

2017/2018 Club Membership Dues are now due!!

Please bring your **\$40** membership renewal dues to the September meeting, or mail them to: *Mark Hogan, 21-455 Hyde Park Road, London ON N6H 3R9*



Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community
September 2017 Volume 13, Issue 1

June's meeting

We started the summer with a bang by seeing the premiere of *The Charming Cheat* – **Mike Fisher's** entry into this year's *London Fringe Festival*.

Dressed in his impressive Victorian-era suit, wearing his equally impressive handlebar mustache, the **Charming Cheat** opened his jacket to show the ... ummm ... quality items he had for sale. With no takers, he started into his games of chance. First up was a selection of 6 wallets by the audience, leading to a classic *Banknote* effect where Mike ended up with the \$100. Next was a *Three Card Monte* (**Martin Lewis's Sidewalk Shuffle**), and a nice *Hanky to Egg* routine, which he then explained to the crowd, except the hollow egg turned into a real egg!

Then it was time for his *Liar's Dice* routine where he determined the correct spots on the die even with it covered up (with an audience member who tried their very best to hide it!). and *Cheater's Poker* was hit, where every hand the spectator dealt to our **Charming Cheat** was the winner! He also performed a *rope escape* from behind his suit jacket.

Finally he got the 6 spectators with wallets to come up on stage. A pre-written set of instructions were used to eliminate them one by one until only one remained. A locked box (on stage the entire time) was unlocked – by using the birth year of the remaining spectator! And inside the box was a wallet – that matched the one held by the spectator!

Next Meeting:

Date: Wednesday, September 13

Time: 7:30 PM

Topic: EASY BUT GOOD!

**Beal Secondary School
525 Dundas Street, London
T-253**

His final trick – A Coke bottle is put into a paper bag and vanishes – but then he brings out of the bag a full glass (of what, we don't know!) and the lights go down on the Charming Cheat enjoying his magical beverage – and his standing ovation!

The show was a superb, polished display of skill, luck ... and charm. Mike put on a most enjoyable show that had the audience scratching their heads and laughing out loud. What a terrific way to start the summer.

Mark Hogan

September's Meeting

DATE: Wednesday, September 13
TIME: 7:30 PM
PLACE: Beal Secondary School
525 Dundas Street, London
T-253

TOPIC: **EASY BUT GOOD!**

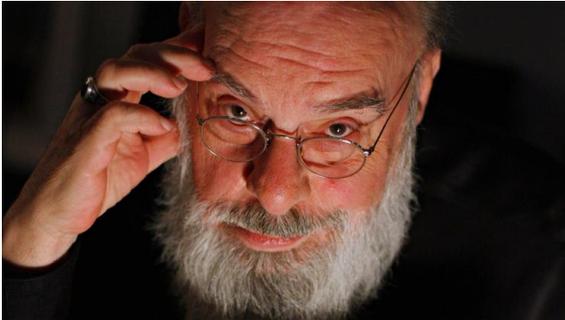
It's been a nice summer – so why not ease back into the swing of things with a night that's easy?

Mark Hogan will show some tricks (mostly cards – sorry, Mike!) that are within everyone's wheelhouse. No fancy moves. No assembly required. This is mostly self-working stuff where you can focus on the presentation.

This isn't your standard "3 rows of 7". The tricks are strong – and they might even fool you. There's only one way to find out – come out this month and learn some easy tricks to add to your arsenal.

We Want Your Reviews and Tricks!
Please send any original reviews, magic
tricks or routines to:
magic_london@yahoo.ca

News Of Interest



Remembering Eugene Burger

(ChicagoTribune.com)

A 21-year-old magician from Kentucky once found himself at the legendary *Magic Castle* in Los Angeles, where a man named Eugene Burger was performing. The visiting illusionist was inexperienced but he'd already made an appearance on "*The Tonight Show*" with **Johnny Carson** and thought himself a young hotshot. He watched Burger light a candle and perform a close-up trick where he burned some thread into tiny, charred pieces, only to restore it whole. It was as if he were an alchemist. The young magician was floored.

"I remember thinking one thing," said **Lance Burton**, now a Las Vegas star. "Why isn't this guy a household name?"

Eugene Burger, who lived simply in a one-bedroom apartment on Dearborn Street, died Aug. 8 at the age of 78 in his hometown of Chicago. This was not front-page news nor an occasion for mayoral proclamation.

"Eugene didn't have the desire to be famous," said Chicago magician and teacher Ross Johnson, one of the many magic people in town who credit Burger with their entire career.

