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Smokejumper biographies for 1948 rookie class, A-H

National Smokejumper Association

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Marshall Carruth Adams (Missoula '48)

Marshall, 90, died November 12, 2011, in Tupelo, Mississippi. He and his twin brother were born March 28, 1921, in Pontotoc, Mississippi. Marshall graduated from Columbia Military Academy in Columbia, Tenn., and he attended Ole Miss until his education was interrupted by Pearl Harbor. He joined the Army Air Force and served as a pilot of a B-24 bomber in Europe in the Eighth Air Force. He attained the rank of 1st Lieutenant. After the war, he returned to school and graduated with a degree in forestry from the University of Montana. He served as a forester, smokejumper and bush pilot in the Northwest and Alaska. Marshall returned to Mississippi, where he pursued careers as a commercial pilot, carpenter, and farmer.

Marshall jumped the 1948 season at Missoula and had seven practice and two fire jumps.

Maxwell J. "Max" Allen (Missoula '48)

Max died in an automobile accident in Arizona July 6, 1998, at the age of 72. He jumped at Missoula 1948-51, 53, 54, West Yellowstone in 1952 and at McCall from 1955-56.

Max had stints with the CIA in Southeast Asia for five years and one year in Peru. Max was one of the two jumpers who parachuted for President Eisenhower at the dedication of the Aerial Fire Depot in Missoula on September 22, 1954.

Robert W. Berry (Missoula '48)

Bob, 87, died at his home in Indianapolis on May 12, 2016. He worked in forest management in Idaho before joining the Army where he was with the 82nd Airborne. After leaving the Army, Bob jumped out of Missoula for the 1948-49 seasons. He started a successful construction business in Indianapolis and was married to his wife, Betty, for 57 years.

Howard W. Betty (North Cascades '48)

Howard died May 2, 2017. He graduated from Okanogan H. S. in 1948 and rookied at Winthrop that same year where he continued to jump through the 1954 season. He had fought many fires for the USFS while in high school and was an experienced firefighter by the time he started jumping.

In 1954 Howard quit jumping and went to work for a Swiss Skyline logging outfit. He thought he would make big money falling timber but nearly starved to death.

Howard had continued his education while jumping and graduated from Eastern Washington University in 1952 with his teaching degree. He went into the lumber business in 1955 and built the Methow Valley Lumber Company until his retirement in 1976.

Howard then joined the Carpenters Union and travelled jobsite to jobsite and built hundreds of homes and businesses in Okanogan County. He was a skilled cabinetmaker, avid hunter, and member of many service clubs.

Smokejumping has stayed in Howard's family. His son Ned (LDG-77) jumped five years, earned an engineering degree, and now lives in Kirkland, Washington. His son-in-law, Steve Reynaud (NCSB-65), also jumped for many years.

Paul Block (Cave Junction '48)

Paul, 85, died August 2, 2010, in the crash of his home-built gyrocopter at the Illinois Valley Airport (former Siskiyou Smokejumper Base). The gyrocopter has a rotor like a helicopter and a propeller like an airplane. It appeared that something came off the tail section as Paul was preparing to land. Paul jumped at the "Gobi" for three seasons (1948-50) before moving south for a full-time job. After his retirement from his job as a public utility worker in the late 80s, he moved back to Cave Junction. He had flown for over 60 years and said, "It's nice to have an airport where there isn't a tower and without planes being all over the sky." Any of us who worked on the Siskiyou Smokejumper Museum Project were able to see Paul and his flying machine as he loved flying and was in the air whenever he had a chance.

Robert O. Brandenberger (Missoula '48)

Bob, 92, died January 26, 2018, in Bozeman, Montana. He graduated from high school in New Jersey and served in WWII as a Naval Aviator from 1943-46. Bob jumped out of Missoula during the 1948 season, the same year he graduated from the University of Michigan with a degree in forestry. He then received his master's in forestry from Yale in 1950.

