



THE PERFORMER



In the News

by Marty Haughn

America's Got Talent is winding down and eliminating acts from the "Live Show". To this writing, several magicians are still in the running, the (my) favorite is Shin Lim, Escape Artist Lord Nil (now gone), Illusionist Rob Lake, and the ever so eerie The Sacred Riana (now gone). I hope everyone has cast a vote for their favorite magician. Good luck to them all.

More News!

by Dennis Schick

MAGIC ON TELEVISION: Since June 29 we have enjoyed the fifth season of Masters of Illusion every Friday night. There are two 30-minute shows back-to-back at 7 pm on the CW Channel. Sometimes the two shows are new. Sometimes one is new and the other is a repeat. Right after Masters of Illusion locally has been an encore presentation of the hour-long "Penn & Teller's Fool Us." But a new version of their show is on Monday nights at 7.

AMERICA'S GOT TALENT: At least three magicians performed Monday night on America's Got Talent: a card magician, an illusionist, and an escape duo.

WHO WENT TO IBM, SAM, or MAGIC LIVE CONVENTIONS? Whoever went to one of the big magic conventions this summer, *should write a review*, especially if you recommend that other people go. What you say and recommend are important for other people to consider going or not.

MASTERS OF ILLUSION EXTENDS ITS BRAND: "Masters of Illusion" has extended its brand beyond the 30-minute television shows. Currently they also have a theater show in Las Vegas, as well as a touring show. Be on the watch for the other two.

Invitation

provided by Gary Fambrough

Hello Ring 29!

The Rocky Mountain Session is September 7 - 9, 2018! We will have lectures from Jack Carpenter, Doc Eason, Bill Goodwin, Kainoa Harbottle, and Max Maven. There will also be a dealer room, 3 shows, and lots of sessions!

The Rocky Mountain Session is getting close to selling out. There are only 17 spots left. We sold out last year and a few people were disappointed that they couldn't attend because they waited until the last minute.

Our room block at the Denver Airport Marriott ends on Thursday, August 16th! You have until midnight on Thursday to get a room for only \$99 a night.

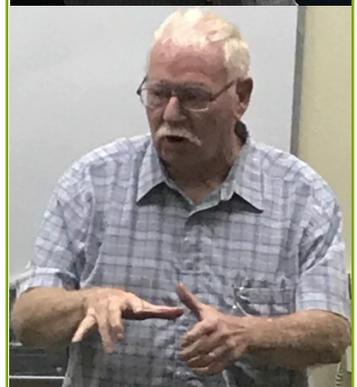
The hotel is only 15 minutes from the airport and there is a free airport shuttle that runs every 30 minutes!

You can learn more and register at <https://rockymountainsession.com>. We hope to see you there!

William Rader
Convention Organizer

Sneak Peek

Uh oh! Mr. Magic has that look again!

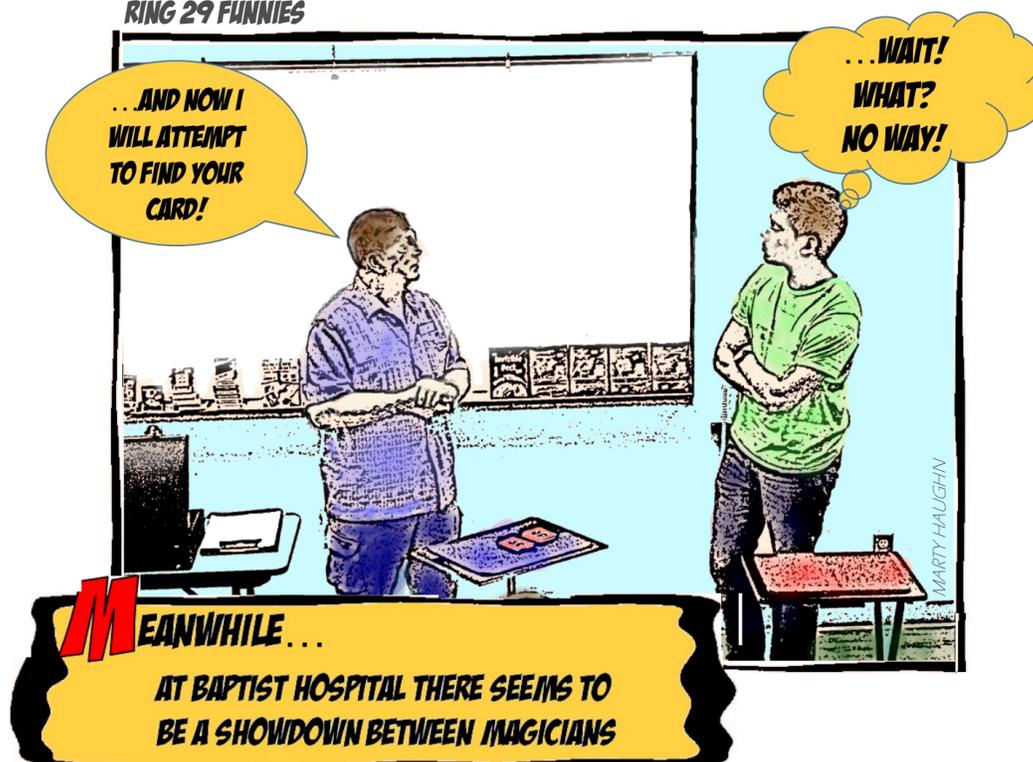


And what about this fellow? You know something fun is about to happen here,

...Read about it on page 3

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President's Corner

by Jo Jones, Ring 29 President

Hello Magician Friends!

