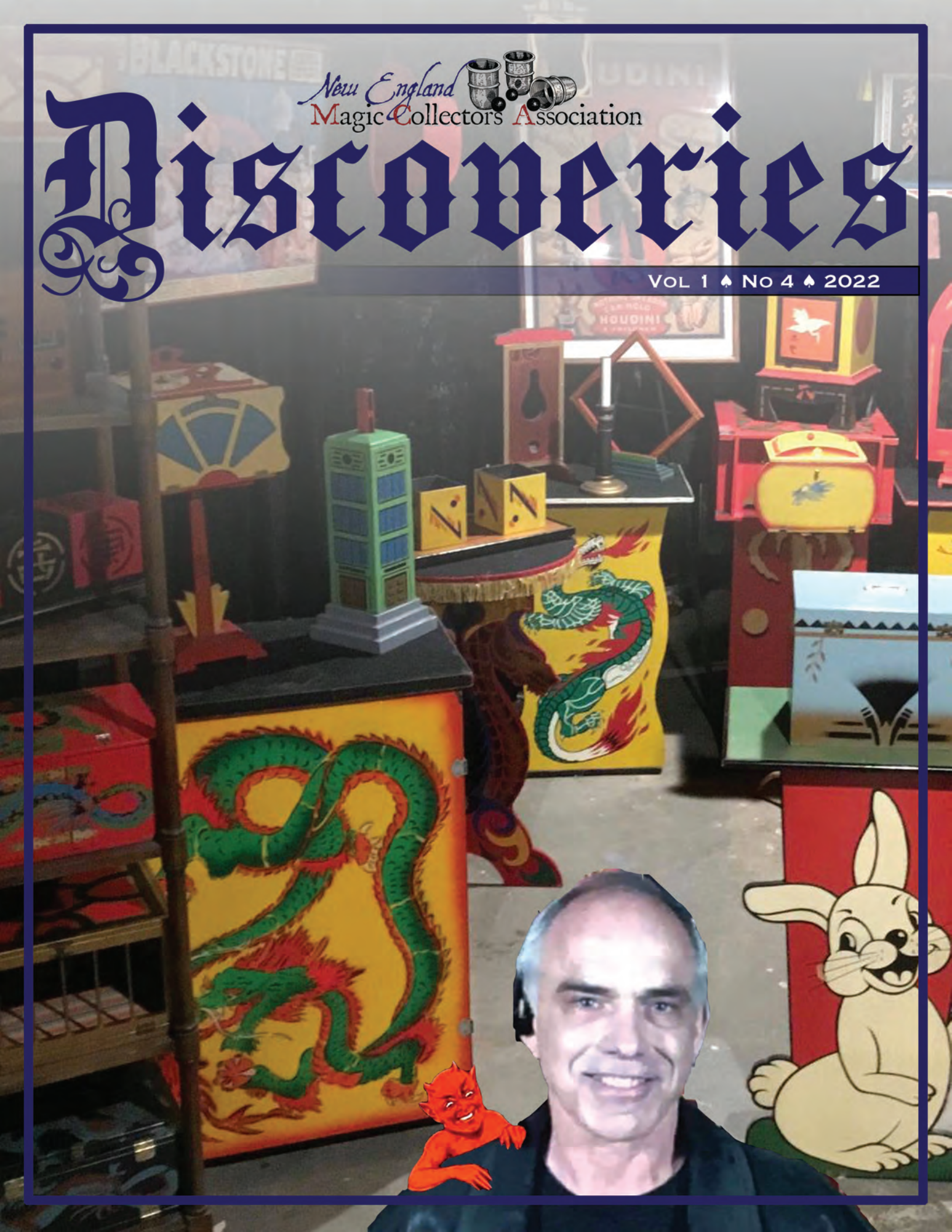


New England
Magic Collectors Association



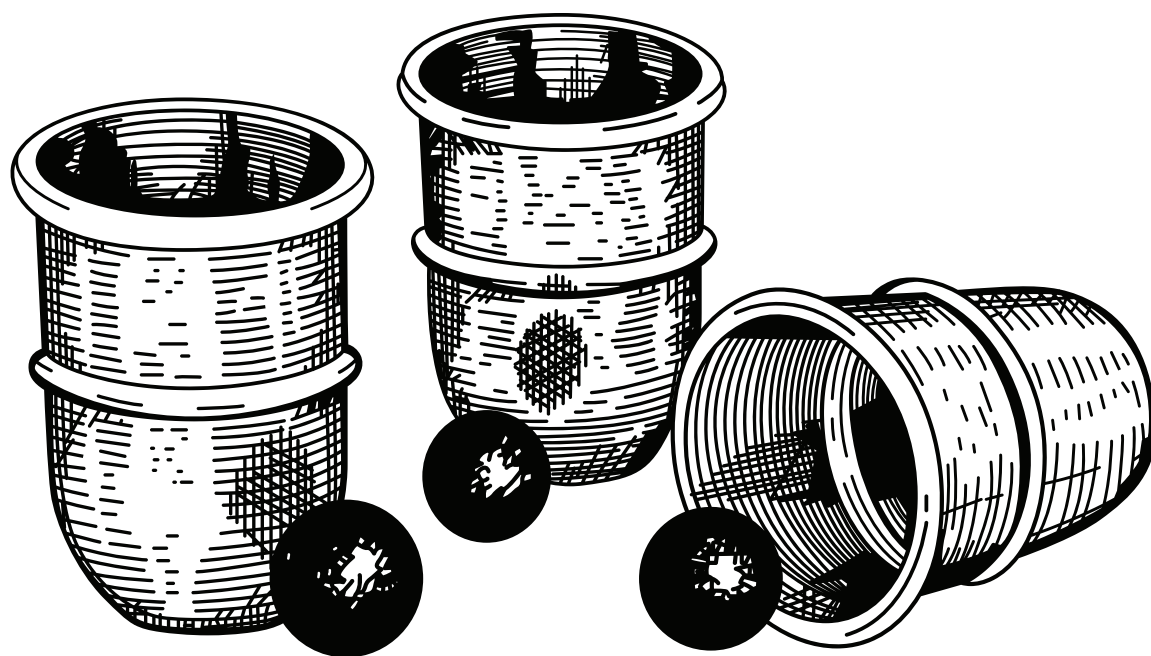
Discoveries

VOL 1 ♠ NO 4 ♠ 2022



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About Discoveries

Discoveries is the official quarterly newsletter of the New England Magic Collectors Association. We aim to inform and entertain the Magic history/collecting community by assembling news, resources, and articles of interest all in one convenient quarterly publication. *Discoveries* is produced and edited by Patrick Lusch with content contributed by NEMCA members. We ask you, our readers, to participate by sending content and questions for future publications to our editorial staff: newsletter@nemca.com. Remember, you may subscribe to the newsletter through our website, or by [clicking here](#).

About NEMCA

NEMCA meets at least three times a year, and one must be 18 years or older with a genuine interest in magic collecting to apply for membership status. Members hail not only from New England, but from throughout the United States and Europe. In 2017, NEMCA became a 501(c)(3) non-profit association. Since its inception, its purpose has steadfastly remained the education and promotion of interest in the collecting of books, memorabilia, history, and apparatus relating to magic and the allied arts; the preservation of the history and knowledge of the theater arts; and the sharing of knowledge and expertise in the collection and preservation of magic apparatus and literature.

The Yankee Gathering: Essential to achieving that purpose, the New England Magic Collectors Association hosts the biennial Yankee Gathering, widely considered one of the premier magic collector's conventions, in November of even-numbered years.

The Yankee Magic Collector: The official journal of the association. Each issue contains a broad range of articles, news and research of interest to magic collectors and historians. The Yankee Magic Collector is published every two years for distribution at the Yankee Gathering and is free to NEMCA members.

Learn more about NEMCA at www.nemca.com.

Featured Cover Photo

Let us feature a photo of your collection, or a special prop from your collection, on the cover of our next issue! Submit your high quality photo to our editorial staff at newsletter@nemca.com. We will caption your photo here in the next issue.

This issue's cover photo comes courtesy of Todd Harris, curator of "The Magic Attic". Be sure to check out Todd's interview and learn about "The Magic Attic" later in this issue.

Welcome New Members

The following new members have joined NEMCA since the last publication. Please join the NEMCA staff in extending a warm welcome. Thank you for your ongoing support of NEMCA!

Didier Clement

Kent Cummins

Charles Greene

James Hagy

Robert Hale

Elizabeth Harris

Todd Harris

Doug James

William Kalush

Peter Lane

Devin Lushbaugh

Ralph Mackintosh

Andy Martin

Christopher Martin

Peter Niall

Richard Nunziato

Rosemary Reid

Steven Trott

Jacob Yanovich

From the President's Desk

Jim Zoldak, NEMCA President

Welcome to our fourth issue of *Discoveries*! Our newsletter continues to evolve, and we hope you are enjoying the changes. As I stated in an earlier issue, we are trying to make every issue better than the last. This issue, I believe, continues that trend.

First, let me apologize for this issue being a little later than usual. We have had a very busy fall season. In addition to preparing for the holidays, our team was very busy putting the final touches in place for Yankee Gathering 2022. This latest Gathering was a much needed get together of old and new collectors and magic enthusiasts. The highlight of the weekend was certainly having Jim Steinmeyer as our Guest of Honor. Jim was very gracious and extremely generous with his time. His talk and interview will long be remembered. For more details and photos of the weekend, be sure to read Nick Miller's Yankee Gathering 2022 Recap.

This issue we also have two great feature articles. The first is our cover story featuring a man who is focused on sharing his knowledge of apparatus magic. Todd Harris gives us a peek into a very special place. In this issue, Todd opens the door to "The Magic Attic" and lets us have a peek into the treasures contained there.

In the other feature article, our editor, Patrick Lusch, explores the history of one of the major manufacturers of fine magic apparatus, the Milson-Worth Company. Patrick talks with Lyn Johnson, the son of the founder of Milson-Worth and the current owner of the company. The article includes much insight into the company's early days as well as a detailed listing of former and current Milson-Worth products. As a collector and/or historian, you don't want to overlook this article.

Additionally, you will find some recurring features. Ray Ricard shares some resources, old and new, that will interest many of you who collect books, bookplates and much more. There are highlights from some of the auctions that took place recently, listings of online collecting resources and upcoming events, and another puzzle to test your knowledge of collectible magic apparatus.

I think there is something for everyone here. So, sit back with your favorite holiday beverage and enjoy the latest *Discoveries*!

We here at NEMCA wish you and yours a very safe, healthy, and happy holiday season. ♦



Book and Collecting Announcements

Ray Ricard, NEMCA Member & Magic Book Expert

As stated in my first column, my sole purpose in writing this every issue is to inform the collecting fraternity of new titles concerning magic history as they become available. Too often, I have learned of new books being published in our field after they have sold out or were now available at twice the price. The following list comprises titles that I have seen and for the most part acquired. Serious collectors have many avenues to purchasing these titles but often the easiest way is directly from the author themselves. Most will inscribe a personal message to you if desired. Anyone interested in knowing more about the titles listed is welcome to email me at rricard264@aol.com. Likewise, if you have written a new work that you want mentioned here please send me an email, or better yet, a review copy. Happy collecting.

