

Central Brittany

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Journal

MAY 2005

1€

ISSUE 12

Guémené sur
Scorff

Menez Brez

Lame Jobik

The Housing
Market

What's On in May

Jacques Cartier:
discovery of a new world

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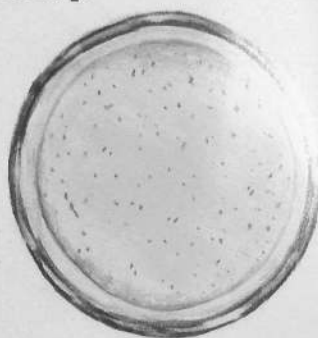
Carrot and Coriander Soup

- Ingredients:**
 1½ lbs (675 g) carrots
 3 tablespoons sunflower oil
 1 onion
 2 medium potatoes, peeled
 2 teaspoons ground coriander
 6 cups vegetable stock
 1 cup fresh coriander leaves
 + 1 tablespoon for garnish
 Salt and freshly ground black pepper

Method:

1. Trim and peel the carrots and cut into medium-sized chunks. Heat the oil in a large heavy-bottomed casserole pan and cook the onion over a low heat until soft.
2. Chop up the potatoes and finely chop the coriander leaves. Add the potatoes to the onion in the pan, cook for a few minutes and then add the carrots and the ground coriander. Cook over low heat for 3-4 minutes, stirring, and then cover.
3. Sauté the vegetables for 8-10 minutes, stirring from time to time to prevent sticking.
4. Add the stock and bring to the boil. Half cover the pan and simmer for another 10 minutes, until the vegetables are tender. Add the chopped coriander and turn off the heat.
5. Liquidise the soup in a food processor, blender, or with a hand-held blender. If the soup is too thick add a little water, until you have the desired consistency. Sprinkle with the remaining coriander and season to taste. Heat over a low heat and serve.

Note: Coriander is still quite difficult to find in the shops in Brittany, but it is easy to grow, see *Tim the Gardener* page 31



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Editorial 3

Editorial

As usual, this issue of the Journal reflects the entrepreneurial skill and enterprise of the English-speaking community of Central Brittany. Ventures featured for the first time include a new spice shop, a new bike shop, a new Ceramic showroom, people setting up in business as builders and gardeners, a phone company, and livery.

The debate about the European constitution seems to now revolve around people's fears that newcomers to a country take jobs from existing residents and then bring down the quality of life by offering a lower quality of work.

In the case of Central Brittany, this certainly is not what is happening. People moving here are not competing against local people for existing jobs, but are creating new ones: this is a process that benefits everyone, and such a job-creation scheme would have cost the government millions of euros if it had been centrally planned.

In the long run, it is not openness that damages an economy, but the opposite, and our region is clearly benefiting from the skills and knowledge that newcomers are bringing with them to the area. *GL*

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A Tree

I think that I shall never see
 A poem lovely as a tree,
 A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
 Against the Earth's sweet, flowing breast;
 A tree that looks at God all day,
 And lifts her leafy arms to pray;
 A tree that may in summer wear
 A nest of robins in her hair;
 Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
 Who intimately lives with rain.
 Poems are made by fools like me,
 But only God can make a tree.

Joyce Kilmer

I Spy in May Beech Catkins

At this time of year, Brittany's beech trees come out in catkins. They are round and furry, on long stalks, and look extremely pretty beside the young yellow-green beech leaves.

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 ENGLISH SPOKEN

Cheapest Phone Rates to and from Brittany?

Ken Kirk-Bayley already had over thirty years experience working in the telecommunications industry when he moved to Brittany ten years ago, and, unlike most other people, did not simply have to put up with being annoyed when he started to receive high phone bills. He set up Primus which now offers some of the cheapest call charges on the market - including a flat rate of 5 cents per minute to anywhere in North America or Europe. Primus via Europhone now also offers mobile phones which give up to 78% savings on call charges and can be used anywhere in Europe.
 For more info call Ken: 02 96 43 33 51

Le Lion / Musicians Wanted

If you are driving between Séglien and Cléguérec or Rostrenen and Pontivy, it is worth stopping at Le Lion, on the crossroads of the D764 and the D18. The bar / restaurant is run by Peter Smith who hails from Jersey and has come to Brittany via a career as an interior designer in the West End of London. Le Lion offers drinks, meals, an excellent cup of coffee, and a warm welcome at any time of the day. Peter is looking for musicians who would be interested in taking part in jamming sessions at Le Lion on Monday evenings.
 Tel: 02 97 38 05 11

Spice Shop Les Épices

Cléguérec
 Welcome news for lovers of Indian and Chinese cooking. Sarah Farrell is opening a spice shop in Cléguérec (opening day May 9th). Sarah has sourced fresh spices, oriental ingredients, and cooking utensils from suppliers in the UK and Paris. Products will also be available online:
 www.les-epices.com.
 34 rue Theodore Huet, 56480, Cléguérec
 02 97 38 10 03

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6 News & Services

The English Book Shop

Josselin
The town of Josselin is home to Central Brittany's first book shop dedicated to new English-language books. Martin and Jennifer Green opened the shop almost a year ago and it is supplied directly by major UK book distributors, which means that prices are competitive and compare well with purchases made on the internet. The English Book Shop is well stocked with a wide range of books including novels, travel books and language courses, and also has an interesting philosophy section and a good collection of classical works.

Cattery

Le Saude
Brian & Carol McDermott have opened a new cattery in the pretty village of Le Saude, 20 minutes from Loudéac and 15 minutes from Lamballe. At present they can accommodate 6 cats and eventually will have room for 12. Each cat has access to an outside run, and all their needs are catered for (toys, scratching boards, etc). The couple have opted to follow the guidelines of the Feline Advisory Bureau in the UK - which are even more stringent than the local requirements. Easily accessible from the N12, N164 and D700. 02 96 34 47 26

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If I am content with what I have.

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News & Services 7

Bike Shop Velocity 29

Huelgoat
Patrick and Caragh Sanders Wright have opened a bike shop in Huelgoat, facing the lake, opposite the campsite. The couple moved to France two years ago and believe that they have found a gap in the market for a specialist bike shop. Velocity 29 offers a complete service - sales, repairs and bike hire. As well as being an expert on mountain bikes, Patrick is well tuned to the needs of family cycling, and can advise on child seats and trailers, etc. Bike hire: adult 10€ per day; child 7€ per day.
35 rue de C. de Gaulle 02 98 99 93 81
www.velocity29.com

Bable

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English/French - French/English classes. An equal number of French and English speakers get together to improve language skills. Weekly during May and June. For more information, contact David Ross 02 96 54 55 69

The Language of Shakespeare

With good cause, English is known as 'the language of Shakespeare' in most European countries.

"They do not love
that do not show
their love."

The Winter's Tale

Send Shakespeare quotes to info@thebj.com

Brittany in 1794

In 1794 Jacques Cambry made a tour of Finistère. The following extract is taken from the book he wrote describing his travels. It gives a vivid picture of the beauties of the Breton countryside.

