

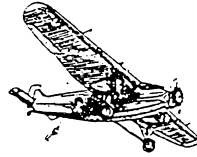


**THE STATIC LINE
NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER
ASSOCIATION**

P.O. BOX 4081
Missoula, Montana 59806-4081

Tel. (406) 549-9938

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THE STATIC LINE

The Static Line Staff

Compiler: Jack Demmons

Editor: Carl Gidlund

Advisory Staff: Don Courtney, Art Jukkala, Roger Savage

Computer Operators: Phil Davis, Scott Belknap, Jack Demmons, Nichole Llewellyn

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Last year at this time I mentioned that several of our members had expressed interest in becoming more involved in their Association. I am pleased to write that a significant number have, indeed, volunteered to work with their N.S.A. in a variety of ways, including submission of excellent articles for the Newsletter; locating "lost" members; volunteering for several committees; giving valuable input into the overall operations of the Association; purchase of, and setting up our new computer, and allowing their names to be placed in nomination for election to the N.S.A. Board of Directors.

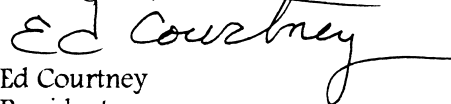
Last year ten individuals stepped forward and ran for the five three-year positions up for election on the Board. Once again the call is out for nominations to fill more seats on our Board. Within the inserts of this Newsletter is a discussion of the position as a Director of the N.S.A., and a nomination form. The membership is encouraged to continue to express that desire to participate in the governance of its Association by nominating a willing candidate.

The next regular annual meeting of the N.S.A. Board of Directors is scheduled for Friday, April 4, 1997, from 8:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. The meeting will be held in Missoula at a location yet to be determined.

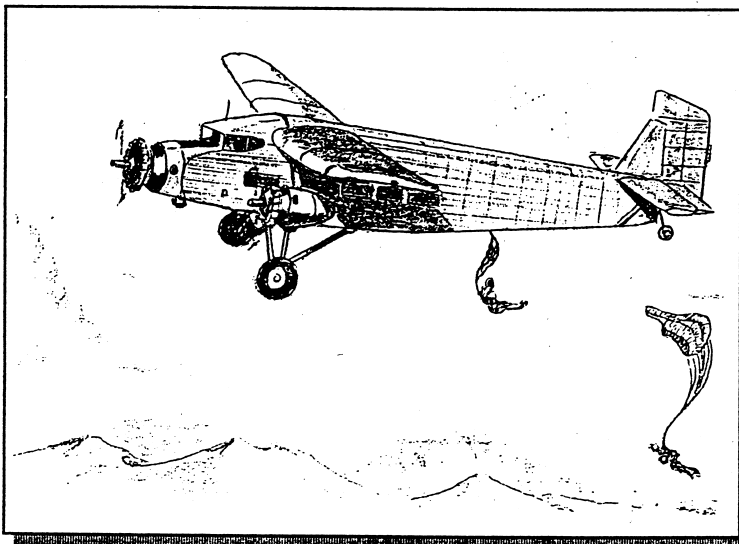
This New Year will, undoubtedly, be an active one for your Association Board of Directors. The goal of establishing a Smokejumper Museum is ongoing, as is the development of a video on the History of Smokejumping. There are still several thousand names of former smokejumpers for which we have no addresses. We continue to seek their whereabouts. Your help in these, and other Association activities will be welcome.

On behalf of your N.S.A. Executive Committee and Board of Directors I wish our members and their families a healthful, happy 1997.

Best Regards,



Ed Courtney
President



*A drawing of a Ford Tri-Motor with smokejumpers exiting,
by Ken Morris.*

Ken is an associate member, currently residing at Duarte, California.

He was with the 12th Air Rescue Squadron from 1952-1956 and was stationed at Bordeaux, France with the U.S.A.F., which was a refueling base for transit aircraft. Also, fighter squadrons based in Germany flew to the area where they conducted gunnery and bombing exercises over the ocean. Ken was involved in patrol work over the French coast. The 12th Air Rescue Squadron utilized Douglas C-47's, Grumman SA-16 amphibians and Sikorsky H-19 helicopters. Ken has also been involved in sport jumping. He has a very large collection of parachuting memorabilia.

NEW MEMBERS

Note: This listing of new members includes those who joined between October 16th, 1996 and January 10th, 1997. Those who joined after January 10th will be mentioned in the 15th Newsletter, which will be mailed out late in April 1997. Should names be misspelled, or addresses be incorrect or changed, please let us know as soon as possible.

NAME	ADDRESS	BASE	1ST YEAR
Alexander, James	548 Fearrington Post, Fearrington Village, NC 27312	MSO	40
Allen, James "Jim" C.	1790 Sw 23rd, Redmond, OR 97756	NCSB	46
Arpino, Bill	Box 111, Tok, AK 99780	FBX	64
Bente, Robert B.	1602 French Lace Ln., Redding, CA 96003	RDD	88
Congleton, Victor	3075 Whitbeck Blvd., Eugene, OR 97405	CJ	67
Cote, Gary A.	Box 215, Ronan, MT 59864	CJ	74
Dougherty, Michael	980 Crestview Ct., Yucaipa, CA 92399	RDD	67
Fuchs, Fred	3836 Tammy Ct., Los Lunas, NM 87031	Associate Pilot	
Klingel, Jon	RR7 Box 126X, Sante Fe, NM 87505-9004	CJ	65
Maxon, Warren	2712 Beagle Pathway, Palm Harbor, FL 34683-6405	RAC	66
Maxwell, Harold "Jim" J.	4711 Pebble Bay Circle, Vero Beach, FL 32963	CJ	55
Owen, David	P.O. Box 4802, Stockton, CA 95204	RAC	66
Pierce, Porter L.	11500 NE 76th St. #A3-56, Vancouver, WA 98662	Associate Pilot	
Schroedel, Daniel	P.O. Box 147, Plains, MT 59859	MSO	57
Shelton, Philip	Clinch Valley College, Wise, VA 24293	MSO	57
Terry, Dennis	6101 Airport Rd. Redding, CA 96002	RDD	90
Walkup, Robert	15300 SW Springdale Ct., Beaverton, OR 97007	MSO	50

N.S.A LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

In the October 1996 Newsletter the opportunity for members to apply for Life Memberships in the N.S.A was announced. To date, the following have been accepted as Life Members: Fred O. Brauer, MSO '41; Charles (Chuck) Fricke, MSO '61; Joseph (Joe) J. Gutkoski, MSO '50; Tom Kovalicky, MSO '61; Michael (Mike) D. McCullough, MSO '56; and Robert (Bob) Quillin, FBX '71.

We again mention the purpose and terms of our Life Memberships. Application forms are located within the inserts of this Newsletter.

LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

The N.S.A. 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. 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-deductible, 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 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.

