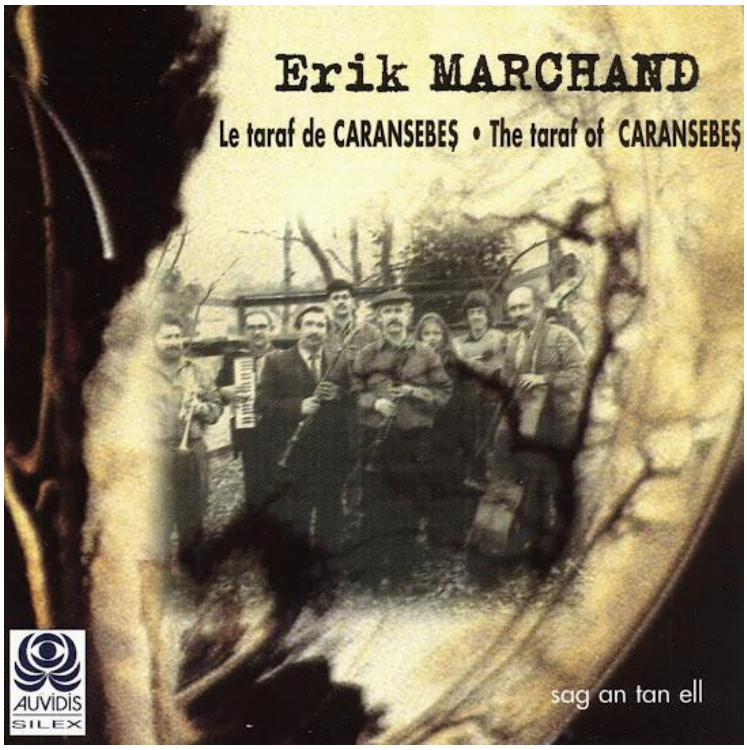
BRO NEVEZ

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



Brittany Mourns the Loss of a Master of Song

KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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

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

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

Editor's Note

If this issue of *Bro Nevez* seems a little "thinner" than usual, you are not mistaken. This is not due to the lack of anything interesting or timely to be said of events in Brittany, but simply this editor's lack of time this December to dig out information and write a short or longer note.

And this issue includes a number of memorial notes about Bretons who have passed away recently. It is sad at what should be a joyous time of the year to have to note the passing of these individuals, but they have played an important role in support of the Brittany and its culture and their presence and contributions will be missed.

Lois

Seasonal Greetings from Ti ar Vro Treger-Goueloù

Each year Ti ar Vro Treger-Goueloù (Maison de la culture bretonne du Trégor-Goëlo) sends out a note to urge people to incorporate the Breton lanugage into holiday greetings. I know these have appeared in past issues of *Bro Nevez*, but here are a few phrases from the Ti ar Vro Treger-Goueloù with Breton, French, and my English equivalents. Check out this very active cultural center on their website: tiarvro22.bzh.

Nedeleg laouen / Joyeux Noël / Merry Christmas
Bloavezh mat / Bonne année / Happy New Year

Bloavezh mat ha yec'hed mat / Bonne année et bonne santé / Happy New Year and good health to you

Nedeleg laouen ha bloavezh mat / Joyeux Noël et Bonne Année / Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Nedeleg laouen ha bloavezh mat e 2026 a hetomp deoc'h / Nous vous souhaitons un joyeux Noël et une excellente année 2026 / We wish you a Merry Christmas and an excellent year 2026

Gwellañ hetoù / Meilleurs voeux / Best wishes

Yec'hed mat d'ho mignoned ha d'ho familhoù / Une bonne santé à vos amis et vos familles / Good health to your friends and families

And a bit more elegant:

Bloavezh mat da beb hini
Ha yec'hed e-leizh an ti !
Une bonne année à tous
Et la santé à toute la maisonnée
Happy New Year to all
And good health to all the household

Ur bloaz nevez a hetomp deoc'h
Korf e yec'hed, kalon e peoc'h !
Nous vous souhaitons une bonne année
Un corps en pleine santé et un coeur en paix !
We wish you a Happy New Year
A body in full health and a heart at peace!

ELEN | EUROPEAN LANGUAGE EQUALITY NETWORK

A call for Protection of the Languages of Europe

As found on their website: *The European Language Equity Network (ELEN) has as its goal, to the exclusion of any profit seeking, the promotion, protection and well-being of European lesser-used (i.e. regional, minority, endangered, indigenous, co-official and smaller national) languages, (RMLS), to work toward linguistic equality for these languages, and multilingualism, under the broader framework of human rights, and to be a voice for the speakers of these languages at the local, regional, national, European and international level. ELEN is a non-governmental organization. ELEN was established in 2011 based on the former European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages (EBLUL) member-state committees, Eurolang, plus many umbrella and individual language NGOPs from most EU Member-States.*

ELEN's purpose is to represent the 50 million people, 10% of the EU's population, who speak a regional, minority, or endangered language. ELEN comprises 174 member organizations, representing 50 languages in 25 European states …

This November some 100 delegates attended the ELEN General Assembly in Barcelona which was hosted by the Catalan Government and Barcelona Council. A range of topics were addressed with a focus on the digital divide, need for language technology, and new proposals to be brought to the European Union for the protection of minoritized languages.

The area of technology and social media is one which can serve to strengthen the use of languages but more needs to be done to support language technology and close a digital divide between minoritized languages and large official languages like English, French or German. Workshops at the General Assembly addressed online activism, the effect of housing issues on language communities, immersion education and developing an ELEN youth movement, among other topics.

On November 28 ELEN called on the European Union for the protection of languages at the UN Forum for Minority Issues held in Geneva. In its statement it reminded the EU of the Article 2 of the Treaty of the European Union stating that "the Union was founded on the values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities." ELEN noted that the rights of minorities of particular languages are not being protected.

"We call on the EU to launch negotiations with ELEN to implement our strategy to achieve long overdue protection measures for our languages, and clear, unambiguous rights for European minoritized and endangered language speakers."

Breizh A Live

As reported in *Bro Nevez* 175, on September 6 some two dozen singers and musicians of Brittany came together for an event called Breizh A Live. This was to support the Breton language and its transmission to younger generations. The event raised 40,000 euros with 10,000 euros given to the three Breton language school streams: the immersive Diwan schools, and bilingual programs in the public schools (Div Yezh Breizh) and private Catholic schools (Divaskell Breizh). Held in Carhaix, Breizh A Live attracted some 3,000 participants for a day's activities as well as concert, including a roundtable on the themes of learning and transmitting Breton, using Breton, and linguistic politics.

