

THE STATIC LINE

NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION

P.O. Box 4081

Missoula, Montana 59806-4081

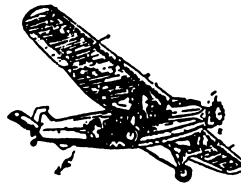
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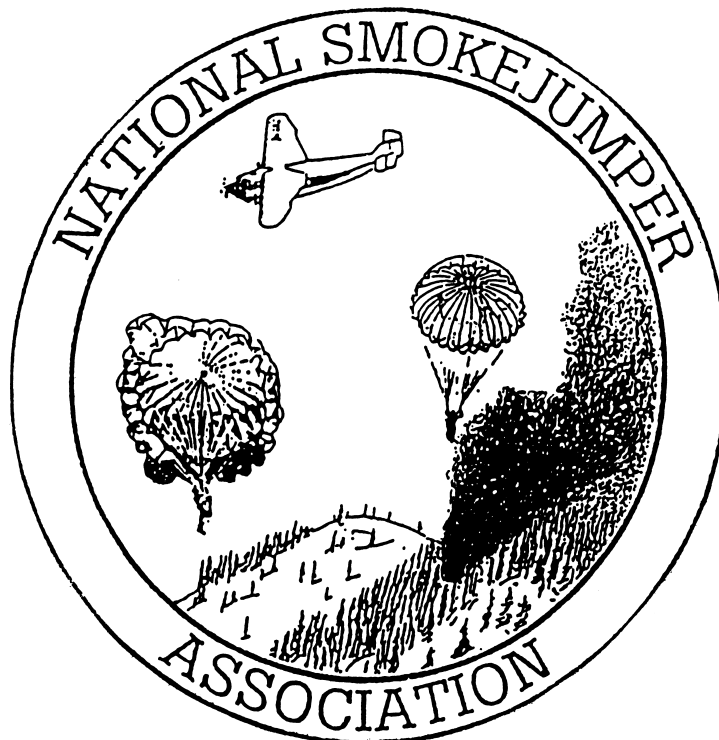
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THE STATIC LINE

The Static Line Staff

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year to all from the Officers and Directors of the National Smokejumper Association. 1997 was a good year for your Association and I believe '98 will be even better. We have scheduled a Board of Directors' Business meeting for Friday April, 10th here in Missoula at the Jumper base's Bob Marshall Room.

You will notice that one of the inserts in this newsletter contains a nomination form for filling the positions of two Directors whose terms will be expiring. They are Lonnie Dale and Jerry Timmons. Please fill out the forms and return them to NSA Headquarters before March 20, 1998. Thanks.

This last year we made progress on several fronts. The Life Membership Drive has resulted in 24 Life Members to date and I want to thank those of you that made this commitment to your Association. Your commitment has improved the Association's financial status, and I encourage those of you who have been thinking about becoming a Life Member to make the leap.

Our Video Production, through the leadership of Fred Rohrbach and his committee, contracted

with Mr. Steve Smith of Seattle, Washington to produce a Historic Documentary Video on Smokejumping. Steve and his crew spent much of last summer shooting footage at various Smokejumper bases and will continue to do so this spring. To date, Fred and his committee have raised approximately \$35,000 in the form of donations to cover part of the costs of this production. Target date for completion is early 1999. Donations should be sent to NSA Headquarters, attention Video Committee.

The Year 2000 isn't that far away and Redding, California is the location for our next National Smokejumper Association Reunion. Dave Nelson is the Reunion Chairman this time and is gearing up to put on the best Reunion ever. Dates will be published in the April Newsletter.

In closing: If any of you placed merchandise orders with the NSA prior to Nov. 1st, 1997 and did not receive them, or have sent checks to the NSA prior to that date and they have not been cancelled, I ask that you call our Historian, Jack Demmons, at (406) 549-9938 as soon as possible to get things straightened out. He is now in charge of orders.

Have a Great and Safe New Year.

Best regards,

Laird Robinson, President
National Smokejumper Association



"Here's a lovely parachute I knitted for you"

A cartoon from Jack Nash's memorabilia, which were given to the N.S.A. in 1993.



Jack was a long-time Missoula jumper and rigger.


He first jumped in 1942. After war-time service he rejoined the Missoula unit.

Jack passed away December 20, 1990.

LISTING OF DECEASED JUMPERS & PILOTS

This listing of deceased smokejumpers is new. Should dates and other material be incorrect, please let us know. Members of the NSA have been very helpful with providing timely information about the deaths of jumpers and pilots.

NAME	BASE	YEAR	COMMENTS
<p>FLINK, WILLIAM "BILL"</p>  <p><i>A smokejumper photo of Bill, 1942.</i></p>	MSO	'42	<p>Bill passed away in Missoula November 24th, 1997 from a diabetic condition at age 76. He was born March 8, 1921 in Missoula and was a graduate of Missoula County High School. Bill became a smokejumper during 1942 and after the end of the season enlisted in the Army. He became a paratrooper with the 508th Airborne Infantry Regiment of the 82nd Airborne Division and made combat jumps in Europe. He married Doris Mary Kay August 24, 1943, in Chicago. She preceeded him in death. After military service he returned to Montana and became manager of the laundry and keeper of the grounds at Warm Springs—A Montana State institution. He retired July, 1984 and moved back to Missoula. He is survived by his daughter Stephanie Ann, who is married to Bill Murphy, MSO '56, and they live at McCall, Idaho. His son Ernest W. Flink resides in Denver. Bill is survived by a sister, Betty Jane Thrasher of Missoula; three brothers Ed and Leo of the same city, and Ken of Butte. Bill always wondered if he might have been the first smokejumper to become a paratrooper. Perhaps some of our readers could help us out with that question. Another time we will have a story about Bill.</p>
			 <p><i>Bill as a paratrooper with the 508th Abn. Inf. Regt., WW II.</i></p>

<p>JOHNSON, MILES L.</p>  <p><i>Miles Johnson MYC '53</i></p>	MYC	'53	<p>Miles died from a heart attack at his home in Boise October 26th, 1997 at the age of 63. Rev. Stan Tate, MYC '53, conducted graveside services at the New Meadows, Idaho cemetery November 8th. Miles was born June 12, 1934 at New Meadows. He graduated from high school there in 1952 and from Boise Junior College in 1954. He was a McCall smokejumper from 1953 through 1961. From 1957-1959 Miles served with the U.S. Army at the Redstone Arsenal in Alabama. During 1960-1962 he worked with the Central Intelligence Agency on a part-time basis, and later full-time, retiring from that agency in 1973. He, along with other former smokejumpers, is mentioned in the Jan., 1998 <u>Air and Space/Smithsonian</u> magazine article "Secret Mission to Tibet." These night flights were conducted during the period 1957-1960 in support of the Tibetan revolution against the Red Chinese. Miles was also involved with providing support and training to Cuban revolutionaries during the Bay of Pigs Invasion. In the April, 1997 issue of The Static Line we had a story with the title "Project 'Coldfeet,' 1962." The body of a dead scientist was lifted aloft from a point 92 miles south of the North Pole by a specially equipped B-17G bomber, using what was known as a "Skyhook." Miles was the "pickup master" in the belly of the bomber during that operation. He also took part in the training of Parachute Aerial Reinforcement Units in Thailand; air operations scheduling of rotor and STOL aircraft in Vietnam; was parachute loft supervisor for Intermountain Aviation at Marana, Arizona; and served in heavy lift (aerial) operations in Laos. Miles is survived by his brother Tommy "Shep" and his wife Janice of Vale, Oregon; step-mother Dora Johnson of Ontario, Oregon and a number of other relatives, living primarily in Idaho and Oregon. He was preceeded in death by his life-long companion, Barbara Dodson. We will have more about Miles in the April, 1998 issue. As Miles would say, "<u>JUMPERS AWAY!</u>"</p>
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LISTING OF DECEASED JUMPERS & PILOTS CONT.

