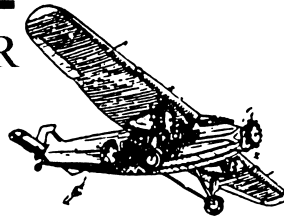


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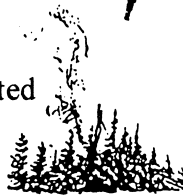
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Volume 3

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THE STATIC LINE

The Static Line Staff

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

At our most recent Board of Directors Meeting this past Spring, I was elected Association President for the coming year. I welcome this opportunity to serve in this capacity and first want to welcome our Newly Elected Board Members, Tim Aldrich, Jim Blaine, Tom Kovalicky (reelected), Larry Lufkin, Fred Rohrbach, and Ron Stoleson.

Through the voluntary donation of time and energy, we the Executive Committee and Board of Directors, look forward to moving the Association to a more efficient and responsive organization during the coming year.

I want to thank Larry Anderson, Lyle Brown,

George Harpole, MSO '49, preparing to make a free fall out of Hale Field, Missoula in 1949. George lives at Clifton, Colorado. Photo courtesy of Danny O'Rourke, CJ '46.



George Cross, Lon Dale, Phil Davis, Carl Gidlund, George Gowen, Lowell Hanson, Tom Kovalicky, Bill Moody, Larry Moore, Chuck Seeley, Jerry Timmons, Bill Werhane and Honorary Director and President Emeritus, Earl Cooley for having served on the Board during the 1996-1997 year.

I particularly wish to thank our Past President, Ed Courtney, for his unselfish dedication during the past two years as President of the Association. I commend him for the job he did in that capacity.

Again, I look forward to the challenges we face during the coming year.

Laird Robinson

Laird Robinson,
President

NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION VIDEO

There is a two-page insert in this newsletter that talks about the production of a Smokejumper video, that is well under way. Members of the video committee are also mentioned, with Fred Rohrbach, Chairman.

As of 7/16/97 the following donations towards the project have been made: **Fred and John Rohrbach** of Seattle and Bellevue, Washington--\$5,000; **Jerry DeBruin** of Sylvania, Ohio--\$100; **Seafirst Bank of Seattle**--\$1,000; and **Neptune Aviation Services of Missoula**--\$500.

We appeal to our membership to help with this project and all donations are tax deductible. See the insert for full particulars.

This will be a 60 minute video documentary.

NEW MEMBERS

Note: This listing of new members includes those who joined between April 16, 1997 and July 16, 1997. Those who joined after July 16th will be mentioned in the 17th Newsletter, which will be mailed out late in Oct. 1997. Should names be misspelled, or addresses be incorrect or changed, please let us know as soon as possible.

NAME	ADDRESS	BASE	1ST YEAR
Beck, Doug C.	2340 Fairfield ST, Eureka, CA 95501	CJ	70
Brown, Kevin	14425 Turah RD, Clinton, MT 59825	MSO	66
Butler, Ben	6101 Rogers AV NE, Albuquerque, NM 87110	MSO	65
Button, John P.	PO Box 977, Elbow Canyon RD, Twisp, WA 98856	NCSB	75
Court, Ashley	RT 1 Box 275, Winthrop, WA 98862	NCSB	63
Decker, Tom C.	151 B Grierson AV, FT Huachuca, AZ 85613	ID CTY	64
Detro, Jim	70 Crumbachen RD, Tonasket, WA 98855	NCSB	67
Dolato, Max	1562 Pelican CT, Salem, OR 97304	MSO	51
Graw, John	8427 Chesam, San Antonio, TX 78250	NCSB	61
Hoffner, Ken W.	5402 Shady Gardens DR, Kingwood, TX 77339	Associate Pilot	
Hooper, Bob	PO Box 57063, Tucson, AZ 85732	CJ	67
Hubble, Bob	519 West Roy #410, Seattle, WA 98119	MSO	91
Jackson, Herman	205 Palmetto AV #102, Merritt Island, FL 32953	Associate Pilot	
Joyce, Armond T.	400 East Lakeshore, Carriere, MS 39426	MSO	58
Leritz, Edward M.	8648 Panorama DR E, Bozeman, MT 59715	MSO	70
McKay, Jim	108 Guaymas Place, Davis, CA 95616-0456	MSO	84
McPike, Christine	PO Box 476, Payette, ID 83661	Associate Member	
Morin, Bill A.	1120 W Diamond, Butte, MT 59701	MSO	46
Nelson, Bill T.	16449 53rd PL S, Tukwila, WA 98188	NCSB	66
Schreiber, George F.	4217 182d AV SE, Issaquah, WA 98027	MYC	47
Secrist, Dewey W.	115 Brookhill RD, Newton Square, PA 19073	MSO	48
Seigrist, Steven S.	4701 American BLVD #2317, Euless, TX 76040	LGD	79
Straw, George	6766 S High DR, Morrison, CO 80465-2618	CJ	62
Tower, Randy	2876 Victoria Ridge CT, Pleasonton, CA 94566	NCSB	63
Wagner, Barry	112 Church ST, Glen Rock, PA 17327	Affiliate	
Wetherell, George A.	3337 Keokuk, Butte, MT 59701	Associate Pilot	

Note: In the April, 1997 edition of The Static Line we erroneously reported that Dave Cuplin, MSO '48 was living in Wyoming. His address is 3011 E Adams, Apt. 2, Cudahy, Wisconsin, 53110-2148. We are sure sorry about the mistake Dave.

N.S.A. LIFE MEMBERSHIPS

Since the January 1997 newsletter, we have had seventeen Life Memberships. Six were named in that newsletter: 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. Five more were added in the April newsletter: Dave Cuplin, MSO '48; Jim Murphy, MSO '48; Fred Rohrbach, MSO '65; and Maynard Rost, MSO '58. The fifth one did not want to be identified until his current 10-year membership expires. The next six to join the Life Membership group are: F. James (Jim) Clatworthy, MSO '56; George Cross, MSO '74; Robert (Bob) L. Derry, MSO '43; Orval Gastineau, MSO '63; Mike Greeson, MSO, '59; and Jerry Linton, MSO '48.

