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MILLER: Today is August 6, 1978 and I am talking with Mr. Frank Peters who for many years ran Alliance established and ran the restaurant, the Raven Restaurant on Main Street.

# REMINISCENCES

OF

FRANK PETERS

Peters, Frank

Interview by  
Harriet F. Miller  
August 6, 1975

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Alliance with  
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PETERS: I was  
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is better than the 1924. I was married to it.  
And we wanted to make a change when. And we found that the  
Raven Restaurant was a restaurant previous to that and it  
was closed and the name was Le Grand.

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MILLER: Le Grand.

1978

PETERS: Le Grand was well, to make it short, why we

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Frank Peters  
August 6, 1975

bought the equipment and we started, that was in August of

1922. In 1922 about the end of September we start the rest-

MILLER: Today is August 6, 1975 and I am talking with Mr. Frank Peters who for many years ran Alliance's well established and famous restaurant, the Raven Restaurant on Main Street. Mr. Peters and I are going to talk about the operation of the Raven Restaurant and a little bit about what Alliance was like in those days. Now Mr. Peters, where were you before you came to Alliance?

MILLER: Well, people even at that time have to eat.

PETERS: Well, back in 1922 I was in Salem with the choice of going in business for myself. Previous to that I was serving as a waiter in different hotels in Pittsburgh like the William Penn Hotel and nightclubs like they used to call it Bon Giovanni which was a famous restaurant all over the country. And, well, I wanted to go in business for myself so I came to Salem and that's where my son Jack was born, back in 1925. In 1926, Mrs. Peters didn't like it, she wanted to go back to Pittsburgh where we we really met and marry in Salem. And I went back to the old place where I worked in Pittsburgh and we find out that the little town is better than the big city, because we got so used to it. And we wanted to make a change again. And we found that the Raven Restaurant was a restaurant previous to that and it was closed and the name was Le Grand.

MILLER: The only one.

MILLER: Le Grand.

PETERS: So...

PETERS: Le Grand. And well, to make it short, why we



bought the equipment and we started, that was in August of 1929. In 1929 about the end of September we start the restaurant and believe it or not, a week to ten days later we had the stock market crash.

PETERS: Yes. Le Grand and was closed.

MILLER: Yes.

MILLER: But it was closed so you...

PETERS: And that went on. So it wasn't so bad, we were still doing fairly good business.

PETERS: I remodeled it a little, as much as we could, and then opened it.

MILLER: Well, people even at that time have to eat.

MILLER: Yes. At that time. And that means then that you

PETERS: That's right. They were eating. But then it got time when they couldn't eat, so they wouldn't eat. They couldn't afford to be out. Then in 1931 the Woods Restaurant opened up. I don't know if you heard or know of the Woods Restaurant. That's where today is the, where Mr. Schwartz is opening the store.

MILLER: Yes. So...

MILLER: Oh yes. In that block just on Freedom and Main Street. The Raven of them all.

PETERS: That's right. And of course he gave us some competition and we both were struggling through the depression. But finally he give out and I was left with the only restaurant.

MILLER: Yes.

MILLER: The only one.

PETERS: So at that time the Raven started.

PETERS: So....

MILLER: I see. So you had a contest.

MILLER: Well, let me check to make sure I understand too, in other words there was a restaurant. You purchased an existing restaurant which had been called Le Grand.

PETERS: Yes. Le Grand and was closed.

MILLER: But it was closed so you.... of opening the rest-

PETERS: I remodeled it a little, as much as we could, and then opened it.

MILLER: Yes. At that time. And that means then that you changed the name from Le Grand, you chose the name Raven.

PETERS: Yeah. Well, we had sort of an ad in the paper for the best name. And a lady by the name of Mrs. Cavanaugh gave us the name Raven and with the essay of Edgar Poe the poet or something.

MILLER: Yes. So.... things have changed. We used to sell a dime hamburger and a nickle hot dog and ten cents a bowl of soup.

PETERS: The Raven of them all.

MILLER: Yes, she was referring to Edgar Allen Poe.

PETERS: We were advertising too for several years but we quit advertising cause we couldn't afford it.

MILLER: Yes. Then people began to go back to work. Morgan

PETERS: So at that time the Raven started.

MILLER: I see. So you had a contest.

PETERS: I had a contest and we picked the Raven Restaurant. It was an odd name and some people call it the Black Raven.

MILLER: Black Raven. Transue - Williams was down. So

PETERS: And some call it the Red Raven cause we painted it red at that time and that's the story of opening the restaurant. And we went through the depression. Sometimes we didn't know how but we did.

PETERS: Which is the Public Works Administration and they

MILLER: It was quite a let down I'm sure to have business open one month and then have a country go into a depression.

PETERS: Well there were many a times that you opened the doors and you just didnt make expense, you know.

PETERS: Different. Now they go and get stamps and they get that

MILLER: Yes. But....

PETERS: Even business today, a lot of business not making expenses. Of course things have changed. We used to sell a dime hamburger and a nickle hot dog and ten cents a bowl of soup.

MILLER: Now this would have been during the period of the depression, these were your prices.

PETERS: Well, the depression lasted till about 1935 I would say. Then people began to go back to work. Morgan Engineering at one time only had two watchmen that's all the business they were there, so I remember. And the Steel Foundry was down too.



MILLER: Well, those were your major industries and if they are cut back....

