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AMERICAN SPIRITS: THE RISE AND FALL OF PROHIBITION EXHIBITION OVERVIEW

On January 17, 1920, a new day dawned. As the 18th Amendment went into effect, Americans could no longer manufacture, sell, or transport intoxicating beverages. Prohibition was now part of the Constitution, holding the same status as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and the abolition of slavery.

What did those who wanted America “dry” hope to achieve? And how did the “wets” fight back? *American Spirits: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*, a world premiere exhibition created by the National Constitution Center, explores those tumultuous years of 1920 to 1933, and why the country went dry in the first place. Prohibition’s advocates said that they wanted to improve the nation’s moral and physical health, and in some ways they succeeded. But the nation also endured a radical rise in crime, corruption, and cynicism. By the time it ended with the ratification of the 21st Amendment in 1933, America had become a very different country.

In the Lobby

A 1929 Buick Marquette greets visitors before they enter the *American Spirits* exhibition. One of the bootleggers’ key innovations was the “Whiskey 6.” Usually Buicks or Studebakers, these six-cylinder cars were extensively modified to accommodate their illegal cargo and to evade authorities. Cars like this Buick Marquette were used by smugglers crossing the Canada-U.S. border.

SECTION 1: AMERICA HAD A DRINKING PROBLEM

American colonists brought their thirst for alcohol with them to the New World. The ship *Arbella*, which arrived in the Massachusetts Bay Colony in 1630, had more than 10,000 gallons of wine in its hold for 700 settlers. It also carried three times as much beer as water.

By 1830, the nation reached rock bottom. On average, Americans over the age of 15 were guzzling seven gallons of pure alcohol each year. This was the equivalent of 90 bottles of 80-proof liquor – or about four shots every day. Three times greater than current levels, it remains the highest measured volume of consumption in U.S. history. The consequences of this national binge would be severe.

Upon entering *American Spirits: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition*, visitors can view a video, set on January 16, 1920, just as Prohibition was about to go into effect. Guests also will see a volume display of glass bottles that demonstrate the drastic difference in the amount an average American adult currently drinks each year versus consumption in 1830.

Alcohol Was Everywhere to a Devastating Effect

By the early 1800s, the country was swimming – and nearly drowning – in liquor. A barrel of hard cider sat by the door of thousands of farmhouses, available to everyone in the family. In many cities, the tolling of a bell at 11 a.m. and again at 4 p.m. marked “grog time,” when workers were granted an alcohol-soaked break. And the wealthy might drink their evenings away in hotel dining rooms or at lavish dinner parties.

In rural areas, whiskey and hard cider were the drinks of choice. Farmers used the grain they grew to make rye or corn whiskey. They also used apples from trees like those that John Chapman – “Johnny Appleseed” – had planted throughout the Ohio Valley. Some of these apples were specifically meant to be fermented into hard cider; a ceramic jug from 1895, like those used to carry hard cider, is on display. Frequently, distilled liquor was added to cider to keep it from spoiling, making it stronger than beer with an alcoholic content of at least 10 percent.

The establishment that was seen as the most destructive force in American life by those advocating for reform was the saloon. Between 1870 and 1900, as millions of immigrants flocked to the United States, it is estimated that the number of saloons nationwide increased from 100,000 to 300,000. The saloon was a male-only institution, which served many different purposes. In cities, they were gathering places for working-class immigrants that often doubled as the headquarters for political organizations. Out West, it was simultaneously a social hall, a place to pick up your mail or cash your check, and an entertainment venue.

Many men gathered in saloons to escape their responsibilities on an ocean of beer and booze. A Growler-style pail from the 1890s, on display in this section of the exhibition, was used to carry beer home from the saloon.

By the early 1900s, saloons had become standardized due to the efforts of the large brewing companies, almost all of them owned by German immigrants. Companies like Anheuser-Busch made exclusive agreements with saloon owners, who would sell nothing but Budweiser in exchange for the company providing glassware, furniture, and even the pictures adorning the walls.

