



WARTIME WORKHORSES

The Junkers Ju 52/3m had formed the backbone of the Deutsche Lufthansa fleet since 1932. When war broke out, the German flag-carrier had to put itself at the disposal of the Reich, but despite the loss of many aircraft it still operated a reduced network with the tri-motors at its core — until, in 1945, the end became inevitable **WORDS:** ROB J. M. MULDER



Lufthansa Ju 52/3m D-ARIW *Joachim Blankenburg* at Rangsdorf, preparing for its scheduled flight on route 9 from Berlin to Munich, Venice and Rome. VIA GÜNTHER OTT

When Adolf Hitler made a speech in Obersalzberg on 22 August 1939, detailing the impending invasion of Poland, it provided the clearest indication yet of German aggression to come. For Deutsche Lufthansa, the consequences would be immediate. It had already been reducing its worldwide operations, using the codeword 'Daedalus' to order crews to return their aircraft to Germany. The process was complete by 26 August, even including those machines flying on the South Atlantic route, the sole exception being one aircraft grounded in Siam. The Lufthansa fleet was now put at the disposal of the Reich and all services flown solely for its purposes.

The first 36 aircraft were handed over to the Luftwaffe, followed by another 23 in September, by which time the defeat of Poland had signalled the start of the Second World War. Aircraft, crews and ground personnel were transferred to Kampfgeschwader zur besonderen Verwendung (KGzbV) 172, formed at Berlin-Tempelhof on 26 August under the command of Carl August Freiherr von Gablenz, who had been given the rank of Oberstleutnant (lieutenant colonel). Apart from Ju 52/3ms, KGzbV 172 included aircraft such as the Ju 90, Focke-Wulf Fw 200 Condor and two obsolete Junkers G 38s, all of which were assigned to transport duties in Poland, Denmark, Norway, the Low Countries and later Greece. During the attack on Denmark and Norway — Operation 'Weserübung' — von Gablenz organised the transport of troops and equipment to Norway, especially to isolated German forces in the Narvik area.

The reduced fleet forced Lufthansa to operate some services with chartered aircraft obtained after the occupation of Czechoslovakia. Two Fokker FVIIb-3ms, D-AABP and D-AABS, from Ceskoslovenske Statni Aerolinie (CSA) plied the Berlin-Danzig-Königsberg route, while five of the same carrier's Savoia-Marchetti SM73s, OK-BAB to 'BAF', appear to have been used too. Joining them from 24 August were three Ceska Letecke Spolecnost (CLS) Douglas DC-3s, D-AAIE *Mährisch-Ostrau*, D-AAIF *Brünn* and D-AAIH *Prag*. After the attack on Poland, Lufthansa was able to reopen some of its services starting with Berlin-Danzig-Königsberg on 21 September, employing first the

DC-3s and later also Ju 52/3ms, Ju 90s and Fw 200s. To begin with, the flights operated from Berlin-Tempelhof, but on 3 October all civil air traffic was transferred to the smaller airfield at Rangsdorf, 25km (15 miles) south of the capital. Not until 7 March 1940 could Lufthansa return to its spiritual home.

International air services by Lufthansa resumed on 4 October with the Berlin-Vienna-Budapest-Belgrade-Sofia-Thessaloniki route, followed by Berlin-Munich-Venice-Rome in pool with Italian national airline Ala Littoria. AB Aerotransport again operated between Stockholm and Berlin, its aircraft clearly

marked with the German word 'SCHWEDEN' on the fuselage and wings. After a KLM DC-3 was shot at en route from Malmö and Copenhagen to Amsterdam, all aircraft from neutral nations flying on European services were painted orange with their country of origin clearly marked in large letters.

In co-operation with DDL Danish Air Lines, Copenhagen-Berlin was restored to the schedule, and from 18 October Hungary's Malert and Lufthansa shared the Berlin-Vienna-Budapest-Bucharest service, later extended to Athens. A new route was inaugurated from Sofia to Istanbul, but it closed in mid-December.

The outbreak of war also meant a change for Spanish airline Iberia. It was no longer acceptable to have German crews flying on the Spanish

network and, as of 2 December, Spaniards took over in the Ju 52/3ms on the Seville-Las Palmas and Seville-Tetuan routes. From 11 December the same was true for Barcelona-Palma de Mallorca.

