

Halloween Theme meeting and Lecture

Posted on [October 27, 2015](#) by [Dennis Phillips](#)

Ring Report Ring #170 “The Bev Bergeron Ring” SAM Assembly #99 October 2015 Meeting

President Craig Schwarz called our October meeting to order and let us know all the local Orlando places where our members are performing.

Twenty six members were present with 2 visitors. It was good to meet Greg Solomon's wife. The magicians in Central Florida are looking forward to May 27-29, 2016 for Magicpalooza, the Florida Magic Association Convention being held here in Orlando.

Phil Schwartz, our resident Magic Historian, teamed up with Bev Bergeron to present an amusing old-time Snake Oil Salesman. Phil did the introduction, provided the props and Bev did the hilarious pitch.

Phil is also our resident Magic historian, author and internationally known Thayer Collector/Expert. He presented his Magic History Moment # 71, The War Ruse Magician: Jasper Maskelyne. Jasper was born in 1902 into the magic Maskelyne dynasty. He is most remembered for his accounts of his work for the British military during World War Two. He claimed to have worked with a small and highly secret James Bond type group called, “The Magic Gang” where they created large-scale ruses, deception and camouflage. Phil showed a number of impressive photographs. Jasper's accomplishments were praised in the 1983 book by David Fisher. However, several writers question the truth of Jasper's claims. Richard Stokes says that “The Magic Gang” never existed and the stories were pure invention. Christian House and David Hambling, writing in Wired, also questioned Jasper's accounts. Historically, Jasper Maskelyne is said, by Stokes, to have had only a marginal role in war deception. One investigating British officer also believed Jasper had perpetrated a ruse. The Officer said, “...the last person you should trust to tell the truth in an autobiography is an illusionist”. Jasper Maskelyne died in 1973.

The balance of the meeting was a lecture on Halloween magic by Michael Matson. Matson manages the Magic shop and attraction at Old Town in Kissimmee, Florida. His lecture was a modern update on some classic old effects and he delivered it with enthusiasm.

He began with a sight gag by crunching his ankle and dragging the broken and twisted ankle. He then went into a card effect where a small packet of cards which had one card that said “treat” and the others said “trick”. Fortunately the spectator chose the one that said “treat”.

The Third Eye was an eerie effect where a stick-on eye revealed a card. Michael had another magic slate type effect with a card revelation using poker chips being held in his eyes like a monocle that showed the card. A small plastic toy soldier stood up in his hand in a patriotic fashion. A borrowed coin disappeared into a shot glass which contained

water from the Bermuda Triangle. A pencil penetrated a card and he has a unique version of the classic “Haunted Key”. Michael personally likes Verone’s Card Rise which occurs in a card box held in the spectator’s hand. Everything can be examined. Finally he did his own version of the classic Snake Basket he called “Cody the Cobra” and a volunteer’s card was found.

Dennis Phillips

Dennis Deliberations ... Ring # 170

“The Bev Bergeron Ring”

November 2015

Richardari once told his audience that he would disappear on the count of 3. He said, “uno, dos...” and then there was a “poof”...He disappeared without a tres.

Back in the old days, entertainers had a premise for their act. You never saw a business card, from them, that read, “Comedy for all occasions”. They targeted their audiences and built up a unique character.

Jack Benny was stingy and vain, Woody Allen was neurotic. Jackie Vernon was known for his gentle, low-key delivery and self-deprecation. Bob Newhart was his own “straight man” in his famous sketches talking

to an unheard person. Comedian Don Knotts began his career as a nervous bumbling character. Dean Martin did not drink as much as his stage character would suggest but it was the key for his relaxed character. Bing Crosby was a nervous wreck off stage but on stage he developed a relaxed character. As the performer creates a character his confidence level rises and the audience can sense the professionalism.

Over the years, I’ve learned a couple of tips that have really helped people to GAIN CONFIDENCE.

#1: Don’t psychologically separate yourself from your audience. Remember, you both want the exact same thing: to have FUN.

#2 One of the best ways to build your confidence, is to perform effects that are effortless, practiced, fool proof, and have an entertaining premise. That way, you can relax and really focus on becoming a better performer.

My friend Wes Iseli, a full time professional in Virginia, forwarded me a new \$40 effect on the market. <http://www.outerbridgemagic.com/shop/tp-prediction/> After I saw the link, I fell off my chair laughing my head off... \$40 for an effect with the payoff being a prediction written on a piece of toilet paper! Free refills because anywhere you go you can snag a roll of TP from the bathroom where you have the show.

It seems hilarious to pay \$40.00 for an Add-a-Number/ Out-to Lunch method. Loads of puns flooded into my head, “That’s a crappy trick!”, “It will go down the toilet”...etc.

But, I liked the idea, not the toilet paper, but the idea. My improvement in a moment.

I never thought toilet paper was very funny. I never laughed when Nathan Burton used a leaf blower and blew toilet paper 30 feet into the air. I did not find Tom Burgoon’s talking roll of toilet paper funny either. It’s all a cheap laugh.

Ted Outerbridge and toilet paper just don’t mix. First of all, Outerbridge looks like the late Tommy Wonder or maybe Rob Zabrecky or mostly like Bill Neff. All these guys have gaunt, anguished, death-warmed-over bizarre looks. Outerbridge could be cast as a narrator for the Zombie Apocalypse.

Nathan Burton and Tom Burgoon are at least funny looking in a buffoon way, but that still does not make toilet paper funny as a prop.

So, how do we salvage Outerbridge’s effect gone wrong? My solution is to use a roll of paper towels! So many better puns! A Bounty of one liners... A quicker picker upper. You could follow with Slydini’s paper towels over the head or Snow Storm in China.

I can see some possibilities!

We can all be as cynically cruel to Criss Angel as we please, and possibly for some justifications, but in this instance only an outright boor would fail to cut him some slack.....

His young son has cancer. The little boy, who is almost two years old, was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia earlier this week. All of Angel’s currently scheduled shows through Nov. 1 have been canceled.

is heading to Australia to spend time with his son, Johnny Crisstopher Sarantakos. The little boy, who is almost two years old, was diagnosed the illness earlier this week.

http://www.etonline.com/news/174664_criss_angel_cancels_las_vegas_shows_to_visit_cancer_stricken_son_australia/

The late entertainer, Red Skelton, lost a 10 year old son to leukemia but medical science has come a long way since then. He should have a good chance of long term survival. The list of possible chemotherapy agents sound like magic words:

Vincristine, Dexamethasone ,prednisone, Doxorubicin, daunorubicin, cyclophosphamide L-asparaginase, etoposide, methotrexate , cytarabine.

Let's hope for the best for the little fellow and that the doctors work their magic.

1. Q) How many magicians does it take to change a light bulb.
A) Seven! One to change the light bulb, four to tell him he flashed and two to tell everyone else how he did it!
2. Q) How many magicians does it take to change a light bulb?
A) One to change it while everyone else hangs back and discusses how they'd have done it better.
3. Q) How many magicians does it take to change a light bulb?
A) That depends on what you want to change it into?
4. Q) How many magicians does it take to change a light bulb?
A) Ten! One to do it and nine to run around shouting, "I can do that!!"
5. Q) How many magicians does it take to change a light bulb?
A) Ten! One to do it and nine to run around shouting, "I invented that!"
6. Q) How many magicians does it take to change a light bulb?
A) One magician to pose and strut, two assistants to prance and re direct and one assistant to do the dirty work.
7. Q) How many magicians does it take to change a light bulb?
A) None! It's Maaaaaagic!
8. Q) How many magicians does it take to change a light bulb?
A) Teller knows, but he ain't talkin'.

Dennis