Behnke, Leo. "Taylor-Made Magic". ¼ Calf. Deluxe edition. 273pp. Frontis., and other illus. Las Vegas, NV: The Book Group, 2022. Limited to 150 deluxe copies. A trade issue is also available. An excellent biography of Taylor and available through Leo Behnke (pictured bottom left).

Caveney, Mike. "Sawing". Cl. Dj. Slipcase. 437pp. Colored plates. Pasadena, CA: Mike Caveney's Magic Words, 2021. Limited to 100 copies. Available from Mike Caveney. A well produced volume on the history of sawing.

Dawes, Edwin. "The Rich Cabinet Collection". Volumes 1 & 2 are available so far. 798pp and counting. Canada: Magicana, 2022. Limited to 250 sets. If you buy nothing else this year, make sure you acquire these. Well written and produced with an eventual production of 8 volumes plus index with over 500 essays. You can order through magicana.com.

Forte, Steve. "Gambling Collectibles". Gilt leatherette. 665pp. Illus. Author, 2022. Available with other titles by the author from his website. A well written history of gambling collectible material including books.



Fury, Sam. "Famous Magicians in History". HB. 100pp. Illus. SF Nonfiction Books, 2022. Basic history of magic up to David Blaine. Available from Amazon or Barnes and Noble.

Huber, Volker. "Bibliographie des Deutschsprachigen Schrifttums zur Zauberkunst". HB. 675pp. Colored plates. Germany: Volker Huber, 2019. 300 copies produced. The definitive bibliography of German conjuring books with colored plates. I mention this now because many seemed to have missed this title when it came out.

Jay, Ricky. "Exemplars from the Ricky Jay Collection". Blue gilt cl. Slipcase. 315pp. Illus. NY: Conjuring Arts, 2021. Limited to 1000 copies. Worth purchasing for the wealth of material contained within. Check with the Conjuring Arts Society for availability.

Schmitz, Bernhard. "Magic Bookplates". Full leather. 483pp. Colored illus. Germany: Remscheid, 2022. Limited to 300 copies with 50 deluxe copies. Available from the author. If you collect bookplates this volume is a must.

Treece, Philip David. "Ellisdon's the History". Volumes 1 & 2. Pictorial stiff brds. Dj. Slipcase. England: Collecting Magic Books, 2021 & 2022. Limited to 100 copies and available from collecting-magicbooks.com. ♦

"The Magic Attic" - New Life for Old Apparatus!

Patrick Lusch, "Discoveries" Editor

What comes to mind when you hear the word attic? For some people, Clark W. Griswold trapped for hours while the rest of the family shops. For others, visions of a dark and oft-forgotten storage space above the living quarters of a home come to mind. A thin layer of dust covering decades of treasures long since forgotten. Perhaps the remnants of a small critter or bird infestation are visible. But in most cases, the attic is a place where "stuff" is placed to slowly fade away into our memory. In this article I'd like to introduce NEMCA members to my friend, who is working hard to change that image of the proverbial "attic". Meet Todd Harris, curator of "The Magic Attic". No, this isn't a dusty corner of Todd's house, but rather a vibrant and growing community of magic history aficionados.

A life-long New Yorker, Todd was blessed to have parents who supported his magical interests as a young boy. Todd's mom was a puppeteer and a theater director in Manhattan. From an early age he was encouraged to perform, taking his interests and cues from comic books and magazines. Todd vividly remembers advertisements from the Johnson Smith Company for magic tricks. For his seventh birthday, Todd received a magic kit, not unlike the kits that most of us started out with. I saw a twinkle appear in Todd's eye as he fondly recalled Brodien's "Magic TV Cards" in the kit.

The influence of the Harris family matriarch was not lost on Todd. His mother's theater, *The Theater of the Changing Space*, gave him the opportunity for a life-changing event that would propel his magic interests. Interestingly enough, the theater was originally due to be called "Pandora's Box", until Mrs. Harris learned of the "alternative" meaning! Adjacent to *The Theater of the Changing Space* was *The Impossible Ragtime Theater*. It was the Spring of 1977, and Doug Henning hosted his 30th birthday at the *Ragtime*. Todd, as a teenager, was fortunate to meet Doug. The rest, shall we say, is history.

All magicians needed a table to perform from, and Todd had set his eyes on UF Grant's "Dragon Night Time Table". He soon began performing magic for birthday parties with his best friend. Their opening act utilized a metal "Vanishing Cane" and "Appearing Cane" simultaneously! On one end of the set, a cane would vanish from Todd's hands while simultaneously appearing in the hands of his co-performer. The effect was magnificent. To the audience, the canes transported from person to person in front of their eyes. A similar routine was performed by the duo utilizing the *Passé Passé* bottles.

Reminiscing about the apparatus of his youth, Todd recalled that all of his purchases were made at Tannen's Magic, then located on 42nd Street. He quickly grew his repertoire to include dove magic and until the age of fourteen, performed regularly at birthdays, holidays, and family gatherings. Around the age of fourteen, Todd came to feel that magic wasn't inherently difficult, and his interests shifted to something he felt might become a stable career. So, what did Todd do? Joined a band of course! His older brother, Craig, played the guitar...a skill Todd admired greatly. He took up electric bass guitar and played and sang in bands from age sixteen until just a few years ago when COVID-19 sidelined his band, "The B Side Bandits".



Putting magic aside after high school, Todd went to Berklee College of Music and majored in Recording Engineering with a minor in Electric Bass. He dreamed of becoming a recording engineer. As often happens, best laid plans change, and Todd became a math and computer science teacher. Later, he became a teacher trainer in New York City and went on to become the Director of Technology for several school districts on Long Island. Todd also served as an Adjunct Professor at Queens College, teaching school administrators how to effectively implement technology. After 30 years of educating, he retired in 2016.

Like so many others I've met in the last few years who had to put their magic interests on the back burner of life, the pandemic reignited Todd's passion for magic. COVID put a damper on his band performances. He took out his collection of dozens of magic props and asked himself "what am I going to do with these things"?

Reflecting on a memory of long ago when Todd wanted to perform for his own daughter's 5th birthday, he discovered he needed to replace his Bob Kline "Doves on a Perch" prop.

He managed to get in touch with Gale Molovinsky who introduced him to the New England Magic Collectors Association. Until this time, Todd had no idea that such a robust magic collector community existed. Todd soon discovered David Sandy and Lance Rich's weekly *Magic Collector's Corner* on Facebook. A fan favorite feature of MCC episodes is a segment called Speed Share. This provides participants an opportunity to share with all attendees an item of magic history or a piece of apparatus related to the overall topic for that week's episode. Todd recognized that almost all of the participants in Speed Shares simply *showed* their props. Todd decided to *perform* his instead. This innocent action turned out to be the dawn of *The Magic Attic*!

Not only is performance important to Todd, but he has an insatiable appetite for learning the history of the manufacturer. For years, it bothered him that he could not identify who made certain pieces of apparatus he owned. For example, he has a Jack Hughes "Doves Through Glass". It was often confused with being an Abbott's-made prop before he finally learned of the Jack Hughes make. Flashing back to the 1970's, Todd recalled seeing a prop way at the top of Tannen's shelves. It was too expensive to be taken down and shown to a young budding magician. He was curious about it, but never got to handle the top-shelf prop. He had read about this item



in Tannen's catalogs. It was called the "Musical Dove Chalet". It can be found in advertisements from the 1971 Tannen's



catalog, but Tannen's carried them as early as 1964. As a dove performer, Todd recalled wanting this item badly. However, it would not be until just six years ago that he would acquire an example. Supreme Magic of England and Louis Tannen's both sold them, but it turns out they didn't make them! After corresponding with Ian Adair, Todd learned that the "Musical Dove Chalet" prop was manufactured by magician Peter Quins-ee of Cam-Trix. Peter was a full-time dealer all of his life and a very good maker of magical props. CAM stood for Cambridge (England), where his shop was located.

In 2021, Todd was awarded the Ray and Ann Goulet Magic History Award and Scholarship. Todd is currently a student at the McBride Mystery School of Magic, and credits Jeff McBride for much of his new-found success. Several of Todd's videos have been featured on McBride's Mystery Monday Broadcasts and Todd recently hosted an hour long segment on prop building and restoration featuring Lupe Nielsen, Michael Baker, Bill Schmeelk and Paul Lembo.

Another item in *The Magic Attic* is the "Sensational Rabbit Vanish", by Milson-Worth. As you may know, Milson-Worth manufactured very few of their own creations. This item was first put out in the 1940's by Tiny Grant. During the pandemic, Todd apprenticed with Bill Schmeelk at Wellington Enterprises where he acquired a broken example of Grant's prop. Offering to sweep floors, pack shipping boxes, and answer phones, Todd hoped to learn from Bill the techniques for building and repairing magic apparatus.

Invited by Dan Stapleton to speak at the Magic Collector's Conference in Florida in 2021, Todd presented on the history of magic collecting. It was here that he would meet Paul Lembo. He traveled to Lembo's shop and took a masterclass in prop building and repair. Quoting Lembo, Todd says "if a person built it, a person can fix it!" Not lost on Todd are the importance of the modern-day master craftsmen of the magic community. Specifically, he commented on the remarkable work of Michael Baker. He had acquired an incomplete Thayer "Temple of Quong-Hi", which he challenged Michael to reimagine into a new prop. Since Todd only had the cabinet, Baker came up with a new routine using colorful tea boxes and a re-imagined patter. What Todd really enjoys is taking a rarely seen old prop and performing it with a new modern-day patter. All props become new again when changed to reflect relevance to modern times.



The mission and the purpose of *The Magic Attic* is simple: It aims to promote and preserve the art and history of stage and parlor magic through performance, videos, imagery and research. The group has over one hundred videos, with new videos being added each month. Each video focuses on one prop or piece of apparatus covering it's history, when it first appeared, who made it, and what variations it came in. Todd has also created videos about prop care and restoration, with additional videos planned.

Additionally, *The Magic Attic* also plans to provide more histories of parlor and stage magicians as part of the mix. It's important to Todd that these videos properly credit those who gave us such amazing apparatus, all without revealing the methods!

In just over a year and a half, *The Magic Attic* Facebook group has swelled to over 3,500 members. Through his efforts, Todd has connected with Domenico Dante (maker of the "Sword of Monte Cristo"), Michael Baker, Lupe Nielsen, Bill Schmeelk, Paul Lembo, John Henley, and other magic luminaries. *The Magic Attic* recently featured magic from the Inzani-Henley Magic Company, Ltd. who used 8mm film to create "silent salesman" type videos to demonstrate their props. Todd is unaware of any other magic company doing this in the early 1960's. Inzani-Henley was a manufacturer and importer/exporter of very high quality props. Their one and only catalog, published in 1966, contained one hundred thirty-two pages. Despite having an index, Henley chose to print the page numbers on the inside margin of each page, closest to the binding. This was done to force the reader to open each page fully and become immersed in the pictures and descriptions of their apparatus. The pictures were professionally drawn by Ali Bongo, who accurately detailed every prop offered.

