

Dunham Bible Museum News



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And the Winner Is...



Now in its third year, "A Piece of the Past" essay contest is becoming a tradition at HBU. Seven students won awards for essays written on artifacts or items in the Dunham Bible Museum.

As he did last year, Nicholas Van Cleve won first place in the Dunham Bible Museum category, this time for his essay, "Siloam Inscription: An Ancient Architectural Feat & Biblical Verification." The essay examines the history behind the inscription found in Hezekiah's tunnel in Jerusalem and the value of this discovery in providing archeological verification for the authenticity of the Bible. Van Cleve is a member of the Honors College at HBU with a double major in Biblical Languages and Philosophy. A leader of HBU Students for Life (a pro-life club on campus), Van Cleve also is a Husky Ambassador, offering tours of HBU. After completing his undergraduate studies, Van Cleve is considering graduate school in an area of apologetics.

Bethany Lindell's essay, "May This Keep You Safe From Harm: Captain James Scott Cumming's New Testament Heart-Shield Bible", received second place in the Dunham Bible Museum category. Lindell's paper examines the metal covered New Testaments often given to soldiers by their loved ones during World War II. Lindell graduated this spring from HBU with a major in studio and fine arts and a minor in creative writing.

Five of the eight "Honorable Mention" winners wrote essays on items from the Dunham Bible Museum's exhibits. These Honorable Mention essays included Joshua Christopher Jones' "Ethiopian Psalter: The Illuminated Manuscript and Genuine Devotion"; Agbasoga Ojirika's "The Benjamin Franklin Family Stool: Genuine Faith is Never Overcome"; Rebecca McFarland's "The Mistake: The 'Wicked Bible'"; Mayra Herrera's "The Great Bible: King Henry VIII's New Bible"; and Lauren Gabrielle Bourn's "*Book of Hours: An Ancient Devotional.*"

Winners of this year's contest received their awards at a special dinner in March at the River Oaks Country Club. First place winners received \$500; second place \$250, and Honorable Mention \$100. All of the winning essays can be read online at www.hbu.edu/PieceofthePastcontest.

"A Piece of the Past" contest was established to encourage student research into the artifacts of three HBU museums: the Dunham Bible Museum, the Museum of American Architecture and Decorative Arts and the Museum of Southern History. Funding for the contest was generously provided by The Joella and Stewart Morris Foundation and Mr. Isaac Heimbinder.

They Read the Same Bible

July 1-3 marks the 150th anniversary of the Battle of Gettysburg, the largest battle on the North American continent and the turning point of the American Civil War. To mark this Civil War sesquicentennial, a special exhibit of Bibles from the era will be at the Dunham Bible Museum from June 16 – December 13, 2013. This exhibit was well received when first presented three years ago, and it is fitting it be remounted for the Civil War sesquicentennial.

The exhibit's title is taken from President Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, given a little over a month before he was assassinated. In his insightful meditations on the Civil War, Lincoln pondered over the fact that both sides, "read the same Bible and pray to the same God, and each invokes His aid against the other. ... The prayers of both could not be answered. That of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes."

All of the twenty Bibles or hymnals in the exhibit are from the Dunham Bible Museum's collection. They include Testaments belonging to soldiers of both sides, many with personal notes or poems in them. The rarest volume is a New Testament printed by the Confederate Bible Society; only 11 known copies of the Testament exist. One of the Testaments captured by the Union as it was shipped through the blockade to the Confederacy is also on display.

The exhibit includes a facsimile of a book owned by Abraham Lincoln - *The Believer's Daily Treasure*, a small devotional of Scripture and poems. It's interesting to note the devotional for April 14, the day Lincoln was assassinated, and wonder if he read the text that day:

Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me. *John v.39*

Lord, thy teaching grace impart,

That we may not read in vain;

Write thy precepts on our heart.

Make thy truths and doctrine plain;

Let the message of thy love

Guide us to thy rest above.

Encomium: A Young Researcher Celebrates the Dunham Bible Museum

By Dr. David Davis

Mark Twain reportedly once said, “In a good bookroom you feel in some mysterious way that you are absorbing the wisdom contained in all the books through your skin.” Having spent a healthy portion of my 20s in the reading rooms of Cambridge, Oxford, Exeter, and the British Library, I can bear witness to this kind of osmosis. A good reading room is the laboratory of the Muses.

Also, I have found that Twain’s words are no less true in regard to Houston Baptist University’s Dunham Bible Museum and its reading room, which is cozily tucked in on the second floor of McNair Hall. Over the past three years, the Dunham collection has inspired and equipped me to write several book chapters and a monograph on the Reformation and the early printing trade in Europe.

