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Patron: Gavin Souter AO

Affiliate Member: Royal Australian Historical Society

Mosman Historical Society – Committee Members 2022-2023

President: Debbie Higginson	Speakers: Prof. David Carment AM	Other Committee members:
Vice-President: Dr. Perry McIntyre AM	Newsletter: Margaret Szalay	John Dansie
Acting Secretary: Dr. Perry McIntyre AM	Library Rep.: Donna Braye (Ex officio)	Noela Gill
Acting Secretary: Dr. Pam Lofthouse	(Mosman Library's Local Studies Librarian)	Kay Halstead
Treasurer: Stephen Palmer	Web master: Amanda Gosse (Ex officio)	

MOSMAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY NEWSLETTER - October 2022

The Society's meetings are held on the second Wednesday in March, May, July, September & November

The above committee members for 2022-23 were elected at the MHS AGM held on 14 September 2022.

We look forward to seeing you at our Speaker evening on **Wednesday, 9th November** and afterwards at our social gathering for tea/coffee, biscuits & a chat.

Our next newsletter will be in February 2023.

MHS BEQUEST FROM PHILLIPA MORRIS

The Mosman Historical Society gratefully acknowledges a very generous gift from the estate of Phillipa Morris, a long-time and valued member and prolific researcher, who died in December 2021.

DATES FOR THE DIARY

Wednesday, 9th November, 7pm

Speaker: Kevin O'Brien to talk about his book,
"Defending Middle Head: A Short History"
(Details in the attached flyer)

Wednesday, 16th November, 5pm

History & Franks walk from Reservoir Park, Brady St
(Details in the attached flyer)

Wednesday, 8th March 2023, 7pm

Speaker: – TBA in the February newsletter

Speaker meetings are held at Mosman Library
605 Military Road, Mosman NSW

If you wish to attend any of the above, please contact David by the Monday prior at davidcarment@mac.com or 0418 857 182 (email preferred)

Congratulations to MHS member, Shirley Beaumont-Owles, named North Shore Volunteer of the Year and Senior Volunteer of the Year, for her outstanding contribution to the community, for her work with the Dress for Success charity, an organisation helping women achieve economic independence by providing a network of support, professional clothing and development tools.

Welcome to new MHS member....

Kelvyn Steggle

Members are encouraged to invite a friend or neighbour to join MHS each year to grow our membership to learn more about & to help preserve our heritage.

Local Studies at BARRY O'KEEFE LIBRARY

(see <https://events.mosman.nsw.gov.au/>)

FEATURE ARTICLES ... overleaf

MHS's Clifton Gardens project, and a detailed article on the mini-submarine attack on Sydney Harbour in 1942.

Donna Braye advised that the Mosman Local Studies Collection holds a number of resources on the attack by the Japanese midget submarines in 1942 and have recently purchased the latest book by Peter Grose, *The Battle of Sydney Harbour* an important record which includes reports by the Japanese. The collection also holds numerous fascinating oral history interviews in which residents recall the night of the attack. These can be found on Trace; Mosman digital archive while a selection can be heard on Mosman Voices

<https://www.mosmanvoices.net/category/midget-submarines>

With best wishes to you all for the Christmas Season and the New Year.

MOSMAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S CLIFTON GARDENS PROJECT

On 23 August 2022, MHS Vice-president, Dr. Perry McIntyre, accepted on behalf of the Mosman Historical Society, a 2022 community grant from Mosman Council, which was awarded for this MHS project to commemorate the history of the Clifton Gardens Hotel. This grant is specifically to be used to lay the brick pier, using original sandstone bricks from the hotel, on which a plaque will be mounted, to publish an e-booklet on Clifton Gardens and the Hotel, and to hold a community event to unveil the plaque. A generous donation from MHS members, Ross and Therese Webb, is held in reserve to support this project.

*Dr. Perry McIntyre accepting the grant award from Mosman Mayor, Carolyn Corrigan, at the Community Grants ceremony at Mosman Civic Centre, 23 August 2022
(Photo: Mosman Council)*



The following background information on the project was prepared by Dr. Pam Lofthouse, a MHS Committee member and Clifton Gardens Project Coordinator

In August 2020, Mosman Historical Society was contacted by Sally Bell (nee Morgan) who now lives in Western Australia, but grew up in Warrawee, a northern suburb of Sydney. She had heard on the "grapevine" that her family home was about to be demolished. Although she had no issue with the demolition, she thought that the Society might be interested in the bricks used to build the house. In her words:

I am the daughter of the original owner / builder (Ray and Judy Morgan) of a property in Warrawee, built in 1968. The property was wholly built with "sandstock" bricks from the Clifton Gardens Hotel which was demolished in 1967.

