

BERT CRANMER

Bert Cranmer was born in 1904 and raised in Cedar Run. He has been making a living from the bay since he was old enough to drive a boat. Bert was taught the bay by his dad, Howard Cranmer, who took him out on the water when he was 4 or 5 years old.

His first boat was a 12-foot sailing sneakbox built by his dad's uncle, George Bogart of Cedar Run.

Bert started his clamming business in 1931 on Cedar Run Dock Road, where he owned and operated a clam house. The clammers would bring their catch to him. Bert would buy the clams and sell them to the markets in New York.

In 1931 Bert was buying clams for 20 cents a hundred for necks, 30 cents a hundred for cherries and 40 cents a hundred for chowders. He handled about 100,000 clams a day.

Most of the clamming Bert did himself was by treading and using his sneakbox.

To go along with his clam house, Bert used to have rental boats, about 10 of them. Some of them were built by his dad. He had them for a few years.

Bert also caught some oysters and tried planting his own seed oysters. He went to New Gretna, bought a garvey load of seed oysters for 30 cents a bushel and brought them back to Cedar Run, where he planted them. But the drumfish ate them before he could harvest them after they grew to the right size.

Grass shrimping was another of Bert's hobbies; he sold them at his clam house for 35 cents a quart to use for weakfish bait. Bert said catching grass shrimp at night was a lot easier and better than in the daytime.

In the winter Bert helped his brother Howard Jr. guide his hunting parties off Cedar Run, hunting mostly black ducks and broadbills.