

# BRO NEVEZ

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



KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

NOVEMBER 85

NUMBER 17

Cover: Anjela Duval  
(1905-1981)

A Breton language poet  
featured in the first part  
of a series on women writers  
of Brittany in this issue of  
Bro Nevez.

Cover design by: Hervé Thomas

A Breton artist and ICDBL  
member who has chosen to  
make Philadelphia his home.

from a photograph taken by: André Lalycan

A Breton poet and singer also  
known by the name of Judikael  
Lalycan, a Gallo from La Trinité-  
Porhoët, and a friend of Anjela  
Duval.

BRO NEVEZ

Newsletter of the U.S. Branch of the International Committee for  
the Defense of the Breton Language

Newsletter 17 - November 1985

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Contributions, letters to the editors, and ideas are welcome from  
all readers. The deadline for contributions for the next newsletter  
is January 6, 1986.

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are those of the authors, and do not necessarily represent ICDBL  
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Please see the back cover for information on subscription, ICDBL  
Membership and newsletter advertising.

## EDITOR'S NOTE: OUR MEMBERSHIP AND QUESTIONNAIRES

The return of 29 questionnaires out of 140 cannot be considered a good response, but those that have been returned are interesting and the fact that only 29 of them have come in so far is in itself a statement about U.S. ICDBL members. I am still waiting for the rest to come back.

Joining the ICDBL is in itself an action and in many small ways members are active in our most important task--to simply tell people about Brittany and the Breton language and culture. Our membership has grown primarily because brochures have been passed around and individuals have talked to friends and acquaintances about the ICDBL. Our dispersal across the U.S. certainly limits the projects we can undertake. But, what makes action and even social get-togethers difficult is the fact that most of us already have a large number of commitments to job, family, or other volunteer organizations. The questionnaires returned and correspondence I have received in the past few years as U.S. ICDBL Secretary reveal that our members are by no means passive, even if many are not good at returning questionnaires. I would be happy to see more action directed towards the ICDBL, but in 1985 we can claim success...and we need to face up to a few lingering problems.

Because it has been the most effective means of furthering the U.S. ICDBL goals as a non-profit educational organization, Bro Nevez has been at the center of our work. Judging from questionnaire responses we have been successful in providing a well-balanced and interesting newsletter. Most respondents indicated that they want more of everything, although several indicated they could do with fewer Breton recipes and a little less of the column on non-Celtic languages and bilingualism.

Some very interesting ideas are found in suggestions for new materials. One member, Greg Stump, not only suggested a new column, but has gone ahead and instituted it: "Legendary Brittany". Two people suggested a regular feature on Breton history and biographies of famous Bretons. Other ideas included a travel column, historical notes on Celtic languages, concert and festival reports, notes on opportunities to hear Celtic music in the U.S., a regular column on Breton music and dance, letters from Breton speakers giving their perspective on events in Brittany, and translations of Breton poetry. While these are all interesting ideas, we need more people willing to actually write something. We have managed to expand our contributors in the past year, but it is still a very small number of people who do most of the work. All too often the column editors end up writing their column rather than editing it. While some topics do require expertise and research, there are many contributions any member can make. We cannot provide complimentary copies of books and records for review, but don't let that stop you from sending in reviews or just a short note on materials you may have in your collection or a book on Brittany you find in a library. Reviews of especially good or bad books and records are always welcome. You will find that several reviewers in this issue have some strong ideas about the materials they review.



EDITOR'S NOTE - continued

Do not be afraid to write to any of the column editors with your ideas or suggestions even if you do not have an article to contribute. With the aim of encouraging questions from people who may be timid about their own knowledge, I have instituted a new column: "Questions". This is for short queries on any topic. Is there anything you have wanted to know about Brittany or the Breton language: for example, how do you say hello or good-bye in Breton?, what is the population of Brittany?, what is the land area of Brittany?, do Bretons have any unique wines or cheeses like other areas of France?, when did the first Breton emigrate to the United States?, what does "Kornog" mean in Breton?, when is Alan Stivell coming back for a tour?... I will count on readers to send in questions and answers to each newsletter's questions.

While the newsletter continues to grow in quality and in quantity of pages, there are some problems that limit our effectiveness and growth. Besides the difficulty of finding new contributors, there is a major problem of money. Once again this year we will break even, but this is not enough. Our membership is slightly below that of 1984 and we remain far from the goal of 200 that would give us the income necessary to go beyond word-of-mouth recruitment of new members. You may recall an invitation for advertisers in Bro Nevez-- a source of income that would help us upgrade the quality of the publication (and relieve me of many hours of tedious work). You will notice that we have not had any advertisers, and this source of income is doomed to failure unless we find a "business manager" to follow up advertising leads with letters or telephone calls. Any volunteers for this job?

A position is also open for an imaginative "publicity director" who can contribute time to help us expand our communication network. I believe strongly that there are many potential members throughout the U.S. who have no idea that the ICDBL exists. The publicity director would have the challenge of finding new ways to reach such people within a very limited budget.

As 1985 draws to a close, let me thank all those who have supported the ICDBL. Membership renewal forms are enclosed with this newsletter. I hope you will continue your support. Many of you have been with the U.S. ICDBL since its beginnings and it is always a great pleasure to see you rejoin. It is also a pleasure to see new names, and in this past year we have gained some very active members. While we remain far from meeting the goal of 200 for our membership (and why not 2,000 eventually?), we have continued to grow in other ways and our continued work is very much appreciated in Brittany. Whether passive or active, your membership does support the Breton language.

Lois Kuter  
General Editor for Bro Nevez  
and Secretary-Treasurer  
for the U.S. ICDBL

## NOTES ON EVENTS IN BRITTANY - THE BRETON LANGUAGE

Lois Kuter

### The So-Called Breton CAPES

Numerous articles have appeared to announce the French government's creation of the "first professional teaching certificate in a regional language": Breton. Articles I have seen are from the New York Times ("France speaks up for regional languages," Sunday, August 18, 1985), The Chronicle of Higher Education (September 18, 1985), and the Welsh-American newspaper Ninnau ("France to Bretons: Viva la difference," October 1, 1985).

The teaching certificate hailed in these articles--which is the CAPES you have heard so much of in the pages of this newsletter--is in fact only a half-measure. It is a mixed CAPES, for Breton and another option--another language, math, or one of the natural sciences, for example. The idea behind the mixture is that Bretons will have a double qualification: certification to teach Breton and certification to teach some other subject. The logic of this is clearly stated in The Chronicle of Higher Education note:

"According to Mr. Chévenement [the French Minister of Education] the dual qualification is needed to insure that those qualified to teach in Breton schools will also be available to take up appointments in other parts of the country."

Thus, the new certification will continue to funnel qualified Breton teachers out of Brittany. Various statements by French government officials reveal their concern that, if given the chance, Bretons will become too highly skilled in Breton. Thus, these Bretons need to be protected from themselves. It is a strange kind of logic that "protects" people from getting the best possible training they can. The risk of not being able to find a job as a Breton teacher is one that students have proven they are ready to take--and they know their odds all too well.

The fact that French government officials continue to insist on a dilluted CAPES for Breton--forcing teachers into a double track which surely means a dilution of skills in both Breton and the optional subject chosen--indicates that there is little commitment to the creation of jobs for qualified Breton teachers in Breton schools. Surveys indicate that students are interested in taking Breton, and many who have expressed this desire have had no means of taking a class. Unfortunately, classes have been organized on a last-minute basis, scheduled at odd hours of the day, with no continuity from on year to the next. It has taken exceptional work on the part of students, parents, and teachers to get Breton into the schools. The success of Breton classes is too often sabotaged by the half-hearted manner in which they are grudgingly allowed into the schools. Half-measures, half-heartedly granted have marked the history of Breton in the schools. The obstacles are difficult to surmount even for

## The Breton CAPES - continued

the most dedicated teachers, The new CAPES for Breton appears to be another half-measure that shows that French policy-makers are still not ready to recognize Breton or any of the other "regional languages" as modern living languages. The fight for a Breton CAPES will go on. Half-measures are certainly better than nothing at all, and one can be optimistic that the Breton half-CAPES will open some new doors. But, it is easy to remain pessimistic that this new measure will be merely just a little better than nothing.

