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March 28, 2018

Dear History Lover,

Objects are being collected, exhibit content is being finalized, items are being gathered for installation. We're just a month away from the opening of the exhibit and we can't wait!

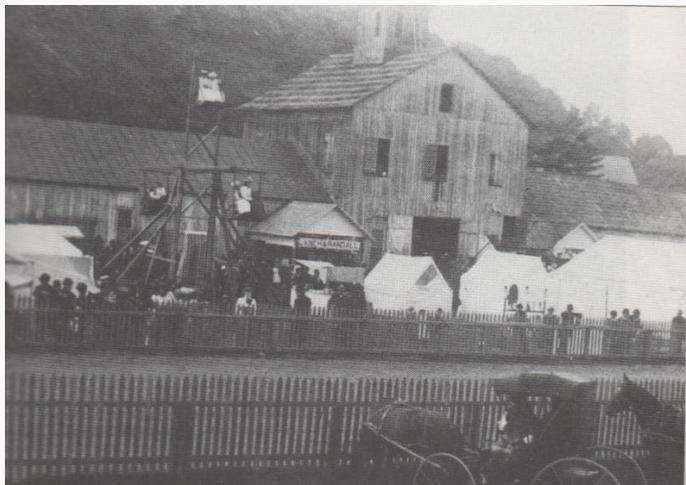
Exhibit Opens April 28!

Join us on Saturday, April 28 for the Grand Opening of the exhibit. We'll have **Free Admission** from 9:00 am to 12:00 pm as part of the [Downtown Barre Car Show](#). The exhibit will be open that day until 4:00 pm.



See you there!

On Track



Caledonia County Fairgrounds: Vermont's First Race

Many of Vermont's earliest automobiles were owned by doctors, who found them useful in making house calls and for transportation during emergencies. It

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CAN YOU HELP?

We're still seeking a few things to include in our exhibit. If you have any of these things - or know someone who does - please email Amanda Gustin at Amanda.gustin@vermonthistory.org

-Original "victory flags" for local drivers

- Photographs of the Dog River Speedway in Northfield

(please note: we've been working for research purposes with the photos shared on this website [http://www.catamountstadium.com/dog_river_speedway.htm] but we need to track down originals or high resolution scans in

seems fitting, then, that the earliest automobile races - and the first fatality during a race - involved a St. Johnsbury doctor.

Dr. John Allen was a beloved local physician whose papers later described as "one of St. Johnsbury's greatest auto enthusiasts." He took part in the first races in Vermont's history, a three-day affair during the Caledonia County Fair of 1903.

The first race, on September 15, was called a "doctor's race," in recognition of the typical ownership of cars at that time. The second, the following day, was called a "county" race; the third, on the 17th, was an "open" race. Dr. Allen entered at least the first two races, and came in first in the doctor's race - making him the first winner in Vermont history.

It was during the county race that tragedy struck. Allen was driving, and a man named Herbert Lamphere rode along with him as a mechanic. It was his job to help balance the vehicle around curves and to maintain air pressure within the engine "for added speed down the stretches." In the fourth heat, Allen was leading at the blistering speed of 36 miles per hour when he lost control of the car. It flew off the track at the third turn and rolled down the embankment.

Lamphere was thrown free of the vehicle and was killed nearly instantly. A spectator, Fred or French Garrick, was also injured when struck by flying debris. Allen was pinned beneath his vehicle when it came to a stop. He was alive, but severely injured. He spent the next six months in Brightlook Hospital, enduring multiple operations to repair his crushed legs. He didn't resume his medical practice until October 1904, 13 months after the accident.

Allen remained, however, a lifelong car lover. When the Vermont Secretary of State first required registration for all cars in 1905, he requested number 13. The Caledonian Record reported that "they felt that since his car had almost killed him already, he had good courage to ask for that number." He was involved in a number of other local accidents with his cars, and bought the first Ford Model A in St. Johnsbury in 1928. He passed away in 1931.

Image: Caledonia County Fairgrounds, 1895. Courtesy of the St. Johnsbury History & Heritage Center

order to include them in the exhibit)

BE PART OF THE ACTION!

Thank you to all our sponsors and supporters for helping bring the Anything for Speed exhibit to life!

There's still time to help us share this important (and fun!) piece of Vermont history, [click here](#) to become a "race" sponsor or make an individual donation [here](#).

For more information, contact Tori at Tori.Hart@vermonthistory.org or (802) 479-8516.

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