

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania

Host family, friends, clients, and colleagues in the intimate setting of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania, an affordable and unique historic venue located in the heart of Center City, Philadelphia.

Lobby & Lounge

Greet your guests in the modern face of our historic building. Our Lobby is a beautiful blend of modern and classic tastes, with eye-catching photographs, maps, paintings, and other items from our collections displayed on a Digital Wall just feet away from the 19th century grand staircase. Our Patron Lounge has space to hang jackets, store personal items in lockers, and informally chat before an event. Creatively use the space and add your own slideshow to the Digital Wall, offer guests refreshments as they check-in, snap photos on the grand staircase, or provide a formal coat check.

Space Capacity

775 square feet

Digital Wall Show

Ideal for cocktail receptions, guests can provide up to 15 images to be as a slideshow on our 10' Digital Wall in the Lobby and Information Commons. Images must be of sufficient quality and submitted at least 10 business days prior to the event date.

Add-on Fee \$100

Patterson Pictures

Capture your special moments in our historic building. The Patterson staircase, mantel, and historic Reading Room provide an intimate, elegant backdrop for an engagement, wedding party, and family photos.

Add-on Fee \$100





Information Commons

The Information Commons is an elegant space best-suited for receptions, including wedding receptions, cocktail parties, evening celebrations, and luncheons. Our historic 19th century card catalogs stand against the backdrop of colonial arched windows and on the opposite end of the room is an original mantelpiece from the Patterson Mansion. Animate and illuminate your event with the modern flair of our digital wall, display cases, and spot lighting and transform the room with seating, live music, dancing, food, and drink.

Space Capacities: (2500 square feet)

Maximum: 200 guests

Cocktail Reception: 150 guests

Available Saturday-Monday 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. or after 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

Per Hour For-Profit

Open Hours	Closed Hours
n/a	\$525

Per Hour Not-for-Profit

Open Hours	Closed Hours
n/a	\$425

Reception Special

Ideal for a meeting or lecture followed by a cocktail party, this package rental includes use of the Information Commons and Patterson Room. Maximum of 200 guests. Available Saturday-Monday or Tuesday and Thursday evenings.

For-Profit Hourly Rate \$675

Not-for-Profit Hourly Rate \$625





Patterson Room

The spacious Patterson Room is our most versatile space, hosting lectures, workshops, organizational fairs, meetings, public programs, and receptions throughout the year. Equipped with a full audio/video system, tables, chairs, stage, and podium as needed, the Patterson Room can be arranged to suit the needs of your next event.

Space Capacities: (2500 Square Feet)

Lecture Style 200 guests

Per Hour For-Profit

Open Hours	Closed Hours
\$400	\$475

Per Hour Not-For-Profit

Open Hours	Closed Hours
\$300 for 2 hours	\$375 for 2 hours

2 Hour Meeting Room Special

For groups of 25 people or less, this special is ideal for small meetings and think-tanks. Available for up to 2 hours Monday-Friday (9:00am- 5:30pm).

For-Profit Rate	Not-for-Profit Rate
\$250 for 2 hours	\$200 for 2 hours

Available throughout the week





Reading Room

The Reading Room is a timeless space, hosting researchers from across the globe as they explore our historic collections. Constructed in 1889, the Reading Room was originally designed as an assembly hall to host meetings, public lectures, and celebrations. The Reading Room currently serves as our library. Ideal for large receptions, add the warm atmosphere of a grand banquet hall to your event as guests’ eyes are pulled to vaulted ceilings, arch windows, balconies, and bookcases.

Per Hour For-Profit		Per Hour Not-for-Profit	
Open Hours	Closed Hours	Open Hours	Closed Hours
n/a	\$525	n/a	\$425

Wedding Package

This package includes use of the Reading Room, Information Commons, and Lobby for a wedding reception. Maximum of 150 guests. Available Saturday-Monday.

Package Fee

\$5,000 for 8 hours, including 2 hour setup and 1 hour cleanup.

Note on moving tables: If you wish to move the tables in the Reading Room, we will arrange for an HSP staff person to supervise safe table movement by members of your party. We recommend assembling a team of 5-6 people to move tables, as they are quite large and heavy. HSP staff cannot assist in moving tables.

Available all day Saturday-Monday or after 5:30 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday evenings.





Behind-the-Scenes Vault Tour

Behind no less than five sets of locks rest some of the most treasured items in HSP's collection of over 21 million manuscripts, graphics, and books. Through Behind-the-Scenes Vault Tours, HSP offers the opportunity to see these documents closer than ever before and, in the case of a few materials, to even hold them.

- Hum along to The Star-Spangled Banner with Francis Scott Key's handwritten lyrics
- Pose for a selfie with the first photograph taken in North America
- Chase the changes in the U.S. Constitution through its first and second handwritten drafts
- Commiserate with the man responsible for a typo in the printer's proof of the Declaration of Independence
- Compare the Philadelphia of today with the first map of the city produced for William Penn before his arrival in the Delaware Valley

Add-on Fee: \$450 for one hour, maximum of 5 guests

Document Show & Tell

Our librarians and archivists will bring history to life as they discuss a display of historic documents prepared on a topic of your choice. Includes fifteen one-of-a-kind documents.