Besides a financial boost for Breton in schools, the event spawned several other actions – a project by Mathias Lebrun called "1,000 families" to encourage the use of Breton in the home, and a boost in inscriptions in Desketa, an online learning tool (desketa.bzh). An auction to benefit Diwan with paintings and designs by Breton musicians and artists will take place in January.

On September 30th Breizh A Live sent the following letter to Brittany's Regional Council (my translation) which outlines demands for action.

Open Letter from the artists of Breizh A Live to the President of the Regional Council of Brittany, M. Loïg Chesnais-Girard

Brittany, September 30, 2025

Mr. President,

The group of artists gathered last September 6 in Carhaix and all those who would have liked to be with them on that day wish to solemnly call upon all Bretons as well as all decision-makers to demand an unfailing engagement in favor of the maintenance of a living Breton language in Brittany.

That is why, before this festive gathering which showed all the vitality and diversity of the Breton music scene, we wished to organize a roundtable with invited key players who discussed the principal challenges for the Breton language and possible solutions for its revitalization and vitality before a full room in the Glenmor space where a number of people had to unfortunately be turned away.

We have defined three themes around the future of the Breton language: learning and transmission of the language, areas of usage for the language, and what one would call linguistic politics. The roundtable also addressed the legal framework of the Molac law, voted in 2021, and the State-Region convention on the transmission of the Breton language and the development of its use in everyday life (2022-2027), signed in March 2022 with the Region of Brittany.

Thus, in view of these exchanges, it appears that the target in the convention to have nearly 30,000 children in bilingual streams will not be respected by the State [France] given the too slow progression of openings of bilingual schools and programs. We will scarcely pass 20,000 students, a number too weak to counterbalance the decline of older Breton speakers.

Equally, teaching the Breton language to all students as stipulated in the Molac law and as defined in this same convention has not seen the smallest beginning in application in the primary schools of Brittany, which is unacceptable to us.

Associations such as Div Yezh (parents of children in bilingual programs of the public schools) and Kelennomp! (teachers of and in Breton) have recently gone to court to file a complaint on the non-application of the Molac Law of 2021 and the State-Region convention on the Breton language. Diwan has announced plans to also make demands in court for the school fees not paid by communities [whose children must attend bilingual programs in other communities].

This large gathering that we organized was born of an urgency to call to the attention of Bretons, Breton speakers or not, and equally of mayors, elected officials on the local, departmental and regional levels, and Deputies and Senators, the importance for a true promotion of our Breton language and the creation of conditions for its expression, notably in the schools, in bilingual streams of public and Catholic schools and the network of Diwan schools.

We need the whole of Breton society and especially its elected officials to attend to and favor the emergence of an expanded bilingual Breton society.

That's why we address you, Mr. President, and ask you to demand, you also, by all means possible, that the State finally respect its commitments from now to the end of 2027, and that the convention which you have signed be fully applied.

Please accept, Mr. President, our sincere Breton compliments.

The artists of Breizh A Live
Breizh.alive@gmail.com

Breizh a-gleiz calls for support of Breton and Gallo language artists

Breizh a-gleiz is a group within the regional Council of Brittany which has followed up on the Breizh A Live initiative, communicating with the main actors in its organization, Gwennyn and Brieg Guerveno. As a result they have sent a five-page letter to the Regional Council President, Loïg Chesnais-Girard, calling for better support from the Council and other Breton communities for performers using Breton or Gallo. Also copied on the letter were Gaëlle Le Stradic, Council VP for culture, Kaourintine Hulaud, VP for languages, and Paul Molac, president of the Ofis Publik ar Brezhoneg.

Five areas of work were proposed:

- Better recognize and support the diversity of musical genres in Breton and Gallo.

- Facilitate access for artists to performance stages and spaces.
- Communicate with the public organization Spectacle Vivant en Bretagne which assists in promoting arts.
- Give preference to the promotion of artists in Breton and Gallo in the institutional communications of communities.
- Add a specific action to enhance the place of these artists in the charters “Ya d’ar brezhoneg” and “Du galo, dame Yan, dame Vére!”

It is hoped that these measures will have symbolic, cultural, and economic impacts in bringing the attention of the public to artists who create in Breton and Gallo.

Members of Breizh a-gleiz signing the letter were Aziliz Gouez and Gael Briand, co-presidents of the Regional Council, as well as Christian Guyonvarc’h, Nil Caouissin, Christine Prigent, Anna Sohier, and Valérie Tabart.

(information gleaned from Agence Bretagne Presse, November 13 news)

Bilingual Breton-French Teacher Training

The association of teachers of the Breton language, Kelennomp!, is calling on the French National Ministry of Education and the Rectorat of the Academy of Rennes to put into place a Licence de Professorat des Écoles (LPE) for bilingual Breton-French teacher training.

The LPE was created in 2025 to ease a gap in the recruitment of teachers. While this has improved the training for new teachers, the degree is only offered for monolingual French language teachers and not for bilingual Breton-French appointments where teachers are lacking.

While bilingual LPE degrees are established for other regional languages – Basque, Occitan, Catalan, Corsican – the academic region of Brittany is the only one not to offer a bilingual LPE.

So that our languages will live

Pour que vivent nos langues was founded in 2019 to denounce the negative impact for regional languages in France of the high school reforms put into place by the French Ministry of National Education.

This October at its General Assembly in Bayonne, it officially became a non-profit organization (Association loi 1901). Representatives from some 20 associations at the Assembly affirmed the need to continue to call on political leaders for support of languages and to create wider public awareness of issues. This is in view of a rise in public support for regional languages of France shown in a July 2025 survey which showed that 77% of French people were favorable to official recognition of these languages – a 5% rise over the past ten years.

The Assembly concluded that in order to advance the use of regional languages, a modification of the French Constitution and the adoption of linguistic laws are necessary. This is not a new demand and Article 2 of the Constitution has been used often to block legislation that would advance education and the public presence for these languages.

Find out more on the October 3, 20205 blog by Fañch Broudic: language-bretonne.org

Agence Bretagne Presse

Agence Bretagne Presse celebrates 22 years serving as a web media to make news about Brittany available to the public. ABP has been an invaluable resource for this editor of *Bro Nevez* for reliable and interesting information.

Founded October 13, 2003, ABP is supported by user contributions and remains steadfast in its mission to provide current information about Breton politics, culture, economy, language and other areas of importance.

Since 2003 ABP has published over 50,000 articles written by over 800 contributors. By incorporating news published in a number of other media (newspapers, websites) it opens the door to a wide range of views on what is going on in Brittany. The ABP site is in French with a bilingual Breton-French version. Check out abp.bzh and br.abp.bzh.