We had quite a fun learning experience at our August Ring Meeting. In attendance were 33 members and guests to hear and Learn from our guest lecturer, Jim Henson.

Jim's focus was the Invisible deck, but was able to work in much more. Jim had Ring members demonstrate their invisible deck routines, and then, he shared others ways the deck could be used. We had a great time sharing and learning.

Jim also gave away lots of "door" prizes. Every family when home with several prizes. Thank you, Jim, for the lecture and the prizes!

We voted to attend the Maxwell Blade show on August 18th. I hope that if you have not seen his show that you took the opportunity to go.

We had such good attendance at the August meeting, I hope it will continue at the remaining meetings this year and beyond. We are able to learn and share so much when you come.

Please try to be at the September meeting at Baptist Hospital, Classroom #1 on Thursday, September 6th, at 6:45pm.

See you soon! Magically yours,

Jo





Jim and Adrien working through a demonstration

Ring 29 Report

by Gary Fambrough, Ring 29 Secretary

Rooty-kazoo, wowie kazow, Jim Henson is my favorite pal!!!

Ring 29 met Thursday, August 2nd at 6:45 pm in Classroom #1 at Baptist Hospital in Little Rock, AR. We had a great attendance of over 30 members and guests. Fantastic for August! As is the norm, club President, Jo Jones, presided of the meeting and started off with announcements.

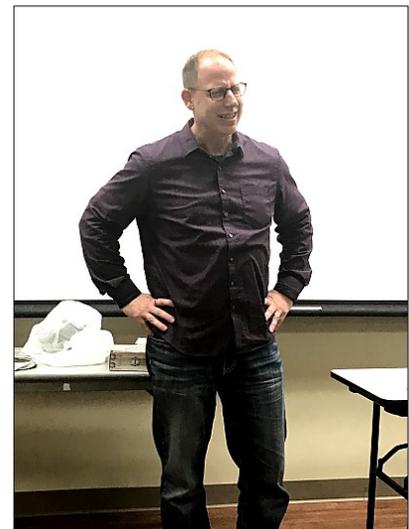
We had a guest in attendance all the way from Nashville by the name of Terry Hedges. He's a magician and motivational speaker. If you happen to be in the Nashville area, look him up. He has some great sleight of hand trickery with cards among many other magical talents.

The club is also considering putting together a calendar of upcoming events. That said, mark your calendars for this. Maxwell Blade has invited our group of magi to come see him perform in Hot Springs and tour his magic museum. The cost is normally around \$25 a person but I hear rumor that we could get a substantial discount if we let him know ahead of time. The potential date set for this run on Hot Springs is Saturday the 18th of August.

One of our very own was lucky enough to visit the Magic Castle in Hollywood recently. Adrian Steelman was there with his family. He met all kinds of celebrity magicians. I'm sure he'll be performing there one day himself.

Last but not least, our very own Bob Bullock reported that he spent some time in Savannah Georgia over the summer. While there, he had a chance to hang out with David Ericson (a previous guest back in April). Sounds like they had some great time together talking about magic and the Savannah area.

Jo served as emcee for the performance portion of our meeting and first up was Jim Henson with a full lecture of sorts regarding the Invisible Deck.



Gary Fambrough

...continued on page 4

He left no stone (or card for that matter) unturned when it comes to different variations of this trick. Dane Dover, Terry Hedges, Jon and Susan Bucher, John Wofford, Adrian Steelman, Mike Jones, Derrick Rose, and Gary Fambrough all assisted with routines. We also had a little impromptu discussion about 'the Amazing Kreskin. All that said, Jim did a fantastic job explaining the nuances of this trick. If you have any questions about the Invisible Deck, feel free to call Jim, or better yet make an appointment to see him in person, and he'll be glad to talk about it one on one.

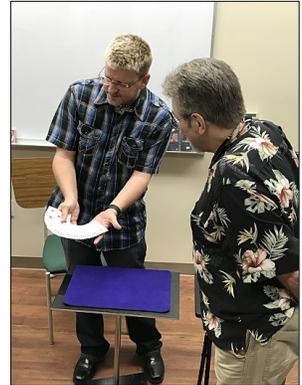
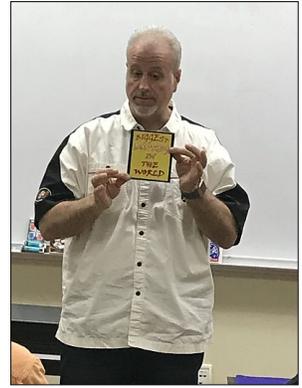
Jim also spoke about using key cards. No, not cards you would use at a hotel while on vacation, but rather specific cards in a deck that are either marked, bent, or embossed, to serve as locaters in a deck of cards. One of the standout routines using this method was "I dream of mindreading" with variations performed by both Jim Henson and Mike Jones.

Did I mention that Jim Henson was the lecturer? In true Jim style he came prepared with lots of magic to give away for free! Yes, for Free!!! Jim's generosity knows no bounds when it comes to the club and magic. It's true that Jim used to own a huge magic store in Little Rock with an inventory of over 15,000 tricks on hand. He closed the brick and mortar shop but still



sells over the phone and out of his warehouse. So, if you were at the meeting in August, you didn't leave empty handed. No siree. Everyone went home with something if not several somethings like silver dollars, DVDs, cups and balls, and even a few extremely rare items.