Anheuser-Busch artifacts in the exhibition depicting this type of branding include early 20th century drinking glasses and artwork commissioned by Anheuser-Busch to display in thousands of saloons across the country. During this time period, the techniques for transporting beer greatly improved. A quarter beer barrel like the one featured in the exhibition was used to ship beer from the Anheuser-Busch headquarters in St. Louis, Missouri, all across the country. By 1901, this number reached over one million barrels a year.

For some members of the middle and upper classes, social drinking in the home was a sign of respectability and sophistication. This section also features a decanter, wine glasses, and other glassware that might have been found in a middle or upper class home.

Many respectable women consumed “home remedies” with high alcoholic content, which sometimes led to abuse. Also featured is a box and bottle of Lydia Pinkham’s Vegetable Compound, a successful patent medicine marketed to women as a remedy for “female complaints” that contained 20.6 percent alcohol in its 14-ounce bottle.

The Crusade for Temperance Begins

Early anti-alcohol campaigners preached “temperance” – a term meaning everything from moderation to total abstinence. Absolute prohibition was not yet on their minds. But if closing the saloons would help men to stop drinking, then closing the saloons was a worthwhile goal. The shift in tactics began on Christmas Eve in 1873 when Eliza Thompson of Hillsboro, Ohio, led a group of women to each of the town’s saloons. The group knelt outside in the snow and prayed. Within days, nine of Hillsboro’s 13 drinking places had closed their doors. Thompson’s crusade led directly to the founding of the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union (WCTU). Under the leadership of Francis Willard, the WCTU became a 250,000 women army.

The WCTU achieved their greatest victory by installing anti-alcohol curriculum in thousands of American schools. But the women realized that without voting rights, their political power was limited. Soon the campaign for universal suffrage became an essential element in the campaign for temperance.

At the first of two photo opportunities in the *American Spirits* exhibition, visitors can pose with life-size figures of a temperance worker and a suffragist. The photo op features campaign sashes and banners with historical slogans from both movements.

Featured in this section of the exhibition is a wooden gavel with white ribbon used by Frances Willard to run WCTU meetings. The white ribbon was the emblem of the WCTU symbolizing purity. Other temperance artifacts include a letter written by Susan B. Anthony to Frances Willard in 1876 and *Do Everything: A Handbook for the World’s White Ribboners*, published in 1875. Suffragist artifacts include a “Woman Suffrage Party” sash from 1910.

The Rise of the Anti-Saloon League

Eliza Thompson began the Crusade inspired by religious piety, and it was religion that continued to be the dominant influence in the temperance movement. Baptists and Methodists – denominations that forbade alcohol consumption – led the attack, carrying their campaign into the nation’s political life. And in 1893, in Oberlin, Ohio, the Anti-Saloon League (ASL) was born. Led entirely by Protestant ministers, the ASL would become the most effective political pressure group in American history.

In this section of *American Spirits*, visitors enter a semi-recreated church with white pews and a pulpit. The sounds of well-known temperance hymns including “Tell Your Mother I’ll Vote Dry” and “When the Girls Can Vote” play on a loop. Adorning the walls are large frames featuring photos of famous temperance figures including Howard Hyde Russell, the founder of the Anti-Saloon League, and the original bar room smasher Carry Nation.

Carry Amelia Nation was six feet tall, with the biceps of a stevedore, the face of a prison warden, and the persistence of a toothache. Using these assets to promote her cause, Nation became famous when she strode into a saloon in Topeka, Kansas, and pulled out a hatchet, smashing all the bottles and the mirror behind the bar. Nation called her raids on saloons “hatchetations.” Beneath Nation’s portrait, a glass case displays a hatchet made of oak and steel and a wall mirror smashed during one of her infamous bar raids.

