

# **EARLY ELECTRIC OLDSMOBILE ACQUIRED BY MUSEUM**

**-Media Release-**

October 3, 2018

**LANSING, MICHIGAN** --- The R.E. Olds Transportation Museum, located in Lansing, recently accomplished its fundraising campaign to acquire an original 1899 Olds Electric car.

The only one known to exist, the electric will now be placed on permanent display at the museum and will join the collection of automobiles and artifacts dedicated to the company's founder and Lansing native, Ransom Eli Olds.

In 1899, the Olds Motor Vehicle Company and the Olds Gasoline Engine Works were combined to form, Olds Motor Works.

Having experimented with steam powered vehicles, in 1899 R.E. Olds began experimenting with electric automobiles and would build and advertise for sale both electric and internal combustion vehicles. Olds is recognized as one of the few auto pioneers to build steam, electric, and internal combustion powered cars.

Following a three year long fund raising campaign, the museum was able to strike a deal with the McDowell family to purchase the car from the estate of the late Don and Ken McDowell. The donations to the fundraiser included Lansing area electric utilities, electrical worker unions and individuals including R.E. and Meta Olds' great-granddaughter Debbie Stephens.

Olds and REO history enthusiast Jim Neal, of Lansing and the Lansing chapter of the MotorCities National Heritage Area, worked to spearhead the fundraising campaign on behalf of the museum.

There will be a celebration of the recent acquisition on October 24<sup>th</sup> at 4pm in the museum, which is located at 240 Museum Drive in Lansing. The public is welcome to attend.

It is believed this particular Oldsmobile electric was driven in 1901 during the Detroit Floral Parade and is the only known Olds Electric in existence.

The Oldsmobile Electrics were supplied with Edison batteries and the range of the cars was very limited in comparison to today's electric vehicle technology. Around the turn of the century, electric cars were a significant part of the automobile market, and were both simpler and more reliable than gas vehicles.

## **Additional Information:**

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