



OSH-2010-3

For more information contact:

Dick Knapinski, Media and Public Relations
(920) 426-6523

dknapinski@eaa.org

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75TH ANNIVERSARY OF DOUGLAS DC-3 CELEBRATED WITH AIRCRAFT REUNION AT EAA AIRVENTURE OSHKOSH 2010

Likely “The Last Time...” DC-3 fans will ever see this large a reunion

EAA AVIATION CENTER, OSHKOSH, Wis. — (Dec. 3, 2009) — What could be the largest Douglas DC-3/C-47 gathering in more than 60 years will be a centerpiece of the aviation activities at EAA AirVenture 2010, “The World’s Greatest Aviation Celebration,” which will be held July 26-August 1 at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh.

EAA is working with a large group of owners and operators of the venerable aircraft, which commemorates its 75th anniversary in 2010, to bring their airplanes and join the reunion at Oshkosh. The event is being organized under the theme “The Last Time...” as it likely will be the final time that more than 25 of these airplanes will be seen together, including formation flights. It will also mark the final major reunion for scores of pilots, flight attendants, mechanics, crew chiefs and passengers that flew, operated and traveled in these aircraft.

While exact details of “The Last Time...” weeklong festivities are still being finalized, planned activities will include a mass formation arrival, a designated aircraft display area, historical and technical forums/presentations, fly-bys and a special evening DC-3 commemorative program at Theater in the Woods.

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“The DC-3, in both civilian and military configurations, has been a true workhorse aircraft since it was unveiled in 1935,” said Tom Poberezny, EAA president and AirVenture chairman. “While the aircraft helped make air travel popular and profitable in the 1930s and 1940s, the fact that it is still used around the world today is a testament to the aircraft’s design. We’re looking forward to welcoming these iconic aviation legends to Oshkosh for AirVenture 2010.”

Douglas Aircraft made the first flight of its new DC-3 on Dec. 17, 1935 – the 32nd anniversary of the Wright brothers’ first successful flight. It was first designed as an all-metal passenger airliner, later evolving to a coast-to-coast luxury transport complete with sleeping berths. By the late 1930s, it was estimated that 90 percent of America’s airline passengers were flying in the DC-3. More than 14,000 of the type were built, with some 10,000 of them used extensively in all World War II operations theaters carrying the C-47 designation.

Fewer than 100 of the aircraft remain airworthy in the United States. Thousands of those airplanes went into civilian service after the war in countless applications, from freight to fire suppression. The airplanes continued to be upgraded for many uses today, with one of the world’s leading DC-3 converters – Basler Turbo Conversions – based at Wittman Regional Airport in Oshkosh, also home to EAA and AirVenture.

EAA AIRVENTURE OSHKOSH is The World’s Greatest Aviation Celebration and EAA’s yearly membership convention. Additional EAA AirVenture information, including advance ticket and camping purchase, is available online at www.airventure.org. EAA members receive lowest prices on admission rates. For more information on EAA and its programs, call 1-800-JOIN-EAA (1-800-564-6322) or visit www.eaa.org. Immediate news is available at <http://twitter.com/EAAupdate>.