

OH-3089, Jack Skinner, 8-20-2014, Laramie, WY In Flight

BOGART: OK. Today is August 20th, 2014. This is Barbara Bogart. I am at the Laramie Regional Airport and I'm talking with Mr. Jack Skinner, who is the airport manager. So how did you get interested in aviation?

SKINNER: Well, it was interesting, Barbara. My previous job was with the state department of audit. I worked for them for 11 years. My main duties -- we had an office on the University of Wyoming -- so my main duties for nine and a half of those 11 years was auditing the University of Wyoming as a public funds examiner is what they called it. The university back in about 1990 went to an all-CPA audit so therefore [00:01:00] I had to move to Cheyenne. Well, I didn't move, I commuted to Cheyenne. So I noticed -- a year and a half of commuting got to be old so I noticed the job advertised in the Laramie Boomerang for the airport manager position so I applied and was interviewed and was lucky enough to land the job. At the time they were looking for somebody that was familiar with grant compliance and my background as an auditor allowed me to qualify in that regard. I didn't know much about aviation

at the time, but I was lucky enough to get the job on June 1st of 1992. So I've been there 22 years.

BOGART: You must like it.

SKINNER: I do enjoy it. It's been quite interesting, a lot different from what I did in my previous [00:02:00] career with the state department of audit. But a lot more interesting, in my opinion.

BOGART: Tell me a little bit about what the airport looked like at that point and what its operations consisted of.

SKINNER: At that point, in 1992, it was quite different. You might not recognize a lot of the difference. But, for instance, one of the big differences, we didn't have a perimeter fence around the airport. Within the first five years that I worked here we were lucky enough to get an FAA grant to fence the entire perimeter. At that point, back in the early- to mid-'90s the concern wasn't a security issue it was more an issue with keeping wildlife off of the runways. So actually the fence that we have [00:03:00] is considered a game fence and what it does is keep the antelope and the deer. Before the fence we obviously had an open range and every once in a while have deer or antelope on the runways and taxiways, which is not a safe situation at all. At that point, the FAA was -- and their primary focus is still safety at airports -- was to make

every airport as safe as possible and they were high on funding fencing, perimeter game fences. So we were lucky enough to -- initially, I remember that grant; it was one of the first grants that I worked with. We only anticipated, according to our engineer's estimate that we would be able to fence about half of the perimeter, but the bids came in so low that we were able to actually do the [00:04:00] full perimeter. That was one of the big differences. Also, since the early '90s we've extended the runway. We've built a parallel taxiway. We've resurfaced both runways since I've been here. There's been a lot of changes, continued every year it seems like we have a project that's upgrading the airfield.

BOGART: OK, '92, was there scheduled airline service into Laramie then?

SKINNER: Yes, there was. Since I've been here there have been three different airlines that have operated in and out of Laramie. At the time that I came there was Mesa Airlines was the name of the airline. And I think at one point when Mesa [00:05:00] was flying we had five flights a day direct to Denver, all of them. And they were flying on Beechcraft 1900s, which seat 19 passengers, which at the time was an ideal aircraft for short hops like we have from Laramie to Denver. It was an efficient aircraft and cost effective

for the airlines to operate at that point. The unusual thing, well not unusual but unique thing about Laramie Regional Airport is that we are considered an essential air service airport. Essential air service that law came into effect in I believe in about 1978 when [00:06:00] all the airlines were deregulated by the federal government. So if you were a small airport like Laramie was that was served by one carrier, at the time of deregulation the federal government wanted to ensure that these small communities like ours wouldn't lose air service, that the airline wouldn't just pull out. So this program was started in '78 and it's still in effect today. And what it does is it subsidizes the airlines to fly in and out of these small communities. So every two years, we're required -- not us required, but the federal government goes out for proposals from airlines to serve these small communities that have essential air service. So what the airlines do is they put together their revenues [00:07:00] and expense projections based on past history and based on the type of aircraft that they want to fly and they try and anticipate what the fuel prices are going to be and they put a financial statement together and the deficit that they anticipate is the subsidy that they're applying for. And they're allowed to build a five percent profit into their financial

statements, into their proposals. So every two years the federal government will go out and through selection -- in the past we had a little bit of competition between Mesa Airlines, Great Lakes Airlines, and some other regional carriers, smaller regional carriers that would apply and submit. Then the communities, each of those communities [00:08:00] that EAS has, they have a say in what airline they want to use. It's not based just solely on the financial subsidy requirement. They do weigh community comments quite heavily into their decision on which airline they select.

