

September 2002

Smokejumper Obituary: Vail, Edwin (Missoula 1944)

National Smokejumper Association

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Recommended Citation

National Smokejumper Association, "Smokejumper Obituary: Vail, Edwin (Missoula 1944)" (2002).
Smokejumper Obituaries. 1159.
https://dc.ewu.edu/smokejumper_bios/1159

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Smokejumper Obituary

Vail, Edwin (Missoula 1944)

Edwin, 83, died September 19, 2002. He was born May 31, 1919, at home in Media, Pennsylvania, into a Quaker family. The family moved to California by the time he was two. They lived in Altadena where he graduated from high school and enrolled in Whittier College before being drafted into Civilian Public Service in 1941. He was only one semester away from graduation at the time.

He was accepted by the smokejumper unit and reported to Nine Mile in May of 1944 where jumped for two seasons. "The 1945 season was very busy—I had eight fire jumps that season."

After his discharge in 1945, he did various labor jobs for eight or nine years before deciding to go into the printing business, his favorite subject in high school. He did two years of work in the field and contact ex-CPS smokejumper, Dave Flaccus, in Missoula. He worked for Flaccus and Montana Press for over eleven years before moving to Olympia, WA.

(end of excerpt)