

Not many new, New Jersey illegal's show up, but this one did back in February. I've had the info but never got around to posting it. I have another New Jersey illegal to do, also.

The chips tell the story of Lester Megill that flew under the radar using Joseph Fero and other underlings to take the heat for many years. In fact we could not find anything gambling related on Lester, as you will read. Neither could the famous prosecutor, Thomas Dewey. We were at a loss until Lester's grandson contacted us from a sales post Spragg did.

Enough of that:

New Jersey:



XZZatt2

Lester G. Megill,
311½ Main St.,
Allenhurst, N.J.

old style monogram
"XYZ" all large
letters in gold

XYZ

100 B-9 -600 W - 400 Choc.-100 Green
Nwk. Inv. #200-6/24/38
400 - B-9 Yellow - Nwk. Inv. 433 - 7/22/38
200-B-9 Yellow - Nkw. Inv.601-8/23/38

XYZ2att2

Lester Megill

311-1/2 Main St

Allenhurst NJ

1938 - loads of chips, 4 colors, several different reorders.

Enter our "Friend of the hobby."

XYZ

Could Be Lakewood Club, Lakewood, NJ

In the mid 30's Joseph Fero was operating a place called the Lakewood Club in Lakewood.

Trenton Evening Times, 31 Dec.1935:

Lakewood Club Raided On Gambling Charges

LAKEWOOD, Dec. 31 (AP).—Six men were arrested today in the Lakewood Club by a raiding party lead by Police Chief Delmar Johnson, of Toms River.

A truck load of gambling paraphernalia, including a roulette table, dice table, and 14 slot machines, was confiscated, police said. The raid was ordered by Common Pleas Judge Russell G. Conover.

The men arrested were Joseph Fero, alleged operator of the club; George Gregory, Lewis Roth, Charles Demmey, Rufus Hastings, and Morris Lour, all of Lakewood.

XYZ2att2

I forgot to mention that Megill, while he had his business address in Allenhurst, his residential address was in Caldwell, NJ--way up in north NJ (north-east of NYC). From the mid 30's to the mid 40's his business is listed in Allenhurst, residence in Caldwell--not sure how to interpret this fact.

Lester George Megill, died 1961 age 66.

The only enterprise that I could find occupying 311 1/2 Main in Allenhurst was Megill's office. He was a broker (stocks, bonds, merchandise; in 1945 a stenographer and a bookkeeper were employed by Megill at the address). I didn't find any evidence of any gambling going on at that address.

There does seem to be some evidence that Megill was involved with gambling in nearby Lakewood, NJ. Lakewood was apparently a popular winter resort town and had a lot of gambling. In the mid 1920's a guy named Joseph Fero was arrested in Lakewood for operating a gambling house (it was raided by the sheriff). Fero claimed Lester Megill was the proprietor. Megill's family moved to Lakewood in the 1910's when he was a teenager and he was buried there. Maybe the chips were used in Lakewood???

This was written as assumptions from past experience for Spragg's post.

The XYZ chips were delivered to Lester McGill, at his business address in NJ, in 1935 and then again in 1938 and used in his operation at the nearby Lakewood Club, Lakewood NJ.

Lakewood was apparently a popular winter resort town and had a lot of gambling. In the mid 1920's, Joseph Fero, apparently McGill's 'fall guy' was arrested in Lakewood for operating a gambling house (it was raided by the sheriff). Fero admitted Lester Megill was the proprietor.

Well it turns out the assumptions were correct as Lester's grandson contacted us.

----- Original Message -----

From: John Sharp

To: david.spragg@marlowcasinochips.com

Sent: Tuesday, February 08, 2011 6:38 PM

Subject: Lester G. Megill

Dear Mr. Spragg, A friend told me about your notice for poker chips used in my grandfather Lester G. Megill 's gambling operations in Lakewood NJ. He was born in 1895 and made his living as " financial consultant" at least that was his public persona, in fact he was involved in illegal gambling from the time he returned from France in WW I till his death in 1961. He was generally headquartered in Atlantic City, not far from the police station. He was known associate of Nucky Johnson and his brother. His primary business was always horse racing, numbers and high stakes poker. To my knowledge he never went to jail. At various times he had a large number of employees including some of the listed in the article, Joseph Fero is one that comes to mind. His payroll included many of the local politico's and law enforcement types of his era. His FBI file notes that he was associated with organized crime elements but was never jailed. I remember seeing him in the 1950's in Atlantic City with my father and brother. One day we visited his " business and with all the phones and men speaking excitedly of horses my younger brother asked " grandpa we want a horsey ride too" Lester gave us each a five dollar bill and told us to go buy some candy on the boardwalk. After, and active life with few regrets, he died in his bed after consuming some champagne.

To my knowledge, Les did not gamble and once told my dad that the only person who made money on the games was him. There is a photo of Les and my mother at the find a grave page below.

Do you have more of the chips from his Lakewood operation?

My note: We gladly sent him some chips.

Regards John G. Sharp

Gene, One more thing, I remember from my grandmother Margaret Campbell Megill. She once stated Thomas E. Dewey when he was a prosecutor for New York State investigated but never indicted Les - the reason is unclear perhaps lack of evidence but grandmother mentioned something about large contributions to Dewey and his associates. This must have been in the 1930's. Grandmother hated Dewey. This conversation with her was in the 1970's, long after Les's death. Grandmother never thought of Les as doing anything illegal, she rarely spoke of his business but when she did she referred to him as "successful financial advisor." She was devout Catholic and prayed for Les each day. My Dad thought that with all her prayers Les might get sprung from purgatory in few hundred years.

My note: Purgatory? I wonder what else Lester was involved with. <g>

Best Regards John

<http://www.findagrave.com/cgi-bin/fg.cgi?page=gr&GSln=Megill&GSfn=Lester&GSbyrel=in&GSdyrel=in&GSob=n&GRid=52323712&df=aii&>



XYZ1att2

Lester & Margaret McGill.