BOGART: But it's a federal or FAA decision?

SKINNER: Yes, it is a federal decision. So for instance Mesa Airlines when I first started was receiving a subsidy to fly in and out of here and over the course of the EAS period -- which I said is a two-year period -- if the airline, if their passenger loads increase and they're making money, there's a point where they say well we don't require [00:09:00] a subsidy. So we're still an EAS market, Laramie. There was a point I remember -- just once though, just one two-year period -- Mesa said that they didn't require a subsidy to fly in and out of here so they didn't receive any federal subsidies. But at the end of that two-year period when they reapplied they determined that they

needed some subsidies. So like I said, every two years they go out. It's a competition. At one point, we had Great Lakes Airlines who we selected, or the feds selected. They were competing at that point with Mesa Airlines and Great Lakes was selected. They served us for about probably 12 or 15 years and then just recently just two years ago SkyWest Airlines started flying as a United Express [00:10:00] carrier. As far as airline service, it's reliable now. It didn't use to be. Some of the carriers that we had previously weren't flying -- there were a lot of flight cancellations and delays. But with this new carrier that we've had the past two years they've been quite reliable and our passenger numbers have increased substantially.

BOGART: I've heard that. Do you think it's just a function of a different carrier?

SKINNER: A lot of it is. Another thing that weighs heavily is that they are a United Express carrier so, for instance if you're a passenger that's connecting out of DIA on a United flight, lots of times the price of the ticket is just minimal, 40 bucks more [00:11:00] round trip just to fly out of Laramie. So them being tagged with United and United's the largest carrier out of Denver, so that helps substantially with the use. Our main flyers out of here

are business people. They want to make sure they make their connection out of Denver. They wouldn't want to be late and miss their connection and have to rebook so reliability seems to be the number one issue with the business travelers. They'll pay the higher cost as long as they make sure they're going to make their connection out of Denver.

BOGART: (coughs) Oh, excuse me. So scheduled airline service is one component of airline operations. What percentage of activity at the airport [00:12:00] is that scheduled service?

SKINNER: Well if we're just basing it off takeoffs and landings it's, gosh, probably only about 15 to 20 percent. We do get a lot of corporate and -- when I first started in '92 we had a lot of general aviation traffic, you know those small, single-engine Cessnas and Pipers and Bonanzas and those types of aircraft. But over the course of the years, as there's been more restrictions and requirements from the federal government and the cost of aviation gasoline and the cost of insurance, it's kind of driven those recreational flyers out of the picture. Predominantly now we get corporate traffic, which a lot of these companies that fly in and out of here have [00:13:00] business in Laramie or they're here to visit the university. The

corporate travel is turbo-prop aircrafts, small jets, business jets, those types of operations. Back in the early '90s I remember we used to sell a lot more, they call it 100 low lead gasoline, which is for the smaller piston-type aircraft. And we would probably outsell jet fuel two-to-one with the 100 low lead. (airplane sounds)

BOGART: Here it comes.

SKINNER: There's an airplane going by. But we probably sell twice as much of the general aviation gasoline for the smaller aircraft then we would jets. And that is totally reversed -- actually we sell probably four to five times more jet fuel [00:14:00] now than the 100 low lead general aviation. So I've seen a complete turnaround as far as the types of aircraft that we get in and out of here, the efficiency of aircraft -- with the cost of fuel that's usually one of the largest, if not the largest cost of operating an aircraft is the fuel cost.

BOGART: Now, since you raised that. Can we talk about governance of the airport for a moment? Is this a joint powers board?

SKINNER: Yes it is.

BOGART: And then, I haven't quite got it clear in my head. I understand there's management of the airport by the board

and staff, but then there's also an FBO, is that a separate operation or are they often combined?

SKINNER: They're often combined. The airport, Laramie Regional, [00:15:00] owns and operates Cowboy Aviation, which is the fixed-base operation. I'm seeing more and more of that over the years where the airport authority, the airport board, is operating the fixed-base operation. The fixed-base operation is where they sell the fuel, hangar the aircraft, those types of things. I've been here 22 years and just from the airports in the state of Wyoming I know that there's four of the major commercial service airports that also own and operate the fixed-base operation. Cheyenne started I think two years ago, took over their FBO. Rock Springs operates the FBO. It's a good revenue source. One of the arguments is that the services may not be provided [00:16:00] that a private FBO would provide, but with a lot of the federal regulations and a lot of the high cost of insurance, a lot of the private FBOs are really struggling to make ends meet. The flight instruction, for instance we don't offer flight instruction. Most private FBOs do provide flight instruction. But the cost of operating the airplane and the insurance, which is part of operating the airplane, obviously, has increased so much that there's fewer and fewer students and there's fewer and

fewer of those flight schools around. Also another issue has been mechanics. Airplane mechanics are [00:17:00] -- it's hard. They've got to carry liability insurance and they've got to be qualified to work on these aircraft. A lot of the private FBOs aren't able to make money because of the cost of insurance. The lower volume of planes out there, the general aviation aircraft, there's just not enough work to keep them busy to and to make enough money and to pay your mechanics.

