



The Performer

*Little Rock Ring 29 Newsletter
Little Rock, Arkansas*

February 2021





President's Corner
 For the Record
 Blast from the Past
 Magical History
 Event Calendar



It's all about the Magic...



Five houses painted five different colors stand in a row. One person of a different nationality lives in each house. The five homeowners all drink some type of beverage, smoke a certain cigar brand, and have a certain kind of pet. But none of the owners drink the same beverage, smoke the same type of cigar, or have the same pet.

Congratulations to MIKE CURTIS! Mike solved the puzzle with the following answer:

THE GERMAN OWNS THE FISH

Be ready for another brain boiler next month. We have another great prize to give away and you don't want to miss out on the chance to win.

Prize: Emerson & West's TRA-FIX packet trick

Send answers to: mjhaughn@gmail.com



Fellow Magi,

If this time last year, you had told me we would not be having the 49th Annual Cavalcade of Magic because of a virus, I would have laughed at you and asked what you had been smoking. If you had told me that we would be canceling for 2021 because of the response to that same virus, I would have doubted your sanity. Boy, oh boy, was I wrong!

Yes, it is my sad duty to inform everyone that the Cavalcade of Magic in Eureka Springs, AR for 2021 will not happen. There are no plans of doing anything virtual this year, simply because of the logistics of getting it all together in time this year. We truly thought and hoped we would be able to meet in person, but that seems to be unrealistic. And since I don't smoke, and am relatively sane, we are accepting defeat again this year.

There are no words to adequately express the grief, frustration, and pure insanity of it all. The current plan is to plan for next year and come back bigger, better, stronger, and continue a 50 year tradition in March 2022. We will let everyone know of future plans as they develop.

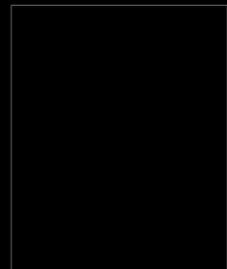
Until then, everyone keep practicing, performing when and where you can, and using magic to entertain and encourage people everywhere. *Ron Ingram, Cavalcade of Magic Committee*



Meetings

Upcoming Events

Zoom Meeting: March 4 @ 6:30





President's Corner Marty Haughn



Fellow Magicians,

Now it is February and we are still being bombarded with bad news. Earlier this month most of us received an email from Ring 75's Ron Ingram stating there will be no Cavalcade of Magic 2021. I do not know about you but I am not sure how much more of this I can take. The damage so far has been no January 2020/21 Christmas Show, no Cavalcade of Magic 2020, No real monthly meetings for the past year, and to knock us all off kilter, no Cavalcade of Magic 2021. This list does not include things like the Ring Auction, Ring Picnic, Tri-Ring gathering and a Magic Flea Market. Like you, I'll sure be glad to see this be in the rear view mirror!

Ok, off my complaint stump!

I belong to several magic themed Facebook groups and from what I gather a lot of the magicians, for one reason or another, have not been diligent in their practice time. In fact, some have even stated they have not practiced at all! Wow! I hope this is not the case with our Ring members. Sure, I understand time is precious but if you continued your ritual of regular practice then you are in good shape.

Our Vice President, Dane Dover, has reminded us of things forgotten or not know of we could be exploring such as that book sitting on the shelf collecting dust. Or, how about those old Linking Ring magazines we tend to ignore after the first read. Better yet, during the last meeting Dane reminded/explained to those in attendance the accessibility of ALL Linking Ring magazines buried in the IBM website. If you are unaware of the latter, get this, you can read the very first Linking Ring from 1922 on the site! Talk about a great reading opportunity!

Whatever your mindset, if you keep magic in your daily life as I do you can remain sane in these unusual times. For me, my time is spent researching old-new ideas by reading, listening to old lectures (a lot from the IBM site) and just generally playing around with things. Up until the colder weather, I have spent many hours in the garage/shop experimenting with builds to try out. They aren't my original ideas but I do try to put in my little touch or twist.

If you have fallen into a magical slump, grab your boot straps walk over to your collection and work on one or three. Good luck and have some fun while doing it!

Until next time...

Stay Safe, Stay Healthy, and by all means, Stay Magical!





