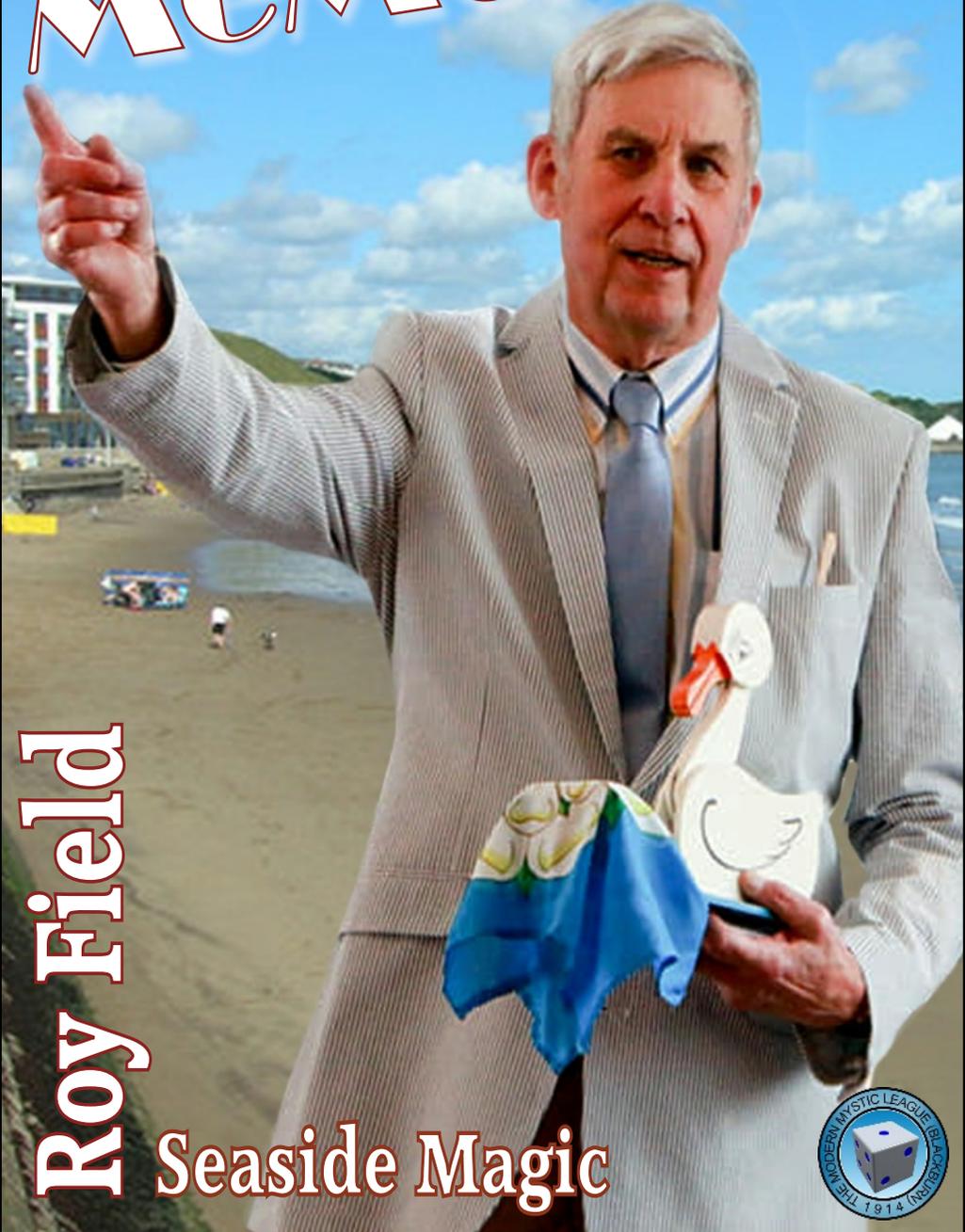


The MEMEL

April 2022



Roy Field

Seaside Magic



2022 CONJURER'S CALENDAR MEETINGS - 2:00PM

JAN		9th January Annual General Meeting		25th January WORKSHOP
FEB ALLAN CLARKE		6th February Robson & Wright: The Dynamic Duo return!	17th - 20th February Blackpool Magic Convention	22nd February WORKSHOP
MAR BRIAN LEAD		13th March Cancelled		29th March COMMITTEE & WORKSHOP
APR DONALD MONK		10th April Seaside Magic with Roy Field OPEN MEETING		26th April WORKSHOP
MAY CARL PEARSON		8th May OPEN MEETING Andrew Lound with 'The Magical Maskelynes'	15th May - Merlins Day of Magic	24th May COMMITTEE & WORKSHOP
JUN ROGER WOODS		12th June Chairman's Day OPEN MEETING	26th June Northern Magic Circle One Day Convention: Harrogate	28th June WORKSHOP
JUL ALLAN CLARKE		10th July Geoffrey Newton with 'Key Ring' Magic		26th July COMMITTEE WORKSHOP
AUG BRIAN LEAD		14th August Desert Island Tricks Members' Day		23rd August WORKSHOP
SEP TBC		11th September Auction of Magic. Visiting Magi welcome.	1st - 4th Sept IBM British Ring Convention at Eastbourne.	27th September COMMITTEE WORKSHOP
OCT TBC		9th October Star lecture from Marc Oberon		25th October WORKSHOP
NOV CARL PEARSON		13th November President's Day OPEN MEETING		22nd November COMMITTEE WORKSHOP
DEC ROGER WOODS		4th December Magic @ Christmas OPEN MEETING		NO WORKSHOP

NOTE* - Name = Refreshments

CHANGE NOTE** Change of usual Date

COMMITTEE - 7:00PM

WORKSHOP - 8:00PM

WHAT'S INSIDE?



**EDITORIAL:
WITH BRIAN LEAD**

**PEARSON'S PRESIDENTIAL
PIES AND PAUL DANIELS...**



**CHAIRMAN'S CHATTER:
SPANISH ROSES.**



**CARL'S COLUMN:
THE EGYPTIAN HALL**



**PAGE 13: HALLOWEEN
HORROR. CLIVE MOORE**



**HANDS, FACE, SPACE
FROM STUART CASSELS**



**CARLTON: THE HUMAN
HAIRPIN BY BRIAN LEAD**



**BE OUR GUEST: DICE TO
SEE YOU... CHRIS WARDLE**



**TRAIN OF THOUGHT: ALL
THAT SCRATCHING...**



**SARNIE SUBTLETIES BY
TONY HODGSON**



This month, we are bulging at the seams with more magic-related goodies.

Chris Wardle makes a welcome return as our special guest, while Clive Moore fills Page 13 with another toe-curler.

It's great to see Tony Hodgson in these pages again, with an entertaining twist on the eponymous 'sandwich', and we are treated to a double dose of 'Quickies' from Jay Fortune and Roy Field.

Allan Clarke returns from the Repair Shop with some thoughts on fleas, and we have the final part of the Stuart Cassels trilogy on Hands-Face-Space.

Carlton is our featured personality, and Carl concludes his fascinating series on the Egyptian Hall.

Add in all the regulars, and we have another bumper bundle for you to enjoy.

Brian



b.lead@btinternet.com



From the Editor's desk...

On April Fool's Day I went round putting up 'no turning' notices on cul-de-sacs.

