

Magic Messenger

The Official Newsletter of the Ann Arbor Magic Club / S.A.M 88 / I.B.M. 210

August 2015

President's Corner

POOF! And just like magic, it seems like the summer of 2015 has vanished! I trust you were able to enjoy it while it lasted.

I had a really magical summer, and I want to thank all our members who had a part in making that happen! Our magic fraternity never ceases to amaze me!

I was able to present my first ever theater show back on August 22nd. The twenty or so members who made the trek in support was so appreciated, and the kind words afterward made me feel comfortable and confident even though the show had its share of mistakes, missteps, and miscues. I'll share some of what I learned through the experience at our next meeting.

Were you able to attend any performances, lectures, or conventions this summer? There sure were plenty to choose from! I made the journey to Las Vegas and Magic Live! And again was amazed at the camaraderie that was so evident every single day. And I'm not talking about part-time amateurs like myself. I'm talking Mac King, David Copperfield, Lance Burton, Jeff McBride, Kevin James, and a host of others that freely roamed the halls and were extremely approachable.

So as fall arrives, it's time to get back to business. This month's club meeting on September 9th will have money magic as its theme, so bring your coins and currency, and let's make a go of it!

PLUS, don't forget our World-Famous Magic Flea Market on Sunday, September 27th at the Eagle's Club in Belleville running from 1pm-4pm. Tables are still available, and you can reserve one either at the meeting or online at our web site (www.aamagic.org).

Looking ahead, October is going to be a homecoming of sorts as we reach out to all members, past and present (and maybe future???), and offer a FREE LECTURE by

none other than Michael Mode (of Napkin Rose fame). Let all our “strays” know about it!

We live in a tough world. Do your best and play your part in bringing a bit of magic into the lives of those around you. I’ll be they’ll appreciate it!

Secretary’s Report 07/31/15

No report on this month’s meeting, “Teach a Trick Night” principally due to the fact *I wasn’t there!*

I do have however have a review of John Russell’s magic show presented 22 August at the Trenton Village Theater. To give you a feel of how popular this event was, the theater seats 355 and virtually all were filled. The audience comprised all age groups, with the preponderance being families. The AMCC Posse “represented”, including such luminaries as **George Hoener, George Mathis, Jim Placido, Dan Jones, Bob Waite, Jim Molnar, Art Goyette, Bob Goodwin, Joe Fusco , Pam / Randy Smith and Marvin Mathena**. All brought family and friends. Excuse me if I missed a few names, it was difficult to identify the members within such a large group! John entertained the audience for a solid 2 hours. He effectively projected his personality along with unique presentations of many effects to the enjoyment of the audience. My favorite of John’s mysteries was the Gypsy Thread, employing the string attached to a helium balloon. It is a great close up effect that he brought to stand up / stage application thru original thinking and clever routining.





GREAT SHOW JOHN!

To tickle your funny bone this month are some chuckles contributed by jokester extraordinaire and life of the party **George Mathis**:

1. Two antennas met on a roof, fell in love and got married. The Ceremony wasn't much but the reception was excellent.
2. A jumper cable walks into a bar. The bartender says, "I'll serve you, but don't start anything"
3. A man walks into a bar with a slab of asphalt under his arm and says: "A beer please, and one for the road."
4. Two cannibals are eating a clown. One says to the other: "Does this taste funny to you?"
5. "Doc, I can't stop singing 'The Green, Green Grass of Home.'" "That sounds like Tom Jones Syndrome." "Is it common?" Well, "It's Not Unusual."
6. An invisible man marries an invisible woman. The kids were nothing to look at either.
7. Deja Moo: The feeling that you've heard this bull before.
8. I went to a seafood disco last week... and pulled a mussel.
9. Two Eskimos sitting in a kayak were chilly, so they lit a fire in the craft. Unsurprisingly it sank, proving once again that you can't have your kayak and heat it too.
10. And finally, there was the person who sent 10 jokes to his friends, with the hope that they would make them laugh. No pun in ten did!!!!!!!





A beautiful and mechanically clever ribbon restoration. This is a reproduction of a very rare effect.

The original was limited to 50 units. It won an originality award from *Abra Magazine*, the most respected magic magazine in the U.K. at the time. It is such a good trick that Paul Daniels even performed it on his television show across the pond. It is a mechanical marvel, fitted to a base, so it is entirely self contained, requiring no table.

The magician shows three giant blocks on a stand. Each block has two slots running through it and a long length of ribbon is threaded through the three blocks. The two outer blocks are moved to metal racks on the ends of the stand so they are well separated from the middle block and the ribbon is clearly visible. The ribbon is pulled back and forth freely.

