



Vol 23 No. 6

November 2025

The Magical Minutes

# VANCOUVER MAGIC CIRCLE

[ibmring92.com](http://ibmring92.com)

the Charles Howard Ring



## VMC EXECUTIVE

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Simon Cassegrain

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Yoosik Oum

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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  
Vincent Lee

### COMPETITION CHAIR

Michel (Mike) Vetterli

# In Flanders Fields

BY

## JOHN MCCRAE

In Flanders fields, the poppies grow  
Between the crosses, row on row,  
That mark our place; and in the sky  
The larks, still bravely singing, fly  
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago  
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,  
Loved and were loved, and now we lie,  
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:  
To you from failing hands we throw  
The torch; be yours to hold it high.  
If ye break faith with us who die  
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow  
In Flanders fields.



## LEST WE FORGET

## Simon Says

Hi everyone, We're already nearing the end of November, and we have plenty of exciting events lined up before the new year.

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you at our Christmas Dinner on Wednesday, November 26th at 7 PM at El Torito in Vancouver. There will be a fun gift exchange as well as our annual Stage Competition.

I also owe you an update on the website and roster. The new members' section is nearly complete, and we're currently testing it before the public launch.

If you'd like to participate in the testing phase or share feedback, please feel free to reach out to me.

As we head into the busiest month of the year, I want to wish each and every one of you great success and plenty of joy sharing your magic!

See you on Wednesday!

Cheers, Simon Cassegrain

## The Editors Desk

Even though November 11, 2025, has now past, I felt it was important that it be commemorated on the front page with the poem 'In Flanders Field' by John McCrae. You will note that the first line ends with 'Grow' other versions end it with 'blow'. In John McCrae's original hand written version he uses 'grow'.

Even though I am originally from England in the UK and spent 55 years in Australia before coming to Canada in 2019. My family have a strong wartime connection with Canada.

My 1st cousin 2x removed **Frank Hopwood** during WW1 served with *The Canadian Expeditionary Force (CEF)*.

In WW2 my Uncle Roy was in the Royal Navy and was a leading stoker on *LCT159* at Dieppe on August 19 1942 (Operation Jubilee).

*"Your uncle's craft was the second LCT to touchdown. They successfully unloaded the three Churchill tanks and an armoured car, (for the Calgary Tank Regiment. Ed) as well as most of the troops they were carrying, but while doing so the ship took a terrible pounding from artillery, mortar and machine-gun fire."* source: Philip Mills.

This was the First Canadian tank unit to see combat during the **Dieppe Raid**

Uncle Roy along with others was captured and spent the rest of the war as a POW.

## *In Flanders Fields* — A Poem of Remembrance



John McCrae Canadian poet and physician (1872–1918)

Written on **May 3, 1915** by Canadian physician and soldier **Lieutenant-Colonel John McCrae**, *In Flanders Fields* was inspired by the death of his close friend, Lieutenant Alexis Helmer, during the **Second Battle of Ypres**. McCrae, grieving and surrounded by graves marked with simple wooden crosses and blooming wild poppies, gave voice to the fallen through his poem.

First published in **Punch magazine** on December 8, 1915, the poem quickly became one of the most quoted works of the First World War. Its imagery of **red poppies growing among soldiers' graves** inspired the remembrance poppy, now one of the world's most recognized memorial symbols.

The poem speaks from the perspective of the dead, urging the living to carry on their struggle and honor their sacrifice.

# Linking Ring Report

## VMC #92 Ring Report for Thursday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2025

The Vancouver Magic Ring's monthly meeting took place on Thursday October 23<sup>rd</sup>. Thanks to Graham Kita for opening the hall, and Mike Vetterli and Roy Hopwood for setting up the tables and chairs. Mike brought and set up his portable stage lights for the evening's competition. Thanks Mike! Ken Cowie brought cookies, Graham made coffee for everyone and put out water, and also brought some Halloween themed cookies, cupcakes and candies. Thanks Ken and Graham!

President Simon Cassegrain got the meeting underway just after 7pm with a few short announcements. He mentioned that the next Pacific Coast Association of Magicians convention in 2026 was going to coincide and be a part of past IBM President Shawn Farquhar's New Westminster Magic Week during March Spring break. Past IBM Presidents, Alex Seaman and Billy Hsueh will be the President and Co-Chair of the convention.

