

Preview of things to come. Illinois, Cicero, Al Capone, etc.

Anyone care to guess the ID on the BC chip? The 3 that got them at the convention can not guess as I told them my overnight findings. <g> Take a look at the Taylor record and take your best shot.



Enough of that:

I got the cloverleaf chip a few weeks ago from the same husband and wife that had the Spur Inn chips from Karnac, IL, on ebay. Spur Inn was the subject of "Illegal Of The Day-Illinois 13," posted on 5/28/11 Robert & Nancy Burfield of Ozark, MO ([mobanx2@yahoo.com](mailto:mobanx2@yahoo.com))

They have some Indiana cloverleaf's for sale if you need one.

In my "Illegal Of The Day-Kentucky 11" I posted on 1/23/11, I told the story of area between Evansville, IN and Henderson, KY known as "The Strip." Kentucky 11 had the story of the KY side of "The Strip."

Only a bridge and the Ohio River separated the many illegal gambling joints along "The Strip." The Estes Kefauver Commission closed down both sides.

And now "The Rest Of The Story."

Actually I think the story of "The Strip" will be never ending <g>  
As you will see we still have many more chips from there to find.

Enough of that:

Indiana: The Strip.

Club Trocadero  
Clarence M Wood  
Evansville, IN  
Symbol – Cloverleaf  
Route 41 – at Evansville, IN - Henderson, KY Bridge.

Cloverleaf chips delivered in 1942



trocadero1

**CLOVER LEAF—Club Trocadero**

Clarence M. Wood, a Kentucky native, died at Henderson, KY in 1981 age 74. The Club Trocadero was located in the area between Evansville, IN and Henderson, KY known as “the Strip. Wood was considered the boss gambler of this area in the 1940’s and his Club Trocadero was considered to be the premier night club. Oswald Coomes, who operated the Kentucky Tavern in Henderson at the time, told a reporter in 2007: “Everybody knew that Clarence Wood controlled everything. What they didn’t know, although a lot of them suspected, was that he was paying everyone from the governor on down.” The Trocadero reportedly had a reserved spot in their parking lot marked “sheriff.”

Note: No surprise the sheriff was welcomed and had his own parking spot. <g>

Wood also owned a place called “The Dells” which was considered a more rough and rowdy place. It was at the Dells that Wood killed a man in 1942. A bartender at the Dells having stayed long after closing and being severely inebriated was arguing with other Dells employees. Wood told him to shut-up and go home. The guy continued arguing. Wood told him again. The guy then pulled a gun and yelling “I’m going to blow your damned brains out” fired a shot at Wood and missed. Wood pulled his gun and put a bullet in the guy’s head. Three days later these lucky four-leaf clover chips were shipped to Wood:

Note: “Three days later these lucky four-leaf clover chips were shipped to Wood.” Not so lucky for the bartender. The world moved on pretty fast, during “The Era Of The Illegals.” <g>

Name <u>CLARENCE WOODS</u>				SPECIAL MONOGRAM				
Address <u>CLUB TROCADERO</u>								
Town <u>EVANSVILLE</u>		State <u>IND.</u>						
Per .....								
Amount	Color	Initials Both Sides	Style Type	Initials One Side	Other Side	Style Type	Monogram Color	Date Shipped
<u>1600</u>	<u>LT. BLUE</u>	<u>SPEC. DIE</u>					<u>GOLD</u>	<u>9-25-42</u>
<u>320</u>	<u>BLACK</u>	<u>"</u>					<u>GOLD</u>	<u>9-25-42</u>

Trocadero2att2

These sent to Wood a year earlier (443 Lincoln Park Drive was Wood’s residential address):

Name: Clarence Woods SPECIAL MONOGRAM  
 Address: 443 Lincoln PK Drive  
 Town: EVANSVILLE State: IND  
 Per: SOME

*Dolls*

Amount	Color	Initials Both Sides	Style Type	Initials One Side	Other Side	Style Type	Monogram Color	Date Shipped
4000	Pink	yes	Spec				Silver	7-18-41

Trocadero3att2

I need this chip. Cough it up if you have a trader.