The performer now takes a pair of scissors and cuts the ribbon on either side of the middle block. He completely lifts the middle block out, showing that it truly is cut and then pulls the little piece entirely out of the block. The ends of the remaining longer pieces can be clearly seen on the hanging through the slots of the inner sides of the two end blocks.

The middle block is placed back on the stand and the two end ones also placed back onto it against the center one. The little piece of ribbon is now made to vanish. The magician then pulls on one end of the ribbon and the other moves, the ribbon having mysteriously restored! Just a moment ago two ends were clearly visible, yet now it is restored. It is pulled back and forth a few times and then entirely out of the block to show it really restored.

This is a real baffler and the mechanics involved to make this happen are absolutely ingenious.

Made by a master craftsman, the repro version was limited to an edition of only 24 pieces.

Name the Original effect / Maker and the Repro version / Maker



Answers at the end of the Messenger

BONUS QUESTION

Riddle me this: “A guy leaves home, makes a left turn, goes on and makes another left turn, travels on and makes another left turn ... and meets two masked men on his return home.” Who are they ?????

Around the Town

Ken Magee is closing the Ann Arbor Magic and Sports Memorabilia Shop 1 October. He carries a wide variety of interesting magic and is a wealth of knowledge based upon years of performing. There is still time to pay Ken a visit and perhaps pick up a magical gem. Give him a call!

For a complete listing of magic events in Michigan, visit **John Luka's** site <http://www.johnlukamagic.com/mi/events.html>

Jim Folkl

***Ex Libris* by Joaquin Ayala, PhD.**

Hello and welcome to the Ex Libris article for August, 2015!

This month I am going to focus on a book that most of you are familiar with and even if you have never read it, you have at least heard of it. This month, we take a look at *The Stars of Magic*.

The Stars of Magic was released by a company called The Stars of Magic, Inc. in the 1940s and 1950s as a series of individual manuscripts. The material was gathered from top magicians of the time and originally, the series was authored by Hon. George Starke, who was not only a judge but also an amateur magician. The photos were supplied by George Karger, a professional photographer who was a regular contributor to Life magazine and good friends with Dai Vernon and John Scarne. The manuscripts were sold individually for a period of 7 years and eventually sold as a bound, hardcover edition book. D. Robbins & Co. purchased the rights to the material and later by Meir Yedid, who bought the rights to both the original and current editions.

The manuscripts were priced between \$1-8/USD and the complete collection sold for \$12/USD. The last two series, numbered 10 and 11, sold for \$10 each and were available directly from the Stars of Magic, Inc. (which was based in New York) and through most magic shops around the country. At these prices, it was very expensive for the time but they were priced to keep the material out of the hands of the “merely curious”. The leatherette editions sold through Max Holden in the early 1950s were priced at \$25, compared to the \$94 dollars that it would have cost a few months earlier for the total of 30 manuscripts that were issued.

The first series (Volume 1) was supposed to be from Dai Vernon, but seeing as he had to leave for a cruise ship job, this delayed the work on his particular series. Starke and Karger were eager to begin, so they decided to start with John Scarne, which Dai Vernon said was a good choice. Vernon and Scarne were good friends, so there were no hard feelings on this end.

In 1952 The Stars of Magic, Inc. quite publishing the individual manuscripts and almost immediately offered the entire series bound in a brown leatherette pressure binder; there were two different colored binders issued, one black and one burgundy, but nobody knows why. Both colors had the gold *Stars of Magic* logo hot stamped on the front and on the spine, the burgundy was sold for many years and the black leatherette covered issues became quite rare. The During this same time period in 1953, the “New Master Lessons” by Vernon and Slydini appeared in the advertisements for the Holden shop; they also used the same cover design as the ‘Stars of Magic’ hardbound book. The ‘New Master Lessons’ covered the Vernon

“Royal Monte” and the Slydini “The Art of Using the Lap as a Servante”. Both of those two lessons were photographed by Dr. Jacob Daley.

Nobody seems to know the circumstances surrounding the acquisition of the rights to *The Stars of Magic* but in 1959, Lou Tannen published a hardbound library edition of *The Stars of Magic* and that edition contained all 11 of the original series and the two extra lessons, the Vernon and Slydini lessons, which originally sold under the title of *The New Master Lessons*. The library edition sold for \$25 dollars. In 1961 Lou Tannen published a hard cover book with the entire series plus the two new lessons, which sold for only \$12.50. The first printing of the hard cover had two-color cover with pictures of the contributors to the book; the subsequent printings had a blue cover with the title hot stamped in gold on the front and spine. The Yedid edition is a new style of printed (no hot stamping) cover with the *Stars of Magic* logo and a photo of the 11 contributors in a gold star shaped graphic. Earlier editions of the book from Max Holden were bound in a red cover with the title in gold, hot stamped on the front.

