



Avie Arenson, 1940–2015

Avie Arenson, a dedicated friend of the Israel Museum, who, as Chairman of its Building Committee, oversaw the comprehensive renewal of our campus from 2007 to 2010, died on January 9, 2015.

Born in Canada and educated at the University of Manitoba, Avie made aliyah to Israel as a young man, building his life, family, and career here. As founder and former owner of Arenson Ltd General Contractors, he presided over Israel's largest private contracting firm for several decades, leaving his mark with numerous and impressive achievements in this field. Alongside a demanding professional life, Avie dedicated time and energy to a wide range of communal causes and professional associations, including Israel's Association of Builders and Contractors and the United Construction Institute of Israel. He also served on the boards supporting numerous cultural and educational institutions, among them Hebrew Union College, the Technion, and Haifa University, and the Zinman Institute of Archaeology at Haifa University.

Bringing with him his professionalism, his creative spirit, and his good humor, Avie became an active member of the Museum's Board of Directors – first joining as an Observer and then as Chairman of the Building Committee for our Campus Renewal Project, the most ambitious renewal of our campus since the Museum's opening in 1965. In this capacity, Avie went far beyond the requirements of his role, spending hours on site – donning a hard hat and actively following progress in the field, and providing wise counsel to our team every step of the way. His knowledge and expertise proved invaluable, lending ballast to our own professionalism and steering us through the daunting task of construction and reconstruction on a scale not common to our landscape.

Avie's long history of friendship was also marked by generous giving, demonstrated by ongoing contributions to the Association of Israeli Friends of the Israel Museum and by major support for exhibitions, among them the highly acclaimed Herod the Great: The King's Final Journey. And together with his wife, Sara, Avie demonstrated generosity in a very personal way, as a gracious host and as a participant in International Council events in Israel and worldwide, inspiring others by his example.

In 2013, the Museum paid tribute to Avie's outstanding contribution as Chairman of our Building Committee, to his generosity, and to his steadfast friendship by making him an Honorary Fellow. We have lost this steadfast friend far too soon, but he will long be remembered with profound fondness and appreciation for the legacy he leaves in our renewed Museum.

