

1-18-2023

Smokejumper biographies for 1952 rookie class, A-H

National Smokejumper Association

1952 Rookie Class A-H

Roland H. Andersen (Grangeville '52)

Andy died December 12, 2017, in East Wenatchee, Washington. He left Chicago at age 17 to join a blister rust crew in Idaho followed by a year in the Army. Andy joined the smokejumpers in 1952, jumped at Grangeville that season and at Missoula 1953-60. He received his pilot's license in 1953 and was a foreman for the Silver City crew during some of his time with the smokejumpers.

From 1958 to 1963 he worked for Civil Air Transport and Air America dropping supplies to guerrillas in Tibet and Hmong forces in Laos. In 1963 Air America hired him as a pilot.

During the years 1964-68 Andy worked at a variety of jobs, tried homesteading in Alaska, then returned to Thailand and started a charter boat service. In 1968-69 he worked as an Army contractor in Vietnam. Andy returned to the U.S. in 1970 and flew for Inter-Mountain Aviation and the USFS. He retired in 1992 in Wenatchee, Washington.

Roger R. Bay (Missoula '52)

Roger, 83, died April 3, 2015, from complications of Alzheimer's disease. He was born November 27, 1931, in LaCrosse, Wisconsin, and was raised in LaCrosse and attended Viterbo College. Roger graduated from the University of Idaho, in Forest Management, in 1953. He earned his masters and doctorate in Forestry and Watershed management from University of Minnesota. Roger served in the U.S. Army for two years, stationed in Alaska.

Roger worked for the U.S. Forest Service for 34 years. He started as a smokejumper and retired as Forest Service Director of the Pacific Southwest Research Station in Berkley, California. After retiring, he worked as a consultant with Univ. of Hawaii College of Agriculture. Roger jumped at Missoula during the 1952 season.

Ray Grady Beasley (McCall '52)

Ray, 88, died February 1, 2018, in Helena, Montana. He was born February 1, 1930, in Denver, Colorado. In 1948 he went into the Air Force upon graduating from high school. He was a Winter Survival Expert and trained crews for deployment to Libya and the Korean War. After his enlistment was up, Ray jumped at McCall 1952-63 and at Idaho City in 1964 and was a spotter and squadleader at both bases.

Using the G.I. Bill, he received his bachelor's degree in Zoology from the University of Idaho in 1958. Ray went to work for the CIA during the winter

months. “Beas” had a long and interesting career with the CIA working in Laos, Guatemala (Bay of Pigs Operation) training Cuban paratroopers, and the Tibet airlift program. Ray co-commissioned a painting, Khampa Airlift to Tibet, which now hangs in CIA headquarters.

In 1964 Ray became a textile engineer for the USFS and his work including inventing the fire shelter and was involved in designing the fire shirts and making improvements to smokejumper parachute technology.

Ray moved to Helena in 1984 where he and his wife started the Birds & Beasley’s gallery/birding store.

Clayton Victor Berg (Missoula ’52)

Clayton died June 17, 2009, due to a tractor accident at his nursery in Helena, Montana. He was born in South Dakota, Aug. 10, 1931.

Clayton was a graduate of South Dakota State University with a degree in Entomology and jumped five seasons at Missoula.

Clayton started the Valley Nursery in the 1960s and was well known for his work in developing cold-hardy plants. His 10-acre nursery boasts the largest collection of cold-hardy plants for the northern U.S.

Jay Thomas Brazie (Cave Junction ’52)

Tom, 91, died March 23, 2020, at his residence in Twin Falls, Idaho. He was born July 2, 1934, in Omaha, Nebraska. Tom graduated from Filer H.S. in Twin Falls in 1946. He enlisted in the Navy and enrolled in the University of Idaho after his time in the service and graduated with a degree in Civil Engineering. Tom jumped at Cave Junction during the 1953 season.

Tom spent his early engineering career working on highway projects in the Magic Valley and in Northern Idaho. He completed his career working on highway and development projects world-wide. Tom retired in 1993 and settle in Shoshone and Twin Falls, Idaho.

