, he was an active member of the first generation of experts for the network of the APM (Association pour le progrès du Management). During this period he regularly accomplished missions to accompany French enterprises on the international stage, while participating at the same time in short periods of training in foreign universities – for example in South Korea, Japan, Egypt, Iraq, Morocco, USSR, Germany, USA, Canada, and especially in Mexico.

At the end of this period of great international activity, and following the death of his mother, Joseph decided to return to Brittany to transmit his collection of rather exceptional experience to future Breton entrepreneurs. This was the beginning of another adventure, in cooperation with another Breton adventurer of great breadth, Jean-Pierre Le Roch, with the launching of the Institut de Locarn.

This creation was diversified and consolidated under the presidency of Alan Glon, another leader and mover and shaker of ideas, in response to new challenges on the horizon. But this time it was not just to catch up on losses, but to invest in new and specific projects. The impetus given to the adventures of today are based more than ever on creative imagination and courage, even temerity. Above all, one must dare.

André POCHON



Bet ganet e 1931 e Aodoù-an-Arvor eo André Pochon. Da 16 vloaz e tiviz kuitaat ar skol evit gouestlañ e vuhez d'al labour douar. En ur skoazellañ e dud e tizolo ar K.Y.K. (Kouerien Yaouank Kristen). Diazezoù preder al luskad-mañ a vo e hentenn a-hed e vuhez : gwelout, barn, ober.

Staliañ a ra war an atant 18 devezh-arat e Sant-Vaeg gant e wreg e 1954. Gant 17 labourer-douar eus ar c'hanton e kemer perzh e krouidigezh Kreizenn Studiañ Teknikoù al Labour-douar (KSTL) e Korle. Gouestlañ a ra e holl nerzhioù o labourat a stroll war an enklaskoù, ar raktresoù deuet da vat hag ar re c'hwitet, ul labour a zisoc'h war kammedoù teknikel ha denel war-raok divent. Kempenn a ra en e KSTL ur reizhiad produiñ diazezet war pradeier melchon gwenn ha geot Itali : hentenn Pochon.

E 1975 ez a da berc'hennañ un atant 50 devezharat e Sant-Bic'hi. Eno e kendalc'ho e enklaskoù, e arnodoù hag e vo gwellaet e berzhioù teknikel hag armerzhel. E 1982 e vez krouet ar KSDLME (Kreizenn Studi evit Diorren ul Labour-douar Muioc'h Emren) gant un nebeud mignoned. Heuliet e vez gêr evit gêr disoc'hoù danevell J. Poly (1979) ha n'int ket, evel-just, heuliet gant al labourerien-douar-all peurvuiañ. D'an hevelep bloaz, ez eo skarzhet eus an aozadurioù micherel en abeg d'e sav-poentoù kontrol war al labour-douar diazezet war ar maiz hag ar sevel loened e-maez douar. Sevel a ra a-du avat gant an holl re a zo a-enep dispignoù ar mamennoù nerzhioù naturel ha saotradur an dour.

Nouspet gwech eo bet goulennataet André Pochon gant ar mediaoù : mediaoù paper pe skinwel (kelaouennoù, kazetennoù, abadennoù skinwel « la marche du siècle » hag « envoyé spécial »). Redet en deus bro e pep-lec'h, komzet dirak kevredigoù a bep seurt evit displegañ e vennozhioù war eeun. Pedet eo bet e Brazil, Kanada, Belgia, Bro-Suis, Aostria, Breizh-Saoz, Bro-Spagn. Hag evel-just en holl skolioù labour-douar. Diplom Akademiezh al Labour-Douar a zo bet roet da André Pochon ha graet eo bet Marc'heg ar Strollad a Enor. Bez-kadoriad ar gevredigezh Vivarmor Nature eus Aodoù-an-Arvor eo ivez.

Savet en deus al levrioù da heul:

1982: *La Prairie Temporaire à base de trèfle blanc*.
1991 : *Du champ à la Source* – Préf. J. C. Pierre.
1998 : *Les champs du possible* – Préf. Michel Jacquot.
2006 : *Les Sillons de la colère* – Préf. Jean-Marie Pelt.
2008 : *Agronomes et Paysans : un dialogue fructueux*
– Préf. C. Béranger, Dir. honor. de l'INRA .
2009 : *Le scandale de la vache folle* - Préf. Nicolas Hulot.anc.



André Pochon was born in 1931 in the Côtes d'Armor. At the age of 16 he decided to interrupt his studies and devote himself to the land. He assisted his farming parents, and discovered the J.A.C (Jeunesse Agricole Chrétienne). The principles of this movement served as his guide: See, Judge, Act.

In 1954 he moved with his wife to a 9 Ha farm in St., Mayeux. With 17 famers of the canton he participated in the creation of the Centre d'Etudes Techniques Agricoles (CETA) of Corlay. He was thus immersed in a collective work based on researches, successes, and failures, allowing for considerable technical and human progress. In his CETA he honed a system of cultivation based on a white clover and rye-grass prairie: the Pochon Method.

In 1975 he bought a farm of 25 Ha in St. Bohy. He pursued his researches and experimentations and improved his technical and economic success. In 1982, with several friends, he founded the CEDAPA (Centre d'Etudes pour le Développement d'une Agriculture Plus Autonome). He followed by the letter the conclusions of the report by J. Poly (1979) which evidently weren't shared by the agricultural profession in general. The same year he was ejected from professional organizations because of his positions against the cultivation of forage corn and indoor animal breeding. But he was following the orientations of all those opposing the wasting of natural energy resources and water pollution.

André Pochon was often called on by the media: written press and television (magazines, newspapers, broadcasts for the "marche du siècle" and "special correspondent.") He toured all the regions, meeting a wide public, to bring his message himself. He was also called to Brazil, Canada, Belgium, Switzerland, Austria, England, Spain ... And of course in all the agricultural schools. André Pochon has a diploma from the l'Académie d'Agriculture, is a Chevalier de la

Légion d'Honneur. He is Vice-President of the Association Vivarmor Nature des Côtes d'Armor.

He is the author of the following works:

1982: *La Prairie Temporaire à base de trèfle blanc*.
1991 : *Du champ à la Source* – Préf. J. C. Pierre.
1998 : *Les champs du possible* – Préf. Michel Jacquot.
2006 : *Les Sillons de la colère* – Préf. Jean-Marie Pelt.
2008 : *Agronomes et Paysans : un dialogue fructueux* – Préf. C. Béranger, Dir. honor. de l'INRA .
2009 : *Le scandale de la vache folle* - Préf. Nicolas Hulot.anc.