Threats to Breton Radio

Radio Kerne and Radio Naoned put out a call of alarm with a deep cut to finances in the Projet de Loi de Finances 2026 where a drop of 44% is shown for funding radios. From 35 million euros in 2025 the 2026 amount will be 19 million euros. This threatens the existence of over 770 independent radios such as Radio Kerne and Radio Naoned and their nearly 3,000 employees. Both Radio Kerne (radiokerne.bzh) and radio Naoned (radionaoned.bzh) broadcast in the Breton language, providing programming for adults and children.

Yes Breizh

[information for this note was drawn from a press release by Yes Breizh with an English translation posted on the nation.cymru website]

Launched in the summer of 2025, Yes Breizh was inspired by the Yes Cymru and Yes Scotland movements (and there is a Yes Kernow group as well). This Breton non-party political movement is advocating devolution of powers to Brittany – a transfer of power from France to Brittany.

The idea of devolution is distinct from autonomy which involves expanded but limited local power still dependent on the central government. Independence, a goal of Yes Cymru and Yes Scotland, could be the end result of devolution, but only after a step by step transfer of powers. Yes Breizh sees this as a gradual transfer from the central government.

A timetable set for 2032 has stages that include:

- Launching a public and media debate
- A consultative referendum in Brittay
- Revision of the French Constitution
- Elections for a Breton Assembly and executive leader

Areas targeted for devolution include:

Health and social welfare – hospital organization, preventative health programs, and support for care givers.

Education and culture – programs to promote Breton and Gallo language, teaching of Breton history and support of arts.

Energy and the environment – management of sustainable energy, coastal protection.

Agriculture and fisheries – adoption of European policies to fit Brittany's needs.

Housing and development – regulation of second homes and investment in social housing.

Transport and infrastructure - rail lines, ports, airports.

Political representation – creation of a Breton Assembly and executive accountable to citizens.

Objections that Brittany is too small aren't viable when comparing other independent countries of Europe. Brittany (all five departments) is larger than Belgium and Slovenia and only slightly smaller in area than the Netherlands. Brittany's population of nearly 5 million is like that of Slovenia, the Republic of Ireland or New Zealand.

In November a partnership with Yes Cymru was announced: Gyda'n gilydd / A-gevred / Together.

Good News for the Cornish Language

Cornish became extinct as a living community language by the end of the 18th century, but its revival starting in the early 20th century has brought enough success that UNESCO reclassified it as "critically endangered" – a much better state than "extinct."

The United Kingdom government is proposing to recognize Cornish / Kernewek for the same status and protection as Welsh, Irish Gaelic and Scots Gaelic to be covered by Part III of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. This comes as a result of years of hard work on the part of the Cornwall Council, and community and cultural groups of Cornwall. While the number of Cornish speakers is not huge (the 2021 census listed a total of 563 living Cornish speakers) interest has been growing with more than 200 people signing up for Cornish classes each year and thousands of school children being introduced to it through the Go Cornish for Primary Schools program commissioned by the Cornwall Council.

Cultural Institute of Brittany Medal to Carole Jézéquel

Brittany hosts a number of book fairs/festivals to celebrate publications by Breton authors. Perhaps best know is the annual Festival du Livre en

Bretagne held in Carhaix in October. This event is the occasion for the awarding of prizes for books and other cultural work for Brittany. This year the Cultural Institute of Brittany / Skol Uhel Ar Vro awarded a medal to Carole Jézéquel for her service to Brittany's cultural life with the creation of the organization Ar Seiz Avel / Les Sept Vents which was inspired by the arts movement Seiz Breur 100 years ago. In 2023 Ar Seiz Avel brought some 60 artists together for an exhibit and sale of their work. (See *Bro Nevez* 170, June 2024 for more).

Two other annual prizes were also awarded at the book festival:

The Prix Xavier-de-Langlais for literature in the Breton language was awarded to Iwan (Ywan) Couée for his poetry collection *En Ty an Archeteclin*. (the book festival's prize)

The Prix du livre d'histoire de Bretagne (prize for a book on the history of Brittany) went to Jean-Yves Éveillard for *Romains d'Armorique* (edited by Skol Vreizh).

Two other works were also recognized: *Peuple de la mer? Le Campaniforme en Bretagne et au-delà* of the Société polymathique du Morbihan, and *Citoyennes ou rebelles, des Bretonnes dans la Révolution française* by Solenn Mabo (PUR). (award by the festival, BCD and the Musée de Bretagne).

(information from drawn from Agence Bretagne Presse, October 27, 2025).

Losses for Brittany and its language and culture …

A Warrior for the Breton Language

(photo Agence Bretagne Presse)

Yannig Baron (1936-2025)

This December Brittany lost one of its most ardent defenders, Yannig Baron, at the age of 89. Born on the island of Groix, his family had a long maritime history and he would serve as a young man on fishing vessels, in National Marine, and be part of its bagad de Lann-Bihoué. But his naval career was a short one and it was his action in favor of the Breton language and culture for which he will be remembered.

In 1950 he began to learn the bombarde and while a teen collected songs from his native island. A relative of the poet Yann-Bêr Kalloc'h (1888-1917) through his paternal grandmother he would organize commemorations of this important poet in Groix to enable Bretons to discover this Breton language literature. With Yann Goasdoue he was active in directing the cultural center Menez Kamm in Spézet in the 1960s and early 1970s.

His militant work of a more political nature for Brittany began with his engagement with the Movement pour l'Organisation de la Bretagne (MOB) and he then joined the Union Démocratique Bretonne (UDB) in 1988.

Yannig Baron is best known for his efforts to get Breton into the schools through the development of bilingual programs. In 1990 he was one of the founders of Dihun, the association of parents for Breton in the Catholic schools. From 1991 through 2006 he undertook a number of hunger strikes (the longest being 38 days) to push for bilingual education. These were effective in bring the attention to the issue to the world beyond Brittany and the need to open bilingual programs and train teachers. He would also champion the cause of Gallo in schools although his focus remained on the bilingual Breton programs of Catholic schools.

Yannig Baron would also take on causes such as the reunification of Brittany and Breton autonomy, among others. As a devout Catholic he helped organize the travel to Brittany by the Pope in 1996 (publishing the book *Le message de Jean-Paul II aux Bretons* (Coop Breizh, 2005).

A courageous and passionate defender of Brittany and its languages and culture, Yannig Baron would be awarded the Order of the Ermine in 2004.