Bob worked for the USFS for 35 years in Northern Idaho and Montana and was instrumental in the planning and development of many ski areas, campgrounds, marinas, and other recreational facilities. He continued his work as a ski area consultant after retirement and was an avid skier until age 90.

Monte Brooks (McCall '48)

Monte, 82, died December 19, 2010, in Boise. He attended Boise schools and earned his business degree at the University of Idaho in 1953. After graduating from high school, Monte spent 1945-47 in the Army Air Corps stationed in the Aleutian Islands. He owned Brooks Insurance in Boise.

Monte jumped at McCall in 1948-51. He became an ardent wildlife conservationist, volunteering for the Idaho Fish and Game Department and the Idaho Conservation League. He also contributed heavily to Boise State University's expansion of its athletic program from a junior college to its top-tier status today and served as president of the Bronco Athletic Association.

Leo "Keith" Brown (McCall '48)

Leo "Keith" Brown passed away at home in Idaho Falls on July 7, 1999. Keith was born on September 22, 1928, in Burns, Oregon. When he was a young boy, the family moved to Nampa, where he graduated from high school in 1947. His parents were avid outdoors people, so he grew up fishing and spearing salmon with them in the meadows of Bear Valley Creek, rockhounding with them in Idaho's deep canyons and high deserts and hunting big game and birds with them throughout its spectacular mountains and plains.

During the Korean war, he served in the Navy aboard the aircraft carrier U.S.S. Valley Forge and saw a good part of the world. But he returned to Idaho, where he worked in McCall as a Forest Service smokejumper before and after the war, making over fifty parachute jumps on wildfires in Idaho's central wilderness.

Keith earned his degree in business administration from Idaho State University in 1957, and moved to Idaho Falls, where he lived and worked as a federal investigator for 29 years until he retired in 1986. Among other things, Keith was a Salmon River camper, a Plaza Lanes pool-shooter, a dedicated golfer, and an avid runner of wild rivers.

Dennis D. Bryan (McCall '48)

Dennis jumped at McCall during the 1948 season and had two fire jumps in August of that year in addition to his rookie training jumps. He is listed as deceased but no further information is available.

John Franklin “Jack” Carey (McCall '48)

Jack, 80, died June 3, 2010, in Bend, Oregon. He was born November 19, 1929, in Boise, Idaho. He spent his early years in Eagle and McCall, Idaho, and later moved to Lava Hot Springs, Idaho, where he graduated from High School. Jack attended Idaho State College where he received a BA degree in business and an MA degree in education. During summer vacations from college, he worked as a smoke jumper for the Forest Service in McCall. Jack served in the Navy for three years, stationed in San Diego and Seattle.

Jack taught school for seven years in Pocatello, Idaho and Murray, Utah. The family then moved to Bend where he taught 5th grade at Juniper Elementary for 26 years. Jack jumped at McCall 1948, 50, and 1951.

Charles Morten “Chuck” Clemensen (Cave Junction '48)

Chuck passed away from a heart attack January 9, 1999, at the age of 74. He was born June 6, 1925, in San Francisco, California, and was in the Army during WWII.

A Celebration of His Life was held at Orange, California in the Los Angeles area on February 17 and his ashes were scattered in San Pedro Harbor to the south of L.A. He jumped at CJ during the 1948-49 seasons.

Kermit C. “K.C.” Cole (Missoula '49)

K.C., 87, died August 25, 2013, in Edmonds, Washington. K.C. came from humble beginnings to achieve greatly. Home was near Darby in the Bitterroot Valley. As a young man he stayed close to home but did join the Army Air Corps in 1944 for a two-year stint. Training consisted of going to gunnery school in Kingman, Arizona. Not being assigned to a permanent unit right away, he volunteered for training in aerial photography. This lengthy training prevented him from being shipped overseas.

In his youth, K.C. worked fires, drove truck and was part of a brush crew. This led him to sign up as a Forestry major in college. His roommate, Jack Dunne (MSO-46), talked him into seasonal smokejumping by persuading him with the argument, “you don’t have to walk to the fire.” The three years of jumping came to an end in 1950 and was followed by a career in academia.

