



# MAGICURRENTS

SAN DIEGO RING 76

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## *Happy New Year To Ring 76!*

On behalf of the writers, illustrators, photographers, editors, printers, account managers, and support staff of MagiCurrents, I'd like to wish you all prosperity and good health in the coming year.

— James Thayer

## *Classic Magic and Close-up Contest Coming Up*

Happy New Year to everyone at Ring 76! January and February bring two of our most popular Ring meetings of the year. First off, in January we feature our "Classic Magic" night. This night should feature your polished



performance of a classic of magic. Doves, illusions, linking rings, cups and balls, stand-up, close-up, etc. And while card magic is considered one the "classics" of magic, we prefer that you not perform any card tricks for this month. If you would like to sign up and perform

for this meeting, please contact Syd Segal at [btl6380@aol.com](mailto:btl6380@aol.com).

If card magic is your thing, do not worry though because in February the Ring will be having its annual Close-Up Competition. This is without a doubt the most attended and most anticipated event of the year. Prizes are available for the winning acts, so come prepared to astonish your audience. As always, your act must fit within a certain time limit and entries to this contest are very limited. More rules and restrictions are forthcoming, however, if you are interested in signing up for the contest, please contact Syd Segal at [btl6380@aol.com](mailto:btl6380@aol.com).

— Sid Segal

## *The Banquet was Mmm-Mmm-Good!*

Our December meeting was our annual Holiday Banquet. Member Belinda Kaesler had the Lions Club decked out in a Tropical Christmas theme, complete with a grass-roofed service bar. This year's banquet was a potluck dinner, with an open wine bar, and entertainment provided by The Magical Misfits (Doug Brewer and John George). The doors opened at 5:30, and by 6 o'clock, our meeting hall was filled with more than 80 Ring members eagerly eyeing a spectacular buffet. Mago Ruly provided seasonal music with his acoustical guitar, and singing in both Spanish and English.

The feast began at 6:30 – and it was both abundant and terrific. Kenny Shelton thoughtfully provided take-home boxes.

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HONEST SID GERHART RING 76

EDITOR JAMES THAYER – [EDITOR@RING76.COM](mailto:EDITOR@RING76.COM)



Near the end of the meal, President Kenny Shelton conducted a raffle with numerous magical prizes. Terry Lunceford then took center stage to introduce The Magical Misfits.

The Magical Misfits, consisting of Doug Brewer and John George, was a very entertaining blend of mentalism and comedy, and these two entertainers really have synergy. They perform good routines, but as is usually the case, it's the presentation that makes the show! These guys were great!!

The Ring thanks Richard Ustick for coordinating who-brought-what, and for bringing the servicing supplies; Syd Segal for arranging the entertainment, Richard Ustick and Terry Lunceford for sharing carving and serving duties, and Bob Meigs for bringing wine and making coffee. The Ring thanks Vernetta, of the Lions Club, for helping decorate the room, and , for hand making all the white chocolate candy canes she set at each persons seat placing. Also many, many thanks go to Cobain from TIKI LAND for helping Belinda decorate the Club with our "Holidays in Paradise" theme. Cobain donated a lot of his time and his tropical decor, palapa, and party rentals. He had to make 3 trips out there, 2 to set-up, and then on Wednesday, after the Lions Club Party, he and Belinda came back to pack up the decor.

And thanks to all the members of Ring 76 who have made 2011 a very entertaining year, and a very Happy New Year to you all.

— Bob Meigs

## ***Four (actually Five) Boldly Marched Into the Lion's Den***

On December 14, two days after our own banquet, five members of Ring 76 were back at the Lions Club for another show; the Lions Club Holiday Banquet. An annual show for our landlords is part of our lease agreement, so these members

performed a community service for both the Lions Club and Ring 76.

The performers, in order of appearance, were Bob Meigs, Kenny Shelton, Jeff Marcus, and Terry Lunceford. Joe Mystic was there if needed, but as it turned out, didn't perform. Bob opened with his St. Vincent's Decanter (adapted from Multum in Parvo); Kenny, his America's Got Talent--style juggling; Jeff, his patented Linking Rings; and Terry performed a series of routines to close. Terry's Vanishing Bandana was a tremendous hit – which is causing me to give that routine another look!

Actually, Bob was scheduled only to emcee, but became a performer when Joe Mystic was delayed by another engagement. Joe did arrive in mid-show, but Bob had already gone and time was short, so Joe – though prepared - didn't go on. That's Ring 76 - talent to spare!

Our thanks to these five for fulfilling this Ring commitment (even though they had fun doing it)! And for everyone who missed out, the Lions' club is planning a charity fund-raiser in April, and will again be looking to Ring 76 to help out. Interested members should talk to Bob Meigs at the January meeting.

— Bob Meigs

## ***Magic Notes***

Magic-Con 2012 is fast approaching. The organizers are assembling an amazing lineup of magic's smartest thinkers, greatest visionaries, and top performers including David Blaine, Dani DaOrtiz, John Gaughan, Paul Harris, Jim Steinmeyer and many, many more. On April 12, they will gather in San Diego for an inspiring weekend of wonder and excitement. Registration is now open with a special advance offer for the first 100 passes. Further information can be found at: <http://magic-con.org>



(Continued on page 7)

## *Photos from the December Meeting*



*Mago Ruly*



*The Guest of Honor*



*Santa checks in to see who's been naughty or nice.*



*The Asembled Multitude*

## *Photos from the December Meeting*



### *The Magical Misfits!*



## *Photos from the December Meeting*



*John George*



*Doug Brewer*

*The Magical Misfits!*



## *Mystery about the Masters of Mystery*

### *"Masters of Mystery - The Strange Friendship of Arthur Conan Doyle and Harry Houdini"*

*Reviewed by Joel A Moskowitz M D  
03 January 2012*

Few names are as famous as Sherlock Holmes and Houdini. One is fictional and the other a supreme example of fictitious acting. It has been remarked that more people have read the stories of Sherlock Holmes than those who have read the Bible. The creator of Sherlock Holmes, Arthur Conan Doyle, a lapsed ophthalmologist, who attempted to kill off his creation (read Rikenback Falls) became obsessed with the quasireligion of Spiritualism. That one's 'spirit' resides in an afterlife and can be reached by mediums via séances was appealing to persons having unresolved issues with those who died and to those who resented the finiteness of life.

