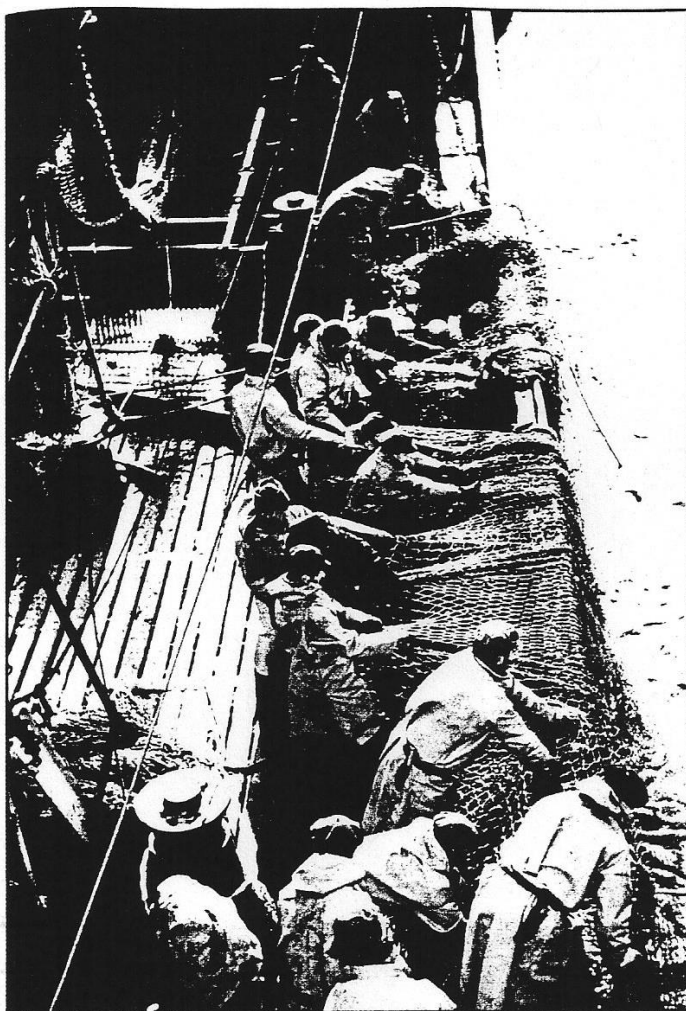


BRO NEVEZ

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



Les hommes tirent sur le chalut. Photographie André Tonnerre.

see page 26

KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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BRO NEVEZ

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The U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language (U.S. ICDBL) was incorporated as a not-for-profit corporation on October 20, 1981.

Bro Nevez ("new country" in the Breton language) is the newsletter of the U.S. ICDBL. It is published quarterly: February, May, August and November. Contributions, letters to the Editor, and ideas are welcome from all readers and will be printed at the discretion of the Editors. Suggested deadlines for receipt of contributions for Bro Nevez are: January 20, April 20, July 20, and October 20.

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

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Voting Membership:	\$18.00 (calendar year)
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The U.S. ICDBL provides Bro Nevez on a complimentary basis to a number of language and cultural organizations in Brittany; in some instances we are also very happy to establish an exchange of publications.

THANK YOU TO U.S. ICDBL MEMBERS AND BRO NEVEZ SUBSCRIBERS

The U.S. ICDBL is not a massive organization, BUT we have a remarkably loyal membership. I would like to thank those individuals who have supported the U.S. ICDBL, and through this, the Breton language and culture, for a long number of years. All of the following are current members and subscribers (with just three exceptions who I hope will renew soon!). I have added their state of residence since this shows just how widely known the U.S. ICDBL has become. And not only are 28 different states and provinces of Canada represented, but we have a pretty even balance of men and women supporting the cause of the Breton language with 27 women and 38 men who have supported the U.S. ICDBL for at least five years.

The following individuals have been with the U.S. ICDBL for **FIVE OR MORE YEARS**:

Eoghan Ballard	Pennsylvania
Nancy Dorian	Maine
Robert Felix (9 years)	South Carolina
Donald Firth	Ontario, Canada
Mahlon Henderson	Florida
Kathi Hochberg	New York
John Hanley	Virginia
Ruta Jancys	Illinois
Phyllis Kadle	Ohio
Ellin Kelly	Ohio
Christine Leahy	North Carolina
Ed McDonald	Indiana
Keith and Rusty McNeil	California
Allen Murphy	Indiana
Gordon Peters	New York
Mike Rackers	Ohio
Jan Robinson	California
Kenneth Rogers	Rhode Island
Anthony Sutherland	Pennsylvania
John Trexler	North Carolina
Jan Zollars	Texas

While five years of support shows a solid commitment, the following people have supported the U.S. ICDBL for over **TEN YEARS**:

David Brule	Massachusetts
Jay Callahan	Vermont
Doris Creegan	New York
Anne Enslow	New Jersey
Brian Frykenberg	Massachusetts
Neil Garrity	Ohio

more!! on the next page

TEN YEAR supporters of the U.S. ICDBL - continued

Rodger Griffin	New York
Stephen Griffin	Massachusetts
Richard Herr	California
Lani Herrmann	California
Roderick Jacobs	Hawaii
Michael Kane	Massachusetts
Jim Kerr	Alabama
Alexei Kondratiev	New York
Leon and Barbara Kuter	Pennsylvania
Serge Laine	Texas
Jean and Huguette Le Gall	Georgia
Joel Le Gall	Pennsylvania
Cheryl Mitchell	Maryland
Paul and Elizabeth Nedwell	New York
Judith Pendleton	Iowa
Mary Primel	Georgia
Gregory Stump	Kentucky
Laurie Zaring	Ohio

The U.S. Branch of the ICDBL began in 1981—**FIFTEEN YEARS** ago. And the following individuals have supported us **SINCE THE BEGINNING**:

Ellen Badone	Ontario, Canada
Daniel Calvez	South Carolina
Mary-Jesse Cosnard de Closets	Connecticut
Real de Melogue	Illinois
Christine Forster Inga	Connecticut and now Sweden
Gweltaz Hamel	California
John M. Jones	New Jersey
Javan Kienzle	Michigan
Dinah LeHoven	California
Evan Parker	Maryland
Genevieve Ray	California
Edgar Slotkin	Ohio
Thomas Standeven	Washington
Lenora Timm	California
Amy Varin	Colorado

and of course me, **Lois Kuter** Pennsylvania

While the importance of international work to show support the future of the Breton language and culture is very well shown by the commitment of all of the names listed above, the U.S. ICDBL also counts on new members each year who support us and I would like to thank all the other members and subscribers who are part of the U.S. ICDBL and its first fifteen years of work.

THE PRESIDENT OF FRANCE TO THE DEFENSE OF BRETON

During his visit to Finistère at the end of May, French President Jacques Chirac had some encouraging words for the regional languages of France and stated that in principle he was in favor of France signing the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. And this meant it was time for the U.S. ICDBL (as well as a number of organizations and individuals in Brittany) to send off a note to the President to congratulate him for this stand and to encourage swift action. And I assured him that the development of Breton in the schools and public life of Brittany was in the best interests of defending France from the invasion of the English language.

While in the past we have not always received a response to letters from the U.S. ICDBL to French government Ministers or the President of France, I did get a response quickly assuring us that with the authority of the Prime Minister, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry for European Affairs were studying the conditions under which France could sign the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages. We were also assured by the "Chef de Cabinet," Annie LHeritier, that while the President intended to promote Francophonism to fight against the risk of cultural uniformity that is linked to the evolution of communication technologies, he held the conviction that linguistic diversity is a strong element of the cultural identity of Europe. And in defense of the regional languages of France like Breton, hadn't he stated when he was in Quimper: "Each culture is precious and a culture expresses itself through a language. That is the reason why these languages must also be considered precious."

Both letters are reprinted below with some news clippings documenting President Chirac's trip to Brittany.

Le Monde
31 mai 1996

En Bretagne, Jacques Chirac défend les langues régionales

Lors de la première journée de sa visite dans le Finistère,
le chef de l'Etat s'est livré à un vibrant plaidoyer
en faveur des identités régionales

QUIMPER

de notre envoyé spécial

La Bretagne, à sa manière, est toujours à la pointe du combat régionaliste. C'est en tout cas chez elle qu'un pas important a été franchi, mercredi 29 mai, lors de la première journée de la visite de Jacques Chirac dans le Finistère : le président de la République a reconnu la nécessité de défendre les identités régionales et, surtout, de permettre aux langues régionales de vivre à côté du français.

Autour de la table du dîner, à la préfecture de Quimper, il y avait les douze parlementaires du département, Yvon Bourges, président (RPR) du conseil régional, Bernard Poignant, maire (PS) de la ville, et Jean-Pierre Denis, secrétaire général adjoint de la présidence de la République. La question a été soulevée par Jean-Yves Cozan, député centriste : pourquoi la France ne ratifie-t-elle pas la convention sur la protection des langues régionales proposée par le Conseil de l'Europe (*Le Monde* du 21 mai) ? Les deux socialistes présents, Louis Le Pensec et Bernard Poignant, ont plaidé dans le même sens.

La réponse de M. Chirac a surpris certains de ses hôtes. Certes, avant de signer ce texte, il faut l'examiner de près, a-t-il expliqué, mais il s'est dit en parfait accord avec le principe défendu par cette convention. Le président de la République a alors prononcé une

belle plaidoirie pour les identités régionales et a comparé la situation des langues régionales vis-à-vis du français à celle du français vis-à-vis de l'anglais.

Sa visite à la mairie de Quimper, en fin d'après-midi, lui avait permis par avance de dire ce qu'il pensait de la présence dominante d'une seule langue. M. Poignant lui avait fait la surprise d'installer un terminal branché sur Internet, en le prévenant qu'ainsi tout ce qu'il dirait serait immédiatement porté à la connaissance de la diaspora bretonne du monde entier. Manifestement passionné, M. Chirac est resté un long moment les yeux rivés sur l'écran mondial, puis il a expliqué que les Français devaient prendre possession de cet outil en évitant qu'il ne serve à étendre la domination de l'anglais.

CIVILITÉ RÉPUBLICAINE

L'échange entre le maire, membre de l'opposition, et le chef de l'Etat, a été un modèle de civilité républicaine. M. Poignant s'est présenté en « maire de tous les Quimpérois accueillant le président de tous les Français » ; a offert à son hôte une statuette chinoise du XVII^e siècle ; a fait une présentation des dossiers bretons qu'en aparté, M. Bourges a trouvée remarquable ; a guidé, enfin, M. Chirac dans un bain de foule de la mairie à la préfecture.

Le dîner a été conforme à cette image. Comme souvent, les élus

bretons ont fait bloc pour défendre les dossiers de leur région. Au cours d'un long tour de table où, fidèle à ses habitudes, M. Chirac a écouté plus qu'il n'a apporté de réponses, tous les dossiers ont été soulevés, le débat se concluant souvent par une adresse au secrétaire général adjoint de l'Elysée : « Jean-Pierre, il va falloir regarder cela rapidement ! » Le chef de l'Etat a assuré Bertrand Cousin, député (RPR) élu à Brest, qu'il suivra personnellement le dossier de l'arsenal, afin que soient trouvées de nouvelles charges de travail en compensation de ce que lui retire le projet de programmation militaire. Il s'est prononcé en faveur d'un statut particulier pour les îles qui parsèment les côtes françaises.

