

This is going to take awhile. If you are not an avid collector of Illinois illegals you probably won't wade through it. <g> This post chronicles 8 years of various city/county and state officials including a future presidential candidate, saying they closed the joint. <g>

This is only a small part of the info available on the joint, that's out there. I only sent for more info because there was a chip order for 34,000 T mold chips. That equals a BIG BIG BIG illegal operation. As you can see there was also chips delivered from B C Wills on the Skey mold. Geez, I wish we had the BC Wills records. <g>

The gambling boss from E St Louis, Buster Wortman was involved with the Hyde Park Club. He was a silent partner in the Hyde Park Club. He has been featured in several other "Illegal Of The Day" posts and will return in a future post.

And, once again the Shelton brothers appears in an "illegal Of The Day" post. If it had to do with illegal gambling in southern Illinois, they were involved. You remember them. Poor dirt farmers that ruled a southern Illinois booting legging empire, with a bloody hand. Retired then unretired to rule the illegals of southern Illinois.

The last article in this post tells about the Shelton's being the cause of a 1930 closure of the Hyde Park Club by threatening the joint for a payoff. Per an article below the joint was grossing 6.5 million a year.

It also tells us the Shelton's were convicted bank robbers.
Will wonders never cease? <g>

One of the Hyde Park Club chips is featured in a 1950 Life Magazine story below. It is a 50¢ chip. Anyone out there have one of them?

Enough of that:

Hyde Park Club
John P. Connor
826 Main St
Venice, IL
1920's – 50's



17043 att2

I also have a double stamped grey \$1. Thank you Mike Vulvo.

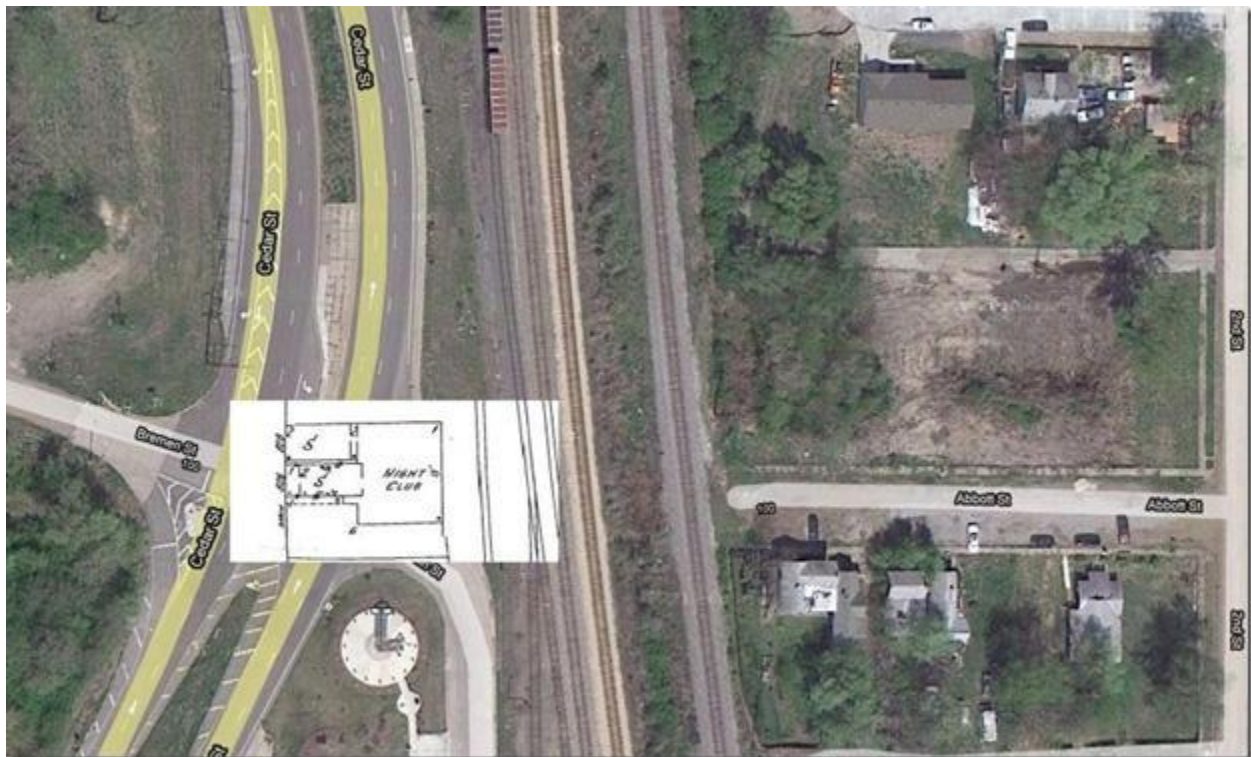
Enter a "Friend of the hobby:

JPC

The Hyde Park Club in Venice had been around for a couple of decades when these chips were ordered. It was a very well known and patronized club which for many years made hay for political candidates who seemed to be continually trying to plug-up this hole of gushing cash.

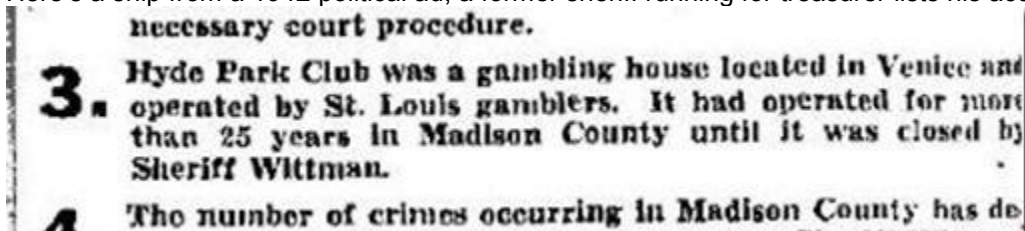
One of the proprietors of the club when the chips were ordered was John P. Connor—I assume it's his initials on the chips. Connor was a native of St. Louis and a son of an Irish born saloon keeper there (Connor was himself a saloon keeper there). Connor died at St. Louis in 1957 age 73; at the time of his death he was a resident of Festus, MO.

The building which housed the address no longer exists. The entire block and street have been obliterated and altered to such a degree that I had to superimpose a snip from an old map onto a current aerial to place its location:



JPC1 att2

Here's a snip from a 1942 political ad; a former sheriff running for treasurer lists his accomplishments:



JPC2 att2

Here is a chip order from 1943 after Sheriff Wittman claims he closed it. <g>

Name <i>Hyde Park Club</i>					SPECIAL MONOGRAM <i>H.P.C.</i>				
Address <i>Main Street</i>									
Town <i>Venice</i> State <i>Lee</i>									
Per _____									
Amount	Color	Initials Both Sides	Style Type	Initials One Side	Other Side	Style Type	Monogram Color	Date Shipped	
<i>100</i>	<i>Choc</i>	<i>H.P.C.</i>	<i>spec</i>				<i>Gold</i>	<i>3.4.43</i>	

I NEED ONE OF THESE! Should be T molds. Cough it up if you have a trader. <g>
Picked these up in February 2011. Exact match to Taylor T molds in above record. In my opinion there is no doubt they are Hyde Park Club chips.



Three years later in 1945 a newspaper editorializes about the accomplishments of the State's Attorney:

Hyde Park Club at Venice has been a blot on Madison County. Because it was within the corporate limits of a municipality, and under the jurisdiction of local officials, the county prosecutor withheld action. When Hyde Park gained a new notoriety, recently, with disclosure of wrong connections, the state's attorney acted. A man identified as operator of the club was fined, the club was closed—and, in the words of the state's attorney, it will remain closed.

JPC3 Att2

State's Attorney Burton said nothing in advance about Evergreen Gardens—he let others talk, then he acted. About Hyde Park, he was silent—then he acted. His actions have spoken louder than the few words he spoke after acting in each case—Evergreens will NOT run; Hyde Park will REMAIN closed.