NAME	BASE	YEAR	COMMENTS
Allen, Russell (Rusty)	RAC	65	Rusty died 7/11/89 when the helicopter he was piloting for Pacific Helicopters International collided with another helicopter over the western part of the Gulf of Mexico. He is survived by three sons: Jason, Russell Jr., and Cody. He had been a Marine Corps officer and flew more than 50 medivac missions in Vietnam with Boeing CH- 46 helicopters during 1970. Rusty is buried at his hometown of Durant, Oklahoma, in the southeastern part of the state and about 20 miles from the Texas border. He was Warren's best friend. This information was received from Warren Maxon, RAC 66.
Click, Alviene	CJ	53	We do not have any information relating to Alviene's death.
Childers, John	CJ	60	We do not have any details about John's death.
Healam, Charles "Chuck"	NCSB	79	Chuck died in early December of this year while topping trees under a Forest Service contract in the Deschutes National Forest of Oregon out of Redmond. It is believed there was some kind of equipment failure and Chuck fell at least 60' on his head. He was born in Twisp, WA 8/25/50 and had been a Smokejumper for 10 years. Chuck is buried at Twisp.
Pierce, Jim	FBX	69	Jim passed away in the Alturas, CA area in 1978. He had been working on a ranch. We do not have any other details at this time.
Sweet, Donald (Don) V.	MSO	52	Don died of cancer at his Glen Arm, Maryland home on November 8, 1996 at the age of 64. His widow, Doris, said he had been very fond of his Forest Service days as a smokejumper. (He was at our 1995 Reunion in Missoula.) Don was born in Kelso, WA and graduated from Washington College in the late 1950's and received a masters degree from American University in 1976, and a second bachelor's degree in 1993 from the University of Maryland. He began work for the Social Security Admin. in 1956 at Walla Walla, WA, later transferring to Woodland and retired in 1987 as an information specialist. After his retirement Don ran a family-owned rental business and was very involved in community activities and edited newsletters for the many organizations he supported. His widow said: "He just seemed to always enjoy himself and life...He lived life to the fullest." His daughter Nancy Bushover said: "He never went to the posh places; he'd go to the places where there was no water and no way to reach him." Don was a member of the N.S.A.

A special Psalm was prepared for Don's funeral. The title was "A Forest Fire Fighter's Psalm..." Part of it reads as follows: "The Lord is my parachute. I shall glide safely to earth...You have given me tools that are more than adequate: as the blaze storms on and smoke drifts to the sky: thicker than the black pitch of night: you fill me with stamina which overflows. I know that goodness and mercy shall always be with me, and will be with me in the last parachute jump from his realm to the life that comes. Thanks be to the Holy One, the Giver, the giver of all life. Amen."



A Johnson Flying Service Travel Air sitting at the former airstrip north of Seeley Lake, Montana during practice parachute jumps in 1941.

Left to Right: Fred Brauer, Roy Matson, Pilot Dick Johnson and Parachute Specialist and Smokejumper Instructor Frank Derry. Fred lives in Missoula. We do not know the whereabouts of Roy Matson. Dick Johnson died in the crash of a Travel Air south of Jackson, Wyoming in March 1945 and Frank Derry is deceased.

Photo courtesy of Fred Brauer.

“EARLY SMOKEJUMPER HISTORY”

by Earl Cooley, MSO '40

In the fall of 1939, a group of “barnstormers” was dropped into timbered areas on the Chelan National Forest to determine the feasibility of dropping fire fighters by parachute to combat forest fires. This original crew of barnstormers included Frank Derry as instructor, Chet Derry, Virgil Derry, Glen Smith, Richard Tuttle, and Allan Honey. Francis Lufkin, a Forest Service employee, made one jump during the last part of the experiment. This experiment proved to be very successful and it was decided that Reg. 6 and Reg. 1 would each have a small group of jumpers to continue the experiment in 1940.

Reg. 6 built their crew around a nucleus of the original barnstormer, with Francis Lufkin and George Honey (Allan Honey's brother) being trained to jump out of Winthrop, Washington, along with Glenn Smith and Virgil Derry during the summer of 1940.

Richard Tuttle and Allan Honey dropped out of the program in the fall of 1939, as they were not Forest Service employees.

Reg. 1 had sent Rufus Robinson from the Nez Perce Forest over to take his training at Winthrop, Washington and be available to go to Moose Creek and start construction on a parachute loft. Rufus came back to Seeley Lake and made one demonstration jump on the Seeley Lake Airport and went on into Moose Creek to start work on the loft building.

As Reg. 1 was to select one key fire guard from each of the seven forests; this left Jim Waite from the Clearwater Forest, Jim Alexander from the Old Cabinet Forest, Bill Bolen from the Kootenai Forest, Dick Lynch from the Flathead Forest, Leonard Hamilton from the Lolo Forest, and myself from the

Bitterroot Forest. Chet Derry was to be the parachute rigger for the Reg. 1 crew. Frank Derry was retained to serve both regions.

When we reported to Fort Missoula to take the regular Cadet Physical, Leonard Hamilton was diagnosed as having an enlarged heart and had to drop out. Bill Bolen made three training jumps and decided to drop out for personal reasons. On his first jump, he free fell almost a third of the distance to the ground before he pulled his rip cord. This may have influenced his decision to drop out. Jim Alexander had caught his arm in the load lines of his

chute and got a bad sprain, so he missed several of his training jumps. Dick Lynch had pulled his legs up on a strong wind jump and landed on his tail bone and missed several jumps. However, by July 10, 1940, we went into Moose Creek. Jim Waite and I had 10 jumps each and Jim Alexander and Dick Lynch were to finish their training after we got to Moose Creek whereas Chet

Derry and Rufus Robinson had made all their training jumps. They left six jumpers at Moose Creek Ranger Station for the summer. We were bunked in the Ranger's dwelling since his family did not come in that season.

Merle Lundrigan (not a jumper at that time) went in as squad leader for the summer. However, Merle made 3 training jumps in the spring of 1941, before he was called into the service. George Case, the Moose Creek Ranger, was selected as project leader. He had spent some time during training with the jumpers at Seeley Lake to familiarize himself with the jumping process.

(Early Smokejumper History by Earl Cooley will be continued in future editions of The Static Line.)



Left to Right: Frank Derry, Chet Derry, Pilot Harold King, and Allen Honey at Winthrop, 1939. Photo Credit: U.S. Forest Service

“RESCUE JUMP, OCTOBER 1949”

During October 1949 a call came into the Missoula jumper base at Hale Field, requesting aid in the search for a H.C. Davis, age 64, of El Dorado, MO, a businessman, who had disappeared from his hunting camp sixteen miles from the Moose Creek Ranger Station in the Nez Perce N.F. He had left the camp on a Friday morning and by the following Thursday was still missing.

Missoula jumpers boarded a Johnson Flying Service C-47 and were soon airborne. The jump area was a very rough one, according to Chuck Pickard, one of the jumpers. He said it looked pretty green, with an overstory of young reproduction. However, under the greenery was one terrible field of criss-crossed timber, burned stumps and heavy brush. Some of the jumpers were bruised and shaken up, with Jerry Linton and George King hurt the most.

Prior to selecting a jump spot, two jumpers had bailed out because of a misunderstanding. Fred Brauer, one of the foremen, who was spotting, touched Dick Pennington's leg, with the idea of having him move back out of the door so he could see the ground. Dick took this to mean jump, and he quickly exited the C-47. Lyle Grenager was the #2 man and right behind Dick and left quickly also. The aircraft was quite low when they jumped. (While talking to Fred about this, he was laughing so hard we had to take a break and have a beer.) They landed some distance from the designated jump spot and had a good hike to reach the others.

