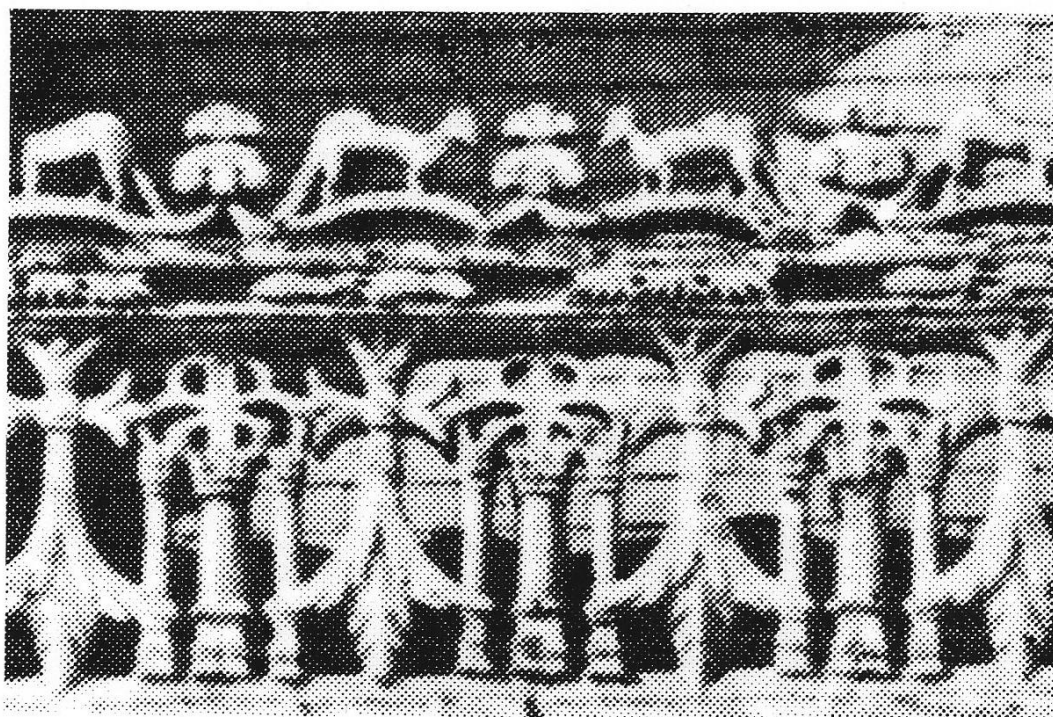


BRO NEVEZ

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

"The Hermine"



*Josselin's Castle
Detail from a stone carved gallery*

KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

FEBRUARY 86

NUMBER 18

BRO NEVEZ - Newsletter of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language

NEWSLETTER 17 - FEBRUARY 1986

General Editor:

Lois Kuter
143 Plymouth Road
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

Front Cover: Hervé Thomas

Breton Language Editor:

Reun ar C'halan
Department of French
Box 45
Wellesley College
Wellesley, MA 02181

Editor for Breton Language Learning Materials:

Lenora A. Timm
Women's Resources and Research
Center
University of California, Davis
10 Lower Freeborn Hall
Davis, CA 95616

Book Review Editor:

Amy Varin
34 Wall Street
Kingston, NY 12401

Legendary Brittany:

Gregory T. Stump
Department of English
University of Kentucky
Lexington, KY 40506

News of Breton, European and International Organizations and Events:

Lois Kuter
143 Plymouth Road
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

Celtic News Editor:

Anne Habermehl
3925 North Main
Marion, NY 14505

News of Non-Celtic Languages

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

Ar Gegin:

Nathalie Novik
P.O. Box 329
Skaneateles, NY 13152

The Newsletter of the U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language is published quarterly: February, May, August and November. Contributions, letters to the editors, and ideas are welcome for all readers. See the back page for subscription and advertising information.

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

EDITOR'S NOTE - Lois Kuter

I will begin this first issue for 1986 with a few New Year's wishes I have received from Brittany which are extended to all who have worked to make Bro Nevez successful.

Bernard Le Nail, Director of Skol Uhel ar Vro/Cultural Institute of Brittany:

"Je vous adresse...mes voeux les meilleurs pour 1986 et je profite de cette lettre pour vous féliciter et vous remercier pour le travail remarquable que vous faites en faveur de la Bretagne et de la langue bretonne aux Etats-Unis. C'est un précieux encouragement pour tous ceux qui luttent pour la langue et la culture bretonnes... Bloavezh mat, berzh-mat, yec'hed ha levenez, hag ar Baradoz e fin ho puhez!"

Alan Al Louarn, Brudan ha Skignan/Centre Rennais d'Informations Bretonnes

"Peoc'h, yec'hed ha levenez a-hed ar Bloavezh nevez da holl dud 'Bro Nevez'."

Yann-Vanch Kemener (Jean-Francois Quémener), singer

"Un bonjour à toute l'équipe de Bro Nevez--une bonne année 1986, et qu'elle nous apporte plein de bonnes choses... Bloavezh mat d'an holl."

The Breton magazine Dalc'homp Sonj and the U.S. ICDBL

Bro Nevez readers will be interested to know that the Breton quarterly magazine Dalc'homp Sonj included an article about the U.S. ICDBL in their Fall 1985 issue (no. 13), pp. 26-29. This was based on the presentation of the U.S. ICDBL distributed to members in July 1985. Jakez Gaucher translated the information in this report into French and transformed the material into an interview with me. My answers are sometimes unnaturally long, but this article will effectively present our work and the reasons Americans support Bretons in their work to keep the Breton language healthy.

Anyone who would like a copy of this article (in French) is invited to write to me for a copy. Dalc'homp Sonj has published a very interesting series of articles on Breton emigration and organizations outside of Brittany working for the Breton language and culture. In Number 12 (Summer 1985), Reun ar C'halan, one of our Board of Director members and editor for our Breton language column, was featured in an article. Those who are interested in Breton history--ancient and contemporary--are encouraged to subscribe to Dalc'homp Sonj. This magazine is a rich source of interesting and well-researched material. Subscription is 70 francs for one year (4 issues). Address: Dalc'homp Sonj, 36 rue Emile Zola, 56100 Lorient, Brittany, France.

* * * * *

THE DIWAN COLLOQUIUM ON BILINGUALISM - October 31 - November 3, 1985

L. Kuter

A four-day conference held in Landerneau, Brittany, was organized by Diwan with the support of the Centre Mondial d'Information sur l'Education Bilingue (World Center for Information on Bilingual Education) and Europe-Education. Although this type of conference has been held often in Europe, this was the first of its kind in Brittany and in France. A variety of private and public institutions offered financial assistance as well: the Commission of the European Communities, the French Ministry of Culture, the National Ministry of Education, the Regional Council of Brittany, several General Councils, the community of Landerneau, the bank Credit Mutuel de Bretagne, and the Cultural Institute of Brittany. Numerous educational specialists from Europe participated in the conference which included some 600 people.

A high quality of presentations and discussions marked the four days of the conference, with contributions from diverse points of view (history, law, psychiatry, pedagogy)--all based on experience and research.

As noted in a newspaper report of this event ("Après le colloque européen de Diwan", La Bretagne à Paris, 22 novembre 1985), the response at the end of the four days was unanimous: bilingualism and plurilingualism based on "regional" languages are an opportunity for and an investment in the future of Europe. For Bretons the colloquium has proven that the Breton language and its teaching in Brittany are topics of interest to Europeans--a recognition that no longer makes it possible for the marginalization of Breton. Experiences exchanged during the conferences affirmed:

- the richness and vitality of what are called regional languages; the vigor of their grass-roots development as soon as they are officially given "juridical space";
- the cultural and economic potential they represent in a changing Europe;
- the pedagogical and psychological advantages of an early bi- or plurilingual education--particularly in certain situations where standard schooling has failed;
- the deficiencies and inertia encouraged by particularly Jacobin reflexes of French public services.

("Après le colloque..." La Bret. à Paris,
22 nov. 1985)

The program of the four-day colloquium clearly presents the scope of this important gathering of teachers and scholars.

Diwan Colloquium Program:

October 31: Experiences of Bilingualism in Several European Minorities.

- Welcome - André Lavanant, President of Diwan.
- Opening speech - Jean-Jacques Kerouredan, Pres. of Europe-Education and Adjunct Mayor of the Breton city of Fougères.
- The Situation in Brittany - Per Denez, Professor of Celtic Studies at the Université de Haute-Bretagne, Rennes.
Discussion led by Christian Lochon, Professor of Literature, and member of the Board of the Centre Mondial d'Information pour l'Education Bilingue (CMIEB).
- The Situation in South Catalonia - Alna Moll, Director of linguistic policy for the Generalidad de Catalunya.
Discussion led by Jean Pinvidic, journalist for Ouest France.
- The Situation in Wales - Gerald Morgan, Director of the secondary school Ysgol gyfun Penweddig, Aberystwyth.
Discussion led by Roperzh Omnes, Mayor of the Breton town of Plomelin and member of the Association of Breton-Speaking Mayors and Elected Officials.
- Reception and fest noz to close the day.

November 1:

- Opening speech by Robert Mallet, Honorary Principal of the Académie of Paris and member of the Board of the CMIEB.
- Pathology of a Bilingualism Badly Lived - Professor Kress, Head of the Psychiatry Service, Regional University Hospital Center, Brest.
- Bilingualism and Development - Anna Vivet, EFPE Paris II, Psycho-clinician, Psychotherapist; and Elizabeth Bauthier-Castaing, Psycholinguist.
- The Myth of English - Gilbert Dalgalian, Vice President of CMIEB, Pedagogical Director of the Alliance Française.
- Work Groups:
 - . What Bilingualism for the Minorities of Europe - led by Joan Dorandeau, President of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages.
 - . Interest of Early Bilingualism in the Child's Home - led by Charlotte Borga, Vice President of CIEB.
 - . Minority Language/Majority Language--What Cohabitation? - led by Jean-Jacques Hassold, Diwan.

Diwan Colloquium Program - continued

November 2: Pedagogy, Objectives and Methods Put into Place for a Real Bilingualism.

- Opening speech by André Martinet, Professor Emeritus at the Sorbonne, Director of the Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, President of CMIEB.
- Objectives and Methods in the International Channels of the Académie du Nord-Pas-de-Calais - Klauss Gerth, Head of the Mission du Recteur, Académie de Lille, and Secretary Adjunct of Europe-Education.
- Objectives and Methods Put into Place by the National Education (of France) in "Bilingual" Public Schools in Regions with Minority Languages - Mr. Cormerais, Inspector of the Académie Adjoint, Ille-et-Vilaine, Brittany.

Discussion led by J.-Y. le Bras, Diwan.

- Objectives and Methods in the Basque Land in Seaska Schools - Maïalen Garat, Seaska teacher.
- Objectives and Methods in Brittany in Diwan Schools - Yann Guillamot and Anne-Marie Le Roux - Diwan teachers.

Discussion led by Ronan Tremel, Breton Committee of the European Bureau for Lesser Used Languages.

- Work Groups:
 - . Discovery Through the Schools - led by Lukian Kergoat, Breton teacher.
 - . Family/School Relations - led by Louis Bocquenot, Psychologist.
 - . Language Contacts in School--When is a Child Bilingual? - led by Robert Powell, University of Swansea.
 - . Language and Cultural Creation in Schools - led by Goulc'hen Kervella, Director of the Breton theater troupe Strollad Ar Vro Bagan.

November 3: Bilingualism in Brittany--Institutional Necessities.

- Opening speech by Recteur Le Moal.
- Solutions on the Family Level - Mikael Madeg, Breton Professor, Breton language author.
- Solutions in Educational Planning - Anton Kaifer, member of the Basque government, Director for bilingual planning in the Department of Education.
- Solutions in Public Life - G. Dolchi, Vice President of the Regional Council of the Vallée d'Aoste.

(continued next page)

Diwan Colloquium Program - continued

November 3 - continued

- Work Groups:

- . Role of the Family - led by Annie Dupart, CNRS Researcher.
- . Role of the School - led by P. Bothorel, Psychologist.
- . Role of Legislators - led by Remi Rouquette, Lawyer.
- . Role of Public Institutions - led by Fanch Peru, Mayor of Berhet, Vice President of the Association of Breton-Speaking Mayors and Elected Officials.

- General Report by Bernard Le Nail, Director of the Cultural Institute of Brittany.

- Closing Remarks by André Lavanant, President of Diwan.

I have received a 17-page summary report of the Diwan colloquium on Bilingualism (in French) which I would be happy to share with any readers interested in some of the conclusions drawn from this gathering of European experts. If you would like a copy of this document, please send \$2 to cover duplication and postage expenses.

Note that a collection of conference papers and discussions will be published by the Cultural Institute of Brittany. Watch for a note on this in future issues of Bro Nevez.

* * * * *

THE DIWAN SCHOOLS - THE QUESTION OF SURVIVAL

Lois Kuter

Diwan's colloquium on bilingualism has shown that, from personal experience and scholarly research, Europeans feel that education in "regional" languages fully prepares children for participation in a changing international society. Nevertheless, bilingual schools--and Diwan schools in particular--face a difficult future.

Since the November issue of Bro Nevez I have been following events in Brittany through newspaper and magazine articles and through correspondence with friends in Brittany. Despite some severe financial problems, the Diwan Breton language schools continue to grow and have wide support in Brittany as institutions which offer children the option of a strong bilingual education. While four bilingual classes now operate in public schools in Rennes, Pontivy, Lannion, and Saint-Rivoal, the Diwan schools are unique in offering education through the Breton language with gradual introduction of French--a teaching policy which gives children a balanced bilingualism given the weight of French in public life and media in Brittany.

Diwan Schools - 2

The following summaries of newspaper articles and communications dating from late October to early January serve to chronicle recent efforts on the part of Diwan to move from the fringes to the main stream of the French educational system.

- J. Charles Perazzi. "Demain l'intégration?--Diwan à un tournant de son histoire" (Tomorrow integration?--Diwan at a turn in its history), La Bretagne à Paris, 25 octobre 1985.

Summary: Starting with families of Lampaul-Ploudalmezeau in 1977 who wanted to educate their children in Breton, Diwan has grown to include 25 classes (16 preschool and 9 primary school). André Lavanant, the current president of Diwan, notes that there could have been ten more classes this year if financial and space problems had not prevented them. Lavanant also notes that evaluations of the two years Diwan has worked with the French National Education under an agreement have been very good. Children have achieved a good level within the Diwan schools which operate exclusively in Breton at the preschool level, progressively introducing French until nine hours per week are used at the end of the primary level. Diwan hopes that discussions with the Ministry of Education will bring integration of the Diwan schools into the French educational system. Work continues to bring this about, and Diwan affirms its commitment to its bilingual method of teaching.

