

Original transcript created by Allan Anderson at an unknown date; revised by Leslie McCartney on August 31, 2018.

Note by McCartney: Although the narrator and interview share the same surname (Anderson), they are not related. This transcript is not a verbatim word-for-word transcript.

Allan Anderson's 12-04-2010 – Slide Tray #2
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00:00:

Allan Anderson (AA): Okay, so I'm here today with Jim Anderson and we are continuing our interview series and today we are working on slide tray #2. But before we get started Jim is going to talk a little bit about his fire bomber operation.

Jim Anderson (JA): Now that was a classic example of good business sense. I came off the DEW Line after being up there with Wiens as flight mechanic for about a year and one of the pilots at Wien's - Don Gilbertson talked me into buying into two B-25 to get into the fire fighting business. And - it was kinda funny. I'm working there at Wien's and working on this plane at night - and carry on - I'd hocked my house -- and everything I had to get into this deal - of course - that was the year we had the flood - and I'm in the firefighting business.

00:49 -- Which is kinda a strange operation. But - at Wiens' - coffee shop one guy standing there said - that Gilbertson going to take you - work you to death and you will get nothing out of this. You are making a mistake - carryin' on. One plane - on the contract one of 'em and they would pay \$300 a day standby. The first time -when the contract started - I came into work - on the swing shift - and I said 'boys I made \$300 today'. The next night - we are up to 6-9 -12 hundred, nobody sayin' a word - they are looking at me - like God damn you you know -- then it flew on a fire. And I said well now - we are up to about \$1500 and we flew so many hours that - uh \$500 an hour - what does that come out to guys? Nobody wanted to talk to me - of course the overhead at Wien's didn't like it either that a mechanic owned a B-25 and was making money. They did not appreciate that - kind of a narrow minded bunch when it came to it -- it was a pilot oriented airline and mechanics were not suppose to have this stuff. In fact, one of my big mistake - probably lead to my leaving Wien's -

02:12

One day I asked them 'could I bring my plane up on the line when the Wien planes are gone that are scheduled - so I can wash it a bit? Oh sure -- so I taxied the B-25 up - on the line- the windows all open up - people are staring up and I am bouncing around out there washing that airplane - from then on it was kinda like a bastard calf -- to the people upstairs - they did not like this - but it was fun -- anyhow we had the two airplanes -- we only put 1 on the contract. They were dropping Phos-Chek on the fires - I think Horace Black was our pilot the first year.

02:55

Just worked and worked and worked. Trying to work at Wien's and work at that keep it going -- I was a very tired fellow by fall. Like I say, that's the year the flood came through and everything stopped

anyhow somewhere in early August. But it worked out - borrowed some money from the SBA - and bought another airplane – Lockheed Loadstar that had been converted to Learstar and I had that to rent out for smoke jumpers - really a nice airplane.

03:28

Then we see - while we were outside - I ran into this lady I had known years before - and the next thing you know -- we got married. I got to figuring this thing out - had to be home sometime - so I sold out.

AA: Just 1 or 2 seasons –

JA: Oh, about a season and a half.

AA: Were you running them in the states?

JA: No, just here in Alaska. They wouldn't use them in the states -- they were outlawed because for some reason or another, politics. The politics in the fire fighting business are very very serious and deadly too - in a way. Don went on - kept going - he ended up having 3 or 4 DC6's as tankers - just doing great for quite a while.

AA: Don?

JA: Don Gilbertson.

AA: Yeah, Don Gilbertson. Actually my brother in law runs around with Gilbertson's kids or grandkids –

JA: Danny – yeah. Danny is a piece of work - he is. He is outside now I heard in Canada -- looking at a single otter he bought - trying to get it fixed up.

04:37

JA: See how that works out - this fire fighting business is interesting. Of course - after things settled down - and I was at work teaching school - the Borough had a aircraft mechanic school - so I went to work there. And - then - that was pretty good - so I grabbed some students - was allowed to work on everybody's firefighting plane - had a pretty good couple of summers there. It was kinda nice - fun.

AA: So – you're disengagement from Wien's was that your choice or theirs?

JA: Oh theirs. Because when I was out buying the Learstar - I came a little late from vacation and they said you can't do that, you're terminated. And the assistant Director of Maintenance - said oh - we have to terminate you this and that and I said, oh, two days? Yes. Against the rules. Okay. And his remark was I am sorry that Gilbertson has lead you down the primrose path and I turned around and said - do you think that being the lead man on graveyard is the greatest job in the world and left Wien's. Best thing that could have happen to me.

5:50

AA: Okay, are you ready to look at pictures?

JA: Sure, go right ahead.

AA: Don't know if you can see that alright.

JA: Oh yeah. I don't know who took that picture - but that looks like my old Taylorcraft and that would have been at Metro Field.

AA: What is the history on that plane? When did you buy it?

JA: Oh a friend of mine found it; some guys at Wien's had owned it. We decided to go partners on it. Gosh \$1700 bucks we paid for it I think. Anyhow, Roy was goin' to learn to fly - Roy Peterson - a partner. And then he lost his hand in a snowmachine accident so he kinda gave up so I started flying it a bit. We had it for 3-4 years - good little airplane. 65 horse.

AA: Ended up selling it?

JA: Oh yeah, the fabric went bad. I bought a riverboat to salvage a wrecked B25 on the Tanana River on a sand bar and the riverboat was so much fun that I just didn't fly - and the next thing you know the fabric went bad, so we sold it.

6:45

AA: Why did you end up being a mechanic instead of a pilot?

JA: I just wasn't that interested in flying. Most of the time it is absolutely boring. And the mechanic in there, there's always something that is interesting like, just one of those things and I enjoy it, great. Sold the airplane and gave up flying. I was only running around the pattern maybe once a month and it just wasn't worth - couldn't stay current - and skilled at it.

07:18

AA: Of all these in field salvages you've done - where you repaired the plane - have you flown any of them out?

JA: No - always brought in a pro - as they are always in bad places and either got the owner or somebody that was good at getting them out. Like I said, I never considered I was that good. Oh yeah, that's it, Old Bluey.

AA: Just for reference, do you remember what year you had this?

JA: Oh - it would have probably been about 1970, somewhere in there.

AA: What year was the plane?

JA: Probably 1946 - 47 - that is when they built most of them. Yes - that was quite a little machine.

08:05

AA: Did you ever use it on any jobs?

JA: No, no, no I have people ask me to come out and work on their airport and I said no, I'm not good enough, would be wrecking my plane too. Some of these people land their airplanes where they shouldn't.

AA: Sometimes that is what keeps you in business.

JA: Oh, well - it worked out yeah. There it is. Now that was taken in the spring and we had one airplane. It wasn't ours. I was another one. I worked on it to go drop sand or ashes on the ice - river ice in the bad spots where it would jam up the ice and flood villages.

