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Singing Toad Teaches Schoolchildren 'Beautiful Jersey' in Jèrriais

Jersey's secret intelligence agency known as the Special Toad Service has given a mission to local students to learn the song and help save our local language.

Children in Jersey's primary schools have been given the opportunity to learn how to sing the popular anthem 'Beautiful Jersey' in Jèrriais – and they are being taught the song by a singing toad. Agent Cliémentinne – who is apparently the chief of the secret James-Bond style organisation known as the Special Toad Service – has appeared in a new pair of videos calling on all children to help them in a new mission to save Jèrriais, starting with the well-known song.

In the first video the feisty and authoritative toad describes the roots and history of Jèrriais. She explains that the hundreds of stories and poems and songs we have in Jèrriais will all be lost if no-one speaks the language. She recruits local musician Kit Ashton to help explain why 'Beautiful Jersey' is such a significant song. In part two of the videos Kit and Cliémentinne sing together, slowly at first, and then again at an upbeat tempo.

Kit Ashton, who is the lead singer of local band Badlabecques says: “It is truly an honour to work with Agent Cliémentinne and to have been asked to help the Special Toad Service with this mission. It’s about time our local kids got the chance to learn this important song, and it’s really incredible timing too as the project also happens to fit in perfectly with my PhD research looking at how music can help safeguard and revitalize endangered languages.”

Kit has been working together with the Jersey Music Service and L’Office du Jèrriais to develop a project that will take two stages. Firstly he is going into a range of schools with Gina McLinton and Katy Parker from the Jersey Music Service, to teach the song to as many children as is practically possible. Then at the end of the Spring term a choir will be formed who will go on to perform the song on Liberation Day as part of the entertainment at the informal street party in the Weighbridge.

In the meantime all members of the public can learn the song with Kit and Cliémentinne, as the videos are available on YouTube, either by searching for the terms “Mission Save Jerriais” or by visiting the Badlabecques channel.

Agent Cliémentinne herself was unavailable for comment.

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