



# REFLECTIONS



The Newsletter of the NWA History Centre  
Dedicated to preserving the history of a great airline and its people.

**NORTHWEST AIRLINES 1926-2010**

## MORE THAN A PAINT JOB

### *The Branding of Northwest Airlines*

by Robert DuBert

The branding of Northwest Airlines: what does this mean? What is a brand? According to Chris Bidlack, a brand identity design specialist in Ann Arbor, Michigan: "More than just a logo, brand identity is the visual presentation of an organization to the world. A good brand identity program is a carefully prepared system of symbol, typography, color, harmony and strategic implementation, which most often succeeds when it's eye-catching, visually memorable and professional in appearance. Most importantly, a great branding system accurately reflects the purpose, function, pride and corporate 'soul' of an organization."



Company employees at corporate headquarters form the compass logo designed in 2003 by TrueBrand, while celebrating NWA's emergence from Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 2007.  
Photo: NWAHC Archives.

As Northwest employees, we were a visible embodiment of the NWA brand, through the uniforms we wore, the design of our workspaces and our interactions with customers and each other. The brand appeared on our paychecks and 401(k) statements. Consciously or subliminally, we developed a bond with the company and our co-workers through the NWA brand. And, like it or not, each of us became part of that brand and the brand became part of our personal identities.

During its 84 year history, Northwest Airlines enjoyed brand identities created by some of the most talented and creative minds in the business. We've already seen how newly-hired vice-president Bryan Moon created Northwest's first comprehensive brand identity program in 1969 (REFLECTIONS Spring 2013). In this article, we'll look at the corporate design and branding programs of Butler & Zimmerman (1948), Landor Associates (1989), and the creation of NWA's ultimate brand identity by TrueBrand (2003).

#### **BUTLER & ZIMMERMAN**

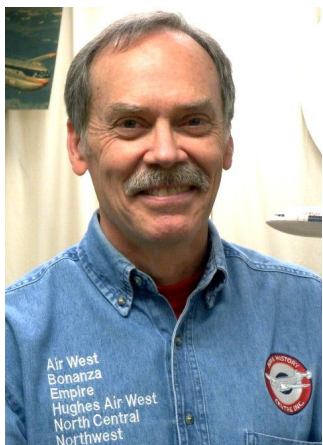


Charles W. Butler.  
Photo courtesy Tracy Butler.

Charles Wilfred Butler was born in 1914 in Perth Amboy, N.J. He studied architecture and design at the Philadelphia Museum School of Industrial Art. After serving in the US Navy during World War II, he joined the famed industrial design firm of Raymond Loewy, where he worked on the designs for the crew area of the Martin PBM-5 Mariner patrol aircraft and the interior of the Martin M-202 airliner. As reported previously, NWA was the launch customer for the M-202 (REFLECTIONS Dec. 2013), and while Butler's business records are not available, it seems likely that Northwest officials became aware of his work because of the Martin connection. We know that in 1948 Butler and his departmental boss left the Loewy studio to form their own company, Butler & Zimmerman, and at some point during the transition were retained by Donald Benson of Northwest's Maintenance and Engineering Department to design a new paint scheme for Northwest's fleet of M-202s.

For the first 20 years of its existence, Northwest planes were largely unpainted, with bare aluminum decorated only with a corporate logo and later, black "lightning" stripes along the fuselage with stylized black bird feathers aft of the cockpit windows. Butler's design team specified a striking and stylish new livery with the tail, nose and wingtips painted red, a dark blue "cheat" line running the length of the fuselage with the Northwest title (name) in white inside the cheatline, and a logo consisting of a stylized compass with the needle pointing in the northwest direction. The design was introduced on NWA's 202 fleet and eventually all aircraft received this livery, with the addition of a white upper fuselage "roof".

With the advent of the jet age, Butler's design was slightly modified by lowering the blue cheatline to the window level, changing the title color to dark blue with a different font and eliminating the compass logo, yielding a sleeker overall design. But it is a testament to the integrity of Charles Butler's design that it served NWA for over 20 years, and his concepts of the red tail



Bruce Kitt Photo: Joe Callaci.

### From the Executive Director

This is a difficult column to write. **The NWAHC is in trouble.**

The first rent-free 11 years of the NWAHC's existence masked a fundamental flaw in the NWAHC's original business plan. The demise of Northwest Airlines ended the supply of future new-hires who would be interested in sharing the history of the 13 airlines that made up Northwest's corporate family tree. It also meant that our natural pool of supporters has peaked—our numbers are dwindling.

The NWAHC's business plan has to be rewritten to reflect these facts. We also have to broaden our base to capture—and involve—people outside the airline alumni. Whereas we have been pleased whenever the NWAHC is involved in the community (most recently the Edina Community Art

and the Nyrop sculptures at Centennial Lake), this must be the norm, not the exception. The NWAHC receives many compliments—we're given pats on the back and high-5s—but the NWAHC has not seen the influx of new paid members needed to keep it financially sound. This past year has not been kind to the NWA History Centre. The forced move in April, and rent, have caused the NWAHC's cash balance to tank. Since our move, the monthly visitor count is a fraction of our pre-move count.

The NWAHC's Board of Directors are like you: we are dispatchers, flight attendants, IT specialists, agents, mechanics and pilots; the knowledge and skills necessary for running a successful business were not a natural part of our aviation careers. The NWAHC is a business. Each day we must work according to a plan that will bring in you (the public), to learn about commercial aviation, enjoy seeing and talking with the people who made the business of flying successful, and who will, before leaving, buy items or donate money necessary for the NWAHC to repeat the plan the next day. So far, we have not been successful at this.

You can help us successfully reinvent the NWAHC. The "easiest" course would be to ask the 637 paid members to renew their memberships and to donate an additional \$50. Financial problem solved! That, however, leaves over 2500 non-members feeling that they weren't part of the solution. The NWAHC wants each of **you** to feel that **you** count, that **your** membership and **your** financial support helps.

Work underwritten by the 2015 Minnesota Historical & Cultural Heritage Inventory Grant will end on December 31<sup>st</sup> of this year. It has provided a terrific boost towards cataloging the items in the NWAHC's collection. We've rediscovered treasures we'd forgotten we have and have started the process of culling duplicate items we've been storing, in some cases since the museum opened in 2002! I'm going to miss having Lindsay Marshall around...she's been an enjoyable teacher (and taskmaster) to have with us.

The final holidays of 2015 are upon us. From all of the volunteers at the NWA History Centre, we wish us all peace on earth and that each of you has a safe and joyous Merry Christmas and New Year. And, in spite of my opening remarks....CAVU. ➔

### NWA History Centre Visitor Information

Open Tuesday-Friday 11AM-5PM Saturday 9AM-1PM.  
Closed Sunday and Monday and major holidays.  
Admission FREE (special events may incur a charge).

(The NWAHC will be closed on Dec.24-28 and New Year's Day)

Advance reservations preferred for visits by groups of 8 or more.  
Please call 952-698-4478.

Free parking. Metro Blue Line—American Blvd. Station.



