

BRO NEVEZ

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



Skol Diwan Landerne celebrates 33 years of Breton language education.

KUZUL ETREVROADEL EVIT KENDALC'H AR BREZHONEG

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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.

This newsletter can be sent as a PDF file attached to an e-mail instead of the print version. Just let the Editor know how you would like to receive it. The e-mail version is much more colorful than the photocopied print copy!

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.



150th Issue of the U.S. ICDBL Newsletter

The following is a bit of history about the evolution of *Bro Nevez* which I hope will be interesting. Since 1981 we have published articles and short notes on a wide range of topics related to the Breton language and culture and our newsletter has remained at the center of the work of the U.S. ICDBL. – Lois Kuter

Newsletter of the U.S. Branch No.1

In July 1981 the first issue of the newsletter of the U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language was produced – a mixture of a few photocopied pages and pages produced by the messy mimeograph method. A master sheet for the mimeograph machine was typed on a typewriter whose keys punched a hole in the mimeograph sheet through which ink would be delivered to create the printing on papers that were cranked through the machine. Some readers may remember this antique method; others can be awed by a quick check on Google. It was a messy process that I continued to use through most of the 1980s.

The first issue of our newsletter was just 11 pages with news of a few Breton magazines (*Breizh*, *Evid ar Brezhoneg* and *Keltica*) as well as two pages presenting Diwan, and a page describing the Université de Haute Bretagne's fight to get a *licence* for Breton at the university level (and in later years we would report on the fight for the CAPES and DEUG degrees). And there was news as well of our drive to build a membership and a financial report showing that we had a grand total of \$56.17 in our bank account. Dues were at that time just \$1 which helped us build a membership of some 100 individuals.

I reproduce here my presentation of the ICDBL from that first newsletter which gives an idea of the wider work of the ICDBL and the U.S. Branch's ambitions to serve as a source of information about the Breton language and Brittany.

The International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language was set up at the beginning of the 1975/76 school year to support the repeated demands of the teachers and people of Brittany that their language be recognized at long last, taught and accepted as a fact of daily life by the French authorities.

This Committee, with more than 500 personalities representing 40 different nationalities, was set up on a voluntary basis by non-Bretons who in this way show that, while the issue does not personally concern them, they consider it to be one which merits the

disinterested support of men and women of good will. The Committee, which is concerned purely with the defense of the cultural rights of the individual, is non-political and non-ideological.

Branches of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language have been established in Canada, France, Spain, Switzerland, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, Denmark, Germany, Ireland, England, Wales, Norway, and Austria. The newest branch of the ICDBL is our own, that of the United States, which is now in the process of being formed.

Activities of the various branches of the ICDBL have included petitions and letters to government officials of France and to diplomatic representatives of France in various European countries. Information has been diffused to the press, and the attention of European Parliament members has been drawn to the situation of the Breton language in hopes that some international pressure will be put on the French government to live up to its promises of aid to the Breton culture. The ICDBL has also acted in support of activities of Bretons themselves in teaching their language.

The activities of the U.S. branch are up to its members. What we choose to do to defend the Breton language may or may not resemble the activities of other branches, since the U.S. is quite different from Europe (and Canada) in terms of peoples' knowledge about Breton. Our main task to start with will be to simply inform people in the United States that the Breton language exists and that Bretons need support for its continued existence.

Our newsletter will be one means of spreading news about the Breton language. I hope this first newsletter will be of interest to members as well as others who have expressed interest in the formation of a U.S. branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language.

Bro Nevez is Born

Recognizing that "Newsletter of the U.S. Branch of the International Committee for the Defense of the Breton Language" was much too long and uninteresting, the U.S. ICDBL members were asked to propose and vote on a shorter name. By Newsletter No. 13 of November 1984 a new name was found – as described in the following "Declaration" by its editor, Lois Kuter.

A "Declaration" from the General Editor

Bro Nevez – New Country

There it is – a new name for the U.S. ICDBL newsletter ... in Breton, short, easy to say (even for Americans unfamiliar with Breton), with different levels of meaning. We of a new country offer our support to those of an old country who are building a new one – Brittany.

Credit for this name goes to Hervé Thomas, the artist of our newsletter covers. Bro Nevez has a place now on a newsletter cover that should be familiar to you – a cover which will mark an ongoing commitment of the U.S. ICDBL each time the newsletter is printed.

It was only after a very brief hesitation that I decided to take on dictatorial power to declare "Bro Nevez" the new newsletter name. The unenthusiastic response on the part of newsletter readers to repeated calls to express preference for one of a dozen or so names so far put forward was certainly a factor in the lack of guilt I feel in undemocratically choosing a name which never even appeared on the list of choices. I do wish to thank all those who proposed names for the newsletter and the 20 people who responded with a preference ... in fact with eight different preferences. Six votes for "Mouezh Breizh en Amerika", five for "An Triskellig", three for "An Erminig", two each for "Brezhoneg Bev" and "Dorn ha Dorn", and one for "Bevet ar Brezhoneg", "Kengred" and "Brud d'ar Brezhoneg".

So what was I to do when faced with such wishy-washy results and a new name that I found personally far more appealing than any previous choices? Well, I seized General Editorial powers (well beyond my powers perhaps). Those who feel cheated out of a democratic decision are invited to express indignation ... or to join me in welcoming a new newsletter name.

38 Years and 150 Newsletters later ...

While a great deal of change for the good of the Breton language and culture has occurred since the founding of the ICDBL and the U.S. Branch, this change has been slow and far too limited to mean that international support for Breton is no longer needed. And, despite the incredible resources available on the internet – prepared by people of Brittany themselves – the need to provide English language information about the Breton language and the work of Bretons to keep this language alive and well is certainly still needed.

The milestone of 150 newsletter issues has prompted me to update the index I have kept for *Bro Nevez* and I want to share some numbers and an overview of the information we have published.

In my general index of articles topics include: animals, architecture, art and sculpture, beer, bilingualism, Breton-U.S. relations, Breton book catalogs, Celtic languages and Celtic Studies programs, cider, cinema,

cooking and recipes, costume, economy, emigration, environment and nature, Europe and Brittany, flags and symbols, geography, Immigration into Brittany, literature and poetry, Loire-Atlantique, maritime Brittany, oral traditions, radio, saints and religion, sports, tourism, wine ... and others.

It is the Breton language that is the focus of our work, so information about activities in Brittany are at the center of each issue of *Bro Nevez*. Since our first newsletter in 1981 we have included news of the Diwan schools in 96 of 150 issues. Articles and short notes have also reported on dozens of Breton language organizations, leisure activities in the Breton language, Breton in the schools at all levels and classes for adults, census and surveys of Breton speakers, contests and prizes for creativity in Breton, dictionaries, publishing and learning materials, internet resources, media and Breton, names (people and place names), public presence of Breton and road signs, theater in Breton, French government relations and action/inaction, Breton government relations and action/inaction, and more ... From 1982 to 1990, poet and writer Reun ar C'halan contributed a series of 23 articles in the Breton language. From 2003 to 2013 Natalie Novik provided a series of 20 Breton language lessons.

Bro Nevez articles often reported on the Celtic countries and their languages and relationship to Brittany – Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Cornwall, Isle of Man, Galicia and Asturias. Some 14 U.S. Celtic organizations have been presented, and the work of two active Breton organizations in the U.S. – Breizh Amerika and BZH New York – have been reported in recent years. The work of over 50 organizations in Brittany working for the Breton language and culture have been presented over the years and over 50 Breton magazines and some 20 book publishers have also been introduced.

A regular and always fascinating feature of each of the past 60 issues of *Bro Nevez* has been Jean-Pierre Le Mat's series "Deep Inside a Breton Skull." And starting in 1991 excerpts from 19th and early 20th century travel accounts by American and British travel writers have also been a regular feature.

Because music is a strong interest of my own, this is topic found in nearly every issue of *Bro Nevez*. This has included articles and notes on the Celtic harp, dance, Dastum, festivals, American musicians in Brittany and tours by Bretons in the U.S., bagpipes/*bombardes* and *bagadoù*, book and recording sources, clarinet, composers, internet resources, and workshops on Breton music. Music has been presented especially through reviews and short notes on recordings from Brittany (which required an index of their own). Over 300 recordings featuring some 200 different singers,

instrumentalists, duos, trios, and groups have been reviewed along with an additional 60 compilations of various performers. Over 1,800 CDs and albums have been briefly noted in the pages of *Bro Nevez* – presenting some 800 individuals or ensembles plus 200 or more compilations of various performers.

In addition to the general index of topics presented in *Bro Nevez* and a separate index of music recording notes and reviews, I have put together two other indexes to make it easier to search past issues. An alphabetical index of biographical notes helps to locate the presentations of over 190 Bretons (and friends of Brittany) active in supporting the Breton language and culture. An index of book notes and reviews includes 600 book notes (of which one-third are for books in the Breton language) and 360 book reviews (of which 73 are books in the Breton language). This is just the tip of an iceberg of publishing activity in Brittany, but we have tried to alert our readers to some interesting reading on a range of topics.

While this summary of newsletter content does not make for fascinating reading, it does show that the U.S. ICDBL is succeeding in its aim to help our newsletter readers become better informed about Brittany, the Breton language, and the wealth of Breton culture. We are not done yet!

Since June 2013 (issue number 126) with several issues before that date, *Bro Nevez* has been accessible on the U.S. ICDBL website: icdbl.org. And, since Number 127 of August 2013, *Bro Nevez* has also been accessible on the website of the Cultural Institute of Brittany (Skol Uhel ar Vro): skoluhelarvro.bzh. Some 80 to 90 copies of *Bro Nevez* are sent to individuals and organizations in Brittany (mostly by e-mail) on a complimentary basis, and we welcome anyone so inclined to share a print or e-mail copy with others!

UNESCO and the International Year of Indigenous Languages

The following is from the website <https://en.iyil2019.org> which was set up for the 2019 Year of Indigenous Languages to engage people in action to protect and develop these languages. On this website it is noted that there are some 7,000 languages spoken worldwide. There are some 5,000 different indigenous cultures and 2,680 languages in danger. There are 370 million indigenous people in the world and 70 countries with indigenous cultures within their borders.

