

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 250 (which corresponds to Litir 554). Ruairidh can be contacted at roddy.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

Archibald Menzies was from near Aberfeldy in Perthshire. He was born in 1754. He spoke Gaelic.

Archibald's father was a gardener. He was working in Castle Menzies. Archibald was also interested in gardening. He got work in Edinburgh in the Royal Botanic Gardens. He did a botany course. After that he did a medical course. He got work in the Royal Navy. He was in the West Indies. Then he went to North America. He started to collect plants.

After a while, he got a position on board a ship. The ship was going around Cape Horn to the Pacific Ocean. Archibald came home with a big collection of plants and seeds. He went on another big voyage. That was with George Vancouver.

On that journey Archibald went on land in Australia, Tahiti, Hawaii and the west coast of North America. He collected many plants. Some of them are common

Bha Gilleasbaig Mèinnearach – Archibald Menzies – à sgìre Obar Pheallaidh ann an Siorrachd Pheairt. Rugadh e ann an seachd ceud deug, caogad 's a ceithir (1754). Bha Gàidhlig aige.

Bha athair Ghilleasbaig na ghàirnealair. Bha e ag obair ann an Caisteal nam Mèinnearach. Bha ùidh aig Gilleasbaig ann an gàirnealaireachd cuideachd. Fhuair e obair ann an Dùn Èideann anns an Lios Luibheach Rìogh-ail. Rinn e cùrsa lus-eòlais. An dèidh sin, rinn e cùrsa dotaireachd. Fhuair e obair anns a' Chabhlaich Rìoghail. Bha e anns na h-Innseachan an Iar. An uair sin chaidh e a dh'Ameireagaidh a Tuath. Thòisich e air lusan a chruinneachadh.

An ceann greis, fhuair e dreuchd air bòrd long. Bha an long a' dol timcheall Cape Horn gu ruige an Cuan Sèimh. Thàinig Gilleasbaig dhachaigh le cruinneachadh mòr de lusan is sìl. Chaidh e air turas-mara mòr eile. Bha sin le Seòras Vancouver.

Air an turas sin chaidh Gilleasbaig air tìr ann an Astràilia, Tahiti, Hawaii agus taobh an iar Ameireagaidh a Tuath. Chruinnich e mòran lusan. Tha cuid dhiubh cumanta

in our gardens in Britain. Many plants are named after him. Here are examples: Arbutus menziesii, Chimaphila menziesii, Nemophila menziesii, Penstemon menziesii, Tolmiea menziesii and Nothofagus menziesii. And the genus Menziesia.

But I'd like to name one tree specifically. Menzies' name is not on this tree. But it appears that it was him that brought this famous tree to Britain. Scientists know it as Araucaria araucana.

When he was on the voyage with Vancouver, Archibald was at a banquet in Chile. On the dinner table, there was a plate. On the plate there were brown nuts. Archibald had never seen those nuts. He put a few in his pocket. He took them to Britain. And the tree is now growing in gardens throughout Britain. Araucaria araucana. You'll be more familiar with it as the monkey puzzle tree.

anns na gàrraidhean againn ann am Breatainn. Dh'fhàs Gilleasbaig ainmeil. Tha mòran lus an ainmeachadh às a dhèidh. Seo eisimpleirean: *Arbutus menziesii, Chimaphila menziesii, Nemophila menziesii, Penstemon menziesii, Tolmiea menziesii* agus *Nothofagus menziesii*. Agus an genus *Menziesia*.

Ach bu mhath leam aon chraobh ainmeachadh gu sònraichte. Chan eil ainm a' Mhèinnearaich air a' chraobh seo. Ach tha a h-uile coltas ann gur e a thug a' chraobh ainmeil seo a Bhreatainn. Tha luchd-saidheans eòlach air mar *Araucaria araucana*.

Nuair a bha air an turas le Vancouver, bha Gilleasbaig aig cuirm ann an Chile. Air bòrd na dinnearach, bha truinnsear. Air an truinnsear bha cnothan ruadha. Chan fhaca Gilleasbaig riamh roimhe na cnothan sin. Chuir e feadhainn na phòcaid. Thug e a Bhreatainn iad. Agus tha a' chraobh ainise a' fàs ann an gàrraidhean air feadh Bhreatainn. *Araucaria araucana*. Bidh sibhse nas eòlaiche oirre mar *monkey puzzle tree*.