More important for Lufthansa was Berlin-Madrid-Lisbon, which the German airline wanted to reopen via Rome. The Italian government refused to grant a licence, saying it was not covered by the air agreement between the two countries, though a fear of competition was the overriding reason. However, Lufthansa was allowed to transfer German mail to Italy's intercontinental airline,

Linee Aeree Transcontinentali Italiane (LATI).

It inaugurated a service across the South Atlantic on 21 December with Savoia-Marchetti SM83 landplanes, flying from Rome to Rio de Janeiro via Seville, Villa

Cisneros, Cape Verde, Natal, Recife and Bahia.

There was a tragic accident on the Munich-Berlin pool service when Ju 52/3m I-BAUS of Ala Littoria crashed at the Arbersee on 4 December, killing four and injuring 13. In January Lufthansa sent a replacement, Ju 52/3mte D-ARCK *Heinz von Vloten* (Werknummer 6779), which was used on the Berlin-Rome schedule registered I-BALI. It returned in May and was handed over to the Luftwaffe.

The war soon spread across Europe. On 9 April 1940, German

“Even in the midst of conflict, Lufthansa still found time to update its Ju 52/3m fleet”

BELOW:
D-ASIS *Wilhelm Cuno* on wintertime operations.

VIA THIJS POSTMA





ABOVE: Having arrived at Rangsdorf from Stockholm in November 1939, a Ju 52/3m of Swedish airline AB Aerotransport is refuelled. The aircraft was painted in orange and the word 'Schweden' (Sweden in German) was displayed prominently on the fuselage. In the background is another example of the type belonging to Det Danske Luftfartsselskab, or Danish Air Lines.

VIA GÜNTHER OTT

forces attacked Denmark and Norway. Denmark was overrun and surrendered that same day, but Norway, supported by the Allies, managed in part to resist the Nazi aggressor until it finally could not help but capitulate on 10 June. The three Ju 52/3ms operated by Norwegian airline DNL (Det Norske Luftfartsselskap) — LN-DAF *Najaden*, LN-DAH *Falken* and the Norwegian navy's serial F400, formerly LN-DAI *Hauken* — were immediately confiscated

by the Luftwaffe, along with British Airways' Ju 52/3m G-AFAP *Jason* (5881). G-AFAP turned up again in May 1944 as a Lufthansa airliner, D-ANPE *Max Limbach*, and was found at Tempelhof after the war. LN-DAI was re-registered to Lufthansa as D-AQUB *Hans Berr*, LN-DAH as D-AQUI *Kurt Wintgens* and LN-DAF as D-AKIY *William Langanke*.

“Lufthansa felt the deteriorating situation ever more acutely”

In six weeks from 10 May 1940, Germany conquered the Low Countries and France. One result was that it took over the local aircraft industries, while Lufthansa gained access to more modern aeroplanes from the Air France and KLM fleets. This made up the shortfall in its own fleet and enabled it to extend and maintain a scheduled network

to 12 European countries. One of its most important routes was that to Barcelona, Madrid and Lisbon, which could now be resumed when

flown via France. Even in the midst of an increasingly widespread conflict, Lufthansa still found time in July 1940 to update its Ju 52/3m fleet with improved equipment and to refurbish the cabins by fitting new green fabric-covered seats, passing the old leather seats to the Luftwaffe.

Extending its operations for the Reich Ministry of Economics, Lufthansa undertook special

freight flights to Vienna between 15 April and 8 August 1940, and later a courier run between Stuttgart and Barcelona. On 1 June it flew a service for the Wehrmacht between Friedrichshafen and Munich, and 6 July saw the start of a courier operation for the German armistice commission from Wiesbaden to Paris and Vichy.



The question of aircraft ownership, amid the chaos of war and the requisitioning of equipment, remained a complex one. On 19 July, Lufthansa and the RLM agreed that, of the Ju 52/3ms and their engines transferred to the Luftwaffe, some had been sold to the RLM while others were chartered. When an aircraft was damaged or destroyed beyond repair while in Luftwaffe service, the RLM would buy it at its value as on 31 December 1938. There would be many such occurrences.

