



The Sheep Stew of Dundas: A Gastronomical Delight

Narrated by Stanley Woodward

1. Life in Dundas (02:47)

<Video opens with a shot of the Hawthornes'' house before showing Pike Hawthorne>

S. Woodward: Are you Pike Hawthorne?

Pike Hawthorne: Yes sir. I am.

S. Woodward: Uh, well, my name's Stan Woodward and I was, uh, at the Holiday Inn last night. And that fella told me that, uh, if I, uh, walked up to you and showed you that card that you would give me some sheep stew.

Pike Hawthorne: That's exactly right. Yep, we got some in the freezer.

<Video cuts momentarily>

Pike Hawthorne: My wife's gonna fix it. She knows you're comin' and she's gonna, uh, fix you some very shortly.

<Video shows Pike Hawthorne sitting>

S. Woodward: Are you from Dundas?

Pike Hawthorne: Yes. I was born and raised one mile from Dundas.

<Video cuts momentarily>

Pike Hawthorne: And, uh, we used to walk to Dundas and we came back by-had to come back by a cemetery. And you know, in the olden days, everybody was 'fraid to go to a cemetery after dark. So I had to walk within ten feet of the cemetery when I came back home.

S. Woodward: How'd you manage that?

Pike Hawthorne: Well, I just wasn't sus-suspicious about things like that in other words. I just took it as it was and went on. You know what I mean by that?

S. Woodward: Um hum. Um hum.

Pike Hawthorne: And they used to tell some might-*<Pansy Hawthorne calls from the house>*-some mighty miraculous tales about Dundas. And uh, we had one man down

there named Jim Brown and he could tell you about spooks gettin' up in the buggy and ridin' with ya' for a long time and then they'd get out. Back in those days, like I said, a whole lot of people believed in spooks.

S. Woodward: Uh huh. But you never saw one.

Pike Hawthorne: Nah, I never saw one. And I never come in contact with one.

<Stanley Woodward laughs>

S. Woodward: Is that a spook right here? Let me see who that is.

<Camera turns to show Pansy Hawthorne>

Pansy Hawthorne: If this is a spook, this is his spook. *<They laugh>* I'll tell you.

S. Woodward: How are you doin'?

Pansy Hawthorne: For fifty five years I been his spook.

S. Woodward: I'm Stan Woodward. Nice to meet you.

Pansy Hawthorne: I'm glad to meet you.

S. Woodward: And you-are you-what do you call yourself? A Dundacite? Is that-

Pansy Hawthorne: Well I tell you what, I guess I'm a [Lunenberger]. *<They laugh>*

We lived-I only lived in Dundas for six years. When my husband and I were first married, we didn't have anything but each other, but that's all we wanted.

S. Woodward: Uh huh.

Pansy Hawthorne: That made us happy.

S. Woodward: Uh huh.

Pansy Hawthorne: So we moved into the house with his parents who lived right behind what is now known as Perseverance Church.

<Video shows Pansy Hawthorne>

Pansy Hawthorne: You can't beat the people from Dundas. You can't. They-they don't come any better than they do.

S. Woodward: Right now, let's talk for a second about what's the importance of-of-of the sheep stew to-to the-

Pansy Hawthorne: Well let me tell you what I want to do now.

S. Woodward: Ok.

Pansy Hawthorne: I want to go-want you to go-unless you want me to bring it out here, I want to show you a quart of the sheep stew and if you would like to, I will, uh, thaw out some of it and let you taste it and see what you think of it.

S. Woodward: Really?

Pansy Hawthorne: Uh huh.

S. Woodward: I would love that.

Pansy Hawthorne: I would be glad to do that.

2. Sheep Stew (02:15)

<Video opens with Pansy Hawthorne>

Pansy Hawthorne: You seen one of these before?

S. Woodward: No, I haven't. That's pretty nice.

Pansy Hawthorne: What does it say?

S. Woodward: It says, "Happiness is being a Virginian from Dundas."

Pansy Hawthorne: Right. *<They both laugh>*

<Video shows Pike Hawthorne>

Pike Hawthorne: Sheep stew is not cooked anywhere except Danieltown Virginia and Dundas, Virginia. Don't anybody away from here know how to cook sheep stew and it's an art to cookin' it because you got to know exactly how much of each ingredients to put in it. Now the old people fif-sixty and seventy years ago, uh, used to cook it and then that young person would watch'em cook it and he would get the ingredients and everything, uh, straight, so when that older person died, the young person could come along and cook sheep stew. And was just as good for the younger peoples cook as it was for the old people that cooked.

