THE ALEXANDRIA ORAL HISTORY CENTER
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CITY OF ALEXANDRIA

Oral History Interview with Frank Attiliis

Interviewers: Francesco De Salvatore, Krystyn Moon, and Marie Bennett

Narrator: Frank Attiliis

Location of Interview: Prince Frederick, Maryland

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Transcriber: Elizabeth Owen

Summary:

Frank Attiliis, the retired president of A&R Insulation, discusses growing up in an Italian-American immigrant family in Alexandria's Del Ray neighborhood during the mid-20th century. The youngest of six children, Attiliis remembers a tight-knit neighborhood with few businesses that has undergone "unbelievable" changes. He describes his family's house, grocery store, winemaking, and extensive gardening. He remembers attending Saint Rita's Catholic Church and Italian religious processions in Washington, D.C. as well as socializing with other members of Alexandria's Italian American community. Attiliis, referred to as "Uncle Frankie," recounts the start of his career and building his own house in Fort Washington, Maryland. A frequent party

host, he mentions inviting Watergate figure and talk-show host G. Gordon Liddy, a former neighbor, to social events at his house. Attiliis also recollects attending Washington Redskins' (Commanders') football games, traveling to Glen Echo Park, and enjoying the Alexandria eateries Al's Steak House, Little Tavern, and his brother's Mighty Midget.

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General	Catholic Church-United States-Virginia; Gran Sasso d'Italia (Italy); Italy-Emigration and immigration; Italian Americans-Business; Italian Americans-Cultural assimilation-Virginia-Alexandria; Italian Americans-Families; Italian Americans-Food-United States; Italian Americans-History; Italian Americans-Language; Italian Americans-Religion; Italian Americans-Social life and customs-20th century; Italian Americans-Virginia-Alexandria-History; Italian Americans-Washington (D.C.)-Social life and customs; Neighborhoods-Virginia-Alexandria; Public schools-Virginia-Alexandria; Restaurants-Virginia-Alexandria; Washington Redskins (Football team)-Anecdotes
People	Attiliis, Addolorato; Attiliis, Alfred; Attiliis, Francesco; Attiliis, Gina; Attiliis, Gene; Attiliis, Johnny; Attiliis, Lena; Attiliis, Mary; Attiliis, Mary Louise; Attiliis, Ruthie; Attiliis, Shan; Attiliis, Shelly; Attiliis, Tony; Colangelo; Caliandro; Calisanto; Cones, Jerry; Coppa; Del Negro, Mike; Edwards, Warren; Gallagher, Father; Gibson, Ray; Giuseppe; Knight; Liddy, Gordon; Marcotte, Elizabeth; Maygray, Jimmy; Scaloni; Sciannella, Nicola; Sciannella, Palmarosa; Severson, Johnny; Severson, Sonny
Places	AC&R; Alexandria, Virginia; Al's Steak House; Angelo's; Calvert County, Maryland; Clark Barrett; Del Ray; Demaine Funeral Home, DeWitt Avenue; District of Columbia; East Randolph Avenue, Fort Washington, Maryland; Gadsby's Tavern; George Washington High School; Glen Echo Park; Gran Sasso d'Italia; Hot Shoppe; Hume Avenue; Landover Mall; Little Tavern; Mighty Midget; Mount Vernon Elementary School, Prince Frederick, Maryland; Russell Road; Saint Rita Catholic Church, San Pietro della Ienca; Thomas Jefferson Middle School; Windsor Avenue

Frank Attiliis [00:00:08] My name is Frank A. Attiliis and the date is April the 9th, 2026 and location is 115 Allnut Court, apartment 502 in Calvert County [Maryland].

Krystyn Moon [00:00:26] And I'm Krystyn Moon, Professor of History and American Studies at the University of Mary Washington.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:00:33] And my name is Francesco De Salvatore. Today is April 9, 2026, and we're at Uncle Frankie's home at 115 Allnut Court in Prince Frederick, Maryland. OK. Well, it's good to be with you, Mr. Frankie. Uncle Frankie. Why am I calling you Mr. Frankie?

So, I want to start with this image here. I'm showing Uncle Frankie an image of a home. Can you describe —

Frank Attiliis [00:01:06] That's the home I was raised in.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:01:06] — what we're looking at?

Frank Attiliis [00:01:07] Yeah, that's the house.

Krystyn Moon [00:01:10] Whose house?

Frank Attiliis [00:01:11] That's Frank A. Attiliis's house, and that's Francesco's [Francesco Attiliis] house too, and Addolorato's [Addolorato Attiliis] house. That's where we were born and raised.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:01:21] Yeah, when you look at that image, what's coming to mind for you?

Frank Attiliis [00:01:26] Just where I was born and raised. Where we played the back-yard basketball. We set up a basketball court here and played there every day. Till 2, 3, 4 o'clock in the morning.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:01:39] Who would you play with?

Frank Attiliis [00:01:41] All my friends, who'd come over, turned the lights on. My mother would holler out, "When are you going to bed?" I said, "Don't worry about it." She never said too much. She was good. I did what I wanted. I was a spoiled brat.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:02:01] Who were your friends? What were their names?

Frank Attiliis [00:02:02] Warren Edwards, Jerry Cones — Warren Edwards was my main buddy — Jimmy Maygray. Mike Del Negro. That was most of them. I played in the back yard.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:02:22] What are some other memories that you have with them?

Frank Attiliis [00:02:26] With my friends, just playing sports. That's all we did.

Krystyn Moon [00:02:33] What other sports did you play besides basketball?

Frank Attiliis [00:02:40] Football, baseball. I loved them all.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:02:43] Can you describe some of your friends more? Like, what would you guys do to get — I mean, you played sports, but, like, what —

Frank Attiliis [00:02:50] I played sports. That's mostly what we did. That's all we did. I mean, I know y'all do a lot today, but we didn't. We played sports. That's it. From morning to night. My mother started hollering [that] I'm gonna have to come in.

Krystyn Moon [00:03:03] *[laughing]*

Francesco De Salvatore [00:03:04] Did they live around you? Where did —

Frank Attiliis [00:03:06] Yeah, they lived further. Most of them lived a couple blocks away. And a couple of them lived a little further, but they was all good guys. All of them straight. None of them were crooks, and we didn't need no drugs.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:03:21] Yeah, yeah. How did you meet them?

Frank Attiliis [00:03:24] Damn, I don't know that part. At the playground, probably.

Krystyn Moon [00:03:29] Did you go to school together?

Frank Attiliis [00:03:36] No, we didn't. They was a little more spread out than that. When I went to private school, maybe Warren went to school with me. High school, yeah. Most of them was in high school. Jimmy and Jerry.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:03:59] I was curious to kinda go back to that image. So, you remember playing outside, are there other memories you have of the outside of the house?

Frank Attiliis [00:04:10] Yeah, my father's garden.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:04:12] Oh, OK. Yeah. Do you want to say more about that?

Frank Attiliis [00:04:17] I'll tell you a story. There's a rail across this thing so you didn't fall off the porch. That's what we, when they tore Saint Rita's [Saint Rita Catholic Church] down, we went and got the backboard. We drug it home and we attached it to this rail on the porch, so we had a regular basketball court.

Krystyn Moon [00:04:35] So, you got it from Saint Rita's?

Frank Attiliis [00:04:37] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:04:38] The original church?

Frank Attiliis [00:04:40] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:04:42] Can you talk a little more about what your dad grew in the garden?

Frank Attiliis [00:04:46] Oh, green peppers, mostly tomatoes, string beans, cucumbers. That's all I can remember that I would eat.

Marie Bennett [00:05:01] What about the figs?

Frank Attiliis [00:05:02] Oh, and the fig trees! He had three fig trees on the side of the house. He had black figs and green ones. That was a lot of them figs, hmm.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:05:13] Did he —

Marie Bennett [00:05:14] Where did they come from?

Frank Attiliis [00:05:15] The tree!

Francesco De Salvatore [00:05:16] [*laughing*]

Marie Bennett [00:05:17] Well, I know, but where did the tree come from?

Frank Attiliis [00:05:20] The trees?

Marie Bennett [00:05:21] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:05:22] I don't know where they came from. They was there when I was born, I think.

Marie Bennett [00:05:27] I'm sure they were. I was told that he brought them from Italy.

Frank Attiliis [00:05:32] I don't know. I don't know, Marie. (inaudible) —

Marie Bennett [00:05:35] They boxed them up over the winters, and I know Al saved a couple of them to plant in the yard when he owned the house.

Frank Attiliis [00:05:47] I don't remember that.

Marie Bennett [00:05:48] To put them around the neighborhood.

Frank Attiliis [00:05:50] I don't remember that.

Marie Bennett [00:05:51] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:05:51] I don't remember that.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:05:52] Could you maybe describe what the garden looked like? If you're looking at it —

Frank Attiliis [00:05:52] It was long.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:06:00] If you're looking at it, like what —? Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:06:01] Maybe off the porch.

Frank Attiliis [00:06:03] It was long. It was probably, uh, 20 yards long and about five yards wide.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:06:10] Oh, OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:06:11] He had three gardens like that.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:06:12] Wow, OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:06:14] One there, one over where little Alfie was born. It was the same thing. And then he had another property up on [East] Randolph Avenue. He had a couple of goats up there.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:06:25] OK, wow. How did he plant the vegetables?

Frank Attiliis [00:06:33] How did he plant them?

Francesco De Salvatore [00:06:33] Yeah, like, did he have a way of doing them? (inaudible)

Frank Attiliis [00:06:36] He did everything. He did everything.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:06:37] (inaudible) Yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:06:38] By hand! He didn't have no rotator [rototiller].

Francesco De Salvatore [00:06:41] No, rotator. OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:06:42] And he kept three gardens like that. And he worked all day. He never missed a day's work except for a funeral.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:06:48] Wow, wow.

Frank Attiliis [00:06:49] He never missed work. He's like his son.

Marie Bennett [00:06:52] Did grandma help with the gardens?

Frank Attiliis [00:06:56] No, she didn't do anything in the garden. She just hung up the clothes in the yard.

Marie Bennett [00:07:01] OK.

Krystyn Moon [00:07:01] Where was the line where she hung up the clothes?

Frank Attiliis [00:07:06] In the backyard. Where we played basketball.

Krystyn Moon [00:07:08] (inaudible) On the side.

Frank Attiliis [00:07:09] Yeah. Right here.

Krystyn Moon [00:07:13] OK. So, on the side.

Frank Attiliis [00:07:14] Yeah, and here's the garden.

Marie Bennett [00:07:17] Right near where the wringer-washer was and the bathtub?

Frank Attiliis [00:07:20] That was in the basement.

Marie Bennett [00:07:23] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:07:24] An old bathtub like this with a washer. And I think they had a washing machine.

Marie Bennett [00:07:31] They had a wringer-washer.

Frank Attiliis [00:07:32] Yeah, they had one of those kinds.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:07:35] A wringer-washer. Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:07:37] So, what would your mom and dad do with all those vegetables in the garden?

Frank Attiliis [00:07:41] Canned a lot of them, gave a lot away, we ate a lot. [*chuckling*] We ate pretty healthy.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:07:47] Wait, so what would you can? What do you remember?

Frank Attiliis [00:07:51] Mostly tomatoes and green peppers. And they had hot peppers so hot it'd burn a hole in the table. God, they were hot! And the smaller they were, the hotter they were. Whooshoo! Man!

Francesco De Salvatore [00:08:04] Do you remember helping them with the canning?

Frank Attiliis [00:08:08] I just watched.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:08:10] You just watched? How would they do it? Like, how would they can the vegetables? Do you remember?

Frank Attiliis [00:08:15] Put them in jars, put the top on, heat them up in the water or something. I remember the wine there! I'll tell you about that.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:08:22] Yeah, yeah! Let's hear about (inaudible) wine!

Krystyn Moon [00:08:23] Alright, let's talk wine!

Frank Attiliis [00:08:27] OK, they bring the wine through the basement windows. They'd get like a hundred cases between my father and the guy next door was Italian, the Coppas.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:08:35] Coppas, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:08:36] They passed the wine through the windows. They washed the hell out of the barrels.

Krystyn Moon [00:08:42] Right.

Frank Attiliis [00:08:44] They put Lysol, everything in it. They washed them barrels so because if they didn't wash the barrels, the wine would turn to vinegar.

Krystyn Moon [00:08:49] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:08:50] So, they really washed them barrels, and that would take a couple days. And then they would take the wine in the basement, and they had a thing that looked like that, with a handle on it.

Krystyn Moon [00:08:59] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:09:00] You pour the grapes into that, turn the handle, grind the grapes, go to [a] 55-gallon drum.

Krystyn Moon [00:09:05] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:09:06] They put no water, nothing in it. No kind of sugar or nothing. And then that would set two or three days, then they put it in a crusher. That thing in the basement. You've seen that, you said.

Krystyn Moon [00:09:16] Yeah! In the basement.

Frank Attiliis [00:09:17] Yeah, like that [*gesturing*].

Krystyn Moon [00:09:19] Right.

Frank Attiliis [00:09:21] You turn that thing, and you have a round thing like that with holes in it like that.

Krystyn Moon [00:09:25] Right. And, so, juice comes out.

Frank Attiliis [00:09:28] Out of it. Right.

Krystyn Moon [00:09:29] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:09:30] And then you seen the thing [that it] come out into.

Krystyn Moon [00:09:31] Yes!

Frank Attiliis [00:09:33] Well, that thing there, they crank that thing down there. It would crush the grapes down. Grapes would start up here. When they finished, it would be about like that.

Krystyn Moon [00:09:39] Right, so it's, like, two feet to, like, three inches.

Frank Attiliis [00:09:43] Two feet, like, six or eight inches.

Krystyn Moon [00:09:45] Yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:09:46] And then sometimes they would take that and they would put water with that and that'd be water wine.

Krystyn Moon [00:09:50] Right.

Frank Attiliis [00:09:51] That'd be for children, if they'd like it, but I didn't like it. I like it when they'd come out of that little spout with grape juice. That was good. And then they'd put it in a barrel, and it would foam around, and it would spew up over. I guess the bad stuff would go to the top.

Krystyn Moon [00:10:06] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:10:07] They'd knock it off every day. And they would put it in the big barrel.

Krystyn Moon [00:10:11] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:10:12] It'd sit there for a few days.

Krystyn Moon [00:10:16] Uncle Frankie, can you talk about how they boiled the wine for special guests? How do they do that?

Frank Attiliis [00:10:21] They just put it in a big pan and they would boil it for I don't know how long. A couple hours, maybe. And that was strong wine for priests and good friends.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:10:33] Do you know, like, how your dad learned about how to make wine?

Frank Attiliis [00:10:38] Oh, no. I wasn't there then.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:10:39] And (inaudible) vegetables?