With DNL acting as ground handling agent, Lufthansa inaugurated a Trondheim-Tromsø service using float-equipped



Ju 52/3ms on 29 September 1940. There were three weekly flights, one continuing as far east as Kirkenes near the Norwegian-Finnish border. Crews initially consisted of both Germans and Norwegians, but after DNL chief pilot Finn Lambrechts and Capt John Strandrud escaped to Sweden in March 1941, Lufthansa decided to end the co-operative arrangement and continued with German crews only. Come 1944, the advance of Soviet troops forced Lufthansa to go no further east than Tromsø, but it continued flying the route right up to the German capitulation on 8 May 1945. The two remaining Ju 52/3ms returned to the new DNL, formed in July 1946, which later became part of the Scandinavian Airlines System (SAS) consortium.

Lufthansa managed to introduce a new service on 3 March 1941, running from Berlin via Copenhagen to Oslo (empty) and from there to Stockholm. To begin with it was plied by a DC-3, but Ju 52/3ms took over from 25 August, beginning with Ju 52/3mte D-ARDS *Robert Weichardt* (5919), captained

by Hans Steinbeck. Although the DC-3 returned occasionally, this aircraft, together with Ju 52/3mte D-AGAK *Ulrich Neckel* (5685), bore most of the burden — including a period when the service was extended into Finland — until the route was suspended indefinitely on 22 February 1942. The German occupation of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania in July 1941 had also made it possible for Lufthansa to extend the Königsberg service via those Baltic states to Helsinki, where connections could be made with Finnish national carrier Aero O/Y.

As a result of the Balkan campaign, which began with the Italian invasion of Greece on 28 October 1940 and intensified with the attack on Yugoslavia, the service to Greece and Bulgaria was temporarily closed, but the extension to Athens and Sofia was reactivated on 13 May 1941. Another bonus of invading Greece was that Lufthansa obtained two Ju 52/3ms from Greek airline EES (Ellinikí Etaireía Enaérion Synkoinonión, Hellenic Air Transport Company): D-ACLI (6004, ex-SX-ACH) and

D-AEJA (6025, ex-SX-ACI). Used for a short time during 1941, their fates remain unknown. Against that, during the night of 16-17 May, an RAF bombing raid destroyed Ju 52/3m D-AHMS *Martin Zander* (6042) while it was parked at Athens airport. No crew or passengers were hurt, but the aircraft was left beyond economic repair.

Ju 52/3ms provided a new Vienna-Graz-Zagreb service, which started on 10 June, and was extended to Sarajevo on 15 July. A renewed relationship between Germany and Turkey made it possible once more to continue the Berlin-Vienna-Budapest-Sofia route to Istanbul from 25 August. It was from Sofia that, on 28 October, brand-new Ju 52/3mte D-AUXZ *Otto von Beaulieu-Marconnay* (7172) took off in bad weather, against local advice, on a flight to Thessaloniki. On board were experienced captain Arpad von Pindter, co-pilot Augustin Holz, radio operator Friedrich Viktor Barthold and 11 passengers. The aircraft crashed near Gabrene in the Belassica mountains after “involuntary ground contact”. It and its occupants — including flight manager Karl-August von Struensee — were not found for two days. D-AUXZ had flown just 259 hours in Lufthansa service.

Luftwaffe-operated Lufthansa Ju 52/3m losses, 1941

D-AFY5 (4020), D-AHUT (4021), D-AHIH (4025), D-AJAN (4026), D-ALUN (4036), D-ANAL (4039), D-AGIS (4048), D-AXES (4052), D-ANYF (4071), D-ANOL (5014), D-AKUO (5484), D-AFCD (5938), D-ANXG (5979), D-ARIW (6180), D-AVAJ (6370), D-ABFA (6385), D-ADBO (6387), D-AEAO (6670)

Note: RLM figures for aircraft destroyed or damaged beyond repair

In February 1942 Lufthansa agreed with the Luftwaffe to set up a Luftfeldpoststaffel, a squadron for the transportation of military mail. Six newly delivered Ju 52/3ms were assigned to the service, marked with civil registrations and a Luftwaffe cross. It operated until July 1944.

