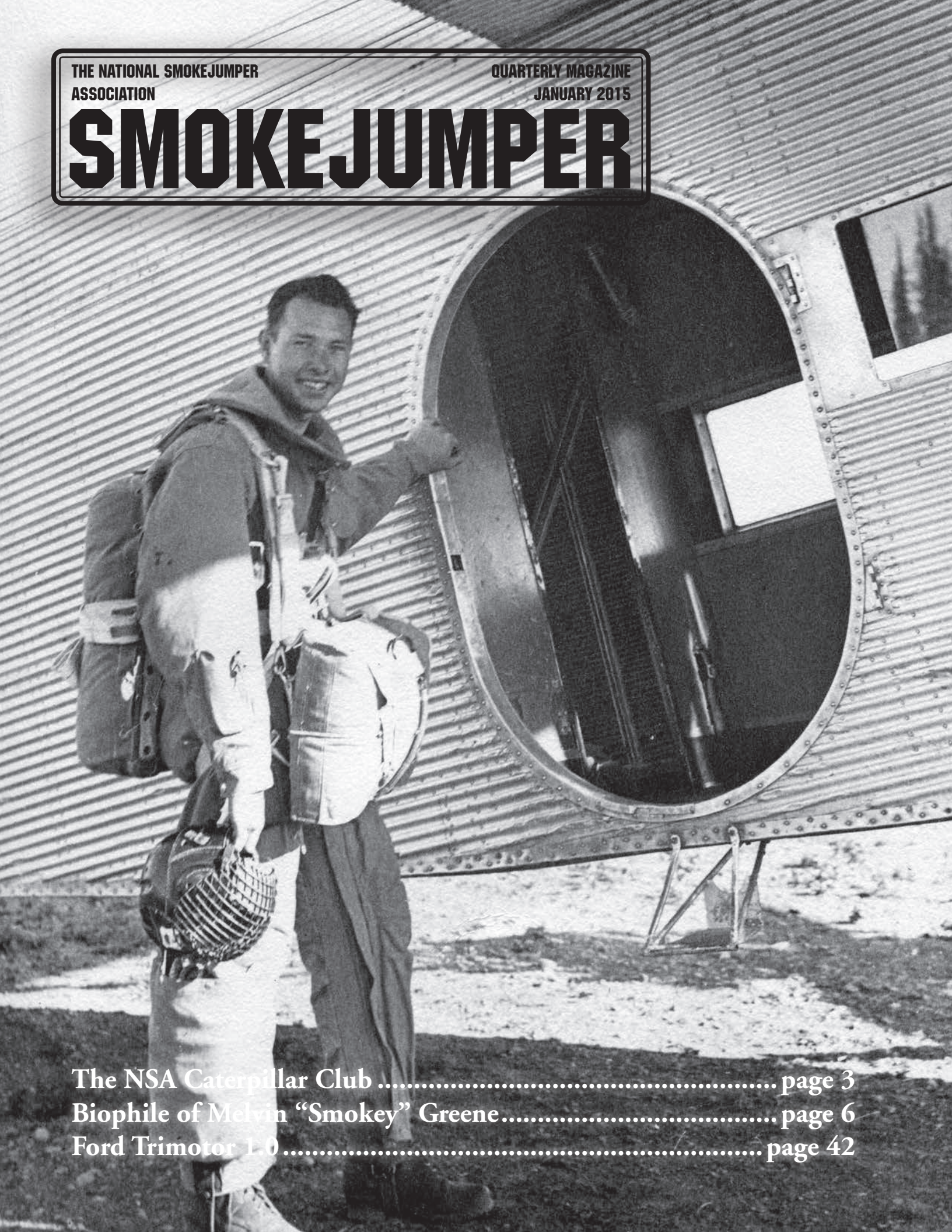


THE NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER
ASSOCIATION

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE
JANUARY 2015

SMOKEJUMPER



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SMOKEJUMPER, ISSUE NO. 87, JANUARY 2015
ISSN 1532-6160

Smokejumper is published quarterly by:
THE NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION
C/O 10 JUDY LANE
CHICO, CA 95926

The opinions of the writers are their own and do not necessarily reflect those of the NSA. Permission to reproduce *Smokejumper* in any manner must first be obtained in writing.

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Printing: *Larry S. Jackson*, Heidelberg Graphics,
www.HeidelbergGraphics.com

Front cover photo: *Melvin L. "Smokey" Greene*
(Courtesy Melvin Greene Jr.)



Message from the President



by **Jim Cherry**
(Missoula '57)
PRESIDENT

AT OUR OCTOBER 2014 NSA Board of Directors meeting in Seattle, we said "Well done!" to a faithful board member: **Guy Hurlbutt** (IDC-62), who has served as the NSA's legal counsel and board member for many years.

Guy has provided invaluable advice to the board. As one who is driven by the desire to serve, Guy's commitments to other organizations are calling him to move to other challenges at this time while he remains an active member of the NSA.

In Guy's place we are welcoming **Jim Lindell** (IDC-64) as our new legal counsel. Jim is a practicing attorney in Minneapolis and a life member of the NSA.

I have recently returned from yet another trail project in the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness of Northeast Minnesota. We were 15 in number – former jumpers together with some spouses and associates. We did work for the U.S. Forest Service and for Wilderness Canoe

Base, the camp where we stayed and had our meals.

Ours was only one of nearly two dozen opportunities offered across the nation for this rich resource for fellowship and valuable contribution to maintaining our nation's natural resources. If you haven't availed yourself of this opportunity, consider doing so in 2015. Check out the web site at nsatrails.com.

During our trail project, I shared each morning and evening some of the writings of **Tom Decker** (IDC-64). Here's a sample:

Hoot!

We finished the work on the fire and lay on the hillside, knowing that the next day the helicopter would pick us up. It was hot, boring, and we were miles from anywhere. To break the monotony, we decided to "hoot" a bit.

The "hoot" – yes, the same "hoot" as wise old owls make – carries in the woods, definitely farther than a voice. The smokejumpers picked the hoot as a tested and true method of signaling other jumpers in dark, smoky fires.

As my jump partner and I pitched rocks down the hill to pass the time, we hooted, "Hoot! Hoot!" We laughed and joked about it, not expecting anyone to ever hear us. Before long, we got a response! Somebody on a trail below hollered, "Hey! What's up?"

We hadn't known that anybody was there, and were startled to hear someone!

Sometimes we think we're all alone, only to find out that there's a crowd! And, unbeknownst to us, they've been there all along!


The body of believers is a case in point. We "... are surrounded," the writer to the Hebrews said, "by a great cloud of witnesses ..." That gives us cause to think, wonder, and take courage when it's time for us to share the work of the Chris-

tian faith.

Tired, bored, burned out? Try a hoot! "Hoot!" Who's out there? We may be surprised at the answers we get!

Hoot!

Hope you are making plans

for 2015 that include attending the Smokejumper reunion in Missoula that will be celebrating the 75th anniversary of the first fire jumps. The dates are July 17-19, 2015. Read more about it in this issue. See you there. ... 

The NSA Caterpillar Club

by Fred Donner (Missoula '59)

On October 20, 1922, an Army test pilot named Lt. Harold Harris took off from McCook Field at Dayton, Ohio. After a mock dogfight with another test pilot, he went into an uncontrollable dive. When wing pieces began coming

off, he bailed out – and became the first person to save their life with a manually-operated parachute. One of those who saw him land was Leslie Irvin who had earlier been the first person to jump out of a working airplane with a manually-operated parachute, albeit ending with a broken ankle. He had not invented parachutes but revolutionized them by putting them in backpacks. The Army immediately ordered 300 parachutes, and Irvin was a wealthy man before he was 30 years old. When his company had been incorporated, a lawyer misspelled his name and thus the Irving Parachute Co. was born. Several weeks after Lt. Harris, a Lt. Tyndall did the same, and newspaper reporters suggested such individuals form a Caterpillar Club. Parachutes were made from silk and silk came from silk worms, or "caterpillars," and the name stuck.

Continued on page 4

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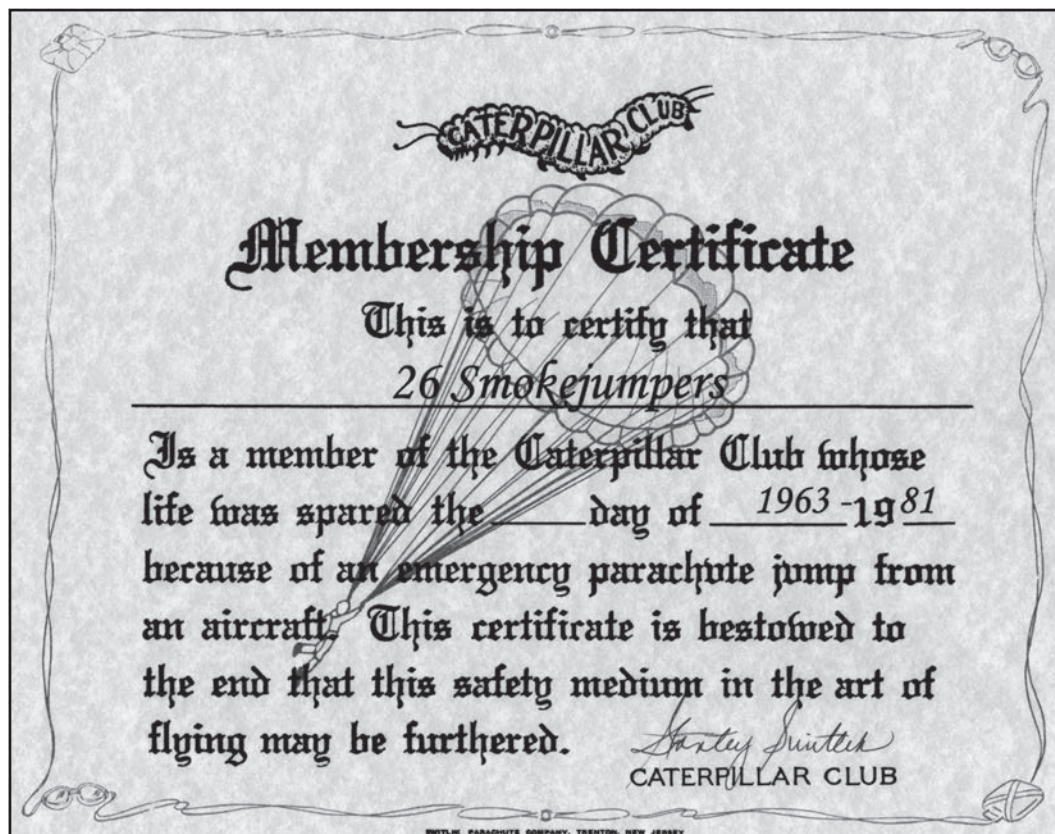
Anchorage.....ANC	GrangevilleGAC	Redding.....RDD
Boise.....NIFC	Idaho City.....IDC	Redmond.....RAC
Cave Junction.....CJ	La Grande.....LGD	West Yellowstone WYS
Fairbanks.....FBX	McCall.....MYC	Whitehorse Yukon YXY
Fort St. John.....YXJ	Missoula.....MSO	Winthrop.....NCSB

Are You Going to Be "Temporarily Away"?

As more of our membership moves with the weather, we are getting an ever-increasing number of *Smokejumper* magazines returned by the post office marked "Temporarily Away." Since we mail the magazine via bulk mail, it is not forwarded, and we are charged first class postage for its return.

If you are leaving your mailing address during the months of March, June, September and/or December, please let Chuck Sheley know. He can hold your magazine and mail it upon your return OR mail it to your seasonal address. Please help us save this triple mailing expense. Chuck's contact information is in the information box on this page.

Another option is join our electronic mailing list. 



Continued from page 3

The third member was a stunt jumper wearing six parachutes intending to open one after another over an air show. You know what's coming next, five got entangled, no surprise. The sixth saved him. (By today's standards he would not be eligible since he had not bailed from a disabled aircraft.) The first British Caterpillar later died when he wasn't wearing a parachute and his plane went down. In 1928 Paul Collins Sr. became a Caterpillar over Pennsylvania, and in 1944 Paul Collins Jr. over Alaska, the first father-son Caterpillars. During World War II the Irving Co. was making 1500 parachutes a week. Mr. Irvin promised a gold pin to everyone whose life was saved by an Irving parachute. By the end of the war there were 34,000 members, although the estimated number of lives saved is over 100,000. Charles Lindbergh was a four-time Caterpillar. My thanks to *Tidbits of the Bitterroot Valley*, Issue # 172, February 12, 2014, for the above information furnished to the NSA by Bob Nicol (MSO-52).

While I have long known of the Caterpillar Club from my Air Force years, I renewed my interest while researching an intended *Smokejumper* article and ran across Ted Nyquest's (MSO-54) account (*Smokejumper* April 2011) of the eight jumpers who bailed from Ford Trimotor NC7861 over Elk City, Idaho, on September 9, 1963. Ted was the spotter in the co-pilot seat. A propeller piece broke off, cut a fuel line, and went through

the fuselage after which the number three engine hinged downward and fell off. I thought those guys belong in the Caterpillar Club and began investigating with the encouragement of NSA president Jim Cherry (MSO-57), my jump partner on my first fire jump, five-time volunteer crew colleague, and close friend.

There have been other Caterpillar Clubs with different manufacturers, but the two principal ones today seem to be the Irving Caterpillar Club, focused in Britain and Europe,

and that of the Switlik Parachute Co. in Trenton, New Jersey. Oddly enough the Switlik Company, in business since 1920, no longer makes parachutes but manufactures aviation, marine, and military survival equipment and related items with a world-wide distribution network. However, the company still maintains the Switlik Caterpillar Club. If you Google "Caterpillar Club," you will find loads of information including old Caterpillar pins for sale. Or Google "Switlik Parachute Co." for their interesting website.

Like a foxhound hot on the chase now, I found three other smokejumper events to qualify some Caterpillar members. I submitted 26 names of prospective NSA Caterpillars to the Switlik Caterpillar Club. They were all approved, and a Caterpillar Club awards ceremony to present certificates and gold pins is planned for the July 2015 reunion in Missoula. However, one big problem remains, the NSA needs your help to find these people who are spread over the past 50 years.

In the aforementioned Ford incident in 1963, the eight jumpers were Dave Bennett (MSO-61), Tom Schroeder (MSO-60), Dave Lancaster (MSO-63), John Scott (MSO-63), Barry Robinson (MSO-61), Richard McElroy (MSO-62), Dave Hess (MSO-63) and Bill Locklear (MSO-63). When Ted turned to tell the guys to get out, he saw the last three already leaving without bothering to say good-bye. NC7861 was repaired and is now at the Naval Air Museum in

Pensacola, Florida.

On August 6, 1966, the right engine on Twin Beech N9328Z quit over Yellowstone National Park. The pilot ordered three jumpers out to prepare for a single-engine landing. They were **Ron Bennett** (MSO-65), **John Hay** (MSO-64) and **Rod McIver** (MSO-64). The spotter, **Roger Savage** (MSO-57), provided this information.

On August 22, 1971, a Winthrop DC-3 with 11 jumpers and two spotters on board was returning from a patrol flight when an engine began trailing smoke and was shut down. The pilot told spotter **Jim Grant** (NCSB-65), who provided this information, to "Get rid of the jumpers." Jim bailed them out over an ideal site, a state park, and he and another spotter landed at Winthrop in a single-engine DC-3. The 11 jumpers were **Tom Belville** (NCSB-69), **Ted Bolin** (NCSB-710), **Dan Burrows** (NCSB-67), **Bill Fleagle** (NCSB-70), **Swede Larson** (NCSB-71), **Kenny Lewis** (NCSB-71), **Frank McWhirter** (NCSB-66), **Bob Miller** (NCSB-69), **Roy Mills** (NCSB-69), **Darold Thornton** (NCSB-69) and **Mike Utigard** (NCSB-71).

Those Winthrop guys live on the edge. You won't believe it but three years later on August 12, 1974, they did it again. A DC-3, not the same one as 1971, shut down an engine and bailed a load. The ten this time were **Tim Ross** (NCSB-74), **Raymond Smith** (NCSB-74), **George Marcot** (NCSB-73), **Ted Bolin** (NCSB-71), **Mike Utigard** (NCSB-71), **Barry George** (NCSB-73), **Larry Longley** (NCSB-72), **Jerry Bushnell** (NCSB-72), **Paul Christen** (NCSB-3) and **Darryl Christian** (NCSB-74). **Bob Miller** (NCSB-69) was the spotter who landed with the plane. Our readers will have no problem recognizing the two "double Caterpillars" above who will get two certificates and pins at the awards ceremony at the reunion.

On June 27, 1981, a Fairchild C-119 (Flying Boxcar) with four jumper/kickers aboard dropped two of three "rollagons" (rubber bladders filled with helicopter gas) to supply a helicopter base camp near Bettles, Alaska. Suddenly the right engine caught fire and exploded. Head kicker **Jim Olson** (FBX-78), unable to talk to the pilot, ordered **Tony Pastro** (FBX-77), **Jack Firestone** (MYC-75) and **Chris Farinetti** (FBX-79) to get out and followed them. When the pilot told the co-pilot to tell the jumpers to get out, the co-pilot took a look and said, "What jumpers?" Then the pilot ordered the co-pilot to bail out and he did. The pilot survived the crash. This information is in **Murry Taylor's** (RDD-65) book *Jumping Fire* and also in *Static Line*, October 1996, the predecessor of *Smokeyumper*, with a picture of the crash site. **Bill Cramer** (NIFC-90), Fairbanks chief, provided an incident report. We

have a lead on co-pilot Jim Slocum and would like to include him if we can locate him.

For a guy living on the edge, nothing tops **Dan Thompson** (FBX-86). On August 4, 1986, he was in the door of a Volpar for a rookie practice jump over Fort Wainwright when the plane began rolling wing over wing. Pinned by the spinning G-forces, he managed to get out on one revolution as the plane went from several thousand to several hundred feet in seconds before recovering. The others onboard assumed they were about to die as did bystanders. The pilot was fired as the props stopped. As we all know all too well, most jumper stories start, "No sxxx, guys, this is really true!" No need to go to *Snopes.com* on that one.

I investigated what I thought might be a latrine rumor, common to smokejumpers, and that is what it turned out to be, no surprise. The story I heard was that **Dave Nelson** (MSO-57) had bailed solo from a DC-3 that lost an engine after Dave dropped a load of jumpers over northern California. In 1956 Dave and I were BLM Fairbanks District fireguards in Alaska, myself at Tanacross/Tok and later at Eagle and Dave, my neighbor at Chicken, so I knew where to go to find the facts. Turns out that twice there was serious engine trouble with "four hands flying all over the cockpit," according to Dave, and he told the pilots he was leaving with any further trouble, but it did not become necessary.

Additionally **Eugene DeBruin** (MSO-59) and **Pisidhi Indradat** (Associate Life) have been recognized by the Switlik Co. as Caterpillars at my request. They parachuted from an Air America C-46 struck by enemy fire over Laos on September 5, 1963. They became parts of a well-known POW and escape story and the (inaccurate) basis for the film "Rescue Dawn." Gene's story was in the October 1995 and January 1996 "Static Line" and updated in the April 2001 *Smokeyumper*. Pisidhi's story was in the October 2006 and January 2007 *Smokeyumper*. More information can be found by Googling their names. 🦋

*If you are one of the Caterpillars listed above, **Jim Phillips** (MSO-67), 2015 NSA reunion chairman, is holding your Caterpillar Club certificate and pin for the awards ceremony in Missoula. Contact him at jimphillips@bresnan.net or cell 406/431-8920 with your current contact information and whether you will be at the reunion. If you recognize any names that may not be reading this, contact them and/or Jim. If you know anyone above who is deceased, please pass any family or family friend information to Jim so that we may contact them. And, if you know of a smokejumper Caterpillar Club candidate not named above, contact me at freddonner@frontiernet.net or cell 703/919-5464 and I will contact the Switlik Caterpillar Club.*

Biophile Of Melvin L. “Smokey” Greene

by Richard Baughn, *Aerophile* magazine

(Editor's note: Copyright April 1980, Aerophile. Our research shows this magazine ceased publication in late 1981.)

In early 1942, Melvin L. “Smokey” Greene (MSO-42) started jumping out of airplanes to fight isolated forest fires for the U.S. Forest Service. A couple of years later his jump training helped save his life when the B-29 on which he was the flight engineer was rammed by a Japanese fighter over Nagoya, Japan.

