

What?

What Happened To The Horseshoe's Million Dollar Display?

Benny Binion, who ran the Horseshoe, had an idea to draw in customers. He was going to put one million dollars in a display case near the front door. A close friend who had the money, Joe W. Brown, suggested they display the bills in a golden horseshoe. Brown supplied the notes.

This was just about the time that Benny lost his battle with the feds and was convicted of tax evasion. He went to Leavenworth Penitentiary in 1954, where he stayed as a guest of the government until 1957. In an unusual transaction, he "sold" the Horseshoe to Joe Brown with the understanding that Binion would again have control when he came back home to Las Vegas.

Brown was now ready to put a million dollars on exhibit near the front door of the Horseshoe. Brown talked to VP Chuck Brooks at the Bank of Nevada branch at Fifth (now Las Vegas Boulevard) and Gass Street. Sutherland who ordered 100 \$10,000 Salmon P. Chase Federal Reserve Notes from the Denver Mint.

When the money arrived, Brown placed it in a suit pocket and walked out of the bank...with no security guards. Waiting at the club was a huge horseshoe. It was eight feet tall, weighed 2,000 pounds and the case to hold the bills was bullet proof. At the top, on a large plaque inscribed with "Joe W. Brown's Horseshoe."

It was an immediate success. Visitors, to the tune of about six hundred a day, more or less, had their photographs taken in front of the million dollar display.



When Brown died, the 100 bills were taken out and put into his estate. But, that isn't the end of the story.

A few years later, Binion decided to put the display up again - people missed it. He had a hard time finding 100 \$10,000 bills but Parry Thomas solved Binion's problem. Thomas owned the Las Vegas Bank and located enough notes at a bank in New York.

In all its glory, the gold horseshoe displayed more money than most people would ever see in their lifetime. This time, the plaque proclaimed "Binion's Horseshoe - Las Vegas."

A few years ago, Chuck Brooks visited the Horseshoe and it was gone. He asked an older female employee in the money cage what had happened. She said it had been sold to a collector for \$13 million.

[<https://www.gbcnv.edu/hickson/Horseshoe.html>]