

BRO NEVEZ

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



NANTES NAONED
SAMEDI 12 octobre 2024

Journée d'action pour
LA RÉUNIFICATION
Devezh *ADUNANEREZH*

**REFUS DE LA RÉUNIFICATION
= DENI DE DÉMOCRATIE**

INTERVENTIONS
de personnalités bretonnes

10h00 -
Rendez-vous
aux points de rassemblements


12h00 -
Arrivée en cortège
Cours Saint-Pierre à NANTES
Restauration

15h00 -
Défilé pour la réunification

16h00 > 20h00 -
Animations + FEST-DEIZ

Marzan Puceul Ancenis
NANTES Vallet
Port Saint-Père

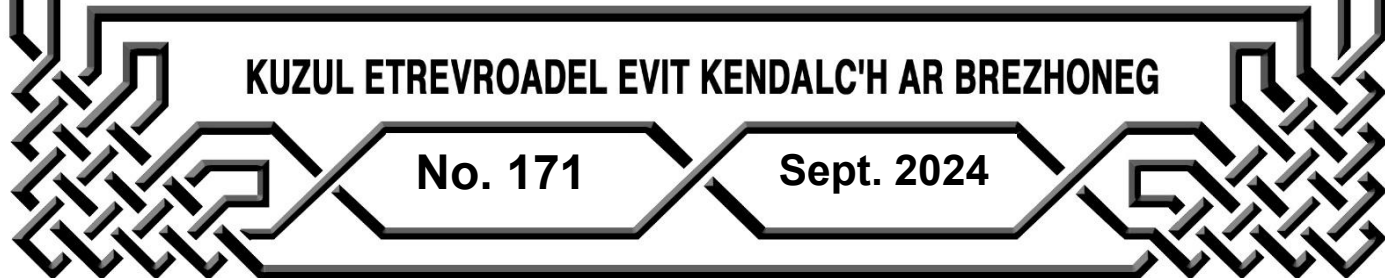
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KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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The U.S. ICDBL provides *Bro Nevez* on a complimentary basis to a number of language and cultural organizations in Brittany to show our support for their work. Your Membership/Subscription allows us to mail print copies. 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 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!

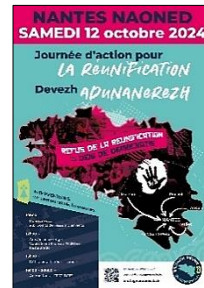
Back issues of *Bro Nevez* can be found on the U.S. ICDBL website

Ideas expressed within this newsletter are those of the individual authors, and do not necessarily represent ICDBL philosophy or policy. Unless otherwise noted Lois Kuter is the author of all articles in this issue. Contributions from others would be very welcome.!



Editor's Note

In this number of *Bro Nevez* you will find information about ongoing work to call for the reunification of Brittany as well as calls for support of the Diwan schools. On the positive side, you will find news of activities in support of the Breton culture and economy, and you will be introduced to four new members of Brittany's Order of the Ermine. In the wake of the 2024 Olympics this summer you will read about the participation of Bretons in the Olympic and Paralympic Games. And it seemed fitting to reintroduce Brittany's own style of wrestling, Gouren, as well as a brief note on other traditional sports. - LK



Call for Action on the Reunification of Brittany

A call has gone out for the mobilization of Bretons for a demonstration in Nantes on October 12 to demand political action on the part of Breton Deputies and Senators to put a process into place to lead to the reunification of Brittany

– the incorporation of the Department of Loire-Atlantique into the administrative Region of Brittany. This is not a new demand but has behind it a petition with 105,000 signatures from people of the Loire-Atlantique and Nantes Pays in support of reunification.

The following questions have been posed to Deputies and Senators (my translation):

Will you gear up a legislative process allowing for the administrative unity of Brittany of five departments.?

Are you for the protection of millennium old Breton placenames threatened by the 3DS law, and for the correction of attacks already made on them; will you vote for a law in this sense?

Will you defend the stream of Breton language teaching and its immersion pedagogy of which the excellence of its results is widely acknowledged?

Will you put in the works a legislative process in favor of the legislative and fiscal autonomy of the region of Brittany (in non sovereign domains)?

While there may be limited response of the part of the elected officials from Brittany, one can be assured that Bretons will not give up on the goal of reunifying Loire-Atlantique with the rest of Brittany, and the fight to protect the Breton identity of this area.

Endangered Breton Place Names – UNESCO Responds

UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Protection of Cultural Patrimony decided on September 1 that placing Breton place names in the category of immaterial patrimony for humanity was not a case for "extreme urgency."

That had been requested by Koun Breizh in view of the implementation of the 3DS law as a threat to Breton names in communities with populations of 2,000 or less where they were required to give a street name and number to all sites. This standardization is viewed – and has been used – as a means of replacing culturally significant Breton names with new French ones.

While rejecting the "extreme urgency" of the case in its decision, UNESCO encouraged France to continue to work with the communities concerned to insure the protection of the immaterial cultural patrimony of Brittany.

For this to happen Koun Breizh will attempt to mobilize political support of the Regional Council of Brittany and the Ofis Publik ar Brezhoneg to stop further Frenchification of Breton names and to reverse damage already done. See *Bro Nevez* 170, June 2024, for background on this issue.

S.O.S. Diwan

This September Diwan put out a call for support to raise 500,000 euros to meet budget needs. An appeal was sent to the Regional Council of Brittany for financial support and a letter was sent to French President Emmanuel Macron by 20 Breton members of the French Parliament – see below. Departments of Brittany are also being asked to step to the plate and so far Finistère has committed some funding.

In 2023 Diwan schools had some 4,000 students in 47 pre/primary schools, 6 middle schools, and 2 high schools, located in all five departments of Brittany. Salaries for some 248 teachers and librarians are supported by the National Education system, but there are 187 staff positions funded by Diwan and 180 by the schools themselves.

This year's financial problems stem in part from a lack of any support from the Rectorat of Nantes for Diwan schools in the department of Loire-Atlantique. 40% of students there in bilingual programs are in Diwan schools. Due to changes in policy for high schools students have found enrollment in Diwan schools more challenging. From the last school year there has been a drop in Diwan students to 3,930 for 2024 – not a major

change, but normally there has been some increase each year. High costs due to inflation and needs for building maintenance have made meeting budget especially difficult.

Yet, there are new projects in the planning with schools for Orvault, Hennebont, Tréguier and Plésidy and a training program at the Carhaix high school for child and elder care. Diwan continues to provide a high quality education for students with a 98% success rate for the Carhaix and Vannes high schools (99 of 101 students) compared to the 96.1% success rate for France over all. For the middle schools there was a success rate of 98.7% (216 students) for the Brevet with four of the six schools scoring 100% success.

In early September twenty (of 33) Breton Senators and National Assembly Deputies of the French Parliament signed a letter appealing to the French President for action to safeguard Diwan and the languages of France.

The following is my translation (LK)

Monsieur Emmanuel Macron
Président de la République
Palais de l'Élysée
55 rue du Faubourg Saint-Honoré
75008 Paris

5 September 2024

Object : Alert from 20 Breton Parliamentarians on the financial situation of the Diwan system

Mr. President,

Our languages are our lives. They make up part of our patrimony. They bear witness to the diversity of our country and its cultural richness. Our languages are in danger and today we all have a mission and responsibility to insure their perpetuity.

You have yourself noted this in a publication of May 26, 2021, about the social media of Facebook, affirming that "The languages are a national treasure" since "as President of the Republic, I am both the protector of the French language and guardian of the riches that are constituted in our regional languages," concluding that you would ask the Government and Parliament to find the means to guarantee the transmission of this linguistic diversity.

It is in this sense that we, Parliamentarians of Brittany, wish today to address you. In effect, we have received from Diwan accounting reports that show serious treasury problems that could put the system in peril as soon as the end of the month.

This associative teaching network offers laical teaching free of charge to over 4,000 students in Brittany through an immersive form of teaching in the Breton language. Concerned here is a major network in Brittany which provides quality teaching with excellent exam results, and which has already allowed the training of thousands of Breton speakers since its creation.

Today the perpetuity of this system is menaced and all of Brittany is mobilizing to save Diwan. Thus, we call on you Mr. President, to enable a means of finding a positive perennial outcome for this system.

