

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 972 (which corresponds to Litir 1,276). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

Do you know Assynt? That's an area in the western side of the county of Sutherland. In 1891 Gaelic was spoken by 87% of the people there. The people of Assynt have a strong Gaelic heritage.

I got a booklet recently. It's full of Gaelic proverbs. The title of the book is 'Gaelic Proverbs'. It was published in 1973.

And what's the link between the book and Assynt? Well, it's a woman from Assynt that compiled it. She was Barbara MacLeod. She heard many of the proverbs from her mother.

Many of her proverbs will be familiar to people from other areas. A lot of them appear in speech and writing still. But I want to give you some that are not so common.

Here is the first one: Am fear a gheibh ainm na mocheirigh, faodaidh e cadal anmoch. Get a name of early rising and you can sleep late. Am fear a gheibh ainm na mocheirigh, faodaidh e cadal anmoch.

How might we say in Gaelic 'friendship cannot be one-sided'? Well, Barbara has a proverb on the very

A bheil sibh eòlach air Asainte? Sin sgìre ann an taobh an iar Siorrachd Chataibh. Ann an ochd ceud deug, naochad 's a h-aon (1891) bha Gàidhlig aig ochdad 's a seachd às a' cheud (87%) de na daoine ann. Tha dualchas Gàidhealach làidir aig muinntir Asainte.

Fhuair mi leabhran o chionn ghoirid. Tha e làn sheanfhaclan Gàidhlig. 'S e an tìotal air an leabhar 'Gaelic Proverbs'. Chaidh fhoillseachadh ann an naoi ceud deug, seachdad 's a trì (1973).

Agus dè an ceangal a tha ann eadar an leabhar agus Asainte? Uill, 's e boireannach à Asainte a chuir ri chèile e. B' ise Barabra Nic Leòid. Bhuineadh i do Chlais an Easaidh. Chuala i gu leòr de na seanfhaclan aig a màthair.

Bidh mòran de na seanfhaclan aice aithnichte do dhaoine à sgìrean eile. Nochdaidh gu leòr dhiubh ann an cainnt is sgrìobhadh fhathast. Ach tha mi airson feadhainn a thoirt dhuibh nach eil cho cumanta.

Seo agaibh a' chiad fhear: *Am fear a gheibh ainm na mocheirigh, faodaidh e cadal anmoch. Get a name of early rising and you can sleep late.* Am fear a gheibh ainm na mocheirigh, faodaidh e cadal anmoch.

Ciamar a chanamaid ann an Gàidhlig 'friendship cannot be one-sided'? Uill, tha seanfhacal aig Barabra air an dearbh chuspair:

topic: Cha seas càirdeas air aon chois. Friendship cannot stand on one leg. Cha seas càirdeas air aon chois. And here is another about friendship: An àm na h-èiginn, dearbhar na càirdean. Adversity shows your true friends. An àm na h-èiginn, dearbhar na càirdean.

It's interesting how often peat appears in Gaelic proverbs. That's not true about the English language! Here is one of Barbara's: Chan aithnich thu duine ach an loisg thu cruach mhòine còmhla ris. Literally, it means 'you won't know a person until you have burned a peatstack with them.' I reckon that means that you require to spend a year, or at least a full winter, with somebody before you know them. Chan aithnich thu duine ach an loisg thu cruach mhòine còmhla ris.

Cha seas càirdeas air aon chois. Friendship cannot stand on one leg. Cha seas càirdeas air aon chois. Agus seo fear eile mu chàirdeas: An àm na h-èiginn, dearbhar na càirdean. Adversity shows your true friends. An àm na h-èiginn, dearbhar na càirdean.

Tha e inntinneach cho tric 's a tha mòine a' nochdadh ann an seanfhaclan Gàidhlig. Chan eil sin fìor mun Bheurla! Seo agaibh fear aig Barabra: Chan aithnich thu duine ach an loisg thu cruach mhòine còmhla ris. Gu litreachail tha e a' ciallachadh 'you won't know a person until you have burned a peatstack with them.' Tha fhios gu bheil sin a' ciallachadh gu feum thu bliadhna, no co-dhiù fad geamhraidh, a chur seachad le cuideigin mus bi thu eòlach orra. Chan aithnich thu duine ach an loisg thu cruach mhòine còmhla ris.