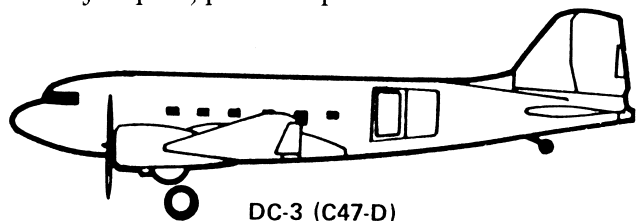
Once on the ground, Chuck Pickard told the jumpers he and Herb Oertli would handle the cooking, because he was sick of the slop being prepared by people who couldn't boil water. (Chuck had a shirt with three stripes on it, which was fitting for a "Mess Sergeant" and a former Marine.)

The other twelve jumpers had been "gridding" the area where Davis' tracks were last seen. An

unusual incident occurred when the second campfire Davis had set was found on a Saturday night by search hounds. The man's shirt, a glove and his gun were located. One of the two flashlights the men had - who were handling the hounds - went out. So one hound was released to go on his own. The handlers believed he would come upon Davis and give out warning howls. Instead, the hound came upon the trail of the packer who was returning Davis' gun to the hunting camp, and took the "fresh scent" to the camp - he took the "hot" trail.

In the end, Moose Creek Ranger Jack Parsell found tracks leading up Pettibone Creek, followed them a quarter of a mile, and came upon the exhausted hunter just before dark. Davis was too weak to continue on. He was carried on an improvised stretcher to the hunting camp. From that point, the jumpers used a special Stokes Stretcher, with a wheel mounted under it, and carried Davis some sixteen miles to the Moose Creek Station. As Chuck said, "Only jumpers could have handled the detail. There were narrow trails, high drop-offs on one side, creeks that had to be crossed, and the victim had to be checked from time-to-time." The wheeled stretcher was a godsend. (During the days when used, they were dropped by parachutes in two loads and then assembled on the ground.)

Jerry Linton and George King were flown out of Moose Creek because of the beating they took on landing. Bill Wood and Al Cramer were leaders of the jumper search party and were year-round employees. Most of the jumpers had been finished for the season and a number of them were back in college, but all volunteered for the rescue mission. Volunteers all, in the best tradition of smokejumpers, past and present.



DC-3 (C47-D)



Rescue Mission, October 1949

Pictured in front of one of the Johnson Flying Service's Douglas C-47's are, from left to right: Al "Jack" King (?); Dick Pennington, kneeling; Lloyd "Chuck" Pickard; Lyle Grenager, in background with cap; Gar Thorsrud; Herb Oertli; Jim Murphy; Cal (?) Thompson; Jesse Parkins; Bill Wood, with hat; George King (?); Glenn Smith, in door of plane; Al Cramer; Jerry Linton, kneeling; and Al Hammond. Picture courtesy of Chuck Pickard, MSO 48.

Where are they now? We do not have addresses for Al "Jack" King, '47; George King, '48; Jesse G. Parkins, '48; and Calvin "Cal" Thompson, '46. They are among the "missing". Al Cramer, '43, Herb Oertli, '48, Dick Pennington, '48, and Glenn "Smitty" Smith, one of the first experimental jumpers out of Winthrop in 1939, are deceased. Lyle Grenager, '47, lives up Lolo Creek south of Missoula; Al Hammond, '46, resides in the Polson, Montana area; Jerry Linton, '48, is in Spokane, Washington; Lloyd "Chuck" Pickard, '48, lives in the Grand Rapids, Minnesota region during the summers and "bugs out" for Vero Beach, Florida during the winters; Gar Thorsrud, '46 resides at Tucson, Arizona; Bill Wood lives at Beaverton, Oregon, close to Portland.

E-MAIL: Our e-mail address is: smokejumpers@marsweb.com Keep those messages coming. We have received many to date and they are appreciated.

“PHIL BROLLIER, BIFC ‘71 and JACOB J. BROLLIER, RDD ‘95, FATHER and SON”

Phil began jumping out of Boise in 1971 and was in the Smokejumpers three years. He then left the jumpers for twenty years, to raise a family and work full-time at the Vernon J. Brollier Insurance Agency that his dad had started in Boise some years earlier.

His boys, Justin and Jake, grew up into manhood and followed his footsteps fighting fires. Jake began as a smokejumper out of Redding in 1995 and Justin has worked on a Hotshot crew and wants to also be a smokejumper.

Phil kept in shape during the time he left the jumpers in 1973. His sons began coming home with “war stories” of their own from fighting fires. He decided it was time to rejoin the jumpers and did so in 1991, jumping out of Redmond for one year. He transferred to Boise in 1992 and is still jumping.

He continues on in the family insurance business during winters, taking care of client risks, and engages in his own risks as a smokejumper during summer months.

Then, during the summer of 1996, there was a “first” in the history of smokejumping. Jake came to the Boise base from Redding as part of a jumper booster crew. He and his dad made three jumps together on fires in

Colorado. (They did not jump on the same sticks to the fires because Phil was using a Square chute and Jake a Round. The Square’s require higher altitudes when departing from aircraft.) These were tremendous adventures for both Phil and Jake, engaging in experiences they value highly as smokejumpers.

The Boise Weekly on December 19, 1996 had an article about Phil and his two sons, Jake and Justin. His sons told of their dad’s stories about days in Alaska, fighting mosquitoes off with Pulaski’s, and parachute jumps into wilderness areas, as they joked about his macho drive and taste for tall tales.

Justin has a story of his own to tell while with a Hot Shot crew. On one fire his saw boss was about to be hit by a falling tree and Justin grabbed his belt, trying to get him out of the way, but the saw boss wouldn’t move. Justin had to step back and watch the tree hit him, with his body compressing and getting squashed like a toad. Justin said he was still yelling, “Keep sawing, keep sawing!”

We anticipate hearing more fire-fighting stories from Phil, Jake and Justin in the years ahead. (Phil and Jake are both members of the National Smokejumpers Association. All members of Hot Shot crews are eligible.) The Brolliers



Left to Right: Jacob Brollier, RDD 95, age 22; Phil Brollier, BIFC 71, age 47. They are standing next to a U.S. Forest Service DC-3C jumpship during the summer of 1996. Photo courtesy of Phil Brollier.

SILK STORIES: Fractured Fables From the Fireline

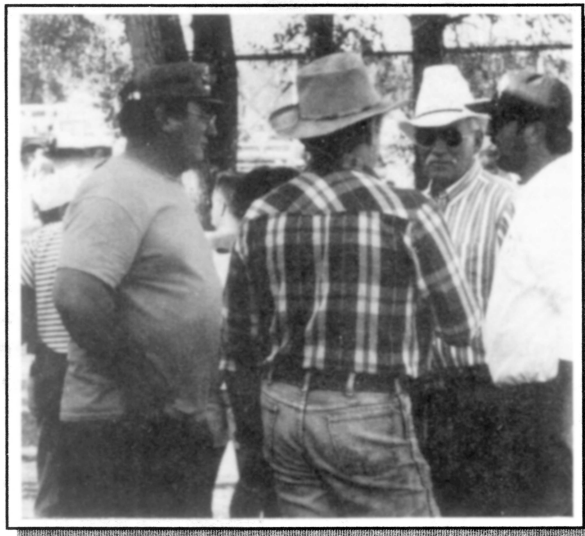
by Scott Belknap, MYC 83, and Active Missoula jumper

Missoula's fall termination party was a celebration of the year and a tribute to the retiring Rondey Lay. Those of you that don't know Rondey may be lucky because you haven't been a participant in one of his famous shenanigans. This is just one of the many "Rondey" stories.

