



## Mr. Samuel Tommy Jackson

December 2, 1938 - September 1, 2017

On September 1, 2017 surrounded by his loving wife Sara and his beloved children, Chief Tommy Jackson, 78 of Ranburne, Alabama hung up his turnout gear, his coat and helmet, for the very last time and walked the path to heaven. To quote one beautiful tribute "he entered those pearly gates as he entered every door, with that big infectious smile". Heaven gained a good and faithful servant but our community lost a valued and treasured member.

In addition to his parents he is preceded in death by his sisters, Josephine C. Johnson Fletcher, Martha Jackson Isaacs, Jayne Toney and his brother John W. "Johnny" Jackson. He is survived by six siblings Beatrice Brown, Louise Bradley, James (Louise) Jackson, Rachel Jackson, Jesse (Betty) Jackson and Howard (Sharon) Jackson; his wife, Sara Jackson, his daughter Lisa Jackson Buchanan and her husband Dalton of Troy, Alabama, his sons, Jeff Jackson and his wife Lisa of Sarasota, Florida and Lance Jackson of Atlanta, Georgia; his seven grandchildren, Stephanie Harlley, Chanler Jackson, McKenna Jackson, Maddie Jackson, Thomas Jackson, Josh Buchanan and Amanda Bennett; and his four great grandchildren, Jackson Hartley, Samuel Hartley, Beau Hartley (due 10/17), Dallis Bennett.

Samuel Thomas "Tommy" Jackson was born December 2, 1938 in Carroll County, Georgia to the late Cliff Jackson and Alice V. Ayers Johnson Jackson. He started his life in a cabin off a dirt road in southwest Bowdon, Georgia born

sixth of eleven children to a sharecropper. As sharecroppers, the Jacksons were a simple hard working family living on the farms they worked without ever owning their own home. The entire family, regardless of age or gender, performed back-breaking labor including plowing, commonly with a mule, planting, weeding, cutting wood for fire, clearing land and harvesting. Although Tommy Jackson and his siblings attended school, it was regularly interrupted when there was work to be done, especially during harvest time. There were no sports or after school activities. Tommy Jackson's early life taught him the value of commitment and hard work which served him well in every aspect of his life.

Tommy Jackson was a treasured member of his community. As the first Carroll County Fire Chief, he founded the highly successful fire department still in place today. He began his firefighting career in 1961 with the Bowdon Volunteer Fire Department at a time when the county was only served by volunteer firefighters and a few city departments. In 1969 he became the fire chief of Bowdon and in 1979 along with Carroll County Commissioner Horrie Duncan he founded the first countywide fire department becoming its first Chief. As part of his celebrated 22 year career he oversaw the building and renovation of 11 fire stations, led the hiring and training of personnel, purchased fire engines, organized the underwater rescue team and was part of the founding team of the emergency radio communications system, also known as 911. He remained chief until 1992 and finished his career in Bowdon where it all began. Gary L. Thomas summed it up beautifully when he shared "Chief Jackson was the right person at the right time to build a brand new fire department. Everything a department is able to do is based on the strength of the foundation of that department and Chief Jackson built a solid professional foundation".

He retired in 2001 and returned to his farming roots raising cattle on a family farm in Ranburne, Alabama with his wife Sara. An avid Rook player he played

in a league twice a week but his first passion was his family. His dedication to Christ was known by all. His granddaughter McKenna shared who he was as a family man perfectly. "You were everything to me. You were my example, my hero and my best friend. You were the greatest man that I have ever known. You loved unconditionally, extended grace without hesitation, smiled constantly, and chased after Christ with all you had. You saved and changed so many lives. Your laugh, your smile, and the way you fiercely loved me more than anyone, will forever be etched on my heart. The legacy that you left on this world is unbelievable."

Acting as best friend to his grandchildren quite possibly may have been his most favorite role. Each family member has their story to tell and each one is more beautiful than the last. His first grandchild, Stephanie Hartley, has the most memories, calling him her first best friend. "My Granddaddy was the most amazing person I have ever had the honor and pleasure of knowing. He was the heart of our family, my saving grace, my superhero. He was the one who rocked me til my feet dragged the ground, singing 'She'll Be Coming Right The Mountain'. He was my superhero who checked me out of school anytime there was severe weather because he knew I was terrified. I was his sidekick who literally went everywhere with him, known to many as Tommy's little blonde headed girl. Growing up my Granddaddy was someone everyone loved talking to and always wanted to be around. In the small town where we lived, everyone knew Tommy and knew they could rely on him for any reason. His love for the Lord was vast and immovable, always having his bible by his side. He strongly influenced my love and faith in Jesus! I can only imagine the great joy when Jesus experiences that big Tommy smile for the first time as he walks into the grace of the Lord! I will miss him greatly but I know this isn't goodbye forever."

"Chief" as he was known to many, Tommy Jackson was beloved by all. To his

family he was a strong, hardworking, loyal and loving man. To his friends he was a dedicated leader and a hero and to many he was a "mentor before we even knew what that was". Tim Padgett's Facebook page included this lovely tribute. "He was not only our Chief ... he was a mentor, a hero and most of all ... he was a friend."