Today there are 65 active members of the Order of the Ermine (listed alphabetically)

René Abjean, Job An Irien, Gweltaz Ar Fur, Andrea Ar Gouilh, Yannig Baron, Dan ar Braz, Yvonne Breilly-Le Calvez, Jean-Christophe Cassard, Yann Choucq, Denise Delouche, Tereza Desbordes, Chanig ar Gall, Yann Goasdoué, Viviane Hélias, Jean-Jacques Hénaff, Rhisiart Hincks, Angèle Jacq, Dodik Jégou, Michael Jones, Tugdual Kalvez, Yann-Fañch Kemener, Jean Kerhervé, Marie Kermarec, Goul'han Kervella, Riwanon Kervella, Lois Kuter, Catherine Latour, Jean-Louis Latour, Donatien Laurent, André Lavanant, Joseph Le Bihan, Raymond Lebossé, Joseph Lec'hvien, Xavier Leclercq, Henri Lecuyer, Jean-Guy Le Floc'h, Pierre Lemoine, Pierre Le Padelec, Pierre Le Rhun, Pierre Loquet, Lena Louarn, Patrick Malrieu, Claudine Mazéas, Rozenn Milin, Pierre-Yves Moign, Rita Morgan Williams, Jean Ollivro, Mona Ozouf, Gabriele Pescatore, Yann Poilvet, André Pochon, Albert Poulain, Jordi Pujol, Annaïg Renault, Naïg Rozmor, Gilles Servat, Frère Marc Simon, Claude Sterckx, Alan Stivell-Cochevelou, Pierre Toulhoat, Albert Trévidic, René Vautier, Jean-Bernard Vighetti, Jean-Pierre Vincent, Ewa Waliszewska

38 additional Members of the Order of the Ermine have died since its revival in 1972 and their induction:

Roger Abjean (2009), Ivetig An Dred-Kervella (2009), Charlez ar Gall (2010), Soeur Anna Vari Arzur (2009), Jacques Briard (June 2002), Herri Caouissin (February 2003), André Chéddeville (2010), Vefa de Bellaing (April 1998), Per Denez (2011), Bernard de Parades (March 2000), Jean Fréour (2010), Yvonig Gicquel (2008), Pierre-Roland Giot (January 2002), Glenmor (June 1996), Pierre-Jakez Hélias (August 1995), Ronan Huon (2003), Yvonne Jean-Haffen, (November 1993), Pierre Laurent (November 2002), Robert Le Grand (2008), François Le Quémener (2009), Pierre Le Treut (February 2004), Jean L'Helgouach (February 2000), Louis Lichou (March 2006), Georges Lombard (2010), Henri Maho (June 2008), Ivona Martin (February 2005), Joseph Martray (2009), Jean Mévellec (1985), Polig Monjarret (December 2003), Roparz Omnes (2010), Martial Pézennec (2010), Michel Phlipponneau (2008), René Pleven (January 1993), Henri Queffélec

(January 1992), Maryvonne Quéméré-Jaouen (December 2001), Yves Rocher (2009), Loeiz Ropars (November 2007), Jean Tricoire (March 1994).



Deep inside a Breton skull

31 - The Rising of the Red Bonnets

Jean-Pierre Le Mat

In Central Brittany, the Red Bonnets are symbolic and mythic figures. A few tens of years ago, this area was considered a poor country. A spot mired in misery. There was no shining industry; only peasants, forage plants, slaughter houses. A place condemned to intellectual poverty. The painters were in Pont Aven, far from the mountains of Are. Celebrities do not live here. Here, debates had the violence of the cold winter rain that blocked cars in bad ruts of our bad roads. Diseases plagued the population in the 19th century, when people consumed with tuberculosis, syphilis or deadly bacteria were transported from the harbor of Brest into Central-Brittany. Isolation was a cause or a consequence, but it made misery still harder to endure.

This poor picture is now vanishing behind us, but it must be said that the Red Bonnets helped the population to survive. Deep inside their skull, the people of the Are Mountains have kept the memory of heroes and martyrs of a failed revolution.

Up to the 17th century, the Breton navy had an organisation of its own. The harbours, the commercial fleet, warships for the protection of the coasts, and the sea-convoys were organised by the Bretons themselves.

In 1626 Cardinal de Richelieu, the influential minister of the King of France Louis XIII, became Admiral of France. In order to rule the Breton harbors, he was also named governor of Brittany. Under his authority, Brest became a big French military harbour, and the French navy organisation supplanted Breton organisation. In the center of Brittany, forests were devastated to build the new warships of the French Crown.

Under the successor of Louis XIII, it was even worse. The reign of the great King of France Louis XIV (1643-1715) was a calamity for Brittany. To finance the continual wars and the king's appetite for luxury, heavier and heavier taxes were imposed. Facing the hostility or the incapacity to pay, the authority of the

French administration became more and more oppressive.

Until then, the prosperity of Brittany was mainly due to its international commerce. The destruction of the independent Breton navy completely ruined the country, and cut it off from the source of its prosperity during the last centuries: the shipping trade tradition.

The main Breton industries, the production of linen for instance, were based on export. These were dramatically reduced by the edicts suppressing corporation's liberties and the freedom of trade.

In order to safeguard Breton privileges, which were considered as national rights, the States of Brittany proposed to buy the edicts, i.e. to prevent their introduction in Brittany through the payment of a ransom. Colbert, minister of Louis XIV, agreed with this proposition for the amount of 2,000,000 pounds, and the deal was signed on December 27, 1673.

Where were the Breton representatives to find such a sum of money? Amongst the poorest classes of society, which were the most numerous. The privileged of the province voted taxes which did not concern them. The pressure of taxation doubled for the Breton people at once.

At this juncture any incident could have started a rebellion. It was Colbert himself who created it. He instituted new taxes on stamped paper, tobacco and dishes. Immediately, on April 18, 1675, the inhabitants of Rennes wrecked the Tobacco Office, and then the Control Office and the Stamped Paper Office. There were fights in the streets between the rioters and troops of gentlemen. Thirty were killed or badly wounded.

On April 23rd, riots started in Nantes where the Tobacco Office and Tin Office were ransacked. The rebellion engulfed the entire city. The royal troops re-established the public order by terror. A battalion of 600 horsemen were placed in the town, at the expense of the inhabitants.



Proclamation du Code Paysan
(Design of Patrice Auffret)

In June and July 1675 the rebellion stirred in all the towns of eastern Brittany. But the revolts which erupted in western Brittany were

different. It was not the taxes which were questioned, but the social order itself.

In May and June 1675 bands of rebels appeared in Guingamp, Chateaulin and Briec. Castles were burned and noblemen killed. By July, 18-20,000 rebels controlled southwest Brittany. Codes were written, with a social programme, under the legitimacy of what they termed “*Armoric liberty*”.

The “Peasant Code” called for drastic changes:

- Suppression of aristocratic rights of property
- Marriages between girls from the aristocracy and commoners
- Abolition of the tax on the salt
- Limitation of the taxes on the wine
- Suppression of the clerical taxes; the priests must get a salary and nothing else.
- Limitation of the hunting season
- Freedom for the people to choose the mill where they will get flour from their wheat.

The rebels attacked the towns of Daoulas, Landerneau, Carhaix, and Pontivy. Concarneau was besieged by 4,000 peasants. Within a few weeks, 200 “noble houses” were looted and wrecked by people who became known as the Red Bonnets.

In the area of Carhaix, in the center of Brittany, the rebels led by Sebastian Ar Balp planned to attack the harbour of Morlaix. This plan coincided with the movements of the Dutch fleet of Admiral Ruyter, which was then cruising in the Channel. Seemingly, the rising was not a mere spontaneous gathering. It must have been planned with political aims.