Add-on Fee: \$250, maximum of 25 guests.



Preferred Caterers

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania maintains this small list of preferred caterers with whom our guests have had excellent experiences and who are familiar with our facility and policies. You may hire your own caterer, however they must contact HSP at least two weeks prior to the event to ensure they are able to abide by our policies. Due to the fragile nature of our historic collections, no open flames of any kind, including sternos, are permitted in the building. We highly recommend hiring a caterer for your event as we do not have kitchen facilities onsite.

Please note alcohol may only be served by a licensed caterer. In accordance with Pennsylvania law, alcoholic beverages cannot be sold, and individuals must be of legal age to be served. No open containers of alcohol may leave the building.

Chef's Table
213 South Street
Philadelphia, PA 19147
215-925-9360

DiBruno Brothers
435 Fairmount Ave.
Philadelphia, PA 19123
215-665-1659

JPM Catering
8 E. Lancaster Ave.
Ardmore, PA 19003
610-649-3744



A/V Equipment

We have a full range of audio/visual equipment available for your use, including laptops, projectors, wireless interent sound system, podium, and microphones.

Decorations

Most types of decorations are permitted. Prohibited items include: open flames of any kind (including candles), confetti, and rice. Nothing may be affixed to the walls, however easels may be provided to display signs or banners. Additional equipment including banquet tables, banquet seating, flowers, pipe and drape, and lighting are available through our preferred caterers.



Availability and Hours

The Historical Society of Pennsylvania Library is open to the public Tuesday-Friday during the hours listed below. We consider these our “open hours” and times falling outside of them “closed hours.” Please note our administrative offices hold regular business hours 9-5:30 Monday-Friday.

Tuesday: 12:30 - 5:30 p.m.
Wednesday: 12:30 - 8:30 p.m.
Thursday: 12:30 - 5:30 p.m.
Friday: 10 a.m. - 5:30 p.m.

What hours are the rooms available to rent?

Our Patterson Room is available during regular business hours, evenings until 10 p.m., and weekends. All other rental spaces are available during closed hours, i.e. Saturday-Monday and weekday evenings until 10 p.m.

Who may rent space at HSP?

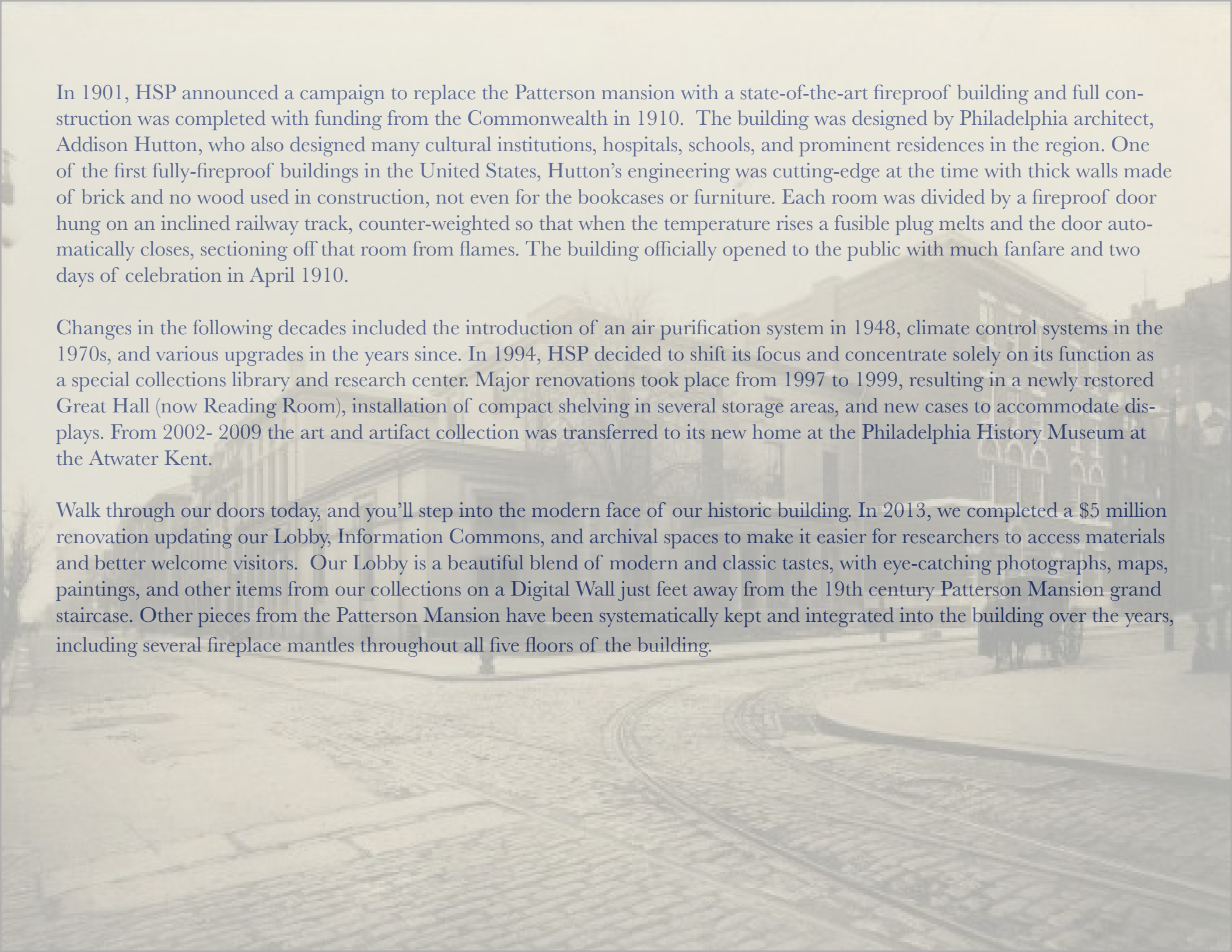
The facility is available for public use and may be rented to individuals, organizations, companies and private groups. Discounted rates are available for nonprofit organizations (501c3). Our spaces can accommodate most types of events, including meetings, seminars, lectures, workshops, presentations, organizational fairs, and receptions.