## THE NWA HISTORY CENTRE

Founder Henry V. "Pete" Patzke  
1925-2012

8011 34<sup>th</sup> Ave S, Suite C26  
Bloomington MN 55425-1637  
952.698.4478

[nwahistory.org](http://nwahistory.org)  
[facebook.com/NWA.History.Centre](https://facebook.com/NWA.History.Centre)

Executive Director **Bruce Kitt**  
Admin. Director **Jerry Nielsen**  
Development **Susan Rostkoski**  
Directors **Drew Dunwoody, Bob Johnson, Fay Kulenkamp, Bill Marchessault, Vince Rodriguez, Jeff Schwalen**  
Collection Manager **Bruce Kitt**

*The NWA History Centre is an independent not-for-profit 501(c)(3) corporation registered in the state of Minnesota.*

REFLECTIONS is published quarterly by the NWAHC and is a benefit of membership. Submissions are welcomed, and subject to editing for content and length.

Editor **Robert DuBert**  
[BobNWFA@aol.com](mailto:BobNWFA@aol.com) 734.678.7600

Reporters **Bob Johnson, Anne Kerr, Carol Hall, Don Swanson.**

### ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

Email **\$30** (correspondence and digital edition newsletter via email.

USPS mail (print edition newsletter) **\$35**

Donations are gratefully accepted, are necessary for the continued operation of the NWA History Centre and are tax-deductible. Enquiries:

[donations@nwahistory.org](mailto:donations@nwahistory.org)





Cont. from p.1

and a corporate logo based on a compass would endure as essential features of the company's branding right up to 2010.

In 1953, Butler formed Charles Butler Associates, with offices in New York and London. He led interior design projects for the Vickers Viscount and Vanguard airliners for Trans-Canada Airlines (now Air Canada) and a brand identity program for Canadian Pacific Airlines. In 1958, the London office became the Charles Butler Associates Design for Industry Ltd., directed by VP-Robert Price, and commissions included interior design projects for the VC-10, BAC 1-11, HS 121 Trident and Concorde. Their last airliner project, before Butler's death in 1973, was for the BAe 146, which was later renamed the Avro RJ, one model of which, the RJ85, was operated by Northwest Airlink carrier Mesaba Airlines during the late 1990s-2000s. In 1975, Robert Price disbanded the company.



Above: The M-202 in the original bare metal and black colors.

Photo: Ed Coates.

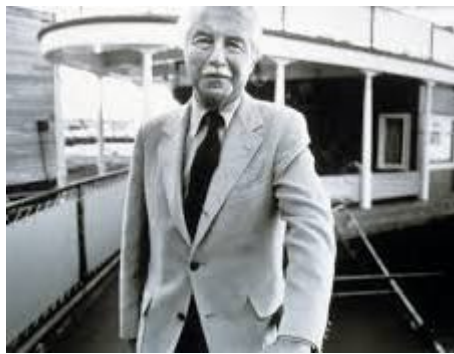
Right: the Charles Butler design.

Far right: Butler's design, updated for the jets.

Photos: NWAHC Archives.



**LANDOR ASSOCIATES** Charles Butler's red-tailed design was, in fact, "just a paint job." His design did not extend to the rest of the facility design at Northwest, which over the next twenty years evolved into what Bryan Moon called the "hotch potch" that he faced in 1968 when Donald Nyrop told him, "I want you to redesign the airline." (REFLECTIONS Spring 2013). Fast forward to 1987: NWA had grown to near mega-carrier status thanks to the merger with Republic, the potentially offensive word "Orient" had been removed from the branding, and new CEO Stephen Rothmeier and his management team wanted a corporate image for the airline which reflected "a bigger, stronger, more dynamic Northwest." Enter Landor Associates.

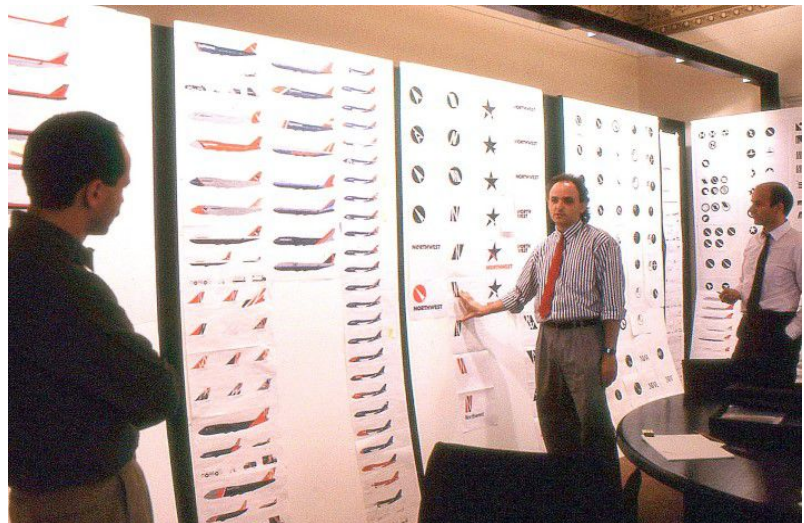


Walter Landor on the gangway of the Klamath.

Photo: branding.com

Walter Landor (Landauer) was born in 1913 in Munich, and trained in art and design at the Goldsmith College School of Art in London, becoming, at age 23, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. He helped design the British Pavilion for the 1939 World's Fair in New York, and emigrated to San Francisco that same year. In 1941, he and wife Josephine started the firm Walter Landor & Associates Industrial Design, relocating the company in 1964 to a former Southern Pacific Railroad ferry boat, the *Klamath*, moored at San Francisco's Pier 5 North. Landor Associates developed a full range of design services aimed at creating what came to be known as brand identity; notes current Landor regional president Jane Geraghty, "Walter Landor pioneered the notion of strategically-led branding." In 1975, Landor landed its first airline client—Alitalia—and by the time Stephen Rothmeier selected Landor for Northwest's rebranding in the late 1980s, Landor had 28 airline image programs in its portfolio and Landor Associates was the world's largest corporate design consultancy, with offices in 18 countries.

