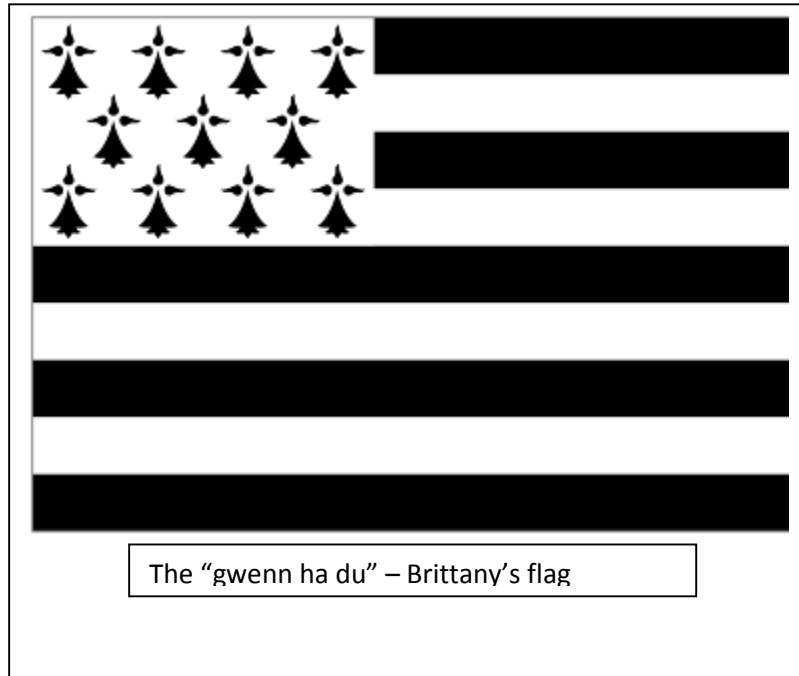


BRO NEVEZ

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

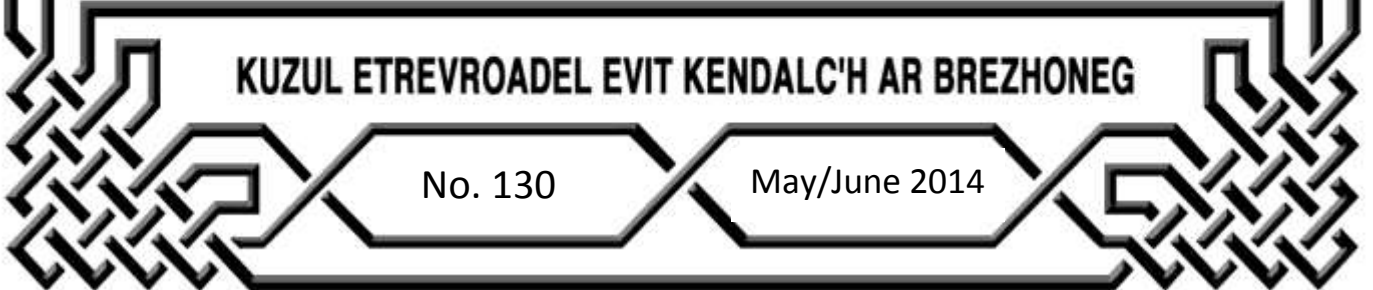


The "gwenn ha du" – Brittany's flag

KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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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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Editor's Note – On the Cover:

The Breton flag is composed of five black (du) bands and four white (gwenn) bands. The white bands stand for the historical "pays" or territories of Lower Brittany: Cornouaille (Kernow), Léon (Leon), Trégor (Treger), and Vannetais (Gwened). The black bands represent the pays of Upper Brittany: Rennes, Saint-Brieuc, Saint-Malo, Dol and NANTES. Isn't it odd that Nantes is stuck administratively outside of Brittany, yet incorporated into the flag of Brittany which flies everywhere and is recognized world-wide? Bretons certainly find this odd and have long been fighting for the re-integration of Nantes and the department Loire-Atlantique into the Region of Brittany. You will read why in this newsletter. –

While normally Bro Nevez has a focus on language and culture, in this issue you will be reading about Breton history and the ongoing fight for more political, social and economic self-determination. In the next issue there will be more news about the Breton language, but it is important to understand that its future is inextricable from the future of Brittany as a land where Bretons themselves determine their destiny.

Lois Kuter



Reunification of Brittany

In a number of issues of *Bro Nevez* we have reported on the ongoing efforts to bring the Department of Loire-Atlantic back into the

administrative region of Brittany. Reforms proposed by politicians in Paris (and from some in Brittany) have provoked outrage and certainly a determination to continue to demand the restoration of a Brittany that respects cultural and historical integrity, and which corresponds to the definition of Brittany most of us from this other side of the Atlantic have.

It was in 1941 by means of a decree of the Vichy government on June 30th that this department (then called Loire-Inférieure) was cut out of the "Region" called Brittany. In successive government plans for regionalization (1955, 1972 and 1982) this exclusion of Loire-Atlantique would be stubbornly maintained despite Breton protests.

If you go to Wikipedia and find "Loire-Atlantique" here is what you will read: *Loire-Atlantique is one of the original 83 departments created during the French Revolution on March 4, 1790. Originally, it was named Loire-Inférieure, but its name was changed in 1957 to Loire-Atlantique. The area is part of the historical Duchy of Brittany, and*

contains what many people still consider to be Brittany's capital, Nantes. However, when the system of French Regions was reviewed by the Vichy Government, the department was excluded from the Region of Brittany and included in the newly created Pays de la Loire Region. Whilst these administrative changes were reversed after the war, they were re-implemented in the 1955 boundary changes intended to optimize the management of the regions. There has since been a series of campaigns reflecting a strong local mood to have the department reintegrated with Brittany.

These "campaigns" definitely continue. In 2001 both the General Council of the Department of Loire-Atlantique and the Regional Council of Brittany voted for the return of this department to Brittany. Surveys taken of the population of this area show an overwhelming desire on the part of the population for reunification of Brittany. And while Bretons who live and have always lived in this department know they are Breton, they fear that children will grow up influenced by government campaigns to create a "Pays de la Loire" identity. The history lessons that so clearly show the importance of Nantes and this region in Breton history are not featured in French history text books.

Once again Bretons have taken to the street to demonstrate their desire that Loire-Atlantique be reunified with Brittany and on April 19, 2014, some 10 to 15,000 people crowded the streets of Nantes. With the slogan "Neither the Status-quo nor the Great West" Bretons are voicing their protest of the continued placement of this department in a "Pays de Loire" which has no cultural or historic reality as well as proposed government proposals for a "Grand Ouest" which would lump Brittany with the Pays de Loire and Poitou-Charentes.

Discussion is in progress in the French government as to possible restructuring of regions and Bretons are speaking up for the reunification of Brittany with five departments – an entity that has historical and cultural reality, as well as economic strength. In mid-May a group called Geographers for a Strong Brittany (Le Géographes pour une Bretagne forte) issued a strong statement supporting reunification. Composed of economic leaders and geographers from Universities in Rennes, Vannes, Nantes and Lorient, they argued that reunification would not only address a historic injustice, but would give Brittany the potential for economic growth – especially based on maritime development - in a period where the economy is suffering. The group Produit en Bretagne which includes companies and businesses promoting a Breton "mark" to market Breton products of high quality has also spoken out in support of reunification, as have The Cultural Council of Brittany (Skol Uhel ar Vro) and a nearly every other organization in Brittany promoting Breton identity, culture, economic growth, etc. They all recognize the economic strength as well as historic and cultural unity of a Brittany with all five departments.

On May 29 Pierrick Massiot, President of the Regional Council of Brittany published a full-page statement in the major newsletters of Brittany (Le Télégramme and Ouest France) calling on Bretons to contribute to a project for the reunification that can be proposed to the French government during this time of debate on reorganization of regions. Massiot denounces the characterization of those seeking reunification of Brittany as backward-looking nostalgics and emphasizes that a Brittany of five departments would not be a return to a dusty past, but a step forward into a future full of promise for Brittany. You can find his statement as well as statements from a variety of Breton groups on the Agence Bretagne Presse website: www.agencebretagnepresse.com



Now

Despite the strong arguments to support the desirability of reuniting Loire-Atlantique to Brittany, on June 2nd French President François Hollande announced his proposal for a redesign of regions which would create 14 regions – leaving intact a Brittany with just 4 departments with Loire-Atlantique still annexed to the Pays de la Loire.



As proposed by President Hollande

In creating 14 regions from the current 23, it is assumed that governmental costs can be saved and governance streamlined. While a few regions would remain as they are, others would combine two or more previously separate regions: Poitou-Charentes, Centre and Limousin would be one large new region, Basse and Haute Normandie would combine, Picardie would be joined to Champagne-Ardenne, Auvergne would be joined to Rhône-Alpes, Alsace and Lorraine would be joined, Bourgogne would be combined with Franche-Comté, and Midi-Pyrénées would be joined with Languedoc-Roussillon. This plan will be considered by the French Assembly and Senate this summer.