S. Woodward: Ok. Now-now why-why sheep stew in Dundas? Were there a bunch of sheep herders at one point down here or what?

Pike Hawthorne: Well we had our [dan-dan] next to Danieltown, uh, which is about, uh, six to eight miles from Dundas, Mr. [Coonie] Daniel and he used to cook sheep stew. Well, after he cooked it and people tasted it, they liked it so well that it gradually moved on up to Dundas and they cooked it down in Dundas and, uh, it's no tellin' how many

sheep have been killed, and sl-slaughtered and made sheep stew around Dundas...and Danielstown.

<Video shows Pansy Hawthorne>

Pansy Hawthorne: Here we go. It's goin' in the microwave. There we go. Sorry, but it's gonna take about ten minutes to thaw it possibly.

<Video shows Pike Hawthorne>

Pike Hawthorne: The people that belong to the Ruritan Club are-are the ones that cookin' it and then they'll advertise in the local papers that they're gonna have a sheep stew on Saturday, first come, first serve. A lot of times, they'll cook ten sheep and they won't have enough for the people to buy.

S. Woodward: Is that right?

Pike Hawthorne: That's right. They-they'll-some of them will stand back there and say, "Well I hope I get some." But, when they sell it all, it's all. All gone. And they don't have anymore.

3. Johnny Hawthorne discusses making sheep stew (02:38)

<Video shows the town of Dundas>

S. Woodward: The Dundas Ruritan Club arranged for me to document the making of their gastronomical delight in March of the next year, but when I arrived, the temperature was a record breaking fifteen degrees below zero.

<Video shows Johnny Hawthorne>

J. Hawthorne: For every sheep you put in there, you put in fifty pounds of onions and you cook it down, you can't even tell the onions in it. ['Bout] ten pounds of-of, uh, mashed potatoes and salt and pepper and fatback and butter and it's good.

<Video shows Johnny Hawthorne again>

J. Hawthorne: Do you know the difference between a sheep stew and a Brunswick Stew?

S. Woodward: No I don't. What is it?

J. Hawthorne: Well-well a sheep stew is made with sheep. Brunswick Stew is made with chicken or beef.

S. Woodward: Um hum.

J. Hawthorne: And Brunswick Stew's got a bunch of vegetables in it and sheep stew all you see is a-is like a muddle it's-it's-it's not like a stew.

Shopkeeper: Mush.

J. Hawthorne: It's like a mush. It's not like a-

S. Woodward: Well now you used the word "muddle." What is that-what-where is that-

J. Hawthorne: I don't-that comes out of the-they had make fish muddles down in Eastern Virginia and North Carolina that they have fish muddles and they-and-and you put the-you put uh...you put, uh, butter beans, and corn, and-and fish in there and you cook it down to-to a muddle or a mush there and that's sort of like what the sheep stew is.

<Video shows the shopkeeper>

S. Woodward: Why are you laughin'?

Shopkeeper: I just never heard of a muddle before.

J. Hawthorne: Oh yeah?

S. Woodward: You haven't heard of a muddle?

Shopkeeper: Well I've heard of a muddle, I didn't know the difference was. To me it's a mush. Sheep mush. *<He laughs>*

S. Woodward: Sheep mush?

Shopkeeper: Yeah.

S. Woodward: That doesn't sound as good as sheep stew.

Shopkeeper: Yeah well, but it tastes good. That's the thing. Just don't look at it. Eat it.

J. Hawthorne: Taste's good. That's the trick to it.

Shopkeeper: That's right.

<Video shows Johnny Hawthorne>

J. Hawthorne: You would be surprised if you just talk about eating sheep, that people away from south side Virginia that just don't eat sheep because they-they consider it a-a lesser, uh, a lesser, kind of meat than beef or chicken or pork. I mean they just-even when I was small and my momma used to fix a leg of lamb for-for Easter, um or somethin' and I mean we all ate it and it was real good; the people in South Hampton County wouldn't eat a leg of lamb if you gave them the lamb.