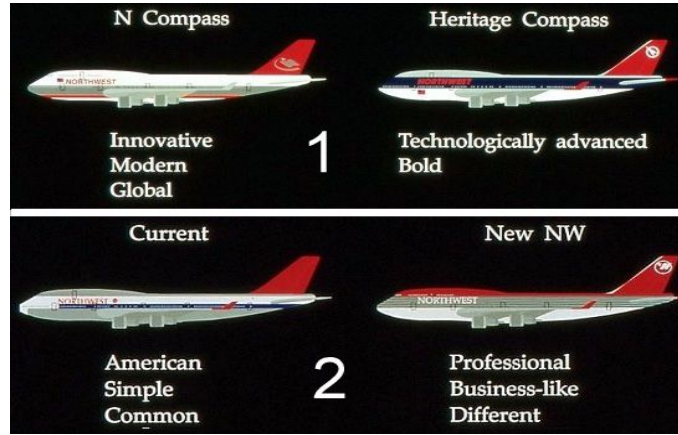
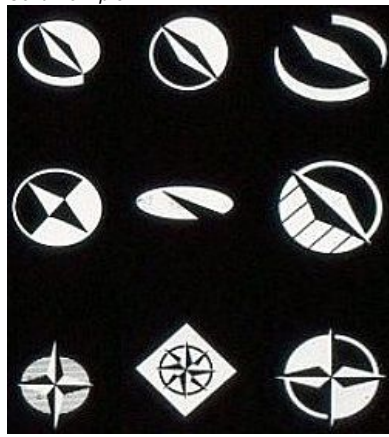
In a 1977 interview, Walter Landor summarized how he worked with a client: "We want to know all there is to know, what they've gone through, how they perceive themselves, how they see themselves five years ahead, where they want to be." For NWA, Landor assigned a team of twelve, led by John Diefenbach, Officer in Charge, and designers Claude Salzberger and Don Kline. They visited the Northwest system, gathering the opinions of almost 35,000 employees, customers, travel agents, vendors and investors worldwide. Salzberger concluded, "The main element that needed redefining was Northwest's image, which many people thought of as old-fashioned and conservative." NWA's style was not glamorous. Said Kline, "It's not a haute couture sort of style. It's more American, practical and efficient rather than extravagant." The team came up with a design objective they called "American Practicality" and created a palette of colors, typefaces and designs that aimed to convey practicality and business-like efficiency. Designers then produced almost 200 different paint schemes for aircraft and dozens of compass logo designs. In a series of meetings, these were narrowed down to three finalists, and a final choice, which came to be known as the "bowling shoe" livery, was selected for the Northwest fleet, with the colors, fonts and the new logo applied to all company facilities and promotional material.



Claude Salzberger, center, presents dozens of design choices for the compass logo and airplane paint livery. Photo: NWAHC Archives.

Cont. p.4

Cont. from p.3



Far left: Nine of the rejected designs for the compass logo.

1: Two finalist designs, "N Compass" and "Heritage Compass", with focus group reactions. Both were rejected.

2: Focus group reactions to the 1969 existing aircraft livery and the selected Landor design.

Photos: NWAHC Archives.

(Note: to see these images in more detail, see p. 12 of the digital edition.)



Left: *The Changing of the Guard*.  
Photo: David Moreau.

Soon after the adoption of the Landor Associates brand identity program, a new Northwest Airlines slogan was introduced:

**SOME PEOPLE JUST KNOW HOW TO FLY**

**TRUEBRAND** The 1990s and early 2000s were extremely challenging for the airline industry and NWA was not immune. It barely avoided declaring Chapter 11 bankruptcy in 1993 and incurred a pilot strike in 1998. The terrorist events of Sept. 11, 2001 caused a precipitous drop in passenger demand, with subsequent workforce reductions. Annual financial losses totalled hundreds of millions despite major employee wage concessions. The internet's rise changed forever the nature of the airline business model: customers acquired near-total access to the pricing of every airline and it was the lowest-cost provider that "called the shots" on fares and potential revenue. NWA, one of the oldest of the legacy carriers, still had a no-frills, no-fun image at best, "Northworst" at worst (said one younger member of a customer focus group, "Me and my friends fly Southwest. Northwest is for my parents"). Richard Anderson, elected CEO in 2001, instituted the program, *Checklist for the Future*, aimed in part at making the airline more attractive to tech-savvy, high-yield business travelers. In a move reminiscent of 1948, Anderson retained a "new kid on the block," TrueBrand, as the brand identity agent of change to make NWA a coveted and desirable brand in the eyes of potential customers.

TrueBrand was founded in 2002 by Vincent Carrà, John Diefenbach and a group of other former Landor and Luxon Carrà employees. The company's name, developed by Partner Marty Brandt, succinctly states its mission to be "True to the Brand" for the client. A TB team, led by Creative Director Carrà (see bio), Diefenbach, Strategy Director Brandt and Chief Designer Michael Collins, worked with a team from NWA led by Mary Linder, Sr. VP, Corporate and Brand Communications and Nancy Darwitz, Manager, Brand Identity and Corporate and Brand Communications, to develop a Design Brief outlining goals and methodology for creating a new brand identity for Northwest Airlines.

### TrueBrand's NWA Design Brief, July 2002: Goals for the Project.

- Develop Northwest's brand identity to meet and exceed the actual service product.
- Build and reinforce the NWA brand through an aspirational and practical aircraft livery.
- Improve the perceptions of Northwest Airlines as a global carrier.
- Send a clear signal of change and something new happening at NWA, but be more evolutionary than revolutionary.
- Portray a better defined brand but not a divorce from the past.

### Desired Key Attributes for the new Brand Identity.

- Global in attitude and state of mind, not merely geography.
- Dynamic, a change agent, an innovator quick to take action.
- Higher quality—new, clean fresh and simple.
- Smart, savvy, stylish and confident.
- Forthright, straightforward and direct.

### BIO: Vincent Carrà

**1943** born in Austin, Tex.

B.A. Carnegie Mellon University (Design major).

M.F.A. Yale University.

**1968** Westinghouse Design Center: Graphic Designer.

**1970** Saul Bass & Associates: Associate Design Director. Project Director for the rebranding of United Airlines and Frontier Airlines.

**1981** Landor Associates: Creative Director, San Francisco and London offices. Creative Director for rebranding of Philippine Airlines.

**1992** Founded Luxon Carrà with Stuart Luxon, formerly Head of Marketing at British Airways. Creative Director for rebranding of USAirways and Aer Lingus.

**2002** Co-founder of TrueBrand. Creative Director for rebranding of NWA.

Independent Creative Consultant since **2012**.

### Carrà's Airline Client Portfolio

Northwest Airlines	United Airlines	British Airways
US Airways	Aer Lingus	Garuda Airlines
Lufthansa	Britannia Airlines	Philippine Airlines
DC Air	Alitalia	Frontier Airlines



Over the course of 2002-3, the teams held dozens of Concept Development meetings, some with focus groups. Early on, the then current (Lander) livery design was deemed to be too heavy, dark and complicated to paint, with lots of masking required. It no longer appeared modern. More specific requirements for its replacement were clarified: the tail had to be somehow red, the compass logo retained in some form, and it should compliment the aircraft interiors (current and future), the existing corporate identity and the new Detroit World Gateway terminal. Despite these restrictions, the TB team was encouraged to present a wide range of options, from relatively tame (evolutionary) to “outrageous” (revolutionary). Ultimately, TB presented over 300 design choices! As work progressed, consensus built around stressing the NWA brand and deemphasizing ‘Northwest’; NWA would reinforce the nwa.com website, it looked more technical, sounded neutral and had no limiting regional geographic associations. A potential problem emerged over possible brand confusion with the in-your-face rap music group N.W.A., but NWA senior management was unconcerned; it might even enhance the company’s image with younger people. When the final choice was made, TB, working with NWA technicians, developed extremely detailed plans for each aircraft type in the fleet, and a 757 and A330 were painted at Boeing Field and the Airbus facility in Toulouse for the official rollout.



