

Axtel Drawing Board. He taught the sequence for arranging a set of nine cards in what appears to be a random order, the values of which, when added, deliver the answer to a combination lock. The “old man” recounts his various failures in school as a math student but shares his newly acquired enthusiasm for numbers when creating “magic squares.” Of course, his attempt to do so for the club (intentionally) flubs. Totally embarrassed, he turns, instead, to his “ring routine.” Doc invited four members to the front and asks them to volunteer their finger rings for a demonstration with the combination lock. He collected the rings and secured them on the lock, rotating the tumblers for security. He is shocked, however, to discover the envelope that was supposed to contain the combination is empty. He passes the lock to one of the volunteers, asking him to try to “figure it out.” Becoming more anxious, the befuddled “magic man” moves to his final phase, his “card trick.” He distributes sets of three number cards to three of the seated volunteers whom he asks to mix the cards in random order—even to switch sets with another if they wish. He then collects a card from each, the numbers of which are recorded in three columns by another volunteer on the Axtell Drawing Board. When added, the sum magically matches the combination which frees the rings! Grimes then reveals his secret—he had a “confederate” in the Drawing Board (“those who know, know”!) The old man bowed grandly as the applause “hooted” him off the stage.

Devin Hall, our new Vice President of Programs, announced the evening’s topic as “Managing Your ‘Outs.’” He introduced himself and his return to magic from years as a professional juggler. Asked to relate his connection of juggling with magic, Devin explained how juggling has increased his self-confidence in facing a mistake and demonstrated juggling routines that collapse and are then recovered. Devin reviewed some of his “go-to” pocket pieces using Gregory Wilson’s pocket coin index in conjunction with his “Mnemonic” card stack. Unexpectedly, George Ferrin revealed his own copy of the Wilson coin index, noting that when he openly reveals it and spins off a set of coins, he gets as much surprise from his spectator than if he were using it in a magic routine!

George then performed his card routine used as an out. He begins his card routines with four cards in CHAS order in his shirt pocket—the A/C, 2/H, 4/D, and 8/S. When a card routine “collapses” on him, he switches to a mentalism effect, asking the spectator to name any card in the deck, the value of which he can retrieve from one or a combination of the cards retrieved from his shirt pocket.

Matthew Martin responded with his color change “out” that he reverts to when a card routine “goes south.” Matthew Martin referenced Max Howard’s response to broken props in his “War Wizard” show. Max always has a backup just off stage and a script that allows him naturally to retrieve it and return seamlessly with the show.

Ron Wilson discussed various details regarding the production of our annual public magic show at Fort Worth’s Rose Theater, a roaring performance set featuring volunteering members from the club. The evening hour-long show was staged last summer and helped raise funds for purchasing a new set of curtains for the theater. Club members discussed the possibility of recurring shows there to continue our commitment to performing at least one public show as a club each year. Ron shared some of the difficulties he has experienced in trying to meet again with the manager, but he hopes that we can return again, this time with much greater marketing support from the theater staff.

Steve Garlick suggested that we update our membership roster and reach out this year to past members to encourage them to return. Pix Smith, our “ghost” editor of *The Flashpaper*, noted that the announcements go out to more than one hundred twenty addresses but that only twenty to thirty are actually opened and read.

The evening adjourned with a commitment this year to increase our club participation and to continue improving our magic!

Dr. Geoffrey Grimes

RING 17, TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA – The Sid Lorraine Hat and Rabbit Club

Meets 1st Mon. (except July and August) For current meeting details and venue, please visit website.

Web Site: www.ibmring17.org

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What an incredible night we shared recently with Lance Burton. Every now and then, the Hat and Rabbit Club pulls off something special, and our recent Zoom event with Lance was one of those moments. We had a memorable conversation with Lance and were able to listen in from one of magic’s greatest living legends. This was a real treat for me as president and what made this event so remarkable Lance’s friendly approach, his warmth, humility, and willingness to share. From the moment he joined the call, he brought us into his world, reflecting on his journey from a young magician to his appearance on *The Johnny Carson Show*, his time at Tombstone and the steps towards the bright lights of the Atomic City.

