

OH-3051, Gene Powers, Duane Powers, Louise Powers,

6-18-2014, WY In Flight

JUNGE: [00:00:00] There. So, today is the 18th of June, 2014.

My name is Mark Junge. And I'm in the home of Louise and Gene Powers, here at their little ranchette site at -- what's the address here?

GENE POWERS: Three three nine five, road 29.

JUNGE: Yeah, I think we're about -- what did you say, two and a half miles east of town?

LOUISE POWERS: I think so.

JUNGE: East of the stop light. That's probably why I missed it, because I went past the bridge and then I started counting off two and a half. I wound up here. (laughs) So, OK, anyway, we're here. It's a kind of a cloudy day. We're in the living room of their beautiful ranch home. There's a pond out here to the north, and north east, I guess? Correct?

LOUISE: Mm-hmm.

JUNGE: And we've got about, oh, 180, almost 180 degree view of the Bighorn Mountains, and the surrounding countryside. The hills. This is, this is [00:01:00] just gorgeous. I told Louise, I said, "This is, this is perfect."

GENE: Well, she built it.

JUNGE: Oh, she built it?

GENE: She superintended.

JUNGE: Oh, OK. Well --

LOUISE: I told the (inaudible) built our house, did the museum in Cody. And he said, "OK, Louise. What's important to you?" And I said -- I told him where I wanted the kitchen, and where, how I wanted the house to function. And the kitchen to be, you know, planned the kitchen. And how many bedrooms we wanted, and he drew the plans, and built it.

JUNGE: Who was the architect?

LOUISE: Park Gale.

JUNGE: And he built the Buffalo Bill?

LOUISE: (inaudible)

GENE: Yeah, he built the museum over there in Cody. That big museum. And a lot of other -- he was a pretty well-known architect.

JUNGE: Well, you're smart for having this architecturally designed, rather than just have some home builder build it, don't you think?

GENE: Well, I gathered up [00:02:00] all the rocks out here for that, and he sorted them out. We had a whole lot left over.

LOUISE: We had to have a third more.

JUNGE: OK, you're talking about this -- what --

GENE: Fire place.

JUNGE: Twenty-foot fireplace, or bigger?

GENE: I don't know.

LOUISE: Twenty one, four.

JUNGE: It's, it's a huge fireplace made out of moss rock. Is
that granite?

LOUISE: No, it's moss rock.

GENE: It's whatever you find out here in the --

LOUISE: More than one color.

GENE: Go out in the boondocks and find it laying around out
here. The BLM.

JUNGE: You picked it up, yourself?

GENE: Yeah. Ruined a good pickup, before I got it all home.

LOUISE: By the time we were finished, the bed was loose on the
pickup and it just was hanging off.

GENE: I was young enough then so I could pick those up. Now
I can't.

JUNGE: Do you like the layout of this house?

GENE: Yeah. I wouldn't part with it.

JUNGE: Where'd you guys live before?

LOUISE: In town.

GENE: In town, there.

JUNGE: How --

GENE: Well, it's hard to say where all I [00:03:00] lived.

(laughs) Actually spent most of my time in Wyoming, but then I didn't -- I lived in an airplane. (laughs)

JUNGE: All right. To, to begin with, what I usually ask is, is for birth dates and birth places. Gene, where and when were you born?

GENE: Well, you get, you get confused, there. Because --

JUNGE: You got more than one birthdate?

GENE: -- I was actually -- well, I was born twice, I guess.

Anyhow, I was actually born in Sheridan. And, 7/26/29.

However, because World War II was chug-- chugging along, and I had two older brothers and they both ended up in the army air corps, which was pretty interesting, in a way, because one of my brothers was, out of a heck of a lot of guys, was one of four that got back from the first time they bombed Berlin. [00:04:00] And my other brother ended up over the Pacific, in -- but anyhow, they were both aviators.

JUNGE: Did they come out of it OK?

GENE: Yeah, they both got out of it OK.

JUNGE: Now, the other person we got on tape over here is
Gene's wife, Louise. Louise, what's your full name?

LOUISE: Louise Schunk Powers.

JUNGE: Schunk?

LOUISE: Schunk.

JUNGE: S-C-H --

LOUISE: U-N-K.

JUNGE: And that's your maiden name?

LOUISE: That's my maiden name.

JUNGE: And you were born when?

LOUISE: In Sheridan, Wyoming, second month, eighth day, '31.

JUNGE: So you are -- you're older than he is!

LOUISE: No!

JUNGE: No, you're younger than he is! I'm sorry. By two
years. Did you guys meet in Sheridan?

GENE: Oh, no.

LOUISE: Oh, we went to school together. But then when we --

GENE: We didn't know [Wellesley?]. That's another long
story, because we both had previous wives.

LOUISE: No, I had a husband.

GENE: Well, yeah. Mates.

LOUISE: Mates.

GENE: Because, [00:05:00] see, I started to tell you. What I did was, when the war come along, both of them, they were actually living halfway between Sheridan and Big Horn on a ranch, was where my folks were. And I was going to school out there, and went to, [called?] Banner School, or whatever.

JUNGE: Banner School?

GENE: Yeah. Little school there.

JUNGE: Can I have that pen real quick?

GENE: Yeah.

JUNGE: I'm just going to -- OK, anyhow. (inaudible)

GENE: I'm out there. But anyhow... I was not a very good student. At all. And when my brothers got off the ranch, so I wasn't looking -- which is the way I put it, rather crudely, you probably don't want it on here -- but I got tired of looking at [tore?] horses' asses while we're farming. Because we were farming with horses, and doing everything [00:06:00] and as I said, I was not a very good student when I got to the start of eighth grade, and high school age. But anyhow, with my brothers gone in the army air corps, and so we were farming right next to the Sheridan airport, (inaudible). And there's just a little airplane stop out there, across the fence, and on the

airport. And Jack [Cancer?], who is somebody you ought to write a book about, for sure --

LOUISE: Well, and dead.

GENE: I mean, he's so much. Yeah, and Dick, too, but Dick was a very famous military aviator, too. But Jack, he was as husky as I am from the waist up, but his legs were only about that long. And [00:07:00] he always what he called his shim. Because to sit in an airplane, he had to just have his butt on the very little edge. The big thing behind him, so he could reach the rudder pedals. And then he had big blocks on his feet, too, so that he could reach them. But anyhow, he -- I think it was the sandbox, and he taxied up alongside me over the fence there, and got out of the airplane, and wanted me to come over and help him. Get his shim back, and get back in the airplane. Well, in the process, somehow, I don't know, but we'd met. And so I, loud as hell, I was going to run off from home and move into the rafters of the hanger over there, in Sheridan. So, I did. But then when I got there, Jack said, well, he would teach me to fly if I went back to school. [00:08:00] And so I lived in the hangar, but I started back to start, and I can't remember now. I think I was maybe a freshman. I don't remember. But anyhow, he got me soloed, but I was

way too young. But about the time I got soloed, I still can see what was going on where my brothers were flying. So I went downtown and found another friend, down there, that worked for one of the photographers down there. And we got my birth certificate, and altered it, because at that time I was 16, barely. So, we altered it so that it would show me to be 17.

LOUISE: It showed it to be 1928, that you were --

GENE: But anyhow, it showed me to be born in '28 instead of '29, [00:09:00] which gives me another birthday. And then, in those days, in the war, you could enlist if you had your parent's consent, at 17. So, I went back home and cornered my dad, and said, "Dad, you've got to give me my consent to join the navy." And he said, "Well, son, I don't know about this." Boiled down to the fact that Dad said, "Well, I'll go with you, son, to the enlistment guy. And if he don't ask me how old you are, why, I won't say anything. But I ain't going to lie." Well, luckily we went to the enlistment and he never asked. When he asked how old he was, I told him. The guy. And he didn't ask Dad, and Dad didn't correct him. And so I went in the navy when I was 16. Of course, I didn't have any high school education or anything else. But I was so hooked on [00:10:00] flying.

And I can truthfully say, at 85 years old, I don't really remember ever working a day in my life. Because aviating and that was not work. I put in a whole lot of over 24 hour day, straight. But every bit of it was fun, wasn't it, [Mother?]?

LOUISE: Yeah.

JUNGE: That's quite a statement.

GENE: But anyhow, now I'm in the navy. Well, I immediately -- of course, I'm pushing to get into naval aviation. Because I want to fly. And so, I was able to -- the first place that, after I got out of boot camp, in the navy, why, I had studied hard enough and got enough grades, I got a little choice of what I'd go. So, I went into the -- [it's?] called naval aviation. Aviation machinist mate. And I got [00:11:00] on North Island, which is a big naval air station out in San Diego. So, that's out there. And while I'm on North Island, I could see that to be a pilot -- which I kept working at -- but which, by the way, Jack had already soloed me and everything -- was --

JUNGE: What was that now? He did what?

GENE: I'd already soloed.

JUNGE: Jack soloed you.

GENE: Yeah, in a little J-3.

JUNGE: Was -- in those days, Gene, did you have to have that, what they call a CFI? A Certified Flight Instructor?

GENE: Oh, yeah.

JUNGE: Sign off?

GENE: Yeah, you had to have that. And so forth. I still got those old pilot licenses, and log books. But anyhow, while I was out there, then anytime I had to leave or something, well I'd go rent an airplane. And I was trying to fly, and couldn't be a pilot, for sure, I knew. But without a high school education, even though I wasn't getting any (inaudible) as fast. [00:12:00] Well, I studied. Knowing what was going on, I studied and took what they called a GED, or something. It was a --

JUNGE: General education diploma.

GENE: And I got a high school diploma. Because I'm striving to become a pilot. And I got the GED, and kept working and ultimately, the war got over with. I got shipped overseas a little while, and but not -- didn't participate in any war, really. And at the end of the war, you were in for the duration, then, when you enlisted back in World War II. You didn't enlist for a year or two, or 10 years. You enlisted for the duration, which meant the end of the war. Well, when it got to the end of the war, they come along

and they said, "OK. You can go home." [00:13:00] You know, and the war's over. Well, I looked that over, and it says, "All you've got to do is sign this, and you can go home." (door opens) Here comes my son. Here's an aviator that can write you a book, too.

JUNGE: Hi, Duane.

DUANE: Hi.

GENE: I'm just trying to give you (inaudible), son. But anyhow, it was the end of the war, and I said, "I don't want to go home yet."

JUNGE: Hang on a minute. Let's get him attached here. Can I help you?

DUANE: Now, this seems to fall off real easy, and I don't know where I can find another one. I'd like to get another one.

JUNGE: How about if we just put it right above your glasses, and then if it falls -- here, whoops.

DUANE: Yeah, that'll work.

GENE: Well, anyhow --

JUNGE: So, anyway, go ahead.

GENE: I said, "I don't want to go home at all. I don't want to go back to farming." So I refused to sign the release to go home [00:14:00] and they kept me for about another

six months, and finally they said, "Well, go home anyhow."
So I did get my honorable discharge, but at that time, I
just -- because I was flying on the side, as I said,
(inaudible) out there, whenever I could get leave, or
anything. Have enough money to rent an airplane. So I
came back to Sheridan, back to the farm, so to speak, and
as soon as I got to Sheridan, why, I -- oh, I had -- I had
done enough flying out there that by that time, I had
gotten a commercial pilot's license. I had got that. And
when I got home, why, I discovered that I had the GI bill,
which by the way I so strongly say now, and I cannot
imagine how many of my friends and so forth, on the GI
bill, how -- what that did for them. Sure a shame that it
isn't [00:15:00] enforced right now, for everybody. That
goes in the military. But with the GI bill, I was able to
-- and then, flying right back with the answer. Well, as
soon as I got home, back to Sheridan.

JUNGE: With Jack?

GENE: Yeah, Jack made me -- he was, like I said, my mentor
for where to go. And little Jack had me spraying, and
[Cubs?] and stuff. And then, when I'd go back to
University of Wyoming, because I decided I wanted the
aeronautical engineering degree. So, in the summer I was

spraying, one place or another. Did a lot of it up in Montana and here and there, but then in the winter I would flight instruct and go to school. Slowly got a degree in engineering.

JUNGE: Oh, you did get it?

GENE: Yeah.

JUNGE: Your BS in aeronautical engineering?

GENE: Yeah. And by that time, [00:16:00] I got -- oh, I'd done quite a lot of flying and everything else. But I wanted to fly, and didn't know what the hell to do, so I went and applied and got hired by United Airlines.

JUNGE: As a pilot?

GENE: As a pilot.

JUNGE: Where were you, at that time?

GENE: Well, I was in Laramie, but then when I got hired -- oh, but I forgot to tell you, also, before I got out of high school I bagged a little sweetie, which is his mother.

JUNGE: (laughs) You bagged a little sweetie, huh?

GENE: Yeah, she was (inaudible).

JUNGE: Did you -- where did you meet her?

GENE: In high school, in Sheridan. So yeah, I went back to high school just for a little while, to get my high school diploma when I got out. So I got this little Polack. He's

half Polack. And so, anyhow, we're down in Laramie, living in a vet's village, [00:17:00] they called it. In a trailer house, and so forth. And I went to work for United. They run me down to Denver, and then I was flying out of Denver, but flying on routes as a -- originally, as a flight engineer. You'd start out as a flight engineer. And so I was a flight engineer, and about the time I -- can't remember the time element. Year or two, I got to be co-pilot. And then I got busy, one time, out in -- where the hell was I? Out on the west coast, some damn place.

LOUISE: Medford?

GENE: Medford, or someplace. I was out in that other part of the country, and while I was on turnaround, you know, to come home, why, I preceded to, to indulge a little bit in whisky. And [00:18:00] I'm pickled. Well, I was smart enough to come back and know that I couldn't fly drunk. But I checked back in and told them, "Hey, I'm sick. I can't take the return flight home." One way or another, I managed to get my ass canned from United. Which I still don't know whether it was a blessing or not, because whatever it was, I got canned.

JUNGE: So then what?

GENE: And so, well, as soon as I did, I came back and what the hell did I -- well, I came back and started flying again. For, I don't know. As a spray pilot here and there. And how'd I end up here, Mother? I don't know.

LOUISE: (inaudible)

GENE: Well, I found out -- oh, I know what it was. Out here, at Greybull. In those days, the guy that run this place was Avery [00:19:00] Aviation.

JUNGE: Morris Avery?

GENE: Morris Avery. You know, I --

JUNGE: No, I just the name.

GENE: OK, it was Morris Avery.

JUNGE: Because there was an Avery sign at that --

GENE: That's Morris Avery. So, I come back here and Morris really needed -- he was kind of a self-taught guy, and just something else. And his main thing in life was a gambler. He'd been 21, crap games, and (inaudible). But the state was shutting down on gambling, at that time. But he also was the first guy to get a helicopter in this area. So he could fly a helicopter, but he'd been -- well, at that time it wasn't Avery Aviation. It was Chrysler and Avery. Mel Chrysler, from down there.

DUANE: Mel Chrysler yeah.

GENE: But Mel and Morris had split. Mel went to [Thermop?]. Because they couldn't get along. Mel was really a fixed wing [00:20:00] pilot, and Morris wanted to be a helicopter pilot. Or, helicopter operation. And they were just arguing, and they split the sheet. So, it was no longer Chrysler and Avery. It was Avery Aviation. And before Mel left, they had got a bunch of surplus airplanes. They had an old B-18, which is a pretty phenomenal airplane, in a way. (inaudible) Try to think of what -- one of the things it did. But anyhow, it was like a DC-3 turned into a bomber. But then they had several privateers. PB4Y-2s. I've got some models of them around here. But that, was, it was a navy version of a B-24. And I'd been in those when I was in the navy. As a flight engineer, flown them. So, (inaudible) got a privateer. [00:21:00] There's B-18. That's it.

LOUISE: Well, and that's when you took a -- and wasn't that went you took it to --

GENE: Austin? (inaudible) Or some damn place. I don't know.

JUNGE: Yeah, it looks like a DC-3.

GENE: They're very -- that's a very famous airplane. It was like a DC-2. Not a DC-3, really. It had Wright engines

instead of Pratt and Whitney. And a little smaller, but same thing. It was like the difference between a DC-4 and a DC- 6. That's the DC-2, instead of a DC-3! (laughs) Well, anyhow, so here I am. Morris needed somebody who could drive the big airplanes. And again, one of the primary things they did was ag flying. By ag, I mean spraying. Spray contracts, and this and that. Well, Morris and I didn't get along too good, but he just plain bought me. Because he really [00:22:00] needed somebody to fly these big airplanes, and spray. We'd take contracts and spray grasshoppers. They (inaudible) back in North Carolina, or something, on some damn thing. Or spraying the mountains, or doing this and that, and he had to have somebody who could fly these big airplanes. And he bought me. Then, because, like I said, I didn't like him. Later on, I learned to like him, but at the time. So, I'm working for Avery Aviation out here. While we're working for him, why, Morris gets another air -- or, another helicopter out there, and it just seemed like the people that worked there, at the airport, every time I'd turn around for wanting a mechanic or somebody to fix this, or somebody to do that, Morris wouldn't know what the hell we were really talking about. Well, one of the guys would

say, [00:23:00] "Well, when Dan Hawkins was here, he did this." Or, "He did that." So, (inaudible), who in the hell is this Dan Hawkins? We need him. For these things. And so I found Dan Hawkins down, and he was -- back then, helicopter instructor. For the military down in Arizona. Where was it, Mother?

LOUISE: Mineral Springs.

GENE: Yeah, Mineral Springs. Was a big, big army helicopter school, or whatever. But I went down there, and I convinced Dan to come back up here and go to work. Well, within not too many months, or a year, why, Dan and I just got together. Conned the bankers, or somebody, into it, and we bought Avery Aviation.

JUNGE: Was he willing to sell out?

GENE: Well, yeah. He was -- without us, he wouldn't have had a business. (laughter) That's really why that's --

LOUISE: Wasn't he dead? Didn't you [00:24:00] buy it from Plet?

GENE: What?

LOUISE: Didn't you buy it from Plet because he had died?

GENE: Come to think about it, that is true. He cra-- or, what the hell. Or did he? He crashed up here.

LOUISE: No.

GENE: Wasn't it? What happened to him?

LOUISE: He died. Remember, he was on a...

GENE: Yeah, he was --

LOUISE: Wasn't it a (inaudible)?

DUANE: Oh, yeah.

GENE: Well, anyhow --

DUANE: A liver. When he had a liver dialysis thing.

GENE: Whatever it was, we were -- Dan and I were working for his wife, Plet Avery. Then, because Morris was out of the picture.

JUNGE: What was her name?

GENE: Plet. P-L-E-T.

LOUISE: P-L-E-T.

GENE: His wife. And so, she completely needed Dan and [not?] I. And we made a deal. It was very good for her, and us too. But we bought the place. Named it Hawkins and Powers, and [00:25:00] Dan did the helicopters. I flew helicopters, too, and he flew big airplanes. But Dan did the helicopter operation, and I did fixed wing. And we were Hawkins and Powers Aviation.

LOUISE: They flipped dice to see -- every Dan and Gene did, they flipped a coin. That's who became president or vice president, or (inaudible).

GENE: Now, wait a minute. He's got the microphone. What is this all about? (laughs)

JUNGE: Well, by the way, I should say. Duane Powers is on the other mic now, and Louise is sitting over here in that recliner. But --

GENE: You -- I don't know. He's coming into this picture. Because you're -- well, you were getting ready to go in the military. You were going to the University of Wyoming then, weren't you? So, when we first started --

DUANE: No, I was in high school.

GENE: Were you? Well, anyhow, he was -- but he was flying from the time he was sitting in my lap, or something. So -
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JUNGE: So, you were -- what was this [00:26:00] idea, about flipping the dice to see who would do his job?

GENE: Well, I don't know about everything we -- decision we made out there. Well, we'd flip a coin to see who did what.

LOUISE: That's how Dan became president. Gene became flight -
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GENE: Oh, yeah. We'd decide who -- Dan was the president, but we were 50-50. With everything we ever did. In fact, that's another reason why I was hesitating, because you

asked me who was the most influential. Well, Jack [Ganser?] certainly was, in a way. But I think, now that right here, in my memory, I'd have to say Hawkins was. Because we were -- from all the time -- for many, many years, all the time we were Hawkins and Powers, we never saw the day we were (inaudible). Complete agreement, and we didn't have any disagreements.

JUNGE: What was it that made such a pleasant relationship [00:27:00] between you two?

GENE: I don't have any idea. He was absolutely the world's best helicopter pilot, I would swear. And he had great respect for my ability as a fixed wing pilot.

JUNGE: Do you have any stories about him?

