



## THE MUSEUM OF AMERICA AND THE SEA

Mystic Seaport - The Museum of America and the Sea - located on the banks of the legendary Mystic River in Mystic, Connecticut, is the nation's leading maritime museum. Founded in 1929, the Museum uses its re-created coastal village, tall ships, exhibit galleries, preservation shipyard and knowledgeable staff to tell stories of the sea.

Before Mystic Seaport opened its \$16-million Collections Research Center, the Museum's storage areas were becoming overcrowded and the storage needed to be upgraded to provide proper environmental controls.

John Rutchick, director of facilities management, explained that collection preservation is always a priority at Mystic Seaport. He also said that as technology dictates advances in environmentally controlled storage space, the cost per square foot can be as much as 22 percent higher than typical space. Special air handling equipment, humidity and temperature control systems, fire and theft protection, as well as demanding maintenance and utility needs all contribute to a higher cost per square foot.

"These factors make space-saving products easily justified in the expensive, high-tech facilities concerned with proper collection and preservation management," Rutchick said. "By reducing storage space by 50 percent and enhancing collection safety, mobile storage was an obvious solution. We not only fit the Museum's vast collection in this space, we also have enough space for 15 years of growth."

### **Curatorial**

Six mechanical assist mobile systems were placed in the curatorial room for housing a wide range of maritime collections. Drawings and maps are housed in preservation quality map folders and stored in oversized flat-file drawers that are specially designed to protect from dust and ultraviolet light.

Rolled textiles and art are stored on cantilever textile racks. Large, oversized ship models, preserved ship figureheads and navigation equipment are stored on expansive wide span shelving. Ship half models are hung on racks designed to support a heavy weight load, while nesting together to save space.

## THE MUSEUM OF AMERICA AND THE SEA (Continued)

### Photography, Film and Video

The Rosenfeld Collection room of maritime photography includes two mechanical assist systems storing photographic prints, negatives and camera equipment, as well as one compact art rack for storing framed prints. The Rosenfeld Collection features historical coverage of the America's Cup and totals nearly 1 million photographs. Three separate vaults, maintained at 35 percent humidity and temperatures ranging from 25-35 degrees, incorporate a mobile system for storing film, video and silver nitrate film and negatives.

“The Spacesaver systems provide the most effective way to load this building and yet still manage and access the collections in a systematic way,” concluded Rutchick. “The systems were flexible enough to design a solution that met our diverse needs.”



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