Sur une question de M. Le Pensec, M. Chirac s'est livré à une vaste fresque de l'« évolution du temps de travail » depuis le Neandertal, assurant qu'il sent le gouvernement réticent devant cette idée, mais qu'il faut pourtant avancer dans cette voie. Toutefois, pour prouver sa solidarité avec ses ministres, il a fait rire ses convives en traitant Alphonse Arzel, sénateur centriste, qui vient de faire condamner Corinne Lepage, le ministre de l'environnement, à rembourser une partie des honoraires perçus du temps où elle était l'avocate des communes victimes de l'Amoco-Cadiz, de « pickpocket ».

Thierry Bréhier

PRÉSIDENCE
DE LA
RÉPUBLIQUE

Le Chef du Cabinet
SC/E & A/J70932

Paris, le 18 JUL 1996

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

le 20 juin 1996

Monsieur le Président de la République Française, Jacques Chirac
Palais de l'Elysée
75000 PARIS
FRANCE

Monsieur le Président,

Je vous écris pour vous congratuler de votre discours du fin mai en Bretagne en faveur des langues et des identités régionales. Et j'espère que la France ratifiera la Charte Européenne des langues régionales ou minoritaires le plus tôt qui soit possible.

J'ai suivi la situation de la langue bretonne et la renaissance de la culture bretonne depuis vingt ans, et je trouve en Bretagne un esprit de fierté et d'ouverture culturel qui permet et qui encourage le dynamisme économique qu'on voit dans l'agriculture et l'électronique. En suivant le développement des écoles Diwan et des classes bilingues dans les écoles publiques et privées, je vois aussi le développement des moyens pour soutenir la diversité culturelle de la France et pour éviter une présence dominante de l'anglais. Je vous assure que les Américains qui voyagent en France n'ont pas envie de trouver un double des Etats Unis ... même si on le parle mal, on attend à communiquer en français ... et en Bretagne on attend à entendre et à voir aussi la langue bretonne. Les langues et les cultures divers de l'Europe sont des richesses à encourager.

I hope you have been able to read my poorly written French. It is easier to learn to speak it than to write it. Again, I congratulate you on your comments in favor of the regional languages and cultures which give France its greatness and which will help France remain a world leader.

Respectfully,

Lois Kuter, PhD
Secretary for the U.S. Branch
International Committee for the Defense
of the Breton Language

169 Greenwood Avenue, B-4
Jenkintown, PA 19046
U.S.A.

Monsieur le Secrétaire,

Le Président de la République m'a confié le soin de répondre à votre lettre, par laquelle vous souhaitez que la France signe la Charte du Conseil de l'Europe sur les langues régionales ou minoritaires.

Monsieur Jacques CHIRAC comprend, croyez-le bien, les raisons de votre démarche.

De même qu'il entend promouvoir la francophonie pour lutter contre le risque d'uniformisation culturelle liée à l'évolution des techniques de la communication, le Chef de l'Etat a, tout autant, la conviction que la diversité linguistique est un élément fort de l'identité culturelle européenne.

Ainsi qu'il l'a déclaré lors de sa récente visite à Quimper : "Chaque culture est précieuse et une culture s'exprime au travers d'une langue. C'est la raison pour laquelle ces langues doivent être aussi considérées comme précieuses".

Aussi, la Présidence de la République a demandé au Ministère des Affaires Etrangères et au Ministre délégué chargé des Affaires Européennes d'étudier, sous l'autorité du Premier Ministre, les conditions dans lesquelles la France pourrait signer cette Charte.

Veillez agréer, Monsieur le Secrétaire, l'expression de mes sentiments les meilleurs.



Annie LHERITIER

Monsieur Lois KUTER
Secrétaire de la Branche Américaine
du Comité International pour la Défense
de la Langue Bretonne
169, Greenwood Avenue, B-4
JENKINTOWN, PA 19046
ETATS-UNIS D'AMERIQUE

Ouest-France 1-2/6/96

Le président de la République reviendra à Brest le 14 juin pour parler de l'av Les encouragements de Chirac au F

Le voyage de Jacques Chirac s'est achevé hier par une conférence de presse. Le chef de l'Etat a une nouvelle fois fait l'éloge du dynamisme finistérien, s'est engagé à défendre les langues régionales et a réaffirmé la grande ambition maritime de la France. Il sera à Brest le 14 juin pour parler de l'arsenal, y compris avec les syndicats.

«Le Finistère est un des plus beaux et des plus dynamiques départements de notre pays. Sa caractéristique est son esprit de conquête, un esprit que j'espère voir triompher partout.» Durant son voyage, Jacques Chirac n'a

pas été avare d'éloges sur les Finistériens. Au moment du départ, il a repris les propos qu'il avait tenus à son arrivée, signe que ce petit périples en Finistère ne l'a pas déçu.

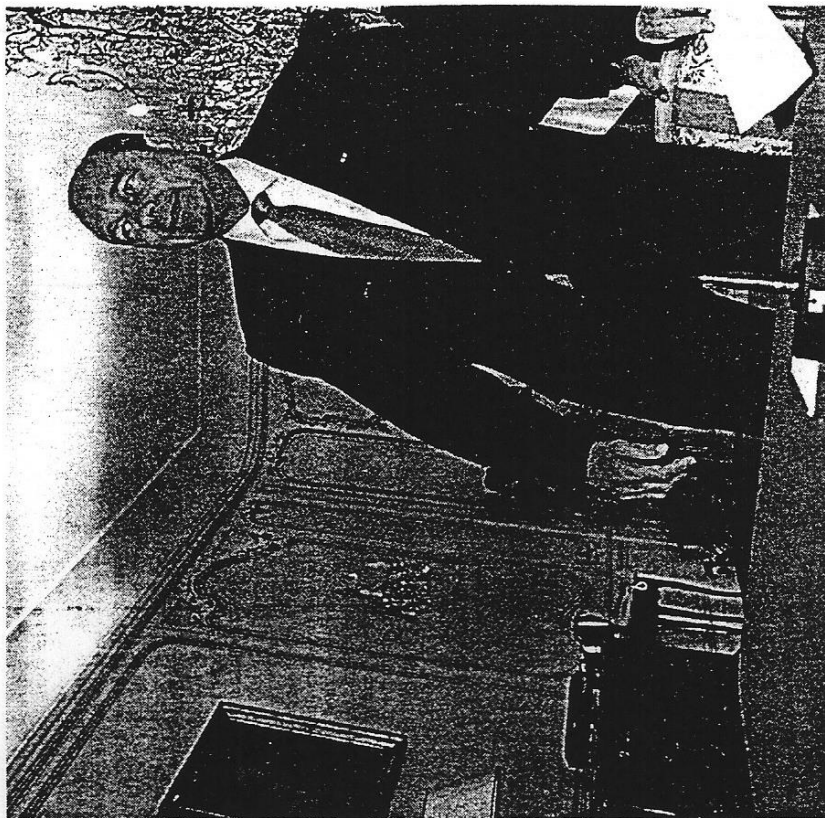
Il a été frappé notamment par le dynamisme de l'agriculture. «Les agriculteurs du Finistère sont des créateurs d'emplois, ils en créent environ 300 par an, ce qui est un peu étonnant. Ils recrutent aujourd'hui dans les milieux urbains et péri-urbains. Le secteur agro-alimentaire est également performant, mais il se trouve confronté à des problèmes, comme ça a toujours été le cas. Le secteur des légumes doit faire face à une concurrence parfois déshonnête, due aux fluctuations monétaires. Les cours de la viande bovine ont

baissé après la crise de la vache folle. Des mesures ont déjà été prises pour compenser la perte des éleveurs, d'autres mesures sont à l'étude au plan national et européen.»

«Chaque langue est précieuse»

Interrogé sur la charte des langues régionales, Jacques Chirac répond : «La question de cette charte a été évoquée devant moi par le député Jean-Yves Cozan, qui a fait beaucoup dans ce domaine qui lui tient à cœur. J'ai toujours été favorable au maintien et au développement des langues régionales qui sont l'expression de cultures. J'invite les autres européens, hispanophones, lusophones et autres, à s'associer pour défendre avec énergie nos langues contre le risque d'uniformisation culturelle due aux nouveaux réseaux d'information. Chaque culture est précieuse. Elle s'exprime à travers une langue. C'est pourquoi ces langues doivent être considérées comme précieuses.»

Interrogé sur le fait qu'il n'ait pas rencontré de délégation de l'arsenal de Brest durant sa visite, Jacques Chirac répond : «Je viens dans deux semaines à Brest, le 14 juin. Je rencontrerai alors les représentants des travailleurs de la DCN. J'ai la volonté de faire en sorte que cette restructuration soit conforme à la dignité des travailleurs et aboutisse au maintien d'une industrie performante dans le domaine des constructions navales.»



Le Finistère est un des plus beaux et des plus dynamiques départements de notre pays.



300 personnes venues manifester à l'appel de la CGT et de la FSU. Un peu plus tard, la CFDT a réuni une cinquantaine de personnes. Les syndicats ont peu mobilisé pour la visite de Jacques Chirac.

ONE STEP FORWARD ... TWO STEPS BACK

One has to wonder about the sincerity of the French President's concern for regional languages when at the same time he is making nice speeches, the French Ministry of Culture specifically excludes these languages from its financial support of regional weekly publications. While limiting support to French-only publications would exclude some publishers in Brittany from applying for assistance, it was the editor of a paper in the Occitan language who described the outrage felt with this discriminatory policy. Here is a translation of an open letter from David Grosclaude, the editor of **La Setmana**.

LA SETMANA
B.P. 86
64230 Lescar
tel. 59 68 66 79
fax: 59 68 67 17

June 11, 1996

No Aid for Weeklies not Written in the French Language

In 1995 the government made the decision to assist the weekly regional press as it had done for daily papers. A budget of five million francs was to go for direct assistance to regional weeklies. It seems that this budget is to be regulated by the Ministry of Culture.

We can only celebrate the fact that one wants to reinforce the pluralism and circulation of information.

But on May 16 the **Journal Officiel** published the decree outlining how the aid in question would be attributed. We were greatly surprised to see that in order for a weekly publication to receive aid it must be published in French. This linguistic criteria even figures first on the list.

Our weekly, **La Setmana**, published entirely in Occitan, thus cannot benefit from this public financial aid. That was confirmed to us by telephone when we asked the question of the Service Juridique et Technique de l'Information et de la Communication which is directly under the Prime Minister. In any case, there is no ambiguity to the wording of the decree.

We cannot accept a discrimination on the basis of linguistic criteria. Liberty of expression, pluralism, and freedom of information do not go together with politics which deny linguistic and cultural diversity.

We ask the public powers, and in particular the Minister of Culture, in the name of what principles he can accept that such linguistic discrimination can be established when it concerns the right to free expression.

Certainly the financial aid that one could expect from this budget would not be very significant, but there are principles that must be respected.

If they are not respected then we are led to believe that our readers are second class citizens, that the fact that we do not do our work in French makes us sub-journalists and that there are such things as sub-languages.

We call on all people who believe in the freedom of expression, in equality and the right to inform, to get in contact with us. We envision a court case in order to force respect of our right to inform through the Occitan language without being penalized.

