



EMORY M. HOBBS
... interesting career

Emory Hobbs Unique In Fishing Annals

Looking through the pages of Bay County marine history the career of Captain Emory M. Hobbs stands out as one of the most interesting of that small select group of mariners whose foresight made Panama City the active fishing center it is today. Coming to Bay County from Colquit, Georgia in 1906 Captain Hobbs began operating a water taxi out of Lynn Haven in 1910, and began carrying mail under contract in 1911 from Bayhead to Panama City.

With his original boat the "Clipper" he began party boat operations from the old city docks in 1944. From here he moved to Holiday Lodge and then to his present location on Grand Lagoon. His fishing experience has covered shrimping and seine boat operations in addition to party boat. Captain Hobbs claims several "firsts" in the party boat field, the most outstanding of which are the initiation of the 2 a.m. trips, and the operation of the first large (65') party boat with the old Gulf Clipper which he had built in Biloxi in 1949.

One of his favorite reminiscences of the beginning days of local marine operations concerns the difficulty in getting a skippers license. Back then they were issued in Appalachicola and the only means of transportation was by water, so Captain Hobs and several other hopefuls chartered a boat operated by J.B. Blackwell to make the run there and sit for their tickets. "Quite a difference from now when you can ride over to Mobile in an air-conditioned car" he commented.

He has two sons in the marine field, Emory who was recently elected Harbormaster and Eugene who is actively helping his father in the operation of the Hobbs fleet.