

Pacific Theatre

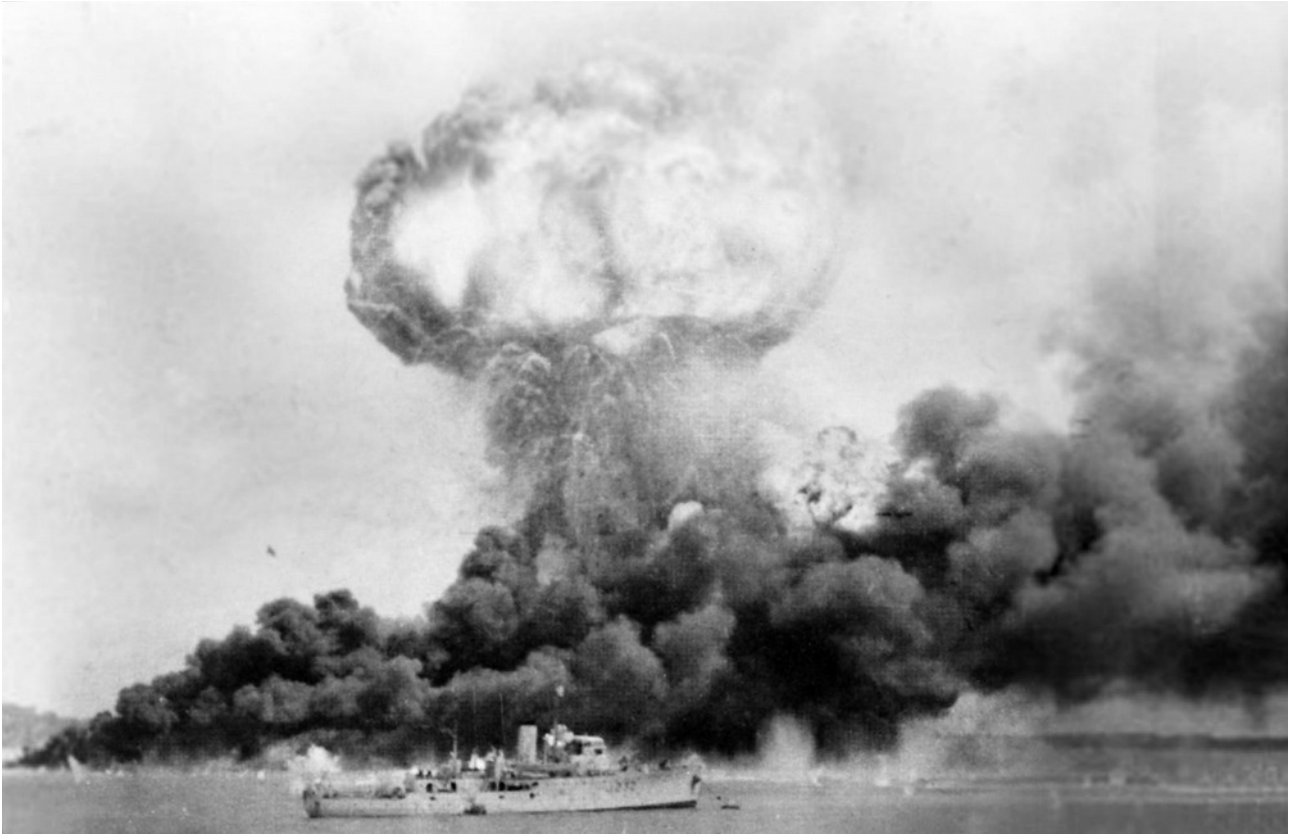
Part 8

“In which we look at a Land Down Under.”

By Lestrade aka Unpopular Opinion

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There's no freedom of speech in the UK but I'll say my opinion anyway



Archive film of Japanese tactical nuclear weapon, designation “Fūjin’s Breath”, detonating over Melbourne causing widespread devastation. 13th October 1944. (jokes, lads, jokes)

I talked a bit about Oz in the last paper but needed a whole article to get into it properly so let’s do this. Australia was first attacked by the Japanese during the [Bombing of Darwin](#). As Wikipedia tells us:

“The Bombing of Darwin, also known as the Battle of Darwin, on 19 February 1942 was the largest single attack ever mounted by a foreign power on Australia. On that day, 242 Japanese aircraft, in two separate raids, attacked the town, ships in Darwin’s harbour and the town’s two airfields in an attempt to prevent the Allies from using them as bases to contest the invasion of Timor and Java during World War II.”

As we’ve already established, the Japanese would seem to barely be in the South Pacific (as they were blatantly not present at Rabaul, or any of the other sites mentioned by the Americans in their vacation home video “[Mission to Rabaul](#)” we saw in the last paper). Nor did the Japanese have any

intention of invading Australia (see previous paper, search for “Tojo”). They’re not at Guadalcanal, again as per the photo evidence. They may have been at Truuk/Chuk Lagoon (we shall see but I’m not holding my breath). You would think the Japanese would be pretty happy occupying Singapore and Hong Kong but yeah, whatever, Timor and Java are suddenly a big deal and warrant an assault on Darwin.

*“Darwin was lightly defended relative to the size of the attack, and the Japanese inflicted heavy losses upon Allied forces at little cost to themselves. The urban areas of Darwin also suffered some damage from the raids and there were a number of civilian casualties. **More than half of Darwin's civilian population left the area permanently, before or immediately after the attack.**”*

Bear that last line in mind. It’s a ghost town.



Darwin is quite small and remote. It only has about 150,000 inhabitants as of 2022. Back in 1940 it only had 2,000 or 3,000 people living there. As per [this site](#) the population “more than tripled” to 7,500 by 1942 due to the number of military personnel stationed there.

Wikipedia tells us:

*“By November 1941 Australia had agreed to allow **the establishment of training bases, maintenance facilities, munitions storage, communications, and improvement of airfields, including at Darwin, to meet the needs of the B-17 bombers in Australia.** Following the outbreak of the Pacific War in early December 1941, **Darwin's defences were strengthened. In line with plans developed before the war,** several Australian Army and RAAF units stationed in the town were sent to the Netherlands East Indies (Dutch East Indies; NEI) to strengthen the defences of the islands of Ambon and Timor. An improvised plan for support of the Philippines and the Dutch East Indies was completed in Washington on 20 December 1941 by the U.S. Army General Staff. It envisioned Darwin as the hub of transshipment efforts to supply those forces by landing supplies at Brisbane, shipping overland to Darwin, and onward by air and blockade-running ships. In reality, transport to Darwin by sea was necessary. Supplies and shipping intended both to build the Darwin base and to support the Java and Philippine forces were gathered in Darwin and the vicinity. **In***

the two months before the air raids, all but 2,000 civilians were evacuated from the town. Japanese submarines I-121 and I-123 laid mines off Darwin in January 1942."

This was a small town of a couple thousand people, the bulk of them are evacuated and the town is rebuilt as a military site with the training and maintenance facilities for the Air Force / Navy and so on. Is this really still what we'd call a town? Or would it be more accurate to call it a military base? So we've got two for two now: a remote location AND a military site.

Who was running the "attack" on Darwin? Our good buddies Admiral [Chūichi Nagumo](#) and Captain [Mitsuo Fuchida](#), who we've both seen before. Nagumo we've seen before – that chap who toured Europe and the US being trained in naval warfare. The one from Midway where Harry Potter fan-fiction tier writing such as this is presented as historical canon:

*"During the bombing of the Akagi, Nagumo would have experienced hard knocks while being tossed about the carrier as the explosions went off around him. The buffeting he encountered during the bombing, as well as the loss of two of his carriers would have left him in no condition to exert even his remaining confidence in victory. As Nagumo began to grasp the enormity of what had happened, **he appears to have gone into a state of shock.** Witnesses saw Nagumo standing near the ship's compass looking out at the flames on his flagship and two other carriers **in a trance-like daze.** Despite being asked to abandon ship, Nagumo didn't move and was reluctant to leave the Akagi, just **muttering**, "It's not time yet,". Nagumo's chief of staff, Rear Admiral Ryūnosuke Kusaka, was able to persuade him to leave the critically damaged Akagi. **Nagumo, with a barely perceptible nod, with tears in his eyes, agreed to go. Nagumo and his staff were forced to evacuate through the forward windows of the bridge by rope. An expert in judo, Nagumo landed lightly, whereas Kusaka badly sprained both ankles and was burned during the evacuation.**"*

Yes, this is absolutely real history and not copy typed up in an ONI back office. Nagumo (allegedly) blows his brains out with a pistol in a cave on Saipan, but we'll get to that. Fuchida meanwhile supposedly led the first wave of air attacks on Pearl Harbour, but unfortunately for him I've already shown how the attack on Pearl Harbour was staged, so... yeah... he didn't. As per Wikipedia:

*"After the war ended, **Fuchida became a Christian convert and evangelist, travelling across the United States and Europe to tell his story. He later settled in the U.S.** (although never taking American citizenship for himself). Some of Fuchida's wartime claims **have been challenged as self-serving by historians, including his claimed advocacy for a third wave attack on Pearl Harbor.**"*

So that's another aspect of the whole "Americans getting conned by fake Christian evangelist movements" thing. But I digress.

Anyway: we have Darwin being the target of the Japanese. Personally I would have gone around the east coast with a proper fleet and firebombed Sydney until it was a cinder (a bit more dramatic, a bit more "massive civilian loss of life inspiring terror", a bit more "we are an actual enemy who wants to kill you").

We [read on](#):

*"Despite Darwin's strategic importance to the defence of Australia, the city was poorly defended. The Australian Army's anti-aircraft defences comprised **sixteen QF 3.7-inch AA guns and two 3-inch AA guns** to counter aircraft flying at high altitude and a small number of Lewis Guns for use against low-flying raiders. **The crews of these guns had conducted little recent training due to ammunition shortages.** The air forces stationed in and near the town comprised No. 12 Squadron,*

*which was equipped with CAC Wirraway advanced trainers (which had been pressed into service as fighters), and No. 13 Squadron which operated Lockheed Hudson light bombers. Six Hudsons, 3 from No. 2 Squadron and 3 from No. 13 Squadron, also arrived at Darwin on 19 February after having been evacuated from Timor. **None of the six Wirraways at Darwin on the day of the raid were serviceable. At the time of the event, there was no functional radar to provide early warning of air raids, and the town's civil defences were dysfunctional.** The Lowe Commission, which was appointed to investigate the raids shortly after they occurred, was informed that the Australian military estimated that Darwin would have needed 36 heavy anti-aircraft guns and 250 fighter aircraft to defend it against a raid of the scale which occurred on 19 February. In addition to the Australian forces, ten United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) Curtiss P-40 Warhawks were passing through Darwin en route to Java on the day of the attack. **The P-40 pilots were largely inexperienced in combat.***

Strategically important, but not actually ready for any trouble. Of course. They've got no radar. There is (somehow) an ammunition shortage. The men on the base are not really trained properly. There is no proper civil defence setup. The Wirraway planes are not fit for flight. The Americans hanging around were green. Anti-Air was weak, as the estimate of needing about 36 anti-air guns highlights how the Australians had... 18 instead (16 + 2).