BOGART: Is there any aviation mechanics training in Wyoming or in the region?

SKINNER: Well, there used to be one in Cheyenne. I don't think they're there anymore. But I think in the region there is. I think the closest now is actually Denver. I know there's mechanics training there. But some of those schools have gone by the wayside, also. A lot of [00:18:00] these airline mechanics get their training in the military. They get out of the military and go to work. The airlines is a big employer, obviously, of airline mechanics. So that's where most of them go. The small, private individual mechanics are kind of far and few between but they're needed in this industry. I'm always getting calls from people about needing a mechanic and if I knew where one was located.

BOGART: And back to flying, how do people learn how to fly nowadays?

SKINNER: Here at Laramie we're lucky. We've got a flying club. It's called the Laramie flying club. It's a private club but anybody can join and they share the cost of a Cessna 182 that we have on the field and I think there's probably about 30 members in the flying club. I think probably about [00:19:00] 15 to 20 are active, which means that they're actually renting the plane and flying. So I'm glad we have that available. And there's I think two or maybe three certified flight instructors that belong to the flying club and they give lessons through the club.

BOGART: Oh, OK. So it's private then?

SKINNER: Yes. You've got to join the flying club and they've got two to three instructors that are available. To teach right now, it's actually going pretty good for them. They've been flying a lot these past couple of months, this summer. The plane has been busy. I know we've been selling them a lot of fuel. There's always new students that are wanting to learn and the couple of instructors that we do have are really good, available a lot in the summer to give lessons [00:20:00]. We do get calls, probably two to three a month, people interested in

actually taking flying lessons. I don't know if they follow through but I forward their names to the instructors.

BOGART: At least there's an interest there. So, the club then collectively owns this plane and they schedule it for their own individual schedule for their own use. Is that right? Is that a trendy thing now that owning your own thing is expensive, that people will go into this kind of arrangement? Have you seen it other places?

SKINNER: Yes. I see it a lot at different places. Another thing I see, Barbara, is where you might have a party of say five people that go together, or four to five people that will go together and buy an aircraft [00:21:00] and they'll share the expense and share the flying. It seems to be an affordable way for folks to fly. And like you said, the flying clubs, I think every community -- I don't know about one hundred percent of these communities similar size to Laramie -- a lot of them have flying clubs that have aircraft available. A lot of them have two to three aircraft, different types of aircraft available for their members. I know this club at one point was talking about buying an additional plane, one that's a little more complex than the current Cessna 172 that they have.

BOGART: Maybe when we get through you could give me a name of somebody in the club because I'd really like to talk to

them about how they do this. You mentioned something about increasing [00:22:00] restrictions, federal restrictions on flying that has put a downward pressure on people owning their own planes. Give me an example of what you're talking about.

SKINNER: Well, for instance, 9/11 is the biggest example that's out there. I remember that day, September 11th, we were at work, me and the operations manager, Andy Ryan, were here and we were watching TV like everyone else or somebody called us and said, "Turn on the news." So we saw the planes fly into the buildings and shortly after that we got a call from the FAA saying we're closing down the airspace in the entire United States. That was the most unusual day that I've ever worked here, when that happened. They instructed every [00:23:00] pilot that was in the air that day to land at the nearest airport that they were at. So we didn't have a great number of planes land but we probably had five to six. One guy I remember was on his way to Mississippi. He had to land and tie down his plane. He rented a car and drove because they didn't know when the airspace was going to open. It was one of the eeriest feelings in the next few days, coming to work, and we're used to planes taking off and landing and seeing airplanes

fly over the airfield. There was nothing. There was no activity in the skies for I can't remember how many days.

BOGART: It was a good while it seemed like.

