

PAT DAVIS, SR.
Owner, Abe's Restaurant
Clarksdale, MS

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Date: August 19, 2005
Location: Abe's dining room
Length: 29 minutes, 3 seconds
Interviewer: Amy Evans
Project: MS Delta Hot Tamale Trail

NOTE: The interview was conducted in the restaurant's main dining room in the middle of the afternoon. There were no customers in the restaurant at that time, but music can be heard playing in the background.

[Begin Pat Davis, Sr.]

0:00:00.0

Amy Evans: This is Amy Evans for the Southern Foodways Alliance on Friday, August nineteenth, 2005, and I'm at Abe's Restaurant in Clarksdale, Mississippi, at the famous Blues Crossroads [of Highways 49 and 61] I'm here with Pat Davis, Senior. Sir, would you mind saying your name and also your birth date for the record?

0:00:21.3

Pat Davis: This is Pat Davis. My birthday is September third, 1937.

0:00:27.5

AE: And can you explain a little bit about who Abe was that the restaurant was named for and the family's history a little bit?

0:00:33.2

PD: My--my father was named Abe--Abraham Davis. He started his first restaurant when he was about twenty-one years old on Fourth Street, which is now Martin Luther King Boulevard, and he had a--a sauce that he made to go on his barbecue sandwiches and the sauce was--they call it the Comeback Sauce--and sort of stuff like that. And for the last eighty-some years, we've been selling barbecue with the same sauce on it. And he moved over here to this location on Highway 61 and [Highway] 49 in 1937.

And I was a young man at the time and began to work with him and probably about ten, eleven years old. And he began to make hot--let me help him make hot tamales. And since we want to talk about hot tamales, I'll give you all the--how the--how we went through it. He would get a couple pork shoulders and--and boil them and then, when they were done, he would take them out and grind them up and put it to the side. And then he would get cornmeal and a little flour and mix it in and put our secret ingredients in it to give it the flavor and all. Then he would pull the meat back out of the refrigerator, when it's cold, and then added the flavoring to that. And then we would boil bundles of corn shucks, and I would have to go through the corn shucks and separate them and pick out the ones that we were able to put a little--meal on them. And we did it all by hand. I had to get one corn shuck, and I'd dip it into the meal and--and spread the meal real thin on it, and then he would pick it up and put the meat in between it and roll it and set it aside. And we would make about ten or fifteen dozen at a time. And then once we got them all made, then we had to go tie them in bundles of threes, you know. And it was just a major project. And as I grew older and got tired of sitting there making--putting that meal on them, I said, "Daddy let's get a machine." So he said, "I don't know if you can get a machine to make hot tamales." And somehow or another I found a place in Waco, Texas, that made hot tamale [extruder] machines. And it was still a hand operated, but you would put the meal and the meat

into this container, and you would press it down, and it would come out into one long hot tamale and--and we would make them--we would get a tray and we'd make them about thirty-inches long and that--line them up and had them about ten or twelve on a tray and then I went and had them--cut them--just cut down and we would cut them the right size, and we started making them that way. Well hot tamales caught on, and we were selling the heck out of them, and it just got [to be] a lot more problems trying to make them, and it just was taking too much of our time away from our regular business. So we found a place that could manufacture them for us, and they've been doing that for about a couple of years for us now. And I just found them. But we quit making hot tamales for quite some time because it was just too big of a chore until I found this factory.

But when I was probably seven or eight years old I was--I was going to the Catholic School on Clark Street and I would walk home, and I would have to cross and come by the Union Planter's Bank down there. And there was an old Mexican man there with a copper pan, and it was amazing. It was—now, this is probably in the early [nineteen] fifties, and in that copper pan he had hot tamales, and they were steaming hot. And it had a little fire in the bottom of it. But he used to sell hot tamales on that corner, and people all over would just come and get hot tamales from him. And anyway, we just--I remember that.

