

OH-3032, PART 1, CLAUDE TYRELL, 4-19-14, WY IN FLIGHT

JUNGE: [00:00:00] OK. Mighty nice of your wife to make this tea for us. Now, I'll put something on the front end of this. This is not -- what this is going to do is go into the archives, so probably no newspaper's going to get ahold of this. It will be heard by somebody down the road, like your kids or your grandkids, if you have them. They're -- they're going to maybe listen to it. Are you OK with that light?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: OK. And, so, it's -- it's not going to be for publication right away, but what we would like to do -- what Sue Castaneda would like to do, she's the one that sent me on this project -- is to do an online museum, where you've got pictures of aviators in Wyoming, pictures of people who are in the military, maybe even pictures of their planes, if they have pictures, and maybe a 30-second excerpt from an interview, maybe a minute excerpt, whatever it would take [00:01:00] to make the point. And that's pretty much it, so a person, instead of having to go all the way to Cheyenne, could just go online and, you know, see something about Claude Tyrell and they can go, "Oh, let's see what Claude has to say about flying." And that's

the purpose of this, to gather this history before it's kaput. So, you understand that?

C. TYRELL: Yep.

JUNGE: OK, so -- and you can just let her go, because we probably won't use most of this. We probably won't use most of this. I hate to tell you that --

C. TYRELL: Oh, yeah.

JUNGE: Somebody will be able to listen to it in the future, but it can't all go on there, as far as I know. OK, so today is the -- are you sure you're all right with that light, now?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: OK.

B. TYRELL: Am I going to bother you clanging in the background?

JUNGE: No, no, that's fine. I think we're going to catch his words OK.

B. TYRELL: OK.

JUNGE: Today is the 19th of April, 2014. My name is Mark Junge and I'm in the home of Bonnie and Claude [00:02:00] Tyrell, at -- what is the address of this place?

C. TYRELL: Nine-five-nine Highway 16, in Worland.

JUNGE: Just east of Worland?

C. TYRELL: Yep.

JUNGE: OK. And Claude -- we're going to talk to Claude about his career in aviation. Were you in the military, too, Claude?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, Marine Corps. I was in the third Marine Air Wing. Supposedly a helicopter mechanic, but they stuck me aboard ship right after I got out of what schooling we got, you know, and so I was mainly pushing helicopters around and whatever, didn't do a lot of work on them. Spent 18 months aboard USS Princeton, which is a helicopter carrier.

JUNGE: OK. Let's go back a step. When and where were you born?

C. TYRELL: In Torrington, Wyoming.

JUNGE: What was the date?

C. TYRELL: Oh, December 5th of 1939, [00:03:00] they tell me.

JUNGE: Two years before Pearl Harbor. They tell you.

C. TYRELL: Yeah, I don't remember. (laughter)

JUNGE: Who were your parents?

C. TYRELL: My father was Eugene Arthur Tyrell, and my mother was Mildred Upton. They were from south of Lusk. My dad lived on a ranch about 10 miles south of Lusk. My mother was from Prairie Center.

JUNGE: What did they do?

C. TYRELL: My -- You know, they were raised on the ranches or farms, and then about the time right after I was born, I

think, you know, it was a just, young couple and he was doing whatever he found, but shortly after I was born, the war started [00:04:00] and they spent several years in Denver. He worked in -- the war, you know, in a big factory there for the war, till after the -- about the time -- till the war was over, and they moved back to Torrington. They'd been in Torrington before that, and moved back to Torrington. And we were in Torrington till about I was in the 7th grade, and they, in the meantime, we'd spent a year or two on my granddad's ranch, but were moved up to Lusk -- my folks bought the [Locker?] plant there, and I went to high school or whatever, in Lusk.

JUNGE: That's where you went to school?

C. TYRELL: Yeah. Torrington in grade school, and Lusk in 7th, 8th grade and through high school.

JUNGE: Graduated from Lusk High School? [00:05:00]

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: Wasn't very big, was it?

C. TYRELL: No, it actually became Niobrara County High School a couple years, I guess -- I graduated in '57 -- in about '55 or something, I think, it became Niobrara County.

JUNGE: So --

C. TYRELL: They brought Manville High School in, and --

JUNGE: Not much to Manville.

C. TYRELL: No, but you know, those kids were used to -- and Manville kids. And then they had to come to Lusk, and there were some noses out of joint, you know, from, you know how that is.

JUNGE: I might add that Bonnie is here, so if you hear any background noise, Bonnie is in the kitchen and she's preparing some food, right?

B. TYRELL: Yep.

JUNGE: For supper.

B. TYRELL: Making some pickled eggs to put on the shelf.

JUNGE: Can I have a steak, medium rare?

B. TYRELL: (laughs) I'll have to thaw it out for you.

JUNGE: OK, OK. Anyway, I was going to ask you --
[00:06:00] oh, you know, I did a couple interviews years and years ago with some people (inaudible) [Pfeiffers?]. The Pfeiffers were in that community of Lusk very early on, and they knew a lot about [Gyra?] College. Remember Gyra? Gyra College?

B. TYRELL: Gyra.

C. TYRELL: Gyra.

JUNGE: Gyra. Is that right?

B. TYRELL: Yes.

JUNGE: Yeah, we went up there to foundations of the place. It used to be a thriving community, but I guess they found out they couldn't make a living. (laughs)

B. TYRELL: No.

JUNGE: It was during those dry farming years when people would say all you had to do was turn up the soil -- take the plow, turn up the soil, and Mother Nature would do the rest. And they found out it wasn't true.

C. TYRELL: Yeah. Some years were better than other. That's where they figured they had to, maybe grow a crop one years and leave it fallow, summer fallow it the next, and kind of, conserve the moisture for the next crop, and...

JUNGE: When you graduated from high school, Claude, what did -- what were your plans?

C. TYRELL: [00:07:00] I don't know if I had a lot of plans. (laughs)

JUNGE: Were you a wild kid?

C. TYRELL: Nope, I'm just a nice little kid.

JUNGE: Is that right, Bonnie?

B. TYRELL: I was the wild one. He ran around with wild kids, but he wasn't.

JUNGE: OK. Well, you didn't have any plans. You just sort of drifted until somebody caught up with you?

C. TYRELL: Yeah. A friend and I who -- well, Yellowstone, I can remember... They were doing a lot of construction up there, and we thought we'd go to Yellowstone and get a job for the summer in construction or something, and we got up there and there were huge lines of people who want to work in Yellowstone for the summer, too. And experienced people, you know? Not a couple high school kids. So we had a friend in Salt Lake and we went to Salt Lake. I remember we -- I had a camper on my pickup, and we spent about two nights in Salt Lake, [00:08:00] and it was hot. It just never cooled off. And so we had a friend in California, the Los Angeles area, so we went out there and we moved in with him, and I was out there for about nine months, and decided that I wasn't really a California person.

JUNGE: What made you think that?

C. TYRELL: You know, I can't imagine what the Los Angeles area is now, but you know, it was terrible then. And that would've been in '58, 1958.

JUNGE: And it was nowhere near the size it is now.

C. TYRELL: Oh, no.

JUNGE: The traffic was bad, freeways.

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: So, what -- you decided you'd get out, then.

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: And what did you do?

C. TYRELL: Came back, and worked on a ranch for [00:09:00] -- basically for a few months, and then I joined the Marine Corps. And then I spent three years in the Marine Corps, and when I got out of the Marine Corps, my folks had bought a little ranch south of Manville, and so I went out there and started [batching?] and Bonnie and I were dating, and we got married shortly after that. So we were out there about three years, I think. And we left there and worked on a couple of ranches, and I decided -- then I decided I wanted to fly, and the uranium mine -- we end up down by Jeffrey City, right on the Sweetwater River on a ranch, a big ranch [00:10:00]. I got to go on one of the last big roundups where we just took a roundup wagon and horses, and it was 50 miles between fences out there, then. They just made a big circle, like in the old days. Anyway, I thought those miners were making a lot of money, so I left the ranch and went to work there to mine, and the third year I mined, I actually made some pretty good money.

JUNGE: Now, what do you mean by, in those days, pretty good money? What does that mean?

C. TYRELL: Well, we -- like, \$3.60 an hour was, probably, really good wages. And we were making \$5 an hour on top of

that. It was a gift they'll pay you. The more you did, the more you got paid. They measured how much earth you moved, you know, when you drilled and blasted, and then they'd go in every two weeks and measure, and if you did x amount more than [00:11:00] what they thought was a day's work, you got paid more, and --

JUNGE: What'd they call it? [Gyppo?] pay?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: What does that mean?

C. TYRELL: Well, it's basically -- as far as I know, gyppo is just when you get paid on top of your regular salary for -- and, you know, and... So you plan things out, and it was eight hours from -- it was all you could work, you know, you couldn't work any overtime underground, so you went in there and you would just -- worked as hard as you could, and you didn't eat lunch until you blasted, and the smoke drove you out. Then you had a bite of lunch, and went back in and went back to work. And we worked, you know, like three headings at one time.

JUNGE: Now tell -- yeah, these terms -- yeah, I don't understand these terms. So what did you actually do? Were you a miner?

C. TYRELL: Yes.

JUNGE: OK.

B. TYRELL: An underground miner.

JUNGE: An underground miner.

C. TYRELL: OK. [00:12:00]

JUNGE: OK, so go ahead and describe your job. What would you do?

C. TYRELL: Well, as a miner, we were working -- yeah, that's rather complicated. But they would drive a drift in, a tunnel in. And then -- underneath the ore. And then, when they got to a place, they would branch off there and then they would drive a raise up into the ore, go straight up into the -- and then they would [timber?] that raise and put a ladder in it. And then from there, you would start blasting and working your way into the ore, and --

JUNGE: Straight up, or horizontally?

C. TYRELL: Well, then you would be level with the ore, and so then you would go on that level. And then it varied quite a bit from there, but you would, say, go in 300 feet, and then they would say, "Well, we need to go a tunnel to the left, and a tunnel to the right," or a drift -- they would proper-- call them, a drift... [00:13:00] And so then you would have, all of a sudden, three headings to work. So, three headings to work, you could have -- your partner could be slushing or -- the muck --

JUNGE: Mucking the --

C. TYRELL: -- where you'd blasted, that ground there you -- he could slice it out while you were drilling over here, and then you would drill and have a load, and then, you know, we used a lot of -- we used some fuse and some electric caps, and we would go and blast, and then you would go back out from -- and then he could start mucking on that one, and you could drill on the other one, or whatever.

JUNGE: Now, did you say electric caps?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: What are those?

C. TYRELL: Well, the blasting caps. Yeah, you would hook those up, you know, to a little wire you had run back there, hook them all up, and they went off milliseconds apart. And then you had a [00:14:00] big electric box that you went and pulled a -- you know, after you got out of your [raze?], and pulled a handle and then they would all go off. Or, if we were using fuses, why, then you let your fuse, while you're standing there with a little [spitter?] cord, and the -- and that timed your round how it went out, so it would pull the ground.

JUNGE: Was this dangerous work?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, I got a slab on my head and broke a leg and just broke a foot bone. The a little bone in the back of your leg --

JUNGE: Fibula?

C. TYRELL: Broke that --

JUNGE: Tibia? Fibula?

C. TYRELL: -- bone there, and they never really found it, so -- until some 30 years later, I [had a?] helicopter wreck, and they (laughs) x-rayed my leg and said, "Oh, you look pretty good [00:15:00] except that old break!" And I say, "In never broke a leg," and they said, "Oh yes, you have. "No I haven't!" They said, "Well, look at this." And I knew what had happened. (laughter)

JUNGE: Well, now, anybody that works underground -- and this is a uranium mine, right?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: Near Jeffrey City?

C. TYRELL: Uh-huh.

JUNGE: Path-- was it Pathfinder?

C. TYRELL: No. We worked at the -- at Golden Goose, and three years I worked -- and I worked for the Phelps Dodge and Western Nuclear and three different companies in three years there.

JUNGE: Did you know Charles Jeffrey, the guy that funded -- I think it was Western Nuclear, didn't he?

