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For Immediate Release

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Ain't Misbehavin'? The World of the Gangster

April 23, 2016 – October 23, 2016

West Branch, Iowa - The Herbert Hoover Presidential Museum's newest exhibit, *Ain't Misbehavin'? The World of the Gangster*, on display from April 23 – October 23, 2016. Be transported back in time to an era of corruption, gambling, prohibition, jazz music, and gangsters. *Ain't Misbehavin'* explores how Prohibition changed the landscape of the country and gave rise to the gangster world and their illegal activities.

When President Hoover entered the White House in 1929, prohibition was already the law. In 1920 the 18th Amendment was ratified and called for a ban on alcohol sales in one year. There were exceptions made for medical reasons – doctors and pharmacies could dispense small amounts of alcohol. States struggled to enforce prohibition and the federal government was apprehensive to become involved. Street criminals turned into “organizations” and the modern “mob” was born.

You enter the exhibit, *Ain't Misbehavin'? The World of the Gangster* through a recreated Hat Shop. As you pass through the Hat Shop, you'll find yourself in a speakeasy. As you leave the speakeasy out the back door into an alley you discover a butcher shop, café, pharmacy, and a flower shop. Each store is hiding something in their back rooms. Something not quite legal.

Ain't Misbehavin'? The World of the Gangster includes:

Bootleggers

These were people who illegally transported or sold alcohol. During Prohibition, stills could be found everywhere. On display in this section will be stills, whiskey barrels and bottles.

Speakeasy and the Jazz Age

A “speakeasy” was a place which illegally sold alcoholic beverages during Prohibition. A speakeasy could be as simple as a room with two chairs and a bottle, or as complicated as a large club featuring a live show and jazz band. On display in the recreated speakeasy is a trumpet belonging to Louis Armstrong and items of Bix Biederbecke.

MORE

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Gangsters

During the 1920s the term “gangster” was used for two different types of criminals – mobsters and outlaws. Mobsters belonged to and/or ran large organized crime rings. Outlaws were robbers and kidnappers who became national celebrities as a result of their crimes. Among the items featured in this section are two Thompson Machine guns and a Colt 45 associated with the Dillinger Gang.

FBI

In 1924, the FBI assumed responsibility of the national fingerprint collection. Daily they add to their collection of over 50 million prints. New technology at the time of prohibition led to wire-tapping. This part of the exhibit will feature items from the FBI - a fingerprint kit and a phone tapping machine.

Explore the Prohibition Era (1920-1933) with this new exhibit, *Ain't Misbehavin'? The World of the Gangster*, at the Herbert Hoover Presidential Library-Museum in West Branch, Iowa from April 23 – October 23, 2016. Open 9-5 daily and located ¼ mile off Interstate 80 at Exit 254. For more information, call 319-643-5301 or visit the website at: www.hoover.archives.gov.