A current research mission of *The Magic Attic* involves the magic of the Resor Company, founded by Richard Resor. Resor produced magic from the 1940's until around 1970. Resor published one catalog and also advertised in *The Linking Ring*. *The Magic Attic* collection contains two pieces of Resor apparatus. Resor apparatus is extremely difficult to find, and they are very unique. If you or someone you know owns apparatus by Richard Resor, please share details with *The Magic Attic* so it can be preserved. Todd is convinced that magicians out there own Resor items, but they don't know what they have! George Robinson of Viking Magic featured his Resor collection on Phil Schwartz's Thayer Magic website (thayermagic.ning.com).



I asked Todd to choose just two pieces of apparatus in his collection that speak the most to him, above and beyond all others. Without a second of hesitation, Todd settled on "Hand in Hand" (shown at left) a wrist chopper guillotine effect by Jack Hughes. Todd loves the artwork, and thanked Gale Molovinsky for this 1960's effect. According to Todd, it's a very innovative prop. Most other guillotine style effects look scary or mundane, and this effect bucks that trend.

The other item he picked is "Return to Karnac" (shown at right), an Egyptian-themed transposition style effect by Gene Morrell from the late 1940's. The lithography, just like Homer Hudson's, is amazing. Less than 15 of these props were likely made and even FEWER have survived time. Todd's been able to identify the locations of about six so far.



In order to end up in *The Magic Attic* collection, a prop has to meet three strict requirements: First, the apparatus has to be something Todd would use in a performance. No shelf decorations allowed! Second, the piece has to be inviting. It must cause someone to look at it and wonder what it does. Decoration and imagery are very important. And lastly, the apparatus must speak for itself during a performance. The audience must know what is happening when the apparatus is used, and there must be no long explanations needed, as is often the case with card tricks.

The Magic Attic is not in the selling business. Although Todd loves to help people find and repair apparatus, his true goal is to educate and inspire. He also hopes to bring content to those interested in the arts of prop construction and restoration. As a lifetime educator, this is Todd's passion. He enjoys gifting magic and giving back to the community. In fact, I received a wonderful surprise of Thayer Magic ephemera (my personal favorite manufacturer) in the mail from Todd earlier this year, with the instruction to read it, study it, research it and learn from it!

I'll close this article with a challenge from *The Magic Attic*: If you have magic "things" lying around, Todd challenges collectors to pay it forward. Pass along unused items collecting dust to someone who can learn from and become inspired by them, especially a young student of magic just starting out. Apparatus sitting on shelves is dead magic! Take your props down, dust them off, perform them, and bring them back to life! ♦

"Apparatus sitting on shelves is dead magic! Take your props down, dust them off, perform them, and bring them back to life!"

Milson-Worth: "Quality Magic for the Sophisticated Magician"

Patrick Lusch, "Discoveries" Editor



MILSON-WORTH

making high quality coin magic. The company was wildly successful, and quickly became the standard of excellence for coin magic around the world. The company grew larger than Charles envisioned, and he sold it to Sam LaPorte who continued developing and expanding on the high standard set by Charles. Charles, now retired from magic, couldn't stay retired for long. With a strong business acumen, he began making close-up magic apparatus again. This time, it was marketed under the name Milson Magic.

Around the same time, a man by the name of Jim Simon was manufacturing quality wooden apparatus in Texas. Jim had come from Minnesota and settled in Fort Worth, Texas. Much of his apparatus was sold to Joe Berg of the National Magic Company. When Berg sold National Magic in Chicago and relocated to the Los Angeles area, he convinced Jim Simon that business was better in California for the magic trade. Simon moved to the Sun Valley, California area and re-established his presence under the name Worth Magic Novelty Company, an homage to his former home of Fort Worth. He would soon engage the services of Eric Lewis, a well known inventor and magician. Lewis would bring an important detail to



Worth...occasional decorations using varnish transfers by the long defunct L.C. Wells company of Germany. These transfers were made in the 1920's, and Lewis owned a quantity of them which were used to decorate a small number of Worth items. Most often, Worth (and subsequently Milson-Worth) used decals made by the Meyercord Co, also defunct. Milson-Worth now makes their own decals in-house.

By profession, Jim Simon was a sign painter and gold-leaf specialist. Most Worth items were hand-striped and can often be recognized from a distinctive green pinstripe. The two would continue to build magic here until Jim's death in 1974.

Coincidentally, in 1974, Charles Johnson also passed away, and control of his Milson Magic passed to his son, Lyn. For those of us who have lost a parent, we know how difficult and taxing the closure of an estate can be. This, made more complicated by the fact that Charles passed away with unfulfilled orders from Milson Magic. Lyn promised himself he would finish his father's work, as many of Charles' customers found themselves in a bind with no other way to get the apparatus they needed. Despite being an aerospace engineer with Lockheed and with an established career track of his own, Lyn made a go at completing the outstanding orders. Lyn used existing stock already on hand, and the completed products turned out remarkably well. (continued page 14)





"Wholesale Manufacturers of Quality Magic"

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WHOLESALE PRICE LIST

MAY 1, 1974

PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT NOTICE

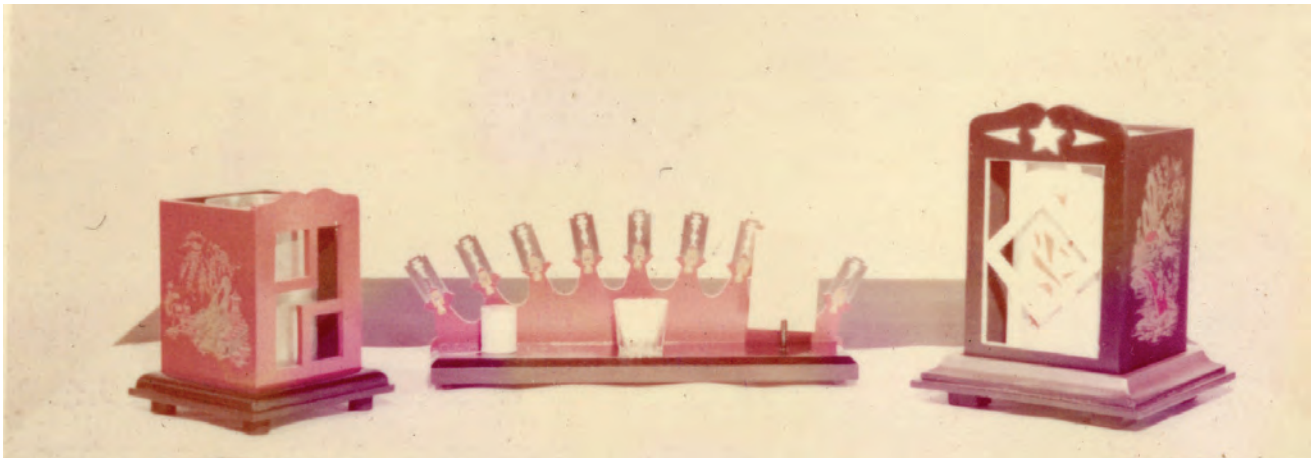
| | <u>WHOLESALE</u> |
|---|--------------------|
| "FLASH" LIVESTOCK VANISH | \$21.50 |
| "FLASH" LIVESTOCK APPEAR | \$21.50 |
| FLIP-OVER BOX (Large size/piano hinged) | \$21.50 |
| FLIP-OVER BOX (One dove/piano hinged) | \$14.50 |
| "Giant" SQUARED CIRCLE (18" High) | \$35.00 |
| LARGE SQUARED CIRCLE (8-1/2" High) | \$11.00 |
| SMALL SQUARED CIRCLE (6-1/2" High) | \$ 8.50 |
| SILK CABBY BOX (Will not stick) | \$12.50 |
| BLOCK-O | \$ 9.25 |
| SUCKER DIE BOX Piano Hinges 2-1/2" Die | \$14.50 |
| BLOK-KORD | \$ 3.50 |
| BALLOON TO BUNNY APPEAR (Lightning fast) Chinese Pagoda Front | \$44.50 |
| CHINESE FLAME CLOCK (Beautiful Prop) | \$37.50 |
| ASTRO-BALL CABINET (Can be inspected) Sponge rubber ball passes from bottom of cabinet into a cocktail glass. | \$14.50 |
| DRAWER BOX (Beautiful/holds large load) Small black walnut | \$34.00 \$29.50 |
| HONG-KONG PIGEON PRODUCTION (Table Model (Visible)) | \$41.50 |
| Tiny Grant's SENSATIONAL RABBIT VANISH | \$37.50 |
| THE FINAL CARD (The last of 16 cards is yours) | \$13.50 |
| CURIOUS CUBES (One of the best sellers in 1970) | \$27.50 |



WHOLESALE PRICE LIST (Cont'd.)

| | <u>WHOLESALE</u> |
|--|----------------------|
| ROYALE BLOCK RELEASE (Rope is released from solid block) | \$ 29.50 |
| FANTASTIC FRAME (Silks appear on rod after being vanished) | \$ 27.50 |
| MAGIC CARD FRAME (Fine demonstrator) | \$ 39.50 doz. |
| COLOR CUBE RELEASE (Two selected cubes release from rod; 4 other stay) | \$ 12.00 |
| FAMOUS SQUEEZE-AWAY BLOCK (3" cube; off market for a long time) | \$ 27.50 |
| QUADRICTION (The finest prediction effect made today) | \$ 22.50 |
| | |
| TABLE TOPS (Black Velvet Covered/Gold Silk Fringe) | |
| 16" x 16" (Plain) | \$ 12.50 |
| 16" x 16" (One Well) | \$ 14.00 |
| 16" x 20" (Plain) | \$ 13.50 |
| 16" x 20" (One Well) | \$ 14.50 |
| 16" x 20" (Two Well) | \$ 16.15 |
| 16" x 24" (Two Well) | \$ 17.50 |
| | |
| DOLL HOUSE ILLUSION (Hand Painted) With Packing Case | \$225.00 \$260.00 |

WE ALSO MANUFACTURE CUSTOM BUILT ILLUSIONS TO ORDER
DEALERS WILL BE NOTIFIED AS NEW EFFECTS ARE MANUFACTURED



Photos of Worth Magic Novelty Company Apparatus, circa 1970's. Jim Simon at top left with doll house illusion.