K.C. graduated from Western Montana College with a degree in education and went on to earn his master’s degree from the University of Montana. He started as a teacher in rural Idaho and became Elementary School supervisor for the State of Montana in 1967. In 1972 he quit and

went to work at an institute sponsored by C.S. Mott. This organization endeavored to change the educational system with innovative approaches.

After obtaining his Ph.D. from Wayne State, he continued in education for the rest of his career. He taught in Oregon and supervised the conversion of general degrees to teaching degrees until 1986. K.C. retired in 1986 from Central Elementary in Flushing, Michigan.

K.C. credited smokejumping with giving him the courage to make changes in his life, in education, and in his community where he continues to be involved. He jumped at Missoula 1948-50.

Wilson Bennett Conner (North Cascades '48)

Ben died April 15, 2007, in Harrisburg, PA. In his 18th year of Parkinson's, he fell and broke his hip Easter Sunday and did not recover from the resultant surgery. He was born March 18, 1923, in Philadelphia, PA. Ben majored in political science at Cornell College in Iowa and competed on Cornell's NCAA Championship wrestling team.

His college education was interrupted by three years in the Army Air Corps during World War II. After the war he graduated from New York University law school and began his career at Aircraft Marine Products where he went from salesman to Vice President and, finally, Director of Marketing. Ben was a Life Member of the National Smokejumper Association. Ben jumped at North Cascades 1948-50.

Pierce William "Bill" Cook Jr. (Missoula '48)

Bill died March 29, 1996, in Charlotte, NC. He was born April 2, 1928, and graduated from Central H.S. in Charlotte. He had served in the Marines in WWII and the Korean War. Bill retired after 20 years with the DuBois Chemical Co. He jumped at Missoula during the 1948-49 seasons.

Ralph Cordes (North Cascades '48)

Jumped at NCSB during 1948 season. Notes say killed in Korean War but can't find any verification. Possible data: Born March 20, 1928, Cincinnati, Ohio. Died May 3, 1953, age 25. Ralph James Cordes

James Crockett (McCall '48)

Jim, 83, died Feb. 21, 2011, in Missoula. He attended the University of Idaho following a stint in the Navy at the end of World War II. Jim jumped at McCall in 1948, at Idaho City in 1949-50, back to McCall in 1951, and after a long hiatus, he jumped from McCall from 1961 through 1965. He served as the crew boss for the Bitterroot Hot Shots in the mid-1960s. Jim retired

from the Bitterroot National Forest in 1982 but continued teaching new recruits each season for several years. As a smokejumper, he accomplished the extraordinary feat of making three fire jumps in the same day.

Walter L. Crown (Missoula '48)

Walter jumped at Missoula during the 1948 season and got one fire jump that season. Might indicate that he was injured. Have him listed as deceased 1998, age 82 but no confirmation.

Possible information:

Born May 4, 1916, Dennison, Ohio.

Died March 21, 1998.

WWII Private

Postal Worker prior to service

Berle Eldon Davis (Missoula '48)

Berle Eldon Davis died on March 7, 2003. He was born Nov. 23, 1922, and grew up on the family homestead and attended school in Judith Gap, Montana. He was in the U.S. Army from 1943 to 1946 and served in the Philippines, New Guinea and Japan and graduated from Montana State University in 1957.

Over the course of his life, he worked many jobs, including the Forest Service, where he was a smokejumper, firefighter, fire control officer, straw boss, and aerial observer. Later he ran the Town Pump stations in Big Timber and Great Falls. He retired in 1988 while working for MSU. Berle jumped at Missoula 1948-50, and 1952.

Philip D. Davis Jr. (Missoula '48)

Phil, 76, who was NSA Secretary 1996-99, died October 9, 2001, in Missoula. He was born January 18, 1925, in Judith Gap, Montana, where he attended grade and high school. After attending Montana State for a quarter, he served in the Army Signal Corps. Phi returned to Montana State upon his discharge and graduated with a degree in Electrical Engineering in 1951. He jumped at Missoula for two seasons while attending the university.