And selling hot tamales just started being a fad here in Clarksdale, you know, and a lot of people--we had one guy [*Laughs*] who came in from upstate one--one day when--at the restaurant and he saw the sign *Hot Tamales* and he asked my father--he said, "What's a hot tamale?" And my daddy was really proud of his hot tamale. And he said, "Well, I'll tell you what. I'm going to give you some and let you see what you think." So he pulled out a bundle of three and he gave them and the man ate them, and my daddy is watching, you know, every bite

and waiting to see what kind of comment [the man would make]. So when he finished, my father said, "Well what do you think about them?" He said, "Well if you like cornbread, it's all right."

[Laughs]

So anyway, hot tamales--the secret to hot tamales is to make them so hot that they don't know what they're eating. But we've been making them--we make ours real mild because we got a lot of kids and all that eat them. And my sister-in-law was here one day, and she wanted a salad. And she said to her husband and her son--she said, "Well I wonder if you get--can I get a salad and put some hot tamales on top of it?" And he said, "Yeah, I want to try it." So he chopped up the tomatoes and lettuce, and he put three or four hot tamales on top of it. And then he got a little idea, and he went and dipped some chili and poured over that and then laid a piece of cheese on it and that's the "Tamaco." We came up with a new invention called "Tamaco," and we're selling the heck out of them right now. But anyway, I think I done told you everything you need to know.

0:05:33.0

AE: Well I have a couple questions--

0:05:33.0

PD: Okay.

0:05:35.2

AE: And one is about the--the Mexican man who was selling tamales on the street. Do you remember what they tasted like, or were they any different from what a tamale is now in the Delta?

0:05:46.0

PD: They had--they were more spicier then and the--the funny thing about it—well, not the funny thing, but there's only one way to eat a hot tamale. People don't do it no more, but the way to eat a hot tamale--and I've seen it because we used to eat them from the Mexican on the street. We would get them, and when he cut the string off we would hold them by the bottom and push them and slide into your mouth, and that way you get the juice and everything. But now people don't use that; they don't want to make the mess. So we shuck them for them before we serve them and all. Another funny thing, we--we tie hot tamales in bundles of three, and we have a big string that we tie them with. And we had some people from England here visiting for the Blues and all, and this lady came in and she saw hot tamales, and she is going to try them out. So my brother gave her an order of hot tamales, and she was eating them, and she came back over to him and she said--holding the string--and she said, “A mop string done got in my hot tamale.” And he was trying to explain to her that that's what we tie them with, and it's not a mop string. Well she couldn't speak too good of English and--and he couldn't understand her too well anyway, but she paid for them, so I guess she was happy with it.

0:06:55.7

AE: So you said that your father started out making pork tamales. Are they still pork?

0:07:00.3

PD: Yeah, yeah, all pork.

0:07:01.8

AE: Okay, because mostly they're [made with] beef [here] in the Delta.

0:07:05.0

PD: Not really. In the--in the--out west, you might get beef, but everything--even barbecue is all pork, you know. But from the Mexicans and people around and your African Americans, you know, and all it's mostly pork. But I'm--some of them make beef hot tamales. I think in stores you might get some hot tamales made with beef and all. Pork has a better flavor, though. You know, we think it's got a little more--I don't want to say fat in it, but--but **[Laughs]** that sort of makes the hot tamale.

0:07:36.6

AE: Do you know where your father got the recipe, originally?

0:07:38.1

PD: You know, I really don't. I don't--my father was way ahead of his time. As a matter of fact, he was so far ahead of his time, but he didn't know how to produce the product that he came up with, but he came up with orange oil way before it came into being. And I remember we was in a restaurant over in nineteen--probably forty-three, forty-four, [and] he was getting orange peels then and squeezing the oil out of them, and we would wipe--we had a--like a plastic counter and we would wipe it and man, it would just shine! But anyway, he just was good at--at putting things together. I mean, he came up with the barbecue sauce that was phenomenal and--.

0:08:17.9

AE: Now, your family is of Lebanese heritage.