This is a continuation of the listing of deceased jumpers and pilots through 1/9/98.

NAME	BASE YEAR	COMMENTS
LEIBEL, EVA MAY	SMOKEJUMPER COOK	Eva passed away at Polson, Montana Dec. 11, 1997 at the age of 88 from natural causes. She was born in Hardin Dec. 3, 1909 to William and Daisey Cooley and attended schools there. She moved to Corvallis in 1923 and married John Leibel in 1925. She was a cook for the Missoula jumpers for a long period of time. She is survived by a daughter Vivian Ross of Polson; a sister Betty Myer of Missoula; and two brothers, Bob Cooley of Big Arm and Earl Cooley of Missoula.
LITVIN, MARTIN V.	MSO 65	Martin was with three other Bitterroot Valley snowmobilers on an outing Monday, January 3d, 1998 near Shadow Lake, southeast of Hamilton, Montana near the Granite and Ravalli County lines. The snowmobilers were trapped in an avalanche around 1:00 p.m. that day. Three were able to dig themselves out, but Martin was not found until four-five hours later. He was 53 years old. Martin, a retired schoolteacher, was employed by the Forest Service. He was president of the Bitterroot snowmobiling club and a resident of Corvallis near Hamilton. At this time we do not have any other details.
LOGAN, CHARLES DEAN	PILOT	Dean died of congestive heart failure Wednesday, January, 7th, 1998 at Lewiston, Idaho where he had retired. Dean had been a bush pilot throughout the Northwest and Alaska, and flew for the Johnson Flying Service many years. Among other flying assignments for that operation, he had been a smokejumper pilot. Dean also did the flying for aerial photography on several Disney films. During a period of seven years he taught aviation technology at the Missoula Vocational Technical center. Dean is survived by his widow, Eleanor, residing at Lewiston; daughter Judith Logan-Kraft of Mill City, California; and a sister, Wilma Casterline of Columbia Falls, Montana. Services were held at 1 p.m. Saturday, January, 10th in Lewiston. Many of us through the years flew with Dean, and especially remember our flights with him in the Travel Air's. He had a tremendous sense of humor and was an outstanding pilot. We hope to have more about Dean in future newsletters.
VANCE, PAUL S.	MSO 46	Paul passed away December 12, 1997 at a Hamilton, Montana hospital after a courageous battle against cancer. He was a native of Grantsdale, near Hamilton. There are those living in the area who remember Paul as an avid horseman, hunter, trapper and fisherman. He loved adventure and challenge, including his time as a smokejumper. Paul served with distinction in both WW II and the Korean conflict. He found a "home in the sky" during his 23 years with the U.S. Army Air Force and U.S. Air Force. Upon retiring he and his wife returned to his boyhood home at Grantsdale. He married June Wolfinbarger Vance at Spokane in 1949. She was a native of Darby, Montana. Besides his widow, he is survived by three daughters, Marie Thompson of Great Falls; Patricia Vance of Tacoma, Washington; and Carol Solis of Great Falls. A memorial service was held Saturday, December, 20th in Hamilton.
CROXTON, RALPH J.	MSO 51	Just prior to press time, we received information from Dick Wengert, MSO '51, currently residing at Winchester, Kentucky, that Ralph had passed away Jan. 15, 1997. (He sent along a copy of the obituary listing from the Purdue Alumni magazine.) Dick and Ralph both graduated from Purdue in 1952. Dick lost track of Ralph in later years. Dick entered the U.S. Army shortly after graduating from Purdue and served in Korea. He retired from his position as Forest Supervisor on the Daniel Boone National Forest in 1993 and now has his own consulting business.

**A REMINDER: THE E-MAIL ADDRESS FOR THE NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION IS:
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**THE ADDRESS FOR THE NATIONAL SMOKEJUMPER ASSOCIATION WEB PAGE IS:
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SILK STORIES: Fractured Fables From the Fireline

by Charley Palmer, MSO '95, an active Missoula Jumper. "Silk Stories" was originally started by Scott Belknap, MYC '83, also an active Missoula Jumper.

Growing up hundreds, even thousands of miles apart, it is tough to imagine that three different men could share so much in common. Yet, despite the geographical vastness that separated them, they each shared the same dream, a dream of challenging the element of sky to do battle with the element of fire. The dream of jumping from perfectly good airplanes. The dream of wearing the wings of a smokejumper.

For J. P., fighting fires offered a chance for travel and excitement. Growing up in Santa Ynez, a small central California town, he joined a local hotshot crew where he quickly received his baptism in fire.

When his crew was staged at the Missoula Aerial Fire Depot one summer, the jumping bug bit him, and hard. The infection lasted until June of 1995, when he rookied with 28 other similarly affected souls.

With Boyd, his move into fire fighting was a natural and logical one. At Fort Belknap, his place of birth on the windswept, northcentral Montana prairie, many took advantage of the opportunities that fire provided. Boyd was one of them. Gaining experience on 20-person crews and on pumpers, Boyd one day heeded the suggestion of an engine boss and applied to the jumpers. Following his rookie year in 1988, he has jumped ever since.

A rookie brother of Boyd's in that class was James. For James, his arrival into fire fighting took a much more circuitous route. Born in Oklahoma, he spent some time there before eventually wandering into Wyoming. After stops in such places as Wind River, Riverton, Shoshone,

Thermopolis, and Casper, his travels took him to Lame Deer, Montana. In 1982, at the urging of a friend, he joined a 20-person fire fighting crew. Although only 17 at the time, no one checked his age and he too has been involved in fire fighting every summer since that time.

However, the similarities these three men

possess go much deeper than their fraternal ties as smokejumpers. They also share the common bond of ancestral brotherhood as well. For J. P. it is the coastal Chumash. With Boyd it is the Assiniboine, and for James the Creek-Ottawa. Although the places where the men grew up may have been separated



A Missoula jumper descending to a fire in Western Montana during the summer of 1995. He is using an FS-12 parachute. This is a 32 foot, flat, circular, multiple porosity chute. It took the place of the FS-10.

Photo courtesy of Charley Palmer, MSO '95, active Missoula jumper.

by many miles, each shares the same distinction of having lived on an Indian reservation.

For this nation's nearly two million Native Americans, fire fighting has an importance unmatched by probably any other occupation. With employment rates hovering near 80% on some reservations, fire suppression provides many with the opportunity for relatively consistent, albeit seasonal, work. Tens of thousands of Indians answer the call every summer to battle the nation's blazes. Only a select few will proudly wear the smokejumper wings. For J. P., Boyd, James, and the other American Indians at the Missoula base, as well as other jumper units, the dream of becoming a smokejumper has come true. And this fulfilled dream has made them all very special.

Editor's Note: I have met a number of these Native American jumpers, and yes, they are very special.

DAN MCCARTHY, RDD '94, CONTINUED

This Is a Continuation of a Story From October, 1997.

This article is a continuation of one written by Dan that appeared in the October, 1997 issue of The Static Line. Two squads of Redding jumpers were to parachute into the headwaters of the Eel River in the great Yolla Bolly Middle Eel Wilderness

southwest of Redding for a three-day training exercise involving the clearing of 15 miles of trail. Two squads were involved. Squad A was made up of those 31 years old and over, while Squad B's members, with a larger section of the trail to clear, were age 30 and younger.

In the October '97 issue the story ended as the jump plane was taking off.

