

ATTACK ON AMERICA



Jim Ogonowski, the brother of pilot John Ogonowski, approaching reporters yesterday at John's home in Dracut.

PILOTS

N.E. mourns veteran fliers

By Caroline Louise Cole
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT
and Scott S. Greenberger
GLOBE STAFF

The captain and copilot of the American Airlines 767 that slammed into the World Trade Center's north tower were New Englanders, one a Dracut farmer and the other a Portsmouth, N.H., man who was active in his church.

John Ogonowski, 50, and Thomas McGuinness, 42, both veteran pilots, were scheduled to be at the controls of American Airlines Flight 11, which departed Boston en route to Los Angeles with 92 people on board. Instead, at around 8:45 a.m., the jet plowed into the World Trade Center — the first in a series of terrorist attacks.

Ogonowski met his wife, Margaret, at American, where she worked as a flight attendant. They have three daughters — Laura, 16, Caroline, 14, and Mary, 11.

Friends and family described Ogonowski as a fourth-generation farm boy who never forgot his roots. He grew hay, corn, blueberries, and peaches on his family's 150 acres in Dracut.

Ogonowski also was committed to helping others stay connected to the land: Three years ago, when the federal government

asked farmers to donate land to Asian immigrants who wanted to farm, he was the first in the region to volunteer.

"I used to tease him that he was a man of such contradiction, that he was a farmer on one hand and he flew jets on the other," said his neighbor and friend Jack Dittilio.

"The truth was that he loved flying, he loved his community, and he loved his family in equal measure."

Dittilio said his friend could not have been alive at the time his plane hit the tower.

"He never would have driven that plane into that building knowing what that would have meant," he said. "He struggled with whomever was trying to take over his plane, and I am sure he died trying to stop what he saw happening."

Close to 400 people attended a memorial Mass for Ogonowski and other victims of terrorism at St. Francis Catholic Church in Dracut last night. The Rev. Brian

Kiely eulogized Ogonowski saying: "Today, the world experienced a tragedy. We experienced a tragedy because our brother died. We do not wish to exploit what happened today, we gather here tonight simply to pray."

Earlier in the day, family and friends gathered at the Ogonowski

farm on Marsh Hill Road in shock when they learned that the man they knew was the captain of Flight 11.

"I keep looking out at the cornfield and expecting my brother to walk out," said his younger brother Jim Ogonowski. He said his brother was an Air Force veteran who served briefly in Vietnam.

"We're in shock, we're in denial."

McGuinness, his wife, Cheryl, and their 14-year-old son and 16-year-old daughter moved into a house in Portsmouth about a year ago. McGuinness was active in Bethany Church in Greenland, according to friends and neighbors.

Outside the church last night,

Pastor Fred Cheney, who said he had been appointed the McGuinness family spokesman, said Tom McGuinness "was a wonderful father, a great husband, a loving family man, a member of Bethany Church, and now he's an American hero. He's a believer in Jesus Christ, and he's with Him now."

He asked the media to respect the family's privacy in their grief, to "pray for all lives lost," and for God to comfort the country.

Rick DeKoven, an administrator at Bethany, described McGuinness as "a devoted family man."

"He was active in his community and church. I just think he set an example for all of us, and we're going to sorely miss him."

DeKoven said pastors were with Cheryl McGuinness when she heard of her husband's death.

Neighbor Chris Murphy, a member of McGuinness's church, said he was a "faith-based man."

"As my son gets older if someone were to tell him he's a lot like Tom, I'd consider that a proud statement."

Kimberly Blanton of the Globe staff and Globe correspondents Kathleen Burge and Clare Kirtledge contributed to this report. Material from the Associated Press was also used.



JOHN OGOONOWSKI
Had three daughters

Security conditions at Logan questioned

▶ LOGAN
Continued from Page A1

trooper who was Governor William F. Weld's chauffeur in the early 1990s, said Logan tower operators received no communications from either plane that anything was amiss before contact with the planes was handed off to national air traffic control operators in Nashua and Long Island.

"Everything seemed normal when they left Logan," said Lawless, who said the American flight left with 92 people on board at 7:59 a.m. and the United flight with 65 people at 8:14 a.m.

