

OKLAHOMA!

Land of

Opportunity



Chapter 14:
The Roaring Twenties and the Great
Depression
STUDY PRESENTATION





Section 1: The Roaring Twenties

Section 2: The Great Depression

Section 1: The Roaring Twenties

➤ Essential Question:

- How did Oklahoma's society change during the 1920s?



Section 1: The Roaring Twenties

➤ What terms do I need to know?

- inflation
- martial law
- Ku Klux Klan
- petrochemicals
- barnstormer
- partisan
- indict



Introduction



Social Unrest

- After WWI, demand for manufactured goods, minerals and agricultural products declined
- Soldiers came home and needed jobs
- High demand for goods caused prices to increase
- Workers demanded more money; some organized into unions who called for strikes
- Eastern Oklahoma put under martial law in November 1919 due to miners' strikes
- A "red scare," or fear of communism, occurred after the war
- Ku Klux Klan reorganized (1915): wanted to ensure supremacy of white, native-born Protestants
- Estimated 100,000 members in Oklahoma in 1920
- KKK would terrorize people with beatings, warnings, whippings, lynching, and burning crosses



The Tulsa Race Riot

- Greenwood was prosperous African American city near Tulsa
- May 30, 1921: one of the worst race riots in America in Tulsa
- Whites (many with guns) gathered in town demanding punishment for a young black man who was accused of assaulting a young white girl
- Tensions grew during the evening – white crowds began to harass and chase blacks
- National Guard called in and panicked black citizens sought escape from the city
- White mobs began burning homes and businesses in Greenwood and keeping firefighters away at gunpoint
- Result: twenty-six blacks and thirteen whites killed; hundreds injured; 35 square blocks of Greenwood burned



Growth of the Oil Industry

- After the war, oil prices fell
- Glut of oil caused further price drops until producers cut production
- 1931: Fields in Texas and Oklahoma panhandle and southwest Kansas connected by pipeline to Chicago
- Derricks surrounded Oklahoma City – one of country's richest
- Petrochemical industry began in 1926 creating formaldehyde and alcohols; later made solvents, photographic chemicals, medicines and refrigerants



Other Industries

- Coal production peaked in 1920 – 5 million tons
- Most industries grew during this time, but overproduction on farms caused prices to fall
- Machinery was not a part of most farms until the 1940s



Aviation Takes Off

- Early runways were flat fields or grasslands
- Fort Sill had army airfield before the war
- barnstormers: WWI pilots who did stunt shows and gave rides for a fee
- 1930: 70,000 people through the Tulsa airport
- Curtiss-Southwest Airplane Company, Spartan School of Aeronautics, and Braniff started during this time
- Wiley Post, famous aviator, flew solo around the world in 7 days



“Motoring”

- Moving assembly line helped reduce cost of automobiles
- Sales rose quickly; by 1929 there were 23,000,000 cars
- Congress wanted highway to connect Virginia to California
- Cyrus Avery worked to get this road routed through Tulsa and Oklahoma City – known as Route 66 (U.S. 66) “The Main Street of America”



Life Was Good

- Many fashion fads (raccoon coats and flappers), motion pictures (silent and talkies), and jazz music, increased use of home appliances show that life was good for many
- Most towns had vaudeville and movie theaters
- The invention of radio changed lives by connecting people to information and entertainment even in rural areas
- “Fibber McGee and Molly” was famous radio show
- Will Rogers famous for wild west shows and witty radio and newspaper comedy



Politics

- Mary Alice Robertson first woman elected to U.S. House of Representatives
- Democrats won majority of seats in state legislature and John C. Walton was elected governor in 1922
- Walton was impeached; charged with 22 counts, convicted of 11 and removed from office after only 10 months
- Walton provided free textbooks to students; state prohibited teaching evolution
- 1925: Tennessee's similar law challenged in famous Scopes Trial in which teacher was charged with teaching Darwin's theory of evolution



Section 2: The Great Depression

➤ Essential Question

- How did the Great Depression affect lives in Oklahoma?



