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Nobel Peace Prize authority, Antioch professor, dies

By [Thomas Gnau](#), Staff Writer

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SCOTT LONDON

Dr. Irwin Abrams at the Dayton Walk of Fame

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Irwin Abrams, a champion and historian of the Nobel Peace Prize, died Thursday at the age of 96.

Abrams was Distinguished University Professor Emeritus at Antioch University in Yellow Springs. He was an authority on the Nobel Peace Prize and those who have received it. He served as a writer, historian and consultant to the U.S. departments of State and Education, among many other roles.

Abrams died at the Friends Care Center in Yellow Springs, about a block away from his home of some 60 years, said Scott London, his grandson.

He died about a week after the most recent Peace Prize was awarded to Liu Xiaobo, a human rights activist in China.

"It's a shame, because I was there at the awards ceremony in Norway, and I was going to give him a full report when I got home," London said.

Antioch College appointed Abrams in 1947 to set up a history department, according to a biography on his website. He had been married to Freda Morrill from 1939 until her death in 1999.

His book, *The Nobel Peace Prize and the Laureates, 1901-1987*, was chosen by the American Library Association as one of the "outstanding reference works of 1989," his website said.

London said he worked closely with Abrams for years. London lived in Stockholm, Sweden as a teen, and he said his grandfather sometimes sent him to interview Peace Prize laureates and relatives to assist his research.

Abrams attended prize ceremonies in Oslo, Norway with his wife as often as he could before 2005, when his health began to prevent him from making the trip, London said.

Abrams and London worked on books together, including one that will be completed shortly, a continuation of a previous work covering laureate acceptance speeches. The latest edition of that work will cover the speeches from 2006 to 2010, London said.

Abrams was inducted into the Dayton Walk of Fame in the Wright-Dunbar district in 2007.

"I think he would be the first to say that he lived a long and very blessed life," London said.

There is no date or location for a service yet, London said. He thought one might be held in Yellow Springs in January.

Contact this reporter at (937) 225-2390 or tgnau@DaytonDailyNews.com.