Frank Attiliis [00:10:40] *[chuckling]* I wasn't there then! No, he learned it, I guess, in Italy.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:10:45] Italy, yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:10:46] He built that house, so I guess he knew how to make the wine.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:10:50] Yeah. Do you think he learned it from your grandparents or did you have any stories of —

Frank Attiliis [00:10:54] I had one story about one grandfather. He was so nice it was unbelievable. With a grandmother. I had another grandfather who was my father's father. He was mean as hell. He used to go around, and he was a humpback. You know, he always bent over, and he always carried a basket around, about that big. I don't know what he put in it. The kids [were] all scared of him. He'd walk up and down the neighborhood, he'd go up to take care of the goats and stuff, but he was mean. He carried a cane. The kids didn't like him at all, and I didn't like him, either. But he ate with us every night and stuff like that.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:11:28] What was his full name?

Frank Attiliis [00:11:30] Uh —

Francesco De Salvatore [00:11:32] Do you remember? It's OK if you don't.

Frank Attiliis [00:11:33] Right.

Marie Bennett [00:11:34] It was Mariano?

Frank Attiliis [00:11:36] Yeah, Marino. Marino, right? Marino. My other grandfather was Nicol [Nicola Scanielli]. He was so nice, it was unbelievable. His wife [Palmarosa Scanielli] was nice.

Marie Bennett [00:11:46] (inaudible)

Francesco De Salvatore [00:11:47] Your mom's (inaudible) dad.

Marie Bennett [00:11:49] (inaudible)

Frank Attiliis [00:11:52] My mother's mother and father were very nice.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:11:54] Your mother's dad, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:11:55] My father's father — I never knew my father's — The woman, you know, his wife. But she couldn't have been as mean as him.

Marie Bennett [00:12:04] This is who?

Frank Attiliis [00:12:05] I don't know if he was ever married. Did you remember him, Marie?

Marie Bennett [00:12:08] Who is that?

Frank Attiliis [00:12:09] Marino.

Marie Bennett [00:12:11] I remember his funeral.

Frank Attiliis [00:12:14] You remember, he's a mean man?

Marie Bennett [00:12:17] I don't know. I just remember I ate too much candy at the funeral and I threw up on somebody's shoes in the kitchen.

Frank Attiliis [00:12:23] Oh-oh-oh!

Krysten Moon [00:12:24] [*laughing*]

Marie Bennett [00:12:25] But I tried to —

Frank Attiliis [00:12:26] That's a good memory.

Marie Bennett [00:12:27] (inaudible)

[00:12:28] *[Background noise from ringing phone]*

Marie Bennett [00:12:34] Palmarosa was your grandmother. Right?

Frank Attiliis [00:12:43] Yes, uh, I can't even think of her name, but she was nice, too. She died when I was pretty young. But my other grandfather, he lived [to be] pretty old.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:12:51] Well, let's start with your dad's father. So, he would go around with a basket, right?

Frank Attiliis [00:12:59] No, that was my grandfather.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:13:01] Your grandfather.

Frank Attiliis [00:13:01] That was my father's father.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:13:02] Your father's father, yeah, yeah. What would he do with the basket? What was he doing?

Frank Attiliis [00:13:07] He collected stuff. I don't know what the hell he collected. We couldn't look in the basket. He might hit you with that cane. Everybody was scared of him, I'm telling you. He walked down the street, kids going to the other side.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:13:16] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:13:18] Do you know when he came to the United States?

Frank Attiliis[00:13:21] [*lowering voice*] No, but Marie probably does.

Krystyn Moon [00:13:25] [*chuckling*]

Francesco De Salvatore [00:13:25] Yeah, yeah.

Marie Bennett [00:13:26] I do have it in the notes somewhere.

Krystyn Moon [00:13:28] OK.

Marie Bennett [00:13:31] Of course, he came after Frankie's father.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:13:34] Yeah.

Marie Bennett [00:13:35] But I'm not very exactly sure when.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:13:39] OK. So, are there any other memories with him, around the holidays or special family gatherings?

Frank Attiliis [00:13:48] No, we just ate dinner every night together at a table like this long. They went and got it in Philadelphia, the table. Had it special made, so you could eat polenta off of it. You know what that is?

Francesco De Salvatore [00:13:58] No, no.

Frank Attiliis 00:13:58] You know what polenta is?

Krystyn Moon [00:14:00] I do know polenta, yes.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:14:00] Oh, oh, polenta! Sorry.

Frank Attiliis [00:14:02] I remember my mother used to say that [if you] have that stuff pop on you, whooh! I used to love that, God! She'd pull it on the table.

Krystyn Moon [00:14:09] So, she made polenta for you?

Frank Attiliis [00:14:11] Oh, yeah. For the whole family. Then they'd pick the table up and run down that end. Then they'd, you know, let it run. They'd pour that sauce, the meatballs and sauce on there. And then after it cooled off, you could play little games with it. You know, I could come over to meet you or go this way. God, I loved that stuff.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:14:29] Yeah.

Marie Bennett [00:14:29] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:14:30] Did she make it in the winter?

Frank Attiliis [00:14:32] Oh, yeah, she made it winter, summer. We didn't eat it too often, but I loved it.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:14:39] So, it sounds like you maybe have more memories with your grandparents on your mom's side, right?

Frank Attiliis [00:14:47] Oh, yeah!

Francesco De Salvatore [00:14:47] Yeah, what are some memories that you have with them?

Frank Attiliis [00:14:51] Just my grandfather and grandmother were very nice, but she died when I was kind of little, too. But he lived for a long time. He was just a nice person. He'd go help my dad work some time and do extra jobs for a dollar a day, and then she would take him and they'd make $2 a day.

Krystyn Moon [00:15:09] Did your grandparents live with you?

Frank Attiliis [00:15:13] Yeah, we had, like, 11 people for dinner every day.

Krystyn Moon [00:15:16] Eleven people at dinner.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:15:19] Yep.

Frank Attiliis [00:15:19] Always had plenty of food. Had to get all the tomatoes. And my mother could cook good.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:15:26] Yeah, let's talk a little bit more about your parents. Can you tell me more about you mom?

Frank Attiliis [00:15:31] That's all she did was work. She'd get up in the morning, she'd do clothes and start cooking. I used to remember when she's making raviolis, she'd start before I went to school. When I come home, I'd do the four edges with a fork.

Marie Bennett [00:15:47] [*laughing*]

Frank Attiliis [00:15:31] Then punch a few holes in the top, then she'd still be cooking. I mean, I couldn't. I mean, washing clothes on that line. Be from here to (inaudible)!

Krystyn Moon [00:15:57] Yes!

Francesco De Salvatore [00:15:57] Yeah!

Frank Attiliis [00:15:58] That's a hard job.

Krystyn Moon [00:15:59] Yes!

Francesco De Salvatore [00:15:59] Yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:16:00] Standing in the basement had to — She'd never — I don't think she had a real washer. She's (inaudible).

Marie Bennett [00:16:06] She just had the wringer.

Frank Attiliis [00:16:06] She had the wringer to wring her clothes out. I remember that. I remember that wringer in the bathtub.

Marie Bennett [00:16:13] Yeah, the bathtub was there for the grapes, right?

Frank Attiliis [00:16:16] No, no, no.

Marie Bennett [00:16:17] No? Oh, OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:16:19] They just used that, she used that just to wash clothes.

Marie Bennett [00:16:23] OK. I thought it was used for the grapes.

Frank Attiliis [00:16:25] But they used to get 50, 60 cases of grapes every year.

Marie Bennett [00:16:29] Yeah. Where'd they get them from?

Frank Attiliis [00:16:32] He was a good grape runner. They spent more time tasting that wine.

Marie Bennett[00:16:39] (inaudible)

Krystyn Moon [00:16:43] Do you know who grew the grapes?

Frank Attiliis [00:16:44] No, they got them at the market in D.C. somewhere. I'm not sure where at.

Krystyn Moon [00:16:47] OK. That's cool, though.

Frank Attiliis [00:16:49] They'd get both of them, both of them would get them at the same time. They'd get a better price or something. They'd pass through the windows on that side and pass 50 on this side.

Marie Bennett [00:16:57] [*laughing*]

Francesco De Salvatore [00:16:59] So, you mentioned your mom made polenta with sauce and meat and also pasta. What else did your mom make?

Frank Attiliis [00:17:10] They called them "gnocchi."

Francesco De Salvatore [00:17:14] Gnocchi, yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:17:15] I love those, too.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:17:16] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:17:17] And then, what else did she make?

Francesco De Salvatore [00:17:19] She would make it from —

Frank Attiliis [00:17:20] Oh, yeah, she'd be rolling them things out on the table. [The] table was bigger than this. Here, like this. She'd roll them things there for gnocchi. She'd draw that long strings.

Krystyn Moon [00:17:32] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:17:32] You know that?

Krystyn Moon [00:17:34] They cut it, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:17:36] Yeah, yeah. I love those things! I still get them. I got some in the freezer.

Marie Bennett [00:17:41] [*laughing*]

Krystyn Moon [00:17:41] Do you like it with tomato sauce?

Frank Attiliis [00:17:43] Oh, yeah, just regular spaghetti sauce.

Krystyn Moon [00:17:45] Yes.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:17:47] Hey, I'm putting out a photo of your parents.

Frank Attiliis [00:17:49] Yep, that's them!

Francesco De Salvatore [00:17:50] I forgot to put that out. That's looking at a photo a little later in their life.

Frank Attiliis [00:17:53] They were pretty nice people.

Krystyn Moon [00:17:56] Yeah! Oh, can you talk about the background? That looks like the inside of the house, right?

Frank Attiliis [00:18:01] You know, I think it is, but I don't know which room it is.

Krystyn Moon [00:18:05] Yeah, what is —

Marie Bennett [00:18:06] It's the dining room.

Krystyn Moon [00:18:07] What did your mom —

Frank Attiliis [00:18:08] I don't remember this.

Marie Bennett [00:18:12] If it's your (inaudible), you're sitting on a chair.

Krystyn Moon [00:18:13] It is.

Marie Bennett [00:18:13] It's in the front living room — I'm sorry, I misspoke — where that house had been decorated in the artisan style from Italy.

Krystyn Moon [00:18:27] Uncle Frankie, can you describe also what the inside of the house looked like?

Frank Attiliis [00:18:33] Well, the hallway, when you come in the front door, it was marble, about four to five foot high. And the top of it was painted like blocks, like that.

Krystyn Moon [00:18:45] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:18:48] And it had, like, I don't remember what you call it.

Krystyn Moon [00:18:52] Sort of looked like bricks?

Marie Bennett [00:18:53] We called it "rag lacquer."

Frank Attiliis [00:18:56] Right, big bricks. (inaudible) the top off. They used to do painting with rags.

Krystyn Moon [00:19:03] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:19:04] And that's what the living room was.

Krystyn Moon [00:19:06] So, it gave it a texture?

Frank Attiliis [00:19:08] It wasn't rough.

Krystyn Moon [00:19:10] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:19:11] It was like blocks like that.

Krystyn Moon [00:19:14] Right.

Frank Attiliis [00:19:14] Just like a regular block.

Krystyn Moon [00:19:015] So, blocks in a row.

Frank Attiliis [00:19:16] Yeah. And then it would split it in next up — You know, just like bricks.

Krystyn Moon [00:19:19] Right. OK.

Marie Bennett [00:19:25] That was in the hallway

Frank Attiliis [00:19:27] Yeah, and the living room, too, before they painted it. Living room had, like — Well, anyway, rags.

Krystyn Moon [00:19:37] So, they painted it with rags?

Frank Attiliis [00:19:39] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:19:40] In sort of big squares?

Frank Attiliis [00:19:41] Mm-hmm.

Marie Bennett [00:19:42] (inaudible)

Frank Attiliis [00:19:43] And we had little things like this, too. Just like eggs around four borders.

Marie Bennett [00:19:48] Do you remember the (inaudible)?

Frank Attiliis [00:19:49] I remember that they would paint it with rags. It was like — It wasn't —

Francesco De Salvatore [00:19:54] Was it like a sponge? Kind of, like, spongy?

Krystyn Moon [00:19:55] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:19:57] Almost like — not textured, like rough.

Frank Attiliis [00:20:00] No, it wasn't rough at all.

Krystyn Moon [[00:20:01] But it's not, like — It doesn't look like this.

Frank Attiliis [00:20:04] No.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:20:04] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:20:04] So —

Francesco De Salvatore [00:20:05] It's like a white wall, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:20:06] And, so, you could see, like, different colors coming through. It's not flat.

Frank Attiliis [00:20:11] (inaudible)

Francesco De Salvatore [00:20:12] Yup.

Frank Attiliis [00:20:13] It looked like eggs for a border.

Krystyn Moon [00:20:15] Yes.

Frank Attiliis [00:20:16] And inside the eggs they would have, like — And it's hard to describe that.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:20:20] Yeah, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:20:22] Very unique.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:20:23] Yeah, it's helpful.

Frank Attiliis [00:20:24] That was unique.

Marie Bennett [00:20:25] I think, Frankie, it's a treatment that you see in churches in Italy.

Frank Attiliis [00:20:30] Is that what that was like?

Marie Bennett [00:20:32] I think so. I think that the people that did that for your father traded that for something else that he did for them.

Frank Attiliis [00:20:42] Probably traded it for wine.

Marie Bennett [00:20:44] Or wine.

Krystyn Moon 00:20:45] (inaudible) [*laughing]*

Frank Attiliis [00:20:46] Those guys were artists in those days.

Marie Bennett [00:20:48] Absolutely.

Frank Attiliis [00:20:49] It wasn't like painters today.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:20:51] Yeah.

Marie Bennett [00:20:54] (inaudible) amazing.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:20:54] So, walk us through. So, once I enter your home, what do I first see?

Frank Attiliis [00:20:59] A long hallway.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:21:00] A long hallway. Right, OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:21:01] And you had three rooms on the left: living room, dining room, kitchen. Big kitchen. On this side, you'd have three rooms. You could put them in anything you wanted.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:21:10] So, on the left, there were three rooms?

Frank Attiliis [00:21:12] Yeah, and on the right was three rooms.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:21:14] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:21:15] It was kind of a simple house, really.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:21:16] But on the right was the living room.

Frank Attiliis [00:21:19] That's on the left.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:21:20] To the left.

Frank Attiliis [00:21:21] Living room, dining room, kitchen. On the right, they had a room; room in the kitchen.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:21:27] Room in the kitchen.

Frank Attiliis [00:21:28] They always put tons of kitchens in. I guess for rental purposes.

Krystyn Moon [00:21:31] Oh.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:21:31] Oh, OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:21:32] They rented a lot of rooms out for income.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:21:35] Right. Oh, OK. Great.

Frank Attiliis [00:21:37] Then they rented the basement out for income. They had a kitchen on this side and a big room next to the wine cellar. And over here, they had two big rooms, a kitchen, a bathroom, and a living room, bedroom. They rented most of that out a lot of times.

