



## Case Study



# Ohio History Museum Embraces 21st Century Technology with New Fire Safety System

You'll find a tremendous admiration and respect for the way things used to be when you visit the Crawford Auto-Aviation Museum and its adjacent history museum and archival library. Home to nearly 200 antique, vintage and classic cars and aircraft ranging from the first enclosed automobile to the first winner of the Cleveland 500, the Crawford collection is one of the top ten in the nation according to Car Collector magazine. The neighboring Bingham-Hanna house and Hay-McKinney house are living, meticulously preserved memorials to a simpler time, exhibiting an impressive array of antique furniture, decorative and fine arts, and domestic artifacts.

Unfortunately, until recently, the three museums shared a fire safety system,

which was also an artifact, a representative of the way things used to be. Forty years old, the antiquated system's principal drawback was that it treated the different museums that comprise the complete historical facility as entirely separate entities.

Mark Corcoran is Chief of Protection Services for the Western Reserve Historical Society, the organization which runs the museum. He explained the practical and potentially dangerous problem which could result from such a limited system.

"Because we had added on fire alarms subsequent to the initial installation, the various alarms did not link together," he said. "So if, for example, a fire alarm activated in the library, it did not annunciate

in the rest of building. Our employees and visitors did not have any clue what was going on over at the library. So an important part of our system upgrade project was putting in a network of alarms that would tie together and provide protection throughout the facility."

As respectful of antiques as they are at this museum, upgrading the old system was not an option. Comprised of outdated technology, there were no longer parts compatible with the old equipment. Mark Corcoran knew that he had to completely remove the old system and take this history museum's safety technology into the 21st century.

Corcoran looked at 3 or 4 different options to upgrade fire safety at the museums, but when Southeast Security Corporation of Sharon Center, Ohio proposed the Fire-Lite solution the decision was quickly finalized. Because it was clear right from the get-go that Fire-Lite's MS-9600 control panel had everything Corcoran was looking for.



*Crawford Auto-Aviation Museum  
Cleveland, OH*



Part of Honeywell's Fire Group, Fire-Lite is one of the country's leading manufacturers of quality life safety systems. Fire-Lite's MS-9600 features the latest in fire protection technology, including Maintenance Alert, Automatic Detector Test, and Sensitivity print-out. It's an extremely powerful and flexible system, able to link together all of the museum's 450+ fire devices with each other and with the system's three control panels.

"One of the panels is located in the basement of the Crawford Auto-Aviation museum, covering that section itself," explained Corcoran. "There's another panel in the basement of the Bingham-Hanna house that covers those alarms. And there's a panel in a closet on the first floor of the Hay-McKinney house which monitors the Hay house and the central edition alarms. And they're all able to talk to each other - when one panel is activated it sets off the other panels."

The museum's MS-9600 panel features a Digital Alarm Communicator Transmitter (DACT-UD) 14.4K Baud modem, an option that provides remote site upload/download and remote monitoring capabilities. This allows life safety system managers like Corcoran to upload vital programming information directly to the control panel and download this information to a local PC. Also, technicians can diagnose problems remotely, saving a great deal of time and money.

Relatively compact in size, Fire-Lite's MS-9600 also has a small learning curve. Manufactured with surface-mount technology, the MS-9600 is designed for ease of installation and programming.

Said Corcoran, "I've put in a number of systems over the years, and when you're putting in unfamiliar equipment you're often sitting on edge hoping that everything's going to work easily and the way it's supposed to. The learning curve for this project was a lot shorter than I had anticipated. Once we took it on, there were a couple of ground faults that had to be fixed, but then it was up and running, and it's been running very well."

"We haven't had any false alarms, and when the fire department came to do the final system check, they actually tested 100% of the system, including every detector and fire-pull station, and it worked flawlessly."

Recently the MS-9600 was called into action. A transformer in the museum's library over-heated and started smoking, a potentially disastrous occurrence in a building housing so many valuable and flammable artifacts. Luckily the smoke triggered an alarm in the library basement, which was heard throughout the facility, just as Corcoran had hoped. The museum was evacuated until the problem was pinpointed and addressed.

"As it turned out," said Corcoran, "It was just a minor problem. But it could have been a lot worse. We were fortunate to have upgraded to an advanced system that really did the job."

In fact, one could say that thanks to Corcoran's decision to upgrade to Fire-Lite technologically advanced safety system, this museum's fire safety worries are history.

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*- Mark Corcoran  
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