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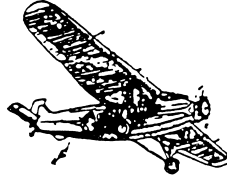
THE STATIC LINE

NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION

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THE STATIC LINE

----- The Static Line Staff -----

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

The past several weeks have been marked with significant, far-reaching activities by members of your N.S.A. Board of Directors. These include:

1. N.S.A./National Forest Service Museum Alliance - The Alliance was mentioned in a previous Newsletter and became more solidified recently when both Boards agreed to a Memorandum of Understanding, developed by an Ad Hoc Committee, made up of members from both the NSA and NFSM. The Memorandum of Understanding commits both groups to the construction of a building on a portion of the 36 acres of USFS land now held under a use permit by the NFSM. The building will have space for offices and a display area, to be shared by the NSA and NFSM offices. It will be located just west of the Intermountain Fire Sciences Laboratory, which is west of the Missoula Smokejumper Base. Both groups have pledged an initial \$11,000 each, and will join together to raise the balance of the cost through donations, grants, etc. (see "Life Memberships" below). This construction will be the first phase of a plan to eventually build a multilevel NFSM that will house both Smokejumper and Forest Service artifacts. Donations to the museum (for both the immediate structure and final museum) are tax deductible and will go into a separate NSA museum account.

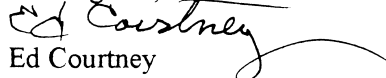
2. Life Memberships - The \$11,000 committed by the NSA for the above mentioned building will be raised through the offer of \$1,000 Life Memberships in the NSA. This offer is explained later in this issue of the Newsletter.

(Several members, including Board member Tom Kovalicky, have indicated a willingness to purchase Life Memberships when they become available.)

3. Smokejumper Video - The NSA is presently considering an offer involving a cooperative agreement with Media Entertainment to develop and produce a video about the history of Smokejumping. The video would be developed at no cost to the NSA, and when completed, would be available to us for resale to the public. The NSA would purchase copies at cost. M.I. indicates that it plans to approach national television networks in an effort to air the film. This approach appears to be the least costly way to have the film produced for us. Cost estimates exceed \$1,000/minute for such a production. (The NSA would have to sell a tremendous number of videos at \$20.00 each in order to get back such an investment on a 45-60 minute production.) A Memorandum of Understanding is currently being reviewed by two of our Board members, Lon Dale and George Gowen, who are both attorneys.

4. Hall of Fame - A Guideline/Procedure is nearing completion and will be ready for publication in the January Newsletter. George Cross, Lon Dale and Tom Kovalicky are the principal "architects" on this committee. They, have put together an excellent guide for procedures to be followed in making selections for the Hall of Fame. Suggestions from members were included. Nomination forms are being developed and will be in the January Newsletter.

Best regards,



Ed Courtney
President

NEW MEMBERS

Note: This listing of new members includes those who joined between July 21st and October 15th, 1996. Those who joined after October 15th will be mentioned in the 14th Newsletter, which will be mailed out late in January 1997. Should names be misspelled, or addresses be incorrect or changed, please let us know as soon as possible.

NAME	ADDRESS	BASE	1ST YEAR
Arndt, Bob F.	Mile 4 1/2 Seward HWY, Seward, AK 99664	MSO	65
Beardslee, Phil G.	PO Box 469, Petersburg, AK 99833	CJ	60
Cook Mike	Unknown at this time.	MYC	68
Dougherty, Mike	11980 Crestview CT, Yucaipa, CA 92399	RDD	67
Eastman, Bill	PO Box 306, East Greenbush, NY 12061	NCSB	55
Hamilton, Cliff	111 Hillside DR, Chicasaw, AL 36611	CJ	61
Hauptner, Edwin	46 Bassett ST, Milton, MA 02186	NCSB	48
Hicks, Brian	390 Red Clover LN, Sandpoint, ID 83864	MSO	95
Kellog, Gordon L.	25955 SW Stafford RD, Wilsonville, OR 97070	CJ	57
McBratney, Brad S.	PO Box 429, Augusta, MT 59410	MSO	82
Mathieson, Josh	PO Box 403, Santa Margarita, CA 93453	RDD	94
Paris, Larry	8291 S Yukon Way, Littleton, CO 80123	MYC	54
Quigley, Gordon L.	208 Cordoba Oasis Village, PO Box 61834 Riyadh: Saudi Arabia	MYC	55
Shanks, Bernie D.	2131 Pearl Beach RD NW, Olympia, WA 98502	MSO	62
Taylor, Paige	NCSB, Route 1, Box 180 Winthrop, WA 98862	FBX	95
Teter, Harry "Buzz"	PO Box 1923, Blue Jay, CA 92317	RDD	79

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

The NSA Board of Directors recently approved a \$1,000.00 Life Membership to provide the NSA with the opportunity to raise funds to accomplish the mission of preserving our Smokejumper History. The sum of \$750.00 of a \$1,000.00 Life Membership will be used to fund the joint effort of the National Forest Service Museum and the National Smokejumper Association to begin the initial stages of a museum for both organizations. The U.S.D.A. U.S. Forest Service has granted a special use permit involving thirty-six acres for the museum adjacent to the Intermountain Fire Sciences Laboratory and close to the Missoula Smokejumper Base.

The joint effort with the NFSM is an excellent opportunity for the NSA to have a place to accomplish the mission of preserving our history without a major outlay of funds for a land purchase, and also be a part of the NFSM.

Our members may now purchase a \$1,000.00 Life Membership with a \$750.00 tax deduction as allowed by the IRS. The \$250.00 balance is non-deductable, since it will be used for membership dues and membership benefits. The NSA will use \$100.00 of the \$250.00 for the general operation of the Association, with the balance of \$150.00 placed in a permanent trust fund, and only the interest being used for our needs. More details are available in the Life Membership section of the insert in this newsletter.

DECEASED JUMPERS AND PILOTS

The names shown below are new to the N.S.A. Obituary Listing. Should dates and other material not be correct, please let us know. If you submitted information for the Obituary and it is not shown, please contact us. Members have been very helpful with this information.

In the 12th Newsletter we made a mistake and had Jim Woodward shown as Woodford, MSO 52. (He passed away at Etowah, NC on June 13, 1995.)

NAME	BASE	YEAR	COMMENTS
Fogerty, Richard "Dick "	MSO	51	Dick passed away in his sleep from a heart attack July 13, 1996. He had been a Marine Corps Fighter Pilot, retiring as a full colonel. He then worked many years for Allied Signal. His wife, Pat, said he always talked about his days as a smokejumper and that Dick had lost track of the smokejumpers, until one day, when his daughter went to the Missoula base and found his name on a roster. He was a member of our Association.
Pennington, Richard "Dick"	MSO	48	Dick died January 28, 1996 at Harrisonburg, Virginia. He was born in 1927 at Superior, Wisconsin. He was a U.S. Navy veteran of WW II. After military service, Dick attended the University of Montana, graduating with a degree in Wildlife Technology. He later attended the University of Minnesota and acquired a Forestry degree from that institution. He went on to a 35-year career with the U.S. Forest Service and worked in eight different forests. His wife, Sandra, sent a copy of Dick's obituary to Wally Dobbins, MSO 47, who gave us the report.
Reishus, Karl	FBX	83	Roger Vorce, FBX 82, sent us a notice telling of Karl's death. He had been a city policeman in Juneau, Alaska and was killed (1991) during a training exercise when he attempted to stop two other officers from falling over the side of a building. Karl was pulled over the side and fell to his death.
Sparks, Calvin R. "Bob"	MSO	52	We had mentioned Bob before, but had only mentioned his first name, Calvin. A number of his fellow jumpers did not know him by that name. Wally Dobbins told us this summer that Bob died in the spring of 1992 in the Missoula area while working around a backhoe. A wheel dropped down into a hole and an arm on the backhoe swung around, crushing him against the machine.
Swain, Charles N. "Chuck"	MSO	52	We believe Chuck died somewhere in Southeast Asia from a boating accident. If anyone has information about him, please let us know.
Tomasheski, John F.	MSO	52	Wally Small, MSO 52, called to say John died from a brain tumor in 1970 at San Diego. He had been an aeronautical engineer for Convair. Wally mentioned that John started jumping at age 26 and died at age 44.

