

Original transcript created by Allan Anderson at an unknown date; revised by Leslie McCartney on December 17, 2018.

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

Allan Anderson's 12-04-2010 – Slide Tray #3  
UAF Oral History number: OH2018-08-04

Jim Anderson Interview - Slide Tray #3 3/26/2011

00:00:00

Allan Anders (AA): Okay, we're on mic now Jim.

Jim Anderson (JA): Alright.

AA: Pictures ... Yeah, I've been meanin' to stop by and see Lillian at work but my mom is actually workin' in her office now.

JA: That's what she said.

AA: But right now's a crazy time in Lillian's office.

JA: Getting' ready for commencement, yeah.

AA: Yeah.

JA: Yeah, that's what she said.

AA: Mom used to work in – she doesn't work there fulltime, she works down at the community college now but she used to work in the graduation, she worked there for 10 or 15 years and gettin' close to graduation they'd be there last month, all of April 'til 9 or 10 o'clock every night.

JA: Hello? (Dead air while they try to get projector working)

00:01:22

AA: There we go, I think.

JA: ... a few times and it went out.

AA: Yeah, I think it's the hard drive light. I wonder if I ... okay ...

JA: Looks like it's not wired to anything.

AA: Why isn't the mouse workin'? (more dead air). There we go. Okay. Technology, ain't it great?

JA: Just amazing me the time spent foolin' with it to get it goin'.

AA: And the whole paperless office thing.

JA: Suppose ...

00:02:28

AA: Okay, we've done slide tray one and two, so that leaves us with slide tray three.

JA: Okay.

AA: And I think this is Arctic Village. I believe these are the neater pictures. So ... Arctic Village.

JA: Looks like it, yeah.

AA: Oh, I guess I probably oughta announce on the tape, its – what's the date day? The 26<sup>th</sup>? Yeah, it's March 26<sup>th</sup>, 2011. I'm here with Jim Anderson and we're reviewing slide tray number three um, and Jim's goin' to narrate the pictures that we're lookin' at on the computer and uh, here we go.

00:03:15

AA: I actually went to Arctic Village one year to teach a weekend computer class.

JA: It was that fuzzy huh?

AA: No, it's workin' on it.

JA: Oh, okay.

AA: There we go.

JA: Yeah, we're workin' away on it there, getting just started out I think.

AA: And this is a Wien Beaver.

JA: Yeah, it's a Wien Beaver that – going to Arctic Village and there was so much smoke hanging over the river in front of the village you couldn't land there. So pilot went back upstream a ways and uh, started to land, went to pump the flaps down and he went up instead, he fell down and spread the gear out and caught one wing. You can see the barrel out there on the end with the rope on it where spam – wingless that down – to bring her down a little bit, it was bent at a pretty good angle.

AA: Bent up?

JA: Yeah, it was bent up quite a bit. Anyhow we're gettin' it down a bit so we can put a big heavy plate on top to hold it place. In the picture is Harold Hill, another Wien mechanic. That is about it - the wing cover hanging over there is also where we had our mess hall.

AA: Um hm.

JA: That where the stove –

AA: Where were you staying during this repair?

JA: In a little tent right next to it – the warmest weather we saw was 35 below during the middle of the day. In an un-heated tent - I might say.

00:04.41

AA: To get all your gear up there and the space heater did they Wiens just land on the river next to it?

JA: Yeah, they landed on the river right near it, and unloaded.

AA: So you weren't going to the village and staying in a cabin each night?

JA: No - no we were here 2 or 3 nights and then we got things fixed up enough so we taxied down and then we stayed at the village another 3 or 4 days -- we spent Thanksgiving there at the village - nice time.

AA: This was late 60's ?

JA: Uh, lat – early I – I think - it probably would have been, '65 maybe.

AA: Can you tell me a little more detail about what all this repair involves?

JA: Well, let's see, the wing was bent up about 20 degree angle outboard strut, the landing gear had broken loose and uh, still attached to the airplane but the top had been forced into the fuselage always of course, it is kinda spread out, as you can see there. I believe we cabled it together at the bottom with a come-along, brought it in to where we could work on it and put some clamps and cables around the top end to uh, get it basically back to where it was, the fittings were broken. This would get it up and level for takeoff - and taxiing around.

00:06:09

AA: Is he on skis?

JA: Oh yeah, wheel skis, yeah, yeah.

AA: And there's also part of the repair for the wing was a big piece of aluminum.

JA: Yeah, we'd made that up in the Wien hangar before we came up. I had been up once and looked at it. Figured out what to do, and uh, took a piece of heavy aluminum, worked with it and formed it to the shape and used another Beaver wing that was in the hangar, double check it, got it formed fairly well for the curvature and then we just, after we got that sucked down, went up there with the drills, hand drills, or what we use to call it, egg beater drill. And we drilled the holes by hand and then screwed it all together. Then we ran a cable and some trim buckles in from the strut - no from the wing tip, put a little attachment out there and we ran cables in from the wing tip and down and taxed off somewhere by gear, or the struts, I'm not sure which now. Quite a while ago.

AA: There is another picture later I think when the plane was flying maybe, that there's a picture of that cable coming down.

00:07:26

JA: Uh, maybe, but, yeah, I remember when we stopped at Fort Yukon for fuel we had to tighten 'em up a little bit

AA: Mmm, and that was just because structurally wing wasn't sound yet.

JA: Oh, no, no, no, just the cables kinda stretched a bit.

AA: Oh no - I mean –

JA: It would've been bad if the wing had started moving they would have gotten tighter. That's what I was worried about.

AA: I guess I was referring to a piece of aluminum just to re-enforce the structure of the wing.

JA: Yeah, yeah, it was, you don't know what will happen, but everything worked fine on the way in. Yeah, that woulda been a good picture except for the smoke off the heater.

AA: What, any idea what year this plane was made, built?

JA: It's a Beaver, they built them way back, they flew 'em in Korea, I know that, later part of Korean, 40's somewhere, late 40's.

AA: Was Wien -- this would have been when Wien was pretty much based out of Fairbanks.

JA: Oh yeah.

AA: Or based out of Anchorage? Fairbanks. They no longer had a ...

JA: Biggest plane they had was the F27 at this time.

AA: So, was Nome much of a base for 'em at that point? 'Cuz they used – originally they were, well ...

