

► SIGHTINGS ◀



**A**Douglas DC-3 got an extreme makeover last year from a group that enables gravely ill children to participate in art projects. Dan Gryder of Griffin, Georgia, loaned his 1938 airliner to Portraits of Hope, which provided young hospital patients with unique paint brushes that allow disabled artists to create huge flower decals. The children signed their work, and they received foam gliders and paint to could create their own flying art.

In a hangar that had been provided by the North Carolina Department of Transportation, volunteers put the 100 flower decals on the airplane. The result: a DC-3A that might have been Austin Powers' very own shagadelic transport brightened the skies over Kitty Hawk, North Carolina, during last December's Centennial of Flight celebration. After the six days it was on display at the centennial, the decals were removed and the airplane went back to its day job, training pilots for their DC-3 type ratings and offering jumbo jet rides to wannabe pilots. Gryder's transport, registration N143D, had first flown for SwissAir, then Ozark. In 1974 it was converted to a freighter.

*Daily News* photographer Ty Greenlee describes the set-up that enabled his photograph (opposite): "After a lengthy preflight briefing involving six airplanes and four photographers, we decided to forgo a large formation and opted for two airplanes, a Cessna O-2 Skymaster camera plane and the DC-3. We planned the flight for the last hour of sunlight, for its visual warmth. I was thrilled at how brilliant the flowers appeared as we flew over the broken shoreline of Roanoke Sound. The shoreline gives just enough contrast to the rippled water without detracting from the airplane."

Says Eric Long, whose photograph appears above, "Learning the significance of the artwork, the children who painted it, and seeing their signatures up close, I felt a bond with the children, whose disabilities may prevent them from flying but who want to share the experience of flight with all."

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