In anticipation of your response, we ask you Mr. President to receive the assurance of our most sincere compliments.

Paul MOLAC, Député du Morbihan
Erwan BALANANT, Député du Finistère
Mickaël BOULOUX, Député d'Ille-et-Vilaine
Jean-Michel BRARD, Député de Loire-Atlantique
Karine DANIEL, Sénatrice de Loire-Atlantique
Ronan DANTEC, Sénateur de Loire-Atlantique
Jean-Luc FICHET, Sénateur du Finistère
Damien GIRARD, Député du Morbihan
Sandrine JOSSO, Députée de Loire-Atlantique
Muriel JOURDA, Sénateur du Morbihan
Julie LAERNOES, Députée de Loire-Atlantique
Tristan LAHAIS, Député d'Ille-et-Vilaine
Corentin LE FUR, Député des Côtes d'Armor
Annie LE HOUEROU, Sénatrice des Côtes d'Armor
Jean-Claude RAUX, Député de Loire-Atlantique
Sylvie ROBERT, Sénatrice d'Ille-et-Vilaine
Claudia ROUAUX, Députée d'Ille-et-Vilaine
Daniel SALMON, Sénateur du Finistère
Mélanie THOMIN, Députée du Finistère
Simon UZENAT, Sénateur du Morbihan

Google and the Breton Language

This summer Google announced the development of translation tools for some 110 lesser known languages of the world. And these included Breton as well as Manx, Occitan, Sicilian, Fijian, Punjabi, Sami, Tahitian, Wolof and Zapotec, to name just a few.

Google adopted the artificial intelligence tool Pathways Language Large Model 2 to translate these languages into hundreds of other languages. As noted by Bernez Rouz on his blog tresor-breton.bzh, Breton translations benefit from the presence of a large number of texts on the internet – 90,000 on Wikipedia.br and some 210,000 literary pages on wikimammenn.

Rouz also notes that the translations are good, but merely provide a basic understanding of a text, and literary texts especially need the finesse of a human

translator to bring out the nuances of meaning. And, certainly, a translation service does not replace the knowledge one attains by actually learning a language and using it for conversation as well as reading.

Making hundreds of lesser known languages of the world more accessible is certainly a welcome step forward and with time the translations are likely to become better in quality and offer potential for expansion to other media.



Some Exhibits Available from Ti ar Vro Treger-Goueloù

Besides serving as a center for Breton language workshops and musical events, Ti ar Vro Treger-Goueloù, in partnership with others, has created several exhibits available to travel to other sites. Here are four of them currently ready to go.

Sonneurs de clarinette en Bretagne – Clarinet Players in Brittany – is an exhibit created by Paotred an Dreujenn Gaol in 1988 and renewed, augmented and updated. It presents the history of the clarinet in Brittany, an instrument used particularly for traditional music in central western Brittany which was successfully reinvigorated in the 1980s.

Le Fest-noz s'affiche – Posters for the Fest-noz. Created by Ti ar Vro and Dastum Bro-Dreger this presents posters and flyers of all sizes used to advertise the fest-noz – where and when to find an event, who organized it, and who the featured singers and musicians will be. Although one could find advertisements in newspapers and sometimes in magazines or radio, in the 1950s, 60s and 70s it was a poster plastered somewhere that was the most effective advertising. I recall that during my year in Brittany in the late 1970s finding a poster was indeed an important way to track down a fest-noz. The posters were often interesting graphic and artistic creations as well.

Les écrivains du Trégor – Writers of the Tregor. Put together by Ti ar Vro and the Bibliothèque langue bretonne de la BCA de Plérin, this bilingual Breton/French exhibit presents writers from the Trégor including names such as Anatole Le Braz, Frañsez Vallée, Charles Le Goffic, Narcisse Quélien and Fañch Al Lae.

Historie du disque vinyle en Bretagne – History of the vinyl record in Brittany. Created by Ti ar Vro and Dastum Bro Dreger this exhibit presents a history of records in Brittany including some fifty LP jackets. The vinyl disc – 45 and 33 rpm – became widely available in

the 1960s and in the 1970s was an important medium for Breton music.



Skol Uhel ar Vro The Cultural Institute of Brittany

The Cultural Institute of Brittany was created in 1981 and has continued to work to serve the Breton culture and identity. Located in the buildings of Ti ar Vro Bro Gwened the Institute

fosters research and the sharing of knowledge in a number of fields – language, music, art, history, economy and Inter-Celtic relations to name a few.

It organizes a number of events and workshops for the public and upcoming 2024 and 2025 events look particularly interesting. Here are some highlights.

Breton Typography (January 23-25, 2025)

This will include a conference of Skritur, an initiative to create and print typographies for the Breton language and related to Brittany. Fañch Le Henaff, Malou Verlomme and Yoann De Roeck will present this work. Also to be addressed is Brito and its development as a font for use, and a workshop will allow children to design letters and print them.

The Breton Pavilion of the International Exposition of Decorative Arts of Paris (April 23-36 2025)

A conference on Ty Breiz which was created for the Exposition International des Arts décoratifs et industriels modernes of Paris in 1925 will be a focus. Daniel Le Coédic will speak on the artists in the Seiz Breur movement and their creation of Breton arts and crafts for this exposition. Also shown will be the documentary film by Laurence-Pauline Boileau – “Jeanne Malivel, un soleil se lève” – about this founding member of Seiz Breur. Exhibits of photography and documents of the artists will also be on view and a workshop on linography, a form of block printing, will be held.

The Cultural Institute will also sponsor several conferences and a series of webinars on various topics related to history, archeology, culture and society to Brittany and other Celtic countries. Here are several of the conferences:

Alvaro Cunqueiro Mora, Voyage d'un Galicien en Bretagne (October 12, 2023)

Pierre Joubin, president of the Comité Bretagne-Galice, will give a talk on the Galician poet, playwright and journalist Alvaro Cunqueiro Mora (1911-1981) and his travels to Brittany and work to create partnerships.

De la préhistoire aux rois de Bretagne, ou l'émergence de l'identité bretonne (November 27, 2023)

Historian Jean-Jacques Monnier will present the emergence of unique Breton cultural elements from prehistoric times through the 17th century and the emergence of Breton identity.

Archéologie de la navigation (June 13, 2025)

Marc Bongrain, active in a number of organizations studying the maritime patrimony of Brittany, will present the history of ocean archaeology and techniques used to identify shipwrecks dating from the Mesolithic period on.

The Cultural Institute's médiathèque and book collections will be open to visitors on scheduled open houses (and through appointment) and with the bookstore Lenn ha Dilenn, authors will be invited to meet the public and speak of their work: Stéphanie Trouillard (December 17, 2024), Xavier Freland (January 31, 2025) and Myrzinn Boucher-Durand (April 4, 2025).

As part of the Documentary Film Month, the 2023 film by Bruno Deniel-Laurent and Yvan Teillier will be projected (November 16, 2024). Filmed in Russia and Georgia “Trois Femmes venues de l'est / Teir flac'h deuet eus Bro reter” is in Breton with French subtitles and presents three Russian women of different time periods who became enamored of Brittany and the Breton language and culture: Anna Mouradova, Yulia Borisova and Ekaterina Bolobanova.

Not to be forgotten is music with the Cultural Institute hosting a concert (October 5, 2024) by Amélik who composes songs in Breton accompanying herself on the oud with a mix of Celtic and eastern influences. Two Irish “sessions” where musicians gather to informally share tunes and song will be held (September 14, 2024, and February 27, 2025). And a “session” for Breton traditional music will be held on May 15.

Also not to be forgotten is the Breton language with a series of storytelling events, workshops, presentations of proverbs, and theater for children and adults. Gallo will also have a place with a series of workshops to present its sounds and unique features. The Cultural Institute also provides links to organizations and resources to learn Breton and Gallo in its Guide to programs for September 2024 to June 2025.



New Members for Brittany's Order of the Ermine

A major annual event of the Cultural Institute of Brittany is the induction of new members for the Order of the Ermine. This is an ancient order of Brittany established in the 15th century noted for its

inclusion of commoners and women which was revived in the early 1970s. My count could be off, but currently there are 78 living members of the Order (53 men, 25 women). An additional 71 who have been inducted since 1972 are now deceased (55 men, 16 women). One can find information about all of these individuals as well as a brief history of the Order of the Ermine on the Cultural Institute website: skoluhelvro.bzh/liste-hermines.