PETERS: That's right, Transue - Williams was down. So we really didn't have very much to go. And of course when the administration changed, Roosevelt started PWA.

MILLER: Right.

PETERS: Which is the Public Works Administration and they hire people for \$55 a month and go out on the highway and clean them. And some clean Main Street and so the people began to even with that welfare as we know it then, the people were working for that welfare. Today it's a little different. Now they go and get stamps and they get that check in the mail.

MILLER: And the work isn't required.

PETERS: And the work, yeah, the work is not required.

MILLER: It was a little different time and a little different person too.

PETERS: That's right. Well, we change as we go along I guess.

MILLER: During the depression when you were operating the restaurant did you find that most people came in for lunch or did most you get more people come in for dinner?

PETERS: Well, we used to do a nice business for lunch. Because like, the doctors and lawyers and girls from the bank and even the five and ten cent store they would come in for maybe a hamburger and a cup of coffee instead of carrying their lunch. It was just as cheap almost to eat out as it was to go home. And it used to be the Woolworths was downtown and Murphys and Kresgee's Stores which have now moved away, some of them. And of course Sears Roebuck is still there. Sears Roebuck came later. I think where Sears Roebuck is today there used to be the Kresgee Store.

MILLER: Kresgee. One of the five and ten's down there.

PETERS: One of the five and ten's yeah.

MILLER: So really at that period of time there were more people employed downtown.

PETERS: Yes, there were as many as they thought they need. But they didn't have too many girls working the five and ten cent stores it was mostly pick up. And what girls they had would eat out. And that helped the downtown district. Paul Klein was operating, it is Bruce Brandon's where Paul Klein had a chef that he was with me I would say for about thirty five years. And at that time he tried to be a waiter and

MILLER: Yes. Where the men's store is. Was Paul Klein also a men's clothing store?

PETERS: He inherited it. In other words he took it over from Paul Klein.

MILLER: I see. Yes. During this period of time now the Raven Restaurant was open from when to when?

PETERS: Well, we start the opening hours between 6:30 and 12:00 at night, that was the beginning. And we did fairly nice business in the evening, late evening, after theaters. But as the depression took ahold why business went down too so we didn't get very much there. So we decided to close about 11:00./

MILLER: So you were originally open from 6:30 in the morning.

PETERS: 6:30 until 12:00.

MILLER: Until midnight at night. So you were only closed a matter of six hours.

PETERS: Just enough to clean up the place.

MILLER: Somebody had to work those hours and clean up.

PETERS: That's right. Well, things were turning so they wouldn't be too brisky so we changed it to about 11:00. I had a chef that he was with me I would say for about thirty five years. And at that time he tried to be a waiter and a chef and everything else. So you can see, I had thirty three people working when we really sold the restaurant and catering business that we were in. But previous, there were times we only had three people; that was one waitress and myself and my cook and the dishwasher. I had two dishwashers



and one was just part-time so really things were pretty bad.

MILLER: So to run that shift from 6:30 in the morning till midnight you had three people and yourself.

PETERS: That's right.

MILLER: Amazing. And eventually then that grew to a staff of thirty three.

PETERS: Well yeah, grew out to thirty three.

MILLER: To cover that period. You mentioned you had theater crowd. How many theaters were there in the downtown area?

PETERS: Well at that time we had three theaters. The Morrison which was around the corner from us, and the Strand which was where, right across from Fiegenschuh's today.

MILLER: Yes on Main Street, this would have been.

PETERS: On Main Street. And the one in the, Columbia which was our more or less vaudeville. And also picture show.

MILLER: Now you mentioned that the Morrison was located right around the corner, we better establish where the Raven Restaurant was.

PETERS: Well, the Raven Restaurant was just east of the Square.

MILLER: East of Freedom Square is what they call it.

PETERS: Freedom Square.

MILLER: On Main Street.

PETERS: On Main Street.

MILLER: And it would have been on the south side of Main Street.

PETERS: It's on the alley where the parking lot is now of the First National City Bank, and it's right in that. Of course the location is still there but the place is closed.

MILLER: Yes, right.

PETERS: The people that bought it I guess they just didn't do what we used to do.

MILLER: No, it's days of glory were under your time. So then when we talk about the Morrison Theater, Morrison Theater was on Freedom just around the corner from where you were located on Main Street.

PETERS: That's right. The Salvation Army was right next door to it also. And the Water Office is right next door, on the corner.

MILLER: Right. And these buildings now, the Salvation Army is a vacant building, and the Morrison Theater is a vacant building.

PETERS: That's right. It's a choice. And the Morrison Theater

MILLER: And we may soon see the demise of both of those buildings; there are plans. Then you move on down Main Street and you found the Strand Theater, which is where the current Ohio Edison Building, well it's next to the Ohio Edison building.

PETERS: That's right. Next to the Ohio Edison building.

MILLER: Oh, down to Canton or some other, the Palace or something like that in Canton. the sidewalk there, where that Strand Theater used to be. Then to find the Columbia, we'd have to go to the corner of Columbia and....

PETERS: And Market, no, Columbia and Freedom. there?

MILLER: So now, of these theaters, Columbia had vaudeville entertainment, and the Strand had what type of.... the Negro

PETERS: Popular, mostly Cowboys and ....

MILLER: Movies.

PETERS: Movies.

MILLER: Nickelodeon.

PETERS: More like a nickle and dime and it attracted a lot of young kids. in too.