David Grosclaude, cap redacteur de La Setmana

BRITTANY LOSES TWO WARRIORS

In May and June Brittany lost two of its most ardent defenders: writer Yann Bouessel du Bourg and poet/singer/bard Glenmor. Both passionately defended Brittany and its culture in periods when this was by no means a popular thing to do. Both used the power of the pen and word to provoke others to learn and to think.

YANN BOUESSEL DU BOURG

Yann Bouessel du Bourg died on May 24, 1996, at the age of 71. An intellectual in the best sense of the word, one could find book reviews and short notes by Yann Bouessel du Bourg regularly in a number of Breton magazines (l'Avenir de la Bretagne, Gwenn-ha-Du, Imbourc'h, Carn, and others). He seemed to have read every book published in Brittany and was an expert on Breton history and literature.

I first began a correspondence with Yann Bouessel du Bourg in May 1982, when Reun ar C'halan suggested that he would be interested in the work of the U.S. ICDBL, our newsletter, and a copy of letters we had written to then French President Mitterrand and Ministers Savary and Lang. While Yann Bouessel du Bourg learned Breton as a second language and published very little in it, the first few letters I received from him were in Breton. He was anxious to pay for a subscription to the U.S. ICDBL newsletter and offered to send us some articles. Indeed, we published a wonderful series of his articles (translated from French by Reun ar C'halan) called "Across Breton Literature: Three Women." Published in Bro Nevez 17, 18 and 19 in 1985 and 1986, these presented Anjela Duval, Vefa de Bellaing and Naig Rozmor.

Yann Bouessel du Bourg sent us a second article which I expected to publish in the August 1986 issue of Bro Nevez, but it never got published. I have relocated this text and was quite surprised to find that it features none other than Glenmor. It is quite fitting to include this text in this issue of Bro Nevez--both a photocopy of the handwritten version in French as well as my translation into English.

But first, it seemed like it would be interesting to reprint an exchange of letters between me and Yann Bouessel du Bourg. While very apologetic of his English, you will see from his letter that Yann Bouessel du Bourg was able to express himself quite well in this language. And while there is nothing particularly brilliant in my return letter, it provides an interesting snapshot of a growing vitality in Breton culture in the mid-1980s. And, you will get a glimpse of what Lois Kuter was up to ten years ago.

Rennes - 20-1-1986

Dear Miss Kuter,

I am really full of shame because it was to me to send you my wishes for the new year. Please receive them: Bloavezh mat ha yec'hed mat hag ar Baradoz e fin ho puhez. Thank you very much for "Bro Nevez" safely arrived two weeks ago or so and always so interesting. Thank you for publishing my articles. Here is another one for later on when the rest is done, and forgive me for my bad English. I have no opportunity and no time to practice it now and it comes to be like paralyzed, awakening for a little moment after a long winter sleep.

With my best and respectful wishes and thanks and congratulations for all you do for our culture and language.

Yann Bouessel du Bourg

While most of my limited correspondence with Yann Bouessel du Bourg was in French, I seemed encouraged by his excellent command of English and took the lazy way out by sending a response in English.

April 19, 1986
Plymouth Meeting, PA

Dear Yann Bouessel du Bourg,

It has been quite some time since I received your New Year's wishes and your contribution on "Singers and Poets." I will be happy to use this contribution. You indicated that it would include a portrait of both Glenmor and Youenn Gwernig, but the page I received included only Glenmor. It is short enough that I could include both portraits together, so I would appreciate it if you would send along the presentation of Youenn Gwernig also. I will plan to use this in the August issue of Bro Nevez, so I would not need it until early July.

I am happy to send you issues of Bro Nevez. I am afraid I will probably have to send them by surface mail. They have gotten so big now that it is very expensive to send copies to Brittany by air mail. Our efforts are certainly very modest compared to the very high quality of reviews now coming out of Brittany. Breizh and Musique Bretonne have been particularly interesting to me in their coverage of Breton music and culture. Certainly Dalc'homp Sonj! serves as a wonderful model as an excellent and very varied magazine on Breton history. I have just received the first issue of Ar Men and it is extraordinary. Of course, Le Chasse Marée would lead one to expect nothing less. All of these magazines--written not just for scholars but for everyone--are very important in allowing Bretons to discover their own history and contemporary culture.

I cannot make this a long letter. It has been a very busy spring for me. I was fortunate to be able to go to the North American Congress of Celtic Studies in Ottawa, and will also be giving a paper at the annual conference of the American Council for Irish Studies to be held in Boston. I hope to be able to meet Reun ar C'halan, but my trip will be very short. We have corresponded for a long time, but so far we have not had the chance to meet. The United States is a big country. This spring I am also teaching a class at night on Celtic music. This only lasts for five weeks (meeting one time each week), but it has required a great deal of work to prepare. I am also continuing to do a radio series on Breton music and will be giving the 17th program of the series tomorrow. that program will feature Bleizi Ruz. They will be touring in the U.S. in May and will have a concert in this area. We look forward to having them here. Breton musicians have done very good work to introduce Brittany to Americans. In fact, the tours by Alan Stivell, Dan ar Braz and Kornog have done far more than the ICDBL to present Brittany and its culture. Bleizi Ruz should also be good. Breton music seems to be popular here, but it has taken a lot of work by touring musicians to build audiences. It is not easy to tour here.

I hope we will continue to see more groups come to the U.S. It is a good introduction to Brittany. Many people develop a genuine interest in Brittany after they are introduced through the music.

Best wishes,
Lois Kuter

Now that it has been ten years since those letters were exchanged and I have put aside Yann Bouessel du Bourg's article on Breton singers and poets, it seems time to publish it. While the handwritten version may be hard to read, those who read French will find an eloquence that my translation lacks.

Chanteurs et poètes

Un des aspects les plus étonnants de la vitalité de la culture bretonne est certainement cette efflorescence de chanteurs, tant en breton qu'en français qui va éclater à la fin des années 50, après la percée de Glenmor.

Dans son volumineux ouvrage de beaucoup plus de 500 pages (*Chantes de tous les Bretons*, aux éditions Picollec), André Georges Hamon a répertorié des centaines de noms et nous donne 170 biographies de ces nouveaux bardes.

C'est dire l'importance de ce mouvement, extraordinaire résurgence, sous une forme très moderne, de ce qui est en Bretagne une profonde tradition et qui survit à l'effondrement de la civilisation paysanne.

Expression la plus authentique des sentiments de tout un peuple, de ses préoccupations de tous les jours, de ses souffrances et de ses rêves, de sa volonté de combattre pour retrouver sa liberté perdue.

Parmi ces bardes beaucoup de vrais poètes qui mériteraient une étude approfondie.

Je n'en citerai que deux comme témoins : Glenmor et Yvonne Guerinif.

Glenmor

Miliga Stann (Emile le Scann à l'Etat-civil) est né le 28 juin 1927 à Naef-Carhaix dans la Côte du Nord. Après des études secondaires et supérieures (il obtient un licence de philosophie), il sortira bien vite des sentiers battus, suivant l'appel de sa Destinée.

Bête et chanteur, en 1958, sous le nom de Glenmor (Terre et Mer), il monte en ligne, face à la foule, pour la défense de "Ce pays à qui, selon l'expression de Norman Lebesque, "on a volé ses propriétés et sa langue", ce pays qui "n'existe plus que par une poignée d'hommes passionnés".

Dans l'ancienne tradition bardique, musique et poésie étaient intimement liées, nées d'une même inspiration, le vers engendrant le chant et par le chant lui-même engendré.

Glenmor est le premier après la guerre à avoir retrouvé cette voix aussi vieille que nos origines pour chanter, en breton comme en français, la misère, les espoirs, la colère, le réveil de son peuple, déclenchant un mouvement irrésistible, à l'origine d'un véritable phénomène ^{de société} social quand on pense qu'André-Georges

Hamon a répertorié dans son ouvrage (" Chantres de toute la Bretagne ") près de 800 noms !

Le bard a vu l'él', sa chevelure grisonne mais, ni sa voix, ni ses vers n'ont rien perdu de leur vigueur, ses yeux bleus de leur transparence maritime.

L'Amour le guide. On peut regretter que Glenmor n'ait pas plus écrit en breton car ses vers inspirent, en notre langue une flamme, une résonnance qu'on ne saurait oublier, qui nous transporte en esprit en ces siècles glorieux où ses pareils menaient les nôtres au combat pour la liberté, pour l'honneur de l'homme.

Yann Bouërzel du Bourg

SINGERS AND POETS

One of the most surprising aspects of the vitality of Breton culture is certainly the efflorescence of singers, both in the Breton and French language, who burst forth at the end of the 1950s once Glenmor opened the way.

In his large work of more than 500 pages (Chantres de Toutes les Bretagnes, Editions Picollec), Andre Georges Hamon has indexed hundreds of names and gives us 170 biographies of these new bards.

This testifies to the scope of this movement and an extraordinary resurgence in a very modern form of a deep tradition in Brittany which survives the breakdown of peasant civilization. This is the most authentic expression of a people--an expression of their everyday preoccupations, their suffering and dreams, and the will to fight to regain their lost liberty.

There are many true poets among these bards who merit an in-depth study. I can cite here just two as examples: Glenmor and Youenn Gwernig.

Glenmor

Milig ar Skanv (Emile le Scanv officially) was born June 28, 1937 in Mael-Carhaix in the Cotes d'Armor. After secondary school and college (he obtained a degree in philosophy), he quickly left the beaten path to follow the call of destiny.

Poet and singer using the name Glenmor (Earth and Sea), he stepped to the front in 1958 facing up to hostile crowds to defend in the words of Morvan Lebesque "this country ... from which one has stolen its papers and its language," this country which "exists only through a handful of passionate men."

In ancient bardic tradition, music and poetry were intimately tied together. Born from the same inspiration, verses gave rise to song and was itself then the product of song.

Glenmor was the first in the post-war period to retake this route as old as our origins to sing. In Breton or French, his songs about misery, hope, anger, and the revival of his people set off an irresistible movement, and were at the origins of a societal phenomenon--as testified in Andre-Georges Hamon's work which lists nearly 800 names of musicians and singers.

This bard has aged and his hair has gotten grey, but neither his voice nor his verses have lost any of their vigor, nor his blue eyes their maritime transparency.

One could regret that Glenmor did not write more in Breton because his verses would ignite a flame in our language, strike a resonance that one could not forget, which would take us in spirit back to those glorious centuries when his equals led us in combat for liberty and for the honor of man.

Yann Bouessel du Bourg

GLENMOR

Glenmor died on June 18 at the age of 64. As Yann Bouessel du Bourg wrote ten years ago, Glenmor was a bard who led the way in the late 1950s as a poet and singer defending Brittany when this was certainly not a popular thing to do. His singing is described best as a recitation of poetry and Glenmor had a distinctive and strong voice that matched the ferocity and intensity of his verses. His songs evoked ancient Breton warriors such as Nevenoe, and urged Bretons to fight for the future of their country. Whether raging against injustice, Paris and politicians, or expressing love for the earth and the honest man, Glenmor always went right to the heart of a topic. And he insisted that Bretons stand up and fight for their country and the right for their language and culture to thrive. And it is fair to say that thanks to Glenmor's outrage and insistent voice, Bretons began to get the message. Others began to sing and speak out and the influence of Glenmor has not been forgotten. The fact that 4,000 people attended his funeral in the little town of Mael-Carhaix is testimony to the importance this bard has played in inspiring Bretons to stand up and fight.

