

White Paper Report

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Institution: Moravian Archives, Bethlehem

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1. Cover Page

Type of Report: White Paper
Grant Number: PF-50255-12
Title of Project: The Moravian Archives Storage Renovation Project
Name of Project Director(s): Dr. Paul M. Peucker
Name of Grantee Institution: The Moravian Archives
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2. Narrative Description: Project Activities and Accomplishments

In late July of 2012, the Moravian Archives in Bethlehem (MAB) was awarded a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) for the installation of compact moveable shelving in the main vault as replacement for existing static shelving units. MAB's Board of Directors soon formed a Project Committee comprised of board members along with Archives Director Dr. Paul Peucker and tasked them with issuing a Request for Proposals for project management services. Jeffrey Long, Architectural Consultant (Bethlehem, PA), was hired in November that same year to guide the Project Committee through bidding and construction as well as to ensure satisfaction of NEH Grant requirements. Collections items were removed from the vault beginning January 2, 2013; on May 31, 2013, the last remaining archival box was returned to the renovated vault. Project completion was observed on June 25, 2013, when the locations for all collections were updated in the Archives' computer system.

The three main work scopes included electrical improvements, interior painting and installation of compact moveable shelving. Project Manager Jeffrey Long initiated the project scope by finalizing plans and specifications in accordance with Project Committee desires and in satisfaction of relevant NEH grant requirements. NEH General Terms and Conditions for Awards (and its Addendum), especially concerning uniform administrative requirements of OMB Circular A-110 (2 CFR Part 215), the audit requirements of OMB Circular A-133 and the cost principles of OMB Circular A-122 (2 CFR Part 230) were also cross-referenced for relevant requirements. The project was registered with the U.S. Department of Labor, Branch of Construction Wage Determinations (Wage and Hour Division) to secure the required Wage Determinations, which were ultimately integrated into project specifications. The Greater Lehigh Valley Chamber of Commerce was also contacted for identifying regional Minority-Owned Business Enterprises (MBE) and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (WBE) as potential bidders for various portions of the project scope. Mr. Long presented the Project Committee with a series of potential firms for each work category, with qualified MBE and WBE firms integrated into the lists. Upon consideration, the Project Committee approved a short list of potential bidding firms for painting and electrical services; bidding documents were released to firms approved by the Committee soon thereafter in the form of invitations to select bidders. After bid responses had been received, Project Committee members met to quantify the bids and to follow-up with any resulting questions or concerns. Once those concerns had been addressed to the satisfaction of the Committee, work contracts were ultimately issued to West Side Hammer Electric (Bethlehem, PA) and to Kenny L. Rogers Painting Services (Freemansburg, PA).

Because of the larger project scale and costs associated with the moveable shelving component, potential shelving firms were pre-vetted by responding to a Committee-prepared set of inquiries. Firms pre-approved by the Committee were presented bidding documents in the form of invitations to select bidders. Similar to the above procedures, Project Committee members met to quantify the bids upon receipt and to follow-up with any resulting questions or concerns. Committee members contacted references provided by respective bidders while the Project Manager created a bid tabulation based upon certain selection criteria. Committee members also traveled to project sites recently by various bidders. The Committee decided to interview three finalists, encouraging the candidates to include members of the proposed installation crew for the actual project and to bring along samples of their products. Reconvening several days later, Project Committee members negotiated with their preferred choice in order to garner a competitive bid, ultimately hiring the services of Diversified Storage Solutions, Inc. (Norristown, PA) for the moveable shelving project scope.

In the meantime Lanie Graf, assistant archivist, confirmed her desire for permanent leave. In her place, two local graduate students, Zack Biro and Donald Wieand, were hired as special project staff to coordinate the move of

archival collections and to recruit student workers and volunteers to assist in those efforts. Once the contents of the vault had been removed and stored elsewhere on-site, Buy-Rite Equipment Company (Reading, PA) dismantled and removed the existing static shelving units. Suppression Systems, Inc. (Pennsburg, PA) was also commissioned during this period to de-activate the existing fire suppression system and to cover all detectors to prevent any unintended discharge of suppression gas during construction.