MILLER: Yes. as, we would talk back and forth. He was

PETERS: Which was good.



MILLER: So you had quite a choice. And the Morrison Theater had....

PETERS: The Morrison Theater showed the better class of movies.

MILLER: Better class of movies.

PETERS: Like the Mount Union today or you would go down to....

MILLER: Oh, down to Canton or some other, the Palace or something like that in Canton.

PETERS: That's right.

MILLER: Yes. And how about the acts that used to come to the Columbia Theater, do you recall any of them there?

PETERS: Well, the star that I remember and I catered his dinner, luncheon and dinner, was Steppin Fetchit, the Negro actor. And of course I don't know now if he is still alive or not but....

MILLER: I don't know either, but he was quite well known.

PETERS: Yeah, he had a group with him, Negro girls and quite a troop with him.

MILLER: And if you catered you probably had an opportunity to chat with him too.

PETERS: Oh yes, we would talk back and forth. He was sort of a nice fellow to talk to.

MILLER: And he enjoyed the food at the Raven Restaurant.

That was before the days when....

PETERS: I would hope.

MILLER: I'm sure he did. So when the theaters would be over about what time at night, would they end?

PETERS: Well, as a rule it was around till about midnight. Or around 11:00 the theater would be over. Then we kept open till after the theaters and then we would close the restaurant.

MILLER: And maybe sometimes that wasn't always when you thought would be closing hours.

PETERS: Yes, that's right.

MILLER: You stayed open until the....

PETERS: Stayed open if there was any business we would stay open.

MILLER: Until the last customer was served, huh? Well, we've talked about the dinner business and the evening business now how about the lunches that were served at the restaurant.

PETERS: Our businessmen were really the main action that we got from the, in the restaurant business because lawyers and doctors and a lot of these girls that worked in the

stores they would come in and we had a special plate lunch.

In fact we served a luncheon one time, for a long time, a swiss steak dinner for 50¢ including soup and dessert and home made pie. I don't know if you heard of the famous Frank Peters pies at the Raven Restaurant.

PETERS: So the Jewish trade kept me from turning. In fact  
MILLER: I have.

PETERS: Was known for having good pasteries. I learned my trade in Pittsburgh and I thought I was doing a good job here. And thank heaven the town was good to me. So you see

I was making pretty rich shortening....  
MILLER: And I have heard of Frank Peters pies too, do you want to give away your secret?

PETERS: I have given them away but they don't seem to click. not today, the Buckeye Village is having, if I must

say this, ... See I sold my little bakery after I went out of the restaurant business. I kept the bakery for a little while and I had a couple of ladies that worked with me and they had my recipes. So when Buckeye opened about eight or nine years ago I sold them the little bakery that we had

PETERS: Well, we use sort of a crisco. now the Buckeye

village, he's baking some of my, I won't say all of it.  
MILLER: A shortening type then. I know many people swear by lard you know.

MILLER: Well, I see.  
PETERS: Well the lard makes the richer dough.

PETERS: So he, I think he's doing a good job on making  
MILLER: Crust, yes.

good pies.



PETERS: But I was carrying too much of the Jewish trade and I didn't want them to find out that I was using lard because I would have lost quite a few of them.

MILLER: Very considerate.

PETERS: So the Jewish trade kept me from turning. In fact I went to a lot of restaurant conventions in Chicago and Columbus, and they were demonstrating lard. But they also demonstrated which was my final recipe, 25 pound of flour, about 12 pound of shortening and three pound of butter. So you see I was making pretty rich shortening....

MILLER: Indeed you were.

PETERS: Yeah, so I kept that for many years. And believe it or not today, the Buckeye Village is having, if I must say this,... See I sold my little bakery after I went out of the restaurant business. I kept the bakery for a little while and I had a couple of ladies that worked with me and they had my recipes. So when Buckeye opened about eight or nine years ago I sold them the little bakery that we had and I sold them my recipes with it. So now the Buckeye Village, he's baking some of my, I won't say all of it, are Frank Peters Bakery.

MILLER: Well, I see.

PETERS: So he, I think he's doing a good job on making good pies.

MILLER: Well, he couldn't go wrong with your recipes certainly. And that recipe followed would make a good pie.

PETERS: Still yesterday I was with Dr. Auld and he said I'm still eating your raisin rilled cookies. Because he goes to the Buckeye and those are our original recipe, raisin filled cookies.

MILLER: So this is Buckeye Village Market that we are talking about on State Street and they're known for their bakery and of course it's obvious that the popularity comes from your recipes.

PETERS: Well, it helped along.

MILLER: Yes, I see. What kind of pie were you especially known for? Now you mentioned raisin filled cookies, what about your filling?

PETERS: Well our cream pies, coconut cream and banana and butterscotch. Our cream pies were really going good. And of course we always said we would call a pumpkin cream, pumpkin custard pie. It's not all pumpkin like a lot of restaurants or bakeries, they make it rich in pumpkin. I use more eggs and I use more milk and that made it sort of odd. I thought delicious pumpkin pie.

MILLER: Oh, I can imagine.

PETERS: And we used to sell a lot of them for Christmas. We sold a lot of pies over the counter for homes and clubs.

I'm still today proud of what I did. *Mr. Hoiles which is owner*

*of the Alliance Review. I think he has passed away, I don't*  
MILLER: Do you still bake pies?

