

Guide to the Frank F. Watts Collection of Casino Memorabilia

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Watts, Frank Frederic, 1911-2004
Title:	Frank F. Watts Collection of Casino Memorabilia
ID:	MS-00255
Date [inclusive]:	1880-1990
Date [bulk]:	1965-1968
Physical Description:	0.4 Linear Feet (1 box)
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The Frank F. Watts Collection of Casino Memorabilia (1880-1990) consists of gaming tokens and chips, matchbooks, and other memorabilia from Nevada and international casinos. The collection also contains items related to early Northern Nevada history including a salt ledger from 1880 as well as a wanted poster from 1913.

Preferred Citation

Frank F. Watts Collection on Casino Memorabilia, 1880-1990. MS-00255. Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Biographical Note

Frank Frederick Watts (1911-2004) was born in Columbus, Ohio and attended Ohio State University before graduating from Franklin University. He came to Las Vegas in 1950 with his wife, Jane. He spent his entire career as a hotel controller, working at the El Rancho until it closed in 1960 and then at the Riviera. Watts, along with the Nevada Resort Association, helped found the hotel college at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) in 1966. Frank Watts passed away on December 10, 2004.

Source: "Frank Watts," *Las Vegas Review-Journal*, December 10, 2004.

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Scope and Contents Note

The Frank F. Watts Collection of Casino Memorabilia (1880-1990) consists of gaming tokens and chips, matchbooks, and other memorabilia from Nevada and international casinos. The bulk of the collection is gaming tokens from 1965-1968 from casinos across the state of Nevada, including Las Vegas, Laughlin, Winnemucca, and Carson City. Other tokens are from former Fremont Street casinos such as the Bingo Club, the Carousel, and Lucky Casino. Other items in the collection include matchbooks from casinos in the United Kingdom, as well as a Las Vegas-themed board game from 1944. The collection also contains items related to early Northern Nevada history including a ledger from Eagle Salt works from 1880 as well as a wanted poster dated 1913 from Virginia City for the crime of white slavery.

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Arrangement

Materials are arranged by format.

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Administrative Information

Access Note

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

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Acquisition Note

Materials were donated in 1985 by Frank F. Watts; accession number 85-135.

Processing Information

Materials were processed by Special Collections staff. In 2015, as part of a legacy finding aid conversion project, Angela Moor revised and enhanced the collection description to bring it into compliance with current professional standards.

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Related Materials

Related Collections

The following resources may provide additional information related to the materials in this collection:

Frank Watts Photographs. PH-00169. Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Watts, Frank. Interview, 01 April 1981 . OH-01928. Oral History Research Center, Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Separated Materials

The following items seem to have been separated and placed in an artificial collection, the Gaming Artifact series of the Promotional and Publicity Material Collection: Gaming tokens: El Cortez (1966), Frontier Hotel (1967), Riviera Hotel (1968), Thunderbird Hotel (1966, 1967, 1968), Eldorado Club (1966), Rainbow Club (1967), Harrah's (1966).

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Names and Subjects

- Memorabilia
- Nevada -- History
- Gambling -- Nevada -- Las Vegas

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Containers
Letter from Walter G. Clark, consulting engineer, undated	box 01
Statement of total amount of salt shipped from Eagle Salt Works, CPRR, 1880 August 31	box 01
Hotel Mirador Casino, Colonia Del Sacramento, Uruguay, ceramic ashtray, undated	box 01
Nevada State Police circular: Elmer Cosgrove Wanted for White Slavery; letter from James F. Mahoney, 1913	box 01

Gaming tokens: Norwegian Caribbean Lines; Diamond Jim's Nevada Club, Las Vegas, Nev.; Pussykat A 'Go Go, Las Vegas, Nev.; McLaney's Carousel, Las Vegas, Nev.; Sonoma Inn, Winnemucca, Nev.; Club Bingo, Las Vegas, Nev.; Riverside Resort, Davis Dam, Nev.; Gus Thiros' Bonanza, North Las Vegas, Nev.; Gold Strike Inn, Hoover Dam, Nev.; Fort Lucinda Inn, Hoover Dam, Nev.; Felix's Bank Club, Lovelock, Nev.; El Casino, Bahamas; Monte Carlo Casino, Bahamas; Big Bonanza, North Las Vegas, Nev.; Kit Carson Club, Carson City, Nev.; Lucky Casino, Las Vegas, Nev., 1965-1968	box 01
Deck of used playing cards from the Excalibur Hotel-Casino, Las Vegas, Nev., undated	box 01
Las Vegas game by Film Star Creations Inc., 1944	box 01
Matchbooks: Las Lenas, Argentina; Rendezvous Casino Club, London, England; Ritz Casino, London, England; Stakis Regency International Casino, Birmingham, England; Cromwells Mint Casino, London, England; Berkeley Casino Club, Edinburgh, Scotland, undated	box 01
Gaming chips: California Club 25¢; Sky Harbor \$25, Lake Tahoe, Nev.; 3 chips for free drinks at the Maxim, Las Vegas, Nev., undated	box 01
Ephemera: playing card coaster; pachinko balls; Live Wire booster fund button Las Vegas, undated	box 01