

BRO NEVEZ

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



©crédit photo : Ville d'Auray. Oeuvre : Nicolas OZANNE, Le Port d'Auray, vu du côté de l'entrée, gravure par Yves-Marie LE GOUAZ, 14 x 23 cm, 1776 [© Musée de Bretagne, Rennes - ADM 2Fi395]



KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

No. 147

Sept. 2018

Bro Nevez 147

September 2018

ISSN 0895 3074

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

The U.S. ICDBL provides Bro Nevez on a complimentary basis to a number of language and cultural organizations in Brittany to show our support for their work. Your Membership/Subscription allows us to mail print copies. Membership (which includes subscription) for one year is \$20. Checks should be in U.S. dollars, made payable to "U.S. ICDBL" and mailed to Lois Kuter at the address above.

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

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



On the Cover

As you will read later in this issue, the town of Auray has welcomed Benjamin Franklin back for its August maritime/river festival. It was in December 1776 that he arrived at the Saint Gouestan port to begin his negotiations to bring France into the American Revolutionary War.

The New School Year and Breton

While numbers on actual students are not yet available, the Ofis ar Brezhoneg website reports a number of new school openings, especially for the public school bilingual programs. Eight new public schools will be offering bilingual Breton programs: three in Ille-et-Vilaine (Argentré-du-Plessis, Goven, Rennes-Prévert), two in Finistère (Carhaix-Kerwenn, Brest-Killiverzan), two in Côtes d'Armor (Lanvollon, Plouagat) and one in Morbihan (Allaire). Two more Catholic schools will now have a bilingual program. Both are in Morbihan (Lorient, Péaule). And one new Diwan school will open in Plouguerneau.

At the middle school level, five schools will open a bilingual program. Four public middle schools (Bruz, Guipavas, Plouha and St-Pol-de-Léon) and one Catholic middle school (Landerneau). The Croix Rouge high school in Brest will also offer a bilingual option.

These are all in the Rennes school district. In the Nantes school district projects for two public school bilingual programs in Guérande and Châteaubriant were not approved.

Diwan Calls for Support

On September 7, Diwan put out a press release calling for Bretons to continue to press the French government for action to insure the survival of Diwan schools. The following is my summary of the main points presented.

Completing 40 years of work to provide immersion education in the Breton language from pre-school through high school, Diwan has grown each year with over 4,200 students in the 2017 school year. Besides teachers, Diwan employs over 200 non-teaching staff to insure the schools' operations. The growth of Diwan (and bilingual programs in public and Catholic schools) has contributed to the economy in fostering media, publishing, new technology and other activities in the Breton language. And the schools have also fed into Brittany's renewal and growth of festivals, festoù-noz, dance and music groups.

But the growth of Diwan schools has been hard fought with little support from the National Education service. A speech on June 21 in Quimper by French President Emmanuel Macron raised some hopes for change as he

noted his respect for the Breton heritage and its languages. “Regional languages will play their role in a rootedness that contributes to the strength of a region. That’s why I hope that through the different education networks we can give it its just place. Whether it concerns the public schools, contracted private schools, or Diwan schools, searching for good solutions for each of these networks must be pursued - maybe institutional or organizational reforms which allow for the perpetuation of these teachings, and we will be present there also for this appointment.” (my translation – LK)

So far, no action has been taken by the French government to enhance the place of regional languages in schools, or even to give them needed lifelines to continue from year to year.

As a public service (free and open tuition for all), Diwan feels the time has come for recognition and action. It seeks the following guarantees which will help to safeguard its future.

- The means to take long-term charge of non-teaching personnel, rather than relief contracts which put Diwan in a precarious situation, with new delays each year.
- Taking responsibility for school buildings.
- Putting new schools under contract in the first year with a contract for all students.
- State establishment for all teachers who have been active teaching for five years.

These are not new demands and would go a long way to alleviate yearly challenges to the Diwan schools.



BAK e Brezhoneg – Diwan high school students take a stand

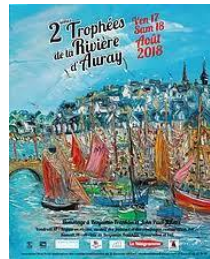
This spring fifteen Diwan high school students decided to take their math baccalaureate exams in Breton, despite the fact that the Rectorat of Rennes (their school district) accepts math exams only in French. The Rectorat’s argument is that these are national level exams and the national language is French. It seems odd that the language should be so important in testing one’s ability in math. Indeed, since students had taken their classes through the medium of Breton, they considered it their right to take the test in Breton – especially since 2012 Basque students have been able to take the math exam in Basque. Currently, the only exam students can take in Breton is history-geography, despite the fact that nearly all their classes are taken through the medium of Breton.

The Rectorat of Rennes has remained firm in its decision that these exams cannot be graded. The issue is not a lack of competent graders able to judge the exams in Breton. And, the exams were graded in defiance of the Rectorat rules. Twelve of the students who took the math exam in Breton passed the BAC, two need to retake exams, and one failed and will need to try again next year. One can be assured that high school students will continue to fight for the right to take exams in the Breton language. Not so clear is whether the Rectorat will, in fact, accept the math exam results since grading was done in defiance of the rules.



It is to be noted that at the middle school level some 60 to 80 students from several Diwan schools chose to take the science brevet exam in Breton,

another show of resistance to the rules where French is only accepted. These students also risk a grade of 0 for their exam.



Benjamin Franklin Lands Again in Auray

The town of Auray held its maritime/river festival on August 17 and 18 with a contest for traditional boats on the river of Auray. Besides food, music and craft demonstrations, the festival celebrated the 240th

anniversary of the first salute to an American flag by a French navy vessel at Quiberon in 1778. This salute was in response to that fired off by John Paul Jones who commanded the USS Ranger. A reception for Ben Franklin who arrived on a sailing ship at the Saint Goustan port of Auray was held on the Saturday of the festival.

The Saint Gouestan port was where Benjamin Franklin arrived on December 5, 1776 to begin his negotiations to bring France into the American Revolutionary War in support of the Americans. Franklin would meet with officials in Paris and elsewhere to work on an alliance which was officially declared on February 6, 1778, when representatives from the U.S. (including Franklin) signed the Treaty of Amity and Commerce and the Treaty of Alliance. For more on this visit the web blog by Breizh-Amerika: breizh-amerkia.com/blog.



Another American Lands in Brittany with the Breizh Amerika Collective

Breizh Amerika has fostered U.S. Breton relations in a number of ways. When it comes to music, the Breizh Amerika Collective has introduced Americans to Breton music through tours to a number of cities each year. This

May for Gouel Breizh the activity was centered in San Francisco and they performed as well at the Inter Celtic Festival of Lorient in Brittany, bringing double bass player Joe Kyle Jr. with them. Based in San Francisco, Kyle is well known in jazz and blues circles. In the Collective he collaborates innovatively with Bretons Gweltaz Rialland on saxophone, Julien Le Mentec on piano and Thomas Moisson on accordion. In Lorient they were joined by singer Lors Landat and drummer Lionel Prigent.



Breizh Amerika Startup Contest

On the economic front Breizh Amerika has fostered Breton-American relations

since 2016 with its startup contest. This summer four Breton start-ups were selected to travel to New York City (and in two cases to Denver, Colorado) to develop partnerships, analyze the U.S. market and find potential investors. The winners of the contest were:

1st place: Wi6Labs, founded in 2014 to develop low-cost and wireless turnkey data collection for the internet.

2nd: Dazzl, for its mobile app allowing professional journalists and other writers to film, edit and distribute directly.

3rd: Pledg, for its development of an online payment system.

4th: Hotel-Skipper, for a web accounting app for managing hotel and restaurant services.

See the Breizh-Amerika.com website for more information.



Breizh Amerika fosters Breton Beer

At the end of July the Breton brewer Lancelot launched a new craft beer called Breizh

Amerika. The idea was hatched at a meeting in New York of members of Breizh Amerika and the Lancelot brewery. This organic craft beer pairs American hops with Breton malt. During the summer it is available at the Tavern du Roi Morvan in Lorient and was present at the Breizh Amerika Collective concerts during the Inter Celtic Festival of Lorient. In the fall it will be more widely distributed and we hope to see it (and maybe other Lancelot beers) here in the U.S.



2018 Championship for the Breton Bagad

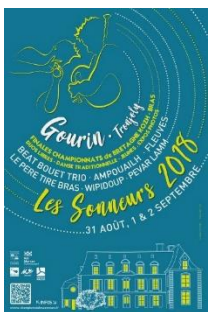
By now it should not be necessary to introduce the “bagad” – a “bagpipe band”

unique to Brittany modeled on the Scottish pipe band, but adding bombardes to the core. Launched in the early 1950s this relatively new tradition to Brittany has exploded over the years and today there are five levels of bagadoù (plural for bagad) engaging thousands of musicians. Each year contests are held for each level to determine the best. The top level 1 holds two competitions – one in the winter in Brest and the second during the Inter Celtic Festival of Lorient in August. Both technical skills and creativity are on display at these contests and I recommend checking out the Boaddeg ar Sonerion website to get a listen and to learn more: bodadeg-ar-sonerion.org.

Results are in for the Lorient contest and Bagad Cap Caval – also the winner of the Brest contest – won once again. Bagad Kemper who has the most championships over all, came in second, and Kevrenn Alre was third. I did not find a ranking for the 2018 championship which would include both Brest and Lorient, but I did find the scores. Based on these, here’s the ranking I found for Level 1 bagadoù. My apologies if I misinterpreted how the overall championship is determined, or if my math is off in adding scores!

- 1 – Bagad Cap Caval (Plomeur)
- 2 – Kevrenn Alre (Auray)
- 3 – Bagad Kemper (Quimper)
- 4 – Bagad Roñsed-Mor (Locoal Mendon)
- 5 – Bagad Melinerien (Vannes)
- 6 – Bagad Brieg (Briec)
- 7 – Kerlenn Pondi (Pontivy)
- 8 – Bagad Meilhoù Glaz (Quimper)
- 9 – Bagad Sonerion Oriant (Lorient)
- 10 – Bagad Bro Dreger (Perros Guirec)
- 11 – Bagad Saozon-Sevigneg (Cesson-Sévigné)
- 12 – Bagad Penhars (Quimper)
- 13 – Bagad Quic-en-Groigne (Saint Malo)
- 14 – Bagad Plougastell (Plougastell-Daoulas)

For 2019 two bagadoù from the second level will move up to the first: Bagad Bourbriac and Bagad Beuzec Cap Sizun.