0:08:20.1

PD: Lebanese, yeah.

0:08:21.4

AE: And did your father--was he born in Clarksdale?

0:08:23.0

PD: My father was thirteen years old when he came to America, he and his sister and brother. They were younger than he. And their mother had already come to America, and she sent back-- from Lebanon--and she sent back and told her husband that America is a great country, there's opportunity here, come on and bring the kids. Well he chose not to come because he was afraid to come to America because they--either the soothsayer or something, you know, that reads tea leaves or whatever told him he was going to be killed by a big block of iron. And so he knew there wasn't no iron in Lebanon at the time, so he sent his three kids ahead of time. And they came by themselves. And my father remembers--and he shared with me that when they came to Ellis Island, they were asking what were their names and the name was Dawood, which means David, and he was saying "Dawood," you know. And the man couldn't understand how to spell Dawood, so he wrote Davis. And they stuck it on him, and that's where we got the name Davis from.

0:09:27.6

AE: Okay. And why Clarksdale? Do you have any idea how--?

0:09:31.6

PD: Well they first came to Brookhaven [Mississippi]. A lot of Lebanese people were already in Brookhaven and they were doing a lot of peddling back then. But a lot of the farm workers

wasn't able to come to town during the week and all so they would go out and peddle clothes and then a few of them, you know I guess they got overrun down in Brook Haven with the peddlers so they--some of them moved here to Clarksdale and began peddling. And my daddy wasn't a good salesman. So he decided he was going to do something else. So he--he worked with a Greek man for about three or four years in a restaurant, and then he branched out on his own. You know, they had--and his father finally came here. He finally got the courage to come. And he got on a train in New York, I think, and he came to Memphis, and when he was debarking--getting off the train--he got off on the wrong side, and another train came and hit and killed him. So he should have stayed in Lebanon. But anyway, it's funny now, but back then it wasn't.

0:10:28.3

AE: Wow.

0:10:30.0

PD: But I'm trying to think. I guess it was--my father was a very religious man and a very prayerful man. And this business is--I promise you, this business is blessed, and it has to be because we still have all the Sonics and McDonald's and Wendy's [fast food restaurants] and all. And I'm going to tell you, when McDonald's first opened up, we didn't have a customer for several days--for about two weeks, really. And word got around, you know, "Pat is going to go bankrupt," you know. And I was figuring everybody right, but knowing my father and his faith and the faith that he shared with me, I--I prayed and I asked God, you know, and what am I

supposed to do? And God just said, you know, in a general way, just keep doing what you've been doing; it will come back. And finally, a customer drove up and this young boy comes in, and he sits down on the stool and man, we all was waiting on him. And he made the statement-- he said, "I'll never go back to McDonald's." And it made me feel good for that second. And then I said, "Why?" And he said, "Because I drove around for thirty minutes and couldn't find a [place to] park." **[Laughs]** But no, I'm serious. This business, I don't know how we've--the competition and all but we must have a product. And it does have the Comeback Sauce-- comeback flavor because when McDonald's opened, I ate a Big Mac, the best sandwich I'd eaten in a long time. As a matter of fact, I wanted to go and get another one, so a few days later I went and got another one. And to this day I've never eat another one. I haven't had the desire to eat another one. But I ate two barbecues today already. And I need to quit eating barbecue because I'm trying to lose some weight, but I just got to have that--that sauce flavor. We have a lawyer in town. I ain't going to mention his name. He was on vacation for two weeks; when he came back he walked in the door, and he told my son, "Get me a bottle of sauce." He pulled out a small bottle of sauce, and he tore it open and turned it up and said, "I've got to have a hit." **[Laughs]** He said, "I've been missing this sauce." But he was raised on it. As a matter of fact, I coached him when he was at the Catholic School when he was a little boy.

0:12:34.2

AE: What year did your father pass?