C. TYRELL: It could be, I don't know.

JUNGE: Jeffrey City was named for him. Yeah. Well, when you're working underground with uranium, aren't you even thinking about the fact that you could get exposed to radiation?

C. TYRELL: No, people don't think about that kind of stuff. It's pretty low-grade, although the stuff underground [00:16:00] usually was a little better grade than maybe in the open pit, you know, they'd go after some stuff that was a little higher, but...

JUNGE: Never affected you?

B. TYRELL: (laughs) Well...

JUNGE: Well? What do you mean, "Well," Bonnie? (laughter)
You won't say, right? OK.

B. TYRELL: No, he's fine.

JUNGE: OK, so you worked in the uranium mine as an underground miner for awhile. Then what?

C. TYRELL: Well, part of my reason there was because I wanted to go to flight school, and --

JUNGE: Why? Why were you interested in aviation? Where does that come into play?

C. TYRELL: You know, I -- my gran-- my--

B. TYRELL: Step-grandfather.

C. TYRELL: Yeah. My dad's father, Walter S. [Happy?] Terrell. And, anyway, when my grandmother died and he remarried

[00:17:00] this lady, who was Jane [Patterson?} and one of the original Ninety-Nines.

JUNGE: What are those?

C. TYRELL: The Ninety-Nines was the first women -- Amelia Earhart belonged, and whatever, in that time.

B. TYRELL: I think Amelia Earhart started the ninety-nines.

JUNGE: Did she?

C. TYRELL: She was -- but there were -- wasn't much more than 99 female pilots in the country at that time. They called it the Ninety-Nines. Even to a commercial pilot rating. That might've had some influence, you know, but then, when I was aboard ship and around there, I don't know, you know, I mean -- helicopter, I got flying the helicopters a little, and I decided that pilots had to do a lot better than mechanics, because the pilots come out, little pimply-faced kids, and got in the airplanes, and [00:18:00] this poor sergeant, they all had to salute him, and he went up and tore up the machinery and come back and strutted of and left, and you had to pick up his -- you know, fix his -- airpl-- and I thought, "Well, that looks better to be a pilot than a mechanic."

JUNGE: (laughs) That's good. But, wait a minute. You have to train to be a pilot. You can't just sit -- hop in a helicopter and start flying it, right?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, so I -- but that's the reason I was mining underground, was to make some money so I could go to flight school. And I went to Lubbock, Texas. [Milesy Gibson?] was running the strangest little spraying school in the world, and I went from zero time down there to 200 -- a little over 200 hours.

JUNGE: That's where you learned to fly?

R: Yeah, and --

JUNGE: Who taught you how to fly?

C. TYRELL: Well, we had several [00:19:00] instructors, including Mr. Gibson there. He was running a spraying business. He was really a strange guy, but he -- we was out of Lubbock there, and our airstrips were right in the middle of a cotton patch, or whatever, and -- you know, 6, 7, 800-foot-long, some of our strips. We flew J-3s, PA-11s, we had one 90-horse PA-18, and 150-horse P-18. And then, because we had to have something to do a little instrument hood work for, you had a Cessna 150 and a Tri-Pacer, but I communicated with him and he made me a real deal. It was like, I give 32 or \$3600 for a little over 200 hours, and that was -- got me a flight instructor, commercial license [00:20:00], and a flight instructor, and... Most of our schooling was in spraying, or whatever.

JUNGE: Did you do instrument, where you had to -- did you do an instrument rating?

C. TYRELL: No. You just had to have x amount -- yeah, commercial license, you know. You had to be able to make a 180-degree turn, and a few things.

JUNGE: OK. So you say that was kind of a strange outfit?

C. TYRELL: It was definitely. Mr. Gibson was definitely a character himself. He had some definite ideas. He sprayed a lot with J-3's and whatever. And he believed in putting in a quart of gas, and you know, 15 gallons of spray, and whatever. He had a lot of pictures of him where he ran out of gas and they had to bring him gas, and stuff, but...
(laughter)

JUNGE: Well now, did you -- tell me about your solo. Everybody's got [00:21:00] a good memory of their first solo flight.

C. TYRELL: Well, Lubbock is a windy country, and we got down there and flew every day regardless, what. So I had at least 15 hours before I soloed, because of the wind and whatever, and the fact that this guy's here for 200 hours, it doesn't make any difference, you know? So it was -- and, wasn't a really big thing to me. I mean, you know, it was a little bit of an excitement, but it wasn't like if it was a -- you know, some of these eight hour students who

solo in eight hours or 10 hours, because I had twice what -
- that, or a lot of 10 hours is really normal, and I had
15, so I don't remember that as being too --

JUNGE: Too special? Did you go to ground school?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, we had our own little ground school there.

[00:22:00] All -- that is a little school, because he had
a -- oh, I don't know, whether he had 15 students or
something, in various stages, going through that school.
It was a crop dusting, school primarily. And so some of
them were coming just for a few weeks to run through his
crop dusting part, and some of us were there to build a
little time, and whatever.

JUNGE: Tell me about crop dusting, now. What does it -- do
you have any experiences that are memorable?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, a few. I don't know, we -- I was fortunate.

I worked for -- Bob [Buten?] was a sprayer out of
Torrington, and he's dead now. He worked for Leonard
[Teaman?] [00:23:00]. Leonard Teaman was not a pilot, but
he owned a couple Cubs out of Torrington. Had his own
landing strip, so when I got done with flight school, I
came back to Lusk, and I worked at a service station for
awhile, but I got on with -- at the airport, at Lusk, and
then Leonard Teaman called me, and I sprayed a little for
him and Bob Buten. They were competitors, but Bob worked

for Leonard, and so they got along, and so I flew for both of them a little bit. And Leonard had two beautiful little Super Cubs. And anyway, one morning, [00:24:00] he'd hired a kid, you know, and I can't think of his name... But anyway, I was spraying one morning and I got done and I come back and I'd fly down from Lusk in a Super Cub and get in the spraying Cub, and we did a lot of work over by Wheatland or around Torrington, and Leonard's wife came out and the other pilot's wife and said he hadn't shown up, and -- where he was supposed to, and I knew where he was spraying, and maybe I ought to go look. So I took my Super Cub up there and he had crashed and burned. They never did figure out why, but so I found him out there in a wheat field, and landed there and went up to look at the airplane, you know, and he was -- he never got out of the airplane. He was well cooked. He had left that morning with full [00:25:00] fuel tanks and had a load of spray, and just went out there and hit the ground.

JUNGE: No indication of what happened? What do you suppose happened? Could be anything, I suppose.

C. TYRELL: He could've went to sleep. They said that he'd been having trouble sleeping, and you know, it's just hard to say. They -- he was so well-cooked that, as I remember, they couldn't hardly find any blood in him, you know, to

really see -- I think he had maybe a little of his wife's tranquilizer in him.

JUNGE: What -- is spraying dangerous? [00:26:00]

C. TYRELL: I think there's more dangerous flying. I always thought that hunting coyotes in a fixed wing is more dangerous than spraying. When I left there, and the next spraying I did was here with a German Ag Cat, which is the safest, probably, airplane to spray in. They were the first airplane built to crash. Grumman designed an airplane with a 40-[G?] cockpit, and around the pilot is a big, heavy tubing that's 40-G, and they can -- they'll -- they can just disintegrate that airplane, and the pilot's sitting in that cage, and so...

JUNGE: Kind of like a -- like a drag racer, almost.

C. TYRELL: Yeah. About the same theory. And that was the first airplane that was really built, you know, [00:27:00] to crash, you might say. They would throw the top wing -- the fuel's in the top wing. That was one thing when that Cub crashed, is he hit a wingtip first. The wing comes down -- if you know how that Super Cub -- the wing tank sits there, and there's a hose that comes down right by the wing rut. Comes own and down by the windshield, well, it jerks that hose off, [doses?] the pilot good, before he ever quit moving, and then, of course, with the -- and if

they -- if you get a (inaudible), then that's -- no doubt what happened to him. But the Ag Cat, well they just come in and hit like that, and through the top wing, and all the fuel off. It just left. And so we flew the Grummon Ag Cats here, [00:28:00] except for a short time when we had a Stearman a couple times. That's what we sprayed with out of Worland here. Great airplanes, and --

JUNGE: You were at Lubbock --

C. TYRELL: -- we had a few forced landings, but they're just would take really good care of you.

JUNGE: Is that the one that people flew that -- when they wear -- wore leather helmets and goggles and --

C. TYRELL: The Stearman, yeah, it's a World War II trainer.

JUNGE: Jeez. God. Did you ever have any problems spraying?

C. TYRELL: I'm not sure. I've had a couple forced landings that were easily pilot-induced, you know. (laughs)

JUNGE: What? (laughs) Give me an example.

C. TYRELL: Usually, if you have a problem with an airplane anymore, it's, you know, it's probably the pilot's fault one way or another. He probably should've done a better pre-flight, or out in a little more fuel, [00:29:00] or found himself a better place to land, or, you know what I'm saying.

JUNGE: So this was your fault, in other words. What did you fail to do? (laughs)

C. TYRELL: Well, one time, in the process here, I got my aircraft mechanic's license, and I liked to do most of my own maintenance for years, till we got too busy, but and -- I had a -- the arm on my carburetor come loose, and as the mechanic, I should've caught that, but -- it was -- the arm is stuck on there, and the screw there that held the arm, and it got a little loose, and I took off from -- that's about 7,000 foot or above on the mountain up here.

[00:30:00] That's where a lot of our spraying was, was on the Bighorn Mountain spraying [sagebrush?] stuff. And so, it was a piece of -- not really even county road, it was a strip up there. There's forest here and stuff, but there's a piece of private land right in there. But anyway, I took off there and I got over (inaudible) and I got about two-thirds of my takeoff ro-- well, of course I'm adding throttle more gently than what you might think because it was so dusty. I was trying to keep the dust off, but -- and I get about two-thirds my strip used up, and I 'm still adding a little throttle, and I don't quite get all my throttle in, and when I come -- but I got my throttle forward, but I'm not getting the power I think I should have, and I come back a little bit, [00:31:00] and push

forward again, and I lost a little more power, but now I'm running out of runway, and so it -- and of course, at the end of the runway was a piece of road, and it had a nice curve, a big sharp curve there, headed down the mountain. However, I had enough speed to get in the air, because I was on a mountain, and the terrain was all falling away from me. So I made a turn, and of course there was a couple of big S-turns in the road right there because it was kind of steep, and I knew I was in a bunch of trouble. I dump my load of chemical, which was basically 24D, which killed a lot of sagebrush along the road. And after about three S-turns, the road straightened out there, and I got her back on the road, and there was a curve right there, and so I'm trying to land around that curve, going downhill yet, too, you know. [00:32:00] And except for one really little reflector pole, you know, on a steel post that they'd put up there, and hit that, and punctured the leading edge of the bottom wing, but I got us stopped, and pulled a piece of cowling and looked in there, and find out what was wrong, and tightened it up with a screwdriver and went back to work.

JUNGE: You went back to work?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: What about that hole in your wing?

C. TYRELL: Oh, well, I had four wings, you know. It's -- well, you know, a -- that was another thing about a biplane, you know, but -- I mean, we would hit a sage grouse or something, you know, like that, and put a big dent in your leading edge skin, because that's a big bird, at, you know -- [00:33:00] at 115, 120 miles an hour. They'd put quite a dent in there, and you'd just fly till you could patch it up, and then, you know, when the season's over, repair, fancy repair, but --

JUNGE: You lost all your 24D, but you still had gas?

C. TYRELL: Oh yeah, well my -- of course, I had a truck up there that we were loading off of, so we just went back and landed and put on another load.

JUNGE: What was the other incident you were talking about? Didn't you say you had a couple?

C. TYRELL: Yeah. Well, I -- I'd rather not even say. That was even dumber, yet. When I picked a road that was right close to where we was spraying. Now that -- this is a 600-horse Ag Cat, with a big radial engine in there.

JUNGE: Ag Cat, you called them? Agriculture Cat, is that what it was, [00:34:00] A-G-C-A-T?