THE SILVER STAR

Miller, Spence

MYC 52 Stan Tate, MYC 53, asked us to include an article about his friend of more than 40 years and an outstanding smokejumper. Stan was with Spence and his family during his final hour on July 31, 1996 at McCall, Idaho where he was dying from cancer. He was dressed in his finest military blues and had his chest filled with some of the highest honors our nation can bestow. Stan said he never witnessed a more courageous person who knew he was dying. (He performed the marriage of one of Spence's daughters at his bedside the night before he died.)

Spence had earned a degree in Forestry from the University of Idaho, and later served two tours in Vietnam. He was awarded the Silver Star, Bronze Star with two Oak Leaf Clusters, the Purple Heart with Oak Leaf Clusters, and the Combat Infantryman's Badge. Spence had been an Airborne Ranger, serving with both the 82nd and 101st Airborne Divisions. He had retired as a Lt. Colonel. Living at McCall, Spence had continued his strong bonds with smokejumpers and became a legend in helping kids in the local ski program.

Stan officiated at the death of Spence's wife, Karen, and daughter, Page, 30 years ago after they had died in an auto accident. (He has officiated at the deaths of other jumpers through the years, to include that of former McCall jumper "Moose" Ken Salyer - 56, who died in the crash of a Twin Beech near Norton Creek on July 9, 1965 while acting as a spotter. Stan's ministry to jumpers goes far beyond a typical parish.)

BELIEVED DOWN IN THE BATTLE CREEK MOUNTAIN AREA

Schas, Dave A.

MYC 48 We had mentioned Dave's death in the October 1994 newsletter, but were lacking details. Ken Hessel, MYC 58, sent us information about Dave which is presented in part. He had departed from the Redmond Air Center (RAC) Redmond, OR piloting a Twin Otter on July 14, 1988, to transport fire fighting personnel to forest fires in Montana - none were on-board at the time. Twenty minutes into the flight he radioed the Malheur Dispatch at John Day of his estimated time of arrival. (John Day is about 115 miles ENE of Redmond.) That was the last transmission Dave would ever make.

Search efforts commenced when he did not arrive at John Day. Using a copy of the radar tracking signals from the Air Route Traffic Control Center at Auburn, WA, an air-ground search was initiated. Four hours later an Ochoco National Forest Air Crew found metal pieces of the aircraft during their initial grid search. Dave's body was found early the next day, Friday, July 15, at a remote area north of Battle Creek Mountain, just north of the Black Canyon Wilderness area about 30 miles west of John Day.

An investigation commenced to try and determine what might have caused the Otter's 1100' descent to destruction. (We do not know if any clearly definable cause was ever determined. If anyone has heard of a definite conclusion, please let us know.)

Dave had started as a smokejumper at McCall in 1948 and then transferred to the Idaho City Base for the 1949-51 seasons. He then became a pilot for the Johnson Flying Service at Missoula, to include flying TBM's on retardant missions. Later he flew for the Intermountain Aviation Company and finally as a Forest Service Pilot for the Regional Aviation Group out of the Redmond Air Center. Dave was a dedicated pilot, and as a former smokejumper, knew the excitement, anxiety, fear and total exhaustion that goes with smokejumping.

He was highly respected and admired by his colleagues and at the time of his death had been named Employee of the Month at the RAC.

He grew up in Jordan Valley in southeastern Oregon where he developed his "cowboy stock" demeanor. He was considered a straight-forward, plain-spoken and truthful person. His passing was deeply felt by many.

We wish to mention that Neal Davis, Base Manager at McCall, helped us with some of the details pertaining to Dave's past.

BEECHCRAFT SUPER 18 ON ITS BACK OVER THE DROP ZONE WITH JUMPERS ON-BOARD

by Dan Thompson, AKA 86

Dan sent us a very interesting article about a hair-raising experience he and others experienced on August 4, 1986 while on a training jump near Ft. Wainright.

Six squares (BLM chutes) had been dropped, and now it was about time for him to exit, along with Rick Abreau (AKA 86). Ed Strong (AKA 75) was spotting and Scott Dewitz (AKA 82) was taking video of the action. Ed barked, "Get in the Door!" Dan quickly and deliberately moved his left foot onto the outside step and dropped to his right knee. He leaned back, covered his emergency chute with an arm and clutched the side-rail of the door. Birch Hill was below them, with Ft. Wainright and Fairbanks just beyond.

The pilot was new at dropping jumpers and had a tendency to line up too far to the right. Ed kept instructing him to go left. Ed then commanded, "Get ready!" Dan removed his hand from the emergency chute, grasped the other handrail, and leaned back hard, tensed with anticipation. He heard Ed tell the pilot again to move left. At that point

Dan said, the plane lurched disturbingly sideways and instantly they were upside down, and then the plane began rolling, wing over wing. He said Scott was bouncing around and Ed had disappeared from view. Dan tried desperately to get out the door, but was riveted to the doorway by centrifugal force. He knew that if the plane kept falling he would never get out, even though his body was mere inches from the door opening, and his lower left leg was already outside.

Suddenly, the plane seemed to stop spinning, but then, just as quickly, flipped back and began rolling in the other direction. He said there was blue sky and then dark earth, flashing by alternately before his eyes with terrifying rapidity as they continued to fall. He had visions of a fireball and became convinced that they were all going to die momentarily. He remembers thinking, "I really don't

want to die today." He had to get out of the Volpar! With all of his will racing overtime he still was welded, unmovable, in the doorway. Staying in the plane would be suicide, but if he could jump, did he have enough altitude, would he miss the propellers? What about their airspeed-later determined to be 140-150 knots at the time? He felt time was going to catch up with them shortly as terror enveloped him.

Then suddenly the force pinning him in the door eased off. The pilot had put the plane into a dive and was trying to pull up. Taking everything into consideration, Dan at that point put everything into one great pull forward. He



Volpar Super Turbo 18, a conversion of the Beechcraft Model 18 with AiResearch TPE 331 turboprops and Volpar Mk IV tricycle landing gear

slid down the side of the fuselage and watched the stabilizer zip past his face mask. His chute slammed open and fast. He had several line twists, and when he stopped spinning he was looking directly at the Volpar. It was straight in front of him. He realized the terror of those still on the plane. They were far from being out of danger. The Volpar were perilously close to the ground, pitching and fluttering, rocking in the breeze like a falling maple leaf. Then it hung stone-like, for what seemed to be far too long a time, and then moved away normally toward Ft. Wainright.

Dan punched through a birch and his chute held. He quickly checked to see if there were shroud lines under his chin — thoughts of Arden Davis, who had died from strangulation — and then released the capewells simultaneously and fell the final two feet. He hit the

BEECHCRAFT SUPER 18 VOLPAR

by Dan Thompson, continued

ground running and all he could say was, "YEP, THAT WAS PRETTY SCARY!" over and over again. As he started to get out of his suit several jumpers came running over and momentarily Ken Coe (AKA 80), one of his rookie trainers, took one look at him and said, "Damn rookies are getting all the old salt points this year," then turned and was gone.

As he and his friends walked down the road they told of their own terror. The plane it seems was directly over the jump spot during most of its plunge, and they had

scattered in all directions, their feet driven by the fear that they too would become statistics in a seemingly inescapable tragedy.