0:12:35.5

PD: Nineteen sixty-six. He was born in 1900--and 1966. He never did draw a check from his Social Security. He died before he got it. But he had sort of semi-retired about two or three years before, you know, and my father worked seven days a week, eight to ten at night. Never took a vacation. We finally took one vacation, and I never will forget it. When I was a young boy and my mother, sister, and we hired another guy to work with her to run the place, and we went to Florida—Biloxi. And soon as we got there they said a hurricane was coming and we didn't even unpack the truck and came back [*Laughs*] And that was--you talk about a long trip in a beat up old car and no heat or air condition back then. It was--but it was awesome, you know. And for many years I didn't take a vacation. I didn't think I was supposed to, and I was working seven days a week. And this young lady came in one day, Goldie Hirschberg. I never will forget it. She said, "Pat, I come here every time, and I always see you. Do you ever take off?" And I said, "No." And she said, "You need a day off. Do you ever have a vacation?" I said, "No." She said, "You need to take off and close a day. " And I started closing a half a day on Tuesday, and I was a nervous wreck. And the reason why I was nervous is because I knew the customers might come here and want a sandwich, and I wasn't going to be here. And sure enough, the phone rang and I went and picked it up and one of my customers--. But anyway, I got to where I had that free time, and I began to write beautiful poetry that just was inspired by God and about my life and all, and it was so amazing that--being away from the business--that I could, you know, expand in some other beautiful things that God has put in--within me. But anyway, then my son and my brother now run the business, and I'm out of it, but I--.

0:14:34.4

AE: You're brother, Abe--Abe, Junior, whom I just met?

0:14:35.5

PD: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I tell Abe--I tell--I tell everybody. My brother, Abe, he's got his name on the sign, so I tell him he can tell everybody he owns the place, as long as I ain't got to pay him but two dollars an hour. But I'm going to see about that. No, my brother is--is a very big part of this business, really.

0:14:54.5

AE: Then when your father--this--the business has been in this building since the [nineteen] thirties. Do I understand that?

0:15:01.2

PD: No, in 1937 he--he moved into a little building over there on the corner, and he built this building here for Gulf Oil Company. They had a twenty-year lease. So when they--the lease had stopped, well, they had a car place on the other side of this building, and they wanted a garage. And so we built that place--we had that building right there [gestures to the building next to the restaurant, which faces Highway 61]. Now this is a new addition here. That addition was a garage, okay. And that connected to the automobile--the Chrysler dealership. So when I bought

the business from dad for five hundred dollars, I said, "Daddy, I need to enlarge, you know. I'm married now and all." He said, "Well, I'll tell you what. We've got this place--this place back here, we'll transfer from over there and we'll build back here, and then we'll tear the service station down." Well my father was a one-man operation. He wasn't the type of people that can designate [delegate] things. And I was basically the same type of person. So really, it was he and I that ran the business. I hopped cars, waited on tables, washed dishes and all that. Business was good, but it wasn't booming. When we moved back here, I mean, we couldn't even handle the business. It was just—just exploded. So I said, "Don't tell that service station! Man, we can't handle what we got." **[Laughs]** So we began to hire people to start helping with it. And the business just--I mean, it's just prospered every year, you know.

0:16:25.3

AE: And your--and the family's hot tamale recipe, is that something that your father told to you, or is it something that you just learned to do, or is it written down somewhere?

0:16:32.3

PD: I--I wrote it down, you know. I made him explain it to me, you know, because he usually would just throw this and that--you know how people do, and it comes out perfect. But I--I wrote it down, and I have the recipe in the house. And the--the beautiful thing about making hot tamales when we used to make them is when you get that meat, and it's got the seasoning in it, you just put it on the grill and warm it and put it in between white bread, and makes a heck of a

sandwich, you know. But then a lot of people tease about hot tamale. And they say, you know, sometimes it's more cornmeal than it is meat, you know. And then sometimes when we were making them by the machine ourselves, the meat wouldn't come out just right, and it would just be a long thing of cornmeal. So we'd always tell the customer to let us know. And even the people now--as a matter of fact, they make--sometimes they mess up [the company that is manufacturing their tamales], and it's all cornmeal so--.