« Dans la Bretagne, l'habitation des laboureurs est à peu près partout la même, presque toujours elle est située dans un fond, près d'un courtil. Un appenti couvert de chaume conserve les charrues et les instruments du labourage ; une aire découverte, sert à battre les grains. On n'y voit point de granges, les blés battus se déposent dans les greniers de la maison principale, ou se conservent en milon. Autour des bâtiments, règnent des vergers enchanteurs, des champs et des prairies toujours entourées de fossés couverts de chênes ou de frênes, d'épines blanches, de ronces ou de genêts ; on ne voit point dans le reste du monde de paysages plus riants, plus pittoresques. Tous les fossés sont tapissés de violettes, de perce-neiges, de roses, de jacinthes sauvages, de mille fleurs de couleurs les plus vives, d'une incroyable variété ; l'air en est parfumé, l'œil en est enchanté. »

"Wherever you go in Brittany, the homes of the country people are very similar; they are almost always built in a hollow, near to a vegetable garden. A lean-to, covered with thatch, houses the ploughs and the tools; an area open to the sky is used for threshing the corn. You will not see any barns; once threshed, the corn is stored in the attics of the main house, or in a large pile. Around the buildings are enchanting orchards, fields, and meadows, which are always surrounded by ditches, covered with oaks or ashes, hawthorns, brambles or broom; nowhere else in the world will you see countryside more joyful or picturesque. All the ditches are carpeted with violets, snowdrops, roses, bluebells and thousands of the brightest, most incredibly varied flowers. The air is perfumed by them, and the eye is enchanted."

Cambry, Voyage dans le Finistère

Travel Roundup

Speed Ferries

Return fare in May: Boulogne/Dover for a car with up to 6 people: 84 euros return.
www.speedferries.com 0321 10 50 00 & 0044 870 22 00 570

Brittany Ferries

16/3/05 - 6/7/05 Cherbourg/Poolle or Cherbourg/Portsmouth. 5 days in the UK. Return fare: 124€ per person, for 2 people travelling in a car i.e. 248€ total.
Tel: 0825 828 828 or www.brittany-ferries.com

Condor Ferries

www.condorferries.fr 0825 160 300

S.N.C.F

Guingamp / London Waterloo - 130€ return.
Book a few weeks in advance, train leaves Guingamp at 5.43 a.m. and arrives at Waterloo at 1.25 p.m. Changes are at Rennes and Lille.

A day in Paris for 25€ each way ("Prem's" fare)

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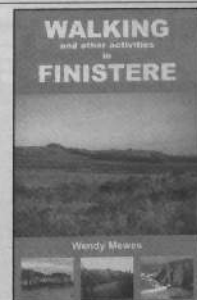
Walking and Other Activities in Finistère

Wendy Mewes

This book starts with the words 'Finistère is a walker's paradise' and this seems to sum up the remarkable impression conveyed by its 128 pages. Finistère must have a greater variety of landscapes and scenery than almost any other comparably-sized region of the world; within its borders are contained spectacular cliff-top walks, beaches, estuaries, moorland, forests, and rolling countryside, and this book offers the perfect way to get to know all of them at first hand.

It describes 36 circular walks in detail; complete with maps, directions and colour photographs of sites of interest, together with information about the time required to complete them, their relative difficulty, where refreshments can be found along the way, and notes of historical interest. Some of the walks take in local towns such as Carhaix, Huelgoat and Châteauneuf-du-Faou. It also contains suggestions for further walks and a guide to other outdoor activities in the region.

A highly recommended guide to the treasures of this wild and unspoilt corner of the world.



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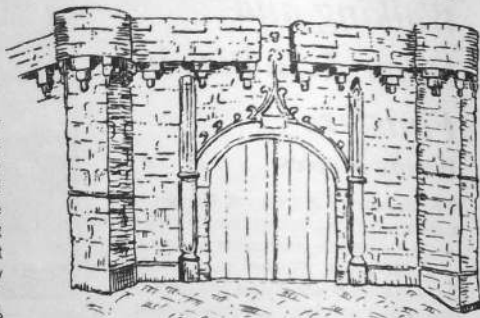
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Guémené sur Scorff

Guémené sur Scorff is one of the most attractive towns in the region. It is situated in the heart of beautiful, wooded countryside and this relative inaccessibility has saved it from too much redevelopment over the past forty or fifty years.

In the Middle Ages, Guémené was an important strategic site, with a large castle guarding the western edge of the domains of the Dukes of Rohan. The town centre still has an unusually large number of distinctive old buildings, making a simple walk up the high street an interesting experience.

Businesses of interest include a traditional Breton baker, the 3 Marchands bar/restaurant, at the top of the hill, which is the centre of the cultural and musical life of the town, and the busy teashop, La Girelle, reviewed opposite.



Very little remains of the old castle at Guémené except a gateway. Instead of leading into the town, it now simply backs onto a private garden.

The 'Brittany'



The Epagneul Breton – or the 'Brittany' as it is known in the US – is a breed of dog that originated in Central Brittany.

The history of the breed is interesting. Early in the 19th century, British sporting gentlemen would come over to France to shoot woodcock, accompanied by their gun dogs, who were mainly English setters. Kenneled with local gamekeepers at the end of the season, the dogs would sometimes escape and mate with the local small black and white French spaniels – the *fougueux* (high-spirited). The resulting offspring combined the qualities of both breeds; they were happy in the home or out hunting, made devoted companions, were very intelligent and had a calm disposition. In 1907 the first Epagneul Breton club was formed in France. The dogs are still bred close to their place

of origin in and around Callac and the Joncours boarding kennels at Kervégant just outside Callac, for example, is home to over a dozen épagueuls.

Joncour Kennels, Kervégant, 22160 Callac. Mme Joncour 02 96 45 59 22 / 06 78 01 87 95 (English spoken.) www.epagneul-breton.com (see advert page 38)

www.thebcj.com

Guémené sur Scorff

Guémené sur Scorff is situated where the D1, from Gourin to Pontivy, crosses the river Scorff.



Top: an old coaching inn on the main street in Guémené.

Above: the rue Bison, which runs through the centre of the town and contains many buildings dating back hundreds of years.

Below: the 3 Marchands, bar and café, serves 10€ meals at lunchtimes.



Teashop Review:

La Girelle



La Girelle, 32 rue Bison, Guémené sur Scorff 02 97 51 27 41

This teashop is in a very pretty stone building, on the main street that runs through Guémené sur Scorff.

The owner, Sian Powell, has succeeded in giving La Girelle the atmosphere of an English teashop. There is a counter at one end where drinks are prepared, and cakes displayed. Specialities include chocolate cake, Victoria sponge, macaroons, Dundee cake, flapjack, and coffee walnut cake, which we particularly enjoyed. Tea and coffee is served in traditional English cups and saucers. There is a tea garden at the back of the shop, which is popular in summer and there are also tables and chairs indoors. Knitting wools and a collection of jewellery are on sale, and these, plus a selection of magazines and an Internet access area (broadband), create a cosy, bustling atmosphere which make the teashop a very pleasant place to visit.