So Burger was not a household name. Unless your household happened to include world-famous magicians. Among that group, Burger, the magic guru and mentor to the leading people of global magic, qualified as a deity.

Appropriate, since Burger graduated from the *Yale Divinity School* in 1964. He made a number of return visits to his alma mater where he impressed students with his existential theorizing around the notion that magic is here to remind us that "life is not a problem to be solved but a mystery to be lived." Magic, Burger liked to say, was a reminder that "we are living in the middle of meaning."

"Instead of seeing a psychotherapist," said Chicago magician-physician **Ricardo T. Rosenkranz**, "I would go and see Eugene. There was truth but no dogma. He was a man who knew what you needed and afforded it to you."

I was with Burger earlier this year in an unusual class at the Northwestern University medical school taught by Rosenkranz, a neo-natal pediatrician. I was there to talk about truth and vulnerability in performance (and talking to a

patient is a performance for any medical professional). Burger was there to talk about the magic of healing; he was fond of saying that magic was medicine because it makes us feel better, and of the idea that magic could be especially useful in situations with children.

It was an afternoon I won't ever forget.

Burger was already in failing health and he wanted not to fool these young doctors in training with his tricks (although fool them he did), but to make them see that the reason we all are drawn to magic and illusion is, in essence, a hedge against our fear of death.

Magic, Burger kept saying, represents our wish for immortality. The magician, he kept saying, has a lot in common with the healer. It's all about our innate desire to see things made whole.

The diverse faces in white coats looked bemused at first. But as Burger continued to talk, they seemed to understand, as if for the first time, what he was trying to tell them — that they would, throughout their professional lives, encounter patients who believed in them, who had absolute faith in their power to heal, who craved victory over mortality. They would, Burger kept telling them, have to learn what to do with that belief, which likely would be absolute. The worse the disease, the more absolute the faith would become.

As the afternoon progressed, he started to put things more bluntly.

As doctors, they would have to figure out how to temper faith with mortality. Unlike the magician, they would not have full control over the outcome of their tricks. That would present them with a conundrum: how to inspire the faith their patients would need to heal themselves while never denying the limitations of the doctor, which would be themselves.

As Burger talked softly, I watched the faces of these students as they came to grips not with the rigors of the human body under duress, or the imperative of the authoritative physician, but of the moral implications of human faith in the healer.

I recall wishing some of the doctors who had treated my late father, and who had not seemed to understand his faith in them, had been able to sit in this Chicago classroom and listen to this man.

Burger spent most of his life helping people such as **Criss Angel** or **Derren Brown** build and perform their illusions. They loved him.

"Magicians tend to be very insecure," Angel said over the phone from Las Vegas this week. "It's all about their secrets. They don't like to share. But Eugene understood that magic is about far more than secrets. It is about telling a story. It is about moving people emotionally."

Angel paused.

"Aside from that," he said, his voice cracking, "he was a magic human being. I hope his voice echoes in my ear until my dying breath."

Burger died at *Northwestern Memorial Hospital*. Johnson was at his bedside, he had met Burger in 1973 and owed him his interest in magic.

In a 2013 interview with *Genii*, a magazine for conjurers, Burger was asked about his legacy. "I'm just trying to find my own way along this magical path," he said, "which is also a path full of brambles and thorns and I am encouraging other people to strike out for themselves as well. You don't have to follow the pack."

Not over a cliff, certainly.

"Magic is about transformation," Burger said. "Transformation is one of the most fundamental symbols and metaphors of magic. And this raises the question of my own transformation and your own transformation. Will there be transformation in our lives?"

Surely, in his.



Shed of the Year contestant in UK

(Echo-news.co.uk)

A magician is hoping to conjure up enough votes to win a spot in the final of *The Shed of The Year Competition*.

Oliver Tabor, 38, of Shopland Road, in Rochford, has used an old outhouse at his parents farm as a magician's workshop since he was a teenager but now hopes the magical space can win him first place.

He said: "When I first got into magic I kept my stuff at home but when I was about 15 there was too much and it didn't fit in my room so I moved it into the outhouse, put a bit of carpet down and some curtains up and it became my workshop.

"It's my creative space, my workshop and rehearsal space, I have a mirror and camera up so I can practice tricks. I follow the *Shed of the Year*

competition every year but it never occurred to me to enter until my girlfriend said I should.

"I follow the competition every year - it's always really interesting to see these everyday folk who have these secret passions and how they change these sheds into their workshops or pubs or even clubs. So I thought I'd give it a go; I had a bit of a tidy up and decorated it and sent the pictures off and two days later the producers got in touch."

