

Q: [00:00:00] -- go from there. OK. You said you were also the fixed-base operator as well as the manager?

GOOD: Yes.

Q: OK. Let me ask you how long you have been in Wyoming, or where are you from originally?

GOOD: I was born in Belle Fourche, South Dakota, and we moved up here and -- when I was about six months old. In '51, 1951. So I have been here the whole time, except for four years in the Navy, which, we moved around a lot. Other than that, I have been right here, and Casper. I lived in Casper for a while.

Q: OK. And what brought your family to Douglas?

GOOD: My grandfather and my grandmother came from Nebraska and homesteaded out here -- Dull Center, Wyoming. It's out -- [00:01:00] if you go to Bill, Wyoming, and go northeast, I think it's about another 30 miles out there. So, it's out in the wilderness.

(laughter)

Q: OK. All right. I had talked to Don [Cooksey?] yesterday, and he said that your dad had been involved in aviation, too.

GOOD: Oh, yeah.

Q: OK. Tell me about that.

GOOD: Yeah. He started -- he was in the Navy, and he was a mechanic in the Navy right after World War II. And he was stationed at -- in Texas for a while, and also Pearl Harbor. And (clears throat) basically mechanic-ing on the naval aircraft. Then he got out, and he was teaching woodworking school in [00:02:00] some airplane mechanic school in Oakland, California. Then he moved back here and started R & G Aircraft. Actually, he moved back here -- he moved to Bell Fourche and was working for Bus Field Aviation over there as a mechanic. My sister and I were both born there. Then he moved to here and started R & G Aircraft the year I was born, in 1951.

Q: And what was your dad's name?

GOOD: Maurice, M-A-U-R-I-C-E. Maurice Good. He was the first airport manager, and I can't give you the exact date; probably about '56, '58, right in there is when he started doing that job as well. [00:03:00] And we were at the old airport. You didn't drive by that, but it's bas-- it's the -- it's on the edge of town, on the east end of town over there. (clears throat) He was the airport manager there until -- well, even when we moved out here to this new airport in 1984, he was still the airport manager, and he passed away in '85. I became airport manager in '85, and

then I have -- so it's just been the two of us that have been airport manager all this time.

Q: OK. Now, when your dad came on as airport manager at the old airport, was the air-- when was the airport established?

GOOD: That airport -- officially, I am not real sure. Unofficially, I think clear back in the '30s, people were landing over there. So officially, I am not real certain about that. Maybe [00:04:00] late '40s? Mid, late '40s?

Q: OK. That makes sense. The little I've read about the creation of a Wyoming airport is '30s, '40s; landing strips before then, so that would be about right, I guess. So, usually, the first question that I ask people is "How did you get interested in aviation?"

GOOD: I grew --

Q: But it doesn't sound like you had --

GOOD: I grew up --

Q: -- much of a choice, yeah.

GOOD: I grew up in it. Well, I've got an older brother, a younger brother, and a sister. And Barb, my sister, worked as a bookkeeper for my dad, and also for me. She worked for me for, like, 19 years. Then she moved to Colorado. Her family -- her and her husband moved to Colorado because their kids were down there. So -- but my older brother, my

younger brother, [00:05:00] they just -- they have no interest, they have no knowledge; it just did not click. To me, it did. I hung around the airport all the time when I was a little kid, and I started working for a wage at -- when I was 13 for 35 cents an hour. And (laughs) just cleaning the shop and doing stuff. And then progressed to maintenance duties through high school. Then I joined the Navy in '71, and I was in flight crew in the Navy, P-3 Orions, anti-submarine warfare, in Patrol Squadron 6 to Barbers Point, Hawaii. And we traveled all over the western Pacific. And then I got out in late '75, December of '75. [00:06:00] (clears throat) Came back to work at the airport again. Been here --

Q: So --

GOOD: -- ever since.

Q: -- you were trained as a pilot in the Navy?

GOOD: No, I was an air crew member. I started flying lessons when I was 16, but I -- even though -- well, at 35 cents an hour, 50 cents an hour, a dollar an hour by the time I was 15, dual instruction in an aircraft with an instructor, the rental of the plane, and the fuel, all included, was \$18.75 an hour. Which was a lot back then. But nowadays, you look at it, it's ridiculously low. I

mean, it's upwards of -- it's probably pushing 100 bucks an hour.

Q: Really?

GOOD: Yeah.

Q: Oh, [00:07:00] I would have thought more than that.

GOOD: I don't know exactly how much it is, but it's a lot more. (clears throat)

Q: And who taught you?

GOOD: Various instructors. They would -- we did -- Douglas was only about 2,800 people back then. And we would get -- I think our first instructor was -- Bill [Teeny?] is the one I started with, in a Cessna 140. Then he moved back to Casper. And then John Cooksey, Don Cooksey's dad, he taught me in a Cherokee 140, and Donnie used to come down with him. He was just a little kid, like this. And then they moved down here -- at least, John did -- and he taught a lot of people to fly for several years. And then [00:08:00] he moved back -- I think he moved back to the Cas-- to Casper, and then they have got a ranch out by Newcastle. And he -- I think he moved back there. I think his wife is still there. Don's mother. But anyway, I didn't finish until after I got out of the Navy, because I kept running out of money. And I should have been taking flying lessons while I was in the Navy, because they had

base flying clubs and stuff that were a lot cheaper. I could have gotten it done. But I was just young and wanting to see the sights and all that, and I had no interest in doing that. And then, being onboard the plane, we flew a lot. I guess that satisfied my aviation urge. Then when I got out, I started again. I finished up in '76, and then got my [00:09:00] commercial and instrument up in Casper on the GI Bill in seventy-- it must have been '77 or '78. I bought a plane; I think it was about '78 or '79. I have owned the same plane all these years.

