

MAGI-GRAM

Official Newsletter of IBM Ring 50 -- The National Capital Ring Volume 59 No. 10 October 2005

A night of spooky magic planned for October

An evening of Spooky Magic is in store for the October meeting of Ring 50. If you would like to perform, please contact Rick Beatty at 443-527-1982 or 703-960-1927. His Web address is trickydick86@hotmail.com.

Some of the performers tentatively lined up for the night are James Munton,

Geoff Weber and Captain Token (Louis Hofheimer). Rick Beatty will perform as well as emcee. October is the perfect time for magic that goes bump in the night. There will be plenty of tricks and lots of treats with our lineup of entertainers. Grab a seat early and enjoy the show!



LINKING RINGS ROUTINE--*Noland Montgomery drew apt attention from Cassandra, a member of the audience, as he demonstrated his skill with a set of linking rings at the September meeting of Ring 50. His performance was part of a cabaret magic teach-in session.*

Inside

- Coming Events.....page 2
- Collectors coming to town.....page 3
- Ring 50 budget report.....page 3
- Teach-in provides tips.....page 4
- Fantasy flick coming soon.....page 5
- The President's Corner.....page 6
- IBM-SAM confab in doubt.....page 6
- Magic show poster.....page 7
- Close-up wizard passes.....page 8
- Houdini in library exhibit.....page 9

(Note: Pages 3 through 9 only in electronic version of this Magi-Gram.)

OCTOBER MEETING
Wednesday, Oct. 5, 2005
HOLIDAY INN
IN ALEXANDRIA
2460 Eisenhower Avenue
Alexandria, VA
6:00 Cocktails
6:45 Dinner
8:00 Meeting

If you want to begin receiving this newsletter by E-mail only, please let Editor Jim Flanigan know by emailing him today at jflanigan@aol.com.

R
I
N
G
50



**International Brotherhood
Of Magicians Ring 50
The National Capital Ring**

President

Don Freedman
(703) 742-9078 (Home)
(703) 633-8158 (Work)
dfreedman16@yahoo.com

Vice President

Dwight Redman
(301) 927-7717
dredman1@comcast.net

Secretary

Bob Fay
(301) 325-6126
rsfay@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Rucj Uffelman
(703) 938-6184
rucj@erols.com

Sergeant-of-Arms

Geoffery Weber
(703) 501-2333
gweber@gmail.com

Magi-Gram Editor

Jim Flanigan
(202) 554-3775
magiwhirl@aol.com

Coming Events

Bishop Ireton Magic Show featuring stage performances by Ring 50 members Dwight Redman, Eric Henning, Mike Taggert, Noland Montgomery and Greg Clements among others. Bob Carnathan will serve as emcee.

Date: Oct. 8 at 7:30 p.m.

Place: Bishop Ireton High School, 201 Cambridge Road, Alexandria, VA

Cost: \$5 for students, \$8 for adults and \$20 for families with proceeds benefiting Ring 50.

Contact: Laurie Curry at 703-698-6953.

Dave Shepherd Close-up Magic

Dates: Wednesdays from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Place: Mama's Italian Restaurant, 9715 Lee Highway, Fairfax, Va.

Contact: 703-385-2646 or 703-623-3952.

Web site: www.daveshepmagic.com

SAM Meeting

Date: Oct. 19 at 7 p.m.

Place: National Press Club, 529 14th Street NW, Washington, D.C.

Theme: Mentalism & Mental Cases

Contact: Ray Eyler at (410) 798-0176 ceyler1026@aol.com or Dwight Redman at (301) 927-7717 or dredman@comcast.net.

Bob Little's Super Sunday Convention

Date: Nov. 20 from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Place: Holiday Inn, 3499 Street Road, Bensalm, PA. Phone: 215-638-1500

Cost: \$30

Contact: Bob Little Guaranteed Magic, 27 Bright Road, Hatboro, PA 19040. Call 215-672-3344.

Magic Collectors Association Convention featuring a flea market, lectures, dealers, tours.

Date: March 30 - April 1, 2006

Place: Holiday Inn in Rosslyn, VA

Cost: Approximately \$200.

