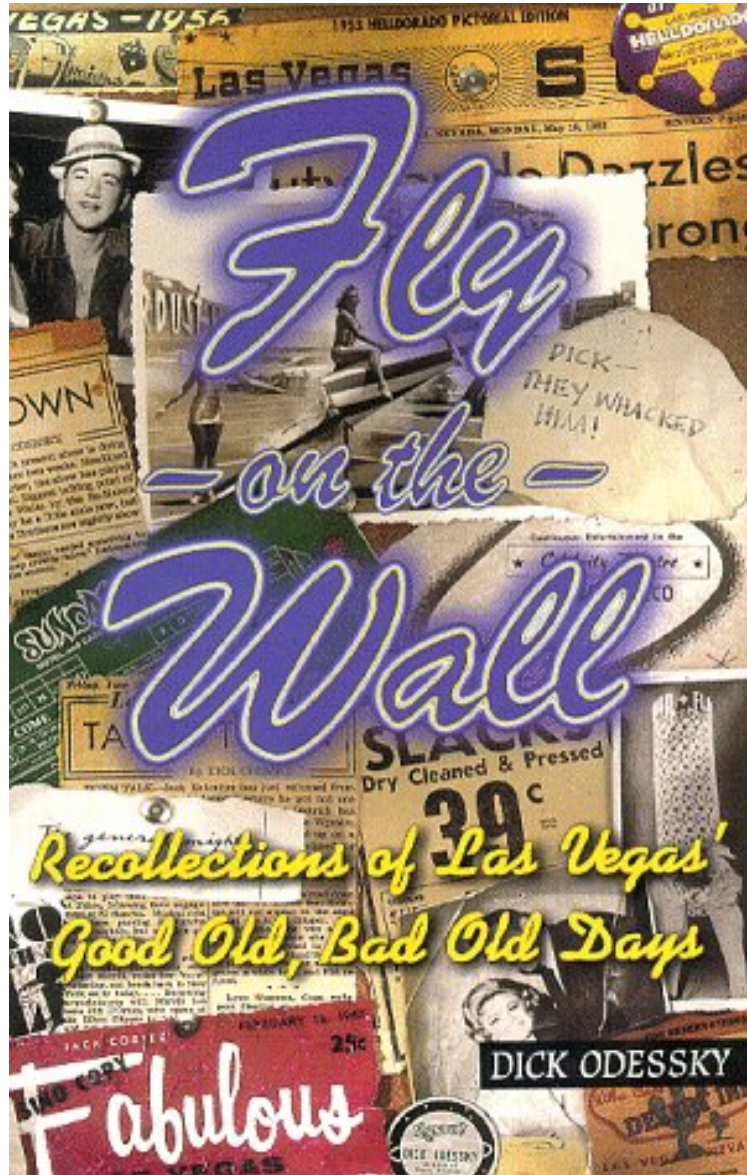


(Free download) Fly on the Wall: Recollections of Las Vegas' Good Old, Bad Old Days

# Fly on the Wall: Recollections of Las Vegas' Good Old, Bad Old Days

Dick Odessky

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Dick Odessky : Fly on the Wall: Recollections of Las Vegas' Good Old, Bad Old Days before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Fly on the Wall: Recollections of Las Vegas' Good Old, Bad Old Days:

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By H. Loyola My husband and I are some of the many who have come to enjoy Vegas as a quick getaway. We both really enjoy places with stories to tell, and many have been told about Vegas. This book is the author's recollections of Vegas from the early 50's to the early 90's and the changes he experienced. I commend him on keeping the stories to what he had first-hand knowledge of and not elaborating by filling in with what those of us who've read on Vegas before, already know. It's interesting to get different perspectives on the good old yarns.

Imagine what it must have been like to be in Las Vegas during its most glamorous and eventful years: the 1950s, when you could rub elbows with powerful politicians, famous entertainers, and infamous gangsters; the 1960s, when Howard Hughes' corporate invasion changed casinos forever; and the 1970s, which were immortalized by the movie Casino. Good Old Days--In the old days, when Eddy Arnold was a great star, Bobby Darin was alive, and Wayne Newton was a little kid, a 50 bottle of beer or a 25 cup of coffee was all you had to buy to catch the showroom performances. In the Copa Room at the old Sands, you and your date could enjoy cocktails, a New York steak dinner, and a 90-minute show with a full chorus line of beautiful dancers, a well-known comedian or singer, and a big star like Frank Sinatra. For all this, you could pay the check, taxes, and tips and still get change from a \$10 bill. The Dirt Buyers--Ted Griss was interested in Las Vegas as an up-and-coming travel destination. Griss proposed to buy a mile of highway frontage that was more than a half-mile deep. The land was worthless and gullywashers often turned the area into a dangerous flood zone. Griss paid \$1 a front foot for the entire parcel, which worked out to around \$5,000. Today, Circus Circus, Slots A Fun, Westward Ho, and the Stardust occupies this "worthless" piece of land. The Funny Man--Following his last show at the Riviera, Shecky Greene went to his suite, changed into his pajamas, and pulled on a silk robe. Then he walked to his car, fired it up, and did a very strange thing: He maneuvered the Buick, facing north, into southbound traffic, until he backed into the Flamingo parking lot. Green walked through the casino to one of the busy crap tables, where he stripped off his robe, climbed over the rail, and lay down atop the chips, dice, and cash. He placed the robe under his head as a pillow. Dick Odessky moved to Las Vegas from Los Angeles to take a job as a cub reporter at the Las Vegas Sun in the early 1950s. He began covering gambling-industry news, entertainment, and personalities two years before he was old enough to legally be inside the casinos. In 1960, Odessky became the youngest casino publicist in Las Vegas, when hotel-casino-marketing departments were one-man shows. He worked as a public-relations executive at the Flamingo, Four Queens, and Stardust for the next 23 years, until retiring. Today, he and his wife manage a resort in Big Bear Lake, California.

About the Author Dick Odessky was a newspaperman in Los Angeles before moving to Las Vegas to ply his trade in the early 1950s. Later, he worked as a publicist and marketing director at several hotel-casinos.