

I Hated C-47s!

written by Tulio R. Soto | August 17, 2021



When I was a kid, we are talking ancient history here, late 1950s and 1960s, every single time that I heard any airplane engine sound at home, I ran outside, with my father's binoculars, to see the airplane fly over or near our house, which was located in the hills across the *Aerodrómo Los Cipresales*.

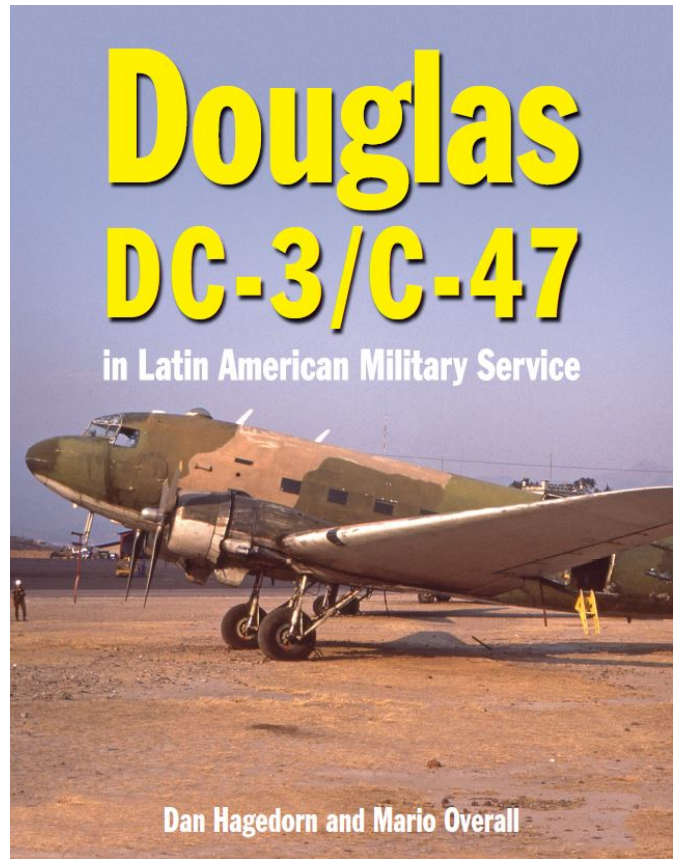
Thus, I saw Boeing P-26s, Beech AT-11s and C-45s, as well Douglas C-47s, North American T-6s and P-51s, Curtiss C-46s, DC-6s and the first Pan American Boeing 707 jets to visit Guatemala; I even saw Super Constellations and C-133s from time to time!

It was with anticipation, that I waited for the Day of the Army on June 30th, Independence Day on September 15th and the Air Force Day on December 10th, because it usually meant an aerial parade.

So, I hated the C-47s because they were sloooooow in passing by. They didn't have the speed or grace of the *Mustangs* or the *Texans*. They impeded my viewing of the fancier airplanes then in service. I thought of them in my mind, as the ponderous Hannibal elephants crossing the Alps.

And then, I grew up...

Even at the 6 or 7 years of age, I began reading all the aviation material that I could get my hands on. And I learned how the C-47s had transported thousands upon thousands of cargo, passengers across the world, and continued doing so. I gained appreciation on the ruggedness, adaptability, toughness of this airplane and its brethren.



Book Cover – Douglas DC-3 / C-47 in Latin American Military Service.

At that time, I could then see the rare sight of a C-47 landing at Los Cipresales. I could see them flying over, and I could from a distance, see them dropping parachutists over *Campo de Marte*. The C-47s were still in service throughout the world, the Guatemalan Air Force not being the exception.

So, I come to realize now, that books like Hagedorn-Overall's on the C-47 in Latin America, should have been most welcome during that early period of my life but they were not available. Thank you, Dan and Mario. You guys are 60 or so years late in publishing the book!!!

Now, I would like to seriously suggest that you esteemed readers, drop a few dollars, euros, dracmas, or whatever your local currency might be, and proceed to purchase your copy of this most excellent book.

Usually books like these, are printed in limited numbers. You don't want to see yourself a few years down the road, spending easily a couple of hundred dollars to purchase a second-hand copy. That is, if you can find one. Remember Hagedorn's books on the P-51, P-47, and the impressive *Alae Supra Canalem*? They are nowadays, rarer than hen's teeth.

Their book on the DC-3 / C-47 in Latin America is crammed with over 600 photos (I counted twice, lost count twice, so I decided to go with the approximate number) and has the abundance of data we have come to expect from Hagedorn and now, Overall. Here are the technical aspects, so to speak:

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You can order the book from [Amazon](#) or from [Crécy's online store](#) if you are in Europe.

It will augment your library on the subject. I already had 6 other books on the DC-3 / C-47 and this particular one, is a most welcome addition to those reference sources.

The service of the DC-3 / C-47 in Latin America is documented with historic data, anecdotal information, serial numbers, history of those airframes that had been tracked. Transport, medical evacuation, makeshift bomber, gunship, all roles undertaken in Latin America by the ubiquitous Gooney Bird.

Oh, and by the way, my first-ever flight on any airplane, was in FAG-505, when the Guatemalan Air Force was selling rides for Q5.00 / \$5.00 as a fundraiser for -I believe- The National Anti-Tuberculosis League back in the very early 1970s. By then, I already loved the C-47...