



President's Corner by John Russell

I love reading biographies of magicians. It started when I was a kid and obtained a biography of Harry Houdini through the Scholastic Book Club (remember those?). I read it numerous times and took in every detail of his life. Learned a lot too. I'm sure you know he jumped off the Belle Isle bridge and died in Grace Hospital (the hospital has since been torn down).

Jim Steinmeyer's biographies are amazing as well. I learned that Thurston performed in the Downriver area of Detroit, not far from where I grew up and now live. I learned that Chung Ling Soo (aka Billy Robinson) used to steal the secrets of the magicians he was working for and take them to his next employer, and once he was on his own, often "adopted" some of those secrets for his own use. (Some things never change, I guess)

So I was really interested in the biography of Doug Henning that was recommended to me recently. Written by John Harrison and titled, "Spellbound: The Wonder-Filled Life of Doug Henning", it is really the definitive biography of the young man who arguably changed the face of magic for the modern age, and paved the way for all of us performing today. I'm about 1/3 of the way through, but I had to share some remarkable information with you.

We know that Henning performed for our club at one point, but do you know the circumstances of that performance? Since he lived in Toronto, Doug traveled to Abbott's Get-Together in Colon regularly. In fact, he learned his famous newspaper tear *personally* from our friend, Gene Anderson. But he also met Denny Loomis... who was active in the forming of our club. Doug traveled to Ann Arbor to catch the jazz festival, and spent time with Loomis. I'll let the book tell you more:

"Like Doug, Denny Loomis was establishing a reputation for himself as a professional magician. Very much involved with the local magic scene, Loomis was one of the founders of the Duke Stern Ring of the International Brotherhood of Magicians (Ring 210) in Ann Arbor. Denny invited Doug to Ann Arbor to perform at the Ring's one-day inaugural celebration. Loomis had arranged to bring Duke Stern, a celebrated magician and the Ring's namesake, up from Florida for the festivities. Yearning to garner respect among his brethren, Doug immediately accepted the invitation. He was especially eager to perform at Loomis' celebration, because he was working on a new illusion." (page 26-27)

That new illusion, by the way, was Robert Harbin's Zig-Zag illusion.

What a storied past we have!

Club News

Well, this is my last "President's Corner". For thirty-six articles, I've waxed on with my thoughts, observations, and commentary on magic. I've shared things I've learned, and I've challenged us all to take whatever *your* next step is in the practice of magic. Don't

settle for *your* status-quo. Reach up and out, always striving to “take it up a notch” (or more). Be creative, be original, and always be professional.

We’ve accomplished a lot the past three years. Membership has increased with many new members (4 just a couple of months ago!), our bank balance has increased (we even changed banks to improve efficiency), changed insurance companies that gave us better coverage for less (thanks George Honer), we put on one heckuva Michigan Magic Day (thanks *everyone*), we’ve hosted several lectures including one by world-famous, home-grown, Franz Harary, inducted several honorary members (Franz, Gene Fogel, and the Markleys), updated some of our bylaws, and established ourselves as players in the Michigan magic scene. We even re-located... *twice* (yep... Ann Arbor is in Livonia)! We’ve boosted attendance at the annual “World Famous Ann Arbor Magic Club Flea Market” (thanks Jim Folkl) by changing the date away from October; and ran 3 “mini-marts” in between. We held “homecoming” in October, and have even crowned a king and queen or two! We moved club communications into the 21st century with a powerful web site (thanks Karl Rabe) and Facebook page (thanks Randy Smith), made e-mail our #1 way to get out information, changed the dating of the Messenger and now publish it online with a spiffy new graphic (and did you know it is read by magi *worldwide*?). And sadly, we’ve had to say good-bye with broken wand ceremonies to two of our long-time members, Bob Waite and George Mathis.

And now, it’s time for me to step aside and let the next person take the reigns. People have asked me if I will remain in the club... *of course I will!* I love our club, and will continue to work to maintain it as the best magic club in the business!

I wanted to make sure I clarified that, because I will be absent from the January and February meetings, as I have shows that conflict with both of those meetings, and I didn’t want any rumors to start.

I also would also like to take a moment to thank Mark O’Brien, my vice-president the past two years. Mark has been a real encouragement and support to me, and an inspiration with his commitment to the *art* of magic.

That does it for me. So until March... **Stay Magical!**

John Russell

Adventures in Dictionaryland

ADVERTISING - The modern substitute for argument; its function is to make the worse appear the better.

JOURNALISM - The opinions of the uneducated, reflecting the ignorance of the community.

CARDIOLOGY - Advanced study of poker playing.

CONFIDENCE - The feeling you have before you understand the situation.

