

I.B.M.
RING #29

October 1996

MAGIC MUSINGS

International Brotherhood of Magicians, Ring #29
8912 Stagecoach Road, #7, Little Rock, ARKANSAS 72209 • (501) 455-6242
Meeting 1st Thursday of every month, Baptist Medical Center



Mystery on Oct. 3; Daryl coming Oct. 10

OCTOBER MEETINGS:

✓ **Thurs., Oct. 3, 7 pm**
Regular monthly meeting
Meeting room 22, Cafeteria
Mystery & Mayhem by Damon

✓ **Thurs. Oct. 10, 7 pm**
SPECIAL LECTURE
BY DARYL

Things & Stuff

✓ **Don Thompson**, current president of the Association of Government Accountants, has been using magic at each of the meetings he has chaired.

✓ **Andy Stirman** will perform again at the annual Festival of Trees benefit for CARTI. But this time he'll do walk-around magic instead of a stage performance (with all the distractions).

✓ **Joe Farrar** broke his ankle and leg on (when else for a magician?) Friday the 13th. He'll be laid up and off work for at least 12 weeks. Bummer! Call or send him greetings.

✓ Don't forget, the **Northeast Arkansas Magic Club** at Newport invites our ring members to attend their regular meeting on the last Sunday of each month, at 2 pm.

The same goes for the **Searcy club**, which meets the second Monday of each month. They have 16 members and Big John and Little John say "come on down (or up)."

✓ **Smiley (Bill Webb) the Clown**, retiree from Hot Springs, has been named the Official Hospital Clown by St. Joseph's Hospital there. He performs for patients at the hospital every Thursday from 9-11 am. Also, recently he performed for the Kids Club in Hot Springs, for some 67 kids.

✓ As of this time, there will not be a December meeting. Too much going on.

✓ Also, the **Don Harlan lecture** has been canceled. His schedule didn't work out.

✓ **Bill Fulton** let us know about the death Friday the 13th of world-famous J.B. Bobo from Texarkana. Enclosed is a reprint of his feature obituary.

We have another **double-header** month, with our regular meeting **Oct. 3** and world-class magician, **Daryl**, performing and lecturing to us on **Oct. 10**.

● The theme for the **October regular monthly meeting** of IBM Ring 29 will be "**An Evening of Mystery and Mayhem**," featuring our own **Damon Reinbold**. He will be performing his **hypnotism act**, with a smidgen of **mentalism** thrown in for good measure.

We don't normally have an opportunity to see either of these specialties of magic, so be sure not to miss this meeting. In fact, it would be a good time to bring one or more prospects for membership.

We'll meet at the regular time (7 pm) at the regular place (Baptist Med Center), in the basement, behind the cafeteria. Come early, go through the line and bring your tray to the meeting room to eat and socialize.

Also, as always, we'll have a performing and show-and-tell segment during which we hope most members will perform. Come try out a new trick on us. Ask for some help with a new routine. We want to see as much magic as possible during the gathering, and urge all

of you to participate.

● World-class magician **Daryl** will return to Arkansas to perform and lecture for our Ring, **Thursday, Oct. 10**. At press time we did not have a place, but we'll meet at **7 pm**.

If you plan to attend you must call the Mr. Magic shop (455-6242) to make a reservation and to find out where it will be held. Cost will be \$8 for members and \$12 for nonmembers, a little more than usual.

We met in Benton the last time he was here, and everyone had a great time. He has lots of original tricks and you'll want to buy some. Bring your wallet or checkbook.

You won't want to miss this one, either. He's in high demand throughout the country and we're lucky to get him. We should have a big crowd, including visiting magicians from around the state.

LAST MONTH:

We had a nice-size audience at the October meeting, at which **Fred Hartman** entertained with his one-liners. Some were old, some new, some borrowed, some blue. But there's nothing like a little corn to whet the appetite. We also had good participation with other members performing.

Also last month the **Ring annual picnic** was held. Some 22 people attended and lots of good magic and fun was had by all.

The second annual statewide gathering of magicians attracted 27 people to Russellville, mostly magicians. There was an hour-and-40-minute show and lots of good fellowship. **Bill Pitts** said Little Rock is still in the running for the 1999 IBM convention. Next year's statewide meeting probably will be an auction. There was lots of support for the idea.

Theater of Magic gets great promotion

The recent opening of **Maxwell Blade's "Theater of Magic"** in Hot Springs has already received some great reviews and plugs, including a good article in the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette* September 18. The article is reprinted in this newsletter.

The theater has 8 pm shows on Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays, and a 2 pm show on Sunday afternoon. Ring member **Sean Westbrook** is in the show -- as "Stonehedge," and others will appear from time to time.

It's a good, family-oriented show and you'll have a great time in the old Malco theater on Central Avenue.

Our ring will hold its **November meeting (Nov. 7)**, at the theater, followed by the show. For those who want to carpool or car caravan over, we'll meet at Mr. Magic at 6 pm and leave from there. We'll give more details at the next meeting. Mark your calendars now.

So what's your news?