The Order of the Ermine recognizes exceptional Bretons (and non-Bretons) for their life-long service to Brittany and the Breton culture. Held each year in a different city of Brittany, this year's event on October 5 will take place in Le Plessis Sévigné (southeast of Vitré in the department of Ille-et-Vilaine).

On September 18 four new inductees for the Order of the Ermine were announced in Argentré du Plessis by the Chancellor of the Ermines, Léna Louarn and the President of the Cultural Institute of Brittany, Jacky Filipot, in the presence of the mayor of Argentré du Plessis Jean-Noël Bévière and the special invitee for this year's ceremony Pascal Jaouen. As presented by Philippe Argouarch of Agence Bretagne Presse, based on information for the Cultural Institute, here are the four new inductees (my translation from the French and photos from the ABP posting).



Irène Frachon

photo Vincent Gouriou

It seemed to some members of the Collège des Herminés that honoring someone who hasn't worked in the Emsav [Breton cultural movement] was important when the achievements of that personality met with consensus. And this is the case with the pulmonologist Irène Frachon, a specialist in pulmonary hypertension at the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Brest.

Everyone knows of the fight by Irène Frachon, a "whistleblower" who dared to confront one of the largest French pharmaceutical laboratories in the scandal of the medication Mediator.

For Irène Frachon "the affair of Mediator is one of the greatest French health scandals that I qualify as an industrial crime. This criminal industry deliberately commercialized a mortal poison for 30 years."

On staff at the Centre Hospitalier Universitaire de Brest, the doctor Irène Frachon revealed in 2007 the disastrous consequences of this diet medication.

Commercialized by the Laboratoire Servier from 1976 to 2009 this medicine was consumed by 5 million people. It caused the death of hundreds of patients

through its major secondary cardiac or pulmonary effects.

Despite multiple pressures placed on her over 15 years, Irène Frachon did not weaken, and brought the affair before the courts, and the Servier laboratory was sentenced heavily. In 2010 she published the work *Mediator 150 mg, combien de morts?*

Her remarkable combat and her tenacity inspired the film *La Fille de Brest* (2016) followed in 2017 by a theater piece *Mon Coeur*. Put out to "sensitize the public" she said was a *bande dessinée* ("comic book") *Mediator, un crime chimiquement pur*.



Saig Jestin

In the 1960s when he was very young, he became interested in the construction of *talus* [field embankments or hedgerows] in his native Léon. He saw the destruction of kilometers of *talus* in the years around 1965 and especially in 1970 in the name of "remembrement." *

In the 1980s when he started teaching at the Pommerit-Jaudy agricultural high school in the Trégor, he witnessed the destruction of wooded groves in several locations. He then decided that something on a large scale needed to be done with his students who were destined to become the caretakers of the Breton groves. It was thus that he constructed 3 kilometers of *talus* near the high school and in bordering communes with them. Little by little he sensitized the media and elected officials on the cause of the *talus*.

Finally, Saig Jestin created Skol ar c'hleuzioù, the school of the talus. This association has as its goal the protection of talus and the menaced Breton wooded groves through teaching educational work sessions which are free and open to all.

Thanks to him, the Breton countryside has been preserved or restored in a number of places through work details for the restoration of groves. He has also built walking trails with educational panels which wind through the three communes of Troguéry, Pouldouran and Hengoat. The panels invite one to discover the patrimony of the wooded groves.

The exhibit *Talus de Bretagne* is made up of 13 bilingual [Breton-French] panels explaining *talus*, their history and role.

Saig Jestin was the mayor of the commune of Pouldouran for several years. He is equally a defender of the Breton language, his maternal language. A film was made about him: *Saig Jestin Medisin ar c'hleuzioù*.

* Breaking down these ecologically rich embankments built around small farm fields was considered important in creating large fields for “modern” farms – a process called *remembrement*. Saig Jestin was not alone in recognizing the ecological problems associated with this. - LK



Lukian Kergoat

Lukian Kergoat is a university lecturer, Breton language teacher, linguist, and writer. He was director of the Breton

Department of the University Rennes 2 following Per Denez. He is a member of the Centre de terminologie for the Diwan schools and member of the Cultural Institute of Brittany’s section on Languages and Linguistics.

Lukian Kergoat was born in Plogonnec (Finistère) in 1948 in a family of farmers where Breton was the only language used. After studies of history-geography at the universities of Brest and Rennes 2 he taught that subject in secondary schools.

Since his student years he has been involved in the Breton movement: in Galv, a movement promoting the Breton language and then in Skol an Emsav with its presence in all of Brittany with militant activism in the organization of workshops, a festival for the Breton language, and publications ...

Following the adoption of the Charte Culturelle de la Bretagne in 1977 he was led to collaborate with the CNTE a training plant to prepare teachers who wanted to teach the Breton language. He became an assistant lecturer at the University of Rennes 2 where he defended his doctorate thesis on Breton proverbs. In 1987 he gained the post of university lecturer in the Breton Department which he directed in the 1990s. He thus contributed to the establishment of a complete course of university studies for the language. His teaching focused on language grammar and phonology – diachronic and synchronic. He also taught for Kelenn where he became involved in the creation of a Master MEEF (bilingual teaching through immersion) linked with the Université de Perpignan.

Parallel to his teaching activity, Lukian Kergoat continued to follow projects for the officialization of Breton. For example, in 1986 he created the Commission for toponymy and signage as part of the Cultural Institute of Brittany. The Breton form for the whole of names for locations was thus standardized so that the establishment of signage in Breton could begin. The commission transformed later into Servij ar Brezhoneg for which he is a member of the scientific council.

In 1985 Lukian Kergoat equally put into place working groups which, subject by subject, elaborated pedagogical materials needed for the creation of a secondary teaching level for Diwan. A terminology center, for which he has been director, was created to develop specialized vocabulary needed for the project Kreizenn ar Geriaouiñ. See the site Brezhoneg21.com. This center has since expanded its activity to other domains such as taxonomy.

He has written *Mille premiers mots en breton* (Skol an Emsav, 1991), *Lagad an heol* with Yvon Gourmelon, *Ar glav hag an amzer vrav – La pluie et le beau temps en dictions* (Coop Breizh, 2000), *Petit florilège des proverbes bretons* (Coop Breizh, 2007), *Proverbes bretons – krennlavarioù brezhoneg* (Coop Breizh, 1996), *Ar grennlavarioeg vrezhoneg – le proverbiar breton*, Rennes 1985.

Éamon Ó Ciosáin



While Anna Mouradova, the only Russian having taught Breton in Russia (at the University of Moscow) received the Order of the Ermine in 2022, Éamon Ó Ciosáin who was the only professor of Breton (and French) in Ireland for a long period (at the National University of Ireland in Maynooth) will receive the Order of the Ermine this year.

Born in 1959 in Dublin, Éamon Ó Ciosáin was professor of Breton and French at the National University of Ireland in Maynooth. For some 15 years he was the only university professor of Breton in Ireland. He also taught Irish (Gaelic), his maternal language, in the Celtic Department of the University of Rennes between 1980 and 1988. He received the Bachelors (*licence*) and Masters degrees in Breton as well as a doctorat in history. Having taken Breton classes in the Breton-speaking areas, he published collections of translations of Gaelic literature into Breton and French and collaborated on the Irish-Breton dictionary of Loeiz Andouard published in 1987. He published three volumes on Irish immigrants in Brittany of the 15th to 18th centuries in collaboration with Alain Le Noac’h as well as several articles on diverse aspects of this migration in Brittany, from social history to elements of the Irish language in Le Pelletier’s *Dictionnaire de langue bretonne*.

