

Caribbean Casino Collectors Club Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 1, Issue 4 Summer 2008

Casinos of the Caribbean

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Caribbean Casino News

Casino Openings and Closings and new Chip Issues

Aruba

- **Aruban Resort & Casino Continues With Exciting Expansions And Reinvention,**
Wednesday, July 9th, 2008

It's hard to miss the exciting progression as you drive down the Sasakiweg Boulevard on what will soon be the island's largest casino project. The **Aruban Resort & Casino** is full-on into several phases of expansion and reinvention, anchored by the ambitious casino facility. Formerly the Royal Cabana Casino, gone are the signature tinted, mirrored walls that once adorned the building. Current construction will ultimately unveil a modern casino complex marvel unlike anything the island has seen. State-of-the-art gaming and amenities will be on-trend with what's hot in Las Vegas. In addition to offering guests the largest casino on Aruba, the facility will also boast a dynamic, American-style sports bar, Vegas worthy entertainment acts in a deluxe theatre setting, and an interactive "chef's table" dining concept spearheaded by one of the U.S.'s most prestigious restaurant concept companies. Completion of the casino is slated for December of this year.

The Aruban Resort & Casino also began a complete renovation of the guest villas, utilizing the talents of U.S. design firm Gil Studios to create a serene, contemporary, Caribbean ambiance to embody a sense of place by employing Aruba's elements of sun, sand, water, and wind into the décor. New flooring, bathrooms, furniture, fabrics, and modern kitchens and granite countertops are some of the amenities villa owners will have to look forward to. The resort will also be adding an entirely new food court within the resort courtyard, with construction beginning last week. Current construction will ultimately unveil a modern casino complex marvel unlike anything the island has seen.



Bahamas

- **Harrah's ends involvement in Bahamas resort complex**

The Associated Press, Monday, March 10, 2008

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico: U.S. casino operator Harrah's Entertainment Inc. has announced that it has pulled out of a six-hotel resort proposal in the Bahamas worth more than US\$2 billion (?1.3 billion) because it has taken too long to organize.

Harrah's had agreed to team up with developer Baha Mar Resorts Ltd. and Starwood Hotels & Resorts Worldwide to create the mega-resort along Nassau's famed Cable Beach. But the U.S. casino company said Monday that plans for the ambitious complex have stalled.

"Unfortunately, it has taken Baha Mar Development Company longer to organize the project than anticipated and circumstances have changed such that it is simply not prudent to move forward," Harrah's said in a statement e-mailed Monday. It did not disclose specifics.

The mixed-use resort, planned for a 1,000-acre (405-hectare) beach front site that included an investment of more than US\$2 billion (?1.3 billion) in its initial phase, was expected to have a work force of 10,000 people upon its completion in 2011.

Baha Mar Resorts asserted that Harrah's withdrawal from the deal was a breach of faith. The development company said it was committed to moving forward with the resort project and challenged Harrah's ability to "unilaterally terminate the arrangements."

"We hope they will reconsider their action before they cause harm to both Baha Mar and the Bahamas," Baha Mar Resorts said in a Monday statement.

Baha Mar last year formed a joint venture with Harrah's, and the companies signed a deal with Starwood to manage the complex. Plans called for the resort to feature the Caesar's Resort Hotel, the St. Regis, the Westin Hotel, W, the Sheraton Hotel and a renovated Windham Nassau Resort.

- I received a scan of a chip from the **Cat Cay Club** located in the Bahamas on Cat Cay Island from Mike Richter. I did some research and came up with this online article published by Erik McCrea at http://www.geocities.com/erik_mccrea/linksC1.html



“A critical point for this numismatic write-up is that Louis Wasey introduced gaming activities to his island. According to the Website, the origins of Cat Cay’s legalized gambling operation began after he’d already built the nine-hole golf course upon which the Duke of

Windsor, while Governor of the Bahamas from 1940-45, enjoyed playing. “The course was named Windsor Downs in his honor. During one of his visits the Duke mentioned that it might be fun to have a little casino on the island for guests, Wasey readily agreed and the Duke issued a license in Lou Wasey’s name personally. Upon Wasey’s death in 1963, the island’s casino license expired. Wasey left the island to his daughter Jane, a New York sculptress, who returned for two years, but in 1965 Hurricane Betsy did enormous damage and the island was closed. A few years later, Al Rockwell, the dynamic head of Rockwell International, put together a small group and bought the island. Eventually it became a private club owned by members...and you know the rest of the story!”

