

January 2014

Smokejumper Obituary: Berrien, Melvin Eugene (Redding 1957)

National Smokejumper Association

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Recommended Citation

National Smokejumper Association, "Smokejumper Obituary: Berrien, Melvin Eugene (Redding 1957)" (2014). *Smokejumper Obituaries*. 846.
https://dc.ewu.edu/smokejumper_bios/846

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Smokejumper Obituary

Berrien, Melvin Eugene (Redding 1957)

Mel, 84, of Hayfork, California, died January 10, 2014. He was a Korean War veteran serving in the Army from 1951-53, and re-enlisting and serving in France until his discharge in 1955. He then began his USFS career as a fire crewman at Trinity Center on the Shasta-Trinity N.F.

Mel was in the original crew that started the Redding Smokejumper Base in 1957 and trained at Cave Junction before coming south. He jumped the '57 season and transferred to other USFS fire positions in the Shasta-T and El Dorado National Forests. His last position was as a fire prevention officer on the Hayfork Ranger District.

He retired from the Hayfork Ranger District in 1983 after 30 years, and then continued working in a volunteer capacity for another 30 years. The majority of the volunteer time involved inventorying and maintaining signs and gates on the road systems all over the "Trinity side" of the Shasta-Trinity National Forest.

(end of excerpt)