



MagicBunny.co.uk

TopHat

December 2004 - Edition 33

Well, it's December already which brings us another edition of the TopHat ezine. With 33 issues and still going strong, I'd like to thank all members who have supported the ezine in some way. The fact that you are reading this now is enough to show that the work we do here does pay off. So, thank you for helping us to get this far and for all of your future support.

This month goes off to a flying start as Nigel Shelton presents the very good news that MagicBunny has been affiliated with top magic-dealer, MagicBox. On top of the fact that this company has decided to back MagicBunny as a discussion forum for all magicians around the world, it also guarantees the future financial side of this site.

Moving on, Michael Jay backs up some of his views on a subject of originality in his column as well as continuing on an idea for a routine he began last time. Following that, Tony Spallino, having jumped on the bizarre bandwagon, decides to address the rest of us magicians who have maybe not yet tried it bizarre, and discusses how we may be able to incorporate some of these ideas into our presentations.

Next, Peter Marucci gives his take on the Hopping Halves effect. Here, he spills a no-gimmick version he's created. Craig Browning's column this month is devoted to his reminiscing of earlier times and how the world of magic has changed and adapted.

Finally, Gary Scott presents an account of his latest escapades in the USA, acquainting himself with Michael Jay... and what fun they must have had.

Until 2005...

~Jon Snoops~

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Every issue of the TopHat contains original effects and articles written by readers and members of MagicBunny.co.uk. If you would like to submit a piece, please email TopHat@magicbunny.co.uk

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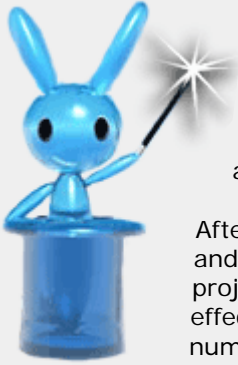
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The Latest From MagicBunny

Website News

Site sponsorship

By Nigel Shelton



In the very earliest days of Magic Bunny the total Internet charges for the site (over a two-year period) amounted to £32.88. Obviously a fee of some £16 a year was insignificant and made no noteworthy problems of financing. However, very soon, the site began to expand and the need to acquire additional web space became apparent. But even in these very early days, the annual fees remained low and straightforward to account for.

After two years, the boards had grown to be the largest magic discussion boards in Europe and new projects were planned, the most demanding being the very popular "File Sharing" project. It was these two factors that initiated the need to look around for a more cost effective Internet Provider to allow us to expand, especially as, at that time, there had been numerous occasions that the boards were "downed" due to problems from our previous server.

At this stage, I began to reassess the financing of the boards. The Internet fees had increased by a factor of fifteen fold to some £240 a year and I wanted the reassurance of knowing that, in my absence, the boards would not fold but would continue to move on as a premier magic site.

Initially, after the demise of our own Magic Shop, several members of the Magic Bunny team and I had spent a great deal of time contacting various Internet retailers to establish different affiliate links. It was thought, with somewhere in the region of two million hits every month, these links would draw in revenue for the upkeep of the boards, as members made their Internet purchases via these affiliate links. At the same time, a "donation" facility was added for those members who wanted to support these boards without the need to use the affiliate links.

The above links were advertised on the boards by random postings, in suitable threads that were of the appropriate subject. I also placed announcements on the "General Board" as well as a submission to our ezine, TopHat. However, after a year or so, it became apparent that these affiliate links (and the donation facility) were not as popular as needed to support the upkeep of the boards. It was evident that members preferred to link directly to a store after reading a thread regarding some product, other members would browse the Internet and then return to an existing affiliate, after breaking the necessary linkage for their purchases to become accredited to Magic Bunny. Apart from the knowledge that the use of the affiliate links would support the day-to-day running of these boards, there was no incentive for members to search our site for the affiliate links in order to do this. In addition to this, the donation facility was poorly supported, with only two members making use. It was for these reasons that these incentives failed to make a significant contribution to the annual board expenses.

Many of you may be aware that my frustration with the affiliate project's method of revenue became more considerable after my dealings with Penguin Magic. Despite an accumulation of some £50 or so over a period of over a year, Penguin Magic were very reluctant to reimburse Magic Bunny with the money owed, money that was rightfully the property of our site. Initially, their affiliate department ignored a series of emails sent at one-week intervals over a period of six weeks. Despite emailing other Magic Penguin departments to receive acknowledgements that these emails had been received and would be replied to soon, there was no other response. Finally, my final email to this retailer gave them a final warning that, if no response was received within one calendar month, I would make my frustrations public and shame their practises. You will know that no reply was forthcoming and it was this that initiated the "Name and Shame" thread on the boards. It was only when Penguin Magic became aware of the damage that this news was having on their goodwill that one of their team "raced" (after a total of ten weeks) to Magic Bunny to offer some half-hearted

The Latest From MagicBunny (cont.)

excuse that my correspondence had become lost in a "crack" in their system. Further correspondence from numerous other members (as replies to the above "Name and Shame" thread or sent to me privately explaining that they too had suffered similar problems) confirmed that this "crack" was somewhat more of a gapping cavern. I was disappointed that this Penguin Magic employee should want to turn a "Name and Shame" thread into a shameless plug for his own site by imploring readers to use Penguin Magic as evidence that their service was second to none. I for one, after reading his hollow words to reply to any readers' concerns and then ignoring these too, shall definitely make a point of taking my custom elsewhere. I am pleased that other Magic Bunny members have pledged to do the same too.

One item of note was that, in the above "Name and Shame" thread, a large number of Magic Bunny members continually endorsed the practises of one reputable dealer, that being Magic Box (www.magicbox.uk.com) Magic Box were good enough to support Magic Bunny in the past by offering a prize for one of our previous competitions. I was also aware of how many times this dealer's name occurred across the discussion boards with strong words of praise and active voices of support. Magic Box is very well thought of and I have never ceased to be amazed by their high level of service and professional track record of service. During the period of one month, when I had set Penguin Magic their final ultimatum to respond to my continued requested for the rightful reimbursement of funds owed to Magic Bunny, I had began correspondence with one member discussing plans of how the boards could be supported in the form of a sponsorship project. During this time, we discussed several plans but these never came to fruition and I decided to make Magic Box my first point of call to discover whether they may be interested in some of these ideas. I really wanted to see Magic Bunny linked to a reputable site with a strong level of customer care and Magic Box was the ideal candidate to approach as the first and strongest contender. It was never my wish for Magic Bunny to become a money making venture – every member, including the moderator team and myself, contributes freely and I did not wish to see Magic Bunny becoming financially biased.