A 1967 government publication entitled *Bahama Islands: Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the Operation of the Business of Casinos in Freeport and in Nassau* recounts a portion of the facts a bit differently: “In the course of its investigations, the Commission came across what eventually emerged as an extraordinary story. The attempt to establish year-round gambling on Cat Cay Island was not within our terms of reference but we have” nevertheless “included this somewhat complicated history” in the Report. “Prior to 1939, a Mr. Louis R. Wasey operated a gambling casino at what was known as the Cat Cay Club — a small residential private club dependent on holiday bookings, and operative for limited periods each year.” Then, “In 1939 the law was changed to allow the Governor in Council to exempt certain persons and bodies from the general prohibition contained in the Penal Code. This change came, not to meet a growing public demand for the introduction of casino gambling into the Bahama Islands, nor as a result of a distinct change in governmental policy. It was prompted by the recent opening by Mr. Louis Wasey of a small casino on a seasonal basis at Cat Cay and the realisation by those in Government at that time that this venture and a casino, which had been openly operated since 1920 at the **Bahamian Club** on the western outskirts of Nassau, were quite illegal. The Bahamian Club at that time was an extremely exclusive establishment. Its casino was open for only about three months every year in the height of the tourist season and then only to a very restricted clientele.” Thus, a “licensing” procedure for the operation of lotteries and gaming houses was created. The immediate effect of the new provision “was to regularise the position of the existing casinos at the Bahamian Club and at Cat Cay to the respective proprietors of which a Certificate of Exemption was granted.” It is important to note that the gambling facilities at both the Bahamian Club and the Cat Cay Club were available only to visitors and non-Bahamians in retirement in the Bahamas (or at any rate those with no business or professional interests in the Colony). Also permitted were the wives of “Persons engaged in any business or profession or employed for gain in the Colony”, as well as the wives of “Officers or employees of the Government of the Colony” (as long as these ladies were not “born in the Colony and ordinarily resident therein”). In the case of the Cat Cay Club, a Certificate of Exemption was approved by the Governor in Council in December of 1939, exempting the seasonal operation of a casino there until further notice. It “was issued to Louis R. Wasey as President of the club and was for an indefinite period, without any restrictions or conditions. In September 1961, on the death of Mr. Wasey, notice was given by the Government of the termination of the Certificate to take effect from 31st December that year.” At that time, “the Governor in Council decided that applications should thenceforth be made annually.” A man named “Sir Stafford Sands, on behalf of Miss Jane Wasey, then applied for the renewal of the Certificate. He explained that Mr. Wasey had died and his daughter, being the sole heir, had

received all her father's interests in Cat Cay and had been elected President of the club. A Certificate of Exemption was then granted with effect from 1st January, 1962, and similar Certificates were successfully applied for by Sir Stafford on Miss Wasey's behalf for the years 1963 to 1967...The size of the Cat Cay enterprise during the limited periods that it functioned can be gauged from the evidence given to the Commission by Mr. Michael J. McLaney who, for a period of two years, ran the casino on a 50/50 basis with Miss Wasey." The two years in which he operated the casino, with the aid of his brother William, were 1963 and 1964. "He described it as being a harmless little thing with five employees and five customers, operating during the week of the Fishing Tournament. He revealed to the Commission that he had approached Sir Stafford Sands and Sir Harold Christie as to the possible purchase of Cat Cay but negotiations terminated on his failure to get investors and because the price asked by Miss Wasey was too high."

- **Just One Casino for Cat Island** 06-10-08, by Jasmin Bonimy, Guardian Staff Reporter, jasmin@nanguard.com

Prime Minister Hubert Ingraham has announced that Cat Island will become the home of only one casino, despite two international developers each proposing to build their own legal gambling den on the southern island.

Ingraham, who is also Minister of Finance, head made the revelation during a town meeting last Thursday night on the largely undeveloped island. Hundreds of residents attended that meeting, hoping to learn more about a proposed development that is expected to be built on 1,906 acres across the southern tip and adjacent to Fine Bay.

The project's investment company — Cat Island Partners Limited — say its boutique casino will take up approximately 5,000 square feet of their development. Still, this is not the first casino announced for the island. Back in January 2006 — under the Christie Administration — the U.S.-based Crystal Mount Limited announced that its \$1.2 billion, mixed-use project would include a golf beach resort with a Monte Carlo-styled casino. The presence of two gaming houses on the island would likely challenge revenues for both properties considering the challenges now facing Exuma's sole casino, attached to the Four Seasons resort.