We sold the property to the Lander family in 1986, who lived in it for 33 years until last year, when it was sold at auction for \$5.35 million, the highest price house in the whole of Sydney that weekend.

The home was built miraculously over about 6 months by a lovely old stuttering designer/builder called Mr Bayfield. I vaguely remember as a 4/5 year old being dragged to the Clifton Gardens Hotel demolition site where I was forbidden to go too far or climb on the piles of bricks because it was dangerous and that "this is what Mummy and Daddy are buying to build our new home".

I have made a comment on the demolition application to this effect, so that the council are aware of the background. I will also attempt to write to the new owners who may have no idea about this. It would be nice to think the bricks could be saved and recycled again!

Of course, the Society's committee was VERY interested in obtaining at least a few of the original bricks, although at the time we had no idea what we would do with them. I corresponded with Sally to express our enthusiasm, and contacted John He, from the development company planning to demolish the house at 45 Cherry Street. John was very obliging, and promised to let us know when we could collect some bricks. Despite some issues and delays around COVID, John was true to his promise and a friend of mine, Richard Brown (a bricklayer who lives in Mosman), collected 150 bricks from the site in September 2021. Richard cleaned the bricks and transported them to be stored at our then-President Noela Gill's home.

So now being the owners of 150 beautiful old sandstock bricks, we then had to decide what to do with them!



(Source – Mosman Local Studies Collection)

The Clifton Gardens Hotel had a long and illustrious history. The bricks date from 1885 when the new licensees David and Mary Thompson redeveloped the old hotel, extended the wharf and added a skating rink and a new pavilion. It was relaunched as the Marine Hotel. When Sydney Ferries Limited took over the hotel in 1906, it became the Clifton Gardens Hotel and the “Cliffo” operated until 1967 when it was demolished.



1993 Clifton Gardens plaque (Photos: David Carment, 2022)

The site of the hotel is now part of the Clifton Gardens Reserve, managed by Mosman Council. The Council placed a plaque on a rock at the site in 1993. The MHS Committee discussed various options for preserving and conserving the bricks, including a brick being added to the local studies collection at the library. It was decided that the preferred option was to build a small brick pier adjacent to the existing rock/plaque on the site of the hotel, with a plaque to explain the significance of the bricks.

There has been a large amount written about the history of the Clifton Gardens Hotel, and to a lesser extent the area known as Clifton Gardens. This information is spread widely across books, websites, social media, blogs and Mosman Library's extensive collections. The MHS Committee agreed to initiate the Clifton Gardens Project, which has three components.

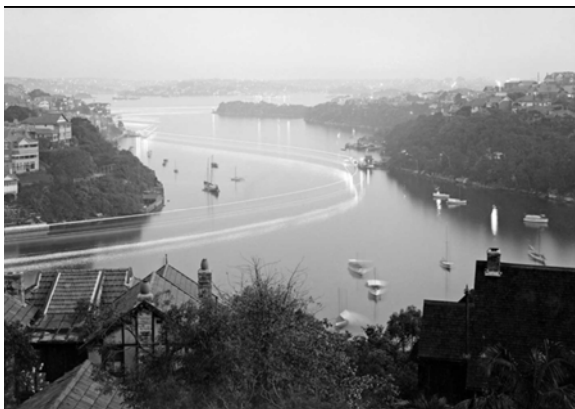
1. Build a brick pier adjacent to the existing rock/plaque on the site of the Clifton Gardens Hotel. Place a plaque on the pier, with information about the bricks.
2. Collate the existing information about Clifton Gardens and the Hotel, supplementing this with original research where necessary. Release this as a public access e-booklet.
3. Hold a community event on the site of the hotel to unveil the pier/plaque and launch the e-booklet.

Permission was given by Mosman Council to build the pier on Council land, and the Society was delighted to receive a generous community grant from Mosman Council in 2022 for this project. Bricklayer, Richard Brown will liaise with Council, prepare the site and build the pier on a firm foundation.

The research and collation work for the e-booklet is being coordinated by Perry McIntyre, with my assistance. The community event is proposed in 2023.

ATTACK ON SYDNEY HARBOUR IN 1942, Japanese submarines brought WWII to Mosman's doorstep.