Dan said it took some time to rid himself of the fear of flying, and would vigorously brush his teeth in flight to relieve the stress. He continued to jump for three more years at Fairbanks. He currently lives at Lakebay, Washington west of Tacoma.

We really appreciate Dan's story. One Wild Ride!



Lower Sherman Creek Meadow, SW of Missoula, July 7, 1955. Dayton Grover is on the left after his third practice jump. Dayton mentioned that the Jumper on the right was from Oklahoma and was injured on a fire jump in Sept., 1955. Does anyone recognize him? Who are the two in the background? The one on the right looks like Fred Brauer, MSO 41.

Photo courtesy of Dayton, MSO 55. Dayton lives at Edina, MO.



A picture of Danny On, CJ 46, who was featured in the July Newsletter. Danny O'Rourke, CJ 46, loaned us the picture. He was a very good friend and skydiving buddy of Danny On's. Danny O'Rourke lives at Cedaredge, CO. We were sad to hear that his wife, Peg, passed away just before Christmas of last year. They had been married 46 years.

CECIL HICKS, NCSB '62 AND BRIAN HICKS **----- MSO '95, FATHER AND SON -----**

We asked Cecil and his son Brian, an active Missoula jumper, to give us some pictures and stories.

CECIL HICKS

Cecil started jumping out of Winthrop in 1962 and then spent the next six seasons as an Alaska jumper out of Ft Wainwright, rising to the position of Asst. Foreman. He had ninety jumps to his credit before returning to college, and then working as a newspaper reporter and editor of weekly papers in Alaska and Idaho. He has a degree in Education, plus majors in Forestry and Journalism. Currently, he is a 4th grade educator at Sandpoint, Idaho.

Cecil's story is about the Eight Mile Ridge Fire in July, 1962 out of Winthrop in the Okanogan NF. Francis "Pappy" Lufkin was the base manager. Many fires were reported after a severe storm swept through the area. Cecil did not make the jump list at the time since he had only recently returned from a fire. By the evening of the storm, a call had gone out for booster crews from Cave Junction and Missoula. The Cave Junction jumpers flew in early the next morning and were placed on stand by. A patrol plane reported a small fire on Eight Mile Ridge eight miles north of Winthrop. About that time a DC-3 with twelve Missoula jumpers on-board radioed that they were approaching Winthrop. Before they could land, they were dispatched to the Eight Mile Ridge Fire. Cecil remembers feeling a little disappointed because Region 6 jumpers had not been assigned to the fire. However, within about forty-five minutes, the DC-3 landed with all jumpers still on-board. The spotter told Francis Lufkin that it was too windy over the fire to jump. Francis decided to send out some Region 6 jumpers to check on the fire.

The siren sounded and Cecil, plus three Cave Junction jumpers, suited up and boarded the Twin Beech standing by. Their spotter was Hal Wyman. Within twenty minutes, they were circling over the fire. There wasn't any clearing near the fire, so it had to be a timber jump. Wyman kicked out the first set of streamers and

they took off in the wind, landing somewhere in the next drainage Cecil said. As the aircraft



Cecil Hicks, NCSB 62, after jumping to a fire near the Yukon River in Alaska during the summer of 1963.

Photo courtesy of Cecil Hicks.

continued to circle, Cecil was trying to keep track of the streamers out of a window, when his left elbow accidentally knocked the reserve chute handle of jump partner Jerry John out of its pocket and the reserve fell to the floor of the plane.

Wyman had Ron Lufkin--Francis's son--change places with Jerry. A second set of streamers was thrown out and Wyman decided they would jump even though it was quite windy. Cecil was the first

out on the two-man stick, followed by Ron. He estimated the wind to be about thirty mph, and when they had drifted over the spot backwards, they were still 500' in the air. Cecil was about halfway down the mountain from the jump spot when he slammed into the steep mountain side in a small clearing, narrowly missing a tall snag, and had the wind knocked out of him. He then rolled eighty-five feet down the slope. As he lay on his back catching his breath, he could see Ron at about his elevation, but dropping rapidly. He finally landed at the bottom of the mountain in willows, brush and alders.

Cecil laid out a yellow signal streamer in the shape of an "L" in the clearing, indicating to those on the Twin Beech that he was OK. (He did not have a radio.) The jump plane made a low cross-hill pass, checking on him. He then walked downhill within shouting distance of Ron, who called back that he was alright and would meet Cecil at the jump spot. Cecil went back to the clearing and laid out double "LL's" to signal that they were both in good shape.

More than two hours after jumping, they finally made it to the fire on Eight Mile Ridge. It was a small fire, about five chains around. That evening they had a C-Ration meal. Cecil found out it was Ron's birthday. He had turned twenty-one, so they celebrated with pound cake soaked in peach juice.

While they were mopping up the next day a patrol plane flew by and dropped a streamer with a message attached, which told of another fire farther up the ridge about 200 yards. This one they also controlled in short order and spent an extra day and night mopping it up. They then hiked down to a logging road and were picked up by a waiting Forest Service truck. Once back to the base they were asked where the radio was. Operations said one had been dropped with the cargo. They had not seen it.

Cecil said the last day of his rookie season was spent hiking back to the spot where the fire had been on Eight Mile Ridge, looking for the missing radio. A fellow jumper accompanied him and they located it after gridding the area. The small parachute and mini-radio had made it through the trees and dropped into brush below.

He commented that it was the windiest jump he ever made during seven years as a jumper. Looking back, he said he would have to agree with

the Missoula spotter who had commented it was too windy to jump.

(Ron Lufkin began jumping out of Cave Junction in 1960 and Jerry John in 1962. We have nothing in the Master Roster concerning Hal Wyman at this time.)

When Brian returned home, after spending four years as an Army Military Policeman, his dad was very proud when he started working on local fire crews, carrying on the family forest fire-fighting tradition. He now had someone who would listen to all of his past fire-fighting stories--all true of course. He was exceptionally pleased when Brian began training as a smokejumper during the summer of 1995 at the Missoula base. (It was now 33 years since he had made his first jump.)

BRIAN HICKS, "THE LIFE OF A LOWLY ROOKIE"



Brian Hicks, MSO 95, preparing for a practice jump out of Missoula from the Sherpa jump ship during the summer of 1995.

Photo courtesy of Brian Hicks.

I am the son of a former smokejumper and I have some very big boots to fill. I grew up listening to Dad's amazing stories of early pioneer smokejumping out of Winthrop, and later, Alaska. My thoughts were that Dad must be the luckiest man alive, to have survived all of the horrible things that happened to him through the years. He filled my impressionable head with incredible jump stories that ranged from bouncing off of piano-sized boulders on botched landing attempts to hanging on to a pulled emergency reserve handle so he wouldn't have to buy the riggers a six-pack of beer. (When I was very young, I remember him telling me that in the old days the rookies didn't use

parachutes until after the third jump, which was a timber jump. After hearing all of those stories, I decided to have a try at smokejumping myself.

About a week before Rookie Camp I remember sitting in the sunshine outside of Missoula, Montana, debating on whether or not to bring along my long underwear. "Nah," I said, "Way too nice for these." So I threw them in the "Don't Bring File". Later that week, as I helped dig miles upon miles of fireline during practice in a foot of fresh snow, I reflected back on that earlier decision with a bit of remorse. It is true what they say when you are freezing to death. You do get a kind of warm feeling toward the end.

Anyway, I survived rookie training, feeling like I got my money's worth out of it. Now all that was left was to get a fire jump so I could get some stories of my own. Unfortunately, I missed my first fire jump because of my sister's August wedding. Who get's married in August anyway? Hell, it's the middle of the fire season! I tried not to be disappointed, but my spirits continued to drop as the weeks of mediocre weather continued. How was I to get my stories this way? The most exciting thing that happened to me was a paper-cut, received while packing cargo boxes.