The reaction to this new plan to reform the regions of France has been swift in Brittany where some 1,000 people demonstrated on June 4 in front of five prefecture and two sub-prefecture buildings in the cities of Nantes, Rennes, Brest, Quimper, Vannes, Saint-Brieuc and Saint-Nazaire. A call has gone out from the Bonnets Rouges for a massive demonstration for June 14. The Cultural Institute of Brittany and Bretagne Réunie corresponded with 28 members of the European Commission to express their hope that European and international organizations will remind France of its obligations to respect national minorities within its borders. This included the letter written by the President of the Regional Council Pierrick Massiot as well as the votes in favor of reunification on the part of the Regional Council of Brittany of February 7 and April 17, 2014.



Taking it to the Streets on June 14th

The group « *Vivre, décider et travailler en Bretagne* » (Live, decide and work in Brittany) sent an invitation to all “Bonnets Rouges” supporters to meet on June 14th at noon to have a picnic in front of their nearest Prefecture or sub-Prefecture in a peaceful show of force. The Prefectures of Brittany are: Nantes, Quimper, Rennes, Saint-Brieuc, Vannes. The sub-prefectures are Ancenis, Brest, Châteaubriant, Châteaulin, Dinan, Fougères, Guingamp, Lannion, Lorient, Morlaix, Pontivy, Redon, Saint-Malo, Saint-Nazaire. *

The demands to be voiced are:

YES to a winning Brittany which
Creates jobs
Brings citizens together

Unites cities and the countryside
Gives a future to its children

NO to a technocratic and Jacobin state
Which destroys jobs
Does not listen to its citizens
Accepts distortions about competing interests
Discourages initiative and innovation

Re so re! - Too much is too much !

* *Editor's Note: I liked this explanation of a Prefecture from the Connexion website (www.connexionfrance.com) from September 2010:*

What exactly does a préfet do?

... The prefect is somewhat of an odd entity: standing between central and local government, their official role is to ensure local branches of state services function properly and they represent the state and ministers ... Appointed by the president, they are rarely in the same position for more than three or four years and can be dismissed or transferred at any time. As such, the job involves mobility and requires a state of total availability that many would find distressing.

Besides running what amounts to their own business with between 300 and 1,000 staff, the prefects have three main missions: to work with the police and the gendarmerie coordinating security issues; to manage the local branches of state services and their contacts with local government; and to work with different local bodies and companies to support the economy and pass on information on local affairs.

Prefects also work at four different geographical levels which determine the extent of their responsibility. Arrondissements or sub-prefectures are grouped inside departments, which are contained within regions. Then there is a grouping of regions known as "defence zones", which are essentially concerned with policing and public safety. ...

The role of a regional prefecture is vast and touches every aspect of life: economic and social development, territorial development, coordination of the fields of culture, environmental protection, rural and urban spaces, local authorities and the EU.



44 = Breizh

Taking it to the Streets on June 28th



The organizations Bretsagne Réunion and 44 = BREIZH (44 being the number for the Department of Loire-Atlantique) have called for a demonstration in Nantes on June 28th to demand a referendum on the integration of Loire-Atlantique with the Region of Brittany. This would call for the people of this department to express their thoughts – once again – on the integration. With a call going out

to join the demonstration from all Breton organizations of all kinds, this should be a huge gathering ... news to come in the next Bro Nevez!

Kevre Breizh Joins Breizh 44 in Call for Demonstration

The following in my translation of a press statement by Tangi Louarn (Oui à la démocratie ! non à la disparition de la Bretagne ! pour une région cohérente, égalitaire et solidaire) posted on Agence Bretagne Press June 17, 2014. This sums up nicely the widely held feelings of Bretons about the reunification of Brittany. - LK

Kevre Breizh, the cultural federations of Brittany representing more than 50,000 members in all five departments expresses with determination their desire for a whole Brittany which can take its own destiny in hand.

The only valid territorial reform must be done in the sense of strengthening territorial democracy. The artificial cutting-up of territories by technocratic powers of Paris takes into account neither the wishes of the population nor a cultural or economic logic.

The interventions of Breton parliament members, the President to the Regional Council of Brittany and the Minister of Defense have for now avoided a fusion of Brittany into an incoherent “Big West” (“Grand Ouest”). While our sense of belonging, our history, our identity are recognized world-wide and are the basis for development and employment.

Such a “region” [Grand Ouest] would mean the disappearance of Brittany as a political collectivity which takes charge of its destiny, a refusal of the rights of Bretons to go their own political directions with their own institutions, and the probable disappearance of tools which have been built during the course of decades by the Regional Council of Brittany - notably for linguistic policies and policies for cultural and touristic development linked to the territory. This would cut off the democratic initiatives from the first decentralization laws under François Mitterrand in 1982. This would sweep

away international principles which affirm the link between economic development and cultures of territories.

To amputate Loire-Atlantique from Brittany also goes against these principles.

Today, a true territorial reform must start with the recognition of the diversity of territories and attribution to those who want it true competencies in areas such as culture, education, teaching, training, linguistic policies, sport and economic and social development. The State must have as its mission the assurance of equality for all, which is underlain not by uniformity but by respect for the equality of language and cultures as well as solidarity between territories.

The Breton cultural federations call on the Deputies of the five Breton departments, as well as all other Deputies, to refuse Parisian authoritarianism. They call for a law which permits all populations to democratically choose for themselves their regions or territories to which they belong.

This is why the cultural and sportive federations which are part of Kevre Breizh support the direction of popular consultation initiated by the Regional Council of Brittany for an Assembly of Brittany which for them makes no sense unless it concerns a reunited Brittany. They thus call on Bretons to mobilize for the recognition of their irrevocable rights and the reunification of Brittany.

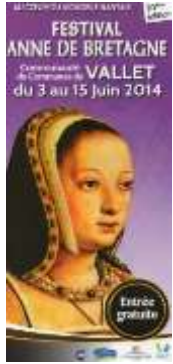
With Bretagne Réunion and 44=Breizh they call for a massive participation at the big demonstration in Nantes on Saturday, June 28th in front of the Prefecture of Loire-Atlantique.

And if you have doubts about the Breton identity of Loire-Atlantique ...



Take note of the many events taking place in June in the Loire-Atlantique to celebrate Breton culture and history. Already underway since the beginning of 2014 has been a commemoration of the 500th anniversary of the death of Anne of Brittany with a variety of events including conferences and lectures, concerts and special musical compositions, mini-festivals, exhibits and art contests, radio programs, theater, and even a special muscadet wine name in her honor. While Wikipedia is not always the best source of information it succinctly introduces this important woman: *Anne, Duchess of Brittany (25 January 1477 – 9 January 1514 also known as Anna of Brittany (French: Anne de Bretagne; Breton: Anna Vreizh), was the last independent Breton ruler, and twice the queen of France (having*

married two successive French kings). She was born in Nantes, Brittany, and was the daughter of Duke Francis II of Brittany and Margaret of Foix. Upon her father's death, she became Duchess of Brittany, Countess of Nantes, Montfort, and Richmond, and Viscountess of Limoges. In her time, she was the richest European woman. She is credited with preserving "home rule" for Brittany as it was annexed to France in treaties. This relative independence would end with the French Revolution.



Anne of Brittany is brought to public attention each year through the Festival Anne de Bretagne which rotates to different cities in the Loire-Atlantique. It has spanned a week and more (this year running from June 3 to 15 in Vallet) and includes a variety of activities celebrating the uniqueness of Breton culture and heritage.

Other June events of note in Loire Atlantique include Breizh en Fête which includes a variety of different events in different locations. For example on June 22 an exhibit on the Breton language in the Presqu'île de Guérande was opened in the Mayor's Office of Piriac. Another exhibit about Anne of Brittany could be found in the Mayor's Office of La Turballe. Concerts and dancing also marked this festival.

The expression of Breton identity does not require the organization of a festival, and on the calendar of events in Loire-Atlantique posted by Agence Culturel Breton de Loire-Atlantique (www.acb44.com) one could find a dozen fest-noz featuring Breton dances of this region and other parts of Brittany, and there is a *Bodad-Ienn* book club for reading in Breton that meets in Nantes!



Also taking place this June are lessons for those who want to learn the art of gouren – Brittany's style of Celtic wrestling. The organization Kentelioù an Noz also offers Breton language classes and a sale of books and CDs in Breton.

While there are opportunities for adults to study Breton, there are also opportunities for children who wish to learn Breton. There are six Diwan schools in Loire-Atlantique (5 pre-schools, 4 primary schools and one middle school) and one bilingual Catholic school (Dihun) and three bilingual public schools (Div Yezh) found in the city of Nantes.



And on the Language Front – a Demonstration for Breton on Television

Roc'h Tredudon in the Arrez Mountains is crowned by a massive TV antenna that is remembered as the target for attack by the FLB (Front de Libération de Bretagne) in 1974. Explosives brought down the tower as a protest to the pitiful amount of Breton language programming on television at that period. Forty years later the organization Ai'ta! Chose this site for a more peaceful protest (called "BOUM") on June 6 to bring attention to the continuing lack of progress made for Breton language media.