When I arrived at the party, Rondey was in the middle of roasting himself with a story from the famous Okefenokee Swamp trip in Florida. Since I didn't get to hear his version in its entirety, I will try to set the record straight.

The folks at the Stephen Foster State Park were very pleased with our work and wished to show their appreciation for our fire fighting efforts. They put together a fantastic steak barbecue and supplied enough beer for four crews, instead of the two we brought. Since we were their guests we ignored this oversight and tried to do the polite thing by drinking all the beer. Once the beer was gone, a problem arose concerning what to do with our over-flowing levels of liquid courage and testosterone.

In the absence of a honky-tonk bursting with local talent anxious to meet smokejumper dudes from Montana, Plan B was put into play. Drunk



Rondey Lay, MSO '67, on the left, at his retirement party held in the Florence, MT area in October 1996. This occasion marked his retirement from work at the Region 1 Fire cache at the jumper base where he was involved in small engine repair, after having been injured some years earlier on a practice jump. Rondey was a star performer in the story about the Safety Harbor Fire out of Lake Chelan, WA in 1970. (We are still working on that story.) Photo courtesy of Terry Williamson, MSO '69.

smokejumpers hijacked canoes from the resident concessionaire and set out to explore the swamp at night. Well, I can tell you that it didn't take a foreman to know that this would be an historic night.

Dave, "The Snake," Serafini and I approached the boat dock just as our hero was beginning his solo voyage into the swamp. We surveyed the situation and decided that Rondey was way too drunk to make this voyage by himself and it was up to us to take charge. (Mistake #1, for those of you scoring at home.)

We were quite a sight as we left the dock. Rondey had parked his "greatness" on the starboard side of the bow seat, leaving the Snake and I to hang our butts, like outriggers, out the port side. I was less concerned about our appearance to someone walking up on this scene than I was about the view the alligators would have out in the swamp. Yes...mistake #2 was agreeing to paddle Rondey out into the swamp. Fortunately, the Snake and I exhibited the foresight to bring a headlamp on this excursion. As we illuminated our surroundings in the open waters of the swamp, we saw more than a dozen pairs of eyes reflecting from the waterline. They were bright red and stared unblinking at us like burning chunks of coal.

Rondey was fascinated by the alligator eyes surrounding us and coaxed us to steer the canoe in the direction of the largest set. We obliged (mistake #3) and pulled up alongside a fourteen-foot gator quietly floating at the surface. Rondey, without hesitation, swung his paddle over his head and smacked the water next to the gator. Predictably, the gator exploded in the water, slapping his tail and diving for the depths. The wake from the gator's recoil rocked the canoe causing our outrigger butts to dip in the water. Miraculously, we stabilized the boat and lit into the now giggling perpetrator. Rondey chided himself for being bad and swore he would never do it again. In the wake of his self-imposed reprimand he pleaded with us to paddle over to another glowing set of eyes, "just so he could get a closer look."

Mistake number 4 was made when we took him at his word and headed for another alligator. As you might expect, Rondey repeated the act.

By now, the Snake and I were stone sober and genuinely afraid for our lives. We paddled as fast as we could back to the dock with Rondey laughing all the way. This may be one of the calmer "Rondey" encounters but I assure you that I feel very lucky to be able to tell you this story today.

“SMOKEJUMPER AIRCRAFT - TRAVEL AIR’S”

Many smokejumpers through the years from different bases jumped from Travel Air's owned and operated by the Johnson Flying Service. Many models of Travel Air's were built, from the original 6000's through to 6-B's. Walter Beech, at the Travel Air Company in Wichita, Kansas, had been determined to build an aircraft that was something of a "Limousine of the Air", and his goal was achieved in 1928 when the first model, a 6000, was completed. It was described as a "buxom beauty", with a roomy interior capable of carrying six passengers. The original engine was a Wright "Whirlwind" J5 with 220 h.p. Later models had Pratt & Whitney 420 and 450 "Wasp" engines.

The price of an A-6000 - A model in 1929 was \$18,000.00.

This ship cruised at 120 mph and had a maximum speed of 140 mph, and landed at 60 mph. It could climb at 1,000' per minute at sea level and had a service ceiling of 18,000'. (The specifications for various models and power plants varied of course.)

Travel Air's served on airlines, with corporations, and a number became "Bush" planes in Alaska and Canada - the remains of one still lie on the north slope of the Brooks Range in Alaska, SW of Umiat.

The Travel Air Co. ceased to exist by

November 1930. Walter Beech sold out his interests to the Curtiss-Wright Co. at St. Louis, Missouri and became president of that corporation's St. Louis division. Curtiss-Wright continued to produce Travel Air's.

Bob Johnson purchased his first Travel Air in the spring of 1929. It was a model 6000 and he paid \$13,000 for it. The ship was named the Mae Gerard, NC8879, and was named for the wife of one of his financial backers, Harry Gerard. It had a 300 h.p. Wright "Whirlwind" engine.

Johnson through the years went on to purchase nine more Travel Air's



NC450N crashed SE of Cub Point in the Nez Perce N.F. 7/15/40 while dropping cargo. Pilot Bob Maricich was killed and cargo kicker Del Claybaugh was seriously injured. This was the first fatality for the Johnson Flying Service of Missoula.

Smokejumpers remember the Travel Air's as safe, dependable aircraft. Generally only two jumpers were carried, along with fire packs and assorted gear, with one pilot. How well we

remember cruising over rugged mountains and through smoke-filled valleys with the dependable engines thundering on.

Johnson, at the age of 79, sold his last Travel Air, N447W, in 1972, offering it for \$9,000.00. The plane went out of Montana.

What happened to Bob Johnson's ten Travel Air's? NC8879 - Mae Gerard - went through the ice on Deadwood Reservoir SE of Cascade, ID in 1939. It caught fire, exploded and burned while being dried out. Destroyed. NC9813 - Dick Johnson crashed while dropping cargo SW



The remains of Johnson's Travel Air NC9813, which crashed in the Roaring Lion country SW of Hamilton, MT on August 22, 1939. Dick Johnson, pilot, and Clarence Sutliff, Assistant Supervisor, Bitterroot N.F., were injured while on a cargo drop.