I'd be remiss if I didn't mention that Jon and Susan Bucher announced that they are GREAT grandparents. Yes, I know what you are thinking...that's a little braggadocios but I don't mean great in that sense of the word. I mean their kids have kids with kids. Got it? It's confusing I'll admit but what a fantastic announcement none-the-less! I'll be ending on that happy note. Hope to see everyone for the September meeting at Baptist Hospital!





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Jon "The Magic Man" Bucher



In the Spotlight

by Marty Haughn, Ring 29 Newsletter Editor



Oh yeah! This month was a fun one. It was my pleasure to be invited to the home of our interviewee for this interview. Before we get started, I would like to say that I have been waiting for some time to do this particular interview. His sense of humor has always appealed to me from our meetings to the Christmas shows. The ability to capture the attention of an audience even as an emcee is an example everyone can learn from. Hmm...I seem to be getting mushy, lets get started. Ladies and Gentleman, Jon "The Magic Man" Bucher.

MH: Jon, I want to thank you and Susan for inviting me to your home for this interview. It was a real treat. I do not have to look at my notes to know the first question as I ask it of everyone. Who is your favorite magician and what style of magic do you prefer?

JB: I knew you were going to ask who the favorite magician is because it is asked a lot and...I don't have one favorite magician. I have some I don't like to watch. One of the reasons I do the style of magic I do now is because of Carl Balantine same with Jim Henson. Some of the early magicians when I first joined the IBM back in the early sixties were just local guys but they had something to do with the International Brotherhood as it was. I learned a lot from them. My very first meeting I learned a coin routine which helped me win a trophy and that was a long time ago.

I grew into the magic scene and reading about people like Blackstone Senior and Thurston and all of the big guys and so I got the urge to want to do that kind of stuff. But then I went to a couple of lectures, I saw Albert Goshman live in Wichita he did a lecture for our Ring. Who else? Several of them...went to Tulsa and Ft. Smith...I lived in Kansas and went to some of their conventions they had and saw Senator Clarke Crandall. In fact, in this last Linking Ring I think there was an article by Bev Bergeron on him...he is long gone. I watched him stack dice, that's



where I got the urge to stack dice by watching him perform. For years close-up was my favorite kind because you don't get too many chances to do stand up, you don't get to work in night clubs even though several big name magicians came to Wichita, Kansas, we had a night club there...a dinner night club. Dell O'Dell, I've got a book on the shelf that Michael Claxton wrote about the life of Dell O'Dell, she appeared there. Mike Caudwell who was a huge big, big guy...I got to see him live. When you get to see them live it is great. It was then I fell in love with close-up magic.

MH: Who inspired you for the close-up?

JB: The guys in Ring 47 of Wichita, Kansas because most of them did that and I got to, in 1975 I got to spend several weeks at a local club with another guy they had a special room which had seats in it that were tiered and was called the Library Room. They served alcohol and every once in a while you get a pretty rough and rowdy crowd, but for several weeks we performed there twice a week. They had a table and a spotlight, a great set up...spotlight in the ceiling that shown right down on the table and we were in the corner. We did three thirty minute sets twice a week. We alternated, I would do the first one he'd do the second one and then I would do the third one. On the next day we would alternate and he would do the first one and then I would do one. That really made me fall in love with it because you would be doing things like "Coins Through the Table" and I don't do normal card tricks I hate normal card tricks, so I had a few that I liked real well. I fell in love with the "Chop Cup" and I altered a routine I found in a book and that became a staple for me and I still do it that way. You are just sitting at a table and the crowd is real close

Close-up isn't all I have ever done. I have done illusions, I've owned illusions, I've done a mentalism show and actually dabbled in escapes once. (**MH:** More on that adventure later!) I have performed at six or seven convention trade shows. The company I worked for, one of the guys was getting ready to go to a trade show and they asked me if I knew any magicians who did trade magic. It just so happens that I had started reading and buying books about trade show magic and studying it. I just told him I know a little about that, I have been reading about it.

Since I worked for the company they flew me to Chicago as I was working for the company in Wichita and our headquarters was in Chicago so they flew me up there and I met with them. I took along a few tricks because they were going to Dallas, Texas to the biggest supermarket, it was a meat packing place, the biggest supermarket convention in the United States. This was the biggest convention in Dallas that year.

They had certain rules, you had to have a message with your magic. You couldn't just do magic and stop people so I took all the tricks I knew that had to do with meat (*HUH?*), sandwiches and food and they bought into it so we hired a model from Dallas who worked in the booth with me. They even made their own trick for me to give away. Tiring, gosh it was tiring. You are doing eight hours a day. You don't have set shows your job was to stop the crowd. So you are always waiting for the next bunch to move on and then here comes some more.

You had to do something so I stacked dice because it had a little bit of noise to it and it would stop the crowd. It was a great attractor. I didn't do a fancy routine just stacked dice in a glass then go into the rest of it. Its fun.

MH: Comedians are famous for referring to "tough crowds". As a magician, what kinds of audiences have you found to be the most difficult and the easiest to entertain?