Registration fee still not announced.

Attendees must be members of the MCA. The fee to join is only \$25. A membership form is available through <http://www.magicposters.com/images/strobridge/>

[Preview%20of%20ApplicationMCA.cwk.pdf](#)

Contact: Ken Trombly at ken.trombly@comcast.net or 202-887-5000.

Wednesday Wizardry at Gaithersburg Arts Barn

Who: Now in its third season, this family friendly magic show suitable for ages 10 and up continues on most Wednesday nights through mid-November. It stars Alain Nu, Mark Phillips and Bob Sheets. In addition to Nu, Sheets, Phillips and his partner Karen Beriss, other top magicians will make guest appearances.

Where: The Gaithersburg Arts Barn at 311 Kent Square Road in Gaithersburg, MD.

Dates: Wednesday night performances are scheduled for Oct. 5, 19 and 26; and Nov. 9 and 16.

Cost: Tickets are \$15 for residents and \$18 for nonresidents for Wednesday performances. For information and tickets please call 301-258-6394. Tickets can also be purchased online at www.gaithersburgmd.gov/RecXpress.

Contact: For more information and directions, visit the Arts Barn website at www.gaithersburgmd.gov/artsbarn.

Maryland Renaissance Festival with three stage shows spotlighting magicians including Johnny Fox, now in his 25th year with the festival, who

also is noted for his sword swallowing. Other stage performers are Mike Rose, who offers off-the-wall magic and sleight of hand, and Bob Garman, who is noted for his "conjuring

tricks of a goodly nature."

Dates: October 1, 2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 22 and 23. Open from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.

Cost: Adults, ages 16-61, \$17; seniors ages 62 plus, \$15; and children, ages 7 through 15, \$8. Free for children 6 and under.

Directions: Located on Crownsville Road, in Anne Arundel County in Crownsville, just outside of Annapolis, MD.

Contact: For more information call 1-800-296-7304



"Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire" is the fourth in a series of films based on the popular books by J.K. Rowling. Date: Movie released nationwide on Nov. 18.

Cost: Check local theater listings.

Synopsis: "The fourth Harry Potter adventure, centering on an inter-school competition, boasts details that are as ingenious and original as ever." -- **Publishers Weekly, Best Books of 2000.**



Warner Bros.

"At the midpoint in a *Harry Potter* projected seven-book series, "Goblet of Fire" is exactly the big, clever, vibrant, tremendously assured installment that gives shape and direction to the whole undertaking and still preserves the material's enchanting innocence." -- **New York Times**

Open Magic Night at Barry's

featuring James Munton, George Woo, George Bradley, The Amazing G plus Barry Taylor, with his wife Susan, performing the Spirit Cabinet.

Dates: Friday, Sept. 30, and Saturday, Oct. 1.

Cost: \$15. Seating limited to 25 people each night.

Contact: Barry's Magic Shop at 301-933-0373.

Ring 50 Schedule

October 5

Spooky Magic

November 2

Lecture TBA

December 7

Holiday Magic

January 4

TBA

February 1

What's New At Barry's

March 1

Lecture TBA

April 5

Auction

May 3

Dan Lacey Contest

New officers elected

Saturday, May 20 (Tent.)

MAGI-WHIRL

June 7

New officers installed, perform

RING 50 OPERATING YEAR

July 1, 2004-to-June 30, 2005

INCOME

50=50	\$ 261.00
Auction	\$ 22.05
Contribution to Ring 50	\$ 235.00
Dues	\$1,280.00
Magi-Whirl Income	\$4,905.78
Performances	\$ 225.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$6,928.83

EXPENSES

Bank Charge	\$ 84.55
Lecture expense, other	\$ 26.00
Lecturer Fees	\$ 510.00
Magi-Whirl Expenses	\$3,591.77
Magi-Gram Expense	\$ 351.41
Operations	\$ 224.09
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$4,787.82

NET INCOME **\$2,141.01**

ASSET BALANCE AS OF 6/30/05 **\$4,209.90**

MAGI-WHIRL NET INCOME \$1,314.01

Ring 50 Treasurer Rucj Uffelman presented a summary of our budget and operating expenses at the September meeting. The financial report is published at the left.