I was very impressed with Magic Box as we began our series of correspondence. Not only were they pleased to offer assistance in the form of sponsorship, they even felt that my original ideas were too commercial and they wanted to support the boards in a less evasive manner than I was proposing. My ideas for a sponsorship of the "Store" link that involved advertisements and endorsements was replaced by a simple paragraph from their team, endorsing the Magic Bunny site. I was even impressed by their wish to continue to promote other sites such as Dan's www.youdomagic.com by allowing his affiliate link to remain on their sponsorship notice. Finally, they even offered to pay all fees in full and in advance. This has reassured me that the partnership between our two sites is a sound one and that any potential customers to Magic Box from this partnership will experience service from them that is professional and honest.

Therefore, I am very pleased to announce Magic Bunny's partnership with Magic Box and I hope that you may be able to show your appreciation of this too by supporting their site when carrying out your Internet transactions. Not only will you rest assured of supporting a site that is totally professional and honest but you will shop with the satisfaction that your actions will help repay the kindness of Magic Box in its sponsorship of Magic Bunny. I shall look forward to the future years, knowing that Magic Bunny's position is secured and that members can experience the very highest level of service from both of our sites.

Thank you.

Nigel Shelton.

From the Desk of Michael Jay

From the Desk of Michael Jay

Ron Bauer and more Irish luck

By Michael Jay



Well, Top Hat is pushing three years since its inception on the net. You know, I just can't say enough about the positive evolution of this e-zine. I find myself looking forward to reading it every month and it ranks right up there with my issue of Linking Ring on my list of things to read. So, with this issue, number 33, I offer you a two part column and hope that you enjoy it!

PART 1

One of my favorite writers on the internet is Craig Browning. Several months back he had a column for Online-Visions titled, "E-lebrity." Summed up, the gist of article was that with the internet, we've come to a point where people who would have been completely unknown now have a platform on which to touch so very many lives. These unknowns are now enjoying a status that is close to celebrity, but from the internet rather than in "real life," hence the title "E-lebrity." I guess that I fall into that category of e-lebrity.

One of the most recognizable traits of my columns, particularly found in my articles for Online-Visions, is my extreme point of view. I ask no quarter and I give no quarter. However, this kind of attitude is easily exploited by more astute readers. It allows those who are of a mind to take me to task an avenue for which to point out my more human side and exploit the fact that I make mistakes or that I am sometimes far too extreme. Of course, there is nothing wrong with this and forces me to look inward myself. That can only be a good thing.

Never the less, sometimes these readers will attempt to exploit something that simply doesn't work, because they are not seeing the big picture. Funny, I never stopped to consider that a nobody from Toledo, Ohio would actually have detractors who are ready to jump on anything that they perceive as a weakness in my logic. And so it was, not too long ago, in the reviews area of Magic Bunny.

One of my latest reviews on the pages of Magic Bunny is of the Ron Bauer performance script, "Ed Marlo's Time Machine." I gave this script the highest rating, a 10 out of 10, because I do believe that it deserves just such a rating. In fact, Bauer's entire "Think Like a Conjuror" series is deserving of accolades from the magic industry and I feel that it is a much overlooked tool for magicians today.

The question that arose regarding my appreciation of Bauer's script goes back to something that I had published, in which I stated that publishing already published material is highly suspect, if not completely unethical. I stand firmly by that belief. Further, I think that our industry suffers from a glut of material that is simply a rehashing of previously published ideas with nothing, absolutely nothing, added in except maybe an extra "and" or "if." We are in an age where desk top publishing makes it easy to sell our ideas to an unsuspecting pool of consumers who, upon reading the material that they've received believe that they are looking upon an entirely new idea, when it is just short of being copied from previously published materials. As they say, "There is nothing new under the sun."

So, how can I justify the script written up by Ron Bauer and published by E-gads? In one word, simple.

The Ron Bauer series is dedicated to teaching the student of magic knowledge that would take a massive library and a lifetime of study. The approach of this series is different from anything on the market today. In fact, 99.99% of all the drivel out there is nothing more than what one can find in a well put together library of magic. Bauer's series seeks to teach the student more than just a trick, though. Further, the tricks that are used in Bauer's series are secondary to the entertainment factor behind them.

Approached from a different angle, consider what your usual purchase will garner you: a simple write up of patter and basic explanation of the sleights and moves the would be magician should use. More than likely, just a single page of explanation is forthcoming. Possibly you purchased a video file, with the author showing you the most awesome puzzle you've ever seen with which to spring upon your poor spectators. Something that looks like magic, but is more of a complex puzzle than anything else (and, if you believe that

From the Desk of Michael Jay (cont.)

your spectators will approach what they've seen from any other angle than a complex puzzle, you are fooling yourself). Generally, you get the moves and the patter but nothing telling you how to entertain your audience. Specifically, this is what I am against and not something that goes far, far beyond giving you a trick to do.

So, what is different in the Bauer series that would save it from my acidic pen? Well, I'm going to tell you!

From the beginning of this series, you get the full value of having Bauer teach you what he is best qualified to teach - how to entertain. You learn comedic timing, proper blocking, strong misdirection, proper presentation, direction and drama; all of this being just a scratch in the surface of the Bauer scripts. More importantly, if studied, this series will teach you to play the part you are supposed to be playing, that of a magician, with all the charm and cunning that goes with just such a personae. You are getting tuition from a man with over 4 decades of experience in entertaining an audience, a live audience. Ron takes these tricks, which should be pure gold, and elevates them to a magical experience for your spectators. So, this isn't a rehashing of the same old same old, this is a series of golden oldies taught to the student who doesn't have writers, directors, producers and technical specialists to help him out along the way. These aren't tricks, these are full performance scripts and, if studied and followed, will not only give the student powerful magic routines but, most importantly, will teach the student exactly how to approach his favorite tricks and elevate them to powerful magic via learning by example.