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12 Places to Visit: Menez Brez

Menez Brez



Directions: Menez Brez is just north of the N12 between Guingamp and Louargat. Follow signs from the centre of Louargat. There is plenty of parking close to the summit.

Menez Brez is a famous landmark in Côtes d'Armor and in previous times served as a meeting point, and the site of an annual horse fair. Its summit offers panoramic views over the surrounding countryside, and the sides of the hill are covered by paths and tracks making it an ideal place for a walk in the countryside.



Saint Hervé & Menez Brez

About fifteen hundred years ago there were many sages and hermits living in Brittany. Two of the most well known of these are St Gildas and St Hervé.

At that time one of the rulers of Brittany was a man named Conomar. He had made himself very unpopular by marrying, and then killing, seven wives, and St Gildas summoned him to be judged by a High Court. This was composed of the wisest people in the land, and was to be held on the summit of Menez Brez.

St Hervé was amongst those invited to attend. He was blind and lived many miles away, but he set off as soon as he received the message. Still, he could only travel slowly, and the other members of the High Court all arrived before him. St Hervé was known to be very wise, and St Gildas insisted on waiting until he was present. This decision annoyed the people who were impatient to begin, and one man, in particular, grew very irate. When St Hervé finally appeared, toiling up the hillside, he angrily demanded why they had waited so long for "a poor monk, dressed in rags?".

At these words he was struck with blindness. Everyone implored Hervé to heal him, but the saint replied that he could not do so without fresh water. How were they to find fresh water on the summit of the hill? At last St Hervé hit the ground with his staff, and a spring of pure water came bubbling up out of the earth. The man's sight was restored, and the water continues to gush forth to this day.

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Jacques Cartier: Discovery of a New World 13

Jacques Cartier:

Discovery of a New World

There was a long history of Breton seafarers voyaging to North America before Columbus' epic voyage of 1492, and a question that is often asked is why the new continent was not claimed as a province of Brittany.



JACQUES CARTIER

Jacques Cartier, discoverer of Canada and one of the most famous Bretons of recent times

Early Breton Explorers

There is reason to believe that monks from Ireland and Brittany may have been in the habit of crossing the Atlantic from as early as the ninth century; early manuscripts of a poem describing the adventures of St. Brendan, suggest that he voyaged from Ireland to places where he found either coconuts or varieties of the wild American grape; and there are also stories of monks leaving Britain and Ireland, either to escape plague or Viking invasions, and settling somewhere in the vicinity of modern-day Boston. Whatever the truth of such stories, it is now more or less an established fact that Breton fishermen had been exploiting the fishing banks off Newfoundland for at least sixty years before Columbus crossed the Atlantic, and probably for much longer.

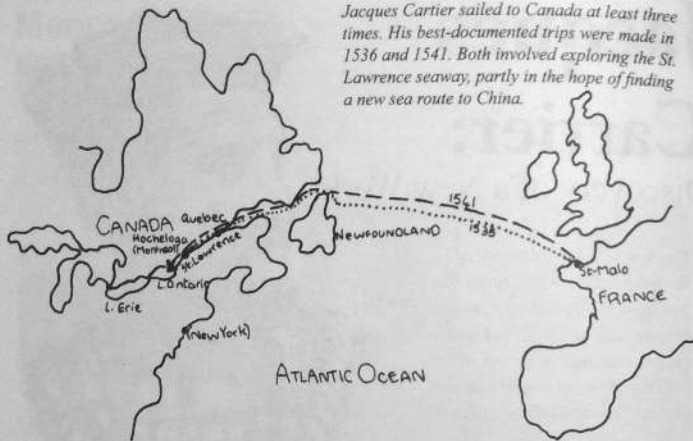
European Explorers of the 1400s and 1500s

There was a difference between the early Bretons who sailed to the shores of Canada for fish, and possibly trade, and a new breed of

'explorers' who emerged in Europe during the fifteenth century. The idea of exploration was closely allied to the new idea of independent European countries, which left kings free to build up their personal power to the maximum limit. Portuguese sailors found a route to India round the coast of Africa making it, briefly, the richest country in Europe, and the Spanish monarchs funded Columbus' trip to America, which ultimately led to huge quantities of gold flowing into Spain, plundered from the Incas and other South American peoples. These exploits left the King of France lagging behind his neighbours, and put him in a receptive frame of mind when Jacques Cartier, a sea captain from St. Malo, came to his court in search of money to finance an expedition to Canada.

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14 Jacques Cartier: Discovery of a New World



Jacques Cartier sailed to Canada at least three times. His best-documented trips were made in 1536 and 1541. Both involved exploring the St. Lawrence seaway, partly in the hope of finding a new sea route to China.

Jacques Cartier

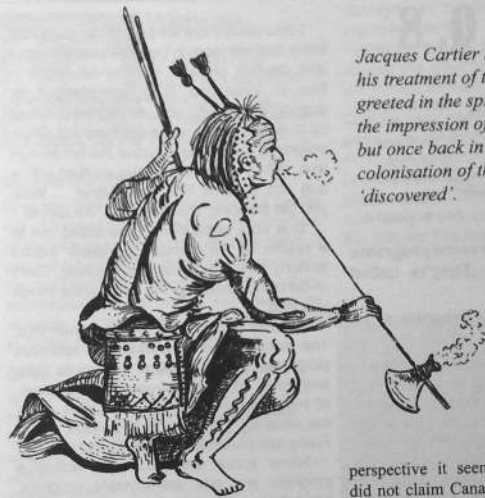
Very little is known about the early life of Jacques Cartier – it was common for sailors of that time to obscure their origins so that they could work for whichever country they chose – but it seems probable that he was born somewhere near Saint Malo, and he was certainly an eminent member of the Saint Malo seafaring fraternity. Records suggest that in his youth he succeeded in passing himself off as Portuguese and spent some time in Brazil. He managed to persuade the French King to finance a trip to 'discover lands and islands where there is reputed to be much gold' and set off with two ships in April 1534. He arrived off the coast of Canada, just twenty days later, in late May. The ease of this crossing has led people to suppose that he was already familiar with the winds and currents for at least part of the way, information that he had gained either from fishermen in St. Malo, or on previous, unofficial trips that he had made himself. On this trip he sailed down the coast of Canada to the St. Lawrence river, made friendly contact with the inhabitants, and went to the extent of

claiming the whole country for France, even though it was clearly already populated. In his written account of his adventures it is plain that Jacques Cartier was overwhelmed by the grandeur and beauty of the landscape, the abundance of produce and the wealth of wildlife. He was also particularly impressed by the nobility of the local people, and, in an effort to rationalise what he had discovered, he suggested that he had perhaps found the descendents of Cain and that Canada was the land to which they had been banished when expelled from the Garden of Eden. He returned to St. Malo in the September of the same year, with no gold, but with two Indian

Canada:

It appears that Jacques Cartier named the new country Canada as a result of a linguistic misunderstanding. In a local dialect Canada means 'home' or 'cabin'. Cartier heard the word so often that he thought it referred to the country.

