

OBITUARIES

Frank W. Hulse III, 79, former Southern Airways chairman

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Frank W. Hulse III of Birmingham, former chairman of Atlanta-based Southern Airways, died of Parkinson's disease Thursday at Baptist Medical Center Montclair in Birmingham. He was 79.

The U.S. aviation pioneer had suffered from Parkinson's since 1966. "He had a good long run of dealing with it," a relative said.

The funeral will be at at 1 p.m. Saturday at Luke's Episcopal Church in Birmingham, with burial at Elmwood Cemetery there.



1975

Mr. Hulse's Southern Air- **Frank W. Hulse III**

ways operated from a base at Atlanta's Hartsfield Airport for 30 years, from 1949 to 1979. That year Mr. Hulse merged it with North Central Airlines, creating Republic Airlines. He became Republic vice chairman. Seven years later, in 1986, he and other Republic stockholders sold it to Northwest Airlines for \$884 million.

Southern began with a single World War II-surplus DC-3 flying along a route from Memphis to Atlanta to Birmingham. By 1952, it linked Atlantans with 33 cities. Eventually Southern served 17 states and the Cayman Islands and had 3,000 employees.

Mr. Hulse decided on a merger in 1979 because "he was smart enough to see that the airline industry was changing, and Southern was too small to survive," according to airport spokesman John Braden.

The Southern chairman "took a look at putting it together with Piedmont [Airlines], but that would have just joined two neighbors, while merging with North Central joined one entire region

ued as chairman of Southern Airways Co., which still operates Hangar One executive aircraft facilities in eight Southern cities, including Atlanta — at Hartsfield, Charlie Brown and DeKalb-Peachtree airports.

Frank Wilson Hulse III was born Sept. 12, 1912, in North Augusta, S.C. As a youth, he did odd jobs at Augusta's Daniel Field in exchange for flying lessons.

He founded Southern Airways Co. in Augusta at age 17 in 1929, giving flying lessons, and rides in his plane for a penny a pound.

He graduated from Georgia Tech in 1934, then returned to Augusta in a triple role as president of his company, manager of Daniel Field, and Delta Airlines station manager.

He moved his company headquarters to Birmingham in 1938, and to Atlanta in 1942. Southern Airways Co. trained fixed-wing and helicopter pilots for the armed forces in World War II, Korean War and Vietnam War.

He founded Southern Airways Inc., a second company to serve as a commercial airline, in 1943. Six years passed before he raised enough funds from investors, and received Civil Aeronautics Board approval in 1949.

Mr. Hulse belonged to the Georgia and Alabama aviation halls of fame.

He was a board member of Fuqua Industries, American Fidelity Life Insurance Co. and Associated Distributors Inc.; a former board member of the Air Transport Association; and also a member of Rotary, Atlanta's Capital City Club and Commerce Club, and St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Birmingham.

Surviving in addition to his son in Atlanta are a daughter, Bonnie Young of Birmingham; a brother, John C. Hulse of Palm Beach, Fla.; and two grandchildren.