HSBC BEGINS THE GREAT MIGRATION OF 2012
Research library, administrative offices, collections, artifacts and museum displays relocate within the Almshouse

Background
The adventure began in 2007 when HSBC realized it could no longer afford the prohibitive expenses associated with its lease of the entire Almshouse building in Cockeysville, MD. Under the terms of the society’s former ten-year lease it was responsible for all the maintenance of the building’s aging infrastructure. Because the building belongs to Baltimore County, HSBC leadership sat down with the county’s property manager to discuss possible solutions. That meeting resulted in a new lease between the society and the county. According to the new lease the county would thereafter assume responsibility for the costs associated with the building’s infrastructure and utilities. In exchange for assuming those expenses, Baltimore County government would require HSBC to relocate the entirety of its collections, library, storage and office space to the building’s east wing, which is approximately half the square-footage it currently occupies. The east wing is the building’s oldest section, built in 1872, whereas the west wing - soon-to-be the county’s - burned in numerous fires and was only partially rebuilt in the early 20th century.

Phase One: Planning
With a fine degree of accuracy, HSBC board members developed architectural drawings for each floor and room in the east wing. In addition, the extensive plan detailed what responsibilities belonged to the county government as compared with the responsibilities that would be best achieved by the society. The plan necessitated the county to complete certain renovations in the east wing in order to make it habitable prior to the society beginning its occupancy of the space. After both parties signed the new lease in 2011, the county completed lead paint stabilization, electrical upgrades, and plaster repairs, plumbing repairs, and limited hardwood floor repairs. Thereafter, the plan stipulates the society is responsible for the following if it desires and/or its budgets allow: installing new lights, painting, installing carpet, refinishing hardwood floors, preparing new library space, and installing library stacks.

One of many storage rooms with museum artifacts that need to be relocated.
Phase Two: lead paint stabilization
The county began lead paint stabilization in the east wing in November 2011, after both parties signed the new ten-year lease. At that time, HSBC volunteers began moving room after room of cultural museum artifacts so the stabilization team could smoothly progress.

Phase Three: county plastering
Plasterers moved in behind the stabilization team to smooth the worst holes and gaps in the Almshouse walls resulting from both the building’s age and the lead-scraping process.
Phase Four: county plumbing
As plasterers finished their task, plumbers moved in to upgrade the heating pipes, install new radiator valves, and install two new radiators on the fourth floor of the east wing. All radiator valves were replaced because they were aged, leaking and/or inoperable. Leaking radiators have rotten wooden floors and ruined plaster walls.

Phase Five: county floor repair
Shortly after plumbers completed their tasks, carpenters arrived to replace hardwood flooring as necessary.

Phase Six: county electrical upgrades
Electricians were onsite for more than three weeks installing new wiring and establishing new electrical service to be delivered to the building. When the society fully consolidates into the east wing it will enjoy updated lighting, especially for researchers.

Phase Seven: HSBC fundraising (in-progress)
HSBC needs approximately $50,000 to complete its portion of this commitment and to relocate its offices, and museum and library collections into a fully prepared new home. Please consider making a contribution! Room-naming opportunities are available too! Please inquire!

Phase Eight: HSBC’s primer-paint and lighting (in-progress)
HSBC hired a primer-painter to apply a base coat following the lead stabilization in order to minimize any additional peeling paint and complete that effort. HSBC also purchased new overhead lights for its space in the east wing of the Almshouse.

Phase Nine: HSBC’s final-coat painters (in-progress)
HSBC chose among four bids from painting contractors to perform wall repair, caulking, and two final coats of paint in its soon-to-be public spaces. This project began in early April 2012.

Phase Ten: HSBC’s carpeting
As budgets allow, and HSBC deems appropriate, it will move forward with carpeting some public areas that will receive the most foot traffic.

Phase Eleven: HSBC Moves pt. 1
Once carpeting is installed, the following remains: the assembling and placing of shelving in the library stacks room, the installing of telephone and network wiring, preparation of storage areas, and the sorting, processing, and relocating of artifacts in HSBC’s collections.

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Phase Twelve: HSBC Moves pt. 2
While HSBC may have to wait on refinishing its wood floors and stairs pending donations, budgets and timelines, the actual move will require relocating the library’s 28 vertical file cabinets containing thousands of research files, 174 linear feet of library stacks with 4,000 volumes, flat storage with more than 500 maps, 57 boxes of archival materials, 65 boxes containing thousands of historic photographs, in addition to furniture, computers, and office equipment.

Significant work and expense remain to achieve our goals—we need your help!