Most significantly for my research, the Dunham houses a diverse assortment of the earliest English Bibles, including the earliest editions of the Coverdale Bible, which were produced in the 1530s, and Henry VIII’s official Great Bible (c. 1539). The Great Bible was the first printed vernacular scripture to have a monarch’s seal of approval. The title-page of the Henry’s Bible, which is on display in the museum, illustrates the majesty and peculiarity of the English Reformation, as Henry is depicted receiving the Word of God from Christ and then distributes copies of the Bible to his clergy.

The Dunham also offers readers several wonderfully-preserved, sixteenth-century editions of the Geneva Bible, which was the most popular version for English readers. These are complimented by a number of copies of the heavily illustrated Bishops Bible, which Elizabeth I had printed to compete with the more puritan Geneva Bible. Although the Bishops Bible was widely criticized for the quality of its translation, which is one of the reasons why King James I had his version created, it contained some of the most elaborate and beautiful woodcuts of early English print.

Although the English Reformation is known for its iconoclastic inclinations, my own studies have focused on the use of imagery in these early Protestant Bibles. The Dunham’s collection is well stocked with illustrated copies, many of which are among the rarest editions of English Bibles. These pictures visualized some of the more important scenes from the Word, including: the sacrifice of Isaac, the vision of Ezekiel, the passion of Christ, and the events of Revelation. My time spent in the Dunham’s reading room has greatly contributed to my examination of these woodcut and engraved illustrations and their importance to Protestant belief and practice. Many of the images from Dunham Bibles were copied and reproduced as illustrations in my book about the English

Reformation: *Seeing Faith, Printing Pictures: Religious Identity during the English Reformation*.

A recent exhibit in the Dunham Bible Museum, *Picturing the Word: Bible Illustrations from the 15th-16th Centuries*, has thoroughly demonstrated how important these illustrations have been to Protestant devotion and learning. From the earliest days of the Reformation, readers saw pictures depicting the truths of scripture as a means of education and spiritual inspiration. Also, as many copies in the Dunham collection show, the Bibles of the seventeenth century became houses for, what Archbishop Laud called, “the beauty of holiness,” as the leading baroque artists created engravings of biblical figures.

Another aspect of the Dunham collection that has heavily influenced my research is the evidence of readership and readers’ marks. Since it is a sad truth that well-used books do not often survive over the centuries, many libraries and collections of early printed books do not have the “thumbed through” feel of the Dunham’s Bibles.

While our modern perspective of books sees them as mass-produced, fixed objects, the early modern reader treated books, even Bibles, as much more malleable objects. They were regularly physically altered and heavily annotated (including correcting the text). Also, pages could be removed, and single volumes could be bound with others, creating a wholly unique compilation. Some of the best examples of these practices in the Dunham are the extensive devotional texts written in the Seymour Bible, owned by Elizabeth Seymour Knightley (niece of Jane Seymour, Queen of England), and the poet Emily Taylor’s personal Bible, which she has amended with pages of hand-written poems and has glued hundreds of woodcut illustrations onto its pages. These volumes offer valuable insight into Bible-readers who have gone before us. Such books demonstrate that early printed books could be incredibly personal items, serving as expressions and records of an individual’s piety, their struggles, their family’s history, and their reading habits.

The Dunham Bible Museum continues to be Houston Baptist University’s best kept secret, and my own research has only scratched the surface of its riches. It is difficult to overstate the value and depth of the collection, which is accessible to both the researcher and the laymen who has a passion for the printed word. As a historian and a bibliophile, I feel honored and blessed to be so familiar with even a part of this impressive assembly of God’s Word.

Dr. Davis is Director of the MLA program at HBU and Asst. Professor in History. His monograph *Seeing Faith, Printing Pictures: religious Identity in the English Reformation* is forthcoming from Brill.

Gifts Received

The Dunham Bible Museum has been the recipient of numerous gifts in 2013. Carolyn Deibler donated 29 books from her late husband's, Timothy Deibler's, library. Most of these are 19th century commentaries, hymnals, and theological works. Numerous friends of Ann Hutchen donated \$450 in her memory. Ann, along with her husband Jack, had been a member of the Dunham Bible Museum Friends since 2008. The American Bible Society gifted the Dunham Bible Museum with a 1909 edition of *The Bible and Its Story Taught by One Thousand Picture Lessons*. Individual donations have included a Bible in Esperanto, four 19th century Family Bibles, and a German Bible.

