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WAR OF 1812 EXHIBIT AT DOWNTOWN CENTRAL LIBRARY

FEATURES LETTERS, RARE BOOKS AND DOCUMENTS

Fall Programs on through January

Inspired by the Bicentennial of the War of 1812, Rare Book Librarians of the Buffalo & Erie County Public Library have drawn upon the Library's extensive collections to illustrate the dramatic story of the village of Buffalo in the newly opened exhibit "*When Buffalo Burned: The War of 1812 and the Niagara Frontier*." On display at the downtown Central Library, 1 Lafayette Square, now through January 2013, the exhibit features items of local and regional interest including a collection of original letters, publications and maps from the time period, broadsides, and documents of national relevance including a copy of the Declaration of War and early printings of "The Star Spangled Banner."

Curated by Rare Book Room Librarian Charles Alaimo, *When Buffalo Burned* illustrates the frontier village of Buffalo and its inhabitants, and follows the dramatic story of its utter devastation by British forces in December 1813. A fascinating collection of War of 1812 letters highlight aspects of the war from the gruesome to the mundane, including an account of the horrific attack on Black Rock as well as a soldier's explanation for being unfit for duty. A striking, recently restored oil portrait of Seth Grosvenor, circa 1835, is a centerpiece of the exhibit. Merchant, militia volunteer and later, Library forefather, Grosvenor's story of attempting to aid the outnumbered American militia as the British attack unfolds; he, along with other remaining civilians, was forced to retreat. His story as a key figure in rebuilding the village along with his greatest legacy to Buffalo – the unusual bequest of \$40,000 to the citizens of Buffalo to create a public reference library, the Grosvenor Library -- is included.

A series of free programs on aspects of the War across the Niagara Frontier will take place at various Library sites through Fall 2012. Highlights include five free concerts by the U.S. Navy Band Great Lakes and the U.S. Marines Brass Band at four Libraries during Buffalo Navy Week (September 11-17); several Tuesday lunchtime talks at the Downtown Library on aspects of War of 1812 history by local historians sponsored by the Center for Art, Architecture, History and Nature; plus historical talks and a workshop for families on Children's pastimes in the 1812 era to be presented at several Library sites as part of the Buffalo Naval & Military Park's War of 1812 Lecture Series. The full schedule of War of 1812 events across the Public Library System appears on www.BuffaloLib.org.

The *When Buffalo Burned* exhibit is free and open to the public during regular hours at the downtown Central Library, which are: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday 8:30a.m. - 6p.m., Thursday 8:30a.m.-8p.m. and Sunday 12p.m. - 5p.m. beginning September 9. The Library is closed on all legal holidays. Visit www.BuffaloLib.org or call 716-858-8900 for related programs.

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