In September 1675 Ar Balp gathered a troop of 30,000 peasants near Carhaix. He tried to convince his prisoner, the marquis of Tymeur, to lead the military operations. But Tymeur killed him, and the troops disbanded.

The Duke of Chaulnes, Governor of Brittany, took advantage of the confusion caused by Ar Balp's death. The repression was atrocious. Hundreds of peasants were hanged. Others were sent to become galley slaves. French troops initiated terror everywhere, with series of killings, rapes, arson and torture. The main leaders of the Red Bonnets were, nevertheless, able to escape to the Glenan islands, south of Brittany, where they were rescued by a ship from the Dutch fleet. Such a junction cannot be a coincidence. The insurgents were in contact with the enemies of France.

In Central Brittany, there are songs about peasant risings. The scientists are able to give a date to each piece of our memory. They are able to throw them far

in the past. But here, people sing these rebel songs and don't bother if they are old or new. These songs tell stories of misery and death, mixed with courage and freedom. In the music, we still can feel the heartbeats of our heroes. And we know that their descendants are living among us. We are the descendants of these people. I remember a song about a revolt which happened two centuries before the rising of the Red Bonnets. No matter. It broke out in Plouye, a village of the Black Mountains, 20 miles from Carhaix. Plouye is a small village of our small country. But the heart-rending cry of the rebels is universal and can be heard through space and time.

“Cursed be the sun, the moon is cursed, cursed be the dew that falls on the earth!”

Cursed be the land itself, the land of Plouye, which is the cause of a terrible strife

The cause of a terrible strife between master and slave

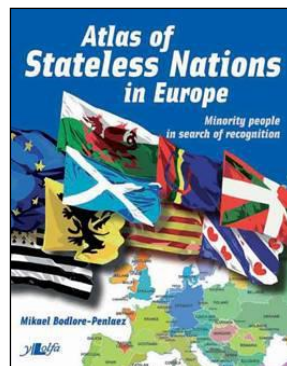
Which spreads the trouble among the men of the countryside, which let more than one uncomfortable;

Which let more than one father without his son, more than one wife becoming a widow, more than one boy or girl being an orphan;

Throwing on the highways more than one crying child following his mother;

But cursed are, above all, the noble men of the cities that oppress the plowman

These new gentlemen, these French adventurers Who are no more Bretons than the viper is a dove, even if it has been hatched in a dove nest.”



Atlas des Nations Sans États now in English

In Bro Nevez 116, November 2010, you will find a review of Mikael Bodlore-Penlaez's book *Atlas des Nations sans État en Europe* published by Yoran Embanner.

Without doing a new review, it is worth noting that this is a true atlas with over 60 maps as well as a wealth of information on the “stateless nations of Europe” (like Brittany). This very colorful 160 page book has been translated into

English by two Irish writers, Sarah and Ciaran Finn, and published by the Welsh publisher Y Lolfa. More information can be found on the website www.eurominority.eu which itself is a mine of information on European cultures. The book can be purchased via that website (ISBN 9781847713797 - £14.95).



The Interceltic Festival of Lorient and BZH-New York

Each year a different Celtic community is featured at the Lorient festival and for its 41st year, The Breton diaspora was featured. The Lorient festival is one largest festivals in Europe with some 800,000 spectators and 4,500 performers spread over a week of events. The Bretons of NY (BZH-New York) had a nice role to play at the festival on Monday, August 8th in the Diaspora Dome when a 26-minute documentary film by France 3 Ouest about Bretons in New York was aired. Also that day BZH New York played a big role in a panel discussion on the economic and cultural partnerships formed between Bretons around the world.

This conference was moderated by Thomas Moisson, a musician from Lorient who performed in NYC for the BZH-New York interceltic fest noz held in January 2011. Co-founder and president of BZH-New York, Charles Kergaravat, beamed in from New York to tell of this organization and its work. Jean Vantalon, of Breizh Punishers, a clothing label in Brittany which has partnered with BZH New York and other diaspora communities also participated (www.breizhpunishers.com). Herve Offredo, VP for sales and marketing of Barnet Products in New Jersey, and an active member of BZH-New York also spoke on economic links. And Samuel Le Hénanff, an accordion player who has traveled to New York several times as well as to China, Reunion and other world destinations, commented on the role of music in Breton diaspora communities.

For more about the August 8 events see the Lorient Interceltic Festival website: www.festival-interceltique.com. And Check out the BZH-New York website for lots more about this too, as well as information on their many other activities: www.bhz-ny.org

Championship of Bagadoù of Brittany

Just in case an introduction is needed, the *bagad* is a bagpipe band of Brittany which was modeled on Scottish pipe bands, but which has gone its own unique direction. The first bagads were created in the late 1940s and early 1950s and they quickly expanded in popularity. Today there are several hundred active *bagadoù*. Besides Scottish style bagpipes (biniau bras) and a drum section (snares, tenor and bass) the Bretons added bombards. Those are the basic instruments to which are added pretty much anything else for concert performances. Bagadoù draw their music from the traditional dances and melodies of Brittany and add quite a few rhythms and sounds from around the world with highly innovative arrangements and compositions.

While the rules for competition can make performances slightly more conservative than those you will hear at a concert, annual competitions for the “best” bagad are still a great occasion to hear just how creative this ensemble can be. This is not your average Scottish pipe band competition where strict adherence to a score is expected. There are five levels of bagadoù for competition (number 1 being the highest). A bagad in a lower category moves up in levels when they win annual competitions. Once you get the Category 1 you can’t get much better and being named the yearly champion is hotly contested with the results of two competitions used to decide the winner – one in Brest in February and the second at the Inter-Celtic Festival of Lorient in August.

For more details on the competitions and bagadoù of Brittany check out the website for Bodadeg ar Sonerion (www.bodadeg-ar-sonerion.org)

Here are the results from the 2011 competition for the final ranking of Level 1 bagadoù. Sometimes bagadoù are known for the town from which they come and other times by a more descriptive name. I’ve tried to include both since this can get confusing if you know a bagad only by one or the other name, or you are not familiar with the Breton language name of a town or city.

Congratulations to this year’s winners:

Bagad Kemper (Quimper)



The finishing order for the other competitors was as follows:

Bagad Cap Caval ar Vro Vigouden (Plomeur)
Bagad Alre (Auray)
Bagad Roñsed Mor (Locoal-Mendon)
Bagad Penhars (Penhars, Quimper)
Bagad Sant Nazer (Saint Nazaire)
Kerlenn Pondi (Pontivy)
Bagad Quic-en-Groigne (Saint Malo)
Bagad Brieg (Brieg)
Bagad Bro Kemperle (Quimperlé)
Bagad Er Melinerion (Vannes)
Bagad Er Meilhoù Glaz (Moulin Vert, Quimper)
Bagad Pañvrid (Pommerit Le Vicomte)
Bagad Plougastell (Plougastell)



Heard of, but not heard ... new recordings from Brittany

Notes for the following were gleaned from the following Breton publications and from the Coop Breizh website (www.coopbreizh.fr): *Ar Men* 183 (July-Aug. 2011), *Armor* 497 (June 2011) & 498/499 (July-Aug 2011), *Musique Bretonne* 226 (May-Jun 2011) & 227 (July-Aug 2011).

