

September 2007



IBM RING 55 * DANNY DEW / BERT EASLEY RING

The Lota

Promoting fellowship and the advancement of magic
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September 2007



I.B.M. RING 55 **"TARBELL NIGHT"** **TUESDAY,** **SEPTEMBER 18TH**

In 1926, Dr. Harlan Tarbell began compiling *The Tarbell Course In Magic*, which became one of the largest and best collections of slights and tricks ever assembled.

Dr. Tarbell had but one idea in mind – the making of magicians. Now in eight volumes, this important set of books probably is - or has been - in the library of almost every aspiring young magician.

In tribute to Dr. Tarbell, Ring 55 is sponsoring our first “Tarbell Night”, and we ask everyone that wishes to do so, to volunteer to perform a favorite effect from his teachings.

Each magical volunteer will be allowed a maximum of five minutes to announce the name of the effect, the Volume from which it is extracted, and to perform it for all of our members. Those performing will each be given one ticket for a drawing to win a Magnavox color television with a built-in DVD player! The only way you can win this outstanding prize is to *perform*!

We will be meeting on our regularly scheduled third Tuesday of the month at the Best Western Airport Inn, located at 2425 S. 24th Street (just South of the airport). Social hour will be at 6:00 p.m., followed by the Tarbell-inspired magic at 7:00 p.m.

Paid-up members of Ring 55, Ring 356, and Ring 172 are always admitted free, and guests will be charged \$20.00

Inside this issue:

Our BIG Event!	1
Presidents Message	2
About this Newsletter	2
Kollectors Komer	3
Last Meeting	4
Club Supporters	5

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KJ'S CORNER



Although the temperature is still registering in triple-digits, we are now looking forward to the holiday season and, hopefully, booking some shows. While looking forward, please do NOT book a show which conflicts with our Halloween Auction and Flea market on Tuesday, October 16th or our FREE Holiday supper and party on Saturday, December 1st!

We also will be looking to have everyone volunteer to help with our annual fund-raising Public Show in Sun City the week-end before Thanksgiving (specific dates and times will be announced). I am really looking forward to see what Tarbell effect you each have chosen to perform at this month's meeting! See you there!

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The Lota

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WHATSIT?



Here's a clever electronic gadget that hasn't been seen for 15 or 20 years.

A very early example of a mini-computer (invented by Harry Potter's great-great-great Grandfather Benjamin Franklin Potter) finds a freely selected card not once, but TWICE!

This little beauty will produce an audible "beep" and the red lights will flash when the button at the lower center of the assembly is pushed.

In performance, the button is pushed and the mini-computer (remember this was made a long time ago) flashes/beeps several combinations to indicate the position and name of two randomly selected playing cards. The kicker finale' is when the chosen card vanishes from the deck and *appears inside the closed card box*.

The first member to contact LARRY WILFONG at (480) 246-1296 or with the name or manufacturer of this goodie wins a FREE \$10.00 GIFT CERTIFICATE to the online American Wizards Magic Shop.

Answer to last month's WHATSIT? = Swoger's WONDER BOX by Viking Mfg. (California Magician JP Jackson knew this one!)

THE SAME...ONLY DIFFERENT II

Welcome to a continuation of last month's voyage through The Accumulation pausing every now and then to look at apparatus that produces the same effect, but has a different (albeit sometimes *slightly* different) secret mechanism or construction.



First up is a classic effect as manufactured by P & L and known as the **Phantom Die**. A solid ungimmicked 2 1/2 inch die is shown and a small open-sided metal framework. The die will fit into the framework and the framework rests upon a little ungimmicked platform to isolate the entire assembly from the Magician's table. An empty top hat is set crown downwards covering the empty platform. The die inside the framework is covered with a foulard (how long has it been since you've used THAT term?) and set upon the bottom of the inverted top hat. You can see the die above the top hat until the final moment. A Magic Word is spoken. The audience sees the die is now missing from the framework, having penetrated the top hat and found resting upon the platform that was underneath the top hat.

The attractive wooden set on the right is **Mel Babcock's IMPROVED version**. All parts of this beautiful example of Mel's woodworking may be examined during the course of the trick. It's the same trick improved and made first class all the way!