JB: My easiest and the one I've had the most results from...I've counted all of the standing ovations I've ever had, thirteen in my life. Several of them were from crowds that were drunk. (*laughter for a bit*) They were having fun and I let them have fun as I just went along with it. It was great, they were easy. I've had a couple of shows where I thought gosh I stunk tonight! I couldn't get to the audience. They didn't laugh or do anything. One of them was a troop of Girl Scouts about thirty years ago. They were dead (*so to speak*). And I thought, this is terrible. Afterwards, one of them came up to me and said, "That was the best magic show I have ever seen!" So I was wrong in my assessment, they just were not a crowd that was outgoing and it could have been because of their leaders and the strictness they might have imposed to keep them down.

I spent eighteen months doing nursing homes. Nursing homes were great. It was a non-profit organization we created and the nursing homes got me for free and I never turned down going someplace and I visited two every day for those eighteen months. All across the state and some neighboring cities. They were easy to work for. It was like working for kids. I don't have a particular kind of audience that I consider tough. I don't get heckled because I don't challenge people. I don't do very many sucker tricks and the ones I do I try to turn them around to me and that's only with kids. As I don't challenge anybody, I don't get the hecklers. And if somebody does holler out something and everybody laughs, I go right along with it.

I never try to have a heckler killer that will make them be quiet. Let em' heckle. I don't get any because I think I don't stop. Once I start that's my stage no matter where I'm at or how close or far away from them that's my stage, I'm going to own it and do my routines. In my close-up stuff I don't ever have someone grab something because I don't give them a chance to grab something. The one time in my life where I had somebody reach up on stage to pull something off the stage I stepped on their fingers and I stepped hard. (more laughter) They didn't put them up there again.

MH: The greatest payoff for an entertainer is generally not financial. Can you describe the most rewarding aspect of performing before an audience?

JB: Applause. I'm an introvert by nature. When I first started magic I was scared to death. When I was a teenager girls just scared the daylight out of me. I didn't talk very much. Magic has brought me out of that and made it so I have something to do. You get feedback. If you do comedy the instant feedback is laughter. But hearing everybody ooh and ah, and how did you do that it is all feedback and instant gratification. I am also on the board of directors of the local community theater and I perform in plays. In fact, I'm in the production committee now to pick out the plays we do at the theater. We do six plays a year plus a musical. I not only get gratification from that, I get training because when you do plays you learn about blocking and scripting so you are able to add that to your magic and make whatever magic you do more theatrical gives you a better professional feeling about what you are doing. You are right, very seldom is it monetary. In fact right now, the last show I did in Little Rock its been three months and I haven't been paid yet.

MH: With a few exceptions, everyone loves magic so in a sense you are dealing in the commodity of happiness. Do you ever give impromptu performances for strangers, say, in an elevator or to passengers on a flight?

JB: Yes and no. Sometimes I will do things, very simple things. Number one, on planes I don't. I don't ever on a plane as there is no room or anything. When I was working in Little Rock just three or four blocks from the River Market we had an elevator there and we had the public in our building going to...it used to be an entrance into the Museum of Discovery and sometimes I would see somebody...kids there and they might be unhappy so I would walk up to the rail and not say anything to them and not look at them, I would push the rail and it would squeak. I always carried a squeaker with me and a TT. It would squeak and I'd say, "I wish they'd fix that they need to oil it." Then I would just walk away. The kids would always walk up and push on the rail. On the elevator when I'd push the button when there were kids were on the elevator I would do that. Oh, if I'm in a restaurant the spoon bending thing, I have a short routine with just bending the spoon, faking it, but in reality I would tell them it is an illusion, it only looks like I'm bending it. I really do bend it the second time. I bring it up off the table and it is bent and then I straighten it out and lay it back down. I might do that one when a waitress is walking up but I'm doing it for the people I am eating with who have never seen it. I do stuff like that.

MH: This is kind of crazy. **JB:** I love crazy. **MH:** I do to. While one monkey may be amusing, its proverbial barrel of monkeys which is synonymous with fun. Can you describe what happens when magicians get together?

JB: Oh God! (*too much laughter to continue*) YES! (*a very loooong pause*) I belong to Ring 47 in Wichita, Ring 308 in Searcy and Ring 29 of Little Rock and also belong to Ring 1 in St. Louis, the first Ring. I also belong to a non-associated magic club called the North East Arkansas Magic Club out of Jonesboro. When we got together in Jonesboro it was just your favorite trick every week and we sat and talked magic.

Have you ever gone out to a restaurant with the magicians of Ring 29? We usually break out and do something goofy or funny for the waitresses. At the meeting last Monday we had a young man there who was, I think he is going to be our first member of our Junior Magic Club. I told the guys he was coming and that I had taught him one or two little things then the other magicians got involved in it. Pretty soon this kid outside of last month had six hours of lessons in three days, first exposure to magic ever. So, he is so new he squeaks. But, a couple of our members were showing, three of our members were showing him stuff so complicated that I don't even do it. This kid was sitting there with the proverbial deer in the headlights look. He had no idea what they were saying, and they were throwing out names like Stevens Magic and Blackstone...what else did they say...Chris Angel, they were throwing out names like that. Well, here's a move that so and so does and showing him fancy moves this kid was going to need to practice every day for years before he ever masters any of them. Its just what magicians do. In fact, before he comes back and the other four I've got coming, I have to tell the guys you can't do that anymore you'll scare them off. You've gotta keep it simple, real simple.

MH: In regard to magic, what is the best piece of advice you have received and what was the source of that advice?