In the spirit of exchange, he has collaborated with the singer Yann-Fañch Kemener, the research team of Ermine, Hervé Le Bihan, Rozenn Milin and the musicians of the historical-musical *Les Irlandais de Bretagne*. He was a founding member of the community Irish language radio *Raidió na Life* which has broadcast

since 1993. He has been frequently interviewed for Breton language radio emissions on France Bleu Breizh Izel, RKB and Radio Kerne responding to questions by journalists on Irish news on a broad scale. For years he wrote Breton language pieces on news and culture in Ireland for the magazine *Al Lanv*. In return he communicated in Ireland on the language and culture of Brittany. His observations focused especially on linguistic politics in Brittany and Ireland, officialization, the Gaeltacht, media, and publishing (one could find him at the book festival of Carhaix almost every year).

Medal of the Cultural Institute of Brittany for Pevarzek

On the occasion of the ceremony to induct new members of the Order of the Ermine the Cultural Institute of Brittany has also awarded medals to recognize outstanding contributions to Breton culture and society. This year the honor goes to Aurell Argemi I Roca (posthumously), Jakez L'Heritier, and the group of artists called Pevarzek.

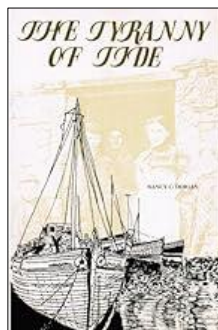
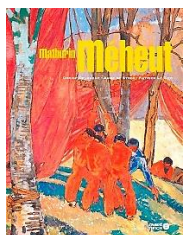
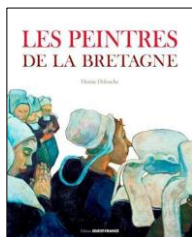
A Note on Pascal Jaouen

Pascal Jaouen is a fashion designer and embroiderer who has incorporated traditional Breton embroidery into modern designs. For his creative work rooted in Breton costume tradition he has been invited to be a special "patron" / invitee for the Order of the Ermine Ceremony and will have an exhibit of his work there. Check out his website to get an idea of the extraordinary work of this designer: pascaljaouen.com.

A Loss for the Cultural Institute of Brittany and the Art World

Denise Delouche (1933-1924)

Well known as a scholar of art and artists of Brittany, Denise Delouche founded the Chair for Art History at the Université de Rennes. She authored numerous books and exhibit guides to present Breton painters and those from elsewhere who came to Brittany to depict the rural countryside and its people. She was inducted into the Order of the Ermine in 1999 in view of her important contribution to the art history of Brittany.



Scottish Gaelic and Endangered Languages Lose a Scholar and Defender

Nancy Dorian (1936-2024)

Nancy Dorian was an internationally recognized scholar of linguistics who would be known especially for her study of

language death with research for over 40 years of the East Sutherland dialect of Scottish Gaelic focused on the villages of Bora, Golspie and Embo. This was not just a dispassionate examination of the loss of Gaelic, but Nancy maintained friendships with people of these villages and was interested in Gaelic as part of a wider culture. She was a fluent speaker herself of Gaelic and a number of other languages.

Nancy Dorian spent much of her academic career at Bryn Mawr College, just outside of Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (1965 until retirement in 1989) where she taught courses in linguistics, Gaelic, German and anthropology. She served as chair of the German Department for a number of those years.

Nancy published a number of influential books as well as hundreds of articles (see below). She received a number of awards for her teaching, research, and advocacy for endangered languages. These included a BBC Alba documentary film in 2005: "Mar a chunnaic mise: Nancy Dorian agus a' Ghàidhlig" ("As I saw it: Nancy Doran and Gaelic") and an Honorary Degree of Letters in 2015 from the University of Glasgow for contributions to Celtic Studies. In 2012 she was awarded the Kenneth L. Hale prize from the Linguistic Society of America for "outstanding work on the documentation of an endangered language."

While Nancy was a scholar who had an impact on the academic world, she was also a strong advocate for endangered languages. She enthusiastically joined the U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language in 1983 soon after its creation and remained a loyal member/*Bro Nevez* subscriber until her death in April 2024. I kept a regular correspondence with Nancy over those years which would eventually move from two to three page letters to an annual exchange of Christmas cards filled with news of her work and encouragement to me in my efforts to find a university position and to pursue my studies of Breton music and culture. The bird images on most of her cards hinted that Nancy was a bird lover. But she had a broader love of nature and spoke in one letter of her joy in watching the annual migration of monarch butterflies that would move through her part of Maine.

As a way of encouraging me in my pursuit of a career based on my Breton interests, Nancy invited me to give a talk at Bryn Mawr College in 1983 for her class on Celtic Civilizations on “the survival of Celticness in the contemporary Celtic countries.” She also invited me to contribute an article about the Breton language for her 1989 book *Investigating Obsolescence: Studies in Language Contraction and Death*. My attempts to land a college teaching position came to naught, but I appreciate the support and respect given to me by Nancy and others in the field of Celtic Studies.

Nancy was remarkable in her intellectual activity despite what seemed to be an endless struggle with health challenges – chronic illnesses that would slow down most of us. She traveled between the Philadelphia area and Maine, moving there permanently on retirement from Bryn Mawr College in 1989. Besides news of her research, Nancy’s cards and letters demonstrated a wry sense of humor as in this September 1984 note:

“I had meant to send you a picture post card at the very least in the course of the summer to let you know that I had eluded my hordes of doctors, at least temporarily, and was ‘hiding out’ here on the coast of Maine. In fact I even *thought* I had sent you a card. But, I’m beginning to think I ‘thought wrote’ quite a lot of correspondence this summer ... My memory of what and whom I wrote is much more expansive than what and whom I *actually* wrote.”

Nancy’s letters also demonstrated her strong belief that *all* languages were important as demonstrated in a November 1986 note where she expressed outrage at the wording used to advertise the book she edited *Investigating Obsolescence*:

“The problem is that Arabic and Swedish are unaccountably referred to, along with Thai, as ‘obscure’ languages. All three are official national languages. Arabic is the official language of many countries. The speakers number in the millions in each case.”

She considered this a Eurocentric problem akin to calling Chinese an “exotic” language.

One can find the details of Nancy Dorian’s academic achievements and publications in the Wikipedia entry about her as well as in an online curriculum vitae for her from Bryn Mawr College. But here are the major works for her research of Scottish Gaelic and endangered languages.

East Sutherland Gaelic: the dialect of the Bora, Golspie, and Embo fishing communities. Dublin Institute for Advanced Studies, 1978.

Language Death: The Life Cycle of a Scottish Gaelic Dialect. University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981.

The Tyranny of Tide: An Oral History of the East Sutherland Fisherfolk. Karoma, 1985.

Investigating Obsolescence: Studies in Language Contraction and Death. Cambridge University Press, 1989, 1992.

Investigating Variation: The Effects of Social Organization and Social Setting. Oxford University Press, 2010.

Small-Language Fates and Prospects: Lessons of Persistence and Change from Endangered Languages - Collected Essays. Brill, 2014.

I am grateful to have had the privilege of knowing Nancy Dorian – at least through a lengthy correspondence – and I know she had an important impact on the world of linguistic studies. She was certainly a champion of the need to not only understand but also to defend endangered languages.

Brittany and the 2024 Olympics in Paris

While I was not riveted to the television to view the Olympics this summer (July 26 to August 11) I did take advantage of coverage of much more than just American athletes to enjoy sports rarely televised here – table tennis, field hockey, archery, equestrian events, badminton, handball, kayak, fencing – as well as the other mainstays of summer games – track and field, swimming and diving, volley ball, water polo, soccer ... New to the Olympics was break dancing for men and women with its combination of dance and gymnastics.

There were over 40 athletes born in Brittany or licensed with clubs in Brittany (of some 570 representing France), among them a number of medal winners in team and individual sports. Reports seemed to vary, but here are the Bretons and Breton-based athletes who won gold and silver medals:

Nicolas Gestin (Tréméren) – gold for canoe slalom
Jenia Grebennikov (Rennes) – gold for volleyball
Jean-Pascal Barraque (Concarneau) – gold for rugby
Titouan Castruck (St. Malo) – silver for kayak
Valentin Madouas (Gouesnou) – silver for cycling
Désiré Doué (Rennes) – silver for soccer
Arnaud Kalmuendo (Rennes) – silver for soccer
Alicia Toublanc (Saint-Jean-Kerdaniel) – silver for handball
Marième Badiane (Brest) – silver for basketball
Denis Civil (Rennes) – silver for breakdancing

While I was unaware of Breton affiliations of any athletes representing France, I did happen to see a few Breton flags in the stands when Nicolas Gestin won his medal. And probably other friends and family showed their Breton identity at other events, although only the flags of countries participating in the Olympics were authorized.

