

OK, suffer me one more poker cruise story. <g> Nothing to do with Illinois or Indiana so scroll down if you don't like stories. <g>

On the BB this past week Charles Kaplan has been selling the Club Cleopatra chips from Trinidad & Tobago. Nice chips at a good price. The post reminded me of one of the 3 poker cruise we did to those islands.



1 cleo att2

I played a little blackjack to get these chips. I won \$100 plus the \$1, two colors both blue and pink of the \$2.50, \$5, and a \$25 chip.



chip12101 att2

There are many little casinos there. Most are in regular houses and do not open until 8:00PM or later. It is tough to get chips from them. There are a couple bigger casinos downtown but table games usually not open in the daytime, only slots.

I organized a fishing trip with 4 of my poker crew, and we got a cab to search for a boat. We found a beautiful cabin cruiser with 2 engines. Two engines is a good thing, saves losing an engine at sea and miss our sailing time. <g>

Off we go. About 45 minutes out, we came upon a sea of garbage “as far as the eye could see” in all directions. We were amazed and appalled at the same time. There were plastic bags full of garbage, plastic bottles, almost any type of floating garbage you can imagine, before our eyes. The captain explained the island dump was in what they called a “wash” on one side of the island. The tides cleaned out the wash. Garbage problem on the island, “Solved.” We were heart sick at what we saw. Somewhere near the South Pole, I’m betting there is an island of garbage.

Four of us went inside the cabin and one of my dealers stayed on the rear of the boat looking at the mess as we steamed through it. All of a sudden there was an explosion that rocked the boat. What happened?

We looked out for the dealer on the back of the boat. Still standing there. He turned around slowly to look at us. His eyes were as big as saucers and he was covered in oil and whatever else was in the sea. <g> Oil was dripping off of him. <g> Sad sight to see but we all broke out laughing anyway. <g>

The captain said we had lost an engine but no problem the other one appeared to be OK. I said yes there is a problem head back to the dock.

So no fishing that day but we had a good (our friend covered in oil looking like a lost puppy) but sad story (a sea of garbage) for a life time of telling. <g>

Moral: Stories and memories can be both good and bad at the same time.

Enough of that:

Sometimes our great reference books are wrong. It just happens. Hopefully TGT authors will see this post.

I got this chip in 1999 from Allan Meyers.

TGT says:

88 Club

Jeffersonville, In

Mold: SM-KEY

Owner: Buster Wortman

Opened 1940's-Closed 1940's

I say:

Club 88

East St Louis, IL

Mold: SM-KEY

Owner: Frank "Buster" Wortman

Opened 1950-Closed 1962



chip7852 att2

Over the years I have seen various spellings of Wortman's name and various first names such as Sam, Bill and Frank in relationship to different chips and illegal clubs. I doubted the Jeffersonville attribution but never really did much research.

BC Wills chips are tough as there are no records to help us. They were one of the most prolific producers of chips, of the old gambling equipment distributors. I was told Howard Hertz found the BC Wills heirs two weeks after they sent the records to the city dump. That could have been the biggest loss our hobby ever suffered.

A few weeks ago Paul Bender once again mentioned the 88 Club chip and he doubted it was Jeffersonville in an email exchange concerning the FAG Hub mold chip I posted last week. I decided to look into it. Paul and I had talked about the 88 Club chip several times over the years.

I knew there was a Frank "Buster" Wortman from East St Louis, IL associated with illegal clubs from past research.

I have much more on old Buster that will be in a future "Illegal Of The Day" post. He was called before the Kefauver Commission.

Enter a Friend Of The Hobby:

Club 88

I didn't come across any info on a Club 88 or Sam "Buster" Wortman in Jeffersonville or Louisville. There may have been a place and a person by that name there, but I didn't find anything.

I'm wondering if this getting confused with Frank "Buster" Wortman who was the gambling boss of the East St Louis area in the 40's and 50's?? There was a gambling operation called "Club 88" which was located just north of the East St Louis city limits which ran as early as 1950 and late as 1962.

Not a lot but enough for me. Sorry you Indiana boys, I gave you a plus one in my FAG Illegal Of The Day post, this one makes you even. <g>