

Guide to the Imperial Royal Sovereign Court of Desert Empire Collection

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Imperial Royal Sovereign Court of the Desert Empire
Contributor:	Royal Barony of the Desert Empire
Title:	Imperial Royal Sovereign Court of the Desert Empire Records
ID:	MS-00556
Date [inclusive]:	1997-2003
Physical Description:	2.57 Cubic Feet (2 boxes)
Physical Description:	2.17 Linear Feet
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The material is comprised of the organizational records of the Imperial Royal Sovereign Court of the Desert Empire and its predecessor, the Royal Barony of the Desert Empire, from 1997 to 2003. The records contain administrative and financial records such as charters, bylaws, financial reports, meeting minutes, correspondence, and publicity documenting the club's activities in Southern Nevada.

Preferred Citation

Imperial Royal Sovereign Court of the Desert Empire Records, 1997-2003. MS-00556. Special Collections and Archives, UNLV Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Historical Note

Founded in 1997 as the Royal Barony of the Desert Empire, the Imperial Royal Sovereign Court of the Desert Empire is the Las Vegas Monarchy of the International Imperial Court system (IIC). The IIC was founded in San Francisco, California, by Jose Julio Sarria and the Tavern Guild of San Francisco. The Tavern Guild was established as the gay community's united front against police harassment. In 1965, the Guild sponsored San Francisco's first large, public drag ball; over 500 gay men and women faced police lines and police photographers to attend the ball, which became an annual tradition. Sarria was named Queen of this first ball, but soon after declared himself Empress of San Francisco. At each of the Guild's annual balls, a new emperor and empress are elected and crowned. Out of the Tavern Guild, Sarria developed the Imperial Court of San Francisco, which became a means for raising money for gay charities. The Imperial Court system was franchised to Canada and throughout the United States. The Royal Barony of the Desert

Empire, in Las Vegas, Nevada, includes Lincoln, Nye, and Clark Counties, and received its corporate charter on July 3, 1997, and then was elevated to full court status as the Imperial Royal Sovereign Court of the Desert Empire in December 1998. The purpose of the Court is to raise money through shows and other events for local charities, as well as to maintain the integrity of the International Imperial Court system and its charitable mission.

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Scope and Contents Note

The material is comprised of the organizational records of the Imperial Royal Sovereign Court of the Desert Empire and its predecessor, the Royal Barony of the Desert Empire, from 1997 to 2003. The records demonstrate the Court's purpose in raising money through shows and other events for local charities, as well as their efforts to maintain the integrity of the International Imperial Court system and its charitable mission. Materials include administrative and financial records such as charters, bylaws, financial reports, meeting minutes, correspondence, and publicity documenting the club's activities. Other records include imperial title holders, election results, logos, merchandise, news clippings about the organization's events, and official stationery. Additionally, the records have information about some other branches in the Imperial Court system, including San Francisco, Reno, and New York City.

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Arrangement Note

Materials are arranged alphabetically by format and then chronologically.

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Administrative Information

Access

Collection is open for research.

Publication Rights

Materials in this collection may be protected by copyrights and other rights. See [Reproductions and Use](#) on the UNLV Special Collections and Archives website for more information about reproductions and permissions to publish.

Acquisition Note

Materials were donated by William "Bill" Schafer in 2009 and 2011; accession numbers 2009-014 and 2011-05.

Processing Note

Material was processed by Dennis McBride in 2009. In 2014, as part of a legacy finding aid conversion project, Lindsay Oden revised the collection description and entered the data into ArchivesSpace.to bring it into compliance with current professional standards. In 2018, as part of an archival backlog elimination project, Sarah Jones revised the collection description to bring it into compliance with current professional standards.

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Names and Subjects

- Gay community -- Nevada -- Las Vegas
- Gay clubs -- Nevada -- Las Vegas -- 20th century
- Charities -- Nevada

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Containers	
Royal Barony of the Desert Empire		
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Adornment Ceremony I: Coronation, November 1, 1997	box 01	folder 03
Adornment Ceremony II: Coronation I, December 5, 1998	box 01	folder 04
Adornment Ceremony II: Coronation I correspondence, December 5, 1998	box 01	folder 05
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	box 01	folder 08-09
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Restriction Note: These materials are restricted to protect the privacy of the individuals mentioned therein.

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"More than a Mouthful" Community cookbook, 2003	box 02