*now, some 15 years ago or something.*  
PETERS: We do, I baked one custard pie today for my son,  
*MILLER: Yes. He was the publisher of the Alliance Review.*  
Jack.

*PETERS: That's right. And then we have Paul Reed which he*  
MILLER: Oh, that's wonderful. Well, I know it's been said  
*was the editor of the Review and later with the WPAK.*  
that people would come in as you mentioned at the holiday  
times and order them five or ten. *he became....*

PETERS: Oh yes. We sold between two and three hundred pies  
at Christmas business. And we worked all night in order  
to do that. *in my place.*

MILLER: Indeed you would. Indeed you would. Just to roll  
out all that crust. Why, that must be acres of crust that  
you rolled out. Well, now we're back to luncheon business  
*PETERS: That's right. And then we had a fellow by the name*  
again. You had mentioned the businessmen and the doctors  
*Edward Cost. Now he was the Manager of the Western Union*  
who would eat at the restaurant.  
*Telegraph Company.*

PETERS: Well, more or less.

*MILLER: Back in the days when we had a telegraph station*  
MILLER: Developed into more of a luncheon club didn't they?

PETERS: More or less. We had two round tables and the one  
group was the Kiwanians and the other group was the Rotarians  
and if you want some of those names why I have....

*MILLER: Yes, Real Estate and Insurance Agency.*  
MILLER: Yes, we'd be interested in knowing some of these  
*PETERS: His son Chuck now is the Construction Company.*  
names.



PETERS: Well, we can go back to Arthur Hoiles which is owner of the Alliance Review. I think he has passed away, I don't know, some 15 years ago or something.

MILLER: That's right and the Eynon Guthrie Agency is still here.  
MILLER: Yes. He was the publisher of the Alliance Review.

PETERS: That's right. And then we have Paul Reed which he was the editor of the Review and later with the WFAH.

MILLER: The radio station, then he became....

PETERS: He was the manager when they first started. And then we had Jack Thorpe he was Safety Directory at that time that he ate in my place.

MILLER: And Jack Thorpe's son now is Jim Thorpe who's served in our State Legislature.

PETERS: That's right. And then we had a fellow by the name Edward Cost. Now he was the manager of the Western Union Telegraph Company.

MILLER: Back in the days when we had a telegraph station here, yes.

PETERS: And then Chet Eynon he passed also away. And he was with the Eynon Guthrie Real Estate.

MILLER: Quite talented musician.  
MILLER: Yes, Real Estate and Insurance Agency.

PETERS: And of course I remember Mrs. Allison when she was a little girl so you see we go way back. And then Gus Graf, he was with the City Savings Bank.

MILLER: Owns that..... we remember Gus Graf for serving on

the Library Board at the time this library was built.

PETERS: Owns that construction company or something.

PETERS: Yes. That's right. And now we, such as Dr. Auld,

MILLER: That's right and the Eynon Guthrie Agency is still  
and he's still practicing Dentistry. And Art Dimit who is  
here.

the Dimit Brothers.....

PETERS: Still there. And then we had Dr. Wilkinson. Prob-

MILLER: Photographers.

ably you heard of Dr. Wilkinson.

PETERS: Photographers studio. And Dr. Earl Sheehan that he

MILLER: Yes. J. B. Wilkinson, quite active in Kiwanians and  
still practicing dentist.  
the state level too.

MILLER: Dentist.

PETERS: Kiwanians and the state. And he was governor of  
Kiwanians in the state of Ohio. Then we had Sidney Geiger,  
one of our prominent attorneys, passed away years ago. And

Eddie Ahrens, he was the manager of the Penny's Store here

MILLER: Yes, this would have been City Savings and now  
for years. Now he's retired in Arizona. His daughter is  
First National City Bank, yes.

Mrs. Dale Allison.

PETERS: Then George Schweikart.

MILLER: Oh yes.

MILLER: George Schweikart for many years with First National

PETERS: You know Dale Allison from the....

City Bank.

MILLER: Yes. She's very active in music.

PETERS: Now that was one table that I can remember.

PETERS: That's right.

MILLER: And that's the Kiwanians. Now how did you get all

MILLER: Quite talented musician. time?

PETERS: And of course I remember Mrs. Allison when she  
was a little girl so you see we go way back. And then Gus  
Graf, he was with the City Savings Bank.

MILLER: Yes. And then we remember Gus Graf for serving on the Library Board at the time this library was built.

PETERS: Yes. That's right. And now we, such as Dr. Auld, and he's still practicing Dentistry. And Art Dimit who is the Dimit Brothers.....

MILLER: Photographers.

PETERS: Photographers studio. And Dr. Earl Sheehan that he still practicing, dentist.

MILLER: Dentist.

PETERS: And of course we know Will Sebrell which he was the President of our bank.

MILLER: Yes, this would have been City Savings and Now First National City Bank, yes.

PETERS: Then George Schweikart.

MILLER: George Schweikart for many years with First National City Bank.

PETERS: Now that was one table that I can remember.

MILLER: And that's the Kiwanians. Now how did you get all those men at the table at the same time?

PETERS: Well, believe it or not many times we had to push

another table together.

back in they I believe it was 1941 or 42. So I've been a



MILLER: I believe it. That's quite a roster.

PETERS: But there were times when there were just maybe eight, ten or twelve. The table would take about twelve.

MILLER: Did they come every day?

PETERS: Some of them they didn't. That's why I say one day you will have ten or twelve the next day you will have fourteen. So if you have more then you will push another table together.