Marie Bennett [00:21:54] In the basement.

Frank Attiliis [00:21:55] And then they had an upstairs to the house. Had four big bedrooms. That's where we all stayed.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:22:01] What was your favorite place in the house?

Frank Attiliis [00:22:04] Kitchen, I guess.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:22:06] Yeah, oh? How come? Yeah, which one? (inaudible)

Frank Attiliis [00:22:08] You run into the regular kitchen upstairs on the left.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:22:13] Ah, ha. Ah, ha.

Krystyn Moon [00:22:13] Did you like to watch your mom cook?

Frank Attiliis [00:22:16] No, but I'd sample everything all the time.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:22:18] You like to eat. You like to eat.

Frank Attiliis [00:22:20] I was a little bambino then. I was the baby of the family. I was a spoiled brat.

Marie Bennett [00:22:25] Did she like her music?

Frank Attiliis [00:22:28] Yeah, Mrs. Coppa next door. Yeah. And the other side was the store she rented out.

Marie Bennett [00:22:34] Right, but I thought grandma played music all the time.

Frank Attiliis [00:22:40] [*whispering*] (inaudible)

Krystyn Moon [00:22:41] Music. Your mom —

Frank Attiliis [00:22:42] Oh, yeah, she had a little record player. I don't know, [it was] probably 100 years old when she got it. She had about 10 records with Catholic religious songs.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:22:50] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:22:51] Used to hear them every day, but I liked them, so — She only had 10 songs. She never had —

Francesco De Salvatore [00:22:57] What were the songs?

Frank Attiliis [00:22:59] All the religious songs.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:23:00] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:23:01] Just a lot of that.

Krystyn Moon [00:23:03] Were they in Italian?

Frank Attiliis [00:23:10] I have to say yes. I can't remember that.

Marie Bennett [00:23:15] I think that's right. The one I found for you was.

Frank Attiliis [00:23:19] But, man, she's playing songs every day. Every night, every night.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:23:24] So, can you describe the kitchen for us? What did it look like, do you remember?

Frank Attiliis [00:23:31] Well, you walk in from the hallway or you walk in from that other door.

Krystyn Moon [00:23:35] From the door in the back.

Frank Attiliis [00:23:37] What I have, actually — Here's the kitchen.

Krystyn Moon [00:23:40] Right.

Frank Attiliis [00:23:41] You walk this. Here's the end of the hallway.

Krystyn Moon [00:23:44] Right.

Frank Attiliis [00:23:44] This takes you upstairs and this takes you outside.

Krystyn Moon [[00:23:46] Right, right.

Frank Attiliis [00:23:48] You get that?

Francesco De Salvatore [00:23:49] Yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:23:51] And there, you go —

Krystyn Moon [00:23:52] So, where is the stove?

Frank Attiliis [00:23:54] Stove was over here.

Krystyn Moon [00:23:55] OK, so, [the] stove: If you're in the hallway, it's to the right.

Frank Attiliis [00:23:59] This is the kitchen. Stove was here, sink was here, and the refrigerator was here that goes to the outside. They had an icebox.

Krystyn Moon [00:24:07] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:24:08] You open that. The ice man would bring ice. And then [in] the winter, they keep this lot of food in there.

Krystyn Moon [00:24:14] OK. So, the sink is right next to the stove.

Frank Attiliis [00:24:17] Right.

Krystyn Moon [00:24:20] And then, this is the back (inaudible)?

Frank Attiliis [00:24:20] The sink was almost the widest table.

Krystyn Moon [00:24:22] Is this the back of the house, then?

Frank Attiliis [00:24:23] Back of the house to you.

Krystyn Moon [00:24:24] Oh, the back of the house is here.

Frank Attiliis [00:24:26] Yeah, this goes outside.

Krystyn Moon [00:24:27] OK, so, the stove and sink are on the back of the house.

Frank Attiliis [00:24:30] Right.

Krystyn Moon [00:24:30] And then, the icebox —

Frank Attiliis [00:24:32] The icebox went out this window here.

Krystyn Moon [00:24:34] Right, so along the side of the house, is this where basketball — You were playing basketball right outside?

Frank Attiliis [00:24:41] Yeah, that's right over here.

Krystyn Moon [00:24:43] Oh, that's on the other side.

Frank Attiliis [00:24:44] No, that's in the back of the kitchen.

Krystyn Moon [00:24:46] That's in the back. OK.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:24:46] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:24:49] Did your mom have a big table in the middle that she worked on?

Frank Attiliis [00:24:51] Oh, yeah, she had a table that was bigger than this.

Krystyn Moon [00:24:53] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:24:54] They went to Philadelphia and bought it. So, it didn't have no cracks in it. So, when they pulled the polenta down it, it'd be smooth.

Krystyn Moon [00:25:02] So, the polenta wouldn't get in the cracks.

Frank Attiliis [00:25:03] Right. Get that sauce out of them cracks.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:25:06] Wow. They really thought about this.

Frank Attiliis [00:25:09] I didn't get rid of it.

Krystyn Moon [00:25:10] [*laughing*] [inaudible] I get it.

Frank Attiliis [00:25:11] I remember they went to Philadelphia to get that table.

Marie Bennett [00:25:15] I'm not sure you understood exactly right. Frankie, the icebox was right there at the door. When you walked in, it was on the right. Then there was a door to the outside.

The sink. I mean the stove, the sink. And then you came to the long outside wall that had windows. And there was a long radiator there that had a window seat, which provided the seating for the table at that end.

Frank Attiliis [00:25:43] Yeah, that was a radiator right here, and it had a board across. That's where we all sat. Or two people sat here.

Marie Bennett [00:25:50] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:25:50] And here was a window outside the outside window. And then the rest of them sat around the table.

Krystyn Moon [00:25:55] OK, in chairs.

Frank Attiliis [00:25:57] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:25:57] OK.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:25:59] Can you describe the room that you slept in? What do you remember about that one?

Frank Attiliis [00:26:05] I slept in all of them. [*laughing*] I don't know why we changed around.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:26:09] You moved around.

Frank Attiliis [00:26:10] I slept in all four of them up there.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:26:12] Oh, really? OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:26:13] Yes.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:26:14] Yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:26:15] They were all kind of big and square with nothing else but a bed and a chest, I guess.

Krystyn Moon [00:26:19] Did you share a room with your siblings, your brothers and sisters?

Frank Attiliis [00:26:22] Yeah, [with] my grandfather for a long time, and then I slept most of it by myself.

Marie Bennett [00:26:26] The mean one [*chuckling*]?

Frank Attiliis 00:26:28] Nicol, not the mean one.

Marie Bennett [00:26:30] Oh, OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:26:31] Oooh!

Krystyn Moon [00:26:34] Do you remember your mom's parents' last name? Your grandparents, the nice ones?

Frank Attiliis [00:26:42] [*whispering*] (inaudible)

Marie Bennett [00:26:44] Scianella, probably.

Frank Attiliis [00:26:46] Was it Scianella?

Krystyn Moon [00:26:47] Scianella?

Marie Bennett [00:26:48] Yeah, mm-hmm. The nice grandparents were Nicol.

Frank Attiliis [00:26:55] That's his first name.

Marie Bennett [00:26:58] His first name was Nicol.

Frank Attiliis [00:26:58]] Yeah.

Marie Bennett [00:26:59] Nicco. And Palmarosa was his wife. And they had six kids.
I don't know when they moved out of the house, but they did live in that house with your parents as the house was being built for a few years after.

Frank Attiliis [00:27:21] I didn't know that part.

Marie Bennett [00:27:24] Yup.

Krystyn Moon [00:27:26] Are they all from the same village?

Frank Attiliis [00:27:30] I don't know that part, either.

Marie Bennett [00:27:34](inaudible) He was.

Frank Attiliis [00:27:36] I would think so. I would think so.

Krystyn Moon [00:27:39] So, where did your mom and dad immigrate from in Italy, then?

Frank Attiliis [00:27:43] From Gran Sasso Mountain [Gran Sasso d'Italia massif].

Krystyn Moon [00:27:45] Gran Sasso Mountain. Have you visited?

Frank Attiliis [00:27:49] Did I? No, but I think Lizzie [Attiliis' sister, Elizabeth Marcotte] did.

Krystyn Moon [00:27:51] Lizzie visited?

Frank Attiliis [00:27:52] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:27:53] My father come over here, then he went back and got my mother, then he went back and got my grandfather. Then, I think my other grandfather came by hisself.

Krystyn Moon [00:28:03] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:28:04] I think it took a lot of days to get over here.

Krystyn Moon [00:28:06] Yeah!

Marie Bennett: [00:28:07] On a boat.

Frank Attiliis [00:28:08] Yeah, but it'd be slow in them days.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:28:10] Are there any family stories that people shared about Italy that you heard about while you were growing up?

Frank Attiliis [00:28:18] Well, my mother always told us she was going to go back.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:28:22] Your mom wanted to go back?

Frank Attiliis [00:28:24] Yeah, she always threatened that. They went back one time. I don't know if they liked it or not. They come back over here to live.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:28:30] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Marie Bennett [00:28:33] That's when they discovered that the church was being rebuilt in San Pietro, up in Abruzzo [region], and they donated the bell that has the family name on it. Their two villages were just a couple of kilometers apart up there in those mountains. I can give you the names of them. I'm afraid to say them because I'll probably get some other San Pietro [della Ienca] was my grandfather's village. And that's where they — family church was, basically. But the one thing that my grandmother — I don't know how much Frankie — How much did you engage on the issue of St. Gabriel?

Frank Attiliis [00:29:17] Oh, they donated — I don't know what you call it.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:29:21] A bell?

Frank Attiliis [00:29:22] No. Flags that go around. Big things, I mean, bigger than this room. They'd walk around the corner with them. They donated a couple of those flags. And they donated a lot of stuff, but I don't know what else.

Krystyn Moon [00:29:37] So, this was for a church in Italy that they donated flags?

Frank Attiliis [00:29:41] No, no, that's a church, the Italian church in D.C.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:29:42] In D.C.

Krystyn Moon [00:29:42] Oh, yeah! Can you talk a little bit more about the festival you would go participate in?

Frank Attiliis [00:29:49] It was St. Gabriel and there was another saint, too. I can't think of that. And all the people would gather around and then they would come down the steps of the church and go around. First of all, it was one, two, eight blocks. And then they cut it back to six blocks. Then they cut back to four blocks, and now I doubt whether they have it or not.

Krystyn Moon [00:30:10] And did they carry a madonna while they processed or was there food?

Frank Attiliis [00:30:15] Food?

Krystyn Moon [00:30:16] Did you eat?

Frank Attiliis [00:30:17] When you got back. They had it downstairs. They just built the church. It hadn't been built too long. I mean, they had a hall built. The church did. The Italian church had a hall built, and they had a lotta functions down there, and that's where they'd all gather around to eat and drink beer and wine. And out back of that they had a little yard. It wasn't much bigger than this. They have something every year. And you just go out, and they have things you can gamble on, and they have little things you could eat on. You could buy pizza there. Stuff like that.

Marie Bennett [00:30:55] (inaudible) married there?

Krystyn Moon [00:30:59] We couldn't hear.

Marie Bennett [00:30:59] Frankie?

Krystyn Moon [00:31:01]Hold on, we couldn't hear your question.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:31:02] Yeah, we can't hear.

Marie Bennett [00:31:03] Was Gina [Gina Attiliis, Attiliis' daughter] married there?

Frank Attiliis [00:31:11] That's a good question, Mary, but I can't —

Francesco De Salvatore [00:31:13] Gina's your sister, right?

Frank Attiliis [00:31:15] I don't think so [that she was married at the church].

Marie Bennett [00:31:16] No, I'm talking about his daughter.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:31:18] His daughter. Oh, OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:31:18] No, I don't think she was married there.

Marie Bennett [00:31:22] It was a big Catholic church somewhere, but I don't know which one. OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:31:26] She's too Catholic for me.

Marie Bennett [00:31:28] I know she is.

Krystyn Moon [00:31:31] So, can you tell us a little bit about the pizza that you ate at that church?

Frank Attiliis [00:31:36] It was very plain. All they had was, I think, basil, sprinkles of basil, all over it with tomato sauce. And it was better than Domino's.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:31:45] [*chuckling*] Really quick, what was your mom's full name?

Frank Attiliis [00:31:50] Addolorata is all I know. That was the first name. I don't know the middle name. It's in that paper, I think.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:31:57] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:31:57] If you can find that.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:31:59] What are some of your favorite memories with her? You know, when you think about your mom, what are some of the first memories? I mean, you talk about cooking, but —

Frank Attiliis [00:32:07] She ended up going to church and cooking. She was a great lady. She was very nice. Washing clothes and mainly cooking. Jeez! And she'd be washing clothes when I'd come home, too. She worked all the time. And my dad did, too. He'd be digging in the garden, she'd been washing clothes. We don't work like that anymore in America.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:32:26] What was your dad's full name?

Frank Attiliis [00:32:28] Francesco. I don't know his middle name. Same as yours. That's why I could always remember your name.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:32:37] *[chuckling]* Your dad's name, yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:32:39] He was a good man.

Krystyn Moon [00:32:40] Do you wanna talk a little bit about Saint Rita's?

Frank Attiliis [00:32:43] Well, Saint Rita's, it went up a steep hill. I think it was Mount Ida [West Mount Ida Avenue]. And they would walk up every Sunday from home, walk up the hill. And we knew everybody that was in the church then.

And then sometimes, she [my mother] would come home and she had some other friends. She'd stop and see them, and I'd be sitting in the living room, and they would talk Italian. I didn't understand one thing they was talking about. They talked a different dialect. I didn't know one thing they were talking about. I tell my mom, "Mom, why don't you speak Italian when you go back [from church]?" And she'd go, "Oh, boy!"

The funniest thing I remember, [is when] my mother — we'd be walking down the street — [and] she'd be telling a story in English. And all of a sudden, she'd go to Italian and smack her head [*chuckling*].

Krystyn Moon [00:33:30] So, your mom spoke two dialects? One is Italian and something else?

Frank Attiliis [00:33:36] It was Italian, too, but it's a different dialect, and I didn't know one thing they were talking about.

Krystyn Moon [00:33:36] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:33:41] It's unbelievable. You know, you've been speaking (inaudible).

Marie Bennett [00:33:44] Some of it was church Latin.

Frank Attiliis [00:33:46] What did you say?

Marie Bennett [00:33:48] Some of it was church Latin.

Frank Attiliis [00:33:50] [*muttering*] I don't know what that is.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:33:51] Church Latin, yeah, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:33:55] Yes. So, that's the original Saint Rita's —

Frank Attiliis [00:33:58] Yes!

Krystyn Moon [00:33:59] — that you went up Mount Ida [West Mount Ida Avenue] to.

Frank Attiliis 00:34:00] Right, right.

Krystyn Moon 00:34:01] Can you talk about what happened later to Saint Rita's?