- Joël Crusson. "L'intégration--Diwan repousse les propositions du Ministère" (Integration--Diwan rejects the Ministry's proposals), La Bretagne à Paris, 22 novembre 1985.

Summary: Since its beginning eight years ago Diwan has called for integration into the French school system. Yet, its leaders have now rejected the Ministry's proposals heading in this direction--despite financial problems which threaten Diwan's future. Basque language schools (Seaska) have just accepted the Minister of National Education's proposals; Occitan schools (from Bordeaux to Montpellier, passing by Toulouse) and Catalan schools (near Perpignan) are getting ready to take the step. With its 250 families and 359 students, Diwan risks finding itself alone to face the Ministry--without a cent. And worse, with debts and bankruptcy facing it.

Diwan has found the Ministry's proposals inadequate, arguing that Diwan schools have filled a need not filled by the public school system, and that its teaching methods bring good results. Financially, the government proposals have included only partial support for teachers. Pedagogically, the proposals impose the introduction of French in the preschools (currently introduced by Diwan at the primary level). The imposed changes in pedagogical policy are seen by Diwan as purely political in motive, since the Diwan system has already proven its effectiveness.

Diwan Schools - 3

Summary - continued.

Diwan has not rejected integration in rejecting the latest proposals. The association will try to get new meetings in Paris to modify the terms of the proposal. Meanwhile, the Ministry insists that it has already said all it needs to say. Several million francs for the government is nothing--for Diwan it is the future.

A Statement from the Support Committee for Diwan Hunger Strikers.

On December 8, 1985, two Diwan parents--Tangi Louarn and Yann Erwan Haspot--began a hunger strike in Quimper to bring attention to the threatened existence of the Diwan schools--an existence that should be guaranteed under international human rights treaties France has signed, and under some of the international conventions France has not yet signed.

The statement from the support committee for the hunger strikers underlines the fact that the government's refusal to integrate Diwan as a Breton language educational system seems to have other than pedagogical motives. The following is a summary of some of the points made by the support committee.

Summary: The 1983 convention signed by Diwan with the Ministry of Education establishing these schools as "experimental" schools stated (in Article 7):

'The respective proportion of teaching in French and in the regional language will be defined in a manner which gives a sufficient instruction in both languages, so that students enter college (junior high level) with equivalent capabilities to those of students in other elementary schools.'

'They (the language proportions) can be modified according to the age of students and their level in one or the other language. The results of the pedagogy used will be subject to an evaluation by the competent inspection teams. These (results) will be determinant for the renewal of the present convention.'

A commission made up of Diwan and National Education personnel has evaluated the level of Diwan children over the past two years without finding any criticism in the teaching methods Diwan has used since its creation in 1977. And, Diwan has conformed in all respects with the teaching program used in the French educational system. Its only difference is in its use of bilingualism. Since evaluations have not shown this aspect of Diwan teaching to negatively affect students, the motives for not accepting the Diwan system as it stands must be other than pedagogical.

The hunger strikers ask that the government accept Diwan's system of teaching as it has proven to work since 1977.

- G. Collas. "Ecoles Diwan--le grand rassemblement" (Diwan schools--the big gathering), La Bretagne à Paris, 27 décembre 1985.

Summary: The hunger strike was brought to an end before Christmas with the French government's agreement to add an additional clause to the Law of Finances for 1986 which met with Diwan's satisfaction.

A rally on December 21 lost some of its impact since the hunger strike had ended by then, but 250 of Diwan's most ardent supporters still gathered to show their commitment. Despite what seems like a victory for Diwan, government authority attitudes remain a problem, as pointed out in comments by Mr. Yves Bonnet, the French Commissioner of the Republic (the new title for what used to be called the Regional Prefect). Mr. Bonnet stated that "it is more useful to learn computer language than Breton." In response to this comment, Diwan invited Mr. Bonnet to visit the Diwan school in Quimper where he can "confirm that it is totally possible to teach in Breton and in French, and to initiate students in computer use through the Breton language." Those offering this invitation also pointed out that the French language is threatened if it comes down to making choices totally on the basis of "utilitarian" considerations.

"Conseil constitutionnel--l'intégration des écoles Diwan remise en question" (Constitutional Council--the integration of Diwan schools put into question), La Bretagne à Paris, 3 janvier 1986.

This brief article of early January reports that the Law of Finances for 1986 was declared constitutional by the reviewing Council, except for the added clauses concerning the integration of teachers of regional language schools (like Diwan) into the National Educational system. The argument for turning these additions down was that they did not belong in the Finance Law.

Comments:

One has to wonder if this latest complication is just a matter of finding the right paperwork, or symptomatic of more serious problems which will continue to block Diwan's integration--and indeed, block Diwan's future.

Since this January newspaper article I have received no word on the status of the Diwan schools. I can only assume that things remain in limbo for the moment. More news will follow in future issues of Bro Nevez.

Readers interested in copies of any of the referenced articles are welcome to contact me.

* * * * *

AN INTRODUCTION TO CHILDREN'S LITERATURE IN THE BRETON LANGUAGE

Lois Kuter

Introduction

Breton language literature is alive and well today in Brittany with a good dozen publishing houses and 50 to 60 new titles each year, despite the fact that there are only an estimated 8-10,000 potential readers.* Most older Breton speakers have never been given the opportunity to learn to read and write their native language, so authors have tended to out-number readers. But, in recent years the market for Breton language literature has been growing--especially for books for children and young people.

While children's literature is not a new genre for Breton language writing, it is an area marked by only sporadic publication. Today things are changing, thanks in particular to one new publishing venture for children's books in the Breton language: An Here.

The following presentation of Breton language children's literature of the past ten to fifteen years will begin with an article by Bernard Le Nail on the work of An Here. Bernard Le Nail is the Director of Skol Uhel ar Vro (the Cultural Institute of Brittany). Following this article, I will briefly present some other publishers and recent publications. While this is not meant to be an exhaustive catalog of children's literature, I hope this introduction will give readers an idea of this very important and growing area of Breton language publication.

EDITIONS "AN HERE" OF QUIMPER - Bernard Le Nail

(from: *Actualité du Livre en Bretagne*, novembre 1985; reprinted in translation by Lois Kuter with the kind permission of the author).

It was in April 1983 that this publishing house--whose name means "the sowings"--saw the light of day in Quimper. An Here was created

* This information has been drawn from a review of Breton language literature by Bernard Le Nail, "La création littéraire et l'édition en langue bretonne aujourd'hui," in Bibliothèques Publiques et Langues Régionales (Ministère de la Culture, Direction du Livre et de la Lecture, 1985). This booklet presents the current situation of publishing not only for Breton, but also for Basque, Alsatian, Catalan, Corsican, Flemish and Occitan. Along with brief essays, the 55-page booklet includes addresses and quick notes on publishers and libraries for these "regional" languages. The booklet is available free upon request from: Ministère de la Culture, Direction du Livre et de la Lecture, 37 Avenue de l'Opéra, 75001 Paris. These French government agencies can be congratulated for this useful and very interesting publication.

An Here - continued

in the form of a 1901 Association* by parents and teachers of the Diwan Breton language preschools and primary schools. An Here is directed by Martial Menard who was himself a Diwan teacher.

An Here has specialized in the edition of Breton language books and pedagogical materials for children. It would be pointless to teach children a language in which there would be no reading materials suitable for their age--largely the case until now. The different Breton language publishers certainly have a few books for children in their catalogs, but these are often unattractive and of an old-fashioned conception. Thus, it has been practically necessary to create everything from scratch. It has been necessary to innovate and to move quickly, since the Diwan schools are already teaching close to 400 children and bilingual classes have appeared in several cities of Brittany.

Within the space of two and a half years, An Here has already published some 30 titles, with others in preparation and many others being planned. Taking account also of other publishers' initiatives --notably the Skol an Fmsav series, the adventures of Lom--we are starting to see today a good selection of pleasant and modern Breton language books for children, which equal works available in English [in France].

The number of titles remains, however, too restricted, and one has been hard pressed for books for very young children. And, children grow quickly, so there is still a wide gap to fill in the domain of books for pre-adolescents and adolescents--ages when one reads a lot. There are several hundred titles that we need to produce in the next five to ten years. A true challenge has been presented, and it can only be met with the active help of public authorities.

The first title published by An Here appeared in May 1983: Ki Bihan ar Feunteun (The Little Dog of the Fountain). This modest booklet for 6-7 year olds used a lovely poem by Anjela Duval with illustrations by Sylvie Donnart. Of 1,000 copies printed, over 800 have already been sold.

A month later Lommig appeared--a true book printed in 2,000 copies. This was an updated reedition of a work which appeared in 1942 with a text by Youenn Drezen and illustrations by Xavier Haas.

An Here became involved in June 1983 in the first co-editing venture, a type of activity it has done frequently since. 1,000 copies of Ur Gazhez Vihan Koant (A Pretty Little Cat) were printed in Breton. At the same time, this work by Mme Denise Francès appeared in French under the title Une jolie petite chatte, by Editions Affolettes. This work for 7-8 year olds has been sold out in Breton.

* The equivalent of a non-profit organization.

An Here - continued

Following contacts made at the Salon du Livre in Paris, An Here next co-edited with Editions Berger-Levrault of Paris a beautiful album in color for pre-adolescents: Le Bateau de Jacques Cartier, in Breton, Lestr Jakez Karter. 1,500 copies of the work in Breton were printed, and Breton language publications of other works from this collection are planned for 1986 and 1987.

At the same time, An Here became involved in a much more ambitious and risky project in editing an elementary dictionary for 4-10 year olds--entirely conceived and printed in the Breton language: Geriadur Kentan Efflam ha Riwanon (The First Dictionary of Efflam and Riwanon). The beautiful illustrations of Fanchon Bourges were reproduced in color, and to avoid too high a price for each book, 4,000 copies were printed--a truly large quantity for books in Breton. Thanks to joint help from the Cultural Institute of Brittany and the Direction du Livre et de la Lecture, the sale price of the book could be kept down to 60 francs, not excessive for a 114-page book with 275 color illustrations. 2,000 copies were sold within one year--a beautiful performance--but the sales still do not cover the expenses committed.

In September 1984, An Here published all at once seven albums of the Adventures of Spot [by Eric Hill], with an eighth just off the press. These concern the adventures of a little dog, and are very popular among 3-6 year olds all over the world, judging from the fact that they have already been translated into 43 different languages. 1,000 copies of each of these albums has been printed in the Far East. The London editor of Spot, Ventura Publishing Ltd., is preparing a series of cartoons which should be seen on television in several different countries in 1987.

Next, An Here published 1,000 copies of a small booklet: Ti ar C'hi (The Dog's House) with the text of a traditional Breton song and illustrations by Pascale Chevillard.

At the end of 1984, An Here published an original Breton language creation, Choupig Morzadeg--the name of the little Breton schoolboy who has marvelous adventures in his dreams. This superb album was conceived and realized by a talented Breton artist, Daniel Kerjean, an art teacher in Pontivy. 3,000 copies have been printed, 1,000 of which have been sold. Contacts have been made with several foreign editors to sell publication rights for this beautiful book in other languages.

Just before summer, An Here published a work--Beaj Vras Eog--which appeared at the same time in French (Le grand voyage d'Eog le saumon) by Editions Eaux et Rivières de Bretagne, with help from the French Ministry of the Environment.

Finally, after many trips back and forth to Wales, An Here has finished a series of 13 little illustrated booklets entitled Daou ha daou (Two by Two), adapted from Welsh and intended to help children learn to read.

An Here - continued

Martial Menard, the Director of An Here, participated in the Salon du Livre of Paris in 1984 and 1985, the Book Fair of London in April 1985, and the Frankfurt Fair in October 1985, and he has multiplied his contacts with editors of children's books in different countries. He also receives more and more interesting manuscripts and high quality illustrations which show that numerous talented creators are found in Brittany. There is no lack of projects and the needs are immense, but the market for children's books in Breton is evidently small. The pursuit and development of these activities are not possible except with the major financial support of public authorities, and the continued contribution of an enormous amount of volunteer work. The appearance of An Here constitutes one of the most original and interesting phenomena of these past years in the domain of publishing in Brittany.

Bernard Le Nail
November 1985
(translation by Lois Kuter)

An Here has also published a monthly magazine for children called Cholori ("Hubbub"). This includes 16 pages for children 5-10 years old. Begun in 1983, by 1984 there were 350 subscribers with hopes for a growing circulation to fund more pages and more use of color in the magazine. This seems to replace a monthly children's magazine in Breton that appeared in the 1970's: Wanig ha Wenig.

For further information on the work of An Here, please note the following address:

Editions An Here
16 rue Jules-Henriot - Kerdrézec
29000 Quimper
Brittany, France

OTHER PUBLISHERS OF CHILDREN'S BOOKS IN THE BRETON LANGUAGE

Diwan

Before the initiation of An Here, Diwan collaborated with Bayard Press in the translation of a book from "Les belles histoires de Pomme d'Api" in 1980. This book, Olf, Nita hag Avel ar C'hreisteiz has been very popular.

Skol an Emsav

Better known for their work to teach Breton and to get more public recognition and use of the Breton language, this organization has been very active in the 1970s and 1980s with the series "Lom". Published originally in Catalan by Editions Timun Mas in Barcelona, the books about the little boy named Lom have also been translated into Basque and Spanish. Nine of these books for 5-10 year olds have appeared so far:

Children's Books - continued

Skol an Emsav - continued

Lom hag e loened (Lom and animals)
Lom o tebrin (Lom eating)
Lom dindan ar glav (Lom in the rain)
Lom o c'hoari (Lom playing)

Little booklets (15 francs each) focusing on a particular activity or subject.

Lom war ar maez (Lom in the country)
Lom zo klanv (Lom is sick)
Lom war vor (Lom at sea)
Lom er foar (Lom at the fair)
Lom er c'harr-nij (Lom in an airplane)

Larger books (40 francs each) including a glossary of words at the back. Like the above, each is beautifully illustrated.

Skol an Emsav has also produced two reading/coloring books:

Nolig an Olifant - translated from Welsh, about a little elephant who wants to learn to dance.