Then Simon introduced Lon Mandrake for a workshop on mentalism with a Halloween theme. Lon taught some great routines using several different mathematical principles which he explained. Another trick with a math principle that uses a freely thought of number, was reworked to using words instead of numbers and the chosen word is revealed. Very clever! He also performed a marketed effect called "Overkill" by Christopher Taylor. A murder mystery that mysteriously uses ten cards, 5 with victims pictured, and 5 cards with their murderers. Through a sequence of shuffling the cards by spelling the victim's names, the cards end up matching the victims to their murderers. Very baffling! Great workshop Lon! The meeting stopped for a 20-minute break to socialize and get refreshments.

Simon called the meeting back to order and proceeded to the annual costume contest. There were 6 contestants, Scott Barker as a mad scientist, Ken Cowie as a sports super fan, Roy Hopwood as a witch, Graham Kita as Mr. America, come on Graham, we are in Canada! Vincent Lee as a monk and our newest junior member [Aaryan Parekh](#) as Dracula. This year's winner was Aaryan Parekh! Congratulations Aaryan!

Next on the evenings agenda was the Halloween themed magic contest for the Tip Top and Tootsie Trophy. The M/C's for the contest were last year's winners Rob Tezka and Vincent Lee, they had tied in scoring, and both won! The contestants, in order of appearance, were Yoosik Oum, Scott Barker, and Roy Hopwood. This year's trophy went to first time winner Scott Barker with his comedic finger chopper routine. Presenting the Tip Top and Tootsie trophy to Scott were Competition Chair Mike Vetterli, President Simon Cassegrain, and M/C Rob Tezka.

To finish off the evening Rob Tezka performed a new routine in order to get some feedback from the members. It was Halloween themed mentalism where the spectator freely selected one of three horror novels. A bookmark was then freely placed into the book and two cutouts in the bookmark lined up with two random words on that page which were then remembered. Then, out of nowhere, an old-time radio broadcast started, it was a horror anthology show. The host mentioned the show's sponsor, which were the two freely chosen words. Very well done Rob!

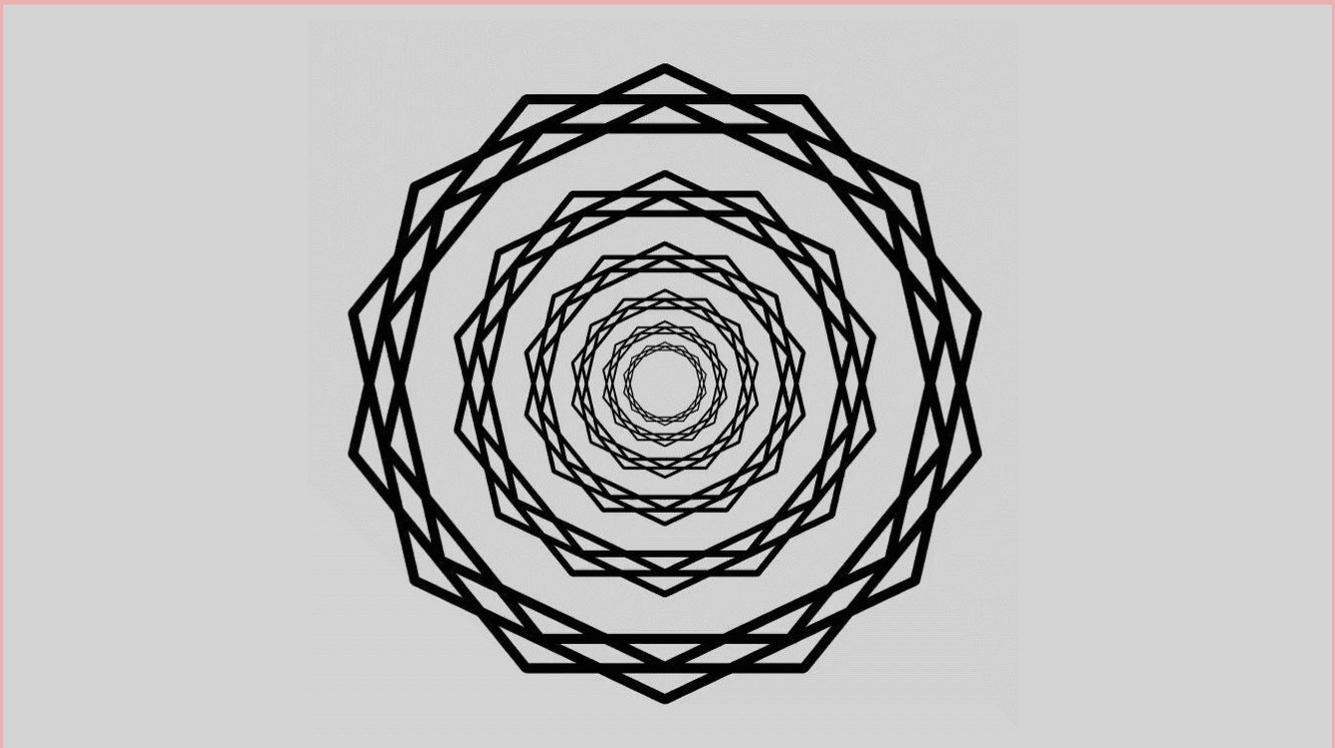
The meeting wrapped up with more socializing and members giving Rob feedback on his routine. Rob is also featuring this routine in his limited time engagement show, The Cozy Spirit Show, for the week leading up to Halloween.

