

July 2015 Ring Meeting

Posted on [July 28, 2015](#) by [Dennis Phillips](#)

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

Summer meetings have lower attendance time as people take vacation. We still managed over 20 people at the meeting. President Craig Schwarz called the meeting to order and reviewed the local Orlando venues where our members are performing. There are lots of upcoming magic events and

We are looking forward to May 27-29, 2016 for the Florida Magic Association Convention now called the Magicpalooza.

Phil Schwartz, our resident Magic Historian, presented Magic History Moment #68 and it was titled, “It was the autopsy that killed him!” Phil’s talk was about Washington Irving Bishop, a late 1800s mentalist. He called himself a “thought reader.” Bishop was born on March 4, 1856 and died in 1889 at age 33. His career was only 12 years. He, like Houdini, was a skilled personal promoter grabbing newspaper headlines with stunts such as promising to read the thoughts of two condemned brothers in Minnesota who were about to be executed. Bishop was college educated and at one point managed the career of psychic performer Anna Eva Fay. He collapsed after a performance on May 12, 1889 at the Lamb’s Club in New York. He was prone to seizures that rendered him comatose. A doctor was called and declared the case hopeless and pronounced him dead and his body was transferred to a funeral home where a quick autopsy was performed. No cause of death was found. His young wife was called and came from Philadelphia only to find his head has been sawed open in what was called a “lightning autopsy”. Tragically in his pocket was a note that read, “If I am found dead, do nothing for forty-eight hours. I occasionally fall into a state which resembles death, but it is merely a trance. Get me to bed; keep my body warm; and have patience. Under no conditions let a surgeon’s knife touch me, do not apply electricity to my body and do not place my body on ice. –W.I.Bishop”. Today, we might speculate that he could have had a form of narcolepsy or epilepsy. His family was left indigent by lawsuits against the autopsy doctors who killed him. They were found innocent.

Ravelli gave an interesting insight into his understanding of the colors of magic: black magic for evil, white magic for entertainment, yellow magic with smells, green magic with flowers and red magic with fluids.

The Ring show opened with Kent Gunn doing the story of his childhood in San Francisco with a deck of cards used in the fashion of “Sam the Bellhop”. Charlie Pfrogner has an unusual little folding box from which he produced an handkerchief, vanished a sponge ball and produced a streamer.

Dennis Phillips did an effect from Mark Wilson’s book where a spectator secretly selects a colored ball from a bag and the magician’s matches. He added an extra feature at the end where both select an unknown multi-colored ball. Jacki Manna did a great

ventriloquist routine with “Superduck”. We all quacked up. Mark Fitzgerald presented “Silent Treatment” where a series of flip cards with written instructions are shown and an audience member selects a card and it appears in his Mark’s mouth which explains why the whole routine was silent. Finally Ravelli did an interesting Chinese coin off a string, cups and balls and the classic and enjoyable street con-game known as the endless chain.

Dennis Phillips

Dennis Deliberations ... Ring # 170
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Phil Schwartz invited me to see “Parlor Tricks by Nick Comis who is playing at Sleuth’s Mystery Dinner Theater on International Drive. Nick’s 45 minute show is in a side room and runs a several days a week. The venue is a small room with raked seating, that seats about 30 people, and Nick had a decent size crowd the evening we saw the show. He works on a small platform without a front curtain and with one male assistant.

Nick opened the show with the Kevin James Bowling Ball production from a large drawing pad. He played recorded music. He did some welcoming chat with the audience and then the classic Half Dyed Handkerchief. A red handkerchief turns white while going through his fist. He attempts to explain that he uses two handkerchiefs. Then his explanation becomes even more mysterious as one disappears when he hides it in his fist. In the end, as he is passing the handkerchief through his fist and one end is red and the other is white, he opens his fist and the handkerchief is dyed half red and half white.

He followed up with a strong card effect known as “Cue the Magic”. An audience members randomly names any card ion the deck (yes, it is a free choice) A stack of large cue cards, in full view of the audience, are read by a volunteer who wants to play the part of the magician giving instructions. The last cue card is an envelope and inside is only one card and it was the randomly selected card. Nick also did the classic Martin Lewis “Card-o-graphic” where a card is selected from a deck and he attempts to draw it and it is the wrong card. He explains that their card is inside the deck and with a few quick moved of the marker he added dimension to the flat card that was drawn. The selected card then rises out of the deck on the paper. He rips off the page with the risen card and the card has actually been drawn on the paper.

Nick then did another comedy Nick Lakin mental trick called “Cereal Killer”. He had a large manila envelope and he attempts to predict and animal. When he shows the prediction after a volunteer names an animal it is a generic stick figure animal. That gets a laugh. Next, he attempts to name any letter of the alphabet and when the card in the envelope is show a Japanese character is said to be that letter. That is another laugh.

Finally he asks the spectator to imagine a trip to the grocery store and going down the breakfast cereal aisle and to name any brand of cereal. He brings out another large card and a large UPC code is seen on it and he proudly announces that it was what the spectator selected. After the laughter died down, he turns the card around that is the brand name printed on the card!

Next he did an expanded and improved version of Hen Fetch's Mental Epic, the three slot marker board mental prediction effect. He combined it with Don Wayne's Room Service, a mental effect made famous by David Copperfield.

Nick continued with using audience members and did a Bill in Lemon version that I had never seen. A borrowed marked bill vanished from an envelope and appeared inside a lemon which was in a sock which was in a lunch box!

He did a nice solo version of the Linking Rings. The magic world is divided. Some magicians believe that the rings are over exposed and others see the value of the classic effect. I am in the last camp. A well done Linking Ring routine can be a strong part of a show. It was for Nick. He has some nice moves and the audience liked it.

His last platform affect was Jon Allen's "Pain Game". This is an anxiety filled routine where upright spikes are placed under brown paper lunch sacks and the sack mixed around so no one is aware which sack contains the sharp spike. Then is a Russian Roulette style action, Nick slammed his hand down on

One bag at a time until he eliminated the one with the spike.

The finale of the show was the big Wind shear Illusion where illusionist penetrates through the blades of a whirling industrial fan. I was pleasantly surprised that even close up in the small room the effect remained a mystery and played well.

If you get a chance, see Nick's show. You will enjoy his presentation, style and routines.

Dennis Phillips