Addressing the Cat Island crowd on Thursday night, Prime Minister said: "I don't particularly like casinos as a matter of personal choice. But the developers (Cat Island Partners) convinced us that the project requires a small casino and it was essential for their development." The PM added that he had discussions with the group which touched on the subject of the Crystal Mount project. "And I told them, 'yes there had been talks about another casino in Cat Island, but the first rat that gets in the hole will have his tail covered'," he said last week. "On my watch there will be only one casino in Cat Island and not two. So if they start as they say, they will have the casino and anybody else will get none while I'm here."

His comments come amid concerns by locals that the cozy island would be overrun with casinos and the antisocial ills associated with gambling. But David Southworth, one of lead members of the development team, attempted to allay those concerns, arguing that his

company has no intention of building a "casino resort" per say. He added that the decision to add a casino to initial plans was a strategic one designed to make the resort more appealing. "It is not a casino that will attract high rollers," said Southworth. "We will not be flying in high rollers. "We do not want to make this a gambling destination . . . it (our casino) will be small, but the word casino is still in the plan."

Meanwhile, his investment team has pegged the first phase of the development at \$200 million. It will center on two miles of beach front property and a 223 single-lot and multifamily residential community, a 100 unit condominium hotel, a PGA Golf Club and Village, as well as a low-rise 200-room JW Marriott Hotel. Government officials said the development would soon be approved and construction could begin in "weeks." The estimated completion date for the project is sometime within the next three years. At full build-out, the resort is expected to offer a much-needed boost to Cat Island's slumbering economy and 937 full-time jobs. More than 200 temporary construction jobs will also be created, said developers.

- **Exuma Casino To Be Sold**, August 7th, 2008, By Quincy Parker
Pinnacle Entertainment, the Las Vegas-based entertainment giant that owns **The Casino at Emerald Bay**, has decided to sell or otherwise discontinue operations the Exuma property, due in part to the problems affecting the neighbouring Four Seasons Resort.

And a company spokesperson says Pinnacle would like to see the property in the hands of a local owner, although no word has been given of a discussion between a potential local buyer and the company. Pinnacle released its second quarter results for 2008 on Wednesday, and noted the intention to divest itself of The Casino at Emerald Bay under its "International" segment. "In July 2008, the company decided to sell or otherwise discontinue operations of The Casino at Emerald Bay. This small casino is distant from Pinnacle's other operations and its success is heavily reliant on the neighboring Four Seasons hotel," the company said on its website. "The owner of (the Four Seasons) is currently in receivership."

Pinnacle said that beginning in the third quarter of 2008, it would reflect the business as "a discontinued operation." Company spokeswoman Pauline Yoshihashi told the Journal from the company's corporate office in Las Vegas that the company has already listed the property as discontinued on its books. "It's a lovely facility, but it's very small. It happens to be fairly far away from our other operations, and as many people know, the hotel (Four Seasons) itself is in receivership," she said. "We would like to sell it, if we can find an appropriate buyer, and if that does not come to pass, then obviously we would liquidate the property," she said. "At this point, we would just be starting out on that process. We don't have an offer on the table, no."

- From the book: The Tokens, Checks, Metallic Tickets, Passes and Tallies of the British Caribbean & Bermuda. Provided by Mark Lighterman.

The **Grand Bahama Hotel and Country Club** was conceived by and built for Bully Butlin who developed holiday camps in England. He was later knighted. It opened in 1950 as the Butlin Vacation Village but within a year went into receivership and was renamed the Grand Bahama Hotel and Country Club. The tokens are the same size as the US 50c, 25c, 10c and 5c with an exchange rate of \$2.80 to the L (British pound), a rate introduced in 1949. They use probably as Slot or Fruit machine tokens ceased in the early 1950's. Many were embedded in a clear plastic floor in the entrance to the casino.

Grand Bahama Club Tokens

		
		
4 ½ Pence	1 Shilling, 9 Pence	3 Shillings, 6 Pence

Bonaire

- **Divi Group Announces Plans to Build Beachfront All Inclusive Resort on Dutch Caribbean Island of Bonaire** (www.diviresorts.com)

Oranjestad, Aruba – 6-1-07 - The Divi Group, which operates nine Divi Resorts on six Caribbean islands, as well as two all inclusive resorts in Aruba, has announced that it will build a new beach front all inclusive resort on the Dutch Caribbean island of Bonaire. Construction of the resort is expected to begin in spring 2007, with completion scheduled for the end of 2008.

Offering an all inclusive program based on the same successful all inclusive concept as the Divi & Tamarijn Aruba All Inclusives in Aruba, the new resort will rise to four stories and will feature 275 spacious ocean and beach view units plus sixty ocean view condominiums adjacent to the property. The condos will available for full ownership with a hotel rental program and people who own/use these units will have access to all resort facilities.