But luck was with me when I suddenly found myself on the way to a Redmond, Oregon fire bust. Yes, I thought, finally I'll get to stare Mr. Death in the eye and laugh at

him just like my Dad did! Finally I'll get a story.

It was a nice calm, sunny afternoon as we circled the fire. Our jump spot was about the size of Texas. We had no wind to speak of. I remember thinking, "Where are the boulders? Where's the 800 yard drift?" I couldn't believe it. This was too easy, easier than any practice jump I had ever made. I landed like a cream puff landing in a bowl of jelly. The rest of the fire was uneventful, except for a mild case of food poisoning I received from a bad can of applesauce eaten that morning.

Later, as I told my meager story to Dad, he seemed quite proud of me. He even claims to believe most of my stories, except for the one about modern-day smokejumpers actually jumping with parachutes--even the rookies. Maybe someone out there could give him a call and tell him it's true. I might have stretched the food poisoning a bit, but I wouldn't lie to him about something like that. Honest Dad, some jumpers do use parachutes these days. Ask anyone.

(Compiler's notes: The 1996 fire season was entirely different from that of 1995. Brian had more than thirteen fire jumps to his credit. Yes, Brian now has many stories to tell, to include one about hanging up in the tallest tree within fifty acres during a practice jump in the Butler Creek region of the Nine Mile country west of Missoula, so he could practice his letdown procedures. He did it quickly and flawlessly. I was there.)



Dick Courson, CJ 46, on the right, checking out Starr Jenkins, CJ 48, prior to boarding the Noorduyn Norseman for a fire jump. The jumper on the left is unidentified. Dick said that jumper once landed in the Illinois River by Cave Junction on a training jump. Dick thought he was going to drown, but he managed to get to shore. (Who is he?) Photo courtesy of Dick Courson of Pendleton, Oregon.

“TRAGEDY IN THE WIND RIVER MOUNTAINS”

On August 18, 1970 air tanker A-34, a highly modified former 4-engine B-17G bomber, registration number N1340N, with Rolls-Royce MK 510 Dart Turboprop engines, was sitting at the West Yellowstone Airfield and Smokejumper Base. The ship was owned by John and Ray Elgin of Cody, WY. Larry Nelsen, MSO 56, was the jumper base manager. He and his wife, Joyce, were good friends of the Elgin's. (Both families lived at the base that summer.) Larry had talked to the pilots during the morning as tanker A-34 sat on the ramp.

One that fateful day, Ray Elgin, age 52, was acting as chief pilot and John Bastion, age 23, of Burns, WA was copilot. Tanker A-34 was ordered out, to drop retardant on a fire on the Wind River Indian

Reservation about 80 miles south of Cody and 130 SE of West Yellowstone.

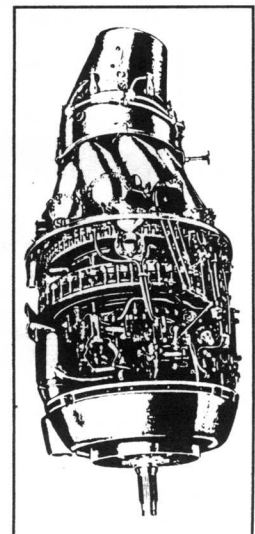
The summer of 1970 was a year of tinder-dry conditions in Northern WY and there were many large fires with erratic wind gusts up to 50 mph in places. Ray Elgin and John Bastion took off and headed for the designated drop zone. During one pass, with the pilots fighting squirrely winds, the B-17 failed to gain altitude. One wing hit a tree, ripping it off. The B-17 flipped over, crashed and exploded. Both pilots died instantly. They were two of more than 110 pilots and crew members of lead planes and aerial tankers who have died since 1958. Aircraft have improved over the years, but the role of these pilots still remains a very dangerous occupation.



B-17G, N1340N, Forest Service Air Tanker number A-34, sits on the ramp at the West Yellowstone Airstrip on August 18, 1970, the day of the fatal crash. Note the length of the Rolls-Royce MK 510 Dart Turboprop engines. (This was the only B-17 bomber that was so modified.) In the background is a Beechcraft C-45, a smokejumper plane, with the jumper base behind it.

Photo courtesy of Larry Nelsen, MSO 56, who was Base Manager at West Yellowstone for five seasons. He was a foreman later at Missoula and was a smokejumper for thirty-two seasons. He and his wife, Joyce, live a short distance north of Missoula. (He spells his “Nelsen” since he is a Norwegian.)

A picture of a Rolls-Royce MK 510 Dart Turboprop engine of the type used on Air Tanker A-34. They are 8' 1 1/2" long without the jet pipe. Originally, they were designed to power British 4-engine Vickers Viscount 800 series aircraft.



“CONTINUATION OF ILLINOIS RIVER CRASH — CAVE JUNCTION, OR — 8/2/44”

In the July newsletter, Ed. 3, Vol. 3, we mentioned the crash of a smokejumper plane in the Illinois River area, close to the Cave Junction strip in southern Oregon on 8/2/44. We asked if anyone knew about the fate of the pilot, Fred Frank. We have had a number of replies.

Cal Hilty and Ken Diller, CJ 43--trained at Missoula and were then sent as part of a C.P.S. (Civilian Public Service) contingent to what was to become the start of the Cave Junction jumper base--had been in touch with each other years after the crash, and shared their memories. (Cal now lives at Strathmore, California and Ken is at Bluffton, Ohio.)

On July 27, 1944, Cal and Ken were called to jump on a fire at Fiddlers Mountain west of Cave Junction, with Walt Ruppert as pilot of the Fairchild 71. Jack Heintzleman, CJ 43, was the

spotter. Walt Buller, CJ 43, now deceased, was along to drop the fire packs. The plane seemed sluggish and Ruppert turned back to the field. After landing, he took off the magnetos and checked them. He then proceeded to make several test flights and pronounced the Fairchild ready for operations.

It was Sunday, July 30th, when Diller and Hilty received a call to jump on a fire on Little Grayback Mountain, just over the Oregon line in California. (This may have been the first fire jump in California.) They had the fire out shortly and were picked up the next morning and returned to the Cave Junction base.

Wednesday, August 2d, two jumpers were told to suit up for a fire jump. Walt Buller and Frank Neufeld, CJ 44, boarded the Fairchild. Two other jumpers standing by grabbed the crank to



Fairchild 71, NC 189H, sitting at the Cave Junction strip in 1944. From left to right: Cal Hilty, cargo dropper; Jack Heintzleman, spotter; Jumpers Bob Painter and ___? Loeffler; pilot Walt Ruppert. (Heintzleman was living at Seattle the last we heard and Painter is at Lakeview, Michigan. We have nothing on Loeffler and Ruppert at this time.)

wind up the engine inertia and get it spinning. Pilot Fred Frank started the engine, taxied to the south end of the field, checked the mags, and took off. At about fifty feet in the air, the engine coughed and died. Cal and Ken were watching from the west side of the strip as Frank put the plane into a slight slip and landed back on the strip, about fifty feet from the end. All of those on-board were slightly shaken by the incident.

Frank drained the sediment bowl and asked spotter Jack Heintzleman, if it might be a good idea to test fly the plane before the jumpers got back in it. Jack agreed. Frank, still appearing a little shaken, taxied into position, gunned the engine several times and then took off. He was airborne within a short distance and the nose went up abruptly. Cal and Ken believe the plane rose about 300-400', and then the engine suddenly coughed and went dead. The Fairchild's left wing dropped and then the nose. The ship went into a spiral and crashed. Those watching ran to the site, but could do nothing because of the flames. About forty-five minutes later after the fire had cooled they could see Frank's charred body,

still in a sitting position within the framework. After the crash, Frank's widow asked the jumpers to look for his diamond ring, but it was never found.



