

MALOOLEY: Except that it was busy.

BB: Why don't we go back and talk about the restaurant now for a little bit?

I think you told me once before that when you opened this part of the restaurant -- the dining room area -- wasn't there something about . . .

MALOOLEY: We were practically ready . . . it was on New Year's . . . the day before New Year's, and we decided to just go ahead and open it up without any advertising. And you'd have think everybody knew it because they started filing in here at 5 o'clock. We were jammed from 5 to midnight. And without any . . . we just decided to open it up, and we weren't really prepared for the onslaught. So, we had everybody working. We were making more salads, making everything in the kitchen. We had three busboys. They had to get everything back in, and I had to tell them, "Let's get it back out; let's get everything going." And everybody was happy because we had horns and hats and things anyway. And it just became a big thing without any advertising.

There weren't too many restaurants in this area because fast foods came after that. And, of course, more food eating places. And the people tend today . . . you know they go for fast foods, get it now. And we were one of the very few downtown restaurants, besides the Goodie Shop. The Goodie Shop used to be on 6th Street here where the parking lot is. Then he moved over where he is. In the early years, he was on North 7th Street. He moved over here, then moved to where he is. George Martin.

And there wasn't . . . oh, there were other restaurants in the early years. The Filbeck Hotel at the southeast corner of 5th and Cherry streets had Mother Eaton's; the Indois, the Deming, the

MALOOLEY: Terre Haute House had restaurants, but as far as individual-owned restaurants, it was one of the few. And I still cut all my meats. I have a butcher shop downstairs, one of the few places that still cut all their steaks and make our own roasts. We still bread our own shrimp. I buy the shrimp with the shell on. We bread our own oysters; we make our own dressings -- an old-fashioned restaurant in a modern-day setting.

We have a nice big crowd all day. We're more day than we are night. I can understand that people . . . business people come in here all day long and don't want to come back at night. Not any more. They'll go someplace else, you know, if they're going to eat out. And, of course, a lot of them do come back, especially all the legal profession.

BB: I think you told me before that at one time or maybe it's now, you know 90% of your customers by their first names?

MALOOLEY: Yes, we do know 90% by name. Like I said, we've become an institution and these people have been coming here . . . we have some that's been coming here since 1946.

Dave Becker's is one of them, across the street, every day. He has the Becker jewelry. And Ish Gurman of the Gurman and Sons barrel place on 3rd Street and . . . I mean these fellows . . . and a lot of these have been coming here since . . .

BB: Didn't Tony Hulman used to come here?

MALOOLEY: Oh, yes, when his cook was on vacation, he and his wife came here and would eat. Oh, we knew Tony well. He was just a few years older than I was. We'd go to Hulman & Company and bought everything, you know. This used to be the Hulman build-

MALOOLEY: ing. And, of course, my uncle worked for Hulman & Company for 50 years and longer -- Sol Malooley. And, of course, before Tony died, I talked to him about buying this building. It had needed repair, and he says, "I don't own anything down there but that;" and he says, "now you surround that." "Yeah," /I said/. He says, "You get it, and we'll make the price right." And, of course, he died three weeks later; and I was scared to death that nobody would know about it.

So, I waited . . . I even took care of the out-of-town guests at the home. Mrs. Hulman wanted me to come down and serve the out-of-town guests that went to the funeral. She said, "You set up and when we come back, you see what they get there." It was Phil Harris, Chris Schenkel. There was two governors from different states. There were a lot of people from out of town, and I would make the drinks and carry them around and . . . just like a valet. So I waited about a month afterwards, and I called and told them that I'd talked to Tony. I told them the story and /that/ he said I could have it. And, of course, I was lucky enough that he had told one of his key men, Homer Taylor, and Homer had confirmed. He said, "Yes, Tony had come to me and said 'I'm going to let Abie Malooley buy that building. It's the only one we got down there. Let him have it.'" And they set the price and everything, and then Joe Cloutier (he was an old friend) and Mort Swango was the lawyer, and we transacted the deal. And that's how it became our building. Now the whole corner is ours now.

BB: It is fascinating the way this building wraps around.

MALOOLEY: Yes, it is built around it because the bank was a short building, built in those days. I couldn't tell you why. And this building was built around it because they needed a place on 5th Street for their deliveries. The bank didn't need deliveries. Everybody come in the front door. And that's

MALOOLEY: why I think they built around it because the entrance to the kitchen is where the hardware store got their deliveries. And everything was sold up in here.

In fact, I still have the old vault. It's very ancient and old. It's one of those great big, heavy . . . you'd have to dynamite it to get it . . . to break it. You can't peel it. Big doors, it's got two double doors; and inside /there are/ two more doors. And it's got painting on it -- Pentecost & Craft, 1800 and something. I don't know.

