

This is a long one, if you are not into history, hit the back button now.

First and foremost, credit to a "Special Friend Of The Hobby."

Tennessee is close to the heart of "Hillbilly Heaven."

I use that term with reverence since I lived the first 40 years of my life in northern KY which was close to the most northern rim of "Hillbilly Heaven." I've been to Nashville a number of times.

Nashville like New Orleans dances to a different drummer, mainly because the drummer is a Hillbilly.

Everyone should visit Nashville at least once. The Grand Ole Opry, Country Music Hall Of Fame, Dolly Parton, and Printers Alley. 1930's thru 1960's Printers Alley mirrored Monmouth St in Newport KY, strip joints and gambling. Many of the owners started out as bootleggers during prohibition. I have several other Printers Alley chips not in this post. Mickey Cohen visited The Uptown Club. Read on!

The story starts with an inquiry for the Rainbow Room chip and Printers Alley.




This chip is more than likely a floor sweeping or a sample chip. It came out of the Taylor sample chips and I would call it a maroon chip, not red like is on the order card. I do not have VooDoo chips.

I got the Black Poodle chip as a gift in Sept 2010 after this post was made.



18086 IM

[illegible]

NAME <u>J.F. BARNES</u>				SPECIAL MONOGRAM				
Address <u>210 Printers Alley</u>								
Town <u>NASHVILLE</u> State <u>TENN</u>								
Per _____								

Amount	Color	Initials Both Sides	Style Type	Initials One Side	Other Side	Style Type	Monogram Color	Date Shipped
1600	White	★					Blue	9-30-60
1000	✓	✓					Black	8-14-61
1000	Black	✓					✓	8-14-61
500	Red	✓					white	11-3-61
1300	white	✓					Black	6-15-62
700	"	✓			Im-5377		Black	7-3-62

I need the 210 and "Star" chips.

My email request to the Nashville Library was to determine if 210 Printers Alley was the location of the Uptown Club--I think it probably was at least for a while

At some point, it appears the Black Poodle was at 210. The Black Poodle, Rainbow Room and VooDoo Room were all located next to each other and to the best of my knowledge, at the time the chips were ordered, were primarily strip bars.

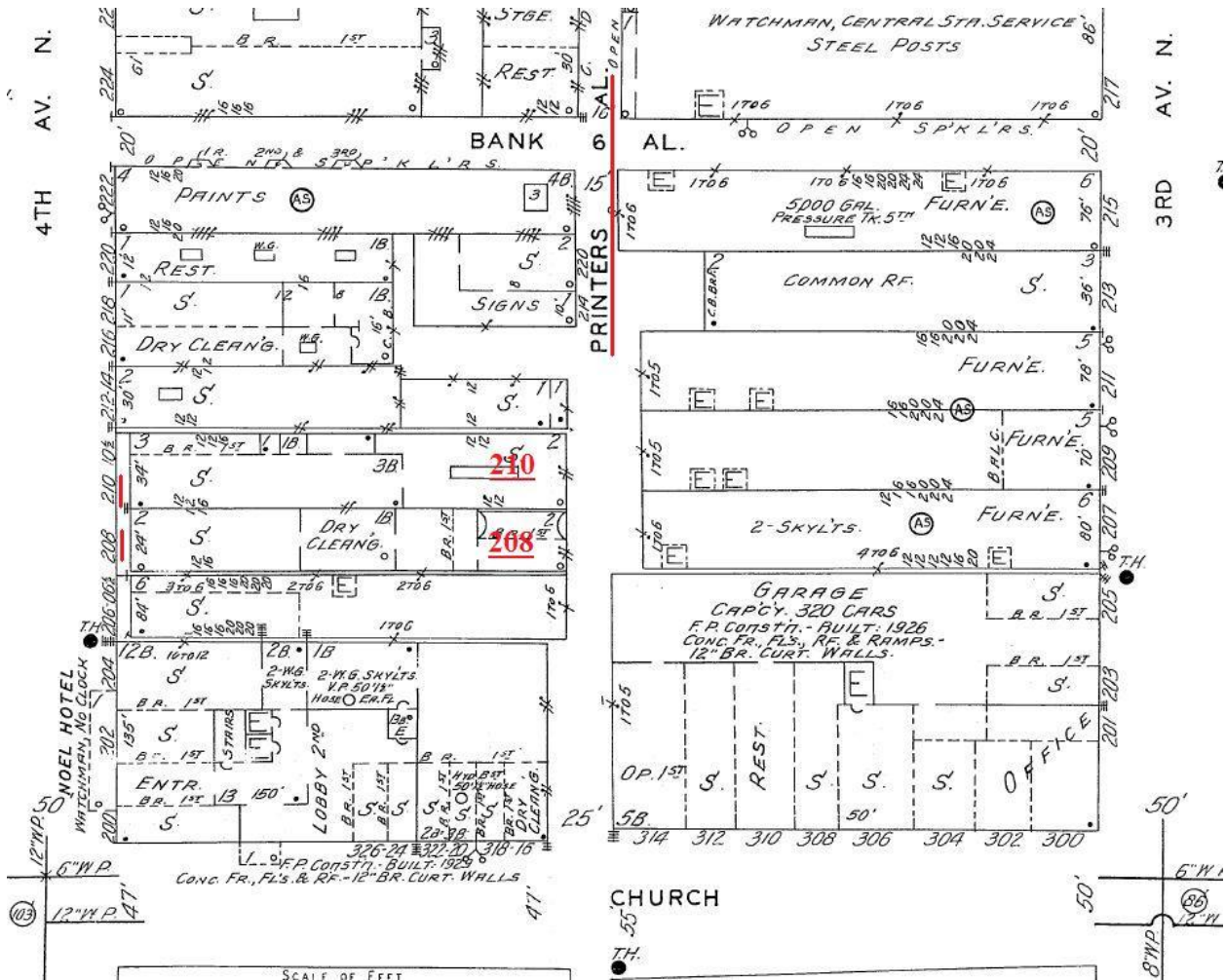
Picture below--then and now. From what I understand, the door immediately to the right of the VooDoo led to a stairway which went to the Rainbow; to the right of the door was the Black Poodle.