In 1848 Maggie and Katie Fox in Hydesville, New York launched the idea of communicating with the dead. By 1881, Doyle, raised in a Catholic family, but agnostic came across Spiritualism and ignoring the extreme rationality of his creation, Sherlock Holmes, became convinced in all matters Spiritual that they were without fault. He wrote in the Strand Magazine (where Sherlock Holmes saw print) that photos of fairies were 'real'. Uncritical to a fault, his fans forgave him his eccentricities.

His father died after many years of psychiatric illness. When his first wife died in 1906, his son Kingsley shortly before end of World War I, and in a short time interval he lost his brother, two brothers-in-law, two nephews, Conan Doyle became depressed. It was comforting to think that there was existence beyond the grave. There followed a literary turn to paranormal. The Professor Challenger (another Doyle hero) in "Land of Mist", a book in which he wrote that

he was convinced in the veracity of the Cottingley Faïres photographs. In 1926, writing the History of Spiritualism, he praised the psychic phenomena and spirit materializations of such as Eusapia Palladino and Mina Margary" Crando.

Enter Houdini, an admirer. Houdini had great respect for Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. After the death of his beloved mother, Houdini went on a campaign to expose fraudulent mediums whose devices were simply trickery. Conversely, Doyle in his book the Edge of the Unknown inferred that Houdini had supernatural powers. They communicated and crossed swords. Doyle knowing of Houdini's affection for his mother, offered the talents of his, then, wife who was able to do 'automatic writing' to link up to Houdini's dead mother.

During a visit to America in 1922, Lady Doyle after putting herself into a trace drew a cross at the top of a sheet of paper and wrote "Oh, my darling, thank God, at last I am through." There was a reference

as well that Houdini would soon get all the evidence he was thirsting for. To be polite, Houdini, didn't yell "Fake, Fake!" However, he knew that his mother knew not one wiff of English. She was Hungarian born and devoutly Jewish. His father had been a Rabbi and certainly, there would not have been a 'cross' at the top of the message. When later Houdini shared his disbelief, Doyle countered with language having no significance to spirits.

Houdini was intent on crusading against fraudulent mediums. As part of a Scientific American committee he offered a substantial reward to anyone who could prove his/her methods were authentic (think of James Randi) Doyle resisted Houdini's efforts to acquaint him with the dodges perpetrated by these fakirs. When

*(Continued on page 7)*



*(Magic Notes— Continued from page 2)*

David Regal will be lecturing at 3 Generations of Magic at 741-B Olive Ave in Vista. David is an amazing creative magician with ideas that anyone can use. The lecture will cost \$25 and will take place on January 28th. Contact James@3generations-ofmagic.com for further information or to reserve your seat.

## "MagiToon"

by Jim Whiting & Ellen Friedman



"Too bad dust bunnies don't vanish like magic rabbits."

### Ring 76 2011-12 Calendar

Jan.	9	Classic Magic (no card tricks)*
Feb.	13	Close-Up competition*
Mar.	12	Auction
Apr.	9	Teach-A-Trick Night
Apr	10	Lecture
May	14	Stage Competition*
June	11	Hi-Tech Magic*
July	8	Installation Banquet

\* Opportunity for Members to Perform

*(Mysteries — Continued from page 6)*

Houdini turned his 'guns' on Margery, Doyle resented this intensely. He kept maintaining that practicing mediums were honest and not cheaters. In "Masters of Mystery - The Strange Friendship of Arthur Conan Doyle and Harry Houdini" the reader will find a well researched readable book about these two superstars. In his acknowledgments, the author begins "This is not a biography of Arthur Conan Doyle or of Harry Houdini." He curiously refers to an unnamed person or persons whom he describes as partisan admirers declining to help and venting at him but he was appreciative that it was not a threat of violence. Seemingly Mr Sandford has encountered such in his past inquiries to rock and film stars.

This hardbound published by Palgrave MacMillan in which the author, a former music critic for The Times (London) has penned a stimulating story of two luminaries known the world over and their 'friendship' and their disagreements. Doyle argued that Houdini profited by unmasking those who were psychic by publicity and perhaps some of that is true. Some essence of doubt must have persisted. After his death, Bess would hold a séance in the Knickerbocker Hotel in Hollywood and search for a 'sign'. After ten years, with no sign forthcoming, she decided to abandon the effort. On that last day, upon leaving the hotel, it has been reported, that suddenly an atypical unseasonal downpour came forth from the heavens. Was this a sign? By the way, the code word he gave Bess, his wife, was "Rosabelle Believe".

What psychological mysteries impelled these two wonderous men to adopt their attitudes is a focus for conjecture? I, the reviewer, with all of my Forensic Psychiatric experience, and having been a member of The Psychic Entertainers Association and contributed to their journals and also a Scientific Expert for C.S.I.C.O.P. (Committee for Scientific Inquiry of Claims of the Paranormal.) would not hazard a premise. But you, the reader, will enjoy and be enlightened by Christopher Sandford's scholarly work. The doctor prescribes this book: Rx Rx Rx Rx Rx (5/5)