

November 2018 Meeting: A Lady Floats!

Posted on [November 28, 2018](#) by [Dennis Phillips](#)

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

November 2018 Meeting

Mike Matson gaveled the meeting to order. Several visitors were present: Mark Gagnon from Vermont, Joshua Stenkamp and Mark O’Brien and ,son, Alexander. Mark lived in Orlando and performed on cruise ships, Busch Garden, Circus World and Nickelodeon TV before moving to the New York area.

We had an interesting discussion about the magic illusions in the stage show at the old Circus World attraction here in Central Florida. Bev Bergeron had a story about Owens and Les Smith providing the illusions, Dan had stories about working there as the illusionist and Mark O’Brien also performed there. The biggest mystery is that no one is sure what ever happened to several truckloads of illusions when the show closed.

Bev Bergeron added more to his last “Teach In”. It was how to use notecards with slate moves to achieve some incredible effects. He showed how to make writing appear on what seemed like empty cards and a three card monte.

Dan Stapleton did the magic history of Sneaky Pete Remco magic sets. He showed the first, second and third sets and some history of each.

Mike Matson’s “Theory and Thaumaturgy” topic was “Repeatability” and how many effects do repeat themselves but each action should build up the tension. He used Cups and Balls, Linking Rings and Card’s Across as examples.

Sebastian Mitdtvaage had a mini-lecture on his card magic. A card morphed and three cards that were merely thought of were revealed. Sebastian explained lots of the subtleties in getting the best out of the presentation.

Dennis Phillips opened the performance portion of the meeting with an Abbotts Super X Levitation, assisted by the lovely Marah.



Trey Talo revealed a spectator selected card with a snap change followed by a spelling reveal. Bob Swaddling enchanted us with his British humor and style . He had a delightful card effect built around special times of your life and what the cards mean. He also did a clever Three Card Monte. Bryan Sullivan did an extended one-rope routine in the style of Tabary. Ends of the ropes and knots appeared and disappeared.

Paul Hallas also enchanted us with his polished British style. Two spectators selected cards and Paul introduced a special pair of glasses where he could see the cards people selected. Eventually the spectators could also see the cards!

Dennis Phillips



Dennis Deliberations ... Ring # 170
“The Bev Bergeron Ring”

December 2018

“Advertising is to a genuine article what manure is to land, – it largely increases the product.”

– P. T. Barnum, [The Humbugs of the World](#)

Okay...Christmas 2018 and the statute of limitations has long since expired and confession is good for the soul. This is about what I got involved in during much of the Summer of 1969. I was out of college for the Summer. AFROTC classes were finished. Kids my age were going to Woodstock. I was traveling around the Mid Atlantic with what was essentially a Carny Promotion.

The late Phil Barr (professionally known as Phil Chandler) was a Dayton, Ohio magician, illusionist and mud-show Circus Ring Master. His last years were with the Hoxie Circus. Somehow he got linked up with a promotions outfit out of Toledo to run their road operation. They had bought a straight box rig “Reefer” Truck (Trucking term for Refrigerated Unit) and had opening panels fitted on the sides along with doors. The idea was that they would sell their 3 day weekend promotion to car dealers and shopping centers. The truck would be set up and they would heavily advertise that they would “Freeze a Living Woman in a Block of Ice for Three Days!” and you were invited to witness the marvel if she survived. They would buy 4 30 to 60 second remote cut-ins on the local Top 40 or Country Western Station for 3 days. Recall that weekends are the slow commercial time for broadcast radio so the time was cheap. I would usually do an interview on the Friday Morning show and then do all the live cut ins from the car dealership by telephone line. On a couple of occasions we used a “Marti Unit” which is an FM voice quality radio link.

Phil was using his wife (his first wife, Cathy) as the lady frozen in ice. A couple of years ago I relinked with Phil’s daughter Lauren, who now lives in Sarasota and I filled her in on some details that happened in her childhood while her parents were away. Lauren grew up to be an attractive woman and helped Roy Huston with illusions in his final years.

