

31 May 1942

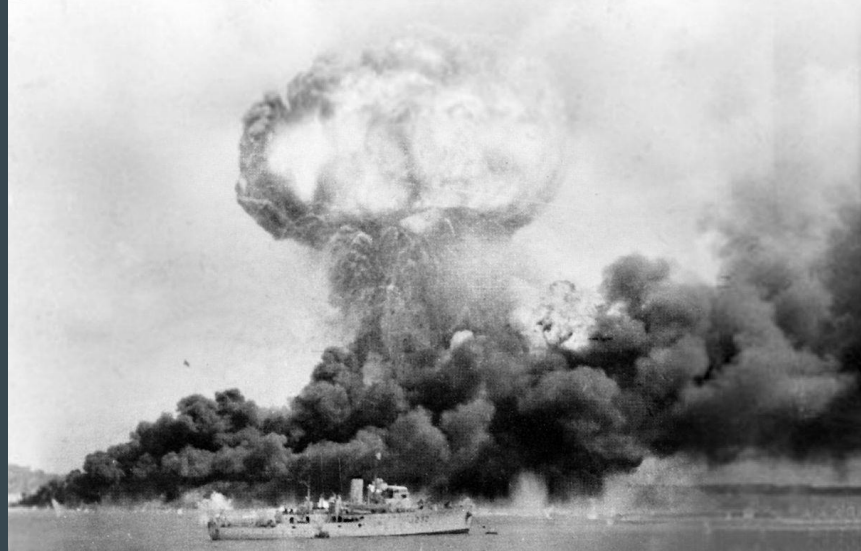
The day the war came to Sydney

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Background

During February and March 1942 (WWII), Japan had attacked Darwin and Katherine in the Northern Territory.



Background

Australians were worried about the possibility of an attack on other parts of Australia. Beaches were lined with barbed wire and primary school children had 'air raid drills' where they had to run to trenches.



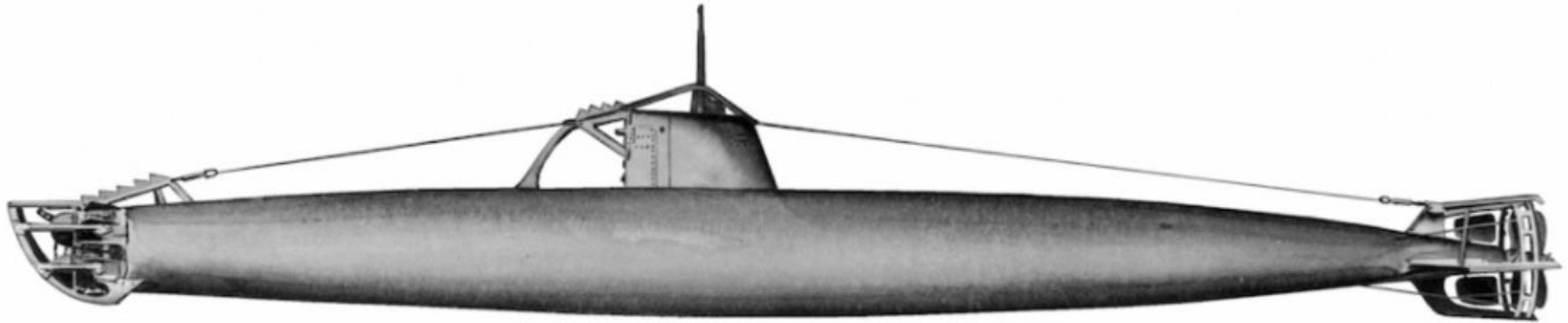
Manly Beach 1942

When and where did it happen?

It was a dreary, overcast and cold day in Sydney on the 31st May 1942.

That evening there were 30 naval vessels from the US and Australia in Sydney Harbour, more than at any other time during the war.

Three Japanese midget submarines snuck into Sydney Harbour to launch an attack on the US navy cruiser USS Chicago and HMAS Canberra, stationed just off the Garden Island navy base.

