

# BRO NEVEZ

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



(photo Agence Bretagne Presse)

The call for Brittany Reunified leads the parade at the Saint Loup festival in Guingamp

KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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# BRO NEVEZ 135

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

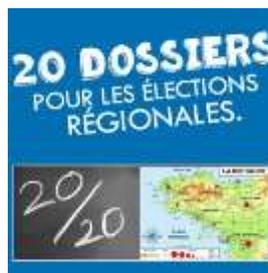
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## Editorial

The image on the cover created by Construire la Bretagne underlines the ongoing demand on the part of Bretons for the reunification of Brittany. And, the photo of the banner leading the parade at the Saint Loup dance festival held annually in Guingamp in Bro Dreger (Côtes d'Armor) underlines the fact that Bretons living far to the northwest of the Loire-Atlantique feel strongly that it is an integral part of Brittany.

The fight for the Breton language and culture is intimately linked to the fight for a reunified Brittany that respects Breton identity and history.



## Construire la Bretagne / Build Brittany

[www.construirelabretagne.bzh](http://www.construirelabretagne.bzh)

For the regional elections coming up in Brittany (December 6-13, 2015) a group called Construire la Bretagne is putting together a series of "dossiers" on issues that are important for the development of Brittany. Directed both to Breton voters and candidates in the elections these short 5 to 6 page documents attack areas in need of change and/or improvement. The documents concisely present issues and challenges and the current situation in Brittany, but more importantly they propose solutions and action that can and should be taken by Brittany's Regional Council. The website posting of the documents welcomes readers' comments.

As of the finalization of this issue of Bro Nevez, the following dossiers have appeared:



1– The Unity of Brittany – Reunification. This presents arguments for the reunification to bring Loire-Atlantique back into the administration area of Brittany.

2. Control of Territorial Action. The role of the region in enabling new economic and social initiatives and activities instead of a governance that simply controls them.

3. Territorial Equilibrium. A look at demographics and the responsibility of the region to insure a balance in access to resources for rural and urban populations.

4. The Breton Language – see below.

The editorial committee for this initiative includes an impressive panel of experts on Breton economy, society, language and culture: Paul Loret (President of the committee and director of the publications), Jean Ollivro, Patrick Malrieu, André Lavanant, Bernard Hommerie, Malo Bouëssel du Bourg, Romain Pasquier, Xavier Leclercq, Tangi Louarn, and Yannig Baron.

Keep an eye on the website for all 20 of these dossiers: [www.construirelabretagne.bzh](http://www.construirelabretagne.bzh)

While the dossiers are directed especially to voters and candidates for the Regional Council of Brittany, the 4<sup>th</sup> dossier about the Breton language seemed worth translating and including in this issue of Bro Nevez. I am not a professional translator, so my apologies for any misinterpretations that might be in the following text.

#### Dossier 4: the Breton Language

##### Diagnostic

While one counted 1 million Breton speakers at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the number of speakers today comes to 200,000 people. It has thus been divided by five in 100 years and this catastrophe continues. Despite the growth of bilingual schools (the three Ds: Diwan, Dihun and Div Yezh) the number of Breton speakers who die gains on the new learners. The slow erosion goes on despite different militant actions and initiatives fostered by the Regional Council.

Catastrophe indeed. A much more serious tragedy than evoked in ordinary discussion. A language is the “software” of original thought created in the context of a land and a human milieu. For over 1000 and even 1500 years, people here have constantly invented and refined words, expressions, and figures of speech to correspond with the identity of their land and to better account for it. In the Leon area each boulder has a name for more effective fishing. Every field is named, often to describe its properties and agricultural singularities (*traoñ an dour*, for example). A language is everything but a neutral element. In periods when resources were scarce it was the denominator to name, manage, and place a value on the potential of a given place. A language is the patient warming-up of a land, initially discerned, and little by little understood, for more development. One is firmly in economic logics and lasting development. When “Penn ar Bed” (tip or beginning of the world) became in French *Finistère* (the end of the land) a strategic and locational vision completely collapsed. When the Breton sea (Mor Breizh) was named “Manche,” one evidently lost a conceptual and logistical resource, and one doesn’t even think any longer of the universe of possibilities.

Breton was spoken in the bulk of the territory up to the 12<sup>th</sup> century – the border line detailed by Loth stopped at the gates of Rennes and ran to Pornic in the Loire-Atlantique before Breton became concentrated more specifically to the west of Brittany, the border running then from Plouha to Sarzeau. In the eastern part Gallo was spoken which also has a linguistic story to be valued. Closer to French, this Gallèse language (not a “patois”) was more easily diluted and its revitalization will be clearly more challenging, although it is necessary to equally do everything possible to assure the promotion and perpetuation of this other “software system of thought.” The Breton language is of a different Celtic form, and the only one of this type spoken on all of continental Europe. Like the Basque language which would be one of the most ancient languages spoken in Europe, Breton is an extraordinary patrimony requiring recognition of its value and its promotion – certainly in the interest of “linguistic diversity” but especially in the logic of providing a thought-out and successful territorial vitality, linked to sustainable development.

Today in a time of internet access and mobility, it should be noted that the linguistic frontier “Upper Brittany/Lower Brittany” tends to become blurry. Certainly there are not as many Breton language schools in eastern Brittany. Nevertheless, remarkable studies by the Public Office of the Breton Language (Ofis Publik ar Brezhoneg) show that important centers for teaching Breton are in Nantes (more exactly Saint-Herblain), Rennes, or Redon. While Breton had been considered the “language of hicks (*ploucs*)” up to the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, it has been proven that people of all professions and especially the higher professions (managers, intellectuals, artists ...) have understood the interest in transmitting Breton, and they place their children in bilingual classes. Numerous researchers (C. Hagège and G. Dalgalian, for example) have demonstrated the intellectual benefits (for math, physical sciences ...) associated with multilingual instruction, simply because learning different languages stimulates the mind.

In 2013, as well as for other years, in combining different criteria (level of academic success, but also social openness) the Diwan high school of Carhaix was ranked as the best of France, ahead of Louis-le-Grand and Henri IV

(<http://etudiant.lefigaro.fr/lesnews/palmares/detail/article/le-classement-2013-des-meilleurs-lycees-de-france-1540/>). Those who assume “Breton is of no use” are badly mistaken. This language is instead a language of success, a supplementary tool to find a job (teaching, media, business, translation ... with 1,300 jobs in 2015), a leverage for cultural advancement, a central element for communication and “dialogue” with the land in which one lives. In a parallel manner the language is an economic marker, even if one should not exaggerate its difference.

The “Côtes-du-Nord” became the “Côtes d’Armor” in 1989 and no one any longer regrets this choice. On the site of the INP (protection of marks/logos), the word “Breizh” is chosen by nearly 200 businesses. Besides Triskell or Triskella, businesses have chosen a number of Breton words to mark their roots and to reinforce economic prosperity: Sterenn, Stered, Armor lux, ArMen, Traou Mad ... Breton is not a language of the past but a marker of the future. If the Stade Rennais (Rennes Stadium) in Upper Brittany chose the name “Roazhon Park” with the support of 72% of votes in 2015, this is not by accident.

However, despite evident progress, this linguistic challenge seems to be viewed in too limited a way. It is certain that in contrast to most European countries, France “indivisible” multiplies the obstacles limiting - even prohibiting - the learning of the languages of France, which is scandalous for this country which purports to “incarnate the rights of man.” 40,000 Samis benefit from a TV channel in their language because the Scandinavian countries consider this language to be part of the world’s patrimony to be maintained and valued. The development of the Welsh channel S4C created over 1,200 jobs which are not easily exportable. In 2015 no Breton media is proposed for the scale of all of Brittany, despite the local radios, web sites, etc. which attempt to fill this alarming and abyssal void.

What’s the Plan?

The next Regional mandate is to be part of a turning point in time which could prove to be decisive in one way or another (continued erosion of language practices, or a restart for them). At least five propositions for concrete action are foreseen. How, during this historic period, will the different political parties take a position on this major issue, and position themselves on this major challenge for civilization.

1, Of course, the first action is to pursue international, European, and national lobbying to convince France and Paris to finally value linguistic diversity and to simply support the Breton language. We had to wait until 2015 and pressure by the Region to get contractual changes for the Diwan schools to reduce the period to two years from five during which the totality of school operations (buildings, teachers, personnel) had to be financed by the schools themselves. Much remains to be done to get equal treatment for school buildings and non-teaching personnel. France has been condemned on this subject several times on the international level (Human Rights Committee of the United Nations in 2011, Council of Europe and Human Rights Committee in Geneva in July 2015). But France still considers linguistic diversity to be a “menace” to French unity, while one knows that all Breton speakers master French perfectly. No one any longer denies that early bilingualism helps in learning other languages, and in a survey in June 2015, 72% of

the people of France expressed favor for the teaching of regional languages. External lobbying is thus an important primary element to try to sweep away the sectarianism of another age, this non-recognition and even the reinforcement of discrimination unworthy of a contemporary democracy (for example, the envisioned closing in 2015 of several bilingual streams in Catholic schools by the Rectorat).