JOHNSON PRODUCTS LINE

Effective July 1, 1970

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. MAGNA COIN BOX\$17.50 A beautiful, solid brass Coin Box complete with two gimmicked Kennedy Halves, magnetic leather pad and audience tested routine. | 20. HALF AND 20 CENTAVO\$12.50 A Mexican 20 Centavo coin and a Kennedy Half are placed in SPECTATOR'S hand. The copper coin changes to a quarter. |
| 2. MAGNA CAP\$10.00 The modern "Cap and Pence" using Kennedy half dollars. | 21. ULTIMATE SILVER AND COPPER\$15.00 Probably the most baffling Silver/Copper Transposition we have ever developed! DON'T MISS THIS ONE. |
| 3. MAGNA CUP\$10.00 Four Kennedy Halves and an English Penny penetrate Cup and Handkerchief. | 22. MAGNETIC SILVER AND COPPER\$17.50 It's different! A Magnetic Silver/Copper coin, a Kennedy Shell with steel insert, 2 prepared English Pennies and instructions for four excellent routines. |
| 4. ORIGINAL JO-PRO BOX\$19.50 A thin walled light weight Okito Type Box which, though gimmicked, will stand close examination. Includes a genuine magnetic Kennedy Half and "Special" playing card. If you have a Magnetic Half, order Jo-Pro Box only at \$10.00. | 23. HOPPING HALF\$17.50 A total of 5 gimmicked coins — professionally routined and a proven audience pleaser. |
| 5. QUARTER BOX Set\$15.00 A tip-top Okito Box routine using three quarter size boxes. Spectators are aware of only one. | 24. J. G. THOMPSON COIN\$ 6.50 Routined exclusively for us by the famous J. G. Thompson — need we say more. For use only with our Magna Coin Box. |
| 6. JARDEN ELLIS RING\$ 7.50 Perfectly fitted and balanced for the professional performer. NOTE: All of the above items are machined from solid brass bar stock insuring a lifetime of satisfactory service. | 25. COPPER or SILVER THROUGH THE TABLE\$17.50 A positive winner designed and routined by Sheldon Atterbury, our Staff Magician who also originated our Ultimate Silver and Copper, the Jo-Pro Box, the Quarter Attraction and others. |
| 7. DOLLAR THIRTY-FIVE TRICK\$12.50 Many of you have seen this one, but you have never seen the equal of ours! | 26. NEST O'HALVES\$19.50 Surprising bare hand production of four Kennedy Halves. Matching Half included. |
| 8. LEVER ACTION DOLLAR THIRTY-FIVE TRICK (LOCKING TYPE)\$15.00 At conclusion of routine, coins nest and lock so perfectly that the "Half Dollar" may be safely passed out for examination. | 27. OUR FAMOUS COIN PRODUCTION EXTRAVAGANZA\$75.00 A bare hand production of 5 Silver Dollars, 2 Kennedy Halves, a Quarter and a Dime. An attractive 15" clear plastic rack is included. A sensational closing number for the professional performer. |
| 9. TWO EIGHTY-FIVE TRICK\$19.50 Similar to the Dollar Thirty-Five but made from two Silver Dollars, a Kennedy Half, a Quarter and a Dime. | NOTE: The following items are offered as props only without instructions except as noted. |
| 10. LEVER ACTION TWO-EIGHTY-FIVE TRICK\$22.50 Same locking action as the Lever Action Dollar Thirty-Five but using the same coins as above. | 28. STRETCHED SILVER DOLLAR\$17.50 |
| 11. QUARTER TO HALF ILLUSION\$ 7.50 Simply snap your fingers and a quarter instantly becomes a Kennedy Half. | 29. STRETCHED KENNEDY HALF\$12.50 |
| 12. STACK OF QUARTERS\$11.50 Precision machined from bright, new quarters and including the very necessary Leather Cone at no extra charge. | 30. STRETCHED SILVER QUARTER\$ 9.50 |
| 13. STACK OF HALVES\$15.00 Same as above except made from halves. Leather Cone included. | 31. STRETCHED ENGLISH PENNY (Natural E/P incl.) \$ 5.00 |
| 14. DIME AND PENNY\$ 2.00 Precision machined from all new coins. | 32. STEEL CORE KENNEDY HALF\$ 6.00 |
| 15. TWENTY-ONE CENT TRICK\$ 4.00 16c vanishes completely then — "Magically" — reappears under your handkerchief. | 33. STEEL CORE ENGLISH PENNY\$ 5.00 |
| 16. QUARTER ATTRACTION\$10.00 Two quarters pass through table. This is a four coin set — beautifully constructed and beautifully routined. | 34. MAGNETIC KENNEDY HALF\$12.50 |
| 17. KENNEDY HALF TO LINCOLN CENT\$15.00 Kennedy Half mysteriously changes to a Lincoln Cent. This routine has been audience tested and is definitely a winner. | 35. MAGNETIC QUARTER\$ 9.50 |
| 18. KENNEDY HALF TO PAPER DOLLAR\$15.00 Two Kennedy Halves are shown, one is removed and the remaining one changes to a Dollar Bill. | 36. MAGNETIC NICKEL\$ 7.50 |
| 19. TWO COPPER AND ONE SILVER\$15.00 One of our most popular numbers. A truly amazing set of prepared coins — both copper and Kennedy Halves. | 37. MAGNETIC ENGLISH PENNY\$10.00 |
| | 38. CHINATOWN QUARTER (Routine Included)\$ 5.00 |
| | 39. FOLDING HALF — REGULAR\$ 4.50 |
| | 40. FOLDING HALF — PROFILE CUT\$ 5.00 |
| | 41. 2-HEADED or 2-TAILED HALF\$ 4.00 |
| | 42. 2-HEADED or 2-TAILED QUARTER\$ 3.25 |
| | 43. 2-HEADED PENNY\$ 1.75 |
| | 44. HOOKED KENNEDY HALF\$ 2.00 |
| | 45. SHELL HALF with MATCHING INSERT\$ 7.50 |
| | 46. COINS for GOSHMAN'S SUN and MOON\$10.00 For Routine see "Modern Coin Magic" by J. B. Bobo |
| | 47. COPPER/SILVER COINS (KENNEDY/ENGLISH PENNY)\$ 4.00 |
| | 48. COPPER/SILVER COINS (SILVER DOLLAR/TEXAS PENNY) (Routine Included)\$15.00 |
| | 49. MATCHING SILVER KENNEDY HALVES\$ 1.50 |
| | 50. MATCHING ENGLISH PENNIES\$.50 |

Our Guarantee:

If our products do not meet with your expectations simply return them via insured mail within 10 days of receipt. Your money will be immediately refunded.

Johnson Products Price List, July 1, 1970

Milson-Worth Collector's Checklist

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Absconding Queen | Gold Coins |
| Accessory Case | Handkerchief Box |
| Astro-Ball Cabinet | Hong Kong Dove Production |
| Backstage Vanish | Jumbo Drawer Box |
| Balloon to Bunny | Light Bulb Penetration |
| Bill Tube | Lippincott Quarter-Go |
| Birds of Burma | Locking Card Case |
| Block Penetration | Magic Card Frame |
| Block-O | Mental Die |
| Blok-Kord | Mephisto Dice Tube |
| Cabala | Mignon Cabinet |
| Candy-N-Silks | Multiplying Candles |
| Card Ejector | Orange Box (Elegant Production Box) |
| Card Guillotine | Quadriction |
| Card in Balloon | Razor Blade Mystery |
| Changing Canister (Niffen) | Sand Frame |
| Chinese Flame Clock | Satyr's Slate |
| Ching Soo Firecracker | Sensational Rabbit Vanish (Disintegrator) |
| Circus Wagon | Silk Cabby |
| Coin of the Realm | Silver Meteor Vanishing Birdcage |
| Coin Well | Squared Circle |
| Color Cube Release | Squeeze-Away Block |
| Curious Cubes | Top Banana |
| Die Box | Transcendental Half (Trap Door) |
| Double Bill Tube | TV Card Frame |
| Double Load Pagoda | Ultimate Drawer Box |
| Double Locking Slate | Ultra Candle Tube |
| Dove Tray | Vanishing Birdcage |
| Drawer Box | Wands, Magic |
| Drop Side Production Box | Wizard's Wand |
| Exchange Case | Wrist Chopper |
| Fantastic Frame | <p><i>Note:</i></p> <p><i>Some items were made exclusively by Milson, some exclusively by Worth, and the majority by Milson-Worth.</i></p> <p><i>Many effects were produced in a number of different styles, paints, and decoration varieties.</i></p> <p><i>Additionally, Milson-Worth produced special custom-made and one-of-a-kind items, which are not included in this list.</i></p> |
| Final Card | |
| Flash Livestock Appear | |
| Flash Livestock Vanish | |
| Flip-Over Box | |
| Glass Penetration | |
| Glass Through Hat | |



As Lyn worked to finish the outstanding orders, new orders came in just as fast. So Lyn filled them. And still more orders came in, and those were filled as well. But one routine visit to Hollywood Magic would solidify Lyn Johnson's name in the annals of magic history.

Louis St. Pierre's store, Hollywood Magic, was a regular dealer of Worth Magic. While Lyn was delivering recently completed orders to the store one day, St. Pierre asked him if he had heard about the recent passing of Jim Simon. Lyn had not heard, and was also informed by St. Pierre that Simon's son was trying to sell Worth Magic Novelty Company. As fate would have it, it was the perfect match. Simon's Worth Magic shop was located close to Lockheed Aircraft Company in Burbank, and Lyn was now deeply involved in creating and building magic props. He made the plunge and purchased the business. It included a full line of magic apparatus, a complete workshop, a paint spray booth, and all the tooling and woodworking materials needed for apparatus of the highest caliber. The two businesses were merged, and Milson-Worth was born.

At the time of the merger, Simon's Worth Magic was almost exclusively selling to magic shops around the country on a wholesale model. Lyn attempted to follow this model (assuming that Simon must have known what he was doing!) and because he was working full

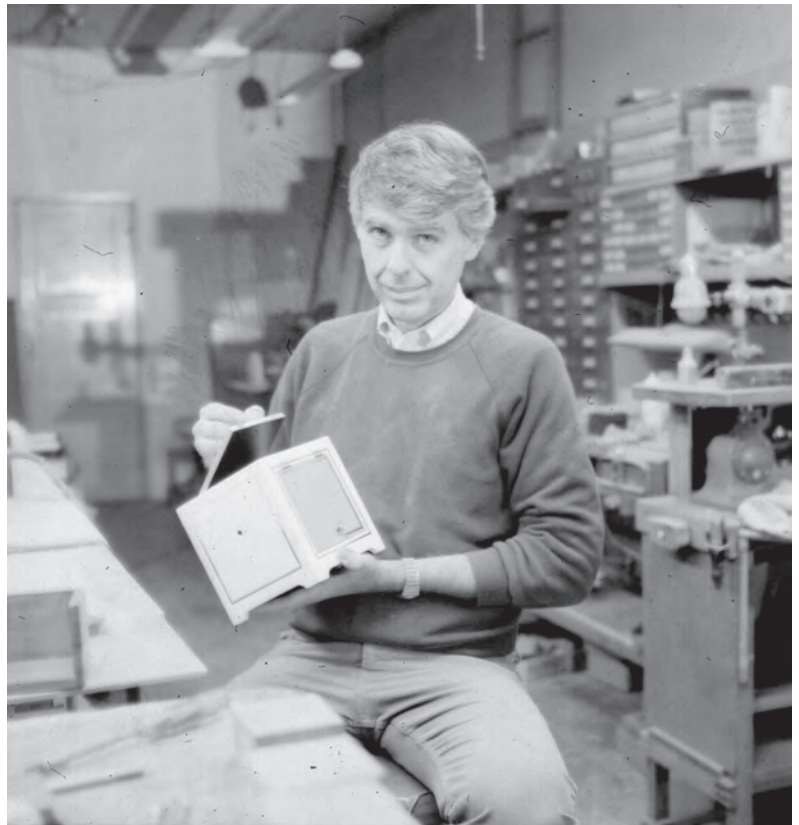
time at Lockheed, he hired a staff of employees to work at the shop including a shop foreman. Lyn quickly realized it was very difficult to turn a profit and simultaneously turn out apparatus of the quality he desired. Magic shops were very reluctant to pay for quality magic. In fact, Louis St. Pierre told Lyn if Milson-Worth started making magic of collector quality, Hollywood Magic would stop doing business with him.