Well, I'm not trying to put up an advertisement for the Bauer series, so I shall move on at this point. The only thing that I wanted to accomplish here is to explain my position in regards to my general disdain for the glut of "nebulosity" which is rife in this industry. So, without further ado, I bring you:

PART 2

In keeping with my recent theme on routining and paying tribute to my love of impromptu in conjunction with an article from two months back, my offering to you this month brings several articles to fruition. You may remember that in issue 31 I gave you a strong magic effect that is simple, impromptu and almost 100% presentation. While it is only a trick, it can easily be made into a routine that continues on the path of the luck of the Irish theme and remains fully impromptu. This will require a bit more technique than the first part in issue 31, but not very much! So, if you haven't read my article in #31, go back and give it a look before you continue (although this will work as a stand alone piece, I find that it is even more powerful when followed with the first proof of "luck").

You will need to know the equivoque force (also called, "The Magician's Choice") and how to force a card from the deck (see Michael Saint Louis's article, also in issue 31), both of these things being very standard, beginner stuff. In my original article, "The Luck of the Irish" I used a cross-cut force; you'll want a different force for this particular part of the routine however, and I will suggest what you should use, but your favorite method will work (again, study Mr. Saint Louis's article). You will also have to control a card from the bottom of the deck to the top in preparation for the force if you use my suggested force.

THE LUCK OF THE IRISH PT.2

"Okay, that was pretty lucky, but still you say 'Where's the proof??'" When you ask the question in the patter, "Where's the proof?" use a slightly louder or deeper voice, to reinforce or strengthen the line a bit.

Pick the deck up and return the original two cards that you separated from the deck into the deck. Place them toward the center of the deck and, in so doing, peek the bottom card (it should be a different card than previously used). Remember that card, control it to the top and add in a riffle shuffle at this point, maintaining that card on top of the deck. You are now set to do this final "luck proving" effect.

While you are doing these things above, say, "Really, what you just saw should prove that I have the luck of the Irish with me, but maybe that just ain't good enough! So, let's make this even more difficult, because, as they say, the proof is in the pudding!" At this point, your force card is top of the deck, place the deck on the table and obtain a piece of paper and a pen or pencil.

"Okay, now I'll make another prediction and see if luck will hold me out on all of this." Write the name of

From the Desk of Michael Jay (cont.)

your force card on the paper, fold it into quarters and ask one of your spectators to hold onto that piece of paper, but let them know you don't want anyone to look at, or see it, yet. That person will be in charge of keeping your prediction a secret. Use this fact to make that spectator an important part of this trick and you'll have no problem with them making sure that nobody sees what you've written - this is simple human nature.

Pick up the deck and cut the cards. Hold a pinky break at the cut (this sets you up for a "Riffle Force," which is my personal force of choice) and have a different spectator tell you when to stop as you riffle down the cards front edge. When the spectator says "Stop" simply cut the top half of the deck off where you have your pinky break, which puts the force card on top of the lower half, and thumb off that card onto the table, face down. Next, spread the cards from the left hand to the right and tell yet a different spectator to simply point to a card. Carefully separate out the pointed to card (to show that you aren't doing anything sneaky) and drop that card face down next to the first card (the first card being your force card). Finally, set the deck onto the table and have a different spectator cut the cards. Take the card that the spectator has cut to and also place it face down on the table, next to the other two cards. You now have three "fairly" chosen cards sitting face down next to each other on the table.

"We now have three cards chosen by three different people sitting on the table. Nobody knows what those cards are, but still, we have to choose one. So, I'll have you sir point to two of those three cards..." Have a different spectator point to two cards, going into an equivoque force. Once the force card is finally chosen, say, "Alright, here is the chosen card, chosen by several different people in several different ways. If it was possible that I could have written that particular card down before any of this happened, that would certainly prove, beyond all doubt, that I do have the luck of the Irish on my side..."

Turn over the final chosen card (the force card) and ask the person who's been holding the prediction slip to open it and read it out loud. Ask, "Would it be too much to ask for another beer?"

Final Thoughts: You probably don't drink as heavily as I do. As a result, I suggest that you change the patter that has to do with drinking somewhat, to reflect your own personality. Me, I can drink three beers in the few minutes that it takes to do this routine, so it works for me and adds (in a besotted sort of way) to the comedy of the overall situation.

As always, take care and thank you for reading.

Mike.

The Bizarre In All of Us

The Bizarre In All of Us

Bizarre or not bizarre?

By Tony Spallino



Just like many other branches of magic, there are lots of different resources you could turn to. Bizarre magic is the same way. There are many resources you could use, and they would be great to have. However, sometimes you're not able to get these resources or maybe you want to try out bizarre style magic and see if it's a direction you want to take your own performances. You might also want to challenge your creative abilities by designing your own routines. You've got to try to pull those bizarre ideas from your brain. How can you accomplish this? I'd like to share the process I went through.

While getting myself started in bizarre magic, I thought about what would be the best resource that I had on hand to start with. In my case, it was Wilson's Complete Course in Magic. I've been over this book hundreds of times, so I'm already familiar with its contents. Now, the question is how to put a bizarre spin on it?

The Bizarre In All of Us (cont.)

From working with my own particular audience, I've discovered that some of the simplest effects hit them hard. Many of them haven't seen a lot of magic recently, especially close-up. I wanted to try something different than cards, since they've already seen some of that. I wanted to try something different.

I remembered one of the first effects I ever learned from Wilson's being the Obedient Colors. It's a wonderful routine, involving 10 cards that have a blue dot on the front and a blue back. Each card is laid out in an alternating pattern, one up, one down, one up, one down, etc. The spectator chooses a number, and counts over to that card. When the card is turned over, the opposite side is seen to be red! Plus, it's the only red side out of all ten cards. This effect looked like it had possibilities.

Now, how to change this? Red and blue dots just don't have the storytelling aspect I'm looking for. Searching for fonts on the computer one day, I happened to find a font that has a Aztec/Cthulu/Atlantean feel to it. An idea was starting to form. Since the effect is number based, how about some numerology? Doing a quick Internet search told me that the Aztecs regarded numbers and numerology as powerful. This story is close enough to be factual but not something the average person would know. I developed an outline of a story at this point. Without an outline, at least, you're going to have no plan in place to create your props. It's like building without a blueprint!