BB: (laughs)

MALOOLEY: And the safe is still down there. And, of course, I had the locksmith fixing it . . . couldn't get it out of here. Don O'Rear, who married into the Pentecost family, he said, "I can't get it out. It ain't worth it so you go ahead and use it." So, I says, "O.K." He'd lost the combination to it so I had a new one made.

BB: (laughs)

MALOOLEY: We store stuff in there -- papers, records, many years of transactions. I'd love . . . I mean it's such an old . . . I'd hate to . . . you know, it might as well stay with the building.

BB: Yes. It belongs here, that's for sure.

MALOOLEY: Yeah.

So, we bought the building and we finally fixed it up, and Tony was a very good landlord. Tony Hulman. I think Terre Haute does owe him a lot. And you know it's ironic . . . you might not say ironic, /rather/ coincidental, that Tony Hulman's

MALOOLEY: initials are "T.H." And Terre Haute is Terre Haute. And they did a lot for Terre Haute. They donated a lot. I know they got their name on things but, listen, things got done. And, look, he brought Wide World of Sports to Terre Haute. Look what he done with the 500-mile race track. Remember when he bought that for \$750,000; now it's worth about \$70 million. But he promoted it. He was a promoter. He knew how to get the job done. And he was good for Terre Haute. He put Terre Haute on the map. He brought . . . I remember when Clark Gable came through Terre Haute. He was going to the 500-mile races. The women that followed that car. It was funny.

BB: About when was that?

MALOOLEY: It was back in '48, I think. He was to be at the race track, 500-mile races. And Tony had him paraded right through . . . brought him to Terre Haute, paraded right down Wabash Avenue. The women all run around Clark Gable's car, you know. But he /Hulman/ did bring a lot of big names. I think Terre Haute does owe Tony Hulman a lot of gratitude. He was a good landlord to us. If I needed the sidewalk . . . it was broke out there and some woman turned her ankle, he put a new sidewalk in. Anything you asked for, he done it for you. And he didn't overcharge on rent.

BB: You paid rent a lot of years.

MALOOLEY: Yes, 36 years. He said, "You mean you've paid me 36 years?" /I said, / "Yes." He said, "You'll get it cheap."

(both laugh)

MALOOLEY: "You get the building cheap."

He was nice to talk with. He was . . . I mean,

MALOOLEY: being a very wealthy man, he was rather . . . when I was in his home for that funeral, while they were at the funeral, I asked the policeman to take me around. /There were/ a lot of antiques. And there was one letter there from the pope. I forget what year it was. It wasn't to him /to Tony/; it was to his wife's father, Fendrich, and from the pope of Rome. I forget what it was about. I think when he . . . St. Benedict's was through the Hulman clan and Fendrichs . . . . When they had a fire, they rebuilt St. Benedict's many years back. I think it was because of that.

And he did. He had built St. Anthony's Hospital. He did a lot of good in Terre Haute.

BB: Speaking of the Hulmans, you told me before about going down to Hulman & Company when you were a little boy when your uncle was working there.

MALOOLEY: Yes. We would . . . they would buy empty carton boxes. We would save 'em up . . . you know, they shipped canned goods in boxes. And when you'd empty them, you'd get those boxes and take 'em back there. You could get a nickel for good ones, 2 cents for some that weren't so good. And, of course, you could go through Hulman & Company. It was such a magnificent place to go through. They had displays out in the front. Well, they still do! It's one of the oldest general merchandise wholesale houses in the country today. I think you can still buy chicken wire and nails. They had such an old-fashioned setup. The only thing they've done to it is computerize it. But the floor . . . they've never modernized anything else except /put in/ computers. The stairways are still the same there, and the floors and the building and the old elevator. And the way the stuff would come down the elevator -- they would slide it off. And if your name was on it, you picked it up and went in front and paid for it. It was a . . . they made their own coffee.

MALOOLEY: And then in 1936 Tony Hulman put Terre Haute on the map again by going national with Clabber Girl Baking Powder. And he almost went broke between '36 and '39 trying to put it over nationally. And Mr. Fendrich came through with, I think, two or three million dollars to help him and from that day on, he just went on up the ladder. But Clabber Girl is a nationalized product. And it's made right here in Terre Haute.

There used to be a whiskey . . . they used to sell whiskey, Hulman & Company did. They sold whiskey in the old days prior to Prohibition. A rye -- I can't remember the name of it. I have a photo, an advertising photo, upstairs somewhere. It was given to me by Mr. Bindley from Bindley drugstore -- Bindley Drug Company.

BB: Yeah, I know who he is.