Q: And what is it?

GOOD: A Bonanza, V-tail Bonanza. So -- and then I've gotten my (clears throat) A&P -- Aircraft and Powerplant license -- in '78, and then I got my inspection authorization -- that's the next step up -- in '81. So -- and I've been working at the airport this whole time, since -- real stead-- well, steady since I got out of the Navy in '75.

Q: Now, was there a flying -- a flight [00:10:00] school in Casper?

GOOD: Yes.

Q: You said you went on the GI Bill, so --

GOOD: Yeah, they had -- Casper Air Service had over 100 employees then. They were a worldwide parts distributor. They flew freight; they flew charter. They had -- they

sold -- they had a dealership for aircraft. They had numerous pilots, numerous instructors. Yeah, it was a big deal.

Q: You think maybe the biggest in the state? Or was there one in Cheyenne, too? Or do you know?

GOOD: I think it was Casper.

Q: Uh-huh. It sounds like it. That sounds like a pretty --

GOOD: Yeah. That's a lot of --

Q: -- big operation.

GOOD: -- employees.

Q: Yeah. Now, let me go back for a moment to Navy. What were your duties as a crew member?

GOOD: I was an anti-submarine warfare operator, and I ran the -- I was dual-qualified. [00:11:00] I was in -- a [sensor station three?] operator, which is the radar, magnetic anomaly detector, and also the ECM: electronic countermeasures. So, you did all three of those. Mainly the radar, because you -- normally, you didn't do any of the other stuff. And then I was also the sensor one operator. (clears throat) We dropped buoys -- sonobuoys -- and they are about three foot tall and about four inches in diameter. And you shoot them out of the bottom of the plane, and these blades come out, and they auto-rotate down like a helicopter, and hit the water. And when they hit,

the impact, it has a hydrophone that drops to a preselected depth. And it goes down, and then a little antenna sticks up that [00:12:00] transmits back to the airplane. And you could set probably about four different depths. And then there was a 14-track tape recorder on the plane, and (clears throat) you had all these different frequencies of all these different buoys in the water looking for submarines. And you would lay different kinds of patterns. You would lay an initial search pattern. Back then, the Cold War was going big, and there was about three Russian nuclear subs off the West Coast, and there was eight to 10 off the East Coast, at all times. So, the job with the anti-submarine warfare people was to keep track of all those things during the Cold War. And then when you go overseas on deployment, Vietnam was going, so we would go to the Philippines, or we would go [00:13:00] to -- we went to Okinawa once, for ea-- six to nine months each. And then we would -- from there, we would go to -- we went to Bandar Abbas, Iran, and we went to [Djibouti?], Thailand, a lot. We went to Diego Garcia, Taiwan, Japan, I said the Philippines, Guam. And (clears throat) our job was different over there. It was watching the -- keeping track of what was on the ocean, and particularly, what was going in and out of Vietnam was far as what kind of boats, what

the cargo was, and you would rig each boat's -- especially special interest boats. You would fly [00:14:00] tracks out each day, and rig everything on the water, and then log it, and then download it for the people on the ground, and the intelligence people.

Q: Yeah. OK. So, you got out of the Navy in '75, you said? OK. And came home to Douglas? OK. Now, but you knew the old airport when your dad was working there. So, tell me what that looked like. What kind of traffic? What kind of operations?

GOOD: That was a -- we had one runway, paved: runway 1028. And it was 5,060 feet long, 75 feet wide. And the elevation was 4,876 [00:15:00] feet above sea level. We had a 50 by 50 maintenance shop. We had -- let's see. We had a row of seven hangars, with an office built on the end. And then we had a row of ten. I think that's all we had.

Q: Ten more hangars?

GOOD: No. We had a row of eight. We had a row of eight, a row of 10, and a row of seven. We had all those hangars full, and at the peak -- in the '70s, it was a big boom for aviation -- there was a lot of planes, and we did a lot of work. There was 13 planes tied outside that didn't have room for a hangar. And we did all kinds of work in that

shop. [00:16:00] My dad and I, we had customers from everywhere. We had Wheatland customers, Lusk, Newcastle, Casper. We still do. But Wheatland is -- I think we might have two. Two now, where we had 20 back then. They had a lot of activity down there. It was a boom right in there, and nationwide. Planes were cheap. Now, it's -- aviation (clears throat) is declining, as far as the amount of pilots out there and the ownership of planes. So, it's changed. When we moved out here in '84, there was a -- to coincide with that boom in aviation, there was a boom in the oilfield.

Q: [00:17:00] OK. You are talking --

GOOD: There was a lot --

Q: -- about --

GOOD: -- of people.