<Video shows the shopkeeper>

Shopkeeper: It's rib stickin'. *<He laughs>*

<Video shows a customer>

Customer: There are some people who have tried it and they'll drive twenty and thirty and forty miles tomorrow and stand in line for an hour, you know, to get some of it. And, they could make it every week and-and sell out every week if they made it.

4. The sheep stew tradition (03:20)

<Video begins with shots of Lunenburg County before showing the Turners' house>

S. Woodward: I drove south from Richmond into Virginia tobacco country to the border of Brunswick and Lunenburg County. According to the notes I had received, the only area that cooked sheep stew is bound by the towns of Dundas, Danieltown, and Alberta. I got directions to the home of stewmaster Ray Turner. He had suffered a recent stroke and could no longer cook sheep stew. He and his wife agreed to an interview.

<Video shows Ray Turner>

S. Woodward: Ray, how are you passing on...how you're making your sheep stew, your recipe, and your way of tending a pot of sheep stew?

R. Turner: Anybody comes up and ask for it.

<Video shows Lucille Turner>

L. Turner: I think the sheep stew is kind of like a cement that kind of holds the community together. It's something that...well we all participate in. Like right-like uh, the Dundas Hunt Club or the Ruritans have their sheep stews and Ray's Hunt Club, the Friendship Hunt Club, they have the sheep stews. And, it's kinda, uh, a competitive thing and yet it's a successful thing. It's all done in good-naturedness and it's in, uh, friendship and neighborliness and also to make money for the Ruritans and-and for our group and for the churches. It's just-it's just something to bring the whole community together.

<Video shows Ray Turner>

S. Woodward: There's a lot of time spent cooking a stew. What do you men talk about?

R. Turner: Oh that I'd rather not tell you.

S. Woodward: I hear there's a lot of jokin' and stuff that goes on.

R. Turner: Yep.

S. Woodward: You remember any of those jokes?

R. Turner: Well, they're not really fit to tell, some of them.

<Stanley Woodward and Lucille Turner laugh>

S. Woodward: Do you have any idea why the sheep stew is popular just in this little tight circle really of Lunenburg County and especially Dundas? You go outside of that area and people don't-don't eat it.

L. Turner: I think it's like I said, at first you have to acquire a taste for it and I think that's-I think that's the main reason-

S. Woodward: Um hum.

L. Turner: -that you just have to acquire a taste for it. And it takes time and it's-it's people here in this community that will not eat it. And but those who like it, like it.

S. Woodward: But apparently a lot of people like it.

L. Turner: Oh yes. Yes. But now you have-you have to like, uh, like leg of lamb. You're gonna have to like the taste of sheep.

<Video cuts momentarily>

L. Turner: And I think the majority of people don't.

<Video shows Ray Turner>

S. Woodward: You have any advice for young stew makers?

R. Turner: *<He laughs>* If you want hard work, they can try sheep. *<They both laugh>*

5. Long tradition of sheep stew (02:20)

<Video shows shots of Perseverance Christian Church>

<A church congregation sings Amazing Grace in the background>

S. Woodward: On the way to Dundas, I stopped at the church where Pike had attended as a child. There I located two men, whose uncles had long ago been in charge of cooking sheep stew and I began to get closer to one of the most unusual stews cooked in the south.

<Video shows Wayne Parish>

W. Parish: It-it's different from anything else. I don't know of anything that tastes like it.

S. Woodward: Can't compare it?

W. Parish: No, but I would say that it is, uh, richly spiced. It's got some grease in it. Probably the reason my arteries are clogged now, probably. *<They laugh>*

<Video shoes Billy Wilkinson>

B. Wilkinson: Start out with an old sheep. Uh, you don't-you don't start out with a tender young lamb. A cull sheep actually makes a better stew they say.

S. Woodward: A cull sheep?

B. Wilkinson: Cull.

S. Woodward: What is that?

B. Wilkinson: One that-that you're ready to cut-cut out of the flock.

S. Woodward: I see.

B. Wilkinson: One that productivity's about finished. Then you got-you put the onions in whole, so you have to cook them apart. When-when it's done you-you can't really identify anything at all; it looks the same.

<Video shows Wayne Parish>

W. Parish: And we have three different or four different [stirring] committees like-

B. Wilkinson: -the onion peeling team.

W. Parish: Yeah and the night before the-on Friday night we usually peel the onions and have a few potatoes go in, but mostly onion. So they do that, uh, Friday night ahead of time.