### Breton Road Signs

The fight for bilingual road signs in Brittany will be a long one. While Jack Lang, the French Minister of Culture, declared in August that the French government was in favor of bilingual signs, the question of budgeting new signs will be a difficult one to resolve. It is certainly a fact of life right now that budgets are tight, and changes will not come overnight. But money is not the real issue. Attitudes are a continuing problem. Breton attitudes are generally positive, or at least neutral. A survey by CELIB (Comité d'études et de liaison des intérêts bretons) shows that 7% of Breton communes have already opted for bilingual signs under their charge. 30% to 40% of Breton communes are favorable to the idea. Attitudes of officials in the French Ministry of Transport and in French departmental level government offices are less favorable. The old excuse that motorists will get lost is still used. In an article in the local newspaper Ouest France, one official is quoted as saying:

"Even if bilingualism could be considered legitimate in terms of the demands of the Breton Movement, it is not necessarily desired by drivers. Road-users would be totally lost." ("Panneau routiers en deux langues: ça couterait très cher," Ouest France, 7 aout 1985).

It is understandable that a shift to all-Breton signs might cause some confusion, but why should motorists be confused by bilingual road signs? The old familiar French distortions of Breton language names will still be very visible on signs!!

Tourists will certainly not be any more confused than they already are in travelling on new roads. Dealing with Breton names is not more difficult than dealing with French names for foreigners who speak neither language! The addition of Breton names should be a boost to tourism and will be welcomed by those who go to Brittany to visit Brittany.

An update on some trials for road sign "degradation":

Jil Kilévéré, president of Skol an Emsav, appeared before the Vannes tribunal on September 5 for the destruction of road signs claimed by members of his organization (see Bro Nevez 16, p. 6). Judgement

### Breton Road Signs - continued

was given on the case on September 19, and Mr. Kilévéré's case was dismissed since the actual culprits have not been identified.

October brought decisions in the cases of Hervé le Bihan and Yves Cadoret, two members of Stourm ar Brezhoneg. Hervé le Bihan, who drove the car in a road sign campaign and who assisted his friend in the "degradation" of signs, was ordered to pay a 7,000 franc fine. Yves Cadoret, determined to be the main actor in this case, was also ordered to pay the 7,000 fine, and, in addition, was ordered to pay a 3,000 franc fine along with 20,000 francs in damages--a total of 30,000 francs (or roughly \$3,750).

### The Association of Breton-Speaking Mayors and Elected Officials

At a meeting on September 28, Kuzulerien Bro Leon, or the Association of Breton Speaking Elected Officials of Leon (northwestern Brittany) was founded. This is the seventh such organization in Brittany to be formed. All groups include people of all political parties and tendencies with the common desire to protect the Breton language and give it as much place as possible in public life. At their first meeting, the Breton-speaking officials of Bro Leon (including 17 mayors, adjunct mayors, municipal councilors and other local elected officials) discussed the various areas in which work can be done to promote more public use of Breton: bilingualism at public meetings, for civil marriage ceremonies and documents, for official speeches, for road signs and street names, and in city bulletins. Comparison was made with the situation of minority languages in other countries. Breton in the schools was also an important topic, and those at the meeting were unanimous in their support of Diwan and other schools' efforts to use Breton.

The grass-roots development of different associations of local officials who will work to use their native language and make Breton a language of public life is one of the more positive developments in recent years for Breton. While work on the part of local officials scattered throughout Brittany is not new, the cooperation of a number of individuals and their formal establishment is new. The official incorporation of Strollad ar vaered hag an dilennidi vrezhonegerien (or, in French, l'Association des maires et élus bretonnants) dates only to July 1984. The association has just published its first bulletin (bilingual Breton/French) called "Evit boulc'han an dorzh" which will be distributed to members of the association in all five Breton departments. The contact person for the Association of Breton-Speaking Mayors and Elected Officials is:

M. Fanch Le Péru  
Maire de Confort-Berhet  
22140 Begard  
Brittany  
France



The National Council for Regional Languages and Cultures  
(Conseil national des langues et cultures régionales)

Announced by Jack Lang at the Inter-Celtic Festival of Lorient in early August, a national advisory council was officially entered in the books (Le Journal Officiel) on September 25, 1985. The stated aim of this council of 30 to 40 members is "to study, in the framework of the general orientations defined by the President of the Republic and the government, the questions relative to the support and promotion of regional languages and cultures." The Prime Minister of France will appoint the members of the council for a four-year term, renewable one time. The renewals will be staggered so that half the council comes up for renewals every two years. The council will meet at least twice a year as arranged by its president, and it will publish an annual report. The task of the council will be to advise various Ministries of the government on policies which affect regional languages and cultures.

This sounds very nice, but one has to wonder how effective such a council will be. It is one thing to advise; it is another to see action actually result. Experts on the regional languages and cultures have been advising the government for decades with very little impact. But, the council will be a constant reminder that problems remain to be solved. Let us hope that the Prime Minister will appoint an effective group of people who will work to promote the languages and cultures of France which are an important part of the enduring and rich heritage of Europe.

Diwan

When you renew your ICDBL membership, please remember the check-off box on the renewal form for Diwan. Contributions to Diwan from individuals who included a little extra in their renewal totalled over \$500. That averages to approximately \$3.50 per member. But, contributions were received from only one-third of U.S. ICDBL members. This year, add a dollar or two or ten to your membership renewal for Diwan. They count on individuals to give them the support needed to keep schools open and to grow. The future of the Breton language depends on children, and the Diwan schools give children the means to grow up with Breton.

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ACROSS BRETON LITERATURE:  
THREE WOMEN

Yann Bouëssel du Bourg\*

One is struck by the small number of women writers in our Breton literature, in a country which has had so many admirable story-tellers who were women. This is undoubtedly related to the fact that, for a long time in Brittany, women hardly had any schooling. Who among us has not had at least a great-grandmother or great-great-grandmother who could neither read nor write? Were these women without culture? By no means, but their culture remained wholly or for the most part oral.

One had to wait until the contemporary period to find a certain number of women writers, mostly poets.

To honor a woman, Lois Kuter, who fights with so much fervor and so much courage for the defense of our Breton language and culture, I thought that it would be fitting today to open this column with the introduction of three of our contemporary women writers, three personalities quite different and quite distinct, whose only common feature is their love for their country and for its language.

Anjela Duval

(1905-1981)

Anjela Duval (or rather Dual) not only is one of our best contemporary poets, and the last one in a long line of peasant poets since the death of Loeiz Herrieu, she also was, for nearly twenty years, the living embodiment and symbol of Breton resistance, as she herself said, on every front--the resistance of a people which they strive to kill in its soul, in its language, in its faith, a people whose land is destroyed so that every last root may be pulled out, "for he who has no land has no roots", a people which is pushed out of its own country by the wagonload so as to make room for foreigners.

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\* Yann Bouëssel du Bourg is a writer of Brittany who has published numerous books and articles in Breton and French. He is an expert on Breton literature and we are fortunate to have a contribution from him for Bro Nevez. This is the first of a series of three portraits of Breton-language women authors.

Reun ar C'halan has kindly translated the articles from French to English.

Anjela Duval - continued

The only surviving child of a farming family from Kozh-Varc'had [The Old Market], Anjela never left her parents or the family farm of Traon-an-Dour. After their death, she went on working the farm by herself, with the occasional help of a kind neighbor, until her strength failed her completely, thus exemplifying her attachment to this sacred land ("The land is the only thing in the world for which it is worth living and dying."), to nature, to her country, Brittany, to which she devoted herself entirely ("I belong to my country and to no one else").

Then, little by little, her calling awakens, the calling to be a writer, to write in this language which has always been the only language of her daily life, of her thoughts and of her heart, Breton, since she never got used to the French which she has been forced to learn in school.

Every evening, after her long day of labour, and often until quite late at night, it is the hour of "paper", the time when she writes poems which draw their substance from the small world which surrounds her, from her love for her country, for its people, for its glorious history, for those who fight for its defense. Unfortunately, she must also answer the countless letters which come to her from all over Brittany, and soon, after her television appearance, in December 1971, from far beyond its borders. Her small domain of Traon-an-Dour has become a place of pilgrimage. People come from everywhere to see her and to listen to her, and if these crowds of visitors, many of whom are just plain intruders who devour her time and her substance, were for her one of the heaviest crosses she ever had to bear, she did nevertheless sow in the hearts of many young people of her country the seeds which some day will grow and produce a bountiful harvest.

