

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 1,018 (which corresponds to Litir 1,322). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

I think that place names are really important in the world of the Gaels. They are exceptionally important in areas where some people say that Gaelic was never spoken there. Among those places is Moray.

I'm pleased to report that there is a new book called 'Gaelic Place-Names of Moray'. It was compiled by Iain Taylor. Iain is a scholar of the subject. He himself belongs to Moray. He is the best man to write such a book!

The book was published by the Moray Gaelic Group. It is divided into seven chapters, based on journeys that can be made in a vehicle. The author tells us about places on the way, and the meanings of the names are at the end of the book.

The first chapter is Eadar Losaidh is Spè – From Lossie to Spey. The journey begins in Inbhir Losaidh or Lossiemouth. The reader learns that the original Gaelic for the River Lossie is Uisge Losaidh and that it means 'vegetation river'.

The road journey concludes at Baile na Dalach, or in its anglicised form, Ballindalloch 'the settlement at

Saoilidh mi gu bheil ainmean-àite fìor chudromach ann an saoghal nan Gàidheal. Tha iad air leth cudromach ann an sgìrean far a bheil cuid ag ràdh nach robh a' Ghàidhlig riamh ann. Am measg nan àiteachan sin, tha Moireibh.

Tha mi toilichte ri aithris gu bheil leabhar ùr ann air a bheil 'Gaelic Place-Names of Moray'. Chaidh a chur ri chèile le Iain Mac an Tàilleir. Tha Iain na sgoilear dhen chuspair. Buinidh e fhèin do Mhoireibh. 'S e an duine as fheàrr airson a leithid de leabhar a sgrìobhadh!

Chaidh an leabhar fhoillseachadh le Buidheann Ghàidhlig Mhoireibh. Tha e air a roinn ann an seachd caibideilean, stèidhichte air tursan a ghabhas dèanamh ann an carbad. Tha an t-ùghdar ag innse dhuinn mu na h-àiteachan air an t-slighe, agus tha ciall nan ainmean aig deireadh an leabhair.

'S e a' chiad chaibideil 'Eadar Losaidh is Spè' – From Lossie to Spey. Tha an turas a' tòiseachadh ann an Inbhir Losaidh no Lossiemouth. Tha an leughadair ag ionnsachadh gur e a' Ghàidhlig thùsail air an River Lossie – Uisge Losaidh – agus gu bheil e a' ciallachadh 'vegetation river'.

Tha an turas rathaid a' crìochnachadh aig Baile na Dalach no, ann an dreach na Beurla, Ballindalloch 'the

the haugh'. On the way, Machair Mhoireibh or the Laich of Moray can be seen. The town of Eilginn or Elgin can be seen – which means 'Ireland'. And Mannocho Road or Rathad nam Manach is followed. The Gaelic means 'the road of the monks' but Iain Taylor reckons that it was possibly an Rathad Meadhanach 'middle road' originally.

The route goes through other places with Gaelic names. There is Rhynagairn or Ruigh nan Càrn 'the shieling of the cairns', and Glenlatterach or Gleann Leitreach 'sloping glen'. There is Rothes, or Ràthais in Gaelic. That means 'fort place'. There is Craigellachie or Creag Eileachaidh 'the rock at the stony place'.

This wee book is full of information like that. There should be a copy in every house in Moray!

settlement at the haugh'. Air an rathad, chithear Machair Mhoireibh no the Laich of Moray. Bithear a' faicinn baile Eilginn no Elgin a tha a' ciallachadh 'Èirinn'. Agus bithear a' leantainn Mannocho Road no Rathad nam Manach. Tha a' Ghàidhlig a' ciallachadh 'the road of the monks' ach tha Iain Mac an Tàilleir dhen bheachd gur dòcha gur e an Rathad Meadhanach 'middle road' a bha ann bho thùs.

Tha an t-slighe a' dol tro àiteachan eile le ainmean Gàidhlig. Tha Rhynagairn ann, no Ruigh nan Càrn 'the shieling of the cairns', agus Glenlatterach no Gleann Leitreach 'sloping glen'. Tha Rothes ann, no Ràthais ann an Gàidhlig. Tha sin a' ciallachadh 'fort place'. Tha Craigellachie ann – no Creag Eileachaidh 'the rock at the stony place'.

Tha an leabhar beag seo làn fiosrachaidh mar sin. Bu chòir do lethbhreac dheth a bhith anns a h-uile dachaigh ann am Moireibh!