Awena. Les Marie-Morgane – Entrelacs de reveries celtiques et orientales. Label

Prikosnovénie.

Morgane Tréheux sings with Marie-Andrée Trembley on Celtic harp for a mix of Breton song and music with Arabic-Andalusian and Armenian sounds.

Bagad Cap Caval. Lioù Tan. Coop Breizh.

This is the fifth CD by this bagad which has been one of Brittany's champions three times (in a row). This CD includes performances from four contests in 2009 and 2010 – long suites and arrangements of traditional music from both eastern and western Brittany.

Bagad Kerlenn Pondi. A-gervet. Coop Breizh

This CD features a combination of this top-level bagad with the group Ampouailh and Safar (from Zanzibar). The 11 selections include arrangements of Breton song and dance as well as new compositions.

Duo Barbedette Quenderff. Plinn. Coop Breizh

This duo includes Hoële Barbedette on harp and Delphine Quenderff on bass fiddle with 13 arrangements of Breton dances and melodies.

Benjamin-Malo-Scène. Chrysalide. Vocations Records VOC 2116

This group includes Malo Morvan on accordion paired with Benjamin Bron on flute (metal concert flute) for a first CD of dances one would find at a Breton fest noz. While the improvisations and beat are not always what a dancer would desire and need, the improvisational quality makes the listening interesting.

Marc Bienne. Rein dans les poches.

This CD includes songs on all topics, full of poetry, sometimes with a Celtic flavor to the melody, set to Bienne's guitar or the fiddle of Martin O'Sullivan.

Carre Manchot. Pell zo – musique de fest-noz.

For 25 years this band has been a big draw for festoù-nos of Brittany. This CD celebrates their anniversary with a variety of dances from all over Brittany – pile menu, plinn, gavottes, avant-deux, hanter dro ... The group has changed over time but includes here Yannig Alory (flutes), Gilbert Le Pennec (guitar), Yann-Loïc Joly (accordion) and Loïc Bléjean (uilleann pipes and whistles).

Centre du Patrimoine Oral de Cornouaille & Dastum Bro Gerne. An Diaoul a Gan. Dastum Bro Gerne.

This is a CD with some 70 minutes of the best performances from the first four song festivals called An Diaoul a Gan (the devil sings) held in the town of Juch. 15 of the 18 songs are in Breton – gwerz, lighter songs, and songs for dancing from different areas of Brittany performed by known and lesser known traditional voices. A 12-page booklet of notes accompanies the CD.

Cécile Corbel. Renaissance. Song Book Vol. 3.

Keltia Musique RSCD 303.

This CD includes arrangements of traditional Breton songs and compositions by this singer and Celtic harpist. Included is a remake of Stivell's "Brian Boru" in a French language version. Corbel is backed by an ensemble of musicians.

Digresk. Alkemi. Coop Breizh

This is an electro-rock group of six musicians with 16 selections of music for dance including laridés, hanter-dro, polkas, waltz, plinn, rond de Saint-Vincent, pile-menu ... The group includes Christophe Cordier (bombard and biniou koz), Ghislain Roquet (flute/bagpipes), Nicholas Rozé (accordion), Tony Mourier (drums), Julien Mourier (bass guitar) and Fred Talus (electric guitar and bass).

Dyp Project. Live at the Black Label Café. Mosaic Music 06122010/1

The group includes David Guézennec (song and bass), Yvan Derrien (drums) and Philippe Brunel (guitar) with a blues-rock sound. They play many of their own compositions with one Jimi Hendrix and a Led Zeppelin arrangement.

Thomas Fersen. *Je suis au paradis*. Tôt ou Tard 3237102.

This CD features songs with a Breton sound (or not) on a variety of topics with an emphasis on fantasy and legendary characters like Blue Beard, werewolves, or other phantoms.

Free Lagen. *DZ Project*. L'OZ Production L'OZ 62. Rock band from Douarnenez (=DZ) who perform work by Mick Jagger and the Beatles – among others. The group includes singer Patrick Bisel with musicians J. M. Jambou, P. Marchand, P. Durand and Y. Kergoat.

Le Frères Mahévas. *Frères Mahévas*. Coop Breizh Christophe Mahévas on bombarde pairs with brother Jean-Michel Mahévas on cornemuse, or biniou braz – Scottish style bagpipes which Bretons have adopted to play in pair with the bombarde just like the smaller high-pitched biniou koz. There are five selections on this CD with three long suites of melodies and dance tunes recorded live for over 50 minutes of music by this four-time championship pair from Locoal-Mendon.

Les Gardons de R'don. *Les Gardons de R'don*. This is a group of singers from the Redon area who mix maritime song (traditional and composed) with songs for dancing from this region of Brittany where shipping on the Vilaine River made Redon a port city of importance.

Gwir. *Liamm Keltiek*. GwirMusic TAZ 103
Airs and tunes from the Celtic traditions performed by musicians with solid mastery of their instruments. Gwir is composed of Loïc Denis on Scottish border pipes, Jean-Yves Martial on fiddle and Marc Jacquier on guitar. They are joined by Dom Molard with a mix of percussion.

Mona Jaouen. *Heitou*. Coop Breizh/Goasco Music. This is the fourth recording by this Breton language singer with a lovely bluesy voice. In this case she sings songs for children – primarily 18 compositions of her own accompanied by a half-dozen musicians on flute, uilleann pipes, accordion, and guitar.

Krepo. *L'Autre Chemin*. Coop Breizh
This CD includes five selections by this six-man group with a rock beat. The group includes Jérôme Houbert (lead song and guitars), Elié Gaulin (song and guitar), Sébastien Bart (bass), Arnaud Patard

(drums), Ludovic Fabre (fiddle) and Gurvan L'Hégoualc'h (flute, bombards, percussion).

Gilles Le Bigot. *Empreintes #2*. Keltia Musique KMCD 535.

Master of acoustic guitar, Gilles Le Bigot produces a second album of tunes from a long and rich career (the first “impressions” CD was in 2002). He is joined by a number of other well known musicians of Brittany: Bernard Le Dréau, Ludovic Mesnil, Ronan Pellen, Jean-Michel Veillon, Erwan Volant, Jean-Félix Lalanne and Gildas Arzal as well as singer Marthe Vassallo.

Meltan. *Fairy Soñj*. Production Meltan, Vocations Records VOC 811

This is the first recording by a young group from Finistère who perform dances, songs and tunes from Brittany and Ireland. The group is composed of singers Elyne Lamarre and Muriel Paul with accordion by Bertrand Le Gall and flute by Fañch Fichou. The group also includes fiddle, guitar and percussion.

Nolwenn Monjarret and Philippe Le Gallou. *Son Elena – Ballades e Breizh*. Coop Breizh
Those who have had the opportunity to travel to the Potomac Celtic Festival in Leesburg, Virginia, already know the beautiful voice (and persona) of Nolwenn Monjarret. Here she sings songs she has grown up with as daughter of Polig Monjarret who is famous for his work to promote piping in Brittany (and all other Breton music), but also as daughter of Zaïg Monjarret who was a noted singer in the 1950s. This CD includes nine traditional songs in Breton and two in French. The CD closes with “Spered an tan,” a song composed by Pierre-Jakez Hélias to the music of Polig Monjarret. There are also two compositions by Philippe Le Gallou. Ronan Le Dissez (flute) and Pierre Sergent (bass fiddle) are also guest musicians for the CD.