William Jennings Bryan, also featured in this section of the exhibition, was among the most controversial figures of his time. Bryan believed that Prohibition could improve the lives of ordinary Americans. He also was a supporter of the amendments to establish the income tax, provide for the direct election of senators, and grant the vote to women. Bryan ran for president three times on the Democratic ticket, but lost each time. Buttons from his 1896, 1900, and 1908

presidential campaign bids are on display in this section of the exhibition. Later, while serving as Secretary of State under Woodrow Wilson, he lived out his temperance beliefs by serving grape juice instead of wine at formal functions.

His portrait placed above the recreated wooden pulpit, Billy Sunday was America's most famous evangelist. Sunday believed that liquor was "God's worst enemy" and "Hell's best friend." A copy of his "booze" sermon with handwritten notes prepared by Sunday from 1916 is displayed under his portrait.

Temperance organizations used every method at their disposal to persuade the American public to support their cause, often using moral arguments to pull at the heart strings. Dr. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, was among the first to recognize alcoholism as a disease and encourage drinking in moderation. Rush's "A Moral and Physical Thermometer," from a copy of *An Inquiry into the Effects of Spirituous Liquors* published in 1790, is on display in this area of the exhibition. It describes the effects of various alcoholic beverages on the mind and body, from cheerfulness-inducing wine to "murderous" rum.

Recreations of temperance propaganda warning of the dangers of alcohol hang on the walls. A hand-colored lithograph titled "The Drunkards Progress" from 1846 by Nathaniel Currier shows the presumed life-span of a drunkard, with his wife and child as the victims of his abuse.

The WCTU succeeded in getting every state in the country to require temperance education in public schools. Its Department of Scientific Instruction produced textbooks and instruction manuals and asked teachers to fill out report cards on how they encouraged temperance in their classrooms. A WCTU textbook, report card, and temperance lesson manual are on display.

In this section of the exhibition, visitors will discover if they might have joined the "wets" or the "drys" by answering a series of questions about their gender, religion, political ideology, and geographic location. The "Wet or Dry" interactive quiz is featured on iPad screens located in the wooden church pews. At the wooden pulpit, another iPad interactive features famous temperance speeches. After listening to samples, visitors can try their hand at delivering their own fiery speech.

SECTION 2: AMENDMENT 18

After decades of promoting temperance, the anti-liquor forces determined that only a constitutional amendment could make the country dry. The man who made it happen was Wayne B. Wheeler.

As the chief lobbyist for the Anti-Saloon League, Wheeler became the ASL's most effective weapon. Taking advantage of an income tax amendment, the campaign for women's suffrage, and a world war, Wheeler shepherded the 18th Amendment to its ratification on January 16, 1919. A new era was about to arrive in America.

The dazzling Wayne Wheeler's Amazing Amendment Machine gives visitors a visual demonstration of the amendment ratification process. Measuring twenty-feet long and eight-feet tall, this carnival-inspired contraption follows the birth of Prohibition from 1913, when Wheeler began his campaign in earnest after the ratification of the income tax amendment, until 1919 when the 18th Amendment was ratified.

An original copy of the 18th Amendment congressional resolution and notification letter – sent to the state of Pennsylvania by Secretary of State Robert Lansing to consider for ratification – is displayed in this section of the exhibition. Pennsylvania became the 45th state to ratify on February 25, 1919, one month after the proposed amendment had been ratified by the required 36 out of 48 states.

SECTION 3: DRYS HAD THEIR AMENDMENT AND WETS HAD THEIR LIQUOR

It was said that two groups above all benefited from Prohibition: Bootleggers and Baptists. Baptists, and those who agreed with them, had succeeded in passing a constitutional amendment. The nation's fifth largest industry (in terms of invested capital) was effectively put out of business overnight.

Bootleggers benefited from the unintended consequences of Prohibition. In well-stocked speakeasies, men and women began drinking together in public. Vast governmental corruption eroded the nation's respect for law. And rampant criminality, as well as some well-placed loopholes in the enforcement of laws, put illegal behavior on the front pages of newspapers daily.

