

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

TIM PRESSLEY, President

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October is a magical month, and just shy of twenty members and spouses had a great celebration beginning with dinner at member Tony Wilhelm's restaurant, *The Local Eatery & Grill*, in Sevierville with their renowned pork tenderloin sandwich along with other American fair and fantastic banana pudding. After a great meal, we caravanned a few miles to the home of magician, Terry Evanswood.

Terry's newly acquired property with an historic home built in 1840 (the oldest home in the county) perched on top of a small hill in Sevierville complete with a bullet hole in the front door from the Civil War is spectacular! He has poured hundreds upon hundreds of hours into renovating, decorating and preparing the three-levels of the home to show to friends, like tonight. For about three hours, we went room-to-room and heard story upon story of the inspirations and accumulations that Evanswood has amassed.

This included treasures like one of the bottles from the set of "I Dream of Jeannie," a Snow White mannequin that came from Disney World's "Scary Adventures" after the ride was taken down, a pair of Marilyn Monroe's shoes, a feather from one of Liberace's boas, a piece of Dolly Parton's bedroom carpet ("don't ask," he says) as well as a piece of Graceland's carpet. In the PT Barnum room – with a life-sized mannequin of Jenny Lind, the most famous singer Barnum ever hired without ever hearing her sing – he played a recording of Barnum's voice. Plus, he played music on an original Edison cylinder phonograph, as he told the group, "Thousands of people around the world are listening to music on Spotify or other streaming services at this very moment...but you are the only ones listening to an Edison cylinder recording right now I can guarantee you." Oh, we have to mention that Mike Phillips has a corner of one room dedicated to his youthful obsession with Farrah Fawcett, including her actual hairbrush and an exact copy of the rosary that she was buried with.

Add to this that his favorite time of year is the Halloween season (he used to have a haunted house that he ran in Chicago for many years), and since we were there just three days before the 95th anniversary of Houdini's death, he also had it all decorated for the Halloween ballyhoo. There is no way to capture the essence of the trip here in this report except to say thank you to Terry and Mike as our hosts for a most incredible Ring meeting as we got to step into his world that included an amusement park, the Titanic, the "cobalt room," the Willy Wonka bathroom, and the PT Barnum room, plus his awesome collection of oddities and magic. Terry this was incredible...thank you!

Tom Vorjohan