

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 roddy.macleon@bbc.co.uk. This is Litir 450. Note that there is also a simplified version called An Litir Bheag which is likewise available on the BBC website. Litir Bheag 146 corresponds to Litir 450.

An t-seachdain sa chaidh, thug sinn sùil air *An Sguabag Bhealaidh* – òran Gàidhlig le Pòl Camshron à Blàr Athall mu chròladh, no *curling*. Chuir sinn crìoch air leis an rainn: “*Sìos am bacan,*” *cluinn an sgiobair* / “*Seòl dhomh clach ri taobh na bioraid*” / *Siud air falbh, an èiteag bhinneach* / *S i air chrith na gluasad.*

Tha *èiteag* a’ ciallachadh clach gheal nach eil ro mhòr. Ach chan eil clachan cròlaidh geal mar as trice agus chan eil iad beag. Tha mi an dùil gun do chleachd an t-ùghdar e oir bha e air “clach” a chleachdadh anns an loidhne roimhe sin. Tha mi a’ smaoinichadh gur e an “èiteag bhinneach” *the apex stone* – an tè as fhaisge air a’ chròlach a tha a’ dìon a’ chòrr.

Tha an còigeamh rann a’ dol: *’S ann an sin tha ’n horo-gheallaidh/Ga toirt suas thar Sgòr na caillich/Rang a daimh le strì ga faire/S laigh i ’m bàrr na cuairteig.* Nise, seo far a bheil taic a dhìth orm. Chan eil fhios agam dè th’ ann an *Sgòr na caillich*. Ma tha smuain agaibh fhèin nach cuir sibh fios thugam?

Tha an ath rann a’ dol mar seo: *Eadar “togail” agus “dionadh”/“Sgram an geàrd” no “sgailc a cliathaich”/Chan eil sean no òg nach miannaich/Bhith fo riar do bhuaireis.*

Tha sin a’ toirt dhuinn tuilleadh briathrachais. Tha *sgram an geàrd* a’ ciallachadh “*take out the guard stone*” agus tha *sgailc a cliathaich* a’ ciallachadh “*give her [ie the stone’s] side a sharp blow*”.

Tha sinn gar toirt don rainn mu dheireadh, mu dheidhinn mar a bhiodh na cròlaich a’ gabhail tlachd aig deireadh an latha: *’S lìonar cuach de dh’fhuarag Athall/ Nithear òl do Bhròd Dhùn Chailleann/ Buaidh ’s cliù don Diùc tha againn/ Sàr chùl-taic na sguabaig.*

’S e “*fuarag Athall*” *Atholl Brose*. Bithear a’ cur mel agus uisge-beatha ri min-choirce agus uisge airson a dhèanamh. Bhiodh na cròlaich a’ faighinn deoch às dèidh làimh cuideachd. Tha an t-òran ag ràdh *Nithear òl do Bhròd Dhùn Chailleann* – “*a toast is made for the Dunkeld crowd*”. Bhiodh farpaisean cròlaidh ann eadar muinntir Bhlàr Athall agus muinntir Dhùn Chailleann.

Chan e sin an t-òran gu lèir, ge-tà. Tha sèist ann a bhiodh air a seinn às dèidh a h-uile rann. Seo i: *’S i mo luaidh an sguabag bhealaidh/Chuireas snuadh an gruaidh nam fearaibh/S i mo luaidh an sguabag bhealaidh/ ’S alag mhear nan cuairteag. The broom brush is my love, it puts colour in the mens’ cheeks, the broom brush is my love, as is the joyful task of the curling circles.*

’S i an sgioba a bhuannaicheas an tè aig a bheil a’ chlach as fhaisge air an *tee* mar a chanar ris ann am Beurla. Bithear a’ comharrachadh chearcall timcheall an *tee* agus tha mi an dùil gur e sin “a’ chuairoteag” a nochdas anns an òran.