JB: Hmm...I've received so much advice. I guess it is what Susan and I practiced, we've done several magic camps for kids over the years. One of the things we have we call the P's and Q's, *Patter, Performance, Personality and Practice*. We emphasize practice...Practice, Practice, Practice. You don't get good playing a guitar or a banjo or playing football or soccer or anything, you don't get good at it without practicing. So if you want to be a magician and get in front of people and not only fool them but entertain them you have to practice. The old adage "How do you get to Carnegie Hall?" Practice, Practice, Practice. Its just a true statement and kind of cutesy but it is a true statement. That is what I remember more than anything else because I used to...when I first started doing balloon animals... I used to be able to buy a box of a hundred balloons for a dollar and thirty-five cents. I would sit there with that whole box and blow them up and make an animal then put it in a trash bag and I would go through the whole box. Over and over again then I would pop all the balloons and throw them away. Later on I would buy another box and do it again.

One of the things I used to do was a coin roll on both hands with a half a dollar. When I first saw that I wanted to learn it for a routine I was putting together with coins. I practiced it every day a minimum of fifteen minutes not more than a half an hour every day for a year before anybody ever saw it outside of my immediate family. I'd sit and watch television and just roll them...roll them forward and roll them backward. I can't do it any more.

This little thing right here (*showing me a TT*) I was in Ring 1 in 1977-78 and I was working out of the St. Louis plant and I went to a lecture by J.B. Bobo at the Midwest Magic Jubilee in 1977 and Bobo stood up on the stage and showed both hands empty and reached in the air and he pulled a little handkerchief about six or eight inches out of his bare hands and then he put it back in and made it disappear. Fooled the daylights out of me! But I bought his lecture notes and that is what he used. I went to a dealer at the convention and I bought one and a small green handkerchief and that is what I vanished for a long time until I discovered the streamers because they looked very long when they come out. Every show I do that's in there, for adults or kids it doesn't matter it is always in there. I have played with it, looked in mirrors and in the school I sit there wearing the TT and the kids were all over and they couldn't see it. When it was time, I loaded it and had no problem with it at all. Mine, if you were to see it, I never do this (*holding hands out with all fingers and thumb pointing outward showing empty hands*) like they say to do. I practice and practice and it's a simple thing but even the simplest stuff, the simple impromptu stuff you've got to practice to make it look so natural. Where else can you get that sort of reaction with such a simple prop? And you can do it literally anywhere.

MH: What do you see as the future of magic? Is technology making some illusions possible that weren't in the past?

JB: Yes. Several of the guys in our club will do a routine with their telephones. I haven't and I don't know if I ever will as I don't want to mess with it. But now with the advent of PK Rings, magnets, electronics...I have a couple of electronic tricks...a candle that will light itself, I don't use it very often and I had bought it for a specific reason. There was a time where you didn't have stuff like that.

Mike Jones was at the meeting Monday night and he showed this kid...had him name a card and then Mike opened up an app on his phone and there was his card on the phone. I've never done that but it wows people. Using things like this with the younger generation is good because they relate to it more easily. Shoot, sometimes I leave my phone at home. I charge mine every night because I use it for an alarm clock if I have to get up in the morning. When I worked in Little Rock I traveled the whole state and when I first started there weren't any cell phones like we are talking about now. So my wife insisted that I buy a bag phone that plugged into the car. And that always stayed with me. When I finally turned it in for a flip phone the people at the counter had never seen a bag phone before and didn't know what it was.

MH: Is there anything you do to take special care of your hands given that basically they are your livelihood as a magician?

JB: I use Cornhuskers lotion. When I am practicing something that requires manipulation...I'm working now on a multiplying ball routine for my stand-up act...and coins sometimes...as you get older the sensitivity of your hands get a little dull and your fingertips seem to get worn and get to be slippery and they don't grip some things quite like they used to. If I use Cornhuskers lotion, I can't remember where I read that it might have been in somebody's old magic book. I put that on my hands and it gives a slight tackiness to it. Cornhuskers is the only lotion I use and use very little of it. One time I use quite a bit and it took forever to get my hands clean where I could work. I have damaged some fingers which prevent me from rolling coins any longer and I can no longer front and back palm a card. Arthritis, another ailment, is something you have to contend with as you get older.

MH: Is being a magician everything you thought it would be?

JB: *a very long pause...*Wow. I've never been asked that question. Its not anything like I thought it would be. I found a magic book in the school library when I was fourteen that I used to read a lot being an introvert, I read every night. It was interesting and I tried one of the tricks and it worked. I actually fooled my family. I read about magicians but I had no idea what all you had to consider from staging to costumes and makeup and what kind of magic you are going to do because there is magic for everything. I just never had any idea. With one of the passwords I use as one of the security questions was, What is your dream job?...its always magician. I did it for eighteen months. Being a professional is not the same as being an amateur and enjoying it as a hobby. When you do it for a living and you get home at night, you quit.

MH: What is something you wished you knew when you first started?

JB: I wished I had known there was a club sixty miles away from me. I lived in a town sixty miles from Wichita, Kansas and I lived in Wichita when I first discovered magic. I was there when I was fourteen and didn't know there was an old IBM Ring there with some really good magicians in it...I had no idea. Until in the seventies...no sixties I met somebody in the hospital I was visiting a friend and they had another friend visiting and belonged to the Wizards of Wichita, IBM Ring 47. I never knew they existed. I discovered they existed at that hospital and they told me when they met. So the next time they met I drove from Kansas City, Kansas to Wichita in the winter, with snow on the ground, wearing a rolled up long sleeved shirt as I hardly ever wore coats. And when I walked into the room from the dead of winter and half the club didn't show because of the weather, when I walked in they weren't sure what sort of a crazy guy I was.

