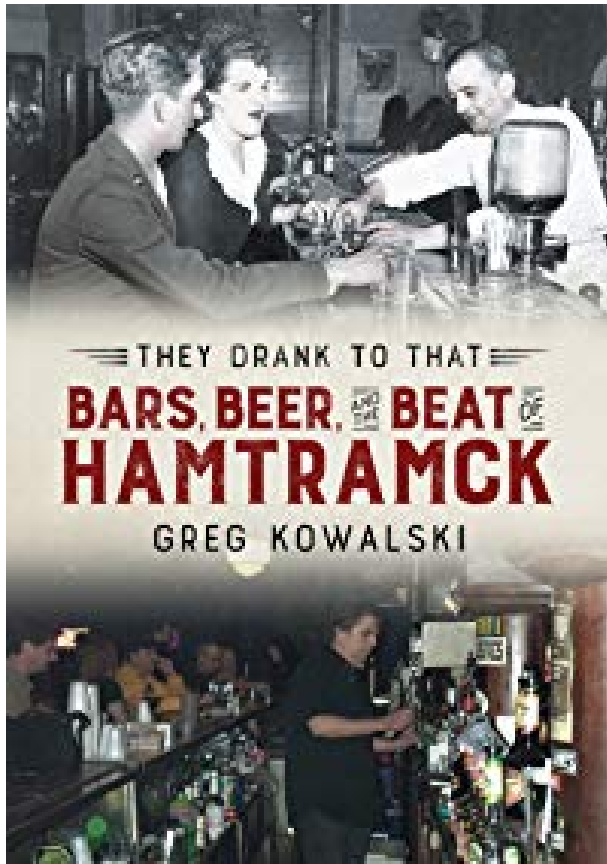


They Drank to That: Bars, Beer and the Beat of Hamtramck



Goodreads Rating:	4.00
ISBN13:	9781634990394
Author:	Greg Kowalski
ISBN10:	1634990390
Pages:	96
Published:	December 11th 2017 by America Through Time

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For decades, the city of Hamtramck, MI, has had a legendary association with bars. Its 2.1 square miles was packed at one point with at least 200 bars, clubs and other places that served alcohol in some form. During Prohibition, there were hundreds of speakeasies that openly flaunted the law and played host to the whole metro area's leading political figures and upstanding citizens--as well as murderers and thieves--among many others. Hamtramck's bar scene seemingly was not like anywhere else. Through the decades bars in Hamtramck have served as social centers, power bases for politicians, dens of crime, and red-hot venues for cutting-edge music. With their pervasive presence, the bars became cornerstones of the community. It's a staggering thought but the vast array of bars that has flourished in the city have made a powerful contribution to its character and even its existence.

Exploring the history of Hamtramck's bars is a fascinating journey that lays out the character of the community--for better and for worse.