Attempts to modernise its fleet with new German-built types having had little effect, and with most

LEFT: When Norway was attacked by Nazi Germany on 9 April 1940, the three Ju 52/3ms of Det Norske Luftfartsselskap, Fred Olsen & Bergenske A/S (DNL) were confiscated. At Oslo-Fornebu, LN-DAF *Najaden* (left) was found intact, taken over and registered as D-AKIY.

VIA JO-OLAV BAKKEN

BELOW LEFT: A snowy scene at Treviso, Italy, from the winter of 1939-40 features D-ANAZ *Willy Charlett* and its crew in Luftwaffe uniforms. VIA GÜNTHER OTT



ABOVE: Supplies being offloaded from D-ARDS Robert Weichard in 1941, the aircraft sporting the yellow markings that were common in the Balkan theatre at that time. VIA GÜNTHER OTT

of its Ju 52/3ms now operating for the Luftwaffe, Lufthansa was forced to bring more aircraft in on lease. Even so, it was still able to serve a large network that stretched from Kirkenes in the north to Athens in the south, and from Helsinki in the east to Lisbon in the west. In the autumn of 1942, DDL Danish Air Lines entered an agreement with Lufthansa, under which it would operate the Berlin-Vienna part of the Balkan route. For this purpose, Ju 52/3m OY-DAL *Selandia* (5610) was transferred to Berlin. Unfortunately, on 18 December this machine was lost in an accident at Vienna-Aspern airport, killing the crew and 15 passengers. Three days later, Lufthansa took over the service with its own Ju 52/3ms.

This followed another loss on 22 October. Captain Julius Nimis, co-pilot Franz Radzey and radio operator Friedrich Mojen had taken off from Budapest in Ju 52/3mte D-AYGX *Johannes Höroldt* (7208) for a flight to Belgrade and Athens.

Contact was lost, and when the wreckage was located it appeared that the aircraft had flown at full power into one of the mountains of the Fruška Gora range. All 14 passengers and three crew members were killed.

Luftwaffe-operated Lufthansa Ju 52/3m losses, 1942

D-AZIR (1301), D-AGUK (4022), D-AKEP (4029), D-AKOK (4030), D-AFES (4047), D-ATON (4054), D-ALAN (5010), D-ABES (5026), D-ANEN (5072), D-AKEQ (5590), D-ARDS (5919), D-ABVF (5954), D-AHFN (6047), D-ASLG (6369), D-AXFH (6372), D-ACEP (6386), D-AGOB (6452), D-AGBI (6659)

Note: RLM figures for aircraft destroyed or damaged beyond repair

The war made airline flying more and more difficult. Only the services to Oslo, Stockholm, Athens, Lisbon, Helsinki, Istanbul and Bucharest were maintained all year-round in 1943. Yet, in spite of the lack

of aircraft, Lufthansa opened freight services between Stuttgart, Lyon, Barcelona and Madrid on 5 February and on the Vienna-Belgrade-Sofia-Thessaloniki-Athens route on 1 March. The Zagreb service was again extended to Sarajevo and took in Mostar between 28 July and 2 October. In the Baltics, Aero O/Y operated on some days between Helsinki and Königsberg, and from 25 August-9 October Lufthansa flew a route from Riga via Vilnius to Minsk. All made use of Ju 52/3ms.

After Benito Mussolini's fall from power on 23 July, Italy signed a peace agreement with the Allies on 8 September. The Berlin-Rome route was suspended and now terminated at Milan. In September, a number of confiscated aircraft were ferried from Italy to Germany, among them Ju 52/3ms D-AIAO (4064), D-ASPE (6803), D-ASPI (6710) and D-AIAT (6765) previously operated by Ala Littoria and the Italian government, which Lufthansa kept mainly on the Italian route. Social unrest in Denmark caused a temporary halt to Danish and Swedish services between 25 August and 30 October, while Lufthansa continued to fly the Berlin-Copenhagen-Oslo schedule.

