

ARIZONA AIRWAYS INC.

A CHRONOLOGICAL ACCOUNT 1942 TO 1950

Copyright © 2004 by Ken Schultz

Arizona Airways was organized by H. O. "Rocky" Nelson^{1 2} and incorporated September 8, 1942 in Arizona.³ The principal place of business being Safford, Arizona. The incorporators were H. O. "Rocky" Nelson,-President, James E. McEldowney,-Vice President, and Timothy O'Connor,-Treasurer. The Articles of Incorporation stated "... The general nature of the business which shall be transacted is to maintain and operate an air flying service, and to transport freight, passengers, baggage, mail, and express by aircraft, to train pilots under the Civilian Pilot Training, Private Pilot Training, or other service that will further the war effort ... " ⁴

The Civil Aeronautics Board (CAB) Reports, Volume 9, Economic Decisions (Jan-Dec 1948) Docket No. 968, Arizona-New Mexico Case, Decided February 13, 1948, p 120, records; "...H.O. Nelson, a licensed commercial pilot ⁵ who has flown over 1,500 hours, has a background of some 20 years of responsible business experience. From 1928 to 1932 he was president of State Development Company, a California agricultural project. In 1932 he formed and became president of the Nelson Engineering Corporation, which engaged in mechanical engineering in the field of diesel engine generating equipment for mines, mills, factories, etc. This organization was expanded in 1937 and its name changed to the Venn-Severin Diesel Distributors Inc. with Mr. Nelson as president. In 1941 he resigned to organize a Navy flight school.

... Arizona Airways operated a Navy Preliminary Flight School from September 1942 to August 1944, and had the best Navy rating of any of the 17 Navy Preliminary Flight schools in the Sixth Region (Arizona, California, Nevada, and Utah). ... " ⁶

The CAB announced on July '11, 1944, that it was initiating an "Experiment" to expand air transportation to smaller cities by new carriers to be designated as feeder carriers.⁷ So after the Navy cancelled the flight training program in August 1944, "Rocky", who wanted to start an airline, devoted his efforts to establishing a local air transportation system in Arizona.

¹ H. O. "Rocky" Nelson was born in Sisseton, South Dakota. Reference South Dakota Department of Vital Statistics. Certificate of Birth, Hillis Orville Nelson, born April 20, 1904.

² *The Phoenix Gazette*. Funeral Notice, March 7, 1951. Hillis Orville (Rocky) Nelson. [Died in Tucson, AZ. March 6, 1951]

³ Arizona Corporations Commission. Phoenix, Arizona. Note: The incorporators signed the document on September 1, 1942, but it was not received and recorded until September 8, 1942, so the official date of the Corporation is September 8, 1942.

⁴ Arizona Airways Inc., Articles of Incorporation.

⁵ Commercial Pilot Certificate No. 312940. Dated October 6, 1947. Reference: FAA Airmen Certification Branch, Oklahoma City, OK. 73125

⁶ *Civil Aeronautics Board Reports*, Volume 9, Economic Decisions (Jan-Dec 1948) Docket 968, p. 120.

⁷ *Civil Aeronautics Board Reports*, Volume 6, Economic Decisions (July 1944 to May 1946) Docket No. 857, INVESTIGATION OF LOCAL, FEEDER, AND PICK-UP AIR SERVICE, pp. 1-57.

"Rocky" moved to Phoenix, Arizona in 1945.^{1 2}

On July 11, 1945, the Articles of Incorporation of Arizona Airways were amended to show the principal place of business as Phoenix, Arizona.³

On September 17, 1945, the Arizona Corporation Commission issued Arizona Airways a certificate of convenience and necessity to become a common carrier by air over the airplanes and airways of the State of Arizona.⁴

On Sunday, March 17, 1946; Arizona Airways inaugurated intrastate service^{5 6} with a DC-3 that had recently been converted from a World War II surplus C-47.⁷ Two more C-47's were purchased and converted to DC-3's for passenger service.⁸ A fourth C-47 was purchased but not converted for passenger service, but left in the military interior-cargo/troop transport configuration with the heavy cargo floor and fold down bucket seats. It was sold to the U.S. Department of Agriculture in January 1949.⁹

The CAB scheduled hearings in Albuquerque, New Mexico, from August 12, 1946, to August 21, 1946, for all interested parties in the Arizona-New Mexico Case, Docket No. 968 et al, "for consideration of applications for certificates, or amendments of existing certificates, of public convenience authorizing air transportation in the Arizona-New Mexico area."