Q: -- in the '70s? No, in the --

GOOD: Late '70s. We move out here, I think the price of oil back then was \$35 to \$50, in there, somewhere in there. We move out here, and there was a bust in the oilfield. We had nobody tied down, and (clears throat) they had built -- they sold that row of seven hangars to Tommy [Wilson?]; he bought that on a bid, open bid. And then they built a new row of -- new hangar building out here of 10. So, they moved the other hangars out here. And then built that one

-- built this building, a 10 -- a row of 10 hangars over there, and then moved the rest out here.

Q: OK. Now, let's go back for a minute to the old airport, when you were a [00:18:00] kid. When did you see that begin, that growth in private plane ownership? Because I am assuming those were all owned by individuals. They weren't corporate planes, right? When did the -- when do you think that really started, so that you ended up with so many planes and so many hangars?

GOOD: The hangars were -- well, they built one -- I forget when they built the row of 10 hangars. The row of seven hangars were old; had been there for a long, long time -- way before the boom. Then the next-oldest ones were the row of eight. And they had a sliding door system on them that didn't work. It came that way, and it just didn't work for snow and stuff, so they put bi-fold doors on all those. [00:19:00] And then the next one they built was that row of 10, and there was two twins. Eddie [More?] had one large hangar on the end, and then also Charlie [George?] had the next one. So that was to accommodate their large twin planes. And -- let's see. [Nisely-Moore?] Construction Company had a Twin Bonanza; they had their own hangar. It was sold off also. It was just a single hangar. So actually, when I got out of the Navy,

that boom had already started. So, I am assuming somewhere '72, '73, is when it got going. And then it progressively got more and more. And [00:20:00] also, the uranium mine out north here, [Kerr Magee?], I think they had, like, 800 people out there working. So it was uranium, too.

Q: Yeah. So the boom in oil, and then the uranium as well, does that mean that there were company planes, or was it a combination of that and private planes?

GOOD: Just mainly private.

Q: Oh, OK. Just --

GOOD: A lot of people had money. You could buy a Super Cub for 15 grand. You could buy a 182 for \$15,000. So they were plentiful, those kinds of planes sitting around on the ramp. Cherokees, Piper Cherokees, real popular. Bonanzas, Beech Bonanzas, Cessna 180s, 182s, 172s. [00:21:00] They were all private people. And (clears throat) --

Q: What did they use their planes for?

GOOD: Ranchers used them for flying over their property and looking for cows, and looking -- make sure every-- the fences are good, and make sure the water is -- they have water for the cattle, and stuff like that. And for transportation back and forth to town. The other people, just a hobby. Mostly. I mean, some people used it for -- well, there was an instructor or two in town. They would

have their own plane for that; they would instruct students in their plane.

Q: Mm-hmm. Who were they?

GOOD: Don Sutphin was one of them, S-U-T-P-H-I-N. And then [00:22:00] there was (clears throat) Ron [Albertson?]. And he moved away to Rapid City. I believe he is still over there. They each taught students. But the maintenance, each plane has to have its -- an annual inspection every year. And I signed off myself 72 in one year out of that little shop.

Q: Oh my gosh! So you said your dad was an aircraft mechanic, and then did you get that training, too? Did you work as a mechanic?

GOOD: I learned it from him when I was -- starting when I was 13. And then I went to school and got my license. But primarily, it was on-the-job training. [00:23:00] And it's -- I was doing a lot of the work, and he was signing them off with his IA. But then when I got my IA, he just kind of relaxed, and (laughs) -- because at that point, he was about 70. So, he had been working in aviation a long time. But anyway, I signed off -- that was the most I have ever signed off. When we get out here, it was a little bit different story, because the boom had gone; they closed that mine. They have got a different way to extract

uranium now, but it's not an open pit situation, it's a -- they inject a chemical in the ground and bring it up, and dry it out, and get it out of there. So, it's a different way to do it. More efficient, I think.

Q: And fewer people involved, I guess. [00:24:00] OK. Now, the old airport and the new airport, both always operated by the county? Owned by the county and operated by the county? OK.

GOOD: Yeah.

Q: All right. So, you came back in '75. You came back to work for your dad at the airport? OK. But the boom is over, which means --

GOOD: Well, it was --

Q: But --

GOOD: -- over when we moved out here. It was just -- it had already started before I came back. Like '73 or somewhere in there. Up to about probably '82, maybe?

Q: Mm-mmm. So, what prompted the county to build the new airport at the end of the boom?

GOOD: Well, they had never applied for a federal grant.

[00:25:00] When you apply for a federal grant, or federal funding, the first thing they want you to do is do a master plan. So, they hired this company out of Denver -- CH2M Hill I think is who it was -- to do a master plan. And

this would have been probably '78, '79, somewhere in there. I would have to look and... Somewhere around '80, 1980. This company comes in. We still have our boom going. We have got a lot of people in town. We have no place to expand for --

Q: At that --

GOOD: -- the airport.

Q: -- location? OK.