I wished I had known about them because they met twice a month on the first and third Saturday. The first Saturday was at a restaurant and you could invite people but it was strictly performing. The third Saturday was for instructions and only members were allowed. Well I walked into that meeting and because I had driven so far they allowed me to stay and plus I promised to join. That was the night that a guy named Maurice Lowe was demonstrating a trick called "Infiltration of Four Coins through a Table." It is what we now call "Coins through the Table". They let me stay and I learned it that night. Had I known about them earlier I would be a much better magician now. When you get around a bunch of guys you learn things you don't get out of books and catalogs.



Something EXTRAORDINARY has happened! This was such an informative interview that.....TO BE CONTINUED...

Uh oh, this is the end of part one! The interview went fairly long and Jon had a lot of good things to say during the interview. For that reason I will continue the remainder of the interview next month so stay tuned. I want to make sure everyone gets the opportunity to read what I had the privilege to listen to.



Intrigue Theater - Eureka Springs, Arkansas

Show Review

by Marty Haughn, Ring 29 Newsletter Editor

I love going to see other magicians perform every chance I get...who doesn't? This month I had the privilege to see two shows and I will review the first one.

As a late anniversary gift my wife and I took a trip to Eureka Springs, Arkansas for a three day adventure. On the itinerary was, of course, a magic show. The show began at eight p.m. Saturday night so we had plenty of time to visit the shops in this historic town.

If you do not already know, Eureka Springs touts itself as being a "haunted town". What a perfect place for magic. You see, the show we witnessed was performed in a late 1800's church, 1879 to be exact. Let me begin with a little history...

Although no longer a church this building does have an interesting history. It was originally built as a frame church in 1879 by the First Christian Church of Eureka Springs and went by the name "Little White Church". As the congregation grew, it was expanded and remodeled into its present form in 1912. In the 1990s the congregation moved to a new location and the building was sold to private individuals who used it as a chapel for hire for weddings, memorial services, baptisms etc under the name of The Old Stone Church". It sold again in 2006 to an individual who, in addition to using it as a wedding chapel, also used it to house his world-renowned mechanical music collection which included a functional 1901 Gavioli Fairgrounds Organ - hence the name Gavioli Chapel. The building presently houses Intrigue Theater featuring performances by an illusionist and a medium - a seemingly far cry from its previous uses. (source unknown)

Intrigued yet? I hope so because that is the name of this theater, "Intrigue Theater". The performers, Illusionist Sean Paul and Medium Juliana Fay.

From the outside and just driving by you see this building as a church not a



as a theater. That is, unless you see the lettered and lit sign on the side of the building. As with all churches it is secluded in the middle of a neighborhood not a normal location for a theater.

As you pass through the entry doors and foyer you are immediately greeted by someone dressed in Victorian era clothing and he is checking the reservation list to hand you your ticket and then promptly seats you. The theater seats seventy-five guests and there is not a bad seat in the house.

Once seated you are greeted by the simple but awesome décor, some from a time long ago as part of the church and some created to edge out the stage in a very quaint manner. Looking left of the stage you see the ornate Gavioli Fairgrounds organ. A closer inspection reveals the true beauty of this magnificent piece of history. Looking further to the left is a small up-rise from the audience floor where drinks and special magic can be had, for a small price. Taking a view to the very high domed like ceiling the house lights appear to be the original at some point...chandeliers. I am not sure which era of the church they originate from.

When everyone finds their seat they discover a card waiting for them. The card asks some specific questions to be used later in the show. You answer the questions and deposit them into an awaiting bucket in front of the stage. When the time comes the house lights dim and a young man appears and introduces himself as the master of ceremonies. He has a few corny jokes and gets the audience warmed up for the main attraction. For that he does a fine job.

Sean Paul is then introduced and he explains the evening's agenda with a mysterious overtone. He explains the show is divided into two parts, Magic then Mentalism or as they like to call it, "The Ghost Show."

Lets begin with the magic. Sean Paul, if you remember, has performed on Penn and Teller Fool Us. He and Juliana Fay along with their pet monkey of about twelve or so years made an attempt at fooling but did not yet still entertaining. Anyway, the show begins with several stage sized illusions. To name a few or better yet describe a couple he had a cinder block wall constructed while he spoke of the history of magicians walking through walls. Well, that is exactly what he did. The illusion looked convincing enough and was well performed. Although I do not know the name of another I have seen it performed by another magician.

The idea was to have his assistant strapped down to what they were calling an operating table from the Civil War. The storyline spoke of the injuries received during the war and the type of things that doctors had to do to save lives. One of those procedures involved amputation.

So here we have Juliana Fay laying on this table and two volunteers one from the North and one from the South wearing period hats and each of them use leather straps to bind her feet and neck and run the straps through holes. Then each volunteer was to pull tightly on the straps so there was no way she could escape. Next came two covers which were placed over her body. Next came two blades used to separate her body into sections. To top it all off Civil War style swords were used to impale the cover tops and through the body. The illusion was effective and got a lot of oos and ahhs and one or two oh craps! Of course Juliana Fay survived the ordeal.