Championship for Sonneurs de Couple in Gourin

Each year paired players of biniou koz with bombarde and biniou braz (cornemuse/Scottish style bagpipes) with bombarde compete for the championship of Brittany (the world!) in the town of Gourin in central western Brittany. To winnow down the contestants from hundreds of “sonneurs” eliminatory contests are held throughout Brittany during the year. For the final contest each pair performs a march, melody, and dance. And one can be sure that those attending the contest will be up and dancing for that final part.

This year’s winners from the August 31 to September 2 event were: Yann-Ewen L’Haridon and Youenn Nédélec for the biniou koz/bombarde pairing, and Christophe and Jean-Michel Mahévas for the biniou braz/bombarde pairs.



St. Loup Festival and Championship for Breton Dance

For 60 years the Saint-Loup Festival in Guingamp has been the host for the championship of Cercles Celtiques in the Kendalc’h federation. During the year contests are held in seven departmental federations of Kendalc’h to determine the finalists from the top level of four.

The final contest has two parts. In the first part each group performs five dances of Upper and Lower Brittany in traditional style. For the second part (60% of the score), the groups choreograph traditional dances in innovative ways. Creativity as well as technical and theatrical quality count in this part. This year’s winner was the Strollad an Tour-Iliz from Trescalan-La Turballe (near Guerlande).



Cercle Celtique Saint-Nazaire ... in 1951

The following is a description from the “Index des Cercles Celtiques et Bagadoù-Sonerien” published in the *Annuaire de Bretagne* 1951 as a special issue of *Ar Soner*, March 1951. It provides an interesting perspective on the tenacity of Bretons in the post World War II period and the attachment of the people of Saint-Nazaire to their Breton culture. My Translation – LK

Saint-Nazaire – Cercle Celtique de St-Nazaire

Goal: to study, make known and support everything that is part of the Breton culture.

Home base: home of the president, Madelein Mesnard

Secretary: Mlle Quillio

Treasurer: M. Quemener

Vice President: M. Le Roux

Delegate to the Amical Loire et Vilaine: Mlle Coquard

Meetings: Foyer de la Fraternité, Tuesdays 8:30 to 10:30 pm; Foyer des Amis Quakers, Service Hervins, Saturday from 8 :30 to 11 pm.

For 1951: dance classes, talks, conferences, study circle

Costume of St-Nazaire

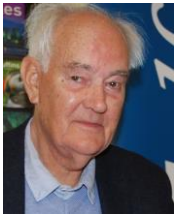
Summary of activities: The C.C St-Nazaire is a very young circle since it has existed for just two years. Born in the middle of a city completely in ruins, it has shown a rapid accomplishment of solid actions; talks, conferences, choral music, dance classes have gone forward despite a dispersal of the population. 1949 saw the renaissance of the costume for men of St-Nazaire, 1950 saw the renaissance of the costume for women. Some 50 outings, nearly five thousand spectators, a library, and all this work was completed in a frightful setting of ruins, with meetings taking place in various hovels made of boards and most members having several kilometers to traverse through streets that existed only in name. With reconstruction taking a favorable direction, one can well hope that the Cercle de St-Nazaire, relieved of all these difficulties, will become one of the most important of Brittany.

Today the Cercle Celtique de St-Nazaire continues with its goals “to study, make known and support everything that is part of the Breton culture.” It has 130 members in eight sections – four for Breton dance and four for Irish dance, organized by ages and levels of experience.

Order of the Ermine 2018

Regular readers of *Bro Nevez* should already be familiar with the Order of the Ermine into which are inducted each year four (sometimes five) individuals in recognition of their life-long work for Brittany. This order is one of the oldest of Europe created in 1381 by Jean IV, Duke of Brittany. It was dissolved with the French Revolution, but reintroduced in 1972 by the Comité d’étude et de liaison des intérêts bretons (CELIB) to recognize the work of René Pléven. In 1988 the Cultural Institute of Brittany (Skol Uhel ar Vro) brought it back to life again and it has continued ever since. 131 men and women have been honored for their contributions; 72 are still living and continuing their work for Brittany.

Below are the presentations of the four new members for 2018 – in Breton and then my translation (from the French). Sadly, two of these individuals, Gwyn Griffiths and Yann Talbot, passed away this spring. You read about them in the last issue of *Bro Nevez* (June 2018), but these presentations add more about their remarkable work.



Gwyn Griffiths (Kembre / Wales 1939-2018)

Un ambasadour eus ar c'hentañ evit Breizh e oa Gwyn Griffiths, hag un den barrek war sevenadur hor bro (he yezh, hec'h istor, he lennegezh, he sonerezh, he foblañs...). Ken alies e oa deuet da Vreizh (un daou-ugent gwech bennak), ken ma oa gwelloc'h e anaoudegezh eus ar vro eget hini kalz Breizhiz ! Kembraeger a-vihanik e oa hag a-drugarez d'e vicher a gelaouenner en deze tro da skrivañ kalzik pennadoù e kelaouennoù a bep seurt hag ivez evit BBC Cymru. Gant se ez eo fonnus e levrlennadur, ennañ skridoù diwar-benn Breizh ha Kembre. Dileuriad a-berzh Kembre e oa evit Kengor etrebroadel evit difenn ar brezhoneg (an ICDBL, a oa bet erminiget e sekretourez Lois Kuter e 1995). Kas a rae ivez ingal pennadoù (57 anezho abaoe 2008) d'an ABP, Agence Bretagne Presse, renet gant Philippe Argouarc'h, bet enoret gant Urzh an Erminig ivez. Diaes eo menegiñ amañ an holl draoù en deus bet graet e Breizh hag evit Breizh : diskouezadegoù, krouidigezh ti ar Joniged ha levrioù diwar-benn an danvez-se, un antologiezh lennegezh Breizh, *The Turn of the Ermine*,

A grand ambassador for Brittany and with a deep knowledge of its culture (language, history, countrysides, literature, music, soul ...). After some 45 stays in Brittany he knew it better than many Bretons! Welsh was his first language and through his profession as a journalist, that meant multiple contributions in Welsh to magazines and newspapers, and then his engagement by BBC Cymru. That generated in all an impressive bibliography on Brittany as well as Wales. Welsh representative for the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language (ICDBL, of which another member of the Order of the Ermine, Lois Kuter is secretary*), he was also a correspondent for the Agence Bretagne Presse (57 articles since 2008) directed by another Order member Philippe Argouarc'h. It is impossible to list – or even make a choice – of his actions for Brittany: exhibits, the creation of the Maison des Johnnies and numerous works on this subject, an anthology of Breton literature, *The Turn of the Ermine* (2007), twinning of cities Trignac / Pontypridd, etc.

* Editor's note: Lois Kuter is secretary only of the U.S. Branch of the ICDBL. Another member of the Order of the Ermine, Claude Sterckx, should be recognized for his leadership and founding of the ICDBL which has been

headquartered in Brussels with branches in a number of countries.



Herve ar Beg (Kemper / Quimper, 1951)

Bet ganet e bed ar brezhoneg en deus Herve ar Beg difennet ha kaset war-raok ar stourm evit ar yezh war meur a dachenn : kelenner a youl vat pa oa krennard, hag er skol-veur diwezhatoc'h. Er bloavezhioù 70 e kemeras perzh er stourm evit krouidigezh an aotreegezh hag an deug brezhoneg. Lezel a reas e vicher a gelenner saozneg a-gostez evit en em ouestlañ d'ar brezhoneg en ur labourat evit ar gelaouenn Evit ar brezhoneg e 1976, a youl vat da gentañ hag evel implijad goude-se. War an dachenn bolitikel e stourmas ivez, evit ma vefe doujet d'ar gwirioù diazez en ur vro a embann ez eo hini Gwirioù Mab-den (harpañ prizonidi an FLB e 1981, krouiñ ha kemer perzh er strollad Emgann etre 1982 ha 2000). Ne voe ket komprenet atav e livadurioù ken brav war ar panneloù-hent, na kennebeut pegen a-bouez e oa ar stourm-se ! Kenderc'hel a reas gant ar stourm evit kaout skingomzioù dizalc'h (Radio Kreiz Breizh etre 1984 ha 2000 hag Arvorig FM goude-se etre 2003 ha 2018). Dre ma'z eo ar sevenadur un danvez liesseurt e kemeras perzh Herve er vuhez sevenadurel lec'hel (krouidigezh Digor, Kreizenn sevenadurel vrezhon Gwengamp, ma voe he frezidant e-pad ugent vloaz) hag en ensavadurioù an Emsav, evel Kuzul Sevenadurel Breizh, diwanet diwar Garta sevenadurel 1978, ha Kevre Breizh. Ur vuhez a-bezh gouestlet d'ar brezhoneg !

Immersed since his childhood in a Breton language milieu, the life of Herve is nothing less than a long series of actions to defend and promote his language. A volunteer teacher while he was just a teen, then at the university, he was part of all the university fights in the 1970s to get a "licence" and DEUG for Breton. His profession as an English teacher was soon put aside to the profit of Breton: volunteer for the journal *Evit ar Brezhoneg* (1976) and then an employee. But any progress in recognition for basic linguistic rights can only be obtained through confrontation and action in the self-proclaimed country of the Rights of Man [France]. Herve became involved also in political action (support of FLB prisoners in 1981, creation and participation in Emgann, 1982-2000) and his colorful and descriptive talents were not always understood for their full value in the stakes. Then, in the unfolding of the fight for the creation of free radios, he would naturally participate in this new challenge (Radio Kreiz Breizh, 1984-2000, then Arvorig FM, 2003-2018). Since culture is all-encompassing, Herve was also involved in supporting the local cultural scene (creation of the Breton culture center Digor in Guingamp where he was president for 20 years), and in participation in initiatives of the Breton movement such as the Cultural Council of Brittany set up with the Cultural Charter of 1978, and then Kevre Breizh. A life dedicated to the Breton language.