Dan resumes his story:

The valley floor, crowded with houses, paved roads and swimming pools, gave way to the brush-covered foothills of the Shasta Trinity N.F. and the Yolla Bolly Wilderness. We beheld a landscape free of man's destructive signature. Unbroken by clear-cuts or strip malls, the forest seemed to rise above the valley, not only in elevation, but also in personality. This completeness of the land allowed for a tangible individuality to be felt separate from our usual terra firma. The wilderness could be compared to an Italian fresco. The art, though beautiful and sublime, is still a part of the wall. Similarly, one normally sees the land and the wilderness as one in the same. However, on that clear summer morning, the forest and her character shown with the same defined separateness as the art in the Sistine Chapel does from the ceiling itself. In sum, the wilderness was a part of the landscape, yet separate in her own right.

Thoughts such as these were short-lived, for

we were distracted by the spotter (Arlen Cravens (RDD '77) and his assistant, Josh Mathiesen (RDD '94). They were busy looking for a suitable place for us to jump along Devil's Hole Ridge. The rookies—Stan Hill, Damon



Dan McCarthy hard at work on a two-man crosscut saw while helping clear trail at the headwaters of the Yolla Bolly Middle Eel Wilderness Area. Photo by Dan McCarthy.

Nelson, Geoff Butler and Jerry Arrellano—had their eyes peeled for a soft, grassy meadow. Instead, we chose to jump a more realistic spot that was located midway on the trail. Aside from a snag to one side of the spot, the clearing was more than adequate.

Rick (Haagenson, RDD '79, project leader) later confided in some of us when he admitted to a slight hesitation about the jump. He wondered whether or not the rookies could "step up to the plate" and make it into the spot, for some had not been able to prove themselves yet with a real fire jump. And with that, we laughed at his trepidation, because some of us knew that nothing bad was going to happen. The stone-faced assistant spotter was yelling, "I love you, man!" to each jumper as they went out.

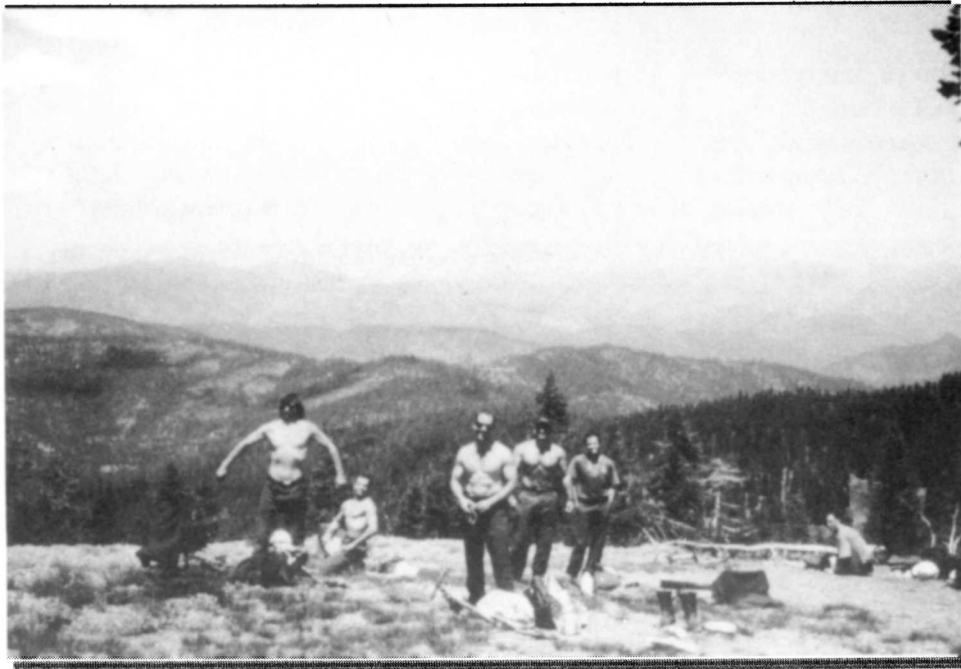
Ivory-colored nylon chutes, inflated with

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pure Northern California air, delivered our tools and food in regular jumper fashion. We quickly gathered the numerous bundles thrown from the

had cut through nearly 3,664 inches of wood and opened 12 miles of trail. What remained was a hike to where we left off the night before, finish



Part of the trail-clearing crew. From left to right: Damon Nelson; Tim Dolan, kneeling; Rick Haagenon; Jerry Arrellano; Stan Hill; Dorsey Lightner, sitting at far right. Photo Courtesy of Dan McCarthy.

plane in our general vicinity. Camp was set up, our gear was stowed, time was taken for a quick bite to eat, and we were off. We didn't know the actual workload waiting for us. All we did know for sure was that we were ready for anything that came our way. Everyone was excited about getting out of the "office" and doing some work.

What in fact greeted us was a sight similar to Hurricane Andrew's destruction of Southern Florida. The Lazyman Trail clearly called out for help. Winter storms and scores of fallen dead trees were the reasons behind the blocked trail.

We attacked the trail with the same patient diligence a child has when dissecting a pile of pickup-sticks. One by one, the logs were splayed open by hand and the clean, rhythmic "tzing" of cold steel cutting through timber could be heard echoing through the woods. The rookies, breathing heavily and deeply, began to feel what it was like to be a smokejumper. Each time a log was bucked, or a tree felled, their faces revealed the same satisfaction that had been felt by those who jumped 50 years ago.

By the morning of the third day Squads A and B

clearing the last three miles of trail (another 864 inches of bucking), and meet our pickup at the trailhead, eight miles beyond. At 9:00 a.m. both squads moved out—together.

We hiked at our own jumper pace and spoke little. Each one could be seen reflecting on something different. Damon had his attention locked on the shards of obsidian that littered the pathway. He was hoping, if lucky, to discover an arrowhead or spearpoint. Dorsey was off in his own world of high risk I.R.A.'s, or the coming of Emily, his first grandchild. Tim had thoughts of law school and financial aid spinning through his head. Stan could think of nothing save

the perfect single track the Lazyman Trail was for mountain biking. Visions of the coming fire season were what Jerry had going on. Rick kept one eye on the trail and one eye on every clearing for any sign of wildlife. Only Geoff could be heard talking about some gnarly, glacial bivouac in Alaska. I could think of nothing but the land around us. Mount Shasta appeared to float in the distance, while behind us the Devil's Hole Ridge looked like a carpet, flat and worked, because of our efforts.

As a team we had worked together, shared some stories around the campfire, risked missing a fire jump and had a great time. (The competition between the squads was lost and forgotten under the massive drifts of thrown sawchips.) This trip solidified in all of our minds that smokejumping is an attitude, a spirit, not just a job. The spirit to enjoy the outside and each other is the thread that ties smokejumpers together. I kept saying "I'll never forget you guys!" I know I won't.

Editor's Note: Dan is currently attending the University of Massachusetts.

ROD SNIDER, RESCUE MISSION, NCSB '51

Awhile back Elmer Neufeld, NCSB '44, sent us a story that had been written by Rod Snider some time ago. The title is "A Labor Day Mission." We have been in touch with both Rod and Elmer concerning the account. Each was involved. Luckily there were no deaths.

not be reached by phone. The situation sounded serious and we needed our pilot badly. I was elected to drive (fly) my 1934 Ford across the Loup Loup highway to the east and try to find him. Luckily, we found Joe and sped back to the jumper base. Elmer Neufeld, our squad



WINTHROP, WASHINGTON—NCSB—JUMPERS, 1951.

Top row, left to right: Jim Allen, '46; Elmer Neufeld, '44; Joe Harrel (Pilot); Brad Lucas, '51; Don Chapman, '51; Howard Verbeck, '51; Bob Pino, '51; Bill Coody, '51; Bob Newberry, '51; Dan Dibble, '50; Al Privette, '49; and Jack Newell, '51.

