



Vol 23 No. 5

October 2025

The Magical Minutes

VANCOUVER MAGIC CIRCLE

ibmring92.com

the Charles Howard Ring



VMC EXECUTIVE

PRESIDENT

Simon Cassegrain

1st VICE PRESIDENT

Roy J Hopwood

2nd VICE PRESIDENT.

Henry Tom

SECRETARY

Charles Gauthier

TREASURER

Roy J Hopwood

SGT. AT ARMS

Ken Cowie (Interim)

PAST PRESIDENT

Yoosik Oum

DIRECTORS

Shawn Farquhar

Graham Kita

Scott Barker

Michel Vetterli

James Nguyen

OTHER APPOINTMENTS

WEBMASTER

Simon Cassegrain

NEWSLETTER

Roy J Hopwood

John Stenning

TLR SCRIBE(S)

Scott Barker

Charles Gauthier

LIBRARIAN

Unfilled

PHOTOGRAPHY

Henry Tom

Roy J Hopwood

Graham Kita

COMPETITION CHAIR

Michel (Mike) Vetterli



Happy 3rd
Birthday to
The Magical
Minutes
Lets hope
there are
many more

The editorial staff
of The Magical
Minutes wish all
members of the
Vancouver Magic
Circle a very
happy and
slightly scary
Halloween



Simon Says

Hello everyone! I hope you all had a wonderful Thanksgiving long weekend, and now it's time to roll into spooky season!

We had a very successful auction with many members and guests attending our last meeting.

This event was also the occasion to bring back an old tradition: the "Teach-a-Trick" tables. It was very well received, with enthusiastic participation at all three tables that were set up.

If you'd like to see more of this format, please let us know, sometimes a little change can spark great innovation!

This meeting was also an opportunity to celebrate Billy for his Invention Award at FISM back in July, we enjoyed a delicious cake, thanks to Graham.

One of the highlights of the month was the success of VMC members at the latest PCAM convention

Congratulations to all our winners for making the VMC proud!

Our next meeting will be held on Thursday October 23rd at 7PM, it will be Tip Top & Tootsie Competition for the best spooky magic, and also we will have a costume competition.

Looking forward to see you at our next meeting!

Cheers, Simon

The Editors Desk

September's Sleight and Spirit

September swept in with a flurry of bids and banter. The VMC's online auction raised a spirited \$263.20—each dollar a testament to the enthusiasm of buyers, sellers, and the quiet magic of community support.

At the hall meeting, the energy was palpable. Items exchanged hands, commissions found their way to the treasurer, and the room buzzed with smooth transactions and shared smiles. No competition this month—just coffee, cookies, and the kind of relaxed chatter that builds lasting bonds.

Then came the jam session: sleights danced across fingertips, ideas sparked like flint, and laughter echoed through the hall. It was a meeting of minds and magic, unhurried and unforgettable.

October looms with Halloween thrills. Costumes, enchantments, and a touch of theatrical mischief await.

Come dressed to impress—and ready to cast a spell or two.

Stay safe, stay magical.

Congratulations

Congratulations to all of the winners and all of the other participants in the various competitions at the recent **PCAM** convention. In particular, congratulations to those winners that are (among other clubs) members of the VMC:

Scott Barker	1st place	PCAM	Close up Competition
Henry Tom	2nd place	PCAM	Close up Competition
Henry Tom	1st place	PCAM	Most Novel
Alex Zander	1st Place	PCAM	Kids Competition
Alex Zander	1st Place	PCAM	Mentalism Competition
Alex Zander	1st place	PCAM	Peoples Choice
Glen LeBarre	1st Place	SAM	One hand Cut-A-Thon

Linking Ring Report

VMC #92 Ring Report for Thursday, September 25th 2025

The Vancouver Magic Ring's monthly meeting took place on Thursday September 25th, the first one after our summer break. Thanks to Graham Kita for opening up the hall, and Ken Cowie, Scott Barker for setting up the tables and chairs. Graham made coffee for everyone and put out water, some brownies that he bought, and a large box of assorted chips that were left over from the summer picnic.