Jacques Cartier: Discovery of a New World 15



Jacques Cartier has been criticised for his treatment of the Indians. He was greeted in the spirit of peace, and gave the impression of responding in kind, but once back in France he urged the colonisation of the land that he had 'discovered'.

princes and stories that fired the imagination of the whole of France.

Jacques Cartier returned to Canada the following year, and again in 1541. He explored the Saint Lawrence seaway as far as 'Hochelaga' (modern day Montréal), which to his disappointment turned out not to be a fabulous city full of gold, as he had hoped, but a simple township of wooden huts. He failed to find a route to America and the expedition was unable to establish a viable colony as had been planned. He was rewarded with honours, however, when he returned to France, and died during a plague epidemic when he was in his late sixties.

Why Isn't Canada Breton?

Even after the time of Jacques Cartier, most of the trade with Canada was conducted exclusively by Bretons, indicating that perhaps trading links had been existent before his voyages of 'discovery'. From a modern

perspective it seems strange that Brittany did not claim Canada for itself while it was still independent of France, prior to 1532. Brittany, however, was probably never a country, in the sense that we understand the word today. Each big town and each region was almost self-governing and autonomous. It would never have occurred to the people of Saint Malo to claim Canada for themselves, just because their fishermen had sighted land there. In many ways it could be considered regrettable that the peaceful approach of developing trade with the 'new' continent was not given more time to develop, before a breed of monarchs emerged in Europe, eager to expand their power by claiming foreign lands for their own.

Mad eo beva pell ;
Beva mad a zo well
'Tis good to live long ;
But to live well is better.

F. A. Q. 8



Last month's column explained why you need a firewall, and how to install it.

Q: "I've been told that some programs spy on my computer. They're called Cookies. Is this true and are they dangerous?"

A.: There are programs, known as spyware, that are capable of sending data about your activities to others on the Internet. Some are fairly innocuous. Real Player is a "free" media program, similar to Microsoft's excellent Windows Media Player. Whilst you're not watching, it gathers information about your surfing and listening habits. It's part of the price of some free software. Your firewall can block this traffic of course. Some offerings, like file sharing programs, are more insidious and should be avoided.

Cookies are something quite different. They are small pieces of code, usually text files, that can do a wide variety of things. Mostly they are benign, even helpful. Have you ever noticed that some websites seem to remember your name when you revisit them? Clever you might think. All done with cookies! It is possible to create cookies that do nasty things so one should be aware of the danger.

What to do about cookies:

You can disable them in modern browsers like Internet Explorer. However, many websites, especially those of banks and other supposedly secure places, will not operate without cookies. A good Cookie Manager, like that in Mozilla Firefox, can be used to rid oneself of the undesirables, but how can you tell the good from the bad? Then there is still the problem of spyware.

Fortunately there are several programs out there that will search out all these intruders and dispose of them for you. Ad-Aware is free to download (<http://www.lavasoft.de/support/download/>) and, as long as it is kept up to date it will do a fine cleaning job. Other programs are just as effective but not always free. When you see a cookie marked with a bug and a name like "Data Miner"... Well, you get the idea. That's a nasty. Squash it!

One note of caution: I was called out to a reader of CBJ whose computer wasn't working. "It's got a virus or something. Can't understand it because I've done all the things you said."

Actually he'd done a lot more than that. The machine had no firewall, two anti-virus programs, neither of which was up to date, and three different anti-spyware programs; all trying to start at once. This comes under the heading: "Too much of a good thing." Fixing that machine took five hours!

Never install more than one anti-virus program and one anti-spyware program. Keep them both up to date and don't forget that firewall.

Any more questions?

graxwarrior@tiscali.fr

or telephone the CBJ: 02 96 21 52 21



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Website Workshop

Last month we looked at DNS and TLDs, this month we shall be investigating the HTML behind a web page.

Q: What is a HTML?

A: Hyper Text Markup Language is a formal set of instructions that specify the structure of documents for retrieval across the Internet using a browser. The principle is that HTML concentrates on structure rather than appearance, which makes the files more reusable and leaves the visual details to the end-user software (i.e. the browser).

Q: So what does HTML look like?

A: All HTML web pages will have the following layout as a minimum - all items between '<' and '>' are called tags:

```
<html>
<head>
<title> </title>
</head>
<body>
</body>
</html>
```

These are all double tags, meaning they all have a start tag and an end tag. The HTML tags (<html> </html>) are used to start the web page and end it. Everything about that website will be held within these two tags which is why they are at the beginning and the end of the HTML code.

The head tags (<head> </head>) will contain various information about the website which will be read by the browser but not displayed on screen. For example, Meta tags are used by search engines when searching for relevant sites. Meta tags are very important and will hold information like your site keywords, description, etc.

The title tags (<title> </title>) hold the title of the page. When you are next online look at the blue bar at the top of the web browser; you will see the title for that particular page (if it has one - some don't). Whatever is

displayed in the blue bar is what's held within the title tags.

Finally, the body tags (<body> </body>) will contain the main body of the website. This will include all the text, pictures, links etc.

Q: How can I see the HTML of a web page I am looking at?

A: If you right-click anywhere within the browser (except on an image), then left-click View Source from the popup menu, a new window will open and you will see what the browser has translated for you.

Malcolm Wearing
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Letters

Brittany Ferries

Has anybody noticed that Brittany Ferries no longer advertise routes from le Havre but only from St. Malo? Now that they seem to have a virtual monopoly on crossings from the western part of the south coast of England it appears that this route is to be dropped, leaving it open to the company to get top dollar for crossing the river.

Brittany Ferries also seems to sell items in their onboard 'duty free' shops at more than they cost in France - a fact which may not be noticed by first time passengers. It is about time that Brittany Ferries did a little more for its customers on the southern routes to Brittany, who do not want the long trip to Calais.

Regards
Colin Wallace

Colour Cover

Congratulations on the first colour cover for the CBJ, it looks great. The CBJ is avidly read in my household, your details on places to see and local history are excellent, this sort of information is not to be found in the usual guide books, the CBJ takes about 10 days from the 1st of the month to fall through our letter box in the UK.

Regards and Best Wishes,
Ken Gough.

Re English for Local Children April Journal

We have received several replies to last month's letter regarding English for local children and have forwarded them to Michel Rémond. He will respond personally and plans to arrange funding, etc. with l'Education Nationale and the Conseil Général so that he can proceed with the idea.



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Points of Interest

European Constitution Referendums

Ironically, even though 'non-French' EU nationals are allowed to vote in European elections in France, they are not allowed to vote in the referendum on the constitution - because it is a national election. Some CBJ readers find themselves disenfranchised altogether from voting on the constitution because they have lived outside their country of origin for a period that also disqualifies them from voting in national elections there. (a period of over 15 years in the case of the UK).