They had a destroyer in the harbour at least – the [USS Peary](#). It was sunk by the Japanese.



“Peary in the Timor Sea, 1942” – original [here](#). So that's an obvious fake, [like the black ships at Bikini Atoll](#).

As per the ships Wiki page:

*“Lost with the ship were 88 officers and men, including Bermingham. There were 53 enlisted survivors and one officer, LTJG R.L. Johnson. LT W.J. Catlett, who was ashore during Peary's final battle, was tasked with writing the official US Navy report on the sinking. **Peary was the first destroyer of the Asiatic Fleet to be sunk in World War II.** She was struck from the Navy List on 8 May 1942. In July 2020 an announcement was made by the Northern Territory government that the propellers from the ship had been found some kilometres from the known wreck site, prompting further investigation into Peary's final battle.”*



“Peary sinking at Darwin, 19 February 1942” - original [here](#).

First photo: weird it is so blurred and yet the ship – especially around that forward gun turret – has such a sharp outline, there’s such a contrast of white and black – why not a colour photo if taken in 1942? Second photo: we don’t even know for sure what’s burning, let alone the specifics of the ship, plus the 88 number cropping up. I suspect a fake ship and no casualties. Note there are no visible aircraft in the skies above.

Back to the main article on the raid and I find this interesting:

*“Darwin was attacked by aircraft flying from aircraft carriers and land bases in the NEI. **The main force involved in the raid was the 1st Carrier Air Fleet which was commanded by Vice-Admiral Chūichi Nagumo. This force comprised the aircraft carriers Akagi, Kaga, Hiryū, and Sōryū and a powerful force of escorting surface ships. All four carriers had participated in the attack on Pearl Harbor at the start of the Pacific War.** In addition to the carrier-based aircraft, 54 land-based bombers also struck Darwin in a high-level bombing raid nearly two hours after the first one struck at 0956. These comprised 27 G3M "Nell" bombers flying from Ambon and another 27 G4M "Betty" bombers operating from Kendari in Celebes.”*

So we’re re-doing the same thing as Pearl Harbour, right? We’ve got a remote naval/military base which is attacked by the Japanese who bomb it in a surprise attack in two waves. They even bring in the same Vice-Admiral and aircraft carriers used at Pearl Harbour, like special guest stars in a TV show. This incident then acts as a signal to the general public to get involved in the war.

Let me guess, there will be stupid Phoenician numerology in the number of planes or something?

*“The four Japanese aircraft carriers launched **188** aircraft on the morning of 19 February. The main objective of their crews was attacking ships and port facilities in Darwin Harbour. Their aircraft comprised **81** Nakajima B5N ("Kate") light bombers, 71 Aichi D3A ("Val") dive bombers, and an escort of 36 Mitsubishi A6M ("Zero") fighters. While the B5N was a purpose-built torpedo bomber, it could instead carry up to **800** kilograms (**1,800** lb) of bombs and there is no evidence of torpedoes being used on this occasion; the D3A could carry up to 514 kilograms (**1,133** lb) of bombs. All of these aircraft were launched by **8.45** am. This wave was led by Commander Mitsuo Fuchida, **who had also commanded the first wave of attackers during the raid on Pearl Harbor.**”*

That... was quite a lot of Special Numbers in one paragraph.

Pearl Harbour 2: Kangaroo Edition also features ridiculous nonsense as to why a major Japanese assault force of multiple aircraft carriers and hundreds of aircraft can sneak up on a military base during wartime:

*“At 9.35 am **Father McGrath of the Sacred Heart mission on Bathurst Island**, who was also an Australian coastwatcher, **sent a message using a pedal radio** to the Amalgamated Wireless Postal Radio Station at Darwin that **a large number of aircraft were flying overhead and proceeding southward**. The message was then relayed to the Royal Australian Air Force Operations at 9.37 am. **No general alarm was given until about 10 am as the RAAF officers there wrongly judged that the aircraft which had been sighted were the ten USAAF P-40s**, which were returning to Darwin at the time after reports of bad weather forced them to abort a flight to Java via Kupang, West Timor. **As a result, the air raid sirens at Darwin were not sounded before the raid.**”*

Of course.

The cargo vessel [Neptuna](#) was in the harbour of Darwin and got struck by Japanese fire. As the cargo ship was full of TNT and depth charges (of course it was), we then got the spectacular mushroom cloud explosion at the start of this piece. It was convenient they had a cameraman ready to shoot that. Also this follow-up shot:



“*Neptuna* explodes at Stokes Hill Wharf, Darwin” – original [here](#). And remember where all these photos are being pasted up: Lookout Mountain Air Station, Los Angeles, so they had all the top Hollywood special effects people working on them. [I hit that in my paper on Manson, of course.](#)

Please note that in both photographs of the *Neptuna*’s demise we see no sign of any aircraft in the skies above Darwin, as with the attack on Dutch Harbour and Pearl Harbour.

I would imagine the *Neptuna* serves the same function as the [Northwestern](#) (the ship in Dutch Harbour) – a vessel chosen to be destroyed to create a big show and something to put on the front page of the newspapers / headline articles.



“An aerial photograph of vessels burning in Darwin Harbour taken by a Japanese airman during the first raid.” - original [here](#).

Kind of a trippy image this is. I like the marble pattern of the waters. More suspicious are the solid black ship silhouettes with nicely outlined smoke trails (see the one on the lower right especially).

During the battle Petty Officer [Hajime Toyoshima](#) is shot down is subsequently captured by Indigenous Australian [Matthias Ulungura](#) (no photo of Matthias!):

*“Ulungura was a member of the Tiwi people, who in 1942 was living on Melville Island. On 19 February, a damaged Japanese fighter returning from an attack on an aerodrome on nearby Bathurst Island crashed near Snake Bay on Melville Island. The Japanese pilot, Hajime Toyoshima, survived the crash, but Ulungura **crept up behind him**, surprising him **with a tomahawk**, and took him prisoner. In Ulungura's words: I walked after him and grabbed his wrist near gun. He got*

proper big fright. I take revolver from his right side near his knee. Then I walk backwards pointing gun, I say "Stick 'em up, two hands, no more holding hands on head."

I thought tomahawks were for Native Americans. Oh wait, I get it – this is writing from an American, so when he thinks “Native” he thinks American Indian, hence a tomahawk. We learn later that Toyoshima was questioned by the police, gave a fake name of “Tadao Minami”, and later taught himself English while a captive in an Australian POW camp. I would imagine this might confuse you as to how he understood the instructions of Mr. Ulungura or his police interrogation (let alone why the police would speak to him instead of the Army) but please don’t think about that too much. His story comes to a tragic end when, after gaining sufficient trust of the wardens of Cowra POW camp, he was allowed possession of a bugle. He then treacherously used this bugle to signal his fellow Japanese to try to escape the camp, which instigated the Cowra Breakout incident. This is the largest and one of the bloodiest prison breaks of World War 2. I had never heard of it. Despite the prison supposedly holding 18,528 men of German, Italian and Japanese descent, we learn:

“Some 359 POWs escaped, while some others attempted or committed suicide, or were killed by their countrymen. Some of those who did escape also committed suicide to avoid recapture. All the survivors were recaptured within 10 days of their breakout.”

What? How many tried to escape? 1,104. So there’s a massive breakout and yet over 17,000 of the prisoners remain tucked up in their beds and the ones who do escape... commit suicide? Or are killed by their own? Japanese POWs killing other Japanese?

231 prisoners were killed during the Cowra Breakout and 108 wounded. Of course. Two guards are mentioned for meritorious conduct during the whole “machine-gun those fleeing prisoners” phase of the breakout: [Ralph Jones](#) and [Benjamin Hardy](#).



At least they used a real human being for Hardy, not just a drawing. Ralph Jones looks like some alien renders I have seen on the internet recently. Hard to believe they would try to pass that by us.

This is Cowra prison camp by the way:



No way does that place hold 18,000+ men (not just in terms of the small number of men in the photo during rec time in the yard, but the number of visible barracks). I know the normies will say “Partial shot! More housing hidden on the left probably”, but I respectfully disagree. Even the pasted-in baseball game looks weird: no basemen or batters, but fifteen guys in deep center field.

Anyway, returning to Darwin the Japanese commence the second wave of attacks:

“The second wave, made up of 54 land-based medium bombers (27 Mitsubishi G3M and 27 Mitsubishi G4M) arrived over Darwin just before midday. The town's air raid sirens were sounded at 11:58 am when the bombers were sighted. The Japanese force separated into two groups flying at 18,000 feet (5,500 m).”

And of course:

*“Due to defective fuses, the Australian heavy anti-aircraft flak gunners were unable to shoot down or damage **any** of the high-flying Japanese aircraft.”*

Moving on to the [aftermath](#) of the battle:

*“The air raids caused chaos in Darwin, with most essential services including water and electricity being badly damaged or destroyed. **Fears of an imminent invasion spread and there was a wave of refugees, as some of the town's civilian population fled inland.** There were reports of **looting**, with provost marshals being among the accused. According to official figures, **278 personnel** belonging to RAAF North-Western Area Command (NWA) were considered to have **deserted** as a*

result of the raids, although it has been argued that the "desertions" were mostly the result of ambiguous orders given to RAAF ground staff after the attacks."

It gets better:

"In the words of journalist Douglas Lockwood, after the second Japanese air raid, the commander of RAAF Darwin, Wing Commander Stuart Griffith summoned his senior administrative officer, Squadron Leader Swan, and gave a verbal order that all airmen were to move half a mile down the main road and then half a mile inland. At this vague rendezvous point... arrangements would be made to feed them. The order led to utter chaos. In being passed by word of mouth from one section to another, sometimes with officers present and sometimes not, it became garbled to the extent it was unrecognisable against the original. In its ultimate form it was interpreted, especially by those desiring such an interpretation, of an impending order for immediate and general evacuation of the area. Highly exaggerated rumours of an impending Japanese invasion had already reached the base from the town and spread quickly among those wanting to believe them. In the absence of restraint, men gathered their belongings and abandoned their stations. While the NWA staff could see what was happening and issued countermanding orders "the damage was done and hundreds of men were already beyond recall". The Australian Army also faced difficulty controlling some of its own troops from looting private property, including "furniture, refrigerators, stoves, pianos, clothes[,] [and] even children's toys" due to the breakdown of law and order after the bombing and the ensuing chaos. Many civilian refugees never returned, or did not return for many years, and in the post-war years some land they owned in Darwin had been expropriated by government bodies in their absence, made legal by the Darwin Lands Acquisition Act 1945."