For the Record

Shawn Miller



Ring 29 members and guest met on Thursday February 4, 2021 via Zoom. Our Zoom meeting was hosted by Vice President Dane Dover. President Marty Haughn presided over the meeting.

The theme for tonight's meeting was Zoom tricks and tips and by the looks of things, something we should all get used to and better at. First up was Marty with several great tips Beginning with one of the biggest problems most people have is not understanding the capabilities of the platform. Familiarize yourself and your clients with the platform, maybe even a preliminary or test call at no charge as not all of your clients may be as technically savvy. Recording the show for the client is another great idea and provide edited clips of the show can be used for ads or promos.

Next, be mindful of your lighting by using, at a minimum the Three Point Light system. The Three Point Lighting Adds Dimension using a "Key Light" used on your subject, a "Fill Light" to fill in shadows created by the Key light preventing them from getting too dark, and finally, the "Back Light". The latter is used to separate the subject from the background. If using a "Green Screen" lighting is extremely important to get the right mixture ensuring a pleasing background.

The one sure-fire way to improve your Zoom meeting is to do pre-recordings of your presentation so you can verify the lighting is good and you or your props are not washed out. Just like your practice sessions and rehearsals, your show must look good and easily seen by viewers. Remember, your audience is staring at a screen of some sort. Have your props ready to go and strategically placed in view or off screen.

One of the mistakes performers make is not keeping their face in full view. Now, depending on what is being shown this may not be an optimum choice. In short, be aware of the framing of your performance. Don't chop off half your head or lose some of the close-up pad to the off screen.

A lot of performers tend to believe they need to change their routine to suit the needs of Zoom. In some cases this may be true, however, if you keep the routines simple and basic with a lot of audience participation you should be able to maintain their undivided attention.

Finally, refrain from using busy backgrounds, green screen or cloth, they both become distractions to your audience. Keep them simple and plain. You and your performance are the "hero" so let's keep the attention on the hero.

Bob Bullock was up with a few tips for audience participation from the Juan Tameriz book "Verbal Magic". He was asked to come on to a radio show in Spain and went so well they booked him for eight shows. Working on radio is similar to the Zoom situation, and there were a lot of great tricks in the book. Bob reviewed "Paradise Recovered", from the book, a seven card trick that a participant can do at home, alone or in a group. It has motion, audience participation and noise. Sounds like a neat trick, Bob promised to perform it for us soon. Thanks for the tips on Verbal Magic.

Bob had another tip, for our drying hands from all the sanitizer we have been using, Corn Huskers lotion for tack on your grip, works great for cards, coins, or getting those pesky produce bags open. Magic tips that help in life.

Mike Curtis was up next with a couple of great tips. Look at the camera and stand up if needed vs. sitting down and remain in frame. Take advantage of sticky notes to keep the flow of your show moving along. Use a blanket on the floor to





For the Record

Shawn Miller



help muffle the sound of dropping props.

Here is a good tip, by using the space bar you can unmute the Zoom meeting for a faster way to speak without using the mouse. The internet and YouTube are full of tips but don't get too consumed by them and forget about the performance. One last tip from Mike was learn to use the split screen option of Zoom so you can see what your participants are seeing. That's a great idea.

Mary Ann Campbell sporting a great green screen of a beach from "Caneva" mentioned that we need to ensure the background has a good contrast with the subject. She then showed us a "screen deck" digital shortcut device that works using a keypad (quick key) to make things move and flow easier. It has programmable set of 15 or 30 keys.

Cedric Morley had a quick review of the Mario the Maker magician handbook, sounds like a good book the check out.

Dane Dover (with a huge banner from Col. Seymour) had a few really good tips such as having someone else run the camera while you are doing your show. To enhance the viewer's experience and if doing anything that uses words or numbers, make sure your video can show the words correctly and not reversed. Here is a great idea Dane shared that is used by another magician, begin your Zoom show by having the kids/audience show their eyes, or teeth to the camera. Have kids present the camera with a huge smile. In essence, get your audience engaged right away and they should remain attentive.