Phil trained with IBM in New York, worked at the Alameda Naval Air station, and then returned to Montana in 1953 and opened an IBM office. Phil worked for IBM for 31 years, retiring in 1980. In addition to his duties as an NSA Board Member, he was on the Young Audiences board of directors and an active Track & Field official for many years.

Donald A. “Don” Dayton (Missoula '48)

Don was born September 25, 1928, in Akron, Ohio, where he grew up and graduated from Akron H.S. in 1947. He got a bachelor's in Wildlife Management from Ohio State University before going into the USAF where he spent 30 years retiring in 1991. Don currently lives in Carlsbad, N.M.

Eugene Patrick “Jake” Dougherty (Missoula '48)

Jake died March 15, 2009, at age 83. He served in the Army Maritime Division 1945-47, 82nd Airborne 1945-47 and U.S. Navy 1950-52. Jake was a Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, firefighter for 25 years. He jumped at Missoula for the 1948 and 1949 seasons.

Major General **William “Bill” Eicher** (North Cascades '48)

Bill, 84, died May 2, 2011, at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., following a highly decorated military career. He jumped from Winthrop for the 1948 season and rejoined the Army in 1950, having served in the Army Air Forces – predecessor to the U.S. Air Force – at the end of World War II. He was a 1950 graduate of Washington State College and earned a master's degree in Business Administration from Syracuse University in 1960.

Gen. Eicher commanded a battalion in the Vietnam War and was commanding general of the Army Armament Materiel Readiness Command in the late 1970s. He was inducted into the Ordnance Hall of Fame in 1986, having streamlined a process for ammunition procurement that saved the Army hundreds of millions of dollars.

Gen. Eicher received the Silver Star in 1951 while serving as a lieutenant in the Korean War. His award noted that as his platoon attacked a strongly defended hill, he repeatedly braved automatic weapons fire and “so inspired his men by his inflexible resolve that they maintained the perimeter against every hostile thrust.”

Gen. Eicher's other decorations included the Distinguished Service Medal, three awards of the Legion of Merit, four awards of the Bronze Star medal, the Purple Heart, the Joint Services Commendation Medal, and two Army Commendation medals. After retiring from the Army, he spent 12 years as a vice president of technical management at the American Defense Preparedness Association.

Wallace R. Froemming (McCall '48)

Wallace jumped at McCall 1948-49.

Virgil Lawson Greene (McCall '48)

Virgil Lawson Greene, longtime Hermiston resident, was born on September 25, 1925, in Cambridge, Idaho. He died on March 28, 2015, in Hermiston, Oregon, at the age of 89 years.

Virgil was raised and attended school in Weiser, Idaho. He enlisted in the United States Army in 1943. Virgil served in the European Theater for 15 months during WWII and was honorably discharged in 1946 and returned to Weiser, Idaho.

Virgil was united in marriage to Joan Townley on December 27, 1950, in Winnemucca, Nevada. They lived in Weiser, Idaho, where Virgil worked on the railroad and during the summer fire season as a smoke jumper in McCall, Idaho, from 1948 through 1950. In 1954 they moved to Ordance and Virgil went to work at the Umatilla Army Depot. He worked as an ammunition inspector for 28 years before retiring in 1982.

Lyle Quinn Grenager (Missoula '48)

Lyle, 93, of Huson, Montana, died April 5, 2022. He was born February 9, 1929, in Williston, ND, and grew up in Missoula. Lyle jumped at Missoula 1948-51, 58, and 1961.

In a 2004 interview, Lyle recalled smokejumper adventures and friends. He said he just missed being assigned to the Mann Gulch Fire because he was returning from an assignment in Republic, Wash., and missed that flight by half a day.

