

ANNOUNCING...

ASSIST: A NEW CONCEPT IN SHROUD RESEARCH

An international communications/peer review organization has been founded as an adjunct to Shroud research. The idea was conceived during conversations between Dr. John DeSalvo, biophysicist, and Fr. Peter M. Rinaldi and given impetus early on by Dr. Frederick T. Zugibe, Chief Medical Examiner of Rockland County, New York and author of *The Cross and The Shroud*. The formal founding of the organization took place at the Rockland County Health Complex in Pomona, NY, on April 7, 1983.

The board of directors is currently composed of Frederick T. Zugibe, M.D., Ph.D., (President); John A. DeSalvo, Ph.D., Northwestern College, Minneapolis, MN (Executive Director); Richard Fiene, Ph.D., Adjunct Prof. of Behavioral Sci. and Educ., Pennsylvania State University, (Secretary); John Slattery, M.B.A. Deputy Chief Auditor, New York State Prosecutor's Office for Medicaid Fraud (Treasurer); Paul C. Maloney, M.A. research archaeologist, Director, Ancient Near Eastern Researches (General Projects Director); The Rev. Peter M. Rinaldi, SDB, Vice President, Holy Shroud Guild, (International Advisor).

Current liaison officers on the board of directors are: Rev. Albert R. Dreisbach, Jr., Founder and President of the Atlantic Center for Shroud Studies (Atlanta GA); Rex Morgan, MBE, (Australia); and Ian Wilson, M.A. (British Society for the Turin Shroud).

Legal counsel for the organization is represented by Philip Carruthers, J.D. Minneapolis, MN, and Thomas Zugibe, J.D. Garnersville, NY. Ted Smith, Talent Coordinator for Channel 9, Jill Franklin Show, is general public relations officer.

To this point in time, the organization has nearly 50 members spanning such diverse fields as archaeology, art history, botany, chemistry, data processing, information theory, forensics, history, medical, microscopy, palynology, photography, physics, serology, textiles and translation.

What is ASSIST?

ASSIST stands for *Association of Scientists and Scholars International for the Shroud of Turin*, Inc., a non-profit, tax exempt, peer review organization incorporated in the State of New York. A consortium of groups and individuals dedicated to the scientific research of the Shroud of Turin, ASSIST will draw heavily on scholarly

expertise around the world. Therefore, ASSIST intends to establish and maintain liaison with other groups interested in the scientific and scholarly study of the Shroud. ASSIST is science/research oriented and dedicated to problem solving.

What are the goals of ASSIST?

- 1) ASSIST intends to be a general reservoir of scholarly knowledge bearing on and pertinent to Shroud research:
 - a. It is the goal of ASSIST to cooperate with Shroud researchers on an international scale. Members of ASSIST represent a wide range of expertise, offering a resource for investigators to draw on.
 - b. ASSIST aims to establish and develop a computer data bank of material on the Shroud which can be immediately accessed for research purposes.
- 2) ASSIST intends to bring together "precision teams" to solve problems in highly defined areas.
 - a. These "precision teams" will be able to advise on specific matters such as the taking of different types of samples from the Shroud, the treatment of samples prior to study (drawing on an ASSIST developed "sample verification system"), and suggest directions research can or should go on these samples.
 - b. The scientific elucidation of enigmatic features on the Shroud is one of the goals of ASSIST. Therefore, "precision teams" will be designated for the resolution of specific problems to be dealt with directly on the Shroud, and on a laboratory level.
- 3) Because ASSIST encourages the development of a wide spectrum of highly trained specialists, an ASSIST team, drawn from this reservoir of specialists, can offer a significant resource for independent data verification.

ASSIST not only protects the rights of scholars to different opinions, it encourages the cooperation of scientists and scholars on a wide ranging continuum of views. ASSIST believes that such a wide range of views is not only healthy, it should actually promote scientific creativity. ASSIST holds that the ultimate accumulation of verified data will become the basis upon which the authenticity of the Shroud is established. Therefore each individual scientific opinion is a valued part of the intermediate process which contributes to the final overall conclusions. Because this is an important part of ASSIST philosophy,

ASSIST provides a resource for the evaluation of existing Shroud data and current scientific methodology used on the Shroud. This peer review feature is an integral part of the ASSIST constitution and organization. We encourage multiple membership in each representative field to foster just such evaluations both for ASSIST itself and for all scientific work done on the Shroud.