Anna Usher, for Mosman Collective
(published with permission)



Mosman Bay, 1940s. Image: Max Dupain



May, 1942. The night World War Two came to Mosman's doorstep.

Nobody ever expected Mosman to become the front line of World War Two.

But on a crisp Autumn evening in 1942, as the sun dipped west behind the Sydney Harbour Bridge, the final stage of an audacious plan to invade Australia's largest city was almost complete.

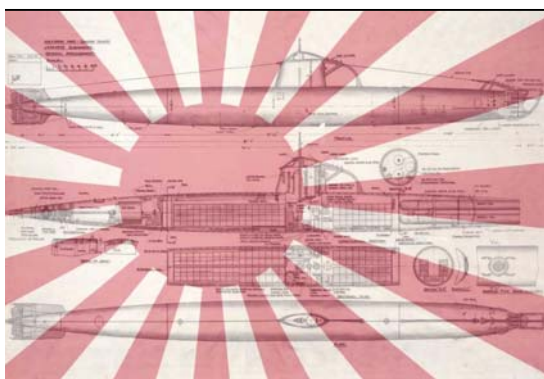
Just a few nautical miles off the Heads, six baby-faced Japanese submariners were making final arrangements for their deaths, penning letters and slipping locks of hair into envelopes for loved ones back home.

After a short prayer, the men stood to attention, shattering the moment's reverence with two sharp claps before downing sake shots.

It was 5:30 pm on Sunday, 31 May.



Japanese Type A Kō hyōteki class submarines that attacked Sydney in May 1942 were the same as those used in the attack on Pearl Harbor, Hawaii in December 1941



The cruisers USS Chicago and HMAS Canberra were two of the Japanese intended targets.jpg

Within hours, they would unleash terror on Sydney Harbour in a night of chaos and confusion that brought war to the sleepy streets of the lower north shore.

Members of Japan's Special Attack Forces, the young sailors remained calm as they said their last goodbyes and climbed into three midget submarines – each carrying two men and two torpedoes. Nobody on Terra Firma knew it yet, but the Battle for Sydney Harbour had just begun.



Workers sift through the remains of Kuttabul.



The requisitioned ferry Kuttabul lying on the seabed following M 24's torpedo attack

On a daring mission to destroy Allied warships, the state-of-the-art midget subs, M27, M22 and M24 – had their sights firmly set on the American cruiser USS Chicago, anchored at Garden Island after returning from the Battle of the Coral Sea.

The requisitioned Sydney Harbour ferry, Kuttabul, was also docked that night, providing essential accommodation for Navy personnel waiting to transfer to other ships.

At 8 pm, the first enemy sub – M27, manned by Lieutenant Kenshi Chuman and Petty Officer Takeshi Omori, navigated through outer-harbour defences but became caught in anti-submarine nets that had been stretched 1.5km from Georges Head to Watsons Bay.

When the tangled vessel was spotted two hours later, Australian Navy patrol boats went out to investigate. Then, at 10 pm, a converted pleasure cruiser HMAS Lolita dropped three depth charges over the enemy midget.

Each of them failed to explode.

The Japanese crew, now trapped inside the doomed sub, knew their game was up.



Second Sub Lieutenant Keiu Matsuo



Second Sub Lieutenant Keiu Matsuo (Right).

ENEMY SUBMARINES ENTER SYDNEY HARBOUR

THREE MIDGET RAIDERS BELIEVED DESTROYED

FORMER FERRY BOAT HIT BY TORPEDO

Three Japanese midget submarines, believed to have been operating from a mother-ship somewhere off the Australian coast, entered Sydney Harbour late on Sunday night. One submarine fired two torpedoes, one of which hit and sank a Sydney ferry boat used as a depot.

Divers who reconnoitred the bed of the harbour yesterday discovered one submarine at rest in the slime. It was intact with one torpedo visible in its tube. A 24 inch steel bawser has been affixed to its water for the mother-ship but, so far as is known, no sign of an enemy vessel has been reported.

The fact that the submarines appeared soon after the succession of stand-by warnings to Sydney A.R.F. personnel has led to a suggestion that the two might be related and that an enemy ship standing well out to sea might have been employing reconnaissance aircraft.

Harbour-side residents had an exciting razz-dazzle when they saw searchlights try to pick up the midgets when they were spotted.

One of the submarines, because, although it was known by the Australian authorities of the raid and their capabilities.