Before you get freaked out about the ice stunt, it was a set up that happened long before David Blaine made the same stunt one of his. Phil’s wife was actually inside a white-silver Styrofoam and metal insulated casket 30 inches by 30 inches by 7 feet with a foot square viewing window and it was equipped with a heated ventilation system, telephone, two way microphone system, and alarm. The ice was slabs a half foot by two feet by three feet that we froze in rubber molds. We froze a few to be only one inch thick and those went on top and the side where the viewing window was.

So... On Friday afternoon we set up the gaff and left the lid off the top and briefly opened the side of the truck when the crowd was ready and I introduced Phil and did the short radio commentary. The woman climbed into to casket and he and an assistant slid the lid and then ice over and she was sealed in. The big side doors closed and we opened the access doors with stairs so spectators could walk up and through the truck and see her in the casket window. We had a fake medical monitoring panel supposedly showing breathing rate and pulse and a recording that played somber slow ethereal music with a

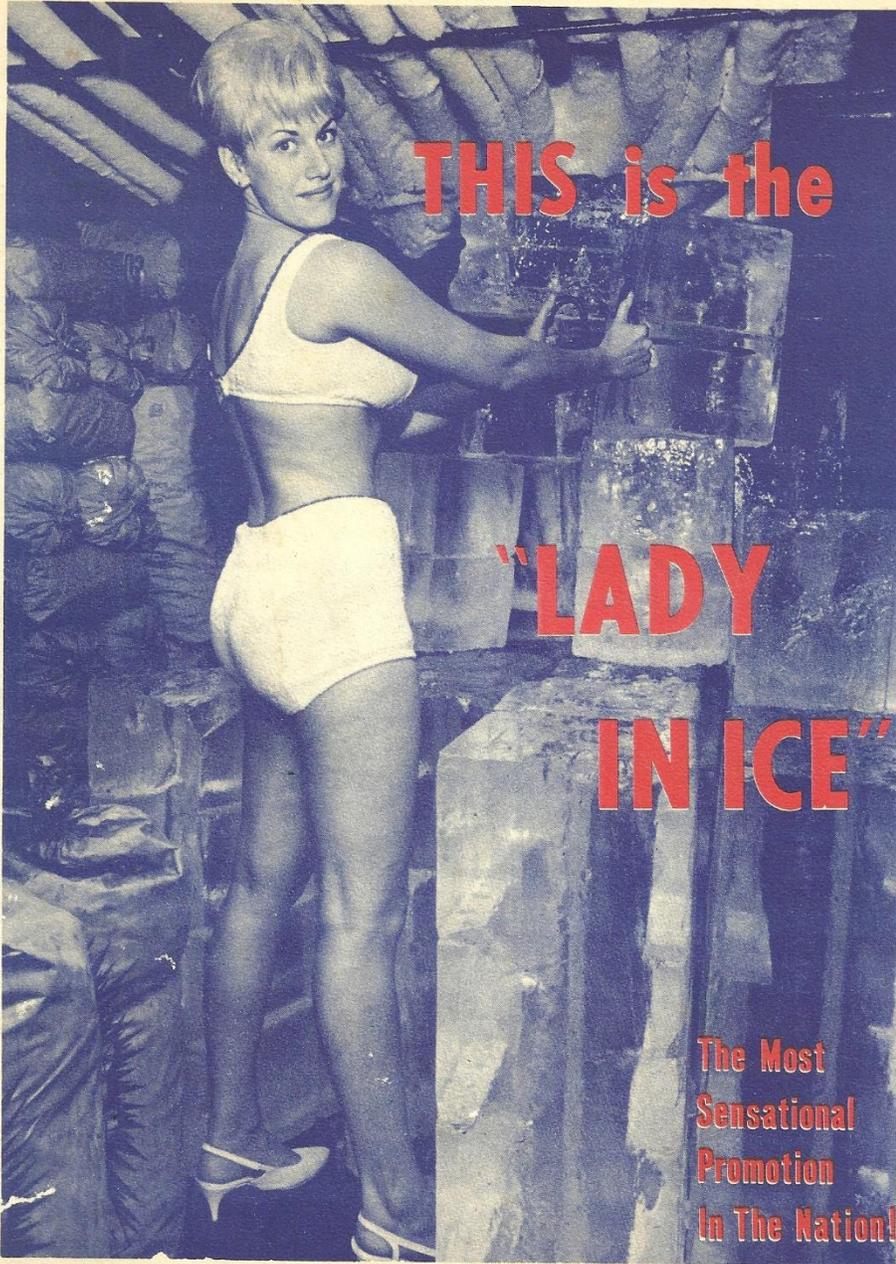
male voice that cut in every minute and said “Everything is A-OK”. That was a line borrowed from the NASA Astronauts. There was a lot of wonderful psychology in the whole promotion. I would do the cut-ins in my announcer voice inviting people to come down and advising on her medical condition. “We have a call into our medical staff advising on signs of hypothermia.” , “Her heart rate has slowed. We don’t think we have to bring her out.”