After abandoned shelving had been removed West Side Hammer demolished existing lighting, replacing it with a brighter and more efficient lighting system with integrated UV-protection. Kenny Rogers Painting appeared on-site soon thereafter to clean and paint all relevant surfaces. Diversified Storage Solutions, Inc. then arrived to install the compact moveable shelving. This work scope involved three specific phases: securing new steel rails onto existing concrete floor slab; constructing elevated plywood flooring system with epoxy finish to align with new rails; assembling steel shelving atop moveable carriages attached to new rail system. A special challenge with the new installation was the length of shelving ranges. In order to maximize space, each carriage measures 49 feet long. For durability, a mechanical assist (hand-crank) system was selected over an electric drive mechanism. 14 shelving ranges were ultimately installed, with a combined shelf length of almost 11,000 linear feet; thus, increasing the original storage capacity of the vault by 62% and providing MAB with room for expansion for the next 35 years. In addition to new moveable shelving, wall space within the vault was fitted with 1,200 square feet of a custom screened panel system, which allows MAB to hang its entire framed art collection within the renovated vault as well.

In satisfaction of NEH Grant requirements, bid bonds and performance bonds were received from contractors commissioned to complete the moveable shelving project scope. Relevant documentation was also secured from each contractor in satisfaction of the Buy American Act. Finally, satisfaction of Davis Bacon Act provisions was accomplished through receipt of weekly WH-347 Certified Payroll forms. Upon completion of the project, Suppression Systems, Inc. was commissioned to return to the project site to re-activate the existing fire suppression system and to uncover all detectors.

The NEH grant provided \$148,085 of funding for the storage renovation project. Through the generosity of many individuals and agencies, MAB successfully raised an additional \$148,085 of match funding and cost share (staff time, volunteer time) in support of this project.

Accomplishments

- storage capacity of the main (manuscript) vault was increased from 6,792 linear feet to 10,976 linear feet. This is an increase of 62%. The total storage capacity of the vault was not only increased by using movable shelving but also by widening the openings of the shelves from 35 ½ in. to 42 in. so that the available shelf space can be optimally used. If we would only store large document boxes (bankers boxes) we could more than double the amount of boxes compared to the previous situation. If we would only use flip-top boxes, an increase of more than 80% was achieved. Of course, we use both large boxes and flip-top boxes.
- storage for framed items was nonexistent in the old situation. Installing the art racks means an increase of 100%. The original proposal provided for a higher square footage of storage. This number had to be decreased because the original proposal had not taken the containers of the existing fire-suppression system into consideration.
- outdated fluorescent lighting system in vault #1 was replaced with new lighting outfitted with UV filtering sleeves.

Audience

MAB attracts about 500 visitors per year for exhibits, lectures and events, and around 440 researchers in person per year, including genealogists, historians, students, professors, clergy and independent scholars. In addition,

MAB receives many phone and email inquiries. As part of the educational outreach program, MAB welcomes about 200 students (mostly from German classes) per year from local schools who tour the facility, learn about regional history and view German-language materials. Circa 60 college students visit MAB every year to tour the facility and to learn about research with primary sources.

The improvements in the vault will benefit the users of MAB in the long run. Collections are better accessible; new acquisitions can be easily incorporated, and especially the art collection can be shown to visitors without much effort. In fact, only a week after collections had been returned to the renovated vault, a book author inquired about a painting he had seen on display at MAB in the past. He wanted to use the image for an upcoming book but was not able to provide a title nor to describe it. By taking him into the vault and showing him the paintings on the art racks, the desired painting was easily found.

MAB is also planning to offer regular tours of the facility to the general public.

By means of Facebook we kept the public informed. People were impressed with the pictures of moving the collection out of the vault into the reading room that served as temporary storage. One person commented on seeing the reading room filled with boxes that it reminded her of an episode of "Hoarders – Extreme." Another person joked when we posted a picture of the empty shelves in the vault: "What is happening? Have you gone digital?"

Publicity

- ongoing postings on the Moravian Archives Facebook page during the project
- information on the Moravian Archives website: www.moravianchurcharchives.org
- *Voices from the Vault: Newsletter from the Moravian Archives*, no. 17 (2012) (<http://www.moravianchurcharchives.org/voices.php>)
- *Voices from the Vault: Newsletter from the Moravian Archives*, no. 18 (2013) (<http://www.moravianchurcharchives.org/voices.php>)
- *Pennsylvania Libraries: Research & Practice* (ISSN 2324-7878). forthcoming
- *Abundant History: Newsletter of the Moravian Historical Society* (Spring 2013)
- news report on Channel 69 (WFMZ) News, February 19, 2013
- *Moravian Music Foundation Newsletter*, vol. 27, no. 4 (Fall 2012).
- *The Moravian Magazine*, Jan./Feb. 2013. (<http://www.moravian.org/news-a-media/the-moravian-magazine/moravian-magazine-back-issues.html>)

3. Appendices (as needed)

* photo report (see separate file)