Yann Talbot (Lannuon1940-2018)

A orin eus Lannuon, desket brezhoneg gantañ, en deus stourmet a-hed e vuhez evit e yezh hag evit e vro. Beleget e voe e 1974 hag e-pad bloavezhioù e kelennas

istor, douaroniezh ha brezhoneg e Skol Itron-Varia Kompostal e Rostrenenn. Anavezout a rae mat-tre ar broioù keltiek ha kalz a stajoù a voe aozet gantañ er broioù-se evit ar re yaouank. E anaoudegezh eus ar yezhoù a roe an tu dezhañ da brezeg e kembraeg hag en alamaneg ivez. Skrivet en deus barzhonegoù, pennadoù niverus, troet skrivagnerien vrudet evel Kafka (An treuzstummadur), homeliennoù, rentet enor da Anjela Duval, da Bêr Bourdellez, kemeret perzh e abadennoù skingomz diwar-benn sent Breizh (war radio Clarté... Krouet en deus Breuriez Sant Erwan, kannadig beleien Breizh, ha kadoriad Kuzul ar Brezhoneg eo bet. Betek e varv e oa ezel eus burev ar C'hendalc'h Keltiek Etrebroadel. E bennadoù zo bet embannet er c'helaouennoù *Al Liamm*, *Al Lanv* hag *Imbourc'h*. « Amañ e Breizh e c'halv an Iliz da stourm evit reiñ da holl bobloù an douar o gwirioù, ober evit ma vo dieubet an dud wasket, labourat evit ma chomo naet ha glan hon douaroù, hon morioù, hon endro, krouiñ traoù nevez ha kaer en hon yezhoù ha sevenadurioù... »

From Lannion, he learned Breton and fought all his life for his language and country. Ordained a priest in 1974 he taught history/geography and Breton at the Notre-Dame de Campostal high school in Rostrenen for many years. He organized camps for youth of the Celtic countries and always gave Breton a place of honor. His knowledge of language was for him an opening to the world and he could preach in Welsh as well as German. A writer, he contributed poetry, short stories, translations (*An treuzstummadur* by Kafka for example) especially to *Al Liamm*, *Al Lanv*, *Imbourc'h*, homilies paying homage for example to the poet Anjela Duval or Pêr Bourdellez, radio broadcasts in Breton on the Breton saints (on radio Clarté). He founded Breuriez Sant Erwan, the newsletter *Kannadig Beleien Breizh*, and he was president of Kuzul ar Brezhoneg. He was always among the officers of the Breton branch of the International Celtic Congress. "Here in Brittany, the church calls on us to fight to give their rights to all peoples of the earth, to act so that all those who suffer from a bondage of any kind can be freed, to work so that our lands, seas, and environment will be clean and free of pollution, to create new and beautiful things in our languages and cultures ..."



Jorj Cadoudal (Magoar, 1929)

Photo from LeTelegramme

N'eur ket evit tremen hep anavezout Jorj Cadoudal e bed ar sonerezh goude ar brezel ! War roud e eontr (ar barzh « Kadour ») eo bet hag asambles gant Job

Noël e krouas Kevrenn Rostrenenn e 1946, Kelc'h

Boulvriag e 1949 ha bagad Boulvriag e 1953... Gantañ ha gant e gomper Etienne Rivoallan ez ae ar maout ingal e kenstrivadegoù ar sonerien e Gourin, hag o skolidi a zeuas da vezañ anavezet ivez evel Daniel Philippe, ar soner aet gantañ ar muiañ a ditloù soner e kampionadoù Breizh. Sonet en deus war meur a bladenn a zo anavezet mat hiziv c'hoazh (Eured Glenmor, pe bladenn en enor da Étienne Rivoallan). Evel-just e kemeras perzh en adlañsañ ar festoù-noz er bloavezhioù 56-60 hag e lakaas Klaodina Mazeas e darempred gant sonerien hengounel a voe enrollet ganti da c'houde (evel an itron Bertrand, kannerez hep he far). Liesseurt eo e stourm, difenn a ra ivez al labour-douar, ar stourmoù ekologel (krouiñ ar gevredigezh Bevañ e Menez Are), ar vuhez lec'hel (stourm evit ma chomo an ospital e Karaez...). Ha pa zeuas ar mare da vont war e leve, e oa leun kouch e implij amzer : festoù-noz gant Re an Are, manifestadegoù evit adunvaniñ Breizh, evit ar brezhoneg, evit harpañ stourmoù etrebroadel...

A key actor in the life of traditional music in the post-war period. Following in the footsteps of his uncle (the bard "Kadouor") he co-founded with Job Noël the Kevrenn Rostren in 1946, the Circle of Bourbriac in 1949, the bagad of Bourbriac in 1953. With his partner Etienne Rivoallan he regularly captured first place in the early contests for sonneurs in Gourin and their students would also become successful, such as Daniel Philippe who would hold the hit-parade of championships titles for Brittany. Recordings to which he contributed remain today standards (*Noce de Glenmor*, or the record *Hommage à Etienne Rivoallan*). He certainly participated in the launching of the modern fest-noz in the years 1956-60s, and he steered Claudine Mazéas to great traditional singers that she had the wisdom to record (such as the incomparable Mme Bertrand...) But his involvement for Brittany is global and one finds him working in defense of small farmers, in ecological battles (creation of the association Bevañ e Menez Are), and in local life (fight to keep the hospital of Carhaix open). And when the hour came for retirement his agenda of minister filled with a whirlwind of dates (festoù-noz with Re an Are, demonstrations for the reunification of Brittany and the Breton language, support for international causes).

In addition to honoring the outstanding commitment of four people to Brittany, during the ceremony for the Order of the Ermine, Skol Uhel ar Vro (Cultural Institute of Brittany) has in recent years given a medal to people or organizations who have made an exceptional contribution to Brittany. This year the following were recognized.



Poellgor Nominoe. This is a non-political organization that works to promote Breton history by organizing conferences and commemorating the victory at the Battle of Ballon (845)

during the annual Gouel Breizh festival in May. This year a stunning new monument was inaugurated.



Anne and Fañch ar Moal. They were recognized for their work to promote Brittany to tourists and for their outstanding garden – the only private garden to earn the “Garden of excellence” label (in 2012) from the International Camelia Society. This year the Society held its biannual conference in Nantes, including a five-day tour of Brittany.



10th Redadeg. This relay run that crosses all of Brittany to raise money for Breton language projects was described in the June 2018 issue of Bro Nevez. In its 10th year, it remains the opportunity for young and older to celebrate the Breton language and support innovative projects for it.



Rouedad staliou kan. This relatively new organization groups together 44 initiatives with the goal of transmitting Breton language song through workshops, classes, and various performance opportunities. In 2017 they organized the project “100 a gan” where 100 singers performed kan ha diskant (while dancing) – a remarkable event. See Bro Nevez 142, June 2017, for more information about that event and Rouedad staliou kan.



Brittany-Wales at the Lorient Inter Celtic Festival

The Cultural Institute of Brittany took advantage of scheduling the Order of the Ermine ceremony during the Lorient festival to organize an afternoon conference on August 6 called “Rencontres Bretagne-Pays de Galles.” This included welcoming remarks from the festival director Lisardo Lombardia, followed by a presentation by the Prime Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, about Breton and Welsh relations and the place of Wales in the European community, emphasizing Welsh language and culture. Also speaking to Welsh-Breton relations was Jean-Michel Boulanger, 1st vice president of the Regional Council of Brittany.

Two round-table discussions followed. The first focused on the languages of Brittany and Wales including Welsh PM Carwyn Jones, Lena Louarn, vice president of the Regional Council of Brittany in charge of linguistic politics, and André Lavannant, a former president of Diwan. The second round-table had as its theme the place for the Welsh and Breton cultures in globalization with Welsh PM Carwyn Jones, Jean-Michel Boulanger, 1st vice president of the Regional Council of Brittany

charged with culture and local democracy, and Bernez Rouz, president of the Cultural Council of Brittany. Throughout the afternoon discussions those attending had the opportunity to ask questions and add comments.

Bro Gozh Ma Zadoù

On August 6 following the Brittany-Wales conference, the Cultural Institute of Brittany was also part of an event celebrating Welsh-Breton relations. This was headed up by the Poellgor Bro Gozh Ma Zadoù committee, with the Brittany-Wales Federation and Kanomp Breizh federation as well as the Cultural Institute. This involved participation by Norbert Métairie the Mayor of Lorient, Lisardo Lombardia the Inter Celtic Festival director, Jacques-Yves le Touze, president of the Bro Gozh ma Zadoù committee, as well as Welsh Prime Minister Carwyn Jones, Jean-Yves le Drian, Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs (for France), Jean-Michel Le Boulanger and Lena Louarn, vice presidents for the Regional Council of Brittany.

This event was the occasion for awarding the Prix Bro Gozh. One went to Jean-Yves Le Drian for his support of Welsh-Breton initiatives and the Breton anthem Bro Gozh ma Zadoù (taken from the Welsh anthem Hen Wlad Fy Nhadau). Prizes were also awarded to the Symphony Orchestra of Brittany, conducted by Welshman Grant Llewellyn for their performance of the Bro Gozh, and to Prime Minister Carwyn Jones, the government of Wales, and the Regional Council of Brittany for their support of Breton-Welsh initiatives and partnerships.



A Recent Loss for Brittany: Yvon Palamour (1932-1918)

Yvon Palamour passed away unexpectedly on August 31. The following information is drawn from a press release prepared by Patrick Malrieu. LK

Yvon Palamour was a talented woodworker, musician, and man of high cultivation.