AA: That sounds interesting.

JA: Oh it was fun - yeah - brought it around to dump that stuff. Was beautiful weather usually you know - and cool - everything performed wonderfully.

AA: Was that the B25 there?

JA: Yeah, that was it there - I think that was probably - we had tail numbers - Antique 1 was the call sign - on it. Fellow by the names of Ed Thorsrud flew it - he was very good.

09:14

AA: Do they still dump sand on the river?

JA: No - they gave that up and I don't know why.

AA: Was it effective?

JA: Oh very - very - it would melt the ice right out, you know and you wouldn't get these blockages, it was great - but the state gave it up after several years.

AA: How wide spread was it - was it mostly on the Tanana or up on the Yukon?

JA: On down the Yukon - up Fort Yukon - down at Galena - Nenana - went all over with the dam thing.

AA: I never heard of that dropping sand on --

JA: I think we even was at Bethel - yeah we were at Bethel once, I wasn't on it then.

AA: And who was the pilot at this time?

JA: Ed Thorsrud; just a real, good, calm, very skilled pilot.

AA: Local guy or ... ?

JA: No he came outa Montana I think it was. An previous to that he'd flown trimotors Fords with smoke jumps and a TBM - single engine torpedo bomber that was rigged up for dropping fire retardant. And then he got his own B25, but the people that got the contract just hired him to fly the airplane. Oh yeah he was smooth.

10:23

AA: What do -- when you are going out and hiring a pilot for something like this I mean - do you look for experience as a bomber pilot?

JA: Somebody that has been in firefighting 'cause of the low altitudes. You wanna find somebody who is pretty skilled, 'cause you've got to go in low and with the B25 you had to below 130 miles per hour otherwise the stuff would start climbing up - the air would bring it up. If you were too fast - it would hit the tail feathers. That is what happened to a couple in the states. They went too fast and it tore the tail off them.

AA: Oh really - it actually would do damage to the plan?

JA: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. You could tell who was good by how high - the stuff was red - and you could tell who was really good by how high it was on the fuselage after the dump gates. You knew right away who was good and who was screwing up.

AA: Was it difficult to fly B25 at low enough speeds to do ... ?

JA: Oh, no it handled beautifully. You were in trouble cause if you lost an engine, why things weren't too good. Although, it happened to Ed - and he managed to get out of it. Brought the plane to Bettles and fixed it there. That was later on during the fire season.

AA: So during the fire season did you have to go out in the fire sites to work on the planes?

JA: Oh sometimes, yeah. Usually I just went - was at Tanacross a couple of times - they had a station there; and at McGrath a couple of times. That is about it. What do we got here now?

12:00

AA: Is that Metro?

JA: Yeah, yeah - it is a Twin Beech landing I just took a picture I think probably from up on top of the roof.

AA: There is not much left at Metro now, there's still some planes out there?

JA: Oh yeah - it is privately owned. It is still operating, oh yes, but only for the people that have places on it.

AA: And - they have a float pond there too don't they?

JA: Oh yeah, yeah, it's a rather narrow one but it's alright. That is probable one of Air North's airplanes.

AA: This is just a little side note. I was wondering the other day when I was driving by yesterday what the history of Chena Marina is - how long it has been here, and who built it?

JA: Uh, actually I was teaching school then -- and uh - Al and Gareth and Linc, the Wright family built it -- it's an old homestead and they built it, and it was probably '71 or so - and they just started selling lots and everything. I bought this lot in 1980. But uh - they made a nice set up.

AA: Yeah, the people that I bring back here just driving around once an while are always amazed at all the planes back here --

13.12

JA: Yeah, well I first moved here in '93 - I think it was - and -- in the summer - they was maybe 3 or 4 float planes and a lot of empty lots - and now everything's full up. I don't know how many float planes - they are pretty much up and down one side.

AA: When did you establish the hanger here at Chena Marina?

JA: I am pretty sure I moved in in 1993 all I had was the building and the next year we put on this shop on the side of the hanger and the office and the other stuff, somewhere in there. It went on - I started building 3 or 4 years before I moved in. Footings one year - floors the next and finally got together for the walls and roof up.

AA: How long has the little cabin been out here?

JA: Oh that was a little earlier. Fella that was workin' for me, lived over here in a tent - I said oh hell - build a log cabin with the trees on the lot so and he did. He lived it but I don't know how, it was pretty leaky. They hadn't chinked 'er very well, filled it with bark on the logs everything else. It was pretty

crude - they lived in it 3-4 months. But that was the only thing here for several years. That would have been somewhere in the '80's.

14:34

AA: Has there been booms and busts in the repair business?

JA: Oh my yes. Let's see, the pipeline was really booming up. I left the school probably about '74; they finished the pipeline in '76 -- so somewhere in there -- '74 or '75 - there was no airplane work 'cause everybody's workin' on the pipeline. And I was beginnin' to wonder what I was going to do next when this fellow that dispatched trucks for Sourdough Express calls up and said do you have any Herman Nelson heaters that you can rent? So we made a deal and I heated up heavy equipment for about two winters and in between heating up cats and trucks and everything else and keeping Herman Nelson heaters going a guy's got a full day's work in -- but it kept things goin'.

AA: Was that just around Fairbanks?

JA: Yeah, yeah.

AA: I thought they might have had you workin' at mines or something.

JA: No the only trip out of town was once up at to - what they called Pit Ten to thaw out a bunch of big trucks and we were only there two days.

AA: Up on the Dalton, or?

JA: Yeah, yeah, on the haul road. Oh yeah, that was a good airplane.

15:54

AA: That is at International - huh?

JA: Yeah.

AA: Jet there.

JA: Yeah, I couldn't tell you what we were doing there but, oh, oh, they were loading there and dropping ash on the Chena down to the mouth out into the Tanana so that it wouldn't block up like previous years. And I had worked on the airplane. He was off flying it and I thought I would go have a hamburger and beer at Pikes and ended up having lunch. A fellow came in and said 'Anderson your plane just crashed. I said what are you talking about? He said, well it disappeared behind the tress down there down river and a bunch of stuff kinda boiled out of the trees and then -- I said oh, I don't think so and she well, what da ya mean? There it is right there, it was coming in to land. Ed was flying again and he would be right down on the river to dump so the stuff would not fly around too much. Oh yeah, you

go down through there - and you could look out and wing tip and the shadow were just a couple of feet apart.

17:05

AA: How did you load sand in to that to be dumped?

JA: Oh we had a hatch up on top of the tank, oh yeah.

AA: This was a state contract?

JA: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

AA: And you said you did that for a couple of years?