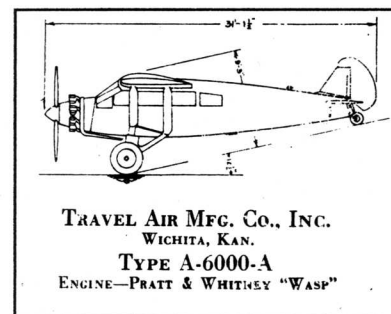
of Hamilton, MT in the Roaring Lion Creek area on August 22, 1939. He was badly injured and Clarence Sutliff, Assistant Supervisor, Bitterroot N.F., suffered minor injuries. Destroyed. NC450N - Bob Maricich was killed while making a cargo drop SE of Cub Point in the Nez Perce N.F. in Idaho on July 15, 1940. Cargo kicker Del Claybaugh was seriously injured. (This involved the first smokejumper rescue mission in the history of smokejumping.) Destroyed. NC655H - Dick Johnson (Bob's brother) was killed in a crash south of Jackson, WY in the Moose Creek-Grey River country on March 2, 1945. Orange Olson, a Wildlife Management Officer, also died. Bob Brown, a Wyoming Deputy Game Warden, survived. Destroyed. NC623H - Bill Yaggy, pilot and former Missoula smokejumper, was killed in a crash north of Dixie, ID in the Nez Perce N.F. on February 21, 1946. Crew member Bob McBride was injured. Destroyed, but remains were salvaged. NC9038 - damaged during a forced landing along Cabin Creek in the Salmon River country of Idaho in 1957. Later in the mid-1960's, with Gene Crosby at the controls, it crashed in the Little Payette Lake region along a

road leading to Warren, ID when the engine timing gear broke. Crosby survived. The plane is currently being restored by Hank Galpin at Kalispell, MT. NC8865 - a former Bradley Mining Co. Travel Air out of Boise, and once owned by Bob Johnson, sat for a number of years in the Beechcraft Staggerwing Museum at Tullahoma, TN, SE of Nashville. It is now owned by Mike Dorris and two associates. It is flying and hangared at McCall, ID. NC8112 - currently in a museum at Little Rock, AR. NC9084 - owned by Bill de Creeft of Homer, AK. It is a "working" Travel Air and is currently mounted on floats, flying for Bill's Kachemak Bay Flying Service. NC447W - the last of Johnson's Travel Air's - is owned by Delta Airlines and sits in a hanger at Atlanta, GA. It is

in need of repairs. (Three of the Travel Air's crashed upon hitting trees during low level operations.)

So ends the saga of Johnson's Travel Air's. Seven of ten were used to fly smokejumpers in regions 1, 4 and 6 at different times.

Penn Stohr, Jr., former Johnson Flying Service pilot, living at Tigard, OR and Kenny Roth, once a smokejumper out of McCall and a Johnson pilot, helped provide material on the fate of Johnson's Travel Air's. Dick Komberec, once a Johnson pilot and now flying for Delta Airlines, also helped with the history of these planes.





NC9084 being flown by owner, Bill de Creeft of the Kachemak Bay Flying Service, Inc., of Homer, AK. The plane is flying over SE Alaska in 1995. This Travel Air was once owned by the Johnson Flying Service and was a Smokejumper aircraft.



A Travel Air 6000 of the Johnson Flying Service at the Missoula Base's Camp Menard airstrip in the Nine Mile area during early summer, 1957. The pilot, Ed Thorsrud - and a former smokejumper - is at the far left with his hand on the fuselage. Who are the others in the picture? This is NC447W, now at Atlanta, Georgia. Photo courtesy of Carroll "Buck" Stucky, MSO 57. Buck and his family live at Belgrade, Montana west of Bozeman.

“WARREN MAXON, RAC 66”

Mt. Jefferson Wilderness - August 20, 1967

Redmond Air Center smokejumpers had the busiest summer in their short history in 1967. I recall that August was especially busy due to a string of lightning strikes in the Central Cascades. Although most of the fires would later be forgotten, or relegated to abbreviated log book entries for overtime purposes, there was one that will always be remembered. The fire call came at about 0730 on August 20 for Bill Freas and me. Rusty Allen was our spotter. Shortly before 0900 we were over the Mt. Jefferson Wilderness area of the Willamette National Forest. There she was - a smoldering snag near the timber line. “Piece of cake”, was my initial thought. This would be a good break in what had been a very hectic last couple of weeks. Just take down the snag, enjoy the exceptional beauty of this high mountain wilderness and maybe do a little fishing. Yea right!

My recollection is that we made at least two extra passes prior to jumping, due largely to turbulent wind conditions. On one pass, just prior to getting the slap to go from Rusty, the Beech yawed decisively to the right and we slid to the opposite bulkhead. It was a relief when we finally did jump. Bill went first and I followed. All was normal at first and that feeling of ultimate tranquility, when one sees that big orange chute above, surrounded by the blue morning sky, for the moment made it seem as if we were in heaven. During those fleeting moments in a smokejumper’s routine there were no worries, there was no fire below and the world was as perfect as a child’s fairy tale.

What took place next was a most pleasant, but unusual occurrence. We appeared to be directly over and between two sharp ridgelines. The turbulence had created a kind of convection current which precluded us from dropping at a normal rate of descent. In fact, I soon realized that at times we were actually gaining altitude. This was an enjoyable interlude for what seemed like the longest time. Then I heard Bill let out a stream of profanities from above me. I

looked up and saw two shadowy footprints darting across my parachute. Before I could react in any way, he dropped off my side and fell approximately 25 feet below me. I breathed a sigh of relief when his chute once again caught air. The surprise to me about all this was that Bill was first out and weighed nearly 200 pounds to my 140! At any rate, we finally landed and Rusty dropped us a band saw to take down the snag.

Around dusk we had the snag down and had seen the last smoke. By this time we could talk lightly about the tricks the currents played on us earlier, while we dined on some gourmet mystery meat from a can. We probably could have begun our pack out early on the morning of August 21, but we remained until nearly 1300. By our map spot, it appeared that we had about five miles to go to reach the nearest road, over pretty steep terrain. What we did not know was that the map spot was wrong and that the terrain would only become increasingly hostile. For the most part, the slope averaged 70-80%. By 2300 the terrain became nearly impassable and we decided to bed down. We were confident that we at least would be able to see the road the next morning



Left to Right: Warren Maxon RAC 66; Rusty Allen, RAC 65. The picture was taken on New Year's Day 1988 at the Cotton Bowl at Dallas, Texas. The teams were Texas A&M and Notre Dame. Warren and his wife reside at Palm Harbor, Florida in the Tampa - St. Petersburg area in west-central Florida. Rusty is deceased. (See obituary column in this volume.) Warren served as a Marine Corps officer from 1968-1989 and retired as a Lt. Colonel. He was an artillery officer in Vietnam from August '69 to September '70, serving with 105mm and 8" howitzer units in direct support of Marine front-line combat units. Picture courtesy of Warren Maxon.

“WARREN MAXON, RAC 66”

Mt. Jefferson Wilderness ~ August 20, 1967

cont'd. from page 13

by climbing a tree. Besides, we were down to our last bit of food — a can of sardines between the two of us.

At first light on the morning of August 22 we devoured the sardines and I climbed the highest tree to see just what lie before us. Nothing but more mountains and valleys were in sight. We were now feeling something of a sense of urgency, so we packed up rapidly and set out in search of the promised road to our east. Bill was usually a real talker, but now remained quiet, our energy concentrated on moving forward as deliberately as possible. Gradually, we worked our way to the crest of the ridge, to find that the map spot was wrong, or as we told Rusty later, “not exactly right”.

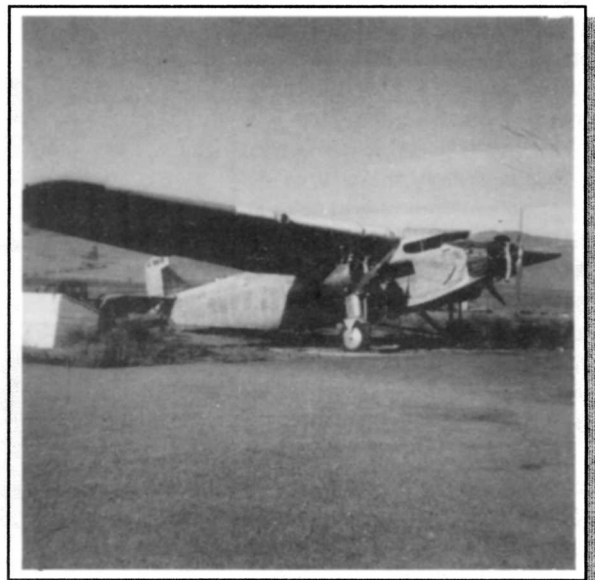


Rusty Allen at the Redmond Air Center around 1961. Rusty is standing by the tail section of a Douglas C-47 (military version of the DC-3). Photo courtesy of Warren Maxon.

