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Smokejumper biographies for 1949 rookie class, J-P

National Smokejumper Association

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1949 Rookie Class J-P

H. Reid Jackson (McCall '49)

Reid, 91, died July 29, 2018. He grew up in Logan, Utah, and moved to Ogden in 1944. Just shy of his 18th birthday he joined the Navy and trained as a tail gunner for the planned invasion of Japan. When the war ended, Reid enrolled at Utah State University and graduated in 1950 with a degree in Forestry. He rookied at McCall in 1949 and worked there until 1956. He was promoted to Foreman at McCall in 1953. In 1956 he took a position as District Ranger on the Heise R.D. near Idaho Falls. In 1960 Reid moved to Boise and took the job as Fire Staff Officer on the Boise N.F.

In 1970 he moved to Nevada City, California, and became the Deputy Supervisor of the Tahoe N.F. In the summer of 1975, he transferred to the Bridger-Teton N.F. as Forest Supervisor. In 1983 he received the Distinguished Service Award from the USDA. Reid retired to Jackson Hole, Wyoming, in 1985 after 42 years of service in the USFS.

Edwin Del Mar "Del" Jaquish (Cave Junction '49)

Del, 91, died April 23, 2021. He was born May 18, 1929, in Fresno, California, graduating from Sanger High School in 1947. In the late 1950s he moved to Idaho and was a smokejumper at Cave Junction, Oregon in 1949 and 1951. He graduated from the University of Idaho in Forestry in 1953 and served in the Army 1953-55.

Del's 33-year career was with the USFS serving primarily as a Public Information Officer. After serving as the District Ranger on the Palouse District, St. Joe NF, in the early 1960s, he transferred to Missoula, Montana, as a Public Information Specialist in 1964. In 1969, he was assigned as the Public Information Officer for the Forest Products Laboratory in Madison, Wisconsin. In 1972, he moved to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and was assigned as the Assistant Regional Forester responsible for Information Services for the 17 national forests in the Eastern Region of the Forest Service. In 1985 Del retired and moved to Post Falls, Idaho.

Hugh Jenkins (Missoula '49)

Hugh was killed in action in Korea while serving with the 3rd Division north of Seoul on April 25, 1953. He was awarded the Silver Star for his actions on the day of his death. He joined the Army in 1952. A graduate of Oberlin College in Ohio, he was a pacifist and was classified as a conscientious objector when the war began. He volunteered as a medic but changed his mind and entered the infantry.

Hugh Jenkins age 16, diary entry, October 16, 1945.

"I am certain that the only way for a man to be truly happy, to feel serene and peaceful in his soul, is to give himself to God. I don't claim to have done this yet, but I'm getting closer; I'm trying. When a man is with God completely, he will have four qualities: faith, hope, love, and courage. And if he has these things, he will be happy, no matter what his outward circumstances are. He will be steady, strong, smiling, and humble, and confident. No one with hope can despair. No one with courage can quit, while no one with love would want to quit. And no one with faith can fail."

"During the early morning of 25 April 1953, in the vicinity of Surang-ni, Korea, Company F was defending strategically valuable Outpost 'Harry' against a large-scale enemy assault. Disregarding the intense mortar and artillery concentrations accompanying the attack, Corporal Jenkins bravely directed the fire of his squad upon the enemy. While leading his men, he was seriously wounded by fragments from an exploding artillery round but, ignoring his wounds, courageously continued to defend the outpost. Through Corporal Jenkins's sound judgment and aggressive leadership, his men mortally wounded or repelled all enemy troops attacking their sector. Observing a friendly casualty, Corporal Jenkins left his position and rushed to aid the man. In this valiant attempt to save his comrade, he was mortally wounded by the enemy fire."

Hugh jumped at Missoula 1949-51 and is the brother of NSA Life Member Starr Jenkins (CJ-48).