0:17:24.3

AE: But they make your recipe?

0:17:26.8

PD: Yeah.

0:17:27.3

AE: Did you--what was that kind of transaction like? Was it--did they have to sign anything that says that they won't divulge [the recipe] information?

0:17:34.2

PD: Yeah, yeah. And our sauce--we have our sauce manufactured now and they--they signed a-- as a matter of fact, they signed something, and I'm getting ready to change over back to--to Newlyweds [Foods Incorporated] in--in Southaven [Mississippi], and I don't know why it's named Newlyweds, but they make seasonings and sauces and all, and they got my recipe. But I haven't signed my papers with them, you know, stating they wouldn't, you know, divulge my recipe to anyone.

0:17:59.5

AE: Okay.

0:18:00.0

PD: I'm glad you mentioned that; I've got to do that. But anyway--

0:18:03.7

AE: Well what do you think it is about hot tamales in the Delta that makes them so popular?

0:18:08.9

PD: It's just something different. It's a different flavor. It's--it's a—well, we've got a Mexican restaurant now [in Clarksdale], and people are willing, you know, to try different things, you

know. And to be honest with you, they've got some great dishes over there but don't eat the hot tamales.

0:18:24.8

AE: Why do you say that?

0:18:25.1

PD: Because I--I just don't--they're not that good, really. I--you know--and then they might not even make them, you know. They're probably buying them someplace and all. But we used to get them from Sisco when we stopped making them, and they just wasn't the product but we still--when we added our seasoning to it or we cooked them, they got to be pretty good. But now, I think it's—well, and *USA Today* and I never--and I can't back it up 'cause I don't have a newspaper, but they--someone called us and said they were reading the *USA Today*--and they were going to send me the paper and never did--and they said that *USA Today* had us number one in the United States for hot tamales. And that makes me mad because I didn't follow up on it. He told me the date of the issue, and I forgot it, and it just slipped my mind, and I never did follow up on it. But Hicks [in Clarksdale] makes a good hot tamale, too, now. Have you been there yet? Okay, he's--his are probably more spicier than mine, I think, 'cause--'cause I think that we tried his one time, and we were going to sell them here, and they were kind of hot, and I didn't want them.

0:19:28.4

AE: Have you tasted any other hot tamales around the Delta?

0:19:32.1

PD: Have I? Doe's [Eat Place in Greenville, Mississippi] has got a good hot one. It's wrapped in paper, you know. And it's a good hot tamale. Each one of them have a different flavor or taste of its own. It's still got the basic hot tamale taste, you know, but some of them, you know--they're a little more different taste to it and all.

0:19:54.3

AE: And can I ask you, too, about kind of the economics of making a hot tamale because there's so much labor involved, and your experience with making them by hand--and people who are still doing that and then people sell them for six dollars a dozen.

0:20:08.4

PD: Really? I can't--really? See, ours are eight dollars a dozen.

0:20:11.2

AE: Yeah” Even eight dollars doesn't seem like enough.

0:20:13.8

PD: Really?

0:20:14.6

AE: [*Laughs*] I mean, when you really get into it and really see the labor and the time.

0:20:17.3

PD: Oh, God, yeah. Yeah.

0:20:18.5

AE: So much time.

0:20:21.7

PD: You've got to have--you've got to prep everything before you even start, you know, and it takes a day to prep. And then you've got to wait a day for it to cool to start back over.

0:20:29.7

AE: Do you remember how much a dozen hot tamales sold for when your father started making them?

0:20:33.2

PD: Gosh, I bet I don't have it on that menu. [Walks over to a framed menu hanging on the wall] I don't have it on this menu. A barbecue eight-pack was two dollars and fifty cents, so a dozen hot tamales couldn't be no more than a couple dollars back then. What's the date on that—nineteen—nineteen sixty-three.