GENE: (inaudible) Oh, I could tell you a story. Well, if you knew -- in fact, Duane might be able to help some of that, later on. But how many lives he saved. As a helicopter -- we were -- you know, Morris was a real pioneer with helicopters in this whole Midwest area. And then, of course, Dan got it going. But how many times he saved somebody that was lost or crashed or screwed up, with a helicopter. It would be -- why, if we were just dreaming, I would just probably figure more things. And you think about, that Dan did.

JUNGE: Did Morris or Dan ever have a wreck? [00:28:00]

GENE: Oh, no. Dan. Well, Dan had a wreck or two. But Morris was out of the picture now, see. With Dan. Well, one time, I know -- in fact, I got to save his ass, then. He was halfway between here and Cody and what was he in? Son, was it a... (inaudible)? I don't know. Yeah, [tore?] a rotor blade off of it.

DUANE: The Alouette.

GENE: Alouette? It was the Alouette? Yeah. I don't know.

DUANE: Gear box went out of it.

GENE: Anyhow, had mechanical failures. You never had a wreck that was his fault. And then I did have to fetch him off of up there in the mountain. What was it? Halfway between Bear Lodge and --

LOUISE: Thought it was on the face of it.

GENE: Well, it was, but it was --

LOUISE: (inaudible) Canyon. That right, [00:29:00] Duane?

GENE: Yeah, I don't know.

DUANE: I don't know.

GENE: Helicopters, I always figured that they were -- well, what I'd keep telling Dan was a helicopter was kind of like a sheep, or something. It was born looking for a place to die. (laughter) Had a short lifespan. Anyhow, we were

Hawkins and Powers, and we got -- then we got pioneered with... Hell, now I -- maybe there was some of that in between, before. I got back into Avery Aviation. But anyhow, we were one of the main people with a large airplane ag operation in the country. And we pioneered -- they started a government [00:30:00] program they called -- or, for fire ants, if you -- I don't know if you know what a fire ant is. But he's an ornery little guy that -- boy, he's worse than a wasp when he bites you. But where they had originally just sprayed for them, the government decided they were going to eradicate them, which I think maybe they got done. But to do that, they had to do the cities. And spray the cities. You had to have a mold engine airplane, and all these special -- you know, to be roaring up and down Main Street with an airplane. Like, I did downtown Atlanta and Savannah, Georgia. All those places, I sprayed them. Well, first we dusted them. That's another thing, God damn it! I built a rig -- they were combatting the fire ants. They were putting out -- what was it? What was it? [00:31:00]

LOUISE: (inaudible)

GENE: Well, they had another that -- well, anyhow, they mixed the poison with bran, just like you'd serve, bran.

And you would dust it. And they were doing it in Stearmans, in a little airplane, you know. But the best they could get out of that dang thing was because of it being small and stuff, they could only get about maybe a 50-foot swath. So, I got smart ass, and designed a thing where... When you -- wasn't using a mold engine airplane -- but anyhow, what you did was you dumped it out of the airplane just like they did, but then right behind where it dumped it out I had a big scoop. And then I had a Wisconsin [00:32:00] engine with an air fan in there, and I'd catch it all again with a great job of air. Bring it back in the air plane, and then I'd put irrigation -- aluminum irrigation pipe. But I put it down across the two engines, and then out the leading edge of the wing and squirted it out the wingtips. And I had a 200-foot swath. And so I could really compete, and of course it did a lot better job. So we had spray contracts all over the country.

DUANE: You [clued?] --

LOUISE: You invented that.

JUNGE: Did you invent that?

GENE: Yeah. Well, I had patents on all kinds of crap.

Yeah, I invented that.

JUNGE: Well, did -- what did they do for spraying before you came into the business?

GENE: Well, with that kind of -- this kind of stuff, it was just putting out this stuff that -- they were dusting, you know, dusting and stuff. But to get the spray -- I mean, you get this granular stuff [00:33:00] to spread, so that when you went -- like a spray, you could get it in the vortex of the wingtips, and it'd make you a nice swath. But they couldn't get that stuff out there to get it spread. And so I was the guy that figured out, "OK, well I dump it out of the airplane, but I'll pick it back up and run it through this fan, and then it'll come down and squirt out the wingtips! So it's in the vortex, so then the vortex takes it in a big old swirl, and you get a wide swath."

JUNGE: How do you think these things up?

GENE: Well, (laughs) you tell him.

JUNGE: Duane, how does he do it?

DUANE: Just a lot of mechanical aptitude and common sense, off the shelf, type of an approach.

GENE: Well, I always like -- one of the things, the same things, for doing the airplanes. Our privateer guys, they were -- [00:34:00] when you got them out of the military,

why, they had a -- oh, it was an 1830. Yes, '94, yes.
Anyhow, the engine -- but that was a very valuable engine.
Because it was 1350 horse, or more, and they would replace
the engine on a lot of other airplanes. It was only 1200
horse. I took that off of there and put 2600s on there.
Hart 2600 engines. Which I could get surplus down in
Tucson for pretty near nothing. And I had a whole lot more
horsepower, and I replaced those -- put those engines on
the airplanes, and that made a hell of a good airplane.

JUNGE: For spraying?

GENE: For anything, yeah. Spraying and dusting. We used
them for both.

JUNGE: So, you flew right down the streets of Savannah and
Atlanta?

GENE: I sure did.

JUNGE: This is hard to believe. [00:35:00]

GENE: Atlanta and Savannah, and I don't know where all. And
then up -- did all of Long Island. And New York. We had
special -- I had special [dispensations?] and you know,
authorization to work in what they called congested areas.
And, I don't know.

LOUISE: Well, you put the spray balloons -- bigger spray balloons, and (inaudible) those, then you'd go on the Privateer, right after you bought (inaudible).

GENE: Yeah, we did the Privateers, and then we got the KC-97s. Worked them up, and did that. Oh, and at the same time, though, why, I'm busy building firebombers. And I did, for Dan. And we had a patent on that. [00:36:00] And everything. Built what they called a Waterboy. But if you -- you know, helicopters, they were starting to use them for aerial firefighting. But they had to land and load the tank up, you know, and they dumped it. For starters, when they first started using the helicopters for firefighting, they were just using the spray systems on there, and it was an emergency dump for the retardant. Well, I got to looking at that and decided that we could beat that, so I designed what we called the Waterboy, which I don't know who ever ended up with that patent, or do you know, Duane? Anything about it?

DUANE: Still --

GENE: Maybe, we probably still own it. I don't know.

DUANE: No, that's... Patent's probably still in your name. I mean, that's how they get registered.

GENE: Well, anyhow, what I did was I designed a bucket [00:37:00] because I'd seen these collapsible buckets. You know, a canvas thing. But a bucket. And then the bucket would collapse, and so that you could put it on the back of your pickup, or in, you know, on the rack of a helicopter or something, and store, if you wanted to. But I got a little air compressor. It was surplus. It would plug you in. Put a cylinder in the bottom of this bucket, and a door so it'd open and dump. So, with a helicopter, you'd sling that bucket on the bottom of a helicopter and go over to a lake or a pond or something, and open the door. And sink the bucket, or else dip it, but it was easier to just hover there a minute and the bucket'd sink. Close the door, take off, and you got a bucket full of water. So, if you could find [00:38:00] a ditch or something like this, anywhere near a fire, why, you -- help for putting out fires.

JUNGE: But how did you -- with the kind of weight that water has, when you scooped up that water, what kind of effect did that have on your helicopter?

GENE: Well, the helicopter had to be able to pick up that weight. It's all dependent on the size of the helicopter. You could carry -- I don't remember now, how much we got in

the Hueys. By then, Dan had gotten a couple of 204s, or Hueys, we'd call them. And we had the 12E Hillers. As I remember, with the tiller, take some 90-gallon or something like that, was it? I don't know.

DUANE: Yeah.

LOUISE: Didn't you manufacture through time, three sizes?

GENE: But I built different size buckets. And it was, again, it was very dependent on the altitude where you were.

DUANE: Don't they have fixed wings now that'll go down and scoop up water?

GENE: Well, they have scoopers, too, yeah. But the helicopter was -- this was strictly helicopter [00:39:00] work.

JUNGE: So, do you get any kickback on that because it's your patent?

GENE: No. No, I don't know. (laughs)

LOUISE: All the manufactured and sold ones.

GENE: Well, anyhow --

JUNGE: Not a great (inaudible).

GENE: We were -- well, what I'm doing is, what I'm telling you is where Hawkins and Powers fit in, in this. Because Hawkins and Powers was primary firefighters, or that...

Bucket fighting stuff, and we were fighting forest fires with -- and we had retardant base out here, to Greybull Airport, and then they built retardant bases all over the United States, really. (inaudible) But you could go in, and that time they were putting out borate. And well, that was what they really called us at first, was borate bombers, because they used borate for fire retardant, which was kind of like bentonite, but different. Later on they built Fire-Trol, they call it. Which was a fertilizer.

[00:40:00] Ammonium nitrate.

JUNGE: What was it called?

GENE: Fire-Trol.

JUNGE: The stuff they make bombs out --

GENE: (inaudible) and Fire-Trol. Yeah. So, but anyhow, there's [ted?] tanker bases, and so we were in the air tanker business. And we were probably the biggest one individual in the country, on aerial firefighting. And I'm sure we were the biggest in spraying. For many years.

Later on, then, somebody hit the mountain. Bite the dust.

JUNGE: One year, I guess you lost a few. More than --

GENE: Yeah, we did. Well, one year we lost three airplanes, didn't we, son? Was that it? The one that kind of put us out of business, I guess. Two?

LOUISE: Wasn't it (inaudible)?

GENE: Two or three.

LOUISE: (inaudible)

DUANE: 4Y.

GENE: 4Y.

DUANE: 4Y and a Hertz.

GENE: So. [00:41:00]Yeah, we got surplus Hertz. We were the first guys to make ag planes out of C130s. And use those. But well, as smart as I was and Duane was, was again, I don't know who's going to listen to your tape, but that's one of the things that I always told Dan, that that's what my dad told me. That's how come we're still here when these other guys crashed. You got enough luck, it'll do for brains.

JUNGE: Now, wait a minute. I was going to just --

GENE: And I had a lot of luck.

JUNGE: (laughs) Well, I was going to ask you -- and I ask every pilot this, I guess. What does it take to be a good pilot?

GENE: You got a little luck. (laughs) No, I don't. I don't -- you answer, that son. This guy's still flying right now, over there in Afghanistan, or where the hell ever it is. He's on his way back over.

JUNGE: To Afghanistan? So, you're in the Air Force?

[00:42:00]

DUANE: No, I'm a civilian contractor pilot over there, in the war zone.

GENE: He's a naval aviator, though. He was, and he's been an aviator since, like I said, since he grew out of diapers.

JUNGE: So, what's your job over there?

DUANE: I support the ground forces in combat over there.

JUNGE: In delivering stuff? Is that what you're doing?

DUANE: Well, it's all classified stuff. I can't get into the details of it, but it's contractor flying in the war zone in support of our troops.

JUNGE: Now, do you have kids?

DUANE: Yup.

JUNGE: How old are they?

DUANE: Oh, got a, got a son that's -- he's a captain for Legion Airlines, and a daughter that's got a law firm down there in Casper.

GENE: Got the lawyer.

DUANE: Several partners in her law firm. And then [00:43:00] another daughter that's in -- just finished medical school and is a doctor in Fort Collins. And another daughter

that's going to be a junior in petroleum engineering at the University of Wyoming, and our youngest daughter is going to eh naval academy here in about a week and a half.

JUNGE: So you have, what, six kids?

DUANE: Five.

JUNGE: Five? And all of them have an education. And she's doing good.

GENE: Well, that's the one thing I -- you know, you got to have school housing, along with your luck. But that's pretty good. She's wanting to be an aviator too, but she needs to go to Annapolis. Can you -- she had her choice, though, didn't she, son?

DUANE: Yeah, she got accepted to the Air Force academy, and the naval academy. And chose the navy.

GENE: That's because he's a sailor.

JUNGE: Oh, is that right? You were in the navy?

DUANE: Yeah, I retired from the navy. [00:44:00]

JUNGE: What made you join the navy?

GENE: And I did, too.

DUANE: Well, I'd originally joined the Air Force, and then the Vietnam War got over with, and I had a degree in engineering so they wanted to make me an engineer in the Air Force, and so I got a hold of the navy recruiter and

they had available seats open in the aviation training, so then I went and joined the navy and got an honorable discharge from the Air Force.

JUNGE: You have flown, like your dad says, that you've --

GENE: Oh, he's flown all this stuff since he was --

JUNGE: Kneehigh to a grasshopper?

DUANE: Yeah. When I was like eight years old, Dad would take me out in a Stearman, out in Oregon, and dust pear crops. And so I'd sit in the front cockpit, an open cockpit, [00:45:00] in the Stearman biplane, and he had me in a (inaudible) set of little goggles. Real flying goggles, not... Make believe goggles, but they were the real, like World War II flying goggles, and a little leather cap. And he'd strap me in. My feet couldn't touch the rudder pedals, but I could sit on the front of the seat with the seatbelt around both him and me, together, and he'd run the rudder pedals and the breaks and the throttle, and I could run the controls.

GENE: Then he could fly.

DUANE: And then I'd get to do some flying.

JUNGE: And how old were you?

DUANE: Eight years old.

GENE: He was good at it.

JUNGE: Was he, from the start?

GENE: Absolutely. He was good at it.

JUNGE: Well. he's learning from a pretty good teacher, too.

GENE: Well, it was fun. [00:46:00] It was fun.

JUNGE: So, how old are you, now, Duane?

DUANE: I'm 62.

JUNGE: When and where were you born?

DUANE: In Sheridan.

JUNGE: What date?

DUANE: July, '52.

JUNGE: July what?

DUANE: Thirtieth.

JUNGE: So, you guys are both going to have a birthday coming up here pretty quick. In the next month. Do you celebrate it together?

DUANE: Sometimes. We're not together much.

GENE: Really, though. He's off in [south Podunk?], now.

(laughs) I have to stay home, damn it.

JUNGE: Would you be out there flying, if you could?

GENE: I sure would.

JUNGE: What's keeping you from flying?

GENE: Oh, I don't know. I'm senile. I wouldn't mind busting myself, but I sure don't want to screw up a good airplane.

JUNGE: You're smart. You're not smart, because if you're senile, I'd like to be as senile as you at 85.

GENE: No, I know I got [00:47:00] the reflexes. If I had him for co-pilot, I could fly up a storm, because he'd keep me out of trouble. But you can't fly when you get -- not the kind of flying that we did.

JUNGE: So you're --

LOUISE: It was all high risk. The company, did all high risk.

GENE: Well, you've got to be able to remember things. And when I have to ask her, "Hey, where do we turn here?" To go to the grocery store in Billings, or something. I'd have a little bit of trouble trying to figure out the things you need to know.

JUNGE: Well, when you're flying those big bombers -- well, you're bombing, slurry bombing, I should say. How low are you flying those in the mountains and in the hills?

GENE: Well, it would be (inaudible) on 50, 100 foot high. We're probably 50 foot high when we dump the stuff, [00:48:00] but where the key to that that kept us surviving, and (inaudible) in the boys, is being able to

cope with the terrain and the weather conditions. I mean, you don't want to be headed uphill where you can't turn just a few degrees, and not be going uphill.

DUANE: I was telling --

GENE: And then the weather. You know, the wind currents and so forth. There's a whole lot to that, but the main thing is the terrain, isn't it, son. I mean, to hit this house (inaudible) be a gut sense, but you get up there in the mountain, and of course you've got to cope with various other things. But probably the terrain.

JUNGE: Gene, have you ever been in the -- up there flying those slurry bombers. Have you ever been in any sticky situations?

GENE: (laughs) I couldn't describe them all. [00:49:00]

JUNGE: Well, give me an example. I want to know because this, to me, is one of the most interesting things about flying, is you're always taking your life in your hands when you get behind the --

GENE: Well, I know one time, somehow I ended up with -- what did I, did I call it? I just had two turning and one burning. And one running. Out of a four engine airplane I was trying to ferry. I bought one out in Medford, surplus again. And I started home with it. And I put some Mickey

Mouse engines on it. Because it was just a hull that I was going to bring back here and get fixed up, and so I'd put - - what the hell, was that the 2600s on the inside. And [18-3s?] on the outside. The two outboard engines. And what had happened, was when I [00:50:00] came back, the two outboard engines were both the original engines on the airplane. And the next thing. You know, I took out of Medford, and you -- when you leave Medford and you come this way, well, you've got to go right up over a big mountain ridge before you get across the hill. But anyhow, I'm climbing, which was the thing that saved me, because as soon as I took off, I'm climbing for all it'll do. So I'm on an upward path out of Medford, and the next thing you know, one of the outboard engines hauled off and started barking, and I hit the feather button and it wouldn't feather. To stop the rotations, is what you call it. And so, while I'm coping with that and thinking, "Well, oh, hell." The other outboard did the same trick. Turned out later [00:51:00] what it was, was something to do with the old oil in them. But probably my fault, there, or somebody. But we just went out and bought the thing. Didn't know about it. So I got both outboards, but I could still get the two 2600s inboard, and I think I'm doing OK

there. And very shortly thereafter, well, one of the inboards popped a cylinder and rode it out and caught fire. So now I got two turning and one burning, and I luckily had been going up, so I had to turn around. Back down the same path, and got landed again. We ended up with the airplane home, and used it, didn't we? (laughs) Didn't you tear it up?

DUANE: Yeah, it got home all right after you [banged?] the motors.

GENE: Sent home for some more motors! (laughs) But I could tell you all kinds of stories like that.

JUNGE: Do you have any stories about Jack or Dick Ganser?

GENE: Oh, boy.

LOUISE: Tell him. [00:52:00] There's (inaudible) about Dick.

GENE: What's that one, Mom?

LOUISE: Well, Dick was the first --

GENE: Oh, yeah.

LOUISE: Go ahead. The first American airman to shoot down --

GENE: Down a German aircraft in World War II. The first American to shoot down a German aircraft in World War II was Dick Ganser.

JUNGE: That's in the record books?

GENE: Yes. I'm sure it is. He was --

JUNGE: What kind of a --

GENE: But for Jack, hell. I could -- I don't know how I
 could tell you how many things he pioneered and did. He
 was such a great little aviator.

DUANE: Robby -- Jack had the little pet flying squirrel that
 he used to --

GENE: Oh, yeah. Yeah! Yeah, he got him a little flying
 squirrel, was his pet. [00:53:00] And he'd go with him all
 the time and be out there. Doing his spraying, or
 something. But when he got back to Sheridan airport, he'd
 fly over the airport, picks his squirrel out the window.
 Then landing, the squirrel would come lay down to him, and
 be with him again.

JUNGE: Are you serious?

GENE: I'm serious! There's all kinds of things like that,
 wasn't there, son?

LOUISE: Remember that, Duane?

DUANE: No, I just heard the story.

GENE: I remember it very well.

JUNGE: (laughs) A flying squirrel.

GENE: There were other things like that, that Jack did. My
 first airplane that I owned -- that's another -- was a
 Curtis Robin. I got a model of that somewhere around here.

Nineteen -- always like that, because it was a 1929 model airplane, the same thing that [Ronald Wayne Corgan?] flew, if you've ever heard of him.

JUNGE: I can't remember the -- yeah, I've heard of him.

GENE: Curtis Robin.

JUNGE: What was the story behind it?

GENE: Well, the nice thing -- the Robin had a -- [00:54:00] it also had the world's first twin-row radial engine, and it had a radial engine and the rows. But it was the first one that had two rows. But they were -- it was a six cylinder that had two rows of three. (laughs)

LOUISE: Well, we found it. What was it, that I ended up, with all that (inaudible)?

GENE: [Seven six hotel?].

LOUISE: Seven six hotel. And you and I were flying on Alaskan. We went into this one runway that was water, and I can't ever remember if it was Anchorage or Fairbanks, and here's his airplane, sitting there. His Curtis Robin, sitting in the water. And Gene and I looked in the windows, and it still had all of --

GENE: It was on floats, then.

LOUISE: Yeah. But it had everything in that we had put in. He had changed the motor. And --

GENE: Well, I took this old radial. Curtis Challenger was the world's [00:55:00] first twin-row radial. I took that off and put a -- what'd I get that off from? The Stearman, I think, 1820.

LOUISE: Continental.

GENE: Oh, yeah, it was a continental. What the hell was it, son?

DUANE: I'm not sure.

JUNGE: If you do, why didn't you try to buy it off the guy, so you could have your original back?