Bourbriac

Comments about the recent demonstration in Bourbriac rumble on. Readers who have contacted the CBJ are generally outraged that such a pleasant and welcoming town should have been stigmatised as being 'anti-British'. Feelings seem to be running particularly high against the way that the issue was treated in the British press.

TV Licences / Hidden Taxes

A measure to levy a supplement of over 300€ on each television in gites, B&Bs and hotels has been slipped into a recent budget. This makes it uneconomic for people who rent out their gîtes for only a few weeks per year to offer their guests a television - an example of how hidden taxes depress sales (TVs in this case), erode the quality of services, and ultimately even lead to a loss of tax revenue.

TV licence fee collection is enforced by cross checking records of TV buyers against licence holders - there is no pretence that such a thing as a 'TV detector van' exists, as in the UK.

Please send letters to:
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info@thecbj.com 02 96 21 52 21

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Training / Administration C.O.B. Formation

Rostrenen & Carhaix

Help for English-speaking people with administrative issues such as tax, health, benefits, insurance, etc. plus advice on finding a job. The scheme is run in association with the local employment offices and is partly funded by the European Union. It is run on a group basis with ten people attending 12 three-hour sessions together. The various topics will be covered by an English-speaking trainer and by invited officials from the relevant departments.

The course will be conducted in English. Contact Anne-Sophie Oudin: Tel 02 96 29 26 44
Cost per person 96.50€ (for the course plus two individual meetings with the trainer).

French Classes

for beginners & improvers
Peter Mickelborough BA(hons), MSc
Pempoulrot, 22110 Kergrist Moëlou
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www.thecbj.com

20 What's On

What's On

Sunday p.m. from 1st May - Sunday 29th May
Château de Kerminaouet, 29910 Trégunc.
Exhibition of paintings, photos and sculptures
Castle, & park open every Sun, afternoon from
2 p.m. to 6 p.m. Tea shop Sundays, 2 p.m. - 6
p.m. 02 98 50 19 68 kerminaouet@wanadoo.fr ;
www.chateaubretagne.info

Wednesday May 4th
Château de Kerminaouet (see above for
more details). Artists' workshop - every first
Wednesday of the month to October. For
painters, sculptors and photographers - 12.50€.

Thursday May 5th. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
Pommerit Jedy (20 mins Guingamp) Country
show in the Lycée CFA. 10 a.m. - 6 p.m. includes
tractor pulling, tree surgery demonstration,
country crafts and lots more.

Thurs. May 5th - Sun May 8th 1 p.m. - 6 p.m.
Rhododendron Festival at Trevarez, St
Goazec.(bet. Châteauneuf du Faou & Spezet)
Plant sale; guided tours of the collection; plant
workshops for children. adults: 4.30€.
www.trevarez.com or 02 98 26 82 79

Thursday 5th May - Sun. 8th May.
Poullaouën & Gourin: 17th International Festival
of Popular Clarinet. Clarinet players from all over
the world gather for concerts and competitions.
Thurs.: Poullaouën: Salle polyvalente: 2.30 p.m.
concert, followed 4.30 p.m. Fest Deiz;
Fri. to Sun: Glomel. Includes open-air
competition (free to all) in Glomel town centre
Sunday 10 a.m. www.clarinete-populaire.com

Friday 6th May - Sun. 8th May. Fri. 8.30 p.m.;
Sat. 8.30 p.m.; **Sun. 2.30 p.m.**
P'tit Cirk (Little Circus). Glomel. Lasts 70
minutes. Price 5€. Big tent behind the Mairie,
Glomel.

Sunday May 8th 9 a.m. - 7 p.m.
12th Annual Plant Festival, Kervézennec water
gardens (jardins d'eau), Maël Carhaix. Admission
4€/under 12s free.

Sunday May 8th 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Used book and bric-a-brac sale, Le Poteau,
Corlay. Live auction (items wanted) and
paintings. Also 3 course lunch - please book.
Tel/fax: Ray & Yvonne on 02 96 45 79 11

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La Fourmi Rouge
(The Red Ant)
Bar Terrace
Breton Beer
20 rue Portz-en-Haie Le Fauouët

Au Rendez-Vous
Des Celtes
In the past month we have served...
Tiger Prawns with Honey & Ginger Sauce
Tuna Steak with Capers & Anchovies
Chicken & Bacon Salad, Lemon Dressing
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Provencale Vegetable Bake
...AND YOU THOUGHT WE JUST DID
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Sunday May 8th 5 p.m.
DVD of Maharaji talking to American journalist
Burt Wolf. 55 minutes. Hotel Relais du Roy,
Guingamp. Town centre. Entrance through
stone arch at left of building.
www.knowthyself-bzh.net

Saturday May 14th 7 p.m.
Plourac'h (near Callac, region 22) Lively
country ramble, with Burkina-Faso storyteller
Robert Nana, and Irish and Breton music.....and
crepes! 5, 7 & 13 km circuits. Booking from 2
p.m. at the school 5€ / 2€ (children under 12)

Saturday May 14th 8 p.m.
Haut Corlay (10 mins Rostrenen dir. Quintin)
Fest Noz at the Manoir Coat Favan with Breton
bands Sonnerien Du and Caré Manchot.

Sunday May 15th 4 p.m. - 7 p.m.
Good Time Jazz at the Bar Tal Ar Pont,
Châteauneuf du Faou (Tel: 02 98 81 84 75)
Lively, entertaining jazz in a great Anglo-French
atmosphere. Arrive early...it gets packed! Next
to the bridge in Châteauneuf. 5€ / 2€ (students).


Saturday 21st May evening
La Détente (past Calanhel quarry, 10 mins
Callac) La Mystique Naturelle - live music
with Patrick Persée - inspired and versatile
rock/reggae musician from Réunion. Admission
free. Mussels & chips - 8 € - menu available.

Saturday 28th & Sunday 29th May.
Open day. La Jardinerie Hollandaise. Le Gariy,
56480 Ste Brigitte 10 a.m. - 7 p.m. Special
selection of plants and flowers. Free advice,
bar, food, music.

Sunday May 29th 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Used book and bric-a-brac sale. Manoir du
Launay, Langoat (nr Perros Guirec). 3-course
lunch (please book). Fantastic venue - dog
shows, clay pigeon shoots etc. planned for
summer. Tel Ray & Yvonne on 02 96 45 79 11

Sunday June 5th 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Book and Boot Sale. Carolann's, Carnoët. Free
tables. Hot food available - by popular demand
- pies and pasties. Friendly atmosphere.
02 96 21 54 62

Please send information for 'What's on' to
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Central Brittany Journal, BP4, 22160 Callac
02 96 21 52 21



LAME JOBIK

Once upon a time there was an old man who had worked hard all his life, and was now taking his last breaths. His wife, his eldest son, and his youngest son were all stood about his bed, and he spoke to each of them in turn.

To his wife he said, "Do not forget me."

