

NAVAL
UNDERSEA
MUSEUM

CASE STUDY:
NAVAL UNDERSEA MUSEUM

Keyport, Washington



Storage Solved®



Naval History and Heritage

NHHC Mission: Collect, preserve, protect, present, and make relevant the artifacts, art, and documents that best capture the Navy's history and heritage.

Vision Statement: Make the Navy and its history relevant to the American people and their leaders. Provide the knowledge foundation for the Navy by maintaining historically relevant resources and products that identify what the Navy is and what it stands for.

The Naval Undersea Museum, located in Keyport, Washington, is a part of the Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC). The NHHC was founded in 1800 when President John Adams founded the Navy Department Library, and for over two centuries they have been preserving U.S. Naval history.

The NHHC is made up of ten museums, including the Naval Undersea Museum, the Navy Library and the Heritage Center and is ultimately responsible for preservation, analysis, and raising awareness of U.S. Naval history and heritage.

The Naval Undersea Museum functions to preserve historic undersea equipment, and undersea scientific discovery. This includes storing everything from art, to rare diving equipment to sonic buoys.







Designing Proper Museum Storage

According to Jennifer Heinzelman, the Collections Manager and Registrar with the Naval Undersea Museum, museum quality storage products were needed when she came on board in 2001. Space was also at a premium, with many of the available storage areas filled to capacity.

In order to preserve and protect the many artifacts stored in the facility, Jennifer worked with a Spacesaver distributor to design several mechanical assist high-density storage systems, including a system that houses large torpedoes. These systems both increased storage capacity and provided museum-quality storage spaces for the unique artifacts.

Archive Storage: A mechanical assist high-density storage system was provided for the archives, that accommodates both films and books.

Object Storage: A second system was installed and equipped to store naval undersea artifacts, which include everything from antique diving gear to baseball caps.

Art Storage: Spacesaver mobile art racks were also installed to house various 2D hanging art with a naval undersea thematic focus.

Spacesaver also helped the museum address environmental and possible disaster control scenarios like seismic or fire damage and they integrated preventative solutions into the storage systems.

With the new high-density mobile systems there has been a 60% increase in storage capacity, and all types of artifacts are now stored in a museum quality storage system, better suited to preserve these items for the long term.



Storing 6,000 lb. Torpedoes

Unique to the museum, is a collection of U.S. torpedoes that includes modern Mk 48 and Mk 50 weapons, torpedo tubes from USS Tecumseh, and even Howell Torpedoes, which were the first self-propelled torpedo designed in the United States in 1870. Some of these artifacts weigh upwards of 6,000 lbs. and are not easy to store.

When the planning for a new solution began, they were housed on old, rusty, conventional industrial shelving that was not protected from seismic conditions. Maneuvering around the shelving with a forklift and

22' torpedo was often difficult and dangerous.

To more effectively and safely store the torpedo collection, a powered ActivRAC® 16 system was installed in lieu of the static shelving. By compacting the system, idle aisles were eliminated, freeing up space. This excess of space allowed for the access aisle, when open, to be significantly widened, which better allowed for forklift access and maneuverability. Racks move with a simple push of a button and aisles are equipped with redundant safety systems.

The new shelving used in conjunction with the ActivRAC system can also be reconfigured to accommodate for flat shelving if needed and can be moved up or down. This is helpful if different shaped or larger items need to be stored on this industrial system.

By transitioning from stationary shelving to ActivRAC mobile racking, the museum was able to move from storing 66 torpedoes to 110, with a larger and much safer access aisle.





Looking Towards the Future

The storage solutions provided for the Naval Undersea Museum truly assist in the preservation of these priceless artifacts, and have helped make better use of the available space on-site for storage.

"We plan to expand more and more," said Heinzelman.

The Naval Undersea Museum is currently planning for another ActivRAC system to be installed to store sea mines, submersibles, and submarine consoles, among other large and hard to store items.



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