A national poet. At her funeral, facing her coffin, the priest Marsel Klerg, who was her last guide on the road to Eternity, cries out as a challenge: "Viva Britannia irredente!", and the Breton flags, White and Black and with the Black Cross, which escorted her to her final resting place were carried by FLB members who had done time in French prisons.

It was at the end of 1962 that Anjela published her first poem in the journal of Roparz Hémon, Ar bed keltiek [The Celtic World]. She later published hundreds of others, scattered through such journals as Barr Heol, Hor Yezh, Skol, Al Liamm, Imbourc'h, Bleun Brug. In 1973, Hor Yezh publishes forty poems, and Skol sixty, under the title Hiboud al Leger [The Whisper of the Leger\*]. Other journals publish narratives written in a prose as simple and pure as the water of the "Old Fountain" to which she compared herself: "Va bed brezel" [My world war], "Envorennoù brezel" [War recollections],

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\* The Leger is the river which flows near Anjela Duval's farm.  
R. ar C'h.

Anjela Duval - continued

in Barr Heol; "Kaier al louarn" [The fox's notebook], in Hor Yezh, in 1972; "Leve ar paour" [The rent of the poor], in Al Liamm in 1980, and finally, in 1982, "Tad-kozh Roperz Huon" [The grandfather of Roperz Huon], a long collection of very old family memories, without any literary pretension, but written in a very sound Breton, a precious account of life on the farm as it was in the old days (published by Hor Yezh).

The publishing hours of Al Liamm has brought out most of her poetry in two volumes: in 1973, Kan an Douar [Song of the earth], reprinted in 1978, and in 1982, Traon-an-Dour [River Valley]. Poems as simple as flowers blooming on the hedges, as pure as spring water, as musical as a bird singing or as the wind whispering through the branches. A testimony, after everything has been laid waste, that there is an indestructable beauty, a beauty for which it is good to fight and to die.

In her small domain of Traon-an-Dour, Anjela lived all through her lonely and laborious existence like a prince rich of all the splendor of earth and sky, like a magician for whom the language of plants and beasts holds no secret, in the presence of God, Lord and Creator of all things, preparing herself, like the prophets, in the shadows and in silence, to hurl her cry of anger and revolt, to bear witness for her humiliated people, for her proscribed language, for Brittany in mortal danger, so that one day, like Israel, she shall remember her past, she will rebuild upon the ruins, and make her deserts bloom again.

Anjela Duval has left us, but even though her body may decay a little more each day, melting away into the earth which made her and to which she returned, thanks to the magic of the book, her entire soul, her living speech shall remain present and shall endure through these pages, messengers of hope, of courage, of immortality. For this Brittany of yesteryear, this peasant civilization of which she was the last herald, the last torch-bearer, this civilization which one might have thought erased forever, stands revealed through her lines in all its integrity, forever preserved from the reach of time.

Yann Bouëssel du Bourg

(English translation by  
Reun ar C'halan)

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## KANTVET D'IZ-HA-BLOAZ EMGANN KERGIDU

### Reun ar C'halan

Emgann Kergidu ez eus anezhi un oberenn a-bouez e lennegezh hor bor. Embannet e oa bet e div levrenn, an hini gentañ e 1877, hag eben e 1878. Savet e oa bet gant ur beleg eus Bro-Leon, Dom Lan Inizan. Penndudenn an danevell a zo Yann Pennorz, un anv a dalvez kement ha "sledge-hammerhead" e saosneg, ur pezh a lak anat ez eus anezhañ un den pennek ha krenñ. Yann Pennorz a zo bet skeudennet diouzh skouer tad-kozh Lan Inizan, Paol Inizan, hag en doa kemeret perzh e stourm ar Vreizhiz a-enep da soudarded an Dispac'h, e 1794. E Kergidu o doa dalc'het penn, ha brud an emgann a oa chomet garanet don e koun al Leoniz.

Lan Inizan e oa ur beleg outañ. D'ar mare m'edo o sevel e levr, etre 1870 ha 1877, ne oa ket an Iliz a-du gant gouarnamant ar Republik a oa bet savet nevez zo, gant ar Roue, ne lavaran ket. Dom Lan Inizan e felle dezhañ e vije skouer e dad-kozh ur gentel vat evit e genvroiz. Da vare an Dispac'h bras e oa bet gouest al Leoniz d'en em sevel a-enep d'ar soudarded bet kaset e Breizh gant ar Republik da heskinañ an noblañs, ar veleien, hag an dud a oa a-du gant ar Roue ha gant an Iliz. Daoust hag-eñ e vefe o warlerc'hidi evit ober kemend-all? Oberenn Dom Lan Inizan n'he deus nemet ur pal: atizañ e lennerien, hag o lakaat da stourm ouzh ar Republik. Diouzh menno Yann Pennorz e oa ken fall an Trede Republik hag an hini gentañ, hag houmañ a oa eus ar vilañ. An Dispac'herien a oa tud dizoue. Ar veleien hag ar gristenien vat a oa a-du gant lezenn an aotrou Doue a veze merzheriet, dibennet pe lazhet didruez gant ar Republik, ne vern pegen divlam e oant, merc'hed, bugale, ha kozhidi.

Danevell Dom Lan Inizan a zo untuek, se zo anat. Hervezañ e oa an dud vat evit an Iliz hag evit ar Roue. Ne oa nemet an dud fallakr hag a oa evit an Iliz hag evit an Dispac'h, ha nebeut-tre a Vreizhiz a vije bet kavet en o zouez. Disheñvel e oa ar wirionez, ret eo hen anzav. Bez' e oa dispac'herien e Breizh, evel e lec'h all, etre 1789 ha 1794. Etre 1871 ha 1877 avat e oa Bro-Leon en he fezh a-enep

d'ar Republik, ha berz a reas Emgann Kergidu e-touez ploueziz ar vro, e doare ma oa ret advoulañ al levr. Advoulet eo bet ur wech all e 1977, e brezhoneg, gant Embannadurioù Al Liamm, ha zoken e galleg, hag embannet e oa ivez ur varnadenn hirik awalc'h diwar-benn levr Dom Lan Inizan er gelaouenn L'Express.<sup>\*</sup> Perak kement a vrud a-zivout ul levr bet savet ken pell kent gant ur beleg diglod eus maezioù Bro-Leon? E 1977 e oa en e greñvañ stourm emsaverien Vreizh. Izili an FLB a lakae o bombezennoù da darzhañ e pep lec'h, hag emichañs e veze sellet outo evel ouzh warlerc'hidi Yann Pennorz gant kazetennerien Vro-C'hall.

\* Lann Inizan, Emgann Kergidu (Brest: Lefournier, vol. I, 1877; vol. II, 1878; Emgann Kergidu (Brest: Al Liamm, 2 vols., 1977); La Bataille de Kergidu (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1977); Max Gallo, "Traduit du breton", L'Express, no. 1348 (9-15 mai 1977), pp. 28-30.

### Abstract

The historical novel Emgann Kergidu was published in 1877-1878. It was the work of a country priest, Dom Lan Inizan. It depicted the struggle of the Breton peasants of Bro-Leon against the Terrorist government of 1794. The book was reprinted in 1977, in Breton. A French translation was also published, and it received an extensive review in the weekly L'Express. The fact that the bombing campaign waged by the FLB, the Front for the Liberation of Brittany, was then at its height, may have had something to do with the unusual publicity given to a book written one century earlier by an obscure country priest.

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## RECENT BRETON PUBLICATIONS

Noted by  
Reun ar C'halan

Fanch an Uhel. Kontadennoù ar Bobl (Brest: Al Liamm, 1985).  
Vol. II.

This is the second volume of the folktales collected by An Uhel over one hundred years ago.

Erwan Berthou. En bro Dreger a-dreus parkoù. (Lesneven: Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1985).

A collection of short notes written by the druid Erwan Berthou around 1900; they tell of customs, beliefs, and people which he had found of interest.

Roparz Hémon. Kanaouennoù (Lesneven: Mouladurioù Hor Yezh, 1985).