Frank Attiliis [00:34:04] They tore it down and built a new church. That's the one they built on Glebe Road..

Krystyn Moon [00:34:08] Right, the Glebe Road one. Did you go to church at that location, too?

Frank Attiliis [00:34:12] Yeah, we went to that one, too.

Krystyn Moon [00:34:13] OK. Did you do a first communion and —

Frank Attiliis [00:34:18] Jeez, you know, I don't remember that, but I'm sure that was at that first thing [Saint Rita's] we did.

Krystyn Moon [00:34:21] At the first Saint Rita's.

Frank Attiliis [00:34:22] I'm sure.

Krystyn Moon [00:34:23] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:34:24] I remember that, though.

Krystyn Moon [00:34:27] Do you remember any of the priests at Saint Rita's?

Frank Attiliis [00:34:31] Father McGannegral [McGonagall]. Father Gallagher was the main priest. They kept preaching [in] those days. They didn't change them around like they do today. You know, he was [the] priest the whole time I went to that church.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:34:44] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:34:45] Did they do the service in English or in Latin?

Frank Attiliis [00:34:47] English, English. Latin, Latin, too.

Krystyn Moon [00:34:50] Latin, too. Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:34:52] I was an altar boy. We did it in Latin.

Krystyn Moon [00:34:55] Yeah, I was an altar — well, girl.

Frank Attiliis [00:34:57] Girl.

Krystyn Moon [00:34:58] [*laughing*]

Frank Attiliis [00:34:58] Were you?

Krystyn Moon [00:34:58] Yeah.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:35:02] So, I'm just curious. I'm going to bring out the image of the neighborhood because we've talked about your home a lot, but I'm just curious if we could talk about the neighborhood a little bit. What are your memories of, like, businesses?

Frank Attiliis [00:35:17] There wasn't none. Just a store next door. (inaudible) business.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:35:19] OK, what was the store next door?

Frank Attiliis [00:35:21] About three blocks this way, they had a little pool hall. And you went across the bridge, you went to Potomac Yards.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:35:27] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:35:28] They had a pool hall up there and a little teeny restaurant. And a little teeny store. That's about it. I'm talking about small.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:35:37] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:35:39] So, the store that you mentioned, is this your family store?

Frank Attiliis [00:35:42] The one next door to our house was the family store. My mom's and dad's store.

Krystyn Moon [00:35:45] OK. What did they sell at the store?

Frank Attiliis [00:35:47] You know, everything. All groceries, like they do at the big stores —

Krystyn Moon [00:35:49] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:35:50] — except smaller quantities.

Krystyn Moon [00:35:51] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:35:54] And they didn't have the meats, either.

Krystyn Moon [00:35:55] Did they sell anything that they canned?

Frank Attiliis [00:35:59] No, no, no, no, no.

Krystyn Moon [00:36:05] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:36:06] That was strictly home edibles.

Krystyn Moon [00:36:07] OK. Did you walk to school?

Frank Attiliis [00:36:09] Oh, yeah. It wasn't but, uh, three blocks at the most.

Krystyn Moon [00:36:15] Where did you go to school?

Frank Attiliis [00:36:17] Mount Vernon [Mount Vernon Elementary School, now Mount Vernon Community School].

Krystyn Moon [00:36:18] Mount Vernon. For elementary school?

Frank Attiliis [00:36:21] Yeah. Elementary up to the eighth grade.

Krystyn Moon [00:36:23] And then where did you go after that?

Frank Attiliis [00:36:25] GW [George Washington] High School [now George Washington Middle School]. Catch a bus [there] for a dime or you can walk for free. If you walk, you get some desserts after school. If you took the bus, you had no money. It was 10 cents, I think.

Krystyn Moon [00:36:41] What did you buy for the 10 cents if you walked?

Frank Attiliis [00:36:45] Oh, I bought on the way home. We used to stop by the drugstore sometimes, get a Coke or something.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:36:52] What are your memories at Mount Vernon as a student?

Frank Attiliis [00:36:57] I had two good-looking teachers. And one mean one, whoo! And we just played ball out in the yard. And one day, one of my teachers, I brought him [her] home for lunch. Mother fixed spaghetti and all that stuff. Gave her a glass of wine. I think she was drunk [at] 1 in the afternoon. I remember that later. I didn't know that at the time. I think she's pretty buzzy. She had a great time that day. She told me about that 10 times: "Oh, that was such a good dinner your mom made."

Francesco De Salvatore and Krystyn Moon [00:37:29] [*laughing*]

Frank Attiliis [00:37:29] I felt funny. You know, my mother couldn't speak English, but they did good.

Marie Bennett [00:37:36] But wasn't that Mrs. Knight, the music teacher?

Frank Attiliis [00:37:41] (inaudible) [*whispering*]

Francesco De Salvatore [00:37:42] Was that Miss Knight?

Frank Attiliis [00:37:43] Yeah, it was Miss Knight, I think!

Krystyn Moon and Marie Bennett [00:37:45] The music teacher.

Marie Bennett [00:37:48] She was our music teacher, too.

Frank Attiliis [00:37:51] I think so. I think she was good-looking, wasn't she?

Marie Bennett [00:37:56] Almost as good-looking as you.

Frank Attiliis [00:37:59] The one I bought home for lunch was good-looking. My mom liked her.

Krystyn Moon [00:38:02] So, Uncle Frankie, did you have to translate for your mom when she met with the teacher?

Frankie Attilis [00:38:09] I can't remember that, either. My mother could speak a little English, but not very good. Like I say, she'd go to English, she's talking English, then she'd get right to Italian and hit her head. 'Cause she knew she went. She flipflopped.

Krystyn Moon [00:38:21] Yeah.

Frankie Attilis [00:38:22] And my dad, he couldn't speak too good English, either. And he worked with Italians all the time. Americans, too.

Krystyn Moon [00:38:30] Yeah. Can you talk about where your dad worked?

Frankie Attilis [00:38:32] He worked at the fruit growers. He put in floor rakes, they called them, and that was to keep the perishable goods dry off the floor. And this is the story I heard at the Italian festival. My father worked with another Italian guy, and they had to do two boxcars a year. And in the morning, they both worked, and [in] the afternoon, the other guy would get drunk and my father would finish the boxcar for him and keep his job.

Marie Bennett [00:38:38] (inaudible)

Frank Attiliis [00:38:59] That was Scaloni.

Krystyn Moon [00:39:00] Scaloni.

Frank Attiliis [00:39:01] Said all he wanted to do was drink. My father kept him straight in the mornings.

Krystyn Moon [00:39:06] Did Scaloni live in Alexandria?

Frank Attiliis [00:39:09] No, he lived in D.C.

Krystyn Moon [00:39:10] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:39:11] And I know my father never missed a day's work except for funerals.

Krystyn Moon [00:39:16] So, did Italians from D.C. come into Alexandria to work?

Frank Attiliis [00:39:20] I think so. I'm not sure about that, either, but he did.

Krystyn Moon [00:39:23] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:39:24] Scaloni did. And they used to carpool in them days a lot. My father never had a car, I don't think. He'd meet the guy on the corner, half a block up. I don't know if he'd give him money or gas or what it was. But he always rode with the other guy. Giuseppe. [*laughing]* Another Irish name. [*laughing]*

Francesco De Salvatore and Krystyn Moon [00:39:44] [*laughing]*

Frank Attiliis [00:39:45] Giuseppe.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:39:48] So, you mentioned the Coppas. Who were the other Italian families in Alexandria?

Frank Attiliis [00:39:53] OK, the Coppas, they're right dead next door. You could throw a baseball, I mean, [and hit their house].

Francesco De Salvatore [00:39:57] Yeah, this is them, right?

Frank Attiliis [00:39:59] Yeah, right —

Francesco De Salvatore [00:39:59] Yeah?

Frank Attiliis [00:40:02] Yeah, I think it was.

Krystyn Moon [00:40:04] And this was a photo of the Coppa family?

Frank Attiliis [00:40:06] Yeah, I think that is.

Marie Bennett [00:40:09] It's their daughters and Frankie's sisters. And I think that that's Alfred up at the top in the upstairs balcony, I guess it was.

Frank Attiliis [00:40:20] These were next-door neighbors. They wasn't as far as this here. There was a driveway in between. That was it.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:40:25] That was it, yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:40:26] (inaudible) [*chuckling*]

Francesco De Salvatore [00:40:28] Yeah. Where were they from in Italy? Do you remember?

Frank Attiliis [00:40:33] I don't know that part.

Marie Bennett [00:40:34] I don't know.

Krystyn Moon [00:40:35] Do you know other Italian families in Alexandria?

Frank Attiliis [00:40:38] OK, I don't know how this map goes, but if you go to the next street over, Raymond Avenue where I lived, and you go half a block up, there used to be a street about maybe 100 yards long. Used to be like six or eight Italian families there.

Krystyn Moon [00:40:54] Did they all work at the railyard?

Frank Attiliis [00:40:56] No, no, no. I don't know where they worked.

Krystyn Moon [00:40:59] OK.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:40:59] Do you remember their names? Their last names?

Frank Attiliis [00:41:02] One's Giuseppe.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:41:02] Giuseppe.

Frank Attiliis [00:41:03] One's Calisanto, I think

Francesco De Salvatore [00:41:06] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:41:08] Maybe Caliandro. And one was Colangelo, and there was a couple more, but I don't know what they were.

Krystyn Moon [00:41:17] OK.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:41:18] And would your families get together? Like, would all these families get together?

Frank Attiliis [00:41:21] With those people (inaudible), no.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:41:22] No, but with the Coppas? Did you guys?

Frank Attiliis [00:41:23] No.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:41:24] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:41:27] I'd go there once in a while. They'd treat me like a son, but —

Krystyn Moon [00:41:31] Did you all go to Saint Rita's together?

Frank Attiliis [00:41:33] I don't think they went to church.

Krystyn Moon [00:41:35] You don't think they went to church.

Frank Attiliis [00:41:36] I'll tell you what they did do. You're not going to believe this. They ate spaghetti 365 days a year.

Krystyn Moon [00:41:44] [*laughing*]

Frank Attiliis [00:41:45] At Thanksgiving, they had turkey and mashed potatoes, and spaghetti!

Francesco De Salvatore [00:41:48] The Coppas?

Frank Attiliis [00:41:49] Yes. Do you believe that?

Krystyn Moon [00:41:51] My family does that, too.

Frank Attiliis [00:41:53] 365?

Krystyn Moon [00:41:54] No! Thanksgiving.

Frank Attiliis [00:41:56] Oh, OK.

Krystyn Moon [00:41:57] We have spaghetti and meatballs for Thanksgiving.

Frank Attiliis [00:41:59] Well, that's all right for that, but I mean every day!

Francesco De Salvatore [00:42:03] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:42:04] Jeez! I mean, I love spaghetti, but not every day.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:42:07] You love pasta.

Marie Bennett [00:42:08] (inaudible) pasta.

Krystyn Moon [00:42:09] I like pasta [*laughing*].

Frank Attiliis [00:42:10] I do, too. But not every day!

Marie Bennett [00:42:13] (inaudible)

Frank Attiliis [00:42:16] I like a bologna sandwich once in a while.

Krystyn Moon [00:42:16] [*laughing*]

Frank Attiliis [00:42:17] Damn!

Marie Bennett [00:42:18] (inaudible)

Marie Bennett [00:42:20] (inaudible) those peppers.

Krystyn Moon [00:42:23] Oh, yeah, the spicy peppers.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:42:24] Spicy peppers.

Frank Attiliis [00:42:26] Peppers are great.

Krystyn Moon [00:42:27] Were they the little yellow [ones]?

Frank Attiliis [00:42:29] No, they were regular green peppers.

Krystyn Moon [00:42:29] They were green peppers.

Frank Attiliis [00:42:31] But he had some little teeny ones. Like I say, they had like that, like that. When they got that big, that'll burn your eyeglasses off.

Krystyn Moon [00:42:38] Yeah, yeah!

Frank Attiliis [00:42:39] I'm telling you, they were hot! Whoo!

Krystyn Moon [00:42:41] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:42:42] Man!

Francesco De Salvatore [00:42:43] What places did you hang out in the neighborhood? Were you mainly in your backyard?

Frank Attiliis [00:42:51] We didn't really hang out. In the backyard to play basketball and went to the playground to play basketball, football.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:42:55] To the playground?

Frank Attiliis [00:42:56] Yeah.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:42:57] Where was the playground?

Frank Attiliis [00:42:58] In back of the school.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:43:00] Back of the school.

Frank Attiliis [00:43:00] That's only three blocks away here.

Krystyn Moon [00:43:01]Behind Mount Vernon.

Frank Attiliis [00:43:02] I'd go out there. I'd be the first one there in the morning. You had to make up games. We'd play against the backstop and hit the ball. This one was a single, double, you know, like that.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:43:12] Yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:43:13] And wait for some guys to come out there and we'd have a team. I was always the leader of the pack there. I had nothing to do. I just had to go play ball. I was very good at — [My mom would say,] "OK. Be home for dinner." [And I'd say,] "OK, ma."

Krystyn Moon [00:43:28] What did you do after you graduated from high school?

Frank Attiliis [00:43:31] I went to work for the railroad. And I worked there three months as a messenger.

Krystyn Moon [00:43:36] Did you like that?

Frank Attiliis [00:43:38] Yeah, but I didn't work enough. I needed money to go out. I mean, when you only work, like, two days a week, that ain't enough. So, my father-in-law said, "You wanna go with me?" I said, "Yes." I tried him and I did good.

Krystyn Moon [00:43:51] What's his name?

Frank Attiliis [00:43:52] Ray Gibson.

Krystyn Moon [00:43:53] OK, and what was the business that you worked with him?

Frank Attiliis [00:43:57] I worked for — I think it was AC&R.

Krystyn Moon [00:44:03] AC&R.

Frank Attiliis[00:44:05] Yeah. And then, I went to work for another company, Clark Barrett, for four or five years. Then, I went to another company after Barrett went out of business. I worked for them a couple of years. And then I went back with asbestos-covered roofing.

Krystyn Moon [00:44:23] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:44:24] And then the guy put me in charge of Landover Mall.

Krystyn Moon [TIME] Oh! Wow!

Frank Attiliis [TIME] And I said, "I don't know if I can run that job." He said, "You can run it." So, I ran Landover Mall. And my sister-in-law had a house — before she moved across the street — she had a house up top of the hill, and it was a man who lived with them on top of it. They had a regular house and they had an apartment up top.

Krystyn Moon [00:44:49] Is this on Mount Ida [Avenue]?

Frank Attiliis [00:44:50] No, it's on [East] Raymond Avenue.

Krystyn Moon [00:44:51] Oh, this is on Raymond. OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:44:53] Yeah. And, anyhow, he kind of ran this great big apartment complex, Auburn Gardens. There was a lot of units. I don't know how many; maybe 500.