Edwin Leon “Ted” Burgon (Idaho City ’52)

Ted Burgon was killed August 31, 2002, in an ambush of a convoy of teachers headed for the Grasberg mine in Papua New Guinea. He had just taken the assignment as principal for the American School at the largest gold mine in the world. The gunmen were suspected to be a part of Muslim militant group.

Ted was born July 16, 1931, in Pocatello, Idaho, where grew up. He was a tank officer in the Marines and an educator for the past 34 years living

and working in ten countries. Ted was living in Sunriver, Oregon. He jumped at Idaho City during the 1952 season.

Al Casieri (Missoula '52)

Al died January 26, 2005, in Berryville, Virginia. He jumped at Missoula from 1952 through 1956. Al was a retired Commander with the U.S. Coast Guard and spent 14 years with the CIA.

Howard W. Chadwick (McCall' 52)

Howard was born in Cleveland in 1931 and went through his primary education in Nova Scotia and Massachusetts. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees in Forestry from the University of Idaho where he was a classmate of **Bob Sallee** (MSO-49).

Howard spent 1953-57 on active duty with the Army as an explosive and ordnance disposal officer. Prior to that he jumped at McCall for the 1952 season and worked as a Lookout before jumping.

He worked 1960-62 as a Range Analyst on the Rio Grande NF, 1962-65 in Range Research, USFS, Tempe, AZ, 1965-85 in Natural Resource Studies, Dept. of Interior in Seattle. Howard lives in Sequim, WA.

David L. Christensen (McCall '52)

Dave was born October 26, 1930, in Fremont, Nebraska, and graduated from Fremont High School in 1948. He attended Grinnell College for two years and graduated from the University of Idaho with a bachelor's in Forestry in 1953. Dave served in the U. S. Army from 1953-55 in Fort Leonard Wood, Missouri. "Received my draft notice the day I was to report to McCall for the 1953 fire season. I rose to the prestigious rank of Corporal with duties as instructor in Signal Corps field training and Company Clerk."

"The US Army, marriage, a baby daughter, and my mother's illness changed my focus of careers from forestry to the family business. I became the seventh employee of my father's lumber business in 1955, that only needed six. Over the years with some great employees, and some very good luck the business thrived and with over 300 employees in two locations in Fremont and Kansas City, it was sold in 2019. Retirement has been good, even if it was started at age 89. The business continues to grow and still carries the name Christensen Lumber Co. with two of my sons, one the CEO, still involved.

"My single summer as a smokejumper is still the best job I ever had and was ready to go in the summer of 1953, then start my career in forestry, then the call from Uncle Sam. There were valuable lessons learned and

experiences that I still reminisce these many years from 1952. Chuck, I am one of many that appreciate your work and dedication in sustaining the National Smokejumpers Association, "Keeping the Flame" and doing some good things for its members. For some reason I cannot throw away a single copy of the Smokejumper."

Richard V. Clearman (Missoula '52)

Richard was born in Choteau, Montana, grew up in Wilburn and Helena, and graduated from Helena H.S. He received his bachelor's in History from the University of Montana and his master's from Boston University.

Richard was in the Army as an Artillery Officer for 20 years and retired as a Lt. Colonel. "My best job was being the Executive and Commanding Officer of a 155mm, 600-man Artillery Battalion in Vietnam." He taught ROTC at the University of Montana for three years. Richard worked at a New York Life agent for 20 years and is currently living in Missoula, Montana. He jumped at Missoula during the 1952-54 seasons.

William L. Crookham (North Cascades '52)

Bill died January 20, 2020, in Caldwell, Idaho. He was born March 4, 1933, in Caldwell. Bill graduated from Caldwell High School in 1951 and attended the University of Idaho for two years. He served in the military for two years and attended schools in Utah, Colorado and Oslo, Norway. Bill served in the Idaho Legislature for four years and headed up the Crookham Company (Agriculture) for 35 years. He jumped at NSCB during the 1952 season.

Jimmie F. Dollard (Cave Junction '52)

Jimmie was born December 27, 1933, in Claremore, Oklahoma, in the middle of the great depression. After graduation from Claremore High in 1951, he spent the summer in the USFS Blister Rust Control program with his high school buddy, future college roommate, smokejumper bro, and Apollo Astronaut, Stuart Roosa (CJ-53). They worked many fires in northern Idaho that summer where they saw smokejumpers in action. Jimmie became so impressed that he jumped at CJ in 1952-54 while earning a bachelor's in General Engineering from Oklahoma A&M (later OK State). In 1957-58 he taught engineering at Purdue while earning a master's in Engineering Sciences.