JA: Yeah, originally it started in Nome and then they moved to Fairbanks, but they had, Wiens at that time had planes in an awful lot of villages around the country. They'd have a 185 here and another one there and Barrow they had a couple of airplanes there as that was the meeting place, I think they 2, 3 airplanes at Nome including a DC3 at Nome. They flew out to uh, what's island? St. Lawrence Island, having to go over water. They need a twin engine for that. Oh yeah, that's a good one there, yeah.

AA: Is this your tent over on the right edge?

JA: Yeah, I expect it is. Oh yeah.

AA: This must be the Chandalar River?

JA: Oh yeah, oh yeah. Ah, it was rough and tough in those days. The parka, I even made that myself.

AA: Did ya?

00:09:38

JA: It was outa a wing cover canvas, yeah, I was workin' in the dope and fabric shop, sewin' machine there, so I gathered up a pattern and made that parka shell and then, uh, put it over an ole GI parka for insulation.

AA: That was probably a precursor to Carharrts.

JA: Yeah, I made it for several of the guys.

AA: Was there any –

JA: Oh yeah, there you can see the cables and all, one in the rear gear fittings and one going probably into a rear engine mount. Yeah, and there's the patch there, you can see we brought it around ...

AA: Ah, okay.

JA: It was really a pretty stout piece of material.

AA: Was there kinda a kink in the wing there?

JA: Oh yeah, it was definite bend, I'd say it woulda probably been bent about 20 degrees, and we brought it down quite some, with the full barrel of gas and this rope, thing, twistin' the ropes, tryin' to bring 'er down and then it was all stressed downwards when we put the plate on.

AA: Was the rear gear okay?

JA: Tail wheel, ah, for a while, and when we tried to move the airplane and the skis were kinda stuck, like usual, you raise the tail - then we let it come down, maybe break the skis loose, well it was already damaged, I didn't realize it and it broke out so we had to put a couple pieces of wood, probably couple of spruce trees if I remember right, in there to get that lined up again.

00:11:14

JA: Yeah, well there, I believe that was right at Arctic Village. We had the engine all covered up and – we're goin' to run it up to see if we could work the radios. We're tryin' to get in touch with Fairbanks and tell 'em it was ready. But uh, that didn't work too good. In fact – we're using the fire pot and it's still a little bit tilted. Couldn't get the gears in as far as we wanted to.

AA: You had quite the story about when you were taxiing from the crash site ...

JA: Oh my ...

AA: Down to the village.

AA: They decided better get to the village and maybe we'd have a better place to sleep without freezing ourselves or something going wrong, so we started it up and got it runnin' and everything was fine, and it wouldn't move. The skis had too much frost on the bottom. So, shut her all down and put the wheels down and skis up, scrapped all the ice and crust off the skis, put it back down. Well by this time, it's

gettin' a little dark, we got 'er goin' again, we had all our camps truck and everything put away, so, well, we'd better do it. And I thought we were going a mile or so, and the Chandalar River in that area, is quite curvy. And we went around curve after curve after curve and I was beginning to wonder if I'd gone the right direction.

00:12:42

JA: Somebody was waving a lantern on the bank of the river, oh we're there. I was so confused after all this runnin' in the dark and turning these curves, to me we were going the wrong direction and this lantern was on the wrong side of the river. I tell you, we were mixed up. We were havin' a hell of a time. Well for one thing, I put the flaps down a little bit figuring it would slide better because we had trouble with that. Found out later that kinda affected my rudder steering. So, uh, oh yeah, we were airborne a few times goin' across sandbars and things. But it all worked, I got down to village.

JA: What was the name of the fellow up there doin' the repair with you?

AA: Errol Hill. Yeah, the first bush trip he ever made and he asked me later how come you picked me to go up there? I've never been out on one of those trips at all. I said well that was one reason Errol, I figured you'd kinda like that, I knew you had some good gear and I knew you could take of yourself in the cold weather. And also I figured, Errol was a good sized man, I said Errol I also figured if the battery was gone, you could hand prop that airplane pretty easy, more than me. I was kinda skinny in those days. So, he laughed and he says oh yeah, you Swedes, you're too smart.

AA: And you ate good on this trip?

JA: Oh yeah, yeah, Wiens had turned us loose in the grocery store, first the eggs froze so we boiled them, ate 'em that way, that wasn't bad. And then we got some steaks. got 'em all cooked up, this was the first night, got that goin', everythings fine, Harold's camp gear consisted of tin plates, bein' an ole timer, well the steak froze to the plate before you could finish eating it. So we had to toast the bread a little bit to thaw it out and then we put it down with the meat on top of it and whatever else we had.

00:14:45

AA: It was cold on that trip.

JA: Oh yeah. Like I said, the warmest we saw was 35 below in the daytime. It was past 50 at night. It was late November, because like I said, we spent Thanksgiving at uh, Arctic Village.

AA: Was the tent heated, did you have any heat?

JA: Oh no, we just had the one Herman Nelson, we couldn't let it run all night, you know you'd run out of fuel so we would take the engine out and put it on a gas box with a. uh, what do they call those? Kinda heater that was ...

AA: Catalytic heater.

JA: Catalytic heater, yeah, it was in this gas box and we'd put the motor on top of that and cover it all up. Keep it warm enough to start it in the morning. And it was so cold that the catalytic heater was barely going in the mornings and we weren't sleeping too long. We had gas lanterns and also worked as late as we could.

00:15:41

JA: Oh yeah.

AA: What did you have for -- go ahead ...

JA: The tent was cold, on the ice --everything, about it, just miserable.

AA: What did you have for sleeping gear. They didn't have synthetic 60 below bags in those days.

JA: I had a big old Woods or something, 4-Star, big feather bag I inherited. Errol had a 3 star, that's the way they rated them in those days and, but he had an air mattress. But he was tryin' to trade me out of the air mattress, I mean trade me out of my sleeping bag as it was a little larger, and warmer, and, uh, Errol and 3 star woods was just like being in a mummy bag, he was that broad, heavy and I wouldn't trade . No way.

AA: Did Errol go out on anymore field repairs after that?

JA: No, no. Let's see, I went up on the DEW Line not long after that and, uh, Errol started getting MS, started getting him a bit, so he pretty much stayin' in the hangar, overhaulin' brakes and things like that.

00:16:59

AA: There you can see that cable.