An Aotrou Nij - about a man who travels only in a hot air balloon.

Address: Skol an Emsav, 8 rue Hoche, 35000 Rennes, Brittany

Ebbe Bierbaum

Ebbe Bierbaum is not a publishing house but an individual who had the good idea of publishing a book simultaneously in Breton, French, and English: Ar Peskatour hag ar vorganezig / Le Pêcheur et la sirène / The Fisherman and the Little Mermaid. Originally written in the author's native language, German, 2,000 copies of this beautifully illustrated book were printed in Breton, 3,000 in English and 9,000 in French, by Editions G. P. in 1979. Adaptations of the three texts were done by Ronan ar Bras, Yves Lainé (both Bretons), and Deirdre Mackeown. Ebbe Bierbaum has been living on the Breton island of Batz and to mark her attachment to Brittany and support for the Breton language, the author not only insisted on an equal place for Breton in publishing this book, but also gave her author's rights to Diwan.

Ar Helenner/Brud Nevez

Three books have been published recently:

An Daou Dort - a folk tale with many versions well known in Brittany and elsewhere about two humpbacks. The first humpback, hearing fairies singing the names of the days of the week, improves their song and is rewarded by having his hump removed.

Children's Books - continued

Ar Helenner/Brud Nevez - continued

A second humpback hopes for the same reward, but his contribution to the song displeases the fairies so much they give him a second hump. Children of the preschool of Gouesnou collaborated on this publication with their drawings. Charles Le Gall has adapted the Breton text.

An Nozvez ken hir - inspired by a short story by Jean Markale, this is also the product of preschool children.

Ar Barizianez vihan - a short piece for marionnettes - also the work of a preschool.

Address: Brud Nevez, 6 rue Beaumarchais, 29200 Brest, Brittany

Al Liamm

Al Liamm is one of the oldest and most prolific of the Breton language publishers today. Among its books is a series for children (Levrioù ar Vugale) which includes Per ar C'honikl, Ar Roue Meudig hag e vab, Ar c'hazig penn-skav, Istor ar ponsin melen and An nadozig vurzhdus. In 1978 several translations of well known stories also appeared in the catalog: Kroc'hen Azen (Peau d'Ane, by Perrault), An Houadig divalay (The Ugly Duckling, by Hans Christian Andersen) and Rouanez an Erc'h (The Snow Queen, also by Andersen).

In 1985 Al Liamm reprinted a 1961 work for children by Roparz Hemon: An tri boulomig Kalon Aour. While Hemon is best known for his linguistic studies and dictionaries, he included among his novels, poems and drama, some works for children. This reedition is a story about three toys who run off from the boy who abuses them. After many adventures they return home when they learn that their old tormenter is very sick and in need of them.

Address: Al Liamm, 2 venelle Poulbriquen, 29200 Brest, Brittany

Preder

Also a publisher better known for materials other than children's books, Preder has left its mark with a translation of The Little Prince--Ar prins bihan--by Saint-Exupery. Translated into Breton by Pierrette Kermoal, a Professor of French Literature in Rennes, this has been one of Preder's best-sellers with over 2,000 copies sold by 1979.

Address: Preder, Penn Menez, Plomelin, 29000 Quimper, Brittany

Children's Books - continued

Comic strips in Breton

"Bandes dessinées," or "bannou treset" in Breton, the comic strip is a genre which has been quite effective in attracting young people to Breton. Preder has been active in this area with a translation of two Asterix books into Breton: Asteriks e Breizh and Emgann ar Pennou. The 10,000 copies printed in 1976 of the first books have sold out.

Skol an Emsav has also published a few albums of comic strips. The series set in the American West featuring "Lucky Luke" and the Dalton Brothers has done quite well.

Other popular comic strips in Breton include An Ankou (1978), an album featuring the adventures of Spirou and Fantasio, by the Rennes artist Jean-Claude Fournier. Two albums from the Tintin series by Editions Casterman have also been published in Breton: Tintin e Milou and Ar 7 Boulenn Strink.

While several publishers have included cartoon albums in their catalogs, one publisher has specialized in this form: Keit 'vimp beo, of Briec-de-l'Odet, under the direction of Yann-Fanch Jacq has published some 30 albums. Most of these are for young people and adults, but a series of four is directed towards younger children. Yakari, the hero of this series, is a young Indian boy.

Address: Keit 'vimp beo, Foyer des Jeunes, 29112 Briec, Brittany

Skol

While there is a growing number of books for young children, it is in the age range of 12-15 that books in Breton have been particularly scarce. Comic strips have been appealing media for this age, but a few books have also appeared. The organization Skol has published a series of short books in Breton including translations of classics which offer good reading for young people. Several adventure novels by Paul Féval have been translated into Breton along with a work by Charles Dickens. Two original works (among 40 published since the founding of Skol in 1958) are particularly suitable for young people:

Pebezh fest-noz - by Garmenig Ihuellou

An adventure story for and about children 12-15 years old.

Re Bennavel/Ur prenestr a oa digor - Roparz Hemon

A story taking place in the future; and a police story.

Address: Skol, 16 rue Hector Berlioz, 22000 St. Brieuc, Brittany

Skol Vreizh

Skol Vreizh is a pedagogical branch of the organization Ar Falz. It has been most active in producing materials for students and teachers at the secondary school level. These are primarily works in French

Children's Books - continued

Skol Vreizh - continued

about Breton history and culture. An excellent series on Breton history is perhaps the best known of Skol Vreizh publications. This organization has also produced a considerable amount of bilingual and Breton language materials for younger children. The magazine Skol Vreizh is a mine of information for teachers to introduce children to Brittany through the Breton language--outstanding are various lexical studies of animals and plants, and a presentation of games in Breton. Children are also encouraged to creatively use Breton in contests sponsored by Skol Vreizh where they submit original stories and poems in the Breton language.

While the material Skol Vreizh produces is "pedagogical" in the sense that it is most often used in teaching Breton, this organization has produced some materials that are for children's use outside the classroom. Of note is a series of 45 rpm records of short songs and sayings in Breton, accompanied by a booklet: Kanaouennoù ha rimadelloù. Collaborating on these records are several of the most talented musicians of Brittany. Certainly audio-visual material in Breton for children is a need as great as written materials.

Address: Skol Vreizh, 6 rue Longue, 29210 Morlaix, Brittany

* * * * *

ACROSS BRETON LITERATURE: THREE WOMEN

Part Two: Vefa de Bellaing

Yann Bouëssel du Bourg

(translated by: Reun ar C'halan)

Geneviève Charbonnier de Sireuil was born September 12, 1909, in Carhaix. She was three when her parents moved to Quimper in 1912. It was there that she spent her childhood years and studied at Notre-Dame d'Espérance.

She was, she says, a "poor student", not hard-working, but she was attracted to music. At the age of sixteen, in 1926, she started to study the violon at the Conservatoire of Nantes, but she stayed only one year, because of her father's sudden death, one year later. Her brother, a naval officer, was far away, and her sister was married.

Her mother chose to call her back near her, in Quimper, and in 1929 she married her cousin Jacques de Bellaing with whom she had two children, Hoela and Bruno-Tremeur.

Vefa de Bellaing - continued

It was her father, an ardent Breton patriot, who taught her to love Brittany and her language.

He did not know Breton, and he had tried to learn it, but in those days it was not easy.

She followed in his footsteps, and she loved her country, always on the breach, always in the first line in the midst of those soldiers who are never relieved. It will not be possible to write the history of the Breton cultural movement without seeing her name popping up everywhere.

It was around the years 1932-1933 that she learned Breton with "Skol Ober" and Marc'harid Gourlaouen, whom she would replace for a while at the head of this organization. At the end of World War II, together with Xavier de Langlais and Ronan Huon, she created the "Kampoù Etrekeltiek ar Vrezhonegerien" (Interceltic Camps of Breton Speakers), which were a mixture of summer schools and meeting places, and which exerted such a powerful influence. She is also a member of the Jury for the Xavier de Langlais Prize in Breton literature. Under her married name, V. de Bellaing, she has published, in Breton, in Al Liamm, articles and studies, mostly on music and literature ("Paol Ladmirault", "Paol Le Flemm", "Lennegezh Bro-Japan", "Ar beder flac'h roet dezho ar priz Nobel a lennegezh"), short stories, translations, memoirs, and, under the pen name Soaz Kervae (between 1966 and 1970), six poems which lead us on tiptoe to the threshold of a soul whose mystery had remained a secret, even for those who had known her many years. Self-sacrifice and courage, fiery tenderness, love of life, of this beauty of the world over which we are meant to keep watch. Did not a single sonnet ensure the fame of the Chevalier d'Arvers?

Some lines of these six poems, simple and unaffected, without false ornamentation: "Distro" (Return), "Pedenn" (Prayer), "Memento", "ene dianav" (Secret Soul), "Joa d'an Anaon" (Joy to the Departed Souls), "Buhez kent" (Former Life), rank among the most beautiful, the most moving ever written in our language.

Under the pen name Herve Huiban, since June 1979, Vefa de Bellaing has been writing for Armor-Magazine, under the title "Tra pe dra" (This and that), a most eclectic Breton column--"Vakañsoù ha traou-achoù" (holidays and things), "Ur Bruderezh dibar" (Publicity without peer), "Ha gouest e oa ar merc'hed da votiñ?" (Were women able to vote?), "Chaseal ar frip" (Hunting for waste), etc....

In the same journal, she has also published, under her own names, a few biographies: "Claude Dervenn", "Paul Le Flem", "P. Ladmirault" ("Une messe en état de grace" (A mass in the state of grâce)).

"The list of my works is rather slim", the author writes with great modesty, "I have spent many years typing texts written by others ... and did not find the time to write for myself."

Vefa de Bellaing - continued

She has also reread, tirelessly, for many years, the texts of Al Liamm and of books published by Al Liamm, always ready to accept the tasks which no one else wanted to assume.

Let us hope that she will, in spite of it all, find the time to tie together the multicolored threads of her memories, and to pursue to the end a labor which she has undertaken, the writing of her memoirs which are also one of the richest pages in our history.

Yann Bouëssel du Bourg
(translation by Reun ar C'halan)

* * * * *

A DICTIONARY OF COMPOSERS OF BRITTANY AND THEIR WORKS

A Project of Vefa de Bellaing

Anyone who has ever had the fortune to meet Vefa de Bellaing will know of her great love for music. It was, in fact, a young musician, Kristen Nogues, who introduced me to this remarkable woman.

Vefa de Bellaing's work for Breton music is perhaps not as well known as her work for the Breton language, but it is just as passionate. Today she is hard at work on a project for Skol Uhel ar Vro, the Cultural Institute of Brittany--a dictionary of composers of Brittany and their works. This book, to be published in 1986, will present composers (of a style of music we call "classical" for lack of a better description) who were born in Brittany or who lived in Brittany --or who are strongly marked in their compositions by Brittany. Living composers as well as those from past centuries will be included. So far some 135 have been documented, and the search goes on for information, photos and scores.

Lois Kuter

AN EMSAV E ROMANTOU ROPARZ HEMON

Reun ar C'halan

Roparz Hémon (1900-1978) a zo bet, etre 1925 hag e varv, e 1978, pennden hol lennegezh. Gant ar gelaouenn Gwalarn, bet krouet gantañ e 1925, e lakaas anat e oa ar brezhoneg e-tailh da geñveriañ ouzh forzh pe yezh all war dachenn al lennegezh. Daoust ma oa outañ un emsaver taer, n'en deus graet implij eus an Emsav nemet e daou eus an dek romant bennak bet savet gantañ: An Aotrou Bimbochet e Breizh, embannet e Gwalarn e 1925 ha 1926, hag Ar Vugale fall, embannet e Gwalarn etre 1928 ha 1930. An Aotrou Bimbochet e Breizh a c'hoarvez en XXIIvet kantved. Breizh a zo dieub abaoe pell 'zo; ne vez komzet nemet brezhoneg, ha den ebet n'en deus dalc'het soñj e oa bet ar vro e kerz ar C'hallaoued. An Aotrou Bimbochet ez eus outañ ur c'helenner gall e Skol-Veur ar Sorbonne. Deuet eo da Vreizh a-berzh ar "Gevredigezh evit adc'hallekaat ar broioù kollet gant Bro-C'hall". Pakañ a ra ur gerseenn: ne gav roud ebet eus ar yezh pe ar sevenadur gall. Ar paour-kaezh aotrou a zistro da b-Paris, ken mezhek hag ur c'hi dilostet, ha mervel a ra gant ar glac'har. Fellout a rae da Roparz Hémon diskouez splann e c'hallfe ur Vreizh distag diouzh Bro-C'hall dont da vezañ ken diorroet ha ken pinvidik ha Danmark, Suis, pe Holland.

Ar Vugale fall, er c'hontrol, a daolenn kevredigezh vreizhat aralle-kaet ar bloavezhioù 20. Roparz Hémon a zispleg pegen breinet e oa pobl Vreizh gant menozioù estren, an ideologiezh vourc'hiz c'hall pe an ideologiezh varksat. Ne vefe saveteet ar vro nemet gant brogarourien prest da stourmañ evit krouiñ ur gevredigezh nevez. Diechu eo ar romant. Fentus ha flemmus war un dro ez eo bet kavet gant lennerien 'zo. N'eo ket bet adembannet, nag An Aotrou Bimbochet e Breizh kennebeut-all, siwazh! Plijadur am bije o gwelout war lañsedoù va armel-levrioù.

Summary:

Roparz Hémon (1900-1978) was, until his death, the dominant figure of Breton literature. Although he published some ten novels and three volumes of short stories, the Emsav is used as a theme only in two of his novels: An Aotrou Bimbochet e Breizh (Mr. Bimbochet in Brittany), and Ar Vugale fall (The naughty boys). An Aotrou Bimbochet e Breizh shows how prosperous Brittany will be in the twenty-second century, after two hundred years of independence, quite the opposite of the alienated Brittany of the 1920's depicted in Ar Vugale fall.

* * * * *

LEGENDARY BRITTANY

Gregory Stump

A very distinctive figure in Breton legend is the Ankou, a personification of death who usually appears in the form of a skeleton carrying a scythe. The following is one of the many legends about his dealings with mortals; it is freely translated from F. M. Luzel's Légendes chrétiennes de la Basse-Bretagne (Vol. I) (Paris: Maisonneuve, 1881, pp. 346-357).

