

## A frightening adventure: Robin Moorhouse

In May 1942, more than 82 years ago - yes, I am old - I had a frightening adventure.

My mother woke my brother and I, bundled us into our warm dressing gowns and slippers and took us across the road to our grandmother's house. The darkness had bright searchlights criss-crossing the sky. Sirens screamed noisily.

By shielded torchlight we went through the garden, down the steps to a deep cave at Nana's house. Her house was on the edge of a gully which ran down to Sydney Harbour where the submarine base was at Neutral Bay. Sometimes we would see a black sub, like a slug, moored beside the wharf.

Attack! It was wartime. Some Japanese midget submarines had entered the Harbour screened under the Manly ferry as it crossed the Heads. The metal net had been opened to allow the ferry through.

Loud explosive sounds boomed as torpedoes were fired at the zoo and city side. Sailors were killed and a moored ferry near the Quay sank.

Two subs escaped out of the Harbour, two sank inside..

The submarines in the Harbour were later found, lifted out, made into one and you can now see this one in the War Museum in Canberra.

The two subs which which escaped went North along the beaches. They ran out of air and the 3 crew died. One sub was found years later in Pittwater. The other is somewhere off Newport Beach - the location is a secret. It has been left as a memorial for the three crew who died inside it.

We were lucky that the zoo was mistaken for the submarine base and fired on.

A very frightening night for a little girl.