Les Bretons unanimes saluent la mémoire d'une voix forte

Glenmor est mort hier soir à Quimperlé

(Lire également en fin de journal)

Glenmor, Millig ar Scanv à l'État-civil s'est éteint hier soir à Quimperlé à l'âge de 64 ans. Il a fait du Landerneen Hervé Le Borgne son exécuteur testamentaire. Hervé Le Borgne préside l'association An Distro qui s'occupe de la publication d'une discographie intégrale de Glenmor, dont les obsèques seront célébrées samedi à Maël-Carhaix où il était né. La disparition du vieux lion de Glomel plonge la Bretagne dans le deuil. De Jean-Yves Cozan, à Dan à Braz, les hommages sont unanimes pour saluer une « voix forte ».

Gilles Servat, l'idée d'insoumission : « J'ai rencontré Glenmor très tôt, à l'île de Groix. Il a eu pour moi une belle parole, que j'ai surprise, il disait : « Qui a dit que le bardisme était mort ? » Millig avait deux visages : d'un côté il faisait la grosse voix, racontait des choses incroyables, assénait des trucs énormes. De l'autre, il y a le Glenmor des « Aphorismes » où il vilipende la technocratie et l'orgueil des prévisionnistes. Si Glenmor n'avait pas existé, la Bretagne existerait tout de même, mais elle ne serait pas la

même. Il a incarné une idée d'insoumission bretonne et y a rallié pas mal de gens. »

Jean-Yves Cozan, vice-président du conseil général du Finistère : « Glenmor, c'était une voix forte de la Bretagne, une voix qui affirmait une identité forte. Il a eu le courage et le mérite de dire très haut, même de manière excessive, des vérités importantes. Il a décomplexé les Bretons. Il a gueulé des affirmations sur l'identité qui nous permettent aujourd'hui de dire les mêmes choses plus calmement, plus posément. Merci braz Glenmor ! Et aujourd'hui, que ceux qui ont à s'exprimer sur la Bretagne le fassent avec la même vigueur ! » Jean-Yves Cozan : « Une voix forte de la Bretagne »

Louis Le Pensec : « Il était foncièrement humain » : « L'annonce de sa mort me rend très triste ce soir. Poète reconnu, chanteur de tempérament qui excellait dans le registre de l'indignation, Glenmor aura été un précurseur dans la revendication identitaire bretonne, à une période où la Bretagne ne s'imposait pas comme une évidence. Il était foncièrement humain. Je savais cet ami diminué. Je reste avec le regret d'avoir finalement si peu rencontré ce voisin. »

Youenn Gwernig : d'abord un Breton. « En Glenmor, le libertaire et le Breton étaient indissociables. Un héritier ? Gilles Servat. »

Premiers contrats en Bretagne. C'est chez Jean-Lou et Renée Justin, de l'Hôtel des Rochers à Ploumanac'h, que Glenmor avait commencé sa carrière bretonne. Pendant une dizaine d'années, dans les années soixante, il avait animé les soirées de La Taverne à Ploumanac'h, alors que Millig avait une vingtaine d'années et qu'il faisait la manche dans les restaurants parisiens. « Il avait des poésies magnifiques, c'était vraiment quelqu'un. Nous l'aimions beaucoup. C'était un homme de convictions. Il l'est resté. »

Dan Ar Braz : l'essence du mouvement breton. « Glenmor incarnait l'essence du mouvement breton. Je me souviens lui avoir dédié une chanson lors de la création d'« Héritage des Celtes ». Pour moi, Glenmor était un monument. Il n'y a rien à jeter dans le mouvement breton. À l'époque de Glenmor, il fallait taper sur la table et il l'a fait. »

Charles Le Quintrec, écrivain, journaliste, vivant à Moëlan-sur-Mer : « La Bretagne perd avec Glenmor l'un de ses bardes de grande

tradition. Dans les années 50, il fut le seul ou presque à faire du sône et du gwerz des armes de combat. Il criait autant qu'il chantait, et ce au cœur de Paris, qu'il fallait rétablir la dignité armorique. Beaucoup de jeunes l'encourageaient en brandissant des drapeaux gwen ha du. Une sorte de ferveur le portait à se croire l'homme du réveil breton. Des mécomptes, l'arrivée de jeunes talents et la maladie ont eu raison, non pas de sa foi, mais de sa lutte. Il fut une voix sauvage dans une bouche souvent terrible. Cette voix s'est éteinte. On pourrait dire qu'une lumière s'est perdue en Brocéliande. »

Yann Goadoué : « A la pointe du combat » : Yann Goadoué, directeur de Coop Breizh et éditeur de Glenmor, venait de recevoir, il y a quelques jours seulement, le texte du nouveau roman écrit par Millig ar Scanv et intitulé « La sanguine ». Glenmor « Était un ami, un breton vigilant, à la pointe du combat dès que l'on touchait à sa Bretagne, à sa langue. Glenmor était un phare, un tuteur. Il aura marqué des générations de jeunes. Je ne peux dissocier son action militante de son œuvre littéraire. » dit Yann Goadoué qui espère voir publiés rapidement des inédits de Glenmor, des nouvelles et un ou deux romans.

■ Disparition

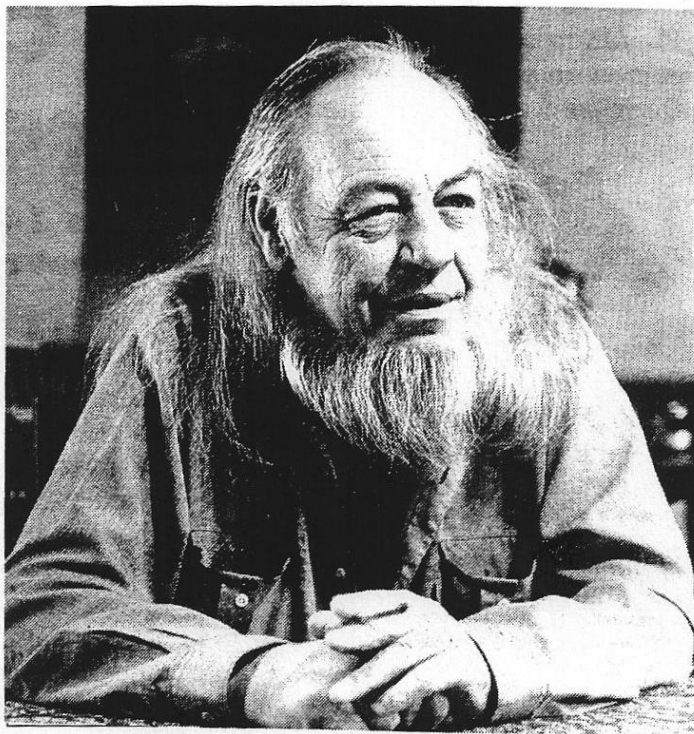
Glenmor, le barde breton n'est plus

Glenmor, le barde breton, est mort, hier, à 19 h, à l'âge de 64 ans à Quimperlé dans le Finistère. Avec ses longs cheveux raides, sa barbe blanche et ses coups de gueule, Glenmor a pendant des années incarné une culture bretonne combative.

Pierre Jakez Hélias en août dernier. Glenmor, hier. En l'espace d'un an, la Bretagne vient de perdre deux de ses poètes. Comme Pierre Jakez Hélias, Glenmor avait redonné du souffle à une culture bretonne, abîmée par la guerre.

Emile Le Scanv, dit Milig, c'était d'abord un chanteur engagé. Ce fils de paysan du Poher, dans le Centre-Finistère, ancien élève du Petit Séminaire de Quintin, a été poète, chanteur, écrivain et éditeur. Mais avant tout, il était, avec sa magnifique voix, le barde d'une Bretagne qui avait oublié sa culture. «**Il a eu le mérite inouï de désenclaver l'idée bretonne**», raconte Alan Stivell. Pendant plus de trente ans, Glenmor a donc chanté la Bretagne. Dans l'indifférence au départ et toujours en dehors du show-business. «**Pour moi, la chanson, c'est une arme politique**», disait celui, qui a multiplié les prises de position en faveur de la Bretagne. Lettre au président de la République, grève de la faim... Emile Le Scanv a d'ailleurs été jusqu'au bout de ses idées, puisqu'aux élections régionales de 1986, il conduisait une liste dans les Côtes d'Armor.

Milig, c'était aussi une gueule et une voix. Derrière son action militante et ses engagements politiques se cachait un artiste, cousin breton de Brel et compagnon de Ferré. Dans ses chansons, Glenmor parlait de sa Bretagne, mais aussi de la mort, de la fin de la civilisation paysanne, de l'amour. Son style était direct, et colère. Milig était un vieux Lion.



Le barde breton a enfin été un éveillé. Comme Pierre Jakez Hélias, il a longtemps «**été seul à défendre la cause**» de la culture bretonne. Puis, «**des Stivel, puis des Servat se sont levés. Certaines de nos idées, celles que nous défendions, incongrues, sont devenues à la**» expliquait, fin 1988, un Emile Le Scanv, qui «**était resté fidèle à la cause**». Le barde breton était monté sur scène pour la première fois à Paris, en 1959. Il avait fait ses adieux à la chanson à Carhaix en juin 1990. Glenmor, (Pierre Jakez Hélias l'appelait «le Glenmor») a aussi publié plusieurs romans. Le manuscrit du dernier, «la Sanguine», venait d'être remis à son éditeur.

□ **Emile Le Scanv**, dit Milig, est un fils de paysans de la région du Poher. Il est né le 25 juin 1931 à Maël-Carhaix (Côtes-d'Armor). Il écrit sa première chanson à 13 ans. Il monte sur scène pour la première fois à Paris en 1959. Après 35 ans de scène, il a décroché dans les années quatre-vingt se consacrant tout entier à la littérature.

Une association «Glenmor an Distro» s'est créée pour rééditer ses premiers livres et sa discographie complète sur CD. Son dernier roman «Les feux de la Vallée» est sorti en mai 1995 (éditions Coop Breizh à Spézet).

J-L EVIN.

BRITTANY AND IRELAND -- A MUSICAL LINK

Erick Falc'her -Poyroux and Alan Monnier. **La Musique Irlandaise**. Spezet: Editions Coop reizh. 1995. 116 pages. 66 francs.

Musique et Musiciens d'Irlande--Killorglin & Milltown, Co. Kerry/Music and Musicians of Ireland/Musik und Musiker aus Irland. Arfolk/Coop Breizh CD 439. 1995

Reviewed by Eoghan Ballard

Most volumes on Irish traditional music, whether great or small in scope, usually share one or two perspectives. Their viewpoints most often are reflexive examinations from either an indigenous or North American vantage point. While it would be misleading to suggest that those perspectives have become stale, a book with a very different point of departure is refreshing.

A small pocketbook "La Musique Irlandaise" and its accompanying, though unrelated CD entitled "Musique et Musiciens d'Irlande-Killorglin & Milltown, Co. Kerry" take distinct approaches from one another in addressing the subject of Irish music. The book itself, being a brief 116 pages, nonetheless attempts an encyclopedic rendering of the history of the subject matter. Considering its brevity, the authors should be commended for their efforts. Such a goal may seem presumptuous, especially when the authors are not Irish themselves. These writers are, however, well equipped. Erick Falc'her -Poyroux's doctoral thesis is on Irish musical identity. Alan Monnier, a longtime participant in Irish musical culture was the first Breton to qualify for the Fleadh Cheoil, an important Irish musical competition.

