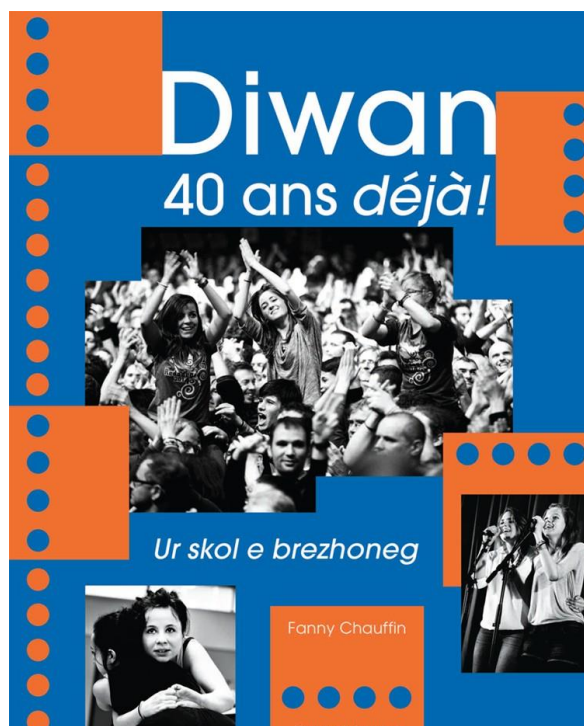


BRO NEVEZ

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



Diwan Breton language schools – 40 years already!

KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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The **U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language (U.S. ICDBL)** was incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation on October 20, 1981. **Bro Nevez** ("new country" in the Breton language) is the newsletter produced by the U.S. ICDBL. It is published quarterly: February/March, May/June, August/September and November/December. Contributions, letters to the Editor, and ideas are welcome from all readers and will be printed at the discretion of the Editor.

The U.S. ICDBL provides Bro Nevez on a complimentary basis to a number of language and cultural organizations in Brittany to show our support for their work. Your Membership/ Subscription allows us to do this. Membership (which includes subscription) for one year is \$20. Checks should be in U.S. dollars, made payable to "U.S. ICDBL" and mailed to Lois Kuter at the address above.

This newsletter can be sent as a PDF file attached to an e-mail instead of, or in addition to, the print version. Just let the Editor know how you would like to receive it. The e-mail version is much more colorful than the photocopied print copy!

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

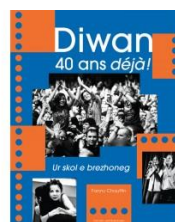
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Editorial

While those of you who receive this newsletter by e-mail may find it before the month of June ends, those receiving it by regular mail will not see it until July, and with the American 4th of July holiday its postal delivery will be a bit delayed. Nevertheless, I hope you will find the contents interesting. If you would like to receive *Bro Nevez* by e-mail (which will give you color images!) please let me know – Lois Kuter

Some New Books from Brittany



Fanny Chauffin. Diwan, 40 ans déjà ! Pédagogie et créativité – les écoles immersives en langue bretonne: quarante ans d'actions. Yoran Embanner 2017. 359 pages. ISBN 978-2-916579-96-2.

In 1977 Diwan was launched with five pre-schoolers taken under the wing of Denez Abernot, a musician in the ground-breaking band called Storlok and member of the Breton language theater troupe Ar Bro Bagan. He was not trained as a teacher but used his creativity to engage children in using the Breton language to play and learn about the world around them.

Creativity is a key notion in this book that presents both the successes and challenges of the Diwan Breton language immersion schools which now span pre-school through high school. From five children Diwan has grown to 4,242 (2016-17 school year) inspiring in its wake bilingual programs in the public schools (created in 1985) and in Catholic schools (beginning in 1991). Today these programs have over 17,000 children. But Diwan schools represent just 1% of school children of Brittany. And these immersive (and bilingual) school programs alone will not insure the future of the Breton language. Children will master this language as a living language only if they are part of a wider community of speakers.

There are challenges – an often-cited one being the difference between the "standard" language learned by children in a school environment vs. the various dialects and richer vocabulary of native speakers whose language reflects daily life and emotions. Chauffin presents the fragile state of Breton language education but also shows that Diwan has been effective in enabling children to go beyond the classroom to make Breton a central part of their lives – and especially of creative arts such as song, theater, audiovisual media, and literature.

The author poses many questions and does not offer easy answers. How do you create opportunities for children to gain fluency in a language that is not

spoken in their home, or spoken by just one parent? How do you create opportunities for children learning a “school” language to learn the subtleties, pronunciations, and expressive richness from native speakers in their community? How do you foster an openness on the part of Breton speakers that will support Breton learners to hone their language skills instead of slamming the door on them because the Breton they speak is “non-traditional” or less “pure”? How do you expand immersion in a language beyond the school room? How do you support a needed standardization for written Breton with a more flexible oral Breton that respects variations and dialects?

Chauffin presents some of the internal debate within Diwan, the financial challenges, as well as outright attacks by those who consider Diwan to be anti-French. Through the years, parents and supporters have had to be imaginative in fundraising and teachers have needed to fill considerable gaps in curricula and reading materials. This has resulted in a great deal of positive creativity. This has included the creation of magazines for children like *Cholori*, then *Talabao* and now *Rouzig*. And schools and their supporters have created annual festivals like Taol Kurun or running events like Tro Mennez Arre and the Redadeg. From eco-fairs to Christmas markets and flea markets, parents and fund-raisers have created events where a larger community can learn about Diwan and where the Breton language takes on a role outside the classroom. Diwan has also had a regular presence at book fairs, festivals and festoù noz.

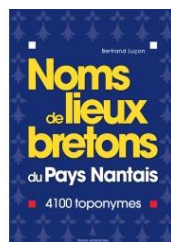
Fanny Chauffin eloquently presents – often in the words of Diwan students, parents, and teachers/administrators – the impact of Diwan in stimulating the production of traditional and non-traditional song and music. Students have often participated in competitions like the Kan ar Bobl or inter-lycée music gathering. Diwan students have also been active in theater workshops and production, audiovisual and internet projects, and literature (poetry, theater pieces, news for radio and internet, novels, and short stories). The needs of Diwan and the bilingual school programs have generated an artistic production that might otherwise have remained dormant. Chauffin argues convincingly that opportunities to use the Breton language in the arts and for fun activities outside of school encourage all ages of Diwan children to embrace Breton as a spontaneous part of their lives outside the classroom.

This book is focused not just on Diwan but touches on the experience of immersion schools for Basque, Welsh, Catalan and other languages of Europe. From the start, those creating Diwan studied the situation of other immersion schools, learning from them and borrowing ideas and resources. And this continues today. While the challenges Diwan faces are different from those of Welsh, Irish, Basque or other immersion

schools, the success of these schools in supporting language acquisition and in encouraging children to creatively use the language outside the classroom is shared.

This book is a revision of Fanny Chauffin’s doctoral thesis and she has clearly done a vast amount of research on language acquisition, often citing other studies of bilingual and immersion education. It has an “academic” style at times, but is highly readable, presenting a wealth of documentation.

While painting a realistic picture of the challenges for the future of the Breton language, this book also celebrates the wider impact Diwan schools have had on preparing students to engage not only in the creation of traditional and less traditional language arts, but also to be open to the voices of their local community and the far reaches of the world.



Bertrand Luçon. *Noms de lieux Bretons du Pays Nantais* – 4100 toponymes. Yoran Embanner 2017. 510 pages. ISBN 978-2-916579-95-5.

This is not a book you read cover-to-cover like a novel, but this book is full of interesting information about the Breton language and its presence in place names in the Pays Nantais. The author begins by defining the area of study – the Pays Nantais and not the department of Loire-Atlantique which does not correspond to the historically recognized area of Pays Nantais. He carefully describes the sources for place names presented in the book which include maps, surveys, ancient manuscripts as well as oral accounts about names. Luçon also notes previous studies of place names of the late 19th century to the present that have focused on all or part of the Nantes country. In each case he notes the strengths and weaknesses which impact the quality of information to be drawn from all these resources.

Breton toponyms are place names created by a population that spoke Breton and that bear characteristics of the Breton language. With changes made to names through time, certifying that a name is definitely Breton is extremely challenging. Luçon makes a conservative estimate of 6,000 names that can be considered Breton. And 4,100 of these are presented in 300 of the 510 pages of the book by general categories:

A – names with Breton elements designating habitation such as *ker*, *trev*, *lez*, *kastell*, etc.

B – names with Breton elements related to communication and travel routes – *hent*, *ri*, *leur*, etc.

C – names with Breton elements for names of people, religion, or occupations
 D – names related to landscape and agriculture - *koad, ran, dour, kloz*, etc.
 E – names related to water / wetlands – *palud, loc'h, stêr*, etc.
 F – names related to the seaside – *arvor, traezh, porzh*, etc.
 G – names related to land relief such as mountains and valleys – *menez, roz, traoñ*, etc.
 H – names related to flora and fauna
 I – names related to salt marshes – which have been an important economy in the area around Guerande where Breton was spoken until recent times.
 J – names of communities

Maps showing the location of names are very useful. Indexes of both place names and people's names are very helpful in tracking down a particular name one might want to find.

For those who really want to delve into the details which are important in an accurate study of place names, the author presents specific traits of Breton found in the Pays Nantais – morphography, mutations, lexicology, and presents the bilingual history where Roman, French and Gallo influences impacted the place of the Breton language as well as its pronunciation and vocabulary. One can well understand the author's caution in verifying Breton origins for place names with the complex history of the Nantes Pays where different languages co-existed for centuries. And one understands his desire to see more study be done.