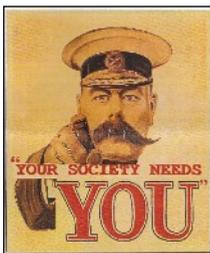
In this 'fooling' month of April, it seems appropriate to relate an amusing tale concerning Arnold Furst, probably best known for his reviews of *Great Magic Shows* and *Famous Magicians of the World*. Not long after the war, Arnold was on a visit to the UK when he was invited by Harry Stanley to accompany him to the theatre, along with a young Robert Harbin. The show was *The Ice Review*, featuring the comedy magician Benson Dulay. By all accounts the act went very well, but Furst was disturbed by one bit of business which involved a spectator's watch being dropped into a bag prior to vanishing it. The watch appeared to fall through a hole in the bag onto the floor, whereupon Dulay set about hitting it with a large hammer. The smashed bits were duly vanished, and then located; the watch being miraculously found whole again, inside a nest of boxes. Furst complained to Harbin that the performer had no right to apparently disrespect his helper's property, even in jest, as this could cause alarm and distress: "Anyone doing that is an asinine fool, behaving like an idiot who does not know how to value personal property belonging to others." He said that he would have gently tapped the bag with a wand before vanishing the timepiece from it.



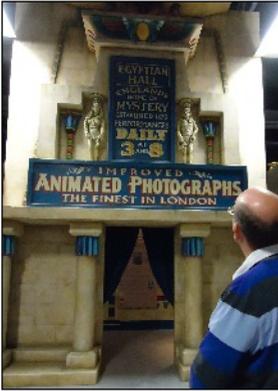
The matter was left there, but a couple of nights later Furst was invited to the home of the then Secretary of The Magic Circle, Francis White, to watch a television programme featuring Robert Harbin. Harbin began his patter by saying that whenever he tried out a new trick, he showed it to Arnold Furst. This, of course, was a lovely in-joke, as to the ears of the uninitiated viewers he was saying "I show it to Arnold first." Harbin then proceeded to perform exactly the same smashed-and-restored watch trick done by Dulay; bag, hammer and all. Furst was mortified, thinking that this was Harbin's own routine. He recalled the venom with which he had attacked it and its performer, and was filled with embarrassment.

He hardly dared to meet the gaze of Harbin when they next met, but the latter burst out laughing. It turned out that Harbin had set up the whole thing as an elaborate practical joke, searching through his props to find his old nest of boxes and visiting several hardware shops before locating a hammer which was an exact replica of the one used by Dulay.

Fascinating facts keep popping up in our Archives section. This month, we learn that in 1962 (well within the memory of most of us) you could get a six-course meal in a hotel for the equivalent of 80p! Also, we see that in 1922 and 1932 the April MML meetings consisted of just a handful of people (six and four respectively) getting together in a private house – but by 1942 this had risen to a record-breaking 25 in a hired venue. I fear, for a number of reasons, that we are returning to those early days in terms of attendees at talks and lectures. We are still emerging slowly from the pandemic, and some of our senior members are unable to travel . . . and we are sadly losing loyal supporters at a quicker rate than we are recruiting new ones. That said, we have great pleasure in announcing that Craig's daughter, Francesca, has now 'signed up' as our latest acquisition. Fran has already been a great supporter over the years, especially at our dinners, and few will forget her appearance at my British Ring President's dinner in the guise of the Mad Hatter.



Anyway, getting back to our numbers problem, we are in dire straits for this Sunday, when some of our hardy group of regulars will not be present for different reasons. Our good friend Roy Field will be travelling all the way from Filey on the East Coast (not an easy journey) with a specially prepared talk about Seaside Magic, accompanied by a performance and Q&A session. His generosity deserves our support, so do please come along if it is at all possible. The cliché 'you won't regret it' really is appropriate this time. Remember it is an open meeting, so do bring along anyone you can find!



This month we come to the conclusion of Carl's meticulously researched series of articles on The Egyptian Hall which won him the Les Brooks Trophy. I recall visiting the Davenports World of Magic in Norfolk just after it had opened, and being inspired by a not-quite-life-size replica of the facade of that wonderful historic building.

A couple of weeks ago I came across another example of our favourite theme of coincidence. At an online Council meeting of the Northern

Magic Circle, it was discovered that it had been Clive Moore's birthday the previous day (on exactly the same date and year as Penn Jilette), and that it would be Bill Temple's birthday the following day, with Roy Field's the day after that. Out of the nine people on screen, three were celebrating their birthdays within three days of each other.

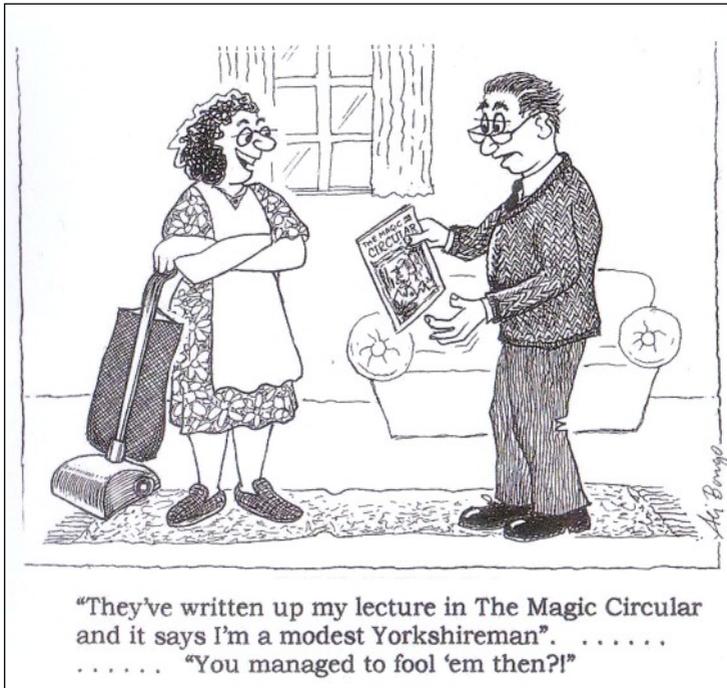
The Repair Shop came up with another magic-related item recently, in the form of an opera hat which had been used by magician Miker Suffield. In fact, he concluded his segment with a rope trick involving the mysterious headgear. Brought up by his mother, Mike had her brother, Uncle Ted (Parker) as a father figure, and learned magic from him. There were a few photographs of him in role, and he looked quite a character. Now Mike's grand-



daughter Isabella is using the hat as an accessory in her own magic show, and so it has been passed down through the generations. It reminded me very much of the one which belonged to Mo, which we now use in his memory for some of our raffles. Intriguingly, on the same programme was a shop-window automaton of a butcher chopping meat – the

sort you used to see in the front windows of bakers, cobblers and so on, with the same basic action.

Some jokes can become very poignant in retrospect. Whenever I visited David Hemingway, he used to say that his main social events had become visits to the doctor and hospital appointments. He joked "I take so many pills that when I die they will have to put a child-proof lid on my coffin." I was rather taken aback recently when re-watching David's *An Audience with David Hemingway* DVD to find him telling the same joke on there, so it must have been one of his favourites. Apart from Donald's drawing, which was his favourite caricature of himself, David was also proud of a cartoon of him by none other than Ali Bongo. It was reproduced in the order of service for his funeral, and here it is again:



I can't understand why my career as a proof reader came to such a sudden end.

Brian

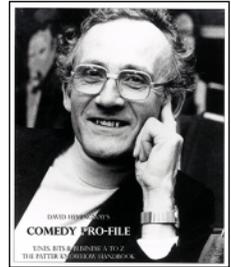


Pearson's Presidential

Hello again, everyone. What a month!

We've missed a workshop, cancelled due to holidays, illness and injury, and had a meeting cancelled due to part of the roof and the gable end collapsing in the storm at St Francis. I believe all the repairs are now done, and normal service has resumed.

I would just like to thank Lorraine Hamer for cheering me up by sending me a copy of Comedy Pro- Files, written by our recently departed member David Hemingway. It was my Mother's funeral last week, and when this unexpected gift arrived it made such a difference to my day. It's the small gestures which mean such a lot.



Due to my recent accident and not getting out, I've been enjoying watching magic on YouTube – mostly all the old Paul Daniels shows. It's a shame that we don't have shows like this on television any more. I have also just discovered Vanishing Inc's 'The Insider Podcast', with some very interesting interviews with well known magical minds. Magic is such a great hobby, and I'm sure like me it has been there for you when things have not been going your way. It has given me so much over the years; the most important of which are my many magical friends.