Arizona Airways had previously applied in their Docket No. 2295 (which was combined with all other applicants under the CAB Docket No. 968 et al) and presented their testimony, and also a brief to the examiner October 28, 1946.

The CAB in the decision of February 13, 1948, Arizona-New Mexico Case, Docket 968 et al, awarded Arizona Airways a temporary certificate of public necessity and convenience. "... after the appropriate showing indicated in the opinion hereto as to the adequacy of airport facilities and provided that Arizona Airways, Inc., prior to such issuance, and in no event later than 6 months after this order, makes a satisfactory showing as to rearrangement of its financial structure, authorizing it to engage in air transportation with respect to persons, property, and mail for a period of 3 years from the date of issuance,..."¹⁰

¹ *The Arizona Republic*. Funeral Notice, Wednesday, March 7, 1951. H.O. (Rocky) Nelson.

² *Arizona Weekly Gazette*. Obituary, Friday, March 9, 1951. H.O. (Rocky) Nelson.

³ Arizona Corporations Commission. Phoenix, Arizona.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ *The Arizona Republic*. Monday, March 18, 1946, pp. 1,6.

⁶ *ARIZONA HIGHWAYS*. May 1947, pp. 6,7,14.

⁷ Federal Aviation Administration. Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Aircraft Records. DC-3, NC 57985, SN. 19996.

⁸ *Ibid.* Aircraft Records. DC-3, NC 64910, SN. 20062, and DC-3, NC 75028, SN. 6053.

⁹ *Ibid.* Aircraft Records. DC-3, NC 75029, SN. 6156.

¹⁰ *Civil Aeronautics Board Reports*, Volume 9, Economic Decisions (January to December 1948) p. 112.

February 26, 1948. "Rocky" Nelson stated, "all Arizona Airways flights will be cancelled as of March 1, 1948. Planes and terminals will have to be radio equipped and otherwise brought up to CAA specifications." ¹

On June 29, 1948, the CAB issued a Temporary Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Arizona Airways for a period of three years, to be known as Route No. 93. ²

A stock offering was made to provide capital to start up operations with the CAB certificate, but was not successful.

The three remaining DC-3's were stored at the Phoenix airport until they were purchased by Monarch Air Lines in 1949, ferried to Denver, Colorado and overhauled by Monarch Air Lines.

On June 18, 1949, the Executive Committee of Arizona Airways; H.O. Nelson, Robert Goldwater, James A. Murphy, J.D. Merrill, J.G. Bulla, and J.E. McEldowney, and Monarch Air Lines Treasurer, C.A. Myhre, signed an agreement for the acquisition of Arizona Airways by Monarch Air Lines.

On July 7, 1949, Monarch Air Lines, and Arizona Airways, filed an application before the CAB "For approval under sections 408 and 412 of the Civil Aeronautics Act of 1938, as amended, of the acquisition by Monarch Air Lines, Inc. of all of the issued and outstanding stock of Arizona Airways, Inc. and the merger or consolidation of the two Corporations." Signed by Ray M. Wilson, Executive Vice President, Monarch Air Lines Inc., and H.O. Nelson, President of Arizona Airways Inc.

Hal S. Darr: Proposes Three-Way Feeder Merger. ³ Hal S. Darr president of Monarch Air Lines has asked the CAB to approve merger of Monarch with Arizona Airways and Challenger Airlines. In aviation 32 years, Darr has been active in airports and flight schools... If the CAB approves the proposal, ... it will create an extensive single-carrier feeder system stretching from Montana to Mexico...

April 10, 1950, the CAB approved the acquisition of Arizona Airways Inc., by Monarch Airlines Inc., on Order Serial No. E-4050.

May 15, 1950, the CAB approved the merger - consolidation between Monarch, Challenger, and Arizona Airways, to form **Frontier Airlines**. ⁴

On June 1, 1950, **Frontier Airlines** inaugurated service on the combined routes of the three merged Airlines. ⁵

FOR FURTHER REASEARCH: ^{6 7}

¹ *Mojave Miner*. Kingman, Arizona. February 26, 1948.

² *Civil Aeronautics Board*. Order Serial Number E-1733. 29 day of June, 1948.

³ *American Aviation*. October 15, 1949, pp. 1,27.

⁴ *Civil Aeronautics Board Reports*. Volume 11, Economic Decisions (December 1949 to August 1950) pp. 1096, 1097.

⁵ *The Denver Post*, June 1, 1950, pg. 1, col.'s 7,8.

⁶ Denver Public Library. Western History Department. Frontier Airlines Collection.

⁷ Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona. Hayden Library. Arizona Airways Collection.