In 1958 he joined the Boeing Space program and in 1963 moved to Huntsville, Alabama, to work on the lunar program. The highlight of this tour was evaluating (along with many others) performance improvements to the

Saturn V where he had the privilege of working with Dr. Braun, rocket pioneer and father of the Saturn V. The improvements increased the payload of the Saturn V from the initial 86K lbs. target to 107K lbs. when the Saturn V launched smokejumper bro, Roosa, to the moon. In 1972 he founded and served as Chief Operations Officer of PRC-SSc, an engineering company which he grew to 1700 employees supporting the army missile and the NASA space programs.

In 1977 he joined US Dept. of Energy valuating alternative energy concepts. In 1981 he left DOE and founded and served as CEO of Sunbelt, a solar company which became the second largest in the country until the tax credits were terminated and the company closed. In 1986 Jimmie started and served as CEO of Mactec, an environmental firm specializing in nuclear, hazardous, and toxic waste. The company grew to 5000 employees in 2001 when it was sold as an employee-owned company, and Jimmie retired.

After retiring he golfed, fished, hunted, and traveled with his wife, Arrie. They also shared their hobby of wildlife photography and he worked on several NSA trail projects. He now lives with his wife in Wind Crest, a retirement home, in Highlands Ranch Colorado.

Robert L. “Bob” Donnelley (McCall '52)

Bob graduated from Boise H.S. in 1952, went to Boise Jr. College, and graduated from the Univ. of Idaho with a degree in Education in 1957. He jumped at McCall 1952-57, and 1959-62, was a squadleader and trained new jumpers. “Loved every minute of it.”

Bob taught in Boise at South Jr. H.S. 1958-66 and moved to Capitol H.S. (1966-68) where he taught P.E., was a football, wrestling, and golf coach. In 1968 he took over the Athletic Director’s job for the Twin Falls School District, completed his master’s degree and resigned in 1975.

He started his own business, Donnelly Sports and worked it until retirement in 2000. Bob was in the Naval Reserve for eight years.

“Working as a smokejumper was the most satisfying segment of my working career. After retirement, I accepted a job on the Sawtooth N.F. working for Air Resources Helicopter Co. for four summers.”

“The highlight after the fire business was my association with the NSA Trail Crew for several summers. Very rewarding.” Bob lives in Twin Falls, Idaho.

Louis V. Ebert (McCall '52)

Lou died October 18, 2011, in Prescott, Arizona. He was born July 2, 1927, in Long Island, New York. Lou graduated from Green Bay (Wisconsin) H.S. in 1945 and joined the Navy at the end of WWII. While at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, he jumped at McCall during the 1952 season. After graduation he was hired to the government using his fluency in Portuguese and Spanish and worked around the world. He retired in Prescott, Arizona, and traveled for 30 years of his retirement. Lou was an avid reader and earned master's degrees from George Washington University and the Naval War College.

Stanley James Eike (Missoula '52)

Stan, 79, died June 29, 2007, in Seattle, Washington. He was born May 14, 1928, in Seattle. He married Bernice E. Keith September 2, 1950. When he registered for the draft during WWII, he was a Merchant Seaman for the Matson Line out of San Francisco.

His Ancestry record notes "well known deep-sea diver." In April 1959 the Centralia, Washington, newspaper wrote "Seattle deep-sea diver Stanley Eike was stricken with the bends at Westport and rushed to the decompression chamber at Keyport Naval Torpedo Station. Eike has been diving off the coast on a commercial job." Stan jumped out of Missoula in 1952.

Thomas A. Elwood (Cave Junction '52)

Tom graduated from Van Nuys H.S. and Valley Junior College in the San Fernando Valley, (CA) and was drafted into the Army. After the Army he went to UCLA and Univ. of the Americas in Mexico City where he earned his master's degree.

