

Central Brittany

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Journal

July 2006

1€

ISSUE 25



**The Towns & Villages
of Central Brittany**

Watch Out!

Hornet *French: Frelon*

With the pleasant days of summer, comes the less pleasant hornet, a giant wasp-like insect with rather a frightening sting. It makes its large, complex nest out of chewed wood pulp which it gathers in its mouth, often from around people's houses.

It is not naturally aggressive, and is even of some use in the garden, as its larvae eats aphids, but should be treated with caution.



Adder

Visitors to Brittany - particularly those coming from cooler climates, such as the UK - are often not aware that you really do have to be careful when walking in the long grass.

Adders are very common in Brittany, and although they normally make every possible effort to keep away from human beings, if you tread on one by mistake, they will bite you. Children, in particular, should wear boots when walking or playing in long grass. If you get bitten by an adder, find a doctor or a hospital as soon as possible.



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International Celtic Conference Carhaix

This year the International Celtic conference will be taking place in Brittany. Representatives from the Celtic nations - Wales, Scotland, Ireland, Cornwall, Isle of Man, and Brittany - will be meeting in Carhaix from the 31st July to the 5th August.

Everyone is welcome to attend the conferences - which are free - that will be taking place in the Espace Glenmor; there will be simultaneous translation available in English. Tickets for concerts and meals are available in advance. The conference finishes with a fest-noz in the town square, to which everyone is invited.

Mon. 31 st July: Conference Opens
Tues. 1st Aug: Meetings about Cornwall with Alison Bevan, director of the Penzance museum, and the Isle of Man with Dorcas Costain Blann, artist. Evening concert: Nolwenn Korbell.
Wed. 2nd Aug: Meeting about Brittany with Armel Le Sec'h and Joanna Mackenzie Farmer from the Art Academy of Brittany, and Wales with David Peterson, artist/broadcaster.
Thur. 3rd Aug: Meetings about Scotland with Donald Murray, artist, and Ireland with Cliodna Cussen, artist and writer.
Fri. 4th Aug: Conference closes. 9pm Fez-Noz
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Le Moulin Blanc, traditional French Cuisine *page 2*
Au Rendez-Vous Des Celtes, Village Pub Plussulien *page 4*
Les Fous, Country Pub & Restaurant Carnoët *page 5*
Poppies, Home-cooked food to eat in or take away *page 5*
Le Poisson Qui Rit, Mobile Fish & Chips *page 8*
Frog 'n' Rosebeef, Moncontour *page 8*
La Petite Pêche, Bar Restaurant, D27 Gourin/Scaer *page 7*



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6 Travel Map

Company	Route	Price €
Speed-ferries	Boulogne/Dover	88.00
Ryan Air	Brest/Luton	193.48
Euro-tunnel	Calais/Folkestone	196.00
Ryan Air	Nantes/E. Midlands	225.00
Ryan Air	Nantes/Stansted	245.12
Ryan Air	Dinard/East Midlands	255.08
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FlyBe	Cherbourg/Southampton	348.48
Brittany Ferries	Roscoff/Plymouth	356.00
FlyBe	Brest/Exeter	450.52
Condor Ferries	St Malo/Poole	513.00
FlyBe	Rennes/Southampton	513.44
FlyBe	Brest/Edinburgh	1098.5

Travel Map

Over recent years travel companies have made their fare structures more and more complicated so that it is now almost impossible to compare prices between one company and another. This travel map provides a 'snapshot' of the cost of travelling from Brittany to the UK for 3 days - 7th to the 10th July, booking on the 24th June.

Prices are for two people plus a car - or two people plus car hire for flights - leaving on Friday 7th, and returning on Monday 10th July.

The French Hexagon

In French media France is often referred to as 'l'Hexagone', and many philosophers and politicians have dedicated a lot of energy to describing the importance of the hexagon to the French psyche. From a purely geometrical point of view, however, it is difficult to see how much of Brittany can be fitted into it.

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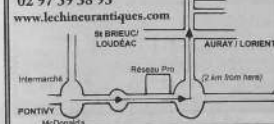
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Editorial 7

Editorial

Welcome to the July issue of the Journal. This issue focuses on the towns and villages of Brittany. It is sometimes easy not to notice when one is going about one's daily activities just how beautiful and how civilised our towns and villages still are: especially when compared to the sprawling cities that one encounters as soon as one ventures out of the region.

As usual, Breton history makes an appearance in the Journal, and I hope that everyone enjoys the story of King Gradlon on page 18, he is not someone that I ever learnt about when I was at school, but since moving to Brittany, I have heard his name mentioned on many occasions, and it is interesting to read his story in more detail.

I hope that readers find the travel map on the facing page interesting, no doubt there are some routes that have been missed (the train is not included in the list because the SNCF internet site was not working when we did the survey) and if we had conducted our survey on a different day, different routes would have come out on top, but the map does give an idea of the range and complexity of travel options now available to the UK.

Above everything else, however, July is the time for enjoying the garden in Brittany. July and August are usually the hottest months of the year, when we get the most sun, and all one really wants to do is sit outside and enjoy the glories of nature.

GL

Central Brittany Journal

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Deadline for classified ads: 20th of the month

News & Services

Frog 'n' Rosebeef Moncontour

A new restaurant will soon be opening in Moncontour. Frog 'n' Rosebeef is due to open on 14th July. Run by Nicola Malleson and her partner Pascal Tsousoglou, the restaurant is licensed, is in the town square and will serve lunches, evening meals and afternoon tea and coffee with cakes and savoury snacks. There will be Tapas, fish and chips on Fridays and a small vegetarian and organic menu.

For five consecutive Tuesday nights starting 18th July, Moncontour hosts 'Le Mardisverts' - live music in the square. Le Bistrot Frog 'n' Rosebeef will be serving 'Moules frites' with a glass of muscadet.

18 pl de Penthièvre Tel: 02 96 69 34 48

« Fest-Jazz »

Châteauneuf Du Faou Sunday 6th August

For many people jazz festivals bring to mind rows of seats and pretentious music. "Fest-Jazz" at Châteauneuf du Faou is different! It takes place around four bars along the banks of the beautiful River Aulne, all within 5mins stroll of each other, and features lively, foot-tapping music in a great atmosphere that everyone can enjoy. Last year's festival was a huge success (over 600 people) and this year will be even better with some international stars like the "Rosenberg Trio" from Holland, world famous "gypsy-jazz" specialists. The day ends with a party, a "Fest-Jazz" in the style of the famous Breton "Fest-Noz". Tickets and details: Tourist Office, Châteauneuf du Faou, (Tel 02 98 81 83 90) or see advertisement on page 4

Art Exhibition

Quintin

The Forssander family lived in London before moving to Brittany in 1973. Cyril Forssander and his daughter Elisabeth will be exhibiting their paintings from the 1st - 31st August at Cap'Art Gallery, 37 Grand rue, 22800 Quintin Tel: 02 96 79 69 75 Tues & Sat: 10-12 & 2-6.30; Wed. Thurs. Fri. 2-6.30; Sun Aug 6th 10-6.30

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News & Services continued

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The Monts d'Arrée is an area of outstanding beauty with sites of natural and cultural interest. Addes - a small organisation based in Brasparts - offers guided walks on many different themes. This summer Addes is launching a new, guided walk with commentary in English for tourists and English speakers who wish to discover the area. Four dates have been fixed: 6th and 20th of July, 3rd and 17th of August 2006. Departing at 3.30 pm from «La Ferme des Artisans» (Craft Centre), the walk will take you to the top of St Michael's Mount of Brasparts, and past a megalithic alignment. The walk is about 6 km and on return to the Craft Centre refreshments will be served. Price: 8 € per person and half price for children aged 7-14. For bookings and more information call Katell (06.62.28.10.08) or contact@arree-randos.com.