William L. "Bill" Kickbusch (Missoula '49)

Bill, 86, died June 25, 2016, in Rolla, Missouri. He was born on Oct. 27, 1929, in Escanaba, Michigan. Bill graduated from Michigan State University with a degree in forestry. He started his Forest Service career before he even graduated - first he spent the summer of 1948 on the Kootenai National Forest in Montana as a summer student in a research camp, and then he worked two summers, 1949 and 1951, as a smokejumper out of Missoula, MT. When the Korean War broke out, he joined the U.S. Air Force and served for two years. After serving in the Air Force, he returned to the Forest Service to start his professional career in 1954.

Kickbusch had been a District Ranger for the Van Buren Ranger District in 1958, which was then managed by the Shawnee National Forest. He remembered this time fondly in an interview conducted in 2012. "In the 1950s, the District Ranger, that was probably the best job that you could have in the Forest Service," Kickbusch recalled. "You were responsible for your district and anything that went on in your district and that included

knowing the people who lived there, and I knew every person that lived on the Van Buren District."

Bill worked for the USFS for 35 years and spent the last 18 years on the Mark Twain National Forest. After his retirement he remained active in the Rolla (MO) community. He enjoyed volunteering for the Phelps County Elections committee and the Korean War Veterans. He was proud to be selected to participate in the Franklin County Honor Flight to Washington DC in 2014.

Ira J. "Ted" Kittell (Missoula '49)

Ted, 77, passed away November 17, 2006, in Seattle. He grew up and graduated from high school in Missoula and served in the Air Force during the Korean War. After his discharge from the service, Ted returned to the University of Montana, receiving a degree in physical therapy. He was a smokejumper for six seasons in Missoula and five seasons in Redding. Ted worked for the Forest Service and retired as Fire Control Officer for the Shasta-Trinity National Forest in northern California.

Lloyd A. Knapp (Missoula '49)

Lloyd, of Skykomish, Washington, died May 21, 2001. He was born March 23, 1930, in Orofino, Idaho, and graduated from high school in Kettle Falls, Washington, and from Washington State University in 1953. While in college, he was a smokejumper from 1949 through 1951. Lloyd served in the Army during the Korean War and worked in private industry for several years. He was a forester on the Mt. Baker/Snoqualmie National Forest from 1970 until he retired in 1988.

Joseph "Joe" Lee (Missoula '49)

Joe, 68, died January 11, 1995, in Spokane, WA. After his days as a jumper, he graduated from dental school and was a dentist in his hometown for many years. He jumped at Missoula during the 1949 season.

Rodney P. Linton (Missoula '49)

Rod, 84, died November 12, 2014. He jumped at Missoula during the 1949 season and attended the University of Montana and Montana State. Rodney served in the Army during the Korean War and was discharged with the rank of Staff Sergeant.

He later graduated from Eastern Washington University and got his masters from Whitworth College. He taught at the elementary and junior

high school level at schools in the Spokane Valley. Rodney retired from teaching in 1990.

Walter “Bud” Lloyd (North Cascades '49)

Bud died June 17, 2010. He grew up in the Winthrop/Twisp area and jumped at North Cascades 1949-50. Bud worked for his brother most of his life at Lloyd Logging and was known for his strong work ethic and running a tight ship. In his 50s he became interested in running, winning many races in his age class, and continued to run into his 70s.

Oroville C. Looper (Cave Junction '49)

Orv died December 6, 2005, in his home in Port Orford, Oregon. He served in the Navy during WWII as a Gunner's Mate 1st Class and was in the Battle of Midway. After the war he returned to Cave Junction and started his smokejumping career with the Forest Service in 1949. He jumped in Cave Junction from 1949 until 1957 when he transferred to Redding, California, as assistant to the smokejumper base manager.

1957 was the initial year of the Redding Base. In January 1959, he moved and helped open the BLM smokejumper base in Fairbanks, Alaska. Orv remained in Fairbanks until the spring of 1966 when he transferred to Winnemucca, Nevada, as a Fire Control Officer for the BLM. After he retired from the BLM in Winnemucca, he lived there for several years before moving to Redding, California, and then to Port Orford.