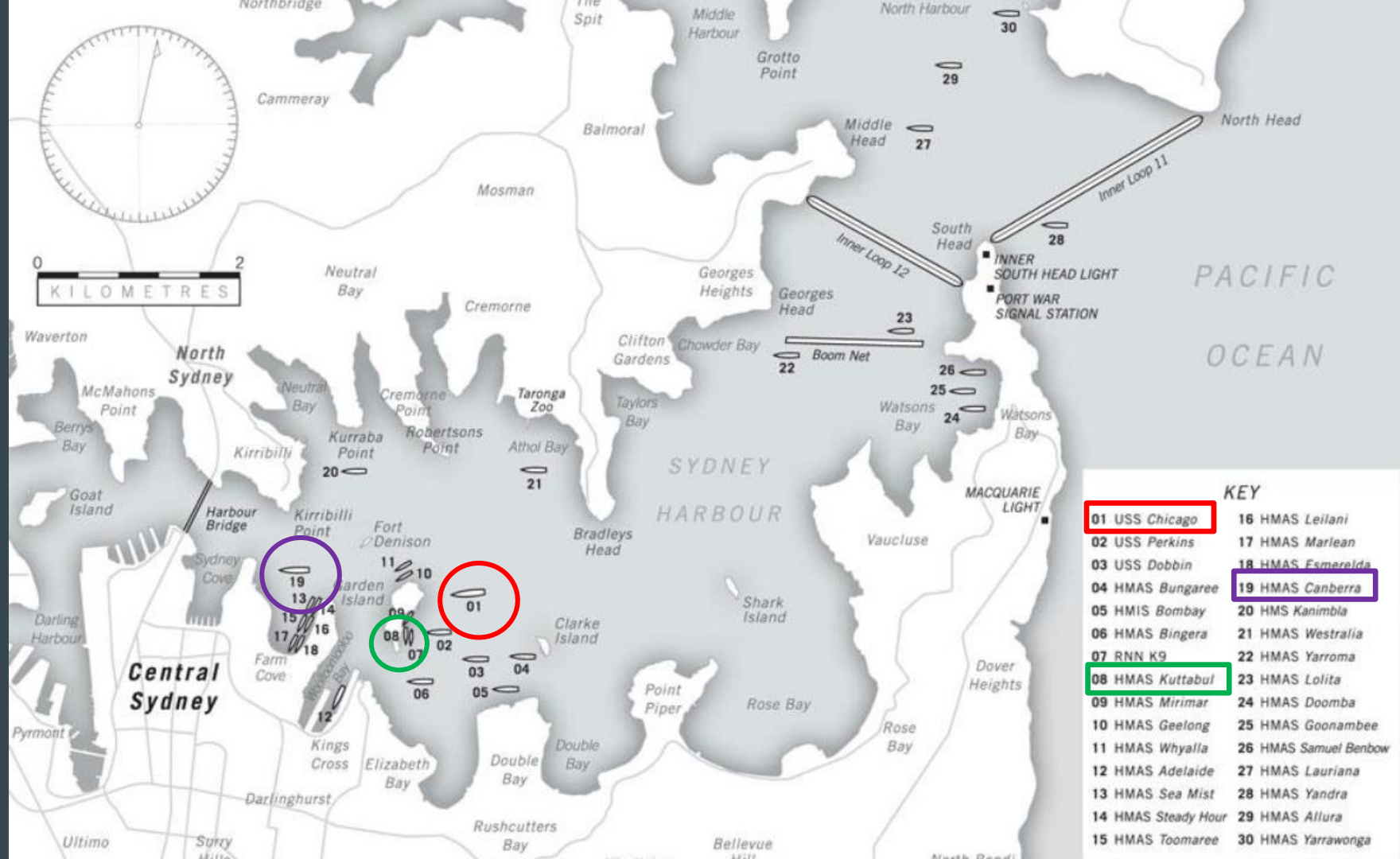


USS Chicago

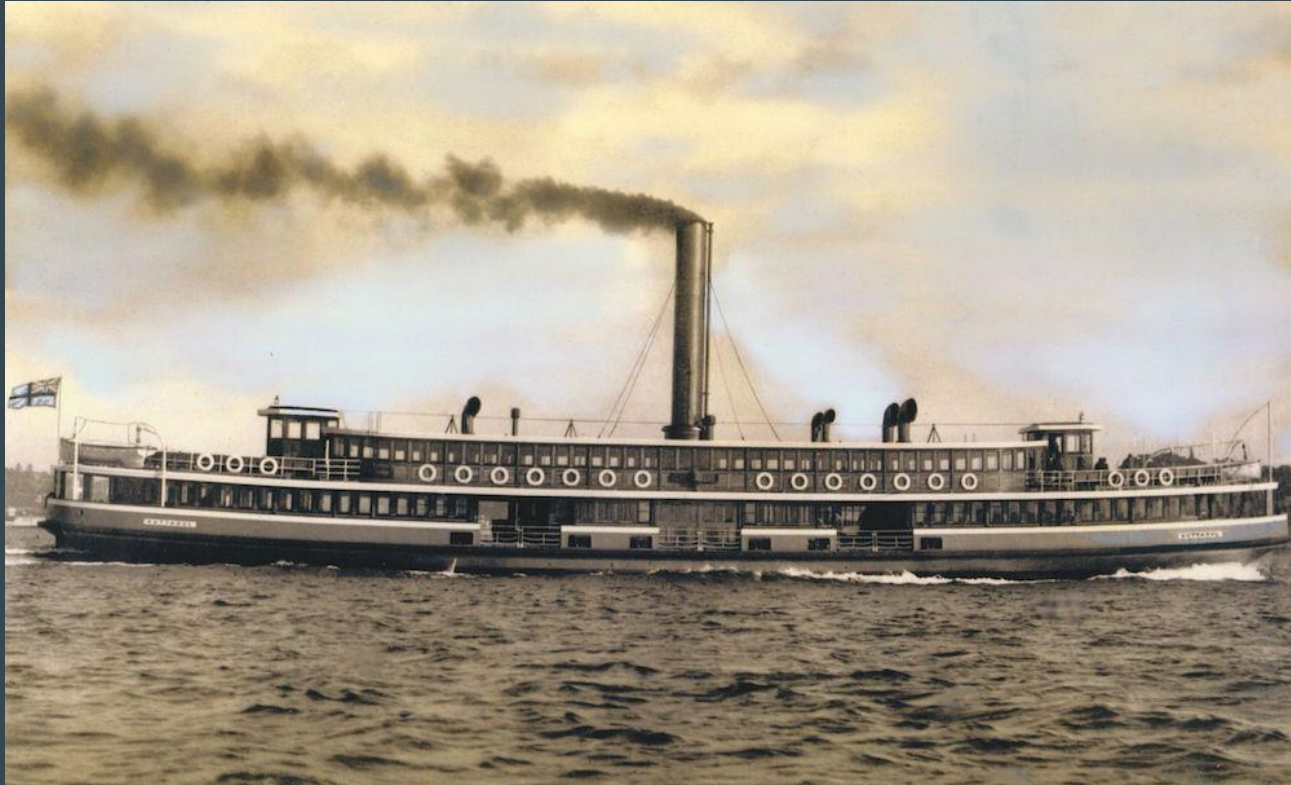


HMAS Canberra





A torpedo was fired at USS Chicago, but instead of striking the Chicago, one of the torpedoes exploded against a sea wall next to a Royal Australian Navy accommodation boat, the HMAS Kuttabul.