The remains of the Fairchild on August 2d, 1944, shortly after it crashed just off the Cave Junction airstrip.



Cartoon from the C.P.S. pamphlet "Smokejumper", produced during the early 1940's. It is from their Smokejumper Map of the Pacific NW.

What was the cause of the crash? Cal and Ken think it might have been dirty fuel. They said Frank was a very precise mechanic. Wally Tower, long-time jumper pilot, now retired at Salem, Oregon, told us the problem might have stemmed from the design of the fuel tanks and gas lines, that Fairchild 71's could have engine failure if placed in too high an angle.

Some pilots have said that the Fairchild 71's had an almost motherly appearance about them. They were slow and cruised around 110 m.p.h., and remarks were made at times that arrows should have been painted on the sides of the fuselages to show people which way the planes were flying. Most of the 71's had 420 h.p. Pratt & Whitney Wasp engines. The wings could be folded back along the sides of the fuselage by pulling the front spar terminal fitting pins, which were connected to a handle, making the job easy. Some were seven-place and

others five-place. First built in 1929, the price at that time was \$18,900, but during the Depression year of 1931 the price was slashed to \$13,500. The 71's were described as being gentle, rugged and trustworthy. Many were used with early airlines, to include those in Alaska and Canada. They proved to be outstanding "Bush" planes. (The Travel Air's made their appearance about the same time and were used in similar type operations.)

Admiral Byrd had four aircraft with him on the Antarctica Expedition of 1928-30, and one was a Fairchild 71. One of the most famous "Glacier

Pilots" in Alaska, Bob Reeve, used one to take off from the Valdez mud flats--on skis--when hauling mountaineers and miners to glacial areas. In 1929 famed Alaska pilot Ben Eielson, along with his mechanic Earl Borland, disappeared on a flight near Siberia. That made world headlines since both Alaska and Russian aircraft were engaged in the search. After the crash site was found near North Cape, Siberia and the bodies later located, they were flown back to Alaska in a Fairchild 71.

Model 71's were workhorses and many led long and useful lives.

HIGH DRAMA ALONG THE KOYUKUK

It was after 10:15 P.M. during daylight hours of Northern Alaska in the summer of 1981. A Bureau of Land Management twin-engine Fairchild C-119 airtanker--a former U.S. Air Force paratrooper plane--was dropping rubber bladders filled with fuel to helicopter locations close to fires that were burning in that part of Alaska. The plane was about thirty miles south of Bettles Field and near the Koyukuk River, close to the village of Allakaket and 200 miles northwest of Fairbanks. One bladder, with 4,500 gallons of fuel for helicopters, had been dropped from an altitude of 400' and the plane

was now on the way to another helicopter pad near a second fire--flying at the same altitude.

The bladders, along with their 64' diameter parachutes, were seated in "rolligans" on tracks, with rollers, on the floor of the plane. When it was time to drop them, wooden chocks were removed from behind the "rolligans" and the units



were pushed out along the rollers. The rear of the plane was open.

The crew on-board the C-119 were: Pilot Ed Dugan, a former U.S. Air Force pilot who had flown F-100 fighters in Vietnam and had more than 1,500 jumps to his credit as a sky diver; and Copilot Jim Slocum, also a sky diver with more than 150 jumps. They were employed by Hawkins and Power out of Greybull, Wyoming, located about sixty miles southwest of Sheridan.

There were also four smokejumpers flying along as "cargo kickers". They were: Chris Farinetti, FBX 79, Jack Firestone, MYC 75, Jim Olson, FBX 78 and Tony Pastro, FBX 77.

As the C-119 continued on course to the second fire, number two engine (the right one) began smoking and then exploded, with fire spreading along the right boom to the tail section. Dugan contacted Bettles Field and declared an emergency. The plane began shaking and vibrating badly. The right propeller refused to feather (where the forward edges of the blades would have faced the airflow, knife-like) and was creating a considerable amount of drag. Dugan had both feet on the left rudder pedal, but the plane still wanted to yaw to the right. With the situation getting worse, Dugan told Slocum and the smokejumpers to leave the C-119. The jumpers had the new quick-opening emergency chutes that had been issued that year for the first time. From 400' it would have been impossible to use their mains. Slocum also had a quick-opening emergency chute, of the type sky divers use. The smokejumpers and Slocum bailed out and the 4,500 gal. fuel cell was ejected. They were not injured, but Pastro experienced a bad exit and a shroud line came slashing along one leg. (Slocum, who was the last one out, parachuted from an altitude of 300'.)

By this time there wasn't a chance of Dugan leaving the crippled ship. The C-119 kept dropping lower as he fought the controls. He was getting exhausted, but had to keep the plane level. It was impossible to reach Bettles Field now. Suddenly, he came up over a rise and there in front of him was the South Fork of the Koyukuk River. He picked out a sandbar where the plane was able to face into the wind and started letting down. (He did not have any flaps or wheels because the right engine also ran the electrical systems.) Dugan was worried about the landing, because C-119's were known for nose sections crumbling during belly landings and being squashed beneath the rest of the

fuselage. The plane settled, slightly nose high, and then skidded along the sandbar, but did not slide too far. However, during the last fifty feet the nose did begin to crumble and the floor beneath Dugan's feet was being peeled away. The C-119 ground to a screeching halt and Dugan exited through the cockpit top hatch, taking his camera and radio with him. The engine fire began to die down. (If the fuel cell had not been dropped, it is doubtful that Dugan would have ever reached the river. Instead, there would have been a massive explosion as the C-119 plunged into the ground.)

A helicopter in the area had already picked up the smokejumpers and Slocum. It then landed by the downed C-119 to retrieve Dugan. (They were all flown back to Fairbanks and within three days Dugan and Slocum had a new C-119 waiting for them.)

Today, it is believed that Dugan is flying for Horizon Air and Slocum for Federal Express. (If anyone knows their whereabouts, please let us know.) Slocum's wife is also a pilot, and it is believed that she was once captain of the U.S. Skydiving Team.

Chris Farinetti is now an Assistant Fire Management Officer for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service out of Lakeview, Oregon--in the south-central part of the state close to the California border. Jack Firestone is an Air Attack Officer for the BLM out of Fairbanks. Jim Olson is currently an active jumper out of Boise and Tony Pastro is still with the Alaska jumpers.