“For the final months of the war, Lufthansa did its best to maintain a skeleton network”

Still looking every inch the pre-war airliner despite the fact it was operating during hostilities, D-AMFR *Ludwig Hautzmayer* waits between flights in Prague during 1941. VIA GÜNTHER OTT



Luftwaffe-operated Lufthansa Ju 52/3m losses, 1943

D-ACBE (6550), D-ABEW (6432), D-ADHF (6066), D-ALAM (5740), D-ANAZ (5128), D-APXD (6149), D-AXAT (5693), D-AMEI (5734)

Note: RLM figures for aircraft destroyed or damaged beyond repair

By 1944, Germany was under a concerted onslaught from all sides. The Allied invasion of Normandy on 6 June led to the withdrawal of German troops from France and Belgium. In the east, the Soviet Union pressed on. Lufthansa felt the deteriorating situation ever more acutely. Services in Spain and Portugal were under constant threat of attack by Allied fighters. A direct flight between Stuttgart and Barcelona, sometimes via Milan, was still possible, but the Barcelona-Madrid-Lisbon leg was only flown once a week, with Iberia providing service on other days.

Fewer problems were experienced in Scandinavia. The domestic



A ground crew member shows off the latest edition of the Kriegsmarine propaganda newspaper *Gegen England* for troops stationed in south-eastern Europe. The consignment has just arrived in Athens aboard Ju 52/3m D-ARDS *Robert Weichard* in May 1942, having been transported on route 17.

VIA GÜNTHER OTT



RIGHT: D-ASHY *Gustav Dörr* at Smolensk in the summer of 1942. In February of that year, Lufthansa had set up a squadron for the transportation of military mail. Six Ju 52/3ms were assigned to the service, flying with civil registrations and military national insignia.

VIA HANS-HEIRI STAPFER

Trondheim-Bodo-Narvik-Tromsø route operated unhindered, and from 16 May was extended to Alta, Hammerfest and Indre Billefjord. Come the end of the year, the extension to the eastern towns was no longer practical due to the advance of Soviet forces. Oslo-Copenhagen-Berlin was under no threat, and likewise Berlin-Stockholm, though on 26 June Lufthansa dropped Malmö from the latter route. There was still scope for new services, and between 4 April and 19 August Lufthansa flew from Berlin via Copenhagen and Oslo to Finland, this time proceeding directly across Sweden to Pori and Rovaniemi. Two different DC-3s and four Ju 52/3ms were used. At the Luftwaffe's request, the city of Kemi was added from 18 July-8 August. Helsinki was dropped from 9 September, when the Finnish government ended co-operation with Germany and asked all German troops to leave its territory.

Diesel-engined Junkers Ju 86s had to take over the Balkan service due to a lack of petrol for the Ju 52/3ms, and the route to Istanbul was shut down on 4 August. Prague was also discontinued during the autumn.

A change of government in Romania led to its own problems. Ju 52/3m D-ACAW *Heinrich Mathy* (6700) was seized on arrival at Bucharest on 23 August, but the local Lufthansa representative managed to intervene, and the aircraft was allowed to return via Arad to Vienna the following day. From September, the extension to Sofia had to be cancelled, and the Athens service was suspended when German troops started to be withdrawn from Greece, but a direct flight between Vienna and



Thessaloniki continued until the end of October. For the Luftwaffe, Lufthansa flew to Budapest, Sarajevo and Pristina, but by the end of 1944 Berlin-Vienna-Zagreb-Sarajevo was the only remaining Lufthansa service in the Balkans.



A Finnish Ju 52/3m (D-AOAW, formerly OH-LAP) was chartered in July. After diplomatic relations between Germany and Finland deteriorated, it was not returned, and it fell victim to Allied gunfire on 9 May 1945. The airline took over several courier services from the Luftwaffe on 1 September 1944, for which the RLM delivered 24 new Ju 52/3ms, mostly g8e and g14e versions. But these additions could barely stem the flow of aircraft falling victim to one cause or another.