As with many Breton emigrants, distance from Brittany only enhanced the interest Yvon had in Breton culture. And his trade as a woodworker (major for his promotion at the Boule school, regional grand prize of Métiers d’art) gave him contact with a range of elements of Brittany’s patrimony. Professionally, Yvon divided his work between the creation of new furniture and restoration of traditional furniture, which led him as well to teach his art (Centre régional de promotion des artisans de Bretagne) in Brittany and in Quebec. Additionally, he participated in multiple conferences over the years. Throughout his life he would be a musician, and promoter and instigator for Breton culture. This was with the Cercle Jabadao in Paris which involved many people who have played a strong

role since in Breton culture. His trade as a woodworker led him to make harps for Alan Stivell's father, Jord Cochevelou. Then on his return to Brittany in 1967 he contributed to the launching of the Bagad de Pluvigner, the organization of contests for sonneurs de couple, and he fostered an interest on the part of pipers and bombarde players in older non-tempered scales. He also participated in the men's choir Kanerion Pleuiner.

With retirement, with one of his former students André Le Bars, Yvon began an extensive study of old popular furniture of Brittany: chests and armoires "press-lin" of northern Brittany, single or polychromatic furniture of southern Brittany. This study will culminate this fall in an exceptional work of 380 pages on this subject with numerous photos, analyses, designs, and watercolors (*Meubles peints de Bretagne – monochromes ou polychromes*).

For his lifetime of work and contributions to Brittany and its musical and artisanal heritage, Yvon Palamour was inducted into the Order of the Ermine in 2015.

Another Loss for the Breton Music World: Jean-Yves Le Corre

Jean-Yves Le Corre passed away this September at the age of 64 after a long illness. An accordion player native to the area of Carhaix in central western Brittany, he was rooted in a Breton-speaking rural tradition and master of the traditional Breton repertoire. But he may be best remembered for his part in the ground-breaking fest noz band Diaouled ar Menez which he launched in 1972 with Bruno Le Manach (electric guitar), Philippe Le Balp and Yann Goasdoue (bombardes). They were a sure draw for any fest noz. Arriving on the scene just as Alan Stivell was attracting Bretons to their musical heritage, Diaouled ar Menez was the first group to embrace an electric guitar and welcomed the chromatic (piano) accordion which was considered less traditional than the diatonic (button) accordion. They would add different musicians to the group over time, but their sound was always unique and highly energetic.

Jean-Yves Le Corre would earn his living working at an agricultural/poultry co-op and then in the 1980s he opened the café/creperie Tann Dehi in Carhaix which was a memorable gathering place for Breton musicians. In the 1990s he was recruited to work for the Coop Breizh book and record producer/distributor and in 2002 he became the head of the record division for the company. He was also at the origins of the Diwan school of Carhaix, which his three children attended, even lending his garage to host the school until a more suitable site could be found.

Deep Inside A Breton Skull 57 – Breton numbers

Jean Pierre Le Mat

Are there Breton numbers? That is a strange question. Numbers are universal abstractions! Oh, are you so sure? I heard recently a great mathematician, rewarded with the Fields medal, saying that he found a difficult solution after years of research just as he was entering a garden, in a country of numbers. According to him, numbers have colors, shape, behaviors.



There is in Brittany a tale about Henri Gillard, the priest of Trehorenteuc, in the Broceliande forest. I can't say if this story is true or false, or even if I imagined it from one end to the other. It is a tale about numbers. Sure, the good priest believed that numbers were created by God himself.

On a nice Sunday, he was walking around. After the morning mass, he was always a little dazed, and probably Paolig an Diaoul, our local Devil, knew that. More than that, Sunday is a day of rest for Christian people and probably for their guardian angels, but nobody knows.

The infernal creature succeeded in manipulating three good men of the village and sent them to meet the traveling priest.

After the usual greetings and some vague sayings about the weather, the three friends asked their priest what thoughts were on his mind.

- Today, my brothers in God, I am meditating about the number 3. To tell the truth, it obsesses me. I find it everywhere: in the Holy Trinity, in the lily flower, in the divine tiara with a triple crown and the triangle of God the Father. The birth of Jesus was approached by three kings and announced by three angels. When he died, he was crucified with three nails. On the Golgotha hill, there were three crosses. To what can this number be linked? The number 3 is a symbol of eternity. It means "Always". It refers to the Eternal Father and perhaps to everything that has no limit ...

- Eternity? Come on! replied one of the three friends. If there is one symbol for limits, it is the number 3. Unlike a point, so small and even without any dimension, unlike a line that extends without limit, the triangle is a trivial figure. Through numerology, you learn that the Path of Life designated by the number three is that of the human world. It is the number dedicated to peaceful and pleasant activities, among friends. The number three is

related to sociability. You are struggling hopelessly against yourself, Henri Gillard. I have calculated that your Realization Number is 3. Your Expression Number is 6, 2 times 3. Your Intimate Number is 9, which is 3 times 3. Saint John the Evangelist said that the Beast of Armageddon has a number 666, which corresponds to your Intimate Number. So I say that ...

The good father Gillard understood nothing of this strange language. He watched the speaker with great wonder. He never knew that this man had any interest in the occult sciences. The second quickly took over:

- The number 3 is not the symbol of eternity; it is a symbol of social improvement. No way with the Magi or the lily flower. The number 3 is the dialectical structure which, from the opposition between the thesis and the antithesis, brings forth the synthesis. This was very well seen by Karl Marx. Like him, let us throw away the Judeo-Christian way of thinking.

The number 3 points to something important, that is dialectical materialism. Social improvement, economic evolution, all these great historical movements can be understood and analyzed without involving Providence or other nonsense. Henri Gillard, you will find an answer to your numerical question only by abandoning this blind and blinding faith that you drag like an iron ball and chain ...

The poor priest was astonished by the violence of the words and he remained silent. The word "dialectic" made him think of Plato. He remembered that the ancient Greek philosopher found a method for getting closer to the immutable truths. But he did not have time to deepen his idea because the third comrade quickly went on:

- Your idea about the number 3 is too static, dear priest. It is not the number itself that is important. It is the operations which connect it to others. The important thing is what moves. I warn you: if you seek to answer to Marx by relying on Plato, I will call Heraclitus to the rescue. Everything is movement, and the number gives a false feeling of stability.

Let us admit, however, that the number 3 may be related to a divine expression, Jesus Christ or the Eternal Father. Let's continue the logic: would the other numbers be inferior? Would they be of a different nature than the number 3? No, of course, because otherwise there could not be mathematical operations. It must be admitted that the other figures, 1, 2, 4, 5, and so on, are also divine expressions. If a number may be the symbol of a god, each number may be the symbol of a different god. There can be as many deities in the world as there are numbers in mathematics ...



Henri Gillard wondered what happened to his good parishioners. And on another level of reality, Paolig an Diaoul was rubbing his hands, seeing the discomfort of his victim. Alone against three, the priest would soon have to surrender.

However, as everybody knows, the best is the enemy of good. And therefore, the worst is the enemy of evil. You follow me, don't you? Paolig, multiplying the opponents, hoped to increase his chances of upsetting the faith of Father Gillard. He had not foreseen all the consequences of the pleasure Bretons took in debating.

The first speaker said:

- Dear friends, it must be admitted that your presentations are not so clear-cut. They lack the paw of the specialist. I would be happy to help you with numerology, which will improve the accuracy of your arguments ...

- What to say? replied the second. What is more precise, more palpable than materialism? This is not a smoky theory that we need, it is an experimental science, advancing step by step based on facts and evidence. This science does not need magic tricks, aiming to mislead people.

- As you go! retorted the third. Our friend is certainly a little obscure, but he is innocent of any black projects.

- Obscure! ... Innocent! ... Away with your junk philosophies!

The face of the first was red with rage. He waved his arms, screaming:

- The arguments, of you two, are ridiculous! Perfectly ridiculous!



The ambiance was electric on the little road, and the people there would soon come to blows. Such a prospect was not dramatic. The three men were not killers nor even bullies. Father Gillard was aware of his spiritual

responsibilities. So, he was getting ready to bless the fighters. In Brittany, traditionally, the wrestlers got the blessing of a priest before the match.

Paolig, fearing the effects of the blessing and sickened by the turn of events, departed.

The four men were not aware of his departure, as they were not conscious of his presence. But they perceived a change. Together, they burst out laughing. They laughed

for so long while holding their ribs, that they were forced to sit on the grassy slope to catch their breath.

Paolig turned his eyes. When he saw them crying with laughter, he shrugged with spite.

New Books from Brittany

Reviewed by Lois Kuter



Yvon Ollivier (Director of publication).
Le livre blanc de l'unité bretonne.
Yoran Embanner. 2018. 383 pages.
ISBN 978-2-36785-008-5.

If one needed convincing that reunification of Brittany – bringing the department of Loire-Atlantique back into

the region of Brittany – is a good idea, this book will certainly do that.

Historien Jean-Jacques Monnier (“La partition administrative de la Bretagne : quand, pourquoi ?”) starts off this collection of articles with a concise history of efforts to divide France into rational and uniform administrative pieces – which especially impacted the division of the department of Loire-Atlantique from the rest of Brittany. The idea of “departments” began before the French Revolution but it was the revolution that opened the door to implementing a centralized power that would define administrative units of France. By the mid-19th century plans were being made to create larger administrative “regions” and these were redefined a number of times, pitting Rennes as the capital for a Breton region against Nantes – an old rivalry revived. The creation of a region of Brittany based on economic and political considerations which ignored a sense of Breton identity based on historical and cultural factors was put into place between 1941 and 1972 with intensified efforts to create purely administrative units since the early 1980s.

Geographer and economist Jean Ollivro (“De la Bretagne administrée à la Bretagne”) delves into more recent history in the creation of territories like Brittany and the Pays de la Loire (which includes the department of Loire-Atlantique). The purpose of these is for government administration, ignoring geographical and historical realities and the fact that 71% of people living in the Loire-Atlantique identify themselves as Breton. Ollivro emphasizes the difference between a Brittany that is an administrative region and the Brittany that is based on people’s sense of who they are and how they live.

