

# Harrogate society of magicians



**Issue 8 : August 2009**

**President  
James Ward MMC**

## Presidential

This month, I'd like to open by saying how much I enjoyed our latest meeting (20 July). As well as Stevie's 'This Is My Life' talk, we had a wide range of magic and a lot of fun. Not for the first time, some of the best moments seem to come when things go wrong. We've all been there and, let's face it, nine times out of ten, if it's going to go wrong, it's going to go wrong at the club! I don't know why that should be – maybe the adrenaline's not flowing quite as strongly, and we let our guard down. But if it's going to go wrong, club meetings are preferable to messing up in front of a paying audience. A few months back, in Leeds, I remember performing what I thought was a very clever trick with a stacked deck. Only I'd forgotten to stack it, so it wasn't that clever, after all. That's why it's always reassuring to be reminded that others, however accomplished, are human, too.

I'm writing this prior to giving a lecture on 12 August to the York Society of Magicians. Hopefully, it will go well and, even more hopefully, I'll escape in one piece. Though you always want things to go smoothly in a lecture, they are one of those venues where you can make a mistake and get away with it, if only because you're going to explain the method in any event, so the pressure's not as great. That said, I hope nothing goes badly wrong, or Rex may have to change his name and leave the county.

The most unusual lecture I ever gave (and possibly ever will give) was at Chandanagar, just outside Kolkata, India in January 2006. I performed half an hour's mentalism, at which point the audience generously applauded, my interpreter thanked me, then promptly led me off the stage as they were running late. I was immediately interviewed by a local television station, after which it was on to lunch, so I had no time to point out that I hadn't actually EXPLAINED any of my effects.

That's my sort of lecture, so, Rex, if you're reading this BEFORE 12 August – you know what to do!

Till next time, keep on shuffling!

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## This Is Your Life : Stevie B

Stevie was born in 1968, the second of three children. He left Prince Henry's Grammar School, Otley, in 1984, to train as a bench hand joiner, and his first job was with Educational and Scientific Furniture, which later became British Thornton ESF Ltd. He still works for the same company today, as a technical designer. In 1991 he met his future wife, Louise, and her young son Jamie, and they married in 1998.

Stevie's magic career began in 1984, when his dad bought him a pack of Paul Daniels Magic Cards – a stripper deck which he quickly mastered. More Paul Daniels' magic followed as Stevie immersed himself in his new passion. One early trick involved producing several balls from out of nowhere – a feat which, Paul Daniels assured him, meant he had acquired master magician status. Stevie was on his way!

His first public performance was in 1988 at a summer event for the Two Dales School for handicapped children. Twenty minutes of what Stevie disarmingly described as "magical crap" – though, knowing Stevie, that's hard to believe!

Soon after, he met the magician Jack Allen, a member of Bradford Magic Circle, who advised him to get in touch with Supreme Magic and expand his range of magic. Among the first items Stevie sent off for were Little Miss Muffet and a Brema Nut.

Jack suggested Stevie join the Bradford Magic Circle (BMC). His audition – in October 1988 – consisted of several effects, among them Do As I Do, and a torn and restored card routine – in which the card eventually reappeared inside a cigarette.

As well as being a stalwart of our own society, Stevie is a member of the British Ring and has been active in the BMC for over 17 years, serving as welfare officer, president and secretary. He has also taken part in more than 30 road shows, both as performer and organiser, and appeared in the Hey Presto magic show three times. He has written his own page in The Billet since 1990, and, for many years, a regular column in Northern Lights.

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### **This Is Your Life : Stevie B – cont.**

His collection of trophies would fill a small warehouse. A BMC stage and close-up champion (the latter three times); he's also been awarded the President's Wand for his work for the society and magic in general. Other accolades include the Eric Bland Trophy (for best Northern Lights article), the close-up title at Leeds Magical Association and several Northern Magic Circle cups, for comedy, originality, stage and close-up.

He was also one half (the lovely Debbie Magoo!) of the comedy duo, "Steve Gore and Co" - the only act ever to win every trophy in the Senior Stage Competition (at the 2004 Northern Magic Circle convention).

On top of everything else, Stevie is a Northern Magic Circle council member, events organiser, and on the convention committee for 2010, arranging workshops, competitions etc. He joined Northern Magic Circle in 1997 in rather unusual circumstances. After winning three trophies, but discovering he only qualified for one (as a member of Bradford), he signed up there and then – paying for his subscription out of his prize money!

We also learned how his stage name, "Stevie B" came about. Apparently, a work colleague often addressed him that way. Stevie liked it – and a legend was born!

Stevie showed us a few of his prized possessions, including the late Bob Eaton's dice production, and a set of inscribed handcuffs given to him by Danny Hunt and Annette Claire. He also performed Bob Eaton's Rising Sausage Box, with the help of Marcus Hill and James Orr.

He concluded his talk with his own amusing version of Albert and the Lion – Albert and the Convention.

