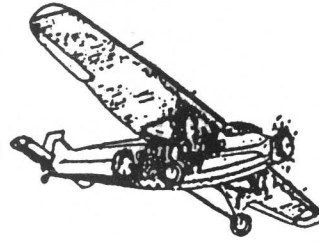




National Smokejumper Association



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Volume 4

October 1995

Edition 2



The "Static Line" Staff

compiler: Jack Demmons

editor: Carl Gidlund

advisory staff: Don Courtney, Art Jukkala, Roger Savage

computer operators: Phil Davis, Sally Cobau

President's Message

In my last message I invited all interested members to become involved in the Association's efforts to reach several important goals. We have received some response to that invitation and hope to hear from more of you in the weeks ahead.

The Executive Committee has also asked for suggestions regarding the site of the next smokejumper reunion. Again, there has been some response, but not enough. Much time and effort goes into organizing a reunion, and a very important part must occur some years before it takes place, i.e. reserving facilities, alerting hotels and motels, etc. Therefore I ask that you who have not responded to our request do so now. Remember too, a reunion the size of ours needs to be located in a city that is easy to get to and is large enough to house both reunion attendees and normal summer tourist flow. Most responses, to date, have listed Missoula, Boise, McCall, and Fairbanks, but there has not been a significant majority for any of these cities. Please let us know what you think. We are very much interested.

We are also interested in hearing your opinions about other things too. This is your Association and how you feel about all aspects of its functioning is important. This includes the newsletter, membership, fund raising priorities, and general Association direction that should be considered.

Please stay in touch.



Ed Courtney
President

National Smokejumper Association

NEW MEMBERSHIP or RENEWAL APPLICATION

(Use same form for change of address)

Name _____

Last

First

Middle

Address _____ () _____

Street

Telephone

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

year trained _____ & base _____



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Membership Category

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or

Renewal _____

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Smokejumper _____

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Affiliate _____

Dues category

1 year \$15.00 _____

2 years \$30.00 _____

5 years \$60.00 _____

10 years \$100.00 _____

Affiliate - 1yr-\$20.00 _____

IN OFFICE USE ONLY: Check # _____ Amount _____

Date received

Renewal date:

New Members

NOTE: This listing of new members includes those who joined between July 7th and October 21st of this year. Those who will have joined later will be listed in the 10th newsletter which will be sent out in January. If your name was missed, please let us know. (Three were missed in the 8th newsletter--Kent Lewis, Charley Moseley and Ben Ortiz. They are included in this newsletter. Also, we had shown Watson "Java" Bradley, MSO, 74 as Bradley "Java" Watson--2621 Cliffside DR Farmington, NM 87401.)

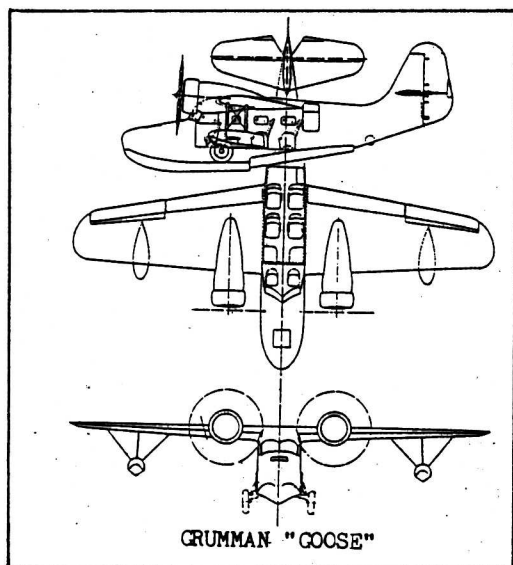
NAME	ADDRESS	BASE	1ST YEAR
Aliber, Robert "Bob" Z	5638 S Dorchester AV Chicago, IL 60637	MSO	51
Andrews, Howard J	4304 N AV Missoula, MT 59801	MSO	77
Barber, Willard "Will"	3198 Judge Arend Fairbanks, AK 99709	RDD	61
Barker, Paul	511 N Elton RD Spokane, WA 99212	ASSOC	
Barnett, Howard	2202 - A Homedale Austin, TX 78704-2759	MSO	65
Belknap, Scott	1635 S 10TH W Missoula, MT 59801	MSO	
83Beaudin, Joel R	RR 1 BOX 58A Lincoln, NH 03251	FBX	
63			
Blanco, Lance	RD #2 BOX 292 Cooperstown, NY 13326	MSO	95
Brandenberger, Robert "Bob"	6410 Rattlesnake DR Missoula, MT 59802	MSO	48
Castellaw, Robert "Bob" W	1623 W 11TH AV Spokane, WA 99204	MSO	79
Childress, Robert "Bob"	406 Albany Hot Springs, SD 57747-0673	MSO	63
Clithero, Robert "Bob"	285 Chapman Hill Bigfork, MT 59911	MSO	50
Cole, Pat	18 Russell PK W Missoula, MT 59801	MSO	73
Cook, Thomas "Tom"	1390 Harrison Missoula, MT 59802	MYC	84
Daly, Michael "Mike"	4173 Indigo CT NE Salem, OR 97305	MYC	57
Dawson, James "Jim"	Box 117 8750 - 11 Gladiolus DR Ft Meyers, FL 33908	MSO	53
arks, Clarence W	32515 2ND SW Federal Way, WA 98003	MSO	45
Dollard, Jim "Jimmie"	29110 Buchanan DR Evergreen, CO 80439	CJ	52
Evenson, David "Dave" H	1020 Strawberry DR Helena, MT 59601	MSO	64
Fieldhouse, Terry	21720 HWY 9 Boulder Creek, CA 95006	CJ	47
Fogarty, Richard "Dick"	4857 Mill Brook DR Dunwoody, GA 30338-4905	MSO	51
Fowler, Bruce M	2755 Blue MTN RD Missoula, MT 59801	MSO	70
Gersbach, Richard "Dick"	2504 Fairview LN Midland, TX 79705	RDD	79
Havel, Don	1517 St Paul AV #12 St Paul, MN 55116	FBX	66
Henry, Stephen "Steve"	1721 CO RD 120 NE Alexandria, MN 56308	MSO	65
Johnson, George W	628 S Argenta Dillon, MT 59725	MSO	77
Johnson, Paul	19 Big Dipper DR Clancy, MT 59634	MSO	75
Kase, Dr Charles "Chuck"	950 E Bogard RD Suite 209 Wasilla, AK 99654	NCSB	74
Knoerr, Kenneth "Ken"	1608 Woodburn RD Durham, NC 27705	ASSOC	
Knowles, Frank A	401 SE 10TH ST #302 Grand Rapids, MN 55744	RDD	71
Lewis, Kent	PO BOX 2756 Missoula, MT 59806	MSO	62
Lindskog, Tom	1509 Driftwood DR Bozeman, MT 59715	MSO	75
Maclean, John N	3604 Porter ST NW Washington, DC 20016	ASSOC	
(John is the son of Norman Maclean who wrote the book YOUNG MEN AND FIRE--concerning the Mann Gulch jumper tragedy of 8/5/49. John is also a writer.)			
Marlowe A Glen	RT 2 BOX 38 Tahlequah, OK 74464	MSO	?
Martin, Wilbur	2314 Highwood Missoula, MT 59802	MSO	62

THAT'S BARRY GETTING SICK UP FRONT
AGAIN. WE'LL ALL BE SICK NOW!

