

# SS Club Historian's Corner

*by Jeff Gaffke*

*When I signed on for this position, Mary Lou Waterbury provided me with a history of the Silver Strikers Club. Below is a first installment of the story of our club.*

## HISTORY OF THE SILVER STRIKE & THE SILVER STRIKERS CHAPTER/CLUB

### Part One

Silver strikes first appeared in 1992 when Anchor Gaming introduced a \$7 silver strike slot machine in several casinos in Nevada. These strikes did not have a case so they got pretty banged up.

The strikes were touted as souvenir coins so when people won one or more they took them home and tossed them in a drawer. A few people felt that this was something they could collect so they began searching for more of the machines.

At the end of 1993 the \$10 strike made its appearance. Also in 1993, a \$28 silver strike was in play at the Aladdin, Las Vegas, Golden Nugget, Laughlin and the Rio Casino in Las Vegas.

In 1994 and 1995 Anchor Gaming tried a 5 cent machine with a prize of a \$2 brass "silver strike." Casinos that offered these machines were the Aladdin, LV and Harrah's Reno which featured the Seven Wonders of the World. The Edgewater in Laughlin did Eleven Wonders. The Teller House in Colorado came out with seven Man Made Wonders and seven Natural Wonders. The Grand in Colorado had the Seven Wonders with both 1994 and 1995 dates. Deadwood, South Dakota had Seven Wonders dated 1994 and 1995 plus four cars and motorcycles. The \$3 "silver strike" was put out by the Aladdin Casino featuring the World's Seven Wonders.

In 1995 a \$5 pull machine was introduced in five Nevada casinos with a prize of a \$200 strike. This was not popular and it ended with the machines being pulled and the \$200 strikes sold out of the cashier cages.

In 1998 the Imperial Palace came up with the idea of trading 20 \$10 strikes for a \$200 and other casinos followed this concept.

Janice O'Neal was printing out a list of all the Nevada silver strikes, to sell to all interested persons.

The strike machines were catching on in other states as those states began permitting legal gambling. Alabama, Colorado, Connecticut, Illinois, Iowa, Louisiana, Michigan, Minnesota, Mississippi, Missouri, New Jersey, North Dakota, South Dakota, and Wisconsin, all jumped on this new "fad." Even cruise ships along with a few of the islands in the Caribbean installed the strike machines.

During these first years collectors were meeting other collectors at the strike machines delighted to find someone with like interests. Names and addresses were exchanged. People for the most part were laboriously writing up their want lists and sending them around the country. Ray Moritz took out an ad in the Numismatic Magazine and met several collectors who responded to his request for silver strikes.

It was so exciting to run across someone who shared your interest. We were all wondering how to contact others and get more silver strike buddies.

### Part Two

Mary Lou Waterbury and Jack Haddock were writing articles for the Casino Chips and Gaming Tokens Collector Club's Magazine. E-mails were sent to known collectors asking if there was a real desire to start a club.

The CC&GTCC were holding their convention in the Orleans Casino and Hotel in 1999. It was very difficult to get a meeting room for our group. Jack and Mary Lou were resigned to paying for a room when Mary Lou was informed that we could have a room at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday morning. Mary Lou had promised with fingers crossed behind her back that at least 25 people would be in attendance. She also received E-mails telling her that 8:30 in the morning was too early. Since it was take that time or meet out in the yard at the Orleans, the decision wasn't too difficult.

On July 17, 1999 at 8:15 a.m. in a meeting room at the Orleans Hotel and Casino of Las Vegas, NV, a group of members of the Casino Chips and Gaming Tokens Club (CC&GTC) met, along with other persons interested in Silver Strikes.

Mary Lou Waterbury gave the opening remarks and then turned the meeting over to Jack Haddock. His first question was, "Do we want to set up a club inside the CC&GTCC as others do, such as the Tokens group?"

After a short discussion Archie Black made a motion to set up a Silver Strikes Chapter under the umbrella of the CC&GTCC. This was 2nd and the motion carried.

A motion was made to have as interim officers, Jack Haddock as President and Mary Lou Waterbury as Secretary. Jack asked for a volunteer for interim Treasurer and Evelyn Grosklaus responded. A request for an Editor of the new newsletter was answered by Peter Van der Kar. The next order of business was to give our Chapter a name. A motion was made and 2nd to call it Silver Strikers. There was also a discussion of dues and dues were set at \$10 per person.

A cutoff date for charter members was set for August 15, 1999.

There were 45 persons at that meeting and before the convention was over 63 people had filled out the make-shift application blanks and paid their dues.

By August 15, 1999 there were 147 charter members.