Josselin Liotard, a Breton language instructor (“Débretonnisation/ligérianisation du département de Loire-Atlantique ?”) takes a detailed look at efforts since the early 1970s to instill a sense of identity and allegiance

to the Pays de Loire region in people of the department of Loire-Atlantique. And he documents the resistance on the part of Bretons in Loire-Atlantique to this separation of this department from the rest of Brittany. Through a study of documents (administrative directives and letters) Liotard describes the actions undertaken to try to convince residents of this artificial region that they are “Ligériens” – the name given to people of the Pays de Loire. This is definitely a hard sell for people of the Loire-Atlantique who find little affinity for this new identity. Efforts to convert them heart and soul to their new region is done through a concerted effort in schools, media, and any public means possible. The propaganda is relentless and school children are a particular target for conversion to a new loyalty. Liotard provides 50 pages of documents and letters he has analyzed so the reader can see clearly for themselves the planning done by Pays de Loire politicians.

In the shorter essay “Langue bretonne en Pays de la Loire: la double peine” (also by Josselin Liotard ?) the author begins by noting the difficulty of fighting the monolingualism encouraged by the French government. He notes that Breton is the only Celtic language with no official status; even Cornish with its 2,000 speakers has had an official status in Great Britain since 2002. Despite the fact that the Breton language has had a strong historical presence in the Loire-Atlantique (even in Nantes), and the population today has expressed the desire for access to Breton language schooling and media, the placement of this department in the Pays de Loire region means there is little incentive on the part of politicians to open doors. As the author puts it, bilingual schools advance with a hand firmly clenched on the brake. This is true from pre-school through the university level where no plan for language development is in place – in contrast to the region of Brittany where support has been put into place.

Pierre Emmanuel Marais, author of novels in French and Breton and a municipal and city councilor for Nantes (“La Bretagne réunifiée, une utopie réaliste?”) describes his particular identity as a Breton and native of the city of Nantes. He convincingly argues for the reunification of Brittany – a move that makes economic as well as cultural sense in a Europe where strong regions are to the advantage of all.

Marc Le Duc, former journalist for Ouest-France (“En Loire-Atlantique, la Bretagne dans la trappe de médias”) evoked a true feeling of outrage for me with his unveiling of the sinister use of media to block knowledge and subtly encourage people of the Loire-Atlantique to take on a new identity. In blocking or severely limiting news of events and stories from the region of Brittany in the media of the Pays de la Loire, people of the Loire-Atlantique can no longer look to local newspapers or TV/radio to learn what is happening in Brittany – their Brittany!. Nor do those in the region of Brittany see a

presence for Loire-Atlantique in productions of publications about “Brittany.” Examples given include a publication on the “most beautiful villages of Brittany” where even the most popular tourist sites of Loire-Atlantique are excluded. And “coverage” of the Redadeg relay run for the Breton language with its stop in Saint-Herblain which received very little newspaper coverage despite a great deal of activity planned at that site and the presence of numerous local officials – mayors, senators and Breton regional councilors. Yes, today one can go to the internet to get news and information, but when every-day media purposely avoid information, this seems very odd. I think of the “local” newspaper here (Philadelphia Inquirer) and evening TV news programs which focus on a human area of interaction and not administrative/governmental borders. Thus, local media allow me to leave Pennsylvania to cross the Delaware River to learn what is happening in the state of New Jersey, and in communities surrounding the large city of Philadelphia. And I am not expected to yearn for news of western Pennsylvania, just as people of Pittsburgh are not especially anxious to know news of Philadelphia. So why are Bretons of Loire-Atlantique expected to hunger for news of Mans or the Sarthe and remain ignorant of Breton cultural activities just miles away in the Morbihan or Ille-et-Vilaine departments?

Alain Fenet, Emeritus Professor of the University of Nantes (“La partition de la Bretagne considérée du point de vue du droit international”) looks at the potential for use of European conventions and international treaties on the protection of ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities to argue for the return of Loire-Atlantique to the region of Brittany. While France has signed onto these agreements (making important exceptions to parts of them) it has resisted compliance when petitioned, with the French Conseil d’État and the Conseil Constitutionnel firmly insisting that France has no minorities. All people are equal and the unity of France (and the French language) must be respected at all costs. While international conventions may not help in gaining the reunification of Brittany, Bretons continue to look to the European and international community for support.

The first two-thirds of *Le livre blanc de l’unité bretonne* focuses on the definition of Brittany and the Pays de la Loire – and the importance of the identity of the Loire-Atlantique department in reunifying it with the rest of Brittany. While issues of “territory” are certainly considered in Part II of the book, this section focuses on the importance of reunification in the economic development of Brittany.

Malo Bouëssel du Bourg (“Le prix de la désunion”) speaks of the incorporation of Loire-Atlantique as key to the development of a Breton image for that department which makes the products it produces and its destination for tourists marketable for their unique quality. It isn’t an accident that marketing Muscadet wine as a Breton wine

allows it to sell better in an international marketplace. Nor is it an accident that sea salt from the Guerande marshes is labeled “Celtic salt” by U.S. importers. * Both products are from the Loire-Atlantique. As the director of *Produit en Bretagne*, the author knows the success of marketing Breton brands to an international market. He makes a strong argument that a Brittany of all five departments, a reunified Normandy, and a region Val de Loire would strengthen each of these areas economic clout.

Yves Lebahy, geographer (“Faire revivre une vision maritime commune”) looks at the maritime history of Nantes and the cities of the Breton coast to argue for a renewed focus on maritime development which would allow the revival of links between the ports of Brittany and the Loire Atlantique which has lost its “maritimité” – cultural and societal roots in everyday life based on a maritime heritage. Reunification would serve to refocus and allow for development which would benefit the Loire-Atlantique and its economic links to the rest of Brittany.

Alan Coraud, marketing company director and former wine maker (“Le marketing identitaire du vin”) focuses on the impact of relabeling Muscadet, a wine unique to Brittany, as a wine of the Pays de Loire. He argues that this not only denies the Breton identity of this wine, but negatively impacts the ability to market it effectively. Its Breton identity as a wine that gets its quality from the particular soil and rock of the Nantes area, and a maritime environment should be used to benefit its sales. As argued by other contributors to this book, a “Breton” label carries much more weight than the artificial “Pays de la Loire” identity – an idea Coraud backs up with statistics showing web searches in English, Russian and Chinese comparing these two.

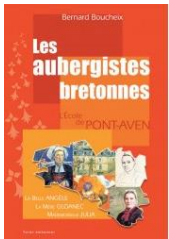
Fañch Gaume, general director of Bretagne Football Association (“La partition administrative et le sport: le case du football”) traces the changes in regional definitions and the impact this has had on the organization of sports – soccer in particular. As the French state has increasingly gotten involved in regulating sports, Loire-Atlantique has been stripped from Brittany and sportsmen and women must be vigilant to keep their Breton identity. And, indeed, like the population of Loire-Atlantique overall, most are proud to proclaim themselves Bretons. As I drafted this review I had the chance to watch bits of the Tour de France cycling championship on TV. As the race progressed through the stage from La Baule (Loire-Atlantique) to Sarzeau (Morbihan) Breton flags were everywhere along the route and the commentators seemed to have not doubt that they were in Brittany. They noted the presence of the flags, although they gave an incorrect interpretation of the nine black and white bands as representing northern and southern areas of Brittany.

Several very short articles close out the book with an article by Georges Vedel on what makes the ideal size of

a governmental “region,” an article by Jean-Marc Sochard on the defiance of “Miss Bretagne” Mélanie Guyomard in 2001 when she appeared at a demonstration for the reunification of Brittany to the disapproval of the “Miss France” committee, and some excerpts from 19th century authors (Balzac, Dumas, George Sand, Paul Féval ...) expressing certitude that Nantes is indeed Breton.

The editor, Yoran Delacourt, closes with his thoughts on the necessity for reunification and the need to keep insisting that it be done. Although the color photographs of demonstrators that nicely augment the book do not identify all individuals, the editor and his family can be spotted in a number of them.

* I could find no indication on the jar of Celtic Sea Salt I found in my local supermarket that it was from Brittany, but the website www.celticseasalt.com notes that “Celtic Sea Salt® is a family-owned brand that was started in California by the founder Jacques Delangre in 1976. Jacques began importing high mineral sea salt from the coast of Brittany, France.” The site also notes that the sources for the salt are now from other areas as well. The “paludier” (salt harvester) and the chateau in the background on the salt container label evoke “Guérande” for me!



Bernard Boucheix. *Les Aubergistes bretonnes – La Mère Gloanec, Mademoiselle Julia, La Belle Angèle – Pont-Aven.* Yoran Embanner. 2018. 157 pages. ISBN 978-2-36785-004-7.

This book presents three women made famous in the late 1800s and early 20th century as inn-keepers in Pont-Aven – a fame due not only to their strong personalities and gastronomic skills, but also to the influx of hundreds of painters of the “Pont-Aven School” as well as English and America tourists. All three were born in Pont-Aven and near-by communities of humble origins, and all three were able to build successful hotels and restaurants during the Belle Epoque of 1879-1914.

While the author repeatedly notes their enduring international fame, I suspect that many American readers today would not be familiar with these three entrepreneurs of Brittany unless they had researched artists of the Pont-Aven school. While the repeated noting of how celebrated and famous these women are can get a little wearying, the author does a nice job of introducing them and the period in which they and Pont-Aven prospered as a center for artists and tourists.

In the prologue the author explains the “sobriquets” (nicknames) given to the three: la Mère Gloanec, Mademoiselle Julia, and La Belle Angèle. While all three women spoke Breton (as did everyone else at the time in that part of Brittany) they learned some French with the arrival of tourists (and artists). The “honorifics” were given

by their guests and it was a common practice in France at this period to give nicknames to exceptional personalities.

The second chapter of the book presents the Belle Epoque and the changes this period (1879-1914) brought to Brittany and other rural areas of France – most notably the building of railroads that allowed much easier access. Brittany was already known to tourists as a picturesque place, and the easier travel and development of beach resorts during this period made it possible (and necessary) for the growth of hotels and restaurants like those built by Mère Gloanec, Mademoiselle Julia and La Belle Angèle. The particular attraction of Pont-Aven for painters and writers meant that there was plenty of business for all three women.