Lawless would not divulge details regarding what Massport knows about who may have been able to get through Logan security and seize control of the planes, but said, "We have a very high security standard here. We are as secure, if not more secure, than any other airport in the US." Nevertheless, Lawless said Logan will remain closed "indefinitely... until we receive some directives from the FAA."

The American flight left from Gate 26 in Terminal B, and the United flight from Gate 19 in Terminal C. One airport employee said nothing unusual was apparent when the American flight left, and airline workers learned almost simultaneously that there had been explosions at the World Trade Center and that air traffic control had lost contact with the American flight.

A flight that left Boston for Cleveland yesterday morning was detained on arrival for a search in a secured area, according to a spokesman for Cleveland Mayor Michael White.

While Logan officials insisted they have hewed to "high-security standards," in recent years safety concerns have repeatedly been raised at Logan, including by some Massport officials concerned about the reliability of low-paid private security company officials charged with inspecting baggage for weapons and keeping intruders out of secure areas.

From 1997 through early 1999, the FAA found at least 136 security violations at Logan, including easy access to parked planes and lax baggage inspections. Massport, which operates Logan, and airlines operating there were fined \$178,000 for security lapses during the period.

In one spectacular security breach during the summer of 1999, a Brookline teenager was able to climb over an airport security fence, walk 2 miles across the tarmac, get through a jetway door that should have been locked, and stow away on a British Airways 747 headed to London. In April 2000, Massport said it was permanently locking 26 of about 300 doors that lead from terminal buildings onto tarmacs after a September 1999 Boston Globe investigation found that doors were frequently left open, potentially allowing terrorists access to airplanes on the ground.

However, this official noted that it would be hard to single out Logan for blame yesterday in light of the simultaneous hijackings of flights from Newark and Dulles.

For terrorists determined to bring down the World Trade Center, Logan would be a natural target because transcontinental flights filled with jet fuel could be commandeered soon after takeoff, Massport's Kinton said.



A Massachusetts state trooper patrolling the American Airlines' empty terminal area at Logan International Airport yesterday.

Brian Sullivan, a retired FAA special agent who had been working to focus congressional and media attention on security concerns at Logan, said yesterday, "If a determined terrorist wants to take out a target, they will get it. The question we have to ask is, 'Have we done everything possible to prevent that?' and I think the answer is no."

"Two of the planes flew out of Logan, but I don't think Logan is weaker than any other airport. The problem is systemic," Sullivan said. "Morale problems are horrendous" among FAA security staff whose job includes trying to prevent terrorists from boarding planes. "All you need to do is look at turnover and employee satisfaction," Sullivan added.

Sullivan, like many other security specialists, said the weak link in aviation security is the low-paid employees hired to work at security checkpoints by private security firms that are contracted by the airlines.

A former Massport official, speaking on condition of anonymity, said that for years airport officials have been concerned about "the quality of the people hired, basically at the minimum wage, to check your bags. There were a lot of people at Massport who said this was the weak link."

However, this official noted that it would be hard to single out Logan for blame yesterday in light of the simultaneous hijackings of flights from Newark and Dulles.

On the issue of weapons getting into the plane, Kinton said, "We don't know what, if anything, got through any of the three airports involved."

Sullivan agreed that in general, "the screeners at checkpoints are not well educated. You can't keep up with their background checks. There is high turnover and low pay. And that is our front line of security. It can't be."

Responsibility for security at Logan is split among Massport and its State Police Troop E contingent, which oversees the airport perimeter, parking areas, and terminal space, and the airlines themselves, which hire contractors to staff the security checkpoints for passengers boarding flights and inspections of baggage being loaded into cargo holds.

Danielle Crosby, a spokeswoman for Globe Aviation Services, an East Boston-based company identified as American's security contractor in Logan's Terminal B, said the company could make "no comment about anything because of the national security issues."

Massport officials identified the security company that runs United's checkpoint at Logan as Huntley Security. Efforts to locate Huntley officials for comment were unsuccessful yesterday.

The 136 violations found by the FAA in the 1997-2000 monitoring came after plainclothes agents were able to board airplanes parked overnight at gates and walk into restricted areas without facing questions. People hired to operate luggage screening devices also routinely failed to detect test items such as pipe bombs and guns.