2. To be rid of this denial of democracy requires an internal strategy especially to win this battle – let it be reminded – for civilization. It is first of all a matter of providing more education to win the battle of public opinion. Reinforcing the desire for the language means encouraging its use in all sectors: teaching, artistic creation, media, economy, public life ... However, campaigns to promote awareness, while useful, are too much directed to “protection” of Breton. One finds brilliant exceptions, notably done by the Public Office of the Breton Language. In any case, the central issue isn’t just to “protect” this exceptional patrimony, but to envision the Breton language as an extraordinary economic and strategic resource. The Breton language embodies a better understanding of a land, a reinforced connection with an environment for better economic and ecological performance. It is an indispensable “foothold” for territorial reputation and identity to increase visibility on an international stage. Didn’t an Italian importer working with the business Côteaux Nantes launch a range of ciders with the Breton language in the forefront?

For young people who want to “live and work in their country” Breton gives them an additional opportunity to find a job here. Without any possible doubt early bilingualism reinforces intellectual performance and favors the learning of other languages. As the Basque Country of Spain shows, the promotion of their culture also reinforces the feeling of attachment by youth to their land, which allows the Basque Country to keep their talents and decision-making powers. Linguistic dynamics are thus also economic dynamics. They create a youth who can achieve strong success, rooted on the one hand, and multilingual and open to other cultures on the other. Let it be noted finally that this teaching is essential in resolving various psychological traumatizations which have burdened Bretons too much. The renewed link with the Breton language isn’t just a “sentimental” matter or a questions of “protection.” It concerns a strategic challenge, of great economic and social – and health – importance to allow young people to be comfortable in their own land, a little like being comfortable in one’s own skin. Thus, the essential means must be allocated to engage in a battle of opinion to show to the population the multiple benefits generated in the presence of a schooling which will create an academically qualified and multilingual Breton youth.

3. In a more concrete fashion, media action is essential. Despite the considerable energy spent by various individuals (small radio stations in the Breton language, the internet TV Breizhoweb, the magazine Ya!, the journals Al Liamm, Bremañ, etc.) the Breton language remains too inaudible in everyday life. Yes, here and there one finds some broadcasts in Breton on “regional” TV and radio stations (France 3 Bretagne, TV Rennes, Tébéo, Radio Bleu Breizh-Izel, France Bleu Armorique, associative radios, etc.). Nevertheless, the current broadcasting isn’t at all up to the needs. New regional powers will thus use all means to engage in reinforcing these broadcasts. Despite the obstacles of the State, it will at minimum create a radio in Breton for all five departments to allow the highlighting of the talents of Breton artists, authors and musicians who do not benefit from the very little exposure on Paris media. The first action isn’t a matter of “protection” but of promotion and dissemination.

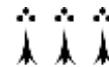
Multiple tourists to Ireland immediately look for radio in Gaelic to be immersed in and to fully “live” outside their home country. It would not be to depart from our country but intelligent activism to present our singularity, promote its artists, and allow at minimum those who wish to hear Breton the opportunity to do so. 82% of the population expressed a desire for a future for the Breton language, and it’s simply a matter of democracy for the Region to make a maximum effort to promote TV in Breton, as Wales has done for Welsh. Keep in mind that the percentage of Basque people speaking their language went from 54% to 23% between 1868 and 1970. Nevertheless, thanks to intentional political policies, today it is over 42% for Basque speakers – all bilingual and often trilingual. Success is thus possible. For Brittany, it is now or never.

4. The fourth strategy is to reinforce the teaching of Breton. It is not normal in this French country which is hesitant about diversity, that only 9% of young Bretons have access to their language when the percentages are 26% for the Basque Country, 53% in Alsace, and 77% in Corsica (<http://www.languesregionales.org/Nombre-de-locuteurs-dans-les>). How did we do so badly? The next Regional Council will make an effort to welcome this dossier with open arms, inspired by other French regions with much better results, and in searching also in Europe for effective solutions which have allowed countries or regions to value their linguistic patrimony and protect their culture. And, if one was to come to us about cost ... a bilingual class costs no more than a monolingual class. In both cases there is a teacher in front of 30 students and walls to hold them.

5. Finally, the Region will make these linguistic challenges a major axis in arranging various budgets (notably concerning transports) in order to promote a more fundamental issue. Not everything is a “question of money.” But, is it admissible that in 2015, the budget

allotted to the promotion and vitalization of the Breton language (3 million euros) is several hundred times smaller than the sums invested for railroads (TGV, TER, etc.)? Things are truly turned upside down and elected officials are mistaken in their targets. If the ultimate goal of the Regional Council is evidently to finance the dynamics of circulation, it is unacceptable that these budgetary orientations neglect an issue at the nerve center which incarnates the reality and future of the land. A reverse writing would give priority to language and the languages of Brittany to allow the winning of this battle in total contrast to current action. The promotion of the Breton language must be a priority for the new Regional Council. The period is pivotal and completely decisive. It is unacceptable to give crumbs to so fundamental an economic and societal challenge.

In conclusion, the development of the Breton language is a territorial marker, a vector of progress, a tool to resolve the problems of a destabilized people, an element of scholastic performance reinforcing an attachment to this land, allowing those who desire to live and work in their land. This language insures the good reputation of some of our businesses and constitutes an unequalled promotional and targeting tool for tourism. It is above all the software program of thought allowing a people to relocate its soul. What will our Councilors do? In such an important phase will they have the Breton conscience to promote the basis of our culture and identity?



## A New School Year for the Breton Language

Statistics for the new school year for Diwan Breton immersion school numbers as well as bilingual public and Catholic schools are not yet out, but will be included in the next issue of *Bro Nevez*. Estimates I have seen state that this year the number of students in bilingual programs will cap 20,000. While precise numbers are not yet in, Diwan should have a 6% growth for this fall 2015 – up from the 4% growth in 2014 and just 2.2% growth in 2013.

The demand for bilingual schooling has consistently grown since the founding of the Diwan schools in 1977, followed by the public bilingual schools in 1982, and the private bilingual Catholic schools in 1990. The particular appeal of the Diwan schools lies not only in the immersion model which allows children to most effectively master Breton at a very early age, but also in the academic success students achieve in these schools. This was evident in an article appearing in the *Ouest France* newspaper (July 16, 2015) about the Diwan school of Saint Herblain near Nantes where the number of students six years ago was 160, growing to 207 this past year and to 220 for this coming school year, necessitating a need for more space. With 10

classes (4 pre-school age) parents are working on plans to open a new space in the fall of 2016, with plans as well to open a middle-school level so students can move to the next level.

The article points out that just 15% of the parents of the children speak Breton, so why the desire to put your children in a Diwan school? Several reasons are cited – not new since the founding of Diwan in 1977, but still compelling for parents. Early bilingualism helps children learn other languages later on and opens them up to a wider world of cultures, besides giving them a greater appreciation of the Breton culture. Diwan schools are tuition-free and non-denominational, and parents have a great deal of input into the life of the school. In sum, children benefit academically and have a real chance to master the Breton language from the start.

But challenges remain for continued growth. These are financial since Diwan is only partially supported by the National Education system and counts heavily on fundraising and the good will of communities in making classroom space available. Another challenge which is also a factor in the growth of bilingual public and private schools is the need for more and better teacher training.

There was some good news for future growth of Diwan at the high school level in a surprise announcement at the September 19 Ceremony for new members of the Order of the Ermine – see the article later in this issue of Bro Nevez. The Mayor of Vannes, David Robo, who hosted the event with Patrick Malrieu, President of the Cultural Institute of Brittany, announced that his city would welcome the opening of a second Diwan high school, to relieve overcrowding at the Carhaix site. While this will take several years to develop, it is an important step in insuring that students can learn Breton from pre-school through their high school years.



### A Call for a Demonstration by Kevre Breizh and Bretagne Réunion

On October 24 demonstrations will be held in several cities of France and in the overseas territories of France to call for action in support of regional languages. In Brittany the site will be the town of Carhaix where a call will be made not

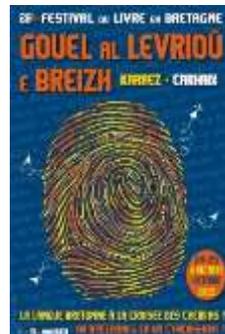
only to give Breton and Gallo legal status but to call for the French government to allow the people of Brittany to have a say in the administrative definition of “Brittany” – reunification of the five departments to match Brittany’s cultural identity, historical reality, and economic ambitions.

