



## TASMANIAN AVIATION HISTORICAL SOCIETY Incorporated

### JAPANESE RECONNAISSANCE FLIGHT OF THE "GLEN" OVER HOBART ON 1 MARCH 1942

#### Japanese Reconnaissance Flight of the "Glen" over Hobart on 1 March 1942

*Author: W. Dearing, June 2021*

The **Yokosuka E14Y** (Allied reporting name **Glen**) was an Imperial Japanese Navy reconnaissance seaplane transported aboard and then launched from Japanese submarine aircraft carriers such as the *I-25* during World War II.



*A Yokosuka E14Y "Glen"*

The E14Y was used for several Japanese reconnaissance missions during the Pacific War including this one over Hobart.

In February 1942 the Japanese submarine *I-25*, under the command of Captain Meiji Tagami, was off the northern tip of King Island in Bass Strait, where an E14Y was launched on a reconnaissance flight. The pilot, Warrant Flying Officer Nobuo Fujita and the observer/gunner Shoji Okuda, completed a recce flight in their "Glen" float plane over Melbourne and Port Phillip Bay from the submarine on 26 February 1942. They were airborne for three hours, during which time they successfully flew over Port Phillip Bay and observed the ships at anchor off Melbourne before returning to land on the aircraft's floats beside the submarine, where it was winched aboard and disassembled.

Captain Tagami then pointed Japanese submarine *I-25* back down the coast of Tasmania travelling on the surface. They decided to initiate a further reconnaissance flight from Great Oyster Bay which is located about halfway up the east coast of Tasmania. The bay is about 35 kms long by 15 kms wide and is protected by the red granite cliffs and steep headlands of the Freycinet Peninsula and Schouten Island. Tagami brought *I-25* into the large bay under a full moon.



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Fujita decided to take off from the water rather than use the catapult on the front deck of the submarine and the "Glen" floatplane was withdrawn from the waterproof hanger at the front of the submarine, assembled, and lifted into the water. Two hours before dawn, Fujita and Okuda were heading south for Hobart. Once he was well south of Cape Pillar, Fujita turned north west and went around the Tasman Peninsula. He then made another sharp turn and approached Hobart from a southerly direction.



***Warrant Flying Officer Nobuo Fujita***

With the full moon, they could easily spot all the fishing boats and coasters on the Derwent River. They spotted the glow of a furnace at a foundry and saw a white concrete road leading away from Hobart. They could see Mount Wellington looming over the beautiful city of Hobart and also saw five cargo ships at anchor but no warships.

Fujita retraced his course back to the submarine arriving back just after dawn. As they were preparing to lift the aircraft on to the deck of the submarine, Tsukudo spotted a small freighter steaming southwards. After some anxious moments it became apparent that the steamer had not seen the Japanese submarine and Hobart's World War 2 incident came to an end.