Grounds for some sort of investigation, dishonourable discharge, prosecution and an official apology surely? If it was real I mean. If you follow [this link](#) you can see some footage taken at the time, around the 5:20 mark, showing the destruction of the Japanese raid. I have some screenshots here but see for yourself:



That is not a building hit by a bomb. That is a building under construction/repair. If a bomb hit it, the joists would not be in place. The attic windowsill bit would not be left intact and unblemished.

The brickwork would have scorch marks from the fire that presumably we are supposed to infer burned the roof. And so on.



Bank of New South Wales – the faded “Bank” section of the sign is not something that has occurred due to the bombardment... this is an old building being demolished or abandoned.



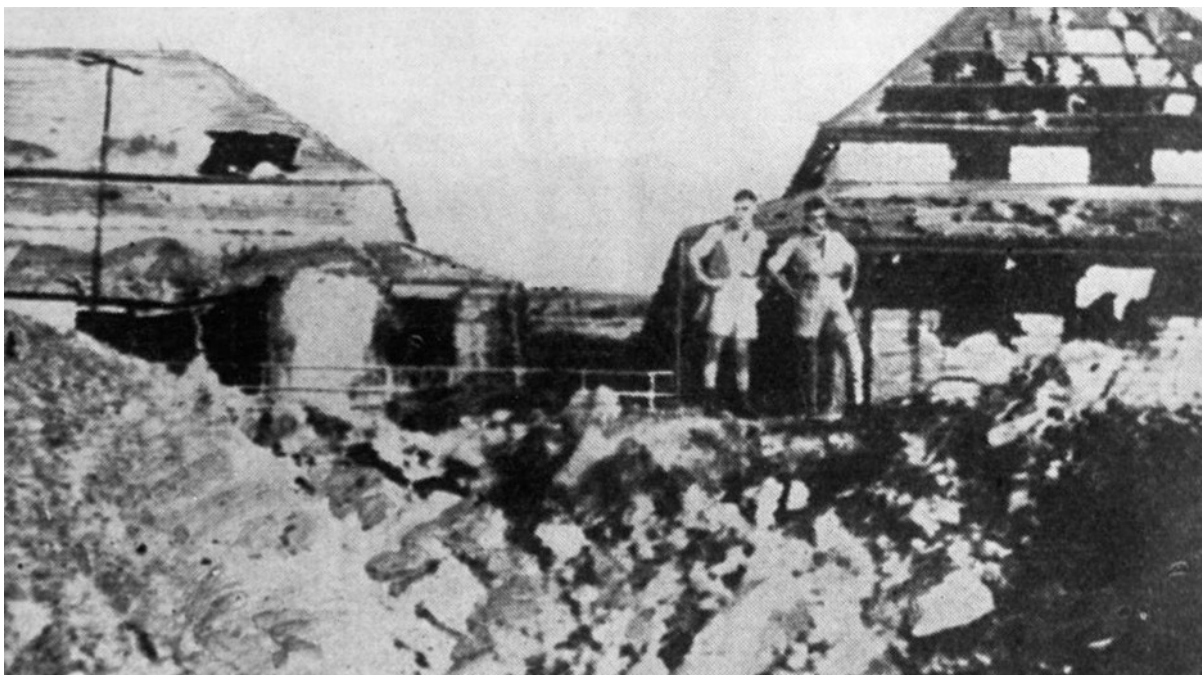
Again, an old-timey hotel where the sign is peeling apart. That's not from bomb damage, that's age.

OK so that establishes that a) there was no real bomb damage to Darwin (as we wouldn't be being palmed off with photos of old buildings in disrepair otherwise). It begs the question: was there actually a mass evacuation of Darwin due to this "Chinese Whispers" rumour idea? Or was the town already pretty downtrodden and empty? Did they perhaps instead make the townsfolk leave BEFORE the bombing raid and then basically steal their homes afterwards? If there were a thousand or so people running away into the bush then you would expect some kind of outcry when (roughly 48 hours later) they realised there was no Japanese invasion and they returned to find their homes having been ransacked by the local soldiers.

Just Google Image the "Bombing of Darwin 1942":



Those guys are pasted in, you can see the pixellation.



Those guys obviously aren't real, they are Hardy Boys illustrations.





...and so on. A few holes in the dirt and some dilapidated housing. More importantly: the first three are all paste-ups.

How many people were supposed to die in this? Well, [it gets more ridiculous](#):

*"The number of people killed during 19 February raids is **disputed**. The Lowe Commission, which investigated them in March 1942, **estimated 243 victims** but, assuming a few were unidentified, concluded "I am satisfied that the number is **approximately 250** and I doubt whether any further investigation will result in ascertaining **a more precise figure**."*

Sure. Sure. You have crew manifests on ships and you have personnel lists for the Army / Air Force and you have a small rural community where people tend to know each other... but drop a couple of bombs and suddenly we have no idea who is dead. It gets weirder:

*"However, **a plaque unveiled in Darwin in 2001 gave the total as 292**. The plaque indicated 10 sailors had been killed aboard the USS William B. Preston but **the US Navy said** there were **13** fatalities and Peter Grose, author of *An Awkward Truth*, said fifteen – he wrote: "With the William B. Preston total corrected to 15, a figure of 297 known dead is the best count anyone is likely to achieve...**the full death toll is likely to be a little over 300, perhaps as many as 310 or 320.**" Lewis and Ingman have revised that to 14 in their 2013 book *Carrier Attack*.*

*In 2000, Darwin historian Peter Forrest, who spoke to survivors and researched the attacks for an unpublished book, said (as paraphrased by a journalist), "the first Japanese air raids on Darwin **probably killed more than double the official figure of 243**", but by 2002 had lowered his estimate to "anything up to double that 243".*

***Other estimates put the toll far higher: one soldier who was there claimed to have seen barges filled with bodies towed out to sea, a member of one of the burial teams recounted seeing uncounted bodies "shoved in a large hole dug by a bulldozer"** (paraphrased), according to some sources, former Darwin Mayor (1921–1922) Jack Burton estimated **900** people were killed; Harry Macredie, who helped rescue survivors and recover bodies in the harbour said, "**we definitely estimate over 1,000**", Rex Ruwoldt, one of the soldiers attacked that day, says that a few days after the raid **he was told over the field telephone that Army Intelligence estimated 1,100 were killed**. According to an AP article about the 50th anniversary of the attacks "some estimates say as many*

as 1,000 died". **Bradford and Forrest said they spoke to survivors who estimated as many as 1,500 people died.**

Stanley, Grose, Rosenzweig, and Tom Lewis rejected such numbers. The former said "it was certainly not the 1,024 claimed recently in unsubstantiated reports" and Grose wrote "numbers such as 1,100 are fancifully high".

By contrast, there is less dispute over the number of injured during the attacks. The Lowe Commission estimated "between 300 and 400" people were wounded. Lewis said the number was over 400, about 200 of which were seriously injured. Womack wrote that 311 were wounded. Australian military historian Chris Coulthard-Clark put the total between 250 and 320. Grose wrote: "if 900 or 1100 died, why were the numbers of injured so low? The count of the injured is more accurate, because they were treated in hospital or shipped out aboard the Manunda [a hospital ship]. The hospitals and Manunda noted names and numbers of those they treated."

Translation: for 70 years we've had a load of nonsense disputing how many people died. They've done the thing Miles talks about where they manage perception through a binary, a "Door number 2" of a conspiracy involving "barges full of dead" and 1,500 people killed (like how, it was mostly bombing the ships in the harbour and there were only about 2,000 people in the town anyway and they then evacuated). The numbers fluctuating is another red flag that this whole thing is fiction. I think nobody died. They blew up the *Neptuna* so you had a big firework show and sank a couple of ships (most likely old ones, ready to be scrapped and/or with decent insurance) and this gave them a big spectacle to sell to the public. The hospital ship to treat the wounded is a neat way to pump up numbers because then you can fold in other causes as being "due to the Darwin bombing".

Look at the photos. Look at the footage – [here](#) for example – there are no planes in the sky. They have a camera crew photographing and filming the "ambush" mid battle and there's no sign of the Japanese. Or [this one](#) – you can see they're just detonating explosives in ships or setting fire to a fuel tank or building here and there. There is no aerial attack. There is no return fire from AA guns. There are no Australian planes taking off to dogfight. If you watch that second link from 1:07 – 1:11 you can see the camera panning on a clear sunny day with an empty sky, to watch a chain of explosives on the ground being detonated in sequence for the crew to capture on film.

So anyway, that was the Bombing of Darwin. Another big fake. But wait! [Wikipedia tells me](#) this is just the first of **111** attacks! (Don't worry, I'm not going to do all 111)

Let's look at the [Attack on Broome](#). Funny numbers? Funny numbers:

*"The town of Broome, Western Australia, was attacked by Japanese fighter planes on 3 March 1942, during World War II. At least **88** civilians and Allied military personnel were killed.*

Although Broome was a small pearling port at the time, it was also a refuelling point for aircraft, on the route between the Netherlands East Indies and major Australian cities. As a result, Broome was on a line of flight for Dutch and other refugees, following the Japanese invasion of Java, and had become a significant Allied military base. During a two-week period in February–March 1942, more than a thousand refugees from the Dutch East Indies—many of them in flying boats, which often served as airliners at the time—passed through Broome.

*The number of refugees has previously been given as **8,000**, but later research by Tom Lewis contends that this figure is **massively overstated**. The figure was first quoted in the relevant Australian Official War History and has been reproduced in many publications since. The actual*

*number of aerial evacuees passing through Broome at this time is estimated to have been **1,350**, mostly military personnel.”*

So what happened? Did bombs get dropped in a sneaky aerial ambush?

“Lt Zenjiro Miyano—the commander of Dai 3 Kōkūtai (3rd Air Group) of the Imperial Japanese Navy Air Service—led nine Mitsubishi A6M2 Zero fighters and a Mitsubishi C5M2 reconnaissance plane from their base at Kupang, Timor in the attack, on the morning of 3 March.

From about 09:20, the Zeros made strafing attacks on the flying boat anchorage at Roebuck Bay and the Royal Australian Air Force (RAAF) base at Broome Airfield. No bombs were dropped, although some were reported, perhaps a result of witnesses seeing the Zero pilots releasing their drop tanks. The raid lasted an hour.

*The Japanese fighters destroyed at least 22 Allied aircraft. These included an airborne United States Army Air Forces (USAAF) B-24A Liberator full of wounded personnel—nearly 20 died when it crashed in the sea, about 16 km (**8.6 nmi**; 9.9 mi) off Broome. The Allies also lost 15 flying boats at anchorage; many Dutch refugees were on board and the exact number and identities of all those killed is unknown but the ages and names of some were recorded when they were moved from Broome to the Perth War Cemetery at Karrakatta in 1950 (the known casualties include nine children, aged from one year old).”*

OK so they bombed planes with refugees on board... a lot of confusion... no idea who these people were (they're using “unknown Dutch refugees” as a way to invent fake casualties I'd imagine). Also we don't think any bombs were actually dropped. Just strafing. Weird the Japanese didn't bring bombs along for a raid on a town. Then it takes a turn:

*“A KLM Douglas DC-3 airliner—PK-AFV (carrying refugees from Bandung)—was pursued and attacked by three Zeroes **80** km (50 mi) north of Broome. The aircraft managed to limp on to perform a successful landing on a beach near Broome, but was then strafed, causing the loss of four lives and the theft of diamonds worth £150,000 – 300,000 (now approximately A\$20–40 million).”*

Hang on. Wait. I'm trying to process this. So... the refugees from Bandung... in this tiny little place in the middle of nowhere... happened to be carrying diamonds. Worth 40 million Australian dollars. Their plane got shot at... four people onboard died... so the diamonds went missing... because presumably the Japanese landed... grabbed a suitcase full of them... then flew away...? Or another refugee grabbed the diamonds? Or one of the cabin crew? How did we know the diamonds were even there if it was such a chaotic situation?