A few more chip orders sent to the Trocadero:

Note: Looks like Wood got himself a new front man, Durant Axton.

Name: DURANT AXTON SPECIAL MONOGRAM  
 Address: 21 So. E. First St. 40 Kellys  
 Town: EVANSVILLE State: IND.  
 Per: Harp 40 KELLYS KETTLE

CLUB TROCADERO \$2500 \$100  
\$100

Amount	Color	Initials Both Sides	Style Type	Initials One Side	Other Side	Style Type	Monogram Color	Date Shipped
700	DK. Blue	yes	spec				Gold	6-3-40
1600	Lt. Green			spec	\$1.00	SMALL	"	"
700	LAVENDER			"	\$5.00	SMALL	"	"
3000	Lt. Green			"	\$100	BLOCK	"	7-8-41
1600	Choc	"	"				Gold	3-23-43
600	Black	"	"				"	" " "
300	Grey	"	"				"	3-23-43
300	"	"	"				"	6-30-43
1400	Grey	"	"				Gold	7-14-43
	(over)							

Trocadero4att2

I need this chip. Cough it up if you have a trader.

Name <u>DURANT Axton</u>					SPECIAL MONOGRAM			
Address <u>Club Trocadero Evansville, IN</u>								
Town _____ State _____								
Per _____								
Amount	Color	Initials Both Sides	Style Type	Initials One Side	Other Side	Style Type	Monogram Color	Date Shipped
1800	Red	Club Trocadero	Open	SPEED			Gold	2-26-46
1400	Red	Dollar Club	"		"		"	10-21-44
1500	LAV	Club Trocadero	"		"		"	7/17/45
700	Red	"	"		"		"	7-26-45
800	Black	"	"		"		"	7-26-45

Trocadero5att2

I need this chip. Cough it up if you have a trader.

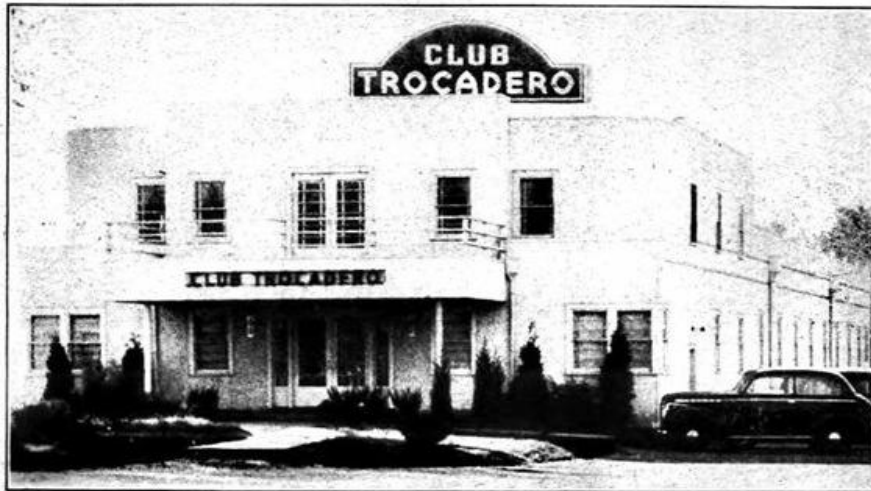
NAME <u>Durant Axton</u>					SPECIAL MONOGRAM			
Address <u>40 Club Trocadero</u>								
Town <u>Henderson</u> State <u>Ky.</u>								
Per <u>T checker</u>								
Amount	Color	Initials Both Sides	Style Type	Initials One Side	Other Side	Style Type	Monogram Color	Date Shipped
14	Red	PK					Gold	12-12-50
25	OK Blue	PK	script				Gold	12-12-50
5	White	PK					Blue	12-12-50

Trocadero6att2

I need this chip. Cough it up if you have a trader.

