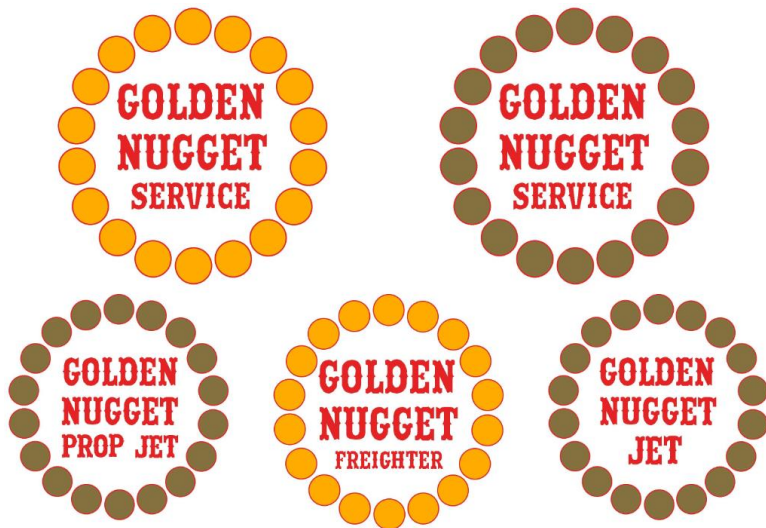




Inaugural jet service to Sitka, 1967.

For most of the 1960s, the logo was Golden Nugget Service. On the tail of the aircraft, “service” was replaced according to the type of aircraft. Illustrations by Mike Tobin.



An unofficial & incomplete history of Alaska Airlines tail logo 1972-2016

Mike.tobin@alaskaair.com

Rev July 16, 2020 with Hawaiian Airlines logo slide

Member of the volunteer archive committee.

This is not authoritative in any way.

Cast & Characters: The Spirit of Alaska Airlines

Copyright © 2008 by Robert J. Serling.




Selected excerpts from the corporate history:

“It began in 1970 when [Charlie] Willis and [Bob] Giersdorf were experimenting with four different logos to replace the airline’s aging Golden Nugget insignia.” ...
 “Giersdorf had turned to Bert Norby, who was an account executive with the now defunct ad agency that created what Nordby called “The Four Cultures” concept.”

Serling spends nearly two pages on “who is the Eskimo,” with no conclusion. The only name mentioned is Chester Sevak, “...although both Willis and Giersdorf firmly denied using him as a model.”

The book also implies the 4 logos never actually flew, but that is incorrect, all did on 727s. Photos exist showing the Eskimo also on 720/707s. The Sourdough on a Convair, and the Totem on a Goose.

In January 1972, the new "Alaska Airlines" logo and 4 images debuted in advertising. Seattle Times, 1/23/72



Alaska!

Alaska is Eskimo. Parkas and kayaks. And great white bears padding softly across ice flows. **Alaska is Indian.** Totems and colorful ceremonial houses in green forest settings. **Alaska is Russian.** Onion domes and Orthodox priests. And Cossack dancers in Sitka. **Alaska is Gold Rush.** Panning gold. Rushing rivers beside narrow pioneer trails. And old-time saloons.

Alaska is thriving cities and quiet villages. **Alaska is wilderness.** Giant mountains overshadowed by even larger mountains. Hundred-mile-long fjords and glaciers rumbling and crashing to the sea.

Alaska is all that you've heard about and read about and dreamed about. And more. Fill out this coupon—and we'll send you all the information you'll need on the exact Alaska you want. Free. It's as quick and simple as that.

Alaska Airlines

Mall for Alaska Airlines, Inc.
Dept. B27012
Seattle-Tacoma International Airport
Seattle, Washington 98158

Please send me free Alaska tour information.

I prefer to travel on prearranged, comprehensive tours:

on an individual basis
 with an escorted tour group

Air Cruise Ship Combination Air/Sea
 Motor Coach
 I will be driving or traveling on my own itinerary.

Specific interests: Arctic Tours Sport Fishing
 Extension to Siberia/Russia Skiing
 Mt. McKinley National Park Winter Tours
 White Pass & Yukon Railroad Glacier Bay Natl. Monument

Name _____
Address _____
City _____
State _____ Zip _____

Seattle Times, 7/31/72
launched the images on
aircraft.



Presenting the beautiful birds.