The book begins with a few technical remarks about contemporary Irish music and musical culture. With a nod to the observations of Irish folklorists and musicians such as Tomás Ó Canainn and Brendan Breathnach. The historic background, so essential to a balanced understanding of any musical culture, and in many ways the most interesting aspect in the study of Irish music, was handled too briefly in the section devoted to it. My initial disappointment was soon overcome by the wealth of historical material integrated in the rest of the text. Like many other approaches to the subject, this book organizes its examination of the music like a catalogue of instruments. It is an efficient, if none too original approach. Because of the brevity a book of this length requires, it would not take an expert to find fault with some of the content. In this case, such complaints will reflect the pet peeves and interests of the individual and can only be made by ignoring the success it achieves in meeting its main goal. It has from the first, been intended to provide a thorough if brief introduction to newcomers interested in Irish traditional music today. In that it has been most successful. While there are numerous such texts aimed at the English speaking world, there are few that do a better job. Further, this book is not written for an Anglophone audience. As such, it has far fewer competitors, making the overall quality more noteworthy. Not only do the authors provide a reasonable background to the subject but a balanced and inclusive view of the contemporary scene.

The more modern period is where this volume excels, whether it's an examination of the period of the Gaelic revival in the nineteenth century or of the iconic figures of 20th century Irish music such as Patsy Tuohy, Johnny Doran, Willie Clancy, Joe Burke, or finally of the "super-groups"

of the last several decades. In this, the authors don't restrict themselves to narrow definitions of traditional music. In looking at the contemporary revival they examine not only the influences of musicians like the Clancy Brothers, the Fureys or the Bothy Band, but also include a discussion of the confluence of Rock and Irish music. Names such as Thin Lizzy, Sinéad O'Connor, Clannad, Enya and the Cranberries quite rightly find inclusion.

The recording, on the other hand, takes a very different direction in examining Irish music. I had to remind myself that they were not really intended as the companion set that the coordinated cover art would suggest. Unlike the book, "Musique et Musiciens d'Irlande" provides a microcosmic view of the state of traditional Irish music in one contemporary community. In doing so, it does provide an excellent example of how the influences elaborated upon in the text have influenced the living music. This recording offers ample proof of the wildly diverse sources that have been utilized by the Irish in their music and a fine example of their skill in synthesizing many strands of musical elements into a unique and pleasing whole.

It is worth noting that these are not professional musicians, but members of a community who for the most part view music as an aspect of their daily lives. It also represents musicians across several generations giving an insight into the chronology of influences that have affected Irish music in the later 20th century. The diversity of these influences are not merely stylistic. They have affected the source and availability of content, style, and even the musical instruments employed in performance. Tomás O' Sullivan's Uilleann pipes and Tim Kearns' fiddle represent the more predictable instrumentation found in Irish music. The banjo, bouzouki, and mandola also are accepted members of the musician's kit. They are to be found alongside the more expected accordion, concertina, fife, flute and bodhrán. More subtle but no less noteworthy is the distinct influence of blues and jazz in the singing style used in singing Gaelic airs by the youngest performers on this recording. Lastly is the diversity of the musical vocabulary itself. The repertoire has in recent years been expanded. There are many examples of dance tunes and songs that have migrated from region to region. That process has been greatly accelerated in recent years with the wealth of published resources--both recordings and printed materials. That increased availability of the music from various parts of Ireland can be seen reflected in the inclusion of Clare slips, Sligo reels, and Donegal barn dances. It is also testified to in the attitudes reflective of regional understandings that remain. The liner notes describe a traditional Ulster sean nós song "Airde Chuain" as not being of the sean-nós category. This error is based upon the assumption of a regional style as the definition of a musical form--the local view that the relatively less inflected melodies typical of Ulster sean-nós singing exclude them from the category. It is also worth noting that no examples of the more highly ornamented style of Munster sean-nós singing are to be found on this recording.

All in all, while you will not find the kind of flashy performance found on many commercial recordings of Irish music on this CD nor the depth of analysis available within a more lengthy book, for the neophyte, or those more at home in French than in English, or someone seeking to find out what traditional Irish music means in the context of a specific community, these titles are sure to please...and inform! Readers may be pleased to note that the liner notes for the CD are in English, French and German.

NEW RECORDINGS FROM BRITTANY

Reviewed by Lois Kuter

Strobinell. **Breizh Hud**. Keltia Musique KMCD66. 1996. CD

In the Breton language Strobinell means magic spell or bewitchment. The title to this group's new CD, "Breizh Hud" translates roughly to "Magical Brittany" or "Wizardry of Brittany." And this title is not an accident, because I know that at least one member of the band earns his living not only as a musician but also as a magician.

Strobinell is among a half dozen great Breton bands still active which got started in the mid 1980s' and is today composed of five musicians. Riwall ar Menn is the magician who provides guitar for the group. Jil Lehart sings as well as provides bombardes, biniou, and clarinet--and he is a fine instrument-maker. The bombardes, biniou and flutes used on the CD are all from his workshop. Patrig ar Balc'h plays bombarde and tin whistle for the group and he is also the composer for a number of tunes on the CD. Yann-Herri ar Gwicher plays flute and Philippe Turbin provides keyboard.

While there are a number of bands in Brittany who combine instruments like bombardes, flutes, and guitar, Strobinell is one of the relatively few which also includes song. I have always associated Jil Lehart with the traditional paired playing of biniou and bombarde. In following contests for the paired playing of biniou/bombarde I have often seen the duo of Jil Lehart and Daniel Féon in the list of winners. And in 1995 they released a CD called "Evit dañsal" featuring a variety of dances of Brittany (see review in Bro Nevez 55). It was a very pleasant surprise to find that Jil Lehart was also a very good singer. Four traditional ballads in the Breton language from the northern Tregor region of Brittany are included on the CD. And they are gems in terms of melodic beauty and drama--tales of seduction, murder, and jilted lovers. I particularly liked the song which closes the CD, "Fañch ar C'halvez." The song was collected in 1868 from Mari Tili in the village of Berc'hed by the famous song collector Luzel whose version had 48 verses; Strobinell condenses it to just 16. The song recounts the tale of Fañch ar C'halvez, a handsome smuggler of tobacco and wine who is eventually caught and taken to prison. Although rich from his smuggling, Fanch loves a tanner's daughter, and calls her to the prison. She says she always told him to stop smuggling and goes home, content to remain a poor tanner's daughter. One might think that listening to over seven minutes of song in a language you don't know (Breton) would be a chore, but let me assure you that you will want to play this selection a few more times for its beautiful melody which is enhanced by a very creative accompaniment. Indeed, there is something very refreshing and different about the accompaniment Strobinell adds to each of the four songs on the CD.

While addition of voice to a band adds variety, Strobinell already has quite a rich mix of instruments. I like their sound because they include quite a bit of bombarde and are not afraid to include a good dose of biniou along with flute, clarinet, guitar and keyboard. If it is Breton dance music that gets your blood pumping, then this CD will definitely get your heart racing with several *an dro*, a *riquegnée*, a *suite plinn*, a *laride* and a suite of *ronds de Loudia*. Strobinell is a much-sought after band for the fest noz and this CD demonstrates why.

The jacket notes are trilingual--Breton, French, and English. While not much information is given for the dance tunes, the full Breton songs texts with French and English translations are included.

This is a CD that anyone who has any liking at all for Breton music will love. I recommend it highly for the lovely songs, fiery dances, and the creative way this fine band rearranges the rich traditional repertoire of Breton music.

Gildas Moal and René Chaplain. **An disput.** Arfolk CD 438. 1996.

In the past two years a number of excellent recordings have come out featuring the paired playing of bombarde and biniou. While the high pitch of the biniou can drive some far away, the unique sound of these two instruments can grow on you. And in Brittany this seems to be the case as this instrumental duo continues to grow in popularity. And as more and more players mature and master the traditional style of using these instruments, there is room for innovation.

In his introductory notes for the CD, flute player Jean-Michel Veillon points this out and refers to the contest for "sonneurs de couple" called Trophée Matilin an Dall where couples are required to present new suites of tunes. In 1995 Gildas Moal and René Chaplain captured this trophy with a memorable suite including a "disput." A "disput" is a satirical joust between singers where the two match musical and literary wits to one-up the other. Often this is between residents of two different regions of Brittany (Tregor vs. Cornouaille) or between men and women, or a mother and daughter. Here the biniou and bombarde enter into such an interplay and the result is an interesting one. The 13-minute suite of tunes including the "disput" is a highlight of this CD, but the recording includes much more. I particularly liked the work of Moal and Chaplain on the slow melodies and marches from the Tregor area where these sonneurs are based. Although this is a very minor comment, the dances (dans plin, kost' ar c'hoad, and suite Loudéac) felt just a touch rushed to me, lacking a certain swing.

Jacket notes for the CD are very good with both French and Breton descriptions for each of the sixteen selections.

If you like the paired playing of the biniou and bombarde, you will enjoy this CD very much. These are great performers with their own distinctive style and the skills necessary to add a few surprises.

* * *

Annie Ebrel. **'Tre ho ti ha ma hini.** Gwerz Pladenn GWP 012. 1996 CD. 41'20.

While Annie Ebrel can be heard as a guest artist on several recordings, this is the first "solo" recording by one of Brittany's finest traditional singers. Annie Ebrel is from the small village of Lohuec (near Callac) in central western Brittany and grew up with the Breton language ballads (gwerz) and kan ha diskan singing for dancing all around her. In the early 1980s when she was just 14, Annie Ebrel started performing publicly, and now in her mid 20s, she is recognized as one of the masters of traditional song.

This CD shows well why one can attach the word "master" to this young singer. Annie Ebrel is joined for the one dance suite--a plinn--on the CD by another master, Marcel Guillou, who has sung with her since 1985 at numerous festou noz and who has served as a "mentor" for a number of other younger singers. And Annie is joined also by Nolüen Le Buhé, another remarkable female voice in the 20-something generation. They perform a march in the same responsive style used for dance--and, indeed, marches in Brittany are much closer to a slow dance than a military parade in their style. Annie Ebrel is on her own for the other six selections of the CD which include a dandling song and a short homage to coffee drinking, as well as four longer ballads--tales of murder and tragic love affairs as well as fantasy. Annie Ebrel has a voice fully up to the challenge of the long Breton-language "gwerz" found in western Brittany. Her performance of the ballad "Renean ar Glas" (10 1/2 minutes) is magnificent. It is worth noting that like other younger masters of traditional unaccompanied ballads and songs for dance (Erik Marchand and Yann Fañch Kemener), Annie Ebrel is also quite at home in more innovative arrangements of Breton music and performs with the group called Dibenn.

The jacket notes to this CD are excellent and include a few photos of Annie Ebrel and her colleagues in song as well as a lovely shot of the family farm. English speakers will find a short but complete summary of each song on the first page. A paragraph in French for each selection tells where the song came from (i.e., who Annie Ebrel learned it from), and the Breton text for each song is provided with a full translation in French.

Annie Ebrel is a great singer and this CD is an excellent testimony to the wealth of the Breton song tradition.