During 1944, Lufthansa lost several more Ju 52/3ms, some through accidents, reflecting the increasingly difficult operating conditions, and others to enemy fire. On 17 April, D-AOCA *Harry Rother* (640996), only delivered on 22 February, was attacked soon after take-off from Belgrade by Allied fighters and shot down in flames near Stara Pazova, killing the captain Kurt Vogel and four of his passengers. Co-pilot Karl Freymüller and radio operator Georg Denzer

survived but were seriously injured. D-ADQU *Karl Noack* (640605) was shot at on 12 July by partisans with machine guns. Despite numerous hits, the aircraft made it to Tatoi, where it landed safely. A bombing raid on Stuttgart airport on 4 September put paid to D-AQIJ *Erich Albrecht* (7053), on its way to Spain to be delivered back to Iberia.

Another loss to enemy fire was D-AUAW *Gerhard Amann* (641039). It was engaged in a mail and freight service when it was attacked by three enemy fighters near Ivanca, Croatia on 2 September. Captain Otto Mader, co-pilot Egon Tracinsky and radio operator Leopold Wejwar all perished in the fiery accident. D-ASHE *Friedrich Dahmen* (640601), flown by Josef Vogel, force-landed in Komárom county, Hungary, on 17 October after being attacked by RAF Mosquito fighters. It had been delivered to Lufthansa on 13 September and had notched up just 340 hours. The crew and five passengers sustained only burns, but one passenger jumped out prematurely and was found dead.

The defeat of Nazi Germany was now inevitable. The last Ju 52/3m delivered to Lufthansa was registered D-AFIN, a portent of what was to come. For the final months of the war, January-May 1945, Lufthansa did its best to maintain

BELOW: A German general receives a French guard of honour upon his arrival with D-ADHF *Walter Höhndorf* at Marseille-Marignane in the unoccupied part of France on 20 May 1942.

VIA GÜNTHER OTT





a skeleton network. Requests from the Luftwaffe for new services could no longer be granted due to a lack of aircraft. The Red Army pushed the German front lines back across Poland, towards their ultimate goal of Berlin. Soon the Berlin-Danzig-Königsberg route had to be suspended, but flights out of Danzig continued as thousands of people tried to flee the city. Women and children were given priority and the Ju 52/3ms used were often filled with up to 50 people. Luggage had to be left at the airport. The last flight, operated with Ju 52/3m D-ASHC *Erhard Spoerl* (130867), and crewed by captain Engelbert Tischbierek, co-pilot Hagelkruijs and radio operator Kruger, took off from Danzig-Langfuhr for Berlin-Tempelhof on 18 March 1945.

In Berlin, the situation was getting more and more precarious. The Lufthansa board of directors decided to transfer the management of the company to Munich, and on 19 April Ju 52/3m D-ALOS *Ernst Heil* (5038), with Tischbierek at the controls, took off with RLM and

Lufthansa personnel and company documentation on board. After a stop at Pilsen (now Plzen), where the RLM people disembarked, the aircraft continued the next day to Munich.

Lufthansa lost Ju 52/3m D-ANAJ *Otto Mader* (501324) on 20 April. It was on its way from Berlin to Munich and Prague on an evacuation service, with captain Paul Salzberger, co-pilot Willie

Menninger, radio operator Lorenz Herter and 17 passengers.

The aircraft disappeared, and it later transpired that it had been shot down by Soviet aircraft. It crashed in a forest near Glienig, south of Berlin.

The route across the Alps continued to be flown by Lufthansa and was operated by the former Italian Ju 52/3ms, equipped with special high-altitude engines. At Munich, passengers had to change aircraft and continue to Berlin in a standard example. On 15 April, Capt Dr Merkel flew the regular aircraft from Berlin but was attacked by enemy aircraft shortly before Munich. It sustained hits from 40

bullets, but landed safely. Four days later, on 19 April, Ju 52/3m D-ASPI (6710) began what turned out to be the last flight to Milan, followed two days later by the final flight out of the Italian city.

Munich was occupied by the Americans on 30 April. The day before, the Lufthansa management — under the leadership of director Hans M. Bongers — decided to move further south. Merkel landed with D-ALOS *Ernst Heil* (5038) in Holzkirchen, where the aircraft was seized by a single American soldier stationed on the airfield. The crew was allowed to return home. A second and then a third aircraft, possibly D-ASPI, was flown by Capt Drexel to Prien on the Chiemsee, where one of the two became stuck in the soft ground. A final flight from the south of Germany was made on 28 April with one of the governmental Ju 52/3ms, bound for Schleswig.

