

No. 58, KNOXVILLE, TN – Smoky Mountain Mystics

Meets 4th Thursday at 6:45 PM each month

Messiah Lutheran Church

6900 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, Tennessee 37919

JOHN HOPPER, President

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The thirteen members and three guests had a blast in February, and we spent more than a couple hours telling stories about our “first books” and performing some DIY magic or some things that we have made. John Hopper, our president, had his first book at Tarbell #1 with the Companion by Julie Miller for spiritual applications. Mike Stratman told us he received the whole set of autographed Tarbells as his first books (almost like he was bragging...LOL!)

Our first guest of the evening, Paul Gertner, opened with effects from his Covid studies: Steve Forte’s “Gambling Sleight of Hand” book including gorgeous muck switches, second dealing and more. He told stories of being on The Tonight Show and also of going to Johnny Carson’s home to hang out and do magic. Oh, and his first book was Bobo’s Coin Magic that he got for \$15. Our second guest was the Tennessee TVP, Tom Gibson, who is a longtime friend of our Ring (and former member). Tom shared stories of working in Gatlinburg back in the late 70’s, and he remembered reading the 1978 release of Larry Becker’s “World of Mentalism,” and Bill Severn’s “Magic Across the Table.” He performed and taught the Door & Keyhole trick from the latter.

Bill Osburn showed some DIY “magic” that he did 30 years ago making a neon “Magic” sign. Michael Priestap showed a planchet...a mismatched penny with no markings on it along with a coin from the World’s Fair that he recently purchased. Jack Wilson talked about some of his first books which included the Scholastic “Spooky Magic” from which he had performed the levitation many meetings ago. Victor Agreeda showed his latest DIY project where he has found \$2 Apple Watch look-a-likes that he is going to use in a borrow-switch-destroy type of effect, and he recalled that the first book bought by himself was Paul Harris’ “Super Magic.”

Michael Messing uses his first book in his library show as he tells the children about getting “141 Professional Tricks You Can Do” by Sherman Ripley. His favorite DIY project was making a chimney-looking illusion to make Santa appear. His most recent project is a very impressive case to hold his Audio Ape. Tom Vorjohan remembers paying Bill Pryor less than \$6 for his purchase of “Magic Digest” by George Anderson. He also shared his DIY Thumb Tip holder for various denominations of bills. Bill Sturgis was just ten when he got Tarbell, and he later bought “How to Be a Magician.” He is currently working on a Christmas themed parlor version of Animal Hunter.

One of the Ring’s most talented DIYer is Ray Adams, and Ray could have talked all night on this subject; as he said, “if you know me, that’s my whole career.” He is currently doing some amazing modeling work with cardboard (like a vent figure!), plus he uses foam, and he showed an amazing flame-flickering lantern along with so much

more! To end the sharing, our program chairman shared his children's routine with a customized wand that has a mouse peek out the ends as well as shoot across the room! This was another fun night for us, and we especially thank our guests Paul and Tom!

Tom Vorjohan