GENE: Oh, I don't want it. I had a lot of --

LOUISE: Had too many other.

GENE: I had a lot of airplanes by the end.

JUNGE: How many airplanes have you had?

GENE: How many did we have? At one time, didn't we have...?

LOUISE: One hundred.

GENE: I don't know. It was pushing -- it got up to 80.

JUNGE: When you were in the business, you mean?

GENE: Yeah, back and forth through there.

LOUISE: He bought all of the Canadian C-119s.

GENE: Yeah, the Flying Boxcars, we had a craft of those. Put them all to work.

LOUISE: Did the flying on it, to test it. And he turned it --
put a bigger [00:56:00] engine on it, a jet. Gene?

GENE: Well, the 1-19 had a bad reputation. Because it was
such a capable airplane when both airplanes were running.
It was two engine. If you know, well, I've got models here
if you want to see one. But anyhow, the Flying Boxcar.
Get our model, Mom. But anyhow, when it was -- its piston
engines weren't the most dependable things in the world,
because they were a lot of horsepower and so forth. But
when both engines were running, the airplane would haul
20,000 pounds pretty graceful. Right there's one of them.
Here's the old 43-60.

JUNGE: What's it -- now, what's the model? What is this?
This was a --

GENE: This is a C-119. Those were 43-60 engines. They were
four rows of seven cylinders apiece.

JUNGE: And it had too much horsepower? [00:57:00]

GENE: No, it had just right, when they were both running.
It just flew so good with both of them running. But it was
so good with both of them running that they'd load it up,
and if one of them quit, you were just shit out of luck.
It wouldn't carry the full load on one engine. And people
were -- the military, them guys. You know, they'd have it

loaded with 20,000 pounds. Well, if they lost an engine, they didn't go very far until they crashed. So the airplane got a reputation that was really bad. Well, Mom, show him that engine -- that model -- again.

JUNGE: Did you fly one of these, then, you say?

GENE: Oh, we bought a whole craft of them.

LOUISE: You bought 21 or 22 of them.

DUANE: Yeah, we had 22 of them. [00:58:00]

GENE: Canadian surplus. This has Canadian colors on it, yet. But see, what I did, then, is I found --

DUANE: Don't let that fall over. (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

GENE: -- surplus, navy. You could go down to Litchfield Park, or down there in Tucson. And the scrapyards were just melting airplanes and so forth.

JUNGE: Was this Davis -- what they call Davis-Monthan?

GENE: Yeah, David-Monthan's one. There were three down there at Litchfield park. Davis-Monthan, this and that. Anyhow, I go back down to Tucson and you could buy -- they had, it was P2... Yeah, PV2. Or P3. Had the J34 jets on it.

DUANE: P2.

GENE: P2, yeah. Had these -- a little jet engine right there, J34. So I went down there and I got these jet engines. And I dug out the type certificate and approval [00:59:00] and everything else, but I wanted that jet engine up there. And when I glued that jet engine on, it just got [quick?], it'd still fly fine, because it had all that extra thrust.

JUNGE: That was your invention.

GENE: Yes.

JUNGE: Is that the way they made those, then, afterwards?

GENE: No, they didn't make them anymore. They were done making them. They were all sitting in the surplus yard getting tore up, except mine, because they had such a bad reputation.

JUNGE: Who made this model?

GENE: Oh, I don't know.

LOUISE: A friend of ours in Chicago, and it's all to scale.

GENE: It's an exact scale.

LOUISE: Exact scale.

JUNGE: So, did you have an engine go out on one of those?

GENE: A lot of them.

JUNGE: Really?

GENE: Well, sure. We had, like you said, we had all kinds of them flying all over the country. And overseas. Hell, we even flew them --

DUANE: Over 20 years.

GENE: Hell, we --

LOUISE: He [asked to see?] everything.

JUNGE: What's that?

GENE: I got the type certification on it, you know. They weren't -- [01:00:00] so you can prove. I had the type certificate and approval and everything else, and we flew them. Hell, we flew them overseas and everywhere else.

LOUISE: And it went to Africa.

GENE: Took one of them to Africa.

JUNGE: Where all have you been? I mean, just generally.

Where all have you been, in an airplane?

GENE: Oh, I've been over in China, and --

LOUISE: Well, not with it.

GENE: Not with one. It was a different airplane. What the hell were we doing over there? Oh, yeah, we were selling Taiwanese -- yeah. Selling these and teaching the Taiwan military. They got some Boxcars, and they come and got me and I go over there and teach their guys how to fly them.

JUNGE: When was that?

GENE: I don't know. When was it, Mom? She won't really remember that.

JUNGE: Fifties or sixties, you think?

GENE: Do you remember when?

LOUISE: Oh, it would've been in -- no, didn't go to Taiwan until --

GENE: Jason and John Wang, was --

LOUISE: The '80s?

JUNGE: Now, you've got to tell me something, all right?

[01:01:00] Because you know Bob [Isley?]?]

GENE: Yeah, quite well. I taught him to fly, so I know him.

JUNGE: You taught him to fly?

GENE: Yes.

JUNGE: Is he a good pilot?

GENE: Yes.

JUNGE: How come he wrecked?

GENE: Well, you answer that, son.

DUANE: I don't --

JUNGE: Let me tell you the story. I wanted to do an interview with Bob, over at Bighorn Airways. Finally got him to agree to sit down with me. He didn't want to do it. I knew he didn't. And I said, "Tell me about some of your accidents." And he said, "I don't -- no, I'm not going to

talk about those." I said, "All right, what if I tell you a story and you tell me if it's true or not?" He said, "All right." I said, "Well, you were spraying and you were flying regular --" what do you call them?

GENE: Yeah, just swaths.

JUNGE: Swaths, under a power line. "And you didn't realize, or had forgotten, that it was an [S?] powerline. And you caught a tip of your wing on one of those curves, and that drove [01:02:00] your plane right into the ground." And he said, "It's not true." I said, "Really?" He said, "Yeah." He said, "It was a right angle."

GENE: Yeah, well, sure. Well, you see, how many spray pilots -- he got hung up going under a power line, son. (laughs) That's a very common occurrence. I knocked down a couple of them.

LOUISE: That's not a wreck.

JUNGE: It's not a wreck?

LOUISE: Doesn't seem to be a wreck when they --

GENE: Well, it don't count.

JUNGE: Now, what is this? It doesn't seem to be a wreck when you do it?

GENE: Well, that don't count.

JUNGE: If you come out of it alive, it doesn't count?

GENE: Well, I think a lot of spray pilots have got hung up. That's one of the other things. Like I said you got enough luck, why, shit'll do for brains, because a whole lot of spray guys have got tangled up. That's one of the big hazards of spraying. There's powerlines, there's telephone lines. The one that really gets you is [01:03:00] when they get sneaky, like (inaudible). Sometimes in the air, you've got your big powerline. And then somebody comes along and puts a telephone line, one line, underneath it. And you see the powerline, but you can't the telephone line.

JUNGE: Have you been through a few of those?

GENE: Yeah, well, once.

JUNGE: Did it upset your plane?

GENE: No, I got the airplane back. But the telephone line, telephone service was out.

JUNGE: Tell me about Bob Isley, now. He's not going to tell me these stories, but he's got a scar across his face.

GENE: I'm trying to think of when he did crash.

LOUISE: Can't even remember that.

GENE: Well, I had to fetch him (inaudible) out, didn't I, Mother?

LOUISE: Well, that I don't remember. I don't remember Bob.

DUANE: Well, he crashed the helicopter, a Bell jet ranger, I remember that. For helicopters.

GENE: I remember that.

JUNGE: What were -- what was the circumstance?

DUANE: Oh, he's just flying it high in the mountains here, got into [01:04:00] icy... Moisture, and colder temperatures, and got -- crashed.

GENE: Duane'd have a lot more memory than I got, for all this stuff.

JUNGE: You can't auto rotate, or whatever they call it?

GENE: Well --

DUANE: Blades --

GENE: Can't auto rotate if you've got ice on them.

DUANE: Get ice on them, and the engine can ice up also, if it's not properly equipped for that. So, you know, you've got to have special equipment and a lot of the helicopters aren't fully equipped for flying in the ice.

JUNGE: Well, he came out of -- if he had two wrecks, he came out of both of them.

GENE: Well, he had more than two, I'm sure. I can't remember.

JUNGE: Well, I remember -- see, I was telling that I used to be a flagger on the (inaudible). [01:05:00]

GENE: Bob, yeah.

JUNGE: And now they do -- for Bob Isley -- and now they do everything with electronics, right? But in those days, they -- we had to hold the flags up on poles --

GENE: Oh, we know all about it. He flagged a lot when he was a kid.

JUNGE: Oh, did you?

DUANE: Yeah, I flagged for Isley when I was in --

GENE: High school, or --

DUANE: College. High school, college. I was teaching college and I was flagging. (laughs) I was teaching at Sheridan College.

GENE: Yeah, remember Jim Howell?

DUANE: Jim?

GENE: Howell?

DUANE: No, I don't remember the name.

GENE: Pilot over there, and --

LOUISE: An instructor.

DUANE: He was either from India -- his family was from India, or part Indian. But the guy was like a super, super intelligent guy. You know, he could just go get one degree, and then get more, and get another degree. So you know, he wanted to learn to fly, so he started taking

flying lessons [01:06:00] at Bighorn Airways. Next thing you know, he's instructing. And when I was a kid, I think he might have been one of my commercial pilot instructors, so I was just a kid in high school getting my commercial license, and then Howell had become an instructor in just a really short period of time, and then later on he started to go to, I think it was something in engineering. So he went to the university and then, by the time I got out of high school, then I went down to Laramie and so I had an electrical engineering laboratory that I had to have for one of my classes, and so I go in there, and here's Howell. He's instructing the electrical engineering [01:07:00] laboratory! And so, so now he's my instructor for that, and then later on I heard that he then got a doctor's -- he became a doctor, and I'm not sure exactly where he lives now. I haven't got --

JUNGE: Like a medical doctor?

DUANE: Yeah, yeah. Jim. Yeah. And it's not one of these basic general practitioner type things. It's -- I don't remember if it's neural surgery, or something. I don't know. (laughter) But this guy's just amazing in his abilities. But he had done some flagging, and I think that's kind of when he first got started and interested in

flying, is when he worked for Isley and then became a pilot for Isley, and then wasn't -- a short time later, then he went on and did some of these other things. But just a lot of examples [01:08:00] of people like that, that you cross paths with and they're real interesting. Personalities, and --

JUNGE: Do you remember Robby Duncan?

GENE: Oh I do, kind of. I could -- I think the name, really.

JUNGE: Well, I called him up the other night wine I was in Glenrock. I'm making a loop, doing interviews around the state. And I call him up and he and his wife are -- hell no, he doesn't want to do an interview! He and his wife are enjoying a glass of wine. And then he started going off on people he didn't like, or one particular person. And he apologized later, you know. He yaks for about an hour and says, "You've got to talk to Gene Powers! You've got to! Man, he is amazing! That guy can build anything!" [Blah, blah, blah?]. He was just going on, and I remember Robby because he was a spray pilot that summer with Bob, and they had those -- you know Commanders? [01:09:00] You know. And he was -- the last job that I had to work, and the last job he had to work that summer, or that spring,

spraying sage, was such that I was out flagging with a kid named Jay Bridger, and he claimed he was like the great great grandson of Jim Bridger. But he was part Indian, and he and I were the two flaggers. He was on the hillside opposite me, I was down lower. And it was the last swath, I guess, and Robby come over the top of my head and I went, "He's going to hit me! He's going to hit me!" I didn't know what buzzing was. So, I hit the dirt and my nose went under a sage brush, into the sand, and I was just amazed that this guy was trying to kill me! And then he went across up to the hill, and buzzed Jay. And Jay got mad. When he got back, he got mad. And he was going to fight him, and beat up Robby Duncan because [01:10:00] you know, he had to hit the group so fast that he split the back of his jeans open. And that -- and Duncan said, "Oh, I'm sorry. Come on, can't you take a joke? We're all going to go home." But it was either him or Isley, we were spraying -- what's that bug spray? Malathion.

GENE: Malathion, or [deodorin?], or [toxophine?], or chlordane. (laughs)

DUANE: Mix it with diesel and malathion.

JUNGE: Yes, and that was it. And they were making regular passes, and in that particular day, I heard a squeal. I

mean, their wheel -- one of the wheels hit a barbed wire fence, and I don't know how that thing -- I guess the plane was stronger than the wire, but I was standing there with the flag and all I remember is that the horizon started tilting, back and forth, and I had to slap my head. I thought, "What is going on?" Then I realized later, I think it was the malathion and diesel. It got --

GENE: Well, that could get you. That's kind of pertinent.

[01:11:00] Potent. Which is another reason I probably -- some of the stuff we put out, I pioneered this fire (inaudible). We were putting out some of that stuff that just an ounce of it or so would kill you. You had to be sure you didn't fly in your own swath, and all kinds of stuff.

JUNGE: Really?

GENE: Toxophine was that was. Deodorin was -- doesn't take hardly any of that to get you.

JUNGE: What was that?

GENE: Deodorin was another insecticide.

JUNGE: Deodorin? How do you spell that?

GENE: I don't know how the hell you spell deodorin.

DUANE: You know, a lot of that stuff, you know --

GENE: Is outlawed, now. Yeah, they quick.

DUANE: You know, you can't build it anymore. But it's kind of like DDT, but a lot worse. You know.

GENE: Well, one ounce of that would kill every bug on an acre.

JUNGE: How did you -- how did you work around it? With a mask?

GENE: Carefully.

JUNGE: (laughs) Geez. Well, I told [01:12:00] my wife, I said, "I'm glad we conceived both of our sons before I got sprayed with 2,4-D [in mouth?]." Because I don't know what they would've come out like! They outlawed --

GENE: A little like this, because he sure as hell got enough of it. (laughs) Or, I got enough.

DUANE: Yeah, I got soaked in that stuff so many times when I was a kid.

LOUISE: So did Gene.

DUANE: It was hard to work around it without getting, you know, getting that stuff on you. But you know, things have changed.

JUNGE: Well, they won't let you use it anymore, right?

DUANE: Some of it they won't, but I mean, they can still spray malathion, or 2,4-D.

JUNGE: Oh, can you? I didn't think they let people spray sage anymore. I thought --

GENE: Oh, well. You can't tell what the environmentalists want to do now.

DUANE: They do a lot of spraying of different stuff. You know, white top. [01:13:00] Different noxious weeds and stuff like that. A lot of ground spraying, as well. You could call the weed -- the county weed and pest, and they will come out and spray your place.

GENE: Well, we were a real pioneer with that spraying, and with aerial firefighting. You know.

DUANE: They spray mosquitoes in the town of Greybull. Different towns, higher spray planes. Our old company from Worland, Sky Aviation, down there, they still spray.

JUNGE: So you say you pioneered sage and --

GENE: Well, we built -- we did a lot of that. Like the aerial firefighting things. The tanks -- I've built what they -- really was the most successful tanker system was what I called the eight tank system. But I even had that in '97, as a fire bomber. But --

LOUISE: (inaudible)

GENE: -- I built a, a type of [01:14:00] -- yeah, the first thing you do is you get them, have to get a type

certificate on them. To (inaudible) it. Like that Privateer. I put eight separate tanks in there. And then I got that patented. I don't know what ever happened to that, but an inner velometer but I fixed it so that, before, you know, they'd open the door and all the soot fell out. So I built eight separate tanks, tied them into a gizmo that I designed, because I could set the clock so that it would time and progress dumping those things. And I could tell it, "I want to dump two doors at once." Or single doors. Or else, have my load. And half my load. But you could program this inner velometer, and gosh, I could build in -- like out here in the sage brush or grass fire, or light fuel. [01:15:00] We could build a, oh, a half-mile of fire line, single doors. And you just kick them out, according to -- set it according to our airspeed. So that one tank, just as soon as this one's going to quit, the next one'd go. And then the next one, and the next one. And it put a nice, even swath out. Or if you come to something that was really a hot spot, why, tell it to dump all four, or something.

JUNGE: Where'd you get this ability from?

GENE: Oh, at the University of Wyoming. And they give degree in engineering.

JUNGE: No, that's not what gives you your -- all your mechanical ability.

GENE: Yeah, it did.

LOUISE: Took his mother's brand new washing machine apart, at four years old. To see how it ran.

JUNGE: What was this? You tell it.

GENE: I don't remember.

LOUISE: His mother told me that.

GENE: Well, I remember getting in trouble because I took the engine out and made me a motor bike out of a Maytag [01:16:00] washing machine motor.

JUNGE: Your mother got mad at you for that?

GENE: Well, I think so.

LOUISE: Well, it was brand new.

JUNGE: You made your own motor bike?

GENE: Yeah.

JUNGE: How'd it work?

GENE: Good.

LOUISE: I don't... Know the story.

JUNGE: And you took this engine out of her washing machine in one day, put it on your bike, and took off?

GENE: Oh, I don't think it was one day. I don't think it was the brand one that I got the washing machine motor out

of. It was another. But I got it. I don't remember. All I know is I made -- that Maytag engines were good.

Little...

JUNGE: Well, this is -- this might be about the time that he was watching [Whizzers?] go up and down the street.

Remember the whizzer?

GENE: Whizzer?

JUNGE: It was called a Whizzer. It was a bicycle with a little motor on it.

GENE: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah. I remember that. It was about [01:17:00] that same time.

JUNGE: Yeah. But you didn't take your instructions from anybody. You didn't go to a mechanic's --

GENE: Well, the guy that did as much as any for me, that really helped me in this later on with the mechanical stuff, was Jack Ganser.

DUANE: Yeah, Ganser built that bicycle that I had when I was like, in the second grade, that had the little Briggs & Stratton motor on the back of it. The little lever that adjusted a tension pulley on a belt, and the belt had a pulley on the motor on the back, and then it was attached to another big pulley that was bolted to the spokes on the rear wheel. And you could pedal -- it was just a regular

old bicycle, like you might've seen from the '40s or '50s. You know, kind of a heavy old bike with the fat tires on it. [01:18:00] And you could pedal it, and get it going, and then just kind of flip that lever tension, and it would engage the drive belt, and that motor would putt you along, and then you release it and then you'd have to use your brakes to stop.

JUNGE: Did you say it had to attach to the spokes or the hub?

DUANE: Well, the pulley was --

GENE: The pulley's on the spokes. Had to mount a v-belt pulley.

JUNGE: On the bicycle spokes?

GENE: On the bicycle wheel, yeah.

DUANE: A big round pulley.

GENE: The motor sitting up behind.

DUANE: And then there was a pulley on the motor, and then a belt. But in between there, there was another little --

GENE: Gear ratio.

DUANE: -- lever that had another pulley on it. But when you turned the engagement crank, it was bolted or welded up to the front of the frame. [01:19:00] You'd rotate that, and it had a little lever that went back and it would move that pulley up against the belt and took the slack out of the

belt, and then the belt would start getting friction on the drive pulley that was back on the motor. It was like a little clutch.

JUNGE: Who built this for you?

DUANE: Well, Ganser built it, and then --

GENE: Jack.

DUANE: -- Dad ended up with it. But it had aircraft tubing mounted to fittings that were welded onto the rear of the bike. And the engine set on a little platform and hung off the back wheel down there, maybe a foot off the ground, behind you. And then, so the engine was back behind. So it was a little tail heavy when you just parked the bike. But when you got on the bike, it was just fine.

GENE: Well see, way back when, that was the one thing that Jack did all two of, [01:20:00] was -- and we did it. He got me into it. Was getting more horsepower. I remember Jack as an example -- I don't know if you know what a Super Cub is. But it was the first one that had 125 horse engine on it.

JUNGE: I've seen them, yeah.

GENE: Well, clear back before they ever had Super Cubs, Jack took the -- was it a P-11? Was 90 horse? Yeah. He took - - he went back, oh, we went back -- but he went back to

Lockhaven, where Piper was building airplanes. And got a Cub Cruiser engine. And it was 135 horses, I remember. Big Cub, and brought that engine back and glued it on the front of a J3. So now you've got this, all this horsepower on this, what used to be [01:21:00] 65 horse, and you've got 140 horse, or something like that, on it. And I mean, we did that all the time. Like, I took my Curtis Robin that had the Curtis Challenger and put the big engine on it. And got, I don't know what all we -- we always put a bigger engine on, didn't we, son?

LOUISE: On everything.

GENE: Got to have more horsepower.

JUNGE: I was going to say, you've got to have more horsepower. Was that -- you used to ride motorcycles, too, didn't you?