The first part of the evening had everyone picking up their winning items from our annual September VMC Auction, which was run a week prior to the meeting. A special thanks to President Simon Cassegrain and Treasurer Roy Hopwood for organizing and setting up the auction. Roy singlehandedly did all the data entry of over 150 items for the auction's web page. Great job Roy! After the auction items were exchanged and some side deals took place for unsold items. Over \$200.00 was raised for the club, thanks everyone who contributed items for another fun and profitable auction.

Tonight featured several members workshopping various magic tricks and techniques. Mike Vetterli demonstrated and taught several different false cuts. Jonathan Santiago was teaching several of his favorite card tricks and Henry Tom taught a great beginner's self-working card trick. Genpei Cai also taught some of his tricks using his lapping technique and some card and coin sleights as well. Thanks Gentlemen!

At about 8:30pm Simon paused the meeting to honour the VMC's own and past IBM International President Billy Hsueh's FISM award. Billy traveled with past IBM International President Shawn Farquhar to the prestigious FISM World Championship of Magic in Torino, Italy, this past July. Billy entered 2 categories, Close-Up/Parlour with his magic Teapot routine, and the Invention category. Billy won in the Invention category with his unique Teapot! Outstanding Billy! He brought his beautiful crystal trophy to show the club members. Graham Kita bought a delicious cake to celebrate Billie's accomplishments. Thanks Graham!

Various magic jam's then broke out for the remainder of the evening. Shawn was entertaining one new member and his dad, Aaryan and Nehul Parekh, with some of his amazing card magic. Henry Tom and Graham Kita took some great photos of the evening's festivities. Thanks gentlemen! Also, Shawn gave away a collection of his London Magic Circle's monthly Magic Circular magazines. Thanks Shawn! Thanks to Graham Kita for giving Roy Hopwood a ride to the meeting and Ken Cowie for giving me a ride as well. We had nineteen members, and seven guests attend.

Scott Barker

What Would You Have Done?

This happened to one of THE GREATS at a performance given before a very large audience of New York's elite. Appearing in Chinese costume he presented the Burned and Restored Ribbon trick made famous by Long Tack Sam. All went well until he set fire to the faked centre portion of the two ribbons. This burned rapidly and; since he had not fireproofed the doubled parts of the ribbons to which this was attached, at the finish, instead of the two assistants holding the ends of the two restored ribbons they each had two pieces of ribbon in their hands!

What would you have done?

On his first visit to China, Nicola—after playing in the European quarter—moved over to one of the Chinese theatres. For the opening night he engaged a Chinese Interpreter to relay his patter to the audience. At first he was gratified by the behaviour of the spectators, they smiled and laughed and seemed to be enjoying themselves immensely, but when his best and most mysterious illusions were treated with shouts of laughter he was quite bewildered. After the show the Chinese manager of the theatre told him that the interpreter had interpreted, not his patter, but the tricks. From his stand point on the stage he had explained how the tricks and illusions were being done.

What would you have done?

The Dennis Chan Picnic

As we didn't produce a newsletter in September we thought you would like to see the photos taken at the picnic in August.



Photos courtesy of Henry Tom and Shawn Farquhar

*****WARNING! CON ARTISTS ALIVE AND WELL IN VANCOUVER!*****



We all know that a well done pick-pocket routine can be great entertainment, however, the art is alive and well on the streets of Vancouver and other cities around the world; I have heard of groups of professional pick-pockets, working together, on the busses and at various locations around the city and have even, many years ago, been sitting with a group of E.S.L. students in a food court downtown when a man tried to sneak up behind one of the students and steal something from their bag, or perhaps take the whole bag!

What really got my attention and why I am writing this, is a recent story on the news, that told of a woman sitting by herself in public, wearing her mothers antique necklace she had owned for many years, when a younger woman (the victim is a senior citizen) came over to her, invaded her personal space and insisted that she try on a necklace (something along those lines). Well, you can guess what happened: the senior citizen was left with a cheap piece of costume jewelry and the scammer had disappeared with her gold necklace.