JPC4 att2

OOPS!!!!!!!!!! <g>

A few months later over 34,000 chips were delivered:

Amount	Color	Initials Both Sides	Style Type	Initials One Side	Other Side	Style Type	Monogram Color	Date Shipped
7400	Gray	JPC \$1.00	Open				Gold	11-6-45
1,000	Green	JPC \$1.00	"				"	11-6-45
4600	Gray	JPC \$1.00	"				"	11-13-45
5400	"	JPC \$1.00	"	No Charge			Yellow	3-25-47
4600	"	"	"	"	"		"	3-28-47
2000	"	"	"	"	"		"	3-29-47
4000	"	"	"				"	4-22-47
1000	"	"	"				"	5-12-47
2300	Red	JPC \$1.00	"				Gold	6-10-48
2300	"	"	"	Returned & Cancelled				7- -48

SPECIAL MONOGRAM
J.P.C. J.P.C.
50¢ 50¢ \$7.00

JPC2 Taylor

In 1947 the Hyde Park Club opened up a second, swankier location a few doors down at 814 Main St.:

Hyde Park Club To Open New Place

Venice, Ill. (IP)—Class distinction will rear its ugly head in Venice bookie circles tomorrow.

The Hyde Park club's 'luxe new handbook, gleaming with glass brick and chrome fittings, is scheduled to open with a firm \$5 floor on the horse bets.

"Peanut bettors" are barred from the swank structure and must stick to the old book—a plain frame building.

JPC5 att2

J. P. Connor and Hyde Park sued in 1948:

Hyde Park Club Sued for Losses

Another of a series of gambling suits presented in the Madison county circuit court during recent months was filed this morning. "Hyde Park" located in Venice and probably the largest gambling place in Southern Illinois was named as defendant. The suit names John P. Connor, doing business as Hyde Park, as defendant. It has long been said that a number of persons own various percentages of interests in the establishment.

The plaintiffs are William E. Selig and Maurine G. Selig. Neither their home address nor relationship is mentioned in the court records. The papers state that the losses are from their joint funds. They seek a judgment for \$8895 plus the costs of the suit.

The court files state that Connor is a resident of Venice and that he has been owner and operator for many years. The papers state the gambling establishment is commonly designated as "Hyde Park" and is operated to induce the public to play games of chance.

"Black jack" and "craps" are listed as the two games. The plaintiffs state that their losses were during a period between Dec. 11, 1947, and May 25, 1948. The suit is brought under an Illinois law which permits a loser to sue if losses are \$10 or more and if the loser fails to sue, another citizen may file for treble the amount of losses with one-half going to the county and the other to the person who sues.

JPC6 att2

My note: At last! The Guv steps in! <g> I wonder if it was still open when Adlai ran for president?
On May 12, 1950 Illinois Governor Adlai Stevenson ordered the Illinois State Police to raid Hyde Park:

State Raids Put Lid On Madison County Gaming

Statement by Governor on Raids Against Hyde Park and '200 Club'

Following is the text of a statement issued by Gov. Adlai Stevenson in connection with the raids Friday afternoon against the racing handbooks of Hyde Park club in Venice and the "200 Club" at Madison:

"I have today, in association with Attorney-General Ivan A. Elliott, used the state police against commercialized gambling in Madison county."

"For more than a year, Attorney-General Elliott and I have attempted to stop commercialized gambling by several methods. We have found our direct talks with local officials of offending counties the most effective method."

"Because it is a local responsibility, commercialized gambling should be suppressed locally. Local authorities have co-operated with us in many cases. In others, we have been successful only temporarily or in part, or not at all. On the whole, the results have been gratifying. Commercialized gambling is at the lowest ebb in Illinois in many years."

"I have stated repeatedly that the state would intervene if necessary in cases where commercialized gambling persists in spite of all our efforts. Hence today's raids. The evidence is being turned over to the state's attorney."

"The state police will be used again if need be to stop persistent, defiant violators although the force is still in process of reorganization and has all it can do to patrol the highways, enforce the truck weight laws and discharge its regular duties."