Thanks to Vincent Lee for taking many photos of the night's events! Also, thanks to Graham Kita and Ken Cowie for giving rides to the meeting for Roy Hopwood and Scott Barker. There were 24 members and 3 guests in attendance.

Ring Report by Scott Barker.

## The Scintillating Starburst Illusion.

(Image credit: Courtesy of Michael Karlovich, Recursia LLC)



The Scintillating Starburst illusion appears to have bright rays emanating from its center.

The [Scintillating Starburst](#) illusion tricks us into seeing bright rays of light. The illusion is made up of concentric polygons that form a series of wreath-like patterns. If the illusion works, you'll see bright rays shining through the intersection points between the outer peaks of each wreath. Our brain perceives bright dots at these intersection points, because they're the thinnest parts of the wreath, and it then invents rays to connect those dots.

Researchers unveiled the Scintillating Starburst in a 2021 study published in the journal [i-Perception](#). Study co-author Michael Karlovich, a visual artist with a background in neuroscience, created the illusion in 2019 while designing the logo for his company, Recursia.

# MAGICIANS DURING TIMES OF WAR



(Top picture is that of an inflatable Sherman tank)

In honour of the men and women who bravely gave their lives, so that we may have the freedoms that we do, I wanted to briefly mention some of the contributions that magicians made towards our victory, especially during WW2.

Many people from all walks of life contributed to the war effort and magicians were no exception. I know books have been written about this subject, however, I am only briefly delving into this topic.

Did you know that Maskelyne was the leader of a “magic gang” that was involved in creating tactical diversions, including the camouflaging of the city of Alexandria from aerial bombardment, as well as the mobilization of phantom tank battalions and more?

Another great feat (among many) were the use of canvas and plywood to disguise 1,000 tanks as trucks, create fake tanks (some, as the picture depicts, were inflatable), as well as a fake railway line. Parachuting dummies on D-day was another tactic, and there was much more than that!

Fast forward to a different era, I’m sure some of you have heard of John Mulholland’s involvement with the CIA, who paid him to write a manual on deception and misdirection. Supposedly, the document was destroyed in 1973, however, copies later appeared and were published as “The Official CIA Manual of Trickery and Deception”.

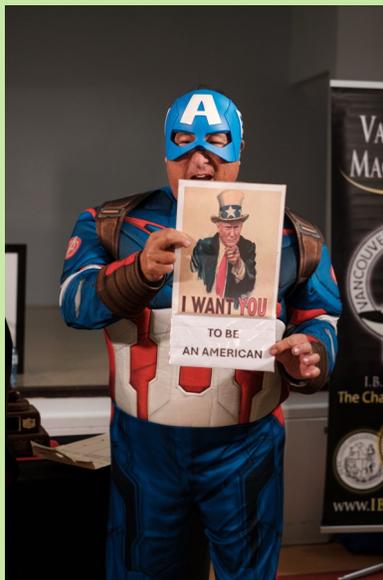
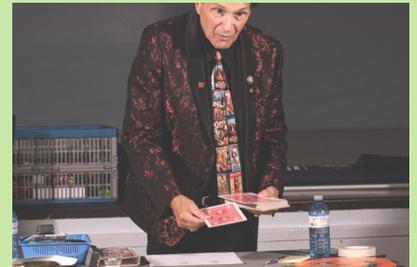
As I have said, there is so much more written about this subject, which is truly fascinating.