The role of the language

It is through language that we communicate with the world, define our identity, express our history and

culture, learn, defend our human rights and participate in all aspects of society, to name but a few.

Through language, people preserve their community's history, customs and traditions, memory, unique modes of thinking, meaning and expression. They also use it to construct their future. Language is pivotal in the areas of human rights protection, good governance, peace building, reconciliation, and sustainable development.

A person's right to use his or her chosen language is a prerequisite for freedom of thought, opinion and expression, access to education and information, employment, building inclusive societies, and other values enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Many of us take it for granted that we can conduct our lives in our home languages without any constraints or prejudice. But this is not the case for everyone.

Of the almost 7,000 existing languages, the majority have been created and are spoken by indigenous peoples who represent the greater part of the world's cultural diversity.

Yet many of these languages are disappearing at an alarming rate, as the communities speaking them are confronted with assimilation, enforced relocation, educational disadvantage, poverty, illiteracy, migration and other forms of discrimination and human rights violations.

Given the complex systems of knowledge and culture developed and accumulated by these local languages over thousands of years, their disappearance would amount to losing a kind of cultural treasure. It would deprive us of the rich diversity they add to our world and the ecological, economic and sociocultural contribution they make.

More importantly, their loss would have a huge negative impact on the indigenous cultures concerned.

It is for this reason and others that the United Nations chose to dedicate a whole year to indigenous languages, to encourage urgent action to preserve, revitalize and promote them.

Is Breton an Indigenous language?

Indigenous language (as defined on www.definitions.net)

An indigenous language or autochthonous language is a language that is native to a region and spoken by indigenous people, often reduced to the status of a minority language. This language would be from a

*linguistically distinct community that has been settled in the area for many generations. Indigenous languages are not necessarily national languages, and the reverse is also true. Many indigenous languages have become endangered because of language deaths or *linguicide* caused by colonization, in which the original language is replaced by that of the colonists.*

Are Bretons an Indigenous People?

While the work of UNESCO and the United Nations for Indigenous People focuses on what most of us in North America think of "Indians," "Native Americans," "Indigenous Peoples", or "Aboriginal Peoples," these organizations have not tried to rigidly "define" who is "Indigenous," but instead recognizes the need to respect the diversity of peoples who self-identify as Indigenous.

Who are indigenous peoples? (as proposed by the United Nations – fact sheet on website www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/5session_factsheet1.pdf)

It is estimated that there are more than 370 million indigenous people spread across 70 countries worldwide. Practicing unique traditions, they retain social, cultural, economic and political characteristics that are distinct from those of the dominant societies in which they live. Spread across the world from the Arctic to the South Pacific, they are the descendants - according to a common definition - of those who inhabited a country or a geographical region at the time when people of different cultures or ethnic origins arrived. The new arrivals later became dominant through conquest, occupation, settlement or other means. Among the indigenous peoples are those of the Americas (for example, the Lakota in the USA, the Mayas in Guatemala or the Aymaras in Bolivia), the Inuit and Aleutians of the circumpolar region, the Saami of northern Europe, the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders of Australia and the Maori of New Zealand. These and most other indigenous peoples have retained distinct characteristics which are clearly different from those of other segments of the national populations.

Understanding the term "indigenous"

Considering the diversity of indigenous peoples, an official definition of "indigenous" has not been adopted by any UN-system body. Instead the system has developed a modern understanding of this term based on the following:

- *Self- identification as indigenous peoples at the individual level and accepted by the community as their member.*

- Historical continuity with pre-colonial and/or pre-settler societies
- Strong link to territories and surrounding natural resources
- Distinct social, economic or political systems
- Distinct language, culture and beliefs
- Form non-dominant groups of society
- Resolve to maintain and reproduce their ancestral environments and systems as distinctive peoples and communities. A question of identity

According to the UN the most fruitful approach is to identify, rather than define indigenous peoples. This is based on the fundamental criterion of self-identification as underlined in a number of human rights documents.

Brittany and the International Year of Indigenous Languages

The website for the International Year of Indigenous Languages includes a map pinpointing various events in different parts of the world which tie into to the aims of the IYIL. And on the map one can find Brittany which highlights Gouel Broadel ar Brezhoneg. The following is the description (minus the French translation) of this event as found on iyil.org.



Gouel Broadel Ar Brezhoneg
JUNE 7, 2019 12:00 AM - JUNE 9, 2019
12:00 AM
Europe and North America | France |
Langoned | Langonnet
CULTURAL EVENTS

Gouel mojenel ha broadel ar brezhoneg. Ur pezh programm a ginnigomp deoc'h ar bloaz-mañ evit

diskouez puilhded hor yezh. Faota deomp diskouez ivez hor goulen sokiañ kreñv evit muioc'h a vrezhoneg hag evit ma vefe anavezet ez-ofisiel amañ, dustu, e Breizh! Deuit 'ta da brofitañ, eskemm, dizoleiñ ha krouiñ ganeomp e-kerzh GBB 2019. Al lec'h da vezañ evit ar vrezhonegerien e vo, tud kar o yezh hag ho mignoned evel-just! Evit an nann-vrezhonegerien e vo ivez un digarez da zizoleiñ bed "kuzhet" hor yezh ha bevañ un darvoud e brezhoneg penn-da-benn ! Ur soubidigezh wir kea, ur gwir taol-arnod ha peadra da vout sebezhet evit lod, sur.

Miliadoù a arvesterien a c'hortozomp evit dizoleiñ arzourien barrekañ ar vro war teir leurenn, evit sonadegoù vras, festoù-deiz ha noz, an Taol-Lañs (leurenn lañs nemeti e Breizh gouestlet d'ar sonerezh a-vremañ kanet e brezhoneg), sinema, sirk, c'hoariva, sportoù, c'hoarioù, artzanned, kêriadenn an ekonomiezh hag an niverel, standoù embannerien, hag ar bed sevenadurel, tabutoù ha prezegennoù... ha kalz traoù all ! Plijadur vo sur.

THE one-and-only Breton Language Festival is back! This iconic event, which was revived in 2017 in Langoned (56-Morbihan) after a few years' absence, is completely unmissable for anyone involved with the Breton language. It's the meeting of the year for all Brittophones – present and future – as well as Breton lovers, supporters, anyone curious and all your friends. But it's much more than a festival: it is also a place of activism. It will once again be an opportunity to remind everyone that the Breton language is rich with a multitude of colours and is a vector of constantly renewed creativity. Nevertheless, it is classified as being in serious danger of extinction by UNESCO ... Come and enjoy yourselves, meet interesting people and get creative with us during GBB 2019. For those who do not (yet) speak Breton, the festival is a unique opportunity to discover a world that may seem hidden, that of the Breton language. It is a "festival experience", open to all. It will be an amazing immersion and discovery for some who do not speak or know Breton. A lifesize trial situation to discover Breton language and culture with your friends from far away!

We are expecting thousands of festival-goers to delight in our exceptional programme featuring the best artists of the moment. On 3 stages, large concerts, a fest-deiz and festoù-noz, An Taol-Lañs (the only springboard for contemporary music in the Breton language), circus, cinema, theatre, conferences and debates, sport, a craftsmen's village, the digital pole in the Breton language, the village of publishers in the Breton language and cultural associations, children's games, workshops... there will be something for everyone! It's going to be a blast!

Mignoned **ar Brezhoneg** **Mignoned ar Brezhoneg**

One of the major projects of the Friends of the Breton Language (Mignoned ar Brezhoneg) is the organization of Gouel ar Brezhoneg. And in this project it has fostered a partnership with the Tafwyl festival in Wales which set up the travel of the Welsh alt-rock trio called Chroma to Gouel ar Brezhoneg. Likewise, UKAN, a pop-rock group from Brittany will perform at the 2019 Tafwyl festival. Also at the Tafwyl festival will be Gwenno, a singer described as psych-pop who sings in Cornish. Both the Tafwyl festival and Gouel ar Brezhoneg share the aim of offering opportunities for the creative use of languages like Breton and Welsh.

But Mignoned ar Brezhoneg has a wider mission beyond Gouel ar Brezhoneg to also support organizations and businesses who promote the Breton language and culture. While they have a small online shop for Breton products on their website -

mignoned.bzh – a new initiative for this organization founded in 2013 is the creation of **Stal.bzh**. This will be a site for businesses who use and promote the Breton language in their operations and in their products. This will be both a way to support such enterprises by giving them some marketing visibility and a way to encourage the use of Breton by organizations and businesses. Due to open this June, check out Stal.bzh to see how the Breton language is promoted commercially!

European Language Equality Network

The following is part of a press release from ELEN concerning its participation this May 2019 in the European Forum for Minorities: Education, Language and Human Rights. Participating in this Forum were two representatives from Brittany – Tangi Louarn, VP for ELEN and representative for Kevre Breizh, and Anna-Vari Chapalain, Director of Diwan Breizh. Readers are recommended to consult the full report of this forum as well as other recent press releases documenting the work of ELEN. - LK

<https://elen.ngo/2019/05/10/european-forum-for-minorities-education-language-and-the-human-rights-of-minorities/>

Experts, international institutions, NGOs and State representatives gathered at the first European Forum for Minorities, held in Brussels on May 6-7th and focusing on Education, Language and the Human Rights of Minorities.

Recommendations from the Forum will feed into the 12th UN Forum for Minorities in Geneva and result in a set of UN guidelines regarding minoritised language education. The European Language Equality Network was co-partner for the event which was initiated by UN Special Rapporteur for Minorities, Fernand de Varennnes, and organized by the Budapest based NGO Tom Lantos Institute, with the assistance and support of ELEN and other organisations.

The Forum was divided into four panels covering: Human rights and minority language education in Europe; Public policy objectives and practices for education in minority languages; Effective practices in the teaching of and education in minority languages; Resources and management for the effective implementation of human rights obligations.

After the panels had made their presentations the floor was opened for an interactive dialogue with NGOs, state representatives and academics.