I do not wish to give away the entire show and I do hope they change it up on occasion. So to rate the first half I would say it was worth going to see. Very entertaining and even though we were on the first row, the illusions were near believable, at least to the layman.

After a short intermission came the Ghost part of the show. Please forgive me for saying but I am a firm believer in Houdini's way of thinking when it comes to spiritualists and mentalism. Believe if you choose, I will not judge.

Juliana Fay comes out on stage in period clothing and begins her story. Sean Paul then begins telling us how things are going to be accomplished and tells us that in order to stay out of trouble they must tell us this is all for "Entertainment" purposes. I don not know if this was necessary or just part of the show for a prover to the layman. Either way it began.

As luck or misfortune would have it (take it any way you like) being on the front row has both advantages and disadvantages as I was selected to go on stage and not only inspect the blind fold she was about to don but also check her hair and ears for any listening devices. Personally I felt a little uncomfortable staring into a strangers ears looking for something. Nonetheless, I performed like a true layman and then left the stage.

I have to be honest from this point on, even as a nay-sayer, but the first two exhibits of mentalism felt pretty convincing. Were they "stooges" or "plants"? Your guess is as good as mine. Either way the audience played it pretty realistically.

As Sean Paul moved through the audience and had asked for everyone to remove something from their pockets I must say it sort of droned on a bit. I know most everyone was still entertained but me I was waiting for the finale.

Have you ever heard of the saying, "Be careful what you wish for"? Well, it bit me. Sean Paul had made the rounds to the back row and began working his way back to the front. He saw what I had in my hand and, dangit, he stopped. Ok, so here we go. I am either going to be really freaked out by the experience or just be entertained, or both.

What I held in my hand was a 3D print I made last year of the Marine Corps emblem on a key ring. He asked if that is what I wanted to have her "see" and tell us what it was and my response was yes. And so it begin once again.

Had he continued the same "patter" used on everyone else he might have been more convincing but he did not. The first word he said was "Membership". True, this could have meant anything but in code talk that could have been the key-word...and if it was, I think it was too obvious. Regardless, Juliana Fay began thinking or envisioning what this time could be. She began with saying it was something about the military. Hmm, ok. Nothing more was said by Sean Paul. More envisioning then she states it deals with the Air Force. I was asked to confirm or deny and I chose the latter. She tried again and this time suggested "Army".

By this time and it seemed almost on cue, Sean Paul stated, "Well, you have two left" and got a good laugh and one from me as well. Finally she said Marines and we left it at that. Do I believe, I am afraid not, but I will admit during the first couple of demonstrations they almost had me.

To close the show they did an altered version of Eugene Burgers Gypsy thread and a great story to go along with it.

After the show Sean Paul came out to meet and greet those who stayed around. I made a point to thank him for a good show and that I was thoroughly entertained and had a good time.

So, overall, how would I rate the show?

Entertainment value for the money: very good, worth the visit 5 stars out of 5

Illusions performed: well done, 5 stars out of 5

Ghost Show: (and I have to be fair here) 4.8 stars out of five (sorry, still not a believer but was well entertained which was the purpose).

Recommendation to see: without a doubt (if for any reason...for the experience of magic in a church of all places)

As always, try to support your fellow magicians by seeing their shows, visiting their brick and mortars...introduce yourself and have a magical conversation.

Until next time...Remember: Put your best foot forward and keep your TT at the ready.



Maxwell Blade Theater of Magic

Through the generosity of Maxwell Blade, Ring 29 was graciously invited to see his show at a hugely discounted rate.

Ring members and their guests met at the Colorado Grill in Hot Springs, Arkansas on August 18th, enjoyed a very good dinner and company then it was off to the show.

Maxwell had reserved forty seats for club members in row 6 of his theater. You couldn't beat the view from these seats!

Having not been to his show since moving to the old Malco, I was impressed with everything I saw, from the entrance on through to the stage. There didn't seem to be any stone unturned for renovation.

Oh, the show, indeed, was well worth the time and even if we had paid full price, worth the money to see. Maxwell has not only maintained his smaller theater show but has added to it with plans to add more.

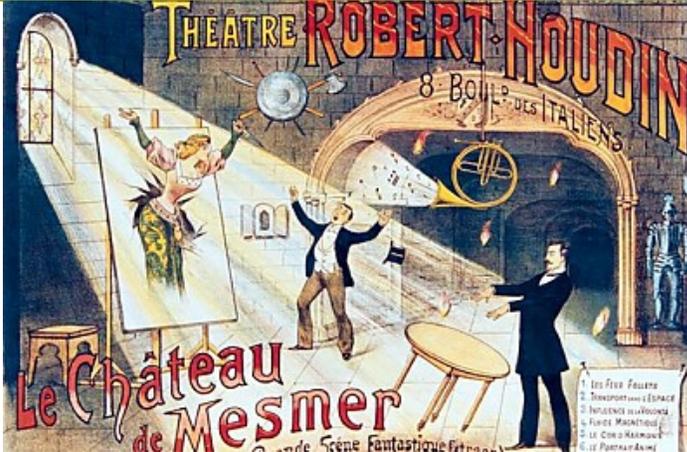
The show did not disappoint. There was plenty of good magic, tons of humor and even a bit of suspense and anxiety...at least for some boys who were onstage.

Even though it was a small part of the show, my favorite illusion Maxwell performed had to be the disappearance of his assistant from behind a hooded robe of sorts. She walked onto the stage to Maxwell, turned her back to the audience, then the robe was quickly yanked from her body...that was no longer there! Wow! Now that was a real visual eye-toaster! Well done and unexpected.