JA: Yeah, you see that is good the cable is a little slack, that means the wing wasn't tryin' to go up or anything like that. Then I gotta a cord between the two wires kinda holdin' 'em so they don't vibrate too much.

AA: Boy - the old planes use to be just a mass of wires way back.

JA: Oh, there was a lot of 'em, yeah.

AA: Biplanes.

JA: Oh, yeah.

00:17:28

JA: That was a DC3 isn't it? And that picture was taken at the DEW Line site at Point Barrow. Yeah.

AA: I see that they have that, what is that? Marston matting? Is that what that's called?

JA: Yeah, yeah, there was Marston -- the whole runway was that stuff. Was the runway was gravel, and the parking lot was Marston matting. Anyhow. Oh yeah. Yeah, I was up there for darn near a year played [inaudible] playing flight attendant and mechanic.

AA: Were you married?

JA: No, no.

AA: This time – so you weren't getting in trouble for bein' gone for a year?

00:18:08

JA: No, no , in fact, that's the reason I was up there. There was probably the best paying job that Wiens that I had. Well, I'd been building the house, been married for about a year and found out things were goin' too well when I was outta town so I got divorced. And then I found out I was absolutely broke. So I took this job on the DEW Line, nobody else wanted it. 'Cuz there was lots of overtime and free room and board, yep, I got resurrected, financially up there. Oh yeah. In fact one of the funny ones, I uh, I was washin' -- cleaning up some parts up in their DSL shop. What do they call it? Depot Level Shop? Some dam thing. Anyhow, they gotta a couple good cleaning tanks and I was up there washin' up some parts and they invited me in for coffee. So, I hadn't been there very long yet, been sittin' there with about a dozen fellas and one of them says so what brings you to the DEW Line? And I says, um, divorce and I think 10 or those 12 started laughin', they were there for the same reason. A lot that went on. Yeah, that's the – the coast Line. Okay, I think we were coming back in, it's probably close to Wainwright heading for Barrow. We would've been heading, you know, pretty much north/south there and you get past Barrow when you get past Barrow you go east and west. Yeah. It was a beautiful night. That's the Will Rogers/Wiley Post monument there.

AA: Okay.

JA: That's where they got killed.

00:19:52

AA: I was always under the impression that—that was – I thought it was way up at Point Barrow.

JA: No, no.

AA: But it is down further south.

JA: Yeah, it is between Barrow and Wainwright. Oh yeah.

AA: Is that a structure there with it?

JA: There is a couple of monuments. There's another one to the Sullivan brothers. They got 5 of them on 1 ship in the Navy during World War II and they all got killed.

AA: U. Were the Sullivan brothers from ...?

JA: I don't think so. I don't know how that ended up. I never checked up on that. That was a beautiful day in August I think that was about it, late July or August.

AA: Is this in the DC3?

JA: Yeah, lookin' through the front right windshield.

AA: Most of the – the hands you guys moved around for the DEW Line - were they mostly lower 48 folks or ?

00:20:50

JA: Oh yeah, yeah. Just about all of them. The mechanics and stuff tended to be from Alaska. Older fellas. A lot of 'em been there for years. Some of 'em had been up there with Puget Sound and Drake, 1948 when they first built some of this stuff and we're out in the oil exploration. You can just barely see on the top of that picture, that's Point Barrow, which at that time, looked like a collection of shacks at a dump. It was something else.

AA: Another shot of Barrow?

JA: Yeah. Yeah.

AA: Looks pretty tiny back then, I bet it's grown a bit since then.

JA: Oh, I guess. I haven't been up there since I left. No reason to go there. Oh yeah.

AA: I guess there's -- they don't generally have rough seas there but it struck me in this picture, how close everything looks to the -- to the shore. Don't they have issues with ice pushing up every once in a while?

JA: They didn't seem to get that far up. It's quite shallow there you see so the ice was hitting the bottom before it reached the beach and there's no tides to speak of. The only time, see if they get a certain wind, the water would push up. And uh, ice was there when anything like that happened. In winter, the ice would be stacked up, 20-30' high on the beach but it seemed to stop there.

00:22:13

AA: Another shot of ...

JA: Well, that just a, looks like -- yeah -- it's actually the land and the lakes all around. Lots of lakes, most of 'em oblong, all the same direction. The wind working the water.

AA: I'd never heard that. You'd think after 20 years of college I would have heard that somewhere along the Line.

JA: Well I thought it was, you know, just some geological thing but it turned out no, scientists out at the Arctic Research Lab [inaudible] made a remark about it and says, no, no it's the wind and water over the years.

AA: That actually makes a lot of sense.

JA: Well you can figure the spring, you know, start melting in the ice would be pushed one way or the other, the winds are generally east and west -- so ...

00:23:03

JA: Yeah, that's just a picture of the tundra as we're going along I think.

AA: Kinda looks like part of the bluff is spilling down there or something.

00:23:12

JA: Oh there's a bit if it yeah. It's the spring, things are runnin' off. Must have been spring, well, summer there. You see they used to have a baseball game the 4th of July and it got closed because of the snow. Oh yeah. That was just a series I took outta the windows.

00:23:38

AA: Still Barrow?

JA: Yeah, that's Barrow and somebody's got some stuff hangin' up there. Somethin' drying up on the rack on the roof. Oh yeah. You know, that might have been Kaktovik, the village on Barter Island. Yeah, I think it probably is. Yeah. It was a pretty small settlement there then, I don't know what it is now. See now they're takin' people out there to watch the polar bears come in.

AA: Who's got that – someone here in town, at one of the small carriers has a tour package goin' ...

JA: I think it's Warbelow's.

AAJ: Warbelow's.

JA: I think so.

00:24:27

AA: Is that the Brooks Range?

JA: Yeah, lookin' in that, it's about – somebody told me one time, I think they said it was about 80 miles from Barter. And then as you go east along the coast from Barter it comes right up to the edge of the ocean.

AA: DEW Line radar?

JA: That's the DEW Line radar, shot from the runway at - ah - Barter Island. Just a sunset I reckon.

AA: Yeah, just peaking through the clouds there, uh?