Nuair a bha mi a' rannsachadh na cùise seo, lorg mi seann dealbh de chròlaich air a' Ghàidhealtachd anns na seasgadan dhen naoidheamh linn deug. 'S e fear Alasdair Urchardan à Baile nan Granndach a rinn an dealbh. An àite bhioran, 's e botail fhiodha a bha iad a' cleachdadh airson an *tee* a chomharrachadh agus tha iad sin anns an dealbh. Chuireadh luaidh sna botail airson an dèanamh trom gu leòr.

Uill, tha mi an dòchas gum bi am briathrachas beag a lorg mi na chuideachadh de sheòrs' air choreigin do sgioba spòrs Craoladh nan Gàidheal is gum faigh sinn aithris bhuapa uaireigin air Farpais Cròlaidh na Cruinne ann an Gàidhlig!

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Faclan na Litreach: Blàr Athall: *Blair Atholl*; cròladh: *curling*; èiteag: *white pebble, stone*; horo-gheallaidh: *uproar, hullabaloo*.

Abairtean na Litreach: sìos am bacan: *[put] down the hack (on which the player puts one foot when throwing the stone)*; cluinn an sgiobair: *hear the skip*; seòl dhomh clach: *aim to me a stone*; siud air falbh, an èiteag bhinneach: *there she goes [away], the apex stone*: air chrith na gluasad: *vibrating as she moves*; oir bha e air "clach" a chleachdadh anns an loidhne roimhe sin: *because he'd used "clach" in the previous line*; as fhaisge air a' chròlach: *closest to the curler*; ga toirt suas thar X: *taking her up past X*; rang a daimh le strì ga faire: *arranging its followers endeavouring to watch it [fem]*; laigh i 'm bàrr na cuairteig: *it lay at the top of the rink circle*; seo far a bheil taic a dhìth orm: *this is where I need help*; eadar "togail" agus "dìonadh": *between "taking out" and "protecting"*; "sgram an geàrd" no "sgailc a cliathaich": *"take out the guard stone" or "give her a sharp blow on the side"*; lionar cuach de dh'fhuarag Athall: *a quaich will be filled with Atholl Brose*; Buaidh 's cliù don Diùc tha againn: *a tribute to our Duke*; Sàr chùl-taic na sguabaig: *a great supporter of the brush [ie the sport]*; bithear a' cur mel agus uisge-beatha ri min-choirce: *honey and whisky are added to oatmeal*; tha sèist ann a bhiodh air a seinn às dèidh a h-uile rann: *there is a chorus which would be sung after every verse*; 's i an sgioba a bhuannaicheas: *the team that wins is*; na seasgadan dhen naoidheamh linn deug: *the 1860s*; Alasdair Urchardan à Baile nan Granndach: *Alexander Urquhart of Grantown-on-Spey*; 's e botail fhiodha a bha iad a' cleachdadh airson X a chomharrachadh: *it's wooden bottles they used to mark X*; chuireadh luaidh sna botail airson an dèanamh trom: *lead was put in the bottles to make them heavy*; na chuideachadh de sheòrs' air choreigin: *of some assistance*; Farpais Cròlaidh na Cruinne: *World Curling Championship*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: *Here's the rest of the Gaelic vocabulary for curling I was able to glean from the song (see also last week's Litir):* binneach: *apical (I imagine the clach or èiteag bhinneach to be one at the front of the circle which is removed by an opposing team "taking it out")*; bioraid: *tee marker*; cuairteag: *circle (around the tee, scored into the ice on frozen lochs, now marked with colours under the ice on curling rinks)*; sgram: *take out*; geàrd: *guard (stone)*; sgailc: *hit (with a stone)*; cliathaich: *side (of stone)*. *In the Litir I ask for help with Sgòr na caillich (written by Paul Cameron as Sgor-na-caillich). Was this perhaps a mark on the ice, such as the "hog line" or the "tee line"? If you're a curler or know the game, you might be able to help me.*

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: *Nithear òl: drink will be taken [lit. drinking will be done]. In some instances, the verb dèan can be used with another verb in this manner. You will often hear "dèan suidhe" [lit. make sit] as an alternative to the plain "suidh" or "suidh sìos".*

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