SKINNER: Yes. Then they started to open it up gradually [00:24:00]. But the restrictions that came out of 9/11 is the biggest change. A lot of it good restrictions. It changed dramatically the way that the airlines operate and it changed dramatically just the way general aviation guys -- because they investigated flight schools, all of a sudden there was more awareness, they wanted all the employees at airports to be aware of the airplanes that were operating in and out of the airfield if there was any suspicious activity to keep an eye on it and report it. So obviously, besides the screening that -- before that we didn't even have screening at these small airports, then all of a sudden we were inundated with x-ray machines and magnetometers [00:25:00] and everybody was checked, bags were checked for people boarding the commercial flights.

BOGART: How did that equipment arrive? Was it given to you? Did you have to purchase it? How did that happen?

SKINNER: No, it was a big outlay the federal government to supply all these smaller airports with the equipment that was needed to properly screen and check the baggage, and

that equipment's evolved over the last -- what has it been
-- almost --

BOGART: Thirteen years.

SKINNER: Yes. Almost 15 years. So 13 years, that equipment
has evolved and changed. The first x-ray machine we had in
here is in some warehouse now because it's obsolete. So
they've upgraded the equipment all the time and we're
getting new magnetometers, new x-rays. They're trying to
figure out more [00:26:00] efficient ways to screen the
passengers and keep the skies safe. The arrival of TSA,
that was a huge deal. So now we're supposed to have six
TSA agents, they're down a couple agents right now. But
just based in Laramie here, we're supposed to have six TSA
agents. Those are federal employees we had to provide
office space and they're good folks to have at the airports,
for sure.

BOGART: OK, now I've got all kinds of questions popping into
my head. But just continuing on the subject of usage, you
mentioned there's a lot of business travelers who use the
scheduled service and also corporate usage of the airport.
How much does the university have an impact [00:27:00] on
the usage of the airport?

SKINNER: Quite a bit, especially in the fall. And actually
during graduation, also. They've got two turbo-prop King

Air 200s. One is used exclusively for research; it's a weather research aircraft.

BOGART: I wandered over there the other day and took a look at it.

SKINNER: Yes, it's a quite interesting plane. The other one is also a King Air 200. It's called their transportation aircraft that they use to fly around the state, even out of state to pick up trustees, to take university employees to various places.

BOGART: Does the university have its own pilot?

SKINNER: Yes, they've got I think three full-time pilots and a couple part-time. And then they've got two full-time mechanics. With the uniqueness [00:28:00] of the research aircraft the mechanics are tinkering with that aircraft a lot.

BOGART: Sure. So you say in the fall, I'm assuming that means for football season? Do you get a lot of general aviation traffic?

SKINNER: Yes we do. It all depends on who we're playing and how we're playing. I've got a couple photographs a few years ago when Texas came and played up in Laramie, University of Texas. They have a big huge fan following and I think we had, oh gosh, close to 50 aircraft on the ramp. And most of them were from Texas. We do have some

Wyoming fans that are season ticket holders that fly down for every home game. In the fall it's busy on football weekends. [00:29:00] When I first started here in the '90s the universities didn't fly their football teams out of here, but about the past probably eight years they've contracted exclusively with Frontier Airlines, they charter a Frontier Airbus and the football team goes to their away games and they fly out of here, which I know the coaches and the athletic department love it, the fact that they can just fly out of here and get home after the game and get in their own beds. But I guess in the past they would bus them down to Denver to catch a flight. I've seen an increase in that. We probably have about ten of those flights a year from the visiting teams and when the Cowboys play.

BOGART: Is it just football or do any of the other [00:30:00] teams fly out?

SKINNER: The basketball, volleyball. They don't all the time fly out of here. Sometimes it's less expensive for them to, for instance, fly commercial.

BOGART: Let's talk a little bit about the physical changes in the airport since you've been here. What were its dimensions when you got here in terms of length of runway, visibilities, and that sort of thing?

SKINNER: OK. So our main runway, which is runway zero-three-two-one, which is oriented on a northeast-southwest orientation, at that time when I first started it was 7,700 feet, 150 foot wide. A good, safe runway. But at our elevation here in Laramie -- I think our field elevation is about 7,280 [00:31:00] -- there's a thing called density altitude where the aircraft don't operate as efficient as they would as a lower elevation, like at sea level. So they need a longer runway. That was one of the main projects we were trying to do is extend the runway. We were able to get some federal funding to extend it 800 feet. So now we're at 8,500 feet, 150 foot wide. It's a good long, safe runway. We've got a crosswind runway; we call it a crosswind runway. It's 6,300 foot long by 100 foot wide. They're both capable to land almost any size aircraft. One thing I've noticed over the course of the years is these aircraft have improved their efficiency in the engines they're using where they don't need as much runway to takeoff [00:32:00] or land. So it hasn't been a big issue with the newer --

BOGART: Even at altitude?