JA: Yeah, yeah. Oh - that was a beautiful one. The Captain had his airplane up there, that Super Cub, OJ Smith, and one day he says let's go, take the cub and go pan for gold. Smitty, they've never found the gold on the north coast of the North Slope. Well, we'll find it says. So off we went. Spent the day on a busman's holiday, drivin' around in a Super Cub instead of a DC3. I don't know which river that was, probably the Hulahula but I'm not sure. Big gravel bar, stopped to have lunch. Nice way to spend an afternoon.

00:25:56

AA: That's fairly close to the – starting to get into the foothills of –

JA: Yeah, we were back up in the hills a ways, yeah. Oh yeah. Gravel bars.

AA: Plenty of area to land.

JA: Oh my, yes. Oh yes. There we are in the winter, heating things up.

AA: Is this Barrow?

JA: Uh ...

AA: It's hard to tell ...

JA: Couldn't say for sure. Hmmm, it mighta been. Any of the sites, you see we'd take off from Barter and would go from Barter to uh, Flaxman, to Oliktok, to Lonely to Barrow and the next day go on to Wainwright, is there another one down there? Point Lay. We went to Point Lay about once a week, way down.

AA: Was this daily? I mean a few times a week?

JA: No, we flew 6 days a week. Sometimes we'd overnight here and overnight there and sometimes we went over to Canada, not too many of those.

00:27:09

AA: I don't suppose Doug Mallard was flyin' any of these things?

JA: No, Doug didn't, he had no seniority to stay in Fairbanks airplanes. Oh yeah.

AA: Who knows .

JA: Cold and nasty day.

AA; Was that ice fog or is that just a slide that is faded?

JA: Well, I would tend to think it's ah, probably just a cold, snowy day. Can see the leading edge of the wing there. That's the trailing edge of the wing. Yeah. Don't see anything else there. We had a little ah, that looks like the terminal that – oh yeah, it's Barter and there is Smitty's cub behind the hanger.

AA: Okay.

JA: Covered up damn near to the wing.

AA: Does Smitty keep the wings cleared off in the in the winter time?

JA: Uh, well, [inaudible] it usually just blew off. It just so happened, this time, it really came around. Oh, we'd been having, we kept it in the hangar for quite a while then the – the boss on the DEW Line got irritated about it so we had to put it outside. It didn't bother a thing.

AA: Was there much issue when you were flyin' up there – this isn't necessarily related to your repair stuff - but between the hands, the guys working and flyin' in the management.

JA: Yeah, yeah. The fella that was head man there, he, I don't know, I think he had been there too long, he was getting' a bit bushy, but if I had to stop in Barrow for any reason to you know, parts or work on

the plane a bit because that is where I could get the parts the fastest, there was a daily flight in, oh it would throw him right out into orbit, he didn't like that at all. And it also, the contract said we , if need be, could be gone for several days, get off the Line -into Fairbanks, maintenance or whatever it need, and uh, didn't like those trips at all. Occasionally, you know, if it just had to have somethin' done I wasn't geared up for it, I didn't have all the parts and pieces. You were at one end of the DEW Line and the supplies were at the other end or in Fairbanks, got kinda sticky now and then. Yeah, politics as usual.

00:29:37

AA: What was the facilities like? There was a hangar at Barrow?

AA: There was a hangar at Barrow. One at Oliktok and one at – Barrow, Oliktok and Barter. About every other station had hangar.

AA: But if you couldn't make it to a hangar site to do a repair, you just did it out in the ...

JA: Oh yeah.

AA: Were there ever any other major things that had to be done at a site that didn't have a hangar?

JA: No, no, no. The DC3 is a great airplane, in one respect, 'cuz I think the figures came out, it took 20 minutes of maintenance for every hour flying. Uh, that is a very good percentage for a piston engine airplane. And generally speakin' I could pretty well keep up with everything, unless it came, let's see, we had an engine change once, and we had a couple medicals, we came in and I had some work done then. But that was about it for bringing the plane into town. But no, I didn't have any – I had – I think in all the time I was there I had one cylinder change, and that at, away from Barter, which is where I had my spare parts, and that was at Oliktok and they brought up a piston or a cylinder from Fairbanks and flew it over with the Beaver that was stationed at Bart -- Barrow. And that was just, blew up in the afternoon after we got in, changed it and we left the next morning.

00:31:14

AA: So did you carry your tools with you and was there tools at each site?

JA: No, I carried tool box with me for what I needed for normal maintenance work, yeah. Just left it in the plane. Oh, we're back to the Beaver again. You know, that might be, yeah, that was at Barrow also. I was up there working on the Beaver that Wiens had there. Went up there about once every month or so. God, I was a skinny guy in those days. Oh yeah. That's at Barrow, out on the runway.

AA: I'm not sure – I got -- were there 2 runways at Barrow at some point? Doug – Doug Mallard has a story and I thought it was a fairly new runway built, I'm not sure.

JA: Well, they a – it was a gravel runway when I was there. I know later on they put in a paved runway where, it's same one or not, I couldn't say. Now of course, they have runways at Prudhoe, which is just down the road a ways. Kotzebue had 2 runways; 1 paved and 1 graveled, sitting at about 90 degree angle.

AA: Yeah, Doug's story involved – after like 3 years after the runway was built - the gravel got soft and he stuck a F27 taxiing around on it, and they had to tug it out and he's got a big plaque and it shows

Noel Wien in Circle in 1926 or something and then Doug underneath there he said 100 years later, or 80 years later, nothings has changed.

JA: Oh yeah, yeah. I don't remember that incident. The parking area at Barrow was pretty soft, guys would jump in there and lock a brake to turn the airplane and it would dig a hole and then they couldn't move. You want to be moving a bit before you worked the brakes to turn.

00:33:21

AA: Were most of the pilots who were in – in your experience, most of 'em came up from the States? Were they homegrown?

JA: Oh, most of 'em were from outside of course. Older fellas, a lot of 'em were World War II pilots. And, top notch. And let's see, most of bush pilots, the Beaver here, fella by the name of Joe Vanderpool, he's flyin' this one. Native guy from, I don't know where he came from, used to live in Fairbanks. Good pilot. Let's see, who else? Ah, Sam White was flyin' for them about this time still I think.

AA: Sam White flew for Wiens?

JA: Oh yeah, yeah, he flew outta Hughes for ages. You know, he's got a book out, while he wrote most of that at Hughes.

AA: Yeah, the book I have but I haven't quite read it.