Onwards and upwards into April, with a visit from our good friend Roy Field with Seaside Magic. I very much look forward to catching up with my Mystic League friends. Do come along, too. I promise you won't regret it.



PS: I'm on refreshments in May, so it's the return of the pies! Do let me know if you want anything special bringing along, food or drink wise. Until next time,

Carl



Chairman's Chatter

It has been a shaky start to the year for the MML with meetings cancelled due to illness and the storm damage at St Francis's Hall. Hopefully things will get better.

On our holidays in Spain Joan and I were pleased to see an excellent magic show at our hotel. The magician, Cahman, gave a 45 minute show to music to an international audience of tourists. Beginning with the production of silks and roses, he moved into a clock theme producing clocks and incorporating a 'back in time' feature. He then had an amusing routine with a telephone cable, a rope routine and some very competent card productions and manipulations ending with a card fountain. After a linking rings routine he had a spot of shadowgraphy, finishing with a butterfly on fan, a floating table and a 'snowstorm' finish. We thought he was really good, and he held the audience throughout.



I have been very impressed by Philip Treece's CollectingMagicBooks.com website. He has a good selection of books and when you buy something

it is always very securely wrapped. The site is well presented and has a touch of class about it, which is good to see.

I'm still looking at things I bought at the Blackpool Convention. I've heard from Steve Gore that the South Tyneside International Magic Festival 2022 is to be held 14th - 16th October so Paul and I are planning to attend as we had such a good time last time we went in 2019.

Unfortunately, I won't be at Roy Field's talk on Sunday as Joan and I are going to see our grandson, Finley, for his fifth birthday party. His Mum, Helen, has booked a local magician called David Major to provide the magic show. Rather him than me with a room full of five year olds! Finley loves magic and I am looking forward to teaching him some small tricks which I bought for him at Blackpool.

Best regards to you all,

Roger

'The Monk Sez'



I thought that I'd share this with any magicians who can't manage to get to our April Workshop.

It was gleaned from a book that I produced and presented as a conundrum to 'make yer brain hurt'!

I liked the premise and, after fooling myself with it, proceeded to tweak it my way to make it actually work in real life.

As proof that it works, here is a still of me performing this for real people at a close-up gig we did at Chorley Bowling Club a couple of years ago.

Here's What Happens:



A short story is read aloud about magicians wanting to stay at a hotel.

The problem is that there aren't enough rooms for them all.

During the story you demonstrate, with a handful of cards and no sneaky moves, just how it was possible to accommodate all the magicians at the hotel.

After you've shown them the solution to this problem your audience is left in no doubt that an impossible thing has just happened.

Not only that, but they are left with a souvenir (*and your contact details*) that continues to puzzle everyone and provide a talking point long, maybe even days, after you've gone.

You leave them with the story postcard which they will show to all their friends and tell them what the magician did, right before their eyes!

Easy to do,- angle proof,- no finger flinging required,- leave 'em scratching their heads and talking about what they just saw you do.

If you come to our April workshop on the last Tuesday, I will give you a demonstration of this effect.

You can also have a number of the story cards to give out and *the actual secret instructions written down*,- just like we used to have in the olden days before those computer thingies.

D the A

Carl's Column...

THE EGYPTIAN HALL: ENGLAND'S HOME OF MYSTERY



On his return to America, Kellar had Maskelyne's three automata recreated and called them Cleo, Phono and Echo. Not content with his blatantly underhand methods, in 1884 he opened his own theatre in Philadelphia and called it the Egyptian Hall! Maskelyne and Cooke were definitely not happy with their American counterpart, but I think they were so successful it didn't cause them any real problems. In the 1880s America was still a world away for most people. I know that Maskelyne did spend a lot of money privately in an attempt to protect his secrets, but sadly even today magicians still see magic secrets as something they can 'borrow' with no real consequences.

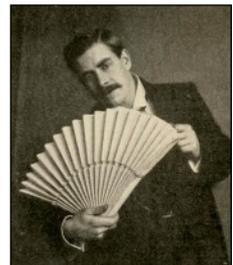
'This partnership was by no means a chance happening..'



Another interesting character to perform at the Hall was Charles Bertram. He turned his hand to being a professional magician after he went bankrupt as a pub landlord in 1882. His rise to the top was fast, and by 1885 he was known as the King's Conjuror to King George VII. It was in that year, after completing a four-month run at St James's Hall, that he arrived on stage at the Egyptian Hall. He performed the only authorised version of both of De Kolta's prize illusions, the Vanishing Bird Cage and the Vanishing Lady.

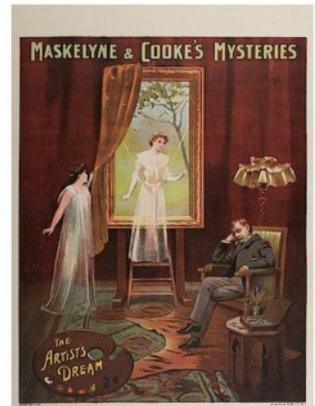
De Kolta had agreed terms with Bertram, so that these could be performed whilst De Kolta was performing in Paris. Bertram was a large but personable character who everyone adored. His catchphrase "Isn't it Wonderful?" summed up this personable man of mystery perfectly.

In 1893 another cast member arrived to join Maskelyne and Cooke. His name was David Devant. This partnership was by no means a chance happening.

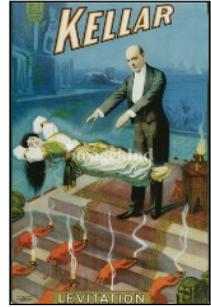


David Devant had always wanted to work with Maskelyne, but knew he had to hone his craft before approaching the master magician. When he thought he was ready he invited Maskelyne to witness a performance at the Crystal Palace Opera Theatre. Maskelyne refused politely, but said that if Devant could secure a booking closer to home he would gladly attend. Devant managed to arrange a demonstration of his skills at the Trocadero Palace music hall near Piccadilly Circus. Maskelyne watched Devant's demonstration, and after the show invited him to his office at the Egyptian Hall. On the day of the meeting Maskelyne explained that, although he liked the illusions, they were too large for the smaller theatre at the Egyptian Hall. David Devant went away and returned just five days later with a miniature model of an illusion he would call the Artist's Dream. It was built, and a sketch was written around it. A three-month contract was offered to Devant to perform his new illusion at the Egyptian Hall, then after the contract expired Maskelyne approached him and asked him to become a permanent member of his team. Eventually, Maskelyne made Devant his official business and performing partner. David Devant was not just a brilliant performer; he was also an Illusion creator. In 1895 he created the Birth of Flora, in which a lady appears from a large display of flowers. In 1905 he created an Illusion which he himself stated was his greatest work. In the Mascot Moth, a lady dressed as a moth floats on stage and is then vanished.

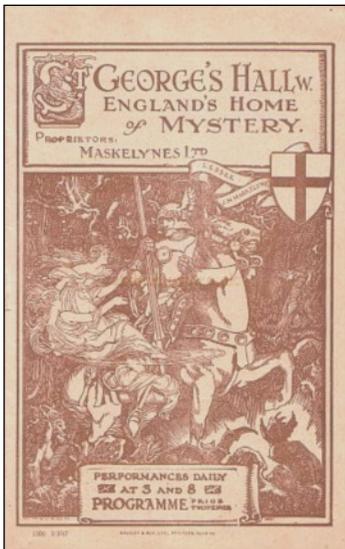
In 1901, Kellar paid his last known visit to the Egyptian Hall where he committed his final act of piracy by stealing the secret to Maskelyne's most prized levitation illusion. Kellar went to great lengths to discover the secret, but when all attempts failed he offered employment to one of Maskelyne's trusted employees, Paul Valadon. Valadon was already a well-known magician in England, and after several performances at the Egyptian Hall Maskelyne approached him and offered him a permanent position within his small group of staff.