In just 112 words, the 18th Amendment made the manufacture, sale, and transport of intoxicating liquors illegal. But a law had to be enacted to determine how the amendment would be enforced. Passed by Congress in 1919, the Volstead Act stipulated what precisely was illegal and what was not.

The Volstead Act provided three key exceptions for the legal manufacture, sale, and transport of alcoholic beverages – sacramental wine, medicinal alcohol, and the preservation of fruit by households through fermentation. At an iPad interactive, visitors can test their Volstead knowhow by deciding "Is It Legal?" when different combinations of alcohol, its use, and its location are combined in a slot machine-style fashion.

Why the Twenties Roared

Men and women mingling in a smoke-filled bar, martini glasses held artfully in hand: the generation that had come of age during the grim carnage of World War I now broke free from the past. When the laws changed, so did American habits.

Jazz spread across the country from speakeasy to speakeasy, as did the era's popular dance crazes, like the Charleston and the shimmy. Prohibition had given birth to the modern American nightclub. Inside *American Spirits*, the Center has recreated a 1920s speakeasy, complete with a wooden dance floor with the footsteps to four versions of the Charleston, and a bar where guests can learn about the evolution of the cocktail and "order a story" about the era. A video projection plays black and white dance footage from the era. Cocktail tables that surround the dance floor contain dinner plate graphics featuring 1920s slang. Coaster graphics at the tables profile famous speakeasy patrons.

The mixed-gender speakeasy replaced the saloon, which had always been a male-only institution, and it now became acceptable for men and women to drink together in public. As women joined men at the speakeasy, owners needed to find bathroom facilities for their new customers. Broom closets and other tucked-away places were converted into bathrooms, but the tiny spaces could not accommodate more than a sink, mirror, and a toilet; it was the birth of something called the "powder room." Inside the Center's recreated powder room, visitors can

view artifacts including a cigarette case, lipstick, blush compact, face powder, and comb from the era.

The changing morals and habits of the speakeasy-era also sparked a revolution in modern fashion. The trends reflected a youthful desire to break with the previous generation. Independent women working in factories and offices wanted less formal and constricting clothing; bobbed hair, straight silhouettes, and shorter hemlines became the norm. Two silk tunic-style dresses and an evening dress made of velvet represent women's 1920s fashion in the exhibition. Women's accessories in this section include dress clips and a brooch, a tiara made of tortoiseshell and rhinestones, a fan made of ostrich feathers, and evening sandals. Also featured, a silk cloche style hat, which became a trademark of the 1920s. Men's fashions featured in this section of the exhibition include a tailcoat and trousers with a top hat and oxford-style shoes, as well as the classic fedora that became synonymous with the gangsters of the era.

Product Ingenuity

When Prohibition shut down the alcoholic beverage industry, many entrepreneurs – both legal and illegal – rose up to fill the void for a thirsty nation. Some who had been in the industry, like the vintners and brewers, had to reinvent themselves to stay in business. Others took advantage of the numerous loopholes in the Volstead Act – or simply turned to illegal liquor to meet the steady demand. A wide array of beverage-related products from this time period can be seen in the exhibition.

Soft drinks first gained popularity in the 1800s, but once Prohibition arrived, business boomed. Law-abiding Americans quenched their thirst with these sweet, carbonated beverages, while those skirting the law used them as mixers to hide the taste of low-quality alcohol.

Soda-pop artifacts from this time period include Coca-Cola bottles and six-pack carton, and a Hires root beer dispenser along with an extract bottle and box. Coca-Cola saw its sales triple during Prohibition. Charles Hires, a Philadelphia pharmacist, developed a recipe for root beer from popular colonial brews in the 1800s. Marketed as a wholesome temperance drink, Hires would grow to become one of the most popular brands of soda-pop.

Vintners were left with an abundance of grapes at the start of Prohibition. But the Volstead Act had a key loophole that permitted families to preserve fruit through fermentation. It did not take long for grapes to be “preserved by turning them into wine.”