Mr. Tabor, who works as a full-time magician, has now been shortlisted for the *Unexpected Category* and will appear on a Channel 4 documentary about the competition later this year.

Masters Of Illusion show back on CW

(CWTV.com)

The roster of award-winning magicians from around the world appearing in Season Four of Masters of Illusion is a virtual who's who in the field of magic.

- **Adam Wylie** (Los Angeles, CA)
- **Barry & Stuart** (Barry Jones and Stuart McLeod, Scotland)
- **Bill Cook** (Chicago, IL)
- **Billy Kidd** (London, UK)
- **Chipper Lowell** (Los Angeles, CA)
- **Chris Korn** (Los Angeles, CA)
- **Chris Randall** (Los Angeles, CA)
- **Draven** (Las Vegas, NV)
- **Ed Alonzo** (Los Angeles, CA)
- **Eric Jones** (Baltimore, MD)
- **Farrell Dillon** (Boise, ID)
- **Greg Gleason** (Las Vegas, NV)
- **Jarrett & Raja** (Jarrett Parker and Raja Rahman from Las Vegas, NV)
- **Jason Bird** (Las Vegas, NV)
- **Jason Bishop** (Blandon, PA)
- **Jeff McBride** (Las Vegas, NV)
- **Jibrizy** (Chicago, IL)
- **Jonathan Pendragon** (Vermont)
- **Joshua Jay** (New York, NY)
- **Kyle Marlett** (Las Vegas, NV)
- **Leon Etienne** (Utica, NY)
- **Les Arnold & Dazzle** (Les Arnold and Alex Arnold, Los Angeles, CA)
- **Matt Marcy** (Culver City, CA)
- **Michael Grandinetti** (Los Angeles, CA)
- **Murray SawChuck** (Las Vegas, NV)
- **Naathan Phan** (Los Angeles, CA)
- **Nathan Burton** (Las Vegas, NV)

- **Neil Crowell** (Montreal, Canada)
- **R.J. Cantu** (Las Vegas, NV)
- **Scott Pepper** (San Antonio, TX)
- **Shawn Farquhar** (Montreal, Canada)
- **Sos Petrosyan, Jr.** (Altrip, Germany)
- **Tigran Petrosyan** (Altrip, Germany)
- **Tommy Wind** (Las Vegas, NV)
- **Tony Chapek** (Atlanta, GA)
- **Xavier Mortimer** (Las Vegas, NV)

To view a Sizzle Reel of Season Four of **Masters of Illusion** on The CW, please visit <https://vimeo.com/user4830612/review/222548449/f2ab2a29cb>

To learn more about **Masters of Illusion**, please visit <http://www.cwtv.com/shows/masters-of-illusion/>



Magician apologizes for insulting Newfoundlanders

(Canadian Press)

Celebrity magician **Penn Jillette** has apologized after Newfoundlanders took him to task for insulting their intelligence on a talk show.

Jillette, half of the comedic magic duo "**Penn & Teller**," talked about his Newfoundland roots during an appearance on HBO's "*Real Time with Bill Maher*" that aired Friday night.

"I'm probably from Newfoundland, which is just a euphemism for stupid," Jillette told the host. "All of those people up in the frozen North that club seals, those are my people."

Some Newfoundlanders used social media to complain about the remarks, and one Twitter user described the comment as "discriminatory."

Jillette apologized to the Twitter user, and called the comment a failed attempt at self-deprecation.

"I've been (to Newfoundland) and loved everyone I met," Jillette tweeted. "I was really stupid and out of line."

Jillette's apology didn't satisfy comedian **Mark Critch**, a native Newfoundlander, who said on Twitter that until the magician learns about his heritage, he should act like his famously-silent partner Teller and "shut it".

Jillette has also joked about "my people" on his podcast "Penn's Sunday School," saying when a person reveals they're from Newfoundland, Canadians "just laugh at you."

The well-known skeptic also referenced his family's origins in a passage of his book "God, No!" in which he reflects on the notion of identity.

"Being proud of some imaginary group you were born into seems insane and wrong," wrote Jillette. "I went back to Newfoundland to see where my grandfather grew up, but I'm not a Newfoundland American."

"I'm Penn Jillette ... who didn't even do well in Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey the Greatest Show on Earth Clown College."

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Concept by: Steve Seguin

The Shell Game is a free newsletter sent to members of the London Magicians Guild and other people in the community interested in magic.

Opinions expressed do not reflect the views of the London Magicians Guild.

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