COUNTING CARDS--
Ring 50 Treasurer Rucj Uffelman is good at counting both cards and organization receipts.

Magic Collectors coming to Washington for first time

For the last 36 years the Magic Collectors Association has been meeting in the spring, usually in Chicago, where the recently deceased Jay Marshall started the group. Last year though, the group met in Las Vegas. While the convention delegates were in the entertainment capital, they were able to see some of David Copperfield's fabulous collection. The year before that the association met in Kansas City.

In the past, the collectors also have met in Cincinnati, where they saw Ken Kloseterman's impressive collection, Baltimore and in Appleton, Wis., where Harry Houdini (Ehrich Weiss) grew up. Next year they will be in the Washington, D.C., area for the first time. They are scheduled to convene from March 30 - April 1 in the Rosslyn Holiday Inn in Northern Virginia.

While all of the events have not been totally firmed up, the tentative plan is a flea market the night before (in this case, the evening of March 29) with the local magic clubs; a dozen or so speakers beginning on Thursday evening. The sponsors anticipate talks next year on particular aspects of magic collecting, one or two talks on Harry Houdini, a talk on Al Wheatley (also known as

Chop Chop), some vintage films of magicians, possibly a talk on the use of conjuring in espionage; and a presentation to at least one honoree. In the past, the collectors have honored David Ben, Teller, Copperfield, Johnny Gaughan, John Calvert, Harry Blackstone, Robert Albo, Robert Lund and a host of others.

There will be 20-30 dealers who specialize in vintage apparatus, poster, books and other collectibles, and a Saturday night show and banquet. Because the attendees will be in the nation's capital, they have arranged with the Library of Congress for a special exhibit that will feature items from the Houdini collection, vintage magic posters from the Library's poster division, and other unique pieces. They may also hold an auction on Saturday for attendees only.

While the convention is not as large as the IBM or SAM, it is probably unique because of the high number of serious collectors as well as prominently known performers and illusion builders and designers who regularly attend. It is definitely the place to buy and sell high-end magic collectibles.

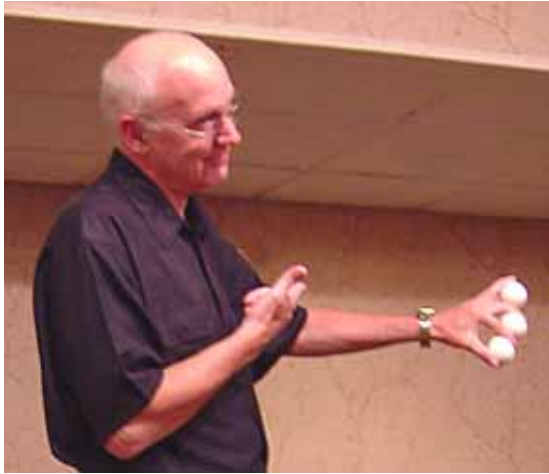
The collectors hope to work with Ring 50 and other local magic clubs that might be interested in participating in the flea market. Also, there may be a limited number of dealer tables available in the dealer's room, should someone wish to be a dealer during the convention itself. Details have not been finalized yet regarding the registration fee. However, the cost will probably be in the range of \$200. This includes a ticket to the banquet, a program book, a souvenir bag with various "goodies" donated by vendors and other collectors, and three days of activities. All persons attending the convention have to be members of the MCA. However, given the wonderful quarterly periodical that our members receive, \$25 a year is a real deal for MCA membership.

To access a membership blank, you can go to this link:

<http://www.magicposters.com/images/strobridge/Preview%20of%20ApplicationMCA.cwk.pdf>

The sponsors will start taking registrations later in the late fall or early winter. For further information, reach Ken Trombly by emailing him at ken.trombly@comcast.net or call him at 202-887-5000.

September teach-in provides top-notch tips



THE RIGHT MOVES--Glenn Gary used a set of multiplying billiard balls as he presented an excellent discussion on stage presence and the right moves to achieve a professional performance.



DEAN'S BOX---Buddy Smith showed a pair of Ring 50 audience members the ropes as he presented his version of Dean's Box. The magical effect is truly grand illusion on a small scale. It can leave an audience spellbound.



