

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Briathrachas a' Chròlaidh (1)

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 1,406. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 1,102 corresponds to Litir 1,406. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

Nuair a bha Geamannan Oilimpigeach a' Gheamhraidh a' dol, **bha mi air mo bheò-ghlacadh** leis a' chròladh. *I was captivated by the curling.* Agus nach math a rinn an ceathrar fhear Albannach a bha a' riochdachadh Bhreatainn. Bhuannaich iad bonn airgid.

Ann an Litrichean ceithir cheud, ceathrad 's a naoi (449) agus ceithir cheud is caogad (450), dh'inns mi dhuibh mu òran Gàidhlig a bha mu chròladh. Bha e air a sgrìobhadh le fear Pòl Camshron à Blàr Athall ann am meadhan an naoidheamh linn deug.

'S e tiotal an òrain *An Sguabag Bhealaidh 'the broom brush'*. Bha na Gàidheil a bha an sàs anns an spòrs a' dèanamh an sguabagan cròlaidh de bhealaidh. Aig an taigh, gu tric bhiodh na sguabagan air an dèanamh de fhraoch. Ach chanainn gum biodh sguabag-fhraoich ro chruaidh air an deigh airson cròladh.

Anns na Litrichean eile mu chròladh, dh'inns mi dhuibh mun bhriathrachas Ghàidhlig co-cheangailte ris an spòrs. Bu mhath leam, anns an Litir seo, sin a leudachadh beagan.

An toiseach, bu chòir dhomh rudeigin a ràdh mun fhacal Ghàidhlig *spèil*. Tha e a' ciallachadh '*slip, slide, skate*'. Bha mi a' spèileadh air an lochan reòite 'I was skating on the frozen lochan'. Thathar a' smaoinichadh gun tàinig *spèil* a-steach don Ghàidhlig bho Albais. Ann an Albais, tha *spiel* a' ciallachadh '*any sort of game or play*'. Tha e air a chleachdadh gu tric ann an co-cheangal ri cròladh. *Spiel – a local game; bonspiel – a match between parishes or districts.*

Feumaidh gun robh na Gàidheil a' cluinntinn '*spiel*' gu tric ann an co-cheangal ri cròladh agus spòrs-deighe. Thàinig e a-steach don Ghàidhlig mar *spèil*, ach le ciall shònraichte co-cheangailte ri deigh.

Chan eil e soilleir cò às a thàinig am facal *cròladh*. Tha e rudeigin coltach ri *curling*. Ach chanainn gur dòcha gu bheil ciall eile air. Ann am Beurla thathar a' dèanamh dheth gur e gluasad nan clach air a bheilear a-mach leis an fhacal *curling*. *The stones curl.*

Ach tha *crò* ann an Gàidhlig a' ciallachadh 'cearcall' – agus àite far am bi, can, caoraich no uain air an cròthadh – air an cumail còmhla. Anns an t-seann aimsir, bhiodh na cròthan-sprèidh mar bu trice cruinn. Agus, ann an cròladh, **bidh na clachan air an cròthadh còmhla anns an 'taigh'** no anns a' 'chuarraig', a tha

cruinn. A bheil a' Bheurla *curling* air buaidh a thoirt air an fhacal Ghàidhlig *cròthadh*, a' fàgail an fhacail *cròladh* againn? Chan eil mi cinnteach, ach bhiodh sin a' dèanamh ciall. Agus 's e *cròlach* cuideigin a bhios a' cluich cròladh.

'S e a' chlach as fhaisge air meadhan na cuairteig a bhuannaicheas geama. Ann am Beurla, 's e meadhan na cuairteig '*the tee*' no '*pin*'. Ann an Gàidhlig, a' *bhioraid*. Nuair a bha daoine a' cluich air loch rèite bhiodh botal no bioraid an sin. Chitheadh na cròlaichean, mar sin, far an robh iad ag amas.

Timcheall na bioraid, tha '*The Button*', cearcall le leud de throigh. Ann an Gàidhlig, 's e sin *Sùil na Cuairteig*. Gu litreachail '*the eye of the house*'. Sùil na Cuairteig.

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Faclan na Litreach: Geamannan Oilimpigeach a' Gheamhraidh: *The Winter Olympics*; sguabag: *brush*; bealaidh: *broom (plant)*; Albais: *Scots language*; spòrs-deighe: *ice sports* a' chuirteag: *the rings i.e. an alternative name for the 'house'*; cròlach: *curler*; a' bhioraid: *the tee*; sùil na cuairteig: *the button*.

Abairtean na Litreach: nach math a rinn an ceathrar fhear Albannach a bha a' riochdachadh Bhreatainn: *didn't the four Scottish men who represented [Great] Britain do well*; bhuannaich iad bonn airgid: *they won a silver medal*; dh'inns mi dhuibh mu òran Gàidhlig a bha mu chròladh: *I told you about a Gaelic song that was about curling*; air a sgrìobhadh le fear Pòl Camshron à Blàr Athall: *written by a Paul Cameron from Blair Atholl*; gum biodh sguabag-fhraoich ro chruaidh air an deigh airson cròladh: *that a heather broom would be too hard on the ice for curling*; chanainn gur dòcha gu bheil ciall eile air: *I would say that there that it perhaps has another meaning*; ann am Beurla thathar a' dèanamh dheth gur e gluasad nan clach air a bheilear a-mach: *in English it is reckoned that it is the movement of the stones that is the object*; 's e a' chlach as fhaisge air meadhan na cuairteig a bhuannaicheas geama: *it's the stone closest to the button that wins a game*; chitheadh na cròlaichean, mar sin, far an robh iad ag amas: *the curlers, thus, would see where they were aiming*; timcheall na bioraid, tha X, cearcall le leud de throigh: *around the tee there is X, a circle which is a foot in extent*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: bidh na clachan air an cròthadh còmhla anns an 'taigh': *the stones are gathered/confined together in the 'house'*. Is this, at least in part, the origin of the Gaelic word *cròladh* for 'curling'? Gaelic literature is full of references to the use of the *crò* (plural *cròthan* or *cròithean*) which means a pen or enclosure, usually made of stone and often circular in shape, which was used to confine sheep or cattle.

Gnàthas-cainnt na Litreach: bha mi air mo bheò-ghlacadh.: *I was captivated, obsessed.*

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