Given that the topic is a core policy area for ELEN the organization was well represented with Vice-President Prof. Anneli Sarhimaa and Secretary-General Davyth Hicks on the panels and President Ferran Suay

(ACPV), Vice-President Paul Bilbao (Kontseilua), Vice-President Tangi Louarn (Kevre Breizh), as well as Marga Payola (Plataforma per la Llengua), Celia Armes (A Mesa), Anna-Vari Chapalain (Diwan), Nicolas Caracota, Stere Stamule (Council of Armans), Sotiris Bletsas (Greek EBLUL), all participating in the dialogue.

There was a wealth of details both from the panels and during the dialogue giving an important insight into the differences and challenges across Europe facing minoritised language education.

Opening the Forum Fernand de Varennnes said that “language is key to inclusion.” In the first panel Sia Spiliopoulou Åkermark underlined that “minority rights are the essence of human rights” and how they act as a thermometer in terms of measuring the tolerance of the society that they inhabit. Prof. Rob Dunbar (Univ. of Edinburgh) referred to the ICESCR posing the question, “What if the full development of human personality and sense of dignity requires mother tongue education?”

ELEN Vice-President Tangi Louarn (Kevre Breizh) discussed the problems with the “dogmatic” French state in establishing Breton-medium education, and Rob Dunbar highlighted the developing importance of language commissioners in several countries in implementing language legislation and offering an important oversight mechanism.

In the second panel of good practices in minoritised language education and public policy, ELEN Secretary-General Davyth Hicks contrasted the relative success of those languages with domestic legislation such as Catalan, Welsh and Basque, to those without such as Breton. He underlined how the Catalan model had been successful in providing bilingual education for all, acting to strengthen social cohesion. In contrast Breton still faces huge problems as it does not have legislation to underpin its immersion education infrastructure.

He stressed the sense of urgency felt by ELEN members whose languages are endangered and where legislation is needed to prevent further decline, and called for co-official status for French ‘regional’ languages as well as an EU Directive for endangered languages. He noted that the two main Council of Europe Treaties for language protection are not being properly implemented by States and referred to the ELEN proposals that the lack of ECRML and FCNM implementation should trigger EU infringement proceedings. He proposed that the EU establish an EU Languages Commissioner and language observatory to monitor language discrimination. “If the EU can protect fish and trees,” he asked, “why can’t it also protect our European endangered languages?” ...

... Anna-Vari Chapalain highlighted the success of the Breton-medium Diwan schools, but that Breton speakers must have their rights respected and upheld by the French state. She supported the ELEN call for an EU Languages Commissioner and proposed that the Erasmus programme support a RML school exchange programme....

... Tangi Louarn referred to the UN's sustainable development goals and proposed that "cultural diversity is vital for sustainable development." He said that a new model for development is needed globally, one that "substantively respects linguistic diversity and ends the neo-liberal model that is destroying the planet."...

School Reform and Diwan

This spring the law project for the "École de la confiance" was presented and is due to be adopted by the end of France's Parliamentary session. At the heart of this project for schools of France is "social justice, fairness, territorial innovation and raising the general level" of education. The law was adopted in February by the National Assembly and with modifications was adopted by the Senate in May. The law's aims seem laudable but comments by the French Minister of Education, Jean-Michel Blanquer, during debates in the French Senate have caused alarm in Brittany.

When the question of regional languages in schools was raised the Minister demonstrated a woeful ignorance of how immersive schools such as Diwan actually work. He insisted that the unilingualism imposed on pre-school children by such schools puts children at risk of not learning French, and that immersive teaching was a questionable pedagogy. This unimaginable confusion of immersive teaching with unilingualism shocked Diwan teachers and parents who know full well that this technique leads children to bilingualism (and even trilingualism). Capabilities in French are evaluated throughout Diwan levels and children excel. Certainly an immersion in Breton in the school has no potential to create unilingual Breton speakers given the predominance of French in everyday life, media, and in most Diwan students' homes! And in responding to the Minister's comments about unilingualism being detrimental to children's cognitive development, leaders of the Diwan schools and Lena Louarn, Vice President of the Regional Council of Brittany, pointed out that the only schools where children are at risk of such unilingualism are those that teach solely through the French language.

Besides the bizarre allegations that immersive schools such as Diwan are questionable in their educational

excellence, Diwan leaders are concerned that previous government promises to enact a law requiring communities to support children attending schools outside their area will be weakened. The "forfeit scolaire" means that the community where a child lives pays for expenses of the community in which the child goes to school. In the case of Diwan schools, this involves a large number of children who attend a school outside of the community in which they live. The fees paid through the "forfeit scolaire" are key in balancing a school's budgets and supporting the non-teaching staff critical to the operation of a school. In May Diwan parents and teachers held demonstrations in a dozen cities to protest this reversal of policy by the Ministry of Education.

It now appears that the Minister of Education has backtracked on his negative assessment of immersive schools such as Diwan, and that the "forfeit scolaire" may not be in danger for Diwan schools. But, this uproar has been typical of government actions and words which have required a strong reaction on the part of Bretons to insure that just decisions are made and promises kept to support Breton in the schools.



Skol Diwan Landerneau Celebrates 33 Years

On June 15 the Diwan School of Landerneau held a festival to celebrate its 33 years. Starting with just eight children in 1986 the Landerneau school today has eighty-two students in preschool through the elementary grade.

The day began in the early afternoon with children's games, bilingual activities (circus, face painting, embroidery, web-radio in Breton), pony rides and storytelling in Breton. Also featured was a sculpture contest for the Breton language classes in all the schools of the area using recycled materials – creations of "trash to treasure."

Later in the afternoon a special concert was given by Maria Desbordes (a former student) and Carlos Soto with songs in Breton, Spanish, French and Judéo-Spanish. The concert also involved the participation of all 82 Diwan students with the choral group Hekleo – see below for more about the Diwan/Hekleo collaboration.

And no celebration would be complete without a fest noz to cap things off. This featured Jean-Charles and Fred Guichen, the groups Strakal and Startijenn (of which Tangi Oillo and Youenn Roue are Diwan

Landerne alumni), and *sonneurs de couple* Damien Malardé and Daniel Moign.

Work to engage Diwan students in creative and fun activity takes place throughout the year in all of the Diwan schools. During this past school year Skol Diwan Landerne was no exception. Among other activities was their participation in the annual competition for Breton choral groups, a beautification project at the school, and a meditation session to support a respectful and peaceful presence at the school. See below ...



Each year a championship is held in Landerneau for choral groups of Brittany. These are identified in three categories and this year the

Landerneau Diwan School – Bugale Skol Diwan Landerne - participated in a special category for newcomers to the contest. Choirs in this category are not rated, but the Diwan choir received congratulations and encouragements from the jury. During the past school year children have worked with the choral group Hekleo to perform two songs: “Kanenn Europa” and “Kan ar Mein.”



Parents and children recycle wood and paint to enhance the school playground.



Children of the CM1-CM2 level have a mediation session with Laëtitia Innocente as part of the PEACE program.



Chakod noz – Breton language “Pocket” Films

For the third year the Chakod Noz film contest was held this May to recognize film production

in the Breton language. Created by Daoulagad Breizh and Emglev Bro Douarnenez the contest is for short films of four minutes maximum in the Breton language with French subtitles. Each year a different theme is given for the contest – this year “Klask pemp troad d’ar maout” (Seek five feet on a ram). While the theme seems challenging enough, the real challenge is to use an object that one can put into a pocket to do the filming – a phone, small camera, or other photographic mechanism. This year, as in the past year, there were 45 entries from which 18 finalists were selected.

And it was up to the audience to choose the winners. This year several categories were designated for prizes in recognition of the fact that many entries were from school students as well as more professional film makers. Prizes also recognized humor, the best use of Breton, and how well the film matched the theme. The winner for the *Sardine d’Or* this year was Morzhol Prod for “Jibouez.”

Speaking of Films – Brittany and the Game of Thrones

The Rennes (Cesson-Sevigné) company Golaem has provided software for the production of Game of Thrones since its third season, enabling the imaging of large crowds and other special effects. 80% of the special effects for the seventh season have been created using Golaem software. The company with its six staff has been located in Brittany for ten years and has also produced special effects for The Walking Dead and dozens of other films including Pirates of the Caribbean and Spiderman.

Some Losses for Brittany

Noted by Lois Kuter

Yann-Fañch Kemener (1957-2019)

This past March Brittany lost a master of the Breton song tradition and an ardent defender of the Breton language, Yann-Fañch Kemener, at age 61. He grew up on a farm in the small town of Sainte-Tréphine in central western Brittany in the Fañch/Plinn Pays bordering the Vannetais area. In this rural community he was immersed in the Breton language and learned song from his family as well as neighbors. We would

master *kan ha diskan* song for dance as well as the long ballads called *gwerz*. In 1977, at just 20 years old, he would record the first of four remarkable lps of *gwerzioù* and other Breton language songs. During the early 1980s three more of the series called *Chants profonds de la Bretagne* would be released. For the fourth album he would pair with Anne Auffret, who would collaborate with him again in 1993 for a CD of religious and non-religious song.

Throughout his career, Yann Fañch Kemener would continue to sing unaccompanied song in his warm distinctive voice, learning from older masters of song and inspiring and passing along his knowledge to younger singers. Recognizing the vast richness of the Breton song heritage, Yann-Fañch Kemener would become a collector as well as singer, meeting with musicians of central western Brittany to record texts of songs. In 1996 this work would be shared in a remarkable publication of 166 songs: *Carnet de route – Kanaouennoù Kalon Vreizh / Chants Profonds de Bretagne*. But during the 1970s and 80s Kemener also collected stories as well as songs, These would eventually be retranscribed with 50 some Breton texts and French translations and published in 2014 (*Yann-Fañch Kemener – Collecteur de Contes en Basse-Bretagne / War Hentoù ar C'hontadennoù*).

Yann-Fañch Kemener would use his knowledge of traditional song to explore a wide range of styles, working with musical groups such as Barzaz and Skolvan in the 1980s and with pianist Didier Squiban in the 1990s and cellist Aldo Ripoché in the first decade of 2000, among others. In 2016 he formed the Yann-Fañch Kemener trio with Erwan Tobie and Heikki Bourgault. We would pair and work in ensembles with a variety of instrumentalists exploring classical and jazz traditions while keeping firmly rooted in traditional Breton song and dance. While he drew from Brittany's rich store of traditional song, Kemener also explored the music of composers and words of poets of Brittany – in French as well as Breton.

