

January 2014

Smokejumper Obituary: Schilling, Fredrick (Missoula 1949)

National Smokejumper Association

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Recommended Citation

National Smokejumper Association, "Smokejumper Obituary: Schilling, Fredrick (Missoula 1949)" (2014).
Smokejumper Obituaries. 761.

https://dc.ewu.edu/smokejumper_bios/761

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Smokejumper Obituary

Schilling, Fredrick (Missoula 1949)

Fritz, 85, was born Dec. 3, 1928 in Missoula, Montana, and died Jan. 1, 2014 in Boise, Idaho, after a year's battle with deteriorating health and an auto accident Dec. 29 outside of Boise.

Fritz graduated from Montana State College with a bachelor's degree in Chemical Engineering and went to work in Idaho Falls. He returned to school Montana State, completing a doctorate in Chemical Engineering in 1959.

He worked at Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory, first in the nuclear reactor program, then in the computing group where he was privileged to be on a team that traveled to Honeywell to test a computer prior to buying it. The team was allowed to work on the machine in the evenings because during the day it was for display to other prospective buyers.

The Honeywell engineers started to stay around in the evenings because they had not seen how buyers were using the computers they were making, and this was their first opportunity to see one programmed for control and data logging.

Fritz worked for many years as the group leader of the Los Alamos non-weapons engineering group. He advanced to deputy division leader in WX and retired in 1990.

Fritz jumped at Missoula in the 1949-50 seasons. He was friends with all the smokejumpers killed in the Mann Gulch Fire Aug. 5, 1949; his picture is on the cover of the book *Young Men and Fire* by Norman Maclean.

Fritz was active in the ski patrol at Pajarito Mountain. He continued his service in Silver Gate, Montana, by joining the search and rescue team and helping the Forest Service spot out-of-bounds snowmobilers.

(end of excerpt)