(Information from Agence Bretagne Presse, December 16. 2025)

Brittany Loses a Scholar and Militant

Pierre-Yves Le Rhun (1936-2025)

This October Brittany lost geographer and Breton militant Pierre-Yves Le Rhun. After teaching geography in high schools, Le Rhun joined the faculty of the University of Nantes. He published a number of key works on Brittany's geography (see below) but was also active using his knowledge to support and

number of causes. These included preservation of Brittany's bocage, the earthen walls surrounding farm fields that fell victim to demands for larger fields, and protection of the Guérande salt marshes as well as opposition to the Carnet nuclear power plant. He was also a member of the environmental organization Bretagne Vivante.

Pierre-Yves Le Rhun was particularly active in calling for the reunification of Brittany – the reintegration of Loire-Atlantique with the other four departments of the Region of Brittany. He served as president of the Comité pour l'unité administrative de la Bretagne (CUAB), which became Bretagne Réunie. Le Rhun was also very active with Ar Falz, serving as its president for a period. Founded in 1933 Ar Falz has fought for the Breton language and is very active in publishing books on Breton history, economy and culture.

For his lifetime of work for Brittany, Pierre-Yves Le Rhun was awarded the Order of the Ermine in 2000, and in 2015 the Cultural Institute of Brittany awarded him its Medal for his book *Géographie numérique* de la Bretagne.

Besides numerous articles the following are his major works:

Géographie économique de la Bretagne (1971)
Géographie de la Bretagne (1976)
Bretagne et Grand Ouest (1988)
La Bretagne face à l'Europe et à l'Île-de-France (1991)
Géographie et aménagement de la Bretagne (1994)
Géographie numérique de la Bretagne (2015)

A Loss for the Music World

Erik Marchand (1955-2025)

Erik Marchand passed away October 30th in Caransebes in Romania where he has longtime friends. He was born in Paris in 1955 with family roots in Perigord-Alsatia and Lorraine and Morbihan Brittany (Quelneuc). He took an interest in a variety of musics early on and moved to Brittany as a young man to explore both the Gallo and Breton language song traditions. He would become a master of both. While meeting and recording a number of singers it was in living and working on the farm of master singer Manu Kerjean that he refined his learning of the Breton language and the song tradition of central western Brittany.

It was his deep knowledge and love of the traditional music of Brittany that allowed him to explore, appreciate, and incorporate other world traditions in his creative work. The following gives some idea of his range of work, but is by no means a complete account of all the albums on which his voice can be heard.

I believe that I first heard his voice with his solo performance of "Rossignolet du vert bocage" on the LP *Bogue d'Or 2 – Chants traditionnels Haute-Bretagne*, 1977, put together by the Goupement Culturel Breton des Pays de Vilaine. That performance won him first place in this highly contested contest for song of the Gallo country.

French would be the language for two CDs with Gigi Bourdin (1947-2022) and Christian Dautel: *Chants à danser de Haute Bretagne*, 1986, and *Chants à répondre de Haute-Bretagne*, 1988.

He would show his mastery of traditional Breton language gwerz (ballads) and kan ha diskan singing for dances on a number of albums. One can be found on *Les Sources du Barzaz Breiz aujourdui*, produced by Dastum and ArMen, 1989.

He pairs with Yann-Fañch Kemener for seven selections on Kemener's CD *Kan ha Diskan* (which also paired Kemener with Annie Ebrel, Patrick Marie, Valentine Colleter, Marcel Guilloux and Ifig Troadeg) 1997.

Along with Annie Ebrel and Yann Fañch Kemener, Erik Marchand pairs with Marcel Le Guilloux on that master singer's album, *Un Devezh 'ba Kerc'h Morvan* (Coop Breizh) 2004.

Also featuring the Breton language song tradition are his collaborations on the albums *Chansons dorées de Bretagne à chanter et à danser*, with Nolùen Le Buhé, (Le Petit ménestrel) 1997, and on *Hiri,* with Éric Menneteau et Youenn Lange, (Compagnie des musiques têtues), 2023.

Erik Marchand also explored the maritime song tradition of Brittany and can be heard on two LPs of maritime music produced by Le Chasse Maree. He has solos for two songs in French and one in Breton on *Chants de Marins II – Danses et complaintes des côtes de France.* 1983. On *Chants de Marins III – Chants de bord des baleiniers et long-courriers*, 1984, he leads two work songs, solos for a ballad, and sings in pair with Gilbert Bourdin for a ballad, and plays clarinet to accompany a song by Christian Desnos. Marchand has three selections with Gilbert Bourdin

and Christian Dautel on *Chants de Mariniers V – Gens de rivière et bateliers des fleuves de France*, 1985. He is also found on the CD by the group Cabestan, *Gwerz Penmarc'h,* produced by Le Chasse-Marée, 1990.

In the mid 1980s the group Gwerz won wide acclaim for its interpretation of traditional Breton and French language song. This gathered the talents of Patrick Molard, Jacky Molard, Youenn Le Bihan, and Soïg Siberil, with Erik Marchand on song and clarinet:

- *Gwerz – musique bretonne de toujours* (Dastum), 1986.
- *Au-dela* (Coop Breizh) 1987
- *Gwerz Live* (Gwerz Pladenn) 1993 and 2000.

Traditional Breton song would be at the heart of Erik Marchand's performances and recordings, but he is well known for his collaboration with musicians and singers from eastern Europe and beyond and his incorporation of instruments and percussion from other world traditions.

- *An henchoù treuz, chants du Centre-Bretagne*, with Thierry Robin, AMTA/Ocora, 1990. (re-edited by Ocora in 2001).

- Trio Erik Marchand: *An tri Breur*, Silex, 1991. (with Thierry Robin on oud and Hameed Khan on tabla with invited guests Yann Fañch Kemener, Youenn Le Bihan (bombard and piston), and Fañch Landreau (violin). I have to say that this is perhaps my favorite album by Erik Marchand with an amazing performance of "Ar brezel Perzeg" (the war of 14) where his voice just soars.

- *Pruna*. Erik Marchand with the Balkaniks (Harmonia Mundi/Le Chant du Monde) 2004.

- *Kan*, with the ensemble Mallakaster d'Albanie, Le Tenore de Santu Predu (Sardinia), Fransy Gonzales-Calvo (Galicia) and Bassey Koné (Mali), BMG. 2001.

- *1 2 3 4, Unu daou tri chtar* avec Jacky Molard, Costica Olan (Rom from Rumania with Taragot), Viorel Tajkuna (Rom from Serbia on accordion), Innacor. 2006

- *Ukronia*, Gallo song repertoire with oud, cornet, early versions of cello and violin, and middle eastern percussion). Innacor, 2012.

