

The Story of Noel and Ruthie Wright

I walk up the steps to 3 Bluff Drive and rap on the front door with the door knocker. I'm greeted by Noel Wright who knows more about Isle of Hope than just about anybody else alive. And his is no book knowledge. It is the firsthand account of a man who moved to Isle of Hope in 1944 and has lived here for the better part of 75 years.

Noel's dad, Noel Wright, Sr., an attorney turned FBI man, moved the Wright family from Ardsley Park to the Isle of Hope because he loved to hunt and fish. Back then, the island was the country—and Noel's mom protested. But Noel was glad she didn't protest too much. He loved the outdoors too.

Noel lived at a home built in 1848 located at 3 Bluff Drive. The first day he came to the island, he strolled down Bluff Drive and noticed three young ladies on the porch of a house at 19 Bluff Drive. Ruthie Bright and her friends, the Cope twins (Jean and Joan), were playing a game of Canasta. They noticed Noel too. His wife, Ruthie, who has



lived here longer than Noel, says it was because there weren't any boys on the island that were their ages. And then she looks at him out of the corner of her eyes and tells Noel not to say what he's about to say. She knows what is coming. She's heard it many times over the past seven decades. Noel says with a straight face: "No, I think the game was spin the bottle."

I can't imagine how many times, they've told this story over the years, but it is a glimpse into their personalities and the bond they have forged since then. Their relationship, just like Isle

of Hope, has an unspoiled character that has grown and changed over the years, but it has still held onto its essence, the "thing" that makes it like nothing else in the world.

As we sip lemonade at their kitchen table, Noel walks me through the details of how he came here in 1944 when the trolley was still running to its stop at Barbee's Pavilion (near today's Marina), how they met at 14, started dating at 16, and well, never left each other's side—at least not for very long. Noel went away to St. Andrew's Episcopal School, then Washington (continued on page 4)

Editor's Note

Before people could write they told stories. And while, it is great to cozy up with a book and experience what you have not lived yourself, there's nothing like hearing someone tell their own story.

Sitting down at Noel and Ruthie Wright's kitchen table, walking around the home Noel grew up in on Bluff Drive as he answered my questions about pictures hanging from the walls, antique furniture, and his wood creations was quite an experience. Sitting down beside him as he clicked through old photos of Isle of Hope that he had scanned over the years was better than simply reading a book or an article on the history of Isle of Hope.

I saw the island and its history through the eyes

of someone who likely knows it more deeply than anyone alive.

I wish you could have been there, but unfortunately, you will have to settle for my recollection of the event. It won't measure up to the experience I had, but hopefully I'll give those who don't know the Wright's—who many consider the patriarch and matriarch of Isle of Hope—a taste of why they are, and have been, such an essential part of the story of Isle of Hope for a long, long time.

Thanks to Noel and Ruthie for taking the time to share their story with all of us that are part of the Isle of Hope Community.

I would also like to give a shout out to all our contributors and advertisers.

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-Editor, Chris Brantley

The Isle of Hope News is a bi-monthly publication serving Isle of Hope area residents and advertisers. It was started by Isle of Hope resident Ed Yannett in 2011 and mails to 2,400 residents in Isle of Hope, Dutch Island and surrounding areas.



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The First Isle of Hope Arts Festival



*First Annual Christmas Sale
of the
Isle of Hope Artisans' League*

The Isle of Hope Artisan's League is a group of local artists who live in the Isle of Hope community. Each will be offering quality items for sale. Art forms include: turned wooden bowls, quilts, pottery, paintings, stained glass, painted fireplace screens, sculpture, photography, and much more.

Artwork will be displayed on the lawns and porches of the lovely historic home of Ruthie and Noel Wright on the Bluff.

When: Saturday, Nov. 10, 2001
9:00 AM—5:00 PM

Where: 3 Bluff Drive
Savannah, GA 31406

Participating Artists

Alberta Beckwith
Polly Cooper
Rebecca Cope
John Jensen
Linda Jensen
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Julie Haven Rittmeyer
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Connie Wright
Noel Wright
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The 1st IOH Arts Festival on the Wright's Front Porch & Yard



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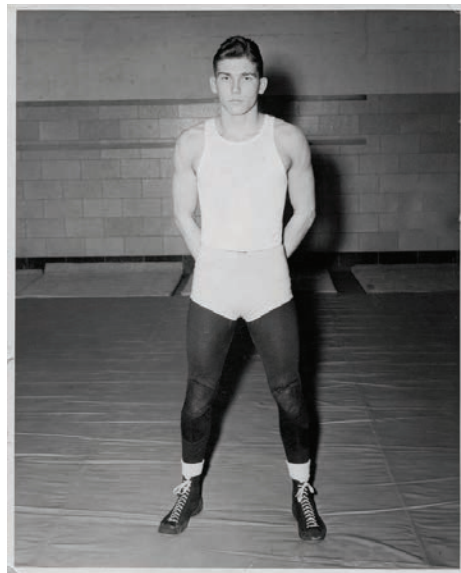


Noel and Ruthie

(continued from the cover) and Lee University—while Ruthie earned her teaching degree at the University of Georgia.