There were a few appearances throughout the night by Jonathan Erlandson and folks might have taken the opportunity to watch this magician's close-up show before Maxwell's.

I can't wait to go back and see what else Maxwell adds to the show.

From myself, my guests and Ring 29 I offer a heartfelt thanks to Maxwell Blade's generosity and sincere wish to entertain.



Jean Eugène Robert-Houdin, the Father of Modern Magic

Blast from the Past

by Mike Curtis, Ring 29 Historian

This month's report comes from 20 year ago. It was the September, 1998 meeting of the Ring. The meeting was full of reports, food, fellowship, and of course magic. The President at that time was Jim Henson and the Secretary was Bill Fulton. The Ring met monthly at Baptist Medical Center, Room 20, in Little Rock.

"Jim Henson, President, opened our business meeting at our annual Ring Picnic on Sept. 19. Damon Reinbold, Convention Chair, reported that the Ring leadership would be meeting with the .B.M. Convention staff on October 2 to discuss convention preparations.

Damon Reinbold, Rebecca Roberts, and Margaret LeClair were inducted into the Ring and were given their I.B.M. Cards, Certificates, and other information. The Ring has written a new induction ceremony using I.B.M. Guidelines. The new ceremony was well received.

Derrick Rose acted as Master of Ceremonies for the evening. Derrick told jokes and entertained us with a beautiful Ring and Rope routine. Damon Reinbold performed Trans-Premonition with an accompanying story that is always as good as his magic. Margaret LeClair showed us her newly purchased Bakery Bear. We joined her in the performance by acting as the children that we are at heart. Eric Benton followed with his version of Shadow Card. Don Baer entertained with the Prince and the Pumpkin. He also added his own special dash of humor.

Preston Strobel, our youngest magician and movie star, performed a great comedy routine as the "World's Strongest Boy." Preston held two ropes that he had two men pull on in a tug-of-war. As the men struggled, Preston leaped away from the two ropes which suddenly became one rope. Jim Henson finished with a very funny Hocus Pocus Bunny.

The 40 members and families at the picnic enjoyed this good time together.

During our September meeting, the membership voted to continue to meet at Baptist Hospital. We have been pleased with the rooms and meals. Jeffery O'Connell was inducted into the Ring and the business meeting ended.”

It was great to be able to induct new members into the Ring at the meeting. It's new members that help keep the Ring fresh and energized new talent, ideas and approaches. Let's continue to seek out others who share a passion for magic and offer them the opportunity to be a part of the largest magic organization in the world.

Until next time, remember, the past has made us what we are today.

Your humble historian, Mike Curtis.

A Little Magic History



Thomas Blaine
Mullica

Thomas Blaine Mullica (August 1948 - February 2016) of Waupun, Wisconsin. When Mullica was five years old, he wanted to be a clown. However, on his seventh birthday his mother bought him a "Sneaky Pete Magic Kit" for Christmas.

After he graduated from Waupun High School in 1966, he enlisted in the Army at age 18, serving 3 years in Korea and Germany. Once he had finished his military service he moved to Colon, Michigan, where he built illusions and demonstrated magic for Abbott's Magic Company.

Mullica then moved to Atlanta, Georgia where he attended bartending school and opened his own nightclub called The Tom-foolery Magic Bar Theater which was open from 1976 until 1987.

Red Skelton visited the Tom-foolery in 1980 and they became fast friends. After the closure of Tom-foolery Mullica asked Skelton for his advice, and Skelton suggested that he take his best material and perform it pantomime to music, which would eliminate any language barrier so that he could perform anywhere in the world. Mullica took Skelton's advice and after six months of rehearsal moved to Paris, France where he worked at the Crazy Horse Saloon.

Mullica returned to the United States in 1991 and continued his comedy magic career. In 1996, he began writing *RED (A Performance Tribute)* which he performed in theaters throughout America and Canada.

Mullica was an American comedy magician and impressionist who performed on television specials, and appeared on TV many times including *Late Night with David Letterman*, *The World's Greatest Magic*, *Viva Variety* and *Penn & Teller's Sin City*.



One of Mullica's most memorable appearances was on *Late Night with David Letterman*, on which he performed his popular signature effect of the manipulation and vanishing of several cigarettes in his mouth (assumed as fake cigarettes that he made).

In 1984 Mullica was awarded \$5,000 cash for winning the Siegfried & Roy Golden Lion Award at the Magic Desert Seminar in Las Vegas.

He also performed at the Just for Laughs Comedy Festival and toured the US and Canada with *RED - A Performance Tribute*, a Red Skelton Tribute show which Mullica wrote and starred in as Skelton



and his characters. *RED* is the only Skelton tribute show authorized by the Skelton Estate.

In 2010, Mullica was diagnosed with acute myelogenous leukemia.

In July 2013 Mullica helped dedicate the Red Skelton Museum & Education Center.

(text source: Wikipedia)





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Contact Mr. Magic or any Ring 29 Officer for information on joining the IBM or Ring 29.

Mailing Lists

In addition to this newsletter Members can receive last minute email information on meetings, events, and lectures. If you wish to be added to our email list, please contact Treasurer **Col. James Kinsey**.

LittleRockMagic.net

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September

September 6
Ring Meeting

October

October 4
Ring Meeting

November

November 1
Ring Meeting

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