

Travels with Anzie – Bobby Lapointe

May 2019



Moliere and Bobby

You mean you don't know Bobby Lapointe? Why, he's the favorite son of Pezenas, France, along with Moliere. Bobby is a more legitimate son, since he was born in Pezenas. Whereas Moliere spent some time here over a few years. The city has been celebrating Bobby's birthday for the past two weeks. You probably know Charles Boyer, the movie star? Maurice Chevalier, movie star ("Gigi"), singer – "Thank Heavens for Little Girls"? Yves Montand, movie star? Maybe even Charles Aznavour, singer? Still, Bobby Lapointe doesn't ring a bell? Well, we had never heard of him either until we became temporary residents of the charming town of Pezenas.

There's a Bobby Lapointe museum in the middle of town. You can tell true Bobby Lapointe fans by their blue and white striped sailor shirt.

So ... what about this guy Bobby? Born in Pezenas in 1922, he was a brilliant student. He applied and was accepted at a technical college in Montpellier. Unfortunately he was conscripted into a war work program in 1942, and sent to Austria. He escaped from there the following year, and work several jobs in Marseille and Paris. While in Paris he began singing and writing songs and plays. In 1951 he produced his first group of songs, "Twelve Songs of an Imbecile". In 1960 Francois Truffaut cast him in his film, "Shoot the Piano Player", opposite the singer Charles Aznavour. Bobby died, in Pezenas, in 1972, age 50.

So ... Why is Bobby famous? Mostly for his funny texts, alliteration and plays on words. Now is the time to check out Bobby's singing. See the links below to listen to two of his best known songs. The first song you'll watch him sing is "Ta Katie t'a quitté", "Your Katie Left You". Never mind you don't understand the words. Just listen and watch his presentation. The second is "Maman des Poissons", which is sung by school children all over France.

If you have a few more minutes, go to "Bobby Lapointe Printival" to sample the annual Spring Bobby Lapointe Festival. You'll see all the Bobby fans dancing in their sailor shirts.

By the way, Bobby was also a technical genius. He developed a binary system. Based on "hexadecimal" (16 digits), it was termed "bibi-binary", because it was based on 2x2x2. Was it ever used? Yes, in a color coding system. It would have been useful at Bletchley Park during WWII as an Enigma code.

Does your town have a favorite son?

A la Prochaine.

Chuck & Anzie

<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=boby+lapointe+katie&&view=detail&mid=113A1E92B2C1CEF9521E113A1E92B2C1CEF9521E&&FORM=VRDGAR> Ta Katie T'a Quitté

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uhGf2WzAS84> Maman des Poissons

<https://bobylapointe/printival>