Holly Shadrix Jiles started working for Chief Jackson as a teenager after school serving as his administrative assistant. Her words and the impact he made on her life can be echoed by many. In their 33 years of friendship he was so much more than a boss or a friend, he was a second father. From the moment they met in 1984 when she was just 16 she says she knew immediately he was a man of respect, dignity, values and morals. "Everyone has heard the saying, everything you need to know you learned in kindergarten. Well for me, Tommy Jackson was my teacher. Many times over the years I have shared that he taught me to drive fast, taught me to always have a strong work ethic, show your respects, led by example and where to find the best BBQ. My most vivid memory of Tommy was always getting into his car and his bible being in the front seat beside him. I wanted to marry a man with that kind of faith."

As a man dedicated to the Lord, his family, his work and his community Carroll County will feel a huge loss from his passing. His life was dedicated to hard work, quality time he made for everyone and a legacy that will live on with his family.

Visitation will be held on Monday, September 4 from 4:00 pm until 8:00 pm at Rainwater Funeral Home, 317 North Carroll Street, Bowdon, Georgia 30108. Memorial service will be Tuesday, September 5 at 11:00 am EST at Macedonia Baptist Church, 3920 County Road 48, Ranburne, Alabama, 36273.



# Cemetery Details

## Macedonia Baptist Church Cemetery

3920 County Road 48  
Ranburne, AL 36273

# Previous Events

## Visitation

SEP 4. 4:00 PM - 8:00 PM (ET)

Rainwater Funeral Home  
317 North Carroll Street  
Bowdon, GA 30108  
(770) 258-7239  
[info@rainwaterfuneralhome.com](mailto:info@rainwaterfuneralhome.com)  
<https://www.rainwaterfuneralhome.com>

## Funeral Service

SEP 5. 11:00 AM (CT)

Macedonia Baptist Church  
3920 County Road 48  
Ranburne, AL 36273

# Tribute Wall

EH

“ Thoughts and prayers are with you all. Ed (Wallace) and Marie Harvell, Derby Kansas.



Ed Harvell - September 05, 2017 at 01:52 PM

TC

“ I was a volunteer fireman for several years while he was Chief. Very good man and I will never forget his smile.

Tim Cantrell - September 05, 2017 at 12:36 PM

TH

“ Tanner Hospice Care staff would like to offer our condolences to you during this difficult time and to say thank you for trusting your loved one in our care

Tanner Hospice - September 05, 2017 at 10:34 AM

ST

“ Mr. and Mrs. Eddie Miller would like to send condolences to the Jackson Family. Eddie said that it was an honor to work with Tommy Jackson and he was a great friend and coworker.

Sharon Townsend - September 04, 2017 at 02:40 PM

ST

“ Sharon Townsend lit a candle in memory of Mr. Samuel Tommy Jackson



Sharon Townsend - September 04, 2017 at 02:34 PM

NL

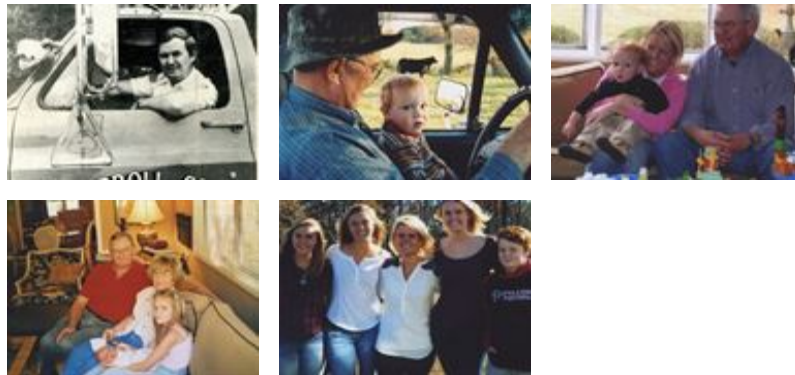
“ So sorry for your loss. Your family is in my prayers!



Nicole League - September 04, 2017 at 02:18 PM



“ 31 files added to the album LifeTributes



Rainwater Funeral Home - September 04, 2017 at 01:24 PM

MM

“ *Martha Morrison lit a candle in memory of Mr. Samuel Tommy Jackson*



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**Martha Morrison** - September 03, 2017 at 09:41 PM

JS

“ *Judy Stringfellow lit a candle in memory of Mr. Samuel Tommy Jackson*



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**Judy Stringfellow** - September 03, 2017 at 01:24 PM

PH

“ *Paula Hall lit a candle in memory of Mr. Samuel Tommy Jackson*



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**paula hall** - September 03, 2017 at 12:52 PM

EP

“ *Edith Powers lit a candle in memory of Mr. Samuel Tommy Jackson*



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**Edith Powers** - September 03, 2017 at 09:27 AM

EP

*Tommy Jackson was a good Man. Knew Him Many Years. Work with Him & Sara, Too.*

**Edith Powers** - September 03, 2017 at 09:29 AM

SS

“ *Sherry Scales lit a candle in memory of Mr. Samuel Tommy Jackson*



**Sherry Scales** - September 03, 2017 at 12:30 AM

JJ

“ *Judie Jackson lit a candle in memory of Mr. Samuel Tommy Jackson*



**Judie Jackson** - September 02, 2017 at 06:30 PM

SG

“ *Susan McCaghren Gibbs lit a candle in memory of Mr. Samuel Tommy Jackson*



**Susan McCaghren Gibbs** - September 02, 2017 at 04:01 PM

TC

“ *Tommy/Judy Cantrell lit a candle in memory of Mr. Samuel Tommy Jackson*



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**Tommy/Judy Cantrell** - September 02, 2017 at 02:14 PM