S. Woodward: And what committee is that?

W. Parish: The peeling committee.

S. Woodward: The peeling committee.

W. Parish: Peeling committee, which consists of most of the inactive, you know, less active members I would think, you know, older members and that's the kind of thing-

B. Wilkinson: The ones that don't want to stir.

W. Parish: Don't want to stir all day with-that'll build some muscles sure enough.

<Stan Woodward laughs> With the texture that that is, late afternoon that really gets tough-tough to stir.

S. Woodward: Because it's so thick.

W. Parish: Right.

S. Woodward: And that's different from a Brunswick Stew?

W. Parish: By far. Yes sir. And if you let it sit, it'll scorch in a heart beat.

<Video shows Billy Wilkinson>

B. Wilkinson: Have you been to Dundas?

S. Woodward: Uh, no I haven't.

B. Wilkinson: You haven't-you haven't seen the sign that advertises the sheep stew?

S. Woodward: No, I haven't.

B. Wilkinson: You'll have to go look at it: "A Gastronomical Delight."

S. Woodward: Is that right? And where is this sign?

B. Wilkinson: Right in the heart of Dundas.

S. Woodward: In the heart of Dundas. Is that hard to find? *<Wayne Parish and Billy Wilkinson laugh>*

B. Wilkinson: Not if you find Dundas. *<They all laugh>* It's kinda-it's pretty small.

S. Woodward: Yeah.

6. The cooking committee (03:49)

<Video shows the location where they are cooking>

S. Woodward: The starting time for the beginning of the stew had been moved back two hours. The pots would be fired at 2:00 AM the next morning.

<Video shows Maxie Moore>

M. Moore: It was passed on to me, kinda accidentally I reckon. Uh, boy that used to-*<He blows his nose>*-that used to cook'em before me, uh, had asked me a time or two to help him, uh, you know, if he had to be off half a day or somethin' when he was cookin', he'd ask me to look after it. Then one day he wanted me to do the whole thing and then it wasn't long before he had a boatin' accident and got drowned.

S. Woodward: Oh, is that right?

M. Moore: And so kinda left it-left it up to me, you know?

<Video shows Maxie Moore spraying water into the pots>

S. Woodward: Alright, now what are you doin' here now?

M. Moore: I just keep on addin' water to keep it from gettin' so hot, you know, that it'll hurt the pots you know. That's all I'm doin' is just-

S. Woodward: Just keep fillin'em up?

M. Moore: Keep-keep puttin' more in it. I'm gonna have to get some out probably [when they get here]. I ain't-don't want it to get...get so hot that it'll crack the pot or somethin', you know, before we get the meat in there.

<Video shows Maxie Moore putting wood under the pots>

S. Woodward: Not many people cook with wood anymore, do they?

M. Moore: Not too many. I cook a stew every year for a church in [????]. They always want to cook with gas and I told them one time I wasn't gonna cook it no more...if they didn't cook it with wood. 'Cause I thought I could get a better stew with the wood.

S. Woodward: Um hum.

M. Moore: They come back beggin' and pleadin' and you know what I done. I went on and done it. *<He laughs>*

<Video shows the Cooking Committee show up>

M. Moore: Ya'll found some meat I reckon. *<Numerous "yeahs" can be heard>*

<Video shows numerous clips of men loading sheep into the pots>

Worker: You got any more you want some wood in?

M. Moore: Huh?

Worker: Hold off on the wood 'til we get the meat in?

M. Moore: The rest of them yeah, need to wait.

<Video shows more clips of the preparation before showing Maxie Moore again>

S. Woodward: Maxie, do you, uh-have you-do you cook many stews in this kinda cold?

M. Moore: Not too many. Not too many where it's real cold like this.

S. Woodward: How does it change the way you-you approach it?

M. Moore: Well, you just have to start a little bit earlier, to compensate for the cold weather.

<Video shows more shots of the preparation and then shows

M. Moore: I'm gonna start to puttin' onions in as fast as it-the water cooks down and [less'll] be able to put the onions we'll start puttin' a few buckets in to keep the pots full.

7. The stirring committee (02:54)

<Numerous conversations take place in the background during this clip>

<Video opens with one of the stirrers>

Stirrer 1: Got the changing of the guard, huh?

S. Woodward: That's right. *<They both laugh>*

<Video shows another stirrer>

S. Woodward: They put you right to work didn't they?

Stirrer 2: Well, I thought I'd try to stay warm. *<They both laugh>*

<Video shows a few clips of the stirring before showing a stirrer sitting down>

S. Woodward: When-when does it begin to all blend together?

Stirrer 3: Oh I'd say around two, three o'clock.

S. Woodward: Is that right?

Stirrer 3: It-it starts to gettin' brown. It starts to get a lot thicker then.

S. Woodward: Yeah.

Stirrer 3: Like all you see is just meat then.

S. Woodward: Right.

<Video shows Maxie Moore with another man>

M. Moore: They do all the work, I just kinda the one that kinda looks after. That's about all you can say. *<He laughs>*

Man: Yeah.

<Video shows a pot being stirred before showing Walter Thompson>

S. Woodward: That's gettin' pretty thick now isn't it?

W. Thompson: This is stirrin' easy now to what is gonna be stirrin' 'bout four or five o'clock this afternoon.

S. Woodward: It'll be a lot thicker than what-

W. Thompson: It'll be a lot thicker and when they start dippin', generally whoever's on the paddle up there dips on-he's on for the duration. He'll start dippin' and it won't change who's paddlin' 'cause-

S. Woodward: Why is that?

W. Thompson: Because just the lack of the number of people here...*<S. Woodward laughs>*...to get everything done.

S. Woodward: So what kind of thing do you use to dip it with?

W. Thompson: Uh, most the time we have-it's a ladle, like you...water dipper.

S. Woodward: A water dipper.

W. Thompson: Like-like you'd see at a spring.

S. Woodward: A pretty good sized thing then.

W. Thompson: Oh yeah. It takes about two dips in the pot to fill a quart.

<Video shows the pot of stew bubbling before showing Walter Thompson>

W. Thompson: If you find somebody who comes along and they're not stirring or feel, like, to the bottom of the pot, or stirrin' incorrectly, somebody's here is watchin' everybody.

<Video shows the pot of stew bubbling>

W. Thompson: We're gonna keep it movin'.

<Video shows Walter Thompson>

S. Woodward: So the big job is when it gets thick.

W. Thompson: Yep.

S. Woodward: It's keepin' it off that bottom.

W. Thompson: Yeah, you have to keep it off the bottom, because-just keep it in motion.

<Video shows the pot of stew bubbling before showing Walter Thompson>

W. Thompson: The last couple of hours we add potatoes and bread crumbs. And when you add those t-that combination, it thickens it right on up.

8. Preparing the stew (03:26)

<Video opens with a customer at a store before showing Bruce Thompson>

Customer: He's a sheep stew expert right here. Bruce-Bruce Thompson.

Someone: Bruce Thompson.

S. Woodward: *<Narrating>* I was scheduled to meet Bruce Thompson at the store. He had offered to let me ride with him to pick up the sheep from a local farmer.

B. Thompson: You reckon so.

S. Woodward: He just introduced you as the expert.

B. Thompson: Oh expert, that's a terrible title ain't it. *<They all laugh>* We discussed that earlier this evening, no-we had no experts.

<Video shows Bruce Thompson driving>

B. Thompson: It used to be we could buy the sheep very reasonable. Now they've about doubled in price.

S. Woodward: Is that right?

B. Thompson: [????]

<Video shows men throwing frozen sheep carcasses onto the bed of a pickup truck>

B. Thompson: Yeah!

Man: You done heard about that-about the game warden and the damn fishin' [business]-

S. Woodward: *<Narrating>* In the old days, sheep were raised in the Dundas area. Today they have to be bought from herds sometimes outside the state of Virginia. These sheep came from three different states.

Man: Said he wants to wait on the weather warms up a little bit more, make sure he's got his [????].

<Video shows sheep carcasses being broken down>

S. Woodward: *<Narrating>* Bruce Thompson and the Sheep Committee meet at the game dressing shed. Here they cut away the tallow and saw the sheep into parts for the stew pot. This tradition is rapidly disappearing. State government regulations are changing the old fashioned ways of preparing sheep stew.

<Video shows onions being peeled before showing Walter Thompson>

S. Woodward: Now does-does the stew have a real onion taste to it?

W. Thompson: Not at all.

S. Woodward: Really?

W. Thompson: It's kind of a...it's a-really a blended taste of sheep and onion...potatoes. By ten o'clock tomorrow morning, you won't be able to see these onions in the stew at all.

S. Woodward: How many buckets like these will you have by the time we're through here.

W. Thompson: There'll be at least six of 'em.

<Video shows Bernice Thompson>

B. Thompson: We're trying to get a lot of more young people involved. Um, I reckon the average age is...fifty maybe.

<Video shows Walter Thompson>

W. Thompson: Uh, Johnnie's son took some stew back up to JMU. I'll let Johnnie tell you the story 'bout that.

<Camera rotates to show Johnnie>

Johnnie: He decided-he loved sheep stew so he wanted to get him some so he carried-carried 'bout three or four quarts back up to JMU. Well he got up there and they got to cookin' it or warmin' it up to eat it *<Someone laughs>* and there wasn't-he couldn't find but two guys that had ever eaten sheep stew before, up there. One of those was from Pakistan and the other one was from Iraq *<Everyone laughs>*.

9. The Dundas Ruritan Club (04:35)

<Video opens with a shot of the building where the sheep stew is being prepared and then shows Maxie Moore>

S. Woodward: Maxie, what does the butter do for the stew?

M. Moore: Eh, it makes it smoother and it makes it have a butter taste too. Makes it...makes it kind of, smooth. I guess is what you'd say and [it's also to] put some more grease in it too.

<Video shows Maxie Moore and two other men>

M. Moore: Twenty five years since I last seen ya'.

Man: Been a long time.

Man 2: You haven't changed. You got a little older, but you ain't changed.

M. Moore: *<Rubbing his stomach>* Got a little-a little-

Man 2: Oh we all get that older. *<Everyone laughs>* That's natural: everything drops down, right?

<Video shows Maxie Moore adding breadcrumbs to the stew>

S. Woodward: What'cha puttin' in Maxie?

M. Moore: Puttin' in breadcrumbs.

S. Woodward: And what does that do?

M. Moore: Well, it makes it a little thicker. Takes up some of the extra water was in it and-and uh, pull it-pick it up like that and there's no lumps in it, it's pretty good and broken up, you know, pretty good and done. If you pick it up and you got yourself lumps

on the knife, you know it ain't done. Now this pot right here won't be like that. [See it's] not that smooth. You see how lumpy it is?

S. Woodward: Uh huh.

M. Moore: That's not done yet. See how stringy that looks? Looks a lot different from that'un right there.

S. Woodward: Yeah.

<Video cuts and then shows Maxie Moore testing a pot of stew again>

M. Moore: That'un's really. Now that's...

<Video cuts and shows Maxie Moore>

M. Moore: I told'em we're gonna dip this in ten minutes

<Video shows the amount of cars parked outside>

M. Moore: We usually start dippin' around five o'clock and we've been fortunate the last few stews we've had, they've been lined up almost to the road.

<Video shows Maxie Moore>

M. Moore: Mmm mmm. That's good. Here, shut that thing off and eat this right there, that's good. *<They laugh>*

<Bluegrass music plays in the background>

<Video shows the stew being divvied out before showing a woman being interviewed by Stanley Woodward>

S. Woodward: How long have you been eatin' sheep stew?

Woman: For a long time.

S. Woodward: Really?

Woman: Yes sir.

S. Woodward: How many years?

Woman: Oh ten, twelve, thirteen, or maybe longer-

S. Woodward: You-

Woman: -I've been knowin' about sheep stew. I grewed up in the town of Dundas and been sheep stew ever since I really knew how to [????]

S. Woodward: Is that right?

Woman: Yes sir.

S. Woodward: How would you describe the taste of it to somebody hadn't eaten it before.

Woman: It's very good. I tell anybody, "It's very good." I nev-I purchased it in different place with-houses and stuff people cook but I never tasted it taste as good as this goin' up here at the Dundas Club. It's very good.

S. Woodward: Is that right?

Woman: So anybody that don't like-

S. Woodward: Is it like anything anybodies ever tasted before? Is it-

Woman: It's not nothin'-it's not like beef. Lot of people say it's like beef, but it's better than that. It's the best taste-stuff I ever taste. It called sheep stew.

<Video shows another woman>

Woman 2: Well all I can say is it's just good.

S. Woodward: *<To the child>* Do you eat sheep stew?

Woman 2: Say yes sir. *<They both laugh>*

<Video shows a man>

Man 3: Uh, I guess on the same line as-as Brunswick Stew. It's cooked basically the same.

<Video shows another man>

Man 4: It's not explanatory.

<Video shows another man>

Man 5: I've been eatin' it forty years.

S. Woodward: How old are you?

Man 5: Forty three. *<They both laugh>*

<Video shows Maxie Moore>

M. Moore: You see around Dundas, you'll hear a lot of stuff.

S. Woodward: Is it all the truth?

M. Moore: No, very little. *<They all laugh>*

<Video shows another man>

Man 6: Poor people, didn't have nothin' else to eat. Started out on goats and then finally made it, after they got a little bit of money and got ahead, to cookin' some sheep.

<Video shows a woman in a car>

Woman 3: Where do you know they cook sheep stew besides Dundas? *<She laughs>*

10. The art of cooking stew (03:52)

<Video opens with someone picking bones from the stew>

M. Moore: It usually takes about a couple of hours...of pickin' to get all the bones out and then we pick from then 'til we start dippin', we'll be gettin' one of two bones out or somethin'. That's the main bone pickin' time.

<Video shows Maxie Moore before showing Walter Thompson>

S. Woodward: He's sort of managing the stew now isn't he? I see him movin' fast and he's goin' and gettin' that water.

W. Thompson: Yeah, he up there. He's gettin'-he's up there-this is gonna be about the last water he can add to the stew. After-after now he won't be able to add no more water...so any decisions that's gotta be made on it's gotta be made now so it'll have time to cook down before we get ready to dip.

S. Woodward: So this is where his art comes in, isn't it?

W. Thompson: This is in the art of cookin' it.

<Video shows Bernice Thompson>

B. Thompson: And the whole responsibility is thrown on a stewmaster, I think, you know. He's the one who's gonna make all the calls and if it's bla-if it's anything wrong, they're gonna blame it on him.

<Video shows Maxie Moore>

S. Woodward: What is a stewmaster, do you know that?

M. Moore: I guess-I guess what they call it is just somebody that looks after it to make sure that everything gets done...uh, would be what I would call a stewmaster.

S. Woodward: What kind of characteristics does he have to have, I mean-?

M. Moore: *<He laughs>* I don't know if he has to have any particular characteristics. He just, uh, he just has to be there and he has to be there most of the time to see that everything get's done-

S. Woodward: Well now right here is a good example though, of what a stewmaster is, right? Because you call the shots in terms of how much pepper goes in-

M. Moore: Oh yeah.

S. Woodward: - and that sort of thing. So-so it has to do with your taste doesn't it?

M. Moore: Well, it has to do with my taste and of course, I get-I get some of the others to taste too. I don't go...preside solely by my taste, uh, well I ask some of the others to taste it to see how they think and then we just more or less agree on what's right and what's wrong. *<He laughs>*

S. Woodward: Right.

<Video shows Bernice Thompson>

B. Thompson: Um, before Maxie gets too old and wants to retire, we're gonna have to train somebody else. *<They laugh>*

<Video shows a pot of stew being stirred>

B. Thompson: We try to keep the young ones on the last shift because that's the hardest shift of all. You gotta continue to stir to make sure it doesn't stick and-

S. Woodward: And it's gettin' thicker.

B. Thompson: -and it's gettin' thicker and heavier as it, you know, as it gets closer towards being done so we try to aim for most of the young ones to be on this shift

<Video shows a stirrer>

Stirrer: ...trying to bring them up, but you can't see them.

B. Thompson: I know.

<Video shows Maxie Moore adding seasoning>

M. Moore: See that measurin' cup? *<They laugh>*

<Video shows containers of seasonings>

M. Moore: You start puttin' your seasonin', your pepper, and your salt, and your red pepper, black pepper.

<Video shows shots of the stew being cooked and then shows someone dumping a bucket of mashed potatoes into one of the pots>

M. Moore: Somebody cooks the potatoes startin' around 12-12:30 in the house in a pot on the stove and then they mash'em up and then we add those potatoes about three o'clock. Continue on cookin' this not as fast because it will scorch quicker the doner it gets. Just keep it boilin' good, you know.

<Video shows the pots>

S. Woodward: Man that's rockin' and rollin'

M. Moore: <Laughing> That's the beauty of youth. That's the beauty of youth.