

## James Burton Longenbach

September 17, 1959 - July 29, 2022

The WWC MFA Program for Writers community is mourning the death of beloved longtime faculty member, poet James Longenbach, after a long illness.

His wife, Joanna Scott, has shared this message:



He died peacefully at his home in the village of Stonington, Connecticut, surrounded by his family. At this time of deep sadness, we want to celebrate Jim's glorious life and remember him with his beautiful words:

*What happens next you cannot know.  
Is it better or worse to live a long time?  
Really the words better and worse do not obtain.*

And when the land stops speaking  
The wave flows out to sea.

A longtime faculty member at the University of Rochester, and the author of 6 books of poetry and 8 works of criticism, James Longenbach taught in the MFA Program for Writers from 2002 until 2016. We'll offer remembrances of his profound contributions to our community as poet, teacher, scholar, and friend in the coming days.

The screenshot below is from the "Craft and the Writing Life" conversation between Jim and faculty member Sally Keith, recorded for our January 2022 residency on December 15, 2021. A clip from that conversation [is available here.](#)

Donations in James Longenbach's memory may be sent to the Stonington (CT) Free Library or the charity of your choice.

