



**Western New York Railway
Historical Society, Inc.
100 Lee Street
Buffalo, New York 14210**



December 16, 2014

Dear Members and Supporters:

As we near the end of the year, I look back with pride with all of the progress that was made by the Society this past year. At Williamsville, the new semaphore post and signal was installed. In Orchard Park, restoration work continued on the BR&P caboose and the buildings. Installation of new windows in the excursion coaches was begun, the Buffalo Creek Alco was restored to its original paint livery and the car restoration site in Hamburg was cleaned up, with the collected scrap metal yielding more than \$5,000 for the Society. Finally, we completed the "Bring Back the Bison" project with the installation and dedication of the Bison at the Depew Amtrak Station earlier this fall.

At the Heritage DiscoverY Center, we acquired 13 additional acres of land for the museum along with 5 additional buildings containing nearly 30,000 square feet of indoor storage. We received the donation of an historic tank car from the LA&L RR in August and in September, the three cars from the Hamburg Fairgrounds were brought to the site. We are currently negotiating with Norfolk Southern to gain access to the active railroad siding located along the back of the property so the rest of the collection can be moved to the site next year.

Inside the Heritage DiscoverY Center, renovations to the 22,000 square foot building are nearly completed. In August, with the help of a grant from National Grid, over 325 lighting fixtures were replaced with new energy-efficient ones resulting in additional savings on our electric bills when combined with the solar panels on the roof.

Our research library on the second floor is currently under development with the guidance of the volunteers from the Buffalo Irish Genealogical Society. We are now in the process of cataloging the several thousands of books, magazines, & maps that are currently in the Society's collection, along with over 350,000 slides and photographs as well as new donations to the collection that have been dropped off at the center. The library will be open to researchers later this coming year.

We also welcomed two new organizations joining us at the HDC. At the end of last year, the Nickel Plate Technical & Historical Society moved their national archives from Cleveland to the HDC and just this past month, the Erie Lackawanna Historical Society agreed to bring their national archives to the museum as well. In addition, along with the Steel Plant Museum, we've hosted several meetings and conferences for local historical groups in the Don Owens Conference Center.

While much has been accomplished, there is much, much more to do. The Society has long-ago learned to stretch our dollars as far as possible through donated materials, services and the labors of our dedicated volunteers. However, funding is still needed so we can continue making progress at the depots, cars and museum site and in light of the unfortunate cancellation of last month's Train Show due to the Snovember Storm, this fund raising plea comes at a critical time for the WNYRHS.

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We have tasked ourselves to raise \$40,000 for the WNYRHS over the next few months. These funds will be used to continue work on our restoration and preservation projects. Our major projects for 2015 include:

- Re-creating the freight platform at the Historic Williamsville Depot which will also serve as a community stage for summer music and theater groups.
- Restoration and painting of the BR&P Caboose and B&O Boxcars at the Orchard Park Depot.
- New upholstery for one of the New York Central coaches and continued installation of the new windows.
- Continued restoration work on the Buffalo Creek ALCO #43 to return it to active service.
- Preparation work required to meet FRA rules to move the Society's railroad rolling stock and locomotives to the Heritage DiscoverY Center.
- Installation of an additional 1,500 feet of display and storage tracks at the museum to accommodate the collection.
- Purchase of new shelving for the Archive Center at the Heritage DiscoverY Center.
- Plus many smaller but important projects....

As you can see just from the short list above, that we have laid out an ambitious work plan for the coming year. With your generous support, I am confident that we can complete all of these project goals in the coming year.

With nearly 500 members, if every member gave just \$100, we would quickly reach and surpass our goal. I know that's not possible for all of our members to do, however I do ask that you give what you can. Every donation of \$20, \$50, \$100 or more will help us reach our goal to continue on the path of progress that we have set before us. Remember, the WNYRHS is a 501(c)(3) Non-Profit educational organization and all donations are tax deductible.

Make your check or money order payable to: **WNYRHS, Inc.** and mail it to: **WNYRHS 100 Lee Street Buffalo, NY 14210**. If you want to make your donation using a credit card, just visit our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/wnyrhs and look for the post with the secure Paypal link. You may also just call me at 716-901-0012 to give me your credit card information over the phone.

Thank you for taking time to read and respond to this appeal for support. While the depots are shut down for the winter, the Heritage DiscoverY Center is open each Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday from 10am to 5pm. We are in the process of installing new displays for your enjoyment. If you are a first time visitor to the museum, just ask one of our volunteers for a quick tour of the building to see the progress and view our plans for development of the 16-acre site.

Thanks again and I hope see you at the January 15th meeting of the WNYRHS.

Sincerely,

Joseph V. Kocsis Jr.

President