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Smokejumper Obituary: Wilson, Gerald D. "Jerry" (Pilot 0000)

National Smokejumper Association

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Smokejumper Obituary

Wilson, Gerald D. "Jerry" (Pilot 0000)

Jerry Wilson of Lewiston, 74, died Wednesday, May 31, in Spokane. Wilson was a lifelong pilot who started flying at the age of 14 and went on to own a major aeronautical firm and at age 39 started a Clarkston bank.

He was drafted into the Army and was discharged in 1946.

Wilson and Frances Greer married in June, 1948, and lived in Orfino, Idaho.

Jerry and Gustin purchased Hillcrest Aircraft in 1959. The firm had flying contracts throughout the U.S. ranging from Hollywood movie productions to Western states wildfires.

NSA member Chuck Viviano said that Jerry was the smokejumper pilot at West Yellowstone in 1953 and 1954. In 1971 Jerry received the national Robert E. Trimble award for distinguished mountain flying for his helicopter rescue of an injured smokejumper in a remote forest area in northern Washington.

Jerry retired from active banking and aviation in 1994, three years after suffering a stroke. He is survived by his wife of nearly 52 years, Frances.

(end of excerpt)