No other airline in the world has planned like this. No stereotypes here. No tacky silk pins. These pins are Alaska. Each one, in its own way, capturing the great and colorful spirit of this Coast Land. Each one is being color-reproduced on the inside to help you reflect the Alaskan experience on the outside of the plane.

And each jet tells a story of Alaska that's uniquely its own.

- 1. Eskimo Alaska** is the tail of one of our planes. It is a combination of a strong, tough and proud people—the original Alaskans. The color could be anything but the vibrant blue of the summer sky. Inside: carping, seals and diptera are also blue—created by the same gold of the summer sun that never sets.
- 2. Russian Alaska.** The onion domes of old-world Russia are the classic example of early Russian influence on Alaska. The domes stand today throughout the state as they do in Moscow—an evidence of the depth of our common past. Inside: the regal purple accents they represent on.
- 3. Gold Rush Alaska.** What better symbol of bold, lonely Gold Rush Alaska than the brave 1897 prospector in silhouette?
- 4. Indian Alaska.** Our design goal was to demonstrate the creative traditions of the Alaskan Indian. The answer was obvious: the Alaska totem, depicted in silk.

natural grace of the vibrant Northwest Alaska totem. That's the story.

The new beautiful birds of Alaska Airlines. But it's only a small part of Alaska Airlines' commitment to better service for Alaska.

We're going to be the best airline in the world. For Alaska. We believe it. And Alaskans everywhere have a say in the way.

For reservations and more information call your travel agent or Alaska Airlines: 746-9000.

Alaska Airlines

And we have more beautiful birds inside.



No other airline in the world has planes like Alaska Airlines. Our jets are Alaska.

Each, in its own way, captures the great and colorful spirit of this Great Land.

Each jet is color coordinated on the inside to fulfill and reflect the Alaska experience shown on the outside of the plane.

And each jet tells a story of Alaska that's uniquely its own.

Eskimo Alaska. The Eskimo is emblematic of a strong, tough and proud people—the original Alaskans. The color could be nothing but the cobalt blue of summer skies. Inside, the carpeting, seats and drapes are also blue, touched by the gold of summer sun that never sets.



Russian Alaska. The onion domes of old-world Russia are the classic example of early Russian influence.

The domes stand today throughout the state as evidence of the depth of our czarist past. Inside and out, the royalist purple accents this opulent era.

Gold Rush Alaska. There is no better symbol of bold, bawdy Gold Rush Alaska than the brave 1800's prospector in strike-it-rich red.



Indian Alaska. Here we demonstrate the creative traditions of the Alaskan Indian—the Alaska totem. Depicted in the rich, natural green of the verdant Southeast Alaska forest.



That's the story.

The new beautiful birds of Alaska Airlines.

But it's only a symbol of Alaska Airlines' commitment to be a better airline for Alaska.

We're going to be the best airline in the world. For Alaska. We believe it. And Alaskans wouldn't have it any other way.

Alaska Airlines



And we have more beautiful birds inside.

(top) Alaska Airlines introduced its new aircraft look and flight attendant uniforms with this "Four Culture" brochure celebrating the "Spirit of Alaska" theme. Advertising executive Bert Nordby, of Cole & Weber Seattle, created the brochure.

(bottom) The tails of the four different "Spirit of Alaska" Boeing 727s included: the 1890s Gold Rush depicted in a red portrait of a prospector; the face of an Alaska Eskimo represented the northern native cultures; a green totem face showcased the Southeast native culture; and the domes of a Russian Orthodox church displayed Alaska's Russian heritage.

Left, page 141 of
"Alaska Airlines – A Visual Celebration"
© 2012 by Cliff & Nancy Hollenbeck.

This shows the 4 representations of Alaska and how they appeared on 727s.