(As regards the ending of this legend--well, Chaucer said it best in his introduction to the Miller's Tale:

... every gentil wight I preye,
For Goddes love, demeth nat that I seye
Of evel entent, but for I moot reherce
Hir tales alle, be they bettre or werse,
Of elles falsen some of my matere.)

The Ankou and his Partner

Once upon a time there was a poor man who was looking for a godfather for his newborn child. He encountered a stranger who asked him: "Where are you going, my poor man?"

"To find a godfather for my newborn child."

"Would you accept me as the godfather for your child?"

"Sure' why not?"

The stranger followed the poor man to his cottage. The godmother, a poor neighbor girl, had already been found, so that they immediately went into town, and the child was baptized and named Arthur. After the ceremony, the godfather returned to the cottage of the poor family, where he and the godmother took part in a very frugal meal, consisting only of buckwheat crêpes and a bit of smoked bacon, with cider to drink. Touched by the poverty and the good-heartedness of the family, he said to the father, just before leaving:

"You're so poor! If you wish, I will make you rich."

"That would be very nice, as long as it's all on the up and up."

"Of course. First, you must become a doctor; then follow my advice, and you will become rich in a very short time."

"A doctor! Good Lord! An ignoramus like me, who can neither read nor write?"

"It doesn't matter; just do what I tell you, and everything will be fine."

"Yes, but all this had better be aboveboard," said his wife, who was listening to this conversation from her bed.

"Yes, it's aboveboard; don't worry about that."

The Ankou - continued

"Well then, " said the father, "I'll do it."

"All right! Here is all you have to do. Let it be known through the entire region that you have become a doctor and that you have infallible cures for all kinds of sicknesses. When you go to see a patient, always check to see whether you can see me standing beside the bed, in the form of a skeleton, visible to you alone; for I am the Ankou."

"Jesus!" cried the man, signing himself.

"Take it easy; don't be afraid. If I am at the foot of the bed, that means that the patient should heal; if, on the other hand, I am at the head of the bed, the sickness is fatal, and the patient will not recover from it. You will always be able to say with certainty whether a patient will heal or not, and you will quickly earn a great reputation for yourself, and will earn a lot of money."

"All right; but what sorts of herbs should I give to my patients, since a doctor should always have some sort of remedy to prescribe."

"Well, give whatever you want; it doesn't make any difference. Pure water, if you want, drawn from the nearest spring, and whatever herbs you should happen to pick in the fields and the woods. "

And with this, the Ankou left.

Beginning the next day, the poor man let it be known throughout the region that he had become a doctor, and that he had cures for every kind of sickness.

A rich nobleman living nearby had been sick in bed for several years. All the doctors and surgeons and even the sorcerers and sorceresses of the region had been called one after another, and had tried their cures and their prayers on him. Nothing worked, and the more doctors he saw, the worse he became. Then the poor man was called.

"You have become a doctor?" the lady of the manor asked him.

"Yes, I am a doctor."

"And you promise to heal my husband?"

"I will heal him for sure, if you pay me well."

"How much are you asking?"

"A hundred crowns."

"You will have them; but if you fail to restore my husband to good health, you will be put to death."

"I accept; let me see the patient."

And the poor man was taken into the room where the nobleman lay dying. He saw a skeleton at the head of the bed, and understood what that meant. But because he was not a stupid man, it occurred to him to play a trick on his partner.

The Ankou - continued

He took his patient's pulse, placed his hand on his forehead, examined his urine, asked several questions, then said:

"You did well to call me, because in twenty-four hours, it would have been too late! But what asses all these doctors are, who claim to be so brilliant. They haven't understood His Grace's sickness at all, and yet it could hardly be clearer what his problem is. For starters, turn his bed around, so that the head is where his feet are now--and quickly, for we don't have much time."

Some servants were called, and they turned the bed around, so that the Ankou, who had first been at the head, now found himself at the foot of the bed. The improvising doctor then handed a flask of clear water to the woman, telling her to have her husband drink a spoonful every hour. Then he left, saying he would return the next morning.

The next day, the patient was feeling better; the day after, better still; and his condition improved so rapidly that after a week his convalescence was complete.

The poor man thus received the hundred crowns that had been promised him, plus a certificate affirming that he had healed the nobleman, while the other doctors hadn't understood his sickness at all.

He took the hundred crowns to his wife, and taking along his certificate, he went to another castle in the region, where another nobleman had been sick for a long time and was, like the first, the despair of his doctors. Talk of his first cure had already spread through the land, so having presented his certificate, he was quickly taken to the sick man. He asked for two hundred crowns to heal him, and they were immediately promised to him. Standing again at the head of the bed was his partner the Ankou, whose signs of disapproval and apparent anger did not prevent the doctor from doing as he had done before, turning the bed so as to situate the Ankou at its foot. In a week, this second nobleman was on his feet, perfectly healed, and our man received his two hundred crowns and another certificate similar to the first one.

By now he had made his reputation; people called him from all over, in towns and in the country, and in a very short time, he became rich.

One day, having learned that the king of France was sick, he set out on the road to Paris to visit him. As he was going through a forest, he came upon his partner the Ankou.

"Ah! There you are!" the Ankou said to him as he approached; "I am delighted to have run into you, for I've been wanting to reproach you."

"Why is that, partner? For my part, I must thank you! I intend always to follow your advice; you have made me the best doctor in the world."

"Yes, but you're cheating by always putting me at the foot of the bed; that was not part of the agreement."

The Ankou - continued

"What do you mean, cheating? Is it such a bad thing to save the lives of my fellow men, when it is you, after all, who taught me how to do it?"

"Of course it's a bad thing. Since I told you my secret, I've hardly gotten anybody from your part of the world; I'm especially short on rich people. You're really cheating me. So stop playing around with me. Is that the kind of recognition I should expect after what I have done for you?"

"Look, partner! You taught me your secret, which is excellent and I sincerely thank you for it; but as a doctor, I cannot let sick people die when I'm the only one that can possibly save them; I simply wouldn't have the heart to."

"Well! If that's how you feel, you'd better look after yourself, because your time will come too, perhaps sooner than you think."

"Ah! Well in that case, so much for you. You taught me your secret; it works great, so you can be sure that I'll use it when my own time comes."

"So it's like that! Well! You won't slip away from me!"

And with that, the Ankou stalked off angrily. The doctor continued on the road toward Paris, not the least bit disturbed by the threats he had heard, and certain that he would always have time to turn his own bed around if he ever saw his partner standing at its head.

Arriving in Paris, he went directly to the king's palace and asked the door-keeper:

"Is this the palace of the king of France?"

"Yes."

"Is he still sick?"

"Yes. On whose behalf have you come to ask about him?"

"On behalf of no one other than myself; let him know, please, that I wish to see him and speak with him."

"You? Do you think that just any old person off the street can be admitted to the king's presence?"

"You should know, Mr. Doorman, that I am not just any old person off the street, and that the king is lucky to have me calling on him."

"Who are you to talk like that?"

"I am a famous doctor from Lower Brittany, and I have come to heal the king."

"Yes, it's clear from your accent that you're from Lower Brittany. The most brilliant doctors in the kingdom can't figure out the cause of the king's illness, and a third-rate bone-setter from Lower Brittany comes along claiming to surpass them in ability! Go on, get out of here! Beat it!"

The Ankou - continued

"Mr. Doorman, you are very insolent. How 'bout I cut your ears off?"

"Go on, scram, I tell you, or I'll turn my dogs loose on you!"

The king's son happened to be passing by at this moment, and on hearing all this noise and seeing the door-keeper getting angry, he asked what the matter was.

"This man is trying to enter without my permission, and is insulting me."

"Why does he wish to enter, and who is he?"

"He says that he's from Lower Brittany and that he has a cure for the king."

The king's son, without another word, went up to our man and spoke:

"You say that you are a doctor and that you can heal the king, my father?"

"Yes, prince, I am a doctor, and I will heal the king, your father, if I am permitted to treat him."

"You know that the most knowledgeable doctors in the kingdom have already failed at that task?"

"I know; but let me see him and care for him, and I will answer for him with my life."

"You will have a barrel of money if you restore my father to good health; but likewise, if you fail to do so, you will be burned alive."

"I accept; take me to the king."

"Follow me."

And the prince, to the great astonishment of the irritated door-keeper, led him to the royal patient.

The old king was in terrible shape, more exhausted, perhaps, from the various remedies which he had been given than from the sickness itself; he was just barely breathing.

On entering the room, the doctor saw his partner the Ankou at the head of the bed.

"For starters, his bed is very poorly situated; turn it around so that it faces the other direction--quickly, quickly!" he ordered immediately.

This was done at once, to the obvious displeasure of his partner the Ankou. Then he took the old king's pulse, examined his urine, gave a flask of water from which he was to drink a spoonful every hour, and thereupon departed, saying he would return the next morning.

The next day, the king was doing much better and seemed to grow healthier and stronger by the hour; the day after, he was doing even better and at the end of a week was completely recovered.

Our man then headed homewards, loaded down with presents and accompanied by four mules loaded with money. He bought farms and woods, had a magnificent castle built for him, and finding himself pretty well off, decided to quit practicing medicine.

His partner the Ankou always kept a close watch on him, and more than once he saw him standing at the head of his bed. But he would always jump up and turn his bed around, and would then have nothing to worry about. In this way, he lived a very long time--several centuries, actually--so that people began to call him Old Man Death-Fooler.

While he was out strolling one day near the big road that passed through his fields, he noticed a wagon stuck in the mud and a man shouting and beating his horses with great strokes of his whip. He approached to help the man pull out his wagon, but realized with astonishment that the stranded driver was none other than his partner the Ankou.* The wagon was full of old clothes, tattered and threadbare.

"So when are you going to come see me at my place?" the Ankou asked him.

"I have plenty of time yet; you'll have to wait a while longer, partner. But say, what's with all this cargo? Have you gone into the junk business?"

"I've used all of these clothes here just chasing after you."

"Well then! By the time you've used as many again, perhaps I will think about coming to see you at your place."

One of the Ankou's skinny horses had a bad case of diarrhea and was dirtying the roads wherever he went.

"Hey, partner! Try to keep your horse from messing up my roads," the ex-doctor said mockingly.

"How am I supposed to do that? Do it yourself, if you can."

"Okay! Okay! You'll see!"

And our man picked up a rock from the road, plugged it into the back of the horse, and began pounding it into place with another rock. But the poor horse pushed with all his might, and the rock blew back out, hitting our man in the forehead with such force that he dropped stone dead right on the spot.

"Ah ha!" the Ankou laughed, "I knew that I would get the better of you, one way or another!"

Thus in the end, Death-Fooler became Death's fool.

* * * * *

* According to Breton legend, the Ankou travels around at night in a rickety horse-drawn wagon in which he piles up his victims. The appearance of this wagon is said to be a portent of death.

For more about the Ankou, see Nathalie Novik's article "The Supernatural in Brittany" in Bro Nevez 16 (August 1985).

BOOK REVIEWS AND NOTES

Amy Varin

Book reviews are welcome from all readers on all subjects. Reviews do not need to be of recently released publications. Send me a note --long or short--about books or articles that you have found particularly interesting, or particularly poor.

Albert DESHAYES. Noms de famille bretons. Montrouilles: Skol Vreizh (Nouvelle série, No. 1), 1985. 82 pp.

Reviewed by Lenora A. Timm, University of California, Davis

Sko Vreizh ('Breton School') is an established publisher (based in Morlaix) of academic and pedagogical materials relating to Breton language and culture, including three journals. The work under review here constitutes the first volume in a new series being introduced by the publisher with the express aim of enlarging its reading audience. Thus, it can be anticipated that subsequent volumes, like the present one, will be primarily non-technical introductions to various aspects of Breton social and cultural institutions and history, written, however, by qualified professionals. (The second volume scheduled to appear is on Breton song - see note which follows).

Breton Family Names contains three major sections: I--Generalities on Anthroponymy; II--Occupational Names; and III--The Application of Toponymy: The Example of Mur-de-Bretagne.

A few preliminary definitions for those not familiar with some of this rather daunting terminology: "anthroponymy" and "toponymy" are simply labels for the study of personal names, on the one hand, and place names, on the other. Together the two constitute the field of onomastics--i.e., the study of proper names in general. As the author points out, the two are "intimately linked and cannot be disassociated in studying them." Some personal names enter into composition with place names or have themselves become place names. Some place names have become family names" (p. 4).

In Part I Deshayes provides a brief historical sketch of the development of personal names in Brittany. We learn that until the 9th century (male) names of warriors or saints were unstable, relating more to feats of daring, glory, or piety than to place of origin (or other characteristics). After the 9th century (i.e., beginning with the decline in Breton territory and political power) such eulogistic names began to evolve into either first or last names among the aristocracy, following the Germanic model of the conquering Franks. Commoners, on the other hand, tended to be named after the place of their birth, age, occupation, or other personal attribute. However, last names were far from stable, as can be seen in cartularies of the 10th-17th centuries, although the pattern of transmitting

Book Reviews - continued

Deshayes. Noms de famille bretons...continued

a surname to ones offspring became increasingly evident from the 13th century onward. This pattern was strengthened by a synod of 1406 that required priests to keep records of baptized infants' first names, as well as the first and last names of its parents and godparents; this practice was legally codified as patronymy (bestowing the child with the father's last name) in 1539.

Over 100 years later, in 1669, Louis XIV ordered that priests and rectors keep double copies of all acts of baptism, marriage and burial, in which were specified, in addition to personal names, the birthplace of a child, the place of origin of parents and godparents, of newlyweds, and of a deceased person; men's occupations were also noted at times. All such data are, of course, grist for the mill of the onomastician, as they provide a rich empirical foundation on which to build a credible perspective on the changes in both personal and place names and on naming practices over time. It must be remembered, however, that the parish registers were first written in Latin (which did not make allowance for the important consonant mutations of Breton); and later, beginning in the 17th century, the records began to be kept in French. Deshayes summarizes the types of distortions or omissions of names that crept into the records as a result:

"One thus sees in these registers gross errors due to the priests, depending on whether or not they were Breton speakers, whether they were recopying documents that they had written from dictation, whether they were drawing up an act of baptism, marriage, or death at some point after it had been celebrated. Thus, a name can be found written in various manners in the same act, or to be poorly transcribed in its local pronunciation. It could also happen that a child would not have its father's name, the act having been drafted on two occasions, and the priest having forgotten the name of the parents or of the deceased, leaving it blank" (p. 7).

Clearly, for the student onomastics, caveat emptor is a sage prescription.

