

HOW I FOUND THE PEOPLES CHOICE CHIPS

by *Jim Episale*

Okay, the secret is finally about to be told.

Five years ago at my first convention, I shipped my posters via UPS and picked them up at their depot in Las Vegas. Monday after the show was over I went with my new friend John Doe to ship them back home. After our trip to UPS Mr. Doe, a long time visitor of Las Vegas, drove me around to show me the sights.

As we passed the Moulin Rouge we noticed that it was being renovated with construction crews on sight. So I said to J.D. lets take a look and see if there is anything left inside.

Not I, he said, this neighborhood is too dangerous. We continued on our tour and in a couple of hours returned to the Aladdin. Well I lasted in the hotel for all of five minutes before deciding that I had to return to the Moulin Rouge, rough neighborhood or not. So I hopped in the car and drove over.

Now for those of you not familiar with the area, the Moulin Rouge is located on Bonanza right around the corner from West Owens where The People's Choice was located, but I digress.

I arrived at the parking lot got out of the car and asked the first person that I saw if I could look around. Receiving permission I walked inside. The place looked like a cyclone hit it all the fixtures were ripped out and there were piles of trash and papers strewn around the building.

I asked the next person that I saw what they were doing with this stuff. To which he replied "throwing it out"

"May I take some", I asked. "Help yourself, the less there is, the less we have to clean up", he said.

I found a couple of boxes and started sorting through the ephemera in order to preserve

some of the fragile history of the first black casino in Nevada. At the bottom of one of the piles were boxes of chips, all from the Peoples Choice. We believe that they were the first issue, they had never been seen before!!

There were 298 blue one dollar chips, 78 red five dollar chips, and 76 green twenty-five dollar chips. I put them in the bottom of one of my two boxed thanked the workers and returned to the Hotel.

When I saw John Doe I related my experience presented him with ONE set of chips but refused to share the rest of my bounty.

We remain friends to this day and he never refuses when I suggest that we go on a historic adventure.

Jim Episale Unshredded Nostalgia