In the third chapter the author describes the Pont-Aven school and the impact of artists on Pont-Aven. Most famous of these was Paul Gauguin (1848-1903) and the height of the artistic life of Pont-Aven was concentrated during the years of his visits: 1886-1894. Before, during and after this period artists of all styles would congregate in Pont-Aven – some just for the summer and some year-round. Other well-known artists included Emile Bernard, Paul Sérusier, Ernest de Chamaillard, Thomas Hovenen, Robert Wylie, Maxime Maufra, Alfred Jarry, Charles Filiger, Emile Schuffenecker and Maurice Denis, to name a few.

Bernard Boucheix devotes a chapter to each innkeeper, providing interesting biographical information about each of them. La Mère Gloanec – Marie-Jeanne Le Gloanec (1839-1915) – was born in Pont-Aven. Her father was a tailor and her mother was a housewife who opened a small inn where Marie-Jeanne learned her trade. She opened her own boarding house with her husband in 1860 when she was 21 and this remained a meeting-place for artists. Its success required the construction of a new larger hotel in 1892 – today called Les Ajoncs d’Or. La Mère Gloanec was the oldest of the three innkeepers and was know for her kindness and good food. When Gauguin first arrived in 1886 her reputation was already made. Costs were modest for lodgers and those who could not pay could compensate with artwork.

Mademoiselle Julia – Julia Guillou (1848-1927) – had a father who as a miller, originally from Quimperlé, and a mother who was a crêpe maker from Baye. Julia worked as a teen in a hotel in Concarneau before employment at the Hôtel des Voyageurs in Pont-Aven, to which she would take ownership in 1878. She ran her hotel with a firm hand and was favored by the American and English artists. Collector Albert Barnes spent several summer visits at her hotel. She organized dances and trips for her visitors and was admired for her business smarts. In 1881 she built a second hotel (Hotel Julia) alongside the first one. In 1895 she built a hotel in Port-Manec’h on the sea, several kilometers from Pont-Aven. Her hotels were

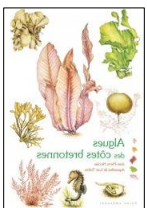
known to be more luxurious and attracted a wealthier clientele, but she welcomed artists and built four studios for them in her hotel.

La Belle Angèle – Angélique Marie Cannevet (1868-1932) - had a father who was a café owner in Pont-Aven and her mother was a hotel-keeper. Angélique married Frédéric-Joseph Satre of a family of sailing ship builders and captains who would later become mayor of Pont-Aven (1889-1916). La Belle Angèle would work in the Cannevet auberge situated right next to the Gloanec boarding house. Both were a congregating point for artists as well as locals. The success of La Belle Angèle and her husband would allow them to build a large house to raise their six children.

Gauguin painted a portrait of La Belle Angèle and offered it to her, but she found it frightful and wanted no part of it. The portrait would be bought by Edgar Degas in 1891 and hangs in the Musée d'Orsay in Paris today. La Belle Angèle would take on the bourgeoisie fashions of her times and abandon the Breton coiffe and costume for use only at festivals and pardons in later years.

The book is enhanced by over 100 reproductions of photos and portraits of the three inn keepers as well as photos of the painters and hotels and town of Pont-Aven of those times.

The author Bernard Boucheix has a degree from the École hôtelière de Chamalières and has researched women of note in the history of French restaurants and hotels. He makes it clear that while La Belle Angèle, la Mère Gloanec and Mademoiselle Julia are exceptional in their place in history, other women also made their mark in this world and Boucheix has published a number of books about them as well.



Jean-Pierre Nicolas, Loïc Tréhin (illustrations). ***Algues des côtes bretonnes***. Yoran Embanner. 2018. 214 pages. ISBN 978-2-36785-010-8.

This is another very welcome addition to Yoran Embanner's series on flora and fauna of Brittany – all written for those who explore their natural world and want to better understand and identify the life they find. While these guides are for non-specialists, they are packed with information and beautifully illustrated with accurate water color depictions of the plants and animals described.

One might not find sea algae as attractive as birds and flowers, but this book will certainly convince you of the importance of these plants and open doors to learning more about the many species common to Brittany. Its author, Jean-Pierre Nicolas, grew up playing on Brittany's beaches and admits that he was not happy encountering the seaweed that impeded swimming and made beach

travel unpleasant. It was only later when he became a teacher on the island of Batz that he became aware of the importance of these plants. He studied up and seaweed was incorporated into the curriculum.

Loïc Tréhin, whose water colors grace the pages of this book, is an engraver, painter, illustrator and photographer. His illustrations are accurate depictions of the color and structure of the plants presented which will surely help beach combers identify plants they find. Whether you have an interest in seaweed or not, you will find the illustrations beautiful.

While the bulk of the book is made up of descriptions and drawings of 50 common types of seaweed found along the coasts of Brittany, there are 60 pages of introductions and annexed information to more generally introduce algae, starting with what it is – a little known aquatic plant. Sea algae, or seaweed, is grouped by three color areas, each evolutionarily separate: brown, red and green. If one includes microalgae, there are an estimated 150,000 species. For the larger seaweed, the number is estimated at 9,000. With its 27,000 kilometers of coast, Brittany has some 600 species of seaweed.

In tracing the history of human use of seaweed, the author notes that archaeological evidence shows that seaweed was used in medicines and food for some 14,000 years. Early medicinal use is especially documented in China – first in a treatise written 5,000 years ago. A quick history of the study of algae as well as its human uses is traced. In Brittany seaweed has been used for many centuries as a fertilizer, but also as fuel and as food and bedding for farm animals.

The collection of *goémon*, Breton for collected seaweed in general, is presented as it has changed over the centuries and continues today, including techniques of harvesting and processing seaweed for various uses. And through the years more and more uses have been found for seaweed in pharmaceuticals, textiles, cosmetology, composts and fertilizers, animal food, human cuisine, and even the potential treatment of cancer. More research will reveal even more areas where this plant is a resource.

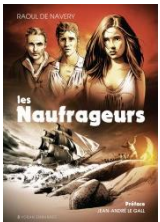
By 2014 some 15 million tons of seaweed was harvested – 96% of it by algaculture in Asia. 320,000 tons were harvested in Europe; 90,000 tons from France, of which 80% was from Brittany. The many different uses for seaweed and the new initiatives in Brittany and elsewhere to take advantage of this resource is eye-opening.

The annexes to the main text add to the wealth of information with recipes, websites and contact information for classes and expeditions in Brittany to learn, festivals, scientific organizations and museums, a synopsis of various research projects, and a bibliography.

Those not well versed in biological terminology (in English or French) will find a glossary of terms welcome.

At the heart of the book are the 50 species presented, each in two or three pages with a full-page watercolor of the plant. For each plant a written description is given of size and where one is likely to find the plant, and its uses. Also described is its life cycle and reproduction. Especially helpful for those using the book to identify plants they find is a note on similar species that might be confused with it. The geographic spread of the plant and types of environment in which it thrives is also described. Common names – in French and Breton – as well as scientific names and etymologies are also provided. Using a set of symbols one can see how a particular species is used: in agriculture, as food for people and/or animals, in pharmaceutical/medicinal products, in cosmetics, in industry, as fertilizer, or in medical research. Symbols will also indicate if it is an invasive species in Brittany, if it was introduced to Breton waters, and if it is purposely cultivated.

This book will introduce you to a wealth of information about seaweed, and if you have the opportunity to explore Breton coastal waters it will serve as an effective guide to the most common species you might encounter. I especially appreciated the fine artwork that so eloquently spoke to the diversity and beauty of this plant.



Raoul de Navery. *Les Naufrageurs*. Yoran Embanner. 2018. 191 pages. ISBN 978-2-36785-009-2.

Here is a romance novel in classic 19th century style set in Brittany. A nice summertime read.

The author, Raoul de Navery, whose true name was Eugénie Caroline Suffray (1829-1885), was born in Ploërmel. Preceded by a strict upbringing by her mother, she attended a boarding school in Rennes until she was 17 when she was taken out in 1846 to be married to a colleague of her father, Joseph Baptiste Cherret. By 1856 she had had enough of an unhappy relationship to leave home to teach in Metz. She began writing to motivate her middle school students and when her husband died in 1871 she moved to Paris to take up a career writing romance novels. She wrote some 100 novels with a dozen set in Brittany (see a review of *Le Marquis de Pontcallec*, 1878, in *Bro Nevez* 41, December 2016).

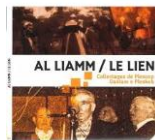
Les Naufrageurs is set in the early 1700s on the coast of Cap Sizun in the Pays Bigouden where a village of savage people (les Cormorants) make their living by fishing but also by luring ships onto the rocky coast during storms by lighting fires that would resemble the light of a lighthouse. The loot is then hidden in huge and endless caverns in the rocky coast (a landscape that does not resemble the actual coast of Penmarc'h and this

region of Brittany) and any survivors are killed so that the secret of this village activity will be kept. But there is an exception – a young child who is saved and raised by the leader of the Cormorants. He diligently keeps this activity secret from her until one day she finds out. There are lots of twists and turns in the plot of this novel as family relationships are discovered. In most cases it is quite easy to foresee upcoming revelations but the adventure can be suspenseful.

The heroine Gouelanig is pure, beautiful, pious, and courageous. The Cormorants are godless and truly evil. Those men who eventually rescue Gouelanig are heroic beyond belief. The only character who seems truly “human” is the Cormorant chief, Jakez Furic who adopts Gouelanig and comes to love her. He is a true *naufregeur* but with regrets. Yes, the characters are stereotypic in their goodness or badness, but this is a good read and you will be drawn into the action and suspense.

Heard of, but not Heard – 12 New CDs from Brittany

The following information was gleaned from issues of *Musique bretonne* 256 (juil-août-sept 2018) and *Ar Men* 225 (juil-août 2018) as well as the Coop Breizh website and other websites for specific musicians.



Al Liamm / Le Lien. Collectages de Plescop.