The remainder of this first section examines the different categories of family names which have developed over the centuries in Brittany (some of which have been noted above)--e.g., warriors' eulogistic names (Vercingétorix, literally, 'super-warrior-king' being a prominent example); names of Biblical origin (Salathiel--'Solomon', Moysan--'Moses', Hélias--'Elijah', etc.); names of Germanic origin, which after the 10th century became increasingly à la mode (Gwilherm, Guichard, Hamon, etc.); Latin-derived names (Gestin, Jaouen, Nedelec); names indicating that one is the son of so-and-so (Abgrall, Abhervé, etc.--Ap being a variant of map, 'son', related to Gaelic mac); nicknames relating to body parts or other attributes (Troadec, Pennec, Contellec--'one who carries a knife').

Deshayes. Noms de famille bretons...continued

Part II takes up the lion's share of this monograph, consisting of a detailed look at the plethora of family names that have arisen on the basis of occupational titles, which, in turn, are grouped into: traditional occupations; occupations linked to customs, to leisure, and to permanent conditions; names deriving from the feudal system; names of military origin; and names of religious origin. The reader will find in these pages a wealth of information on the probable, or possible, origins of both common and uncommon names, along with an indication, when available, of their first appearance in early cartularies or parish registers.

Part III focuses on the toponymic, or place-name, analysis of a particular locality in Haute Cornouaille: the area of Mur-de-Bretagne, a cantonal headquarters, and nearby villages. Here the author shows that village and other locality names tend to derive from: (1) topographic features such as mountains (e.g., Le Mané--'the mountain'), rocks (La Roche, Roc'h Roy), holes (e.g., Touldu--'The Black Hole'); (2) hydrographic features such as marshes (Le Guern, Guerledan--'large/wide marsh'), bridges (Pont Alpin, Pen er Pont), etc.; (3) vegetation (Coet--'woods'--is a favorite, entering into many compound formations); (4) land (e.g., Prad--'grassland, meadow', also entering into compounds); (5) the successive waves of human settlement in Brittany, which have left characteristic traces, such as (to cite just a few salient examples): trê--(a parish subdivision, though with an earlier meaning of 'agricultural property'), which is the basis of numerous place-names around Mur (and elsewhere, for that matter); ker--'inhabited place, village'--that forms readily with proper or common nouns, yielding, for example, Keriven ('Ivan's village'), Kerbonalenne ('village of the bonal'--i.e., the brush known as 'broom'); bod--'residence, habitation, shelter'--giving compounds such as Bodauffret ('Auffret's residence'), Le Boter (the latter a contraction of bod plus proper noun Herr); etc.

The text of this study is interspersed with numerous scenes depicting aspects of traditional rural life sketched engagingly by artist Olivier Perrin. Overall, the book is pleasantly laid out and fairly easy to read; family or place names discussed are arranged alphabetically in each section, and each entry is in boldface. This is probably not the sort of book one would sit down and devour in a single read, but, rather, one that lends itself to snacking on some of the rich plums of Breton onomastics.

* * * *

Book Reviews - continued

Daniel GIRAUDON. Chansons populaires de Basse-Bretagne sur feuilles volantes. Morlaix: Skol Vreizh, 1985. 140 pp. (in French)

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

Just out, this second publication in the Skol Vreizh "Breton Civilization" series will be of interest to anyone who loves Breton song. Anyone who loves Breton music will know that song is the very heart of it. Feuilles volantes--literally 'flying sheets'--were printed in Breton, sung, and sold at markets of Lower Brittany from the 16th to early 20th century. These songs recounted local and not-so-local events, crimes, politics, and delivered moral or humorous messages. They are part of an extremely rich heritage of song, stories and recitations of all kinds of Lower Brittany.

The author of this new book, Daniel Giraudon spent four years researching the "feuilles volantes" for his university thesis. He has a lot more to say than what one is likely to find in 140 pages, but this presentation--beautifully documented with old photographs and reproductions of song sheets--goes a long way in introducing the singers as well as some of the songs that are a part of this important part of the Breton song tradition.

Per DENEZ. Glas evel daoulagad c'hlas na oant ket ma re. (Blue as two blue eyes which were not mine). Brest: Al Liamm, 1979. (in Breton)

Reviewed by Nathalie Novik

The title is so elegant in Breton, it is hard to translate into any other language, the more so since "glas" can signify blue, green or gray... It is a short novel, the subject of which would be perfect for one of Spielberg's "Amazing Stories". If I told you the story, you would no longer enjoy the thrill and the suspense. I will only say that it starts as the common story of a woman whose husband dies at sea... Their life as pharmacists was quite devoid of any outstanding events, and she had a passion for her rose garden. But one day, as she goes through his papers, she discovers that he had a mistress... She carefully plans her revenge and I will not tell any more except that the rose garden has the final word.

The other reason why the book is so enjoyable is the extraordinary purity of the language used by Per Denez. It is Breton at its best, rich in expressions and colloquialisms, devoid of gallicisms, and with every sentence carefully chiseled. As a result, it is accessible without the help of a dictionary to a large number of students of Breton, regardless of their level, and understandable to any native Breton speaker. Let us pay homage here to Per Denez, who not only fights with admirable energy for the preservation of Breton, but who also masters to perfection the use of the language he defends.

Book Reviews - continued

Robert LIMA. The Olde Ground. Drawings by Deirdre McCullough Grunwald, Waltham, MA: Society of Inter-Celtic Arts and Culture, 1985.

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

In a beautifully produced book, Robert Lima presents 19 poems, and Deirdre McCullough Grunwald presents 19 Celtic designs. The poems and drawings enhance each other. Deirdre McCullough Grunwald is a graphic artist, painter and commercial illustrator best known in New England, where she lives. Robert Lima is a Professor of Spanish and Comparative Literatures at the Pennsylvania State University. He has published many poems in journals and collections and has an earlier book of poetry called Fathoms. His ancestors come from Galicia; he is at home with the moors, menhirs and stones he presents in his poems.

Autographed copies of The Olde Ground are available from the author for \$7.00 (including postage): Robert Lima, 485 Orlando Avenue, State College, PA 16803.

Carn - the quarterly magazine of the Celtic League

Carn is a unique publication, including articles on Ireland, Scotland, Wales, Cornwall, the Isle of Man and Brittany--in Irish and Scottish Gaelic, Welsh, Cornish, Manx and Breton, as well as English (which dominates). You will find news in Carn that does not make it into other media--notes of a political nature as well as articles on all aspects of Celtic history and culture. Carn comes out quarterly and includes some 25 pages.

If you live in the New York City area, consider becoming active in the U.S. Branch of the Celtic League. A subscription to Carn is included in membership dues (\$14). Contact: Mary Kate Mulkeen, P.O. Box 20153, Dag Hammarskjold Postal Centre, New York, NY 10017.

If you do not live near New York City, you are likely to find a membership in the U.S. Celtic League very frustrating. You will be better advised to subscribe to Carn directly through its "International Branch". Subscription is \$10. Contact: Alan Heusaff, 9 Br. Cnoc Sion, Dromchonrach, Ath Cliath 9, EIRE (Ireland).

Lois Kuter

** **

RECORD REVIEWS - "NEW" BRETON MUSIC

Lois Kuter

One might not suspect it from the amount of space we have devoted to music in Bro Nevez, or from the amount of Breton music one hears on the radio or in concert here, but music is the area where Bretons have been most successful in honoring their heritage and in creating a new uniquely Breton heritage. One can truly speak of a renaissance of music and dance in Brittany--of traditional styles and of newer styles firmly rooted in tradition.

Since the 1950's and 1960's, Breton "groups" have been playing with combinations of bagpipes, bombardes, accordions, flutes, fiddles, electric guitars and synthesizers (among other instruments). In the 1980's it is easy to wonder if the evolution has gone as far as it can go. It is easy to get a bit fed up with yet one more new arrangement of the "gavotte des montagnes". With time, some ensembles of Breton musicians seem to struggle to maintain the spark which marked the growth of bands in the 1970's. But for many musicians who formed bands in the 1970s, the evolution continues--both in terms of technical mastery of instruments, and in terms of creativity. The end is not yet in sight. There are more ways to play a gavotte--not done just with the rearrangement of a few notes or the introduction of a few chords on an electric organ.

There is a great variety of what has been called "new" Breton music. Some musicians find inspiration in jazz, some in rock, and yet others in more "classical" styles. Despite a variety of styles which Bretons use to create new music, the element that seems to divide the exceptional from the mediocre is the musician's ability to draw from traditional Breton sources. Those creating the most exciting "new" music are those most firmly rooted in older Breton traditions. Those who have a good grasp of both the melodies and rhythms of traditional Breton music as well as the spirit of making Breton music, are those who produce a music today which contributes to a true renaissance of Breton music.

The renaissance seems to continue from what I hear of new recordings from Brittany. Normally, I do not like to review a record without seeing its jacket--often a wonderful source of education about Breton music--but I have received a few cassette copies of recent releases which demand comment.

Tammles. Embarquement immédiat. Escalibur 813, 1985.

In my opinion, Tammles is one of the most exciting groups in Brittany today. They manage to maintain the essence of Breton rhythms and melodies in creating some very new sounds. From super-traditional bombarde/biniou duets to the swing of saxophones and polyphonic drone of synthesizers, their music is entrancing and stimulating. Tammles consists of four musicians:

Record Reviews - continued

Tammles - continued

Alain Pennec (accordion and binioù), Marc Jacquier (a variety of stringed instruments of the guitar family), Jean-Yves Martial (fiddle and bouzouki), and Philippe Janvier (bombarde and saxophone). Flute and synthesizer also figure among the instruments one hears on this album, but I do not know who is responsible for each. All four musicians sing--and sing well. They have mastered their instruments. But, the way Tammles combines instruments and vocals is what makes them above average... well above. There is a certain sophistication in this album that one does not often hear in "folk" groups. What perhaps makes Tammles uniquely Breton is their mastery of rhythm. Super-traditional rhythms of Breton dances (the key to Breton music) and new rhythms are beautifully blended rather than just grafted together with blind hope. I recommend this album without reservation. And I recommend also their first album, Tammles (Escalibur 810, 1982)--a bit more "down home" but equally expressive of the creative talent of this group.

Ti Jaz. TJ 8501, 1985.

I will begin this quick review by admitting from the start that I have a terrible weakness for good bombarde and good saxophone playing. Saxophones and bombardes are certainly a strong part of the music of Ti Jaz, but the highlight of this record is perhaps the one vocal selection--a cantique like song in the Breton language with lovely bombarde and brass ensemble back-up. The voice is wonderful, of a certain quality that immediately brings Brittany to mind.

Piecing together bits of concert reviews, I have identified some or all of this relatively new group as: Richard Dilly, Bernard Lasbleiz, Jacques le Pendu, Olivier Mell and Camille Olivier. Newspapers can do funny things to names, and Breton groups can change quickly, but whoever makes up Ti Jaz provides some great music, judging from the cassette copy I have received of their first album. This group has been described as a "fest noz band" and I can well imagine the job they would do to make a dance memorable. Like Tammles, Ti Jaz has a firm grasp of Breton rhythms which allows them to fool around with counter-rhythms--rhythms which explain their name "Ti Jaz". Accordion and bombardes combine with a strong wind section--saxophones and bass clarinets, a brass ensemble, and electric guitar, to create an overwhelming desire to hit the dance floor. I have heard that this album does not compare to the energy of this group in live performance. If that is the case, it is well worth a trip out of the way to find this group at a fest noz. Take note of their name if you plan a trip to Brittany.

Record Reviews - continued

Dan ar Bras. Musique pour les silences à venir. Rikou Soner RS 3063, 1985.

This record is deceptively pleasant--perhaps a little too pretty for some. But, Dan ar Bras does not provide "easy listening music" unless the listener chooses to put this music in the background. If you listen with half the passion Dan ar Bras puts into his music, you will hear a lot in this album. "Music for silences to come" is an instrumental album, in contrast to Dan's last album, Acoustic, which includes song (Green Linnet SIF 3035, 1985). Both electric and acoustic guitar work are featured with a rich texture of keyboards, saxophone and percussion contributed by a few friends: Benoit Wideman, Francois Daniel, Daniel Paboeuf, and Jean-Pierre Fouguet. But, it is Dan ar Bras who shows us in this album the full range of expression one can get from guitars. My heart has been won more often by winds, and I am an unabashed bagpipe addict. Thus, it takes an exceptional guitarist to attract my attention. Dan ar Bras is that, but not because he has technically mastered this instrument and not because he makes any sound possible with strings. Dan's guitar playing is exceptional because he uses this instrument--acoustic or electric--to express himself fully. And that is what counts in music. There are few who can match Dan's intensity. In this album you are lured down Breton paths ("Avenue du hent glas") and into the sea ("La lamentation de la mer"). In a selection called "Jesse Carpenter" Dan takes you to your own backyard. This piece was composed in remembering a visit to graves in Normandy with his father, and is played in remembering an American hero of World War II, Jesse Carpenter, who died of the cold, a homeless man, in a park across the street from the White House in Washington D.C. In "silences to come" the music of Dan ar Bras will be welcome.

Note: Dan ar Bras will be back in the U.S. touring this spring (June). Watch for him at local folk clubs--or work on them to book him! For information contact his manager: Dan Behrman, Immigrant Music, Inc., 25 Windsor Place, Glen Ridge, NJ 07028; (201) 429-2273.

Kornog. Ar Seizh Avel/On Seven Winds. Green Linnet SF 1062, 1985

My first reaction to this third album by Kornog was disappointment. The spirit of this group as I have come to know it in their live performances here did not seem to make it onto the record. But, few recordings can compare to a live performance. This is an album I have grown to like more each time I listen to it.

Like Première (Green Linnet SIF 1055, 1984), the album features Breton tunes and Scottish songs that Kornog has performed on their tours to this country. Some of the best of their 1985 tour are on the 1985 album. The unique talent of each of the four members of the group are well expressed on Ar Seizh Avel, even if the spark of a live performance that was captured on Première is not as strong.