Events followed a similar pattern in Austria. The Berlin-Prague-Vienna-Zagreb route had been suspended on 6 April, with Soviet troops approaching Vienna's Aspern airport. Ju 52/3m D-AHCF flew that day from Vienna to Linz-Enns, from where the service was resumed. The last departure from Zagreb was on 21 April by D-AOCB *Eduard von Bildring* (640999). ➤

“On arriving safely, a Canadian soldier told them, ‘Be happy — you are home, the war is finished’”

ABOVE: A sad end befell this Ju 52/3m, D-AYGX *Johannes Hörold*, pictured at Budaörs airport in Hungary. On 22 October 1942, Capt Julius Nimis took off from Budapest in this aircraft for a flight to Belgrade and crashed at full power into a mountain. All 14 passengers and the three crew members were killed.

VIA TADEUSZ DOBROWIECKI



ABOVE: A classic study illustrating the end of Deutsche Lufthansa as an airline. The fact that the carrier worked for the Nazi regime and contributed to the war effort meant it had to be closed down. These are the remains of Ju 52/3m D-AMFR Ludwig Hautz Mayer at Tempelhof in 1945.
VIA HANS-HEIRI STAPPER

Ju 52/3m D-AOAW (7490) proceeded from Linz-Enns to Prague and returned two days later to Linz-Hörsching. The last three Ju 52/3ms in Linz, D-AOCB, D-AOAW and D-ACDA, were evacuated on 4 May. Capt Vogel flew D-AOAW to Bad Ischl and Capt Christiansen continued to Aigen, where a local SS officer who wanted to fly 16 partisans to Romania confiscated the aeroplane. A Luftwaffe pilot was able to stop this plan, but instead crashed the Junkers during a night take-off. Christiansen transferred another aircraft to Zell-am-See, where it was to be put at the disposal of a general and his staff. Again, it got stuck in the soft ground, and American troops arrived before this situation could be rectified. Capt Buntrock flew D-ACDA from Bad Ischl to Zinkenbach near St Gilgen on the Wolfgangsee. Additional petrol tanks were fitted, but they were not installed in time to beat the arrival of US forces. The aircraft was destroyed by American machine gun fire on 9 June.

Berlin was now in desperate straits. The Soviets began their relentless shelling of the city on 16 April. Lufthansa director Luz ordered all remaining aircraft to be ready to leave on the 22nd. Ju 52/3m D-AKUA Eberhard Klix (6840),

along with several other types, left Tempelhof that evening and flew at low altitude to Warnemünde. The machine was flown by Capt Tusch and had more than 30 people on board. Capt Schneehage escaped with D-AUAV *Julius Nimis* (641038) the next day, also carrying a large number of passengers. When Hitler committed suicide on 30 April, all aircraft were transferred to Flensburg, where the new leader of the German government, Admiral Dönitz, had his headquarters.

On 3 May, Schneehage flew D-AUAV from Flensburg to Copenhagen and Malmö and back. Tusch performed some courier flights between Oslo and Aalborg

with D-AFFF between 25 April and 2 May. The last recorded Lufthansa Ju 52/3m flight was made on 5 May, when Tusch managed to return with D-AFFF to Flensburg.

But there was one more flight, albeit unofficial. On 8 May, Capt Fritz Bernard took off in D-AFFF for Oslo and landed there without difficulty. The next day, the crew headed back to Fornebu airport, where their aircraft was still parked, and left for Flensburg. On arriving safely, a Canadian soldier told them, "Be happy — you are home, the war is finished". So too were operations by this incarnation of Deutsche Lufthansa, and its greatest workhorse.



LUFTHANSA Ju 52/3m FLEET STATUS

Year	In service at year start	Additions	Written off	Disposed of	In service at year end
1939	73	26	4	17	78
1940	78	6	1	3	80
1941	80	7	20	1	66
1942	66	2	19	2	47
1943	47	3	8	1	41
1944	41	15	16	0	40
1945	40	0	40	0	n/a

The figures above come from Lufthansa sources, and cannot be confirmed as completely correct.