

Biography of James W. Long

<http://jimlong.com>

James W. Long was born in Goshen Indiana on September 2, 1955. Son of William Junior Long and Mary Lucille (Kenaga) Long. He grew up in the best of comfort and was always free to explore the world as he wished. He enjoyed swimming, football, basketball, go-carts, mini-bikes, and motorcycles.

Influenced by his mother, Jim showed an early interest in music and entertaining, in the fifth grade he formed a band called *The Clowns* in which he played the guitar. The band performed at intermission for a High School Dance.

He was a springboard diver on the swimming team in ninth grade and placed 3rd in the regional matches.

During High School, he formed bands and played at many area dances and was on track to becoming a professional musician.

Not satisfied with just playing in bands, and after a year of working nights in a tooling factory, he went to *Berklee College of Music*, Boston Massachusetts. After a summer accident at Walden's Pond in Boston, he had micro surgery to fix the tendons and nerves his hand at IU Indianapolis, then moved to Nashville Tennessee and worked in the office of *Triune Music*, a publisher of Southern Gospel records and sheet music. A year later, he went back to Berklee for two years graduating Cum Laud with a degree in Composition, and then again, moved to Nashville to start an official career in music.

He first was a music copyist for commercial string sessions for major country music acts including the group *Alabama*. While auditioning for a guitar spot in a dance band, he met Cherrill V. Dyson, who was a

singer in local nightclubs. Cherrill was born on December 22, 1954. They were married on February 14, 1983. Cherrill is the daughter of Bobby L. Dyson (Duckworth) and Janice Medlin. She grew up in Texas, where she lived in a children's home and later with her grandparents. Cherrill's father was a well-known session bass player in Nashville and was a regular on the TV show *Hee Haw*.

Jim took a job in a house band as guitarist and arranger for a local music television show called, *Music City Live*. Here he performed with many nationally known artists. During this time he also worked as a guitarist on the international gospel cable TV show, *Bobby Jones Gospel*. He was a regular on the show and worked with many nationally known Gospel Artists.

He did some touring with *Bobby Jones*, also the *Bo Thorpe Orchestra* out of North Carolina, a band that performed at four Presidential Inaugurations. He became musical arranger for that band. During this period, he also worked in local Nashville society bands with his wife Cherrill.

It was also during this time, Jim tried a run at songwriting, having limited success with cuts on black gospel recording artists *Deleon*, *Vannessa Mitchell*, and *Lynnette Hawkins*. He would go to Collins Music on Nashville's Music Row every morning and write songs, sometimes with well know writers such as *Keith Stegall*, *Roger Murrah*, *Steve Dean*, *Randy Vanwarmer* and others. Jim's catalog of original songs is substantial.

In 1993 he and Cherrill partnered with other prominent local musicians and formed their own society dance band know as *Club Fred* playing evets such as Nashville's Lakefront 4th of July Celebration. Club Fred changed it's name to *The Manhattan Dance Orchestra* and played a

wide variety of music at society events and conventions including the Century 21 Convention at New Orleans Louisiana.

During his career, Jim's major performances include an appearance with soul legend *Aretha Franklin* and international recording artist *Patty Austin* in the Symphonic Pop Series *Oh Freedom* performed first in San Francisco and later with the Nashville Pops Series. The show was also performed in Memphis where Jim received a standing ovation after a blues guitar solo from an all African American audience. Jim would say that was his greatest moment on stage.

Jim played on records and made television appearances with with many nationally known artist such as; *Elvis Presley, Aaron Neville, Deniece Williams, Howard Hewitt of Shalamar, Beverly Knight, Cissy Houston, Gary Chapman, Jay DeMarcus, Albertina Walker, Shirley Caesar, Risen, Al Green, Regina Bell, Walter Hawkins, Rufus Thomas, Oli-Ollie Woodson, Lucy Arnaz, Bobby Vinton, Bernadette Peters, Toni Tennille, Paul Williams, Bob Hope, the Diamonds and The Coasters*, and many others.

Jim made a couple of trips to Scotland with the gospel duo, *Reggie and Ladylove Smith*, known for their appearances on the Bill Gaither Homecoming. These trips were sponsored by The Campbells, a Scottish Clan, and the Craigalbert Church. These trips were very special to him and led him to accept Christ as his Lord and Savior.

Jim became a Christian making his commitment to Christ in 1999. His family was involved in leading praise and worship music at their church, *Bellevue Community Church*, sometime serving on stage together. Also at *Crosspoint Church*, a schism church of BCC.

His wife Cherrill was very admired in the church and around Nashville as a fabulous soul type singer. The couple's younger daughter Betsey became a talented singer at an early age singing many solos at church.

Betsey went on to record two recordings (*Gemini and Gorham Woods*) as a solo recording artist. She also sang a duet harmony part on *Maranda Lambert's* song 2012 hit single "*Fastest Girl in Town.*" The Long Family became close friends with *Charlie McCoy* a very famous Nashville session player and a very special person. Betsey went on to co-write a song with Charlie called "*Rattin' You Out.*"

In 2021, Betsey married James Graber and the couple gave birth to a son, River David Graber in 2022.

Jim and Cherrill's oldest daughter Jessica became a very good golfer at an early age, winning the Mini-Masters at the Tennessee PGA's Little Course at age eight. Jim coached her and later became the middle school golf coach at *Christ Presbyterian Academy* for 12 years. Jim would call it a true labor of love and highly rewarding experience. Cherrill works at the Academy as a teacher's aid.

Jessica studied English at Tusculum College in Greenville Tennessee. She later married Dustin Lincicome. The couple moved to Wichita Kansas and have a son, Luke William Lincicome born February 2017.

Jim later enjoyed a side career as a website and database programmer. His clients included *Quaver's Marvelous World of Music* created by David Mastran; *Rowloff* - a publisher of Marching Drum Music owned by Chris Brooks and Chris Crockerell; *Arrangers Publishing Company* owned by Jeff Hearington and Jay Dawson; *Cheatham County Tennessee*, and others.

At this time, the family was spending winters at Sanibel Island Florida at Jim's parent's winter home, and summers in Goshen Indiana at his boyhood home.

In 2016, Jim, and Cherrill, (and later Betsey), moved from Nashville to Goshen Indiana. Jim took over the management of his parent's rental business. He used his knowledge of programming customer service software to streamline and reorganize the family business.

Jim and Cherrill became members Maple Crest Country Club in Goshen. They also became members of the *West Goshen Church of the Brethren* where he coordinated and led the praise team. During these years he wrote many praise and spiritual songs for performance at the church.

Jim continues to play guitar as a performer and accompanist at local churches and events such as the *Goshen College Festival of Carols*. As well as performances with *The Major Minor Band* including his wife *Cherrill*, and special musical events with his daughter, *Betsey Long*.

Jim's hobbies are writing songs, golfing, cooking, genealogy. But above all is his Faith in Jesus Christ!

Praise God, because everything comes from God. To God Alone, Be the Glory!