Getting to the performances Shawn Miler was up next, Shawn told us about a dream where him and Dane went on a trip, in the dream he did two tricks, one card, and one mentalism. Just like in the dream, Dane chose a card from a shuffled deck, placed it back the deck, but in the attempt to shuffle Shawn dropped the cards, just like in the dream. So let's move to the mentalism part of the dream. Shawn had a brown paper sack with a souvenir from their trip. Next from a pad of listed world locations Shawn riffled through the pad and Dane said stop, stopping on Rome, when the souvenir was removed from the sack it was a coffee cup from Rome. When the cup was tilted to reveal the bottom, the card Dane first chose was printed on the bottom. The magician in trouble is always a fun route to take.

Dane pulled out a popcorn box, a red scarf, a blue scarf and a white scarf. With a flourish of his hand they disappeared, but they were still there when he opened the box. Hang on! POP! The scarves fused together, to form an American flag! Thanks Dane for the classic magic to end our Zoom session. Great meeting, can't wait to see you at the next Little Rock ring 29 meeting in March. Please come join us for some fun fellowship, and magic. You might teach or learn something new, we hope to see you soon.

Stay safe and stay magical,

Shawn Miller





Blast from the Past

Mike Curtis



This month's report is from 71 years ago. It is remembering the February, 1950 meeting of the Ring. The President at that time was Dr. John McCullough Smith and the Secretary was J. H. McGowen. The Necromancers of Ring 29 met monthly at Albert Pike Hotel.

February business meeting was shorter than usual but many items of interest were presented and decisions made on most of them. Through the efforts of J. K. Poch and Otis Dugan, Blackstone presented his show here February 10 and 11, sponsored by the Lions Club of North Little Rock, Ark. Members of Ring 29 and guests were invited to attend the Lions banquet February 9th at which Blackstone was guest of honor. It grieves us to hear that this is his farewell tour.

After the business meeting Zuko took over in the absence of the appointed emcee and presented a good show. L. D. Boyer, with a clever vanishing and reappearing coin sleight. James Nolting presented a new egg bag routine ending with a startling production of a 75-watt light bulb from the bag. Otis Dougan, with his ever popular paper tearing and a card naming effect using a medium. Albert Houpt, newest member of the Ring, did a cut and restored rope which went over quite well. Albert takes his magic seriously and presents it nicely, and we are looking forward to more of it in the future. Dr. Smith did a clever imitation of Tom (Little Boy) Williams doing his pantomime hair through head followed by slate writing, cut and restored twine and card location. The members tried to foul him up on the card locating by giving the same number twice but it worked just the same. Lawrence Burrough did the pantomime deck of cards, card through hank and a card stabbing trick while blindfolded and the reaction was terrific. Joe Poch, coin manipulations and a card location. Secretary J. H. McGowen, Jr., concluded the show with card fans, ring on the rope and a rising card trick."

That was an outstanding month for the Ring. What a special privilege to be able to interact with Blackstone and see his farewell tour show live! Although the members surely appreciated Blackstone as an outstanding magician in 1950, they probably couldn't comprehend how powerfully he would be revered in the future.

It is unfortunate that we are now deprived of seeing our current groundbreaking magicians perform live. We do have YouTube to help us enjoy the greats from the past as well as the present, but it's just not the same as having the live experience. But one day . . .

Until next time, remember, the past may often seem distant, but it's always there for us to find.



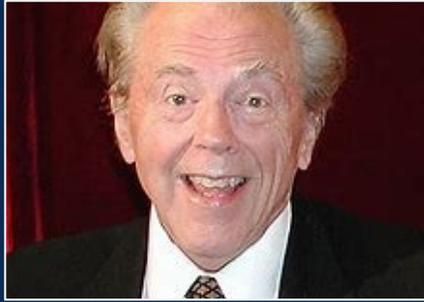


February Performers





Magical History



James Mark Wilson, April 11, 1921-January 19, 2021, was the son of a salesman and he spent much of his youth traveling with his parents as his father moved about on business. He has said his interest in magic began when he was eight years old and saw a magician named Tommy Martin perform at a hotel in Indianapolis, where the Wilson family were staying at the time. The family later moved to Dallas, Texas, where, as a teenager, Wilson improved his magic knowledge by working for the Douglas Magic land shop as a clerk. As his skills improved he began performing magic shows at small functions.

He attended the School of Business Administration at Southern Methodist University, where he majored in marketing, learning skills that were to help him in his future career.

