



Collections Storage Conundrums

Presented by:
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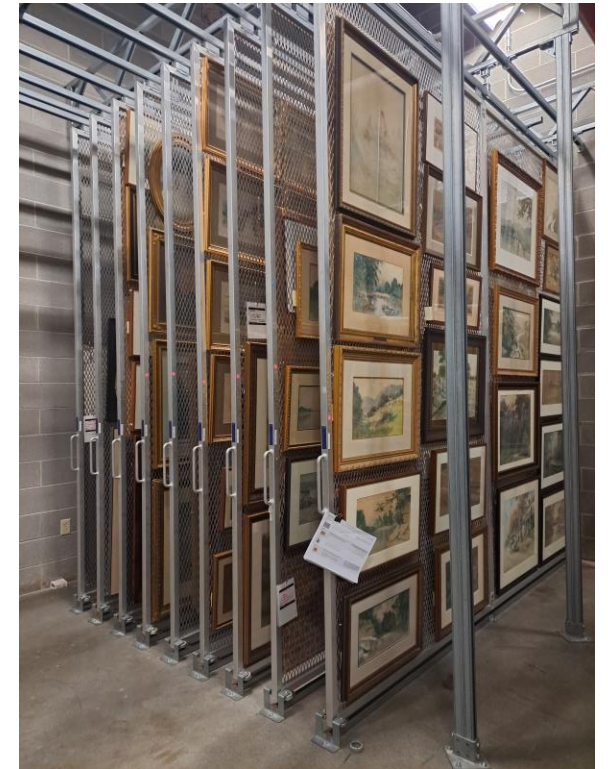
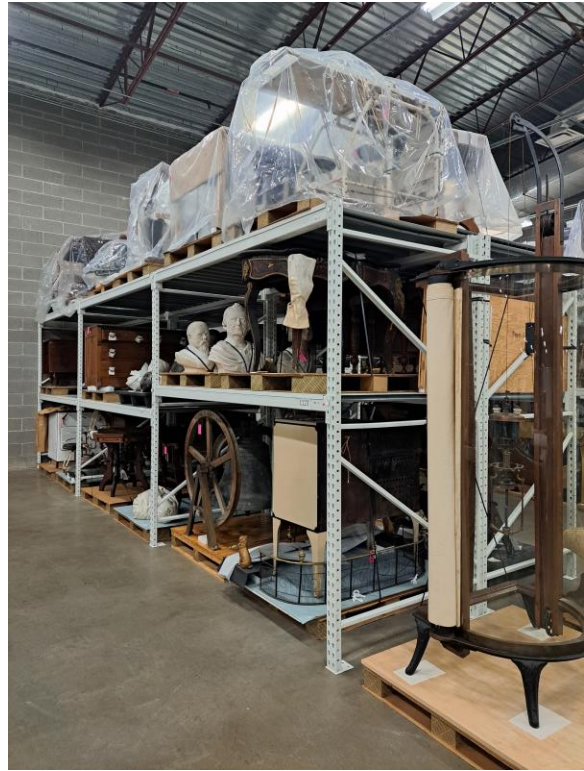
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Getting Started

- Monitor temperature and relative humidity – keep it as stable as possible, allowing for seasonal swings
- Storage spaces should be well sealed to reduce insect activity, dust
- Avoid permanent workstations in storage to reduce UV exposure
- When possible, storage areas should not contain exposed pipes
- Keep away food and drink
- Regularly dust and vacuum to eliminate organic food sources for pests and mold growth
- Keep future growth of your holdings in mind

Storage Options

- Shelving
- Cabinets
- Hanging
- Floor
- Rolled



Storage Tips

- Avoid storing objects directly on the floor
 - Protects from flooding, pests, and dust
- Consider the size and weight of the object
- Store items similar in composition and weight together
- Line surfaces with polyethylene foam or acid-free cardboard



Storage Tips

- Pallets can be used on the floor or shelving
 - Plastic is best (UL listed flame retardant), cover with acid-free cardboard
 - Cardboard pallets are a good alternative, but not as sturdy
 - Barriers between the cardboard pallets and your objects are necessary
- Cover objects not boxed or shelved
 - Tyvek is lightweight, waterproof, washable, allows circulation
 - Muslin is a great dust and light cover
 - Polyethylene sheeting protects from dust and possible leaks
- Utilize boxes, labels, and tags to identify objects and lessen handling



Problem Solving - Storage Types

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Item Specific Housing

- Flat Textiles
 - Rolled
 - Acid-free tubes
 - Interleave with acid-free tissue
 - Cover with Tyvek, Muslin
 - Boxing
 - Acid-free boxes
 - Acid-free tissue
 - Clear labels



Item Specific Housing

- Clothing
 - Utilize padded hangers if storing upright; avoid metal or plastic hangers
 - Store more fragile pieces in shallow, acid-free boxes; pad out creases with acid-free tissue
 - Store very fragile pieces flat



Courtesy [Inside the Conservator's Studio](#)

Item Specific Housing

- Photographs and documents
 - House in polyester sleeves (Mylar) or acid free envelopes
 - Don't overcrowd folders



- Maps, oversized flat objects
 - Best kept in flat files or shallow drawers
 - Interleave with acid-free paper or glassine; glassine is not stable long-term