GENE: Oh, yeah.

JUNGE: Was that the way it was with motorcycles?

GENE: Oh, yeah. Yeah, I fell off a motorcycle a time or two.

DUANE: Well, you had a helmet.

GENE: I raced. Oh, I was -- at one time, I was... What the hell. [Scammells?] champ for southern Oregon. And raced motorcycles. I did bigger engines.

JUNGE: (laughs) What kind of cycles were they?

GENE: Well, the one that I liked the best was my '74 Harley.

[01:22:00] Back in those days. Well, I -- what I really liked was Triumph, later on. But then, and that -- and I did. God damn it, I get mixed up. I had the little Tiger Cub, wasn't it, son. Triumph gave me a new motorcycle each year, to race it, when I was flying out of Medford, Oregon. That little Tiger Cub, if you remember what it was. But then I had a... What's the bigger one, that... Damn it. I've still got one of them down there in the barn.

JUNGE: Did you have an Indian?

DUANE: The Bonneville.

JUNGE: Oh, the Bonneville?

GENE: Yeah, but no, I never did get along with Indians.

Well, at one time I had one of the old Indian Square Fours. Or Fours, that were inline. But that was back in the 20 -- '29, or '30, year Indian. I used to have an inline four cylinder engine. And it was too big. Wasn't much good.

JUNGE: Really. The DuPont chemical company owned those guys

[01:23:00] for a while.

GENE: Did they?

JUNGE: Indian, yeah. And now they're -- now they're making a comeback.

GENE: Are they?

JUNGE: Yup. Did you ride motorcycles, Duane?

GENE: (laughs) Yeah, he did.

DUANE: I started riding them when I was eight years old.

About the time I started flying Stearmans. Yeah, I couldn't -- again, I was -- Dad had a 650 Triumph, and that was when we were out in Oregon, and I couldn't put my legs down --

GENE: Yeah, he couldn't stop! (laughs) He'd get on going!

DUANE: But with my toes, I could get my toes on the foot pegs. And so he'd start it, and I'd climb up on it, and then he'd hold it, and then of course I could run the clutch and the throttle, and then I could hit the shifter lever down there by the foot peg. But he told me that I could only go to second gear. He wouldn't let me go anything more than second gear, [01:24:00] and so we put it in gear and I'd let the clutch out, and he'd kind of push me like he was, you know, teaching me how to ride a bicycle. I'd go ride the motorcycle all over, and then when I wanted to stop I'd pull up and he'd grab it and I'd climb off it.

GENE: He'd have to go around the block, or something.

DUANE: And so that's how I learned to ride motorcycles.

GENE: He couldn't reach the ground. I remember that now.

So, I'd forgot about that. That was out there in Medford.

JUNGE: What were you guys doing in Medford? I don't --

GENE: Well, I was flying airplanes out of there. I told you, when I --

DUANE: He worked for this guy named Rosenbaum, with this whole character. I mean, just --

GENE: Dale Rosenbaum. Rosenbaum Aviation.

DUANE: Amazing aviation pioneer guy himself, but he had a company like, that was very similar to Chrysler and Avery's. And don't know -- I don't think I ever saw a helicopter out there, that Rosenbaum had, but he probably flew them at one time or another. [01:25:00]

GENE: I don't think Rosenbaum ever had helicopters.

DUANE: Yeah, don't remember one. But he had a lot of fire bombers and sprayers, and stuff. And Dad was working for Rosenbaum. That's when we were out in Oregon.

GENE: I was bolting 985 engines on Stearmans. Give them 450 horsepower instead of 220.

DUANE: They had a fire tanker based in Medford, and the Medford airport was pretty wide open. Had sage brush, and a lot of kind of oak trees, or something, that really looked like oak trees. I don't know that they were elm

trees. I don't remember. But there's a distinctive kind of looking tree that you see out there, in that part of the country, a lot. Not -- not your spruce or pine tree, which there's a lot of, too. But these were broadleaf type trees, and they were [01:26:00] kind of like a pretty nice shade tree, but the terrain out there would be just a lot of these trees with kind of tall prairie grass and some sage brush, and stuff like that, that the airport was built on. And so you'd go out to the airport, and I don't even know that they had a fence around it. Maybe like a barbed wire fence, or something. But there wasn't anything like the big chain-link, tall, deer fences, and stuff that you see now. Or security fences, around airports. And off in one corner of the airport, they had this tanker base, and Rosenbaum had his aviation operation there with his airplanes, and they were on contract with the Forest Service and whatnot to --

GENE: Airtag, or firefighters.

DUANE: Firefighters. So there was always, during the summer, I would always hang out, out at the airport, as a kid [01:27:00] when I wasn't going to school, and there'd be all these tanker pilots and spray pilots, and all these medical emergency type pilots, and fly the old Twin Beeches

and things like that. And that as the thing that was being pioneered at the time, too, that company that was started by a guy. Milligan, I think it was.

GENE: Yeah.

DUANE: It was (overlapping dialogue; inaudible)

JUNGE: Medevacs? Like a medevac --

GENE: Well, American flights was the first, really, medevac thing.

DUANE: A lot of, a lot of in the fog -- Medford was in that valley that always would, in the winter --

GENE: Just fog into nothing.

DUANE: -- those times of year, would fog in. And the fog would be, you know, 100 foot thick or something, but just super dense when you couldn't see down into it to land. But if you played it right, you could take off, off -- [01:28:00] using your compass heading, and hold everything steady, and then climb up through it to get out of it. And then they would use dry ice. They'd carry dry ice on board, so that when they arrived back, if they had to land, they would drop dry ice.

GENE: Buzz the airport and throw dry ice out.

DUANE: And then the dry ice would condense --

GENE: Make it rain a little bit.

DUANE: -- the vapor, the water vapor.

GENE: You could see a little hole in the fog.

DUANE: And then it would clear out a little hole in the fog,
and then they could land.

GENE: It was kind of pioneering -- we were kind of
pioneering cloud seedings, which are (inaudible).

JUNGE: Really? Never heard of such a -- so you drop these,
like, bombs onto the --

GENE: No, you just --

DUANE: It's granular dry ice.

GENE: Have dry ice all ground up when you left, and then
you'd open a window and throw it out the window, when you
went.

DUANE: Because the dry ice would be cold, and then it would
condense -- the moisture would condense, and then it would
kind of like rain.

GENE: It would make the fog [01:29:00] condense. But not --
just make a hole in it, for a little bit. Like seeding a
cloud.

DUANE: I was like --

GENE: I was doing it.

DUANE: I was in grade school, but that's what they would be
doing. So there was all these guys there that did

different things, and some of the first turbo propeller airliners were coming in and out of there about that time. But mostly it was, you know, little piston airplanes and stuff. But I was just, just a kid. That would go out there and just kind of live out there, at the airport --

GENE: He'd spend the whole summer out there.

DUANE: Yeah. I would come to work. He'd take with him all the time, and so sometimes we'd go fly and this and that, with these guys. Would be standing around, but they wouldn't have a fire, or something, and so they'd have, off in this area, they'd have their gun shooting range, and so they're on the airport. You know, just shooting away. Target practicing, and stuff with all their [01:30:00] muzzle loaders, and various old rifles and stuff like that. Having contests, kind of like an old fur trap or ramp rendezvous thing going on. And so, there was always these racks of these old rifles and stuff in the standby shack, with powder and musket balls, and things like that around it. And you know, when somebody got the urge, they'd just say, "OK, let's go shoot some rounds." And so they'd have a contest. It was always, always a competition of some kind, and then they would have their motorcycles, and so then they'd have to have a dirt track out there. So they

created a track out there, and opened part. And they'd have races. So they'd race motorcycles while they were waiting.

GENE: Waiting for the fire bell to ring.

DUANE: And shooting. And then [01:31:00] they had a couple little Cubs, like J3 Cubs, that you could get two people in, and so they'd usually get -- one guy would be the pilot, and he'd be flying. The other guy would be in the back, and then I would get on the wing strut, and so I would ride --

GENE: On the wing struts.

JUNGE: Whoa, really?

DUANE: Yeah. I put my legs -- like the door -- window was pulled open on the side, and then the door would fold up. You know how the doors open --

GENE: So we got a three place Cub.

DUANE: On the struts. So, they'd open a window and then I could hang my butt over the little door that was out, and I could sit on the strut, and then be kind of back out in front. And then we'd take off and go out and land in a watermelon patch somewhere on --

GENE: And steal watermelons.

DUANE: -- on a dirt road, and get, you know, two or three watermelons, and take off. Come back to the airport, and then put the watermelons [01:32:00] on the ice. For the barbecue that was going to happen later that evening, after you know, the regular schedule. You know, they'd show up and they'd have various things that would take place during the day that would occupy you until dark, and then you'd go home and start over the next day. So --

JUNGE: Well, did you -- you were flying out there without any seatbelt, or anything.

DUANE: No, I was just hanging on.

GENE: You got to hang on, you don't --

DUANE: But I had my legs inside, kind of over the --

GENE: Butt out on the strut.

JUNGE: God. That's too bad somebody didn't get a picture of that.

DUANE: Didn't go fast enough to really create too much draft.

GENE: Hell, that's just part of it. I'd forgot a lot of that, but we did a lot more things like that.

DUANE: Yeah, I mean, Dad -- who was that writer that, that famous author, that wrote *Riders of the Purple Sea*?

JUNGE: Zane Grey.

DUANE: Yeah, no, he had -- didn't you tell me he had --

[01:33:00]

GENE: Yeah, down at --

DUANE: Somebody that he was acquainted with had a cabin on the Rogue River?

GENE: Yeah, down on the Rogue River.

DUANE: So, it didn't have any runways at all. So what you'd have to do is you'd have to go down on the river and --

GENE: Had fat tires, on the Cub.

DUANE: With the Cub, and then you'd land it --

GENE: Land in the water, but make sure you got to the bank just as you got --

DUANE: Going fast.

GENE: -- slow enough to sink.

DUANE: Because the water --

GENE: The water'd skip to the bank and stop.

DUANE: You'd skim across the water with your tires, like -- you know, when you're going 50 miles an hour, the water's about as hard as concrete. Like water skis.

GENE: You got to time it, right when you get to the banks.

DUANE: Because you land on the water, and then you fly the airplane on top of the water. And then you top the throttle so that you, just in time, before a sandbar, so

that just as you start to slow down, you roll out onto the sandbar and you stop. [01:34:00] That's how you land. And then when you take off, you've got to have enough room to be going at least fast enough to hydroplane, but not fast enough to fly, because there's not enough --

JUNGE: You did the reverse, then.

DUANE: You did do the reverse, and fly out. So he would take guys into the Rogue River --

GENE: Yeah, down there at the --

DUANE: -- and drop them off out in the middle of nowhere.

GENE: Well, I know who I took down there, goddamn it. Who's the famous general?

LOUISE: (inaudible)

DUANE: LeMay?

GENE: Yeah. Curt LeMay. He liked to go down to that cabin, and here -- I'm just a young guy out there, and he's -- if you've heard of Curt LeMay, well, he loved to go to Zane Grey's cabin down there. And he'd come out there and get in the Cub with me, and I'd take him down there, and take him to the cabin!

JUNGE: And that's how you landed?

GENE: Yeah, that's the only way you could.

DUANE: And Dad would take me down on the river, there, and do the same thing. And --

GENE: I forgot that. That's old Curt LeMay, I remember that.

DUANE: When I was a kid, learning to fly here, in Greybull, [01:35:00] you know, we're learning for real with formal instruction. And I finally got my pilot's license, where I could fly legally. And so, then, you know, the turd pond out here --

GENE: They call it the honey pond, down there.

JUNGE: Oh, yeah. The sewage lagoon?

DUANE: Yeah. So I would waterski across the sewage lagoon. Go down, touch the wheels, you know, and waterski.

JUNGE: Well, you got a little bit more solid matter in there.

GENE: Oh, yeah.

JUNGE: You did this, too?

GENE: Yeah, yeah.

JUNGE: You've got to --

DUANE: Did this for fun.

JUNGE: You've got to be good to --

GENE: Well, you went from there, and you --

JUNGE: You make a mistake, and you're --

GENE: Some of the other flying he did in the navy, and so forth, you could write books about. Or, what are you doing right now? If he'd tell you about, probably.

DUANE: Yeah, it gets pretty sporty over there, sometimes. When you're chasing bad guys.

JUNGE: Why are you doing this at age 61, 62?

DUANE: [01:36:00] I've just been flying all my life.

GENE: He's kind of like me. I told you, never worked.

DUANE: You know, and it's like --

GENE: If he couldn't get paid to do that, he'd probably be paying them to do it.

JUNGE: You love to fly.

DUANE: Going back to the old flying stuff, you know, you try other things, and it just seems like you always go back to doing what you kind of --

GENE: You get interested in all he's done, you need to go over here. He's a neighbor, right over here. See the wonderful house he's got over here, and the wife and all. And like I said, the kids that are going to Annapolis and -

-

JUNGE: Oh, you live just across the way, here?

DUANE: Yeah.

GENE: Oh, about a mile over there.

DUANE: Not quite.

JUNGE: You got the same kind of place as your dad?

DUANE: Yeah, we don't have a pond. We've got a little --

GENE: He's got a beautiful view.

DUANE: About 80 acres.

JUNGE: What does your wife do?

DUANE: Well, she was a -- she had her own barbershop and hairdresser shop here in town, for about almost 20 years, [01:37:00] now. She's kind of retired from that, but she's still got some really old timey customers that she had over 20 years ago, that still come out to our place, now. And she does a little part-time work for some of her old-timey customers, but pretty much just is concentrated on raising our kids, and --

JUNGE: Well, they're all grown.

DUANE: -- attending all their, you know, school events. And taking care of the ranch out there, and --

JUNGE: Gene, how does it make you feel that you got a granddaughter going to the naval academy?

GENE: I'm pretty proud of it. I'm pretty proud of it. The others are just as talented.

JUNGE: Did you know Clyde Ice?

GENE: Oh, sure. Did I know Clyde Ice. (laughs)

JUNGE: I've got to tell you a couple stories, but you tell me
-- well, you tell me some stories about Clyde.

GENE: Well, I'll have to think about it. I could -- I --
[01:38:00] Clyde Ice. (laughs)

JUNGE: Did you know him?

DUANE: No, I didn't know him. I know when Dan Hawkins was
inducted into the South Dakota Hall of Fame, I think Clyde
Ice is also one of the Hall of Famers from South Dakota, is
he?

JUNGE: Yeah. Spear-fish, yeah.

DUANE: Wasn't he, for spear-fish? And I just remember,
during that time, there was quite a review of Clyde Ice's
history, and one of the things that I think he was well
known for was his -- a certain trip where it was just
really, really horrible weather and so he was quite an
accomplished all-weather, seat of the pants, kind of a
flyer, where you're flying in an environment that is not
any kind of a structured airspace [01:39:00] where you have
the benefit of navigational aids, or charting, or something
like that. It's all just pretty much, had learned that
area from having been there and flown in and out of there,
so that you're familiar with the country and the terrain
and the elevation, from you know, just practice. And

skills, and having done it. And then having to put yourself into a, you know, almost a zero-zero weather condition, and flying off of compass headings, and having altitude restrictions in mind, just from your memory and experience, and flying in that environment without anything other than just some basic [01:40:00] flight instruments, you know, to keep yourself level, or keep track of what direction and what altitude you're at.

JUNGE: What is zero-zero? What does that mean?

GENE: Zero ceiling and zero visibility.

JUNGE: Zero what?

GENE: Zero ceiling and zero visibility.

DUANE: All that fog --

GENE: All that fog. Can't hardly see your feet when you're walking.

DUANE: Out in Medford, for Mercy Flights. And they were doing those --

GENE: Dry ice, and things, and stuff.

DUANE: Flying in the fog. In straight fog, where you can't -
- you can't see, you know, so it'd be just like, pitch black.

JUNGE: I remember, I interviewed him, about 25 years ago. He was 102.

GENE: Really?

JUNGE: And his son Howard -- I guess he had Howard, Randall, and Cecil.

GENE: I didn't know them. I don't think.

JUNGE: Well, his son Howard was retired in his 70s, when he sat in the room and we talked. And he had flown for Governor Janklow, of South Dakota. Something like that. But I -- he told me this story [01:41:00] and maybe it's the same one, where a doctor called him up one night, got him out of bed, and said he needed a flight to help some woman deliver a baby. And Clyde said, "No, ask the guys down the airport." And he said, "I have." He says, "Well, ask them again," or something like that. And the doctor called him back and said, "I cannot get anybody to help, and I need to get out to this woman." And he goes, "All right." And it was terrible. The conditions, like you said, were rotten. And he followed a telephone line. And he said -- he about knew where this ranch was, where this woman was having her baby. But he knew that that telephone line took a turn, and so just before he got to that point -- talk about memory -- he started, what do you call it, banking?

GENE: Yeah.

JUNGE: To make a turn, and he said, if he hadn't remembered where that bend was, he would've been lost. He and the doctor both. But as it was, they could follow that telephone line clear to the ranch, land the plane.

[01:42:00] and it was in a terrible wind as well as a snowstorm, and they somehow or other managed to get it tied down on a hill, and the doctor went in and delivered the kid.

GENE: Well, see, that's -- to us, in our day, IFR didn't mean instrument flight rules. It meant, I follow the road.

JUNGE: (laughs) I follow the road! Did you do that a lot?

GENE: That's IFR. (laughs) A lot, yeah! Definitely.

DUANE: Yeah, we used to fly from here clear to Alaska, following the --

GENE: ALCAN Highway.

DUANE: -- ALCAN Highway, and stuff. Under the clouds, real low, and the rain.

GENE: See, we were one of the main contractors and firefighters, at the whole damn state of Alaska for many years. But we were the main firefighter up there, and then hauling fish. I don't know how many thousand pounds of fish did we --

LOUISE: But we did that in --

GENE: Three million pounds, once, I hauled, of fresh salmon out of, [01:43:00] out of [Homer?].

LOUISE: And Egegik.

GENE: And Egegik, and Kodiak.

LOUISE: Eating salmon.

GENE: He'd go up there right when the salmon season, and had these airplanes up there, and land out there on the beach when the tide -- they got a 20 foot tide up there. When the tide goes out, you land on a beach, you fill that [son of a bitch?] full of salmon that they've caught, and you tail out of there before the tide comes back. We did a lot of that.

LOUISE: Twenty thousand pounds have been hauled, in the (inaudible).

GENE: This guys' hauled 20,000 pounds.

LOUISE: All that, into King Salmon, and put it on the 97.

GENE: Take this, and then he'd haul 50,000. So, this guy takes it from the beach out there and takes it into King Salmon. Big airport. Unload it out of here, and put it in that thing, and that thing'd take it to... To Anchorage, or to Fairbank -- or, not Fairbanks, but Anchorage or where the hell?

LOUISE: Bremerton, Washington. You made some (inaudible)
there.

GENE: And Homer.

LOUSIE: Homer. [01:44:00]

GENE: Homer Seafood. Kodiak. But take fish, and go right
back, and get another load.

JUNGE: You sold them?

GENE: Well, we were doing our contracting for -- the guys
were paying us. Homer Seafood company, or something, would
--

DUANE: And they'd bring them on the beach, and then when the
tide went out, it was like a 30-foot tide, so when that
tide come in, it would just swallow up the beach. So you
had to time it during certain hours of the day, so that you
can land on the beach, and if you didn't land in the right
spot, the airplane would mush in and get stuck, and then
the tide would come in.

GENE: That was the end of the airplane.

DUANE: Demolish the airplane. Some of the other operators
that were doing that same kind of stuff, that had their own
airplanes, or whatnot, and weren't quite savvy enough to
get it all sorted out, and they actually lost a few
airplanes where they had either crashed on the [01:45:00]

beach or got stuck, and then the tide came in and covered up the airplane.

GENE: You had to time it so you landed kind of in the wet sand, but the whatever. But the one thing you could not do was turn around. No breaks. And, roll to a stop, and stop right where they could come out. There was a fork lift, and put the salmon in the airplane. And then take off straight ahead, again. Because if you tried to pivot, or anything, to start that wheel down in the sand, you were going to be there, then, until -- well, that was the end of your airplane. But we did an awful lot of salmon hauling.

JUNGE: Was that -- was that a good business to be in?

GENE: Sure, sure. Well, I don't know. (laughs) It was fun, wasn't it?

DUANE: Until the seafood company went broke.

LOUISE: And then we wound up with stock.

DUANE: And then we owned part of a worthless seafood company.

GENE: Because we didn't get paid.

