

Collection Name: American Legion. Designs by School Children for Alaska's Flag, 1927. ASL-MS-14

Identifier: ASM-III-O-410

Title: **Alaska flag design by Benny Benson.**

Description: At the request of Governor George A. Parks, the Alaska Chapter of the American Legion conducted a contest among the Territory's school children to choose Alaska's Flag Design.

The original design for the Alaska territorial flag, painted with blue paint on construction paper. Flag is painted on a separate piece of paper, which has been cut out and glued to the main sheet. The flag represents the constellation Ursa Major (Big Dipper and North Star) against a blue field. Writing in pencil below the flag design states "The blue field is for the Alaska sky and the foret-me-not, an Alaskan flower. The North Star is for the future state of Alaska, the most northerly in the union. The Dipper is for the Great Bear, symbolising strenth [strength]." A photo of Benny Benson is attached (probably after the design was submitted) to the upper right corner. Reverse is signed by members of the selection committee.

Original design of Alaska Flag by Benny Benson, submitted in 1927 for a design competition for the Alaska territorial flag. The competition was open to Alaska schoolchildren between grades 7 and 12. Benson was a 13 year old student at the Jessie Lee MIssion Home in Seward. The competition was organized by the American Legion, who collected a total of 142 entries from throughout Alaska. The American Legion recommended Benson's design to the Territorial Legislature, who unanimously passed an act officially adopting the design. In addition to the watch, the legislature granted Benson \$1000 for a trip to Washington DC to present the flag to the President of the United States; however, due to scheduling problems, this was not possible, so the funds were put toward Benson's future education. The flag was dedicated on July 8, 1927, at the Jessie Lee Mission Home, and there Benson received his first place watch.

Creator: Benson, John Ben, 1913-1972

Subject.TGM: Flags
Children
Drawings
Composite drawings
School children

Subject.LCSH: Flags--Alaska

Subject.Local: Alaska Natives

Personal Name: Benson, John Ben, 1913-1972

Corporate Name: American Legion

Location: Alaska

Region: Alaska

Time Period: 1913 to 1939

Date.original: 1927

Type: Image (Drawings)

Related Materials: Alaska State Museums' Collections Search:
<http://www.museums.state.ak.us/collectionsearch.html>

Ordering & Use: <http://146.63.87.186/ASMSearch/Agreement?backNav=SearchForm>

Holding Institution: Alaska State Museum 395 Whittier Street, Juneau, AK 99801-1718
www.museums.state.ak.us/asmhome.html

Transcript: The blue field is for the Alaska sky and the foret-me-not, an Alaskan flower. The North Star is for the future state of Alaska, the most northerly in the union. The Dipper is for the Great Bear, symbolising strenth [strength].

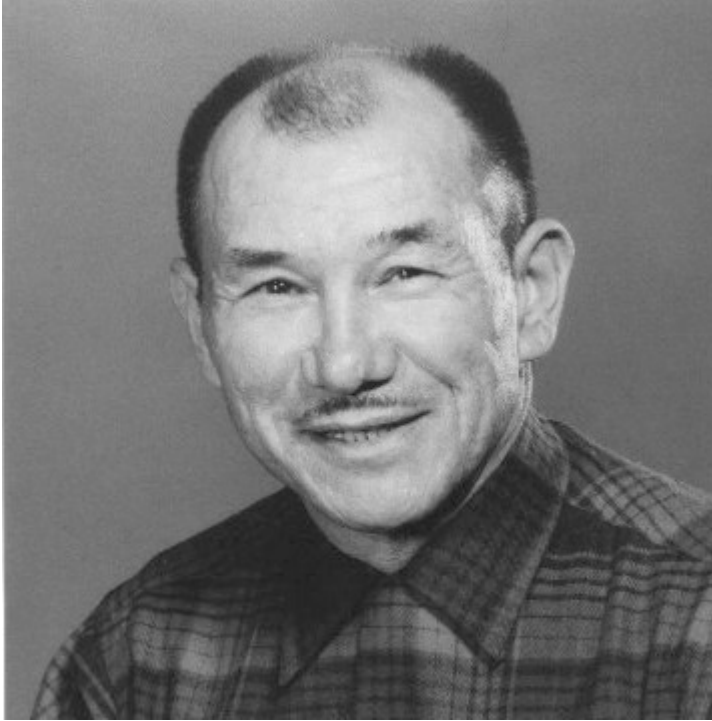


photo courtesy Alaska Native Heritage Center