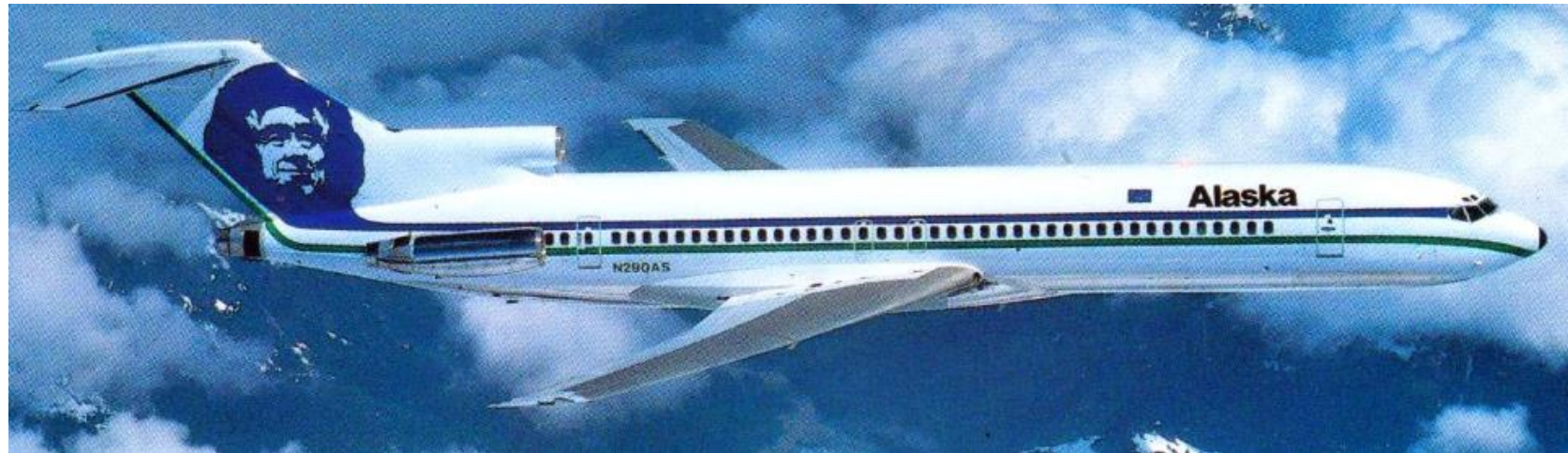
Timetable
Effective April 4 to May 14, 1977

Alaska Airlines



In 1976, the company decided only one image made sense on the small fleet, and went with the Eskimo. The stern look was tweaked to be a smile.

This led to a brighter livery with the 727-200s starting in 1978, and then an entire campaign called "Fly With A Happy Face."





Embellishments to the logo.

All photos and text from
Alaska's World
August 23, 2007
By Don Conrard

A man of many faces

Donning a lei isn't the first time Alaska has put decals on the Eskimo to help promote new service by the airline. When Alaska Airlines launched intra-California service in the late 1980s, the Eskimo wore sunglasses as part of the "California Dreamin'" campaign. In the mid-1990s, cartoon-like speaking bubbles were added showing the Eskimo saying "Thanks" and "Gotta Go" — taglines from the original "Alaska's World" television commercials.



All dressed up and ready to go

Eskimo gets into "aloha spirit" to promote Hawaii service

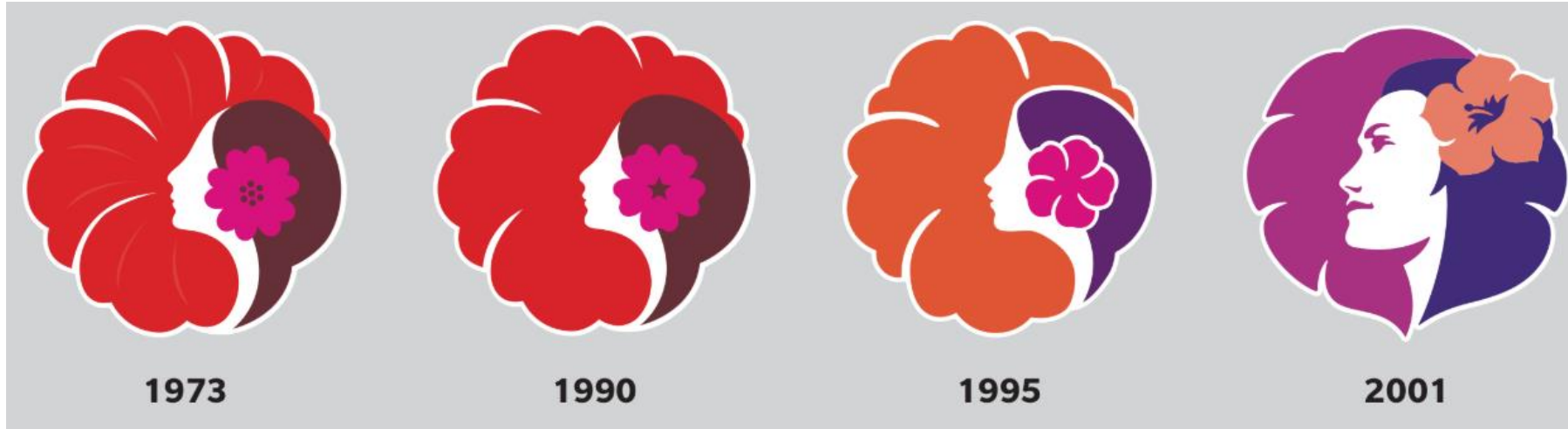
The first aircraft to sport the new lei decal rolled into service this morning on a flight to Anchorage. When Alaska Airlines' Eskimo lands in Hawaii this fall he'll be dressed in style, wearing a brightly colored lei around his trademark fur parka.