Badly injured and burned, he spent the remainder of the war in Japan in solitary confinement as a war criminal. Following the war, Smokey decided to stay in the U.S. Army Air Force – which became the U.S. Air Force in 1947 – and later retired in Austin, Texas, in 1972 as a colonel.

Forest Service firefighters and parachute specialists gathered in the fall of 1939 to determine the feasibility of jumping into the rugged timber country to fight fires. They wanted to reduce their reaction time so a small number of men could contain a fire early before it became a raging inferno.

In 1940 two six-man airborne squads assigned to Montana and Washington made nine jumps, saving a substantial amount of timber. Thus the concept of the “smokejumper” was proven. It was now possible to spot a fire in an inaccessible area and reach it in a matter of minutes instead of days.

Success brought money to expand the smokejumper program and a call went out for more airborne firefighters. Smokey Greene had worked several summers as a regular Forest Service firefighter while attending the Montana School of Mines. He was quick to volunteer.

“Our training was very similar to the Army’s paratrooper program,” Smokey says. “After a good check-up by the doc, we started a tough physical conditioning course. Then came jumps from the high platform, followed by live jumps into an open field, finishing with several jumps into heavily timbered mountainous areas.”

“All during the training, they stressed the use of the 50-foot rope we were issued. It was used to let oneself down from tall trees and steep mountain ledges if the chute hung up during descent,” Smokey continued.

“Our steerable chute was essential because of the mountain air currents, which can be aggravated by the heat from a forest fire. Landing close to the pre-select-



Melvin L. “Smokey” Greene (Courtesy Melvin Greene Jr.)

ed point was very important for several reasons, not the least of which was avoiding the fire,” he emphasized. “The chutes were reasonably maneuverable, but a strong unpredictable wind could always carry us off target.”

Six jumps were required to complete the course, but Smokey got seven. On his third jump the primary chute did not open and he had to use the small emergency chute. Since they jumped from relatively low altitudes, he didn’t have much spare time. In fact he landed in a tree as the chute opened, which helped break his fall, saving him from serious injury or worse.

“My squadleader got me airborne right away for another jump to help ward off the clanks,” Smokey said. This was Smokey’s bonus jump.

Initially the experts thought Smokey had failed to

connect the static line which automatically opened the chute, but he was certain he had it hooked. Although given two days off, he returned to camp after a few hours, because he feared someone else might experience the same malfunction.

Smokey continued to plead with his bosses. "Something's wrong," I told them. "I did have it hooked. Sure enough the next day they had another. Fortunately a checker was by the door of the aircraft and saw the jumper hook his line. They found the problem and went to work right away to fix it," Smokey related.

He obviously savored the fact that he had been correct and probably helped save someone's life.

Parachute jumping in those days was in its infancy and most of the doctrine was being written as they learned. The U.S. Army airborne units were relatively new and on the low side of the learning curve, similar to the smokejumpers. Consequently, the smokejumpers and paratroopers maintained a close liaison, trading ideas.

The Army developed the static line for automatic chute opening and passed it on to the smokejumpers, knowing it would enhance their safety during low-altitude fire jumps. (*Actually Frank Derry developed the static line before there was even an Army Airborne - Ed.*) The smokejumpers provided information concerning the techniques of parachuting into mountain forests for an elite airborne unit activated during World War II.

Smokey went on to make four firefighting jumps. His first was near McCall, Idaho, close to the headwaters of the Snake River.

"Eight of us jumped into the Snake River Canyon. We kinda got separated due to the wind currents and some of 'em never made the fire. Then the fire blew anyway, so the smokejumpers couldn't handle it. The regular firefighters with their heavy equipment had to be called," Smokey commented.

(*The following remark refers to the Mann Gulch Fire of 1949, in which 12 smokejumpers and one firefighter died - Ed.*) "Like the fire near Helena a couple of years after I went into the service. It blew on 'em. They were ahead of the fire and didn't have a chance. We lost 13 jumpers. That was the worst accident we had. We lost others, but nothing like that. Some of my good friends were lost in that one," Smokey mused. "If I hadn't gone into the service I would have probably been with them."

"My second fire jump was near the Big Prairie Ranger Station. That was a primitive area. There were no roads at all. You either had to pack in or jump. Of course there was only one way out and you had to carry all of your equipment. If you left anything, you

paid for it," Smokey said with a smile.

"I was good for up to 20 miles a day then. Even with equipment," he said, trying to avoid sounding boastful. "It still took me about 24 hours of walking time to make it out. My other two fire jumps were very routine."

Patriotism called, so Smokey volunteered for the Army Air Corps and was commissioned a second lieutenant in early 1943 after completing an Air Corps engineering course at Yale University. He was assigned to Kelly Field, Texas, and later to Pecos Field, Texas, as a maintenance-engineering officer.

In October 1944 Smokey was selected to become a B-29 flight engineer. After completing the flight engineer's course at Alamogordo, New Mexico, he was assigned to a newly formed bomber group at Pratt, Kansas. Within a few months his unit was bombing Japan from their base in Guam.

It was on the 7th of April 1945, while flying his seventh mission, that Smokey's B-29 was rammed by a fighter coming at them head-on. "We were on the bomb run when someone called a fighter at 12 o'clock low. The bombardier was eyeballing the bombsite and couldn't stop to fire. Neither the top turret nor waist gunners could see him, because he was slightly below us," Smokey continued.

"He hit our wing just to the left of the fuselage. His wing ripped into our fuselage. There was a loud explosion and it felt as though we had hit a brick wall. Instantly fire shot through the crew compartment. It happened so quickly I had the feeling of being motionless," Smokey said ponderously.

"A sort of euphoria gripped me, because for an instant the end seemed very near."

"Then it started getting warm," he added with a smile to emphasize his understatement. "I unfastened my seat belt and was at once banged against the side of the fuselage; I couldn't move due to the centrifugal force caused by the flat spin the old B-29 was in. It was like a whip-to-whip ride at the carnival," he said, gesturing.

"I was finally able to pull the ditching hatch. We weren't supposed to use it for bailouts, but I didn't have a choice. I pushed and kicked, trying to get through the hatch opening. About halfway out I got stuck. Burning gasoline started running across the opening, so I struggled back inside and was slammed against the fuselage again."

"Once or twice it felt like the old bird tumbled, because I was bounced around a couple of times. The fire was getting worse on the inside and I knew I had to get out or else," he said very determinedly. "It's amazing what that fire did for me. I seemed to shoot

out the hatch door, parachute and all. The experts said it couldn't be done, but they never tried it while being fried," Smokey said with a wink.

"Things must've happened real fast, but it seemed like an eternity. I was pretty badly burned and cut, but I don't recall any pain at the time ... One thing was for sure, I knew I had to get out and never really had any doubts about making it at the time."

"I was tumbling like mad and falling through dense smoke coming up from the target. Seems like I was a born smokejumper," he said with a wide smile. "Once out, I regained my presence of mind. It was like being back on familiar ground. I knew I had to get my flak jacket off so I could open my chute. I even thought about guys who had clawed through their clothing, trying to find the rip cord, but this was only a passing thought," Smokey added.

"Being close to the target, I could hear bombs exploding. This got my attention," he emphasized. "Fortunately they were at a safe distance. I could see parts from an aircraft falling around me. They were probably from ours but I'm not sure."

"When I got on the ground my vision was blurred. My eyes had been damaged by the fire, I guess. Some of my recollections are a little hazy. Evidently I was in shock. I saw our navigator lying on the ground. His chute hadn't opened. I wondered about the other nine crewmembers. The bombs were still going off and some were pretty close. I could hear some Japanese screaming. All of this hit me at once," he said very slowly, then paused.

"I do recall getting out of my chute and hiding it along with some other things."

"I walked for a while, but finally got captured by some police. They tied me to a pole and I took a pretty good beating from them and a few civilians with clubs. I was standing in water and could see blood running over the tops of my boots into the water. I didn't know what was wrong at the time, but I had cut my legs going through the hatch," he said. "The water made it look like I was losing more blood than I was. Thank God."

Like most B-29 crews that survived after being shot down, Smokey was classified as a war criminal. This meant solitary confinement, half of the meager rations of a normal POW and no medical attention. Interrogations, beatings and steady harassment were a daily routine. Contact with other internees was strictly forbidden, but despite this, an Australian Marine who serviced Smokey's "binjo" would occasionally sneak a few words with him. Once he gave Smokey some sulpha pills when he learned Smokey's burns and cuts were badly infected and covered with maggots.

Smokey's weight dropped from around 180 pounds to around 100. "I had a thin watery broth almost every day. Once or twice a week I would get a small bowl of grain, which never failed to turn me inside out. The soup always tasted fishy. Sometimes it would have a little fish, but always seemed spoiled," Smokey said with a grimace.

"One time I was so disgusted I threw it against the wall and it stuck there. Finally I got so hungry I crawled over and ate it. A lot of guys just plain starved to death, because they couldn't stand to eat that garbage," Smokey said disgustedly. "I made up my mind I was going to survive," he said with determination.

Smokey survived the Omori prison camp, which was called the "war's blackest hell hole" by the United Press. Shortly after his release, he was requested to provide a deposition concerning his maltreatment and observations of other prisoners being abused.

It took several operations and a couple of years before Smokey recovered fully from his injuries and burns. During his convalescence, Smokey decided to accept a regular commission and went on to serve 30 years in the maintenance and supply field. His awards include the Legion of Merit, the Air Medal, Purple Heart and three other commendation medals.

Smokey and his wife, the former Martha Achée of Mission, Texas, were married while he was stationed in Pecos, Texas, during World War II. They have five children – four girls and a son. All four daughters are married and three reside in Texas and the fourth lives in Montgomery, Alabama. Their son graduated from the Air Force Academy and has been flying fighters, including the British "Harrier," while on exchange duty with the RAF.

Gene Hamner (MSO-67) made the initial contact with Melvin L. "Smoky" Greene Jr. who was, like Gene, with the "Ravens" in Laos, although not at the same time. "Smokejumper" did a two-part series by Gene on the "Ravens" in January and April 2005. Here is a short bio on Smoke Jr:

Smoky Greene's son and namesake was born in Texas while Smoke Sr was enjoying the hospitality of the Emperor of Japan in the infamous Omori prison in Tokyo Bay following the destruction of his B-29 over target in April 1945.

Smoke Jr. followed his father's footsteps into the Air Force. His operational flying career began in Vietnam and then Laos in 1969 where he flew unarmed observation aircraft in the Forward Air Controller role, call sign "Raven." He went on to serve 30 years active duty in varied flying and staff assignments flying a number of different single seat fighter-bomber aircraft retiring in 1997. He now lives near Fredericksburg, Virginia. 🇺🇸



ODDS AND ENDS



by **Chuck Sheley**

Congratulations and thanks to Jim Lindell (IDC-64) and Bill Baden (MYC-59) who just became our latest Life Members.

If you are interested in outdoor supplies and equipment, “backcountry” is offering NSA members a 15-30% discount. If you go to the following websites the discount will automatically be put in your cart on items ordered:

<http://www.backcountry.com/?COUP=98A-1-2DKVY>

<http://www.dogfunk.com/?COUP=98A-1-2DKVY>

<http://www.competitivecyclist.com/?COUP=98A-1-2DKVY>

Kev Hodgin (RDD-67): “As long as people blame fire fatalities on weather, fuel and slope, people will continue to die. People die because of their attitude about safety issues and their ego that makes them believe they can defy nature.

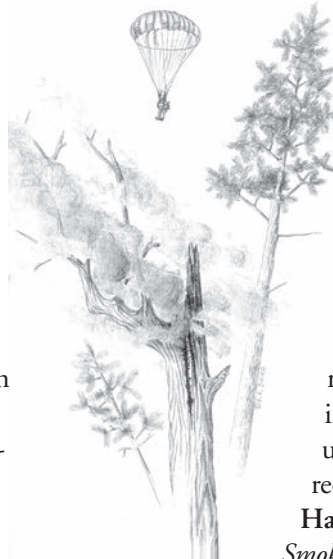
You can’t continue to build a direct line downhill and not expect someone to get killed. Add a fire that has toed under a crew and you increase the chances of someone dying. Sitting on an indirect line and watching the fire run at your line is another way to go home in a body bag.

You have three choices: Leave, build a safe zone, or burn out the line before the main fire gets to the line. I always chose to burn out the line. I didn’t care what the bosses said, and if the boss wasn’t there, he didn’t need to know the difference.”

Luke Birky (MSO-45): “I always enjoy the articles in the *Smokeyjumper* magazine, but this last one listed the deaths of too many of my contemporaries—please slow down.

I was particularly interested in the article “The Longest Rescue?” by **Carl Gidlund (MSO-58)**. I was one of the jumpers who were dropped to carry **Archie Keith (MSO-45)** out. There is some information that I had forgotten or never knew. I did seven fire and two rescue jumps that summer.

The other rescue jump was in the Bitterroots. A forest service employee (not a jumper) had walked in on a small fire with one other firefighter. He had



tripped and fallen into a bed of coals and was severely burned. Eight of us jumped in just before dark. There was a lot of wind and the spotter said he would not have let us jump if it was only a fire. We landed all over the place but got together, rendered first aid, put him on a stretcher and carried him out. We had a very good trail all the way, but it was a long night—2 men at a time—up switchbacks and down into the valley. By around 8:00 am, a bus met us. I often wondered who he was and what his recovery was like?”

Harvey Versteeg (MSO-53): “I always enjoy the *Smokeyjumper* magazine, but the October issue really got my attention.

I found this issue particularly interesting, not only for several people being mentioned in several places, but I also found many allusions to places and events familiar to my experience. Like **Bob Sal-lee (MSO-49)**, I spent two years as a ‘ribe jerker’ at about the same age before becoming a jumper; mention of Big Prairie (one visit in via DC-3 bringing a tractor and out via Ford) and St. Joe fires before and with jumpers.” 🌲



Dave Towers (CJ-60) supports the NSA with a smile and a 10-year membership check to Chuck Sheley (CJ-59) at the Siskiyou Smokeyjumper Museum last summer. (Courtesy Johnny Kirkley)



Grechen Stumhofer (*RDD-12*)
Robert V. Potter (MSO-51)
Scholarship



Erin Kate Springer (*RAC-08*)
NSA Jukkala / McBride
Scholarship



Eli Schned (*MSO-11*)
NSA Jukkala / McBride
Scholarship



NSA Scholarships 2014

Photos Courtesy Recipients



Jessica Dowers
NSA Jukkala / McBride
Scholarship



Michael Francis (*GAC-12*)
Donald E. Maypole (IDC-54)
Scholarship



Jesse Rae Stevens
Jim Cherry (MSO-57)
Scholarship

Layout Design: Johnny Kirkley (CJ-64)

NSA SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS FOR 2014

This year the NSA increased its scholarships from four to six. The application process was completed in January and the recipients were selected in June. Information on the program and process can be found on the NSA website. The following received NSA scholarships this year:

Jessica Dowers is the daughter of **Carlene Anders** (NCSB-86) and has been attending Wenatchee Valley College for the past two years. She is attending Montana State University to pursue a degree in Architecture. Jessica graduated from Pateros High School with many scholastic and athletic honors. She has been a volunteer firefighter for the past two years. Jessica will receive one of the NSA Jukkala/McBride Scholarships.

Eli Schned (MSO-11) is attending the University of Vermont College of Medicine with an expected M.D. in 2015. He hopes to pursue emergency medicine during his residency. "I feel fortunate that many of the underserved (medically) regions of the United States are places that are close to my heart—the West chief among them." Eli will receive one of the NSA Jukkala/McBride Scholarships.

Erin Springer (RAC-08) jumped at Redmond until the 2013 season when she transferred to Missoula, where she is pursuing her Master's Degree in Forestry. "I am looking forward to applying my fireline leadership qualities and Smokejumper/ MacGyver skills to my academic experience and become a quality Forest Service employee in Forest Management. An M.S. in Forestry and my 13-plus years as a ground pounder gives me a complement of experience I feel can be valuable in upper forestry management jobs today." Erin will receive one of the NSA Jukkala/McBride Scholarships.

Michael Francis (GAC-12) has finished his third season at Grangeville and is pursuing a career in aviation. He received his private pilot's license in April of 2014. "This winter I will continue my aviation pursuit by obtaining my instrument rating at Alliance International Aviation Flight Center in Riverside, California." His goal, like many other jumpers, is to eventually become a smokejumper pilot. Michael will receive the **Donald E. Maypole** (IDC-54) Scholarship.

Gretchen Stumhofer (RDD-12): "When I graduated from Stanford in 2011, I had two dreams. Whatever it took, I wanted to be a smokejumper and I wanted to be a doctor. My desire to pursue both of these careers started much earlier, though. When I was 9 my dad took a job flying lead plane out of Missoula. After hearing his stories of the extraordinary, resourceful, incredibly fit firefighters who were recruited from all over the United States to be part of an elite aerial team, I remember finally going on a tour of the Missoula smokejumper base and being in total awe. Then and there I decided that I would someday jump from airplanes and fight wildfires, too."

Last year our base and many in the smokejumping community were devastated by the loss of **Luke Sheehy** (RDD-09). Luke was a mentor, a friend, and an all-around, incredible man. He was a big part of my rookie training—his unmatched fitness and intensity terrified us, pushed us to be the best that we could be, and made us all better smokejumpers."

Gretchen is attending the University of California, San Diego School of Medicine and will receive the **Robert V. Potter** (MSO-51) Scholarship.

Jesse Rae Stevens is the daughter of long time smokejumper **Dirk Stevens** (RAC-91). "For nineteen years I have been lucky enough to be a part of this smokejumper family by attending Sunday barbecues, watching practice jumps, and packing the occasional cargo chute. I will be returning to the University of Denver in the fall as a sophomore, majoring in hospitality under the Daniels College of Business." Jesse will receive the **Jim Cherry** (MSO-57) scholarship. 🐼

NSA Scholarships— Time To Act

The National Smokejumper Association awards up to five \$1,000 scholarships, one \$500 scholarship, and one \$250 scholarship each year. The total number of awards will depend on the number of applicants and their qualifications.

Continued on page 12

Who May Apply For A NSA Scholarship?

National Smokejumper Association Scholarships are intended to provide financial support to students who are committed to obtaining advanced education. The applicants must be:

1. Smokejumpers or smokejumper pilots, *or*
2. Direct family members of smokejumpers or smokejumper pilots,
and
3. Currently enrolled in an accredited program that will lead to college degree or other accreditation.

Required Documentation

1. A narrative, not to exceed one typewritten page, addressing the criteria listed below must be prepared and emailed to: **Gary Baker (406-360-8566) at gbmso67@cox.net by June 15th.** The successful applicants will be notified by July 15th. Scholarship funds will be paid by the National Smokejumper Association to the educational institution of choice and are intended to be used for academic purposes, such as tuition, fees, room, board and/or books.
2. Applicant must submit with the application a picture of himself or herself. Pictures will be used for publication purposes and should be of excellent resolution of at least 1 MB.
3. Applicant must submit with application the name and address of the registration unit of the educational facility and the student's activity account number or related information. Award funds are sent directly to the educational facility.

Criteria

1. Applicant must demonstrate financial need and submit a statement of estimated yearly earnings for the year applying.
2. Student must be in good standing, with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 2.5 at his/her college, university, trade, or training school.
3. Applicant must describe their leadership style/ character/ service potential.
4. Applicant must explain intended future use of degree/training.

PATRICK LEE'S BOOK, *KICKERS:* A NOVEL OF THE SECRET WAR.

For anyone wondering whether or not they should order and read Patrick Lee's new book, *Kickers: A Novel of the Secret War*, I have but one thing to say. DO IT! At first skeptical that it would be very good, I was blown away when I got into the heart of it and found it to be absolutely terrific. This is a great story. Telling it involved a lot of research, including interviews with the guys that were there. It is cleverly crafted, tightly written, engaging, heart-warming, and, ultimately, tragic. Some of the writing reminds me of Hemingway's *For Whom The Bell Tolls*. It's that good. I had no idea of just how much the jumpers were part of that whole Air America/Rocky Mountain Air story in SE Asia. Hell, they weren't just part of it, they were IT. Although *Kickers* is a novel, Patrick assured me that the main historical points—the Tibet involvement, the Marana base in Arizona, and, of course, the action in Laos—are all based on fact. This book will expand your appreciation of being a smokejumper even more once you see what an amazing thing they did over there. At one point the chain of command in the air ops Laos support group was, simply, President Johnson, the Ambassador to Laos and smokejumpers. *Kickers* is a fine book and a tribute to much that was—and still is—exceptional about smokejumpers. I'm already reading it the second time. **Murry Taylor (RDD-65)** 🇺🇸

New NSA Life Members since January 2014 Thanks for your support!