Left: A 757 is painted in a hangar at Boeing Field, in preparation for the rollout of NWA's new brand identity in 2003.

Photo: Vincent Carrà.

All through the process, TB's Program Approach stressed that a new aircraft livery should not be an end in itself (not just a paint job) but should be a flag to signal

change, one part of a comprehensive revitalization initiative to spark efforts such as improved customer service-oriented behavior throughout the airline. Accordingly, all airport facilities and signage were updated with the new design, as were all promotional and advertising materials used by NWA. TB presented an overall design for improving the website to give it some tech dazzle, with changes implemented by a Twin Cities web design company. A new advertising slogan was introduced: *Now You're Flying Smart*. NWA launched a training program for all employees, called *The Northwest Experience*, aimed at improving the corporate culture for employees and customers alike. Unfortunately, this program was cancelled after just a few sessions in Detroit, possibly due to NWA's worsening financial condition in 2004-5, which ultimately led to NWA's strategic chapter 11 bankruptcy filing in 2005. Other TB proposals, such as a major redesign of one of the WorldClubs in MSP, were put on indefinite hold. Finally, as senior management began serious consideration of a merger with Delta Air Lines, the brand identity of NWA became a moot point. The coming years would see the disappearance of the brand identity created by TrueBrand, and the Northwest Airlines brand itself would join the pantheon of vanished airline brands which includes Braniff, Sabena, Continental, Eastern, Pan Am, US Airways, Republic, Laker, TWA and many others. But wait—the Eastern and Republic brands have come back! The evolution of the airline industry continues. →

Many thanks to Vincent Carrà and Chris Bidlack for their gracious and invaluable assistance in the preparation of this article.

See p. 13 of the digital edition for more information on the TrueBrand design.

#### Principal References

CBA Archive of Design.  
VECTOR, 3<sup>rd</sup> qtr., 1989.  
Lander.com.

TrueBrand Northwest Airlines Design Brief, July 9, 2002.

TrueBrand Power Point Presentation: Re-Branding in a Challenging Environment.

Personal communication with Tracy Butler and Vincent Carrà.



Vincent Carrà and Nancy Darwitz. Photo courtesy Vincent Carrà.

#### Evolutionary Studies



#### Revolutionary Concepts



#### Essence of the Brand Image: Modernization

The final choice blended aspects of these two designs:



- Metallic silver fuselage was smarter, more modern.
- **nwa** and compass logo were integrated into one cohesive graphic signature.
- “Northwest Airlines” title was secondary to **nwa** and compass logo.

Functional benefits: the new livery was easier to apply and the clearcoat finish stayed cleaner and retained its gloss longer.

## CHRIS BIDLACK: Profile and Q&A.

Brand Identity Design and Communications Specialist Chris Bidlack designed the striking and colorful poster and postcard for the NWAHC Airline Collectibles Show & Sale, and as a show vendor premiered his new art print posters of the NWA B-377, the North Central CV-580 and the MSP International Airport (see p.7). Born in Ann Arbor, Mich., in 1956, he attended Ann Arbor public schools and Eastern Michigan University, where he was a Theatre Major, specializing in set and lighting design. During his high school and college years, he took flying lessons and worked part-time as an aircraft cleaner at the Ann Arbor Airport and as a lineman/fueler for an FBO at the Ann Arbor and Detroit City Airports. After graduating from EMU, he worked as a graphic designer before starting his own company, The Bidlack Creative Group, in 1987. His wife Linda, also a designer, “runs the company” and is the principal client liason. Major clients have included the University of Michigan, Duke University Law School, The Detroit Institute of Arts, The Henry Ford Learning Institute, the Detroit Medical Center, the Yankee Air Museum, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra (UK) and former Michigan Governor Jennifer Granholm. Chris has also designed a line of art print posters for airliners and airports, which he offers through the website [JetAgeArt.com](http://JetAgeArt.com). And, no surprise, his office contains a large display of airline collectibles!

To learn more about the company and his work: [bidlack.com](http://bidlack.com).

**Q: Living in Metro Detroit, you flew NWA and Republic often. Do you remember your first flight?**

A: It was a Northwest DC-6 or 7, from Willow Run Airport (YIP) to Chicago Midway. I was probably about 6 or 7; my parents told me I ran up and down the aisle and was a nuisance for the stewardesses.

**Q: What inspired your concept for JetAgeArt.com?**

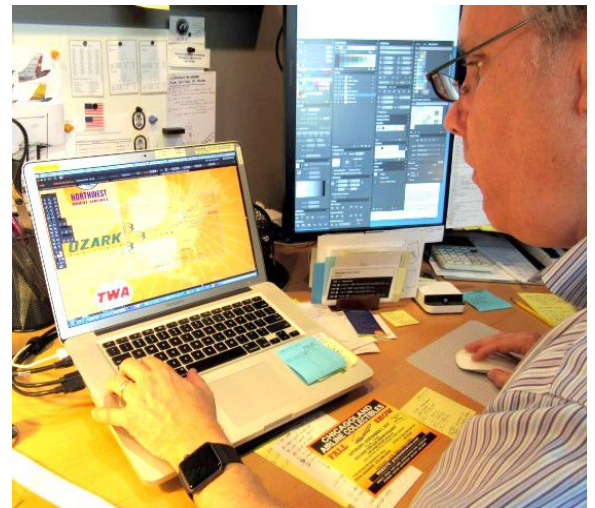
A: The airport prints are in a retro-futuristic style, popular in the 1950s and 60s. I love the excitement of that era...it was an age when all things seemed possible, things were happening, there was excitement for the future. The airliner prints are in a very detailed, realistic style, with historical information, route maps and technical data. I started with the 727 and its first American operators, but my involvement with the NWAHC inspired me to branch out into the propeller era.

**Q: Tell me about your work for your client, the Yankee Air Museum in Ypsilanti, Michigan.**

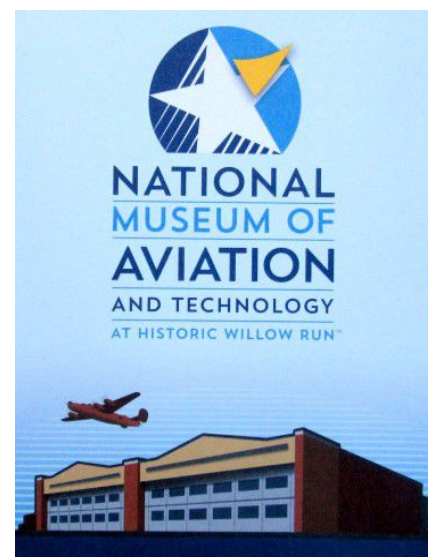
A: Originally a “warbird” museum, the YAM will rebrand in 2018 as The National Museum of Aviation and Technology at Historic Willow Run, relocating to a much larger space in the former B-24 bomber plant at the airport, with an expanded mission to tell the story of American aviation and aerospace—military and civil. We've been involved as designers for their media advertising, including the re-design and launch of the museum magazine *Approaches*, and we're consultants for other museum projects, including the upcoming Detroit Aviation & Collectibles Show and Sale on April 9, 2016!