The day's activities began with a round table on Breton language television which included Margaret Cameron from BBC Alba, Lionel Buannic for Brezhoweb (www.breizhoweb.com) who was formerly

involved with TV Breizh, Serge Steyer from Films en Bretagne (www.filmsevenbretagne.com), Samuel Julein of Dizale (www.dizale.org), Mangi Merien, author and Breton language content producer, Lena Louaren, Vice President of the Regional Council of Brittany, Paul Molac, Deputy from Morbihan, Jean-Luc Bleunven, Deputy from Finistère, and Christian Troadec, Mayor of Carhaix and spokesperson for the Bonnets Rouges. Gwenael Jéquel, Director of Skol an Emsav, moderated the discussion.

Some 600 participants marched several kilometers up to the Roc'h Tredudon tower. This included representatives from the Diwan, Div yez, and Dihun bilingual schools, the organizations Bretagne Réunion, Breizh Impacte, and a number of Bonnets Rouges. At the base of the site a mini-concert was given by Nolwenn Korbell, Lleuwen Stefan, Tangi et Youenn Gouez, Bernez Tangi, Gweltaz Ar Fur, and Gweltas Adeux, singers and musicians who feature the Breton language in their art. Another concert held in Plounéour Menez capped the day with Les Ramoneurs de menhirs, Alambig Elektrik, IMG and Rhapsodya.

While it was pointed out that more and interesting work is being done using internet resources where Breton language programming can freely expand, this has a cost, and France is not coming forth with funding or resources to support the work that Bretons are now doing and could expand.

New Books from Brittany

Reviewed and noted by Lois Kuter



David Le Yaouang. *Opération Revival 946*. Yoran Embanner, 2014. 182 pages. ISBN 978-2-916579-65-8.

For many of us summer is the time to relax and read some good novels or murder mysteries! This new book is a complicated crime novel about Paul

Rogan, a ne'er-do-well kicking around Paris after abandoning his native Ireland and serving in the French Foreign Legion. He receives a mysterious note identifying a former "Ulster Freedom Fighter" responsible for the death of his brother in 1971 who was active in the IRA. Paul puts his skills as a sniper to work to avenge the death of his brother, but is arrested by a rogue band of police who recruit him to assassinate other scourges of society. What does he have to lose in joining this vigilante band?

A call girl Paul meets is implicated and both eventually flee to Brittany with the help of a Breton journalist who is trying to uncover the police and who has a soft spot for Ireland. With the help of a few footnotes in just five pages of the book, the journalist summarizes Breton history and Breton resistance to France for the clueless Paul Rogan. This starts with the annexation of the Duchy of Brittany in 1532 by the French kingdom up to the FLB of the 1960s and the cultural renaissance of the post-war years. While a bit simplistic, this vast summary will enlighten any clueless readers of this novel – along with the character Paul Rogan - about some basic highlights of Breton history.

The suspense grows as Paul Rogan and his girlfriend hide out in a light house on an isolated island only to be tracked down by the rogue police intent on finishing off this man who knows too much about their operation. Who finishes off whom is definitely an ending you won't see coming.



Hervé Le Bevilion. *Du Sang sur les Bonnets Rouges*. Yoran Embanner, 2014. 311 pages. ISBN 978-2-916579-62-7.

This is a murder mystery centered on the police commissioner of Rennes Jean-Marie Bellec and his team. They

are trying to track down the killer or killers of prominent leaders in the Breton movement. The killers are part of an underground and previously unknown organization called "Honor of France." It appears that this ultra-French nationalist group is trying to quell the increasingly outspoken demand in Brittany for more independence – and

this brand new novel features the "Bonnets Rouges" movement happening right now in Brittany which you have read about in Bro Nevez. Police Commissioner Bellec and his team struggle to find the killer(s) as the series of murders mobilizes large protest marches in the streets of Brittany.

Those already familiar with contemporary Breton history will find the characters in this book familiar. Names of organizations and individuals are fictional but not far from actual. On nearly a daily basis Bretons active in the Breton movement are assassinated. The first is Gildas Le Gwenn, a single farmworker active in the local Bonnets Rouges group in the Rennes area. The second is Anna Bruchet, a beloved Breton teacher and director of a Breton cultural center in Lorient. Third is Yann Dénébet, Editor of Hor Bro, a Breton language publishing house in Plougastel-Daoulas. Next is Gérard Mignon of Nantes who is active in action for the re-unification of Loire-Atlantique with Brittany. Then there is Maria Charlez, founder of the magazine An Amzer and active in raising funds for families of Bonnets Rouges members jailed for destroying eco-tax highway toll booths. The youngest of the victims is 18 year old Nolwenn Penngwenn, daughter of a founder of the Bonnets Rouges. Then there are bombs that simultaneously blow up Breton cultural centers in Saint Malo, Vannes and Brest. Then a bomb is detonated in the middle of a massive, yet peaceful, demonstration in Nantes where children are killed and many others wounded.

In the process of the investigation you get to know the "fics" – Bellec and his team – almost all Bretons, some more aware and proud of that identity than others. They are a likeable group of people, doing their job the best they can to solve the murders and keep the peace. They struggle to link together clues and to stop leaks of information to the press by one of their team. They are also impeded by the police investigators from Paris who do not hide their disdain for Brittany and all things Breton. Then there are encounters with a less than likeable Prefect. On their side, leaders of the Breton movement of all persuasions meet to try to figure out the murders themselves – another opportunity for readers to meet a cast of characters and learn a bit about Breton history and the Breton movement.

The killer is eventually caught, but not without a tangle of clues and some surprises.



Alain Coviaux. *Quand j's'rai grand j's'rai Breton! – Itinéraire singulier d'un militant du FLB*. Yoran Embanner, 2014. 326 pages. ISBN 978-2-916579-67-2.

"When I grow up I'm going to be a Breton." Alain Coviaux was born in Arras in the Pas-de-Calais region of northern France. As

a child his father went to summer camp in Brittany and his fond memories led him to bring his family there for summer vacations. Young Alain remembered his month-long summer stays from 1960 to 1963 in Suscinio in the Morbihan with love.

Turning 18 in 1969 he grew up in turbulent time and in 1973 he would move to Brittany. Bouncing about from job to job he would meet his wife Déphine and they would settle down in the area of Rennes where her brother Padrig and parents lived. It would be Padrig who would introduce Alain to the FLB – Front de Libération de la Bretagne – a secret organization started up in 1966 which would remain active for over 30 years. Alain would become fully involved with the FLB and the bombing of buildings and structures symbolizing French oppression of Brittany.

This book is not a history of the FLB – for that I recommend *FLB-ARB, l'histoire 1966-2005*, by Lionel Henry and Annick Lagadec (Yoran Embanner, 2006). As the title notes it is the singular journey of one militant, Alain Coviaux, told from his perspective with a focus particularly on the 1970s. If this book does nothing else, it allows one to understand why young Bretons would run the risk of long jail terms and possible death by setting off bombs in Prefectures, police stations, a variety of public buildings, or Shell Oil offices – particularly symbolic after the wreck of the Amoco Cadiz oil tanker which caused a massive oil slick on the Breton coast in 1978. One of the most spectacular bombings was the destruction of the Roc'h Tredudon TV antenna in 1974 which “deprived” Bretons of television for weeks. The bombing that garnered the most media would have been the bombing of the Versailles Palace outside of Paris in June 1979.

During the 1960s, 70s, 80s and 90s, there would be some 300 explosions or actions undertaken by the FLB and ARB – Armée Républicaine/Révolutionnaire Bretonne. Over 150 Bretons would be arrested on suspicion of bombings, and even spray-painting FLB-ARB on a wall might be enough to bring some jail time. While those rounding up these dangerous individuals would label them “terrorists,” “Nazis,” “neo-fascists,” or “misguided youth,” they were none of those. They ranged in age and had different political leanings and came from all walks of life: students, mechanics, farmers, shop keepers, artists, salesmen, office and factory workers, teachers, doctors, and even a few priests, among others.

In contrast to other “terrorist” movements the FLB did not aim to cause terror and scrupulously avoided human targets in posing bombs at night at hours when no one would be in or near the target. Two casualties would be FLB members themselves who died when their own explosives went off. Although some suspected the FLB, the death of an innocent MacDonalds restaurant worker in Quévert in April 2000 was never claimed by the FLB.

So why did so many Bretons take violent and personally dangerous action in bombings during this period? In the 1960s and 1970s and throughout the time the FLB was active, it became clear to many Bretons that legal action was going nowhere and there was nothing to expect from France but empty promises, devastating environmental catastrophes (Erika and Amoco Cadiz), or nuclear power plants imposed against one’s will (Plogoff). Certainly there was no or very minimal support for the Breton language in schools or in the media. Even Bretons who abhorred the tactics of the FLB recognized that these actions were effective in bringing attention to Paris’ neglect of Breton demands to better manage their economy, environment and cultural development. The trials of FLB suspects offered a rare opportunity for Bretons to speak up so that France and the world could hear them.