Lyn realized his new business wasn't going to make money, and he was forced to let employees go. He retooled the business and changed the model to where he could build *what* he wanted *when* he wanted. He stopped selling wholesale to stores, and became a mail order "on-demand" business.

One might wonder: how does an aerospace engineer become successful running a magic apparatus company with no prior experience? Turns out that Lyn wasn't quite a stranger to woodworking after all. Lyn had built a wooden boat years prior, and had a co-worker friend at Lockheed who was a skilled woodworker. They initially worked together at Milson-Worth but other priorities took over and put an end to a short one-year partnership leaving Lyn back at the helm solo.

Milson-Worth put out a total of three catalogs. All catalogs contained black and white photos and highlighted the most well-known and popular pieces of apparatus.

Catalog #1 was published in 1977 and had a blue cover with white printing. Catalog #2 was published in 1979 and contained 24 pages. It has a distinctive white cover with the blue Milson-Worth logo prominently displayed. The third and final catalog, #3 was published in the early 1980's. There were two printings: a first printing with a sepia cover and a second printing with a blue cover with images of the apparatus all over. It contained 36 pages.





Additional advertisement prints were placed in Genii Magazine.

Today, about 99% of the Milson-Worth magic line remains available...with two caveats: the right price and the right time. Milson-Worth apparatus ordered today will be significantly more expensive, and will take considerably longer to deliver, than it did 40 years ago. That said, I can guarantee there will be no finer quality available anywhere.

Lyn doesn't get too many requests for a number of the older products. Magicians and collectors ordering from him today have interests in the later items. Newer items like the famous "Absconding Queen" remain incredibly popular, as well as the "Chinese Flame Clock" of which Lyn currently has several orders for in the queue. The Drop Side Production Cabinet and the Oriental Die Box are also among the most popular items.

When I asked Lyn what the future holds for him and Milson-Worth, he quickly answered "retirement", although he promptly added that he has no plans to do so. Lyn recognizes that box magic, parlor magic, and wooden apparatus are going out of fashion. As Lyn remarked,

"new kids in magic don't use it."

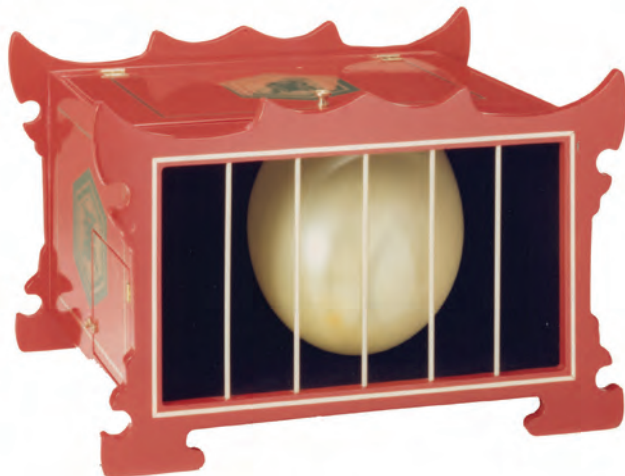
Lyn's favorite piece of apparatus to make, despite an extremely limited production run, is the "Pillar of the Magi". He has the ambition to make at least one more, with the exterior styled in the Second Empire period in which Robert-Houdin would have first invented it. Lyn continues his search for authentic decorations used at that time.

While Lyn continues to write what arguably might be the final chapters of Milson-Worth's production days, one thing remains certain. Milson-Worth apparatus will continue to remain highly desirable among collectors, and will be forever revered as one of the highest quality manufacturers of the 20th century. ♦

Author's Note: I remain indebted to Lyn for his willingness to participate in my phone interview, multiple back and forth emails, and my insistence on capturing the Milson-Worth story. Lyn was gracious enough to ship me a box of photos, negatives, and historical documents from Worth, Milson, Johnson and Milson-Worth. It is my hope that the hundreds of photos not used in this article will form the basis for a more detailed and in-depth work on the history of this amazing company in the near future. Thank you, Lyn, for all you've done for the magic community.



Photos: Lyn at Work (Previous Page and Top Left), Pillar of the Magi (Middle Right), Balloon to Bunny (Bottom Left), Elegant Production Box (aka Orange Box) (Below Right).



MEPHISTO'S DICE TUBE



A beautiful, square Hardwood Tube with polished copper ornament and 3/4 inch "gimmicked" dice.

Tube is stood on end & the colored dice are dropped in. The WHITE die is dropped in on top of the COLORED dice but when the Tube is lifted it is found that the dice have now changed positions - the white die having penetrated the colored dice appears at the bottom of the stack with the colored dice on top!

A second effect is described in our instructions and at the end you are left clean.

The dice may be passed for inspection and the Tube clearly shown to be hollow with no pins nor other obstructions.

\$17.50

Magic by MILSON



P.O. BOX 545
MONROVIA, CALIF. 91016

Inasmuch as the instructions that accompany a trick contain its secret and are therefore the most valuable part of the trick - most Magician's Supply Houses feel that after the instructions have been read the secret cannot be returned and therefore take the position that all sales are final.

On the other hand we at Milson feel that when a buyer is asked to send money for merchandise he has never seen to people whom he does not know, that the buyer should be allowed to judge for himself whether or not he has received his money's worth.

Therefore examine and use anything that you buy from us for a full week. If at the end of that time you are not fully satisfied, simply return the item to us - undamaged - and your money will be immediately refunded.

The SIDEWINDER



One of the most startling effects on to-day's close-up market:

A precision made mechanism of professional quality with only one moving part - it is simple, sturdy and easy to perform.

The Magician merely draws a RED silk handkerchief thru his closed left fist with his right thumb & forefinger and the handkerchief comes out GREEN - it's as simple as that!

The handkerchief may be immediately passed for examination and both hands shown to be empty.

Another audience tested winner - - - by Milson

\$9.50

The STANPADDES



- Not one but a pair of Paddles -

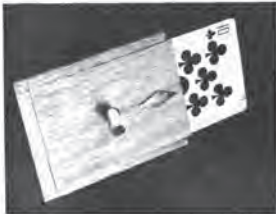
Made of Ebonized Hardwood perfectly proportioned to give the performer the easiest and smoothest "Paddle Move" possible.

One Paddle shows a small playing card on one side and a 1¢ stamp is permanently attached to the other. The second has a magnet recessed into its center and a 1¢ stamp affixed on its side.

Thru an easy fully explained switch the audience is never aware of but one Paddle. However with this combination it is possible for the performer to not only accomplish a wide variety of different transformations but at the conclusion the Paddle accurately predicts a "Freely Selected" card and may then be passed for examination.

\$9.50

CIGARETTE GUILLOTINE



Always ready to perform - nothing to set up or "get ready."

A small Hardwood Frame with removable front cover and a playing card are shown. All three items have a hole in the center. The card is placed in the frame and the cover replaced over the card.

The card is pulled up until the hole in the card may be seen above the top of the frame and the bottom of the card is obviously above the holes in the frame and cover. The Magician now places a cigarette (pencil or rod) halfway through the holes in the frame and cover and slowly pushes the card down to the bottom of the frame.

The card apparently slices through the cigarette on its way down yet when the cover is removed neither card nor cigarette has been damaged. The card and cigarette may be given out for inspection while Magician pockets the frame.

\$12.50

LIPPENCOTT QUARTER GO



A borrowed coin is marked by spectator, placed under a handkerchief and returned to spectator to hold. A small, beautifully made, brass bound and padlocked walnut chest is produced and placed on table. A clear glass tumbler is positioned on top of the chest and the spectator holding the coin is asked to hold handkerchief and coin over the glass. At the Magician's command spectator releases the coin which clinks to the bottom of the glass. The handkerchief is quickly removed but the coin has now vanished. Spectator unlocks chest and inside - miraculously - discovers the coin with his original marking.

Box may be passed for inspection and performer is left clean.

\$15.00

CHINESE DEVIL STICKS



This old stage favorite has been reduced in size and is now available as a close-up "Show Stopper."

Two Ebony-like Hardwood Sticks, 2 1/2 inches long, with turned Delrin Ivory Tips, are joined by colored cords with genuine Chinese Coins serving as pulls. The quality of the material and craftsmanship employed in this item actually qualify it as a collector's piece.

Always popular on stage but when performed "Close-Up"

CHINESE DEVIL STICKS are actually weird.

\$6.75

The SATYR'S SLATE



One of the most popular as well as one of the most startling effects in Close-up Magic.

A small, beautifully made slate is freely shown on both sides and placed on spectator's palm or on table. Magician asks that a card be selected from any deck and shown to audience. The slate is now turned over and - FRESTO - the name of the selected card appears on its surface.

It is completely baffling yet very easy to perform. It is not a flap slate, there is nothing -

to add
to take away
to go wrong
to worry about

It's made to order for the Close-up Performer!

\$12.50

A Milson Magic sales brochure with seven effects shown.



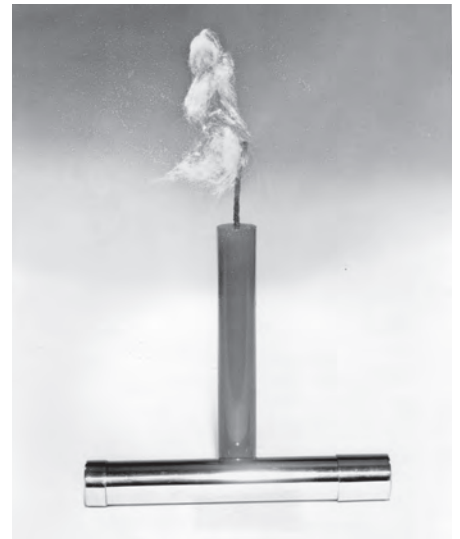
Magician Roland Hill demonstrating the Lightbulb Penetration and the Absconding Queen in Milson-Worth marketing photos.