A newsletter is simply not one without any news. We always welcome ANY tidbit about you and about magic.

Just call Dennis at 374-1500 or Jim at 455-6242 and tell them what's going on! We really do want to know.

Nothing up my sleeve

Magician brings his sleight of hand to downtown Hot Springs theater

BY JACK W. HILL
Democrat-Gazette Style Writer

Magicians can do more by means of faith than physicians by the truth.

— "The Heroic Enthusiasts"
by Giordano Bruno (1548-1600)

For Maxwell Blade, magic is all he has ever wanted to do, even if it meant long hours on the road schlepping heavy equipment all over the place, like rock bands have to do. In fact, Blade even tried playing music for a time, just so he could work some magic into the show.

"I remember seeing a magician named Mark Wilson on TV when I was 5 or 6," Blade says. "His show was called 'The Magic Circus,' I think, and he was doing a trick with multiplying balls. From there I took a big interest in becoming a performer of magic. I did card tricks and when I got to my teens, I began to send off and get catalogs from magic shops and checked out books from libraries."

Famous magicians like David Copperfield, Siegfried & Roy and Harry Anderson of "Night Court" fame also helped inspire Blade.

"Anderson, who plays the judge on 'Night Court,' also invents and sells magic tricks," Blade says. "I'm a member of the IBM — the International Brotherhood of Magicians, a worldwide club, and I've learned a lot of close-up magic from Anderson."

Blade, 34, is a 1980 graduate of Greenwood High School. He tried rock 'n' roll, working in bands called Exit Five and Shark Avenue, but found his magic was slowly taking over, crowding out the music until the music had to go. "I slowly began to realize that the audiences remembered the magic acts more than the music!"

Blade and his magic have opened shows for Jason D. Williams, Trout Fishing in America and Dan Seals, and he has done Christmas shows in pediatric wings of hospitals and anti-drug shows at schools. Dick Renko, a Fort Smith booking agent and festival organizer, says Blade is a credit to his profession.

Magic show

Maxwell Blade

8 p.m. Thursday, Friday, Saturday; 2 p.m. Sunday

Maxwell Blade Theater of Magic, Malco Theatre, 817 Central Ave., Hot Springs

Tickets: \$12, \$6 children under 12, \$10 senior citizens, 623-6200

"Maxwell has a great combination of skills," Renko says.

"He connects well with people and has a natural charm about him. He's sincere and he's pursuing a lifelong ambition with his magic. He's fantastic. If you sit down at a table with him for some close-up magic, he'll have you shaking your head in wonder."

And now Blade has found a home, theatrically speaking. He has a five-year lease on one side of Hot Springs' historic Malco Theatre, home of the city's Documentary Film Festival. (Blade will relinquish his space Oct. 15-20 during the festival.)

"I had been looking for a place to settle into," he says. "I first put together a large show in the early 1990s, and my first illusion show was with the Fort Smith Symphony when we chose some music — the James Bond themes — and the symphony played behind me and my three assistants. Eventually, we traveled with the show, but it's costly and a lot of work to take a lot of people and all the equipment on the road."

"In 1994 I did some shows at the King Opera House in Van Buren. My wife, Cathy, is from Hot Springs and we began to look around here, especially after we heard the Malco was for sale. When the Documentary Film Festival acquired it, they came to me about a deal. They're a great organization and we signed a lease, and started working in February on some renovations."

Blade has been making things disappear and reappear in the Spa City since Aug. 15, when he officially opened for business.

His 90-minute shows incorporate magic and illusion with pulsing rock music (Elton John's

"Funeral for a Friend" and "Love Lies Bleeding" plus songs from The Police and Pink Floyd) and smoke, with a bit of youthful audience involvement. He makes his first stage appearance and quickly executes a trick with a silver ball, then recounts a local legend — an "Unsolved Mystery," if you will — from 1928, when touring magician Prof. Jerome Schimitar came to town and made a young woman disappear from the stage. Unfortunately for all concerned, he was not able to bring her back, and she was never seen again.

Hopefully, the audience no doubt assumes, Blade's lovely blond assistants would not prove so unlucky.

There are ropes and rings, cards and a guillotine, and that changes color, padlocks that mysteriously move from a paper

bag to a neat line on a tray, an assistant who dangles from the ceiling in a strait-jacket and ladies in trunks threatened by an ugly-looking device with sharp pointy things.

Any further description of what happens would be like giving away the ending of an Alfred Hitchcock movie.

Besides his wife, Blade's show also includes Stonehenge (Sean Westbrook), who moved to Hot Springs from Little Rock a year ago; Andrea Long, his other blond female stage assistant; Dan Roth, a bald musician; Rhonda Kay and her husband, Steve Kay (who is backstage manager); Mike McRae, sound and light man; Eddie Trulson, the doorman; and Joni Hunter, who runs the concession stand.

"We are the only theater of magic in the state," Blade says proudly, "and one of few in the country. You can go to Tunica, Miss., Branson, Mo., and Las Vegas and see some magic, of course, but we chose Hot Springs because of all the tourists and the limited amount of entertainment here. We wanted to bring another attraction."