The jacket blurb on this book claims it reads like a novel – and, in fact, it does with a style that includes dialog and suspense. The characters in this story may have disguised names, but they are real people with complex lives and varied personalities. Coviaux succeeds in giving a human perspective to this period of history as he relates his personal participation FLB action, arrest, and trial. It is a singular story that sheds light on an important period in Breton history.

A footnote from the Bro Nevez Editor:

In looking through my hefty file of news clippings about the FLB which starts in the 1960s, I found an article from Newsweek Magazine (February 3, 1969) that gives an interesting perspective and somewhat sympathetic view of the FLB, despite some shaky history and a stereotypic depiction of Bretons as stubborn defenders of an archaic culture.

France: The Occupying Power

Two years ago, when he rode in glory through Quebec, Charles de Gaulle saw himself as the savior of an oppressed people – and ever since he has been crying out for the “liberation” of French Canada. This week, as he travels in state through one of his own nation’s largest provinces, he will be dismissed – silently if not openly – as nothing more than the head of “the Paris occupation regime.” And only hasty wall-scrubbing by the local authorities will spare him the sight of the ironic slogan: “Free Quebec! Free Brittany!”

With remarkable stubbornness, the sturdy farmers and fishermen of Brittany have never fully reconciled themselves to being French. Descendants of Celts who fled the Saxon invasions of the British Isles in the fifth and sixth centuries, the Bretons have clung tenaciously to their ancient heritage. The names of villages scattered along Brittany’s craggy coast – names such as Ploumanac’h, Beg-Meil and Kernascléden – echo the

archaic Breton tongue. And on festive occasions, the squeal of Celtic bagpipes is still heard in Brittany.

But Brittany, which was united with France in 1532, also boasts another heritage: that of periodic rebellion against Paris. And now a group of rebels calling themselves the *Front de Libération de la Bretagne – the FLB* – is doing its best to keep alive the old dream of regional autonomy that seems to lurk somewhere in the hearts of all of France's 2.5 million Bretons. In the process the FLB has been giving government officials in Paris some nervous moments. For, in addition to scrawling their separatist slogans across the walls of Brittany, FLB activists have resorted to that classic arm of underground organizations everywhere: the terrorist bomb.

Targets: Since 1966, more than 30 FLB bombs have exploded in Brittany – none of them, however, causing any injuries or fatalities. Indeed, it is the somewhat self-righteous boast of FLB leaders that their targets thus far have been limited to physical property such as telephone poles, post offices or police stations – anything belonging to “the occupation regime.” To date, the FLB's most spectacular operation was staged in the town of Saint-Brieuc, where time-bombs destroyed a dozen vehicles belonging to France's crack riot police.

Not surprisingly, the Saint-Brieuc raid caused Paris officialdom to decide that Breton separatism had gone a bit too far. A police dragnet was therefore thrown across the peninsula – and it yielded a rewarding haul: more than 1 ton of explosives and some 40 suspected terrorists. The suspects included a number of students and farmers plus an architect, a town councilor, a veteran of the Quebec separatist movement and not fewer than four priests – one of whom had been storing bombs in the vicarage washing machine. (Still at large, however, is one of the best-know Breton nationalist leaders, Yann Goulet, who wages his war against Paris from exile in Ireland – where each day, he raises the Breton flag in front of his home.)

Only the most incurably romantic of Breton separatists now demand complete autonomy for their homeland. But even level-headed Bretons unanimously agree that their province, the most economically backward in all France, has been cruelly neglected by the Paris government. Recently, perhaps in response to the terrorism, the Gaullist regime seems to have become alive to Brittany's plight and has pledged to spend \$300 million over the next five years on the establishment of new industries in Brittany. Even non-nationalist Bretons, however, remain skeptical that these projects will ever materialize. “There's every chance,” sighed a Breton economist last week, “that the government's plans for Brittany will become buried on the desk of some bureaucrat in Paris.”

Some new perspectives on the Breton language: “Breton: the postvernacular challenge”

A review by Tudi Kernalegenn in *Ar Men* magazine (no. 199, mars-avril 2014) brought my attention to this very interesting issue of the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language* focused on the Breton language and some complex issues surrounding its history and current state.

Breton: the postvernacular challenge was edited by Michael Hornsby (Department of Celtic Languages & Literatures, Institute of English, Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznan, Poland) and Dick Vigers (Faculty of Humanities, University of Southampton, UK) for the *International Journal of the Sociology of Language*, which is edited by Joshua Fishman and Ofelia Garcia Otheguy, (www.degruyter.com), Vol 223, September 2013

A particularly interesting focus is on diversity within the Breton language and the sometimes contentious rift in the way those studying to state of the language view the difference between its use by older speakers and newer speakers who learn Breton in school rather than through familial transmission. The articles in English and French by Breton scholars and those examining Breton from an outside perspective add up to a varied approach to what is “authentic” or “natural” about the Breton spoken by all generations in Brittany today.

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- Fañch Broudic, Langue bretonne : un siècle de mutations
- Ronan Le Coadic, À propos des relations entre langue et identité en Bretagne
- Jean Le Dù et Yves Le Berre, La langue bretonne dans la société régionale contemporaine
- Madeleine Adkins, Will the real Breton please stand up? Language revitalization and the problem of authentic language
- Michael Hornsby and Gilles Quentel, Contested varieties and competing authenticities: neologisms in revitalized Breton
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- Eva Vetter, Teaching languages for a multilingual Europe — minority schools as examples of best practice? The Breton experience of Diwan
- Dick Vigers, Signs of absence: language and memory in the linguistic landscape of Brittany
- Book review by Erwan Le Pipec of *Traité de prononciation du breton du Nord Ouest à l'usage des bretonnants*, by Mikael Madeg



Ar Redadeg 2014

The following English language summary is from the Ar Redadeg website (www.ar-redadeg.org) which provides texts in Breton, French and English as well as ample photos of this important event for the

Breton language which took place this May. Some 10,000 Bretons of all ages take part raising money for Diwan and a number of other Breton language projects.

From 24th to 31th May, from Morlaix to Glomel, 1500 km in Brittany !

The Redadeg, launched in 2008, is a relay race which takes place every two years.

Popular and festive, it crosses Brittany, day and night to symbolise the transmission of a lively, creative and dynamic Breton language, across the generations and territories.

To back the projects in support of the Breton language the kilometres are sold and the profits are redistributed. These new initiatives are selected based on application, they are very diverse and can relate to teaching, leisure, media, sport or culture but they all promote the use of Breton in social and family life.

The race goes through the 5 Breton departments over 1500kms and crosses more than 300 municipalities.

The Redadeg defends the idea « Brezhoneg ha plijadur » ! « Breton language and pleasure » ! You can run with your family, friends or colleagues, in disguise, with music, follow the race on foot, or on rollerblades, in pushchairs or on bikes....organise some entertainment or take advantage of the local festivities, concerts, theatre, stands, breakfasts....organised according to the time and place of the race passing. The main idea is to take part, to be seen, to have fun and it's also the opportunity to hear, to use and to make Breton be heard!

The baton, symbol of the Breton language, carries a secret message, it is passed from hand to hand and is read at the finishing line.

For the start of the 4th edition in 2014, the race will leave from Morlaix on Saturday 24th May and arrive in Glomel on Saturday 31st May in the middle of the International Festival of Clarinettes, Gouel an Dreujenn Gaol.

The Redadeg is an event which is uniting, sporting, cultural, popular and festive all at the same time.

The Redadeg is an event with a strong media (in Brittany and elsewhere), economic (direct and indirect) and cultural, impact.

Breton Costumes

Natalie Novik

Editor's Note: Natalie Novik lends her strong knowledge of Breton costume for a series of articles to introduce you to the beauty of Breton costumes, their history, and their complexity!



1. Definitions

Two words will be very useful for this little study of Breton costumes:

- Giz (plural gizioù), which is the word used in Breton for these costumes (probably from the old French "guise" or fashion)
- Bro (plural broioù), which actually has a relative in English, the word "borough" (a Germanic borrowing, which itself came from Celtic), and means a distinct territory, what the French would call pays or terroir. In English, country does not mean the same thing at all, it's too wide encompassing, so we will stick with territory as the basic meaning.

For the students of Breton: both words are feminine, and therefore the word following them undergoes a softening mutation.

2. History

It is important to remember that these distinct and colorful vestments do not go back to time immemorial. While there might have been some regional differences, the materials and shapes are the result of the abolition of so-called sumptuary laws by the French Revolution in 1789: commoners could now wear velvet, silk, lace, gold and silver ornaments, pearls and precious stones, all things reserved to the nobility and the clergy until then. This led to an explosion of regional costumes all over France, each with its own characteristics. Brittany went probably further than most other regions, with an amazing diversity of "gizioù", each one more imaginative than the other. Documented in beautiful lithographies in the mid-19th century by Francois-Hippolyte Lalaisse, the costumes will evolve over the next century and be again captured in the mid-20th century by Rene-Yves Creston (Bigouden poster about speaking Breton to your children – on the left).