Jakez Pincet. *Solo Piping Art*. Paker Prod 005.
This is the third volume – a double CD – of this Breton master of Scottish style piping traditions with recordings from the 1980s. This CD includes jigs and reels, but also some of the more complex art of piobaireachd, long variations upon a theme that grows ever more complex and dramatic.

Soig Siberil and Cédric Le Bozec. *Duo Libre*. Coop Breizh CS 1042
This CD pairs acoustic guitar master Soig Siberil with Cédric Le Bozec, equally a master of the Scottish style bagpipes now part of Breton tradition. This is an unusual pairing of instruments but is very much in the style of Breton “couples” where there is a responsive interplay between two musicians or two singers. They

are joined for several selections by Tangi Sicard on bombard and Patrice Marzin on electric guitar.

Serendou. *Avel an douar.*

This is a trio with Breton flute-player Jean-Luc Thomas at work with Nigerian flute player Yacoubal Moumouni and percussionist Boubacar Souleymane. The compositions are inspired by the traditions of Brittany and Nigeria and this is another very successful collaboration of Breton and African musicians.

Les Souillés de fond de cale et le Bagad Spered an Vel de Plouha. *Kejadenn – Rencontre.* Coop Breizh.

With this CD a Breton bagad collaborates with a 5-man maritime group from the Côtes d'Armor for a live recording of Breton/French and English sea shanties with some newer compositions and a bit of Breton dance for swing.

Xavier Soulabail, Jean Marc Illien, Frédéric Moreau, Cédric Le Bozec. *Breizh ha Rock – « In Live »* (www.brezharock.com)

This CD is a mix of a bagad with a variety of Breton musicians performing compositions by Cédric Le Bozec which are rooted in traditional song and dance of Brittany. Performers include Soig Siberil (acoustic guitar), Pat O'May (electric guitar), Jean-Marc Illien (keyboard), Xavier Soulabail (bass guitar), Frédéric Moreau (drums) and a bagad for the occasion including over 20 pipers, bombard players and percussionists. Included are a DVD of 41 minutes and a CD of 46 minutes.

Yelle. *Safari Disco Club.* Productions Yelle/Barclay. This is the second album by this singer in an electro-pop style of her own compositions. She is accompanied by Jean-François Perrier and Tanguy Destable.

♫ Some Corrections/Clarifications

Sometimes the information I work with to create the short CD notes for Bro Nevez are pretty incomplete, and sometimes my proof-reading is not the best! Here are a few things to know about CDs noted in Bro Nevez 118 (May 2011).

The CD by pianist **Didier Squiban** and percussionist **Jérôme Kerihuel** has the title of **Adarre** (and not Addare, as I noted). (L'OZ Production L'OZ 66)

The CD by **Erwan Keravec, *Urban Pipes*** (Buda Music) is indeed Urban Pipes II, a second recording (and not a re-edition) of bagpipes in a very free-wheeling jazz style that takes this instrument far away from Scotland or Brittany.

An Inter-Celtic CD preview

Rún, Sé: *Songs from the Six Celtic Nations*



Rún is a quartet of women based in England who are due to release a truly inter-Celtic album of traditional songs in unique arrangements – in Irish, Welsh, Scots Gaelic, Cornish, Manx and Breton, with two songs in French from the Gallo tradition of eastern Brittany. While five of the 12 selections on this album called Sé: *Songs from the Six Celtic Nations* are in the Irish language, you have to give this group credit for tackling all six of the Celtic languages. Their Breton language selection is from the Vannetais tradition: Ar Sac'had Kerc'h (Sack of Oats). And who wouldn't like their inclusion of all six flags incorporated into costume and décor. To hear just a short sample of their songs go to www.run-se.bandcamp.com.

On that site you will find the following short introduction to them and their album to be released in September 2012: *Produced by County Down singer/harper, Bróna McVittie, Sé features close-harmony arrangements of songs in Irish, Scots Gaelic, Manx, Welsh, Cornish and Breton dialects, brought to life through the dulcet tones of Alli Buhagiar, Sonja Byrne and Ciara Holland. The languages of the six Celtic nations evolved as branches of 'old Celtic', spoken millenia ago by tribes who lived, loved and laboured across Europe from the British Isles to Gallatia. The group brings new life to old Celtic songs about one-horned cows and gigolos, blackbirds and bogeymen, drinking and debauchery, ardor and arable farming.*

A press release adds a bit more of an introduction:

Rún is the Gaelic word for 'secret, wish or love'. Formed late in 2007 by Co: Down singer/harper, Bróna McVittie, after a trip to Donegal to explore Irish legend and lore through song, the London-based act has performed at many folk clubs and venues including the Royal Festival Hall Foyer, the Union Chapel, the National Theatre Foyer, FrontRoom at the Queen Elizabeth Hall and Camden Irish Centre.

Their festival appearances include Upton Folk Festival, Glastonbury, Lewisham People's Day, Lovebox, Lambeth Country Show, Crawley Folk Festival, Return to Camden Town, Rhythms of the World, Celtic Connections and Southbank's recent Festival of Britain. They have supported a variety of high-profile folk artists including Martin Simpson, Martin Carthy, John McSherry and Zoe Conway. In November 2009, the group released a 5-track EP, Beidh Aonach Amárach (There's a Fair Tomorrow), at the Islington Folk Club to showcase their Irish and Scots Gaelic material. After selling-out of EPs they decided to expand their repertoire to include Celtic-language songs in Manx, Cornish, Welsh and Breton.

For more information, please visit www.runceol.com.

You can also learn a bit more from a forthcoming radio broadcast (available from September 3 to 10 online). Colum Sands interviews Brona and plays songs from the new album, Sé: *Songs from the Six Celtic Nations* on BBC Radio Ulster Folkclub on Saturday 3rd September:

http://www.bbc.co.uk/northernireland/radioulster/folk_club/



Carn, the Celtic League magazine now accessible online



The Celtic League has scanned 148 issues of its newsletter so that they are now available on its website www.celticleague.net. This provides a wealth of information about Wales, Ireland, Scotland, Brittany, the Isle of Man, and Cornwall, as well as issues of interest to the Celtic world more generally. And unique to this magazine is

the fact that much of the content is in all six of the Celtic languages.

What is the Celtic League? As stated on its website:

The Celtic League is an inter-Celtic organization that campaigns for the political, language, cultural and social rights of the Celtic nations. It does this across a broad range of issues. It highlights human rights abuse, monitors military activity and focuses on political, socio-economic, environmental, language and cultural issues, which generally or specifically affect one or more of the Celtic countries in some

way. The organization also aims to further each of the Celtic nations right to independence and to promote the benefits of inter Celtic cooperation. Additionally, the League draws attention to matters that we believe bear a wider concern for the peoples of the Celtic countries.