Section 2: The Great Depression

- What terms do I need to know?
 - Great Depression
 - credit
 - stock market
 - New Deal
 - collective bargaining
 - shelterbelt



Introduction



Trouble Brews

- Factors contributing to the Great Depression:
- consumers rushed to purchase the latest household items; spending on credit increased
 - international trade decreased because of tariffs (taxes)
 - growth of stock market increased wealth of many; stocks were purchased with the expectation that they could be sold at a higher price
 - October 1929: stockholders began to lose confidence in their purchases; many began to sell at any price; this caused stock market prices to tumble, eventually creating a panic
 - Tuesday, October 29, 1929: “Black Tuesday” – panic selling caused many Americans to lose all their money, many were so far in debt, they would never be able to recover
 - Due to lack of money, purchasing slowed – factories had to slow or stop production because there were no buyers for their goods
 - People withdrew savings from banks, but some banks had no money to give due failed loans – 5,000 banks closed by 1933



Oklahoma's Plight

- Low and falling prices for oil and farm crops hurt the economy of Oklahoma
- Cotton cost more to grow than it could be sold for
- Unemployment was at an all-time high



“Alfalfa Bill”

- 1930: William “Alfalfa Bill” Murray (D) elected governor
- Emergency food and free seed provided
- Oklahoma Tax Commission worked to reduce state debt
- National Guard called out to close oil wells until prices rose by controlled production



The New Deal

- 1932: Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected president
- He assembled a “brain trust” to create job programs and improve the economy – laws passed were called a “New Deal” for America
- CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps): camps where young men could get a job constructing buildings, trails, parks, bridges, and planted trees
- PWA (Public Works Administration): built roads, buildings and other public works
- FERA (Federal Emergency Relief Administration): federal money for state and local assistance for citizens
- FDIC (Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation): insured people’s money deposited in banks
- AAA (Agricultural Adjustment Act): worked to help farmers
- REA (Rural Electrification Administration): brought electric power to rural homes and farms
- SEC (Securities and Exchange Commission): regulated stocks and the stock market to avoid another crash
- FHA (Federal Housing Administration): helped to provide low-income housing
- Indian Reorganization Act restored common tribal land and tribal self-government rights



The Second New Deal

- By 1935, labor unions were stronger with collective bargaining laws
- Social Security Act provided for retirement and old-age benefits
- WPA: largest program of New Deal - included public art and writing



The Dust Bowl

- Early 1930s, drought occurred in southeastern U.S. and spread west
- Western Kansas, southeast Oklahoma, and the Oklahoma Panhandle were worst hit
- Native grasses had been removed to make way for plowing for farms
- Strong winds blew away topsoil in great dust storms
- April 14, 1935: “Black Sunday” – dark clouds of dust covered much of the state
- 1936-1940: over 309,000 people left the state
- John Steinbeck’s *Grapes of Wrath* written about conditions in the state
- Woody Guthrie: wrote many songs and poems about life in the region



Life Goes On

- 1934: E.W. Marland elected governor – started Highway Patrol
- 1938: Leon Phillips elected governor – worked to get state out of debt and mobilized for WWII
- Will Rogers and Wiley Post killed in air crash in Alaska
- Shelterbelts built to block winds and efforts made to conserve soils
- Denison and Grand River Dams constructed
- Crime increased with poverty: Pretty Boy Floyd, Bonnie & Clyde, Ma Barker, were famous outlaws
- Jazz grew in popularity: Count Basie Orchestra among those with Oklahoma roots
- Weather problems continued: drought, floods, very cold weather and violent tornadoes