The Bidlack prints which premiered at the MSP Show. Photo: Robert DuBert.



Chris in his studio, working on the design for the MSP Airport print. Photo: Robert DuBert.



Brochure design for the Yankee Air Museum.





## The MSP Airline Collectibles Show & Sale attended by over 200.

The Oct. 10 show and sale, operated by Bill Rosenbloom and the NWAHC, drew over 200 attendees to the ballroom of the Best Western Plus Bloomington Hotel. Several vendors offered a wide range of airline-related collectibles, and the HC tables drew eager shoppers who seized the opportunity to purchase logo-branded clothing and a wide range of items from the surplus inventory of the HC. Next year's event will be held in October, date to be announced.



Left: Carol Hall and Darlene Lemke register an attendee. Gail Diercks and Sandy Elliott (background) also worked the table.

Right: Gary Thompson at one of the HC tables, with the always popular NWA logo-branded shirts, sweatshirts and hats.



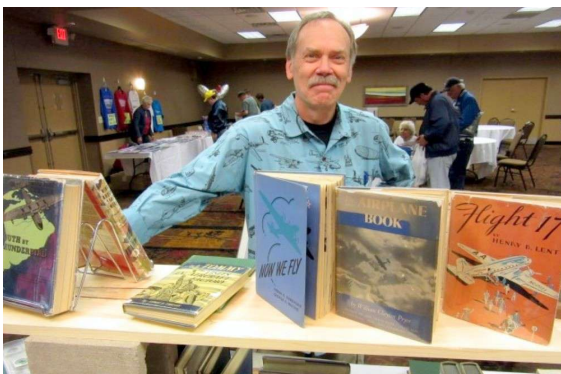
Left: Vince Rodriguez and Sue Rostkoski staffed the HC tables offering books, DVDs, mugs and surplus airline branded glassware.

Right: Artist Chris Bidlack offered the full range of his airline art prints, posters and postcards. Making their debut at the show were his NWA Stratocruiser, North Central CV-580 and MSP airport art prints.



Left: Dealer and show organizer Bill Rosenbloom offered many unique items, including two Air India maharajah figurines. (Your editor bought several items from his inventory of rarities.)

Right: Capt. Tom and Judy Schellinger at Judy Swanson and son Donny's table. Sadly, Don was ill and unable to attend.



Left: HC Executive Director Bruce Kitt offered vintage books culled from his huge collection.

Right: Anne Kerr (right) and Joan Lee. Newly offered this year were Anne's line of note-cards and some surplus items from her personal collection.



Photos:  
Robert DuBert





former North Central pilot **Barb Wiley** and retired stewardess **Anne Kerr**. For complete information and photos for this event, see the AirSpace Minnesota page on facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/AirSpaceMinnesota/?fref=ts>

Right: The Legends panel members. L-R: Honeywell engineer **Elizabeth Bierman**; Astronaut **Dr. Sandy Magnus**; WWII Women's Air Force Service Pilot **Elizabeth Strohfus**; **Anne Kerr**; **Barb Wiley**; **Julie Clark**. During World War II, WASP instructor **Strohfus** taught instrument flying to male USAAF cadets and piloted ferry flights on B-17 and AT-6 aircraft.

## News and Announcements

**GIRLS INTERNATIONAL AVIATION DAY** On Sept. 26, the Stars of the North Chapter of Women in Aviation and AirSpace Minnesota jointly presented the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Girls International Aviation Day at the Downtown St. Paul Airport. Over 1000 young women attended this event, part of a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) initiative which aims to broaden awareness and encourage women to pursue careers in aviation and aerospace. Included in a panel discussion entitled "Legends" were retired Northwest captain and aerobatic pilot **Julie Clark**,



Left: Capt. Clark showed her T-34 to a group of students.

Right: Capt. Clark thrilled the crowd with a display of acrobatic flying.

Photos: AirSpace Minnesota.



**MEMORIAL SERVICES** On Oct. 13, a priest from St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Church in Stillwater, Minn. officiated at an informal memorial service at the Almelund, Minn. crash site of a Northwest Airlines Martin 202 training flight on Oct. 13, 1950 (REFLECTIONS, December 2013). Among those attending the service was **Mike Cagley**, son of Capt. **Ray Render**, check pilot on the flight. For photos and more information about the service, see Anne Kerr's blogpage: <http://www.ladyskywriter.com/2015/10/nwa-martin-202-crash-65-years-ago-memorialized-today-at-almelund-wisconsin.html>



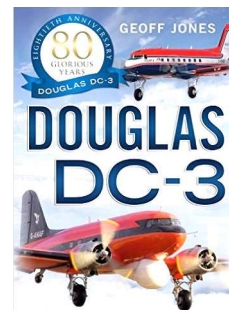
Harriman State Park in Rockland County, N.Y., was the scene on Nov. 8 of a memorial ceremony to commemorate the crash of Northwest flight 6231 on Dec. 1, 1974 and to honor the three pilots of the 727 who lost their lives in the disaster: Capt. **John Lagorio**, Edina, Minn.; First Officer **Walter Zara**, Seattle and Second Officer **James Cox**, Seattle. The flight was a ferry operation from JFK to BUF and no one else was onboard. Family members of the three pilots were present to witness the unveiling of an historical marker on the actual crash site, where small fragments of the aircraft continue to be discovered by hikers. For full coverage and photos of this event:

<http://www.lohud.com/story/news/local/rockland/stony-point/2015/11/07/rockland-plane-crash/75365332/>

A video of the service, posted on YouTube by Rockland County: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aHduhnd4FUQ>

Above: The unveiling of the Rockland County Historical Marker. Photo: The Journal New/lohud.com.

**RECENT PUBLICATIONS** Welsh writer and aviation historian **Geoff Jones**, author of *Northwest Airlines, the First Eighty Years* (REFLECTIONS Dec. 2014) is pleased to announce the release of his latest book, *Douglas DC-3, 80 Glorious Years*. Published by Fonthill Media, it is readily available in print and Kindle editions on amazon.com.





Noted aviation historian, author and NWAHC member Johannes Allert presented his formal paper, *Accentuating the Postive: the Role of Northwest Airlines' Modification Center in World War II* at the 48<sup>th</sup> Annual Northern Great Plains History Conference in Sept. 2013. This scholarly 24-page work is the most complete treatment of this topic to date, and you can now read it on this webpage: [https://www.academia.edu/4625461/FORMAL\\_PAPER\\_Accentuating\\_the\\_Positive](https://www.academia.edu/4625461/FORMAL_PAPER_Accentuating_the_Positive)

On Sept. 17, 1961, Northwest Electra flight 706 crashed shortly after takeoff from ORD, killing all onboard. The probable cause was a cable separation controlling the right aileron. Craig Hagstrom, son of Capt. Ralph Hagstrom, the pilot in command of the flight, has examined the data and his investigation gives a new perspective on the flight's final seconds and the crew's intentions. At the time, investigators concluded that the aircraft was uncontrollable, but Hagstrom's analysis suggests the crew may have been attempting a belly landing, which came close to succeeding. This heroic effort went unnoticed at the time. Craig Hagstrom presents his report as a work in progress, in hopes of bringing more evidence to light. Click on this link to download the file: <http://we.tl/4GRGZxxxEJ> (note: this link may not open in some browsers. If you encounter this problem, please copy and paste.)

