

Long Grove History

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Beer and Ice Cream

By Aaron Underwood · Long Grove Historical Society

What food and beverage comes to mind on a hot summer day in July? A cold beer? Some ice cream? You may have heard some trivia about how the Long Grove Village Tavern became an Ice Cream parlor when Prohibition started in 1920. Imagining that today, it would seem to make sense. An ice cream shop would fit right in to our quaint downtown. However, the “family friendly” Village Tavern/Restaurant as we know it today, was something ushered in by the Sayles/Ullrich families in the 1960’s. The Village Tavern of the early 1900’s, and even the crossroads as a whole, would have been a much more adult environment.

The history and use of Ice Cream is closely linked with refrigeration technology. By 1920, it was possible for a business to store ice cream without the use of ice, and soda fountains were gaining in popularity. A few of the major breweries thought the best use of their now obsoleted refrigerated beer trucks was to convert them to transporting ice cream. So they incented their former beer customers to convert to ice cream as well. Going for an ice cream was also something society did in a social setting, so it fit with Tavern culture as well.



**EVERY SIP HELPS
SOMEBODY**

**ANHEUSER-BUSCH,
POST-REPEAL**

The ‘Every Sip Helps Somebody’ campaign — executive, laborer, and farmer all at the harvest.



Initially there were some public health benefits from Prohibition as Alcohol related deaths declined significantly. This was, however, quickly followed by much worse health impacts from various substances passed off as drinkable spirits in alleys and hidey holes. There's a somewhat infamous story of a bootlegger, bribing a chemist to determine the exact content of a rival bootleggers concoction, only to have his chemist come back with the report, "Your horse has diabetes." Eww.

BOOTLEG QUALITY CONTROL

Your horse has diabetes.

Organized crime stepped in to help meet consumer demand. With many of these bootleggers taking up residence here in our neck of the woods, it's easy to imagine that some of our local watering holes probably had some off menu flavors of "ice cream" that tasted and looked a lot like beer.

Enforcement difficulties were mostly insurmountable, but ultimately it was the Great Depression that put the final nail in the Prohibition coffin. The promise of restoring and growing jobs in the brewing industry had a lot of appeal. Annheiser Busch's ad campaign after repeal featured the slogan, "Every Sip Helps Somebody". Not only was it legal to drink again, it was downright patriotic!