Secretary’s Report by Joaquin M. Ayala

Happy New Year everybody! First allow me to wish you all the greatest success to have a prosperous year! Secondly, I wish to extend my thanks to the following outgoing Board Members: **President John Russell, Vice President Mark O’Brien, Treasurer Scott**

Mitchell and Sergeant-at-Arms, Bill Brang. Thank you all for your time and your service to the club as part of the Board of Directors – everyone did an excellent job! Though Scott Mitchell and Bill Brang are both running for President, I listed them here because they are both potentially leaving their current positions. I look forward to working with the new Board after elections this month (January)! In case you have missed the previous reports about the candidates for this year, here they are again:

President: Scott Mitchell and Bill Brang

Vice President: Dan Jones (unopposed)

Treasurer: Rob Krozal (unopposed)

Secretary: Yours Truly, Dr. Joaquin M. Ayala (unopposed)

Sergeant-at-Arms: Pam Smith (unopposed)

Good luck to all the candidates! Having said that, this newsletter will be rather short because as you know, our December meeting was sadly canceled because of the weather. We had a lot of heavy snowfall that shut down a lot of schools and businesses *that evening* for the following day. Unfortunately, we also missed out on Nathan Kranzo giving his lecture, but he was thankful for the cancellation and not having to travel on the roads. We have left the lecture open to rescheduling at another time.

I want to leave everyone with a challenge of sorts, a bit of a New Year Resolution. Please try it out and challenge yourselves: I have written 33 (34 total) articles in my time as the Club Librarian on approximately 40 different magic books, all of which I have read at least once, most of them multiple times. The whole idea behind it is to introduce the readers and members to the treasure trove of excellent and astounding material that is hidden in the pages of those books (and others), and to encourage you to pick up one of those books and read them, materials in hand to try the effects and learn from them. I have gotten quite a few messages from people thanking me for talking about books they have never heard of, where they might find a copy or for help in learning something from a book that they got stuck on.

SO, my challenge to YOU is this: I would like you to choose one book per month from your magic library and learn one new effect per month. Just one! If you want to use one book for the whole year, fine, but learn one new effect per month from that book. The books you choose can be from different genres of magic or they can all be from the same genre. If you like, learn a new version of the same effect each month – a different handling or method of the same plot if you like. You will be surprised at the end of the year how much you have learned by doing this. So, please, please, PLEASE try this challenge for me? Pretty please, with a cherry on top?

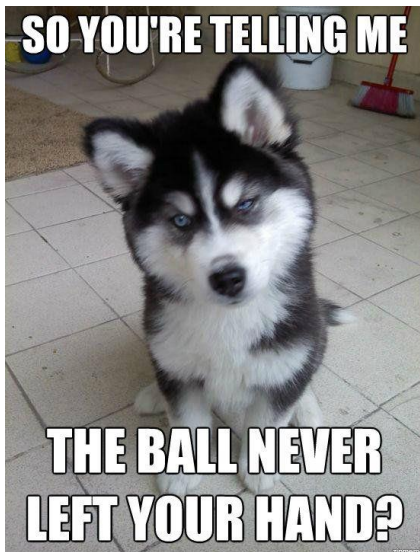
Have a great year everyone and thank you for all your words of encouragement and criticisms over the past year – it has been a pleasure to serve as your Secretary and I have had a lot of fun trying to fill those colorful and funky shoes that Mr. Folkl left for me!

Yours in the Secret Art,

Dr. Joaquin M. Ayala de Cedoz, Ph.D.



Meanwhile at the Magic Joe Fusco household:



FIRST TRIVIA QUESTION OF 2018

The magician pictured below was born in 1940 in Sheffield, U.K. He had a successful career in the wool trade and only started performing magic after that. He was quite well known as a collector and authority on all things related to the Cups & Balls, wrote several booklets on his own material and starred in various videos of his own. He always had a signature bowler hat nearby if not on his head, he was known primarily for his comedic nature, quick wit and one-liners. One of his most famous effects that is not well-known is called “Transpo Tumbler”, in which he used his signature topper as part of the effect. Who is he??? Answer at the end of the newsletter!



Ex Libris by **Joaquin Ayala, Ph.D.**

Hello folks and welcome to 2018 and to the first *Ex Libris* article for the year! Every year for January I try to go back to the real basics of conjuring books, seeing as it is the first (read: *beginning*) month of the year; it is a time to have a fresh new start to things. In that spirit I like to talk about books that beginners to magic may be told to read but that even experienced magicians would do well to revisit from time to time. Counting this month, I have written 34 articles (more accurately, 33, as the very first article was only and introductory one) dedicated to the purpose of hopefully inspiring the readers to pick up a copy of those books, or *any* magic book, because that is where all the good stuff is hidden! Shhh!

This month I thought I would focus on the *Encyclopedia of Card Tricks* first published in 1937 by **Max Holden**. It was originally compiled by **Doctor Wilhelm von Deussen** in a collaborative effort with **Glenn Gravatt**. **Jean Hugard** later added to and edited the book and is widely (though erroneously) credited as the originator. *Dover Publications* reprinted the book in 1974, followed later by *D. Robbins & Co.* It is currently available on the used market as a softcover book and as a PDF from Lybrary.com.

