



Vol 24 No. 5

October 2026

— RING 92 —

VANCOUVER MAGIC CIRCLE

lbmring92.com

the Charles Howard Ring



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In Memory of John Stenning (1958–2026)

The Vancouver Magic Circle mourns the unexpected passing of long-time member and friend, John Stenning. His contributions, kindness, and dedication to the art of magic touched every corner of our club. A Broken Wand Ceremony was held on September 24, attended by family, friends, and magicians from across the region.



The above photo is the editors edit of an existing photo of John - it signifies that if you handed John a deck of cards he could perform anywhere.



Editors Desk

We know summer has truly ended — the rain has returned to Raincouver, and the VMC is back to holding in-person meetings again.

I only had a few days to source, compile, proofread, and publish before October 1, when Microsoft officially removes **Publisher** from **Microsoft 365**.

Beginning next month, **TMM** will be produced using **Affinity by Canva**. Please be patient as I learn the new workflow — it has a steeper learning curve than **Publisher**, and the first few issues may look a little different while I adjust.

Hopefully I can get to grips **Affinity by Canva** fairly quickly.

My right shoulder is also injured, causing agonising pain through my arm and hand, which makes typing extremely difficult, and I am right handed.

Even with the challenges, I'm proud of this issue and hope you enjoy it.

— **Roy J. Hopwood, Editor**

Presidents Message

Hi fellow VMC Members,

I hope you all enjoyed a refreshing summer break. Unfortunately, our annual picnic didn't go ahead — the forecasted weather forced a postponement, and on the rescheduled date many members were unable to attend, leaving numbers too low to proceed.

As most of you are aware, **John Stenning passed away unexpectedly on August 26, 2026**. His loss has been felt deeply throughout our club.

Thank you to **Shawn Farquhar** for organizing the 6/10 Sessions, which he developed to help members strengthen and refine their magic.

Several members of the Executive recently met with the descendants of **William C. Shelly**, one of our founders. We shared a wonderful meal, good conversation, and a little magic. The family kindly presented the VMC with copies of photographs of William Shelly — a meaningful addition to our history.

They also expressed interest in attending our Christmas Dinner in November, as well as watching the stage competition where we award the **William Shelly Trophy** to the winner.

Talk again soon.

— **Roy J. Hopwood, President**

THANK YOU VMC

Thank you to all VMC members who worked tirelessly both before and during the Broken Wand Ceremony for **John Stenning** on Thursday September 24, 2026.

Your care, preparation, and teamwork made the evening the seamless success it was. **John's family** shared that they found the ceremony deeply moving, and that is because of each of you, including but not limited to:

- Charles Gauthier
- Graham Kita
- Julius Palme
- Ken Cowie
- Scott Barker
- Simon Cassegrain

Thanks also to **Johns family, VMC Members, Members From FVMC, SAM95** and visitors who attended, John would have been very proud.

Ring Report – September 24, 2026

*Submitted by Scott Barker**

The Vancouver Magic Circle reconvened on Thursday, September 24th for our first meeting since June. Although our August picnic was cancelled due to poor weather and low attendance, members returned to the Sunrise Community Hall with a strong sense of community — and with heavy hearts.

On August 26th, we lost our Sergeant-at-Arms, **John “Melrick” Stenning**, a dedicated member of the Executive and a valued contributor to *The Magical Minutes*. John lectured at the club, assisted with meetings, and regularly helped President Roy Hopwood with proofreading the newsletter. His sudden passing deeply affected our membership.

At 7:45 pm, First Vice President **Charles Gauthier** welcomed members and announced Shawn Farquhar’s new monthly performance workshop, **6 and 10**, held at Hidden Wonders beginning October 5th.

The **Broken Wand Ceremony** for **John** followed. **Roy Hopwood** conducted the service with heartfelt remarks, sharing memories of their friendship and reading a moving poem he had written.

Members and family were invited to speak, including: **Peter Stenning, Marcee Millar, Ken Cowie** (reading a message from Shawn Farquhar), **Rod Chow, Scott Barker, Gabe Gabini, Ryan Stenning**, and **Mike Norden** on behalf of the Fraser Valley Magic Company.

Members of the Stenning family in attendance included **Peter, George, Annette, Mari, Emma** and **Ryan**.

The ceremony was warm, sincere, and deeply appreciated. A break followed with refreshments, including a chocolate cake brought by **Annette** — one of John’s favourites.

