

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 204 (which corresponds to Litir 508). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

I was reading a book recently. It was pleasurable. It's name is Thugam agus Bhuam ["to me and from me"]. It's a collection of stories and songs. They are all by the late Peter Morrison.

The stories were told by Peter. They were recorded by the late Donald Archie MacDonald. He chose and edited the stories in the book. Donald Archie was working for [at] the School of Scottish Studies. The book came out 32 years ago. But the Grimsay Community Association reprinted it recently.

Peter Morrison was born in Grimsay. That was in 1889. Grimsay is a small island between North Uist and Benbecula. When Peter was raised there, the community was very traditional. The ceilidh house was still on the go.

When Peter was young he was working on the Clyde. He was working in boats. The boats were taking goods between Glasgow and Belfast. When he was in that job, he saw a famous thing

Bha mi a' leughadh leabhar o chionn ghoirid. Bha e taitneach. 'S e an t-ainm a tha air *Thugam agus Bhuam*. 'S e cruinneachadh de sgeulachdan is òrain a tha ann. Tha iad uile le Pàdrraig Moireasdan nach maireann.

Bha na stòiridhean air an aithris le Pàdrraig. Bha iad air an clàradh le Dòmhnall Eàirdsidh Dòmhnallach nach maireann. Thagh esan agus dheasaich esan na sgeulachdan anns an leabhar. Bha Dòmhnall Eàirdsidh ag obair aig Sgoil Eòlais na h-Alba. Thàinig an leabhar a-mach o chionn trithead 's a dhà bliadhna. Ach chuir Comann Coimhearsnachd Ghriomasaigh ann an clò a-rithist e o chionn ghoirid.

Rugadh Pàdrraig Moireasdan ann an Griomasaigh. Bha sin ann an ochd ceud deug, ochdad 's a naoi (1889). Tha Griomasaigh na eilean beag eadar Uibhist a Tuath agus Beinn a' Bhadhla. Nuair a thogadh Pàdrraig ann, bha a' choimhearsnachd gu math traidiseanta. Bha an taigh-cèilidh fhathast a' dol.

Nuair a bha Pàdrraig òg bha e ag obair air Chluaidh. Bha e ag obair ann am bàtaichean. Bha na bàtaichean a' toirt bathar eadar Glaschu is Beal Feirste. Nuair a bha e anns an dreuchd sin, chunnaic e rud mòr ainmeil.

[event]. It happened in 1911. There is a report about the matter in the book.

It happened in Belfast. Do you know what it was? Peter was present when the largest vessel ever built was launched. That was the Titanic. It happened on the last day of May, 1911. She wasn't ready to carry people. There was still work to be done on her. But her hull was ready.

More than twenty tons of tallow were put on the slipway. That let the hull slide down to the river. Everything went pretty well. Many people were present.

But Peter heard something strange that day. Something on which he was thinking when the Titanic was sunk [went under]. Next week I'll tell you exactly what Peter heard that day.

Thachair e ann an naoi ceud deug 's a h-aon-deug (1911). Tha aithris mu dheidhinn a' ghnòthaich anns an leabhar.

'S ann am Beal Feirste a thachair e. A bheil fios agaibh dè bha ann? Bha Pàdraig an làthair nuair a chaidh an soitheach as motha a chaidh a thogail riamh a chur air bhog. B' ise an Titanic. Thachair sin air an latha mu dheireadh dhen Chèitean naoi ceud deug 's a h-aon-deug (1911). Cha robh i deiseil airson daoine a ghiùlain. Bha obair ri dhèanamh oirre fhathast. Ach bha a slige deiseil.

Chaidh còrr is fichead tonna de gheir a chur air an t-slip. Leig sin leis an t-slige sleamhnadh sìos don abhainn. Dh'obraich a h-uile càil an ìre mhath. Bha mòran an làthair.

Ach chuala Pàdrùig rudeigin neònach air an latha sin. Rudeigin air an robh e a' smaoinachadh nuair a chaidh an Titanic fodha. An ath-sheachdain, innsidh mi dhuibh dè dìreach a chuala Pàdrùig air an latha sin.