C. TYRELL: A-G-C-A-T. And it was... But anyway, I pick this road, and we come in, and we set the truck up, and in the morning I come in and looked at that road, and there was

one piece of fence that kind of come in like that, and I thought, "Boy, that's tighter than what I thought when I --" You know, it always looks different when you're driving, because I had a 42-foot wingspan. And so I landed, and when I took off, with a load -- put a load on and took off, and where that fence came in -- it came in where my wingtip was, and I broke about 12 wood posts and bent over, you know 10 or 12 steel posts. It started pulling the airplane aside, and I -- if I'd have pulled the power, it'd just pulled me on around, and [00:35:00] I'd go into the [bar pit?] and into the fence, you know?

JUNGE: Pulled the power, mean increased it, or decrea--

C. TYRELL: Yeah, decreased the power.

JUNGE: Decreased it?

C. TYRELL: It would've pulled me in there, so I just kept the power in, and tore up fence posts and whatever else till that old beast got off the ground. [Like I said?], they were great airplanes.

JUNGE: You got off the ground?

C. TYRELL: Oh yeah. I went up and sprayed off that load, and called my crew, and we were over by Pinedale. It's kind of a good -- a good story, because in Pinedale, there was a bunch of Limies, a bunch of British guys, and they were doing a high altitude test on a turbine helicopter over

there. They came over there because of the high elevation and the mountains off there, and they were trying to get some certification, you know, for the FAA, for high elevations, or something. [00:36:00] So, I come in there, and there's a half a dozen of them, and they're standing around doing nothing because, you know, there was nothing to do -- to work on that helicopter at the moment, and they come over and looked at that, and I had a pretty good dent in the wing that time. I didn't want to go right back to spraying, so we checked out the spar, because it went clear into the spar, and checked out the wing rut, and checked the airplane over pretty good, and I decided I could fly it home. And so they grabbed a piece of tin, and some pop rivets, and we put a piece of skin over the top of that and taped around the edge, and they even got some yellow paint out, and painted the wing for me (laughs). So we flew back over to here and [00:37:00] made a more permanent repair on it.

JUNGE: But you were -- you had taken out all these fence posts, and you still flew the thing?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: So, when you were taking these fence posts out, did you then gain altitude, at that point?

C. TYRELL: Well, yeah. Of course, the road's a little higher, and the wingtip on that Ag-Cat's probably up to the middle of your chest, so you're hitting the top of those posts, but you also have two wings up there high that are in the good air, not in the fence posts, and this over here, wing's trying to fly, too.

JUNGE: (laughs) That's a hell of a story.

C. TYRELL: And, you know, the airplanes were just a great design, because you have good, big tires with really good brakes and stuff, so if it starts pulling you that way, you can counteract it with brakes, and with great [00:38:00] (inaudible), see, on all four wings, so you can try to pick that wing up, too, while you're picking up a little more speed.

JUNGE: Why don't they continue to use biplanes for spray?

C. TYRELL: They do.

JUNGE: Oh, because -- what's his name -- Tom Woodward -- showed me -- what were they -- we called one a Thrush. One was a smaller Thrush and one was a bigger Thrush. And these things have huge reciprocated engines, I guess they call them, right? In front. And I guess it seems like they would -- like a -- this one you're talking about, a Stearman?

C. TYRELL: No.

JUNGE: Or, what are you talking about?

C. TYRELL: The Ag Cat.

JUNGE: Oh, the Ag Cat. The Ag Cat. Is it built like that, like those Thrushes? I mean, except that it has four wings. Do they have big -- a lot of power?

C. TYRELL: Yeah. It had the 600-horsepower with the big radial engine, and then they put extra big blades on them.

[00:39:00] Get the picture of the -- me and the Ag Cat off the wall.

B. TYRELL: What about the time you hit the bird that was [sitting in?] the tree?

JUNGE: Yeah, you didn't tell me about that.

C. TYRELL: (laughs)

JUNGE: Oh, those are chimes. Yeah.

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: OK, so she's going to get this picture to show us.

C. TYRELL: Yeah, show you what -- well, I've got [of course?] out here somewhere. When I retired, I took all my pictures off the wall, off the office, you know, and I've got them -- most of them just up in the attic --

JUNGE: Well, while she's getting that, tell me about that bird incident?

C. TYRELL: Oh, you'd have to ask her.

JUNGE: Oh here she comes, never mind. She's going to show me this picture first.

B. TYRELL: Back to the airport with the big ding in his [00:40:00] wing, and they said, "What happened?" And he said, "I hit a bird," and they said, "Made that big of a ding?" And he said, "Well, he was sitting in a tree."
(laughter) That's the story I heard, anyway.

JUNGE: Oh, OK. This is a -- what is this?

C. TYRELL: That's an Ag-Cat.

JUNGE: Oh OK, so it looks like the Thrush that I saw today, except it's got four wings. And you call it four wings.
It's a biplane?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: OK. Is it fabric-covered?

C. TYRELL: No.

JUNGE: Steel?

C. TYRELL: The --

JUNGE: Or aluminum?

C. TYRELL: The bottom of the wings were fabric on these. But sometimes they put aluminum back on. They put fabric on them because it was easier to repair. That's the -- probably the same airplane.

JUNGE: Is that you?

C. TYRELL: Yes.

B. TYRELL: He was young!

C. TYRELL: That was a couple years before I [00:41:00] -- I haven't shaved since 1975 or something.

JUNGE: He was -- Bonnie, a good-looking guy!

B. TYRELL: That he was.

JUNGE: Did you --

B. TYRELL: Made my little heart go pitter-pat.

JUNGE: Is that right? Well, it wasn't because he was a pilot, because he wasn't a pilot at that time.

B. TYRELL: No, he was a rancher and he was underground, and then he was in the air, and I had a hard time just keeping him on the level.

JUNGE: Did you worry about him being in the air?

B. TYRELL: Yes. Just like you worry about him underground. You don't think about it unless they're not home when they're supposed to be, or you get a strange call in the middle of the night when they're gone, or something. Then you wonder. You don't let yourself stew about it the rest of the time.

JUNGE: So this bird in the tree situation, that's as far as it goes? [00:42:00]

B. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: He hit the tree, or he hit the bird in the tree?

B. TYRELL: Now, that was his story to the people at the airport. (laughter) I just heard it secondhand.

JUNGE: What happened, actually?

C. TYRELL: You know, I -- I'm having trouble recalling that particular one. We replaced -- oh yeah, I remember what that one was.

B. TYRELL: Have to ask your kids.

C. TYRELL: No, I was -- we were spraying right about orchards up on the mountain, and they come out with these GPS systems, those new GPS systems, to guide you when you're spraying. And they're accurate to within a foot or so. So they try to tell you that you're -- when you're right in the center of the swath, and you know, you have to have exactly the [00:43:00] same heading, because if you get off a foot, it starts... Yeah.

JUNGE: It starts losing it.

C. TYRELL: Well, we hadn't had those very long, and they're very frustrating, and I wasn't as young anymore as maybe, some of the people that were used to them. But anyway, we were up there spraying some really rough ground at about 8,000 foot, 7,500, and I made a turn on this end, and my GPS is saying, "da-de-da-de-da." Well, I had to dive down -- we're on the mountain, so there's a big ridge here. I had to dive down here, and there would be the area where

you started to spray, and sprayed up there, and up this hill and turn. Well, on this ridge was a big pile of rocks about 30 foot high. And I came around and was starting to line up on there, [00:44:00] and I'm looking at this damn GPS, and my right wing hit those rocks on that hill. There was, you know, kind of a kebang, and so I got on, straightened out there, and sprayed my swath, and turned around and sprayed till my load was empty, and came back and landed at the truck. That was another time when it didn't look very good on that leading edge of the wing. I don't know how many times we repaired those leading edges of the wing.

JUNGE: I work for Bob [Eisley?] at Bighorn Airways.

C. TYRELL: Oh, yeah.

JUNGE: Do you know Bob?

C. TYRELL: Oh, yeah.

JUNGE: Back in '69, I was teaching at Sheridan College, and I was -- I needed a summer job, and they needed flaggers. You know, they have GPS now, but in those days they had flaggers, and I was a flagger. [00:45:00] And we -- one night, we stayed up late. We were flying out of Rawlins, and we were staying at the Travelodge. You know where that is? And across the street was the Golden Spike, and there were go-go dancers there --

B. TYRELL: Oh!

JUNGE: -- and drinks. And we had too much beer and too much fun, and it wasn't about till 1:30 a.m. or so that we got back to the motel room. And of course Bob got up at, I don't know, somewhere between 3:00 and 4:00 in the morning so he could get his [ag?] fuel, and his 24D, or his diesel, all this stuff. And we figured -- well, someone said, "We might as well not go to sleep, because, you know, it's harder on you if you do go to sleep and have to get up in a couple hours." And I thought, nah, I can do this. So I got up and I was tired, and all I remember is that I got so tired is that I just, kind of, put my flag down and went to sleep under a sagebrush, my head in the sand. [00:46:00] And the next thing I knew, Bob was buzzing me. And I could see him looking at me, looking down at me, as that Aero Commander went by, and he was going like this, with his fist.

C. TYRELL: He'd be flying a snow.

JUNGE: A Snow.

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: A Snow Commander, not an Aero. I'm sorry. But we were -- you know, we had to pace off so many feet, or so many steps, to the next area that would be the swath. And I just saw today -- Tom Woodward showed me this device that

you put on your wing. It's called an automatic flagger.

And so I had him take a picture of me next to that, because I said, "This is how things have changed. I was the flagger, physically, on the ground.

C. TYRELL: Yeah. We still use -- you know, we had the automatic flaggers, but we started out using the flaggers like you. In fact, Bob and I sprayed together. If we get a big job or something... [00:47:00] So...

B. TYRELL: How about the time you can in dragging all the telephone wires and electric --

C. TYRELL: That wasn't me. (laughs) We were spraying north of Casper, and we -- [pan-Irvine?].

JUNGE: Pan-Irvine?

C. TYRELL: Bob had bought a big ranch up there, and wanted to spray a whole bunch of it. And I was the only guy that would get him a guarantee on killing the sagebrush, and so, anyway, we had some just wonderful spraying big long runs, you know, two or three miles. We sprayed one day and there was a power line in the middle, that sucker. And it was an old one, you know, with how the poles get [00:48:00] all, just, brown and... Anyway, sometime the next day, after jumping that thing, or going under them for a day and a half, I just, between two poles, and just flew right through that wire. And now, these are old poles, but those

old spray planes are heavy with a bunch of chemical. Had a lot of power. Jerked down about six power poles, and hit them, and, you know, all this shit's going on, and I never quit spraying, you know, no use -- I was busy flying the airplane, and then everything, well... Eventually the power line -- [decided I'd?] just drop down a little, I pulled up a little, you know, from startling. Just dropped down a little [00:49:00] and continued spraying, and about that time, I got a big old jerk and the airplane goes, "Pkkkk" (laughs). It broke off a big piece, and with a biplane on the end stretch that holds up the top wing, the wire was draped across there, hanging off both sides. When I come down it finally grabbed a piece of sagebrush, or something. Grabbed and jerked, and the airplane swung around like that.

JUNGE: (laughs) Wouldn't that --

C. TYRELL: Fortunately, that power line hadn't been used for years. It was running out to an oil [PAC?] somewhere, you know, where they were no longer using it, so I didn't get stuck with --

JUNGE: Paying the bill. (laughs)

C. TYRELL: Yeah, paying the bill for a bunch of poles, or --

JUNGE: Do you have any stories about Bob flying?

C. TYRELL: Bob Eisley? I don't know, Bob and I sprayed together, and, of course, he flew that old Snow. They were really good airplanes [00:50:00] and I flew the Ag-Cat. So it's like Ford and Chevy people, you know, and I'll tell you what, I could -- those biplanes will out-turn any of them, you know? Of course, they have more drag. There's good things and bad things about anything, you know. But Bob and I were spraying together and we -- we'd had some big, long runs, and we finally end up where we were making pretty short runs, so we were close to each other, and that old Snow was a lot faster than my biplane, but I could out-turn him. And I -- we was both just working as hard as we could. I would just turn that thing as hard as I could to get back in the field, because he'd be right on my tail, you know, and I could get away a from him a little bit, but not far. He'd turn that old Snow around, and then he'd catch up with me [00:51:00] going across the field, and I'd -- I could out-turn him a little and get a little land, but... Fortunately, we sprayed together on a couple jobs out there, but I don't know if I have, really, any big tales I can tell on him.