VeloCity 29

Huelgoat

Velocity 29 in Huelgoat is now open for business again after having been closed over the winter months. The shop offers a complete service of bike hire, sales and repairs. The owner, Patrick Saunders-Wright is a mountain bike specialist.

See advert back page

The Language of Shakespeare

Silence is the perfectest
herald of joy:

I were but little happy, if
I could say how much.

Much Ado About Nothing

Letters

Car Storage

We wonder if you know of any organisations/individuals that will store and maintain a French registered car on a 'ready to go' basis near to the port of Roscoff, ready for us to collect for travel to our house near Josselin when we arrive as foot passengers? Hope you might be able to help!

Thanks,
Ian et Jenny Wasson
replies to info@thebcj.com

Vide-Greniers

I've just been fined 450€ (suspended for 5 years), because I did 20 vide-greniers over 5 years. I declared that I was a private individual getting rid of excess baggage and was done for 'travail clandestine'! The law is that one is allowed to do one vide-grenier a year in, or bordering on, one's commune. Apparently the law is relaxing a bit because professional dealers say that they need private exhibitors to help their business.

The first time I did a car boot here I asked an English stallholder how many car boots one was allowed to do per year - he said that he didn't know but that he did 50 per year! I suppose he's now in the 'French Alkatraz'!!!

Nigel

Business Charges & the Health Service

Last week we met a lady who had recently had a hip replacement, a major (and expensive) operation. She needed some help to keep her garden in order. We quoted a very fair price, which would have worked out at €15 per hour. She at first accepted, and then rejected it claiming it was too high. I suspect that she had an offer to do the job for cash, at a slightly lower price.

Due to obligatory charges, most notably social charges, if I quote for €150 per day, I might keep €50 in my pocket, whereas someone working on the black will quote €100 - 120, and pocket the lot.

The question is simple. Having effectively helped pay for the hip operation - through the social charges that I pay - I am now (seemingly) too expensive to help the person who has had the operation. How then is a registered business able to effectively compete?

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Environmental Information

Are you interested in information about environmental issues in Finistère? The brand-new 'Centre de documentation sur l'environnement' (Documentation Centre on environmental issues) is now open to the public in the city centre of Quimper (left bank of the Odet River, not far from the cathedral). Feel free to come and visit us or to send us an email.

Our address is:
2, rue Théodore Le Hars - 29000 QUIMPER email: yves.marhic@eq29.fr
Open every afternoon, from Monday to Friday (1:30 to 5:30 PM). Free entrance.

If you think your French (or your Breton...) is not fluent enough, don't worry, from August 1st on, an English speaking officer will be at your disposal to help you whenever you need it. We are looking forward to meeting you!

Regards,
Yves MARHIC

June Gala Event

Some readers may have noticed our absence from the June 11th Gala Event at Fleur de Bretagne. This is due to irreconcilable differences between us and the owners. Our clients and friends have advised us not to organise further events for the time being. To all the people who have visited our events over the past couple of years, we thank you for your friendship, business - and laughter!

Ray and Yvonne Constable

In Memory

We would like to pay our respects to Steve Bates and his partner Françoise Guennec who both perished in a recent house fire in the village of Duault. Steve and Françoise were very popular residents and had recently made a short film called Carmina. We and many others will miss them!

Dave & Pauline Morgan

Chenil 56

It is with much sadness that I have to inform our clients that Chenil 56 as closed due to ill health.

Can I take this opportunity to say a huge thank you to all those who supported us in this venture by trusting us with their treasured pets. We had a great bunch of dogs to care for and hope they enjoyed their time with us as we enjoyed them.

Thank you all once again.
Kind regards from Dianne and Graham Brown

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Restaurant: Les Fous p5

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DollyMops of Brittany p33

Heating / Counselling p32

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Blackcurrant Jam

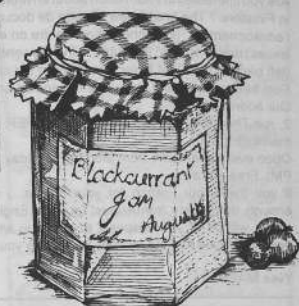
Making jam is the perfect way to use up a surplus of summer fruit. Blackcurrant jam is not only one of the most delicious, but also one of the easiest to make as the fruit is rich in pectin and the jam sets well. Every jam-maker has their own special techniques, but this simple recipe should work for even the least experienced cook.

Ingredients:

12 oz (350 g) blackcurrants
½ pint (275 ml) water
1 ½ lbs (675 g) white granulated sugar

Method:

1. Remove the stalks from the blackcurrants, place the fruit in a colander and wash gently under cold, running water. Drain well.
2. Tip berries into a large saucepan together with the water and sugar.
3. Heat gently for 2 to 3 minutes, stirring frequently with a wooden spoon until all the sugar has dissolved.
4. Turn up the heat and bring to the boil. Boil the mixture fiercely for 5 minutes, stirring occasionally to prevent the jam from sticking.
5. Turn off the heat and let the jam cool for 2 minutes whilst spooning off any scum that has formed on the surface.
6. Pour the hot jam into jam jars, to within ¼" (½ cm) of the top of the jar.
7. Cover the top of the jam with a circle of greaseproof paper and set aside to cool.



How Many Breton Departments?



The traditional boundaries of Brittany include the area that is now known as the Loire-Atlantique - which contains the old Breton capital, Nantes. After the Revolution, when France was divided up into 'départements', the region of Brittany contained five départements. During the Second World War, the government of Marshal Pétain (which ruled France on behalf of the occupying German forces) reorganised local government, and the region of Brittany was reduced to four départements - the area around Nantes was made part of the 'Pays-de-la Loire'.

Bretons have never been able to understand why this decision was not reversed once the war was over. It still rankles that the people themselves have never been consulted over the issue and it would probably be true to say that most people living in the five départements still regard Nantes and the area around it as being part of Brittany.



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Towns & Villages of Central Brittany

Many of the towns and villages of Central Brittany have been left relatively unspoiled by modern development. It remains for the current inhabitants of the region to determine how they can be brought up to date whilst at the same time preserving their character and beauty for the benefit of future generations.