I've heard of worse stories in other countries, however, I believe we must be careful when strangers are getting too close and or are making physical contact, because like the lady who lost her necklace, we could end up missing something ourselves.

Stay magical.

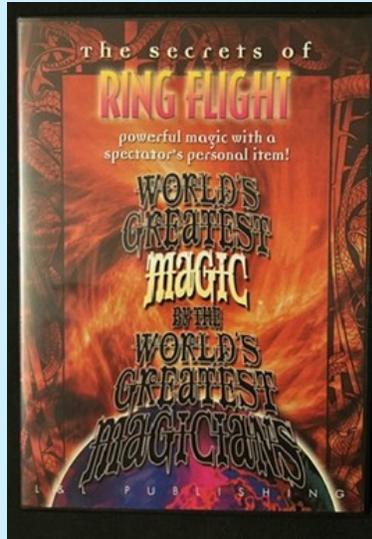
J.Stenning
Oct 7/2025

VMC Meeting—September 2025



Photos Courtesy of Henry Tom: John Stenning: Simon Cassegrain and Graham Kita

RING FLIGHT (DVD)



In this video, there are some very interesting routines using a ring flight, a few of them even use some “ring on string or wand” applications as well. Some of these methods are very unique and I have personally never seen them anywhere, not that I claim to know how everything works (not by a long shot)!

Michael Close, for example, does a routine that is much different than the usual or classic ring flight, as he does not want to risk damaging a borrowed ring; several of the performers talk about how to be careful with ladies rings that have stones in them, which stones are more prone to coming off/getting loose, however, no one seems to mention just NOT using any delicate rings in the first place.

I really enjoyed this one and found the information very valuable, not just for the ring flight methods, but the ring on string techniques as well.

If you have ever wanted to do a ring flight routine, or combine it with some string or wand methods, this DVD is highly recommended.

Featuring:

- STEVE DRAUN
- BRUCE CERVON
- DAN TONG
- DAN FLESHMAN

And Michael Close.

Stay magical.

J.Stenning
September 26, 2025

PCAM 2025

SAM One Hand Cut-A-Thon



Photos courtesy of PCAM

Magicians and Witches: A Halloween Tale

Under a glowing harvest moon, a magician and two witches gathered on Elderglen Hill. Jack-o'-lanterns flickered, mist curled, and ancient magic stirred. They began the Ritual of Emberlight, chanting with moonstones and starlight. Suddenly, the Sorcerer of Dreadmoor emerged from the shadows, his staff pulsing with dark power.

“You dare summon without me?” he growled.

The magician raised his wand. “We protect what you tried to destroy.” Spells clashed, light against shadow.

The witches joined in, their magic weaving through the night. As dawn neared, the forest fell silent—balance restored, for now ...



Story and image courtesy of Copilot

I Recall...

By

Roy Hopwood

Mentors

Have You Ever Had a Mentor? Have You Ever Been a Mentor?

I've had the honour of standing on both sides of the mentoring fence.

As a young magician in Adelaide, I was fortunate to be mentored by Gerry McCreanor—a man who didn't just teach magic, but survival. One of our regular gigs was performing at the Stonyfell Winery Christmas functions, where Gerry taught me how to play Santa while performing magic. It was festive, chaotic, and utterly unforgettable.

But before I could work the main corporate room—packed with 300 to 400 guests who'd been enjoying the corporate bar since 7 pm—I had to prove myself in the smaller, non-corporate rooms. These were the warm-up acts, the proving grounds. Only after earning my stripes would Gerry allow me into the lion's den.

We'd start working the main room around 9 pm, just as the wine had fully settled in and the crowd was at its rowdiest. Gerry's advice was simple and unforgettable: *"If you can work this room and come out alive, you can work any room."* He was right. It was a tough crowd, but a brilliant training ground. Thanks, Gerry—for the lesson, the laughs, and the quiet confidence you passed on.