..... New Life Member Base Year

291.. PACKARD, JOHN REDMOND 1965
292.. ATKINS, JACK MISSOULA 1968
293.. SAYRE, JIM MISSOULA 1980
294.. LOWDEN, WILLIE N. CASCADES 1972
295.. BURNEY, MICHAEL IDAHO CITY ... 1966
296.. ANDERSON, JAMES W. MISSOULA 1958
297.. LARSON, JON FAIRBANKS 1989
298.. BRAZZI, GORDON REDDING 1966
299.. DICKENSON, STEVE LAGRANDE 1978
300.. LINDELL, JIM IDAHO CITY ... 1964
301.. BADEN, BILL MCCALL 1959

Widow Of Former Jumper Seeks Support For Laos School Project

by Karen (Weissenback) Moen

(Author's note: This article is of special interest to smokejumpers who worked in Southeast Asia during 1960-75.)

Alumni members of the American School at Vientiane are returning to Laos in January 2015 to commemorate the 1975 closing of Vientiane's American School.

ASV alumni in the United States and Australia have established the Cobra Fund (ASV mascot: the cobra) to raise \$22,000 to build a six-room school in Ban Pha Wai, Xieng Khouang Province. Ban Pha Wai is inhabited today by White and Black Hmong; this was one of the many villages destroyed during the war years and has subsequently rebuilt. Ban Pha Wai is a very poor village in the mountains with limited educational opportunities for its children.

The new school will replace the existing two-room wood building with six classrooms plus bathrooms and a septic system. The six classrooms will accommodate

preschool through fifth-grade students.

At Pha Wai and other regional schools, it is critical that ethnic children get orientated in the common Lao language as early as possible and have the opportunity to develop basic literacy/learning skills in safe, all-weather structures.

Karen Weissenback Moen donated to this project in memory of **Edward Weissenback** (RAC-64) and invites those former smokejumpers who also lived in Laos to consider doing the same.

Donating to the Cobra Fund is easy and every dollar helps towards

the goal of building this school.

If you wish to donate by check, please mail it to: Give Children A Choice, P.O. Box 2298, Matthews, NC 28106. Please write "Cobra Fund" on the memo line of the check.

To pay via PayPal, credit card or debit card, go to the Give Children A Choice website – www.givechildrenachoice.org – and click "donate" under "PayPal" on the left-hand side. When using PayPal, please click on the "Add special instructions to the seller" area in the PayPal screen and enter "Cobra Fund" when making your donation. 🙏



*Group hopes to build new schools in Laos
(Courtesy Karen Moen)*

Crosscuts, Bob Sallee And Mann Gulch

by Frank Fowler (Missoula '52)

Although Bob Sallee (MSO-49) and I were close in age, he left the jumpers just before I started. Our friendship didn't start until we both ended up on the same smokejumper project in 2006. That year several of us nailed a new shingle roof on the Mullan Cabin on the Idaho Panhandle National Forests. We also both worked projects for

several years on the Priest River Experiment Station in Idaho.

Our projects were always performed with a small crew, so we came to know one another pretty well. We frequently whiled away the evenings in pleasant conversation – often with a beer in hand. The comradeship was exceptional. We laughed a lot and thoroughly

enjoyed one another's company, even if many of the stories were liberally embellished.

At some point during the week, Bob usually told of his experiences at Mann Gulch – probably at the prodding of **Carl Gidlund** (MSO-58). I think Carl realized that because the crew changed somewhat each year that there were those who had never heard Bob's first-hand account of the story, a story every smokejumper would be eager to hear.

Bob's telling of his Mann Gulch experience was extremely intriguing, and I never tired of hearing it, but I was equally impressed by the manner in which it was told. One had the distinct feeling that there were no embellishments and a complete absence of bragadocio.

It was obvious that Bob tried to be as factual and unemotional as possible. He seemed to realize that the Mann Gulch tragedy was much bigger than he was, but he also knew that he alone could talk about it intimately. And while he may not have felt any great need to relate his account, he seemed to understand that others thirsted for his first-hand telling of it. I always admired and respected his acceptance of this burden – I was convinced he did it for others and not to satisfy any innate need.

Usually after telling his story about Mann Gulch, those who had never heard the account would ask a question or two. Someone asked, "Why do you think you survived when most died?"

Those not well-acquainted with Bob might have expected him to talk about how fast he could walk and what good shape he was in, or that he was very young and had a physical advantage because of it. But Bob never talked about any superior physical prowess he possessed, although he frequently asserted that he was never – before or since – in better shape.

"Luck," he replied. "I have thought about it many times and concluded there is no other explanation. Acceptance of that fact was the only thing that would allow me to put the question to rest and get on with my life."

That was the answer that most of us knew he would give, but then he went on to say: "But there are two things which gave **Walt Rumsey** (MSO-49) and me an advantage over most of the other crew."

This brought all of us to attention because this was not a usual part of his discussion. Bob paused, as if to give us an opportunity to suggest what these two things might be, but the small circle of jumpers remained silent. Finally Bob continued.

"When we left the cargo spot, all of the men carried double tools, a shovel and a pulaski, except Walt and me. We each carried a cross-cut saw." He didn't explain

how this came to be ... that perhaps older, more experienced men latched on to their shovels and pulaskis leaving Bob and Walt with no choice. Or perhaps tool assignments were promulgated ... or perhaps Bob and Walt preferred sawyer duty.

Whatever the reason, Bob didn't explain.

Then Bob asked the group a question. "Where do the saw carriers line up in a string of firefighters walking to a fire?"

Many of us had been on fires with cross-cuts and remembered the rule: cross-cut saws were always located at the end of the line because they were carried on the shoulder and protruded several feet to the rear. They were dangerous to other crewmembers and needed to be regarded as weapons.

Some of the group still hadn't connected the dots and didn't get the point until Bob said, "When **Wag Dodge** (MSO-41) ordered us to stop our descent down the mountain and reverse our direction, Walt and I instantly found ourselves at the head of the line as opposed to last. We had the shortest travel distance to the ridge. This was clearly an advantage for us."

I had always supposed that Bob and Walt were ahead in the race to the ridge because they were young and fast, and while there may have been some truth in that thought, this knowledge of their position in regard to the others was even more significant.

"Well, what was the second advantage that you and Walt had?" someone asked.

"At the same time that Wag gave the order to go back uphill, he also ordered tools to be dropped. Walt and I instantly discarded the cross-cut saws to the side; most of the others did not."

Bob, of course, couldn't explain why the others retained their tools, but he speculated that it might have been something akin to telling a soldier to retreat and to discard his weapon: "Retreat, okay, but don't ask me to give up my gun!"

But neither Bob nor Walt hesitated because they knew that trying to scramble uphill with a cross-cut saw bouncing on your shoulder would have been madness.

"So," Bob concluded, "not only were Walt and I highest on the mountain, but our hands were free ... we carried no surplus weight. Our efforts to rapidly climb were as efficient as we could make them, while all of the rest of the crew not only had farther to travel but many were laden with surplus weight. That said, our survival was nevertheless highly dependent on luck."

Norman Maclean should have reached some sort of poetic ecstasy with this aspect of the Mann Gulch story. You know what? I don't think either Bob or Walt ever told him about it. 🙄

After Distinguished Jumping Career, Moody Helps Fight Wildfires From Aloft

by Ann McCreary

(Copyright 2014, the Methow Valley News, Twisp, Wash.)

Circling the pillars of smoke billowing upward from a wildfire is a small plane. Inside, **Bill Moody** (NCSB-57) of Twisp is the air tactical supervisor for the fire, orchestrating the aircraft fighting the fire and providing strategies and tactics to crews fighting the fire on the ground from his airborne perspective.

Moody, 75, has worked as an air tactical supervisor on fires around the nation for 35 years. It's a job that entails being an air traffic controller, a strategist, and having the stomach to ride in a small, bucking aircraft for up to eight hours at a stretch.

Moody's career in firefighting includes 33 years as a smokejumper at the North Cascades Smokejumper Base, which he supervised from 1972 to 1989. His 615 jumps was a record for many years. Since retiring, he has provided consulting on wildfires around the world.

Moody was in Cheney, Wash., in July, working on the Watermelon Fire. Before that, he was in Tonasket, working on the Bug Road Fire.

As air attack supervisor, Moody's primary job is to help determine what aircraft are needed to fight the fire and coordinate their movements to ensure safety and most effective use of resources. He rides with a pilot, usually in a twin-engine plane.

"I do a size-up when I arrive, circle [the fire] and make an evaluation," Moody explained in a recent interview.

"In the early stages of the fire, I talk with the ground to discuss strategies and tactics – what kind of air tankers or helicopters are needed."

Decisions on how to fight a fire are based on "understanding fire behavior, the terrain, winds, condition of fuels and location of the fire relative to terrain features," Moody said.

He discusses all these factors with the key people at the base of operations on the ground. "I pass on my observations and concerns," Moody said.

As firefighting moves into full swing and aircraft are called to the scene, Moody becomes a flying air traffic controller. "Any aircraft has to report to me. I'll make assignments as far as altitudes or flight pat-

terns," he said.

A flight traffic area is established around the fire, and any aircraft – such as tankers carrying retardant, helicopters with water buckets or planes delivering smokejumpers – must make contact with Moody before coming any closer than seven miles from the center of the fire.

Safety protocols:

"The key thing is safety," Moody said. "There's a protocol for air space between aircraft," usually 500 to 1,000 feet. Moody makes sure the approaching aircraft are aware of the position of his plane and others in the area.

"I give them my approval to enter the airspace and the altitude to enter," Moody said.

In communicating with fire managers on the ground and the aircraft, Moody is often monitoring four to six radio frequencies. "The air attack plane flies only during daylight," Moody said.

Large fires can create their own weather systems and as Moody and the pilot circle a fire, they fly through smoke and turbulence.

"There is a lot of turbulence near where the flames are. It can get very, very extreme. In some areas where it is too turbulent, or the smoke is too thick, we can't work in there until the conditions change," Moody said.

Moody said he has occasionally "had a lot of concern, but never had anything really critical" happen while flying air attack.

"A couple of times I had air tankers coming in that didn't see me and we had to make a quick correction to get out of their path," he said. "One [tanker] I had warned of my position and he must have forgotten."

During another flight Moody's plane lost all electronics and communications. The pilot headed to an airport in Omak, Wash., to land.

"We were just in the process of hand-cranking the [landing] gear down ... and told the airport to have a response ready when the electronics kicked in again and the landing gear came down," Moody said.

He has trained four smokejumpers from the North Cascades base to work air attack. Trainees ride in a seat behind him, until they are ready to change positions.

"The jumper program is an excellent way to recruit people to do the position," Moody said. 🌲



BLAST FROM THE PAST



Progress In Parachute Forest Job

by Jack Demmons (Missoula '50)
The Daily Missoulian, October 22, 1944

Growth of the parachute-jumping program in the National Forests of this region is indicated by the fact that half of the fire jumps on record were made in 1944.

So far in the five years of the parachute program, there have been 446 jumps on 154 forest fires. The parachuters are credited with hitting 188 fires, and the records show they either controlled all of these or held them until ground crews reached the scene to complete mopping up.

The largest number of individual jumpers on one crew was the force of 29 that dropped on the Bell



Lake Fire on the Bitterroot Forest during the past summer. The parachute men set up their own camp and organization there.

Only two jumpers have been injured on fire jumps. During that five-year period, 2,108 training jumps have been made as 221 jumpers were trained, including 25 for the military service.

Seventy regular Forest Service men have participated as parachute jumpers during the five years, and of these, 42 are now in the military service. Twenty-eight are in the Army, 12 in the Navy and two in the Marines. Five others received honorable discharges from the military.

Twelve such experienced jumpers remain in the region.

The total number of jumps on fire and training has been 2,554. 🌲

An Old Smokejumper Looks Back

by Jeff R. Davis (Missoula '57)

"It was the best of times ..." begins the classic novel by Charles Dickens, *A Tale of Two Cities*.

As I look back on 22 years of smokejumping, it certainly was the finest experience of my entire life. It was the best of times.

But the game was different in the '50s and '60s when I did most of my jumping. The mission was the same: going into wildfires by parachute and putting them out. But the ways and means of accomplishing that were unlike those of the jumpers of this era.

Initial attack

We hit the running front of those fires directly in those days, not as they do today, attacking the flanks and gradually working toward the head and pinching it off. And the rule then was to "put 'em all out," with no consideration for terrain or weather conditions or

common sense.

Many was the time I had to hustle my guys to the ground before the fire went out. Conditions often dictated that the smokes would extinguish themselves, but we put men on them anyhow so we could follow the rule of the day and assure ourselves of yet another fire jump.

Two-man fires were common in those days. A 16- or 32-man fire was the biggest we ever had, and most of them occurred on the Salmon River. I'll never forget the dreaded call: "Sixteen men to the Salmon." It still runs chills down my spine.

Jump gear

Our first parachutes were FS-2s – canopy-first-deployed, candy-striped 28-footers. We called them "flat-wraps" and they opened with a bang. Many's the time we jumped in a haze of stars streaking across our vision as the opening shock thumped the bejesus out

of us. Malfunctions were common; lineovers, inversions and severe twists were prevalent.

Our harnesses were the old cotton “H-1,” where the four connecting straps joined in a single-point box release at the center of our bodies. A pull of the cotterpin safety and a quarter-turn to the left released all four straps at once. Upon landing once, I gave my release box a crank and found that I had *locked* it instead of releasing it. It was open all the way down. If I had touched that thing in midair, I would have found myself in free fall.

The jumpsuits were basically the same design then as they are today, but the material was 17-ounce canvas duck with quarter-inch felt padding, instead of Kevlar and Ensolite.

My first helmet was leather, sporting the familiar wire-mesh mask.

Our jump boots were one of two models – no exceptions: the same White logger boots used today and a similar boot made by Buffalo. The Buffs, unlike the animal they’re named after, went extinct after a couple of seasons, and we jumped only in Whites.

Clothing

Nomex was unknown then. We fought fire in 14-ounce cotton Levis or “Can’t Bust ‘em” Frisco jeans. Since insulation from the heat of the fire is a function of thickness, like the RH factor in housing insulation, the phenomenon of “black leg” was unknown. Fourteen-ounce cotton beat seven-ounce Nomex every time for protection against heat and fire ash. And it proved to be a real advantage for direct attack right up against the flaming front of those fires, as was the custom of the day.

Hard hats were unknown. We wore the logger’s “crusher” felt hats or no hats at all.

Support equipment

We had no radios. Ground-to-air signals were accomplished by laying out the orange, crepe-paper signal streamers we had in our rope pockets, a “double-L” signaling that all jumpers were down and safe. The first radio I used was in New Mexico on the Gila forest. It was a huge Motorola, a good 12 inches long and weighing several pounds. We jumped with them slung under our reserves.

We had fire shelters, but we weren’t required to wear them on the line. We left them with our personal gear, ready to use if we needed them. On some of the smaller fires they weren’t even dropped.

Chain saws were also unknown. We were all familiar with the two-man cross-cut saw, which we called “misery whips.” They were hooped around the two-

man fire packs for dropping, and at times they climbed up the lines during descent and caused the chute to auger in.

We humped out our 120-pound loads on small wooden frames called “clack frames.” They often broke during the drop, and we patched them together with fiberglass tape or whatever else we had on hand. Pack-outs were common. The only choppers we had then were G3-B Bells, and there were precious few of them. I remember my longest packout was about 23 miles, but hikes of five miles or so were the norm.

The cost of our gear then was commensurate with the times, when cigarettes cost two bits (25 cents) a pack and gas was 25 cents a gallon. My first pair of Whites cost \$29.95 and I thought that was pretty steep. My first Levis cost \$2.98. On out-of-region fire calls, I carried a \$20 traveler’s check, which was plenty for a few days of extra food and all the beer I could drink.

Our P.G. (personal gear) bags were small and light in comparison to the 40-pound bags some carry nowadays. Mine carried a pair of socks, my “tin coat” and a carton of Lucky Strikes.

We jumped with as little extra weight as possible. Those 28-footers had us smoking into the ground under the best of conditions. I couldn’t believe the way the first FS-14s I ever watched floated into the ground like feathers. The last canopy I jumped was the FS-12. I also jumped the FS-1, FS-2, FS-2A, FS-5, FS-5A, FS-10 and FS-11.

Pay

My beginning wage as a GS-5 smokejumper was \$5 an hour, and as a GS-9 foreman, I never made more than nine bucks an hour. It was all straight-time overtime, no time-and-a-half, no hazardous-duty pay. Injured jumpers were required to come to work anyway. That was before the days of the union, and we couldn’t use sick leave for jump injuries. Wounded jumpers on crutches and wearing casts were commonly used as tour guides, who were prevalent at the Aerial Fire Depot in Missoula where I trained and jumped.

Physical training

Tough physical-fitness standards were in place then as they are now. But again, they were different.

We ran a half mile for time, but we didn’t make that run in sweats and running shoes. We ran it right down the asphalt ramp in front of the AFD in Whites and work clothes, shin splints be damned.

We were familiar with the obstacle course, too. But we didn’t run it once for time; we ran it repeatedly for *endurance*. I saw squadleaders positioned at each

sawdust pit under the various ramps we jumped off to practice our PLFs, and I wondered why. (Back then, we did a roll called the Allen Roll; only later did we employ the military PLF.)

I found out why the squadleaders were positioned at those pits about my third time around the course. They used their Whites to kick us to our feet as we collapsed into the pits from sheer exhaustion. To this day the smell of sawdust can make me sick.

We also learned to check the daily schedule as to when we ran the O-course. If we had it in the morning, we skipped breakfast. If it were slated for the afternoon, we missed lunch. We were going to puke running that course regardless, and it was easier to deal with the dry heaves than it was to be unloading our groceries every day running that monster.

When we practiced digging cold line during those hot June days, we were placed on short water rations. Short rations meant no water at all, from the time we started until the time we finished, hours later. Like our exercises on the Torture Rack (aptly named, that), we didn't question the value behind such discipline; we only asked ourselves how much we wanted to become smokejumpers. We wanted to, badly. We put up with the PT.

Aircraft

We of course jumped out of perfectly good airplanes to accomplish our mission the same way jumpers do today. But the aircraft themselves were quite different.

My first jump was out of a Ford Trimotor. Second man out of the Ford was a difficult feat, indeed. I usually managed only to get my butt out the door, and worried about my exit position on the way down when it was too late.

We also flew a small fabric-and-wood job called the

Curtiss Wright Travelaire for two-man fires. By the end of the fire season, the deck around the exit door was worn clear through to the wood, exposing the timbered terrain beneath our feet. It didn't take much to shuffle through that fragile superstructure during an active fire season.

Our prime carrier, as it was with the Airborne, was the DC-3 or C-47. A dependable workhorse, that Doug, until it finally wore out from lack of replacement parts.

We also had one DC-2, the only one I've ever seen. The markings on the inside fuselage for center of gravity were in Spanish.

The days of the Twin Otter were still far in the future for me, as were the more "sophisticated" retardant ships (we called them "slop wagons"), such as the PBYS and B-17s or the C-130s.

We relied solely on the one tanker available at the time, the TBM – torpedo bomber, medium. It carried a load of 500 gallons, which at the time was borate, a caustic chemical that seared the eyeballs of anyone unfortunate enough to catch a shovelful of it, as I did one day, as well as sterilizing the soil on which it was dropped.

We tried mounting slurry tanks on the Fords, but that proved unsuccessful, as the tanks stuck shut and wouldn't allow the pilot to release his load. Only the remarkable STOL-like characteristics of the Ford saved those early experiments from ending in disaster. We saw TBMs auger in when their traps stuck on low-level drops.