Right: Capt. Ralph Hagstrom. Photo courtesy Craig Hagstrom.



## MSP HAPPENINGS



Left: A recent employee reunion, held at the Mall of America, attended by almost 500 former NWA employees, their families and friends.

Right: The last sculpture in the series honoring Donald Nyrop was installed at Centennial Lake. This near life-size work shows a family boarding a flight. Photos from Facebook. For more information on this project, see REFLECTIONS, Sept. 2015. Photos: Facebook.



Joseph Dranshak. Photo: Bruce Kitt.



Northwest mechanics Alvin Smith and William Kuntz install de-icing equipment on a C-47 in Vandalia. Photo: Minnesota History Center Archives.

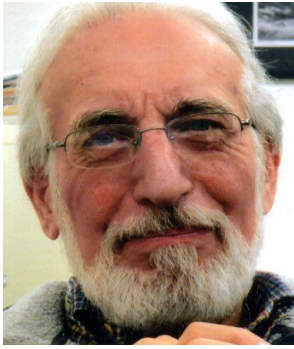
**ELUSIVE VANDALIA** In January, 1943 in support of the war effort, NWA opened a facility in Vandalia, Ohio (site of today's Dayton International Airport) known as the Accelerated Service Testing Center. As told by Geoff Jones in *Northwest Airlines, the First Eighty Years*: "The first three aircraft manufactured—regardless of manufacturer—were flown to Vandalia, where over 1000 of Northwest's men and women were responsible for 'de-bugging' these aircraft. Unlike the 'Mod' (in St. Paul), Vandalia dealt with fighters, trainers, reconnaissance planes and even gliders used in the Normandy landings." However, with the exception of a few documents in the NWA archives of the Minnesota History Center, more information about this facility has proved impossible to locate. Recently, NWAHC Executive Director **Bruce Kitt** went to Vandalia and met with **Joseph Dranshak**, Director of the Historical Society of Vandalia-Butler, in search of more information, which, alas, proved elusive. The search continues.

Cont. on p.10



Cont. from p.9

## A MESSAGE FROM JOE



On March 4<sup>th</sup>, long-time NWA employee and dedicated NWAHC volunteer Joe Callaci died suddenly and unexpectedly (REFLECTIONS, March 2015). Recently, a private family memorial service was held in Chicago, and the family wishes to keep other arrangements private.

Joe was a man of many talents, but we just found out recently that he wrote poetry as well. For Joe's many friends, here at the NWAHC and elsewhere, we offer in tribute this poem that he wrote in 1969, two years after he returned to Chicago after serving in Viet Nam with the US Army.

Poem and photo courtesy Fay Kulenkamp.

### DON'T CRY FOR ME

Don't cry for me when I'm gone.  
Don't cry when I pass away.  
Just remember that I once lived  
and think as I thought for only a day.

Save your tears and your flowers  
for someone else and your casket of genuine gold.  
What do I care of all these things  
when my heart stops beating and my body grows cold?

After I'm dead, my friends, I won't need  
flowers or money and such.  
But if you feel you must do something,  
free your heart and let it touch...

the sky on a summer day at dusk,  
a flower growing under a tree.  
Just free your soul to roam at will.  
That will be enough for me.

Enjoy the simple things of life;  
the babbling of a brook,  
a friendly smile, a baby's laugh,  
a fireplace and maybe a book.

Walk through the forest and  
let your hair blow free,  
smell a flower, feed a squirrel  
then think of me.

Play the music soft and sad  
or dance to a swinging band.  
Listen to your neighbor's hurt.  
Be ready with a helping hand.

Don't let it matter what others say  
Just live every day and be free.  
Think as you will, speak what you think.  
That's enough for my memory.

## SAVE THE DATE!



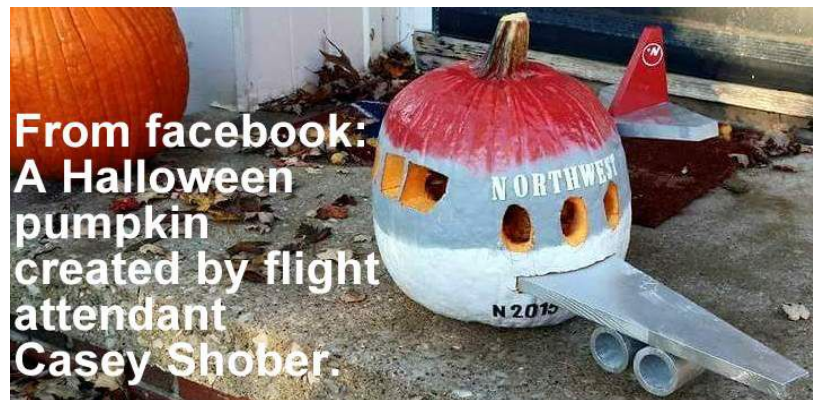
## WINTER DUCK REUNION

(North Central and Republic Airlines alumni, family and friends)

**Sunday, March 6, 2016**

Pelican Point Golf and Country Club, Venice FL.

Email a2ike@aol.com if you haven't received your invitation by Feb. 29 or call 941-475-7808 for information and reservations.



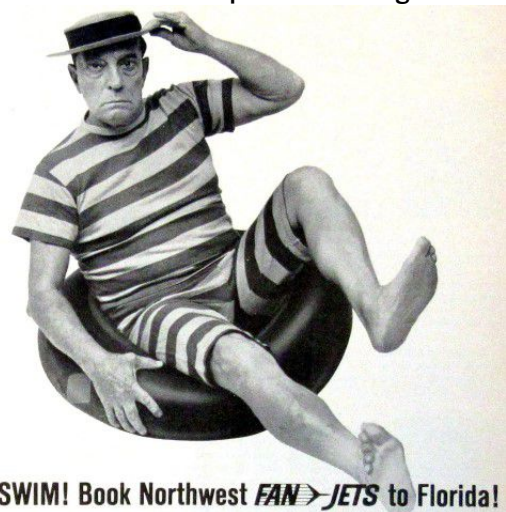
## HELP WANTED

Docents for the NWA History Centre who can work the following shifts on a regular basis, weekly or monthly:

**Friday 11a-2p and 2p-5p; Saturday 9a-1p.**

Duties include greeting visitors, answering questions and selling items from the gift shop. Please call Bruce Kitt: 952-212-4842.