Top Banana



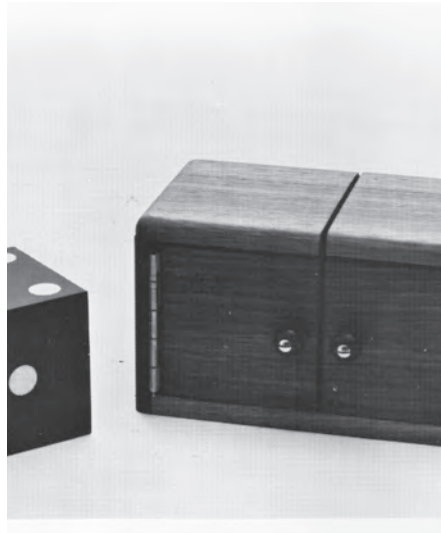
Coin of the Realm



Ching Soo Firecracker



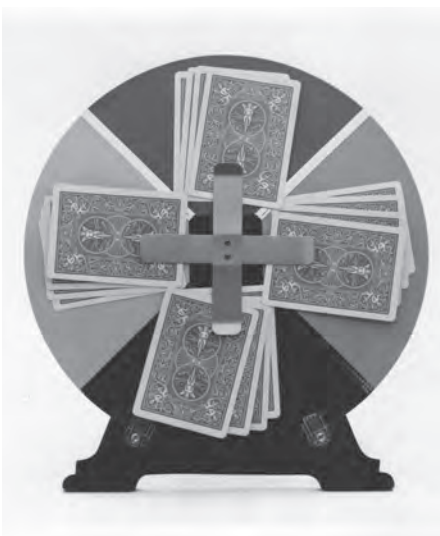
Color Cube Release



Die Box



Cabala



Final Card



Sensational Rabbit Vanish



Satyr's Slate



Square Circle



Block-O



Curious Cubes



TV Card Frame



Chinese Flame Clock



Astro Ball Cabinet



Fantastic Frame



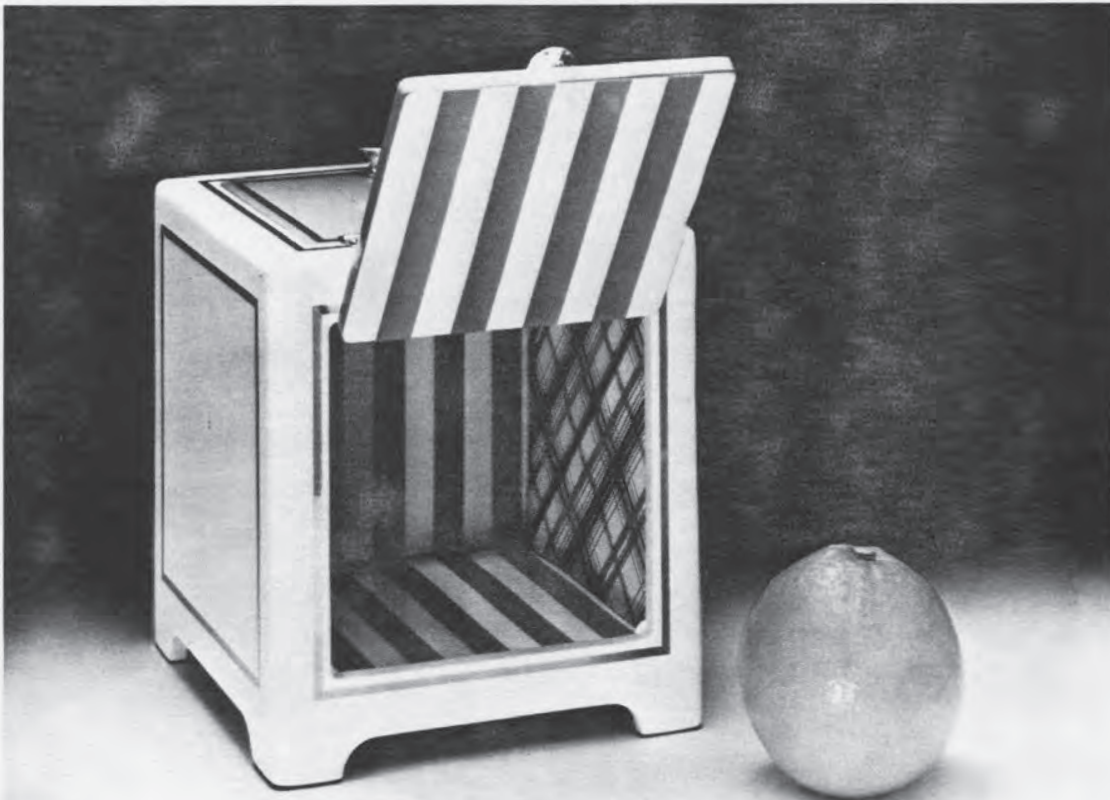
Accessory Case



Absconding Queen



Catalog #2 (1979), with additional product inserts.



THE ELEGANT PRODUCTION BOX FOR SOPHISTICATED MAGICIANS

We've all seen production boxes with black interiors that immediately place audiences on alert. Well, Milson-Worth's Elegant Production box does no such thing – no suspicious black interiors here. Only a completely empty box, (apparently). And you demonstrate this, from all angles. And it's beautiful..!

And with the Elegant Production Box, Milson-Worth provides a dynamite "borrowed-ring-tied-on-a-rope-inside-an-orange" routine that is simply stunning in impact. The effect is so strong that in the recent past we called the Elegant Production Box the Orange Box due to the astounding effect achieved by the use of oranges in the routine.

The "Orange" routine takes practice and dedication, and you might want to select your audience quite carefully, as some people don't appreciate their jewelry with juice. But if your audience wants true

bombshell effects, this will be the one.

And the "Orange" effect comes as a bonus. The Elegant Production Box stands completely on its own as a masterpiece of the magic manufacturer's art, unsurpassed in quality of workmanship and entertainment value.

The Elegant "Orange" Production Box is a performer's delight. The price is \$200, and Milson-Worth pays shipping. Make no mistake. This Elegant Production Box is for the sophisticated magician and serious collector.

MILSON-WORTH MAGIC

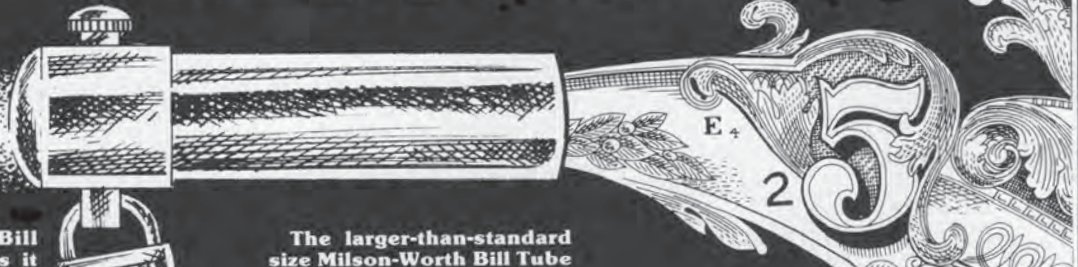
For the Sophisticated Magician and Collector.

8255 San Fernando Road, Sun Valley, CA 91352 818-768-6536

Visa and MasterCard accepted.

Milson-Worth ad copy for the "Elegant Production Box", also known as the "Orange Box".

BILL TUBE



The Milson-Worth Bill Tube... that really says it all! Precision-handcrafted from brass, expertly buffed and polished and sprayed with a protective polyurethane finish, the Milson-Worth Bill Tube captivates the eye as well as the imagination.

A dollar bill is marked, rolled up, handed to the spectator and covered with a handkerchief. The handkerchief is shaken out, and the bill has vanished. The securely locked and bolted tube is unlocked, and the marked bill is found inside. This baffling effect can be repeated with professional ease time and time again.

The larger-than-standard size Milson-Worth Bill Tube comes in a protective drawing pouch. From one professional to another, what else would you expect but the very finest effect - from Milson-Worth!

To order or to be placed on our mailing list and receive a new-products flier, please write or call: Milson-Worth, 8255 San Fernando Road, Sun Valley, CA 91352 (213) 768-6536. For a copy of our latest catalogue, please remit \$2.00.



\$45.00

milson-worth Postpaid and Insured

8255 San Fernando Road, Sun Valley, CA 91352 (213) 768-6536.

(213) 768-6536

COIN OF THE REALM

Incredibly baffling!
Absolutely mystifying!
What's so astounding about a coin falling through a box slotted both top and bottom? It must penetrate a solid sheet of glass inside! Invite your audience to inspect closely the box, coin and glass before and after the effect. Dare them to unlock the secret of the Coin of the Realm!



- Elegantly contoured walnut box
- Ornately brass-bound
- Solid construction
- A first-class act!

\$49.00

Postpaid and Insured



| | |
|----------------------|-----------------------|
| Order Form: Quantity | Total Cost |
| Name | Address |
| City | State Zip |
| Check Enclosed | or bill my MasterCard |
| VISA | Exp. Date |



milson-worth

8255 San Fernando Road Sun Valley, CA 91352

Milson-Worth ad copy for the "Bill Tube" and the "Coin of the Realm".



NILSON-WORTH

Lyn Johnson crafting a die-box, circa 1970's.

Remembering Ann Goulet

by Frank Dudgeon, NEMCA Member

On December 16th, 2022, NEMCA and the world of magic suffered a great loss with the passing of Ann Goulet at the age of 94. She was the beloved wife of Ray Goulet from 1949 until Ray's passing on Oct. 7, 2017. She was born Ann Marie Ford September 23, 1928 and lived in Watertown, Massachusetts all her life until she moved to assisted living residences in 2021.

Ann's life in magic began in 1945 when she met Ray and became one of the assistants in a fledgling illusion show called "The M & R Magical Parade" featuring Ray and Mal Robbins. In 1954 Ann and Ray became The Raymonds and performed in nightclubs, opening for some of the biggest names in show business. They also developed an illusion show and played at fairs and other venues. Soon "The Raymonds - Classics in Deception," was one of the most popular acts in New England working the busy club date circuit. They also performed on luxury cruise ships including 22 trans-Atlantic crossings and many trips to the Caribbean. They continued performing until around 1995. In 1976 the Goulets opened the Magic Art Studio and it quickly became a Boston area mecca for magicians. During all this time Ann also worked a day job at the phone company, retiring in 1985 after almost 40 years of service. To say that Ann and Ray were both hard workers is an understatement.

Ann was important to NEMCA, serving as Registrar/Treasurer for the Yankee Gathering from 1986 to 2000 while Ray was Chairman. She also handled much of the correspondence involved in committee work for magic clubs and other matters. Ann spent countless hours cataloguing Ray's amazing collection and library. Along with Ann Fields she handled the rapid-fire bookkeeping necessary for the regular auctions at the Magic Art Studio. Ann worked with Constance Pole Bayer on her book about John Henry Anderson, The Great Wizard of the North, published by Ray's Magic Art Book Company in 1990. Over the years the Goulets were hosts to many of magic's luminaries, including John Calvert, Walter Gibson, Dr.

Eddie and Amy Dawes and so many others at their lovely home in Watertown. Ann was deeply involved in all aspects of sharing a life in magic with Ray. After his death, Ann kept the store open for another year to provide area magicians the Saturday gathering spot they had enjoyed for so many years.

