

Continuation of the DC-6 story started in NetLetter nr 1531 through 1536.

Jet Way Inc. alias Markair Transport.

K & C Corporation had acquired the aircraft for associated company Jet Way Inc., which was an executive jet operator flying Lear Jets as freighters out of Detroit's famous Willow Run Airport.

Willow Run was a 'propliner mecca' at the time, home base of the large fleets of Zantop, Trans Continental and others which flew their aircraft in support of Detroit's automobile industry, flying in car components from plants all over the eastern United States and Canada to keep the huge assembly lines churning out Fords, Chevrolets, Chryslers and other notable American marques of the era.

From their offices at Willow Run Airport, the directors of Jet Way Inc could see these fleets of DC-6's, Convairs, Electras, DC-8's and others plying in and out, and decided to get in on this action, acquiring their own fleet of five DC-6's and two DC-8's.

One of the chosen DC-6's was our subject aircraft, now registered N646DG, which was to experience quite a career change, forsaking the frozen Arctic tundra for hauling car parts around the eastern United States.

N646DG was ferried from Yellowknife to Dothan, Alabama, where it underwent considerable work and a full overhaul by Hayes International Corporation. Its passenger interior fittings were removed and it was converted to a pure freighter and fitted with upgraded avionics.

It was resprayed into a scheme of natural metal lower fuselage, white upper fuselage and tail, and a green and gold cheat line. It did not carry any titles. Thus modified, it received anew C of A on May 31, 1979 (total time recorded as 29,035 hours) and entered service out of Willow Run Airport alongside Jet Way's other aircraft.

The registration was changed from N646DG to N555JW on August 27, 1979. Jet Way Inc. used the trade name of Mark Air Transport for its car parts freighter division, although no titles were carried on the aircraft.

The writer fondly recalls his visit to Willow Run Airport in October 1979, when in the course of a day's 'spotting' there were noted four DC-6's of Mark Air Transport (including N555JW), eight DC-6's and one C46 Commando of Trans Continental, four DC-3's of Mannion Air Charter, and no less than twelve DC-6's, thirteen Convair 640's and thirteen Electras of Zantop.

This was certainly the heyday of the propeller aircraft serving the car industry at "Motor City".

Sometime later, by Bill of Sale dated November 1, 1981, K & C Corporation transferred ownership of N555JW to Jet Way Inc., and it was registered to this company on February 26, 1982, but it had been earning its keep with Jet Way/Mark Air since June 1979.

During 1983 Jet Way Inc was sold to Connie Kalitta Services Inc., another major presence at the Willow Run Airport, with a fleet of cargo Lear Jets and Volpar Turboliners.

The new owners closed the company down, kept the Lear Jets and sold everything else. Evidently Connie Kalitta had no need for the DC-6's, and managed to sell three of the Jet Way aircraft, including N555JW, to one buyer.

By Bill of Sale dated April 27 1983, N555JW (together with N2904F & N3022F) were sold to Conifair Aviation Inc. Our subject was to return to Canada, on this occasion to Quebec, where once again it would be given a new role.