The study of Breton place names shows that the Breton language has been spoken in the Nantes Pays for 1,500 years. Contrary to those who would like to claim that the Loire-Atlantique Department is not "Breton," and that the Breton language was never spoken in Nantes, this study shows that indeed Nantes has always had a population of Breton speakers – and they were not imported from western Brittany.

While the Breton language has been pushed to the west of the Nantes Pays over time, it persisted longer in this southern part of Brittany than it did in the north. In the western area of Pays Nantais – the area of Guérande and the coastal communities – Breton was the pre-dominant language spoken up to the early 20th century. The villages of Batz-sur-Mer held out the longest and Breton was an everyday language in some communities until the 1960s. The last of the native speakers died in the early 1970s with some elderly residents maintaining bits of Breton for several decades longer.

For those interested in the history of Brittany and the Breton language this is a valuable and interesting

resource. And this book leaves no doubt that Nantes and the Pays Nantais are Breton.



Yves Mathelier. *Le Breton parlé dans le pays guérandais – Ar gwenranneg, mémoire d'une amnésie*. Yoran Embanner 20167. 506 pages. ISBN 978-2-916579-91-7.

This is a book that will be of great interest to those who want to dig into the history and linguistic diversity within the Breton language. Yves Mathelier succeeds in offering the most complete work to date on the Breton of the Guérande area of the Pays Nantais where Breton was spoken until the 1960s. The important presence of Breton in the Nantes Pays until recent times is certainly one more strong argument for the re-integration of the Loire-Atlantique Department into the Region of Brittany.

Through both archival research and the study of works by 19th and 20th century scholars such as Emile Ernault, François Cadic, Pierre Le Roux and Gildas Buron, the author summarizes what has been written about the linguistic specificity of the Breton spoken in the Guérande area. The book starts off with texts collected in the late 19th century and phrases collection up until the mid 20th century. These form an important basis for the analysis of the structure and unique aspects of this Breton.

The bulk of the book – some 300 pages – is a dictionary of words found in the documentation collected and studied. Each word is translated into French and identified as a noun (masculine or feminine gender) or verb, adverb, etc. Versions of the word in other dialects of Breton are also provided, and for many words a Cornish or Welsh equivalent is given and sometimes Scottish Gaelic or Irish is also included. The author adds a short note and draws on observations of other scholars to describe important characteristics.

Here's a sample with my translation of notes and [added explanation of abbreviations].

Blè (n. m.), *loup* [wolf]
bleiz (KLT) [Cornouaille-Léon-Trégor]
blei (GW) [Gwenedeg – Vannetais]
beydh (KER) [Kerneveureg – Cornish]
blaidd (CYM) [Kenbraeg – Welsh]
Plural blèi, bleizi (KLT)
bleidi (GW)
bleydhes (KER)
bleiddiaid (CYM)

Once more we note the disappearance of the z, which is characteristic of South-Armorican Breton. As

Pierre Le Roux showed for singular as well as plural (A.L.B.B, map 35) [Atlas Linguistique de Basse-Bretagne]

The book's listing of French words with the Breton equivalent is very helpful for those who might seek a particular word in the dictionary.

In the next 100 pages Mathelier launches into more detailed analysis of the Breton of Guérande.. He begins with pronunciation and the specific features of Guérande Breton gleaned from written texts and the analysis of earlier scholars. This is a challenging area since the last fragment of written Breton was collected in 1959 and very few traces were to be gleaned from people who might have remembered hearing it in their youth. While Vannetais Breton also has an accent on the last syllable, Guérande Breton is distinctive in having a very strong accent on the last syllable. Today one can hear this in the pronunciation of French in this area. The author also discusses the pronunciation of vowels and consonants that are distinctive to the Guérande dialect of Breton.

Grammar is also examined for what is characteristic of the Guérande dialect. Like other dialects of Breton, mutation of particular consonants beginning a word is found, but the situations that provoke a mutation vary. Also discussed are the treatment of articles, numbers and the expression of time, nouns, adjectives, pronouns, prefixes and suffixes, adverbs, prepositions, verbs and phrasing.

Those less interested in the linguistic details will perhaps find the final essays of the book the most approachable – and I would recommend these as a great starting point. First is “the place of Breton speaking in the Bourg de Batz within the linguistic space of Brittany.” This summarizes the arguments for the Breton of Guérande to be recognized as a distinct dialect and not just a “patois” derived from Vannetais Breton. Also discussed are traces of the Breton language in the Roman dialects of the Nantes Pays, with an exploration of the influence on and of neighboring Gallo dialects.

A final essay presents the “history of the Breton language in the Pays Nantais.” Very helpful maps show the location of Breton speakers from the end of the Roman empire through westward movement in this area to the last of its speakers in the 1960s.

Like Bertrand Luçon's new book on Breton place names in the Pays Nantais, this book on the history and linguistic distinctiveness of Breton in the Guérande area definitively places the Breton language in this southeastern area of Brittany, underlining the justice of re-integrating the Loire-Atlantique into Brittany.



International Award for Welsh Writer and Translator Gwyn Griffiths

Press Release from Francis Boutle Publishers
www.francisboutle.co.uk



A short introduction to the bilingual anthology of Welsh literature co-edited by Gwyn Griffiths and Meic Stephens was included in the last issue of Bro Nevez (March 2017). Here I am reprinting a press release noting

the award of the 2017 Translation Prize to Gwyn Griffiths, who has served for many years as the Welsh representative for the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language.

Welsh writer Gwyn Griffiths of Pontypridd has been awarded the 2017 Translation Prize at the minority languages literary festival held in Ostana, northern Italy. The prize was partly in recognition of his work as co-editor of two volumes in the important series of anthologies in European lesser-used languages, published by Francis Boutle Publishers.

The festival, described as both “a workshop and a celebration of the diversity of the world's languages”, aims at promoting and raising world-wide awareness of minority languages.

Ostana is a tiny village high above the Po Valley, in a part of Italy where Occitan is still spoken. Occitan, the language of the troubadours, can still be heard across a wide swathe of southern France, in a number of valleys in northern Italy and one valley in Catalonia. It has official status in Italy and Catalonia, but not in France.

Among others honoured at the festival were Joséphine Bacon, a Canadian who writes in Innu and French; the young Norwegian poet Erlend O. Nødtvedt; and Roland Pécout of Provence, who writes in Occitan. Salem Zenia who writes in the Amazigh-Kabyla language was also honoured as was Samir Aït Belkacem who makes films in the Kabyla language, both of North Africa.

Griffiths's latest book in the Francis Boutle Lesser Used Languages of Europe series is the newly published The Old Red Tongue, a bilingual anthology of Welsh literature spanning 1500 years, which he co-edited with writer and academic Meic Stephens. His other work in the series was The Turn of the Ermine, an anthology of Breton language literature published in 2006, which he coedited with the Breton writer Jacqueline Gibson.

This is the third time Francis Boutle Publishers have received awards from the Ostana festival. Two years ago the publishers received a prize for its lesser used languages series, along with James Thomas, editor and translator of Grains of Gold, the anthology of Occitan literature from the same series.

ABER – A Breton Literary Magazine

www.aber-bzh.info

ABER was created in 2000 and has been directed since by Pierrette Kermaol. The 67th issue (spring 2017) went out last month.

The objective of the journal is to foster literary creation and criticism and in a broader sense intellectual life in Breton. ABER aims at expressing the world in a Breton perspective.

ABER publishes original literary works in Breton and translations from foreign languages (Irish, Welsh, Basque, English, German etc.). And its analysis and in depth look at Breton and foreign literary texts is one of its features.

In 2006, ABER started publishing in Breton original literary works, translations and reviews, literary and historical essays and more. For example, it has published two books by pupils of Diwan schools and is now completing a translation of the French theatre works of Tanguy Malmanche. A good idea of the wealth of materials to be found can be found on the ABER website. And the website is very user-friendly for English speakers.

But it seemed worth including here a more eloquent introduction to ABER written by Pierrette Kermaol and published in the first issue of the magazine published in 2001.

Lavar Breizh Language and Brittany

Pierrette Kermaol

The builders of the modern Breton literature did not comply with any tradition while not ignoring any of them. One of their most determinant achievements, albeit rarely noticed, is the invention of a new language. After centuries of silence, it expresses the Breton looking at the world in the very sense Kazantzaki told of the Cretan looking at the world.

Roparz Hemon, the pre-eminent figure of the movement, in a serial story published in Gwalarn in 1925-1926, portrays the tour that Professor Bimbochet, a French visitor, is making in year 2125 in a sovereign Brittany. Looking 200 years back, Donalda, a feminine*

character of the fiction, voices the amazement the young artist experienced himself at his unprecedented undertaking to create a literature to Brittany: "What a miracle had it been, seeing a brand new language springing up, being shaped, so to speak, between one's own fingers, a new instrument to carve their thoughts."

Strange to his readers and to himself, the new language he creates is the token of a genuine artist. Every writer in the world faces this difficult and urgent issue. It is neither harder —nor easier— for Bretons but only more urgent, for the only strength that we have holds in the language we are able to breed. We have no State to rely upon; our recent and distant history is distorted and falsified; Breton people are not familiar with their own language in spite of the increasing number of initiatives for its reappropriation.