There are more differences I could draw between the old and new smokejumper programs, but the one's I've made are enough. Smokejumping is a fine program that I hope continues into the next generation and beyond. Smokejumpers are the salt of the earth. 🍌

NSA Good Samaritan Fund Contributions

Contributions since the previous publication of donors October 2014

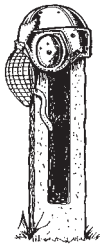
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Nan Cervenka.....	Dwight Chambers (MSO-66)
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Roland "Andy" Andersen (GAC-52)	Don Webb (MYC-56)
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In Memory/Honor of

Total funds disbursed to smokejumpers and families since 2004—\$55,340

Mail your Good Samaritan Fund contributions to: Chuck Sheley, 10 Judy Ln., Chico, CA 95926



Off The List

Remember and honor fellow jumpers with a gift to the NSA Good Samaritan Fund in their name. Hard times can fall on many of us at any time. The NSA is here to support our fellow jumpers and their families through the Good Samaritan Fund. Mail your contribution to:

Chuck Sheley
10 Judy Lane
Chico, CA 95926

Art L. Galbraith (North Cascades '61)

Art, 77, died July 11, 2014. Born in Iowa he lived in eastern Oregon and attended Oregon State University. He served in the U.S. Army Airborne before jumping at NCSB in 1961 and worked for the USFS for 33 years. Art enjoyed horseback riding, branding, and working with cattle.

Donald R. Webb (McCall '56)

Don died July 29, 2014, after a battle with lymphoma. He graduated from the University of Idaho with a degree in forestry and jumped at McCall 1956, 57 and 60 and at Missoula 1958 and 59. Between 1960 and 1967, he developed the first fire dispatch office for the Coronado National Forest and also served as the first ski ranger at the Mount Lemmon Ski Area in Arizona. From 1967 to 1973, he served as the Regional Fire Coordinator in Albuquerque. From there he was transferred to the Gila National Forest in Silver City. He was the Fire Management Officer from 1973 to 1984 when he retired.

Robert C. "Bob" Searles (Missoula '45)

Bob died July 13, 2014. He was active in radio and TV in the Los Angeles area during his career. Bob was an accomplished musician, playing at some of the best spots in the LA area including the famed Cocoanut Grove. He and **Dick Flaharty** (MSO-45) provided the entertainment at many of the CPS jumper reunions.

Harold Gene Crosby (McCall '53)

Gene, 82, died July 13, 2014, in Boise, Idaho. He was a graduate of Oklahoma State University and jumped at McCall 1953-54, 57-59. Gene brought a plane while at OSU and later worked as a seasonal pilot for the USFS. Gene also flew for the Johnson Air Company flying mail and hunters into the backcountry. His next job was in Boise, Idaho, working for Joe Albertson, as his co-pilot, flying him around the country as the grocery store chain expanded. Gene got an award for flying one million miles without an accident; quite a feat with a single engine plane over mountainous terrain. He served as a First Lieutenant in the U. S.

Army from 1954 to 1957.

Donald L. Pape (Idaho City '48)

Don died September 13, 2014, in Boise. He attended Boise Junior College and jumped at Idaho City in 1948 and 1950 before joining the Air Force. He flew the F-86 Safer Jet during the Korean War. Don completed 129 combat missions before being shot down in 1953 and was a POW until the prisoner exchange at the end of the war. In 1955 he joined the Idaho Air National Guard and attended Creighton University Dental School where he graduated in 1959. He practiced dentistry in Boise from 1960-1993.

Don received the Air Medal and Distinguished Flying Cross and was inducted into the Idaho Aviation Hall of Fame in 2012.

Leland "Lee" Miller (Missoula '44)

Lee, 93, of Spokane Valley, Washington, died September 17, 2014. He was raised in a Mennonite farm family in South Dakota before serving with the CPS-103 smokejumpers in 1944 and 1945. After the war he returned to South Dakota but eventually moved to Sioux Falls, Iowa, and worked for the Caterpillar dealership with heavy equipment. In 1965 he moved to the Spokane area still working with the Caterpillar dealership. Lee had a musical ear, singing with various choirs and groups in his youth and becoming a jazz buff in his later years.

Donald W. Pitts (Missoula '55)

Don, 86, died July 31, 2014, in Fresno, California. He served in the U.S. Army Airborne before getting his degree in Logging Engineering from Oregon State. Don jumped at Missoula the 1955-56 and 1958 seasons. After working as a Forester, he went to the Univ. of California Boalt Law School and started a career in law.

Don worked in private practice and for the Fresno DA's office before being appointed Federal Magistrate Judge for Yosemite N.P. in 1975. In his 18 years on the Federal Bench, he was known for his skepticism for the well-fashioned fabrication.

Retirement could not persuade Don to leave Yosemite. He and his wife, Kay, built and ran the Yosemite Peregrine, a Bed and Breakfast, from 1994 to 2011.

Donald E. Wallace (Cave Junction '49)

Don, 84, died May 16, 2014, at his home in Las Cruces, New Mexico. Don served in the U.S. Army in the Occupation of Japan, 1946-48, in the 8th Cavalry, 1st Brigade of the 1st (Armored) Cavalry Division. He was later called back into service during the Korean War 1950-52. He jumped at Cave Junction during the 1949-50 seasons. Don was a graduate of the University of Washington in Seattle. He worked for The Boeing Company as a Site Development Manager. During that time he was based in a number of locations, including Seattle, Huntsville, New Orleans, Houston, Edwards Air Force Base, Washington DC and Ismir, Turkey. Don retired in 1990 after a career of 35 years.

Melvin L. "Smokey" Greene (Missoula '42)

Smokey, 95, died January 20, 2014, at his home in Austin, Texas. He grew up in Montana, worked for the Forest Service, and entered the Montana School of Mines in Butte before becoming a smokejumper in 1942. He credits his smokejumping experience with

later saving his life over Japan in 1945. (See story in this issue-Ed.)

Smokey's plane was struck by a kamikaze pilot over Nagoya, Japan, in April 1945, and he spent the remainder of WWII in Omori prison near Tokyo. After the war he stayed in the Air Force, retiring as a Colonel in 1972. He and his son made annual trips to Montana to backpack and fish.

Ronald G.O. Curtiss (Grangeville '61)

Ron died September 26, 2014, in Libby, Montana, at the age of 73. He went to work with the Forest Service while attending Eastern Washington College in Cheney, Washington. Ron jumped at Missoula and Grangeville for eleven seasons and had 98 fire jumps. He worked for the USFS for his entire career and became the Incident Commander on one of the 18 Type 1 teams in the nation in 1984. Ron was FMO for the Fisher River District, Kootenai N.F., from 1972 until his retirement in 1994.

Otto F. Krueger (Missoula '55)

Otto died December 14, 2013. He lived in Jamul, California, and had a career with the BLM. Otto loved fishing and hunting. 🐟

My Trip To Redding In 1958

by **Wild Bill Yensen** (McCall '53)

This is a story that I want to get printed before I forget all the details. It is one of my favorite memories.

I had just gotten out of the Army in April 1958. My wife and I went to San Diego and found teaching jobs to start in the fall, so back to McCall and smokejumping we went. We got one of the 8-foot-by-32-foot trailers to live in, which we thought was fine.

A call for backup came from Redding. I was on the list, so a DC-3 load flew down to Redding. On arriving we were told to suit up; we got on their Lockheed Lodestar and flew off near Mt. Shasta.

Richard "Paperlegs" Peterson (MYC-47) was the spotter. Our fire was in a big stand of sugar pines. The spot was an opening in the trees that from the plane looked like a football field. It was 100 yards long and 30 yards wide in the middle.

We jumped single sticks and I was first. The Lodestar doesn't slow down much and we were still jumping flat packs, so I do remember a big opening shock. I

headed for the spot and I was afraid I wouldn't make it, so I planed hard and just barely missed the top of the last tree on the edge of the spot.

I thought, "Wow! I made it!" Coming in I realized that those were really big trees! I got myself ready to land, and I kept seeing tree trunks going by for what seemed like a long time. I finally landed okay. The last quarter of our jump was from the treetops to the ground.

Rocky Stone (MYC-57), **Grant Landes** (MYC-58), and **Bill Weaver** (MYC-58) were the rest of the crew. Rocky and Grant both landed in the spot okay. Bill was last out and he had a "Mae West." He fought it a little and then did what he was trained to do: pull the reserve.

With two chutes open he could not steer and was at the mercy of the wind. He almost made the spot but hung up in the top of one of those giant sugar pines.

He hollered, "I'm coming down!" I hollered back, "No, you're not! You don't have enough rope."

At that time we had 90-foot nylon tape letdown ropes. He was in a 250-foot sugar pine near the top. I told him to get his reserve out of the tree and tie his letdown rope on it and lower it, which he did. Then I had to put on the spurs and climb 40 feet up that trunk with the other three jump ropes and the Fanno saw.

With great difficulty I got them tied on and he pulled that up. Rocky and Grant went over to the fire and put in a line while I helped Bill get out of the tree.

Soon he got his main out and dropped it. Then he dropped the rest of his jump gear except his harness, which he put on. Then he tied all four ropes together with bowline knots. He tied one end to his chest strap and dropped the rest to me. He went over the lowest green branch and I lowered him.

With two chutes open he could not steer and was at the mercy of the wind. He almost made the spot but hung up in the top of one of those giant sugar pines.

He hollered, "I'm coming down!" I hollered back, "No, you're not! You don't have enough rope."

I wrapped the rope over my shoulder and under my leg and eased him down slowly and safely. It took nearly all of that rope!

We went to the fire and found it was a sugar pine, eight feet in diameter, which lightning had struck and burned out a huge cat face in the bottom. All four of us were able to get into that cat face. There was fire way up in that tree, so we had to fell it.

One of the cargo chutes had landed in the very top of a tree, and the crosscut saw was on it with Grant's and my elephant bags. We had to have that saw and the rest of our gear. It was a lone tree that looked like a Christmas tree surrounded by brush.

When we first saw it, I thought that cargo chute looked awfully small up there. I took three jump ropes and the spurs and went down to the tree. What looked like ground around the tree was really the canopy of 30-foot brush.

That tree turned out to be a Douglas fir that was 18 feet in diameter at the base! I put on the spurs, hooked the ropes and Fanno to my belt, and went up

the tree.

About 50 feet up I came to a big branch I couldn't get a grip on. Getting up to there wasn't too hard because the bark had big cracks in it, which I was able to use for a grip. I tied myself to that lowest branch with a rope and gave a big jump and hung on and clambered up on that branch. From there up it was nearly like climbing a ladder.

When I got to the cargo chute, it was a little after noon so I got out some food and a canteen and had lunch. What a sight I had from the top of that tree. Mt. Shasta was beautiful and majestic and I could see 360 degrees.

I had been hired to teach biology at Mar Vista High School in Imperial Beach, Calif. I looked at the terminal bud at the very top of the tree and thought, "How does Mother Nature get sap this high using osmosis and capillarity?" That's what I had been taught in college.

Then came the fun, getting down with all that stuff. I tied the ropes together with bowline knots and tied the crosscut to one end and let it down. The crosscut is six feet long, the three ropes were 270 feet long, and I had to climb down 20 more feet to get it on the ground. I read much later that Douglas fir trees are second only to sequoias in height.

With all our gear down, we attacked the fire. The ground fire was out and now we had to cut that big tree down. The cat face saved us a lot of sawing, but we got it down. When it hit, it shook the whole mountain! The fire suppression rules required us to build a line around the whole tree, so we did, and it was 18 chains long.

We set up camp, ate supper, and slept very soundly after a long, hard day. We made the fire look good for whoever came to check it and waited for our 24 hours after last smoke, packed up our gear and hiked to the nearest road. While packing out we crossed an area that had small poison oak brush on it, only a foot high. I avoided most of it.

We waited at the road till 2000 hours, and a Jeep station wagon came to get us. On the way out it was getting dark and the lights didn't work. We stopped in a small town to get the lights fixed.

Well, what do smokejumpers do when they are waiting? We went to the nearest bar, of course. It was a cool, misty kind of night, and we had put on our jump jackets to keep warm.

There we were, sitting at the bar having a cool one, when a man in a business suit walked up and asked what kind of jackets we were wearing. We told him they were our jump jackets and that we had just jumped a fire near Mt. Shasta and were waiting for our

ride back to Redding to get the truck's lights fixed.

Having never talked to smokejumpers before, he sat a pitcher up for us. We told him jump stories, starting with this one, and he kept setting up pitchers. I was pretty well oiled up when we got back to Redding at about 11 p.m. So ended the fire they called the Dutchman's Peak Fire.

They told us we would be jumping again first thing in the morning. They asked who was a rigger and I said I was. So I spent two hours wobbling up and down the loft tables, packing up six more chutes for us to jump the next morning.

The fire I jumped was on the Rubicon River, east of Auburn. My jump partner was a Redding guy, whose name I can't remember. I certainly remember the jump because I had my first and only Mae West. You can't steer a Mae West and you go down fast.

I could see which lines were over so I grabbed them and sawed them off the canopy. Now I could steer. Big problem, now, because I was so low I had only two choices: a big rock pile or a big oak tree. I took the oak tree.

I hit it right on top and it was a big one, about a hundred feet tall. The canopy of leaves and branches was tough enough to stop me. The chute fell all over me as I crashed through the canopy and headed for the ground. I bounced off of limbs till I found myself hanging by my right ankle with three shroud lines around it.

Now I had a real problem. I was hanging upside down by one leg six feet above a big rock. I yelled to my jump partner for help but got no answer. He was a half-mile away. If I'd cut the lines, I would've fallen on my head and been killed. My only choice was to use all of my athletic ability and do upside-down gymnastics and get those lines off my ankle. Somehow I did it.

I went to the fire and found our gear and started working. My partner showed up and we handled the ground fire. They had dropped us a chain saw, so I used it to cut down and cut up the tree that had been struck by lightning.

Two ground pounders showed up and told us to hike out. I had a Redding pack, which had a back board and rubber bands to attach gear to it. We packed up and walked seven miles up the river bottom, which was dry. I never saw so much poison oak. There was poison oak so big you could climb it.

We came to a trail and had to go another seven miles to the road. There was poison oak all over that, too. A rig was waiting for us at the road, and we went in to the warehouse in Auburn.

I knew I had been exposed to poison oak, big time. In 1954, after my second year of jumping, I had

gone back to school at the University of Redlands. The San Bernardino Forest, east of Redlands, had fire Friday afternoon that was putting up a smoke column that looked like Hiroshima. They wanted all the firefighters they could get so they called me and George Benson, who had worked that summer with the Mentone fire people.

We rounded up a hundred college boys with boots who wanted to make some money. Being a smoke-jumper, I was the crew boss, so I got higher pay. They took us to a place too steep for cats to put in line.

The first thing I did was get all of those college boys where they could see me and gave them a lesson on swinging pulaskis and brush hooks.

I had been working on timber stand improvement earlier that summer. We were cutting out weed trees with pulaskis. **Merle Cables** (IDC-48) was the squad leader in charge, and he had given us the same directions on how not to cut our feet with a sharp pulaski. One guy didn't pay attention and chopped a big gash between his toes.

I described the damage that did to that guy's foot and I guess the college boys believed me, because no one got hurt.

We built a 10-yard-wide line down that steep hill. The fire was coming, so we scattered them all out along the far side of the line, and I told them to immediately stomp out any sparks that flew across. They did a great job and we stopped that side of the fire, which was headed for more than 100 houses.

The second day of the fire, I walked through the smoke of burning poison oak with my left sleeve rolled up. I got poison oak on that arm something awful. I went to the infirmary, and the doctor told me what to do next time I was exposed. It was too late this time; I just had to suffer.

With that experience in mind, I went straight to a drug store in Auburn and bought two quarts of rubbing alcohol. I went back to the warehouse, took off my clothes, and took a shower with all the soap I could find. Then I drenched my whole body with alcohol, which dissolves the resin that affects the victim. I put all my clothes, in a washing machine with soap and Clorox and washed them.

I only got poison oak on my lower legs, which had been exposed two days earlier. I put on wet clothing, which dried quickly, then went to bed. So ended the fire they called the "Rubicon," which was the first one ever jumped on the El Dorado Forest.

We returned to McCall, and I finished the fire season with 10 fire jumps. I suffered and scratched my legs for the rest of the summer. For the next 20 years, I would not go to either Redding or Cave Junction. 🍄

THE VIEW FROM OUTSIDE THE FENCE



by **Chris Sorensen**
(Associate)

2014 WAS ANOTHER busy year with some resource requests for smokejumpers “unable to fill.” I can’t recall any of the bases adding smokejumper positions – perhaps they have. How many years of “unable to fill” resource orders does it take to add positions?

We’re grateful there were no smokejumper line-of-duty deaths in 2014. I did hear of one serious jump injury in the spring. If there were any other serious injuries, I am unaware of them.

I have heard rumblings that the Missoula Doug is going to be retired at the end of the season with 20,000 hours on it after the last major overhaul. Reportedly, the plan is to replace the Doug with military-surplus (sound familiar?) Sherpas.

Apparently this model Sherpa doesn’t fly very well at higher altitudes nor in hot weather. That doesn’t sound very good, does it? When inquiries were made about what would happen if smokejumpers couldn’t jump a fire due to the capabilities of the Sherpa,

the answer was: those fires will be fought by heli-rapellers. Really?

I had the opportunity to visit with the Navajo Nation Helitack crew last summer. They were a good bunch to talk to and I was impressed. The helitack crews are another tool in the box with some good capabilities, but I’ll never waver from my conviction that eight (or more) smokejumpers deliver by fixed-wing is far more cost-effective than a helitack crew.

I do believe it takes everyone to get the job done, but heli-rapellers and helitack crews are not a replacement for smokejumpers.

The Forest Service is starting to pay attention to post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and suicide. There was a suicide-intervention workshop in Redding in September. I don’t know if suicide is a problem in the resource agencies, but the top 10 states for suicide are (in order from the highest per-capita) Alaska, Montana, New Mexico, Wyoming, Nevada, Colorado, West Virginia, Arizona, Oregon and Kentucky. Idaho is 11th.

We have all been affected by suicide and PTSD in one way or another. It’s great that the Forest Service is addressing these issues.

I hope to see many of you at the 75th anniversary of smokejumping. There are many smokejumpers who live within a day’s drive of Missoula but have never attended a reunion. We have lost more than 400 smokejumpers since 2004, including many high-profile people associated with the program. Reunions come with some financial risk, so the NSA

needs a good turnout.

As you read in the last issue, the grave of **Malvin P. Brown** (PNOR-45) was located through the efforts of **Fred Donner** (MSO-59), **John Maclean** (Associate) and others. Is there any interest in locating the graves of all of the smokejumpers killed in the line of duty for historical purposes?

I am thinking the NSA should have those records for future generations. If anyone wants to form a work group to collect this information, contact me. It would be advantageous to have someone on the ground in Helena to collect the records of the jumpers lost on the Mann Gulch Fire. 📍

People Search— Can You Help?

by **Chuck Sheley**
(Cave Junction ’59)

We have over 400 names of smokejumpers in our database for whom we do not have any contact information. In some cases we have an old address and/or phone number. We do have their rookie year and the years they jumped.

In addition to those missing, I’m sure that we have many for whom we do not have any obits or date of death. The NSA would like to have a recorded obit for anyone who has been a smokejumper.

If you are skilled at finding people and/or obits and are willing to help us out, please contact me. My contact information is on page 3 of the magazine. 📍



Burr Satterfield '59 & Dick Wildman '61



Mike Fort '61, Bill Furman '62 & Ken Borg '64

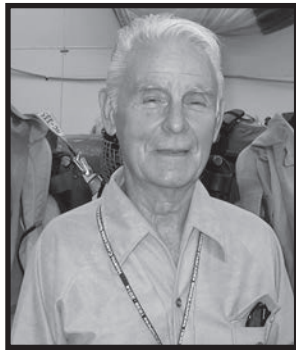


Mark Marcu...



North Cascades Smokeju...

Photos Courtesy Tit...



Dave Russell, Pilot



Ron Borst '64 & Craig Boesel '66



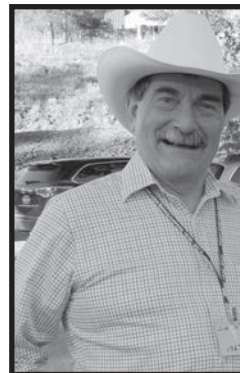
Kathy Russell '98



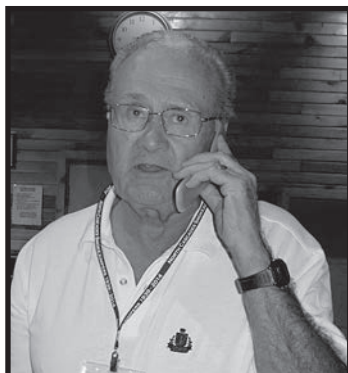
Mark Marcuson '64, Kirk Fraser '70 & Baynard Buzzard '65



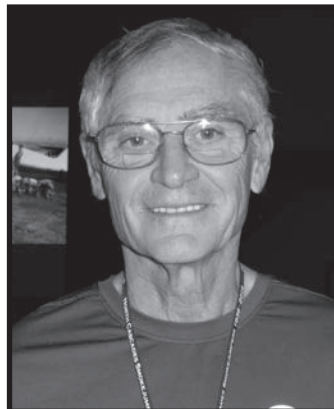
Daren Belsby '86



Jime Detro '67 & ...