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
BASLER, WARREN L.			Warren was the Chief Executive Officer for Basler Turbo Conversions, Inc. , with headquarters out of Oshkosh, Wisconsin. He was the pilot of a Beech Bonanza that collided with one of the new conversions—produced for the Republic of Mali—in the Oshkosh area March 15, 1997. The Bonanza collided with the DC-3-C and both planes crashed, killing all four on board the two planes. The aircraft were on a routine test flight and in-flight photography recording project. Warren was a true aviation pioneer and had almost 30,000 hours of flight time, more than half of which were in DC-3 type ships. He was inducted into the Wisconsin Aviation Hall of Fame in 1993. Warren was 70 years old at the time of his death. He is survived by his wife Patricia. The DC-3-C's used by the McCall and Missoula jumper bases are Basler conversions. The planes before conversion were former military Douglas C-47's. DC-3's are the civilian counterparts.
HIRTH, JOHN AND BABKA, WILLIAM			John and Bill were killed in the crash of their Lockheed PV-2 Harpoon air tanker, a WW II twin-engine patrol bomber, on April 20, 1997, north of Altoona, Pennsylvania while on an initial attack mission. The crew was making a cross-slope run, banked right, and the right wing tip caught on a sloping ridge. The PV-2 rolled, became inverted, and crashed. John and his wife Connie began Hirth Air Tankers in 1987 at Dothan, Alabama, prior to moving the operation to Buffalo, Wyoming, 30 miles south of Sheridan. To date, more than 110 pilots and crew members of lead planes and air tankers have lost their lives since 1958.
JENSEN, HOVALD M.	MSO	44	Marshall passed away at Hamilton, Montana June 12, 1997 from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis. He was born September 5, 1924 at Union, Iowa and had attended Iowa State College. At one time he lived in the San Francisco Bay Area and Nevada City, California, where he started working for Pacific Telephone. He was then transferred to Chico where he lived for 30 years before retiring in 1983. Marshall moved to Montana in 1991. He is survived by his widow Marjorie.
KELLY, RALPH			Ralph died in the crash of his Douglas B-18 retardant bomber in Colorado June 18, 1958. He flew for the Johnson Flying Service about six years and had been a military pilot. Kenny Roth, former McCall jumper and Johnson Flying Service pilot, flew to Colorado to bring Ralph's body back to Missoula, where he is buried.
KIM, HOWARD			Howard, a former U.S. Navy pilot from Albuquerque, acting as a lead plane pilot, had been directing an air tanker that was to drop retardant on a Mount Taylor blaze 70 miles west of Albuquerque on Friday, June 21, 1991. There were "squirrely" winds in the area and he lost control of his twin-engine Beechcraft Baron, crashing on the northwest slope of 11,301' Mount Taylor. He was 48 years old.
KRUSE, RAYMOND	MSO	48	Ray passed away 6/25/94 at Fallbrook, California, southeast of Los Angeles from emphysema. He was originally from Jersey City, New Jersey and was a paratrooper with the 13th Airborne Div. during WW II. He began work with the Northern Pacific Railroad 10/17/47. He moved to California in 1979 after retiring. This information was given to us by his daughter Valerie Nichols of Arcadia, California.
MCPIKE, ROGER H.	MYC	53	Roger died Tuesday, March 18, 1997 at Las Vegas after a lengthy illness. He was born May 2, 1934, at Boise. Roger jumped out of McCall from 1953 to 1956. He graduated from the University of Idaho in 1956 with a prelaw degree. He then served four years active duty as a reserve officer with the U.S. Marine Corps and remained an active member of the reserve for 31 years, retiring as a colonel in 1987. Roger graduated from the Stanford Law School in California and was then a senior partner with a law firm in San Francisco. He then moved to Las Vegas and worked with a firm there, continuing his corporate and construction law practice before opening up his private law practice. His sister Christine, living at Payette, Idaho, sent us much information about her brother, to include an extensive file covering his service with the

(Continued on page 5)

DECEASED JUMPERS AND PILOTS, cont'd.

(Continued from page 4)

Marines. That material has become a part of the N.S.A. archives and a copy has been sent to the McCall base. Roger was known for his generous nature, his exuberant love of humor, art, sculpture, the written word, the great outdoors, the underdog and the Marine Corps. Burial followed full military honors at the Southern Nevada Veterans Memorial Cemetery at Boulder City, Nevada. Christine joined the N.S.A. as an Associate member.

TWOHIG, DAN

MSO

79

Dan died in 1985 after being caught in an avalanche near Lolo Pass west of Missoula. Dan Geiger, MSO '80, living at Loudon, New Hampshire, sent us that information.

GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES IN THE PAYETTE NATIONAL FOREST WERE NAMED FOR JOHN FERGUSON, MYC '42 AND LLOYD JOHNSON, MYC '43

In the April 1996 newsletter - Edition 3, Volume 2 - we had an article about John Ferguson. It was mentioned that he and Lloyd (Stewart) Johnson had been designated squad leaders in May 1943 at the McCall base, which was established for the first time on that date. They were designated "Co-Leaders." John and Lester Gahler made the first fire jumps for Region 4 on August 14, 1943, on the Captain John Creek Fire in the Salmon River drainage near Riggins, Idaho. John enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Force late in 1943 and served as a crewman on medium and heavy bombers. He then returned to the McCall base after the war in 1946, was given the title Parachute Technician and placed in charge of the loft. He left the jumpers in 1950 and then served for 39 years, 8 months in engineering with the U.S. Forest Service's Region 4.

Many former jumpers and pilots do not know that John and Lloyd were honored some years ago by having two geographical features in the Payette National Forest named for them. On the recommendation of Forest Ranger Dee Russell in 1944 the two features were established by the U.S. Forest Service and approved by the U.S. Board of Geographical Names.

There is a U.S. Forest Service sign along Highway 95 several miles south of Council, Idaho that reads: Johnson Creek - 6 miles and Ferguson Basin - 9 miles. The sign was erected in 1944. Council is 22 air miles southwest of McCall, 85 miles south of Grangeville and 75 miles north of Boise.

One can locate both geographical features on a Goodrich Quadrangle, Idaho, U.S. Dept. of Interior Geographical Survey, 1986 map. On that map Ferguson Basin is shown 8 1/2 air miles southwest of Council, and the mouth of Johnson Creek, which empties into the Weiser River, is 6 miles west

southwest of Council near Highway 95.

Both features are in isolated areas of the Payette National Forest. From the former small settlement of Goodrich off of Highway 95, eight miles to the southwest of Council, there is an improved dirt road that runs north for about four miles. Then an unimproved dirt road continues on in that direction for approximately three miles. From the end of that road it is over a mile by trail to Ferguson Basin. Mountains in the area are from 4,500' to 5,600' in elevation. Johnson Creek, to the east of that basin, runs generally from northwest to southeast. Should you ever be traveling on Highway 95 - it stretches from Kingsgate along the Canadian line north of Sandpoint, Idaho, south through Grangeville to Caldwell, and southwest from there 43 miles to Jordan Valley on the Idaho-Oregon border - you might want to stop south of Council and check that sign, and perhaps drive and walk up into Ferguson Basin.

John told us there was an article in the Ogden Standard Examiner, July 3, 1996, that stated: "Persons had to be dead to have geographical features named after them." John and Lloyd are two exceptions. John sent us a photo of a large display he has with a description of Ferguson Basin, an enlarged map of the area, and pictures of a Trimotor, eagle chute, himself in the leather jumpsuit he made from his WW II flying gear, and the sign south of Council along Highway 95, pointing in the direction of the geographical features.

John lives at North Ogden, Utah. He had a serious heart attack in March, 1994, and is still recovering. Lloyd lives at Fruitland, Idaho, 45 miles northwest of Boise, near the Oregon border.

The material for this article was provided by John Ferguson.

“JUMPERS OF THE NORTH CASCADES, PART II”

by Bill Moody, NCSB '57

AIRCRAFT - THE EARLY DAYS - 1945-1957 With the reinstatement of a seasonal crew the Region assigned a Forest Service single engine Noorduyn Norseman to NCSB—North Cascades Smokejumper Base. The Noorduyn Norseman was configured for four jumpers, spotter and cargo. The jump door and step were located on the right side of the aircraft. Cruise speed was 105-115 MPH. Colorful pilots of the era included Don Moyer 1945-'46, Jim Sproat 1945, Robert Benesh, 1947, Ken D. Benesh 1947-'49, “Big Foot” Tranell 1948, Joe Harrell 1950-'51, Jack Loney 1952, Harold Emmons 1952, and long-time captain Wally Tower, who later became a Director of Aviation Management in Region 6.



Far Right: Bill Moody. Standing next to him is Nikolai Andrev, who was in charge of the USSR's 2,000-man smokejumper force. They are at a Russian airfield and the aircraft behind them is an AN-2 jumper plane. The picture was taken in 1967 in East Siberia. Photo courtesy of Bill Moody.

TRAGEDY ON EIGHT MILE RIDGE

During a severe lightning storm, while dropping a

track fireline digger and other equipment to a jumper crew on Eight Mile Ridge - Winthrop Ranger District - Okanogan National Forest, N164Z, a Forest Service Twin Beech, crashed, killing all four on board. Twenty-two rookies who had driven to the fire, witnessed the crash. Killed were pilot Robert Cavanaugh; Squad leader Keith (Gus) Hendrickson NCSB '47; Squad leader Trainee Gerald Helmer, NCSB '53; and Forester/Jumper Robert Carlman, NCSB '57.

