



For Immediate Release

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Brand New Woodward Avenue Exhibit to Open at Birmingham Historical Museum



BIRMINGHAM, MI, March 27, 2015 – The Birmingham community will learn more about its famous corridor with the opening of a brand new exhibit at the Birmingham Historical Museum titled ‘History’s Highway: The Story of Woodward Avenue’. From a major Native American pathway to modern-day transportation corridor, Woodward Avenue has shaped the City of Birmingham in fascinating ways. The year-long exhibition will open on Wednesday, April 1.

The museum will explore the renowned avenue’s history, from wilderness trail to settlement plank road, to 19th century retail and commercial magnet, to 20th century superhighway to “Cruise Central,” to present-day multimodal transportation corridor. It will incorporate objects and content from other museums in the area, including the Detroit Historical Museum, the Royal Oak Historical Museum, and Cranbrook Institute of Science. Artifacts from private collections will also be featured. A variety of displays will be used to tell stories that make Woodward’s history unique among famous American highways.



Photo of the opening of Hunter Boulevard portion of Woodward, 1939, Birmingham Historical Museum & Park collection.

“Many people in the Birmingham community don’t realize Woodward Avenue evolved from an earlier Native American trail linking Detroit and Saginaw. The Saginaw Trail, as it was called, played a major role in the founding of Birmingham and its early growth, long before the Dream Cruise made its mark as the world’s largest one-day automotive event,” said Birmingham Historical Museum Director, Leslie Pielack. “We have other great local stories to tell, and some fresh approaches to telling them. I think visitors will leave amazed and delighted.”

Among the highlights of the exhibition is an interactive vintage map of Birmingham, a reconstruction of Old Woodward Avenue and its historic buildings, and the first ever museum exhibit of unique trail marker trees shaped by native peoples. Pielack worked with Eric Hemenway of the Little Traverse Bay Band of Odawa Indians on the Native American content to help ensure accuracy and cultural sensitivity.

The Birmingham Historical Museum is located at 556 West Maple. Exhibit hours are Wednesday through Saturday from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m. Admission prices are as follows: Adults, \$7; Seniors & students, \$5; Kids 5 & under and members, free! The museum is open until 8 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month. For more information, call 248-530-1928 or visit www.bhamgov.org/museum.