JA: Oh yeah, yeah, two or three years. Let's see now. I believe that was taken down at Nenana. One of the fellows had parked his B25 and his three down there for the winter. Cheaper rates and everything, so we went down there in the spring to get batteries in and get them fired up and fool with 'em a bit.

AA: Can you identify the person in the picture there?

JA: Yeah, it was probably Lyle College - he was working with me on this stuff for a year or two, part time.

AA: As part of the aircraft repair?

JA: Well, yeah we worked on a bunch of stuff. He was out there helping me on the airplanes on Ft. Wainwright.

AA: The bombers?

JA: Yeah, and then, he'd been a student at the school and seemed pretty level head so I put him to work with me. Then, uh, Lyle was pretty sharp until he saw the money in the airplane business and then he went back to being an ironworker. Did well. Yeah that is Lyle there in the foreground, and can't remember the other fellow's name. Oh yeah.

AA: Just doing maintenance on that?

JA: Yeah, gettin' ready, there is snow in the background so we probably just getting it ready for spring.

AA: What am I looking at here down underneath?

JA: That is part of the gate mechanism for dumping - use 3 or 4 small doors down there and you could open up as many as you wanted or whatever

19:00

AA: Was there - you hear about like the 747 that's dumping now, what was the capacity of the B-25 and how ... ?

JA: B25 was 1,000 gallons that was it.

AA: And it all came out pretty quick?

JA: Oh, didn't take anything at all. There was ramp air duct top to pressure it and it really came out good.

AA: also - the tank was pressurized?

JA: Just by ambient air - air speed - yeah - just a little - it wasn't 6-8" at all - up on top.

AA: Is this intake for the engine?

JA: Yeah, carbonator air.

AA: Uh where did you pick the B-25 up at? Who'd ya buy it from?

JA: Bought it off two other Wien pilots, Ron Dodson and Darwin Kellogg. They had decided to go out to go to work for a bigger airlines and leave Wien's and sold us this stuff. Not bad - think we paid \$15,000 for both airplanes.

AA: So they were up here local?

JA: Oh yeah, they're local boys, yeah.

AA: Had they been using them for fire service?

JA: Oh yeah, they had been used for it before. Metro Field again.

AA: Metro?

JA: Looks like it, yeah, low trees in the background.

AA: Probably more of your sanding operations since its winter?

JA: Yeah, yeah. Oh yes.

20:35

AA: Did you eventually paint this? –

JA: No not this one –

AA: Not this one, must be another one.

JA: We painted the one that Don and I owned, Antique 5, painted it red and black. That was taken out on the base probably, looking at the hills and background.

AA: What plane is that?

JA: DC3. They used them for smoke jumpers.

AA: Okay. That wasn't your plane?

JA: No, no.

AA: More pictures of the B-25 yeah - boxes of B25 pictures.

JA: Oh yeah, yeah.

AA: More B-25 up here?

JA: Yeah, there was 6 all told.

AA: Contractors from state or local planes?

JA: Let's see, we had 1- Red Dodge out of Anchorage had 1; Bob Schott, those were the local people and a couple of others, two were owned by Gran Collins. That was in Anchorage and Bob Schott came up from the states and Ed came up from the states.

AA: You said the reason you got out of the business was that you were freshly married and just wanted to spend some time?

JA: Well, that is when I sold out of my operation, yeah, it was -- Don and I weren't getting along too good at that time. He kinda wanted me to leave so he could really carry on. Like I say, he was quite a guy, quite a character. Now that's the PB4Y. It's a single tailed liberator might say. You can see the red stuff on the belly there from Phos-Chek.

22:10

AA: Was it bigger capacity?

JA: Oh yeah, yeah, I forget what they carried.

AA: Is that who's that up on the -- ?

JA: Oh, no telling. One of their mechanics. Those people were Hawkins and Powers out of Greybull Wyoming.

AA: Okay. Once again - that is the same plane taking off?

22:37

JA: No, that's a B17. We had a couple of them here one year too. Pretty sure that is it, with that tail. Yeah, yeah – they're sitting there, yeah.

AA: Anybody you know?

JA: No, can't say right off.

AA: That one got four engines.

JA: Umhm. Now what the heck, something else again, a tail dragger with four engines. You know, I don't remember what that was. The four wise had nose wheel. Hmm - I think it's 17, yeah.

AA: You see all sorts of airplanes up here?

JA: Oh yeah, yeah, oh yeah, that's a 17.

AA: More of the 17. Did they use nose cones for those for spotting fires or anything?

JA: No, they're strictly droppers. I don't know who that is either.

AA: North Star Aviation.

JA: That was Bob Schott and Bill Whittmer owned that.

AA: Were they local guys?

JA: Yeah, yeah. Oh that's in the spring, we were getting' it ready, that was the plane we used for dropping sand and ashes on the river. Oh yes.

24:17

AA: Did you do any work on the smoke – the bombers for retardant other than your own?

JA: Oh yeah, yeah. Worked on the PB4Y's and here was some B26's, ended up workin' on them a little bit. I think that was a Land Management pilot on that one. That's Lyle in the foreground again.

AA: So when these crews came up from all over the place to fight fires with their bombers, they didn't necessarily bring their own mechanics - sometimes they'd --- ?

JA: Generally yeah, they had their own. They'd get me when they - when everybody was busier than heck - each plane usually had a mechanic with it. But then now and then they needed help.

AA: And that's Lyle standing in front of one of your airplanes?

JA: Yeah, that's North Star Aviation again.

AA: Doing sand.

JA: Yeah. And that is the end of - I don't know which number -- it is a sand bar off the Tanana River about opposite Ft. Wainwright .

AA: Was that one of your planes?

JA: No, it wasn't one of mine, no. Actually it was Thorsrud's airplane but he'd gone outside to see his family 'cause it was slow, and another pilot by the name of Herman Gallagher put it in. Blamed bad fuel, we never come up with an answer, but it wasn't bad fuel, somethin' went wrong.

AA: Was that a smoke bomber?

JA: Yeah. Firefighter, yeah.

AA: Smokebomber or fire bomber. Nobody was hurt?

JA: No, no, see, they had the engines off by then.

AA: So you guys salvage what you could off it?

JA: Oh yeah, went up took all the instruments out and all the parts and pieces that we could and pulled the engines and got them set up so we could pick them up or do something up, hadn't quite figured that out . As it turned out there was a big Chinook helicopter that came in off the slope, were doin' some maintenance work and got them to go out and pick up the engines. And that's when I found out about static electricity in helicopters

AA: Uh ho.

