

Merged Airlines Now Serve 167 Stations

By Kay J. Kennedy

Wien Consolidated Airlines new Boeing 737 twin jet service marks another step in company growth following closely the merger of Wien Alaska Airlines and Northern Consolidated Airlines April 1. The union of these two pioneer "aviation" families trace their ancestries back to earl bush pilot days and air services. Each were among those pushing back Alaska frontiers and laying the foundations for present day aviation in Alaska.

Wien Consolidated Airlines is the largest Alaska-based air carrier. It serves 167 stations, primarily in low-density areas, connecting 8,500 route miles covering approximately 500,000 square miles.

Greater Payload Is New Feature On 737 Twinjet

Through-stop capability of the 111,000-pound version of the Boeing 737 has been improved by increasing the twinjet's maximum landing weight. The short-range jetliner now can dispatch with greater payloads, land up to two tons heavier and take off for the

East-west the system stretches from Whitehorse and Old Crow in the Yukon to Gambell on St. Lawrence Island, 46 miles from Siberia; south-north from Juneau to Point Barrow.

Wien Alaska Airlines was the outgrowth of a series of air services operated by Noel Wien who arrived to fly in the Territory of Alaska in 1924. He established the first scheduled service in Alaska—between Fairbanks and Nome back in 1927. Noel was joined by his brothers Ralph, Fritz and Sigurd to pioneer regular air service in the northern regions.

By 1935 Wien merged with Northern Air Transport of Nome. In 1940 Sigurd took over the presidency and management from Noel. Ferguson Airways of Kotzebue was purchased about 1950. Byers Airways was acquired in 1956, the same year that Pan American's Fairbanks-Nome route was transferred to Wien.

In 1958 eight more upper Yukon River stations had been added. More bush routes were awarded in the 1958 Intra-Alaska Route Case by the Civil Aeronautics Board and in 1963 Wien acquired Pan American's

Fairbanks-Whitehorse-Juneau route, thus bringing the total route mileage to approximately 4,900 miles.

Wien planes flew the first tourists to the Arctic during the 1930s to Wiseman and Ft. Yukon villages and subsequently developed a tour program which now carries more than 5,000 visitors annually to Nome-Kotzebue, Barrow, and Ft. Yukon.

Following World War II, Raymond I. Petersen, who had arrived to fly in Alaska in 1934, saw that the many little individual air services would not be able to survive in the new aviation era. He pulled together six of these pioneer companies and later (1955) acquired a seventh, Bristol Bay Air Service, at a tax sale. The original six were: Petersen's own Petersen Flying Service, Jim Dodson Air Service, Northern Airways, Walatka Air Service, Gillam Air and Northern Air Service.

Northern Consolidated Airlines was incorporated in 1946 and received CAB approval in 1947. Additional bush routes were awarded to the company in the 1958 Intra-Alaska Route Case and in 1963 CAB awarded the

Anchorage-Illiamna-Big Mountain-King Salmon-Dillingham-Bethel route to NCA.

Recently CAB awarded a direct Anchorage-Fairbanks route authority between these two largest Alaska cities. Wien's application for a Juneau-Minneapolis-St. Paul-Chicago route has been pending since 1966.

Both carriers have been alert to new aircraft suitable for northern flying. Each has been operating Pilatus Porters and Twin Otters for bush work. NCA also has a Harland Short Skyvan.

Sigurd Wien is president of the merged company and Raymond I. Petersen is chairman of the board. Other officers are:

Fritz Wien—Vice President,

Special Projects; Albert E. Hagberg—Senior Vice President/Marketing; Luther P. Fritz—Vice President—Traffic & Sales; Hessel Ragins—Assistant Vice President/Traffic; Frank H. Whaley—Assistant Vice President/Interline & Tours; Stuart B. Fitzhugh—Senior Vice Pres./Treasurer & Director; William B. Burdue—Assistant Vice President/Finance; Jerry G. Barnes—Assistant Treasurer; Gordon R. Unwin—Assistant Treasurer; W.R. Rice—Vice President/Operations; Ralph Brumbaugh—Vice President/Operations, Northern Division; Alfred DuFault—Vice President/Maintenance; Victor R. Davis—Secretary; Marie A. Petersen—Assistant Secretary.

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