Simple explanation: Broome was also used as a cover to facilitate the theft of tens of millions of dollars of diamonds and/or facilitated a massive insurance claim fraud. Yep, now it makes sense.

“There were no Allied fighter planes based in Broome at the time.”

Of course not. Why have fighter planes at a military base during a world war? As always, never arm yourselves at a forward base to defend against attack. But:

*“One Zero pilot—Warrant Officer Osamu Kudō—was killed **by ground fire** from a Dutch ML-KNIL pilot, First Lieutenant Gus Winckel, using a 7.9-millimetre (0.31 in) **machine gun** he had removed from his Lodestar. Winckel **balanced the weapon on his shoulder** and sustained burns to his left forearm when it touched the barrel of the gun after firing.”*

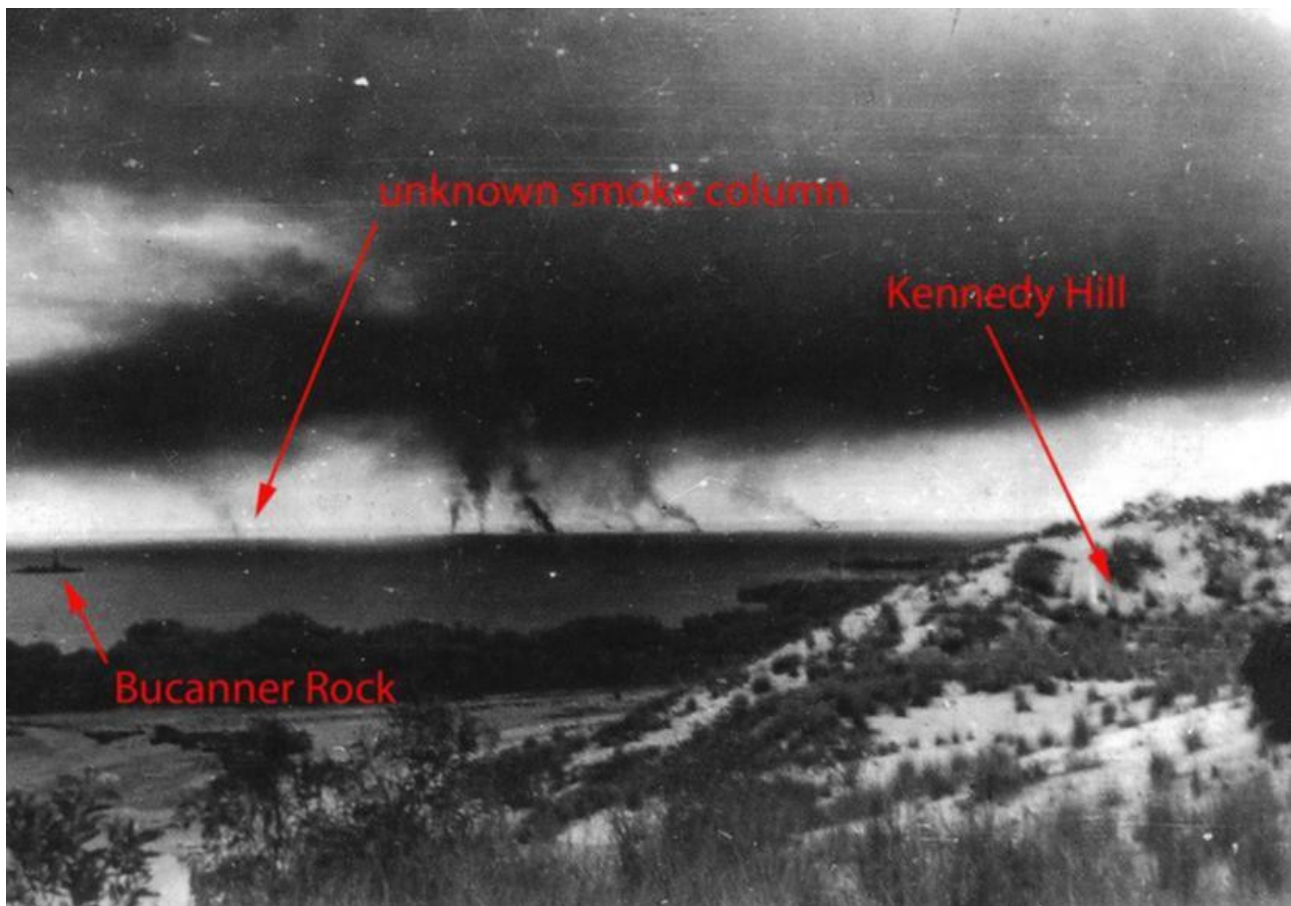
He took out a fighter plane during a strafing run with a machine gun like he's Rambo. Because of course.

Photos? Photos:



Again you can see how small and remote these places are. In the first photo there are six smokey fires in the bay and two inland. What's aflame? These would be the [Catalina flying boats](#) in the harbour I guess. Why six smoke trails? The Japanese are supposed to have hit 22 aircraft in the Broome raid. There's supposed to be six planes hit at the airfield, 15 planes in the harbour, then one plane out at sea. The airfield I assume is in the top left, why only two little smoke trails? Who is taking the photo anyway? In the second photo it's two or possibly three sources of fuel, one out to sea, but the whole thing is another paste.

[This link](#) again highlights how the smoke trails are from way out at sea:



See what I mean? Only seven smoke trails, way out. Not at a dock. Not in the harbour. Also the usual: no planes visible in the sky, no anti-air gun fire – no sign of an actual Japanese presence. Again with the twilight zone photo quality. What even is this picture? [A Hollywood paste-up.](#)

OK so look, nothing but lies at Darwin and Broome but still, 111 is a pretty impressive number of attacks you guys. They can't all be fake, surely?

Although, if we [read this page](#), we get this:

“Japanese naval flying boats conducted four small air raids on the north Queensland city of Townsville and the town of Mossman in late July 1942. Townsville, which was an important military base, was raided by Japanese Kawanishi H8K1 "Emily" flying boats operating from Rabaul on three nights in late July 1942. On the night of 25/26 July, the city was attacked by two flying boats but did not suffer any damage as the six bombs dropped by these aircraft fell into the sea. Townsville was attacked for the second time in the early hours of 28 July when a single flying boat dropped eight bombs which landed in bushland outside the city. Six P-39 Airacobras unsuccessfully attempted to intercept the Japanese aircraft. The third raid on Townsville occurred

*in the early hours of 29 July when **a single flying boat** again attacked the city, **dropping seven bombs into the sea** and an **eighth** which fell on an agricultural research station at Oonoonba, **damaging a coconut plantation**. This aircraft was intercepted by four Airacobras and was damaged. The fourth raid on north Queensland occurred on the night of **31** July when **a single flying boat dropped a bomb which exploded near a house outside of Mossman, injuring a child.**”*

Do you see what they're doing? They're flying one airboat over a small town and dropping munitions at sea and later saying “Ooh it was those Japanese what done did it”.

If the Japanese were going to attack, they would send a squadron of bombers. Or an aircraft carrier. Or amphibious troops. They're not going to fly one airboat around and miss the target completely! What is the point of that? This is ridiculous.

Or to put it another way: look at [this article](#) listing all the raids. Have a read. Look at how many are a stub note with no information. Very few of them actually mention anyone being injured or killed, e.g. one rare exception are the five indigenous men and a priest at Drysdale River Mission. You're not seeing something like “The Japanese attacked the town of Walalamborhini with 200 bombers backed by 150 fighter planes and 4,500 people died, half the town was annihilated, 78 Australian air force fighters were shot down, over 400 Australian Air Force personnel were killed and here are their names and here are their graves and that's why Bendigo had to be entirely rebuilt in 1946”.

You have over 100 raids on Australia by what was a modern mechanised army and (essentially) no damage was done. This makes very little sense until you realise there are no Japanese raids, this is just the Australian air force (or American air force I guess) playing games to freak out the locals.

What about the attack on [Sydney Harbour](#)?

*“In late May and early June 1942, during World War II, submarines belonging to the Imperial Japanese Navy made a series of attacks on the Australian cities of Sydney and Newcastle. On the night of 31 May – 1 June, **three Ko-hyoteki-class midget submarines**, (M-14, M-21 and M-24) each with a **two-member crew**, entered Sydney Harbour, avoided the partially constructed Sydney Harbour anti-submarine boom net, and attempted to sink Allied warships. Two of the midget submarines were detected and attacked before they could engage any Allied vessels. The crew of M-14 scuttled their submarine, whilst M-21 was successfully attacked and sunk. The crew of M-21 killed themselves. These submarines were later recovered by the Allies. **The third submarine attempted to torpedo the heavy cruiser USS Chicago, but instead sank the converted ferry HMAS Kuttabul, killing 21 sailors.** This midget submarine's fate was **unknown until 2006**, when amateur scuba divers discovered the wreck off Sydney's northern beaches.”*

It's those pesky midget submarines again. All the Japanese die in the attempt you'll notice. Three submarines, two of which are spotted and sunk – the third destroys a ferry and vanishes until 2006 when its wreck is found. Of course Sydney didn't have a proper defence set up for its harbour in mid-1942. It's not like it's an important place or anything.

*“The midget submarine attacks and subsequent bombardments are **among the best-known examples of Axis naval activity in Australian waters during World War II**, and are the **only occasion in history when either city has come under attack**. The physical effects were slight: the Japanese had intended to destroy several major warships, but sank only an unarmed depot ship and failed to damage any significant targets during the bombardments. The main impact was psychological; creating popular fear of an impending Japanese invasion and forcing the Australian military to upgrade defences, including the commencement of convoy operations to protect merchant shipping.”*

That first sentence hits different when we realise this is another fake op for the cameras doesn't it? This is so easy, you have the Navy pull some submarine parts out of the water and go "Oh look everyone, we foiled an attack by the Japanese" and then people can pay more money to support them building a proper submarine net and bulk up their numbers and so on. You don't need to then hire anyone extra or build anything useful so then you're sat on a stack of cash to spend on the finer things in life (e.g. quality dark rum, goth strippers, pizza and tailored suits).

