

Life in Naval Aviation Engineering Factory and Tomitsuka in wartime

Yoshio Otsuka (Tomitsuka, 90 years old)

I was born in Tomitsuka in Taisho 15th year (1920), and after graduating from Ordinary Senior Elementary School (an elementary school under the old system), I entered the Yokosuka 1st Naval Aviation Engineering Factory Worker Training Institute (an institution that prototyping, experimenting, researching, naval aircraft and so on). There were about 700 students at the same time year, and after two years of studying, practical training, and boarding life, I became a preparatory student of the Naval Engineering Department. This meant that by making the workers students of the Navy, they would not be drafted into the Army, and it was a course that would eventually become engineers rather than workers. When I was a worker, I came to work between 6:30 and 7:00 a.m. and regularly finished working at 5:00 p.m., but due to labor shortages, it was common to work overtime until 7:00 p.m., and I often worked until 9:00 p.m. I got paid about 90 yen with additional salary depending on the performance. I got the days off one day every two weeks. As I didn't have much use for my money, I was saving money. There were also many people who went to war from Tomitsuka and went to the outer land and died. If you get a summons warrant that was called "akagami," you have no choice but to go even if you have a wife and children. They gathered at the Torimi Shrine, and a banner reading "Congratulations on the Expedition" was raised, and the person himself stood in front of the main hall to greet them. Long live the three chants, He was seen off with a military song "Be encouraged to die and to return", and everyone who went to war prepared himself for dying. When the remains of those who died in the war were returned, a village funeral was held at an elementary school. The mother who lost her son broke down crying in the cemetery, "How unhappy I am!" and became unable to move, and everyone was quiet. I remember somehow soothing her and finally going home. Some were drafted into the Army and went to Hiroshima. According to these people, when the atomic bomb was dropped, they were in a place across the mountain from the city, and they saw the sky glow brightly. They later entered the city and apparently cleaned up enough bodies to fill the river in front of the atomic bomb dome, and atomic-bomb victims record books were issued after the war.