

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 973 (which corresponds to Litir 1,277). Ruairidh can be contacted at fios@learngaelic.scot.

In the Second [World] War, Loch Ewe, near Gairloch, was used as a refuge for shipping. In June 1941 attacks were made on it from the air four or five times. That was before the Arctic convoys began between Loch Ewe and Murmansk.

The German aircraft came from Stavanger or Trondheim in Norway. Norway was at that time under the control of Germany.

The air attacks weren't terribly successful. On the first night the Germans thought they had bombed a large ship. But, instead of that, they attacked an island. Sgeir an Araig is in the middle of Loch Ewe. It has the shape of a boat. There were sheds and masts on it. At half past one in the morning, it looked a bit like a ship.

There were air attacks during the day also. Bualnaluib Primary School is near Aultbea. The schoolchildren were playing in the playground at lunchtime when a German aircraft appeared.

It was so close to them that the children were seeing the pilot. He waved to them and they waved

Ann an Dàrna Cogadh, bha Loch Iubh, faisg air Gearrloch, air a chleachdadh mar thèarmann airson luingeas. Anns an Ògmhios naoi ceud deug, ceathrad 's a h-aon (1941), chaidh ionnsaighean a thoirt air bhon adhar ceithir no còig tursan. Bha sin mus do thòisich na conbhoidhean Artach eadar Loch Iubh agus Murmansk.

Thàinig na h-itealain Ghearmailteach à Stavanger no Trondheim ann an Nirribhidh. Bha Nirribhidh an uair sin fo smachd na Gearmailt.

Cha robh na h-ionnsaighean-adhair uabhasach soirbheachail. Air a' chiad oidhche bha na Gearmailtich dhen bheachd gun do leag iad boma air long mhòr. Ach, an àite sin, thug iad ionnsaigh air eilean. Tha Sgeir an Araig ann am meadhan Loch Iubh. Tha cumadh bàta oirre. Bha seadaichean agus crainn oirre. Aig leth-uair an dèidh uair sa mhadainn, bha i a' coimhead car coltach ri long.

Bha ionnsaighean-adhair ann tron latha cuideachd. Tha Bun-sgoil Buail na Lùib faisg air an Allt-Bheithe. Bha clann na sgoile a' cluich anns an raon-chluiche aig àm lòn nuair a nochd itealan Gearmailteach.

Bha e cho faisg orra 's gun robh a' chlànn a' faicinn a' phileit. Smèid e orra agus smèid iadsan air ais. Bha am maighstir-sgoile

back. The schoolmaster was angry. Some of the pupils received the strap for waving at the enemy.

The plane dropped bombs on a ship in Loch Ewe. The merchant vessel suffered damage.

The attacks did damage but the Luftwaffe lost several aircraft. Protective [anti-aircraft] guns were busy against them.

The Germans lost a plane in Wester Ross more than three years after that. That was in December 1944. It left Stavanger with the aim of gaining intelligence on ships in Orkney.

But things went awry. They went far to the south. They had trouble with the engine. The crew ejected, making use of their parachutes. The plane came down at the mouth of Loch Broom.

Only one person survived. He came down close to the shore on Little Loch Broom, south of Loch Broom. In the next Litir, I'll tell you what happened to him then.

feargach. Fhuair feadhainn de na sgoilearan strapadh airson a bhith smèideadh air an nàmhaid.

Leag an t-itealan bomaichean air long ann an Loch Iubh. Dh'fhuiling an soitheach-carago damaiste.

Rinn na h-ionnsaighean cron ach chaill an Luftwaffe grunn phlèanaichean. Bha gunnaichean-dìon trang nan aghaidh.

Chaill na Gearmailtich itealan ann an Ros an Iar còrr is trì bliadhna an dèidh sin. Bha sin anns an Dùbhlachd, naoi ceud deug, ceathrad 's a ceithir (1944). Dh'fhàg e Stavanger leis an amas fiosrachadh fhaighinn air longan ann an Arcaibh.

Ach chaidh cùisean ceàrr. Chaidh iad fada gu deas. Bha trioblaid aca leis an einnsean. Leum an criutha a-mach, a' cur feum air na paraisiutan aca. Thàinig an t-itealan sìos aig beul Loch a' Bhraoin.

Cha do mhair beò ach aon duine. Thàinig e sìos faisg air a' chladach anns an Loch Bheag, deas air Loch a' Bhraoin. Anns an ath Litir, innsidh mi dhuibh dè thachair dha an uair sin.