SKINNER: Yes. I mean it's always an issue in the summer on a hot day because then they're starved for oxygen and you need a longer runway but we haven't had any issues in

several years with the development of aircraft engines and more power and more efficiency that they are. That's been a good thing. One of the good improvements might not look like a huge improvement to the layperson but at one point we did not have a parallel taxiway to runway three-zero, so what would happen is the aircraft would go out in the middle of the runway and what they call back taxi, just kind of drive down to the end of the [00:33:00] runway, turn around and take off. That was considered a huge safety issue by the FAA. So we were able to secure funding to build a full-length, parallel taxiway to runway 1230. So that was a huge improvement. We've improved the ramp, strengthened the concrete on the ramp to accommodate the larger aircraft. This building we're in is called the aircraft rescue and firefighting building. We didn't have this building when I first started. I think it was erected in '96. It's been a huge improvement as far as -- all commercial service airports are required to have a fire truck and snow removal equipment. So it's allowed us to park our snow removal equipment inside, our fire trucks inside, [00:34:00] and some of our other operational vehicles inside and provided us with an office space and conference room. We've upgraded the lighting in the last ten years on the airfield. Some of the land-side

improvements have been nice. When I first got here, well until about the last five years, we just had a gravel parking lot with not much lighting. So we were able to get a grant to build a nice parking lot with lighting and we were able to bury some of the overhead power lines to make it a more attractive place and now we've got a great parking lot that's almost full all the time.

BOGART: I saw that when I came in. Well speaking of weather, [00:35:00] you mentioned snow removal as well as the fire and rescue, do you have any stories about weather impacts on the airport?

SKINNER: (laughs) Yes. And it seems, Barbara, that spring time -- those big, heavy, wet spring storms are the ones that, I wouldn't say cripple us, but are a challenge. Our equipment is big. Our snow removal equipment is larger than what you'd see on the highway, what you'd see in town. Our plow blades are 22 foot wide. But when you're plowing a 150-foot-wide runway it takes a lot of --

BOGART: You need that.

SKINNER: Yes. You need that. So those heavy, wet spring snowstorms are the ones that cause the problems because of the weight of the snow [00:36:00]. You're pushing it the entire length of the runway and it's hard on the trucks. But the positive thing about spring snowstorms is that in a

couple of days the sun will come out and it melts it quickly. But those have been the biggest challenge, the spring storms. I remember years -- it doesn't seem like we were having to plow as much in the last few years than several years ago. I don't know if the winters have become more mild or what, but we're always challenged with a spring storm at least once a year, but multiple times. I remember, probably back in the late '90s, we had some storms in the winter that kind of shut things down. It wasn't because we couldn't remove the snow off the runways, it was because of the visibility where we had blizzard conditions, [00:37:00] that it wasn't safe for the airplanes to land. So those were challenging times. Most of our funding for our capital improvements comes from the federal government and when they provide you funding for snow removal equipment and for these all-weather runways and these taxiways and lighting systems, one of the requirements it's a grant assurance is that you maintain your airfield and that you keep it open as much as you can. There's been times also where the highways have been closed but the flights are still operating. We'll get called when the highways are closed and ask if the flights are going and they'll buy a ticket that day even though that's the highest-priced ticket. [00:38:00] So there are situations

like that where the airport -- we try and keep it open all the time. We're mandated that -- if we close the airport due to weather conditions there better be a good reason and we better make every effort that we can to keep it open.

BOGART: And who are you responsible to for that? The FAA?

SKINNER: Yes, the FAA. We have an annual inspection from what they call a certification inspector. Comes in and they'll look at all of our operations, our training records, the conditions of the airfield. Whenever there's a condition that may not be safe for a pilot we're supposed to issue a NOTAM. So they'll look at all the NOTAMs for the year and if they see a NOTAM where the airport was closed for an extended amount of time they'll definitely question that and say, [00:39:00] "Why weren't you working?" So to keep this place open.

BOGART: Now a NOTAM, is that an acronym?

SKINNER: Yes. Notice to Airmen is what it stands for. It goes throughout the whole system and when pilots are filing a flight plan they'll get a list of NOTAMs to the airports that they're flying in and out of to see what the conditions are. There might be, for instance, this weekend we're going to have some painting done on the runways; some markings are going to be upgraded. So we'll have to issue a NOTAM that there's men and equipment working on taxiways

and runways. Just alerts the pilots that are coming in and leaving of the conditions of the airfield.