A second collection of songs written in Breton by Roparz Hémon. The tunes were borrowed from songs well known to England, Germany, Austria, Flanders, Spain, America, and even China. A few examples: Stille nacht, heilige nacht...; Old Folks at Home; Jingle Bells; Good King Wenceslas.

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KOMZ  
(Speech)

Lois Kuter

Komz is a sound archives for languages spoken in Brittany--Breton and Gallo--which operates within Dastum, an archives for traditional Breton music. Dastum has worked for over ten years to coordinate collection activities and to stimulate the creation of new music of all styles rooted in a solid knowledge of traditional styles. Thus, the major function of this archives is to serve as part of an on-going transmission of music from one generation to the next, encouraging contacts between musicians and singers and making recordings accessible to the public.

Komz has much the same role in its work with oral traditions. Through its collection work this organization encourages native Breton speakers to demonstrate storytelling skills, and the recordings produced are certainly valuable for Breton learners who are trying to bridge a gap in the transmission of this language from one generation to the next. So far, Komz has produced two cassettes.

Komz - continued

Komz - nivrenn I: Doareoù an ankou. Mikael Madeg. Edition Dastum. 1984.

The first publication from the Komz archives is a cassette and accompanying 30-page booklet with 30 short accounts of communications between the living and the dead. Twenty-two different native speakers of Breton from Bro Leon (Léon) and Bro Gerne (Cornouaille) tell of premonitions and signs of death and communications from the other world. As anyone who read Nathalie Novik's note on the supernatural in the last issue of Bro Nevez will know, Bretons do not draw a hard line between the world of the dead and the living. Doareoù an ankou provides fascinating documentation of this, but, beyond an interesting content, this publication is very useful for Breton learners removed from a milieu where Breton is spoken as the everyday language. For those who rely on seeing a written text to learn a language, the text for each of the 30 stories helps greatly. As a lazy learner of Breton, I am always challenged by texts which offer no escape by means of a French translation. The introductory text to the transcriptions, an explanation of the work of Komz, and brief introductions to each of the speakers on the cassette are entirely in Breton...and well worth reading. Following the transcriptions, which are as literally rendered as possible in a standard Breton, are several pages explaining the dialect differences between the speakers. Basic differences in syntax, phonology and vocabulary are clearly presented in this section according to the different origins of the speakers.

Komz - nivrenn 2. Margidig an dour yen: Kontadenn gant Jean-Louis Rolland. Mikael Madeg. Dastum, 1985.

This second cassette and accompanying 50-page booklet is a story told by a well-known story-teller of the town of Trébriant (near Carhaix), Jean-Louis Rolland. Born in 1908, this remarkable story-teller has recounted many a tale. Sadly, Mr. Rolland died this past summer. But his language and spirit will be passed on in the recordings made for Komz. The cassette just published is but one rendering of one tale--the adventures of a king's son. The written transcription of the tale is in standard Breton, but those not familiar with the variety of Breton dialects will find Mr. Rolland's Breton a far cry from the standard used on most cassettes for Breton learners. Described to me once as a Breton that sounds like it is being swallowed, the Breton of the Carhaix area is perhaps one of the most difficult for learners to understand. The written text will help one adjust to the particular sound of this Breton. Several pages of notes in the booklet are also very helpful in getting listeners off to a good start. Also very interesting is the introduction to the tale by Mikael Madeg and an autobiographical sketch by J.-L. Rolland.



## LEGENDARY BRITTANY

Gregory Stump

For an upcoming issue of Bro Nevez, I would like to ask native Breton speakers to send me any Breton proverbs, jokes, or rhymes which they learned as children. Such sayings are an integral part of Breton folklore, and will certainly appeal to all of our readers. Even nasty sayings are welcome.

With the Christmas season approaching, I felt it would be appropriate to present a translation of one of the countless Breton legends pertaining to the life of Christ. According to Breton tradition, Christ actually visited Brittany with his apostles; the following legend describes one of the many episodes of his visit. This legend is freely translated from F. M. Luzel's Légendes chrétiennes de la Basse-Bretagne (Vol. I) (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1881, pp. 6-8).

### The Good Lord, Saint Peter, and Saint John

One day, long ago, the Good Lord was travelling through Brittany with Saint Peter and Saint John. It was about two in the afternoon, and because they hadn't eaten since early morning, they were beginning to get hungry. As they were passing a house by the roadside, they saw through the door a servant-girl who was preparing batter for crêpes.

"Let's go into this house, and we'll get some hot crêpes," said Saint Peter.

They went on in.

"Greetings to all of you in this house," they said.

"And to you too, my lords."

"We are three travellers who have been walking since early this morning, and we are tired and hungry; would you be good enough to give us a little something to eat?"

"Yes, gladly," replied the matron of the house. "Sit down a moment; the servant-girl is making batter for crêpes, and in just a little bit, you'll have some good, hot crêpes."

"Mar plij gant Doue,\* it would be good to add, I believe," said our Savior.

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\* "God willing"

Legendary Brittany - continued

"Oh! the batter is ready, and you will certainly have some crepes in just a bit," said the servant-girl.

"Very well," replied our Savior.

And they all three sat down.

The servant-girl then set two trivets on the hearthstone, placed two frying pans on them, and lit the fire underneath them. Then she got the bucket containing the batter, to take it to the hearth. Then by golly, if the bucket didn't burst apart, spilling all its contents out on the ground. And did this ever set the servant-girl to exclaiming, and the matron to scolding!

"Well now, my friends," the matron said to the three travellers, "you had better look elsewhere for your crêpes, because there won't be any here today."

"Yes, yes, there will be, thanks to God," replied our Savior.

And with the end of his staff, he touched the pieces of the bucket scattered about on the floor of the house, and they immediately flew together, and the bucket became whole again--with the batter in it!--all to the great astonishment of the onlookers.

The servant-girl was then able to make her crêpes, and our three travellers ate some with relish, then set out on their way again. But before leaving, our Savior said to the servant-girl: "Remember my child, that it is always good to say mar plij gant Doue."

\* \* \* \* \*

QUESTION:

Wales has St. David, Scotland has St. Andrew, and Ireland has St. Patrick? Who is the Patron Saint of Brittany?

Hint: Does Brittany have a patron saint?, or does it have two or three or more?

The person offering the best response to this question will receive an ICDBL decal. We are also looking for some good questions.

## BOOK REVIEWS

Book reviews or short book notes are welcome from readers. As you can see from this issue of Bro Nevez, reviews do not have to be of books from or about Brittany.

Amy Varin  
34 Wall Street  
Kingston, NY 12401

François Grosjean, Life with Two Languages: An Introduction to Bilingualism (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1982, xiv + 370 pp.)

Review by Amy Varin

François Grosjean, who is bilingual in French and English, has written a sympathetic and informative introduction to bilingualism, which he defines as the regular use of more than one language. He rejects the popular idea that a bilingual must be perfectly fluent in both languages on all subjects, citing the common example of the bilingual scientist who cannot discuss his work in the language he speaks at home.

Grosjean points out that in monolingual countries, where there is only one official language, there are often more bilinguals than in bilingual countries, where most people do not have to learn a second language in order to deal with the government. He distinguishes two kinds of bilingual countries: those organized on the personality principle and those organized on the territorial principle. The personality principle is usually chosen when the government's main concern is for the rights of the individual, as in Canada outside Québec, where anyone may use French or English, as he or she chooses, no matter what language the neighbors choose. The drawback of the personality principle is that most speakers of the minority language adopt the majority language anyway, often faster than they would if they felt persecuted, simply because the majority language is more useful.

The territorial principle is usually chosen to preserve both languages and cultures, as in Belgium. Except in Brussels, where both French and Flemish are spoken, all Belgians must use the language of the area where they live, no matter what their native language is. The drawback is that when one linguistic region is richer than the other, residents of the poorer region must either abandon their native language and move, or accept lesser opportunities at home. Naturally, they resent having to make the choice, and they resent the speakers of the economically favored language, who don't have to choose.