A Brief History of Urban Development

The size and shape of towns and cities has always been determined by the nature of the transport links by which they are served. In olden times the size of inland cities was fixed by how much produce could be brought into the town from the surrounding countryside - half a day's journey for a horse and cart was the maximum journey time that most farmers were prepared to endure, whilst towns situated beside the sea, or on major rivers, could support a larger population because food could be brought in on boats and barges. These rules applied in Brittany just as much as elsewhere - which explains why the major Breton cities are around the coast.



The roads of Central Brittany are famous for having been almost impassable for much of the year and thus its towns were small - consisting of a fortified position, a market, and the houses of a few tradesmen. Most towns were themselves almost self-sufficient with the inhabitants growing their own grain and vegetables on nearby plots of land.

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14 Towns & Villages of Central Brittany

The smaller villages differed from the towns only in that they were not centres of administration, and did not contain castles or fortified positions. Farms were small, and cottages were grouped together in hamlets, making up large, extended family units.

This was a pattern of development which would at one time have been mirrored across much of Western Europe. What makes Central Brittany unusual, is that it remained remarkably unchanged up until very recently.

Canals and Waterways

For most parts of Europe urban development started to accelerate in the 1700s with the building of canals and waterways. This programme of development affected eastern areas of Brittany - particularly around Redon and Nantes, but the hilly, moorland areas of western Brittany did not lend themselves to canal building. When a canal was finally built in the 1800s - the Nantes/Brest Canal - it was not a commercial success: anyone walking beside the canal today will see that there are very few warehouses or factories along its banks, and, in fact, that there are not even many quays for loading and unloading barges. Pontivy was redeveloped as part of the canal project but few of the other towns of Central Brittany were greatly affected.

The Railways

The railways had an even bigger impact on the towns and cities of Europe than the canals. The centres of many European cities were demolished and rebuilt in order to accommodate their arrival; evidence of this process can be seen in Quimper, for example, where much of the old city was redeveloped in the late 1800s. Central Brittany, however, was left almost untouched by the process. The big railway companies chose routes running along the Northern and Southern coasts of Brittany in order to link the region to Paris; life in the centre carried on as normal.

When the railways finally did come to Central Brittany, it was a narrow-gauge railway that was built, and costly engineering projects were kept to a minimum. As far as possible, tracks were built along the valley bottoms or along shallow inclines and, as a result, they tended not to go through town centres. Consequently, their effect upon urban development was not great. Furthermore, by the time that Central Brittany's railway system had been completed, motorised road transport was already gaining in popularity, and businesses were no longer interested in spending money on developing sites beside the railways.

Road Transport

The potential for urban development was taken onto a new level with the introduction of cars and lorries: no limit has yet been found to the size of a city population that a modern road system can sustain - the urban agglomeration of Paris, for example, has a population of over 20 million people. Very early in the days of motoring, governments decided that measures would have to be taken to regulate how and where new urban development took place.

'Ribbon development' was the first identifiable problem of motoring-related development: it involved people building houses alongside roads leading out of towns, and then driving to work. There was more or less universal agreement that ribbon development had to be stopped, and this was achieved by the creation of planning departments which had the power to say which pieces of land people were allowed to build on, and which they were not.

Once again, Central Brittany was fortunate in escaping the blight of ribbon development: there were hardly any big towns to which people wanted to commute, and, in the early days of motoring, few local residents could afford to buy a car. As with the railways, the major roads linking Brittany to the outside world

Towns & Villages of Central Brittany 15



Above: Quimper. Old buildings line the waterfront, and the city centre streets, providing an attractive mixture of architectural styles.

Below: Traditional, village properties in Ducault. Each house reflects the individual style of its builder. Renovations have also been made in a distinctive way, making use of materials available at any particular time.

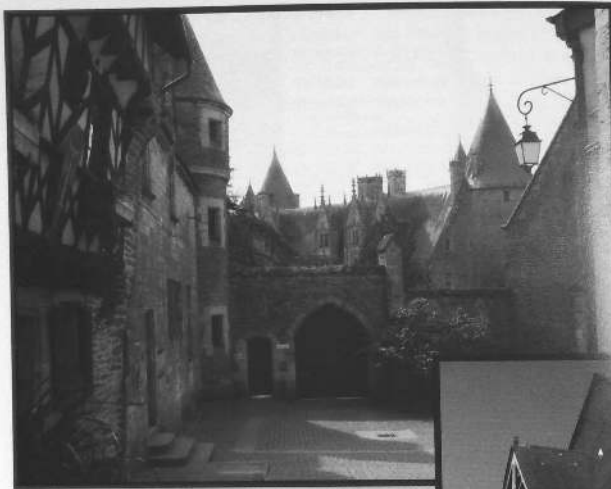


Right Top: Local communes still take responsibility for maintaining traditional features of village life, such as this recently-restored wash-house in Ducault.

Right Middle: The famous well at Bulat Pestivien illustrates the commitment that people used to have to looking after public places.

Right bottom: An example of a fairly affluent house in the country - a combination of stones collected locally and more expensive materials sourced from a quarry.





Above: Josselin, the entrance to the castle, with the roof of the castle showing above in the background. During the Middle Ages, Breton towns were administrative centres established in strategic positions, and they all had city walls and fortified buildings. Many of these castles have survived to the modern day.

Below: Timber-framed buildings made from locally-felled oak are a feature of many Breton towns - particularly in areas which were not served by a local granite quarry.



Cover: Timber-framed buildings in Josselin



Above: The market was, and still is, the heart and soul of most Breton towns. The market hall in Le Faouët is one of the finest in existence.

followed the coast and left Central Brittany unscathed.

The Present Situation

Due to the fact that they have been bypassed or forgotten by both roads and railways, the towns and villages of central Brittany have, by and large, retained their traditional charm: there is often a central square surrounded by shops and restaurants, traffic is light, and it is still enjoyable to stroll around the streets on a summer's evening.

In all probability this is set to change: given the pressure for space in modern Europe, and the exceptional beauty of the area, it is inevitable that more and more people will want to move here. Furthermore, the nature of modern communications is such that Central Brittany can no longer be regarded as an isolated region, and the factors that have protected the region from modern development in the past, are no longer relevant today.

If more people move to the area, there will be pressure to build new houses and to bring the towns and cities of the region up to date. Unfortunately there is no reason to believe that developers and planners have the skills required to manage this successfully.

Whilst it seemed a good idea to give considerable power to planning departments fifty or sixty years ago, it is by no means clear that their work has been beneficial. Historically, there have been few examples of urban development less appealing than the modern city, and in some places it could even be said that planners have succeeded in creating an environment that is no longer fit for people to live in at all. Furthermore, the concept of restricting building to defined urban zones - in order to protect the countryside - has in some countries, such as the UK, led to a shortage of building land, and, consequently, ruinous levels of house price inflation.

No doubt, it would be unfair to ascribe all the blame for these problems to planners - the real difficulty is that, so far, no one has been able to devise a development plan which is, on the one hand, friendly to human beings whilst, on the other hand, giving easy access to the motor car.

