

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT



Filson Historical Society

Exhibiting an Historic Vision for Museum Storage

CHALLENGE

After 30 years of calling Old Louisville's storied Ferguson Mansion home, the Filson Historical Society's popularity and success meant it was time to seek more space. Specifically, more space for its growing collections of items and documents preserving and celebrating the history of Kentucky and the Ohio River Valley. Already once renovated to add storage shelving, the stacks of museum storage were filled with more than 10,000 museum items as well as a significant collection of books, documents and other treasures.

Long a fixture in the community and a Louisville institution since 1884, the Filson Historical Society needed more room... in the same historic neighborhood. With a move neither practical nor desired, it was faced with making a determination in how to best position itself for continued growth and sustainability.

SOLUTION

Curator of Collections Jim Holmberg has known Patterson Pope Sales Representative Glen Kalley for more than two decades. In fact, the two worked together on adding additional storage shelving to the Ferguson Mansion during an earlier renovation back at the turn of the 21st century.

"When we looked to do the new building, which was going to have five levels of stacks, four of which were going to have compact shelving from the get-go to maximize our storage, we obviously reached out to Glen again," said Holmberg.

The new building was christened the Owsley Brown II History Center. While the plan for inclusion of mechanical-assist high-density compact shelving was part of a plan put together by an architecture firm, Holmberg knew Kalley was the man to contact for the right product – and the right approach.

Kalley helped Holmberg select and install a trio of 310-linear-foot mechanical assist high-density shelving units, each of which was outfitted with Spacesaver 4-post shelving. Because the spaces on each floor where the separate units were going to be placed were different measurements, each had to be custom design for the space. In addition, Holmberg's team also received five storage cases as part of the museum shelving system, as well as a flat file case for the smaller artwork and more miniature items. Cases were quickly reserved for items like firearms, silver, edged weapons, canes, and parasols. A total of 25 movable art rack ranges were also installed, adding just over 5,100 square feet of capacity.

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Jim Holmberg
Curator of Collections
Filson Historical Society

ACHIEVEMENT

Some of the new high-density units can be seen from the street. Their function and aesthetic combine to make a big impression – on users and visitors alike. The art racks allow curators and staff to easily see, secure and protect more of the collection without having to dig through cumbersome stacks or browse through leaning canvases. It’s all part of the commitment to create a space that is as much about the future as it is the past.

“As you might expect, the difference has been amazing,” said Holmberg of the additional archival and museum storage space. “Being able to come into the area with new shelving – from day one – has allowed us to place everything

exactly where we want it to be. And, we have room to grow.”

The collections team at the Filson Historical Society has every intention of being a lasting part of the community. There’s a lot more to happen, after all.

“The installation team did a phenomenal job for us,” added Holmberg. “It’s worked really well for us and has given us everything we needed. We’ve got Glen and Patterson Pope to thank for that.”