Using MS Publisher I created 20 cards, each about the same size as a playing card. On the first ten, I printed an interesting, yet different looking, symbol on the front. These symbols are different enough to be easily distinguishable yet all have a similar look to them. Instead of a red dot, I used a graphic of a skull. It's a easy symbol to recognize, but also still relevant to the topic. On the other ten, I used one particular symbol to represent the backs of the cards. This shape was basically triangular, a shape I hadn't used for the front. This makes the front and back easy to tell apart.

Cardstock can be one of a bizarrist's best friends. With some computer know-how, and a good software program, you can create some pretty interesting things. I printed out the cards, cut them out, and started gluing the front and backs together. Personally, I love rubber cement. It's easy to work with, there's no warping, and any that leaks out the sides is easily cleaned up by rubbing it off! Now I had my cards!

At this point, I have to stress how important it is to practice with your new props. Even if you've done an effect before, you've got to get used to the new variation. I've done Obedient Colors with 3x5 cards before. They're much thinner and slide easily against each other. After trying the same thing with my new "Aztec" cards, I discovered that the edges still had rubber cement on them. This ended up causing the cards to stick together when I tried to lay them out on the desk. I had to rub them along the edge to get most of it off. Also, the double thickness took a little adjustment to get used to the handling. Obedient Colors is not a slight of hand effect, but the new thickness will feel awkward at first.

Once I was comfortable with the new cards, it was time to flesh out my story. I added more detail about how the Aztecs were respectful of numbers and the place they held in their culture. How was I going to justify having cards with these symbols on them? I'm definitely not a world traveler! The cards also didn't look like they belonged to an antique shop. Aging them, in this case, wouldn't have produced the desired effect either. I do have a reputation for knowing about weird pieces of trivia. I decided that I made a copy of these cards from symbols found in an obscure library book.

Be sure that your explanation for your props is feasible, even if it's something like finding your props at an old flea market. You can't claim travel or "mysterious" happenings that don't have a touch of truth or possibility to them. Once I had my story straight, it was time for the practicing. Like all magic, you've got to practice, practice, practice!

Almost every effect has a few kinks to shake loose, as did mine. After some adjustment to the pacing and the story I was ready to go.

The nice thing about these cards is that they will fit into a wallet.

Waiting until the end of the day, I saw an opportunity and took it. The effect got great reactions, with my spectator just sitting there with her mouth open, wondering how it was possible. The simplicity of the effect also helped to deflect any possible explanation her friends gave. She actually helped prove the effect for me by telling her friends what wasn't possible.

The Bizarre In All of Us (cont.)

Please don't interpret this as bragging about what I've done. It's more of an example to show some of the possibilities for getting started in bizarre magic. I also wanted to show you some of the things you need to think about.

What did I learn from this? Let your imagination go! Possibilities can happen at any time. I write notes whenever I'm presented with a story possibility, even if I don't have an effect yet. Use the tools you have. If you're computer skilled, go ahead and use it! If you have great artistic skills, use them to create something beautiful and unique. Bizarre can be very personal and your skills are a great way to give your routine that personal touch we all want. Look through your books, even ones that you may have "outgrown" years ago. Think about how you can make changes and integrate that routine with a favorite story.

Bizarre magic can be about the strange and obscure...but your ideas and props don't have to be!

By Tony Spallino

No-Gimmick Hopping Halves

No-Gimmick Hopping Halves

By Peter Marucci



Purists will argue that gimmicks are a crutch and shouldn't be used. That's putting it a bit strongly, since many effects can't be done at all without gimmicks, and many other effects are easier with gimmicks. But sometimes, we tend to rely too much on gimmicks; they are often not necessary and once in a while actually make an effect worse. My No-Gimmick Scotch and Soda (based on an idea by Bill Palmer) is one example of a trick that is actually easier (and, arguably, better) without the gimmick. The locking coin takes too long to unlock, making the whole thing not really practical for table hopping. The following - I hope - falls in the same category:

NO-GIMMICK HOPPING HALVES

Effect: The magus shows an English penny and a U.S. half dollar on the palm of his left hand. He takes the half in his right and closes his left hand. The right hand puts the half in his pocket but, when he opens the left hand, the half is back with the penny.

This is repeated.

The third time, he removes the half and puts it in his pocket as before. But this time, when the left hand opens, both coins have vanished.

A dealer ad would read: "No reset; no clean-up (you finish clean); no gimmicks."

And probably charge you about 20 bucks for the effect.

But you're getting it free here! (Aren't I a nice guy!)

Working: You'll need an English penny and two U.S. half dollars.

The penny and one half are on the palm of the left hand; the other half is finger palmed in the right hand. As the right hand comes over the left hand to pick up the half, it drops the concealed half on the fingers of the left hand, which immediately closes. (The coins should be far enough apart so that they don't "talk".)

The left hand is in a fist and the forefinger points at the right hand, which is holding the half; this conceals the fact that the left hand is actually holding two coins.

The right hand puts the half in the right pants pocket but steals it out again in a finger palm.

The left hand is opened showing the two coins have re-united.

This is repeated but this time the right hand actually leaves the coin in the right pants pocket.

No-Gimmick Hopping Halves (cont.)

The left hand shows the two coins and they are tossed to the right hand, to show the other side of the table/room/audience; in fact, they are positioned for the Click Pass. With both coins in the right hand, apparently dump them into the left hand. In fact, only one coin (the half) actually goes into the left hand; due to the Click Pass, it sounds as if both coins landed in the left hand.

The right hand conceals the penny and the forefinger and thumb reach into the left hand and take out the half, holding it by the fingertips; the position should naturally hide the fact that the penny is concealed in the right hand, too.

Put the half in the right pants pocket, ditching the penny along with it (be careful they don't "talk".)

The left hand is still closed and, apparently, holding the penny.

With a clearly empty right hand, point to the left hand, asking what should be left.

No matter what the answer, open the left hand, showing it clearly empty, as well as the right.

Second thoughts: There is no patter given with this because:

a) the variations are so many that you might miss one of your own creations if you followed my patter.

b) I am still working on a story line for this but wanted to get it into print and into your hands as soon as possible.

Obviously, you don't have to use an English penny and a U.S. half; after all, the penny is no longer in circulation and the half is fairly rare in most areas.

It's not necessary to even use two coins the same size, although it does lead the audience down the garden path!