0:20:55.1

AE: Okay.

0:20:56.3

PD: That's the menu from 1963 and--and I never will forget. A guy came in here and said, "Pat, if I had a--a nickel for every sandwich y'all make I'd be a rich man." I said, "Well, I've been getting two dollars or three dollars, and I ain't rich yet. [*Laughs*]"

0:21:12.1

AE: Well what is--do you have a family and--and sons or daughters who are in the business and really interested? I mean, I know--

0:21:16.8

PD: Yeah.

0:21:19.0

AE: Pat Davis, Junior [his son] works here.

0:21:19.9

PD: Yeah, my--my daughter, Jennifer, she's a school teacher and she--she works a couple nights for us, just to make a little extra money, and I think that's it. And her husband works a night or two. He's got a wrecker service, you know so--.

0:21:36.2

AE: You think you will always have hot tamales in--on the menu as long as--?

0:21:40.1

PD: Oh, yeah. Oh, yeah. Now, you know--and back--we used to make our own sauce, and that was a chore. We had to boil the bottles and make the mix and then put them in--bottle them, and then we had to label them and all that. But now we send out labels, and they throw everything together for us, and it's a lot easier.

0:22:01.6

AE: Do you--what do you cook at home? Do you cook any traditional Lebanese?

0:22:03.0

PD: Everything—everything. I don't like--I don't eat much, but when I eat Lebanese food or barbecue I eat 'til I'm miserable. And grape leaves is my--my favorite. And I'll go home, and I could be depressed or tired or whatever, and I will reach in the refrigerator and start thawing out the hamburger meat, and by the time it's thawed, out I've done washed about fifty or sixty grape leaves. We get them in jars now--pickled or whatever, and I can make them, and within an hour I'm eating grape leaves.

0:22:36.1

AE: [*Laughs*] Do you see any links now that--you know, you mentioned grape leaves, and I know how they're prepared and wrapped and everything. There's so many steps. There's some comparisons, I think, maybe there [to making hot tamales].

0:22:44.2

PD: There really is--there really is. And maybe that's why my dad even started, you know, making hot tamales back then because he used to love to make grape leaves and cabbage rolls and all, and then he just probably heard about hot tamales and then said, "Yeah, I believe I can do that." And then started working that and came up with a beautiful recipe, you know.

0:23:03.2

AE: Have you visited Lebanon since--?

0:23:05.6

PD: No. I have no desire to go, and my father didn't have any desire. He said, "God bless America." But he was a young boy so--when they came through. But Chafik Chamoun [pronounced *Sha-feek Sha-moon*], have you talked to him [owner of Chamoun's Rest Haven restaurant in Clarksdale, also Lebanese]?

0:23:15.0

AE: No, I haven't spoken with him, but I love eating there. [*Laughs*]

0:23:16.9

PD: Well he's got--yeah, he's got—golly, I don't know if his mother is still living, but he has family still over there [in Lebanon], but he used to go. He went back during the war when they were fighting over there, and he said God had to be with him, you know, because he don't know how he got where he was supposed to be and come back and still be alive. Because it was very dangerous, really. But everybody said that Lebanon is a beautiful place, but I think our country is beautiful.

0:23:44.5

AE: When--talking a little bit, too, about how Clarksdale has changed over the years and is having this resurgence in popularity, and y'all had this big Sunflower Blues Festival last weekend and so many tourists are coming through, you think hot tamales have anything to do with that? Or do you think hot tamales *can* have something to do with that?

