

A Tribute to James F. Strange (1938-2018)

Prof. James F. Strange passed away peacefully at home on March 23, 2018, surrounded by his family. Beginning with his work with Eric and Carol Meyers in their excavations in Upper Galilee in the 70s, his directorship of the University of South Florida's excavations of Sepphorus (1983-2010), and his numerous publications, Jim was a major figure in biblical archaeology.

But he was more than that. He came to the University of South Florida in the fall of 1972 as an Assistant Professor in the Religious Studies Department, and for the next forty-six years he opened the eyes, minds, and hearts of his students to the biblical world. Demanding the best of his students, he was kind and generous when they faltered. Never once using notes or PowerPoints, Jim never lectured but conversed with his students on whatever was the topic for that class. In doing so, he revealed his love of the Bible, archaeology, and teaching. A love that was passed on to them, changing many of their lives, and in return they loved him.

I should know. I was one of those students forty-six years ago. Jim was a role model not only for his scholarship and love for the biblical world, but for his love of life and music. A member of his church's choir, one could occasionally hear Jim singing softly with his rich bass-baritone in his office or the "coffee room." Right now, as I am writing this, I am alone in the department; yet, I can still hear him gently singing. Jim is survived by his wife of fifty-seven years, Carolyn, their son and three daughters, and their families, including six grandchildren.

—Paul Schneider, Department of Religious Studies, University of South Florida