The story line should follow the coins: An English penny and a U.S. half could tell the story of a girl, Elizabeth, and a boy, Jack, who were separated but he rejoined her; when they were separated again, she joins him - who knows where?

You could tell the story of a financier who didn't know whether to put his finances in foreign or domestic money and ends up losing it all.

Or a half dollar and an Oriental coin could tell the story related to the long-term effects of the Vietnam War.

Or - well, you get the idea.

I have used a borrowed coin and a Houdini palming coin; he escapes twice and, being a showman, he naturally charges for the act; the third time he and the money vanish.

Let's hear what you can come up with; if you have a full routine, the germ of an idea, or anything in between, I'd appreciate hearing from you, snail mail or e-mail.

Peter Marucci

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The Dreams of Youth

The Dreams of Youth

Nostalgia

By Craig Browning



Long before our "instant-gratification" culture of the late 20th and early 21st century the realm of magic was a bit more restrictive. If you were lucky, there was a real magic shop within a two-hour drive from your home. For most of us that drive was much further, and our contact with "real" magicians limited to the local magic club (if one was accessible) or something that happened as part of a family vacation. Of course, there was the public library and the chance that they may have more than a couple of books, typically out of date, that covered the subject. More than likely we were forced to deal with the wonderful realities of snail mail. Our first tricks purchased by way of an ad set within the binding of pulp magazines or comic books. Then, even after we'd coughed up that hard earned \$10.00 or more, it would be another six to eight weeks before our cherished puzzle would arrive. Invariably, an item that seemed to fall way short of the things we'd envisioned. After all, to an eight-year-old some stupid looking plastic thumb that's too big to fit on your own hand had little appeal.

The Dreams of Youth (cont.)

Of course there was the holiday season and birthdays. Those special times of year when family members reluctantly spend their hard-earned dollars on something that might help keep us quiet for a few days and, in appearances at least, sate our need for intellectual food that sustained our dream of becoming the next great mage in history.

In the times of my youth the goal was to obtain the complete Tarbell course and possibly a copy of Mark Wilson's new release; one of the best illustrated and most complete courses in magic of the modern era. After all, either of these collections lent to us a plethora of effects, techniques and nifty gadgets that were "easily" made at home. For the inventive and resourceful such tomes were far superior to any catalog filled with the latest in gadgets. They allowed us... actually encouraged us, to use our mind and imagination. Necessity after all, is the mother of invention. As a child of the 60s and 70s that eagerly viewed Bill Bixby's weekly exploits or the annual Henning special, being able to create "Magic" was most certainly a matter of necessity.

I recall those fun-filled days as well as the fantasies enveloping them. How, on those hot August nights, I'd lay in my bed dreaming of the day that I'd own and perform the famed miracles of Sielbit – those grand illusions made famous by the likes of Blackstone, Dante and Thurston. More important, I affirmed within my heart of hearts, that I would become a true modern-day Wizard; one that was learned and skilled in either form of magic – the realms of things occult as well as the way of the trickster.

There's an old saying, "Be careful what you pray for, you may get it..." Well, I got it! I got it in spades! A life-achievement degree before I was in my late 20s in the fields of Religion, Philosophy, and Metaphysics. A degree that sustained the more esoteric side of that childhood fantasy, placing me within the ranks of the world's practicing "masters" of ritualized magick and spiritualistic perspective. Then too, within this same period of time, I was introduced to a man who would extend some of the greatest impact my young life had ever known.

Few in today's world know the name of Charles W. "Kirk" Kirkham. In the post World War II era however, he'd cultivated a career that was of genuine exception. Then again, he was the named successor to the legendary Will Rock who had followed in the lineage of the one and only Howard Thurston. Rock obtaining the rights to the Thurston show via his purchase of the "B" unit e.g. the "older" equipment Howard had passed down to his brother Harry. The Thurston program being so popular that three separate show units were needed in order to traverse the nation as well as the world; Howard's own Miracle program (featuring the newest and coolest of current innovation). Then there was Harry's "B" Unit, which essentially featured highlights from Howard's shows of the past few seasons; and then there was the "C" unit, an allied production that featured a gent of such charisma that it could not readily be seen as a replication to Howard's program. The man's name being simple – DANTE!

Like Mark Wilson, Chuck Jones and Lee Grabel, Kirkham had come into magic during an era when the going was tough. Magic had become a bit passé in the mind of the public for two key reasons; Technicolor Motion Pictures and Television. It would be the ventures taken by these and other noted men and women of the day, that would preserve magic and plant seeds of inspiration into the minds of the world's youth, especially in the United States. That's where the television wars took place and each of these gents along with the likes of Dell O'Dell, Gerry Larsen, the Zimmerman's and of course Melbourne Christopher vied for air time and national exposure. The advent of television introducing a new "star" of magic via noted Hollywood personalities as well. People like Carry Grant, Tony Curtis, Orson Wells, and Donald O'Connor stepping up to the plate with their own acts or full-evening programs. Their star power taking from those actually dedicated to the craft, the opportunity to become the public sensation once known to the Golden Age masters. I can remember those early years well, watching as Peter Pit made his first American performance on the Ed Sullivan show, with his Dancing Cane. Being intrigued as Fred Kapps produced an uncanny amount of salt from his bare hands and so much more! The Variety Shows of early television serving as the impetus to many of us who are now long in the tooth, to investigate and learn all that could be learned, about this strange and wonderful craft.

I was about 13 years old when Doug Henning hosted his first network special. Like many, I found myself spellbound – possessed! Though I'd come far in my early days as a child performer, I realized that I could now go much further. Magic was alive and on the come back as a viable source of income and fame. At 21 years of age I'd left my life in my small Ohio hometown and ventured into the world of Hollywood,

The Dreams of Youth (cont.)

California. My first stop was non-other than the famed Magic Castle where Peter Pit himself sponsored me in as a member. My first few nights in this magnificent facility introducing me to the likes of Shimada, Dai Vernon, and all the other modern-day masters I'd seen so many times on television or read about in magazines. There I was, rubbing elbows with the elite and learning how to hone my skills, becoming the best possible performer I could be.

Every silver lining however, has a big gray cloud enveloping it. The fulfillment of my childhood fantasies and affirmations came with an awesome price. One that I'd discovered over time, I really wasn't comfortable paying.