First news of the attempted raid was conveyed in the following special communique issued from General Headquarters, Melbourne, yesterday: "An attempted submarine raid on Sydney was frustrated. Three enemy midget submarines are believed to have been destroyed, one by gunfire, two by depth charges."

ENEMY LOSE THREE SUBMARINES

Wide Search By Air For Mother Ship

Harbor Explosions Startle City

Swift Allied counter-measures followed a daring but futile attempt by Japanese midget submarines to penetrate the defences of Sydney Harbor and attack shipping at anchor on Sunday night.

FREDERICK, MD., MONDAY, JUNE 1, 1942.

Japs Try To Raid Sydney; Three Midget Subs Sunk

Bulk Of Trapped

Thunder Of Gunfire, Depth Charges Greet Foray By Enemy In Southern Australia

Escapee On Trial For Rape At Hagerstown

Anderson Sane, Dr. Doolittle

A warning cup from an American-donated canteen is welcomed by Canadian bombers.

3 Midget Submarines Raid Sydney; All Believed Sunk

By The United Press.

MELBOURNE, Australia, Monday, June 1.—Three Japanese midget submarines penetrated the great harbor at Sydney, Australia's largest city, last night, but they were believed to have been destroyed after they had damaged one small vessel, it was announced today.

The raid, first threat to this part of the coast, was thought to be the first since the attack on Pearl Harbor last Dec. 7.—was made in a special communique issued by General Douglas MacArthur's headquarters.

It was just seven minutes later, at 10:37 pm when the sailors chose a warrior's death – destroying themselves and their craft by detonating its 35-kilogram scuttling charge.

The deafening noise of the explosion woke sleeping residents of Mosman before the wailing emergency sirens did, and so began a wild night of panic and terror on Sydney Harbour.

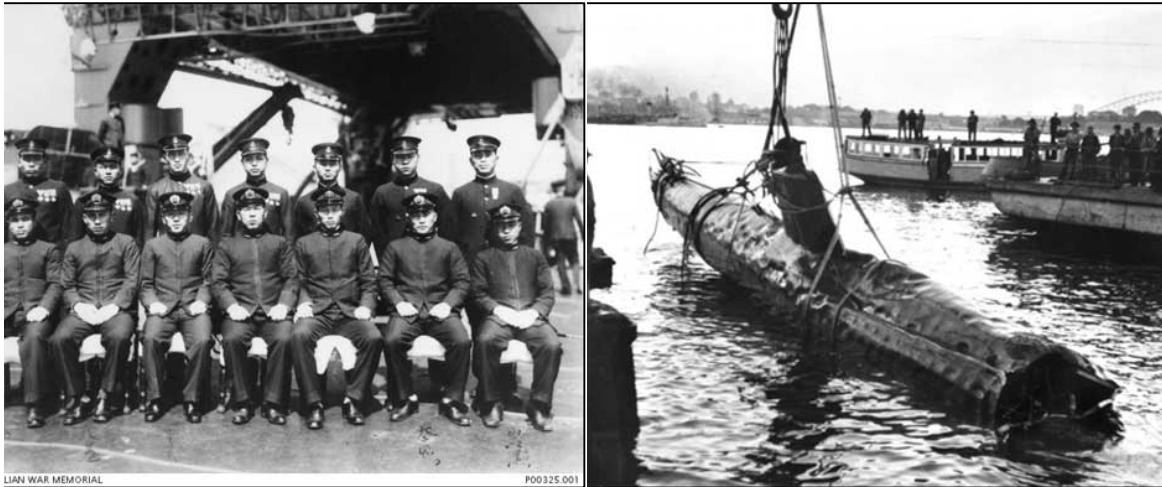
"The harbour was just one mass of light and medley of noise," Currughbeena Rd resident Philip Dulhunty would later tell reporters, "the thunder of the explosions was terrific."

Neville Cleary was aged just seven and living in Bond St when he woke to the sound of sirens screaming across Mosman.

"My first memory of the attack was when my mother raced down the hallway in her nightdress – but with her prized fur stole wrapped around her shoulders," Mr Cleary recalled in a 2009 State Government heritage project.

"She told us that the loud noises we could hear were probably an air attack by the Japanese and that we should take cover.

"Dad, in the meantime, was dragging the dining room table into the hallway, and we all initially sheltered under it."