Gerry also mentored Gary Edwards on how to work as a magic-performing Santa at Stonyfell. It became a tradition, a training ground, and a brotherhood of red suits and sleight-of-hand.

You had to be on your toes and ready for anything the crowd could throw at you—sometimes literally. One night, I earned kudos from Gerry for a response to a question you'd hear at least twice an evening. The comedian Kevin 'Bloody' Wilson had a famously R-rated song called *"Santa, where's my F..ing bike?"* When someone lobbed that line at me, I didn't flinch. I shot back: *"In your F..ing shed."* The room froze, then roared. Gerry hadn't thought of that one, and soon he and Gary were using my comeback in their own sets.

Years later, I resurrected and ran YAMS—the Young Adelaide Magicians Society—for many years. Originally founded by Gerry McCreanor and Peter Faro, it had gone into recess before I brought it back to life. Through YAMS, I mentored a new generation of magicians: Jamie Ramzan, Sky Loh, Lewis Parkin, DJ Lloyd, Shahin Zareei, and others.

Shahin, an Iranian who calls himself Persian, first contacted me out of the blue. He introduced himself as a professional magician, but I told him, "I know all the professional magicians in Adelaide, and I've never heard of you. What do you do?" He said he was a card man. I invited him over to see what he could do.

His technical skills were far beyond mine, but his presentation and people skills were almost nonexistent. He was enthusiastic—too enthusiastic. He wanted to show magic to everyone he met. I had to rein him in and explain that not everyone wants to see a trick.

Slowly, his personality softened, and his skills became even more impressive. But he still had blind spots. I remember rehearsing for a children's charity show at the Royalty Theatre. Raymond Crowe had just finished his set when Shahin said, *"He's not very good. All he does is entertain people."* He was still a long way off

understanding the art.

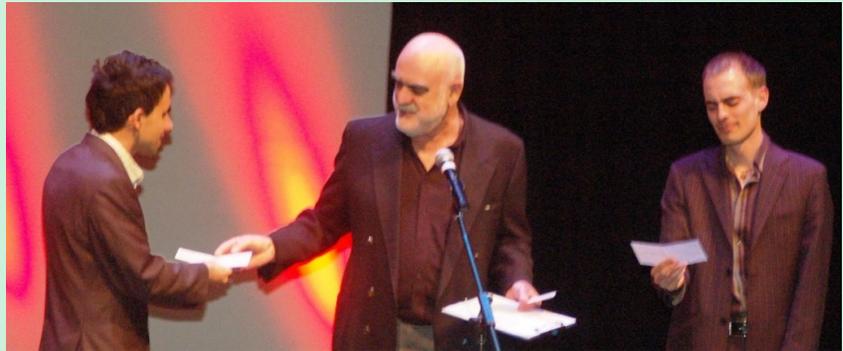
I kept mentoring him—discussing performance psychology, audience management, and the subtleties that separate a technician from a true entertainer.

In 2007, ASM Assembly No. 1 in Melbourne held its centenary celebration convention, drawing magicians from around the world. One of the major events was the close-up magic competition. Shahin said he'd enter—but only if he thought he'd win. I told him, "You can't guarantee a win. Just do your best." He replied, "*If I'm not going to win, I won't enter.*" Eventually, I convinced him he had a good chance.

We began crafting his act. My vision was simple: if you're a magician, you don't need a briefcase—everything should be produced from thin air. Start with a coin that multiplies, changes, vanishes, reappears, then morphs into a deck of cards, which disappears at the end. But Shahin was strong-minded and didn't follow all my ideas.

Instead, he opened his act by walking on stage, and saying: "***Don't mess with me, I'm a terrorist.***" It was bold, provocative, and risky.

When the votes were tallied, he was declared an equal winner alongside Simon Coronel.