The question everyone asks is “Did she eat and use the bathroom”... Of course, she did! We would close the door when the crowd was low to “put down some salt and saw dust because the truck bed is slippery” and she would climb out for 10 minutes, go in a port-a-potty on the other side of the ice block and have a hamburger and fries. Phil also had a medical bag and white lab coat and would hang a stethoscope around his neck and I would tell the crowd, we needed the doctor to go in and talk to her through the intercom and look at her skin color. She seems a bit blue. The inside of the casket had a blanket and drinks and all the comforts of an RV bunk bed. The stunt was all in the perception.

Final Day... We had a big coming out ceremony. Music would blare, she would struggle to get out. The assistant wore the doctors coat, faked like he was listening to her heart. She would sit in a lawn chair with a blanket as Phil recounted that a record has been set and we would take her to be checked out at a medical facility, but she appeared to be okay, maybe a little dehydrated. (This is almost identical to the David Blaine stunt)

We once had an irate old guy who came up to Phil after the stunt and said, “That whole thing is a fake!” Phil tensed up. Then the old guy said, “She wasn’t in here for 3 days!” Then he said, “She went in Friday ay 3PM and got out at 3PM on Sunday. That’s only 48 hours, which is two days.” Phil lowered his voice and head like a Preacher talking to a repentant sinner in church and said, “ Dear Brother, Jesus was crucified on Friday and arose on Sunday before dawn! The Bible calls that 3 days! We all believe that was three days! Do you want to argue with God?” The old guy looked like he had been punched in the stomach and said, “Oh, I see! I had it wrong, Bless you sir!”

I almost fell over laughing to myself.... I love a good con!

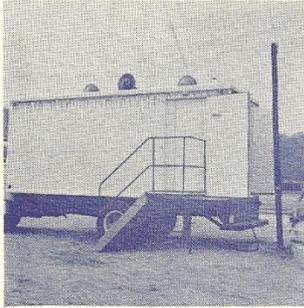


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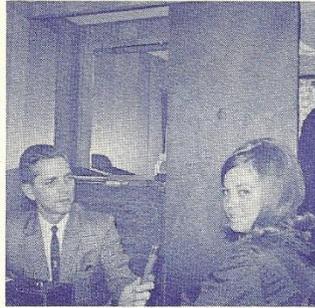
**"LADY
IN ICE"**

**The Most
Sensational
Promotion
In The Nation!**

SEEING IS BELIEVING!!



AMMCO's custom-designed refrigerated Van features the exclusive "In-the-Van" entrance to regulate flow of viewers.



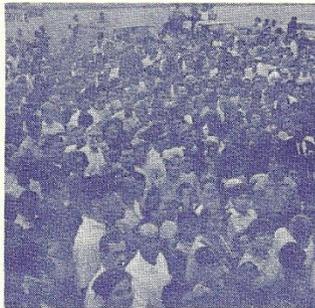
Prior to her entombment, the "Lady In Ice" is interviewed at local radio stations for pre-show publicity.



AMMCO's trained professional personnel are proficient in handling crowds in addition to entertaining them.



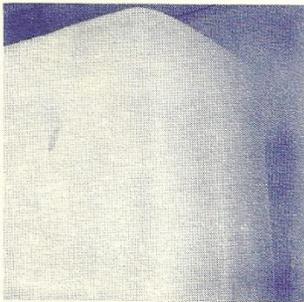
The "Lady" enters the ice, and waves a last farewell to the crowd as she begins her 48-hour long ordeal.