*"On the night of 31 May/1 June 1942, three Ko-hyoteki class midget submarines of the Imperial Japanese Navy entered Sydney Harbour with the intention of attacking Allied warships. According to the official account, **only one of the submarines, designated M-24, was able to fire her torpedoes, but both missed their intended target: the heavy cruiser USS Chicago. The torpedoes, fired around 00:30, continued on to Garden Island: one ran aground harmlessly, but the other hit the breakwater against which Kuttabul and the Dutch submarine K-IX were moored.***

The attack killed 19 Royal Australian Navy and two Royal Navy sailors asleep aboard the ferry, and wounded another 10. It took several days for the bodies of the dead sailors to be recovered, with a burial ceremony held on 3 June. One of the ferry's wheelhouses was salvaged and used as a naval police guardhouse at the Garden Island naval base; the base was commissioned on 1 January 1943 as the stone frigate HMAS Kuttabul in commemoration of the ferry and the lives lost. The wheelhouse later came into the possession of the Australian War Memorial, and is on display alongside a composite submarine built from the wreckage of two of the Japanese midget submarines."



A composite submarine. You see what I mean, this is like the submarine paraded around that [beached at Pearl Harbour](#), which had been taken apart and jumbled about for the eyes of the crowd fitted with new components.

“Kuttatul after sinking” – original [here](#).

I wonder why over 30 people were asleep on that ferry overnight? Were they crew? You can see from the photo it’s not that big a ship. Surely a normal crew would be like a half dozen or so instead? Would a passenger ferry that makes trips across Sydney bay have a dormitory for over 30 men?

Then we have the [Shelling of Newcastle](#), in which:

“The Shelling of Newcastle was conducted by the Japanese submarine I-21 in the early hours of 8 June 1942. The bombardment followed the Attack on Sydney Harbour on 31 May, and was conducted shortly after I-24 shelled the Eastern Suburbs of Sydney. During the attack I-21 fired 34 shells at Newcastle, including eight illumination rounds, but caused little damage. The Australian gunners at Fort Scratchley fired four shells at the submarine, but scored no hits.”

Body count?

Strength	
One submarine	Coastal artillery
Casualties and losses	
None	One house damaged, no casualties

Lol. How do you fire 34 shells at a city and only hit one house?

“The target of the attack was the BHP steelworks in the city.”

So it wasn’t about attacking the locals, it was about trying to blow up a steelworks? Even worse, that means they missed 26 consecutive shots at a factory complex!

*“The purpose of these attacks was to generate what historian David Jenkins has called an **“air of disquiet”** rather than inflict significant damage on targets in the two cities.”*

Jenkins obviously not buying the steelworks pitch. So which is it? Wikipedia doesn’t know or care. There’s truth in Jenkin’s quote, at least in that this is all psychological warfare.

“I-21 and I-24 were not attacked by Allied ships during or after their bombardments as **no anti-submarine warfare-capable vessels were available in either port**. While **one person was injured by falling masonry and debris in Sydney**, there were **no casualties in Newcastle**. Although the bombardments caused little damage, **they were successful in generating concern among Australians**.”

Of course there weren’t any anti-submarine vessels at Sydney, or Newcastle, or in the general vicinity. Why would the Australians need that? Not like there’s a war on or anything.

Oh, this is so dumb. What’s next? [Port Gregory](#):

“The shelling of Port Gregory took place on 28 January 1943 during World War II. The attack was conducted by the Japanese submarine I-165 under the command of Lieutenant Commander Tatenosuke Tosu as part of the attempts to divert Allied attention away from the evacuation of

Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands. None of the ten shells fired at Port Gregory caused any damage, and the attack was not noticed by the Allied naval authorities until a radio signal sent by Tosu was intercepted and decoded a week later.”

Imagine training for years to become a submarine commander and firing 10 shells at a port before sailing away, only to learn later that not only did you not hit anything or hurt anyone, the enemy didn't even realise you'd done anything until they spied on your private communications bragging about it.

“I-165 surfaced 6,400 metres (4 miles) off the village of Port Gregory just after midnight. From a range of 7,000 metres (7,700 yd; 4.3 mi), she fired about ten 100-mm (3.9-inch) shells from her Type 88 deck gun at a derelict crayfish cannery, which the submarine's crew had mistakenly identified as an ammunition factory. None of the shells caused any damage. Tosu did not attempt to observe the results of his submarine's bombardment, and resumed patrolling off the coast of Western Australia.”

Bless him, I feel bad for the guy. If it had been real and not just more fiction, I mean.

“The attack on Port Gregory was one of three submarine shellings on Australian towns and cities, the other two being the attacks on Newcastle and Sydney in June 1942.”

Is that it? Really? I don't get to read about the Japanese fighting Australian troops in a proper battle? Imagine if we got an article talking about “The Battle of Perth, where over 65,000 men died to hold the line while civilians were evacuated to the East in the face of the unrelenting, katana-wielding cannibal fanatics of Nippon”? This is it? A handful of pointless submarine/bomber “raids” that do absolutely nothing?

Speaking of Perth and its surroundings, we did of course have [this](#), which boils down to the military – stop me if you've heard this one before – scaring the local population with rumours of imminent invasion, bulking up local defences / troop numbers and ultimately absolutely nothing happening, just a false alarm or two.

I tire of Australian government lies. One more: what about [The Sinking of The AHS Centaur](#), I hear you cry?



*“Australian Hospital Ship (AHS) Centaur was a hospital ship which was **attacked and sunk by a Japanese submarine off the coast of Queensland, Australia, on 14 May 1943**. Of the **332** medical personnel and civilian crew aboard, 268 died, including 63 of the 65 army personnel.”*

And:

*“In January 1943, Centaur was handed over to the Australian military for conversion to a **hospital ship**, as her small size made her suitable for operating in Maritime Southeast Asia. The refit (including installation of medical facilities and repainting with Red Cross markings) was completed in **March**, and the ship undertook a trial voyage: transporting wounded from Townsville to Brisbane, then from **Port Moresby** to Brisbane. After replenishing in **Sydney**, Centaur embarked the 2/12th Field Ambulance for transport to New Guinea, and **sailed on 12 May**. Before dawn on **14 May 1943, during her second voyage, Centaur was torpedoed and sunk by a Japanese submarine off Moreton Island, Queensland**. The majority of the 332 aboard died in the attack; **the 64 survivors were discovered 36 hours later**. The incident resulted in public outrage as attacking a hospital ship is considered a war crime under the 1907 Hague Convention. Protests were made by the Australian and British governments to Japan and efforts were made to discover the people responsible so they could be tried at a war crimes tribunal. **In the 1970s the probable identity of the attacking submarine, I-177, became public.**”*

One: the Centaur was given by the British to the Australian military and its conversion to a hospital ship was only in March that year. It's the first “proper” mission, after the trial sailing to and from Brisbane.

Two: the ship is supposed to sink from one torpedo strike within 3 minutes, which seems unlikely (despite allegedly hitting a fuel tank or similar). The story is the sinking is simultaneously fast enough that nobody can radio for help AND is still enough time for 64 people to get into life rafts (or at least get topside). The time of the attack is around 4:10am, so I don't know about you but at that time of night I am not fully dressed and walking around topside ready to vault over the rail into a lifeboat. I would be in my bunk in my underwear, head under a pillow, asleep. Three minutes after an explosion I would have maybe put my trousers on, be very confused and about to open my cabin door to find myself up the creek. I find it implausible you could have that many survivors and not have anyone be able to alert the mainland.

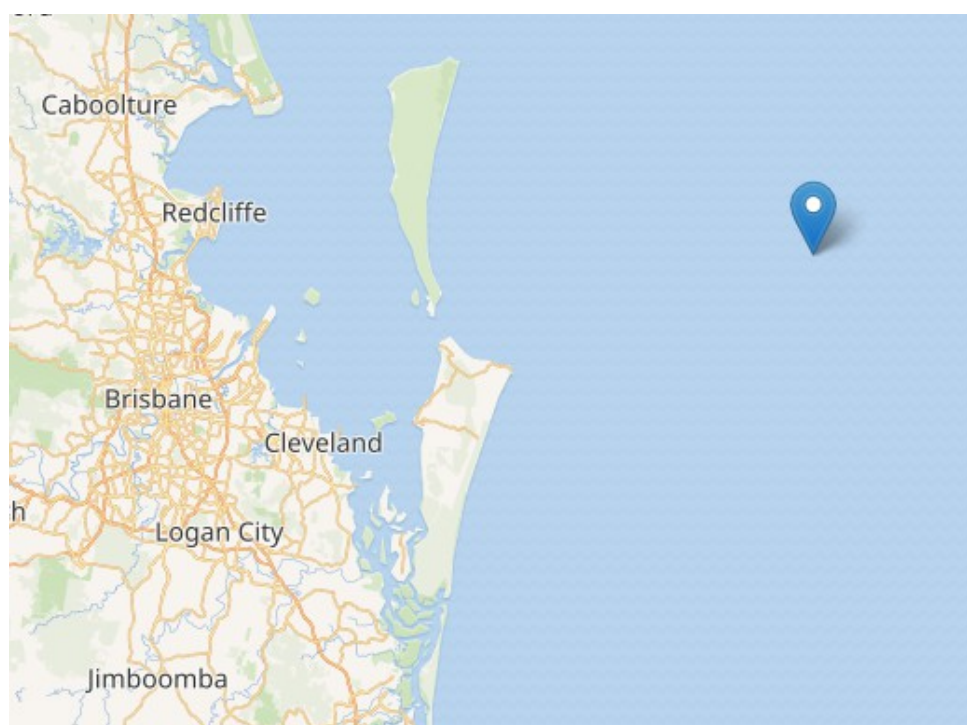
Three: it takes 36 hours to be found – the ship would have been radio silent for over a day with nobody noticing. The survivors are discovered by chance, drifting only a couple miles out from Brisbane. How is this not noticed sooner? Were they unable to paddle west a bit and get to land? They are only discovered by chance, by an anti-submarine plane from the [USS Mugford](#) who was escorting the NZ Freighter Sussex in the area.

The Mugford is already shady for pretending to do anything at Guadalcanal:



Mugford under air attack at Guadalcanal on 7 August 1942. - original [here](#). Was the ship steaming in a sea of pebbles?

You can see the wreck location on the map below. There should have been multiple vessels in the area surely?



Site of the wreck of the Centaur – original [here](#). (Side note: Jimboomba? Seriously? I love Australia.)

Nobody knows why the Centaur was attacked (I mean, aside from me telling you that the purpose of it was a staged attack to drum up anti-Japanese sentiment and support for the war). There are theories that range from “they were just mean” to “they didn’t see it was a hospital ship despite the lights and the crosses”. Both seem shallow explanations.