In Memoriam Janet Richardson (1946-2013)



Janet Richardson and her husband Ken have been faithful volunteers at the Dunham Bible Museum since its relocation to the Morris Cultural Arts Center in 2008. The second and fourth Mondays of every month they faithfully reported to duty to give tours to visitors, collate pamphlets, update the Museum scrapbook, encapsulate ephemera left in Bibles, or whatever work needed to be done. They also have helped staff the special events the Museum has hosted, especially the KJV@400 conference in 2011.

On May 1, 2013, Janet passed from this life into eternity. We will miss her, as we know Ken, her husband of 46 years, will. Yet, we do not sorrow as those who have no hope and rejoice that she is now "away from the body and at home with the Lord."

Congratulations to Andrew Adler and Lesleigh Balkum, who were graduated at HBU's commencement today!

Andrew was the Outstanding Student in Biblical Languages; Lesleigh Balkum was an Outstanding English Major and a winner of the President's Award. Both Andrew and Lesleigh have been student assistants at the Bible Museum for two years and will be sorely missed, though we are very excited about the future of both of these scholars. After six months in Christian work in India, Andrew will return to HBU to work on a Masters in Biblical Languages. Lesleigh is getting married June 1. She and her husband will both begin their graduate studies at University of Massachusetts, Boston in the fall. May the Lord bless both Andrew and Lesleigh as they seek to serve Him in their lives ahead.

museum (up from 4002 last year). Of these, 5008 were visitors who came as individuals or visited during other events on campus.

- 68 group tours were given, for 1312 visitors. Many of these were senior citizens groups, as well as church bible studies.
- 14 groups were from schools, with a total of 446 students. Schools included public and private schools as well as classes from Wharton Community College.
- 15 classes from HBU visited the Bible Museums, with a total if 389 students.
- Three student assistants helped provide tours for visitors, in addition to four volunteers outside the University.
- There were 9125 visits to the Dunham Bible Museum website (www.hbu.edu/biblemuseum), almost three times the number as last year.
- A Facebook page was established, which now has 55 "likes"

You are Invited to become a Dunham Bible Museum Friend

Friends have the satisfaction that their tax deductible gift will enable the Dunham Bible Museum to continue to develop its exhibits and outreach and enable it to achieve its goal of being a premier museum dedicated to the Bible, its message, history and influence. Memberships are available at several levels and benefits: King James (\$50), Geneva (75), Coverdale (\$250), Wycliffe (\$500), Tyndale (\$1000), Gutenberg (Corporate) and St. Jerome (Lifetime- \$10,000). For more information visit the Museum's website at www.hbu.edu/biblemuseum.

Memberships may be submitted online or by mailing to Dunham Bible Museum,
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Visit our website at
www.hbu.edu/biblemuseum

“I know not how long a republican government can flourish among a great people who have not the Bible, the experiment has never been tried, but this I do know that the existing government of this country never could have had existence but for the Bible.”

William Seward, Secretary of State for Abraham Lincoln and Andrew Johnson

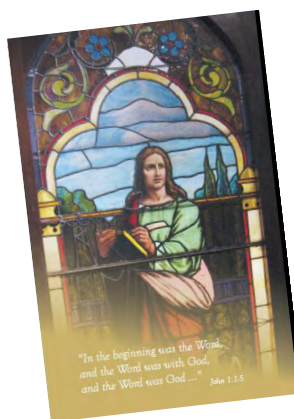


The entrance to the Hinton Center now features a display of artifacts from the Dunham Bible Museum. A Torah scroll, a Gutenberg Bible facsimile, a 17th century King James Version and a portion of the microfilm Bible that went to the moon in back are exhibited, and viewers are encouraged to see more in the Dunham Bible Museum itself.



The Dunham Bible Museum is one of more than 1,800 museums across America to offer free admission to military personnel and their families from Memorial Day through Labor Day 2013. "Blue Star Museums" is a collaboration with the National Endowment for the Humanities, Blue Star families, and the Department of Defense.

“THEY READ THE SAME BIBLE” SPECIAL EXHIBIT ON CIVIL WAR BIBLES JUNE 15 – DECEMBER 13, 2013



A new pamphlet, featuring messages of the Light of the Scripture from the Bible Museum, was designed and donated by Doug Sanders. Thank you, Mr. Sanders! The pamphlet well highlights the Bible's message of the Light and Redemption in Christ. Pick one up on your next visit to the Bible Museum!

The **Dunham Bible Museum** is open 10-4 Monday – Saturdays, except University Holidays. To make an appointment for group tours, or for further information, contact **Dr. Diana Severance at 281-649-3287 or dseverance@hbu.edu**