So please, remember those who died so that we could be free of those who would see to it that we are not and be grateful for what you have in this great country of ours.

All the best to you and yours; stay magical and have a great holiday season and a Happy New Year.

J.Stenning Nov 13/2025

# VMC Meeting—October 2025



Photos Courtesy of Vincent Lee

\$\$\$ VMC 2026 fees are due \$\$\$



Some VMC Fees for 2026 are due on January 1, 2026. If according to VMC records your fees are due the treasurer will be sending you an invoice based on your previous payment history. If you have any questions in relation to your payment status, please contact the Treasurer via [treasurer@ibmring92.com](mailto:treasurer@ibmring92.com).

If you have changed your Membership Type or wish to change your payment term, below is a schedule of fees.

Membership type	Fees—1 Year	Fees—3 years
General member	\$40.00	\$105.00
Senior member	\$30.00	\$75.00
Junior member	\$30.00	\$75.00
Out of town member	\$25.00	\$60.00

Payment can be made via:

- Pay for things : [VMC Website](#)
- PayPal: [treasurer@ibmring92.com](mailto:treasurer@ibmring92.com)
- eTransfer: [treasurer@ibmring92.com](mailto:treasurer@ibmring92.com)

[Money - Pink Floyd HD \(Studio Version\)](#)

# I Recall...



By Roy Hopwood, October 2025 – Vancouver, BC, Canada

## HAPPY HALLOWEEN!

In Canada and the USA, Halloween is a huge deal. In Australia, I didn't observe it—and as I understand it, neither do most Australians. But here in [Steveston](#), it's a full-blown seasonal celebration. Many households decorate their front gardens, and families drive around to admire the spooky displays.

Throughout October, local stores, banks, and other businesses participate in an annual competition for the best Halloween-themed window or storefront. Scarecrows, skeletons, and cobwebs abound.



I'm writing this at 12:21 a.m. PST on Wednesday, October 29th. People have been stocking up on “candy” (or *lollies*, as we say in Australia) for the big day—this coming Friday, October 31st.

### Steveston Comes Alive

On Halloween afternoon, businesses along Moncton Street hand out candy to hundreds of children. The street buzzes with excitement until the candy runs out. Then families head home for a short break before darkness falls around 6 p.m.—and the real trick-or-treating begins.

I'll be stationed once again at our son Jeremy's home while Jeremy, Leslie, and the girls head out in costume. In truth, there's no “tricking”—it's all about collecting as much candy as possible.

The following pics are from 2024.



Last year, I handed out treats to 275 children before we ran out. This year, despite the forecasted rain, we're preparing for 300 visitors. The children range from newborns to about 15 years old, and their costumes are always a delight.

### 🪄 Magic Club Mischief

Our magic club, the [Vancouver Magic Circle](#), always looks forward to the October meeting. For some members, it's the highlight of the year. We host a fun costume contest and a more serious Halloween-themed competition for the **Tip Top & Tootsie Trophy**. Back in 2021, during COVID, I won both contests via Zoom with a character I created called **Woodwitch**. This year, I reprised Woodwitch and entered both competitions again.



A new junior member was awarded the prize for the best Halloween costume.

The main competition was a different kettle of fish. There's a strict 10-minute time limit and exceeding it means instant disqualification. I chose to revive an old principle: identifying envelopes behind my back—a technique I hadn't used in over 60 years. The envelopes arrived late that afternoon, and I had to modify the method slightly. I estimated my routine would take 8½ to 9 minutes. Rookie mistake—I ran over by 25 seconds.

Another misstep: I chose the new junior member as my "Trustworthy Assistant." He didn't

know the names of the members, so I had to guide him, which slowed me down. I also planned to read the next envelope while he handed out the current one—but that didn't go smoothly.

To top it off, I doubted myself on two envelopes, retrieved them to double-check, and discovered my original readings were correct. That cost me another 20 seconds.

### ⌚ A Lesson in Grace

The winner is a good friend of mine, and I made sure to be the first to congratulate him on his well-earned victory. Had I not been disqualified, I understand I would not have won anyway. I reached out again to affirm his win—not just because I was disqualified, but because he truly earned it.

### 🔮 What's Next?

By the time you read this, Halloween will be all done and dusted, and everyone will be gearing up for the next big holiday—Christmas.