Plans call for the decals to be applied to all 10 of the airline's ETOPS-equipped 737-800s delivered by November. Each aircraft's Eskimo will wear them for the next six to eight months.

"These aircraft will truly be head-turners," said Greg Latimer, managing director of brand and product marketing. "We can't think of a more dramatic or cost-effective way to advertise Alaska Airlines' new service to the islands."

The airline is launching daily service between Seattle and Honolulu on Oct. 12 and from Seattle to Kauai on Oct. 28. Seasonal Anchorage-Honolulu flights begin Dec. 9.

Hawaiian Airlines is the only U.S. Airline with a human image on their tails.



A New Look for Pualani

We are unveiling a refreshed logo, livery and overall creative look that honors Pualani and the Hawaiian hospitality she represents. We aimed to retain the essence of our brand and move forward with a bolder, truer expression of our unique identity.

Pualani, with her welcoming smile and proud gaze, embodies our culture even more clearly. Known as the “flower of the sky,” Pualani is now framed by the rising sun, watching over our guests and crew along their journey. To celebrate her regal status, we are featuring purple more prominently in our color palette, complemented by an updated graphical style that reflects our reputation as a premium, global brand.

Pualani has always been our beacon of Hawaiian hospitality. While her appearance has changed throughout the years, she remains a promise to our guests that we offer something no other airline can - the warmth, care and generosity that are hallmarks of our Hawaiian culture. Now, more than ever, our commitment to elevated service continues to be our competitive edge.

<https://www.hawaiianairlines.com/brand-refresh>



Paulani - Means "heavenly flower" or "royal offspring" from Hawaiian *pua* "flower, offspring" and *lani* "heaven, sky, royal, majesty".

<https://www.behindthename.com/name/pualani>



1972

SPRIT OF ALASKA

A new paint scheme representing the spirit of The Last Frontier state emerges, honoring Alaska's Russian heritage, the gold rush era, Native traditions and the people of the far north. The Ula-Biklane Doo (Eskimo) on the tail of some of the airline's 737s. Four years later, a new attitude toward customer service greets the Biklane to Alaska.

1990s

TECHNOLOGICAL FIRSTS

Alaska is the first airline to sell tickets via the Internet. Alaska concludes to build a reputation for innovation, from cutting-edge GPS navigation systems to its award-winning mobile app; from self-check baggage service to remote airports with using fingerprint ID for checking in.

2008

RATED TOPS

Alaska earns the firm of eight consecutive J.D. Power awards ranking it "Highest in Customer Satisfaction Among Traditional Network Carriers." Also, FlightStats Inc. recognized Alaska recently as the No. 1 North American carrier for on-time performance for the sixth year in a row.

2016

NEW LOOK

Smiles, more spacious and a focus on caring service lead to a fresh new look for the airline that includes our aircraft, uniforms, website, digital channels, baggage fees, credit card and much more.

Who is that smiling Eskimo? Look for "The Face on the Tail," an investigative film, at alaskaair.com/welcome.



1980s

ROUTE EXPANSION

With the Alaska Development Act of 1978, Alaska begins expanding its route system. First into San Francisco and Southern California. More aircraft and the purchase of Boeing 747 help take them throughout the Pacific Northwest and into Western Canada, Arizona and Mexico.



This has been an unofficial and incomplete history of the Alaska Airlines logo from 1972 to current.

<https://blog.alaskaair.com/alaska-airlines/about-brand-refresh/#jp-carousel-4323>

The following slides touch on the controversial and contentious “who is the Eskimo” debate.

“The very uniqueness of that tail insignia has helped set the airline apart from other carriers. It symbolizes the company’s heritage, traditions, and commitment to being a little different from and often a little better than anyone else.”