JUNGE: You know, he wont -- he didn't want to talk. When I first called him up, I said, "Bob, I worked for you 45 years ago. Can we do an interview?" "Yeah..." I said, "I

want to hear about your adventures, some of your accidents." He says, "Oh, no. No, I'm not going to tell you about them. " Well, I was in Sheridan the other day and I talked to them, and he says, "I'd rather not." And I said, "Well, can I tell you one that I heard?" He says, "Yeah, go ahead, I'll tell you if it's true or not." And I said, well, "They tell me that you were making regular passes under a power line, and this power line had an S-curve in it, and you had forgotten there was an S-curve, and you caught a wingtip and drove the plane into the ground." And he says, "Well," he said, "That wasn't quite true." [00:52:00] He said, "It wasn't an S-curve, it was a right angle." (laughs) But he caught a wingtip and it drove that plane right into the ground. I don't know whether that's where he got the scar on his face, or not. Did you ever hear that story about him?

C. TYRELL: No.

JUNGE: He also destroyed a helicopter.

C. TYRELL: I was going to say, I remember a -- I'd just started flying the Jet Ranger, and when he got some snow, they put snow [baffles?] on him, which kept the snow from clogging up your air intake, because there was a big air filter there. And if -- without the snow deflectors, why, the snow would just pack in there. And I think that's what

happened to him on that Jet Ranger. And his engine just quit, you know, and he put it on the -- he was over a county road there, [00:53:00] and he did pretty good, considering, because he -- you're -- now you've lost power, and if you're not real high, you need to get forward motion to get rid of, you know. And so you lost power and you try to slow down, and whatever, and all of a sudden you're on the ground, and you're skidding along, there, with no directional control, really, to speak of.

JUNGE: That's what he was talking about.

C. TYRELL: Yeah. I remember that.

JUNGE: He said it would've been worse, but, you know, it slid -- it was a muddy road, so it slid a little bit. But I guess it finally toppled, and he said it just --

C. TYRELL: Yeah, I think, when the gear finally folded on it.

JUNGE: Yeah. It just --

C. TYRELL: -- when it skids, and

JUNGE: -- it just ate itself to pieces, I guess.

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: Yeah. You flown on a lot of -- you've probably landed on a lot of weird places, right? Well, I mean --

C. TYRELL: We -- you know, 100 coyotes were [00:54:00] ... Over 5,000 hours. I don't remember in the six wing. And in the earlier years, we used to pick up a lot of the coyotes we

shot. And especially in eastern Wyoming, well I -- we'd shoot a pair of coyotes and try to find a place to land, so where you was where you was, you know, and you had to try to find land -- a place to land, so... See, we started getting a pretty good eye. At first, it was just really hard to judge the ground -- how rough it was, you know. But after awhile, you -- with experience, well, you got to know how rough that was, because...

JUNGE: Did you have any adventures hunting the coyotes?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, we did. I would tell a story with one -- with Leonard Johnson. We were hunting -- [00:55:00] he was a district supervisor for the Fish and Wildlife Service, and he was living in Lusk, and I used to -- I flew with him several thousand hours, anyway. And he's a great, big guy. And he's pretty tall, but he's no skinny fella, either. And I don't know how familiar you are with Super Cubs, but --

JUNGE: I've seen them, that's about all.

C. TYRELL: They're not real big, and --

JUNGE: And I've been in one.

C. TYRELL: -- in the winter, when you put on your big, heavy coats, and stuff, why, and he'd -- he just took up the whole backseat. He was shoulder to shoulder, and then we'd have two shotguns, and shotgun shells, and anyway... But

we're way north of Lusk up there, north of the Cheyenne River, and there's no -- there's hardly any ranches, or anything, up there. [00:56:00]

JUNGE: That's national grasslands, isn't it?

C. TYRELL: I don't think we were quite up that far.

JUNGE: Oh, OK. Powder River Basin, anyway.

C. TYRELL: Anyway, we were just put-put-putting along, and the -- no wind, and it's 10-, 15-below, and so the air is like a brick, you know, just really solid, and it takes no power to keep the old Super Cub in the air, so we're just put-put-putting along, and we see this bobcat. And at that time, we used to shoot bobcats. A couple years after that, they quit shooting bobcats from the airplane, but... So, the cat was not too concerned, and we're just out in the middle of prairie. There's a little [draw?] there. And so I didn't even add any power to speak of, I just made a nice big turn and come around, and, you know, watched him [00:57:00] and made a nice, slow approach on him, and bang-bang. And I added power, and he goes, ka-pop-pop-pop and I pulled the throttle back, and it smoothed out. But I'm clear back to my put-put, you know, RPM, and I decide to add a little more, and pop-pop-pop. And so Leonard said, "I'd sure like to land and pick up that cat." And I said, "I'd like to land and drain my sump." I figured that I'd

picked up a little water somewhere in our fuel. And so we come around, and I looked, and there was a lot of snow on the ground, and I come around and I looked and I found this place of -- the grass. It's kind of the sand grass, which is the taller grass, but it's picking up. [00:58:00] But it didn't look too bad. So I come around, and went to land, and I touched down about right, right where that grass was. The problem was, I hadn't realized that the ground was falling away. It was downhill a little, and the snow got deeper, fast. And as soon as we touched down, the tail came up. Wanted -- you know, dragged through the deep snow. And I jammed the throttle forward and pulled back on the stick, and I got full power. It just come in screaming. And so -- and with the big weight in the back and both of us leaning back. And so the tail was way up here, and we come to a stop, and the tail just went like that.

JUNGE: Just flattened out.

C. TYRELL: It was just stopped [short?]. So we got out [00:59:00] and he said, "Well, I'll go get that cat." And I said, "Well, I'll try to kick some trail out of here." We got out, and the snow was crusted about -- you know, six inches, you could kick it and break it and throw it off, and then underneath it there was that much soft snow, and

try to kick that out of the way. So I'm making this big trail, and Leonard -- he starts out and I said, "Better take a shotgun." "No." I said, "You'd better take a shotgun, that sucker will get up and run off." "No, he's dead." So I'm working away and working away and building me a runway through that snow, and pretty soon he comes back, but no bobcat. "No, I got over there and he just got up and run off." And so, you know, I told him, "I told you so!" You know. So we kicked around there [01:00:00] and got us a bigger -- you know, a spot where that snow would -- got all the crusted snow out of there and made us a little landing strip, and got the airplane back up on top of the ridge, and got in there. And of course with the 15- below, or whatever, that air -- you know, that old Super Cub come right off the ground, and away we went. But if -- [I thought?] if we'd have turned that sucker over on its back, we would've had no idea where the nearest ranch was. It could've been 15 or 20 miles, and we wouldn't have known which way to walk, there. It's just -- that's a country that's no --

JUNGE: Whereabouts was that?

C. TYRELL: It was way north of the Cheyenne River. Red Bird, you know, towards Newcastle.

JUNGE: Did you let the -- you didn't try to find the bobcat?

C. TYRELL: Oh, I'm sure we did. [01:01:00] I remember we flew around there and -- I drained my sump when we got out. I drained my sump, and hit the gas -- the gas hit the -- there was a little bit of water in there. I drained it a couple times and we took off and everything's great. We flew around for a couple more hours and killed a coyote or two, and all of a sudden, I can't add power again. And all I can do is just get that low RPM, you know, that we can just put-put along at, but... And so we went into Newcastle and got some gasoline. I drained my sump again. And we bought some heat, you know, like you'd put in your gas line, and it's just alcohol. Especially when you're on an airplane where you have sumps, I just go down and it goes right to the bottom right now, and you can open your drain and it comes right out. [01:02:00] I later found out that, you know, there's a little screen on your sediment bulb there in the bottom end, that water would accumulate right on top of that screen -- it's a real fine screen -- and keep the gasoline from flowing through there fast enough. I think there was a -- like a --

JUNGE: A sheet of ice, or something?

C. TYRELL: -- like some fuzz on that screen, too, that helped to hold that water on there. But like, when I landed and

took that, you know, and then you got full throttle. And then, you know, if we hadn't got full throttle in a bit --

B. TYRELL: You'd have been upside-down like you were upside-down on the mountain in the snow. Jack Clucas is someone you could talk to that's had a lot of experience. He's a coyote hunter, not a pilot, [01:03:00] but he's flown with a lot of pilots. A lot of experience.

JUNGE: Jack Lucas?

C. TYRELL: Clucas.

JUNGE: Clucas?

B. TYRELL: K-L-U-C-A-S.

C. TYRELL: C-L-U-C-A-S.

B. TYRELL: C-L-U, it's not K?

C. TYRELL: He's either in Greybull or Basin right now, I think.

JUNGE: And he was a -- he'd go along and he'd shoot the coyotes?

C. TYRELL: Yeah. He's a government trapper and Jack --

JUNGE: What about this ty-- you know, I'm sure glad Bonnie is here to remind you of all these little mishaps.

(laughs) What happened on this upside-down thing?

C. TYRELL: Oh, well, Ja-- I was hunting coyotes with Jack, and this was somewhere about -- towards the end of March. We got a big snowstorm, one of those real wet ones, I mean, it was just deep and wet. And we had a bunch of snow

[01:04:00] on top of our sumps on top -- you know, everywhere. We went out there and took our little snow shovels and pushed the snow off, but it was warm and melting, too, you know? There was water standing, and whatever. Anyway, the next morning, early, Jack called. Wanted to go coyote hunting, because we had all this snow, and --

JUNGE: Be easier to track.

C. TYRELL: Yeah, easier to track. So I went out and got my Super Cub and one tank was full. I'd flown a day or two before, about an hour, hour-and-a-half. So that tank was down. So I pulled the airplane over there and I killed that tank. The fuel selector was on the right tank, and just put the fuel in the left tank. Took off, went to Greybull, picked up Jack, and [01:05:00] we flew around the lower area and headed up for the mountain. And so we got up there about 9,000-foot elevation, and the snow's deep. We was flying right up a ridge, right on the edge of Boulder Basin, and I looked and my right tank was getting down. We'd flown about three hours. So I switched to the left tank. We flew on up the ridge. It seemed to me like quite awhile, but all of a sudden, the engine just quit. And I pulled the carburetor heat, and that didn't help. Pushed the throttle in and that didn't help, and changed

fuel tanks and that didn't help. Well, [we'd been just?] on the ridge -- there was a [01:06:00] big valley off to our left. I made a left turn towards there so we could descend, and I switched back to the right, which was not the thing to do, prob-- but I switched back to the left tank again, but the airplane wouldn't do nothing. It just... So, pretty soon, I knew we were getting down into a basin, and even if we got power, we couldn't climb out of there, and the snow was deep. Finally, off here, I saw the top of a fence post. There was about this much sticking out. The top of a fence post for a little depth perception, because everything was just -- it was, oh yeah, just white and the sun was shining. And I flared out and I was a little bit higher than I thought I was, but -- when the airplane stalled, just like that, you know, it was over on its back. [01:07:00] So, bang, we're on our back, and I picked up my spittoon -- I used to chew, and I had a spittoon in there (laughs) -- picked (inaudible) up right in my spittoon, opened up the side door, and Jack, he had a portable radio, fortunately, and he's just cool. He hadn't said anything, you know, from the time the engine quit, and Jack's not normally a silent person, or -- he would be, maybe, the one that would help you out with something, but he was watching. (laughter) But he didn't say anything.