For more information see:

Deomp de'i - [www.deompde'i.bzh](http://www.deompde'i.bzh)

Kevre Breizh – [www.kevrebreizh.org](http://www.kevrebreizh.org)

Bretagne Réunion – [www.bretagne-reunie.org](http://www.bretagne-reunie.org)



### 26<sup>th</sup> Festival of Books in Carhaix, October 24 & 25, 2015

The annual book festival of Brittany is the occasion to discover the wide range of materials published in Brittany – in the Breton language, Gallo and French. The two days feature a presentation of books but also activities for children, theater, and the opportunity for discussion

and an exchange of ideas. This year will have a focus on the Breton language with a conference session with the theme: The Breton Language at the Crossroads. While there is much good will towards the Breton language in Brittany, it continues to lose ground and road blocks remain that make it difficult to truly advance - lack of media, limited schooling, limited budgets ... This discussion – in Breton and in French, including experts as well as the general public attending the festival – will examine the issues and propose some solutions and action to be taken.

For more information see: [www.festivaldulivre-carhaix.org](http://www.festivaldulivre-carhaix.org)

### New Books from Brittany

Reviewed by Lois Kuter



**Alan Coraud. *Sauvons le Muscadet d'une mort programmée.*** Éditions Yoran Embanner 2015. 102 pages. ISBN 978-2-916579-82-5

Most Americans have a small understanding of the importance in a name for wines of France and their close link to a specific geographic area. While we know that Brittany has a strong tradition of cider-making, the history of wine in Brittany is much less known on this side of the Atlantic. And how could we help but to be ignorant when every product that comes from France is stamped “French,” as if it were manufactured in the shadow of the Eiffel Tower.

Yet, as Alan Coraud clearly presents in this little book, Brittany has a long tradition of wine production in the region of Nantes that goes back many centuries. And as he even more clearly presents, the fate of this wine production has been linked closely to politics and its impact on economy.

The signature wine of the Nantes region is Muscadet, a dry white wine whose character is due to the gneiss and granite in the soil of the region and the maritime influence on the climate. During times of history when Brittany was a powerful player in sea trade Nantes was a key seaport on the mouth of the Loire River, and wine from Brittany had substantial markets in Britain, Belgium, Holland and Scandinavia.

Coraud argues, with reason, that a label that promotes “Breton” and “Celtic” wine would be favorable today to a large market given the 140 million Celts dispersed around the world. Alas, politicians and wine industry decision-makers during the past twenty years have not been interested in this idea. And Bretons have not had the power to market Muscadet as a “Breton” wine and have struggled to fight its submergence in a “Pays de Loire” or “Val de Loire” label. This has been a marketing disaster for Muscadet and part of the wider plan to slowly but surely erase Breton identity from those in the Department of Loire-Atlantique – the department of historical Brittany taken out during the Vichy government. Despite strong public support for Bretons in all five departments of historical Brittany, petitions to reunify Brittany have not had an impact, and government plans to restructure departments and regions of France continue to ignore the strong Breton identity and history of Loire-Atlantique. Muscadet is a victim of this “re-branding” of people and products.

Alan Coraud is a wine producer himself (on a small scale) and knows the Muscadet and wine production industry of the Nantes area from the inside. He knows what he is talking about when it comes to the power of marketing as a director of a marketing-communications company focused on tourism. He served as the mayor of La Remaudière from 2008 to 2014 and was a founding member of the tourism office of the wine country of Nantes.

While his history of the sabotage of Muscadet wine-making and marketing is a sad one, this book is not about the extinction of this wine. It is a call to arms for Bretons and wine-makers of the Nantes region to work even harder to promote and protect a rich heritage.

If you are fortunate to find a Muscadet sold in your wine store, try it. It's one of my favorite white wines although not readily available in Pennsylvania.

## Two New Pocket Dictionaries from Yoran Embanner

The Yoran Embanner publishing company based in Fouesnant in Brittany has published a series of pocket dictionaries – handy little books measuring 4 ¾ inches high and 3 ¼ inches wide. Each contains some 8,000 to 9,000 words with very short definitions – more the equivalent word rather than a long definition of meaning. They include a vocabulary for everyday use but those learning one or the other of the languages featured would need to use other resources to truly master the language. Of the 22 pocket dictionaries published so far, English speakers will find the Cornish-English one noted below as well as a Corsican-English dictionary. The series also includes Breton-Catalan, Breton-Irish Gaelic and Breton-French dictionaries. Check out the others on the website: [www.yoran-embanner.com](http://www.yoran-embanner.com).

This publisher has also produced a series of 20 mini-dictionaries, and these are truly tiny measuring 2 ½ inches tall and 1 ¾ inches wide. Like the pocket dictionaries they pack in a lot of words – some 8,000. Twenty of these have been published including a Breton-English dictionary and seven others for Breton speakers to find a word's translation in French, German, Spanish, Italian, Dutch, Portuguese and Welsh.



**Ken George. *Gerlyver Poket Kernewek-Sowsnek & Sowsnek-Kernewek / Cornish-English & English-Cornish Pocket Dictionary*.** Yoran Embanner. 2015. 295 pages. ISBN 978-2-36747-003-0

Ken George is well known as a scholar of Cornish and he worked with the Cornish Language Board (Kesva an Taves Kernewek) to put together this dictionary. As the brief history of Cornish at the beginning of the book explains Cornish is one of six Celtic languages – closest to Breton and Welsh. The last everyday speaker of Cornish, Dolly Pentreath, died in 1777. While traces of the language remained in the traditional knowledge of people in the 19<sup>th</sup> century it ceased to be an everyday language of conversation. A revival of the language began in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, but it was only in the 1970s that efforts were made to make it a spoken everyday language again. Today an estimated 300 families use it and Cornish benefits from recognition as an official regional language by the United Kingdom which authorizes its teaching in schools and public funds for its support.



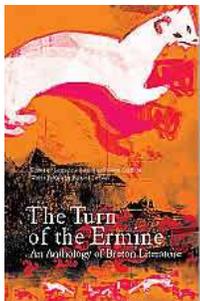
**Loïc Cheveau. *Faclair-Póca Gàidhlig-Fraingis & Fraingis-Gàidhlig / Dico de Poche Gaélique d'Écosse-Français & Français-Gaélique d'Écosse.***  
Yoram Embaner, 2015. 341 pages. ISBN 978-2-36747-014-6

Scottish Gaelic, like Cornish, is a Celtic language most closely related to Irish Gaelic and Manx. This dictionary also starts with a brief history of the language (in French) – its challenges and development, and guidance on syntax and orthography and other distinguishing features that a French speaker would need to be aware of. Also included is a short bibliography and internet site list. While English speakers might find the discovery of Scottish Gaelic words through their French equivalents interesting and entertaining, this is certainly a dictionary that will be useful for Bretons interested in Celtic culture.

### **An Award for Francis Boutle Publishers for Minority and Endangered Languages**

By Gwyn Griffiths (adapted from the posting on Agence Bretagne Presse, June 23, 2015)

A series of literary anthologies in the lesser used languages of Europe which began with an anthology of Breton literature edited by two people then living in Wales has earned an award from Châmbra d'Oc in Piedmont, Italy, for North London Publishers Francis Boutle. The award to Francis Boutle was for their work as publishers of minority and endangered languages.



The first volume in the series was jointly edited by Welsh author and journalist Gwyn Griffiths and the award winning French and Breton academic, Jacqueline Gibson, who at the time was on the staff of the French Department at Aberystwyth University but has since returned to her native Brittany. That book, entitled *The Turn of the Ermine*, was published in 2006. [see a review in *Bro Nevez* 98, May 2006]

At the same award ceremony James Thomas, also with strong Welsh connections, received an award as editor for the latest volume in the series, the beautifully produced *Grains of Gold: an anthology of Occitan language*. His parents, both musicians, were from Wales and James was brought up in Bristol, and educated at Bristol University. He is a professional translator specialising in Catalan and Occitan. The awards were presented in Ostana, an Occitan-speaking

community in the foothills of the Alps, at a festival of literature, which included speakers of Occitan, Corsican, Armenian and Tutunaku (Mexico).

Occitan, the ancient language of Southern France and parts of Spain and parts of Northern Italy, was the language of the troubadours whose influence as lyrical poets spread throughout Europe in the Middle Ages. It was also the first Latin language to be grammatically standardised. Various dialects of the Oc language can still be heard in many parts of Southern France, and is often confused with Provençal, possibly thanks to the writer Frédéric Mistral. It is claimed that Mistral was the only writer in a minority language without official status – to win the Nobel Prize for literature. That was in 1904.