CARD IN GLASS--A card in glass routine was used by Mike Taggart, center, to demonstrate stage presentation and angles. He showed the importance of placing audience members into a tableau on stage.

Fantasy film marks fourth appearance for Harry Potter

The fourth film installment of the magical fantasy “Harry Potter” series, “Goblet of Fire,” is scheduled for release in movie theaters around the country on Nov. 18.

Our young hero stars Daniel Radcliffe as Harry. He competes in a major Quidditch Cup tournament and finally has his first encounter with his arch enemy, the vile Voldemort, portrayed by noted actor Ralph Fiennes.

Once again Harry will team up with his sidekicks Hermione Granger, played by Emma Watson, and Ron Weasley, with Rupert Grint in the part.

For the first time, a British director is at the helm. Mike Newell offers an installment that finds Harry wondering why the lightning-shaped scar on his forehead — the result of a death curse gone wrong — is aching painfully and perhaps even causing mysterious visions.

Before he can think too much about it, however, Harry boards the train to Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry, where he will attend his fourth year of magical education.

Shortly after his reunion with his best friends, Ron and Hermione, Harry is introduced to yet another Defense Against the Dark Arts teacher: the grizzled Alastor “Mad Eye” Moody.

Actor Brendan Gleeson will become the Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry’s newest faculty member in the Warner Bros.’ production. He tackles the role of a former dark wizard catcher who has agreed to take on the teaching spot as a personal favor to the witchcraft school’s headmaster, Professor Dumbledore, with Michael Gambon in that part.

Harry’s wishes for an uneventful school year are almost immediately dashed when he is unexpectedly chosen, along with fellow student Cedric Diggory (Robert Pattinson), as Hogwarts’ representative in the Tri-Wizard Tournament, which awards whoever completes three magical tasks the most skillfully with a thousand-galleon purse and the admiration of



Warner Bros.

SCHOOL BUDDIES---*Harry Potter, right, played by Daniel Radcliffe, confers with his pals Hermione Granger, portrayed by Emma Watson, and Ron Weasley, the adolescent actor Rupert Grint. They are upperclass members at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry in the latest film installment of the popular series.*

the international wizard community. As difficult as it is to deal with his schoolwork, friendships, and the tournament at the same time (not to mention his feelings toward the ever unfathomable Professor Snape (Alan Rickman), Harry doesn’t realize that the most feared wizard in the world, Lord Voldemort, is waiting for Harry to clutch the coveted Tri-Wizard trophy, in doing so initiating his return to power.

In the first three installments, a deadly magic spell meant for a baby

Harry Potter backfired and deprived the wicked warlock Voldemort of a body. So only his spirit wrought havoc in “The Sorcerer’s Stone,” “The Chamber of Secrets” and the recent “Prisoner of Azkaban.” But Voldemort finally returns in the flesh in part four, “Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire.”

Parts of this article are based on a review by Tracie Cooper of All Movie Guide

Magic in the air on PA college campus

Plans for the fourth installment of Muhlenberg College’s program on The Theory and Art of Magic in Allentown, Pa., will take place in the fall of 2006. A steering committee has been chosen to work with director Larry Hass on planning and implementing

the program. Steering committee members include Mike Bruckner, Francesca Coppa, Chris Hooker-Haring, Donna Kish-Goodling, Linda McGuire, Jim Peck, Charles Richter, Chris Sistare, Laura Snodgrass, and Jeremy Teissere.

Between Magi-Gram issues, you can get the latest news on events and restaurant performers at the Ring 50 Web site www.IBMRing50.org.

The President's Corner

Katrina victims can have hope with Ring 50's help and talent

Greetings,

For all of you who did not make the last meeting, there were a number of suggestions made as to how we could contribute as a group to the Hurricane Katrina recovery effort.

I just want each of you to know what some of the activities are that are going on regarding the New Orleans and Gulf disaster and the point of contact (POC) in case you would like to participate.

These are in no particular order but rather how I remember them.

