

# DOUGLAS DC-3-194B

## VH-ANR [C/N 1944]

24APR37 First Flown at Santa Monica U.S.A. (fitted with a right hand door). {FO}

24APR37 Accepted by Fokker (the 10th DC-3 for Fokker). {FO}

24APR37 Accepted by customer (KLM). {FO}

25APR37 Delivered to KLM as PH-ALW "Wielewaal" (Golden Oriole). {AB}

25APR37 Flown away from Santa Monica (at 3.30pm). {FO}

28APR37 Arrived New York (in the morning). {FO}

15MAY37 Sailed from New York on the S.S. Pennland. {FO}

MAY37 Assembled at Waalhaven, Rotterdam by a team of seven KLM engineers including John Gyzemter. After a test flight, the aircraft was ferried to Schiphol. {JG}

03JUN37 Entered service on the Amsterdam-Batavia route. PH-ALW was one of 9 DC-3s allocated to this route. These aircraft were fitted with only 11 seats (in lieu of the normal 21) for passenger comfort. {JG}

16SEP39 KLM flights on the Batavia route resumed from Naples (3 flights a week) after France and England closed their airspace to KLM on 08SEP39 and 10SEP39 respectively. Major overhaul was transferred to KNILM in Bandoeng. {JG}

01JUN40 Re-registered PK-ALW. The aircraft remained KLM property and retained KLM livery although under the operational control of KNILM. {JG} {AB}

22JUL40 KLM flights on the Batavia route resumed from Lydda, Palestine (2 flights a week) after it was feared that Italy would enter the war. Two DC-3s were transferred to KLM in England, leaving 7 aircraft to operate the Lydda-Batavia route which was later reduced to one flight a week because of growing wartime restrictions. {JG}

08FEB42 PK-ALW Departed Lydda under the command of Captain Evert Van Dijk on the last service to Batavia. {JG}

13FEB42 Advised that he could not land in Singapore as planned, Van Dijk waited in Calcutta for further clearance. {JG}

14FEB42 Van Dijk cleared to depart for Akyab and Medan. On arrival in Medan, Van Dijk encountered a group of 36 women and children awaiting evacuation to Batavia. To accommodate the extra passengers and to reduce weight, the seats were removed and abandoned at Medan. {JG}

15FEB42 PK-ALW arrived in Batavia, the same day that Singapore capitulated. {JG}

03MAR42 Under the command of Captain Eddy Dunlop, PK-ALW was flown to an unfinished highway (Boeabatoe Road) just outside Bandoeng to await the arrival of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor General, Dr. H. Van Mook who was to be evacuated to Australia. This road had been used as a secret landing strip for several days previously. Several KNILM ground staff were also awaiting evacuation. {JG}

07MAR42 With the arrival of its important passenger, PK-ALW departed at 0100 as the last civil aircraft to leave the East Indies. Heavy fighting was in progress at Lembang, less than 15 km away from Bandoeng. PK-ALW arrived at Port Hedland, W.A. after a non-stop flight lasting a total of 7 hours 32 minutes. {JG}

19MAR42 Document shows aircraft sold to Australian Government for £5 as VH-ALW. {AT} Photographic evidence suggests that PK-ALW was never painted as VH-ALW although other photographic evidence indicates that at least one of the Dutch aircraft was painted with VH marks.

28MAR42 KNILM signed a contract to hand over ten aircraft to the USAAF between 15MAY42 and 18MAY42. Date of sale also reported as 20MAR42 and price quoted as either \$53,000.00 or \$530,000.00. Eleven (11) KNILM aircraft (2 DC-2, 4 Lockheed 14, 2 DC-3 and 3 DC-5) had been evacuated to Australia when N.E.I. fell to Japan. (One Lockheed 14



subsequently crashed). Initially the KNILM aircraft operated under charter to the USAAF, but the US military were reluctant to leave a major part of the already meagre air transport fleet in private hands. General MacArthur (who arrived in Australia on 18MAR42) ordered that the Dutch aircraft be acquired by the USAAF. By cutting off logistic support (including 100 cases of spares) KNILM were effectively forced to sell their aircraft to the USAAF. {AAHS Journal Summer 1983}.

03APR42 21st Transport Squadron activated at Archerfield. {BB}

14MAY42 Under the terms of the contract of sale to the USAAF, all aircraft had to be test flown before delivery. The KNILM maintenance crew agreed to have all aircraft ready for a simultaneous test flight. Thus all 10 aircraft were in the air together over Sydney Harbour. The Dutch destroyer "Tromp" berthed at Woolloomooloo was buzzed by several of the aircraft. Three of the KNILM aircraft then flew under the Sydney Harbour Bridge, once in each direction. The "Bridge" formation was led by Captain Frans Van Breemen in DC-2 PK-AFK followed by Capt Peter Deenik in DC-3 PK-ALW and Captain Dirk Rab (with John Gyzenyter as Flight Engineer) in DC-5 PK-ADG. {JG}

15MAY42 Handed over to United States Army Air Force as C-49H "11944" (not an official serial number but one apparently contrived from the c/n). Operated by 21st Transport Squadron USAAF out of Archerfield, Brisbane as VHCXE (radio call-sign). Used mainly on troop flights to/from New Guinea under control of Directorate of Air Transport (DAT). {AB}

17MAY42 Request to Chief-of-Staff, Allied Air Forces for aircraft to be assigned to General Headquarters. (See 14JUN42).