A lot of the costumes one observes today at festivals are usually the 1950's variation, but there is also a comeback

of older versions, going back to the early 19th century. Before 1789, we see from remaining church sculptures and few paintings or drawings that the Bretons were wearing pretty much what other Europeans were. If you look at a Brueghel painting, you get a good idea of what it was like. The one distinct feature of Brittany was that the men wore their hair shoulder length, something that bothered immensely the French army commanders...

3. Usage

Even at the end of the 19th century, most of the pieces of these costumes were not used on a daily basis. Until recently, the female headdresses or coiffes were still worn in everyday life, but both world wars contributed greatly to the demise of the costumes, particularly with the men. However, with the birth of Celtic circles in the 1950s, followed by the creation of a multitude of festivals, people enjoy wearing these beautiful outfits for special occasions, and they have also inspired fashion designers. Some of their features are actually meant to convey information relevant at social gatherings, so there cannot be one costume fixed for eternity, but a lifetime told in an outfit. With over 70 main styles or giz, and accounting for the male/female/child versions, and the intermediary stages depicting events in life, which you need to multiply into several historic versions, the total number of Breton costumes is absolutely staggering.

4. Components

Common to practically all gizioi are the following elements:

- a) For the women: a headdress (koef) with a matching lace collar, a dress (sae) or a matching top and skirt, and an apron (davanjer), with sometimes a jacket.
- b) For the men: a round hat, a vest (jiletenn) over a shirt, a matching jacket (chupenn), matching pants or sometimes wide brogues).

Traditionally, people wore wooden clogs (boutou koad), and still do mostly in the country side. But leather shoes (boutou ler) have largely replaced them, and in particular women dancers wear mary janes with a short heel. Another interesting aspect, which shows the interconnection of Brittany with the rest of Europe, is the changes in these costumes under the influence of dominant fashions, like the length of the skirts.

5. The crafters

The importance of these outfits gives a special place to the tailor (kemener) in the communities. The job is often held by men, because embroidery work requires great strength to go through several layers of cloth. But equally important is the work of the lacemakers, all female, who continue to this day this delicate tradition by creating not only headdresses and matching collars, but also a whole range of doilies and tablecloths.

The art of Breton embroidery and lacemaking has been revived in more recent years by Viviane Helias. Her disciple, Pascal Jaouen, has started an embroidery school in Quimper (<http://www.ecoledebroderie.com>), where students from outside the region are accepted during the summer and embroidery kits can be ordered.

Links:

http://folkcostume.blogspot.com/2012_03_01_archive.html (in English)

BRO BY BRO

We will start this Tro Breizh (tour of Brittany) with Bro Gemper (Quimper and adjacent territories), Kemper (Quimper in French) being the capital of Cornwall in Brittany. Cornwall (Kernev in Breton) saw a strong immigration from British Cornwall under the Anglo-Saxon invasions in the 7th-8th centuries, whence its name.

Bro Gemper

- a) a) The men's outfit

The giz Kemper is called "glazik", or little blue, because of the dominant color in the men's chupenn. It is probably one of the oldest costumes in



Brittany, because the men traditionally wear what is called "bragou braz", i.e. pleated and rather wide trousers tied under the knee, reminiscent of what the Greek evzones wear. The thinking is that in earlier times, they might not have been trousers at all, but more like kilts. Below the knee, they wear spats. The color of the bragou braz is often white, but they can be dark blue, black, even brown. If they don't wear bragou braz, men wear dark pants. The vest, worn over a white straight-collared shirt, is decorated with a double row of buttons and the top of the vest, closer to the neck, has a large gold embroidery panel. It is tucked inside a wide belt with an ornate heart-shaped golden buckle. On top of this, men wear a short chupenn, decorated with matching gold embroidery panels on the front (baskou) and on the sleeves and velvet panels on the shoulders and below the elbow. The glazik "tok" (or hat) has a straight bowl with a moderate brim, and two large black velvet ribbons with ornate gold embroideries hanging in the back of a bachelor's tok. Those two ribbons are cut after the owner of the hat gets married.

b) The women's outfit

It is called after the headdress, the Borledenn (wide brim), because the older form of the coiffe, made of several layers, had a large brim framing the face. It has remarkably evolved in 150 years, the upper layer shrinking to a small 3 inch-high lace coiffe, tied under the chin with ornate ribbons, and resting on a small cylindrical piece of carton covered in velvet, called small coiffe (koef bihan).



That small piece is where the hair (always long) is brought up, tied into a bun, and dozens of hairpins used to fasten the koef bihan around the bun. If you don't have long hair, it is a tedious and often frustrating operation! The top piece has two lace ribbons hanging in the back, and gets ornamented with a rosette for special occasions. Sometimes the lace ribbons are stuck under the neck strap to prevent them from flying around.

The outfit starts with a shirt worn underneath a cloth or velvet top, richly ornamented, particularly since the arrival in the 1920's of paillettes, sequins and other shiny beads, mixed with gold and silver embroidery. The motives are floral, and cover both the front and the back. The sleeves have panels of embroidered velvet, the span of which depends on the wealth of the wearer. The same idea is repeated on the skirt. It is generally of cloth, with the velvet covering as much as the wearer can afford. Today, both the sleeves and the skirt are often entirely made of velvet.



The Borledenn costume (pictured here with embroidery by Pascal Jaouen) is characterized by a waist-high apron which covers the front and sides of the skirt almost entirely. The apron is made of silk, satin, or some other "noble" light material and profusely embroidered. It is usually white with gold embroidery.

Three types of jewels are used on these outfits: a silver heart-shaped

brooch below the neck, a cross on the chest, and for the pardons (or religious pilgrimages) a spillen-pardoun, a

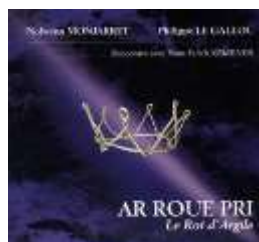
special ornate brooch with dangling beads, which is usually given to a young woman by a man wooing her.

For the next issue of Bro Nevez:
Those incredible Bigouden!



CD Review

By Lois Kuter



Nolwenn Monjarret & Philippe Le Gallou. Ar Roue Pri. Coop Breizh CD VOC 4489. 51'54 minutes.

This is not a brand new CD but one I had not had the chance to listen to until now. Singer Nolwenn Monjarret pairs here with guitarist Philippe Le Gallou for a remarkable selection of songs and tunes – made more remarkable by guest artist Yann Fañch Kemener, a traditional singer who is no stranger to contemporary and innovative arrangements of traditional Breton language song. And the addition of uilleann pipes and low whistle by Peter Merbeth and a second acoustic guitar by Robin Le Gallou on several selections add to the rich texture of sound.

At the heart of the CD are traditional Breton language ballads – often well-known but here sung and arranged in a way that makes them seem quite new. Add to that the innovative guitar accompaniment by Le Gallou who does most of the arranging and you have a refreshing and creative feel. Nolwenn Monjarret is heard solo (or doubling herself in a few cases) with the accompaniment of Philippe Le Gallou on four Breton language ballads, a traditional song in French from the Loire-Atlantique, and an English language ballad from Ireland.

Besides newly arranged traditional songs the CD includes two compositions. "Ar roue pri" – "The King of clay" - gives its title to the CD and is a poem by Pierre Jakez Hélias set to music by Michel Magne. "Son Isabella" is an instrumental composed and performed by guitarist Philippe Le Gallou with accompaniment on uilleann pipes by Peter Merbeth. Le Gallou solos also on the "Marche de Pluvigner" but his mastery of the guitar is never hidden on this CD where he performs in duo/trio rather than "accompanies" both Nolwenn Monjarret and Yann Fañch Kemener.

Yann Fañch Kemener could be described as one of the stars of traditional Breton language song and he has a unique voice that can be recognized immediately. One

would not expect his higher bright sound to blend well with Nolwenn Monjarret's rather low pitched darker voice but they complement each other well in alternating verses or singing together on the three songs they perform together: "Gwahan mecher," "Ha pe oen bihan, bihanig," and "Ar meliner ieùank." Kemener also has a solo on "Madame La Frontière," a song with many versions in Breton and French about a mother who murders her son.

All of the songs on this CD have beautiful melodies, with a majority from the Vannetais tradition. As is often the case for Breton song, the texts are tragic in many cases with murder and death central – lovers killing their beloved, sons killing parents, mothers killing sons. But one finds a lighter tone to the song for the dance laridé "Ha pe oen bihan, bihanig" sung by Monjarret and Kemener where a young shepherdess is waylaid by men on the road. She excuses herself saying her mother is calling and she will be marrying the most handsome man of the region – who doesn't drink or smoke, but is a bit of a skirt-chaser. While the abduction of "Marivonig an Dourduff" by English sailors could have ended tragically, she jumps off the ship into the sea where a little fish takes her to shore. The young lady of "Ar meliner ieùank" is seduced and spends a night with the young miller who promises to follow up and ask for her hand in marriage. .. which could end tragically if the parents refuse!