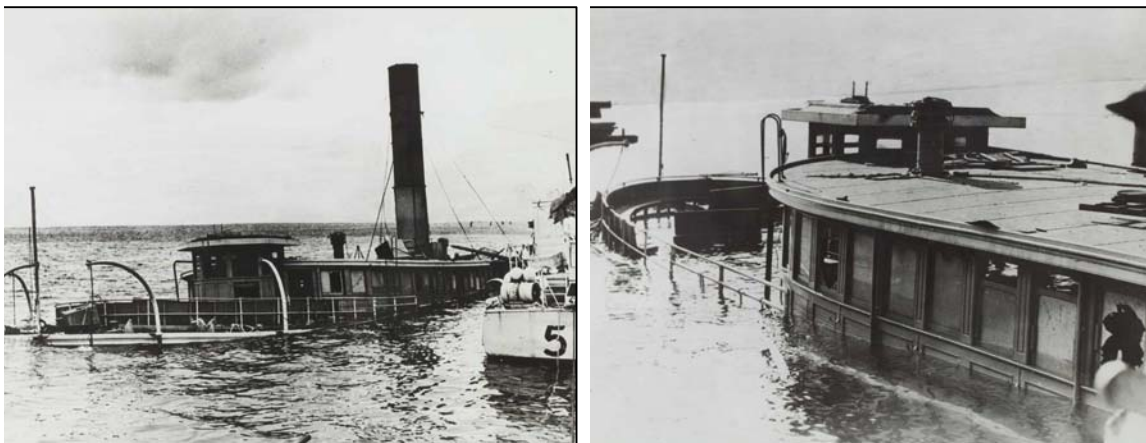


The crews of the Japanese midget submarines prior to the attack on Sydney.

As Air Raid Precaution (ARP) Wardens patrolled the streets and terrified families took cover under tables and beds, a second midget, M24, had slipped unnoticed into Sydney at 10 pm, following a Manly ferry bound for Circular Quay.

As fate would have it, 16-year-old Kevin Loughry was heading in the opposite direction on a 10 pm ferry from Circular Quay to Manly when the two boats met at the boom gate, on the Mosman side of the anti-submarine net.

“When the boom gate opened, our ferry from Circular Quay moved through – and then the ferry from Manly slowly started towards the gate,” he said, “the beams from searchlights were scanning both ferries ... I got a definite glimpse of what I believed to be a periscope, closely following the ferry from Manly through the gate.”



HMAS Kuttabul after the attack.

It was the M-24.

The submarine was heading west, towards the Harbour Bridge, when all hell broke loose.

At 10:52 pm, the USS Chicago spotted the midget and opened fire.

The Battle for Sydney Harbour was on – and the suburbs of Mosman and Cremorne had front row seats.

David Clegg, a student at Mosman Public School, living in Sirius Avenue, remembers watching the electrifying scene unfold on Sydney Harbour.



*Sydney residents inspecting property damage following the Japanese attack on Sydney Harbour.
Image: State Library NSW.*

“Darwin had (already) been attacked from the air, and we were in no doubt that Australia was vulnerable,” he wrote in a blog post published by Mosman Library, “but to experience an attack so close to home removed any doubt.”

“From the window of our house, we witnessed tracer shells fired from the USS Chicago. At the time, we had no idea what was happening.”

One newspaper report describes “hysterical women” screaming as the ack-ack of machine guns and flashes of light pierced suburban streets that had been plunged into darkness.

“In Mosman and Cremorne, hundreds of people wearing dressing gowns and overcoats streamed into the streets to be escorted to shelters,” it says.

Another describes residents crowding onto verandas to watch the deadly fireworks, with their “glowing cigarettes making pinpricks in the night”.

In his bestselling book “Mosman – A History”, author Gavin Souter describes the incredible battle scene played out, as Allied ships hunted down the M-24.

“The harbour became a son et Lumiere of shells, depth charges, pom poms, searchlights, flares and smoke, which many residents took for a Japanese air raid,” he writes, “Mosman could fairly be said to have been right on the front line.”



At 1:30 am, M-24 re-entered the fray from its hiding position in Bradleys Head.

Sub-Lieutenant Katsuhisa Ban, 24, and Petty Officer Mamoru Ashibe, 25, fired two torpedoes across the harbour, aimed at the USS Chicago, both missing the 182-metre American ship.

HMAS Kuttabul wasn't so lucky.

One torpedo had run ashore on Garden Island, failing to explode. The other passed under a Dutch submarine, striking the seawall next to HMAS Kuttabul.

Kuttabul was broken in two, killing 19 Australian and two British sailors and wounding ten.

