

## Alumni and the Scrolls

*The PLNU Alumni Association recently made a trip to see the San Diego Natural History Museum's Dead Sea Scrolls exhibit. Three alumni discuss what the visit meant to them.*

On a beautiful, warm summer afternoon in August, my wife, Charlene, and I met on the lawn adjacent to the Botanical Gardens in Balboa Park with over 150 other alums of PLNU. As we approached the museum, we saw the banner that announced, "Sponsored by Point Loma Nazarene University." What a wonderful gift to give to the City of San Diego and all who attend the exhibit.

After enjoying a catered lunch, we went to experience the magnificent exhibit that contained fragments of the Dead Sea Scrolls. The exhibit began with a pictorial account of the geographical area in which the scrolls were found and the circumstances under which they were discovered.

It was overwhelming to be in the presence of people of the past with whom we have a strong connection today. The scrolls were a witness to their commitment to the writings of Scripture. Seeing this was a deeply moving spiritual experience.

A highlight of the day was the Q&A session that the group shared with Dr. John Wright, professor of theology and Christian Scriptures at PLNU. His knowledge and obvious love for the scrolls personalized the experience for us and added greatly to our understanding and appreciation for what we experienced. I am thankful that we have a scholar of Dr. Wright's experience and expertise on our faculty at PLNU.

Dr. Tom Goble (56)

As I wandered through the ancient artifacts from Qumran (the shoes and the comb with the lice were fascinating); the Psalms and Deuteronomy scrolls (how did they figure out where each piece belongs?); and even a scroll inscribed on copper (this was probably my favorite), I was struck by two things: our heritage and our responsibility.



*PLNU alumni eating lunch at Dead Sea Scrolls event.*

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As Christians, we have been blessed with a God who continually pursues us, who wants to have a relationship with us and wants to dwell in our midst. This exhibit reminded me that God has been pursuing humanity for thousands of years and how important it is to be in relationship with Him. Second, it became clear to me the responsibility we have as Christians. We must provide a heritage so that future generations can look back and see how we have served God by proclaiming His Word and changing our world because of our relationship with Him. Today, I was humbled at my need for God and awed at His desire to meet my need.

Susan (Williamson) Brownlee (83)

This was my first event as an alumnus, and it was cool to see that Point Loma still has that special community feel even after you have graduated. The beauty of the exhibit was in the great detail found in all the introductory information provided. It's much harder to understand the significance of an event or artifact if you don't understand the time period around it. The audio resource, written descriptions, replicas, and artifacts from Qumran all helped to create context and provide a mental backdrop. I really gained an appreciation for how much work and practice it must have taken to write all the documents found in and around Qumran.

Raylene Merino (05)