A Historic Building

Founded in 1824, the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (HSP) has called 1300 Locust Street in Philadelphia home since 1884. In its early years, the Society was housed in several locations throughout the city, first at the Phrenological Society in Carpenter's Court, then in an upstairs room of the American Philosophical Society, in rented rooms at the Pennsylvania Life Insurance Company and then the Athenaeum, and next at 820 Spruce Street in a building known as the Picture Building, on the grounds of Pennsylvania Hospital. These 60 years of repeated relocation were tied to the need to find adequate archive space to store HSP's constantly growing collection of historic documents and artifacts.

After years of saving, in 1884 HSP took up permanent residence at its current location in what was then the Patterson mansion, once owned by a well-respected Major General in the American and Mexican-American Civil Wars, General Robert Patterson. The mansion was originally built in 1823 for Philadelphian John Hare Powel, who had purchased the land from Edward Shippen Burd. At the time of construction, the house was thought to have "simple neoclassical lines that presented a quiet contrast to the exuberant details of the eclectic new Victorian buildings going up in the neighborhood, many designed by Frank Furness." By 1835, the house was owned by Patterson, who lived there with his family for nearly fifty years. The house, with its gardens and greenhouses, came to be well known in Philadelphia, as Patterson had frequently entertained notable guests including author Charles Dickens and actress Fanny Kemble.

Due to space constrictions and fire concerns at the turn of the twentieth century, the original mansion gradually became unsuitable to house the Society's collection which was dramatically growing in size, value, and historical significance. Over the first twenty years of residence in the mansion, HSP made various additions and changes to the original building, including the introduction of innovative fireproof features and storage areas to ensure the institution could successfully grow for years to come. The historic Reading Room in our Library today was a fireproof addition to the west side of the mansion constructed in 1889, known then as the Jordan Annex. Despite this addition, the mansion section of the building was not fireproof, which presented substantial concern about the potential of fire to destroy or damage the Society's historic collection.



In 1901, HSP announced a campaign to replace the Patterson mansion with a state-of-the-art fireproof building and full construction was completed with funding from the Commonwealth in 1910. The building was designed by Philadelphia architect, Addison Hutton, who also designed many cultural institutions, hospitals, schools, and prominent residences in the region. One of the first fully-fireproof buildings in the United States, Hutton's engineering was cutting-edge at the time with thick walls made of brick and no wood used in construction, not even for the bookcases or furniture. Each room was divided by a fireproof door hung on an inclined railway track, counter-weighted so that when the temperature rises a fusible plug melts and the door automatically closes, sectioning off that room from flames. The building officially opened to the public with much fanfare and two days of celebration in April 1910.

Changes in the following decades included the introduction of an air purification system in 1948, climate control systems in the 1970s, and various upgrades in the years since. In 1994, HSP decided to shift its focus and concentrate solely on its function as a special collections library and research center. Major renovations took place from 1997 to 1999, resulting in a newly restored Great Hall (now Reading Room), installation of compact shelving in several storage areas, and new cases to accommodate displays. From 2002- 2009 the art and artifact collection was transferred to its new home at the Philadelphia History Museum at the Atwater Kent.

Walk through our doors today, and you'll step into the modern face of our historic building. In 2013, we completed a \$5 million renovation updating our Lobby, Information Commons, and archival spaces to make it easier for researchers to access materials and better welcome visitors. Our Lobby is a beautiful blend of modern and classic tastes, with eye-catching photographs, maps, paintings, and other items from our collections on a Digital Wall just feet away from the 19th century Patterson Mansion grand staircase. Other pieces from the Patterson Mansion have been systematically kept and integrated into the building over the years, including several fireplace mantles throughout all five floors of the building.

Contact Us

For more information or to check availability, contact Christopher Damiani, Director of Public Programs, at 215-732-6200 ext. 227 or cdamiani@hsp.org