JA: 'Cause they were up there and had a long sling on one engine and shorter one on the other. So they come in and they're goin' pick up the short sling first; they reeled out their cable, I'm standing there with engine sling in my hand and grabbed that hook and got knocked right on my back. Crawled up and thought, oh that was static. By that time their hook had hit the ground, so okay, she's grounded so I can hook up now. But there's a lot of power to that stuff off a helicopter, yes.

27:05

AA: This is the same engine recovery that you had other pictures of on -- is that in this slide reel -- or the other one because I saw pictures of two engines being lifted up.

JA: That was later on, yeah, there should be more of these somewhere.

AA: Maybe that is later on in this slide tray - I thought that was in the last slide tray. The ones where you had - was that your wife with you?

JA: Yeah, yeah. And that is where - we were up there at the airplane - you can see I have the flaps loaded into the boat and other stuff. Wife is getting out lunch look like.

AA: Is that Ruth?

JA: Judy.

AA: Judy. I don't know why I'm thinkin' your wife's name is Ruth.

JA: Oh yeah, that was some good times.

AA: Which dog is that?

JA: That's old King, big old shepherd. The other one is around there somewhere.

AA: There probably wasn't many opportunity to take your wife along with you.

JA: Not really, with the kids and all. You know, you'd have to find a babysitter - she loved to get out ion that boat, still does, still own the same boat.

AA: Is that the one sitting right out back here?

JA: Yeah.

28:22

AA: Oh yeah, okay, I was confused on the sequence of things.

JA: Yeah, they were getting' ready to pull in, engines off, they're comin' up right now.

AA: Was it, when a plane went down like that - was it pretty much open season - or were you hired to go those?

JA: I was hired to go get the stuff, yeah. I don't know if I ever got paid, but I went up and got them. We put the engines on another airplane later on and away it went, still used 'em.

AA: Locally? Here in town?

JA: Yeah, still -- there was a couple of B25's sitting in Anchorage they weren't usin' and Ed took the engines down there, installed 'em and away they went.

AA: Do you have to go thru an engine like that when it has been in a wreck?

JA: Well we probably should have but we didn't. Figured - well - you can see the prop in the foreground how bent it is.

AA: Just on a day to day, on your average wreck, if you have an engine that the prop is all bent to hell, do you have to go through the engine, or -- ?

JA: You do now, you didn't in those days. And this was restricted category and the FAA didn't fool with them much, they didn't.

AA: Weren't -you - if you were puttin' those on a different plane after you had been in a wreck - weren't you kinda taking a crap shoot when you were putting them on a plane --?

JA: Oh yeah, but that is all we had so we used them.

AA: You couldn't run the engine somehow -- ?

JA: No, no -

AA: Put 'em on an engine stand?

JA: Put them on and try it out. And they worked fine for another three, four years.

AA: Right on -

JA: That I knew of.

29:45

AA: It still just amazes me doing field work like this I mean you go out, cut poles, build a tripod --

JA: Just me and my wife.

AA: Yeah. You just had a manual comealong to pull those off?

JA: Oh yeah.

AA: Did the weather cooperate with you?

JA: Oh, it was beautiful, we had a great time.

AA: Just camped out there for a few days?

JA: Yeah, just camped out there with it.

AA: How long did it take you to pull those engines?

JA: Oh think we were up there a couple of days. That's about it.

AA: Where did you say the sand bar was?

JA: It is opposite Ft, Wainwright about, they used to line up between hospital and somethin' on the ridge behind there to know where it was at. Channels have all changed, everything's grown now you can hardly find it, there's hardly anything left. I'm gonna have to go.

AA: Okay.

40:45

JA: It is always strange, people look at these pictures and say oh what an adventure that was, what an adventure this was, nope, it was just another day's work.

AA: Well it seems like an adventure to a lot of people to who spend their life behind a desk.

JA: Oh I suppose, yeah, yeah. Oh yeah. That's Judy there and things are coming up.

AA: What a -- about what year is this - can you tell?

JA: Hmmmm. You know I think -- well I brought it back into Metro Field and had 'em dropped -- but uh - when I bought the boat in '69. Yeah.

AA: And you bought the boat for this job?

31:37

JA: Oh yeah, I was using a lake boat - 14 footer - and I could see this wouldn't work to well. So I called my tax man and asked him if I could buy a river boat for salvage work. And he said absolutely. So I went down to Compeau's - they were located on Cushman Street then -- told 'em my fine story and said I would like to get a 20 footer. Bob looked at me and said you know family and this stuff that you are doin' and he says a 24 doesn't cost that much more and I think you would be happier and a 33 Evenrude. \$2,100 in those days. The last engine I bought, the outboard for the boat, was \$5,600 (laughs). I got clean up today - after how many years -- 69 and now - so what's that, I'm on my third engine and I am up to a 50 horse Mercury now.

AA: When was the last time you took the boat out?

JA: Oh, didn't go out year 'cause of the way I was feeling but the year before we went out a several of times.

AA: Tanana is kinda tricky in a boat - isn't it?

JA: It was just -- you gotta learn how to watch a bit and even then you go aground now and then. We like to go down river a ways - there is some clear water streams that come in - and the -- it's got a good place to catch Pike - they are not too big --but it is a lot of fun - get out of town. The kids just practically grew up in that boat, picnic time. Gosh - I would work all day long, come home, and we wanna go and have a picnic, okay, load 'er up. Kept it right on the river near the house - worked out nicely.

AA: And you're over here off the Chena so you've got easy.

JA: We did then - yeah was right next to -- Fouts' Landing, yeah, we just kept it there. Get it up vertical, sit it on the mount on some planks, garbage, shift everything over to the other side and take it off.

AA: What did one of those engines weight?

JA: About 3,000 pounds, that's what we figured it at anyhow. There's the other side going up.

AA: Nobody was hurt when they --

JA: Oh no, no. See the wing damage, hit a bunch of trees, he actually landed in the slough, and then slid up on this bar and we thought about it for a while and maybe we could repair it or somethin' but I didn't know the back was twisted where the fuselage was. So that was impossible.

34:30

JA: There she is.

AA: Some of these slides are really faded there we got the helicopter.

JA: There's the helicopter, yep.

AA: And I think -- I think this picture I flipped it so it would be oriented right -- I think in this picture you can see the engines. There it is originally and there's one where it's sideways -- you can see -- how much was helicopter rental in those days?

JA: You know they gave a pretty good deal because they were actually doin' a test flight on there -- after they got the repairs and I think it ran me about \$600. It was a real bargain.

AA: Oh, I meant to ask ya, that uh - you had the picture of the plane from Minto Lake and you said that came in by helicopter but they dropped the wings?

JA: Yeah.

AA: Were the wings repairable after they dropped 'em - and where did they drop 'em?

JA: Oh I don't know where they dropped them - somewhere on the way in they hit some birch trees. Yeah, they were repaired. The plane went outside after that.