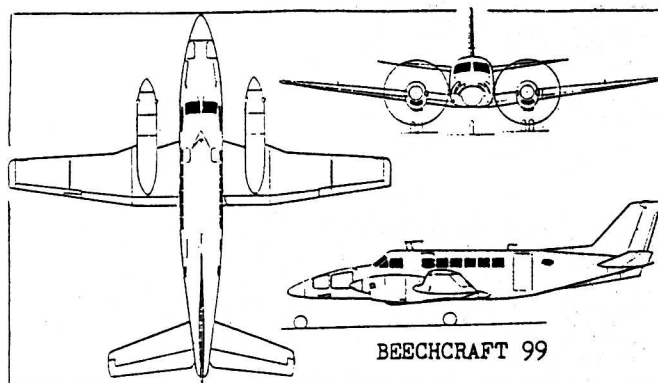


Adapted from USAF Aerospace

McChesney, Curtis H	834 Pine Meadows Hamilton, MT 59840	MSO	84
Miller, Richard "Dick" F	1920 SE 39 Albany, OR 97321	MSO	62
Moseley, Charley	PO BOX 1083 Waynesboro, MS 39367	CJ	62
Muhm, Robert "Bob" E	108 Cromwell CT Woodbury, NJ 08096	MSO	49
O'Brien, Daniel "Dan" M	2230 S Flower ST Lakewood, CO 80227	MSO	64
Ortiz, Benny "Ben" G	221 N Cheyenne ST Silver City, NM 59901	MYC	61
Ostrom, George	1516 Woodland AV Kalispell, MT 59901	MSO	50
Parcell, Robert "Bob" E	PO BOX 1209 Condon, MT 59826-1209	MSO	71
Raborn, W.E. "Dub"	PO BOX 783 Smyrna, TN 37167	MSO	59
Reinhardt, Charles "Chuck"	PO BOX 128 Highland Lakes, NJ 07427	MSO	67?
Robinson, Calvin "Cal"	3722 Rose Crest DR Missoula, MT 59801	RAC	90
Salyer, Bill W	3119 Winter Ridge RD Cedar Falls, IA 50613	ASSOC	
Salyer, Jim L	1923 Pleasant DR Cedar Falls, IA 50613	ASSOC	
(Bill and Jim are brothers of Ken "Moose" Salyer, MYC 56, who died in the crash of a Twin Beech out of McCall near Norton Creek on 7/9/65. Ken was the jumper spotter on a fire. He and the pilot both went down with the plane.			
Scheid, Patrick "Pat" C	828 Fordham ST Rockville, MD 20850	MSO	58
Searle, Mike	PO BOX 848 Coeur d' Alene, ID 83814	ASSOC-PILOT	
Searles, Robert "Bob" C	17437 Keswick ST Northridge, CA 91325-4513	MSO	45
Simons, Charles "Chuck"	NW 245 Harrison Pullman, WA 99163	MSO	52
Simonson, Steen W	825 Emma CT Missoula, MT 59802	MSO	91
Tainter, Frank H	436 Patterson RD Central, SC 29630	MSO	62
Terrill, William "Bill"	963 N Shoshone Loop Hamilton, MT 59840	MSO	73
Thompson, Gene	4320 Sierra Missoula, MT 59801	MSO	79
Frompler, Paul "Wil"	NO 4 Pan Am Paonia, CO 81428	MSO	51
Froyer, Menno E	1505 Riverside RD Bigfork, MT 59911-6001	MSO	68
Vagner, John E	132 Luke ST Savanac Lake, NY 12983	MSO	57
Volferman, Keith	2245 S 5TH W Missoula, MT 59801	MSO	91
oolworth, William "Bill"	928 Fletcher LN #10 Hayward, CA 94544	MSO	68
ount, William "Bill"	202 St Marys DR Stevensville, MT 59870	MSO	69



The Grumman Goose and Beachcraft 99 are mentioned on pages 14 and 15 in connection with the development of the Ram-air parachute.



Hey..it's ok..I..
I'll be..ohh..sick..!



4 WILL THEY EVER QUIT
CIRCLING?? (From US AF
Flying Safety, Jan. 1991.)

Continuation Of Mailing Addresses: In the last news letter, we started a list of former smokejumpers for whom we had no current address at all. Below is a continuation of that list, progressing alphabetically through our master file. If you have a valid address or know of the death of any of these former jumpers, would you pass the information on to us?

Again, the base trained codes are listed here for your convenience.

FBX-Fairbanks, BIFC-Boise Interagency Fire Center, CJ-Cave Junction, IDC-Idaho City, LGD-La Grande, MSO-Missoula, MYC-McCall, NCSB-Winthrop, RAC-Redmond, RDD-Redding.

Graves, Tom	NCSB	49	Hamnack, Dan	?	91	Hayes, Lowell	MSO	53
Graw, John	NCSB	61	Hamner, Eugene	MSO	?	Hayes, Tim	?	?
Gray, Lavern	NCSB	62	Hancock, Dick	MYC	56	Heacox, Bill	MSO	?
Gray, Wilmer	MSO	46	Handrich, Bruce	?	?	Healam, Chuck	NCSB	79
Green, Daniel	MYC	?	Hankins, Paul	MSO	46	Healy, Ralph	NCSB	48
Green, John	MSO	?	Hannig, David	MSO	?	Heare, Kenneth	MSO	79
Green, Mel	MSO	42	Hansen, Donald	MSO	?	Hearst, Robert	MSO	?
Green, Millard	RDD	45	Hansen, Jim	RDD	87	Heath, Monty	MSO	67
Greentree, Jon	MSO	53	Hansen, Pete	MYC	86	Hechler, Phil	MSO	?
Greeson, Francis	MSO	46	Hanson, Bliss	?	?	Hegland, Alman	MSO	48
Gordon, Gregg	RDD	72	Hanson, Edward	MYC	?	Hellerline, D.	?	?
Gregory, Carl	NCSB	52	Harbine, Pat	MSO	?	Henderson, Al	MYC	?
Greiner, Claude	MSO	54	Harden, Harold	MYC	?	Henderson, Art	MSO	?
Greiner, Thomas	MYC	56	Harmening, Ed	MSO	?	Henderson, B.	RAC	64
Grendahl, David	MSO	?	Harp, Walt	MSO	47	Henderson, Bob	NCSB	63
Grenfell, Allen	MSO	46	Harper, Bob	RAC	88	Henderson, Larry	MYC	?
Grenlin, Lester	MSO	46	Harper, Rob	RAC	87	Hendrickson, G.	NCSB	51
Griffin, John	MSO		Harris, Bob	RDD	75	Hendrickson, T.	MSO	49
Griggs, David	MSO	67	Harris, John	MSO	?	Henley, Dick	MSO	45
Grill, Adrian	MYC	?	Harris, Oliver	MSO	46	Hennessey, John	MYC	?
Grinby, James	MSO	?	Harris, Richard	NCSB	51	Henninger, Doug	RDD	72
Griswold, John	MSO	48	Harris, Victor	MYC	?	Henry, Bill	RDD	67
Groff, Richard	MSO	?	Harrison, Ames	MSO	54	Henry, Edward	MSO	53
Grondin, Ivan	MSO	46	Harro, William	MYC	68	Henry, Stephen	MSO	?
Gropp, Howard	MSO	42	Harrow, William	?	?	Hensel, Dick	MYC	?
Gropp, Wilbur	MSO	46	Hart, Tom	LGD	76	Hensleigh, Bob	MSO	?
Grove, Chris	MSO	85	Harter, Jack	CJ	52	Henworth, Dick	MSO	?
Grover, Leland	MSO	49	Hartgrave, Larry	RDD	76	Herkshan, Guy	RAC	87
Grubb, John W.	MSO	?	Hartman, Bill	MSO	?	Hermes, Edwin	MSO	?
Guilford, Dee	MYC	?	Hartzell, Karl	MYC	?	Hermit, Ray	MYC	?
Gunn, Lawrence	MSO	?	Hartzell, Marty	MYC	?	Hernandez, Dan	RDD	85
Guschawsky, R.	MSO	?	Hatch, Tim	AKA	79	Hernandez, Fred	RDD	88
Gutierrez, Mike	RDD	71	Hatcher, Charles	MSO	47	Herndon, James	MSO	?
Hagg, Mark	RDD	68	Hatton, William	MSO	?	Herrod, Day	MSO	46
Haagenson, R.	RDD	79	Haught, Leroy	RDD	86	Hess, David	MSO	?
Hackborth, R.	MSO	46	Hauk, Jeremy	MSO	?	Hester, Stephen	MSO	69
Hadden, Lathol	MSO	53	Haunack, Dan	?	91	Heter, Elmo	MYC	?
Hahn, David	RAC	69	Hawes, James	RAC	66	Hibbert, Alden	MYC	?
Hahn, Howard	RDD	69	Hawk, John	MSO	?	Hickerson, Jesse	?	55
Haines, Leroy	MSO	50	Hawkes, Tom	MYC	?	Hidu, Herb	NCSB	56
Hall, Clark	MSO	46	Hawkins, John	RAC	87	Higbee, Art	NCSB	46
Hall, John C.	MYC	?	Hawkins, Dick	MYC	?	Higbee, Clint	NCSB	47
Halladay, Daren	RAC	91	Hawks, Harry	MSO	49	Higgins, Charles	MYC	?
Halterman, C.	MSO	?	Hawley, Pete	CJ	76	Higham, Thomas	MSO	?
Halverson, Frank	MYC	?	Hay, Charles	MYC	63	Highland, Sam	MSO	?
Hamane, Greg	FBX	82	Hayden, Larry	MSO	?	Hildner, Richard	MSO	67
Hamilton, Dave	MYC	?	Hayden, Neil	MSO	?	Hillyer, Saunders	RAC	66
Hamilton, Wm.	MSO	49	Hayes, Frank	RDD	81	Hindman, Forest	NCSB	54
Hammond, Kelly	MYC	?	Hayes, Harlan	MSO	52	Hines, Richard	MYC	?

Continuation of Listing of Deceased Jumpers and Pilots

There is a VFW post in the United States that places the following quotation above its Obituaries. It is one that is very applicable to jumpers, pilots and others. It reads: "Memories are a form of immortality. Those you remember never die. They continue to walk with you; their influence is with us always."

Our Obituary listing began with the 3d newsletter and continued on in the 5th, 6th and 8th letters. In this, the 9th newsletter, the Obituary listing is again divided into two sections. Section A includes new material relating to deaths reported earlier. Section B contains names and information not shown before.

SECTION A

Name and Base (1st Year)

Remarks

Bjornsen, Robert L. RDD ?

Bob died from a heart attack at his home near Lake Topaz, NV on 12/1/91. He had retired from the position of Director of Forest Service Operations at the Boise Interagency Fire Center in 1980. He had served with the 1st Marine Div. in the South Pacific during WW II. He also fought during the Korean War and was awarded a Bronze Star for valor under enemy fire. He was a 1950 forestry graduate from Utah State University.

Moisio, Walford "Fritz" NCSB ?

