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LAFAYETTE SQUARE CELEBRATED IN EXHIBIT AT CENTRAL LIBRARY

Downtown's Central Square and Surrounding Buildings Featured

Lafayette Square Then & Now is the featured exhibit in the downtown Buffalo & Erie County Public Library's Rare Book Room now through January 2012. Featuring more than 90 items from the Library's Special Collections, the exhibit includes a Lafayette Square watercolor print from V. Roger Lalli's *Buffalo My City* series (1993) as well as postcards and photos dating back to the 1880s. Photographs, maps, postcards and other ephemera help tell the story of the Square, its surrounding significant buildings and its role in the history of the city as a gathering place.

With its stately Soldiers and Sailors monument in the center, Lafayette Square has been and continues to be the heart of downtown Buffalo. The Square was a significant feature of Joseph Ellicott's original 1804 design for the village of New Amsterdam, shortly thereafter renamed the city of Buffalo. Originally called "Court House Square" because of the placing of that important civic structure, the Square was later renamed Lafayette Square after the 1825 visit of that revered General. The transformation of the Square over its lifetime from wooded park to crossroads of busy intersecting streets, and in recent years a popular concert venue, is the story of the many changes in downtown Buffalo. The Central Library has been a significant anchor of Lafayette Square since 1887, an indication of the importance of the Square as a central address and the Library as a critical public institution.

Lafayette Square Then and Now can be visited at the Rare Book Room on the Library's main floor next to the Grosvenor Room during regular library hours which are Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday from 8:30 a.m. - 6:00 p.m.; Thursday from 8:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m. and beginning Sunday, October 2nd from 12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. There is no admission charge.

The Rare Book Room at the Central Library is home to over 40,000 books and more than 5,000 literary and historic manuscripts and letters. To highlight the unique materials that are not normally on public display, Rare Book Room staff research and create displays of materials several times a year.

2011 marks the 175th anniversary of library services in Buffalo and Erie County. To learn more about the 37-branch Library System, visit www.BuffaloLib.org.

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