THE RECORD YEAR - 1970

A combination of light snowpack, and numerous hot, dry lightning storms resulted in NCSB's busiest year on record. Two “mega busts” occurred during July-September. In July, 176 jumpers, plus support, shared the “North



Left to Right: NCSB jumpers Francis Lufkin, George Honey, Glenn “Smitty” Smith, and Virgil Derry. They are standing in front of the Winthrop Ranger Station in 1940. Smitty and Virgil are deceased. Photo courtesy of Bill Moody.

“JUMPERS OF THE NORTH CASCADES, PART II”

by Bill Moody, NCSB ‘57, cont’d. on page 8

(Continued from page 6)

Cascades experience.” The season ended up with 1,066 fire jumps on 212 fires, not including the La Grande base. It was estimated that if jumpers had been available, 600 more jumps could have been made to an additional 100 fires.

CHANGING OF THE GUARD

After 33 years in the program, pioneer jumper and national smokejumper program leader, Francis B. Lufkin, retired. Bill Moody, long time NCSB veteran, succeeded Lufkin as Base Manager. In December 1989 Moody, also with 33 years in the jumper program, retired. Doug Houston, former Redmond Air Center training foreman, took the reins in 1990 and continues in the position today.

THE RUSSIAN CONNECTION

In 1977 Nicolai Andrev, Chief of the Soviet (now Russian) aerial fire-fighting operations, visited NCSB. This was a follow up to Bill Moody and Doug Bird’s (ex-McCall jumper, MYC ‘57 and then Washington, D.C. Office Fire Management) 1976 visit to the USSR as part of the US-Soviet Scientific Technical Exchange Program. Moody made two jumps in East Siberia during the exchange. Nicolai, after making his historic jump in the United States from a USFS DC-3 with the NCSB crew and Bird, reciprocated by presenting NCSB with a Soviet Forester parachute and jump gear. The Forester specs and design were incorporated into the Forest Service FS-12 parachute.

1980-1984 THE SURVIVAL YEARS

The 1979 National Smokejumper Base Study and Region 6 base centralization proved fatal for two of Region 6’s bases. The Siskiyou and La Grande Bases were closed. NCSB barely “dodged the bullet” and was reduced from 45 to 11 jumpers. NCSB was required to transfer all of its sewing machines to Redmond, and lost its personnel parachute rigging “privileges.” Chutes were repacked at Redmond and flown, or driven, 400 miles to NCSB. A Redmond spike base was periodically set up at Wenatchee, 67 air miles south of NCSB. The Region’s political strategy to reduce NCSB to “satellite status” almost worked, but support from state and national congressmen, plus the strong leadership of Okanogan National Forest Supervisor Bill McLaughlin, MSO ‘58, supported NCSB’s existence. A revised regional smokejumper study in 1984 reinstated NCSB to full status, except for rookie training. The crew increased to 21. In the early 1990’s NCSB alternated with Redmond as the rookie training base for Region 6. NCSB survived, just barely.

OTHER NOTABLE EVENTS

Although NCSB hired female recruits in 1983 it wasn’t until 1986 that the first NCSB females completed rookie training and made fire jumps. NCSB’s first female jumpers were Carlee Anders and Debbie Englehart.

Owned by the Forest Service since 1932, Intercity Airport was deeded to the Washington State Division of Aeronautics in 1985. The Forest Service, for liability and maintenance cost reasons, decided it no longer wanted to be in the public airport business. The airport name was changed to Methow Valley State Airport. In 1996 the state resurfaced the 5,050 foot runway. Since 1940, NCSB has been the rookie base for 440 rookies.

THE FUTURE

NCSB has been an integral part of Forest Service and smokejumper history. The base has served its constituents well for almost six decades. Many a great silk story has its roots in the remote, hostile, rugged North Cascades - land of the 300-foot trees and 250-foot jump ropes - and crazy NCSB spotters. May more have the opportunity to witness the excitement of jumping in the North Cascades.



A Twin Beech from the NCSB base. Silver Star Mountain, Okanogan N.F. is in the background. A jumper has a foot on the step. The year is believed to be 1965. Photo courtesy of Bill Moody.

“JUMPERS OF THE NORTH CASCADES, PART II”

by Bill Moody, NCSB '57, cont'd.



The sign at the entrance to the NCSB (Winthrop) base. The plaque at the bottom reads:

A 'hare-brained and risky scheme' became the profession of smokejumping here in the fall of 1939. Forest Service firefighters and employees of the Eagle Parachute Company made 58 jumps into clearings and timber, testing whether men could safely parachute to remote wildfires. They flew up in a single-engine Stinson and rode silk Eagle parachutes down. Their injury-free experimental proved that parachuting firefighters could 'land in all kinds of green timber common to the Chelan National Forest', and smokejumping was born. Francis Lufkin and Glen Smith made the first fire jumps in the Pacific Northwest Region just west of here on August 10, 1940.

Photo courtesy of Bill Moody.

BOB DERRY, MSO '43

Bob is the youngest of the Derry brothers. Frank, Virgil and Chester "Chet" were involved in the experiments in 1939 at Winthrop, Washington to see if dropping parachutists to fires was feasible. At the time, Bob was a teenager. He has commented on the traumatic experiences his brothers went through as they anguished through the experimental stages of designing equipment, let down procedures, etc., making the concept feasible. Frank, Virgil and Chet are now deceased.



Bob Derry, 1997.

On May 16th of this year the Wenatchee Valley Senior Center awarded its first "Older American of the Year" award to Bob, who, at the age of 71, is known for his youthful vigor.

Bob lives life to the fullest. He spends much time on his bicycle and in his racing shell. Since 1980 he has participated in Wenatchee's annual Ridge to River Race. In 1994 he took a trip to Russia with the U.S. Cycling Team.

He served for years as the Douglas County fire chief

and was also mayor of East Wenatchee. Bob is known throughout the area for his good deeds. He and his wife Colleen live there and have been married for 50 years. They have one daughter and three sons. Colleen said she does not take part in the running but is the "Pit Crew". Both typify what senior citizens can be. Photos from The Wenatchee World, 5/18/97.



Bob Derry competing in this year's Ridge to River Relay out of Wenatchee. He is running toward the finish line.

“1937 BLACKWATER FIRE INVESTIGATION”

by Karl Brauneis, MSO '77, Forester, Shoshone National Forest, Wyoming

As Fire Management Officer on the Shoshone National Forest, I have studied the tragic Blackwater Fire of August 21, 1937, to learn more about local fire behavior variables and to train fire fighters on all aspects of safety during

The fire investigation was conducted by David P. Godwin, the Assistant Chief of Fire Management for the U.S. Forest Service. Godwin's report was entitled, The Handling Of The Blackwater Fire. In addition, A.A. Brown of the Rocky Mountain Region (R-2) as-

sisted with a fire behavior study entitled, The Factors and Circumstances That Led To The Blackwater Fire Tragedy.

David Godwin concluded that the leadership on the fire was “intelligent and protective of the men”. The Forest Rangers involved with the direction of fire suppression on the Blackwater used the standard techniques of the day. Still, I believe that David Godwin struggled with the tragedy and worked within the Division of Fire Control for ways to improve fire suppression techniques.

Godwin focused on response times to the Blackwater fire from Forest Officers to Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) crews. He developed a chart to display call and arrival times and reported, that in general, “response times were fair”. A delay in the arrival of the Tensleep CCC crew lost about two hours in effective control time on the fire. It was a “logical speculation” that if Forest Officers could

have had the crew on site two hours earlier, the tragedy might have been averted.