MILLER: How did you know, you wouldn't know from one day to the next how many to expect.

PETERS: Oh no, cause that's the gamble of being in the restaurant business.

MILLER: Yes, and that's by guess and by golly, huh?

PETERS: That's right.

MILLER: Well that takes care of the Kiwanians and quite a roster of people. I think J. B. Wilkinson who was active in Kiwanians at the state level also published a news letter for the Kiwanians. Put and Take it was called.

PETERS: And we still printed it. Put and Take.

MILLER: Yes, that's right. It still continues.

PETERS: See, he was instrumental in me joining the Kiwanians back in the, I believe it was 1941 or 42. So I've been a

Kiwanian about 33 years.   
MILLER: Must have been easy to attend the meetings for you.

PETERS: Yeah, that's right, that's right.

MILLER: They met at your restaurant.

PETERS: Well of course I had to give up a little bit and go to the Country Club once and a while.

MILLER: Yes, once they moved.   
PETERS: Once we were at the Woman's Club and then we were at the Country Club mostly and I don't remember any other places.

MILLER: Well they've met at different places around town.   
How did you happen to decide to join to the Kiawanians when you also had Rotary table meeting too?

PETERS: Well, after all I was invited by the Kiwanians so I joined it.

MILLER: You accepted.

PETERS: I accepted.

MILLER: But yet you must have gotten along with Rotary because you had a Rotary....

PETERS: Years later of course my son Jack joined the Rotarians.

MILLER: That's right.

PETERS: You see when the boy came from school he was in business with me, I don't know if you know anything about that.

MILLER: Yes, your son Jack Peters who now is with Butler Wick, the Investment Agency, at one time worked with you in the restaurant.

PETERS: That's right.

MILLER: And he through that association probably joined the Rotary Club then huh?

PETERS: Yes, I believe so.

MILLER: Because he would of....

PETERS: That's right. Well that way it gives us one, I would go to Kiwanians on Thursday and he would go to Rotary on Wednesday.

MILLER: On Wednesday. So you covered both. How about your Rotary table, who were the fellows who ate there?

PETERS: Well, the persons that I remember such as Mr. C. C. Crawford. I don't know if you remember C. C. Crawford.

MILLER: I've heard the name.

PETERS: He used to have a store in town, then he sold out, oh, dry goods store, ladies store.

MILLER: Oh, well let's see. That doesn't make any differ-



ence. What was his store? What kind of merchandise did he carry?

PETERS: The operator, yes.

PETERS: Ladies apparel.

MILLER: The Tri Theater.

MILLER: Ladies wear, and things like that.

PETERS: And then we, Homer Grimes, he was the manager of

PETERS: Then we had C. C. Henderson. ore everyday.

MILLER: Yes. Now that would have been....that's still in

existence.

PETERS: He was with the Ohio Edison Company.

PETERS: Still in existence. And George Prince, which is

MILLER: He was division manager for Ohio Edison and also on the Library Board, so we remember him.

MILLER: Real Estate.

PETERS: Now if you like I mentioned about the theaters, Raymond Wallace was the manager of the Tri Theater association. Years ago the three theaters; there was one company and Mr. Wallace was managing.

MILLER: An attorney.

MILLER: So these would have been the three theaters we've

PETERS: With John Teeple.

already mentioned.

MILLER: Now we had, was Sidney Geiger Milton Geiger's

PETERS: Yeah, that's right.

Father?

MILLER: They were under one ownership.

PETERS: No they were cousins.

PETERS: Ownership, yes.

MILLER: I see.

MILLER: And Ray Wallace was....

PETERS: Their fathers were brothers.

PETERS: Ray Wallace was the....

MILLER: I see. One in Kivanians, because we mentioned

MILLER: The operator of that. Geiger in Rotary.

PETERS: The operator, yes. Davis which was with Alliance

MILLER: The Tri Theater.

PETERS: And then we, Homer Grimes, he was the manager of the Alliance Dry Cleaners. He ate there everyday.

MILLER: All right. And that's a company that's still in existence.

PETERS: Still in existence. And George Prince, which is still....

MILLER: Real Estate.

PETERS: Real Estate business. And Milton Geiger which is an attorney.

MILLER: An attorney.

PETERS: With John Teeple.

MILLER: Now we had, was Sidney Geiger Milton Geiger's father?

PETERS: No they were cousins.

MILLER: I see.

PETERS: Their fathers were brothers.

MILLER: I see. One in Kiwanians, because we mentioned

Sidney in Kiwanians and Milton Geiger in Rotary.

PETERS: And then we had Art Davis which was with Alliance Machine for years. And Fred Rauth was with First National City Bank. And Dr. Hobe. He's still active. Gordon Robertson, retired now with the American Steel Foundries.

MILLER: Yes, still active.

PETERS: Then our former Mayor, Harley Ewing, he was almost part of the fixtures.

MILLER: Yes.

PETERS: He came in almost every day, while he was serving.

And of course you probably heard of other stores in town like Spring - Holzworth and O'Neils. O'Neils store was succeeding Spring - Holzworth, and the Boston Store. You've heard I suppose....

MILLER: Boston Store.

PETERS: That's a store where the Friendly Furniture Store is today.

MILLER: I see. Down on the corner of what would that be. On Main Street and....

PETERS: On Main Street and....

MILLER: Linden, is that Linden running through there, no.