Continuing on, we eventually found a wide flat rock. It was nearly noon. Bill and I did not need to exchange words. We silently went about marking the rock with an “H” for helispot. Even though we had not seen a helicopter the previous two days. We knew RAC would be getting concerned since we were well into our third day. Fortunately, our luck turned and a helicopter spotted us at around 1530 on August 22. Our pilot, a tall cowboy with a smile as big as Texas, was quick to point out our wisdom in preparing the helispot. There was a good six mile stretch remaining before we would have reached that road. When we got out of the mountainous area, the helicopter pilot spied a coyote and decided to chase it down while flying only a few feet off the ground. A half hour later the coyote went “belly up”. We were then, and finally, dropped off at the nearest ranger station. Bill finally managed a smile and commented that he was sure glad we didn’t have to take that helicopter ride on a full stomach.

Complier’s notes: Mt. Jefferson rises to 10,495’. The Mt. Jefferson Wilderness Area is about 50 miles east of Corvallis, Oregon and around 75 miles southeast of Portland. There are very few roads in the area.

Does anyone know what happened to Bill Freas, RAC 66, or where he is at?



Johnson Flying Service N9612 sitting at Hale Field Missoula in 1960. It is Tri-motor 4-AT-55. (AT stands for Air Transport and it was the 55th model A-AT built.) Photo courtesy of Phil Davis, MSO 48.

SMOKEJUMPER BASE ACTIVITIES 1996

BASE	NO. JUMPERS	NO. ROOKIES	NO. WOMEN JUMPERS	NO. FIRE JUMPS WITHIN REGION	NO. RESCUE JUMPS	NO. TNG JUMPS	FIRE JUMPS AS BOOSTER CREWS	FIRE SEASON ENDED	BASE AIRCRAFT
Et. Wainwright, AK FBX, BLM	64	5	2	582	0	527	268	10/1/96	1 - C-23 - A Sherpa 2 - Casa 212's 2 - Banderanie's 1 - C-23A Sherpa 1 - DHC-6 Twin Otter 1 - DHC-6 Twin Otter 1 - DC3-C 2 - DHC-6 Twin Otters 1 - DC3-C
Boise, ID BLM	52	1	2	1,060	0	543	139	10/1/96	1 - C-23A Sherpa 1 - DHC-6 Twin Otter 1 - DHC-6 Twin Otter 1 - DC3-C 2 - DHC-6 Twin Otters 1 - DC3-C
Grangeville, ID GAC	27	0	3	288	0	175	97	10/31/96	1 - C-23A Sherpa 1 - DHC-6 Twin Otter
McCall, ID MYC	66	0	3	555	0	592	240	10/31/96	1 - DC3-C 2 - DHC-6 Twin Otters 1 - DC3-C
Miscoula, MT MSO	62	0	3	289	0	341	282	10/30/96	1 - C-23A Sherpa 1 - C-23A Sherpa 1 - Banderanie (From Alaska)
Redding, CA RDD	40	0	2	284	0	276	188	10/15/96	1 - DHC-6 Twin Otter (From McCall)
Redmond, OR RAC	32	0	6	218	0	279	180	10/12/96	2 - C-23A Sherpas 1 - Reach-99
West Yellowstone, MT WYS	16	0	0	109	0	195	62	9/27/96	
Winthrop, WA NCSB	20	1	0	61	2 on injured jumpers	216	246	10/31/96	1 - Casa 212 1 - C-23A Sherpa (From Redmond) 1 - DHC-6 Twin Otter (From McCall)

Retirements:

MSO - Terry Williamson 4/97. He is from the MSO class of "69".
 RDD - Tim Huntington 1/3/97. Tim was a RDD Rookie in 1977.

Change of Positions for Key Personnel for 1997:

FBX - Gary Johnson, former Redding and Redmond Base Manager, left BLM Alaska Fire Service position of Aviation Manager and transferred to Boise as Aviation Operations Specialist at BLM's National Aviation Office.
 Boise BLM - Sean Cross - Base Manager; Steve Nemore - Operations Chief; Rick Blanton - Air Operations (Rick's dad, Chuck Blanton - recently retired was a MYC jumper - '47. He was in the jumper film "Telephone Creek" and was known as "The Hawk."); George Steele - Loft Foreman.
 MSO - New Loadmaster to be selected when Terry Williamson retires.
 RDD - Stan Kubota became a new squad leader during 1996.

Additional Base Information:

Boise BLM - Chris Palmer made his 200th fire jump after 18 seasons at FBX, Boise, MYC and RDD. He is 43 years old.
 Forty-six percent of fire jumps in their jurisdiction were made by Jumper Booster Crews - 13% BLM Jumpers and 33% USFS Jumpers. Their 1994 record season for fire jumps was exceeded by 240 in 1996.
 MYC - Operated a Spike Base Camp at Panguitch, UT for two months.
 RDD - Utilized only one jump plane during 1996, but will be back to two in 1997.
 WYS - Had a Personnel Service Contract for a jumper pilot - flying a Forest Service-owned aircraft.

“REDMOND AIR CENTER”

There was a Dedication and Open House at Roberts Field, Redmond, Oregon, on August 29, 1964. Phase 1 of the construction of facilities had been completed for a smokejumper center. During that year twenty jumpers were employed, with an ultimate strength of fifty-four to be assigned once the third barracks building was completed. Later, the base also housed an Inter-regional Fire Suppression Crew, air tankers and air cargo handling.

Jim Allen NCSB '46 and former member of the 326th Combat Engineers, I O 1 s t

Airborne Division from 1943-46, and a combat veteran of the European Theatre of Operations during WWII, took over all of these operations at Redmond in 1966 and remained in that position until his retirement in 1976. (He had been at Winthrop - NCSB- for seven years and at Cave Junction -CJ- thirteen years. Jim resides at Redmond. There is a lot of history behind Jim and one day we will feature him.)

The base is located two miles east of Redmond on U.S. Highway 26. Once the facilities were completed Redmond was home for fifty smokejumpers, air tankers, a twenty-five man fire suppression crew, a fire warehouse, a firepump repair shop and the Regional Fire Training Center.

For the jumpers, there is a parachute loft, administrative office, three twenty-five man barracks, a 100-man mess hall and training center. The Redmond jumpers serve national forests and other forested areas of Oregon and Washington. The base is in the Deschutes



Picture of a Beechcraft C-45 out of Redmond with the Three Sisters Mountains in the background. From a pamphlet provided by Jim Allen.

National Forest of Oregon.

Currently, the Jumper Base Manager is Dewey Warner, who took over in 1995. He started jumping in 1975 at Redmond. (This past season Redmond had six women smokejumpers - more than any other base.)

Jim Allen and Dewey Warner supplied much of the material for this article.