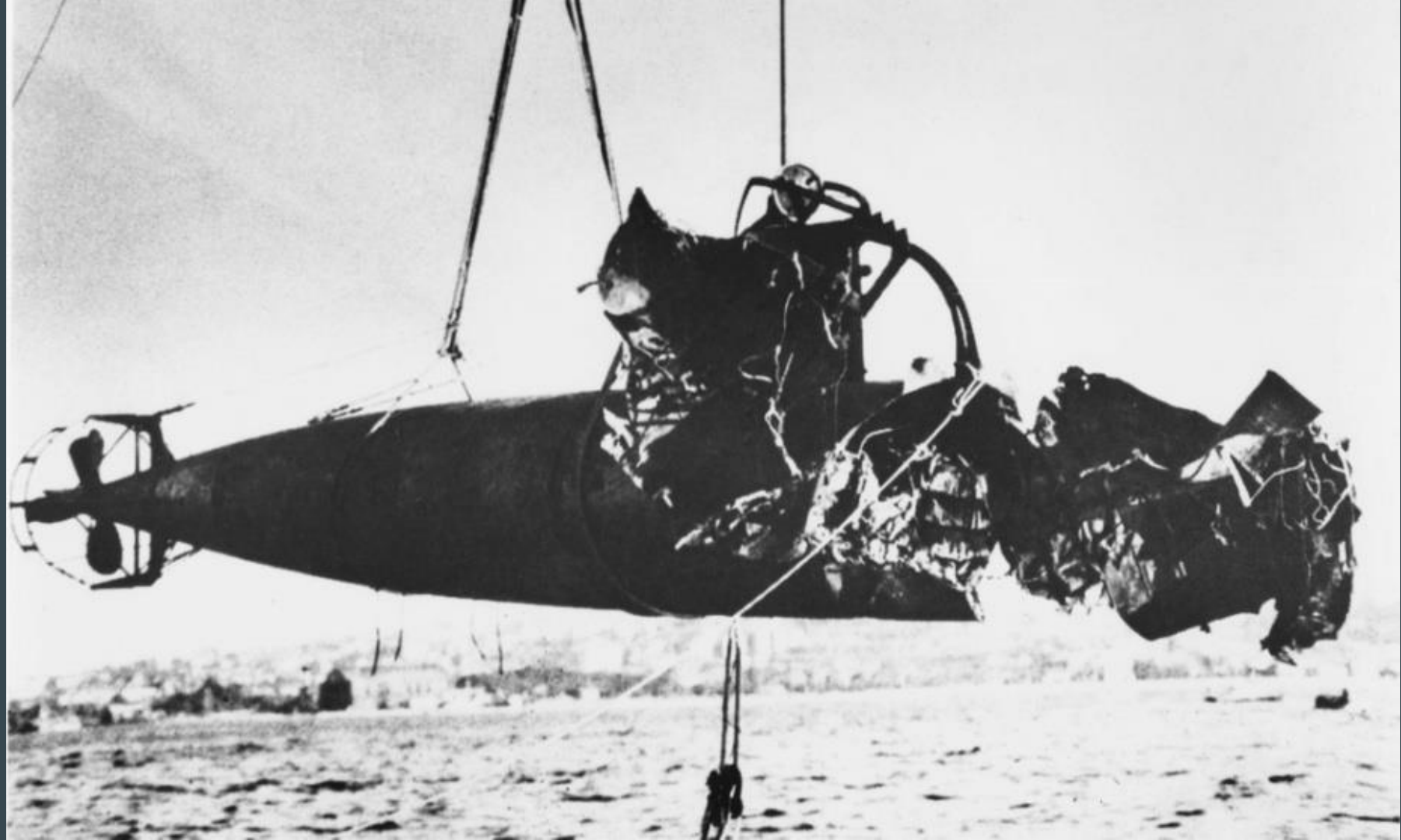
The explosion caused a massive hole in the Kuttabul, it sank, killing 21 sailors.



All three of the midget submarines were sunk, one sank when it got caught in anti-submarine nets and one from depth charges.

Two of the submarines were located shortly after the attack.





The third midget submarine was discovered in November 2006 by divers just off Newport. It had been tangled in nets and had sunk.







ABC interview:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TD2PmCzYfm8>