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Contact: Susan Navarre, Executive Director

director@fitchburghhistoricalsociety.com 978-345-1157

Photographs available

Interviews available: Peter Capodagli, Joel Kaddy, Scott Kinsman

Fitchburg Historical Society Presents “Iver Johnson: Designed to Last”

2017 Summer Exhibition from June 17 to July 19

The Annual Celebration of Fitchburg-made Bicycles Returns

The Fitchburg Historical Society is pleased to offer its popular summer exhibition of classic Iver Johnson Bicycles from June 17 to July 19, 2017. The display is timed to coincide with Fitchburg’s summer cycling events, including *Fitchburg Rides* and the *Longsjo Classic*, as well as the city’s annual Civic Days celebration. During *Iver Johnson: Designed to Last*, the Fitchburg Historical Society will be filled with the historic bikes that were made for decades in Fitchburg by the Iver Johnson Arms and Cycle Works. Many of the bicycles have been loaned by private collectors; others come from the Fitchburg Historical Society collection, which includes bicycles, tools and ephemera donated by Richard Hansen.

From 1891 to 1941, Iver Johnson’s Arms and Cycle Works in Fitchburg manufactured nearly 700,000 bikes. The bicycle models on exhibition are a favorite among bicycle historians for the quality of their construction and their capacity for high speed in long-distance bike races. These included racing bikes, standard and touring bikes, as well as children’s bikes and tricycles. They are known as some of the highest quality bikes ever made.

The skilled metal workers who created Iver Johnson bicycles were known for the quality and consistency of their work. Some worked for as many as 60 years at the factory, which also produced Iver Johnson guns until the 1970’s. This year’s exhibition will feature images and records documenting the workers and their innovations in bicycle design, gun design, and marketing.

The exhibition will also include photos and artifacts about American Olympian bicyclist Arthur Longsjo, a Finnish-American athlete from Fitchburg who was considered one of the greatest bicyclists of his generation. Longsjo died tragically young and his memory is honored with the Arthur Longsjo Classic Bike Race. The exhibition will be open extra hours, from 1 to 5 p.m. on Sunday, June 25, when the Arthur Longsjo Classic Bike Race comes to Fitchburg.

The normal opening hours for the exhibition are Monday and Tuesday, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Wednesday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. On Saturday, June 17, when the FITchburg Rides program will also take place in downtown Fitchburg, the exhibition will be open from 8:00 a.m. to 4 p.m. There will be additional special hours during Fitchburg's Civic Days celebration, when the Historical Society will be open Monday, July 3 from 6:00 to 9:00 p.m., as part of the Main Street Block Party celebration.

The exhibition is free and open to the public, though donations are accepted. For more information, call 978-345-1157, write welcome@fitchburghistoricalsociety.com or visit www.fitchburghistoricalsociety.org and <https://www.facebook.com/FitchburgHistoricalSociety>.

The Fitchburg Historical Society and Crocker Family Center for the History of Fitchburg is located at 781 Main Street, Fitchburg in the historic Phoenix building. There is abundant on-street parking near the Historical Society and free parking behind the building. The building is handicapped accessible.

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Iver Johnson: Designed to Last, Annual Wallace Exhibition

June 17 – July 19, 2017

Mondays and Tuesdays, 10 a.m. – 4 p.m.; Wednesdays, 10 a.m. – 6 p.m.

George R. Wallace Jr. and Alice G. Wallace Exhibit Hall, Fitchburg Historical Society

Free and open to the public.

Additional Open Hours

Additional exhibition hours: ***Iver Johnson: Designed to Last, Annual Wallace Exhibition***

Saturday, June 17 2017, 8:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

George R. Wallace Jr. and Alice G. Wallace Exhibit Hall, Fitchburg Historical Society

Fitchburg Rides, Bicycle Safety and Health Event

Additional exhibition hours: ***Iver Johnson: Designed to Last, Annual Wallace Exhibition***

Sunday, June 25, 2017, 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

George R. Wallace Jr. and Alice G. Wallace Exhibit Hall, Fitchburg Historical Society

Longsjo Classic Bicycle Race

Additional exhibition hours: ***Iver Johnson: Designed to Last, Annual Wallace Exhibition***

Monday, July 3, 2017, 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

George R. Wallace Jr. and Alice G. Wallace Exhibit Hall, Fitchburg Historical Society

Civic Days Block Party

About the Fitchburg Historical Society: Founded by James F.D. Garfield in 1892, the Fitchburg Historical Society is an independent non-profit that was created to collect, preserve, and interpret the history of Fitchburg. Now located in an historic H.M. Francis-designed building on Main Street, the Society hosts lectures, exhibits and annual events relating to the city's history. Exhibitions and educational programming about Fitchburg history are supported by a grant from The George R. Wallace Foundation, and are presented in the George R. Wallace Jr. and Alice G. Wallace Exhibit Hall.