So he kind of crawled out and said, "We need to pull the battery out. Last year when Bill [Blakeman?] [01:08:00] turned his Cub over, they were hunting coyotes." It was a different -- but, because he had turned the Cub over, the battery was in the middle of the fuselage in the back, so you take the battery out so all the acid doesn't run out. So we pulled the battery, and he called -- got on the radio, on the government channel, and talked to one of the trappers on the ground and told him that we were on the ground in Boulder Basin, and we could probably use a ride. (laughter) Well, of course, we were part of [Hawkins and Powers?]. They got a hold of Hawkins and Powers, and in about an hour or so, here comes a heli-- one of their helicopters, a Piston helicopter. Mike [Mayville?], if I remember, Mike was flying. Later, [01:09:00] Mike gave me some instruction when I started flying helicopters for him. Mike had come up, and we loaded up and I had no idea what was wrong with the airplane. It just quit. And the snow was crusted pretty good -- we could stand on top of it most time -- but they got us down there, and so that next weekend, a bunch of the Hawkins and Power guys took their snow machines up and took the wings off, and then they came up with a helicopter and pulled the airplane down. And it turns out that when they weren't up there, one of the guys

looked in the fuel tank, and the airplane's upside-down, and the Super Cub had this glass fuel gage -- it was about, you know, 10 inches long -- and he could see that it was half full of water. [01:10:00] What had happened is, when we'd got that real wet snow, it had run into our underground tanks through the fuel hole, and it went to the bottom, the -- we were sucking -- that was before we had a float on there, so I sucked right -- so what I did was sucked water right in there, which was another thing. If I'd have, when I got to Greybull at least, if I'd have sumped that tank, I'd have seen it was water instead of gasoline.

JUNGE: What do you mean by, "sumped the tank"?

C. TYRELL: There's [a sump in?] a low spot in the tank, and you, you know, you let a little out just to see what it is, if it's dirty or whatever, and it would've been water. But...

B. TYRELL: Why don't I go get a pizza? Then you could have pizza with this, and keep talking?

JUNGE: Oh my goodness, it's almost 6:00. [01:11:00] That's fine with me. Let me buy.

B. TYRELL: No.

JUNGE: No.

B. TYRELL: Would you eat pizza?

JUNGE: Would I? Yeah, of course!

B. TYRELL: What would you like?

JUNGE: Whatever you guys have is fine with me.

B. TYRELL: OK, I like everything on it.

JUNGE: I do too.

B. TYRELL: Super supreme. I will just call and order one.

JUNGE: I'm sorry, I just totally lost track of the time.

B. TYRELL: That's quite all right.

JUNGE: It's almost 6:00. What time do you folks normally
 eat?

B. TYRELL: Around 6:00. Six, 6:30, no big deal.

C. TYRELL: Jack used to call me and say, "This is our
 anniversary!" (laughter) Of that day. He remembers that
 quite well.

B. TYRELL: And Robert used to call in the morning, and he and I
 would chat. Robbie Orchard.

JUNGE: Oh, really?

C. TYRELL: We sprayed for Robbie, there, and -- or even down in
 that area. He'd call and see what the wind's doing, or
 whatever, because it's a long ways down there from here,
 when you... [01:12:00]

JUNGE: Yeah. Jack Clucas. Is that C-L-U-C -- Bonnie, is
 that C-L-U-C-A--

C. TYRELL: S.

B. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: A-S. That's an A. OK, Clucas.

B. TYRELL: Can't read my writing there.

JUNGE: Well, just that one little A. Yeah, when I went out there -- when was it yest-- God, it seems like forever, but I was out there yesterday morning, and drove up in my pickup truck, and it was blowing -- that sock was almost straight out, from the south to the north. And I got out and took some pictures of the Nowood International Airport sign. And then went on up the road and saw Rob, and after we were done with the interview, we came back to the airport and I took his picture there, and it was -- the thing was limp. Absolutely no air -- I mean, no wind. So that's how much it had changed, you know. But in this country, anything can happen, I suppose.

C. TYRELL: Well, [01:13:00] of course, spraying, we didn't need any -- you know, we couldn't handle over eight miles per hour wind, so it's all been real early in the morning, as you know from your flagging days.

JUNGE: Yeah. Because that -- it would lay down. Otherwise it would just -- went up into space --

C. TYRELL: Drifted off somewhere where you didn't want it.

JUNGE: Yeah. I was going to ask you -- did you know Dick Randall? From Rock Springs? He was a government trapper for a long time --

C. TYRELL: Oh yeah.

JUNGE: -- he said, "They called me Turncoat," because he said he went the other direction.

C. TYRELL: Yeah, he went to work for --

JUNGE: Defenders of wildlife.

C. TYRELL: They were --

JUNGE: And he told me that he was in a plane one ti-- he's been in a couple wrecks, and they had snow in one -- which probably saved their lives -- and then the other one, they shot the -- a hunter -- was it him? [01:14:00] They shot the prop.

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: And that brought them down real quick. Have you ever done that?

C. TYRELL: Not the prop. We've quit flying the Super Cubs, and we -- I bought a couple Arctic Terns. Great airplanes. Kenny [Dermiti?], who's passed on, was the government trapper. Lived just a mile up the road here. (inaudible) see him quite a bit, and he shot the wing strut. (laughs) Just hit that sucker dead center, you know, and so we're talking two or three feet, you know, and that 12-gauge put

a hole in there about the size of a half dollar, right through the center of it, which is -- you know, it makes you wonder -- see if that wing strut's going to hold together, you know? [01:15:00] Or let the wing go up, and so... We were only 10 or 15 miles from town, so we put-put-putted gently back to the airport, welded a patch on it, and --

JUNGE: If that strut would've gone, then what?

C. TYRELL: Well, the wing would've just -- that's the only thing keeping the wing from just going straight up. It has two s--

JUNGE: Has more than one strut, doesn't it?

C. TYRELL: There's two struts. The front one -- the wing would've -- the front of the wing would've just pitched up, and you'd have -- you wouldn't have had control, and you would've rolled over.

JUNGE: Yeah. Did you have to go -- you said you went back wherever you could to pick up the coyotes, because you said you got the bounty -- otherwise, you didn't get the bounty if you couldn't prove it?

C. TYRELL: No, they were the -- at that time -- this would be back in the '70s [01:16:00] when we did -- and the '80s, maybe early '80s, when we did a lot of that. The fur money went to the county. And the trappers were still being paid

by the county then, and they became paid by the state, then they became paid by the federal government, and...

B. TYRELL: Are you hungry?

C. TYRELL: -- it's quite a mess, but at that time, the county got the money, and the federal government was paying for the airplane. So it was really a boon to them. They were paying the trapper, but we were -- I think, in Niobrara County -- we were bringing in more than what they were paying the trapper for our furs. A lot of them we picked up with the airplane. A lot of them, we had, at that time, not real good radio communication, but radio communication or a loudspeaker, or notes. [01:17:00] We took like, your automatic flagger thing with the -- you know, the -- got that big -- looks like toilet paper, on the end piece of cardboard -- write a note to him, fly over him, throw it down, tell him where to go, and -- to find that coyote, or whatever. And we'd go hunting and figure he'd be back there, go over there, and if he's in the general area, then you could dive down, and then he'd know where to go and pick up the coyote.

JUNGE: I'll be darned. So you would drop this from the plane?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: Just a little note?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, with that big --

JUNGE: How would it drift to the ground? I mean, did you have to tie a rock around it, or...?

C. TYRELL: No, we'd add a little piece of that cardboard on, a piece of heavy cardboard, and then that streamer, which is like an automatic flag -- like, toilet paper, but it's tougher. [01:18:00] So you'd throw it out and the streamer comes out, and it comes down like that. So it's easy to see.

C. TYRELL: So the trapper would know where to go?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, well, he'd know where to pick up the note, and later, of course, we got a lot of radios, and whatever. One of the first years, Leonard -- Leonard Johnson -- we had to go to Cheyenne. I think he had a predator meeting there, so we hunted coyotes on the way down, and went to the county meeting, and then we come back towards Lusk, and out there north of Cheyenne a ways, we jumped a bunch of pups, the whole den of pups out there. And we killed like five of them pretty fast, and we landed, and Leonard, he pulls out his pocketknife, and those guys skin a lot of coyotes -- [01:19:00] can skin one in no time at all, because they just cut the legs a little, and turn them inside out, you know. So these were pups. So he skinned about five of them, and turned him inside out and threw

them in the baggage compartment. And we took off, and pretty soon he's going, you know. Pretty soon I'm going, "Fleas!" We had an airplane full of fleas. And that was the last coyotes that ever rode in there. Everything else, from then on, was tied to the strut outside. I've got pictures of, you know, like three coyotes on each side of the airplane. We'd land and --

JUNGE: God, I'd love to see that someday. That'd be a nice one to scan and put on the --

B. TYRELL: Yeah, well we can probably find you all kinds of pictures of him with his airplane and the helicopter [01:20:00] and all kinds of stuff. But it'll take a little while.

JUNGE: Yeah. I know how that goes. Do you have a lot of pictures?

B. TYRELL: I think we have quite a few, yeah. I don't know what you brought from Sky Aviation, or where you even put them. You don't either.

C. TYRELL: Some of them are probably in a box, you know?

B. TYRELL: In a box somewhere.

JUNGE: Did you -- so, you sprayed -- you -- food for coyotes. Did you ever do any wild horse roundup stuff?

C. TYRELL: With the helicopter.

JUNGE: You did? Well, tell me about that. I'm interested in that.

B. TYRELL: You also did a lot of game counting, game surveys. He was always off counting something.

C. TYRELL: We started -- when I first went to work here at Sky Aviation, [01:21:00] -- you know, every town in Wyoming had a little airport, and a guy there that had a Super Cub, you know, and was a good enough pilot, and they did game surveys for the local game warden, or the local biologists, it seemed like. And then there got to be, I don't know, more of these people that wanted to fly their Cessnas and didn't want to mess with their Super Cubs and stuff. Anyway, we kept getting more work all the time the -- for the Game and Fish Commission, and then, I don't know if you remember when they lost two biologists in that airplane over by Cody, doing a bear survey, looking for a bear, and they lost two biologists and a pilot. [01:22:00] And the next year or so, that same operator, which is out of Idaho, just on the Idaho border, he -- yeah, he had a strut break. You asked about that. He had a strut break, I think may -- and he landed almost in his own pasture. he was just circling a neighbor, made a tight turn, and there was corrosion inside there. Pulled a wing, and he died there. Well, all of a sudden, he had had -- was running three

airplanes doing wildlife surveys, and all of a sudden, there was nobody to do that Wyoming work that he was doing. And they came to us. Jerry [Hyatt?] -- I don't know if you've talked to Jerry -- he's working for the feds right now, hunting coyotes. [01:23:00] He's out of Casper, I think, right now.

JUNGE: Jerry Hyatt. Let me mark that down right here.

C. TYRELL: So, Jerry and I -- and he -- we had two Ag Cats. He was spraying with one, and I was spraying with the other, and so betwixt him and I, we picked up all that work that the Idaho operator was doing. And so we did grizzly bear surveys, mountain sheep. We had done a certain amount of that before, but it was, you know, not a whole lot.

JUNGE: Is there a science to it? Because it seems to me you're just flying around looking for a bear.

C. TYRELL: Well, the real science is flying around at 12, 13,000 foot with 160-horse airplane, [01:24:00] and keeping the -- you know, keeping everything together for thousands of hours, I guess.

JUNGE: (laughs)

C. TYRELL: We did -- you know, they started putting radio collars on there, and we had antennas on the airplane, and we did -- except for Yellowstone, we did all of the radio telemetry work -- radio -- the bears with collars on them.

Then we would do flights for bears without collars. We did, you know, goat surveys -- mountain goat surveys, bighorn sheep surveys, mule deer surveys, moose surveys --

JUNGE: Is there a --

C. TYRELL: -- a lot of antelope surveys.

JUNGE: Well, for the mountain goats and the bighorns -- bighorn sheep -- you'd have to be flying some pretty steep country.

C. TYRELL: Well, a lot of the grizzly bear work we did because a lot of the grizzlies, in the summer, are moving up above [01:25:00] timber line, and eating moths on these -- the slopes.

JUNGE: Eating what?

C. TYRELL: The moths. Like, yeah. Yeah. We were some of the first that helped -- we used to do surveys, and we would find these bears up in the doggonest spots you'd ever seen, the talus slopes, just steep. There's nothing but rock there, and here's grizzly bears, digging in rocks. I'd say to the biologists, "What are they doing up there?" And he said, "We really don't know." And they eventually, you know -- and then they would get -- they would do some surveys of their own, you know? And the horseback, or whatever, but the backpackers is telling them, "Oh yeah, I was seeing these grizzly bears [01:26:00] up there at

12,000 feet on these talus slopes, and they're digging around there, and the moths are so thick you can hardly breathe. Yeah, so...

