

Dead Sea Scrolls scientists dies

October 27 2005

Archaeologist Robert Johnston of Brighton, N.Y. -- an archaeologist who helped develop a way to read ancient texts -- has died. He was 77.

Johnson, who found a way to reconstruct texts blackened or faded by time, including the Dead Sea Scrolls, died last week at his home after a series of infections and minor strokes, the New York Times reported.

Johnston -- a professor and administrator at the Rochester Institute of Technology -- worked in digital imaging to restore ancient text that often had not been seen for as long as 2,000 years, the Times said.

Johnston also worked on texts from the time of Christ and decoded parts of a 10th-century parchment copy of a famous treatise by the Greek mathematician Archimedes.

Johnston served as dean of the institute's College of Fine and Applied Arts for nearly 20 years and later became director of the Chester Carlson Center for Imaging Science.

He also found time to earn a black belt in judo, play the banjo and ride a motorcycle, the Times reported.

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Citation: Dead Sea Scrolls scientists dies (2005, October 27) retrieved 18 April 2024 from

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