



## Handsel Grady Morgan, Sr.

February 29, 2020

Mr. Handsel Grady Morgan, Sr., age 98, of Buford, GA, passed away on February 29, 2020. He is survived by three children, daughter, Ann Morgan Kaser, of Los Angeles, CA; son, Handsel Morgan, Jr., of Buford, GA; and son and daughter-in-law, Tim and Darcy Morgan, of Buford, GA; by four grandchildren, Lois Morgan Grimsley (Ryan), Taylor Morgan (Jessica), Leah Morgan, and Samuel Morgan (Hannah); and by five great-grandchildren. He was predeceased by his wife of sixty-two years, Joy King Morgan, and his parents, Henry Grady Morgan and Eva Benson Morgan.

He was born in Buford, Georgia, on September 20, 1921, and graduated from Buford High School, where he played football, basketball, baseball, track, and other sports. He was a member of Buford First United Methodist Church since 1931, serving in a number of positions, including Church Board, District Trustee, delegate to Annual Conference, Chancel Choir, and perhaps most notably, he taught the Fellowship Sunday School Class for more than 40 years.

He earned an AB degree from Piedmont College, a Masters Degree from University of Georgia, where he was Phi Beta Kappa, and earned his law degree while teaching at Buford High School by going to night school at John Marshall Law School, and was admitted to the Georgia Bar in 1950.

He served 37 months in the U.S. Army during World War II, being deployed in the Allied invasion of North Africa, Italy, France, and Germany, and is an Honorary Lifetime Member of the American Legion.

He served three terms in the Georgia House of Representatives, serving from 1959-1965, one of Gwinnett County's two representatives at the time. Perhaps his most significant accomplishment in the legislature was co-sponsoring legislation to create the Gwinnett Judicial Circuit out of the Piedmont Judicial Circuit, so Gwinnett County had its own court system and was no longer combined with Jackson, Barrow, and Banks Counties.

He was the first executive director of the Buford Housing Authority, supervising the original construction of the public housing projects in Buford, Sugar Hill, Duluth, and Flowery Branch.

He served as Judge of the City Court of Buford (later the State Court of Gwinnett County) from 1965 to 1970. By 1970, the population of Gwinnett County had increased to 50,000, and the County was thereby entitled to establish its own separate Juvenile Court. Beginning in 1971, he served as Gwinnett County's first Juvenile Court Judge, presiding for 20 plus years and retiring in 1991.

He received the Public Service Award in 1994 from the Gwinnett Chamber of Commerce.

He was appointed Buford City Historian in 1987 and began collecting information for a history of Buford, *Historic Buford*, published in 1993, and later republished.

He also wrote *The Buford First United Methodist Church: a History*, published in 1996, followed in 2008 by *The Measure You Give*, a collection of his

Sunday School lessons.

He was also instrumental in establishing the Buford City Museum.

Funeral services will be held on Wednesday, March 4, 2020, at 11:00 A.M. in the sanctuary of Buford First United Methodist Church, with Rev. Jim Buckman officiating. Interment will follow at Broadlawn Memorial Gardens in Buford, Ga. The family will receive friends at the funeral home on Tuesday from 4:00 P.M. until 8:00 P.M.

While the family welcomes flowers, Mr. Morgan requested donations to the Buford First United Methodist Church Building Fund.

# Tribute Wall



“ *Handsel Grady Morgan, Sr.*

November 08, 2022 at 07:37 PM



“ *I am pleased that I had the honor to meet him.*

**Randy Savage** - March 05, 2020 at 12:00 AM



“ *Mr. Morgan was almost the first person I actually spoke with when I first came to Buford, so my history goes way back. It was 1973. I thought a lot of him and know he was a very fine man, one of the best anyone could ever know. He was multifaceted in so many ways and yet was always a humble man. I enjoyed chatting with both he and Joy when they visited my practice with their cats and I can testify they both loved their animals! I enjoyed his Book about Buford and know that he loved this community and its people. He was someone a person could count on to do the right thing. Rest in Peace Sir, and I believe as much as my own Father and Mother that you are happy in Heaven with Jesus and your loved ones there. God Bless the family and rest assured that you will, one day, as the Bible promises, be reunited in Heaven. With Respect and our condolences Bill and Karin Knight.*

**William M. Knight** - March 04, 2020 at 12:00 AM



“ *Rest in peace.*

**Dick and Grace Hayden** - March 03, 2020 at 12:00 AM

BW

“ Please accept our sincere condolences as you mourn the loss of your precious father. He was a true gentleman and a very great leader in our community, and we are privileged to have known him.

We greatly appreciated using his collection of Sunday School lessons to teach the Beacon class of BFUMC just a couple of years ago; the stories and Biblical applications were just as meaningful for our group in the 2000s as they were for the students he taught several generations ago.

He will be missed.

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**Bradley and Heather White** - March 03, 2020 at 12:00 AM

SJ

“ MR HANDSEL WAS A WONDERFUL MAN I WAS A YOUNG GIRL THE FIRST TIME I MET MR HANDSEL. HE WAS TEACHING AT BUFORD HE TAUGHT MY SISTER. THERE WERE SEVERAL WOULD COME TO OUR HOUSE HANDSEL, JOY, ELMER LYNN AND MY SISTER NORMA JEAN. AND THEY WOULD COOK AND EAT AND LAUGH HAVING A GOOD TIME THAT WAS HOW THEY HAD FUN. HANDSEL WAS THE SAME KIND MAN EVER TIME YOU SAW HIM I HAVE ENJOYED HIS BOOK ABOUT GINNETT . HANDSEL I KNOW YOU ARE HAPPY NOW THAT YOU ARE WITH THE LOVE OF YOUR LIFE MISS JOY SHE WAS A PRECIOUS LADY. YOU CHILDREN WILL BE IN MY PRAYERS. RIP HANDSEL

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**Shirley Jones** - March 03, 2020 at 12:00 AM

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**Shirley Jones** - March 03, 2020 at 12:00 AM

WS

“ Thoughts and prayers with the family. Handsel was one special man and touched so many people. He was my Sunday School Teacher for 40 years. He certainly taught me so many lessons and made a major impact on my life. What a privilege it was when he asked me to type the transcript of The History of the Buford First Methodist Church book that he published. This was a true honor to work along side of him on this. Thank you Handsel.

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**Wilma Kimbro Smith** - March 02, 2020 at 12:00 AM

RE

“ Taylor and Leah so sorry for your loss.

Rainey E  
C/O 2007 BHS

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**Rainey E** - March 02, 2020 at 12:00 AM

CA

“ Judge Morgan has had my total respect and admiration since my family moved to Buford, when I was 12 years of age .He was instrumental in our moving into an apartment in the Buford Housing Project.His office was there and he was so nice to our family

Since the 1950's seeing all his talents and accomplishments, he became my "Hero". I told him every time I had the opportunity. He was a Gentle Giant.

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**Charles Anglin** - March 02, 2020 at 12:00 AM