

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

## An t-Urr. Seumas MacDhonnchaidh (3)

*Each week the West Highland Free Press publishes the text for Ruairidh's "Letter to Gaelic Learners" on BBC Radio nan Gàidheal (103.5-105 FM). Broadcasts are as follows: 2:55pm on Sunday as part of BBC Radio nan Gàidheal's hour-long learning zone, following the Gaelic Learners' programme 'SpeakGaelic Extra', with a repeat at 10.30 pm on Wednesday. This is Litir 1,233. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 929 corresponds to Litir 1,233. The Litir is also available at [www.bbc.co.uk/litir](http://www.bbc.co.uk/litir) and [www.learn Gaelic.scot/litir](http://www.learn Gaelic.scot/litir). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learn Gaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learn Gaelic.scot).*

Sgrìobh an t-Urramach Seumas MacDhonnchaidh mu dheidhinn ainmean-àite timcheall Chalasraid anns an t-Seann Chunntas Staitistigeach. Airson a' bhaile aige fhèin – *Callander* ann am Beurla – thug e dà mhìneachadh seachad. Anns a' chiad àite tha *cala* a' ciallachadh 'port'. Mar sin, 's e *Cala-sraid* an t-sràid a tha a' dol eadar an caisteal agus an cala far an robh bàt'-aiseig air an abhainn.

Ach tha *Callander* ann cuideachd. Tha Mgr MacDhonnchaidh ag ràdh gur dòcha gun tàinig sin bho *Calltainn-doir* a' ciallachadh coille bheag anns an robh craobhan-calltainn. Thug an sgoilear Pàdraig MacNaoimhin sùil air a' ghnothach o chionn dà bhliadhna agus cha do ràinig e co-dhùnadh air tùs an ainm.

Bha mi riamh a' beachdachadh air Beinn Mheanbh (Ben Venue) anns na Tròisichean. Tha i nas àirde na beinn sam bith eile timcheall Loch Ceiteirein. Carson, ma-thà, as e **A' Bheinn Mheanbh** a th' oirre? Uill, tha Seumas MacDhonnchaidh ag innse dhuinn. Tha i ann an loidhne eadar dà bheinn mhòr – Beinn Laomainn agus Beinn Lididh. Tha i **letheach-slighe eatarra**. Ach tha i nas ìsle nan dà bheinn sin. 'S e 'beinn mheanbh' a th' innte an coimeas riuthasan.

Tha Mgr MacDhonnchaidh cuideachd a' dèanamh coimeas eadar na faclan *coire* agus *gleann*. Tha iad le chèile a' seasamh airson 'valley' ann am Beurla. Tha *coire* dùinte aig aon cheann dheth mar 'thaigh-cluiche fosgailte'. Tha *gleann*, air an làimh eile, fosgailte aig an dà cheann. Tha Mgr MacDhonnchaidh a' cumail a-mach gu bheil glè bheag de chànanan eile a' dèanamh sgaradh, le aon fhacal, eadar an dà sheòrsa de ghleann.

Tha am ministear cuideachd a' mìneachadh ainm lochain shuas air druim Beinn Lididh. 'S e sin Lochan nan Corp. Bha buidheann à Gleann Fhionnghlais a' falbh thar na beinne airson tiodhlacadh ann an caibeal Naomh Brìde air cladach Loch Lùdnaig. Bha an lochan reòite agus math dh'fhaodte gun robh e còmhdhaichte le sneachd. Thuit na daoine tron deigh agus bha iad air am bàthadh.

Air cladach an iar Loch Lùdnaig tha creag air a bheil *Creag na Co-sheilg*. Tha e a' ciallachadh 'the rock of the joint hunting'. Tha Mgr MacDhonnchaidh ag innse dhuinn gun robh i air a' chrìch eadar dà oighreachd. Air làithean seilg, bhiodh na h-uachdarain a' coinneachadh an sin, len coin agus luchd-taice.

Cha chreid mi nach eil daoine dhen bheachd gur e Glen Finglas *Gleann Fhionnghlais* 'glen of the fair stream'. Ach sgrìobh Mgr MacDhonnchaidh gu bheil an

t-ainm a' ciallachadh *'the fair green glen'*. Nuair a bha esan beò, bha e ag ràdh gun robh pàirc cho mòr ann 's a chitheadh tu ann an àite sam bith anns na sgìrean sin. Cuideachd, bha e ag ràdh gun robh am fear fada, a tha gorm as t-samhradh, a' dol bàn – gealaichte – anns a' gheamhradh.

Uill, sin agaibh cuid de na beachdan aig an Urramach Seumas MacDhonnchaidh. Mo bheannachd air, gu h-àraidh airson a bhith a' dìon na Gàidhlig aig àm nuair nach robh gu leòr de dhaoine sgoileireil ga dìon.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** An t-Urramach Seumas MacDhonnchaidh: *The Rev. James Robertson*; craobhan-calltainn: *hazel trees*; Loch Ceiteirein: *Loch Katrine*; nas ìsle: *lower*; math dh'fhaodte: *perhaps*; Lochan nan Corp: *the wee loch of the bodies*; Gleann Fhionnghlais: *Glen Finglas*; Loch Lùdnaig: *Loch Lubnaig*; gealaichte: *bleached*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** an t-sràid a tha a' dol eadar an caisteal agus an cala far an robh bàt'-aiseig air an abhainn: *the street that goes between the castle and the harbour where there was a ferry on the river*; thug an sgoilear Pàdraig MacNaomhin sùil air: *the scholar Peter McNiven looked at*; cha do ràinig e co-dhùnadh air tùs an ainm: *he didn't reach a conclusion on the origin of the name*; bha mi riamh a' beachdachadh air Beinn Mheanbh anns na Tròisichean: *I was always thinking about Ben Venue in the Trossachs*; ann an loidhne eadar dà bheinn mhòr – Beinn Laomainn agus Beinn Lididh: *in a line between two big mountains – Ben Lomond and Ben Ledi*; 's e 'beinn mheanbh' a th' innte an coimeas riuthasan: *she's a wee mountain in comparison with them [emphatic]*; dùinte aig aon cheann dheth mar 'thaigh-cluiche fosgailte': *closed at one end [of it] like an 'amphitheatre'*; a' dèanamh sgaradh, le aon fhacal: *making a distinction, with one word*; tiodhlacadh ann an caibeal Naomh Bhrìde: *a funeral in St Bride's chapel*; thuit na daoine tron deigh agus bha iad air am bàthadh: *the people fell through the ice and they were drowned*; air a' chrich eadar dà oighreachd: *on the border between two estates*; cha chreid mi nach eil daoine dhen bheachd: *I think that people reckon*; gun robh pàirc cho mòr ann 's a chitheadh tu ann an àite sam bith: *that there was as big a pasture as you'd see in any place*; mo bheannachd air, gu h-àraidh airson a bhith a' dìon na Gàidhlig: *my blessing on him, particularly for defending the Gaelic language*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** Carson, ma-thà, as e **A' Beinn Mheanbh** a th' oirre?: *why is it called A' Bheinn Mheanbh 'the little mountain'?* [it is on maps as Ben Venue which indicates the local pronunciation of meanbh]. You will probably be familiar with meanbh 'small, diminutive' in meanbh-chuileag 'midge', showing that it often appears before the noun it is qualifying e.g. meanbh-fhrìde 'insect', meanbh-chrodh 'tiny (breed of) cattle', meanbh-chùiseach 'trifling, unimportant'. However, it can also (less commonly) come in 'standard' position following the noun as in the example in the Litir.

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** Tha i letheach-slighe eatarra: *it is halfway between them*.

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