Krystyn Moon [00:45:04] So, Auburn Gardens in Del Ray, right? Off of Glebe Road?

Frank Attiliis [00:45:10] That was off of Glebe Road, too.

Krystyn Moon [00:45:11] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:45:12] Commonwealth went to the bottom of a hill —

Krystyn Moon [00:45:14] Yep.

Frank Attiliis [00:45:15] — and run into a restaurant now.

Krystyn Moon [00:45:17] Yeah. I know where you're talking about.

Frank Attiliis [00:45:18] It's right (inaudible) great big apartments. You know, one, two, three bedrooms. And anyway, he said, one of the bulls went bad. He said, "I have a little side job if you'd like to look at it." So, I called my boss up and I said, "I got a side job. Can I do it?" Well, at the time, we was working three days a week. He said, "Yeah." So, I said, "I will buy the material from you." I did that side job. After we make so much money, we retire in a couple of weeks. We did good on that side job. And then I decided to go into business. I talked my partner into going into business, and we did good.

Krystyn Moon [00:45:55] So, you mostly did roofing or what other types of jobs?

Frank Attiliis [00:45:59] Strictly insulation, commercial. We didn't do no houses.

Krystyn Moon [00:46:05] OK.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:46:09] I just want to maybe go back a second because we haven't talked about your siblings.

Frank Attiliis [00:46:14] OK.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:46:15] So, could you name all your siblings in order from oldest to youngest?

Frank Attiliis [00:46:21] I think Mary was the oldest.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:46:23] Mary? Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:46:24] And then, Uncle Alfred. And then, I think Uncle Johnny, then Gene, then Lena, Elizabeth, and Frankie, last.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:46:41] I have an image of you, I think, with your sisters.

Frank Attiliis [00:46:45] Yeah, that was me. See how little I was?

Francesco De Salvatore [00:46:49] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:46:49] Wow!

Francesco De Salvatore [00:46:49] What do you remember? Do you remember when this photo was taken at all?

Frank Attiliis [00:46:54] Oh, no. God, no! I remember I used to get money from both of them.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:46:59] You got money from Mary?

Frank Attiliis [00:47:01] Lizzie was a little tighter than Lena. Lena give me anything.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:47:04] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:47:05] Do you have stories about your brothers and sisters?

Frank Attiliis [00:47:09] No, they was all very nice to me. They were all a lot older.

Krystyn Moon [00:47:14] They were older?

Francesco De Salvatore [00:47:15] They were older than you?

Frank Attiliis [00:47:16] Lizzie was next, but she's 10 years older than me.

Krystyn Moon [00:47:19] Oh, wow.

Marie Bennett [00:47:22] So, I think (inaudible).

Frank Attiliis [00:47:23] That's Lizzie and that's Lena.

Marie Bennett [00:47:24] (inaudible) your children with your nieces and nephews because of the age difference. Didn't you?

Frank Attiliis [00:47:32] [*referring to photo*] I don't know who that is.

Krystyn Moon [00:47:33] Yeah, somebody put question marks there.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:47:35] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:47:36] Oh, they didn't know, either.

Krystyn Moon [00:47:37] Yeah, but that's you, right? Right here. Right here.

Frank Attiliis [00:47:39] I'm sure. Who's that, I wonder? Is that Ray?

Francesco De Salvatore [00:47:43] I can't read what it says.

Krystyn Moon [00:47:46] I'm not sure what that says.

Francesco De Salvatore 00:47:47] I'm not sure.

Frank Attiliis [00:47:49] It looks a little bit like Ray. And I just don't look like anybody I know.

Marie Bennett [00:47:55] Yeah, I don't think that's Ray. I was told by Al, but I don't remember who Al said it was.

Frank Attiliis [00:48:00] I know that's me and my two sisters.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:48:02] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:48:03] Something about "built National Airport" here on this photograph.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:48:07] Yeah, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:48:08] Do you know anything about that?

Frank Attiliis [00:48:10] No. I knew they got married. She got married at Nashville Airport.

Krystyn Moon [00:48:13] She got married.

Frank Attiliis [00:48:16] She's at the first wedding that Mary had or something.

Krystyn Moon [00:48:19] Oh!

Frank Attiliis [00:48:20] They talked him into it or something.

Krystyn Moon [00:48:22] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:48:23] [*referring to photo]* I don't know who that is.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:48:25] What are some of your —

Marie Bennett [00:48:26] (inaudible) got married at the Italian hall, right?

Francesco De Salvatore [00:48:31] Lena. Did Lena get married at the Italian hall?

Frank Attiliis [00:48:36] I think they got married at Gadsby's Tavern, from what I can remember. That's where they had the reception, anyway.

Marie Bennett [00:48:44] Right. But you got married at the Italian hall, didn't you?

Frank Attiliis [00:48:49] I gotta tell you, I got married in an Italian church.

Krystyn Moon [00:48:52] In D.C.?

Marie Bennett [00:48:53] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:48:53] I think. I think so.

Marie Bennett [00:48:54] Right. And then you had the reception in the Italian hall.

Frank Attiliis [00:48:58] I had the reception in Alexandria. Still there, that place is still there. I think it went Black pretty much. Coming down the street —

Marie Bennett [00:49:11] We just ate good.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:49:16] What are some of your favorite memories with your siblings that come to mind?

Frank Attiliis [00:49:21] Well, I didn't associate with them that much because, like I said, they were all older.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:49:25] They were much older than you.

Frank Attiliis [00:49:25] Just when we had dinner.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:49:26] Yeah, yeah, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:49:27] And you got money from them.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:49:29] You got money?

Frank Attiliis [00:49:30] Just my two sisters. My brother didn't give me much. Then I went to work for my brother at the Mighty Midget, too. He owned a little Mighty Midget. I don't know if y'all ever seen one.

Krystyn Moon [00:49:41] No, what is that?

Francesco De Salvatore [00:49:41] No, no.

Frank Attiliis [00:49:42] It's a little metal kitchen. It's about 12 by 15 [feet], and they sell hamburgers, hot dogs, barbecues, cheeseburgers, potato chips, a piece of pie, sodas, bag of chips, and that's it. That's all they sold.

Krystyn Moon [00:49:58] So, where was the Mighty Midget in Alexandria?

Frank Attiliis [00:50:01] Mighty Midget was across from Angelo's Italian restaurant on Mount Vernon Avenue. I think it's 3805.

Krystyn Moon [00:50:08] You remember the address.

Marie Bennett [00:50:08] [*laughing*]

Frank Attiliis [00:50:10] I think that's it. I may be wrong. But I used to love that.

Marie Bennett [00:50:14] Who owned it?

Frank Attiliis [00:50:15] Johnny, Uncle Johnny.

Marie Bennett [00:50:17] That's what I thought.

Frank Attiliis [00:50:18] And he'd — whew! Christmas time and stuff, they'd have a few beers and whiskey and stuff, and they'd shoot crap in the back of it. (inaudible) why?

Krystyn Moon [00:50:29] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:50:30] They'd shoot crap back there.

Krystyn Moon [00:50:30] Crap, yeah.

Marie Bennett [00:50:31] [*laughing*]

Francesco De Salvatore [00:50:31] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:50:29] So, you mentioned an Italian — was there an Italian restaurant back there?

Frank Attiliis [00:50:35] Across the street. Called Angelo's, I worked there, too. I was a dishwasher.

Krystyn Moon [00:50:38] You were a dishwasher there?

Frank Attiliis [00:50:39] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:50:40] Was this when you were in high school?

Frank Attiliis [00:50:42] Yes.

Krystyn Moon [00:50:43] OK. What type of food did they serve?

Frank Attiliis [00:50:45] They sold everything, and I think it was pretty good. I didn't get to eat the food too much. Well, two brothers kind of ran it for the old man.

Krystyn Moon [00:50:53] Yes.

Frank Attiliis [00:50:54] The papa was getting old then. And one was pretty lenient and one watched the business too much. So, when the one ran [the business], I could eat everything. When the other one [ran the business], [I] didn't eat nothing, I just eat the black olives. They had a big jar of black olives. Eat these things every day. In fact, one of them mentioned one time, "Since you've been working here, ever back, they've all been disappearing." I said, "Yeah, I ate a lot of them." I didn't tell the other one that.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:51:26] When you went outside the neighborhood, did you go anywhere else in Alexandria? Like, other places that you or your family went in Alexandria?

Frank Attiliis [00:51:35] My mom and dad never went nowhere. They went to the Italian church once in a while.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:51:41] They kind of stayed in the neighborhood.

Frank Attiliis [00:51:42] And that was it.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:51:42] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:51:43] I don't think they ever went to a movie or nothing. They didn't spend any money except —

Krystyn Moon [00:51:52] You said your mom and dad went to some funerals, though. Where did they go for funerals? To Saint Rita's or in D.C.?

Frank Attiliis [00:51:59] Yeah, to Saint Rita's. In D.C., too. And they went to a lot in D,C.

Krystyn Moon [00:52:04] OK, did they have a lot of friends in D.C.?

Frank Attiliis [00:52:07] Oh, yeah! A lot of them went off of New York Avenue with a lot of Italian families, [who] emigrated there.

Krystyn Moon [00:52:14] Yes.

Marie Bennett [00:52:15] The funeral home was Demaine's [Demaine Funeral Home] for our family? Was it Demaine's?

Francesco De Salvatore [00:52:22] Oh, the, uh —

Marie Bennett [00:52:25] Funeral home.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:52:26] Demaine's?

Frank Attiliis [00:52:27] Demaine's was in Alexandria.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:52:28] Was in Alexandria, yeah.

Marie Bennett [00:52:30] But I think one significant fact was that I think all of Frankie's parents, grandparents, and many other relatives, their funeral visitations were held in the hall.

Frank Attiliis [00:52:46] [*commenting aside to Francesco De Salvatore*] That was kind of a Catholic, you know, funeral — They didn't go to (inaudible) and a couple others that were around. They all went to Demaine's.

Marie Bennett [00:52:55] What they don't do anymore is lay folks out in the living room.

Frank Attiliis [00:52:59] Oh, yeah, they used to bring the bodies home and put them in the living room for three or four days.

Krystyn Moon [00:53:06] For, like, a week.

Frank Attiliis [00:53:08] Yeah, you get people come by all the time. They'd sit in the kitchen drinking and stuff. Some of them didn't drink too much. Some drank pretty much. But they always had plenty of food and plenty of wine back there, whoo!

Francesco De Salvatore [00:53:24] What are your memories of, like, family holidays? Were there certain traditions?

Frank Attiliis[00:53:31] A lot of good food. That's pretty much [it].

Francesco De Salvatore [00:53:34] So, for, like, Christmas, for example, what were the foods that your mom —

Frank Attiliis [00:53:41] The foods they had. Well, people would bring food over there, too. I don't know why. That house was a central place, but people would bring, like, these square things like that with stuff in the middle. You bring a lot of those over there and just different things people bring over.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:53:57] What'd your mom cook for Christmas?

Frank Attiliis [00:53:59] You know, my mom, she just cooked regular food. She never cooked crazy for Christmas.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:54:06] Oh, OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:54:09] You know? My mother never baked either too much. We never had pies or cakes or nothing like that. They come from the store.

Marie Bennett[00:54:16] Mrs. Coppa baked.

Frank Attiliis [00:54:18] Yeah, next door used to do some.

Marie Bennett [00:54:21] And (inaudible) mom cooked.

Frank Attiliis [00:54:23] Oh! They ate spaghetti every day. Did you know that, Marie?

Marie Bennett [00:54:28] Now that you say it, I think I remember.

Frank Attiliis [00:54:30] They ate spaghetti 365 days a year. [On] Thanksgiving, they have turkey and spaghetti.

Marie Bennett
[00:54:36] That'd be OK with me!

Frank Attiliis [00:54:38] Man! Alba Coppa told me that!

Marie Bennett [00:54:40] What's your problem?

Frank Attiliis [00:54:41] Yeah, I went over one time. It is a different kind. I said, "You'll eat spaghetti with that?", and he said, "Oh, yeah, we eat this every day." I mean, I like spaghetti, but not every day!

Krystyn Moon [00:54:53] Did your mom make anything special for Easter?

Frank Attiliis [00:54:57] No, she would cook something normal. Maybe ravioli or something like that. Very good, though, I tell you that. That's one good thing. I wish I could eat like that now.

Krystyn Moon [00:55:07] Yeah.

Marie Bennett [00:55:09] Remember, when we had a big family celebration for grandma's birthday at Easter?

Krystyn Moon [00:55:09] (*low voice, to Frank Attiliis*) Did you go to church?

Frank Attiliis [00:55:12] Oh, yeah.

Marie Bennett [00:55:13] (inaudible) grandma's birthday at Easter?

Krystyn Moon [00:55:18] Do you remember your mom's birthday near Easter and the celebrations?

Frank Attiliis [00:55:25] No, I remember we had a couple things there at Easter time. We'd be in the dining room. That wasn't very often.

Krystyn Moon [00:55:33] OK. But you went to church for Easter and Christmas?

Frank Attiliis [00:55:35] Oh, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:55:36] Did you do Christmas Eve mass or did you go —?

Frank Attiliis [00:55:39] I used to go to midday mass a lot of times, I remember that.

Krystyn Moon [00:55:43] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:55:45] And a few times, my mom and dad would go to midnight mass, but they usually went in the morning.

Krystyn Moon [00:55:51] OK. In the early morning?

Frank Attiliis [00:55:52] In the regular [mass]. Yeah.

Marie Bennett [00:55:53] Did you have a letter (inaudible) from my father there, Frankie?

Frank Attiliis [00:55:56] What'd you say, honey?

Marie Bennett [00:55:58] Did you ever run across my father there at Christmas mass?

Frank Attiliis [00:56:02] N-n-no.

Marie Bennett [00:56:05] OK.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:56:08] There's a story that I think Marie told us about you losing your teeth.

Frank Attiliis [00:56:14] Which time?

Marie Bennett [00:56:14] I didn't tell you this.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:56:16] Or someone told me. Someone told me.

Krystyn Moon [00:56:16] Which time?

Frank Attiliis [00:56:17] The time I spit 'em out over the bridge?

Francesco De Salvatore [00:56:19] Yeah, I think it involved the bridge and your teeth.

Frank Attiliis [00:56:23] We'd come back from a football game, [Washington] Redskin [Commanders] game. We used to drink a lot. I was hollerin' at some girl out the window.

Marie Bennett [00:56:32] [*chucklong*]

Frank Attiliis [00:56:33] It wasn't empty. And one time, I come home drunk, and my wife helped me for a change. I was throwing up in the toilet. She flushed the toilet.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:56:43] Wait, so, this is when you're in high school or when you're older?

Frank Attiliis [00:56:45] No, no, we was married then.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:56:46] Oh, it's when you're married. OK, I see. Yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:56:49] Shwoo! Man!