Valadon give him the secret in exchange for employing him and getting him ready to be his successor, taking him to America. Kellar unveiled it as his own, advertising the illusion as 'Kellar's levitation of Princess Karnak'. To give credit to Kellar, he did have the design changed so that the illusion was portable, which meant he could take it on tour. Unfortunately for Paul Valadon, his rise to the top was quashed when he and Kellar had a disagreement and the two parted.



In 1908 Kellar retired and sold all his illusions to his new successor, Howard Thurston.



In January 1905 the final magic performance was shown on the stage of The Egyptian Hall, and then everything was packed away and moved to London's new Home of Mystery; Saint George's Hall. In February the same year, George Cooke, John Maskelyne's great friend, passed away.

In 1905 The Egyptian Hall was demolished to make way for offices and retail outlets. If you visit the Magic Circle in London you will find there a couple of seats from the front row of the theatre.

The only other parts of the hall known to have survived are the two statues of Oasis and Isis who once stood proudly above the entrance. Sadly, they now stand not so proudly either side of the service lift at the London Museum.

The Egyptian Hall, England's Home of Mystery, may be gone but is not forgotten.

Carl



Hello once again, and thank you to everyone who keeps me updated about welfare matters.

Paul and Margaret Guy are recovering from Covid. I have sent a card with our get well wishes, with the hope they are both fully fit soon.

Brian Berry has had a stomach bug which he thinks he picked up whilst at the Blackpool convention. I'm glad to say he is well on the road to recovery.

We have just heard that Ron Baron is in hospital in Preston following a mini-stroke (TIA). We wish him and Betty well, and will keep you informed.

Please take care of yourselves and your loved ones, as time is the most precious thing we have. Spend it wisely and have fun.

I think the rest of us are as well as we can be!

Please let me know of anyone who is under the weather or just needs a chat.

Until next month,

My email is: pearsoncarl1@virginmedia.com

Mobile no. is 07807 115784.

Keep safe - **Carl.**

Ed: We must include Carl himself this month, and send back to him all the love and support which he gives to others.

Quotation of the month



‘Penn Jillette: I think the most important thing for any magician is not to give away the secrets, ever.
Teller: But nobody ever died over the secret to a magic trick’

(From an interview in Genii magazine; May, 1995)

Sitting in the audience of a magic show can be quite dangerous. After all, you wouldn't want an elephant from a Las Vegas show to come and sit on your knee, or to be too close to a fire eater.

We were visiting a few friends last Christmas and, after the usual mince pies, we settled down to a magic show performed by their teenage son. After the usual card tricks, which had gone off without a hitch, came his big production of a red light on the end of his thumb. All was going well until his final production. The action of throwing his arms in the air to take his final bow was done with such enthusiasm that it caused the D-lite thumb tip to propel, like a missile, from his hand onto Jeani's nose. It bounced off several objects (the thumb tip, not Jeani's nose) and landed on a lady's lap, leaving her with a terrified look on her face as she tried to work out what this thumb tip was doing in her sandwich.



This little amusing episode started me thinking about the strange things that happen in our mysterious world. One such thing occurred many years ago after a lecturer, whose name I can't remember, had demonstrated a dove production effect. A week or two later, I was invited to a local magician's house and he took me down to his shed and showed me this contraption he had built. A dove would be secretly placed in a hammock until the appropriate time, when a catch would be released, propelling the dove onto his finger. Behind the mechanism

was a large spring; in this case resembling a shock absorber from a car. The magician demonstrated this by putting a de-icer can into the hammock to represent a dove and, as we stood on the lawn, he released the catch, sending the can flying into space. We never saw that can again, but one day someone might well find it on the moon, so thank goodness a dove wasn't used.

One Hallowe'en night we were putting on a show to raise money for a local children's hospice. There were six close-up workers on six tables, amongst the false cobwebs and plastic spiders. All was going well, until one of our magicians offered a few cards with the introduction "Take a card." One of the ladies took a card, but unfortunately she caught the end of one of the fanned cards, sustaining a paper cut to her finger. The blood oozed everywhere and it looked an ideal effect for Hallowe'en! The lady in question needed first aid by way of a plaster. The rest of the people on the table thought it was an effect using stage blood. She lived to come back into the audience on another day.



Next time you are thinking of taking up an extra dangerous hobby, like sky diving, you could think of doing magic instead.

Keep safe and well, and waving your wands.

Clive Moore



Good Fortune?

Back when I was a pro magician, I once turned up to entertain at a wedding. I began to present magic to the guests on the lawn, much to the delight of everyone. Two hours later, I met the Bride and Groom and did a quick piece of magic for them (the wedding couple are always busy on their wedding day, so are left until last to see some magic) and they kept on saying what a nice surprise it was. I then began to realise that a lot of the guests had said that.

As I walked away, thinking I'd done a great job and everyone was happy, the manager ran across the green to my car. Oh... dear...

Yes. I'd been on time, been at the right venue, only... I had been performing at the **WRONG** wedding! The wedding guests I was booked to perform for were on the other side of the hotel!

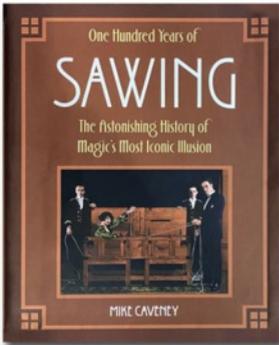
Jay Fortune

WORKSHOP

29th March 2022

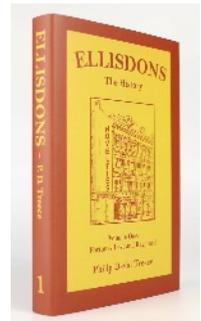


With the January Workshop meeting cancelled due to sickness and the February Workshop meeting cancelled due to storm damage at St Francis's, it was finally good to get together again for the March Workshop meeting. Seven members were present: Allan, Brian L, Craig, Donald, Francesca, Paul and Roger.



Brian showed us the sumptuous book from Mike Caveney, 'One Hundred Years of Sawing', all about the history of the sawing a lady in half illusion. Allan had 'Ellisdon's: The History, Vol One' by Philip Treece of CollectingMagicBooks.com which is the first part of a history of the well known joke and trick suppliers.

For the rest of the meeting Paul took us through the items on a list of the higher value tricks generously donated to the Society by Anne, which will be for private sale or auction in due course. Many thanks are due to Paul for cataloguing and researching all these items. Tonight's items were mainly for stage or cabaret or were collectors' items and included a Dog Arm Puppet, the Mysterious Mini



Card Boxes from Merlins, a Card Dagger and Card Fountain, again from Merlins, Miser's Delight Pro X, a Floating Table, a Rubik's Cube Sliding Die Box and some other choice items.

Apart from these items there are also DVDs, decks of cards and over two hundred smaller tricks for our auction sale in September.

For our next Workshop meeting on **26th April** we will be continuing the theme "What Is It?" which has proved to be most interesting.

Roger



Part 3

By *Stuart
Cassels*

Space - Astrology

Definition (noun): "The study of the movements and relative positions of celestial bodies interpreted as having an influence on human affairs and the natural world."



It seems ridiculous to think that, at its simplest level, astrology can be anything more than Barnum statements; as after all surely not everyone born in the same month can have the same future, despite what the newspapers would have us believe?

Imagine having the ability to not only predict a random event in the near future, but also a random person's star-sign!

The Effect: You throw a balloon into the audience and let it bounce from person to person for a short amount of time (perhaps whilst playing a suitable piece of music). When the music stops, the lucky random person holding the balloon joins you on stage. The balloon is fastened to the table or microphone stand in full view, and after a bit of business, perhaps with a stack of palmistry cards, or a phrenology head, you prove that it was indeed fate that they were chosen. You explain that within the inflated balloon (obviously sealed) is a prediction specific to them, despite the fact it seems completely random that they caught the balloon! You prove it by popping the balloon and retrieving the prediction that falls to the floor - surprise - it has their star sign written on it!