Ben Hull '64



Bob Veitch '67



Ash Court '63



Davis Perkins '72

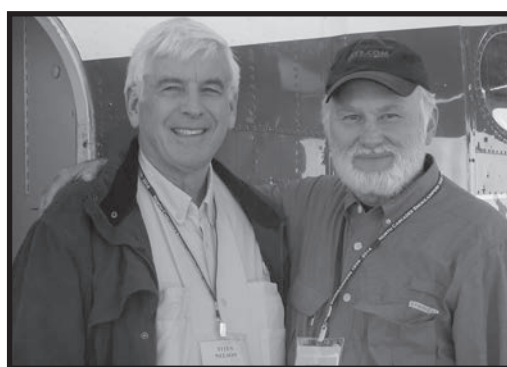
Layout Design: Joh...



Titus Nelson '64 & Mary Nelson (NCSB-66)



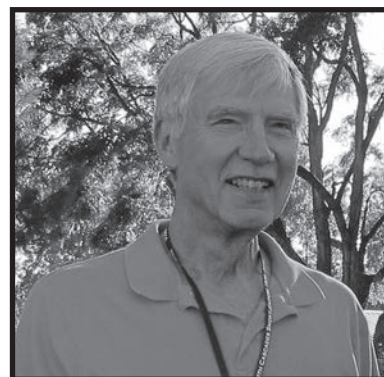
Barry George '73 & Bob Kemper '67



Titus Nelson '66 & Kjell Krane '65



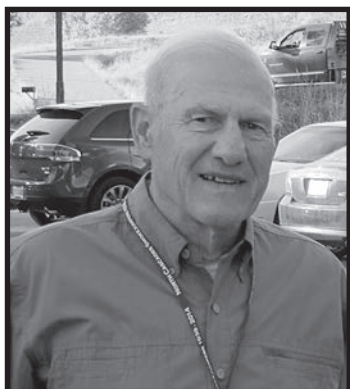
L-R: Jim Detro '67, Denis Breslin '69, Tom Belvill '69 & Bill Fleagle '70



Fred Cooper '62



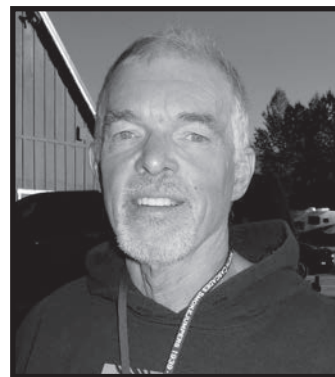
Doug Houston '73



Bill Moody '57



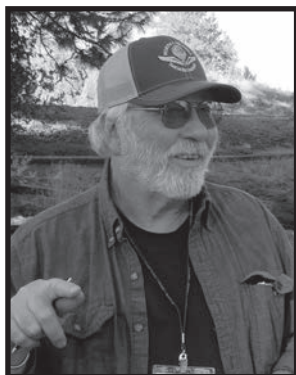
Randy Tower '63



Kirk Fraser '70



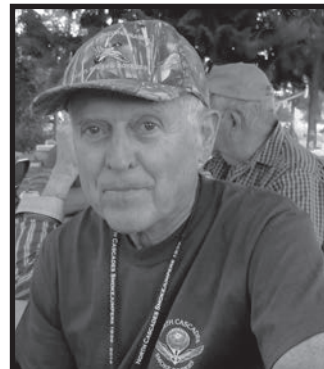
Johnny Kirkley (CJ-64)



Tom Thomas '62



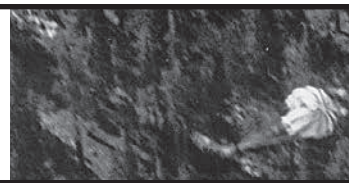
Jim Grant '65 & Dean Longaneker '68



Doug Bernhard '58



THE JUMP LIST



The Jump List is intended to bring you up-to-date on your fellow NSA members. Send your information to Chuck Shelley; see his contact information on page 3 of this magazine.

CHARLES "TED" NYQUEST (Missoula '54)

Now living in: Missoula, Mont.

Jumped: MSO 54, 57-58, 60-68, 74

Since jumping: Owned and operated residential and storage rentals for 42 years; sold the last of the business in 2005; doing volunteer work, such as Meals on Wheels, 12 years; driving shuttle for Avis rental cars, 10 years; have been square dancing 12 years.

Ted says: "I enjoy the abundance of retired smokejumpers who have made Missoula their home. I can opt to join some of the activities, such as Boys on Wednesday breakfast chat groups. I will have been coordinating the smokejumpers and associates highway pickup crew for the 14th year in April here in Missoula. I have an interest in economic fundamentals and have been attending seminars, lectures and debates, especially in Las Vegas, for nine years at a special gathering called Freedom Fest. Retirement in Missoula is special!"

DAYTON GROVER (Missoula '55)

Now living in: Edina, Mo.

Jumped: MSO 55-56, 58, 62-65

Since jumping: Served as Vietnam advisor, 1967-68; mainly have worked several types of jobs since jumping – taught school in Missouri, Bolivia and New Mexico; left teaching at 57 and worked in three water plants, and returned to Sheriff's Department where I've worked off and on since 1980; decided to quit when I was 79 due to declining health.

Dayton says: "I consider the jumpers my second family. The job gave me a lot of self-confidence and knowing that people didn't think I was crazy really gave me lots of inner comfort. Give the job all you have! I think having this association is a wonderful thing for those of us living far away. Best wishes and good luck; hope I can make it back to the 2015 Reunion."

DON WEBB (McCall '56)

Now living in: Sahuarita, Ariz.

Jumped: MYC 56-57, 60, MSO 58-59

Since jumping: Had a 32-year career with the U.S. Forest Service, all in fire; served as fire dispatcher for

Gila and Coronado national forests, regional fire coordinator for Region 3, Gila fire management officer, and incident commander for Region 3, Class I fire team.

Don says: "I've spent the past 31 winters in Bahia de Kino, Sonora, Mexico."

ROBERT WILSON (Missoula '57)

Now living in: Georgetown, Texas

Jumped: MSO 57, WYS 59-61

Since jumping: Received bachelor's degree in Mechanical Engineering from University of Oklahoma in 1959; spent some 23 years selling beer, booze and soft drink production lines in 14 Far East countries; retired in 1994 after seven years as a resident of Campbell River, British Columbia, and moved back to Oklahoma City; now living in a Del Webb retirement community.

Robert says: "I greatly miss the camaraderie with other jumpers – I never found such after I stopped jumping."

TROY "TED" COOK (Cave Junction '58)

Now living in: Kailua, Hawaii

Jumped: CJ 58-59

Since jumping: Attended University of Oregon 1958-62, earning bachelor's degree in Liberal Arts; worked as juvenile counselor in First Circuit Court, Klamath Falls, Ore., 1962-65; chief probation officer, Bonnevill County Probate Court, Idaho Falls, 1965-66; owner and skipper of schooner *Sharolyn*, Honolulu, 1966-71; intake counselor, family court, Honolulu, 1969-71; wrote two novels, *Lead Feathers* and *Single-tree*, unpublished, in Costa del Sol, Spain 1971-76; worked in yacht sales, San Francisco Bay, 1976-81; competed in trans-Pacific yacht race from Long Beach, Calif. to Honolulu, on sloop *Petrouchka*, 1981; built and sailed 41-foot sloop *Victoria* in Kailua, Hawaii, 1983-84; recreational therapist for Hawaii State Hospital, 1984-2009; retired in 2009; now owner and skipper of 29-foot sloop *Sidewinder*, Kailua, Hawaii. **Ted says:** "I was a charter member of the Emerald Skydivers in Eugene, Ore., in 1960."

ROGER SIEMENS (Missoula '59)

Now living in: Silver Star, Mont.

Jumped: MSO 59-63

Since jumping: Transferred from Aerial Fire Depot in Missoula to fire management position in the Bitterroot National Forest in 1964; worked as range and wild-life specialist on several ranger districts, all in Region 1, and retired from Deer Lodge National Forest in 1994; currently own and operate a small business in Silver Star dealing with all aspects of natural resource management and conservation, including control of nuisance animals of all kinds; specialize in management and control of rattlesnakes throughout southwest and south central Montana.

Roger says: “What do jumping out of perfectly good, running aircraft into forest fires, and catching rattlesnakes, have in common? You don’t have to be crazy, but it sure helps!”

FLOYD BETHKE (Missoula ’60)

Now living in: Hamilton, Mont.

Jumped: MSO 60-76

Since jumping: After making more than 350 fire jumps, transferred to Boise (NIFC) as a helicopter transportation specialist; then back to Deer Lodge National Forest in Montana as a supervisory forestry technician; then Kernville, Calif., in the Sequoia National Forest, playing a pivotal role in the dramatic rescue of a 15-year-old boy whose foot had gotten caught in the Kern River while floating on an inner tube; as one of the first people on the scene, jumped into the river and held the boy’s head above water for approximately eight hours until other rescuers could free the youth’s swollen foot; transferred to Burley, Idaho, serving in limited and modified suppression ideas/areas in the Burley District; retired in 1990.

Floyd says: “My phone number is (406) 363-6023.”

ROY WAGONER (North Cascades ’61)

Now living in: Hood River, Ore.

Years jumped: NCSB 61-63, 66

Since jumping: Worked 40 years for the telephone company.

Roy says: “I made 83 jumps during my time at NCSB.”

LAWRENCE “LARRY” VINCENT (Fairbanks ’62)

Now living in: San Cristobal, N.M.

Jumped: FBX 62-63, 65

Since jumping: Earned bachelor’s degree in Forest Management at Colorado State University, 1966; went to Venezuela on a Fulbright scholarship; earned master’s degree in Forest Management from University of the Andes (ULA), Venezuela, 1971; earned Ph.D. in Ecology at University of Tennessee, 1978; and an honorary doctorate from ULA, 2008; worked

for ULA 1970-96 teaching and research in the forestry graduate school in tropical forest management, retiring in 1996; did tropical and sub-tropical forest management consulting in Bolivia, Panama, Venezuela and Argentina 1993-2003; moved back to New Mexico in 2005 where I have been an adjunct professor at The University of New Mexico-Taos and served on the New Mexico USFS Collaborative Forest Restoration Program Technical Advisory Panel; started Forest BioPower, an information service, sole-owner business in 2011, which is dedicated to promoting the idea of achieving a balance between preservation and productive forest management for forest health, wood products, energy and jobs; have been writing the Natural Resources Notebook column in Taos *News* since 2007 and have written a book, *Forest Power: Adventures in Ecology and Forest Management*, with articles from the Taos *News* column 2007-12.

Larry says: “The recent trend in ‘mega-fires’ in the West, due to drought and unhealthy forest fuel build-up, largely as a result of lack of management, is an opportunity to get involved in trying to change public opinion in favor of treating larger areas of public forests through long term sustainable multi-objective productive forest management based on time-tested silvicultural practices combined with modern elements of maximizing environmental benefits. The answer lies in achieving a truly sustainable balance between preservation and productive management. Our smokejumper readers could consider getting more involved in efforts towards better forest health while contributing to economic growth and the associated environmental benefits in improving forest management policies and practices.”

GARRY PETERS (Cave Junction ’63)

Now living in: Orcas Island, Wash.

Jumped: CJ 63-66, 75

Since jumping: Joined the Air Force and flew the F-100, OV-10, A-7 in Vietnam; after 7½ years, left and went back to Cave Junction to jump one more summer; got hired on as a pilot and flew the Gobi jumpers until they closed the base in 1981; moved to Baker City, Ore., and flew the Baron as a lead plane pilot for the La Grande tanker base; retired from the Forest Service in 1993 and moved to Orcas Island to spend some time on the water.

Garry says: “Come by Cave Junction sometime and visit the Siskiyou Smokejumper Museum. It is getting better every year, thanks to a lot of smokejumpers’ yearly work parties and equipment donations from other bases.”

JOHN T. CRAMER (McCall '63)

Now living in: Boise, Idaho

Jumped: MYC 63-65, IDC 66-69, BOI 70-79, MSO 80

Since jumping: Worked for Office of Aircraft Services, 17 years; worked five years as a GED instructor for the Idaho State Correction Institution; worked five summers for Idaho Department of Lands on an engine/hand crew; for last five years my wife, Rosalie, and I have been going to Fairbanks where I've been working part-time as a ramp manager, fuel site manager, or station manager for the BLM when fire activities allow; also do a lot of diamond willow work there.

John says: "The best job I ever had was being a smoke-jumper and the best people to work with are jumpers. Wish I could do it all over again."

MAJOR L. BODDICKER (Missoula '63)

Now living in: LaPorte, Colo.

Jumped: MSO 63-64, 68-69

Since jumping: Worked as environmental education director 1970-73; outdoor education specialist for the 4-H Department, Kansas State University 1973-74; extension wildlife specialist, Department of Fishery and Wildlife Biology, Colorado State University 1975-85; Rocky Mountain Wildlife Enterprises 1985-present, including Coyote Den Fur Co. 1985-92, Rocky Mountain Wildlife Products (Crit'R Calls 1976-present), Rocky Mountain Wildlife Services (wildlife pest control) 1985-present; consulted in South African agriculture and conservation agencies 1986-87, 1994, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2005; Smithsonian Biodiversity Monitoring, large mammal specialist in Peru 1996-98 and in Gabon 2002-04; writer about trapping, predator hunting, wildlife pest control and smokejumping. **Major says:** "I'd enjoy hearing from you. See you at the 2015 reunion in Missoula. My e-mail is *critrcalln@yahoo.com*."

RICK HUDSON (Boise '73)

Now living in: McCall, Idaho

Jumped: BOI 73-79, MYC 80-08

Since jumping: For the past six summers, have worked for McCall-based Canyons River Company, outfitting float trips on the Middle Fork and main Salmon rivers; while floating through these rugged canyons, point out jump spots and fires to the guests while relating "and there we were" stories; river guides are similar to jumpers – a close-knit, hard-working group, excited about being on the river and in the wilderness; for 15 winters, have guided for Brundage Mountain Cat-Ski Adventures, leading snowboarders and skiers on backcountry powder trips; work with five former

and current jumpers in the operation, covering 19,000 permitted acres on the Payette National Forest; for 31 seasons, have worked as a ski and snowboard tech for Dean Hovdey (MYC-70), owner of Hometown Sports in McCall, a specialty ski shop with top-end equipment, as well as a common place for retired and active jumpers to drop by.

Rick says: "It's great being out in winter with the bros, sharing powder runs and, of course, jump stories with the guests. For the last few years, retired Payette N.F. fire staff members, including retired McCall smokejumpers, meet for breakfast the second Wednesday of each month to keep in touch. Everything from book exchanges to ski trips, motorcycles rides and river trips are organized and launched from these gatherings."

JOHN BLACKWELL (McCall '64)

Now living in: Portland, Ore.

Jumped: MYC 64

Since jumping: Served as president, World Forestry Center (1972-99); chairman, Oregon Board of Forestry (2009-13); chairman, Oregon Parks Commission (1998-2006); president, Oregon Consular Corps (2013); honorary consul general in western U.S. for Malaysia (2007-present); president, Cycle Oregon (present).

John says: "Smokejumping was the best job I ever had."

MYRON TOLLISON (McCall '66)

Now living in: Hernando, Miss.

Jumped: MYC 66

Since jumping: Earned bachelor's degree in History and master's degree in School Administration; taught 11th- and 12th-grade history and government; coached high school football and track; headmaster at private schools for eight years; Farm Bureau insurance agent and then agency manager for 33 years; retired in 2011; now golf, hunt ducks and fish for crappie from a boat named *Smokejumper*.

Myron says: "See you at the Missoula Reunion in 2015."

BILL "CHICKENMAN" WERHANE (Missoula '66)

Now living in: Caldwell, Idaho

Jumped: MSO 66-70, 72-75, 81-82, WYS 76-80, 84-01

Since jumping: Contracting with Mission Center Solutions (MCS) about 12 weeks per year, teaching leadership classes for organizations working in high-risk environments – i.e., structure, wildland fire, police,

U.S. Coast Guard, etc.; working on NSA trail projects and taking long (10,000 miles per trip) motorcycle tours with wife, Gina, and black wiener dog.
Bill says: "Stay in touch with fellow smokejumpers, and travel to all the smokejumper reunions."

LANCE STRYKER (Redmond '67)

Now living in: White Salmon, Wash.

Jumped: RAC 67-70, FBX 71-73

Since jumping: Graduated with bachelor's degree from Dartmouth College, 1970; graduated with J.D. from University of California Hastings School of Law, 1974; admitted to California Bar, 1974; admitted to Washington State Bar, 2004; specialize in representing policyholders against insurance companies; mostly retired now but still active – windsurfing, skiing and learning to play the piano.

Lance says: "I survived the Loma Prieta Earthquake in the Bay Area in 1989, and the Oakland-Berkeley Hills Fire Oct. 20, 1991. I lost the house, the cars, clothes, computers, legal and other files and can still tell the tale."

RANDALL CRIBBS (Missoula '69)

Now living in: Flagstaff, Ariz.

Jumped: MSO 69-70, 72-73, BOI 75, FBX 76

Since jumping: Worked as financial analyst for W.L. Gore and Associates in Flagstaff, 16 years; am currently working for Winslow Indian Health Care Center, Inc., for past 10 years; will retire next year.

GARY "GRAMPS" JOHNSON (Redding '69)

Now living in: Ely, Nev.

Jumped: RDD 69-74, 76-81, 83-85

Since jumping: Moved to Alaska, spending time with the Alaska Fire Service; retired in 2001 while at NIFC in Boise; now live in eastern Nevada; wife, Kathy, is a biologist with the U.S. Forest Service in Ely; we have three children – Sam is 22 and attends college in Oregon and fights wildland fire during the summer, Jake is 20 and on a religious mission in Missouri, and daughter, Rose, is a senior in high school; we do volunteer work in the community, hunt and try to stay healthy.

Gary says: "If you pass through Ely, we're in the phone book."

WILLIE LOWDEN (North Cascades '72)

Now living in: Wilderville, Ore.

Jumped: NCSB 72-73, LGD 74-75, CJ 76-77, 80, FBX 78-79, 81-84, NIFC 91, RAC 92-93

Since jumping: Have continued to dabble in fire, timber and motorcycles.

Willie says: "Now I'm finally bagging up my fire gear for the last time, and I also hope to be done with logging. I continue to sew (a lot) for Grayback Forestry in Merlin, Ore."

DAVE DOOLEY (Redding '73)

Now living in: Cedar Crest, N.M.

Jumped: RDD 73

Since jumping: Continued with the Forest Service, eventually leaving fire control to work in Law Enforcement and Investigations; worked in LE&I assignments in regions 3, 5 and 6, and was attached to the W.O. as a firearms instructor detailed to the Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC); retired from LE&I in the R-3 regional office in Albuquerque in 2002; after retiring, worked four more years at FLETC teaching air marshals to shoot; after finishing up at FLETC, worked five more years as a firearms instructor for the U.S. Department of Energy.

Dave says: "I'm currently retired but continue to teach firearms in civilian concealed-carry classes."

KIM MAYNARD (Missoula '82)

Now living in: Missoula, Mont.

Jumped: MSO 82-90

Since jumping: Worked internationally providing assistance to war-torn countries; partly retired in 2006 and moved back to home-love of Missoula; built a straw-bale house and am happily working NSA Trail Projects, teaching at the university, cavorting with elk and deer, and still trying to save the world from the hell of war.

DAN "OGGY" OGDEN (Redding '92)

Now living in: Bella Vista, Calif.