GOOD: It was landlocked to the east, and it was landlocked to the west. [00:26:00] We had a little grass crosswind runway. The interstate was over here, and (inaudible) -- or Richards Street was over here. So it was landlocked, and so they recommended we build a new airport. Everything is looking up. I mean, there is all these people. So they look; they have a site selection committee, and they had -- I don't know -- five or six people on the site selection committee, locals. And they had -- they went around looking at all those different sites that would work. This particular one was the closest to town with the best approaches. And so, they settled on this site. And then it progressed from there. They did get a grant [00:27:00] to seal the old runway. But that was the only time they got a federal grant, to do that, at that airport. (clears throat) Then they come out here, and we are building -- we

are finishing up this airport when the prices of oil are going down, and we had to buy all the property -- "we" meaning the county. And they had to have land people going around negotiating with these people and buying their property, and several -- they bought a portion of a ranch in here. They bought several -- I think three or four -- homes. So, it was kind of controversial at the time. You know, there is a lot of people, if it doesn't affect them [00:28:00] personally, they could care less about whatever you are doing. And anyway, that's how it became where it is today. We have a lot longer runway. We have got two runways. We have got nice approaches. This is probably the best general aviation airport in the state. We're considered a business airport, according to WYDOT. (clears throat)

Q: What does that designation mean?

GOOD: Oh, I think -- there is a map right back there that shows the --

Q: Oh, right! And I have seen that map, yeah.

GOOD: -- business airports. Afton, Douglas, Evanston, Greybull, Pinedale, and Saratoga? [00:29:00] I suppose location. Basically, location.

Q: OK. So we built this new airport, and nobody came. Right?

GOOD: Well, we didn't have as many -- all the people from down there -- not all of them; some of them [still have?] their planes, but just because of the economy, moved out here. (clears throat) But we had several empty hangars. Nobody on the ramp. So, the economy definitely turned down at that point. And that's in '84, fall of '84, when we moved out here. Since then, we have got all of our hangars full. We have got this private hangar right behind us. [00:30:00] And we still don't have anybody parked out on the ramp, but that's a good thing. Everybody wants inside of a hangar. And there's two people on the waiting list, hangar waiting list. (clears throat) So... But the economy's picking back up. And you know how it works in Wyoming. It's just like this. It's starting to come back up, and... But the problem is, is a lot of the pilots are my age or older, and we have got a shelf life. And we have got a medical to pass. And so, I looked at the AOPA -- the Aircraft Owners and Pilots Association -- web site, because I had to have some facts for the county commissioners when I [00:31:00] get the budget approved. And that was several years ago, and I believe that there is only -- at that point, there was only 600-and-some thousand pilots nationwide.

Q: Private pilots (inaudible)? Oh my gosh!

GOOD: Any kind of pilot. And of those -- so that's -- and you have got over 300 million people, that's about 0.6 of 1 percent are pilots. Of those, a third of them own planes. So, you are looking at 0.02 percent of the population own aircraft. So, it's a --

Q: Compared to 50 or 60 years ago, when it would have been --

GOOD: Well, there would -- at the [00:32:00] high point, it was right after World War II; there was a boom right in there. And late '70s, there was a -- lots of pilots. But never more than maybe 850,000?

Q: Total? Mm-hmm. Now, (clears throat) the people who own the planes in the hangars now, are those just private ownership, or is there any business or corporate [business?]?

GOOD: Some of them are listed in there that are -- a business owns them, but... And -- but there's not a lot of activity, actually. Because most guys are just pleasure flyers. And occasionally, you'll have -- the ranchers use theirs on their property. So, you'll have the ranch people. [00:33:00] Let's see if there is any -- one guy flies a pipeline with his plane; pipeline patrol. The rest of them are basically for personal use.

Q: OK. So, nobody -- crop dusting or spraying, or...?

GOOD: No. There is people from Torrington come up here and do that. There is a lot of that going on down there. And they live at Torrington, and they have several planes, and they come up here and work for the Weed & Pest, Converse County Weed & Pest.

Q: OK. Anybody work for fish and wildlife?

GOOD: No.

Q: I've heard of people doing that in other parts of the state. I don't know if you did that [here?].

GOOD: They come in here and do a lot of it. In fact, these guys come in here and just did some raptor survey for Game and Fish. [00:34:00] And then they are going to come back next month, and their newborn chicks, I think -- what are they called?

Q: Oh, the --

GOOD: "Fledglings" or something? They are going to check those out again. But they do that a lot.

Q: But they are coming in from somewhere else?

GOOD: Right.

Q: OK. OK. Has there ever been any commercial service in Douglas?

GOOD: Frontier Airlines.

Q: Really?

GOOD: That's it.

Q: Was that -- oh, that --

GOOD: Nineteen fifty-eight. And they were giving
sightseeing flights in a DC-3 for \$2.50.

(laughter)

Q: But that not scheduled service. You are talking --

GOOD: Well, they came in here; they were scheduled. For a
while. (laughs) [00:35:00] We are always competing with
Casper.

Q: Oh, of course! Because you are so close. Oh, of course.

GOOD: That's -- everybody competes with Casper. The
restaurants, the -- any kind of hardware store. And it's
35 minutes away.

Q: Yeah. I keep forgetting that part. Oh, OK. That makes
sense.

GOOD: So that changes business in Douglas a lot. But yeah,
that's...

Q: Well, that's very cool to have, actually. (clears throat)
And of course, the DC-3s, were they used -- they were used
in World War II, weren't they?