Dr. Thomas Bramwell Welch developed “Dr. Welch’s Unfermented Wine” in the 1860s. After winning the Methodist Church’s approval to use it as a nonalcoholic communion wine, Welch’s Grape Juice set new sales records during Prohibition. The exhibition features a Welch’s Grape Juice Bottle from 1925.

Unable to make beer legally, many breweries were forced to shut their doors at the start of Prohibition. The biggest breweries found ways to stay in business by reconfiguring their facilities to manufacture other products. Pabst Brewing Company, for example, made Pabst-ett cheese, a carton of which can be seen in the exhibition. Other brewers made ice cream or refrigerated trucks. Breweries also kept their doors open by producing perfectly legal malt syrup. The addition of water, yeast, and time yielded a foamy, alcohol-rich beer for those who wished to brew their own suds at home. An Anheuser-Busch malt syrup can and yeast container can be seen in the exhibition.

Some breweries went through the process of removing alcohol from beer. This “near beer” grew in popularity as states passed dry laws, but demand quickly dropped in the 1920s as many drinkers preferred alcoholic homebrews or beer produced illegally by bootleggers. Anheuser-Busch introduced the nonalcoholic “Bevo” in 1916, which is featured in the exhibition.

Certain distilleries were granted licenses to manufacture liquor for the pharmaceutical trade. Physicians sold prescriptions for a wide variety of ailments; patients could redeem one at the local pharmacy for a pint of liquor every 10 days. Early on, medicinal alcohol was dispensed in dark, unmarked bottles; within a few years, well-known brands were available. Bottles, like the Sam Thompson Old Monongahela Pure Rye Whiskey bottle featured in the exhibition, looked just like their pre-Prohibition versions, except for the words “For Medicinal Purposes Only” printed on the label.

Rumrunners and Bootleggers

From hard cider to moonshine, making alcoholic beverages at home happened long before Prohibition. While the Volstead Act permitted families to make a limited amount of “fruit beverages” like cider or wine, distilling spirits was not allowed. This didn’t stop stills from popping up in basements, apartments, and backwoods across the country. This section of the *American Spirits* exhibition features a still used in the early 1930s by a farmer in North Carolina who manufactured spirits from his excess corn during Prohibition.

Networks to transport illegal alcohol quickly spread across the country. The Coast Guard, in response to the illegal importation of alcohol along the coasts, greatly expanded during Prohibition. The Coast Guard’s efforts to stop this smuggling became the most effective element of federal Prohibition enforcement.

To demonstrate the efforts of the Coast Guard to stop illegal rum running, the Center created a custom two-player video game – complete with wooden boat wheels – where visitors play the role of the Coast Guard trolling the waters of Puget Sound off the coast of Washington state. Puget Sound was the real-life stage of restless races between coast guards and rumrunners, who were smuggling alcohol from British Columbia to Washington State.

This area of the exhibition also showcases the many clever ways individuals disguised alcohol in the form of personal objects. Flasks hidden in a fake book, camera flask, cigar case flask, and a cane with a hidden flask are on display.

Prohibition Enforcement

Before Prohibition, the Treasury Department had been responsible for collecting taxes on beer, wine, and liquor and chasing down those who failed to pay. In 1919, the Volstead Act assigned Prohibition enforcement to a new unit tucked into the Treasury bureaucracy: the Bureau of Prohibition.

Prosecution of those arrested fell to a division of the Justice Department headed by Assistant Attorney General Mabel Walker Willebrandt. Together, these two departments faced a monumental challenge. The White House never gave them much support, and Congress, after passing the Volstead Act, never allocated enough money. The atmosphere was perfect for official corruption on an unprecedented scale.