PETERS: That would be Linden, Linden. The second door next after on Linden and Main Streets.

MILLER: Yes, there's something else right on the corner, and the next one to the east would be Friendly....

PETERS: Friendly Furniture Store.

MILLER: Which used to be where....

PETERS: The Boston Store was.

MILLER: Boston Store, Was that a department store?

PETERS: More of a department store.

MILLER: Yes. See there we had two of them. Spring Holzworth and the Boston Store.

PETERS: Yes.

MILLER: And now we have none.

PETERS: Of course they all, like Kings and other places, they have taken the place.

MILLER: They're discount stores now that we have.

PETERS: More of the discount yes.

MILLER: But people still say in Alliance, I've heard it ever since I came here ten years ago, "What we need is a department store." And here at one time we had two.

PETERS: We did. And then of course, like I say, right next door to my restaurant was Mrs. Diver, now that was a Drug-store where Bett's Grocery Store is now.

PETERS: No, Eddie Knowles....

MILLER: Oh yes.

MILLER: Well, that's Turners, Eddie Knowles....

PETERS: That was a drugstore years ago.

PETERS: Eddie Knowles had a drugstore of his own during the

MILLER: Did a lady run it, Mrs. Diver?

PETERS: Mrs. Diver. See her husband had died before that but he was a druggist and then she had to hire a....

PETERS: For the Turners. And then Turners, Turner brothers,

MILLER: A druggist. Milton and of course Gene is still living,

PETERS: A druggist. but he had two other brothers who passed away and they had

three drugstores. And then they had one in Sebring, drug-

MILLER: But she carried on.

PETERS: She carried on till her death.

MILLER: And there were some other drugstores in town that you mentioned too.

PETERS: You know the Turners Drugstores was one on Main Street, and then the other one on the corner where, dry goods store on the corner.... where Penrod's Dry Goods store

MILLER: Oh yes, Schwartz's is that what you're referring to? That was also, and that was a Turner Drugstore.

PETERS: Schwartz's used to be a drugstore in there and, lets' see...

MILLER: Let's see, was that Paul England's Drugstore where Schwartz's is now?

PETERS: No, Eddie Knowles....

MILLER: Well, that's Turners, Eddie Knowles....

PETERS: Eddie Knowles had a drugstore of his own during the Depression. And then he went to work for the....

MILLER: Turners. And then Grays of course came

PETERS: For the Turners. And then Turners, Turner brothers, there were three; Milton and of course Gene is still living, but he had two other brothers who passed away and they had three drugstores. And then they had one in Sebring, drugstores. I think it's always been difficult for the small

MILLER: And of course now....

PETERS: Then they opened one on State Street, the corner where Schuman's is now.

MILLER: Schuman's has taken over and all those others are closed. The other name that we were trying to think of is the location at Arch and Main where Penrod's Dry Goods store is now? And that was a drugstore also.

PETERS: That was also, and that was a Turner Drugstore.

MILLER: Turners had a location there.



PETERS: Yes, that's right. Then when he was reorganizing they then they opened the store in Mount Union and they closed at the one on Main Street. That's on Arch and Main.

MILLER: I see. Yes.

PETERS: Where Penrods is now.

MILLER: So we had a number of drugstores down town.

PETERS: Oh we had a number. And then Grays of course came to town and that didn't do them any good.

MILLER: No.

PETERS: Grays still there.

MILLER: I think it's always been difficult for the small individual owner to compete with a large chain.

PETERS: That's right.

MILLER: And when they move in this means a change and eventually the small owner moves out. At your restaurant, the Raven, when did you start your catering business?

PETERS: Well, of course we started little by little. People liked our food I guess and says, "well about serving." And most, I would say in the Depression years. How it started first with the Elks, was where the Moose building is now?

MILLER: Yes. On Market Street.

PETERS: On Market Street. Well, the Elks was there and they would have dinners. And of course prices were reasonable at that time and I used to cater to them. And that's how we started. We got equipment to do the job and then gradually we went to the catering business. When my son came back from school, he wanted to go to the big city and I said, "now listen, what's the matter with you? You was raised here." So he decided to stay with us and of course he got married.

MILLER: You came 7,000 miles to Alliance?

PETERS: Well Greece, I was born in Greece. then my son Jack

MILLER: I see.

PETERS: See, I was born in 1897, which that makes me 78 years old next October.

MILLER: Now we have that all down, yes. So how did you, well, if you came from so far away in Greece how did you get to Alliance? Because you had come to New York first.

PETERS: Well, I was in Pittsburgh first. I had a sister, two sisters in Canonsburgh, Pennsylvania which is about I would say 15 or 20 miles south of Pittsburgh. And then gradually I went to Pittsburgh for a job. And that's how I started in the restaurant business. I started as a water boy. I was 16 and 1/2 years old when I came over and I started as a water boy. And then I was promoted to busboy.

And then a waiter. And then of course I always have a knack to go in the kitchen and I tried to steal some of the recipes of the good chefs. I decided then to go in business for myself. And the way I started, how I knew Alliance, I never knew where Alliance was until somebody, a friend of mine had a little restaurant in Salem and he asked me to become his partner.

MILLER: I see.

PETERS: And so I was in partnership with him for a few years. And then I got married in 1924, and then my son Jack was born in 1925. But Mrs. Peters was not satisfied, and wanted to go back to Pittsburgh. So we went to Pittsburgh but you know when you're single it's different than when you have a family. So we decided to go back to a small town. But we found out that our Raven Restaurant was a closed place, it was the Le Grand Restaurant then. So we came here and we started in the restaurant business.