Resort amenities will include a large beach, full service dive center, state-of-the-art fitness center, rock climbing wall, large infinity pool, a selection of restaurants and bars, on-site spa, casino and shops. All food and beverage outlets will be open to non-hotel guests as well as

guests of the Divi Flamingo Beach Resort & Casino, Divi Resorts current property in Bonaire. Management of the new all-inclusive resort will fall under the Divi All Inclusive Group in Aruba, with both properties on the island sharing a management team.

Curacao

- **Holiday Beach Casino** in Curacao closed on April 28 2008. All chips had to be redeemed by then. It was purchased by Andalex Group of New York and eventually will reopen. Reported by John Glanfield.

This response is from Thalia Wawoe, Director of Sales, Holiday Beach Hotel & Casino, on 9/22/09: Our Veneto Casino is open daily from 11:00 am through 4:00 am.

Guyana

- **Gambling to be legalised in Guyana**, Monday, August 25, 2008, By Oscar Ramjeet Caribbean Net News Special Correspondent, Email: oscar@caribbeannetnews.com (*Guyana is small South American country on the Atlantic coast between Venezuela and Suriname*)

GEORGETOWN, Guyana: The mechanism is being put in place to pave the way for casino gambling in Guyana. President Bharat Jagdeo said that draft regulations for the establishment of a gaming authority under legislation to facilitate casino gambling should be on Cabinet's agenda very soon. The Stabroek News newspaper reported on Sunday that Jagdeo said he had seen the draft regulations -- "just the basic elements of the gaming authority."

One of the major investors, the new buyer of Buddy's International Hotel, Sudi Ozkan, told Stabroek News in an interview that he intended to operate a casino out of the hotel at Providence, East Bank Demerara, but had not obtained any licenses at that time. Ozkan, who is known in Turkey his native country as the "Casino King", said that establishing a casino would be an expensive undertaking, but he would nevertheless be pursuing it. The Turkish magnate, who plans to take over full management of the hotel by October this year, could not apply for a casino premises license or a casino license because the gaming authority regulations are not yet in place.

Haiti

- **Haiti Casinos**, Posted on August 2nd, 2007 by vitchy (www.haiticentral.info) Haiti is situated in the Caribbean sharing the island of Hispaniola with the Dominican Republic. Haiti also constitutes other smaller islands such as Les Cayemites, Ile de Anacaona, La Gonave, La Tourtue or Tortuga, and the uninhabited island of Navasse, shared with the US. There are only two Haiti casinos available for your gambling pleasures, and both are situated in the capital city of Port au Prince.

Both Haiti casinos, **El Rancho Hotel & Casino** as well as **Royal Haitian Hotel & Casino**, are hotels as the name implies. The El Rancho Hotel & Casino is open daily between 5 pm and 3 am and offers 13 table games, out of which blackjack occupies nine tables, poker is played at two tables, and roulette is practiced at two tables. Fifty slot machines are also part

of the casino for the guests' entertainment. In its complex, the El Rancho Hotel & Casino provides 95 rooms and suites, two restaurants, a piano bar, a discothèque, spa and health club center with a swimming pool, and a tennis court, as well.

The other Haiti casino, the Royal Haitian Hotel & Casino, is open between 9 pm until the last guest in the house leaves. With an area of 500 square feet made available for just the gambling facilities, it offers six table games divided as follows: for blackjack three tables, for Caribbean stud poker one table, and for roulette two tables, as well as 35 slot machines.

The Royal Haitian Hotel & Casino provides 85 rooms and suites, one restaurant, a bar, swimming pool, and a tennis court, as well. Both Haiti casinos are extremely hospitable, welcoming tourists from all over the world, as well as the local residents.

Jamaica

- **The Jamaica government has approved casino gambling.**

August 7th, 2008, Caribbean360.com

The announcement came yesterday from Prime Minister Bruce Golding who revealed that the revenues from casino operations will be placed in a special fund to finance capital development in health, education and security. He said the decision was taken on the heels of a report, prepared in consultation with Price Waterhouse Coopers of Canada, which suggested that "casino gaming would be a very viable industry for Jamaica and has significant potential for direct and indirect employment".

"The issue of casinos has been a lightning rod of controversy for a long time. We have tiptoed around the issue, not wanting to be embroiled in the controversy. We have sneaked up on the issue while proclaiming our opposition to it," he said in his maiden budget speech. "There are those who I know disagree with casino gaming. I respect their views. The fact is that horse bolted through the gate a long time ago with the granting of licenses for hundreds of gaming machines."