Throughout the book, Grosjean makes it clear that people use more than one language because they have to. If they don't feel that

Book Reviews - continued

they have to, they will be monolingual. Sadly, many people do not feel the need to learn the language of their cultural heritage, at least not while they are young enough to do so easily. Grosjean cites the case of a French couple living in the United States who intended to use only French at home. It worked until their older son discovered that his parents spoke perfectly good English. After that, he refused to speak French. The younger son realized as soon as he began to talk that, like his brother, he needed to speak only English. Though both children now understand French, neither speaks it. The parents speak French to each other, but they have given in and speak English to the children. Yet, European French is respected in the United States. No American teacher will call a child stupid for speaking French at home; if anything, the teacher will say, "Aren't you lucky! You'll get straight A's in French !"

The implications for Breton are frightening. Mere tolerance, even respect, is not enough to preserve a language: people must need it in their daily lives. Only a totally Breton-speaking environment, one in which it is possible to work as a doctor or a banker as well as a farm laborer, can save Breton. Any lesser concessions, like bilingual road signs or the right to write checks in Breton, can only make a dying patient more comfortable.

Morgan Llywelyn, Bard: The Odyssey of the Irish (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1984, 466 pp.)

Reviewed by Amy Varin

Dorothy Parker once complained that she couldn't say that a book was rotten, because "'rotten' is not a nice word for a lady to use. It sounds lousy."\* These days a lady can say "rotten" if she likes. She can even say "lousy." She just can't use the language I want to use about Morgan Llywelyn's Bard: The Odyssey of the Irish.

I wanted this book to be good. Retellings of myth and epic are my favorite kind of reading. Without Rosemary Sutcliff and Lloyd Alexander I would probably never have learned any of the Celtic languages and I wouldn't be writing for Bro Nevez now; and you can ask my mother how hard I was to live with while I was reading The Once and Future King. I don't think that the Book of Invasions, the medieval Irish account of how successive waves of conquerors settled Ireland, is too sacred for this sort of thing at all. It's just that Bard does an awful job of it.

Llywelyn confines her retelling to the last section of the Book of Invasions, in which the Sons of Mil arrive from Spain and conquer the Tuatha De Danaan. Her Milesians are Noble Barbarians, a little bit larger than life and not quite so natural; her



## Book Reviews - continued

Tuatha De Danaan would be wonderful in life, but they're a dreadful bore in literature. They've evolved quite a bit since they conquered Ireland themselves, you see. They're pacifists now, into total harmony with nature, and they're waiting to produce a new generation who will all be like their youngest daughter, Sinann, who is so completely One with the Environment that she doesn't need to talk at all. So they put up an illusion of a battle, to let the Milesians think they're conquered, and fade into invisibility to become, presumably, the fairies. And Sinann and Amergin, the bard of the title, the most sensitive of the Sons of Mil, live happily ever after.

Then there's the way Llywelyn writes. She seems to believe that her readers won't see anything unless she hits them over the head with it. For example, the Milesians, or "Gaelicians" (a neat fusion of Galicians and Gaels), have accepted a Phoenician shipwright into the tribe. We are told over and over again that he feels more at home among these just barbarians than among his own people, to the point of adopting a Gaelic name. When he is congratulated on his Milesian wife's pregnancy, he says, "We'll have to hurry up and people this island with Gaels!" And just in case somebody missed the point, Llywelyn repeats the punch line in a paragraph all to itself: "Gaels."

I sympathize with Mrs. Parker. At least I can say that this book is rotten.

- \* Dorothy Parker, "Mr. Lewis Lays It On With A Trowel" (review of The Man Who Knew Coolidge, by Sinclair Lewis), The New Yorker, April 7, 1928; reprinted in The Portable Dorothy Parker (Penguin Books, 1973), pp. 508-509.

An Droichead - The Bridge: A Bilingual Journal from Ireland.  
Fómhar/Geimhreadh - Autumn/Winter '85.

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

Through the kindness of people at the Keshcarrigan Bookshop in New York, I received in the mail a copy of the second number of a bilingual Irish/English magazine called An Droichead. All who are learning Irish, or who simply feel it is important to have publications in Irish will welcome this interesting publication. The magazine is beautifully printed with many photographs and drawings and an interesting layout which makes the bilingual aspect effective. An interesting aspect--especially for Irish learners--is the availability of a cassette of the magazine spoken in the three major dialects of Irish. Unfortunately, no indication is given of the price for the cassette or for a year's subscription to the magazine. Readers are invited to contact Irish Books and Media (683 Osceola Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55105) or Keshcarrigan Bookshop (90 West Broadway, New York, NY 10007) for information.

## Book Reviews - continued

As someone who has gotten used to passing on practical details to other people on Breton and other Celtic matters, I am left with a few basic questions about this magazine. How does one subscribe? I found no information in the magazine to help me. I am puzzled by the fact that the front cover subtitles the issue "A bilingual journal from Ireland" yet I find no address in Ireland anywhere in the pages of An Droichead. Contributors and people featured in the content are most definitely Irish--some of the most creative talents of Ireland today--but the only addresses available for more information about the past and future of this magazine are those cited above for accompanying cassettes, and an address for the publisher: Ull Mór, 3 York Street, New York, NY 10013. There is no address attached to the Editor, Gabriel Rosenstock, although one hopes that he might be contacted through the publisher for questions, comments, or a plea for information about how to get the magazine in the future.

Now that I have grumbled about the lack of practical information, let me try to give an idea of the nature of this new publication. First, it is worth mentioning that all arts are covered: music, painting, sculpture, cooking, writing of all kinds, film-making and theater. The content is quite varied, including interviews, short stories, poetry, book reviews, recipes, biographical sketches and other short notes. The adjective "short" is important because the only shortcoming I find in this publication is that everything is so short in length that I am left with a definite sense of reading an abstract only to find that nothing follows it. Does the fact that English and Irish both get equal space mean that contributions to this magazine have to be half the length that one normally needs to satisfy a craving for content on any of the subjects introduced? The "Reader's Digest" quality of the speed by which one finishes an article is annoying. But, if you have little time and like to be able to finish an article in less than one minute, you will definitely enjoy this magazine. Personally, I felt a little cheated with articles that gave me only a taste of what could be fascinating reading. But, I was only reading the English part of the magazine.

In the editorial opening to An Droichead, Gabriel Rosenstock indicates that the magazine creators now have a clearer idea of their potential readership. He specifies: "abroad it is the independent visitor to Ireland who wishes to maintain contact with something more real than the smile of a comely maiden in a rainbowed landscape, frequently offered to the package-traveler..." But I feel that the potential readership for this magazine would also like something more real than the comely smiles of poets and painters who dash across the pages of this magazine.

## Book Reviews - continued

While some articles offer enough depth to get a grasp of something real--the interview with the poet Nuala Ní Dhomhnaill and the short story by Séamas Mac Annaidh ("Gearrscéal"/"Hate"), for instance--most contributions in this issue give one little to sink one's teeth into. It is a very quick visit to Ireland.. although certainly an interesting one.

But, judge this magazine for yourself--whether you read Irish or not. It is well worth looking up.

André Colleu and Mathilde Valverde. L'Album - panorama de l'audio-visuel en Bretagne. Skol Uhel ar Vro/Institut Culturel de Bretagne (3 rue Martenot, B.P. 66A, 35031 Rennes Cédex), 1985

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

There are organizations that talk about what needs to be done and there are organizations that do things. Skol Uhel ar Vro, created in 1981, is an organization that does things. A group which draws upon the expertise of scholars of Brittany, the Institute has published a half dozen excellent books and has produced several films, co-edited records, and launched various research projects which will bear fruit in the coming years.

The latest publication of the Institute is the Album--a panorama of film and audiovisual projects in Brittany. The first 50 pages of this document review the history of film in Brittany, reviewing as well the current resources for potential film-makers. Intended as a resource for people who produce films and use audiovisual material in Brittany, the Album is a mine of practical information, including nearly 300 names and addresses of film-makers, organizations and resource centers.

The bulk of the Album--some 200 pages--consists of short descriptions of films and videotapes on Brittany: 450 in all. Each descriptive entry in this catalog gives the nature of the material (16 mm, diaporama, video, etc.), the date it was made, the author and producer, the distributor, the length, and a succinct abstract which gives a very good idea of content and story line. In some cases a "microanalyse" is also included which describes technical aspects of the material--the quality of sound, the way the camera has been used, narration, etc.