Featured in this section of *American Spirits* is a federal regulation book from the era given to Prohibition agents with guidelines and forms to implement the Volstead Act. A search warrant from 1927 that was used to enter and search an alleged “saloon” operating in St. Louis,

Missouri, is also on display. At three filing cabinets, visitors can learn about various Prohibition agents and administrators like Eliot Ness, Isidore Einstein, and Daisy Simpson to gain insight into the challenges that these agents faced and the corruption that ran rampant. Ness' signed oath of office from 1926 also is featured in this section. In addition, guests can view a former Prohibition Administrator Badge from 1931 belonging to former Navy Commander John Pennington, the Federal Prohibition Administrator for Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware from 1930 until 1933.

Two large-scale graphics also are featured in this section. A map of the United States shows major bootlegging cities and networks crisscrossing the country, as well as the international imports and shipments that Prohibition agents were tasked with stopping. On an enforcement organizational chart, visitors can learn more about the various federal agencies tasked with investigating and prosecuting Volstead violations and how well – or poorly – they did their jobs.

Reinterpreting the Fourth Amendment

During Prohibition, the Supreme Court issued dozens of decisions relating to its enforcement. Twenty cases involved the Fourth Amendment's protection against unreasonable searches and seizures, dramatically reshaping the way the amendment was interpreted.

One of the most important Fourth Amendment cases arose after federal agents tapped Seattle bootlegger Roy Olmstead's telephone without a warrant, which led to his conviction on a number of charges. Olmstead was the youngest lieutenant on the Seattle police force and one of its most promising officers. After leaving the force, he became the most successful bootlegger in the Pacific Northwest.

The candlestick telephone used by Olmstead to operate his bootlegging empire is featured in this section of the exhibition. Olmstead appealed to the Supreme Court, arguing that the evidence of his telephone conversations used during his trial was inadmissible because its collection violated the Fourth Amendment. The Supreme Court disagreed. In *Olmstead v. United States*, the Court ruled that private telephone communications were no different from casual conversations overheard in a public place. The legality of warrantless wiretapping was not overturned until *Katz v. United States* in 1967.

Organized Crime

Organized crime wasn't a new phenomenon in the 1920s. In most cities, gangs had long controlled such illegal enterprises as gambling, prostitution, and narcotics. But these were strictly local businesses, often consolidated in a part of town known for its illegal ways.

Prohibition, though, required the shipment of large quantities of physical goods from one place to another. Mobsters in one city suddenly needed partners in other places. At the same time, competing gangs fought for control of those same markets. Mob wars were rich material for the newspapers, which splashed pictures of slain mobsters across their front pages. This increase in violent crime contributed to the growing public opposition to Prohibition.

Iron knuckles from gangster Owen "Owney" Madden are on display in this section of the exhibition. Madden made millions bootlegging, gambling, and on nightclub operations, including the infamous Cotton Club. An intake card from Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site shows a 24-years-inmate who was incarcerated for the manufacturing and sale of intoxicating liquor. A reproduction M1921 Thompson "Tommy" Submachine gun on display was a popular weapon for bootleggers and law enforcement alike because of its compact design and ability to fire multiple rounds automatically.

Also featured, the guilty verdict for one of the most infamous gangsters of the era, Al Capone, who was convicted in Chicago in 1931 and sentenced to 11 years in prison for not paying taxes on money earned from his illegal operations. Capone also famously spent a year incarcerated at Eastern State Penitentiary Historical Site for a 1929 charge of gun possession.

The Birth of a National Crime Syndicate

The effort to coordinate bootlegging activities across regions produced one of Prohibition's enduring legacies – the national crime syndicate. Criminals from Chicago, Cleveland, Philadelphia, Newark, and New York City first met in Atlantic City in 1929 to divide up territories, fix prices, and make cross-territorial distribution deals.

Visitors can view a mug shot wall featuring some of the notorious gangsters and criminals of the era, along with their criminal history. Guests also can enter a lineup and have their mug shot taken alongside life-size figures of Al Capone, Lucky Luciano, and Meyer Lansky. A great keepsake, the photos can then be emailed directly to visitors.

SECTION 4: REPEAL THE 18th!

