

Preservation Buffalo Niagara Honorees

Category: Education and Outreach

Black Rock Historic District Photo Project Grant–Amherst Business Association, Buffalo

The importance of Black Rock as the earliest settled section of the City of Buffalo and its significance in the War of 1812 signaled to the Grant-Amherst Business Association in 2004 a need to correct what was a dearth within the city's two leading archival institutions of historical photographs reflecting life and activity in the area.

When the Association's public call for "old photos" and an exhibition of then-available important images spurred the many who attended the exhibition to submit their personal collections, the project was on its way.

In 2009, to generate more interest, the Association produced postcards and held a slide presentation at BECHS during its 12th Annual Rediscover Amherst Street Festival. The presentation and discussion was so well received that the Association was

invited back to repeat it for Buffalo State College students.

Attendance at subsequent presentations in 2010 was also so great that BECHS had to close its doors to sixty would-be attendees, and audience interaction inspired more photo submissions.

To date, the efforts of those responsible for this project have resulted in a priceless collection of some 1,800 images depicting people at work and leisure, businesses, factories, architecture, churches, schools, scenes along the Erie Canal, and more, submitted by upwards of 100 individuals.

The interest and excitement generated by the project have uncovered countless stories, and a video documentary in the works has already recorded the memories and experiences of eleven contributors.



In addition, a feature about the project in *Buffalo Spree* resulted in an influx of new photos and another exhibition. Photos from the project's archive assisted county projects in 2008, city projects in 2009, and the NYS Scajaquada Creek Summit in 2010, and are currently on display at Wegmans on Amherst Street. In 2010, the project received BECHS prestigious Niederlander Award for Outstanding Programming.

PBN is pleased to also honor the Black Rock Photo project with our award for Education and Outreach.