When television began to grow, Wilson launched a show titled Time for Magic on a local station in Dallas in 1955. Calling on his marketing training he made this show possible by attracting sponsorship from the Dr. Pepper Bottling Company. He then expanded to other shows in Houston and San Antonio.

When videotape was developed, Wilson created the first show to be videotaped and nationally syndicated. That was the original black and white Magic Land of Allakazam. It debuted on 1 October 1960 on CBS-TV and aired every Saturday morning on that network for four years. His wife, Nani Darnell, assisted him and they were joined by Bev Bergeron, who helped write the shows and played the character Rebo the Clown. The show was sponsored by Kellogg's. Wilson, Darnell and Bergeron toured state fairs during the summer and made appearances on other network shows. The writing team grew at CBS to include Bobby "Torchy" Towner, Bobby Fenton, Leo Behnke, Lin Searles with Johnny Daniel and Carl Owen building the illusions for the first year of 39 shows. For the second year the existing creative team remained, but Frances Martineau was added along with a young John Gaughan. This group was the nucleus that brought a new look to magic illusions that are still being used today. Magic Land of Allakazam moved from CBS-TV to ABC-TV in 1962 without missing one week on air. That same year, Wilson appeared on the short-lived ABC western comedy and variety series The Roy Rogers and Dale Evans Show. In 1965, Magic Land of Allakazam left ABC and was internationally syndicated.

Wilson later created The Funny Face Magic Show and the Pillsbury Company sponsored Magic Circus in 1971. He also provided the Hall of Magic at the 1964/5 World's Fair in New York. He appeared on film at the Bell Telephone exhibit at the 1968 Hemisfair. He and his crew assisted in the technical production of the magic in many network shows, including The Magician, Circus of the Stars, Hollywood Palace, The Six Million Dollar Man, The Incredible Hulk, Columbo and more.

Wilson's last regular television stint was The Magic Of Mark Wilson. The series was seen in national syndication in 1981 and Wilson was aided on this final series by second son Greg as well as by longtime assistant Nani.

Mark and Nani made an appearance in 2015 in the second series of Penn & Teller: Fool Us, where they were part of the reveal of Greg Wilson's act.

Source: Wikipedia





Event Calendar

| Date | Meeting | Location | Theme | Lecturer | Host/Emcee |
|-----------|--------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|----------|----------------------------|
| July | Zoom | Home | Free for All | N/A | Dane Dover |
| August | TBA - ZOOM | TBA - HOME | Free for All | N/A | Dane Dover |
| September | In Person | Henson Home | First Learned Trick | N/A | Jim Henson Marty Haughn |
| October | In Person | Dover Home | Halloween Magic | N/A | James Kinsey |
| November | TBA | TBD | Free for All | N/A | Adrian Steelman |
| December | In-Person/ Zoom | Cool Caps Facility | Free for All | N/A | Shawn Miller |
| January | Zoom | TBD | TBA | N/A | |
| February | Zoom | TBA | TBA | N/A | |
| March | Zoom | TBD | TBA | N/A | |
| April | Zoom | TBA | TBA | N/A | |
| May | TBA | TBA | TBA | N/A | |
| June | TBA | TBA | TBA | N/A | |

There are a lot of TBAs here on this calendar. Once the State of Arkansas begins to loosen things up a bit changes to this calendar will begin to happen.

EVERYTHING on this calendar is tentative but we need to continue planning the future as if we will be back to some resemblance of normal soon.

These are our normal meeting gatherings. Any additional activity throughout the month will be listed on the website beginning in August.



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Membership

All members of Ring 29 must first be a member of the International Brotherhood of Magicians. I.B.M. Applications can be obtained from http://www.magician.org/membership_application.pdf.

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*.

www.littlerockmagic.net or www.littlerockmagic.org

Our website has been filled with a wealth of information to assist our members and potential members. New features are being added daily. Check out the Ring 29 Highlights video, the Magicians for Hire page, or the Ring 29 Event Calendar.

Using Ring 29 Email Group

To be added to our email group, contact James Kinsey or Marty Haughn

We now use GOOGLE GROUPS for our email service.

Ring 29 is proud to endorse and support Little Rock's world class ONLINE Magic Store, "Mr. Magic" Mr. Magic is owned and operated by retired Fire Chief Jim Henson and is a primary contact for Ring 29.

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