

What's News?

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Ito Susumu's Spy Flight over Sydney Harbour – by Phil Dulhunty

On 29th May 1942 the Japanese submarine I-29 catapulted Ito Susumu in his Yokosuka "Glen" floatplane off the deck to reconnoitre the allied warships lurking in Sydney Harbour. His mission was to record the positions and details of all the warships in the harbour so that the midget subs could be launched the following day to torpedo them. Ito was flying an unmarked floatplane and carried an observer who sketched the position of the boom net across the entrance to the harbour and the location of all the battleships. When flying low over Garden Island he noticed flood lights and oxy welding flashes coming from Cockatoo Island west of the Bridge. He had to climb up to go over the bridge and circled around Cockatoo Island and the battleships in there under repair.

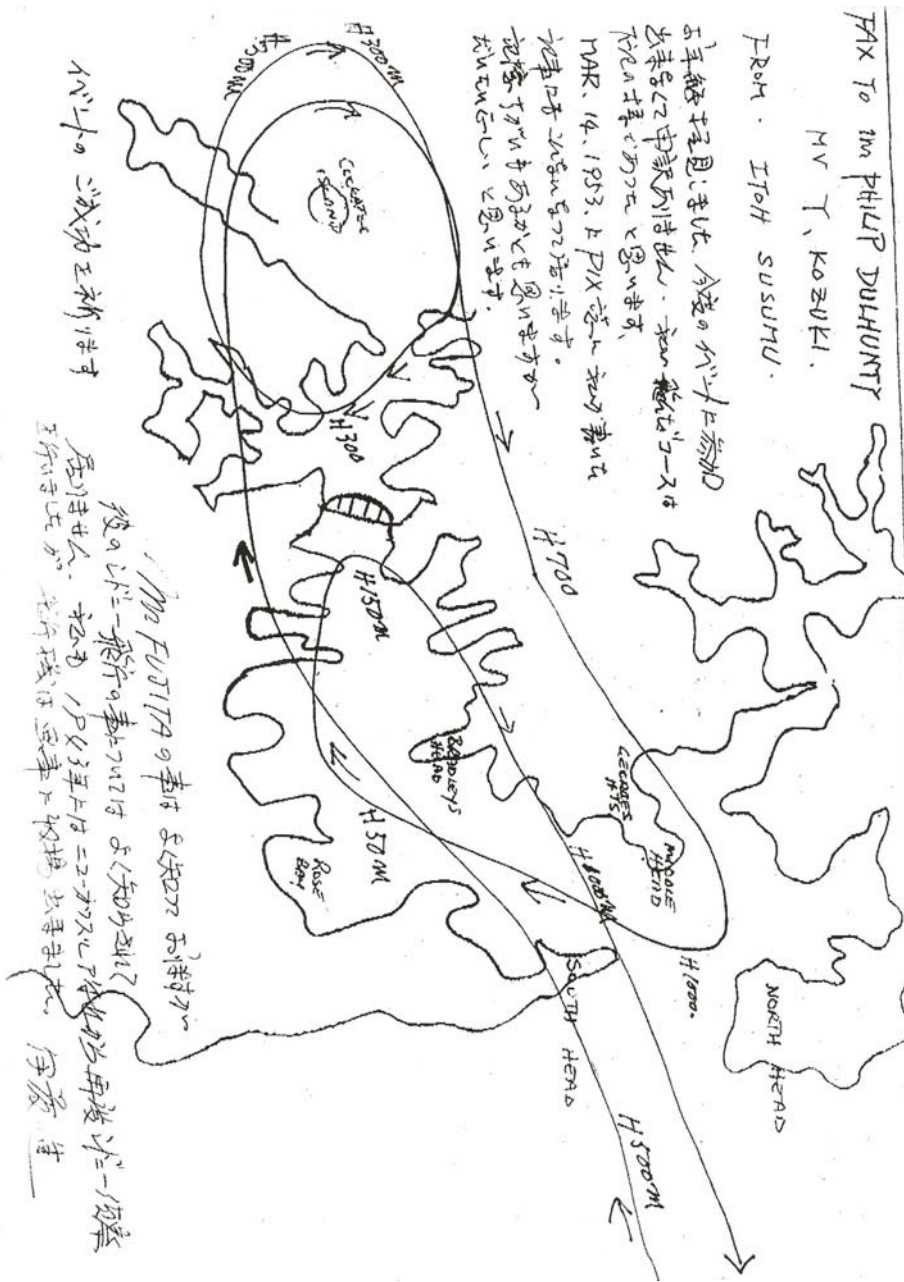
It just so happened that the ack-ack gun battery at Georges Heights was where the rookie ack-ack gunner Philip Dulhunty was in training on 3.7 anti-aircraft guns. Ito's plane was mistaken for a floatplane from one of the American war ships namely the SS Chicago a heavy cruiser moored just east of Garden Island.