Sign outside the Redmond Base near Highway 26 in Oregon. Photo courtesy of Jim Allen.



The Paraloft building at Redmond. Aircraft park next to the structure to facilitate quick take-offs. Photo courtesy of Jim Allen.

PHOTOGRAPH SECTION

MCCALL JUMPERS at their IDAHO BASE in 1951



Left to Right, Back Row: Fred Pearson, Squad Leader, '48; Max Glaves, '47; D.J. Gilford, '?; Jim Crockett, '48; Clifford Wise, '47; Hank Hanson, '? Front Row: Ben Shur, '?; Dick Norell, '51; Spence Miller, '?; and Jim Roche, '?'.

Fred is now in Kenai, AK. Max resides at Escondido, CA and Jim is at Corvallis, MT. Clifford is deceased and Dick lives in Boise. We do not have any information on the whereabouts of the others. (If names are spelled incorrectly, please let us know.) Photo courtesy of Max Glaves.

HIGH-LEVEL STRATEGY MEETING at NCSB (Winthrop, WA) 1952



Left to Right: Elmer Neufeld, NCSB '44; Francis "Pappy" Lufkin, NCSB '39; Howard Betty, NCSB '48; Wally Tower, pilot NCSB '52; and Jim Allen, NCSB '46. Elmer currently resides at Boise. Francis winters at Bellingham, WA and spends summers at Winthrop, WA. Howard resides at Twisp, WA. Wally is at Salem, OR and Jim at Redmond, OR. The aircraft in the background is a Noorduyn Norseman, one of three that were once used in Region 6. The picture was taken at The NCSB (North Cascades Smokejumper Base) in either 1952 or 1953. Photo courtesy of Wally Tower.

PHOTOGRAPH SECTION

REGION 1'S CAMP MENARD, 1950



Missoula jumpers at the former Camp Menard Training site at Nine Mile in 1950, 25 miles west of Missoula.

Left to Right, Front Row: Hal Samsel '49; Berle Davis '48; Bill Edlund '48. Back Row: Fred Barnowsky '42; Jack Wall '48; Art Cochran '42; Effie Brown, cook; and Herb Oertli '48. Hal resides in the Polson, MT area. Berle is at Lewiston, MT. We do not know where Bill Edlund is at. Do any of you? Fred is living in the Kalispell, MT region. Jack lives at Tucson. Art is in the Stites, ID area close to Kooskie. Effie is in the Flathead Valley of MT and Herb is deceased. Photo courtesy of Berle Davis.



JOE MONTANA and BASE REP'S, 1990

Left to Right, Front Row: Wayne Williams, MSO 77; Ron Rucker, RAC 76. Rear Row: Dan Felt, MYC 77; Mario Marquez, RAC 87; Joe Montana; Kim Maynard, MSO 82; and Frank Domingues, RDD 89. All of the smokejumpers are still active, with the exception of Kim, who lives at Arlington, Virginia. Current base locations for the jumpers are: Wayne, Missoula; Ron, Redmond; Dan, McCall; Mario, BLM out of Boise; and Frank at Fort Wainwright. It should be mentioned that Dan, who is Operations Supervisor at McCall, participated in an exchange with Russian jumpers in 1994 and made jumps in Russia. (Russians did not jump out of McCall however.)

The picture was taken in September 1990 at Santa Clara, California, and made into posters to commemorate 50 years of Aerial Attack against forest fires on the part of Smokejumpers. Wayne worked with Region 5's "Smokey and Pro's Program" in this endeavor, which was jointly financed by all of the Jumper bases. He was responsible for getting the jumpers pictured above involved in the program. Photo courtesy of the Missoula Smokejumper Base.

CHUTE THE BREEZE



Note: If pictures and/or articles that some of you sent in earlier do not appear in this newsletter, do not give up hope. They will definitely be in future editions. We greatly appreciate the material that has been received. Keep it up!

CORRECTIONS AND CHANGES:

Bob Whaley, MSO 56, called us shortly after the issuance of the Oct. '96 newsletter. We had referred to ex-Marines. Bob said there aren't any ex-Marines. They are former Marines - still Marines. Very true. Bob was a Marine pilot who served in Vietnam and now lives in Missoula.

In the article "Continuation of the Illinois River Crash - Cave Junction, OR - 8/2/44", (Oct. '96 issue), mention was made that we did not know who the Jumper was standing at Bob Painter's left. Bill Laughlin, MSO 43, wrote and told us he was the one. He sent us a story about jumping on a fire in the Umpqua N.F. of Douglas County in Oregon, which will be in the April newsletter, along with some personal experiences he also forwarded. Bill lives in Mansfield Center, CT.

Jim Rabideau, NCSB 49, residing at Pasco, WA, wrote to say that Hal Wyman, in the article about Cecil Hicks and his son Brian, (Oct '96 issue), should be spelled Hal Weinmann, NCSB 47. We have contacted Hal at Redmond, OR and sent him a copy of the newsletter. Hal was known as an excellent spotter.

Chuck Blanton, "The Hawk", MYC 47, told us that Dave Schas, MYC 48, (Oct. '96 Obituary), grew up in Nampa, ID instead of the Jordan Valley in Oregon. He and Dave were classmates. Chuck said Dave played center on their high school football team, lettering for three consecutive years. Also, Chuck and Dave jumped on several fires together.

Starr, CJ 48, has mentioned that the unidentified Jumper standing next to him in the picture on page 10 of the Oct. '96 newsletter is Jack Barrett. We do not have him listed in the Master Roster. However, we do have a Ron Barrett, RAC 88, but no address. They might be related. Does anyone now anything about Jack and/or Ron?

THROUGH THE DECADES

HARVEY WEIERICH, MSO 44: Harvey has mentioned that BILL YAGGEY, MSO 41, a former Smokejumper and Johnson Flying Service pilot, who was killed in the crash of Travel Air NC 623H north of Dixie, ID in the Nez Perce NF on 2/21/46, gave him his check ride in a Piper Cub for his solo license in 1945. He also told the story about Bill falling asleep one time while flying the Cub to Missoula to see his girlfriend, and drifting some distance off course before he awakened. Harvey lives in Goshen, IN.

DON PAPE, MYC 48: Don said that in 1949 a cargo chute became hung up on the tail wheel of a Noorduyn Norseman after two Jumpers were dropped to a fire on Alexander Flats out of Idaho City. Those still on-board were ordered by the pilot to jump in order to lessen the weight of the aircraft. This included the Forest Service dispatcher who was along for a "joy ride". It was his first time in an airplane. Don said they all parachuted safely to the ground. As the Noorduyn was landing at an airstrip the chute fell free from the tail wheel before touchdown. Clair Hartman was the pilot. Does anyone know where he is at, or what happened to him? Don lives in Boise.

BOB W. CLARK, PILOT, 1942-1987. Bob started flying in the Army Air Corps in 1942. He has flown nineteen different types of fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft. He flew through Canada and Alaska during 1943-45 while with the Army Air Force Air Transport Command and was involved in Arctic Search and Rescue missions during that time. Among other types of military aircraft, he has flown the F-86 Sabre Jet fighters. He was awarded the Air Medal. After military service Bob joined the Johnson Flying Service and flew Smokejumpers and cargo out of Missoula, Silver City, NM, Redding, CA, Ogden, UT and McCall, ID. During 1976-78 Bob was involved with infrared photography at Boise. Through the years he accumulated 17,000 hours of flying time. Bob is retired and lives at Anacortes, WA about fifty miles north of Seattle.