The prime minister said a team has been established to recommend the appropriate regulatory framework and tax regime to govern the operation of casinos. "In the meanwhile, the government has approved proposals from the developers of the **Palmyra Resort and Spa**, operating under a company known as Celebration Jamaica Ltd., for a major new investment predicated on the granting of a casino license," Mr. Golding said.

"This investment involves the development of a 65 acre property adjoining the existing Palmyra Resort at Rose Hall and consisting of 2,080 new hotel rooms. The project will involve a total investment of US\$1.8 billion." However, he revealed that in order for that proposal to be committed to agreement, government will have to renegotiate the terms of the agreement with the Tavistock Group which was partnering with government through a specially formed company called Harmonization Ltd. for the development of the **Harmony Cove** project in Trelawny, a large upscale project on 2,300 acres with total investment of US\$4-5 billion and the construction of some 4,500 rooms.

"We had to renegotiate the terms of the agreement with the Tavistock Group in respect of Harmony Cove. This was so because under the agreement entered into with the previous administration, Harmony Cove would have enjoyed an exclusive license to operate gaming machines within a 10 mile radius of any border of Trelawny. This exclusive zone encompasses Rose Hall," Mr Golding revealed.

"I am in a position to advise that based on our undertaking that it will also be allowed to operate a casino, Tavistock has agreed to restrict its exclusivity to allow for an agreement to be signed with Celebration Jamaica and by an exchange of letters the Heads of Agreement have been amended accordingly." He added that the amended agreement also involves Tavistock increasing the size of the project from 4,500 rooms to 8,500 rooms with an additional investment of US\$1-2 billion. The Jamaican leader however made it clear that applications for casino licenses will only be considered if all conditions are met.

These include a minimum investment of US\$1.5 billion and the construction of not less than 1,000 rooms; that the casino component be no more than 20 per cent of the total project; that operators of the casino be subject to the approval of the government after appropriate due diligence including fit and proper tests and evaluation of track record; and an appropriate regulatory framework with the necessary legislation and enforcement mechanism is in place. "We will ensure that best practices are observed and that only reputable companies with proven integrity are allowed to operate in Jamaica," Mr Golding assured.

- Illegal Casino expert, Ed Hertel, sent a scan of a chip attributed to the **Casa Montego Hotel** in Jamaica. A little research on the internet confirmed the location of the hotel, that it was built by a Las Vegas construction firm that specializes in building casinos, and that the "MTD" monogram chips were delivered to the hotel from the manufacturer's records. This is an interesting find and it leaves us with the conclusion that the same mobster's that were in Las Vegas had branched out to run illegal casinos in Jamaica. Here is a link to the construction firm's portfolio of casinos it developed:

<http://www.taylor-usa.com/portfolio.html>





Casa Montego Hotel

Mexico

- Revamped Caliente Gets Back in the Game, May 14, 2008, By Hiram Soto - Union-Tribune Staff Writer



TIJUANA – Construction workers are still removing debris and gardeners are tending to recently planted lawns, but a new kind of betting has begun at the iconic **Caliente casino**. The historic building has a new facade with a Las Vegas-style entryway. Within, there's the greyhound track, remodeled halls for traditional bingo games, sports betting, an international cuisine restaurant and a piano bar. Also inside are 1,333 new electronic gambling machines, which turned Caliente into the largest casino in Mexico when it opened last month. The casino's owner, former Tijuana Mayor Jorge Hank Rhon, invested more than \$25 million in the facility. The renovation is so dramatic that it's easy to lose sight of the new development around Caliente.

Next month, construction of a 33,000-seat soccer stadium is expected to be finished. The stadium will be capable of hosting a first division soccer team, which the Hank family has sought for years. A private firm plans to open a 425,000-square-foot shopping center with a movie theater, high-end retailers, a Wal-Mart and a Starbucks by March. “Before, the traditional part of Tijuana was Revolución Avenue, but with this we're creating an attraction

not just for local shoppers, but also foreign tourists,” said Francisco Ramírez, director of public relations for Grupo Caliente, the casino's owner.

In Mexico, gambling is limited to sporting events, including horse racing, and number-based games of chance such as bingo. In 2004, however, the government approved legislation that opened the doors to bingo-based electronic games. Since then, there has been a proliferation of mini-casinos with these machines, which to the untrained eye look like Las Vegas-style slots. Grupo Caliente operates more than 130 gambling establishments in Mexico, and many have electronic bingo-based machines, including those at the Pueblo Amigo hotel and on Revolución Avenue. To play, a customer needs a card and a code that must be entered into the machine. To cash out, the player takes the card to a cashier.

