

2007

Ron and Natalie Daise

Saddler Taylor

University of South Carolina - Columbia, taylor7@mailbox.sc.edu

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarcommons.sc.edu/mks_staffpub



Part of the [History Commons](#)

Publication Info

Published in *The South Carolina Encyclopedia*, ed. Walter B. Edgar, 2007, pages 242-243.

This Article is brought to you by the McKissick Museum at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Staff Publications by an authorized administrator of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact digres@mailbox.sc.edu.

Daise, Ron (b. 1956) and Natalie Daise (b. 1960). Educators, entertainers. Well known for bringing Gullah culture to national and international television audiences, Ron and Natalie Daise have spent the last two decades researching, performing, and publishing information about the dynamic history of lowcountry African Americans. Born in the Cedar Grove community of St. Helena Island on January 29, 1956, Ron Daise grew up singing at home, at

school, and in church choirs. After earning a B.A. in mass media arts from Hampton Institute in Virginia, Daise returned home to explore the Gullah culture of his youth. As the first African American reporter for the *Beaufort Gazette*, Daise had the opportunity to talk to many elderly Sea Island residents about the history of the Gullah community. This wealth of information formed the basis for his 1986 book, *Reminiscences of Sea Island Heritage*.

Ron Daise and Natalie Daise, his wife since 1985, have tirelessly performed the program *Sea Island Montage*, a multimedia theater performance that combines photographs, storytelling, song, and dance. Natalie, a native of Rochester, New York, was born on November 11, 1960, into a musical family. In 1994 the Daises launched the children's television program *Gullah Gullah Island*, which aired on the Nick Jr. cable television network through 1997. Several other projects followed, including the music production *Sweet Surprises*. Completed in 2000, *Sweet Surprises* features original love songs written and performed by Ron Daise. In the same year Natalie Daise opened Miss Natalie's Workshop. Located on St. Helena Island, the shop features handcrafted Gullah gifts and arts and crafts workshops. In addition, the Daises have numerous children's books and audio and video productions to their credit. Strong advocates for the importance of recognizing Gullah language and culture, the Daises have ensured that people around the world are familiar with the Gullah history tied to the South Carolina Sea Islands. They reside in Beaufort with their two children. SADDLER TAYLOR

Daise, Ronald. *Little Muddy Waters: A Gullah Folk Tale*. Beaufort, S.C.: G.O.G. Enterprises, 1997.

———. *Reminiscences of Sea Island Heritage*. Orangeburg, S.C.: Sandlapper, 1986.