

# NUNAWADING MILITARY HISTORY GROUP

## MINI NEWSLETTER No. 5

### Why Anzac Day Evokes Fond Memories

Since leaving Hobart to join the Navy in 1992, every Anzac Day morning Chief Petty Officer Scott Clear has messaged his Vietnam Veteran Dad to thank him for his service.

This year, Chief Petty Officer Clear will hold true to that personally significant tradition, but rather than join his HMAS *Kuttabul* colleagues to march down the streets of Sydney's CBD afterwards, he will proudly commemorate the day from his balcony, standing at dawn wearing a hand-knitted poppy.

Chief Petty Officer Clear describes himself as an 'army brat' who was destined to join one of the services and follow his family's strong military service history.



**Chief Petty Officer Scott Clear with the hand-knitted poppy he will wear this year. Photo: Able Seaman Sittichai Sakonpoonpol**

"My Great-Uncle Jack Allen Clear served in WWII, was a POW in Burma, and sadly died whilst captured working on the Burma railway," Chief Petty Officer Clear said. "My father, who is named after my Great-Uncle Jack, served in Vietnam, namely the infamous battle of Long Tan.

"Growing up with this knowledge, I had - and continue to have - respect for their service from a very young age. So Anzac Day is very special to me."

Chief Petty Officer Clear has his own service history to be proud of, having helped rebuild East Timor during the 1999 INTERFET campaign and being the recipient of a Unit Citation from his 2003 service in Iraq during the Gulf War and the international campaign against terrorism. Chief Petty Officer Clear said one of his fondest Anzac Day memories was spent with his Dad in Hobart.

Being able to commemorate Anzac Day alongside him is something I cherish and hold very dear.

"Whilst on leave in Hobart once I was able to march with my father," Chief Petty Officer Clear said.

"Being able to commemorate Anzac Day alongside him is something I cherish and hold very dear."

The hand-knitted poppy Chief Petty Officer Clear will wear at dawn this Anzac Day also evokes a fond Anzac Day memory. "On Anzac Day in 2017, a HMAS *Kanimbla* reunion was held in Jingellic, a little country town on the border of New South Wales and Victoria," Chief Petty Officer Clear said. "One of the hosts, a 97-year-old lady who had lost a large number of her family members in WWI and WWII, made hand-knitted poppies, which I purchased and will wear when I stand at dawn this Anzac Day."

Seeing the public actively commemorating Anzac Day, especially when normal commemoration services and rituals cannot be undertaken this year, fills Chief Petty Officer Clear with gratitude. "I am so proud the general public are finding a way to commemorate Anzac Day," Chief Petty Officer Clear said. "It shows the Anzac spirit still resonates with them and is alive and well with the general public. It's just awesome to see posts on social media of what people are planning to do on this significant day." Australians are encouraged to mark Anzac Day by watching the commemorative service televised from the Australian War Memorial and pledging to #StandAtDawn.

*By Lieutenant Jessica Craig – Defence News*

# Medics Excel Under Fire

On March 11 and 14, Australian and New Zealand personnel, as part of Task Group Taji 10 (TGT-X), along with coalition partners, were exposed to terrifying events when multiple rockets were fired at their camp.



**Task Group Taji 10 medics Corporal Ashlee Liversedge, left, and Corporal Sarah Nixon in the Middle East. Photo: Leading Seaman Craig Walton**

The blast from the rockets resulted in the deaths of three coalition members, with many more wounded.

Australian Army medics Corporal Sarah Nixon and Corporal Ashlee Liversedge recall the events of the rocket attacks on one of the nights.

“We heard a round hit close. It felt like it was just 50m away – it was loud, the building shook, we hit the ground and put on our body armour,” Corporal Nixon said.

“Other camp Taji medical staff ran in and said to expect casualties.”

Corporals Nixon and Liversedge had to quickly run to a nearby tent to grab medical stores and prepare the resuscitation room while rockets continued to hit Camp Taji. Over

the next few hours, casualties came through the tent, with both corporals providing critical medical support to the wounded.

“Corporal Nixon and Corporal Liversedge showed exceptional care and courage during both attacks.”

“Sarah and I were part of a team that treated the significant injuries of patients as they came through the tent,” Corporal Liversedge said.

“The whole team played an integral role providing medical assistance to casualties in times of increased threat. “The gravity of the situation was felt when our first patient arrived and it was one of our coalition medics.”

For almost two hours, the casualty numbers grew and medical staff prioritised treatment based on those with major injuries, minor shrapnel wounds and concussions. TGT-X medical staff worked through the night to treat the wounded coalition personnel, a few of which had to be evacuated by helicopter for further treatment in Baghdad.

TGT-X Commander Colonel Nick Foxall praised the heroism of Corporal Nixon and Corporal Liversedge following the attacks.