-page 13

“Eskimos and Alaskans in general are a resourceful, proud people. So it is entirely possible that the little smile on the face adorning the tails of more than 100 modern jetliners is one of pride. After all, the flying Eskimo symbolizes a very proud and resourceful airline that happens to be grateful for its ancestral roots.”

-page 15

Cast & Characters: The Spirit of Alaska Airlines

Copyright © 2008 by Robert J. Serling.

In 1988, Vic Warren is quoted in the PI: "The Eskimo came from an airline's photo of an Alaska native used in some ads."

Seattle Post-Intelligencer

January 15, 1988

(in a story about the designers of the controversial proposed mountain tail logo, and then current Eskimo logo:

Vic Warren, a partner in the Seattle ad agency WBA Inc., said he designed the Eskimo logo in 1973 when he worked for another Seattle agency. He was creative director and recalls that Alaska Airlines had just moved its headquarters to Seattle from Alaska and wanted to assuage the feelings of "ticked off" Alaskans as well as get a stronger, more professional image. The company had red velour and gold tassel graphics and was known as a "bawdy, fun-loving airline."

"We wanted to come up with something that didn't look like every other airline" and a photo on the airplane tail was discussed. The Eskimo came from an airline's photo of an Alaska native used in some ads. Airline officials said the Eskimo wasn't enough and the ad agency also designed logos of a gold digger, a totem and domes of Russian Orthodox churches. All four were used on Alaska Airlines plane tails for a time.

"It was exciting doing something that large. When the first planes were rolled out, the airline employees were very positive," Warren said. "The one most people recognized and responded to was the Eskimo" and the others were dropped after three years of use.

"I can kind of understand the airline is growing beyond Alaska," he said. "But if they drop the Eskimo, they should drop the name Alaska, too. That positions them as much as the symbol."

Warren said Patterson's new logo "is a nice design but not unique." The Eskimo "turns heads."

In 2013, however, Vic Warren posted on his web site:

<http://www.vicwarren.com/fly-with-a-happy-face>

Back in 1973, when I designed the Eskimo, an elderly Eskimo gentleman in Kotzebue was working as a greeter for the airline on its Arctic Tours. You got off the plane in Kotzebue and he was one of the folks who came up and helped you into a fur-trimmed parka to protect you from the cold. It was sort of an Eskimo version of the Hawaiian lei.

We had photos of him and others during the welcoming procedure. I used one of those photos as the basis for the art. His name was Chester Seveck Downey.



START HERDING TOURISTS

In the year of 1954 July 7th, the Gov't. have me retired from Reindeer Service. Right after I retired the Wien Airlines, Frank Whaley, have me to take a job to taking care the tourists come to Kotzebue for every summertime only. In winter time we go with Frank Whaley and Wien Airlines have us take to traveling to the States, what we called promotion tour. We traveling all big cities almost all over United States.

...

When the spring come, we started to work for Wien Airlines at Kotzebue. We be tour guides.

In Sept. we went to Fairbanks and then we go outside to take the tourist promotion trip for Wien Airlines. Every summer 4 months, we works for Wien Airlines tour guides and winter time to take the traveling to the States for promotion.

In 1953, Frank Whaley, brother of Jack Whaley, he have me summertime job at Kotzebue to meet the tourists, give them skin boat ride, dog sled ride, see blanket toss and see Eskimo dances, also see skin sewing demonstration and see ivory carving demonstration.

...

In the year of 1964 in Fairbanks, we bought a trailer from Jim Thompson.

OBITUARIES FROM END OF THE TRAIL



Chester A. Seveck

Death: Sunday, January 18, 1981
Alaska

Chester A. Seveck, 91, who was born in Kivalina and who spent many years as a tour guide for Wien Airlines, died January 18 in Fairbanks. [June1981]

END OF THE TRAIL

Notices in this section are limited to names of those who have achieved pioneer status through many years in the North, or who are otherwise of unquestioned importance in the daily scene.

<http://alaskamagazine.com>



Source: *Alaska Sportsman*, June 1981

This obituary is printed here with special permission from the editor and is copyrighted as such.

Vic Warren's web site says the logo was designed in 1973, yet the image was in use in January 1972.