*There is no other motive for Aber**. The journal will publish contemporary fiction, poetry and critical reviews on artistic achievements from Brittany and overseas. One of its ambitions is to attract attention and cooperation among Breton, as well as other, readers and writers. To that aim each issue will contain a brief summary or an excerpt in English of the Breton articles.*

*In addition Aber intends to promote exchanges of literary writings with journals abroad. The present issue includes a translation of Cogadh —War— a short story by Daithí Ó Muirí that appeared in Comhar*** in December 1999. In exchange, Comhar will publish an Irish version of Ar marc'hadour bihan sardin —The little sardinemonger—, by Pierrette Kermaol.*

** Gwalarn —North-West— points the direction to Ireland, was created in 1925 as a literary supplement to Breiz Atao —Brittany for ever—, the monthly journal of the nationalist movement. From 1927 until 1944, Gwalarn came out as an independent publication.*

*** Aber —fiord—. The three abers of Brittany are on the NorthWest coast facing Ireland.*

**** Comhar Teoranta, 5 Rae Mhuirfean, BÁC 2, Eire.*



A Few Notable Bretons of the 19th and 20th Century – Part 2

From: **Jean-Loup Avril, *Mille Bretons – dictionnaire biographique***, 2nd edition. Les Portes du Large, 2003.

As I did for the previous issue of *Bro Nevez* I have translated a few of the entries in this dictionary of 1,000 Bretons who have been notable in a number of areas. The ones here have contributed in the field of Breton language writing. LK

François Jaffrennou, Grand-Bard Taldir

Celtic writer. Born March 15, 1879 in Carnoët, near Callac (Côtes d'Armor); died in Bergerac, March 23, 1956. Jaffrennou was a personality of the Breton movement of the first half of the 20th century. A student at the Saint-Charles School in St. Brieuc, he met François Vallée. With him, in 1898, he participated in the creation of the Union Régionaliste Bretonne in Morlaix. When a law student in Rennes, he founded the Fédération des Étudiants Bretons in 1900. In 1904 he created a printing company in Carhaix and launched *Ar Vro*, a monthly magazine in Breton, and *Ar Bobl*, a bilingual weekly journal. These two publications were produced up until 1914.

After the war of 1914-1918 Jaffrennou returned to Carhaix and worked in a wine commerce. He devoted himself to the "Gorsedd" which had Yves Berthou as its grand-druid, and organized an important annual congress. In 1927 Jaffrennou launched *An Oaled*, a quarterly journal that was published until the War of 1939-1945. During the Occupation, Jaffrennou contributed to *La Bretagne*, the regionalist daily newspaper of Yann Fouéré. For these activities he was severely sentenced at the Liberation. Jaffrennou's work in Breton is considerable. It includes poetry, songs, plays. His thesis on Prosper Proux was the first to be sustained in Breton at the University of Rennes in 1913.

References:

Lucien Raoul, *Un siècle de journalisme breton*. Le Guilvinec, Editions Le Signor, 1981.
Sophie Souquet, "Taldir, barde de Cornouaille," *Bulletin de l'Association Bretonne*, 2001, pp 315-374.

Yann Sohier

Breton militant. Born in Loudéac, September 10, 1901; died in Plourivo (Côtes d'Armor), March 21, 1935. After serving as a policeman in Loudéac, his father became a tax collector in Lamballe where the young Yann was a student in the upper primary school from 1912 to 1918. In 1918 he entered the École Normale in St. Brieuc. It was there, seduced by the writings of Anatole Le Braz, that he began to learn Breton. A teacher in Tregor, in Tréguiez, Plouguiel and Quempervan, he was placed in Plourivo in 1929.

In 1929 he participated in the first congress of Breiz Atao in Rosporden, retuning convinced that the Breton language should not be exclusively used by the clergy. In 1933 he founded *Ar Falz*, a monthly bulletin for public school teachers in favor of teaching the Breton language.

A Communist, he wrote: "We are revolutionaries, our sympathies go to the USSR, protectors of national

minorities." He was a friend of Marcel Cachin who had a home in Plourivo, but also of the Abbé Perrot, an ardent defender of Breton. Both of them attended his funeral in Plourivo. At that time a young man like Yann Sohier could die of blood poisoning from a cut.

His Breton teaching manuel *Me a lenno*, illustrated by R.Y. Creston, was published in 1941.

Reference:

Paolig Combot, "Yann Sohier, un instituteur laïc en Bretagne dans les années trente." *Ar Falz* 1983, no. 42-43, pp. 30-36.

Jean-Pierre Calloc'h, named Bleimor

Breton language poet. Born on the Island of Groix, July 24, 1888; killed on the Front, April 10, 1917, in Urvilliers near Saint-Quentin. Son of a sailor, he spent his childhood on his birth isle of Groix. Due to his intelligence his Education Supervisory sent him to do his secondary studies at the Petit Séminaire de Sainte-Anne d'Auray. His first writings were in French, but most of his work is in Vannetais Breton. This includes poetry, dramatic works, historical studies, and articles with the pseudonym Bleimor, sea-wolf. Jean-Pierre Calloc'h was an active member of the Union Régionaliste Bretonne. In 1915 he studied with the École de Saint-Maix, graduating as a mid-shipman.

References:

Pierre Bernard, "Yann-Ber Kalloc'h, un poète foudroyé," *Dalc'homp Sonj* 1988, No. 20, pp. 2-8.
Dr. Léon Palaux, *Un barde breton: Jean-Pierre Calloc'h - Bleimor, Sa vie et ses œuvres inédites*. Quimper, 1926. 320 pp.

Loeiz Herrieu (Louis Henrio)

Breton language writer. Born January 27, 1879, in Caudan near Lorient in a family of farmers. Died in Auray, May 22, 1953. After studies in Lorient he established a farm near Hennebont and devoted himself to the renovation of the Breton language of the Vannetais area. He well-earned his bardic name of Barz Labourer. In 1905, with his friend André Mellac, he founded the magazine *Dihunamb* (wake us up) which was published in Vannetais Breton and appeared up until 1944. In 1906 he established the bi-weekly bilingual publication *Le Réveil Breton* which became *Le Pays Breton* and was published up to his being drafted into the army in 1914.

Loeiz Herrieu was intensely active in the promotion of teaching Breton which he developed in organizing contests for school children. He was secretary for the Union Régionaliste Bretonne and the Gorsedd of Bards. Having published articles about the Breton culture in *L'Heure Bretonne* during World War II he had to hide in 1944, but was acquitted in 1949.

Loeiz Herrieu's works in Breton are numerous. They include poetry, theater pieces for youth, stories, memoirs of the First War, and songs for soldiers. He collected *Les Chansons populaires d Pays de Vannes* and published *Panorama de la littérature breton depuis les origines jusqu'au XXe siècle*.

Reference :

François Falc'hun, "Les Lettres bretonnes en deuil (à propos de Loeiz Herrieu)," *Annales de Bretagne* 1953, 60 pp. 432-433.



Deep inside a Breton skull 52 - Human and animal diversity

Jean Pierre Le Mat

The citizens of the big cities are pleased when they give lessons of tolerance and diversity to us, rural people and archaic fellows of Brittany. They show us their sidewalks, their offices and their restaurants, where white, black, people of all colors come together.

In their televisions, they tell us that we must admire their open-mindedness.

Deep inside my Breton skull, I am not convinced.

I attended international congresses and I attended Breton agricultural fairs too. In international congresses, sure, you meet people with different colors of skin. They speak very different languages, although they usually have English as their common language. But I do not find them very different from each other. They follow international fashion styles. They usually wear the same clothes, or clothes of the same quality. Their glaze is similar. They are of comparable size. Their foreheads, noses, mouths look like each other.

When television interviews great urban dwellers, they show the same expressions, the same gestures. Unlike the rural people, when they speak English, I have no trouble understanding them. I found in their hopes, their fears, their anger, their joys, a common ideal of material or intellectual comfort. They share the same concerns and same ambitions. They are reasonable. Reason is so French! But Reason bears no diversity. It is unique and universal. The great urban dwellers seem to be built on the same reasonable, unique and universal model.

To meet the diversity, go to an agricultural fair in Brittany! You will not regret it.

Of course, the white color of the skin largely predominates. That is a genetic tradition. You will see

some individuals of other skin colors, integrated into our community by adoption or by marriage. Sure, I meet people there much more different than those attending international congresses or speaking on television.

Formerly, at the time when each parish had its own fashions, the garments were very variegated. At a local agricultural fair, you can meet now men and women for whom international fashions are either distant or inaccessible.



Look at the heads of my fellow peasants! Frail or massive heads, very high or very low foreheads, tiny or enormous noses, pale or reddish faces, absent or prominent chins.

The speech rates varied a lot, but it is the gaze that brings me wonder. The color of the eyes is probably a key element. In these gazes the sun of the fields and the shade of the stables have been printed. Caring for animals has a real influence. I could sometimes guess that one is breeding cows, another pigs, another guinea fowls. Some part of the behavior and instincts of your beasts skips into your behavior.



Besides the look, retention and gesture are different. The people who work in offices have gestures linked to their own thoughts. Gestures of breeders are adapted to their animal

environment. Physical strength is expressed differently depending on whether you are dealing with a 500 kg cattle or 500 chickens of 1 kg each.

Not far from the agricultural fair, I encounter diversity in our ditches and on our embankments. Vegetal diversity of the Breton trails! Horsetail, fern, clover, and rye grass mingle together. Few shimmering colors but thousands of shapes, thousands of strategies of life and reproduction. The opposite of international botanical exhibitions.