Middle row, left to right: Howard Beatty, '51; Spence Floyd, '51; Chuck Dickie, '51; Ed Mays, '51; Virg Hutchinson, '51; Dean Sutherland, '49—Deceased; Kent Beckman '51; Neil Dibble, '51; Les Kile, '48; Effie Gammonn and Francis Taylor, cooks.

Bottom row, left to right: Jim Campbell, '48; Wayne Buchert, '51; Bob Kruckeberg, '51; Rod Snider, '51; George Hendrickson, '51; Jack Johnston, '51—Deceased; Louis Stevens, '51; Dick Harris, '51; Bob Hough, '51; Francis Lufkin, '39, Foreman. Noorduyn Norseman N58691 is in the background.

Photos Courtesy of Rod Snider.

This is Rod's Story: Due to a slow 1951 fire year, there were very few jumpers around the Winthrop base on Labor Day, including the pilot, who was visiting in Omak for the day. (Omak was about 40 miles away by a winding dirt road across the mountains from the jumper base.) I was not on the jump list, but was just hanging around. Shortly after noon a call came in for some jumpers to help with a helicopter crash and ranger mishap on Miner's Ridge near Glacier Peak, 50 miles southwest of Winthrop in the Cascade Range and 25 miles southeast of Darrington.

For some reason the pilot, Joe Harrel, could

leader, could not believe we had made the trip, over and back, in that short of time.

Some jumpers insisted I go on the mission, since I had driven across the mountains and found our pilot. I accepted their thoughtful gesture and we were soon on the way in our jump ship, Noorduyn Norseman N58691. This part of Washington is the most beautiful, rugged place one can imagine.

Upon flying over Miner's Ridge, we could see a bright yellow helicopter lying on its side below the lookout. It was not a pretty sight. In 1951 'copters had poorer performance. Winds

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and altitude could create very hazardous missions.

Apparently the ranger, Warren Pressentin, was on an inspection of the lookout and stepped back through the open trap door. He fell and rolled down the stairs to the first landing, and then fell free to the ground. With help from a worker at the station he was able to climb back into the lookout and wait for assistance. Since an operable telephone was not available, the worker ran 14 miles to report the accident and a decision was made to send a helicopter with a doctor to the scene.

The Coast Guard pilot, Lt. (jg) Charles E. Mueller, and the doctor, Charles R. Terry, both from the Port Angeles Coast Guard base, had flown to the area and attempted a landing near the lookout, but their helicopter lost lift in the rarefied atmosphere and wind gusts carried them over the side of the ridge, where they crashed some 100 yards below. The pilot suffered a slight head injury and the doctor had a cut hand.

Later, on the jumper mission, Rod, squad leader Elmer Neufeld, Dave "Skinny" Beals-NCSB '45, and Jack Johnston, were spotted by their foreman, Francis Lufkin, from Noorduyn N58691. Rod said each of them made a good jump below the lookout tower.

It was decided to carry the injured ranger out in the morning. During the night a Forest Service packer, along with three other individuals, arrived to help with the evacuation. Rod said they left at around 8:00 a.m., carrying the ranger, who was tied onto a stretcher with ropes. The injured pilot rode a horse and the doctor walked alongside the stretcher, keeping a sharp eye on the ranger, who was in extreme pain.

Rod commented that the trip proceeded very slowly and members of the rescue team took turns carrying the stretcher. Improvised slings were devised for the ends of the stretcher as the trip progressed downward. He said they traveled through beautiful forests, lush vegetation, and even huckleberries, which they snacked on.

It was a 14-mile journey and when it became dark, conditions became more difficult and they had to use flashlights. A light rain developed which made conditions more miserable. At 10:00 p.m. the group finally reached the trail's end and then rode by truck to Darrington.

It was later determined that the ranger's back was not broken, but was severely bruised.

SUPPLEMENT BY ELMER NEUFELD.

The Coast Guard Doctor thought the ranger's back

was broken. We had to take him out of the lookout to the ground. That was my job and I asked for a volunteer. Rod stepped forward. He was tied to a stretcher, moved out of a window, placed on the catwalk rail, and turned 90 degrees. We then tied a letdown rope on each handle, and lowered the stretcher 30' to the ground. We then repeated the procedure with the injured ranger.

At the end of the trail we turned the stretcher and patient over to the ambulance crew. A number of pickup trucks had their lights on and the R6 Safety Officer recognized me. He came up, stuck out his hand and asked, "Elmer, how in the hell are you? Say, how come it takes 16 guys to carry out one guy? And how come it takes you 14 hours to do it?" If I hadn't been so darn tired, I would have decked the S.O.B.

Today, Rod and Elmer both reside in Boise.

Editor's Note: In the April 1994 issue of The Static Line we had an article with the title, "High Drama At Higgins Ridge." This involved a volunteer helicopter rescue mission flown by Rod Snider on August 4th 1961, when he saved 20 Missoula and Grangeville fire-encircled jumpers in the Nez Perce N.F. from possible death by flying all of them to safety on a number of perilous flights, at considerable risk to himself. For that action he was later awarded the North American Forest Service Medal for outstanding heroism and also received the Stanley-Hiller Jr. Pilot of the Year Award at the 14th Annual Meeting of the Helicopter Association of America in Jan. 1962.



Left to right, Bob Kruckeberg, NCSB '51 and Rod Snider, NCSB '51 at Winthrop, Washington in 1951. Noorduyn N58691 is in back.

JOHN CULBERTSON, FAIRBANKS, '69

THIS STORY IS ABOUT JOHN'S FRIEND JIMMY PEARCE, FBX '69

Many jumpers and pilots will remember Jimmy B. Pearce from the old Alaska base on Airport Way, and later at the newer facilities at the "T" hanger at Fort Wanwright. Ever a fixture in sneakers and levis, cowboy shirts cut off at the sleeve and a Marlborough hanging on his lip, Jimmy was the only jumper I ever saw who worked out skipping rope to the country ballads



Jimmy with chain saw, side-band radio and fire pack in background. The jump ship was BLM's Grumman Goose 644 Romeo, with radial engines—1969.

Photo Courtesy of John Culbertson.

of Marty Robbins. On anybody else it wouldn't of worked. The rhythm was all wrong, especially when viewed from the distance of the rock-charged workouts of the 90's. But for Jimmy it was just right. A white man with rhythm, he would pause for a smoke while changing tapes and exude confidence and satisfaction.

Watching from the corner of the weight room,

where I attempted to squelch my never ending supply of urban nervousness with another set of pull-ups, Jimmy couldn't have been more different than me if he had tried. An orphan from Kansas, Jimmy had been on his own for a long time. A former paratrooper, ranch hand, and Forest Service fire fighter, he had lived on the Modoc Reservation in northeastern California for awhile, then drifted back to being a hired hand outside of Alturas, at the foot of the Warner Mountains near the reservation.

Jimmy's idea of a good deal was rolling down the road in his Mercury convertible to pester the waitresses at the Beacon Coffee Shop in Alturas after the jump season was over in Alaska. He had money in his pocket, top down, country music blasting, hair slicked back with Vitalis, and his street shoes on. I was freezing my butt off, as this event usually occurred during mid-December, but as Jimmy said, "When ya got a fine car like the 'Merc,' ya gotta show it off."

