

## 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 189 (which corresponds to Litir 493). Ruairidh can be contacted at [rodny.macleane@bbc.co.uk](mailto:rodny.macleane@bbc.co.uk).

*I was telling you about Robbie and Anne Northway. They were in Strathan on Cape Wrath. I was there in autumn this year. I was there with a friend. But we were also in another bothy in the area. That is the bothy in Strathcailleach.*

*That bothy is very small, low and dark. It is seven miles from any road. Not many people go there. But the building itself is in good repair. It is the Mountain Bothies Association that keeps it in repair.*

*We reached the bothy. "Here's where he was – the Old Fox," said my friend.*

*"Who was the Old Fox?" I asked. My friend told me about a time he came to the bothy. A man was living there. He wasn't nice. "Go away!" he said. That man was James McRory Smith. He was living in that bothy for thirty years.*

*James belonged to Dumbarton. He was in the army in West Germany after the war. He returned to Scotland. But things*

Bha mi ag innse dhuibh mu Robbie is Anne Northway. Bha iad anns an t-Srathan air a' Pharbh. Bha mi ann as t-fhoghar am-bliadhna. Bha mi ann còmhla ri caraid. Ach bha sinn ann am bothan eile anns an sgìre sin cuideachd. 'S e sin am bothan ann an Srath Chailleach.

Tha am bothan sin gu math beag, ìosal is dorch. Tha e seachd mìle bho rathad sam bith. Chan eil mòran daoine a' dol ann. Ach tha an togalach ann an deagh òrdugh. 'S e Comann Bothain nam Beann a tha ga chumail ann an òrdugh.

Ràinig sinn am bothan. "Seo far an robh e – an Seann Mhadadh Ruadh," thuirt mo charaid.

"Cò bha anns a' Mhadadh Ruadh?" dh'fhaighnich mi. Dh'innis mo charaid dhomh mun turas a thàinig e don bhothan. Bha fear a' fuireach ann. Cha robh e laghach. "Thalla!" thuirt e. B' e an duine sin Seumas MacRuairidh Mac a' Ghobhainn. Bha e a' fuireach anns a' bhothan sin airson trithead bliadhna.

Bhuineadh Seumas do Dhùn Bhreatainn. Bha e anns an arm anns a' Ghearmailt an Iar às dèidh a' chogaidh. Thill e a dh'Alba. Ach cha

*didn't go well for him. He lost his wife in a road accident.*

*James moved to the north. And he made his home in the old house in Strathcailleach. It was eight miles on foot between the house and the shop. But it appears that James was happy living on his own.*

*The Bothies Association had nothing to do with the place – at that time. But there was a big storm. That was in 1981. The storm damaged the building. The Bothies Association agreed to repair the building. But, for that, James agreed to leave one of his rooms open to walkers.*

*James agreed but he didn't keep [his part of] the bargain. There were many people who went there.*

*James left during the nineties. He also died in the nineties. His house is now a bothy for walkers. But the pictures he drew are still on the wall – as a reminder of him.*

deach gu math dha. Chaill e a bhean ann an tubaist rathaid.

Ghluais Seumas don cheann a tuath. Agus rinn e a dhachaigh anns an t-seann taigh ann an Srath Chailleach. Bha e ochd mìle air cois eadar an taigh agus a' bhùth. Ach tha e coltach gun robh Seumas toilichte a bhith a' fuireach leis fhèin.

Cha robh gnothach aig Comann nam Bothan ris an àite – aig an àm sin. Ach bha stoirm mhòr ann. Bha sin ann an naoi ceud deug, ochdad 's a h-aon (1981). Rinn an stoirm milleadh air an togalach. Dh'aontaich Comann nam Bothan an togalach a chàradh. Ach, airson sin, dh'aontaich Seumas aon seòmar aige fhàgail fosgailte do luchd-coiseachd.

Dh'aontaich Seumas ach cha do chùm e ris a' bhargan. Bha iomadh duine a chaidh ann, nach d' fhuair fàilte.

Dh'fhalbh Seumas anns na naochadan. Chaochail e anns na naochadan cuideachd. Tha an taigh aige nise na bhothan do luchd-coiseachd. Ach tha na dealbhan a rinn e fhathast air a' bhalla – mar chuimhneachan air.