Both the evening she enters the ice, and the night she is removed, thousands are on hand to view the attraction.



To guarantee traffic control, the public is directed to form a single file line to enter the refrigerated van.



A hole carved into the ice permits each person entering the van to actually see the girl in her icy tomb.



And now, the final night. As the attendants open the block of ice with picks and pry-bars, the crowd awaits breathless.

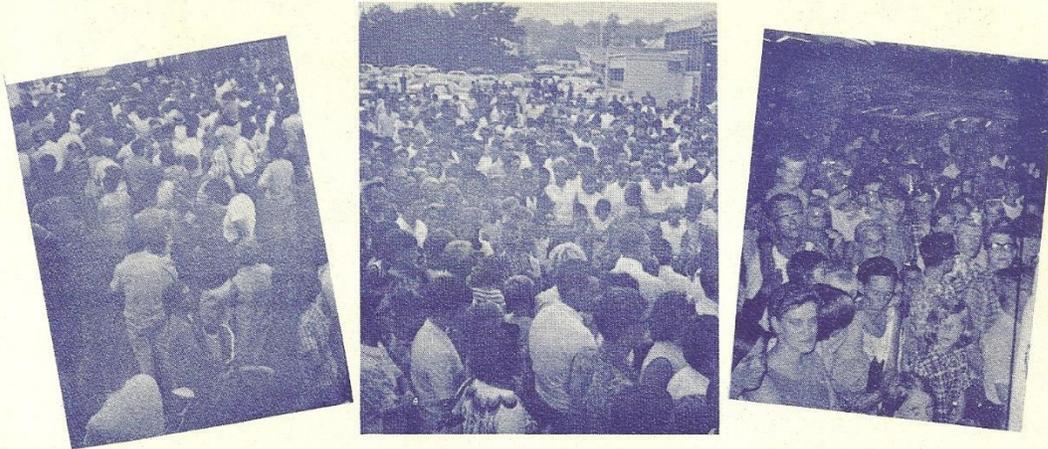


And here is the "Lady In Ice" . . . obviously in good shape after her 48-hour entombment.

"LADY IN ICE" Works Anywhere!!

Shopping centers, automobile dealers, discount stores, and mobile home dealers ALL enjoy the same results. In Anchorage, "LADY IN ICE" was the largest promotion ever to hit Alaska! It was reputed to be "the second riot in New Jersey", and caused a 4-lane highway to be jammed for 6 miles. YES! "LADY IN ICE" WORKS FOR EVERY TYPE OF RETAIL BUSINESS. AND SHE WILL WORK FOR YOU, TOO!

FIGURES DON'T LIE!



"LADY IN ICE" has a GREAT SALES RECORD! In 3 day periods, the 'Lady' has helped dealers to sell 150 cars in Indianapolis — 48 mobile homes in 3 days in Joplin, Missouri — 53 cars in 3 days in South Bend — 23 mobile homes in 3 days in Wilson, North Carolina — 40 new cars in 48 hours in Toledo!

AND THESE RESULTS ARE JUST A SAMPLE!

Attendance Runs Into The Millions!!

"LADY IN ICE" DRAWS CROWDS OF PEOPLE! 27,000 in 15° weather in Youngstown — over 50,000 viewed her in 3 days in Eatontown, New Jersey — a Benton Harbor car dealer drew 20,000 people, and sold 51 cars with 3 FEET OF SNOW ON THE GROUND! "Lady" pulled in 500 people an hour in a cloudburst in Harrisonburg,

WE KID YOU NOT . . . **"LADY IN ICE"** DRAWS PEOPLE!

When Properly Exploited, Your Cost Per Thousand is Less Than \$10!!

"LADY IN ICE" plays to more controlled-traffic, potential customers than any other similar promotion. It will create a steady stream of people ALL DAY LONG, at a lower cost to you than any direct mail campaign, or any radio and TV schedule, or any newspaper ad series you have ever devised! IT CAN BE THE BIGGEST PROMOTION YOU HAVE EVER USED!