To his eldest son, Matau, he said, "Work hard and be brave."

To his youngest son, Jobik, he said, "Be patient and hope."

After this he passed away. This advice was all he had to leave his family, for they were very poor.

Eight days after the funeral Jobik was lying in the box bed. He had been crying all day over his father, but it was now nearly midnight, and he and everyone else were fast asleep. Suddenly he heard a noise, and then a voice calling "Jobik, Jobik". He stuck his head out of the box bed into the room. It was dimly lit and he thought he saw his father sitting beside the table. He wanted to run and embrace him, but then he grew frightened and hid his head beneath the bedclothes.

The next morning his mother and brother did not believe him when he told them what he had seen.

"Why, you should have asked him what was the matter," they laughed. "He must want to tell you something."

The next night the spirit appeared again.

"How can I help you, Father?" said Jobik.

"Ah, my son," said the old man, "I promised when I was alive to make a pilgrimage to Quelven, but I did not keep my word. Please fulfil my pledge and make the pilgrimage yourselves." So saying he disappeared.

Jobik told his mother and brother what had happened, and this time they did believe him.

"Very well," said his mother. "When the good weather comes your brother and I will go to Quelven. You can stay here and look after the house while we are away."

Poor Jobik was lame and walked very slowly, so he was always left behind. This time, however, he was determined to go to Quelven. When the day came he arose very early and said that he was going hunting in the forest. He took his little sling and set off along the forest paths, in the direction of Quelven. Towards evening he lost his way and found himself in a tangled thicket. The stars were appearing and he could hear the cries of wild animals. Growing afraid he climbed a tree, and hid amongst the branches.

After a while he saw a light coming towards him. It was a lantern that hung from the hat of a giant. He was carrying an ox over his shoulders, and he sat down at the foot of Jobik's tree and began to roast it over a fire.

Jobik saw all this with dismay. He did not want the giant beside him all night and he decided to chase him away. He slipped a pebble into his sling, and fired it at the giant's face. The pebble hit his nose but bounced off like a rubber ball on a wooden table. The giant scratched himself and muttered:

"The flies are biting hard tonight. No doubt there is a storm brewing."

Jobik climbed lower and fired the next pebble above the giant's ear. The giant raised his head and saw Jobik in the tree.

"Oh, so it's you, little one, who is throwing hazel nuts at me," he said. "Stop those tricks and

come and join me. We can eat and then attend to business.

He took Jobik in his huge hand and set him on the ground. He would have shared the ox with him, but the boy could not eat it, so the giant ate it all. When he had finished he dropped Jobik into his knapsack and set off at a great speed. Mountains, deserts and valleys passed by in the blink of an eye, and Jobik could hear the giant's breath coming and going like a pair of bellows. At length they stopped beside a beautiful castle, surrounded by a high wall.

"Do you see that castle, little one?" asked the giant. "I want you to help me get over the walls. Take these three eggs and climb into the courtyard. There you will find a great serpent with a blue mark on its forehead. Throw these eggs at it and take care not to miss."

Jobik obeyed and when he entered the courtyard he hurled the eggs at the serpent. It fell down dead and he called out "I have done it."

"Very good," said the giant. "Now fetch a pickaxe from the castle and make a hole in the wall for me to come in by."

Jobik began hacking at the wall and when the hole was large enough the giant thrust in his head. Soon Jobik became very weary.

"I am tired," said Jobik, "can't you squeeze through?"

The giant pushed in his shoulders but could go no further. He made a supreme effort and broke free, but the wall came tumbling down on top of him.

Seeing that he was dead, Jobik breathed a sigh of relief; he was glad to be rid of this troublesome companion. He entered the castle and passed through many beautiful rooms. Everything was silent, and there was no one to be seen except in the last room. Here he found a beautiful young girl with her head resting on a table, fast asleep. Beside her lay a handkerchief and a snuff box. Jobik put these in his pocket, then, fearing he would waken the maiden, left the castle and re-entered the forest. He wandered for nearly a month, until at last he met his mother and brother, returning from their pilgrimage. They were surprised and angry when they saw him, and insisted that he come back to the village with them.



26 Lame Jobik

One evening they came to the end of the forest through which they had been walking for several days. Beside the road stood a beautiful house, which had just been built.

"It is wonderful how quickly things happen here," said Metau. "On our way that house wasn't even there - and now it is furnished and inhabited."

What is more, over the doorway was a sign which read:

"Here food and drink are free;
To all who tell a wonderful tale of adventure."

"Let us go in," said Metau. "I'll tell enough tales to earn us a night's board and lodging."

When they entered, the owner of the house asked them if they knew any interesting stories.

"Oh yes," said Metau.

"Then eat your fill," said the owner.

When they had finished Jobik said that he also knew a story.

"You, poor simpleton," said his mother and brother, laughing.

"And why not?" cried their host. "Something could have happened to him that you know nothing of. Tell us your story, child."

So Jobik told them about how he had left the house and walked through the forest, and about his meeting with the giant.

"Really," said Metau. "How can we be expected to believe such nonsense?"

"Easily, continue my child," said their host.

Jobik told them all about the giant's death, about how he had entered the castle and found the slumbering maiden and about how he had taken the handkerchief and snuffbox.

"Do you still have them?" asked their host.

"Yes, of course," said Jobik and pulled them out of his pocket.

Their host went to a door, opened it, and led out a beautiful young girl.

"This is your deliverer, my child," he said to her.

The maiden ran to Jobik and began to thank him. "I will never be able to repay you," she said.

"For many years I have been imprisoned in that castle, guarded by the serpent, and every day the giant tried to break his way in and slay me.

Their deaths set me free, and my only regret was that I did not know who was my saviour. I decided to build this house, and set up that sign, in the hope that he would pass this way. Now here you are, and it is my turn to do all I can to thank you."

The maiden kept her word. She gave Jobik lands and farms, and to the amazement of his mother and brother he became the richest man for twenty leagues around.

He behaved generously to his family, and he gave Metau one of his farms, and put his mother in charge of his affairs. As for his father, he continued to honour his memory for all the days of his life.



Aesop's Fables

After a while the man paid a visit to the daughter who had married the gardener...

There was once a man who had two daughters. One daughter married a gardener, the other a potter.

So, my child, how are things with you? How is your business?

We lack nothing, Father. I have only one thing to ask of the Gods, and that is plenty of rain for the vegetables.

A little later the man went to visit his other daughter who had married the potter...

And how are you, my child?

Everything is to my liking. I have only one wish and that is for the weather to stay sunny, then all our pots will dry.

Now look at my dilemma! One daughter wants bad weather, the other good - so with whom should I join my prayers?

Word Search

Find the 71 languages hidden in the grid below.

Words can run forwards, backwards, up, down, and diagonally

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A Year in Brittany:

Market Gardening nr Carhaix

WANTED Ideally, teacher of Physics and A&E nurse to run B&B and market gardening business in beautiful countryside. Would suit friendly couple seeking to improve quality of life. Must have sound knowledge of horticulture.