*“In December 1943, following official protests, **the Japanese government issued a statement formally denying responsibility for the sinking of Centaur. Records provided by the Japanese following the war also did not acknowledge responsibility.** Although Centaur's sinking was a war crime, no one was tried for sinking the hospital ship. **Investigations into the attack were conducted***

between 1944 and 1948, and included the interrogation of the commanders of the submarines operating in Australian waters at the time, their superiors, plus junior officers and crewmen from the submarines who had survived the war. Several of the investigators suspected that Nakagawa and I-177 were most likely responsible, but they were unable to establish this beyond reasonable doubt, and the Centaur case file was closed on 14 December 1948 without any charges laid."

To clarify: the Japanese, during total war, are asked if they did the thing and officially replied "Nah we didn't do that". No reason to lie, they are intending to win the war and obviously aren't going to punish themselves afterwards if they are victorious. They are happy to admit to other atrocities (e.g. previous anecdotes we've seen such as "I put men in bamboo cages and threw them into shark infested waters"), but with this particular incident they go "Nope". Post-war, when the West gets access to the Japanese military records, there is nothing found internally in their Naval/military archive going "Yeah we did it but we will lie to the gaijin for a laugh", despite the independent investigation (you can imagine how sympathetic Americans/Australians would have been to the Japanese at that point in time what with all the propaganda, so if there was anything, we'd hear about it). The Allies then round up all the submarine crewmen and commanders said to be operating in Australian waters – post war, when the Japanese have lost and are under military occupation – and interrogate them and cross examine them and nobody cracks or says anything to indicate it was a Japanese submarine.

But we know it was a Japanese submarine. We know this because:

"In 1972, German military historian Jürgen Rohwer claimed in Chronology Of The War At Sea that I-177 torpedoed Centaur, based on a Japanese report stating that I-177 had attacked a ship on 14 May 1943 in the area the hospital ship had sunk. Japanese Rear Admiral Kaneyoshi Sakamoto, who had shown Rohwer the report, stated that Nakagawa and I-177 were responsible for the attack on Centaur in his 1979 book History of Submarine Warfare."

As an official history of the Japanese Navy, Sakamoto's work was considered to be official admission of the attacking submarine's identity. Subsequently, most sources assumed as fact Nakagawa's and I-177's role in the loss of Centaur. Nakagawa, who died in 1991, refused to speak about the attack on Centaur following the war crimes investigation at the end of World War II or even to defend himself or deny the claims made by Rohwer and Sakamoto."

Right... so 30 years after the event we have Sakamoto rocking up to tell a German historian "Nakagawa did it" and waves around a report that (presumably) had no copy or match to anything found in the regular Japanese military archives inspected during the investigation.



This is a photo of Sakamoto I found online. There doesn't appear to be any copy of the document Sakamoto showed Rohwer that substantiates his claim that I could find on the internet. It appears that the "confirmation" of it being Nakagawa boils down to Rohwer claiming this in a book called "[Chronology of the War at Sea](#)", which I can't find an epub/pdf rip of so I can't check it to confirm to see how solid this is (if anyone reading this has a copy, plz check the entry and let me know). I may be wrong here, but logically if there WAS a document that proved it was Nakagawa there would be a photograph or copy of this document and it would not be hidden in one book by a German historian from the 1970's, it would be visible on... y'know... the various websites and archives about the Centaur.

So I find the whole thing deeply suspicious. You've got a ship that only just started out on operations being involved in a dawn ambush that sinks within 3 minutes and yet there are over 60 survivors, which can then be used as a rallying point for the public sentiment against Japan.

As per [the BBC article](#) the wreck was eventually found, in December 2009. We then get some photos like these:



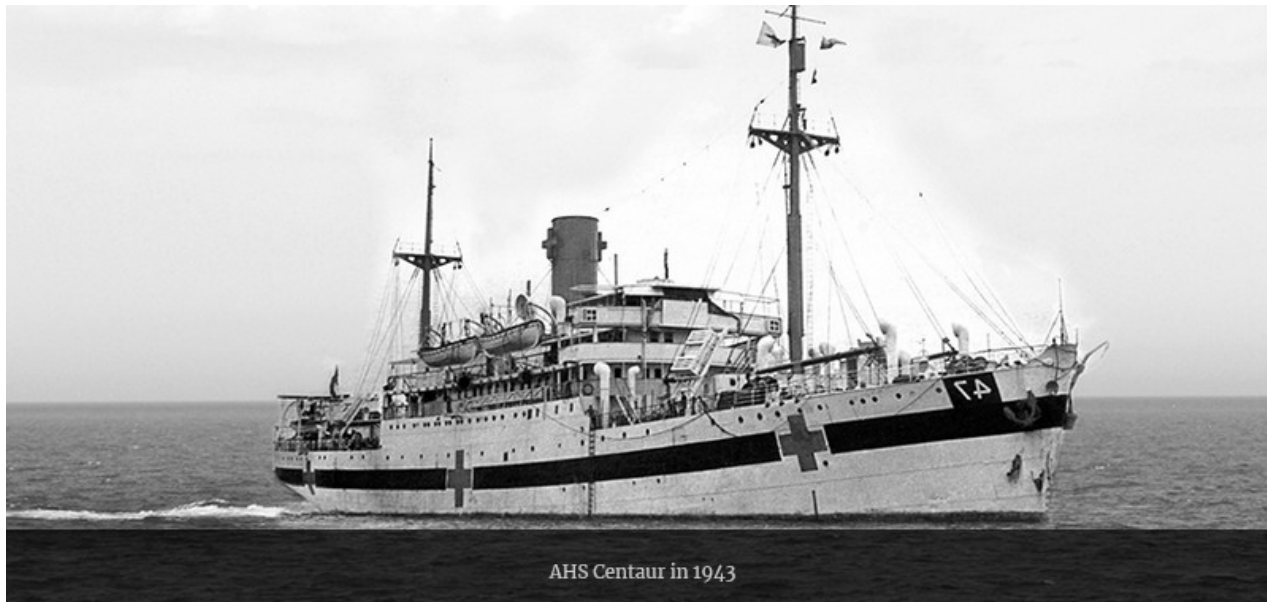
The proof this ship is the AHS Centaur comes from this:



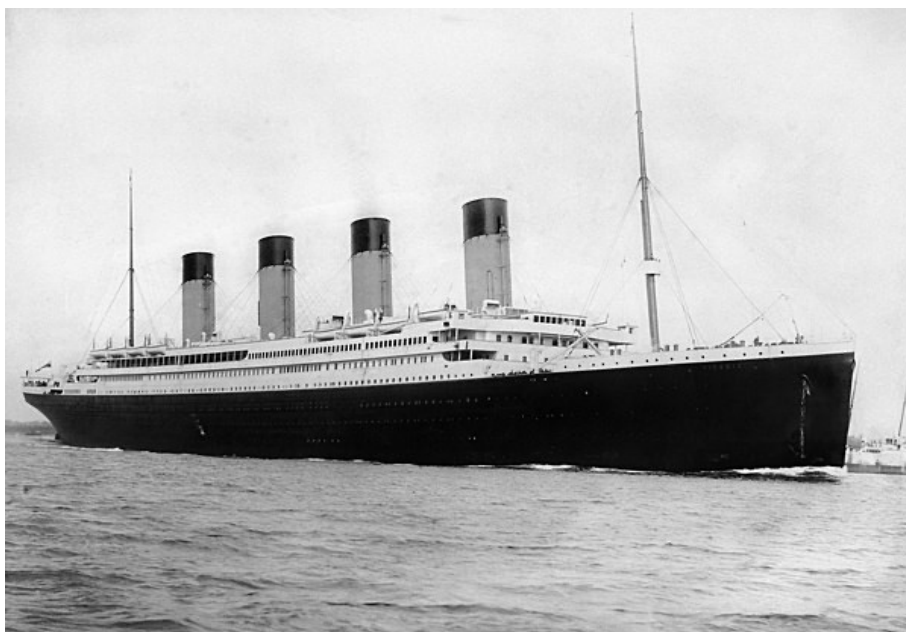
Original [here](#).

They say you can tell it's the bow of the ship (starboard side) because you can just about see the faint lower half of the "7" of 47, the ships number, left of the anchor, above the green horizontal paint stripe.

Genuine question: if we go on the website for the [Centaur Memorial Fund for Nurses](#), then scroll down, why do we see this photo of the Centaur:



You may think the reversed 47 is weird, but that just means the photo got reversed. There is something else weirder. Do you see the white halo around the ship above? What is that? It is again the sign of the paste. It is residue of photoshop or the older process. There are other pictures of the ship, so I don't know why they faked this one. It looks like they redid the masts and rigging for some reason. My assumption is that the ship didn't have masts or rigging, since it was a steamer. See the smokestack? So they did the same thing here that they did with the Titanic:



That is the lead photo of the Titanic at Wikipedia. Look closely there, and you can see ghosts all the way around the ship, especially the masts and rigging, which are again the telltale signs of a paste-up. But it is much much worse on the Centaur. So why jack with the masts in that photo? I don't know, but it may be it was flying the wrong flags for this story or something.

Here's a [clip from Sky News](#) about the discovery of the Centaur. You can also follow [this link](#) to see a slide show that contains more photographs from the RV they used to photograph the wreck. Slide 38 onwards has the RV pics.

I always wonder why they never just use the robot sub to film the ship entirely, or give it an establishing shot (like zoomed out a bit, light/visibility allowing, showing a section of the ship or ideally the whole wreck where it sits on the sea floor) – instead it's always a bunch of point blank shots of hull sections, the robot floating right smack in front of what it is filming from a foot away which makes it really hard to tell what you are looking at. You would think they would want an establishing shot to help prove it's the ship they say it is.

The narrator helpfully tells us that the wreck is now protected so nobody else can go down there and there are no plans to recover any remains of the dead. OK.

The wreck of the Centaur was located by David Mearns. His Wiki profile reads:

*"In 2008 Mearns led a search team to find the Australian cruiser **HMAS Sydney** and the German auxiliary cruiser **Kormoran**, which both sank following an engagement off Western Australia in 1941 during World War 2. Prior to finding H.M.A.S. Sydney, Mearns said that it was, in some ways, "bigger than the Titanic" because of what it meant to Australia. "Nothing comes close to the Sydney." At the end of 2010, he successfully led the search for another missing Australian shipwreck, the Hospital Ship **Centaur**, which was torpedoed off Queensland by a Japanese submarine in 1943. On 1 November 2010, Mearns was awarded an honorary Medal of the Order of Australia in recognition of his work in locating and analysing the wrecks of H.M.A.S. Sydney and A.H.S. Centaur.*

On 3 March 2015, Mearns was part of a team led by Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen which located the wreck of the Japanese battleship Musashi in the Sibuyan Sea."

Interesting, so although he's not technically part of Paul Allen's gang he has worked with Allen. He also found the Kormoran and the Sydney, [which is another yarn I can't be bothered to get into](#) (essentially another hearsay story involving Germans this time).