AA: Did they -- he hit 'em when they were flying? - or did he -- ?

JA: Just pulled the pin and let them drop. They got to swinging around so bad underneath he couldn't control his machine.

AA: Okay. That wasn't quite a chinook.

JA: There we go -- both engines -- let's see -- oh that is just a picture from the top of the hanger at Metro Field.

AA: There is not a hanger out there -- there wasn't a tower, it was just a hanger?

JA: Just a hanger, yeah. Air North owned it -- then they had the classroom on top - we rented part of it for the school - which was good - the students got to work on all kinds of things - see action going on and help with the airplanes a bit with the mechanics for Air North. It was a real good set up in a way in a way. Too crowded though.

36:22

AA: How did that all come about – you know, with the school, the borough - did you apply for the job or word of mouth?

JA: Oh, it was silly. I had just gotten back from the states with Judy and I was thinking - here I am fresh married with a pregnant wife - no money and no job. And I ran into an old friend from Wien's - who was teaching at the school - name of Ed Phelps. And Ed said you know I would like to go off and go fishing for about a month, I'm tired - of this for a bit - why don't you take this, it's only 4 hours a day -- well that worked out fine. So, I took the job - thinking that was the biggest joke in the world - me being a school teacher. Well about a month or so goes by and Ed shows up and he says you know I hear this that the salmon are running at Chitina I think I will go down there, why don't you keep job - you need it more than I do. So that is how I ended up with the job - full time. Yeah, quite a guy.

AA: How many years did you teach there?

JA: Oh, 4 1/2 or 5 years - something like that. Yeah, uh, yeah the borough started it - it was the North Star Borough School of Aviation. One guy, Walt, I can't think of his last name right off, Walt, Walt, it 'ill come to me later – kinda got vocational education goin' here and he was in charge of it. Then the next thing you know the built Hutchinson and the University took everything over and it is still going.

AA: Hutchinson. Is it named after Jim Hutchinson?

JA: Jim Hutchinson - yes. Oh yeah.

AA: Was it good years there at the school?

JA: Oh, I enjoyed it, I enjoyed teaching but it finally got a little bit - I kinda got burned out. Those 4 1/2 years - I didn't get a single vacation all that time, just week-ends.

AA: Did school run year around?

JA: Yeah, one class wouldn't be leaving and another coming in. It's a one year program - one of the few one year. But yeah, I enjoyed it - but finally I was just oh boy – getting' bad tempered - was time to go.

AA: No breaks at all and –

JA: The only way you got a break – there was 2 of us teaching. Bob Richardson was the other fella and we would kinda make a deal where he would take it for a week so I could get a week off and I'd do the same for him but that was the only actual time off that we had.

AA: Do you stay in contact with any of the students?

39:08

JA: They show up pretty regularly, yeah, in fact, Terry who is working out here now is one of them. It was a mixture of high school students and people on the Manpower Development Training Act -- adults. And some of those fellows figured out the answer - they were getting more money than I was. Thought we were doing pretty good - we were getting \$1,000 a month.

AA: That was good money back in those days.

JA: Wasn't bad at all - we just based it on what a lead man at Wien's got - plus so much a ticket you know and went from there. I'm sure other teachers made more - but it worked out for us.

AA: Not sure what that is.

JA: Oh that is 25 - yeah.

AA: Did you use your plane as a teaching tool for the students?

JA: Once in a while. In fact - we had an engine change due on mine out at the base and I gathered up oh half a dozen of the students and said why don't you come out here and I will pay you and you will get a little more experience and you can see what is going on and they all jumped for it and away we went. We changed the engine that night. Had it runnin' about 2-3 in the morning.

AA: Did you keep the B25 at Metro?

JA: Parked it there in the winter time.

AA: So what the other plane there that you owned out there?

JA: That was a Learstar but that was at International. Then it went outside and Don traded it off - I think to get into the DC6's. There I am after a fresh paint job on the old girl. That was the Antique 5 - painted it on the ramp at International.

AA: That was the B25?

JA: Yeah, yeah. All clean and shiny.

AA: That's you?

JA: That's me. I probably weighed about a 180 pounds in those days, lean and mean. You know it's strange, still doesn't matter what I put on in clothes I'm a walking shambles (laughs).

41:22

AA: Well you painted the whole plane.

JA: Well just the fuselage - wing and prop tips and that stuff, yeah. The wings were still aluminum.

AA: Was there a reason to paint the plane?

JA: No just - Don decided we ought to paint it - it would look better - so we painted it.

AA: Painting can be a pretty expensive job, can't it?

JA: Oh - wasn't so much then - just cleaned it up grabbed a bunch of DuPont enamel and had at it.

AA: I'm glad you identified yourself or I wouldn't have recognized you. Of course the only pictures I have seen of you about have been where you got coveralls on, and parks

JA: There is one there where I am all dressed up - Las Vegas - that's my Dad. He came down to see how things were going.

AA: Okay.

JA: Yep. Well Pop as long as you are here how about giving me a hand. He says nope - you don't work on cats and I don't work on airplanes (laughs).

AA: Did your Dad spend his whole life in Alaska?

JA: No he was raised up Spokane over Seattle and he came to Alaska I think somewhere in probably the late 20's - no - yeah, it would have been the late 20's, yeah. He was in one of - at the University when it was very, very small - he went to school out there for a year. And I wanna say '27 but I am not real sure. I asked him why did you come to Alaska Pop - oh I had this big Essex car running around Seattle and the word got out that the Revenues were after me - so it was time to leave - so we did - ended up at Ferry, I think, down there trapping and carrying on. And he met Mom there and came to town and went to work for the FE Company.

AA: Miner most of his life?

JA: No, no, heavy equipment of sorts and then see - there was pictures of him driving the ole 60 horse gas cats when they were building the Davidson ditch. And let's see him and Mom got married in '32- at the old Chatanika FE Camp. Then, of course, he did a little mining there for a while - I think basically was FE Company and did some mining about 1939 'cause I was a little kid and we were at Pine Creek on the Upper Chena. I remember a few things about that - like backing my tricycle into a hornets nest. Don't

want to forget that one - and let's see - then was back to town and of course the war came along. Went to work as engineers and moved to Seward for a year or two, there was an equipment shop down there.
44:22

AA: what is surprising to me is that they toted a tricycles all the way up to Pine Creek.

J: Just threw 'er on the sled, just went in with cat train, you can still see the trail going up there.

AA: Is that on Chena Hot Springs Rd or off -- ?

JA: Basically just up the Chena River - just off to the side of the road.

AA: How did he do mining up there?

