

#3C 1940s David Chadwick - Harkers Island-Straits Baseball Team in the Tidewater League

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By Joe Willis

David Chadwick was borne Jan 21, 1925. He grew up in Straits about 100 yards behind his present home today. His parents were Ira Pigott and Lillie Davis Chadwick. His parents had three boys, Claude, Walter and David and two daughters Evelyn and Virgie.

David served in the Army in France and Germany in 1946-1948. He was hospitalized in Germany and moved to England. David said, "I didn't know the Army had truck until the last few months when I began working in the motor pool." He said, "All I did was walk through France and Germany wearing out shoe leather."

In 1953, David married Mamie Springler from Beaufort and they had a daughter Lillie.

David played for the Tidewater Harkers Island-Straits team in the Tidewater League in the 1940s, and he was selected as an All-Star along with Moe Willis, David Yeomans and Lee Hawkins.

David got started in playing baseball with the "Big Boys" when he attended as a spectator a game when he was twelve years old. Because of number of errors being made at second base, David was pulled out of the stands to play with the Straits team around 1937. He had to borrow a glove from the opposing team (Beaufort) and when he did so well the next inning they would let him have a glove again.

He told me a story about the time he 'popped' his knee while playing baseball and that Wilson Davis and Snowball Gaskill carried him into the house. They put him down in front of his mother and said here he is. Wilson had to go and left Snowball to explain what happen. She didn't understand a word he said.

He told how one game with Morehead how Moe Willis could not go with the team to pitch and the team had to get someone to pitch and they elected Lee Hawkins. Lee had been a big time pitcher for the Duke Blue Devils in the late 1920s. but that was more than 20 years ago, now he was a first baseman and a great power hitter, but he pitched but he knew he had to lob the ball rather than try to throw it fast, so he lobbed the ball the whole game. At first Morehead, one of the top teams in the league was booing and when the Morehead team never hit the ball, about the third inning the fans started booing their team. HI-Straits went on to beat Morehead who was leading the league at that time.

He still loves to talk about his friend Gerald Whitehurst, the Manager of the HI-Straits team in 1948, how he used to go out in the car and listen to Baltimore play on the AM Radio and about how his wife Mae had to come and get late into the night.

David still talks about baseball and his fellow players with such great affection that he makes you feels like it was just yesterday that he was enjoying his field of dreams..