Another problem is that modern development is usually driven by commercial concerns and the desire to make a profit. Most of the old buildings - which we admire so much - were built for quite different reasons: many houses in the country were built by ordinary people for themselves simply so that they and their families would have somewhere to live, and many buildings in towns, although built by craftsmen, were commissioned by tradesmen for their own use.

With the benefit of hindsight, one can see that it was always unrealistic to expect paid officials to be able to take care of urban development: when people are working as employees, their main concern is that they should not lose their jobs. The money that makes their jobs possible ultimately comes from business activity; therefore, planners will always, in the end, give permission for commercial building projects to proceed - no matter what effect they have on the lives of ordinary people.

Where Central Brittany differs from other areas is that it has been relatively untouched by the planning mistakes that have blighted many other areas of Europe. So far, this has simply been due to good fortune - the region was not rich or important enough to be subjected to major development in the twentieth century - but if its architectural heritage and quality of life are to be preserved into the future, a new, more people-friendly, approach to planning and development will have to be found.

The story of King Gradlon illustrates how a good leader can bring peace and prosperity to the people. King Gradlon is remembered in Brittany as a monarch who learnt wisdom over the course of his reign, and for many years was regarded as a role model who later rulers tried to emulate.

King Gradlon of Cournouaille

(reigned 470 – 505)

Gradlon was, according to the few accounts of his early life, a warrior chieftain, born in the South of England. He sailed over to Brittany accompanied by his warriors, and other immigrants, and established himself as king of a region formally inhabited by fierce bands of pirates. This new kingdom was called Cornouaille and was in the west of the Breton peninsula. It included the valley of the river Aulne, and reached as far as the Menez Arez (Montagnes d'Arée).

Gradlon had won his kingdom through the strength of his sword, and at first he was a harsh and warlike ruler. His wife had passed away some time before, and he had one daughter called Dahut, whom he loved dearly, but whom he was quite incapable of restraining. She was wayward and extravagant, and under her influence Gradlon's court soon gained a bad reputation.

However, there were many wise men living in Gradlon's domain, and the King frequently came into contact with them. He was appointed to act as judge when a woman accused St Ronan of killing her child¹, and on another occasion he was forced to seek the hospitality of the hermit, St Corentin: Gradlon had lost his way while out hunting and he arrived tired and hungry at the forest hermitage. St Corentin welcomed him but explained that he had no food save a magical fish, which lived in the spring close by. Each day he cut a piece from it, and returned it to the water. Today, however, when he went to the spring, he saw that it contained two fish – one for himself, and another for his guest. Gradlon was filled with wonder, but he was even more impressed by the wisdom and generosity of Corentin.

Some time later reports began to reach King Gradlon of a man called Gwenolé who had recently sailed over from Britain and established a centre of learning at Landevenec, by the coast. The retreat was only nine leagues from Gradlon's court, and the King decided to visit the stranger, of whom he had heard so much.

¹ See May issue of the CBJ for the story of St Ronan



Soon he came to the retreat and and walked, with some trepidation, towards St Gwenolé. The sage was tall and imposing, and Gradlon had heard much of his simple way of life, his self-restraint, and his piety. However, to his surprise, Gwenolé smiled at him, and welcomed him warmly.

"What presents can I give you?" cried Gradlon. "I have many possessions, much power, vast dominions, coffers filled with gold and silver, excellent garments, and many other gifts that have been bestowed upon me. No one will touch what I give you and no one can turn me against you. You will be able to enjoy my presents for ever."

Gwenolé held his hand out to the King, who had knelt before him, and helped him to rise.

"O King, why are you offering me these things?" he said. "If I valued them, why would I have chosen to live in this deserted place, far from human habitation? I might as well have stayed in the home of my father, who is a rich and powerful lord."

Gradlon continued to press gifts upon St Gwenolé, but the sage continued to refuse them. Instead, he offered Gradlon his friendship, and the King eagerly accepted. Henceforward, Gradlon often sought the sage's advice and he soon became known as a wise and merciful ruler.

Over the succeeding months, Gwenolé warned the King many times to curb the excesses of his wild daughter, but Gradlon could not check Dahut, and when a great wave engulfed the city which she had built upon the coast, she and many of the courtiers perished. Only Gradlon was saved by Gwenolé who guided him through the waves to the safety of the shore.

Together, Gradlon and Gwenolé travelled some way inland and, at the place where two rivers joined, they decided to found a new city, which they called Kemper (Quimper).

Gradlon pressed Gwenolé to be his chief minister but Gwenolé refused. Was there no one else who could fill the post? It was then that Gradlon remembered the hermit in the forest with the wonderful fish. He sent for St Corentin and, to his delight, the hermit agreed to become his chief minister.²

An ancient text describes the reign of Gradlon assisted by Corentin and Gwenolé:

"How the peaks of Cornouaille shone with a threefold radiance when those three great men – Gradlon, Corentin, and Gwenolé – reigned supreme. Gradlon's share was the temporal kingdom, and he ruled the countryside and coastline with justice; Corentin, in his high dignity and all the splendour of his learning, quenched the thirst of the people with the precious water of wisdom. As for Gwenolé, the most illustrious of them all, his prodigious energy, and the strength of his integrity, earned him his place as father of the people."³

Gradlon ruled until his death, (c.505) and left behind him the city of Quimper, and the reputation of a just and noble-hearted ruler.

² Corentin is sometimes described as one of the first bishops of Brittany. ³ Life of St Gwenolé, Vita S. Uimva loel, Wrlisten.



St. Gwenolé



Jacques Cambry

Travels in Brittany:

St Cécile's day: Quimper 1794

In 1794 a government official, Jacques Cambry, made a tour on horseback of the region of Finistère. The book he wrote describing his travels is one of the chief sources of information on life in Brittany two hundred years ago.

In this extract, Cambry describes a ceremony that he observed in Quimper:

Every year in Quimper, on St Cécile's day (22nd November), two hours after noon, all the clergy ascends the platform on which stands the statue of King Gradlon on horseback, up between the two towers of the cathedral.

Everybody joins in with singing a hymn, accompanied by musicians; in the meantime one of the town watchmen climbs onto the crupper of the horse, holding a bottle, a glass and a napkin. This man then pours out a glassful of wine, presents it to the king, swallows it down, dries the monarch's mouth, and throws the glass into the square.

Everyone rushes to catch it, for it is said that whoever can bring it back unbroken will receive a prize of an hundred écus – something that has never yet happened.

They said that the watchman broke the glass before throwing it, but the claim is unfounded. As a severe critic, I can affirm that he who, for the last twenty-two years, has performed this function, has thrown the glass without having cracked it previously.

The ceremony concludes with placing a branch of bay in King Gradlon's hand.



What's On

Saturday July 1st & Sunday July 2nd Concert for different musicians in Huelgoat open-air theatre. Ragamuffins play at 6 p.m. on the Saturday.