JA: Well he made enough to buy a house in Fairbanks. Little log place on 8th, just off Cowles Street on 8th - and uh - then he went to Seward - probably would have stayed in Seward if it wasn't for that house - that was first house Mom and Dad had owned and they came back to Fairbanks. He worked out on base - engineers and heavy equipment shop for some years - and went off on his own - clearing land for homesteaders with an old D-8 cat.

AA: Around Fairbanks?

JA: Yeah. Prices were high. Badger Road, Farmers Loop, Chena Hot Springs - pretty tough at \$20 an hour. Furnished the fuel, the cat, the operator, oh yeah.

45:42

AA: That plane looks nice with that paint job?

JA: Yeah - I wish I would have gotten the ladder out of the picture though.

AA: Was this at International?

JA: Yes - that is International - what we called it the East Ramp then. Parallels the road, Airport Road. That is PB4Y's at sunset. And there they are all lined up.

AA: Those are all 25's.

JA: Uh huh.

AA: I can't tell which one is yours - is any of those yours?

JA: Yeah - the first one - with the red tails.

AA: Yeah - it is white okay.

JA: The next one was #1 - I forget who owned it - and the 7 was our other airplane, we got it on contract about a year later - or Don did. I fixed it up - got it put back together and they were flying it too. That was a hardnosed one. It had 6 fifty caliber machine guns mounted in the nose - originally - two gun packs on each side - '50 's again. You can imagine the fire power came out of that when it was scrapping away.

47:07

AA: Were these World War II Bombers?

JA: Yeah, yeah, Mitchells.

AA: So you owned the 7 too?

JA: Yeah - we bought the 7 and 5 all at the same time. But the 7 had been just sittin' - only 1 airplane on the contract - so parts got robbed off of it - but managed to get enough parts pulled together to put it back in service. And that is Dale Griggs in front of Red Dodge's airplane. Briggs - Dale Briggs - We were together for about a year. He was one of the students also. And when he got out he went wandering off and he was up playing helicopter mechanic out of Prudhoe or up that way somewhere and something went wrong and he got flipped out of the machine and got killed.

AA: Oh No - he got thrown out of the helicopter?

JA: Yeah, about a year after we parted company. He was a good hand.

AA: So he was working for you guys?

JA: For me -me and Don - yeah -Arrow Retardant Company.

AA: Was this - when he got thrown out of the helicopter - was this up when they were doing exploration up there?

JA: Just startin' to get going, bit of pipeline work, yeah, doin' everything.

AA: That's a shame.

JA: Sure was. There's our Learstar.

AA: Okay.

JA: Don's sittin' in front of it. It was a Loadstar or L18 - they called it - then you put a longer nose on it and some other modifications and it just fast airplane - comfortable. At one time it belong to Becket Corporation. And we got it and gutted it out - put in different seats and everything for the smoke jumpers.

48:56

AA: What's the advantage in putting on longer nose on it? Aerodynamics?

JA: Aerodynamics - yeah -yeah

49.04

AA: What other modifications were done to it?

JA: Oh there was - several things - there was a tail incident, change in sail, alot of the fairings were changed to smooth things out -- just to cleaned it up in general

AA: No engines or anything?

JA: No, same engines, Wright 1820's.

AA: And that was a smoke jumpers plane?

JA: Yeah - we used it for a couple of years.

AA: Do you remember who your pilots were for that?

JA: Don pretty much flew that, smoke jumpers love it - they said boy - that thing would get down slow - was like stepping off a chair, everything, he said that was fine - but then they wanted the DC 3, it held more people.

49.41

AA: Gilbertson was a Wien employee at some point?

JA: Oh yeah, he flew for Wiens for quite a few years, yeah, he was one of the Captains.

AA: I heard the name through the years - I just wasn't sure if I was confusing it with his kids with stuff my Dad had said.

JA: No, Don was there for quite a while.

AA: That 's a beautiful plane.

JA: It was, it was somthin' else.

50:05

JA: Bought it down in Florida then flew it up here. Flew it to Dallas, then we got, there was 2 or 3 door sizes - so we put in a larger door size so you could get a drum through. Had to be big enough to put a 50 gallon drum through it. And I left Don in Dallas - let's see – Then I drove a pick up with a bunch of the parts a pieces in it. Yeah.

AA: You went down as a partner? Like a financial partner or as a mechanic, or both?

JA: I was both.

AA: Both.

JA: Yes. I was never mentioned as partner, I was always 'my mechanic'. Pilot mentality again.

AA: Yeah. I know how those pilots are.

JA: When we bought this off the Caroline Aircraft Company, we're up getting payment you know - getting the money ready and everything and one of the other fellows was I think Carl Boyes his name was, he says, oh by the way, there's a sales tax here, this 'n that, and God, it was goin' to be about \$3,000. And he said, unless you have some sort of tax exempt -- I was sitting there - I said - yeah - I got one after the flood we had and right here, whips out a card and reads off NSB67 - that's it. And put it away. Well we're leavin' and Don says – where'd you get that tax exempt thing? What's that all about? I said actually it's my building permit code. There was no exemption. He looked at me, couple of days he was kinda wondering what was going on. Well, I knew the state of Florida wasn't goin' to see that money, I figured, we might as well keep it – so that's the way she went.

51:58

JA: Oh that was a nice flying machine, it really was. Ah the C82, it belong to Northern Air Cargo and I would go over there and heat it up for them when they came to Fairbanks and take care of it a bit.

AA: This was the years you after you worked at the school?

JA: Oh yeah, yeah, somewhere in there. Some of it was while I was working at the school too.

52.24 –

AA: This was when things were slow because of the pipeline you were --?

JA: Oh no, this is the reason, when the pipeline fellows truckers drivers got ahold of me I had the heaters because I keep two of 'em mounted up and working to take care of these guys when they came

through town. Bobby Sholton's operation. He had two of them, that's what started Northern Air Cargo, which is still in operation flying jets.

52.49

AA: And fish and fuel?

JA: Oh everything you can. The 82's have been gone for a long time. The FAA decided they were too old. Political move, again.

AA: Did these planes have a big rear hatch or was it a side door?

JA: Oh, no, no, they had a gate that open up - swing gate back then. Oh yeah they hauled pick-ups, 'n trucks, anything and everything.

53.26

JA: And that's Cliff Everts Travelair, quite a machine.

AA: Was that out there when you were warming up?

JA: Yeah I don't know where that was parked at at that time. It was probably right around somewhere on the East Ramp - you might say. Oh, let's see, I don't know where that was at but you can see the props bent, one of the landing gears is broke. It was an Aurora Air Service airplane. You can see where the wheel is sitting back her, ski stuff, well the landing gear broke just above the attach bolts at the wheel and it fell down on the ski. But it did go up on its tip forward enough to get the prop. So went up there and stuck a new gear up into it and a new prop, put 'er together and and flew it back to town.