* * *

Arnaud Maisonneuve. **"Oulet men deulagad"**. Keltia Musique RSCD 222. 1996. CD. 40'50.

Like Annie Ebrel, Arnaud Maisonneuve sings in the Breton language and draws from Brittany's extremely rich tradition of song. And it is said that in no part of Brittany can one find more beautiful melodies for song than in the Vannetais (Gwened) area where the "k" sounds of the Breton language melt in to a "ch" sound. Arnaud Maisonneuve has chosen some of the loveliest songs of Vannetais Brittany for this CD of songs from the south of Brittany. He also draws from the south of the U.S. with some very bluesy guitar accompaniments and the use of tunes by Blind Boy Fuller and Fred McDowell to accompany two Breton texts. One might not consider Arnaud Maisonneuve's singing to be the best (he is definitely not a blues singer), but he is terrific on the guitar. The fusion of blues and Breton song is not always perfect, but at times it works extremely well (as in the song "Mar dan d'er hovand"). The traditional Vannetias texts, like most ballads from the Breton song tradition, are songs that speak of the blues--tragic love tales, murders or conscription to the army. While nine of the songs on the CD are drawn from the Breton tradition, Arnaud Maisonneuve includes one composition of his own set to music by Fred McDowell. This tells the story of Philippe Hetet from Quimper who worked in the oil fields of Algeria where he was killed by religious fanatics in October 1994. Accompanied by Arnaud Maisonneuve on slide guitar this is performed by Marie-Aline Lagadic--a traditional Breton singer who does a terrific job of singing in blues style.

Jacket notes are bilingual in French and English, and give just the minimum of information on the songs. Unless readily available elsewhere, it is always nice to have texts for the songs. Some biographical information about Arnaud Maisonneuve would have been especially welcome.

You may or may not like Arnaud Maisonneuve's voice, but he sings with passion and this CD presents a very interesting fusion of blues and Breton song.

* * *

Band ar Jazz/Bernard Lepallec. **Zéro Un**. Escalibur CD 859. 1996.

I cannot claim to be at all knowledgeable about jazz, but I liked this new CD which successfully combines some instruments one normally doesn't find together. Bernard Lepallec plays saxophones and is the core of this group. I happen to think that the saxophone is very well suited to the free-wheeling nature of jazz and have always liked that instrument. Ronan Le Bars seems to be everywhere with his uilleann pipes and shows that this is an extremely versatile instrument. Of course, if you have ever played uilleann pipes or watched someone trying to learn this instrument, you will know that it takes a true master to be able to make the music Ronan Le Bars can make with it. The reedy combination of uilleann pipes and saxophone works well in the compositions on this CD. The addition of various combinations of trombone by Jean-Louis Pommier, bass fiddle by Vincent Guerin, some accordion and percussion by Jean-Guy Le Maitre, and guitar by Jean-Luc Roumier adds even more texture to an already interesting combination of sounds. There's never a dull moment.

While jazz can be quite demanding, I found this CD quite enjoyable, and the variety of moods and musical sounds held my interest throughout. I especially liked "Kan Eured Banleg"--a highly unusual arrangement of the traditional songs performed during marriage ceremonies to make the bride cry when she leaves the home of her parents. You won't find the "Ridee" easy to dance to, but it has a definite swing and the reappearance from time to time of a familiar yet totally new melody is intriguing. One of the compositions on the CD is by Vincent Guerin and the other eight are all credited to Bernard Lepallec. Each is quite different and all are worth hearing.

Unfortunately much of the notes to the CD are very difficult to read because the print is superimposed over a photographs (of rocks) which are dark enough to obscure much of the text. The notes indicate which musicians are involved in each piece, and give a short poetic introduction to set the mood for the music. I like the photographic backdrop, but perhaps a different color of ink could be used so the text doesn't disappear. A photograph of each musician is included, but otherwise there is no information about them. A little biography would have been interesting. But, as those who read my reviews know, I hope to find a lot more in CD notes than most people require.

If you like a jazzy swing, and the sound of saxophone, uilleann pipes, trombone and bass fiddle, you will enjoy Band ar Jazz. And this is another CD that shows convincingly that Brittany is a land of incredible musical variety and talent.

* * *

Jacques Pellen, Riccardo Del Fra. **Sorserez**. Gwerz Pladenn GWP 011. 1996. CD 56'39.

This is definitely not in the category of "easy listening music" but I would put it into the category of good listening music. Indeed, it is music that cannot be played as background to other activity (like reading the Sunday paper). I did that the first time I played this CD and really didn't hear a thing. This CD requires that you pay attention, and when you do, you will find some very interesting compositions.

The title "Sorserez" comes from the arrangement of a Breton ballad about a young sorceress who would use her power to turn Brittany into a wasteland. Most of the compositions and arrangements of traditional songs on this CD are of a dark and moody quality. You will find no lively dances or joyful songs. That is not to say that you will not find beauty. The low plunk of Riccardo Del Fra's bass fiddle is countered nicely by the spikey sound of Jacques Pellen's acoustic guitar and some wailing of his electric guitar in several pieces. These two musicians work beautifully together and both are masters of their instruments. And that is why, even if you normally wouldn't be attracted to a CD where evil spirits and laments predominate, this CD is worth a careful listen. Jacques Pellen and Riccardo Del Fra give powerful expression to this darker side in their own unique style.

* * *

Violaine Mayor. **Danse avec les fées - Musiques de Bretagne et d'Irlande**. Hent Telenn Breizh VM01. 1996. CD

This new CD includes over an hour of music divided roughly in half with arrangements of traditional Breton and Irish melodies and dance tunes and one composition by Violaine Mayor. After studying on nylon-strung harps in various conservatories in Brittany and researching the traditions of Ireland and Scotland, Violaine Mayor has chosen to use metal strung harps played with fingernails instead of the tips of the fingers. The jacket notes claim that "on bronze strings, this technique allows clean and rapid ornamentation, better rhythmic precision, prolonged resonance, and artistic sensitivity to nuance..." And, indeed those claims seem to be quite true and are especially evident in the Breton dance tunes--fisel, plinn and gavotte. And there is nothing awkward or plodding in the Irish jigs and

reels on this CD. The resonance of the metal strings also gives a nice sound to the slower airs-- including the lovely composition by Violaine Mayor for a boat made by Joel Herrou who also made two of the three harps heard on this CD.

In eight of the fifteen selections, Violaine Mayer plays an Irish harp made by Denis Brevet which is a copy of a 17th century harp ("Orway castle"). For the other selections she uses harps made by Joel Herrou--a copy of the medieval Scottish "Queen Mary" harp and a "Breton harp" adapted from this. In several selections the harp is accompanied by guitar and bouzouki by Franck Le Rest and in two selections Michel Masson adds oboe, English horn, and tin whistle. Most selections are just harp and there is certainly no need to add anything at all to the rich sound of the instrument. The variety of lovely slower airs and lively dance tunes shows off well the full talent of Violaine Mayer who can keep up a very lively pace for dance tunes and deliver a very soulful rendering of a slow air.

The notes to this CD are bilingual in French and English giving titles and identifying the instruments used for each selection. A short paragraph for each selection succinctly identifies its source and gives other information to help listeners best appreciate the tune. The notes also give a nice introduction to the musicians and the harps and their history.

This is an excellent CD that clearly shows that since the renaissance of the Celtic harp by Alan Stivell, Brittany has continued to produce a number of great harp players.

* * *

Sedrenn. **Chemin faisant/On our Way**. Keltia Musique KMCD62. 1996. CD.

And if Violaine Mayor doesn't convince you that Brittany is a haven for harp players, here's yet more evidence with a duo called Sedrenn made up of Elisa Velianiti and Christine Merienne. In contrast to the "bardic" look and sound of Violaine Mayor who is photographed in long white dress and bare feet seated with her harp in the Breton countryside, Sedrenn has a decidedly more "modern" style, evident first in the look of the CD jacket notes and then in their arrangements of music. Sedrenn (which means "cedar" in English) is a little reminiscent of the Scottish duo called Sileas with a combination of vocals and lively dance duets, but they have gone their own way -- and as is evident on this CD, they take quite a few different paths with music from Brittany, Ireland, Scotland, and Quebec, as well as a mazurka from Poland and a tango from anywhere tangos are danced. This is an enjoyable CD with jigs and reels and a very lively Breton "Suite de Loudéac" as well as some lovely songs in French, with one English and one in Breton. Whether using a relatively new composition or traditional ballad or dance tune, Sedrenn has a way of rearranging things to make them all their own. It is evident in the performances and in the jacket notes to the CD that this is a pair of musicians who really enjoy what they do. and this CD is quite pleasant in its variety and upbeat spirit. Although quite different in style, both Sedrenn and Violaine Mayor make a strong contribute to a growing and very innovative population of harp players in Brittany.

* * *

Soig Siberil. **Entre ardoise et granit**. Gwerz Pladenn GWP 013. 1996 CD 46'45.

Last but certainly not least in this review of outstanding new recordings from Brittany is that of Soig Siberil. This is a musician who has been around. Soig Siberil is a veteran of bands such as Kornog, Pennoù Skoulm, Den, Kemia, and the legendary Gwerz. And while he was a key member of all those groups as a guitarist, composer and arranger, one never really got to hear just how creative and skilled Soig Siberil could be. His first solo recording in 1993 (Digor. Gwerz Pladenn GWP 005) included some masterpieces, but there was still a lot of group work where Soig's genius as a

composer was evident but the guitar was not fully center-stage. In this new CD the genius of Soig Siberil as a guitar player is fully audible. There are a few of the great musicians Soig has worked with for a number of years who can be heard in some of the selections: Jamie Mc Menemy with bouzouki, Jacky Molard with tenor guitar, and Jacques Pellen with 12 string guitar and something called "nappes" which is translated in the notes as "background guitar." Soig Siberil is truly solo on four of the eleven selections and is accompanied in most of the other selections by just this "background guitar" which provides some ethereal layers of sound.

Just as Soig Siberil takes center stage on this recording to show off his brilliant guitar work, so too, melodies and dance tunes from the Breton tradition are much more prominent than on the first CD, Digor. But that is not to say that Soig doesn't considerably rearrange the ballads tunes or the gavottes, an dro, rondes de Loudéac, ridees, and marches he pulls from the Breton tradition. The rearrangement is always interesting and the pace never bogs down, but that does not mean that Soig Siberil doesn't know how to bring out the beauty of a slow melody. The ability of Soig Siberil to get any sound possible and desired from a guitar is evident in all of the selections on this CD. But his skill as a composer and arranger to make something new of even the most familiar Breton melodies (for example, "Maro eo ma mestrez") is also very evident.

Notes for each selection are in French and English and provide a short but very good introduction. The small print size is a struggle for me, but that is the sacrifice you make for including lots of information in little space.

Anyone who has followed the career of Soig Siberil will want to get this CD which is the best yet in presenting the full genius of this musician. Like many of the great Breton musicians who started in the 1970s, Soig Siberil just gets better and better.

* * *

HEARD OF BUT NOT HEARD

A few more new releases from Brittany (cited in the pages of recent issues of the Breton magazines Musique Bretonne and Ar Men)

Roland Brou. **Trois garçons du Lion d'Or**. TVB Productions, Keltia Musique RSCD 220. 1996. CD
Roland Brou is one of a number of great traditional voices of Brittany--and in this case Upper Brittany. This singer has done a great deal of research and collection and this CD includes the cream of the crop he has grown. Roland Brou can be heard as part of the group L'Echo des Luths but this is the first solo recording for this great voice.