"But Illinois is not and must not be a gambling state. The local citizenry and their elected officials can stop commercialized gambling with its attendant corruption and lawlessness. I hope they will, and that Illinois will not contribute further to the abolition of local government and local responsibility."

State Police Use Gaming Charges Is Rare in Raids Filed Against 16

When uniformed highway patrolmen, led by state officials, raided the 200 Club in Madison and the Hyde Park establishment at Venice Friday afternoon, it was the first time in more than ten years that Illinois state police have been used in gambling raids.

Harry Curtis, chief of the state police, said Saturday that the drastic action should "put the fear of God" into gamblers in every part of the state.

"At least it would me, if I were in their shoes," Curtis added. He said state police had never been used in a gambling raid in the last 12½ years when John C. Kennedy, Peoria was attorney-general of Illinois.

The raids Friday were the climax of 18 months of efforts by Gov. Adlai Stevenson and Attorney-General Ivan A. Elliott to wipe out gambling by other methods. Stevenson and Elliott, who campaigned partly on the gambling issue in 1932, had been urged many times to use highway patrolmen to stamp out gambling. They hesitated, however, because they felt the problem was primarily one for local authorities.

But Stevenson said that the state will "intervene if necessary" when commercialized gambling persists. "Personally, I hate to see local government abolished."

The governor and Elliott tried other methods, chief of which was having "heart-to-heart" talks with officials of counties where gambling was widespread. The governor said this worked in many cases.

"In others, we have been successful only temporarily or in part or not at all," Stevenson said in a formal statement published elsewhere in today's Intelligencer. He repeated his pledge to intervene if necessary where "commercialized gambling persists in spite of all our efforts," and said this was the reason for the Madison county raid.

Whether Stevenson and Elliott would find it necessary to use state police in that manner again was speculation. But the governor warned that the police "will be used again if need be to stop persistent, defiant violators."

He said "Illinois is not and must not be a gambling state."

Political observers said scores of handbooks, dice games and huge parties being business in other counties were sure to close in a "wait and see" gesture.

The raids on Hyde Park and the 200 Club were carried out with utmost secrecy. Selected troops from other sections of the state

Governor Takes Hand in Affairs After Pleas Fail

Racing Handbooks of '200 Club' and Hyde Park First Targets

Commercialized gambling operations in Madison county ceased abruptly, and wholesale shutdowns of similar establishments in Southern Illinois were predicted Saturday, after more than 50 state troopers closed the racing handbooks of Hyde Park club at Venice and the "200 Club" in Madison Friday afternoon.

The surprise action, ordered by Gov. Adlai Stevenson, was carried out without advance notice to Madison county officials and caught the gamblers unawares.

Both raids were made with search warrants issued by Henry P. Bowers, Alton justice of the peace, upon complaint of Norman J. Lee, chief investigator for the Illinois Bureau of Investigation.

An estimated 500 customers were in the Hyde Park establishment and approximately 200 were in the 200 Club handbooks parties. The customers were released after questioning. Some of the gaming equipment was confiscated as evidence.

The bookmaking cases are expected to be laid before the May term circuit court grand jury, scheduled to be impaneled by Judge R. W. Griffith on Monday, May 15.

Lee and Assistant Attorney General Harold G. Talley, Alton, led the raid on the 200 Club, while simultaneously another squad of state patrolmen descended on Hyde Park. The latter squad was headed by Assistant Attorney General Harold Heflinger and Tom Brewster, who is administrative assistant to State Public Service Director Thomas O'Donnell.

Persons who appeared to be in charge of the handbooks, together with their aides, were first taken to the Alton police station for fingerprinting and then were brought to the county jail here.

Complaints against the Hyde Park group were signed by the Police Sgt. Eldon Murphy, Lemont, Ill. Assistant Attorney General Talley signed the complaints against the 200 Club.

The four state warrants—two against the alleged operators and two against various employees of both places—were issued here at 2 a. m. Saturday by Police Master Donald Hoffmeyer, following a conference of Heflinger and Talley with State's Attorney Austin Lewis.