Our work is achieved through the activities of our organisation at branch and central level, the publication of a high quality quarterly magazine, Carn, and a regular Celtic League news service.

The Celtic League has taken strong stands against the political oppression of the six Celtic nations, and has struggled to acknowledge the Celtic identity of communities in Asturias and Galician (Spain) who have participated for many years in inter-Celtic celebrations of culture in Brittany (and in their own countries). What some might see as a narrow definition of "Celtic" is based on the presence of Celtic languages.

The work of this organization since 1961 to support and defend the Celtic nations is undeniably of consequence, and they are to be congratulated in creating a website that provides a wealth of information to all interested.

But there is one place where their website information is in need of change. If you hit the Breizh link on the Celtic League website www.celticleague.net you will find a very brief introduction to the Breton language:

The Breton Language was the majority language prior to the second world war but its native speaker base is confined to the coastal fringe. The French centralist authorities have oppressed both the language and the people, though the Diwan language schools are keeping the language alive with the children who attend them.

This is misleading in its brevity and hopefully will be updated. The native speaker base historically and today has not been found on the "coastal fringe," but in the interior of western Brittany. It is true that French centralist policy has oppressed the Breton language, but it is an overstatement to give credit to the Diwan schools alone as the hope that the Breton language will be kept alive. The situation is much more complex – both historically and in work that is going on today for the future of the Breton language. Certainly the Diwan schools have been a critical element in provoking the expansion of bilingual programs in Breton schools more widely, but the future of the Breton language depends on adults who make an effort to learn it and who work to insure that it has a public presence for all to enjoy.



Nominoe's Vow, an illustration to the English translation of Barzaz Breiz (by Tom Taylor – see below), depicting the early Breton leader Nominoe vengeance on the Franks for killing a Breton emissary,

The influence of the *Barzaz Breiz* on 19th Century British Travel Writers

Excerpts from “Modern Ancients,” *Household Words, a Weekly Journal conducted by Charles Dickens*, 1854, and S. Baring-Gould, *A Book of Brittany*, 1901

Lois Kuter

English language travel literature of the late 19th century is full of borrowings from fellow writers of the period – a way to fill out a traveler’s observations especially of music and dance or other events in which a foreign traveler is unlikely to participate. Thus the very influential *Barzaz Breiz* by Hersart de la Villemarqué was a gold mine for song texts and descriptions of customs.

The Barzaz Breiz was first published in 1839 and its last edition was in 1867. At the time of this last edition there was bitter controversy among Breton scholars as to the authenticity of the texts in the Barzaz Breiz and La Villemarqué was accused of fabricating them. In 1989 Donatien Laurent published *Aux Sources du Barzaz Breiz – La mémoire d’un peuple*, based on his careful study of notebooks by La Villemarqué. He confirmed that while La Villemarqué improved upon some of the texts, they were in fact drawn from the popular tradition of Brittany.

British (and American) travel writers of the late 19th century seeking colorful additions for their accounts were probably not terribly aware of the bitter accusations that swirled around the Barzaz Breiz. Certainly those publishing their travel accounts before 1867 had no reason to suspect La Villemarqué of inventing songs. In any case, they were probably not going directly to La Villemarqué’s book to find interesting filler for a travel account, but drawing instead on English translations.



Photo of Tom Taylor by Lewis Carroll

In 1865 Tom Taylor published his translation of the Barzaz Breiz: *Ballads and Songs of Brittany*.

But even more influential were short articles by Taylor and others found in the popular magazines of the day. Here are a few I located from 1840 to 1873:

- “Courting in Bretagne; or, the Bazvalan” Miss Louisa Stuart Costello. *Bentley’s Miscellany*, Vol. 8, 1840 (Miss Costello is also the author of a number of travel books and collections of French song)
- “The Bards of Brittany,” by W. C. Taylor, L.L.D., *Bentley’s Miscellany* (London), Vol. 22, 1847
- “The popular poetry of Brittany” (no author), *Tait’s Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol. 20, No. 224, January 1853
- “Breton Ballads – King Louis the Eleventh’s Page, Dialect of Cornouaille” J.D., Dublin. *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine* Vol. 86, October 1859
- “Chapter XX – National music of Brittany” in *Narrative of a Walking tour in Brittany*, by John Mounteney Jephson (London: Lovell Reeve), 1859. This includes Breton and English translations for 11 texts from the Barzaz Breiz – unlike other shorter articles, the source is clearly noted here.
- “Brittany: Its People and Its Poems,” a series of 4 articles in *The Catholic World*, Vol. 8, No. 45, December 1868; Vol. 11, No. 63, June 1870; ?; Vol. 17, No. 100, July 1873

While La Villemarqué’s Barzaz Breiz (and its translations) certainly provided great material for travel writers, it is also worth noting the influence of Emile Souvestre and his works *Les Derniers Bretons* (1835-1837) and *Le Foyer Breton* (1844).

The following travel account from 1854 is an odd combination of the author’s own observations (in this case, the Pardon of Rosporden in Finsitère) with observations of other writers of the day. One of the most striking observations is that “the Breton instrument of music is a rebec with three cords, which serves to accompany the chanting of these rustic minstrels.” This stringed instrument is also noted in the article from 1853 “The popular poetry of Brittany” (noted above). While it is not likely that British travelers would have gotten to know the Kloer (kler, kloerrec), cited by a number of them as important carriers of the song tradition, this is a common topic.

"Modern Ancients: Household Words, A Weekly Journal Conducted by Charles Dickens. No. 213, April 22, 1854.

Although they are, upon the whole, rude, dirty, and superstitious, I like no peasantry better than that among which I am in the habit of wandering in Brittany. They all seem to me picturesque in their minds, partly by reason of their sense of poetry, and partly because they retain so much of what was striking in the old customs and notions of their ancestors and ours. I make my headquarters at Nantes, and consider myself very happily surrounded.

Nantes itself is, to my mind, a magnificent city, clasped in the many arms of the great river Loire; a city of smiling islands and gay flat meadows full of flowers; a place of bridges, antique towers, and broad quays, bristling with masts from all nations. The towers and walls of the Château de l'Hermine, once the seat of the Dukes of Brittany, though now serving as a powder-magazine, speak to me of days when gunpowder was not. So does the Cathedral; and there is no lack of stone sermons in the statues of the famous Duchess Anne, and her lineage, and those of the great captains De Clisson and Duguesclin which are scattered about in the thirty or forty public squares that give air to the town.

It is worth the while of any man of leisure to come over and pass three or four weeks at Nantes; making excursions from thence to and fro by diligence, and establishing some sort of acquaintance with the country people.

Tracts have not superseded their legendary song; and many ballads, quite as touching and as tender as the ancient lays of Scotland, may be heard at this day from the lips of wandering bards, who sing, without a harp, matter familiar and dear to all the crowd that listens.

The Bretons are all born to song. Field-labourers in the villages, and workmen in the small towns, receive in Brittany little instruction beyond what the priests, who generally spring from their own ranks, afford. As they are imaginative and excitable, they supply their want of other knowledge by remembering long poems, which they recite to one another, and thus hand down to their children. They are themselves rude improvisatori, and make songs on every event of which they hear, turning the metre with considerable skill.