Films are broken down by general subject area: agriculture, the sea, habitat, environment, history and documentary, ethnology, films in Breton or about the Breton language, social problems, women, militancy (strikes and demonstrations, for example), films made by school classes or about schools, literature, fiction, animated films, media and communications, dance and music,

## Book Reviews - continued

art and artisans, economy, tourism, sports. Indexes and cross-referencing insure that users find all possible films on any particular topic.

The album is generously illustrated with photos. This is a fascinating document of what Bretons are doing with media. Anyone with an interest in film-making, or in locating Breton films or videos for use, should make an effort to find this book.

### A Few Book Notes:

Lois Kuter

Bibliothèques publiques et langues régionales. Direction du livre et de la lecture, Ministère de la Culture (27 avenue de l'Opéra, 75001 Paris). 54 pages. 1985.

The French Ministry of Culture has published this booklet which surveys publications in the "regional" and "minority" languages of France: Alsatian, Basque, Breton, Catalan, Flemish, and Occitan. Texts in each language are followed by an address list of publishers.

Pour les langues de France. Edited under the direction of Henri Giordan. Centre Georges-Pompidou. Collection: "Culture au quotidien", 1984. 104 pages.

A dossier on the various languages spoken in France, including 30 pages on Breton.

\* \* \* \* \*



## RECORD REVIEWS

Alan Stivell. Mojenn (Legend). Disc'AZ, 1984.

Reviewed by Nathalie Novik

Released last year, this is Stivell's latest recording, featuring his contributions to the film industry as well as to science fiction.

The first side presents his music for the movie by Monique Enckell "Si j'avais mille ans" (If I were one thousand years old). It includes six pieces, some vocal ("Tour an Arvor", the tower of Arvor), some instrumental, and a particularly beautiful harp solo on the theme of "Tour an Arvor" at the end.

The following piece is a reel "Eireog Shinedin", inspired by "Jenny's Chicken" and the harp work is very skillful, reminiscent of Alan's early career in "Rennaissance". The harp, which he designed himself, has a rich sonority with crystal-like high notes, and for a moment, we are brought back to the magic times of his beginnings...

We come down to earth with the next composition, entitled "Immram Brain". It is an attempt to illustrate Brendan's Voyage without paraphrasing Shaun Davey. The result is a rather monotonous chant, in Irish, sustained by the harp, flutes and heavy percussions. It is quite soporific, and would be best enjoyed late at night, just before bedtime.

The second side of the record is more ambitious: Stivell has selected several famous Irish legends and endeavored to treat them in his own style. If you enjoyed the "Celtic Symphony", you will be delighted. It has everything to be a good fiction movie score: the thunder, the strange sounds of exotic flutes, the percussions thumping through the action... Celtic music? I don't know. It is not because you borrow an Irish melody here and a Breton an dro there that you continue a tradition. There are some very rewarding moments, like the harp virtuoso piece in "Dagda & Morrigan", or Angus' dream, but on the whole, this kind of music is closer to the score of "E.T." or "Star Wars". It is voluntary, Alan giving some credit in his commentaries to the science fictional account of the origins of Ireland and the Tuatha de Danann in particular (elegantly called T.D.D. throughout his text!), and also acknowledged in his old fascination for science fiction.

The record is not yet available in the U.S., but when it is, it will probably feature a translation of the abundant texts accompanying it. If you unconditionally love Stivell's recent creations, this record is for you. Otherwise, just wait and see: he looks like he has more surprises up his sleeve...

Record Reviews - continued

An Tri Yann. Café du bon coin. Phonogram Marzelle PG 224. 1983.

Reviewed by Nathalie Novik

We have said before in this newsletter that the Tri Yann deserve more recognition in the U.S., and this new record is another proof that every effort should be made to bring them over.

The "café du bon coin", or street-corner café, is illustrated on the inside of the record jacket, in its 1920 aspect and its contemporary outlook. Things have not changed much, and this is the message brought by Tri Yann in this 1983 creation. They modernize traditional music, but are careful to preserve its qualities. The result: a fireworks of masterpieces, borrowing a lot from Irish music ("Kalondakour", pieces by O'Carolan...). We also witness the rise of Jean-Paul Corbinau as a confirmed "chanteur de charme". His voice is getting richer with the years, and he is featured prominently on this record.

Two pieces in particular make this recording an exceptional one: "An Tourter" and "Complainte de Yuna Madalen". "An Tourter" (the bulldozer) is a striking adaptation of a desperate poem in Breton by Visant Seite about the destruction of the old Breton landscape by bulldozers. Right at the beginning of the second side, we hear the sound of a bulldozer starting up, and as the noise mingles gradually with the percussions, it becomes more threatening as a background to the half-whispered curses sung by the group, who have greatly improved their articulation and pronunciation of Breton...

"Yuna Madalen" is a sweet and sad lament on the life of a Breton woman, working in the fields and then in the factory. Corbinau's melancholy voice used partly a cappella haunts the piece with beauty and dignity.

If I had to express one regret, it might be about "Aventurou Marian" (the adventures of Marian), which, though funny and sarcastic, dealing with transexuality, does not rise to the level of this outstanding recording.

You can find the record in the U.S., and I am sure it will be a very welcome addition to the collection of any lover of Breton music.

Reviews for the next Bro Nevez issue to include:

Dan ar Bras - Musiques pour les silences à venir.  
Kornog - Ar Seizh Avel/On Seven Winds.

... new releases by musicians touring in the U.S. this November.  
A concert review would be very welcome!

## AR GEGIN - Breton Recipes for the coming of the Cold Season

Nathalie Novik

### Pot-au-Feu à la bretonne

#### 1. Pot-au-feu

3 pounds of lean beef  
1 marrow bone wrapped in cheesecloth  
a few carrots  
2 or 3 turnips  
1/2 rutabaga (optional)  
1 bunch of leeks bound together  
1 onion  
1 branch of celery  
1 small parboiled cabbage (optional)

Place the meat in a large Dutch oven in cold water, and bring the water to a boil. Strain the fat from the surface. Add all the vegetables. Cook 3 to 4 hours on a very low fire.

#### 2. Fars

It is not mandatory, but this is what will give the Breton touch to your pot-au-feu. You have to find a small bag, about 10-15 inches long, 8-10 inches wide (it does not really matter) made of some sturdy cloth. Some spice bags would be perfect, otherwise you might have to make it.

2 1/2 pounds of buckwheat flour  
3 eggs  
12 pitted prunes soaked for some time before  
salt

Place the flour in a bowl, and break the eggs in the middle. Salt the mixture, and dilute with water. The batter should be of middle consistency, not too fluid. Add the prunes and mix thoroughly. Pour the batter into the little bag, and tie it, leaving some space inside the bag as the batter is going to rise. Place in the broth with the meat and the vegetables two hours before you finish cooking the pot-au-feu.

#### 3. When you are ready to serve your pot-au-feu, get the 'fars' out of the bag, slice it in one-inch thick slices, place one slice on each plate and cover it with meat and vegetables; serve the broth in separate bowls. Don't throw away any leftovers; they taste even better the next day.

### Apple Omelette

Eggs, apples, apple eau-de-vie, milk, sugar, salt.

Sautee the sliced apples in butter, add sugar and a few drops of eau-de-vie (or rum). Beat the eggs, add a little milk and sugar, and salt very lightly. Cook the omelette, add the apples in one thick layer and fold the omelette in two. Sprinkle with sugar and flambe with the eau-de-vie (or rum).

## CELTIC FORTNIGHT - THE SOCIETY OF INTER-CELTIC ARTS AND CULTURE

From time to time in past newsletters we have reported on the work of the Society of Inter-Celtic Arts and Culture, based in the Boston area. The Inter-Celtic festival, called "interKelt" is still in the works for those who may be wondering. The directors of the Inter-Celtic Society have been hard at work as well on some events that merit an introduction because they are truly Inter-Celtic.

The Society of InterCeltic Arts and Culture, founded in 1978, is a tax-exempt educational organization (non-profit) to promote public interest and involvement in all aspects of Celtic culture through its publications, research and referral service, as well as public programs. It is a resource center with some 3,000 Celtic books, periodicals and recordings, available for public use. The journal Keltica best exemplifies the Society's comprehensive scope of interests and the high quality of everything it produces. Other projects have included the organization of local and national tours for Celtic performers, artists and speakers, and the InterCeltic Society is also working to become more active in sponsoring films, lectures, concerts, readings, exhibits and other events--in the Boston area especially.

