

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

A special programme, in the form of a “letter”, designed for 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, Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 368. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 64 corresponds to Litir 368.

Bha mi ann an Uibhist a Deas o chionn ghoirid agus abair gun do chòrd e rium. Bha a’ ghrian a’ deàrrsadh, bha i blàth, is bha flùraichean a’ mhachaire dìreach àlainn. ’S iad na lusan a bu mhotha a ghlac m’ aire Seileastair, Buidheag an t-Samhraidh – a tha le chèile buidhe – agus fear a tha dearg. ’S e sin a’ *Chaorag Lèana*. Lus beag brèagha le flùr-bhileagan a tha rudeigin luideagach. Canaidh daoine *ragged robin* ris ann am Beurla. A’ *Chaorag Lèana*. Tha an t-ainm Gàidhlig a’ ciallachadh “*little spark of the meadow*”. ’S e an dath as coireach ri sin, chanainn – agus gu bheil e a’ fàs air lèanan. Agus ’s e an dath as coireach gu bheil sinn a’ gabhail *caor* air na dearcas dearga a tha a’ fàs air an “rowan tree” – no craobh chaorainn.

Co-dhiù, cha deach mi a dh’Uibhist airson na flùraichean fhaicinn, ged a bha iad brèagha dha-rìreabh. Chaidh mi ann airson pàirt a gabhail anns an fhèis bhliadhnail ris an canar “Ceòlas”. Tha Ceòlas air a bhith ann airson deich bliadhna a-nise, agus ’s ann bho neart gu neart a tha i a’ dol.

Tha an fhèis stèidhichte air ceithir rudan gu h-àraidh – ceòl, seinn, danns agus a’ Ghàidhlig. Uaireannan tron t-seachdain bidh a h-uile rud sin a’ tighinn còmhla, agus dannsairean a’ gabhail cheummannan air an ùrlar fhad ’s a tha daoine a’ seinn òrain Gàidhlig agus daoine eile a’ cluich ionnstramaidean mar an fhidheall is a’ phìob.

Bha mi a’ moladh Ceòlas do charaid dhomh air tìr-mòr, às dèidh dhomh tilleadh dhachaigh. Agus bha mi cuideachd ag innse dha cho math ’s a bha muinntir Uibhist a Deas fhèin a thaobh ceòl is danns – gu h-àraidh le bhith a’ dannsadh na *quadrilles*. “Tha fios a’ m,” thuirt e. “Tha ceòl annta. Bha mi a-riamh a’ mothachadh sin aig na cèilidhean Gàidhealach ann an Glaschu. An coimeas rinn fhèin, bha na h-Uibhistich air leth aotrom air an casan.”

’S e sluagh eile a tha air an aon dòigh muinntir Cheap Bhreatainn ann an Canada. Agus nuair a chaidh Ceòlas a chur air chois, rinneadh ceangal eadar Uibhist a Deas agus Ceap Breatainn – ceangal a tha ann fhathast. Tha an-còmhnaidh feadhainn ann à Ceap Breatainn a tha a’ teagasg na fìdhle no dannsa-ceum.

Bha mi fhìn ann an clas seinn cuide ri tè de na seinneadairean Gàidhlig às fheàrr a th’ ann an-diugh. Bha an clas sònraichte math. Am measg nan òran a dh’ionnsaich sinn bha fear car aotrom mu dheidhinn banais nach robh uabhasach soirbheachail. Tuigidh sibh mar a bha gnothaichean aig a’ bhanais bhon dà loidhne mu dheireadh: “**Dh’olc no èiginn** fhuair mi [a] leagail, ’s bhuail mi breab san tòn air.”

Co-dhiù, bha sinn a’ beachdachadh air cò às a bha an t-òran. ’S e an tiotal a th’ air “A’ Bhanais a bha ’n Ciostal Odhar.” Càite a bheil Ciostal, ge-tà? Cha robh fios aig duine sa chlas. Thuirt cuideigin a bhuineadh do eilean gu deas air Beinn a’ Bhadhla, “Feumaidh gu bheil e ann

an Uibhist a Tuath oir 's ann mar sin a tha cuid de na bainnsean an sin!" Tha mi a' smaoinichadh gun robh i ri fealla-dhà. Agus cha chreidinn fhìn facal dheth.

'S ann mar sin a bha a' chùis gus an robh mi a' dràibheadh dhachaigh. Anns an Eilean Sgitheanach eadar Ùige is Port Rìgh, chunnaic mi soidhne rathaid air an robh "Ciostal". Airson tiotan bha m' inntinn air ais ann an Uibhist, am measg ghuthan binn is flùraichean a' mhachaire.

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Faclan na Litreach: Uibhist a Deas: *South Uist*; Seileastair: *flag iris*; Buidheag an t-Samhraidh: *meadow buttercup*; A' Chaorag Lèana: *ragged robin*; Ceap Breatainn: *Cape Breton*; aotrom: *light*.

Abairtean na Litreach: abair gun do chòrd e rium: *I really enjoyed it*; 's iad na lusan a bu mhotha a ghlac m' aire: *the plants which most caught my attention*; a tha le chèile buidhe: *which are both yellow*; flùr-bhileagan a tha rudeigin luideagach: *petals that are somewhat ragged*; 's e an dath as coireach ri sin, chanainn: *the colour is responsible for that, I would say*; 's ann bho neart gu neart a tha i a' dol: *it is going from strength to strength*; a' gabhail cheumannan air an ùrlar: *taking steps on the floor*; tha ceòl annta: *they are musical [there is music in them]*; an coimeas rinn fhèin: *in comparison to ourselves*; bha na h-Uibhistich air leth aotrom air an casan: *the Uist folk were particularly light on their feet*; 's e sluagh eile a tha air an aon dòigh: *another people who are similar*; nuair a chaidh Ceòlas a chur air chois, rinneadh ceangal: *when Ceòlas was set up, a link was made*; tha an-còmhnaidh feadhainn ann a tha a' teagasg na fìdhle no dannsa-ceum: *there are always some who teach the fiddle or stepdance*; cuide ri tè de na seinneadairean Gàidhlig às fheàrr: *along with one of the best Gaelic singers*; banais nach robh uabhasach soirbheachail: *a wedding which was not particularly successful*; bhuail mi breab san tòin air: *I kicked him on the backside*; bha sinn a' beachdachadh air cò às a bha an t-òran: *we were discussing where the song came from*; a bhuineadh do eilean gu deas air Beinn a' Bhadhla: *who belonged to an island south of Benbecula*; feumaidh gu bheil e ann an Uibhist a Tuath: *it must be in North Uist*; gun robh i ri fealla-dhà: *that she was joking*; 's ann mar sin a bha a' chùis: *that was how the matter remained*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: **bha mi a' moladh Ceòlas do charaid dhomh air tìr-mòr:** *I was recommending Ceòlas to a relation of mine on the mainland. We last looked at the use of do rather than aig to express possession more than four years ago in Litir 136 (18.01.02), although you may have reread it recently if you bought my book "Leabhar nan Litrichean" (available from Clì Gàidhlig). It is included here to revise the point – although it should be noted that it the usage is more common in some dialects than others. Dhomh, of course, is the prepositional pronoun formed from do + mi (and it occurs again in the same sentence). Make sure you give it full nasal impact – it is quite unlike any sound in the English language and sometimes takes learners a bit of time to master.*

Gnàths-cainnt na Litreach: **Dh'olc no èiginn** (fhuair mi [a] leagail): *by hook or by crook (I managed to fell him).*

* Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoinichadh le Seirbheis nam Meadhanan Gàidhlig.