

THE SOCIETY

Harrogate Society of Magicians Newsletter

Issue 6: JULY 2010

Editorial

Hello and welcome to the July issue of The Society.

As I was unable to attend the last meeting, Jim has kindly taken some notes for this issue, let's hope nothing gets lost in translation! As you know this coming Saturday is our show at the Feva Festival! We have decided to have a technical rehearsal on Tuesday 10th. Please can you let Bob know if you're unable to make it on Tuesday?

I'm sure everyone is looking forward to the show this year, and as at previous shows I will try and record it, depending on the set-up and will take some photos!

There isn't much else for me to say this month; apart from I hope everyone is well!

N

Presidential

A short one this month. (Honest!)

By the time you read this, we may have performed at the Frazer Theatre. If we have, then I hope it went well and we're still in one piece. If we haven't, however, then I hope it goes well. Either way, as a relatively small Society, I think we should be proud of ourselves for "having a go".

Organising these things is not always easy, and there's always a chance that something will go disastrously wrong – if only in my act. (And how I hope those aren't "famous last words"!)

The easy thing would be to sit back and never bother. The great thing about our club, however, is that, far from struggling to find people to take part, we're generally trying to work out how we can fit everyone in. I like to think that's in part down to the fact that, though we all appreciate putting on shows is a serious business, we none of us take ourselves too seriously. That makes us, I hope, more tolerant towards each other, and aware that each of us is keen to do our best, both for ourselves and the Harrogate Society of Magicians.

At the end of the day, most of us are not professionals and just want to have fun, albeit we want to be as good as we can be in the process. I hope we never lose sight of that because, in my view, that makes us what we are – a club, hopefully, in which we can all make a useful contribution (even if that's just turning up each month and giving our support) and of which we can all feel a part.

What makes you think I'm struggling for something to say this month?

Only seven more Presidentials to go. I bet you're counting the days. Keep up your good work – whatever it is!☺

J

Meeting Theme: Clive Cullum "loading and stealing gimmicks"

Clive gave a thoroughly entertaining talk which, though centred on the loading and stealing of gimmicks, went far beyond and made great use of his extensive collection of props, gimmicks and other utility items.

Using no fewer than 15 headings, Clive took us on an informative and fun-filled journey through the world of coins, thimbles, ball-holders, pulls, sleeving, the use of lapels, pockets, magnets, servantes, shells, thumb tips, wallets, tubes, bags, envelopes, billet knives and other deceptive devices.

The highlight for many of us was the servante used for magic when seated at a table. A cross between a truss and the smallest rucksack in the world, Clive had us in stitches as he showed us not only why it was so useful, but why wearing a jacket is an absolute necessity when using it. (You had to be there, I'm afraid!)



It's impossible to do Clive's talk justice in such a short time, but items demonstrated included: a coin dropper, a cloth hold-out (for use with a sleeve), hand-held coin gimmicks, and an ingenious thimble holder that allowed its wearer to show an empty hand one moment and thimbles on every finger the next. Pulls included both a Vernet and a Beelzebub Bomb.

Discussing large pocket magnets, Clive warned us of the perils of straying too close to a radiator and finding oneself stuck, which, he admitted, had once happened to him.

He also showed us several types of servante, including Michael Ammar's Topit and a much smaller version – a Poppit – as well as the table magic device described above.

Other devices included a Sanada gimmick, coin shells, a Bank Night-type tray for delivering duplicate items (see Tarbell, vol 5, p 183 for a description), a Z-fold wallet, a Himber wallet, a flash wallet, a WOW wallet, an El Duco wallet and a very modern version – on a chain – for use when performing street magic.

Clive also showed us a bill tube, a pea tube, a drumhead tube, a Devil's Hank, a Handy Hank, Pat Page's Hanky Panky and a coin bag which allows one to visibly change one coin for another. In addition, there were cardboard and paper tubes, devices to change items, produce silks and the like.

Touching on mentalism, Clive also showed us a clever billet pencil and billet knife – both of which allow you to introduce written predictions into impossible locations. He also touched on the use of change bags, mirror glasses, card swords, change drawers and hank balls (for producing silks). Among other things!

As I said at the start, it's impossible to do Clive's talk justice in such a short time, but it was a veritable master class in the technical aspects of magical deception. The evening sped by and was greatly enjoyed by everyone.

Thank you, Clive, for taking so much trouble and putting together a very interesting talk.

News

Frazer Theatre

This being our last chance to discuss the forthcoming show, Bob took us through various aspects of the night, following his recent discussion with the FEVA organisers. In Neil's absence, it was decided – if Neil was willing – that he would be the best person to operate the sound system, with lighting being the responsibility of FEVA, in possible conjunction with the theatre. The theatre will provide interval snacks for members of the audience, FEVA have public liability insurance and will make a donation to club funds once the festival is over.

George will take responsibility for operating the curtains and Adrian will be stage manager, responsible for ensuring everyone knows where they are, when they are due to perform and that props are in their correct place. Potential new member, John Hunt, offered to assist Adrian in this role.

It was also decided that Brian would be in charge of make-up – should performers require any help with this.

It was also agreed that, once stage acts are finalised, Stevie (as compere) and Adrian/John as stage managers, will need to know each performer's closing routine. Neil will also need to know which acts require audience participation as the lights may need to be raised at times.

Finally, it was decided that Bob would contact the theatre in the hope that we can make use of the facilities for an advance rehearsal, to include stage management, operating the curtains and sound/lighting.

Whixley Performance

We have been asked to perform table-hopping magic at a village event in Whixley on Saturday, 30 October. There will be 12 tables of 8 people. A lady vicar will be present and a request has been made that she either be sawn in half or have her head chopped off. I can only assume she's offended several people!

If anyone has a device that can accomplish this feat without us all being taken to court, your contribution will be very welcome.



Prospective New Member

Finally, Clive brought along a prospective new member, John Hunt who, as noted elsewhere, quickly threw himself into the spirit of things by volunteering to help Adrian with stage management at the Frazer. (Or, as someone remarked, 'It will give Adrian someone to boss around!')

Hungarian Magic

The meeting opened with a ten-minute routine from visiting magician, Oliver Prince. Oliver is a young Hungarian, currently working at the Bar and Grill restaurant in Harrogate and had contacted George, asking if he might be allowed to attend a meeting before returning home next month.

Oliver entertained us with a variety of effects, including: Professor's Nightmare, twentieth century silks (with bra!) and silk to panties. Oliver then fanned cards horizontally before cascading them into a top hat to dispel any suggestion that they were somehow linked. He also bent a spoon – Uri Gellar-fashion – produced cash from a spectacular fire wallet and concluded with a lovely flame to rose effect.

All in all, Oliver's act provided an entertaining start to proceedings, and he remained with us for the rest of the evening.

Members Present

- Members present at the July meeting: Adrian, Bob, Brian, Clive, David, George, Jim, Joe, Mike, Rex, Stevie
- Apologies for absence: Neil, Marcus, Stuart

Next Meeting

DATE: 16.08.2010

TIME: 20:00

VENUE: Harrogate Conservative Club

THEME: "My Life at Pontins" by Brian Knowles

