

Harold J. Stocker

March 8, 1900- January 9, 1983

Elected 1938 4 years

Harold J. Stocker served only one term on the Clark County Commission, but the Stocker family contributed considerably to the development of gaming in Las Vegas. Stocker's mother, Mayme received the first gaming license in the state once gambling was legalized in 1931. Harold and his brothers helped run the Northern Club located at 15 East Fremont Street. Stocker later went into business in Overton and built and operated a motel and apartments in Las Vegas.



The Stocker family arrived in Las Vegas in October 1911. Harold's father, Oscar, worked for the railroad. Shortly after the family moved to southern Nevada, Mayme's sister fell ill in Butte, Montana. Mayme and the young Harold went to Montana to care for the ailing aunt. During this time, Harold was first introduced to the whisky business. Following the time in Montana, Harold attended school in Los Angeles, something allowed by the family's free travel on the railroad because of his father's employment with the railroad. At the age of 17, he began to work as a casino dealer in Tijuana, Mexico.

During World War I, Stocker joined the Student Army Training Corps. During his military training, the flu epidemic forced the closure of the school. He eventually returned to Las Vegas in 1919.

In 1920, Mayme Stocker opened the Northern Club on Fremont Street. The Stocker sons all worked in the club with Harold working in the management of the club. Mayme received the first gaming license issued following the legalization of gaming on March 20, 1931. In 1945, she leased the club to Wilbur Clark.

During the 1930s, Stocker left the gaming and whisky business. He opened a glass sand claim near Overton. He named the operation the Nevada Silica Sand Company and operated it from 1932 until 1940.

In 1938, Stocker sought a seat on the Clark County Commission. He ran as a non-partisan and easily defeated Albert L. Jones at the poll. He served one contentious term on the commission. He opposed Kenneth O. Earl for the chairmanship of the Commission and the County Commission became mired in deadlock. In May of 1940, Stocker was charged with malpractice and malfeasance in his office as a County Commissioner. The charges stemmed from the lease of his dump truck to Clark County and the subsequent collection of fees and rent for the truck by his wife. The judge ruled that there was not enough evidence to convict Stocker, but did find his actions questionable.

Following his tenure as a County Commissioner, Stocker remained active in civic affairs in Las Vegas. In 1949, he led a group of citizens to develop a convention center for Las Vegas. In 1950, he was named state chairman of the Republican Party. He called for the division of Nevada into two states. His chairmanship was marred by scandal and in 1951, party officials attempted to remove him as chairman.

Stocker opened the Chief Hotel Court at the intersection of Fremont Street and Maryland Parkway in 1939. In 1948, he built the Desert Plaza Apartment Complex on Maryland Parkway. It was the largest complex in the state when it opened.

Mayme Stocker lived until 1972 and until her death; Harold threw her lavish birthday parties. Harold died on January 9, 1983 at his home of heart failure.