His performances could be simple *a capella* solos or ensemble work captured on lps and CDs but also dramatic productions such as his 2016 theater performance *Gouelit ma daoulagad – Nous irons pleurer sur vos ombres*. This evokes Kemener's great uncle Julien Joa who died during World War I while incarcerated in a military camp in Algeria – thus “not dead for France” as opposed to those who gloriously “died for France” in battle. In 2017 he would create another performance “Ar en deulin” based on the works of poet Yann Ber Kalloc'h.

The influence Yann-Fañch Kemener had on Brittany's musical world and the love Bretons had for him were reflected in his funeral service on March 19, attended by some 1,500 to 2,000 people – a small fraction of

which could fit inside the church of Sainte-Tréphine. This moving ceremony was recorded by the Centre de recherches historique du Léon and can be found on their website.

I cannot claim to have known Yann-Fañch Kemener but did meet him when I was in Brittany in 1978-79 researching Breton music and identity. I exchanged some letters with him from 1980 to 1983 with a few quick greetings in later years. He expressed pleasure that I had not forgotten Brittany after returning to the U.S. and I updated him on my doctoral thesis plans of the early 80s. Our letters were not long, nor terribly interesting in detail. But it is perhaps interesting to pass along one anecdote from a letter from Yann-Fañch of July 1981. In this he notes the arrival of a Japanese researcher he hosted for several days, introducing her to a storyteller he knew. Yann-Fañch noted that “she conducted herself like a city girl who came to analyze an object” (my translation of his French). Both he and the storyteller being “analyzed” were furious – the storyteller closing her door forever on the researcher and Kemener vowing he would never introduce anyone again. I must have behaved myself better during my stay in Brittany since Yann-Fañch kindly said in his letter that I would be welcome back to Brittany and could even stay at his house. I don't recall much more than a short conversation with him during my stay in Brittany – I was a pretty timid “researcher,” just trying to understand what I saw and heard. No danger of analysis! I was never able to take up his offer to visit on later trips to Brittany, nor did I try.

When did Jean-François Quéméneur become Yann-Fañch Kemener? I have no clear answer to this, but in my correspondence with him in the early 1980s he used both versions of his name – in one case the return address stamped on the envelope was Jean-François Quéméneur while the address stamped on the letter itself was Yann-Fañch Kemener. I imagine there was a transition period when he used the spelling he thought most likely to be recognized. Given the French postal service aversion to addresses in the Breton language, they probably preferred “Quéméneur” for a return address. By the early 1990s there were a few lingering references to Quéméneur in newspaper or magazine notes, but he had clearly chosen to be uniquely Yann-Fañch Kemener by then.

Books

Carnets de Route de Yann-Fañch Kemener – Kanaouennoù Kaon Vreizh /Chants Profonds de Bretagne. Skol Verizh. 1996. 359 pages.

Chant de Vision – Yann-Fañch Kemener. Vivre tout simplement. 2012.

Yann-Fañch Kemener, Collecteur de contes de Basse-

Bretagne / War henchoù ar c'hontadennoù. Yorán Embanner. 2014. 497 pages.

Nous irons pleurer sur vos ombres – Gouelit ma daoulagad. Yorán Embanner. 2016. 93 pages.

Recordings

This does not include numerous recordings where Yann-Fañch Kemener is a guest artist or part of a group such as Barzaz and Skolvan.

Jean-François Quéméner. *Chants profonds de la Bretagne, Vol. 1.* 1977.

Jean-François Quéméner. *Chants profonds de la Bretagne / Kanou Kalon Vreizh, Vol. 2.* 1979.

Jean-François Quéméner. *Chants profonds de la Bretagne, Vol. 3.* 1981.

Jean-François Quéméner & Marcel Guilloux. *Kan ha diskan.* 1982.

Jean-François Quéméner & Ann Auffret. *Chants profonds de Bretagne, Vol. 4.* 1985.

Yann-Fañch Kemener. *Dibedibedañchaou – Kanaouennoù ha rimadelloù evi ar vugale.* 1988 & 2000.

Yann-Fañch Kemener. *Gwerzioù ha sonioù.* 1989

Yann-Fañch Kemener & Anne Auffret. *Roue Gralon ni ho salud ! – Chants profanes et sacrés de Bretagne.* 1993.

Yann-Fañch Kemener & Didier Squiban. *Enez Eusa.* 1995.

Yann-Fañch Kemener & Didier Squiban. *Ile-Exile.* 1996.

Yann-Fañch Kemener (and Annie Ebré, Erik Marchand, Patrick Marie, Valentine Colleter, Claudine Floc'hig, Marcel Guilloux, Ifig Troadeg) *Kan ha Diskan.* 1997.

Yann-Fañch Kemener & Didier Squiban. *Kimiad.* 1999.

Yann-Fañch Kemener & Aldo Ripoché. *An eur glaz.* 2000.

Yann-Fañch Kemener & Aldo Ripoché. *An dorn.* 2004

Yann-Fañch Kemener, Aldo Ripoché & Florence Pavie. *Dialogues.* 2008.

Yann-Fañch Kemener & Aldo Ripoché. *Noël en Bretagne / Nedeleg / Christmas in Brittany.* 2008

Yann-Fañch Kemener, Aldo Ripoché, Florence Rouillard, Ruth Weber. *Tuchant e erruo an hañv / Bientôt l'été.* 2008.

Yann-Fañch Kemener, Laurent Audemard, Françoise Fava & Renat Sette. *Si je savais voler, chants de Bretagne et d'Occitanie.* 2010.

Yann-Fañch Kemener & Eric Menneteau. *Vive la liberté.* 2012.

Yann-Fañch Kemener, Aldo Ripoché, Hervé Merlin, Damien Cotty. *Gouañv bepred.* 2012.

Yann-Fañch Kemener, Aldo Ripoché & Damien Cotty. *Les Chants de la Passion.* 2015.

Yann-Fañch Kemener * BA.FNU. *YFK-2016.* 2016.

Yann-Fañch Kemener Trio. *Dañs.* 2017.

Yann-Fañch Kemener, Florence Rousseau, Aldo Ripoché. *Ar Baradoz – Chants sacrés de Basse Bretagne.* 2017.

Yann-Fañch Kemener. *Roudennoù / Traces.* 2019.

Annaïg Baillard-Gwernig (1950 ?-2019)

Annaïg Baillard-Gwernig passed away April 24 at the age of 68. The oldest daughter of poet/sculptor/singer Youenn Gwernig, she moved with her family to New York City when she was a child in 1957, returning in 1969. Growing up in the Bronx with its melting pot of people, she was at home with diversity and shared an

international outlook and concern for Breton (and human) rights that was often the subject of her father's poems and songs.

Annaïg would compose her own songs in both English and French and collaborated with her sister Gwenola on a tribute to their father called *Pedadenn, la Grande Tribu* in 2014. She worked for fifteen years until 1987 as a radio broadcaster for RBO-France Bleu Breizh-Izel and was a professional translator (English to French). Her translation skills were put to the test in editing correspondence (in English) between her father and Jack Kerouac which she inherited after Youenn Gwernig's death in 2006. The letters and translations were artfully embedded in an album of photography by Pierre Tanguy which evoked the sense of exilement Youenn Gwernig and Jack Kerouac both shared ... besides their Breton ancestry – *Sad Paradise – La dernière route de Jack Kerouac*, 2016.

Annaïg's childhood in the Bronx also gave her a taste – literally – for diverse cuisine, and she became a proponent of biological farming and a celebration of cooking. Between 1995 and 2017 she published a series of eleven short books (*Les Recettes de "Nana"*) focused on various areas of ingredients – vegetables, honey, butter, beer, wine, eggs ... and food from her New York experiences. She published an autobiographical work in two volumes incorporating her exploration of cuisine – *Un monde à croquer* – illustrated by her sister Gwenole.

Married to musician Jean-Jacques Baillard, the family lived for a time in the Monts d'Arrée of central western Brittany before moving to Douarnenez some twenty years ago.

Annaïg was a personality – with an attitude rooted both in a Bronx, New York, upbringing and her love of Brittany. She loved not only writing and poetry, but also exploration and sharing a delight in cuisine of all kinds.

Books

Collection : Les Recettes de « Nana » (Petits livres de cuisine bio). Éditions Capbio except for first book.

- *Petits plaisirs aromatiques et printaniers* - éditions La Belle Bleue, 1995

- *Cuisine des beaux jours*, 1999 ; new edition 2016

- *Légumes pour tous les jours*, 2002

- *Blondes et brunes et compagnie...* (beer recipes), new edition 2016

- *Le Banquet des Abeilles*, 2009

- *Le petit cuisinier bio* (jeune public), 2011

- *Ma cuisine de New York*, 2013

- *Du goût aux Plomarc'h*, 2015

- *Ce petit bonheur de beurre*, 2016

- *Recettes de vins qui font du bien, sirops et liqueurs tout en douceur !* re-edited 2016

- *La poule qui chante, pond son œuf*, 2017

La Bretagne des Cafés plus. Éditions des Dessins et des mots, 2008

Un monde à croquer Tome 1 - éditions la Belle Bleue 2007
(sub-titled: 30 ans du Festival de cinéma de Douarnenez)
Un monde à croquer Tome 2 – Capbio éditions 2016
(sub-titled : De la farine de l'eau et du sel)

René Tanguy – Annaig Baillard Gwernig, *Sad paradise – La dernière route de Jack Kerouac.* Edition Locus Solus, 2016.

Fañch Morvannou (1931-2019)

Brittany lost a scholar and teacher of the Breton language on May 6 – Fañch Morvannou. Originally from Cloître-Pleyben, he earned a degree in Classical Letters and was first posted in a job at the Université de Rouen. In 1970 he joined the faculty of the Université de Bretagne Occidentale in Brest where he first taught Latin and then Breton. He was a researcher also for the Centre de Recherche Bretonne et Celtique at that university. Fañch Morvannou earned a doctorate degree in Celtic studies with a thesis on Breton language literature of the Vannetais area of the first half of the 19th century.

