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Smokejumper Obituary: Reimer, Walter B. (Missoula 1944)

National Smokejumper Association

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Smokejumper Obituary

Reimer, Walter B. (Missoula 1944)

Walter was born on February 18, 1920, near Hillsboro, Kansas, and died October 29, 2016. He was a member of the Alexanderwohl Mennonite Church near Goessel, Kansas. He attended a one-room school through 8th grade, after which he helped on the family farm until he was drafted at the end of 1942 to serve in World War II. He chose to serve in the Civilian Public Service (CPS).

While in CPS, he was sent to Nebraska, Oregon, California, Montana, and Iowa to perform different duties. He worked for the Bureau of Reclamation building a dam for irrigation in Oregon, the National Park Services in California, and, finally, as a smokejumper with the USFS in Missoula, Montana. Walt had 21 jumps during the 1944-45 seasons.

After being discharged from CPS in April 1946, Walt went to Eastern Washington to work wheat harvest on the Julius Franz Farm. He became a member of the Menno Mennonite Church of Ritzville. There, he served as deacon and as Menno's representative on the original Camrec (Washington Mennonite Fellowship Retreat Ground) building committee.

In 1985, Walt retired and moved with his wife to Moses Lake, WA, and in 2009, they moved to Kidron Retirement Village in Newton, Kansas.

During his retirement, he set up a woodworking shop in his basement and created numerous beautiful pieces, many of which were prized donations at the Mennonite Country Auction. He also gifted many of his wood creations to family and friends.

(end of excerpt)