

### Minemen Yokosuka Train Heist.

This is a brief story of an incident from the mid-1950s circa 1955/1956 in which some minemen “stole” a Japanese train. This happened about 10 years after a thoroughly devastated Japan had been defeated in World War 2. And less than five years since Japan had been under control of United States occupation forces.

A group of young Minemen stationed at the Yokosuka mine shop were in either Tokyo or Yokohama on liberty. The names remembered were: Tad Scott or Tapscott, Bartyzal, Bondick, and maybe Eaglehoff.) It was early morning and they were at a train station waiting for a ride Yokosuka. The train was loaded and waiting for scheduled time to depart. A couple of the Minemen were trying to get the train operator to depart early, but he would not. After a period intimidation, the operator got off the train. One of the Minemen suggested it could not be too hard to operate the train. After briefly looking at the controls, off they went with a train full of terrified Japanese, driving the train south towards Yokosuka, the last stop on that train line. They figured the Shore Patrol and Japanese police would be waiting to greet them at Yokosuka. Instead of going to Yokosuka they stopped the train a couple of stops prior and got off. The Yokosuka mine shop was on Azuma Island in Tokyo Bay. The wayward train bandits swam a narrow channel between the mainland and Azuma and made morning quarters. They were never apprehended for the train robbery and the story eventually went away. It did not go away completely, however. It became a grand sea story in the mine community told many times over for many years until men and memories started to fade.