JA: I was working for somebody else, anyhow, I went over to work on Sam's private airplane at Hughes, had an L5 on floats. I am down there tinkerin' around, cleaning this, cleaning that, checkin' things, all pretty good, got all done and told Sam I said I wanna give it a little flight here, I think everything's pretty good. Flew around and came back and says, ah, just try, it's got that one little buzz in it, he says, if that's there, I know everything's good. So we went over to the lodge where he was living, the roadhouse, and uh, got up there and told him about what he owed me. He says, uh, I said Sam, you don't remember me? Well, should I? Real gruff. Says yeah, I says I lived right down the street from you, I'm Andy Anderson's son and I use to deliver your paper. And he got the biggest roar out of that, nothin' doin' we had to go down stairs and he said lookit my paperboy is working on my aircraft. Quite a man Sam was, quite a man.

00:35:16

AA: Doin' alright? Do ya need to take a break or anything?

JA: No, that's okay keep going. Um, what I go there? I don't know what that is, unless it's a propeller, tryin' to get some artistic picture there. Yeah, I think that's a Beaver sittin' there. In the sunset. About what it looks like. And those slides, they did lighten up didn't they?

AA: Some of 'em lightened, some of 'em darkened. The ones that darkened, scanned real good. The ones that lightened I just couldn't get ...

JA: Yeah, just sittin' away in the dark all those years too. Been a long time, this was what? I came in the time of the year of the flood so must have come in barely '67. Somewhere in there. Spring of '67. Something out in the tundra but I don't know what it is.

00:36:27

AA: Barrow? [inaudible]

JA: I think it's Barrow, yeah, yeah.

AA: How long were you in Barrow? Just the one year?

JA: Well, I was on the DEW Line for about a year, but that was just into Barrow and out, we hardly, maybe go downtown and say hello to people, but, ah, basically – prior to that I'd been to Barrow several times workin' on the bush planes while I was up here. Take care of things, do 100 hour, whatever it took.

AA: What was the primary base on DEW Line?

JA: At Barter.

AA: At Barter.

JA: At Barter for me, yeah.

AA: You guys – was there another Canadian contract flyin' the Canadian side of the DEW Line?

JA: Yeah, yeah, we met them several times. Yeah, let's see. I think they were based at Tuktoyaktuk over in Canada. Interesting place. At one of the mouths of the Mackenzie. You know along that coast between the Tuk and uh, the border, there is a driftwood pile that must go for 40-50 miles, stacked up on the beach, all come out of the Mackenzie over the years.

00:37:47

AA: When did you have an opportunity to be up in that country, on the Canadian side?

JA: Oh, we just made a trip over that way and it was all DEW Line business, you got to carry somebody over, or somethin' special, back 'n forth. First we got I think it was a place called Cape Perry, I can't remember the designation. See, uh, Barter east it was Bar 1/2/3/4, I think that was it and from uh, towards Barrow, let's see, they were all pow sites to Point Barrow, segmented off like that. Oh, that's the beach at Barrow with some old sled sittin' there. Yeah, yeah. Ice in the spring.

AA: That's a sled:

JA: Yeah, yeah.

AA: Okay, I thought it was a piece of drift wood.

JA: On no, a couple of handles sticking up in back there.

AA: That's right.

JA: Oh yeah.

AA: Whitefish?

00:38:49

JA: Might, beats me, well it could be, probably is, probably is.

AA: Bunch of 'em.

JA: Oh yeah, they've got quite a bit of it. I think they used most of it for dog food.

AA: Um-hm.

00:39:13

JA: I believe that's that great big lake out of Barrow, I forget the name of it. Teishapuk [?], somethin' like that?

AA: Yeah there is – is a big lake.

JA: Yeah, yeah.

AA: That's a pretty good memory of Jim.

JA: Comes back a little bit.

00:39:38

JA: You know, they were in somethin' else. It's probably the Yukon, I don't know what's goin' on there. Undoubtedly goin' someplace.

AA: Big river.

JA: Yeah, yeah. [inaudible] that's probably the Yukon, biwinged plane. I don't know what I was in there, well, it's a Cessna. But what I was doin' and where I was goin', I couldn't tell ya. Undoubtedly goin' somewhere to fix something.

AA: Some of the slide fading was just kinda random, I mean this looks like the same series of picture ...

JA: Yeah, it's odd isn't it?

AA: These some – that's backwards, here's the right version of it.

JA: Oh yeah. That's a Piper Clipper I rebuilt, cute little thing wasn't it? And I believe that's my wife standin' next to it.

AA: Um, Judy?

JA: Yeah, yeah. I'd like her to see that picture. Oh, is it on the disc or will be?

AA: It will be, I can – if – if there's particular pictures, I mean I can't do hundreds of 'em but I can – I can make prints of some of 'em.

JA: I'd like to have a print of that one, yeah.

00:41:02

AA: Okay.

JA: Yeah, that was a good little airplane.

AA: Would ya have a preference in size?

JA: Oh, I don't know.

AA: Er 4 x 6, 5 x 7?

JA: I'd like to have a 5 x 7 of this, frame nice.

AA: Okay.

00:41:17

JA: That's over at Metro Field here in Fairbanks. That's me way back when with my first airplanes.

AA: You're kid ...

JA: We're flying.

AA: You're kiddin' me, that's you?

JA: That's me, I was about, uh, uh, 18 or 19 years old then I guess, somethin' like that.

AA: And that was the first airplane you owned to fly?

JA: Yeah. Yeah, I bought it then it – it sat there for a year while I went out to Northrup to go to school - year and a half I guess, and came back and rebuilt it that summer, so, uh, yeah, I might have been – I might 'ave been 20 years old by then. Strange isn't it? Didn't matter what I wear, I'm a walkin' shambles. (Laugh)

00:42:00

AA: Oh, I can't think of the guys last name. We had a guest speaker here the other night - he was an editor for the Anchorage News, um, you went to high school with him. It's Michael, not Clancy but, oh what's that guys last name? Anyways he went to school with you because he was asking each one of us what we were working on- for Graduate School and I, I'd say the guy's an editor in Anchorage. He lived up here for years. He wrote for Anchorage Daily News. I'm just – I have his name in my notebook when I – I'll bring it back -- but he – he knew you, yeah. He said that, he – yeah – I said did you go to school with Jim Anderson? And he goes there was a couple of Jim Andersons, he says like, the guy that was into airplanes. He's like oh yeah! Jim, yeah.