Mike Tobin's *personal* doubts about Chester Seveck as the model:

- 1) He seemed to have only worked for Wien Air Alaska, not Alaska Airlines.
- 2) His (auto)biography makes no claim.
- 3) He seems to have moved from OTZ to FAI in 1964.
- 4) The Seattle Times report of Alaska's June 1980 inaugural back to OME and OTZ says Chester was part of the welcoming celebration. I would think there'd be mention if he was the model.
- 5) The Alaska Airlines advertisement extract is below, compared with the original 727 image. This person was an Alaska Airlines greeter and representative during the 1960s, and whose family has made a claim, Oliver Amouak.

NOTE! There are retirees from that era that believe it is Chester, as there are those who say it is not, and many, many more who claim it is some one else! This is why officially, the image represents all people of the North.



Photo from Alaska Airlines It's Alaska Travel Film and Stage Show brochure.



Photo by Bob Garrard, June 1975
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/23032926@N05/8427461331/>

Seattle Times June 8, 1980

F 6 The Seattle Times Sunday, June 8, 1980

Line makes good on promise

Stanton H. Patty of The Times was a guest on the inaugural flight of Alaska Airlines from Seattle to Nome and Kotzebue.

by Stanton H. Patty
 Times assistant travel editor

OME, Alaska — Alaska Airlines has made good a promise to restore service to the Arctic.

"We'll be back," said O.P. Biesecke, then president of the airline, when Alaska Airlines was forced to suspend service to Nome and Kotzebue January 31, 1975. The Civil Aeronautics Board had removed Alaska from the route.

Biesecke, now retired, stepped to microphone on a windy, cold platform at the Nome airport on recent day, smiled and announced:

"Hello again. We're back."

A few hours later he repeated the greeting in Kotzebue above the Arctic Circle. Crowds estimated at more than 200 persons at both airports cheered. Competitive service had been restored to Alaska's Arctic.

With deregulation of the airline industry, Alaska Airlines now will compete with Wien Air Alaska on the Nome-Kotzebue run in time for the tourist season.

"This flight is something in the nature of a celebration," said Bruce R. Kennedy, Alaska's chairman, president and chief executive officer. "It's great to be back."

What happened back in 1975 was that the C.A.B. decided that Wien should have a monopoly in the Arctic. At the same time, the C.A.B. removed Western Airlines from Southeastern Alaska and granted Alaska Airlines a monopoly there. Now, with deregulation, Alaska and Wien are competitors both in the Arctic and in Southeastern.

Alaska's new service from Anchorage to Nome and Kotzebue began officially last Sunday. Two flights a day are scheduled.

The inaugural flight was the curtain-raiser — a party for all concerned.

"We want to have some fun together," Kennedy told the Nome and Kotzebue audiences.

A new Boeing 727-200 jetliner —

Christenson announced a fully automatic instrument landing.

"The electronics and avionics now have control of the aircraft," he told the passengers.

Old-time bush pilots would have a difficult time believing the wonders built into today's aircraft.

It was that crew of courageous bush pilots who blazed the air

souvenir caps Alaska Airlines had provided for the inaugural.

"Sure," said Jim Johnson, Alaska's vice president of public affairs. "But you have to wear them when your next flight lands."

And then, with a rolling take-off, it was on to Kotzebue in the Arctic.

For newcomers to Alaska, Christenson, with tongue in cheek,



Child at Kotzebue, Alaska

The celebration was similar in bright, chilly Kotzebue (population: 3,000).

Chester Seveck, an ancient reindeer herder, led the Kotzebue Eskimo Dancers in a traditional welcome dance. Mayor Royal Harris of Kotzebue joined Kennedy on the platform.

...re-...
 ...for the return trip to...
 ...Anchorage.
 ...The Arctic is not a distant and...
 ...remote destination any more. Jet-...
 ...liners have changed all that. The...
 ...first tourists of the season began...
 ...arriving in Nome and Kotzebue...
 ...last week.

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TRANS CANADA AUTO TRAIN TRANSPORT LTD.
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n of Alaska.



est vacation spot a-goin'... and you'd be right. views of glaciers, snow-capped mountains, and derness, and tundra with unmatched fishing and hillsides... where gold fever brought thousands ound the turn-of-the-century. Alaska is Russian the United States in 1867. Russian icons and

kas, mukluks, kayaks, spears, dog sleds, huskies, nces and chants performed for visitors. Alaska is st Alaska with a rich cultural heritage of art and nerations.

