

NUNAWADING MILITARY HISTORY GROUP

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HMAS Sydney (V) Complete Sea and Combat Weapon System Trials



NUSHIP *Sydney (V)* is the final of three ships of the Hobart Class guided missile destroyers

NUSHIP *Sydney (V)* is the final of three ships of the Hobart Class guided missile destroyers. Her sister ships will be HMAS *Hobart (III)* and HMAS *Brisbane (III)*. The keel of *Sydney* was laid down on 19 November 2015 and launched on 19 May 2018 by Mrs Judy Shalders in Osborne, South Australia. *Sydney* is based on the Navantia designed F100 frigate and is coupled it with the Aegis Combat System. *Sydney* is being constructed in Australia by the Air Warfare Destroyer Alliance. *Sydney* will provide air defence for accompanying ships in addition to land forces and infrastructure in coastal areas, and for self-protection against missiles and aircraft. The Aegis Combat System incorporating the state-of-the-art phased array radar, AN/SPY 1D(V), in combination with the SM-2 missile, will provide an advanced air defence system capable of engaging enemy aircraft and missiles at ranges in excess of 150km. *Sydney* will carry a MH-60R helicopter for surveillance and response to support key warfare areas. The surface warfare function will include long range anti-ship missiles and a naval gun capable of firing extended range munitions in support of land forces. *Sydney* will also conduct undersea warfare and be equipped with modern sonar systems, decoys, surface-launched torpedoes and an array of effective close-in defensive weapons. These capabilities ensure that the Hobart Class guided missile destroyers have the layered defensive and offensive capability required to counter conventional and asymmetric threats.

Kamikaze "Divine Wind" or "Spirit Wind" Recruitment, Training and Cultural Beliefs

"There was a hypnotic fascination to the sight so alien to our Western philosophy. We watched each plunging kamikaze with the detached horror of one witnessing a terrible spectacle rather than as the intended victim. We forgot self for the moment as we groped hopelessly for the thought of that other man up there".

Vice Admiral C. R. Brown, US Navy

Kamikaze ("divine wind" or "spirit wind"), officially *Tokubetsu Kōgekitali*, "Special Attack Unit"), were a part of the Japanese Special Attack Units of military aviators who initiated suicide attacks for the Empire of Japan against Allied naval vessels in the closing stages of the Pacific campaign of World War II, designed to destroy warships more effectively than possible with conventional air attacks. About 3,800 *kamikaze* pilots died during the war, and more than 7,000 naval personnel were killed by *kamikaze* attacks.

Kamikaze aircraft were essentially pilot-guided explosive missiles, purpose-built or converted from conventional aircraft. Pilots would attempt to crash their aircraft into enemy ships in what was called a "body attack" (*tai-atari*) in planes loaded with a combination of explosives, bombs, and torpedoes. Accuracy was much higher than that of conventional attacks, and the payload and explosion larger; about 19% of *kamikaze* attacks were successful. A *kamikaze* could sustain damage that would disable a conventional attacker and still achieve its objective. The goal of crippling or destroying large numbers of Allied ships, particularly aircraft carriers, was considered by the Empire of Japan to be a just reason for sacrificing pilots and aircraft.

These attacks, which began in October 1944, followed several critical military defeats for the Japanese. They had long since lost aerial parity because of having outdated aircraft and enduring the loss of experienced pilots. Japan suffered from a diminishing capacity for war and a rapidly declining industrial capacity relative to that of the Allies. Japan was also losing pilots faster than it could train their replacements. These combined factors, along with Japan's unwillingness to surrender, led to the use of *kamikaze* tactics as Allied forces advanced towards the Japanese home islands.

The tradition of death instead of defeat, capture and shame was deeply entrenched in Japanese military culture; one of the primary values in the samurai life and the *Bushido* code was loyalty and honor until death. In addition to kamikazes, the Japanese military also used or made plans for non-aerial Japanese Special Attack Units, including those involving submarines, human torpedoes, speedboats and divers.