I don't know enough about oceanography and the science of underwater paint rust to be 100%, but I just find the whole thing a bit weird, in terms of the photographs hyper-focused on one little bit and not the whole ship, or that the paint of the 47 marking is SO faded and yet you can see the little details like this boot that are still preserved perfectly after 70 years:

Single Boot in Debris Field



Someone [wise in the ways of science](#) may come at me with “Actually you muppet it’s completely normal for the boot to be preserved like it’s been underwater a day while the entire sign faded to oblivion”, I don’t know. Fair play if that’s the case. When I’m writing this stuff I’ll keep it honest with you about things that to me are blatantly false and things I’m suspicious of but can’t give you a kill shot on.

I can. [We already hit this in the Titanic paper as well](#), see last section. The shoe should NOT be there, but they claim it has something to do with tannins, which all sea creatures hate. The fact that it is a shoe is also a clue, since it is a common signal in these events. We have seen it in many more recent events in the US, where they photograph a single shoe for no reason. [We saw it prominently at Charlottesville](#), for example.

One last comment: I like the creepy little memorial they made for the Centaur:



A floating pyramid above a rock. Vigilant Citizen would have a field day with that.

Bonus Content: The Ballad of PT-109

Just when we thought the Pacific campaign couldn't get more ridiculous, it's time to tell you the tale of how a plucky young man who pulled himself up by his bootstraps and showed courage in the face of danger saved his friends and went on to become the President of the United States.

Oh yes.

This is the tale of John F Kennedy, on an Elco PT patrol boat, designation [109](#).



The patrol boat in question. The thing is useless, nay, a death trap, given that [as per Wikipedia](#):

*“The PT boat's **principal offensive weapon was her torpedoes**... The **Mark 8**, however, was both inaccurate and ineffective until its detonator was recalibrated by the Navy at the end of the war. A major issue was that **even in the unlikely instance they hit their target, they rarely detonated**, even when they hit at a 90-degree angle, perpendicular to their target. Also noteworthy, was that the torpedoes were **slow, travelling at only 28 knots, thoroughly unable to catch faster moving Japanese vessels**... One naval officer explained that **90% of the time**, when the button was pushed on the torpedo tube to launch a torpedo, **nothing happened or occasionally the motor spun the propeller until the torpedo motor exploded in the tube**, showering the deck with metal fragments. For safety, **a torpedoman's mate was frequently required to hit the torpedo's firing pin with a hammer to get one to launch**. Kennedy and contemporary writers noted that torpedo mates and other PT crew were inadequately trained in aiming and firing the Mark 8 torpedoes, and were never informed of the torpedoes' ineffectiveness and low rate of detonation.”*

We will note this as an example of where money has been spent designing weapons of war that are completely ineffective and a hazard to the crewmen. The Pentagon buys it in bulk and the taxpayer pays for it but it's useless. What, did nobody bother to field test the hardware then? Or have any kind of standards?

Anyway, Kennedy:

“Despite having a chronically bad back and a history of other illnesses including abdominal pain and scarlet fever as an infant, John F. Kennedy used his father Joseph P. Kennedy's influence to get into the war. In 1940, the U.S. Army's Officer Candidate School had rejected him as 4-F, for

his bad back, ulcers and asthma. **Kennedy's father persuaded his old friend Captain Allan Goodrich Kirk, USN, head of the Office of Naval Intelligence, to let a private Boston doctor certify his son's good health.** Kennedy started out in October 1941 prior to Pearl Harbor as an ensign with a desk job for the Office of Naval Intelligence. He was reassigned to South Carolina in January 1942 because of his affair with Danish journalist Inga Arvad. On 27 July 1942, Kennedy entered the Naval Reserve Officers Training School in Chicago.”

What a nice young man. He used his families wealth and connections to get INTO the war. As is so often the case with the wealthy and inbred. His dad is buddy-buddy with the head of the ONI (!) and gets a faked doctors report to clear him to work in Naval Intel. I imagine Miles has already blown this in a previous paper but it's interesting for me to learn that JFK thus started out as literally a Naval Intelligence spook. He then immediately bumbles by getting busy with a Danish journalist – you can read about her [here](#) but this doesn't matter much and he keeps going from strength to strength:

“After completing his Naval Reserve Officer's Training on 27 September, Kennedy voluntarily entered the Motor Torpedo Boat Squadrons Training Center in Melville, Rhode Island, where he was promoted to lieutenant (junior grade) (LTJG). In September 1942, Joseph Kennedy had secured PT Lieutenant Commander John Bulkeley's help in placing his son in the PT boat's service and enrolling him in their training school, after meeting with Bulkeley in a New York Plaza suite near his office at Rockefeller Plaza.”

I love how it's Rockefeller Plaza. So Kennedy is being artificially moved through positions due to his dad and his connections. The next sentence is glorious in its deadpan delivery:

“Nonetheless, Bulkeley would not have recommended John Kennedy for PT boat training if he did not believe he was qualified to be a PT captain. In an interview with Kennedy, Bulkeley was impressed with his appearance, communication skills, grades at Harvard, and awards received in small boat competitions, particularly while a member of Harvard's sailing team.”

Amazing. Bulkeley is also shown to be a liar talking about the PT boats (which we've established are rubbish) and makes out they are ship-killers:

“Exaggerated claims by Bulkeley about the effectiveness of the PTs in combat against larger craft allowed him to recruit top talent, raise war bonds, and cause overconfidence among squadron commanders who continued to pit PTs against larger craft. But many in the Navy knew the truth; his claims that PTs had sunk a Japanese cruiser, a troopship, and a plane tender in the Philippines were false. Kennedy completed his PT training in Rhode Island on 2 December, with very high marks and was asked to stay for a brief period as an instructor. He was then ordered to the training squadron, Motor Torpedo Squadron 4, to take over the command of motor torpedo boat PT-101, a 78-foot (24 m) Huckins PT boat.”

He was so good, we begged him to stay and teach the newbies. Of course.

“In January 1943, PT-101 and four other boats were ordered to Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron 14 (RON 14), which was assigned to patrol the Panama Canal. Kennedy detached from RON 14 in February 1943, while the squadron was in Jacksonville, Florida, preparing for transfer to the Panama Canal Zone. Still desperately seeking a combat assignment, and on his own volition, Lieutenant Kennedy then contacted family friend and crony, Massachusetts Senator David I. Walsh, Chairman of the Naval Affairs Committee, who diverted his assignment to Panama, and had him sent to PT combat in the Solomon Islands, granting Kennedy's previous "change-of-

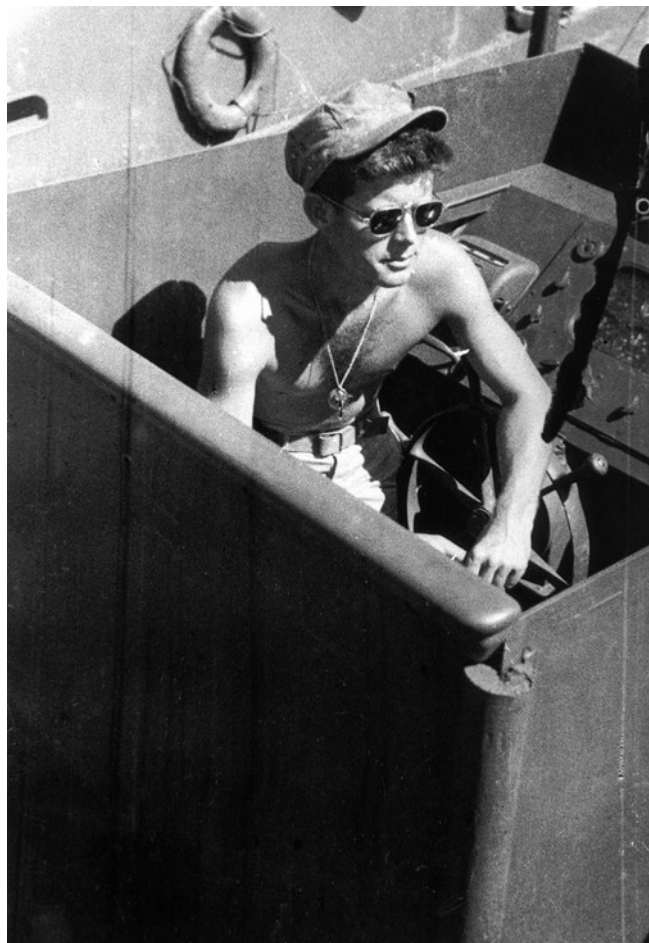
assignment" request to be sent to a squadron in the South Pacific. His actions were against the wishes of his father who had wanted a safer assignment."

Translation: The Kennedy family wanted JF to have some clout when he ran for political office in the years ahead, so they needed a decent war story for him to recount. They got him a series of cushy roles at a Rhode Island yacht club and gave him an A+ whenever he lifted a finger. They then got him sent somewhere safe where he couldn't possibly be in danger: the Solomon Islands.

"The Allies had been in a campaign of island hopping since securing Guadalcanal in a bloody battle in early 1943. Kennedy transferred on 23 February 1943, as a replacement officer to Motor Torpedo Boat Squadron 2, which was based at Tulagi Island, immediately north of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands. Travelling to the Pacific on the large troop carrier Rochambeau, Kennedy witnessed a fierce air strike that killed the ship's captain, and found Kennedy helping to hand shells to supply a large gun on board, giving him his first taste of battle. He arrived at Tulagi on 14 April and took command of PT-109 on 23 April."

Thinking about it, all of this is a red flag that the Solomon Islands campaign (or the Guadalcanal Campaign/Operation Watchtower/Cartwheel or whichever title you use for it: the military action against the Japanese from Papa New Guinea to the tip of the Solomons) was a safe zone for smug trust fund kiddies. They wouldn't put him in harms way, so this tells me you can be based at Tulagi and be absolutely fine.

We then have some lovely photographs of JF chilling on a boat:



"Lt. John F. Kennedy aboard the PT-109" – original [here](#).



"Lt. JG Kennedy at the helm of PT-109" – original [here](#).

Then we have the crew of the PT-109:



Original [here](#).

Obviously this is a collage, even I can see this immediately. Everyone is cropped in, the heads are floating, the light is wrong, everyone "pops" off the page with an outline or corona of white. I like how the 109 is visible in that specific font we've seen used on ships in previous papers but lacks the shadow effect they've used on the other naval vessels we've seen. Why not now? Is it not standardised?

You can read [here](#) about the “Battle of Blackett Strait” but the TL;DR is that Kennedy is sailing around on the PT at night and crashes into a Japanese ship that was sailing with its lights off to be stealthy. The PT boat explodes and two crewmen are killed. Kennedy rallies the survivors and then saves everyone.

*“Late in the night, Kennedy's 109 and two accompanying PTs became the last to sight the Japanese destroyers returning on their northern route to Rabaul, New Britain, New Guinea, after they had completed dropping their supplies and troops at 1:45 a.m. on the southern tip of Kolombangara. The official Navy account of the incident listed radio communications as good, but PT commanders **were also told to maintain radio silence** until informed of enemy sightings, causing many commanders **to turn off their radios** or not closely monitor their radio traffic, including Kennedy.”*

Because “radio silence” is the same as “switch off your communications completely and sail blind”.