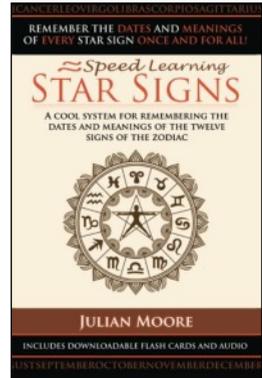
This is a variation of Card in Balloon, but using a peek wallet or impression pad to find out the volunteer's birthdate and therefore their star sign. There are various methods to accomplish the effect of the prediction ending up in the balloon. Personally, I like Chris Piercy's Pierced, replacing the playing card for a large, folded slip of paper. For those who have this effect, or a similar routine, you should already know how the prediction ends up within the balloon. Needless to say, I have eliminated the most technical move and replaced it with a prepared set of paper slips, each with a sign of the zodiac in a pocket index. The pocket index I use is Carl Royle's leather index which holds twelve slips; perfect for star signs.

These slips are printed as large as possible and placed in date order - January to December, with the star sign of the beginning of each month (Capricorn to Sagittarius). After all, why bother memorizing the star signs for each month? If you are unfortunate enough to find someone whose birthdate is on the cusp of two signs, refer to a crib on your table or in your case.

If you are interested in performing this, get Chris Piercy's DVD instructions and all will become clear.

I have also recently discovered that Qualatex sell black balloons with silver or gold stars printed on, perfect for the effect!

If you want to memorize star signs and their dates, and their supposed attributes, there are various books written on the subject; such as Julian Moore's book *Speed Learning Star Signs*.



My own simple method of memorizing the signs:

Over the years I have used the old mnemonic "**All The Great Constellations Live Very Long Since Stars Cannot Alter Physics**". Each initial represents a star sign - Aries, Taurus, Gemini, Cancer, Leo, Virgo, Libra, Scorpio, Sagittarius, Capricorn, Aquarius, Pisces.

I then tie this to an image of Jonathan Ross in Fear marching through the Air with a Lion with a poorly tail. At this point you may want to build your own suitable mnemonic! If, of course, you are still reading.

Jonathan Ross cannot pronounce his Rs, so fear becomes FEAW - the elements of the zodiac - Fire Earth Air Water (the elements are cyclic).

Marching tells me the first sign is in March and Air tells me the first sign is Aries.

There are 2 signs that start with the letter L - the first must be Leo (the Lion).

There are two signs that start with the letter C - poorly = Cancer - the first of those signs.

There are two signs that start with the letter S - the tail tells me the first is Scorpio (scorpion's tail).

Of course, you can always have a crib printed and stuck inside your case!

Stuart

CARLTON, THE HUMAN HAIRPIN: Brian Lead

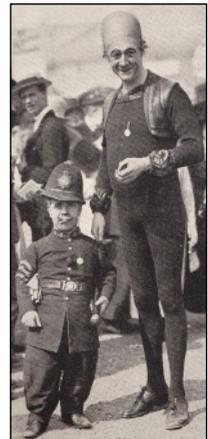
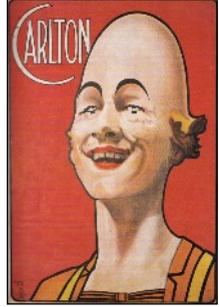
Our April guest, Roy Field, has commented that in his youth he used to perform wearing a tall, pointed 'dunce's cap' which elevated his height from six feet four inches to around seven feet.

This reminded me of the comedy magician Carlton (Arthur Carlton Philps, 1881-1942) who wore a tightly fitting costume with black tights, to accentuate his thin body and to prove he had nothing hidden on his person; something that the regular stage costume for a magician could not do.

In his autobiography, *Twenty Years of Spoof and Bluff*, he wrote: 'I was exceedingly thin, weighing less than nine and a half stone, and my all-black stage costume accentuated my lankiness, which I further increased by wearing 'elevators' in my shoes and a high, padded bald wig, so that I looked well over seven feet tall.' This earned him the nick-names of 'The Human Hairpin' and 'The Human Match Stick'. The reaction was spontaneous: 'My first appearance was the signal for so uproarious a scene as I had never before witnessed. The whole house rocked with laughter. I had to give my performance in dumb-show, as I could not hear myself speak.'

Subsequently, he adopted a high-pitched staccato voice (rather like Joe Pasquale), and gave a running commentary on his own act as though he were a spectator.

In order to emphasise his extreme appearance further by contrast, Carlton employed 'the fattest man in the world' and a number of dwarfs. The fat man, weighing a reported forty stones, was the American Bobby Dunlop, who when travelling had to be accommodated in the luggage van as he was unable to fit through the door of an ordinary railway carriage. Two of the dwarfs, Signor and Madame Gondin, were reputed to be the smallest husband and wife in the world. Carlton also had the ability to stretch his body by several inches, as taught by Willard, 'The Man Who Grows'.



Carlton's signature trick was the Sliding Die Box, but early in his career he made capital out of a much larger box. At the Egyptian Hall in Piccadilly, Maskelyne and Cooke were presenting a trick in which a man, corded up inside a locked box, freed himself in a few seconds. With an additional transformation, this was to become Metamorphosis or, more prosaically, the Substitution Trunk; a trademark effect for several performers, including Houdini. Initially, it was the central illusion in the playlet *Will, the Witch and the Watch*.



Anyway, at each performance Maskelyne would offer the sizeable sum of £500 to anyone who could make a similar box and successfully duplicate the trick. Two mechanics succeeded in making such a box and Carlton, describing himself as a 'lithe and supple youth,' was placed inside, releasing himself in three seconds flat. As stipulated by Maskelyne and Cooke, the box was locked and Carlton was enveloped in a canvas cover which was then sealed and corded.

To cut a long story short, the pair declined to pay up the promised prize money, and the case was carried through the Court of Appeal to the House of Lords. Maskelyne and Cooke lost, and the two men who had made the box finally received their £500; but as their humble box-jumper Carlton did not derive any financial benefit. Being very familiar with the apparatus by this time, however, he was able to construct his own, with a couple of improvements, and announced: 'Carlton Philips in a facsimile of the famous Box Trick that won £500 in the House of Lords.' It enabled him to send home a substantial sum each week for his mother and sisters and 'put a little by for a rainy day' as well as attending to his daily needs.



Carlton wrote about inventing his own illusion, called The Mysterious Cross, along the lines of the Assistant's Revenge: 'It created a big sensation all over the country, topping bills wherever it was shown. The trick consisted of a wooden cross, to which my sister Olive was securely bound. Only one long rope was used, this being fastened round her waist and neck and finished off at her wrists, which were extended to the ends of the arms of the cross, the two ends of the rope then being held by two members of the audience.'

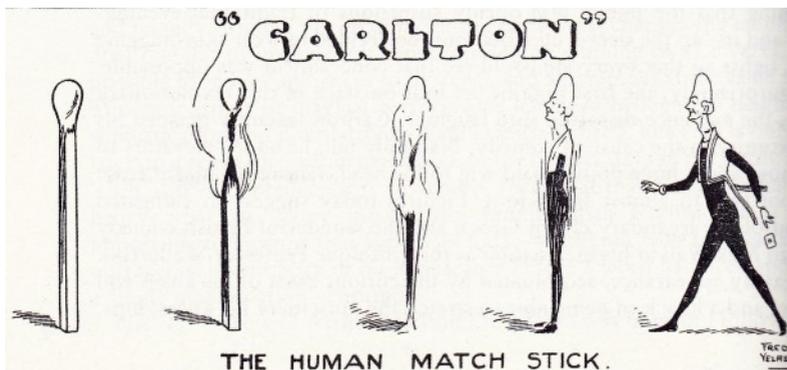
While the rope was thus being held, she vanished from under a curtain drawn round her, and my assistant was found, upon the curtain being drawn, to have taken her place. The whole thing was practically instantaneous, and the illusion has baffled some of the biggest experts in the world. I used no mirrors, wires, trick scenery or trap-doors, some of which form the basis of most illusions of that kind, and the secret has never been found out by anybody to this day.'

