



James L Battersby Jr

August 24, 1936 - May 12, 2024

JAMES L BATTERSBY, JR died at home on May 12, 2024 at the age of 87. Born on August 24, 1936 in Pawtucket, Rhode Island, he spent his childhood and teen years in the richly diverse neighborhoods of Providence and Warwick. He served in the U.S. Army Security Agency from 1954-57, after which he completed a B.S. degree in Education from the University of Vermont, graduating magna cum laude and with a Phi Beta Kappa membership. His postgraduate work was done on a Woodrow Wilson Fellowship at Cornell University, where he received his Ph.D. in English in 1965. His teaching career began at the University of California-Berkeley (1965-70) and finished at The Ohio State University, from which he retired as an Emeritus Professor of English in 1995.

His many books and articles show a beautiful mind; he was known internationally for the philosophical rigor displayed in his work on eighteenth-century literature and modern critical theory. He also wrote two lively books focusing on both the follies and successes of American higher education. As Samuel Johnson said of Joseph Addison, “he had read with critical eyes the important volume of human life.”

Jim is preceded in death by his parents, James and Hazel (Deuel) Battersby. He is survived by his devoted wife of 34 years, Lisa J. Kiser; his brother Charles Battersby (Marguerite) of Sturbridge, MA; his sister Jane Wicklund

(Rick) of Sonoma, CA; his daughter Julie Hines and grandson Samuel Hines of Seattle, WA; and many nieces and nephews on both coasts. To his family and friends, he showed the deepest loyalty, love, and tenderness.

Per Jim's wishes, the family will hold a private service. Online memories or condolences may be left for the family at www.rutherfordfuneralhomes.com. Donations may be made in Jim's memory to Operation Smile (<https://www.operationismile.org>) or Southern Poverty Law Center (<https://www.splcenter.org>).

Tribute Wall

RH

“ I studied literary criticism with Prof. Battersby in 1966. Later I took a seminar on Johnson with him. He was a model of intellectual persistence and eloquence too. And he gave me Sam Johnson, who remains with me always. I did not know him personally, but I knew him very well as a teacher. I've been an English professor for 53 years. He is still a model to me. I'm grateful to have studied with him. That's putting it mildly..

Robert von Hallberg

Robert von Hallberg - June 12 at 07:22 PM

WC

“ I took English 1A from Prof. Battersby at U.C. Berkeley in 1965 and we spent a tot of time studying Shakespeare. Prof. Battersby also talked at great length about the lack of meaningful work for men in American society. In retrospect, I can't help but wonder how all the women in the class felt about that.

William Crowell - January 14 at 07:52 AM

SK

“ I did my PhD with Jim's wife, Lisa, at OSU and am now a professor at Rutgers University. Jim's work, life, and teaching has influenced me deeply and helped me to become a better scholar and teacher. He was a wonderful and kind person and lived an amazing, exemplary life. I am so sorry for your loss.

stacy klein - December 19, 2024 at 09:27 AM

DS

“ So sorry to see this

David Scott - May 29, 2024 at 08:07 AM



“ *May the love of God surround you and your family during this difficult time,
May you come to know that the love of God is with you always,*

May your memories of James L. Battersby Jr., give you peace, comfort and strength...

Rest now in the arms of our Lord your mission on earth is complete. I thank you for your service to our Country and my Freedom. You will not be forgotten.

*My thoughts
and prayers to the family of*

US Army Veteran, James L. Battersby Jr., is “A True American Hero” God Bless†

† Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. John 15:13 †

Cheryl Skinner, Tri-state Military Museum - May 15, 2024 at 06:04 AM

CJ

“ In the Autumn Quarter of 1973, I was not an English major, but on a lark, I took a course on Shakespeare taught by Professor Battersby at OSU. He was one of the most enthusiastic and intelligent teachers I ever had, and taking his course left me with a love for Shakespeare that remains after all these years. I wrote a paper for that course on two scenes from "Richard III" that he took the time to analyze in great detail, writing many comments and questions along the margins. I was surprised and pleased that he spent so much time and effort helping to improve my own thinking and writing. I still have that paper after all these years, and I remember him fondly as one of my very favorite professors. I never saw him after taking that class and I didn't get to know him well personally, but I will always remember his interesting and inspiring class.

Charles R. (Bob) Janes

Charles R. Janes - May 15, 2024 at 01:18 AM

NB

“ I have so many fond memories of Jim going back to my childhood. Im glad I got to talk to him a few days before his passing. I hope he is busy playing cribbage with my dad and coming up with crazy birthday ideas and eating their Spam and fruit cocktail dinner. RiP Jim. Love Nancy Benham

Nancy Benham - May 13, 2024 at 09:35 PM