GOOD: Yeah. I think it was a C-- what was it? A C-46, C-47
is the military designation? But yeah, they are a -- they
used them for cargo. They still use them. Not -- maybe
not for the military, [00:36:00] but there is a lot of --

Q: They are still --

GOOD: -- private people --

Q: -- around?

GOOD: -- that have them.

Q: Really?

GOOD: Oh, yeah. Yeah. They are flying. One of our board members is a -- he used to fly them. And down in South America and all over the place, he flew those things. And he is an instructor. (clears throat) But yeah, that's -- I remember those things flying into Douglas when I was a little kid. Well, in '58, I'd have been seven. But it didn't last long. (laughs) Especially at \$2.50 a head.

(laughter)

Q: It doesn't sound like a viable business enterprise to me.

GOOD: They would have probably lowered the price just to get [00:37:00] people used to it, you know? And then the price would have probably increased.

Q: Right, right. The one -- I haven't talked to anyone in Casper, but there is actually another historian who is working on this project, too, and I think he is coming to Casper, so I am mainly trying to cover the smaller airports, which I think are pretty interesting, actually. And you said you still have your Cherokee?

GOOD: Bonanza.

Q: Bonanza? I am sorry. And what -- do you fly it much anymore?

GOOD: I flew -- I only flew 25 hours last year, but I have flown -- the most I have ever flown, I think, is about 175 a year. So, I think probably 50 hours a year is my normal.

Q: Mm-hmm. What do you use it for?

GOOD: Just transportation. My wife's [00:38:00] from Col-- Nebraska, Kearney, Nebraska, and we used to go down to see her mother. And that's a seven-hour drive; it's a two-hour flight. And we used to go down there a lot. She passed away, so we don't go down there much. We still do a little bit, but not for -- not like we did. But we have flown to Seattle, Arizona, numerous places, California. Of course, Montana, Idaho, Oregon, Texas, and Arizona -- I said Arizona. Colorado a lot. [00:39:00]

Q: So just pleasure trips?

GOOD: Yeah, some. Most of them, yeah.

Q: But do you go to the national -- are there national conferences or conventions?

GOOD: (clears throat) I've never gone. I've always been working. (laughs) Oshkosh is a big one.

Q: That's what I've heard, yeah.

GOOD: I would kind of like to go, but some of my customers have gone and they -- you have got to like crowds, and you

have got to be prepared for muggy, hot, humid conditions.

So, it's kind of kept me away from it. Plus, we get a lot of people flying in, getting fuel, and going out there.

Q: Oh, OK. OK. So, you get -- as well as the people who are based here, you get -- what -- I don't know what you call -- a "fly-through traffic" or "pass-through" --

GOOD: Yeah.

Q: -- "traffic?" OK.

GOOD: [00:40:00] It's a good stop, because we have a good -- like I said, we have good approaches. They can camp here on the airport if they want to. We have courtesy cars, free courtesy cars. They have even stayed in our pilot lounge at night, if it's raining or something. So, it's kind of a friendly airport for people to come into. The fuel prices are reasonable. We have hangar space available if there is -- you know, if there is a storm coming through or something like that.

Q: So, is it easier just for a casual traveler like that to stop here than -- rather than Casper?

GOOD: Yes.

Q: OK. Because?

GOOD: Less traffic; quicker to get fuel. You are dealing with -- you don't even have to have a radio to land here. Normal people do, but you announce your intentions.

[00:41:00] There is more freedom involved. Casper, you are -- you have got a controller, a tower, and the risks are higher if you mess something up. People prefer to go to a smaller airport than they do a bigger one.

Q: Have you seen a change in the amount of that kind of traffic over the years?

GOOD: Yes. Yes. Yeah. There used to be a lot of traffic. It's diminished considerably.

Q: Do you -- have you have any of the cross-country races come through here?

GOOD: Huh-uh.

Q: OK. I was talking last year, I guess, to the manager of Pinedale, and that's -- the day I was there, they were having the -- I think it's the Ninety-Nines, race of the women pilots, coming through. So that was (laughs) kind of exciting, [00:42:00] because he would have to jump up every few minutes and run out, and see what people needed. But they don't come through here? Well, that -- and that race had a -- apparently, it has a different route every year, so... (clears throat) I didn't know if any of the --

GOOD: It might come through here sometime, but it hasn't yet.

Q: Oh, OK. Just curious. And when your dad ran the airport, how many people did he have working for him?

GOOD: Oh, we had a bookkeeper, myself, and then we would have usually one kid, high school kid, about like what we do now. Then we did our own mowing, actually. I did a lot of the mowing, tractor m-- cutting the grass, when I was in high school. After that, I didn't do too much of it.

[00:43:00] And then, (clears throat) we have always had kids working on the weekends and stuff, pumping fuel and stuff. We still do. Actually, we have -- [Dixie?] is the office manager, and I just got accustomed to doing all of my own work, so I don't have anybody help. I have had them before, but I prefer to -- it's more control to do it yourself. And then we have got another guy that works weekends, Chris, and I think he is 33? He is a volunteer fireman, so he does both jobs.

Q: Mm-hmm. Now, (clears throat) the high school kids who you have come in and help, (coughs) are they at all interested in aviation? Is there still someone who offers instruction?

