

**Barrie Schwartz
1946 - 2024
In Memoriam...**

By Ian Wilson

June 21 of this year marked the passing of one of the Shroud scene's friendliest, most high profile and most likeable figures, Jewish-born professional photographer Barrie Schwartz of Colorado Springs, Colorado, USA.



Barrie was in his early thirties and had virtually no prior knowledge of the Shroud when little more than chance led to him being invited to take on the task of photographically documenting the work of the Shroud of Turin Research Project. It was he who along with fellow-photographer Vernon Miller recorded the scientific projects that the STURP team carried out round-the-clock during the five days that they were allowed direct access to the Shroud between the 8th and 13th October 1978. Though he was not even a Christian at the time those five days and the object itself so intrigued him that they radically changed his life. The superb quality photographs that he took both of the Shroud and of the scientific work quickly became in high demand on the part of authors writing about the STURP project, likewise by the producers of TV documentaries on the subject.

A fluent raconteur – he joked about his initials! - Barrie received and usually accepted numerous invitations to become a guest speaker at Shroud events, a role that he excelled in. The Internet was still very young when he made the pioneering decision to acquire the domain name shroud.com and set up a website for the subject. It was a venture that he made into a huge international success, shroud.com quickly becoming, and remaining the world's most extensive, visible, and heavily used website on the subject. According to one estimate, he received more than fifteen million hits from well over a million people. Certainly it felt an honour and a privilege when at the time that I edited this Newsletter he most graciously granted my request for his website to host its archive copies, an arrangement that has continued most efficiently and happily down the decades.

At the end of the last century Barrie was my unhesitating choice as co-author for *The Turin Shroud: the Illustrated Evidence*, a very amicable partnership frustratingly let down only by a mercantile London publisher who failed to do justice to Barrie's superb colour photographs. In 2009, looking to posterity, Barrie founded the Shroud of Turin Education and Research Association. (STERA, Inc.), a non-profit corporation, to which he donated the website and his extensive Shroud photographic collection, as well as many other important Shroud resources, his aim being that these could be preserved and made available for future study in perpetuity.

Immensely sad and unexpected though Barrie's passing is, there can be few, if any, other people in the Shroud world who are likely to be remembered with greater and more widespread affection. On the many occasions that he and I met at Shroud conferences he could always be relied on for his fund of stories, his cheerfulness and his good humour. Whenever I needed to illustrate some point concerning the STURP 1978 scientific examination, it was Barrie who was always willing and able to provide a photograph with just that right human touch. Not too long ago, Barrie told a reporter for the New Zealand Herald, "The irony of my life is how much time I spend, as a Jew, trying to educate Christians that this could well be a relic of Jesus." He will be sorely missed...

Ian Wilson