In Mexico he worked as factory manager of Knoll International furniture company, then started his own business of auto body shops (collision repair and paint) which was a big success because "I was the first paint shop in Mexico City to use the oven-baked enamel paint finish which I copied from the California body shops." Tom expanded the business into a chain of eleven shops and 144 workers. He is now living in a suburb of Mexico City.

"My three years (52, 54-55) smoke jumping out of Cave Junction, Oregon, into forest fires in the Cascade mountains were summertime jobs only—but the best and most exciting job you could ever have."

James "Jim" Emerson (Idaho City '52)

Jim was born December 30, 1933, in Cheyenne, Wyoming. He graduated from St Maries, Idaho, H.S. in 1951, and jumped at IDC during the 1952 season. He then went into Army and served in Korea on the DMZ being discharged in 1954. Jim graduated from the Univ. of Montana with a degree in Forestry in 1960 and started a career with the USFS, working in Montana, Idaho, and Washington, D.C. before retiring in 1982. Jim then owned and operated a print shop in Coeur d Alene, Idaho, where he currently lives, for five years.

Richard A. Faurot (Missoula '52)

Richard died June 26, 2004. He jumped at Missoula in 1952 and 1953 and was an NSA member. Richard was born Aug 27, 1932, in St. Croix Falls and graduated from high school in St. Croix Falls. He attended Montana State University and Oregon State University for forestry and engineering. Richard then worked as a professional engineer for the Forest Service. He married Linda Louise Fesler. She preceded him in death in 1972. He was a veteran of the U.S. Army, serving during the Korean War.

Bruce H. Ferguson (Missoula '52)

Bruce died in September 2010 according to information in the database. No confirmation. Possibility that he was a student at Montana State University (Missoula) in 1954 and went to Sentinel H.S. in Missoula. Other records show H. Bruce Ferguson living in Missoula. He jumped at Missoula 1952-54 and West Yellowstone in 1955.

Merl C. "Bud" Filler (McCall'52)

Bud, 86, died of cancer March 26, 2020, at his home in Boise. He was a graduate of Penn State University and earned his masters from the University of British Columbia. Bud jumped at McCall 1952-54 and served as an Artillery Officer in the U.S. Army's 9th Infantry Division.

Throughout an exemplary career in forest products, Bud worked for several major forest products manufacturing companies and later co-founded Filler King Company, a highly successful manufacturer of structural engineered wood products. He authored two books and was a pilot. As a volunteer National Ski Patrolman for many years at Bogus Basin, he was first on the hill and one of the last off. Bud was a Life Member of the NSA.

Frank Fowler (Missoula '52)

Frank jumped at Missoula 1952-54 while attending the Univ. of Montana where he graduated with a degree in Forestry. He went to work for the USFS in Asheville, NC, before being drafted into the Army where he served 1955-57, part of which in Germany with the 11th Airborne.

After his discharge he returned to Colville NF and then took District Ranger position on the Sullivan Lake RD, Clearwater NF. After six years, Frank moved to the Flathead NF where he led a study of the Jewel Basin that resulted in it becoming a recreation area. He also led the study to bring the Flathead Rivers into the Wild and Scenic River System.

Frank was working in land management planning on the Idaho Panhandle NF when he retired in 1984. In retirement he worked for Stoltz Lumber Company for several years. He authored *High-Mountain Two-Manner* and felt it was significant that two from the 1952 rookie class jumped on fires as a single jumper.

Frank was involved in the NSA Trails Program and was a volunteer host at the Lochsa Historic Ranger Station for many years.

William “Bill” Joseph Fredeking (Missoula '52)

Bill was born May 12, 1930, in Alleghany County, Virginia. He attended school in Clifton Forge and Alexandria, Virginia, graduating from George Washington H.S. in 1948.

During the summers of 1949 and 1950, Bill worked in the Coeur d'Alene NF on the blister rust program and served on a lookout tower. In the spring of 1952, he received a bachelor's degree in Forestry and Wildlife from Virginia Polytechnic Institution. After graduation, he was a smokejumper in Missoula, Montana during the 1952 fire season.

In July 1953, he received a permanent appointment as a forester on the Coeur d'Alene NF. In 1954, Bill earned a master's degree of Forestry from Montana State University. He entered the US Army in 1954-56.