JUNGE: You're talking about moths that fly? These little --

C. TYRELL: Yeah, the little moths that -- I'm trying to say these are alfalfa moths, or whatever. But they're -- we get so many of them here, that I could probably find you one on the windowsill --

JUNGE: Oh, like a [miller?]

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: Like millers? But how does a grizzly bear catch these things?

C. TYRELL: Well, they're under the rocks up there. And it's cool up there. I never could figure out why they went there, because, you know, at those elevations, it's not very warm, and... But they eat them by the tons, and then -- and they've found that in the years when it was dry and you didn't have a lot of bear-- [01:27:00] berries, and that kind of stuff, that they used that more. And I -- and we started finding bigger and bigger areas. I think the bears [theirselves?] were learning, teaching each other, and learning as we were learning. Because we just had a few areas that were known, and they we would fly surveys. We were doing a lot of surveys, pilot only, with the radio

telemetry, you know. And we would find a bear on a talus slope and we'd ride him down, and then you'd start searching that one, and, sure enough, there's bears out there.

JUNGE: Well, how did you record -- OK, you find them by telemetry -- they've got collars right? If you find them by telemetry, how do you differentiate one from the other, or do you just use the telemetry to count them? No, every one of them has a different frequency. So you had a scanner that would go [01:28:00] a couple seconds on one, a few seconds on one frequency, and then it would change frequencies. Or, if you knew that a -- if you knew --

JUNGE: Hang on a minute, you're still connected, here.

C. TYRELL: -- if you knew that a -- I just want to look to see that [bear?]. OK.

JUNGE: I just heard him. He was just lapping up some water.

C. TYRELL: Yeah. She's old and has a belly problem. If you knew the, you know, that this bear was here last week, and so you would listen to that frequency longer, you know, see if you... But otherwise, if there were bears that were missing, or -- we had a, like, a couple lions that were in with the bear frequencies. I remember we had a female and

a young male. And so, you had lions in there, too,

[01:29:00] that they --

JUNGE: With collars on?

C. TYRELL: -- that they collared a couple lions.

JUNGE: Interesting. So what did you learn, and what did the biologists learn, from locating them? I mean, they just located them, right? OK, now we found them.

C. TYRELL: Well, on some of the surveys, you know... But you would -- when we first started -- this was before the GPS -- so then you tried to put them on a drainage or whatever, you know, because some of these were problem bears. If they had a collar, they got caught somehow -- a lot of times, the reason -- how they got caught was, they got trouble in a campground or something. They'd put a collar on them and hauled them off and kicked them out. And they could track them -- see when they're coming back to where they, you know, or whatever. Or they would know whether they was above timber line, or whatever. [01:30:00] It wasn't too long after that, and some of the GPS's come out, and we weren't using the aviation GPS, but they were a lot better than no G-- you know. And so we would just locate him on the GPS, and give him their location.

JUNGE: Is that -- was that a good-paying job?

C. TYRELL: It was like -- kept beans on the table, you know.

JUNGE: (laughs) Yeah. Well, OK, you did surveys for Game and Fish?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: And BLM too?

C. TYRELL: At one time, we did a lot of surveys for the BLM, then the Republicans took over and cut their budget. Because they were doing the same surveys that the Wild Game and Fish was. And they could -- although, we continued to do for the Fish and Wildlife Service, and they would tend to be different surveys, and they would [01:31:00] tend to be different surveys from what the Game and Fish, a lot of times, were doing. Like, on the Indian reservations, the Fish and Wildlife Service would do that. But at all this time, part of this work kept going to the helicopter, from fixed wing to helicopter. The (inaudible) Game and Fish had a preference. They thought the helicopter was safer and probably, on a lot of this work, turned out to be, you know, safer.

JUNGE: Really? Why?

C. TYRELL: Because we didn't wreck as many. (laughs) Well, you tend to have a lot more horsepower, and at high elevations, the helicopter is like a fixed wing, you know. It has problems with high elevations, but high-density altitudes... [01:32:00] But it handles winds and stuff

better than a light -- you know, because we're using real light fixed wings.

JUNGE: So, let's see, you did game surveys, you went for coyotes and bobcats, sprayed sage, what else did you do?

C. TYRELL: Well, then we started a flying helicopter, and spraying with the helicopter, then that's how we built time. Actually, we just had a demand for some helicopter spraying, and nobody wanted to stop and do it. About the time that the spraying started, they started a bunch of their fire work, you know? And so they said, "Who don't you do it?" And I said, "I got no helicopter," and whatever. So [01:33:00] they land up getting my helicopter rating, and give me a little training on helicopter spraying, and put a tank on a helicopter, and I'm -- so I'm spraying with a helicopter and a fixed wing.

JUNGE: Man. Did you also fight fires?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: Drop slurry?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: With a helicopter?

C. TYRELL: Uh-huh. Went from -- when I got enough time, then we started doing game surveys with the helicopter -- I did. Because we were losing part of our work to the helicopter anyway, and I was an experienced survey pilot, you might

say, and as soon as I accumulated time, why, we were doing a lot of the work that we'd done before, only with the helicopter. And so we did a lot of surveys [01:34:00] and then we did a lot of wildlife herding, like Wind Cave, over in South Dakota. We round up their buffaloes. Dan [Hawkins?] was doing that when he was a pup.

JUNGE: Really? What was that like?

C. TYRELL: It worked -- we -- when I started there, we would just take two Piston helicopters -- two of the smaller helicopters -- over, and pick them up, and then -- they -- every second or every third year, they were gathering them up. They had big corrals, and the buffalo moved fairly good. And when they brucellosis, you know, and that became a problem because the Wind Cave was -- it's -- I'm trying to say it's [01:35:00] a park, or whatever. So they round up the buffalo, but they had to give them away, and they give them to the Indians, but they had brucellosis, so the thing was, is, we need to get rid of the brucellosis in our buffalo herd, right? So then we started gathering them every year, and then they started getting wise to us. We were doing -- they were working pretty good for us, but once we started working them every year, they said, "I remember that guy from last year," you know? And there's a lot of big hills there, and timber, and you know, you run a

bunch into the timber and they wouldn't all come out the other side. And you could hover there and blow things around, you know, and some of them didn't care after awhile. They had this figured out, so.

JUNGE: (laughs) They're not so dumb.

C. TYRELL: But so they [01:36:00] -- we would have to work really hard then. You know, might catch them out the next year and keep the herd away from that timber, and get them in, and get them in the pens, because they needed them all in to vaccinate and test. And -- you know, and some of them they had to dispose of. And we did this for every year, and they just kept getting meaner and meaner, and harder to get along with.

JUNGE: Was there a trick to rounding them up wi-- I mean, I'm wondering what the technique was. Just get on their butts and push them?

C. TYRELL: Yeah. We did a lot -- we did in Theodore Roosevelt National Park in North Dakota, we'd go up and do them, and have to move them a long ways up there. And, you know, it's like -- one of the things is, the farther you -- like, running horses too -- is, the farther you can stay away from them, [01:37:00] and the easier you can move them, the better things are going, till you get to the trap, because you want them scared of that machine. And if you keep

moving them too hard and getting too close to them, they're getting too used to you, you know? So if you can just stay back there and gently move them on -- and it's a lot better for the animal, you know? You're not getting them all head up and stressed out. And then when you get, all of a sudden, up to the pen, then you can start crowding them, and they're still scared of you, and you can, you know, get them to move in there, and then, you know, I mean, all of a sudden you got a hundred buffalo headed down this hill and they hit the wing fence, and some of them say, "What's going on here?" But it's too late, you got everyb-- you know, the ones in the front are seeing the gate, but they've got a hundred of them pushing, you know? And so, that works much better than, you know. [01:38:00] Yeah. We also gathered elk with the helicopter at Wind Cave. They had that nice elk herd there, and --

JUNGE: What did you have to gather?

C. TYRELL: Well, to eliminate -- they had to get rid of some of them.

JUNGE: There were too many elk?

C. TYRELL: They get too many of them and they can't hold a hunting season there.

JUNGE: So you corralled them up?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, but them in the buffalo pens, where -- same place we'd put the buffalo.

JUNGE: Do they drive the same way a buffalo drives?

C. TYRELL: No, they're -- it was really surprising. The buffalo are the -- buffalo just -- usually just head out. And they take off and cover some country, you know, get into a lope and go along there. And the elk would really spook for, you know, probably not over a half- mile to a mile, and then all of a sudden they're looking back at you, [01:39:00] and they seem to stress out, to me. It seemed to me they stressed out more, and --

JUNGE: So they couldn't drive them -- they would -- they'd splinter off, or --

C. TYRELL: No, they drove. They drove as good as buffalo, I think, but they weren't -- you didn't feel like they were as tough as the buffalo, you know? And I think it was mainly stress. I think they just --

JUNGE: Tightened up?

C. TYRELL: Yeah. They got stressed out and -- because violent elk -- a lot -- and you know they can cover miles and miles without a problem, but they just seemed like you needed to really take it easy on the elk.

JUNGE: You drove buffalo, you drove elk, what else? Anything else?

C. TYRELL: Horses.

JUNGE: How did the hor-- were horses any different?

C. TYRELL: Well, a horse -- horses depend on how much

[01:40:00] they'd been herded. Horses that hadn't been herded with a helicopter are pretty easy, you know? I mean, you just stayed back behind them, and if they turned this way, why, you got over on that side, and -- but you're way back there, you know, you just kind of went out there, and --

JUNGE: Did they follow --

C. TYRELL: -- and moved them in.

JUNGE: -- follow a leader, didn't they?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, they --

JUNGE: A stallion, or something?

C. TYRELL: -- liked to, you know, have a lead mare or whatever.

JUNGE: A lead mare.

C. TYRELL: But with a wild horse, a lot of times, if you get a couple bunches together, then all of a sudden you got stallions fighting, so if you push two bunches together, and they're trying to fight and cause problems, and then you got colts and whatever, that are having trouble keeping up, and burros. We went to Death Valley and gathered burros.

JUNGE: What was that like?

C. TYRELL: [01:41:00] They'd been a lot of burros together before I ever been down there, you know, different years. They were doing that yearly, and so they got a lot of the burros out, but most of the burros are, you know, they run a little ways and then they're down to a walk, and you're not going to push them too fast. There was generally small bunches, and instead of running them into a trap, we would herd them down to where their cowboys were. They'd haul their horses out there on horseback, and they'd set over behind the hill somewhere, and you'd bring them by, and you'd rope them, because there'd be just a little bunch here, and then they'd drag them into a horse trailer, you know, and load their horses and go off somewhere else, and you'd go find you some more burros. There's a lot of water in Death Valley -- good springs, you know. Some of them were quite a ways apart, but [01:42:00] there would be -- and --

JUNGE: I don't think a lot of people know that.

C. TYRELL: Every spring there would be some burros, and, you know, one time they thought the burro was a great thing, and then all of a sudden there's not an actual critter there, and they have the bighorn sheep - the desert bighorn -- and whatever, and they're taking forage away from them, and --

JUNGE: So they got to haul them off?

C. TYRELL: So they decided to gather them up.

JUNGE: Do they -- did they make -- did they sell them for
pets, or did they chew them u-- or, I mean, make hamburger
out of them?

C. TYRELL: They were the same as the wild horse.

JUNGE: Oh, they get -- they slaughter them.

C. TYRELL: No.

JUNGE: Oh, you mean adopt a horse? Adopt a burro?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, I mean as I understand it, the burros go
better --

B. TYRELL: I want a burro.

C. TYRELL: -- that the burros adopt out faster than the horses.

JUNGE: You want a burro, Bonnie?

B. TYRELL: I do.

JUNGE: Can't you drive one here? [01:43:00]

C. TYRELL: I don't know if we -- we don't have any around here.
They've certainly -- there's a lot less burros in the
country than there used to be. They've gathered a lot of
those, the BLM.