He is perhaps best known for his Assimil method for learning Breton – *Le breton sans peine* – but published a number of works, including a study of the poet Armand Robin (*O Klask Armand Robin*, 2001) and a translation of Thomas More's Utopia into Breton (*An Utopia, Tomaz Mor*. Planedenn, 1991).

Fañch Morvannou was not only an author but also actively supported the Breton language through work with the organization Ar Falz where he helped to create and publish the literary and cultural journal *Planedenn* from 1979 to 1986. As part of the Breton political party Union Démocratique Breton he directed the Breton language version of its magazine *Pobl Vreizh* from 1976 until it ended in 1982. He also contributed Breton language articles to a variety of other publications including *Al Liamm*, *Brud Nevez* and *Minih Levenez*.

As a Catholic he worked to translate liturgy into Breton and write or translate works on past and contemporary personalities of the Catholic Church. From 1992 to 2001 he created and presented a weekly radio program in Breton for RCF-Rivages. For his research, translations and writings concerning the Catholic Church he was named a member of the Ordre de Saint Grégoire-le-Grand in 2013 by Pope Francis.

Some Books

Le breton sans peine. Assimil, 1975-1979. 6782 pages. 2 volumes & 4 audio-cassettes.
Initiation au breton sans peine. Assimil. 1980. 186 pages.

Le breton, la jeunesse d'une vieille langue. Presses Populaires de Bretagne. 1st edition 1980 ; 3rd edition 1994. 90 pages.
Traduire en breton - Treñ e brezhoneg. Skol Vreizh. 2011.

Deep Inside A Breton Skull 59 – Universal Truths and Me

Jean Pierre LE MAT

America is the land of freedom. France is the country of human rights. If I link Brittany with a big idea like that, you will suspect that, deep in my Breton skull, a paranoid crisis suddenly occurred.



Bretons cannot claim for their country an abstraction such as freedom, equality, fraternity, or else... Brittany is not the eldest daughter of Christianity, as was France; or the homeland of socialism, as was USSR. My country is not the place of a great idea. It is only a nice country. The country of the Bretons.

Together, we, Bretons, can claim a common weirdness. But not an ideal!... We can be accepted as a human variety. But without being a model! Are we deprived of ambition? Worse, do we have contempt for humanity, do we let down humanism?

“Cogito ergo sum”. “I think, therefore I exist”. Through this sentence, the French philosopher Descartes gave a primacy to the idea over the existence. Primacy of universal truths over singular facts. Primacy of the great over the small, of the sun over the moon, of eternity over mortal life.

Since Descartes, the people of the cities triumphed over peasantry. The city carries with it the pleasure to think, the passion to judge, the necessity to know. The life in the countryside is different. It leads to mute observation. The city dweller gets his influence through the strength of his ideas. For the countryman, it is a vital necessity to observe the singularities: the weather, the crops, the animals. For the man of the fields, the local has primacy over the global, the singular over the universal, the small over the big.

Since Descartes, mathematical deductions triumphed over limited observations. Time is universal. It always moves in the same direction. It can be divided into equal parts: seconds, minutes, hours, days, years, centuries. OK for time, what about space? Space has three dimensions. Within this space are moving bodies. Localization cannot be denied. I am here and not somewhere else. Of course, there are relationships between space and time. But could there be relations if

space and time were not truths? Could there be mathematical operations if numbers were not absolutes?

The claim for universal truths blossomed in empires. Their most generous heirs wanted to transcend their imperial heritage in a new way, both humanistic and universal. They repeat that every man has the same rights. We are equal in front of the law.

This noble ideal produces a terrible logical chain. If the rights are to be universal, laws must be universal as well. That is said by the most generous heirs of the empires, but also by the most dreadful, the thirstiest for power. "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men..." said Lord Acton.

In Brittany, we cannot nurture such ambitions. But... But humanity can be conceived without universality. If we cannot have an ambition of unity, we can have a concern about balance. To achieve unity, it is necessary to define, to identify, to standardize, to pressure, to compel. Balance and harmony are related with culture and aesthetics.

Standing on our peninsula beaten by the waves of the Atlantic sea, we observe the big divisions between good and evil, truth and error, civilization and savagery, gods and demons. Nobody asked for our point of view. We are listening to what the good heirs of the empires say...

We are old enough. We know that the present global truths will be replaced by other global truths. We heard them talking about God, the king of France, the republic, people's will, democracy, nature, climate... Omnipotent and angry entities, asking for obedience, threatening to apocalypse.



Our little country does not predispose us for great truths. When I am walking around the village of Le Faou, I don't observe a flower-in-itself or a bird-in-itself, but a wild orchid on the way to Rosnoën, or a seagull flying over the river. On my way to Rumengol, I admire the dandelions' yellow and the greenness of budding wheat. Some crickets shut up when a truck is passing by, but not all of them. This amazing world, out of control, would not exist with universalized dandelions, theoretical wheat or conceptual crickets.

Deep in my skull, the splendid singularities have primacy over concepts that include, bind together, devitalize them. Am I a pagan? The old dragon has been defeated by universal truths and deductive logics. It remains in silent areas, distant from urban centers.



Am I a postmodern guy? Quantum physicists told us that universal truths like matter, energy, time, space can be questioned. Their experiments raise doubts about unit of location, orientation of time, grid of space.

Einstein said that craftsmanship would save humanity. Let's add Bretons. No claim to universality. A local aesthetic instead of a universal ethic. Blessed are the craftsmen and all the natives.

ABER Literary Review

www.aber-bzh

ABER was created in 2000 with the objective "to foster literary creation and criticism and in a broader sense intellectual life in Breton. ABER aims at expressing the world in a Breton perspective." A number of writers contribute to quarterly issues of ABER – original works as well as translations from other languages into Breton. The following contribution from ABER for *Bro Nevez* presents some books and authors published in 2019.

List of Books Published in 2019

Àr an Daoulin (On One's Knees) – Poems

"O mildness of masses in a chapel.. "

The author of *Pedenn ar gedour* (the watcher's prayer) was well-known and praised, and still is. As bro-Gwened's poet, as a Christian poet, and as a soldier poet. Today, we present to Breton-speaking people the works of Yann-Bêr Kalloc'h . A poet with his qualities and defaults, a poet with his strengths and weaknesses, a poet with his youth rhymes and his major works. And, dressed in modern spelling, a poet for all Brittany.

Yann-Bêr Kalloc'h – Bleimor as his pen name indicates - was born in Groix Island in 1888, and killed on the battlefield in 1917. He has been, although he too early died, one of the creators of our modern literature, and one of those who opened our eyes.

Kou ar Vran (Kou the Crow) - Tale

"Kou is my name. Name, father, I don't have." Kou's skull is talking; and goes on telling the writer his previous owner's story.

Who is Kou? "A son of a bitch" some people say. "For sure, I am a son of a bitch" answers Kou himself, "and proud to be, because I might be the king's son; on the other hand, you, any gentleman you are, are probably the groom's son."

And why *Kou the crow*? Kou is a crow, that's his job: he collects and buries plague victims bodies. The story takes place in Landerne, during the XIVth century, where the plague is taking its toll. When death is all around, one tries to make life triumph and enjoy as much as possible by drinking, eating, living..

So, obviously, this tale is cheerful, lively and full of humour.

Tangi Malmanche (1875-1953), Gwalarn's precursor, is one of the writers who take a large share in the creation of a world-level Breton literature, from the beginning of the XXth century. His theatrical work in Breton is well-known, innovative and excellent in language, expression and inspiration as well.

However he wrote a large part of his works in French, among which are some tales. *Kou ar vran* is one of them, written here in Breton by Pierrette Kermaol.

Temptadur ar C'hloareg Frañsez (Brother Frañsez's Temptation) - Novel

About 1978-1980, end of Summer. One week "Story and religion camp". A group of teenagers in the orchard of the Angel's Abbey in Aber Wrac'h's port, following Saint Herve, Mikael an Nobletz, Saint Anton 's.... footsteps.

They are working on a play about the monks of St Francis coming and settling down in Aber Wrac'h. Youna, a young mother, and Brother Frañsez – in his last year study at a major Seminary – are looking after them.

Sunday night arrives at the camp a young man, a little older than the others. Brother Frañsez will have to choose between the way of God and the call of the world...

Goulc'han Kervella is well known as the director of the theater company "Strollad ar Vro Bagan": Ar Vro Bagan's plays are successful, especially when played in Summer in front of the sea or in the rocks of Meneham.

Comedian, director, trainer in drama schools for children or adults, Goulc'han is also a writer; he penned many novels, short stories, plays, .. This short novel shows his humour and his deep knowledge of the area.

Perlez va Daeloù (The Pearls of my Tears) – Collection of poems

Emotion and beauty..

Paskal Tabuteau finds inspiration in old myths - Celtic often, Greek occasionally - and in thrills and emotions of life around him as well. So his poems are close to the reader's heart, and give him the opportunity to get - or discover- the riches of our past civilizations. Paskal often uses internal rhymes, usual in middle-Breton.

Paskal Tabuteau learned Breton during sessions with SAV, Roudour or Stumdi, in the 1980s and 1990s. In the first 2000s, he has been a Breton teacher in Morbihan, and Breton became his creation language. He is very interested in poetry and old Celtic literature, source of his inspiration. After a period of 'exile' in France's East, he now lives in Lorient.

La Maison Minée (The Mined House) - Novel

Normandy landing, June 1944...

Evacuation of the battle zone ... Destructions, problems of all kinds, permanent danger...This is the background of *La Maison Minée* . However the tone of the novel is not gloomy at all. The story is amazing, mysterious full of humour and unexpected events. In short, in Malmanche's style.

Tanguy Malmanche (1875-1953), initiator of the modern Breton literature and Gwalarn's precursor, is well-known for the strength and originality of his plays in Breton, while he gave also French versions. His works in French are also important, unpublished for a long time; *La Maison Minée* is one of them.

As part of "The Project Malmanche", Aber undertook the publication of this unedited writing. This volume is the ninth and last in the series.



