

## **Guide to the Stuart and Flora Mason Photographs**

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## Summary Information

<b>Repository:</b>	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
<b>Creator:</b>	Mason, Stuart J.
<b>Creator:</b>	Mason, Flora, 1940-
<b>Title:</b>	Stuart and Flora Mason Photographs
<b>ID:</b>	PH-00370
<b>Date [inclusive]:</b>	1940-1999
<b>Physical Description:</b>	1.5 Linear Feet (1 oversize box)
<b>Language of the Material:</b>	English
<b>Abstract:</b>	The Stuart and Flora Mason Photographs (1940-1999) contain photographs of hotels, casinos, and other buildings constructed by Taylor International Corporation, which was owned by the Mason Family. The photographs depict the Aladdin, Venetian, Tropicana, Riviera, MGM Grand, and International hotels and casinos in Las Vegas, Nevada. The photographs also depict buildings in Miami and Coral Gables, Florida, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

### Preferred Citation

Stuart and Flora Mason Photographs, 1940-1999. PH-00370. Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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## Biographical Note for Stuart Mason

Stuart Jay Mason (1935-2012) was a 47-year resident of Las Vegas and builder of some of the most iconic hotel casinos on the Strip. The Mason family construction company, Taylor International Corporation, is responsible for the Riviera (1955), the Tropicana (1957), Caesars Palace (1966), and the Stratosphere (1996). Mason built the then-largest hotel in the world four times: the International Hotel (opened in 1969, now called the Westgate), the MGM Grand at 3645 Las Vegas Boulevard (opened in 1973, now called Bally's), the MGM Grand at 3799 Las Vegas Boulevard (opened in 1993), and the Las Vegas Sands-owned Venetian/Palazzo complex (the Venetian opened in 1999 and the Palazzo opened in 2008).

Mason was born on December 19, 1935 in Columbus, Ohio. In 1937 his family moved to Coral Gables, Florida. He worked summers at his father's construction company and went to high school at Staunton Military Academy of Virginia. Mason met his future wife Flora Esformes in 1956 at a college fraternity

party. The couple got married in 1958 after he graduated from the University of Miami with a bachelor's degree in business and a minor in philosophy. For seven years he traveled to Jamaica, Aruba, Puerto Rico, and Grand Bahama building hotels for his father's company.

Stuart's father Morry Mason acquired Taylor International Corporation in 1940 and built many iconic hotels in Miami, Florida. In 1954 Morry Mason went to Las Vegas to build the Riviera, and in 1964 he was approached by Jay Sarno to build Caesars Palace. Morry moved the whole company to Las Vegas and Stuart went along to work on Caesars. Stuart's wife and children followed shortly after and the family decided to move to Las Vegas permanently. Eventually Stuart replaced his father Morry as head of Taylor International, and then in 1997 passed the company on to his two sons, Jim and Bill. After many years in the family business, Stuart was hired by Sheldon Adelson to work for Las Vegas Sands Incorporated as the Vice President of Development for the Venetian.

Stuart Mason served as President of Temple Beth Sholom in Las Vegas from 1983 to 1984 and helped build the congregation's new synagogue in 2000. He was also president of the Nevada State Contractors Board, Trustee of Clark County Library, and board member of the Great Basin National Park Foundation. Mason and his wife Flora founded the Nevada chapter of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation in 1970. In 1997 the couple helped to create the UNLV Libraries Mason Undergraduate Peer Research Coach program for motivated students who are identified as statistically unlikely to graduate. Stuart Mason passed away in Las Vegas on April 28, 2012.

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## Biographical Note for Flora Mason

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Flora Mason (née Esformes; 1940- ) is a Las Vegas, Nevada philanthropist who, along with her husband Stuart Mason, founded the Las Vegas Chapter of the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation in 1970 and the Mason Undergraduate Peer Coach Program at University of Nevada, Las Vegas (UNLV) Libraries in 2006. She was the first woman elected by the general membership to serve on the Temple Beth Sholom Board of Directors, and she served on the National Board of Directors of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation. Mason has also been involved with the Jewish Federation of Las Vegas, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Temple Beth Sholom youth group, United Synagogue Youth.