Recruitment

It was claimed by the Japanese forces at the time that there were many volunteers for the suicidal forces. Captain Motoharu Okamura commented that "there were so many volunteers for suicide missions that he referred to them as a swarm of bees", explaining: "Bees die after they have stung." Okamura is credited with being the first to propose the *kamikaze* attacks. He had expressed his desire to lead a volunteer group of suicide attacks some four months before Admiral Takijiro Ohnishi, commander of the Japanese naval air forces in the Philippines, presented the idea to his staff. While Vice Admiral Shigeru Fukudome, commander of the second air fleet, was inspecting the 341st Air Group, Captain Okamura took the chance to express his ideas on crash-dive tactics. "In our present situation I firmly believe that the only way to swing the war in our favor is to resort to crash-dive attacks with our planes. There is no other way. There will be more than enough volunteers for this chance to save our country, and I would like to command such an operation. Provide me with 300 planes and I will turn the tide of war."

When the volunteers arrived for duty in the corps, there were twice as many persons as aircraft available. "After the war, some commanders would express regret for allowing superfluous crews to accompany sorties, sometimes squeezing themselves aboard bombers and fighters so as to encourage the suicide pilots and, it seems, join in the exultation of sinking a large enemy vessel." Many of the *kamikaze* pilots believed their death would pay the debt they owed and show the love they had for their families, friends and emperor. "So eager were many minimally trained pilots to take part in suicide missions that when their sorties were delayed or aborted, the pilots

became deeply despondent. Many of those who were selected for a body crashing mission were described as being extraordinarily blissful immediately before their final sortie."

As time wore on, modern critics questioned the nationalist portrayal of *kamikaze* pilots as noble soldiers willing to sacrifice their lives for the country. In 2006, Tsuneo Watanabe, editor-in-chief of the *Yomiuri Shimbun*, criticized Japanese nationalists' glorification of *kamikaze* attacks:

It's all a lie that they left filled with braveness and joy, crying, "Long live the emperor!" They were sheep at a slaughterhouse. Everybody was looking down and tottering. Some were unable to stand up and were carried and pushed into the plane by maintenance soldiers.

Training

When you eliminate all thoughts about life and death, you will be able to totally disregard your earthly life. This will also enable you to concentrate your attention on eradicating the enemy with unwavering determination, meanwhile reinforcing your excellence in flight skills.

— *Excerpt from a kamikaze pilots' manual*

Tokkōtai pilot training, as described by Takeo Kasuga, generally "consisted of incredibly strenuous training, coupled with cruel and torturous corporal punishment as a daily routine". Daikichi Irokawa, who trained at Tsuchiura Naval Air Base, recalled that he "was struck on the face so hard and frequently that [his] face was no longer recognizable". He also wrote: "I was hit so hard that I could no longer see and fell on the floor. The minute I got up; I was hit again by a club so that I would confess." This brutal "training" was justified by the idea that it would instill a "soldier's fighting spirit", but daily beatings and corporal punishment eliminated patriotism among many pilots.

We tried to live with 120 percent intensity, rather than waiting for death. We read and read, trying to understand why we had to die in our early twenties. We felt the clock ticking away towards our death, every sound of the clock shortening our lives.

Irokawa Daikichi, *Kamikaze Diaries: Reflections of Japanese Student Soldiers*

Pilots were given a manual that detailed how they were supposed to think, prepare and attack. From this manual, pilots were told to "attain a high level of spiritual training", and to "keep [their] health in the absolute best condition". These instructions, among others, were meant to make pilots mentally ready to die.

The *tokkōtai* pilot's manual also explained how a pilot may turn back if the pilot could not locate a target and that "[a pilot] should not waste [his] life lightly". One pilot who continually came back to base was shot after his ninth return.

The manual was incredibly detailed in how a pilot should attack. A pilot would dive towards his target and "aim for a point between the bridge tower and the smokestacks". Entering a smokestack was also said to be "effective". Pilots were told not to aim at a ship's bridge tower or gun turret but instead to look for elevators or the flight deck to hit. For horizontal attacks, the pilot was to "aim at the middle of the vessel, slightly higher than the waterline" or to "aim at the entrance to the aircraft hangar, or the bottom of the stack" if the former was too difficult.

The *tokkōtai* pilot's manual told pilots to never close their eyes, as this would lower the chances of hitting their targets. In the final moments before the crash, the pilot was to yell "*hissatsu*" at the top of his lungs, which translates to "certain kill".