Fritz passed away at Seaside, OR on 10/7/93. He was a native of Astoria, OR, and had served with the Forest Service for many years. His last service was with the River Basin Planning in Watershed Management in Region 6.

Owen, Dale "Mouse" CJ 72

Dale died as a result of a skydiving accident near North Pole, Alaska on 9/6/81. Not 9/9/81 as reported earlier.

Rinard, John E. MYC 47

John passed away in Boise 4/15/95. He had retired from his position as a Roadside Manager for the Idaho Trans. Dept.

Swift, Mick CJ 56

Mick died at his home in Cave Junction. OR 10/5/93.

SECTION B

Fish, Howard "Bud" MSO 51

Bud died from cancer five years ago in the Truckee CA area. (Place of death has not been confirmed.) He had worked in the timber industry for many years.

Graham, James "Jim" MYC 47

Jim died 7/21/68 at age 42 at Garden Valley, ID from an aneurysm. He is buried at the Homedale-Marshing, ID cemetery.

Kelso, Jon MSO 91

Jon had been a jumper, but died in the Storm King Mountain Fire in Colorado on 7/6/94 while fighting fire as a member of the Prineville, OR Hot Shot Crew.

Adventurous Life: a profile on Kasey Rose

KASEY ROSE SAYS OF HER FIRST JUMP:

"I was never scared until I got set to jump for the first time. I had been so excited, making it through training--but on the plane, as soon as I put that parachute on my back it hit me in the stomach, and I just thought, 'Oh, my God, what am I doing?' The fact is, I'm afraid of heights! Then I told myself, 'No I want to do this.' It was a conscious decision that I wasn't going to be afraid." (Parade Magazine) This first jump must seem a world away. Rose has been smokejumping for the last seven years.

I had been trying to get hold of Rose for a few weeks, but her busy schedule prevented it. Finally I reached her at the Boise BLM base. I was anxious to talk to her on the phone, having read an article about her in Parade magazine (January, 1994).

Were you at all hindered by the tough physical demands of smokejumping? Kasey said she didn't have a problem meeting the physical requirements, although she's a

woman in a mostly male field. Perhaps this is true because she grew up with eight other kids on a farm in Washington, doing tough chores such as haying and milking (often this extended into the wee hours of the morning.) This physicality extended to high school and college where she played basketball at Garfield High School in Seattle and became captain of the rowing crew team at the University of Washington. (She ended up earning a B.S. in Zoology in 1991.)

The minimum requirements for jumping when Kasey was applying for the job included: running a mile and a half in less than eleven minutes and doing 25 pushups, 45 sit ups and seven pullups. and a three mile packout with a 110 pound pack that had to be accomplished within ninety minutes." Being able to do the pullups was a challenge for Kasey: "A year and a half earlier, I'd been able to do all those things except for the pullups. Most men can do seven without any trouble because of their upper body strength, but I couldn't do one. I can do ten now, but

I'm terrified of losing them because I know how hard it was to get them."

Doug Houston, the manager of the North Cascades station and a 21 year veteran jumper says about Kasey: "The first woman came here in 1986, but Kasey is the only one who kept coming back." (Parade Magazine)

Briefly, Kasey first worked out of Winthrop, Washington from 1989-1992. After this she transferred to the Boise BLM base, where she began jumping with a square RAM-air chute, which she applauds because of its ability to function in windier, harsher conditions.

While at Winthrop, Kasey simply had her own room in the bunkhouse with all the guys. Eventually she lived with her boyfriend (a Forest Service worker) in a small cabin.

I asked her to relay an "adventure story"...I knew there must be many. Kasey laughed and told me this one: "This was one of my scariest jumps...it was my rookie year and my partner was Steve Reynaud. It was a two-jumper fire. We were flying over the

Wenatchee Forest in Washington. Because the wind was so bad, the spotter didn't want to throw us. We circled around one more time. I told Steve: "I'll do whatever you do." Steve wanted to jump; we were the first to go. We jumped out. Steve kept yelling things through the air, but I couldn't hear anything. The wind was pushing us backward. I came in backwards and my feet went through the top of a tree. And finally we landed right in the spot... and I rejoiced."

During the off-season, Kasey continues training. She has spent the last two winters in Bend, Oregon where she skis. She has also gone down to Tucson, Arizona to bicycle train.

She says that she loves the life of a smokejumper because it claims people with an independent spirit. *I asked her who a female role model would be?* "Gabriel Reese!" she answered enthusiastically. *Who?* The beach volleyball star and announcer for MTV Sports. Kasey says she has the "perfect life."

Kasey says, "I keep coming back because I love the job. So many times, parachuting into the wilderness and working hard and finally walking out, with so much beauty around, I can't believe I'm getting paid at all to do it. And I've learned about life here too. The people I respect and see as leaders are those who do a job because it has to get done, and they enjoy it. Not to impress people. I really have a strong belief that true leadership comes from the right motivation

"The people I respect and see as leaders are those who do a job because it has to get done, they enjoy it. Not to impress people. I really have a strong belief that true leadership comes from the right motivation..."

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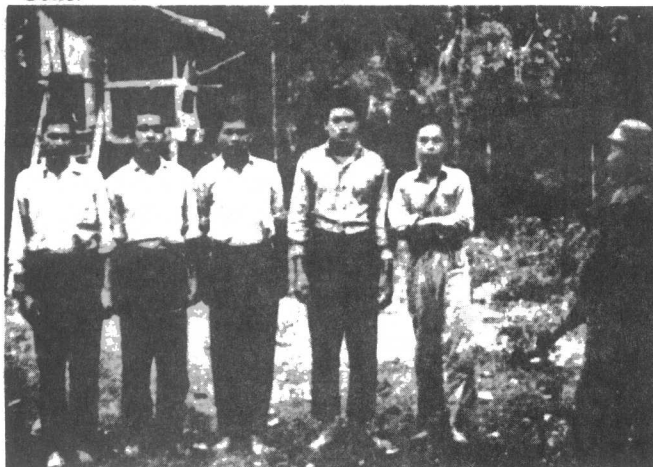
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and determination." This interview was conducted on September 21. Kasey was on call at the Idaho base.

--Sally Cobau

Eugene DeBruin POW-- MIA

During the past year we have received material concerning Eugene DeBruin, MSO 58, who was shot down over southern Laos in 1963. We have also talked to his brother Dr. Jerry DeBruin, who is a professor at the University of Toledo in Ohio. (Jerry will be joining our association.) Jerry wrote an article for the publication Vietnam in June of this year, concerning Gene.



Left to Right: American, Eugene Henry DeBruin; Thais, Pisidhi Indradat, Prasit Promsuwan, Prasit Thaneë; Hong Kong Chinese, To Yick Chiu. Tha Pa Chon Village Prison, Laos (WE 8705) May, 1964

The story about Gene and his disappearance is one of the most tragic relating to former smokejumpers. In 1971 Jerry had traveled to Vientiane, Laos to the Pathet Laos headquarters in an attempt to find some answer as to the whereabouts of his brother. He talked to the leader of the delegation, Soth Phetrasi, who said he knew of his brother but did not have any information as to whether he was dead or alive. From there Jerry went to the North Vietnamese Embassy in Vientiane and talked to a senior-ranking official. No information was obtained there either.

The story begins September 5, 1963 when a Curtiss C-46 transport took off from Vientiane for the

airport at Savannakhet in south Laos. Onboard were the following: Pilot Cheney copilot Herlick, To Yick Chiu, radio operator from Hong Kong and air freight dispatchers (cargo kickers) Gene DeBruin, Pisidhi Indradat, Prasit Promsuwan and Prasit Thaneë. (The latter three were Thais.) The plane was loaded with cargo (sacks of rice and buffalo meat) and then flew to Ban Hoeui San, to the southeast of Savannakhet, on a forty-minute flight. The cargo was kicked out and the C-46 returned to Savannakhet. They had not experienced any enemy fire.

During the second flight and on the final drop two bundles (300 kilograms of rice each) were released. The first bundle was on target, but the second one seemed to float up, and caught on the left horizontal stabilizer of the tail. The pilots tried to shake the bundle off and the plane vibrated badly. The rice sack was finally dislodged. Back at Savannakhet the ship was checked thoroughly and everything seemed to be in order. A third mission was prepared and flown, with takeoff around 4:00 P.M. They went to 8,000 feet and flew along the same route as on the first two trips.

About ten minutes prior to reaching Ban Hoeui San, as the civilian C-46 cruised high above the karst peaks and steep valleys in the panhandle of Southern Laos, there was a violent explosion which slammed the occupants against the metal sides of the plane. Antiaircraft fire hit the fuselage and right engine, which had to be shut down. As the C-46 lost altitude Cheney ordered the radio operator and cargo kickers to abandon ship. The pilots were urged to do so too but they refused and kept the plane level while sending an emergency signal to Vientiane and Savannakhet.

Gene and the four others bailed out successfully as the fire spread through the fuselage. The C-46 continued to fall toward the ground and looked like some giant fireball. It is believed that both pilots died on impact when the plane exploded.