MILLER: So really you came 7,000 miles to Alliance.

PETERS: But you see, I was born in one of the Greek Islands.

MILLER: Which one?

PETERS: Which of course the name is Karpathos, in the Mediterranean Islands and one of the Dodecanese Islands and the Island of Rhodes is close by. But my parents have immigrated from the Island of Karpathos into Athens or



Piraeus which is the seaport of Athens. came?

MILLER: Right. word of English.

PETERS: And I worked there as, In the restaurant business of course. And it was more like a wine dispensing place and also food, restaurant. And I came here and that's how I started in the restaurant business. I had two brothers here and they both were in coal mines. Well I didn't like to go in the coal mines. So, and at that time they were not making the money they are making today. They were working four days a week at a dollar and a half a day, you know. So it was six dollars a week, twenty five dollars a month, it was not very much money. So any way that's how I started in the restaurant business.

MILLER: Besides you had restaurant experience, you had some training for this. in Italian. But not fluently. Greek

PETERS: I had a little, yes, I did have some training. At the time I was a young man they didn't have the laws that they have today, that they compel you to go to school till you're about 16. Here now maybe it's 18, but over there it was 16 later. In my time there were none. So I was 11 years old when I quit school in the fifth grade and then I went to night school for a little while. And then I was 16 and 1/2 years old when I immigrated to the United States. Of course I came, immigrated, I had my sisters in Canonsburgh and then I went to Pittsburgh and that's how I start in restaurant work.

MILLER: Did you speak English when you came?

PETERS: I didn't speak one word of English.

MILLER: But I bet you learned fast.

PETERS: Well I had to or bust.

MILLER: Probably you spoke Greek.

PETERS: Well, yes, the Greek. That's about all.

MILLER: No other languages?

PETERS: No other language.

MILLER: I see.

PETERS: Oh, I could understand a few words. You see when I worked in Pittsburgh was in an Italian restaurant and I learned a few words in Italian. But not fluently. Greek and English.

MILLER: Well, you've come a long way. From Greece to being a water boy to being the owner of a restaurant.

PETERS: You know, I often think, I don't know if this is the proper place to say it. The most wonderful country in the world and some of our people abusing it, it hurts me deeply. Because I know when I came to the United States I came here on borrowed money. Although I was working, what little money I earned it had to go for the keep of the house.

My father he was a sick man, the doctors decided he had heart trouble. So I knew what hardships was. And I came here and I've been prosperous ever since. I had my ups and downs in life like every other person. But the people that, born in this country they take this country for granted. There's no other country in the world. I took at least five or six trips to Greece since 1954 and after. My first trip was after forty years in this country, I didn't see my father die or my mother die because I couldn't afford it. That's the truth. And now at my age when I look around I say well what is the matter with these people. They should go to see how the other half of the world lives.

MILLER: Yes. It's so often true, you don't realize what wonderful things you have until you see how things are in the rest of the world. And I think people who gave up their homeland and came and adopted this country do have a greater appreciation of it.

PETERS: But one thing I must tell you too. It takes a good Greek to become a good American. A bad Greek or a bad Italian he can never be a good American.

MILLER: Would be a bad American, yes, isn't this true. We had talked about the businesses on Main Street, let's talk a little bit more about what other things looked like on Main Street. Like the streetcar, transportation at the time you came.



PETERS: Well, of course we had the rails on Main Street and there was a streetcar communication between Salem and Canton. When I was in Salem previous to coming to Alliance my recreation of course we didn't have an automobile in those days was to pay 50¢, they had a sort of excursion, and I could be all day long on the streetcar just going to Canton and back. All you wanted for 50¢.

MILLER: The streetcar that came from Salem did it come to Alliance first and....

PETERS: To Alliance, right there where, close to the railroad tracks is a little building.

MILLER: Down on Main Street?

PETERS: On Main, on East Main Street.

MILLER: By the viaduct?

PETERS: Almost to the viaduct.

MILLER: There's a little building.

PETERS: There's a building on the north side of the street. The building is still there, but that was the streetcar station. And it had a waiting room for people who would take the streetcar to go to Canton.

MILLER: So it's a lot more comfortable than those of us who remember now bus stations. Because bus transportation is declining and bus stations are not comfortable places.

PETERS: That's right.

MILLER: But here the important way of getting around was the streetcar because you didn't have the automobile. So for 50¢ you could take a whole day and travel back and forth.

PETERS: Oh yes, and travel back and forth.

MILLER: And a lot of people did, didn't they?

PETERS: A lot of people, especially young folks you know.

MILLER: Families.

PETERS: Families.

MILLER: Take their families.

PETERS: A man and wife would take their children for a streetcar ride.

MILLER: Yes.

PETERS: So, but back in I think, right after, I would say in 1930 or 1931 then the streetcar line closed well then the buses started for a little while.

MILLER: The streetcar was electric, wasn't it?

PETERS: It was all electric.

MILLER: Yes. And then the buses came along and that would have, because the buses weren't dependent where those rails and lines went.

PETERS: Well, the bus line, the buses were operating also but they were more or less like the Greyhound coming from Pittsburgh. And their waiting room was in the corner of Seneca, where the parking lot is now. Seneca and Main.

