



Jim T Parkinson

OCT 23, 1941 - JUN 26, 2025



Scan to Visit



CHAPEL
OF THE
CHIMES
OAKLAND

Funeral, Cemetery
& Cremation Services

Table of Contents

Obituary	Page 3
Tribute Wall	Page 5



Jim T Parkinson

OCT 23, 1941 - JUN 26, 2025

James T. Parkinson (“Jim”) 10/23/1941–06/26/2025

On June 26, 2025, Jim Parkinson passed away peacefully, with his wife, Dorothy A. Yule, by his side in their home in Oakland, California.

Born in Oakland on October 23, 1941, Jim grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area and studied design and painting at the California College of Arts and Crafts. He graduated in 1963, and became a staff artist at Hallmark Cards in Kansas City, Missouri, Mo. Realizing that “drawing rabbits” was not his strength, his employers moved him to the lettering department, where he thrived. Jim soon understood not only that he could carve a professional niche for himself by specializing in lettering; it was also his life’s calling. He had an incredible knack for rendering any kind of letter style by hand. That served him well after returning to Oakland to start a freelance career that would last for more than 50 years.

Although he remained dedicated solely to letters, Jim’s skill set was so broad that he was more than capable of handling just about any kind of job — from logos to complete alphabets. Over those five decades, Jim’s letters appeared almost everywhere. He drew headlines for ads, logos for bands (the Doobie Brothers) and the circus (Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey), dozens of custom and retail typefaces, and countless nameplates for magazines (Rolling Stone) and newspapers (the Los Angeles Times). He became the go-to logo artist for art directors looking to refresh their publications, and he redrew some titles multiple times over the years. Visit any newsstand in the U.S. — and even some abroad — and you’ll see Jim’s work, often on more than one cover.

In the early 1990s he spent time at the San Francisco Chronicle, first as a graphic artist, filling space or illustrating features with amusing title graphics and cartoons. Later, he designed several custom typefaces for the newspaper, including Chronicle Metro (after W.A. Dwiggins) for



Obituary

Jim T Parkinson

OCT 23, 1941 - JUN 26, 2025

headlines, and Chronicle Gothic for small settings like stock listings. It was at the Chronicle that he met his future wife, Dorothy, who was working as a designer.

Later in life, between drawing logos or making fonts, Jim painted. Often his paintings were on the subject of vintage neon signage based on snapshots from his road trips throughout the American West. He captured every peeling surface and broken glass tube in a way that somehow looks even more real than his photos. Eventually the walls of his home became filled with dozens of these large paintings.

Jim is remembered for his generosity and kind nature, his big smile and an easy laugh, plus an ability to tell a great story, which rewarded him with many lifelong friends. His immense talent and creativity, combined with a boundless drive for refining his craft, earned him great recognition among the industries he served and the immense respect of his colleagues.

Jim is survived by his wife, Dorothy A. Yule, his life partner since 2010 and his dedicated caregiver during his years of dementia, and Dorothy's twin sister, Susan Hunt Yule. He was predeceased by his previous wife, Beth Parkinson (1952–2007), of Niagara Falls, NY.

In lieu of flowers, consider making a donation to the Alzheimer's Foundation
<https://www.alz.org/?form=FUNDHYMMBXU>



Tribute Wall

Jim T Parkinson

OCT 23, 1941 - JUN 26, 2025



Gary Barker posted:

I am so very sorry to hear of Jim's passing. Jim was a good man with a big heart and an infectious laugh. I would see him regularly in the Chronicle art department, when I was dropping off an illustration. He and his partner, Ed Rachles, were always up to something there, seldom having anything to do with work. Jim was a master at type faces, drawing them by hand in the early days before computers—a remarkable skill to have mastered. He always came up with the perfect look for each project, breathing life into the mastheads of iconic publications around the world. Jim was one of the good ones. I'll carry his memory in my heart.

July 10 at 4:49 PM



Memories only last if you share them

Join us in honoring Jim by contributing to a collection of shared memories.



Scan to Visit



**CHAPEL
OF THE
CHIMES
OAKLAND**

Funeral, Cemetery
& Cremation Services