This is a most excellent book for beginners solely because of its wide range of content, but even well-versed magicians can get a lot out of this book. As **Theo Annemann** pointed out in his introduction for this book that if one were to combine the original market value of its contents, this book would be worth thousands of dollars; that estimation includes effects using gaffed decks and cards as well as normal decks. The book is broken down into sections that deal with different [now] classic plots in card magic, plots such as *Do As I Do* and *Spelling Tricks*. Further sections deal with describing a few different types gaffed decks that are still on the market today followed by some effects using them.

The first section details impromptu and easy effects, many of which you will recognize such as the *Card Detectives*, the *Easy Card to Wallet*, *Whispering Queen* and *Matching the Aces*, along with plenty of them that will no doubt be new to you. The effects here are not necessarily self-working but they are good, and can all be done with a borrowed deck. The second section deals with spelling effects and for those of you unfamiliar with that plot, the selected card(s) are found by spelling their names out with each card representing one letter in the name (i.e. Ace of Spades, Two of Hearts). Some other versions might spell other words to locate the cards, such as the name of the audience participant, their birth month, etc. There are versions that can be done on the fly as well as those with pre-arranged set-ups.

The third section is dedicated to the Key Card idea, something that even many laypeople are familiar with but when done correctly, you can easily dispel the idea that you are using one. The next two sections are ideas using slick cards and a substance called Diachylon, which was a substance that was lightly tacky and contained a bit of plaster; it has long since been banned due to its lead content but there are many modern substances that can be used in its place.

The book also contains rather large sections that teach you calculation effects based on simple math (mathemagic, if you will), effects using short cards, reversed cards, prearranged packets and decks, double backed cards, double face cards and a few special packs. It details what Svengali, Mene-Tekel and Stripper decks are and how to use them. The description of the decks is also thorough enough for you to make your own, but all of

them are still readily available on the market these days. Also described in a short section are sundry sleights that one may find useful, but they are by no means the only ones applicable to this book.

The book is closed with a section that is dedicated to the Nikola Card System, which is a system for memorizing the Nikola Stack. Not only does it describe the stack itself, but the entire mnemonic system for memorizing the cards and their numeric positions is detailed, though you could use any memory peg system you like. Following that there are a few effects that can be used with this memorized deck including *Cards by Weight*, *Spelling Any Card Called For* and *Wizard's Whist*, which is sort of a gambling-themed demo based on the game of Bid Whist.

There are a lot of books out there that use the term 'encyclopedia' and while many of them are not quite worthy of the word, this book really is. There are more card effects contained in this book than you ever wanted to know and given the broad range and scope of the contents, this book truly is encyclopedic, at least for its age. The good news about this book is that it is available anywhere from a mere \$6/USD for the PDF to about \$20/USD for the softcover, but they are usually closer to the \$10/USD range.

I do hope that you give this book a try because there are some really good effects hidden within and none of them are particularly difficult. That is all for this month folks – Happy New Year to all of you and we will see you soon! – **J.M.A.**

Further Adventures in Dictionaryland

OPTIMIST - [1] A proponent of the doctrine that black is white, or [2] One who fills a crossword puzzle in ink.

OUTPATIENT - A person who fainted.

LIES - Terminological inexactitudes.

LOGIC - The art of thinking and reasoning in strict accordance with the limitations and incapacities of the human misunderstanding.

LUNARIAN - An inhabitant of the moon, as distinguished from Lunatic, one whom the moon inhabits.

TRIVIA ANSWER

Bob Read (Born in 1940, died at the age of 65 in 2005). Some notable work from Bob includes the books, *Thanks to Pepys*, *The Penultimate Cups and Balls* and *The Cups & Balls in 19th Century Graphic Art* as well as his DVD set entitled *The Bob Read Collection*, produced by International Magic.

Two more for the road: Why is it that people always believe you when you say there are four billion stars, but they *just have to* check when you say the paint is wet?

Did you know that your middle name serves no purpose other than you being able to tell that you are in really deep doo-doo?

Support our local brick & mortar magic shops!

ABC Magic Shop
69 N Walnut St, /Mount Clemens, MI 48043
(586) 790-3700
<http://abcmagicshop.com/>

Wunderground Magic, Inc.
Phone: (248) 280-5925
Email: paul@wundergroundmagicshop.com
Mail: 16 S. Main St., Clawson, MI 48017
Web: <http://www.wundergroundmagicshop.com/>

2018 AAMC POCs
President, Vice President, Treasurer, Sergeant-at-Arms and Historian: TBD
Secretary: Dr. Joaquin M. Ayala de Cédoz / chefayala99@gmail.com
Librarian: Dr. Joaquin Ayala / chefayala99@gmail.com
Webmaster: Karl Rabe / krabe@comcast.net
Website: <http://www.aamagic.org/>

Check out our Facebook Page “Ann Arbor Magic Club”
Have a question / suggestion / comment / contribution? Contact us!
Bring a guest to a meeting! Perform! Join a Committee!

The Ann Arbor Magic Club meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month at Senate Coney Island Restaurant - 34359 Plymouth Rd, Livonia, MI 48150-1500. Meeting starts at 7 p.m. Come at 6 p.m. if you want to eat.