This CD includes 20 selections culled from some 100 hours of recordings made by a number of different people in Plescop during the past several decades. Put together by the organization Petra Neue which has fostered performance opportunities for traditional singers and transmission of song to younger generations, the CD includes songs in both French and Breton, representing the position of Plescop in this linguistic border area.



Michel Aumont. Armorigène.

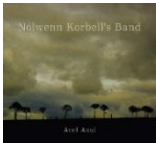
This is the latest CD by a master of clarinet and bass clarinet. Here he draws from Breton tradition for innovative arrangements as well as new compositions, highlighting some 30 years on the Breton music scene. 16 selections are drawn from his work as a soloist and with the groups SouffleS3, Quintet Clarinettes, le Grand orchestra Armorigène, and La Confrérie des clars graves.



Festival Interceltique Lorient – 2018, année du pays de Galles.

This CD includes 16 selections drawn from hundreds of performances during the Inter-Celtic Festival of Lorient – headliners as well as up and coming performers. With Wales the featured country this year, the CD includes performances by Pendevig, Catrin Finch/Seckou Keita, Alaw, Only Boys

Aloud, and Manic Street Preachers. But all the Celtic countries have a strong presence during the 10 days of this festival. On the CD you find Denez [Prigent], Yann Tiersen, Gilles Servat, and the Jacky Molard Quartet from Brittany. From Brittany and Ireland/U.S.: Rhiannon Giddens and the Orchestre Symphonique de Bretagne; from Ireland: Jiggy; from Scotland: Julie Fowlis; from Cornwall: MacQuarrie and Toms; from the Isle of Man: a'Nish; from Galicia and Asturias respectively: Uxía and Jose Manuel Tejedor; and from Quebec: # Solo avec le Vent du Nord et de Temps Antan.



Nolwenn Korbell's Band. *Avel Azul.*

Singer Nolwenn Korbell joins here with Frank Darcel who provides a large number of the themes and texts for this CD. Also in the band are Xavier Géronimi on guitar, Roberto Friot on bass, and Pierre Marolleau on drums. Songs are in Breton, English and French with a rock beat and themes that are melancholic and melodic.



Label Danse. *Label Danse.*

This is a Trio who perform a variety of dances – not traditional to Brittany, but certainly danced by Bretons with enthusiasm: waltzes, rumba, cha cha, bassa nova, rock and roll, disco ... The group is made up of Stéphane Lonnoy (song, fiddle, guitar, keyboard), Christophe Jégard (accordion, bandoneon, organ), Philippe Daniel (song, bass fiddle, electric bass, sousaphone).



Virginie Le Furaut. *Eau de l'âme.*

Celtic harp player and singer Virginie Le Furaut is joined here by Jérémy Kerno-Dréano (song), Eddy Guilloteau (bodhran) and Alban Bauduin (guitar) for nine selections of traditional song and dance from Brittany, Ireland and Scotland.



Ioana Lemoine and Yann-Fañch Perroches. *C'est demain que nous partons.*

This CD pairs Yann-Fañch Perroches on accordion with singer Iona Lemoine for 13 songs that are rooted in Brittany but take the two travelling also to Scotland, Ireland and Spain.



Daniel Paboef Unity. *Golden Years.*

With a style not easily pinned down – a mix of rock, jazz, pop and electronics with a strong melodic line – saxophonist Daniel Paboef continues to create new music. Here he works with Mistress Bob H (laptop and programming), David Euverte (keyboard) and Nicolas Courret (drums).



Skolvan. *Ti ar seven.*

While some of its members have changed, Skolvan has been on the Breton scene for over 30 years and is composed of some of Brittany's masters of traditional dance and melody. Musicians on this CD are Youenn Le Bihan (piston, a "softer" bombarde), Gilles Le Bigot (guitar and tambura), Bernard Le Dréau (soprano sax), and Régis Huiban (accordion). They perform 15 dances and dance suites, primarily composed in traditional style, including andro, plinn, Scottish, rond de St.-Vincent, gavotte, mazurka, laride in 8, and rond de Loudéac. Also included is a Flemish dance and a song composed by Youenn Le Bihan to music by Régis Huiban.



Taran Celt. *Nevezamzer*

This five-member group presents here 10 selections of song in Breton and French rooted in both rock and traditional Breton styles. The group is composed of Gwenolé Lahall (song and guitar), Ollivier Arz (flute, bombarde, subois, bagpipes), Nicolas Lasseur (fiddle, bagpipes), Philippe Micielski (bass guitar) and David Hurtrez (drums).



Trio Forj. *Rue du chat qui danse*

Created in 2014, this trio from the Rennes area presents here a CD with 8 dances (Rond de Loudéac, ridée, polka, contre rond de St. Vincent, and others). The group is made up of Kenan Guernaec on flute, Alan Vallée on guitar, and Clément Le Goff with song.



Wipidoup. *Ar spletenn, les horloges.*

This is a CD from a well-known and loved fest noz band composed of four seasoned musicians: Philippe Gloaguen (guitar), Pierrick Tardivel bass, n'goni), Gildas Le Buhé (song, saxophone) and Régis Huiban (accordion, accordina). The CD includes several dances and dance suites – kas a barzh, ronds de Loudéac, mazurka, dañs tro (gavotte), laridé, plinn – and a song.

A Travel Account of Brittany from 1925 – Some American Connections

It seemed fitting to include a travel account here that touches on some of the notes and places noted earlier in this issue of *Bro Nevez*. The narrative by this American tourist, Elizabeth Shackleton, quickly skims topics and destinations, but her observations and tidbits of information can be interesting.

Elizabeth Shackleton. *Touring Through France.* The Penn Publishing Company, Philadelphia. 1925.

Chapter VIII – Harbors of American History

The gate of the old convent creaked on its hinges at 8:45, not so bad for a start on the first frosty morning of the year. On leaving Quimperlé we waved adieu to a woman at her door under her sign: *Vve. S – Tricoteuse*. There the widow sat, two small children playing at her feet, facing the world and the wolves at her door, with her knitting needles glinting at their work. It was a humble neighborhood where great loaves of bread were at the baker's window. It was what Gil Blas* calls sallow-complexioned bread. Each loaf was twenty-four inches long and nine wide and cost five-and-a-half cents as our money exchanged. "Little mouths eat much bread," as they say here.

Twenty kilometres through fields being harrowed, though sodden with yesterday's rain, brought us to the suburbs of L'Orient where the houses rise, straight-walled and foundationless, from the pavement. Here was France's dream of a great port with the East when India was hers, with the West when Canada and Louisiana were French. L'Orient was of the days when John Law, the Scotchman, was bewitching the whole country with a far-expanded Mississippi bubble.

It was the port where the *Bon Homme Richard* was outfitted. We ran the car along the quays, not very busy now, looking out at the harbor and trying to place the roadstead of Groix so often written of, in the anxious letters that passed between John Paul Jones and Franklin, in Paris.

It was while waiting long at L'Orient later on the *Alliance*, that Jones gave a party, "at great and unnecessary expense" with a mock battle between the *Serapis* and the *Bon Homme Richard*. His sour-visaged critics forgot to say, in their letters to America, that he paid for his party, powder and all, from his own prize-money pocket.

L'Orient does not hold one now. A little steamer runs out to Belle Ile, Sarah Bernhardt's lonely island in the sea. Madame de Sévigné, chattering away with her pen, told of its merchants back from Siam with porcelains and silks. She almost bought for Mme. Grignan, her daughter, *une jolie étoffe pour robe de chambre* – but cautious spender, she didn't! Her modern touch: "Our card will let you see the situation: makes one almost believe post-cards existed in 1689!"

We tried to awaken some memory of the *Bon Homme Richard*, to find someone who knew of the naval glory that went with this port. "It's long ago!" was as near as anyone came. We left L'Orient with a patriotic thrill in honor of our Fredericksburg admiral, thinking, as we went, one gets out of Europe only what one brings. Perhaps even at home nowadays his name would suggest a dance rather than an admiral.

Both from interest and necessity of bridge, our way was inland through Hennebont, Breton for "old bridge," a

brave place on the ancient Roman road through Gaul, with a spirited career behind it. It was the first place on our route to which Froissart of old had come riding up with his ever fascinating query: "What great château is this?" He went on to record his great tale of the women of Hennebont who fended for themselves at this fortress gate when their men were away. Valiantly did they defend the walls, these *dames et demoiselles d'Hennebont* under the command of Jeanne de Montfort. Froissart gave her the "courage of a man and the heart of a lion!"

So unrestored was Hennebont, so real, so romantically gated we could almost see the women on the walls with their soup kettles and hot fat, scalding their enemies with zest and hurling the rocks of six centuries ago.

Old wrought iron well-heads covered shallow wells, that were still sources of household water. Town mansions of bygone seigneurs bordered an open *place* on which stood in domination the pride of Hennebont, Notre Dame de Paradis, a church whose whole front was one great flamboyant door and lofty steeple.

The tall curé came out of his house when we were near his doorstep. He talked of his town and laughed about the bell-ropes being tucked in cupboards with locks so the *gamins* could not pull them. He was gently of the opinion the English did not build the church though savants had said so. It seemed very French to him.

It was on this day's drive that we crossed the Pont l'Orois, a high-hung suspension bridge approached by a sharp-backed ridge. The primitive, slender bridge spanning an arm of the sea was so narrow we could just get in, so long we thought we'd never get out and so beautiful to look away from, we wanted to stop!

This was on a somewhat minor route toward Carnac and Quiberon. Carnac is the capital, one might say, of prehistoric stones. It was a gloomy, bare country with curious lanes, many and narrow, between high-stacked, steep-edged mud walls, green with their grassy cover. Trees gnarled and knobby were bent by the landward wind. An eerie feeling of one generation cometh and another passeth away crept close to us in straggling Erdevan. Here suddenly the road was in the midst of a veritable village of granite menhirs, black, grey, evenly spaced, tall, all twenty feet high at least, and far above our heads. These spindles of stone stand in row upon row, aloft, alone, unexplained.

