

I N M E M O R I A M

*A Remembrance of Baruj Benacerraf by
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Baruj Benacerraf, M.D., AAI '57 1920–2011

The AAI and all immunologists mourn
the passing of one of the giants in our

field—Baruj Benacerraf died on August 2, 2011.

My older son was an infant when I was in Baruj's lab, and he met and played with him. Twenty-two years later, I was in Boston when my son visited and I brought him to Baruj's office. Baruj greeted him warmly and asked him what he was doing. Upon hearing that my son was an assistant director of the Hartford Stage Company, Baruj exclaimed that he really envied him and he, Baruj, had wasted his life in the lab and should have stayed in the theater where he had met Annette as she directed a college play in which she had a prominent part.

We suspect the last part was a bit apocryphal, but Baruj and Annette were serious patrons of the arts and they played duets on flute and harpsichord for friends for many years.

This same theme of an artistic side to Baruj (and Annette) is at the core of the following remembrance from **Emil Unanue**, who joined Baruj shortly after he became chair of Pathology at Harvard:

My major interactions with Baruj took place during the fifteen years I spent at the Department of Pathology at HMS. He recruited me in late 1970 as an assistant professor. The department was a center of activity all during the 1970s and visitors from all over the world were coming by to discuss Ir genes and MHC restriction and to get his opinion on problems that were not yet clear. Of course I was highly influenced by these activities in my own research work on antigen presentation. But I want to focus on another facet of Baruj's personality: his enjoyment (with Annette of course, you could not separate them) of the many beautiful components of life. Both were highly cultured: interested in a good book, listening to and playing music (classical only!), a nice meal, a conversation on politics or religion. Here I saw a different Baruj, one who was relaxed, eager to talk, witty, smiling.

locally and internationally. In addition to his scholarship, he was a superb mentor who took great pleasure in advancing the careers of his students. In the late '70s Baruj received an invitation from Laurence Rockefeller to discuss an opportunity to head Memorial Sloan Kettering. Shortly thereafter, Harvard and the DFCI countered by offering the DFCI presidency. Months after accepting

personal investment in me with no direct relationship to science;