Breton Music in Massachusetts

Thanks to U.S. ICDBL Member Nym Cooke residents of Massachusetts had two opportunities (May 18 and 19 in the towns

of Fiskdale and Southbridge) to enjoy a truly inter-Celtic concert. Called “Celtic Spring” the Quinebaug Valley Singers, directed by Nym Cooke, presented a program of songs and music from Brittany, Scotland, Ireland, Wales, Cornwall and Galicia.

For the Breton portion of the program Nym Cooke and his daughter Thalia Cooke Slocombe created English language texts for four pieces from the Ensemble Choral du Bout du Monde’s CD called *Buhez*: Tuchenn Mikael, Ar Chas Doñv Yelo Da Ouez, Ar Men Du, and Galvaden (this last one being mostly tra la leno syllables with no need for translation).

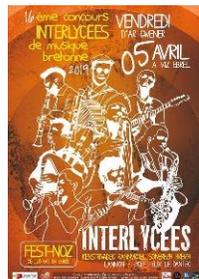
The choral group was accompanied by a band composed of uilleann pipes (William Thomas), Irish harp (Kala Farnham), fiddle (Hunter Foote), pennywhistle and guitar (Tim Loftus), keyboard (Brooks Milgate), and drums (Jon Richt). The band also had some instrumental solos and jammed during intermissions. If you live anywhere near south central Massachusetts keep an eye out for future concerts by the Quinebaug Valley Singers.



Breton Music in Louisiana The Festival International de Louisiane

As described on their website (festivalinternational.org) “the Festival International de Louisiane is a non-profit organization that produces the largest international music and arts festival in the United States with a special emphasis on the connection between Acadiana and the Francophone world.” This five-day festival attracts over 300,000 festival goers every year in April when it is held in downtown Lafayette. Musicians, singers, artists and other performers come from over 20 countries and the festival includes workshops, exhibits, and theater as well as music. April 22-26, 2020 will be the 34th year for the festival.

Brittany has often been represented at this festival and this year the Bagad Plougastel brought 37 pipers, bombarde players and percussionists to wow the festival crowd. They participated in a number of parades and concerts collaborating with Cajun musicians Trey Boudreaux and Jourdan Thibodeaux. This collaboration and trip to Louisiana was fostered by Breizh Amerika which has cultivated links between Breton and American musicians through its Breizh Amerika Collective projects. The success of the Bagad Plougastel at this festival and the ongoing work of Breizh Amerika can only mean more exchanges to come. To follow the work of Breizh Amerika check out their website breizh-amerika.com.



Inter-High School Music Competition

This April for the 16th year, the Concours Inter-lycée de Musique Traditionnelle highlighted up and coming musical talents at the Le Dantec high school in Lannion.

Twelve groups from different high schools of Brittany performed 20-minute sets to get everyone dancing. A jury of seasoned Breton musicians had the challenge of selecting winners of this contest. For 2019 the first prize went to the group **Boz** from the Diwan high school in Carhaix. Drawing from the Vannetais tradition the group is composed of Piala Louis Voc’h on vocals, Fabian Cadoudal on accordion and Elias Le Bot on saxophone. The second prize winners were also from the Diwan high school in Carhaix, the group **Digabestr**, and in third was **Fénelon trad** from the Fénelon high school in Brest. Besides bragging rights, winners of this competition earn a performance spot in some of Brittany’s festivals.

Rouedad Staliou Kan

<https://rouedad.kanomp.bzh/>

Rouedad Staliou Kan is a network of workshops held throughout Brittany to foster song in the Breton language. Each year they launch an event called Kant a Gan (One Hundred Singing) where 100 (and more!) singers join together to sing a specific text at a fest noz or festival. This year there will be two events. Song texts in Breton for dance suites from the Fañch and Fisel areas will be led by master singers Marcel le Guilloux and Ronan Guéblez for a gathering of 100 at the Fisel festival in Rostrenen in August. Songs in French for dance suites for the ridée and Rond de Saint-Vincent-sur-Oust will be led by masters of the Gallo tradition Roland Brou, Mathieu Hamon, and Charles Quimbert for a gathering at the Gallésie en Fête festival held at the end of June in Monterfil. Those interested in participating can learn songs in advance at workshops or via the Rouedad Staliou Kan website. Why do this? This is yet one more way to support – and especially to enjoy - the rich song heritage of Brittany.

Heard of, but not heard – 22 New Recordings from Brittany

The following information was drawn from reviews in *Musique Bretonne* (258, Jan-Feb-Mar 2019 & 259, Apr-May-June 2019) and *Ar Men* (228, Jan-Feb 2019, 229, Mar-Apr 2019 & 230, May-June 2019), as well as from the Coop Breizh website and sites for some of the performers.



Artho Duo. *Ciel Oblique.* Accords Croisés Label AC 183.
This duo has roots in traditional song and melodies of Brittany but experiments widely in the use of voice and instruments. Julie Garnier provides vocals as well as saxophone and flute, and Marc Anthony plays electrified *vielle à roue* (hurdy-gurdy) on the 14 selections of this CD.



Best of – *Chants de Marins.*
This is a compilation of 18 selections from singers and groups of Brittany who have performed music with a maritime theme. Included are Djiboudjep, Miklael

Yaouank, Les Gabiers d'Artimon, Les Marins d'Iroise and Soldat Louis.



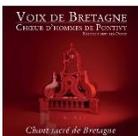
Celtic Social Club. *From Babylon to Avalon.*

This group includes musicians from Brittany, Ireland and France who bring a wealth of experience from playing with bands of all styles. The eleven selections on this new CD all have English language titles, but the music is rooted in the different traditions and experiences the musicians bring. The group currently includes Goulven Hamel (mandolin, guitars, banjo), Pierre Stephan (fiddle), Richard Puaud (bass, vocals), Ronan Le Bars (uilleann pipes, flute), Mathieu Pequeriau (harmonica, washboard, vocals), Dan Donnelly (guitar, vocals) and Manu Masko (drums, keyboards, vocals).



Charka. *La Colère de la boue.* Innacour 1815

Rooted in experiences with the Kreiz Breizh Akademi where modal untempored scales are core, this sextet has a strong improvisational style. Song topics in French and Breton address contemporary issues including opposition to mining projects in central Brittany and industrialization of rural Brittany. The group includes: Faustine Audebert (vocals), Timothée Le Bour (tenor sax), Gervant Le Gac (flute), Gaëtan Samson (percussions), Florian Baron (oud) and Jonathan Caserta (bass fiddle).



Choeur d'Hommes de Pontivy. *Kaloneu derv Bro Pondi /Chant Sacré de Bretagne.*

This men's choir of the Pontivy presents sacred and secular music from the rich song tradition of Vannetais Brittany. The 24 singers are all Breton speakers from birth and this performance is traditional in style rather than complex choral arrangements of harmonies. They are accompanied by a duo of *bombarde* and organ in this recording made in the church Saint-Cornély of Carnac.



Dom Duff. *7vet Kelc'h.*

This is the seventh album by singer and guitarist Dom Duff with 10 of 11 song compositions in Breton. His style is labeled as “power folk” with acoustic and electric ballads on contemporary and international topics.



Envie de Bretagne.

This is a compilation including popular Breton artists and some of their most popular songs/tunes. Performers include Gilles Servat, Nolwenn Leroy, Denez Prigent, Alan Stivell, Cécile Corbel, Aziliz Manrow and Fleuves ... and others.



Ewen Delahaye Favennec. *En route pour la gloire !*

Patrick Ewen, Gérard Delahaye and Melaine Favennec have been active on the Breton music scene for nearly 50 years – solo, duo or trio. Here they continue a road trip from previous albums called *Route 66* and *Route 29* with a dozen songs. They are accompanied by the vocal quartet Barba Loutig and bassist Cedrik Alexandre with a contribution (in English) by singer Annie Ebrel.



Festival Cornouaille / Kemper – *Kalon ar fest.*

Another compilation – this time of performers who have appeared at the Festival de Cornouaille in Quimper. Performers include a range of styles with Red Cardell, Denez Prigent, Gilles Servat, Aziliz Manrow, Ampouilh, Gwennyn, Fleuves, Fred Guichen, the Bagad Kemper, Dan ar Braz, Yann Fañch Kemener and Rozen Talec and more.



Les Frères Paranthoën. *In the jungle.*

Klam Records. 09.
Alan Paranthoën (fiddle) and brother Youenn (diatonic accordion) got their start with the band Spontus. With 25 years of experience, they combine here dances and melodies in a style uniquely their own.



Fleuves. #2.

Fleuves is a trio made up of Emilien Robic (clarinet), Romain Dubois (Fender Rhodes and electronics) and Samson Dayou (bass). They have an electronic/jazz fusion style rooted in traditional Breton dance. The 9 selections on this CD include compositions as well as their own arrangements of more traditional tunes.



Robin Foster. *Pen Insular II – The Bridge*. Melodyn/My Dear Recordings 020.

Describing his own music as “post-rock cinegraphic” composer and multi-instrumentalist Robin Foster uses this CD to evoke images of various places of the Presqu’île de Crozon.



Jean Félix Lalanne & Soïg Siberil. *Back to Celtic Guitar*.

This CD by two of Brittany’s finest acoustic guitar players is a follow-up to the album and tour called “Autour de la Guitare Celtique.” This new CD includes 14 selections of melodies and dances from Brittany, Scotland, Ireland and Galicia – most composed by either Siberil or Lalanne.



Bernard Le Dréau. *Saxophones*.

This 2-CD set encompasses the many experiences of saxophonist Bernard Le Dréau over the past 40 years. The first CD is called “Amzer” and includes a range of instrumental pieces and ensembles – from jazz rock and traditional Breton to folk and chamber music. The second CD called “Time” focuses on song from a variety of singers Le Dréau has worked with. Lots of variety in both CDs to show the breadth of styles Le Dréau has mastered.



Tristan Le Govic Trio. *Dañs*.

This album is centered on the harp of Tristan Le Govic with Tangi Le Hénanff on electric bass guitar and Alan Quéré-Moysan on drums. They provide unique arrangements of songs and dances rooted in the Breton tradition.



Aziliz Manrow. *Earth*.