A human ecology exists. The environment of people working in large companies or administrations are similar enough, and they end up resembling each other, regardless of latitude, language or skin color. The great city-dwellers are closer one to another than they are close to the breeder nearby. On the one hand, a mass of inert materials limiting the horizon, where

everything is useful for mankind. On the other hand, herds of non-human living beings, animals which carry an immemorial heritage of genes, behaviors and instincts.

Modern symbols, invented by artists of the big cities, are abstractions which stimulate the mind and amuse our reason. Deep inside my Breton skull, I understand that my ancestors drew animals on the walls of their caves, and picked them as their symbols, the wild boar, the sea horse, the ermine. Old symbols are linked with an ancient part of our brain.



An ancient, primordial part which supports our present identity of civilized Bretons.



A New Website for Breton Song

<https://Kan.bzh>

The Kan (Breton for song) website is a huge resource of information and Breton language song texts. These are drawn from notations made by collectors, printed texts such as the feuilles volantes (broadsheets) and texts published in books or magazines and archived manuscripts.

Discussion and definitions on the site show the complexity of organizing a vast collection of songs from the oral tradition, and in making them accessible through a website search. And there are various ways to look for songs on the website.

Here are some numbers provided for the two main sections of the site which give an idea of the wealth of information to be found and the richness of the Breton song heritage.

Songs from the oral tradition

This site includes songs in Breton from the oral tradition with 1,688 “type-songs.” These type-songs have been found 11,366 times in published or manuscript sources. These findings correspond to 5,844 different versions. For 1,993 of these versions the singer and place of performance are not known. For the others, the songs have been collected from 1,092 performers in 339 communes by 294 collectors. Online PDF consultation is proposed for 1,657 songs. For some 50 of these type-songs one can hear a singer perform them. These examples were drawn from CDs in the Bro Dreger series edited by Kreizenn Sevenadurel Lannuon.

Feuilles Volantes

To create this site, and to classify and analyze the feuilles volantes, 32,000 scans were done in different libraries of Brittany. This study led to a reference for 4,671 feuilles volantes. Of these, 919 were published multiple times, with sometimes up to 27 editions. Online PDF consultation is proposed for 2,767 feuilles volantes. The feuilles volantes include 6,647 songs, corresponding to 5,616 different type-songs. 14% of the songs are in French. Summaries of content for 3,420 songs are available. The songs were composed by 754 authors. They are classified into 206 themes. 173 partitions performed on synthesizer can be heard using MP3 format.



Rouedad Staliou Kan

At the initiative of Louis-Jacques Suignard, a network of 36 Breton language song workshops was created during the past six months. This represents some 500 singers – mostly in western Brittany – who get together regularly to learn and share song. This allows the groups in the network to share song texts with other groups and to create festive occasions to promote performance. This can include exchange visits by groups where not only songs but also dance and food are shared.

This spring a remarkable project called “100 a gan” (100 singing) was launched with the goal of singing a suite of songs for the gavotte on Easter Sunday in Châteauneuf du Faou. And on April 16, over 200 singers did indeed gather, dance, and sing in the first of a kind project. Check out the FaceBook for Rouedad Staliou Kan and this performance on youtube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gPRma7s3hjw>.

The song chosen for “100 a gan” is one that will be of interest to American readers of Bro Nevez: “Son an Amerik” (Song of America). There are different versions of this song and the one chosen for “100 a gan” was composed by Jean Citérin of Spezet sometime in the 1930s. If you have been a long-time reader of Bro Nevez you will have discovered this song in the May/August 1983 newsletter (no. 7/8). And I reproduced it again with the English translation kindly provided by Reun ar C’halan, who was a member of the U.S. ICDBL in the 1980s, in Bro Nevez 103 (August 2007).

For a small contribution I acquired a copy of the song text at the 10th anniversary festival for Dastum in November 1982 at an information stand for the Atelier Régional de Communication Orale (ARCOB), a network of a dozen or so collection groups and

cassette documentation projects for Breton oral culture. When I brought this song home from that trip to Brittany I had no idea that twenty years later I would find it again in a book written by U.S. ICDBL member Raymond Jean Jacq, *It's Better to Laugh Than to Cry – An Immigrant Journey Through the Twentieth Century*.

Published in 2005 this is a book about the life of Raymond Jacq's parents Jean-Louis Jacq (1910-1971) and Marie-Jeanne Conan (1911-1998). Based in large part on a diary his mother kept, as well as extensive research among family members, this book paints a very personal portrait of the lives of a newly married couple who move to the U.S. in 1933. Jean Jacq had already spent three years (1929-1933) living in Paterson, New Jersey, working in the fabric dying mills there. He was among many Bretons who had come to New York and northern New Jersey to find work and earn enough money to go back to Brittany and buy a farm or start a business. Jean Jacq was from Langolen and Marie-Jeanne Conan was from Landudal – both to the northeast of Quimper, and not far from towns and small villages further to the east like Spézet, Châteauneuf-du-Faou, Briec, or Gourin from which many Bretons emigrated to the U.S. in the early 1900s.

The beginning of a large emigration to the U.S. from this part of Brittany can be dated to the recruitment of workers in 1901 by the Michelin company for work first in the factories of Clermont-Ferrand with later transfer to Milltown, New Jersey. In a period of ten years, some 3,000 Bretons had emigrated for work in the Michelin factories where they could earn salaries often six times those at home in Brittany. With the closing of Michelin factories in 1928, Bretons in New Jersey found work at other factories – artificial silk and nylon mills in Lodi and Paterson, chemical plants in Passaic, or steel mills in Trenton. The work was extremely hard and Breton workers did not become rich overnight, and most never got close to their dreams of wealth.

Jean Jacq's work in a dye mill was of this grueling nature. It is no wonder that when he bought a notebook in 1931 the first nine pages would include the neatly written text of a song called "Potred Breiz Izel en Americ." It was Ray Jacq's belief that his father, who loved to sing, might have composed this song which very eloquently describes the experience of workers in New Jersey mills. But this song seems to belong to Brittany's oral tradition and was probably composed by someone else.

The text Ray Jacq reproduces from his father's copybook is virtually identical to the reproduction of the feuille volant (broadsheet) I found in 1982 at the 10th Anniversary of Dastum in Pontivy. In the final three verses the singer (composer?) of "Potred Breiz-Izel en Americ" is identified by hometown:

So as not to declare myself, I will not say my name,

I will say only that I am from Briec-de-l'Odet

*Born in the parish of Sant Toz, in a town on the hill
Destined to travel since I was small in my cradle.*

*From one corner to the other I have seen Lower
Brittany
And I have come to America, pushed by the wind.*

A very similar text ("Son an Amerik") is found on a 1994 CD where 34 of the 53 verses were sung for a gavotte by Jean-Claude Talec and Alain Le Clere (Manuel Kerjean, Bastien Guern, Alain Le Clere, Jean-Claude Talec, *Chants à répondre en Centre Bretagne – Fest noz e Bro Rostren*. Arfolk CD 428, 1994). The jacket notes state that the text was collected from Soaz Citerin of Spézet in 1981. And the final three verses identify yet another singer (composer):

*So as not to declare myself, I will not say my name.
I will say only that I am from the parish of Speied
[Spézet]*

*Born in Rubiou, in a town on the hill
Destined to travel since I was small in my cradle*

*Destined to travel since I was small in my cradle
I will say my name to you, it is Yann Chiterenn.*

Clearly this is a song that remains meaningful in its depiction of the lives of Breton emigrants to the United States who worked in the factories of northern New Jersey. We know from the fact that Jean Jacq carefully entered the text in his notebook in 1931 that it struck a chord with that Breton from Langolen. And we know from the two slightly different texts that it was sung by men of Spézet and Breic-de-l'Odet who probably also knew first-hand the experiences described in the song.

Below is the full text from the broad sheet I found in 1982 and printed in Bro Nevez 7/8 (May/August 1983) and again in Bro Nevez 103 (August 2007) with the translation by Reun ar C'halan. It's worth including here in Bro Nevez for a third time.