54.26

AA: This was somewhere - this wasn't near town?

JA: No, this was up some river somewhere. I don't know exactly where it was, couldn't tell you now. Don't know what year it was.

AA: Does it look other than the gear and prop?

JA: No it didn't hurt a thing. Nope.

AA: Wintertime again.

JA: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. The same thing. And that was on the Salcha River you can see the aileron hanging down. Came around a corner, it wouldn't make it and he caught a wing.

AA: Just on a tree?

JA: Yeah, yeah, and it skidded around and came to a halt. Tore the floats up badly though on the rocks. So went up and fixed that up. I think the plane belonged Rod Christenson.

55.18.

AA: How did you fix the floats ?

JA: Uh boy. Well there might be another picture or two but we put a bunch of logs down, winched her up on the beach and kinda lifted it up a little bit somehow. And then just crawled under there and got outa twist drill and started patching it up with aluminum and some kind of gooey/tapey material that I got off somebody. And then, sent the word back in that have the float belly ready when we lands and get 'er right out of the water immediately because I knew it wasn't going to last, it was enough to get off and that was about it. Put a new aileron on, fixed up the wing tip a bit and away he went.

56.08.

JA: And it really got interesting because the guy that was going to fly it out - were on these logs you know, then turned around ,headed for the water, and he put the coal to it and it accelerated way more than he thought. And he actually trying to turn and he actually went into the trees on the other side of the river and then swung loose and then took off. But it was close.

56.31

AA: Were these with that gooey tape did you put aluminum patches over it or?

JA: Oh, tried everything, yeah, patches and glue and this tape sticking in some of the holes - then a patch over that. Oh yeah.

AA: What did you do for the aileron?

JA: Oh, we had a spare one somebody'd borrowed, and stuck that on.

AA: These guys all had radios they could call out for help?

JA: Oh yeah, yeah.

57.06

AA: That one is tore up pretty good.

JA: Yeah and you can see how sunk the float is and that is in the shallows. Oh yeah, that's one I hadn't thought about in years.

AA: Here is one I was looking at carefully when I was scanning the slides. I still see you jeep out here.

JA: No that is a boom truck, it's a dodge. 6 by 6, yeah, yeah that went in the river right a Fouts, when down and picked it up. Was upside down so that's the way we picked 'er up. Took it over and parked it.

57:41

AA: Do you remember whose plane it was?

JA: It was one of the Fouts airplanes. 57 November - I think, yeah, 57. Was one of their Supercubs.

AA: Do you recognize that fellow standing there with something in his hand?

JA: That is a can of beer, and I'm not sure.

58.04

AA: I think there is quite a few pictures of this.

JA: Oh yeah, that's when we first went up.

AA: So you guys actually recovered fishing boats too.

JA: Oh yeah, got some boats over to it so we could get it hooked up and screw around.

AA: So this was in the middle of the river.

JA: Middle of the Chena, yeah. Oh yeah.

58.25

AA: And you got the floats off it somehow.

JA: Either that or they were torn off. I'm not sure.

AA: The plane looks pretty mangled.

JA: Oh yeah, oh yeah.

AA: Nobody was hurt?

JA: 32 Kilo. Hmmm. I don't remember which one was, yeah, no nobody got hurt. Nobody go killed anyhow.

AA: It is actually 5357N.

JA: No, N would be the first letter.

AA: Is this the first letter here?

58:58

JA: Yeah. Maybe -- turn it right side up, that would yeah, that read okay -- beats me, yeah 32 Kilo. I don't remember which one. Yeah, now let's see now. That's Roger Burns. That's the guy who wrecked it and this fellow with the hook, that's Roy Peterson. He was my partner in the Taylorcraft before he lost his hand. Yeah, in fact I said Roger, how did you wreck this airplane? And he says, well, I was scratchin'd my butt instead of flyin'. It was in the fall, he took off, little frost on the wings, got off too soon, little slow and she fell back in. Oh yeah, yeah.

AA: How submerged was the plane when you got to it?

JA: About like that.

AA: Was it resting on the bottom?

JA: Yeah - I think so, yeah, yeah.

AA: Was it - did you rebuild the plane?

JA: No, no, the Fouts rebuilt their own. I just went down and helped 'em get it out. Yeah.

01:00:25. He's the fella that did most of the rebuilding. Oh yeah. Probably took the wings and everything off right there, oh yeah, tools are out, that is what is goin' on.

AA: Are the Fouts an old time family of Fairbanks?

JA: They showed up somewhere late 60's - I guess. No, must have been before because they were working at Wiens when I go there in '63, so they come up somewhere in the 50's from ...

AA: Were they mechanics or pilots?

JA: Mechanics, yeah. One son went off to fly for Western Airlines, and one of 'em still lives here, yeah.

01:01:19

JA: Art Wolson's 180 at Beaver Creek. He tried to take off going up and he got into some deep sand and away she went, little too heavy, little too hot and sand drug him down. I'm standing on a bank, it's actually down in the little swale, that airplane is sitting out here now on floats.

AA: It is out here at your shop?

JA: Yeah, it's right outside, you can see it through the window. Yeah, yeah. In fact - uh - wing tip damage, let's see -- yeah -- Fouts, yeah, Fouts. Young Sigh flew me up there and when we both worked to get it out and then he flew it back in town.

AA: Whereabouts on Beaver Creek was it? Do ya remember?

JA: Herman', Herman's Bar. This old German trapper and he had a little bit of a runway there, and a lot of people used to go up there and then go fishing. Well, it's just this old, part of an old gravel bar, or slough, and just across the river from it is quite a little bluff, and people that didn't like to take off that way - they were leery of that, they would take off away from the river and then they would get in this sand. A lot of planes wrecked up there because of that. But if you took off towards the bluff it didn't matter, you just picked up and turned a bit - you were in good shape. And it was better runway there, rocks and all.

01.02.56

JA: And there use to be strips all over the place and places to land all over Alaska. I mean more, more than today?

JA: Well, all the, all the old miners had a runway of some sort. And a lot of it was just pure skis in the winter and floats in the summer on the rivers. Oh yeah, Herman's Bar.

AA: I was just reading that, there is this gigantic encyclopedic 2 volume set called Alaska Aviation History written by Stevens, Robert Stevens, and I was readin' about when Wiens and them first got started.

JA: Oh yeah.

AA: And people would have to build runways and as soon as they started figuring out the benefits of air travel they would build runways.

JA: They would - the villages built their own ,oh yeah.

AA: And I would get in on Dad building his runway out there on the lake, and that not - you just don't build a runway overnight.

JA: Oh no. No -- there's a lot of work involved. Oh yeah.