Louise Ebrel. **Gwerz ha kan ha boz**. Production Kerig K104. Diffusion Breizh. 1996. CD
Louise Ebrel is the daughter of Eugénie Goadec (one of the famous Goadec sisters with whom she has recorded a CD). She has inherited a wonderful repertoire of traditional songs and has the great vocal talents of her mother and aunts.

Bro Dreger VIII. **Flute transversière en Tregor**. Kreizenn Sevenadurel Lannuon. BD 008. 1996. CD
The cultural center of Lannion has produced an excellent series of cassettes documenting the wealth of music and song in the Tregor region of Brittany. This new CD in the series features wooden flute--an instrument brought to Brittany in the 1970s. You'll find Jean-Michel Veillon on this CD but also a number of other flute players--solo and accompanied.

Carré Manchot. **Noz**. Déclic Communication 50519-2. 1996. CD
Carre Manchot is one of the most popular fest-noz bands of Brittany, and this CD shows you why.

Kurun. Trios. Pixie. Déclic Communication 50495-2. Blue Silver Diffusion. 1996. CD.

Kurin is an up-and-coming group said to resemble Pennoù Skoulm and Strobinnell in style. Its musicians are Yann Cariou on flute, Roland Conq on guitar and Yann-Fanch Le Coz on bombarde. The CD includes slower melodies as well as dances. After just three years on the scene, this trio seems to be gaining a following.

Accordéon en Haute Bretagne. Pixie. Déclic Communication DK 334, Duffusion Blue Silver. 1996.

This new CD on the Pixie label includes eleven of the best accordion players from Upper Brittany, recorded live at a concert. Dances and slower airs are included, and the accordions are solo or accompanied by a variety of instruments or song.

De Lorient à l'Orient, Chansons de mer, de marins et de voyages. Production Kedvisual, Diffusion Breizh. 1996. CD

This CD features a number of performances recorded live at concerts which were part of the 1992 and 1993 "Océanes" festival held in Lorient. If you like maritime music, this includes a little of everything and lots of great performers.

Alain Le Goff. La Légende de la ville d'Ys. Kerig K 110. Diffusion Breizh. CD 1996.

The legend of the submerged city of Ys is one of the best known tales from Brittany and has been the topic of song and theater. Alain Le Goff is one of the best story tellers of Brittany (which has many great ones) and this 42-minute recording captures his telling of this tale--another live performance which includes some backup music with clarinet and harp.

EV. Huchal. Déclic Communication 841 6742. Diffusion Virgin. 1996. CD

EV is made up of two Bretons and two Finns and their rock style has attracted strong audiences for a number of years now. There are a large number of rock bands in Brittany, but this one makes its attachment to Brittany known through texts in Breton, French or Finnish. Instruments include electric bass guitars, keyboard, accordion, tin whistle and bombarde.

Soldat Louis. C'est un pays. Déclic Communication, Diffusion Virgin. 1996. CD

This is another rock band that often has a Breton message to their texts. And like EV they have gained a large following in Brittany.

Les Pires. Sava. Bond Age. BR 95 112. Diffusion WMD. 1996. CD

Yet another unorthodox Breton band which has gained a solid following in Brittany. Formed in 1989, Les Pires ("the worst") includes six musicians who pull much of their inspiration from music of Eastern Europe and use fiddle, accordion, voice, saxophone, piano, trumpet and percussions.

Breizh and Roll. Arsen, Move On Production. Distribution WMD. 1996. CD

If you want to sample the more electric side of Breton performance here is a sampler of 16 cuts from recordings by Breton bands. Included are better known groups such as Glaz, Sonerion Du, and Ar re yaouank, but the CD also includes a number of lesser known talents for one's discovery.

Tri Yann. Le Meilleur de Tri Yann. Compilation 1996. Polygram Diffusion. 1996. CD

If you enjoy the group Tri Yann and have only a few of the older lps in your collection (like me), here's a new "best of" compilation on CD. And for those that have never heard this legendary group of Brittany, this would be a great recording to become acquainted with them.

René Abjean, Pol & Herve Quefféléant, Job an Irien. War varc'h d'ar Mor. Keltia Musique KM64. 1996. CD

This composition is described as an oratorio for soloists, choir and Celtic instruments. This is not the first time composer Rene Abjean has set the text of Job an Irien to music with the harps of the Queffeleant brothers. And if it is like their earlier work, this composition of a more classical style will provide some interesting and enjoyable listening.

DASTUM

A Database of Breton Recordings

Dastum continues to accomplish remarkable work to document and support to performance of music in Brittany. In June this "archives" of Breton music and oral traditions inaugurated a database of commercial recordings of Breton music available on the Minitel system (35.15 Dastum). This data base includes 2,438 references of lp recordings, cassettes and compact discs dating from the time when recordings first came out on 78 rpm to the present day. All styles are represented in the data base, and one can find over 2,000 different performers, 11,638 songs and 574 different record labels. The really interesting aspect of the database is that you can ask your Minitel to search for recordings of particular artists, by particular instruments, by title or even a word in the title if you can remember the whole thing. For example one can ask to find all the recordings with saxophones, or where "Ireland" is part of the title, or all the recordings where "love" is found in the title to a song.

This is a nice service for anyone who wants to track down particular recordings, but it is also of interest to scholars and this will make their research of the rich collection of commercial recordings of Breton music much easier.

The bulk of the work to create this database was done by Goulc'hen Malrieu and completed by Visant Dubois with the help of many volunteers who researched information. Having attempted to put together a good discography of Breton recordings and keep track of the many new releases each year, I know what a big job this is. I have collected nearly 1,000 references during the past 15 years--just half of what Dastum has been able to document--but, beyond putting artists in alphabetical order, I have no index to really make use of my box of 3 x 5 cards. Happily, the wonders of modern technology and a much more thorough job to professionally build a database of recordings makes my work obsolete. While we don't have Minitel on this side of the Atlantic, no doubt it is just a matter of time before some of the incredible resources of Dastum will be accessible via computer networking.

An important result of Dastum's project to create a database of recordings has been the collection of lps for Dastum's archives (with copies made for listening). As older recordings become harder and harder to find, the collection of such recordings becomes important so that the music on them is not lost.

SELL'TA - A NEW VIDEOCASSETTE MAGAZINE

This Spring the first issue of a new videocassette magazine in the Breton language became available. Three issues per year are planned with one or more special numbers. The idea of this new magazine is to entertain and inform people--through the Breton language--with a variety of programs, including music, cartoons, recipes, reports and interviews. Given the pathetic amount of Breton language programming on television in Brittany (less than an hour weekly), this project also fills a big void in audiovisual production.

And what if you don't know any Breton? The videocassettes come with a bilingual booklet (Breton/French) so if you know French, you will be able to follow the action. And for those trying to learn Breton, these videos will offer a really enjoyable way to improve your skills.

The videos are available in VHS or SECAM so they should be compatible to American VCRs. Each video is 60 minutes. While the price may sound high (150 francs, or roughly \$30 including postage), these videos can be played over and over again. Like many projects in Brittany to support the Breton language, getting Sell'ta off the ground has been accomplished thanks to hardworking volunteers. The costs of production for video are high, so Sell'ta needs the support of a solid base of subscribers. And they also accept memberships if you want to show additional support or if you don't have a VCR and simply want to support the cause.

A subscription form is reproduced below. Questions can be directed to:

Sell'ta
c/o Sked
18, straed Duguay Trouin
29200 Brest
telephone: 98 80 26 71
fax: 98 44 36 97

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MAGAZINES OF NOTE

Celtic Chronicles

This is a very nice magazine from Portland, Oregon. Published six times a year, this twelve-page publication is packed with diverse information. The July/August 1996 issue (Vol. 4, no. 3) includes short articles on making a bodhran, love spoons, Scottish place names, Irish wakes, going barefoot in Ireland, legends of Scottish giants, and the second part of a tale called "The daughter of The King of the Seals." Regular features include book, record and video reviews, Scottish clan information, poetry, a "Druidic Lunar Zodiac," and a listing of events (concerts, lectures, conferences, festivals) primarily in the Portland area. While much of the content focuses on Ireland and Scotland, the "Celtic Chronicles" also regularly includes articles and notes on Wales, Cornwall, the Isle of Man, and Brittany. In this issue my presentation of Dastum in Bro Nevez 58 (May 1996) is reprinted and the Celtic Chronicles of May/June 1996 included an excellent article about the Breton language by Steve Sneyd.

Subscription is \$10 a year for the U.S. (\$11 for Canada and \$15 foreign). Back issues are available for \$2 (\$3 foreign). For more information, contact:

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Galiza-Breizh

This is a relatively new magazine from Galicia, Spain. Like Celtic Chronicles, reviewed above, it is not slick and glossy but attractively laid out with lots of black and white drawings and designs. The principle objectives outlined by the Editor, Anjo Avelaira are as follows:

to established a network of communication with Galicians who have lived in Brittany or who simply have an interest in it.

to help develop relations, exchanges, and twinnings between Galicia and Brittany.

to inspire the Galician cultural movement which is less active than the political movement.

to remind Galicians in north-western Galicia of their identity as descendants of Breton immigrants.

to examine the historical importance the Breton Bishopric "Britonia" had in the Galician kingdom.

Galiza-Breizh is published entirely in the Galician language, Galego, which will make it a challenge for English speakers, but even with no knowledge of the language it was easy to see the interesting variety of information provided on Breton culture, history and current events. The most recent issue (no. 5) includes articles on pilgrimage routes in Brittany to Santiago de Compostela, a translation of Jakez Gaucher's *Histoire chronologique des pays celtique* into Galego, a quick travel guide to Brittany, how to learn Breton in Galicia, the 19th Festival de Cinema de

Douarnenez, and various short notes on Breton festivals, places to travel, and an obituary for Glenmor. While intended primarily to keep Galicians informed about Brittany, notes are also included on Celtic organizations in Galicia and their activities.

I would be happy to send subscription information to anyone interested in this quarterly magazine, or you could contact the Editor directly:

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SPAIN

NEW PUBLICATIONS FROM BRITTANY

About Ireland

As noted in the last issue of Bro Nevez, 1996 is the Year of Ireland in France and Brittany is hosting a number of scholars, artists and musicians for conferences and festivals. But, Brittany always hosts a number of travelling Irish men and women, so this is an excuse to just increase the level of inter-Celtic celebration a bit. And part of that celebration is the publication of books. Here are just three I have received.

Edmond Rébillé. *Itinéraire littéraire en Irlande*. Spezet: Coop Breizh, 1996. 85 pages.

This is an unusual little book with a unique approach to Irish literature. Author Edmond Rébillé takes us on a trip to Ireland and as the narration of his travels from one spot to another continues, he points out all the sites related to Irish authors and their books. You go to Edna O'Brien's hometown, visit the grave of Douglas Hyde, and the birthplaces of Brian Friel and Flann O'Brien. Over 150 names are found in the index which is an essential tool to tracking down your favorite personality. You'll find the ancient and modern, the famous and lesser known figures of Irish literature all attached to a site. This is not a scholarly work on Irish literature, but would be a fun book to take along while traveling in Ireland.