Strong feelings about a traumatic incident are a “prime motivation for action” (see Fire Management News Notes, Volume 56/No 4, Use The Connections- No One Is An Island by James E. Stone). It appears that David Godwin was able to work through the Blackwater disaster and initiate positive actions to develop a new and faster way to put smokechasers



Eight fire fighters died here in Clayton Gulch August 21, 1937 in the Shoshone National Forest Blackwater Fire of Wyoming. Photo courtesy of Karl Brauneis.

potential blowup conditions. Fifteen fire fighters died on the Blackwater when a passing cold front turned the fire's head a full 90 degrees and trapped groups of fire fighters on various parts of the fire. Recently, we have been able to develop and present a fire training slide show on the Blackwater Fire to cover the elements of Standards for Survival and Look Up, Look Down and Look Around. Still, there is a story on the investigation of this fire that needs to be told.

“1937 BLACKWATER FIRE INVESTIGATION”

by Karl Brauneis, MSO '77, Forester, Shoshone National Forest, Wyoming



Fallen fire fighters have been transported on the backs of horses to waiting trucks after the 1937 Blackwater Fire in Wyoming. Photo courtesy of Karl Brauneis.

*(Continued from page 9)
on the line.*

In Stan Cohen's book, A Pictorial History of Smokejumping, it is noted that David P. Godwin is “the man most instrumental in the initial development of the smokejumping concept” (page - 18). One can only imagine the effect that the Blackwater Fire had on David Godwin. The efforts he made to avert a future tragedy by improving fire response times are,

however, documented in forest history. All managers in our fire-fighting agencies should use Godwin's Fire Report and the actions he took as a model for an effective management response to an incident.

True, the Smokejumper project was first developed at Winthrop, Washington (Region 6) in the autumn of 1939. Still, I believe that the Smokejumpers were born through tragedy on a hot August day in 1937 near a stream called Blackwater.

Fire Prevention Week, 1994, at Lander, WY.
Left to Right: Janet Spriggs, Business Management Asst., Washakie Ranger District, Smokey The Bear, and Karl Brauneis, Forester, Shoshone National Forest, Wyoming. The truck is a 1953 Chevrolet that cost \$1,600 new. Karl is wearing the 1950's-60's and early 70's Forest Service uniform. Photo courtesy of Karl Brauneis.



HAROLD "JIM" MAXWELL, CJ '55 & FBX '61

Jim, residing at Vero Beach, Florida on the east coast, about 100 miles north of Miami, sent us some material at our request, relating to his days as a "Gobi Desert Rat" smokejumper at Cave Junction, Oregon, and later, as a U.S. Marine pilot.

Jim first jumped in 1955 and served with such legendary jumpers as Orville Looper, Jim Allen and jumper-pilot Ed Scholtz.

Jim jumped out of Cave Junction during 1955-'56. He then became a Marine aviation cadet - class 4856 - at Pensacola, Florida in 1956 and served as a Marine pilot through 1960, flying jet fighters, and rising to the rank of captain. Jim then left the service in 1960 and joined the BLM smokejumpers at Fort Wainright, Alaska and was with that unit during 1961-'62. He then reentered the Marine Corps and after a year of training on H-34 helicopters at El Toro, California, was shipped overseas to Vietnam in early 1965.

At the time they were classified as "advisors" and for several months resupplied outposts with food and



Capt. Jim Maxwell, U.S. Marines, standing by a McDonnell Douglas A-4D fighter-bomber in 1960. A Jim Maxwell photo.



Jim Maxwell, CJ 55, standing by a Noorduyn Norelman at the "Gobi Desert" airstrip at Cave Junction 1955. Photo courtesy of Jim Maxwell.

ammunition, as well as carrying out vertical assault missions with the ARVNS (South Vietnamese troops). Jim said these troops would carry their food with them into combat in the form of live chickens and fresh fruit. Jim and the other pilots - 20 or more - would resupply and then evacuate the Vietnamese from the Viet Cong areas while under fire.

Around mid-1965 the "nice little war" blew up as President Johnson began to send American troops to Vietnam. Jim and the other pilots and crews lived "in-country" and flew missions in the I Corps area with HMM-163, the "Ridge Runners", which included search and rescue missions near the 17th parallel, to rescue downed pilots. Jim said they always had two M-60 machine gunners on board their helicopters and all of them wore flack vests and "diapers" for protection from enemy fire. Later they flew missions in their helicopters from carrier decks. One day they flew for 10 1/2 consecutive hours.

Before departing for the United States Jim's unit had three pilots and one crew chief killed in action. HMM-163 members received 13 Purple Hearts, one Silver Star, and one Distinguished Flying Cross, plus several

(Continued on page 12)

HAROLD "JIM" MAXWELL, CJ '55 & FBX '61

(Continued from page 11)

unit citations. We made a copy of his HMM-163 Cruise Book, telling the story of the unit since its creation in 1951. Also, Jim sent an article from *Life* magazine, April 16, 1965, with the title "One Ride With Yankee Papa 14" - an H-34 helicopter from HMM-163. It is a very stirring article with pictures of that mission, to include the rescue of another helicopter pilot, Lieutenant Magel, whose life slipped away before the rescue helicopter got back to Da Nang. The civilian photographer who took the pictures, Larry Burrows, was killed in action later that year.

After returning to the States, Jim was assigned to Meridan, Mississippi as an instructor for student jet fighter pilots, which he said is "a whole story in itself."

He then joined the Colgate Palmolive Corp. and was with that firm for 20 years, beginning as an industrial engineer and rising to the position of chief manager.

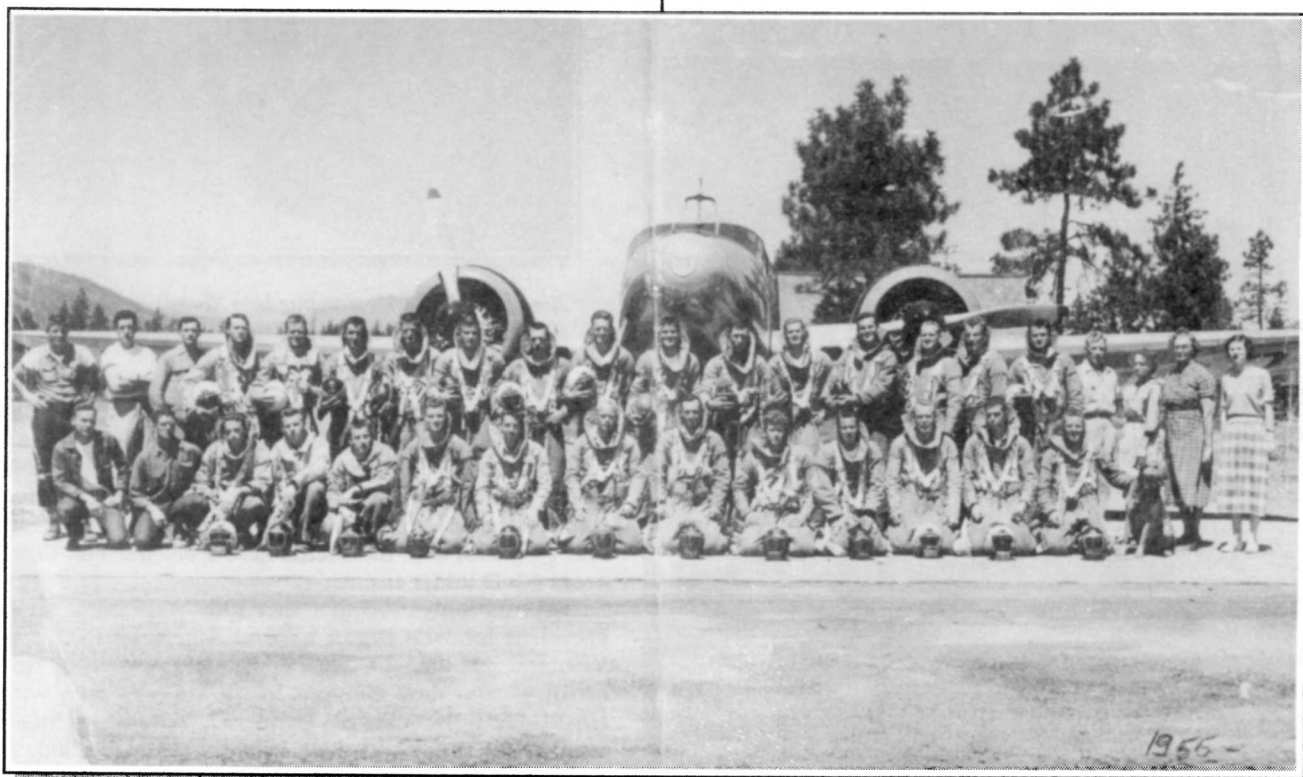
Jim now devotes much of his time acting as a "maintenance person" for those living nearby in a retirement community at Vero Beach, Florida.

