

DC3 WRECK SITE (14° 07.70'S, 126° 18.56'E) – Chart AUS 727



THE BRIEF STORY OF THIS DC3

On 26 February 1942, nearly two years before Truscott Airbase was established, an American Douglas C-53 (DC3) made a forced landing on a mudflat on the eastern side of Vansittart Bay. The plane, VH-UGY, had been en route from Perth to Broome when the pilot had become disorientated in bad weather and darkness, and put the plane down when fuel was running low.

The two crew members and two passengers survived the landing and were rescued three days later by a QANTAS flying boat, the "CORINTHIAN". The DC3 is still basically intact.



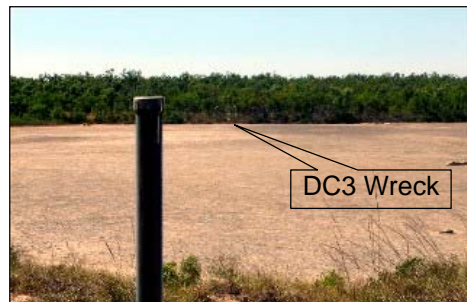
The Air Photo above and the photograph left, taken from the air in April 2003, clearly show the landing site.

Finding the Wreck Site

The wreck of the DC3 is located on the north-eastern side of a salt flat on the eastern side of Vansittart Bay, approximately 5 miles southwest of Truscott Airstrip. Approaching the area from the direction of Middle Rock or from Freshwater Bay, anchor well offshore because of the scattered fringing reef.

Anchor around 14° 07.7'S, 126° 17.8'E. Looking due east from this point, there is a 1.5m pipe in the top of a sandhill. Take the dinghy ashore and walk up to the pipe. Looking east from the pipe across the mud flat (right), the DC3 wreck will be visible about 50m into the bush on the eastern side of the mudflat.

Other photos below, taken in July 2005, remind us just how lucky these people were to survive the landing and to be rescued quickly from this remote area.



Site Photographs



The photos above show a few of the bits like the wings that have roughly been knocked off or fallen off the plane, and large pieces like the engine and part of the fuselage that have been removed.

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The photos below show one shot taken from inside the fuselage, another towards the stripped cockpit, and the starboard radial engine lying flat on the ground.



This wreck has been here for over 60 years, subjected to fires, heat and storms but the airframe is in exceptional condition and should remain so for a number of years to come.