GOOD: There is. [00:44:00] There is a guy in Lusk that comes up here. And he has done a lot of students around here. But most of them -- well, it used to be there would be a lot of kids hanging around the airport. There isn't now. And I was reading this magazine -- I read a lot of magazines: AOPA magazine; *American Bonanza Society*

Magazine; various magazines, *Flying Magazine*. And this lady used to work for the FAA, (clears throat) and she was also a charter pilot. She is writing this article -- she has a monthly column -- and she noticed it, and her opinion is these kids are getting their stimulation [00:45:00] with electronics and stuff now instead of getting out and getting outdoors, and getting -- like going to a racetrack, or going to fairgrounds, or any kind of -- flying, hanging around the airport.

Q: That's so interesting.

GOOD: It's so different now than when I grew up. We didn't have a lot to do. I mean, we'd go hunting, and target practicing, and stuff like that. We were outside all the time. And spent a lot of time at the airport. So, I was interested in it. My other brothers, my younger brother did some, but my older brother had no interest. So... But there was always kids hanging around.

Q: Right. Mostly boys, I guess? [00:46:00] OK. It makes it sound like -- I mean, the -- as though there is a trend where how long will it be before there will be no more private pleasure flying?

GOOD: FAA knows about it, too. That's why they have started this Sport Pilot license.

Q: What's -- oh! Tell me about that.

GOOD: Let's say I'm getting up in my age, say another 10 years, and I am thinking I may or may not be able to pass my flight physical. If I do ne-- if I never have failed a flight physical, I can just use the -- get my Sport Pilot license and buy a sport plane. And it's restricted in [00:47:00] weight, speed; it's a smaller, slower, less fuel-type plane for -- it's a different rating altogether. And you use your driver's license. You don't use your medical.

Q: OK. But is --

GOOD: That's something they have tried to prop up the general aviation with. And -- but the problem with those planes is they have gotten so expensive. They are way more expensive than -- well, cost is one of the problems keeping people out of it.

Q: Right. And I have heard that consistently around the state: that it was a lot less expensive to buy planes and fly them 30, 40 years ago than it is now. Then that may be another reason why younger people are not getting into it?

GOOD: It could be. Yeah. We bought that Bonanza, [00:48:00] my first wife and I, in, like I said, late '70s. One of our customers in Wheatland had it -- two customers, consecutive owners of it. And we had been doing the work on it for nine years, so I really knew the plane. And the

guy wanted to sell it. And he was the editor of the newspaper down there, and he was getting up in age, and he hadn't been flying much, so he decided to sell it. At that point, it was 29 grand is what he wanted for it, and that's what we paid him for it. Which, back then, late '70s, was considerable. And it's increased in value. It's probably worth 70 now. But it's a good plane, and 70,000, that's a lot of planes. A hundred and ninety to 210 mile an hour. A good traveling [00:49:00] plane. There is planes now, Cirrus, it's a composite plane, they are up around 800,000. And if you compare the Cirrus with that, I'll take that. It's all metal. The composite, they haven't quite figured out the lifespan of them. They know metal is going to last a long time. Keep the corrosion down, and it'll last forever. It's got a track record. That plane is a 1961 model. And (laughs) it's good. And it hasn't been in an area where there has been a lot of corrosion, so it's real clean. But [00:50:00] 800,000 -- and Cessna has 182s they are producing, and they are over half a million. They are still making Beech Bonanzas, only it's a six-place A36 Bonanza, and they are a million.

Q: Well, that explains --

GOOD: So, if you look at all of --

Q: -- a lot.

GOOD: -- of that -- and you can still buy planes -- I was explaining this to the county commissioners, and they were talking about increasing the hangar rent out here. And I said, "You increase it too much, you are going to run a bunch of people off." And we keep track of other airports' hangar rent. (clears throat) And one of them mentioned, "If they can afford a plane, they can sure afford a little hangar rent." And I explained to him, I said, "Just because a guy is a pilot [00:51:00] does not -- it's not a sign of wealth. It's a sign of passion." That's your passion. It's like a target shooter: that's his passion. A barrel racer, that's her pa-- or his passion, whichever. A fisherman. A hunter. And they spend lots of money doing their passions. Motorcycles. Racecars. A plane, you can buy a little Tri-Pacer for 20,000, 25,000. And then I told him, I said, "So what's a new Suburban cost? Sixty?" So, yes, he is a pilot; yes, he is flying in the air. But that's not a sign of wealth. And so, you have got to -- I told him, I said, [00:52:00] "I can't afford to buy everything new. I buy -- I have an old plane, and I have been flying it for a long, long time. But I drive old cars. I don't need a brand-new car." (laughs) And -- well, there's a lot of people out there with brand-new cars.

Q: And that's -- this is a question that hadn't occurred to me before. People who buy planes and fly them because they are passionate about them, they are not constantly trading up or trading an old model for a new one? They tend to hang onto the planes they have?

GOOD: It depends on the person. Usually, it's like anything: you get into some sport that you are not familiar with, and you buy something. Like you are a golfer and you buy a set of golf clubs, and you think those clubs are the cat's meow. And then you find out that I need to trade up [00:53:00] for my skill level, or... Or you start flying and you get in entry level, and building your hours up, and getting your confidence built up, and you are figuring out how much you are going to use it. And then you decide that your wife likes it, too; hey, we can go on trips. And this particular plane is not going to do it. We are going to have to sell it and get another one, of this kind. So, you are learning about what kind of airplane you might want. But you are still buying a used airplane, usually. Usually, people will -- like you are flying a little trainer, a two-seater. And you have a child, so then you need to go up to the 172, and it's a four seat. And then you want something a little more powerful; you go up to the 182. That's what Cessna did. They have [00:54:00] got it

all the way clear up to the jets. One of the fastest jets on Earth -- commercial, private plane -- a Citation X, all the way from the Cessna 150.