He fondly remembers his days as a jumper with the

Gobi Desert Rats and the Alaska jumpers, days of high morale and esprit de corps, among very elite groups.



*Jim Maxwell
1996. Photo
courtesy of
Jim Maxwell.*



Cave Junction jumpers in front of a Twin Beech in 1955. Jim Maxwell and Mel Greenup are not in the picture. They were on a fire in the Umqua N.F. northeast of Cave Junction. Left to Right, back row: Orville Looper, Jim Allen, Jack Harter, Phil Clark — Charlotta's brother and Orville's brother-in-law, Bob Wood, Doug Stinson, Bob Berry, Jim Kesterson, Jim Ferrell, Charles Buckner — deceased, Dan Hayes, Jim Oleson, Forrest Moore, Jim Elwood, Hal Werner, Bill Long, Mac MacAtee, Ed Scholtz — pilot, cooks, Irma Wolf and Alviene Kaufman, clerk, Charlotte Looper — Orville's wife. Left to Right, front row: Bob Scofield, Roger Newton, Mike Hodges, Bob Crick, Jack Long, Bob Kester, Jim Yandell, Milan Ferry, Gideon "Gid" Newton — deceased, Tim Koester, Bob Calvery, Jim Dail, Warren Webb, Jim Wright — deceased. The dog's name was "Nose", for a very good reason Jim said. Jim Allen provided us with many of the names. Photo courtesy of Jim Maxwell.

SILK STORIES: **Fractured Fables From the Fireline**

by **Scott Belknap, MYC 83, and Now An Active Missoula Jumper**

When I started this column, I hoped that it might serve as a forum for others to share those fun stories that are told time and again around the cook fire. Charlie Palmer, MSO '95, has offered the first contribution, documenting the installment of new monuments at Mann Gulch. Enjoy his story and then sit down and share one of your own with all of us. Send your story to the NSA at: P.O. Box 4081, Missoula, MT 59806-4081, ATTN: Jack Demmons, or at smokejumpers@smokejumpers.com. on the internet. You can also send them directly to me at: Smokejump@AOL.com.

Smokejumpers Return to Mann Gulch

The black streamers descended slowly, almost hesitatingly, in the crisp morning air of mid-May. Pilots Pat Veillette and Eldon Hatch banked the Sherpa into the standard left turn to give spotter Everett Weniger, MSO '88, a better view of the alighting drift indicators.

"It looks like about a hundred and fifty yards," Weniger yelled above the wind blast from the open door to jumper-in-charge Scott Belknap. "Try to stay in the saddle near the top of the ridge, and good luck!"

Belknap and jump partner Andy Hayes, MSO '79, each nodded, neither speaking.

"You're both clear!" assistant spotter Todd Onken, MSO '82, shouted to the pair of waiting jumpers.

Weniger slapped the side of the door, and the jumpers shifted to their pre-exit postures. Three seconds later, he swatted Belknap's left calf, and the first stick stepped into the open sky. Two more sticks would follow, but this would not be a typical six-manner. The saddle used for this jump lay near the head of Mann Gulch, and was within a pulaski throw of a jump spot utilized nearly fifty years ago by fifteen of Missoula's bravest. On that hot August day in 1949, twelve of these jumpers, plus a recreation guard, a former jumper, would lose their lives in what continues to be one of the deadliest wildland fires in history.

Once on the ground, jumpers Belknap, Hayes, Jim Beck, MSO '75, Hardy Bloemeke, MSO '77, Mike Patten, MSO '88, and John Smith, MSO '82, tied in with fellow jumpers Joe Chandler, MSO '71, and Charlie Palmer, who had hiked in from near the head of Willow Creek. Now eight strong, the men gathered up tools and set about their task. Strangely, there was no smell of wood smoke in the air, nor flame visible anywhere near the Gulch. Their somber, yet rewarding job for the next few days would not

involve fire fighting, but rather, erecting new granite monuments for each of the thirteen fallen men. The old white crosses, placed where each body had been found, were beginning to show the effects of forty plus years of exposure to the harsh Montana elements. Cracked and crumbling, they had served for decades as stark references as to how that footrace for life played out on the steep Mann Gulch slope.

The eight jumpers began with the crosses nearest the top, perhaps in some way paying tribute to those who made it the farthest on that day, yet not quite far enough. Teams were formed to speed the process. Three went ahead to dig the new holes. Two more followed to set the re-bar and prepare the new markers, which had been packed in by the Last Chance Chapter of the Back Country Horsemen. The cement, crudely but efficiently mixed in a five gallon cubic box, was then poured by the remaining three. One by one, the names sounded off in a strange roll call for the dead: Henry Thol, David Navon, Philip McVey, Eldon Diettert, Marvin Sherman, Leonard Piper, Silas Thompson, Robert Bennett, James Harrison, Joseph Sylvia, Newton Thompson, Stanley Reba. All present. That accounted for twelve of the thirteen. The cross of the missing man, Bill Hellman, could be found just to the northwest. Badly burned near the top of Mann Gulch, he had staggered into the adjoining draw. Subsequent efforts to save him, although unsuccessful, helped give birth to the place's present name of Rescue Gulch.

With Hellman's new monument in place, the jumpers had completed their arduous task. After a brief discussion, it was decided to leave the old crosses in place, save for Navon's. (As a Jew, his family had rightfully opposed the use of the Christian symbol.) Left to the elements, some of the white markers will survive longer than others, which seems only fitting as they oddly reflect the fateful happenings here. Together, the crosses and monuments will help tell the story of what happened in Mann Gulch on that day, the hottest day on record for that part of the country. The eight jumpers who took part in this endeavor cherished the opportunity to help keep the memory of these men alive.

Thanks, Charlie.

The Static Line Staff would like to establish "cub reporters" at every jump base. The hope is that these reporters would be able to submit one or two reports a year on base activity, retirements, rookie classes, and the fire season. Please contact the NSA if you would like to represent your base.

(Continued on page 14)

SILK STORIES: **Fractured Fables From the Fireline** by Scott Belknap, MYC 83, and Now An Active Missoula Jumper, cont'd.



Eldon Dietert, MSO '49. His markers at Mann Gulch are similar to the others that have been erected there in memory of those who died August 5, 1949. Photo courtesy of Scott Belknap.



FORMER MCCALL JUMPERS, 1993. This picture was given to us by Max Glaves, MYC '47, and was taken during the group's reunion at McCall in 1993. They were all McCall jumpers. Back Row, left to right: Kenny Roth, '46; Lavon Scott, '46; Ray Mansisidor '46; Max Glaves, '47; Terry McMullan, '48; and Marvin (Buss) Bertram, '46. Front Row, left to right: Bernie Nielsen, '47; Leo Compton, '47; Rodney (Rod) Davidson, '47; Merle Cables, '48. Should there be errors as to names and dates first jumped out of McCall, please let us know. 1993 marked the 50th anniversary for the McCall base, which began operations in the spring of 1943.

GARY PETERSON, FORMER RECON/TANKER PILOT

Gary joined the Association in February. He has a number of stories relating to his days as a pilot. Several of them are mentioned in this article and others will appear in future newsletters.