At Washington and Lee, Noel wrestled (never lost a match until he joined a fraternity and got distracted), played football and tennis too. But he transferred to the University of Georgia after one year to be closer to Ruthie. She graduated in

1953 and they married in 1954 in the living room of Ruthie’s home on 1 Bluff Drive. After graduating, she planned to teach at an Athen’s elementary school for a year, while Noel finished his last year of college. But she soon got the flu. She was dehydrated, throwing up, etc. As Noel tells the story, Ruthie chimes in “I was pregnant.” Such is life, but they went onto have three kids who all



Noel’s College Wrestling Picture

live on Isle of Hope.

After Noel served two years in the Army Field Artillery as a 2nd & 1st Lieutenant at Fort Sill in landlocked Oklahoma (which Ruthie didn’t like too much), they came back home to their beloved Isle of Hope. They lived in Wymberly and then on Hopecrest before moving back to the Wright family’s old homestead at 3 Bluff Drive in 1985.

In 1957, Noel began working at First Federal Savings & Loan and Ruthie taught fourth grade at Isle of Hope School and then Savannah Christian. As she talks about teaching her eyes still light up. “I loved teaching school,” she tells me. Many of the kids she taught still live on the island. She also wrote two children’s books, titled



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Noel and Ruthie

"Hello, Dr. Mew" and "Mo-sey" under the pen name Savannah Nana.

After this kitchen table introduction, Noel takes me to his office to see some vintage photos of Isle of Hope that he has scanned onto his computer. On our way, I get a tour of his amazing home. I have a few questions, like wow, has this furniture been around since your parents moved in. "Yes, most of it," says Noel. Every room is chock full of antiques. I also notice some interesting photos on the wall. There's one of George Washington Wylly, Sr. who lived in the house for 88 years before selling

it to Olin McIntosh in 1942. McIntosh sold the house to Noel's parents in 1944. There's another of Ruthie looking beautiful on her and Noel's wedding day. Noel's woodwork is also scattered all about the rooms. He's a woodturner, but we'll talk more about that later.

So here we are in his office, on the wall, is a picture of his Brittany Beau, his old boat (which weathered Hurricane David in 1979), and an aerial view of Isle of Hope from the early 1900s. We sit down and peruse his computer files which contain what is likely the most extensive library of Isle of Hope historical photos

found anywhere in the world. I am tempted to ask him to send me his hard drive. As we click through each photo, he points out the ones he really likes, tells me the story of most, but there are a few he can't place.

After this, we head to his workshop. I know about it because, I walk the Bluff most mornings and hear his lathe turning when I pass in front of his house. As I said before, Noel is a woodturner. For those, who don't know (yeah, I had to look it up too) woodturning is "the art or process of fashioning wooden pieces or blocks (continued on 14)



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My wife Lisa grew up here on Peridot Lane and we knew there was no other place we wanted to raise our family.

But I'll have to say living here has exceeded my expectations -- by a ton. I've watched my boys, Ed Beck and Charlie grow up here and have never worried about their safety. They rode bikes with their friends, fished, swam, attended church a block down the street --- and just had a great time surrounded by friends who cared about them and looked out for them.

I like to say it's a combination of Andy Griffith's Mayberry and Cheers -- a small town "where everybody knows your name" and they look out for one another. Something that is very hard to find these days. Yes, the Isle of Hope is one of the most beautiful places in Savannah, but what I love most about Isle of Hope is the sense of community that is like no place else. - Ed



