

A Tribute to My Uncle
Adrian Raymond Morgan
October 22, 1930 – August 31, 1999



Recorded October 3, 1999 with [Family Tree Maker](#)

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Unlike today's generation, when I grew up in the 1950's – 1970's the word "family" had a special meaning. This was especially true for me because my mother and I lived in the same home with my grandparents. In those days a family visit usually lasted 8 hours or more. So unlike many children today, the words "Uncle Adrian" actually meant that I saw, talked, and regularly played with him at least 2 Sunday's per month for 15 years or so. During some months I would see him on 4 Sundays plus a day or two during the week.

He was no imaginary figure to me. I played with his children, rode tractors on his farm, and admired the beautiful trees and shrubs in his yard and most of all loved listening to his stories. Sometimes, on a dark night he told about an unusual ghost light shining on railroad tracks a few miles from his home. Adrian was a great captivator of both your imagination and interest. He had an exceptionally beautiful voice that was strong, deep, and very clear. With simple stories Adrian taught everyone around him. I remember that during my early teenage years, just after I had started driving my own car, he and I walked alone in the backyard of my grandparent's home in Blackshear, talking with each other for a while. Actually, Adrian talked while I simply listened in amazement. He described to me all of the internal workings of a gasoline combustion engine. He had taken engines apart and put them back together and he well understood not only the theoretical basis of operation but also the practical considerations as well. He described that at 50 miles per hour the internal pistons were firing at a rate producing several thousand revolutions per minute. Then, he described the detailed operations of an engine operating at 70 miles per hour. Finally, he talked to me about what was going on inside the engine when it was running at 100 miles per hour. Without once mentioning anything about me or my driving habits, Uncle Adrian had forever changed me, and probably saved my life with a simple story. A number of my high school friends had automobile accidents at high rates of speed; many of them died. To this day when I look at my

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speedometer I can hear my beloved Uncle Adrian's story and usually I remember to slow down.

On another occasion I remember us going on another walk in my grandparent's backyard. This was shortly after I had started smoking cigarettes and he probably was aware of it but never said so. Instead, he lit a cigarette and asked me if I knew what they were called? Quizzically, I answered no. He said that cigarettes were called "coffin nails." The imagery was so strong that forty years later this is still how I think of cigarettes. My own addition to nicotine was so strong that I tried every way (hypnotism, computerized systems, patches, cold turkey, etc.) possible to quit but still found the destiny of smoke free impossible to achieve. As a last resort I started to pray for help to stop smoking. I prayed to stop smoking for 3 years even while I continued to smoke. Could it be that even the Lord would not help me stop I asked? Well, after 3 years I did receive the help and answer I had requested. While scuba diving I experienced a heart attack at age 44. I spent one week in the Cardiac Intensive Care unit on a morphine drip; essentially I was consciously out of this world for almost a week. My days of smoking were over forever. My prayers at last were answered. And if I had it to do over again, I would still pray to stop even knowing that a heart attack was the method that finally forced me to stop. It was a worthwhile trade for no longer do I add any more coffin nails to my body.

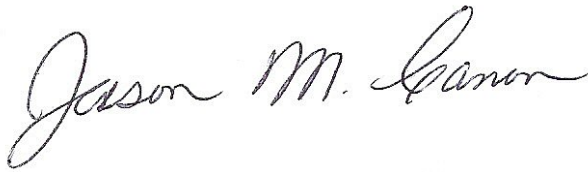
Over the years many interesting stories developed. There was a storage shed out back behind my grandparents home that Adrian filled with dispensing machines; peanut dispensing machines I believe. The kind you placed a penny into and rotated a small handle and received a handful of peanuts in return. Like his father, my Uncle Adrian was a great believer in free enterprise. On another occasion the back-end half of a 16-wheel truck was parked in an empty lot next to my grandparent's property. Apparently, the driver had stiffed Uncle Adrian and simply left the trailer in New Jersey so he needed a temporary parking spot after getting it back to Georgia. Almost as hard headed as I am, he would never quit. Adrian continued with other free enterprise business projects while he simultaneously worked for the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad Company. Later, in the years while I moved from one part of the world to another I spoke with him infrequently via telephone. I learned of his entry into honey production and the sugar commodities trading markets. I loved his determination to do the very best possible for his family and I will always admire his "can do" spirit. I believe he contributed greatly to my own "can do" attitude.

Each of my three uncles had a strong influence upon my development. My beloved Uncle Earl gave me a passion for electronics and is responsible, along with my mother, for why I chose to spend my life working with computers. My beloved Uncle Doys taught me about working smart and with great persistence, determination, and most importantly optimism. For many years I had a difficult time finding the correct label for what



important lessons and influence Uncle Adrian conveyed to me. As I'm sure he would say, "Ponder on it long enough son and you will understand." Well, dearest uncle this letter is to say that at last I do understand. You gave me one of the most important gifts of all; you taught me the importance of loving a child. In the New American Bible translation it is written in the book of Mark, "*Taking a child he placed it in their midst, and putting his arms around it he said to them, Whoever receives one child such as this in my name, receives me; and whoever receives me, receives not me but the One who sent me.*" Dear Adrian may God bless you forever for the wonderful gifts that you gave to me as a child with your daily actions.

Jason M. Canon



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