Afterward, members continued socializing and completing auction exchanges. Special thanks go to:

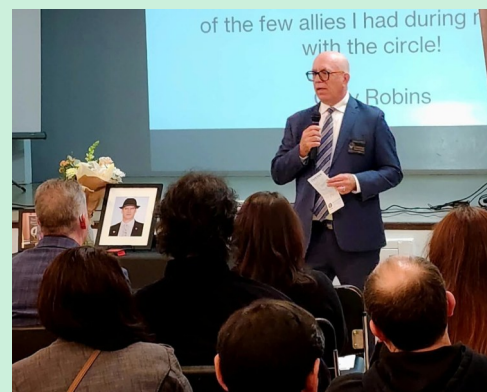
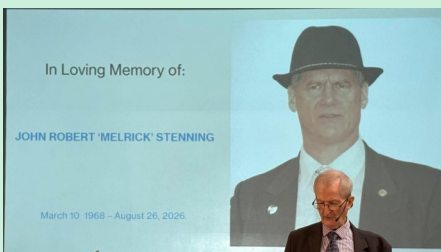
- **Roy Hopwood** – video montage and special edition of *The Magical Minutes*
- **Graham Kita** – hall setup, coffee, snacks, AV support, cleanup, and transportation for members
- **Charles Gauthier** – MC duties and providing sandwiches, cheese, and vegetables
- **Ken Cowie, Scott Barker, Julius Palme** – table and chair setup
- **Scott Barker** – flowers and photos
- **Simon Cassegrain** – video assistance and photography

A further thank-you to **Ken Cowie** for stepping in as Sergeant-at-Arms for the remainder of the year.

Attendance included **21 members, 5 guests**, and **7 members of John’s family**. John will be greatly missed.

* Edited and modified with the assistance of Copilot

Photos of From John Stenning's Broken wand Ceremony



Still Here Somehow

A Poem by

Roy J. Hopwood

I keep waking up expecting you to phone,
still reaching for a voice
that won't answer anymore.

The world didn't stop when you unexpectedly died —
it just kept moving,
while I stayed stunned and frozen
in the moment I learned you were gone.

I ask the sky for answers
and it gives me nothing
but silence.

It hurts in ways I can't name.
Sharp. Sudden.
Like the loss is still happening
even now.

I walk past the places we laughed,
and they feel haunted
but holy.

I talk to you under my breath,
half hoping you'll hear me,
half knowing you won't.

I ask the wind where you've gone.
It only carries your memory.

I'm searching through the pieces you left,
trying to understand
the shape of the space you filled.

Trying to make sense
of how someone so present
can vanish completely.

But even in the wreckage,
There's a small light
you planted in me.

It flickers,
but it hasn't gone out.

If friendship is a thread,
Yours hasn't broken.
It's tangled in everything I do.

I'm learning to breathe with the ache,
Learning to carry
the part of you
that stayed.

And even now —
even now —

that small light you left behind
is still here...

... somehow

I Recall...

Column No. 80 — October 2026

Time

by Roy J. Hopwood, Vancouver

This month, I recall the strange truth about time — why some people never have enough, and why magicians often misuse the very seconds their art depends on.

I recall someone once telling me, “Time is never the problem — priorities are.” It stayed with me because I’ve noticed how often people say *I don’t have time*, and how their productivity — even their social life — suffers for it. Yet others seem to have all the time in the world. And here’s the curious part: apart from the one variable none of us can control — the length of our life — every one of us receives time in exactly the same measurements. Sixty seconds per minute. Sixty minutes per hour. Twenty-four hours per day. Time is the most democratic resource we have. What differs is how we treat it.

Some people live in a constant state of urgency, convinced they’re always behind. Their inner monologue is a steady drumbeat of *should, must, ought to*. Even on quiet days, they feel rushed. This creates a kind of psychological time famine — a sense that the hours are slipping away faster than they can catch them. Meanwhile, the people who appear time-rich often have a calmer internal clock. They move deliberately, finish what they start, and don’t scatter their attention. They’re not faster; they’re steadier.

I’ve also noticed that people who “don’t have time” often give their time away too easily. They say yes to everything. They allow interruptions. They let other people’s priorities override their own. Their hours are constantly hijacked. The ones who seem to have time aren’t blessed with extra hours — they simply defend the ones they have. They say *not now, later, or no* without guilt. They treat time as a resource, not a public park.

And then there’s emotional bandwidth. A person may have three free hours, but if they’re stressed, grieving, burnt out, or mentally scattered, those hours are unusable. Time excuses often hide emotional exhaustion. I learned this in 2025, when my own health scare forced me to slow down. I had time — plenty of it — but not the energy to use it. Recovery taught me that time isn’t just measured in minutes; it’s measured in capacity.

