

SAN DIEGO NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM

# Dead Sea Scrolls

ANCIENT · AUTHENTIC · AMAZING

*Presented by Joan and Irwin Jacobs*

*Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation*

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

*For Immediate Release*

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### **San Diego's Precious Artifacts Join World-class Dead Sea Scrolls Exhibition** *San Diego Public Library lends ancient manuscripts to San Diego Natural History Museum*

**San Diego: October 26, 2007**—On June 29 the San Diego Natural History Museum opened *Dead Sea Scrolls*, the largest, most comprehensive exhibition of the Dead Sea Scrolls ever assembled. Joining institutions from around the world, the San Diego Public Library is lending valuable manuscripts to the Museum for its exhibition.

The Wangenheim Room's items on loan for *Dead Sea Scrolls* include an original leaf from an 1121 CE Armenian Bible manuscript, a 13th century Latin Bible on thin vellum from France, a facsimile edition of the Gutenberg Bible, an exquisitely bound Geneva Bible printed in 1599, known as the "Breeches" Bible, and the Book of Esther on an 18<sup>th</sup> century wooden scroll.

"The Library is proud to share these rare, unusual and beautiful Bibles with a larger audience," said Heidi Wigler, curator for the Wangenheim Room at the San Diego Public Library. "We hope that viewing these amazing documents will pique the public's curiosity to see the many other treasures located in the Wangenheim Room and greater San Diego community."

The Wangenheim Room contains a collection of rare books, manuscripts, and artifacts illustrating the development of books through the ages. The collection, which was named after San Diego civic leader and bibliophile Julius Wangenheim, spans more than 4000 years, ranging from Babylonian clays tablets from 2300 BCE to a rare and exquisitely illustrated 20th century manuscript of *The Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam*.

The Wangenheim Room is located in the Central Library downtown at 820 E Street and is open to the public Monday–Saturday, 1:30–4:30 PM. Access the Wangenheim Room's holdings by visiting the San Diego Public Library's online catalog at [www.sandiegolibrary.org](http://www.sandiegolibrary.org).

"Our curator and exhibits team have pulled together material from the far-flung corners of the Earth: Russia, Ethiopia, England, and more. The San Diego Public Library's Wangenheim Room is

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an incredible resource and it's wonderful to have manuscripts from the San Diego community featured," exclaimed Museum President and CEO Dr. Michael Hager.

*Dead Sea Scrolls* will not travel: this comprehensive exhibition will only be at the San Diego Natural History Museum. The exhibition is unprecedented in size, scope and length. The six-month exhibition brings materials never before exhibited together: Dead Sea Scrolls from Israel and Jordan reunited for the first time in decades, rarely seen ancient Hebrew codices from the National Library of Russia, medieval manuscripts from the British National Library, and stunning modern hand-scribed texts and art. Tracing the scrolls and their meaning through time, the exhibition connects the ancient world to the modern. The exhibition spans two floors and over 14,500 square feet. The presenting sponsor of the exhibition is the Joan and Irwin Jacobs Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to encounter some of the world's most significant documents and artifacts, all in the same space," says Dr. Risa Levitt Kohn, curator of the exhibition and director of San Diego State University's Judaic Studies Program. "The scrolls are the oldest discovered copies of the books of the Hebrew Bible, and the ideas in them have shaped our world. They shed light on life, faith and culture in ancient Israel, which influenced Judaism and Christianity." The Museum anticipates over 400,000 in attendance over the six-month period.

Celebrating its 133<sup>rd</sup> year, the San Diego Natural History Museum is the second oldest scientific institution in California; third west of the Mississippi. A binational Museum, its mission is to interpret the natural world through research, education, and exhibits; to promote understanding of the evolution and diversity of southern California and the peninsula of Baja California and to inspire in all a respect for nature and the environment. Located in Balboa Park at the intersection of Village Place and Park Blvd., it is open daily except for Thanksgiving and Christmas. Phone: 619.232.3821. Website: [www.sdnhm.org](http://www.sdnhm.org).

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