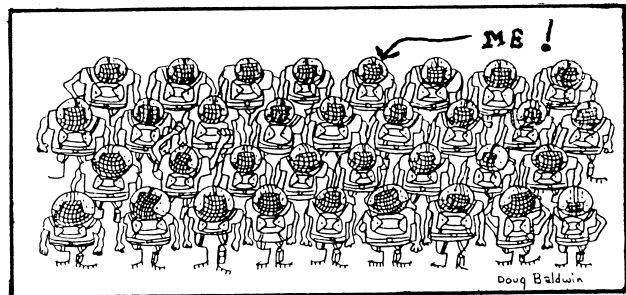
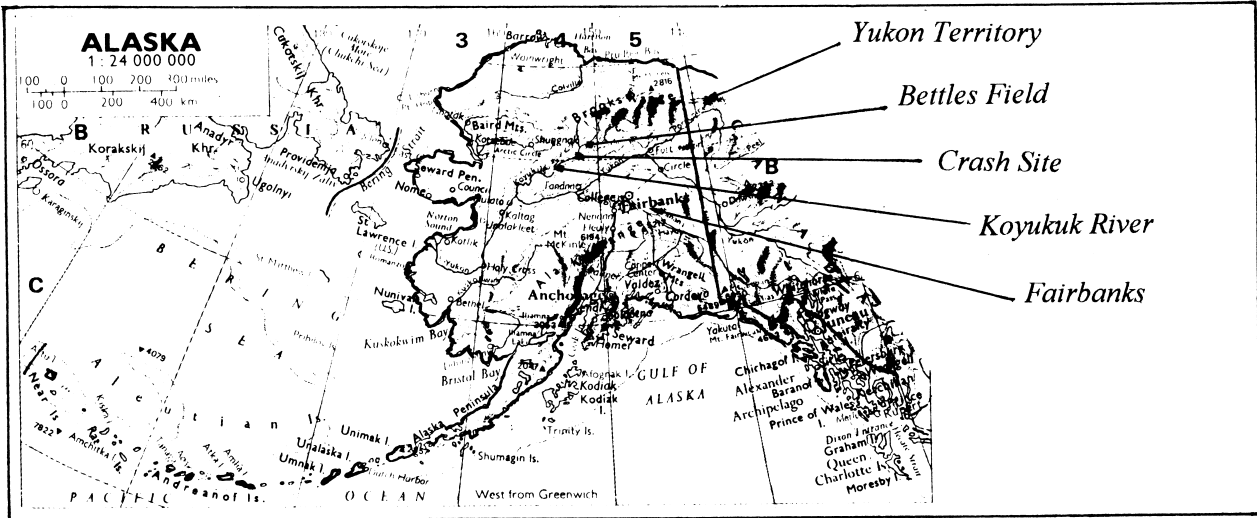
We talked to Jim and Chris about their experiences that summer's day fifteen years ago. Tom Albert, with the North Zone Aviation Operations out of Redding, filled us in on some details. Murry (There isn't an "a" after the second "r" in his first name.) Taylor, RDD 65,--an active Alaska jumper--faxed us material from Alaska newspapers that told about the incident. Ken Perkins, RDD 77, residing in Redding, also provided some information and sent us the picture of the C-119 along the Koyukuk River. Steve Nemore, RAC 69, and now a smokejumper foreman at Boise, helped with the story and briefed us as to the present locations of some of the participants. Neal Davis, MYC 69, now Base Manager at McCall, also was very helpful.

Here in Missoula Gordon "Gordy" Henson, MSO 63, showed us the approximate location of

the crash site on an aviation map of Alaska, and also helped with names and addresses of those who had been on-board the doomed plane. Eldon Askelson, USFS Region 1 Airplane Manager and pilot of both heavy and light Forest Service aircraft, and Eldon Hatch, USFS pilot also rated in both types of aircraft, helped with details leading to the crash. (Both Eldon's have been and are sky divers.)

For a long time, the wreckage of Airtanker 138

rested along the banks of the South Fork of the Koyukuk River, grim testimony to a near tragedy that could have taken six lives that summer's day in the far northern reaches of Alaska. The C-119 has since been removed and even the scars that showed where it had skidded to a stop have been erased. However, the story about Airtanker 138 and the men who were on it that fateful day will live on in the annals of Alaska aviation and smokejumper history.



Cartoon courtesy of Dayton Grover, MSO 55. It was designed by Doug Baldwin who created a number of them about smokejumpers. He had been a cook at the dining hall at the Missoula Base in the 1960's. Dayton mentioned that Baldwin had also been a disk jockey at a local Missoula radio station. There will be more about Baldwin's cartoons in future newsletters. We had been told that he is in one of the eastern states but have not been able to track him down. Does anyone know his location?



SILK STORIES: Fractured Fables From the Fireline

by **Scott Belknap, MYC 83, an Active Missoula Jumper**

The 1996 fire season is reluctantly drawing to a close. It has been one of the longest, drawn-out seasons I can remember. We started at the end of April in Silver City, New Mexico. As I write (mid October), we are still going at a steady pace. I spent so much time away from home this season, I thought I was a Boise BLM "Gypsy Jumper".

About midsummer, my wife pointed out that I had not been home more than two nights in a row. She referred to the second night as "*a Bonus Night*." Such is the life of a smokejumper and the ones we leave behind. When I am home I make an effort to help. Since I am often home for only eight hours, I've gotten pretty good at mowing the lawn and cleaning up after the dogs with a headlight on. I even clean the tub after washing off the "*black leg*". And, I offer to pay the bills during my short visits.

As I made that offer in August, my wife fidgeted nervously and said, "I made a rather expensive phone call that I'm a bit embarrassed about." "Oh yeah?" I commented, thinking that she had lost track of time while talking to her sister back east. "Why don't you tell me about it."

"Well," she said, "I have a new *psychic friend*." "What does that mean?" I asked. "I called the Psychic Friends Network...thought it was a free call. It was very confusing...but the call cost \$63."

Now I know there is no one for her to talk to when we are gone, and fire seasons go on forever. So I played along and asked if she had found out how much overtime I would make this year. "No," she responded. I then asked if she had found out where my next fire dispatch would be and when. "No."

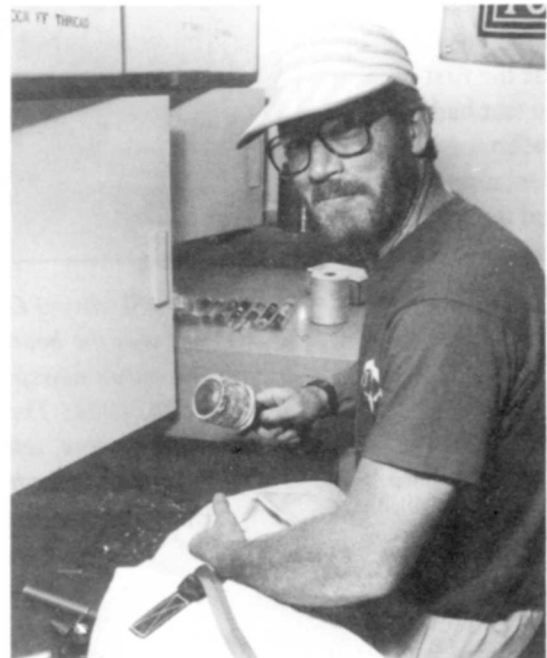
My next question was whether she knew if we would go to California this fall. "No!" she exclaimed.

I ran out of questions at this point and it became obvious that I would need a *psychic friend* if I was to ever discover the purpose of the call.

The next day brought another fire call and I relayed this tale during the "jump story" session that night. "You will never believe what my wife did," was the intro to my story. That of course got everyone's attention. She made a \$63 phone call to the Psychic Friends..." I was immediately cut off by another jumper who thought he had heard the story before. "She called the Psychic *Pet* Network, didn't she?" he blurted. "No," I replied, "she called the Psychic *Friends* Network. What is the Psychic Pet Network?"

He then related a story about an Alaska jumper who's wife had called the Psychic Pet Network about a family dog.

It suddenly hit me, that for all the time my wife is left alone, a \$63 Psychic Friend isn't all that bad. I wonder if there is a Psychic *Jump Story* Friend Network?



SCOTT BELKNAP AT WORK AT
AT THE MISSOULA BASE, 1994.
Photo courtesy of Scott Belknap.
Just after this picture was taken,
Scott hit his thumb with the "hammer".

GORDON "GORDY" HENSON, MSO 63, AND FBX

The Montana University's (now known as the University of Montana) newspaper, the "Montana Kaimin", on Jan. 16, 1964 had an interesting account about three members of the University's Silvertip Skydivers. One of the three was Gordon "Gordy" Henson, a sophomore from Black Eagle, Montana. The other two were Eddie Sugg, a former Montana Univ student from Raleigh, North Carolina and Wayne Kubasko, a junior from Youngstown, Ohio. The title of the article was: "Three Skydivers Complete Difficult Double Baton Pass". It was the first time the feat had been performed in Montana. (Gordy said the 12" baton was painted bright red so they would not lose sight of it in the sky.)