Show business is not an industry for those of us who are weak of heart or even remotely lethargic, or to be more accurate, the kind of individual seeking to live a "normal" life. If you are by nature, a homebody the real world of commercial entertainment probably isn't a good choice for you when it comes to career. Leave it as a sideline: a hobby that pays for itself. After all, this is a BUSINESS and not something that's done for the "fun of it" as many believes when hosting those childhood fantasies.

I am living proof that those of us that host an "artists" perspective about this craft, isn't enough. Without a solid sense of business acumen or else a network of folks working with you that have said skills, "success" is but a fleeting thought. Whereas our passions may push us forward, they likewise limit us in our ability to function and operate in the real world by its very real rules of thumb. The full-time magician having to wear several caps at once, taking on the role of producer, show manager, logistics coordinator, and more! We must be a hard hitting salesman and marketing pro, someone that's willing to take risks and put EVERYTHING on the line in order to make it. In that such individuals are rare and the majority of us are more concerned with raising a family and having a life that feels and appears to be "normal." Sorry, between the politics and stress associated with the above action, it's just not for me!

Yes, I've been there, done that, have the T-shirt to prove it (as well as a bad back, shattered nerves, and lots of gray hair!) But, as I've aged and mellowed I've also developed that strange syndrome known to many in my position – 20/20 hindsight. The ability to look at the past and realize, probably for the first time, what I gave up in exchange for moderate success within my field.

Yes, my childhood dreams came to fruition. I not only got to perform some of the greatest illusions of magic's history, I got to lug them around and cuss them out on a regular basis because they were so darned heavy and a royal pain to support – storage don't come cheap! The "Glory" of such things lasts only for the time you're on stage. Outside of that, you're rarely more than another grunt moving things around – on and off the truck. A schlep stuck in the office doing paperwork and making phone calls in hopes of getting that next good paying gig. An individual that has little time for living life and enjoying the real magic that surrounds us every day – our children, grandchildren, walks in the park or a stroll along the beach, playing with the dog or going out to see the most current of really cool films.

The next time you find yourself fantasizing about "the big show", fortune or fame I hope that you take a few minutes to consider the price such things bring. Where it is a wonderful thing that can make your life "rich" in ways most will never know, it is likewise a commitment that's unlike any other. A life that can be rather lonely at times, unfulfilling at others. Only those that have been down this path can relate to the number of tears one will shed over broken promises and lost dreams. The reality that an exceptionally few of us ever really "make it" even when our names have been up in lights in some of the most coveted venues on earth. I recall listening to a taped interview with Dante shortly prior to his death one afternoon. He spoke of how amazing it was getting ready for shows and no longer needing the thick theatrical make-up he'd used for decades, to look older and more sophisticated. He also spoke on how he'd discovered how, in his present life, there was no longer the need nor the drive, to do more. He was reserved and content with doing simple forms of magic, the things that pleased him rather than the big illusions he'd done so long, for the sake of pleasing his ego as well as his employers.

Maybe it's just something that happens to us all, as we move into those stages of mid and late life? We mellow and learn to appreciate the simple things much more. Then again, it could be that we are no longer blinded by the delusions of our youth and the spirit of conquest that image brings forth? I don't know for certain. What I do know is that my dreams and affirmations in today's chapter of life, center on the simplistic and the ability to deliver to my patrons something that's a bit more than a trick – an experience

The Dreams of Youth (cont.)

that they will relish long after I've gone.

Truth is, each of us can only give to the world two great illusions; the one that we have striven so hard to create around our self, and the one we leave lingering in the mind, heart and soul of the people we've served. The rest is little more than an act of ego-feeding – misdirection that prevents us from seeing the real magick that exists in our world. The magick that we are already a part of and too frequently, afraid to enjoy.

Well, the dreams will continue and for some of us, they may even become fulfilled. Learn however to look beyond the illusions. Allow yourself to know the magic that surrounds you and let that element serve as your guide as you move forward in creating your career along with your expression of this art we each love.

See you soon!

By P. Craig Browning

Discovering Americana...

Discovering Americana...

A tale of magic friendship

By Gary Scott



A couple of years ago, I came across a fellow on Magic Bunny named Michael Jay. Michael was a superb poster and had been a magician for 25 years. Little did I realise that due to our chance encounter in cyberspace., 'Mike' would become the 'big brother', I never had!

Our latest meeting was no accident. I had wanted to return to Toledo, Ohio, for nearly a year!

Personal grief had me yearning to return to America's mid-west. To be with my 'big brother' again and finally bury some personal demons. So..... Monday 1st November 2004, I did something I needed to do. I caught a flight to Toledo, Ohio and here is the story of my little adventure as two magicians meet!

Michael Jay was in high spirits about wanting me to return. Two weeks before I begun my journey across to the good ol' U.S of A, Mike had informed me of two things.

1. Ron Bauer had invited the both of us to visit with him and his family.
2. Mike had asked me to perform with him at functions he was booked to do.

You can guess that the chance of me becoming an international performer had me ecstatic.!!

The travelling time to Toledo, was 20 hours...door to door. The flights were good, even catching Harry Potter 3 and Spiderman 2 as part of their in-flight movie package. What a great start to my holiday. Arriving in Cincinnati, I noticed a very strange thing was written on the runway. YIELD FOR AIRCRAFT.!...somehow, I don't think I'll be screwing with a 747 anytime soon. I had to board a connecting flight to Toledo which turned out to be a very, very long 50 minute ride. Anticipation, stretches these things out!

Arriving in Toledo, I was peppered with excitement. I had collected my baggage and walked towards the main entrance/exit of the airport. Twenty yards away, I saw a familiar figure strolling towards me. Here was Michael Jay. I embraced him with the passion only a brother could give, and he, likewise, returned the same. We walked to the car park, still in awe of the situation, and just for jolly, I performed a Torture Rack backbreaker (that weird wrestling sh*te!) on him. This was twenty hours in and now a two hour drive to Orion House in Michigan, to meet up with Ron Bauer and a few others.

Discovering Americana... (cont.)

A drive in a car with Mike is a true experience.. Here we had time to chat sh*t and catch up on the past year! We both screamed with laughter as we came across a freeway junction that was called 'Big Beaver at Exit 69!'.

Arriving at Orion House, I had a new enthusiasm about the mid-west.