“Corporal Nixon and Corporal Liversedge showed exceptional care and courage during both attacks. The actions of these two soldiers almost certainly saved the lives of the injured coalition members,” Colonel Foxall said.

“They had only been in-country for a short time when they were called upon to do their job, and in doing so displayed nothing but the highest of values when representing the Australian and New Zealand Task Group.”

*By Captain Roger Brennan – Defence News*

# Parasite Aircraft

A **parasite aircraft** is a component of a composite aircraft which is carried aloft and air launched by a larger carrier aircraft or mother ship to support the primary mission of the carrier. The carrier craft may or may not be able to later recover the parasite during flight.

The first parasite aircraft flew in 1916, when the British launched a Bristol Scout from a Felixstowe Porte Baby flying boat. The idea eventually developed into jet bombers carrying fully capable parasite fighters. With the advent of long-range fighters equipped with air-to-air missiles, and aerial refueling, parasite fighters fell out of use.

Until the middle of the 20th century there was military interest in parasite fighters – fighter aircraft intended to be carried into a combat zone by a larger aircraft, such as a bomber. If the bomber were threatened, the parasite would be released to defend it. Parasite fighters have never been highly successful and have seldom been used in combat. A major disadvantage of a parasite aircraft was that it reduced the payload capacity of the carrier aircraft. Projects for this type were designed to overcome the great disparity in range between bombers and their escort fighters. Development of aerial refueling has made parasite fighters obsolete.

## 1910s

The first parasite fighters were launched and recovered from trapezes mounted externally to military airships. In 1915 Neville Osborne and another British officer worked on a plan to lift a BE.2C fighter under a SS-class non-rigid airship. This would allow the fighter to reach the height of a raiding Zeppelin



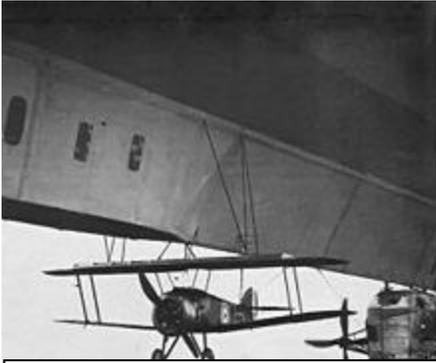
**Bristol Scout on Porte Baby**

rapidly while also conserving fuel. In the first experimental flight on 21 February 1916, the envelope lost pressure and the plane was prematurely separated from it at 4,000 feet. Both the officers were killed and there was no further experimentation with small airships.

In May 1916 a Bristol Scout flown by Flt. Lt. M. J. Day was mounted above the top wing of a Porte Baby flying boat flown by Sqn. Ldr John Cyril Porte, and was successfully released at a height of 1000 ft (300 m). Although successful the scheme, intended to provide long-range defence against Zeppelins, was not pursued.

A Sopwith 2F.1 Camel secured under the British HM Airship 23r. In 1918 the Royal Air Force experimented with launching Sopwith Camel fighters from HM Airship 23.

The Germans also experimented with the idea, suspending an Albatros D.III fighter aeroplane below a Zeppelin and releasing it at altitude: the intention was to use the aeroplane to defend airships against the British seaplane patrols encountered over the North Sea. Although the single trial, made on 25 January 1918, was successful the experiments were not continued. On 12 December 1918, in a test to determine the feasibility of carrying fighter aircraft on dirigibles, the airship C-1 lifted a US Army Curtiss JN-4 aircraft to 2,500 feet over Fort Tilden, New York, and at that height released it for a free flight back to base. The airship was piloted by Lieutenant George Crompton, Dirigible Officer at NAS Rockaway, and the airplane by Lieutenant A. W. Redfield, USA, commander of the 52nd Aero Squadron based at Mineola (Long Island, NY).



**A Sopwith 2F.1 Camel secured under the British HM Airship 23r.**



**A Curtiss F9C Sparrowhawk attached by a "skyhook" to USS Macon.**

### 1920s

The British Imperial Airship Scheme of 1924 envisaged a commercial airship that could also carry five fighter aircraft if put into military use, but this requirement was abandoned. In 1925 first the DH.53 light aeroplane and then Gloster Grebes had been launched from the airship R.33.

### 1930s

In 1930, the US Navy airship USS *Los Angeles* was used to test the trapeze system developed to launch and recover fixed wing aircraft from rigid airships. The tests were a success, and the purpose built airships USS *Akron* and USS *Macon* were designed to carry parasite aircraft inside a hangar bay within the hull. The airships could carry up to five single-seat Curtiss F9C Sparrowhawks for scouting or two-seat Fleet N2Y-1s for training. In 1934, two two-seat Waco UBF XJW-1 biplanes equipped with skyhooks were delivered to the USS *Macon*.

The temporary system was removed from the *Los Angeles*, which never carried any aircraft on operational flights. In 1930, the *Los Angeles* also tested the launching of a glider over Lakehurst, New Jersey.