The most eminent of their poets in this kind are millers, tailors, and a class of men called Pillaoners,

in fact, rag-men, gaberlunzie men. These last, wandering from town to town in pursuance of their calling, collect all the small talk, as well as all the political information that they pick up on the road, and have in all houses a sure welcome for their songs and sayings. Autolycus, who reads to us now like a fiction of the poet, continues to be a real person in Brittany.

As Autolycus is always supposed to be poor, and indeed almost comes under the denomination of beggar, he is looked upon with a certain reverential pity, that his conduct does not always merit. When he arrives at a village, he does not enter cottages unbidden but observes a certain form that has been long established, and is at no time departed from. Pausing at a house-door, he says "Gob bless you, people of this house; God bless you little and big." The invariable answer of those who expect a song, and do not grudge their pancakes is, "God bless you also, traveler, whoever you may be."

Those pancakes, by the by, deserve a word of notice, since they are the staple diet of the people. They are made in great quantities at a time, placed one upon the other, pressed closely together, and the pile is cut as wanted, like a cheese. When a fresh batch of pancakes is turned out, the event is hailed, in a Breton household, as a something to be glad over; and that is not surprising considering the difference that there must be between stale and new pancakes.

Besides Autolycus the gaberluzie-man, there is a set of singers of a better class, equally poor. These singers are the poor students or clerks, who are young peasants destined for the Church. They are called Kloer in the Breton language, and travel from one Episcopal town to another, meeting in bands at Tréguier, Léon, Kemper, and Vannes. To see them arrive in the costumes in which they left their villages, is a quaint sight. They still have their long hair floating down over their shoulders; and, when they have but lately joined, are remarkable for their wild eyes full of enthusiasm. The great ambition of a Breton peasant is to have a son a priest; and the free life of a Kloer, candidate for future honours in the church, attracts youths of eighteen or twenty, quite as much as the glory promised to a soldier. These young men are all poets and singers. They live together in the suburbs of cathedral towns – to all appearance miserably enough as their funds are very scanty, and possessed in common; however, they do live, and study properly for the career that they have chosen. By degrees they lose their extreme rusticity, in consequence of being received into what, to them, is good society; and it often naturally happens that, treated with great familiarity in many families, a devotee of nineteen years old meets with bright eyes

that tell him to think twice before he makes himself a solitary priest. Perhaps he mistrusts the reality of his vocation, and abandons it. But since to do this is considered a disgrace, sad conflicts arise often between duty and inclination, and the poor young clerk fights a hard battle with himself, perplexing terribly his unripe judgment.

If "Heaven has all," he solaces his heart with verse, and his lays gain by the real feeling that his regret or his resolution puts into them. The Kloers never print their compositions, but nevertheless they have to bear the brunt of severe criticism. Critics are always ready in the tailors and the millers, who are envious of the superior knowledge of the clerks. The ragmen, too, if they must be outshone as bards, have their revenge as judges. When once the Kloer is an actual priest, his business is to decry and anathematize his former life; he therefore takes advantage of his liberty, while yet the sun is shining for him. But in his maturity the Breton preacher I think very eloquent, and the poetry of his old Kloer days often plays with a mild light over this religious exhortations.

The Breton instrument of music is a rebec with three cords, which serves to accompany the chanting of these rustic minstrels. Sometimes the air is composed at the moment, according to necessity and taste, and the same themes are constantly repeated, as well as the same chorus, which is generally something popular, well-known, and liked by the whole auditory. There is a strange charm about these songs, which put new thoughts into old diction, - for the Breton used by the peasants is the same language as that of the early bards of the country, although the language of the educated classes in the province has been greatly modified. When the people sing the old ballads of the country, words and language fit together. No doubt centuries of oral tradition have worked change in the original traditions. Some of these are remarkable. Merlin, of course, figures in many, as in the old stories of Wales; but a favourite heroine is no other than Héloïse, she of the "deep solitudes and awful cells." She is here transformed into a sorceress of the very worst description, who, under the name of Loïza, is repeatedly apostrophized. The people listen with awe when she is named, and when they hear the words, "Loïza! Loïza, take heed for your soul! If this world is yours, the next belongs to God!" a shudder runs through the whole crowd. On days of Pardon, as the religious fairs are called, these crowds assemble in the squares of the great towns, and will listen, not for hours only, but for days together, to a drama that is being made while it is being acted. If a Breton singer happens to be a man of conscience as well as of talent, he can do much good. This was the case with a lame peasant of Basse-Cournouaille, who was

exercising, a few years ago, a great influence over the people. He was nicknamed Loïz-Kam, or Louis the Lamé, and looked like one of the dwarfs kept at a king's court of old; he was full of sense, and wit, and quick perception. He had no objection to be thought a conjurer, and was not offended at the strange stories that were current on the subject of his powers; such a belief gave him an advantage over his uneducated hearers, which he did not use for an ill purpose. Drunkenness prevails amongst the lower order of the Bretons, and, at their grand Pardons, it is seldom that the solemnity passes away without scenes of distressing brutality. Louis Kam always took occasion in this own parish to attract an immense crowd round him, and by persuasive eloquence and vivid pictures, drawn in songs, upon the horror of this beastly vice, he achieved throughout his own district a triumph similar to that of Father Mathew.

Quite lately I happened to be witness of a scene at St. Pol de Léon, which was very striking and characteristic. There had been a frightful murder in the district, which, being the newest and most fascinating event, was chosen for his theme by a blind minstrel at the fair. A large crowd had assembled round him, and he had already named his subject, and prefaced his poem by an exordium, when he paused suddenly and addressed the auditors:

Christians," said he, "before we go further let us all say a Pater and a De profundis for the assassin and his victim."

At these words he took off his hat, a movement which was generally followed. All made the sign of the cross; he then recited several expiatory prayers, to which the rest responded; having done that he resumed his ballad, and so went on to relate his story.

When cholera prevailed in Brittany, the wandering singers took that as their theme, and, instructed by the doctors and the authorities, put into song the proper remedies which should be used in the treatment of the malady. Thus people were taught readily to take those precautions which their indolence or ignorance would in no other way have cared to study.

I have alluded to the great religious meetings of the Bretons, called their Pardons. They are quite peculiar to the province, and they date their origin back to the early ages after Druidism had disappeared. In fact they are remnants of the ceremonies of the ancient pagans, of which a great number of vestiges occur in Brittany.

Every great Pardon lasts at least three days. On the eve of the first day, all the bells of all the churches are set ringing; all the chapels are adorned with garlands and vases of fresh flowers; the saints in their niches, and over their alters, are dressed in the national costume; and, in particular, the saint who is the patron of the district, is dressed like a bride or bridegroom, as the case may be. If the saint be a female, she has a white coif put upon her head, ornamented with a multitude of little mirrors, such as early brides in Brittany wear on the wedding-day. If the saint be a gentleman, he wears in this breast the customary bouquet, gay with floating ribbons, which distinguishes a bridegroom in his glory.

