



RAYMOND J. ELLIS

Raymond J. Ellis was born at Adona, Perry County, Arkansas, March 28, 1905. At the age of six his family moved to Hugo, Oklahoma, where he completed his high school studies. He continued his education at Oklahoma A & M College, now Oklahoma State University, at Stillwater. Ellis was an outstanding end on the college football team. During his senior year in 1929 he received an Honorable Mention on the Missouri Valley Conference All-Star team.

After a stint as a science teacher and athletic coach at Haskell, Oklahoma, Ellis joined the Pure Oil Company. He soloed in a 40 horsepower J-2 Piper Cub from Hatbox Field, Muskogee, Oklahoma, in 1937. He later attended the Spartan School of Aeronautics in Tulsa where he received his commercial and instrument ratings.

On October 1, 1940, Ellis founded Fayetteville Flying Service and moved to Fayetteville, Arkansas. He brought with him his young bride Sallye Margaret Chadwell. Sallye Margaret not only married a husband, she married a career as well. She has been a vital force in the aviation business the two built together. During the years of World War II, Fayetteville Flying Service provided flight training for the CPT program and the 10 hour indoctrination course for aviation cadets.

After the war, Ellis continued his flight training for ROTC cadets at the University, and directed his efforts to selling the benefits of aviation to Northwest Arkansas.

September 1, 1953, marked the first scheduled flight of Scheduled Skyways, with Ellis as pilot. The Cessna 195 departed Fayetteville Drake Field en route to Little Rock's Adams Field. Two decades later a group of investors acquired the airline, and began the expansion program that has made Scheduled Skyways one of the outstanding commuter airlines in the nation, and the second oldest in operation.

In addition to the many honors bestowed on Ray Ellis in his business and civic work, these stand out: President of the Fayetteville Rotary Club, President of the Fayetteville Chamber of Commerce. In 1969 he was appointed by Governor Win Rockefeller to fill an unexpired term on the Arkansas Aeronautics Commission. In 1971 Governor Dale Bumpers reappointed him to serve a full five year term. During 1972 he served as Chairman of the Commission. Ray Ellis has been a great influence in the development of aviation and airports in the state of Arkansas and the nation.