

I got an email from a fan of "Illegal Of The Day" posts. Well, sort of fan. <g>

"Skip the BS and just post the ID's."

No deal! My posts-My rules! <g>

Good story about gambling, Utah, and me.

In 1982, I was working at the Four Queens. I stopped in the Horseshoe, across the street to play a little blackjack. Bought in for \$60. As my poker partner of 20 years, Brownie, used to tell me, "I had a bird on my shoulder." Caught the big rush and fired the winnings back at them. Ran to \$20,000, dropped it back to just under \$19,000 and cashed in. All of this happened in about an hour and a half.

I had always wanted a Corvette. Now is the time, its free. <g> Lots of Las Vegans went to St George, Utah for new cars back then. Off I went to Utah. They did not have the one I wanted, color and options. Salesman said they would have a load in 3 weeks. He wanted me to put a deposit down but for some unknown reason I did not. Gave him my number and drove home.

Salesman called me 3 weeks later. Now the other half of Brownie's little saying comes into play. "But someday that bird will fly off your shoulder." The money for the Vet was gone. Binion's had reclaimed what was rightfully theirs.

1982 was the last time I ever played a hand of Blackjack. And I do not miss it! "If you are not smart enough to keep the \$, you have no business wining it!" Another little quip from Howard "Two Thumbs" Donley. I quit rolling the bones 6 months later.

My poker partners 1961-80 Brownie Noel and Howard "Two Thumbs" Donley had lots of poker quips that usually wound up ringing true. <g>

Enough of that:

UTAH:

RBH

The Mint

Ben Harmon

Salt Lake City, UT

1936



11411

Ben Harmon
27 E. 2nd South
Salt Lake City, Utah

BBH

8/26/36 - B-9-400R-250W-650B-150Y-50J- SF Inv.
#2713

Once again the Mason record card does not give us a club name. Without research it could just be a home play set. But, it is hard to fool my "Friend Of The Hobby." <g>

The delivery address, 27 E. 2nd South, was the location of a popular cafe/bar called the Mint.

The Mint welcomed high and low limit players and everyone in between and was for years considered the headquarters for Utah sportsmen. On one of its walls was a large scoreboard which kept the patrons current on scores, standings, etc. It was opened in 1918 by Benjamin Michael "Ben" Harmon who ran the place until 1938 when a self-inflicted gunshot wound to the heart ended his life at age 57

A few days prior to his suicide, Harmon and Salt Lake City's former mayor and former police chief were indicted for taking protection money from prostitutes.

Pic of Ben Harmon:



After Ben Harmon's death his 32 year old son Ralph B. Harmon took over management of the Mint. I think the RBH on the chip may be for Ralph, he was working at the Mint when the chips were ordered.

I guess RBH could also stand for Ralph & Ben Harmon. Ralph ran the Mint until his death in 1968 (cancer).

A few months after Ben Harmon's death in 1938 the indictments against the former mayor and police chief were expanded to include money taken for protection of gambling operations. The indictment listed the names of gambling locations in Salt Lake City which made payoffs and the list was published in the:

Salt Lake Tribune on 12 August 1938:

Lotteries

456 West Second South street and 458 West Second South street, Lee Bens and L. Wong.

472 West Second South street, Chang Chung.

435 West Second South street, E. Young Waugh.

439 West Second South street, Bow Kee.

Dice Games

Western Social club, 35 1-2 West Second South street, Mike Bekis and Christ Klaris.

Zapian club, 56 West Second South street, Charles Cayias.

61 1-2 East Second South street, Abie Rosenbloom.

Bookmakers

36 West Second South street, basement, Bill Browning.

5 East Fourth South street, William Farber.

124 East Second South street, second floor, and 235 Second East street, first floor, Lefty Newton.

10 Exchange place and 54 1-2 South Main street, Cliff Jennings.

Poker Games

Pastime club, 55 East Second South street.

Bank Smoke Shop, 58 East Second South street.

Wilson Card Room, 32 East Second South street.

Mission Cigar store, 129 South Main street.

Peter Fan Card club, 222 South Main street.

Horseshoe Card room, 51 East Second South street.

Mint Card club, 27 East Second South street.

Stubeck's Card club, 2 West Second South street.

Silver Dollar, 41 East Second South street.

Malouf Billiards, 248 South Main street, basement.