We pause now for this important message:

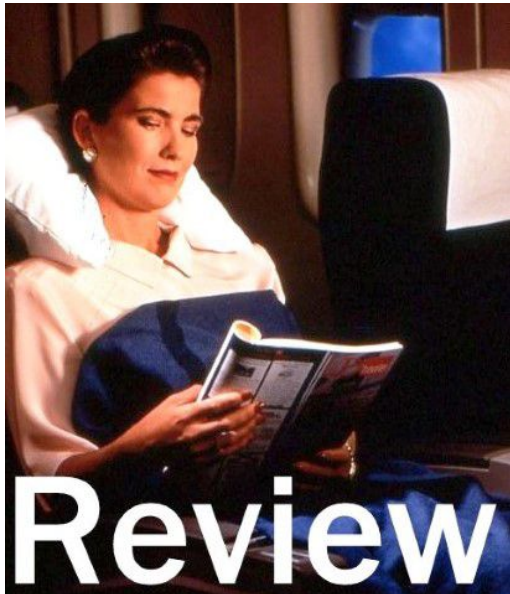


GET IN THE SWIM! Book Northwest **FAN** → **JETS** to Florida!



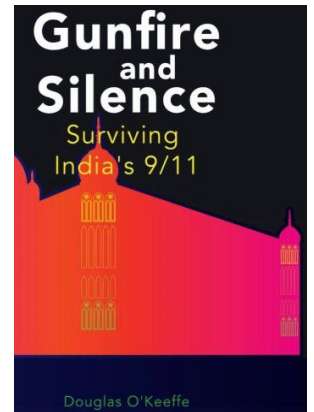
## GUNFIRE and SILENCE—Surviving India's 9/11

O'Keeffe, Douglas. CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 164 pages, 6X9, B&W images, trade paperback, 2015. Available in print (\$13.95) and Kindle (\$3.99) editions from amazon.com. *by Robert DuBert*

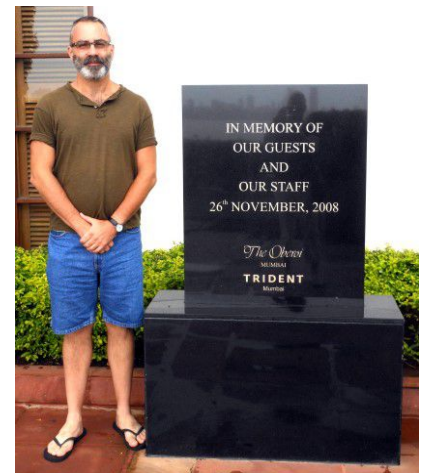


# Review

For four days, Nov. 26-29, 2008, Pakistani members of Lashkar-e-Taiba, an Islamic militant organization, conducted a series of coordinated bombing and shooting attacks in Mumbai in India, killing 164 people and wounding over 300. One of their targets was the Oberoi Trident hotel, used by Northwest Airlines as a layover hotel for crews working AMS-BOM flights. This event was the subject of a short article by NWA Capt. Thomas Cook, who was in the hotel during the attack (*CONTRAILS*, the magazine of the Retired Northwest Pilot's Association, May 2009). Flight attendant Douglas O'Keeffe was also among the crew members at the hotel who were preparing to depart for the airport to work flight 35 to AMS when the attack began, and his brief



volume is an almost minute-by-minute account of the attack as experienced by an airline's crew and employees. This book is aimed at a general audience and for privacy reasons O'Keeffe has changed the names of everyone who appears in the account as well as the airlines involved (note: if you were to guess that those airlines were Northwest, Lufthansa and Swiss International, you would probably be correct, but I couldn't possibly comment.) For his general audience, O'Keeffe begins with biographical information and a discussion of flight attendant hiring, training, job duties and trip-bidding. Some readers may choose to skim over this, as well as some occasional bits of very personal information, without losing track of the unfolding chain of events, which is simply hair-raising. O'Keeffe was one of a group of flight attendants from three airlines and two Nigerian hotel guests who, finding exits from the hotel impassible as the sounds of gunfire rang around them, sought refuge in a mezzanine-level conference room, where they hid for hours, fully expecting terrorists to burst in at any moment and kill them all. From interviews and conversations held in the aftermath, O'Keeffe has reconstructed the actions and events occurring on inbound flight 36, which arrived in BOM during the attack and whose crew was detained onboard, as well as the action at what readers may surmise to be the MSP SOC, as the directors of airline security and disaster response dealt with the developing crisis 12 time zones and several thousand miles away. O'Keeffe freely admits to his feelings of momentary confusion, disbelief and foreboding as the situation unfolded. This is not light reading, and you may well find yourself wrung out, as I was, when all the crew members are eventually rescued. O'Keeffe covers the aftermath as well; readers will not be surprised to learn that several crew members suffered symptoms of shock and post-traumatic stress disorder, but will be heartened to learn that when the crew returned to DTW as passengers on a regularly scheduled flight, two Business Class passengers, briefed on the situation by staff of a certain Dutch airline, offered to buy all the crew members gifts of their choosing from the Duty Free cart! Meanwhile, an inflight manager, dispatched by the airline to Mumbai to arrange for the return of the crew luggage left behind at the hotel, was horrified to find that she had no choice but to traverse the devastated, blood-spattered hotel lobby to identify the luggage. The book closes with O'Keeffe's account of his 2012 return to the hotel to revisit the tragic site of so much trauma for him, his fellow crewmembers and the others with whom he bonded deeply in the face of searing, shared experience.



Douglas O'Keeffe, with the memorial monument in front of the Oberoi Trident Hotel, 2012. Photo courtesy Douglas O'Keeffe.

This is an intensely personal book that is both engaging and horrifying, and Douglas O'Keeffe does a great service in telling us what happened half a world away, while Americans at home celebrated Thanksgiving, in a depth and breadth of detail that otherwise might never have been revealed in print. →

*At Northwest Airlines, Douglas O'Keeffe trained with the NWA Assist Team and the National Organization of Victim's Assistance. He is currently a DTW-based flight attendant for a large airline whose headquarters is in Atlanta. You know the one.*

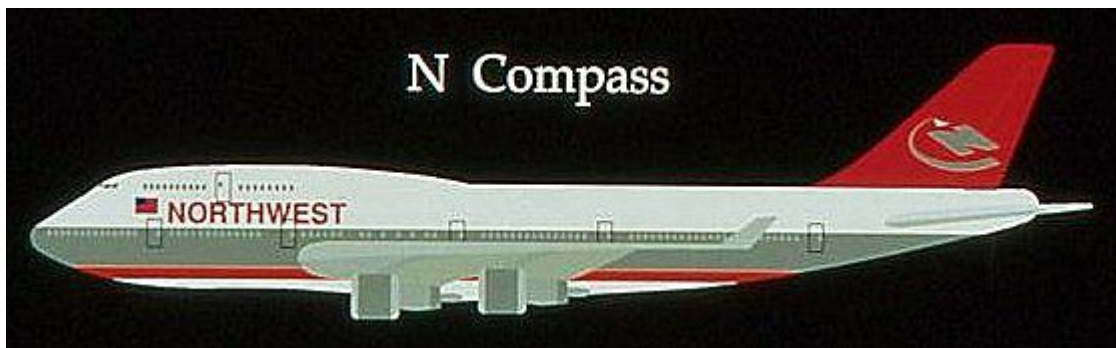
*From the Editor:* A reminder that all back issues of this newsletter, **History Matters** and REFLECTIONS, can be found in the newsletter section of our website: [nwahistory.org](http://nwahistory.org). Our webmaster, Bruce Palaggi, recently redesigned the website to be more modern looking and easier to navigate. It's our very own NWAHC brand identity makeover and it's beautiful. Check it out! Due to its being a quarterly with a limited number of pages, REFLECTIONS is, by definition, neither timely nor comprehensive. For the most up-to-date HC news, see and like us on our **facebook** page. Signing up is easy, it's free, and you'll join the over 8000 NWA alumni who regularly post interesting news and photos, and keep in touch with their friends and former co-workers worldwide. Don't miss out! RD