Photos courtesy of Roy Hopwood

In his acceptance speech, he thanked "***My God, My Father, and Roy.***"

Now, here in Vancouver, I've agreed to mentor a young person who's shy and quiet—but I see great potential in him. The cycle continues.

Mentoring can be a tough job, but it is thoroughly rewarding.

Here are some delightful and dramatic backstage anecdotes from famous magicians that reveal the humor, danger, and unpredictability behind the curtain.

James Randi's Near-Drowning Escape Before becoming a famed skeptic, *James Randi* performed Houdini-style escapes. In the 1950s, he was locked in a submerged metal coffin when the lock jammed. As his air ran out, he fought panic and finally wrenched it open seconds before blacking out. "It wasn't magic that saved me," he said. "It was sheer stubbornness".

Derren Brown and the Time Traveler Just before a live show, *Derren Brown* was approached backstage by a man claiming to be a time traveler. He insisted Brown would mess up a specific prediction—then security escorted him out. Strangely, Brown *did* mess up that prediction.

David Copperfield's Vanishing Assistant While rehearsing a disappearing act, one of *Copperfield's* assistants took a wrong turn in the prop tunnel and genuinely vanished—ending up in a different part of the theatre. The crew panicked, thinking the illusion had gone terribly wrong. Copperfield quipped, "It was the only time the trick worked too well".

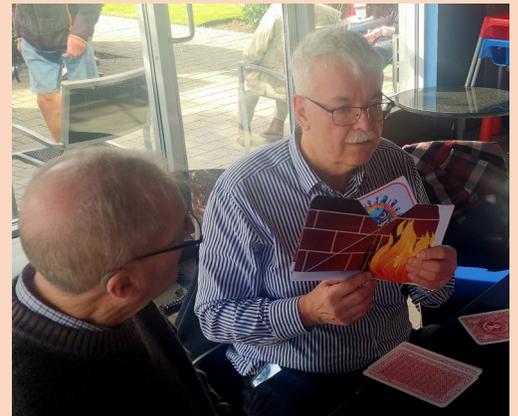
Dynamo Accidentally Glued to a Car During a street magic shoot, *Dynamo* wore a hoodie embedded with magnets for a levitation trick. Leaning on a parked car, he instantly stuck to it. It took a minute and some awkward maneuvering to unstick him—he later joked, "I stayed cool. Looked like I meant it".

Source: <https://paulcmagic.co.uk/>

Coffee & Magic Jam.

Fun Jam on Friday October 3 2025 at Waves in Steveston with Guest from Germany Rolf Haecker & Ken Cowie; Scott Barker; Roy Hopwood; Graham Kita & Julius Palme (from Germany) all sharing tips & ideas.

Even some of the Patrons at Waves enjoyed some fun magic.



Photos courtesy of Ken Cowie

HALLOWEEN



What is it? What is it to you?

As the season of trick or treating is upon us and people get ready to hand out candy for the kids, go to parties and generally have fun, I have been asking myself about what Halloween means to me, what it is now compared to the 70's when I was a greedy little kid, going out to get as much candy as I could. How about you, have you noticed a difference in Halloween over the last few years or more?

As I've gotten older and no longer drink, going to a party, or to see live music on Halloween isn't a priority anymore and now that I perform magic, I always start to think about Halloween around the end of August or the beginning of September; I also try to come up with some sort of original Halloween routine for our annual competition.

As I'm sure most of you know, Halloween is big business! People in western countries spend millions on candy and treats to give away and costumes. (some even get them for their pets)! It has become a favourite holiday of many, as it seems to be....how shall I say it? Less stressful than Christmas perhaps?

If you perform magic, or want to at some point in the future, I would recommend you give some thought to Halloween themed magic, as there is usually lot's of work around this time of year and Halloween isn't going away anytime soon.

So again, I ask you: "what is Halloween to you?"

Happy Halloween everyone and don't eat too much candy....just kidding, eat lot's!