Potred Breiz-izel en Americ

Chanson brezonek var eun ton anavezet

The Boys of Lower Brittany in America *A Breton song on a Well-Known Melody*

1. Breman pa z'eo deut ar goan dister ar labourio
Evil temen va amzer, a gompozan sonio.

*Now that winter has come, jobs are scarce
To pass the time, I write songs*

2. N'oun ket na barz na belec, na ker neubend skrivagnour
Mar teuan da fazia, me o ped d'am zikour

*I am neither poet nor cleric, nor am I a writer
If I happen to make mistakes, please come to my help*

3. Da zibuna dirazoc'k, ar pezh zo n'em speret
Euz ar sklera ma hellin, evit beza comprened

*To place before you what is on my mind
As clearly as I can in order to be understood*

4. Monet rin digant va hent, o sellet an daou du
Skei a rin gant va daou zorn, elec'h ma kavin an tu

*I'll go on my way, looking at each side
I'll strike with both hands, whenever I'll find the way*

5. Peb lec'h ma vellin an droug, dimeuz an daou gostez
Me en lavaro dizamant, pa vo ar wirionez

*Wherever I will see evil, on both sides,
I'll speak without fear, if it is the truth*

6. Dimeuz potred Breiz-Izel, a gomzin d'eoc'h hirio
Pere zo deut d'an Americ, da hounid dollario

*About the boys of Lower Brittany, I will talk to you today
Those who came to America to earn dollars*

7. Kuittet a n'eump Breiz-Izel, kaëra bro zo er bed
Bevi reomp en esperanç, da vont h'oaz d'e guellet

*We left Lower Brittany, the most beautiful country in the world
We live in the hope of returning to see her*

8. Mez kalet eo ar vuez, en amzer m'omp breman
Ar bevanz a zo ken ker, dister ar baëmant

*But life is hard in the times we are in now
Living is so expensive, the pay is low*

9. Ar bevanz a zo ken ker, ag an dillad ive
Ma n'hell mui or labourer, sevel mad e vugale

*The living is so expensive, and so is clothing
So that a working man cannot raise his children decently*

10. Kuittet a n'eump anezi, evit eur pennad Amzer
Evit beva evrusoc'h, pa zistrofomp d'ar ger

*It has been quite a while since we left our county,
So as to live more happily when we return home*

11. Treuzet a n'eump ar mor braz, evel guir vortoloded
Diskenned e pouz New-York, brasa ker zo er bed

*We have crossed the wide sea like real sailors
And landed in the port of New York, the largest city in the world*

12. Setu-ta ni digouezed, ebarz ar vro neve
Ebarz bro an uzinou, hanved an New-Jersey.

*And we have arrived in the new land
In the country of factories, named New Jersey*

13. Da genta lavarin d'eoc'h, on doare da veva
Or faeson n'em gomer dimeuz an digousta

*First of all I will tell you about our way of life
About our way of doing things in the cheapest manner*

14. Bevi a reomp assemblez, evel d'ar zoudarded
O ren buez ar Riffian, evel m'a zomp hanved.

*We all live together like soldiers
Living like the Riffians,* the name we are called.*

15. N'hellomp ket mont d'an hôtel, da zrebi or prejo
Pe aotramant on arhant, etre on daouarn a deuzo.

*We cannot go to the hotel to eat our meals
Otherwise our money would melt between our fingers*

16. Pa z'omp deut keit-man euz ar ger, da hounid dollario
N'eo ket evit o dispign, ebarz an ostaleurio

*If we have come so far away to earn dollars
It is not to spend them in hostels*

17. Na zeuit ket d'an Americ, da glask o plujadur
Aman 'vit gounid arhant, a renker beza fur.

*Don't come to America to look for fun
Here in order to earn money, one has to be sober*

18. Beza fur a labourat, koulz an dez ag an noz
Eb gelloud kaout avecho, eur momant da repoz
To be sober and to work, by day and by night as well,
Without sometimes being able to get a moment of rest

19. Ober beb seurt labouriou, re louz a re gallet
Labouriou skuizuz d'ar horf, pe noazuz d'ar ie'hed

*Doing all sorts of work, dirty and hard,
Work tiring for the body, or damaging to one's health*

20. Tremen gant eun tam bara, euz ar mintin tre d'an noz
Na peuz evit e lonka, nemed guin ar baradoz

*Manage with a piece of bread from morning till night
And you will have but the wine from the sky to swallow*

21. Dimeuz ar haëra lapoused, a glevomp hanoio
Salesmanbitch a crazy, a re all diganto

*From the most beautiful birds, we hear names
"salesman bitch a crazy," and others from them*

22. Mez n'omp ket deut d'an Americ, var zigarez pourmen
Deut e z'omp da labourat, a gounid gueneien.

*But we did not come to America in order to visit
We have come to work, and to make money*

23. Darn ahanomp zo dimezed, neuz greg a bugale
Sonjit barz ar galonad, tont da guitted an'e.

*Some of us are married, have a wife and children
Think of the heartbreak, leaving them behind*

24. Seblantout a ra d'eomp, h'oaz guellet anezo
An dour en'o daoulagad, lavaret d'eomp kenavo

*We seem to see them still
With tears in their eyes, saying good bye to us*

25. Klevet ran lod lavaret, e z'omp tud dirollet
Tud n'a garont ket o famill, a memez tud kollet.

*I hear some people say we are debauchers
We don't love our family, we are lost people*

26. Mez me a lavar ar h'ontrol, eo an dud kaloneka
Eo a zo deut d'an Americ, da hounid peadra

*But I say the contrary, it is the most courageous people
Who have come to America to earn something*

27. Da zével mad o bugale, rei d'ezo deskadurez
A n'em zével o'hunaan, dimeuz an dienez

*To raise their children, to give them an education
To raise themselves from poverty*

28. Rei d'ezo deskadurez vad, ag eun tamig danvez
A rai d'ezo kalez sikour, pa iefont er vuez

*To give them a good education, and a little property
Which will be of help to them when they enter life*

29 Labourat 'vit o pugale, kaëra tra zo er bed
Ag a ra d'eoc'h nerz kalon, pa vezoc'h ankeniet.

*To work for your children, the most beautiful thing in the
world,
It gives you strength in your heart when you are distressed.*

30. Dever eun tad a famill, m'a n'eo ket kemense
Me a bed an hini a oar, d'en lavaret din'me

*The duty of the father of the family, if that's not it,
I pray the one who knows better to let me know*

31. Ag me a heuillo e avis, ar fidela m'a hellin
Rag bepred eun avis mad, neuz gret plujadur din

*And I will follow this advice as best I can
For good counsel has always pleased me*

32. Be a z'euz eun neubendig, 'ma diganto o famill
Berroc'h kavont o Amzer, o tremen o exil

*There are a few who have their family with them
They find the time shorter they spend in exile*

33. Potred yaouanc a z'euz ive, a vije dimezed
Mag en dijen bed danvez, arog ma oant partiet

*There are also bachelors who would have married
Had they had the property before they went abroad*

34. Darn e'ma o mestrezed, bepred euz o gortoz
A pa zistrofont d'ar ger, en 'ofont o mennoz

*Some of them have girlfriends still awaiting them
And when they return home they will carry out their plans*

35. Abalamour d'eun tam arhant, gounezet en Americ
Ar ré goz a vo kontant, vezo gret eun neizic

*Thanks to a little money earned in America
The old ones will be happy, they will have their nest*

36. Etre an daou zen yaouanc, a neuz bepred n'em garet
Ne oa nemed an arhant, en d'oa o separet

*Between two young people who always loved each other
There was only the money that came between them*

37. Kalz ré all a zo deut h'oaz, da hounid dollario
Evit kaout eur vec'h tiegez, pa zistrofont an dro

*Many others will have come to earn dollars
In order to get a household** when they return home*

38. Ag n'em gonsoli a reont, o kavet hir a amzer
O soujal er blujadur, pa n'emgafont er ger

*And it is a comfort to them, when they find the time long,
To think of the pleasure when they find themselves at home*

39. Me o ped potred yaouanc, pere zo h'oaz 'n'o pro
Da zilaou gant interest, dan dimeuz va homzo.

*I pray the young men who are still in their country
To listen with interest to some of my words*

40. A goude pezo lenned, pe kanned va janson
Houi a raio deuz o kiz, goude reflexion

*And when you have read or sung my song
You will do as you wish, after thinking it over*

41. Houi pere so attaked, gant klenved an dansou
Med o ped da zont aman, ag a kavoc'h louzou

*You who are victims of the sickness of dancing
I pray you to come here, and you will find the cure*

42. Me o ped da zont aman, eun neubeud bloaveziou
Da ziskuiza o tiwisker, dimeuz an ebatou

*I pray you to come here for a few years
To rest your legs of the pleasures [of the dances]*

43. N'anavezan ket eur breizad, a neufe gret eun danç
Digant eur miss pe eur Lady, Abaoue neuz kuittet Franç

*I don't know a single Breton who might have danced a dance
With a Miss or a Lady since he left France*

44. Pa grog en ó ar fantaisi, da vont d'eur bal er ker
Pa n'ouzont ket speak english, neuz netra da ober.

*When they get the fancy to go to a ball in the city
If they don't "speak English," there is nothing to do*

45. Neuze zistroont d'ar ger, evel chass dilosted
A n'em glozont en ó hamp, da zonjal n'o mestrezed

*Then they return home like dogs with their tails cut off
And they shut themselves in their room thinking of their girls*

46. Pere zo chomed e Breiz, an tu all d'ar mor braz
Martreze n'ont ar bonheur, da vont d'o guellet h'oarz

*Who have stayed in Brittany, on the other side of the ocean
Perhaps they will have the good fortune to return to see them*

47. Sete az mignoned, a zo fin d'am janson
Euz o klevet e h'ana, m'o konzolasion

*There, my friends, is the end of my song
Those who have heard it sung will be comforted.*

48. Kredi ran m'euz lavaret, ar wirionez pen-dre-ben
Var an droug a var ar vad, hervez va reolen

*I think I have told the truth, the whole truth
About the good and the bad, according to my rule*

49. A bremen lezan peb hini, da dema konkluzion
Dimeuz an oll prepoziou, scrived en 'em janson

*And now I leave everyone to draw their conclusion
From all the words written in my song*

50. Komposed gant eur Breizad, o chôme Paterson
O kavet hir e Amzer, kontristed a galon

*Written by a Breton living in Paterson
And finding the time long, sad in his heart*

51. Evit nompaz n'em ziskleria, va haono n'a larin ket
Lavaret rin seulamaent, oun euz Breic-de-l'odet

*So as not to declare myself, I will not say my name
I will say only that I am from Brie-de-l'Odet*

52. Ganed e parroz Santoz, en 'eur ger var an huel
Destined da voyaji, a vihanic n'em havel

*Born in the parish of Sant Toz, in a town on the hill,
Destined to travel since I was small in my cradle*

53. Euz an eill korn d'egile, meuz guellet Breizh-Izel
A digouezed en Americ, poulzet gant an avel.

*From one corner to the other I have seen Lower Brittany
And I have come to America, pushed by the wind*

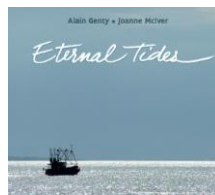
Fin

Eur Breizad en Americ

A Breton in America

* Riffian: Riff, a mountainous province of Morocco. Its inhabitants were fierce warriors who long resisted all French attempts to occupy their land. The word "Riffian" refers to a hard life.