Inside Orion House, I strolled confidently up to Ron Bauer, we shook hands, and he said.. " Wanna try some Panther Piss?"..... Panther Piss?...What is Panther Piss you may ask?

Panther Piss was a moisturizing lotion that 'the guys' were using. The lotion had a yellowish hue, so you can guess how it got its name. Ron sprayed some on my hands and taught me some 'panther piss etiquette...!' Two minutes later, I was second dealing like Ed Marlo. Speaking of which, Ed used the very same Panther Piss, to which I can never reveal its true identity. Hey, I got to keep some secrets... right?

Well, I spent the whole evening with Ron, in awe. He absolutely levelled me with his one-handed top palm. I screamed at the impossibility of what I had just 'NOT' seen! Of course he showed me this and his RAP (Riffle Action Palm)

Five hours into my vacation, and I was on a roll. At some point along the way, Ron had told me that he wanted Mike and me to go and stay over at his house later on in the week. I settled down to hear a few more stories and eat some BBQ shrimps. The shrimps being so divine, they began my quest to devour as much American food as possible. Anyway, we retired to the bar for a few hours with Ron infusing his wisdom on us all and performing some great magic. It was getting close to 1am, and we had to drive back to Toledo. We quickly said goodbye, as I had been up 28 hours and needed some sleep. It was going to be another 2 days before I saw 'Big Beaver at Exit 69' again!

For the next couple of days, the two pitbulls (Me and Mike!) were just catching up, as you do. I had brought Mike over a couple of DVD's from the British magic scene. Stuff the White Rabbit and Best of Magic. Mike loved 'em both! Especially the comedy openings of John Lenahan. Tom Mullica and Jerry Sadowitz also tickled Mike's fancy. Tom Mullica had us walking around all week asking each other to choose No.11. Those who have seen the show, will not have to ask why. Just get out there and see it people!!!!!!

Anyway, the next 2 days became a food-fest as Mike took me everywhere. I was hooked on their cuisine, and by Thursday had a complete 'American Restaurant' addiction. Hey...Even I got to have some kind of Vice, even if it is Tim Horton's!

If I could melt down those Restaurants and inject them, I probably would!

I never got much sleep over the next few days. 4 hours, maybe 5. New environment, excitement of it all. Sugar levels were probably all over the place by now...so sleep became less important on this trip. What followed was a series of random adventures of what the two pitbulls got up to whilst they were in between 'Big Beaver at Exit 69' visits.

Big Beaver was not the only 'sign of the week', as Mike constantly pointed out that there are special signs for 'Slow Children!'. Maybe its just me, but really...is it fair to point this out to them? It's not their fault. Mike took me to visit his parents (who I adore!) His Mum is a whiz of a cook in all things American, so lucky, lucky me. I got to taste Americana! His Dad is a world class Hunter and Fisherman.

Entering his family life was an experience like no other. It was just like walking on to the set of 'Happy Days'.... So activities wise, we just chilled, laid back....shot the sh*t. Doing magic for Mike was fun. He kept acting like everything I was doing, was the best magic trick he had ever seen.

YEP!...I had my own Dave for a little while...I showed him a few card bits and he showed me some coin stuff. We were acting like a couple of long lost brothers who hadn't seen each other for a year...Oh yeah...that's just what we were!..

7am, every morning, was Magic Bunny time...I could never grasp why Mike has Alec Baldwin as his screensaver?...No accounting for taste!

Well, Thursday came and it was time to get back to Lake Orion and visit Ron Bauer.

Now I'm going to give an insight into the man who I have dubbed as 'Uncle' Ron. This is the most giving man I have ever met. I think that is his job. Sitting and Giving! Ron Shares his secrets, his magic, his stories and his wisdom, without wanting anything in return. As Mike has told me on numerous occasions. "Ron is the kind of friend, everybody should have!"

Discovering Americana... (cont.)

Big Beaver at exit 69 was still making us laugh as we pulled into Ron's drive way!!!!

Ron Bauer lives in a beautiful part of Michigan, overlooking Lake Orion. His home is as vast as his magical knowledge. Spending time with Ron and his family had an extreme influence on my appreciation for the American way of life. Ron's basement is filled, I mean FILLED with probably every book ever created on the subject of magic. I even found a first edition of RRTCM from 1948 to browse through. All the Ed Marlo prints were personally signed. I saw one Ed Marlo signature from 1953. If you want to study magic in a Library, there will be no place like Ron Bauer's basement.

Mike found himself drawn to the gambling and con men section.

Ron's office is dedicated to his magic. More wall to wall books on every type of theatrics, film, (computer and magic than most people would read in their lifetimes. Me and Mike spent the majority of our time with Ron in his office, discussing magic, watching magic and arguing over time-misdirection. Which came to ahead when Ron showed us a world renowned professional proclaiming they invented time – misdirection when they were 4 years old, which had us cringing and laughing all at once.

Ron searched his archives and showed us Don Allen doing his close-up routine with the chop cup. Ron made us analyse everything and why it was done. I am trying to think of a gag for our discussion on final-final loads, but can't think of one. BTW, if you ever get Ron to sign a playing card, make sure you don't have a sharpie! The look on his face when Mike pulled one out of his pocket was , quite honestly, a sight to behold. This was the moment Ron introduced us to the 'Kumquat' DVD. 'Kumquat' was a 14 year old, (well he looked 14) magician (I use this term in its loosest, possible sense) who used a sharpie. This guy was a highlight of the convention that Ron had turned down to appear at, to spend his time with us. Lets just say, I don't want to end up like 'Kumquat!'. This was another factor in our 'tuition' called.... "Don't try this at home!"

I got to see Blackstone do his stage act that involved the infamous dancing hanky. It looked impossible. There was even a Cups and Balls routine from an Egyptian guy called 'Galli Galli'... (Apologies if I got the name wrong!) which involved chicks and the most impossible looking loads ever. It was breathtaking. Charlie Miller, Johnny Thompson... and countless past masters of the art, all got a viewing. The video highlight for me, was seeing Cardini doing his card manipulation act from beginning to end. Two days study with Ron has given me the ability to analyse what I perform in a WHY do I do that? Kinda way...instead of HOW to.... Information overload over two days?... maybe...but well worth it!