DIGITAL EDITION EXCLUSIVE EXTRAS—The Landor Associates Brand Identity Design Program

The two rejected choices of the three finalists (Photos: NWAHC Archives)

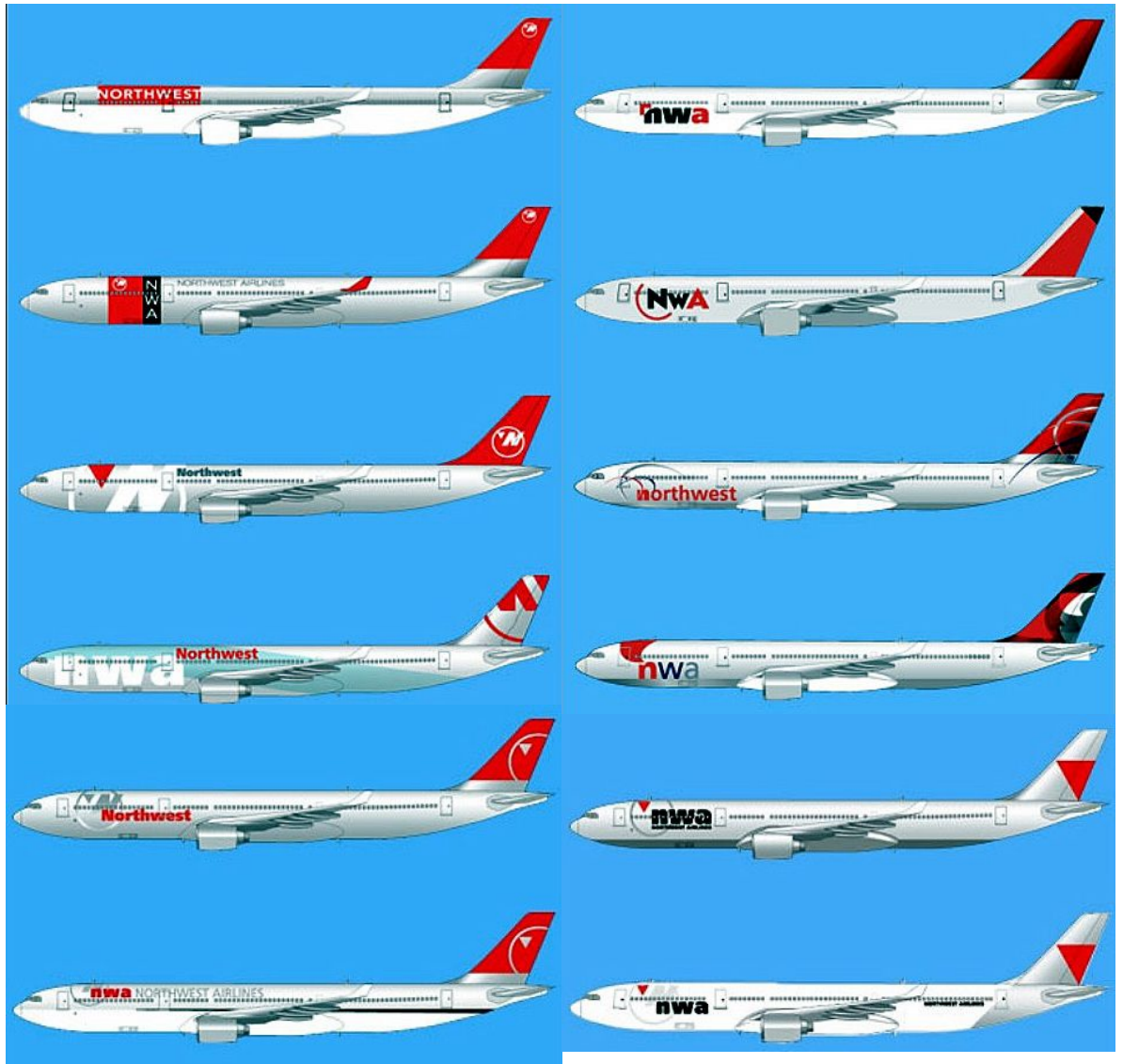


The NWA History Centre will be closed Dec. 24-28 and New Year's Day.

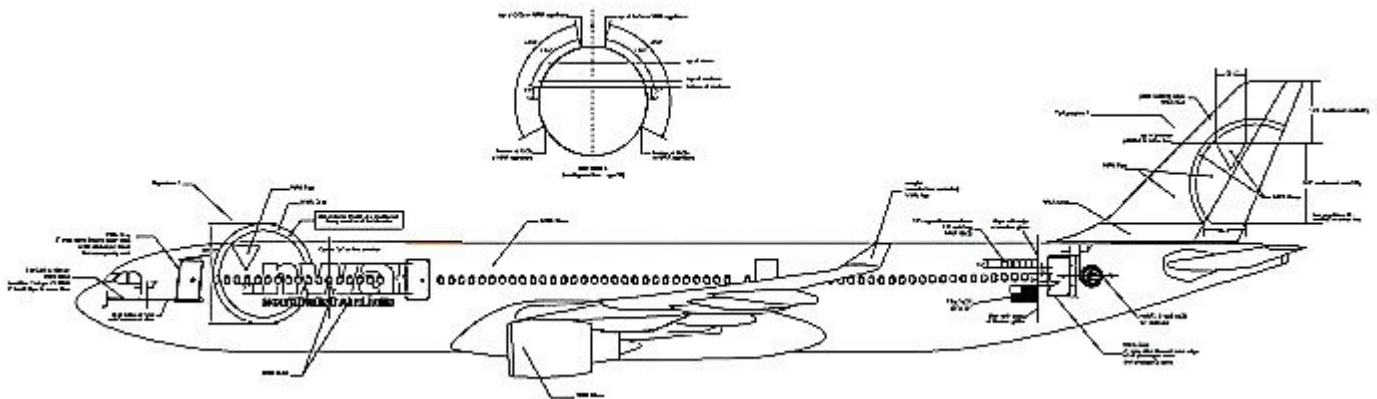




Some of the design options offered to NWA management by TrueBrand.



Details of the TrueBrand 2003 livery specification, as applied to the NWA fleet.



The official NWA Graphic Standard: Red—Pantone 186; Gray—Pantone 428 (light) and 429 (dark); White—Pure, Bright; Black—Process Black; Metallic silver—50-75% screen of Pantone 877.

NWA typeface standard: Frutiger fonts in the type family—Light, Roman, Bold, Black, Condensed.