

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

*A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, written and compiled by Roddy Maclean, and specifically aimed at Gaelic learners who already have some knowledge of the language. A short vocabulary and comments on points of grammar and figures of speech are included with the text. If you have comments, Roddy can be contacted at rodny.maclea@bbc.co.uk * This is Litir 356. Note that Roddy also broadcasts a simplified version – An Litir Bheag – on Monday evenings at 7.00 pm. This is also available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 52 corresponds to Litir 356.*

Tha mi a’ dol a leughadh liosta de dh’fhaclan dhuibh. Tha mi airson ’s gun èist sibh riutha, agus gun obraich sibh a-mach dè th’ annta. Tha iad a’ dol còmhla ann an dòigh air choreigin: An Rùd, An Tarbh, Càraid, A’ Chrùbag, An Leòmhann, An Òigh, Am Meidh, An Nathair-nimhe, Am Boghadair, An Gobhar, Fear-giùlain Bùirn agus Na h-Iasgan.

Bu chòir dhomh ràdh, ’s dòcha, gun tàinig an liosta à Eilean Bheàrnaraigh – Beàrnaraigh Mòr – far chosta siar Eilein Leòdhais. Buinidh cuid de na faclan don sgìre sin. Bhiodh iad eadar-dhealaichte ann an sgìrean eile, ’s dòcha. Seo iad a-rithist. An Rùd, An Tarbh, Càraid, A’ Chrùbag, An Leòmhann, An Òigh, Am Meidh, An Nathair-nimhe, Am Boghadair, An Gobhar, Fear-giùlain Bùirn agus Na h-Iasgan.

’S e a th’ annta dà chomharra dheug na Crios-nèimhe. Dà chomharra dheug na Crios-nèimhe. *The twelve signs of the zodiac.* An Rùd no an rùda no reithe – *Aries, the ram*, An Tarbh – *Taurus, the bull*, Càraid – *Gemini, the twins*, A’ Chrùbag – *Cancer, the crab*, An Leòmhann – *Leo, the lion*, An Òigh – *Virgo, the virgin*, Am Meidh – *Libra, the scales*, An Nathair-nimhe – *Scorpio, the scorpion*, Am Boghadair – *Sagittarius, the archer*, An Gobhar – *Capricorn, the goat*, Fear-giùlain Bùirn – *Aquarius, the water carrier* agus Na h-Iasgan no na h-èisg – *Pisces, the fishes*.

Tha am fiosrachadh a’ tighinn bho leabhar a chaidh fhoillseachadh o chionn beagan mhìosan, air a bheil *Muir is Tìr*. ’S e a th’ ann cruinneachadh de bheul-aithris is fios mu àrainneachd na mara, na tìre is nan speuran. Chaidh a chur ri chèile le fear a bha na iasgair – Seòras Chalaim Sheòrais no Seòras MacLeòid nach maireann.

Bu mhath leam blasad a thoirt dhuibh de chuid dhen stuth a th’ anns an leabhar. Dè th’ ann an ***Co-shìntean Leud***, mar eisimpleir? Uill, ’s e a th’ annta, a rèir an leabhair, “Criosan a tha air an tarraing co-shìnte ri crios-meadhain an t-saoghail. Tha na criosan seo a’ fàs nas lugha **mar as fhaisge a tha iad a’ tighinn air** cridhe na h-àird a Tuath ’s a Deas.” *Parallels of latitude*. Co-shìntean Leud. ’S e *leud* a’ Ghàidhlig aig Seòras Chalaim air “latitude”. Agus tha e a’ ciallachadh, “An t-astar a tha àite dìreach Tuath no Deas air crios-meadhain an t-saoghail”.

Agus seo mar a mhìnicheas Seòras “longitude”: Astair: *Longitude*: “An t-astar a tha àite an Iar no an Ear air crios na h-àird a Deas Greenwich”. Co-shìntean Astair – *the meridians of longitude*: “Criosan a tha air an tarraing co-shìnte ri crios meadhan-lathach Greenwich tro chridhe na h-àird a Tuath ’s a Deas.” Bidh cuid a’ cleachdadh

“fad” airson *longitude* ach 's e astair a bha Seoras Chaluim a' cleachdadh. Agus tha e inntinneach gur e cridhe na h-àird a Tuath a bh' aige airson *North Pole*. Bidh daoine ag ràdh *Am Pòla mu Thuath* san latha an-diugh.

Nise, seo beagan fiosrachaidh bhon leabhar. Leughaidh mi a' chiad phàirt de sheantans. Cuiribh fhèin crìoch air. Tha sia mìle is ceithir fichead troigh a' dèanamh _____. Dè? Tha sia mìle is ceithir fichead troigh a' dèanamh *mìle mara*. Tha mìle mara co-ionann ri aon _____. Dè? Tha mìle mara co-ionann ri aon *mhionaid leud*. Aon mhionaid leud. Ciamar a chaidh dhuibh le sin? Am biodh sibh nur deagh mharaiche?

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Faclan na Litreach: Beàrnaraigh Mòr: *Great Bernera*; comharra: *sign, mark*; Crios-nèimhe: *Zodiac (a feminine word in this dialect)*; Seòras Chaluim Sheòrais: *George, son of Calum, who was son of George*.

Abairtean na Litreach: tha mi airson 's gun èist sibh riutha: *I want you to listen to them*; ann an dòigh air choreigin: *in some way or another*; rùd/rùda: *ram*; tarbh: *bull*; càraid: *twins, couple*; crùbag: *crab*; leòmhann: *lion*; òigh: *virgin*; meidh: *scales*; nathair-nimhe: *scorpion*; boghadair: *archer*; gobhar: *goat*; fear-giùlain bùirn: *water carrier*; iasgan (more commonly èisg): *fishes*; cruinneachadh de bheul-aithris is fios: *a collection of oral tradition and information*; àrainneachd na mara, na tìre is nan speuran: *the environment of the sea, the land and the heavens*; bu mhath leam blasad a thoirt dhuibh: *I would like to give you a small taste*; criosan a tha air an tarraing co-shìnte ri crios-meadhain an t-saoghail: *belts that are drawn parallel with the Equator*; a' fàs nas lugha mar as fhaisge a tha iad a' tighinn air cridhe na h-àird a Tuath 's a Deas: *growing smaller the closer they get to the North and South poles*; cuiribh fhèin crìoch air: *finish it off yourself*; sia mìle is ceithir fichead troigh: *six thousand and eighty feet*; tha mìle mara co-ionann ri aon mhionaid leud: *a nautical mile is equal to one minute of latitude*; ciamar a chaidh dhuibh le sin?: *how did you get on with that?*; am biodh sibh nur deagh mharaiche?: *would you make [be] a good mariner?*

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **Co-shìntean:** *parallels (of latitude)*. This word derives from the verb *co-shìn*. *Sìn, sìneadh* means “stretch out, extend” (*sìn do làmh a Mhàiri = give [me] your hand, Mary*). *Co-shìn* means “stretch out together” ie “lie parallel”. The adjective (actually the past participle of the verb) is *co-shìnte* – which means “parallel”. *Co-shìnteachan* is the Gaelic for *parallelogram* – and it's not a new-fangled word – you'll find it in *Dwelly*.

Gnàths-cainnt na Litreach: **mar as fhaisge a tha iad a' tighinn air:** the closer they get to.

* Tha “*Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh*” air a maoinachadh le *Seirbheis nam Meadhanan Gàidhlig*.