Since the original photo plates were lost somewhere in time, the photographs in the Tannen edition were quite poor and since the D. Robbins & Co. did not rescreen the photographs properly when the new negatives were made for printing, this poor photograph quality continued with their editions. The Meir Yedid edition also contains the same poor photographs, but they were digitally enhanced as much as they could be. This helped sharpen the images a little bit, but nothing compares to the quality of the photos from the original series back in the 40s and 50s.

There were some truly landmark effects in this collection of manuscripts which went on to become what many of us consider the ‘standards of magic’ today, effects such as Dai Vernon’s *Triumph*, Francis Carlyle’s *The Homing Card*, Slydini’s *Paper Balls Over the Head*, the Malini/Bey *Chink-A-Chink* (Max Malini and Mohammed Bey) and the John Scarne *Classic (3) Ball Routine*.

For the effect this month, we are going to focus on the John Scarne contribution called *Triple Coincidence*. It is very easy to do and is very fooling.

Triple Coincidence by John Scarne

Effect: Two ordinary decks are introduced, each with a different back design. A volunteer shuffles one deck while the performer shuffles the other. At no time does the magician touch the other deck shuffled by the volunteer. The volunteer cuts his

deck three times, each time exchanging a card with the performer. When both ribbon spread their decks, a miracle is accomplished – each time the spectator and magician turn up one of the three stranger cards in their decks, the cards turn out to be alike – a knock-out triple coincidence. Both decks are left for examination.

Preparation: Use two decks with backs of contrasting design. From deck #1 (which will later be used by the spectator) remove any 3 cards and insert them into different parts of deck #2, which will be used by the magician. From deck #2 select the duplicates of these three cards and place them on top of deck #2. Put this deck in its case and in your pocket.

Performance: Request the spectator to shuffle Deck #1 which you have just been using for some other card effect(s). Take out Deck #2 from pocket and riffle-shuffle it *face up* on the table (reason being to prevent spectator from seeing the backs of the three stranger cards). Be sure not to disturb the three top cards (which are now on the bottom as the deck is face up).

After you have both completed shuffling your decks, turn your pack face down, holding it in dealing position and push top card off onto table. Request spectator to cut his deck anywhere he desires. Take the card at the point where spectator cut and place it on top of your deck. Then place the card, which you pushed off onto the table, in the same place where you removed the card from the spectator's deck. Request spectator to replace upper stock onto the lower stock thereby burying your card somewhere in his deck.

At this point request spectator to shuffle his deck thoroughly. In the meantime, cut your deck using sleight A or B in order to *maneuver spectator's card to the bottom without disturbing the two top cards*. Repeat the above procedure twice, each time pushing off *one of your top cards* onto table and exchanging them with spectator's cards.

Spectator now has three stranger cards separated in different parts of his deck. You have the duplicates of these three cards separated in your deck and *the three indifferent cards on the bottom*. Spectator is requested to place his deck on the table. Place your deck on top of his. Request spectator to separate the two decks. (You have thus subtly disposed of the three indifferent cards).

Each one ribbon-spreads his deck. Now point out that each deck has three stranger cards. Take advantage of this to build up the effect to a startling finish. Emphasize

that the spectator shuffled his deck in the beginning as much as he wanted; that you have at no time touched his deck; that he chose any three cards at random by cutting the deck wherever he desired. While stressing these points, seize the opportunity to glimpse at two of the stranger cards in your deck by pulling the three slightly out of line, as if to make them stand out a little better from the rest of the deck.

Request spectator to turn over one of his stranger cards. Now *slowly* turn over the card that matches his. Each time spectator turns over one of the remaining stranger cards, you pick out the duplicate and *slowly* turn it over. Thus, a knock-out triple coincidence. Leave both decks to be examined at the end if desired.

SLEIGHT A: Holding your deck in left hand, with spectator's card on top, right hand undercuts a portion. In the action of placing undercut part on top, right hand little finger pushes off the spectator's card slightly, so that when you place the undercut portion on top and in line with the pushed-off (out-jogged) card, you form a step. Then undercut the lower part, place it on top and square up the deck. You have thus moved their card to the bottom, leaving the top two alone.

SLEIGHT B: Spectator's card which is on top of your deck, is pushed off slightly with the right hand first finger. Right hand undercuts and places undercut portion on top of and in line with the pushed-off card, forming a step. Now undercut the lower part, place it on top and square up the deck. This accomplishes the same thing as SLEIGHT A.

Have a magical month folks and we will see you in September, when school is back in session!

Yours in the Secret Art,

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Check out our Facebook Page “Ann Arbor Magic Club”
Have a question / suggestion / comment / contribution? Contact us!

Original: “The Blocks of San Yen” - Ian Ogilvy

Reproduction: “Family Ties” - Richard Gerlitz

BONUS: The catcher and the umpire!

Bring a guest to a meeting! Perform! Join a Committee!