Record Reviews - continued

Kornog - continued

Jamie McMenemy is a Scotsman from Brittany, or a Breton from Scotland--either way you put it--whose vocals are featured in two ballads on the album: "Sir Aldingar" and "Helen of Kirkonnel" as well as in a song of a "lighter" nature, "The Shuttle Rins". Jamie also provides bouzouki and mandolin. It is worth mentioning that he has also written the jacket notes--which are excellent. A little of his humor comes through in the notes, and a lot of his knowledge of Breton music is shared with the reader. One of the high points of Ar Seizh Avel (besides the jacket notes which come up to my high pedagogical standards) is the composition by Jamie McMenemy and Soig Siberil called "Trip to Flagstaff". This was written when blocked in by snow in a small village of Brittany--inspired by memories of a snowy drive from Phoenix to Flagstaff during their 1984 tour of the U.S. The haunting beauty of the tune seems to capture the beauty of this part of our vast country very well. And it is one of the few tunes where one has the chance to really hear Soig Siberil, the guitarist of Kornog. It is easy to take his contribution to the music for granted. Solos are a strong part of the album. Soig Siberil has another spotlight in the "Dans Plinn", and Christian Lemaitre, the fiddler or "violon" player is featured in a set of three gavottenn on the album. My favorite solo of the album is the flute rendition of three "Ronds de St. Vincent" by Jean-Michel Veillon. This happens to be one of my favorite dances of Brittany, but that small bias does not take away from the extraordinary work of this flute player. Jean-Michel also provides tin whistle and low whistle as well as a very spirited D bombarde (a toned-down bombarde) for the album.

The strength of all four musicians as a quartet is what makes Kornog work. Their arrangements bring out the best of each musician, retaining the unique spirit of traditional Breton music and the force of Scottish ballads while adding something new. All four musicians work to beautifully support each other's creativity and skill. Nothing demonstrates this better than the final cut on their album, "Varbiska Ratchenitza", a Bulgraian dance attacked with the same all-out effort that goes into the gavottes, plinns and an dro. Ar Seizh Avel does not substitute for a live performance by Kornog, but it is an album worth listening to again....and again.

For those who might have the fortune to travel to Brittany, "Ar Seizh Avel" is also a café in the town of Konfort Berc'hed (Confort Berhet), near Cavan, near Begard, in the area of La Roche-Derrien and Lannion. All kinds of good music can be heard at this "pub" which also features workshops, theater, films, and spontaneous creativity of various kinds besides drinking.

Record Reviews - continued

After the Tour is Over....

While I am on the subject of Kornog, I will indulge in a few comments about their tour this past November. First, why didn't any of you out there send me a review of Kornog (or Dan ar Bras)? Where are the record reviews? Am I the only one listening to Breton music?

The review of Kornog's latest album speaks for the high quality of their music--which I had the chance to hear at concerts in Philadelphia and Washington D.C. But there are some other things that happened on their 1985 tour that should be mentioned. First, they brought two excellent musicians with them for an opening act: Gilles Le Bigot and Serge Desaunay. Gilles is a guitarist who once played with Jean-Michel Veillon in the group called Galorn. At ease with the melodies and dances of both Lower and Upper Brittany, he does a wonderful job with this instrument which is not the easiest to adapt to the rhythms of Breton music. Serge Desaunay's instrument is the accordion. Serge is not from Brittany, but he has played there frequently and can lead a dance with the best of them (and he can also dance the plinn with the best of them, from what I saw). Serge draws his music from his own home in the Burgundy area of France...and from other parts of France and the world where his creative talents have taken him. With or without Kornog, I hope Serge Desaunay and Gilles Le Bigot will be back to tour in the U.S.

A non-musical result of the 1985 Kornog and Desaunay/Le Bigot tour, as well as of past tours by Breton musicians, is an increased awareness on the part of people in the U.S. of the existence of a place called Brittany. As Secretary for the U.S. ICDBL, I have the job of answering letters from a variety of individuals all over the U.S. who have learned of our existence as a source of information (we are listed on the back of Ar Seizh Avel, and that has brought a few inquiries). No matter what means people use to find the ICDBL address, it has been evident that many Americans discover Brittany--and the Breton language--by means of music. Breton musicians who tour here--so far Kornog, Le Bigot/Desaunay, Alan Stivell and Dan ar Bras--have done a very good job of introducing not only the beauty of Breton music, but also the uniqueness of Brittany and its cultural heritage. By making an effort to introduce their music on stage and to talk to people after concerts, touring musicians have served as cultural ambassadors for Brittany. This has been important, and Breton musicians who have toured here have left behind more than just a good memory of an exciting concert.

The First "Fest-Noz" in the U.S.A.

I cannot be sure that I can claim to have participated in the first Breton fest noz ever held in the U.S., but I know that I was present at a very special event in Washington D.C. on December 8, 1985. The fact that the Greater Washington Ceili Club sponsored a concert by Kornog and the duo of Desaunay/Le Bigot on that date is not significant, since these musicians have appeared in dozens of other cities on their tour--drawing a rave review in the New York Times. What

Record Reviews - continued

"Fest-Noz" - continued

was remarkable about the final stop of their tour in Washington was the fact that the Ceili Club had managed to arrange for a dance to follow the concert. The musicians of Kornog have all played for dancing in Brittany (as members of different bands), but Kornog is an ensemble for concert performances. That may be an important distinction in Brittany, but no one here was drawing fine lines, and the combined forces of Kornog and Le Bigor and Desanay worked well to create something that could be called a festnoz in the basement hall of the Chevy Chase Presbyterian Church.

The fest noz found today throughout Brittany is perhaps best described as a community dance. These Saturday-night events draw people from a particular area to dance the traditional dance of their community, or to dance a variety of traditional dances of other areas of Brittany, in less "pure" instances. The fest noz is an event where people of all ages share in dance, and where musicians of all ages demonstrate their abilities to draw people into a trance-like circle, snaking lines or a mass of couples. A fest noz is above all a social event where people share in dance, talk and drink.

The community spirit of a Breton fest noz was very much present in Washington where approximately 100 people who had stayed after the concert struggled together to learn dances they had never seen before. Musicians took turns showing the steps briefly and the dancers followed along--improving as the dances progressed. Circles and lines of dancers formed for gavottes, plinns and the an dro; couples learned the schottische and worked through a relatively more familiar rhythm of two different waltz speeds. The gavotte did not look like the gavottes done in the "montagnes" of Lower Brittany, but in our own American way we were a community of dancers, moving together happily rather than pulling at each other in different directions.

Perhaps the only major difference between this fest noz and those of Brittany was the fact that there was no bar at the end of the large basement of the Presbyterian church. Perhaps a few dancers would have benefited from a little lubrication in their joints, but I saw no one suffering from a lack of alcohol. The Ceili Club provided American apple cider and home-baked "fars".

Americans seem perfectly capable of mastering the spirit of the fest noz--even if the foot work might need some more practice. There is only one solution to that--we will have to have more of these events in the U.S. Congratulations to the Greater Washington Ceili Club for their work to make this event successful, and to a fine group of musicians whose music got us dancing in Washington.

ANOTHER BRETON GROUP TO DEBUT IN THE U.S. - BLEIZI RUZ

Bleizi Ruz (the "red wolves") have been performing in Brittany for twelve years now. They will be heard in the U.S. for the first time this May. This group is one of the top bands today in Brittany, performing innovative arrangements of traditional Breton dances and melodies as well as their own compositions. Bleizi Ruz started in 1973 as an ensemble of nine musicians (a good number of whom had been a part of the Bagad Kevrenn Brest St. Marc). At that time the instrumental mix included bombardes, accordion, bassoon, drums, bass and electric guitar. Over the years there has been a shift in personnel and instruments, and the group has perfected a distinctive sound of its own--a somewhat electric, and most definitely electrifying sound. Today the band includes six musicians: Loic Le Borgne (accordion), Bernard Quillien (bombarde), Pierre Crepillon (bombarde and flute), Jean-Luc (Ben) Creac'h (bass guitar) and Eric Liorzou (guitar), with Dominique Molard on drums. They will be touring here without their duummer, but that should not cut down any of the fervor of this band. If they tour anywhere in your area do not miss their concert. For information on their tour, contact: Hershel Freeman Agency, 4212 Old Chapel Hill Road, Durham, NC 27707; (919) 493-6028.

Discography: An dro. Arfolk SB 326, 1974.
Bleizi Ruz. Kerblues KB 80310.
Coz Liorzou. Pluriel PL 3355, 1984
Klask ar lac'h. Pluriel 3365, 1985.

ALAN STIVELL ON TOUR - FEBRUARY 1986

By the time this newsletter gets out, Alan Stivell will be back in France, but I take this opportunity to invite readers on the West coast (California and British Columbia) to send me a concert or record review. A new record is out: Harpe du nouvel age (WEA Filipachi 240 7371, 1985). - LK

TO ALAN STIVELL

You are to Brittany as a cool, refreshing rain
To a land parched by a hot summer's sun.
You are to Brittany as the spring's flood
Of colors to a gray land when winter is finally done.
You are to Brittany as a cool, evening breeze
Off the ocean to a shore baked by a summer's day.
You are to Brittany as the fall's rich
Colors are to our tired eyes in their display.
Yes, you are to Brittany a shining star
In that wondrous firmament of the Breton sky.

Paul Nedwell
July 26, 1985

THE 'COOPERATIVE BREIZH'

Lois Kuter

As secretary for the U.S. ICDBL, I have answered quite a few letters from individuals looking for places to buy Breton books and records. And, readers of this newsletter can perhaps recall notes on this subject in past issues.

One of the addresses I often give people is that of the Coop Breizh, an organization in Brittany founded in 1957 at the initiative of Kendalc'h to help people involved in Breton cultural organizations find materials on Brittany. At that period, few book stores in Brittany stocked such material. Over the decades it has become much easier to locate stores which specialize in Breton books and records, but the Coop Breizh continues to play an important role in making material more accessible.

Most importantly, perhaps, the Coop has served as a distributor to other stores and libraries through its base of operations in St. Herbot, known by the name "Diffusion Breizh". Three stores have served individual shoppers--one in Rennes, one in La Baule, and one in the Montparnasse area of Paris. But, the Coop has fallen onto some hard times. The La Baule store is due to close and the fate of the Paris store is uncertain. The Coop will certainly continue its work to publish and re-edit books as well as make the rich material on Brittany available to the public. Its success in promoting Breton materials is shown in the fact that other stores now compete with the Coop for customers.

From the time I spent in the Rennes Coop Breizh store wishing I were rich, I can assure you that they have a wonderful stock of books and magazines as well as records, flags, decals, notecards and other smaller items. If you will be in Brittany, stop in: Coop Breizh, 17 rue de Penhoët, 35000 Rennes (tel.: 99-79.01.87). If you will be in Paris, the store there is also worth a visit: Coop Breizh, 10 rue du Maine, 75014 Paris (call ahead for hours: 320.84.64). Note that the Rennes store is the one that should be contacted for all orders by mail. Bookstores or distributors who are interested in larger orders should contact Diffusion Breizh: 4 route de Gourin, 29135 Spezet.

Anyone who needs suggestions for places in the U.S. where Breton materials can be found is invited to contact me. Although it is nearly impossible to find Breton books, I can give a few suggestions. I have several addresses for record distribution as well as some suggestions for anyone interested in starting a record collection of Breton music.

THE NEW YORK BRETONS CELEBRATE THE 30th ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR ASSOCIATION "LE STADE BRETON"

On December 8th, 1985, 580 people gathered for an evening at the Crystal Palace to commemorate the foundation, 30 years ago, of "le Stade Breton", the association which links all Bretons living and working in the New York area.

A delegation of 30 Bretons, coming mostly from central Brittany, with the founder of the Stade, Jean Pengloan, at their head, joined in for a 12-day stay, which included a tour of Manhattan, a visit to Atlantic City and a show at Radio City Hall.

Following the tradition of previous associations (like the French Club and the Stade Gaulois), Le Stade Breton seeks to promote activities and sports in which the local Bretons excell. It features cycling, petanque (a form of bowling), soccer, and fishing outings.

Jean-Pierre Touchard, the current President, is a Manhattan "restaurateur", but manages, in spite of his busy schedule, to keep the Association on the road. His efforts were rewarded by the French government during the evening of December 8th, as the Ministry of Youth and Sports honored him with the "Medaille d'Argent des Sports".

The celebration at the Crystal Palace was broadcasted live by Radio Montagnes Noires in Gourin, with a rebroadcast the next day. This was a first, and marked a renewed will to keep the link between Brittany and expatriated Bretons a strong one.

For any information on the Stade Breton, contact:

Le Stade Breton
1085 Second Avenue
New York, NY 10022
Telephone: (212) 759-1466

Nathalie Novik

* * * * *

AR GEGIN

Nathalie Novik

BRETON DRINKS

We have covered quite a variety of dishes in this column, but it is about time we talked about what Bretons drink, since drinks--alcoholic or not--are a prominent part of Breton hospitality. Whenever a visitor drops by, he or she will always be offered a glass of wine or a bowl of cider, or a cup of coffee. To illustrate this point,

Breton Drinks - continued

my Breton teacher, Yann-Fulup, told me that, when he was going from farm to farm during his vacation to find Breton speakers willing to accomodate students during the summer, he was offered so many drinks that he could not refuse that he always toured with his wife so she could take over the driving after a few farms (women can refuse alcohol, but men should not...).

Breton wines

They are grown in the Nantes area. The best know perhaps is Muscadet, a dry, fruity white wine, which is a must for oysters, seafood and fish. It can also be served as a dessert wine. Another white wine, Gros-Plant, qualifies as an excellent table wine, perfect for any sauce or to add to a fish soup. Both are available in the U.S. in well stocked wine stores, and I found the prices to be reasonable (under \$5). However, it should be noted that transportation does not always seem to agree with them.

Chistr (Cider)

Very different from American cider, Breton chistr is a sparkling, mildly alcoholic beverage (between 5 and 10% alcohol), which comes in two versions: either a limpid, very sparkly beverage, which is now for the most part industrially produced; or a more opaque form which looks very much like hard cider, and is produced mostly by farmers. Under the influence of Normandy, industrial producers have started to cork cider like champagne, which does not add anything to it, and is most often found with very industrialized tasteless ciders. The best areas for cider are those of Rennes, Dol, Fouesnant and Beg-Meil.* Cider is a must when you serve krampouez or crêpes, and is also delicious when heated and spiced. It cannot be transported without being pasteurized, and I have not been able to find it so far in the U.S.

Chouchen (or mead)

With 4000 years of history behind it, this delicate blend of honey, white wine (or cider) and alcohol is a favorite. The taste varies greatly, and for my part, I prefer the chouchen from Bro-Gerne (Cornouaille), which is very thick and fruity. It is quite strong, however, and you often discover too late that you have had one too many. Chouchen is not easily found outside of Brittany, but I wish someone would brave the FDA administration and import it here.