Next is a Worth's (not Milson-Worth) **Silk Cabby**. The original Worth models and most others in The Accumulation have the standard "elevator" load chamber construction (refer to Rice #2), not the improved non-stick pivot mechanism as do the later Milson-Worth versions. To the right is another approach to the Silk Cabby. I do not know the origin of this piece, but it has the look of an Indian or Japanese import. It is made well and the bottom is very thin due to the load being concealed on the back door. I remember making one of these out of a cigar box when I was just a little Magician!

Here's one of my very favorites in The Accumulation, **Thayer's Rice and Checker Effect** (later "Rice, Checkers and Orange"). This set is probably circa 1930's based upon the beetle design on the tubes. (An interesting side note: This effect was sold as an upgrade from **Thayer's Here, There, or Where?** apparatus which originally involved a bottle instead of the separate checkers.) The effect is baffling and easy to follow: A stack of large wooden checkers is covered by one tube; an orange is covered by another tube and a bag of loose rice is poured into the attractive wooden vase.

The Magic Spell is cast (too much Harry Potter this week-end) and the rice has vanished from the vase and in it's place is the orange, the rice is found where the checkers were and the checkers are where the orange was!



The other set is U.F. Grant's/MAK Magic's **Imperial Rice Checkers and Orange**. In addition to being considerably larger than the Thayer set (although it should be noted Owens Magic Supreme also offers a giant version of Rice, Checkers and Orange), the typical ingenious Grant thinking in this larger set improved the ease of handling the cylinders and simplified the transformation of the loose rice into the solid orange.

I have pleasant thoughts about this apparatus because I first received an Owen's set with shiny chrome cylinders (not painted) and a metal vase as a birthday present in the early 1960's. I sold or traded that and in later years purchased an old Thayer or Owen's set from Sam Berland at a Collectors' week-end at Magic Inc. in the early 1970's. The wooden vase needed to be refinished and Chicago Magician Don Wiberg (who was also a shop teacher) did a beautiful job. At some point I sold or traded that set. (Is there a pattern developing here?). A few years ago I acquired the Thayer set pictured from our friend Jay Gorham. Just recently Gail surprised me with the Imperial set. Methinks these last two are keepers!

Remember next month is **AUCTION NIGHT**...bring your own goodies to sell and your cash, credit card or checkbook to buy...or just come to watch...**WE ALWAYS HAVE FUN!**



Our August meeting was actually divided into two parts, which we shared and co-sponsored with our fellow wizards from SAM Assembly 248. The first part was a lecture on Friday night by **Kevin Spencer** on “The Healing of Magic”. Although the Spencers have a huge traveling illusion show, they also take time to promote the therapeutic aspects of using simple magic skills to assist patients in improving motor skills and cognitive challenges. Kevin’s passion for this use of magic is very evident in his presentation, and he encourages others

to embrace it to “share your talent, elevate the art of magic, obtain media attention, and for personal gratification by doing something important for others”. We invited local therapists as well as the clown community to also hear about “the healing of magic”.

The second part of our joint August meeting was on Tuesday night, as 60 members and guests, including new members **Patrick Compeau** and **Robert Stephens** enjoyed an incredibly entertaining evening with the very talented and funny **Stephen Bargatze**! Stephen has a unique ability to entertain and mystify while he is also teaching the “reason” why certain things must happen to make it “magical”. Many of his effects are sold in your local magic shops, but he makes them “better” by developing his own presentation!

Because Stephen normally does not give lectures anymore, we were most fortunate to coax him into appearing with us because he was in town to perform at **Michael Finney’s** charity for children, the “All-Star Comedy and Variety Show”. For me, the highlights of his show and lecture were the Silent Mental Card routine which he developed with Don Alan, and his “The Plunger Trick”, ably assisted by members **Steve Peebles** and **John Thornton**.

In our raffle, **Stuart Friedman** won four tickets to the Casino Arizona “Showstoppers”, **Larry Wilfong** won a copy of “Out of This Hemisphere”, and **John Thornton** won a bunch of bucks in the split-the pot! Hope to see you next month!

Kind magical regards,
Clark Wirthlin, Ring 55 Secretary



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