

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 700 (which corresponds to Litir 1,004). Ruairidh can be contacted at rodny.maclean@bbc.co.uk.

Many people across the world like the golden birding-dog. I mean by that the golden retriever. It was created in the Highlands of Scotland in 1868. Where? Well, at Guisachan House near Tomich. Tomich is near Cannich, west of Loch Ness.

The man who created it was Lord Tweedmouth who owned Guisachan House. He was wanting a dog with a soft mouth that would be good at retrieving dead birds without damaging them. He was also wanting a dog that would be capable of walking through bogs and of withstanding bad weather. He was wanting it to have a long waterproof coat.

Lord Tweedmouth combined two breeds – wavy-coated retriever and Tweed water-spaniel. And it was the golden retriever that arose from it. It didn't have the official name, however, until the Golden Retriever Club was established in 1920.

Now this breed is very popular globally, but particularly in Australia, North America and

Tha mòran air feadh an t-saoghail measail air a' chù-eunaich bhuidhe. Tha mi a' ciallachadh le sin an *golden retriever*. Chaidh a chruthachadh air Gàidhealtachd na h-Alba ann an ochd ceud deug, seasgad 's a h-ochd (1868). Càite? Uill, ann an Taigh a' Ghiùthsachain faisg air Tomaich. Tha Tomaich faisg air Canaich gu siar air Loch Nis.

B' e am fear a chruthaich e am Morair Tweedmouth leis an robh Taigh a' Ghiùthsachain. Bha e ag iarraidh cù le beul bog a bhiodh math air èoin mharbh a thoirt air ais gun chron a dhèanamh orra. Bha e cuideachd ag iarraidh cù a bhiodh comasach air coiseachd thar bhoglaichean agus air seasamh ri droch shìde. Bha e ag iarraidh gum biodh bian fada, dìonach air.

Chuir am Morair Tweedmouth dà sheòrsa ri chèile – *wavy-coated retriever* agus *Tweed water-spaniel*. Agus b' e an cù-eunaich buidhe – an *golden retriever* – a dh'èirich às. Cha robh an t-ainm oifigeil air, ge-tà, gus an deach an *Golden Retriever Club* a chur air chois ann an naoi ceud deug is fichead (1920).

A-nise tha fèill mhòr air an t-seòrsa seo air feadh an t-saoghail, ach gu h-àraidh ann an Astràilia, Ameireagaidh a Tuath

Europe. Not many of those dogs are involved in birding, however. They are pets. They normally have an easy-going and nice nature.

Guisachan House is now a ruin. But to many people it's a special place. Some people go there on a pilgrimage.

This year 150 years have elapsed since the golden retriever was created. Hundreds of people came together during the summer in Tomich and Cannich to celebrate that. I was speaking to some people from the United States and Australia who came to Scotland specifically because this gathering was happening.

On the final day, a picture [photo] was taken in front of Guisachan House. There are 361 dogs – of the one breed – in the picture! Cheerio just now.

agus san Roinn Eòrpa. Cha bhi mòran de na coin sin an sàs ann an eunach, ge-tà. 'S e peataichean a tha annta. Tha iad, mar as trice, gu math dòigheil, laghach nan nàdar.

Tha Taigh a' Ghiùthsachain a-nise na thobhta. Ach do mhòran 's e àite sònraichte a tha ann. Bidh feadhainn a' dol ann air eilthireachd.

Am-bliadhna, tha ceud gu leth bliadhna air a dhol seachad bhon a chaidh an cù-eunaich buidhe a chruthachadh. Thàinig na ceudan cruinn còmhla as t-samhradh ann an Tomaich is Canaich airson sin a chomharrachadh. Bha mi a' bruidhinn ri feadhainn às na Stàitean Aonaichte agus Astràilia a thàinig a dh'Alba a dh'aona-ghnothach air sgàth 's gun robh an fhèill seo a' dol air adhart.

Air an latha mu dheireadh, chaidh dealbh a thogail air beulaibh Taigh a' Ghiùthsachain. Tha trì cheud, seasgad 's a h-aon coin – dhen aon seòrsa – anns an dealbh! Mar sin leibh an-dràsta.