Another truth is that some people confuse activity with productivity. They multitask, jump between jobs, and scatter their focus. They feel busy, but they don’t move forward. The people who “have time” often do fewer things, but they finish them. Their days feel spacious because their minds are not cluttered.

And perhaps this is why magicians *should* understand time better than most — but often don’t. Magic is built on timing: the pause before the reveal, the beat that lets astonishment bloom, the moment misdirection quietly does its work. A single second, used well, can be more powerful than a complicated move.

Yet many magicians struggle with time offstage in exactly the same way non-magicians do. They rush their rehearsals. They cram too many tricks into too few minutes. They ignore pacing, transitions, and breathing space. They spend hours tinkering with props but almost no time shaping the presentation. Then they wonder why the act feels frantic, why the audience doesn't connect, or why the applause is polite rather than warm.

Some magicians treat time as an enemy — racing through effects, fearing silence, filling every moment with patter. Others treat time as a partner — allowing pauses, shaping moments, letting the audience catch up emotionally. The difference is not skill; it's time management. The magician who “never has time” to rehearse, refine, or rethink their act often produces a performance that feels exactly like that: rushed, unfinished, and unconsidered. The magician who *makes* time — intentionally — creates magic that breathes.

In magic, as in life, time is the invisible assistant. When used well, it elevates everything. When ignored, it exposes everything.

And finally, priorities. Every *I don't have time* is really *something else matters more right now*. People rarely want to admit that. It's easier to blame the clock than to say, *I don't value that*, or *I'd rather do something else*. But our choices reveal us. We make time for what matters — for people, for passions, for the things that feed us. We always have.

So when I hear someone say *I don't have time*, I no longer take it at face value. Time is equal for all of us. What differs is how we use it — whether we scatter it, guard it, fear it, or honour it. Some people chase time. Others walk with it. And the ones who seem to have all the time in the world aren't living slower lives. They're living intentional ones.

In the end, time doesn't reveal who we are — how we spend it does.

The Quiet Power of a Single Magical Moment

Every magician knows the thrill of a perfectly executed effect — that instant when a spectator's expression shifts from curiosity to wonder. It's easy to think the magic lives in the technique, the misdirection, or the hours of practice behind the scenes. But the real power often lies in something quieter: the moment of connection.

A simple card revelation, a coin that vanishes at the fingertips, or a rope restored with a tug can linger in someone's memory for years. Not because the method was clever, but because the magician offered a brief escape from the ordinary.

Magic reminds people that surprise still exists, that imagination still matters, and that even adults can feel the spark of childhood awe.

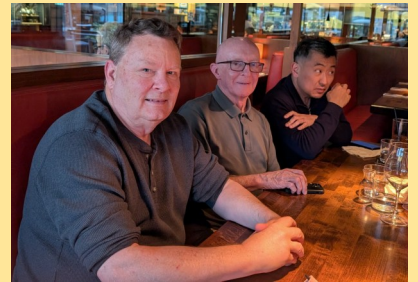
In a world that moves quickly, a single magical moment can slow everything down — just long enough for wonder to take hold.

Dinner with the Shelly Descendants

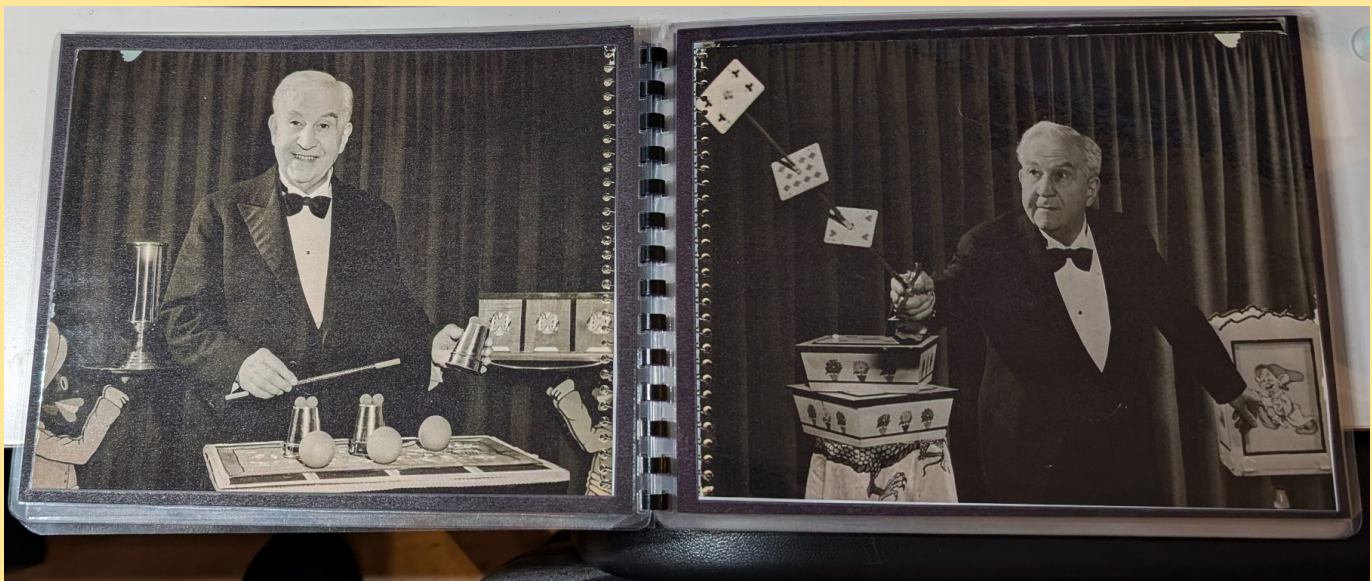
On Tuesday, September 22, 2026 four members of the Executive Committee joined **Bob Anthony, Mary Jane Anthony (née Shelly), and Kate Anthony** for dinner at the **Cactus Club Café in North Burnaby**. The evening was filled with lively conversation and warm connection.

