

# The Northwest Ring of Fire

February 2010

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## **President's Message**

*A message from your President Master Payne*

Fellow Magi,

It is with great sadness that I must tell you of the passing of our fellow club member and the most recent recipient of the Lifetime Achievement award Don Brisbane. He succumbed to complications from a heart attack on January 31<sup>st</sup>. He will be missed as he was an integral part of our club and a frequent performer, both at the monthly meetings as well as our annual club show. His Newspaper act was a long time favorite and always a joy to watch. I believe he was the last surviving member of the Virgil and Julie troupe in the Pacific Northwest so with his passing the last link to that era has been severed. He was 81.

We will be holding his broken wand ceremony at the next meeting and be passing around a sympathy card for his family to sign. We will also be renaming the Presidents Choice Award given out at our yearly Holiday party the Chambers\Brisbane Award. Please try and make the next meeting to participate in his final farewell. Bring a trick or a story to share with your fellow club members to honor the memory of Don.

Payne

## **Secretary's Message**

Greetings from your secretary, Craig Colombel. I have gotten our Librarian to write some reviews of the items in the club's library. We will have a guest writer Ralph Huntzinger with abstracts from his blog. If you want more the link to his blog is at the end of the article. Again if you know of any magic events or performances or are performing yourself let me know and I will place it into the newsletter.

**A request, If someone who knew Don Brisbane well give me the information. Next issue will be a tribute issue.**

**Thanks**

## **Don Brisbane at Smoke and Mirrors**



## **February 2010 Meeting:**

As a brife intro to the way meetings are to those who have not been there this year. The meetings will open with the business portion, after business we will have performaces, lectures or teach a trick by one or more of the members and on some nights something special. Come and see what you are missing.

As Jeff Dial was not at the Christmas party, he received his "Magician of the Year" award at the February meeting. There was a report of the Rafael Benatar Lecture. Those who where there felt it was a very good lecture and well worth the money. About 45 people showed up for the lecture. Payne brought a copy of the coffee table book "Magic" ( a book large enough to be a coffee table.)

A tentative date of September 25<sup>th</sup> has been set for our "Smoke and Mirror" show. The plans are to combine it with the "Day of Magic". Joy Knight brought her new baby, very cute(everyone was wondering if the baby would fit in a square circle).

Ralph Huntzinger informed the group that his preforming troupe "Magic Happens" has volunteer/dragged into forming a committee to handle club's participation in the Lynnwood Tree Lighting Ceremony. For those who don't know, every year the city of Lynnwood have a Tree Lighting Ceremony and the club provides magicians to perform as part of our payment to have our meeting space at the firehouse for free. Ralph would like the club's participation to be more organise and better for the spectators and the club. He will have things to do for performers and non-performers, so all can participate. He will also be working on planning what we will do ahead of time. This will be a good way to promote the club and magic and do community outreach.

Bruce Meyers had a report on the situation at the Magic Castle.

Members were reminded of Magic Mondays at Third Place Books in Revena. They are looking for performers, no pay but a place to hone your skills.

Our visitor was Rich Stark from Baltimore. Welcome and come again.

### **Performances:**

Bruce Meyers did a haunted key routine with a story about a locked magic room. He did a second story with the key about how everyone is looking for the key to the universe but the universe is never locked.

Dick Ptakek had a spectator open a sealed card box and shuffled the cards, deal into three piles, chose a card from one pile, recombine the piles then when look for the card was missing from the deck but on Dick's forehead. He performed a second trick, where the spectator thought of a number count down in the deck to that number, look at the card, put the card back then Dick put the deck behind his back and found the card. Ralph showed a wooden version of tricky compass/crazy arrows. It was octogon in shape an sat on a stand. He then performed crazy arrows with a medieval motif.

Bruce Johnson performed a trick for children and for adults using cards with fish on them and to the Suses story "One fish, Two fish, red fish, blue fish" When one card was shown to have six fish, he changed it to nine fish.

SandyStanislawski, a new member of the club and new to magic, performed a rope routine starting with making knot appear by tossing one end of the rope, one hand tying of knots, loop the rope twice and produce two knots, repeat with one knot being a simple knot and the other a crazy 8 knot. She demonstrated a lot of work learning some rope magic and combining them into a routine. Good Work Sandy.

