

Dunham Bible Museum News



Houston Baptist University

April-June 2008

Vol. 5, Issue 2

The Dedication

Several hundred friends of Houston Baptist University gathered March 25 in McNair Hall to dedicate Houston Baptist University's three museums – the **Dunham Bible Museum**, the Museum of American Architecture and Decorative Arts, and the Museum of Southern History. After an opening ceremony and ribbon cutting, guests enjoyed refreshments reflecting the diverse themes of the Museums: fried chicken, grits, and pecan tartlets for the Museum of Southern History and grapes, olives, cheese, and baklava for the **Bible Museum**.



Linda and Archie Dunham were recognized at the Dedication of the Dunham Bible Museum, named in their honor.

Guests toured all three museums and were impressed with the collections displayed as well as the creative design and craftsmanship of Charles Paramore and his team at Museum Arts, Inc.

Visitors first peering into the new **Bible Museum** from windows in McNair Hall immediately knew they would be in for a treat. Eyes first focus on the printing shop and the working replica of the press Gutenberg used to first print the Bible in the

1450's. Nearby, beautifully illuminated medieval Bible manuscripts are housed in mahogany display cases. A very Irish-looking medieval monk works at his desk on a manuscript. In the distant background, a diorama of the Dead Sea Scroll caves provides the setting for displays of archaeological artifacts.

Entering the front doors of the **Bible Museum**, visitors immediately see a large mural of the earth rising over the lunar landscape and hear the words, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth..." The **Dunham Bible Museum's** new exhibits begin with the Bible's origins in history, how the manuscripts were written and collected into the Old and New Testaments, and the centrality of Jesus Christ to all of Scripture.

The story of the Bible's preservation from manuscript to printed word is followed by exhibits on the dramatic history of the English Bible. One half of the Museum is devoted to the Bible in America. Visitors view colonial Bibles with the backdrop of Boston's Old South Meetinghouse, and can hear psalms singing quietly in the background. Exhibits of American Bibles demonstrate the influence of the Bible in the lives of individuals as well as the culture and development of the United States. The exhibits conclude with Bible translations from around the globe, proclaiming that the Bible is indeed God's Word for all times and all peoples.



Vice President Emeritus Don Looser emceed the Dedication Ceremony. Dr. Looser tirelessly supervised the installation of HBU's Museums in the Cultural Arts Center.



Dr. Robert Sloan, Charles Paramore, and Dr. Doug Hodo in front of the Moses mural in the Dunham Bible Museum. The Bible Museum was originally the dream of HBU's President emeritus, Dr. Hodo. The dream was brought to fruition under the leadership of HBU's current President, Dr. Sloan, and by the creative talents of Charles Paramore, President of Museum Arts, Inc.

Dr. John Hellstern, center, explains to Marilyn and Robert Silverthorn the history of the medieval Bible manuscripts on display.



The Brake-Hellstern Collection

The **Dunham Bible Museum** Dedication was greatly enhanced by the exhibits put together for the Museum by Dr. Donald Brake, vice president and dean of Multnomah Biblical Seminary, and Dr. John Hellstern, a retired Air Force chaplain. Brake and Hellstern have collected historic Bibles for 30 years, and together they have amassed a collection that is one of the richest in the country for its breadth and depth. Through the Living Word National Bible Museum, which they co-founded, Brake and Hellstern have had major Bible exhibits in Fort Worth, Dallas, Branson, and Tulsa.



Donald Brake and John Hellstern

Papyrus pieces, scrolls, and illuminated Medieval manuscripts show the Bible's transmission from earliest times up to John Wycliffe. Demonstrating the giant Gutenberg-style press helps bring to life the 15th century, and the message of the Reformation becomes more vibrant when viewing printed Bibles produced during that period. Exhibits on the English Bible begin with a 1536 New Testament, translated from the Greek and Hebrew by William Tyndale. Early editions of the Geneva Bible and other forerunners of the 1611 King James Bible reinforce the story of personal sacrifice behind the preservation of the English Bible we so freely read today.

Over the last 14 years, exhibitions from the collections of Brake and Hellstern have enhanced the faith of numerous Christians as well as been a potent witness to nonbelievers of the importance and power of the Scriptures.

The **Dunham Bible Museum** is privileged to exhibit important items from this valuable collection, and funds are being raised to complete the purchase of the collection for the University. HBU currently has one of the best American



Latin Bible printed by Froben in 1591.

Bible collections in the country. Acquisition of the collections of Brake and Hellstern would greatly enable the **Dunham Bible Museum's** exhibits to tell the story of the Bible's preservation, history, transmission, and influence. It would also greatly enhance the research potential for HBU and the scholarly community.

If you would like to contribute towards HBU's purchase of the Brake-Hellstern collections, contact Rick Ogden at 281-649-3355 (rogden@hbu.edu) or Diana Severance at 281-649-3287 (dseverance@hbu.edu).



Queen Catherine the Great's Gospels

Books and Resources

A new feature has been added to the Dunham Bible Museum website at www.hbu.edu/biblemuseum. The link to "Books and Resources" takes you to a list of books, DVDs, and other resources about the Bible's origins, history, and influence. You will find everything from scholarly sources to resources for children. We've divided the resources into the following five categories:

- The Bible's Origin, Manuscripts and History
- The English Bible
- The King James Bible
- The Bible's Influence and Impact on Culture and Lives
- Especially for Children and Young People

You can support the Dunham Bible Museum by purchasing items listed from Amazon.com through the Dunham Bible Museum website. The Dunham Bible Museum receives up to 10% of the price of all purchases from Amazon.com made through its website. Thanks for shopping!