JA: Okay. I wonder who that would have been? Oh yeah. That was – that's off the end of Philip's Field and the Noyes – yeah, the Noyes Slough.

AA: Um-hm.

00:42:58

JA: The plane had just got built, up, squared away.

AA: Were they goin' take off off the slough or taxi to the Chena?

JA: They usually taxied out to the Chena. Some people took off from the slough, but, uh, most of them taxied down. It wasn't too far.

00:43:09

AA: What kinda plane is that?

JA: Well looks like a – I believe it is a PA 12 with a metal fuselage, which is modification it uh, Fairbanks Aircraft did on a couple of them. Yeah, that's what it is, yeah.

AA: Any idea of who that is standing there at the back of the plane?

JA: No idea at all.

AA: Um. Um.

00:43:34

AA: I guess I was – who were you workin' for at this time?

JA: Fairbanks Aircrafts.

AA: Okay.

JA: There was three fellows owned it. See, there was, Gordie Mitchell, Dave Philips and Jess Bachner. Well, Dave sold out. Then Gordie sold out to Jess and then after a year or so they changed it to uh, Bachner Aircraft.

AA: So this would have been way back in the day when you were first working for them?

JA: Yeah.

AA: Was this around the same time you went out to Takotna Lake to recover that one that was frozen in the ice?

JA: No.

AA: Not Takotna Lake, uh ...

JA: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah, woulda been uh, probably a little late than this.

AA: Um-hm.

0044:13

JA: See, I went to – Northrup, boy, oh boy, trying to figure all these dates up. I went out to Northrup, I left late in '55 'cuz I spent all of '56 and I got my tickets in '57, early in '57, so, yeah, this would have to have been '54, summer of '55 – somewhere in there.

AA: Oh, I know somethin' I meant to ask ya. Did you, uh, I scanned your resume, you gave me a copy of your resume and I still have the original. Do you want a copy of that back or do ya have one.

JA: I sure would like to, because it's – it's all gone.

AA: Okay. Okay, yeah, I'll – I think I have one, the original one you gave me.

JA: Every time I turn around and think of something, it went up in the hangar.

00:45:00

JA: Okay, they're loadin' up Comanche out in front. That woulda been one of, Fort Yukon Air Service, Fairchild order.

AA: Was this Phillips Field or ... ?

JA: Yeah, that's Phillips Field, yeah, um hm.

00:45:16

JA: That is another launching. I don't know who's plane that was. Let's see, what was the fella's name? Bill something. Bill Ackerman. An old timer. Showed up, worked here for a while. I don't know what happened there. He was working when I went off to school and when I came back he had his – he had his own little, he – he'd been doin' repair work. Decided to run his own shop, make a lot of money. But there was a space, I don't know how that all came about.

00:45.51

AA: This is – this slide tray had quite the range of pictures in it from DEW Line stuff to back when you were working for Wright's Aircraft.

JA: Oh yeah, yeah, yeah, I didn't sort things too well.

00:46:07

JA: That's somethin' I got mixed up in, that's a Ryan. Same type that Lindberg flew to Paris.

AA: Really?

JA: And I got conned into helpin' taking this apart and this and that. I was gonna have a share of the airplane and of course, that same guy, Bill Ackerman, he sold everything and I never got a nickel; story of my life. Buy high and sell low. It's interesting, that wing came off in one piece. Must have been 40' from tip to tip. At one time it belonged to Al Wright, yeah, one time it belonged to an ole boy over at Kotzebue, uh, oh, he was a character, and I can't think of his name right off. Gene, Gene Joiner, that was it. Gene Joiner. Yeah, he owned it for a while.

00:46:52

AA: This is Phillips Field again?

JA: No, this is out of the brush of – that's act – on Airport Road, or off Airport Road, about where Geraghty Street is, somethin' like that. Yeah, no – would have been Gregory Street. Yeah. Kinda sittin' in Glen Gregory's yard. He had a cabin down there.

AA: How did this plane arrive at this place?

JA: I have no idea, no idea at all.

AA: Was the plane ever rebuilt:

JA: I don't know, just sold outside, somewhere it might of. There's them like I said, all in one piece.

AA: How much did a wing like that weight?

JA: I don't know but we managed to back that truck underneath it and get it all on there, somehow.

AA: Railroad crossing somewhere.

JA: Yeah, that's of by Phillips Field II think.

0047:53

JA: Yeah, that was the first Apaches in town. Piper.

AA: Phillips Field again?

JA: Yeah, yeah. Yeah, there was nothin' but trees across the runway.

AA: Now we're gonna get into a whole series of hotrod – I think, it looks like vacation pictures from somewhere, but they're a little later.

JA: This one was taken at Phillips. I had sold that motorcycle to the guy that's drivin' it. Not long after the pictures was taken, he dipped – dumped it and broke his leg. I'd brought the bike up from California when I was went – after I was goin' to school there. Hot little thing.

AA: That might be where some of these coming – these pictures coming up were – were taken, 'cuz there's some of them I think have palm trees in them.

JA: Oh, there were some taken in Florida too.

AA: Do you remember the fella's name on the bike?

JA: Uh, the one hanging on the back is Clarence Smeltzer who now – is – ran Aero Services for year, owns it. And the guy on the bike, I can't quite think of the name, it will come to me.

00:48:55

JA: Yeah, army helicopter, doing something.

AA: Um. Same type of helicopter that lifted the engines off that --

JA: No, no.

AA: No?

JA: No, no that was a Chinook, this is an earlier thing they called a Flying Banana and it could hard -- it could barely fly. Oh good, we can back up and show her her picture. Yeah, I -- they'd -- they had these things out on Wainwright for uh, oh my, oh, they were still out there when I was working on the B25 and the 60's and early 70's. Old Sikorsky's I think they were. There it is coming up. Judy? Come see somethin'.

JUDY: Oh my God. That's me. A hundred years ago.

JA: Yeah. Good lookin' airplane isn't it?

JUDY: Yeah.

JA: (Laughs). You too. My name is Judy.

JA: Yeah, this is Andy.

JUDY: Hi Andy.

JA: Yeah, this must 've been about, uh, oh, about 1970s, '71? Somewhere in there.

JUDY: Probably, uh-huh.