Q: Uh-huh, uh-huh. That's interesting! Do you think that was a corporate strategy --?

GOOD: Oh, yeah.

Q: -- to -- oh, yeah. That makes sense.

GOOD: Even their location in Kansas: center of the country.

Q: Yeah, yeah. Yeah. Let's -- I want to talk a little bit -- and then I'll let you go -- about the county and their support of the airport. When you were talking about mowing, for instance, I was wondering who plows, who takes care of the snow. Do you do that? Or --

GOOD: We have our own plot. We have our own mower. And we got grants for both of them. Bought them both new. And right now, most -- [00:55:00] this year -- this is a [wide-op spec?] plow. It has a single axle, 12-foot blade, diesel engine. One guy has been doing most of the mowing -- or, snow plowing. Then these big storms come up, and we end up with these big drifts everywhere. We have to call over to Croell Redi-Mix, and we can get an operator and a loader over here to take care of that. Mainly, the little 12-foot blade works just fine on, well, anything up to about like that.

Q: About a foot?

GOOD: If you get any drifting and big stuff, it's too time consuming and it's hard on the equipment, and it's just better to call them up and spend the extra money on... Well, yeah. We get our funding from them, from the county commissioners. They own the airport. And the airport [00:56:00] board is appointed by the commissioners. And I was hired in '85 to be the manager by the board.

Q: OK. And you report to them, then?

GOOD: Yeah.

Q: OK. Now, do you go to the statewide meetings? The airport managers' meetings?

GOOD: The Airport Operators Association?

Q: Uh-huh.

GOOD: I haven't gone for several years. I'm going to start going back. I used to be a director. My dad was a charter member of it. I used to go to all of them, and it just got to be, it was kind of -- I don't know. It just got to be kind of time consuming, and a lot of extracurricular activities that weren't -- and you have to be there Wednesday through Friday. So [00:57:00] if you are really busy, and then you look at what's -- who the guest -- the speakers are going to be and what the topics are going to be, you just don't go.

Q: Mm-hmm. I'm just wondering what the -- (coughs) everything I have heard from the people I have talked to have talked about the decline in general aviation, private plane ownership, and that kind of thing. And I am just wondering what the general scuttlebutt is in the organization about the future of general aviation in the state, and then the life expectancy of these little airports. And I didn't know if you have any thoughts on that.

GOOD: Well, one thing about it: I think even if we are down to 10 pilots, Flight for Life comes in here a lot. A lot. You can't believe how many [00:58:00] times they have come in here. The hospital, if they have anything that's sketchy, I mean, they call Flight for Life, and they are gone. And 24/7. There are several from Denver that come up here. They have a helicopter and a PC-12 Palatis in Casper that comes down here a lot. They train down here. They have to do their approaches, and they come down here because there is less traffic. Then we used to get a bunch of them out of Rapid City, and we had a total of maybe about six to eight would come in here? So just for the emergency, it'd be hard to shut it down. Plus, if you get federal funding, you can't, by their [00:59:00] law, their rule. Twenty years from the time you sign your last grant. Which is a good thing, I think. It assures that that place

can't be -- some developer might want to shut it down, and it's happening all over the country. Meigs Field --

Q: Where is that?

GOOD: -- is a classic example. Chicago. They had a little airport out there on this little island, and Mayor Daley all of a sudden one night goes out with a motor grader and cuts big Xs in it. And turned it into a park. But he got in trouble with the FAA. He forgot about that part. And they fined him. They made him pay them back about 800 grand or something.

Q: Yeah. Well, in a rural area, of course, I can see the need for airport for emergency services. What about --
[01:00:00] do you get fire crews in here?

GOOD: Oh, yeah. Yeah. There are some of our plaques from firefighters. In fact, they will be here probably July through maybe even into October. Based out of here.

Q: Right, right. And over there, I see something about Civil Air Patrol. Do you have Civil Air Patrol here in Converse County?

GOOD: We don't anymore. They go to Casper and use the one up there. We won an award -- that award right there -- in 1999. And basically, American Association of Airport Executives -- [01:01:00] I'm a real neat person. I like things neat, and put away, and no clutter. (laughs) And

then they observed that, and we like to keep our grass looking nice, and I'm -- we keep it nice. I mean, this is our golf course out here. And anyway, they noticed it, obviously, and we won the award for the best-kept airport in the whole Northwest Mountain Region. And that's including the big airports -- all of them. They have big budgets. We have a small little -- we're operating on \$135,000, \$140,000 a year. So -- and that's to match all of our grants we get. We have rent, but that's usually what we [01:02:00] get from the commissioners, is about that amount. They cut us back, because the economy is so bad.

Q: Right. Yeah. That's the story all over the state right now, so...

GOOD: In fact, we're about -- last year, it was -- we asked them for 78. Yeah. So this year, it'll be a little more than that.