He learned to fly at Boise in 1973 and has a number of ratings. He has accumulated 12,000 hours of flight time. Gary flew search planes for a number of missing aircraft in the Targhee National Forest of eastern Idaho and flew injured fire fighters out of Challis and Salmon. He has flown many types of aircraft through the years, from Cessna 180's to Lear Jets and Boeing 747's.

From 1977 to 1981 Gary managed a flying service at St. Anthony, Idaho, 45 miles northeast of Idaho Falls in the eastern part of the state. He would fly as a crop duster in the mornings, beginning around 4:00 A.M., and then conduct aerial fire patrols later in the day, covering an area from the Lemhi Range in the Salmon National Forest, north to the Bitterroots, and then east to the Tetons in Wyoming, looking for possible fires. On some occasions he flew smokejumpers.

In 1985 he became an air tanker pilot on Consolidated PB4Y-2 Privateer's--former U.S. Navy patrol bombers--for Hawkins and Powers of Greybull, Wyoming and flew all over the United States. Today he flies B-747 jumbo jets out of Houston for Continental Airlines and lives at Kingwood, Texas northeast of that city. He and his wife are preparing to move to the Idaho-Montana region within the coming year. Gary told another pilot, Ken Hoffner, a pilot for Continental on McDonnell Douglas MD-80's, based out of Houston, and also a former Hawkins and Powers tanker pilot, about our Association and he too joined.

Gary said he was trying to get out of crop dusting and into something safer when he was offered a job by Hawkins and Powers and went to the company's headquarters at Greybull, Wyoming for processing. He met the chief pilot and was escorted to the office to fill out forms, to include those telling where to send the biggest body parts, if need be. He was then introduced to Tanker 126, which would be his ship.

His first retardant drop took place out of Battle Mountain, Nevada, west of Elko, when they were dispatched to replace a Fairchild C-119 that had landed hard, breaking a tail boom, rendering the plane suitable for becoming a rather large flower pot or garage. It was during this flight that they had a failure of the #1 prop governor, which required an engine shutdown. They were unable to feather the prop, which increased the drag on the left side. However, they continued on to the fire and made the retardant drop. They

then returned to the airport to repair the offending part. Gary said, "It is amazing what one can repair with a large hammer."

There was a rather amusing incident later that month when they were flying out of Missoula. Their plane had been dubbed "The Ugly Duck" among the tankers based there. On one particular flight they had completed their drop and upon the return to the airfield, were greeted by a uniformed Forest Service representative driving a jeep and holding up a clipboard, "just like in the movies," Gary said. He drove up to the plane and asked, "You boys missing any parts?" Gary and the other pilot looked back at Tanker 126 and it appeared that all of the parts were still there. However, upon closer inspection, they found that several short stacks from the exhausts of #3 engine were indeed missing. They had been retrieved from the runway after Tanker 126's departure.

Tankers are usually lined up on a first-in-first-out basis before being flown to other locations. However, they were placed at the head of the line, Gary said, "so as to be the first to depart and not further embarrass the Forest Service at the jumper base at Missoula."

In a future newsletter we will mention some of Gary's experiences in dropping smokejumpers to fires and his work with a volunteer fire department in Texas during his time off from flying. He has a great sense of humor.

(Continued on page 16)



Left to Right: Mike Linn, an air tanker captain, and Gary Peterson. The picture was taken next to Tanker 126. The date is July, 1985. Photo courtesy of Gary Peterson.

GARY PETERSON, FORMER RECON/TANKER PILOT, cont'd.



Hawkins and Powers Tanker 126 sitting at the Missoula smokejumper base July, 1985. Photo courtesy of Gary Peterson.



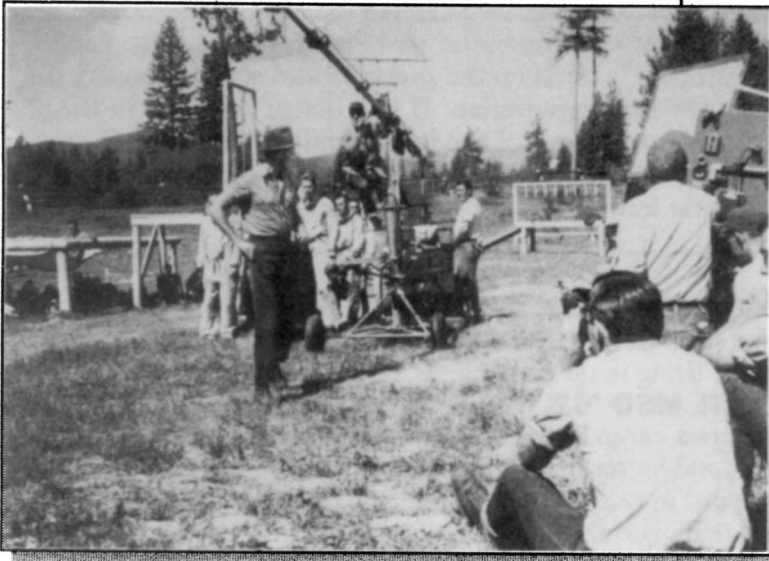
Tanker 126 enroute from Coeur d'Alene, Idaho to Seattle at the end of August, 1985. Engine #2 is out and prop feathered. Engine #1 is also out, but the prop refused to feather. Photo courtesy of Gary Peterson.

West Yellowstone, Montana smokejumper crew in August, 1954. Standing, Left to Right: Tom Milligan, MSO '52(?), foreman; Frank Polutnik, MSO '52; Jim Spence, MSO '53; Maurice (Knut) Knudson, MSO '52. Squatting, Left to Right: Jerry Wilson, pilot; Charles (Chuck) Viviano, MSO '53. Tom stayed with the U.S. Park Service and worked within Yellowstone Park. He retired as a District Ranger from the Teton National Park. Fran retired as a captain in the Montana Highway Patrol and was a captain in the U.S. Navy Reserve. Jim retired from the U.S. Forest Service in Alaska. Knut has degrees in wildlife management and engineering. He became a government inspector at Boeing out of Seattle. Knut passed away May 10, 1987 at the age of 55.



Chuck retired April 1990 as a captain with the Los Angeles County Fire Department. Jerry retired after a very successful career in aviation and banking, among other business activities. He currently lives in Lewiston, Idaho and his health has been failing. The aircraft that was used as a jump ship at West Yellowstone is a 1929 Fokker Super Universal, N 6880, and was owned by the Bowler Flying Service at Orofino, Idaho. Abe Bowler passed away July 9, 1962 from a heart attack at age 51. Note that the control lines to the tail section run along the outside of the fuselage. What happened to this aircraft? Did it go to Alaska? The picture and information were supplied by Chuck Viviano, who lives at Cypress, California.

PICTURE SECTION



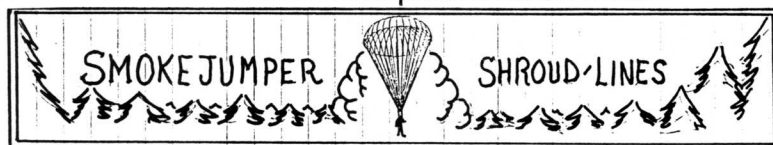
Max Dolato, MSO '51, sent us this picture taken during the filming of "Red Skies of Montana" at the Missoula Nine Mile smokejumper training base during the summer of 1951. The star, Richard Widmark, with hat, is standing in the center. Does anyone recognize the jumpers in the background? There are those of us who remember this scene during the filming. Max took part in the making of this movie. He was a student in the Forestry School at what is now known as the University of Montana. Max currently resides at Salem, Oregon. We located him through the Internet and with what is known as a "search engine." He had been among "The Missing" and is now a member of the Association.



Mike Tabler, NCSB '67. Mike is standing in the door of a Twin Beech preparing to save the lives, if not the dignity, of three colleagues who are all fouled up in the canopy of a runaway chute. He jumped from 1967-72, and spent his last two years at the La Grande, Oregon base as a squad leader.