01:03:59

AA: Did you pull the engine off that - I see you have a tripod there?

JA: No - that is how we lifted it up, put the landing gear back in. One of those is ripped out, got everything bolted back together. One of the toughest part of that job was pulling it out of that little

swale it was in. We had to come over about a 6 foot bank, come along off knock something else out there. Cranked away, pushed, heaved and tossed. Had quite a time.

1.04.32

AA: So when he was takin' off hit that sand did he get pulled off and then ...?

JA: Basically yeah. It pulled 'im over. Yeah. There we are comin' up, you can see, yeah that's the way looked. You know, the silliest thing, we got that out of there and about a week later -another airplane went in the same spot but it went upside down. At the exact same spot.

AA: Were there a number of mechanics doing these in field recoveries back then or you involved with that one that went over on it's, that flipped over.

JA: No I wasn't involved with that. There were some others, yeah. Oh yeah. And a lot of the owners did themselves, they'd get some friends and go out there and somebody else more airplanes go out in a bunch together and get it squared away. One dealer walked in, run into was over near Eagle, these guys called up and they'd wrecked or one said that he'd tore the gear out and they wanted me to go work on it and the situation, I couldn't go, I was too busy doin' something. So I told 'em, I says, well, no, whatcya gotta do is get some cables and clamps, some nuts and bolts and a bunch of tin and get over there and get 'er lifted up. Doesn't sound like it's too bad and then anchor you know and do this and that, I says I think you can make out, you guys are pretty handy.

1.05.5

JA: Well, three or four went by and they called up and says what you told us worked perfectly. We got 'er back into town and to this day I don't how they did it. But they did 'er. Yeah, that's kinda a bum picture, yeah, yeah. We are getting ropes hung out and everything.

AA: Who's that in the picture?

JA: That's SigH Fouts.

AA: Any idea what year this is?

JA: Uh - I couldn't say , somewhere in the 80's.

AA: '80s. What am I lookin' at here.

JA: Uh, I don't know what to tell you there, I have no idea. Maybe it is a cache over by Herman's house. That could be --

AA: Looks taller than it is because it ...

JA: Yeah it's possible. Yeah. There, and he still had small wheels on it and everything, yeah. But we patched and patched and one engine mount was broke and we gotta, Sigh Sigh got a come-along in there and wrapped the cables around and tightened 'er up, and that worked, tin on the tail.

01:07:14

AA: Is that some of the sand on the runway?

JA: Yeah that's what we are sitting in there.

AA: That's what kinda got him in trouble.

JA: Yeah - that is what got him into trouble, yeah.

AA: Pretty rugged terrain there.

JA: Oh yeah, it is, yes, yes.

AA: 'Cuz you drive into Nome Creek now on that US Creek Road and get into Beaver Creek there.

JA: Oh yeah.

AA: It's not that rugged ...

JA: It's quite a ways down from this one.

AA: Those are the White Mountains huh?

JA: Yeah, yeah.

AA: Yeah, me and my brothers are talking about floating that but we'd have to take out on Victoria Creek.

JA: Oh yeah. Wing patched up - tail patched, oh yeah, 1 cowl flap missing because we had the handle of the come-along stickin' thru there. Oh yeah. That's the plane he took me up there in there, that's the same one, 6 3 Kilo.

AA: Oh the one ...

JA: The one that was in the water. Now I tell ya, I can't tell you this is before or after the water deal. Same airplane.

01:08:14

AA: Generally, what was easier repairs, winter time jobs or summer time?

JA: It varied.

AA: It varied.

JA: With amount of damage, yeah, and the terrain and everything. Summers are better, of course, you weren't fighting the weather so much and heating everything and cold all the time. I think I told you when we worked on Wiens Beaver above Arctic Village; the warmest we saw was 35 below in the middle of the day. And you have to be more careful or something will go wrong. Hurt yourself, freeze yourself, do something.

AA: Was that one of the colder ...?

JA: that was one of the coldest ones yeah. Well there was one over on the Noatak River, with single Otter and we flew in there every day and came back out and it was 30-40 below over there all the time too.

01:09:07

AA: It wasn't like you could fly heaters in with you there like the big Massey-Ferguson heaters or somethin'.

JA: No that we had the big Herman Nelson's BT 400, you could get them into a 180 and, let's see, that's what we had over on, yeah, we had one with us up on the Arctic Village job and we had one over on the Noatak job too.

AA: This is the series of pictures I think that said Horace Black question mark?

JA: Yeah. Horace Black's Airplane, he fell through the ice. That's one of the earlier Discovery Boats right behind him.

AA: Oh yeah? So this must be on the Chena.

JA: Yeah it was on the Chena. Yeah he called up and tell me his troubles and I said well I am teaching school , I'll take these boys over and show 'em how we get a plane out of the ice. So we gathered up just about everybody up at school and ran over there, made a tripod, lifted it up, carried on. Good training for the boys. Oh yeah.

AA: They probably don't get that kind of experience in the school anymore.

JA: Oh not like that because it is not on a runway for one thing. They do a pretty good job though - those fellows are coming out alright.

01:10:24

AA: I think I told you I have some history with Horace had history with Horace before he passed away 'cuz him and his son myself are best friends.

JA: Oh yeah - there we are tripodding up.

AA: Most of these are - there ...

JA: And there's off to the side of the hole.

AA: Was it early in the year? I mean why would the ice cave in? Well, you got that, the ice drops, you got that shore ice there, and then the - the ice on the river itself will sometimes drop down and there will be a ledge like this, you just think it is a little bank of snow, but you poke a hole in it and there's water is right there. And the snow is such that lays over it so you can't tell. The water runs underneath it. There's an air gap, snow and it stays thawed. Yeah.

01:11:25 Oh yes, everybody's workin' away.

AA: Everybody is wearing surplus army coats.

JA: Oh sure. That was the thing.

AA: Let me know if you think Horace is in any of these pictures.

JA: I don't think so because we were trying to figure out some and I says Geez Horace and I need a ladder. So while he went to get the ladder we got the airplane outta the hole and got it up.

AA: There we go. Yep - back to the Taylorcraft. Fine ole machine. I took my mother-in-law up in the airplane once. Oh that woman, she was a cantankerous thing. And we went down and looked around looked a moose and come back, I said I generally bounce a little bit when I land here, don't worry about it and there was a picture of that plane just before it hit with a 3 wheels about 6 inches off the ground. It was the best landing I ever made. Never did figure that one out. First thing we rode through that big mud hole right in front of us there, just blew water all over the place.

AA: I think that's that whole slide carousel.

JA: Oh my. Sure enough. Well there's more somewhere then.

AA: More slides?

JA: I'll have to think on that. Yeah, let me take a leak and have a cigarette [end of recording].