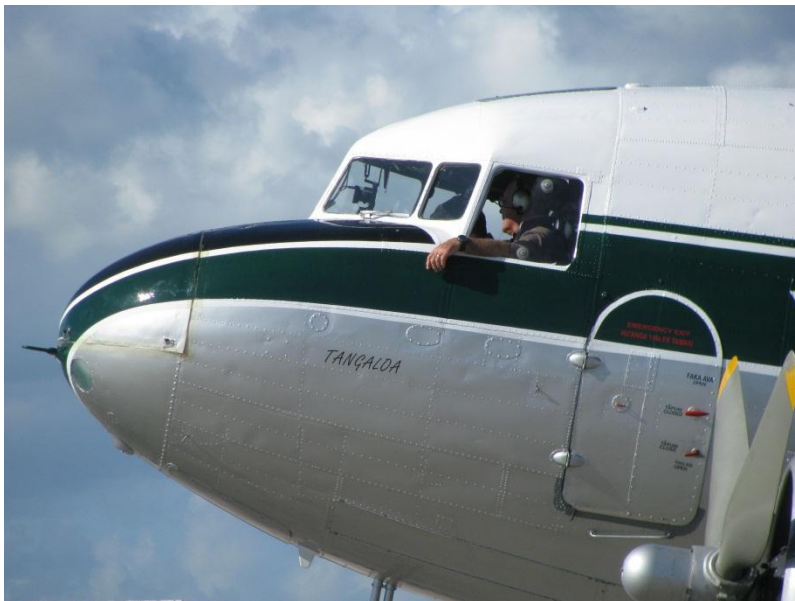




A3-AWP - MY STORY SO FAR

Malo e lelei, Hi and welcome aboard this special *Chathams Pacific Airline's* flight. My new name is *Tangaloo* (God of the Sky) and I will share my history with you.



The first prototype DC-3 flew on 17 December 1935, the 32nd anniversary of the Wright Brothers' first Kittyhawk flight. As a C-47B-30-DK, I was built in 1944, originally as Number 16387, but was renumbered as 33135, when it was discovered several numbers had been duplicated.

I have a wing span of 95 feet, an overall length of 64.5 feet and a height of almost 15 feet and am powered by two Wright Pratt and Whitney R1830 engines with 1200hp each.

With my delivery crew I left Oklahoma City, USA on 21 April 1945 and flew to Hamilton New Zealand and from 13 May 1945 I became known as *RNZAF Dakota NZ3543* and was assigned to 41 Squadron on 21 July of that year until 1952. My time in the military was interesting and varied. I was injured in action in the Southern Alps NZ while supply dropping but after repairs went on to serve in Singapore on supply missions during the Malayan Emergency. I retired from the military in 1952 and entered civilian life as *ZK-AWP*. With NAC I was given the name *Powhaitere* (Yellow fronted Parakeet, a New Zealand native bird) and served both freight and passenger roles. Later I was upgraded with bigger windows, heating and sound-proofing to become a "Skyliner" and given the name *Kaitaia*, as it became the custom to name us after towns around New Zealand.

My New Zealand registration was cancelled on 2nd February 1970 and I was leased to Polynesian Airlines as *5W-FAI* and based in Western Samoa. This lease expired 8 June 1973 and I returned to New Zealand to be given my old registration *ZK-AWP*. From here I was converted to a top-dresser to spread fertiliser across New Zealand. On 3 August 1973 my owners, Southern Super Ltd, (whose parent company was James Aviation) based me out of Queenstown, until 14 July 1975 when Fieldair NZ took over my ownership and based me on the East Coast of the North Island. In November 1976 a loading boom collapsed on my back and I needed a rebuild. On 27 May 1985 I finally retired after completing 6722 hours top dressing.



Photo courtesy of John King

During 1986 Classic Air Services took over my ownership along with ZK-AMR and gave us both pretty new paint schemes, replaced our windows, installed dual controls, fitted freight doors and we came back to life as freighters, primarily on parcel courier services between Wellington, Blenheim and Christchurch.

From 1990 Airwork (NZ) as Post Air employed me to deliver mail throughout New Zealand until my last flight with them on 26 March 1993. Sir Tim Wallis purchased me on 28 August 1993 and subsequently leased me to Classic Air Ltd for a short term before I returned to Wanaka. For a time I was owned by Rob Mackley, NZ Aerial Mapping (Historic Flight) and finally put into storage at Palmerston North.

In 1999 Fieldair refurbished and repainted me in NAC Skyliner livery but had no specific use for me.

The year 2000 saw me placed on the International market after 46,000 flying hours. I joined the team at Pionair Adventures Ltd in June and spent many happy hours flying tours around NZ and Australia. Pionair became my official owners in May 2002, but on 19 June 2002 while attempting to take off in the snow at Mt Cook we skidded off the runway and I was flown to Palmerston North to have my undercarriage repaired and was again given a new paint scheme and a new name – *Lucille*.



Photo courtesy of John King

My Pacific Island Adventures began on 2 June 2004 when I left Christchurch and 7.5 hours later landed at Fua'amotou, Kingdom of Tonga to work with Shore Line Group "Peau Vava'u", at the request of the now present King of Tonga, in partnership with Pionair, along with my sister-ship ZK-AMY. From 21 November 2005, under Tongan ownership I became known as *A3-AWP*, and we flew domestic routes in the Kingdom of Tonga until 23 October 2006, when AMY returned to NZ (and is now owned by Southern DC-3 Trust) and I lay alone in the hangar in Tonga.

64 years on after service with RNZAF, NAC, top-dressing, courier, freight, postal and sundry other ventures thanks to *Chatham's Pacific*, starting on 13 August 2009 I was given a complete rebuild under the loving care of Project Manager, Engineer Keith Mitchell, craftsman, Pete Jestin, local engineer Terry O'Brien and the team, and Avionics master Steve Lilly and Nick Angus. I was test-flown on 7 August 2010 and re-entered scheduled service with a total time of 48,862 hours.

Thanks to the passion and enthusiasm of owner, Craig Emeny, I now have a new and exciting future to look forward to. I have a specialist team who care for me, my primary engineer, Brendan Odell, flight training captain Keith Mitchell and Craig Emeny, so sit back, relax and enjoy our time together. Malo 'Aupito.