** tiegezh: means "farm" as well as "family."



CD Review: Alain Genty and Joanne McIver. *Eternal Tides*. Buda Musique 860308. 45'53. 2017. www.alaingenty.com

This new CD by Breton guitarist Alain Genty and Scottish singer Joanne McIver includes 13 selections of song and instrumentals rooted in Scottish (and Breton) music and rhythm. Songs sometimes have a traditional feel to them and sometimes a pop sound and sometimes a very innovative "electronic" arrangement, evoking a range of complex moods ... like the sea and the skies beautifully portrayed in the photos of the jacket cover.

Most of the songs composed by Joanne McIver are in English: the title cut "Eternal Tides" (a young man's leaving for herring fishing), "The Fisher Lassies" with a Gaelic chorus (ladies on shore who unload the herring), "Sailing on the wind" (a return to the Scottish islands from the sea), "Turning with the Moon" (an ode to nature and a lament on the carnage of wars), "Cullodon" (the Jacobite Rising of 1746), and "Building Castles" (the ephemeral freedom of sailing on the sea). There are two songs in Gaelic: "Mo Leannan" evoking the rhythm of traditional Scottish work songs, and "Hill a bhéah" with an eerie feel.

I particularly liked the soaring sound of the instrumental "Les fleurs du desert" with its complex mix of binioù and bombard with electronic and electric sounds propelled by a light percussion. I also liked "The Fisher Lassies" with its interweaving of electric/electronic and acoustic sounds with voice. There's a pop feel to it, but it ultimately retains a very Scottish feel in song subject and rhythm.

Lyrics are composed and performed by Joanne McIver who also plays Scottish small pipes. She is from the Arran Islands of Scotland and learned Gaelic song from her grandfather. Although not featured on this CD she is an accomplished piper – Scottish Highland pipes and small pipes – who also plays flute and whistles. She has recorded a number of albums, working often with harpist Christophe Saunière.

Alain Genty composed and arranged the music and produced and mixed the CD. He brings his considerable talents as a bass guitarist, and provides drum, keyboards, voice and electronics. Genty is well known on the Breton music scene having played with groups like Gwerz, Barzaz, Den, Celtic Procession and Skolvan. He produced his first solo album in 1994 and has worked with a wide range of Breton artists.

François Élie Roulin mastered the CD, a formidable job of balancing all the sounds to successfully insure all the subtleties can be heard as the musicians want them to be.

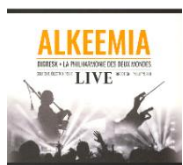
Guest artists include Patrick Molard (binioù), Jean-Michel Veillon (bombard), Kouider Berkane (fiddle), Bachir Mokari (darbuka, bendir and karkabu), Nicolas Girard (trumpet and berimbau), Thierry Garcia (guitars) and Christophe Saunière (harp). *

The CD jacket notes includes words to all the songs with summaries in French. Instrumental pieces are briefly described but the music speaks for itself. You can do an internet search to get a more precise idea. While it is easy enough to search the internet for information about Alain Genty and Joanne Mclver, a quick introduction in the CD notes would have been nice to complement to photos of a ferocious-looking Genty and pensive Mclver.

* Breton musicians have incorporated instruments (and singers and musicians) from around the world. The darbuka, bendir, karkabu, and berimbau are percussion instruments from North African and the Middle East.

Heard of, but not heard – 26 new CDs from Brittany

The following descriptions are based on notes on the Coop Breizh website (and other web searches) as well as *Ar Men* 217 (March-April 2017) & 218 (May-June 2017) and *Musique Bretonne* 250 (Jan-Feb-March 2017).



Alkeemia. Live. ALK 2016.

This is an unusual collaboration by the electro-folk fest noz band Digresk with the classical orchestra Philharmonie des Deux Mondes. The CD captures a live performance from the 2015 Yaouank festival in Rennes.

Dances include gavotte, ridee, avant-deux, and pach pi in an interesting pull between rock and roll and a symphonic sound.



Ampouailh. Live

This is the third CD by a very popular fest noz band. It is from a live performance at a fest noz in Saint-Mayeu in December 2016 and includes gavottes, ridee, fisel, ronds

de Saint-Vincent, kost er hoet and dañs fanch.



Nolwenn Arzel. A Nezh kalon – de toute mon âme.

This is the fourth album by singer and harpist Nolwenn Arzel with 12 selections of traditional songs (in French) and tunes from Brittany and

Ireland, as well as a few of her own compositions. She is joined by Loïc Bléjean on uilleann pipes and low

whistle, Yann Queffelec on guitar, and Yvon Molard on percussions.



Bagad Cap Caval. Tan De'i!

One of Brittany's top bagads, Cap Caval here presents a performance called "Tan De'i" which incorporates music of Scotland, Ireland, Galicia,

and Brittany. Joining the bagad are

fiddler Jonathan Dour with Floriane Le Pottier, and cellist Alexis Bocher. Also joining the bagad are sax player Julien Ryo and singer Elsa Corre (with song in Breton, French and Galician Gallego).



Bagad de Vannes / Melinerion. À l'Olympia – Contrechamp.

One of Brittany's top bagads performs 12 suites of melodies and dances.

This was recorded live at a concert at the Olympia in February 2017.



La Belle Bleue. Fenêtres.

This is the fourth album by this band from the area of Guérande with 14 songs in French. Founded in 2004 the group now includes René Bergier (guitar, song percussions), Frédéric

Perroux (drums and percussions), David Gouin (guitars, song, melodica, didjeridoo), Mathieu Picot (guitars, song) and Antoine Sorin (bass, guitar, song).



Les Clébards. On attend.

This is the sixth album by this folk-punk-rock group from the area of Fougères. It includes 12 songs in French with acoustic and electric guitar, drums and accordion. The band has

been performing in the Fougères area for 11 years – especially in bars and smaller venues.

www.lesclebards.com



Darhaou. Direnni.

This is the fourth album by this group which formed in 1997. The group includes biniou and bombard, treujenn gaol (clarinet), accordion, guitar, and bass. There are 13 selections on this

CD including several melodies and the dances plinn, hanter-dro, ridee, gavotte, kas ha barh, laride, and tour.



Gerard Delahaye. Hip, hip, hip ... Pirates!.

Dylie Productions 317

Gerard Delahaye is known for his collaboration with Patrick Ewen and Melaine Favenec, but he is also well loved for his music for children. Here he

has written a "mini-opera" on the theme of pirates. He is joined by Yannick Noguet on accordion, Patrick Boileau on drums, and Vincent Burlot, Cedrick

Alexandre and Yvan Knorst with other instruments. As always, Delahaye produces a CD that will delight adults as well as children.



Annie Ebrel and Ricardo Del Fra. *Voulouz Loar.*

This is the reedition of the 1998 CD of the same name featuring Annie Ebrel, a master of traditional Breton language song, paired with jazz musician

Ricardo Del Fra on bass fiddle. The CD includes 11 selections of traditional songs and dance tunes with a composition based on a text by Pierre Jakez Hélias. This was a terrific CD when it came out in 1998 and remains uniquely fresh in sound.



Robin Foster. *Empyrean.* Queen Bee Music 19045

Robin Foster is originally from the British Isles but has been based in Finistère for a long time. His music is

described as “post-rock” with “cinemagraphic soundscapes.”



Le Gabiers d'Artimon. *Escale à Lorient.*

This is the thirteenth album by this men's choir based in Lorient who specialize in maritime song from Brittany and elsewhere – traditional

and newly composed. This CD has 15 selections out of some 200 in their repertoire.



Yann Fañch Kemener Trio. *Dañs* !

One can always count on Yann Fañch Kemener for innovative collaborations with other musicians. Here this master of traditional Breton language song joins with accordion player Erwann

Tobie and guitarist Heikki Bourgault for 14 selections of traditional dances of Brittany – fisel, an dro, gavotte, laride, kost ar c'hoet and others. www.yfkemener.com



Erwan Keravec. *Sonneurs.* Buda Musique 860 299/SC 870.

Piper Erwan Keravec combines Scottish bagpipes, biniou, bombards and a Breton invention called the

trélombarde to present modern compositions where disharmony and a chaotic rhythm may grate on the ear for some, but open up a world of new sounds that effectively challenge the listener's ability to explore. This is not a pleasant stream of melodies but a unique use of traditional instruments for contemporary composition.



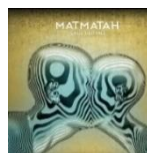
Krismenn. *N'om gustumiñ deus an deñvalijenn.* World Village

This first solo album by this Breton language singer shows off his talent on a number of instruments – slide guitar, bass, electronic beats, and biniou – as well as song. The sound is urban rap but you also find a bluesy rendition of a traditional style gwerz. All the Breton song tests are his composition, showing off his mastery of the Breton language and his creative use of it.