LOUISE: There was the -- [01:46:00] some of that crew. Here's the airplane, that flew it.

JUNGE: That's the PVY. Is that what you call it?

LOUISE: No, that's your --

GENE: C19.

LOUISE: C-119, with the twin tail. And here's the -- these are totes. And that's what they'd load on the back of the airplane, because the back of the airplane would open up and you'd haul 20,000 pounds of fresh salmon.

JUNGE: Well, did they -- thank you, for showing me those pictures!

GENE: We've got all kinds of pictures there, of everything.

JUNGE: Did they gut out the salmon, or were they frozen?

GENE: No, they were plum fresh.

DUANE: Just packed them up in -- loose, in ice, and then they would go to the processing plant and take care of it.

JUNGE: You didn't even gut them out.

GENE: No.

DUANE: No, they were just fresh.

GENE: Plum fresh.

DUANE: They just were fresh caught.

LOUISE: One of those totes in a load.

DUANE: They'd throw them in there with ice.

GENE: Some of them would still be flopping, in the ice.

[01:47:00] You got to get them to -- a few hours to get them to the cannery, so that they could --

JUNGE: Process.

GENE: Process them.

DUANE: And if you ever got stuck or waylaid, and you had a loaded -- tote loads of salmon, then the salmon all thawed out and started to spoil. It stunk pretty bad.

LOUISE: (inaudible) Bumblebee salmon.

JUNGE: Oh, really?

LOUISE: Yeah.

JUNGE: Oh, that's what we were eating?

LOUISE: A can of it to my -- this day.

JUNGE: (laughs) OK. What's this?

LOUISE: Here is the beach.

JUNGE: Yeah. Oh, I see. Yeah, I see.

LOUISE: Before we started carrying the fish, we hauled out all of their boards and everything to build their little house.

JUNGE: And here's all their -- all their nets.

LOUISE: Nets, before they'd get the -- as they picked, yeah.

So you had to --

JUNGE: I know what this operation is about. [01:48:00]

Because my brother and I did that one time, up in Dillingham.

LOUISE: Oh, well, we were --

GENE: We hauled fish out of Dillingham.

JUNGE: Did you?

LOUISE: Yeah.

JUNGE: What -- let me go back a step here. What exactly --
 where exactly did the expression, fly by the seat of your
 pants, come from?

DUANE: Just feeling the airplane move by sitting there. You
 know, just kind of like, you know, rollercoaster. And you
 feel it light, you feel it heavy. Feel yourself kind of
 leaning out in the curve, to the outside. You know, the --

GENE: See those clouds, out there?

DUANE: -- the centrifugal force moving you around. Your
 sense is right in the ass of your pants.

GENE: One of the things would be just like those clouds,
 which I did when I was just a kid, learning to fly again.
 To fly, you didn't have instruments in those days, or stuff
 for the [dam?]. And so, [01:49:00] What I'd do is go find
 one of them clouds and fly around it. And if I could see
 underneath, there was a lot of air underneath it, too,
 clean air. And I'd drive into the cloud. And then you've
 got to sit there and you've got to fly. By the seat of
 your pants. And if you start to lose it, the one thing you
 always had to really be careful of was putting a negative G
 on the airplane, or something. You know, you could end up
 -- which a lot of guys did. They called it a graveyard
 spiral, but you could -- you could end up with the thing

kind of spiraling down, and then you know that you're getting a lot of extra air speed, so you think you're getting extra air speed, so you haul back on the stick, and spiral, and tear the wings off. Or else you could end up getting it kind of right, and you do a loop. You didn't even know you're doing it. You get (inaudible). In a lot of ways, you get in trouble. [01:50:00] In fact, there was a compass and needle ball up there, but got to where -- that's the way I learned to fly in a cloud. Because you could fly in there and be real careful. Especially if you had that needle ball right there. You can fly with that. Nothing but that one instrument, to see up there.

JUNGE: On the mantle?

GENE: On the mantle. That, and an air speed indicator, and the compass. Is enough, back in our days, to fly IFR. Hell, that's all the air -- the original air mail pilots had. And so forth. And --

JUNGE: Well, you weren't too far from that in time.

GENE: No. But it was fun. But that's the way we did it, and that's by the seat of the pants.

DUANE: Yeah, and then if you -- if you're not in the clouds, you didn't need any instruments. You could fly with no

airspeed, no [out rudder?]. You didn't need anything, you just --

GENE: Hear and feel.

DUANE: -- by the seat of your [01:51:00] pants. You could tell when the airplane was getting slow, just by the sound of the air. You know, you knew the performance capabilities, so if you saw a ridge coming up in front of you, you knew that I've got to start climbing way back here, and you just sort of start easing over to make sure that you have enough room, and if it didn't look right, then you'd also know when you'd need to turn away from it so that you never got too close, where you had to crash into the ridge.

JUNGE: Isn't that what happened in Bomber Mountain, up here? Or do you know what happened on Bomber?

GENE: That could be one that probably is about --

DUANE: During the war, when that airplane --

JUNGE: Yeah, '40.

DUANE: It was just in the clouds, and didn't know they were that low. They just flew --- they were flying across the country. If I remember it, weren't they going form --

LOUISE: Rapid City.

GENE: Yeah, they were going from --

JUNGE: They were going from, [01:52:00] I think, Walla Walla to somewhere in Nebraska. Grand Island.

DUANE: They just didn't have enough altitude, when they were cruising.

LOUISE: Captain didn't know how to --

DUANE: Cruising across there, didn't realize how high they should be.

JUNGE: So, you -- here's something I've always wondered about. Let's say you fly into a cloud. How do you know you're going to not go head-on into somebody else that's flying into it?

GENE: (laughs) Well, first thing is, like Duane told you. Back when, there wasn't that many airplanes up there. If your -- nowadays, they've got all kinds of things. Air controllers, and ground radar. And so forth. But back then, why, if you had enough luck, shit would do for brains.

JUNGE: Where does it -- where does the word, or the term, barnstormer, come from?

GENE: Well, that [01:53:00] comes from guys that were, in the early, early days, previous to us, but back in the late '20s or early '30s, they were all guys that were running around putting on little airshows, or something like that.

And they would go to land in this guy's -- you know, the county fair over here, or over there. But they were running around giving rides, and so forth. And landing in the hay fields. Or a ranch, to do it. And they were all barnstormers.

JUNGE: That's almost exactly what -- well, I think that's how Clyde Ice got started.

GENE: Yeah, it was.

JUNGE: I asked him. I said, "Well, what was your first interest in aviation?" He said, well, he used to -- out on the ranch or the farm, in South Dakota, he used to herd cattle. And so he -- he'd lay under this tree, and he'd watch these cows. But then [01:54:00] he'd look up in the sky and gaze at the clouds, and think to himself, "I wonder what it'd be like if those cows could fly, and I could ride one of those cows." Now, that's old time.

LOUISE: (inaudible)

JUNGE: Oh, did you take that off? Did you take that off?

LOUISE: No.

JUNGE: Oh, yeah, it just -- it just pulled off. (laughs)
There it is.

GENE: Pull it out here -- 1929 Curtis Robin, I bought my first airplane.

JUNGE: This is the Curtis Robin?

GENE: That's a Curtis Robin.

JUNGE: God, who made --

GENE: The Challenger.

JUNGE: Did Texaco make these? Little models?

GENE: Well, Texaco used them. For their (inaudible).

JUNGE: How many cylinders? One, two, three -- six cylinders.

GENE: It's six cylinder radial. That's Curtis Challenger.

JUNGE: Oh, here. Let me -- let me put this back on you,
here. Sorry, I should've warned you about that.

GENE: Well, I should've known. But then, you've got to
trust [him?] for that. [01:55:00] That's the risk you take
when you deal with me.

JUNGE: (laughs) This is a Curtis Robin. How many horse power
did this have?

GENE: What was it, 100 -- I've got this. I've got one of
them Challenger engines around here. I can show you, down
in the old barn, still.

JUNGE: Well, we need to get a picture before we -- before I
leave here. Got to get a picture of you and --

GENE: That was the world's first twin-row radial.

JUNGE: Where's the twin-row?

GENE: Two right there. They're not -- they're not quite in a row. I'll show the engine down there. But I took that - - when I got it, my first engine, you know, and then with Jack, I set up with a 220 Continental on there, instead of that.

LOUISE: That's what it had on it in Alaska.

GENE: That's the one that's sitting up there, still. Or, one of them, maybe, yellow. But that was the first -- "Wrong Way" Corrigan flew that thing. Doing Lindberg's flight, if you ever heard. They wouldn't clear him to -- you'll have to study up [01:56:00] on him, if you ever heard of "Wrong Way" Corrigan?

JUNGE: Yeah, I have, but I never --

GENE: See, he was wanting to fly across Lake Lindberg and go to Paris. Cross there. And the country wouldn't give him a clearance to do it. Cross this, you know. Cross the other countries. So, Corrigan got himself a Robin and he filed a flight plan from, I think it was Newark, New Jersey. I had some pictures of that. Even when he was taking off. Probably I still have that. Some old pictures they got out of an old *National Geographic*. But anyway, he got his Robin, and he filled it up with -- you know, just maxxed it out with extra fuel in the cockpit, and

everything. Or in the back seat. Was a three place airplane. You set one guy in front and then two behind. In the back seat. But he got it all fixed up and filed a flight plan so he could get it all going out of --

[01:57:00] I believe it was Newark. Only he got mixed up and went the wrong way. He ended up in Ireland instead. He was going to go -- he was going to non-stop from Newark to San Francisco. Or Vermeer to Seattle, or some damn thing. And that's why he got the airplane all ready, and told everybody all about it. But then when he took off, he got headed the wrong way, and so he ended up in Ireland.

JUNGE: "Wrong Way" Corrigan.

GENE: Then he went from Ireland to Paris, and he made it.
In a Robin.

JUNGE: Clyde was telling me how he learned to fly in the --

GENE: Well, I got that bumner Robin over there.

JUNGE: Where, in Spearfish?

GENE: Yeah, that's where I got it.

JUNGE: What'd he sell it to you for? How much?

GENE: I think it was \$400, or something like that.

JUNGE: Did you fly it back?

GENE: Oh, yes.

JUNGE: You knew how to fly, obviously, at that --

GENE: Well, yeah.

JUNGE: He said he -- he worked for a barnstormer, and I
didn't -- [01:58:00]

GENE: Well, I'm sure.

JUNGE: But anyway, I guess there were some people out there
waiting for rides. I thought it meant something about
flying over a barn, or --

GENE: No, no. It was -- they call it barnstormer. Well,
you might have done that, but guys were barnstormers that
run around all these two-bit air shows giving rides and
stuff like that.

JUNGE: That's what he doing. He said this guy hired him to
take -- help him with his customers, and he said this guy
was quite a coffee hound, he called him. And so he'd go
into town and get coffee every so often, and I guess one
time he left. He had a line of clients that wanted to go
flying, and this one guy was insistent, and insisted to
Clyde, he wanted to fly. And so Clyde knew just enough, I
guess, to get the thing started and down towards the end of
the runway. So he taxied down to the end of the runway and
came back, and the guy said, "You don't understand. I want
to fly." OK, so he went down again. Revved it up, came
back, and he said, "Man was irate. He wanted to fly." so

he said, "I just --" I don't know, what do you do? Pull back on the [01:59:00] stick on those?"

GENE: Yeah.

JUNGE: He says, "I got towards the fence," and he says, "I pulled back on the stick, and I flew to a town 10 miles away. Made a circle and came back." And I don't know why he didn't land in the same place, but I said, "Well, how'd you land?" And he says, "Well, I looked down there and I saw this stubble field." And he says, "I figured I could land there." so he just got down low, lower and lower. Just level with the stubble field, and then turned the key off. Can you do that?

GENE: (laughs) Well, you could, I guess.

JUNGE: So he said, you know, the sequel to this thing is that --

GENE: I don't know [whose?] he'd be. He had to know how to fly to do this. This wasn't somebody that never flew before.

JUNGE: Really, OK.

GENE: Absolutely. That wouldn't happen, because one of the trickiest things about -- you'd have to be able to do for what you just described, is how to run your feet.

DUANE: That's the hardest part.

GENE: That's the hardest part of that, flying those old airplanes.

DUANE: Not running the stick, but the rudder pedals.

JUNGE: So, he would've had to do some --

GENE: Yeah, he couldn't have done it.

DUANE: Yeah, without practice [02:00:00] he would've --

GENE: He wouldn't have -- he'd have ground looped.

DUANE: Crashed. Probably on --

GENE: On take-off, or, yeah.

DUANE: See, if he was going fast down the -- down the grass trip, and then cutting it and turning around, coming back, he already was proficient with his rudders.

GENE: Absolutely.

DUANE: You couldn't make it from one end of the field to the other unless you were just creeping real slow, taxiing. Unless you were proficient with your rudder.

GENE: You do all your steering on the ground, with your feet. And of course, once you start to go, well, you've got -- if you've got individual brakes, which some had one kind or some had others -- but --

DUANE: A lot of those planes didn't have any brake.

GENE: You had to -- yeah, the robin didn't. It didn't have any tail wheel. Had kind of a hook and a skid back there.

But [02:01:00] once it got slow, and had the throttle closed, you didn't have any wind over your rudder, and you didn't' have any control at all, for direction.

JUNGE: Well, he must have been up in the air, then, with this --

GENE: Yeah, he knew what he was doing if he did what you said. He'd had some -- he'd had plenty of practice.

JUNGE: On the ground. He could've done it on the ground, right?

GENE: Well --

DUANE: Both. He can't do it on the ground, then once he got in the air, he had to know how to keep it from stalling out.

GENE: He could do it pretty quick, like you know, five or six hours of the right instruction in the right airplane. And of course, a lot depends on what kind of an airplane he was in! Some of them are a lot tougher than others.

JUNGE: Well, I think -- wasn't he flying in the teens? He would've been flying them ten of so years after the Wright brothers took off.

GENE: Well, that could be, too. That could be different. But, yeah.

JUNGE: He says he --

GENE: Well, if he's clear back to [02:02:00] one of those old biplanes, like the Wright brothers had, why, maybe he did what you said.

JUNGE: Well, I don't know. But he --

GENE: It wouldn't ground loop, maybe. Or who knows.

JUNGE: He -- I don't know.

GENE: And what kind of speed they flew at, you know. Who knows what their air speed --

JUNGE: What do you suppose it was?

GENE: Twenty, thirty miles an hour. (laughter)

JUNGE: He said this guy, later on, came to me. He says, "He came up to me and he said, 'Do you remember me?'" And Clyde says, "Sure, I remember you. I gave you your first airplane ride." And the guy says, "That's right!" And he says, "I didn't have the heart to tell the guy it was my first, too." (laughs)

GENE: You know, I'm trying to think. I know a story or two about Clyde Ice, that -- come up with, sooner or later.

JUNGE: Yeah. Here, I'll put that right there.

GENE: But, because he was quite a pioneer.

JUNGE: Yeah, he -- well, he told me he'd flew a Ford tri-motors.

GENE: He had a tri-motor when I [02:03:00] got that steel
(inaudible) there.

JUNGE: He had a Ford tri-motor?

GENE: Yeah.

JUNGE: And he used to people -- either commuters or tourists,
in New York. Around New York City. With a tri-motor. And
then he also flew -- I don't know whether it was
contraband, or what he flew. But he flew over the Mexican
border, and he said he had guys on the ground shooting at
him with rifles. And I don't know if all this is true.
How many hours could a guy like that accumulate in a
career?

GENE: Many, many hours. Hell. Back in those days, well, we
used to fly 12, 14 hours a day. And sometimes 18 hours a
day, depending.

JUNGE: How many hours have you flown, Gene, you think?

GENE: I don't have any idea. I quit counting at 40, 50,000.
Or something like that. But --

JUNGE: That's the most I've ever heard anybody fly.

GENE: Well, I flew from the time I was just a kid, for many,
many years. And I know several [02:04:00] more than one
year, when I was at way over 1,000 hours. In a year.

With, like contraband, hell. Hell, I smuggled 20,000 pounds of marijuana from... Where the hell was it? In --

DUANE: Colombia.

GENE: Colombia. And lost it all to --

JUNGE: Where did you get that stuff?

GENE: Yeah. What it was, was the DEA hired me to go down there --

LOUISE: You want that on the --

GENE: So, (inaudible) the DEA was, you know, they hired me because they're trying to catch the drug smugglers. So, they got displaced down there in Barranquilla. That was it, Barranquilla, Colombia. So I go down there to Barranquilla, and I had one of their DEA guys with me, for co-pilot. And we land down there, to where the [02:05:00] guys -- you know, they'd -- it was their secret whatever. Find the drug smugglers. And they wanted the guys who were getting it up here, where you delivered. So I land down there, and I can't remember now what the hell. One way or another, the good guy, I called him -- the DEA guy -- got out in Barranquilla, but I had to go out, down to some field, down there. And I loaded up my dope, and started back with it. Well, I'm on my way back, and I don't know where the hell to go with it, so I'm thinking... I was

supposed to take it to a spot somewhere down there, around Douglas, Arizona. But here I am, coming back, and all of a sudden another airplane come in behind me. [02:06:00] And came up and talked to me on the radio, on 122-8. And says, "Hey, right up here's a road. Land there." So I landed there and they unloaded all my dope, and I got in my airplane and went to Tucson. And the government had just paid me (laughs) to import 20,000 pounds of -- and they, these smugglers got it before -- they got their dope. Because they made me land. Instead of landing where I was supposed to, where they were going to raid and catch everybody. I landed where the dope guys -- they knew I was -- they were just that far ahead of the government. And they -- oh, geez.

JUNGE: Have you had any stories like that, Duane?

DUANE: Not quite like that.

GENE: You've heard that story.

DUANE: Yeah, I was there, during that time. I remember the whole story. And [02:07:00] when the airplane -- Dad got back, there was chunks of jungle leaves underneath the wing, in these little inspection covers. These little plates, underneath the wing, that have screw panels that you take off to look inside, to inspect. And they had been

so heavy when the drug guys loaded the airplane -- of course, they weren't measuring any weight at all. They just were cramming it in, as full as it could go. And it was a big airplane. Big four engine airplane. And it had a full load, and when they took off, just barely made it off the --

GENE: Went out through the brush.

DUANE: -- over the top. And it had little chunks of trees in it, when it got back to the hangar. We were cleaning that out of it.

JUNGE: You remember that?

GENE: I remember that. I was --

JUNGE: How old were you then?

DUANE: Oh, I was probably -- [02:08:00] I was out the navy. Well, I was still in the reserves. I was off active duty. I'd gotten back from active duty in the navy. I spent 20 years, part of that in the naval reserve slot. So, I --

GENE: Yeah, I made several drug runs.

DUANE: -- naval reserve duty, once a month. I'd go up to Seattle, and fly with the navy up there, and then I worked steady with the company for over 20 years. Almost 30 years.

JUNGE: What sort of planes are you flying now? Or is that
classified?

DUANE: No, we're flying [Keen Airs?] now.

JUNGE: OK. So --

GENE: He was a P -- P3, or P2 pilot, once.

DUANE: P3, in the navy.

JUNGE: What's a P2, P3? I don't know what that would --

GENE: We've got a model of that, somewhere.

DUANE: Four engine turbo propeller. Submarine chaser,
(inaudible) bomber.

JUNGE: OK. [02:09:00] So you've flown just about every kind
of plane, like your dad?

DUANE: Most of everything we had here, I've flown at one time
or another, other than -- I didn't get into the helicopters
much. I flew a little bit, you know, with the pilots
supervising. But I didn't -- never do any of the ratings
in helicopters. But I got 20... Twenty-one type ratings.

GENE: I don't know how many type ratings I had. I had a --
I count -- I can't remember how many I had, type rating.
But it was all -- well, I was a flight examiner, an FAA
designated flight examiner. And a flight engineer
examination. Designated. Had all kinds of ratings.

JUNGE: So, you could --

GENE: I could give somebody else a commercial pilot ride.

[02:10:00]

JUNGE: But what about in mechanics work, fixing engines? Did you --

GENE: Fixing engines? Well, I never was -- never got an A and P, or --

LOUISE: He didn't need one.

GENE: I didn't need one.

JUNGE: (laughs) Did you do your own inspections, then?

GENE: Well, we had a lot of good -- very good people working for us here, but otherwise I did my own. But we had many, many really specially qualified people.

JUNGE: One thing I've got to ask you on this Barranquilla trip. You know, if somebody would've asked me, "Look, we want you to take part in our drug bust." I would've just said, "Find another guy." Why did you do it?

GENE: Sounded like fun to me.