In between the Breton and Occitan anthologies, Francis Boutle has published volumes of literature from Manx, Galician, Norman French from Jersey and Guernsey, Maltese and even Esperanto. All the books have facing-page translations into English. Clive Boutle, director of the publishing house, says there are others on the way – including Welsh.

In his autobiography, *Ar Drywydd Stori* (published last month by Y Lolfa) Gwyn Griffiths explains how the first anthology in the series came about. “I was approached by Clive Boutle after I had written a travel book in Welsh about Brittany. He said he wanted a reader of Breton literature. I said, ‘yes, but give me time’. By a lucky accident, soon afterwards, I met Jacqueline when we were both speaking at a conference at the University of Glamorgan. I told her about the proposal from Clive Boutle and she agreed enthusiastically, even to the extent of putting her Ph.D. on hold. We agreed that it should be a book of Breton language literature despite the huge amount of French language literature by Breton writers and by French writers visiting the region. This, in the main, has been the template followed by the editors of the subsequent anthologies.”

That was in 2000 and it was 2006 before the anthology appeared in print. It proved sufficiently successful and well enough reviewed for Mr Boutle to decide there was a market for series and without doubt *Grains of Gold* is a game-changer.

For more information about this publisher (and to purchase books): <http://www.francisboutle.co.uk>



### **Breton History on Internet Television**

A new series of programs called *La Bretagne en Histoire* has been developed by Olivier Caillebot – producer and interviewer with Jean-Jacques Monnier, a scholar of Breton history. The 23 episodes

(13 minutes each) have been drawn from the encyclopedia and CD collection published by Skol Vreizh. In the style of a conversation with numerous images the series will introduce internet TV viewers to a range of topics in Breton history. Starting September 13, the programs are aired at 8:30 pm (prime time!) and can be replayed at a later date from the website of the television channels involved:

Tébéo – [www.tebeo.bzh](http://www.tebeo.bzh)

Tébésud – [www.tebesud.fr](http://www.tebesud.fr)

TV Rennes 35 – [www.tvr.bzh](http://www.tvr.bzh)

Télé Nantes - [www.telenantes.com](http://www.telenantes.com) (which will air it on Wednesdays alternating with a series about Jules Verne)

So, check out these internet TV stations for this educational series on Breton history as well as other programming and news of all kinds.



## New Members of Brittany's Order of the Ermine

The Order of the Ermine is one of Europe's oldest military and honorary orders, created in 1381 by Jean IV, Duke of Brittany. It was distinctive in being open to women and commoners. Like all of the chivalric orders of France, it was abolished with the French Revolution. In 1972 the order was reinvented to pay honor to René Pleven who had presided CELIB, (Committee for the Study and Relationship of Breton Interests). In 1988 the Cultural Institute of Brittany, Skol Uhel ar Vro, took up where CELIB left off in 1973 and has awarded the medallion to four or five individuals each year for their life-long service to Brittany.

The following are the four new honorees for this fall 2015. I have included the Breton introduction from the Cultural Institute. My translations are from French versions of those.

### Tud enoret / People Honored



**Patrick Mareschal (1939)**  
Difenner taer adunvaniezh Breizh eo Patrick Mareschal. Pa oa rener Arsellva ekonomikel ar C'hornôg eo bet oberianttre ha kemeret en deus perzh, e 1973, e krouidigezh ar gevredigezh B5 a zo deuet da vezañ ar c'hCUAB e 1981 (Poellgor evit unaniezh melestradurel Breizh). Dilezet en deus ar garg a brezidant pa 'z eo

bet anvet da guzulier-kêr e Naoned e 1983. E 2001, hag eñ kuzulier-departamant el Liger Atlantel, eo deuet abenn da lakaat mouezhiañ, gant koulz lavarout an holl, ur mennad evit adunvaniezh Breizh. E 2004 eo bet anvet Patrick Mareschal da brezidant ar C'huzul-Meur hag an dra kentañ en deus graet eo lakaat banniel Breizh war savadur an departamant etre an hini gall hag an hini european : sklaer e oa d'an holl e oa al Liger Atlantel e Breizh ha n'eus bet tamm stourm a-enep ebet a-berzh an dilennedi ha keodediz an departamant. Diouzh e diviz e-unan en deus kuitaet Patrick Mareschal ar C'huzul-meur e 2011 met strakal a ra bepred ar Gwenn ha Du war ti an departamant.

### Patrick Mareschal (born 1939)

Tenacious militant for the reunification of Brittany. While he was the director of the Observatoire économique de l'Ouest, Patrick Mareschal actively participated in the creation of the organization B5 in 1973 which became the Comité pour l'unité administrative de la Bretagne (CUAB) in 1981. He became its president but resigned in 1983 when he was elected to the Municipal Council of Nantes. In 2001 while a member of the General Council of Loire-Atlantique he succeeded in having a near unanimous vote for reunification of Brittany by the council. In 2004 Patrick Mareschal became president of the General Council and his first gesture was to raise the Breton flag on the Department offices between the French and European flags. The fact that Loire-Atlantique belongs in Brittany was thus spectacularly affirmed without provoking any contestation on the part of the citizens or their elected officials. In 2011 Patrick departed from the General Council but the Gwenn ha Du continues to fly over the Department offices.



### Eugène Riguidel (1940)

Eugène Riguidel, Gouere 1940, marv evit Bro-C'hall e Mers el-Kebir. Miz Du 1940 : ganedigezh Eugène Riguidel e Aradon aloubet gant an Alamaned. 1941, distaget al Liger-Atlantel diouzh Breizh

gant Pétain. Ur vugaleaj eürus, leun a hunvre, ar Mor Bihan, tignoloù, pouleñvat, dichapadennoù. Ur c'hrennard war vor... Karantez hag engouestl, kiriegezh. Dimeziñ, bugale, labourat e Pariz war ar sizhun, bageal e-pad an dibenn-sizhun hag e-pad ar vakañsoù. 1968 : prezegenn Rostand, keodedad ar bed evit dont er maez eus an nukleel. Bageal gwashañ ma c'hell, kenstrivadegoù, beajoù, trec'hioù : 1971 - Kêr ar C'hab-Rio, 1974 - Redadeg digenvez an Aurore, 1979 - Kentañ e Redadeg treuzatlantel a-zaouioù gant Gilles Gahinet : ar vrud ! 1981 : Kentañ e trede tennad tro ar bed (Whitebread) e bourzh ar Mor bihan. 1985 : termen d'ar c'henstrivadegoù. Stourmer oberiant a-enep an direizhderioù, a-enep ar c'hreizennoù nukleel, an OGK, an orjal... A-du gant Breizh adunvanet, gant sevenadur

Breizh hag ar brezhoneg, gant Diwan. Evit lorc'h pobl Vreizh a-enep ar c'holieroù.... Evit kolier an Erminig !

### **Eugène Riguidel (1940)**

Eugène Riguidel : July 1940, deaths for France at Mers el-Kebir. In November 1940, Eugène Riguidel is born in Arradon, then occupied by the Germans. 1941, Pétain separates Loire-Atlantique from Brittany. A happy childhood, dreamy, the gulf, fishing boats, scull boats, escape. A maritime adolescence ... love, engagement, responsibility. Marriage, children, a job in Paris during the week, boating at the end of the week and on vacations. 1968: Rostand conference, citizen of the world, to end nuclear plants. Extreme sailing, competition, voyages, victories (1971: Cap-Rio, 1974 solo of the Aurore) 1979: Victory in the Transatlantic race in doubles with Gilles Gahinet: glory. 1981 : First in the third stage of the world tour (Whitbread) on board the Mor bihan. 1985 : end of the competition. Militant engagement against injustices, nuclear power plants, the OGM, wires ... For liberty, for reunified Brittany, for the Breton language and culture, for Diwan, for the pride of the Breton people against chains, ... for the Medallion of the Ermine.



### **Philippe Argouarc'h (1949)**

Bet eo bet Philippe Argouarc'h, e kerzh e yaouankiz, o kantreal amañ hag ahont, disuj e oa d'ar servij soudard, tapet gantañ arnodennoù war ar fizik en deus labouret en un arnodva e Skol-veur Stanford er Stadoù-Unanet. Bez e oa unan eus ar

skipailh en deus skignet al lec'hienn gentañ war ar rouedad en Amerika an Hanternoz. E 1997 e sav kevredigezh Bretoned California. Distro da Bariz e 2001 : webmestr evit International Herald Tribune. E 2003 e tigor Agence Bretagne Presse, Ajañs kelaouiñ e Breizh. Merzhet en deus pegen fall e oa ar servijoù kelaouiñ er vro, pe vefent prevez pe ensavadurel, pa vez kaoz eus mad ar Vretoned. An ABP a zo un doare da gelaouiñ ha da lakaat war wel buan-tre ar c'heleier (3 000 gweladenn bemdez). Rener an embann eo Philippe Argouarc'h ha doujañ a ra d'ar frankiz bras an esteurel. Hervez ar pennadoù a vez lennet ar muiañ e renker o urzh, da lavarout eo plas ar pennadoù pennañ. An ABP a zo dizalc'h hep tamm skoazell arc'hant ebet. E-pad 12 vloaz ez eus bet embannet 35 000 pennad, 30 000 skeudenn ha kantadoù a videoioù war lec'hienn an ABP, ur binvidigezh dibar e-bed ar c'heleier, ul lec'h eskemm buhez hag ul lec'h evit mirout danvez ha memor Breizh.