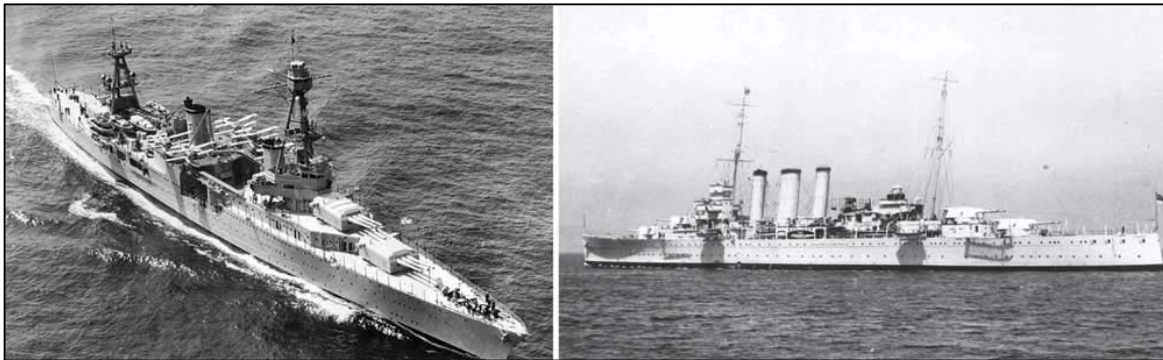
M-24 then left Sydney Harbour.



Sydney Harbour 1942.

To avoid becoming 'sitting ducks' from further attacks, HMAS Bombay, HMAS Whyalla, HMAS Canberra, USS Perkins and USS Chicago immediately prepared to leave the harbour. On their way out, USS Chicago spotted a periscope ... it was the third submarine, M-21.

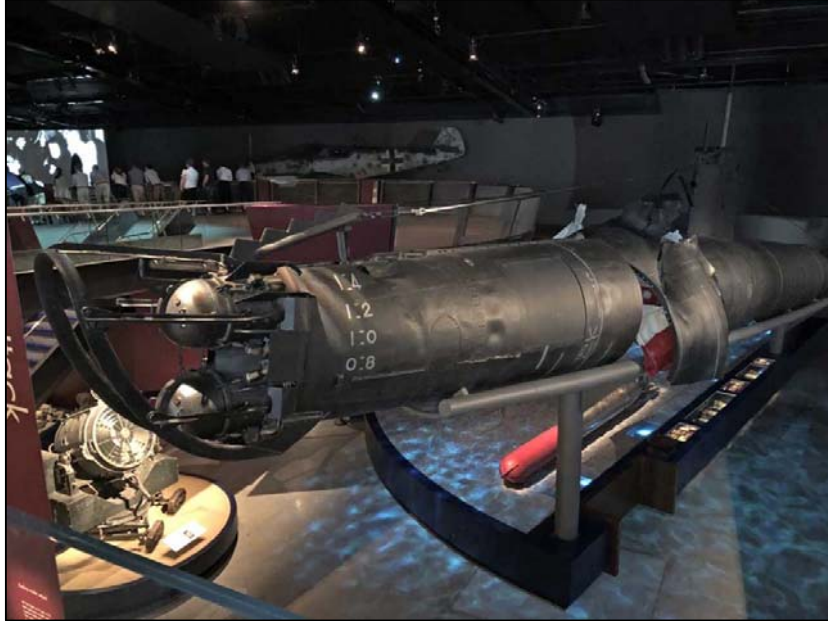
At 3.50 am, the converted passenger liner HMAS Kanimbla fired on M21 in Neutral Bay. It was sighted again in Taylors Bay around 5 am, and HMAS Seamist dropped two depth charges.



The cruisers USS Chicago and HMAS Canberra were two of the Japanese intended targets.jpg

The submarine surfaced and then sunk. A barrage of 17 depth charges followed from HMAS Steady Hour. Inside the crippled, cramped, hot and airless submarine, the crew of M21, Lieutenant Keiu Matsuo and Petty Officer Masao Tsuzuku shot themselves.

In a move widely criticised by the Australian public, four of the recovered Japanese sailors were given funerals with full military honours.



The composite midget submarine now on display in the Australian War Memorial, Canberra.

Two subs were recovered shortly after the attack, where they remain on display at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.

Source: <https://www.mosmancollective.com/attack-on-sydney-harbour-in-1942-japanese-submarines-brought-wwii-to-mosmans-doorstep/>