JUNGE: (laughs) That's pretty gutsy.

LOUISE: He told me (inaudible). The guy in the DEA said, "You can be in touch with our office all of the time.

[02:11:00] We'll know where he is every minute. And he'll be back in three days."

GENE: That's what the DEA told her.

JUNGE: But they lost him.

GENE: They lost us.

JUNGE: They lost that one.

LOUISE: And he -- they got in a storm coming out of Barranquilla, and they figured he was dead, or he disappeared.

GENE: Well, it was -- yeah, they were followed. They had a -- for a while they had a marker in the airplane, and they had one of their guys in one of Duane's P3s, or something. Was supposed to keep track of me. Flying above, way up there, and keep track. And it got -- the weather got so God damn bad that the guy in the P3 government airplane thought, "He's dead, and I can't fly here anymore."
(laughs) And they lost me.

LOUISE: Well, and then they changed the airport. [02:12:00]

GENE: And that's when the drug guys told me to go somewhere else.

LOUISE: They found him and they flew real low, and it was frightening to Gene because he figured that that would piss the drug people off. That he was -- that they knew where he was. So, he let them know, one way or the other, and just hoped and held his breath that they would stop. And, or, contact him anymore, or fly away, or anything. And he

figured that, by the guys -- I think this is right, isn't it, Father? Coming over, he decided that he was going to take off, and he supposedly was short of fuel, but he knows how to transfer fuel in the airplane, and transfer it for one engine to the next. Wasn't sure [02:13:00] that he could make it, but he was going to get out of there, because he figured that when all these guys went to the party, when he landed with the load, that -- and they asked him to go. and he wouldn't go. He said, "No, I'll stay right here with my airplane."

GENE: Yeah, see I landed. That's where they (inaudible).

LOUISE: They told his co-pilot, he says, "We're getting out of here." And he took off. And they headed for --

GENE: Who the hell was my co-pilot? Was that Dyer?

LOUISE: No, it was Bob.

GENE: Bob West?

LOUISE: Mm-hmm.

GENE: OK. Oh, and I got -- see, I touch you, I'm dingy. I remember this now. Part of that was, when I was coming back, you know, and the bad guy was in there with me, instead of the good guy, when we left Barranquilla. And I'm supposed to go someplace where the government knows, and everything. But the bad guy says, "Hey. [02:14:00]

Come over here." And this other airplane come up behind me and says, "Land here." On the intercom. So I landed on a road down there. And I couldn't find the damn place. South of Douglas, Arizona, but in Mexico. And landed on a road, and the smugglers came in and unloaded all my dope! Well, I supposed to get gasoline and so forth. But I'm waiting for them to bring me some gas, because I just came with a big load all the way from Colombia to there. So I'm sitting out there, and they wanted to take me down, you know, to their house, and I was a hero or all this shit. And I wasn't leaving my airplane. Getting a little nervous, so I said, "No, I'll stay here with my airplane. I've got to stay with my airplane." Well, by now, the drug guys that were supposed to be keeping track of me [02:15:00] are getting worried, and they found me and they come down there and they flew around a little while, and I heard the (inaudible) go, and pretty soon they come down real low. Well, the bad guys that were still with me when I stayed with the airplane. They were out there in the weeds with guns.

LOUISE: It was an AK-47.

GENE: AK-47s. They were armed with. And this guy comes flying by real low, by me. I didn't know who It was at

first, but when he come by so God damn close, I looked up there and I see who it was. It was Dryer in that airplane. He just buzzed me just real -- like so. So I thought, "Well," then I thought -- who the hell did you say was my co-pilot?

LOUISE: Bob. West.

GENE: Yeah, West. I said, "OK, let's see how God damn quick we can start this thing." So I jumped up in the airplane and we cranked it up. We were still cranking [02:16:00] on the second engine while the first engine was going. And we took off before I -- I figured, and this is what I told Bob. I said, "I think if we get in this airplane and get the hell out of here, they think we're good guys, and I think before they can get permission to shoot us, or kill us, or something, you know, from their bosses, we'll be gone." So we took off. Well, as soon as we got off -- I don't' know how much people they got, because the cases are all empty. But I'm airborne. So the damn airplane's got - - it only had five basic fuel tanks, didn't it? Two mains and two [auxs?]. And then a center tank, or something. But anyhow, the center tank was empty. But the airplane was flying level. The others, I'd run down until the gauges said empty or damn near empty, you know, and then

I'd switch tanks. [02:17:00] Better than run them dry. So I said, "OK. The only way we can tell where we're going to go are (inaudible) knowing how much fuel we got in here, is to put all the engines -- or, both engines on one tank." So, it's a cross feed (inaudible) put the engines on. Number one fuel sell. And time it. Well, I don't know what they run on. Like, 20 minutes or something like that. Thirty minutes. And quick. I said, "OK. Now you got number one. Put it all on number four." So they put it on number four, sure enough it worked out about right. Run another 20 minutes or 30 minutes. I said, "OK, try number two." So he goes to number two, and it ran for a while. And by then I'm coming to the border, so I landed in -- instead of going -- I was trying to get back to Tucson, where the center --

LOUISE: You came out of Phoenix.

GENE: Or, Phoenix. Phoenix, yeah. But instead I ended up in Douglas, Arizona. [02:18:00] Because I had enough fuel, but I crossed the border. Landed in Douglas, Arizona. Got some fuel.

JUNGE: So, what did the DEA have to say to you?

GENE: Well, we had a fuss there, didn't we. Over the, getting paid. I was --

LOUISE: I thought it was the income tax. We did the taxes and we got (inaudible).

GENE: Well, that there was a different flight, now, Mother. That was a different one. I'll get straight with that one, too.

JUNGE: Were they disappointed, the DEA? I mean, I suppose they were.

GENE: Yeah. Well, what it was, I was supposed to get paid by the bad guys. For smuggling it. Because I run off before I got my money, I didn't have no money. So what that was, so, I guess she's right. So when I get there, I send the [02:19:00] DEA a bill for my flight, and they aren't paying me. So then, well, then my -- didn't I tell them I was going to --

LOUISE: No, you put a bad debt on our plane [company?].

GENE: That's what I said.

LOUISE: And it was a bad debt, of whatever the figure was, and then you said to the IRA [sic] -- or --

GENE: IRS says, "You can't have a bad debt from the government." Well, you know, they weren't going to -- the IRS wasn't -- when I said, "The trade review department owes me this much money, and it's a bad debt. They didn't pay me." And so the IRS says, "No, you can't -- come on

now, don't buy that shit. You know, the government pays its bills."

JUNGE: So you just had to chalk this one up to experience.

GENE: No, what I did then was I said, "OK, I tell you what. Either you allow me this bad debt or I'm going to tell you what the hell the bad debt was for." And when I -- when the IRS -- [02:20:00] or, the treasurers -- I mean, when the smuggling guys found out I was going to tell the IRS that I smuggled in all this dope, for free, they allowed the bad debt.

JUNGE: What did they pay you? What were they supposed to pay you?

GENE: Oh, I don't remember. Do you, Duane?

DUANE: No.

GENE: It was good money. I think -- did we get \$600 an hour, if we were working then, or what --

DUANE: No, it wasn't much. I mean --

GENE: Well, it was a lot because the dollar was worth a whole lot more. But --

JUNGE: That was pretty -- pretty cagey.

GENE: I think it was \$600 an hour, is what they --

LOUISE: Then we had to go back there. San Antonio, and he had -- Gene, well, Gene had taken my camera. And he was snapping pictures.

GENE: Yeah, I had pictures of the whole damn thing.

LOUISE: And so the guys said, "Well, as soon as we get our pictures off of there --" the pictures of these guys -- "I'll send you [02:21:00] the rest." Well, we never got the camera or the pictures. But, down in San Antonio, they showed Gene the pictures and he -- the men that they thought were part of the -- were mules, with the drug smuggling. And Gene couldn't recognize any of the guys. He said, "No, none of those were on the airplane." So, but I never got the camera back, and the pictures that I had. So, that load, they lost. They never did get it.

JUNGE: What a, what a story. I've never heard a story like this.

GENE: Oh, there's more stories like that. (laughs) I mean -
-

LOUISE: Maybe you shouldn't put it in that thing.

JUNGE: No, it's not going to hurt! Well, I shouldn't say -- you can do what you want. We can cut out anything that you want.

GENE: Well, they knew what we did, there. (inaudible)

[Alaska?], just like I said. I told them, "Hey, you want me to tell on you? Or you pay me."

JUNGE: (laughs) That's pretty cagey. [02:22:00]

LOUISE: And then when we got home, Duane goes -- Duane looked like (inaudible), long time you could smell marijuana. And you brought me a little bit of it. I still have it. In a bottle.

JUNGE: Little -- little medical marijuana? Well, Gene, you ought to try some of that!

GENE: Yeah, I'm willing to.

JUNGE: Huh?

GENE: I'm willing to, now. I couldn't' do it while I was flying, but I would now, if I had it.

DUANE: Some of the other stuff, I remember, like this was in '84. Eighty four, there was a huge snowstorm that hit in April, here.

GENE: In Salt Lake?

DUANE: Well, it was from Salt Lake all the way up clear through Canada. Through Montana, Wyoming. And the cattle were all stranded, and all the ranchers and everything -- I mean, it was a huge storm. You could research it and learn

about it. [02:23:00] But there was just -- I don't know how many feet of snow.

GENE: Hell, I'd forgot that.

DUANE: In April. And so, somebody that was kind of working for some of these ranchers all around this region, had organized purchases of hay from these ranchers here up at [Schill?], that had bales of hay. And so, they brought, you know, eight or ten of their cowboys -- like, 20, 30 year old, tobacco chewing cowboys wearing chaps, and boots, and big belt buckles, and that kind of a thing. With these big semis full of hay, out to the airport. And we loaded all of that hay, and made several trips all [02:24:00] between here and Montana, and all the way down to Salt Lake City. And we dropped hay on all --

GENE: Dropped it out in the fields. We fed the cows out of our airplane.

DUANE: A lot of times, we were dropping it down through the clouds. We couldn't even see, so we'd have to locate ourselves electronically --

GENE: Well, I had to -- we had GPS then, didn't we? Or, did we?

DUANE: No, we didn't have the GPS.

GENE: We did. We had that little -- yeah, LORAN, that's what it was. We had LORAN, see.

DUANE: But you also, you know, pick up a (inaudible) radio, or something. And then you plot the location of this thing on a sectional map. And fly over it, and then drop the hay out. And you know, sometimes, like, you hit, like, it bounces off a cow, and break the cow's neck. You know, so you have a dead cow down there, but you know, 150 other cows were all getting the [02:25:00] big course dinner of hay. You know, so we saved a lot of --

GENE: We hauled a lot of hay. God, I can't remember how much.

DUANE: Doing hay drops, with our airplanes. All over. And I just kind of remember we had harnesses, like if you were climbing a building, or something. You put on a safety harness. So, we made each of those cowboys -- they all got on the airplane, and rode along.

GENE: They were throwing the bales out.

DUANE: Because the C97 -- that big straddle cruiser -- that thing --

GENE: That's just, yeah, right here.

DUANE: Probably 60 feet long, just the cargo area, from front to back. Just full of hay. And the only way you could get from front to back, you had to crawl --

GENE: Well, they were up with the hay?

DUANE: No, they'd crawl all the way across the --

GENE: It'd take 50,000 pounds, if you get it in there.

DUANE: -- (inaudible) and it took you several minutes. To make it from the front clear to the back. And so, [02:26:00] they'd start throwing it out and you'd have to kind of watch where you were getting the hay bales so that you were getting out of center gravity while they were doing it. But we'd open up the big old cargo doors in the back, in flight, and get all those cowboys in the back, pitching hay bales out, just like they were throwing them on the hay wagon. And they were just dropping right out the back, and bouncing off the snow down there. In the ranches.

JUNGE: These guys didn't mind doing it?

GENE: Hell, they were --

DUANE: They had a ball!

GENE: They were living high.

DUANE: They didn't have the door, (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). And then went out there in the airstream.

LOUISE: Well, how long did you fly to that island down there in Salt Lake, and feed?

DUANE: That was about a week, but you know Antelope Island? If you look on your map, there's an island in Great Salt Lake, right in the middle of Salt Lake City. It's called Antelope Island. A lot of cattle on it. [02:27:00]

GENE: I forgot all that.

DUANE: And we'd take off out of Salt Lake with hay --

GENE: And feed them cows.

DUANE: It would be all clouded over, foggy and cloudy, we couldn't see. Just follow the cloud line underneath you, and then we would position ourself electronically, and then just throw the hay out, and it would go out into these pastures and stuff along the perimeter of Antelope Island. The center of it was all kind of steep, steep --

JUNGE: Rock?

DUANE: Bluffs, and stuff like that. But --

JUNGE: How did they, how did they get those animals off the island, when they wanted to market them?

DUANE: Well, they must have --

GENE: Boats, I'm sure.

DUANE: There's a lot of grass --

GENE: A lot of grassland there on that island. It's a big island.

DUANE: Stuff out there where --

GENE: They just couldn't feed them. That winter, it was tough.

DUANE: Out there, on that Antelope Island.

GENE: Well, taking out of here, we had to get [02:28:00] a Cat, or something, to knock the engines down, of the snow. Because the snow was so piled -- when they plowed it with their rotary snowplows, it was as high as the outboard wings. You know, they didn't have it wide enough, and they had to knock the edges down of the snowbanks, so we could go.

DUANE: We did -- we did a lot of movies, like going back to Chrysler and Avery. Some of the planes were the B-25s, like the Doolittle Raider, B-25s. And Avery had several of those, and you remember that movie -- I can't remember --

JUNGE: Always? Was it Always?

GENE: Always, yeah. We did -- I did Always, yeah.

DUANE: We did that with Steven Spielberg, and Holly Hunter, and Steven Dreyfuss.

JUNGE: John Goodman --

DUANE: Richard Dreyfuss.

JUNGE: Wasn't John Goodman in that?

DUANE: John Goodman was in there, and oh, who's the other...

There's another young pilot guy that [02:29:00] was acting in the movie there. But anyway, the movie *Catch-22*? Oh, you've got to -- you better write that down. *Catch-22*.

You need to research that. That's a famous story. It's a satire, or two.

JUNGE: Oh, yeah! Yossierian. The guy that was a pilot.

GENE: I remember that. Joseph Heller wrote that book.

DUANE: Joseph Heller. That's who -- you're right. So, that movie, *Catch-22*, was filmed with our B-25s.

JUNGE: Really. Whereabouts?

DUANE: That was down in Mexico.

GENE: Yeah. Where in the hell --

LOUISE: Wasn't it in San Carlos?

GENE: San Carlos and the Hermosillo. Or, yeah. In that.

DUANE: In the old --

GENE: That's where they're running up and down the beach, or the ocean. Was down in Mexico. Sea of Cortes.

JUNGE: Well, where did they shoots *Always*?

DUANE: *Always* was up in a couple locations, but Libby, Montana. And Moses Lake, Washington. [02:30:00] That part where Goodman was out on the umbrella. He was kind of

grounded, kind of a pilot guy, that was training the young pilots to drop and stuff. And so he's out there with his beer cooler and his lawn chair and his umbrella, and these guys come over and they miss, and they drop on top of him. That was in Moses Lake. And then some of the other flying with trees, and all that, the timber type stuff was up in Libby, Montana.

GENE: God, I forgot all that.

DUANE: We did *Always*. And then we did some series of Angela Lansbury's *Murder, She Wrote*. Where they had like this whole car, drives up inside this airplane, and it had a murder story behind it, and she solves it. [02:31:00] And this and that. And then a Sylvester Stallone movie. *Stop, or My Mom Will Shoot*. And we did --

LOUISE: *Last Flight Out of*, something.

DUANE: We did that.

GENE: *Last Flight out of Someplace*? What the hell is that?

DUANE: Navy *SEALs*, was another one. With our C-130s. Did helicopters, like Kenny Rogers movies. With some like, wild horses, or something to do with horses, back in the '70s. And --

GENE: What was that *Last Flight out of* --

DUANE: John Wayne and the fire -- the Hellfighters.

GENE: The Hellfighters?

DUANE: Remember the John Wayne movie?

GENE: Yeah.

DUANE: Dan Hawkins was a Colombian, or South American, or Venezuelan, military pilot. He had a big old handlebar mustache.

GENE: Oh, yeah, he was --

DUANE: Dan Hawkins flew in that one, in the helicopter. For that movie. [02:32:00]

JUNGE: God, I'm going to have to go back and look at this stuff. Now what -- when you, what was your participation, or what was your role? To fly the planes in the action scenes?

DUANE: Oh, sometimes. But other times, they would have -- every once in a while, there would be other pilots that were associated with the movie production thing that would fly, and then we would go along to babysit them, like we would like a commercial. One time I remember with British Petroleum, and --

GENE: Well, generally, we were flying the airplanes for so much an hour. They just hired us and says, "It's an hour." And we did what they told us to.

DUANE: But we did -- so we did commercials, air drops. Where we'd drop things and then build them and turn them into like a British Petroleum station out in the middle of the Bonneville salt flats, out in the middle of nowhere. And so they'd fly over and they'd be all barren, and nothing out there. And they'd show us flying over, and we'd parachute drop all these different things in there for building, and then they'd put together this mock gas station out in the middle of the thing. They had to get permission from the -- I think it was BLM, or some parks services. Controls the Bonneville salt flats out there. And so they built this mock gas station, and stuff out there, for this commercial. And it was like a \$3 million commercial, which was one of the -- I mean, I remember, as a kid, movies -- full feature movies -- costing \$3 million. And this was just a commercial, for --

GENE: You know, you just reminded me of one other thing. Was cloud seeding work. I was kind of a pioneer in that. When I was out in Medford, Oregon -- [02:34:00] and I told you about throwing -- Medford would get zero-zero fog. Flying for Mercy Flights. And we screwed up the guy's -- that was funny. With Mercy Flights, with an old Twin

Beech. Or, UC-78, Twin Cessna, little old thing. But the Twin Beech, or B-18, or what is it -- C-45! C-45.

DUANE: Beech 18.

GENE: Anyhow, with a Twin Beech, but for Mercy Flights ambulance things. And Medford would be zero-zero, and I would take off. Take ambulance, you know, if some guy's about to die, off to where the hell ever he had to get. But I'd come back and it'd be zero-zero, so I'd have a sack of dry ice in the back of the airplane, and I'd come down over the [02:35:00] runway and throw the dry ice out. And it would rain for just a little bit or something, bust this ice up. And I would land. OK, well now, Medford has been sitting there, reporting on the weather. Zero-Zero for all day long. And the airlines are flying over and going clear on up to Salem or someplace. Because they can't land. So all of a sudden, Medford tower puts out a thing that now Medford's got 200 ½, or something. You know, IFR minimums. So I land. Only I ain't seeding clouds no more, and a little bit later all the airlines are diverted to Medford and then they can't land. (laughter) They didn't have no dry ice!

JUNGE: That's funny!

GENE: That was funny.

JUNGE: Now, in '49, you were 20 years old. Do you remember the hay drops in '49?

GENE: Sure.

JUNGE: Were you part of that?

GENE: Yeah. [02:36:00]

JUNGE: You were?

GENE: Forty nine was --

LOUISE: Graduated from high school that year.

GENE: Forty nine was [the answer?] or something. And we -- wasn't -- those hay drops from then, up on -- where the hell were they? Well, maybe I'm mixed up. I know we did some all the way back -- maybe not, I don't know. But I do know --

DUANE: There was some hay drops things, there. Did you read that, you know, that book *Spirit of Steamboat*, that Craig Johnson wrote?

JUNGE: No, I know which one you're talking about.

DUANE: It just came out. Well, when he was -- about a year ago, he contacted me and so he got my wife Cindy and I down to Lisa's restaurant there, and kind of asked me if I'd help him write that book. And he said that he had been hooked up down at one of those Confederate Air Force, commemorative [02:37:00] Air Force, airshows, and had met

some of the pilots that have the B-25s that fly the demonstrations and at that time, there was still an old boy that was one of the raiders that --

JUNGE: Doolittle Raiders?

DUANE: -- was still -- yeah, still alive. And so he had met him and was kind of fascinated with the whole thing about it. And so, in his book -- have you read the book, or --

JUNGE: No.

DUANE: You should get the book. It's a little book. And it was going to be a real short story by -- the publisher was going to put it out as just a special edition short story thing, kind of like a *Reader's Digest* story. And so he didn't know anything about flying, really. And he wanted to get some realism in it, and he had this -- [02:38:00] he had a real short little draft script, just one word document. And he wanted me to look at it, and it was just like totally hokey. Like, embarrassing for somebody that understood aviation. Now, he's a fiction writer, and have you read any of his other books?

