

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 507 (which corresponds to Litir 811). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodgy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

On the final day of the National Mod last year, I heard a bit of a joke. Somebody was speaking about Oban. That's where the Mod will be this year. He was saying that there was a shower or two while the Mod was in Inverness. And that he was sure there would be a shower or two in Oban.

He told an anecdote about an American man. He was in Oban for a fortnight. It rained all the time. The man was on the street and he saw a young lad. 'Doesn't it ever get dry here?' the lad asked.

'How would I know?' the lad replied. 'I'm only five years old!'

It reminds me of a weather forecast I heard in Fort William. 'Look out of the window,' I was told. 'If you can't see Ben Nevis, it's raining. If you can see the mountain, it's about to rain!' I hope that the people of Fort William will accept my apology!

At this time of year, the weather is usually cold. But, in

Air an latha mu dheireadh dhen Mhòd Nàiseanta an-uiridh, chuala mi beagan fealla-dhà. Bha cuideigin a' bruidhinn mun Òban. Sin far am bi am Mòd am-bliadhna. Bha e ag ràdh gun robh fras no dhà ann fhad 's a bha am Mòd ann an Inbhir Nis. Agus gun robh e cinnteach gum biodh fras no dhà ann anns an Òban.

Dh'inns e naidheachd mu fhear Ameireaganach. Bha e anns an Òban airson ceala-deug. Bha an t-uisge ann fad na h-ùine. Bha am fear air an t-sràid agus chunnaic e balach òg. 'Nach bi an turadh ann an seo uair sam bith?' dh'fhaighnich e dhen ghille.

'Ciamar a bhiodh fios agamsa?' fhreagair an gille. 'Chan eil mi ach còig bliadhna a dh'aois!'

Tha e a' cur nam chuimhne ro-shealladh na h-aimsir a chuala mi airson a' Ghearasdain. 'Coimhead a-mach air an uinneig,' chaidh innse dhomh. 'Mura faic thu Beinn Nibheis, tha an t-uisge ann. Ma chì thu a' bheinn, tha an t-uisge gu bhith ann!' Tha mi an dòchas gun gabh muinntir a' Ghearasdain mo leisgeul!

Aig an àm seo dhen bhliadhna, bidh an aimsir, mar as trice, fuar. Ach an

comparison with Canada and Russia, Scotland isn't so cold. A thaw can occur any time in the winter.

Do you know that word – aiteamh 'thaw'? We say 'tha an latha ris an aiteamh' or 'tha i ag aiteamh' [for 'it is thawing']. Here is a proverb connected with the thaw.

Cha mhair aiteamh ach bhon tuath, 's cha mhair cur ach bhon deas 'no thaw lasts except one from the north, and no snowfall lasts except one from the south'. Cha mhair aiteamh ach bhon tuath, 's cha mhair cur ach bhon deas.

It means that warmth will last in the winter only when the wind comes from the north. If a thaw comes from the south, perhaps a freeze will come again when the wind [direction] changes. Then it will be coming from the north where it is usually colder. I hope it won't be too cold for you this week!

coimeas ri Canada no an Ruis, chan eil Alba cho fuar sin. Faodaidh aiteamh a bhith ann uair sam bith anns a' gheamhradh.

A bheil sibh eòlach air an fhacal sin – aiteamh 'thaw'? Bidh sinn ag ràdh 'tha an latha ris an aiteamh' no 'tha i ag aiteamh'. Seo seanfhacal co-cheangailte ris an aiteamh:

Cha mhair aiteamh ach bhon tuath, 's cha mhair cur ach bhon deas 'no thaw lasts except one from the north, and no snowfall lasts except one from the south'. Cha mhair aiteamh ach bhon tuath, 's cha mhair cur ach bhon deas.

Tha e a' ciallachadh gum mair blàths anns a' gheamhradh a-mhàin nuair a tha a' ghaoth a' tighinn bhon àird a tuath. Ma thig aiteamh bhon deas, 's dòcha gun tig reothadh a-rithist nuair a dh'atharraicheas a' ghaoth. Bidh i an uair sin a' tighinn bhon cheann a tuath far am bi i nas fhuaire, mar as trice. Tha mi an dòchas nach bi i ro fhuar dhuibh an t-seachdain seo!