20MAY42 History of 374th Troop Carrier Group states that VHCXE was assigned to the 21st Transport Squadron on this date. The history of the 21st Troop Carrier Squadron states June 1942. {BB}

14JUN42 Letter from Air-Vice-Marshal Bostock, Chief-of-Staff, Allied Air Forces SWPA to Commander-in-Chief SWPA offering an unidentified "DC-3 with two new engines, fitted with seven regular passenger seats, new radio equipment and heating apparatus and a 1000 mile safe range". {2}

16JUN42 Letter from Colonel Fitch, Adjutant General, to Commander, Allied Air Forces "It is understood that the DC-3 will be at Essendon on June 18. An inspection will be made at that time. By command of General MacARTHUR". {3}

17JUL42 General MacArthur travelled from Melbourne to Canberra and return to attend the Prime Minister's War Conference. Letter from Colonel Henry Godman dated 07JUL95 states that he was the pilot and the aircraft was "the Dutch DC-3". Although Godman is unable to confirm the exact date, this date is consistent with MacArthur's known movements.

26JUL42 21st Transport Squadron redesignated 21st Troop Carrier Squadron. {BB}

27SEP42 Final mention of VHCXE in 21TCS records. Shown as transferred to GHQ South West Pacific Area. {GG}

24APR43 Flight Report (AAF Form No 1 2-2-42) records a local flight from Archerfield by DC-3 serial number 1944. Crew shown as follows:  
 Maj H.C. Godman GHQ (Pilot)  
 Maj Gen R.K. Sutherland GHQ (Co-pilot)  
 S/Sgt V.L. Gumm (Engineer)  
 S/Sgt S.P. Bone (Radio Operator)  
 Flight departed 14:10  
 Flight returned 15:55  
 Flight time 1:07  
 Landings 2 {4}

14MAY43 Received at Commonwealth Aircraft Corporation, Fisherman's Bend, Melbourne as USAAF 41-1944 for modifications. (Some sources claim that this work was performed by A.N.A. at Essendon.) Allocated sequence number CAC 17. The first aircraft (CAC 1) to go through



this programme was another ex-KLM DC-3 c/n 1941. AHSA Journal Vol. 19 No. 3 shows several photos of this aircraft undergoing the installation of a large removable hatch on the right hand side. This hatch (as distinct from a door) appears to approximate the size of a C-47 double door. Installed within this hatch was a single passenger door similar in size and shape to the normal DC-3 single passenger door, albeit of reduced height. It is believed that DC-3 CAC 17 (c/n 1944) received this same modification. CAC 1 was in the factory from 06OCT42 until 28NOV42 i.e. 53 days. CAC 17 was in the factory for 89 days. AHSA Journal Vol. 22 No. 4 Page 92 provides these dates which were taken from the diary of the CAC Chief Security Officer. It is also stated that C-49H-DO 41-1944 changed its radio callsign from VHCXE to VHCXL during the mods at CAC. It is also stated that this aircraft (c/n 1944) had been General Douglas MacArthur's aircraft until the arrival and modification of C-47A-20-DL 41-23421 c/n 9283 which assumed the radio callsign VHCXE and the name "Shiny Shiela" (Photographic evidence that the name was spelled "Shiela" not "Sheila") This latter aircraft passed through the CAC programme as CAC 16, arriving on 13MAY43 and departing on 05JUN43. It is believed that all internal fittings were removed from c/n 1944 for fitment to c/n 9283. DC-3 c/n 1944 was then fitted with side-saddle seats. Modification work completed by CAC. Returned to USAAF. Taken on charge by the RAAF as VHCXL. Operated by No 36 Sqn, Townsville on courier flights. On loan from the USAAF. {GG} First flight with 36Sqn from Townsville to Port Moresby and return (F/O McConachie and P/O Garde). During 36Sqn service VHCXL was natural metal with USAAF stars. VHCXL was the only aircraft in 36Sqn not camouflaged, which may be why all subsequent flights were to Horn Island. {GR} General MacArthur's B-17E 41-2593 "Bataan" entered service. Flown from Townsville to Essendon by P/O Ball and SGT Varney. Last flight with 36Sqn. {GR} Returned to Directorate of Air Transport (DAT). Australian National Airways Pty Ltd applied to D.C.A. for a Certificate of Airworthiness. Paperwork describes aircraft as c/n 1944, USAAF serial 41-1944 and "VH-CXL". {GG} Australian CoFA No. X-16 issued to Australian National Airways as VHCXL (22 passenger seats). The aircraft did not appear on the Australian Register. This special "X" series CoFA permitted carriage of civil passengers on military aircraft. Used on ANA's "Pacific Islands Courier" service out of Melbourne. {GG} Struck off charge by RAAF and returned to USAAF. {GG} Delivered to ANA. Allocated USAAF serial 44-83229 as a C-49H-DO (presumably a book-keeping exercise prior to imminent disposal). Offered for sale by U.S. Foreign Economic Administration (as PK-ALW) "Estimated Flying Time 3500 hours" {1} ANA were operating a daily service from Archerfield to Finschhafen and a Brisbane-Sydney-Melbourne return service every Sunday. Struck off by USAAF. Registered VH-ANR to Australian National Airways. Certificate of Registration No 985. {FP} Named "Oana" (To Inform) in ANA service. At some stage the passenger door was moved from the right side to the left side. This was probably done by ANA prior to this date during pre-service modifications. Total Time 7802:33. Aircraft tipped on to its nose at Van Rook Station, Qld due to poor airfield conditions. Aircraft was commanded by Capt Bonney. Aeroplane was later flown out by Capt P.L. Taylor, ANA Flight Superintendent, direct to Melbourne in 7 hours. The total non-stop distance of 1450 miles was claimed as a record for a DC-3 in Australia. This incident is described thus in Nan Whitcomb's book *Up Here and Down There*:



"During the wet season when some of the airstrips became extremely soggy, the station owners had to make the decision for us whether it was safe to land. On a visit to Van Rook Station, the safety markers were out, so after a low observation run across the strip, Captain Maurie B. and First Officer Ernie S. decided it was OK to land. On touching down, all seemed well, until the Captain pulled back on the power and we came to an abrupt stop in a deep bog with the result that the aircraft ended up on its nose. For a moment, I thought we would flip right over but that sturdy old DC-3 shuddered and eventually flopped back on to its belly - lucky for us. Multipots, cutlery, dishes and food became airborne and ended up near the cockpit. As twelve of our passengers had disembarked at the stop before, we had only one delightful old bushman on board who, I am still convinced, thought it was a perfectly normal landing. The only thing he was concerned about was losing his pipe. After a very pleasant four day rest as enforced guests at Van Rook, we were flown out in the air ambulance Dragon Rapide - only to hear rumours that we had hit high tension wires and were all dead - so much for the bush telegraph!" Account contributed by Flight Hostess Mary Dulhunty (later Turbayne).

MAY50 ANA records show total time 18,720 hours. {AT}  
 APR55 Major overhaul by Fairey Aviation, Bankstown. Total time 26,623 hours. {AT}  
 21OCT57 ANA was renamed Ansett-ANA {FP}  
 18FEB58 Ansett Transport Industries gained control of Butler Air Transport. {FP}  
 APR58 Leased to Butler Air Transport Pty Ltd, Sydney as VH-ANR. {AB}  
 17JUL58 Modified to "Viewmaster" configuration by Fairey Aviation at Bankstown. Believed to be the first "Viewmaster" conversion in Australia. {QM}  
 01OCT58 Returned to service after modifications. {QM}  
 17FEB59 Registered to Airlines of New South Wales as VH-ANR although operated by Butler Air Transport in Butler colours.  
 19DEC59 Airlines of NSW commenced operations. {FP}  
 JUN68 Airlines of NSW became Ansett Airlines of NSW. {FP}  
 23JUL68 Arrived Essendon from Sydney. Several days later was fitted with wings from DC-3 VH-ANQ which was retired to the graveyard with wings from VH-ANR. VH-ANQ was subsequently scrapped at Essendon. {Essendon Newsletter No 19}  
 01NOV68 Ansett-ANA became Ansett Airlines of Australia. {FP}  
 23SEP69 Ferried Sydney to Melbourne for overhaul. {Essendon Newsletter No 36}  
 28OCT69 Ferried Melbourne to Sydney after overhaul and modifications. {Essendon Newsletter No 38}  
 24JUL72 Ferried Sydney to Schofields for storage. Aircraft was leased for a token price to two ANSW pilots who intended to operate the aircraft as a flying museum. [Essendon Newsletter No 61 states aircraft was dismantled at Schofields and moved by road to an un-named transport museum??]  
 14AUG72 Struck off Register.  
 Owners shown as Capt Alex Garriock and F/O John Wilson of Sydney.  
 14DEC74 Ferried to Camden (wheels down) and stored.  
 24JAN81 Ownership transferred to George Markey, Sydney. {AT}  
 24JAN87 Restoration work commenced with view to flying aircraft under ANR108a.  
 18FEB94 Donated to Queensland Air Museum by George Markey.  
 23APR94 Aircraft inspected at Camden by QAM member who changed the lock on the cabin door.  
 28AUG94 QAM recovery crew arrived Camden.  
 15SEP94 Arrived at Caloundra on two semi-trailers.  
 19OCT94 Fuselage and centre section re-attached at Caloundra.