ASSIST offers the following categories as part of its philosophical structure for Shroud research:

1. Photography and Related Fields:
 - a. Technical and Scientific Photography.
 - b. Photomicrography.
 - c. Holography.
 - d. Computer specialists (3-D reconstruction, Photo Enhancement, Data processing).
 - e. Information theory.
 - f. Systems analyst.
 - g. Engineering (bioengineering, electrical, fluidics, etc.).
 2. Exact Sciences:
 - a. Biophysics.
 - b. Chemistry: (organic, blood, textiles, etc.).
 - c. Microscopy: (microspectroscopy, electron microscopy—transmission & scanning, etc.).
 - d. Nuclear Physics: (Carbon 14, Neutron Activation Analysis, other high energy analytical tools).
 - e. Physics: (Spectroscopy, radiography, materials physics, fluidics, Mossbauer scanning, etc.)
 3. Medical Sciences:
 - a. Anatomy.
 - b. Blood Chemistry (serology, pathology, archaeobiochemistry, etc.).
 - c. Medical pathology (blood flow studies, forensics, etc).
 - d. Medical specialties (blood flow patterns, cardiology, etc.).
 4. Special Fields:
 - a. Anthropology (Forensic Anthropology, Physical Anthropology).
 - b. Archaeology (Classical, Near Eastern).
 - c. Art Analysis (museum science, preservation).
 - d. Art History (Byzantine, Gothic, medieval).
 - e. Art Techniques and styles (Byzantine, medieval).
 - f. Artist.
 - g. Botany.
 - h. Geology.
 - i. History (New Testament, Rabbinic studies, Byzantine, medieval, Gothic, Church history, History of Religions, esp. Roman Empire; Hebrew, Greek & Latin languages).
 - j. Numismatics (Roman, Palestinian, Byzantine, coin technology).
 - k. Palynology (botanical geography, Israeli botany, etc.).
 - l. Psychology.
 - m. Textiles (Science of).
 - n. Weaving Specialist.
 5. Shroud related: (Sindonology).
 - a. History of Christian Art.
 - b. History of Shroud Science.
 - c. Shroud History.
 - d. Theology.
- 4) ASSIST aims to contribute toward coordination of Shroud research on a worldwide scale in order to promote the dissemination of scientific data for the advancement of Shroud science. Therefore, ASSIST will make Shroud material available in five languages: English, French, German, Italian and Spanish. With this in mind, we have established a professional translation team headed by Dr. David W. Lewis, chairman of the Dept. of Modern Foreign Languages and Literature of Lehigh University,

Bethlehem, PA. His special field of French is complemented in other languages by his departmental colleagues Dr. Anje C. van der Naald (Dutch, Spanish) and Dr. John A. Van Eerde (Italian). Communications in German will be in the hands of Dr. Raymond Phillips, technical translator for the Fuller Co. (Bethlehem, PA). Correspondence in French and Italian is translated by Carmela Marsala.

ASSIST also wishes to sponsor the publication of important Shroud studies or offer publication aid wherever there is need.

Finally, it must be emphasized that ASSIST does not wish to duplicate the goals of other established Shroud organizations. Our hallmarks are high precision, peer review, and international communications.

Among the tenets of modern science are *testability* and *repeatability*. The former was preeminently demonstrated by Italian and American scientists in 1978 when they drew samples from a concrete object (the Shroud of Turin) and, based upon their tests of these, proposed some interesting and bold hypotheses to explain the data. While ASSIST has continued interest in the development of the former we wish to bring the second of the above mentioned tenets into play in an objective and independent effort to verify the currently existing statements about the nature of the Shroud and the samples taken from it.

ASSIST seeks a membership which is actively interested and/or involved in research and desires to establish contact with other organizations (regional or international) which are dedicated to scientific and/or scholarly study of the Shroud. Those interested may write to ASSIST: Office of General Projects Director, Box 334, Quakertown, Pennsylvania, 18951, U.S.A. or to ASSIST, Office of the Secretary (Dr. Richard Fiene), 1800 Pineford Drive, Middletown, Pennsylvania, 17057, U.S.A.

PAUL MALONEY
ASSIST, General Projects Director