JUNGE: So we -- how do you --

C. TYRELL: We've gathered a few cattle, antelope, wolves...

B. TYRELL: But the most fun is snow survey.

C. TYRELL: And yeah, snow survey.

JUNGE: Snow survey?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: They're pretty easy to round up, aren't they?

C. TYRELL: Snows?

B. TYRELL: The snows? (laughs)

C. TYRELL: Yeah, there's -- all over the mountain -- the mountains, they have the snowtels -- little, like, outhouses, only some of them would be three or four stories tall -- that have the instruments and stuff in them, or there would be just a marked place, [01:44:00] and you'd fly over in the helicopter with your snowshoes on, and land and put your snowshoes on and get out there and take your pole and measure the depth of snow. And, you know, it was a hollow pole, and you'd weigh your pole so you'd know how much moisture was in that. And write it down, and go back, take your snowshoes off, get in the helicopter, and go to the next spot.

B. TYRELL: You had to have -- put your snowshoes on your feet, too.

JUNGE: I've never seen snowshoes for a helicopter. What do they look like?

C. TYRELL: Like snowshoes. They -- most of them were just a piece of aluminum, you know, about so wide, with -- of course, with tubing or something, stiffing them, so just --

so -- and we used a Hughes 500, if you're familiar with the Hughes -- five-bladed little guy --

JUNGE: Yeah, I just saw one [01:45:00] this morning. It's kind of a stub-nosed, bubbly-like thing --

C. TYRELL: Because of the short blades and... If the snow was real deep and fresh, you'd -- you could land -- even with the snowshoes on, and then you'd bounce it a little, and you'd keep going down and down and down, and sometimes, till the belly hit. So your skids are all down in the snow, and the bellies are just -- so you don't turn over. We did a lot of water surveys, too. They lost whatever helicopters were -- you'd land on the crusted snow, and then broke through on one side of the crust, rolled over when the blades were still turning, so that really...

JUNGE: That'll really mess you.

C. TYRELL: Yeah. I end up giving me a trip to Alaska [01:46:00] to pick up a helicopter and bring one down from Alaska.

JUNGE: You mean you had to -- you couldn't fly it back.

C. TYRELL: I flew it back.

JUNGE: After they repair it?

C. TYRELL: No. That one was totaled out, so we --

B. TYRELL: A replacement.

C. TYRELL: -- just bought a different helicopter, and -- in Alaska, and brought it down to Greybull.

JUNGE: You flew a helicopter from Alaska to Greybull?

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: So the one that was down was in Greybull?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, it was up here on the Bighorns.

JUNGE: Why did you have to go to Alaska to get another helicopter?

C. TYRELL: Well, they were buying --

B. TYRELL: Good price.

C. TYRELL: -- they thought they had the one for the right price, or whatever. Alaska helicopters was -- went out of business about that time, and they were selling off a fleet of Belles, and so - and they, said, "Claude, you've already flown that route," [01:47:00] because our Arctic Terns that were fixed wing, that we'd bought, we'd bought two of those, and they were built in Alaska. So we'd flew -- flown -- one of those down. "You been down there, why don't you go up?" And I said, "Well, I [don't?] mind flying a helicopter up there. I don't want to go up there and buy one," you know? A used helicopter. "Oh no, we'll send a mechanic up." So when the time comes, I went up by myself. Had to go up there and look this helicopter over and say, "Well, this and this," and we end up making them

change the blades on it, and, I think -- before they bought it. They gave us a new set of blades, and we bought their helicopter.

JUNGE: What did you have to pay for it, do you remember?

[01:48:00]

B. TYRELL: It was on sale.

JUNGE: What's that?

B. TYRELL: They were having a good special, so it wasn't very much.

C. TYRELL: She's tal-- he's talking helicopters.

B. TYRELL: Oh. Helicopters. (laughter) The helicopters was on sale, too!

JUNGE: You were talking about the pizza?

B. TYRELL: Yeah.

JUNGE: OK, we're going to eat some pizza, here.

C. TYRELL: I don't remember what that helicopter --

B. TYRELL: Would you like some more iced tea, or beer?

JUNGE: You know, I'd love a beer.

C. TYRELL: A beer.

JUNGE: Here. You know... Bonnie, you're going to -- well, I'll let you get your own, huh? OK.

C. TYRELL: Look out for herself.

JUNGE: Thank you. I'm going to -- [01:49:00] can I turn this off for a bit?

B. TYRELL: Sure.

JUNGE: OK.

END OF AUDIO FILE PART 1

OH-3032, PART 2, CLAUDE TYRELL, 4-19-14, WY IN FLIGHT

JUNGE: All right, I think we're on. OK. All right,
Bonnie, what was this topic you wanted him to talk about?

B. TYRELL: I wanted him to tell you about the extra large
coyote they shot, and then it spent the winter in my deep
freeze.

C. TYRELL: I believe in early 80's, we were hunting coyotes for
the government, and they shut the government down over the
abortion bill, I don't know if you -- you was a youngster
then, but --

JUNGE: Over the what bill?

C. TYRELL: Over abortion, basically. And so, yeah, they
basically -- that was another time that they shut the
government down. So the government -- we couldn't fly for,
and at that time, the price on furs was good, and so... Was
Bill Bush still the manager? [00:01:00]

B. TYRELL: I can't remember, but--

C. TYRELL: When Hawkins and Power first bought Sky Aviation, they hired Bill Bush as the manager, and he was a pilot, and whatever. And he was retired from the FAA. But anyway, after three or four years, why, he quit, and just was a pilot for us -- he was just an on-call pilot. But anyway, the furs were pretty good, and we had no flying to do, and that was what I did, you know, is every day went up and hunted coyotes for (inaudible). So I said, "Bill, let's go coyote hunting, and we'll just have to fly someplace where we can stop and land and pick them up, because furs is the only thing we're going to get out of it." So we did, and we'd fly to areas that were not so rough, you know, or we thought we could find a place... Anyway, I remember it was cold. We had a lot of clothes on and we were flying south of Orland over, sort of towards Orchards [00:02:00] out there.

JUNGE: Is this with a helicopter?

C. TYRELL: No, with a fixed wing. A Super Cub. And Bill Bush was my gunner, and we'd been killing a few coyotes, and we'd bring them in and taxi up the gas pump and untie them off the struts, and drop them and call the local guy that was buying furs, and he'd come pick them up, give us a \$100 bill apiece. Yeah, this was in the '80s, so this was good money! And we were, actually, making money flying for

furs. But anyway, this one day we were flying along there, and [jumped?] this coyote, and I remember he crossed the Nowater Creek, and Bill got him -- we got him shot up there, and we had to land on the other side. I remember I had all these clothes on, [00:03:00] because I had to go down the big old [draw?] and climb up the other side, and by that time, of course, you're sweating because you've got all these clothes on, and here was this humungous coyote. He weighed 50 pounds when we put him on the scale. And I said -- "Bush," -- he was on down by the airplane -- "You son of a bitch! You killed somebody's dog!" (laughter) He said, "Ooh!" And I carried him back there, but...We've got a picture of him here somewhere.

B. TYRELL: Leaning up against the airplane.

C. TYRELL: No, he was leaning up against my leg. Tied him on the airplane, and he froze, you know? And so when we untied him, we just stood him up right there by my leg and took a picture. Anyway, when we weighed him, he was 50 pounds. He was the fattest coyote you ever saw. He had just a layer of fat on him. I don't know what he'd been eating.

JUNGE: It's almost like a -- well, a wolf is a lot heavier, but -- [00:04:00]

C. TYRELL: Oh, he was worse. A hundred bucks. I should've took 100 bucks. But instead, [kind of talked?] to the taxidermist, and was going to do this and that, and in the meantime we threw him in the deep freeze -- in Bonnie's deep freeze. And he was there in a -- till spring. And I talked to the local taxidermist, and he took him. And he had to mount him on a small wolf frame, he was so big. But he mounted him up, and --

JUNGE: How'd you get him put in the freezer? Did you bend his legs?

B. TYRELL: I can't remember. He'd fit in there, though. It was -- fortunately, it was not my good freezer that I was using for everyday things, it was an old one we had.

C. TYRELL: Another part of that that was not so good was, come the Hawkins and Powers Christmas party -- you know, Hawkins and Powers of Greybull -- and so we went up there, and [00:05:00] [Gene?] Powers, the... "What are you guys doing?" And I said, "Well, we've been hunting coyotes for furs," and said, "We've been getting 100 bucks for them, just in the round, you know?" "Oh, they're worth more than that!" he said, "You need to be skinning them and taking care of them and sell them in the spring." Well, I'm -- I have no experience and I didn't want any experience. I mean, we were getting 100 bucks for it. So then I -- I had

to build a stretcher for him, and then had to skin them, and then, you know, you turn them upside-down or inside-out, and then if you cut the hide you have to sew them up and scrape off the fat and the whatever, and when I -- come spring, I got \$32 each for them.

JUNGE: (laughs)

C. TYRELL: And they weren't the prettiest hides they had.

They're, you know... I mean... [00:06:00]

JUNGE: Thirty-two bucks a piece.

C. TYRELL: Yeah, when I could've got 100 for them and not touched them. And I eventually learned -- I guess I won't say anymore. (laughter) You don't necessarily listen -- or, sometimes you don't want to tell everybody everything you know, or something. I would've worked -- you know, we were doing really good and making money, and... Bill was -- just loved to shoot. And we'd go out, and if I couldn't pick up a coyote in an hour and a half, we came home, because they're not moving. And I'm out here and we're trying to hold the company together, kind of, pay payroll and whatever, the gas bill and whatever, you know. He would say, "Maybe we ought to stay out longer." I said, "Oh, them coyotes aren't moving. [00:07:00] We'll try it tomorrow." Some days they seemed to be out, (inaudible) around, and some days they don't seem to be --

JUNGE: How did you -- oh, they had to be out. I mean, you couldn't just spook them up?

C. TYRELL: Well, yeah, but -- I don't know, some days you just couldn't seem to find them, you know? I don't know what it was, it --

JUNGE: What's the most you've ever gotten in a day?

C. TYRELL: I don't know. I remember one day -- in three days, we got 102 or something. That's not a --

JUNGE: How many?

C. TYRELL: A hundred and two in three days. And people have done a lot better than that, but I remember we come back the third day, and we had, like 98, and we'd been down in the Goshen Hole, and it had snowed a good two foot. It was just [00:08:00] unbelievable. It kept the coyotes out there, and they're up to their shoulders, the poor boogers. It was like tracking an elephant through the snow, because they left a big trough, you know? The poor boogers. But anyway, so we're about out of gas, and we head back for Lusk. And here jump a coyote. And Leonard Johnson -- he's sitting back there in the back -- well, he's shot six boxes of shotgun shells, and they're all around his feet, so he's just -- his feet are covered up, and the floor's covered up with shotgun shells. And so he starts digging around in through there, what he's dropped, "I found a couple

shells!" And he shoot the coyote. And pretty soon, we go up a little ways more and there's another coyote, and he's digging around there. He finds a couple more shells, and we kill another coyote (laughs). End up with 102 [00:09:00] or 103 in three days.

JUNGE: You know, in the old days they used to take pictures -- the trappers, or... And they'd have --

B. TYRELL: With one end up on the fence.

JUNGE: Yeah. Did you ever do that with a plane? I think I've seen pictures of them lined up against a plane.

C. TYRELL: Oh yeah, I've seen them hung up on an airplane, you know, from one side to the other. Probably [Clyde Ice?] There was a guy up -- you know, Jack Clucas might tell you -- this old boy, hunted -- oh, by Spotted Horse, or over in there -- and you enter by yourself, and he took his hound dog with him a lot. And if he'd run a coyote into a bush, the coyote [paid attention?] He did his own gunning. One day -- if he'd run one in the hole or into the bush or something, he'd land and let the dog out and the dog would go -- you know, and then he would go back to the spot, and [00:10:00] land where he'd let the dog out, and the dog would come back and get back in the airplane. Boy, I can almost say his name. He was -- you know, he's still famous. Leonard Johnson -- he's retired, lives down in

Lusk now... I'm thinking his name was [Kruce?] or something, but... And he's probably crossed great divide now, I'd imagine. He's too old. He was an older fellow that --

JUNGE: What would the dog do? Would the dog just keep the animal on the run?