If you celebrated Halloween, I hope you didn't get scared too badly... or scare anyone else too much!

“Until next time, may your broomsticks fly straight and your candy bowls never run dry.”

Roy J Hopwood

## Yoosik Ethan Oum

Performing the show MIND HAUNTS at the El Torito Mexican restaurant.



- ◆ When Houdini was traveling, customs officers often demanded he open his locked trunks. He would smile, pull out a key, and unlock them — but the key was secretly palmed from the officer's own pocket moments earlier. Houdini delighted in showing that even the guardians of security weren't immune to a magician's misdirection.
- ◆ At a Canadian magic club meeting in the 1950s, a performer's rope trick went wrong when the rope snapped. Without missing a beat, he quipped, “Well, that's what happens when you buy rope from a discount store.” The gag was so well received it became part of his regular patter.

## Coffee & Magic Jam.

Coffee and magic jam and Jam on Monday November 17 2025 at Cloverdale enjoying some fun magic, followed by a visit to Scott's magic shop ..er garage. It is always great when Shawn joins us, he is always helpful and generous with his time.



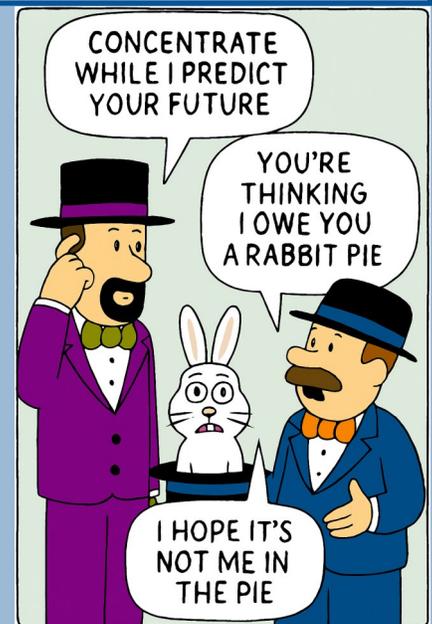
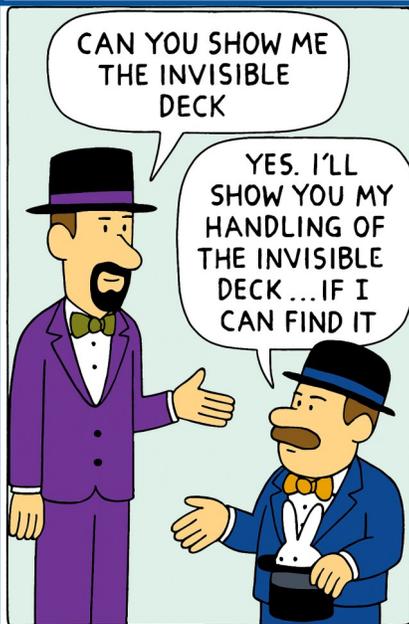
Photos courtesy of Ken Cowie

# Jest for Fun



Great illusionist...  
but bad at fractions.

## Max & Leo



A magician walks into a diner and orders a burger. The waiter asks, "Want fries with that?" The magician replies, "No need—I'll conjure them." He waves his wand, says "Abracadabra!" and poof—nothing happens. The waiter smirks, "Need a little more ketchup in your spell?" The magician tries again, and this time fries rain from the ceiling. The manager storms out, yelling, "This isn't a magic show!" The magician bows and says, "Actually, it is. I just made your patience disappear."

## 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](http://lbmring92.com)

<b>VMC Executive Meeting:</b>	<b>TBA - via Zoom</b>
<b>November 26 2025</b>	VMC Christmas Dinner & Stage Competition El Torito Mexican restaurant.
<b>December 2025</b>	No meeting

**Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, if Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, were is the peck of pickled peppers that Peter Piper Picked**

### Other Clubs (as a courtesy)

<b>Society of American Magicians #95</b> <a href="#">SAM#95</a>	Meetings of the SAM #95 are held the <b>first Tuesday of the month</b> at members homes. TBA—check web site for dates and times
<b>Fraser Valley Magic Company</b> <a href="#">FVMC</a>	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

“A good magician's performance tells a story. Each act should build on the next, becoming ever more engaging to fill the audience with wonder. It's a bud that unfurls into a flower, meant to woo the audience.”

**Laura Lam**

### 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.*