

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 1,073 (which corresponds to Litir 1,377). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

Sometimes we hear false information connected to the heritage of the Gaels. For example, there is a loch in the Trossachs called Loch Drunkie. Drunkie is spelt D-R-U-N-K-I-E.

There is a story that the name commemorates how some people put barrels of whisky into the loch. They were making whisky illegally. The excisemen were pursuing them. Those people were the 'drunkies'.

Fortunately, this name appears on the website of the research body, Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba. They translate it as 'loch of the place called Drongaidh'; the name is Loch Drongaidh in Gaelic. Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba tell us that it first appears as Lochdrungy in the fifteenth century. That was long before the excisemen existed.

And Drongaidh itself? According to Iain Taylor, in 'Place-Names of Scotland' perhaps it means 'ridge place'.

What story do tourists hear about the name, however? I suspect that at least some of them hear that it is an English name and that it is connected with an alcoholic drink.

Uaireannan, bidh sinn a' cluinntinn fiosrachadh fuadain co-cheangailte ri dualchas nan Gàidheal. Mar eisimpleir, tha loch anns na Tròisichean ris an canar Loch Drunkie. Tha Drunkie air a litreachadh D-R-U-N-K-I-E.

Tha stòiridh ann gu bheil an t-ainm a' cuimhneachadh mar a chuir feadhainn baraillean uisge-bheatha don loch. Bha iad a' dèanamh uisge-beatha gu mì-laghail. Bha na gèidsearan an tòir orra. B' iad na daoine sin na 'drunkies'.

Gu fortanach, tha an t-ainm seo a' nochdadh air làrach-lìn na buidhne-rannsachaidh, Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba. Tha iadsan ga eadar-theangachadh mar 'loch of the place called Drongaidh'; 's e Loch Drongaidh dreach an ainm ann an Gàidhlig. Tha Ainmean-Àite na h-Alba ag innse dhuinn gu bheil e a' nochdadh an toiseach mar Lochdrungy anns a' chòigeamh linn deug. Bha sin fada mus robh na gèidsearan ann.

Agus Drongaidh fhèin? A rèir Iain Mhic an Tàilleir, ann am *Place-Names of Scotland*, math dh'fhaodte gu bheil e a' ciallachadh 'ridge place'.

Dè an sgeul a tha luchd-turais a' cluinntinn mun ainm, ge-tà? Tha droch amharas agam gum bi cuid co-dhiù a' cluinntinn gur e ainm Beurla a tha ann agus gu bheil e co-cheangailte ri deoch-làidir.

<p><i>That brings me to a new book. It is full of information of the sort that tourists should be hearing. Correct information. Appropriate information. The book was written by Coinneach Maclean. Coinneach belongs to a famous Gaelic family. He has been involved in tourism. He saw how tourists were sometimes getting false information about the Highlands.</i></p> <p><i>The name of the book is 'Travels in Another Country: A Guide to Gaelic Scotland'. It has five hundred pages. It is full of information about the heritage of the Gaels in every part of Scotland where the language was once spoken. Those who serve tourists no longer have an excuse for being ignorant about the heritage of the Gaels in their own patch.</i></p> <p><i>The book begins in Glasgow and takes us throughout Scotland. We'll take a look at a snippet or two from Travels in Another Country in the next Litir.</i></p>	<p>Tha sin gam thoirt gu leabhar ùr. Tha e làn fiosrachaidh dhen t-seòrsa a bu chòir do luchd-turais a bhith a' cluinntinn. Fiosrachadh ceart. Fiosrachadh dòigheil. Chaidh an leabhar a sgrìobhadh le Coinneach MacGill-Eain. Buinidh Coinneach do theaghlach Gàidhealach cliùmhhor. Tha e air a bhith an sàs ann an turasachd. Chunnaic e mar a bha luchd-turais uaireannan a' faighinn fiosrachadh fuadain mun Ghàidhealtachd.</p> <p>'S e an t-ainm air an leabhar '<i>Travels in Another Country: A Guide to Gaelic Scotland</i>'. Tha còig ceud duilleag ann. Tha e làn fiosrachaidh mu dhualchas nan Gàidheal anns gach sgìre de dh'Alba far an robh an cànan air a bruidhinn uaireigin. Chan eil leisgeul tuilleadh aig feadhainn a tha a' frithealadh luchd-turais a bhith aineolach mu dhualchas nan Gàidheal anns an sgìre aca fhèin.</p> <p>Tha an leabhar a' tòiseachadh ann an Glaschu agus gar toirt air feadh Alba. Bheir sinn sùil air criomag no dhà bho <i>Travels in Another Country</i> anns an ath Litir.</p>
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