The directors of the Society, Margot de Chatelaine and Kevin Gilligan, have been active members of the U.S. ICDBL since its beginnings, helping us with information and serving to make the Breton language and culture known to thousands of people. Because of the important work the InterCeltic Society does to further some of the same aims of the ICDBL, it is not surprising to find some of our members involved in InterCeltic Society projects. In May, I set up an information stand and display of Breton books and records at the New England Irish Festival--part of a cultural tent set up by the InterCeltic Society to present all the Celtic arts and literatures. Nathalie Novik, one of our Board members and a Bro Nevez column editor and regular contributor, has also worked with the InterCeltic Society on a variety of projects. Another Board member and Bro Nevez editor, Reun ar C'halan was a part of the Celtic Fortnight this October which is described below.

The Celtic Fortnight is the most recent of a series of events organized by the InterCeltic Society. This two-week event presented eleven poets and writers (including also one musician). Taking place October 22-31, the Fortnight was supported by and held in the Boston Public Library, with additional support from the Mayor's Office of Business and Cultural Development, the Boston Arts Lottery Council, the Massachusetts Council on the Arts and Humanities, the British Council, the Consulate General of Canada, the Consulate General of Ireland, as well as many volunteers and consultants.

Although it may seem a bit cruel to tantalize readers with a description of the Fortnight now that it is over, it is well worth presenting this event as a means of introducing the various poets and writers involved. The following descriptions are adapted from a



## Celtic Fortnight - continued

brochure prepared by the Society of InterCeltic Arts and Culture to present the Fortnight.

October 22 - Charles Dunn - "Highland Bards and Lowland Poets: Readings"

Born in Scotland in 1915, Charles Dunn is Professor Emeritus of Celtic Languages and Literatures at Harvard University, where he served as department chairman from 1963 to 1984. Editor of numerous works of medieval history and literature and author of Highland Settler: A Portrait of the Scottish Gael in Nova Scotia, Dr. Dunn is a member of many Scottish learned and cultural societies.

October 22 - Alistair MacLeod - "Reading from His Work"

Few Canadian writers are so highly regarded at home and abroad as Alistair MacLeod. A poet, playwright and short story writer from Cape Breton Island, he teaches at the University of Windsor and has edited its literary review since 1973. A frequent guest on national radio and television programs, MacLeod has collaborated in producing several films and plays based on his work. In 1984, he was selected for the "Canada-Scotland Writers in Residence Exchange Program." A collection of his stories, The Lost Salt Gift of Blood, appeared in 1976.

October 23 - Robert Minhinnick - "Reading from Modern Welsh Poets"

Born in South Wales in 1952, Robert Minhinnick is one of the most widely read younger poets in Wales and Britain. Four verse collections, A Thread in the Maze, Native Ground, Life Sentences, and The Dinosaur Park have been published in Wales and are distributed in America by Dufour Editions.

October 24 - Joseph Clancy - "Welsh Poetry, Medieval and Modern"

A member of the faculty of Marymount Manhattan College, Joseph Clancy is the foremost translator of Welsh literature in modern times. He has published three volumes of translations of Welsh poetry from the Middle Ages to the present day, and will soon complete publication of a four-volume collection of The Plays of Saunders Lewis, the greatest Welsh writer of the twentieth century. Clancy's own verse collection, The Significance of Flesh, has been published in both Wales and the U.S.

October 27 - Bill Ochs - "The Ace and Deuce of Piping: A Recital"

Bill Ochs studied uilleann pipes (bellows-blown bagpipes of Ireland) in Ireland under a grant from the National Endowment for the Arts and was selected for the NEA tour, "The Best in Irish Music and Dance in America," in 1978. In addition to writing

## Celtic Fortnight - continued

about piping, Ochs has played and arranged music for theater and dance productions, national public television and radio, and Irish folk festivals and concerts throughout America.

### October 28 - Reun ar C'halan - "Reading from The Book of Destiny"

Born in 1923 in Brittany, the Celtic province of France, Reun ar C'halan has published two collections of Breton verse, Klemmgan Breizh (The Elegy of Brittany) and Levr ar Blanedenn (The Book of Destiny), the latter receiving the highest award for literature written in Breton in 1979. A member of the faculty of Wellesley College since 1951, ar C'halan has published numerous works of literary criticism in English, French and Breton including books on Renan, Baudelaire, and Saint-John Perse.

### October 28 - Robert Lima - "Reading from The Olde Ground and other Works"

A professor of Spanish and Comparative Literature at Pennsylvania State University, Robert Lima is the author of books on Lorca, Valle-Inclán, and Borges, and two volumes of poetry, Fathoms and The Olde Ground. A limited edition of the latter with twenty illustrations by artist Deirdre McCullough Grunwald has been published by the Inter-Celtic Society. In addition to reading from his work, Lima will discuss the Celtic heritage of Spain, particularly that of his ancestral home, Galicia.

### October 30 - Daniel Gillis - "Readings of Contemporary Scots-Canadian Poetry"

A Classics professor at Haverford College, Gillis has published a collection of poems, Vita, and the biography of a Scottish Gaelic immigrant from rural Canada to Massachusetts, Measure of a Man. In 1982 he founded the Iona Foundation for the retrieval of Gaelic language, history, and culture among descendants of Highland emigrants to America. In addition to publishing historical and literary works, it maintains archives and conducts classes, workshops, and conferences at Iona House in Prince Edward Island. In 1986, it will publish the first American edition of verse by Scotland's greatest living Gaelic poet, Sorley MacLean: Poems: 1932-1982.

### October 30 - Francis Phelan - "The Breaking of the String: A Reading"

A professor of Irish and English literature at Stonehill College and former director of the school's Irish Studies program, Frank Phelan has been hailed as the most gifted Irish-American writer of our day. He has published two volumes of fiction, Religion Land, a collection of satires, and Four Ways of Computing Midnight, a novel made up of short stories whose title piece won a Pushcart Prize in 1982.

Celtic Fortnight - continued

October 31 - Tessa Ransford - "Crossing A Threshold: A Halloween Reading"

The four verse collections published by Tessa Ransford have won great acclaim in her native Scotland and Britain, where her work appears in many literary magazines. In addition to reading from her most recent books, Fools and Angels and Light of the Mind, she will briefly discuss her work as director of the Scottish Poetry Library, an organization she founded in 1984 to collect and distribute literature in Scotland's three languages: Gaelic, Scots and English.

October 31 - Séan O Tuama - "Readings from Poetry in the Irish Language"

A professor of Irish literature at University College, Cork since 1950, and student of Daniel Corkery (The Hidden Ireland), Séan O Tuama has published numerous works of literary criticism in Irish and English as well as original plays and poetry in Irish. He has prepared academic editions of several major Gaelic texts and collaborated as editor with poet and translator Thomas Kinsella in publishing the most important collection of Irish poetry in modern times: An Duanaire: An Irish Anthology, 1600-1900: Poems of the Dispossessed.

The difficulties of organizing such an event for the first time meant that it was impossible to publicize the Celtic Fortnight widely in advance beyond the Boston area. But, such a gathering will no doubt be a part of the future work of the Inter-Celtic Society. If you would like to be on the mailing list for future news contact:

Margot de Chatelaine  
Kevin Gilligan  
Inter-Celtic Society of Arts and Culture  
96 Marguerite Avenue  
Waltham, MA 02154

\* \* \* \* \*

## NEWS OF NON-CELTIC LANGUAGES

The following article is a greatly condensed version of a hitherto unpublished article written by Marisa Garrett in 1984. Ms. Garrett holds an M.A. in Germanic Linguistics from the University of California, Berkeley, and is currently teaching English in Mexico.

To my general ongoing call (plea?) for contributions to this column, let me add a specific request. Ms. Garrett's article concentrates on the use of Dutch and French in Belgium, but alludes only briefly to the German-speaking area in eastern Belgium. If any of my fellow Germanists have special knowledge of this region and its language situation, a short article would be eagerly accepted as a followup to the one presented in this issue.