J.Stenning Oct 5/2025

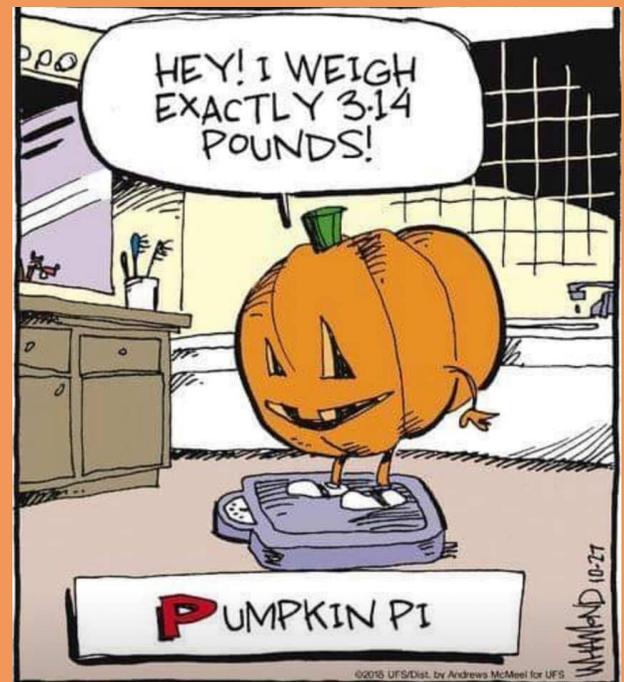


PCAM Competition Winners & more



Photos courtesy of PCAM

Jest for Fun



Why didn't the skeleton go to the party?

He had no body to go with!

Why are ghosts so bad at lying?

Because you can see right through them.

Diary Dates*

Generally meets on the fourth Thursday of the Month—January; February; March; April; May; June ; September; October: November; Plus August—Picnic on date tba.

Vancouver Magic Circle
lbmring92.com

VMC Executive Meeting:	TBA - via Zoom
October 23, 2025	Tip top & Tootsie (Halloween) Competition Best Halloween costume fun competition
November 2025	TBA

Shows (as a courtesy)

Hidden Wonders https://hiddenwonders.ca	Shows are generally on Thursday 7 PM, Fri & Sat 7 & 9:30 and Sunday 3 & 7 TBA—check web site for dates and times
--	---

The Parlour Magic Show The Parlour Magic Show	Monthly on the third Wednesday TBA—check web site for dates and times
---	--

Other Clubs (as a courtesy)

Society of American Magicians #95 SAM#95	Meetings of the SAM #95 are held the first Tuesday of the month at members homes. TBA—check web site for dates and times
---	--

Fraser Valley Magic Company FVMC	Regular monthly meetings take place on the second Friday of most months, at a private home in Mission, BC. TBA—check web site for dates and times
--	--

Magic quote of the month

“The magician and the child share a secret: the world is not always what it seems.”

—Charles de Lint “

VMC Library

The Vancouver Magic Circle Library Catalogue is online!

Remember: if you want a new trick, look in an old book! Our hope is that whenever our members see a trick they really want, or are trying to learn a difficult piece of theory, or are interested in buying a book— they will first check the library. This is one way we can improve our magic, and this [searchable online catalogue](#) is the first step towards taking full advantage of this incredible resource.

Please Do Not Forward The Magical Minutes to Non-Members*

This is just a friendly reminder to all our members to please not to forward our newsletter, 'The Magical Minutes' or any private newsletter links, to people who are not financial members of the VMC. The online VMC Library, and The Magical Minutes newsletter are a membership privilege. It takes a lot of time and effort to write our newsletter, and we do it exclusively for the benefit of our members. If a non-financial member asks you to forward The Magical Minutes to them, please refrain from doing so. Lastly, the Executive Committee would like to thank everyone who has contributed to and / or sent positive messages about The Magical Minutes newsletter. It is truly appreciated and makes all the hard work worth it.

Thank you
The VMC Executive Committee

** Do NOT rely upon this newsletter for critical dates and times of meetings; events or shows. Always check the official source of the information.*