Aziliz Manrow is part of the Goarnig family of Brittany who bravely defied French laws by insisting on giving Breton names to the children. Her style in the 11 selections on this CD draws from Breton and Celtic traditions with a certain western swing. She sings in French, English and Breton on a variety of topics of contemporary importance – the environment, human relations, and women’s rights among them.



O'Tridal. *Karridi Sessions*. Paker Productions.

This new CD includes 11 selections of compositions and arrangements of Breton songs and dances by a trio composed of Thibault Nibolé (guitars, bouzouki, bass, steel guitar), Kentin Juillard (percussion of all kinds), and Yeltaz Guenneau (flute, bagpipes, duduk). Nibolé and Juillard bring experience from work with the Bagad Penhars, and Guenneau has worked with the Bagad

Kemper. For this CD they are joined by Lors Landat, a singer who has frequently collaborated with O'Tridal and who composed the songs for this new CD. Also joining is Davy Mengear on bagpipes and Guillaume Le Bourc'h on bass guitar.



Rock e Breizh – *Bigoud'Hell & Rukun'Roll*

This is volume 2 of a collection of Breton rock bands – 21 in all – who feature song in the Breton language. A number of rock bands in the past have chosen to sing in Breton, but this collection shows that the use of Breton is not an exceptional occurrence in that genre.



Skeud. *Trijastenn*.

This group celebrated its 10th year of performance in September 2018 with a fest noz and CD release. The CD includes a dozen dances – traditional and of their own composition. The band is composed of Murielle Robert on chromatic accordion, Christophe Leroux on guitar and bouzouki, Éric Lehayée on bass, and Rémy Le Bray on *veuze* and oboe.



Sonerien Du. *Kalon*

25th album by this high energy fest noz band with 14 previously unrecorded cuts recorded between December 2018 and April 2019. Invited guests for this CD are Morgan Le Coz and Lors Landat with song, and Willy Pichard with *vielle à roue* (hurdy gurdy).



Yann Tierson, *All*

“All” has the sense of “everything” in English and “other” in Breton. It is Breton that is favored in the songs Yann Tierson composes and arranges on this album. These focus on the natural world and its beauty and demise. Tierson also draws from several texts by the poet Anjela Duval. Guests on the album include Denez Prigent for the gwerz “Gwennilled.”



Zonk. *An daou du - Musique bretonne et irlandaise*. Ride On Music.

The music group Zonk celebrated ten years of performance and the release of a new double CD on May 11-12. With a passion for traditions of both Brittany and Ireland and a flair for jazzy arrangements of dance, the two CDs of this release celebrate each. Musicians making up Zonk are Yuna Leon on fiddle, Kenan Guernalec on piano, Jaouen Le Goïc on diatonic accordion, and Ronan Le Dissez on flute, *bombarde* and *piston* (a softer *bombarde*). The celebratory festival in May included a number of great Breton groups with the proceeds going to the Diwan Middle School of Plésidy. (information from Ti ar Vro Treger-Goueloù press release, May 17, 2019)

Want to Learn Some Breton Dances? Bécédia and #tuto danses bretonnes

<http://bcd.bzh/becedia/>

Bécédia is a website collection of resource material on a wide range of topics, including some 150 dossiers related to Breton history, art, architecture, language, economy, social history, religion, etc. – each a specific essay on a topic rather than a broad overview.

A recent addition has been a tutorial to learn Breton dances. Called *#tuto danses bretonnes*. This is found in the *chaines video & audio* section of the website. In a very brief presentation 14 dances are shown. Particularly helpful is the view of dancers from the back so you can follow along with them. And dances are shown in slow motion as well. You can replay the dancing as often as you need to until you master the steps and arm movements, and this might be necessary since the presentations are very short!

This tutorial was the idea of Tamm Kreiz, a website where one can find out about every *fest noz* happening in Brittany (and a wealth of information on musicians of Brittany). The federations Kendalc'h, War'l Leur, Bretagne Culture Diversité, and Sevenadurioù also collaborate.



Want to Hear Some Breton Music?

In the past we have noted websites where you can find not only a wealth of information, but also a good sampling of Breton music. Here is a reminder of just a few to explore:

Canal Breizh
Canalbreizh.bzh

This is a webradio shared by Dastum, Tamm Kreiz and Noz Breizh. It is easy to navigate and will take you to lots of information as well as sound samples from a range of performers.

Tamm Kreiz
Tamm-kreiz.bzh

This provides a very complete listing of concerts, festoù noz, workshops, and information on literally thousands of musicians, singers, and groups of all styles of music in Brittany. You can find samples of music and information about recordings to keep you listening for hours.

Noz Breizh
Nozbreizh.fr

This site offers a vast amount of information and samples of music from hundreds of musicians. There is a strong focus on dance and dance music offering the opportunity to view video clips of performances by some of Brittany's dance groups.

Radio Breizh
Radiobreizh.bzh

This site has links to Breton language radio stations where you can listen to programming, including lots of music from Brittany and the rest of the world you would never find on American radio. Great place to simply listen to the Breton language being used.

Travel in Brittany 90 Years Ago

Margaret Lathrop Law, "Welcoming Spring in Brittany" *Travel*, Vol. 52, No. 6, April 1929

Margaret Lathrop Law (1890-1988) was from South Carolina and was the author of a number of books, as well as poetry, short magazine articles, and song lyrics. Best known of her books was Aimée, with 15 editions published between 1956 and 2011 in three languages. This is a fictional work about Aimée Dubuc de Rivery who sails from Martinique for France (with Josephine Napoleon), encountering shipwrecks, pirates and eventual adventures in Algiers with Sultans.

The article below, "Welcoming Spring in Brittany," is a bit less adventurous, but includes lots of exotic description. And, the stereotypes of Breton people common to many travel accounts of the 19th and early 20th century can be found in this account as well: Bretons are devout but cling to pagan practices, a primitive people who handle drinking badly, and engage in frenzied dancing...

Wooden shoes clumping over cobblestones regular as the tick, tick of a clock – the staccato click of a steel-shod staff – a wizened figure coming out of the early morning mist ... this is Easter morning in Brittany, and old Katik on her yearly pilgrimage to her saint's shrine. Do you notice that she limps a little? That is because of the coin which she has tucked inside her shoe. The scourging of the flesh she will assure you, is pleasing to the saints, as well as good for the soul. If she seems bowed and bent, it is not only because of those heavy burdens she has borne during a long life, but because she carries to the saint intercessions for more than half her village.

For this is the season when pilgrims fare forth, a time of prayers and Pardons, of faith renewed and hope revived. Spring has come at last to Brittany. Under their arms shepherds carry wobbly-kneed lambs; farmers are busily spading up rich brown earth. Hens are clucking proudly to a new generation of yellow-downed chicks, and soft-cheeked babies are sprawling in cottage doorways. Old grandfathers in brightly embroidered vests hobble to the nearest café where they sit on the sunny pavement drinking cider, playing dominoes and talking volubly of bygone, youthful springs.

Fragrance of blossoming fruit trees pruned flat against stone walls and a soft breeze stirring from over the seas fire the imagination dulled through a long winter of smoking by the fireside. This sun, these smells, spell winter's end, relief from long Lenten fasting and penance. Fields are emerald with young grain, gnarled old trees spread with a mantle of white blossom – spring is good to sniff. It is the season of fresh beginnings and new-born hopes; now the blood courses more freely through the veins and winter-killed ambitions are brought to life. Along the beach weather-beaten fishermen in blue smocks and black berets sit mending their nets. Blue and henna sails tip and tilt; full-bellied, they go scudding before the breeze. Sardine fishing has begun again; men are leaving the land for heaven knows what perils of the sea. There are muttered incantations against the evil spirits that haunt dark waters. It is the time when candles are burned to patron saints, lighted alike by those sailing forth and those left to wait their home-coming.

Spring, fresh beginnings and resurrection have since time immemorial been inseparable, and there is no religion which has not marked nature's rebirth with formal ceremony. Druidic and Celtic, half pagan and half Christian are the beliefs of the old Katik and her ilk in that strange corner of France where Clemenceau was born, yet where old men and women neither speak nor understand their native tongue. Indeed, their patois is as Celtic as their traditions and superstitions. At times all Brittany seems an anachronism and one wonders that the *tri-couleur* flies over these people, the last in France to yield to union, a folk who seem to have stepped from the pages of medieval history or to have strayed from a scene of *opera bouffe*.

To this literal and primitive people the outward manifestation of religious belief must of necessity be literal. Lent has for them a meaning which could not be understood by you or by me. What do we know of those long winters where the struggle is daily against the elements, where men are hewers of wood and drawers of water, while their women tend the cradle, cook the food and guard the fire, where life for all would literally cease should either fail the task? Small wonder that with spring even the old crones like Katik

feel the call of the roads – winding, silver, ribbonary roads leading who knows whither. The blood is a-tingle; there's a wind in the heels and a fire in the heart, an irresistible urge to be up and on.

The sabots of tiny urchins can clatter no further than the cobblestones of village streets. They can never escape the vigilant eye of parent and grandparent. Some must stay at home to lead the sheep and cows to spring pasture – but who knows what the mystic shepherd maid is dreaming as she tends her flocks and knits her never-ended sock? Who knows where old Katik really wanders, how she talks with spirits, and what her wayside ventures really are? As she sat carding tow by the fire, her furrowed face outlined against the black oak wall, I could scarcely believe the truth of things she told me. Was she *clairvoyante*, *fumiste*, or simple *mentuse*? Has she really made as many pilgrimages as she says? Is it possible that she has traveled so many miles each spring and summer?

Let us follow where she leads, staff in hand, through prickly moorland thickets, over rocky cliffs and precipitous heights, where the winds of the sea blow sharply, and the air has a salty tang, past dolmens and cromlechs, past villages of clustering houses and wayside *calvaires*, where humble peasant folk kneel before saints whom time has weathered noseless.

Let us trail her to a dark ravine, where the air is dank, and where, half-hidden, between lichen walls, there stands a forlorn fountain. The faint splashing of water is the only sound to break the ominous hush. Katik seems more than ever troubled, weighed down with burdens, absorbed in wracking problems all her own. Suddenly she hastens her steps, and by the fountainside stoops low, dipping her hands in the murky waters, sprinkling the earth as she mutters a strange incantation. Then straightway she slips into the ruin of a chapel whose crumbling walls, half hidden there behind the elms, look as if they will fall in about her head. Bats nest in the dark corners and on a rough altar stands a row of saints whose faces are even more weather-damaged and time-ravaged than that of old Katik herself. Slightly tottering, they lean shoulder to shoulder as if for added strength.

