

An Litir Bheag
le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

An Litir Bheag is a shortened and simplified version of Ruairidh's Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh (also available on the BBC website), designed for those who are at an earlier stage of learning Gaelic. The topic each week is the same as Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh so that, once the Litir Bheag is mastered, a student of the language might wish to try the full Litir. This is Litir Bheag 324 (which corresponds to Litir 628). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.macleam@bbc.co.uk.

I was telling you about Taigh nam Bodach, or Taigh na Cailliche, near Loch Lyon. People put the stones out of the 'house' every Beltane. They bring them in again for the winter at Halloween.

The local people were keeping the practice alive. But a dam was built after the Second War. There is now a large loch in the glen. The people left. But there was still a shepherd there. He was Bob Bissett, and he kept the practice alive. He gave information to the expert, Anne Ross, about it. Now others keep it alive.

It's not clear, however, what will happen. There is a plan for a hydro-electric scheme. That would damage the place. The old people would believe that the Cailleach and Bodach wouldn't be pleased. And, if the Cailleach and Bodach weren't pleased, the people themselves would be in danger. Some people in the area think the place should be a 'sacred site'.

Before I leave supernatural matters in Glen Lyon, have you heard about urisks? People say that one lives in the glen. An urisk is a

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Thaigh nam Bodach, no Taigh na Cailliche, faisg air Loch Lìomhann. Bidh daoine a' cur nan clachan a-mach às an 'taigh' a h-uile Bealltainn. Bidh iad gan toirt a-steach a-rithist airson a' gheamhraidh air Oidhche Shamhna.

Bha muinntir an àite a' cumail a' chleachdaidh beò. Ach thogadh dàam an dèidh an Dàrna Cogaidh. Tha a-nise loch mòr anns a' ghleann. Dh'fhalbh na daoine. Ach bha cìobair fhathast ann. B' esan Bob Bissett, agus chùm e an cleachdadh a dol. Thug e fiosrachadh don eòlaiche, Anna Ros, mu dheidhinn. A-nise tha daoine eile ga chumail beò.

Chan eil e soilleir, ge-tà, dè thachras. Tha plana ann airson sgeama dealain-uisge. Bhiodh sin a' dèanamh cron air an àite. Bhiodh na seann daoine a' creidsinn nach biodh a' Chailleach 's am Bodach toilichte. Agus, mura biodh a' Chailleach 's am Bodach toilichte, bhiodh na daoine fhèin ann an cunnart. Tha cuid anns an sgìre dhen bheachd gum bu chòir don àite a bhith na 'làrach naomh'.

Mus fhàg mi gnothaichean os-nàdarrach ann an Gleann Lìomhann, an cuala sibh mu ùruisgean? Tha daoine ag ràdh gu bheil fear a'

supernatural creature. It was living in water, particularly in rivers. The writer Seton Gordon in his book Highways and Byways in the Central Highlands tells us about a stone in Glen Lyon. There is a footprint in the stone. People call it Caslorg Pheallaidh, the footprint of Peallaidh.

Gordon tells us that Peallaidh is the king of the urisks. The town of Aberfeldy gets its name from him.

People were saying that Peallaidh was living in the River Lyon. His home was at the Falls of Moness near Aberfeldy. Urisks were more numerous, perhaps, in Glen Lyon than any other place in Scotland. Thirteen urisks are named in an old Gaelic verse from the area. I'll tell you the verse in the next Litir.

fuireach anns a' ghleann. 'S e ùruisg creutair os-nàdarrach. Bha e a' fuireach ann an uisge, gu h-àraidh ann an aibhnichean. Tha an sgrìobhaiche Seton Gordon anns an leabhar aige *Highways and Byways in the Central Highlands* ag innse dhuinn mu chlach ann an Gleann Lìomhann. Tha lorg-coise anns a' chloich. Canaidh daoine *Caslorg Pheallaidh* ris, *the footprint of Peallaidh*.

Tha Gordon ag innse dhuinn gur e Peallaidh rìgh nan ùruisgean. Tha baile Obar Pheallaidh a' faighinn ainm bhuaithe.

Bha daoine ag ràdh gun robh Peallaidh a' fuireach ann an Uisge Lìomhann. Bha an dachaigh aige ann am Bun Eas no *Falls of Moness* faisg air Obar Pheallaidh. Bha ùruisgean na bu phailte, 's dòcha, ann an Gleann Lìomhann na àite sam bith eile ann an Alba. Tha trì ùruisgean deug air an ainmeachadh ann an seann rann Gàidhlig bhon sgìre. Innsidh mi an rann dhuibh anns an ath Litir.