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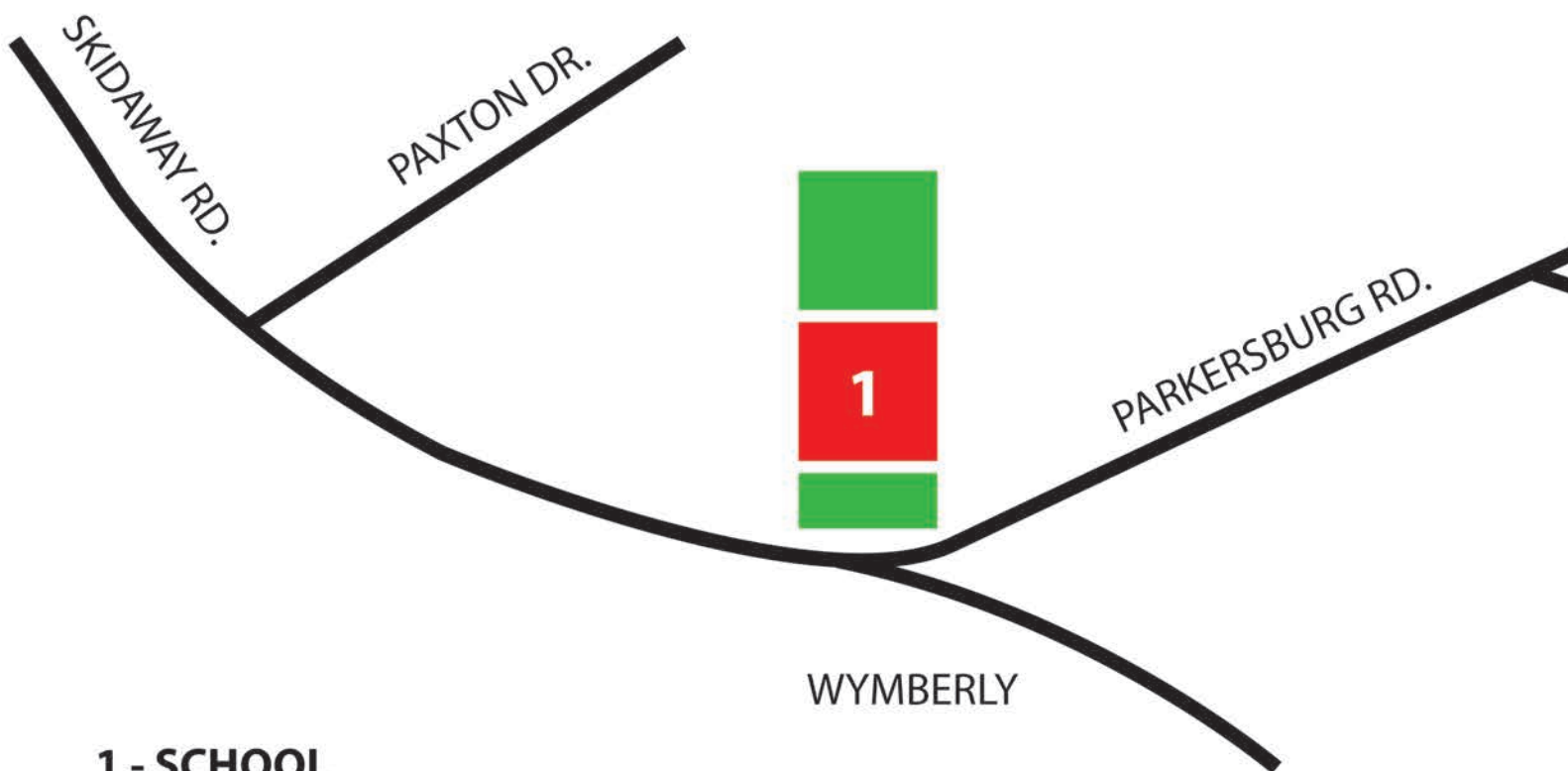
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**The Placement of this Map in the Isle of Hope News Was Sponsored by Team Yannett*

Your Neighborhood Market Report By Team Yannett

Homes Sold on Isle of Hope and Dutch Island (1-1-2018 to 9-30-2018)

SOLD	IOH 2018- 1/1 to 9/30	DI 2018 - 1/1 to 9/30
Homes Sold	45	10
Avg. List Price	402,722	477,470
LP Per SQ FT	173.17	149.71
Avg. Sold Price	384,936	454,610
SP per SQ FT	166.64	143.14
Days On Market	124	158
Least Expensive	209,000	325,000
Most Expensive	1,300,000	540,000
FOR SALE	Isle of Hope	Dutch Island
Homes for Sale	13	9
Avg. List Price	383,476	586,867
LP Per SQ FT	155.5	167.04
Days on Market	105	109
Least Expensive	249,900	349,000
Most Expensive	729,590	898,000

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Notes from IOH Neighborhood Watch Meeting

* Chatham County Police Chief Hadley presented Andra Adair-Morgan with a special award honoring her mother Anita for all that she did for IOH and the Chatham Co. Police!

