



## James Franklin Torrence

September 25, 1934 - October 6, 2021

James Franklin Torrence, former Deputy Chief Nuclear Engineer at the National Bureau of Standards/National Institute of Standards and Technology for more than 30 years, passed away on Wednesday, October 6 in Gaithersburg MD, after a period of declining health. He was 87 years old. Born on September 25, 1934 to Ruby Stiller Torrence and James Monroe Torrence in Salisbury, North Carolina, he was a graduate of Boyden High School. For all four of his high school years, he served as photography editor of the yearbook, the ECHO. A classmate, Janet Plyler Deal, recalls, “Jim’s photography made the yearbook so much more excellent than those I have seen of other schools. He is the reason all of his classmates and those presented in all four of those books have the memories that we do of all of our activities in excellent photos!” Jim’s photographic skills came naturally, from his father who owned Torrence Studio in Salisbury.

He served in the US Air Force Cadet program and graduated from North Carolina State College (now University) with a B.S. degree in Mechanical Engineering. During his studies, he became interested in nuclear engineering, and after graduation was employed as a graduate assistant at the NC State nuclear reactor. He subsequently worked at the Nuclear Reactor Testing Station in Idaho, and returned to NC State to help build the instrumentation for a new Reactor there. He was recruited to help build the new NBS Reactor (NBSR) by the then Chief Nuclear Engineer, whom he had trained while a student at NC State.

While attending an NBS conference banquet he met a fellow NBS staff member, Sara Redmon. They were married December 13, 1969. He and Sara were avid travelers, visiting 97 countries on all seven continents during their marriage. Jim's personal interests also included photography, archeology, ancient history, geology and astronomy. It was this interest that led Jim and Sara to become eclipse chasers, "being in the shadow of the moon" seven times. They were Lifetime Members of the Shillelagh Travel Club, Vienna, VA. Jim was a Rotarian for 30 years with the Rotary Club of Potomac. He proposed Sara as a Rotarian two days after the Supreme Court made the decision that in the United States women could not be prohibited from being Rotarians. He and Sara attended four Rotary International Conventions and were host counselors to six Rotary International Scholars. He was a supporter of the Rotary Foundation and Rotary's program to end polio in the world, Polio Plus.

Jim is survived by his wife of 52 years, Sara Torrence; a daughter, Laura T. Kangas (John Webb) of Boonsboro, MD; two grandsons, Holden Kangas (Ciarah Robinson) of Falling Waters, WV, and Collin Kangas of Boonsboro; a brother, Richard Torrence of King, NC; his sister-in-law, Jane Redmon, of Arlington, VA; a goddaughter, Kathy Koontz of Portland, OR; a godson, Arne Thiedemann of Reutlingen, Germany; two nieces, Kathy Torrence and Sandra(Brian) Poole, and a nephew, John Deadmon IV, all of Salisbury, NC; an honorary son, Kokou Kounoudji (Colette and daughter Grace) of Gaithersburg, MD; and numerous friends. His parents and a sister, Carolyn Deadmon, predeceased Jim.

The family will be receiving visitors at Summersett Funeral Home, 1315 West Innes Street, Salisbury, from 12:30 to 3:30 p.m on Saturday, October 30, 2021. A graveside service will take place at 2 p.m. at City Memorial Park. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in his name to the Rotary International Foundation, c/o the Rotary Club of Potomac, 4015 Montpelier Road, Rockville, MD 20853; Montgomery Hospice, ([www.montgomeryhospice.org](http://www.montgomeryhospice.org)); or Geneva Presbyterian Church, 11931 Seven Locks Road, Potomac,

MD 20854.

Summersett Funeral Home is serving the Torrence family. Online condolences may be made to [www.summersettfuneralhome.com](http://www.summersettfuneralhome.com).

# Previous Events

## Visitation

OCT **30**. 12:00 PM - 1:30 PM (ET)

Summersett Funeral Home  
1315 W. Innes St.  
Salisbury, NC 28144  
(704) 633-2111  
<https://www.summersettfuneralhome.com>

## Graveside Service

OCT **30**. 2:00 PM (ET)

City Memorial Park  
1316 West Innes St  
Salisbury, NC 28144