

**Remarks of Lucy Loomis, Director, Sturgis Library  
At the Rededication of the Lothrop Bible, October 10, 2009**

Hello, and welcome to the Sturgis Library. For those of you who may not know me, I'm Lucy Loomis, Library Director. It's wonderful to see you all here today, as we rededicate the historic Lothrop Bible on the 370<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the settlement of the Town of Barnstable, and the 365<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the construction of our historic building -- Reverend John Lothrop's meetinghouse.

I'd like to say that this event came about because of good planning, but like most things, it helps when the stars are aligned just right. The convergence of the anniversaries, the preservation of the Bible, and the scheduling of the Lothrop family reunion helped everything to fall into place. Many thanks to Helen Taber and the Lothrop Family Foundation for helping to make it happen.

The Lothrop Bible, as many of you know, was published in 1605 by Robert Barker, and it traveled with Reverend Lothrop to the new world. As the story goes, in the words of Daniel Lothrop, "During the voyage to this country Mr. Lothrop dropped on one of its pages a spark of fire while reading at his evening devotions. Unaware of the accident he fell asleep with the book partially closed, his fingers between the leaves. At length, awakened by the heat, he found a hole had burned through several pages of the sacred Book, the only copy on the ship. Before the voyage was completed the space thus burned was carefully filled, and the missing words on most of the pages supplied from memory with pen and ink in the old English text in which they had been printed."

The Bible was passed down in the Lothrop family for over 350 years, until Grace Lathrop Luling donated it to the Sturgis Library in 1957. A dedication ceremony was held in the County Courthouse, and was attended by library Trustees, staff, local dignitaries, and Lothrop descendants.

In 1976, the Bible was rededicated as part of a series of Bicentennial year celebrations, and a wooden display case was created so that it could be put on permanent display in the Lothrop Room.

One of our scheduled speakers, Rev. Kenneth Warren, was in attendance at both of these ceremonies, and we had hoped that he could talk a bit about that piece of the Bible's history. Unfortunately he has been battling a virus and is under doctor's orders to rest and recuperate. He sends his regrets for missing this event.

Earlier this year, the Sturgis Library was awarded an American Heritage grant from the Institute of Museum and Library Services & the Bank of America Foundation. These grants -- 53 of them -- were awarded to raise awareness and fund the preservation of

treasures held in small museums, libraries, and archives. Our grant was used to create this museum-quality microclimate display case for the Bible. The case keeps the Bible at a constant humidity level and minimizes pollutants. The new case, along with LED lighting in the Lothrop Room, will help to preserve the Bible for hundreds of years to come.

While the new display case was being built, I gathered together as much information as I could about the Bible and its journey here to the Sturgis Library. And it occurred to me that it would be helpful to staff, patrons, and Lothrop descendants to have that history compiled in one place. In addition, Reverend John's diary had never been professionally published, and so I asked one of our staff members to transcribe it from an earlier typewritten copy. We included the diary, along with the history of the Bible, in our new book *John Lothrop in Barnstable : a 370<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Tribute*. Copies of the book will be available here at the library, or can be ordered through our website.

I thank you all for coming, and would like to dedicate the preservation of the Lothrop Bible to all Lothrop, Lathrop, Laythrop, and Lowthorpe descendants around country and around the world, who can trace their lineage back to Reverend John. Your interest in your family heritage and your support of the Sturgis Library over the years has allowed us to keep Reverend John Lothrop's story alive to share with future generations.

I'd like to now introduce our speakers. We're very pleased that they were able to be here with us today.

**Rev. Richard Stower** has been minister of The First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church of Scituate, Massachusetts since 1992. He has BA and MA degrees in American History from the George Washington University in Washington, D.C. He received his Master of Divinity degree from Harvard Divinity School in 1990 and was ordained into the Unitarian Universalist ministry in his home church, First Parish in Concord, MA. His history of First Parish Scituate will be published next year. The church is currently celebrating its 375th anniversary.

The **Reverend Dr. Kristen L. Harper** has served the Unitarian Universalist Church of Barnstable since 1992. She has served churches in Florida, New York, Michigan and Chicago prior to coming here. She is married with three cats.

**Rev. Reed Baer** has been pastor and teacher at West Parish of Barnstable, United Church of Christ, which worships in its historic 1717 Meetinghouse, for the past eleven years.

**Helen Taber**, Founder of Lothrop Family Foundation, is an educator and author of the book *A New Home in Mattakeese : A Guide to Reverend John Lothrop's Barnstable*