It was 4:30 P.M. Laotian and Vietnamese Communist soldiers were in the area. Four North American AT-6 aircraft belonging to Laotian Rightist forces flew over, were met by gunfire and flew away. Rescue helicopters swept into action, with one flying directly over the site, and the pilot noting the remains of the cargo strewn about on the ground, which included the sacks of rice and buffalo meat. To him the blood stains from the meat looked ominous. The choppers did not see any signs of life and were also

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met with hostile fire. A ground crew went in but had to withdraw shortly afterwards.

Phisit Intharathat had grasped a log floating along in a stream and drifted downstream some distance. Around a bend was a campfire with five men in loinclothes standing next to it. Two were holding old muskets and two others, long-handled sickles. The fifth held a crossbow. They saw him in the glare from the fire and shouted to stay put as the muskets were aimed at him. One of the group began signalling with a wooden claker signal. Soon ten Laotian Communist soldiers carrying Chinese rifles and two hand-held French machine guns surrounded him, tied his hands

behind his back and then looped the rope around his neck in a noose. He was pulled through the jungle, across a plain and to a large village. His four friends were all there, bound in the same manner.

It was three long months before the Pathet Laos let it be known that Gene and the other four crew members were alive. They would be shuffled from prison camp to prison camp, at times beaten with sticks by hostile villagers.

We will conclude the article about Gene and his brother Jerry's continued search for him 32 years later in the 10th newsletter in January.

Stranded on Dolleman Island

The New York Times on Monday, December 2, 1957 commented: "Four men and their Air Force plane have been down on a remote Antarctic island for more than a week. They have tents and food for four months.

According to radio reports from the area the companion plane, which was to bring additional fuel to enable the stranded aircraft to complete its journey caught fire. The flames were extinguished and the damage repaired, but poor weather prevented a relief flight.

The two C-47 transports were pioneering a 2,000 mile air route from South America. They had almost reached their destination when they were forced to turn back by clouds.

They returned to the place where they had made their last landing..."

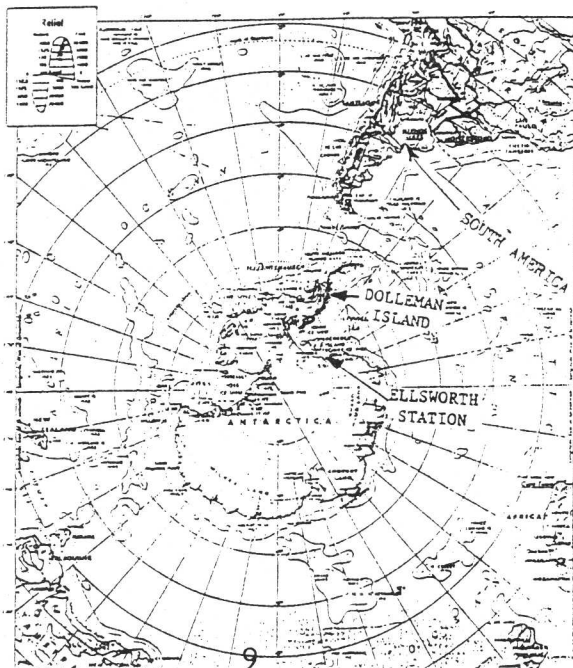
The article went on to mention that the aircraft were short on fuel. One C-47 was tanked and

flew on to Ellsworth Station. Four Americans were left behind with the other C-47. One of the four was a civilian and former Missoula smokejumper. (He has asked that his name not be given.) After more than two weeks spent for the most part inside the stranded aircraft they were rescued from their location on Dolleman Island and flown to Ellsworth Station, none the worse for their unintended stay. (It should be mentioned that this former smokejumper was also involved in the Antarctica area on another occasion when the Beechcraft he was on (C-45--a Twin Beech) had to be abandoned and those on board had to walk out to a base. According to a different source, this jumper was very instrumental in saving the lives of his companions. He is truly a legendary individual.

These two incidents serve to help point out the great variety of hair-raising experiences past and present jumpers have gone through, a special breed of people.



MONDAY MORNING AT THE BASE AFTER A WEEKEND ON THE TOWN,
(From the USAF publication, *Approach*, June, 1964.)



YOU SAY WE HAVE A JUMPER HOOKED ON OUR TAIL?
(From USAF publication *Approach*, June 1964.)

Some Injuries, Earl Schmidt--'43, '44, '45

Asa Mundell, MSO 43, published a book in 1993 with the title Static Lines and Canopies. Stories from the Smokejumpers in Civilian Public Service Camp No. 103, Missoula, Montana 1943, 1944, and 1945. Asa gave us permission to reproduce one of those stories concerning Earl Schmidt. Asa lives at Beaverton, Oregon.

Some Injuries

I recall the beauty of a DC-3 circling our fire at Granite Ridge, in 1944, I believe. We knew it was headed for another fire, about ten miles away, where Levi Tschetter had burned a leg when he broke through the crust over a smoldering underground area. The plane carried two Negro paramedics. The consideration for others seemed to be a natural trait of the Smokejumpers--especially Ollie Huset. He had had a particularly rough landing in Lolo Forest about ten miles from a road. His concussion made it advisable to call in a stretcher crew. It seems while they were carrying him he took pity on them and suggested, "Why don't one of you get down here and let me help carry this thing a while?" Ad Carlson's reply was, "Lay down, Ollie, you're rocking the boat." "Okay, Ad, I'll do what you say," replied Ollie.

Then Winton Stucky's practice jump at Cave Junction, Oregon, comes to mind. It seems he got a terrible rough opening on one parachute. Next jump he wanted another chute, but by the time he got around to it, all the other chutes were gone so he jumped it again. This time it knocked him unconscious on the opening and he landed in a heap, fracturing one vertebrae, with the next one okay, and the next one split. His son said after his death they kept him in the back of a pickup for two hours waiting to find out who would pay the medical bills! He was released with no benefits, with a broken back, and had to provide his own livelihood after the initial hospitalization. And then there was Archie Keith. His chute hooked over a dead tree-snap, which crashed on him. The tree was about 100 feet high. On the way down, Archie thought he would hit the ground and the tree would hit and kill him. However, he remembered hitting the ground, where his right leg was broken near the hip and a 6-inch sliver broke off, the left leg broken near the ankle, and then hearing the tree hit. "If I heard

the tree hit, I must not be dead." A crew was jumped in with Ray Hudson, I believe, sent along to administer morphine. They brought a basket stretcher, which was a great help. It was almost dark and they had to cut "dog hair"--young thickly grown saplings, carry him forward, then cut more almost all night long. Daylight found them exhausted and they requested relief. Another eight were sent in to carry him the 15 miles to the road below Hamilton, Montana.

The previous winter some of the Forest Service Jumpers had seen Dr. Amos R. Little, who was with the Air Force Search & Rescue, and trained with the Smokejumpers in the fall, I think. They asked the Doctor what procedure to use if they needed him. "Procedure, nothing--call me." So they called him for Archie. It was a 45-minute flight, but in 55 minutes, the doctor was at Missoula to transfer to another plane, and 2 hours from the request he was beside Archie.

He also administered aid and helped carry the basket stretcher. When in sight of the cabin, he ran ahead to get a cup of coffee before loading Archie on a pickup for the 75-mile trip to the Missoula Hospital. He spent 2 1/2 months in the hospital with cast from waist to right knee and left mid thigh, a bar across mid thighs, and a cast on left lower leg. Again, the Forest Service dropped all help when camp closed the first of 1946.

* * *

 ***"Silk Stories:
Fractured Fables
from the Fireline"***

SCOTT BELKNAP, MSO 83, IS A current Region 1 jumper out of Missoula. He will be submitting articles for each newsletter, which we appreciate. Stories can be submitted to the N.S.A. at the address shown on the cover of the newsletter, or to Scott's e-mail. See information on this in the following article. There are great stories out there, and current jumpers

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have many to tell also. The title "Silk Stories :Fractured Fables from the Fireline" was made up by Scott and is a good one.

As the R-1 fire season turned out this year, the hottest dispatch was to the National Smokejumper Association reunion in Missoula, Montana. I waited until the hour before the Friday night event to give up on a last minute fire call to decide to attend. I am glad I went.

The inspiration for my attendance and this column started with the parade of visiting jumpers converging on the base; just looking for a friendly face to share a story. This is all anyone wanted to do; tell a jump story. When I arrived at the dinner and beer fest at the fairgrounds, again the stories were flowing as freely as the beer. I concluded from this experience that the glue that sticks us all together is jump stories.

"Silk Stories: Fractured Fables From the Firelines" is your chance to share your best jump stories. Submit your best "there I was" story to Jack Demmons, the compiler, by mailing them to the NSA post office box or e-mail a story to Smokejump@AOL.com. The N.S.A. "Static Line" staff will massage it a bit to make it fit the size requirements and print your story in future newsletters. I hope this idea catches on and you will have fun telling your stories in print.



The "seed story" to initiate the column takes us back to the MSO dispatch of two crews to the southeast in 1985. Bill Meadows and Larry Fite were leading the charge for the two twenty-jumper crews. Our first assignment was to the Big Cypress Swamp in southern Florida. This was a very unique fire fighting experience for one used to the tall timber burns of the west. And the accommodations were finally what we deserve all the time. The local resort had a run-in with the law and greatly appreciated the off-season business to keep them out of Chapter 11. They showed their appreciation by providing a FREE keg of beer every night we stayed. This was too good to be true and we knew it couldn't last.