As late as 1930, getting rid of Prohibition was considered almost impossible. No constitutional amendment had ever been repealed. And few believed two-thirds of each house of Congress, as well as the legislatures of 36 of the 48 states, would be able to agree that Prohibition was a failure.

But the devastating effects of the Great Depression changed everything. As unemployment rose, federal income tax revenues plummeted. Taxes on capital gains evaporated altogether. The Congress elected in 1930 became desperate for revenue.

Congress saw hope in a tax – this time, the return of a federal tax on alcohol. By the time Franklin Roosevelt came out for repeal during the 1932 campaign, it was clear that the 18th Amendment was doomed.

Ratifying the 21st

In this section of *American Spirits*, guests can view the official copy of the 21st Amendment congressional resolution and notification from the state of New Jersey. While New Jersey was the last to ratify the 18th Amendment, it became the fifth state to ratify repeal on June 1, 1933. Celebratory images of Americans enjoying the first legal glasses of beer in April 1933 and toasting repeal in December 1933 surround the resolution.

Also in this section, visitors can sit in a 1930s-style theater to view a newsreel created by the Center about repeal. Set in April 1933, it celebrates the return of legal beer and features Michigan as the first state to vote for repeal, while looking forward to the eventual ratification of the 21st Amendment that would come later that year on December 5th.

Happy Days Are Here Again!

On March 16, 1933, the new Congress amended the Volstead Act's definition of "intoxicating" to make beer legal, raising the minimum standard from 0.5 to 3.2 percent alcohol by volume; President Roosevelt signed the "Beer Bill" almost immediately.

On April 7th, when the new law went into effect, the Budweiser Clydesdales made their debut. They began a nationwide marketing tour, including the delivery of a commemorative case of beer to the White House. Visitors can view a Budweiser beer bottle and case from 1933, one of

the first produced by Anheuser-Busch after Congress redefined “intoxicating liquors” to make beer legal.

Other propaganda promoting repeal includes a “Repeal the 18th Amendment, More Beer Less Taxes” handkerchief and a “No Beer, No Work” pin. A “Happy Days Are Here Again” shot glass celebrates the popular theme song from Franklin Roosevelt’s 1932 campaign, which also was used to celebrate the repeal of Prohibition.

SECTION 5: THE LEGACY OF PROHIBITION

In almost every respect imaginable, Prohibition was a failure. It encouraged criminality and institutionalized hypocrisy. It deprived the government of revenue, created a culture of official corruption, and imposed profound limitations on individual rights.

But in one critical respect Prohibition was a success: Americans drank less. Even after repeal, Americans’ per capita alcohol consumption did not return to pre-Prohibition levels until 1973.

The repeal of Prohibition actually made it harder, not easier, to get alcohol. Section 2 of the 21st Amendment returned the regulation of alcohol to the states, and states responded with new laws intended to prevent the lawlessness of Prohibition and the excesses of what came before. Everywhere there were new restrictions on buying, selling, and consuming alcohol: closing times, age limits, Sunday blue laws, and the end of brewery-owned saloons.

Many states were guided by the 1933 reporter *Toward Liquor Control*, which described two methods of regulating alcohol sales – one in which the state issues licenses to private sellers of alcohol, the other in which the state itself controlled alcohol sales. After the repeal of Prohibition, 19 states chose “control,” while the rest chose to license private alcohol sellers. Here, a large United States map highlights Prohibition’s lasting effects in states across the country and how the laws regarding alcohol vary drastically state by state.

American Spirits: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition

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Created by the National Constitution Center and curated by Pulitzer Prize finalist Daniel Okrent

Admission to *American Spirits: The Rise and Fall of Prohibition* is \$17.50 for adults, \$16 for seniors and students, and \$11 for children ages 4-12. Group rates also are available. Admission to the Center’s main exhibition, *The Story of We the People*, including the award-winning theatrical production *Freedom Rising*, is included. For ticket information, call 215.409.6700 or visit www.constitutioncenter.org.

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