

First Floor Restoration at Allegany Museum

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Allegany Museum is in the process of a grand renovation and installation of a large, permanent exhibition on its first floor – *Crossroads of America* – slated to open in the fall of 2017.

The exhibit begins with the ancient Americans who lived here over 12,000 years ago and continues with Nemaquin's Trail and its evolution to the National Road. Trade routes such as the Nemaquin Trail, an ancient Native American trail that connected the Potomac River and the Ohio and Monongahela River watersheds, linked native cultures before European contact.

Also featured is Cumberland's colonial history, focusing on Fort Cumberland and the experiences of George Washington and General Braddock. Events of the French and Indian War, particularly the need to transport thousands of men as well as wagons



First floor restoration has resulted in the reappearance of the beautiful vaulted ceiling.



Conceptual renderings of the new first floor "*Crossroads of America*" permanent exhibition. Above left: Visitors enter the exhibition to an informational and orientation video and then proceed to an ancient Indian hut.



Above right: A highlight of the exhibition hall is a section which features the colonial history of Allegany County. The focus of this area is Fort Cumberland and the experiences of George Washington and General Braddock.

and artillery to the Ohio territory, spurred British investment in improving the Nemaquin Trail and the creation of the first road to cross successive ridgelines of the Appalachian Mountains.

The Cumberland Road, or National Road, authorized in 1806 by President Thomas Jefferson, was the first highway built by the Federal Government to promote westward colonization.

The exhibit will also include scale models of canal boats and trains. The role of the B&O railroad and the C&O

Canal, which reached Cumberland in 1842 and 1850, respectively, was of major importance in transporting regional resources, especially timber and coal, and fueling America's industrialization.

Visitors will also be able to walk along a reconstructed 'National Road' that will display vehicles such as an authentic 1825 Conestoga wagon and a Model T Ford.

Cumberland's foundation and history is tied to its geographic importance as a key east-west route linking coastal eastern America with the Ohio and Mississippi watersheds.

The evolution of transportation via roads, canals, and trains in America and the role this played in encouraging westward colonization is a primary theme of the Allegany Museum.



Conceptual rendering of the National Road exhibition and the various forms of transportation used on the road over time.



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