Morwenn Le Norman and Roland Conq. *Loened fur ha foll.*

This is a duo of singer Morwenn Le Norman and guitarist Roland Conq. This CD includes 15 songs for children in Breton about animals – dogs, cats, rabbits, pigs and others. The CD includes a booklet with words to the songs to encourage family sing-alongs.



Matmatah. *Plates coutures.* La Ouache Production / L'Autre Distribution.

This is the fifth album after a long absence from the music scene by this band. The CD includes 11 selections of song and dance in a folk-rock style.



Violaine Mayor. *D'eau et de lumière.*

Violaine Mayor is a master of Celtic harp and here she reproduces the piping tradition of piobaireachd on this instrument. For release in July 2017.



Dominique Molard. *B.R.O.* (Breizh Rythmik Orchestrad).

A master of percussion instruments of all kinds on the Breton music scene since 1966, this is Dominique Molard's first solo CD. He performs on a variety of drums and percussion instruments - bodhran, snare drum, darbouka, tabla, steel drums ... drawing on Breton traditional music and rhythms from around the world.



Jacques Pellen, Karim Zaid, Etienne Callac, Sylvain Barou. *Offshore/Shorewards.* Paker Productions.

This is a quartet of four seasoned musicians who present nine selections of compositions and traditional Breton tunes. Guitarist Jacques Pellen is well known on the Breton scene, working with a number of Breton singers and musicians as well as in the jazz world. Karim Zaid is a world traveler originally from Algeria who brings drums and percussion of various types as well as vocals to the CD. Etienne Callac is an electric bass guitarist who has explored African musics and has worked with a

number of Breton performers. Sylvain Barou is a master of Breton and Irish flute (who can also handle uilleann pipes, biniou, bombard, and other instruments).



Les Ramoneurs de Menhirs ha Bagad Bro Kemperle. *Breizh Anok*.

The Ramoneurs de Menhirs (menhir gatherers) is a well-loved Breton punk group who have performed over 600 concerts. Members of the band are

Gwenael Kere, Eric Gorce, Richard Bevillon and Lorrann de Bretagne. Guest singers include Louise Ebel and Soazig Gouliau. The group with electric guitars, biniou and bombard are joined here by the bagad of Kemperle for 9 selections with titles like "Space Galetenn," "Pach-Punk," and "Fuck the System."

www.ramoneursdemenhirs.bzh



Gilles Servat. *70 ans ... à l'Ouest*.

This CD is a celebration of Gilles Servat's 70th birthday and 50 years as a singer/songwriter. The CD includes 12 well known songs as well as newly recorded selections on all topics – in

Breton and French. The accompanying group includes Patrick Audouin (guitar), Mathilde Chevrel (fiddle, cello), Jérôme Kerihuel (percussion), Calum Stewart (uilleann pipes and low whistle) and Philippe Turbin (keyboard).



Soig Siberil. *Habask*. Coop Breizh.

This is the eleventh album by master guitarist Soig Siberil with 12 selections of traditional Celtic melodies and dances (Brittany, Ireland, Scotland and

Wales) as well as compositions. He is joined on several selections by electric guitarist Patrick Marzin who also did the recording and mastering of the CD.



Sonerien Du. *45 ans de fiesta!*

This CD celebrates 45 years of performance by this fiery band, including 17 sections of Breton dances and songs – some not previously recorded – from live concerts.

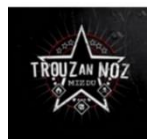
Sonerien Du was one of the early bands to successfully blend Breton instruments like the biniou and bombard with electric guitars.



Triomphe des Sonneurs.

For the 70th anniversary of Sonerien (Bodadeg ar Sonerien) a compilation has been put together of some of the best to be heard from the bagads of Brittany as well as "sonneurs de

couple" – paired bombard and biniou koz or biniou braz. This is a great collection for those who love all styles of piping from Brittany and the innovative work to be heard from the Breton bagad.

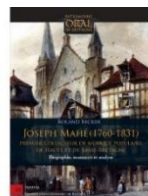


Trouz an Noz. *Miz Du*.

Labeled "rock-radical-Breton" and "Celtic electro-punk" the band Trouz an Noz (night noise) will release its second album in July 2017. Originally from St.

Brieuc the group celebrates 1 years of performance.

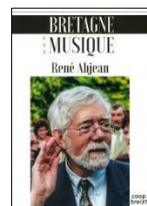
A Few New and Not-so-New Books About Breton Music



Roland Becker. *Joseph Mahé (1760-1831) – Premier collecteur de musique Populaire de Haute et de Basse-Bretagne*. Vol. 8 in the collection Patrimoine oral de Bretagne. Dastum. 2017. 348 pages.

Contrary to most collectors of traditional music Joseph Mahé collected and noted down 285 traditional tunes from both Upper and Lower Brittany with no notation of words to songs. These are published in this new book for the first time by Roland Becker who provides a biography of Mahé, facsimiles of his manuscripts, as well as an analysis of the music. This is an important addition to the 40 tunes first published by Mahé in his 1825 *Essai sur les Antiquités du Département du Morbihan*.

Roland Becker is not only a fine scholar of traditional Breton music but a master of the bombard – traditional style as well as in innovative compositions and soundscapes that draw on some forty years of collecting traditional music, studying it, and performing and arranging it.



René Abjean. *Bretagne est musique*. Coop Breizh, 2017. ISBN 978-2-84346-814-8

René Abjean is a scholar of Breton music but also a composer who has done remarkable work in creating choral works based on Breton tradition. Here he presents a broad view of the history of Breton music with a more in-depth review of the past 50 years of creativity.



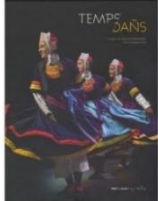
Frédéric Jambon. *Conversations avec Didier Squiban*. Coop Breiz 2015.

Jazz pianist Didier Squiban has produced some 20 albums, drawing on traditional Breton music in unique arrangements. Journalist Frédéric Jambon explores this musician's personality and his musical path.



Arnaud Choutet. *Bretagne – Folk, néo-trad et métissages*. Le Mot et le reste, 2014. 263 pages. ISBN 978-2-36054-113-3.

This book explores the incredible explosion of music in Brittany since the 1970s when traditional styles were explored for the creation of newer sounds blending jazz, rock and folk, and the incorporation electronic and electric instruments into ensembles with the more traditional sound of bombards, biniou, accordion, etc. Included is a discography which includes a selection of the representative albums of the past 40 years.



Temps dans. War'l Leur. 2017.

The organization War'l Leur celebrates 50 years as a collaborative umbrella for Breton dance groups with the publication of this book on Breton dance. Visually beautiful, the book portrays Cercles Celtiques and their work to promote traditional Breton dance and costumes.



A Travel Account from Brittany – 1910

George Wharton Edwards, *Brittany and the Bretons*. New York: Moffet Yard & Co., 1910

In the last issue of Bro Nevez the introductory section of this book was reproduced – an account that was typical in its both positive and often very negative depiction of the Breton character. Here we present his description of the town of Montcontour and the colorful visitors to the pardon of Saint Mathurin. Note that this town's name is actually Moncontour. I have kept his naming of the town.

George Wharton Edwards was an American born in Connecticut in 1859 (deceased in 1950) and was an award-winning artist as well as a writer. You will find a sample of his artistry in the images of the town of Moncontour and of the sonneur included here.



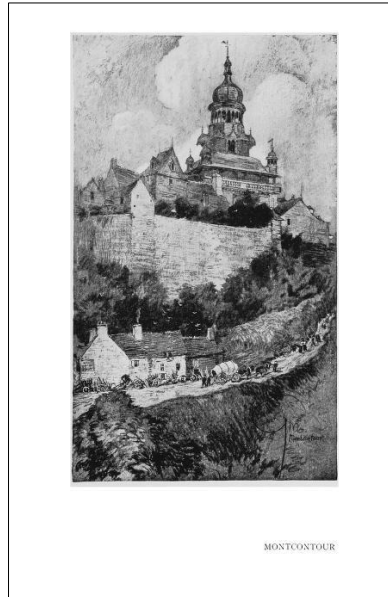
for including all of Brittany on its map! As a modern

Just to get you situated here is a map showing the location of Moncontour from the website <http://www.moncontour-holiday.co.uk>. Congratulations to this town's office of tourism

tourist visit this website to see how this town retains all the charm Edwards gives to it.

From the Chapter: *Lamballe, Montfort, Montcontour*

About ten miles from Lamballe, in the heart of a superb region, with dim, misty, forest-clad hills marking the horizon, is the small and ancient town of Montcontour, perched upon a walled, rocky moss-clad promontory, like an island, and crowned by a charming tower and pinnacles.



It is not seen from afar very plainly – one comes upon it rather suddenly, really at the foot of its very walls, the road continues around the escarpment, and passes between masses of rock, small hours and ramparts clad in verdure, and all in some confusion, but impressive for all that.

After encircling the curious roadway

encumbered, as it is with old wagons and the debris of a blacksmith who seems to have the right to store his antiques all along the way, leaving barely space for the diligence to pass, the village is reached, and one sees with delight the quaint, window-pierced towers of the houses, the walled gardens with overhanging verdure, and above, against the soft blue of the sky, the tower of the Church of Saint Mathurin, with its quaint lantern and the hooded windows beneath, and, lower down, the bizarre balcony and pedestals. Formerly there was a gate at the ramparts after the first terrace, but this has long since disappeared. A small postern gate gives access on the other side, and the stairway descends among the small peasant houses, and the mills watered by the tin streams.

