

## Harry L. Hucks

Isle of Hope

1910 – 1994

By Noel & Ruthie Wright

Harry Hucks was known as one of the best fisherman on Isle of Hope. He moved on the island in 1918 with his Mother and Father and on Rose Avenue. He attended the elementary school here. Harry started commercial fishing in 1928 when he began working on a boat named the “Nellie C” owned by Joe and Raymond Hallman of Isle of Hope. The boat was kept at Barbee’s pavilion and restaurant. Then he found an old boat abandoned in the mud. He dug it out of the mudbank, brought it to Isle of Hope, and completely rebuilt it. Because it had a picture of Mickey Mouse on the bow, he named it the Mickey Mouse. With this boat he hunted and trapped for Dr. Tory on Ossabaw Island, among others.

When Harry and Stella Mock were married, they lived at 55 Henderson Avenue and raised six children; Inez, Harry III, Sarah, Portia, Lula and Carson, who now lives on Rosenbrook Ave.

In 1938 he purchased a heavily built boat named the Dill Pickle and converted it into a shrimp boat. Shrimp fishing was good and he unloaded his catch at Barbee’s, where they canned the shrimp along with terrapins and clams. But in 1940 the shrimp became scarce, so he sold the boat to take a job with the Corps of Engineers working as the operator of a tugboat. During World War II he became the

leverman on the dredge Henry Bacon and worked on harbor dredging and maintenance up and down the east coast, including a winter in Newfoundland. Harry retired after 29 years of service.

Noel and I met Harry in 1957 when we returned home after two years in the army stationed in Oklahoma. Harry kept his bateau at our dock and supplied us with many fish suppers. He became part of our family, eating almost every holiday meal with us. He divided his eating time between our family and Blackie and Harriet Barras, where he was affectionately called "Papa". Harry would never eat a meal without providing some special food that he wanted cooked. We still remember Harry knocking on the door and calling out, "Newell (Noel), fresh fish."

We loved hearing his Gullah stories. One of our favorite stories that Harry told was about the time he was at the old City Market in downtown Savannah where most of the vendors came from Daufuskie. He wanted to buy some chickens from an old Daufuskie farmer he knew who spoke Gullah and did not know how to count. The old man assured Harry he could now count. Harry dared the old man to demonstrate his counting abilities, so he started by counting his chickens. He said "Dere's two, dere's turty, dere's two pernappynutty and dere's two wid his legs tied together!"

Harry was always giving us meaningful quotes that he had memorized. Here are a few of them:

There is only one thing better than making a new friend and that is keeping an old one.

2. Any man who doesn't want what he hasn't got, has all he wants.

3. The fault- finder will find faults in Paradise.

4. When love is thin, faults are thick.

Harry was one of our friends who lived on the island that made Isle of Hope so special. He would sit on our dock and knit cast nets. Or he would silently sit in his rocking chair and stare at the marsh across the river calling the green grass his front lawn. He kept his bateau at our dock, and when the tide was just right, he would paddle a few docks away to his favorite fishing drop beside Archie Morris' dock, always returning with fish for the next meal. We called him our dock master.

When our children were little and their friends came over to have mud fights, Harry was there to make them clean every speck of mud from the dock. He took the boys on boat trips to Wassaw and Ossabaw and taught them all about the river and the islands.

We still miss him.