00:50:04

JUDY: Yes.

JA: Somewhere around in that era?

JUDY: That's probably of the colors I got on, that time.

JA: Trying to figure who built the airplane.

AA: were you able to get into your garage okay?

JUDY: Oh yeah.

AA: I was worried about bein' in your way.

JUDY: Oh, no problem, no problem. No, I -- there has a few dents in the side there of your truck.

AA: That's fine.

JUDY: (Laughs).

00:50:31

JA: Judy? Do ya see this one? Look at that skinny rascal.

JUDY: Oh my gosh. You musta been all of –

JA: When I had a leather jacket, I was an aviator.

JUDY: Yeah.

JA: (laughs)

JUDY: Wow.

JA: About 20 I think.

JUDY: Yeah, we haven't looked at any of these CDs. I am so thankful that you came along and copied all of those Andy.

AA: Well, I'm kickin' myself for not of been faster and gotten all of 'em but we have about 700 images scanned.

JUDY: And what, maybe 60, 80% you've got?

AA: Oh yeah, out of the total? Maybe, I'm thinki' – I'm – I'm not really sure how many albums are left. I got all – most of the slide trays but there is – most of the albums I didn't get, I only got two albums.

JA: Oh yeah.

AA: One of the albums had 300 pictures in it.

JA: Yeah, and there was – there were about four or five of those, yeah. Oh yeah.

00:51:33

JUDY: You better keep that.

JA: Oh yeah.

JUDY: That sounded ...

JA: Thanks.

JUDY: In the ground, in the driveway.

JA: Yeah, that was one of my great sayings. Where the heck is this? This was after – think this was after I got outta the army. Wasn't doin' anything for a while, and me and a friend built that (Judy talking in background). Big Buick engine and we had a blower hangin' on it and oh, my, would it go.

00:52:00

AA: Did ya build the frame and everything or was it built on ... ?

JA: We got the frame somewhere else but everything – all rest of it we put together, was just a bare frame when we got it.

AA: Was Courtesy Corner some store in Fairbanks?

JA: It was a service station.

AA: Uh-hm.

JA: Down on the corner of – geez, what is it? Right across Teamster's Hall, still a service station, you know?

AA: Teamster's Hall?

JA: Yeah, uh, I can't think of the name of the street, bottom of – Noble and bottom of Noble where it hooks right.

AA: Did the Teamster's Hall – do they still have offices down there where Fairbanks ...

JA: I think that is all - do you mean out there? I don't think so. 't think so. I don't know where they're hold up now, but they had a building down here, on, what's the name of that street anyhow? Noble comes down, turns right and goes over and then you go across the Noble Street Bridge or something, but uh ...

AA: Oh, down there, right down there by the Court House?

JA: Yeah.

AA: Whatever what – where that Chevron station is there?

JA: Yeah.

AA: Ron – Ron's?

JA: Ron's, yeah, that's where this was, [inaudible] corner.

00:53:08

JA: And that's my friend Ernie, he was sittin' there. He was the driver.

AA: I like the cave man.

JA: Oh yeah. Ernie man, that was his name. He put that on there.

00:53:23

JA: Oh yeah, few of them machines. Here we are with the super charger and everything mounted up. It takes – oh, did it go.

AA: Were there drag races in Fairbanks at the time?

JA: Well, they gave – I thought there were drag races every night somewhere in Fairbanks, but actually they gave a big meet at Tanacross every summer, the guys from Anchorage would come up and we would go down there and big runway. It was a great place I drove it at. Didn't have the super chargers on them. Yeah, it was quite a machine.

00:54:00

JA: Ah, the things that waste money on. This was taken in Florida.

AA: Okay, these are Florida shots.

JA: Yeah. I was down there for a trip before I got drafted and took went out there and watched the drag races one day

AA: How did you get to Florida, I mean why – why did you go to Florida?

JA: Oh, uh, it was one of those things. This friend of mine wanted to go out and buy a new car and he had been in Florida quite a bit, so, we were talkin' and finally I said, well, realized, when the guy I knew at the airport, Phillips Field, he was gonna to fly out to back east. So, well, you got room for a couple of passengers? Paid part of the gas and we all have a good time, and be good. So it was Jack Clouser and I, climb into the Pacer, Type Pacer, and Bob somethin', the pilot's owner's name was, and we flew to Detroit and got off there. Jack bought a new car and I – we proceeded to go to Cincinnati to see his folks and then we went on down to Florida. On the way to Fl – on the way picked up another friend from here, named Bruce Parren, had a good time. That's where I meet my first grits. I was snoozin' in the back of the car, we were drivin' along and, eh? We're gonna have some breakfast, I says oh, good. Early in the morning. Walked in and we order a, you know, ham and eggs like always and some little girl inside the diner comes out and I am looking there and I says, what's this stuff? It looked like wallpaper paste to me, and a voice from the back says, them grits you Yankee and this very large black lady came out and I ate those grits. Yeah. Haven – we're gonna try them again someday, but I—I couldn't get a handle on 'em.

00:55:42

AA: (Laughs). Welcome to the south.

JA: Yeah, it was somethin' else. I was amazed when you went in – you had to say ham and eggs and potatoes, and part of the time you would get french fries instead of hash browns. Oh yeah.

AA: Where did – once you got to ...

JA: There we are. There's Jack and Bruce there. We were headed across the Tamiami Trail, it must be about 60 Impala convertible.

AA: Where'd ya get the car?

JA: Oh, Jack bought it in Detroit.

AA: Okay.

JA: Yeah, I – he was – he wanted a new car, I was getting' out the army and I think, I'll work this out, so I lent him some money to buy the car, and then, of course, he paid back while I was in the service so I'd get money comin' in every month, which was very nice. They're both dead now. I'm the only survivor.

00:56:24

JA: That's taken out in the Everglades, I think.

AA: This is like the – you hear about kids sayin', let's go take a road trip, this was like the ultimate road trip. All – flyin' all the way across country and then ...

JA: Oh yeah. Didn't think about it, just wandered along. One guy described that as, uh, he says, the people out where he was livin' in the summer/winters, uh, didn't understand the Alaskan lifestyle and I said well, what do you call the Alaskan lifestyle? He says, it's when you get up in the mornin' and you have an urge to go somewhere and you jump in the car and go without shooting the breeze and carryin' on and planning. Everybody in America, the States, plan you're gone. Oh sure, I have friends who went down to the airport to see somebody off and all went together, said heck with it and they left too.

