

The Peale, Baltimore

Out of the Blocks Storytelling Series

Recorded by Aaron Henkin; Photographs and Music by Wendel Patrick

Produced for the Out of the Blocks website, created by the Peale, <https://ootb.thepeale.org/>



Michael Allen Meckel ([00:00](#)):

If I had any advice, it's for potential bakers and it's use the timer. You can always put time on something, but you can't unbake it.

Speaker 2 ([00:08](#)):

Now what we offer in donuts are honey twist and sugar twist.

Speaker 3 ([00:13](#)):

Chocolate crullers, plain crullers.

Speaker 2 ([00:15](#)):

Boston cream donuts.

Speaker 3 ([00:16](#)):

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And down there is marshmallow.

Speaker 2 ([00:18](#)):

Cinnamon crumb doughnut also, which is a cake donut.

Speaker 3 ([00:21](#)):

And then there's the sticky buns.

Speaker 2 ([00:22](#)):

We have filled Danish, which are all different flavors.

Speaker 3 ([00:26](#)):

Crumb custard squares.

Speaker 2 ([00:27](#)):

And coconut custard.

Speaker 3 ([00:28](#)):

Down here are the buns.

Speaker 2 ([00:30](#)):

Chocolate covered buns that have a little bit of cinnamon in them.

Speaker 3 ([00:32](#)):

Eclairs and cream puffs.

Speaker 2 ([00:34](#)):

Now we also have pies.

Michael Allen Meckel ([00:36](#)):

I've got white bread coming and then I will have raisin bread, and after raisin bread I'll be doing a layer cake and probably some devil's food, maybe some red velvet. We'll see. My name's Michael Allen Meckel. People here call me Al. This is Fenwick Bakery and our address is 7219 Harford Road, Baltimore, Maryland, 21234. I've been here since 1979. And actually I moved to this neighborhood back in 1970. So for a kid at 10 years old or so, a bakery moving into your block is a great thing. I'd come up here and get my two donuts for a quarter. Things are a little more expensive now. When I was 18, I came up here and

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Mr. Walter Uebersax, who was the owner, he decided, okay, well, I guess I'll hire you. And I worked with him and his brother Ed, who was the head baker, and they're the ones who taught me how to do the job.

Speaker 4 ([01:37](#)):

Who's next? Help you, ma'am?

Michael Allen Meckel ([01:39](#)):

Now, when I first started working here, I was 129 pounds and now I'm about 180 pounds or so. So over the course of four decades, I guess that's not too bad. On a typical day, I'll get here about two o'clock in the morning. Hopefully I leave here at around one o'clock or so, but I stay as long as I need to, or if they need me, they call me and I come back in since I only live a block away. Tuesday is my day off. And I'm usually come in from five o'clock until about eight or nine. So my wife says I just don't understand the concept of a day off. I said, "What am I going to do otherwise? Sit and watch TV?"

Adam Droneburg ([02:26](#)):

Is life different for you than you originally imagined?

Michael Allen Meckel ([02:31](#)):

I live in the same house I lived in 40 years ago. So it can't be that different from what I was imagining when I grew up, and I'm going to the same baker. I guess all things considered, I'm doing pretty much the same thing as I did 40 years ago except I'm doing it for me now instead of for somebody else. Pardon me, [inaudible 00:02:55].

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