The Trocadero opened in the late 30's and closed in the early 50's. The structure which housed the club was destroyed by a fire in 1990.

an ad from 1942:



# **CLUB TROCADERO**

On Route 41 at Evansville-Henderson Bridge

Featuring Name Bands and  
Floor Shows Nightly

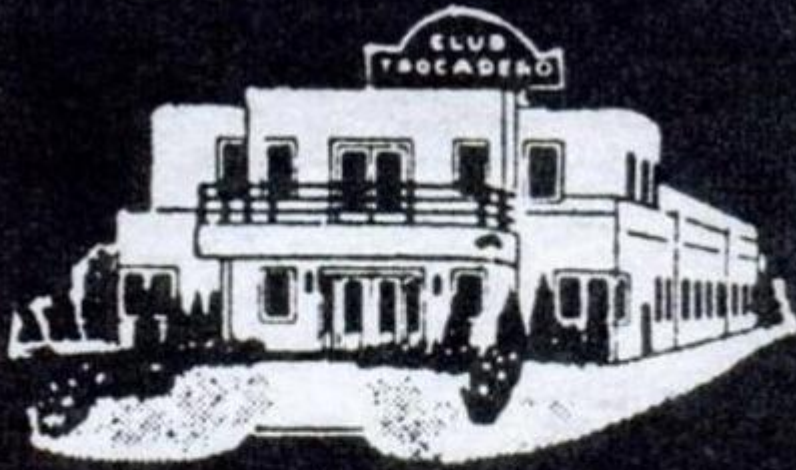
Always Serving Fine Foods  
and Drinks

**Phone 2-0111**

**Evansville, Ind.**

Trocadero7att2

another ad:



*Club  
Trocadero*

ON U. S. 41

At Ohio River Bridge

P. O. Box 222 — Phone 2-0111

Henderson, Ky.    Evansville, Ind.

Trocadero8att2

Here's a 1993 article from the Evansville Courier which describes both the Trocadero and Dells:

The Trocadero flourished there from 1939 until 1951. Owned by Clarence Wood, the stucco building featured big-name bands. The first floor included a dance hall, hardwood floors and a mahogany bar. Slot machines finished in mahogany lined one wall.

A red-carpeted stairway led to the second story gambling area. The basement was for high-stakes games. Employees all wore ties.

"It was plush," Dietze admitted.

The Trocadero was a stark contrast to Wood's other establishment in "no-man's land," a shabby, bouncy club called The Dells.

"That was the joint where the trouble was going on," Dietze said. "The Troc was for the nice folks, the Dells for the crumbs."

Irma Dietze, his wife, remembers being inside the Troc. But not The Dells. "No, Lord, no," she said.

"Decent people wouldn't go to The Dells," the minister said.

John Payne, an Evansville historian, is a trifle more charitable toward The Dells.

"It was kind of a shotgun building," Payne said. "It lacked every bit of the glamour of the Trocadero. To put it into the vernacular that we would normally place it, it was a dive.

"It was ramshackle. It was adequate. It was a place to drink."

"I was in The Dells one time. Not for gambling. It was New Year's Eve and the place was so jammed up, the only reason I believe that everybody was not flat on the floor from drinking was because it was too crowded, there was no place to fall."

Trocadero9att2

Sounds like what KY people would describe when talking about Beverly Hills and comparing it to Screw Andrew's old Sportsman Club before Frank "Chin" Conforti and Danny Andrews burned it down for the insurance. Chin was a friend for 45 years and had many stories to tell. He left the fire without eyebrows when the device went off early. <g> He was Screw's nephew.

Stories about "The Era Of The Illegals" repeat over and over all across the country. Most stories could be adapted to a dozen different cities or states with only a name change or two. I love the history and never get tired of collecting it.

I think and also hope all collectors of illegal chips feel the same about the history.