Krystyn Moon [00:56:52] Do you remember —

Frank Attiliis [00:56:52] I said, "Hold it, hold it!" [*Making flushing sound*] Time to (inaudible) some more teeth.

Krystyn Moon [00:56:58] Do you remember the Korean War, and did that affect your family?

Frank Attiliis [00:57:02] I don't think it did. I read that in that article. I don't think it did.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:57:06] No?

Krystyn Moon [00:57:06] OK. How about World War II?

Frank Attiliis [00:57:10] I remember when it was over.

Krystyn Moon [00:57:11] You remember when it was over?

Frank Attiliis [00:57:13] They [Newspaper boys] used to come up and down the street with [news of] landings and stuff.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:57:16] Uh-huh.

Frank Attiliis [00:57:18] Everybody had to turn all the lights out and get down. I remember that, but I was very young then.

Krystyn Moon [00:57:22] During blackout?

Frank Attiliis [00:57:25] Yeah!

Krystyn Moon [00:57:25] Blackouts, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:57:26] Mm-hmm.

Krystyn Moon [00:57:27] Did your family ever talk about [Italian dictator Benito] Mussolini or what was going on?

Frank Attiliis [00:57:31] No, we never talked about that stuff.

Krystyn Moon [00:57:33] OK.

Frank Attiliis [00:57:34] [*slightly chuckling*] I don't think they knew what was going on, to tell you the truth.

Krystyn Moon [00:57:36] OK.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:57:39] Well, yeah, so, maybe let's move into your more adult life. We've kind of been going all over the place a little bit, but you've talked a little about your career. Maybe let's start with your wife. How did you meet your wife?

Frank Attiliis [00:57:56] I met her at a house party. The guy was high up in the Navy. He had a nice house on Russell Road across from St. Mary's.

Krystyn Moon [00:58:05] OK, I know exactly where that is.

Frank Attiliis [00:58:08] (inaudible) where we played football. If you go down that street, you'll head into Mount Ida [Avenue]. So, there's about one or two houses from Mount Ida.

Krystyn Moon [00:58:13] Yep.

Frank Attiliis [00:58:14] On Russell.

Krystyn Moon [00:58:15] On Russell Road, yeah.

Frank Attiliis 00:58:16] And we just had house parties up there. Drink a little beer and stuff. I met her there.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:58:22] What's her full name?

Frank Attiliis [00:58:24] Mary Louise Attiliis.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:58:27] And so, what are your memories? What did you think about her when you first met her?

Frank Attiliis [00:58:32] She was good-looking. I wanted to get with her.

Francesco De Salvatore and Krystyn Moon [00:58:34] [*laughing*]

Francesco De Salvatore [00:58:35] That's it. Simple. OK [*chuckling*].

Frank Attiliis [00:58:36] Yeah, she was good-looking. She liked to dress up. She was very smart, too.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:58:43] Yeah. What are some of your memorable memories with her, with your wife?

Frank Attiliis [00:58:49] Going out and partying. We used to go everywhere.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:58:52] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [00:58:53] Did you host parties, too?

Frank Attiliis [00:58:55] We had a lot of parties. We were the hosts. And when I moved down on the water, we used to have parties all the time.

Krystyn Moon [00:59:00] Where on the water did you live?

Frank Attiliis [00:59:03] Ask —

Marie Bennett [00:59:07] Toward Washington.

Frank Attiliis [00:59:09] 9210. What's the name of that street before Washington, Marie, where I lived?

Marie Bennett [00:59:13] I don't remember.

Frank Attiliis [00:59:16] (inaudible) right on the water.

Marie Bennett [00:59:16] I only remember interior decorating.

Krystyn Moon [00:59:20] So, in Maryland?

Frank Attiliis and Marie Bennett [00:59:20] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:59:22] (inaudible) two. Gordon Liddy [convicted Watergate operative and later talk-show host] lived about three houses, four houses down. G. Gordon —

Krystyn Moon [00:59:27] And you'd like to host parties there.

Frank Attiliis [00:59:29] Oh, man. We had Gordon Liddy come to a few of them.

Krystyn Moon [00:59:34] Oh, that's cool.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:59:34] What would you do at these parties?

Frank Attiliis [00:59:36] Drink. Hard. That's all.

Francesco De Salvatore [00:59:38] Hang out, yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [00:59:39] One party that I told [about], we had a bartender there. I said, "Look, it's gonna be a long party and it's free, so, people are gonna drink a lot. Be easy on them." She said, "OK." So, she got tired. My son took over. I gave him the same sermon. Christ, had people falling in the bushes and stuff.

Krystyn Moon and Marie Bennett [01:00:00] [*laughing*]

Frank Attiliis [01:00:02] He's [My son's] a big drinker.

Marie Bennett [01:00:02] That was after they'd been dancing, right?

Frank Attiliis [01:00:05] No. We go to a lot of parties.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:00:13] So, how old were you when you met your wife?

Frank Attiliis [01:00:18] Probably 19 or 20. Got married pretty young —– 20, 21.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:00:24] What are your memories about your wedding? It sounded like you —

Frank Attiliis [01:00:27] Oh, I had a small wedding. It was Gadsby's Tavern. I think.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:00:32] Was that yours or Lena's?

Frank Attiliis [01:00:33] You know that street that comes down the hill [in Alexandria, VA]? You go over the bridge for, you know, Potomac Yards?

Francesco De Salvatore [01:00:39] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:00:40] And you come down that main street?

Krystyn Moon [01:00:41] Yeah.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:00:41] Washington [Street]?

Krystyn Moon [01:00:42] Route 1 or Washington [Street].

Frank Attiliis [01:00:46] So, you're coming down that street and —

Francesco De Salvatore [01:00:48] You make a left.

Frank Attiliis [01:00:48] Before you get to King Street.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:00:50] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:00:52] About two blocks. There's a big building there, which I don't know if it's Gadsby's Tavern or something. But that's where we had the reception.

Marie Bennett [01:00:59] Yeah, I think it was. I'm trying to remember all the weddings that I have cooked for and laid the table for because most of it was catered by your family.

Frank Attiliis [01:01:10] Not my wedding. Yeah, my wedding was catered by the family. It wasn't but about 50 people there. Well, I can't think of the name of it! It's still there, though.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:01:20] It sounds like it is Gadsby's Tavern.

Frank Attiliis [01:01:24] It might be the Eagles Club?

Francesco De Salvatore [01:01:26] It is two blocks [from King Street].

Krystyn Moon [01:01:28] Gadsby's closer to the water, though.

Frank Attiliis [01:01:30] No, no, that's my house on the water. This is talking about where I got married.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:01:34] He's saying it's two blocks away from King Street.

Frank Attiliis [01:01:37] Riverside Drive. I lived [at] 9210.

Krystyn Moon [01:01:40]Riverside Drive.

Frank Attiliis [01:01:40] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [01:01:41] So, Fort Washington [in Maryland].

Frank Attiliis [01:01:42] Yeah.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:01:42] Fort Washington.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:01:46] This is after you got married. You guys moved to Fort Washington, right?

Frank Attiliis [01:01:47] Yeah. We built the house in '72.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:01:51] You built the house? Wow.

Frank Attiliis [01:01:53] Yeah. Whooh, that almost killed me. That's hard.

Krystyn Moon [01:01:56] Did you build your house or did somebody else?

Frank Attiliis [01:01:58] Yeah, that one I built.

Krystyn Moon [01:01:59] OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:02:02] But I had a Hungarian friend. I could never build it without him. He was the brains. I was labor.

Krystyn Moon [01:02:11] Yeah? Can you describe the house that you built in 1972? What did it look like?

Frank Attiliis [01:02:16] Damn, I had a big thing [photo] of that thing, too. It was very nice.

Krystyn Moon [01:02:20] OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:02:23] It was very different, too. My wife wanted different. You walk in, it had a big garage, two-car garage. You come up the steps, you're in the laundry room. Take two more steps and the family room was to the right, and then we had a living room, and she wanted a second floor. So, the living room was here, and upstairs had a rail around it, all the way around. And then, [we] had two bedrooms here. We had a big bedroom here with a big bathroom. And then down here was the living room, and then you go in, and there was the kitchen. And the kitchen and dining room was together. That was the whole house, but it was pretty big.

Krystyn Moon [01:03:02] Yes.

Frank Attiliis [01:03:04] Then, we had a swimming pool. It was a nice house.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:03:05] How long did you guys live there for?

Frank Attiliis [01:03:08] We lived there probably 30 years.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:03:10] Thirty, OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:03:10] Until she passed away.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:03:11] Got it.

Frank Attiliis [01:03:12] I had to sell it. Too much work. I didn't do nothing. I hired everybody to do everything.

Krystyn Moon [01:03:18] Did you eat a lot of Italian food at that house? Or did you make Italian food?

Frank Attiliis [01:03:22] No, no, no. My wife didn't cook Italian, but she was a good cook. She could sure cook a Thanksgiving dinner. She was a good cook. I don't know how she learned it. Her grandmother was a good cook, and she lived with us a couple of years. We lived in Tantallon [waterfront neighborhood in Fort Washington, MD] for, like, 10 to 15 years.

Krystyn Moon [01:03:41] Yeah. Did you still go to Saint Rita's?

Frank Attiliis [01:03:43] No, I didn't go to church from the time when I got there.

Krystyn Moon [01:03:45] Oh, OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:03:46] I gave up on church. I don't know why.

Marie Bennett [01:03:48] Do you think Louise learned some of her cooking from Betty and Lizzie and Lorraine?

Francesco De Salvatore [01:03:56] Did your wife learn some of her cooking from —

Frank Attiliis [01:03:59] I think from her grandmother.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:04:00] From her grandmother?

Marie Bennett [01:04:02] From her grandmother. But I remember her cooking with Lizzie, Lorraine, and Betty when we met.

Frank Attiliis [01:04:07] Well, Lorraine and Betty were damn good cooks, too.

Marie Bennett [01:04:10] Yeah, and so was Lizzie. She made the stellar stuffed shells.

Frank Attiliis [01:04:14] Yeah, Lizzie's good, too.

Marie Bennett [01:04:17] Yep, they were.

Frank Attiliis [01:04:18] Lena didn't cook.

Frank Attiliis [01:04:19] Lena didn't cook much.

Marie Bennett [01:04:24] I didn't think so, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:04:25] She cooked at Christmastime. Spaghetti sauce.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:04:28] How many kids did you have?

Frank Attiliis [01:04:30] I have four.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:04:31] Four. And what are their names?

Frank Attiliis [01:04:35] Shan, Tony, Shelly, and Gina.

Krystyn Moon [01:04:41] Do you have any memories that you want to share about your kids?

Frank Attiliis [01:04:45] Oh, they were pretty good kids, I guess.

Krystyn Moon [01:04:47] [*laughing*]

Frank Attiliis [01:04:48] How do you know, right? If you ask all the neighbors, they can tell you.

Marie Bennett [01:04:52] Did they ever serve in the military?

Frank Attiliis [01:04:53] My son drinks a lot, I know that. And Tony was in the military, but they said he took his helmet off when he was doing something, and that almost killed him. But he did drugs and stuff. The rest of them are pretty good.

My one daughter, she's in the Air Force. She retired in 23 years, and she was an air traffic controller. She did pretty good. She did good and then she got divorced. I don't know if she got divorced or not. She decided she was going to move to Arkansas and her son lives in Georgia. Her husband lives in Georgia and he's the nicest guy you'll ever meet. I know she's a little nutty. She's going to move to Arkansas. So, she said she's coming up in May.

Krystyn Moon [01:05:39] OK.

Marie Bennett [01:05:40] Well, good.

Frank Attiliis [01:05:40] With her husband!

Krystyn Moon [01:05:41] OK.

Marie Bennett [01:05:41] Good!

Frank Attiliis [01:05:42] And she lives in Arkansas and he lives in Georgia.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:05:45] What are your favorite memories as a father with them? What are some memories that come to mind?

Frank Attiliis [01:05:52] I know one memory; it ain't a favorite. We'd come back from [a Washington] Redskins [Commanders] game. And my daughter was riding in the back of the truck. And my son turned around and said, "Dad, there she goes!" [*chuckling*] She got out of the trunk.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:06:05] She flew out of the truck?

Frank Attiliis [01:06:06] Thank God, she didn't get hurt or kill herself. They was drinking, too. I let them drink. We didn't get to do what we wanted to.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:06:13] You used to go to a lot of Redskins [Commanders] games, right?

Frank Attiliis [01:06:15] All of them. I didn't miss but two games in that stadium.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:06:18] Wow.

Frank Attiliis [[01:06:19] In 40 years.

Krystyn Moon [01:06:20] So, which stadium did you go to?

Frank Attiliis [01:06:23] RFK

Krystyn Moon [01:06:24] RFK

Frank Attiliis [01:06:24] The one I think they're tearing down. No, they're not. I think the one they're tearing down now.

Krystyn Moon [01:06:29] Yeah, they are. Do you remember any special games that you —

Frank Attiliis [01:06:33] Oh, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [01:06:34]— saw there?

Frank Attiliis [01:06:35] One year we beat Dallas and we beat [the] Green Bay Packers, back-to-back. That was fantastic.

Krystyn Moon [01:06:42] Did you have a party afterwards or what did you do?

Frank Attiliis [01:06:47] That might have been — No, [*chuckling*] that wasn't the game Shan fell out of the truck on. I laugh at that. It wasn't funny, really. When it happened, I was a nervous wreck, but it's funny now. They still laugh about it, too.

Marie Bennett [01:07:02] Wasn't Shan a Redskin [Commanders] cheerleader?

Frank Attiliis [01:07:06] Yeah, she did that one year. That was too hard. She said they had to practice too much.

Marie Bennett [01:07:11] [*chuckling*] OK. She got the chance. You know, you used to go to Blackie's for dinner with Johnny and my dad and you, and —

Frank Attiliis [01:07:25] Oh, that was young, I was still young. I was only 17 when I had Redskin [Commanders] tickets. Your dad and Johnny got them for me.

Marie Bennett [01:07:32] Oh!

Krystyn Moon [01:07:32] Was that your first game?

Frank Attiliis [01:07:34] Yeah, I was about 17.

Krystyn Moon [01:07:36] Did you like going? Is that why you —

Frank Attiliis [01:07:40] Oh, yeah! They'd go to this little delicatessen. They used to have a lot of delicatessens in those days.

Krystyn Moon [01:07:44] Yes.

Frank Attiliis [01:07:45] It was on Mount Vernon Avenue. We'd all meet there and we'd all go to the game together. They'd all drink, and I just wouldn't drink. I couldn't drink then, but —

Krystyn Moon [01:07:51] So, why did you meet at the delicatessen?

Frank Attiliis [01:07:53] That's the way I expect they rode together.

Krystyn Moon [01:07:55] OK, so you carpooled together to the game.

