POPS

228 jumps in 24hours, Roy Fox

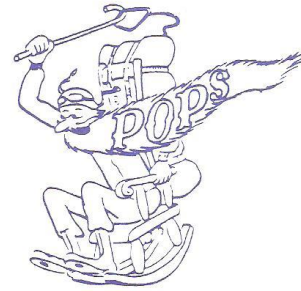**23,24 Nov 1995**

Somerton, AZ

228 PARACHUTE JUMPS
55TH BIRTHDAY EVENT
SOMERTON AZ NOV. 1995

News Release

Roy Fox, POPS 4678, celebrates his 55th birthday by making 228 jumps in a 24-hour period.

In doing so, Fox broke all records for skydivers over 50 years old.

Fox dedicated the event to the memory of Arizona Department of Public Safety Sgt. Mike Crowe and Yuma Police Lt. Dan Elkins, who were murdered at the Yuma Offices of the Southwest Border Alliance. Crowe had often piloted the aircraft for the Territorial Skydivers Jump Club. In conjunction with the record-breaking jump, the area high school students sought donations for the Crowe/Elkins Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Throughout his endeavor, Fox had a support crew of at least 50 volunteers from the Territorial Skydivers and jumpers from the U.S. Army Free-Fall Parachute School. It took five pilots, two planes, five parachutes and as many qualified parachute packers as could be found to work in shifts to keep Fox in the air at the Somerton Airport in Arizona. He began his record-breaking attempt at 4 p.m. on Thanksgiving Day, to mark his 55th birthday and averaged ten jumps every hour.

A professional parachute designer for over three decades, the Belleville, WV. native, is currently working at the Castle Dome Heliport on Yuma Proving Ground, conducting parachute development programs for the NASA X-35 manned space vehicle and a long-range, high-glide, satellite-guided parachute system for the US Army.

In 1994, he was awarded the Space Achievement Award as part of the DC-X, Delta Clipper Single Stage to Orbit, reusable rocket development team.

CROWE/ELKINS MEMORIAL PARACHUTE EVENT

Recently two Yuma, Arizona drug enforcement officers were tragically slain in the line of duty, each leaving behind a wife and young children. To assist in the effort of raising money for the memorial fund established in their names, Roy Fox of Belleville, West Virginia (a friend of one of the victims) will attempt to establish a world record for the greatest number of parachute jumps in a 24-hour period by a person over fifty years of age. On or about November 24, 1995, to mark his 55th birthday, Roy will strive to make a minimum of 55 parachute jumps (his actual goal is much higher than 55).

Roy has been professionally involved in parachute design, development and testing for a wide variety of demanding programs over the years. His accomplishments are unparalleled in our industry. He has served as test director for a number of precedent setting parachute development programs:

> Galileo Probe which will parachute into the atmosphere of Jupiter later this year.
> Heaviest load ever dropped under a single conventional parachute.
> Heaviest load ever dropped under a cluster of conventional parachutes.
> Heaviest load ever dropped under a parafoil (modern gliding parachute).
> Largest parafoil ever tested.
> Space Shuttle Booster recovery parachutes.
> Mars Pathfinder parachutes for a series of planned landings on the Martian surface.

Roy is currently conducting parachute development programs for the NASA X-35 manned space vehicle and a long range high glide satellite guided parachute system for the US Army. In 1994 he was awarded the Space Achievement Award as part of the DC-X, Delta Clipper Single Stage to Orbit, reusable rocket development team.

Roy's 34 years of experience in the field of parachute development includes continuous involvement as a jumper, and 24 years as owner of his own business, providing technical assistance to a who's who of American Aerospace as well as every branch of the US Armed services and NASA. As a nationally known expert in the field of high performance parachute design and development and an accomplished skydiver, he is very well qualified to undertake this record attempt.

Roy and his wife, Phyllis, are the proud parents of two sons; Roy III who is a graduate mechanical engineer and Randy who is attending medical school. Roy is a lifelong non-smoker and non-drinker. He is an enthusiastic advocate of the benefits of a wholesome lifestyle and hopes that this project will inspire others. Because of his "senior citizen" status, Roy hopes to garner a great deal of attention and support from the retired/seasonal residents who swell the Yuma and La Paz County populations during the winter months. This will be an excellent, high visibility and very worthwhile project for you to support.
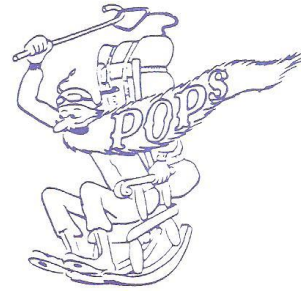
The operation will be conducted at the airport at Somerton, Arizona with management of the ground/air operations and logistics under the guidance of Jay Stokes, US Army Free Fall Parachute School Safety Officer, and the unlimited world record holder for the greatest number of parachute jumps in a 24-hour period. Packing parachutes, and attending to the vast number of other essential chores, will be many civilian and military volunteers. Flying the three aircraft required for the operation will be a sizable crew of volunteer pilots, both civilian and military.

Roy's endeavor can provide the basis for very positive, and widespread, public focus; TV coverage is assured. Because he has a very demanding full time job conducting tests at YPG, Roy needs volunteers to conduct the fund raising portion of this event. Please consider volunteering some of your time and services to help with this very worthwhile humanitarian project. You could hardly find a better cause.

MY ANNOUNCED GOAL WAS 55 JUMPS. MY SECRET GOAL WAS 200 JUMPS. 228 JUMPS WERE MADE.

7 April 1996

Roy Fox, Jr. - POPS 4678
Aero. Rec. Service
Rt. 1 Box 32A
Belleville WV 26133

Dear Roy,

Thank you for submitting your documented records to POPS for acknowledgement. We have just begun our POPS certificate program and you are one of the first to receive them.