I have always enjoyed the opening and closing ceremonies of Olympic games with the parade of teams and other entertainment featuring the host country. While the Olympic torch did travel throughout France leading up to the Games, the events in Paris during the Games gave no hint that France existed beyond Paris.

For the opening ceremony the athletes traveled down the Seine River on boats of various sizes joyfully waving, singing and dancing, despite a pounding rain. Prerecorded and live performances were staged along the banks of the Seine and seemed to feature every stereotype about Paris one could imagine – from can-can dancing to a fashion show and theatrical storyline about a mysterious torch bearer (the Phantom of the Opera?) who raced along rooftops to deliver the torch. Equally theatrical was the bearing of the Olympic flag across Paris and down the Seine on a mechanical horse galloping down the surface of the river – impressive but seemed a very long run. Performances included famous stars such as Lady Gaga, Celestine Dion and French opera divas as well as immense statues and huge Louvre art reproductions. I'm not sure who viewed all this other than television viewers. There was a bizarre juxtaposition of breakdancing, double-dutch jump roping, strutting fashion models, singers of various styles, pianists in the rain, and the pomp of raising the Olympic flag and lighting the torch. Certainly a spectacle.

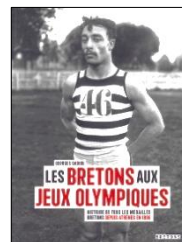
While I did not watch all of the closing ceremonies, this too had some surreal elements. The parade of athletes into a packed stadium was a bit more "traditional" and they seemed to enjoy that music – of all styles, including karaoke. There were renditions of the Marseillaise and the Star Spangled Banner done with a great deal of artistic liberty. The flashing lights made viewing for me uncomfortable at times.

A highlight seemed to be actor Tom Cruise dropping down from the top of the arena to mingle with the athletes – a touch of Hollywood moviedom to get the feel for the next Olympic Games in Los Angeles. He would jump onto a motorcycle to transport to Olympic flag to the airport and through the magic of film, skydive to the famous Hollywood sign before transferring the flag to athletes who would carry it through the streets of Los Angeles to arrive at a beach concert featuring the Red Hot Chili Peppers, Billie Eilish and Snoop Dog and Dr. Dre - all from LA. And back in Paris during the half-

hour of all that? Were the athletes watching this on a big screen or partying on their own. The TV audience experience was surely different from that of those in the stadium.

The closing ceremonies were a mix of more sedate ceremony – like extinguishing the Olympic flame – and odd musical performances including a rendition of Frank Sinatra's hit "I did it my way" and a piano suspended sideways high in the air. Truly a spectacle – entertaining, creative and weird as well.

Paris and all its famous buildings, streets, and monuments definitely had a spotlight. But TV viewers would not get a clue that there was life outside the City of Light.



A History of Breton Medal Winners at the Olympic Games.

Georges Cadiou. *Les Bretons aux Jeux Olympiques : Histoire de tous les médaillés Bretons depuis Athènes en 1896*. Éditions Blanc et Noir. 2024. 192 pages.

Georges Cadiou is a journalist and writer who has written a number of books on sports in Brittany, and in time for this summer Olympics he has published a history of Bretons (athletes with Breton roots and affiliations) who have won medals in the Olympics since they have been held in 1896. He found that 104 medals by 85 Bretons were won since the new Olympics were held in Athens in that year. The book is not just a list of medal winners but an exploration of the history of Breton involvement in various sports from equestrian events, fencing, wrestling, track and field, sailing and more.

For this issue of *Bro Nevez* I have put together a list of Breton medalists from 1900 to 1996 which is drawn from an article by Georges Cadiou published in 2000: "Bretons aux Jeux Olympiques" *Ar Men* 115, October 200, pp. 24-33. To bring this list up to date for the summer Olympics as well as Breton participation in winter and paralympic competitions, you will need to consult his new book. --

My apologies for mistranslation of any names for sport events.

Athens 1896 – No Bretons among athletes

Paris 1900

Gold Medals – Léon Moreaux for speed pistol shooting as well as team revolver.

Bronze – Louis de Champsavin for individual dressage in equestrian

St. Louis 1904 – No French delegation

London 1908 – No Breton medalists

Stockholm 1912

Gold – Jean Cariou in individual jumping in equestrian

Gold – Gaston, Amedée, and Jacques Thubé in sailing

Silver – Charles Lelong in 4 x 400 m track relay

Silver – Jean Cariou in team jumping

Bronze – Jean Cariou in military equestrian

Anvers 1920

Gold – Joseph Guillemot in track 5,000 m

Silver – Joseph Guillemot in track 10,000 m

Silvers – Philippe Cattiau in fencing – individual and team foils

Silver – Alfred Eluère in rugby

Paris 1924

Gold – Philippe Cattiau and Joseph Péroteaux in fencing, team foils

Silver – Philippe Cattiau in fencing, individual foils

Silver - Louis Béguet in rugby

Amsterdam 1928

Gold – André Derrien with Virginie Hériot in sailing

Silver – Philippe Cattiau in fencing, team foils

Silver – Émile Cornic in fencing, team épée

Los Angeles 1932

Gold – Philippe Cattiau in fencing team foils and team épée

Silver – René Le Grèves in cycling, team pursuit

Berlin 1936

Gold – Émile Poilvé in Greco-roman wrestling

Gold – Roger Le Nizerhy in cycling, team pursuit

Bronze - Marcel Chauvingné, Jean Cosmat, Marcel Fernand & Noël Vandernotte of the Nantes Club in 4-men rowing

Bronze – Noël Vandernotte with Tapie and Fourade in 2-man rowing

Bronze – Philippe Cattiau and Michel Pécheux in fencing, team épée

Bronze – Charles Juchault des Jamonières in pistol

London 1948

Gold – Micheline Ostermeyer in weight lifting and discus

Gold – Michel Pécheux in fencing, team épée

Silver - Francis Schevetta and Roert Chefhotel in track, 4 x 400 relay

Silver - André Barraix, André Even and Ferdinand Guillou in basketball

Bronze – Jacqueline Mazéas in track, women's discus

Bronze – Micheline Ostermeyer in track, high jump

Helsinki 1952 – No Breton medalists

Melbourne 1956 – No Breton medalists

Rome 1960

Bronze – Jacques Le Goff, equestrian, complete trial by team

Tokyo 1964

Silver – Maryvonne Dupuveru – track, women's 500 m

Silver – Jean Boudehen with Michel Chapuie in canoe-kayak

Mexico 1968

Bronze – Raoul Guéguen in modern team pentathlon

Munich 1972

Silver – Yves and Marc Pajot in sailing

Bronze – Gilles Bertould and Francis Kerbirou in track 4 x 4000 m relay

Montreal 1976 – No Breton medalists

Moscow 1988 – No Breton medalists

Los Angeles 1984

Gold – William Ayache, Michel Bibard and José Touré of Nantes Club with Nicolas Hénard in sailing

Bronze – Olivier Boivin with Didier Hoyer in canoe-kayak

Bronze – Pascal Mahé and Eric Quintin with the French handball team

Seoul 1988

Gold – Jean-Yves Le Déroff with Nicolas Hénard – sailing

Bronze – Gilles Quénéhervé in track 4 x 400 m relay

Barcelona 1992

Gold – Philippe Omnès in fencing, individual foil

Gold – Franck David in wind surfing

Gold - Sébastien Flute in individual archery

Gold – Yves Loday with Nicolas Hénard in sailing

Bronze – Olivier Boivin with Didier Hoyer in canoe-kayak

Bronze – Pascal Mahé and Éric Quintin with French handball team

Atlanta 1996

Gold- Nathalie Even-Lancien in cycling point race

Silver – Olivier Moncelet in rowing

Portraits of a few Breton Olympic Medalists

So far, the Breton who has won the most Olympic medals is Philippe Cattiau (1892-1962) with 8 medals (3

Gold, 4 Silver and 1 Bronze) won between 1920 and 1936. The following is my translation of a biographical presentation of this fencer from Jean-Loup Avril's *Mille Bretons – Dictionnaire biographique*. (2nd ed. Les Portes du Large, 2003). He cites as reference for this the article by Georges Cadiou cited above.