Erik Marchand incorporated an international swing and rhythm also in collaborations with musicians best know on the rock scene – Jacques Pellen of Brittany and Alsatian Rodolphe Burger:

- Fresu, Pellen, Marchand trio, *Condaghes*, Silex, Choc 1997. (with Paolo Fresnu and Jacques Pellen)
- *Before Bach* with Rodolphe Burger et Mehdi Haddab, Wagram Music, 2004, with reedtion 2011, with live concert of 2004. Innacor
- *Glück auf !,* with Rodolphe Burger. Dernière Bande, 2021. Also joined by Mahdi Abbad (electric oud) and Pauline Willerval (gadulka)

As one might suppose from Erik Marchand's last days spent in the town of Caransebes in Romania, a particularly valued friendship and collaboration was with the band from that town, the Taraf de Caransebes. Besides performances with this group at Breton festivals Erik Marchand would produce two albums:

- Erik Marchand et le Taraf de Caransebes : *Sag an tan ell*, Silex. 1994
- Erik Marchand et le Taraf de Caransebes : *Dor*, BMG, 1998

Association des Sonneurs de Clarinette de Bretagne
Rencontre Internationale de la Clarinette Populaire

Marchand also mastered the treujenn goal, the clarinet traditional to the south of the Côtes d'Armor and Arrée Mountains in Finistère. With others interested in bringing new life to this instrument, he was at the founding of the group Paotred an Dreujenn-Gaol with its first annual festival held in 1989. The festival has gathered clarinet players from literally around the world bringing their traditions as well as the role of clarinet in jazz. The festival is still going strong. These are just two albums on which his clarinet can be heard:

- *Musique têtue* with the Quintet de Clarinettes, Silex, 1991.
- *Bazh du* with the Quintet de Clarinettes, Silex. 1993.

Erik Marchand was not only a fine singer and musician but also a teacher, mentoring other singers and founding the Kreiz Breizh Akademi in 2003 which he directed until 2021. As described on its website the aim has been "to teach musical techniques based on modal understanding; to develop skills around composition, improvisation, arrangement methods and orchestra playing; and to learn stage techniques." Depending on the year, twelve to eighteen musicians/singers are selected to embark on a one-year training program followed by two years during which they create a work which they will perform in concerts and which leads to an album. This prepares

them for a professional career if they choose to follow that path.

I did not know Erik Marchand personally, but he was one of my heros of Breton song. There will certainly be more eloquent homage paid to him by others with tributes in the pages of Dastum's magazine *Musique Bretonne* to come.

Erik Marchand supported the work of Dastum and was an early contributor of music and song he collected, also serving as part of its administration. Before his death Marchand was working with Dastum on a double CD album in the "Passeurs" series documenting singers and musicians who played important roles in transmitting traditional Breton music, and Erik Marchand was certainly one of those. (The first volume presented clarinet player Dominique Jouve.)

Erik Marchand will be greatly missed by the many who performed with him, learned from him, and recognized his exceptional voice and importance for traditional Breton and other world musics.

And Another Loss for Breton Music

Jean-Louis Le Vallégant (1956-2025)

This past October another major figure of the Breton music scene passed away at a much too young age. Jean-Louis Le Vallégant began his musical career with the bombarde in 1968 playing in Brittany's unique "bagpipe band", the bagad, and for Celtic Circles before playing in pair with the biniou. At the beginning of the 1980s he took on the saxophone as well.

From 1978 to 1983 he worked with jazz musician François Tusques' Intercommunal Free Dance Orchestra which would be determinant in his incorporation of Breton traditional music into jazz creations with a variety of musicians. He began a professional career as a musician in 1986 and in 1987 he founded the street ensemble ZAP which he directed until 1991.

Not just a musician, Le Vallégant also studied music business management and would work on a number of projects including management in 1995 of the duo Yann Fañch Kemener and Didier Squiban, helping to launch this very successful pairing of Breton language song and piano. Le Vallégant also supported the promotion of musicians as part of the staff of Coop Breizh.

He would continue to play bombarde and saxophone, performing with a number of musicians and creating concert performances which toured widely. In 2004 he created Le Vallégant Noz Unit with a 2008 CD *Confidences Sonores*.

During his career Le Vallégant would collaborate and record with Diaouled ar Menez, Daniel Miniou, Bagad Bro Kemperle, Patrick Lefebvre, Gérard Delahaye, Étienne Grandjean, Menestra, Gilles Servat, Roland Becker and many others.

A fine musician and a creator and enabler of innovative Breton music, he will be missed.

New Music Albums from Brittany

Notes for these short introductions are drawn from reviews in *Ar Men* 269 (Nov.-Dec. 2025), newsletters of Culture-Celtie, and various websites.

Ampouailh. *Lang(u)ages*. CD Tud Yaouank / Arfolk AR 1232.
Created in 2004 this group features a repertoire for festoù-noz, presenting here 10 selections. The make-up of Ampouailh has changed over the years but for this CD you have Gwynlan Meneghin on bass guitar, Yuna Léon on violin, Vincent Le Meur as the sound engineer, Rémi Bouguennec on flute, Heikki Bourgault on guitar, and Simon Letout on bombarde.

Dastum. *La Bretagne des Pays, Volume 8 – Pays de Locminé, Bro Boio.*
This is the 8th in Dastum's series of CDs which include a variety of song and music traditional to specific areas of Brittany. With the CDs come transcriptions, biographies, song texts, photos and a wealth of other information about the *pays*. This double CD featuring song of Bro Boio is the product of work by the Kanerion Bro Boio, a group begun in 1987.

Annie Ebrel. *An Ebatoù*. Arfolk AR 1228
This CD captures a performance created by Annie Ebrel while in residence at the Carre Magique in Lannion and performed at several festivals since. The 11 selections are based on traditional Breton song as well as original compositions by Ebrel. Breton language song and kan ha diskan for dance are the base for the music. The voice of Annie Ebrel is supported by three musicians: Clement Dallot on piano and keyboard, Ronan Pellen on cittern, and Daravan Souvanna on electric bass and percussions. A master of traditional song, Annie Ebrel works with the three fellow

musicians to add a jazzy touch while wholly respecting the swing of Breton dance.

Robin Fincker & Janick Martin. *Vison Visu*. L'Autre Distribution.
This is a CD with 11 selections of compositions and arrangements of melodies and rhythms from Breton, Cajun and Scottish traditions. Janick Martin on accordion is paired with Robin Fincker on tenor saxophone and clarinet. The overall feel is one of jazz, a genre well known to these musicians, with lots of improvisation.