JUNGE: No, everybody else has. I've read a little bit of C. J. Box, but that's about --

DUANE: So, he's kind of like a C.J. Box, in a way. But he's got maybe a little better following, because he's more

prolific in his writing. And then he is really -- the French and European people are just crazy about his western writing. His characters, and stuff like that. So he travels to Europe quite a bit. Stuff like that. And this Craig Johnson, he's quite a bullshitter.

JUNGE: I heard him one time, at a --

DUANE: If you sat there and listened to him, you'd think, "This guy's a real bullshitter." And in, [02:39:00] not really in a credible way. But he's just a big joker, kind of a guy. Sense of humor. But some of it's pretty absurd, you know. And it's just like --

GENE: Where's the book, Mother? You got it here, somewhere.

LOUISE: Right there on the left.

DUANE: Anyway, so he had this little manuscript drafted, and he wanted me to look it over, and I read it and I sent a copy to Dad, and I told him -- so, I was like, embarrassed. Like, no way am I putting my name on any of this. And so, I told him there, that OK, I'd read this thing, and we can rework this quite a bit, but it -- I said, "Craig, if you want any credibility with your readers, and there's any aviation people that like your other stories [02:40:00] and they read this? You, you know, basically will be embarrassing yourself among these other guys. You've got

to have -- even though if it's fiction, you've got to have some credibility so that, it's just like if it's fiction and you're talking about the medical part of things, and you've got a special doctor advising you on all the medical things. Or this and that. You need to have some real stuff, even if there's a lot of wild --"

GENE: Bullshit in between.

DUANE: "-- aviation stuff going on in there." So I started writing, and I ended up writing about a third of that book. And so his little short story, *Reader's Digest* thing --

GENE: Got to be a pretty good book.

DUANE: -- turned into what they call a novella, which is a -- not quite a full book, not a short story. So it turned into this novella thing, and it got -- that thing hit like number, I don't know. Eighteen, fourteen, [02:41:00] on the *New York Times* list. It went way up there. And he did real good with that little book there. But in the lead, in the acknowledgements, it gives me a little credit. But it doesn't talk about Dad. But what I did, was I made up this story on how this B-25 in this book -- this Steamboat -- really could have come to be, and play in Durant, which is his Buffalo, Wyoming. And so, the story about how the airplane makes it out, and everything, and he had -- he had

this person, this girl, that had never even hardly flown before, being the co-pilot with this other guy. This old-timey sheriff that was a Doolittle Raider guy, that had [02:42:00] one leg missing. That was going to fly this thing that might -- in this huge storm of the century, down to Denver to a burn center, to get this girl that was in a car wreck down there. So, I kind of fixed it up a bit where the girl had flown a couple seasons with Hawkins and Powers, but didn't call it Hawkins and Powers. But --

LOUISE: Yes, they did.

DUANE: I think he used my name in there, or something. But anyway, she had some prior firebombing experience in a B-25, and you know, kind of made that part like, OK, so she's qualified in the airplane. Not a total rookie. And she was an instructor pilot and a commercial pilot. So now that the crew starts to come together a little bit, with this whole part that's going to fly, that was a Doolittle Raider, and the time frame is back in the '80s so he's not super old, but you know. [02:43:00]

JUNGE: This is what it says. And the name of this book is --

DUANE: *Spirit of Steamboat.*

JUNGE: *Spirit of Steamboat.* And it's a B-25? The Steamboat is? And in his acknowledgements, he says, "Besides the

usual crew members, I picked up a few hangar sweepers on this trip." What are hangar sweepers?

DUANE: Just people that hang around the airports, and you know.

JUNGE: Which is what you were as a kid, right?

DUANE: Yeah, I swept --

GENE: When he was a young kid. Only he wasn't a sweeper.

(laughs) He --

LOUISE: He was a real little boy.

JUNGE: OK. "There were a number of areas of expertise, where I needed a little in-air assistance, and I'm glad to say that these folks helped me bring *Spirit of Steamboat* in for a safe landing in your hands. First up is pilot extraordinaire and flight legend, Duane Powers of Hawkins and Powers in Greybull, Wyoming. He kept my feet on the pedals during this flight of fancy. Those meetings at Lisa's restaurant were indispensable, my friend." And then he goes on to [02:44:00] mention a few others. Tom --

DUANE: Now, in the book, he talks about his old sheriff, the Doolittle Raider guy. So, that's Dad.

GENE: Oh, really?

DUANE: So, you'll learn about -- I told him about Ganser, and about how Dad ran away from the farm. Did Dad tell you that story?

JUNGE: Well, if you don't mind listening to it again, I want to hear it again. But I want to hear it -- the version, from somebody who knows what they're talking about. Yeah.

DUANE: You know where the Sheridan airport is?

JUNGE: Yeah.

DUANE: And so, my granddad -- Dad's mom and dad -- had a farm that wasn't far from the airport. You could see the airplanes flying around when they came and went. And so Dad's -- my uncles -- Grover and Pinky --

GENE: That's my brothers.

DUANE: Were pilots --

JUNGE: Pinky?

DUANE: -- during World War II, and --

GENE: Rusty, Red, and Pinky. That was us three.

DUANE: And Uncle Grover was a navigator on the B-24s, and he flew in those [02:45:00] bombing raids in Romania. Where the bombing (overlapping dialogue; inaudible).

GENE: And Berlin.

DUANE: Then, and then Uncle Pinky, he was a flight instructor during World War II. And so, they were off flying, and Dad

was too young to get in the military and wanted to join up, and was like, 16 or so. You had to be 17 with a letter from your parents, or a note from your parents, to join up, if you weren't 18. And so, he ran away from the farm and went out to the airport. Now, if you go to the Sheridan airport and you drive into the terminal, and you go through the drive-in, that first little Quonset hangar on the right was Bighorn Airway's hangar.

GENE: Was general airplane service in those days.

DUANE: And up [02:46:00] inside that Quonset hangar, there's a loft up there that the Gansers had thrown old airplane parts and stuff up in, just to store. You know, like a rudder or maybe part of a wing, or a landing gear, or some part up there. So Dad ran away from the farm and Ganser put him up in the loft, and he had a little sleeping bag nest and stuff up there where he lived. And so, my grandma, Nanna, kept trying to get Dad to come back and go to school, and this and that. And he said, "Well, if I go to -- or, if you sign the papers to let me go in the navy, I'll finish school when I get back." And so, he had to promise that he would come back and finish high school. [02:47:00] And so, her and [Grandpy?] signed the papers and he went in the navy, a year early. And then right about

the time he got in, shortly thereafter the war got over with. And so then he came back and finished high school, and then went to college and when he was in college, he was instructing some of the ROTC cadets, as well. That were in a flight program down there. But anyway, part of that story is in there, to give this [Luson?] Conley -- the old sheriff that was the Doolittle Raider -- some credibility of where he came from, and his background in the war.

GENE: And you wrote that, that part.

DUANE: I wrote about a third of that book.

JUNGE: Well, you ought to get a third of the royalties!

(laughs)

DUANE: It's not very long. It's not a very long book, but [02:48:00] you know, Craig did a lot of editing, too. But I went through all that aviation stuff, so basically a lot of the scenarios involved in there were stuff that really had happened to Dad and I over the years, and then in the end, the finale of how that Steamboat actually makes it and lands, and gets the passengers safely to Denver, that was a real thing that happened to Dad and I in a C-82.

JUNGE: Can you tell about that, Gene, or -- no, he --

DUANE: You have to read the book. I can't tell you anything more about that. But that's based on a real story, that

part of how the old-timey pilot got that airplane stopped safely on this runway, in the snow blizzard down there in Denver. [02:49:00]

JUNGE: That's fantastic.

DUANE: Yeah. And that -- and a lot of the tricks and things that were used to get the airplane from Durant, which would be Buffalo, down to Denver, in the middle of a snowstorm at night, were real things that we --

GENE: True. Stuff we did in the C-82.

DUANE: -- had done, in other airplanes, too.

JUNGE: Before we quit -- you know, I -- well, do you have any humorous stories about -- wait a minute. I was going to ask you about Bill Monday. Chuck Jaeger's mentioned in here. Did you know Bill Monday or Chuck Jaeger?

GENE: I don't think so. I don't know.

JUNGE: Chuck -- you never met Chuck Jaeger?

GENE: The name rings a bell, but then not knowing --

DUANE: He was the Air Force pilot that broke the speed of sound.

GENE: Yeah, but I don't really know. I don't think so.

DUANE: But you knew Bob Hoover. And Bob Hoover was kind of a [vintage?] of Chuck Jaeger.

GENE: Well, I knew Hoover because he was such an airshow
guy. yeah. [02:50:00]

DUANE: As a pilot, you know --

GENE: Because I used to run around the airshows, too.

JUNGE: Do you have any memories of him?

GENE: I don't know. Mom could probably tell you something.
We would be at some airshow, but --

JUNGE: Well, listen. You guys --

GENE: You've got to go, you've got to go.

JUNGE: It's 6:00. It's almost 6:00. Well, I've -- you know,
I can go another two hours. This is -- I love this.
(laughs) You ever thought about doing a --

GENE: Where you got to go tonight? You got to leave? You
can stay here tonight, if you want to.

JUNGE: Well, thanks. I appreciate that. That's kind of you.
But no, I have to interview a lady in the morning in
Riverton, and so I got to make some tracks. But --

GENE: Hell, we haven't even got to -- we're just getting
started. (laughs) Yes.

JUNGE: I know! I know. That's why I say, I'd love to come
back. You're going to be around. You're not going
anywhere, right?

DUANE: I'm going to Afghanistan.

JUNGE: For how long?

DUANE: Well, we go over there for two to three months. I
spend about eight months a year over there.

JUNGE: Well --

DUANE: One of the other --

GENE: You need him. His memory's better than mine,

DUANE: -- was the one -- the last movie, [02:51:00] the
company made. Before we sold it, was *Flight of the
Phoenix*. And that's -- we filmed that in Namibia, Africa,
with this C-119. This 20th Century Fox. You've got to see
that movie.

JUNGE: *Flight of the Phoenix*.

DUANE: *Flight of the Phoenix*, and it's with --

LOUISE: Well, the original was [Barry Stuart?]. And we think
it's a better movie.

DUANE: It's a remake of the original *Flight of the Phoenix*,
but it was done by 20th Century Fox, and it stars Dennis
Quade and a few others in the movie. But it's about an
airplane that's in Africa, that gets caught in this huge
sandstorm and crashes out in the middle of the desert. And
then these guys survive by building a smaller airplane out
of the parts in the wings, using one of the tail booms. So
they take one wing off of one side, and put it [02:52:00]

on the other side, and they turn it into a single engine. And so we built -- we flew our airplane over there, and did all the flying in the movie. And it's pretty neat flying. And then the Phoenix, which is the single engine airplane with the engine running, and everything. We had one of our mechanics over there, up inside where the wheel sticks down, and he had a throttle and some oil pressure gauges, and stuff like that, that he could start the engine, and run it.

GENE: But it didn't fly.

DUANE: Yeah, that one didn't fly, but they actually flew the version of the Phoenix by recreating it digitally off of that.

JUNGE: Oh, really?

DUANE: That actual airplane that we had built, using the wing panels and stuff. Actual C-119 wing panels and things like that. Tail section and everything. [02:53:00] So, that was another Hawkins and Powers thing, and what happened in the end of the movie, is all the filming was done, and on the last day they wanted to get a couple shots of the airplane taxiing around, and with the engines running. And so what the production company did was they had all these trucks with these huge motors, and big propellers -- fans,

in the back, bolted down to the back of these pickup trucks. And they would blast these things going to make -- and then they'd throw like tumbleweeds and crap, and it would blow across like this desert storm. And so, during the shooting, on the last day, this ground handler guy had this pickup truck, and he was hurrying around trying to move [02:54:00] the truck, and he drove right under the wing, and this huge fan motor, propeller thing, with a shroud around it, hit the bottom of our wing and put a big rip right through the bottom of the wing, and the controls and everything. And ripped out part of the wing, so we couldn't fly home. And so, we had to go to the -- clear to Hollywood, in Los Angeles area, there, to deal with the producer and everything, of 20th Century Fox. Like, the executive whoever. I can't remember this guy's name, but we get there and these guys are just total assholes. All they want is money, and they don't want to help you do nothing. And every production [02:55:00] that's made, you see all these different names you know, like Glass Pond Productions. Or this or that. And it sounds like, sometimes, it's the 20th Century Fox, but it's actually a whole new company that is created by 20th Century Fox, but it's a separate corporation, to protect itself from

liability. And so you find out that who you're dealing with isn't really 20th Century Fox company, although they control it and they have the lawyers and everything. So, when you're trying to file your insurance claims and stuff, against the company, to get repairs and costs -- to get your airplane back -- then you have to finally start working through this Los Angeles deal. Not the people that you actually -- your director, and the [02:56:00] people on site, that are the bosses. But somebody thousands of miles away, halfway around the world. And so, one way or another, it took about a month to get this airplane fixed, and get through all the reimbursements of cost and payment. And the aviation gas is like a high grade car gas. Not [turbon?] gas, not jet fuel. So, aviation gas is almost not available outside of certain places in Europe and the United States. They only strictly would have jet fuel available, and the radial engines can't burn jet fuel. It'd be like putting diesel in your car. It'd detonate. So, to get over there, we had to fly from Wyoming to Pennsylvania, to Newfoundland, to the [Azures?]. [02:57:00] To the Canary Islands, to Dakar, Senegal, to Akra, Ghana, to Libreville, Gabon. And then from there to

Namibia, which is western south Africa. And so, we --
every stop, we had to, months in advance, order --

GENE: The hundred octane.

DUANE: Engine gasoline to be stockpiled at each of these
places, and then a barrel at a time loaded up one forklift
and hand pump it.

GENE: Into the airplane.

DUANE: Into the airplane, so you'd have to have 3,000 gallons
of gas just to make one leg of your flight from one spot to
another, with those distances. And so it would take a full
day of just pumping gas, just to get fueled, after you
landed at some spot. And so [02:58:00] we had gotten all
the way over there, and then we're headed back. And so,
after the airplane gets repaired in Namibia and we send our
flight crew -- or, our mechanics, inspectors, and
everything -- to clear it all off, and make sure it was
safe to fly. Our crew takes off, and they get all the way
to... Akra, Ghana. And the... Handlers -- because we
were late -- the people that had the gas, sold it.

JUNGE: I was going to say, what happens if you didn't have
the gas?

DUANE: So we didn't have the gas. So, you can't go across --
and so, during the winter, the best way to get back like,

early, late [02:59:00] winter, after Christmas, like in February or January timeframe, is to go from Senegal across the Atlantic to Brazil. And then from Brazil up through the Caribbean to Florida, and then back home. But during the springtime, the prevailing winds are blowing across Newfoundland towards Europe, and so we went that way, to the Azores, and then the Canary Islands, and on down on the way over. But on the way back, it would be better because there's too strong a headwinds to make it back going the other way. So, we had to have at least 3,000 gallons of gas, and there was only like 2,000 stockpiled in Senegal, where we would take off, [03:00:00] which would be the closest point. Between there and Brazil. And we were in Ghana. So, if we took off and went to Senegal, there wasn't enough. Because we figured that we could carry about 1,000 out of Ghana, and then add -- top it off, and then make it the rest of the way. So we didn't have enough gas to get out of Ghana, once we landed there because there wasn't any for us to fuel there. And even if we could make it Senegal, there wasn't enough gas there, stockpiled. So, the handlers of the fuel company said, "Well, there's a timber company way up in the northern part of the jungle of Ghana. And we could take a truck up there, but it's about

a 20-some hour drive on this old jungle road to get there. And we'll take our fuel truck up [03:01:00] there, if you go with us. And we'll get some gas from the timber company. And then we'll come back, and that'd be enough. We could get you 1,000 gallons or something, in our truck." So, we sent one of our crew members up there from the -- the co-pilot of the airplane, up there. And they go all the way through the jungle and you get clear up there, and then I told them. I said, "Make sure, when you get there, don't just pump the gas in the truck and come back. You drain it off and inspect it. Make sure it looks OK for you, before you put it in the truck and come back." And so, they got all the way up there and drained it, and it was all rusty and full of water, and the wrong color and everything. So he said, "OK, come back." And by that time, it's getting to be Christmas. And so the crew's been over there since late fall. And [03:02:00] they want to come home for Christmas, and all that stuff. And so we don't have any gas, so we're going to have to order it and it's going to take maybe six weeks to ship on a freighter, these barrels of gas over there. To order new gas. And so we sent the crew home, with the production company. They're all done. See, they're -- they're all done

shooting and everything. The movie's over. It's been a great success. But this executive guy in LA that I'm dealing with, and his lawyers, they don't want to pay for anything. And I told them, I said, "Now, look. Our contract says you will pay for our fuel and costs to get to Africa and back. And if we have an engine problem, you'll help us pay for the cost to get spare engine there, or anything else." And I said, "The reason we're there is because your guy ran into our [03:03:00] airplane. And now our gas is gone. Beyond our control. But you're still obligated to help get our airplane home." And so they didn't want to pay for our airline tickets to get our crew back home during this period of time, or pay for a hotel for our crew to stay there or anything else, for six weeks, waiting for gas. And so we argued it out and made a settlement with the movie company, and fight back and forth for a while, and finally got something resolved there and so in the meantime, before the crew went home for Christmas, they're coming back out of the jungle from the timber company, up there. And they have these Liberian -- or, Nigerian rebels. You know about Nigeria, that's a bad place. And so these rebels run all the way across the northern borders [03:04:00] of these countries, from

Nigeria around and stuff. And they do a lot of their controlling and hijacking and stuff like that. And so there's this guy in a pickup truck in front, blocking the road. And then these Nigerian rebels have him at gunpoint. And they've got like a sawed-off shotgun, and they're beating this guy [forward?], you know, like over the hood of this truck. Banging his head and stuff like that. Grabbing him by the back of the shoulders and the shirt, you know. Smashing him up there. And this other guy's got this sawed-off shotgun and he's blasting it off, just a few feet from this guy's head. And they're roughing him up and we're next in line. Waiting. And so finally, they get done with that guy, and then they come up to our fuel truck and our guy, and the handler -- this is the driver -- [03:05:00] and they start talking Afrikaans to each other. And this and that. And then finally our handler says the right stuff to them, and they let us go, mercifully. And so by that time, our crew's ready to get the hell out of Africa. They want to go home for Christmas. So we buy airline tickets for them, and send them home. And then a couple months later, we come back and get the airplane. But by that time, the regular pilot that was flying it had gone to work for another company. And so Dad goes over,

and Dad flies the airplane home with the co-pilot that was in the jungle.

JUNGE: Where'd you get your gas, then? Where'd you get the gas, eventually?

DUANE: We ordered it, and --

GENE: Well, that was during a period of time.

DUANE: And while they're home, the gas shows up. And then two months later, we go back and get the airplane.

JUNGE: And you flew that home? [03:06:00]

DUANE: Yeah, Dad flew it home.

GENE: Ended up in Brazil or some God damn place.

DUANE: They went to Brazil and the Caribbean, and all the way up through there on a little vacation, and that'll --

GENE: Just had a ball.

JUNGE: Did you go with him on these trips at all, Louise?

GENE: Quite a few.

LOUISE: One I didn't go on with him was the DEA, and this one to Africa.

GENE: She -- generally took her with me. Well, I couldn't get rid of her.

DUANE: We had the [Seth?] 27, and back in the '80s, if you researched this in the news, all of Australia's domestic airlines (overlapping dialogue; inaudible). So there was

no flying -- the whole flying was shut down in Australia. And at that time, the world's largest diamond mine was located in Argyle, western Australia. Which is, if you look at Australia, it looks like a potato. And half of that potato is western Australia. The eastern -- right on the eastern border [03:07:00] of western Australia, which is almost in the center of Australia, is Argyle.

GENE: Show him your diamond ring, Mom. (laughs)

DUANE: And so, the diamonds that were coming out of there would go to Perth, where the headquarters of Argyle Diamonds is.

JUNGE: Which is further west in Australia. It's on the coast, I think.

DUANE: The southern hemisphere Seattle. Perth is just almost like, you go there and you think you're looking at Seattle instead of -- you're below the equator. But the temperature and the latitude and everything is very similar. So, we get this contract to fly for Argyle Diamonds, to charter to Argyle Diamonds to haul their miners. They've got like 2,000 miners that come and go. So every day, miners are leaving the mine to go on a month [03:08:00] vacation, and then other miners are coming back

off of a month's vacation. So, they had like 2,000 miners coming and going.