Songs about love in the Breton tradition can end in a woman's murder, marriage to cruel or drunken husband, abduction, or just plain disappointment. But they can sometimes be romantic in tone as is the case for the song "Deut ganin man da ma bro" with ends with a church wedding and gold rings for the couple. The one French language song on the CD, "Voici fleurir les roses du doux printemps," is a tender love song with a beautiful melody to match.

This is a CD that is not only lovely to listen to, but interesting in the singer's interpretations and Le Gallou's style and interpretation on guitar. Although the CD notes are well prepared with photos, full texts for the songs with translations in French (partial or full) and a summary if not partial translation in English, the microscopic white print on a nearly black background makes reading a challenge. A small factor that can be solved with a magnifying glass.



Heard of But Not Heard – 33 New Music Recordings from Brittany

Notes for the following were gleaned from *Musique Bretonne* 239 (Apr-May-June 2014) and the websites for Coop Breizh (www.coop-breizh.fr) and Tamm Kreiz (www.tamm-kreiz.com).



40 ans de fest noz – les groups à danser.

A compilation is never a bad way to start an exploration of Breton music and this 4-CD set of music for Breton dances is definitely a great introduction to the variety of voices and instrumental groups that are to be found at a Breton fest-noz. These 4 CDs feature close to 50 different fest-noz bands – older and newer - and over 20 different dances from all parts of Brittany.



Airs Emblématiques de Bretagne / Anthems from Brittany, Volume 3.

This is a compilation of well-known performers and well-loved songs and music. This CD includes a variety of groups and performers: Alan Stivell, Gwalarn, Tri Yann, Soldat Louis, Bagad Kemper and Bagad du Moulin Vert, Gilles Servat, Yann Fañc Kemener & Didier Squiban, Elaine Morgan, Dan Ar Braz, EDF, Ar Re Yaouank, Sonerien Du and Mouezh Paotred Breizh. While not the latest in Breton creativity this is a selection of "classics."



Alambig Elektrik. Vorlenn's Stomp.

This second CD by this fest noz band features a variety of Breton dances as well as their composition for the Redadeg relay run for the Breton language. The group includes singer Lors Landat, trumpet player Patrick Pereira, accordion player Gaël Runigo and guitarist Roland Conq. Their music is described as traditional with an "electro-world" touch.



Amañ. Amañ hag Bremañ.

This is the first recording by a band that grew out of the group Follenn which was a well-known fest noz band during 25 years. Musicians of the group are Yannick Le Sausse (fiddle, bombarde, song), Jean-Marc Lesieur (clarinet, song), Jean-Philippe Mauras (flute, song) and Christophe Rio (guitars). They include a variety of dances (kas ha barh, ronde de Loudeac, schottische, plinn, hanterdro...).



Dan Ar Braz. Célébration d'un Héritage.

This CD features a concert performed for the 90th anniversary of the Festival de Cornouaille and the 20th anniversary of the Héritage des Celtes gathering in which Dan Ar Braz has been an integral part. A master of acoustic and electric guitar he is joined by the Bagad Kemper as well as some of Brittany's best, and singers and instrumentalists from a wider Celtic world. Included are new versions of some of Dan Ar Braz's well-loved compositions (Diwanit Bugale, Borders of Salt, Broken Prayer) as well as new compositions.



Arvest. IV. L'Oz Production.

As the title suggests, this is the fourth CD by this fest noz band. On this CD they include one melody and 10 dances from all parts of Brittany (rond pagan, polka plinn, gavotte pourlet, lardé ...) with songs composed primarily in Breton but also in French.

Nolwenn Arzel. Strewin.



New CD from a harpist whose repertoire includes Irish dances and melodies but also Breton dances and melodies. Included here are suites for the laridé in 8 and gavotte as well as some Breton melodies.



Bagad Cap Caval. Beo!

The Bagad Cap Caval from the Bigoudenn area of southwestern Brittany has been among the top three for the annual championship competition for the bagad – Brittany's version of a bagpipe band which includes bombardes as well as Scottish style bagpipes and percussion. This CD includes performances from competitions of 2011, 2012 and 2013.



Bodh'aktan. Tant qu'il restera du rhum

A rock group of seven described as Celtic-punk-trad. Titles on this CD include "La bouteille est agréable," "Trash trombola," and "Laridé An Dro."



La Bretagne Rebelle.

This CD is a compilation of 16 songs of revolt – some old and some new – evoking political, social, ecological, and cultural issues. Performers include Glenmor, Tri Yann, Youenn Gwernig, Storlok, Yvon Etienne, Gweltaz Ar Fur, Gilles Servat and others.



Championnat des Bagadoù – Brest 2014. Bodadeg ar Sonerion.

This 3-CD and DVD set includes performances from 15 of Brittany's top bagads at one of two competitions for the championship of Brittany. Featured in this competition held in Brest in March 2014 is music from the traditions of the Fañch, Goëlo, and the Tregor areas.



Collectif Le Jeu à la Nantaise. Coop Breizh

Created in 2009 this group of eleven musicians bring an international flavor to their performance, reflecting the diversity of music and culture in the city of Nantes. One finds music rooted in traditions of eastern Brittany but also Algerian, Klezmer, Gypsy and Irish music. This was recorded at concerts which took place during 2012 and 2013.



E-Leizh. L8.1

This quartet includes Pierre Stéphan (fiddle), Yann-Guirec Le Bars (guitar), Ronan Le Dissez (bombarde) and Stéphane Le Foll (biniau). They perform a variety of Breton dances and melodies including one with the intriguing title "Batman à Saint-Arnel."



Epsilon. Manufacture du temps.

This is a group with a sound described as a mix of rock and traditional music, featuring original compositions and song texts (in French). The group includes: Nicholas Michon (acoustic and electric guitars), Aurélien Dupont (electric guitar and song), Benjamin Sanchez (drums), Antonin Martineau (bass, oud, mandolin and song), Christophe Pouvreau

(accordion, fiddle, veuze) and Denis Grollier (bombarde and sax).



Les Gabiers d'Artimon. Longévitude 35.

This group has long been popular for its choral renditions of maritime song and this CD includes well known standards as well as some

new compositions recorded from live concerts to celebrate their 35 years of performance.



Gisèle Gallais. Vous jeunes gens qui desire entendre. Répertoire d'une chanteuse de Haute-Bretagne. Dastum. Granjagoul, Presses Universitaires de Rennes.

This book and DVD present the considerable repertoire of singer Gisèle Gallais. Born in 1931 in Rouillac

(in the Côtes d'Armor, between Broons and Colliné) Gisèle grew up with an oral tradition, learning songs, stories, sayings and lore from family and neighbors. During an adulthood spent working in Paris she put aside the repertoire of her youth and learned new songs. It was not until returning to Brittany upon retirement that she began to rediscover the old songs with the encouragement of other traditional singers who collected them from her and urged her to participate in festivals. This new book includes texts and music for 179 selections and a biography as well as analysis of her repertoire. The DVD presents a long interview as well as 17 songs and a story. Hundreds of other selections from her repertoire are accessible in the Dastum archives.



Kistinidiz. E tal e Blanhoéh

The group Kistinidiz (from the town of Quistinic) celebrated its

40th anniversary in 2013 with this new CD. The repertoire is centered on the Vannetais repertoire from the family of the group's singers Gildas, Jacques and Yolande Le Sciellour. Also in the group are Gérard Le Gall (banjo), Abdelhafid Majjari (fiddle) and Michel Le Paih (guitar).



Tristan Le Govic & Lise Enochsson. Elva.

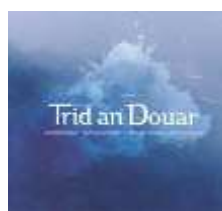
This CD brings together Celtic and Scandinavian sounds. As described by Tristan Le Govic on the web blog CelticHarpBlog.com the group includes seven musicians: Tristan

Le Govic (Celtic harp & vocals), Lise Enochsson (vocals), Stuart Macpherson (bass), Roy Shearer (drums), Per Nord (drums), André Le Meut (bombarde) and Pascal Lamour (biniou). And the very important contribution of non-musicians: Olle Grane (mixing and mastering), Johann Guillon (graphics) and Erik Enochsson (photos)



André Le Meut and Philippe Bataille. Bombarde et orgue.

This is the 3rd CD for this duo pairing bombarde with organ. 26 selections feature 71 minutes of Breton cantiques (hymns), dances and melodies, with a bit of Vivaldi also to be found.



Le Pottier Quartet. Trid an Douar.

Described as being inspired by traditional fiddlers, rock riffs, classical harmonies and tribal transe, this is a new sound by a quartet composed of Mathilde Chevrel, Jonathan Dour, Floraine Le Pottier, and Antonin Volson. Traditional and newly composed tunes for Breton dances are featured.



Loened Fall. Bel ba'r gër.