According to three sources interviewed by the Globe, a flight attendant on the American flight called back to Boston to report that flight attendants and passengers had been stabbed by a knife-wielding assailant who slit their throats — raising questions about whether a knife may have been smuggled through security or stashed ahead of time on the plane.

Cathal Flynn, the FAA's associate administrator for civil aviation security from December 1993 through October 2000, said he was "horrified and saddened" by the attacks. "At the same time, I wondered how do you deal with the problem of determined, suicidal attackers," Flynn said.

"I worried about this sort of thing and other sorts of things constantly," Flynn said. "To be involved in security is to be worried, and then to transfer that worry from something that is just debilitating to something that is conscious, systematic work to improve things. It's a tough thing to do in a free country and a system based on free enterprise."

Flynn said any free country will always struggle to maintain security. "Israel is a highly security-conscious place, and yet people are being killed by suicidal attackers. It is an enormously difficult problem," Flynn said.

In late July, the FAA announced it would seek \$99,000 in civil penalties against American Airlines for a total of nine security breaches last year on six flights, including one from Logan to Chicago's O'Hare International Airport.

During an assessment of American's passenger pre-screening and checked baggage security on June 25, 2000, FAA special agents found that the airline had improperly transported unaccom-

panied bags on five flights, failed to perform a passenger ID check on two flights, and failed to ask appropriate security questions about checked bags on two flights.

The FAA did not say which violations occurred on the Boston-Chicago flight or on the other flights, which were from Washington's Ronald Reagan National to Miami International, Denver International to Dallas/Fort Worth International, San Diego International to Reno Tahoe International, San Jose International to Los Angeles International, and Lambert St. Louis International to Chicago's O'Hare.

The FAA said American took immediate corrective actions at the airports where the alleged violations were reported.

One of the more spectacular Logan security breaches occurred in July 1999 when a 17-year-old Brookline youth who hoped to impress Israeli spies cut razor wire from the top of a Logan perimeter fence, walked hundreds of yards across supposedly secured areas, then through a jetway door normally protected by a combination lock, and stowed away aboard a British Airways Boeing 747 jetliner headed to London. The youth was arrested after he arrived in England.

In the late 1990s, the FAA took steps to beef up security at Logan, including buying 600 machines to detect traces of explosives in passenger bags, but FAA investigators found many went unused, and many security staffers were never trained in how to use them.

Glen Johnson, Kimberly Blanton, and Stephanie Stoughton of the Globe staff contributed to this report.

LUCKY ONES

Couple altered itinerary

By Michael Paulson
GLOBE STAFF

Weeks ago, Susan Yahn and Peter MacPherson of Wayland began planning their trip to the Hawaiian island of Maui.

She had booked the American Airlines morning flight to Los Angeles, and her husband was booked on a United Airlines flight. With three kids to take care of, they don't fly together, just in case.

Luckily for them, they changed their plans.

MacPherson decided to go Monday instead of yesterday and flew through San Francisco instead of Los Angeles.

And Yahn decided to take a later flight, so she could see her children off at the school bus stop.

Yahn, a 48-year-old real estate agent, was on the Logan Express bus from Framingham when cellphones began ringing all around her. There had been an airplane crash. In New York. The flight she was supposed to take.

"I just started to cry, and I cried all the way to the airport," Yahn said. "I said, 'I'm not going anywhere.'"

She never got off the bus — the airport was closed by the time she arrived anyway. On the way back, she frantically alerted her son and her husband that she had changed her flight.

"My son called me at 4:30 a.m. [Hawaii time], and I woke up to this tale that Tom Clancy in his wildest imagination couldn't figure out," MacPherson, a sales manager for a software company, said in a phone call from Maui. "My wife really had a near miss. But she was a good mother who said, 'I want to see my youngest off to school.' I'm just happy she's fine."

Yahn said she felt as though both she and her husband narrowly escaped death.

"I've had three glasses of Scotch on the rocks, and I'm a wine drinker," she said. "I feel very fortunate to be here. As Dorothy says, there's no place like home."

Michael Paulson can be reached by e-mail at mpaulson@globe.com.