Thomas Wiaotte “Tom” Marshall (Missoula '49)

Tom, 82, of Madison Heights, Virginia, died Aug. 2, 2009, in Lynchburg, Va., due to complications from Alzheimer's disease and other health problems. He was born October 4, 1926, in New Orleans and graduated from Metairie H.S. Tom earned a bachelor's degree in Botany from Louisiana State University and served in the U.S. Navy. Tom became a smokejumper as a college student in 1949, working just his rookie season.

After graduating from LSU, Tom became a forester, working for major paper-producing companies in Louisiana, Alabama and North Carolina retiring in 1991.

Frederick “Fred” Michelotti (Cave Junction '49)

Fred, 27, died February 23, 1957, and is buried at Forest Lawn Cemetery in Seattle. He was born May 4, 1929 and jumped at Cave Junction 1949-50. He was in the Army Engineers and grave marker shows rank of 1st Lt.

He is pictured in the West Seattle H.S. yearbook of 1945 and the University of Washington yearbook of 1951 showing "Wrestling Champions."

Arnold Morelli (North Cascades '49)

Arnold "Moose" Morelli, a resident of Mariemont, Ohio for 51 years, died October 19, 2020. Born in Cincinnati on June 28, 1928, he graduated from Withrow High School and the University of Cincinnati, where he received a B.A. in Political Science in 1951. He received his LLB from Harvard Law School in 1955 after serving in the Korean conflict.

He came to Cincinnati in 1957 and joined Paxton & Seasongood, then became an Assistant U.S. Attorney and First Assistant U.S. Attorney in 1962. He practiced law with Bauer, Morelli and Heyd for 30 years, specializing in litigation. He will be remembered for several high-profile cases and as co-counsel on the Cincinnati Crime Study Committee in 1966.

In 1983 Arnold placed number six of the area's top lawyers according to Cincinnati Magazine. He lectured at University of Cincinnati's Law School and Chase Law School. He was a member of the American College of Trial Lawyers, the American Board of Trial Lawyers, and was included in the Best Lawyers in America, the National Directory of Criminal Lawyers, and Who's Who in Law.

From 1972-1976 he served on the Mariemont Board of Education. He jumped at NCSB during the 1949 season.

Robert E. Muhm (Missoula '49)

Bob died July 13, 2013. After graduating from high school, he attended a local junior college before enlisting in the Marine Corps in 1943. Bob served as a navigator with the rank of Technical Sergeant (Aviation) and was discharged in 1946.

With the help of the G.I. Bill, he enrolled at Iowa State College and graduated with a degree in Forestry in 1950. During that time, he jumped at Missoula during the 1949 season. From his daughter Marjorie: "His stint as a smokejumper was relatively brief, however the experience left an indelible impression on him."

He began his career in Manufacturing at Wood Conversion Company making building materials from wood byproducts. In 1961, he transferred to a plant in New Jersey and in 1967 accepted a position as plant manager at Appleton Manufacturing Company's plant in Michigan City, Indiana. In 1971 Bob left the wood products industry when he became plant manager at

UOP Johnson in West Deptford, New Jersey, making industrial filters and well screens. He retired in 1986.

From Bob's Daughter: "Back in 1980 when Bob was on a flight to Minneapolis-St. Paul he fell into a conversation with a fellow traveler who casually mentioned being from Missoula. Bob mentioned spending the summer of 1949 there working for the U.S. Forest service as a smokejumper. The traveler mentioned a September article that appeared in *The Daily Missoulian* about Norman Maclean's plan to write about the Mann Gulch fire. Bob obtained a copy of the article and followed up with a letter to Professor Maclean, describing the afternoon of August 4 when his crew was recalled from Grangeville. When he arrived in Missoula, he checked the posted jump list and found he was listed number five under the checked-off Mann Gulch crew. In his letter to Maclean, he admitted that coming within five people of being with those men at that fire made him think many times of what might have been."

Glenn Steele Murphy (Missoula '49)

Glenn was born on March 21, 1921, in Springfield, Ohio. He married Anna P. Beck on February 14, 1947, in Missoula, Montana. They had four children during their marriage. He died on June 23, 2000, in Rancho Murieta, California, at the age of 79. He was in the Army 1942-45 and jumped at Missoula during the 1949 season.