The "bad animals" are a great fest noz group that has been performing for 17 years featuring the kan a diskan of Marthe Vassallo and Ronan Guéblez with Hervé Bertho on fiddle, Thomas Lotout on Bombard and Marc Thoénon on guitar and bouzouki. Dominique Mahé joins them on biniou for this CD which includes suites for gavotte, dañs plin, fisel and das pourlet and a laridé-gavotte.



Lothodé-Raud.

Fabrice Lothodé et Hubert Raud met each other in the Kervrenn Alre in 1991, and played with that top line bagad for 15 years. As *sonneurs de couple* - bombarde-biniou koz and braz – they have won numerous championships. On this CD they perform a variety of dances, melodies and marches.



Lunch Noazh. *Breudeur ha c'hoarezed.* Terpsikora.

Sax player and composer Julien Vrigneau is at the center of this group which brings together musicians with varied styles – jazz, fest noz, folk and funk. With song in Breton interpreted by Mael Ar Floc'h, the band has an improvisational style with lots of strong rhythm and groove.



Manglo. [Mojo]

This is a group of seven singers from the area of Saint-Vincent sur Oust accompanied by accordion. Their repertoire of traditional dances and melodies is drawn from this area of

Gallo Brittany.



Dominique Moisan Orchestre. II était une fois dans l'ouest.

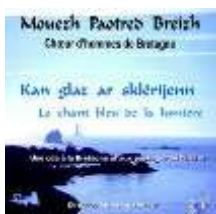
As the album cover might convey this is an old-fashioned style dance band with a repertoire of waltz, paso-doble, fox trots, samba, tango, java, Bostons, Madisons, with a marche and an dro included. But this is a uniquely Breton style of dance band with compositions with titles such as “La Bretagne au coeur,” “La fille du main pêcheur,” “Breizh Madison.” and “De Vannes Saint-Malo.”



Xavier Boderiou, Jacques Pellen, Sylvain Barou. *Morenn.*

Described as a project, Morenn is an unusual collaboration by Xavier Boderiou on bagpipes, Jacques Pellen on guitars, and

Sylvain Barou on flutes to rearrange “piobaireachd,” the complex Scottish “classical” music for Highland bagpipes. This would not be the first time that Breton musicians have done innovative arrangements of this music with increasingly complex variations on a theme, but this is a trio who has the musical ability to both respect this tradition and reinvent it.



Mouezh Paotred Breizh. *Kan glaz ar sklêrijenn / Le chant bleu de la lumière.*

This men's choir celebrates its 20th anniversary in 2014 and for this occasion it has recorded a cantata with 16 parts. Composed by Jean-Pierre Boulic and

translated into Breton by Job an Irien with music by René Abjean, this piece won a prize for creativity at the 2013 championship competition for choirs during the Kann al Loar festival in Landerneau.



Oktopus Kafé. *Signor Fildero, Rêveur de Tango.*

This CD is inspired by Jules Signor, a poet born in 1913 who preferred the tango to the traditional songs of the Bigoudenenn country. This CD includes a storyline of traditional Breton songs (in Breton) and dances, poetry, new compositions, and a tango or two. Oktopus Kafé is made up of Alain Léon (guitars), Pierric Tardivel (bass fiddle and guitar), Jean Le Floc'h (accordion and vocals) and Ifig Flatrès (vocals).



Jean-Luc Roudaut. *Pemp troad d'ar Maout.*

A specialist in Breton language songs for children, Jean-Luc Roudaut brings together singers and instrumentalists (guitar, kora, uilleann pipes, bagpipes and piano)

for 15 selections which will please both children and adults ... and teach you some Breton as well.



Saint-Malo Rock City – *La Compil.*

This CD presents 15 rock groups from the town of Saint-Malo. There may not be a typically “Breton” sound to the music but the CD certainly demonstrates the health of all kinds of music in Brittany which is typical.



Soig Siberil. *Dek.*

This tenth album from master guitarist Soig Siberil features him solo on acoustic guitar. Included are compositions and arrangements of traditional dances and melodies from Brittany as well as from Ireland.



Ti Ar Vro Bro-Leon. *Un droiad e Bro-Bagan.*

www.tiarvroleon.org

Published at the end of 2013, this 100+ page book and double CD by the cultural center Ti Ar Vro Bro-Leon comes from a project to explore the “Pagan” area on bicycle. The Tro Velo spanned 2012 and 2013 and involved the collection of reminiscences, stories,

poems, and songs in Breton. Texts of the Breton language presentations on the CDs are found with summaries in French in the book, and all the recordings from the project can be accessed on the Ti Ar Vro Bro-Leon website.



Vent de Noroiz. *La mer à boire.*

This group of nine has been performing maritime music of Brittany for ten years. They include here 15 ballads and tunes composed by a variety of Breton song-writers (in French).

A Traveler's View of Nantes and Saint Nazaire in 1896

Mrs. Bury Palliser. *Brittany & Its Byways* – Some Account of Its Inhabitants and Its Antiquities; During a Residence in That Country. London: John Murray, Albemarle Street.



Editor's Note: Here Mrs. Palliser describes not only some of the sights to be seen, but also provides a history lesson. This is perhaps not the most reliable account of Breton history, but a dramatic summary typical of travel literature of the 19th century!

Nantes is a cheerful, busy, handsome city, but wanting in the picturesque characteristics of the towns of Lower Brittany. Quimper, Vannes, Rennes, and Nantes, have all been successively capitals of its dukes.

The cathedral contains its principal artistic monument, the tomb of Duke Francis II, and his second wife, Marguerite de Foix, called "sein de lys," from the beauty of her complexion. It was erected by their daughter, the Queen-Duchess Anne, and was executed by Michel Colomb, a sculptor of St. Pol de Léon, originally a herd-boy. This monument, considered a masterpiece of the Renaissance, is not copied from any Italian original, but is entirely the offspring of the artist's own fancy. There is much simplicity in its design and execution. The tomb, about five feet high, is of white marble, diapered with ermine and the letter F. On a black slab repose the effigies of the Duke and Duchess, and at their feet are lying a lion and a greyhound, holding their several escutcheons. Four large allegorical figures are at each angle of the tomb, representing the cardinal virtues. Justice carries the book of the laws, and the sword by which she makes them respected. This figure is said to be the portrait of the Duchess Anne. Temperance, in a monastic dress, is characterized by a bit and a lantern. Prudence, double faced, holds a mirror and a compass, and has a serpent at her feet. This figure is in the costume of a peasant girl of St. Pol; the second face, that

of an old man, is also in the dress of Lower Brittany. Strength or Fortitude, handsome, resolute, and calm, strangles a dragon with his grasp.

Upon the principle sides of the tomb are the twelve Apostles, and below, in niches, sixteen mourners (pleureuses) in monastic habits, the faces and hands white, the rest of the body black. The beautiful attitude of these figures is much admired. Some are kneeling, others are seated – all in the attitude and expression of prayer. This monument was originally in the church of the Carmelites, whence it was transferred to the cathedral.

Besides the remains of Duke Francis and his two wives, it formerly contained the heart of his daughter, the Queen-Duchess Anne, enshrined in a golden case in the form of a heart, surmounted by a crown, and surrounded by a cordelière; but the tomb was rifled during the Reign of Terror.* It now holds the remains of the Constable Duke Arthur III.

Duke John IV, also died at Nantes, after his long eventful reign, having acquired a military glory which earned him the name of Conqueror, and equaled that of Du Guesclin and Clisson. Twice he lost and twice he regained his crown. He alienated Du Guesclin and his faithful subjects by his partiality to England. The Bretons rose, and he fled to Edward III; but when Charles V entered the duchy, with the intention of confiscating it to the crown of France, the Bretons all united to defend their nationality against the ambition of the French King, and recalled their Sovereign. So great was the enthusiasm on his arrival at St. Malo, that the nobles plunged into the water to approach his ship; and even the widow of his rival, Charles of Blois, went to welcome him. His cowardly attempt against the Constable Clisson again compromised his reputation, and was disgracefully avenged upon his son by the implacable daughter of Clisson.

The old ducal castle still rises on the left bank of the river. It was here Anne of Brittany was born, and here she married, 1499, her old admirer, the chivalrous Duke of Orleans, then King Louis XII, according to her stipulation, that the King, "viendra l'épouser en sa maison de Nantes." Left at the age of eleven, by the death of her father, a prey to claimants to her hand, which carried with it the powerful duchy of Brittany, Anne was a prize worth a king's seeking, even at a time when there were so many other rich heiresses undisposed of – Mary of Burgundy, Elizabeth of York, Isabella of Castille, and Catherine de Foix. Anne is described as handsome, but slightly lame, generous, and gentle, but grave and proud in her demeanor. Louis XII called her his "fière Bretonne," and allowed her the uncontrolled government of Brittany, "tout ainsi que si elle n'estoit point sa femme."

Though the wife of two Kings of France, Anne never forgot the interests of her duchy, whose nationality she

always strove to maintain with the pertinacity of a true Breton, and showed herself, by her spirit and independence, to be the most worthy of all her race to wear the ducal crown. Jean Marot addresses her as "Royne incomparable, deux fois divinement sacrée, Anne Duchesse de Bretagne."