### **Philippe Argouarc'h (1949)**

A vagabonding youth, resistance to military service, diploma in Physics, a job at the laboratory of Stanford University (USA). He was part of the team who launched

the first website in North America. In 1977 he created the Bretons of California association. The return in 2001 to Paris as webmaster for the International Herald Tribune. In 2003 he opened the Agence Bretagne Presse to compensate for the poor ability of large press agencies, private and public, to take Breton interests into account and thus he gave Brittany a means of expression to react to current events (3000 visits each day to the site). As the director of publication, Philippe Argouarc'h promotes a large freedom of expression. The hierarchy of articles (and thus, the One) are indexed as to success by the readers. The A.B.P. is an independent un-subsidized media. The 35,000 articles, 30,000 photos, and hundreds of videos published during twelve years make the A.B.P. an extraordinary source of information, a place for sustained discussion, and a depository for the memoirs of Brittany.



**Yvon Palamour (1932)** Evel kalz a Vretoned harluet pell eus ar vro eo bet Yvon Palamour kizidikaet ouzh sevenadur Breizh. Ebenour a vicher (kentañ eus e rummad e skol Boule, Priz meur rannvroel ar Micherioù arz) en deus bet tro da vont war-dro

ul lodenn eus hon glad. Yvon, dre e vicher en deus krouet arrebeuri pe strolladoù pezhoù arrebeuri nevez hag ivez adkempennet arrebeuri hengounel. Kelennet en deus e varregezh war an danvez-se e Breizh hag er C'hebek (Kreizenn rannvroel brudañ artizaned Breizh) En tu-hont da se eo bet, e vuhez pad, buhezour ha roet en deus lañs ha brudet sevenadur Breizh ( tremen a rae kalzig a dud e kelc'h Jabadao e Pariz, un toullad anezho o deus kemeret perzh e sevenadur Breizh goude-se). Graet en deus ivez telennoù ha pa 'z eo distro da Vreizh e 1967 en deus savet bagad Pleuwigner, aozet kenstrivadegoù sonerien daou-ha-daou, broudet ar sonerien da implijout ar biniou hag ar vombard e skeulenoù na oant ket temperet, ezel eo ivez eus laz-kanañ « Paotred Pleuiner ». Pa 'z eo aet war e leve, en deus, gant unan eus e stajidi kozh, Andre ar Barzh, studiet don an arrebeuri poblel hengounel (irc'hier, presoù lin hanternoz Breizh, arrebeuri unliv pe liesliv kreisteiz Breizh). An enklaskoù-se a zo dellezek da vezañ embannet.

### **Yvon Palamour (1932)**

As for many Breton emigrants, distance from Brittany only intensified Yvon Palamour's interest in the Breton culture. And his profession of wood working (top of graduation at the Boule School, Regional Grand Prize of the Métiers d'Art) put him naturally in contact with a wide range of our patrimony. Thus, professionally, Yvon divided time between the making of new furniture or suites with the restoration of traditional furnishings, which led to his also teaching his art (Centre régional de promotion des artisans de Bretagne) in Brittany and

Quebec. Parallel to this and throughout his lifetime, he would be a promoter, inciter ... for Breton culture (Cercle Jabadao in Paris through which numerous people who played a strong role for Breton culture would pass). His trade as a wood worker would lead him to construct harps, then with his return to Brittany in 1967 a number of initiatives: the launching of the bagad of Pluvigner, organization of contests for paired bombard and biniou players, sensitizing pipers to the interest of instruments in untemperd scales, participation in the men's choir Paotred Pleuiner. With retirement he launched into a study of traditional furniture with one of his former students, André Le Bars (chests and armoires, "Press-lins" of northern Brittany, monochrome or polychrome furniture of southern Brittany) which will hopefully result in a publication.

A medal from the Cultural Institute of Brittany was also be awarded to **Pierre-Yves Rhun** for his study of the geography of Brittany and work to make information accessible online – a mass of documents from his own scholarship as well as those of other Breton experts. Check this site for a massive amount of information on Brittany's geography, demography, environment, economy, and social organization – past and present. [http://www.skolvreizh.com/wiki/G%C3%A9ographie\\_nu\\_m%C3%A9rique\\_de\\_la\\_Bretagne](http://www.skolvreizh.com/wiki/G%C3%A9ographie_nu_m%C3%A9rique_de_la_Bretagne)

## Deep Inside a Breton Skull 46 – How to Speak Breton in English

Jean-Pierre Le Mat

Maybe you speak Breton. Maybe not.



The problem is to get a taste of Breton while being understood.

There is a solution, which is called "bretonisms".

During the XXth century, people in Brittany were forced to use French words. They do so, but they kept the Breton syntax and the Breton way of expressing their ideas. You can do the same in English.

Instead of saying: "How are you?",  
Say "It goes well?" (in Breton: Mont a ra mat ?)  
Or say "Good the things?" (in Breton: Mat an traoù ?)  
Or say "How is with you?" (in Breton: Penaos eo ganit ?)

Instead of saying: "The weather is nice"  
Say: "Nice the weather"  
(in Breton: Brav an amzer)

Instead of saying: "I own a car -or a new hat, or a \$10 bill-"

Say: "A car -or a hat new, or a bill \$10- is with me"  
(in Breton: Ur c'harr -pe un tok nevez, pe ur bilhed 10\$- 'zo ganin)

Instead of saying: "He arrived suddenly"

Say: "He arrived in the middle of everything"  
(In Breton: Erru eo a-greiz holl)

Instead of saying: "I sing the Breton anthem"

Say: "Singing I do the Breton anthem" (in Breton: Kanañ à ran Bro Gozh ma zadoù, if you want to stress what you are doing)

Or say: "I sing the Breton anthem" (in Breton: Me 'gan Bro Gozh ma zadoù, if you want to stress yourself)

Or say: "The Breton anthem I sing" (in Breton: Bro Gozh ma zadoù e kanan, if you want to stress the Breton anthem)

Instead of saying: "Do you want a cup of tea?"

Say: "A cup of tea will go with you?"  
(In Breton: ur bannig te a yelo ganeoc'h?)

Instead of saying: "I didn't bring my bag"

Say: "My bag stayed after me"  
(in Breton: Chomet eo va sac'h war va lerc'h)

Instead of saying: "she is in love with me"

Say: "She is stupid with me"  
(in Breton: Honnezh 'zo sot ganin)

Instead of saying: "It is not sure"

Say: "It is not said"  
(in Breton: N'eo ket lavaret)

Instead of saying: "Put your feet in your shoes"

Say: "Put your shoes in your feet"  
(in Breton: Lak da voutoù en da dreid)

Instead of saying: "This one works for the government"

Say: "This one works under the government"  
(in Breton: Hennez a labour dindan ar Stad)

Instead of saying: "You gave me too much"

Say: "You gave me half too much"  
(in Breton: Roet peus din an hanter re)

Instead of saying: "I never saw that!"

Say: "Never so much!"  
(in Breton: Biskoaz kemend-all!)

Instead of saying: "He got much money"

Say: "He got money to manure"  
(in Breton: Arc'hant d'ober teil zo gantañ)

Instead of saying: "I am speaking Breton with him"

Say: "I am to speak Breton with him"  
(in Breton: Me 'zo o komz brezhoneg gantañ)

(More bretonisms, but in French:  
<http://lesbretonnismes.canalblog.com/>)

You can also change the gender of the words. In Breton, “rain”, “earth”, “sea”, “letter”, “key”, “grave”, “water”, “war”, “tongue”, “apple” are masculine words.

“Coffee”, “cemetery”, “travel”, “knife”, “boat” are feminine words, as well as the names of countries, rivers or towns.

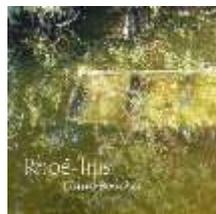
I believe that the difference in gender, deep inside our Breton skulls, is of some significance.