One of the standout moments was Lance’s emphasis on storytelling. “It’s not about the

trick,” he said, “It’s about the connection, and the experience you create for your audience.” The Q&A was fun and insightful. Lance took questions about his creative process, his signature dove act, and even his transition into directing and producing. What struck me was how open and honest he was. He didn’t just talk about his success, he talked about the hard work, the missteps, and the lessons he learned along the way with always a shout out to his mentors and those who worked with him along the way.

As the evening wrapped, Lance reminded us of the joy and responsibility that comes with being magicians: to create wonder, to tell stories, and to never stop learning. Thanks, Lance, for stepping into our club that night and for the encouraging and thoughtful reminder of why we do what we do.

Then last month, members of Ring 17 got to enjoy the poetic magic of Chris Pilsworth. Chris started with a beautiful “Ring and Rope” routine using a large silver ring and a length of blue rope. Standing atop a chair to ensure the best viewing (which he would do for the entire lecture), he passed a ring on and off of a rope in increasingly perplexing and mysterious ways. Chris said that his inspiration was Tabary’s ring and rope routine (which can be found in *The Award-Winning Rope Magic of Francis Tabary*.) Chris also mentioned that he had added touches from Peter Warlock and Harlan Tarbell. The routine flowed well from start to finish and he got a great reception at the end.

The second effect presented was “Homing Card to Wallet.” During the explanation Chris provided pointers on a slow-motion top change, tips on taking a palmed card from the pocket, plus his preferred handling for the Mullica Wallet. Chris had a smart way of coaching the audience how to respond. At the end of this routine, the person who had selected the card was surprised to see it removed from inside Chris’s wallet. However, that person was sitting amongst the crowd and their reaction couldn’t be seen. So, Chris said, “Now show your card to the audience so everyone can freak out.” You can guess what happened next.

In “Don’t Burst By Bubble,” Chris produced a soap bubble from a small manila envelope. Poetic effect; clever method. Next was “Passe-Passe Salt” done with a bottle of sand and a twist on the traditional method which makes it very practical as the trick is automatically reset at the end of the routine.

My favourite routine of the night (or at least tied with his “Ring and Rope” routine) was the “Jellybean Prediction.” (Same effect but a dif-

ferent method than the one found in Jim Steinmeyer’s *The Conjuring Anthology*.) Several audience members called out a single digit number, creating a four-digit number. Inside an envelope that was in full view the entire time was a tally of how many of each colour of jellybean was in the jar (and the figures were all written in different colours). Needless to say, the number created by the audience members matched the tally exactly!

His closing routine was the “Egg Bag” ... with a twist. It was done with a paper lunch bag and an egg that didn’t have to be emptied of its contents, ostensibly, to protect the garments of the spectators. Working with a paper bag it was even possible to conclude with the Malini ending wherein the assistant experiences the magic of the egg appearing in the bag while they are holding it! Apparently, Bill Abbott used to sell this version but now Chris is the sole supplier, so please reach out to him if you’re interested. It’s so strong that Bob Sheets uses it as his closer.

Throughout the night Chris also filled us in on how he views his various routines. He refers to them as either “babies,” “teenagers,” “parents,” or “grandparents.” The various titles have been allocated depending on the amount of flight time he has logged with each routine. Grandparents have seen every possible working condition imaginable and can often be done surrounded for a few people or for many people. In short, the routines that become grandparents are the ones you perform the most and will eventually become your go-to effects.

David Sutherland and David Peck

RING 19, MINNEAPOLIS, MINNESOTA – Carl Jones Ring

Meets 2nd Mon. each month, 7:00 p.m., via Zoom and in person 2nd Sat. (location TBD)

ANDREW SELBITSCHKA, President / Web site: www.IBMRing19.com

The anticipated 7.5 inches of snow predicted did not stop sixteen members of the Minnesota I.B.M. Ring 19 members from meeting! Snow, bah!

Dan Norat started off the magic by presenting a Dan Harlan card trick, the “12 Card Principle,” a lesson in subtle manipulation. Walt Pattinson assisted with the magic. Sleven Olson offered up a coin trick whereby he vanished four coins to four pockets. He was followed by Annmarie Thomas. Annmarie uses magic as part of her public speaking talks and often uses the club for feedback. Her next talk deals with the subject of “Play” and she presented an envelope word force using the subjects JOY, WHIMSY, NEW PEOPLE and SURPRISE. We talked through “outs” and envelope gimmicking.

A new venue for magic in the Twin Cities,