The date was Jan. 5th and it was -12 degrees as the Cessna 180 climbed to 10,000' above Hamilton, Montana, about forty-five miles south of Missoula. Gordy, carrying the baton, dove from the plane, and was followed immediately by Sugg and Kubasko. Gordy had reached a speed of 120 mph. Sugg maneuvered himself to within a few feet of Gordy, who passed him the baton. Kubasko had been falling directly above them, and after the first pass was made, changed his body position and

attained a speed of 200 mph. When he reached Sugg, Kubasko faced him, and the second pass was completed. The entire process took thirty seconds of a forty-five second delayed fall. Single baton passes during free falls were considered difficult, but the three-man pass was very rare.



"Three Skydivers Complete Difficult Double Baton Pass" was the heading of an article in Montana University's newspaper, the "Montana Kaimin" on Jan. 16, 1964. The three members of the Silvertip Skydivers were, left to right: Eddie Sugg, Gordy Henson, and Wayne Kubasko. It was the first time for the feat in Montana--January 5, 1964.

Gordy is currently Helicopter Program Manager, U.S.F.S., Region 1 (Inspector Pilot and Check Airman), a position he has held since 1989. He began skydiving in 1961, the year he graduated from high school in Great Falls, Montana.

Gordy began his F.S. career working in the Kelly Creek Dist. of the Clearwater N.F. during 1962.

He rookieed at the Missoula base in 1963 and was a rigger during the 1964 and 1965 seasons.

In the 1960's he was a U.S. Army helicopter mechanic

on CH-21 and CH-47 types.

From Dec. 1967 to Dec. 1968 he served as a helicopter pilot in Vietnam, and during 1969-71 as a helicopter instructor pilot at Fort Walters, Texas.

After leaving military service, Gordy became an aerial photographer for the U.S.F.S. from 1971 to 1973. Then it was back into the smoke-jumpers, this time in Alaska with the Bureau of

Land Management, from 1974 through 1977, rising to the position of Operations Foreman.

Gordy was involved with the OAS (Office of Aircraft Service) from 1971-79, as a pilot of both helicopters and fixed-wing aircraft, which included flying in Alaska, among other areas, on whale, polar bear and wolf surveys. He flew far out along the Aleutian Chain, one of the "storm factories" of the world.

He had a change of pace during one four-month period in 1979-80, operating and flying helicopters with a tour operation in Hawaii. Then it was back to the OAS as a pilot from 1980-82.

During 1982-87 Gordy was with ERA Helicopters in Alaska and Jamaica, flying nine different helicopter models.

In 1987-88 he served with the BLM as an Aircraft Technical Specialist out of Sacramento, and later in 1988 was a helicopter pilot for the State of Montana.

That brings us down to his present position, which was mentioned earlier in this article. No, Gordy has not retired yet. His stories of past experiences would truly fill a book. In another newsletter we will include one of his special hair-raising experiences.

CHUTE THE BREEZE



We have a number of stories on hand for future newsletters, along with photos, and much material for the "Chute The Breeze" section. If you are not mentioned in this newsletter (nor in past issues), do not give up hope. Your stories will be included in the future. Keep the stories and photos coming.

In the 14th newsletter, which will be mailed out in January, we will have a summary of activities for the past summer for all of the bases. Scott Belknap will help in that area.

We were asked by several Missoula jumpers to include this announcement: Smokejumper Safari. Baja, Mexico, Winter of 1997. Rest and Reconnoiter For Possible Smokejumper Safe House. Investors And Participants Welcome. Contact Mike "Gizmo" Waldron or Steve "Mad Dog" Williams at: 248A N. Higgins, Missoula, MT 59802. (A "Safe House" is a place used for meetings, gatherings, retirement, vacations, etc., such as those locations used for concealment by CIA agents, secret police, smokejumpers, and the like.)

In a Newsweek issue this summer there was a story about some Missoula jumpers and fire fighting in the Southwest. Gizmo was mentioned. He had been hit by lightning in the foot and it came out his tongue. The moral of this story, according to jumpers, is to keep your mouth open when around lightning so as to prevent it from blasting out your teeth should it exit from your tongue. Joey "Death" Chandler was also referred to in the publication. The article used the term "smoke jumpers". We wrote to Newsweek and mentioned that, while dictionaries use two words

for the term, we use "smokejumpers" in the field.

We now have members of the Association in every state except Delaware, Rhode Island and West Virginia. They are also in Australia, the Fiji Islands, Saudi Arabia, Bulgaria, Bosnia, Norway, Uruguay, Yukon Territory, British Columbia and Alberta. One had been in China until recently.

The Safety Harbor Fire--1970 out of Lake Chelan in Washington--has been put on hold for now. It will definitely be in a future issue of the newsletter. As mentioned before, this has to be one of the most hilarious episodes in the history of smokejumping--fifty jumpers were involved.

We hope to have a story in the January newsletter featuring Phil Brollier and his son Jake. They made three fire jumps together this summer out of the Boise base. We believe this is a first in smokejumper history.

Danny O'Rourke, CJ 46, sent us a copy of his National Parachute Jumpers-Riggers, Inc. card. This was an assoc. affiliated with the National Aeronautic Association. Danny wondered if such an organization still exists and whether anyone else has such a card. Let us know.

E-mail letters have been coming in to us. Keep it up (smokejumpers@marsweb.com).

We have been in touch with the Pararescue Association out of Albuquerque, NM. There is a picture of one of our members in their recently published book. It is Dr. Amos Little, MSO 43, who trained with Missoula jumpers as a pararescue doctor during WW II, and is now living at Helena, MT. We will have more about that organization in January.

CHUTE THE BREEZE: THROUGH THE DECADES

Hal Samsel, MSO 49: Hal was one of eight jumpers from Missoula who were dispatched to West Yellowstone in a Tri-motor on Aug. 3, 1949. Only six were needed for three reported fires. One jumper claimed to be #4 on the jump list, but a check showed that Hal was #4. He and Warren "Short" Hall, MSO 49, dropped on the second fire. The third one was not located and the two jumpers scheduled for it returned to West Yellowstone and then flew back to the Missoula base, along with the other two who were still at the West Yellowstone base. All four of those jumpers died in the Mann Gulch Fire north of Helena, Montana on Aug. 5th. Hal came very close to being one of them.

Ed Case, MYC 46: In 1946 Ed had a streamer and used his emergency chute on the James Creek Fire. A shoulder harness connection had come loose. On his third training jump Bruce Froman, MYC 46, walked across the top of his chute and fell through Ed's shroud lines. Ed offered to cut some of his own lines but Bruce managed to swing free. Bruce had been a WW II parachute rigger. (Where is he at today?)

Greg Whipple, MSO 59: Greg has been vacationing in the city of Salvador and surrounding area, in the State of Bahia, Brazil during the last part of January and early February the past two years. His wife Rosalie went with him the 1st year. Greg caught pneumonia that time and they had to return early to the states. This year Greg went alone. Rosalie wanted him to check things out. Greg said the people are really friendly. They speak Portuguese and he speaks Spanish, but things worked out he commented. He told of a moonlight ride on a horse along the beach, at a full gallop. It was the "hottest" horse he has been on. Gregg said, down there, the smaller the cup the stronger the coffee.

Gordon Kellog, CJ 57: Gordon wrote to discuss an article we had in the January '96 newsletter, where it was mentioned that he had the 1st lost-time accident in 1961 at Cave Junction--broken foot during a let-down from a tree in the Umpqua N.F. His chute was draped over the top of it (more than 200' tall). He had only a 100' let-down rope. His letter was really hilarious. He asked that a copy of his letter be sent to Jim Oleson, CJ 53, at Kalispell, MT, which we did. Gordon said he had not planned on landing in the top of that tree. He sent copies of pictures too.