Frank Attiliis [01:07:58] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [01:07:59] (inaudible)

Francesco De Salvatore [01:08:01] What memories do you have with your nephews and nieces? Like Marie, for example. Do you?

Frank Attiliis [01:08:08] Oh, well, I played golf with Denny and Tommy. I'd tell them how good I was, and then when we played, they found out how bad I was.

Marie Bennett, Krystyn Moon and Francesco De Salvatore [01:08:15] [*laughing*]

Frank Attiliis [01:08:16] They still laugh about that. I was terrible.

Marie Bennett [01:08:20] (inaudible) pretty much.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:08:22] Would you go to the circus with them?

Frank Attiliis[01:08:24] I went to the circus one time. I took them all to the circus.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:08:28] Yeah, yeah, yeah. What was the circus?

Frank Attiliis [01:08:29] That was in D.C. Then I took him to (inaudible) at a new park one time. I think that was my grandkids that I took.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:08:35] Uh-huh, uh-huh.

Marie Bennett [01:08:37] What were you driving?

Frank Attiliis [01:08:39] What was I driving?

Marie Bennett [01:08:41] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:08:42] Probably a Volkswagen.

Marie Bennett [01:08:45] And weren't we all!

Frank Attiliis [01:08:47] (inaudible) [*whispering*]

Krystyn Moon [01:08:49] Did you like cars?

Frank Attiliis [01:08:51] I wasn't into cars.

Krystyn Moon [01:08:52] You weren't into cars.

Frank Attiliis [01:08:54] I still ain't.

Marie Bennett [01:08:56] But you (inaudible) a car, do you think?

Frank Attiliis [01:08:58] [*whispering*] What did she say?

Francesco De Salvatore [01:09:02] Did your parents own a car?

Frank Attiliis [01:09:03] I don't think. You know, I think my dad had one for a couple of weeks, Marie, and I think he gave it up. Because he rode with Giuseppe for 40 years to work. I know that. I remember that.

Krystyn Moon [01:09:17] So, how did they get to D.C. To go to church or the Italian festival?

Frank Attiliis [01:09:21] Yeah, my sister would take them or my brother would take them.

Krystyn Moon [01:09:24] OK. Did they ever take the bus?

Frank Attiliis [01:09:26] No.

Krystyn Moon [01:09:26] Or the train?

Frank Attiliis [01:09:27] I don't remember them taking a bus.

Krystyn Moon [01:09:28] OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:09:30] But that was D.C. That was a good day. You know, I used to wear my knickers, white knickers. I used to hate that, but I had to wear them.

Krystyn Moon [01:09:39] Oh, for when you went to D.C. to church?

Francesco De Salvatore 01:09:41] To church. Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:09:42] When we did the parade.

Krystyn Moon [01:09:44] Oh, for the festivals.

Frank Attiliis [01:09:46] When you walk around like this.

Krystyn Moon 01:09:47] Oh.

Frank Attiliis 01:09:48] They brought the St. Gabriel banisters. I think they called them banisters.

Krystyn Moon [01:09:53] Right, the banner!

Frank Attiliis [01:09:55] Banners, yeah, but they were big.

Krystyn Moon [01:09:57] Right, and they're like on a pole, right?.

Frank Attiliis [01:10:00] Yes, a pole with a flag.

Krystyn Moon [01:10:01] Yeah. And it's a long flag, right?

Frank Attiliis [01:10:03] Yeah, it was pretty big. It's pretty heavy. Most of the guys who did that was pretty strong. Especially the St. Gabriel one.

Krystyn Moon [01:10:10] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:10:11] They had this big, ol' Italian guy. Boy, he was tough like —

Krystyn Moon [01:10:14] Did they carry a statue?

Frank Attiliis [01:10:17] They did. They carried a picture of the statue of Jesus, and it would be two [people carrying it] in the back and two in the front. They'd go around like that, too. That was —

Krystyn Moon [01:10:25] Part of the processional.

Frank Attiliis [01:10:26] It was a pretty big parade.

Krystyn Moon [01:10:28] Yeah, OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:10:29] When it started, yes.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:10:33] I have one question that is not related to this, but I'll make sure we talk about it. Can you describe the inside of your parents' store? Like, what did it look like?

Frank Attiliis [01:10:45] Well, that wasn't modern.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:10:47] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:10:47] Just you walk in the front door, it's on a caddy corner. You know, it didn't come in straight, you come in on a catty corner. And it just had, like, three or four shelves. I think three shelves. You know, three aisles, and in the back was a meat counter.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:11:05] OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:11:06] Now, the Jewish guy that done it before, he carried meat, and he would cut it for you like that.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:11:11] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:11:13] I tell you, it still wasn't very big at all.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:11:15] Yeah, but —

Marie Bennett [01:11:16] You didn't have an ice cream thing?

Frank Attiliis [01:11:21] You know —

Marie Bennett [01:11:23] Maybe later?

Frank Attiliis [01:11:24] Marie, I don't think they had a frozen box.

Marie Bennett [01:11:28] Oh!

Frank Attiliis [01:11:29] They didn't. They did have back in the corner, before you went to the basement, they did have a milk and butter [section] and stuff like that.

Marie Bennett [01:11:40] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:11:41] And then across the back was a meat counter.

Marie Bennett [01:11:44] And I remember inheriting a couple of bakery cabinets, the glass bakery cabinets that they had for pies and cakes, cookies. There were two of them that I ended up with.

Frank Attiliis [01:12:01] And in the back of the counter they had a walk-in box [freezer].

Marie Bennett [01:12:04] Ah! OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:12:05] It was in the back.

Krystyn Moon [01:12:06] Do you remember who they bought the store from?

Frank Attiliis [01:12:09] My mother and father?

Krystyn Moon [01:12:10] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:12:11] They built it.

Krystyn Moon [01:12:12] Oh, they built it.

Frank Attiliis [01:12:12] Together with Sciannelli [Scianella], my uncle. He was a bricklayer.

Marie Bennett [01:12:16] Yeah, Sciannella.

Krystyn Moon [01:12:17] So, Sciannelli is your mother's brother.

Frank Attiliis [01:12:21] I think so.

Krystyn Moon [01:12:22] OK, and he immigrated with her or maybe with his parents?

Frank Attiliis [01:12:25] I think they were first. I'm not sure.

Krystyn Moon [01:12:29] OK.

Marie Bennett [01:12:29] His grandmother, Sciannella, is Adoloretta's mother. Palmarosa Sciannella, and the nice grandfather were grandma's (inaudible).

Frank Attiliis [01:12:45] Ms. Sciannelli's [Sciannella's] husband was a bricklayer.

Marie Bennett [01:12:49] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:12:50] [*lowering voic*e] And he built the store.

Marie Bennett [01:12:50] That was Alfred. His name was Alfred

Francesco De Salvatore [01:12:54] But you mentioned — [*lowering voice*] Yeah, I think this is Alfred.

Frank Attiliis [01:12:59] That's Alfredo. He was the yard master of the railroad. He ran a railroad for like five or 10 years.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:13:04] But you mentioned at the store, there was a Jewish man who (inaudible).

Frank Attiliis [01:13:08] They rented it from my mother and father.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:13:10] They rented it, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:13:10] Yeah, they bought everything and sold everything.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:13:13] Do you remember who that Jewish man was?

Frank Attiliis [01:13:16] Berk.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:13:17] Berk?

Frank Attiliis [01:13:18] That's one of them. (inaudible)

Francesco De Salvatore [01:13:19] That was the first name or last name?

Frank Attiliis [01:13:21] Last name.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:13:21] Last name, OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:13:23] Sidney Berk was the son, Joyce Berk was a daughter, and they had a little brat boy, too. I don't know his name [*chuckling*].

Krystyn Moon [01:13:29] [*laughing*]

Francesco De Salvatore [01:13:29] Yeah, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:13:31] But, uh —

Krystyn Moon [01:13:32] And that store was on Hume Ave. [Avenue]?

Frank Attiliis [01:13:34] Hume Avenue and DeWitt [Avenue].

Krystyn Moon [01:13:36] Hume Avenue and DeWitt. So, like, right here on this map?

Frank Attiliis [01:13:40] Mm-hmm, our house was here. Alfred's house was here.

Krystyn Moon [01:13:44] Alfred's house was on Clifford [Avenue]? Or Raymond [East Raymond Avenue]?

Frank Attiliis [01:13:48] No, it was on Hume [Avenue]. The end of Hume and DeWitt [Avenues].

Krystyn Moon [01:13:52] OK, right here where it ended.

Frank Attiliis [01:13:55] And it still was on the corner of Hume and DeWitt [Avenues], too. On the other side of the street.

Krystyn Moon [01:13:57] (inaudible) find it.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:13:59] I'm just curious: so, when you move to Fort Washington, you're living there, but you obviously return to Alexandria during those years, right?

Frank Attiliis [01:14:12] Not too much. I'd go see my mother every other week.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:14:14] Yeah, you see your mom, right. What are your memories of the neighborhood then, when you were returning?

Frank Attiliis [01:14:21] A lot of old people. Very nice. Now you go in the neighborhood, you can't see it. They're all additions. On top, on the sides, in the back.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:14:29] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:14:29] In Del Ray, you wouldn't know the difference.

Krystyn Moon [01:14:31] [*referring to photo*] Is that the store?

Frank Attiliis [01:14:32] That's the store.

Krystyn Moon [01:14:33] OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:14:34] That is the store.

Krystyn Moon [01:14:35] So, it's still standing.

Marie Bennett [01:14:37] Oh, yeah!

Frank Attiliis [01:14:38] Oh, it's still there.

Krystyn Moon [01:14:39] Yes! It's still standing.

Frank Attiliis [01:14:39] I think the people that had an art gallery in there or something, I think they decided to move there.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:14:44] So, what were the changes that you saw happening in Del Ray when you would come back?

Frank Attiliis [01:14:50] Well, it didn't change as much when I was there. Everything was —

Francesco De Salvatore [01:14:54] Growing up, when you were growing up, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:14:57] People lived there 30 years, 20 years, 40 years. All of them nice people.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:15:03] Yeah. How about when you were coming back in the '80s, '90s to go see your mom?

Frank Attiliis [01:15:10] Well, I just went to see her and then we went home. But I lived in back of them. I bought a house behind my mother's house.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:15:15] Uh-huh.

Frank Attiliis [01:15:16] My first house. And I used to see her a lot then. Then I moved to Maryland. We used to stop every couple weeks to see her.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:15:24] Yeah, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [01:15:25] So, you bought a house on Randolph Street?

Frank Attiliis [01:15:29] Raymond [East Raymond Avenue].

Krystyn Moon [01:15:29] Raymond Street [East Raymond Avenue]! Behind your mom and dad's [house].

Frank Attiliis [01:15:30] Right there behind my mother's, a little bit over.

Krystyn Moon [01:15:33] OK, and that was your first house.

Frank Attiliis [01:15:35] Yeah, and Johnny and Betty lived across the street.

Krystyn Moon [01:15:37] And Johnny and Betty lived across the street. And then you built the house in Fort Washington in 19 —

Frank Attiliis [01:15:43] No, no, then I moved to Tantallon, and then I sold that house, and then we rented a house for a couple years while I built this house.

Krystyn Moon [01:15:53] OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:15:54] Phew, I can't build no more houses! When I'm still here.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:15:57] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:15:58] That's hard.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:15:58] I wouldn't do it.

Frank Attiliis [01:15:59] And I did all the bricks and everything.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:16:00] Wow.

Krystyn Moon [01:16:00] So, how did Del Ray change from when you were a kid to when you are now?

Frank Attiliis [01:16:05] Oh, you wouldn't know it now.

Krystyn Moon [01:16:07] So, what were some of the changes you noticed?

Frank Attiliis [01:16:09] Just people. Houses [are] all three times bigger.

Krystyn Moon [01:16:12] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:16:13] They went up, out (inaudible) in the back. Unbelievable.

Krystyn Moon [01:16:17] Yeah, so, big houses.

Frank Attiliis [01:16:18] I went back where my brother-in-law lives, and we couldn't find the house.

Krystyn Moon [01:16:22] Oh, your mom's house or your house?

Frank Attiliis [01:16:24] No, my sister's house.

Krystyn Moon [01:16:27] Your sister's house.

Frank Attiliis [01:16:28] I told Billy, "We got to go back over again soon." I got to get that before I get out of here.

Krystyn Moon and Francesco De Salvatore [01:16:33] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:16:34] I just can't (inaudible).

Marie Bennett [01:16:34] Do you remember when they put the playground in the train?

Frank Attiliis [01:16:40] Oh, yeah, I remember when they moved Alfred's house down the track, railroad tracks. I remember that. That was a big memory. We lived right next to railroad tracks.

Krystyn Moon [01:16:50] Right.

Frank Attiliis [01:16:51] And my brother bought a house that they moved.

Krystyn Moon [01:16:54] OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:16:55] Three-story brick house. And one day, I wake up, and the house is going down the railroad track.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:01] So, they moved it to where?

Frank Attiliis [01:17:02] Yes, to the house across from the store.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:04] To Raymond Street [East Raymond Avenue]?

Frank Attiliis [01:17:05] Hume Avenue.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:06] Oh, oh, to Hume Avenue, where DeWitt [Avenue] ends.

Frank Attiliis [01:17:08] Where my father used to do the gardening.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:11] Oh! OK, OK. So, up here?

Frank Attiliis [01:17:16] I'm not good on these maps, now.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:17] [*referring to map*] This is Hume [Avenue].

Frank Attiliis [01:17:18] OK.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:20] And this is DeWitt [Avenue].

Frank Attiliis [01:17:21] OK. OK, now I —

Krystyn Moon [01:17:22] And (inaudible) your mom and dad's house here.

Frank Attiliis [01:17:26] And that was on Raymond [East Raymond Avenue]. I'm right behind my mom and dad's house.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:31] Right, there's Raymond.

Frank Attiliis [01:17:31] A little bit.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:32] So, you would be like right here.

Frank Attiliis [01:17:34] Yeah.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:35] And then where's Alfred's house? Over here?

Frank Attiliis [01:17:36] Right across the street.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:37] From you.

Frank Attiliis [01:17:38] Yeah, he was —

Krystyn Moon [01:17:39] So, on Raymond?

Frank Attiliis [01:17:40] No, no, no, he wasn't across from me. He was across from the store.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:43] From the store.

Frank Attiliis [01:17:44] Mm-hmm.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:45] So, over here on Hume [Avenue].

Frank Attiliis [01:17:46] Store's on one corner.

Marie Bennett [01:17:47] On DeWitt [Avenue].

Krystyn Moon [01:17:48] You can hold my phone, too.

Unknown Person [01:17:51] [*laughing*]

Frank Attiliis [01:17:52] Here's DeWiitt [Avenue].

Marie Bennett [01:17:53] Arthur's house was on DeWitt. Across the street from (inaudible).

Frank Attiliis [01:17:56] I see. Here's a store.