Mounts

Your storage will dictate the
method of making mounts

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Storage Materials to Avoid

- Cellophane and masking tapes
- Rubber or rubber-based material
- Unsealed wood
- Plastics containing PVC or plasticizers
- Acidic glues
- Metal paperclips, staples
- Materials that could snag, abrade
- Acidic paper products
- Wool products
- Nail polish, nail polish remover
- Fabrics containing bleach or fire retardants

Storage Materials to Use

- Acid-free paper products
 - Tissue, paper, file folders, boxes
 - Buffered helps mitigate acidity of paper but should NOT be used with animal skins
- Unbleached, undyed cotton/linen
 - First wash in hot water, no detergent
- Needle-felted polyester batting
- Polyester film (e.g. Mylar)
- Polyethylene microfoam (e.g. Ethafoam)
- Polyethylene bags
 - Cut a ventilation hole to prevent trapping humidity

Mount Examples



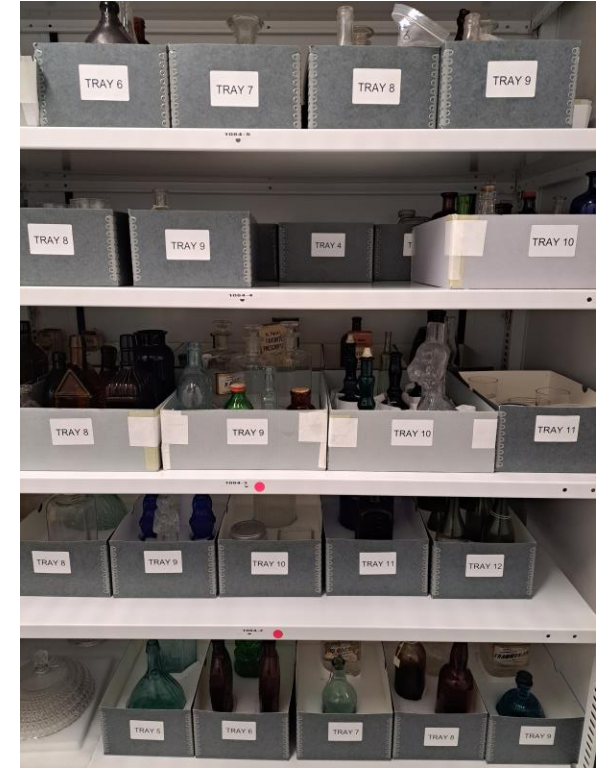
Shoes



Hats



Medals



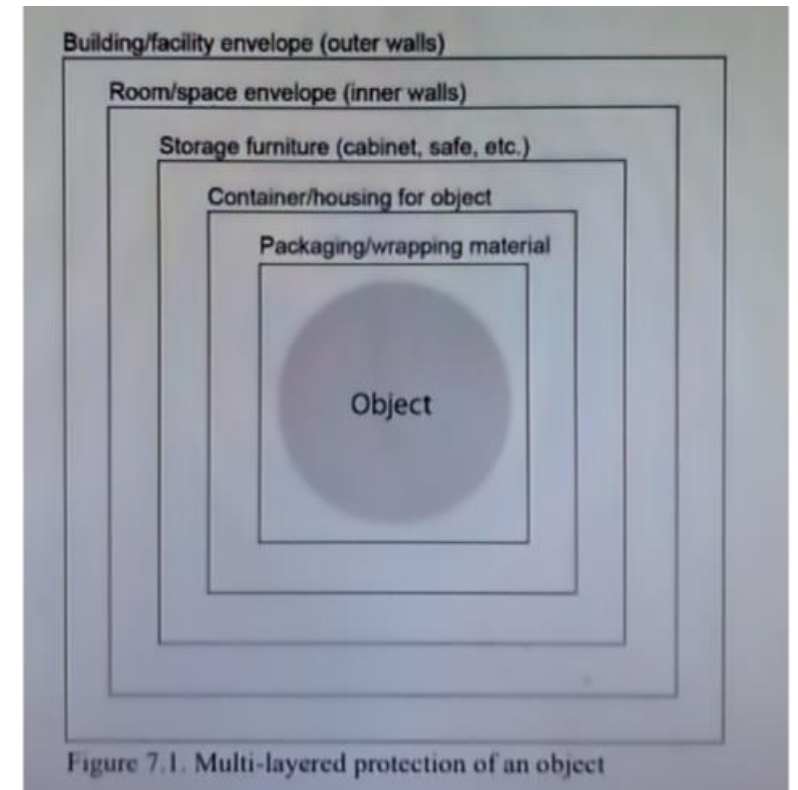
Glass

Planning

- If you buy material ready-made it will cost more money. If you buy the supplies to make it, it will cost less money but more time.
- Each object
 - Has an assigned location
 - Is retrievable within minutes
 - Is movable without damaging another

Helpful tips

- Label your supplies; including the part number will save time with reordering
- Greater number of layers = more protection
 - Each layer creates a “buffer” from factors that contribute to deterioration



Source: [NPS, Chapter 7: Museum Collection Storage](#)



Problem Solving - Housing/Mounts

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How to afford quality storage

- Grants
- Utilize local businesses asking for in-kind donations, free labor
- Train volunteers and interns on a specific storage processes

Resources

- [NPS Conserv O' Grams](#)
- [FAIC Connecting to Collections Care](#)
- [Northern States Conservation Center](#)
- [Northeast Document Conservation Center \(NEDCC\)](#)
- MRM6: Museum Registration Methods – [Amazon](#); [AbeBooks](#)
- Kentucky Museum and Heritage Alliance – ask your friends



Questions

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