Singling out the tallest of these, Katik addresses him (or her ... who knows there in the half light?) in fervent supplication. She bows low, touching the ground with her forehead, now raising her eyes to heaven, now petitioning with clasped hands. More earnest she becomes, higher and higher is her voice. Suddenly her moaning and beseeching end. For a dramatic moment there is silence. Then she rises and walks solemnly, silently around the church. Then in a flash her mood changes. She is suddenly elastic, almost gay. She walks with a spring in her step, she is no longer earth-bound. Her sins are expiated, her sins of a year's

accumulation, and moreover, all those sins of her village folk with whom she has been so long burdened on the weary way. She has earned what they have paid her, her pilgrim's work is done, a burden rolled away; she is free. Blithely she sings snatches of old songs. And from the tree-top comes the answering note of a bird who is taking his springtime migrations in like mood.

On she goes, clambering over the hills that border the ravine, out into the sunlight of a great Easter fair. During the winter months, there has been weaving aplenty and the persistent feeding of animals. Nor will all the motors and tourists in Brittany change the peasants' market days or the way of bringing their animals to be sold. They would as soon abandon their *coiffes* or their *calvaires*, their fish-nets or their folk-tales. From far and near one may see the peasants coming to the Dinan fair, or to many another like it. There is Monik leading on a string those two white ducks which she has kept tied to the leg of her bed these past two days. One must avoid the catastrophe of having them escape just as the united family is starting off! Baptiste there in his high cart has five calves lying inert on their sides with feet bound tightly together and eyes rolling pitifully.

Once arrived at the market, we see long rows of stalls. In that corner yonder, sheep are being shorn. Nearby, under a booth made of old sail, stands a wide-hipped woman who is a self-appointed goddess of the buckwheat cake. Will we have one? Made nice and thick and heavy as the Breton loves them? Or perhaps some *gauffres*, and a few bon-bons? Here is soft wool, woven, during those winter months, by the fireside ... don't we need some? Here is a performing dog – won't we pay fifty centimes to watch him? But the greatest amusement is found in the archaic merry-go-round turned by an aged and dejected white horse who seems in no wise merry. But that does not effect the joyous squeals of the young couples in the seats which swing far out on their poles lengths, dangerously near those horses and cows which are offered for sale. If we can dodge between their hoofs and horns, the way lies open to a realm of grunting pigs. Pierre there seems adept at catching the elusive sleek-backed rascals.

There are horns and whistles, the saw-dust counters full of cheap and tawdry jewelry. There is cider and is aftermath, there are wild-eyed men and women seeking here a brief respite from life's daily drudging toil. Orgiac the whole scene may seem to those who find their amusement in more sophisticated form, yet to women who weave and men who wrest a living from the soil, life in its various complexities is little different from the time when "Adam delved and Eve span." Life consists of a few elemental things, birth and death, work and prayer ... between what snatched moments for play the fates may give on rare spring days.

Weddings, like fairs, offer such moments of somber, fitful joy, they afford a chance for drinking and dancing, with the same determination applied to tasks. No one has tasted Breton spring who has not been the guest, invited or otherwise, at a Breton wedding. For "spring time is ring time" the world over. "Come quickly," says my friend Katik, "for the couples are already gathering there on the village square." They have come in groups from neighboring farms, since a visit from the priest is but a biennial occurrence in this remote corner and one must make the most of the opportunity to be married.

They are filing in and out of the *mairie* as the dapper and mustachioed little mayor gives his permission in legal form. His blessing he reserves for the wedding feast. And it matters not to him or them that there are twenty brides and as many matching grooms. There is Jeanne Herjean, whose *coiffe* strings thrust forth as direct as bayonets, and whose face glistens from soapy scrubbing. The bridal *coiffe* is her "something new." Her entire apron is the "something blue," even though it be elaborately embroidered in yellow. It was her mother's and her grandmother's, and before that it had lain for heavens knows how long in the great carved chest. For "something borrowed" she carries the ubiquitous black cotton umbrella which her grandmother has insisted on lending, even for the wedding. In Brittany life is no matter of sunshine and soft breezes, it is a somber consideration of rain and storms and fog horns, occasionally broken by nature's smiles.

louenn Kerival, the groom to whose arm Jeanne clings so tenaciously, has polished the buckle of his broad-brimmed hat till it shines as highly as his bride's little pink nose. His streamers fly at a jaunty, holiday angle. They enter the cold, bleak church which seems as bare as their poor, struggling lives. Couple by couple the others follow them. One long Latin ceremony from the priest suffices – a collection from the wedding guests – and in no more time than it takes to yoke one couple the twenty are tied.

Now come with Katik and me to the wedding feast. Do not scruple at not being "bid," for in Brittany, as in the Bible, the beggars come in swarms to eat "the crumbs which fall from the master's table," here perchance set up in green fields. On many borrowed stoves are steaming pots and caldrons, while in the background animals are being butchered, none of which seems to spoil the guests' *bon appetit*. Young men dart hither and yon, filling their glasses with cider drawn into their earthen jars from the great casks back of the tables.

Bright-hued bridal embroidery, somber black of old women's dresses, glistening white caps are silhouetted against a clear blue sky. White clouds are driven against the breeze, it is a rare day of sunshine, which

lights bronzed, weather-roughened faces and falls on broad shoulders squared to heavy burdens. All seem bent on the food and mood of the moment ... one is occupied only with the happy present and the hopeful future. As more and more cider is poured from the casks, tongues begin to wag more freely. The silent Breton grows more loquacious, more riotous in his clumsy toasts. Then suddenly, dramatically, a hush falls over all.

An aged hag of a woman rises straight out of the nowhere. She is a witch-like creature, the oldest of the family, destined soon to join the spirits of that world beyond with which she lives in such close touch. With feeble and uncertain tread, she makes her way toward the young bride and groom whose life stretches before them. Standing there, reaching forth a hand in their direction, she sways slightly from side to side. She rivets on them the eye that a cat turns on a fluttering bird, then she gazes into space, as if hypnotized by some wisdom which is for her alone. Seeing sights the others see not, hearing voices they cannot hear, she begins as if in a trance to mutter and incantation to the dead. She invokes the spirit of long-buried ancestors.

"Come, oh come and join the feast," she pleads. "Seal with your blessing this, your offspring's marriage," she beseeches. In reality it is the god of the clan whom the old sybil invokes. And the god of the clan was one of the first that primitive man worshiped, whether one of Katik's Aryan ancestors or one of yours and mine.

It is only for a few minutes that the wedding feast is interrupted by the tremulous, quavering voice of this living representative of the dead. "The dance, on with the dance," say the younger folk, all eager to begin. A blind old *biniou* player sits upon a cider barrel; the wild notes and nasal skirl of his bag-pipes soon rouse the dancers. First there is a well-ordered and rhythmic clumping and thumping of wooden shoes on earth, but in less time than it takes to tell it, the guests have become a prancing, leaping group, gesticulating madly, whirling dizzily. Wild blood and hot courses through their veins. There is a frenzy of waving aprons, mad tossing of hat strings, fluttering of white *coiffes*. Cider and bag-pipes prove an inciting combination – faces grow scarlet with exertion, perspiration streams, brows are mopped with broad hands. Wide-hipped matrons are puffing audibly. Yet there is neither blitheness nor lightness, neither coquetry nor comeliness. There is only a grim determination to be the last couple left standing. This is really no dance in the sense of stately and sophisticated minuet, rather it harks back to some pagan rite not long forgotten. The layering of civilization on civilization is but a thin one – all that matters to the wedding guests is that they are happy and amused for the moment.

Soon they will be going their way to do daily tasks, to fairs and markets, to wayside shrines and Pardons. There we will see gathered some of those same lovers who, at the wedding feast, stand on the outskirts of the crowd, stand shyly touching finger tips. There we will meet the same crones muttering incantations, the same idiots and beggars insisting upon "les droits des pauvres." There are the same little girls whose long, stiff skirts touch the ground like their mothers', the same hot-cake booths, the same tawdry jewelry and shrieking whistles which we see at the markets and fairs.

Few Pardons are more interesting than that of St. Anne de la Palude. According to Katik whom I followed there, St. Anne, the mother of Our Lord, was born in Brittany. The whole tale has been handed down from wizened Bretonne grand-dame to bronzed Bretonne grand-daughter and this is the way it goes: the dear saint so loved her native land that even in Jerusalem she drooped and pined for Plouvenez-Portzay. So a daring angel brought her back to this coast village, where she lived, a protection to all fishermen. But one day she was mysteriously carried off to celestial realms, and in her place the fisher-folk found only a consoling statue. So they built a church to house it, and now all who see the spire from afar may bring their sick bodies and suffering souls.

They come, indeed, in large numbers. At the time of the Pardon, white tents seem to float on a vast human sea of sound and color. There is a curious mixture of laughter and love-making, chanting and psalm-singing as the lame, the halt and the blind gather round the fountain to be sprinkled with its healing waters. Then comes the procession: ecclesiastical figures in richly brodered costumes seem to have stepped straight from a cathedral's stained glass window. There is a waving of banners borne high on standards. There are gray-hooded widows of the sea who march with candles extinguished, all too true an interpretation of their sad and barren lives. Following them are the "saved men," dressed in the very clothes they wore the day of the shipwreck, and carrying with them a small ship's model. There is chanting of litanies and ringing of church bells. There are muffled rolls of drums, mysticism mingled with barbarism, - Christianity layered on paganism. The whole scene is painted against a windswept sky, and a sandy beach where the sun gleams on foam-flecked combers. Here there is being waged the eternal war of sea against shore, a battle even older than that of man against the elements. No less persistent throughout the centuries is spring, the season of resurrection, whether in trees' sap or man's hopes, spring, the time of the wobbly-kneed calves, and emerald wheat fields, of weddings and wanderings.

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