* Chief Hadley reported that the overall Chatham Co. crime rate is down 11% and IOH is below the average crime rate for this area.

* He stressed that most crimes on IOH are property crimes with 96% of those related to car break-ins. "Very

rarely do you see windows getting smashed, most thieves open the car though unlocked car doors." He and Helen Stone urged us to lock car doors.

* Residents voiced safety concerns about speeding, panhandling in Sandfly and Wal-Mart/McDonald's, and gunshots.

* The Chief took notes about where drivers are speeding and running stop signs and he and Helen discussed some ways they

may be able to help. Helen said "speeding is one of the most dangerous threats to lives in a neighborhood like IOH."

* Chief Hadley stated that he was unaware of panhandlers in the area becoming violent. "We don't know what you don't tell us." He and Helen stressed that if anyone feels threatened by panhandlers to first walk/drive away, get a good description of the person, and call 911 when you are in a safe place. You don't need to stick around. They will respond.

* The Chief asked that if we hear gunshots (that aren't the gun club) to call 911 so his officers can investigate.

In closing, Chief Hadley discussed how a neighborhood watch could help with many of these and other issues.

He shared several tips from other successful neighborhood watches and pledged that he and his officers will support an IOH neighborhood watch (because it helps them to be more effective at what they do).

He is happy to advise us on how to set an IOH neighborhood watch up for success and provide a meeting space, if needed. He shared his email: jhadley@chathamcounty.org and said we can reach out to him as needed and to follow the Chatham County Facebook page. - *Provided by Amanda Meadows via Facebook Post*



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Boxwood Wreath (18")	\$ 34		
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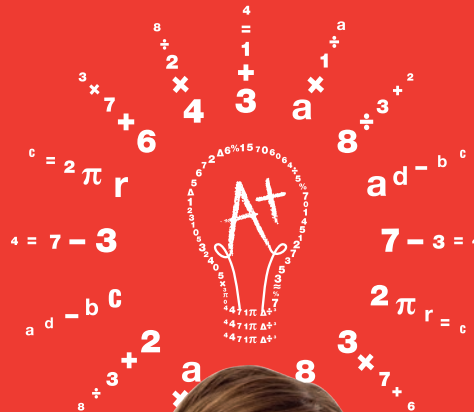
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For more info, contact Brooke Chambers at Isle of Hope UMC bchambers@iohumc.com 355-8527

The 'Trap' of Not 'Filling in the Gaps' in Math

Poor grades might seem be the most obvious sign that your child needs additional support in math but there are many other signs that can indicate that there may have foundational gaps that will affect them in future grades and even in College.

- Low self-esteem about math. Comments like 'I'm no good at math'
- Missing key milestones. Addition/subtraction facts should be mastered by end of 2nd or 3rd grade, multiplication and division by end 3rd or 4th grade, fluency with fractions by the end of 5th or 6th grade.
- Physical signs like counting on fingers suggests poor retention of number facts
- Frustration with math homework or avoiding the homework altogether
- Weak mental math skills, reliance too much on paper and pencil

Parents often comment to me that 'My child did great until 3rd grade....' or 'everything was fine till we got to middle school,' or 'he managed to pass Algebra but has failed Geometry twice'. Math is a foundational subject. Each topic and each grade builds on previous concepts and skills. Curriculum in math that adopts a fast, spiraling approach with the hope that if a student doesn't get

something the first time, they will get it on the next pass, seldom give students the chance to master the topic. The class has moved on nonetheless.