Just as we were getting used to the routine in Florida, we got a dispatch to the Okefenokee Swamp. It is a different world up there in many ways, beginning with our first trip to the fireline.

Okefenokee is fabled to be an Indian word for "land of the trembling earth." Appropriately named. We were fighting fire on a floating tangle of lateral roots that formed a floating mat. There were no less than 10,000 stems per square inch. Walking around on this "raft" was like the effort it took to get back to your room after the free keg back in Florida. The only good thing about this "fuel type" was the effort it took to mop it up. Just cut a hole in the root mass and push the burning material down into the standing water. No problem.

Wrong!!!!!! Amongst the tangle of indescribable flora were at least 47 genera of thorny/spiked/needle-like plants that made passage through anything but burned out areas impossible. We stumbled and clawed our way out of the tangle and hit solid ground near a squad of jumpers rehabing some dozer line. Their first reaction to our appearance was surprise and fear, which made a quick transition to side-splitting laughter. We had no idea what set them off. We turned to each other for an explanation and found the answer. Everyone who had emerged from the swamp was slashed and tattered, bleeding and ragged from the tussle with plant life. Hazard pay recognized a new category after our experience.

The following relates the meat of the story, what has come to be known as the greatest pimp in modern smokejumper history. The story continues as we are told at the end of the shift that the crews will have to be split between two different accommodations. One option is air mattresses and fart sacks on the cement floor of the screened-in (deluxe) pavilion in the Steven Foster State Park. The other option is beds at the Lem Griffiths Hunting Lodge. A heads out flip ensued. My foreman, Virgil Fite, won. We did our best to hide our delight as we gathered our gear and loaded on the bus.

The nightmare started when the bus pulled off the main road at a collection of out buildings we passed on the drive in. I recognized it as what I previously thought was a boarding kennel. This was the hunting lodge. The next fright came as Lem himself, looking like he had just stepped off the set of "Psycho," led us to the first set of rooms. He opened the door revealing a large room with four double beds. He said, "Well, I guess we can put eight in here." I quietly wondered how and opted to postpone my claim on a room. It was the same story with every door Lem opened. I figured I had a choice between sleeping in a bed with a fellow

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jumper in a room with one or three other "odd couple" pairings. The sleeping arrangements were not the only endearing quality of the rooms.

In contrast to the opulent appointments of the Florida resort, these rooms had a can of "Killer" bug spray on the bureau instead of the decorative air freshener. And it was obvious that the floors were uneven by the collection of dead bugs (I recommend "Killer" bug spray) against the south wall. The bathrooms were unique as I'm sure they smelled better after each individual made a morning visit. The high level of tannic acid in the local water smelled something awful. There was more to enjoy as the evening progressed.

We all met on the porch, after cleaning up, for a session of "spittin' and whittlin'." While we were all bragging up the advantages of the rooms or roommates we selected, a sudden cloudburst hit the lodge. Some say it was thirty seconds and others claim a full minute expired after the first raindrop when Jeff Barnes stuck his head out of his room and said, "Our roof is leaking." We weren't impressed until he insisted we look in his room. Jeff had positioned a 35-gallon garbage can under a free-

flowing waterfall cascading through the ceiling. How could our situation improve?

A little more spittin' and whittlin' and we had it. We should do the fair thing and swap accommodations with Meadows' crew the next night so they could enjoy the ambiance of the lodge. We left it to Virgil to cast the bare line for Meadows to tie his prepositioned hook. "It just seems fair," Fite said. That is all it took.

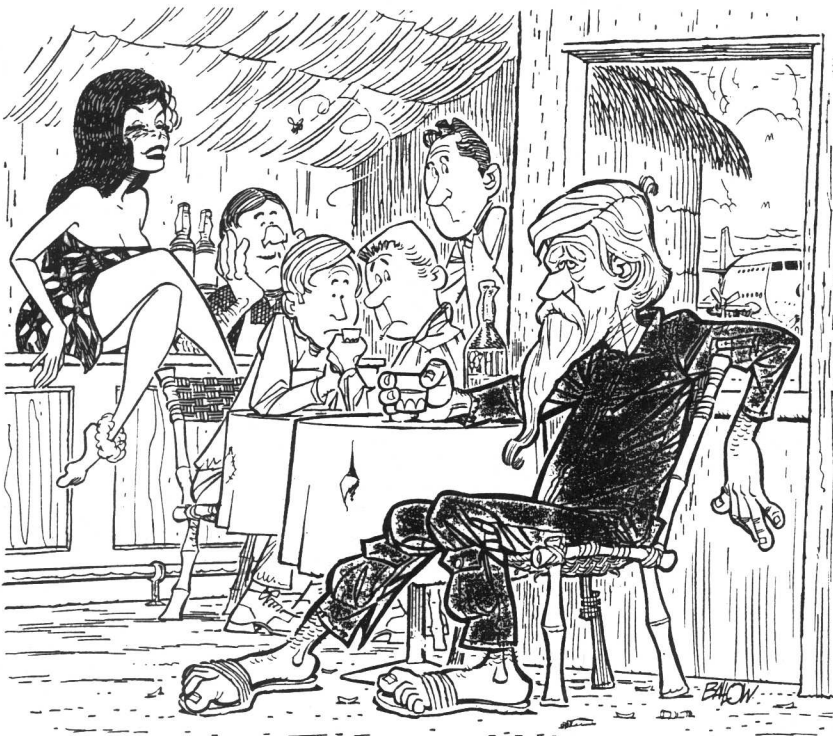
The young bus driver was a party to our pimp and nearly rolled the bus hurrying back to tell us the reaction. It seems that one individual refused to get off the bus and another vowed to walk the ten miles back to the pavilion. Other less creative jumpers resorted to four-letter expletives and "I knew we shouldn't have trusted them," chants. We got the reaction we sought.

Needless to say, we were all much happier back at the pavilion throwing "whites" in the middle of the night at the world-class snorers.

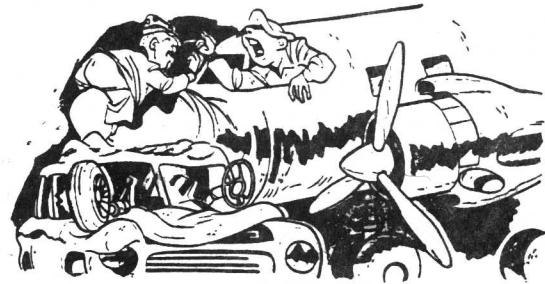
Your turn now. Try to limit your story to one page and try to keep them factual. HMMMM, YESSSS.



They truly did, and do, fly through the "Valleys of Death."



RETIRED AIR TANKER PILOT IN HAWAII. TELLING OF THOSE DAYS WHEN HE FLEW THROUGH THE VALLEYS OF DEATH. Adapted from the USAF publication Mac Flyer, Jan. 1966. Artwork by Dub Balo



WHAT IS THE TRUE STORY BEHIND THIS AIR TANKER INCIDENT? Let us know.

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Lead Plane and Air Tanker Aircraft Tragedies

In 1958 the first death of a leadplane pilot (known then as a bird-dog pilot) took place. Bill Archibald was training Carl Miligan in a Beech V-35 on the Wildcat Cyn Fire near El Toro, CA when the tail separated from the aircraft. Both died in the ensuing crash. Since that time more than 110 pilots and crew members have died in lead plane and airtanker aircraft crashes.

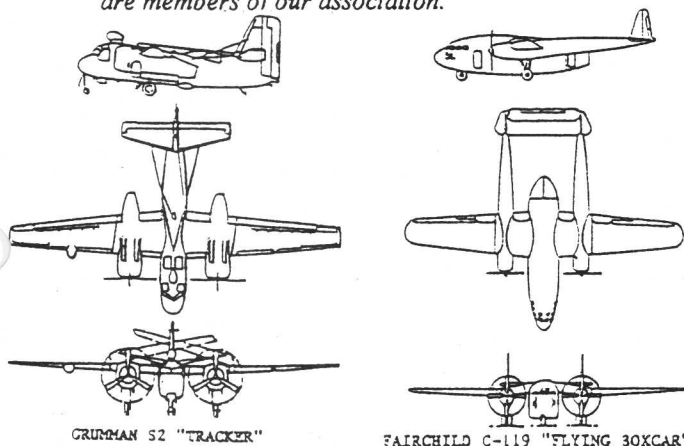
Lloyd Hansen, Region 1 Forest Service pilot, supplied us with information relating to this subject. As he said, the data is not fully complete at this time. (Lloyd was a former Johnson Flying Service pilot and at one time was a Smokejumper pilot captain. He has flown a great variety of aircraft, to include such jumper aircraft as the DC-3's, Twin Otter's and Cessna 206's. He flew for the Johnson Flying Service 9 1/2 years and 21 years for the Forest Service. Lloyd will be retiring very shortly.)

Clyde "Chub" Riggleman, Forest Service Lead Plane Safety Inspector, has also been very helpful in giving us material concerning this topic.

It is interesting to note that ten of the crashes involved former US Navy Grumman TBM torpedo bombers, nine Grumman S2 Tracker planes (Like the TBM's they too were carrier-based aircraft and three were Fairchild C-119 Flying Boxcars. (In each instance, a wing came off the C-119's while fighting fires in California.)