Sunday July 2nd and Monday July 3rd Calliac cinema (by the church). TRUMAN CAPOTE (2005) in English. 8.30 p.m. start. 114 min.

Thursdays July 6th & July 20th Guided walks in the Monts d'Arrée with Commentary in English. See page 9 for more details.

Saturday July 8th Ragamuffins play Old Time Jazz tin Roudoualec, near Gourin. Bar Le Soleil. (opp.mairie). 9 p.m. onwards.

July 8th & July 9th Sculpture course. **July 20th** Painting class at Chateau de Kerminaouet. 29910 Trégunc. For more information www.trockbretagne.info and www.chateaubretagne.info

Tuesday July 11th & Tuesday July 25th Wildwalks organise a monthly programme of guided walks. **July 11th** - Loqueffret (D14, west of Huelgoat) Meet by Mairie 2.30 p.m. **July 25th** - Chateaufort-du-Faou Meet by river bridge (Centre des Vacances) 2.30 p.m. More details on www.brittanywalks.com or phone 02 98 24 15 19

Sunday July 23rd. Christ Church Brittany. Bonen Church near Rostrenen. Holy Communion with hymns taken by the Revd Michael Grainger. Preacher - Robin Hillman. C of E. All welcome. For further information contact Robin or Laura Hillman. tel 02 97 51 74 26, e-mail: kermoran@wanadoo.fr.

Friday July 14th National Breton Dance and Music festival, Carhaix. 2 p.m. 2000 dancers parade through the streets of Carhaix. (4€ charge). From 3 p.m. onwards at the Kerampuilh site (behind the swimming baths, Carhaix) final of the Breton Music Championship and an Exhibition of dancing and music. Entrance free. Followed by a Fest Noz in the evening (6€).

Saturday July 15th 10am-7 pm; **Sunday July 16th** and **Monday July 17th** 2 p.m. – 7 p.m. Grand Summer Sale at the huge Emmaus brocante, St Brieuc. Address is rte de Beauregard, Pont de Gouët, Plérin. Thousand of bargains in furniture, clothing, electrical, toys and bric-a-brac.

Thursday July 20th - Sunday July 23rd The 15th Vieilles Charrues pop festival, Carhaix. This weekend the whole town is taken over by thousands of young people who come to hear well-known and not-so-well-known bands play. From traditional Breton music to Johnny Halliday and Madness. More information: www.vieillescharrues.asso.fr.

Friday July 21st WORKSHOP: MAKE YOUR OWN NATURAL PRODUCTS. Insect repellent & aftersun spray, antiseptic gel, creams etc. For more info about workshops contact Anna 02 96 51 30 58 annabaker22@aol.com www.fraichot-aromatics.com

July 31st - August 5th International Celtic Conference. See more info page 4

What's On contd. page 27

AIKB

Pavillon de Rohan, Gouarec

Saturday July 8th to Sunday July 30th Exhibition 4 artistes. Four local artists, Pat Bromley, Meg Brookes, George Howard & Louise Louth. "Quatre Artistes du Coin", will be showing their most recent 'work' in their '2006 Summer Exhibition'. 70 to 80 pictures on view. 10am – 1pm & 2pm- 6pm during weekdays. 2pm - 6pm on Saturdays & Sundays. Free entry

Sunday July 9th 'The Tour de France' will be passing through Gouarec at 1pm approx. (access to the Centre of town blocked to traffic from 10.30am approx.). There will be an AIKB Tea Rooms for refreshments & the opportunity to visit exhibitions at the Pavillon whilst waiting for the Tour de France to arrive. For further details on the Tour see <http://www.letour.fr/calendrier2006.html> or phone 02 96 24 87 90. Later in the afternoon at the Foirail, the Association Les Historiques are holding a competition of Breton Dancing followed by a Dance Display, and followed by a Fez Diez, Soirée Crêpe, Fez Noz and Firework Display. Entrance 10€ per person, Children under 12 Free. Proceeds to Les Historiques.

Mon July 24th - Fri 28th or Mon July 31st - Fri Aug. 4th Summertime Intensive French Courses. Improve your French rapidly with a one week, 15 hour course including conversation, grammar, roleplay & useful everyday vocabulary from Beginners from 10am-1pm Intermediates from 2pm-5pm.

Further details: call Liz 2pm-6pm on 02 96 24 87 90 or email aikb@wanadoo.fr website www.aikb.fr

Fleur de Bretagne Bar & Campsite

SUNDAY JULY 9TH

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FISHING COMPETITION From 07.30
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ON THE D11 DIRECTION ROSEBEN TO BELFACON PAST THE L'YCEE PROFESSIONAL ON THE LEFT.

Rendez-vous des Celtes

Plussulien 02 96 24 04 26

Every Wednesday at 8pm

FREE 1 wine tasting and tapas; just a couple of wines available locally, some nibbles and good company.

Tuesday 11th July starts 7.30pm

Darts and Skittles, 5€ to include, by popular request, Annie's Steak Pie and Chips. Good social night out, no particular ability at playing required (or expected!) Booking advised, teams made up on the night.

Tuesday 25th July starts 8pm

Quiz Night & Annie's Steak Pie and Chips 5€. Very popular evening-early booking advised.
(This month's anagrams – win a bottle of Jack Daniels!)

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F. A. Q. 21



Q: At the CBJ Spring Fair in Callac I was offered a second hand computer with Linux for €150. Would this be a good purchase for someone who isn't very computer wise?

A: You met Benji! When I arrived I saw his row of monitors so made a point of talking with this young Dutchman, who speaks excellent English, has an extensive knowledge of computer hardware and software problems and recently moved to our area. He should be a good contact for anyone suffering with a malfunctioning computer. You can contact him through Lin at CBJ*.

That's the end of the commercial. Now I'll answer the question. The biggest problem in the computer world is the vast amount of machinery that works (yes it does, honestly) but has become obsolete because new software is written for the most up-to-date machines.

Every time Microsoft introduces a new operating system most PCs are not powerful enough to run it properly. This happened with MS Windows 98 and, most noticeably, with MS Windows XP. This is why there are so many machines still using older operating systems. Millions of these machines are still giving good service but there is a danger.

Microsoft stopped supporting Windows 98 a year ago so security updates are no longer available. Considering the fragility and basic insecurity of Microsoft's products, anyone who uses an unsupported operating system to connect to the Internet is really asking for trouble. I've dealt with most of the dangers in this series so you know what I'm talking about.

Very soon there will be a new product from Microsoft: Windows Vista! This will make XP obsolete and a lot more hardware along with it. By the way, IT speak for old, obsolete and defunct is "legacy". So, we shall all have to buy new computers and our legacy hardware can go to land-fill!

Well, not quite. Most "legacy" hardware will work perfectly well with many versions of the Linux operating system. I've mentioned this excellent project before so I'll stick to the salient features.

Linux is Open Source software so it's usually free to use. It's stable, secure and powerful. All the software that you could possibly want comes bundled with it; also free to use! The downside is that for those who are familiar with MS Windows it might take a little while to learn to use - just like any new program. Also, Linux is not widely supported and some hardware can be tricky to set up. In the unusual situation that there is a Windows program that you must have, it may not work with Linux.