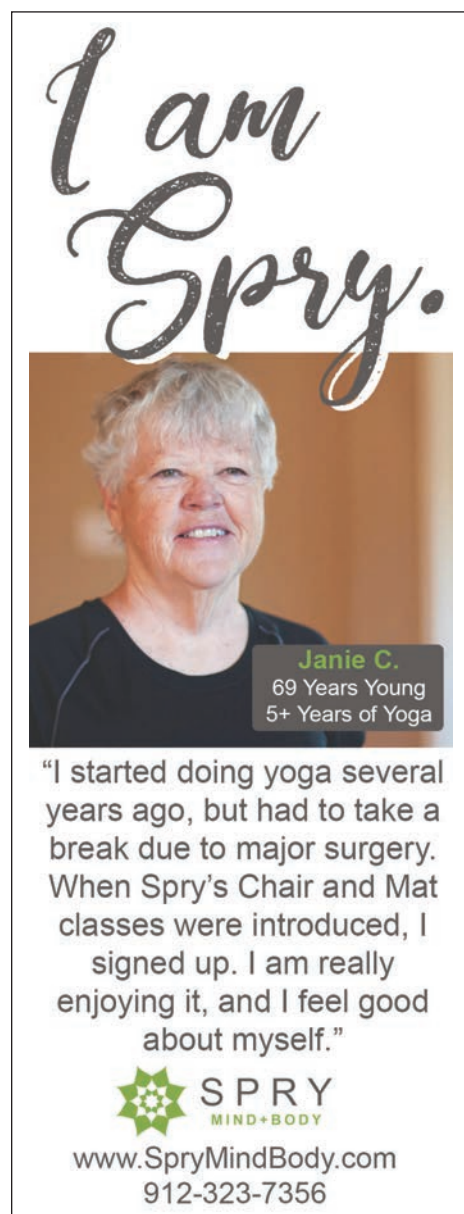
Too often, students are passed through each grade, or pushed into advanced academic programs when they lack the prerequisite skills needed for success. Frustration sets in and tears can take over.

Private tutors will offer support to 'put out today's fire' by working on homework and studying for tests, but without identifying the underlying skills that are causing the problem, long term success in math is unattainable. Once you fill those gaps, the homework and tests become so much easier.

Many Colleges have college placement tests to determine where students should be placed in Math. So passing grades without true understanding through middle and high school might result in students spending semesters in remedial classes in College. While this might be discouraging for students, and painful for the parent's bank balance, it is more likely to set them up for academic success in College by making sure they have the required skills

for their math classes.


Aileen Clarkson is the owner of 4 local Mathnasium Math Learning centers. She can be contacted on 912-355-5678, by email at savannahmidtown@mathnasium.com or at www.mathnasium.com/savannahmidtown



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Noel and Ruthie

(continued from page 5)
into various forms and shapes by means of a lathe." He spends hours a day using his tools and the lathe to transform all types of wood blocks. Some he has found on the side of the road, some he has received from friends, and others he has ordered from as far away as Australia.

As I watched Noel work, I couldn't help but think about how we all receive a life, a block of wood so to speak, that we have to shape and mold into something else—and if we work hard and are fortunate it becomes something that exudes our character. I just

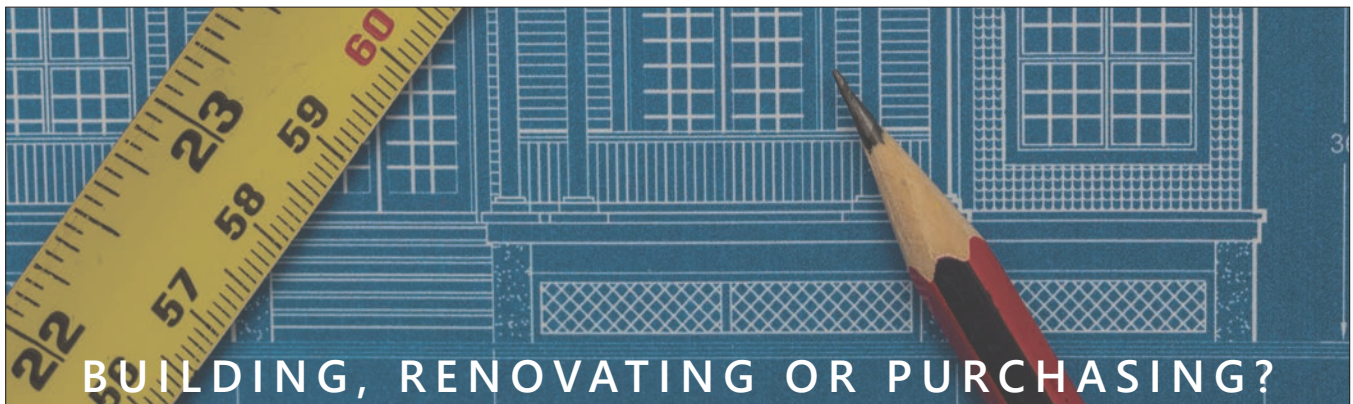


Woodturning: Noel Working with the Lathe

met Noel and Ruthie today. But as I've spent time with them and listened to their story, I have gained a sense of how starting in 1944 until this day, they have crafted

a life and relationship as exceptional as the island they've lived on for so long.

-Chris Brantley



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