Philippe Cattiau

Most medaled Breton at the Olympic Games with 8 medals. Born in Saint-Malo July 28, 1892. Died on February 17, 1962. He was introduced to fencing very early on by his father, a soldier and excellent fencer himself. He [Philippe] was a champion of Brittany in foil and épée before entering the École de Joinville. He returned from the war of 1914-1918 with wounds to the knee which handicapped him.

Present on the podium of the Games at Anvers in 1920, he would also be there for the Games in Berlin in 1936. He won a total of eight medals, two [three] of which were gold without ever coming to triumph in individual competition. He was an Olympic champion in team foil in 1924 and 1932, in team épée in 1932. He was second in individual foils in 1924 and team foils in 1928. He was third in team épée in 1936 at the age of 44.

Employed by Dunlop, he was nicknamed the "unpuncturable." He was also two times Champion of Europe.

The Thubé Brothers

The above list of medalists put together by Georges Cadiou notes that Gaston, Amédée, and Jacques Thubé won a Gold in sailing at the Stockholm Games. It should not be surprising that Bretons have been present at the Olympics and other international sailing competitions given the long coast of Brittany and its maritime history. Probably the most famous of Breton sailors is Éric Tabarly (1931-1998). The following is an introduction to the Thubé brothers drawn from Jean-Loup Avril's 2003 *Mille Bretons – Dictionnaire biographique*. (my translation).

Thubé Brothers

Olympic champions in sailing. The three Thubé brothers, Gaston (1876-1974), Amédée (1884-1941) and Jacques (1882-1969) were part of a family from Belle-Ile-en-Mer who lived in Nantes. They acquired a financial ease which allowed them to practice yachting, to participate in the Olympic Games of Stockholm in 1912, and to take home a gold medal in the category of 6-man sailing on board their *Mac Miche*.

After the war of 1914-18 they were among the organizers of regattas for dinghies of 14 feet and of 8.5

meters for "Sport Nautiques de l'Ouest." It was thanks to Jacques Thubé in the 1930s that when returning from a business trip to the U.S. a boat of the series of 5.72 meters, the *Snipe*, was brought to France where it would gain a large worldwide success.

Brittany and the Paralympics

Following the Olympics were the Paralympics held August 28 to September 8. Here, too, athletes from Brittany had a strong showing with 17 medals of 75 won by France. As far as I could tell from newspaper reports this included 5 gold, 3 silver and 9 bronze. Here are the Bretons and their medals:

Alexandre Léauté in cycling events with 2 gold and 2 bronze

Tanguy de la Forest in rifle marksmanship with a gold and a silver

Émeline Pierre in swimming with a gold and a bronze

Dorian Foulon in cycling with a gold and a silver

Gaiten Le Rousseau in cycling with a silver and a bronze

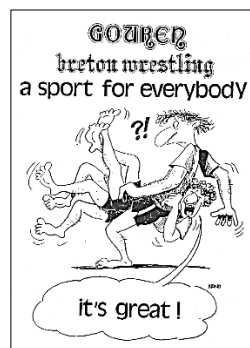
Antoine Praud in track with a bronze

Jason Grandry in judo with a bronze

Matéo Bohéas in table tennis with a bronze

Faustine Noël in badminton with a bronze

Ludovic Lemoigne in fencing with a bronze



Gouren – A Wrestling Style Traditional to Brittany

In the U.S. we are familiar with Greco-Roman wrestling which is practiced at high schools, colleges and by professionals – not to be confused with what's called "professional wrestling" where costumed men (and women) toss each other around

in televised "smackdowns."

Celtic wrestling is quite a different sport. The Breton version is called Gouren, and wrestlers are standing rather than on the ground. Wrestlers take hold of each other by a special shirt (roched) and use their legs to throw the opponent off balance. The aim is to throw one's opponent squarely on the back with both shoulder blades touching.

Before each tournament or bout contestants face each other and swear to play fairly. Here is the Breton version of the oath that is also repeated in French. The English version here is from the book *Celtic Wrestling* by Guy Jaouen and Matthew Bennett Nichols (full citation below).

*M'hen tou da c'houren gant lealded
Hep trubarderez na taol fall ebet
Evit ma enor ha hini ma bro
E testeni eus ma gwirieguez
Hag evit heul kiz vad ma zud koz
Kinnig a ran d'am c'henvreur ma dorn ha ma jod.*

*I swear to wrestle with entire loyalty,
Without treachery or brutality,
For my honor and that of my country,
In testimony of my sincerity,
And to follow the custom of my ancestors,
I present to my fellow
My hand and my cheek.*

Celtic wrestling is an ancient sport found in the British Isles and Scotland and very popular in Cornwall where the style is very similar to Gouren of Brittany. In Scotland Backhold is a similar style of wrestling. Wrestlers travel a great deal between the Celtic countries with Bretons going to England this August for a Backhold tournament. At this year's Interceltic Festival of Lorient there were contests for Backhold, Cornish wrestling and Gouren. A championship for Europe in Gouren and Backhold is always a hotly contested event for the best of the best young people and adults.

In Brittany representation in writing and images and sculpture show a long history of Celtic wrestling with a particular popularity in the Middle Ages. While at one time a sport of the nobility, by the 19th century Gouren became a sport of rural areas and there are numerous references to tournaments in Brittany by authors of this period. The popularity of Gouren waned in the early 20th century but saw a revival in the 1930s with the formation of FALSAB (Fédération des Amis des Luttes et Sports Athlétiques Bretons). Rules were introduced to provide a more standard practice and contests were organized at local fairs and festivals – which remain a context for the practice of Gouren today.



In 1980 the Fédération de Gouren (Bodadeg ar Gouren) was founded and today provides support with 45 clubs in all five departments of Brittany. These schools provide training for all ages by licensed trainers and in 2020 there were 1,521 licensed wrestlers – 28% of them women (numbers from the Federation website). The Fédération de Gouren, its departmental committees, and Ti ar Gouren (a center for activities) have nine salaried employees although a large number of volunteers are active in training and organizing events. In 2019 over 10,000 children were engaged in learning Gouren.

The Federation publishes a magazine – *Gouren Magazine* – with articles about activities, contests, interviews, and news of schools. Gouren continues to be popular as a Breton and Celtic expression of identity.

For more information check out the Fédération de Gouren website: gouren.bzh which is in both French and Breton. This provides a nice history and presents the range of activities related to Gouren. For English language readers the following book is recommended for an in-depth presentation of the history of Gouren and other Celtic styles of wrestling as well as an explanation of techniques (with lots of photos): Guy Jaouen & Matthew Bennett Nichols. *Celtic Wrestling – The Jacket Styles*. (Fédération Internationales des Luttes Associées / FILA. 2007. 184 pages. ISBN 978-9504402-9-0).

Sportoù Breizh - Breton Sports

While Gouren may be better known as a widely practiced sport of Brittany, there are a number of other sports and games found in the Breton tradition – some unique to Brittany, and others are versions of games practiced widely in Europe. This is the case for “boules” (“balls”) which is quite similar to the Italian *bocce* where wooden balls are bowled on a defined grassy space and competitors gain points by rolling their ball closest to a smaller ball thrown out in advance. And British immigrants to Brittany have formed a number of clubs to practice Short Mat Bowls. The practice of boules in Brittany and throughout France takes a variety of forms – played in singles or teams and the balls can be of various sizes made of wood or today more likely to be of plastic. It can be a casual gathering in a town square or a more serious competition.

On the occasion of the summer Olympics, the *Fédération mondiale de boules et pétanques* called for the inclusion of *boules* in upcoming Olympic competition. In August some 684 players participated in the Open de Kergoz in Guingamp and there are some 10,000 licensed *boule* players in Brittany.

Other popular sports that have been practiced widely in Brittany on an informal, but serious, basis are horse racing, cycling, and a wide range of tests of strength and accuracy. They are often part of events at fairs or festivals. One unique sport is *soule*, a contest where villages vie for possession of a leather ball which is passed about and can travel long distances over the course of an afternoon (with no “field” of play defined). While no longer practiced and discouraged by the church for its violent nature, this was a very popular practice in some areas of Brittany and is considered a precursor to rugby which has gained wide popularity in Brittany today.

