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Smokejumper Obituary: Wenger, Florence H. (CPS-103 1943)

National Smokejumper Association

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Smokejumper Obituary

Wenger, Florence H. (CPS-103 1943)

Florence is included as her husband , Roy, administered Civilian Public Service Camp 103 at Missoula during the war years 1943-45. She went through smokejumper training but was not allowed to jump—a woman ahead of her time. (Ed.)

"When I retired in 1980, one of my colleagues noted that four was very prominent in my career. I had attended four universities, had taught at four levels, taught at four universities, in four states and on four continents and was retiring after 44 years in education."

Florence grew up near Toledo, Ohio, and attended small country school. She was feisty—"I received my second spanking in school in the 5th grade when the boy in front of me turned over my inkwell and ruined my favorite book. I instantly clobbered his towhead with the inky side of the book."

She attended Bowling Green University for two years and got a teaching certificate. It was in the middle of the Depression and jobs were hard to find. In 1932 at age 18, she was hired to teach first grade at the school she attended at a younger age. Florence attended Ohio State during the summers.

She married Roy Wenger in 1942 and went to Seeley Lake in 1943 where Roy was to be Camp Director for the newly formed CPS-103 smokejumper unit. Florence went through smokejumper training that year.

After the war, she taught at the University of Montana, graduate school at Ohio State, teaching at Ohio State, teaching at the American School in Japan, Akron University, Bowling Green University, Kent State—a career too lengthy to cover here.

Florence died December 12, 1989.

(end of excerpt)