*“By 2 a.m. on 2 August 1943, as the battle neared its end, PT-109, PT-162, and PT-169 were ordered to continue patrolling the area on orders previously radioed from Commander Warfield. The night was cloudy and moonless, **and fog had set** amidst the remaining PTs. Kennedy's boat was idling on one engine to avoid the detection of her phosphorescent wake by Japanese aircraft when the crew realized they were in the path of the Japanese destroyer Amagiri, which was heading north to Rabaul from Vila Plantation, Kolombangara, after offloading supplies and 902 soldiers.*

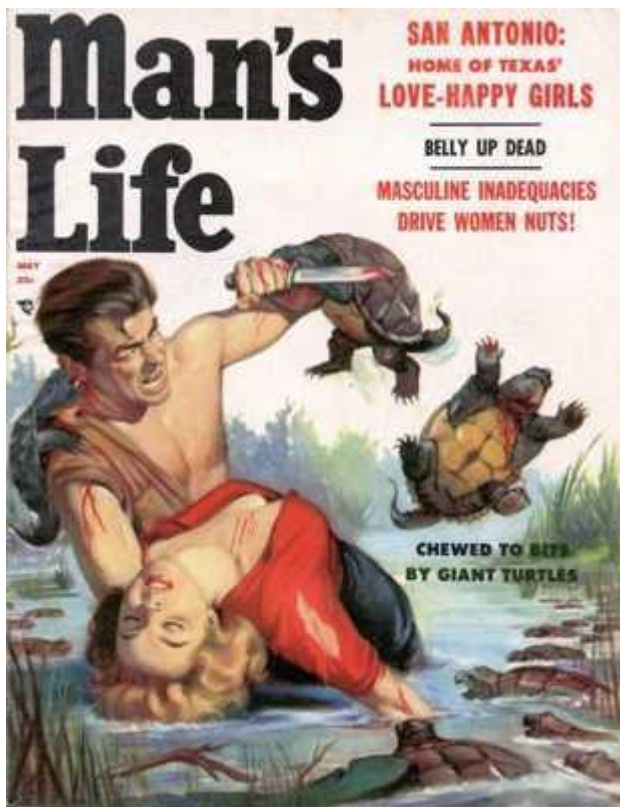
*Kennedy and his crew **had less than ten seconds** to get the engines up to speed and evade the oncoming destroyer, which was advancing without running lights, but the PT boat was run down and severed between Kolombangara and Ghizo Island, near 8°3'S 156°56'E. The 109 was struck on her starboard side at a 20-degree angle, shearing off a piece of the boat.*

*When PT-109 was cut in two around 2:27 a.m., **a fireball of exploding aviation fuel 100-foot-high (30 m) announced the collision, and caused the sea surrounding the ship to flame.** Seamen Andrew Jackson Kirksey and Harold William Marney were killed instantly, and two other members of the crew were badly injured and burned when they were thrown into the flaming sea surrounding the boat. For such a catastrophic collision, explosion, and fire, there were few men lost when contrasted to the losses on other PT boats hit by shell fire. PT-109 was gravely damaged, with watertight compartments keeping only the forward hull afloat in a sea of flames.”*

Very nice of the Japanese to not shoot at the boat that they struck. It gets better:

*“Kennedy was able to rescue MM1 Patrick McMahon, the crew member with the most severe wounds, which included burns that covered 70 percent of his body, and brought him to the floating bow. Kennedy also rescued Starkey and Harris, bringing them both to the bow. On instructions from Kennedy, the **eleven** survivors thrown from the 109 first regrouped, and then hoping for rescue, clung to PT-109's bow section for 12 hours as it drifted slowly south. By about 1 p.m., on 2 August, it was apparent that the hull was taking on water and would soon sink, so the men decided to swim for land, departing around 1:30 p.m. As there were Japanese camps on all the nearby large islands including Kolombangara, the closest, they chose the tiny deserted **Plum Pudding Island** southwest of where the bow section had drifted. They placed their lantern, shoes, and non-swimmers on one of the timbers that had been used as a gun mount and began kicking together to propel it. **Kennedy, who had been on the Harvard University swim team, used a life jacket strap clenched between his teeth to tow McMahon. It took four hours to swim to the island, 3.5 miles (5.6 km) away, which they reached without encountering sharks or crocodiles.”***

This is all getting a bit “Man’s Life”, isn’t it?



“Pl
m



Pudding Island was only 100 yards (91 m) in diameter, with no food or water. The exhausted crew dragged themselves behind the tree line to hide from passing Japanese barges. The night of 2 August, Kennedy swam 2 miles (3.2 km) to Ferguson Passage to attempt to hail a passing American PT boat. On 4 August, he and Lenny Thom assisted his injured and hungry crew on a demanding swim 3.75 miles (6.04 km) south to Olasana Island which was visible to all from Plum Pudding Island. They swam against a strong current, and once again, Kennedy towed McMahon by his life vest. They were pleased to discover Olasana had ripe coconuts, though there was still no fresh water. On the following day, 5 August, Kennedy and George Ross swam for one hour to Naru Island, visible at an additional distance of about .5 miles (0.80 km) south-east, in search of help and food and because it was closer to Ferguson Passage where Kennedy might see or swim to a passing PT boat on patrol. Kennedy and Ross found a small canoe, packages of crackers and candy, and a fifty-gallon drum of drinkable water left by the Japanese, which Kennedy paddled back to Olasana in the acquired canoe to provide his crew. It was then that Kennedy first spoke to native Melanesian coastwatchers Biuku Gasa and Eroni Kumana on Olasana Island. Months earlier, Kennedy had learned a smattering of the pidgin English used by the coastwatchers by speaking with a native boy. The two coastwatchers had finally been convinced by Ensign Thom that the crew were from the lost 109, when Thom asked Gasa if he knew John Kari, and Gasa replied that he worked with him. Realizing they were with Americans, the coastwatchers brought a few yams, vegetables, and cigarettes from their dugout canoe and vowed to help the starving crew. But it would take two more days for a full rescue.”

That dodgy back and sore tummy Kennedy had since childhood has faded away in the face of adversity. Quite impressive he went several days without water while swimming miles of ocean in shark infested waters. Shame we didn't have him wrestling crocodiles as well.

Luckily a nearby Allied spy based at the top of a volcano had seen the whole thing and arranged a rescue. No really:

*“The rescue of PT-109 was a long process, largely achieved by the work of native Solomon Island scouts who first located Kennedy and his crew. The scouts were sent by **Sub-lieutenant Reg Evans**, an Australian coastwatcher, who had seen the 109 explode from his secret observation site. **The explosion and resulting fireball on the early morning of 2 August was spotted by Evans, who manned a secret observation post at the top of the Mount Veve volcano on Kolombangara, where more than 10,000 Japanese troops were garrisoned below on the south-east portion.**”*

There's more nonsense involving secret messages in coconuts and helpful natives. Eventually Kennedy and his men get rescued. Kennedy gets a medal:



Perfectly normal quality photo for an awards ceremony in the mid 40's. I like how the background is a white void that shifts above nipple height to a churning grey mist. Original [here](#).

The [Solomon Islanders](#) who helped Kennedy and the other survivors have their own page where we read this:

*“**Kennedy later invited them to attend his presidential inauguration in 1961, but the pair was duped en route in Honiara, the Solomon Islands capital, by British colonial officials who sent other representatives instead. Another version of the story is that they were turned back by British officials at the airport due to not speaking English. The story from Biuku's descendants is that the British officials did not want to send Biuku and Eroni because they were simple village men and not well dressed (by the British authorities' standards). The legend of these two men survives to this day among their descendants in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands.**”*

So when the President of the United States invites the men who saved his life to attend his inauguration, they are somehow blocked by the British, who send some other people in their place.

Right.

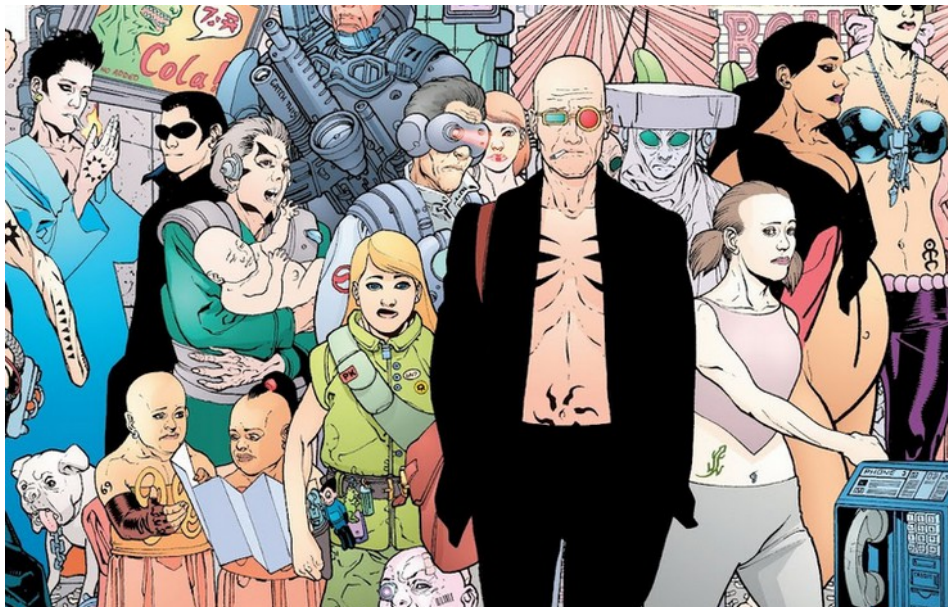
Or, you know, there weren't any islanders. But that can't be right, after all National Geographic interviewed them and our good buddy Robert Ballard found the PT-109:

"Gasa and Kumana were interviewed by National Geographic in 2002, and can be seen on the DVD of the television special. They were presented a bust by Max Kennedy, a son of Robert F. Kennedy. The National Geographic had gone there as part of an expedition by Robert Ballard, the discoverer of the wreck of the Titanic, who did find the remains of the PT-109. The special was called The Search for Kennedy's PT 109."

Just perfect.



More to come.



[Traditional Australian National Anthem Outro Music](#)

PS: I know, I know, I should have used Jimi Hendrix's [All Along The Watchtower](#) as the Outro track for the last article rather than the epic Lime in the Coconut, as it was Guadalcanal related. Although I am insufferable enough to have probably probably gone with this [obscure sci-fi nerd version](#) instead.

PPS: Regarding bloated, camp, 1998 melodrama [The Thin Red Line](#): I just couldn't finish it. I gave it forty minutes and switched it off while enunciating some rather choice language. I cannot take John Travolta and a bunch of luvvy actors swanning around on a troop transport being impossibly pretentious seriously. It's all fiction anyway, it's not based on anything real to do with Guadalcanal, either Mt. Austen or otherwise so they may as well have had Sean Penn on a unicorn.