

Jimmy - Obit

James Vincent Morgan, 70, co-owner of the former Morgan's Drug Stores of Gloucester and West Point, died Oct. 16, 1997, at Riverside Walter Reed Hospital, Gloucester, after a long illness.

Morgan was well known for his devotion to his church and community and involved himself in many volunteer activities.

John Warren Cooke of Mathews, former Speaker of the House of Delegates, said Mr. Morgan was "a first rate citizen of Gloucester County. His contributions for the welfare of the whole county have been many. He will be greatly missed."

Lorna Wass of Gloucester, who, with her husband, the late Marvin Wass, were charter members of Friends of Dragon Run with Mr. Morgan, said Mr. Morgan was "the spirit behind the group."

"He was with the Friends of Dragon Run from the beginning and it was his chief conservation priority. He was active in many things in the county but he had known the Dragon Run since he was a boy."

Wass says Mr. Morgan was never too tired or too busy to take people on a canoe trip to see the loveliness of the Dragon, a vast cypress swamp that stretches through several Middle Peninsula counties.

Davis Rhodes, chairman of the Friends of Dragon Run, said, "It is difficult to put into words the loss that Gloucester will experience with the death of Jimmy Morgan.

Jimmy was an icon as far as conservation and leadership in doing the right thing for the community. It is a terrible loss for everyone who knew Jimmy. We are saddened by his passing."

Raymond S. Brown, a longtime Gloucester physician who, as a boy, worked behind the Morgan's Drug Store fountain, said, "Jimmy was always interested in community affairs and was usually working on some community project. He was a devoted friend and some of my most pleasant memories are being with him canoeing up the Dragon Run or sailing in the British Virgin Islands."

A Gloucester native, Mr. Morgan was educated in Gloucester public schools, then attended Virginia Tech until he volunteered for service in the U. S. Navy from 1945-47. He graduated from Hampden-Sydney College in 1950 and the Medical College of Virginia School of Pharmacy in 1953.

His many business and professional organizations included service as president of the Chesapeake Pharmaceutical Association, membership in national and state pharmaceutical associations, and recipient of the A.H. Robins Bowl of Hygeia Award for outstanding community service in 1964; membership on the Governor's Advisory Committee on Medicare and Medicaid from 1980 to 1984; service on the United Virginia Bank (now Crestar) Gloucester Area Board of Directors; founding

president of Windsor Gardens Cemetery; and membership on the Advisory Board of Riverside Walter Reed Hospital.

He was instrumental in securing the hospital location in Gloucester and served as Community Gifts Chairman for the Capital Fund Drive.

Mr. Morgan also served as president of the Gloucester Chamber of Commerce and received its John Hasty Award for community service in 1989; was a past president and member of the Board of Directors and a Paul Harris Fellow of the Gloucester Rotary Club; was an organizer and past president of the Gloucester Village Association; and was appointed to the Board of Directors of the Francis N. Sanders Nursing Home and received its Award for Excellence in 1996.

He was the first to create a navigable canoe passageway through the Dragon Run and spearheaded the purchase of several adjacent properties for conservation purposes. In 1990, Mr. Morgan received the Elizabeth Cabell Dugdale Award for Conservation from the Garden Club of Virginia for his efforts to preserve the Dragon. In 1996, he received the Bald Cypress Award for exemplary ethics and practice in conservation from the Friends of Dragon Run.

He was well known for his countless volunteer hours at Gloucester's Beaverdam Park, including building campsites, a pedestrian bridge and picnic shelter and blazing and marking trails. In recognition of his contributions, he was awarded the Freedom B. Goode Memorial Award in 1992 by the Gloucester Department of Parks and Recreation.

In 1993, he received the John Clayton Botany Award for his tireless efforts in preserving the Dragon Run, and the same year was named Environmentalist of the Year by the Tidewater Soil and Water Conservation District.

A longtime volunteer with the Boy Scouts of America, he became Gloucester County's first Eagle Scout in 1945 and later served as scoutmaster for Troop 111, Adviser to Explorer Post 111 and chairman of the Northern District, Peninsula Council. He was awarded the Silver Beaver Award and was inducted into the Order of the Arrow.

In 1989, he received the Distinguished Citizen Award from the Northern Star District, BSA, for service to youth and the community.

He was an active volunteer with the American Red Cross and began the first water safety instruction program in Gloucester County.

Mr. Morgan was a founding member of the Ware River Yacht Club and served as its commodore in 1982. He was also a member of the Long Bridge Ordinary Foundation and spent many hours on improvements to its building and grounds. In 1993, he was honored by Botetourt Masonic Lodge No. 7 for his contributions to the community with its Community Builder Award.

He was a member of the First Presbyterian Church, where he served as deacon, elder and finance chairman of the building committee. A consummate outdoorsman, Morgan enjoyed hiking, canoeing, sailing, skiing, scuba diving and creating botanical nature trails.

Mr. Morgan is survived by his wife, Violet Ritchie Morgan; three sons, James V. Morgan Jr. of Lynchburg, Dr. William R. Morgan of Richmond and Joseph K. Morgan of Williamsburg, and their wives; his parents, Mr. and Mrs. L. V. Morgan, and a brother, Harvey B. Morgan, of Gloucester; a sister, Mary M. Jarvis of Mathews; and nine grandchildren.