

Kim Dreisbach

Text by Dan Scavone

The Rev. Albert (Kim) Dreisbach now knows the truth about the Shroud of Jesus. He had been seeking it and searching for it for almost half his seventy-two years on the earth. He now knows which of us is on the right track in our own researches and which of us are—sadly—going down the wrong paths. Of course, Kim was always going in the right direction. We just had to ask him!

Russ Breault has noticed that Kim's passing occurred in the same week as his beloved Jane's four years ago. It is sweet to think of this as we celebrate major moments in Kim's life. This photo was entitled 1 June '57.



Yes, Kim was, in fact, a U.S. Marine—and always proud of it.



Early on in his ministry, Kim was a “street priest.” It was always his real vocation. He followed his calling among his people. He marched and spoke intimately with Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr.



One of our finest “people’s presidents,” Jimmy Carter, listened when Kim spoke.
(Everybody did.)



Was Kim a Shroud scholar? He denied it to the very end. “I am the bone-digger for the real Shroud scholars” were words I heard more times than I can count. One evening while we were together at a Shroud meeting in Torino, Kim showed me some photos of Byzantine epitaphioi—colorfully gorgeous embroidered liturgical cloths bearing Shroud-like representations of Jesus lying in state in what are called *threnos* (lamentation) scenes. We communicated about this for a year. In Richmond in 1999 I prepared and delivered a paper on this topic with numerous epitaphios visuals, which furthered my earlier research on the evidence for the Shroud in Constantinople. It was Kim who had “dug up the

bones.” It was in every sense a joint achievement by the two of us—and I acknowledged the fact then and do so now.

I will remember Kim for this and other similar cooperative projects. He was also known by his close friends for his incessant search (“bone-digging”) for his famous “spy-clues.” Among the most enduring will be Kim’s discovery that, in an anecdote unique to Mark (14: 51-52) the word *sindon* is used twice to describe the linen cloth left by an unnamed young man when he fled naked from the Garden of Gethsemane. Mark also uses the same word twice at 15:46 to describe the linen shroud which enveloped the body of Jesus. The passage in Mark was a “proleptic” or subtle anticipatory reference (a “spy-clue”) to the importance of the burial shroud at the time the gospel of Mark was being written. It makes perfect sense. And how many times have we heard the word “proleptic” in our conversations with Kim!

Kim found *convincing* spy-clues everywhere—a tribute to his extraordinarily wide reading—even in rather esoteric places like Spain’s Mozarabic rite, in the writings of Theodore of Mopsuestia, and in the Syriac *Hymn of the Pearl*. All these references and so many others provide evidence that the Shroud was quietly known more widely than has been thought during Christianity’s early centuries.

He was our scriptural sindonologist, more familiar than most with the entire New Testament text. Was he a Shroud scholar? Well, he denied it, hiding behind his own playful self-descriptor, “his humble magnificence.”

Another expression he often used, as when he had survived a surgery was that “God didn’t think I was ready for prime time.” Today Kim has been promoted to “prime time,” as American sindonology’s anchor man, and he is probably asking Peter how it *really* was in those times when *he* walked with the Lord.

Kim was a good friend. We shared confidences and swapped sports-stories and jokes, and always the special bond between us was our love of the Shroud.