

October 2006

Smokejumper Obituary: Durland, Donald M. (Missoula 1947)

National Smokejumper Association

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National Smokejumper Association, "Smokejumper Obituary: Durland, Donald M. (Missoula 1947)" (2006).
Smokejumper Obituaries. 1078.

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Smokejumper Obituary

Durland, Donald M. (Missoula 1947)

Don died Monday, Oct. 2, 2006, at his home in St. Regis, Montana, after a lengthy illness. He attended Darby Schools and received a B.S. degree in forestry from the University of Montana.

While in high school, he joined the Army Air Force Reserve and was honorably discharged in 1945. He started a career as a smokejumper, but it ended in 1947 when his chute malfunctioned while jumping to a fire in Roaring Mountain Canyon in the Bitterroot Valley. The accident resulted in a fractured back requiring a rescue team to transport him 13 miles via a stretcher.

He retired after 36 years with the U.S. Forest Service, with assignments in Montana, Idaho and Alaska.

(end of excerpt)