Mike is currently a lawyer with an office at Ephrata, Washington, 80 miles SW of Spokane and 20 miles NW of Moses Lake.

Photo courtesy of long-time smokejumper pilot Wally Tower, retired at Salem, Oregon



Ken Perkins, RDD '77, sent this sketch to us some time ago. He had been jumping out of Redding, but suffered severe injuries during a practice jump several years ago, which have prevented him from jumping anymore. Ken is a very renowned artist who specializes in aviation, military, wildlife, and landscapes. He has painted smokejumper scenes also.

CHUTE THE BREEZE



Some of the material and pictures we have received during the past year have yet to be used. However, they will appear in future newsletters. Please keep the pictures and stories coming in. We would like to highlight the Boise Base in the next newsletter. If you notice mistakes in the newsletters, such as dates and names, or can identify some of the individuals in pictures where names are lacking, please get in touch with us. We have been receiving a tremendous amount of correspondence and are behind in answering letters, but we will get caught up.

In the October, 1996 newsletter we had a picture of **DAYTON GROVER, MSO '55**, and an unidentified jumper at the right. We were told that he is **CHARLIE CUMMINGS, MSO '55**, who once lived at Locus Grove, Oklahoma, but is believed to be living in the Los Alamos, New Mexico area now. So far we have not been able to contact him. **TOM BUTLER, MSO '62**, residing at Tulsa, Oklahoma--a school counselor for 21 years and prior to that, an Air America cargo kicker in Southeast Asia--recognized him. We checked with Dayton, who had forgotten the name, and he verified it was Charlie. Where is he?

Former Air America pilot **MIKE SEALE** dropped in recently with a friend, **HERMAN "HERM" JACKSON**, who also once served as a pilot with that organization. Herm joined our Association. Air America recently had a reunion at Cocoa Beach, Florida, south of Titusville, and it was as usual, a wild affair. Mike broke his crutches and a rented wheelchair. He dropped by a year ago with **PORTER PIERCE**, another former Air America pilot, now a captain for Alaska Airlines, and he too joined the NSA. As most of you know, many former jumpers and jumper pilots from the different bases served with Air America and the C.I.A.

LYNN SHOLTY, with the Nine Mile Ranger Station near the **FORMER MISSOULA JUMPER TRAINING BASE--CAMP MENARD**, is working with **JACK DEMMONS, MSO '50**, on a possible interpretive site there, where more than 1,000 rookies trained in past years and countless others took refresher training. We are looking for pictures of Camp Menard, to include aerial photographs. If you should have some, showing the former structures and site, please send them to Jack who will have them reproduced. The originals will be returned to you. Any information relating to Camp Menard will certainly be welcome. Thanks.

We talked to **LOLA LUFKIN** today--July 19--concerning the condition of **FRANCIS, NCSB '39**, pioneer smokejumper and former long-time Winthrop base manager, who suffered several strokes in April. Lola said their daughter **JOYCE** took Francis out this morning for a cheeseburger and a coke that he had been longing for, and then took him for a drive. He took 35 steps unassisted today. He is still having trouble with his speech, but it is improving. Francis is at the St. Francis Health Care Home at Bellingham, Washington. We certainly wish him the best and hope he will be back home at Winthrop before too long.

DAVE PIERCE, RAC '65, was in a motorcycle accident in Missoula June 7. He was seriously injured and suffered three broken ribs, a broken scapula, and a broken ankle, among other injuries. He has made a good recovery and is back at work as Equipment Specialist at the Forest Service's Missoula Technological And Development Center located at Fort Missoula. Dave said he may retire later this year. In the April newsletter we mentioned Dave's extensive parachuting history.

JERRY DEBRUIN, BROTHER OF EUGENE "GENE" DEBRUIN, MSO AND AK, '58-'63:

Jerry, residing at Sylvania, Ohio, had these comments on his Membership Profile Sheet: "I am the brother of Gene DeBruin, former Smokejumper who is a Pathet Lao prisinor in Laos. Our 33-year search for Gene continues. He was in the U.S. Air Force from 1952-1956, and a student at Montana State (now the University of Montana) during 1956-1960. He was a Smokejumper at Missoula and in Alaska from 1958-1963. Gene has been a prisoner in Laos from 1963 to the present. I would be happy to send additional information if needed. Smokejumpers Lee Gossett, Karl Seethaler, Bob Herald, Art Jukkala, Dennis Hensley, plus others, have been very helpful over the years. Don Courtney and Lyle Brown have been super too. I wish I could meet with each person and personally thank them for their efforts on behalf of Gene and our family. Hopefully, through your organization, that day will come soon." Jerry is an Associate member of the NSA and lives at Sylvania, Ohio. We had articles on Gene in the October 1995 and January 1996 issues of The Static Line. The story about Gene is one of the most tragic relating to former smokejumpers. Gene was an Air America cargo kicker, along with three others, on a civilian, twin-engine Curtiss C-46 transport that was shot down over Laos on Sept. 5, 1963. All on board--with the exception of the two pilots--survived by parachuting from the blazing aircraft. Gene escaped from his guards June 29, 1966, and from that time on Gene's exact fate is unknown. Jerry, with a deep love for his brother, is still very hopeful Gene is alive--we earnestly hope so too--and continues his search.

CHUTE THE BREEZE CONTINUED

THROUGH THE DECADES

DON HERTZOG, MYC '48: Don sent us a message by e-mail February 4 of this year. He referred to the picture we had of McCall jumpers, 1951, in our January '97 newsletter. Don said that Fred Pearson, squad leader at the time, pulled him off a cliff in 1950 after a jump in the Big Creek Wilderness Area. Wayne Green, his jump partner, had sailed under him, spilling just enough air to drop him about five feet and into the cliff. Don had been knocked unconscious and had a badly sprained ankle. Fred had been on an earlier stick and climbed 30' up the cliff to Don and packed him down and then to a camp site. A packer came in with an unbroken horse, a pack horse and a mule. Don had first priority to ride out because of his ankle. Don said the packer had never walked any farther than from the back door to the corral in his life and had to hoof it six miles cross-country and then 11 miles by trail back to an airfield. He was not a happy packer. On the way out the pack horse rolled at one point. Don lives at Lacey, Washington and Fred is at Kenai, Alaska. Where is Wayne?

BOB PAINTER, REDWOOD, OR '44: Redwood was near Cave Junction and the jumpers stationed there during WW II had trained initially at Missoula. In a copy of the Static Line prepared by jumpers at that time, Bob had commented on an article from an Oregon paper: "...The highlight of the jumping occurred Monday-- July, 1944--when an air transport plane operating from the Marine base at Corvallis landed at the Illinois airport and picked up five jumpers. Two of them were dropped near the Tannen Mountain and three in a remote part of the Umpqua National Forest. This was the first time that an airplane of the DC-3 class has ever landed at the local airport...The plane had five Marines on board when it landed to pick up jumpers." Bob lives at Lakeview, Michigan.

DEWEY SECRIST, MSO '48: Dewey was among "The Missing" for a considerable period of time and efforts to locate him had gone on for three years. He had been living in the Bitterroot Valley south of Missoula at one time. He was located through our computer and a "search engine." We found there was only one Dewey Secrist listed for the entire United States, and he lived at Newton Square, Pennsylvania. A letter sent to him revealed he was the missing jumper. He had served in the U.S. Navy during WW II, and later with the Merchant Marine Military Sealift Command, retiring from that operation in 1989. He sent us some very interesting jump stories and they will appear in the October newsletter. He is now a member of the NSA.