C. TYRELL: Yeah, just -- you know, the coyote -- if you pepper him a couple times with the shot, they say, "Hey, that airplane's not good stuff." And then they start running crooked or looking for a hole or someplace to hide. And so if they hide down there on the crick in the willows or something, why, then the dog would run down there, and [00:11:00] --

JUNGE: Chase them out?

C. TYRELL: -- chase him out.

JUNGE: Let me ask you this before we quit -- you were talking about Dan Hawkins. Do you have any Dan Hawkins stories?

C. TYRELL: (laugh)

B. TYRELL: He was a good guy.

C. TYRELL: Yeah.

B. TYRELL: We liked him.

JUNGE: Did you know him, Bonnie?

B. TYRELL: Mm-hmm.

JUNGE: He seemed like a good guy.

B. TYRELL: He was.

JUNGE: And he was -- he was a good helicopter pilot, huh?

C. TYRELL: Yeah. He had a hell of a wreck. They'd bought an Alouette, a French helicopter. And Bob Hawkins, his son, could tell you that story right. But anyway, they had a short driveline -- runs from the engine to the transmission or something, and some of them were greased, and some of them you weren't supposed to grease -- were sealed, you know. And the sealed ones had a band [00:12:00] painted on them. Anyways, they got this helicopter, and that short shaft had a band on it. Well, it shouldn't have had a band on it. Anyway, Dan -- he's flying over towards -- betwinxt Greybull and Cody, and that short shaft broke loose at the coupling, and swung up there and took his controls out. And he's just plunking along there at 100 miles an hour, and all of a sudden, he has no control. And he said that -- pitched up, and he tried to push the nose down and that didn't help, so he tried to see -- pull the nose up, and he said that seemed to help it flatten out a little. But anyway, he come down fast and he rolled up in a big old ball, and Dan gets out there. He's all beat to shit -- blood, he'd been bleeding, and whatever, and makes his way over to the highway, a couple -- three miles. And he's

been rolled around in the dirt and the oil and the blood and the guts, and you know? And he gets there by the highway and nobody would [00:13:00] pick him up! (laughs) Because he's so bad. Bob could tell you more -- he had a bad back from that crash the rest of his life.

JUNGE: I remember we used to go over to Hawkins and Powers every once in awhile, you know, just fly over because we had a job to do. And there was that Avery helicopter -- wrecked helicopter -- there all summer long. It said Avery on it. Bonnie, I got to get out of your hair.

B. TYRELL: Aren't bothering me. I'm going to go wash mine (laughs). You can stay as long as you want.

JUNGE: Well, OK. I think I'd better call it quits. Thank you so much.

C. TYRELL: You bet.

B. TYRELL: You'll have to come back when you got the time. He crashed over herding buffalo.

JUNGE: Wait a minute, put that back on! You going to tell me about that? I might not hear this again for awhile. OK.

C. TYRELL: I was at Wind Cave [00:14:00] and they'd decided that they were -- brucellosis -- they were trying to round up every year, and the buffalo were getting wise to this helicopter roundup stuff. They were getting harder to

round up all the time. And then -- but being they were having a roundup every year, they wanted to cut their costs, so they wanted one helicopter. So they sent -- well, I was supposed to go over, and then they said, no, they just want one, so they sent Bob Hawkins. And Bob got a bunch of them in the big corr-- big catch pen. It'd be about 10, 15 acres, but one -- but they got in there, and then they spent the night, and the buffalo, during the season, all the gates were just left open there, and they [00:15:00] were used to going through there. They knew where all the gates were. Well, now, all the gates were shut. So Bob gets out there in the morning, and he tries to put them in -- tries to crowd them in this wing fence, you know, to get them in there, but they're not getting up there because they've already checked that gate out, and they know it's closed. Of course, now it's open, but open the way they're thinking, but it's... But anyway, they aren't going, so they tried with some pickups and stuff to help them, so they called for the other helicopters. So I came over. And, well, now they're really smart, because they've had the helicopter trying to push them, and whatever. So we get out there with two helicopters and they got, like, two or three government pickups, a couple guys on horseback. I remember the one guy -- the horseback

-- had like a .38 pistol [00:16:00] with birdshot in it. Anyway, we get these elk -- or, buffalo -- crowded down towards the wing fence, but they're not having this. And there as just a little crick run through the middle, and they just went across the crick and they turned around and faced us, and there was -- right in front of me, there's this cow and she just turned around to face you. And her tail come up, and when their tail comes up, they're mad. And they're not scared of nothing. And she's going to take on this helicopter. Well, this guy a-horseback run up there and he started shooting her in the face with that birdshot, and she just charged him. Well that horse, who'd been around buffalo, knew he didn't want to tangle. He just -- you never heard a -- seen a horse turn so fast.

JUNGE: (laughs)

C. TYRELL: Well, this guy left him hanging out there. He grabs the saddle horn [00:17:00] and he's just a-swinging out there. (laughs) Or he'd have been mincemeat. But anyway, we -- in -- somewhere in the process, where one of them bulls run right over the top of a brand-new Dodge pickup. Right over the hood, over the cab, just smashed it all down. But anyway, we end up getting -- oh, maybe, 50 head -- in this wing fence. And so now they're in an area that's a couple hundred yards long but fairly narrow, that

goes into the corral. They don't -- they've already tried the gates in the corral and they know it's closed, so they won't go up there. So we get both helicopters in there. And we're going side-by-side and they're really close together -- blades going like this -- and the wing fence there, and you're right on the ground, and they just [00:18:00] turn back on us, and they had [the raise?] up, you know? And so we come around. Bob says, "Let me try them in front. I'll get in front, and you just, kind of, back me up." So he's -- I give him room, and he can go back and forth a little, you know -- like this -- and both of us are... And so he goes up there, and he gets about -- you know, as soon as you get them up close to that other gate, they just turn around and come back. And so he's still there, but they're starting to go by him, and they're really charging down towards this gate that's shut down at this end, and I pulled up, come around like this, and you don't -- no helicopters. You just pick up speed, and stick the nose -- do what they call a quick stop. So you can stop -- and my idea was to get in front of that gate, so they didn't come down and hit that gate. [00:10:00] Well, as soon as I did this quick stop, all of a sudden, bang! It was like -- I thought first I'd hit a telephone pole. Your mind works pretty quick at times, you know? And I

realized there was no telephone pole, and the only other thing up there was that other helicopter. Bob Hawkins must've come around and hit me from behind. But anyway, about that time, things really go to shit. The vibration is so bad that you can't even see the ground. I don't know if you can understand that, but it just -- thin-- you can't distinguish anything. And I then realize I'd turned up a little and to the left, and the nose was high, and I tried to fly it, and then I don't seem to have any control. So I do a, you know, an auto-rotation. Of course, I have no control or nothing. It just come down and hit like this. We had to go back up a little bit. [00:20:00] We'd finally got these buffalo in the wing fence and we went in and fueled up. And then we're going to go try and put them in the pen. So they got this brand-new guy. He's kind of the supervisor guy for the Parks Service. He's one of the higher guys, and he just moved in. Today's his first day on the job. So they, kind of, give him a helicopter ride, you know. So they'd stuck him in the seat next to me. He was on the side that the helicopter come down and hit, like that. Right before we'd left Greybull, I'd had that helicopter -- had done some spraying, and the bubble -- Dan Hawkins liked his helicopters perfect. And I don't know if it was some chemical, or what, but the bubble wasn't right,

so they'd put a whole new bubble on her. This huge thing. "They put a new bubble on there! [00:21:00] Blah blah blah!" You know? So -- and I take off my seatbelt. We're on the ground, and I ask this guy if he's all right, and he isn't saying nothing. And I want out of that sucker, you know? And there's -- my door is up here and about this time, Bob Hawkins -- I don't know how he did it, but he plopped his butt on the ground and run around, and he was there. I come right out through that brand new bubble. It was all broke to hell, you know. So there -- they've got all these government employees and they're all well trained. The EMTs -- we've got EMTs running out our ears. I crawled out of that sucker and I got about four of them. "Get down, get down! Don't move, don't move!" I said, "I'm all right, I'm all right." "No, you can't move!" So [00:22:00] there was a whole bunch of females there. Ladies sit down beside me, and they go over there... And this poor guy -- I can't think of his name right now -- he starts coming, too, and they try to drag him out of there. And one of them had it all -- he broke his hip on -- and he's wanting none of that at all. They flew a National Guard helicopter, and they finally lifted him out and put him in there and flew him off.

JUNGE: How soon did they get the EMTs there?

C. TYRELL: Oh, there were EMTs everywhere there. They just had to leave him in the helicopter. He was -- you know -- didn't have any pain medication or nothing, so they left him in there until they got the stretcher and stuff for him. So they took me to the hospital and that's when they x-rayed my leg. I had broke it -- [00:23:00] that's when I broke it mining. And -- but anyway -- it isn't -- it's like -- I don't think it was a year later, and they send me over to Wind Cave to do something, and this guy gets out there and rides with me.

JUNGE: Again?

C. TYRELL: Yeah. And I thought, man, that guy is... But anyway, so Dan Hawkins -- the next morning, Dan Hawkins is over there at daylight from Greybull. And the feds are coming over to investigate the accident because it was an accident working for the Parks Service -- that's why they send the government, not the FAA -- but the OAS sent their people over. That helicopter -- that blade come apart on me. We never did -- we couldn't figure out what the hell happened. All of a sudden, "Pkkk," you know? [00:24:00] And Bob had thought the engine blew up on me, or something. Because he had turned around when I was -- he'd just got turned around. He said he saw a puff of smoke come from the engine. The nose pitched up. He thought that was the

engine. That was actually when the blade hit the tail. The blades are, like, 18 foot long, and they have a piece of [sucker?] rod that's like, eight feet long. And on the end of that was like a 12-pound weight. And that's in the middle of the blade, and this keeps the blade from all of a sudden developing this kind of a motion, you know, and just going --

JUNGE: A wave?

C. TYRELL: Yeah. Oh, it turns out that this blade had just come back from the factory. They'd supposedly worked on the tip. They'd put it on a helicopter, and -- this helicopter -- [00:25:00] and Dan had flew it and gathered some horses, come back. The next day I flew it -- took it over there. So -- and the -- anyway, that piece of sucker rod in the butt end is held by a cap that is silver soldered on there. And that silver solder come loose. And so now we have this 12-pound weight. The centrifugal force is huge, comes right out the end of the blade with an 8-foot rod on it. Well, when it goes out it bends, right? And the rod kind of -- this all half a mo-- but that weigh comes around, and hits the tail., you know, and hits the tail rotor and all that stuff. And of course, that breaks the blade, and, you know, I was just along for the ride. They investigated that and [00:26:00] the metallurgist just said that silver

solder is -- had been done real recent. The people that'd worked on the blade had supposedly only worked on the tip. But anyway, they bought us a new helicopter. It totaled that helicopter.

JUNGE: Who bought you the new one?

C. TYRELL: The company that worked on the blade. They were glad to get off that cheap, I'm sure.

JUNGE: I imagine insurance on these things must be awfully high. Do you know Marvin Robinson?

C. TYRELL: Kind of sounds familiar, but --

JUNGE: He's a mechanic -- airplane mechanic -- at Casper. He's been there for years and years and years. I had a chance to talk to him earlier in the week, and he showed me a coupling that works on those rotors. You got one rotor out this way, one out thi-- and then there's a mask, and then there's these two, like, couplings. Is that what you're talking about? [00:27:00]

C. TYRELL: No, it was a completely different type of --

JUNGE: Operation?

C. TYRELL: -- helicopter. Yeah.

JUNGE: Bonnie, can I get a picture of you two? I always try to get at least one picture of everybody before we leave here. Is that all right?

B. TYRELL: OK.

JUNGE: OK. Did you fill out both these forms?

C. TYRELL: No.

B. TYRELL: No.

JUNGE: Let's see. Let me give you one of those. I'll do my job, and then I'll get out of your house and out of your hair for awhile.

END OF AUDIO FILE