Bill returned to Montana and continued his career with the USFS as District Ranger on the Libby RD, Kootenai NF in 1961. In 1965 he was promoted and transferred to the Lewis & Clark NF as the timber management and fire staff officer. In 1967, he was transferred to the Forest Service Chief's Office in Washington, D.C. as an Employee Development Specialist. He served in that position until 1970 when he became the Deputy Forest Supervisor on the Stanislaus NF in Sonora, California.

In 1980 he was transferred to the Forest Service Region Five Regional Office in San Francisco, California as the Computer Science User Support Branch Chief for Region Five. Bill continued in this role until he retired in 1985.

John C. Gambrell (Missoula '52)

John jumped the 1952 and 1955 seasons at Missoula and got a total of six fire jumps. He died September 2, 2011.

Robert L. "Bob" Graham (Missoula '52)

Bob was born February 10, 1933, in Waukesha, Wisconsin. He grew up on south side of Chicago and graduated from St. Ignatius H.S. in 1951. Bob went into the Army 1953-54 before attending Washington State University where he graduated from in 1958 with a degree in Forestry. In his long career with the USFS, Bob worked on the Clearwater N.F., Nez Perce N.F., Bitterroot N.F., Kaniksu N.F., and the Panhandle N.F. His positions included Assistant Ranger, Ranger, and Fire Staff Officer. Bob was a Class I Incident Commander from 1971-83 with his last fire being the Yellowstone Fire in 1988. He currently (2021) lives in Bonners Ferry, Idaho. Bob jumped at Missoula 1952-53.

William A. "Bill" Groman (Missoula'52)

Bill died August 27, 2010, in Pebble Creek, Arizona, after a long battle with cancer. He graduated from Penn State University with his BA in forestry and earned his masters and Ph.D. in forestry from Oregon State University. Bill served in the US Army during the Korean War and was a professor in the School of Forestry at the University of Northern Arizona before his retirement.

Elmer I. Hagloch (Missoula '52)

Elmer jumped at Missoula during the 1952 season. He was a USAF Command Pilot and Senior Missile Officer and software engineer for the space shuttle programs at Thiokol Corporation. Elmer served 12 years in the Strategic Air Command flying the B-47 for seven years. Command pilots are those who have flown for 15 years and have logged at least 3,000 hours. During the Vietnam War, he flew 342 combat missions and terminated his USAF career over dissatisfaction with the conduct of the war. Elmer studied at four universities. He was born May 5, 1931, and went to Dover H.S. in Dover, Ohio. Currently (2022) living in Harrisville, Utah. Elmer jumped at Missoula during the 1952 season.

William Roger Hatton (Missoula '52)

Bill, 85, died March 15, 2013, in Kalispell, Montana. He lived in Hinsdale, Wheeler, and Glasgow in his growing up years and graduated from

Glasgow High School in 1946. Bill joined the U.S. Army after graduating from high school and served 16 months as a truck master during the Korean War.

Following his service, Bill attended Western Montana College before jumping at Missoula in 1952 and 1954, and at Grangeville in 1953. He worked as a logger in Montana and Alaska, and later owned Roto-Rooter franchises in Coeur d'Alene, Idaho, and Kalispell.

John L. Hautzinger (Missoula '52)

John, 69, died October 2, 2000, in his home in Helena, Montana, after a three-year battle with prostate cancer. He was born November 28, 1930, in Omaha, Nebraska, and attended the University of Nebraska for one year before transferring to the University of Montana. He graduated in 1955 with a bachelor's in Forestry.

Following graduation, John served four years in the Air Force as a pilot and radar installation officer. He then returned to Montana where he worked for the USFS in timber management until his retirement in 1986.

Harlan L. Hayes (Missoula'52)

Harlan, 83, died August 14, 2017, in Coeur d' Alene, Idaho. He grew up in Missoula and graduated from the University of Montana in 1956 with a degree in Forestry. Harlan was a Reserve Army Officer and alternated military postings with his work with the USFS and BLM in Montana, Oregon, and Colorado.

He retired in his early 50s and was active in the Retired Federal Employees group and the Freedom From Religion Foundation. Harlan jumped at Missoula during the 1952-53 seasons.