BILL BUCK, CJ '53: Bill said he and **RICHARD "PETE" PETERSON, MYC '47,** "were on a smoke in the Gila Wilderness when a spotter plane appeared overhead and the engine was cut. Someone then dropped a missile attached to a small chute. To our surprise and delight there were two cans of beer with a note attached. It read, 'Happy Father's Day!!' and was signed, 'Old Dad X.' It was **MAX ALLEN.** The beer was warm but good." Bill lives at Traverse City, Michigan and Max, who started jumping out of Missoula in 1948 and later transferred to McCall, calls Tucson, Arizona home. Pete is at Weiser, Idaho.

MARSHALL SULLIVAN, MSO '58: We will have a story from Marshall in the October newsletter. He once was involved with Carl Gidlund, Ron Stoleson, Jeff Davis, Bob Gallop and other Missoula jumpers. Marshall has not been in the best of health recently. Your compiler, Jack Demmons, talked to him at some length several months ago. Marshall lives at Broadus, Montana.

DEWAYNE DAVIS, MYC '53: We will have some of DeWayne's stories in the October newsletter. He states: "I will type up a couple of 'Fire/Smoke Stories,' defining them like 'War Stories,' which are a specified category of 'Fish Stories.' They are true and factual, but just a bit more embellished. 'Fire Stories' tend to be warmer than the fire was." He really has some good stories. DeWayne resides at Ridgecrest, California.

BILL ARPINO, FBX '64: Bill jumped out of Alaska for two seasons and was a rigger. He was another smokejumper--among very few--who jumped out of a B-26 medium bomber. He also parachuted from a Fairchild-Hiller 1100 helicopter. He was on active duty with the U.S. Army from 1959-1961 and has taken classes at the University of Alaska at Fairbanks in Wildlife Management. He resides at Tok, Alaska--a Jack London part of Alaska. There are those of us who have been in Tok when it was more than -70 degrees. You could take a pan of warm water, toss it in the air, and it would start to freeze before hitting the ground. A fact!

RANDY TOWER, NCSB '63: Randy is the son of **WALLY TOWER,** long-time jumper pilot. Randy was on a 25-man Hotshot crew in 1962. He then jumped out of NCSB in 1963 and at RAC (Redmond, Oregon) in 1964. As a youngster, in the 1950's, he spent several summers at NCSB, living on the base with his family when his dad was the pilot at Intercity Airport, before becoming Regional Air Officer for Region 6. Randy said, "One of my highlights, in retrospect, was my rookie group's first practice jump. I was #1 in the first stick on the first jump--with my dad flying the Twin Beech C-45. (He was more nervous than I was.) At the time it wasn't any big deal, but now it's kind of special." Randy's dad was one of the very finest of smokejumper pilots. Wally has a tremendous memory, and a wealth of information in his mind relating to aircraft and aircraft engines. Randy calls Pleasanton, California home and Wally is retired at Salem, Oregon.

CHUTE THE BREEZE CONTINUED

JOHN CULBERTSON, FBX '69: John said he might have been the first BLM jumper to travel the South Seas for the winter. He did this in 1969. In the autumn of 1971 he hitch-hiked from Fairbanks, Alaska to New Orleans, and then on to New York and across Europe, and found a job fighting fire in Israel in 1972. John then hitch-hiked to Finland. From there he went to Russia and took the Trans-Siberian Railroad to Siberia. In eastern Siberia he boarded a Russian freighter and went to Japan, where he worked as a dishwasher until he had enough money to return to Alaska for the 1973 fire season. There is more, which will be taken up in a later newsletter. When not in Alaska or traveling around the world, John rests in Carpinteria, California.

STEVE REYNAUD, NCSB '65: Steve retired from smokejumping at the Winthrop Base (NCSB) May 2 of this year, after serving 32 years as a smokejumper. He has a total of 601 jumps to his credit. While a NCSB jumper, he was at the La Grande, Oregon base five seasons. He retired at Twisp, Washington, near the NCSB.

DEAN LONGANECKER, NCSB '68: Dean jumped from 1968 through 1973. He, his older brother **ERNIE, NCSB '70**, and his younger brother **DALE, NCSB '74**, were the only set of three brothers to jump out of Winthrop--each has more than 100 jumps. Dale is still jumping and this will be his 24th year. Dean said his association with **MIKE TABLER, NCSB '67**, led directly to his present position as President of Mid State Bank in Waterville, Washington, 20 miles north of Wenatchee. He has known Francis and Lola Lufkin all of his life and Lola was the midwife at his birth. Ernie lives at Spokane and Dale is at Omak, Washington. Mike is a lawyer at Ephrata.

JOHN A. ASCHIM, RAC '77: John mentions that his rookie year of 1977 was a drought year. His first fire jump was in the high desert about 100 miles south of Vernal, Utah. He and other jumpers were sent there to back up existing fire crews on a project fire in the Flaming Gorge National Forest. Three fire fighters had burned to death in that fire during the initial attack. He said it was difficult to maneuver his chute in the thin air. His crew boss-and fire boss--was **DEWEY WARNER, RAC '75**. John said only four of the original thirteen rookies in his class graduated as smokejumpers. He currently lives at Vancouver, Washington. Dewey is Base Manager at the Redmond Air Center, Redmond, Oregon.

MIKE "APPY" APICELLO, CJ '78: During the summer of 1980 Mike was seriously injured on a jump near the Oregon-California border in the Rogue River country. He came into a very tall fir tree in a stand of old growth and his chute collapsed. Mike went down through the branches and fell on rocks. He broke his back and both feet. Later, at a hospital, they were going to amputate one foot since the injury was so severe, but they managed to save it. Mike came back to the Forest Service in 1987--but not as a jumper. Today he is the USFS Public Affairs Officer at the NIFC (National Interagency Fire Center) at Boise. His home is in Boise.

RICHARD FORT, FBX, '80: Dick was originally from Mississippi, but now lives at Asheville, North Carolina. He jumped for 10 seasons--1980-1982, 1985-1990, and 1992, for a total of 199 jumps. He is an architect and graduated from Mississippi State University with a BA in Architecture. Dick jumped from 13 different types of aircraft during his career as a smokejumper and was qualified as an EMT. He was present at the "Greatest Party of All Time" on July 29, 1987. The location was at the Alaska Smokejumper Operations Building--"On The Lawn." One wild party! Compiler's note: I believe local authorities gave four of the participants three minutes "to leave town."

JEFF MARTINSON, GRANGEVILLE, '87: Jeff trained at Missoula and was then sent to the Grangeville, Idaho base. He jumped for two seasons and then returned to Choteau, Montana where he and his wife Melody publish that town's weekly newspaper. He has a BS and AS from Western Montana College.

BARRY LAYTON, RDD '92: Barry is a California native and currently resides at South Lake Tahoe. He jumped out of Redding for four seasons and has a total of 54 jumps to his credit. Barry has a BS in Natural Resource Management--his major--from Cal Poly at San Luis Obispo, California.

CARLOS TREVINO, WEST YELLOWSTONE, '92: Carlos trained at Missoula and was then assigned to the West Yellowstone, Montana base. During the 1995 season--his 4th at the time--he severely bruised a hip upon hitting a log while landing during a jump in New Mexico. He had attended Montana State University at Bozeman and worked as a logger in that area. During the 1995 fire season, the average age of the West Yellowstone jumpers was 34. Three jumpers at West, **BILL WERHANE, BILL CRAIG AND CHUCK FLACH**, are 51 years old. We will have more about the West Yellowstone jumpers in the Oct. newsletter.

FRED A. FUCHS, PILOT: Fred lives south of Albuquerque at Los Lunas. He learned to fly at Artisia, in southeastern New Mexico in 1947. He has been an airline transport pilot, has flown single and multiengine aircraft and helicopters. At one time he worked as a flight instructor and was an electronics instructor in the U.S. Army. He was a lead plane pilot and served in that capacity from 1965-1997. Fred flew out of Redding and McCall, and was a US Forest Service Smokejumper Captain pilot. Fred has flown more than 9,000 hours. He earned a BS in Forestry in 1962 from Northern Arizona University.