Gerry Adams. *Irlande Libre-Vers une Paix Durable*. Translation by Christian Le Bras. Editions Apogee/Coop Breizh. 1996. 239 pages.

This is the French translation of Gerry Adams' book *Free Ireland* which was first published in 1986. This leader of the Sinn Féin expresses his ideas on the current situation in Northern Ireland and puts this into the context of the history of Ireland. Whatever view one has of the situation in Northern Ireland, it is always useful to understand the perspective of influential leaders. While English speakers will do better with the original English edition, this translation makes it possible for French speakers to see what Gerry Adams has to say.

Jim Fitzpatrick. **Le Livre des Conquêtes**. Translation by Aude Le Dube. Spezet: Coop Breizh. 1996.

This is the translation of Fitzpatrick's 1978 book, **The Book of Conquests**, published by Dragon's World Ltd. In fact this is Fitzpatrick's retelling of ancient Irish mythology and in the retelling he provides some 25 large illustrations--most sprawling across two pages. Perhaps best described as a sophisticated comic book style, these illustrations vividly present the characters and action of the narration. Additional color is added to the 110 pages of this 8" x 11" paperback with a large border of intricate Irish designs. In fact, there are just 53 pages of text and at least one-third of these pages is taken up with illustrations and border design. So, these tales are told through colorful artwork as well as words. I would find the reading more enjoyable if the print size was just a bit larger, but the illustrations and intricate knotwork and braiding around each page was fun to have.

The narration is divided into seven parts: the history of the Tuan and the conquest by the Fir Bolg; the arrival of the Tuatha de Danann and the pact of friendship between Streng and Breas; the gathering of the Fir Bolg at Tara and the assembly of the Tuatha De Danann; the First Battle of Moy Tura; the dream of Nuada; the warrior fury of Nuada; and the ultimate battle and death of Eochai.

* * *

About the Sea and Islands of Brittany

Les Cahiers de l'Ile de Groix: "Le froid était notre blé noir"--André Tonnerre, un marin de Groix à la Grande Pêche. Ecomusée de l'Ile de Groix. Numero special, Juin 1996. 64 pages.

This is not in fact a book, but a special issue of a magazine focused on the Ile de Groix and its history. This issue has been published in conjunction with an exhibit on one of the last Breton fishing expeditions to the Great Banks. The magazine and the exhibit feature the accounts and some of the remarkable photographs taken by André Tonnerre. Born in 1943, Tonnerre first went to sea on a tuna fishing ship at the age of 8. In 1967 he began what is called the "grande peche"--the difficult cross-Atlantic expeditions--and in 1970 he took command of the "Ville de Fécamp," one of the last ships to make these trips. His accounts and photographs of fishing expeditions in the 1960s and early 70s bring this work to life with details of life on board the ship, tools and techniques, and the very difficult conditions in which fishermen lived and worked.

Interesting commentary and photographs are also provided by Pierre Calloch, also from the Island of Groix, who navigated an "assistance boat" during this period. These boats would cross the Atlantic to serve as a communication link to the fishing fleet and to provide medical and other assistance. You don't need to know anything about ships or fishing to find the accounts interesting. The exhibit at the Ecomusée de Groix continues until October 15, so if you're in Brittany, plan to see it.

An interesting side-event to the exhibit at the Ecomuseum of Groix has been the return of a restored fishing dinghy called the "Piwisi." Built in 1961 by one of the last carpenters of Groix who built such small fishing boats, the restoration was a project taken on by students at an "Institut de Rééducation" in Orléans (a school for "at risk" youth). This gave students the opportunity not only to learn woodworking skills, but also to become familiar with Groix and its maritime culture.

Lucien Breton. **Le pain de mer, ou la vie des goémoniers bretons en 1950**. Spezet: Nature et Bretagne. 1995. 245 pages.

As the title indicates this book is about the life of Breton seaweed collectors in 1950. Requiring skills as both a sailor and a farmer, the life of those who made a living from collecting seaweed from the northern Breton coast of Leon was not an easy one. And this book gives one an excellent feel for the unrelenting labor required of the whole family to earn a living.

Lucien Breton starts his book by noting that Pierre Arzel's book **Le Goémoniers** published in 1987 stands as the key work of reference on seaweed collection. While not perhaps as rich in technical details about this profession, Lucien Breton succeeds very well in his aim to describe the life of seaweed collectors in the 1950s--the period just before major economic and social changes were to eliminate this life style. He personalizes the account by talking about three families and what their everyday life was like. This allows one to more directly understand the complexity of seaweed collection and its dependence on tides, weather, and families working together. While dipping one's feet into a cold tub of water on a hot humid day of the Philadelphia summer is quite refreshing, one can readily imagine from the descriptions in this book the strength it took to endure getting soaked to the skin in a pounding rain on a cold spring day or keeping one's hands submerged for hours in a frigid sea. And even when one learns to endure the backbreaking work to harvest the seaweed, bad weather can always destroy the "crop" before one has the chance to take it to market.

This book gives a good feel for what it is like to be part of a seaweed collecting family in the 1950s--not only what the men of the family did, but what your chores would be as a child, the mother of the household, or as the precious horse who was so critical in hauling the seaweed in from the sea. Besides the hard and often dangerous work to collect the different kinds of seaweed harvested, Lucien Breton also describes what a house was like, what people ate and wore, and the social and religious life of their community.

This is not a portrait of the "good old days" but of a particular period and the people who worked extremely hard to earn their living from seaweed, or "the bread of the sea."

Catherine Gaston-Mathé. **Houat--La Mémoire de l'Ile**. Spezet: Nature et Bretagne. 1995. 236 pages.

This book takes one to the southern coast of Brittany and to the island of Houat off of the Quiberon peninsula. And it takes one back in time to describe the uniqueness of this small island which has only 400 residents. In the first 35 pages, a brief history is given of the relation of this island to the mainland from prehistorical times through the second World War. The next 100 pages of the book focus on the second half of the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century to cover a range of topics including the layout of the town, the distinct aspects of the Breton language spoken, collective work, the family, religion and the role of the church, education, and health. Third section of the book focuses a bit more on the early 20th century and economic evolution of the island. Topics include land ownership, hunting, agriculture and farm animals, fishing and ports of the island, and trade with the continent. In the final shorter section the author discusses the very rapid modernization of the island in the post-war period and the impact of increased contact with the rest of Brittany. While no topic is treated in depth, the wealth of information on a wide range of topics gives one a good feel for the life on this island, and the economic and social changes it has undergone in the past century. Especially interesting are the photographs found on nearly every page.

Louis Brigand, Georges Boulestreau. **Guide de Ouessant**. Crozon: Les Editions Buissonnières. 1995. 79 pages.

This pleasant little pocket-size guide to the island of Ouessant (off the northwestern tip of Brittany) offers a particularly good introduction to the ecological and economic state of this island. Unlike the books reviewed above, this is not ethnographic in emphasis. You will not read about the life of a Ouessant resident, but you will learn about what this island is and how people and nature coexist. Topics are arranged by basic topics: the geographical relation and transportation links to the mainland and the Molene Archipelego; the natural science of the island; the impact of man on land use; visitors to the island and places to visit; and a bit of history and practical information about life on the island. Within each section are short chapters with photos, maps and graphs. Topics include wildlife and bird migrations, geology, winds and weather, vegetation and farming, sheep, architecture, lighthouses, the dangers of tides, history, and placenames. A good bibliography and list of useful telephone numbers is also included.

This is a particularly interesting guide for those interested in the environment, and Ouessant is a place where one could take some interesting hiking trails. In a very small book, one gets a good introduction to a range of topics which would insure that a visit to this island would be enjoyable.

* * *

Some Humor

Georges Chaulet. **L'Incroyable Croisière--Une Bretagne Indépendante?** Spezet: Coop Breizh. 1995. 205 pages.

This story begins when a furniture-maker named Faouet notices a crack in his ceiling. The next thing you know the wall separates from his house and Brittany begins to drift away from France (historical Brittany, including the department of Loire-Atlantique). This novel follows Mr. Faouet, his family and neighbors, as their world changes. Entrepreneurs with a new coastline build boats and a King is elected for a now independent Brittany. And what do you do when the tectonic plate movement pushes Brittany side by side with Cornwall and the southern coast of England? A bridge is built and the trucks roll over it to take advantage of the new opportunities for economic trade.

Much of the satire of this book will be lost on non-Bretons who cannot have the intimate knowledge of local Breton politics and village life (and I admit that is my case). But there is still enough universal humor and crazy characters to make this a funny book--just imagine what would happen if New York City floated out to sea.

I have to admit that I was a bit let down to have the book end with Brittany moving back and becoming part of France once again. A sequel is called for, and perhaps Brittany could float over to North America...a much more fantastic voyage. But, wasn't Jules Verne a Breton?

University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia
Penn Language Center Hosts NAACLT '96
(North American Association for Celtic Language Teachers)

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Conference and Teachers' Professional Development Day

In conjunction with the conference a "Teachers' Professional Development Day" will be held to give teachers of Irish, Scottish Gaelic, Manx, Welsh, Breton and Cornish and opportunity to take part in professional development activities.

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The 1997 conference will be held May 30-31 at St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish, Nova Scotia, hosted by Dr. Kenneth Nilsen. Proposals for 20-minute papers should be sent to Dr. Roslyn Blyn (see address and e-mail above). Send 3 double-spaced copies of 300-word abstract with name, address, voice and fax number, e-mail, and institutional affiliation on the 1st copy; no identification on the 2nd and 3rd copy. Also send a 50-word summary for conference program. Submit all materials in hard copy and by e-mail or diskette (indicating word processing program used). Topics include: computer-assisted instruction, dialect choice in language learning, language acquisition, language and gender, language learning materials, language policy and planning, language testing and teacher certification, and syllabus design.

NAACLT Membership: U.S. \$15 (\$10 students) payable to NAACLT. Send to Thomas Ihde, JCLL/NAACLT, 1 Beattie Court, Little Falls, NJ 07424-1401
e-mail: ihde@pilot.njin.net.

The NAACLT publishes *Journal of Celtic Language Learning* and *NAACLT News*.
Contact Thomas Ihde for information about these.

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* * *

Editor's Note: I realize that readers in California or Texas may not be able to travel to Pennsylvania for this conference, but let us know if similar things are going on in your part of the world. Such conferences are always of interest to readers in Brittany who are eager to learn of conferences overseas that concern the Breton language ... and for future years experts from Brittany can perhaps find a way to join such conferences.

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1997 Pan Celtic Calendar Now Available

The Celtic League American Branch announces the arrival of its 1997 Pan Celtic Calendar. This is the only calendar to follow the traditional Celtic Year, November 1 (1996) to October 31 (1997). Artwork for each month features Celtic mythology and this year's calendar artwork is by Patrick Wynne. The calendar also features over 800 historical entries, information on Celtic feast days, and an introduction to the six modern Celtic languages.

Prices quoted are for large orders. Suggested retail is \$7.00; a case of 100 costs \$400 (including shipping). For orders of ten or more a price of \$4.25 per calendar is quoted (Free shipping with advance payment). To order call 1-800-626-CELT or 914-779-9377. Fax 914-779-3710. Or write to:

Celtic Calendar, 2973 Valentine Ave., Bronx, NY 10458.

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