I first met Jimmy in Seattle at the SeaTac Airport. The ultimate good deal of my nineteen-year-old life had just occurred in the form of a free ticket from Los Angeles to Alaska, courtesy of the BLM (Bureau of Land Management). Having some hours to kill while waiting for the Wein Consolidated flight, I inquired if there were any other people listed on BLM flight status, and if so, to please page them. Drink in hand, Jimmy came drifting out of the lounge in the company of a pleasantly plump barmaid, asking the world in general, "Who could be wanting little ol me?" I fessed up to paging him, and then he looked me up and down, asking, "Are you a real cowboy?" I must have been quite a sight. Not knowing a thing about Alaska, other than watching "North to Alaska" three or four times, I had taken all my cues from John Wayne and the film's Owens Valley High Sierra setting and so had fitted myself out in true dude ranch form. I admitted I didn't even know how to ride a horse. Then he asked, "Is that a gold pan strapped to your pack?" I told him, "Yes Sir." We quickly ascertained that we both were gold panning fanatics, and had spent our days off from the Forest Service prospecting. In fact, he had a pan in his pack too.

Jimmy turned to the lady on his arm and said

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he needed to speak to me a minute. Then in a most courteous and respectful manner told me to go into the men's room and take off those "silly-looking clothes." When I returned in running shoes and a ball cap he handed me a drink (something I was not used to) and said, "Now that's you." I knew I had met a friend for life.

I told Jim I was nervous about this jumping business, but he brushed it off, saying he'd done it in the Army and it wasn't "no big thing." He commented, "The way I see it is we do whatever they want us to do, then take our pans along on the jump. When the work's all done there's gotta be some fooling around, waiting to get out...we're going to find gold."

Speaking of gold, Jimmy asked if I didn't think it was sorta funny that the BLM was paying for our flight to Alaska, and would give us free room and board. They had even sent letters, informing us we would be paid overtime for the flight. He said, "Ya know the Forest Service is just so dang cheap I have a hard time believing the BLM would be so loose with its money." We had no idea we were looking at the tip of the iceberg!

Well, the years went by and Jimmy and I couldn't get enough of Alaska. We both loved to work, and we worked our tails off for the BLM. I found in Jimmy someone more mature and settled than myself, but still blissfully lost in the conviction that hard work is a reward in itself and that life is a never ending adventure. We beat down flames with our spruce boughs till we were cold and shivering, then rallied to do it again, as though the fire was a personal challenge and the reputation of the jumpers rested on our shoulders.

We filed on state land, then found ourselves too busy to prove up on it. We panned for gold, never got rich, hobo'ed rides on the Alaska Railroad—once looking black as the soot of the coal car we landed in through stupidity and rode to Healy, caught huge strings of grayling, got chased by bears, fell in love with native women, were befriended by old sourdoughs, watched native crews dance and sing in a language we could not understand, got drunk on cheap wine, sat around a thousand camp fires, howled at the moon, and stared out at the long sub-arctic twilight. In the winters Jimmy taught me to ride a horse, and set me up for one of the most painful experiences of my life, a real cattle drive, with real cowboys.

Just like his love of country ballads, Jimmy loved to listen to poetry and we were both

fascinated with Robert Service. He laughed to the "Cremation of Sam McGee" and got sentimental with "The Men That Don't Fit In."

I bought a little copy of The Spell of the Yukon and in the evenings read out loud while Jimmy would doodle with his pen and paper, eventually creating a whole set of logos and stationery for the jumpers.

Along with some crazy ex-Missoula types we bought a bright red '55 Pontiac convertible for forty-five dollars. It had an Indian chief on the hood that lit up at night, burned two quarts of oil per tank of gas and had so many rust holes in the floor that we left a trail of beer cans and Rocket brand reclaimed motor oil containers wherever we went.

One fall Jimmy signed us on with Bob Betts (RDD 66) on the only official search for a Sasquatch, or "Bush Man," in Alaska. We never found the "Bush Man," but we thought we were on the best adventure in the world. In late fall he decided to ride a full-dress Harley "Hog" motorcycle south on the snow-covered Alcan Highway, falling eleven times between Big Delta and Tanacross before being arrested for his own protection by a state trooper who eventually befriended him and drove him down to Haines. I remember the few jumpers that were left at the loft standing in the snow giggling hilariously as Jimmy took off, his down-filled arctic work suit billowing in the wind, making him look like the Michelin man before diving into a snowbank.

Jimmy was forever the one to turn the other cheek, look out after others and lend a helping hand. I wasn't there to help Jimmy when the troubles of his world came down on him. In the winter of '78/'79 he took his own life on a ranch near Davis Creek at the foot of the Warner Mountains in northeastern California. As always happens when a jumper takes his own life, there was a great deal of soul-searching and just plain sadness when Jimmy died.

It was several years before I could bring myself to go back to the Alturas country and spend some time in Jimmy's stomping grounds. Many of his old ranch friends had passed on or moved away. The door to the bunkhouse he had turned into a home swung in the wind and the ranch was closed and unworked. Red, the horse Jimmy taught me to ride, was no longer in the stable. I put a bouquet of sagebrush on his grave and lay down on it for many hours listening to the wind

(Continued from page 12)

and watching the clouds pass by.

I cried so hard I threw up, and in the evening walked the long ridge behind the bunkhouse into the next creek to the north. I met two small boys, brothers age seven and ten, pushing old bikes up the hill for one last death-defying run before supper. They were in old torn clothes, cheap shoes, and covered with dirt. The kind of hardscrabble kid Jimmy probably had been, except these kids had a little trailer house and a mom and dad on some rented land down in

the canyon.

The older boy said they had seen me walking for some time as they had been in the hills all afternoon. He said, "You're looking for Jimmy aren't you! You're one of the smokejumeprs..he was our friend too." The little guy looked all around the hills, like a kid will do when he's working up to talk. He looked at the sagebrush, juniper and pinion in the cold purple twilight and then said, "We still see him sometimes, he walks up here,...He's OK."



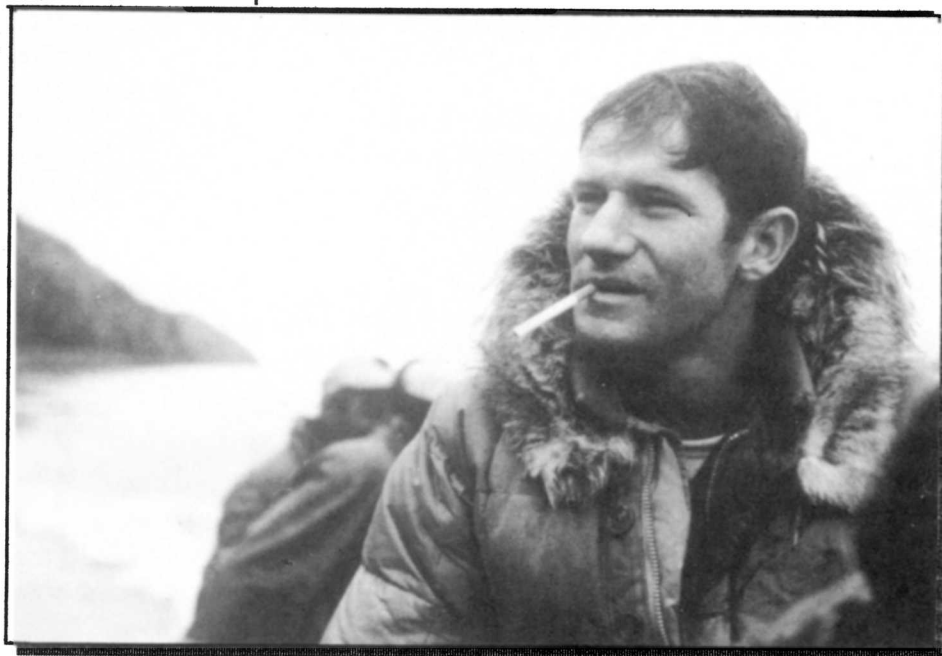
John Culbertson with gear at the Alaska jumper base in 1969, standing next to the BLM Grumman Goose, 644 Romeo. It was painted a red and yellowish-orange.