The latest deaths involved Gary Cockrell and Lisa Nitsch, pilot and copilot, of a four-engine Douglas DC-4, and Mike Smith, who was piloting a leadplane, when the two ships collided on approach to the Ramona, CA airstrip. (We mentioned in the last newsletter that Mike was a former smokejumper.)

We will continue on in future newsletters with the subject of airtankers and leadplanes. A number of these present-day and former pilots and crewmembers are members of our association.



A Kitten for a Pet?

During the summer of 1957 two jumpers, Lyle Brown and Ovid Williams, were detailed to clear trails out of the Red River Ranger Station along the American River in the Nezperce National Forest. (Earl Cooley was the ranger in that district at the time.)

One day as they were heading back to camp they came around a sharp bend in the trail and were confronted by a mother bobcat with a kitten in its mouth. She was in the process of moving it to another location under a fir tree where she had deposited another. She dropped the kitten with its sibling and retreated a short distance up the rock slide.

Lyle decided to have a close look at those small bundles of fur. Draping a Levi jacket over one arm he reached under the tree for one of them. It took hold of his arm and started screaming. At this point the mother started moving down the slide toward them, spitting, snarling, and looking ready to pounce. Ovid started throwing rocks, which made it retreat for a few moments, and then, back down the slide it would come. While Lyle was shaking his arm vigorously and shouting at the little critter to let go, and doing the two-step, the kitten only screamed louder and tightened its grip on Lyle's arm. The mother bobcat was now in a state of extreme rage, raising Hell and baring her fangs and coming much closer. And so the battle progressed. Then, for some reason, the kitten that had become so attached to Lyle decided to leave him and ran to its sibling under the tree. The mother bobcat was now at the end of the slide and rocks were doing little to make it stay away. At this time, Lyle and Ovid decided they had more important business elsewhere and beat a hasty retreat. (Lyle lives in the Missoula area and Ovid resides in the Hamilton, Montana region.)

At this point a story involving former jumper Dick "Carp" Carpenter should be related. (He currently lives in Dillon, Montana.) One day some years ago, Carp was involved in a logging operation along the West Fork of the Bitterroot River of Western Montana. The snow was deep and hounds had treed a bobcat. Eddy Walton--owner and manager of Eddy Walton's Bar in Darby--had told Carp he wanted to see a bobcat up close.

After the capture, Carp placed the bobcat in a gunnysack and took it to the bar, which at the time was

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full of loggers—one of the toughest breeds that ever walked the face of this earth. As Carp tells it, he opened the sack slightly in front of Eddy and the bobcat decided to take a walk. It jumped up on top of the bar and then ran to one end, knocking bottles and glasses over in its flight, and came to rest on top of the toilet. There it crouched "eyeballing" Eddy, Carp and the loggers, snarling and screaming and the loggers beat a very hasty retreat out the front door. Eddy and Carp stayed. The bobcat made a lunge from its perch and followed the loggers out the door, not even giving Carp and Eddy a farewell. That story is still told in Darby by some of the old, retired loggers.

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Early Smokejumper History by Earl Cooley

This is the first in a series of articles by Earl Cooley relating to early-day smokejumper history. Earl and Rufus Robinson made the first two fire jumps in the history of smokejumping, with Rufus being the first one out of Travel Air, followed by Earl Cooley on the second pass. The jump took place on July 12, 1940 in the Martin Creek drainage of the Nezperce National Forest.

As a result of the parachute experiments out of Winthrop in 1939, Regions 1 and 6 began preparations for organizing a small crew of jumpers for each region in 1940. Region 6 formed its squad around a nucleus of men who had been involved in the experimental jumping at Winthrop during the autumn of 1939. Region 1 selected Rufus Robinson as squad leader for its crew and sent him to Winthrop for training during the spring of 1940. Frank Derry was retained by both regions to assist in training that year. He was with the Eagle Parachute Company. Seven smokejumpers were selected for Region 1. They were Leonard Hamilton from the Lolo Forest; Dick Lynch, Flathead Forest; Jim Waite, Clearwater Forest; Rufus Robinson, Nezperce Forest; Bill Bolen, Kootenai Forest; Jim Alexander, Cabinet Forest; and Earl Cooley, Bitterroot Forest. Jumpers at Winthrop were Francis Lufkin, George Honey, Virgil Derry and Glenn Smith.

The Missoula jumpers took the ROTC physical exam at Fort Missoula. One jumper had to drop out because of an enlarged heart. Merle Lundrigan was designated as a squad leader for the summer, although he was not a jumper at the time. (He did make seven

training jumps in the spring of 1941, prior to being called to active duty with the military service.)

Seeley Lake, Montana northeast of Missoula, was selected as the Region 1 training base for 1940. During the training jumps, one man fell for more than 500 feet before pulling his ripcord. Another caught an arm in the lines and suffered a sprain. A third pulled up his legs just prior to landing and hit his tail bone during the required wind landing. Bill Bolen was dragged by his chute in a strong wind and suffered scratches and severe bruising. Jim Waite and Earl Cooley were the only ones to make all ten training jumps.

Major William Lee Carey had been present to observe the training jumps and cargo drops. He would return to Fort Benning, Georgia and begin establishing the first US Army parachute unit.

On July 10 the Missoula squad assembled at the Moose Creek Ranger Station in the Nezperce Forest of Idaho. Rufus Robinson had been sent ahead to begin construction of the first permanent parachute unit.

George Case, the Moose Creek Ranger, had been appointed project leader. Chet Derry was there as parachute rigger. (He, like his brother Frank, was already an accomplished parachutist.)

Earl Cooley's accounts of early-day smokejumping history will be continued in the 10th newsletter.

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The Ram-Air Parachute

part 1

In this, the 9th newsletter and the 10th, we will take up the ram-air parachutes used by the Bureau of Land Management jumpers at Boise and Fort Wainwright. We wish to thank the Boise BLM base, to include Kasey Rose and Steve Nemore, current Boise jumpers, for material on the subject.

The ram-air or "square" parachute is an aerodynamically stiffened wing, or airfoil, which generates lift by flying forward through the air. Openings in the leading edge of the canopy allow air to enter and inflate the wing. Forward flight pressurizes the chute, giving the wing its rigidity.

The ram-air canopy is actually a glider, powered by gravity. The jumper is likened to a pilot of the ram-air wing as it is flown through the air and guided to the ground, following the same aerodynamic principals as an airplane.

The Quantum Q-5, the current BLM Ram-air parachute, is a maneuverable canopy that allows jumpers to land in higher wind conditions. The Trilobe is specifically developed to offer the best possible performance from a ram-air canopy for landing in small jump spots surrounded by hazards.

This ram-air parachute has a forward speed between 20--22 mph. While flown at half brakes it will move forward at 8-10 mph. When held at full brakes the ram-air can slow to 0-5 mph.

The Quantum has a descent rate at full run of 18-20 ft/sec, at half brakes of 12-14 ft/sec and at full brakes at 22-24 ft/sec. If held into a stall, the canopy will fall at up to 28 ft/sec.

The aerodynamic qualities of the ram-air make it possible for the canopy to convert forward speed into lift. This dynamic process creates lift and sets the jumper up for a soft "flared" landing. Using a flared landing, the descent rate can be reduced to 0 ft/sec, forward speed can be brought down to 0 mph, and the canopy can perform a perfect flare under optimum conditions. Under normal conditions descent rates range from 3-7 ft/sec.

Turn rates for the Quantum are 6-9 seconds for a 360 degree turn when flown at full run. The canopy will then accelerate into subsequent turns and can make full 360 degree turns in just 4 seconds.

Jumpers can increase their rates of descent by doing full toggle turns if they need to get out of the sky faster. The jumper also has the option of decreasing his/her rate of descent by doing off-hand turns if it is beneficial to stay in the air longer.

These options allow the jumpers to give each other more airspace in which to fly, thereby decreasing the chances of mid-air collisions. They give lighter jumpers a way of losing altitude if high winds threaten to push the jumper beyond the jump spot. Heavier jumpers have the option of slowing down their rates of descent and setting up for lighter landings.

Depending on limitations dictated by jump spot size, terrain, air stability, and elevation, ram-air has allowed BLM smokejumpers to improve their mission effectiveness by making it possible to staff fires when wind conditions would otherwise prevent jumping.

History of the ram-air, Part 11

In 1977 the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service recognized the need to replace the FS-10 round parachute system used by the smokejumper program. The BLM smokejumper program based at Fort Wainwright, Alaska began investigating the potential of the ram-air parachute.

Jim Veitch, an Alaska spotter in 1978, researched skydiving sport canopies and interviewed developers of ram-air parachutes. Veitch recommended the BLM investigate the use of the ram-air parachute in smokejumper operations.

In the spring of 1979, four tandem "piggyback" systems (main and reserve parachute worn on back) were purchased by the BLM. These rigs utilized a static line to open the main parachute container, releasing a spring coiled pilot chute.

The first official BLM experimental ram-air jumps were made on May 22, 1979 by Jim Veitch, Eric Schoenfeld, Matt Kelly and Jim Schultz out of a Grumman Goose.

The first jumpers experienced inconsistent opening shock with the static line deployment, sometimes completely flipping through the risers. It was determined that aircraft speed for smokejumper operations was too high and body position was not consistent for static line deployment.