Q: Now, you said early on something about you thought this was the best general aviation airport in the state. Explain.

GOOD: I have flown to most of them. And I know how they are kept, and I know -- I just know that -- well, when I fly into an airport, I can tell [01:03:00] if they are -- if they just plow -- or if they just mow out the required amount, it's done. And (clears throat) they don't go the

extra step to keep things up as well, or to make it as nice as possible with the funds that we have. We don't have the funds to offer -- to hire a whole bunch of people out here, well, you know, making it look exactly like a golf course. We have -- this is desert. (laughs) And so -- but we can keep it as nice as we possibly can for what -- the money we have. And that's what we do. And I go around, and I look at some of the other airports, and they just don't do it. It's -- for whatever reason, they are just not doing it. And you can tell it. That airport in Nebraska we fly into, Kearney, Nebraska, [01:04:00] they really take care of that airport. And (clears throat) you just notice things like that when you fly into different airports. You know, with the size of the runway, the width of our runway, the approaches we have, easy access to town, cars we have available, not everybody has that.

Q: Right, right. So you are doing a good job, and the commissioners like you, apparently.

GOOD: Well, the commissioners don't even know. They never show up. They are never out here. They don't know anything. (laughs)

Q: But your board?

GOOD: Yeah, the board knows. Most of them are pilots.

[01:05:00] And one of the board members runs that snowplow.

(laughs) And the other one -- well, actually, he does the mowing, too, at this point.

Q: Well, those are the kinds of board members that you want --

GOOD: Yeah.

Q: -- who will --

GOOD: We want all on the same page, and we want to promote our airport. That's what we want.

Q: Right. And they are active in -- they are invested in the operations. So that's good.

GOOD: That's the problem you have. I have had some lousy board members, and I have had some lousy boards. And these guys are the best, right now, that I have ever had. The most support, and most agreeable as far as wanting to keep things good, and...

Q: That's good. That makes your --

GOOD: That's why they're --

Q: -- life easier.

GOOD: -- appointed, [01:06:00] is to be good stewards of the airport. It's our duty. That's our job. If we weren't doing it, we'd be neglecting our job. And it's no different than if you are the principal of school: that's what you are hired for. Or a -- the guy down at the -- running the fairgrounds. If he's doing his job, that place is going to be looking good, and people are going to be

talking about it, and he is trying to promote people to go there. (clears throat) With this, not only -- it's a gateway into this community, and it's -- there is some of the -- it's bad enough to drive into town from the north and see some of this area that's not good. I go by it every day. If you fly in, [01:07:00] "There is a lot of people around. Man, this is nice! You ought to see our airport." And it's a reflection on our whole town.

Q: Of course. Right. Do you have promotional events for the airport?

GOOD: We used to have fly-ins all the time. We haven't for a while. They had one down at Glendo, and there is various ones around, but we haven't had any for a while. This eclipse thing is a big deal; I'm starting to get calls on that. And I think we're going to probably shut it down for ground traffic. Because we don't have the staff to police them. I mean, it could be a real mess.

Q: Oh, I hadn't even thought about people flying in, but of course.

GOOD: The [01:08:00] flying in people that it could -- that's who -- we are here for those people. They can camp out here. And there might be a bunch of -- who knows? There is supposed to be -- all the rooms are booked; in Casper, they are all booked. And that's our -- one of our

topics each board member -- or, board meeting, including this one coming up, is that. And in my opinion -- I just came to it about three weeks ago; I don't know what their opinion is, but we need to discuss it -- is to close it off for the general public. Because it could be mass chaos, and it could be to the detriment of the planes being parked out on the ramp.

Q: Oh, absolutely! You need to --

GOOD: There might be a bunch of --

Q: -- to just --

GOOD: -- looky-loos, and --

Q: -- shut the gate and keep people from coming in, absolutely. Yeah. That makes sense.

GOOD: There is plenty of other places. They can park along that access road, and they could even camp up there if they [01:09:00] want. But I just don't see that the end result that we could end up with a lot of cleanup and... We'd have to hire somebody, and we -- that's hard to find people --

Q: To do that kind of thing?

GOOD: Yeah.

Q: Yeah. Well, I have one kind of unrelated question, and that is, I am on my way to Gillette today, and when I was talking with Donnie Cooksey yesterday, he mentioned someone

in Wright. And I didn't bring my notes with me, and I don't remember the person's name. Do you know who runs the airport up at Wright?

GOOD: Gary [Marcus?]?

Q: Yes! That was the name. I thought I might give him a call and [01:10:00] it -- I know it's very short notice, but maybe he could spare some time to talk to me.

GOOD: He's got his own airstrip out -- a little buffalo ranch. It's out west of Right on -- what is that? Four eighty-seven?

Q: I don't know the highway numbers up there.

GOOD: I have forgot the -- anyway.

Q: Well, I'll see if I can give him a call.

GOOD: He is an instructor and a mechanic, and he has got several planes.

Q: Oh, OK. I -- oh! I think that I don't get up this way very often, but this is like my third trip in 18 months, so I guess I do get up here more than I think. Well, I am going to shut this off. Thank you so much.

GOOD: You are welcome.

Q: -- for your memories.

END OF AUDIO FILE