Montcontour, with its fifteen hundred inhabitants, has nothing of the aspect of a village. It seeks, rather, to pose as a town, a town composed of three or four short streets, but flanked by grand, large, old houses. Lying far away from the whistle of the locomotive, it is really living two hundred years in the past, and nothing occurs here to mar the impression of antiquity save, perhaps, the arrival of the daily mail, or the visit of the ferocious looking whiskered gendarme, who want to know why M'Sieur has come to Montcontour, from whence, and where does he intend to go afterwards?

The streets are very silent. One hears plainly in the inn the squeak of the mill wheel turning far below the walls.

Ancient figures, clad in decent black garments, visit each other behind blank looking doors, and the closely curtained windows of the sad looking houses; and there are quiet shops that one really fears to enter, for fear of intrusion, and antique looking groceries, and an inn or two. Elsewhere, in small, narrow streets, are charming corners, doorways of houses which are open hospitably, habitations of the poorer classes, where, from beflowered window to window, pass neighborly conversations, conveying to the loiterer details of the daily life of the little town. Wandering idly about, one comes upon a small shrine at a corner in a niche in the wall embowered in flowers, and containing a faience statue of the Virgin and this inscription:

“Si l’ amour de Marie
Et ton coeur est grave
En passant ne t’oublie
De lui dire un Ave.
1775.

Montcontour possesses a holy patron, famed and venerated throughout Brittany, Saint Mathurin, who, the legend has it, “enjoyed in Paradise among the Saints such a reputation for superior wisdom, that little by little he had gained such an important place that one day, God the Father, in despair over the cares of the government of the Universe, desired to abdicate, and cast his eyes upon him as the one most worthy to receive the scepter. Saint Mathurin, pressed to accept, says the legend, asked time to reflect, and weighing well the advantages and disadvantages of the position then said, he preferred to remain Saint Mathurin at Montcontour!”

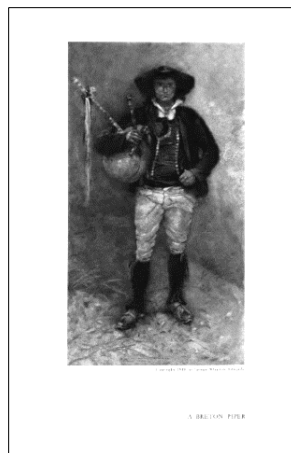
Enclosed in a massive silver reliquaire reposes the skull (Chef) of Saint Mathurin, and every year at Pentecost there is here a great Pilgrimage to the Church in his honor.

The Bretons of Pontivy and Guéméné, and even further, arrive in procession with “binious” or pipes, and drummers, who accompany the “cantiques” in the church and outside, and the dances which follow the ceremonies on the esplanade of the Chateau des Granges.

Here the peasants of Briochin, and the Lambalais gather in crowds, all singing:

“Saint Mathurin de Montcontour,
Donne d ble neye a nous ! “

The fête continues far into the night, and long after the bell in the tower gives the signal to dispense, and the little inn has closed its doors, one can hear from the roads below, leading out from Montcontour to the



forests and to the hamlets by the sea, the squeal of the binious (Breton bagpipes) and the chanting of the crowds of happy pilgrims homeward bound.

There is a most astonishing variety of dress and type in this small corner of France. To see them collectively one should go down to Rumengol on some fête Sunday, say on the day of Trinity. From a sort of

grassy mound near the church yard, with my back against the little chapel of the good saint, I have seen the multitude come and go in the slanting sunlight. Here are some fine fellows from the fastness of the Montagnes Arrée, all dressed in brown wool fashioned by their women folk beside the huge log fires of winter, when the winds bend and sway the huge pines and oaks about the heavy stone walls of the farm houses. They are of handsome, graceful mien, great, fine lads, with Roman noses and straight, black hair, who have the high cheek bones and small eyes of the Celt. They jostle against the somewhat smaller and red-cheeked, clean shaven, blue clad men of Cornouaille, whose taste runs to heavy yellow embroidery and gorgeous red and green handkerchiefs whose hues set the teeth on edge. They are the most boisterous of all the Bretons, these men of Cornouaille, the most drunken, too, I am told, although I do not detect any great lapse from sobriety among them to-day. They are, however, very shy when separated from their kind, I note.

I am interested in a gathering of men clad like Mexicans in bright colors, with large felt hats on their heads, much embroidered jackets of yellow felt or wool, and singularly cut trousers that swell out or flare over the shoes. They are said to be very “sporty,” these huge, red-bearded fellows; they come from Pont l’Abbe and are called “Tran’c Doué.” Each one has a bottle either sticking out of his pocket or firmly grasped in his hand. They are standing stolidly at the wayside regarding the crowd about them apathetically, hardly turning to look at a procession of pretty girls, all ravishingly pretty, too, and clad in snowy white dresses, each one carrying a small wax taper in her white cotton gloved hand, and marching in procession headed by a young damsel carrying a banner. They even block the way of a huge cart laden with red-cheeked women in snowy, stiffly starched coifs from the Gwénédez or Vannes district, for the Cornouailles and the Vannetais are ancient enemies, as Le Braz tells us so graphically.

Following the cart is a group of men and women from the Tregorrois country, who seem not to look to the

right or left, but nothing escapes those bright, piercing, blue eyes set far back beneath their bushy brows, These are poorly clad in dark, dull blues and rusty blacks, the coifs of the women alone being distinctive. I notice the last two of the group, a nice, fresh looking young fellow hand in hand with the young girl beside him, and that each holds the other by a hooked little finger, and they swing them to and fro in tune with the dull beating of a distant drum and the scream of pastoral pipe. They are followed by an old, old man from Minihiy, whom time seems to have forgotten; on his head is a large, flapping, felt hat with long, rusty black velvet ribbons hanging down behind; his face is so seamed with wrinkles that his mouth and eyes have disappeared; his long, gray hair hangs upon his shoulders, and the hand holding his staff is like a bunch of bones covered with yellow parchment – he lingers painfully – he must have walked the whole distance.

And now more Gwènédours or men from Vannes, with smooth, sallow faces, roughly cut, and straight black hair, who in turn give way to peasants from Scäer clad in black close jackets trimmed lavishly with satin and velveteen, who seem to fraternize with the fellows from Elliant in their stiff collars. As they pass I can see the sign of the Holy Sacrament embroidered in yellow braid on the shoulders and backs of their short jackets. Then peasants from Fouesnant, Erque, and from Kerfeunteun, both men and women, some withered with age and labor, others fresh as dew, or flowers, the white stiff wings of their belaced and starched caps and collars enveloping their attractive young faces.

And now a band of young soldiers, who are allowed two days' leave to attend the pardon, all clad in heavy leggings and clumsy red breeches, on their heads the foolish caps which France disfigures her unfortunate infantry, their collars bearing the number of their various regiments. They do not seem happy, yet the peasants regard them with some show of interest, especially those from the mountains. One of these I afterwards asked to join me in a bowl of cider by the roadside, and as we sat he talked freely of himself. He was from below Carnac, he said – the long road to Loc Maria Ker – ah! – I knew it then? Did I know the third house on the right beyond the dolmen? Well. that was where he was born – a poor place, yes; many stones and little crop; yes, this is so, many stones and little crop; but a country dear to me, Monsieur, you see – my country! And he went on to tell me of the large family and their struggles – of his father who was drowned at fishing four years ago “come next pardon”; since then he had labored at the gathering of Vraic, or sea weed, for the farmers' use on the fields.

He had an aunt, oh, so old, too, he said, who could not live much longer. She was rich and would give him a farm holding for himself when his time was up as a soldier; two years more must he serve, and then he

would settle, yes, he would marry. “Of course,” he answered me, “of course, she would marry him, did she not carry his ring knotted in a handkerchief in her bosom – but, then you see, his word was given to her.” And then he fell silent and would say no more. That is the way with these Bretons, one minute all confidence in you, and loquacious, then, all at once, something like a cloud of suspicion – or distrust comes over them, and then you will get no more out of them. So I paid the four sous for our two bowls of thin cider, and with a nod, the young soldier took himself off, and, although I stood watching him as he passed among the crowd of peasants, he did not look back.

A Quick Introduction to the U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language (U.S. ICDBL)

www.icdbl.org

Who are the Members of the ICDBL?

Some U.S. ICDBL members are of Breton heritage, but the U.S. ICDBL is intended to be a group of “anyone and everyone” showing support for the Breton language rather than an organization for Breton-Americans like so many other “ethnic” organizations in the U.S. We do have quite a few members with Irish, Scottish or Welsh heritage, so there is a strong inter-Celtic element to our work. Most of our members speak neither Breton nor French and most have never been to Brittany. But we all have some reason to help fight for the survival of the Breton language.

What the does the U.S. ICDBL do?

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

Our central activity is the publication of a quarterly newsletter called **Bro Nevez** (“new country” in the Breton language). In November 2006 we published our 100th issue. In the 3,000+ pages of **Bro Nevez** produced so far, over 800 books from Brittany have been reviewed or noted, and over 300 Breton music recordings have been reviewed and an additional 800 new releases briefly described.

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