To learn more about some of the traditional sports and games of Brittany and the Breton language vocabulary and phrases associated with them visit the tresor-breton.bzh website where a series of articles were published this summer.



The Interceltic Festival of Lorient

The 53rd edition of this 10-day festival had a banner year with an estimated 650,000 festival-goers, 160,000 tickets and passes sold, 92,000 viewers for the parade through the streets of Lorient, and 1 million television viewers for the parade retransmitted on FR3.

Each year a different Celtic nation is celebrated and for 2024 it was the youth of the Celtic nations who were given center stage. With this theme in mind the Cultural Institute of Brittany (Skol Uhel ar Vro) organized a forum to bring youth of the Celtic countries together to discuss their identity. Topics addressed included the practice (and challenges) of speaking Celtic languages, sports and other unique cultural elements of the Celtic nations, and opportunities for travel and inter-Celtic collaboration among youth.



For 2025 the theme will be “the Cousins of America” with musicians and singers from Acadia, Louisiana, Quebec, New Brunswick, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia, as well as Boston and New York where Bretons and other Celts have maintained their traditions and created new ones.



The Interceltic Business Forum

Initiated by Charles Kergaravet of Breizh Amerika in 2016 the Interceltic Business Forum has been held four times in conjunction with the

Interceltic Festival of Lorient and this 2024 was the latest. The forum engages business leaders and entrepreneurs, and this year included representation from Brittany, Wales, Scotland, Isle of Man, Ireland, Cornwall and Galicia.

The idea is to foster cooperation and collaboration among Celts and the forum included presentations of projects and roundtable discussions on the interconnection of economics, technology, environment and culture. Panel discussions included the economic impact of the Interceltic Festival of Lorient, trade links

between France and Ireland, the Welsh technology ecosystem, and maritime development.

The Interceltic Scaling Award was launched to recognize innovative startups from the Celtic world. There were fifty-three candidates with eight finalists from Brittany, Wales, Ireland, Scotland and Cornwall.

The winners were:

Famileo – a Breton startup that turns digital messages into personalized family newspapers for the benefit of elders who haven’t mastered digital technology.

Zeus Scooters – an Irish company for sustainable shared electric motor scooters.

BuyMedia – an Irish initiative to help local businesses manage advertising plans using a variety of media.

The next Interceltic Business Forum is planned for the Spring of 2025 in Cornwall.

Breizh in the USA and the Festival International du film de Bretagne

This July the documentary film directed by Philippe Orreindy called *Breizh in the USA* won an award for best film music at the Festival International du film de Bretagne held in Locronan. Locronan is a picturesque village of western Brittany which has been the setting for a number of movies and films – most memorable for me, the 1969 movie *Tess* by Roman Polanski based on Thomas Hardy’s novel *Tess of the d’Urbervilles*.

Created in 2021 the ten-day festival attracts film-makers and cinema enthusiasts from around the world. The film *Breizh in the USA* documents the Breizh Amerika Collective, an initiative by Breizh Amerika to introduce Breton music to Americans started in 2015. The tours take singers and instrumentalists to different cities across the U.S. where they collaborate with American musicians mixing traditional Breton song and dance with jazz, blues and other distinctively American sounds.

In the film *Breizh in the USA* Bretons collaborate with Garifuna musicians based in New York City, and it is this musical mix that won the award for this film. The four Breton musicians featured in this documentary are Armel Le Hejer, Alain Le Clere, Thomas Moison and Gaetan Grandjean. It was not clear who the three Garifuna musicians were in the film but the 2015 collaboration involved James Lovell, Alex Kwabena Colon and the Garifuna Drum Band.

For those in need of an introduction, as I have been, Garifuna are people of Indigenous Caribbean and

escaped African slave ancestry who speak a language in the Arawak family which like Breton faces challenges for its future. Gafuinas can be found in Belize, Honduras, Guatemala and Nicaragua and from there they have migrated to different cities of the U.S. with the Bronx hosting the largest population.

Check out the Breizh-Amerika.com website blog section for more about the Collective as well as a number of articles about Bretons in the U.S.



Breizh Amerika Collective events this October

Renewing its close relationship with Louisiana Breizh Amerika will partner with the Celtic Bayou Festival for a Celtic Halloween Fest featuring the Breizh Amerika Collective on

October 19 (7:30-10 pm). This will be at Deggy's Brick Oven Pizza and Brewery in Lafayette, Louisiana. Breizh Amerika will also launch the Breizh Amerika IPA produced by Brittany's Brasserie Lancelot at the Gulf Brew Festival for beers.

The Breizh Amerika Collective will also have an artist-in-residence stay in New Orleans where they will work in collaboration with jazz musicians to create a performance at the New Orleans Jazz Museum. For this 2024 trip Breton musicians in the Collective will be Julien Le Mentec, bass fiddle, keyboard and composer who has been with the Collective since 2016. He will be joined by Gweltaz Riolland, a bombarde player with long experience with the bagad Kevrenn Alre, and Thibault Niobé who brings a mastery of bagpipes and electric guitar. More information: breizh-amerika.com/blog.



BZH New York

The Breton community of New York City has been active for a number of years and has some great events coming up this fall. Although this newsletter will arrive too late for most of you to actually get lined up to attend these events, it is worth noting them, and those who live in the area of New York City might want to arrange to receive e-mail alerts of BZH New York activities (info@bzh-ny.org)

Here's what's planned for this fall:

Saturday, September 21 at 8:30 pm at the DROM in East Village – a fest-noz featuring the very well known group from Brittany, Startijenn. With support of the Consulat Général de France in New York City, the event is free although a contribution of \$5 is requested to support the work of BZH NY.

Sunday, September 22, 1 to 5 pm in Central Park – the annual Garden Paté Hénaff Picnic is another free event with the opportunity to purchase Paté Hénaff sandwiches and other Breton specialties. This is a family friendly event with a magician and Breton music.

Sunday, October 13, 11 am to 5 pm at the Chelsea Market – the 4th edition of the Paysan Breton Kouign Amann contest. Those attending – who register in advance - will be able to sample this very buttery Breton pastry (kouign = cake or bun / amann = butter). A panel of judges will decide the winning entries from New York pastry chefs.

BZH New York is a non-profit organization with some 150 members, whose activities are powered by volunteers. The following from their website bzh-ny.org gives a good idea of their mission.

Our Mission

Connecting Breton and Celtic communities in New York

*Pay homage to the “Stade Breton” and Bretons who immigrated to New York in the 1950s and 1960s.
Network with Breton associations around the globe.
Develop exchanges among the Irish, Scottish, Welsh, Asturian, Galician and Manx communities in New York.*

... Identity and Culture

*Promote Breton culture through language, music, art and history.
Identify Brittany as one of the celebrated Celtic nations.
Produce cultural events highlighting Breton artists in New York.
Create opportunities for collaboration between Breton and American artists.*

... Economy

*Highlight the diverse and innovative Breton economy.
Provide Breton business people with logistical support and introductions to professional networks in New York (exhibitions, meetings).
Attract and encourage Americans to invest in Brittany.*

... Tourism

*Promote Brittany as a major tourist destination in France, highlighting gastronomy and seaside attraction.
Inform New Yorkers about the world-famous summertime festivals in Brittany.
Feature Brittany's incredible legends, traditions and historical heritage.*



Sonerion looks to the future and keeps roots in the past

Sonerion, formerly called Bodadeg ar Sonerion, is a federation of bagads – Breton bagpipe bands – organized locally and by departments to foster performance and teaching. And in its over 70 years it has fostered hundreds (thousands?) of musicians who become steeped in the traditional music of Brittany but are also part of a highly creative performances featuring the Breton style Scottish bagpipes (biniou braz), bombarde and percussion.

Sonerion has been working to keep its focus on fostering tradition and innovation and has adopted a new logo (above) to reflect its attachment to a rich traditional heritage and promotion of new creations that look to the future. The logo, designed by Antoine Perhirin, is inspired by the Seiz Breur artistic movement which also took its inspiration from traditional Breton design while creating new arts.