Jean-Charles Guichen. *Panorama*.
Arfolk AR 1243.
This is the 7th solo album from this guitar master who became first known as part of the group Ar Re Yaouank. This CD of 12 selections includes compositions and arrangements for Breton melodies and dance with a touch of jazz. Guichen is joined by Sylvain Barou on uillean pipes and flute, Claire Mocquard on violin, Olivier Carole on bass, and Mickaël Bourdois on percussion.

Kerbedig. *Fest-Noz Live 2016 et 2025*.
Arfolk AR 1218.
This is a 3-CD set with two live performances from festoù-noz of 2025 and one from 2016, accompanied by a 20-page booklet of notes. Kerbedig is a group of dancers and musicians featuring paired bombarde-biniou of Yannig Adran and Dominig Mahé, with Denis-Paul Régnier on accordion, Stevan Audran on clarinet and Claude Le Gallic on saxophone. The repertoire of dances is drawn from the Vannetais and Haute-Cornouaille areas as well as the Gallo tradition with plinn, gavotte, hanter-dro, rond de Saint-Vincent, polka, scottish, and others. The live recording captures well the energy of the dancers and musicians.

Antoine Lahay. *Dragon nuage*. Musiques Têtues. CMT 060484.
Guitarist Antoine Lahay is known as a musician with Denez, Eben, and Dièze3 (among other collaborations). This is his first solo album with 7 selections of songs in French and melodic compositions. He is joined by Jonathan Dour on alto, Julien Stévenin on bass fiddle, Lina Belaid on cello, Ilyas Khan on percussions, Etienne Cabaret on bass clarinet and Antoine Peran on flute.

Dominique Martin. *Enez Glaz, Saison 2*.
This CD of 11 selections follows up on *Enez Glaz* and features piano arrangements of traditional melodies and rhythms of Brittany, Ireland, and Scotland as well as four compositions, three of which were co-written with Didier Squiban who was part of the CD production team. As is the case with the work of pianist Didier Squiban, Dominique Martin blends traditional music with jazz and a classical tone.

Plouz ha Foen. *D'an neb a gleva*. Paker Prod. PAK CD 44.
Rapping in Breton is not new and the language lends itself well to this compliment of music and poetry with an appeal to younger generations. Toutz (Gweltaz Foulon) pairs with Kavalou (Kadvael Jolivet) for a narrative on 14 selections about a young man who discovers an incomprehensible language which he unconsciously absorbs. Melodic lines a supported by the violin of Sterenn Toscer and the guitar of Maël Guego. Rappers Krismen and Sam Mac also contribute to the CD.

Red Cardell. *En Concert*. Arfolk.
The very popular Breton rock band Red Cardell celebrates its 33rd anniversary with the release of a live recording of a concert from August 2024. This is a digital distribution only (via internet) with 12 selections of their compositions rooted in Breton rhythms. The band is made up of Jean-Pierre Riou on guitar and vocals, Pierre Sangra on guitar and violin, Hibu Corbel on drums, and Fred Lucas on electric bass.

Breizh a Gan Choral Festival

This December marks the 43rd year for this two-day festival for choral work. This is organized by the federation Kanomp Breizh which incorporates Breton language choirs from all five departments of Brittany. This year the festival held in St. Brieuc highlighted youth, working in collaboration with Kenleur, Ti Ar Vro Sant-Brieg, and the middle/high school Saint-Pierre.

The first day of the festival included master classes for singers and a series of presentations on the theme of the relation of traditional Breton song to the development of choral polyphony. Participants lined up were:

Yves Coativy, Director of the Centre de Recherche Bretonne et Celtique
Daniel Giraudon, author of *La Bretagne à travers chants – Gwerzioù ha Sonioù.*
Jorj Belz, retired professor of Breton and history, musician, singer and collector

Jean-Pierre Thomin, researcher and president of Kanomp Breizh

Following a round-table to sum up the presentation, the day closed with a “repas chanté” - a festive mix of a meal with songs.

The second day took place at the Saint-Etienne Cathedral of Saint Brieuc with performances by local choirs Kanomp Ar Vro Sant-Brieg, Choeur d’Enfants de Bretagne, and Kan Dre Gan for the first part. The second part featured the Ensemble Polyphonique de Bretagne directed by Guy Pouliquen. This ensemble is composed of some fifty singers of sixteen choirs from all parts of Brittany who are members of Kanomp Breizh.

For more information: kanompbreizh.bzh

An English Language Website of Note: All Things Breton

Allthingsbreton.org

As described on its website “The goal for this site is to provide a deep, content-rich, graphically exciting portal for the English-speaking world to learn more about the magnificent culture and music of Brittany. What started 20 years ago as a simple blog with very brief simple music reviews has slowly expanded into longer reviews as well as numerous articles related to Breton music and culture, including academic papers, downloadable out-of-print music tutorial materials, repaired historical images, video links, expositions on musical instruments used in traditional music, and articles about and direct interviews with notable figures.”
Indeed, this is a rich source of information for English speakers, with a strong focus on music of Brittany. And the site provides links to Breizh Amerika as well as to the U.S. ICDBL and the most recent issue of *Bro Nevez*.

At the heart of this creation is Wendy Mewes of Welsh family living in England who taught Latin and classical civilization in English schools. She embarked on a career as a writer and moved to Brittany in 2000, a place that spoke to her Celtic roots and love of nature. She remains a prolific author of books about Brittany. Here are just a few (note that I found varied publication dates):

Discovering the History of Brittany (2000)
Brittany: A Cultural History (2014)
Introduction to the Breton Saints (2019)
Introduction to the Tro Breiz – A Pilgrimage in Brittany (2024)
The Unquiet Path – My Pilgrimage in Brittany (2024)
Brittany – Stone Stories (2023)
Spirit of Place in Finistère (2016)
Legends of Brittany … from the dawn of history to the nuclear age (2012)

Among guide books:
Walks in Finistère (2016)
Crossing Brittany: Walking the Nantes-Brest Canal (2008)
Wayfaring in Brittany (2020)

Among novels set in Brittany:
The Stolen Saint (2020)
The Ambling Rock (2021)
The Tearful Tree (2022)

With the wealth of books by Wendy Mewes and the resources available on the All Things Breton website, English speakers (whose French or Breton is limited) living in Brittany or traveling there as a tourist have no excuse to be ignorant of that land, its history, and culture.

December in Breton History

The following is my translation of an entry for December 6 in Bernard Le Nail’s *L’Amanach de la Bretagne* (Éditions Jacques Marseille, Larousse, 2003).