... oil fields, mining, construction, logging, and and proud of their Great 49th State. They have They have jets, cruise ships, ferry-liners, stream- leds, horses, and hiking trails. And, they extend et's go to Alaska!

ur attractions on morning, afternoon or evening our Travel Agent for details or call Alaska Airlines

IT'S ALASKA



TRAVEL FILM AND STAGE SHOW

- Musical Tour of Alaska through song, dance, and film.
- Authentic Alaskan Eskimo and Indian Dancers.
- Cast of 16 costumed entertainers...live on stage.
- The latest color and sound travel film of Alaska...narrated by **Burl Ives**
- Exciting motion pictures on Alaska big game and fishing.
- An hour and 45 minutes of delightful entertainment.

PRESENTED BY
ALASKA
AIRLINES

KNOW THE HAPPY FACE



OLIVER AMOUAK

Biography of Oliver Amouak
Written by: Granddaughter, Brenda Ritchey

"New To Read
Seattle Times
February 1, 1998

"Know the Happy Face: Oliver Amouak," by Brenda Ritchey (P.O. Box 1256, Auburn, WA 98071-1256, \$17.95 plus \$5 shipping and Washington state sales tax).

A biography of the Eskimo whose portrait appears on the tailfins of Alaska Airlines' fleet. By his granddaughter."

In 2012 Brenda Ritchey posted this video about her book, and her frustration with Alaska Airlines over denying claims and reparations.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Bhe3WI7uF94>

<https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1988-01-13-fi-23638-story.html>

Airline's Plan to Junk Eskimo Logo Stirs Up Some Alaskans

JAN. 13, 1988 12 AM

ASSOCIATED PRESS

SEATTLE — The parka-hooded, smiling Eskimo face emblazoned on the tail of Alaska Airlines planes may soon be replaced by a new emblem, and some Alaskans are incensed. The Alaska Legislature, which went into session on Monday, will consider a resolution asking the Seattle-based airline not to junk the colorful logo for one featuring a stylized mountain, said state Sen. Tim Kelly of Anchorage.

"It may not be the best representation of an Eskimo, but it's our Eskimo," he said. "(Alaskans) feel an affinity with the airline. Alaskans feel it's their airline."

State Senators Voice Support

Alaska's 20 state senators have voiced support for the resolution, he said.

The proposed new logo, created by a consultant hired last year to develop a more universal emblem for the airline, was unveiled in a recent Alaska Airlines newsletter.

The newsletter said some customers have trouble figuring out that the picture on the planes is an Eskimo and it was difficult to use the logo in small size on stationery.

Also, Alaska airlines flies to California and the Southwest, and some potential customers may think the airline flies only within Alaska, said Bruce Kennedy, chairman of Alaska Air Group.

Since the new logo was unveiled, many Alaska Airline employees have opposed the change. Several hundred of them signed a petition to Kennedy urging the Eskimo logo be kept.

"We like our happy face," said Alaska Airlines reservation agent Kim Como in Seattle.

The face is that of the late Chester Seveck, "a reindeer herder and a phenomenal Eskimo dancer" who for years greeted tourists getting off the plane at Kotzebue, Alaska, said state Sen. Willie Hensley, an Eskimo from Kotzebue.

A radio station in Kotzebue, above the Arctic Circle between Nome and Barrow, did a five-minute interview on the controversy with Alaska Airlines spokesman Louis Cancelmi.

Resemblances Seen

Kennedy said the airline for years has gotten comments that the Eskimo face looks like killer Charles Manson, Libyan leader Moammar Kadafi or singers Johnny Cash or Willie Nelson. Comedian Jay Leno joked about it on the Johnny Carson show. But Alaskans aren't laughing.

"The Eskimo is a friendly, human symbol of the north, of the spirit of Alaska," wrote Satch Carlson, an Anchorage Daily News columnist. "Take him off the Alaska planes in favor of some abstract, hip, meaningless design, you're taking one step closer to that impersonal austerity that characterizes most other airlines today."

One Letter of Support

Cancelmi said the company has gotten at least one letter in support of the new logo. "A graphic designer who is related to a pilot thought it was good."

Kennedy says he'll make a decision soon.

"There's no thought of changing the name of Alaska Airlines," he said. "I lived in Alaska for 15 years and consider myself an Alaskan. There is an independence and freewheeling spirit in Alaska that we have claimed as our own corporate culture. The last thing we want to do is lose that."