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Local Historical Group Takes First Step To Revive Railroad Station

NICHOLSON, PA – With an Endless Mountains Heritage Region (EMHR) grant through the PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR), the Nicholson Heritage Association (the Association) launches its historic structure feasibility study of the former Delaware, Lackawanna and Western Railroad's (DL&W) Station in Nicholson.

Working with Facility Design & Development of Scranton, the feasibility study will look at rehabilitating the station into a community center for residents to gather, and a visitor's center and gateway to the Viaduct Valley Way Scenic Byway to promote tourism.

"This study moves us one step closer to returning the remarkable historic station to its former role as the heart of the community," states Marion Sweet, chair of the Association. "I can't thank our supporters enough who've made donations or volunteered their time to get us this far. We look forward to working with EMHR and DCNR, and all our stakeholders, on a continual basis to ensure this project is a success."

Phil Swank, EMHR executive director explains, "The Endless Mountains Heritage Region is very pleased to partner with Nicholson Heritage Association in the funding of this study. The potential for significant historic preservation, education and interpretation and heritage tourism associated with the DL&W Railroad Station is exciting, and our organization appreciates the efforts of NHA in acquiring and rehabilitating this important structure. We believe that this opportunity will greatly contribute to the goals of the Heritage Region and Pennsylvania's DCNR in heritage development."

“I believe that careful re-purposing of this facility with great sensitivity to its original use and character; will breathe new life into this structure, and insure that it is used in a sustainable way for generations to come,” articulates Alex Belavitz, Facility Design & Development president.

Building a rail line in Nicholson forever changed the small community as it connected people, commerce, and trade. The station was originally built by one of the DL&W’s predecessors, the Liggett’s Gap Railroad, in 1849. This first, and largest, station on that line was initially used to board transient workers before being used to handle freight and passengers.

With the completion of the Clarks Summit-Hallstead Cut-off in 1915, passenger service began from the then new brick and concrete station next to the then just completed Tunkhannock Viaduct, also known as the Nicholson Bridge. After 1915, the original 1849 station handled all freight in town, even following the DL&W merger with the Erie Railroad, becoming the Erie Lackawanna Railroad (EL), in 1960. Due to financial hardship, the EL permanently closed the station in 1971. The station was sold in 1983 to a local business and in private use until purchased by NHA in June 2012 with donations from individuals, businesses, and a \$25,000 Pepsi Refresh Project grant.

The feasibility study is one step towards rehabilitating the station. Donations are still needed and can be mailed to the Association at P.O. Box 496, Nicholson, PA 18446. In addition, donations are accepted through PayPal. More information available at: <http://www.nicholsonstation.org>.

Besides this initiative, the Association meets regularly to discuss projects that include the Viaduct Valley Way Scenic Byway and the 100th anniversary celebration of the Nicholson Bridge in 2015. The next Nicholson Heritage Association meeting will take place at 7 p.m. on Wednesday, July 31, 2013 at the First Presbyterian Church, 65 State Street, in Nicholson. For updates, please visit <http://www.nicholsonheritage.org> or visit them on Facebook.

About The Nicholson Heritage Association

The Nicholson Heritage Association was established in 1989 as a non-profit organization in anticipation of the 75th anniversary of the Tunkhannock Viaduct, also known as the Nicholson Bridge, and is dedicated to the historical preservation of Nicholson and the region. Nicholson is a small rural town nestled in Wyoming County and the Endless Mountains of Northeastern Pennsylvania. The Association continues to play an active role in the community through many initiatives, including purchasing U.S. flags for local businesses. Visit <http://www.nicholsonheritage.org> for more information.