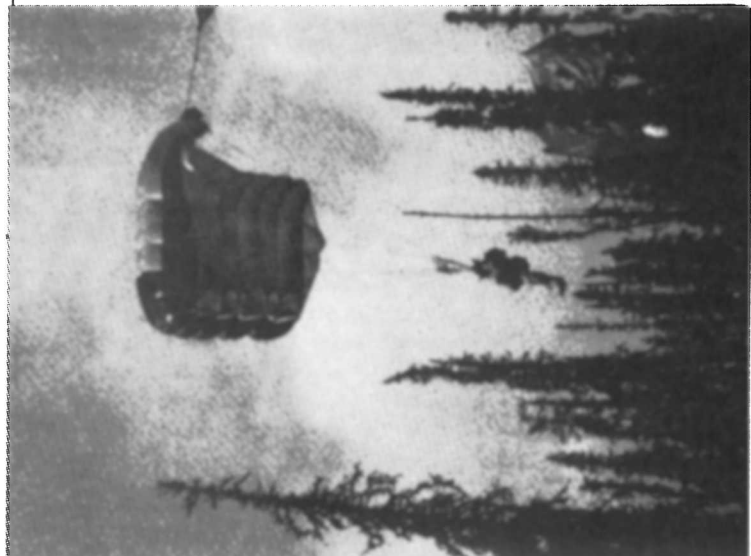
Veitch began investigating the method used by Russian Smokejumpers which was a drogue development system that stabilized the jumper's body position when exiting the aircraft, thus reducing opening shock on both the jumper and the parachute. The drogue then acts as a pilot for the main canopy when the jumper releases it by pulling the drogue-release handle.

On June 21, 1982 the first Ram-air fire jump was made on fire #8524 near Selawick Lake, Alaska. The eight-jumper stick exited the aircraft on a single pass. Jim Veitch spotted the mission and the jumpers were Matt Kelley, Ed Strong, Eric Brundige, Craig Irvine, Jerry Waters, Jack Firestone, Bob Mauck and Lynn Flock.

The spring of 1983 saw expanded ram-air training, procurement of canopies and developmental work. The ram-aIRS were used extensively on fire jumps in Alaska.

The first ram-air fire jump in the continental United States occurred on July 23, 1983 in Utah on the Dixie National Forest. Craig Irvine, Russ Little, Willy Lowden and Mike August were spotted by Rick Blanton out of a King Air.

We will continue with the development and use of the ram-air parachute in the next newsletter. Also note the profile on Kasey Rose in which she talks about the ram-air chute.



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Francis Lufkin-- Pioneer Jumper, Winthrop, Washington, 1939 continued ⌚

This article is a continuation of the one that was in the August newsletter concerning Francis Lufkin, one of the few survivors of the first days of smokejumping in 1939. This material is part of that found in the University of Montana archives and from an interview conducted by veteran jumper Kim Maynard in 1984.

All you needed was a sturdy football helmet & an old burlap bag that sheep shearers used (that would be your sleeping bag...)

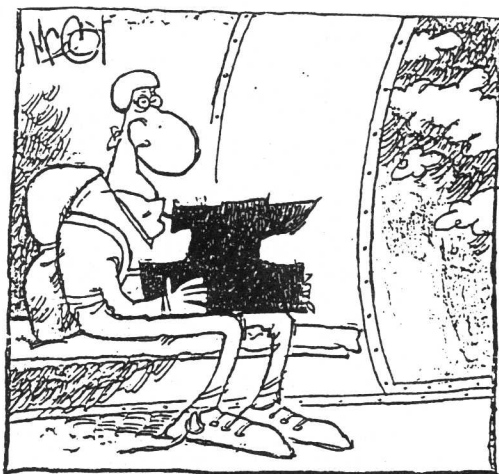
Francis mentioned to Kim that Virgil "Buzz" Derry (deceased Jan. 31, 1995) had been slapped along the side of his face by one of the long risers on an Eagle parachute in Winthrop, WA and it had split his cheek wide open and the scar was still visible at the 1984 Reunion. During the first experimental jumps helmets were not used. But after Buzz's accident they started using football helmets and members of the experimental group went to Seattle to have a mask designed to fit the helmets. (The masks used today vary little from the original ones.)

The football helmets originally used were made of leather, but have been drastically changed and are of plastic and similar in nature to those used by military pilots. In 1940 Eagle chutes with short risers were being used. One came up under Francis' chin and split it open and popped a hole in the canopy, which was about a ten-inch triangle. (On returning to the base the project superintendent started "chewing." He thought Francis had packed the chute with the hole in it.)

In 1941 they started using static lines about nine feet long. Francis came over to Missoula to make three experimental jumps with the new static line that the Derry's had devised during the previous winter. These jumps were made under Civil Aeronautics Authority Jurisdiction. These officials did not start the timing for opening until the cover was off the chute, instead of from the time the jumper exited the aircraft with the static line strung out. The CAA said the chute had to be open within 1 1/2 seconds after the cover came off. The openings were so fast the officials weren't able to time them with their stop watches.

Francis mentioned the early firepacks, which did not contain sleeping bags. The packs were dropped with burlap chutes, which were made from wool sacks sheep shearers used. They were about 7 feet long and of heavy burlap. The Winthrop base bought the sacks, ripped them open, tied quarter-inch ropes on each of four ends, and attached ten pounds of sand for use as drift chutes. When used as regular parachutes all types of cargo were dropped, especially small articles. (The Missoula base at the time used similar types.) Shortly, surplus and defective military chutes with 24 and 28 foot diameters were used for cargo drops.

We will continue in other future newsletters about Francis' experiences...



ALTHOUGH HE WAS NERVOUS ABOUT HIS FIRST PARACHUTE JUMP, ANDY KNEW NOTHING WOULD GO WRONG AS LONG AS HE HAD HIS LUCKY ANNIE!
(Cartoon provided courtesy of Hans Trankle.)



"I SAID OUT!"

D. Baldwin

Russian Smokejumpers, cont.

During the last part of September, a Russian smokejumper visited the Missoula base. He was Kirill Vilchinsky, command instructor, Irkutsk Base Aviation Forest Protection Parachute Service. We did not get a chance to talk to him, but he was in the United States to check on smokejumper technology. (In the 4th newsletter we mentioned that Irkutsk is located in the southern part of Siberia along the Angara River about 40 air miles northwest of the southern tip of Lake Baykal (Russian spelling), the deepest lake in the world. The Irkutsk Region is the most active fire region in Russia and has the largest smokejumper program in that country with 22 airbases, 500 smokejumpers and 200 rappellers.)

This article about Russian smokejumpers is a continuation of material given to us earlier by Deanne Shulman, a former McCall jumper, one of three persons who participated in the U.S.D.A. Forest Service and Russian Aerial Fire Service Exchange Program in the Irkutsk Region from July 12th through August 30th, 1993.

On July 30th the Americans visited Bratsk, one of three timber processing complexes in the Irkutsk Region. (The plywood factory there is the largest in Russia.) During the afternoon they had the opportunity to photograph the B-12 experimental airtanker that had been assigned to fight fires in the area, and on the following day saw the plane scooping water from the Sea of Bratsk and dropping it on a nearby fire. Deanne said there was a seven minute turnaround time.

On August 12th they travelled by bus with jumpers to the sport parachute airport at Bratsk and a demonstration of the experimental radio controlled cargo

chutes. The first one they observed being dropped was rigged improperly and would only turn one way and the second chute failed to open. (Apparently, the Russians have continued to experiment with radio controlled cargo chutes.)

At the same time, the Russian jumpers were doing proficiency jumps and had laid out some canvas cloth on which to repack their chutes. The smokejumpers were trying to get in as many jumps as possible on that day and some ended up with five. The jump aircraft was continually loading, dropping jumpers and landing most of the day. Deanne said there was a frantic round of jumpers repacking and running back to the plane for more jumps. She also said that their joy and professional standards in parachuting were obvious.

On August 14th they had the opportunity to look at the inside of a B-12 amphibious airtanker, then observe it in action while they flew alongside in a helicopter. The airtanker took about 1 minute and 38 seconds to fill while scooping up water.

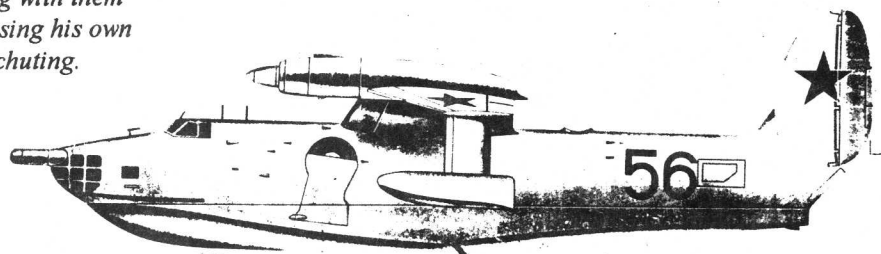
During the afternoon of the 14th there was a discussion about the safety record of the AN-2 smokejumper plane (A picture of an AN-2 was in the 8th newsletter.) It has been used to drop smokejumpers for the last 30 years. The Russians said that improved versions had been developed but the jumpers preferred the older, proven model. One commented: "The An-2's just never fall out of the sky."