Towards evening the chapel is swept, and it is customary to throw chapel dust up into the air, in order that the wind may be favourable to those who are coming in from the adjacent islands on the morrow. Immediately afterwards all the gifts that are to be offered to the holy patron of the place, are spread out in a conspicuous part of the nave. These gifts are generally sacks of corn, hanks of flax, fleeces of young lambs or ewes, new hives of honey, and such rustic treasures. Less than a century ago it was usual at this time to dance in the chapel; but at present the dance takes place on the green in front, where there is sure to be a fountain dedicated to a saint.

Formerly the bonfire never was omitted late at night, but of late years even the bonfire has fallen a good deal into disuse. In some hamlets, however, it is still abided by, with all the rites thereto belonging. A high pole adorned with a garland is set up in the midst of light wood shavings and heather. To the light shavings fire is set, and the whole company, with wild cries, songs, and prayer, watches until the flame shall have leaped high enough to catch the garland at the top. Directly after this has happened, all dance twelve times round the pole, and then the old men place a circle of stones round the fire, in the midst of which there is a cauldron fixed. Formerly meat for the priests used to be cooked in that pot, but now people content themselves by filling it with water. Children throw into the water, as it boils, pieces of metal, and then fixing bits of reed to the two handles, they cause the whole machine to discourse excellent music.

By daybreak the next morning visitors come in bands to the Pardon, from all parts of Brittany, singing and shouting prayers. As soon as each band gets within sight of the church spire, all the people go down on their knees, and make the sign of the cross. If the Pardon be held in a town near the sea, the water is at this time covered with vessels, from every one of which proceeds the same chorus of prayer.

Sometimes whole cantons arrive at once, bringing the banners of their parishes, and headed by their priests. The clergy of the Pardon always advance to receive and welcome them.

After vespers there takes place a grand procession. The young men and the maids, in all the pomp of costume, walk in long close lines, with infinite devotion, followed by bands of sailors, who go barefooted and sometimes almost unclad, if they happen to have made vows when in fear of shipwreck. The procession pauses at the cemetery of the town, where prayers are said, and in these prayers it is usual for the lord of the manor and his family to join.

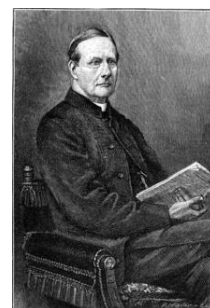
The whole level plain is covered by this time with tents, under which pilgrims pass the night in vigils, and in listening to the religious songs. The minstrels go from one part to another of the whole encampment, singing no songs that are not of a serious kind, because the whole of the first day of the Pardon must be spent in holy thoughts. Worldly amusements are to follow.

At dawn on the second day worldly thoughts and pleasures are permitted to rush in; then began all the amusements of a fair, and its excesses. The Kloers may then sing their love-songs for the last time, if they mean to hold by their choice of the priestly calling. Then it is that those famous dramas are performed, which last several days, and which are the last existing remnants of the Mysteries and Moralities that were the delight of our forefathers in almost all countries.

The Pardon here described I saw at Rosporden in Finistère.

❧

Because this travel account is an example of how the *Barzaz Breiz* and other popular Breton literature about song and customs had an influence on British travel writers of the late 19th century, I must also add an excerpt from **S. Baring-Gould's publication, A Book of Brittany (London: Methuen & Co.) from 1901**. Here (pages 172-174) the author chastises English travel writers for their glorification of the *Barzaz Breiz*. And he provides a very harsh criticism of la Villemarqué as an unwitting fraud. But, ironically enough, Baring-Gould goes on in the very next paragraph to provide one of the most garbled and strange descriptions of Breton music and dancing



one will find. And certainly, like other travel writers of his time, he makes no effort to be diplomatic in his judgment of Breton music.

... In 1837 M. de la Villemarqué published his *Barzaz breiz*, a collection that purported to be made from the lips of the Bretons of their traditional ballads, historical, legendary, and mythological.

The *Barzaz breiz* was hailed with enthusiasm in France and was crowned by the Academy.

So years passed, and others, notably M. Luzel, began to collect. Then he found that what he gathered was not quite the same as what De la Villemarqué had given to the world, and that of some of the most interesting historical and poetical pieces not a trace could anywhere be discovered.

De la Villemarqué was an amiable and well-intentioned man, and none suspected him of forgery. But what had taken place was this. He had largely "restored" ballads of which he had picked up mere fragments; he did this without indicating where his restorations came in. Worse than this, he had accepted a budget of contributions forwarded to him by at least one friend whom he trusted, and who had manufactured the pieces and passed them off on the uncritical and unsuspecting De la Villemarqué as genuine antiques.

He was not satisfied without giving to those pieces which he himself heard a fictitious. For instance, the Bretons have a song strictly like our familiar – "Sing as song of One O! What shall I sing you?"

Now, De la Villemarqué touched it up adding lines of his own to convert it into a Druidic lesson imparting deep mysteries to a pupil. Not a word of this occurs in the genuine ballad.

The *Barzaz breiz*, after having hoaxed the Academy and pretty nearly every English traveler in Brittany, who flies to it to extract padding for his volume of travels, has fallen into disrepute; and although the learned are unwilling to say hard words of a man who sought to popularize the ballads of his native land and dealt with them in a stupid manner, they can trust to the genuineness of no single piece in the collection unless its counterpart can be found in the volumes of M. Luzel.

De la Villemarqué should have named his authorities and have indicated what alterations he had introduced into the text, and should have left copies of the ballads as he received them. But he had the example of such men as Bishop Percy and Sir Walter

Scott before him, and he followed their traces. He has been termed the Macpherson of Brittany.

The musical instrument in general use among the Bretons is the *biniau*, a bagpipe, but differing in some particulars from the Scottish national instrument. The bagpipe is the most ancient wind instrument in Europe. It was formerly very widely diffused. At Aruns in the Pyrenees is a white marble font, on which is represented in carving a marriage feast of the fifteenth century, and a man is figured thereon playing a bagpipe to the dancers. So also at Marychurch in Devon a bagpipe player is represented; so also on a bench-end of the fifteenth century at Altarnon in Cornwall. The Breton *biniau* differs mainly from the Scottish national instrument in this, that the former is played by two persons, one with the chanter or melody pipe, the other as a bag with one drone, and a smaller pipe which he fingers to vary the accompaniment.

The Highland bagpipe is played by one person. It has a chanter for the melody, and there are three drones which lie over the shoulder; these produce the note A, the long one an octave lower than the other two.

There are but two dances that can be considered as national in Brittany, the *gavotte* and the *ping-pong*. The latter consists in the partners holding each other by the little finger in walking up the line of *contre-danse* till they find a gap, whereupon they whirl each other round three times, and then saunter forward finger-locked again. It is not a picturesque and pretty dance as is the *gavotte*.

Breton music is not of a good quality; the popular melodies are poor, miserably so, as compared with those of Ireland, Wales and Cornwall. And the ecclesiastical music in the churches is rendered badly by harsh voices. Possibly the dismal *biniau* has militated against good music.



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We would like to hear of your travels

If you have had the good fortune to travel to Brittany – recently or in the past – we would love to have your travel account. Were there favorite places you loved to visit? Did you meet memorable people? Did you hear the Breton language in your travels???!! Did you have the chance to do some dancing, or hear good music? How was Brittany like (or unlike) other Celtic countries you have visited?

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