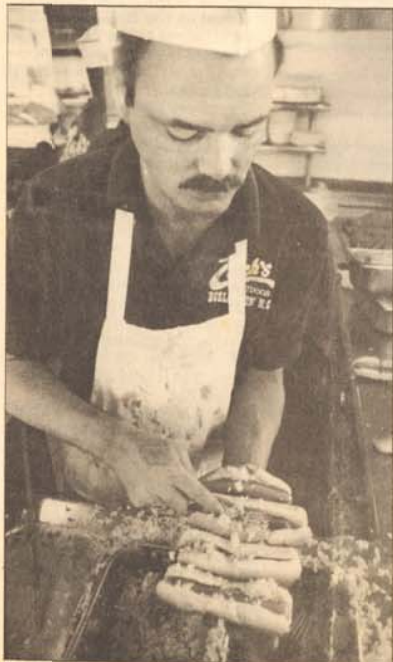




ALL THE WAY



Above, Zack's is located on the same block of Worth Street where the original restaurant began in 1928. Right, Zack's claims customers get their orders within one minute.



Kirk Martin, Zack's senior employee, has been dressing the dogs for 15 years.

Life is slowed and the streets are quiet on Sunday afternoons in downtown Burlington, except on the corner of Worth and Davis.

The odor of onions drifts above the bustle of bottles opening, burgers turning and buns being stuffed with dogs and the works. Since 1928, within this block downtown, "one all the way" has been heard daily for three-generations.

The activity is at Zack's, a restaurant best known for its hot dogs. And nine-year-old Dee Elder says, "Their hot dogs are the best."

Zack's originally anchored the opposite end of the block, at the corner of Worth and Front.

The original owner, Zacharias Touloupas, started the restaurant in 1928. In its early days, Zack's was known as the Alamance Hot Weiner Lunch.

Touloupas is from Greece and came to America "to make his fortune," his grandson of the same name says. It is this grandson, known as Zack, and his father, John, who are the present owners and operators of the business.

Zack said his grandfather wanted to come to the United States because he heard there were \$20 gold pieces buried in the sand. He traveled to South Carolina and began working in a restaurant in Columbia.

There he heard about a restaurant for

sale in Burlington and the business he began 63 years ago is still being enjoyed by residents of Alamance County.

Zack's grandfather is now 96 and Zack said he worked in the store until he was 88.

On a typical day, Zack said you could see "any and every type of people" in the restaurant. He said his clientele includes high school students, farmers, mill workers, doctors and lawyers.

Zack's is convenient for employees of downtown businesses — and it's fast. Whether you eat in a booth, grab a stool at the counter or order take-out, your food will reach you in about a minute.

There are always about five or six employees roaming the floor to wait on customers the second they sit down. When you're ready, they yell "clear," get an OK from the kitchen and start repeating your order as they head back to the kitchen to pick it up.

Zack says the most popular order is a hot dog all the way, and of course a bottled soft drink. And Mildred Turner, who followed Zack's when it moved to its present location in 1977, likes the fact that she can get her drink in a bottle at Zack's.

There aren't many places you can still do that, she said. But forget the all the way, she'll take the cheese dog. It's what she's ordered for 60 years.



For 60 years, Mildred Turner has been enjoying cheese dogs and soft drinks in a bottle at Zack's.

Story and Photos by Julie Stovall