John currently lives at Carpinteria, California 10 miles southeast of Santa Barbara. He has worked for the Santa Barbara fire department for 19 years, involved in "fire landscaping" for city homes and the demonstration of fire effects in urban areas, among other tasks. He still travels to Alaska.

This is John's favorite picture of Jimmy, with the Yukon River in the background.

John wrote a fascinating true story about a jumper he thought of as a big brother. He mentioned that the ending of the story really happened and thought it would be good to share it with Jimmy's friends who are not in contact with John's circle of buddies.

John said he would help us with the history of Alaska's jump bases. How about others out there? Please contact us. We hope to write not only about the three full-time bases Alaska has had, but the numerous spike camps too.



JIM "SMOKEY" B. STOVER, IDAHO CITY, 1948-'69

Jim "Smokey" Stover was the smokejumper in charge at Idaho City from 1948-1969—from its beginnings to its end as a jumper base. He then served at the Boise Interagency Fire Center, in charge of the jumper training area and loft from



Jim "Smokey" Stover during training at the Nine Mile Base west of Missoula in 1946. After training, he went back to the McCall base. He is standing in the training area. Photo courtesy of Smokey Stover.

1970 until his retirement in 1972. He loaned in a great amount of material relating to his years with the smokejumpers. He and his wife live at Waldport, Oregon along the coast on Highway 101 northwest of Eugene.

He was a native of Idaho and entered the military service with the 41st Division in 1940. After war was declared, Jim went on to serve with the Combat Engineers of that unit in the South Pacific. He served four years, eleven months and one day, before being discharged in 1945.

In 1946 he applied for the smokejumpers and was accepted by the McCall, Idaho base. (He was paid on a scale of \$2,320 per annum, for the grade of SP-6.) McCall did not have any training facilities at that time—not until 1947, so McCall jumpers, including Smokey, went to Missoula's Nine Mile training base, 25 miles west of that city. (McCall began operations in 1943, with two jumper squad leaders and three Civilian Public Service smokejumpers. During WW II most of the

jumpers at that base were CPS personnel and they underwent training at Seeley Lake northeast of Missoula and at Nine Mile. By 1946 there were 43 smokejumpers at McCall, to include 10 jumpers from Missoula's Region 1.)

IDAHO CITY, 1948

In 1948 a squad of 12 men was trained at McCall and based at Idaho City on the Boise National Forest, 75 miles south of McCall and 25 miles northeast of Boise. The McCall jumpers were upset about having to leave their resort town, so names were drawn out of a hat to see who the "lucky ones" would be to go to the "Rock Pile." It is said that after the drawing, money changed hands as jumpers made one final effort to stay at McCall. Smokey and Wayne Webb were nominated for the leadership at Idaho City. Smokey volunteered for the 1948 season with the understanding that Wayne would take charge in



MCCALL JUMPERS, 1948

Twenty-nine McCall jumpers at their base in 1948. Smokey Stover is standing at the far right and Wayne Webb is kneeling, second from the left. The pilot is kneeling at the far left. The Tri-motor was Bob Johnson's NC 7861. Photo courtesy of Smokey Stover.

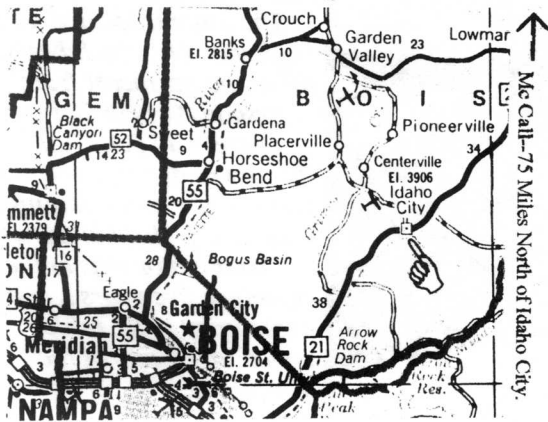
1949. However, as it turned out, Smokey stayed at Idaho City. Once stationed there, jumpers acquired fond feelings for the base and surrounding area.

(Continued on page 15)

SMOKEY STOVER, IDAHO CITY, CONTINUED

(Continued from page 14)

From 1948 to 1953 Idaho City was classified as a McCall "Spike Camp," which made it possible for the Boise National Forest to receive faster action on fires. The 11 to 12-man squads returned to Idaho City from McCall each year, until 1953, when the squad was increased to 20 men and three squad leaders. (In 1954 the Idaho City base became semi-independent when the



BOISE AND IDAHO CITY AREAS

Boise Forest supervisor became responsible for its administration and supervision.)

The base had its own aircraft in 1948, a Noorduyn Norseman, piloted by Clare Hartnett, a veteran pilot, who had risen to the rank of Lt. Col. in the Army Air Force during WW II.

Airport construction got the jumpers off to a slow start. It wasn't until August 2nd that the first fire jumps were made out of Idaho City. Charles Clark and Bernard St. Clair were dropped on the Mahoney Creek Fire, with Smokey doing the spotting and Hartnett flying the Norseman. Jumpers dropped on the last fire of the season September 11th.

During 1948 the 11 Idaho City jumpers, which included six new men (NEDS), made 37 jumps to 15 fires. On August 23rd Leo Compton suffered the first serious injury of the group—in the Deadwood Reservoir area, 35 miles north of Idaho City. His chute caught

on a large yellow pine and then slipped free. Leo fell more than 50 feet and was seriously injured. He suffered a broken leg among other injuries.

The 1948 jumpers in addition to Smokey were: Merl Cables, Bob Caldwell, Parley "Bill" Cherry, Charles Clark, Leo Compton, Clyde Hawley, Don Pape, John Roberts, Bernard St. Clair, and John Wilcock.

IDAHO CITY, 1949

Idaho City had 11 jumpers, which included six new men, during the 1949 season—a very dry year. The group made 143 jumps to 52 fires, with an average of 13.0 jumps per man. The first fire occurred on July 6th and the last on October 1st. John Wilcock received a pin for having made 50 jumps during his jumper career. Willy Stevenson made the first one-man fire jump on the Boise National Forest and Harry McCarty, up through 1949, set the record for the most jumps on that forest, parachuting to 17 fires.

In addition to the Noorduyn, a Travel Air from the Missoula-based Johnson Flying Service was used part-time. Swede Nelson had flown it down from McCall where it had been on a stand by basis. Clare Hartnett made 239 flights with the Noorduyn and carried 613 passengers.