Jason Goldberg is looking into the possibility of Ring 50 members going over to the DC Amory, where some evacuees were taken, and performing for the kids there. The format would probably be walk around magic for small groups.

Laurie Curie has a call out to members who might want to join in with an Oct. 8 show at Bishop Ireton High School in Alexandria.

James Munton suggested that we could do lunchtime magic at some of the downtown Washington office buildings (lobby or food court areas) and pass the hat for donations made out to the American Red Cross.

Rick Beatty suggested that the people at the Soldiers and Sailors



Ring 50 President Don Freedman

Home could use a real morale boost as they have been moved here with no possessions. These people are really into card magic and would enjoy anyone that would demonstrate this type of magic to them.

Louis Hofheimer has said that he would check with one of the local Virginia schools to see if we could use the school for a benefit.

Bob Fay indicated that he would check with the Montgomery School system to see if we could use one of their schools for a benefit.

Hugh Turley, at an earlier meeting, suggested that we contact a Maryland school about getting them involved in a charitable effort using a children's magic show to raise money. I hope that Hugh will run with this idea with the Katrina support as the recipient.

As you can see the ideas were flowing "fast and furious." I hope that I didn't forget anyone's idea. If I did, please feel free to send it on to this newsletter distribution list with your name as a POC.

I think this outpouring of desire to contribute by our membership is just great. While we are doing this to help the Katrina victims, I still want to let the community at large know that IBM Ring 50 is at work.

As any of these efforts get going, please let Larry Lipman know. He is in charge of public relations for the chapter. He will see that we get recognition in the local press.

Thanks in advance for all of you who contribute to these efforts.

—Donald M. Freedman

I.B.M.-S.A.M. 3008 international magic competition in New Orleans in limbo

An international magic competition scheduled July 7-12 2008 in New Orleans is up in the air at the moment because of Hurricane Katrina. The event is being sponsored jointly by the International Brotherhood of Magicians (IBM) and the Society of American Magicians (SAM).

The two oldest and largest magic organizations have joined together to stage the six-day event. It will culminate by awarding the largest contest prize ever, \$10,000 each for both the stage and close-up contest winners, from a group of more than 100 competitors.

Added to the week-long event will be stage shows, a close-up show, lectures, a banquet and several off-site activities.

After six months of research and interviews by a committee jointly appointed the IBM and SAM, plans for the event were approved early in July 2005 by the boards of both organizations at annual meetings in Reno and Boston.

Both the IBM and SAM will hold the International Magic Competition in place of their regular conventions that year, but will hold their business meetings separately during the event.

Both organizations will hold their annual conventions in 2006 and 2007 as usual. If this model is as successful as planned, it could be held again in five or six years.

The New Orleans venue was chosen for its combination of theaters, food and entertainment, and affordability for the 2,000 attendees who are expected from all corners of the world. But when the hurricane hit, new challenges faced the planners.

Members of the organizing committee will continue to explore alternatives.

(Print out this poster and circulate it among your friends, clubs, schools)

A Magical Evening

See some of the Washington area's top magicians perform on stage

Bishop Ireton High School

201 Cambridge Road
Alexandria, VA

Saturday, Oct. 8

at 7:30 p.m.



*Mike
Taggert*



*Dwight
Redman*



Emcee and performer Bob Carnathan



Laurie Curry



*Noland
Montgomery*



*Eric
Henning*

\$5 for students
\$8 for adults
\$20 for families

Sponsored by Ring 50 of the International Brotherhood of Magicians
and Larry West Assembly 23 of the Society of American Magicians

Cy Keller known for close-up skills

One of the nation's most accomplished close-up magicians, Cy Keller of Philadelphia, died on Sept. 9 at Keystone Hospice in Wyndmoor. He was 77. He had lived in upper Roxborough before entering the hospice.

Cy lectured several years ago at a Ring 50 meeting. Among his suggestions that night to improve one's magic was to talk slower. "Almost all beginners make the mistake of talking too fast. So do some performers who have been around awhile," he said. Cy was soft-spoken, but his moves caught you off guard even though he maintained "it may be better to be direct at all times" while practicing misdirection.

Former Ring 50 President Eric Henning called Cy a "sleight-of-hand master, a true gentleman and gifted raconteur."