Krystyn Moon [01:17:58] Right, and then this is...

Frank Attiliis [01:18:00] Wait a minute, lemme finish. Here's the store.

Marie Bennett [01:18:03] (inaudible) on the other side of the store.

Frank Attiliis [01:18:05] That's my mother's house right here.

Krystyn Moon [01:18:07] OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:18:07] And I bought this house right here.

Krystyn Moon [01:18:09] Right there.

Frank Attiliis [01:18:10] Raymond [Avenue].

Krystyn Moon [01:18:11] Raymond.

Frank Attiliis [01:18:12] That's DeWitt [Avenue].

Krystyn Moon [01:18:13] OK, and then where's Alfred's house?

Frank Attiliis [01:18:16] Right here. Alfred, the store, my mother and me.

Krystyn Moon [01:18:19] Gotcha.

Frank Attiliis [01:18:20] And Johnny and Betty.

Krystyn Moon [01:18:23] All within, like, one block of each other.

Frank Attiliis [01:18:25] Yeah, they were. They're very close, that group there.

Krystyn Moon [01:18:28] OK.

Marie Bennett [01:18:29] My family were the outliers. We were the ones that were on Windsor [Avenue].

Frank Attiliis [01:18:34] And they was about — What's that, six blocks up?

Marie Bennett [01:18:37] Four to six blocks, maybe. (inaudible)

Frank Attiliis [01:18:38] DeWitt [Avenue]. They were right next to DeWitt, too.

Krystyn Moon [01:18:40] They're on DeWitt, but down on Windsor.

Frank Attiliis [01:18:42] Yeah, DeWitt and Windsor.

Marie Bennett [01:18:43] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:18:44] The firehouse is right here.

Krystyn Moon [01:18:46] OK. Oh, I know where that is. Yeah, the firehouse. OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:18:49] Do you really?

Krystyn Moon [01:18:50] I do. It's still there. It's so (inaudible)

Francesco De Salvatore [01:18:54] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:18:56] Well, they live right at the firehouse. They live right here. Right across DeWitt [Avenue] and right on the corner.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:19:02] Are there any questions that we haven't asked you that you want to talk about?

Frank Attiliis [01:19:10] Y'all covered pretty much.

Krystyn Moon [01:19:16] Is there any sort of last story about Alexandria that you want to share?

Frank Attiliis [01:19:22] Naw, I just used to go to the boys' club at Alexandria.

Krystyn Moon [01:19:25] Where was the boys' club?

Frank Attiliis [01:19:27] I can find it, but I don't know the name of the streets.

Krystyn Moon [01:19:30] Was it in Del Ray?

Frank Attiliis [01:19:31] No, no, that was in Alexandria. You know the bridge?

Krystyn Moon [01:19:34] Yes!

Frank Attiliis [01:19:35] Come across that bridge, and they drove down about three or four blocks, and the boys' club's about one block back.

Krystyn Moon [01:19:42] OK, so —

Frank Attiliis [01:19:43] I don't know if it's Columbus Street?

Krystyn Moon [01:19:45] So, if you're crossing, like, Route 1 —

Frank Attiliis [01:19:49] Coming towards Alexandria.

Krystyn Moon [01:19:50] Towards Alexandria, and then — So, we're going south on the left, sort of back that way.

Frank Attiliis [01:19:55] Yeah, yeah.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:19:56] Yeah

Krystyn Moon [01:19:56] OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:19:56] And we used to play ball at that school down there, too. I think it's Jefferson [Thomas Jefferson Middle School].

Marie Bennett [01:20:00] Yeah. It was Jefferson. Middle school. I think that was on Cameron.

Frank Attiliis [01:20:02] (inaudible) stretch. This is an old story. Same daughter. I used to take her to the ball games. We used to play for kegs of beer. She got on the end of the bench. She got so drunk that day my wife about killed me when I got home. She was loaded. She was more drunk than I was! Phew!

Marie Bennett [01:20:27] Well, not a good thing.

Marie Bennett, Francesco De Salvatore, Krystyn Moon [01:20:28] [*laughing*]

Frank Attiliis [01:20:28] Man!

Francesco De Salvatore [01:20:29] Things happen, things happen.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:20:33] I'm curious: this is a question I always ask people at the end, but what's a memory you would hold on to for the rest of your life?

Frank Attiliis [01:20:41] Shan falling out of that truck.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:20:43] [*laughing*] That's a memory?

Frank Attiliis [01:20:46] (inaudible) he said, "Dad, there she goes!"

Krystyn Moon [01:20:48] [*laughing*]

Frank Attiliis [01:20:49] That kid. I think of that all the time. I said, "Damn, how lucky I was." Shoo!!

Francesco De Salvatore [01:20:53] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:20:54] Man!

Marie Bennett [01:20:55] Could you bowl with the others, Frankie?

Frank Attiliis [01:21:00] I think —

Marie Bennett [01:21:01] With the bowling?

Frank Attiliis [01:21:02] Pardon me?

Francesco De Salvatore [01:21:03] What'd you say?

Marie Bennett [01:21:04] Did you go bowling with the others?

Frank Attiliis [01:21:06] Oh, yeah, we had a bowling team, too. The railroad and — I bowled with them. My brother and sister-in-law. My brother threw that ball to pin buoys. That's when they had pin buoys. He'd throw the ball, he'd bring it, throw that ball down there. They'd win a couple of pin

buoys and they didn't want to be pin buoys no more. They went to the manager and made him throw the bowl over. My brother was crazy.

Marie Bennett [01:21:26] Yeah. Do you remember going to Glen Echo [Glen Echo Park]?

Frank Attiliis [01:21:29] Oh, in the streetcar! Yeah! I used to love that. Catch a bus to Washington. [For] ten cents, you could ride the streetcar to Glen Echo. That thing rocked cross them bridges. Scared the hell out of me.

Krystyn Moon [01:21:41] Was Glen Echo an amusement park, then?

Frank Attiliis [01:21:43] Yes! That was really nice.

Krystyn Moon [01:21:46] What was your favorite ride?

Frank Attiliis [01:21:51] Uh, it wasn't the roller coaster, I can tell you that. And it wasn't the ferris wheel. That's kind of a sissy [ride]. I liked the bumper cars and stuff like that.

Krystyn Moon [01:22:00] [*chuckling*] Yeah?

Frank Attiliis [01:22:01] But I used to go swimming at the —

Marie Bennett [01:22:03] Did you swim?

Frank Attiliis [01:22:03] We used to go just to go swimming.

Krystyn Moon [01:22:04] You went, you liked to go swimming up there.

Frank Attiliis [01:22:08] Oh, yeah. And they had a diving pool. And I did a backflip over that side pool and I hit on my back. I couldn't breathe. I thought I was gone.

Krystyn Moon [01:22:15] Oh!

Frank Attiliis [01:22:15] And the lifeguard, he just looked at me. I said, "Buddy, I'm drowning! What are you doing?" He finally got me out of there.

Marie Bennett [01:22:20] Were you there the time that your brother lost his bathing trunks?

Frank Attiliis [01:22:26] No.

Marie Bennett [01:22:28] He had rented it, the trunks, if you can believe that.

Frank Attiliis [01:22:33] I think my crazy (inaudible)

Marie Bennett [01:22:35] They dived off, and they came off. My mom was in the balcony, watching.

Frank Attiliis [01:22:42] I think my favorite ride out there was the Fun House.

Krystyn Moon [01:22:45] The Fun House.

Marie Bennett [01:22:46] Ah, OK. That's cool.

Frank Attiliis [01:22:48] So, these barrels you walk through and they knock you dizzy, but these have a little crazy little thing you sit on.

Krystyn Moon [01:22:54] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:22:54] And you go to the top, and they would go down.

Krystyn Moon [01:22:57] Yeah. And it's like, sp-i-i-i-n.

Frank Attiliis [01:23:00] I can't remember, but I think it's only, like, a dime to get in there.

Krystyn Moon [01:23:02] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:23:03] You can stay all day!

Krystyn Moon [01:23:04] Yeah! All day.

Frank Attiliis [01:23:07] (inaudible) today.

Krystyn Moon [01:23:07] Definitely not.

Frank Attiliis [01:23:08] Nope. And Little Tavern's my favorite food.

Krystyn Moon [01:23:11] What's your —

Frank Attiliis [01:23:12] Little Tavern.

Krystyn Moon [01:23:13] Little Tavern is your favorite restaurant or — ?

Francesco De Salvatore [01:23:15] At Glen Echo.

Krystyn Moon [01:23:16] Oh, at Glen Echo?

Frank Attiliis [01:23:18] No, no, just —

Francesco De Salvatore [01:23:19] No? Oh, just around?

Frank Attiliis [01:23:22] Little Tavern was little restaurants they used to have. I think they did. You probably remember those, don't you?

Krystyn Moon [01:23:26] No, I don't. Tell me, tell me what (inaudible).

Marie Bennett [01:23:28] I remember (inaudible) had one, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:23:30] [*to Francesco De Salvatore*] You wasn't here.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:23:31] I was definitely not here [*chuckling*].

Krystyn Moon [01:23:32] But we didn't have them where I grew up.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:23:34] Really?

Frank Attiliis [01:23:35] No, Little Tavern pretty much ran (inaudible). Those little places, everybody looks like they just got out of jail. They worked there. They had a look to them. They all looked the same.

Krystyn Moon [01:23:45] [*chuckling*] What type of food?

Frank Attiliis [01:23:46] Hamburgers, that's it. Hamburgers, cheeseburgers was all they sold. Pie.

Krystyn Moon [01:23:51] Was there one in Alexandria?

Frank Attiliis [01:23:52] Oh, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [01:23:53] Where was it in Alexandria?

Frank Attiliis [01:23:54] On, uh —

Marie Bennett [01:23:58] Was it on King Street?

Frank Attiliis [01:23:58] You remember where the Hot Shoppe was. It was right across the street.

Krystyn Moon [01:24:00] I know where the Hot Shoppe was, yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:24:02] Well, right across from the Hot Shoppe!

Krystyn Moon [01:24:03] Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's Washington Street?

Frank Attiliis [01:24:06] Yes, yes!

Krystyn Moon [01:24:06] Sort of south of town.

Frank Attiliis [01:24:07] Yeah, Washington Street.

Krystyn Moon [01:24:09] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:24:10] Down south.

Krystyn Moon [01:24:11] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:24:12] Boy, them hot fudge cakes. You can't beat them.

Krystyn Moon [01:24:15] Did you go to Hot Shoppe for hot fudge cake?

Frank Attiliis [01:24:19] It was so good. You can't —

Francesco De Salvatore [01:24:22] Wasn't there a barbecue place?

Frank Attiliis [01:24:24] Oh, man, yes! If you know where that Little Tavern was and the Hot Shoppe, there's a triangle there.

Krystyn Moon [01:24:30] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:24:31] There used to be a barbecue space — a beer joint, actually — but they cooked the pig in the back of the restaurant.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:24:35] Yeah, what's the — I can't think of the name right now.

Krystyn Moon [01:24:38] Is that the one with the sign still on it?

Francesco De Salvatore [01:24:41] I don't know if the sign's still on it. I don't know.

Frank Attiliis [01:24:45] It was on a triangle. They cooked the pig inside the beer joint. Man, that was barbecue there! And then up the street, about a half a mile, up that street that come in like this, a half of a mile there was another barbecue place that was really good.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:24:51] OK.

Frank Attiliis [01:25:04] They was probably there when she was there.

Krystyn Moon [01:25:05] Is barbecue one of your favorite things to eat?

Frank Attiliis [01:25:08] It was then. Not there. You can't get good food like you used to. (inaudible) a lot of barbecue.

Marie Bennett [01:25:16] You used to go to Al's Steak House a lot.

Frank Attiliis [01:25:19] Where?

Francesco De Salvatore [01:25:20] Al's Steak House.

Marie Bennett [01:25:20] Al's Steak House.

Frank Attiliis [01:25:22] Let me tell you something, I went there about 10 years ago. It was terrible.

Marie Bennett [01:25:28] Well, yeah, (inaudible)

Frank Attiliis [01:25:29] They changed. The guy died that owned that thing.

Marie Bennett [01:25:33] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:25:34] 'Cause I know his —

Krystyn Moon [01:25:36] That's the place in Del Ray, right?

Marie Bennett [01:25:38] Right, right across from the high school.

Frank Attiliis [01:25:39] Right across from Mount Vernon High School, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [01:25:42] You know, they had a big fire there, too.

Frank Attiliis [01:25:44] At the high-school?

Krystyn Moon [01:25:45] No, no, at Al's Steak House.

Marie Bennett [01:25:46] At Al's, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [01:25:47] But they reopened.

Frank Attiliis [01:25:49] I know, that's when it got bad.

Marie Bennett [01:25:52] Right, that's when they reopened. But before that, when you were in high school, wasn't it a pretty awesome place?

Frank Attiliis [01:25:56] Very good. Very good steak sandwiches. But after it burned down, the guy that took it over ain't too good.

Marie Bennett [01:26:03] Yeah, I agree with you.

Krystyn Moon [01:26:03] Was it like a Philly cheesesteak?

Frank Attiliis [01:26:05] Yeah, but it's better.

Krystyn Moon [01:26:06] Better than a Philly cheesesteak?

Frank Attiliis [01:26:07] Oh, God, these were good.

Krystyn Moon [01:26:08] Was it beef? Was it beef?

Frank Attiliis [01:26:09] Yeah, oh, yeah.

Krystyn Moon [01:26:10] Yeah.

Frank Attiliis [01:26:11] (inaudible) in fact, I called there six months ago. Wondered if he'd died. Hadn't heard of [Al's Steak House owner] Sonny Severson, and his brother [Johnny Severson] earned that. And he did that as a young man. He must have been a multimillionaire. But he liked to gamble, too. He gambled a lot.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:26:29] Great, well —

Marie Bennett [01:26:30] Those were great sandwiches.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:26:31] Yeah, well, is there anything else that we haven't asked you before we conclude? I know we've covered everything we had talked about with Marie.

Frank Attiliis [01:26:43] No, but playing golf was funny with her and her brother. I was really bad. I'd BS them all the time. I'd say, "Yeah, I can hit that thing!", and I couldn't.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:26:53] With the golf? Golfing, you mean?

Frank Attiliis [01:26:55] And right there, you know, they'd ride me up the street. Ooh! "I thought you could hit that (inaudible) out." I said, "Well, I could. I used to. I'm getting old now." I was probably 25.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:27:07] Well, thank you so much for doing this, Uncle Frankie.

Krystyn Moon [01:27:10] Thank you, Uncle Frankie.

Frank Attiliis [01:27:11] It was pretty easy.

Francesco De Salvatore [01:27:11] Yeah, yeah! This has been great. Yeah, thank you [*chuckling*].

Marie Bennett [01:27:15] (inaudible)

Frank Attiliis [01:27:15] (inaudible) It's pretty easy.