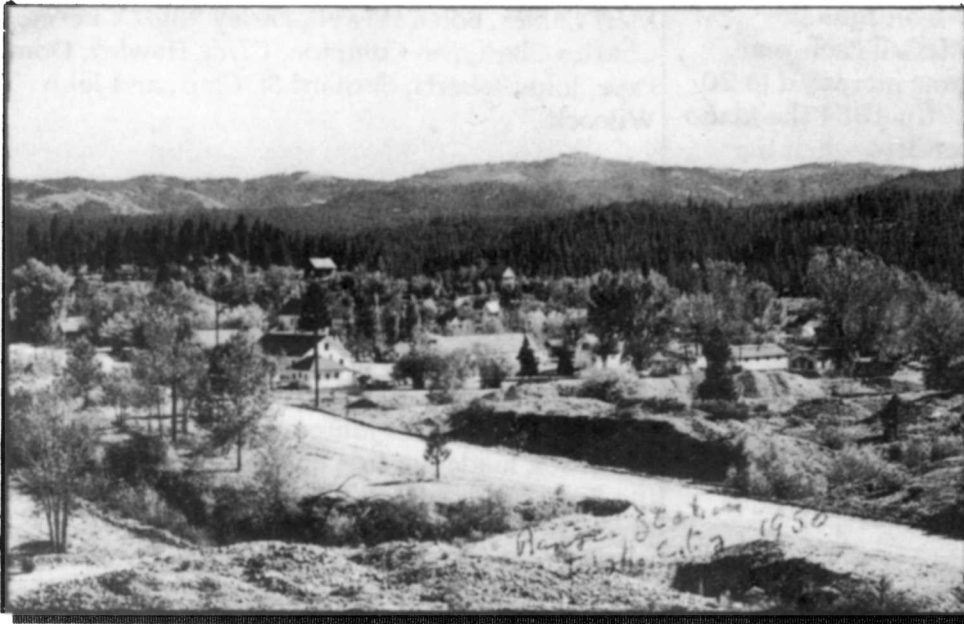


IDAHO CITY JUMPERS, 1949

Left to right, Front Row: Jim Crockett, Clyde Hawley, Jim McCormick.
Middle Row: Bob Caldwell, Jim Graham, Willy Stevenson,
Harry McCarty, deceased.
Back Row: Jim "Smokey" Stover, Jack Wilcock, Dave Schas, deceased.

SMOKEY STOVER, IDAHO CITY, CONTINUED

(Continued from page 15)



Idaho City, summer of 1950. The ranger station is in the foreground. Note the surrounding terrain.

The town is located along Highway 21, which branches off to the northeast from Interstate 84 near Boise.

There is a "Boot Hill" at this town, dating back many years when much mining was taking place in the area.

(Your editor was at the cemetery five years ago and came upon a big rattler coiled up by one of the tombstones.)

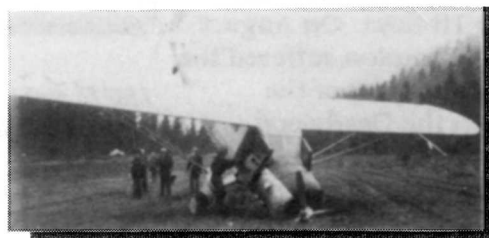
CLARE AND RACHAEL HARTNETT

This picture was taken prior to WW II. Clare is standing by an Eagle Rock biplane and his wife Rachael is seated in the cockpit. Clare passed away several years ago at Riverside, California, east of Los Angeles. Rachael still lives there and Smokey keeps in touch with her. Photo courtesy of Smokey.



IDAHO CITY NOORDUYN, 1952

Idaho City's Noorduyn sank in the mud of the Indian Creek Landing Strip during the summer of 1952 near the Middle Fork of the Salmon River, about 50 miles upriver from where the Middle Fork flows into the main Salmon River. The plane had nosed over after sinking into the mud. The crew standing near by pulled the tail down. Photos courtesy of Smokey Stover.



SMOKEJUMPER AIRCRAFT EVALUATION PROCESS

The USDA Forest Service, the USDI Bureau of Land Management and the USDI Office of Aircraft Services (OAS) maintain a list of "approved" smokejumper aircraft.



An Embraer (Empresa Brasileira De Aeronautica SA) 110P Bandeirante, produced in Brazil and in Brazilian Air Force markings and coloration, undergoing test evaluations for use as a smokejumper aircraft in the early 1980's out of Missoula. The Missoula Technology & Development Center at Fort Missoula was conducting the tests. This aircraft design was created Aug. 19, 1969 and manufacturing of the Bandeirante's began Jan. 2, 1970. The aircraft are powered by Pratt & Whitney PT6A-34 turboprop engines produced in Canada. They are 47 feet 10 1/2 inches long and have a wingspan of 50 feet 1/2 inches. Economy cruise speed at 10,000 feet is 209 mph. The plane has a service ceiling of 27,100 feet.

Two Bandeirante's have been under contract with the BLM smokejumper unit at Fort Wainwright, Alaska for some time. Currently, Leading Edge Aviation, with offices in Missoula Montana, is the contractor. The aircraft are Canadian-owned.

Photo courtesy of the MTDC and Dave Pierce.

The criteria for an "approved" smokejumper aircraft were developed and are maintained by the Smokejumper Aircraft Screening and Evaluation Board (SASEB). Membership within the SASEB includes smokejumping and aviation representatives from the FS, BLM, and OAS.

A smokejumper aircraft evaluation is structured to identify flight performance characteristics, safe

deployment of standard smokejumping parachutes, special accessories that will be needed, and procedures to provide for safe smokejumping.

The smokejumper aircraft evaluation process was first used in the mid-1970's, with the responsibility of overseeing evaluations assigned to the Missoula Technology & Development Center, located at Fort Missoula. Responsibility for conducting flight performance evaluations is assigned to pilots from the FS, BLM, or OAS.

The sponsor of a candidate smokejumper aircraft is usually a smokejumper unit. The smokejumper base manager's liaison person is appointed by the manager of the base chosen to support the evaluation.

The first step in the process is for the sponsoring unit (unit that is interested in



Left to right, George Jackson (MSO '74) and Dave Pierce (RAC '65), MTDC, checking the view a jumper and spotter would have from the open door, down under the wing of a Bandeirante while in flight. The plane was sitting on the ground at the Missoula County Airport. Dave was the Smokejumper Equipment Specialist at MTDC and retired January 2, 1998.

Photo courtesy of the MTDC & Dave Pierce.

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SMOKEJUMPER AIRCRAFT EVALUATION PROCESS CONTINUED

(Continued from page 17)

contracting for a currently unapproved aircraft) to prepare a paper evaluation on the aircraft. This evaluation must address an established set of SASEB requirements. The aircraft must be FAA certified as a normal or transport category aircraft; must be FAA approved to fly with the jumper exit door removed; must not exceed an airspeed of 115 knots when dropping smokejumpers; and the jumper door must be at least 25 inches wide and 36 inches high.



A Bandeirante's static line cable and anchor being tested for strength at the Missoula County Airport by members of the MTDC in the 1980's.

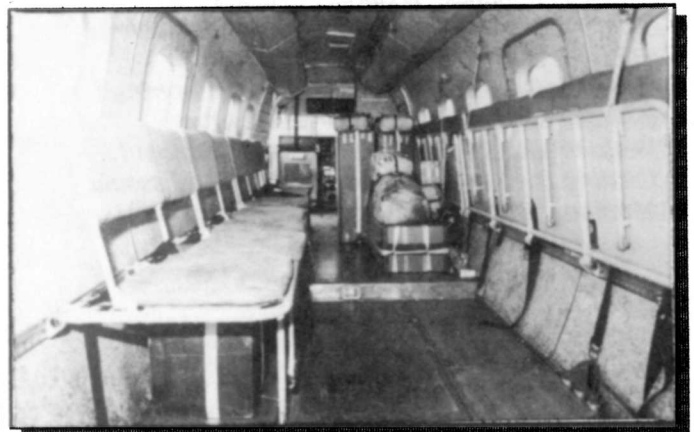
Photo courtesy of the MTDC and Dave Pierce.

The SASEB reviews the sponsor's preliminary report and recommends technical acceptance or rejection. Then the FS, BLM, and OAS management groups review the SASEB recommendation and decide if they want to provide funding to evaluate the aircraft. Pending the availability of funding needed to accomplish the evaluation, an Evaluation Director is appointed and the Flight Performance and Functional Evaluations are accomplished. If the flight performance and functional evaluations are successful, needed accessories are designed and fabricated. A smokejumper base then contracts for the aircraft for a field evaluation. If the field evaluation is successful, the Evaluation Director then submits a package of complete documentation, showing that the candidate aircraft has met all of the requirements for an "approved" smokejumper aircraft.