After the meal, the four VMC members — **Charles Gauthier, Scott Barker, Roy Hopwood, and Yoosik Oum** — performed a selection of magic for the family.

During the visit, **Mary Jane presented the Vancouver Magic Circle with a photo album containing historic photographs of her grandfather, *William Curtis Shelly***. This thoughtful and generous gift adds meaningful depth to the club's archival history



The above photos courtesy of Roy J. Hopwood



Extract from the William Curtis Shelly Photo Album

Coffee & Magic Jam — Steveston

On August 20, eight VMC members gathered at Waves Coffee House in Steveston for an afternoon of coffee, conversation, and close-up magic.

Those participating in the jam were: **Charles Gauthier, Scott Barker, Julius Palme, Gabe Gabini, Michael Levy, Roy Hopwood, Ken Cowie, and Shawn Farquhar.**

The session was lively and full of variety, with members sharing routines, testing new ideas, and offering feedback. As always, Shawn generously contributed his deep knowledge of technique and performance, helping several members refine their handling and strengthen their presentations. **Thank you, Shawn.**

These informal gatherings continue to be a valuable way for members to connect, learn, and enjoy magic in a relaxed setting. More Coffee & Magic Jams are planned, and all members are welcome to join.



Felice Ling Lecture

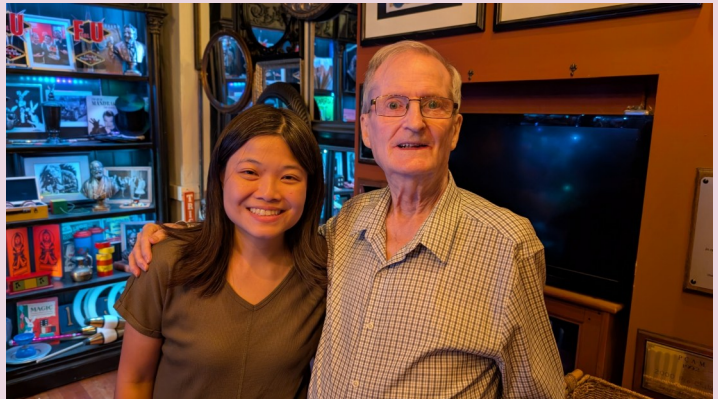
On Wednesday, August 26, **Felice Ling** presented a two-part lecture for thirty magicians at **Shawn Farquhar's *Hidden Wonders*** in New Westminster. The evening was exceptionally well-received, with attendees praising both the content and Felice's engaging teaching style.

The first half focused on close-up magic, where Felice demonstrated several clever and novel techniques that fooled nearly everyone in the room. Her handling was crisp, deceptive, and refreshingly original.

The second half explored the world of street performing (busking). Felice shared practical insights, strategies, and real-world advice, supported by a clear and well-structured PowerPoint presentation. Her explanations were easy to follow, and she took time to answer questions and revisit points whenever needed.

Attendees agreed that this was an excellent lecture — informative, thoughtful, and inspiring. Afterward, about half the group continued the evening over a shared meal, with Felice joining us for more conversation and camaraderie.