00:57:19

JA: There I am.

AA: You know, I would have never guessed that was you.

JA: Why not? Big and ugly as ever.

AA: That picture, you look like you're 6'7".

JA: Well yeah, did look a little taller, yeah. That's odd isn't it?

AA: I guess part of the reason it didn't set in my mind that – that might be you was just the order of the slides.

JA: Ah.

AA: Lookin' at stuff from Alaska then ...

JA: Oh yeah. You remember where these were? There was a big race. There were some top named people there.

A: Those look like ...

00:57:55

JA: Oh, that was, yeah, a fella, Don Garfield, Darwood? Dar – something. He's a big drag racer.

AA: Um-hm.

JA: That is the first time they broke 180 miles an hour, happened to be there.

AA: Those look mostly like just street cars, everyday ...

JA: Oh yeah. Pretty well hopped up thought, they really got with the program. Oh yeah. It was – it was fun watchin' 'em.

AA: So this woulda been, you graduated high school in ... ?

JA: No, this woulda been in the – just before I got drafted to the army so this woulda been in '58.

AA: Um.

JA: Yeah. 'Cuz after we parted company, everybody went different directions, and uh, I got out to California to see some friends there and I got a telegram from my mother and it says it is 40 below and the draft board wants you, you better come home. And I saved that for years. It all went up in the fire, yep, at least I think it did. I can't – Judy might have it somewhere. Some more drag racing, they're not too exciting, they don't look – doesn't get ya goin' too much. The cars is more noise than anything else.

AA: Um.

00:59:06

JA: Yeah, there we're getting' into the regular rail job type ...

AA: Um. A lot of people there.

JA: Oh, oh, there was crowds. Oh yeah.

AA: Not – there – there was no safety precautions in place at that time.

JA: Everybody was just there.

AA: And no – no guardrails for the people or ...

JA: No, no, no, just there.

AA: Do you remember what city was in?

JA: I – sh – let's see – we were probably – we might have been over in St. Petersburg by then. Somewhere outta there.

AA: That looks like ...

JA: It was an old air force base of some sort.

AA: That looks similar to what you built.

JA: Oh, a little big, yeah.

00:59:50

JA: Oh yeah. Quite a time (laughs).

01:00:03

AA: I know when I was in high school, or just outta high school and when I was in the states I'd always migrate to drag races in California.

JA: Oh yeah.

AA: Seemed like an Alaskan thing to do.

JA: Fun thing to do, go around and watch them a bit.

AA: Disneyland no interest, a drag race, take me to it.

JA: Well, years ago, I used to say, you gotta see Disneyland and Las Vegas before you die. But Disneyland was fun, seein' how there was a nice lookin' girl was with me. But uh, Vegas was fun. We went back to Vegas last year, Judy and I, in fact we got married there, again, remarried, and the place had changed so much, I didn't enjoy it at all. We were stayin' out further on the strip in this big place called Excelsior something and, God sakes, there's people in there with their kids and everything else and I just couldn't figure out what was going on, I guess.

01:01:02

JA: Yeah, I don't know where that was taken. I know I've had it for years. I think that might have been a commercial one, that I had for some reason or somebody give me.

01:01:21

JA: That use to sit onside the road outside of town here. No, it's further down. There's is too many mountains. These were commercial ones. I think, yeah, while I was in the army, my mother sent me some, she'd just bought a bunch and she sent them out so we could look at 'em, you know, wildlife and old cabins and things.

AA: Okay. 'Cuz, yeah there's – there's moose here ...

JA: Yeah, that's what these are. These are the ones she sent me when I was off in the service.

AA: Double rainbow. They all look Alaska.

JA: Oh yeah. They are, they are. That house use to be down on, about 6th and Cowles.

AA: Oh, speaking of houses, when did you build, originally build this house that we're in?

01:02:02

JA: Started building in '63 when I went to work for Wiens. Went to work for Wiens and I said hell I might as well get some property and build down here. Lots were 60 by about 120, \$650 bucks each, \$25 down and \$25 a month. My, how things have changed.

AA: Yeah, \$12,000 a lot now.

JA: Yeah, that's somebody sold one for, yeah. Oh yeah, those are all commercial pictures, probably from – what's his name fella had a photo studio here for years, right on 2nd Avenue. My mother worked there. Oh yeah. They were definitely using different film than I was, different camera too (laughs).

AA: That almost looks like it was taken from Farmers – the ridge above Farmers Loop.

JA: Yeah, looks like it. There's a ...

AA: A lot of places.

JA: Yeah, somewhere up there.

01:03:09

JA: There's the Nenana sittin' in the river about where the power plant is now.

AA: Was that a studio shot again?

JA: I don't know.

01:03:24

AA: There we are back to Arctic Village.

JA: Hm, okay.

AA: Well Jim, I think I'll wrap it up for today.

JA: Alright.

AA: We got a little more done. My Mom is transcribing the interviews for me.

JA: Oh.

AA: I reckon one, on hour of vid – of audio works into somewhere between 20-25 pages of type.

JA: Oh my.

AA: And she uh, it takes her probably about an hour for two pages, so got to hand it to my Mom, I gotta get her – gonna have to get her a big bouquet of flowers.

JA: You better take her out to the Turtle Club.

AA: Yeah.

JA: Yeah. Okay, that's just about right, yeah.

AA: The next uh, the next one we'll do audio on is a 300 page – 300 picture photo album so we'll either have a marathon session or we'll do it in chunks.

JA: Okay, sure.

01:04:17

AA: Because there – typical side tray is about 100 images, the – the photo album is – is 300 pictures.

JA: Uh, okay.

AA: 'Cuz I was thinkin' to myself, I was like wow, photos, this is gonna go quick on the scanning but I looked at cover, 300 pictures. I gotta lotta work to do here.

JA: Yeah, yeah.

AA: I sure appreciate it Jim.

JA: Well, I can't tell ya how much to thank you for what we did salvage out of that mess. Yeah. A little bit of history to leave behind me.

AA: Um.

JA: I use to worry about who was – when I die – who's gonna get this and who's gonna get that, and oh my God, this gonna be a mess, I'll have to sell all these tools and crap in this hangar and get it ...