SASEB then reviews the package. If it is complete and acceptable, SASEB recommends to management that the aircraft be added to the list of "approved" smokejumper aircraft.

While time requirements vary, the complete process of evaluating and approving an aircraft for use by smokejumpers can take two years or more. Costs for such an evaluation, including flight time, design, fabrication, and FAA Supplemental Type Certificates (STC's) for accessories can easily total \$50,000 to \$100,000 (1997 dollars).

There are many considerations to be taken into account when evaluating an aircraft smokejumpers might use. Contract economics are a key consideration. Performance and physical characteristics are critical. For example, how close is the horizontal stabilizer to the jump exit and cargo door locations? Is there a chance of a tail strike by jumpers or paracargo? Is there the possibility of parachutes deploying over the top of a stabilizer or in the area of the elevator hinge? Is the distance from the anticipated primary static line anchor location to the horizontal stabilizer compatible with the use of standard 15-foot static lines? Is the aircraft "clean" around the exit door and back along the fuselage, so that static lines will not be damaged or cut? How is the aircraft affected when the cabin door is removed—are flight characteristics affected and is there the possibility of exhaust fumes entering the cabin? Are the pilot's and



The interior of a Bandeirante smokejumper aircraft, looking forward towards the cockpit. Note the seats—with safety belts—and cargo storage area.

Photo courtesy of MTDC and Dave Pierce.

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SMOKEJUMPER AIRCRAFT EVALUATION PROCESSS CONTINUED

(Continued from page 18)

spotter's visibility adequate for smokejumper and paracargo operations? And does the aircraft have suitable seats and restraint systems for smokejumpers and paracargo, or can it be equipped with the special bench seats designed for use in smokejumper aircraft?

For evaluation, MTDC designs accessories needed to configure an aircraft for smokejumping. Such accessories might include static line anchors for both jumpers and cargo parachutes, spotter tether anchors, jump door handles, jump steps, and door boots to provide smooth, nonabrasive surfaces for static lines.

It is critical that the BLM Ram-Air drogue static lines be attached to anchors located appropriate distances from the jump doors to insure proper drogue deployment. This is typically accomplished by using "extenders" of proper length attached to the static lines of the drogue chutes. (The drogue chutes



Steve Clairmont, MSO '62, now retired, showing the distance from the anchor end of a static line to the top of a chute during tests of the Bandeirante aircraft at the Missoula County Airport in the early 1980's.

Photo courtesy of MTDC and Dave Pierce.

stabilize BLM jumpers in an upright position after exiting an aircraft. The jumpers then pull rip cords to deploy their main chutes.)

Jump steps must be attached to aircraft doors if they are not large enough to allow jumpers to make standing exits. The steps have to be designed so dangling boot laces or jump suit pocket ties cannot get hooked on them.

A number of factors have to be considered when testing the aircraft, such as performance with one engine out at different altitudes, and when making

turns; center of gravity; use of flaps; stall warnings for different situations and attitudes; and airspeed requirements for varying conditions and loads.

Before live drops are conducted, "torso dummies" are used. Generally, no more than two torso dummies are dropped during one pass. All types of cargo chutes are dropped with varying types of loads attached. Video and high-speed film is taken of the drops from cameras mounted at appropriate locations on the aircraft.

Live drops then take place. Spotters and jumpers are thoroughly briefed before each flight, as to objectives of the test flight, specific procedures to be followed and special safety concerns. Cargo drops follow behind the live jumps during at least one test flight.

Finally, a field evaluation consisting of a full season of operational use is needed to validate smokejumping procedures and the configuration of smokejumping accessories developed for the aircraft. Modifications are made where needed and supplemental type certificates (STC's) are obtained from the FAA for special accessories.

Using this process, the aircraft in use today by smokejumpers at the seven U.S. Forest Service and two Bureau of Land Management jumper bases are among the safest for this unique mission.



A Bandeirante smokejumper aircraft sitting at the Fairbanks, Alaska BLM base some years ago. At the time, Arctic Circle Air was transporting jumpers and cargo. As mentioned earlier, Leading Edge Aviation of Missoula now contracts with the Alaska base. Note the Fairchild C-119 retardant aircraft in back.

Photo courtesy of MTDC and Dave Pierce.

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SMOKEJUMPER AIRCRAFT EVALUATION PROCESS

(Continued from page 19)

Aircraft currently approved for the smokejumper mission are: The Sherpa, Casa, DC-3 C, Twin Otter, Bandeirante, Dornier 228, Beech 90, Beech 99, Cessna 208 Caravan and the Shorts Sky Van.

Editor's Note: Special thanks are due Eldon Askelson, Chairman of the Screening and Evaluation Board, for

his help. He is currently stationed in Missoula and is the U.S.F.S.'s Region 1 Airplane Manager. Eldon is a qualified pilot for both heavy and light Forest Service aircraft. He is a former McCall smokejumper-'66. Special thanks also go to Art Jukkala, MSO '56, retired, who once worked full-time with MTDC. He was very helpful by providing details for this article.

CHUTE THE BREEZE



✈✈✈ *Editor's Note: We ran short of space in this newsletter for more stories and pictures, plus material, under "Chute the Breeze." In the April, 1998 issue of The Static Line more pictures will be included, as well as individual accounts. We greatly appreciate the material being sent in by jumpers and pilots. Please keep sending them. We have a number of stories on hold for future newsletters. Please don't give up hope if your stories and pictures have not yet been printed. Don't worry about spelling and grammar. We will help there.*

The **MCCALL BASE** has informed us they will be holding a **55th Year Region 4 Smokejumper Reunion** in beautiful McCall, Idaho June 26-28, 1998. They state: "There will be plenty of food and refreshments, comradery, jump stories—big ones and many of them, golf tourney, and other fun activities." The e-mail address for further information is: smileo@micron.net (base tel. # is 1-208-634-0383). **NEAL DAVIS** is the Base Manager. Should be a great time in 'Ol McCall. All smokejumpers, past and present, from any base, are very welcome and encouraged to attend.

The **REGION 1 SMOKEJUMPER BASE** will send seven jumpers—"The Gashouse Gang"—under **WAYNE WILLIAMS** to southern Mississippi Jan. 19 for a six-week period where they will be involved in burn operations. WW said they will be about 100 miles from the Mar di gras at New Orleans this year. He and his jumper crew will be there en masse. Absolutely no parties like jumper parties! They have already arranged for bail bonds should they be needed.



*Left to right: **PAT WILSON, MSO '80** and **DAVE PIERCE, RAC '65**, at the Missoula Technology & Development Center at Fort Missoula. Dave was retiring that day, Jan. 2nd, 1998. **He had been the Smokejumper Technical Specialist and Pat was taking his place.***

Dave had been with the Forest Service 32 years and was a smokejumper for 15 years, including service with jumpers at Redmond, Oregon; Missoula, Montana; and Fairbanks, Alaska. He began jumping in 1962 as a sport parachutist. He has been a skydiving instructor, master parachute rigger and jump aircraft pilot. In Alaska he held foreman positions in the loft, training and operations. He transferred to MTDC in 1981. He lives in Missoula and has many projects going which will keep him busy during retirement.

Photo courtesy of Jack Demmons.

Pat has been with the Forest Service 20 years. He worked on an engine crew four years for the State of Idaho, spent two years with a hotshot crew, and began his smokejumping career at Missoula in 1980. While with the Missoula jumpers he was assigned to Grangeville, Idaho on detail in 1981 and transferred to that base in 1982. He took over as base manager there in 1987.