"In his slow-moving hands," said Henning, "cards simply do the impossible, apparently without any intervention. Cy is unforgettable."

Keller started doing magic 68 years ago while growing up in Baltimore. An aunt gave him a book about doing card tricks, the beginning of his foray into the world of magic.

When word spread in the magic community about Keller's battle with Non-Hodgkin's Disease, he received calls and visits from magicians all over the United States, from those he mentored over the years.

Jeff Altman, a regular on The Late Show with David Letterman, met Keller while a student at Johns Hopkins University and credits Keller with teaching him how to entertain. "That was his gift," said Altman, "being entertaining, because as you know, 95 percent of close-up magicians are boring as plain toast."

At 15, Keller did his first formal magic show for an audience of 300 at his high school. But later, Keller did not do shows for kids. "Kids have a short attention span, and for many of them, these tricks become a battle of wits. That takes all the fun out of it," Keller said in an article two years ago. "I do



Cy Keller

close-up and platform magic, not illusions."

John Ekin, who performs magic regularly at Walt Disney World and performed more than 30 times at the White House during the last four administrations, said, "Cy opened my eyes to what magic insiders call 'the real work' and the many practical uses of the 'side steal' in card magic. He is a suave combination of Cary Grant, Hugh Hefner and Charlie Parker — one of the true 'cool cats'."

Keller was an English major at Loyola College in Baltimore, and performed magic at Red Cross shows while in the U.S. Navy. For many years, his magic was just an avocation. He credits magic for bringing out his personality. He was a shy kid.

Keller worked for the Great Books Foundation for 12 years facilitating discussion groups all over the East Coast. He also had stints as an insurance and mens wear salesman and as a documenter at a bank for 14 years. Finally, he started doing magic professionally after work hours, including lecturing at magic clubs in London and Dublin.

Keller's reputation began to rise in the 1980s when he played at The Magic Castle in Hollywood. After that, Keller, who invented about 50 tricks that now

appear in magic magazines, performed at magic conventions and other venues. He had a library collection of more than 500 volumes about magic.

Tim Conover, a professional magician and mentalist who works out of Ponte Verda, Florida, was in his late teens when he met Keller. He remembers Cy's "open approach to sharing with a passionate young magician. It left an indelible impression on my life. His magical technique was flawless." continued Conover.

In 1984, Keller appeared on People Are Talking in Baltimore with Oprah Winfrey before she went national. Although it is commonly assumed that professional magic was much bigger many decades ago because of people like Harry Houdini and Blackstone (Keller's boyhood idol), Keller believed that more people do it today than ever before, thanks to the influence of performers like Ricky Jay, Doug Henning, David Blaine and David Copperfield.

Keller is survived by his companion of 22 years, Bernice Bricklin; five children, Donald, Richard and Michael Keller, Caroline Clare and Barbara Henriksen; eight grandchildren, Deirdre, Oisin, Julia and Stephen Keller, Erica and Jonathan Clare and Nicholas and Adrienne Henriksen; and one great grandchild, Shayla Mullikin. His daughter-in-law, Louise Thomas Keller, and son-in-law, Bill Clare, also survive him. Keller's son David died in 1970.

Keller is also survived by Shoshana Bricklin and Bert, Brahm and Gene Schultz, Aliza Bricklin and Andrew, Jacob and Rachel Schwab and Lila Bricklin, who wrote this article.

Funeral services were at Mishkan Shalom Synagogue, Roxborough, on Sept. 12. Donations in Keller's memory may be made to the Cy Keller Magic of Books Fund c/o The Great Books Foundation, 36 East Wacker Drive, Suite 2300, Chicago, IL 60601-2298.

Lila Bricklin contributed to this article.

Former cryptologist, magician remembered by Ring 50 friends

Fred William Johansen, 93, who worked as a cryptologist with the National Security Agency (NSA) and whose passion was performing magic tricks, died this summer at Frederick Memorial Hospital. He and his wife were longtime Montgomery County residents.

Al Cohen remembers Fred as “a very nice person and a credit to the magic fraternity” who often came by Al’s Magic Shop. “I knew Fred real well. He was an ‘early member’ of SAM 23. Very active in the club,” Al said.