Ann was the first of Jim and Anna Ford's eleven children. She and Ray both had large families who were immensely important to them and they also treasured their many friends, in and out of magic.

Those of us who were fortunate to know Ann will hold dear the memory of a remarkable woman. ♦



Yankee Gathering 2022 - A Recap

Nick Miller, NEMCA Member

As I checked into the hotel, the front desk clerk offered me a large, warm, slightly gooey chocolate chip cookie. Yes, I know, I wasn't special – they give them to everyone who checks in. And who wants a chocolate chip cookie at nine o'clock in the morning anyway? Well, I did, since I had just arrived on the red eye from San Francisco and was ravenous. The cookie was welcome, and that was my start to the 2022 Yankee Gathering at the Double Tree Hotel in Westborough, MA. The rest of the weekend definitely lived up to the cookie.

What do I look for at these Gatherings? The relaxed pace. Talking with old and new friends. Lunches and dinners with old and new friends. Lectures and performances by old and new friends. Do you notice a theme here? There's plenty of time to hang out in the dealers' room (and perhaps even buy something), peruse the exhibits, and check out the auction and flea market.

The official program began on Thursday evening with a wine and cheese reception sponsored by David Haversat and the Milbourne Christopher Foundation (thanks David!), after which Jim Zoldak welcomed the attendees, and Andrew Pinard thanked the authors and Editorial Board of this year's edition (the 20th) of *The Yankee Magic Collector*. At this point, it was time to introduce the guest of honor for the Gathering.

This year, NEMCA honored Jim Steinmeyer, author and designer of magical illusions and special effects for the stage. Doug Henning said of him, "I consider Jim Steinmeyer the most brilliant mind in magic." Much of his work in magic has been behind the scenes as a consultant to famous magicians, but I should mention that some years ago, I saw his very entertaining version of "Cards up the Sleeve." So he also has impressive sleight of hand and performance chops. He is an expert on the history of stage magic and magicians, and this evening he presented a fascinating talk on *A Deceptive History of a Deceptive Art*, with many examples of how the show business stories about famous characters in magic came to be created.



I counted the names of 15 collectors who generously raided their collections to provide the exhibits. The display included some beautiful costumes and objects from the Le Grand David show (pictured page 27), a few items from Herman Weber's *Midnite Voodoo Party* (see below), some gaffed gambling devices, a Great Raymond exhibit, some original manuscripts of published magic books by Professor Hoffmann, Will Goldston and others, items from the life of Madame Konorah (see below), and a display on the theme of Jim Steinmeyer's illusions.

Friday opened with Rosemary Reid, a Canadian magician, speaking about "Becoming Madame Konorah." Madame Konorah, whose real name was Anna Nora Belmonte, was a now forgotten turn-of-the-20th-century magician and lightning calculator who billed herself as "The Modern Witch." In her time, she was famous, and it is a mystery why she has been so thoroughly forgotten.



Next up was Rick Heath, the artist for Le Grand David and his own Spectacular Magic Company. His lecture on Le Grand David: *Magical in its Entirety* described how Cesareo Pelaez created the company in the out-of-the-way town of Beverly, Massachusetts, and made it an amazing success. In addition to describing the history of the endeavor and showing the beautiful artistry of the stage productions, he also revealed one of the major reasons for its success: the emphasis Cesareo placed and the example he set on the importance of working together.

That was the end of Thursday's formal activities, but the dealers' room opened up after the lectures, and the socializing continued there.

It was well worth paying a visit (or two or three!) to the Exhibits Room on Friday or Saturday. In the program,

Lee Asher delivered his lecture, "Playing Card Love," in which he explored how advancements in the manufacture of playing cards over the last two centuries have influenced the development of magic. For example, consider how many card tricks would become almost impossible if your favorite Bicycle deck lacked corner indices. But indices weren't a feature until the late 1870s. Mr. Asher described several other surprising features that were developed over the years. He is a full-time sleight-of-hand artist, but his avocation is as a historian and collector of playing cards, and he is the President of the world's largest playing card collectors' group

Charles Greene III (pictured at right) then described his research for his new book, *Ionia: Magician Princess Secrets Unlocked*. His talk was entitled "Ionia—New Secrets Unlocked," and he described his month-long trip to France where he visited several sites connected with Ionia and her family, including Charles de Vere's (Ionia's father) Paris home, Ionia's last home in the French Riviera, and her grave in the Père Lachaise cemetery in Paris.

Mr. Greene's lecture was followed by a brief In Memoriam for the magical members, collectors, and historians who have left us since the last Gathering.

Friday afternoon was devoted to the auction, presided over by auctioneer Robert Olson, whose acerbic comments always liven up the proceedings. Most of the items went for moderate prices. But the highest bid, over \$6,000, went to the "Traveling Magician" statue, made by the John Rogers studio in 1877, depicting a magician entertaining a man and his son.

After Friday's dinner break, Michelle Ainsworth shared her expert knowledge of magic exhibits in her talk on "Programs of Temporary Magic Exhibitions." Her presentation featured spectacular posters, and remarkable catalogs.

Tom Ewing was scheduled next to talk about "Herman Weber and the Power of Darkness," but he was unfortunately laid low by Covid, and was unable to attend the Gathering. (Tom Ewing and his wife, Debbie, are both fine now.) However, Mark Walker ably stepped in for Mr. Ewing and told the story of Herman L. Weber's wildly popular Midnite Voodoo Party, a 1940s Memphis theatrical event that featured graveyard zombies, demons, tarantulas dropping from the ceiling, and other scary delights.



The Friday evening show was hosted by Marc DeSouza as Master of Ceremonies (he did a great job!) and featured Richard Hatch (pictured at left), his wife, violinist Rosemary Kimura Hatch and his sister-in-law, pianist Bo young Kimura. The Hatches own and manage the Hatch Academy of Magic and Music in Logan, Utah, where they teach – guess what – magic and music. During their beautiful performance, Richard Hatch, accompanied by his wife and sister-in-law, told the tale of a young fisherman in old Japan, illustrating the story with figures formed with a *tamasudare* mat made from bamboo sticks lashed together. It reminded me a little of troublewit but performed at a much higher artistic level.

Saturday's lectures began with Richard Hughes on the subject of "Magical Apparatus Hallmarks." For the last eight years Mr. Hughes has worked as the archivist for Ken Klosterman's *Salon de Magie* and he therefore has a great deal of experience with his topic. He displayed many of the marks that various manufacturers used to identify their handiwork, many of which are not obviously visible on a piece of magical apparatus.

However, they are important clues in documenting the history of magic.

Robert Olson is a researcher and performer of 18th, 19th, and early 20th century magic, and his talk dealt with "Victorian Trade Cards." Companies and merchants that made and sold soap and patent medicines, teas and coffees, threads and fabrics, tobacco and chocolates, used trade cards to advertise their products, and many were linked to magic. Mr. Olson's presentation was filled with images of cups and balls, butterflies and fans, and children performing magic, all in color, and many with bright gold backgrounds.

After lunch, Gabe Fajuri lectured on "Leo Rullman: Dealer in Old Conjuring Books." If you look in magic magazines of the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, you will see Leo Rullman's advertisements for classic magic books at what now seem like ridiculously low prices. For example, in his advertisement in a 1931 issue of *The Sphinx*, Rullman lists a "good copy" of Devant's *Woes of a Wizard* for \$1.75. Even taking inflation into account, that converts to a present-day price of about \$35, still an amazingly good deal for any book collector.

Richard Hatch was the last lecturer on the program, with his presentation on "The Travels and Travails of Herr Alexander," a performer who spent more than eight years touring North and South America with great success, despite serious illnesses and financial setbacks. Nine volumes of Her Alexander's diaries have been published in German, and Mr. Hatch based his talk on these diaries and other contemporary accounts.



Matt Roberts and Jim Steinmeyer then engaged in an on-stage interview (pictured at left) on many aspects of magic. Mr. Steinmeyer spent some time describing the direction in which he thinks magic is heading. As always, Mr. Steinmeyer's views were sometimes controversial, but always fascinating and worth hearing. This event was billed as an interview, but Matt Roberts is such a skillful interviewer that it came off as a living room conversation between friends.

An event organized by Pat Hill featured Ann Myrece James presenting a talk entitled "The Story of Ann Myrece - The Dancing Magicienne". Ann Myrece James is the fifth member of the Schwartz family to perform magic, and her act combined magic with tap dancing. Although this "extra event" was originally designed to give an opportunity for spouses of attendees to participate in a social interaction with other spouses, the event will be considered to be included in the formal program at future Gatherings and not be a "spouses only" event.

The flea market occupied the late afternoon, followed by the cocktail hour during which Alyx Hilshey performed. Ms. Hilshey is a traveling street entertainer from Vermont who is funny, skillful, and smart, and does a great cups and balls. She had to perform boxed-in at the end of the hallway where the cocktail reception was held – not an ideal setting for any performer! But she adapted very well, and soon had her audience laughing and enjoying her magic.

The dinner and show that followed always have, for me at least, a slightly sad undertone. They are the last official events of the Gathering, and they mark the last time I will see many of these friends for a couple of years. The dinner was typical bland banquet fare – chicken or fish – but the stimulating company made up for the unimaginative food. The Gala Show followed, with Master of Ceremonies Matt Roberts, who is as entertaining an MC as he is an interviewer. Alex Boyce, Nick Diffatte, and David Garrity all performed to much well-deserved applause.

Many of us hadn't seen our magical collector friends since the last in-person Gathering in 2018. So socializing and catching up with friends were main events. I'm told that attendance was down somewhat from prior years, but as a (perhaps unreasonable) optimist, I'm hoping that the Covid plague will be long gone by the time the 2024 Gathering arrives and that attendance will be back to pre-Covid levels.

But in summary, this Gathering was a welcome reunion, and its friendly ambiance made being there and learning about magic history a positive joy. ♦



GUEST OF HONOR



JIM STEINMEYER

Highs & Lows - Selected Auction Results

by Patrick Lusch, "Discoveries" Editor

The following are auction results (the highest and lowest grossing lots) for selected auctions since the previous issue. All photos courtesy of the respective auction houses.

Winter Magic Auction - Potter & Potter (December 10, 2022)

Lot Number: 266

Description: Ouija Prediction Watch. Arizona: Richard Gerlitz, 2010s

Estimate: \$1,500 - 2,500

Price Realized: \$13,200

Description:

Mechanically complex watch with concealed internal device allows the performer to pre-program the watch so the hand will spell out words or reveal other information chosen by a spectator apparently at random, simulacrum of a Ouija Board or similar "talking boards." Instructions included. One of only a limited number manufactured by hand.



Lot Number: 65

Description: A Group of 25 Photos of Italian Magician Gianni Pasqua Roxy

Estimate: \$50 - 100

Price Realized: \$30

Description:

A group of 25 photos of Italian magician Gianni Pasqua Roxy (1946-2011) and others. [Ca. 1970s-1980s]. Nine photos are in full color (4 x 6"), the remainder mostly black and white (8 x 10" and smaller). Some occasional wear, fading. A good group.