So, you can speak Breton in English. Of course, it will not be a kind of scar, as when we speak Breton in French. But it can be, deep in your American skulls, remembering an ancient past, a time when, in «Tir na nóg », the Land of the Young, the heroes were speaking a Celtic language.



## New Music of and from Brittany

Reviewed by Lois Kuter



**Claire Boucher. Rhoé-Inis.**  
[www.claireboucher.ca](http://www.claireboucher.ca)

Singer Claire Boucher hails from Sarzeau on the Rhuys peninsula of southeastern Brittany and lives in Montreal. Claire’s involvement with traditional Breton music started with dance, followed by song. She has taken a number of workshops in Brittany working with singers such as Jorj Belz, Laurent Jouin and Charles Quimbert to master both Breton and French traditional song repertoires.

The 15 selections on this CD includes seven songs in French and five in Breton, with roughly half of the songs from the Rhuys area and the Loire-Atlantique. Not only has Claire learned from some masters of Breton song tradition – and she could certainly be called a master of song herself - but she has drawn the songs on this CD from a variety of sources. Half of them are from the Dastum archives – a fine testament to the role Dastum has always tried to play in enabling singers and musicians to use their collection to create new performances. Three songs are drawn from Yann-Fañch L’Henoret’s publication in the magazine *Breizh* (No. 302 from April 1985). That’s one of the few issues I am missing in this excellent long-running magazine put out by the organization Kendalc’h. I am sure that *Breizh* editors from the 1980s would be very pleased to see the

good effect their work has had 30 years later. From the interesting sources Claire has chosen for her song, it is clear that she has a solid knowledge of Breton tradition – already evident in her performance.

Song takes center-stage on this CD but the instrumental accompaniment is varied and interesting, although on the few dances (*an dros*) on the CD, the instruments seemed to drag a bit for me behind the bright and energetic voice of Claire Boucher. I personally found most enjoyable the duo of Claire’s voice with Scottish Smallpipes played by Timothy Cummings for the Breton language song “An Hollaika” and for the widely known Breton cantique “Kantic ar baradoz.” There’s also a very nice duet of voice and flute by Brad Hurley on “An tad malh” as well as voice and guitar also by Brad Hurley on “C’était Anne de Bretagne.” Having known Albert Trevidic I think he would have appreciated Claire’s rendering of “Ar c’hazh koad” about the demise of a squirrel who ends up in the stew pot. The plucking of a jew’s harp and bass fiddle in accompaniment add a nice touch. Also of a humorous nature is the story told in Breton by Hervé Conan – “Ar bleiz ha marc’h ar miliner” – about a wolf who is outwitted by a horse.

While Alan Jones’ solo rendition on Northumbrian smallpipes of “Derwentwater’s Farewell” is masterful, this song about the beheading of the Earl of Derwentwater for his role in the Jacobite Rising of 1715 seems a bit out of place with the rest of the repertoire chosen for the CD. Alan Jones also solos on the closing selection “Air de Noirmoutier” adapted from a performance by Thierry Bertrand on the veuze, the bagpipe native to southeastern Brittany and the Vendée.

The notes to the CD provide all the song texts with a French translation for those in Breton and an ample English summary for all selections. I would have welcomed a little more biographical information about Claire Boucher and an introduction to the other performers who were noted only by name and instrument. For a little more about Claire and samples of her music visit [www.claireboucher.ca](http://www.claireboucher.ca).

For the other musicians I have pieced together website information as well as notes provided by e-mail from Brad Hurley to give a brief introduction here. In no particular order:

*Brad Hurley* has been playing traditional Irish music on wooden flute and tin whistle since 1975. And he’s no slouch on the guitar He became interested in Breton music through the flute playing of Jean-Michel Veillon and Jean-Luc Thomas, and CDs of Annie Ebrel, Yann-Fañch Kemener, and Erik Marchand made him a fan of traditional Breton song. Based in Montreal he is an environmental writer specializing in climate change and children’s environmental health, among other topics.  
[www.firescribble.net/](http://www.firescribble.net/)

Anyone who plays bagpipes in North America (and beyond) is likely to know of *Alan Jones*, organizer of the North American Northumbrian Pipers Convention held annually in Vermont. This gathering brought together not only Northumbrian pipers but a number of other lesser heard pipes including the Breton biniou and veuze. Alan plays the Northumbrian pipes as well as dozens of other bagpipes and instruments and is a scholar of and collector of bagpipes as well.

*Tim Cummings* was born in Tennessee and resides in Vermont. Like many other Americans who tormented their families by learning the bagpipes, he inexplicably fell in love with Scottish Highland pipes. But; unlike most of these others, he became a professional piper and teacher, also performing on Scottish Smallpipes, Border pipes and whistles.

*Jeremiah McLane* is a Vermont-based accordionist, pianist, and composer who performs solo and with a number of bands: Nightingale, Le Bon Vent, Trio Actuel, Hummingbird, The Clayfoot Strutters, The Goat Broke Loose, and The Maritsa Trio.  
[www.jeremiahclane.com/](http://www.jeremiahclane.com/).

*Steven Jones* (no relation to Alan) is an accordion player, fiddler, and whistle player (and teacher) who lived in Montréal for many years and now lives in the Eastern Townships of Québec. His repertoire is primarily Irish but, like Brad Hurley, he has played for a number of Breton dances in the past.

*Corey DiMario* plays bass fiddle for Crooked Still, an alternative bluegrass band known for its high energy, technical skill, unusual instrumentation and innovative acoustic style. A native of Vermont, he was invited to participate in this recording.

*Hervé Connan* who reads the Breton language story of the wolf and horse drawn from Luzel's collection of Breton songs is originally from the Trégor region of Brittany. He learned the biniou and bombard in the late 1940s and early 50s in a period when Breton traditions were being discarded in the interest of "modernization." And he polished his knowledge of Breton through *kan ha diskan* singing. After immigrating to Canada in the 1950s he continued to promote Breton culture in a variety of roles and served as the musical director of the dance troupe Triskell in Montreal until 1990.



## Heard of but not heard – New CDs from Brittany

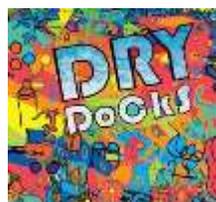
Information for these short notes were gleaned from reviews in *Musique Bretonne* No. 244 (July-August-September 2015), *Ar Men* No. 207 (July-August 2015), and the Co-op Breizh website [www.coop-breizh.fr](http://www.coop-breizh.fr) as well as some web searching.



### **Bagad ar Meilhoù Glaz. Steir eo.**

The bagad Meilhoù Glaz (Moulin Vert) from Quimper was created in 1951 and has been in the top category of Brittany's unique style of bagpipe bands since 1995. Drawing on the traditional melodies and

dances of Brittany they present suites of dances from competition performances from 2010 to 2015. Included in a march and melody are paired biniou and bombard "couples" Julien Tymen / Michel Kerveillant and Goulven Hénaff / Alexis Meunier. And the group Sonerion Du joins for a selection to close the CD.



### **Dry Docks. Dry Docks.**

Dry Docks is made up of Manu Boels (Belgian composer and singer), Loic Douce (bass fiddle, guitars and vocals), Tristan Gonidec (percussion), and Matthieu Friant (electric guitar). The style is

described as reggae, soul, hip-hop, rhythm and blues, and folk – and on the album cover they state: "a little riddim never get rid of soul..."

### **Régis Huiban. Mille boutons.**

Bemol Productions.

Accordion virtuoso Régis Huiban has been on the Breton music scene for a long time working with many musicians in creative collaborations. Here he goes solo with chromatic accordion and the accordina, an instrument which combines the keyboard of a button accordion with a harmonica. Huiban features dances of Brittany inspired by the performances of Breton masters of the accordion Yves Menez, Jean Coatével, Yves Richard and others.



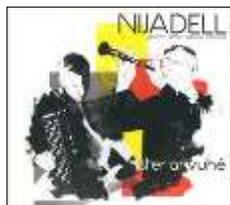
### **Françoise Le Visage & Enzo Vacca. Gwiadenn**

Harp players Françoise Le Visage from Brittany and Enzo Vacca from the Piedmont of Italy weave together melodies and dances of their home countries. They are joined by Anaig Lucas on vocals

and the Telenn Band (telenn = harp in Breton).