Born on October 23, 1940 in New York City, Flora Mason grew up between New York and Miami Beach. Flora met her future husband, Stuart Mason in Miami, and they married in 1958. Stuart Mason worked in the family business, Taylor International Corporation, and in 1964 he moved to Las Vegas to build Caesars Palace. Flora and their three children, Deborah, William, and James, joined Stuart in Las Vegas in 1965. The Masons initially planned to stay in Nevada only temporarily, but then they both fell in love with the West and Las Vegas, and went on to become active and very influential members of the Las Vegas community.

After beginning her college education at the University of Miami, Flora completed her Bachelor's degree at UNLV, where she also later earned her Master's degree in English literature. Flora served as a lecturer in the English department at UNLV, and worked there until her retirement.

Source:

Mason, Flora. Interview, 2014 December 08. OH-02215. Oral History Research Center, Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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## Scope and Contents Note

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The Stuart and Flora Mason Photographs (1940-1999) contain photographs of hotels, casinos, and other buildings constructed by Taylor International Corporation, which was owned by the Mason Family. The photographs depict the Aladdin, Venetian, Tropicana, Riviera, MGM Grand, and International hotels and casinos in Las Vegas, Nevada. The photographs also depict buildings in Miami and Coral Gables, Florida, and San Juan, Puerto Rico.

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## Administrative Information

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### Access

The collection is open for research. The collection has been digitized and is [available online](#).

### Publication Rights

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

### Acquisition Note

Materials were donated in 2013 by Jim Mason.

### Processing Note

Materials were processed by Special Collections staff in 2013. In 2015, as part of a legacy finding aid conversion project, Lindsay Oden and Emily Lapworth wrote the collection description in compliance with current professional standards.

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## Related Materials

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### Related Materials

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

Flora and Stuart Mason Photographs and Event Programs, 1965-2010. MS-00964. Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Taylor Construction Company, 1965-2010. MS-00694. Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Stuart Mason. Interview, November 09, 2006. OH-01211. Oral History Research Center, Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Flora Mason. Interview, December 08, 2014. OH-02215. Oral History Research Center, Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Flora and Stuart Mason. Interview, February 27, 2010. OH-02235. Oral History Research Center, Special Collections, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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## Names and Subjects

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- Hotels -- Nevada -- Las Vegas
- Construction -- Nevada -- Las Vegas
- Photographs
- Taylor Construction Company
- Aladdin Hotel and Casino
- Venetian Resort Hotel Casino
- Tropicana Hotel (Las Vegas, Nev.)
- Riviera Hotel & Casino (Las Vegas Strip, Nev.)
- MGM Grand Hotel
- International Hotel

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## Collection Inventory

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Title/Description	Containers
Postcard of the Hotel San Juan Intercontinental, San Juan, Puerto Rico, 1958 (0370_0001) ( <a href="#">view online</a> )	

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Sans Souchi Hotel, Miami Beach, Florida, approximately 1950-1959 (0370\_0002) ([view online](#))

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Thunderbird Motel, Miami Beach, Florida, undated (0370\_0003) ([view online](#))

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Film transparency of Mount Sinai Hospital, Miami, Florida, approximately 1950-1959 (0370\_0004) ([view online](#))

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Film transparency of Morry and Stuart Mason in front of the Marina Hotel and Casino, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0005) ([view online](#))

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Construction of an unidentified hotel on the Las Vegas Strip, Nevada, approximately 1960-1969 (0370\_0006) ([view online](#))

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Two unidentified men posing with the MGM Grand Hotel, Reno, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0007) ([view online](#))

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Construction on the new MGM, Las Vegas, Nevada, 1994 (0370\_0008) ([view online](#))

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London Club Blackjack tables in the Aladdin Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0009) ([view online](#))

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London Club Blackjack tables in the Aladdin Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0010) ([view online](#))

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London Club Blackjack tables in the Aladdin Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0011) ([view online](#))

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London Club Blackjack tables in the Aladdin Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0012) ([view online](#))