One of the warrants is a 24-hour Gregory Moore, Louis Calcaterra, John P. Connor and Howard Quinn as alleged operators of the Hyde Park handbook at 828 Main street, Venice.

State police overlooked Hyde Park's other handbook a few doors away when they made their raid. Moore, first to be released at

(Continued on Page 2)

Gaming Acts

3 a. m., waived preliminary hearing before Hoffmeyer, posted \$1000 bond and was bound over to the grand jury. His bond was signed by two Granite City professionals, Nordstrom, William F. Kaiser and James Travis. Bond of the other three named in the warrant also was set at \$1000 each.

Another state warrant named Harry West and Robert Lee as operators of the 200 Club handbook. Their bond also was set at \$1000 each. Lee was not present when the place was raided, nor were Connor and Quinn whose officers entered the Hyde Park establishment.

A third warrant charged 32 persons with bookmaking as alleged employees of the Hyde Park handbook. Named in this warrant were:

John Arena, Bernard Kirculis, John Knogger, Andrew Joyce, John Ryan Webb, John Z. Kaiter, Leo J. Wigge, Patrick J. Sherman, William Hartman, Robert Sullivan, Peter A. Heib, Joseph Gelibetti, John A. Macken, Patrick Joseph O'Brien, Christopher Rowe, Jr., Ben H. Fitzgill, Earl Giebe, Sr., Edward Hanning, Gus Collins, James Grant, Wally B. Maden, Peter Callahan, Joseph Marry, Frank Givovich, Thomas Model, Charles O'Donnell, Frank Houston, John J. Quinn, Gerald P. Fox, Dennis Callahan, Austin Kennedy and Edward Hartman. Bond of each was set at \$500.

The fourth warrant listed 16 alleged employees at the 200 Club. Named were:

Ray Bonds, Edward F. Beger, Wilfred A. Rigg, Norman Bauer, William Earl Jones, John J. Lyons, Anthony James Caxer, Edward A. Jenks, Homer J. Murphy, Louis A. Klemm, Ernest Butler, Thomas Rex, Oliver Barthelmeim, Shadab Cohen, Harold Albert Dandman and Frank A. Roderberger, Jr. Bond for each was also set at \$500.

Release of the defendants from the county jail began after the warrants had been issued, and the state's attorney's office closed at 3:45 a. m. Bond of those who waived preliminary hearing and were bound over to the grand jury were furnished at the jail before Magistrate Hoffmeyer.

Action Is Rare

(Continued from Page 1)

were summoned to Springfield Thursday night for briefing. To avoid the possibility of a "tip" to the gamblers, none of the officers were told where they were going until the carves of police cars had surrounded the two places.

Gaming Charges

(Continued from Page 1)

