



Guide to the Carolyn Merriam Collection on the Sands Hotel

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Summary Information

Repository:	University of Nevada, Las Vegas. University Libraries. Special Collections and Archives.
Creator:	Merriam, Carolyn
Title:	Carolyn Merriam Collection on the Sands Hotel
ID:	MS-00673
Date [inclusive]:	1972-1998
Date [bulk]:	1980s-1998
Physical Description:	1.96 Cubic Feet (3 boxes)
Physical Description:	1.40 Linear Feet
Language of the Material:	English
Abstract:	The Carolyn Merriam Collection on the Sands Hotel (1972-1998) consists primarily of Sands Hotel merchandise and ephemera, including mugs, glassware, playing cards, dice, an ashtray, and a tote bag. The collection also contains several framed photograph reproductions depicting Las Vegas, Nevada in the 1950s and 1960s. The Sands Hotel operated in Las Vegas, Nevada from 1952 to 1996.

Preferred Citation

Carolyn Merriam Collection on the Sands Hotel, 1972-1998. MS-00673. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Historical Background

The Sands Hotel and Casino opened in Las Vegas, Nevada, on December 15, 1952. It was built at a cost of \$5 million by Texas oilman Jake Freedman and several out-of-state investors, including Ed Levinson, Sid Wyman, and Michael Shapiro. Freedman purchased the property himself, and had Googie-style California architect Wayne McAllister design the building. New York nightclub manager Jack Entratter became general manager of the hotel and casino. The combination of Entratter's connections in the entertainment world from his days at the Copacabana Club in New York and the hotel's lavish spending on entertainment assured that the Sands was a preeminent

place for top-name entertainers such as Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin, and Sammy Davis Jr., all of whom performed in the renowned Copa Room during the 1950s and 1960s, surrounded by the famous Copa girls.

After the death of Jake Freedman in 1958, Entratter and Carl Cohen, the casino manager, took over the hotel as President and Vice-President respectively. In 1963, construction of a 15-story circular tower began and was part of an overall expansion and renovation of the hotel and casino as a major convention facility. Howard Hughes acquired the Sands in 1967 for \$14.6 million and planned to add 4,000 rooms to the resort. Hughes never built the addition and sold the Sands to the Pratt Corporation in 1983, but reacquired the property soon after. Hughes sold the Sands again in 1988 to Kirk Kerkorian, the builder of the International and MGM Grand hotels. Kerkorian kept the Sands for only a few months, eventually selling it to Sheldon Adelson, chairperson of the Interface Group, for \$110 million. Adelson built a 575,000 square foot convention facility, the Sands Expo and Convention Center, which opened in 1990. Adelson announced plans to build a new resort, and the Sands officially closed in June of 1996 and was imploded later that year. In 1999, Adelson opened his \$1.5 billion Venetian hotel at the site of the old Sands hotel.

Sources:

"The History of Las Vegas Sands." Las Vegas Sands Corp. Accessed December 18, 2018. <https://www.sands.com/corporate-overview/history.html>

"Sands Hotel." Online Nevada Encyclopedia. Accessed December 18, 2018. <http://www.onlinenevada.org/articles/sands-hotel>

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Scope and Contents Note

The Carolyn Merriam Collection on the Sands Hotel (1972-1998) consists primarily of Sands Hotel merchandise and ephemera, including mugs, glassware, playing cards, dice, an ashtray, and a tote bag. The collection also contains several framed photograph reproductions depicting Las Vegas, Nevada in the 1950s and 1960s. The Sands Hotel operated in Las Vegas, Nevada from 1952 to 1996.

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Arrangement

Materials remain in original order.

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Administrative Information

Access Note

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 in 2008 by Carolyn Merriam; accession number 2008-027.

Processing Note

Materials were minimally processed upon accession in 2008. In 2014, Lindsay Oden further processed and described the collection to bring it into compliance with current professional standards. In 2018, as part of an archival elimination project, Christina Lamoureux rehoused and arranged the materials, revised the finding aid, and entered the data into ArchivesSpace.

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Related Materials

Related Collections

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

Sands Hotel Public Relations Records, 1952-1977. MS-00417. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

Sands Hotel Photographs, 1950-1980. PH-00287. Special Collections and Archives, University Libraries, University of Nevada, Las Vegas. Las Vegas, Nevada.

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Names and Subjects

- Casinos -- Nevada -- Las Vegas -- History
- photographs
- Memorabilia
- Playing cards
- Postcards
- Hotels -- Nevada -- Las Vegas
- Sands Hotel & Casino (Las Vegas, Nev)

Collection Inventory

Title/Description	Containers
Glasses, mugs, postcards, playing cards, dice, ashtray, and other ephemera, approximately 1972-1996	box 01
Assorted shirts and Sands Tennis Club tote bag, 1980s-1996	box 02
Framed photograph reproductions depicting Las Vegas, Nevada during the 1950s-1960s and a commemorative plaque with a piece of wood from the stage of the Copa Room in the Sands Hotel, approximately 1980s-1998	box 03