We waited 25 years for this advert but in the end we came to France to chance our arm, and have now been here for over a year, and loving every minute of it. We didn't come here to retire, well not yet anyway. No, we came here to realise an ambition to run our own business and be independent, as far as is possible these days, and yet avoid becoming hermits. Our property is situated in *La Croix Neuve*, a small hamlet en route D49 equidistant between Maël

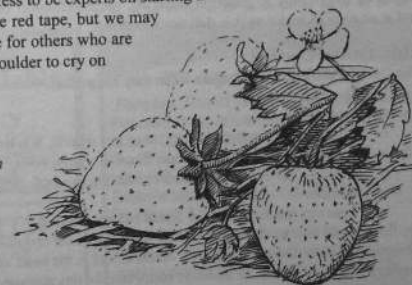
Carhaix and Carhaix and opposite a converted railway station. Over the last year we have been developing a soft fruit and plant growing enterprise in conjunction with a bed and breakfast business. Establishing a business in England is no easy task but here in France, the added problems of language and the cultural differences, coupled with the tangle of French bureaucracy have made the job, to say the least, interesting. However, thanks to a partner with a good deal of determination and an aptitude for paperwork we are in good heart, having survived one year, and are ready for the rigours of another growing season.

We now have 2000 strawberry runners of two types, and four different varieties of raspberry, amounting to 1200 canes. This year it is unlikely that we will be able to offer pick your own strawberries or raspberries, simply because the plants are very young and are unlikely to produce the required volume of fruit, but we have a good range of plants for sale, and will have soft fruit as it comes in season. We have set up a shop area on our premises, open 7 days a week, from which we hope to sell the majority of our plants and fruit, but if all else fails you may well see me at one of the many local markets in the area, encouraging the local French population to *Buy British*. Um, maybe not the best slogan for these parts.

After just one year we don't profess to be experts on starting a business or rummaging through the red tape, but we may be able to offer some useful advice for others who are starting up or, at least, provide a shoulder to cry on if needs be.

Peter Coomber

A full list of bedding plants, vegetable plants, herbs and perennial plants, can be seen on Peter and Jean Coomber's website: www.holidayinbrittany.org
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lagrandemaison2@wanadoo.fr



Vegetable Gardening in May

It is still not too late to plant almost any of the major vegetable crops - including carrots, beetroot, lettuce, potatoes, etc. - and the beginning of May is the ideal time for planting sensitive crops such as sweetcorn, courgettes and French beans. The main task this month is, however, to weed and thin sowings made in April, and to water seedlings if there is a spell of dry weather.

Growing Courgettes

Given good timing, Brittany provides almost perfect conditions for growing courgettes. The plants require rich soil, warm weather and plenty of water during their first few months of life.

Plants bought from garden centres have often been forced and are lacking in vitality, and it is best to grow your own plants from seed. Sow the seeds in pots, indoors, at the beginning of the month, let the seedlings have as much light as possible, and plant them out at the end of May, or when you are sure that summer weather has arrived. Each plant needs plenty of space - plant them about three feet apart - and the soil should be as rich as possible - you can plant them directly into well-rotted compost if you have any. If all goes well, in a few months' time each plant will be producing a courgette every other day.

Elderflowers

In late May and June the elder trees come into flower, and the hedgerows stand out with the unmistakable masses of frothy white blooms so characteristic of the tree. Their smell is quite a recognisable being extremely strong and sweet - the scent of summer days and sunshine. The flowers have been used since ancient times, and probably have more uses than any other blossom.

Their ability to soothe sunburn has been acknowledged by scientists, and they are used as an ingredient in modern skin ointments and eye lotions. Their other uses are so numerous that it would be impossible to mention them all, but elderflower cordial is a long-standing favourite, and is as easy to make as it is delicious to drink.

Elderflower Cordial:

2 oz (50 g) elderflowers, pick them when they are perfect, without any dead blossoms

2 - 3 oz (50 - 75 g) sugar

1 pint (600 ml) water

1. Shake the flowers well to get rid of any insects. It is best not to wash them, as this will remove much of the fragrance. Place in a large bowl.
2. Dissolve the sugar in the water and bring to a boil. Boil for 1 minute, then pour over the flowers.
3. Leave to infuse until cold. Strain before drinking.

The flowers can also be dried and kept to make tea all the rest of the year. The steam that rises from hot water and elderflowers completely clears a cold in the head, and is also said to purify the skin. A couple of elderflowers can be added to bathwater for this purpose.

If you feel like trying a rather unusual recipe for elderflowers, you can dip the heads in a thin batter of flour and water, then deep fry them until golden-brown. Served with sugar, they make a delicious and interesting dessert.

Chicory

It is easy to grow vegetables for the summer months; the challenge for the committed gardener is to grow produce that can be picked in the winter and chicory is one of the principal winter vegetables grown in this area.

Chicory is called 'endive' in French, whilst the plant which is called endive in English is called 'chicorée' in French. Confusion is exacerbated by their both being rather bitter-tasting, lettuce-like plants.

Chicory, however, is not grown for its summer leaves, but for its 'chicons' which grow in the winter if the plant is kept in the dark. Producing chicons is not difficult, but the process can appear to be daunting if you have not done it before. For a beginner, it is probably best to take one step at a time.

Chicory Month by Month: May

May is the first month of the year in which chicory can be sown. Select a site with deep soil, free of stones, and rich in vegetable matter. Make sure the ground is well weeded and that the surface has been broken down to a fine tilth by raking and hoeing. Sow the seed fairly thinly in rows 8 in (20 cm) apart. Further sowings can be made in June.

If you want to grow really good coriander, then here is the way to go about it: plant the seeds now, and when they start to flower in about one month's time, just leave them be. By the time Autumn comes round all the seeds should be ripe, and then you can pull up the plants and put them on the compost heap. Where the plants flowered, and wherever the compost is spread, you will have coriander growing.



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32 Gardening

Oregano is a perennial herb, which grows like mint, but can be picked throughout the winter. It has a strong but pleasant taste, which gives dishes that unmistakable flavour of the Mediterranean.

Seeds planted in spring will produce plants for the following year, but old plants can easily be divided.



Barnhaven Primroses

If you are going to make a trip to the north coast of Brittany, it may be worth stopping off to visit the Barnhaven Primroses nurseries in St. Michel les Grèves. The company is a renowned specialist in the production and preservation of primrose varieties, and sells its seeds all over the world.

02 96 35 68 41 www.barnhaven.com

**Gardens of Kervézennec
Maël Carhaix
12th Annual Plant Festival**

Maël Carhaix is unusual in that it is one of the few small communes of Central Brittany to have a park and gardens. The 'Gardens of Kervézennec' are just outside the village; they were created 12 years ago on 25 acres of boggy wasteland, and are now tended by a fulltime gardener - Frédéric Tasset - along with a team of dedicated volunteers.