**Mouez Breiz Production.**  
**Mémoire sonore de la musique bretonne 1950-1976.**

Mouez Breiz was a record producer based in Quimper from 1950 to 1976, producing 78, 33 and 45 rpm records of traditional and less traditional Breton music. Keltia Musique, founded in 1970, also based in Quimper, would ultimately take on the catalogue of Mouez Breiz and is now re-releasing some of the 300 Mouez Breiz recordings. The ten currently available include three featuring kan ha diskan (*Soeurs Goadec, Pardon des kan ha diskan, Fest noz à Scrignac*), two by singer Eliane Pronost, a recording by the Kanerien Bro Leon choral group, and one by the group Tregeriz (*Ar Jentiliez*). There are two recordings by sonneurs - one of Pierre Le Beuz and René Daoudal, and a second with several performers: Per Guillou and Yann Péron, Loeiz Ropars, Yvon Palamour and Alain Le Buhé. Two of the new CDs present a snapshot of the Fête de Cornouaille (1957, 1960, 1961) and the Festival des Cornemuses of Brest (1959-1962) featuring Scottish pipe bands. Original notes, illustrations and photos from the first editions are retained.

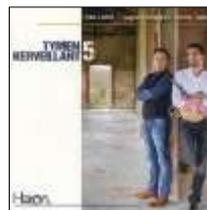


**Nijadel. *Ster ar vuhé.***  
Nijadel is a duo composed of Fabrice Lothodé (bombards and biniou) and Jérémy Simon (chromatic accordion). This CD was recorded in different churches to provide a range of sonority. 14

traditional songs, dances, and compositions take the listener through the entire life cycle from birth to death, passing through childhood, youth and adulthood.

**Les Siffleurs de Nuit. *Déliez-moi les pieds.***

This is a group composed of two musicians from Brittany and two from Quebec who provide here 10 selections of dances and melodies – primarily from Brittany but also Quebec. Emmanuelle Hélias provides vocals and percussions, Anthony Gérard provides vocals, trumpet and shruti box. Félix Duhamel plays guitar, fiddle, jew's harp, vocals and feet (and if you have heard music from Quebec, you know what feet can do). Alex Kehler plays fiddle, Nordic cistre, nyckelharpa and provides vocals.



**Tymen/Kerveillant. *Heson.***

This bombard/biniou duo has won the top prize at the Gourin championship competition in 2013 and 2014 so their mastery of the traditional Breton repertoire is unquestioned. On this CD they show off their virtuosity with a variety of dances – compositions and arrangements. Julien Tymen adds soprano sax to his bombard performance with Michel Kerveillant on biniou koz. They are joined by Gwylan Menghin on bass, Kentin Julliard on percussions and Tibo Niobé on guitars, banjo, bass and percussions.



**Gouelioù Breizh – Festivals of Brittany**  
[www.gouelioubreizh.bzh](http://www.gouelioubreizh.bzh)

The summer is a time when festivals featuring Breton music and dance hit their peak, but festivals continue throughout the year, throughout Brittany. A great website to search for festivals is Gouelioù Breizh where you can find links to some 40 festivals plus dozens of other festivals and contests organized by Kendalc'h and War'l Leur featuring Breton dance, Kanomp Breizh, promoting choral music in the Breton language, and Bodadeg ar Sonerion which federates dozens of bagads of Brittany.

There are also many concerts by Breton musicians and dancing (the fest noz) outside of festivals. A great place to track these down is the Tamm Kreiz website ([www.tamm-kreiz.com](http://www.tamm-kreiz.com)) where you can search a calendar, by artists or group, or by type of instrument.

While the chance to hear and dance to more traditional styles of Breton music are certainly plentiful, Brittany fosters all styles of music and there are numerous festivals for classical music, jazz, blues, rock, and other styles.



**Loire-Atlantique celebrates its Breton heritage**

Each year the Anne de Bretagne Festival provides an opportunity to enjoy music, dance, food, drink and other aspects of Breton culture found in this southeastern portion of Brittany. Rotating to different cities and towns in the area of Nantes, this year the festival takes place in September in Saint-Herblain and Pornic. See the website for this year's program:

<http://www.i-pornic.com/agenda/2015/09/12-09-2015-21eme-festival-anne-de-bretagne-a-pornic-8213.php>

Here are **just a few** links to **some** other festivals and events in Brittany. Check them out to get a taste of just a few of the festivals and events that take place in Brittany year-round:

Les Celtiques Festival in Guérande

[www.bro-gwenrann.org](http://www.bro-gwenrann.org)

Danouet Festival for the Dance Plinn

[www.danouet.free.fr](http://www.danouet.free.fr)

Festival de Cornouaille in Quimper

[www.festival-cornouaille.bzh](http://www.festival-cornouaille.bzh)

InterCeltic festival of Lorient

[www.festival-interceltique.com](http://www.festival-interceltique.com)

Festival des Filets Bleu in Concarneau

[www.festivaldesfiletsbleus.fr](http://www.festivaldesfiletsbleus.fr)

Festival of sea songs in Paimpol

[www.paimpol-festival.fr](http://www.paimpol-festival.fr)

Fisel dance festival in Rostrenen

[www.fisel.org](http://www.fisel.org)

Championship for sonneurs de couple

[www.championnat.des.sonneurs-gouren.over-blog.com](http://www.championnat.des.sonneurs-gouren.over-blog.com)

Gallo music festival Mil Goul

[www.bertegn-galezz.com](http://www.bertegn-galezz.com)

Celtomania Festival of Nantes

[www.celtomania.vr](http://www.celtomania.vr)

Celt'Vannes Festival:

[www.vbs-56.com/festival-celti-vannes](http://www.vbs-56.com/festival-celti-vannes)

Rencontres International de harpe

[www.harpe-celtique.fr/festival](http://www.harpe-celtique.fr/festival)

Festival des Vieilles Charrues in Carhaix

[www.vieillescharrues.asso.fr](http://www.vieillescharrues.asso.fr)

Kann al Loar in Landerneau

[www.kan-al-loar.bzh](http://www.kan-al-loar.bzh)

Fest Bro Pagan in Guissény

[www.fest-bropagan.org](http://www.fest-bropagan.org)

Fête des Brodeuses in Pont-l'Abbé

[www.fetedesbrodeuses.com](http://www.fetedesbrodeuses.com)

Mondial'Folk Festival in Plozévet

[www.mondialfolk.org](http://www.mondialfolk.org)

Festival de la Saint-Loup in Guingamp

[www.festival-saint-loup.bzh](http://www.festival-saint-loup.bzh)

### Breizh-Amerika

[www.breizh-amerika.com](http://www.breizh-amerika.com)

During the months of July and August Breizh-Amerika created a display of photographs documenting the travel of the Collectif Breizh Amerika musicians to six U.S. cities - New York City, Rochester (New York),



Cleveland (Ohio), Chicago (Illinois), Santa Fe and Albuquerque (New Mexico). Held in the Tronjoly chateau in Gourin the exhibit features photos by Charles Kergaravat and videos by Jean-Francois Baudet The exhibition was co-organized by Breizh-Amerika with À Ciel Ouvert, with support of Bretagne Transamerica, the town of Gourin, and the Communauté de Communes du Pays du Roi Morvan.

The collective Breizh-Amerika for this tour included Armel an Hejer, Alain Le Clere, Thomas Moisson and Gaetan Grandjean from Brittany, James Lovel and the Garifuna Band from New York. See *Bro Nevez133* (February/March 2015) and the Breizh-Amerika website for more.

### **A Traveler's View of Brittany from 1821: John Scott, *Sketches of Manners, Scenery, &c in the French Provinces, Switzerland and Italy.***

(London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown), 1821.

#### Chapter IV: Journey to Rennes

Our departure from Dinan brought a concourse of people round the door of the inn. Men, boys, women, and girls, all crowded to see the English go. Our travelling equipage would have afforded much amusement to some of our English friends, could they have seen us at this moment. Three small horses, with long tails, ran abreast, on one of which rode the postilion in a blue linen frock. The *voiture* was a great clumsy affair on two wheels, and suspended more coarsely than an English taxed cart. There were two seats in the inside, the front of which was a mere plank, passed across, the hardness of which, coupled with the violent shaking of the carriage, soon reduced its unfortunate occupiers to a pitiable situation. The roads to Rennes, the capital of Brittany, distant thirty-five miles, were worse than any I had ever before seen, not excepting in the Highlands of Scotland. No description of mine can convey an idea of heir horrid state: indeed we, in a great measure, lost the sense of fatigue in our alarm. It seemed that the *voiture* must inevitably break down.

The country was very thinly inhabited. Not one gentleman's seat was to be seen; nor any of those appearances of opulent respectability, which denote that honourable, wealthy, and steady persons exist amongst the people, exerting a beneficial influence on the community, and acting their proper part in church and state, for the public good. The scenery was beautifully wooded; but it lost many of its finest romantic features as we got further from Dinan.