Hey John Zoesch, maybe you can find the Royal Blue Palace crammed in the picture somewhere. <g>

Could that be it, at the end of the alley <g>

1956 street survey map--VooDoo in 208 and Black Poodle in 210; Rainbow Room apparently located on the 2nd floor of the 210 building:





Didn't come across any evidence of gambling at the Black Poodle, VooDoo or Rainbow, however, I did see evidence that girls who worked at those places served as hostesses at the Uptown Club. Do you think maybe these chips could have been passed out at the strip clubs to steer people to the Uptown to gamble?

In 1965 Barnes and his two partners (James Washer and Robert Carney) were charged with violating several of the new Federal anti-racketeering statutes (the ones which allowed

the Federal government to get involved in busting gambling enterprises if there was an interstate component).

One of the indictments against Barnes involved the fact that he had chips and dice delivered to him from out of state vendors in Chicago and Cincinnati. Sounds familiar, if you read my Biloxi articles on Rip Polous and Christy Jones, Las Vegas.

<http://www.marlowcasinochips.com/links/genetrimble/genetrimble.htm>

My note: Just a wild and crazy guess! Taylor Company in Chicago and Rigdon in Cincinnati were the out of state vendors. *vbg*

Kingsport Times--17nov1965:

Ex-Employe Says Club Was Den For Gamblers

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (UPI) — Four former employees of the Uptown Dinner Club in Printers Alley testified yesterday that the club was a gambling establishment which gave away food and drinks to many of its customers.

The men testified during the second day of the Federal Court trial of James Washer, James Barnes and Robert Carney, operators of the club. The men are charged with using interstate facilities to promote gambling.

The trial was to continue today.

Testifying in the trial were E. B. Borchardt and West Morton Jolly both of Nashville; William Glenn Johnson, Donelson, and George Robert Lemmer, Evansville, Ind., formerly of Nashville.

They said they were employed at the club until it closed last Jan. 2.

Borchardt testified that "dice and blackjack games" were in operation at the club during his employment, and that "active gamblers" did not pay for food and drinks.

Jolly said that the club gave most of its food away and that gambling was its source of income. Lemmer and Johnson said they worked as dice dealers during their employment.

U. S. Atty. James F. Neal asked Johnson, at one point during his testimony, after the witness said the club was closed for "weeks at a time," if the club were closed during the legislature.

Johnson said "I don't really know when it was."

John J. Hooker Sr., one of the attorneys representing the defendants, said "we can show that the legislators were there."

U. S. District Court judge William E. Miller, presiding in the case, said "let's leave the legislature out this."

In the 50's the Uptown Club was reportedly visited often by Mickey Cohen of Los Angeles.