Jumped: RDD 92-96, FBX 97

Since jumping: After breaking my femur in Alaska and all tail bones, took a prescribed-fire job in Whiskeytown National Recreation Area; worked as an ignition specialist and "C" faller for the 1998-99 seasons; took a job as trail crew leader for the National Park Service at Golden Gate National Recreational Area in 2000, leading a crew of 10 trail workers as we built a staircase from Fort Point, below the Golden Gate Bridge, up to the upper parking lot at the Presidio; did a lot of tree climbing and tree work in the winter months when not building staircases on trails – a lot of trail maintenance was done in the Presidio, Fort Mason and Flagler Estates; went back to the Forest Service in 2001 to help start the Klamath Hotshots, taking the position of squad boss/saw boss; got to start in early April to get all the saws and parts ordered, and build up the Hotshots Saw Shack; unfortunately,

ended up having some weird heart problems that the hospital could never reproduce and I was off the crew by September 2001; luckily, **Arlen Cravens** (RDD-78) was working a detail on the Klamath at the time and he got me into the equipment shop; this was an awesome experience as I had worked as a mechanic in the winters for independent shops since 1987, up to my last jump season of 1997; growing up in Arcadia, Calif., near the Angeles National Forest, I got to know the foothills well, so naturally would end up fighting fire on the Dalton Hotshots for four seasons, two years out of high school; worked a season on Apple Valley Fly Crew for the Bureau of Land Management in the California Desert District for the 1991 season, then rookied in Redding in 1992; the Klamath detail ended after nine months; most of the other Forest Service mechanics were off on fires, but I couldn't go due to doctor's orders; stayed in the shop and cranked out annuals while learning a lot about fire engines; after the detail, went back to Oak Knoll and was a maintenance worker for the station; interviewed with the Presidio Trust in January 2003, landing a job on the Presidio tree crew – a lot of felling and bucking big eucalyptus and cypress trees, as well as side trimming with a 65-foot-high Ranger and climbing big trees, and a lot of chipping and obtaining my commercial license; maintained a lot of chain saws and small-engine stump grinders, dump truck and chippers; by mid-2005 had enough of the city life and moved back home to start of my own restoration shop on cars manufactured from the 1950s until 1972; this was fun, as I was finding cars for clients and hauling them as well; had a lot of business, with customers from L.A. and the Bay Area; dropping off their cars to my shop in Redding, would also pick them up if I was in the area; ended up also building a 1-off custom chipper for a customer with a Ford 300 six power plant; had refined a 1954 Chevy Bel Air, a 1963 Chevy II and did a lot of custom work on a 1968 Camaro, as well as a full-build and chopped 1953 Chevy 210, and a build of a 1964 Bel Air wagon, and a ground-up build of a 1956 Volkswagen Bug; during the time of running the shop, would also spend time in the Bay Area, working for Maxwell Tree, with **Eric Klump** (RDD-92); work was 10-hour days with big tree removals in the Oakland and Berkeley hills; due to the economy's crash in 2008, started to put in applications for government jobs, mainly with the Forest Service and National Park Service; applied for trail worker job at Whiskeytown and began work in June 2009; after a month of maintaining trails and fixing saws, Weed Eaters, pole saws, etc. in the field, my supervisor asked if I'd be interested in working in the

equipment shop; I said, "hell, yes!" so I began running the shop alone after July, and have continued doing so to this day; have downsized the vehicle fleet from 50 gasoline-powered vehicles to 33, and maintain and repair 16 pieces of heavy equipment, three over-the-road trucks, a gaggle of welding machines, air compressors and small engines; am now the father of a baby, Drostan Daniel Ogden; life is busy as I work full-time and go to school 6-8 units per semester for my Diesel degree; we hike Sundays in Shasta County. **Dan says:** "I'd like to coordinate a NSA trail crew project here at Whiskeytown. There is going to be a wilderness trail out of Coggins Park in the near future. Would love to get some bros on that project." 🌲

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NSA members are signing up for the electronic version of *Smokejumper* that is delivered via email. It is sent in a PDF file that contains everything that is in the hardcopy issue.

The advantages are: early delivery (a month ahead of USPS), ease of storage, and NSA postal expense savings. If you like the hardcopy, you can download and print it at home.

NSA Director **Fred Cooper** (NCSB-62) says: "I will opt to have my magazines delivered electronically rather than via USPS to save us direct \$ in printing and mailing, not to mention your hand labor in processing. I think I mentioned in an earlier message that I'm having other magazines/newsletters delivered electronically. It takes less space to store them electronically and if I do want a hard copy, it is easy to print using the *Fast Draft printer option* which allows printing 48 pages in less than two minutes on my printer and uses a lot less ink."

If you want to be added to the electronic mailing, contact Editor **Chuck Sheley** (CJ-59): cnkgsheley@earthlink.net. 🌲



SOUNDING OFF from the editor



by **Chuck Sheley**
(Cave Junction '59)
MANAGING EDITOR

Blessed Are The Peacemakers For They Will Be Forgotten By History

WE HAVE HAD a recent surge in news about the Triple Nickles. In the October (2014) issue of *Smokeyjumper*, Fred Donner (MSO-59) wrote an excellent article on the efforts to find the gravesite of Malvin L. Brown (PNOR-45), who was the first smokejumper killed in the line of duty. Last February the USFS named a conference room after the Triple Nickles at the agency's national headquarters in Washington, D.C. A "novel inspired by true events," *Operation Firefly* came out in early September. I hope to have a review of the book in the next issue. The Triple Nickles made 1,220 fire jumps on 32 fires (for an average of 38 jumpers per fire) during four

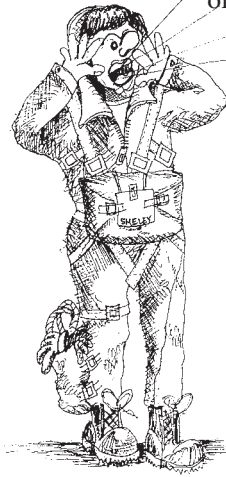
months in 1945.

At the same time, the smokejumpers of CPS-103 (conscientious objectors) made 1,236 fire jumps on 296 fires but have been forgotten by the USFS and the NSA. To review a bit for the readers: By the end of 1942 the smokejumper program was in danger of being shut down due to lack of manpower.

At the start of the 1943 season, there were only five experienced jumpers available. However, there were about twelve thousand men working in the Civilian Public Service (CPS) programs.

There are various reasons for which one was classified as a conscientious objector (CO). Part of this group were members of the historic "peace churches," the Quakers, Mennonites and Brethren. Many of their ancestors left Europe for the U.S. with hopes of escaping the persecution given those who practiced a nonviolent Christian belief. Being a CO during WWII was extremely difficult as this was the "good war." The COs took a lot of abuse for their beliefs, being called "draft dodgers" and "yellowbellies."

There were those who served in the military but did not carry a rifle. The first CO to get the Medal of Honor (Desmond Doss) retrieved and carried 75 soldiers from a gunfire-swept area on Okinawa as a medic. He followed that up with rescuing and treating the wounded for 19 more days before he was twice wounded. He crawled



off the litter to direct treatment of others before he was shot for the third time, suffering a compound fracture of the arm. He splinted the arm with a rifle stock and crawled 300 yards to the aid station.

With the smokejumper program in danger, Phil Stanley (MSO-43) wrote government officials letting them know that there were strong men available to continue the smokejumper operation. Sixty men, 20 from each of the peace churches, were selected as rookies for the 1943 season. Many were farmers from the Midwest where working from dawn to dusk was a way of life. Being strong and having a good work ethic was not a problem for these men.

As Earl Cooley (MSO-40) said: "We thought these men would be hard to handle, independent, and real renegades. But they were just the opposite. The Mennonites were almost all Midwest farm boys. They were used to working hard from daylight to dark and could not understand the eight-hour work laws. The clothes the men were wearing were threadbare. Provisions were made (for the Peace Churches) to buy them boots, two pair of pants, three shirts, socks and gloves. The government would not insure these men for injuries during the smokejumper operation."

For three years, 1943-45, anywhere from 220 to 250 COs handled the smokejumper program at Missoula, Cave Junction, McCall and, in 1945, Winthrop. Their pay

came from the Peace Church organization at \$5 a month. Same with allowances for clothing and boots. At the end of the war, they were discharged from Civilian Public Service to return home.

The 1943 season found these men jumping 47 fires with an estimated savings of \$75,000 in fire costs. In 1944 over 100 fires were jumped. In 1945 the number of jumpers was increased to 235 with 1,236 jumps made on 296 fires and a savings of about \$350,000.

Earl Cooley: "We soon began receiving field reports that one jumper was equivalent to a typical eight-man crew. The CPS jumpers were all young, husky and hand-picked."

The highest compliment for these guys was found by Mark Corbet (LGD-74) in his extensive search of the old fire records. From the 1945 "Fire Control Narrative Report R-6:" "Siskiyou (NF): This will undoubtedly go down in history as the season when fire control manning was the poorest since the Forest Service became a firefighting organization. *The biggest counter balance to this situation was the availability of the smoke-jumpers. (Referring to the CPS jumpers at Cave Jct. Ed.)* They gave a good account of themselves as far as their number could reach. Fires which they covered were the more difficult to reach and undoubtedly some of them would have been too large for smoke chasers to handle by the time they were reached."

My interest in the CPS-103 group started at the 1995 national reunion in Missoula, Montana. The main speaker was talking about jumpers with the highest number of jumps and was going over the history of smokejumping. I thought this strange as they were all from Missoula. **Trooper Tom Emonds** (CJ-66) was sitting

at the same table as myself and I think Bill Moody (NCSB-57) was in the audience. Guess these guys didn't count.

What really caught my attention was the mention of the smoke-jumping program and leaving out 1943-45. I knew the history of the program and couldn't understand why an important part of smoke-jumping had been left out.

Later when I got on the National Smokejumpers Association Board of Directors, my wife and I attended a CPS-103 reunion in Oskaloosa, Iowa, in 2000. The CPS jumpers had held reunions long before the NSA was formed. They were a great bunch of people, but I had a strange feeling that something was wrong. I was representing the NSA. I came to find out that there were some big wounds to be healed after the 1995 Missoula Reunion.

Apparently the CPS jumpers had been especially invited to that reunion. After being snubbed at the Saturday night dinner, one of them approached one of the speakers and asked about being left out of our history. The answer was related to me at another CPS reunion in Hungry Horse, Montana, a few years later. I was approached by the daughter of one of the jumpers who was still concerned about the 1995 reunion. She related that the speaker said something to the effect that "we didn't want to bring up anything about cults." I could see that years later this incident had not been forgotten.

After the end of WWII only four CPS jumpers chose to stay with the smokejumper program and they were hired by **Francis Lufkin** (NCSB-40) at NCSB. Two of them, **Elmer Neufeld** (CJ-44) and **David "Skinny" Beals** (MYC-45) stayed with the jumpers for the rest of their career. One of them,

Walter "Pic" Littell (MSO-44), went on to become a career diplomat in the US Foreign Service. Pic was our man in the Soviet Union at a time when the "cold war" was getting pretty hot. Both the US and Soviet Union had their trigger fingers on the nuclear options. I wonder if a smokejumper from a Peace Church had a calming influence in a time of potential nuclear war?

The COs were almost totally replaced by returning WWII vets in the 1946 rookie classes. That year there were 123 rookies at Missoula, 38 at McCall, 24 at Cave Junction and 12 at Winthrop.

My boss at Cave Junction, **Jim Allen** (NCSB-46), was one of those rookies. He was 101st Airborne, jumped at Operation Market Garden (A Bridge Too Far), and was wounded at the Battle of the Bulge. In later years I asked Jim if the returning vets had any animosity towards the CPS jumpers. I'm paraphrasing his answer but it went along the lines that, speaking for himself, the WWII combat vets had seen enough war for a lifetime and that each person needed to be respected for their beliefs.

There are a couple good books that you should read to get a good educated perspective on the Civilian Public Service smokejumpers: *Smoke Jumping On The Western Fire Line* by Mark Matthews and *Smokejumpers of the Civilian Public Service in World War II* by Robert C. Cottrell.

Don't ever look for the USFS to honor these guys. The number of jumps, low injury rate under some challenging conditions, Mennonite work ethic, and forest saved speaks for itself. They were not politically correct, but they were one heck of a group and very good smokejumpers, even though forgotten by history. 🌲

The Legend Of Ed 'Dead' Dugan And The Doomed C-119

by Ed Dugan (Pilot)

I flew firebombers in Alaska for seven seasons. In my fifth season I survived an event against all chance. I follow accident investigations when I can, an interest from being involved in that business in the past. As an ex-firebomber pilot, I took considerable interest in the two air tankers, one helicopter, and their six crewmen lost in the 2002 fire season and was finally encouraged to write down my own experience.

On June 27, 1981, we took off from Fairbanks, Alaska, on a paracargo mission to deliver fuel and supplies to a wildfire base camp about 50 miles south of Bettles, near the center of Alaska, then make another fuel drop on a second fire camp near Fort Yukon. We were flying a military surplus Fairchild C-119 Flying Boxcar, a twin piston-engine tactical cargo airplane, the predecessor to the C-130 Hercules.

We were hauling three 500-gallon jet fuel bladders, called "rollagons," and numerous smaller firefighting supplies. The rollagons were each on a wooden pallet, with two 64-foot parachutes atop the rollagon. With pallet, rigging, parachutes and all, each unit weighed 4,000 pounds. The smaller stuff would be dropped with 28-foot chutes.

We had six guys on board: my co-pilot, Jim, and I, and four smokejumpers (Head kicker **Jim Olson** (FBX-78), **Tony Pastro** (FBX-77), **Jack Firestone** (MYC-75) and **Chris Farinetti** (FBX-79), friends who would handle the cargo as "kickers." I had flown paracargo missions before but, for the first time, the smokejumpers were wearing personal parachutes, a fortunate happenstance on this flight. Both Jim and I were sport skydivers and always carried our parachutes as a matter of course.

I had been worried about this particular airplane for some time. Now without the ability to dump the cargo fast, as with fire retardant slurry, and with four more friends onboard, I was much more concerned but the take off and climb-out were uneventful. Leveling off I turned to Jim and said, "The worst is over."

With altitude and significant fuel weight burned off to get our heavily laden beast up here, I felt we could more easily handle any problem.

It was late at night after descending for delivery on our first target south of Bettles in the 24-hour "day"

light of the Alaska summer. Two passes for fuel rollagon drops first, to support the project's helicopter living on the fire, then numerous passes for smaller stuff at a lower altitude.

After the last drop I started a turn toward our next target near Fort Yukon for the last fuel rollagon drop for a helicopter based on that fire. I called for cruise climb power and as Jim was adding it, my head kicker called, "We're getting a lot of smoke from the right engine."

I said, "OK – we'll watch it."

Jim looked right and said, "We're smoking heavy from the top exhaust stack" – the only one he could see from the cockpit.

I started a turn toward Bettles, scratching the Fort Yukon drop. The engine was still running smoothly. I felt the smoke was likely from a failing power recovery turbine (PRT), an endemic problem on the R-3350 engine.

Three of these units are installed in the exhaust gas stream, and their turbines convert some exhaust gas energy into torque, hydraulically coupled back to the crankshaft, adding 450 horsepower of the 3,500 at takeoff. A PRT bearing or seal failure in the exhaust heat causes rapid loss of engine oil, producing lots of smoke.

Before we got the power set, we heard *Whomp*, followed by another *Whomp*!

"There she goes," I said. We feathered No. 2, or so I thought, and brought No. 1 to climb power. I said, "Start the jet!"

I don't remember who did it. Perhaps it was a co-effort. (We had a small jet engine mounted on top of the airplane, a modification that added 3,000 pounds of thrust.)

"We're on fire!" my kickers called.

Jim confirmed, "Number two is on fire."

I already had the fuel mixture control at "cutoff" and the propeller control in "feather." I turned the fuel selector (an electric rotary switch on the overhead panel) to "off." Our jet engine quit. I thought, "What a time for the jet to quit."

We had maybe 400 feet of air underneath us. Jim pointed at the fire bottle switch and I nodded. He hit the switch and it was only then that I learned the right

propeller wasn't feathered. It was windmilling (turning freely in the wind and creating drag), which is why we were still at 400 feet.

Jim watched the results. The fire extinguisher knocked the flames down for a moment, but that was all. I slammed the prop control hard several times into "feather" position without any effect.

My smokejumpers called, "We're standing by." They were asking for orders, but not for long.

I mashed everything about the left engine into the instrument panel, including the left rudder pedal. The airspeed was 105 knots.

We still weren't climbing.

I closed the left cowl flaps to minimize drag, hoping to get a little altitude and then open them again for some engine cooling.

Spark – snap – boink! The electrical system quit.

No response from my query to our smokejumpers and at this low airspeed, maximum engine power and with the cowl flaps closed down, the left engine was going to severely overheat. We had 105 knots with the nose high, trying to hold onto some sky.

I couldn't go faster.

I had to start a descent to go faster and there wasn't altitude for that.

I couldn't go slower.

I had both feet holding full left rudder, but at 104 knots it started a right roll I couldn't control. One hundred five knots was the only speed it would fly and we weren't doing so good at that.

I asked Jim to "go see what's going on back there."

He donned his parachute and went back.

When he returned, he said, "They're gone."

Our kickers had jumped out.

I told him to "Get the rollagon outta here!" Our last 4,000-pound unit of jet fuel was still in the front of the cabin.

He went back and started working on it but couldn't get the blocks loose that held it in place. The rollagon sat on roller tracks, with wooden blocks set in the tracks to hold it in position. At our low airspeed the deck angle was steep. Normally when the kickers are ready to move cargo to the back edge they ask me to lower the nose so they can get the blocks out and ease the cargo aft with a jury-rigged belay system (a coordinated effort of the whole crew).

Jim came up and asked me to lower the nose. "No way!" I said.

Looking out the windshield and seeing the tundra level with it, Jim did not ask again and went back to try some more. With his back to the rollagon and his feet wedged in the roller tracks, he got it to move forward – something akin to pushing a bus up your

driveway. He pulled the blocks and stepped aside.

The rollagon went down the roller tracks the full length of the cabin and out into the flaming air behind us. I felt the aircraft heave as it left. I felt a lot better and thought we might get some altitude now.

We gained maybe 50 feet and that was it.

The fire was burning away skin off of the right tailboom, burning the tailboom ventral fin and some fabric off of the elevator and right rudder. The airplane was starting to shake – more like a buzz, actually.

Flying more sideways than ever, the increased drag scotched any hope for a climb despite everything I could get from the left engine.

Jim came back up and I said, "Take the controls so I can get my parachute on." Then, changing my mind I said, "Go back and throw everything out."

There wasn't much left back there, but it was the best I could think of. Jim grabbed the previous captain's tool box, thinking: *Is he ever gonna be pissed.* At 75 pounds Jim said it felt like nothing. He ran to the back and tossed it out. Some of the drawers came open and Jim noted in irony as wrenches, screwdrivers, pliers and numerous small special tools and parts scattered in the air like skeet.

I had both feet planted as hard as I could on the left rudder pedal and was giving it full left aileron. I was starting to tire and everything I did cost altitude. When I'd reach for a switch (for some reason hoping it might work) or shift my position to use different muscles, it would cost a few more feet.

Everything I did cost altitude.

Jim came back up and said, "We're still on fire, pieces are coming off and I don't think it's gonna hold."

I said, "JUMP!"

He had a look of disbelief in his eyes. He almost froze.

I yelled it again. "JUMP!!"

I think he knew the plight but didn't want to leave me with it alone. He hesitated in his retreat off the cockpit deck but then left and went to the back edge of the cabin. Looking at the ground, hardly more than 200 feet now, he thought, *That's too close.*

Then looking at the low hanging tail and through the left skeleton of the right tailboom (much skin having already been burned away), he thought, *No point to stay with it – I'd might as well bounce* (a skydiver term meaning hitting the ground in free fall without a deployed parachute).

He jumped and pulled as soon as he felt his pilot chute would clear the drooping tail. Knowing his main sport parachute canopy wouldn't have time to open, he

used his emergency chute and got a fast hard opening, hitting the tundra a few seconds later.

Looking at the flame, fire and smoke, still trailing from the sideways flying C-119 as it flew away, he thought, *That's the last I'll ever see of him.*

I continued another 10 miles or so, maxed out and not knowing what to do. I had been in tight spots before but this time I didn't see any way out. I looked at the left engine. All the power I could get from it, low airspeed, cowl flaps closed down. I didn't even consider looking at the cylinder head temperature.

I thought, *The left engine has got to be about to blow.*

Maximum cross-controls and a shaking airframe, maybe 200 feet of sky left and not quite hanging on to that.

The landing gear lever was an electrical switch and with the electrical system failed, any landing would be gear up, not a good situation in a C-119. The cockpit had a bad habit of curling under in a gear-up slide, shredding the front seats and anyone in them.