Cultural Background

In 1944–45, US military leaders invented the term "State Shinto" as part of the Shinto Directive to differentiate the Japanese state's ideology from traditional Shinto practices. As time went on, Americans claimed, Shinto was used increasingly in the promotion of nationalist sentiment. In 1890, the Imperial Rescript on Education was passed, under which students were required to ritually recite its oath to offer themselves "courageously to the state" as well as protect the Imperial family. The ultimate offering was to give up one's life. It was an honour to die for Japan and the Emperor. Axell and Kase pointed out: "The fact is that innumerable soldiers, sailors and pilots were determined to die, to become *eirei*, that is 'guardian spirits' of the country. ... Many Japanese felt that to be enshrined at Yasukuni was a special honour because the Emperor visited the shrine to pay homage twice

a year. Yasukuni is the only shrine deifying common men which the Emperor would visit to pay his respects." Young Japanese people were indoctrinated from an early age with these ideals.



Chiran high school girls wave farewell with cherry blossom branches to departing kamikaze pilot in a Nakajima Ki-43-IIIa Hayabusa

Following the commencement of the *kamikaze* tactic, newspapers and books ran advertisements, articles and stories regarding the suicide bombers to aid in recruiting and support. In October 1944, the *Nippon Times* quoted Lieutenant Sekio Nishina: "The spirit of the Special Attack Corps is the great spirit that runs in the blood of every Japanese ... The crashing action which simultaneously kills the enemy and oneself without fail is called the Special Attack ... Every Japanese is capable of becoming a member of the Special Attack Corps." Publishers also played up the idea that the *kamikaze* were enshrined at Yasukuni and ran exaggerated stories of *kamikaze* bravery – there were even fairy tales for little children that promoted the *kamikaze*. A Foreign Office official named Toshikazu Kase said: "It was customary for GHQ [in Tokyo] to make false announcements of victory in utter disregard of facts, and for the elated and complacent public to believe them."

While many stories were falsified, some were true, such as that of Kiyu Ishikawa, who saved a Japanese ship when he crashed his plane into a torpedo that an American submarine had launched. The sergeant major was posthumously promoted to second lieutenant by the emperor and was enshrined at Yasukuni. Stories like these, which showed the kind of praise and honour death produced, encouraged young Japanese to volunteer for the Special Attack Corps and instilled a desire in the youth to die as a *kamikaze*.

Ceremonies were carried out before *kamikaze* pilots departed on their final mission. The *kamikaze* shared ceremonial cups of sake or water known as "mizu no sakazuki". Many Army officer *kamikaze* took their swords along, while the Navy pilots (as a general rule) did not. The *kamikaze*, along with all Japanese aviators flying over unfriendly territory, were issued (or purchased, if they were officers) a Nambu pistol with which to end their lives if they risked being captured. Like all Army and Navy servicemen, the *kamikaze* would wear their *sen-ninbari*, a "belt of a thousand stitches" given to them by their mothers. They also composed and read a death poem, a tradition stemming from the samurai, who did so before committing *seppuku*. Pilots carried prayers from their families and were given military decorations. The *kamikaze* were escorted by other pilots whose function was to protect them en route to their destination and report on the results. Some of these escort pilots, such as Zero pilot Toshimitsu Imaizumi, were later sent out on their own *kamikaze* missions.

While it is commonly perceived that volunteers signed up in droves for *kamikaze* missions, it has also been contended that there was extensive coercion and peer pressure involved in recruiting soldiers for the sacrifice. Their motivations in "volunteering" were complex and not simply about patriotism or bringing honour to their families. Firsthand interviews with surviving *kamikaze* and escort pilots has revealed that they were motivated by a desire to protect their families from perceived atrocities and possible extinction at the hands of the Allies. They viewed themselves as the last defense.

At least one of these pilots was a conscripted Korean with a Japanese name, adopted under the pre-war *Soshikaimei* ordinance that compelled Koreans to take Japanese personal names. Eleven of the 1,036 IJA *kamikaze* pilots who died in sorties from Chiran and other Japanese air bases during the Battle of Okinawa were Koreans.