Rich Waters performed a silk trick in honor of the 106<sup>th</sup> aniversity of the American author Dr. Suses. He used a red silk and a blue silk and made the red disappear in the blue then reappear, using patter reminise of Dr. Suses.

### **Lecture:**

Jeff Dial Started with two decks of cards one red, one blue and with a spectator did a "do as I do" card trick. He informed us that he used methods and routines form Huggard's Encyclopedia of Magic and from Greater Magic. He told us he used a key card and discussed different types of locator cards that were in existace before short cards.

### **After**

After the performances the meeting was adjourned and those that wanted to went to Maddox's for refreshments.

## Magic Reviews

Payne has graciously donated some reviews of magic, he did for MUM Magazine. I will print one or two per newsletter issue.

### **Shufton's Portal**

David Regal

A curious gateway to a land of little balls

Available From <http://www.davidregal.com>

\$60.00

Reviewed by Payne

So what do you get when you mix Jerry Andru's Zone Zero with a little bit of Al Wheatley's Chop Cup and a pinch of a Coin Board thrown in for good measure? You get yourself a Shufton's Portal.

So what exactly is a Shufton's Portal? Well try to imagine a tiny (6" X 4") Zone Zero that you can use close up in a table hopping or strolling situation.

The premise is pretty much the same as Mr. Andus's original inception. A black plastic board with a hole in its center is fairly shown on both sides, or even passed out for examination. After the performer's hands are shown empty a small crochet covered ball is visibly pulled out of the center of the hole. This ball can be made to vanish, change colour, turn invisible or even multiply, all at the whim of the magician. Balls can even be produced from the hole while a spectator holds onto the portal.

It's a very versatile prop from which many clever and original routines are sure to spring. Plus you're not limited to just producing balls. Coins, poker chips, candy, plastic bugs, bottle caps or any small object (after it has been properly shimmed) could be used with this prop to make interesting and innovative routines. This is something that many clever magicians are going to have a great time creating new routines for.

Yes, it is a black plastic board with a hole in it that looks like nothing like anything you'd see outside of a magic shop. So those purists who feel that everything a magician employs in his act should look like something one would find in the "real" world should therefore steer well clear from this effect. Let those of us who can concoct a compelling storyline or justification for just about anything we decide to use in our performances have fun with this. And we most certainly will.

For those wanting to start right out of the gate and not have to develop a unique presentation for this prop it comes with an instructional DVD with five different routines. This well produced DVD also clearly teaches a wide variety of moves made possible by the clever construction of The Portal. Mr. Roth takes the viewer through the various vanishes, appearances, as well as showing many ways to secretly load and steal objects from the board. Clearly a lot of thought has gone into the many things that can be done with this versatile prop. But there are some drawbacks. The balls I found to be rather small, being about a half inch in diameter. This might not be a problem for most but anyone with large hands might have trouble handling them. I know I did. It is also a bit angely (there are even a couple of inadvertent flashes made on the DVD) which will make some of the moves problematic in a walk around situation. I also felt the board could be constructed a little better. It appears to be made out of Sintra, an expanded PVC product, with a light plastic laminate contact cemented on top and bottom. I'm not too sure how durable this will be as after a few days of playing with mine the laminate started coming up on one corner. I also felt it was a little too thick and that this could lead the spectator to think the balls were somehow hidden inside the board. Perhaps a deluxe version constructed out of exotic hardwoods will eventually be offered up for sale (hint hint).

But these minor complaints aside this is an innovative little prop that you can have a lot of fun with. It comes with the Portal, 5 crocheted balls (2 white 1 red, 1 green and 1 yellow) a plastic spot card (used in a couple of the routines and an instructional DVD.

Reset is a snap as many of the routines do so themselves and the whole thing fits easily into a jacket pocket so what's not to like?

## Zinger's Thoughts – Ralph Huntzinger Blog

Each Month I will give a brief report of items of interest from Ralph Huntzinger blog. I will give a brief review of his musings and if you want to read the rest you can find it at

<http://magickhappens.com/wp/>

### Lotta Bowls

An 8 or 9 years old kid, walking hand in hand with third grade classmates up to the high school, a magic show, a very long walk, a very large place, and only one magic image is remembered --- another kid called on stage to constantly empty water from a metal vase into a bucket. That “Lota Bowl” routine made a lasting impression on me. I use one in almost every show as a reminder that real wonder exists when recreated in someone's mind.