The subject of Russian smokejumpers will be continued in the 10th newsletter.



As mentioned in an earlier newsletter, some Russian smokejumpers and rappellers bring dogs along with them on fires. The dog in the picture had jumped using his own chute. The dogs reportedly really enjoy parachuting.

The Beriev Be-12 was first produced in 1963 as an armed reconnaissance amphibian aircraft. Its top speed is 520 kms, or around 323 mph and it generally cruises at 186 mph. Maximum payload is 15,431 lbs and water tank capacity is 1,585 gals. The ship is powered by turbine engines and at one time held six international records in its class of amphibian flying boat, to include an altitude flight of 39,997 ft. Its nickname is "Tchaika," meaning "Gull," because of its wing shape.



Smokejumper Aircraft through the Years

FROM 1939 UP THROUGH 1995 MORE THAN twenty different types of aircraft have been used by smokejumpers. In this issue the Twin Otter ship produced by de Havilland Canada is described. Through the years many jumpers from different bases have parachuted from this aircraft and are still doing so today.

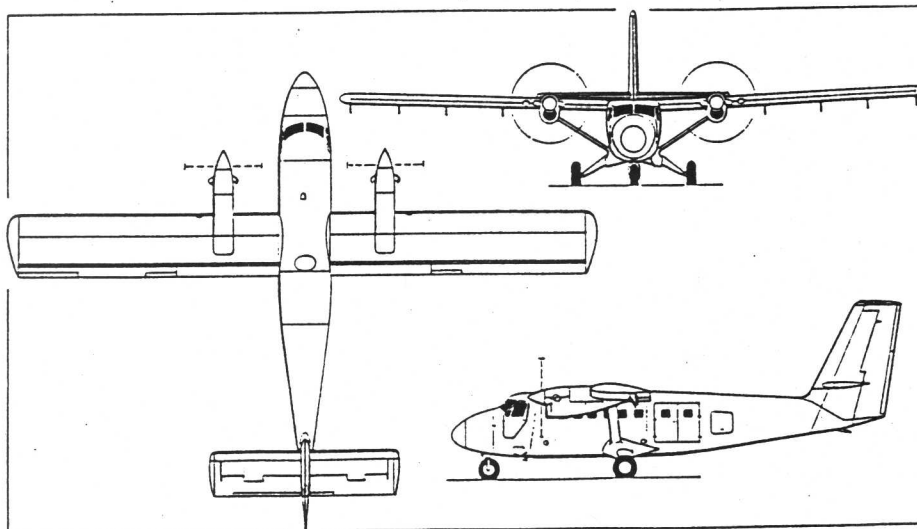
The current Twin Otters are Series 300 ships, first produced in 1969. They are outstanding mountain and back country airstrip aircraft and are used by different nations throughout the world.

The Series 300 Twin Otters are powered by two 652 eshp Pratt & Whitney PT6A-27 turboprop engines, each driving a Hartzell HC-B3TN-3D three-blade reversible-pitch fully feathering metal propeller with a diameter of 8' 6". There are accommodations for two pilots, and while the 300's can carry up to 20 passengers, a maximum of eight to ten jumpers are carried, with fewer depending upon terrain elevation and other considerations.

The landing gear is a non-retractable tricycle type and there is a fully-steerable nosewheel. (During the 1994 fire season a Twin Otter, while landing at the McCall base—empty except for the pilot—wiped out its landing gear and had other structural damage. The pilot was not hurt and the ship has been rebuilt.)

The DHC-6 Series planes have maximum cruising speeds of 210 mph at 10,000 ft. Stalling speed with flaps down can be in the area of 67 mph, depending on altitude density. With one engine out this Twin Otter can climb at 340 ft/min. It has a service ceiling of 26,700 feet and with one engine out it can still maintain 11,600 ft. Range at maximum cruising speed with a 2,550 lb payload is 892 miles.

Initial production of Twin Otters began with the Series 100 in 1964 with 115 being built. The series 300 ships have either "long" or "short" noses. The one in the accompanying drawing is a "short" nose 300. (On Thursday, Sept. 28 a "short" nose stopped at the Missoula airport. It had been under contract with the US Forest Service at Grangeville, Idaho through the Leading Edge Aviation Corporation of Missoula. The plane was heading back to Calgary, Alberta now that the fire season is over.) As of Aug. 14, 1985 a total of 825 Twin Otters had been built by the Canadian de Havilland firm, and delivered to more than seventy nations. They are being used for a great variety of purposes and will certainly continue to be used as smokejumper aircraft well into the 21st Century.



de Havilland Canada DHC-6 Twin Otter twin-turboprop transport



Chute the Breeze

1. We have had to postpone articles on the Siskiyou and Mongolian jumpers until the 10th newsletter. These articles are ready now for that letter.

2. At this time we have slightly more than 1,000 active members in the N.S.A. Some who had been members let their membership lapse. Hopefully, they will rejoin once reminders are sent to them.

3. Recently we received word that Jess Nelson, MSO 1955-73, had received several awards as mayor of Guymon, Oklahoma. We talked to him over the telephone on 10/27 and found that he had been given the Don Rider award by the Oklahoma Municipal League for being the outstanding municipal official in the state. He was also given a second award. This was presented to him in Tulsa on 10/6 by the Oklahoma Conference of Mayors in recognition of Jess being the outstanding mayor of the year in Oklahoma. He has been mayor of that city for the past four and one-half years and was on the city council for eighteen years. This is the first time in the history of Oklahoma that one individual received both awards.

Jess has been very active in recruiting new businesses for Guymon and for helping prepare for a large influx of workers and families in conjunction with the new operations. One new business will slaughter 16,000 hogs per day.

We certainly want to congratulate Jess on those awards.

Jess and Tommy "T. J." Thompson were both working at the St. Regis Ranger Station in western Montana in 1954 and traveled to Missoula for the dedication of the new smokejumper facilities at the airport. President Eisenhower made the presentation. Jess and T. J. (along with Chuck Evans) were very impressed by the smokejumpers and decided to apply. They were accepted for the 1955 season. (Chuck--now deceased--applied the following year.) T. J. is now retired and we understand may travel to Guymon to assist Jess with managerial responsibilities in some of the new operations. (T. J. lives at Boerne, TX. The town is pronounced "Bernie" down there, as "Boorn" in Massachusetts and "Burrnn" in Montana.)

We hope to see both Jess and T. J. in Montana again soon. (They were at the recent reunion. Former jumpers from a number of bases know both men.)

4. During the 1954 dedication ceremonies mentioned above, smokejumpers were supposed to jump from several aircraft, including a DC-2 and a Ford Tri-motor. The Missoula Sentinel on Thursday, Sept. 23 made these comments: "Of 18 jumpers who went up in two Johnson Flying Service airplanes at 4:00 P.M. (on Wed., Sept. 22) only three were able to jump. With the wind increasing steadily, jumpmasters in the planes called off the other jumps...One of the three jumpers who did bail out, Max Allen, accidentally pulled the ripcord of his auxiliary chute and came down with his orange and white main chute and the smaller white auxiliary billowing out in front of him..." Of course, many of us know Max, and he pulled his emergency in order to catch President Eisenhower's attention. (The President asked if Max had landed OK.) However, the three who did jump had been taking their gear off when the jump was first cancelled. But, there was a last minute change and three were to drop. Max was being helped into his gear and harness and almost went out the door without his emergency being attached. Tony Percival--NCSB 54--once commented: "Max Allen. The 'King' of the connivers...Max could finesse the paint off the wall. Legend has it once upon a time, and with a straight face, one lunch hour, Max picked up the tip of someone's finger that had just been cut off, re-baited his hook with it and continued fishing, while someone else was giving first aid. His ability to instigate unscathed far exceeded the abilities of either Rabideau (Jim--NCSB 49) or Pino (Buck--NCSB 51)..."

5. Master Rosters are again available at \$7.50 each. Jumper and associate names are arranged by states, thanks to Phil Davis, one of our computer operators.

6. Some Reunion T-shirts and belt buckles are still available, as well as key chains. Also, there are several of our old-style T-shirts with the N.S.A. logo on them. Should you be interested, please check with us.

7. We are still looking for stories and cartoons. Can anyone--other than Don Courtney--match Larry Fite in creating cartoons? We need one of a bear standing four feet away--on its rear feet--looking two jumpers in the face in a fit of rage.

8. We have a listing of 35 ex-jumpers who died in the line-of-duty, either as jumpers, as aerial observers, as non-jumpers fighting fires, and as aircraft passengers. Should you be interested in the names and causes of death, contact Jack Demmons.

9. From time-to-time we have had stories involving former jumpers who did not wish to have their names mentioned. As many jumpers and associates know, there have been different Federal agencies who have recruited from the smokejumper and mountain pilot ranks. Hopefully, some day, they can tell their stories, stories which in many instances far outrank fight on interest and intrigue.

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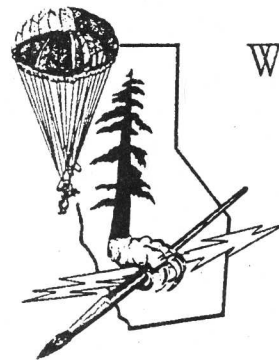
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