I have also sent the enclosed news release to both *Parachutist* and *Skydiving* magazines.

In addition, I have included all of your information into our POPS History Album which shall be passed on in our organzation as a permanent record.

My happiest regards to you on your 55th birthday!

Sincerely,

The sky's the limit

Castle Dome man breaks skydiving record for age group

By ROSEMARIE FITZSIMMONS
Special to The Sun

SOMERTON

Roy Fox had already been a world-record holder for 16 hours when he took off for his 200th jump at 1 p.m. Friday, but now he was approaching his second milestone.

The moment the plane reached 2,000 feet he was out the door, parachute open, spiraling downward to increase his rate of descent. Within two minutes, he was on the ground at Somerton Airport, out of his parachute and racing to get into rig number 201.

"That was the cake," he yelled to his ground crew. "The rest is all icing!"

By the end of the 24 hours, Fox, 54, had completed 228 jumps, shattering all known records for skydivers over 50 years old. According to the Parachutists Over Phorty Society, three people over 50 have each made 50 consecutive jumps in one day.

"For the past three or four years, I've been trying to think of something special I could do to celebrate my 55th birthday, Dec. 5," said Fox. "I even thought about taking a 55-day bicycle trip cross country, but I realized I'd never get 55 days off work. Finally, I decided I wanted to break this record."
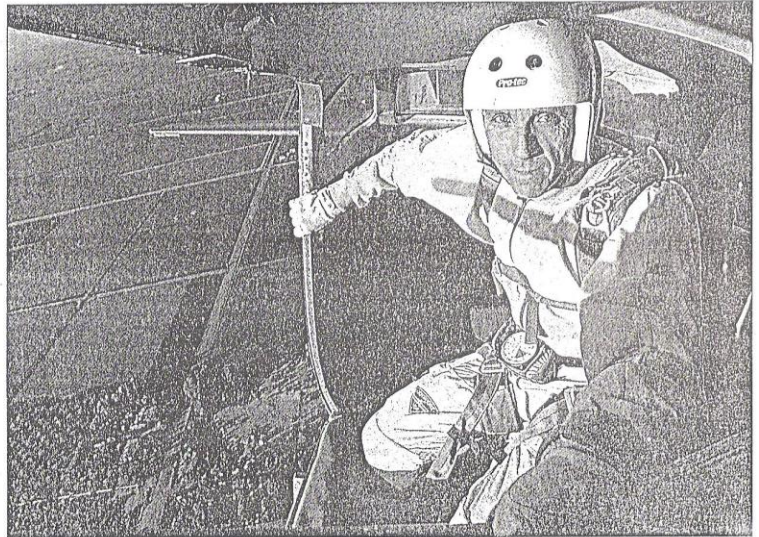
Once Fox realized how low the record was, he changed his goal from 55 to 200 jumps, determined to not only set a record, but to blow it away.

He also decided to dedicate the event to the memory of Arizona Department of Public Safety Sgt. Mike Crowe and Yuma police Lt. Dan Elkins, who were murdered July 4 at the Yuma offices of the Southwest Border Alliance. Crowe had often piloted the aircraft for the Territorial Skydivers jump club.

A professional parachute designer, the Belleville, W.Va., native, is currently working at the Castle Dome Heliport on Yuma Proving Ground, conducting parachute development programs for the NASA X-35 manned space vehicle and a long-range, high-glide, satellite-guided parachute system for the U.S. Army.

Throughout his endeavor, Fox had a support crew of at least 50 volunteers from the Territorial Skydivers and jumpers from the U.S. Army Free-Fall Parachute School.

According to ground crew coordinator, Jay Stokes, it took five pilots, two planes, five parachutes and as many

Roy Fox before exiting his jump plane over Somerton airport Thursday afternoon

The Sun/James Blair

qualified parachute packers as could be found to work in shifts to keep Fox in the air. Stokes and Fox's wife, Phyllis remained awake throughout the event.

Fox began his record-breaking attempt at 4 p.m. Thanksgiving day. He averaged 10 jumps every hour, and remained up-beat and energetic, even when it seemed the night would never end.

"This is the toughest part," said Stokes, safety officer from the jump school. Until recently, Stokes held the over-40 record with 331 jumps in 24 hours. "At night you start to feel alone, and kind of numb," he added. "It affects your depth perception on landing, too. At daybreak, though, you get your second wind and it carries you through."

Despite lack of sleep, an occasional hard landing and the constant chaffing from his gear, Fox never changed his pace. "I went through about three bottles of eye drops because of the sand everywhere," he said afterward, "but other than that, I'm ready to go up again tomorrow."

Although most would consider this a great feat, requiring stamina and athletic ability, Fox claims the credit for is accomplishment should actually go to the members of his crew.

"When it comes right down to it, I was just a small part of the effort," said Fox. "All I had to do was keep falling out of an airplane. Someone else did all the work."

10 HRS & 18 MIN DAY JUMPS = 94 JUMPS
13 HRS & 42 MIN NITE JUMPS = 134 JUMPS

Jumping into the record book

The Sun/James Blair

At an altitude of 2,000 feet, sky diver Roy Fox (above) looks over the landing area Thursday afternoon during his bid to set a record for the most jumps by a person over 50 years of age in a 24-hour period. Moments later, Fox glides to a landing (right) over Somerton Airport, then secures another parachute (top right) with help from ground crewman Derek Baldwin as his drop plane approaches from behind. As part of the record-breaking attempt, which was to continue today, Yuma-area high school students sought donations for the Crowe/Elkins Memorial Scholarship Fund, named for the two law enforcement officers slain last summer, Yuma police Lt. Dan Elkins and Arizona Department of Public Safety Sgt. Mike Crowe.