* Editor's Note: Cider-making is a fine art cultivated in many parts of Brittany, and one is likely to find many different claims for the "best". For my part, the best cider I tasted was in Plufur (Treger). But, farm produced cider varies greatly in taste depending upon the year and apples used. I tasted many ciders of which their producers can be justly proud.

AR BEGIN - continued

Please note that readers are invited to send in recipes for this column. I would also love to get feed-back from anyone who has tried recipes we have printed. Suggestions and questions are always welcome.

Nathalie Novik

* * * * *

QUESTION

Who is the Patron Saint of Brittany?

I have received several answers to this question from the last issue of Bro Nevez. S. Michael Price has transmitted his translation/summary of information he recieved from Vefa de Bellaing:

Sant Erwan is the Breton name of St. Yves, a famous saint who flourished from 1253-1303. He is the first Breton saint officially canonized by the Church. Sant Erwan was born near Tréguier, studied in Paris and Rome, and returned to live in Brittany where he was rektor (recteur, or parish priest) for the parish of Louannec, near Tréguier. He was also a lawyer known for his defense of the poor, which gave him the name "alvokad ar beorien". His feast day is May 19th, Gouel Sant Erwan. There was once in Rome a parish of Bretons and a church called St. Yves des Bretons. After the union of Brittany to France in 1532, the parish was confiscated by the Church of France. Sant Erwan is the most popular saint in Brittany, and it is certain that he existed, while other saints (not officially canonized) are known through legends.

I also received a note from Mark Kerrain who points out that while Sant Erwan and Santez Anna are best known, there are other saints who are important as "national saints". There was a pilgrimage tradition in Brittany to honor seven early saints and bishops of Brittany: Sant Paol (Leon), Sant Tugdual (Treger), Sant Padern (Gwened), Sant Malo, Sant Brieg, Sant Samsan (Dol) and Sant Kaourintin (Kerne). These founding saints were important in the establishment of a strong parish system in Brittany by the time of the sixth century.

Perhaps the best answer to the question "who is the patron saint of Brittany" is to say that there is no one patron saint, but hundreds of saints honored yearly in parish "pardons" throughout Brittany. While some saints, like Sant Erwan and Santez Anna have a more popular or official acknowledgement, it is the local saint that Bretons call upon most often for their spiritual needs.

Do you have a question about Brittany? -- send it in!

BRETON AT THE SUMMER LANGUAGE INSTITUTE '86 - CALIFORNIA

The University of California at Santa Cruz is offering a Beginner's course in the Breton language in its 1986 Summer Language Institute, June 23-August 22, 1986. This is a first in this area, and perhaps in the nation.

The objectives of the session (Breton 1-2-3, i.e., a full year of study in nine weeks) are to master all the basic structures of Breton, and to learn approximately 1,000 words. The basic skills to be obtained are: listening and reading comprehension, speaking, and writing at a modest level. A further objective is the acquisition of a knowledge of Breton history, geography, and culture.

The method used will be the so-called direct method. Fortunately, an excellent modern text is presently available in English: Per Denez, Brezhoneg buan hag aes. The dictionary will be: R. Delaporte, Elementary Breton-English Dictionary. Both books are published by Cork University Press and have been ordered. The stress will be on oral drills, for which there will be lab books, tapes, various exercises, with the help of a Teaching Assistant (native). I will make a reader adapted to the needs of the class, drawn from periodicals, short stories, poetry, songs...

The Breton taught is standard Breton, albeit with the Tregor style of pronunciation. The Teaching Assistant will be available for 1-2 hours of oral drills and written exercises, at the beginning of every afternoon. Students and faculty take their lunch time together and carry on conversations in Breton at all possible times.

If you are interested in our Breton class, please contact the Summer Session Office at the University of California, Santa Cruz (tel.: 408/429-2524). Should you have any questions relating to the language itself, the method, books, and the like, do not hesitate to contact me personally.

Gweltaz Hame
Lecturer in Languages and Literature
Cowell College, U.C.S.C.
Santa Cruz, CA 95064
(408) 427-0290 or 429-2609 (msg.)

* * * * *

Note also two intensive Welsh language sessions this summer:

Welsh Heritage Week, Keuka Lake, New York
July 20-27, 1986
contact: Anne Habermehl, 3925 North Main Street,
Marion, NY 14505 (315/926-5318)

Cwrs Cymraeg y Bedol Aur (Welsh Course of the Golden Horseshoe)
St. Michael's College, University of Toronto
(10th annual Cwrs Cymraeg)
August 10-17, 1986
contact: Laura Selleck, 14 Moorehill Dr., Toronto, Ont.
Canada M4G 1A1 (416/421-9444)

SOME UPCOMING CELTIC CONFERENCES

Celtic Linguistics at the Kentucky Foreign Language Conference

April 25-26, 1986

The University of Kentucky, Lexington, Kentucky

At this year's conference there will be three sections devoted to the formal analysis of Celtic languages. The following papers are scheduled for presentation:

Stephen Harlow	"The Syntax of Welsh Soft Mutation"
Randall Hendrick	"On Breton Pseudopassives"
Peter Lasersohn	"When the Welsh Double Pronoun Construction only Allows a Single Pronoun"
Joseph Malone	"On the Global-Phonologic Nature of Classical Irish Alliteration"
James McCloskey	"Unaccusatives and Passives in Modern Irish"
Joyce Powers	"Soft Mutation on Verbs in Welsh"
Roslyn Raney	"The Verbal Noun in Welsh"
Peter Sells	"Control Clauses in Modern Irish"
Richard Sproat	"More on Celtic Consonant Mutation"
Nancy Stenson	"Irish Impersonal Constructions"
Gregory Stump	"A Nonlocal Mutation in Breton"
Lenora Timm	"VSO or SVO in Modern Breton--Evidence from a Spoken Dialect"
Penny Willis	"The Phonemic Status of the Welsh 'Voiceless Nasals'"
Laurie Zaring	"Agreement Inflection and the Distribution of Null and Overt Pronouns in Welsh"

For further information on the conference, contact:

Gregory T. Stump, Department of English, University of Kentucky,
Lexington, KY 40506-0027 (606/257-3001)

Eighth Annual Celtic Studies Conference of the Celtic Colloquium

May 2-4, 1986

University of California, Los Angeles

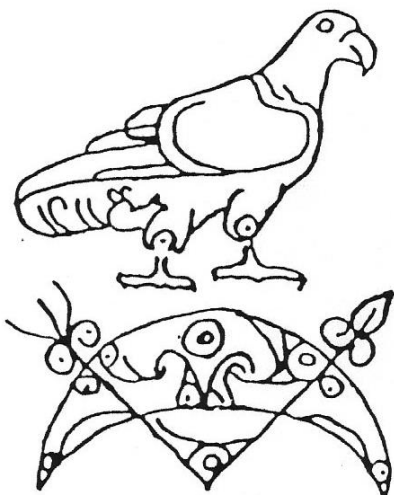
The general theme of this year's conference is "Poets and Poetry in Celtic Cultures." Presentations dealing with other subjects relating to Celtic languages and cultures will also be given.

For information contact:

University of California-Los Angeles, Celtic Colloquium,
Folklore & Mythology Center, 1037 GSM-Library Wing, 405 Hilgard
Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024

NORTH AMERICAN CONGRESS OF CELTIC STUDIES

26-30 March, 1986



Under the auspices of
THE CHAIR OF CELTIC STUDIES
of the
University of Ottawa

Supported by
The Celtic Studies Association
of North America

UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA  UNIVERSITY OF OTTAWA

Themes

CELTS AND CELTIC CULTURE
IN THE NEW WORLD
Living Celtic Speech
The Computer as a Research Tool
in Celtic Studies
Celtic Folklore and Mythology
The Celts: Origins, Expansion and Dispersal

Introduction to the Congress

In recent years interest in Celtic Studies has been growing steadily in North America. More and more courses are being offered in universities and colleges in Canada and the United States. In Canada three new centres of Celtic studies have been recently funded with the aid of the Celtic communities, provincial governments and the Federal Government i.e. the Chair of Celtic Studies at the University of Ottawa, the Chair of Gaelic Studies at St. Francis Xavier, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, and the Chair of Irish Studies now being set up at St. Mary's University, Halifax, Nova Scotia. In addition a Celtic Studies programme is operating at St. Michael's College of the University of Toronto. Numerous other smaller projects involving Celtic research have been undertaken. Internationally Canada is now represented in the Celtic Studies Association of North America and on the UNESCO-backed "Project for the Study and Promotion of Celtic Cultures".

The objectives of the Congress are to stimulate co-operation in research and teaching and to promote the dissemination of information (a) within Canada, (b) within North America, and (c) between North America and Europe. With this in mind participants have been invited from the new Canadian centres of Celtic studies, as well as from other Canadian institutions, from the U.S.A., and from the Celtic countries and other countries in Europe. Confirmation of participation has been received from leading scholars in all these countries thus guaranteeing the academic excellence of the Congress.

The congress will constitute the largest gathering of Celtic scholars ever held in North America and it will afford North American lecturers, teachers, researchers and students an invaluable opportunity to meet each other, to contribute to Celtic learning, and to hear views on the state of the art expounded by international experts in all aspects of Celtic studies. At the same time it will focus the attention of the Celtic world on Canada's contribution to Celtic culture and the part played by the Celts in Canada's cultural development. The "Proceedings of the Congress" will be published as a permanent record of the event.

Partial list of scholars from abroad who will be reading papers:

Donald MacAulay (*Aberdeen*), Donald Meek (*Edinburgh*), Gearóid MacEoin (*Galway*), Alan Harrison (*Dublin*), Gerard Stockman (*Belfast*), Breandán O Buachalla (*Dublin*), Proinsias Mac Cana (*Dublin*), Geraint Gruffydd (*Aberystwyth*), D. Ellis Evans (*Oxford*), Andrew Hawke (*computers - Welsh Dictionary Project, Aberystwyth*), Robert Owen Jones (*Swansea*), K.J. George (*Cornish and computers - Cornwall*), Per Denez (*Rennes*), Jean Le Dù (*Brest*), Birget Bramsbaeck (*Upsala*), Diego Poli (*Rome*), Antonio Tovar (*Madrid*), Karl H. Schmidt (*Bonn*), Wolfgang Meid (*Innsbruck*).

for further information contact:

Dr. Gordon W. MacLennan
Department of Modern Languages and
Literatures
University of Ottawa
550 Cumberland
Ottawa, Ontario K1N 6N5 CANADA

CELTIC CONFERENCES - continued

The Celtic Peoples on the European Scene

Conference "Europe of Regions" - Ninth Convention
June 7-11, 1986

The Foundation for International Understanding, Copenhagen, Denmark

As described by Folmer Wisti, the Director of the Conference, the 1986 Convention of the Conference "Europe of Regions" will be devoted to Celtic Peoples (June 7-11) with a Celtic Festival in Copenhagen, to be followed by an optional excursion to the Celtic countires (June 11-15).

"In order to encourage the growing universal interest in the Celtic peoples and to support their untiring struggle for self-government, national and regional equality in the school, mass-media, etc., this Celtic Convention will be held at Christiansborg Palace, Copenhagen, 7-11 June, 1986, with lectures, panels by outstanding experts and working groups on centralism, regionalism and democracy--resistance to centralism in modern Europe in politics, in economics and in culture...

Concurrently, a Celtic Festival will be arranged in Copenhagen with exhibitions, films, concerts and entertainments, presenting the everyday life in the Celtic countries at home, at work, environments, and their great contribution to our common culture. Not least in the field of folk music the Celtic Peoples have a mission today with their warm, refreshing songs and melodies, drawing from the purest, ingenious sources and traditions.

This first joint Celtic manifestation in the Nordic countries is met with warm and active interest in Brittany, Ireland, Wales and Scotland. Also Cornwall and Galicia are involved."

Some of the specific topics included in the conference are:

- The Celtic people on the European scene--their political resurgence as a contribution towards European democracy.
- Problems in self-government, national and regional freedom.
- Centralism, regionalism, and democracy--resistance to centralism in modern Europe in politics, in economics and in culture.
- Four stages in European regionalism--from a Europe of states to a Europe of regions?

Ethno-nationalism
Regional Autonomist demands
Constitutional decentralization
The European dimension

For information contact: Folmer Wisti, Director, Conference on Celtic Peoples, Foundation for International Understanding, Kultorvet 2, Postbox 85, DK-1003 København K, Denmark.

NEWS OF NON-CELTIC LANGUAGES

Once again we have a contribution from ICDBL member Paul Nedwell. Paul, A Ukrainian-American, has written on Ukraine for our newsletter and is now branching out into other Slavic topics. This time, he offers us a most interesting look at a very small, but linguistically and culturally "healthy" Slavic people: the Sorbs. Please note that the pictures we have reproduced were kindly provided by the Embassey of the German Democratic Republic.

As always, I welcome contributions to the column:

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

The Sorbs, the Smallest Slavic Nation, and their Language

In most of the Slavic languages, the Sorbs and their language are designated by names formed from the toponym "Lusatia"; however, in German, the terms "Lusatia" and "Lusatian" are used to refer to the inhabitants of Lustia whether they are of Slavic or German origin. In German, "Wend" and "Wendish" have been used until recently; but, because of the pejorative connotation these terms have in German, they are readily relinquished today in favor of the terms "Sorb" and "Sorbian". The Sorbs call themselves "Serbja" ("Serb"), but as this term causes some confusion in Western minds with the Serbs of Yugoslavia, the use of the terms "Sorb" and "Sorbian" appears most justified in the English language and will prevail throughout this article.

The homeland of the Sorbs, Lusatia, is today situated in the German Democratic Republic (GDR). In the north it extends to within some 80 kilometers of Berlin; in the south it extends as far as the Czechoslovakian broder. In the east it reaches the river Neisse, and its width from east to west at its widest point is less than 50 kilometers. The river Spree runs through the entire length of Lusatia from south to north. The territory is divided into Upper Lusatia and Lower Lusatia in keeping with the upper and lower reaches of the river Spree. And it is here that the 100,000 Sorbs in the German Democratic Republic live side by side with over 500,000 Germans (the total population of the GDR is approximately 17 million).

