

NEW ALADDIN
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And it was just this week that the Dunes people, across the highway from the expanded Aladdin, decided that they would do a little tower building, too...like two of 'em, each with 500 rooms. Ground-breaking is scheduled in July, completion a year later. The county commissioners put their O.K. on it just a couple days ago. A thousand more rooms and about \$75 million here.

Jackie Gaughan, one of Vegas' astute old-tyme operators, will be nestling his new high-rise gaming emporium in the very shadow of the Flamingo Hilton. He's named it "The Barbary Coast" and it doth appear that this "Strip" addition will be a Gaughaner within the next 12 months.

Another pending new near-neighbor for the Aladdin -- also across U.S. Highway 91, will be the 1,200 room Xanadu, deluxe in every respect and purportedly in the \$80 million-plus bracket.

But despite all this ferocious activity, the two big Las Vegas stories so far this year have to be:

1. The passing of billionaire Howard Hughes, owner of the Desert Inn, Sands, Frontier, Landmark and Castaways whose apparently intestate departure from this worldly veil was followed by a rash of wills (last count: 30).

2. The Aladdin's entry into the Big Leagues, coupled with its bold, nay, revolutionary construction of a \$10 million, 7,500-seat Theatre For the Performing Arts.

Las Vegas will tell you that this citadel for the arts will positively up-end the local entertainment scene...No food, no beverages and all seats reserved. And the biggest of the Mega-Stars, as they're called these days.

For openers? Neil Diamond. He'll perform July 2, 3 and 4. Next? "Chicago," playing July 8 and 9. And then? A continuing stream of mega-stars, Broadway shows, ballets, symphony concerts, rock-and-pop stars, operas, championship boxing matches, professional tennis and basketball and stars of stage, screen, TV, radio and the recording industry.

The Aladdin has other showcases to energize the Las Vegas entertainment picture. They've built a new showroom, just off the casino, seating 600. It opened May 28 with Glenn Yarbrough



SINGER-COMPOSER NEIL DIAMOND, WHOSE ONE-MAN SHOW WAS A TWO-WEEK SELL-OUT ON BROADWAY, MAKES HIS LAS VEGAS DEBUT AT ALADDIN HOTEL'S NEW THEATRE FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS, JULY 2, 3, 4.

and The Limelights in a revue entitled "Reunion '76," and divided the marquee billing with Frank Sinatra, Jr. The show stays until June 17 -- two performances nightly at 8 P.M. and 12 Midnight. It's the Bagdad Theatre. Other top stars will follow, according to the Aladdin's Entertainment Director, Mitch DeWood -- another old-tyme on the Las Vegas show scene.

DeWood has also booked in some powerhouse entertainers for the Aladdin's new 250-seat Casino Lounge. Currently playing, from dusk-to-dawn is the Irish Showband, featuring Brendan Boyer. Come June 3, Sam Butera and The Witnesses will play opposite them.

To premiere the "new" Aladdin, Jim Abraham, executive vice president and general manager, ordered a series of super-spectacular opening parties. These "soirees" were planned to be absolutely overwhelming in their sybaritic aspects -- ice carvings, tons of fresh flowers with rose petals cast at the feet of the

arriving celebrities, oodles of stars, and celebrities, strollers, troubadours and bellydancers, soothsayers, magicians and a couple-dozen pink-clad "Jeanie" Girls...not to mention over-popular Bob Crosby and his 15-piece orchestra. 'Tis rumored that the opening soirees, what with the Beluga caviar, culinary and floral displays, choice morsels flown in from 10 foreign nations, stood the Aladdin owners, including Chairman of the Board Peter Webbe and President Richard Daly, the better part of a million dollars, American.

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