BOGART: Now, what about -- I saw in the paper, what did I see in the paper today? You got a grant to do something.

[00:40:00]

SKINNER: We got a grant to improve our nav aids, navigational aids. We got a grant to put in some lighting systems, one is called the PAPI, which is precision approach path indicator, on runway three and the other one is for the reels and also supplemental wind cones on the airfield.

BOGART: I just have a couple more questions. Unusual or special visitors to the airport since you've been here?

SKINNER: Oh, we've had quite a few. Back when Mr. Cheney was the vice president, I remember four different occasions when he flew into Laramie, when he was the vice president. The preparation ahead of time, the Secret Service will show up a week before and [00:41:00] tap your phones and do all the stuff that they need to get ready for the arrival of the vice president. So we've had I guess it's Air Force Two come in here four times within that eight-year timeframe when Cheney was vice president. During the election season in 2008 we had both, well Bill Clinton was here campaigning for his wife, Hillary. So he came into Laramie. And Obama made a stop in 2008. We've had

Harrison Ford. He's a private pilot who lives in Jackson and he's stopped in here for fuel. David Letterman's stopped in here in his private jet to look at a ranch. At one time Jim Nabors flew in and out of here. Mikhail Gorbachev, that was an interesting one. [00:42:00] He came to speak on the university and he came from -- the jet he was flying in on came from Canada, so he had to clear customs. We're not an international airport so the customs agent from Casper had to come down and clear Gorbachev's travel party or anybody that was on that jet before he was released to go speak at the university. Had Gorbachev. Some generals, a few sports stars, and a few entertainers have flown in and out of here on private aircraft. Elton John's been here twice on his private jet to perform at the university.

BOGART: I didn't know he'd ever performed here. That's cool.

SKINNER: Yes. We've had those type. [00:43:00] Interesting people.

BOGART: Well, I think I've exhausted my brain of questions, unless there are things you want to tell me -- I know what I wanted to ask you. Who was General Brees?

SKINNER: General Brees was a -- I believe it was in World War II -- he was a general that was from Laramie, Wyoming, and I believe he was in the Air Force and one of the hotshot

pilots. So this field was named after him. Well, this field was built in 1934 and it was called the Laramie Airport before they renamed it to General Brees Field in, gosh I don't know that was probably the late '40s or early '50s that it was named General Brees. And then actually when I first started in 1992 [00:44:00] the airport board was in the process of changing the name from General Brees Field to Laramie Regional and interesting they kind of thought that the word Brees, since the wind does blow in Laramie, they thought the term Brees could be misconstrued as (laughs) breeze. Even though it is spelled different --

BOGART: Right, that had crossed my mind, too.

SKINNER: In 1992, the name was changed to Laramie Regional Airport. It's still General Brees Field, but it's Laramie Regional Airport. We don't want to lose the Brees name.

BOGART: Sure. That's all I can think of, unless you've got things you want to tell me.

SKINNER: No. The aviation world's an interesting world. It's a tight-knit group of pilots and air traffic controllers and people that work at airports [00:45:00] seem to be a tight-knit group. Different airports know who's pilots at other communities so it's interesting. I'm not a pilot myself, but it's interesting to watch the pilots get together and talk about flying and I'm glad to be involved

in it. It's been an interesting career and I'm glad I made the switch from an auditor to an airport manager.

BOGART: I would think there would be a little more variety.

SKINNER: Oh yes. Especially at a small airport. Airport managers do a little bit of everything. I go out and plow, I fuel planes, I clean the terminal, I take care of all the bookkeeping and all the grant stuff and all the paperwork that's involved, compliance with the federal government, I handle all the leases whereas at a larger airport they have [00:46:00] individuals that handle each of those duties.

BOGART: Well that makes me all the more grateful for you giving me an hour of your time.

SKINNER: Oh, it's fine.

BOGART: I appreciate that.

SKINNER: Not a problem.

BOGART: Tell me, or give me the name of somebody involved in that flying club that I might talk with.

SKINNER: Merl Raisbeck is a good contact. He worked for the university and I think the state vet lab but I think he's retiring now. He's a flight instructor and been involved. He owns a hangar over here and so he's been involved with aviation for a long time. I could find a phone number for you.

BOGART: Oh, I can find it. If he's connected with the
university at all, it's easy to find people. Well let me
shut --

END OF AUDIO FILE