

# Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIllleathain

## **Bàrr Èibhinn (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 1,256. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 952 corresponds to Litir 1,256. 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).*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mun chloich-neirt ri taobh na h-eaglaise ann am Bàrr Èibhinn air oighreachd Chaladair. Thathar ag ràdh **gu bheil ochd clachan deug de chuideam innte**. Tha sin co-ionann ri ceud is ceithir-deug cileagraman. Tha i fìor dhoirbh a thogail. Tha i ri taobh na seann eaglaise ann an Clachan Bhàrr Èibhinn.

Tha cunntas againn dhen chloich bho ochd ceud deug is ochdad (1880). Bha tuathanach a' fuireach ri taobh a' chlachain. 'S e Uilleam Mac an Tòisich an t-ainm a bh' air. Bha e seachdad 's a seachd bliadhna a dh'aois. Dh'inns Mac an Tòisich don fhear a sgrìobh an cunntas – Uilleam Jolly – gun robh comas aige a' chlach a thogail nuair a bha e òg. Bha e eadhon **comasach air a togail gu h-àrd agus a cur air muin a' ghàrraidh** a tha timcheall a' chladh.

Cha b' e sin a-mhàin, ach dh'inns caraid aig Jolly a bha còmhla ris gun robh a sheanmhair air a' chlach a thogail. Rinn i sin le bhith a' cur a h-àparain fòidhpe. Tha an cunntas sin inntinneach oir, ann am beul-aithris nan Gàidheal, bhiodh bana-bhuidsich a' togail chlachan mòra le bhith a' cleachdadh an aparain. Agus bhiodh fìr Ghàidhealach a' togail chuideaman mòra uaireannan le bhith a' cur am fèilidhean fòidhpa.

Chan eil e soilleir cia mheud duine a th' air Clach-neirt Bhàrr Èibhinn a thogail bhon uair sin. Ach tha cunntas inntinneach a chaidh a dhèanamh o chionn ghoirid mu cheangal eadar a' chlach agus Uibhist a Tuath.

Bha fear às an Eilean Sgitheanach – Dòmhnall MacIllleathain – ag obair mar phoileas agus mar thuathanach ann an Siorrachd Narann anns na ficheadan dhen linn a dh'fhalbh. Dh'fhàg e an t-eilean gun sgillinn ruadh na phòcaid, ach shàbhail e airgead gu leòr airson fearann ri taobh Clachan Bhàrr Èibhinn a cheannach. Bha Dòmhnall gu math làidir agus bha ùidh aige sa chloich-neirt. Ach chan eil e dearbhte gun do thog esan i.

Cheannaich Dòmhnall crodh bho dhaoine ann an Uibhist a Tuath. Fhuair e eòlas air Uibhistich agus thug e obair do fheadhainn aca air an tuathanas aige aig àm an Dàrna Cogaidh. A rèir aithris, chum na h-Uibhistich farpais airson faicinn cò bha comasach air a' chlach a thogail. B' e an aon duine a rinn an gnothach fear Pàdraig MacIllleathain.

Ann an dà mhìle 's a dhà-dheug (2012), thog fear à Eilginn, Martin Jancsics, a' chlach gu a ghalainn – a' chiad duine anns an linn seo a rinn sin, a rèir aithris. Tha

esan ag ràdh nach eil a' chlach buileach cho trom 's a tha feadhainn eile a' cumail a-mach. Tha dìreach ceud 's a còig cileagraman de chuideam innte!

Ceithir bliadhna an dèidh sin, thill Martin airson bhidio a dhèanamh, agus e fhèin a' togail na cloiche. Bhon uair sin, tha grunnan dhaoine air bhidiothan a dhèanamh dhiubh fhèin, agus iad a' togail na cloiche don ghualainn no eadhon os an cionn.

Tha rudeigin laghach mu na 'farpaisean' togail seo. Tha iad gu mòr co-cheangailte ri eachdraidh agus dualchas nan Gàidheal. Tha na clachan fhèin gu math eachdraidheil, mar a tha an tè ann am Bàrr Èibhinn.

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**Faclan na Litreach:** co-ionann ri: *equivalent to*; fìor dhoirbh: *very difficult*; Uilleam Mac an Tòisich: *William MacIntosh*; bana-bhuidsich: *witches*; Uibhist a Tuath: *North Uist*; crodh: *cattle*; Pàdraig MacIllEathain: *Peter Maclean*; Eilginn: *Elgin*; laghach: *nice*; eachdraidheil: *historic*.

**Abairtean na Litreach:** mun chloich-neirt ri taobh na h-eaglaise ann am Bàrr Èibhinn air oighreachd Chaladair: *about the lifting stone next to the church in Barevan on the Cawdor estate*; bha tuathanach a' fuireach ri taobh a' chlachain: *a farmer was living next to the kirkton*; gun robh comas aige a' chlach a thogail nuair a bha e òg: *that he was able to lift the stone when he was young*; gun robh a sheanmhair air a' chlach a thogail: *that his grandmother had lifted the stone*; le bhith a' cur a h-aparain fòidhpe: *by putting her apron underneath it*; a' togail chuideaman mòra uaireannan le bhith a' cur am fèilidhean fòidhpa: *lifting big weights by putting their plaids underneath them*; bha fear às an Eilean Sgitheanach – Dòmhnall MacIllEathain – ag obair mar phoileas agus mar thuathanach ann an Siorrachd Narann: *a man from Skye – Donald Maclean – was working as a policeman and farmer in Nairnshire*; bha ùidh aige: *he was interested*; chan eil e dearbhte gun do thog esan i: *it's not proven that he lifted it*; chùm na h-Uibhistich farpais: *the Uist men held a competition*; chithear a' bhidio: *the video can be seen*; a' togail na cloiche don ghualainn no eadhon os an cionn: *lifting the stone to the shoulder or even above them*.

**Puing-chànain na Litreach:** Bha e eadhon comasach air a togail gu h-àrd agus a cur air muin a' ghàrraidh: *that he was even capable of lifting it high and putting it on top of the stone wall. The phrase air a togail has the possessive pronoun within it. Because clach is a feminine noun, it is the third person singular feminine pronoun we employ and this does not lenite the noun. It is the same with air a cur. If I had been talking about a masculine noun e.g. bòrd, I would have said 'bha e comasach air a thogail...' Here are other examples: bha e comasach air mo thogail 'he was able to lift me'; am bithinn comasach air do thogail? 'would I be able to lift you?'*

**Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach:** Thathar ag ràdh gu bheil ochd clachan deug de chuideam innte: *it's said that it weighs eighteen stones [lit. 'that there are eighteen stones of weight in her']*.

Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoineachadh le MG ALBA