I have “a lota” Lota Bowls, I guess that means I collect them since I only use three but buy every different one I find when affordable. (I pronounce it “low tah” believing crassly unsophisticated dunces resort to the “lot a” joke in performance and description.)

A *lota* pot, used in Hindu puja or ceremony in Kerala, where a separate tradition of spare, utilitarian elegance flourished. *Zebrowski* refers to spouted lota of bell metal make, a bell metal kindi, vases and superbly refined oil lamps found in religious ceremonies in temples dedicated to Siva. *Bellodu kindi* is a remedy for the influence of evil eyes says Gunapatam.

Magically, Lota Bowls are an everfilling or pouring jug, vase or pot.

Morrissey Magic of Canada supplies excellent aluminum bowls in two sizes. I use and abuse the “Jumbo” ones that are 10” high and 60 oz, Small ones are 6” high and holds 40 oz, Morrissey also supply a bucket 7” high with 7 ½ “ mouth.



Wild West theme spittoon, rather large. This has been modified to be a lota bowl by inserting the gimmick inside.



## Book Talk

### A quick look at what is in the library of the NWRF by Jeff Dial

This hopefully ongoing series will look at some of the things we have in our library and a look at them through Jeff coloured glasses.

Someday I will editorialize about the value of learning magic from books, but to completely jump the rails and deviate from the book theme let me give you the rundown on a DVD set we have.



International Magicians Society  
Magic Academy  
Course in Magic  
NWRF Call #s D1-D10

This set of 10 DVDs was originally released by the International Magicians Society (IMS) beginning in 1992 as 50 separate video cassettes. "The I.M.S. Magic Academy Course of Magic consists of 50 volumes. Each volume features a Master Magician, sharing with you the knowledge and secrets that took him a life-time to learn." It was a subscription service where one would purchase a video, "master" the material, pass a written test, and then receive (after payment) another video. The last five volumes on stage illusions could not be purchased until the previous 45 had been "mastered." A formula employed by Harlan Tarbell in the 1920's and 1930's.

With the advent of the DVD IMS re-released the entire series on 10 DVD's in the first year of the new millennium.

The course is an wide and varied in both its content and teachers, Harry Lorayne, Derek Dingle, Johnny Thompson, Dean Dill, Finn John, Billy McComb, Patrick Page, John Cornelius, Ali Bongo, and others. Names that a student of magic needs to be at least familiar.

While billed as a course in magic, it is really for the intermediate magician. The first lesson for example has Harry Lorayne teaching the In-Jog Shuffle, Double Lift, and Palm card sleights.(I'm not sure how card palming is a basic sleight.) Some familiarity with a deck of cards or coins sleights would be helpful before tackling the material, but not required.

What you do get is mostly solid material, especially in the early volumes. Harry Lorayne In the later volumes the material is taught gets the feeling that it was filler to get up to 50 lessons: Volume 41 teaches how to use a host of gimmicks, Volume 42 thumb tip, Volume 43 black art, Volume 44 pick pocketing, and Volume 45 simple sleight of hand (should have been the first lesson).

Which brings us to the last disk. It was the big sell was the last 5 volumes (Disk 10) where the working of Grand Illusions were revealed and could then be constructed. While it delivers on the first count it fails on the second. What you get is a through explanation of the workings, but you would have a lot of work to do in order to actually construct these illusions.

The production values of the video are not the level of things we see today, but I have not had any issues learning. .... **Continue next page**

## BookTalk- Continue

### A quick look at what is in the library of the NWRF by Jeff Dial

The problem with a review is that there is just too much and varied material to review. (Probably like watching two seasons of 24 including the commercials.) The material is good and there are some great masters teaching. It is a great introduction with good material for so many areas of magic. Having said all this, I have come to understand that this set is perhaps the single best investment we have made in the library. It offers a little of everything at an intermediate level taught by magicians that know what they are talking about. It is in video format for those biblio challenged. If you are thinking about adding a new area of magic to your repertoire this is a good way to get there. If something seems interesting give it a look.

## Member Report - Performances by our own

**On Feb 21st, 2010, Bruce Meyers competed and won the bronze!!!!**

**The competition took place at Vancouver's Lafflines Comedy club for the Vancouver Magic Circle IBM #92.**

**The event was held during (but in no way related to) the 2010 Winter Olympic games in Vancouver Canada.**