Recommendation: **Felice Ling** is highly recommended as a lecturer for any club seeking a blend of strong technique, thoughtful theory, and real-world performance experience.





Hey VMC members, have you ever wanted to work on a new piece, or act and wanted a fun place and safe audience to present it in front of for the first time?

6 and Ten - The Magic Experiment Join us for an informal open mic-style evening of magic at the Hidden Wonders Showroom. Each gathering will feature a maximum of six performers, with each magician having up to 10 minutes to perform.

Participating magicians may also bring one non-magician guest to enjoy the show. Seating is limited to 30 people, so pre-registration is required.

To perform or reserve your spot, please contact Shawn at shawn@magichampion.com

First event is Monday October 5, 2026 and there's only one spot left for a performer.

Scott Cantrell Visit

By

Rod Chow

Thank you to [Shawn Farquhar](#), [Lori](#) and Hannah for inviting visiting magician [Scott Cantrell](#) and his wife Holly from Nashville, Tennessee to Lori's favourite Lemon Chicken restaurant, Jade Dynasty, in Vancouver, Chinatown to enjoy a delicious Cantonese lunch alongside local magicians, [Graham Kita](#), [Blake Aleong](#) and me.

Afterwards, we all went down the street to see the Skinniest Building in the World. While Shawn and family and Blake had to leave early for shows that evening, I had the pleasure to tour Scott, Holly and Graham through each of our five Giant Panda Habitats where they had fun navigating through our skinniest building while interacting with our friendly Panda family and enjoying some magical surprises and prizes along the way!

It was so nice to see Scott again in Canada after seeing him previously at magic conventions in the USA.



Editors Note:

Scott Cantrell, is the I.B.M. publishing committee chair

Source: Shawn Farquhar

Jest 4 Fun

- **I asked my doctor if my sleight-of-hand practice was causing wrist pain.** He said, “No — but your constant *misdirection* is worrying.”
- **A magician walked into a bar.** The bartender said, “Why the long face?” The magician replied, “I tried to pull a rabbit out of a hat... and got a hamster with attitude.”
- **I told my audience I’d make their problems disappear.** Someone shouted, “Start with my credit card bill!” I said, “Sorry — I’m a magician, not a miracle worker.”
- **I bought a new magic wand on sale.** Turns out it was a *wand-ering* product — it doesn’t stay where I put it.

- **The Vanishing Volunteer**

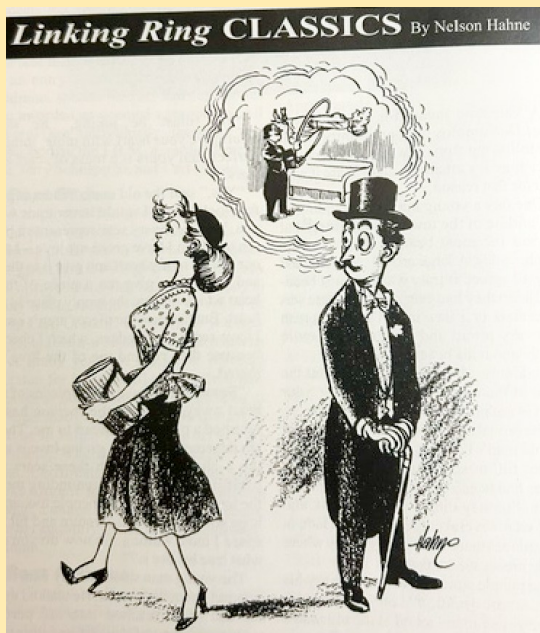
A magician once asked for a volunteer. A man raised his hand, stood up... and walked straight out the door. The magician said, “Well, that’s the cleanest vanish I’ve ever seen.”

- **The Honest Child**

During a kids’ show, a magician asked, “Did you see how I did that?” A child replied, “No... but I know you don’t want me to.”

- **The Over-Helpful Spectator**

A spectator once said, “I know how you did that trick!” The magician smiled and said, “Wonderful — could you teach me? I’ve been trying to figure it out for years.”



The Great Kazan attempts to pull a shark out of his hat.

Diary Dates*

Vancouver Magic Circle

lbmring92.com

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

VMC Executive Meeting:

Tuesday October 13, 2026 - via Zoom

October 2026

**Tip Top Tootsie Competition
Best Halloween Costume**

November 2026

**Christmas Dinner Function
Location, date, time 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

If Peter Piper picked a peck of pickled peppers, where's the peck of pickled peppers that Peter Piper picked

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 day

“The audience remembers how you made them feel, not how you fooled them.”
— Dariel Fitzkee

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

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.*