The period of Germanization has been so long that it is a wonder at all that any Sorbs have managed to preserve their language down into our present century. Having always been too small in number, in comparison with their neighbors, to form an independent state of their own, they have fallen victim to power struggles between strong neighboring rulers. However, despite all this, they have survived, holding fast to their language, their Christian religion and their ancient Slavic customs, quietly tilling the land as farmers (for the most part) and holding out for better days. To the student of Slavic languages, literatures and history, these Slavs form an extremely interesting, if little known group with a rich and colorful literature--by no means a small acheivement for such a small group. They deserve to be more widely know for their survival alone.

The Sorbs are the last survivors of the Slavic tribes which once occupied the territory between the rivers Oder and Elbe. Lower Lusatia was occupied by a Slavic tribe known as the Luzici, and Upper Lusatia was occupied by another Slavic tribe, the Melceni. The Luzici and Melceni may be regarded as the ancestors of the Lower and Upper Sorbs respectively.

The independence of the Sorbs lasted for but a brief time. The Slavic tribes west of the Oder were constantly attacked by the Germans in their eastward expansion. After the Slavic tribes to the west of them were subjugated, the Sorbs, at the end of the 7th century, suddenly found themselves facing the Germans on their western borders. The Germans attacked them constantly until, by the end of the 10th century, they were totally subjugated. From that time on, they have never regained their independence.

The Sorbs – continued

A period of almost a thousand years of national and social oppression then ensued. Yet, the Sorbs resisted this oppression and deprivation of their rights. From the 15th to the 19th century they fought against this exploitation in many peasant and artisan uprisings, at the same time rejecting the prohibition against speaking their own language, which the ruling classes considered to be the chief reason for the stubborn resistance of their Sorbian subjects. The national movement of the Sorbs, which came into being in the first half of the 19th century, fought desperately against the liquidation of the Sorbian language, of Sorbian poetry and of the Sorbian secular literature created during the 18th century.

After the treaty of Versailles, the Sorbs were not even technically recognized as a national minority, because they had no state outside of Germany with which they could claim a close affinity. They had no representative in the Reichstag. To counter Germanizing policies, the Sorbs set up two organizations: the Domowina (Homeland) and Sokol (Falcon). The main purpose of the Domowina was the development of national life and the publication of Sorbian literature, while the Sokol was chiefly a sports organization which, nevertheless, also helped in the awakening of national consciousness among the Sorbs. With the rise to power of the Nazis, the situation of the Sorbs deteriorated drastically. Almost all Sorbian organizations, including Domowina and Sokol were closed down, and the use of the Sorbian language was forbidden in public.

It is little wonder that the Sorbs, so long and so consistently persecuted, should have developed a very reserved character. The Sorbian peasantry is known for its great conservatism and deep religious feelings, and they have preserved many ancient Slavic traditions. Not the least of their treasures is their very old Slavic tongue, which still preserves the dual number in both declension and conjugation, and the aorist tense.

Modern Sorbian is divided into two main literary languages—Upper Sorbian and Lower Sorbian—which are based on the two main groups of dialects centered on Bautzen and Cottbus respectively. These dialects (scholars are still not in agreement whether to call these linguistic groups languages or dialects) are very similar in grammar and vocabulary, but their underlying phonological structure is somewhat different. So, unless one has studied their sound systems, the speaker or reader of one dialect does not always immediately understand the other dialect's speech or writing. However, with elementary study, one is able to read both dialects without difficulty. Past studies have shown that differences between the two must have started developing as early as the 13th century.

Fortunately for the Sorbs, the past and present leaders of the GDR have realized what a great loss it would be to the Slavic world and indeed to the world at large, if this smallest of Slavic



Traditional Sorbian wedding costume.
(photo: General German News Service—Main
Office/German Democratic Republic 10/84)

The Sorbs - continued



Sorbs pass on their handicraft skills.
(photo: General German News Service-
Main Office/German Democratic Republic
10/84)

nations were allowed to quietly disappear from the face of Europe. It is to their great credit that they have gone out of their way to insure the continued growth and development of the Sorbian language today.

The Sorbian language is now officially recognized in the administrative and judicial bodies of the areas in which the Sorbs live. Signs in these areas indicate the names of localities in both the Sorbian and German language.

The Domowina, mentioned previously, resumed its activities a mere two days after the surrender of Nazi Germany (on May 10, 1945). The Domowina runs its own publishing house, which presently publishes eight Sorbian-language newspapers. Radio GDR also has a Sorbian-language department, which broadcasts several hours a week in Sorbian.

The cultivation of the Sorbian language and culture, which was previously suppressed, is now given due respect in the GDR. There are six 10-year secondary schools in which the language of instruction is Sorbian. At an additional fifty schools, the curriculum includes Sorbian language instruction. In addition, there are two extended secondary schools where Sorbs may acquire university entrance level using their native tongue. Also, all schools in the bilingual regions of the GDR must teach the young people the history and culture of the Sorbian nation. There are also two special schools where adults who no longer know their native language, and who may be unfamiliar with their own people's heritage, can learn the Sorbian language or take courses on the history and culture of the Sorbian nation.

Textbooks for these Sorbian schools are published by the Domowina publishing house. Sorbian teachers are trained at the Sorbian Training Institute in Bautzen and at the Institute for Sorbian Studies in Leipzig. There is a journal, "Serbska Sula", which informs readers of the latest findings in Sorbian language instruction.

Under these good circumstances, the Sorbian culture has been able to blossom. Since the end of the Second World War, a new generation of Sorbian writers, artists, and intellectuals has risen. In the various professional associations of the GDR there are working groups of Sorbian writers, artists, musicians and film-makers. Between 1976 and 1980, these Sorbs have created, among other things, 125 works of art, 220 musical compositions and six films dealing with Sorbian subjects.

There are also 150 Sorbian folk art circles and interest groups, a museum of Sorbian culture and history and festivals. The Domowina regularly brings out Sorbian language literature as well as books on the Sorbs in German. The Institute for Sorbian Studies, attached to the Cultural Institute for History of the Academy of Sciences of the GDR devotes itself exclusively to the study of Sorbian history, folklore, language, literature and music.

This is one very small minority language group that, with genuine government concern and help, will, I believe survive well into the 21st century with its colorful, unique and flourishing culture. The French government could learn from the German example here and show similar concern for its own beleaguered minority languages and cultures (e.g., Breton). These are irreplaceable national treasures that should be jealously guarded and protected for the benefit of all.

Paul Nedwell

Breton Road Signs . . .

I have recieved the following appeal from the Celtic League which merits inclusion in this newsletter. It will not only give readers an accurate update on the situation of action in favor of Breton language road signs in Brittany, but will also give some suggestions for ways individuals can support Bretons working to give their language a public place - Lois Kuter

CELTIC LEAGUE APPEAL

The Celtic League would like to draw international attention to the case of several Bretons who have been sentenced or are to be tried for their part in the campaign of the cultural association **Stourm ar Brezhoneg** to win official status for the Breton Language. Similar non-violent campaigns were carried out successfully in the 1930's by the Flemings and in the 1970's by the Welsh **Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg**. Stourm ar Brezhoneg has concentrated its action, started almost two years ago, on getting the French Department of Transport, which is responsible in this field, to put up bilingual road signs with the placenames in their correct Breton form as well as in the hitherto exclusively used and often grotesque Frenchified form. They systematically daubed the corrupt form.

Until quite recently, the only official response to Stourm ar Brezhoneg was to prosecute its members. H. Barry and D. Guesdon were sentenced each to 4 months jail and a 10,000 franc fine. Herve Kerrain and Joelle Barzhig were fined 2,000 francs each. Herve ar Bihan and Iwan Kadored, both from Gwened/Vannes, were tried in March 1985. They appealed. One September 23rd, they were fined 7,000 francs each in Roazhon/Rennes: an aggravated penalty out of all proportion to the material damage caused. As in previous cases, they were silenced when they tried to speak in Breton in Court. So were their witnesses, among whom Dr. Per Denez, from the Rennes University Celtic department. No one was "heard" on the defence side.

Other Stourm ar Brezhoneg members, Ph. Launay, Y. Riviere, P. Herve, G. W. Bihannic and probably H. ar Beg, are due for trial shortly. The recent verdicts suggest that increasingly heavy sentences may be imposed in an attempt to break Stourm ar Brezhoneg. Yet President Giscard d'Estaing's government in 1978 acknowledged solemnly that the Bretons were entitled to preserve their cultural "personality". Mr. F. Mitterrand, just before his election, spoke of the "right to be different" and of "historic reparation". Last August, Mr. J. Lang, Culture Minister, said that bilingual road signs would be allowed if the department councils wanted them and if the local communities paid for them. The Regional Council decided this month to allocate a restricted amount of money to such a scheme if and where the department councils agreed. It remains to be seen if such assurances will be acted upon (Mr. Lang was contradicted by the Minister of Transport shortly after his speech, and the Regional Council has in mind only the signposts just outside the towns).

However, it amounts to an admission that the Stourm ar Brezhoneg action was perfectly justified. Had it not been for it, the meek law-abiding demands would have fallen on deaf ears.

WHY THEN SHOULD STOURM AR BREZHONEG MEMBERS BE PROSECTUED OR PENALIZED?

Our Appeal

We in the Celtic League appeal to you, as we believe that you are concerned about the future of the Breton language and that no language can survive nowadays unless it is given official status, to help in getting the sentences imposed on Herve Le Bihan and Yves Cadoret (using the forms of their names under which they were tried) quashed and the prosecutions against the other Stourm ar Brezhoneg members stopped.

You can do so—by writing in their behalf to the French Ambassador in your country (or in the State in which you live) asking him to convey your expression of support to the French President; also by writing to your elected representatives, and to the executive councils of any organization you may belong to, asking them to write also to the relevant French ambassador; and finally by writing to the editors of newspapers and periodicals likely to publish this appeal.

In our opinion, the main points to be stressed are:

- the Bretons are entitled to their language; to survive, this must be given equal validity with French in Brittany;
- in other countries, bilingual road signs exist, they are not deemed to be an unreasonable burden on the public purse, they cause no inconvenience to motorists; it is less expensive to put up correct signs than replacing daubed ones.
- the sentences imposed are based on an unjust state of affairs and should be quashed.

It would be useful to send copies of the letters to Stourm ar Brezhoneg (Ti K.S.G., 21 rue des Tribunaux, F-56000 Vannes, France) so that they are kept informed of the representations made and they may give them publicity which will encourage the Bretons to stand for their rights.

International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language

THE U.S. BRANCH OF THE ICDBL

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

OFFICERS: Lenora A. Timm, President
Lois Kuter, Secretary-Treasurer
General Editor, Bro Nevez

BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Christine Renee C. Forster
Reun ar C'halan
James W. Kerr
Dennis King
Alastair B. Kyle
Nathalie Novik

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

MEMBERSHIP

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

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

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

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

Lois Kuter
143 Plymouth Road
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

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

NEWSLETTER OF THE U.S. ICDBL - BRO NEVEZ

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

SUBSCRIPTION

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

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

ADVERTISING IN BRO NEVEZ

Advertising in Bro Nevez not only makes you better known to our 300 to 350 readers, but helps us to finance an upgrade in duplication processes.

Rates: 1/2 page = \$30 for 1st insertion.
1/4 page = \$20 for 1st insertion.
1/8 page = \$10 for 1st insertion.

Note that rates go down with repetition of ads. Write for details.

ICDBL members receive a 20% discount on prices; newsletter subscribers receive a 10% discount.

Classified Ads:

2 lines (1/2 page column) \$1.00; 50¢ for each repeat.

3 lines - \$2.00 first time; \$1.00 each repeat.

4 lines - \$3.00 first time; \$2.00 each repeat.

more lines - see advertising rates above.

Deadlines: January 20th for February issue.
April 20th for May issue.
July 20th for August issue.
October 20th for November issue.

All advertising must be camera-ready copy; classified ads should be typed if possible. A check or money order (made out to "Lois Kuter/ICDBL") must accompany the advertisement or classified ad.

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

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

Name: _____

Address: _____

☐ I would like to join the U.S. ICDBL:

Circle one: Voting Member (\$10/year)

Non-Voting Member (\$9/year)

☐ I would liketo subscribe to Bro Nevez.
(Note: subscription included in membership dues)

Enclosed is \$8 U.S. Canada

\$12 Overseas Surface Mail

\$15 Overseas Airmail

U.S. Branch of the
International Committee for the
Defense of the Breton Language
143 Plymouth Road
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

BULK RATE
U.S. Postage Paid
Permit No. 101
Plymouth Meeting,
PA 19462

BRO NEVEZ - Newsletter of the U.S. ICDBL NUMBER 18 - FEBRUARY 1986

	page		page
Editor's Note	2	Record Reviews - L. Kuter	32-37
The Diwan Colloquium on Bilingualism	3-6	Tammles, Embarquement immédiat	
The Diwan Schools - The Question of Survival		Ti Jaz	
L. Kuter	6-9	Dan ar Bras, Musique pour les	
An Introduction to Children's Literature in		silences à venir	
the Breton Language - L. Kuter	10-17	Kornog, Ar Seizh Avel	
- Editions 'An Here' - B. Le Nail	10-13	Tours, festou-noz	
- Other Publishers of Children's Books	13-17	A Debut in the U.S.: Bleizi Ruz	38
Across Breton Literature: Three Women--		To Alan Stivell - A poem by P. Nedwell	38
Part 2: Vefa de Bellaing - by Y. Bouéssel		The 'Coop Breizh' - L. Kuter	39
du Bourg	18-19	New York Bretons celebrate the 30th	
A Dictionary of Breton Composers - L. Kuter	19	anniversary of 'Le Stade Breton' -	
An Emsav e Romantoù Roparz Hémon -		N. Novik	40
R. ar C'halan	20	Ar Gegin: Breton Drinks - N. Novik	40-42
Legendary Brittany: The Ankou and his		Question: Breton Saints	42
Partner - G. Stump	21-26	Breton at the Summer Language Institute	
Book Reviews:	27-31	UCSC - G. Hamel	43
A. Deshayes, Noms de famille bretons,		Some Celtic Conferences:	44-46
by L. Timm	27-29	Kentucky Foreign Language Conf.	
D. Giraudon, Chansons populaires de Basse-		Celtic Colloquium Conference, Calif.	
Bretagne sur feuilles volants, by L. Kuter	30	North American Congress of Celtic	
P. Denez, Glas evel daoulagad c'hlas na oant		Studies, Ottawa	
ket ma re, by N. Novik	30	The Celtic Peoples - Copenhagen	
R. Lima, The Olde Ground, by L. Kuter	31	News of Non-Celtic Languages: The Sorbs-	
Carn - L. Kuter	31	P. Nedwell	47-49