YOU GET EVERYTHING!

GUARANTEES –

- ★ \$100,000 – \$300,000 Public Liability Insurance!
- ★ \$25,000 Property Damage Insurance!
- ★ Ohio State Workmen's Compensation Insurance!
- ★ Guaranteed Market Area Exclusivity

EXCLUSIVITY –

- ★ Exclusive Promotion Kit Helps Insure Success!
- ★ All Personnel Specially Trained To Control Crowds!
- ★ Smart, New Equipment Showcases The Attraction!

PUBLICITY –

- ★ FREE! – All Newspaper Ads and Ad Mats Included
- ★ FREE! – Radio Tapes and TV Scripts are Included
- ★ FREE! – News Releases and Dramatic Photos Included
- ★ FREE! – Public Address Announcements About Your Location are Included
- ★ FREE! – Personal Appearances at Radio and TV Stations

Don't Let Your Competition Steal The Profit That Could Have Been Yours!

Call Us For ALL THE INFORMATION On The

"LADY IN ICE"

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Phil Chandler (Barr) magician, stage illusionist and circus ringmaster.

Philip E. Chandler originally from the Dayton Ohio area, acquired his enthusiasm for magic at age 7, after watching Harry Blackstone Jr.'s stage show.

After graduating high school, Phil joined Dr. Franklin's illusion and spook show which played fairs, theatre and drive-ins. After which he toured with a circus and hosted horror movies on local television stations. (WHIO-TV) and did a children's TV show.

Phil then toured with Jack Baker's (Dr. Silkini) for eight years and stated "I loved every minute of it".

After leaving Baker, Phil started his own and framed an illusion show which he toured it in the United States, Puerto Rico and Santa Domingo.

In 1973 Phil and his wife Linda joined the Hoxie Bros. Circus where he served as ringmaster and his illusions were featured in the performance. Audiences attending the circus in the centennial year of 1975 will not have forgotten the opening production were the dapper Phil, in his top hat and red tates sang "It's a Grand Old Flag".

Phil toured in the early eighties as Merlin the Magician on Allan C. Hill's stage production of "The Amazing World of Magic". Later in the eighties Chandler opened "Merlin's Magic Den" in St. Augustine Florida.

He later work with Bob Childress' Hendricks Bros. Circus.

Philip E. Chandler passed away quietly on October 10, 2002 in Gibsonton Florida, after completing the season with Bob Childress' Hendricks Bros Circus.









Phil's two daughters: Lauren and Natalie today:



I remember when “Caravan” was the theme song to every night club magic act. Bill Neff and Jack Gwynn and others used it. Now the name “Caravan” is the beginning of a political argument. Go figure.

The familiar brass tune starts at :58 into the cut..
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TS-G4UQTfUo> Magicians take note... this is a great classic magic track.



I was please to be a part of the November 10th Circus Picnic Show.
Cast bows from last week's Circus Fan of America Tent #137 circus picnic show, Polk City, Florida.

Produced by Dan Stapleton.

l-r Juggler/sword swallower Ted Campbell, Ringmaster Chris Connors, balancer "Csaba", Mimi (silks), Lydia the elephant, Dennis Phillips (plate spinning), Dan Stapleton (magic).

It was a coming true of the promise at the end of all circus shows, “May all your days be circus days!”

We lost another icon of magic on November 24th.
Ricky Jay.

He was a trend setting and influential to today’s style card magic. Jay also acted in films and TV shows such as “Boogie Nights,” “House of Games” and “Deadwood,” died Saturday in Los Angeles. He was 72.

He appeared in several David Mamet movies, including “House of Games,” “The Spanish Prisoner,” “Things Change,” “Redbelt” and “State and Main.”

In the 1997 James Bond film “Tomorrow Never Dies,” Jay played a cyber-terrorist to Pierce Brosnan’s Bond.

He also provided the narration for movies such as Paul Thomas Anderson’s “Magnolia.” His one-man Broadway show, “Ricky Jay and His 52 Assistants,” was recorded for an HBO special in 1996.