It's unclear what effect the Caliente casino will have on attendance of San Diego County's casinos, which offer myriad promotions to attract guests from Mexico, including free transportation. Some casinos in the county have a large number of players from Mexico. For example, up to 40 percent of the clientele at the Golden Acorn in Pine Valley comes from Tijuana, Tecate and Mexicali. The Caliente casino “hasn't had an impact on our business,” Golden Acorn's Audrey Marlow said. “We think the competition is good because it strengthens the industry.” But there are signs that the new Caliente could affect U.S. Casinos. Patricia Méndez is among the hundreds of Tijuana residents who pack the buses that transport gamblers north of the border every day. “The line to cross into San Diego is really hard and the truth is this casino is attractive and close to my home,” said Méndez, 47, a homemaker. The casino belongs to the controversial ex-mayor, who returned to the private sector last year after losing the election for governor of Baja California.

Hank, 52, who is well-connected politically, has been dogged by allegations of money laundering, and his former bodyguard was convicted in the 1988 murder of a Tijuana journalist. Hank has never been charged with a major crime. The original track opened in 1916, and its casino operated from 1928 until 1935, when gambling was banned in Mexico. Certain types of bets were allowed in 1947, including on horse racing, which continued at the track until the 1980s. The new phase has surprised many customers who have patronized the place for years, including Fernando Parra, who has come to the dog races since 1971. From his chair, he can see in the distance the unfinished soccer stadium, and workers with shovels and picks walk past the greyhounds as he enjoys the air conditioning in the new hall. “It's fabulous,” he said. “I remember when you had to cross to the other side just to eat a hamburger, and now we have everything here, even a casino. I think this is going to be very popular with people from the other side of the border, too.”

Puerto Rico

- Puerto Rico Herald, March 24, 2005, by Elisabeth Roman
... Andrews, who has been developing hotels in Puerto Rico for the past 35 years, has played a key role in the growth of the island's tourism industry, successfully renovating, expanding, and developing premier properties throughout the island that had been closed. Initially working for Williams Hospitality Management Co. and now with **International Hospitality Enterprises Inc. (IHE)**, which is dedicated to the development, renovation, repositioning and management of hotels and resorts in Puerto Rico, Andrews has personally invested, or

persuaded others to invest—even including a bank as far away as Japan—well over half a billion dollars in renovating and developing 11 hotel properties throughout the island. IHE's recent project in Isla Verde has spurred public controversy, with extreme environmentalist groups halting work underway on a temporary parking site adjacent to the Courtyard that isn't even part of the future hotel project.

While Andrews has the longest record in Puerto Rico of continuous successful hotel operations on the island, he is also no stranger to controversy when it comes to developing hotels. The experienced hotelier has faced more than his share of opposition in Puerto Rico despite being a key figure in successfully turning the local hotel business around.

In 1976, after four different names—the **Ponce de León, the San Gerónimo Hilton, the San Gerónimo, and the Helio Isla**—the 340-room hotel located in Condado, which was about to be closed, was acquired by Andrews and successfully repositioned as the premier commercial hotel in Puerto Rico under the name **Condado Plaza Hotel & Casino**. Two years later, the bankrupt and shuttered 250-room **Flamboyán Hotel** located across the street from the Condado Plaza was also purchased by Andrews' group, renovated, and integrated into the Condado Plaza. Today, the Condado Plaza (both properties) employs 850 people, according to figures obtained by the Puerto Rico Tourism Co. and is one of the island's most successful business hotels.

"The Condado Plaza had been bankrupt four times, the 200-room Flamboyán Hotel [now the Laguna Wing of the Condado Plaza] was closed and abandoned when we bought it in 1978 and built the bridge over Ashford Avenue to connect the properties and yes, the ambientalistas went crazy over this too," recalls Andrews. Yet, in all the years the bridge has been functioning, it has not caused any environmental problems. Today, 800 people work in the successful hotel property.

As the founder and president of Williams Hospitality Management Co., in 1984 Andrews purchased the 378-room **El San Juan Hotel & Casino** in Isla Verde. The bankrupt and closed property was renovated, repositioned, and inaugurated as the premier hotel in San Juan catering to the luxury leisure individual and group traveler, quickly gaining success and recognition as one of the finest resorts in the world.

In 1993, Andrews took over the bankrupt and abandoned 400-room **El Conquistador Resort & Country Club** in Fajardo, renovating and repositioning the property as the incentive-market luxury-destination resort. In order to adequately reposition El Conquistador, Williams added 350 hotel rooms, 60,000 square feet of banquet and meeting space, and a luxury five-star condominium component known as Las Casitas. This was the first time the concept of condo-hotel had been applied to finance hotel properties in Puerto Rico. The resort complex, now recognized as one of the most beautiful resorts in the world, employs 1,700 people.