These drawbacks are part of the reason the OS is not more popular. Without good technical support I don't recommend this route. However, this is where Benji comes in. He is offering a fully functional machine that will surf the www, do email, all the office things you want and loads more. He told me that he's prepared to set things up and make them work.

If you're on a tight budget or looking for a cheap back-up machine, this is definitely worth looking into.



Any questions?
graxwarrior@wanadoo.fr
or leave a message with the CBJ:
02 96 21 52 21

BURO+
express
Office Supplies Stationery Printers
Fax machines Photocopying
ZAE du Pohet, Carhaix (near McDonald's)
Tel: 02 98 93 04 10 Fax: 02 98 99 13 06

* Better still, get in touch with Benji directly:
02 96 24 66 41 Ed.



Website Workshop

This month we look at the increased use in modem routers that the Internet Service Providers (ISPs) are currently marketing to the public.

Q - What is a modem router?

A - A modem router is a device that allows your computer to connect to the Internet via your telephone line. You plug one end into your phone socket and the other into your computer. The original purpose was simply to provide new revenue from current broadband services but next-generation networking is changing the way we use our broadband connection.

Q - How will this affect how I use the Internet?

A - Currently, the carrier (e.g. France Telecom) provides a line for a fee (your basic line rental) and for an additional fee the ISP offers a simple broadband connection to the Internet. Things are now changing and you will access the Internet by a Residential Gateway using the new modem router. One example of the involved technology change is that you will now be using VOIP (Voice Over Internet Protocol) to make phone calls - usually at much reduced rates (or even free) - which negates the need for traditional telephone technology and you therefore cancel your line rental to FT. This means you pay only one subscription fee (to the ISP) for broadband, telephone and also French TV via the computer. The act of making the phone call is the same but the underlying technology has changed the face of telephony forever.

Q - I have a LiveBox on Orange (previously Wanadoo) and continually have problems with it, is there a solution?

A - As with all relatively new technology, there are teething problems and the Orange LiveBox and AliceBox seem to have more than their fair share. There are professionals in the industry who are now refusing to repair either of these two because they are so inherently difficult to fix and are so time-consuming that customers are complaining about the cost of repair - that's if a repair is possible at all. Originally, Wanadoo collaborated with Microsoft

to produce their LiveBox and hopefully these large companies that seem to have limitless resources will eventually come up with a more stable solution in the future.

Q - What other companies provide their own modem router?

A - Neuf do their Neuf Box, Free, Cegetel, Noos, Tele2 - in fact most ISPs provide similar services now.

Q - Can anyone get these modem router connections?

A - A lot depends on your exchange. For example Free.fr offers a service depending on your 'Dégroupage' status. Dégroupage is a term used when independent telecom service providers are able to connect their clients directly to their network without passing through the national provider (in this case FT). If you are 'dégrouper' you can also benefit from higher flow broadband including the telephone and TV services.

To find out your dégroupage status you can go to www.degrouptest.com where you enter your phone number and postal code and it will return your suitability for packages provided by the most popular ISPs, based on things like the distance from your nearest exchange, line noise etc.

Next month: How to get the results you want from a Search Engine.

You can contact Malcolm on malcolm@practicalnet.com or see www.practicalnet.com for more information

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The Sorcerer's Three Belts

Once upon a time there lived a king who had an only son. One day he called the young man to him.

"My son, it is time for you to take a wife," he said. "Go to the turret at the other end of the castle and open the door with the golden lock. You will find a throne room with as many windows as there are days in the year. Beside each window stands a maiden. You must choose one of these to be your wife. Here is the key to the room."

The Prince hurried up the stairs and entered the throne room. It was full of girls, all beautiful and all magnificently dressed. The Prince bowed to each one and looked for a long time into her face, but each time he walked on with the words, "No, she is not for me."

He was about to leave the room when he saw a maiden standing half-hidden in a corner. He raised the thick veil that covered her face, and gazed with wonder at her beauty.

"I choose you to be my wife," he said.

"Alas, young man, I cannot wed whom I please," said the maiden. "I belong to a cruel Enchanter. Whoever wishes to win my hand must pass three tests. All who fail are turned to stone."

"A king's son will succeed where others have failed," said the Prince. "I will not change my choice."

The King and the Queen and all the courtiers pleaded with the young man, but to no avail. He was determined to defeat the Enchanter.

Soon he set forth for the Enchanter's castle. It lay on the other side of a great forest, and the Prince lost his way. He wandered on for some time, until he saw a huge man sitting at the foot of a tree.

"I am lost," said the Prince. "Do you know the way out of this forest?"

The man arose, and began to uncoil upwards like a spring. Soon his head was above the tops of the trees.

"The edge of the forest is a few stone's throws from here," he said.

The Prince was filled with amazement; he had never seen such a man in his life.

"Would you like to come with me on my travels?" he asked.

"Gladly," said the giant. "I am looking for adventure."

"What is your name?"

"My name is Hir (Long)."

They had only gone on a few steps when they heard the sound of snoring. A man with a belly round as a barrel was lying asleep on the grass.

"What are you doing there?" said the Prince.

"I am waiting for a master who will employ me to do difficult work."

"What is your name?"

"My name is Ledan (Wide)."

"What can you do?"

The man took a deep breath, and the air rushed into him with a sound like the gurgling of a waterfall. His belly swelled like a huge pair of bellows, and he had to breathe out very slowly, so as not to blow down all the trees in the forest.

"Please join us," said the Prince.

"Gladly," said the man.

At the edge of the forest they met a third man. At the sound of their feet he had tied a bandage over his eyes.

"What are you doing?" asked the Prince. "Are you afraid of us, or do you want to hide your eyes?"

"You have spoken the truth, young man," said the stranger. "If I look at a person or object it shatters into pieces." He unfastened the bandage and looked at a great boulder. It split apart as if struck by lightning.

"You are a wonderful man," cried the Prince. "What is your name?"

"My name is Lagad Spiz (Clear Sight)."

"Would you like to come with us on our travels?"

"Gladly, I am looking for adventure." And Lagad Spiz joined them, after first covering his eyes.

Soon they reached the Enchanter's castle. It was dark and gloomy, and the door was bound with iron. They knocked loudly, but no one came to welcome them.

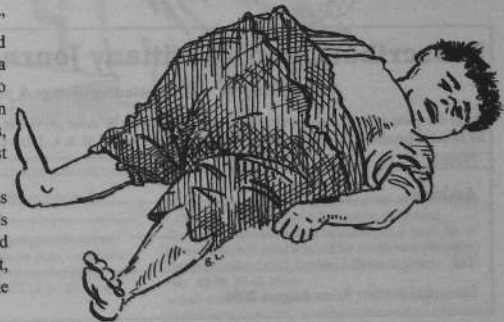
"Lagad Spiz, take off your bandage," said the Prince. Lagad Spiz obeyed and the lock fell to the ground.