“Because the smokejumpers represented the most advanced parachute technology in the world at that time, with elite men like **Jim Waite** (MSO-40) and **Frank Derry** (MSO-40) pushing the state of the art with their innovations, the CIA turned to the smokejumpers for help with a secret mission after the war,” Lyle recalled. He was one of five or six men from Missoula recruited to serve his country.

“We can't tell you where you're going, but this will take the place of your required military service,” he was told by the recruiter. Lyle, who was in the Naval Air Corps ROTC at the time, accepted the assignment. He soon found himself in Taiwan, giving parachuting training to units that served the nationalist leader Chiang Kai-shek. The smokejumpers also trained the units in survival techniques to prepare for dropping behind enemy lines on the mainland. Among the other men with him in Taiwan, he recalled **Jack Wall** (MSO-48), **Herman Ball** (MSO-50) and **Wally Dobbins** (MSO-47).

Lyle played softball into his 80's and won many events in the Senior Olympics including horseshoes, basketball, and sprints. He spent his later days building a home on the Clark Fork River with his wife, Louise.

Edwin Lewis “Ned” Hauptner (North Cascades '48)

Ned, 92, died November 12, 2019. He was born April 27, 1927, in New York and lived in Milton, Massachusetts. Ned was a Special Needs Teacher at Hyde Park H.S. in Boston and was in the Army during WWII. His passion was reading history from the revolutionary war through WWII and had a personal library of over 5,000 books on that time period. Ned jumped at NCSB during the 1948 season.

Clyde Hawley (Idaho City '48)

Clyde grew up in Salmon, Idaho and started working for the Forest Service at age 15. As seen with other jumpers of the 1940s, it was not uncommon to start working at this age due to the lack of available manpower caused by WWII.

Clyde graduated from the University of Idaho in 1958 with a degree in Zoology but went to work in the Nuclear Energy industry after taking a job offer from Phillips Petroleum. After spending two years with Phillips, he spent 25 years with the Atomic Energy Commission retiring in 1980. There was a two-year break during that period in which he worked for the International Energy Agency in Vienna on the “Plowshares” program using nuclear energy for other purposes.

Clyde did consultant work for the nuclear industry until 1987. He retired in Salmon, Idaho and moved to Nampa in 2001.

Clyde jumped for seven seasons over a ten-year period. As with many others, he was drafted in 1950 and spent two years in the military. He was one of the initial ten jumpers to go with “**Smokey**” **Stover** (MYC-46) to Idaho City and build that base. Clyde remembers **Bob Caldwell** (MYC-46), and pilots Claire Hartnett and Karl Bryning.

Alman W. “Bill” Hegland (Missoula '48)

Bill died November 24, 2003, in Lakeside, Montana, where he and his wife Faye had retired in 1980. After graduating from high school, he worked in an aircraft factory before joining the Navy in 1944. Upon his discharge from the Navy, Bill attended the University of Montana and graduated in 1950 with a degree in forestry. He then went to work for the Northern Pacific Railroad as a civil engineer until his retirement. Bill was an NSA member.

Donald E. Hertzog (McCall '48)

Don, 92, died June 27, 2020, in Lacey, Washington, after suffering from Parkinson's Disease for several years. He graduated from high school in Caldwell, Idaho, and served in the US Army as a MP in South Korea. Don started work with the USFS at an early age due to the lack of manpower during WWII. As a teenager, he manned a lookout and later worked building trails.

Don graduated from the University of Washington with a degree in engineering and spent over four years with the Washington State Dept. of Fisheries designing facilities for salmon migration. He later spent 10 years with Boeing and supervised a group of engineers responsible for the design and construction of the "world's largest building," the 747-manufacturing plant in Everett, WA. From there he worked as City Engineer for the city of Hoquiam, Washington.

Don then moved to Lacey to be the Director of Public Works and served for 17 years as City Engineer. Don jumped at McCall 1948-50 while attending college.

Arthur Theodore Honey Jr. (Cave Junction '48)

Arthur, 86, of Caldwell, Idaho, died Monday, December 26, 2016, at his home of natural causes. He jumped at Cave Junction during the 1948 season.