Please send all contributions to my new address:

Roslyn Raney  
Department of Foreign Languages  
and Literatures  
Northern Illinois University  
DeKalb, IL 60115

### The Flemish Movement and the Restoration of Dutch in Belgium

Marisa Garrett

The freedom to express oneself in one's own language is a right that most people take for granted. But such has not always been the case in Belgium. For centuries, French was the language of administration and culture; little prestige was afforded the Flemish dialects of Dutch.

Present-day Belgium is divided into two major linguistic and cultural areas: Dutch-speaking Flanders in the north, and French-speaking Wallonia in the south. The two areas now enjoy considerable autonomy. Let us trace the history of language policy in Belgium to understand the struggles that have led to the present solution.

In the Middle Ages, Flanders was part of the Netherlands. However, the court owed allegiance to France, and the prestige status of French was already apparent. Flemish nobility perceived their native dialects as "common" and preferred to speak French.

The 16th and 17th centuries were dominated by the Eighty Years War (1568-1648). At the end of this the northern Netherlands received their independence; Flanders, however, endured periods of Spanish and Austrian rule. The predominance of French continued and was extremely strong in the 18th century. Upper-class Flemings spoke French and scorned the Flemish dialects of the masses. With such attitudes prevailing, and with the unavailability of education for Flemings in their own language past the first few years of school, it is hardly surprising that the Flemings had no real pride in or even consciousness of their cultural heritage.



## The Flemish Movement - continued

The early 19th century saw, finally, a positive development for the Flemings. The Congress of Vienna proclaimed in 1815 that the Netherlands, Flanders and Wallonia were the "United Kingdom of the Netherlands". King William of Orange proclaimed Dutch the official language of the country. This language policy was, predictably, opposed by the Walloons, but also by the Flemish bourgeoisie. The modern autonomous Belgian state's birth in 1830 had little immediate positive effect on the status of Dutch; public institutions remained French-speaking, and poverty-stricken Flemings sometimes relocated to the then more prosperous Walloon region, where they soon assimilated culturally and linguistically.

Some Flemish intellectuals had supported William's Dutch language policy and their native language and culture. They deplored the fact that Dutch had so little prestige and official recognition, and began meeting during the 1830's to discuss this. In this cultural interest and in these meetings, the Flemish movement had its origins. As early as 1840, however this cultural interest led to a fledgling political act. Flemish movement members circulated a petition asking that the government use the Dutch language in courts, schools and in administration in Flanders. The government, however, ignored this petition.

The establishment in 1856 of a Royal Commission to propose measures to stimulate the development of the Dutch language was quite encouraging to the Flemish movement. Members prepared a report which proposed, again, the reforms of the 1840 petition. The report also called for bilingual government documents and the establishment of a Dutch-language university. The movement suffered a setback when, in 1859, the Belgian government refused to publish this report and instead issued its own report claiming that official recognition of both French and Dutch would pose a threat to the unity of Belgium.

This defeat mobilized the Flemings to become more politically active. They began to run for office. However, their united linguistic preference was compromised by the political and religious diversity of the Flemish people. Their allegiance lay either with the Catholic Party or the Liberal Party. Culture and language were not the only issues of great importance to the Flemings, although the two parties later did agree to work together on certain Flemish causes.

The late 19th century saw joint publication of a dictionary by Flanders and the Netherlands, and some sentiment for combining the two Dutch-speaking regions into one country, the "Greater Netherlands." The Catholic Party, which was particularly sympathetic to the Flemish cause, gained control of the Belgian government around 1880, and finally, after France's humiliating defeat in the Franco-Prussian War of 1870-71, the French language lost some of its prestige. In the final decades of the 19th century, the Flemish Movement stood united in its demand for a Dutch-language university at Ghent. This was the idea of Lodewijk de Raet, who saw language as the only way to spread education, which in turn was the only viable way to increase prosperity and foster cultural development.

## The Flemish Movement - continued

The considerable progress made by the Flemish Movement in the 19th century was followed by two major setbacks in the 20th century. The two World Wars found many Flemings serving in the army of their country, twice occupied by the Germans. The Belgian army's officers, however, were French-speaking--a situation which ironically points out the social inequalities which the Flemings endured. In both wars, an extremist faction of Flemish soldiers known as the "Activists" collaborated with the Germans in hope of furthering the "Greater Netherlands" cause. After both German defeats, the Flemish Movement lost credibility.

The idea which forms the basis of the Belgian solution to the problem of a country with two languages was first suggested in a radical manifesto shortly after World War I. Unlike the rather tolerant--and ineffective--language laws of the 19th century, this manifesto rejected bilingualism, which would only encourage continuation of class distinction. Instead, unilingualism was demanded. Flanders was to be an exclusively Dutch-speaking area; Wallonia exclusively French-speaking. By 1929 the government had accepted this in principle. Many details remained to be worked out, however, and it was already clear that special provisions would have to be made for Brussels, the national capital situated in Flanders but very near the Dutch/French language border.

A 1958 report formed the basis for many later reforms. This document espoused unilingualism and defined Flanders and Wallonia as distinct cultural communities. Brussels was not considered a cultural community, however, and was granted bilingual status. Despite its physical location in the Flemish province of Brabant, the city was heavily gallicized, and French still enjoyed much prestige--even though Flanders was doing well economically and Wallonia was suffering some degree of economic decline. The growth of the capital city had implications for the language question: if suburbs were incorporated, the areas became officially bilingual and the unilingual Dutch-speaking part of Belgium thus diminished in size. By 1965, no more incorporation was allowed. The suburbs remained Dutch, but a concession was made. Bilingual civil departments provided Walloon residents of these suburbs with French-language "facilities."

The 1971 constitution affirms the status of Flanders and Wallonia as virtually autonomous states within a federation. Belgium has found an equitable solution, within the framework of a united state, to its language question. The Flemish Movement's struggle is not over, however. Important concerns are the protection of the rights of the Flemish minority in Brussels, and the drive for international recognition of the Dutch language as it is spoken in Belgium. The 1980 Treaty of Linguistic Union between Flanders and the Netherlands is a major force in achieving such recognition. By this treaty, Flanders and the Netherlands assume dual responsibility for all Dutch language questions, and the status of Flanders as an unchallenged member of the Dutch language community is assured.

# International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language

## THE U.S. BRANCH OF THE ICDBL

The U.S. Branch of the ICDBL is a non-profit educational organization, exempt from federal income tax under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. All contributions to the U.S. ICDBL, including membership dues and subscription to Bro Nevez are tax deductible.

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With the primary aim of promoting education in and about the Breton language, the U.S. ICDBL has initiated the following activities: a bibliography project, the development of a series of "working papers" and informational publication, work to make Breton books and journals better known and more accessible in the U.S., and participation in festivals and conferences. The U.S. ICDBL serves as a clearinghouse for information relating specifically to the Breton language and culture and more generally to Breton society and history.

## MEMBERSHIP

Members of the U.S. ICDBL receive the newsletter for the year of their membership. Two membership categories exist:

**Voting Members** have the right to cast one vote for their membership on all issues brought to vote. Groups of several individuals may hold a membership in common.  
**Dues: \$10 per year.**

**Non-Voting Members** have no voting rights, but are welcome and encouraged to be active in all ICDBL activities. This category is primarily for those who would like to show support, but do not want decision-making responsibilities.  
**Dues: \$9 per year.**

Those wishing to join the U.S. ICDBL are invited to contact the Branch Secretary:

Lois Kuter  
143 Plymouth Road  
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

Persons living outside the U.S. are urged to join ICDBL branches existant in their location. A list is available upon request.

## NEWSLETTER OF THE U.S. ICDBL - BRO NEVEZ

Published quarterly (February, May, August, and November) this 30-40 page newsletter is designed to inform readers in the U.S. and elsewhere about the Breton language and culture, and the work of Bretons to support them. The aim of the newsletter is to be both a source of and a guide to information about the Breton language and culture.

## SUBSCRIPTION

Includes 4 numbers yearly. Subscription rates are \$8.00 for the U.S. and Canada; \$12 overseas (surface mail); \$15 overseas (airmail). Note: Subscription is included in membership dues.

Back issues of the newsletter are available for \$2 per number (\$4 per double issue; 50¢ for Newsletter Number 1).

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For information on advertising, subscriptions, back issues, etc., contact:

Lois Kuter  
General Editor - Bro Nevez  
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Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

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