Meyer Harris "Mickey" Cohen was part of the second generation of gangsters that came after the likes of Al Capone and the old Mustache Petes. Mickey Cohen was Ben "Bugsy" Seigel's darker half. While Bugsy dined with Hollywood's royalty and bedded the stars, Mickey emptied their safes and broke their bones.

Oakland Tribune--06jan1960:

Cop Witness In Probe of L.A. Slaying

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 6—(UPI)

—A Nashville, Tenn., police sergeant was among the witnesses to be questioned today before a Federal grand jury concerning three guns found at the restaurant where extortionist Jack (The Enforcer) Whalen was slain.

Sgt. Morgan Smith, 51, was reported to have owned at one time one of the three guns. He arrived here yesterday and announced to newsmen:

"I don't want to be nasty and I'm not going to be, but there's the man (pointing to Charles A. Lynberg of the U.S. Attorney General's office here) who will do all the talking for me."

J. T. (Jimmy) Washer, an operator of the Uptown Club in Nashville and a gambler, also was to be questioned about ownership of one of the three guns. Both Smith and Washer have been subpoenaed to testify before the Federal panel which is probing crime and rackets. The jury's interest in the guns was to determine whether a violation of the Federal Firearms Act had occurred.

Former gambler Mickey Cohen, who was present Dec. 2 when Whalen was shot to death, was reported to have been a frequent visitor several

years ago at the Uptown Club.

The murder weapon has not been found, although Cohen's pal, Sam Frank Locigno, admitted the shooting and claimed it was in self-defense. Whalen said he threw the weapon away but can't remember where.

The three guns found dumped in a trash can outside the restaurant after the shooting were all .38 caliber revolvers. One was registered to slain hoodlum Johnny Stompanato, victim of justifiable homicide by actress Lana Turner's daughter in 1958, the second to a local gun shop and the third to a Nashville store whose owner said he sold it to Smith in 1946.

From Jim Linduff.

In the early 1960's, a thriving gambling community existed in underground Nashville. Across Church Street from Printers Alley was another alley. On the left corner of the alley a few steps above street level was the Zanzibar, an all night bar and general hangout. Below the Zanzibar and down a long flight of stairs was the Subway Lounge, later to become the Captains Table. It was a dine and dance club with live bands and top notch food. It was owned by Mickey Kreitner, who also owned the Zanzibar and several Printers Alley clubs, including the Brass Rail Stables. A block down that alley was a large brick building that started in the alley and fronted on Third Avenue. At the back of the building was a concrete loading dock with a roll up door that had been sealed shut at one side.

Opposite that was a large steel door with an eyehole in it. To get in, you knocked on the door and someone eyeballed you through the eyehole. If you were known or otherwise acceptable, the door was opened by a man about the size of the door and you entered. You went through a room that was apparently a dining room with

tables and booths and no activity. There was almost no light in the room.

At the back of the room was another door with another eyehole. The same procedure got you into the back room. A bar ran half the length of the left side of the room. The front right side had a blackjack table. A large Vegas style crap table ran down the middle of the room, opposite the bar, and there were several tables and booths in the back corner. It was known as the Uptown Club. Just like Vegas, you got your drinks and food free while you were playing, all served at the table by a beautiful waitress, usually a stripper from one of the Printers Alley clubs, getting in extra work.

The top levels of Nashville society, legal or otherwise, were always there. Of the many I saw were Mickey Kreitner, noted restaurateur, Kermit Stengel, head of Crescent Amusement Company, Joel Vradenburg, who owned or co-owned several Printers Alley clubs, Skull Schulman, who owned the Rainbow Room in Printers Alley, and Jimmy Washer, the owner of the club and the head of Nashvilles gambling community.

Washer was a quiet, smallish, graying man who dressed impeccably if a bit on the ostentatious side. I saw him once, standing in front of Loew's Vendome Theatre on Church Street, wearing an ankle length camels hair overcoat with two diamond stickpins in his lapels. He had on a Palm Beach white Fedora and was carrying a cane with a silver head on it. The silver was probably genuine. He ran downtown Nashville gambling.

His only competition was the Automobile Business Club, known as the ABC, in Bordeaux. It was owned by Al Alessio and had the same facilities and plush interiors as the Uptown Club. To my knowledge, Washer and Alessio had no wars over their territories or clientele.

Later in the 1960's, for whatever reason, the Uptown Club was shut down and the building was sold to an entrepreneur, I think Shug Baggott. He gutted the interior and built the first and best Nashville Disco, D'Scene And Zodiac Lounge.