MALOOLEY: Oh, many years ago he gave it to us. He says, "Hang it on the wall." It's up there somewhere. And there was a Merchants Distillery down on South 1st Street, and they made Merchants whiskey. And it was very good whiskey.

Terre Haute became diversified as years went by with different manufacturers and plants. We had a big candy company on 9th Street called Mewhinneys. They were a big candy company on North 9th near Chestnut and Sycamore -- somewhere in that area. [It was a] big plant, Mewhinneys candies. I think the building's still there. If they'd look on the side somewhere, if it's not painted over, I think you'd find the name. I remember it because I used to go in the back of it to get candy.

And there were a lot of bread companies. Now Terre Haute Pure Milk became Borden's. We had two other milk companies. The names escape me right now. We had . . . old Fitzgerald Baking Company

MALOOLEY: was one of the oldest. Jerry Fitzgerald was very well-known in Terre Haute. He had a baking . . . he made bread, Fitzgerald bread. It finally was taken over by Continental /Baking Co./, I think. But we had Toastmaster. We had Miller-Parrott Baking Company, who made crackers. And they made the butternut bread which was one of the best loaves of bread made around Terre Haute. It was a solid loaf called Butternut. And there was another bread company. The name escapes me.

In the summertime you could walk through the bakery as newsboys and they'd give you a hot roll, hot buns. And we used to get some butter and put on those things and ooooh, that hot bread!

BB: (quietly) Nothing better.

MALOOLEY: And Fitzgerald, Jerry Fitzgerald was good to all the newsboys. And, of course, the Terre Haute . . . the Boys' Club used to be here across from the courthouse on 3rd Street upstairs. They finally moved down on North 3rd where they are now when they located. We all went there on Saturday to play in the gym. And before you did that, you had to haul the ashes out of the basement furnace. (laughs) Everybody had to haul ashes out of the furnace; then you could go play. Each guy had a job down there to help keep the place going. It goes pretty good now, parts of the Boys' Club. Different service organizations around Christmas time would take newsboys or the Boys' Club boys, take them out and have a nice dinner at the Deming or some other place for Christmas and give them little candies and things. And they used to decorate . . . when I was a kid at . . . where the parking lot is across from Hulman & Company, that big square lot, they used to put up a great, huge Christmas tree and decorate it. And the day before Christmas . . . I think it was the Salvation Army /that/ gave out little candy, stockings, you know,



MALOOLEY: and toys to everybody that came around. They all just used to flock around there and gave stuff away to all the kids. And that was every year . . . oh, I'd say five years. Of course, actually I don't know if they did it. You just stopped going; you grow up.

BB: Yeah. Too bad.

MALOOLEY: But as kids, man, that was it. It was a huge tree. It must have been (laughing) 15 feet tall. Where they got it from, I don't know. It was right on a stand, built up on a stand /and was/ well decorated. And I'm sure it was the Salvation Army that done it.

Now, these thoughts come to me as I recollect. You know, go back and think and there was a lot of things that did go on that probably are not coming out now. It's a shame. I should have written them down in the past as I thought of them. If I'd known that you were going to be here and recorded them, that way I could have given them to you a lot simpler and more in rotation right or categorically . . . .

BB: We're talking about a lot of things tonight that we didn't talk about the last time.

MALOOLEY: Yeah, there was a few things that came out.

BB: Things that are coming out. That's O.K. That's the way it happens. That's why we talk to a lot of different people, to get a lot of different memories and views.

MALOOLEY: Yeah. I don't know. I hope I . . .

BB: You're not solely responsible for remembering everything (laughing) about Terre Haute.

MALOOLEY: Oh, I know that and I appreciate you even considering what I have to say and know and remember . . .

BB: I think if we gave you a pen and pencil or paper, you could probably name every store that was ever on Wabash Avenue in any given year.

MALOOLEY: Yeah. You know we were talking . . . you heard of me catching the bank robber? [6-16-81]

BB: Yeah. Um hm.

MALOOLEY: Yeah. That came about because I happened to walk in the bank and Ish Gurman was coming out, and I said, "I've got a question on Schultz and Smith." I said, "They started on this side of the street or that side?" That's what we were talking about because the chief of police at the dinner they gave for us -- you know, they gave us the plaques -- told the story. He says, "When the cameras clicked on, who was the center of attraction, is Abe and Ish Gurman. And we know they're talking because he was using his hands saying, this, that," he said. "At the same time he was still using his hands when he turned and saw the bank fellow. Then when Jim hollered and the guy started running, he was . . . he started . . .

BB: (laughs heartily)

MALOOLEY: . . . running, too!"

It was funny. And we were talking about Schultz and Smith. And that's how we come to be standing there. I don't know what would have happened. We may not have been there or I'd have been back in the back somewhere.

BB: You maybe would have passed by and said "hello" and gone on.