“Fred was a member of both IBM 50 and SAM 23,” Ray Eyler said. “However, in later years he transferred to SAM 141 and was active until he became ill....He was an inventor of Mongolian Silks, an effect that, when it came out, sold well...He will be remembered fondly. He was a gentle soul and open to help.”

“I knew him when I was a young magician,” recalled magic dealer Denny Haney. “Not much to tell other than he was a REALLY nice guy who also took great pride in his Mongolian Silk Mystery effect.”

A native of Nebraska, Fred grew up in a small town in the western part of the state. When he was 13, he began working as an usher at a theater called Skeen’s Wonder Show.

Occasionally, a traveling magic show passed through Hay Springs, his home town, and Fred’s father, editor of the weekly newspaper, usually got a free pass. His stories about the wonders he witnessed prompted young Fred and his twin brother Ferd to put together a magic act. The Twin Mystics, as they billed themselves, entertained at venues across the state.

After high school graduation in 1930, Fred moved to Omaha to find work. He attended the Bickel School of Advertising and a business school. While working for a large furniture store in Omaha, he performed as a professional magician for trade shows, dinners and churches and in theaters.

Shortly after the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor in 1941, Fred joined the U.S. Navy. He was dispatched to

Washington, where he worked with communications specialists in the Navy Department, and in 1943 he was sent to Chunking, China, where he was assigned to the headquarters of Admiral Milton Miles. As a magician, he traveled across China and into Mongolia, performing at Chinese army camps, in temples and in the homes of warlords.

When the war ended, he settled in the Mount Pleasant area of Washington. With his wife and four children, he moved to Montgomery County in 1955.

In Washington, Fred went to work for the CIA and was transferred to the NSA shortly thereafter. His duties as a cryptologist were highly classified, but when he retired in 1973, he was commended for his dedication to the U.S. government and for his support of NSA’s mission.

He continued entertaining with his magic tricks and ventriloquism. A quiet man, he became a different person on stage, his wife, Madge E. Johansen of Jefferson, told the Washington Post. He performed at children’s birthday parties and churches and at Christmas for reporters and their families at the National Press Club. He did his magic act for patients at the National Institutes of Health until he was no longer able to do so.

Fred was a member of the Society of American Magicians for 74 years and served several terms as president.

MAGIC MAN--

The always magical entertainment of Bob Hope is chronicled in a special exhibit now at the Library of Congress. Hope began his career in vaudeville. Harry Houdini was an early pioneer in that venue.



Houdini makes cameo appearance in Bob Hope exhibit

Harry Houdini makes a cameo appearance in an exhibit at the Library of Congress on the life of comedian Bob Hope. “Bob Hope and American Variety” chronicles the ski-nosed comic’s 70-year career from vaudeville to musical theater, to radio and then Hollywood as well as his many appearances before troops in battle zones and sailors aboard ships at sea during wars. It is in the Bob Hope Gallery of American Entertainment at the LOC.



Houdini

Houdini is featured in one display case in the Bob Hope collection. He is seen nearly nude in shackles in an historic photograph on stage. Below the picture are a pair of one the actual handcuffs from which he escaped as well as leg irons he wriggled out of in his act.

Houdini, who struggled at first performing in circuses and dime museum gigs, received his big break in 1899 when he was booked on vaudeville’s Orpheum Circuit. He soon became known as the “King of Handcuffs” to his fans. He embarked on a European tour in 1900, emerging as a star across the Atlantic, appearing before royalty as well as commoners.

When he returned to America, his reputation as a jail breaker and handcuff king was sealed forever when on Jan. 7, 1906, he escaped from the Washington, D.C. jail cell of Charles Guiteau—the assassin of President James Garfield.

In the vaudeville section of the Bob Hope presentation, there’s also a 1918 poster from the Orpheum Theatre featuring Houdini. “Nothing on Earth Can Hold Houdini,” a legend reads. There’s also a photograph of Houdini when he vanished an elephant on stage in 1918. From the early 1880s to the end of the 1920s vaudeville was the most popular form of live entertainment.