Benjamin Franklin, Brittany and the Bretons

Born in Boston in 1706 and deceased in 1790 in Philadelphia, Benjamin Franklin is especially known for the political role he played in the fight for the independence of the U.S., but he was also a dynamic entrepreneur creating a large printing house in 1729 in Philadelphia, an editor of gazettes and almanacs such ar *Poor Richard’s Almanac*, and a creative scientific spirit who invented the lightening rod and the heating system known as the “Franklin Stove.”

Charged with the task of negotiating an alliance with France, he arrived in Nantes on December 7* and was warmly welcomed by the ship owners and merchants of Nantes. He stayed a dozen days, lodging at the home of ship owner Barthélemy-Jacques Gruel and left his nephew John Williams there to oversee American interests and to look after the departure for and arrival from ships going to America.

Then he [Franklin] left for Paris where he met Jacques-Donatien Le Ray de Chaumont, a Breton totally won over

to the cause of American Independence. Born in Nantes in 1725, Le Ray de Chaumont was a powerful man of finance, often more influential than a minister. It was he who hosted Franklin in his home during his stay in Paris at his property of Passy which served in a way as the U.S. embassy in France. It was Le Ray de Chaumont who drew other powerful businessmen to financially support the American cause. He himself put a large part of his fortune into this.

Through his simplicity and good nature, Benjamin Franklin rapidly conquered hearts. On February 6, 1778, Vergennes, minister of foreign affairs for Louis XVI, signed the official recognition of the independence of the U.S. Franklin had accomplished his mission.

* Benjamin Franklin first reached France on December 3, 1776, arriving at the Breton Port de Saint-Goustan of Auray.

Return of Duke Jean IV to Brittany in 1379

Breizhia.org is a website created by Jean-Pierre Le Mat which uses artificial intelligence to allow readers to explore a range of topics related to Breton history and identity, and the history of the Celtic nations. One can ask a question in English and get the response in English. For this December issue of *Bro Nevez*, I asked about historical events in December and got a concise and interesting response almost instantaneously.

Below is my question and the response from Breizhia:

What is the most important event in Breton history to occur in the month of December?

One significant event in Breton history that occurred in December is the return of Duke Jean IV to Brittany in 1379. After being exiled for four years, his return marked a pivotal moment for Breton independence. The people of Brittany welcomed him with great enthusiasm, and this event demonstrated the strong national sentiment and unity among Bretons. The popular support was so overwhelming that many Bretons took up arms against the French even before the official call to arms by the Duke. This period eventually led to the Treaty of Guérande in 1381, where France recognized Breton independence. Breizh Dieub !

And a few notable December dates and birthdays

Short summaries of information are drawn from Bernard Le Nail's *L'Amanach de la Bretagne* and Jean-Loup Avril's *Mille Bretons – Dictionnaire Biographique*, 2nd edition (Les Portes du Large, 2003). I by no means included all Breton December events and birthdays.

December 2, 1833
Edouard Riou (1833-1900) was born in Saint-Servan and was a painter and illustrator – in particular for several volumes of Jules Verne's *Voyages extraordinaires.* Verne was born in Nantes in 1828 and died in Amiens in 1905.

December 3, 1879
Birth of Joseph Marie (Job) Le Pévédic (1879-1964) in Ploemel (Morbihan). He was a farmer who would become the mayor of Ploemel serving for 50 years. At his appointment in 1909 he was the youngest Mayor in France. He was elected a Deputy (1928 to 1942) and with his Breton costume and accent made a remarkable presence in the National Assembly.

December 4, 1924
Yann Bouëssel du Bourg (1924-1996) was born in Paris of a father originally from the Fougères area of Brittany. Bouëssel du Bourg completed university studies in Brittany and would teach English in Vannes and Rennes. He published some 500 articles in Breton and French as well as books on Breton arts and history. He was an ardent defender of the Breton language

December 8, 1877
Paul Ladmirault (1877-1944) was born in Nantes and early on showed musical talents. He studied music with Gabriel Faure in Paris and returned to Nantes to teach in its conservatory. A prolific composer, his works were often inspired by Brittany and it song tradition.

December 12, 1773
Birth of privateer/corsair Robert Surcouf (1773-1827) in Saint-Malo who would engage in a long career on the seas, travelling widely. He was renowned (infamous) for his siege and capture of ships and cargo. He would amass a fortune and become a ship owner for corsairs and merchant ships.

December 12, 1999
This was the date for the shipwreck of the oil tanker *Erika*, causing massive oil spills on the shores of Morbihan and Loire-Atlantique.

December 17, 1802
Jobert de Lamballe (1802-1867) was born in Matignon (Côtes d'Armor) and would become a pioneer in surgery, serving the general population as well as being the personal surgeon for Napoleon III. He was the first in France to use general anesthesia in operations.

December 18, 1892
Noël Roquevert (Noël Bénévent) (1892-1973) was born in the department of Maine-et-Loire. After completing school in Dinan he would begin a long acting career appearing in nearly 200 movies starting in 1922 in Max

Linder's *L'Étroit Mousquetaire*. Upon retirement he lived in Douarnenez.

December 18, 1907
Louis Guillaume (1907-1971) was born in Paris but spent much of his childhood with his grandmother on the island of Bréhat. He published a number of collections of his poetry which were often inspired by Bréhat.

December 18, 1944
The first issue of *Le Monde* was published, directed by Hubert Beuve-Méry (1902-1989) who was a Breton of the Paris community with a father from Vannes and mother from Quintin.

December 20, 1807
Birth of Hippolyte Julien Joseph Lucas (1807-1878) in Rennes. He studied law in Paris, but would devote his life to journalism and literature. He was one of the founders of the *Revue de Bretagne* with the Rennes printer Alphonse Marteville.

December 20, 1899
Hervé Le Menn (1889-1973) was born in Hanvec (Finistère) and was active in the Breton community of Paris promoting Breton culture. In 1932 with Dorig Le Voyer he founded Kevreuriez ar Viniourien (brotherhood of biniou players). He was a biniou player and maker and active in promoting Breton dance. The Prix Hervé Le Menn was created in 1988 and is given annually to an individual making an exceptional contribution to Breton culture.

December 21, 1912
Henri Le Moal (1912-2001) was born in Plozévet and studied physical sciences and taught at the University of Rennes. As Rector of the Academy of Rennes (head of school systems) he supported the development of Breton language in schools and was active in the Breton cultural movement and in the defense of the Breton language.

December 22, 1862
Born in Broons (Côtes d'Armor), Louis Bagot (1862-1941) would serve in the Navy and then become a doctor in Saint-Pol-de-Léon. He was interested in zoology, comparative anatomy and climatology. In 1899 he created the Institut marin de Rockroum in Roscoff, a center for thalassotherapy (sea water cures) which was unique in the world at that time. Today thalassotherapy can be found in a number of centers on the Breton coasts.