Carlton is credited with appearing on the first Royal Command Variety Performance, held before King George V and Queen Mary in November 1912. In fact, David Devant was the only magician to perform an act, including his hilarious *The Boy, the Girl and the Eggs*. Carlton had only a cameo role. The show ended in a finale depicting a Varieties Garden Party, produced by Albert Toft. Essentially, a number of music hall artists made a walk-on appearance, assembling in a large tableau. Carlton crossed the stage with his Die Box, bowed to the audience and joined the group.

This idea of a themed finale developed over the following years, reaching a peak in 1938 when it is reported that 250 well-known performers joined in the Lambeth Walk dance from *Me and My Girl*.

According to Carlton, the only bad review he ever received came from *The Salt Lake Evening Telegram* in America: 'Carlton the long magician has the most disgusting and joy-killing ten minutes the stage has offered in recent times. The Orpheum has no business inflicting such a pest on its patrons.' Shortly afterwards, the female journalist responsible drowned herself in the Great Salt Lake, eliciting the verdict 'suicide while insane.'

Carlton framed the review and proudly displayed it in his home, saying: "Anyone can get flattering press notices, but he cannot buy one like this!"





An Experiment with Colours and Dice

By Chris Wardle

The Routine: You explain to your audience that tucked into your top pocket is a handkerchief in a specific colour, which is your prediction. You are going to have a colour chosen, but in as random a way as possible. You will not just ask for a colour to be named, as psychologically most people say either red or blue and so this might seem too obvious. Therefore, you have prepared a list of eleven different colours and you have two dice to roll, which could total any number from two (one plus one) to twelve (six plus six). The dice will be rolled by a spectator three times, and the total on the third roll will be the chosen total, to make it completely random. The dice are rolled three times, the total on the third roll is, for example six, made with a five and a one, and the sixth colour is now looked at on the list. It is orange. The spectator now reaches into the performer's top pocket and produces an orange hankie - a perfect match!

There are two methods running simultaneously here. First, the dice appear genuine, but they are rather special. You can buy trick dice from various dealers and online (I got mine from The Card Collection some years ago) where they only have a one, two or three printed on one of them, and only four, five and six printed on the other. Therefore, each number appears twice on each die. However, because they are handled and rolled together as a pair, everything appears genuine as they are not loaded and a free mixture of numbers is seen on each roll. You cannot see more than three sides of a die at any time, so the special printing is hidden perfectly. Simply handle them casually and don't draw particular attention to them. With these special dice, only the totals five, six, seven, eight or nine can be made, so only five totals rather than the eleven you claim! (If you use a dice cup, or even a clear plastic glass, this limits the amount of handling the dice receive by the spectator, too!)

You need to be wearing a jacket and a shirt with a top pocket. You place a purple hankie in your shirt pocket and an orange hankie in the top pocket of your jacket. You mention your 'top pocket' at the start, but you do not say which one! This means that either colour can be pulled out by the spectator and displayed at the end. You direct them to the correct pocket as you patter.



My list of colours looks like this:

- | | | |
|----------|----------|----------|
| 2 White | 3 Yellow | 4 Red |
| 5 Violet | 6 Orange | 7 Purple |
| 8 Amber | 9 Mauve | 10 Green |
| 11 Blue | 12 Pink | |

As you can see, five, seven and nine are covered by the purple hankie, and six and eight are covered by the orange hankie. At a casual glance, the list appears all different and innocent.

It appears that despite a completely free choice of total, rolled by the spectator, and a list of all different colours, you have been able to predict the chosen one exactly.

Of course, you could use a double envelope or any other container which has two compartments, such as a change bag, to reveal the hankie colour, but using the top pocket dodge, allows for the spectator to remove the silk themselves and no extra props are required. You just steer your patter once you know which silk will need to be revealed!

Chris



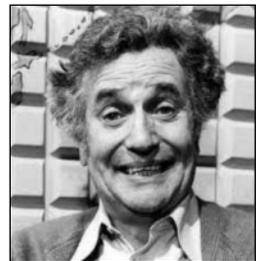
An itchy question ?

Seeing and listening to Jon Marshall on 'The repair Shop' last month brought back a memory of his visit to the MML in 2015 when he presented one of his smaller Sideshow Illusions, The Flea Circus. Jon took to the stage as a sideshow barker, drumming up business for his amazing miniature show. Various performing fleas would balance on a tightrope, dive into a small pool from a great height, pull enormous weights and generally create mayhem for the audience. It was a really fun afternoon and I had forgotten how these simple pleasures could give so much joy.



Whilst searching for images to illustrate the article, I stumbled upon another well-known Flea Circus proponent, Michael Bentine. Again, memories flooded back as I remembered watching enthralled, at these tiny creatures performing all manner of strange feats. Michael Bentine was co-creator of 'The Goon Show' radio programme, along with Spike Milligan, Peter Sellers and Harry Secombe, although Bentine only appeared in the first few dozen shows aired on the then BBC Light Programme.

The Goon Show was another favourite of mine and, looking back, the radio format allowed listeners to create the characters and sets in their imagination, and I think that stimulation certainly helps to conjure up ideas and think through outcomes, especially in performance. Michael went on to create the TV shows 'Potty Time' and 'It's a Square World'. The latter is where I first remember seeing his flea circus in action.



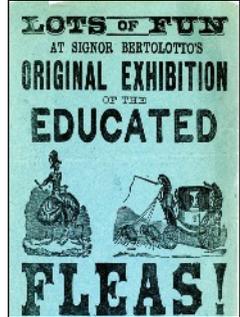
Of course, the Flea Circus had been around for decades, and initially the focus was not on the fleas, but on the miniature masterpieces of craftsmanship they were attached to.



Flea circuses were started by jewellers or watchmakers as a display of miniature objects. It was an acclaimed showman from Italy, Louis Bertolotto, who transformed these early shows into a phenomenon.

In the 1830s, his flea circus became the hottest ticket in London, performing in front of crowned heads of Europe in a touring career that lasted over 50 years.

Some people believed this form of entertainment declined in the 1950s because of concerns about animal cruelty. Flea circuses were indeed mentioned in the House of Commons in relation to animal protection in the 1920s, but rather it was to highlight what was seen as the ridiculous nature of a proposed act to protect performing animals.



There's a good article about the Flea Circus by Dr Tim Cockerill, again on the BBC. You can find it here: [BBC Link](#)



Incidentally, if you are a fan of Spike Milligan material, there's a new comedy called 'Spike', written by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman which is being performed at The Watermill Theatre in Newbury.

Here's what the critics have to say about it:

SPIKE is an absurdly funny new play by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman, that delves into the inner workings of one of our most unique and brilliantly irreverent comedy minds. The cast includes Olivier Award-winning actor John Dagleish (Sunny Afternoon) as Spike Milligan, with Stephen Fry as the voice of the BBC announcer.

There's nothing like a good dose of nostalgia to blow away the stresses and strains of modern living.

Allan



SARNIE SUBTLETIES

by Tony Hodgson



If you hunger for more and more card magic, and I think you do, then you will have a ravenous craving that urges you to consume more and more. So, consider an effect that has become the bread-and-butter trick which occupies many a strolling magician's repertoire; but first of all, allow me to relate an historical sketch to whet your growing appetite and stave off starvation, whilst adding to your enlightenment.