David R. Navon (Missoula '49)

David, 28, died August 5, 1949, along with 11 other Missoula smokejumpers in the Mann Gulch Fire. He was a 2nd lieutenant in the 82nd Airborne Division and jumped on D-Day and Operation Market Garden in Holland in the fall of 1944. Wounds in that battle took him back to England for recovery. After the war he transferred to the 101st Airborne and served in Berlin. He was discharged in 1946, after five years of service, as a 1st lieutenant.

David enrolled in the forestry program at the University of California Berkeley graduating with his degree in June 1949. The 1949 season was to be his last jumping as he was going to pursue a career in forestry and get advanced degrees in the field.

David was born in Argentina where his dad sold farm machinery for International Harvester. He graduated from high school in Modesto, California, and attended Modesto Jr. College and was a member of the National Guard before he was drafted in 1941.

Paul E. Needham (Missoula '49)

Following fits but not verified to smokejumping:

Paul Eugene Needham was born on August 19, 1929, in Oskaloosa, Iowa. He married on January 16, 1954. He had two children during his marriage. He died on March 19, 2000, in Bumpass, Virginia, at the age of 70, and was buried in Lemay, Missouri.

He was in the USAF with the rank of Colonel and served in Korea and Vietnam. The main connection in the NSA database is name with middle initial and date of death. Paul is also shown in the Iowa State University yearbook in 1949 and 1951 and was in the Forestry Club.

Verland "Swede" Ohlson (Missoula '49)

"Swede" Ohlson, 86, died December 7, 2003, at his home in Conway NH. Born in northwestern New York, son of Swedish immigrants who ran logging camps in the early 1900's, he was drafted in 1941 and served in the First Special Service Force (The Devil's Brigade) in Italy where he was wounded. He was injured during training at Missoula on his 4th jump and did not take part in the 1949 season.

After the war he completed his Forestry education at the University of Montana and worked on the Clearwater N.F. in Idaho before his moving east to the Allegheny, George Washington, and White Mountain National Forests. Appointed District Ranger of the Saco Ranger District, WMNF in June 1957, he served 23 years as District Ranger before retirement in 1980. Two of his grandchildren are currently smokejumpers.

Leonard L. Piper (Missoula '49)

Leonard, 23, died August 5, 1949, along with 11 other Missoula smokejumpers in the Mann Gulch Fire. He was born July 5, 1926, in Blairsville, Pennsylvania. Leonard was a Machinist Mate 3rd Class U.S. Navy during WWII. He enrolled in the University of Montana to study Forestry in 1947 after his discharge from the Navy.

Alan L. Privette (North Cascades '49)

Alvan L. Privette, Jr., 83, passed away peacefully, Monday, April 18, 2011, at St. Mary's Hospital in Reno, NV. A WWII Veteran, he was a jump instructor with the All American 82nd Airborne. Al was one of the founding coaches of the Reno Continental Little League and was a proud member of the Cal-Nevada All Airborne Assoc.

James W. Prochnau (Missoula '49)

Jim, 87, a leader in the Northwest timber industry, died January 9, 2016, in Albany, Oregon, after a three-month battle with pancreatic cancer. He was born August 13, 1928, in Bakersfield, CA. He rookied at Missoula in 1949 and was good friends with Leonard Piper. Both are pictured on the cover of Norman McLean's book Young Men and Fire. He jumped at Missoula 1949-50.

Jim graduated from Everett High School in 1946. In 1952 he earned his degree from University of Washington in forest management.

Jim co-founded Jackson & Prochnau, a forestry consulting company in 1954. He performed consulting work throughout the U.S., Canada, Honduras, Russia, and China. His expertise led him to be a highly sought expert witness in court cases involving timber.

George Albert Pynn (Missoula '49))

George jumped at Missoula during the 1949 season. He is a Dentist by career, lived in Colorado and his last known place of residence was Arlington, WA.