

## DC-3 Historical Timeline

*The timeless classic has seen a lot in its 80 years*

*Flying Magazine*



***Jon Whittle***

This beautiful DC-3, Flagship Detroit, is one of the oldest still flying. American Airlines took delivery of it in 1937, and the airplane is now owned, maintained and operated by Flagship Detroit Foundation. Last year, the historic airplane flew to 10 events across the country.

July 22, 1921: The Douglas Aircraft Co. incorporates, with its main base in Santa Monica, California, in an old movie studio.



*Alamy*

After its introduction in the mid-1930s, the DC-3 became a huge hit with airlines, including Delta, United, American and TWA, as well as a long list of international operators.

**April 1936:** The first Douglas Sleeper Transport is delivered to American Airlines.



City of Portland was an early Douglas Sleeper Transport operated by United Airlines.



*Tyson Rininger*

**1940:** Air Transport Command begins its orders of C-47s, the military version of the DC-3.

**1943:** The 2,000th C-47 rolls out of the production hangar at Long Beach.

**1944:** More than 100 C-47s fill the skies over Europe while supporting the Battle of the Bulge.

**1959:** Ozark Air Lines begins operations with 24 DC-3s and three Fairchild F-27s.



*"Together We Fly: Voices from the DC-3" Charles Midyett Collection*

*Capt. Chuck Midyett began flying the DC-3 as a 20-year-old pilot at Ozark Air Lines. He still flies the DC-3, and says he loves it just as much as he did when he stepped into the cockpit more than 50 years ago.*

**1960:** Delta Air Lines retires its last DC-3.

**1970:** Buffalo Airways is founded, with headquarters in Hay River, NWT, Canada, and starts flying the DC-3.



March 23, 1975: A Continental Air Services DC-3 carries 106 people, including 98 children, on a relief flight from Ku Lat to Saigon, Vietnam.



*Getty Images*

*Despite its impressive operational capabilities, the DC-3 is also a true piece of art.*

**1982:** Four Star Air Cargo begins Caribbean operations using the DC-3.

**1989:** A DC-3 is the air transport of choice for the fictional Cleveland Indians in the film *Major League*.



**Getty Images**

*Most DC-3s have two Pratt & Whitney R-1830 Twin Wasp radial engines.*

**1993:** The DC-3 with the most flight time, PBA's N136PB, clocks in at 91,400 hours; though not flying today, she could be.

**2009:** The Ice Pilots NWT TV show debuts; the final episode aired on December 17, 2014.



While the DC-3 has been out of production since the mid-1940s, there are many beautiful examples still flying. However, with a dwindling number of usable engines and the possible end to the 100LL fuel needed to feed them, the days of this historic airplane taking flight might be numbered.