'I'll try one of those, Sandwich, if it's alright by you'

During a game of cards, a group of regular gamblers who were getting cheesed off with the antics of one of their members, collectively complained to a certain John Montagu, the 4th Earl of Sandwich, that his habit of leaving the card table to consume large quantities of food was disrupting play, and it was therefore suggested that he should forfeit his place. Immediately, without any subterfuge, sleights or subtleties, Montagu instructed his faithful old retainer to wedge a piece of pork, larded with apple sauce, in-between the mid-eighteenth-century equivalent of the separated parts of a baguette; a device which allowed him to continue the game in a convenient and uninterrupted manner while satisfying his burgeoning appetite. Figuratively speaking, Montagu was having his cake and eating it - although let's be clear about this, it was not a cake he was eating, and whilst we are at it, his concoction was an entirely different proposition when it came to the manners required for the delicate and genteel consumption of this new form of fodder.

On the downside, it is clear that Montagu gambled away a small fortune whilst merrily chomping his way through his new invention, but he had signed his name into the history books by inadvertently creating a new and novel way of enjoying his food, whilst at play. And it didn't take long for his contemporaries to ask for this new-fangled delectation. "I'll try one of those, Sandwich, if it's alright by you." And in this way the sandwich was first christened.

As Montagu's notoriety and his sandwich spread, it was eventually inaugurated into the hall of fame for the famished, thus revolutionising the dining habits of future generations and enabling bread makers the world over to rejoice because of the bounty it provided.

It is a rather good yarn, I think you will agree, even if it is not the complete unvarnished truth, but it also allows me to introduce the tentative connection it has with card magic. As we all know, the sandwich became part and parcel of everyday life and was eventually incorporated into our general vocabulary. I relate this story to you as a starter to amplify your yearning for the next discourse.

(An interlude of about 260 years intervened between Montagu's first tasting of his precious sandwich and the Scandinavians ruining the original concept by carelessly leaving off the top slice of bread and calling it an open sandwich; a complete misnomer, if ever there was one. However, I digress).



In fact, 200 years elapsed between Montagu's first tasting of his precious sandwich and magicians subsequently adopting the sandwich as a metaphor for categorising or describing certain types of card tricks. At first, tricks which

contained the elements that could qualify as a sandwich trick were merely described as card tricks, the nomenclature being added retrospectively. Also, it would be churlish to imagine that a face-down card, or cards, had never appeared between two or more face-up cards, either by design or by chance, before the sandwich in this context had been invented. Crucially, the card magic historians who classify such tricks didn't know, at that stage, what to call it.

Possibly the first magician to use the term 'sandwich' to describe a card trick was Victor Farrelli; an attired- in-white purveyor of ice cream during the hours of daylight, whose vendeur de gelato persona transformed him into a nocturnal amateur close-up finger flinger; a figure who prowled the city's late-night venues dressed in a black cloak and top hat, possessed with a frantic knowledge of card magic which was second to none.



Fortunately for historical reference, in 1934 he generously published a book with absolutely no mention of the accolades he had received for his immaculate '99 wafer' or his stupendous banana and pineapple fruit sundae. Instead, he treated his readers to a tour de force of pasteboard perfection entitled Farrell's Card Magic, which included the aforementioned 'The Sandwich,' along with many other delicious offerings.

After all that nonsense, the term 'sandwich' leapt from relative obscurity into the limelight, with several notable magicians contributing various effects to its canon. Ed Marlo, one of the most prolific of all the cardicians, who created hundreds of card tricks and was a legend in his own lunch time, invented multiple sandwich tricks in between snacks, many of which were inspired by his tremendous love of card tricks and chip butties. Larry Jennings also made great progress with his sandwich tricks but complained bitterly that searching for solutions for such effects was definitely no picnic. Controversially, Harry Lorayne claimed that he had popularized the Sandwich trick, which made him somewhat unpopular amongst other card men.

In conclusion, history does not record the amounts of food John Montagu consumed during his time at the card table, or the extent of discomfort he experienced afterwards. Likewise, if you're a glutton for card magic then be warned . . . Too many sandwich tricks may cause severe indigestion and constipation.



Tony



100 years ago (3rd April, 1922): Meeting held at 8, Maple Street with six members present. There was an election of officers, with all getting jobs! It was proposed that a combined photograph of members should be taken, and this was arranged for the next meeting.

90 years ago (12th April, 1932): Only four members were present, but there followed a very interesting conversation, Mr Murray seeking an improvement on one of his devices. This brought forward a very ingenious solution, which Mr Dobson demonstrated.

80 years ago (12th April, 1942): 25 members were present at the White Bull Hotel – which proved to be a record attendance when consulting the register. Problems had been experienced with the duplicator (for printing the magazine etc.), and this was returned to the manufacturer as having it repaired could prove too expensive. Those who had subscribed to its purchase were repaid. It was decided to form a magical ‘Brains Trust’ of five members, who would answer questions on any topic – not, for example, “When was Chung Ling Soo born?”, but more provocative topics along the lines of “Why were the magicians of thirty years ago so much better than we are today?” A sub-committee had drafted a new initiation ceremony, and this was accepted for immediate implementation, although details were not given. It was proposed that the present-day equivalent of a penny should be paid for each ‘new’ book borrowed from the library (raising the perennial question about the value of the material contained in the old ones!) and that each member should contribute two pence for sets of magazines to be bound. The Librarian received 17/6 (about 87p) from this initiative, said to be a very good result.

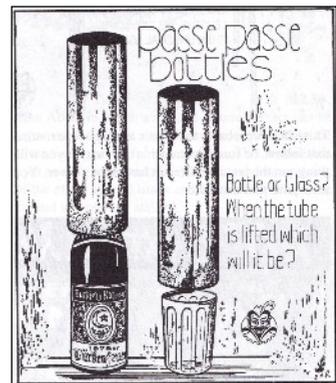
Bro Kinson had broken his journey to pay a visit while in the locality, and was warmly welcomed. Bro Eddleston demonstrated the Davenport’s ‘sand and sugar’ effect, described as ‘remarkable’. Henn Hilton had put on a very good show at the Palace Theatre in Burnley, with an act of miscellaneous magic. The only reservation was that his card work was too quick, not allowing the audience to appreciate it properly. He ran through the whole gamut, from the transposition of alarm clocks and watches to the decapitation of a pigeon, with sucker box vanish. The Australian escapologist Murray had also put on a good performance, blending magic with escape work. As is often the case, the smaller magic of the production of full glasses of beer from his pockets as a running gag particularly caught the imagination of the audience.

60 years ago (8th April, 1962): 14 members were present, and preparations for the dinner were discussed. It was decided to go for the cheapest option – a six-course menu (including starter, fish and main course) at a cost of 16/- (80p). Thought was given to inviting the Mayor and Mayoress. An application for membership from Myron Carruthers was accepted without the need for an initiation. The Fylde Mystics had offered to pay a visit the following month, while today the entertainment was provided by the Blackpool club.

Passé-Passé Bottles - Roy Field

I used to finish my cabaret act with a rapid 'Passé Passé' bottles - not the multiplying routine but one bottle, one glass. I think my set is pretty rare in that one bottle (metal) has a compartment for liquid so you can pour yourself a drink as a finale.

It must be twenty years since I last used it, so when I flushed out the special compartment almost more rust than liquid came out - not especially safe to drink, I thought! Also, what liquid to use? When I was performing it regularly, I used to let beer go flat overnight. Trying to use 'fresh' beer from a can or bottle caused havoc trying to get it into a narrow mock bottle top. In the end I got some disgusting ersatz 'coke', so sweet you could have stood a spoon upright in it. A combination of high sugar and rust was not a good one, but I got away with it by my saying 'Cheers' and just letting my lips touch the glass. It was still a nice finish after all these years.



'My wife told me to stop impersonating a flamingo. I had to put my foot down.'



Bob's Bits With Bob Benyon

Flying is the second best thing in the world. The first is landing.

During the war our neighbour used to flirt with the butcher. I think she was playing for greater steaks.

Teacher: What was the name of Noah's wife?