Champions of Brittany: Sonneurs de Couple and bagadoù

For those who love the bagad and the paired playing of bombarde with biniou bihan or biniou braz the Sonerion website (sonerion.bzh) is a gold mine of recordings and videos.

Two important competitions were held this summer. The second of two for the top level of bagadoù which determines the champion was held during the August Lorient Interceltic Festival, as it is each year. And competitions for *sonneurs de couple* – paired bombard and biniou bihan and paired bombard and biniou braz (Scottish style bagpipes) was held earlier this September. Here are some of the results. To learn more and to hear performances go to the sonerion.bzh website.

Top three for paired bombard & biniou bihan

Julien Tymen & Michel Kerveillant
Erwan Hamon & Sylvain Leroy
Damien Matteyses & Youenn Le Cam

Top three for paired bombard & biniou braz

Christophe Mahévas & Jean-Michel Mahévas
Goulven Henaff & Alexis Meunier
Julian Kergozien & Maëlig Mollo

The top ten for level 1 bagad

Bagad Cap Caval (Plomeur)
Bagad Brieg (Briec)
Bagasd Kemper (Quimper)
Bagad Roñsed Mor (Locoal-Mendon)

Bagad Melinerion (Vannes)
Bagad Kevrenn Alré (Auray)
Bagad Kerlenn Pondi (Pontivy)
Bagad Ar Meilhoù Glaz (Quimper)
Bagad Sonerien Bro Dreger (Pays de Perros-Guirec)
Bagad Sonerien an Oriant Lorient)

Heard of but not heard – New albums and books from Brittany

Short notes have been drawn from reviews in *Ar Men* 261 (July-August 2024), *Musique Bretonne* 278 (Jan.-Feb-March 2024) and 279 (Aug. 2024) as well as various websites.



Sébastien Bertrand. *Les gens d'ailleurs.*

This album features compositions by Sébastien Bertrand on accordion with Delphine Gosseries on cello, Christine Craipeau with song (in French) and Julien Padovani on piano. The themes are of contemporary life with an accent on melody.



FA. *Pevar Hent.*

Fifteen years since his first album (“Guitares celtiques”) and other since, FA (Fabrice Carre) returns with acoustic guitar work on ten selections of Breton dance arrangements and three more meditative melodies. These are rooted in Breton rhythms with an influence of jazz and eastern flavors. FA on acoustic guitar is joined by nine other musicians on percussions, accordion, flute, cello, saxophones, oud, bombard, bass clarinet and tuba.



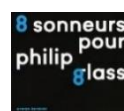
Fleuves. #3.

A Trio with ten years of experience known for their arrangements of Breton music with an electronic, jazz and rock buzz. This CD of 11 selections includes (primarily) Breton dances, with a bourée, song and a march. The trio is composed of Émilien Robic (clarinet), Romain Dubois (piano) and Samson Dayou (bass).



Hamon Martin Quintet. *Et si l'idée coulait de source.*

Sixth album by this group well known on the fest-noz scene. They draw from traditional song and dances of Haute Bretagne for 10 selections. The group is composed of Mathieu Hamon (song), Erwan Hamon (bombarde, flute), Janick Martin (accordion), Ronan Pelle (cittern) and Erwan Volant (bass).



Erwan Keravec. *Sonneurs pour Philip Glass.* Buda Musique.

With a previous album interpreting American minimalist composer Terry Riley, here Keravec takes on Philip Glass interpreted by eight bombard, biniou and Scottish bagpipe players. Like his

last work, this is an extraordinary use of traditional instruments for contemporary compositions.



Erwan Menguy Quartet. *Spi*. Klam Records.

Better known as an instrument for traditional Irish music, the wooden flute has been very successfully adopted by Breton musicians. Erwan Menguy is one of many and here he is joined by Kevin Le Pennec on cittern, Hughes Lassere on bass fiddle and Erwan Bérenguer on guitar. Rooted in Breton tradition the musicians compose in a style somewhere between folk, jazz and classical music.



Modkozmik Galactik. *Menez Kernall*. Vlad.

A digital production drawing on concerts prepared for the 50th anniversary of Dastum. Song texts in Breton are drawn from the Mountain country of central western Brittany and cover a range of topics and time periods from World War II, elections of 1927, or a setting of the 17th century. The group is composed of Yann-Erwan L'Haridon (song, saxophone), Clément Dallot (keyboard), Louri Derrien (trumpet), Théo Morin (percussions) and Simon Latouche (trombone). Traditional style music is mixed with jazz, funk and groove.



Kristen Noguès. *Marc'h Gouez*.

Harpist and singer Kristen Noguès passed away in 2007 but this reedition of her album *Marc'h Gouez* demonstrates the lasting influence of her work. Seven selections are presented and she is joined by a number of musicians she has worked with in the Nevenoe Cooperative and elsewhere.



Jakez Pincet. *Solo Piping Art, Volume 5*.

This is a double CD (6 selections on each CD) by Jakez Pincet, a master of Scottish Highland bagpipes with recordings from 1998 and 2018. There is a focus on piobaireachd, long compositions with increasingly complex variations, composed by Pincet. "Lighter" styles from the Scottish tradition are also included with marches, strathspeys and reels.



La Sèrcl. *Je M'en vais dans mon jardin*.

A CD by the trio La Sèrcl composed of Mathieu Guitton (song, violin, banjo, jaw's harp), Manu Bouthillier (song, violin) and Cedric Malaunais (song, accordion, veuze). They draw from their roots and love of the Gallo traditions of eastern Brittany with styles ranging from pure traditional to more experimental arrangements.



Sonerien Du. *An naer wenn*.

This group has been on the Breton scene since 1972 and this is the 26th album for the

group of seven (which has changed content over the years). They provide 1 song and 12 dances of Brittany in the high energy mix of acoustic and electric instruments that has characterized their sound.



Titom. *Retour au crépuscule*.

This is the sixth album by Titom, with 11 selections of Breton dances. Composer, arranger, and bombard player Thomas Lotout is joined by Stéphane Rama (bass), Marcus Camus (drums), Gaëtan Grandjean (bouzouki, electric and acoustic guitars), Yannig Alony (flute), Gab Faure (violin), and additional guest musicians with song, accordion, bagpipes and hurdy-gurdy.



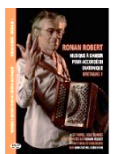
Les Vrillés. *Ta mère en kilt*.

This is the third album by this rock group formed in 2013 with 13 selections of song on a variety of topics – half comical and half more serious. The album title with the taunt "Your mother wears a kilt" gives the flavor. The group is said to be composed of nine brothers of the Mac Vrillé family, all named Yann. It is a group of friends where song is accompanied by bass guitar, drums, electric guitar, accordion, keyboard, bombard and bagpipes.



Manu Lann Huel, Pierre Jakez Hélias. *Chansons d'Orgueil*.

Paker Production. Manu Lann Huel sets the Breton language poetry of Pierre Jakez Hélias (1914-1995) to song with music composed by Lann Huel as well as Éric Le Lann and Didier Squiban. Arrangements are made by the late guitarist Jacques Pellen. With a touch of jazz and Breton melody, you hear Pellen with a number of other established Breton musicians: Sylvain Barou (biniau, dudek and uilleann pipes), Nolwenn Arzel (harp), Bernard Le Dréau (saxophone), Éric Le Lann (trumpet), Ludovic Mesnil (electric guitar), Yann Pelliet (bagpipes), Patrick Péron (keyboard), Youenn Roue (bombard), David Rusaouen (drums), Julien Stévenin (bass fiddle), and Jacquy Thomas (bass). Texts are provided in a nicely produced bilingual (Breton/French) book along with a CD of 13 selections.



Ronan Robert. *Musique à danser pour accordéon diatonique. Bretagne 1 & Bretagne 2*. Franches Connexions.

Two volumes of 20 selections each present a variety of traditional Breton dances drawn from Upper and Lower Brittany, with a few compositions added. Musicial notations and tablature are provided by Jean-Michel Corgeron, creator of Editions Franches Connexions which has published other accordion music. Also included are DVDs to hear and see Ronan Robert perform the music. This surely a welcome publication for those learning the diatonic accordion.

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