The wretchedness of the cottages is beyond all idea. None of them have glass windows; a peep into their insides discovered miserable sheds, with dirty truckle

beds crowded together in the same apartment. The inhabitants looked the caricatures of our representation of the French peasants in wooded shoes; yet the girls in Brittany are handsome, and the men, as we passed them working on the road, we found fine, strong, hearty fellows. We saw the labourers dining on milk and bread, which they took from coarse earthen vessels, brought with them from their homes in the morning to their place of work. Meat is never eaten here by the poor people.

One is surprised at the wretchedness of the houses of the peasantry, for at a distance they have the appearance of respectable farm-houses, being large and well built. One quarter of the size would enable them to live comfortably; but seven-eighths of the houses are allowed to run to ruin, while the family huddled together filthily in the small remainder. The French, in fact, are distinguished by a want of proper calculation; they never proportion the means to the end; they never form a judicious selection of what is within their reach, they have no management, their things are too good or too bad for their purpose. Their houses are too spacious for peasants, and too bare and dirty for beggars. The expense in stone and mortar might have been one-half saved, and the saving employed in putting in decent windows and doors, such as are given to English cottages. At the inn of a small village called Chaussée, there was a long passage up stairs, leading to six apartments. One of these was open to the sky, another was half full of chaff, a third was but half floored, a fourth was empty, and fifth and sixth held all the beds of all the family; all sleeping together, male and female.

In the same way, the roads are unnecessarily large, and are never mended. They look magnificent, and are found to be wretched. Large gardens lie three quarters waste. All indicates that the country is either ignorant of the first principles of conduct, or that it has been decaying, and has got below the level to which it had once attained. If the latter is the cause, the decline of France must have been proceeding under Bonaparte, as Emperor, who, it follows, has been counteracting the promising tendencies of the revolution. They said, in apology for the bad roads, that the times had been very wretched, but they would now soon be mended.

At the aforementioned village, it seemed too likely that we should procure nothing comfortable. But here we had a proof how well the French can make much out of a little. A very small quantity of broth, which looked as if it had been saved from some feast of yesterday, was put on the fire, and to it were added a bit of cold boiled veal, a bit of previously dressed pork, and a remainder morsel of beef. A stew, which also seemed a remnant, was taken from a dish to be warmed up; and a bit of veal was put down to roast. In Brittany, unlike the greater part of France, they roast extremely well. We had roast meat every day, as well cooked as we could have had it in England. In the sequel the dinner-table was set out with

ample variety and due regard to appearances, though there was not a good dish upon it in point of quantity. The national taste for variety was however fully consulted. There were the soup and bouilli, the fricandeaux and the roti; and afterwards the ceremony of the dessert was gone through with some stale cakes, and a few cherries.

The French bate nothing of externals in any situation. They have dinner arranged at the tables of the rich, and in the first hotels, according to the forms described; it follows also that the same sumptuous forms must be observed down to an hedge alehouse; the substantial merits of a dinner being abated at every stage, that the external magnificence may be wholly kept up. Gentlemen address each other with Monsieur, and therefore the postilions, carters, and peasants, do the same. In the Paris paper devoted to advertisements I saw a cook-maid's application for a place in a kitchen; and those in need of one so qualified, were told to correspond with "the young lady, Adele." In England, at such a place as Chaussée, the landlady of the inn would have put down but one dish of a homely kind, entreating her guests to excuse her humble fare; in France they never ask you to excuse anything, but are always giving you occasion to accuse if you will.

As another example of that facility and neatness of expression, that distinguish the French, I may mention part of the conversation we had with our hostess here. She recollected, she said, an English carriage that had passed by her door fourteen or fifteen years ago. "Oh, it was so beautiful! But in England," said she, "you finish every thing so much better than we do in France." Here we have good meat, good fruit, and a fine country; but in England what you do for yourselves is better than what you receive from nature."

A château, near this inn, was a remarkable and interesting object. It belonged to the old romantic château style of building, including high roofs, turrets, and numerous small windows; in short, it was exactly fitted for Mrs. Radcliffe's use. It is the property of an old unmarried lady of noble family, she is afflicted by the epilepsy, and has joined a religious sisterhood near Paris, allowing the curate of the village to reside in the house of her family. He is eighty-eight years of age, and is bedridden. He has been the pastor of this village for fifty years; retiring during the worst times of the revolution, and returning when the bitterest part of the storm was blown over. The great hall, with the large open fireplace, once the scene of feasting and hospitality, was now waste and empty. Some washing-tubs were piled in one corner. Many of the windows had been destroyed, and through the holes were to be seen rooms closed up, and reposing in silence amongst dust and decay. The court-yard was overgrown, the walls were broken down; a large garden at the back of the house, only supplied vegetables for an old man and

woman, who attended the bedridden curé. He lay in the last stage of helplessness in a remote corner of this spacious place. We heard his feeble voice, sounding faintly from his room; it gave an indescribably solemn effect to the surrounding gloom and desolation. The old man and woman spoke of him in terms of veneration, and affection. It seemed as if he had kept pace with the decline of religion in France, and was about to sink into his grave from a ruin indicating the destruction of the nobility.

A French gentleman, decorated with the riband of the legion of honour, dined in the same room with us at the inn. He was the only symptom of travelling we had seen along eighteen miles of road. We had been astonished at the total want of all signs of traffic and communication. We had not seen a soul on horseback, or in a carriage, nor indeed scarcely a human being. The gentleman alluded to, had all the ease and vivacity of French manners about him. He paid great attention to our ladies; and, from his civil speeches to them, would turn round in their presence to joke with the postilion about his wife, in terms of freedom, such as no well-behaved Englishman would permit himself to utter before respectable females. He corrected us when we spoke of a piece of twenty francs under the appellation of a Napoleon. He said, "We no longer, thank God, recognize that name in France." I found, however, that in Paris in particular, it still retained the forbidden title, in the transactions of business.

The winter, he said, was as cold in Brittany as in London; but this, I think, may be doubted. If so, they must be very wretched here during the cold weather, for their houses, and the manner in which they are regulated, are exceedingly ill adapted to keep out the winter. No window or door shuts closely, and the large chimneys admit as much cold into the room as they disperse heat through it. In our hotel at Rennes, the windows, when shut, left a hole to the open air, of the size of two inches at least. The season here had been as backward as in England. Our old landlady said, in the usual high style of familiar remark, which I have before described; "Months roll on, but nature does not advance." Yet there was clearly a geniality in the air, which is but seldom experienced in England; we could sit, without inconvenience, at open windows. In fact, the customs of the inhabitants in their houses, prove this. The general custom will always be found grounded on experience. They clothe warmly, however. The last advice given to my wife, by the girls of the inn at Saint Maloes, was, "Clothe yourself well, Madam; France requires it; here we never leave off our woollens."

There are no grapes in this part of France, but plenty of apple-trees. The country is covered abundantly with corn, pasture, and wood. The oxen and cows run very small. The mutton is good, but not reared with that care and to that perfection which we find in England. An

English grazier would have great contempt for the method and produce of this part of farming in France. Mr. Birkbeck's statements in regard to French farming, so very favourable to it, are about, I believe, to receive a decisive refutation, which will probably be out before this volume is submitted to the public. All practical men agree that agriculture is much behind in France; that the coarse and imperfect practices of the old system are obstinately adhered to. This opinion has been expressed by the great majority of writers on the subject; and Mr. Birkbeck's espousal of the opposite side, is founded on such evident partiality, and is so directly hostile to palpable facts, that it cannot stand. There is no attention paid in France to feeding, cross-breeding, and all expedients suggested by scientific knowledge to improve sheep and cattle,.

In the course of our journey we observed that almost every house had an oven built adjoining, but detached. On the road to Rennes from the village where we dined, we met a priest returning from visiting his parishioners. He took off his hat to us, and seemed anxious to speak. We found he had been in England, and thanked us with looks of sincere and friendly gratitude for the asylum our country had afforded to his brethren. The day was showery, but the weather produced fine effects of light and shade, and showed a beautiful country. We now met more travelers. They were chiefly on horseback, and one could see, in the way they were equipped, proofs that riding was the chief method of travelling in this country. The horses bore about them conveniences for carrying a large quantity of clothes, &c. and the rider was generally seen with a pipe in his mouth.

Almost half past six we arrived at Rennes. Its immediate environs testified more in favour of its animation, and respectability, than those of any other place we had seen in this part of France. Large and showy buildings are interspersed among the trees that thickly cover what had now become a very flat country. To be sure these houses are not to be judged of by the magnificence of their distant appearance. He who would do this in France would be sadly deceived; but the general effect was good. The road had been very good for the last four miles; the small inns had become numerous. One is astonished on observing with what appearance of ease the small rough-looking horses in France bear long journies for a succession of days together. Two of them will drag a heavy carriage, laden with passengers and luggage, the distance of forty miles a day for a week together; and at the end of each day's work they come in a fresh as when they set out.

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