Pupil: Joan of Arc.

I heard on the news that a thief has stolen five hundred packets of cigarettes and a crate of lettuce from the local supermarket. The police are looking for a big rabbit with a bad cough.

I said to the waitress "This egg you've served me is bad."
She said "Don't blame me - I only laid the table."

I went to see my GP about flat feet, and he gave me a foot pump.

My grandson still plays a game I used to play - but now it's called 'I spy with my little iPhone.'

I'm afraid coffee just isn't my cup of tea.

My wife complained that I brought Africa into every conversation. Kenya believe that?

I was an accountant from the age of twenty to thirty-two, then I was inexplicably sacked. What a waste of fifteen years.

When I told my wife she had drawn her eyebrows on too high she looked really surprised.

I drive an old banger which only has a reverse gear. At least it gets me from B to A.

The hardest part about solving a Rubik's cube is not getting all of the coloured stickers stuck to your fingers.

I think giraffes are really snobby. They look down on all the other animals.

My careers teacher asked me why I wanted to be a detective, and I said "I haven't got a clue."

For her birthday, I got my wife a present which really took her breath away. It was an exercise bike.

Bob

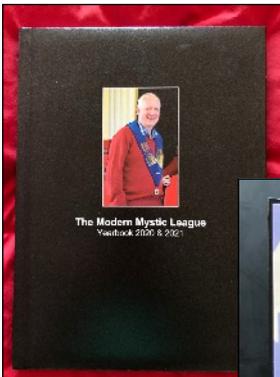
AND FINALLY: *The Covid Years...*

The club is indebted to Craig Docherty who, for the past few years and at his own expense, has provided the President of the club with a photo 'yearbook' celebrating their year of office. A reference copy has also been donated to the club library for us all to enjoy and reflect on; along with the opportunity for members to purchase a copy if they wish.

Although my two-year covid induced stint at the helm of the good ship MML didn't contain much in the way of face-to-face contact, Craig has nonetheless assembled a great memento for us and has done an excellent job in creating a fabulous keepsake.

There are some terrific reminders of both the lectures we have enjoyed and images of members we haven't seen in a while. The whole book is very professionally produced, and something of pride to adorn any coffee table. I hope many of our members will buy this double edition covering 2020 and 2021, or reminisce over it in the library.

Allan



Anyone who would like a copy should contact Craig.



Officers of the MML

PRESIDENT: Carl Pearson
pearsoncarl1@virginmedia.com

CHAIRMAN: Roger Woods
woods.roger1953@gmail.com

Hon Secretary: Paul Guy
p6uys@yahoo.com

Hon Treasurer: Allan Clarke
allan.clarke@memel.org.uk

Hon Librarian: Donald Monk
magicmonk@hotmail.co.uk

MeMeL Editor: Brian Lead
b.lead@btinternet.com

Events Secretary: Brian Lead
b.lead@btinternet.com

President Elect: TBC
@.com

Communications: Allan Clarke
allan.clarke@memel.org.uk

Welfare Officer: Carl Pearson
pearsoncarl1@virginmedia.com



THE LAST COPY DATE FOR
THE NEXT EDITION IS:

Wednesday 27th April

All articles, reports and
submissions should be sent to
Brian Lead by the above date
to ensure inclusion.

Honorary Vice Presidents



**Debbie
McGee**



**John
Pye**

Honorary Members



Sooty



**Norman
Greenhalgh**

Dates for your Diary:

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023

Sunday January 15th

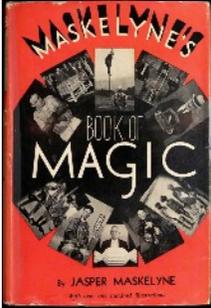
(1 week later than usual meeting date)

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

8TH MAY 2022

ANDREW LOUND

THE MAGICAL MASKELYNES



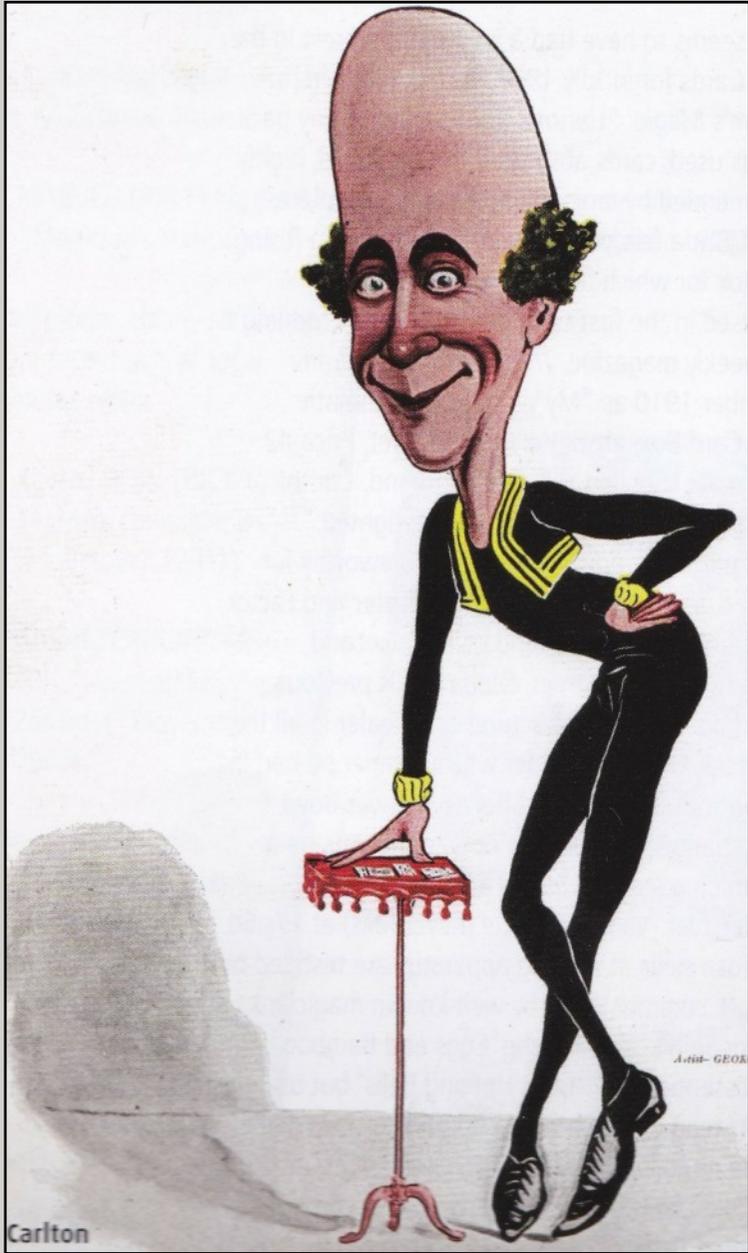
'I finally finished writing a book on penguins! In hindsight, it would have been easier to do it on paper'

We have on the horizon for next month another 'first' in the long history of the MML, as we get set to welcome actor and researcher Andrew Lound, who will present a specially commissioned piece on the Magical Maskelynes.

John Nevil was the first of the famous dynasty, which spread over three generations. Born in 1839, he was introduced to magic when he spotted the deception being perpetrated at a séance by the Davenport Brothers. He went on to join Cooke; first at St. James's Hall and then the Egyptian Hall in London, introducing the concept of the 'magic play'.

Nevil continued the family tradition, creating a number of new effects before handing over to his three sons; Clive, Noel and Jasper. Clive often deputised on stage for his father, while Noel was described by Will Goldston as 'a surprisingly good showman' and Jasper achieved fame as 'the War Magician', working in the traditional Maskelyne style and appearing in the Royal Command Performance of 1932.

Andrew's skill lies in embodying the characters of whom he speaks, so we are in for a virtuoso performance. This will be an open event, so please publicise it as widely as possible.



The MeMeL is the Journal of The Modern Mystic League.