"El San Juan had been closed in bankruptcy when we purchased it, and El Conquistador had also been forced into foreclosure and had stood abandoned and vandalized for more than 10 years when we purchased it in 1988-89," said Andrews. "Between the Condado Plaza, El San Juan, and El Conquistador, my old company [Williams Hospitality] created more than 2,000

hotel rooms and a whopping 5,000 jobs from 1976 to 1993. The current value of the Condado Plaza, El San Juan, and El Conquistador exceeds \$750 million." ...

- **New shopping centre planned for Puerto Rico**, Friday, May 23, 2008, By Daniel Taub
LOS ANGELES, USA (Bloomberg): Taubman Centers Inc., the owner of 24 US shopping malls, plans to build its first site in Puerto Rico, a 500,000-square-foot retail center that will be part of a hotel, **casino** and office project. Taubman will develop retail spaces and San Juan, Puerto Rico- based New Century Development Inc. will build the hotel, casino and offices, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan-based Taubman said. The project was announced at the International Council of Shopping Centers conference in Las Vegas.

The Plaza Internacional development "will address enormous pent-up market demand for better merchandise" in Puerto Rico, Taubman said in marketing materials promoting the project. Almost two-thirds of Puerto Rico's population and "the majority of its most affluent residents" live in the region to be served by Plaza Internacional, Taubman said. The mall's construction cost hasn't been determined yet, Taubman spokeswoman Karen MacDonald said. Construction is expected to begin by late next year and the mall will take about 18 to 24 months to build, she said.

- **4 new casinos slated for Puerto Rico**, 05-22-2008
Four new casinos are opening in Puerto Rico and requests for another two are pending. Tourism officials say one casino is expected to open in 2009 in San Juan's newly renovated **La Concha** hotel. The others will open in **Guayanilla**, **Cabo Rojo** and **Aguadilla**, a western coastal town popular with surfers. Tourism official Hector Rivera says the casinos will add 800 machines across the U.S. Caribbean territory. He said Wednesday that island's 24 casinos bring in an estimated US\$300 million (?190 million) a year. Rivera said Wednesday that requests to open a casino in Isla Verde and Ponce are pending.

St. Croix

- ST. CROIX, U.S Virgin Islands, February 28, 2008 - **A major United States hotel chain is entering a new Caribbean market with the development of a 400-room resort.**
(Caribbean360.com)

Wyndham Hotels and Resorts yesterday announced that the Wyndham St. Croix Golf Resort and Casino will be the keystone of a US\$250 million complex that includes a new 43,000-square foot conference centre. The 294-acre property which will be located on the south shore of St. Croix, is scheduled to break ground this spring and open in 2010. It will feature a 25,000 square-foot casino; 18-hole golf course; 17,000 square-foot world-class spa and fitness centre; four restaurants; lounges; retail stores; and kid's club.

The move is designed to stimulate the island's economy through financial support of investment ventures designed to increase tourism and employment. Wyndham Hotels and Resorts president, Peter Strelbel said the introduction of the Wyndham brand in St. Croix will build upon its 24-resort portfolio in the Caribbean and Mexico, which includes properties in Puerto Rico, St. Thomas, Dominican Republic, Bahamas, Cozumel and the Riviera Maya.

"This world-class resort will enhance the Wyndham brand's strong position in the Caribbean, promote tourism and introduce thousands of travelers to this wonderful island, with its rich culture, friendly people, pristine beaches and exciting recreational activities," he said.

Paul Golden, chief executive officer of Golden Resorts which will develop the hotel jointly with Jericho All-Weather Opportunity Fund of Boca Raton, Florida, said construction and operation of the hotel and casino will be an "economic catalyst" for the island and its citizens, "creating more than 1,000 construction jobs and 1,200 permanent jobs".

Jericho managing partner, Scott Svirsky said his company was excited about the development opportunity. "We are extremely pleased to be working with Golden Resorts, Wyndham Hotels and Resorts and the U.S. Virgin Islands government to bring this resort to St. Croix," he said.

St. Kitts

St. Lucia

St. Maarten

Suriname

Trinidad and Tobago

Turks and Caicos

- **Turks and Caicos to open new casino**, 6/8/2008

We reported last July that we discovered that, although Turks and Caicos has only one casino, it has issued three gaming licenses, and that one of them is held by Butch Stewart, chairman of Sandals and Beaches resorts. At the time, we were told there was still internal debate about where, and whether, to build a casino. Apparently, it's been settled: It will go in behind the French Pavilion area of Beaches Turks and Caicos. No date yet for when construction will begin; it's apparently in line behind the Italian Pavilion extension of Beaches (now under construction, due for a soft opening Jan. 29), a water park and a Royal Plantation adjacent to Beaches. TC was told that when all that construction is finished, Butch will still have some land left over.