It is said that young pilots on *kamikaze* missions often flew southwest from Japan over the 922 m (3,025 ft) Mount Kaimon. The mountain is also called "*Satsuma Fuji*" (meaning a mountain like Mount Fuji but located in the Satsuma Province region). Suicide-mission pilots looked over their shoulders to see the mountain, the southernmost on the Japanese mainland, said farewell to their country and saluted the mountain. Residents on Kikaishima Island, east of Amami Ōshima, say that pilots from suicide-mission units dropped flowers from the air as they departed on their final missions.



Kamikaze pilots before their final mission

Kamikaze pilots who were unable to complete their missions (because of mechanical failure, interception, etc.) were stigmatized in the years following the war. This stigma began to diminish some 50 years after the war as scholars and publishers began to distribute the survivors' stories.

Some Japanese military personnel were critical of the policy. Officers such as Minoru Genda, Tadashi Minobe and Yoshio Shiga, refused to obey the policy. They said that the commander of a *kamikaze* attack should engage in the task first. Some persons who obeyed the policy, such as Kiyokuma Okajima, Saburo Shindo and Iyozo Fujita, were also critical of the policy. Saburō Sakai said: "We never dared to question orders, to doubt authority, to do anything but immediately carry out all the commands of our superiors. We were automatons who obeyed without thinking." Tetsuzo Iwamoto refused to engage in a *kamikaze* attack because he thought the task of fighter pilots was to shoot down aircraft.

Quotations

"I cannot predict the outcome of the air battles, but you will be making a mistake if you should regard Special Attack operations as normal methods. The right way is to attack the enemy with skill and return to the base with good results. A plane should be utilized over and over again. That's the way to fight a war. The current thinking is skewed. Otherwise, you cannot expect to improve air power. There will be no progress if flyers continue to die".

— **Lieutenant Commander Iwatani, *Taiyo (Sun) magazine*, March 1945.**

"Ah, two souls reside in my heart. After all I am just a human being. Sometimes, my chest pounds with excitement when I think of the day I will fly into the sky. I trained my mind and body as hard as I could and am anxious for the day I can use them to their full capacity in fighting. I think my life and death belong to the mission. Yet, at other times, I envy those science majors who remain at home [exempt from the draft]. ... One of my souls looks to heaven, while the other is attracted to the earth. I wish to enter the Navy as soon as possible so that I can devote myself to the task. I hope that the days when I am tormented by stupid thoughts will pass quickly".

— **Hachiro Sasaki**

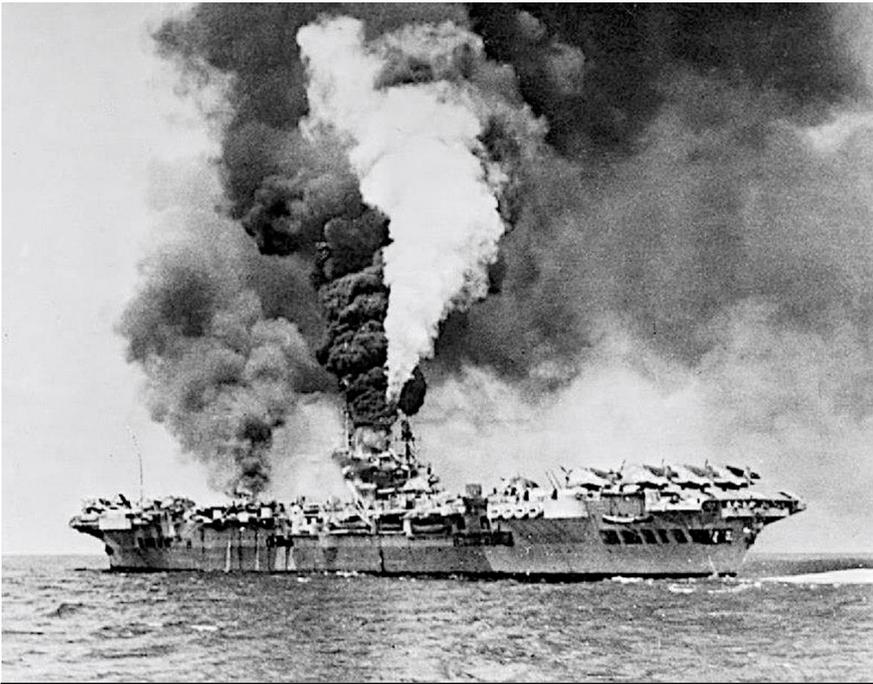
"It is easy to talk about death in the abstract, as the ancient philosophers discussed. But it is real death I fear, and I don't know if I can overcome the fear. Even for a short life, there are many memories. For someone who had a good life, it is very difficult to part with it. But I reached a point of no return. I must plunge into an enemy vessel.