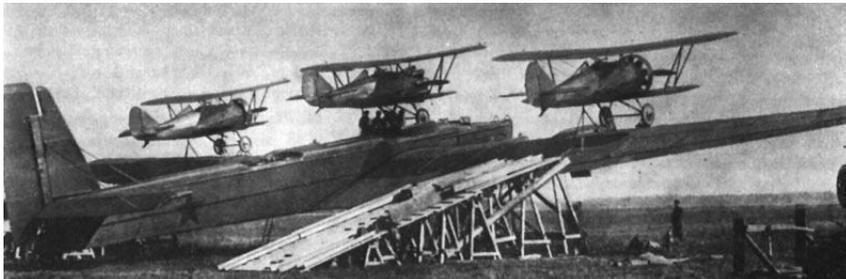
Although operations of these parasite aircraft were quite successful, the ultimate loss of both airships (*Akron* in 1933 and *Macon* in 1935) put an end to the program.

The first bombers to carry parasite fighters did so as part of the Zveno experiments carried out in the Soviet Union by Vladimir Vakhmistrov from 1931. Up to five fighters of various types were carried

by Tupolev TB-1 and Tupolev TB-3 bombers.

### 1940s

In August 1941, these combinations would fly the only combat missions ever undertaken by parasite fighters. TB-3s carrying Polikarpov I-16SPB dive bombers attacked the Cernavodăbridge and Constanta docks, in Romania. After that, this squadron, based in the Crimea, carried out a tactical attack on a bridge over the river Dnieper at Zaporozhye, which had been captured by advancing German troops.

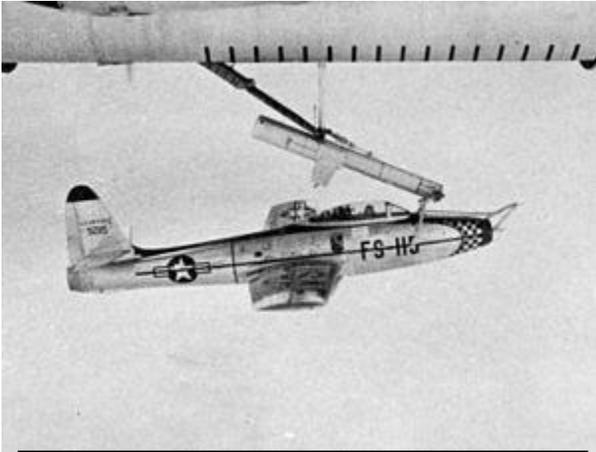


**Zveno-2: Tupolev TB-3 and three Polikarpov I-5. Also visible is the ramp for loading the fighters. The centerline aircraft was hoisted on top of the fuselage by hand.**

Later in World War II, the *Luftwaffe* experimented with the Messerschmitt Me 328 as a parasite fighter, but problems with its pulsejet engines could not be overcome. Other late-war rocket-powered projects such as the Arado E.381 and Sombold So 344 never left the experimental stage. By contrast, the Empire of Japan were able to get the Yokosuka MXY7 Ohka kamikaze rocket plane type into active service, typically using

the Mitsubishi G4M (Betty) bomber class to carry them within range. However, their effectiveness proved minimal in part because Allied air naval defense took advantage of the weight of the parasitical

aircraft payload slowing the carrying bombers, making them vulnerable to interception before the rocket plane could launch.

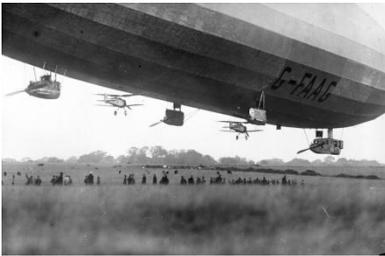


### 1950s

During the early years of the Cold War, the United States Air Force experimented with a variety of parasite fighters to protect its Convair B-36 bombers, including the dedicated XF-85 Goblin, and methods of either carrying a Republic F-84 Thunderjet in the bomber's bomb bay (the FICON project), or attached to the bomber's wingtips (Project Tom-Tom). One configuration studied for the XF-85/B-36 combination was for a B-36 to drop the XF-85 for a dash across enemy territory for bombing or reconnaissance and for the pilot to hook onto a different B-36 on the other side of the enemy territory. These projects were all soon abandoned, partly because aerial refueling appeared as a much safer solution to extend the range of fighters.

**An F-84 Thunderjet hooked on a FICON trapeze beneath its mother ship**

Some additional "Parasite" aircraft configurations



**HM Airship 23r with underslung Sopwith Camel in 1918.**



**A Sopwith 2F.1 Camel secured under the British HM Airship 23r**



**Project Tom Tom: Boeing B-50 with Republic F-84 Thunderjet**



**TB-3 docking with a Grigorovich I-Z under the fuselage.**

*Parasite aircraft articles sourced from Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia*