## DICK McKANDLESS

Dick McKandless was born Sept. 17, 1915 in West Creek. He grew up in Simm Place and walked through the woods to the little one-room schoolhouse in Warren Grove. After leaving Tuckerton High School he worked with Milton and Josie Cox, hauling and cutting timber in West Creek. Harvesting salt hay from the marshes was still another part-time job.

Party boat fishing in the summer was Dick's main source of income. He painted the signs on racing garveys and painted the wasp on Mason Price's garvey. Because they couldn't afford to buy good brushes for the sign painting, Dick would have his mom cut his hair so he could shape it and make his brushes out of it.

Dick's family lived off the white tail deer, using all of its parts. His two daughters even had a tail on their hats. They made stew out of the tough cuts of meat.

Dick was serious about his hunting and made sure the girls knew about safety. One day, however, one daughter was in a particularly mischievous mood and took the buckshot out of his shells and replaced them with cooking flour. Dick came home from work, grabbed his gun saying he'd just seen a deer, and flew out the door. He found the deer, stood in front of it and fired. Poof! White powder. Shot again. Poof! More white powder. It finally occurred to him what had happened. He ran home, threw his gun on the sofa and yelled, "Starve, you b———, starve!"

Dick hunted with all the Prices and Joe Dayton. They weren't actually a club but a group of close friends. One day they were out duck hunting with the Conklins and a terrible lightning storm came up. The kids were scared to death and Dick was trying to make light of it. He had an old iron coffee pot on board. Every time lightning would flash he would yell "Crack her again, J.C." Well, he did. Lightning struck the coffee pot, scaring the wits out of everyone on board, and Dick never again made light of lightning on the high seas.

Garvey building was another vocation Dick could count on. He learned his garvey building from Adam Price. The boat building business was on the corner of Bay Avenue and Route 9 in Parkertown. He built a 17-foot garvey with a Ford engine in it named the *Alice M.* It ran fast, but he let some friends borrow it and the bottom fell out of it.

The biggest weakfish haul the family ever had was aboard a 21-foot garvey Dick made. At the tide pond between West Creek and Parkertown during a full moon, they caught a dozen three- and four-pound fish using shedders and live shrimp. Dick knew where to go and that the moon and tides were just right for this catch.

During recent years Dick became a bird carver. His birds are said to be so good that he can sit them in the grass and fool the smartest birds and the smartest people.