

Putting ID's to chips without some kind of info from distributors records is always a little iffy. Both Ed Hertel and I feel comfortable with this one but there is some room for error. Valparaiso, IN (population 32,000 in 2012) was not a big hub of illegal casinos in the 1950's-60's. As stated in previous "Illegal Of The Day" posts the Mom and Pop joints in small town America was the "Heart and Soul" of the illegal chips that we collect.

Westen Charles bought The Club chips on ebay. The seller was in Valparaiso, IN but had no further information on the chips that he had purchased locally.



The Club Tavern1att2

After research"

The Club Tavern

Al Steele

Valparaiso, In

From Ed:

It's not easy sniffing for a club named "The Club". Sheesh.

The closest I could find was something called "The Club Tavern" from the late 1950s (see attached). I'm not sure when the wave mold was done. The chips look pretty pristine (or maybe they were just exceptional examples from my buddy Westen). Could they be 50 years old? I'm not sure how long The Club Tavern was around. What do you think?

My note: If the feds had not raided the 6 joints for not buying Federal Gambling Tax Stamps, we may never have known they had gambling. *vbg* Small town and small joints.

1958

Six Tavern Owners Fined

HAMMOND — The owners of six Valparaiso taverns, arrested Nov. 8, 1958, by Internal Revenue agents on charges of operating a gambling device (pinball machines) without a federal tax stamp, were fined Tuesday by Judge Luther Sweigert in Hammond Federal court.

Each owner, upon his plea of guilty, was fined \$200 plus costs. The costs ranged from \$37 to \$39. There were no sentences.

A spokesman for the U. S. District Attorney's office stated today difference in cost probably resulted from mileage turned in by the arresting agents.

The spokesman also stated that the machines taken by Internal Revenue agents during the raid are still being held. The district attorney's office stated that they expect to receive a court order concerning the machines.

"They probably will be confiscated," it was stated.

Continuance Granted

Fined Tuesday were owners of the Brown Derby, Alibi Inn, Sportsman club, Franklin House, Ten Pin Tap, and Northside Tap.

An attorney appeared for Al Steele, who was one of the owners of the Club Tavern when the arrests were made, and asked for a continuance, which was granted. Steele is reportedly in Minnesota with his carnival at this time.

The Club tavern is now under new ownership.

The District Attorney reported that he has been informed that all of the tavern owners now have purchased the gambling tax stamps.

The Club Tavern2

If the chips didn't have such a generic name I would feel a lot better about putting the chips and club together. However, it is pretty nice that we got a hit so quick when I started looking in Valparaiso. I don't have any reason to question Westen's location he found them in so I'd probably be in the 3/5 comfort range. Ed

My Note: Ed asks if the Wave mold is 50 years old.

From Robert Eisenstadt's great site on chip molds.

http://www.antiquegamblingchips.com/molddesignindex_site.htm

WAVE CRESTS (a/k/a WAVE) -- 24 waves. (The mold is shown on this page because the wave crests look like the letter "C.") 1930's-1940's. Bowman Equipment Co. ("Bowman Excel Speed" appears on one of my advertising distributor chips), Chicago IL. (I found an identical chip [but with 23 waves] in a c.1961 Evans Park and Carnival Device Corp. {successors to H C Evans & Co.} catalog.).....

The answer is "Yes." The Burt Co in Maine made the largest part on the old clay chips. The records we have from Burt are far from complete. We can find no record of sales to the Bowman Equipment Co nor any mention of the Wave mold. Many of the old molds were rented by distributors. Once a company went out of business anyone could have used the mold.

My note: Not quite the "quality" of ID we strive for but as stated "small towns" are tough. Many had pinball machines, satellite sport betting, punch boards, pull tabs, and card games. We had all but the sport betting at the Mustang in Newport when I owned it in the 1970's. We did not buy the tax stamp and never heard from any feds nor local cops about it. My customers went up the street to bet sports.
vbg