On returning to the sub Ito crash-landed in the sea which had become turbulent in a southerly buster. He and his observer with his important map were rescued and the Glen floatplane after some trouble was sunk.

Some 50 years later when ack-ack gunner Phil Dulhunty had become a seaplane pilot himself contact was made with Ito at his home in Iwakuni in Japan. Ito gave Philip a full description of his flight together with a copy of his map of Sydney Harbour and the route of his spy flight (next page).

Now some 20 years further on Ito and Phil Dulhunty are both still alive and a re-enactment of Ito's flight was organised by Peter Grose who had researched and written the book "A Very Rude Awakening" of the whole seaplane and midget submarine attack on Sydney Harbour.

For the re-enactment, in the absence of Phil's C180 (VH-BNJ), the closest seaplane to Ito's Glen was Bill Lane's Cessna 182 from Port Macquarie. To make the flight with a documentary record, the experts Gary Jackson and Rob McAuley were roped in. In addition to the cinematographer in the aircraft together with Phil Dulhunty and Peter Grose special wide angle cameras were fitted to the wings of the aircraft (see photos at the end of this article).



Ito's hand drawn copy of his map of Sydney Harbour and the route of his spy flight

Fortunately the route of Ito's spy flight happened to coincide with the special seaplane and helicopter lane in restricted area R405 so that on Saturday 20 March 2010, a precise re-enactment was flown. Peter Grose's documentary should be available to members in due course.



Peter Grose author of "A Very Rude Awakening"



Fitting the wide angle cameras to Bill Lane's Cessna 182



Ito and I sharing our various seaplane experiences in Japan. I've also presented him with his formal certificate of membership of the Seaplane Pilots' Association of Australia.

Ito Susumu and Phil Dulhunty

New Members/Donations

The Catalina Flying Memorial welcomes the following members to the Aussie Cat Club:

The CFML is extremely grateful for the following donations:

- Bill Dean - \$1000

A very big thank you Bill for your support!

Is the PBY Human?

To find out you'll have to turn the page!

BANTER



Is the PBY Human?

AN ARGUMENT as to whether the PBY will enter heaven when it dies, just as do all naval officers, has reached the stages of furious debate at Quonset's Air Combat Information Officers' School. Nobody ever gave the subject a thought until a local cameraman with a strong metaphysical bent began to notice changes in facial expression as the flying boat completed various stages of flight.

The more he watched the more he became confirmed in his suspicion that the PBY somehow had transcended the bounds of mere matériel and transmigrated into a state of humanity. That night he was so excited he could only sleep 8 hours.

Armed with a reliable camera, he set about to spy on the itinerant plane and prove his point. Most of the shots were taken from vantage points when the PBY wasn't looking and was freely exercising its innermost feelings without any traces of self-consciousness.

Scenes on this page were submitted to Naval Aviation News as evidence of the PBY's humanity. In the absence of a rebuttal from the negative, no conclusion can be handed down, but it seems safe to observe that, at the very least, the PBY is an emotional critter... a plane of many moods.

EXERCISING MANY MOODS THE PBY RUNS GAMUT OF EMOTIONS IN THESE CANDID SHOTS TO BECOME BEST PHOTOGRAPHIC MODEL



SHEEPISH EXPECTANT HIGH HAT DRUNK AS A LORD

HEILY-TOILY! LONESOME BORED G-R-R-R-R HUNG OVER

UP AND AT 'EM

WANNA GO HOME KITTENISH

SOUND ASLEEP LOOK ME OVER, FOLKS! HOW'N I DOIN'!

News or comments

If you have any news or comments regarding the website, please forward to Colin Cool (colin.cool@jemena.com.au) or Jill Brandon (info@catalinaflying.org.au).