Editor's Note: The following lot unique because of high number of bids.

Lot Number: 304

Description: Cup of Gold. Colon: Abbott's Magic Company, 1970s.

of Bids: 43 (Highest Number of Bids at This Auction)

Estimate: \$100 - 200

Price Realized: \$2,640

Description:

A continuous production of sponge balls into a gold cup ends with a paper streamer and multiple shots of whiskey. Includes original props and instructions. Gimmicked tumbler 5" tall. Very good.



Salon de Magie III - Potter & Potter (October 29, 2022)

Lot Number: 68

Description: Houdini's Automatic Flowering Rosebush, New York: R.S. Schlosser, ca. 1924.

Estimate: \$25,000 - 50,000

Price Realized: \$324,000

(highest price realized of any item of magic at auction to date)

Description:

The performer places a small earthenware pot atop an elaborate metal table terminating in four large claw feet. A short red flower surrounded by green foliage is then placed in the flowerpot, and the plant is covered with a gauzy cloth. On command, the flower began to grow and transform, expanding into a full size rose bush, revealed when the cloth was whisked away from the tabletop. To conclude, the performer then removed the plant in its pot from the tabletop to present it to the audience. Elaborate cast metal base with concealed crank-wound worm gear and mechanical tabletop, the claw feet on concealed rolling casters. Height of table 37". Height inclusive of flowers 70". As elaborate and intricate a mechanism as we have encountered. With the original compartmentalized traveling trunk. See Salon de Magie, page 182. This was one of several flashy effects used to open the production Houdini created for his final American tour, billed as "three shows in one," being made up of magic, spiritualism exposes, and sensational escapes. In the first act, Houdini presented two rose growths – two identical tables were constructed for the show – by Rudolph Schlosser, an enigmatic New York-based craftsman. Schlosser was both creative and talented, inventing unusual mechanical devices which centered primarily around

tricks with feather flowers, including hats and musical instruments that transformed into giant colorful bouquets, as well as the infamous "backpack" that visibly transformed a magician's assistant into an enormous flower-covered tree without any special covering or apparent apparatus. Magical horticulture has been a constant theme in the shows of stage magicians, and many methods from the all-metal P&L model, to Kellar's growth of real roses, to the now-standard Botania have been devised by dozens of makers to apparently instantly grow flowers – both real and imitation – on stage before a live audience. Germain's model of the effect was considered especially artistic. The rose growth offered here is one of two Schlosser built for Houdini, and is as elaborate and finely made as it is inventive in its working.



Lot Number: 338

Description: How To Become a Clairvoyant. New York: Hurst & Co., 1874.

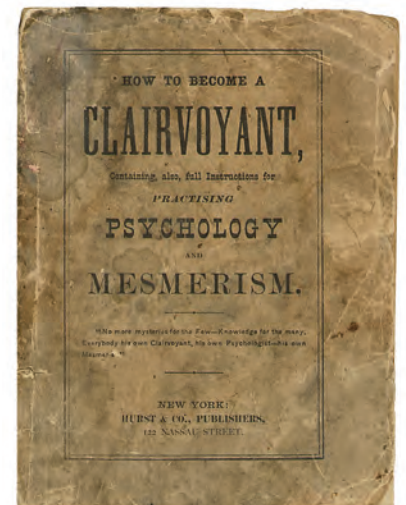
Estimate: \$100 - 200

Price Realized: \$96

Description:

Illustrated with 8 pp. of advertisements. Publisher's printed wraps (soiling throughout, losses, rear wrapper detached, notations on title page). Klosterman bookplate.

Not in Toole Stott.



October Online Auction - QualityMagicSales.com (October 22, 2022)

Lot Number: n/a

Description: Two Effects from Germany by Tony Lackner and Dietmar Willert

Estimate: \$489 - 910

Price Realized: \$1,300

Description:

Two rare and amazing effects from wonderful German Craftsmen. Hand of Cleopatra by Tony Lackner – (\$350) (Printed Instructions.) Cleopatra's Windblown Sands by Dietmar Willert, Jan Gol – (\$350) (Printed Instructions.) Approx. Total Retail: \$700



Lot Number: n/a

Description: Two Effects from Tricks Co.

Estimate: \$227 - 422

Price Realized: \$135

Description:

This lot contains two hard to find items from Japan's Tricks Co. Sword and Die by Tricks Co. – (\$250) (Printed Instructions. New Joining Silks by Tricks Co. – (\$75) (Printed Instructions.) Approx. Total Retail: \$325



October Magic Auction - Haversat & Ewing (October 21, 2022)

Lot Number: 150

Description: Merv Taylor Orb-Eternal Linking Rings

Estimate: \$80+

Price Realized: \$1,121

Description:

A lovely set of 10" stainless steel rings as only Taylor could make them. Comes with original box with lid corners split from the weight of the rings. Very good.



Lot Number: 2

Description: Harry Blackstone, Sr Ephemera Lot

Estimate: \$50+

Price Realized: \$29.50

Description:

Attractive Blackstone letterhead with matching envelope. Comes with two pitch books, Mysteries of Magic and Blackstone's Junior Magicians.



Fall Magic Auction - Potter & Potter (September 17, 2022)

Lot Number: 1

Description: David Roth's Close Up Act.

Estimate: \$2,500 - 4,000

Price Realized: \$31,200

Description:

A black hard-sided attache case containing the act of one of the most influential coin magicians of modern times, David Roth. Housed within the case are most of Roth's most iconic props and routines. Among the contents are the props for his Rainbow routine, The Black Hole, The Table, Three Ball Routine, Coin Box, Wild Coins, The World, The Sleeve, a lap servante, and more. Most of the routines contained within are detailed in the now modern classic book, Expert Coin Magic (Kaufman & Greenberg, 1985).

Lot Number: 124

Description: John Calvert Magic Set. Birmingham: Magic City Toy Co., ca. 1940s

Estimate: \$50 - 100

Price Realized: \$48

Description:

A complete magic sets in bright three-color pictorial box, containing all props for the tricks and instructions booklet. Some foxing and wear overall. Fair. October Magic Auction - Haversat & Ewing (October 21, 2022)



August Online Auction - QualityMagicSales.com (August 26, 2022)

Lot Number: n/a

Description: Mini Cyclops Box by Martin Breese, Magic Wagon

Estimate: \$525 - 975

Price Realized: \$6,225

Description:

This is the re-released version of Martin Breese's Cyclops Box in a smaller size built to perfection by the Magic Wagon team.

Lot Number: n/a

Description: John Calvert Magic Set. Birmingham: Magic City Toy Co., ca. 1940s

Estimate: \$345 - 642

Price Realized: \$149

Description:

This lot contains: Frozen in Time (New visual) by Masuda – (\$70) (Printed Instructions.) The Box by Mark Southworth – (\$75) (DVD (or similar) Instructions.) Charming Chinese Challenge by Troy Hooser – (\$40) (Online Instructions.) Perfect Silk To Ball (Red, Ver. 3) by JL Magic – (\$65) (DVD (or similar) Instructions.) Psychic Card Paddle by Bob Solari Magic – (\$14) (Instructions: Unknown.) Polish Poker (Bicycle) by Michal Kociolek – (\$35) (Online Instructions.) Strongman by Jimmy Strange – (\$59) (Online Instructions.) Vanishing Deck (Magnetic Version) by Joker Magic – (\$37) (Printed Instructions.) The Gift (Gold Limited Edition) by Angelo Carbone – (\$99) (Online Instructions.) Approx. Total Retail: \$494. ♦



Puzzling Props

by Patrick Lusch, "Discoveries" Editor

Can you identify the magic prop in the photo below with just a few jigsaw puzzle pieces? We'll give you between 4 and 5 puzzle pieces in each puzzle. Try to identify the maker and the prop name. Submit your answer to newsletter@nemca.com for a chance to win some NEMCA swag! Winner chosen randomly from all correct responses. The answer will be revealed in the next issue. Good luck!

Last Issue's Answer: "Blue Phantom" by Thayer (Owen Magic Supreme).

Photo courtesy of Potter & Potter Auctions.

A metal cover is placed over a stack of seven checkers, one blue, six of another color. The blue checker seems endowed with ghostly power as it jumps from the top of the stack to the middle or the bottom and bounces back again. All checkers are solid and separate. A most beautiful outfit originally designed by Carl Owen from an effect in "das Wunderbuch." ♦



Online Collecting Resources

We will endeavor to keep this handy reference up to date.

For additions, removals, and corrections, please email newsletter@nemca.com.

| Online Research / Periodicals | |
|---|---|
| Conjuring Arts / Ask Alexander | www.askalexander.org |
| Magicana | www.magicana.org |
| Magicpedia | geniimagazine.com/wiki/index.php |
| Magic Knowledge Base | www.lybrary.com |
| Ye Olde Magic Mag | yeoldemagicmag.com |
| Online Magic Collecting Communities | |
| Fans of Thayer & Owen Magic Supreme | facebook.com/groups/owenmagicfans/ |
| Fans of Milson Worth | facebook.com/groups/592662305901319/ |
| Magic Collectors Corner | facebook.com/groups/magiccollectorscorner |
| Thayer Magic History & Collecting Community | thayermagic.ning.com |
| Auctions & Retail Sales | |
| Hard To Find Magic | hardtofindmagic.com |
| Haversat & Ewing Galleries | haversatewing.com |
| Hocus Pocus | hocus-pocus.com |
| KTMagic Auction | ktmagicauktion.com |
| Magic Collectibles | magiccollectibles.com |
| Potter & Potter Auctions | potterauktions.com |
| Quality Magic Sales | qualitymagicsales.com |
| Quicker Than The Eye | quickerthantheeye.com |
| Sterlini's Magical Mayhem | facebook.com/sterlinismagicalmayhem |
| Steven's Magic | stevensmagic.com |
| Viking Magic | vikingmagic.com |

Upcoming Events

For additions, removals, and corrections, please email newsletter@nemca.com.

January 2023

- Gator Gate Gathering, Orlando, FL (gatorgategathering.wixsite.com)January 5 - 7
Magifest, Columbus, OH (www.vanishinginmagic.com).....January 26 - 28

February 2023

- Florida Magic Collector's Conference, Orlando, FL (www.magic-palooza.com)February 3 - 5
Blackpool Magic Convention, Blackpoole, UK (blackpoolmagicconvention.com)February 16 - 19
Kapital Kidvention, Washington, DC (www.kapitalkidvention.com).....February 17 - 19

March 2023

- Winter Carnival of Magic, Pigeon Forge, TN (www.ibmring58.com)..... March 9 - 11
Magic Capital Close-up Convention, Colon, MI (magiccapitalcloseup.com)..... March 17 - 18
Portland Magic Jam, Portland, OR (pdxmagicjam.com)..... March 17 - 19

May 2023

- Magic Collector's Expo, Cleveland, OH (www.magiccollectorexpo.com)..... May 9 - 11

August 2023

- European Magic History Conference, Ghent, Belgium (emhc2023.com).....August 24 - 27