MILLER: And Main Street, yes.

PETERS: On the southeast corner.

MILLER: Yes, that's near where the Alliance Review is located, the Alliance Review.

PETERS: No. I'm not talking about Linden, I'm talking about Seneca.

MILLER: Oh, Seneca, I'm sorry, I'm on the wrong corner.

PETERS: Seneca, that's right across is the Amoco Gas Station now.

MILLER: Yes.

PETERS: Well, where the Amoco Gas Station is today, it used to be a cigar store. A fellow by the name Allott.

MILLER: Allott.

PETERS: Not, the Allott Hardware, it was Allott that was in the tobacco business.

MILLER: I see. Spelled the same way?

PETERS: ALLOTT.



MILLER: Yes. *...and a private dining room up there.*

PETERS: So then he, and there was also a cigar store in the corner of Freedom where the Woods Restaurant was. Right in the corner there, where today they selling cards, what do you call it?

*PETERS: Well, we used to serve them food; families and clubs. And it was as still we sold the restaurant.*

MILLER: A gift shop.

PETERS: A gift shop. Well, it used to be in there a cigar store. *MILLER: When did you sell the restaurant? What year was that?*

MILLER: Another cigar store. Did they have the Indian standing out front? You know the old cigar store Indian that sometimes. *1960. And someone else as we mentioned purchased*

*it but that later closed. So that there's nobody operating that restaurant now.*

PETERS: I don't remember.

MILLER: Don't remember. But they had cigars and tobacco and things like that.

*MILLER: But there for quite a span of forty years then you*

PETERS: Yes.

*ran that business. Quite demanding on your time wasn't it?*

MILLER: Yes. Oh, Main Street has changed quite a bit, over the years hasn't it?

*PETERS: Well, it was very confining. But when you enjoy*

PETERS: Yeah. *why you don't mind it.*

MILLER: Raven Restaurant probably went through some changes. When you first started out you had the ground floor. *that*

*were told in those walls.*

PETERS: Yes. And then I remodeled the second floor and we had quite a few parties upstairs.

MILLER: You mentioned you had a private dining room up there.

PETERS: Private dining room, that's right.

MILLER: So someone would rent that out.

PETERS: Well, we used to serve them food; families and clubs. And it went on until we sold the restaurant.

MILLER: When did you sell the restaurant? What year was that?

PETERS: I sold it in 1960.

MILLER: 1960. And someone else as we mentioned purchased it but that later closed. So that there's nobody operating that restaurant now.

PETERS: Not right now.

MILLER: But there for quite a span of forty years then you ran that business. Quite demanding on your time wasn't it? You didn't put in an eight hour day did you?

PETERS: Well, it was very confining. But when you enjoy doing something why you don't mind it.

MILLER: I can imagine when your round tables were meeting there, there probably were some pretty good stories that were told in those walls.

PETERS: That's right.

MILLER: J. B. Wilkinson when he edited Put and Take got a lot of his humor from some of it.

PETERS: I wouldn't be surprised.

MILLER: Do you remember any characters?

PETERS: No.

MILLER: No? But a lot of pleasant memories, connected with this business.

PETERS: Well, close friendships you can not buy. All the people that we served were more or less personal friends after a while.

MILLER: Yes. It was more than just a customer relationship they were good friends. You mentioned then that sometime or another your son Jack had to make the decision about taking over.

PETERS: Well, he came from school, of course he graduated from Wharton School of Finance.

MILLER: We were talking about your son Jack after he graduated from Wharton School of Finance. He came back to work in his father's restaurant?

PETERS: Well, he wanted to stay in Alliance, the reason was that he wanted to be married. He had this girlfriend from school. So I said alright, so we became partners in



the restaurant. And he was very contented. That's how we expanded in the catering business, of course there was two of us then. One could stay and produce and the other one cater. And Jack fit right in it, he fit right into it.

MILLER: Jack did then the catering, you stayed and oversaw the restaurant.

PETERS: Yes, I stayed and oversaw the production.

MILLER: Yes.

PETERS: And the restaurant. And of course the time came when we had to make a move. What I mean make a move, the war was over and our business was more or less just a luncheon business.

MILLER: Yes.

PETERS: And the catering business was a lot of hard work. So I told my son we had to make a move, to either developing another restaurant.... But he said, "Dad I think I have my mind becoming a broker." So he went to Youngstown where Butler Wick was and put his application in. And they accepted him and he's a stock broker yet. But we worked thirteen years together. Time did run by and I didn't realize it was that long, but we did from 1948 until 1960, so that's thirteen years.

MILLER: It speaks well I think when a father and son can operate a business together.

PETERS: Well, we did well. We never had any arguments of any kind, it was all father and son understanding. Anything that he did, why it was well done.

MILLER: Very good and I'm sure he learned a lot from you too. And of course that's good training to be in the business for his stock broker business too. It's good practical training.

PETERS: Well he had the education for it. And of course he's got a lot of friends in town and I think he's doing a good job.

MILLER: Good contacts too.

PETERS: He's level headed. He's not a speculative type who let anybody buy something and then lose his money the next day or two. But I think he's doing a good job and I'm proud of him.

MILLER: And I'm sure he's proud of you and the training he had in this restaurant too.

PETERS: Thank you.

MILLER: I think we've covered pretty much the history of this restaurant. I think we did a good job spanning forty years here. I appreciate your taking time.

PETERS: Thank you very much.