

Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh

le Ruairidh MacIlleathain

Abairt is Seanfhaclan co-cheangailte ri ‘uisge’

Each week the West Highland Free Press publishes the text for Ruairidh's "Letter to Gaelic Learners" on BBC Radio nan Gàidheal (103.5-105 FM). Broadcasts are as follows: 2:55pm on Sunday as part of BBC Radio nan Gàidheal's hour-long learning zone, following the Gaelic Learners' programme 'SpeakGaelic Extra', with a repeat at 10.30 pm on Wednesday. This is Litir 1,203. There is also a simpler version – An Litir Bheag – which is broadcast at 2:30pm each Sunday. Litir Bheag 899 corresponds to Litir 1,203. The Litir is also available at www.bbc.co.uk/litir and www.learnghaelic.scot/litir. Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learnghaelic.scot.

Anns an Litir mu dheireadh bha mi a' toirt sùil air *bùrn* agus *uisge*, faclan airson *water* ann an Gàidhlig. Mus fhàg sinn an cuspair sin, dè th' ann am 'bùrn na Sàbaid'? Bùrn na Sàbaid. 'S e sin am bùrn a bhiodh feadhainn a' toirt a-steach bhon tobar **air Disathairne** gus nach biodh aca ri dhol ann air an t-Sàbaid.

An t-seachdain seo, cha bhi sinn a' trèigsinn *uisge* is *bùrn uile-gu-lèir*. Tha mi a' dol a thoirt sùil air abairtean is seanfhaclan co-cheangailte ri *uisge*. An toiseach feadhainn anns a bheil am facal *uisge* a' nochdadh.

Uaireannan, tha am facal a' ciallachadh *uisge* a tha na laighe air an talamh. Mar eisimpleir tha an seanfhaclan seo ann: *Bha rudeigin de dh'uisge far na bhàthadh an gamhainn*. Tha sin a' nochdadh anns a' chruinneachadh aig an Sgitheanach, Alasdair MacNeacail. Tha e co-ionann ris an t-seanfhaclan ann an Albais – *there's aye some water whaur the stirkie drowns*. Bha rudeigin de dh'uisge far na bhàthadh an gamhainn. Tha bàthadh a' ghamhna a' dearbhadh, mar gum bitheadh, gu bheil *uisge* – rudeigin domhainn – anns an àite sin.

Uaireannan, tha *uisge* a' seasamh airson 'rain' mar anns an abairt: *Tha currac air a' bheinn, siud an t-uisg' a' tighinn* – *the mountain has a cap on, there's the rain coming*. Tha currac air a' bheinn, siud an t-uisg' a' tighinn.

Mar as trice, ann an abairtean is seanfhaclan, 's e am facal *uisge* a tha a' nochdadh airson *water*. Ach seo agaibh abairt anns a bheil 'bùrn'. *Bùrn dubh ort! Black water on you*. Bùrn dubh ort! Uill, tha mi an dùil gu bheil e mì-mhodhail ach chan eil mi buileach cinnteach cuin a bhiodh daoine ga ràdh.

Ma leigeas tu seachad cothrom air rudeigin – mar eisimpleir a bhith a' dèanamh obair – dh'fhaodamaid a ràdh: ***Cadal a' mhuilleir 's an t-uisg' a' dol seachad***. *The miller asleep and the water running past*. Cadal a' mhuilleir 's an t-uisg' a' dol seachad. Tha sin a' buntainn ri muileann-uisge ri taobh allt a bhios a' sruthadh fad na h-ùine.

Tha abairt car coltach ri sin. Tha mi cinnteach gu bheil i co-cheangailte ri suidheachadh nuair a tha e a' fàilneachadh air cuideigin rudeigin a dhèanamh air sàillibh ghnothaichean air nach eil smachd aige no aice. *Cha b' e 'm muileann nach meileadh ach an t-uisge nach ruitheadh*. *It wasn't the mill that wouldn't grind but the water that wouldn't run*. Bha sinne deònach is comasach air an gnothach a

choileanadh, ach bha an dealan dheth, mar eisimpleir. Cha b' e 'm muileann nach meileadh ach an t-uisge nach ruitheadh.

Agus dè ur beachdan air an t-seanfhacl seo? *Cha do rinn uisge glan riamh leann math. Clean water never made good ale.* Tha amharas agam nach biodh an fheadhainn a tha a' dèanamh leann ag aontachadh ri sin! Ach tha e a-mach air daoine, nach eil? Cha leig thu leas a bhith fìor-ghlan airson a bhith math air rudeigin. Cha do rinn uisge glan riamh leann math.

Leis an t-seanfhacl mu dheireadh, tha sinn a' tilleadh don fhacl *bùrn*. *Is duilich bùrn glan a thoirt à tobar salach.* Tha sin fìor ann an iomadach dòigh, nach eil? *It's difficult to draw clean water from a dirty well.* Is duilich bùrn glan a thoirt à tobar salach.

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Faclan na Litreach: tobar: *well*; abairtean is seanfhaclan: *phrases and proverbs*; bhàthadh: *was drowned*; gamhainn: *stirk*; domhainn: *deep*; currac: *hood, cap*; fìor-ghlan: *pure*.

Abairtean na Litreach: Mus fhàg sinn an cuspair sin, dè th' ann am 'bùrn na Sàbaid'? *before we leave that subject, what is Sabbath water?*; gus nach biodh aca ri dhol ann air an t-Sàbaid: *so that they wouldn't have to go there on the Sabbath*; cha bhi sinn a' tràigsinn uisge is bùrn uile-gu-lèir: *we won't be abandoning water entirely*; uisge a tha na laighe air an talamh: *water that is lying on the ground*; tha mi an dùil gu bheil e mì-mhodhail ach chan eil mi buileach cinnteach cuin a bhiodh daoine ga ràdh: *I expect it is rude but I'm not entirely sure when people would say it*; ma leigeas tu seachad cothrom: *if you let an opportunity pass*; a' buntainn ri muileann-uisge ri taobh allt a bhios a' sruthadh fad na h-ùine: *concerns a watermill beside a burn which runs all the time*; nuair a tha e a' fàilneachadh air cuideigin rudeigin a dhèanamh air sàillibh ghnòthaichean air nach eil smachd aige no aice: *when somebody fails to do something because of matters over which they have no control*; tha amharas agam nach biodh an fheadhainn a tha a' dèanamh leann ag aontachadh ri sin: *I suspect that those who make ale would not agree with that*; fìor ann an iomadach dòigh: *correct in many ways*.

Puing-chànain na Litreach: am bùrn a bhiodh feadhainn a' toirt a-steach bhon tobar **air Disathairne**: *the water that some people would take in from the well on Saturdays*. To be absolutely clear, you could say 'a h-uile Disathairne' but the presence of the preposition air with a day of the week generally refers to a regular or repeated occurrence. Although we might say 'on Tuesday' in English, we just say Dimàirt in Gaelic e.g. am bi thu ann Dimàirt? 'will you be there on Tuesday?' Air Dimàirt would mean 'on Tuesdays'. Bidh mi a' dol ann Diciadain 'I will be going there on Wednesday'; bidh mi a' dol ann air Diciadain 'I go there on Wednesdays'.

Seanfhacl na Litreach: Cadal a' mhuilleir 's an t-uisg' a' dol seachad: *the miller asleep and the water running past*.

Tha "Litir do Luchd-ionnsachaidh" air a maoineachadh le MG ALBA