The Designers and Fabricators

Everyone at the dedication of the **Dunham Bible Museum** was tremendously impressed with the beautiful exhibit areas designed and manufactured by Museum Arts, Inc. of Dallas. The team at Museum Arts put their hearts as well as their talents into their work.

In developing plans for the **Dunham Bible Museum**, Lary Brown found that “becoming more aware of the personal sacrifices made by so many to ensure the availability of the Bible worldwide is humbling.” Designer George Rigg considered work on the Bible Museum one of the pinnacles of his career: “Working on the Dunham Bible Museum was a rare merger of my strong personal beliefs (serving God) with my professional passions. It has been an honor to work on this project!” George looks forward to continuing Museum Arts’ relationship with HBU “in portraying historic truths, fascinating facts and to ultimately shine God’s light from the past to the present and into the future.”

History had always been writer and researcher Kelli Briscoe’s favorite subject. Working on the Bible museum gave her “a great opportunity to learn more about the rich history of the Bible. The journey of the Bible is a winding but fascinating road,” she said. “I hope visitors will leave with a better understanding of and appreciation for the Bible. It was a pleasure working with Diana, and I’m proud of this jewel in HBU’s crown.”



Ross Edwards using an airbrush to add details to the large mural of Moses and the Ten Commandments.

The dedication of the **Bible Museum** was especially significant for Design Director Ross Edwards: “The Bible Museum opening coincided with the day I celebrated 29 years in following Jesus Christ. My relationship with the Lord began March 25, 1979. The planning for the installation of the Bibles was eclipsed only by the actual handling of the written Word

of God in many historic forms as they were placed in each exhibit case. Painting the Moses mural with the Hebrew and English listing of the Ten Commandments was a joy. It is the only mural I’ve ever painted with so great a theme. Knowing the students and museum visitors will be able to learn the history and the important sacrifices men called of God gave to bring the Written Word to us today is very rewarding.”



Museum Arts President Charles Paramore at Dedication Ceremony

Museum Arts’ President Charles Paramore, who provided the leadership for the entire project, has a deep love of the Scriptures which he poured into his work on the Bible Museum: “Some 25 years ago I had a young seminary student working for me at Museum Arts who had an unusual gift of teaching. One day I called him into my office to confess that although I had grown up in church and had held every kind of church office, I did not like studying the Bible. To me, Bible study was like eating dry cereal. I knew I needed the nourishment, but every bite was difficult to digest.

“I had heard that there were people who thought Bible study was like eating peaches and cream, and I wanted that for myself.

“The student and I began a once a week study before work on Wednesday morning; we were studying the book of Ruth. He required me to study each morning for at least half an hour, and in time I extended that time to over an hour and a half. Within six months, I found the study time so exciting I told him I could not afford to continue our time together on Wednesdays. I have been beginning each day since then with at least one hour devoted to a love affair with God’s Word.

“When we were approached with the opportunity to work on the Bible Museum, I was thrilled. While I enjoyed working on the other two museums, this museum is the closest to my heart.

“When completed, this museum experience will be a living testimony to the power of God’s Word to change people’s lives. My special thanks to Don Looser, Houston Baptist University, and especially Diana Severance for making my dream of a lifetime come true.”

DUNHAM

Bible

MUSEUM™

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Visit our website at
www.hbu.edu/biblemuseum

*“God’s Word is a light that
shines in a dark place.”*
— Martin Luther

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A Visual History of the English Bible

Renowned Biblical scholar Dr. Donald Brake, whose collection forms an important part of the **Dunham Bible Museum’s** new exhibits, has written a fascinating book telling the story of the journey of the English Bible from the pulpit to the people. *A Visual History of the English Bible* is beautifully illustrated with over one hundred color illustrations, inviting readers to explore the process of the Bible’s transformation from medieval manuscripts to today’s contemporary translations. Along the way, readers will meet many heroes of the faith – men and women who preserved and published the Scriptures, often at the risk of their own lives.



Dr. Robert Sloan, HBU’s president, wrote that “Donald Brake’s *A Visual History of the English Bible* deserves a wide readership. He salts his compelling narrative about the democratization of the Bible with whimsical stories about how he, as a man of unexceptional means, slowly obtained a wonderful collection of rare editions. The result is informative and entertaining. Brake’s happy obsession benefits us all.”

The book will be available in September 2008.

To pre-order at a 30% discount visit www.bakerbooks.com/avisualhistoryoftheenglishbible and enter promotional code 13164. Or call 1-800-877-2665 and mention the same code.

Visiting the Museum And Coming Events

The **Dunham Bible Museum** will be open by appointment only during the spring and summer, allowing the Museum to complete its move to the Cultural Arts Center and complete installation of its exhibits. Regular hours will be established in the fall. To make an appointment or for further information, contact **Dr. Diana Severance at 281-649-3287 or dseverance@hbu.edu**.

Mark your calendars for coming lectures and exhibits:

September 18 – “The Bible and the Founding Fathers” by Dr. Daniel Dreisbach, School of Public Affairs at American University and author of numerous books.

October 9 – “Shakespeare and the Bible” by Dr. Naseeb Shaheen, University of Memphis, author of *Biblical References in Shakespeare’s Plays*

October 10 – “Greek texts used in English Translations” by Dr. Donald Brake, author of *A Visual History of the English Bible*

October 9-November 14 – Special exhibit on Soldier’s Bibles

February 26 – “The Bible and Lincoln” by Ronald C. White, author of *Lincoln’s Greatest Speech, The Eloquent President: A Portrait of Lincoln Through His Words*

March-April – Special exhibit on St. John’s Bible