They entered the castle, and walked through the empty rooms. There was no one to be seen, but a fine dinner was laid out in the dining room.

They ate until they were satisfied then continued their walk about the castle. At last they met the Enchanter. He had three iron belts bound about his chest and he asked them why they had come. The Prince explained that he wished to marry the maiden who he was keeping prisoner.

"I thought as much," said the Enchanter, "and I guessed that you were a king's son. Still, all who wish to win the maiden must pass the same tests, and if they fail they must meet with the same fate."

That night the four friends were led to the maiden's bedchamber. If they could watch over her all night, they would be able to take her away with them.



They fought against sleep for a long time, but they were all tired and at last they gave in. In the morning they woke up and found that the maiden was gone. They had to find her before noon.

"Lagad Spiz, we need your help," said the Prince. Lagad Spiz looked in the darkest corners of the castle, but he could not see the maiden.

"Look outside the castle, in the forests, on the mountains, in the oceans."

"I can see her," said Lagad Spiz. "She is hidden in an acorn, a hundred leagues away, in the heart of a forest."

"Now it is my turn," said Hir. "Climb onto my back, Lagad Spiz." He made his legs so long that they covered the distance with ease. Soon they had picked the acorn, freed the maiden, and returned to the castle. When the Enchanter arrived at the first stroke of noon he swelled with anger and one of the iron belts about his chest burst asunder.

The next night the friends once again watched over the maiden, and once again they fell asleep. In the morning she was gone.

"Lagad Spiz, we need your help," said the Prince. Lagad Spiz looked and looked and at last he saw the girl five hundred leagues away, hidden in a grain of wheat.

Once again he climbed on Hir's back and directed him over mountains and valleys until they reached the field of corn. They picked the grain and returned with the maiden to the castle. The Enchanter was filled with rage, and his second belt burst asunder.

The third night the test was the same and once again the four friends fell asleep. The next morning the room was empty.

"We cannot fail now," said the Prince. "You must help us again, Lagad Spiz."

Lagad Spiz looked and looked but he could not find the maiden. At last, at eleven o'clock, he cried:

"I can see her. She is a thousand leagues away, hidden in a ring at the bottom of a lake." How could they find her and return in time?

Hir set off with Lagad Spiz and Ledan on his back. Soon he had reached the lake.

"It is up to you now, Ledan," he said. Ledan sucked up the water in mighty mouthfuls, and in a little while they saw the ring lying at the bottom. Leaving Ledan behind to slowly let out

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the water they took the ring and hastened back to the castle. Midday was chiming as they entered.

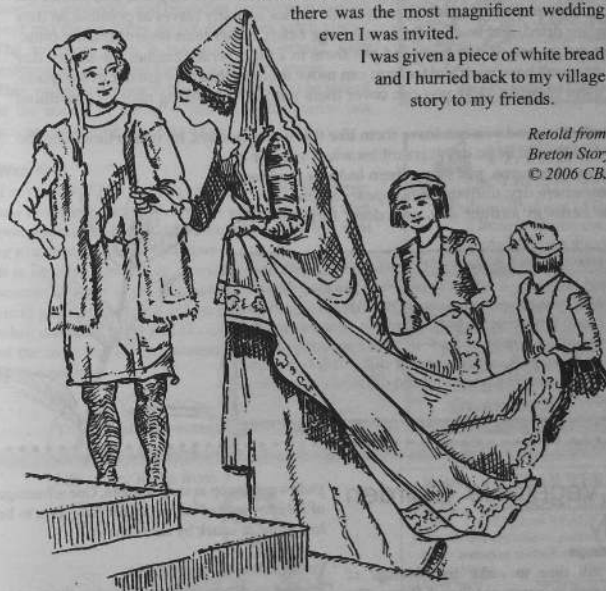
"We are lost," murmured Hir.

"No, not yet," said Lagad Spiz. "This will get there before the Enchanter." So saying, he threw the ring in through an open window. When the Enchanter entered, the maiden was standing before him.

"I have been defeated by this little prince," cried the Enchanter. The third belt fell at his feet and as it touched the ground he was turned into stone. The Prince returned with his bride and his three companions to his father's court. Before long, there was the most magnificent wedding to which even I was invited.

I was given a piece of white bread and butter and I hurried back to my village to tell this story to my friends.

Retold from a traditional
Breton Story by Bethan Lewis
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What's On *contd from page 21*

Every Sunday 10.30 a.m. Guerlesquin Christian Fellowship meetings at Chapelle St Jean - opposite library in the main street. English-speaking group - all denominations welcome. Tel: 02 98 78 21 28 for a friendly chat.

Enjoy the fun of painting - bi-weekly on Thursdays - 13.45 to 16.45 at the AikB Pavillon de Rohan, Gouarec or out-of-doors on location. As a beginner or an experienced artist you will be made very welcome. For more information, contact Patricia Bromley tel: 02 96 29 84 45 or email: pat.bromley@wanadoo.fr

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Sun-Dried Herbs

When Summer is here and Nature is producing food in such abundance, it is wisdom to save a little for the Winter months, when produce from the garden is rare. This is most easily done with herbs, which store well, and will even improve in flavour when dried.

Choose a sunny, cloudless day, when the weather looks set to be good, and gather the herbs you want to dry (see note). It is advisable to pick as many leaves as possible, as they reduce when dried, and to do them in one large batch, rather than several smaller ones. Lay them out on one or two trays and put them in a place which catches the sun all day long. If you don't have such a place, you can move them so that they are not in the shade. To stop them blowing away you can cover them with a wire baking rack, or something similar.

If the weather is good you can leave them like this for three days, by which time even the fleshiest leaf should be so dry it crumbles when you rub it.

If the weather turns, just bring them indoors, and keep them somewhere dry, until the sun appears again.

Store the herbs in airtight jars, and don't forget to label them!

Note 1: Any herb can be dried, but with herbs such as sage and rosemary it is hardly necessary, as they will be there all Winter. Oregano is a classic dried herb. It reduces a good deal with drying, but its flavour becomes much more distinctive. Other herbs which are commonly dried are parsley, mint, Summer savoury, dill, basil, lavender, and bay. You can even try fennel and dill seeds, which are delicious in breads.



The Vegetable Garden in July

Late sowings

There is still time to make late sowings of vegetables such as carrots and French Beans. The seeds should be kept moist after sowing - watering every day if necessary. In fact, lack of water is the main problem for vegetables sown at this time of the year: their roots do not have time to become established before the really dry summer weather sets in. If the summer proves to be wet (which seems unlikely at the moment) or if you are able to water them regularly, however, they ought to

yield a good crop in early autumn. One advantage of July sowings of carrots is that they seem to be less prone to attack by carrot fly.

Vegetables for the Winter

Strange though it may seem, now is the time to start thinking about vegetables for the winter.