Like most of the ladies of her age, Anne was an accomplished linguist. She understood Latin and Greek, and most of the European languages. She corresponded with her husband in Latin verse. Her letters, still extant, breathe the most tender affection. One, written to him (1499) during the Italian wars, begins, "Une épouse tender et chérie écrit à son époux encore plus chéri, l'objet à la fois de ses regrets et de son estime, conduit par la gloire loin de sa patrie. Amante infortunée, il n'est pas pour elle aucun instant sans alarmes. Quel malheur affreux que celui d'être privé d'un Prince que l'on aime, d'un Prince plus amant qu'époux. »

It was in this castle that Henry IV signed his celebrated Edict of Nantes, so fatally revoked by Louis XIV.

The Duc de Mercoeur, when governor of Brittany, made Nantes a regular fortified town. Having married Marie de Luxembourg, heiress of the house of Pentièvre, he sought to secure to himself the duchy of Brittany, while his brother, the Duke de Guise, aimed at the crown of France. Head of the League in that province, he looked upon it as a means of attaining his end: his wife joined him in his plans of ambition, and they by turns tyrannized and caressed the Nantais, amusing them with fêtes, in which the Duchess condescended to dance with the townsfolk. For twenty years Mercoeur held the province; but a peace was eventually signed between him and Henry IV, through the mediation of Gabrielle d'Estrées, whose son César de Vendôme, then four years of age, was affianced to the Duke de Mercoeur's daughter, then only six. When Henry IV made his entry into Nantes after the pacification, he observed, on surveying the fortifications, "Ventre Saint Gris, le Duc de Bretagne n'étaient pas de petits compagnons."

Nantes has been the scene of many an act of vengeance on the part of the Kings of France.

The Place de Bouffay, the place of execution, was the scene of the tragic death of the young Henri de Talleyrand, Comte de Chalais, executed by Louis XIII for his part in the conspiracy which bears his name. Its object was the death of the Cardinal, and to place the crown on the head of the feeble Gaston, who was celebrating his marriage at Nantes at the time that his victim Chalais was paying the penalty of his crime.

The restless, intriguing Cardinal de Retz was imprisoned in Nantes Castle during the minority of Louis XIV and made a wonderful escape by letting himself down from the walls to the river, where a boat awaited him. It was also at Nantes that the same monarch caused Fouquet to

be arrested, not, as alleged, for his malpractices in office, but because his ambition and pomp offended the pride of his royal master.

For their part in the conspiracy of Cellamere, the Marquis de Pontcallec and three other Breton gentlemen suffered on the Place de Bouffay, and the Vendean chief, La Charette, was also there shot in 1795.

Not far from the castle is the Rue Haute de Château. At the Maison Juigny, in this street, the Duchesse de Berri was arrested, after having remained sixteen hours concealed in the aperture behind a chimney on the third floor, scarcely a foot and a half high and four feet long. The police, having information of her being in the house, through the treachery of a Jew, had made a fruitless search, but had left a watch behind. The soldiers lighted a fire in the chimney, and the Duchess, with her three attendants, sallied out, her dress completely scorched. They had endured the heat, but were unable to bear the suffocation.

Nantes has some fine promenades and boulevards, planted with trees. In the Cours Saint Pierre and St. André are statues of the Duchess Anne and of the three Breton constables, Du Guesclin, Clisson, and Richmont.

One of the leading characteristics of Nantes is its numerous bridges: a regular chain of them form a continuous line across the river and canals, and others unite the islands which form the suburbs to the town itself. . . .

Near our hotel is one of the curiosities of Nantes, the Passage de la Pommeraye, consisting of three stories of iron galleries or arcades, uniting the Rue de Crébillon with the Rue de la Fosse. The second arcade communicates by a flight of stairs with the third, called the Galerie de la Fosse, opening upon the street of that name.

The Garden of Plants is beautifully laid out; groves and avenues of magnolias in full flower, with rocks, waterfalls, rustic bridges, all most picturesquely disposed, making it one of the prettiest gardens and public promenades in France.

We descended the Loire by steamer, passing by the vast granite buildings, built as magazines for colonial imports, called Les Salorges, in front of which the horrible noyades of Carrier took place, and these warehouses served as a temporary place of confinement for the victims. We next steamed past the island of Indret, the great manufacturer of steam-engines for the State. Here we landed some market women, in caps of the same form, with high combs, as those of clear muslin worn by the Nantaises, only of a coarse material, and edged with black.

On the right was Couëron, where Duke Francis II died in consequence of a fall from his horse. The battle of St. Aubin-du-Cormier had decided his fate and that of his daughters – a humiliation from which he never recovered. His faithful friend Rieux, who commanded his army, defeated by the youthful Louis de la Trémoille; the chivalrous Louis of Orleans, a prisoner in an iron cage in the “Grosse Tour” at Bourges; and the safety of his daughters at the mercy of King Charles VII, or worse, of his imperious sister, the Regent Anne de Beaujeu, who would have committed some act of spoliation, had not the Chancellor Rochefort saved the duchy by his integrity, declaring to Anne that “a conqueror without right is but an illustrious robber.”

At Les Pellerins, barges were loading with hay, and heaps of it standing on the river's edge ready for embarkation. On the left bank is Paimboeuf, a favorite little watering-place south of the Loire.

St. Nazaire is a bustling seaport town, now the point of departure of the transatlantic steamers for the West Indies and Mexico. A Mexican, in his picturesque costume, all the seams of his dress fringed with hanging silver buttons, was living in the same hotel with ourselves. St. Nazaire has now a large floating basin, opened in 1858, capable of holding 200 ships of large size, and another is in course of construction.

It was from St. Nazaire that Price Charles, the young Pretender, sailed on the adventurous expedition of '45, furnished with a frigate and a ship of the line by Mr. Walsh, of Nantes. Among the noble cavaliers who had sacrificed everything to follow the Stuarts into exile was the Walsh family, originally from Ireland. They shared the wandering fortunes of Charles II, returned with him at the Restoration to find the better part of their property confiscated; but they did not hesitate to sacrifice the rest when James II abdicated the throne, and a Walsh commanded the ship which carried the King to France. Sent on a secret mission to England, he was recognized, denounced, and arrested. James II crested him an Earl at St. Germain. Two of his sons had retired to St. Malo and Nantes, and engaged in commercial speculations, endeavoring thereby to restore the fortunes of their house.

Commerce was strictly forbidden to the Breton nobles; but, when war or misfortune had reduced their fortunes, they were allowed to enter into commerce, or any other profession, without derogating from their rank, provided they first deposited their swords with the Parliament, to be again claimed when their circumstances were improved. All will remember the anecdote in the ‘Sentimental Journey.’ As a book, called ‘The State of Nobility in Brittany,’ published in 1681, sets forth: “When nobles are engaged in commerce, their noble blood sleeps; but when the derogatory works are over, it revives. It is never lost but in death.”

But to return to the Walsh family. One of the brothers had embarked the remains of his little fortune in the business of “armateur” – a kind of shipowner, or one who fits out and charters ships, and sometimes commands them himself - the profession of Jean Bart and Duguay Trouin. [footnote: The late Vicomte Walsh has written ‘Gilles de Bretagne,’ and other novels, with all a Breton's nationality. His son, the present representative of the family, occupies the beautiful Château of Chaumont on the Loire, devolved to him by right of his accomplished wife, the widow of the Comte d'Aramon.]

It was to this Anthony Walsh, and a banker of Dunkirk, that Prince Charles addressed himself to fit out an old worm-eaten seventy-gun man-of-war, the ‘Elizabeth,’ they had just obtained from Government for his expedition. True to the hereditary loyalty of the family, Mr. Walsh not only devoted all he possessed to the armament of the frigate, but also fitted out a brig, called the ‘Doutelle’ – both intended as privateers to cruise against the English – and took command of her himself.

On the 28th June 1745, furnished with about 4000 / of money, Charles Edward embarked on the Loire, in a fisherman's boat, to join the ‘Doutelle’ at St. Nazaire, and the ‘Elizabeth’ at Belle-Isle. He passed for a young Irish priest, and wore the habit of a student of the Scots' College of Paris. The ships encountered an English man-of-war, the ‘Lion.’ At the sound of the first shot, the Prince rushed on deck and asked for a sword. Mr. Walsh, by virtue of his authority as captain, took him by the arm and said to him sternly, “M. Abbé, your place is not here; go below with the passengers.” The Prince obeyed, night separated the combatants, and on the 18th of July he was safely landed in Scotland. On Michaelmas Day, the following year, the disasters of Culloden again threw him an exile on the shores of Britany.



* Editor's Note: Now housed in the Dobrée Museum of Nantes, for the 500th anniversary of Anne's death the heart was exhibited from March 15 to April 6 in the Château Royal de Blois (a stop in the funeral procession which took Anne's body to be buried in St. Denis. From April 8 to May 18 is was exhibited at the Château des ducs de Bretagne–Nantes history museum as part of a yearlong

series of events to celebrate 500 years since the death of Anne of Brittany.



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