

# **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 945 (which corresponds to Litir 1,249). Ruairidh can be contacted at [fios@learngaelic.scot](mailto:fios@learngaelic.scot).

*I was telling you about Eilean nan Ròn in the Mackay Country. In 1950 a group went to live there for a while. They were taking part in a medical experiment. The people of the island left a dozen years earlier. But their houses were still there.*

*The researchers wanted to be by themselves for some weeks. Why? What were they doing on Eilean nan Ròn? Well, they were researching the common cold. They were part of a research project called 'The Common Cold Research Unit' or CCRU. They got their funding from the British Government. They were based in the south of England.*

*While the test was going, mail was not getting to the island. Letters were going to the Skerray Post Office on the mainland. They were read over the radio to the people on the island.*

*The conductors of the experiment were going to be by themselves for ten weeks. Then some folk who had the cold were going to go there.*

*Most of the experimenters were from the University of Aberdeen.*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Eilean nan Ròn ann an Dùthaich MhicAoidh. Ann an naoi ceud deug is caogad (1950) chaidh buidheann a dh'fhuireach ann airson greis. Bha iad a' gabhail pàirt ann an deuchainn mheidigeach. Dh'fhalbh muinntir an eilein dusan bliadhna roimhe sin. Ach bha na taighean aca fhathast ann.

Bha an luchd-rannsachaidh airson a bhith leotha fhèin airson grunn seachdainean. Carson? Dè bha iad a' dèanamh air Eilean nan Ròn? Uill, bha iad a' dèanamh rannsachadh air a' chnatan. Bha iad mar phàirt de phròiseact rannsachaidh ris an canadh iad 'The Common Cold Research Unit' no CCRU. Fhuair iad an ionmhas bho Riaghaltas Bhreatainn. Bha iad stèidhichte ann an ceann a deas Shasainn.

Fhad 's a bha an deuchainn a' dol, cha robh am post a' faighinn chun an eilein. Bha litrichean a' dol a dh'Oifis a' Phuist ann an Sgeara air tìr-mòr. Bha iad air an leughadh thairis air an rèidio do na daoine anns an eilean.

Bha luchd na deuchainn gu bhith leotha fhèin anns an eilean airson deich seachdainean. An uair sin bha feadhainn air an robh an cnatan a' dol a dhol ann.

Bha a' chuid a bu mhotha de luchd na deuchainn à Oilthigh Obar Dheathain.

*They had enough food for three months. There was a report done on them at the time. They were going to play golf and cricket there. And listen to this report: 'Those interested in natural history will try to discover whether the grey seal breeds on the coast of Roan.' It's Roan or Island Roan (R-O-A-N) that they called the island. Didn't one of them understand why the island was called 'Eilean nan Ròn'?!*

*Some of the students put letters in bottles. They threw the bottles into the sea. One of them was from Peterhead. He sent a message to his family in a bottle. Two girls picked up the bottle in Orkney.*

*After ten weeks, some people came from the mainland. They were full of the cold. Did the experimenters catch the cold from them? I'll tell you next week.*

Bha biadh gu leòr aca airson trì mìosan. Chaidh aithris a dhèanamh orra aig an àm. Bha iad a' dol a chluich golf is criogad ann. Agus èistibh ris an aithris seo: 'Those interested in natural history will try to discover whether the grey seal breeds on the coast of Roan.' 'S e Roan no Island Roan (R-O-A-N) a bha aca air an eilean. Nach do thuig duine aca carson as e 'Eilean nan Ròn' a tha air an eilean mar ainm?!

Chuir feadhainn de na h-oileanaich litrichean ann am botail. Thilg iad na botail gu muir. Bha fear dhiubh à Ceann Phàdraig. Chuir esan teachdaireachd don teaghlach aige ann am botal. Thog dithis nighean am botal ann an Arcaibh.

An dèidh deich seachdainean, thàinig feadhainn à tìr-mòr. Bha iad làn dhen chnatan. An do ghabh luchd na deuchainn an cnatan bhuapa? Innsidh mi dhuibh an-ath-sheachdain.