Leeks are one of the most popular local vegetables and they do particularly well in this climate. Growers sell bundles of 100 leek plants on the local markets, ready for planting out. A hole should be made with a dibber, about three or four inches deep, it should then be filled with water, and the leek plant dropped in. Many people trim

the ends of the leaves and roots before planting their leek plants. Leeks do well in any soil, but the richer the soil, the bigger the leeks you will get in the winter.

Lambs' Lettuce: Lambs' lettuce is a very popular vegetable across much of Europe. In France it is known as mâche. Its popularity is due to its producing extremely tasty leaves that can be used in salads in the middle of winter.

Seeds should be planted now, in good soil in a sheltered position and watered regularly. They often take up to a month to germinate, and even then germination is often poor and the seedlings do not grow with much vigour. The important thing is not to be discouraged: keep watering the plants and keep them clear of weeds.

They will start to grow in the autumn, and can be picked in the middle of winter - just when the garden has stopped producing any other crops.

Watering

The months of July and August are often dry in Brittany, and in recent years they seem to have been drier than ever. Most older houses, however, have access to a well or to a spring, or were built close to a river.

It is certainly worthwhile to make use of these natural sources of water in the vegetable garden. The cost of a small pump and a length of hose pipe is relatively small when compared to the cost of mains water and the value of the crops that can be harvested from a well-watered Breton garden.

You can take advantage of a few sunny days in July to dry herbs from your garden.



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Mr. Biznuz

Government grants: why are they considered bad for business?

Next time you pay a visit to a small town in Central Brittany conduct a survey of the different makes of car that you see parked beside the road. You will probably find that about half the cars are Renault and that most of the other half are Peugeot/Citroën. A similar survey conducted in a country that does not have its own car industry - such as Belgium or Ireland - would yield quite different results: you would see a much greater range of manufacturers, the most popular make of car would probably be Volkswagen, and there would be many more cars made in the Far East. These findings tend to confirm the widely-held belief that the car industry in France is in receipt of some sort of state assistance. Government help is not always in the form of grants, sometimes it consists of favoured treatment in the awarding of contracts, and sometimes in a regulatory regime that excludes foreign competition.

It would not be true to say that business people do not like government help - they are only human and they find government handouts as attractive as everyone else. The reason why such assistance is considered to be bad for business is that it creates an artificial market making it too easy for a company to sell its products in the home market. It is then difficult for the company to determine whether or not its products are truly competitive and, as a result, it is likely to start falling behind its competitors in technical excellence value for money, or customer service. Sooner or later, consumers realise that they are not getting as good a deal as people in other countries, and the subsidised company suddenly finds itself unable to sell its products either at home or abroad.

Perhaps you are thinking that these issues are not relevant to people with small businesses in Central Brittany, but a detailed analysis of the local business environment shows that the majority of businesses rely to a large degree on some form of state funding - whether it be direct state subsidy, as in the case of farming, indirect state funding, as in the case of businesses that serve the farming industry, or simply due to the fact that a business depends on government contracts for most of its work.

All these companies are vulnerable to foreign competition, and it is not wise to be drawn too deeply into this sort of business culture; it is advisable, instead, to concentrate upon providing customer satisfaction and building as wide a client base as possible.

Next month: The importance to business of a good system of regulation.



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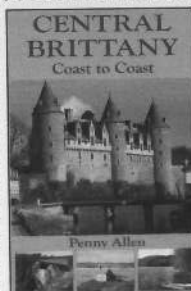
The Breton Point of View
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This is a well-researched, concise history of Brittany, covering the period from the Bronze age to the present day. Its greatest strength is that the author does not try to pretend that History is an objective science - he has a strong belief that there is such a thing as the Breton nation, that Bretons have their own history, and that they have the right to determine their own future - and he makes it clear from the start that the book is written from this perspective.

Even so, he does not shirk from recounting some of the less glorious incidents in Breton history, such as the involvement of the Breton nationalists with the German occupying forces in the Second World War.

The book makes an interesting read whether or not one is familiar with Breton history as it is presented in the text books and is thoroughly recommended to anyone new to the area who is keen to understand more about its history and culture.

This is an English-language version, written by the author for publication at the same time as the French-language version



Central Brittany, Coast to Coast

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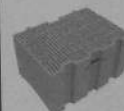
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Wanted / Exchange contd. from page 41

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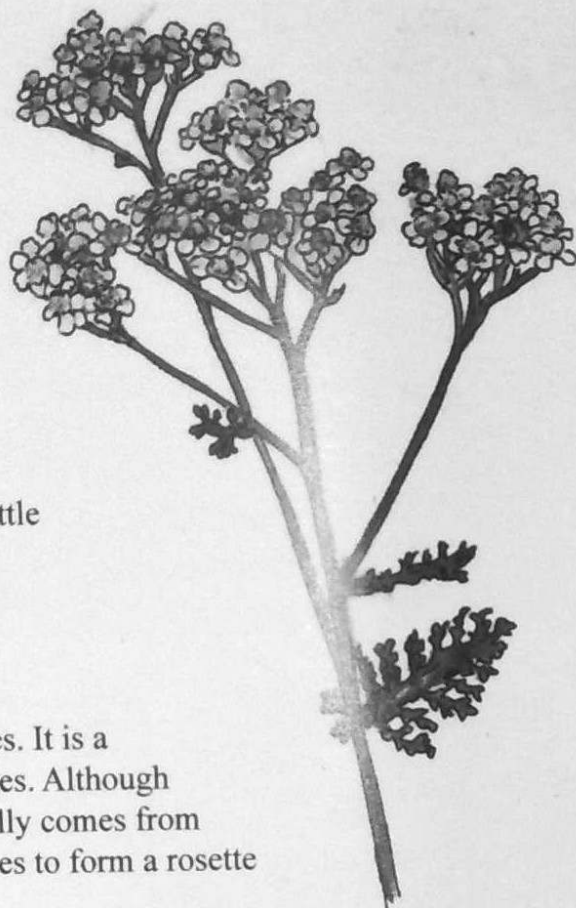
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Yarrow *French: achillée Achillea millefolium*

The feathery pungent leaves could belong to no other plant but yarrow, and the clusters of white flowers, borne on tough stalks are equally unmistakable.

Yarrow is a perennial plant, which spreads by long shoelace-like roots under the ground. It is found in dry places, and flowers throughout the summer.

Thanks to its countless medicinal properties, Yarrow has always found a place in or around peoples' gardens, where it looks after itself, and makes a lovely addition to the flowerbed as well. Sometimes the white flowers are found tinged with a little pink.



Herb Robert *Geranium maculatum*

Herb Robert is a common plant of damp walls and shady places. It is a biennial, and flowers only in its second year – after which it dies. Although giving the appearance of a creeping plant, all the foliage actually comes from one central stalk, which throws out many low-growing branches to form a rosette of vegetation.

The colour of herb robert is quite unmistakable – the stems are dark maroon, the leaves light green; the flowers, which can be seen throughout the Spring and Summer, are pink. The seedpods resemble the bill of a crane, and herb robert is referred to as a cranesbill, together with several other plants with similar seed pods.



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