With Michael Weber, he created the Deceptive Practices company, which provided solutions to movies and TV productions such as the wheelchair that hid Gary Sinise’s legs in “Forrest Gump.” They also worked on films including “The Prestige,” “The Illusionist” and “Oceans Thirteen.”



I am also sad to lose my friend, Richard Robinson. He published a book, 20 years ago, by Dick Biow and me on the Jarrow Bill in Lemon effect and he was known for his All Magic Guide Website.



Richard ROBINSON-

Died on November 15, 2018 at home in Manhattan. Robinson, born in New Britain, CT, was a graduate of the Loomis School and attended Yale University until several months before graduation, dropped out to join a rock and roll band. After moving to Manhattan in the late 1960s, he worked as a record executive at Buddah Records, had a syndicated music column with the Bell McClure syndicate, was a late night disc jockey on WNEW-FM, and hosted a syndicated radio show. Additionally, he directed early videos for The Ramones and Blondie, produced albums for the Flamin' Groovies, Lou Reed and David Johansen, wrote 13 books — including “The Video Primer,” books on music, kung fu and magic, and co-authored Dick Clark’s autobiography. He was a contributor to Creem Magazine and edited the rock magazines Hit Parader and Rock Scene. In the late 1990s, he quit the music business to perform as a magician and run several magic web sites . He is survived by his wife and author Lisa Robinson.

THE SECRET TOOLS MAGICIANS USE TO FOOL YOU

(Source: NEWS 360 online)

You’ve probably seen magicians pull playing cards from thin air, make silk handkerchiefs change colors, or cause cigarettes to vanish. What you likely didn’t notice – assuming the trick was successful – were the secret gadgets and modified props, called “gimmicks,” used to fool your eyes. From fake thumbs to silicone eggs, they only work by evading detection.

Louis De Belle exposes them in his new book *Disappearing Objects*. Many of the 32 gimmicks he spotlights belong to magicians in Italy who let him photograph them under the strict condition he not actually give away their tricks. “I made a vow not to break the

number one rule of magic,” De Belle says, “though it’s not hard to google how a thumb tip works.”

Magic tricks, like the famous cups-and-balls routine, can be performed by simple sleight of hand, but magicians have also relied on gimmicks for centuries. In one mischievous monk’s 15th-century vellum notebook, he described how to attach a thin strand of hair to a hollow egg to make it look like it’s moving on its own. Today, amateur magicians share how-to’s on YouTube and buy cheap, China-made accessories on Amazon. Rigged decks make it easy to cut to the right card; thumb tips hide away hankies and coins; and “funkenrings” let you shoot fireballs from your hand, just like Iron Man.

This world of illusion entranced de Belle in the early 2000s, when endurance artist David Blaine was busy pulling stunts and making headlines underwater. Though impressed, De Belle was more enamored by the old-school magicians working on street corners and in parlors to deceive spectators mere feet away. “It’s a pretty paradoxical act,” he says. “You’re aware of being deceived, yet you want to be fooled.”

The subject struck De Belle as a natural follow-up to *Besides Faith*, his prior exploration of Italy’s \$5 billion religious paraphernalia market. Last year, he began visiting magic shops by day and venturing out at night to the unmarked basement venues in Milan where magicians perform. At first, they shunned him. But after studying enough magic to talk the lingo, he gained access to a supportive circle of people who continually traded tips about which gimmicks might improve their acts. “Illusionists don’t only spend years practicing, they also change and customize their tools,” De Belle says. “I wanted to celebrate this enormous yet invisible work, by giving these marvelous tiny creations a chance of being seen.”

The magicians preferred to remain anonymous but allowed De Belle to borrow their gimmicks between shows. He carried the objects to his studio, where he shot them against a plain backdrop with a Canon 1DX and large soft box for even lighting. His favorites? The fake body parts and flesh-toned contraptions fitted with tiny metal switches and pulleys – especially those customized to fit the performer’s hand. “To me, they represent the ultimate secrecy, since they’re used right before the spectator’s eyes,” he says.

De Belle preserves the mystery – likely to the consternation of some viewers. The images become themselves a kind of magic: “We know it’s a trick,” De Belle says, “but we still don’t know how it works.”

Dennis