Fed by local streams, the garden has bridges, shaded walkways and many varieties of aquatic plants, trees and shrubs, and wildlife - including ducks! Everyone is welcome to visit whenever they wish and admission is free.

This year the gardens will host its 12th Annual Plant Festival on May 8th, 9 a.m. - 7 p.m. Last year 3000 people attended the festival which includes displays by local craftspeople and stalls run by local growers and nurseries. Crêpes and coffee are also available.

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Nature in Brittany: Hawthorn 33

Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna*

Breton: Spenn Gwenn French: Aubépine

Hawthorn is one of the great treasures of the landscape. In early spring, while many of the trees are still dormant, the

hawthorn buds have split open, and the tree is covered in its tender, bright-green foliage. As spring turns into summer, out bursts the hawthorn into bloom, the pinky-white blossom covering the plant like a sheet. The flowers fade and wither, and for a time the hawthorn is quite unnoticeable, until in autumn the green haws ripen to a rich red, and the tree is once



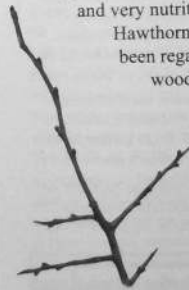
again ablaze.

The hawthorn is not a forest tree, and it never reaches a very great size; yet as a hedgerow plant it has long been a favourite, for it seems that there is no better thing for enclosing livestock than a well-trimmed hawthorn hedge. The tree adapts itself very well to regular cutting, and will make a strong barrier, with the added advantage of natural barbs (the thorns), and besides, the leaves are relished by all animals, being good to eat and very nutritious.

Hawthorns have been recorded to live to very great ages, and have long been regarded as sacred trees, which should not be cut down lightly. Their wood is very dense, and burns extremely hotly. In a thunderstorm, an

old rhyme recommends that it is the hawthorn under which one should seek shelter:

*"Beware of the oak,
It draws the stroke;
Avoid the ash,
It counts the flash;
Creep under the thorn,
It can save you from harm."*



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The Housing Market

The property market in Central Brittany can appear to be quite baffling at times - prices have, on average, doubled over the past five years but there are still thousands of houses standing empty across the region - but it does follow some basic underlying rules.

Ultimately, the cost of homes in the area is pegged to the fact that building land is plentiful and cheap - typically costing no more than 10€ per m², compared to 30€ per m² in a large town such as Guingamp, and 300€ per square metre anywhere within 20 km of Paris.

This means that a spacious, well-situated plot of building land costs no more than 10 000€; a price that would be unthinkable in countries such as the UK or Holland. Building costs range from 300€ to 360€ per m² of living space which means that a new, high-spec, 3 bedroom house set in a large garden would cost a total of around 100 000€. Traditional, stone-built houses have acquired a premium in recent years and a stone house of comparable size and renovated to a similar standard as a new house would cost a third more - 135 000€ for a 3-bedroom property in a good position.

The cost of traditional houses in need of renovation has increased dramatically in recent years: a property that may have cost 20 000 to 30 000€ in the late 1990s would now cost 100 000€ - the price being determined by the difference between the value of the house when renovated and the cost of required building work.

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36 Property: The Housing Market

Local Variation

The above figures reflect the overall picture, but there are wide variations in property prices within the region: there is strong demand for houses in towns such as St Nicolas du Pelem, Bourbriac, or Mûr de Bretagne which have all the modern services, but there are still many isolated properties in smaller, more remote towns and villages. People are often prepared to pay extra for an unusual property or one in a particularly scenic location.

Why Have Prices Risen?

People moving from the UK may be accustomed to the idea that property prices rise in excess of inflation, but this has not been the pattern in Brittany in the past. The factors that cause house prices to rise are often difficult to determine and have more to do with government fiscal policies than any local factors. Current price rises across France may be due to an effort to bring the country more into line with its neighbours by shifting borrowing from public debt to private debt, by making

more funds available for mortgages. Locally, the exceptional rise in prices over the past few years has been due to the price differential between Central Brittany and areas closer to the coast being eroded. Five years ago country properties were valued at about half the level of properties that were 15 to 20 km from the coast, now they fetch around 75% of the price of properties in such areas.

This may be due to people not being able to afford the more expensive coastal properties or it may be that people are coming to appreciate the qualities of this beautiful region. In either event, Central Brittany is no longer an area of rock-bottom house prices.

Thanks to Armel Moizant, L'Immobilier des Tourelles for information regarding the current state of the property market. For anyone uncertain about how to proceed in buying or selling a local property, Armel points out the advantage of using a local immobilier who has to negotiate a fair price, agreeable to both buyer and vendor, in order to retain goodwill in the community.

Building & Property Services

see also pages 6, 37, 39, 40, 43 & 44

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Common Toad

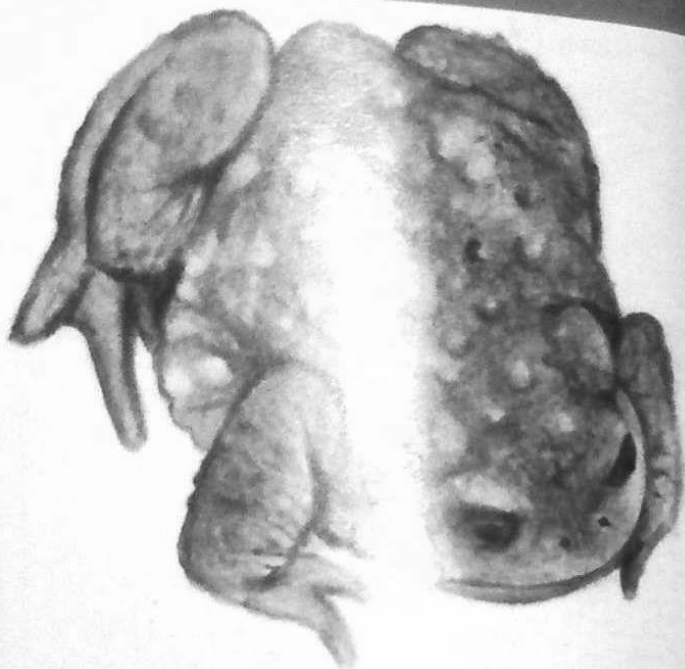
(*bufo bufo*)

French: crapaud commun

Breton: tousseg

It is not difficult to see a toad. They like to live in gardens and when spotted, will assume a defence posture with head down and legs outspread, rather than run away. They will also release powerful toxins from the lumps on their backs, to put off predators - although hedgehogs and birds of prey do not seem to be deterred.

Toads are always welcome in the garden, where they live in shallow burrows. They have a voracious appetite for slugs, earwigs and other harmful creatures, which they will seize with their long, sticky tongue as they sit and wait for prey outside their burrow. Toads hibernate in winter, under old logs, woodpiles, dead leaves, or any other suitable place. It is not known how long they can live to, but an average lifespan seems to be at least forty years!



Toads can be up to 15 cm long, and almost as wide. They have red eyes with horizontal slits, and unlike frogs, their skin is dry rather than wet.



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