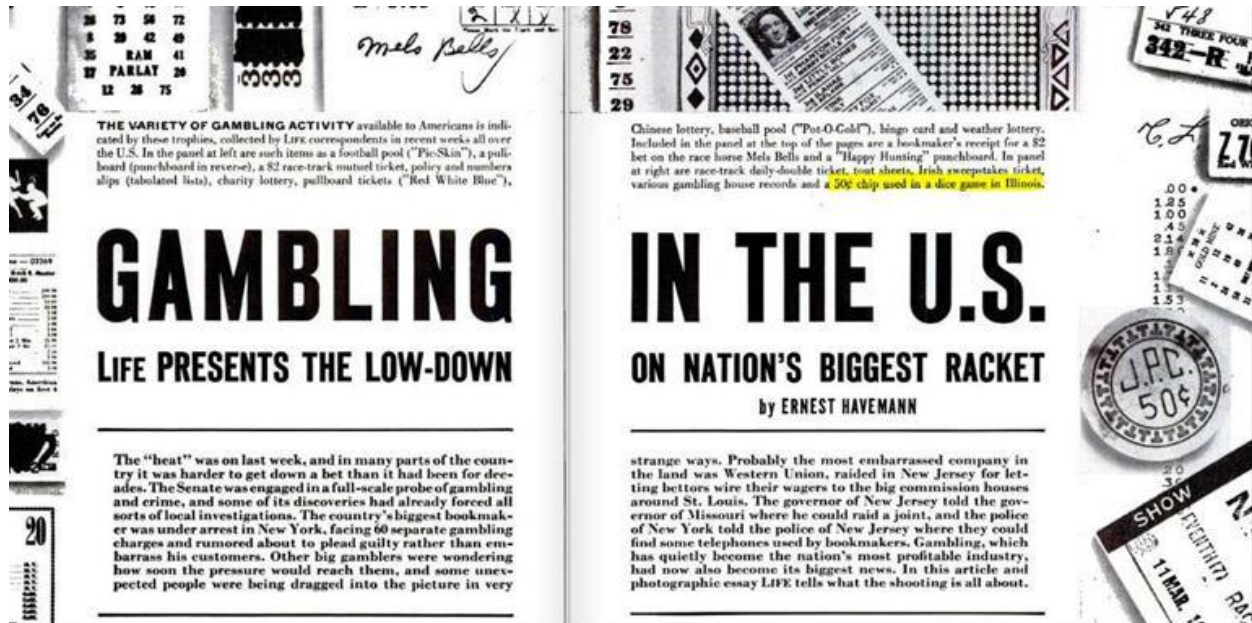
common gaming laws were filed against Vic Benavise, 222 North Main street, Edwardsville.

Charged with violating the gaming laws for distributing punch boards and huge trees were Kurt Herdick, Alton, and William Davis, Edwardsville.

Arraignments of the 16 defendants before Judge Kenney is scheduled for May 17 at 1:30 p. m.

A month after the raid, the June 19th issue of Life Magazine printed an article about gambling in the US. On the first page of the article there's a montage of gambling items Life's reporters had collected around the country.

One of the items is a JPC chip. The article also features some photos of the Hyde Park raid. One of the pics shows one of the owners: Gregory "Red" Moore. Moore also handled the ownership stake of one of Hyde Park's "silent" partners: Frank "Buster" Wortman.



JPC8 att2

BIG BOOKIES ARE RAIDED



WOMAN CUSTOMER hides head with newspaper at blackjack game interrupted by raid at Hyde Park Club.



OFFICE SAFE yields records showing that Hyde Park grossed \$6.5 million a year. Owner Red Moore is at left.



RACING PAPERS dropped by customers litter floor of Hyde Park Club as state police take over.

Simultaneous raids were made here and at the 200 Club, both across river from St. Louis, on May 12.

JPC9 att2

My Note: Now a little trip "Back To The Future." <g> Or, maybe it's a "Prequel" since its from 1930. <g> You remember the Shelton brothers from several previous "Illegal Of The Day" posts.

More from our "Friend of the hobby." He remembers the Sheltons. <g>

Probably too much stuff already on this place (there's a lot of info out there on it). But here's one more article from 1930 which I had to include--our old friends the Shelton Brothers:

SAYS GANG THREAT CLOSED HYDE PARK

**Newspaper Declares "Shelton
Gang" Demanded Share in
the Profits.**

A St. Louis newspaper today said that Hyde Park Club, former Venice gambling resort, was closed Monday night because of threats by members of the so-called "Shelton gang."

Members of the gang, it was asserted, visited the club Sunday afternoon and told those in charge that the resort would have to close if the owners did not donate a share of the profits to the gang.

The newspaper declared it was "reliably informed" of that demand, but did not, of course, reveal the source of its information.

It also declared that the "Shelton gang" has engaged extensively in "liquor running" on the Illinois side of the Mississippi River.

The Shelton brothers, Carl, Earl and Bernie, were sentenced to federal prison in January 1928 after being convicted of participation in the Kincaid bank robbery. They won a new trial upon an affidavit they had been "framed" and were released on bond, pending the new trial which has not been called.

John T. Soy, of St. Louis, part owner of Hyde Park Club, last night reiterated his previous assertion that the club was closed because of lack of patronage. He said he did not know the Sheltons and categorically denied receiving any threat Sunday afternoon.