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London Club Blackjack tables in the Aladdin Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0013) ([view online](#))

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Postrio Restaurant at the Venetian Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0014) ([view online](#))

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Postrio Restaurant at the Venetian Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0015) ([view online](#))

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Postrio Restaurant at the Venetian Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0016) ([view online](#))

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Postrio Restaurant at the Venetian Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0017) ([view online](#))

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Postrio Restaurant at the Venetian Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0018) ([view online](#))

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Postrio Restaurant at the Venetian Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0019) ([view online](#))

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Seating areas, location unknown, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0020) ([view online](#))

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Postrio Restaurant at the Venetian Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0021) ([view online](#))

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Postrio Restaurant at the Venetian Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, approximately 1990-1999 (0370\_0022) ([view online](#))

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Stuart Mason, Morry Mason, and Fred Bennioger meeting to sign a contract for the International Hotel, 1969 (0370\_0023) ([view online](#))

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Morry Mason teaching a class at the University of Miami, Coral Gables, Florida, approximately 1960-1969 (0370\_0024) ([view online](#))

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Artist's rendering of a typical guest room at the Tropicana, Las Vegas, Nevada, undated (0370\_0025) ([view online](#))

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Artist's rendering of a typical guest room at the Tropicana, Las Vegas, Nevada, undated (0370\_0026) ([view online](#))

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Artist's rendering of the Blue Room of the Tropicana Hotel, Las Vegas Nevada, undated (0370\_0027) ([view online](#))

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Artist's rendering of the Blue Room of the Tropicana Hotel, Las Vegas Nevada, undated (0370\_0028) ([view online](#))

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Artist's rendering of the Showroom of the Tropicana Hotel, Las Vegas Nevada, undated (0370\_0029) ([view online](#))

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Riviera Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, undated (0370\_0030) ([view online](#))

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Tropicana Hotel under construction, Las Vegas, Nevada, 1957 (0370\_0031) ([view online](#))

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Artist's rendering of the MGM Grand Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada, undated (0370\_0032) ([view online](#))

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Fountainbleau and Eden Roc Hotels, Miami, Florida, 1957 (0370\_0033) ([view online](#))

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Eden Roc and Tropicana Hotels, Miami, Florida, approximately 1950-1959 (0370\_0034) ([view online](#))

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Aerial photograph of postwar housing in Coral Gables, Florida, approximately 1950-1959 (0370\_0035) ([view online](#))

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Nautilus Hotel and the Shore Club Hotel, Miami Beach, Florida, 1951 April 01 (0370\_0036) ([view online](#))

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Lombardy Hotel, Miami Beach, Florida, approximately 1940-1955 (0370\_0037) ([view online](#))

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Aerial photograph of Americana Hotel, Miami Beach, approximately 1950-1959 (0370\_0038) ([view online](#))

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Sterling Hotel and Riviera Ocean Villas, Miami, Florida, approximately 1950-1959 (0370\_0039) ([view online](#))

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Demolition of the Ferestone Estate, Miami Beach, Florida, 1954 (0370\_0040) ([view online](#))

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Algiers Hotel, Miami Beach, Florida, approximately 1950-1959 (0370\_0041) ([view online](#))

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Sheraton Bal Harbour Resort, Miami Beach, Florida, undated (0370\_0042) ([view online](#))

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Golden Gate Hotel, Miami Beach, Florida, undated (0370\_0043) ([view online](#))



Mount Sinai Hospital, Miami, Florida, approximately 1960-1969 (0370\_0044) ([view online](#))

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Aerial photograph of a hotel and golf course, undated (0370\_0045) ([view online](#))

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Hotel under construction, undated (0370\_0046) ([view online](#))

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Unidentified building, undated (0370\_0047) ([view online](#))

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Kenilworth Hotel under construction, Miami Beach, Florida, undated (0370\_0048) ([view online](#))

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Saxony Hotel under construction, Miami Beach, Florida, approximately 1940-1949 (0370\_0049) ([view online](#))

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Booklet of construction progress photographs of the International Hotel, Las Vegas, 1969 February (0370\_Photo\_Album) ([view online](#))

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