

October 2020

Smokejumper Obituary: Spicer, Ralph (Missoula 1944)

National Smokejumper Association

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Recommended Citation

National Smokejumper Association, "Smokejumper Obituary: Spicer, Ralph (Missoula 1944)" (2020).
Smokejumper Obituaries. 359.
https://dc.ewu.edu/smokejumper_bios/359

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Smokejumper Obituary

Spicer, Ralph (Missoula 1944)

Ralph died August 7, 1952, when he was struck by a car while working as an engineer on a city water project in Cleveland, Ohio. While standing in the middle of the road with his crew, he was struck from behind by a car. The driver explained that he became distracted when his sunglasses fell off. Ralph was born June 18, 1922, in Philadelphia, the son of a bricklayer. He first attended Earlham College in Indiana and later graduated from Penn State University.

Ralph had Quaker values and was drafted into Civilian Public Service in 1943 and his occupation at that time was listed as Mechanical draftsman. He joined CPS-103 for smokejumper training in 1944. Ralph had eight training and four fire jumps during the 1944 season and three training, five fire and one rescue jump in the 1945 season.

As did many of the CPS men, Ralph worked on one of the "cattle boat" trip to Poland as part of the post-war relief help to war-ravaged Europe. He met and married Inge Hellwing in Poland. CPS notes say she was "smuggled" back to the U.S. on the "cattle boat."

Ralph is buried in Alger Cemetery in Cleveland.

(end of excerpt)