



LIBRARY OF VIRGINIA

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Library of Virginia Exhibition Explores

Teetotalers & Moonshiners: Prohibition in Virginia, Distilled

RUNS APRIL 3–DECEMBER 5, 2017

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For Immediate Release

Richmond, Virginia – Virginians imbibed their last legal drink on Halloween night in 1916—more than three years before national prohibition was enacted. Newspapers reported bacchanalian scenes in the Old Dominion’s cities as “wets” drank up and bought out the stock of saloons and bars. Most of the state’s liquor, beer, and wine producers quietly shut down. Many farmers worried that a major part of their livelihood from corn and fruit had disappeared overnight, while supporters of prohibition exulted in the promise of a morally upright “Dry Virginia.” For the next 18 years the state became a laboratory for a grand social experiment that ultimately left many Virginians with a serious hangover—and eventually led to repeal.

The Library of Virginia will tell the story of Virginia Prohibition and its legacy through an exciting exhibition and associated programming. ***Teetotalers & Moonshiners: Prohibition in Virginia, Distilled*** addresses the important and long-lasting effects of Prohibition on commonwealth and America, including

- The prohibition movement as part of a social reform movement
- The economic and social costs of Prohibition, including the closing of businesses and conflict within communities, and the rise of illegal alcohol production and sale as an underground culture and economy
- The role of government in overseeing public health
- Prohibition’s legacy—from NASCAR to the creation of the Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control to the rise of the modern brewing and distilling industry

Installed in the Library’s 1,200 square foot gallery, *Teetotalers & Moonshiners* uses the Library’s deep and compelling collections on this era, from humorous sheet music mocking the absurdities of Prohibition to

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blazing headlines in anti- and pro-liquor newspapers and broadsides. At the core of the exhibition are the records of the state's Prohibition Commission, which record the daily activities of its agents. Key artifacts from the "Moonshine Capital of the World," Franklin County, will also be on display, on loan from the Blue Ridge Institute. Digital interactive components, film clips, and music and recorded narration will document statewide prohibition trends and tell the personal stories of commission agents, bootleggers, and moonshiners.

The exhibition is supported in part by the Virginia Department of Alcoholic Beverage Control and the National Alcoholic Beverage Control Association. The Virginia Foundation for the Humanities and the Virginia Distillers Association have also provided support.

IMAGES AVAILABLE AT

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/ublakbqrf1c8wtj/AAACy6WGpgBy8bk7IDcTw3v5a?dl=0>

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