BOB WALKUP, MSO 50: Bob graduated from the University of Montana with a B.S. in Forest Management in 1954. He was a Smokejumper from 1950 through 1953, and later served with the U.S.A.F. during 1954-56. His first fire jump was on the Idaho side of Hells Canyon of the Snake River country in August 1950, and his last one was in October 1953, just below the limestone cliffs of the great Chinese Wall on the Sun River side of the Bob Marshall Wilderness Area in Montana. Bob said he found it hard to believe that they were paid to "visit" very scenic places in the West. He later worked for the Crown Zellerbach Corp. out of Molalla, OR and then with the Montana State Forester's office, among other jobs. Currently, Bob is working on a presentation about Forest Economics for the Clackamas County Farm Forestry Assoc. out of Portland. He and his wife Georgia have been married for forty-five years and they live in Beaverton, OR on the western outskirts of Potland.

BUD FILLER, MYC 52: Some time ago we mentioned a painting being done by TIM LARSON of Nampa, ID. Bud and WAYNE KING had borrowed a jumpsuit from the McCall base. A photograph was taken with Bud in the suit, posing as the Jumper and Wayne as spotter while in the door of Gene Frank's Tri-motor N-1077 (4-AT-10)--the oldest registered Tri-motor in the United States--at Caldwell, ID. The painting, made from the photograph, has been completed and prints made. Your compiler has one on order. Perhaps they will be advertised later.

CHUTE THE BREEZE, CONTINUED

CLARENCE ROWLEY, CJ 51: Clarence mentioned that during a fire bust in 1953 he jumped four fires in seven days. He commented: "The jumping was OK but the pack outs were killers." Clarence lives at Baird, TX.

GREG WEST, FBX 64: In 1964 Greg broke an ankle on a fire jump. During 1965 he made a jump next to the Bering Sea, about 500 miles west of Anchorage, and then one north of the Arctic Circle. It was during the Spring of 1966 that he happened to be the spotter during training jumps when **ARDEN DAVIS, FBX 64**, strangled to death during a letdown from a tree. There was a shroudline beneath his neck that he was not aware of.

MICHAEL 'BOOGER' BROWN, RDD 68: After serving as a Smokejumper Mike became a U.S.A.F. Survival Instructor for twenty years. Part of his career involved training aircrews in sea survival and rescue procedures in Florida. He has made more than 175 water equipment jumps. Mike has a total of 230 jumps to his credit and attained both Senior and Master Parachute Status. His last jump was from a Lockheed C-141 four-engine jet transport over the desert east of Reno, NV in 1988. He completed the Army's Airborne Parachute School at Fort Benning, GA in Oct. 1970 and was awarded the Distinguished Graduate Trophy. Mike resides at Merced, CA.

MIKE SEALE AND PORTER PIERCE, ASSOCIATE MEMBERS AND FORMER AIR AMERICAN PILOTS: This summer the door to our office in Hanger 24 at the Missoula County Airport popped open and a fellow on crutches came in. He loudly asked, "What is that smell out there? Did I mess my pants? Where's the toilet?" The smell came from the pulp mill near Frenchtown to the west--temperature inversion--and the speaker was Mike Seale and he was addressing your compiler. Behind him came Porter Pierce. We talked for about two hours and had a great time exchanging stories. Mike and Porter told about one time when they were both pilots on a Beechcraft Volpar over the Vietnamese countryside, when all of a sudden the ground below them began erupting with violent explosions, that reached up and bounced their aircraft, which was at 6,000'. They quickly noted B-52 heavy bombers far above them. They were in the middle of the bombing pattern. Needless to say, they took the Volpar out of the area like a scalded cat. In the April issue of the newsletter we will discuss how Mike came to be injured, and will have some stories about both he and Porter. Mike is retired and lives at Coeur d' Alene, ID. Porter is a pilot for Alaska Airlines and resides at Vancouver, WA.

STEPHEN JAKALA, MYC 74: Steve made his first fire jump with Wayne Webb on 6/74. He said Wayne had been jumping for four years before he was born. Steve once made two fire jumps in one day in Alaska during 1977. He was a jumper at Redding during 1976 and then at the Fort Wainwright base during 1977-78. He graduated from the University of Minnesota College of Forestry with a B.S. in Forest Resource Management. Currently he resides at International Falls, MN.

ROBERT JAMES, MSO 75: Bob said during his rookie year in 1975 there weren't any fire jumps. In 1977, while on a flight from West Yellowstone to Missoula, lightning hit the tail section of their C-47 jump ship. He said the pilot, **WHITEY HACKMEISTER**, warned them that the flying was going to be rough, and it was. However, it was comforting to know that Whitey was at the controls. (Whitey and others died when the C-47 he was flying lost an engine--dropped off the aircraft--over the Selway River in Idaho on 6/11/79. He tried to crash-land on the river, but the ship hit a tree as it made its approach.) Bob has a B.S. in Aeronautical Operations from San Jose State Univ. in CA. He currently lives in Boise.

DEANNE SHULMAN, MYC 81: Deanne was in Mongolia during May 1996. She and Ray Dionne were on a trip to assess the wildfire situation in that country. A part of that report will be in a future newsletter. (In previous editions we had articles about her trip to Russia and visits with Smokejumpers and other fire-fighting operations.) Deanne lives at Kernville, CA. (Deanne was the first Woman Smokejumper.)

BRENT WOFFINDEN, FBX 89: Brent is a graduate of Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo, CA and received a B.S. in Environmental Management. He has jumped from 1989-97. His favorite jumps were on Kodiak Island and 200 miles down the Aleutian Chain. Brent said: "It is quite a feeling to open up over the ocean." He so far has 178 jumps. He lives at Craig, Alaska.

KELVIN PALM, MYC 93: During 1993 he and several other McCall jumpers were sent to the Dixie NF in southern Utah. While there, they were invited to ride on the Forest Service float during a parade. The float carried the slogan "Fire Fighters From the Sky." It was determined by their leader, **BARRY KONCINSKY**, that the "Ned's" (Rookies) **DAVE CRAWFORD**, **BOB CHARLIE**, and himself would wear their jumpsuits on that very warm day. They were to throw out bauble's (candy) to the children along the route in Panguitch, UT. The next afternoon they were to make jumps at the rodeo. It turned out to be rather windy, so the jump spot was moved from the arena to a point nearby. They all headed for the spot, except for **JERRY OGAWA, MYC 67**. He went for the arena and surprisingly made it, narrowly missing several cows. It is said that Jerry uttered some expletive when a bystander inquired about his health. Kelvin is at La Luz, NM; Barry resides at McCall; Dave is in Missoula; Bob is also at McCall; and Jerry calls Ontario, OR home.

BILL CRAMER, BOISE BLM 90: We mentioned Bill in the October '96 newsletter, and how he took off after a marauding bear in camp, while stark naked and armed only with a can of pepper spray, saving the jumper crew's rations. What we did not state was that his dad is **JOHN CRAMER, MYC 63-65, IDAHO CITY 66-69, BOISE 70-79 AND MSO 80**. John's home is in Boise.

E~MAIL: We wish to remind our readers and members again that our e-mail address is: smokejumpers@marsweb.com Keep those messages coming in.