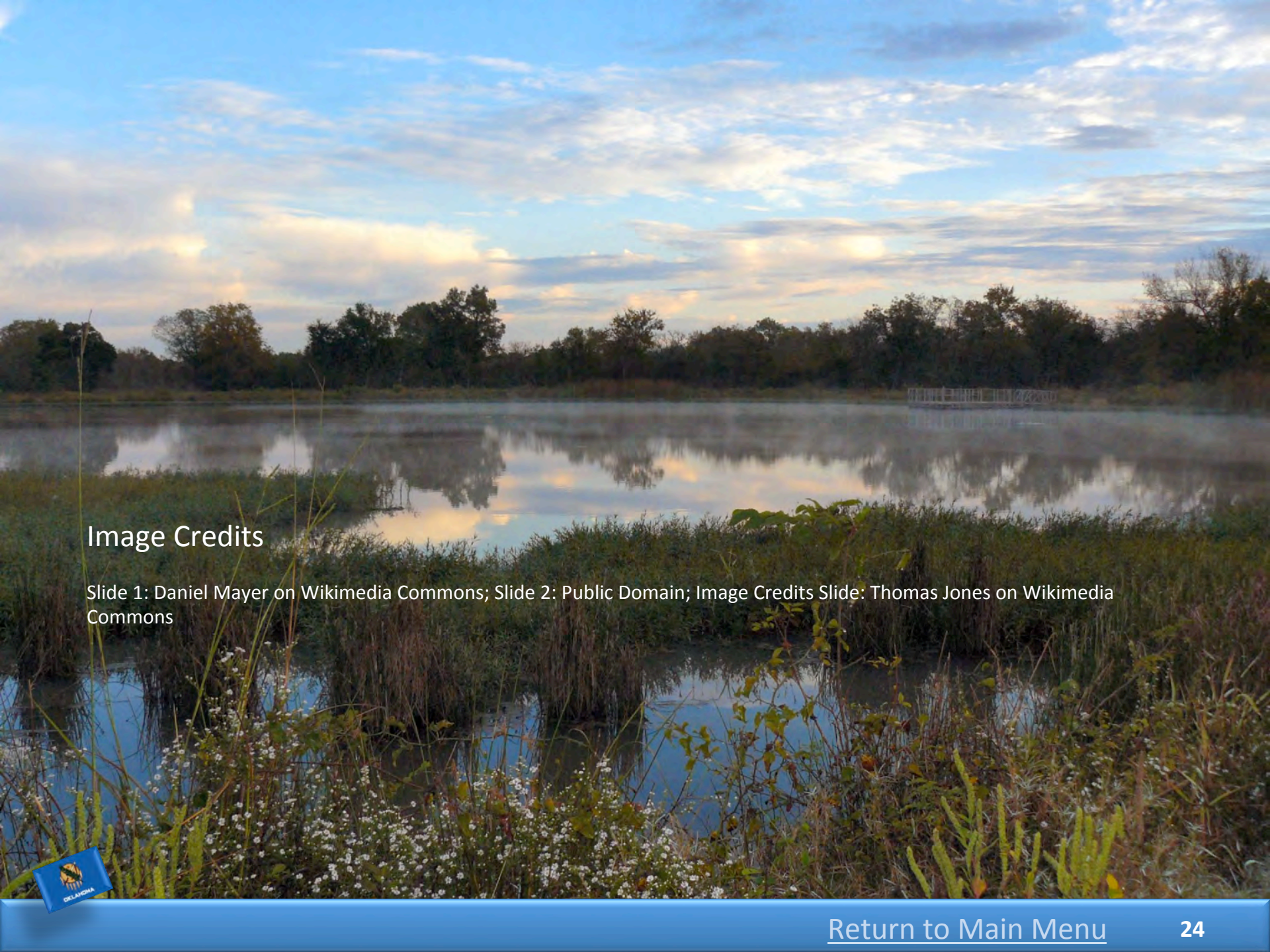


Image Credits

Slide 1: Daniel Mayer on Wikimedia Commons; Slide 2: Public Domain; Image Credits Slide: Thomas Jones on Wikimedia Commons