0:24:02.1

PD: Yeah, definitely. Hot tamales and--and barbecue and blues go together, and we've been blessed really, because we've got--we've had people from Australia, England, Germany. And this

past weekend was a terrific weekend. I mean, business-wise you know. It--it--when people are here it--it shows up. And God only knows, you know, why they come, but we had all them blues [musicians and music] back then and didn't--really didn't know how to appreciate it, you know. And to be honest with you, when we were on--in the Delta Inn, behind our restaurant was a big tall sycamore tree, and that street used to be called Sycamore because it had a lot of sycamore trees. And I really believe it's very possible, because I know a lot of African American men would sit up under that tree and eat sandwiches and drink beer, and it's very possible Robert Johnson sold his soul to the devil under that sycamore tree. Because a few years after he died, lightning hit that tree and took it down. And that's the truth, now. But whether he was under there or not, I don't know. But things have changed and--and really for the better, you know. During the Civil Rights Movement--and I think Abe's Barbecue and Rest Haven was the only two restaurants that would serve African Americans, you know. The rest of them would threaten with lawsuits. And it was--my father never refused service to anyone. Even the Delta Inn, I never will forget; I was about 12 years old and we had three or four guys in the evening that had a few beers and all, and two black men came in from up north and they sat down on the counter. And they ordered some food, and my father was fixing it, and they began to call them names and all. My dad said, "Y'all just need to hush it up and let these men get the food to eat and leave them alone." And they did; they shut up. And when they--they left, they told my father that's a good way to run your business, you know, to serve an African American. And my father never would refuse service to anyone. And they respected him, too, because **[Laughs]** at times he would have to throw them out the back door when they got out of line. But it was right--during the war it was a really rough place. It was--they had good barbecue but they had a lot of--you know, people drank beer and--and to this day, working in the Delta Inn Cafe, when I see somebody with a can

of beer in their hand or a bottle of beer in their hand, it--it makes me think less of them, really. But all my kids drink beer, so I can't say nothing. But growing up in that atmosphere and seeing--and Daddy getting in arguments and fights with people and all.

This guy came in one day--and he had a policy never to serve anybody that he thought was drunk, and he had a sign that said *No Beer to Be Sold to Intoxicated Persons*. This guy came in one day, and he said, "I want a beer!" And Daddy said, "I can't sell you no beer; you had too much. Go on home. I'll call you a cab if you want to." He said, "I want a beer, and I'm going to come around the counter." And Daddy said, "If you come around that counter, you'll be in trouble." Well, when he started around the counter, and Daddy grabbed him and was about to choke him to death and they finally--the customers, you know, separated them. So the guy leaves, and he comes back with a gun. And when he walked in and Daddy came around the counter--that building right there, what you see is what was over there--about in the same space and everything. What we did was just--just about picked it up and put it right there because when people were eating there and they came to eat in here, they thought the highway was out there--so for dinner--so he came around the counter, and he shot three times in the--in the floor and Daddy walked over to him and put his arm around him and took the gun from him and he said, "If you was going to kill me, you would have been shot, you know, and I know you don't want to shoot me." But the funny story, there was a guy named Bear Morgana who was the mailman; him and Tullio Todd--and Tullio is still living--little skinny guy and they were eating, and when the guy shot, they rushed out the back door, and they got stuck in the back door trying to get out the same time. **[Laughs]** But anyway, Tullio would tell you that today, really. And his son has Delta Amusement [Café] on--on--near the Blues place [Ground Zero], you know. Where--where is your home?

0:28:25.6

AE: I live in Oxford, [Mississippi], but I'm from Houston, Texas.

0:28:28.2

PD: Oh, okay.

0:28:29.1

AE: Yeah, I've been in Oxford about four years now.

0:28:31.6

PD: Well that's great, honey. Anything else?

0:28:33.6

AE: No, unless you have any final thoughts about hot tamales.

0:28:39.2

PD: [Short pause] I don't want to share what I--what I heard, you know, because--people might quit eating hot tamales. They say the Mexicans have a special recipe with hot tamales, and when you'd die, they'd find out. But I don't know if it's true or not. But they were good. So you know, who--I mean, as long as it's cooked [until it's] done, it's all right.

0:28:55.6

AE: [*Laughs*] What doesn't kill you makes you stronger. [*Laughs*] All right.

0:29:03.1

[End Pat Davis, Sr.]