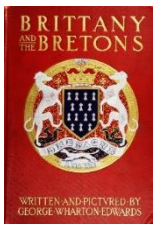
December 23, 1743
Théophile Malo de La Tour d'Auvergne (1743-1800) was born in Carhaix and is best known for his military career. But he was also a scholar of Celtic languages, publishing works on the ancient origins of the Breton language.

December 24, 1864
Birth of Zacharie Le Rouzic (1864-1939) who would become the assistant to Scottish archaeologist James Miln in research of Carnac and its region. Le Rouzic would create and be the first conservator for the archeological museum of Carnac.

December 25, 1389
Jean V, Duke of Brittany was born in La Touche near Nantes. Son of Jean IV and Jeanne de Navarre, he was named Duke of Brittany at the death of his father in 1400. He reigned during a period of economic prosperity and cultural development – not without some political turmoil.

December 27, 1847
Joseph Loth (1847-1934) was born on this date in Guémené-sur-Scorff (Morbihan). After studies in Vannes he taught in Pontivy and Quimper. He would teach and pursue studies in Paris where he was influenced by Celtic scholars Arbois de Jubainville and Gaidoz. Loth would study Celtic languages and especially Breton, his native language, and join the Faculty of Letters of Rennes University, where he would create *Annales de Bretagne* and establish a Chair of Celtic Studies.

December 29, 1981
On this date the Cultural Institute of Brittany / Skol Uhel ar Vro was created.



A travel account from 1910 – George Wharton Edwards, *Brittany and the Bretons*.

In past issues of *Bro Nevez* excerpts from travel accounts by English and American writers and artists of the 19th and 20th centuries have often been included. George Wharton Edwards (1859-1950) was an American impressionist painter who also wrote and illustrated a number of travel books on European destinations, including *Brittany and the Bretons*. Several excerpts have been included in past issues of *Bro Nevez*. In *Bro Nevez* 175 (September 2025) part of the chapter on Paimpol, Treguier and Lannon was included, with the text about the area of Lannion. Here we go back to the beginning of that chapter to present Paimpol.

Paimpol, Treguier, Lannion, from pages 79-82.

On the twentieth day of February each year, Paimpol, the gray village, is in a great state of excitement, for on this day the Icelandic fleet of fishing vessels start for the fishing banks in the polar sea and the great banks of Newfoundland, and the blessing of the fleet takes place with the most elaborate solemnity, just before it departs.

Some two hundred fishing vessels, of fairly large size, leave the port and the other smaller towns on the Bay of Saint Brieuc upon this day, and the scene amid the snow-clad hills which surround the port, the flag decked vessels, the richly clad clergy, the altars erected on the quay, and the hundreds of peasant women in costume of the province, make up a sight worth traveling a long distance to see. Paimpol after this day sinks into lifelessness, and has nothing to offer to the tourist but a good inn where one may rest, and from which one may make excursions to many points of interest, by diligence or carriage as one prefers. The former is quaint, of course, but not as comfortable as a carriage, and the cost of the latter is small comparatively, while for the automobile the roads are generally all that can be desired.

About five miles northward and a mile or so off the coast, is the Ile Brehat, which is reached by a small sail boat, but only in fair weather. It is a spot of great picturesqueness, the Adamless Eden, as I have called it elsewhere, where no men are to be seen, only women of large stature, and considerable personal comeliness, who do all the work of the small farms and gardens, and seem to be very happy in their isolated state, the men being away with the fishing fleets on the Icelandic banks. The houses are small, the grass is green, and all about is the flashing blue sea. The costume of the women is very somber, of black and white, and is not as quaint as the isolated island would lead one to expect.

Here, in the little inn of the “Grey Parrot,” we enjoyed great content, due to the care of the hospitable hostess. One cannot praise too highly the wholesome food, or the cleanliness of the house. The air is as soft here as the Mediterranean, the sea as blue, and the sunlight as perfect. There may be days of storm and fog, but I had none of them on this perfect island. The artists who have visited the island from time to time, have painted each other’s portraits on tumblers which the hostess has arranged on shelves and displays to the infrequent visitor with great pride. We left it with great regret, and on returning to Paimpol for the night, the town seemed all the grayer and more somber by contrast with the gem-like little island we had just left.

Paimpol has a Grand Place with heavy, gray stone houses, surrounding it, from which dark streets branch here and there. In a deep, stone doorway, perchance, one will see the furtive, lounging figure of an ancient mariner, or a “Douanier” in uniform, walking slowly along a quay, his hands behind his back, alternatingly appearing and vanishing behind huge piles of rope and coiled chain, rusty anchors, windlasses, old upturned boats, and the thousand and one impediments of a marine port.

The sad looking gray stone houses bear signs such as “*Vente et achat des articles de la grande peche*,” and over all is the fragrant odor of pitch and rosin. This is where Pierre Loti wrote his romance “Pecheur d’Islande,” and the little port of Ploubannec, from which one reaches Brehat, is named in the book. The diligence leaves the corner just opposite the hotel, where hangs a very well painted sign of some running horses, done by a traveling artist of fine ability; a name is signed to it, but I could not make it out, nor could any one tell me by whom it was painted.

There is a most quaint and typical churchyard at Paimpol upon which we chanced quite by accident the morning after our arrival, and in a retired corner at this pathetic “God’s Acre,” among the vines and rose briar, is a full length figure of “L’Abbe Jean Vincent Moy,” for many years curé of the parish. The figure is carved in the dark green Kersauton stone used throughout this region, and is polished in places as if rubbed by loving hands. At its feet is a cup of Holy Water, kept filled by a picturesque and polite old peasant woman who spends all her time here caring lovingly for the tomb of her beloved curé, and incidentally collecting all the spare sous of the traveller, but she does it in such an agreeable manner that one submits willingly. Here under the fine elms in orderly rows sleep the ancient “habitants” of Paimpol, but on some of the black crosses hung with wire wreaths of immortelles one reads the pathetic legend: “To the memory of Jean Marie Louis, who was drowned at sea off the Grand Banks of Newfoundland; pray for him.” Alas! there are many such graves here in this quiet corner. Touching tributes of affectionate remembrance of those who went forth bravely, with priestly blessings, in the fishing fleet, never to return.

The old woman who stands beside us leaning on her stick, points out other graves on which we read, “Marie, Mathilde, Eugenie, Hortense G - , aged respectively eighty-four, eighty-eight, eighty-two, and eighty-nine” and tells us that she herself is much younger. She did not say how much, but she certainly looked to be at least ninety, and when I told her so, she smiled and really seemed to think I had complimented her.

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