Caribbean TITOs

By: Jim Noll CCCC R-017

The 34 known TITOs from the Caribbean area have been added to the upcoming Ver. 2 of the TITO Collectors Catalog and to the Caribbean Chip Guide, thanks to the collectors who have helped reach that number, now it is time to identify more types and add them to both reference sources.

The casino collectors press recently stated that almost all of the casinos in Puerto Rico had converted to TITOs. Since to date we have TITOs listed from 11 Puerto Rico Casinos that should mean that we have about 10 more to find as Charles lists 21 open casinos in Puerto Rico. In addition several of the casinos that we have seen TITOs from share slot cards with other casinos and thus those casinos are good candidates to have TITOs now or soon to have TITOs.

I am reviewing the casino/hotel web sites for the other Caribbean locations and trying to determine if they use TITOs, To date I have identified 3 more locations that have or should have TITOs, including the Atlantis World in Dominican Republic, Hilton Ponce in Puerto Rico and The Players Club in Turks & Caicos which issues slot and electronic table game pay out TITOs. Charles has added 6 more countries to the CCG since the last newsletter; I have reviewed web sites from the casinos listed in these new countries and TITO's should be available from the Las Vegas Casino in Belize and the Veneto Casino in Panama.

I would estimate that most casinos with 100 machines or more would be using TITOs, smaller places most likely not. Charles indicated in the CCG that about 165 casinos are open in the Caribbean area he is tracking on the CCG. I would guess that something like less than half of them would be big enough to have TITOs. Thus it would appear we have a lot of TITOs to find. As I do not travel to the Caribbean area I am going to ask those of you that do to add TITOs to your collecting interests during Caribbean trips.

Also since TITOs have been in use since 2000/2001 it is possible that some Caribbean Casinos that opened or upgraded their slots and then later closed between 2000/2001 and 2007 could have had TITOs. most likely in the 2004 to 2007 period. If such TITOs exist they will be very hard to find as it is unlikely many were saved.

The AWG people are soon to open the Dunes Casino in St. Maarten, when that happens all the AWG casinos most likely will get new design TITOs as they list all their casinos on the TITO backs. They have issued a slot card with the Dunes name on the back so the TITOs should follow.

Anyone with questions on TITOs and TITO collecting please feel free to contact me at Jenca@pacbell.net.

Caribbean Casino Collectors Club News

The CCCC held its first meeting at the CCGTCC Convention in Las Vegas on Thursday June 19th at 4pm. There were approximately 40 collectors in attendance. The group was in agreement for keeping this club informal and that it could continue to function without the need for organization and structure. I will continue to run the club the best that I am able to and solicit assistance for specific projects. We will look to hold our next meeting at the 2009 CCGTCC convention.

There was a recommendation that we try to organize a group trip to a Caribbean destination or go on a Caribbean Cruise. A likely candidate for the destination would be an island that is easily accessible, is affordable, and has many open casinos. Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic come to mind, although there are others like St. Maarten and Aruba. The Bahamas is another candidate but there are only two open casinos in Nassau/Paradise Island and the other open casino is a flight away on Grand Bahama island. If anyone is interested in participating on this trip or is willing to organize it, please contact me. My wife is a travel agent and can help to make the travel arrangements.

At the meeting I distributed a souvenir CCCC casino chip. Those in attendance received the chip. If you were not in attendance and would like a chip, please contact me and let me know if you would like one of the red or blue chips. If you would like both, there will be a \$5 charge for the extra chip, shipping included.



The Caribbean ChipGuide

The Caribbean ChipGuide, www.caribbeanchipguide.com, is going strong with close to 4,700 items. I have pretty much put every scan that has been sent to me up on the CCG. Thanks to the 95 different collectors who have sent me some scans so far. So now is the time to look through your collections for items that are missing from the CCG and send me some more scans. We are close to 5,000 items. I am not sure what I will do, but I'll celebrate that milestone in a big way. Any suggestions?

I am also working on enhancements to make it easier to find items and generate custom displays or catalogs. Those enhancements are on the back burner for now.

I recently added several Central America countries that border on the Caribbean Sea to the Caribbean ChipGuide: Mexico, Belize, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama. If you have chips, tokens or other items from these locations, please send me the scans.

Market Commentary

Nothing new to report.

Hordes and Discoveries

Nothing new to report.

So that's it for now, happy chipping.

Charles Kaplan

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TOTALS: Printed 57 of the 58 records.