I was still headed for Bettles; I didn't know why but I had nowhere else to go. Then I came onto the Koyukuk River with a large bend that had a wide gravel bank on the inner curve. I decided to risk being shredded beneath a curling-under cockpit. The left engine couldn't hold much longer and the airframe couldn't hold together much longer, either.

I set it down.

It didn't slide very far, but the structural members at the rear of the cockpit fractured in the last 30 feet or so of the slide. I instinctively lifted my feet as it came to a stop, only inches from the gravel.

I jumped up and started through the overhead escape hatch, then thought: *The radio!* Realizing that the hand radio would be important now, I ducked back in, grabbed the radio and, noticing my camera that had fallen off the back deck, grabbed that too, then I went out the top and got some distance between me and the airplane.

The right engine was hanging low on its mount, the members weakened by the still burning fire. I tried to shoot some pictures but my camera had taken a dent when it fell off the back deck and the shutter wouldn't fire. I remember thinking, *What a time for a once-in-a-lifetime shot, and the camera won't work.*

I made my way around the still-burning airplane, pulling my jacket around my head and face, with the mosquitoes nearly lifting me off the ground. There was mosquito repellent in the cockpit but with 900 gallons of gas on board and the airplane still on fire, I declined retrieving it. On the inside bank, I climbed a 200-foot hill and called: "Mayday – anybody on red?" (Red was

the prime radio frequency we used.)

At least the mosquitoes up here were from lesser-duty squadrons.

After several calls, I finally got a response.

The fire base camp had been monitoring our flight – plight? – as, due to a malfunction, we just happened to be transmitting when talking between the cockpit and the cabin. The camp helicopter launched and almost immediately picked up my four smokejumpers. Returning them to base camp, he launched toward my smoke, a burning C-119 on a riverbank some 25 miles away, readily visible in the pristine Alaskan environment. He responded to my call and shortly I could hear his rotor blades beating in the still air.

"I'm coming toward you," he said.

I said, "Take it slow, and look for my co-pilot. I'm OK. I'm breathing hard because I just climbed a big hill, but I'm OK. Look for my co-pilot."

I heard his rotor beat grow quiet, then, after a time, resume.

He had picked up Jim and was heading for the still-burning C-119. I went down the hill into the mosquito quagmire again and started waving the inside of my flight jacket, lined with international orange until he said, "I've got ya."

The relief from him landing near me was significant, as his rotor wash whooshed away hordes of mosquitoes.

Jim jumped out with an amazed look at something he never expected to see ... me still alive. We flew back, gathered our smokejumpers and flew to Bettles.

They had to scour the bars in Fairbanks that night to get a team of EMT qualified smokejumpers together to come and get us. But the response was fast and we got back to Fairbanks in only a few hours.

Early the next day we did interviews for the crash investigation and then flew to the crash site. We found that the No. 5 cylinder on the right engine had completely blown off, ripping away the propeller control cable routed across it, which is why it wouldn't feather the prop.

The windmilling propeller pumped engine oil out of the hole where the cylinder had been, which lit off and fed a fire we couldn't put out with the flames engulfing the entire right tailboom. Flames had swirled around and into the aft cabin, scorching insulation on the back walls, which was why our kickers had made a hasty decision to bail out.

The first point of ground contact had been just past a one-foot rise. Had I landed shorter and hit that rise, the nose would have slammed down and in true C-119 fashion, the cockpit would have curled under the airframe, shredding me along with it.

There were numerous other happenstances that just happened to occur, without any of which it would not have been possible for me to survive.

We had for years been using old military stocks of purple 115/145-octane avgas because fire contracts in Alaska were “wet.” The government supplied all the purple gas you could waste, all without cost to the contractors. My airplane was designed for purple gas, so it had been good for me. Other airplanes had to change leaded-up spark plugs every few hours but these old Alaskan gas stocks had run out.

We had been seeing more and more green 100/130-octane avgas in recent years and this year the contracts went “dry” and contractors had to buy the gas. In this fire season, this was the only load of 115/145 gas I got all year, near or possibly the last purple gas load ever pumped (as these stocks had completely run out).

Without purple gas I could not have mashed full throttle on the left engine and survived. Detonation would have blown the engine apart in short order.

Had it been the left engine that had failed, due to propeller factor (P-factor) with high nose up, the extra speed required to maintain control would have required a descent that would have been a short trip into the Alaskan tundra.

P-factor is an aerodynamic effect that causes

propeller-driven planes to yaw left when they are flown at high power and low airspeed. This is based on the differences in thrust on each side of the propeller – the right side has more thrust in a clockwise-rotating prop.

Had the jet been available (the jet got its fuel from the same source as the right engine) I’m afraid I might have tried to fly it. The airframe would not have held, and the left engine would have blown. Without the jet, I survived.

Had Jim not been able to get the last 4,000-pound rollagon out, I could not have survived.

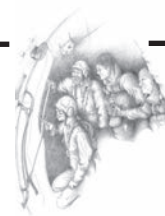
Later the next day we got on an airliner to Anchorage to pick up a replacement C-119 that had just finished the seasonal fish haul. We boarded carrying parachutes slung over our shoulders. I was surprised that nobody said a thing. I guess people figured they were just backpacks.

The flight attendant handed out Anchorage newspapers. The front page’s lead story was our C-119 crash with a picture of our airplane crunched on the riverbank. Getting off in Anchorage, I asked if I might have another paper as we were the crew on the front-page picture. The flight attendant gave me another newspaper as we deplaned, parachutes still slung over our shoulders.

You can find more details of this crash of C-119G N8682 (c/n 10859) on www.aviation-safety.net. 🐼



Touching All Bases



Redding

by Kyle Jackson (RDD-14)

As fire season winds down for some bases, Redding is still going strong with 48 fires total as of September, the last being in the Sanhedrin Wilderness on the Mendocino National Forest. Porterville is continuing to be staffed with chances of lightning and red flag warnings in the forecast.

134 out-of-region boosters from Missoula, Grangeville, West Yellowstone, McCall, Alaska and Boise were added to the list this year to staff fires



on 13 forests with a total of 367 jumps made out of Region 5. Ground action for the base this year put 10 jumpers in Crescent City for the Bear Fire on the Six Rivers N.F. Two 20-person and one 10-person handcrews were sent to the Happy Camp Complex on the Klamath N.F. Paracargo missions were big for us this year with 20,000+ lbs delivered, the largest being 2600 lbs to the Irene Fire, El Dorado N.F.

With the retirement of **Tim Quigley** (RDD-79) in June, **Nate Hesse** (RDD-01) returned to take over as Loft Foreman. **Brian Pontes** (RDD-03) will be transferring to Alaska next season, and

Toby Smith (RDD-09) will be returning to Boise after spending the season with us. **Don Graham** (RDD-01) completed spotter training and seven rookies completed training on May 16.

Redmond

by **David Ortlund** (RAC-10)

On September 3, 1964, President Lyndon Johnson signed the Wilderness Act into effect, about the time the Redmond Smokejumpers were ready to conclude their first season. As we prepare to celebrate the 50th Reunion at Redmond, it is fitting that the two occasions should coincide. Wilderness protection was established and Redmond smokejumpers were parachuting into these areas with the intention to preserve our nation's backcountry. The reunion is coming up fast and it will undoubtedly be a weekend to remember in Central Oregon, filled with stories, bonfires, and flips. As the Redmond Smokejumpers turn the corner on fifty years, fresh blood and strong backs apprehensively arrived at the Air Center. They came in the form of the 2014 rookie class. The Redmond-Grangeville combined class battled trees, angry hawks, and unattainable rookie skit timelines on their odyssey to become real Smokejumpers. When the story concluded and the boots stopped stomping around the loft in a running frenzy, ten RAC and six GAC candidates graduated. Just hours after the conclusion of training, a handful of rooks boarded the Sherpa with a mix of real smokejumpers and were off to Redding.

Thank you GAC suckers that participated as Cadre for the training. **Mike Blinn** (RDD-01) was invaluable to the rookie's hooch building skills and the camping cuisine. Thanks to **Phil Schreffler** (GAC-11), Uncle Phil to the rookies, for your PLF expertise and for sticking it out for the entirety. Also thanks to **Tim Lum** (RDD-91), Grangeville Training Forman, for his presence and invaluable assistance. Lead trainer **Jason Barber** (RAC-05), who has worked as a trainer for many classes, did an outstanding job in the position. Afterwards, Barber took up a new path and is moving on from smokejumping. Barber is on the board at RAC with 75 fire jumps. So good luck to Barber. See you on the mountain, brother.

New developments took place with the Welfare Organization. With **Marcel Potvin** (RAC-07) as Secretary, the Welfare Organization is now an official non-profit organization. A lot was going on with Marcel this year. He was the Jump Hog with 12 fire jumps. Congratulations to Marcel and Anne as they are the proud parents of little Adeline Potvin. On the

790 Fire, Potvin and all of us were on satellite-phone-baby standby. At a moments notice, Marcel was prepared to run out of the wilderness and get a ride home to his pregnant wife. In true smokejumper form, the rest of us took bets on the time the call would come in. Nobody won that bet and Marcel made it home with seven days to spare.

A total of 24 jumpers staffed the 790 Fire in the Sky Lakes Wilderness, and fourteen thousand pounds of paracargo were thrown on the fire in multiple locations.

The season started with the boost of ten to Redding. The boost was uneventful; say for helping **Bob Bente** (RDD-88) rope goats and string up a fence for the goats. The idea was to get the goats to eat and eradicate the poison oak. I don't know if the goats ever got that hungry.

Meanwhile **Ben Bell** (RAC-07) and **Ray F Rubio** (RAC-95) campaigned for the position of Mayor of Silver City. I think it still belongs to Ray.

Four long-term Forest Service temporary employees received appointments in the early summer. **Mat Mendonca** (RAC-05), **Chris Hinnenkamp** (RAC-08), **Garrett Allen** (RAC-10), and **David Ortlund** (RAC-10) are all extremely excited to be at Redmond as permanent employees. **Justin Wood** (RAC-01) and **Geoff Shultz** (RDD-00) detailed as spotters for the season. **Tony Johnson** (RAC-97) flew with **Brock** (pilot) around the states and came back a qualified ASM.

The first fire jump out of RAC for the season occurred on July 13th on the Willamette National Forest with **Garrett Allen** (RAC-10) first in the door. A full load landed in a clearcut and five rookies received jumper t-shirts, high fives, and no further direction. That week the gears started turning and the fire season was on.

The Lone Mountain Fire, near Stehekin, WA, was staffed with **Marcel Potvin** plus nine. The Kelly Mountain Fire was jumped in Washington. On the fire, eight jumpers held 80 acres for four days and actually caught it for about twenty minutes. But Ernie had other plans, and one spot fire became 20 acres in the time it takes to make your coffee.

The Crater Lake National Park had jumpers behind every tree in August. Base Manager **Bill Selby** (RAC-91) fearlessly led a full load on Fire 378. Some incredible country was jumped during dirty August, including the backside of

Bachelor, Mt Jefferson, the Umpqua, and the Thielsen Wilderness. Boosters from Boise, Alaska, Missoula, Grangeville, West Yellowstone and, of course, NCSB did very well out of Redmond throughout August. September kept a busy pace with fires being jumped about once every few days.

Eight jumped the Bone Creek Basin Fire in the Steens Mountain Wilderness. They actually jumped a ranch and burnt out around it. When the fire was turned over to the Type 2 team, it was essentially out. Happy with the result, the scraggly lot packed up their things, soaked in the Alvord Hot Springs while talking to a strange man and his parrot, and headed to Redmond. As I write this Redmond has 338 fire jumps and 65 fires staffed and the last fire jump happened minutes ago on the Deschutes. So it continues on into the fall, here in Oregon. Until next time, we wish you all well. Have a great winter.

Missoula

by Nate Ochs (MSO-11)

There were twelve fires jumped out of Missoula this season. That's less than one third of the average over the last ten years, and the fewest since the notoriously dismal 1997 fire season. Morning weather briefings were grim this season as rain pummeled our crunchy, hopeful lightning bait into soggy, unreceptive fuel beds of despair. But the Missoula Smokejumpers were indomitable - nay, un-boneable! They were dispatched to the Southwest, where they jumped eight fires out of Silver City. They rallied to the East and jumped eight more out of Miles City. They boosted to the West, six times to Redding and once to Redmond.

The loft was a hive of activity as equipment for two parachute systems was manufactured and maintained, both for Missoula's 65 jumpers and for out-of-region parties interested in the Ram Air program. Loadmasters performed missions that included paracargo and experiments with new food box configurations, though these were ultimately abandoned. Training division put seven Missoula jumpers through New Man Ram Air training.

Retiring from the organization this year are **John Davis** (GAC-88), **Andy Elliott** (MSO-89) and **Seth Hansen** (MSO-00). Respect! You will be missed.

Congratulations to MSO's recent hires and upgrades, including:

GS-08 Spotters: **Louis Fleming** (MSO-06), **Jesse Myers** (MSO-03) and **Cort Wallace** (GAC-04)

GS-07 Squad Leaders: **Audrey Banfill** (RAC-06), **JT Gilman** (WYS-06) and **Drew Pattison** (RAC-07)

Those upgraded 13/13: **Jesse Burns** (MSO-04), **Derek Harbour** (MSO-05), **Garrett Olson** (MSO-01), **Kurt Rohrbach** (MSO-03) and **Ryan Williams** (MSO-04).

New GS-06 13/13 employees: **Tyson Atkinson** (MSO-11), **Sam Bullington** (MSO-11), **Jake Caudle** (MSO-13), **Travis Clark** (WYS-13), **Sam Cox** (MSO-07), **Stephen Latham** (MSO-11), **Nate Ochs** (MSO-11), **Eddie Smith** (MSO-11), **Jamie Thomaston** (MSO-13) and **Brendan Quinn** (GAC-11).

Heartfelt congratulations as well to our smokejumpers who had babies this season, including: **Colby Jackson** (RDD-03) and **Ed Lynn** (MSO-95), who had girls; **Mike Pennacchio** (MSO-00) and **Eddie Smith** (MSO-11), who had boys; and **Megan McKinnie** (MSO-11), who with **Knute Olson** (MSO-00) had twin boys.

Despite excessive precipitation, the bros abide. So as we wrap up the 2014 season, let it rain! Next year will be the Big One and we'll be prepared.

North Cascades

by Simon Friedman (NCSB-00)

Although frogs didn't fall from the sky and no more boils than usual were manifested on us here at NCSB, we, no doubt, are ending a season of biblical plagues. 2014 brought the state of Washington's largest fire on record to the front door of the base. Storms of fire swept across 270,000 acres of the Methow Valley and down to the banks of the Columbia River. Days were turned to nights as great plumes of black smoke towered over the area, all but blocking out the sun. Local ranchers' herds were decimated, calling for heavy equipment to dig mass graves for the bovine. And, when the rains came to subdue the unrelenting flames, hillsides turned to liquid, filling our clean flowing Methow River with blood-red mud.

Plagues aside, the fire did do some good in areas but, unfortunately, left hundreds of homes turned to ash. Our own **Charlie McCarthy** (NCSB-02) lost his home and all his possessions minus his beloved pickup and airplane. Jokingly, he feels lucky his house burned down, for his neighbors, who were able to save their home, subsequently lost it after it was filled with two feet of mud when the rains came. Thankfully, Charlie's family made it through the fiasco safely.

Blake Stokes' (NCSB-10) family lost countless cattle and a handful of buildings, including his brother's home. As usual, the Methow is pulling together and is proving to be an outstanding community.

During the melee, power was knocked out for nearly two weeks. Here at the base, we barely noticed...

just another benefit of never evolving from the Stone Age. We have never had any lights in the loft anyway, and our sewing machines still have foot treadles. There was some grumbling when the cell towers finally went down. Mostly, folks were upset they couldn't stream "movies" on their phones.

The fire did bring a few dignitaries to the Birthplace of Smokejumping. Tom Harbor, Forest Service Fire and Aviation Director, and his boss, Forest Service Chief Tom Tidwell, made it to the base along with Washington state governor Jay Inslee.

Harbor and Tidwell both commented on our fateful white strip, painted just to the right of the paraloft's front door. The line de-marks the FAA's "obstacle free-zone," the area 250 feet from the runway. If acted upon, the FAA intends to clear this area, including removing at least two-thirds of the loft and most of the administrative building. Luckily for us, the Forest Service senior management showed warmth for our old, bucolic Quonset hut.

Amidst the calamities of the megalithic Carlton Complex, there was another fire start just across the river that was caught at a mere 500 acres and consumed another dozen or so homes. More would have been lost had one of the bros not charged across the runway to flush the gaggle of parked helicopters into the air as if startling a resting flock of seagulls into flight. The remaining jumpers on base hastily loaded

the rigs and responded, supplying much needed leadership to a chaotic situation.

Even though it seemed our world was on fire, we ended the season with a paltry 15 fires jumped, only putting 72 jumpers out the door. Most of our hours came from single resource assignments in our backyard and helping out the local district.

A big thanks goes out to RAC for having a real fire season and repeatedly calling for boosters. Getting to jump fires goes a long way for crew moral.

If the big fire didn't beckon them, about 300 of the crustiest, old, tobacco-chewing, boot-stomping smokejumpers ever, showed up at the base. Some with their lovely and less crusty wives to help celebrate NCSB's 75th anniversary. The 75th had a great turnout of alumni from over the years. The only base manager missing from the past three quarters of a century was Francis, who no doubt was turning over in his grave from all the sh*t talking going on.

Our NCSB family is growing this year. **Fidel Verduzco** (NCSB-09) and his wife, Irma, are due to have a baby in early October. We all pray for Irma that the baby does not have arms as big as Fidel's. To all of our surprise, the grumpiest "Wookie" to ever grace this base, **Guy McClean** ('07) is getting married to long-time girlfriend Rowan Jordan. Finally, to close the year, we have several temps with their fingers crossed as the base intends to fill some permanent 6's.

McCall

By Ahjah Boise (McCall '12)

A quarterly update from your Bros at McCall,
We had a slow start, just like the rest of y'all.

Eric "Messy" Messenger started ten Neds training,
When the dust settled, there were just five remaining.

Legacy complete, **Brett "Betty" Bittenbender** retired,
Leaving many a Senior and Master rigger inspired.

Soon **Joe "Brink" Brinkley** led the charge down to Ogden,
But then it snowed before they could start their loggin'.

Before too long, the onslaught in Redding began,
But instead of a plane, they were taking a van.

Eric "Chesty" Duning had a broken steering line,
But it takes more to break him, and soon he'll be fine.

Some months on, thankful jumpers will not soon forget,
Dirty August finally came to the Payette.

It was almost just enough to salvage the O(a)Ts,
Jeff "Big Sug" Schricker managed to procure some goats.

This year's flip was won by Pilot **John "Traitor" Stright**,
Ski bibs and jacket, you'd think he knew he'd win thrice.

Steve "Cerveza Hombre" Bierman claimed last season,
Well, none of the Bros here in McCall believe him.

Single resources got assigned in September,
The T-Party happened, no Bros to remember.

Michael "Cappy" Kolb plus nine got WFR training,
They found it best to assess patients when raining.

There was continued talk of a switch to Ram-Air,
Seems we'll keep doing a PLF over flair.

Here in McCall, the Dragon prepares to slumber,
We'll be ready when it rears its head next summer. 🐉

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The **SMOKEJUMPERS** cap offers gold embroidery and trim with a velcro strap. The **U.S. Forest Service** cap has a brass buckle and green-and-white "sandwich"-style bill, while the **Siskiyou** cap is a rich royal blue with khaki bill and brass headband buckle. Why not order one of each?

- **SMOKEJUMPERS** cap \$19.95 • **U.S. Forest Service Smokejumpers** cap \$15.95 •
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Sharp, embroidered **SMOKEJUMPERS** logo on the left front. Choose from black, navy blue, forest green and white. Available sizes include S, M, L, XL and XXL. **As this is a custom order, please allow 3-4 weeks for delivery.**

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Are you still hangin' around?

These high-quality t-shirts feature spectacular artwork of an "old" smokejumper dangling from a tree. Ash-gray t-shirt will withstand many years of washing. Perfect for the gym, around the house or around town! M, L, XL and XXL. **\$16.95**



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Author's first-hand experience takes you to the fire lines

Ralph Ryan shows you the definition of action in *Wildfire: Memories of a Wildland Firefighter*. Murry Taylor, author of *Jumping Fire*, says: "Wildfire is a first-hand account of one of America's last great true-life adventures – smokejumping. Live it and feel it from inside as they smokejumpers themselves do. Experience the passion, the pride, and the sheer guts of parachuting to wildfires amidst the grandeur of the mountainous West and Alaska."

