



## **Marilyn on The Celtic Media Festival**

Very excited about the Celtic Media Festival, it's extremely flattering to have been selected. Just to be among the finalists for the radio documentary series is extraordinary. It's wonderful publicity for us.

But it also reminds me of the long, long road we've gone down to get there. When we started four years ago there was a lady from Saint Gwenn rang me and said that she had decided, had a dream, there should be an English speaking radio in Brittany, what could AIKB do to help? I had absolutely no idea. I went to the first meeting and I thought that nobody had actually thought about how the French were going around doing it and they were sort of applying knowledge they had from the UK to France. Which is, normally, exactly the opposite of what you have to do. So I suggested I did a bit of research and I realised that the best idea was to have an associative radio. Associative radios exist in France and they have the right to have air-wave. To have ways of transmitting. You just can't start a radio station unless you've got somewhere to transmit from.

So the easiest thing seemed to me to inform myself by visiting these different associative radio stations. They were absolutely wonderful, they picked up the idea very quickly and I was very amused because they said, all the ones I visited were Breton. Basically their vocation was to speak quite a lot of Breton during the day, said 'Hey, you too, you're a minority language why don't you join us.' So that was very encouraging. They also taught me that the wavelengths are only up for bidding, I think it's every three, four, five years. I can't remember but it had just been attributed to people and so there was no question of trying to get your own radio stations set up for at least three years.

Then there was a series of adventures that followed on. One of our members had worked in forces radio with the British army in Germany and she knew what she was doing and she was excited by the project and she started in her kitchen basically conceiving the programs and recording them and editing them and it was decided we were going out with a different programme for a quarter of an hour every week, which would be broadcast daily. That was very ambitious. Sandra Marks who I really would like to thank for her work absolutely ground herself into complete discomposure I think so much hard work getting this all together but she did do some wonderful programmes and she got some very talented people to help her.

When she decided to go back to the UK there was a bit of panic stations knowing what we were going to do next. One of the people who had been helping us called Paul Master, he accepted to pick up the gauntlet. However

he had not the technical knowledge that Sandra had and it proved to be a big struggle and without the help of RKB and Radio Bro Gwened technically we wouldn't have thrived. Henry Douglass then followed on and he too put in a tremendous amount of work. By the we had decided that the radio station should be in Gouarec where people could come in and that would be the only way to rebuild the team and Henry was there right at the beginning of that and when he too went off for long months, and we knew that was going to happen right from the start Elaine Agrell took over and since she's been there the team has just flourished. Our decision to a half an hour broadcast once a month was really coming down to reality, what we were capable of doing to a sufficiently good standard but we were far from thinking that one day we would be able to have an award or the possibility of having won an award at the Celtic Media Festival.

Jane and Pdraig Coyle are professional radio people and they chose three of their programmes and put it together in an hour long version and my goodness we got there. We got to the bottom of the steps. I should think its extremely unlikely we'll get to the top of the steps but getting that far after all this story I've been telling you is pretty amazing. I think we should really thank everybody right from the beginning up to now who helped us get there, That includes obviously people who helped us financially we've had money from the Conseil Général, from the CCKB and from European funding, and to thank obviously Christian Rivoalen and Cecile Gouaré for their tremendous output and as you'll hear every week Bruno Blanchat once a technician now a radio star is putting in such humour and input into the links we have with the French language and a touch of Breton too.