There were two strong links with American history here. The American flag, flying on the Ranger, was first saluted by a foreign power as it entered the water now before us, Quiberon Bay, within sound of these stones that taunt through the ages with their mystery. It was past these menhirs on the long *presque-isle*, this finger-like peninsula to Quiberon, that Lafayette hurried on

horseback to join his boat on his voyage into fame and our history.

Here too, the French émigrés landed from British ships to try to save their monarch and their monarchy, to meet defeat, capture and death, on the sands and in the shallow water. General Hoche was the republican who crushed them. He had with him on this lonely road to Quiberon a man whose song goes singing through the years, Rouget de Lisle.

At Carnac a great tumulus loomed ahead by the roadside, seventy feet high and curiously like the mounds in Ohio. From its man-made height a view over moor and marsh, inlets and sea, could be had. Behind the village, behind the line of garden wall and house were the great alignments, stone after stone in parallels, line after line, even in space, each stone standing erect, in the thirteen rows. There were five miles of stones, 1991, still standing erect. Who put them there? What are they for? Old Geoffrey of Monmouth, whose oriel window still looks out on his Welsh town, first chronicler of them, writes down after seeing them: "They are magic. The giants brought them in other times." Who can say much more to-day, when one stone alone weighs three hundred and fifty tons?

The peasants have always been afraid of them. They are Caesar's legions turned to stone say those who live near them and whose forefathers saw the Romans. Curiously Caesar, forever commenting on camps and customs, commented not on these stony legions.

We went to Locmariaquer – its Highlands-of-Scotland-sounding name is natural. Bretons and Gaels are one blood and of almost one tongue. The shallow sea of Morbihan was on our left, dotted with green islets, one for each day in the year. We looked for "the table of the merchants," a great stone which sits on others so that a cavern exists beneath. When in the underground space we felt like beetles about to be crushed. The sheep looked in at us from above. Near it, as if to offer a taunt to theories of how and why, lies the greatest of all the stones thrown down by lightning and broken, almost within the memory of men now living. Its seventy feet was once its height, and it weighs four hundred tons.

The uncanny shadows were long that the tall stones cast, as we hurried, saying it was the thought of crossing that vibrating bridge in the dark that made for speed. Soon we began to say – "we never saw that and we passed this." Still the bridge evaded us and dusk settled. We asked our way and turned a flashlight on the kilometer posts. They were inextricable tangles of *Ploe's* and *Ker's*. It was manifest we were *trompeed*, a most expressive French term. We saw lights ahead and used Froissart's formula: "What is this city?" It was Auray, mysteriously attained by a wrong road and fifteen kilometres on our next day's way. We entered by an obscure and back-door path.

Auray gave us a warm welcome but cold rooms, though a quart of hot water, corked in a champagne bottle, was supposed to produce comfort, even luxury, in a chatteringly cold bedroom. The dinner was good, the way had been long, we slept. The came in for some exploration in the morning; it had a few interesting arcades and four-sided slate roofs. A lovely tree-shaded, peaceful path was in sight of the river. We went by a very prosaic, crooked road to the modern pilgrimage church of Ste. Anne d'Auray, inspired by a peasant's vision, in recent times. Even in November, groups and families were piously walking toward the church. Little booths lined the approach, selling gingerbread-fair methods. The church was as Gothic, with rose windows, flying buttresses and high steepled tower, as modern hands could make it. Devout families prayed in groups. Thousands of new squares of marble were applied to the walls, telling of pious thankfulness for returned health and requited love, for examinations passed and sons born. Daughters did not seem to require a tablet of thanks. It is one of the greatest pilgrimage places of France and the French journey to shrines as their most active form of travel, the one thing that takes them from home.

We searched for the Chartreuse, a great walled mass of picturesque buildings in a field. Much knocking brought a tight-waisted nun in silver grey and white, to the grille. She took us through many gardens and cloisters telling us no one but *messieurs* had ever been there in the days of the old Chartreuse. We never thought of a monk as a gentleman, as a *monsieur!* The Duchesse d'Angoulême, daughter of Louis XVI, she who survived all the horrors of the revolution and saw father, mother and brother go to their fate, built a classic chapel here to cover the bones of nine hundred brave men, prisoners shot at dawn in the name of liberty, after capture on the sands of Quiberon. Their names were dimly reminiscent of the glories of France, de Sombreuil, de Soulanges, de Talbouet. It was a chill, white, lonely place.

It was good to be out in the sunshine again and to see the fields. On a most lovely byroad we passed a pillar marking the victory of Jean de Montfort. At this spot in Auray in the Hundred Years' War with England, they struggled in the marshes for this path, fighting among the tall reeds which still grew there and that were sere and brown as we crossed the marsh on a narrow road. We passed an old mill with a pond, full of reflection, and climbed a defile under great rocks, - all the fought-for path of 600 years ago.

Glimpses of the shallow sea of Morbihan with its islets followed us to Vannes, a department capital, with great public buildings and an open square where sat on his horse an armored knight, a gallant and an inspiring figure with a feathery plume, Arthur of Richmond, dead in the 1400's but alive to the Vannetois to-day. The fixity of French homes makes for heroes. The forefathers fought

under them. Their heroes walked the same stones in the same streets. We walked them too and found the stones very hard and penitential, but saw many beautiful streets of hill-piled houses, timber-crossed in black and white, and not too ruinous. The signs were sometimes in Breton which, too, was spoken on the streets. By towers and walls under an adequate town gate, we followed an esplanade called "la Rabine" out the long river harbor. Ochre-colored sails hung limp on the masts of seagoing boats that men were hauling by rope up to town.

Vannes was a fighting place, in and out from this harbor, when Caesar grappled their boats with hooks and went at them, hand to hand and hammer and tongs. The Venetii – the name has changed little – commanded his respect and he occupied many lively pages of his commentaries describing their leather sails and chains for sailing gear. Their harbor is very quiet now with green banks, with all promenading Vannes out taking the sun. We passed under the monument to the author of *Gil Blas*, born in this countryside. It had a peasant girl outstretching a palm to honor him, as if Le Sage lives with them, too.

In the morning we aimed inland to the northeast, for Josselin and Ploermel. As we left the sea and rose to higher, barer land scantily inhabited, we found a white frost coating every twig, every leaf, with white and feathery efflorescence. The sky was an even dull grey. On the bare moor, before reaching the village of Elven, were two solitary stone posts by the roadside, topped with great balls, cryptically marked *Largoet*. We turned into a wheel track between the posts, going in and on, engulfed in mist and frost. A hunting lodge with a gate closed the path. It had stone hares, crouching and peering at the gables and corners. The gate was opened and we were courteously asked to warm ourselves by the log fire. A breakfast for a hunting party was simmering on the hearth, and there was the studied rusticity of heavy oak and simple linen. We were assured if we kept *tout le droit, tout le droit*, we should find ourselves at the place we sought, the ruined towers of Elven. The pines came close, the oaks hung low, pearly balls of mistletoe brushed us as we passed. The white mist waved across our path in soft, stealthy, far-flung scarfs. The bracken was silvery above the ground. Suddenly in the mist before the car rose two high ruined towers guarded by a drawbridge and a moat. Frosty briars fended us from the logs over the drawbridge. Under the crested and boasting portcullis we went and across the desolate courtyard into the great hollow keep, looking up through its floorless rooms at the cold sky, at the cold hearths adhering to the grey walls. The mists floated in at the gaunt windows. A King of England was prisoner in the far backward of time, but a Tudor, Henry VII, wrecked when a prince on the shores of Brittany, after the battle of Tewkesbury that Shakespeare has made live for us. We turned the car cautiously by the moat and the mist closed in behind us.

When the fog had left us, we saw in a village what we took to be a light, lean heifer, led by an old woman. The two changed our outlook and livened us with laughing. It was a long-legged pig with prodigious, pendulous ears. The pig was attached, not driven, by a cord on its hind leg and frisked and coquetted and danced. Its wagging and pendant ears were enough for good-sized purses even if pigskin is only recently a proper pocketbook material.

In the heaths of Lanvaux we came upon a château, in a heavy-planted woods at the bottom of a hill. It had round cone-topped towers peacefully reflected in a pool and was notable among châteaux for its old and beautiful trees. It was tightly closed and we asked a wood-chopper and we asked a little girl "What is the name of this château?" All alert, came the invariable answer: "Oh! Madame, it is *the* château!" It's the only one in the world to them who live on its land. We stopped to search the château book which is supposed to have them all. We shuffled pages and search again, but unidentified it was until we came, hungry to Plumelen, It was a drab place, but we entered the little inn, passing wood-carters eating by the kitchen hearth and another bare-tabled company, to a third room where a fire burned on the hearth and one woman and seven men were seated at luncheon. Where could they all have come from! Of them we asked of the château. It was Tredion. "Who owns it?" "Oh, always the same, M. de Tredion." The whole conservative quality of French society was expressed in the answer on the road and in the inn. It is the chateau and "de Tredion owned it always."

The kindness of the group in that low-ceilinged room remains in mind. The one woman at the table warmed her husband's plate at the fire, two for us and her own. All helped satisfy our curiosity as to the château and the road. They in turn were curious about America. Would we tell them what we drank in America? Every ear at table was attentive to hear what we would say. We explained we had more and different fruit on our tables, we had cream on things, we used more coffee and had tea. There wasn't any use eulogizing water. It is not understood as a beverage in France. They all sadly wagged their heads. What would a dinner be without wine even for the poor! And two men said: "All the Americans drank when they were here! The colonel, the captain, and the soldiers. Cognac, madame, I saw what I have never seen before – a man lift a bottle like this: - a cider bottle – "and hold it to his mouth until it was empty!" They all wagged their heads in respectful horror at the capacity of such a man. Still sad, we left them – and still eating.

Note: *Gil Blas*, referenced several times in this travel account is the title of a picaresque novel (full name, *Histoire de Gil Blas de Santillane*) by Alain-René Lesage published in four volumes between 1715 and 1735. Alain-René Lesage (also spelled Le Sage) was a prolific satirical dramatist, born in Sarzeau, Brittany in 1668, and deceased in Boulogne in 1747.

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