\$15.95

Cave Junction jumper fought fire before going to the moon

Smoke Jumper, Moon Pilot: The Remarkable Life of Apollo Astronaut Stuart Roosa by Willie Moseley is the family-authorized biography of Apollo 14 Command Module Pilot Stuart Roosa. It's the quintessential, All-American chronicle of the life of an Oklahoma farm boy whose initiative, drive and personal integrity earned him a place among the 24 individuals who made the most dramatic voyage in human history after parachuting to fight forest fires from Cave Junction in 1953.

\$24.95



1952 movie inspired many dreams of smokejumping

Loosely based on the tragic Mann Gulch Fire in which 12 jumpers and a firefighter died, "Red Skies of Montana" fascinated many young men about life "out West." Released in February 1952. Color.

\$14.95



Exhaustive DVD tells story of smokejumping from the start

"Smokejumpers: Firefighters From the Sky" DVD is a definitive record of smokejumping, featuring 120 minutes of history from 1939 to 2000. Footage and action shots filmed at current bases and in the field.

\$14.95

Good looks, durability: our heavyweight sweatshirt delivers it all

While deciding to introduce a sweatshirt to our line of apparel, we ordered the best sweatshirt on the market – this outstanding 9.5-ounce cotton that feels irresistibly soft, yet substantial. It's great for holding the chill at bay, or raising a real sweat while working out. The best part is, this weight of material lasts through years of washings while retaining its good looks.

Navy blue with gold "SMOKEJUMPERS" embroidery along with tree-and-wings logo on chest. Hooded with pockets and drawstring. Sizes: M, L, XL and XXL.

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Fleece gives you the warmth you want, without the bulkiness

Our stylish fleece with half-length zipper ... it's remarkably warm for something that weighs so little, making it perfect when you want to dress in layers.

Cuffed sleeves keep the cold off your arms. Zip it all the way up to keep your neck comfortable. Wear it once and you'll be hooked!

Navy blue with gold "SMOKEJUMPERS" embroidery along with tree-and-wings logo on chest.

Since this is a special-order item, please allow approximately two weeks to receive it. Sizes: M, L, XL and XXL.

\$42.95

Big pride in this little pin

NSA pin looks great, offering the final touch of class no matter what you're wearing. Stays secure with double-post fasteners. Shiny chrome finish. **Order several ... you get FREE shipping!**

\$2.95



You've been framed!

Top of this license plate frame reads "Jumpin' Fires" while the bottom reads "Smokejumpers." White letters on a black background. Buy one for each of your vehicles, and save!



\$4 each, or two for \$7

75th Anniversary of Smokejumping



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National Reunion, Missoula, July 17-19, 2015

Ford Trimotor 1.0

by Fred Donner (Missoula '59)

It would be interesting indeed if someone compiled a list of all the types of airplanes that have dropped smokejumpers since 1940. The fabled airplane in Missoula from 1940 to 1967 was the Ford Trimotor. **Earl Cooley** (MSO-40) and **Rufus Robinson** (MSO-40), as we all know, made the first fire jump on July 12, 1940, from a Curtiss Travelair. A week later, a Ford dropped three two-manners, including Earl and **Jim Waite** (MSO-40). And a month later, a Ford dropped two two-manners, including Earl and **Chet Derry** (MSO-40). Earl thus jumped on the first, fourth, and eighth smokejumper fires of the 1940 Missoula fire season.

So both the Ford and the two-manner were quickly established as Missoula iconic symbols for years to come. Gender neutrality does not apply when discussing Ford Trimotors and smokejumpers. Unfortunately, the women missed a great airplane experience. Sorry, ladies.

On July 18, 1941, a Ford went to Winthrop and dropped a two-manner with **Jim Alexander** (MSO-40) and **Wagner Dodge** (MSO-41), Wagner later of the Mann Gulch tragedy in 1949. This was the first out-of-region request and jump. On July 19 and July 20, it dropped two more Winthrop two-manners. But no Ford is known to have returned to Winthrop. McCall had a Ford from 1943 to 1960 and Grangeville in 1958-1959 and 1961-1967.

On August 12, 1967, at 1645 hours, **Ted Putnam** (MSO-66) and **Gary Molsness** (MSO-66) jumped a Grangeville Ford on the Nez Perce N.F. Then **Peter Mattes** (MSO-66) and **Bill Werhane** (MSO-66) jumped the same Ford 35 minutes later on the Nez Perce N.F. for the final act. The spotter for all four was **Homer Courville** (MSO-61). Then the curtain fell forever on Ford Trimotor jumps, very appropriately on two-manners.

Old-timers like myself, more commonly known as Old Farts and locked in a Paleozoic-era smokejumper mindset, are still talking about the glory days of the Ford Trimotor. When the Evergreen Ford (more on that later) flew over the 1995 Missoula reunion, the whole motley mob ran out cheering and yelling at the top of their lungs. It was enough to bring tears to my old eyes. But newbies would have no idea how such emotion could be stirred. Thus, "Ford Trimotor 1.0" unveiled here for the first time. Remember where you

saw it first.

Henry Ford built 199 Fords from 1926 to 1932, principally the 4-AT and the 5-AT models with various engines and assorted modifications as he went. The Ford was the first true commercial airliner and was flown in the airlines of many countries, notably in Latin America, Canada, Europe, Australia and China. It went on exhibition in Korea and Japan. The U.S. Marine Corps, Army, and Navy all flew Fords. It flew over the South Pole. It flew on floats and skis. A Ford was outfitted as an aerial tanker in 1931 and 1937 in short-lived experiments, but that was the end of the "K-Ford." K is the U.S. Air Force tanker designation.

Fords were involved in just over 200 accidents, according to the Larkins book cited below, and ironically killed just over 200 people around the world by the last accident tally in 1981. One notable example was when a Ford taking off struck another Ford waiting to take off in 1935 in Medellin, Colombia, and killed 17 people in the worst air accident in Colombia to that date. Capt. Claire Chennault of later Flying Tiger fame

*We are all capable of great efforts
if a piece of propeller just went
in and out of the fuselage and
missed a guy by inches.*

crashed a Ford in Texas in 1929. Johnson Flying Service had eight Ford crashes between 1938 and 1959.

The Ford had many distinctives remembered by smokejumpers. Foremost was the exit door. One did not stand in the low door. The first jumper put his foot out on the step and extended his helmet beyond the fuselage. This gave a good view and a firm foothold from which to exit. For the second guy, quite different. From inside, he had to move his leg outside quickly and be sure to hit the step in the prop wash, at the same time ducking his head to clear the top edge and still keep the jump spot in view. If he missed the step, he could easily tumble forward risking going upside down. In the famous 1963 bailout of eight jumpers from the Ford that dropped an engine over Elk City, Idaho, I have no idea how those guys cleared in sec-



Historic trimotor photo. L-R: Bill Dratz, Ed Eggen, Bill Hellman, Skip Stratton and pilot Bob Johnson at Missoula before taking off for Washington D.C. 1949. A jump was made onto the Ellipse in front of the White House. (Courtesy Skip Stratton)

onds. But we are all capable of great efforts if a piece of propeller just went in and out of the fuselage and missed a guy by inches.

Other Ford distinctives were some external control cables and some instrument gauges mounted on the wing braces. There is a canard that the cables could be reached from the door or possibly a window to rattle a pilot, presumably on the tarmac. Two Old Fart peers agreed with me that this was a smokejumper latrine rumor, all too common to the species. Then there is another anomaly related to the Ford – the color print many smokejumpers, including myself, have of an alleged Johnson Flying Service Ford dropping smokejumpers in front of the “Chinese Wall” in the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area. Have you ever seen a Ford

with a portside exit?

The “Cliff Notes” version for Ford Trimotors is to simply Google “Ford Trimotor.” The first hit should be the Wikipedia information sheet for Fords. It will probably tell you all you might want to know right now including how many Fords are flying today (8), how many are on static display (5), and how many are under reconstruction (5), all as of 2014 according to a Ford information website.

However, the finest source of Ford information in one place is the de facto Ford Bible *The Ford Trimotor 1926-1992* by William T. Larkins, published by Schiffer Publishing Ltd. in 1992. It can be ordered from the company at schifferbooks.com or from amazon.com or bookstores at various prices from \$50 down for

new or used copies. A coffee-table-type book, it is an exhaustive encyclopedic history of the Ford Trimotor covering construction, corporate, military, and export histories as well as individual histories of almost every known Ford and accident and incident histories, not to mention hundreds of pictures – with 16 appendices of detailed additional information. Any website searched for the Ford will also likely mention other lesser Ford books.

If you Google “EAA Ford Trimotor” or “Kalamazoo Ford Trimotor,” you will learn where you can obtain Ford rides today. Or try *Flytheford.com*. If you Google “Grand Canyon Airlines Ford Trimotor,” you will learn not only where to get a Ford ride, but where to get a Ford VFR type rating. This airline at Valle Airport at Williams, Arizona, just west of Flagstaff, is the only place in the world today offering Ford pilot checkouts. Call Norm Gorbeil, a friendly fellow, at 928/635-5280 for dates and costs of future classes as I did. Or try *Fordtyperatings.com*. And consider your options for a second mortgage.

The Ford Trimotor is no stranger to *Smokejumper* magazine. Ford articles appeared in the October 2005, June 2006, July 2009, October 2009, July 2010, April 2011, July 2013, and January 2014 issues written by such widely recognized literature illuminati as **Denis Symes** (MYC-63), **Roland Pera** (MSO-56), **Bob Graham** (MSO-52), **Harvey Harden** (IDC-59), “**Wild Bill**” **Yensen** (MYC-53), **Ted Nyquest** (MSO-54), **Chuck Sheley** (CJ-59), and **Ray Williams** (Assoc.).

If you Google “Ford Trimotor” and “E-Bay,” you will find more Ford merchandise than you can imagine, including model kits to build your own. There are Ford Trimotor postage stamps, a Cuban in 1979 and an American in 1997, now collectibles. And, if you Google “Ford Trimotor aluminum model,” you will find several large Fords priced around \$500. Your spouse wants one for the living room right now, trust me. For myself, I ordered a Ford cap from the Experimental Aircraft Association (EAA) Store.

The Ford is sometimes known as the “Tin Goose.” According to the Larkins book, this is a myth pre-dating the Ford, a name that was applied to another airplane and somehow erroneously moved over. I hope I have offered enough Ford information resources here to satisfy the most teary-eyed Ford jumper in his dotage endlessly rehashing the ancient Ford days while crying in his beer missing the old bird – not to mention the guys that jumped it with him.

Now for a surprise. Smokejumpers were not the first Forest Service firefighters to go to a fire in a Ford. In the summer of 1931, Mamer Air Service of Spokane, with a 4-AT-55 Ford NC-9612, moved men and

cargo to the Chamberlain Basin Meadows airfield of the then-Idaho N.F. (now on the Payette N.F. inside the Frank Church Wilderness Area) to cut arrival time on a fire from days to hours. Some of the men and equipment were flown to Moose Creek, all according to the Larkins book. Buy the book today. You’ll love it. No one who ever jumped a Ford should be without one.

As to the Evergreen Ford beloved by smokejumpers. Evergreen had, at some effort to themselves, made it available for fly-overs for at least four smoke-jumper reunions or other Forest Service events,

*Contrary to widespread
smokejumper thinking, the
Evergreen Ford was never a
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anywhere, only seen at fly-
overs. NC9645 was C/N 8 or
construction number 8, the eighth
Ford manufactured in 1929.*

including a Mann Gulch Memorial fly-over and the Forest Service one hundredth anniversary event at Cody, Wyoming. But, unfortunately, Evergreen Aviation in McMinnville, Oregon, went bankrupt the last day of 2013 culminating months of rumors, another story for another time. NC9645 was up for grabs by creditors. Contrary to widespread smoke-jumper thinking, the Evergreen Ford was never a smokejumper Ford for anybody anywhere, only seen at fly-overs. NC9645 was C/N 8 or construction number 8, the eighth Ford manufactured in 1929. It flew the first transcontinental route from New York to San Diego and flew in the U.S. until 1937 when it went to Honduras and later Mexico. In 1951 it had major repairs in Mexico and came out as a “smooth skin Ford” for whatever reason. After several U.S. owners, it was purchased by Harrah’s Club of Reno. Harrah’s undertook the expensive process of restoring the corrugated skin and auctioned it for \$1.5 million in 1986 to a private owner who sold it to Evergreen in 1990. According to press reports, an aircraft broker for an Evergreen creditor sold it in mid-February 2014 “for an undisclosed amount” to “an undisclosed buyer.” Inside information at writing is that EAA has leased it and will now be flying two Fords. Such is the law of the jungle, Survival of the fittest. Long live the Ford. 🐼

Survivors Of Ford Trimotor Accidents At 1995 Missoula Reunion

by Fred Donner (Missoula '59)

Fritz Wolfrum (MSO-53) and Kenny Roth (MYC-46), along with six other jumpers, survived the crash of Ford N69905 shortly after it took off from Spotted Bear air strip on August 17, 1953. That Ford had been purchased by Johnson Flying Service only a few weeks before. Kenny, who died in 2007, was a tribal legend as a jumper and as a pilot. Suffering a broken foot, a nurse he met recuperating in the hospital became his wife. The complete story is in the July 2009 issue of *Smokejumper*.

Ted Nyquest (MSO-54) was in the co-pilot's seat of Ford NC7861 on September 9, 1963, getting ready to spot a load of eight jumpers. Over Elk City, Idaho, a piece of propeller broke off and pierced the fuselage after cutting a fuel line. Then number three engine folded downwards and fell off. The pilot and Ted managed to land at Elk City. Eight jumpers had just qualified for the Caterpillar Club, those that have saved their lives with an



L-R: Fritz Wolfrum (MSO-53), Kenny Roth (MYC-46), Ted Nyquest (MSO-54), Ron Stoleson (MSO-56) (Courtesy Ron Stoleson)

emergency bailout. The complete story is in the April 2011 issue of *Smokejumper*.

Ron Stoleson (MSO-56) was on-board Ford NC8419 on August 4, 1959, getting ready to spot **Gary Williams** (MSO-59) and **John Rolf** (MSO-57). The plane landed at Moose Creek R.S. to drop off some cargo before continuing to the fire. The

plane ground-looped in a tail wind into trees and caught fire. The pilot and Ron were burned but survived, Gary and John died of burns, and the Nez Perce N.F. supervisor, who was on board, later died while being treated for injuries. The complete story is in the June 2006 issue of *Smokejumper* with an interesting sequel in the January 2014 issue. 🧑‍🚒

Wanted - Donated Items for 2015 National Reunion

We are looking for anything from guided fishing trips, knives, apparel, framed prints, pottery, etc. for the Silent Auction. We are also looking for larger items that might be raffle item(s) or even a live auction item.

All proceeds will go to the National Smokejumper Association to assist in helping our brothers and sisters in need.

The sales price of donated items will/can go toward a down payment on a NSA Life membership. If the item is large enough, could pay the entire cost and you become a life member.

If you have interest, please contact Doug Houston, (406) 370-9141 or dwhouston73@gmail.com. My personal goal is \$10,000 in final sales. Should be fun.

Agenda

National Smokejumper Association Reunion

July 17-19, 2015

Friday, July 17

Time	Activity	Location
3 p.m.	Registration (Sandy Evenson)	University Center
3 p.m.	Silent Auction (Doug Houston)	University Center
4 p.m.	Happy Hour	Oval
6 p.m.	Barbecue	Oval
	Blue Grass Band • Bonfire • Ken Wabunsee presentation	
7 p.m.	Caterpillar Awards (Tom Harbour, Fred Donner)	
10:30 p.m.	Last Call	



July 18, 2015

Time	Activity	Location
4 p.m.	Registration	University Center
4 p.m.	No-Host Bar	University Center
5 p.m.	VIP Reception	University Center
6 p.m.	Silent Auction Ends	
6 p.m.	Dinner	University Center
7 p.m.	Speakers John Maclean and Others	

July 19, 2015

Time	Activity	Location
9 a.m.	Breakfast	University Center
10 a.m.	Memorial Service	University Center
10 a.m.-noon	Finalize Silent Auction	

2015 National Reunion Group Rates

Hotel name	Phone	Rates (1/2/3/4 people)
Americas Best Value Inn	(406) 728-4500	80.00/80.00/80.00/80.00
Best Western Plus Grant Creek Inn	(406) 543-0700	139.00/139.00/139.00/139.00
C'mon Inn	(406) 543-4600	137.99/137.99/137.99/137.99
Comfort Inn University	(406) 549-7600	109.00/109.00/109.00/109.00
Courtyard by Marriott	(406) 549-5260	159.00/159.00/159.00/159.00
Holiday Inn Express	(406) 830-3100	119.00/119.00/119.00/119.00
Holiday Inn Missoula Downtown	(406) 721-8550	136.00/136.00/136.00/136.00
GuestHouse Inn & Suites	(406) 251-2665	74.00/84.00/84.00/84.00
La Quinta Inn	(406) 549-9000	110.00/110.00/110.00/110.00
Staybridge Suites	(406) 830-3900	139.00/149.00/149.00/149.00

Ask for the National Smokejumper Association group rate. Group rates will cut off as early as 45 days prior to the event start date. The earlier you book your reservations, the better.

Univ. Montana Knowles Hall – \$22 single/\$29 double. To make a reservation, submit housing application by July 1, 2015 with payment in full. This form will be on our web page. The rooms are not air-conditioned and do not have private bathrooms.

Circuitous Route To Sequim

by Roger Mull (Missoula '70)

Copyright 2014, the *Sequim Gazette* of Sequim, Wash.

Roger Mull wrote this article for the "Verbatim" section of the newspaper.

I grew up in North Georgia, near the city of Rome. During college and graduate school, I had the opportunity to spend five summers working with the U.S. Forest Service in the Northwest, the last three as a smokejumper, parachuting to suppress remote forest fires throughout Montana, Idaho, Washington, and Oregon. It was an incredible experience which gave me a unique opportunity to see much of the region firsthand and to develop a strong attraction to it.

After college, I intended to return to the area permanently but due to personal and career decisions eventually landed on the coast of South Carolina where I lived and worked for more than 20 years. But the lure of the Northwest was always imbedded in my psyche. Finally, in 2007, I was able to relocate and moved to Missoula, Mont., a great town. However, after five years I decided that the summer heat and winter cold (like 10 below zero at times), snow and ice of Montana did not suit me and, being a sailor at heart, I wanted to be near blue water.

Through a process of elimination, I decided to move to Sequim in July 2012. The decision was influenced by the awesome relocation package sent to me by the Sequim-Dungeness Valley Chamber of Commerce.

While in Missoula, I began a second career as an enrolled agent/tax advisor. I now work five months of the year during tax season as an enrolled agent with a major tax-software provider, fielding calls from customers worldwide who seek to resolve tax questions and/or software navigation issues. It is a mental challenge and hectic at times, but thoroughly enjoyable. This is done from my home office in Sequim, Wash. Who woulda thunk it?

Fortunately tax season occurs during the months which are "less than perfect" for outdoor activities. During the off-season, time has to be devoted to continuing education, formal for required credit hours and informal for expanded knowledge. There is still ample time for personal reading, mostly history, and for enjoying the many amenities the Sequim area has to offer



Roger Mull (Courtesy R. Mull)

from county and city parks: Dungeness, Dungeness Landing, Cline Spit, Robin Hill Farm, Port Williams, Salt Creek, Carrie Blake (especially if you have a dog), are all treasures, to John Wayne Marina, Washington state parks and Olympic National Park.

The Olympic Discovery Trail area is a bicycling paradise. I was able to log 1,300 miles, all within about 10 miles of Sequim, on my bicycle in 2013 and lost 30 pounds in the process. I have a couple of pounds to go and am well on track to exceed the 2013 mileage this year.

Summer, especially August, on or near Puget Sound is glorious.

The city of Sequim has a small town atmosphere, not too big and not too small.

Sequim, Wash. – not a bad decision! 🍷

Get Ready to Get Ready

Smokejumpers

Celebrating
75 years

*National Reunion
University of Montana
Missoula, Montana
July 17-18-19, 2015*

1940 ~ 2015



Reunion Website Info: <http://smj2015reunion.wordpress.com>