JUNGE: Each day?

GENE: No, no, no.

DUANE: Two thousand each day.

JUNGE: Each day?

GENE: Total, but were coming and going for their vacation time.

DUANE: In our airplane, we could carry 40 of them to Perth, from Argyle, 1,100 miles. It's 1,100 miles across western Australia. Every day, we'd fly one trip to Perth, drop off the guys, and bring another trip --

GENE: That airplane's still out there at the airport, now.

DUANE: And it would go back and forth, and so I had three crews. Where I'd have one crew in Argyle, one crew in Perth, and one crew airborne. Every day, for -- we were there for like a month and a half or so. Flying steady for the diamond mine.

GENE: Tell him how many [03:09:00] pounds of diamonds you'd carry every now and then.

DUANE: (inaudible) Five star hotel in Perth, and you know, you could go in and order anything you wanted. It was like this French restaurant, and all this food's like super

rich, exotic food. These desserts and things. I mean, sometimes you'd just be sick of eating the food. You just want to go out and get a pizza somewhere. And the wine. You know, you order bottles of wine. This exotic wine. You know, just fantastic chow there, at the hotel. And then at Argyle, it was a whole resort they built right out in the middle of the desert where this diamond mine was. And it had like an Olympic swimming pool, and just fantastic food and recreational areas and stuff for the miners that were working out there in the mines and stuff. And so the [03:10:00] superintendent of the mine told us one day, when we were coming into Perth, that our crew was welcome to go to the Argyle [stable's?] office, and we could buy any diamonds we wanted. We could buy all the diamonds we could afford, at cost. And that was about half price of what a diamond, a finished diamond -- so, you'd pay \$5,000 and you'd get a \$10,000 diamond. Whatever you wanted. And so they took us in there and we went through, and they trained us, in a short period of time, how to look at the coloring and the --

GENE: And they built a special color over there. The --

DUANE: And this and that. And so, once we learned how to recognize a good diamond, then we could look at their

sheets. They had printouts. There was those folded
[03:11:00] printout sheets, you know, that come out of
those little printers that go, (makes printing sound), like
that. And they had sheets -- sheets of any kind of diamond
you wanted. So you'd say, "Well, I just want these kinds
of diamonds." So they'd throw the sheet out there and
you'd look through, and they'd have the, the size of the
carat and the color, and the quality of the, you know
(overlapping dialogue; inaudible) and stuff like that. And
then they'd tell you what the price was. And then you'd
say, "OK, I want this one and this one." They'd bring it
out and you'd look at them and you'd finally, you know,
choose. So you could afford a couple diamonds, or
something. So we got diamonds for you know, various
people, and brought them back. And I got a hell of a deal
on them. And so in return, we had a firearms license here
in Wyoming. The company had a firearm dealer license. And
so [03:12:00] we bought a 44 Magnum Smith and Wesson
revolver for this superintendent, and just exported it to
Australia. And Australia, to have a weapon, you have to
have it registered with the local sheriff and you can't
keep the weapon in your home. You have to keep it in a
registered gun club. So you have to be a member of a gun

club, and to shoot the weapon, you have to go to the gun club and shoot it inside of a target range, inside their gun club. But these guys would kind of sneak their weapons out, and they would go out and shoot, like, kangaroos and shit like that. With them. You know, that's just Australian wild west stuff. But anyway, one time when we were hauling [03:13:00] twice a week, they would throw on two big crates that were like, maybe twice the size of that suitcase there. Big trunks. Full of diamonds. On the airplane. They were raw diamonds.

JUNGE: Cut? They were cut diamonds?

DUANE: These were raw diamonds, from the mine. That were going to go to Perth. So we'd haul the miners, and then twice a week they would throw these two big trunks of -- full of diamonds on our airplane, and we'd haul those to Perth with the miners. And so the first couple weeks, whenever they did that, they would have their guards on board with us. And then after a couple weeks, they just quit sending the guards. They'd just throw the boxes on the airplane, and then when we landed, all of the miner's baggage and stuff [03:14:00] would come off and they'd have their own paid baggage handlers and stuff that would take this stuff, and we'd never touch any of the luggage. It

would just get loaded on by their people and when we landed, we would take one crew that landed and go to the hotel. The other crew would come from the hotel and gas and service the airplanes for the trip back, that night to Argyle. And then when they landed, then the next crew from Argyle would trade off, and then they would go back. So there was a crew in the hotel, a crew airborne, and a crew in Argyle at each time. And so, one time I had this flight where, when I landed, about, oh, 20 minutes after we landed, all the luggage and everything's off the airplane and we're gassing it up and I'm talking to the new crew that's going to take it back that night with a whole load of miners, and this little guy [03:14:00] with these round glasses and this clipboard shows up. Right there in the flight line, and he's kind of nervous, and he's saying, "Where are the boxes that were loaded on board?" And I said, "I don't know. I mean, they were there when we landed, and we don't handle the bags. And we don't know where the boxes are." And I knew what was in the boxes. It was full of diamonds. So one little plastic Tupperware thing, like out of your camping picnic area, you might wash dishes with? You know, one of those things you buy at Walmart or something? One of those full of the raw

diamonds was \$5 million. Just one of them. So, I figured there was probably, in just one box, probably one, two, three, four -- maybe four, five, [03:16:00] so ten. Ten of those. Times five. Million. Just in one.

GENE: In our goddamn airplane.

DUANE: In one box. And there's two of those. And they did that twice a week.

JUNGE: Fifteen million bucks worth of diamonds.

DUANE: Yeah, 15 million of diamonds.

JUNGE: So, did they find this?

DUANE: Well, then, so the guy left and so now the crew is just getting ready to leave, and so we get in and we're going to the hotel. So I go to the hotel and before that, he comes back again. One more time. And now he's really nervous. He says, "We can't find the -- we can't find the diamonds. And we need to know, what can you tell us?" And I says, "All I can tell you is when we landed, the diamonds were there and the luggage packed, and the handlers offloaded it, and whoever normally gets those diamonds [03:17:00] must have come and got the diamonds. As far as I know, because that's what happens. We don't deal with the diamonds or the luggage." And so now, he's just really nervous, and he disappears again. And we go back to the

hotel. So, the next day, you know, I come out and we go to Argyle and I run into these guys at Argyle and I'm asking them. I says, "Hey, did you guys ever find those boxes?" "Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. We found them. We found our diamonds." I says, "Well, where were they?" "They were on the luggage carousel at the international terminal, just going around and around and around in the main international terminal over there." (laughter)

JUNGE: What a story. What a story.

DUANE: Yeah! So, that's where their diamonds disappeared. The baggage handlers, they didn't know that the diamonds were in there. Could you think of a heist, though, somebody that --

JUNGE: Sure.

DUANE: -- had a snitch inside, that says, you know, "Hey, twice a week, \$15 million worth of diamonds shows up on this [03:18:00] little airplane with Hawkins and Powers."

JUNGE: Here's another story for you. (laughter) I think that'd be a great story.

DUANE: Yeah, that'd be a heck of a story. And so, yeah. That's how I kind of, good old boy stuff goes on in Australia over there. It was kind of neat.

JUNGE: Where -- last question. Where was the diamond mine,
 in --

DUANE: In Argyle.

JUNGE: In central Aussie. Australia.

DUANE: Right on the west -- the eastern border, Western
 Australia. I know if you went on Google Earth --

GENE: You'd find it.

DUANE: -- you'd probably find Argyle, and you could see the
 big -- and diamonds are formed in what they call a pipe,
 and when the Earth forms them with all the heat and
 tremendous pressure and everything, the diamonds are --
 [03:19:00] it looks like a tornado shape. And they call it
 a pipe, and it's very -- somewhat narrow, like a shaft that
 goes down deep in the Earth, and as it comes up towards the
 surface, it gets spread out like a funnel shape. And so
 the diamonds, when they start finding them, it's in this
 kimberlite ore. And a kimberlite looks like of like a dark
 grey, shale-like rock, and you can pick up a rock and you
 can see the little nubs of the diamonds embedded into the
 kimberlite. And so, in the beginning, when they're mining
 the pipe, they can get so many -- so many carats per ton of
 ore. And as they go deeper [03:20:00] and deeper, it's
 like over in Gillette. They have to use that open pit, so

they have to terrace out way beyond, just to get their equipment in there and they mine it with big excavators, huge excavators, and then they dump them into dump trucks and the dump trucks -- just the tire of a dump truck is probably eight feet tall, just one wheel of the dump truck is eight feet tall. Like, when you stand at the tires, taller than you could stand. And they -- I can't remember how many tons they would carry in one of those dump trucks, but then there would be so many carat per every ton in there. And then they would take the dump trucks and come up out of the mine and then go over to this other hopper dump, and then dump down in there, and it would come into a conveyor [03:21:00] belt, and then they would crush the rock to a certain size. And the size was bigger than what a diamond would be, but they can somehow, then, process it so that it's a combination of particles that are either diamonds or rock. And then they dump it down into these big vertical vats, that are full of amalgam, they call it. But it's basically a consistency of a [sporey?] mix that is heavier than rock, but lighter than diamonds. So, it floats rock and diamonds sink. [03:22:00] And so the rock floats onto the top and then they scrape off the rock, and toss it out in these tailing pits, and then they take the

stuff of the bottom that's mostly diamond, but there's still --

JUNGE: Slag.

DUANE: -- some rock in there. Or different stuff. And so then they process that all out, get it kind of dried out, and stuff, and then they run it through a conveyor belt and they go clear up, like, two, three stories high. And there's this huge thing about as big as this room here that looks like an umbrella, and there's like 12 flutes -- you know, umbrella flutes. You know? Ribs? Like little channels in the top of this big umbrella. And they have a sprinkler nozzle where this diamond and [03:23:00] ore mix hits the top of this umbrella apex, up at the top. And the dirt and the diamonds find their way into one of these flutes, the 12 chutes. It runs down in the diameter of this big umbrella up there. And so the stuff falls down the chutes, and then it falls off the brim of the umbrella. But it's physically oriented in a vertical fall by this chute, the 12 chutes. And there's an electronic eye that reads the, kind of like the density, or the opaqueness of the material that falls past it. [03:24:00] And it can tell if a diamond has just passed, falling from two to three stories high, has just passed this sensor. And it

knows the velocity, like, Leonardo DaVinci dropping the feather and ball off the Leaning Tower of Pisa. And it's timed, and down below there, several feet, is a nozzle. A high-powered nozzle of air, and the air knows when it passed, that was a diamond. And it blasts air and it shoots the diamond off into a trough. And the other shit falls down below there. So these raw diamonds end up all collected.

JUNGE: What do they look like?

DUANE: Well, you can see pictures [03:25:00] of them and stuff on the internet, and whatnot, but they're kind of like a, if you took a yellow kind of a marble, or maybe a white marble, and had beat it and hammered it a lot, and it's kind of chipped, and then you know the difference between a rock that's been laying in the riverbed versus a rock that you just freshly busted? Well, the surface of these things is rough. It's not clear and smooth, like glass. But they're kind of opaque looking, and they're different. You can see them -- they're like the size of a little pin head, or maybe the size of that wheel on that model airplane right there.

JUNGE: And that would be one huge diamond. This thing is about a quarter --

DUANE: A few carats. I mean, but they have all sizes and different colors. And -- [03:26:00]

GENE: That was the one thing about Argyle, is those colored ones.

DUANE: They had some of them that were kind of a golden yellowish color, and then they had some black, black-ish looking diamonds that were kind of a specialty. And then regular, just super high-grade, clear, perfect diamonds. With no flaws in them.

JUNGE: They took you through this whole operation.

DUANE: Yeah, yeah. And then, but these diamonds were all just -- and they put them in these tubs, and you could view the tubs of these diamonds ready to go.

GENE: But somehow, he never did get home with a tubful.

DUANE: Which sorted, and then they would take those tubs twice a week and throw them in those crates, and throw them on our airplane, and then they'd haul them. That's how they got their diamonds to the cutting place. And the cutting place is actually [03:27:00] a grinding place, and it's a big, special wheel that has different grades of diamond surface on it. So they use diamonds to cut diamonds, and polish the diamonds. And then there's a special tool. There's a name for everything. Even the

little foil -- or the little tissue paper sheets that they specially fold a diamond in. And you get a diamond and it comes in a little, kind of a little envelope, but it's not sealed. It's just folded, and it's kind of like a crispy tissue paper. Heavy tissue paper thing that's folded in a certain way, and it has a name. I can't remember what it's called.

JUNGE: Yeah, like a pharmacist would used to wrap prescriptions in.

DUANE: Yeah.

JUNGE: So, then it goes to the Netherlands, right?

DUANE: Well, Argyle Sales competed against De Beers.

[03:28:00] See, De Beers had kind of like, to try to get a monopoly, well, in Belgium. Belgium and the Netherlands and that area there, was trying to -- they'd captured the world diamond market. But Argyle was such a producer, they had their own sales office independent of De Beers.

JUNGE: In Australia.

DUANE: Yeah. Right there in Perth.

JUNGE: Never heard of it. Never heard of it.

DUANE: Yeah, yeah. And they produced 40% of the world's diamonds, right out of that one line. Forty percent, at that time. And this was in 1980, maybe '82. Or no, let's

see. It would have been '86, probably, because I was off active duty and I'd only been there --

GENE: I don't know. We've only -- wasn't very long.

DUANE: It was probably '86 or '87. Maybe it was '80 -- it wasn't '88. Eighty eight was when they had the Yellowstone [03:29:00] fires.

JUNGE: You guys were up there on that?

LOUISE: You were here for that, Duane.

DUANE: Yeah, but I was here.

GENE: Yeah, we were really involved in that.

DUANE: I was here for it, because I went to Australia on this job, so that -- and that would've been sometime in the '80s.

GENE: Son, was the F27 -- or, what the hell airplane was it that ended up in Greenland that I had to go rescue, or somebody. Or you know, we were up in that area.

LOUISE: No, that's when you were sending something to Europe for --

DUANE: You were hauling something and the engine failed and ended up, up in -- up by Hudson Bay, somewhere.

GENE: Yeah, yeah.

DUANE: In Canada, during the middle of the winter.

GENE: Yeah, I'm trying to think of what the hell that was.

That was --

DUANE: Froze in, I think.

GENE: -- plumb interesting.

JUNGE: In Gander? Was it in Gander?

DUANE: No, it was in Canada, by Hudson Bay. Not

Newfoundland, but --

JUNGE: Well, listen, we better quit! You know what, how many hours? We've gone three and a half hours.

GENE: We have enough bullshit to last a while.

JUNGE: Yeah, maybe -- [03:30:00]

GENE: We haven't even got started to the good stuff yet.

DUANE: We just barely got into it.

JUNGE: I know! Is there a way that I could sometime come back and we could --

GENE: That's up to you, not me!

DUANE: I didn't get clear. What are you going to do with all this stuff you're gathering from everybody?

JUNGE: Most of this stuff, as I told your dad and mom --

LOUISE: That all got on here.

JUNGE: Most of this stuff will go into the state archives, and be in the form of DVDs, right? Because I'm going to burn DVDs, and I'll give them the product. And then I'm

done with the project. They will try to build an online museum where pictures of people are shown along with excerpts from the oral history tapes. Maybe some pictures of pioneer aviators and airplanes.

DUANE: (inaudible) Whole crew of student archivists putting all this stuff together.

JUNGE: Well, no. No, they'll -- the lady that was going to do this all, quit. So I don't know who's going to take over. So, my guess is, is that [03:31:00] nobody's going to hear this for quite a while, unless a member of the family wants it. But, I think -- I think this is some of the best material I've ever gotten, from you guys. And --

GENE: We barely got to the good stuff. (laughs)

JUNGE: I know! I know! And that's what ticks me off! I haven't got to the diamonds yet! Bright. Well -- you need some help?

GENE: Yeah, I'm old, sure. I'll get there.

JUNGE: Anyway, I would like to come back and talk to you guys again and -- but what I'd like to do is create an outline first, so that we know what we're going to talk about. I mean, stories, mainly. Because we've got the basic framework on the history, don't we, Louise?

LOUISE: Yeah, pretty good.

JUNGE: Pretty much?

LOUISE: A lot of things you missed, though.

GENE: Well, our firefighting career. Has got --

LOUISE: And all of this (inaudible). Duane might help you with that.

JUNGE: Well, what I'm thinking is, is somebody ought to do a book on this sometime. Are you thinking about that?

DUANE: Yeah, I thought, I mean, there is -- [03:32:00] you could have a very, very neat book that brings in a lot of different characters, and some of these people or other well-known folks that you talk to, and stuff. But there's a tremendous amount of these characters that you know, from other parts of the country, that were part of this era and industry, that were just total wild people, in terms of their character and their mannerisms, and things that they did as pioneers in this field of aviation that, in today's age -- like, I fly over, you know, in the war zone, and I'm flying with a lot of these folks that might be younger, and some older than me. And a lot of them are maybe [03:33:00] mostly just military ex-pilots, and stuff. But they have no comprehension of what flying is really about, and they're very narrow-minded in their thoughts on what, maybe, is doable in an airplane, or what's --

JUNGE: What's gone on.

DUANE: -- sane, or what's wise. And they don't really understand how you can do something and do it safely and consistently, time after time after time, without just being totally out of control. They just don't have any appreciation of that type of flying.

JUNGE: Well, look --

DUANE: But it links back to the old pioneer type we're all evolved from, back in the day, and we were part of a lot of that.

JUNGE: Yes, yes. And what you say is totally true.

[03:34:00] What I could -- I want to give you a couple forms to fill out. One's a release form. One is a biographical questionnaire form, but I want you to put your -- you have email, right?

GENE: Yeah.

JUNGE: OK, I want you to put your email on there, because I want to contact you guys again. You know, this -- I'm -- you know what I did on this last trip? I've done -- this is my third trip. And I told them, after my second trip, I had already gathered more interviews than I was supposed to, and I said, "I love this stuff." I said, they said, "Well, we don't have any more money. I mean, your grant

money's out." It was a small stipend. So I said, "All right. I'll tell you what I'll do." I said, "You pay my expenses -- pay for the motel and the food, and the gas, and I'll go out and do it for nothing." And that pricked their consciousness a little bit and they went, "Well, maybe we can come up with a little money." I don't know how much money they're going to come up with, but they want me to negotiate with them.

DUANE: No, they do have a Wyoming Aviation Hall of Fame.

Dad's in that. And I don't know --

JUNGE: You are, yeah.

DUANE: They're probably on a shoestring [03:35:00] budget as well, but I got the feeling that they did get some kind of support, maybe, through the Wyoming Aeronautics Commission, or this or that. But you know, there's got to be some funding out there for something like this, and I've seen a lot of this over the years in Wyoming. This, more based on the agricultural, or the mining industry aspects of you know, the Wyoming culture. And there really isn't a lot of Wyoming aviation out there. Other than, you know, some basic flight operations type stuff. You know, a few pioneers like over in Acton.

JUNGE: Aviat, you mean?

DUANE: Well, before that. [Col-air?]. And some stuff like that.

JUNGE: I talked to -- the owner was in New York, and he said, "Yeah, I guess I could do that [03:36:00] if I happen to be in town." And I've never gotten back with him, but --

DUANE: Well, there is some Wyoming aviation like that, you know. The Acton manufacturing, and things. The pits. Bi-plane manufacturing. Eventually things evolved into this Aviat deal, but before that, and before actually even Chrysler and Avery, some of that stuff. But --

JUNGE: Oh, we didn't even talk about that.

DUANE: Not a lot of that. Not of a lot of it. And other states, aviation states. So --

JUNGE: This guy at Sky Aviation in Worland, Tom Woodward? Do you know him?

DUANE: We owned a Sky Aviation.

GENE: We owned Sky, for a long time.

DUANE: That was our company.

JUNGE: Oh, OK. Well, he knows you guys.

DUANE: We created a lot of what --

GENE: Well, a lot of these airports in this (inaudible).

DUANE: We owned Sky. That was our company. We sold that company. [03:37:00]

JUNGE: Well, he talked about Mel Chrysler and the Connies.

The Constellations. And we need to talk about that, too.

GENE: Well, we had them parked down there for a while.

JUNGE: All right. You know what -- what time do you normally eat?

GENE: Whenever she tells me.

LOUISE: (laughs)

JUNGE: Louise, I get the impression you're the boss here.

Thanks so much for this. OK, let me shut this off.

END OF AUDIO FILE