

NEWS

Opening on Friday 19th July, and until 22nd July, in Pasco, Washington State, USA, there is an international conference entitled: Seeking Solutions to the Mystery of the Shroud. It is organised by Robert Rucker, a nuclear engineer, who is also giving a paper on the Neutron Absorption Hypothesis, which may prove to be the touchstone of the whole conference. Guideline topics for presenters include 'Is the Shroud of Turin the same as the Image of Edessa', the 'Legitimacy of claims of what can be seen or detected on the Shroud', 'The pros and cons of the various proposed explanations for the formation of the image', and the Sudarium of Oviedo. It is intended that there will also be time for questions and discussion, the lack of which many felt was a detriment to the previous conference in St Louis, Missouri in 2014. Nevertheless, over fifty presentations are programmed, averaging about half an hour in length. It promises to be a fascinating, inspiring and, dare I say it, controversial experience. Sadly I won't be able to be there myself, but look forward to whatever record is made of it with eager enthusiasm. For more details see: [shroudresearch.net](http://shroudresearch.net).

The following weekend sees this year's Jalsa Salana, the annual gathering of the Ahmadiyya Muslim community in Hampshire, UK, which itself looks set to become a minor Shroud convention of its own. Half a dozen experts are due to attend, including Barrie Schwartz, whose pivotal role in Shroud studies not only includes STERA and shroud.com, but the deliciously ironic fact that as a Jew he believes in the authenticity of the Shroud, but not in the Resurrection, while I believe in the Resurrection, but not the authenticity of the Shroud. The other Christians believe in both the authenticity and the Resurrection, while the Ahmadiyya Muslims don't think Jesus died on the cross. I doubt if a similar variety of opinions will be found in Pasco.