Outside of magic (though it's hard to see how he finds the time), Stevie is a member of Ilkley Moor Lions, of which he's a past President and current Zone Chairman.

Oh, yes – and he once shot Mark Raffles on stage in Durham!

Thanks, Stevie, A very enjoyable talk and another fascinating addition to our ongoing series.

### **Meeting Theme : Magic with Cups & Glasses**

#### **Denys Hollis**

Our oldest member, Denys Hollis (96) – who we were delighted to have with us for the first time in ages – had to leave early, but not before delighting us with his 'Corks and Saucers' effect. Things didn't go as smoothly as Denys would have liked, but it was great to see him perform again, and we all hope he'll be back with us soon.

#### **Clive Cullum**

Next up was Clive with a very entertaining routine involving precision-made "Leprachaun Cups". One was a "Lots-A-Coins" cup and the other a "Shamrock" cup. There were a few technical problems, but Clive soldiered on bravely, before showing us his mirror glass and, finally, producing a drink from his wallet. Refusing to be beaten, Clive took to the stage again later in the evening and reprised his "Leprachaun Cups" - this time without a hitch and to great applause.

#### **James Orr**

James Orr performed an excellent card trick, with Dan as his assistant.

#### **Stevie B**

Stevie B was next up with card in wineglass (in which the face card changed several times).

#### **Rex Stott**

Rex, who had brought along "The Essential Stewart James", gave us some interesting information on this prolific inventor of magical effects, then showed us his first trick, published in "The Linking Ring". It dated from 1926 and involved a cup suspended on a string and pencil. Miraculously, when dropped, the cup didn't hit the floor - the string on which it was held wrapping itself around the pencil in Rex's hand. It looked impossible – and very dramatic.

#### **Stuart Broadbank**

Stuart showed us a torn and restored effect, "Mismade Monopoly

#### **Dan Curston**

Dan cheekily forced the same card on Stevie B several times in quick succession

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## **Meeting Theme : Magic with Cups & Glasses - cont.**

### **Marcus Hill**

Marcus entertained us with magic set to music, using coins, silks and wineglasses to great effect; and concluded with a very nice vanishing card case.

### **Brian Knowles**

Brian performed Burtini's version of "Multum in Parvo" (in which the same jug of beer is poured into a succession of ever smaller glasses). Adrian Salamon showed us his chop cup routine

### **Bob McBratney**

Bob decided to stretch the definition of glasses to include spectacles. James Orr helped out, wearing Bob's special pair of mind-reading specs to reveal George's choice of card.

## **News**

### **York Lecture**

Rex extended an invitation to members to attend a lecture in York on Wednesday, 12 August entitled "Ideas and Innovation in Magic" given by someone called James Ward. Jim said he'd be going – but didn't advise anyone else.

### **Auditions**

It was agreed that at the next meeting, our three latest recruits, Adrian, Dan and Stuart, will audition for full membership.

### **Annual Shows**

Jim passed on Roy Field's and Paul Freeman's thanks for their warm reception at the June meeting. They enjoyed the evening and thought we were a very friendly club. Two shows are in the offing: one at Staveley (for the local church) and another at Summerbridge (for the Roddy Scott Foundation). Staveley may clash with the British Ring convention, but a show of hands made it clear we'd have no trouble finding enough performers. Jim will get back to us with more details as soon as he can. [UPDATE: Staveley has now been fixed for 25 September.]

## **Where to Find Magic**

### **Wolverhampton**

Kidology UK 2009. Ali Cardabra will give a talk on Walk Around Magic for Children, Derek Lever on Children's Magic Props through the Ages, Michael Diamond on Halloween Magic and Michael Fitch on Kids' Cabaret (Michael won the International Children's Entertainer award at this year's Blackpool Convention). 15 magic dealers will exhibit their latest products and the day's £35.00 registration includes a buffet lunch. Kidology UK will once again be held at the Civic and Wulfrun Halls in Wolverhampton. Tuesday, 8 September 2009.

For more info visit: [www.practical-magic.com](http://www.practical-magic.com)

### **Blackpool**

FISM World Championships 2012 Blackpool Winter Gardens Grand Theatre and Tower Ballroom.

Opening registration price €450

Further details available at [www.blackpoolmagic.com](http://www.blackpoolmagic.com) or email [arthurcasson@aol.com](mailto:arthurcasson@aol.com)

9-14 July 2012

## **Members Present @ Meeting**

Stevie B, Stuart Broadbank, Mike Coyne, Clive Cullum, Dan Curston, George Fowler, Marcus Hill, David Hird, Denys Hollis, Brian Knowles, Bob McBratney, Adrian Salamon, Rex Stott, James Orr, James Ward

### **Apologies for Absence**

Neil Bradley-Smith.

### **Next Meeting**

Magic With Flowers

This is Your Life : Neil Bradley-Smith

### **Meeting Date & Time**

17 August 2009 @ 20:00