Bob Kline, RDD 65: Bob wrote on his Smokejumper Profile sheet that he is a former KGB agent.

Bern Shanks, MSO 62: Bern is now Washington State's Fish and Wildlife Director. He and his family live in Olympia, Washington. Bern is an ex-Marine.

Murry Taylor, RDD 65: Murry, an active jumper in Alaska, said he is writing a book. The title is: **BRAVE AND CRAZY INNOCENCE**. The Alaska Smokejumpers. Murry has been in the jumpers for thirty-one years.

Bill Newlun, MYC 70: Bill said he was the World's Best Dressed Smokejumper--1970-84-- and that you would have had to been there to enjoy it. (Check with Bill as to the meaning of his description.)

Bob McCann, CJ 76: Bob and his wife moved to the Fiji Islands from Seychelles (a country of many islands in the Indian Ocean) in early 1995. He is Deputy General Manager of the Pacific Fishing Co., which is a fishing and tuna processing company located on the small island of Ovalau, just off the coast from Suva and east of Australia.

Dan Hernandez, RDD 85, and Steve Murphy, RDD 88, are both active Redding jumpers and each has had the experience of jumping out of a Dornier aircraft. Dan has jumped from eight different types of planes and Steve seven.

Bill Cramer, BIFC 90: Bill jumped out of Boise from 1990-93 and out of Alaska from 1994 to the present. During this past fire season he chased a good-sized black bear out of camp early in the morning while he was stark naked and armed only with pepper spray. He was in charge of a twenty-man jumper crew on fire A-321. He said the bear left the area at a full run, sneezing violently and leaving a slippery trail, but the jumpers' breakfast was saved.

Paige Taylor, FBX 95: Paige had a very close rendezvous with destiny this past summer. She is an Alaska jumper and had been detailed to the Winthrop, Washington base during the height of the fire season there. Then, she was dispatched with others to Redding when things got very hot in that area. On July 28 Paige, along with ten other BLM jumpers, parachuted to a fire on the Klamath National Forest in northern California near Yreka. (The BLM jumpers use manually deployed RAM-AIR parachutes instead of static lines.) Suspension lines in her Main became entangled, causing a "tension knot". She was falling about thirty feet per second, spinning and spinning, but managed to cut her Main away--standard procedure in such an incident--and deployed her emergency. However, she was then 700 feet above the ground and too close for it to fully open. She said, "I could see the ground coming up pretty fast and when I hit the trees and crashed through them I just tried to remember to do a good roll when I hit the ground." Luckily, she hit the trees, but still suffered two fractured vertebrae and an ankle. She is back at work as a dispatcher for the Okanogan National Forest in Washington out of Winthrop and plans on jumping again next year. We talked to Paige at her job there recently and she is recovering nicely. We also talked to Tom Boatner, Alaska Base Manager, FBX 88, and he had high praise for her. Paige is from Plains, Montana and plans to return to college in the spring to finish her degree in athletic training before returning to Alaska as a jumper during the 1997 fire season.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP

NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION

MISSION ACCOMPLISHMENT

The NSA Board of Directors approved the Life Membership to provide the NSA with the opportunity to raise funds to begin the establishment a Smokejumper Museum. Our members may now choose a \$1000 Life Membership because they want to give something extra and are committed to the preservation of smokejumper history and memorabilia for future generations.

ALLOCATION AND MANAGEMENT OF THE LIFE MEMBERSHIP FUNDS

The \$1000 Life Membership funds will be utilized in the following manner. The members will be allowed to take a \$750 Tax deduction. The balance of \$250 is conceded as dues and considered non-deductible by the IRS. The management of the \$250 dues portion will be as follows: The first \$100 will go into the general yearly operational funds with the balance of \$150 to be deposited into a permanent trust fund and with only the interest used in the general operation of the association.

MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS

- ◆ Lifetime subscription to the newsletter - The Static Line
- ◆ Engraved Life Member Plaque
- ◆ Laminated wallet size membership card
- ◆ Name engraved on perpetual plaque displayed in the museum
- ◆ \$750 Tax Deduction
- ◆ 10 % discount on NSA Merchandise

PAYMENT OPTIONS

You have the option to pay the entire amount at one time. Or, you may choose the option of \$250 down and making three \$250 quarterly payments. Note: the first \$250 will be considered the non-deductible portion of your membership. Any amount over the first \$250 paid will be allowed as the tax deduction. However only the actual amount paid in a given year may be deducted in that year. The quarterly option will be interest free. In the event, you choose the quarterly option, and discontinue any portion of the payments before the \$1000 is paid in full all payments received will be considered a donation and will not be refunded. The five and ten year members will be allowed to apply their original payment to the non-deductible dues portion during the balance of 1996 and 1997. This allowance will be included as a part of the normal operation funds.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name _____ Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Base Trained _____ Years Jumped _____
Payment Plan: _____ \$1000 one-time payment. _____ \$250 down, \$250 per quarter.
Deduct 5-year membership _____ . 10- year membership _____ .
Signature _____ Date _____ Check number _____

NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION MERCHANDISE

NSA - BELT BUCKLE: Solid bronze with NSA logo (Tri-motor, Eagle and FS-12 Chutes with Smokejumpers descending into mountain background).

Size: 2 3/4" x 2 1/4". Buckles are serially numbered.

Cost: \$25.00 each, plus \$3.50 shipping and handling.

NSA - Key Tag: Solid bronze with set of wings, parachute, and pine tree in foreground ("new man" pin). Size: 1 1/2" x 2" oval shape

Cost: \$8.00 each, plus \$3.50 shipping and handling.

NSA - Coffee Mug: 10oz. Durable clear glaze Ironstone in off-white color set of wings, parachute and green pine tree in foreground.

Cost: \$6.00 each, plus \$3.50 shipping and handling.

NSA - Cap: Embroidered set of wings, parachute and green pine tree in foreground. National Smokejumper wording above emblem.

Cost: \$11.00 each, plus shipping and handling.

Items ordered

quantity	item	price	total price

Shipping and handling* _____

Total amount of order _____

Check number _____

*1st item @ \$3.50 add \$1.25 for each additional item.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ **State** _____ **Zip** _____

Phone _____

Advertisers: Please write or call for ad rates for the newsletter.

NSA, P. O. Box 4081, Missoula, Mt. 59806-4081

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SUPPORT OUR ADVISERS

JUMPING SKYWARD

BY STAN TATE

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Your personal experiences in the forests will be renewed as you travel through Northwest forests with Stan Tate, a former smokejumper and Episcopal Priest. He has divulged the elevated, (exalted), feelings smokejumpers enjoy, parachuting into the 'biocathedral' found only in the wilderness.

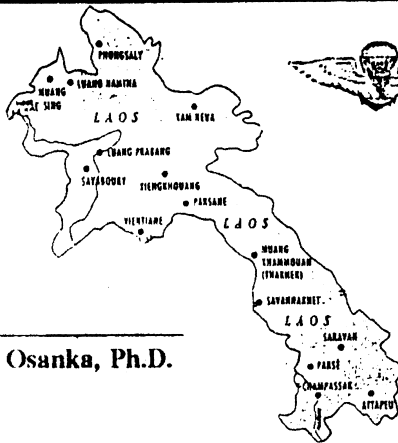
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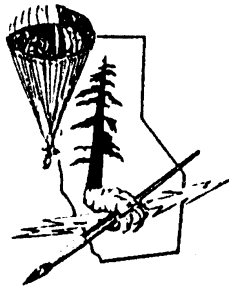


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