To be honest, I cannot say that the wish to die for the emperor is genuine, coming from my heart. However, it is decided for me that I die for the emperor".

— **Ichizo Hayashi**

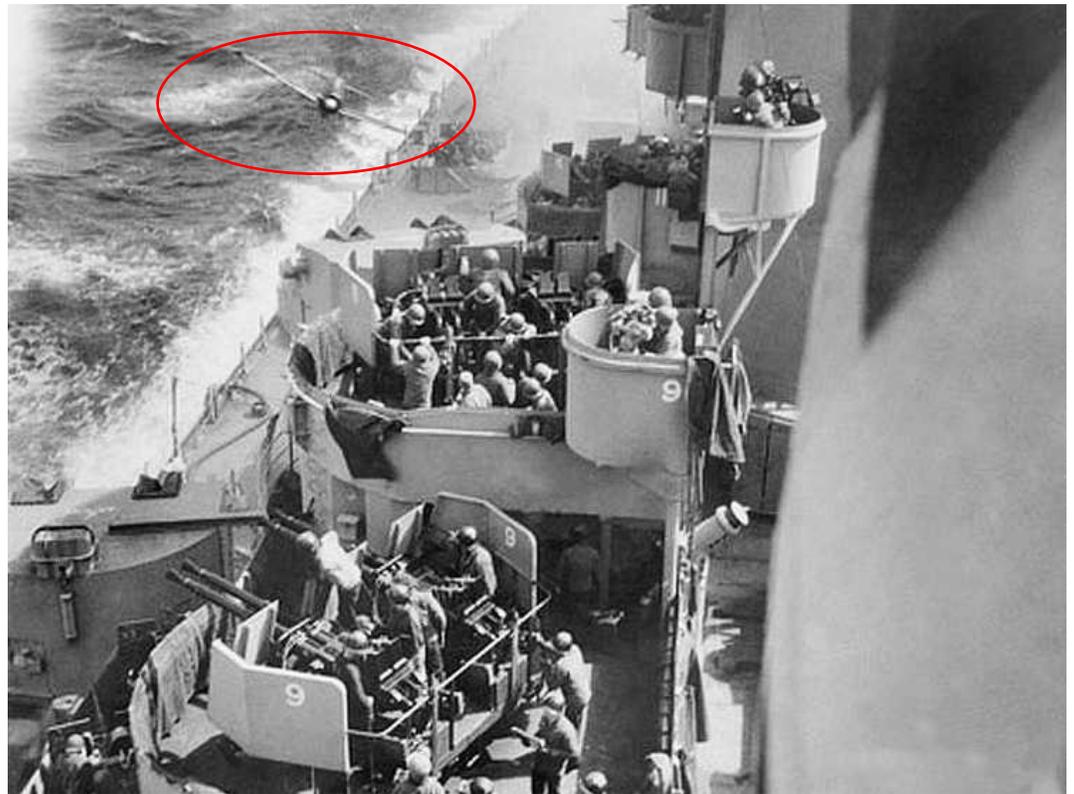
"I am pleased to have the honour of having been chosen as a member of a Special Attack Force that is on its way into battle, but I cannot help crying when I think of you, Mum. When I reflect on the hopes you had for my future ... I feel so sad that I am going to die without doing anything to bring you joy".

— *Ichizo Hayashi, last letter home a few days before his final flight. April 1945*



Yasukuni Shrine is a Shinto shrine located in Chiyoda, Tokyo.

Aircraft carrier HMS *Formidable* after being struck by a *kamikaze* off the Sakishima Islands. The *kamikaze* made a dent 3 metres (9.8 ft) long and 0.6 metres (2 ft 0 in) wide and deep in the armored flight deck. Eight crew members were killed, forty-seven were wounded, and 11 aircraft were destroyed.



USS Missouri shortly before being hit by a Mitsubishi A6M Zero (visible top left), 11 April 1945