Dr. Frank Bicknell Series 2019-2020
Wednesday, October 16, 7:30 p.m.
Cook School House 20025 Mack Plaza
Grosse Pointe Woods

The "Detroit/Windsor" Funnel
- The Centennial of the National Prohibition Act -

Image: Socotra House Publishing
Grosse Pointe Historical Society  
Dr. Frank Bicknell Lecture  
Wednesday, October 16, 2019 at 7:30 pm  
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The “Detroit/Windsor Funnel”  
(The Centennial of the National Prohibition Act)

The Eighteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution was ratified in 1919, prohibiting the sale, consumption, & manufacturing of alcoholic beverages. The National Prohibition Act, which became effective on January 16, 1920, defined what constituted an illegal alcoholic beverage and provided federal, state, and local authorities the regulations to enforce the prohibition of alcohol.

With the supply of alcohol cut off, bootleggers turned to Canada, which had no such liquor laws. Smugglers began trafficking bootlegged liquor across the border and into Michigan via the Detroit River and Lake St. Clair, an area which became known as the “Windsor-Detroit Funnel”, as 75% of all the alcohol smuggled into the United States during Prohibition crossed the border through these two waterways.

By 1929, rum running was Detroit’s second largest industry, netting $215 million per year. The Detroit News estimated that there were between 16,000 and 25,000 speakeasies (illegal drinking establishments) operating in the Detroit area.

Joel Stone, Senior Curator of the Detroit Historical Society will present a PowerPoint program relating this fascinating period of Grosse Pointe history.

All Bicknell lectures are free and open to the public.
Joel Stone is the Detroit Historical Society’s senior curator, which oversees the Detroit Historical Museum, Dossin Great Lakes Museum, and a quarter-million artifacts in the City of Detroit’s historical collections. Raised in the Detroit area, Mr. Stone studied journalism, history, archaeology & archival management at the University of Detroit, Wayne State University, and the University College in Cork, Ireland.