Bernard Carter Hearn (Grangeville '52)

Bernard was born February 8, 1933, in Baltimore, Maryland, and grew up in Chevy Chase, Maryland, where he graduated from high school. He received his bachelor's in Chemistry from Wesleyan University in 1954 and his Ph.D. from John Hopkins in 1959.

Bernard worked for the USFS on the Nez Perce in 1951 and jumped at Grangeville during the 1952 season. "In the summer of 1952, I drove to Montana in my 1932 Plymouth 4-cyl. Sedan, trained west of Missoula and was assigned Grangeville." He remembers a 32-mile hike out after one fire

He started his career with the U.S. Geological Survey (Geologist) in Reston, Virginia 1957-1995. Bernard has worked as a volunteer (Scientist Emeritus) in Reston 1996 to the present. He has also worked at the

Smithsonian National Museum of Natural History as a contractor 1996 to the present. Bernard is currently living in McLean, Virginia.

“For the past 40 years, my wife and I have been heavily into running whitewater rivers in solo kayak and decked canoe on rivers in the eastern US, Colorado, Montana, and Idaho.

“Forest Service work and smokejumping really guided my career choice, and the principles learned were invaluable in my work over the years. A smokejumper never quits until the job is done, always stays aware of the escape routes for safety, and always looks out for the welfare of co-workers and the public.”

Al Hebrank (North Cascades '52)

Al, 72, died June 3, 2006. He served as President of the Land Surveyor's Association and was on the State Board of Registration for ten years in the state of Washington. He was a leader in the Surveyor's profession in the state. Al jumped at NCSB during the 1952 season.

Robert D. “Bob” Heeren (Missoula'52)

Bob, 87, died July 13, 2016. He graduated with a degree in Forestry from Rutgers University and went on to get a master's degree from Duke University. Bob was the Hardwood Management Coordinator for Union Camp Corporation and retired in 1996.

Bob was a Captain in the US Army 1948-50 and was in the Army Reserves and National Guard from 1950-89. He was active in the Boy Scouts of America and served as a Scout Master District Commander. Bob jumped at Missoula during the 1952 season.

Jimmie L. “Jim” Hickman (Missoula '52)

Jim was born 1931, in Missouri, and graduated from high school in La Junta, CO in 1948. He graduated from Oklahoma Baptist Univ. in 1952 with a bachelor's in Chemistry and worked as a logger 1947-51 to pay for his education. In the spring of 1952 he took Navy Exam for OCS, was accepted for Fall session. “Also, in the spring 1952 I was accepted for a position with the Missoula Smokejumpers. After training, I was assigned to projects but was called up by the Navy and was gone without ever getting to jump on a fire.”

Jimmie was commissioned Officer in USN and volunteered for Underwater Demolition Training. “Swam a lot and blew up a lot of things, though did not set foot on Korean soil.” He was released from duty in 1955 and reported to Forestry School at Utah State Univ. He jumped at Missoula during the 1956 season, graduated from Forestry School in 1958 and took a job as Forester on the Lolo NF.

His USFS career included stints on the Bitterroot, Kootenai, Tongass, Sequoia National Forests and the D.C. office. Jimmie's last assignment in 1980 was Director Fire and Aviation, Southwestern Region, Albuquerque, NM. He traveled and worked officially in Mexico, then assisted in a research program extensively in Brazil, making four working trips there. Jim retired from the USFS in 1993.

Elmer G. Huston (Idaho City '52)

Elmer, 88, died January 9, 2014, in Caldwell, Idaho. He started working for U.S. Forest Service at 16, and then entered training at 17 with the Navy at NTS Farragut, Idaho. He served on the USS Mifflin during World War II and was honorably discharged in May 1946. Elmer witnessed the raising of the flag on Iwo Jima. Upon his return he continued with the Forest Service until he retired in 1976 after 31 years of service, which included working with his wife on Thunderbolt Lookout as newlyweds in 1949. Elmer jumped from Idaho City in the 1952 and 1954 seasons and was a fire-control officer in the Idaho forests for 19 years. Elmer was an enthusiastic pilot and built two airplanes of his own.