During our stay at Ron Bauer's home, I got to meet Sandra Kort again and spent some time talking to her about her father. (Milt Kort)... Apparently, during her adult years spent watching her father perform, she could not understand why everybody was so impressed, then she worked out that as a child, she would stand behind her Dad and watch him perform. This gave her a performers perspective and she could see what was really going on. Sandra showed us the workings behind the Ron Bauer private study series. From illustrations and conception to the finished print. Fascinating!

Of course, as I had hoped, the food at Ron's was true Americana. His beautiful granddaughter, Sam, making me a very large breakfast sandwich. Yummy! We ordered out for these humongous sandwich baguettes. Seafood,, and meat which were enjoyed by all. On the very last evening, I bought everybody dinner as a gesture of thanks for the past two days. Ron's wife Pat and Sam were just in total awe of my North London accent. How strange! Here is where I learned that KFC is no longer Kentucky, but Kitchen Fried Chicken. McDonalds has also ousted Ronald from their marketing campaign, and a little chef emblazes their logo.

I'm not sure how to sum up these past two days., but all my appreciation to Ron Bauer, Pat Bauer, Sandra Kort and Sam for making the both of us feel so welcome. I am indebted to Ron and his family for their gracious hospitality. I am honoured to be able to call Ron Bauer my mentor, Uncle and most importantly my friend. You took a Pizza delivery guy from Toledo and a crippled nobody from the streets of North London and let them into your world, because out of everybody, you want to help us succeed. Thank you Ron Bauer, from both myself and Michael Jay...Thank you!

The drive home to Toledo, was an emotional one. All that could be heard coming from Mike was..."Damn!"...and " Mother f*ck*r!". I was in silent awe, with me whispering..." F*ck...unbelievable!"... The Big Beaver at exit 69 passed us by for the last time, taking in a couple of drinks and shooting the sh*t at Denny's, along the way. We arrived home exhausted. Mentally and emotionally, but much the better for it. The next 2 days were all about me doing the impossible dream. Becoming an international performer and it went something like this

Discovering Americana... (cont.)

Saturday was performing day and unlike any other show I had performed at, this was on foreign ground. The morning was all about food and chilling, but the afternoon was all about food and magic. I had no real idea what to expect, but Mike did inform me that today was a kids show. So I took a few regular bits and pieces and off we went. We arrived at the home of Cutter and Kristine, to perform for their daughter and her friends. Much to my delight, food was on the table and I discovered devilled eggs for the first time. I ate about ten eggs and Kristine made me some to take home. Enough about me and my eating, the important factor here was Michael Jay and his kids show. First his equipment must get a mention. Mike has the best close-up/ performing table I have ever seen. A crimson colour with a built in performing mat and a matching surround that clips on and off. I want one! Also, Mike has the best change bag. I want one of those too. Michael Jay has been performing magic for a long time and with that experience he proved to be the best children's performer I have ever witnessed. His show is vibrant, colourful, entertaining, professional....but most of all...Magical!.. There is one thing that I am biased in and its not because he is my friend. It's because he is American and I believe Americans do come across as better all around entertainers, no matter what genre.

I just hoped that my performance was up to scratch. I did a couple of things in a very British way and they went down very well. I have to explain that these kids had never heard a London accent before and it sure helped with the attention. I sure hoped that everybody could understand what I could say.

The main thing I did was the 'dream bag'! I called up my assistant...Victoria, I do believe. Now whether or not she could understand me verbally, she certainly understood the magic. Even the Adults enjoyed my efforts. Mike, thanks so much for this. It was a honour working with you on your home ground. I can now put international performer on my resume, but my thanks will be achieved at the end of this writing.

Saturday night we celebrated our success. On the drive back, we stopped at the 'Magic Wok' for some Chinese cuisine. Inside, whilst ordering, a local woman asked us. " Are you guys in a Band?".. (she had just seen Jethro Tull and was still excited)...Unfortunately, Mike told her that we were magicians and she looked so freaked, disappointed and quickly stepped out the door. Poor girl. Its not everyday you get to see a magician in the flesh. Tired and full of party food, we didn't attack this feast so well. We never returned too late, so we popped over to the video store and rented some movies. Freddy vs. Jason, Van Helsing and The Punisher!.. we watched them sporadically over the next 2 days, with Mike being the only person I have met, to understand how the Freddy vs. Jason movie worked. Yep, we like the same sh*t!.. I had to travel 5000 miles for that.

Sunday was performing day number two. This time was a less informal affair, being invited by Mike's biggest fan, Jim, to pop over for a few drinks and do some magic for him and his friends.

Well, the first few hours were dedicated to watching everybody get pissed whilst playing darts and pool. Mike had been screaming all day for me to perform 'That pool table card trick!'...so I obliged! This was great! I was doing stuff for people who appreciated magic. Even more fun, people who appreciated magic that were pissed!

And that began an hour of me and Mike tossing back and forth between magic tricks! I'm not sure how much Mike remembers about us performing, but I do know that Card to Mouth and Rainbow Cascade got huge reactions. This was a very different environment for me. I'm not a mixer. I like to keep company few and far between. Americans just enjoy each other, and it was nice to visit the other side of the fence for a while...but only for a while.

The weekend was coming to an end and I had 48 hours left. With Mike and myself, now having these hours to kill, we went around town looking for stuff for my 'Bizarre' act, which we had been chatting about in-between everything else and we found some beauties.

Unfortunately, I cannot disclose the nature of this act, as it is top secret. I had fun with Mike talking about and developing the main aspects of it though. We came up with costume, character and some of the effects. Mike took me to a gigantic Mall, and we looked at some really cool stuff. One shop had an entire section dedicated to the film " A Nightmare before Christmas", so as you can imagine, the store was stuffed with everything Jack Skellington. The one thing I never bought was the Jack Skellington Candelabra, which Mike will tell you was a beautiful piece. I could never have fit that in my case. Now a couple of strange occurrences happened, whilst in the shop. (Store for all you Americans.)

First the very, very, very nice girl behind the counter wanted to take me home. Well....British accent and all.

Discovering Americana... (cont.)

Second, she recognised Michael Jay as being the 'local' magician. Mike had previously worked her brother's 21st birthday party. So, Mike is a local legend!.... Kinda like Bigfoot....You know he exists, but only the privileged get to see him.

Well, by now it was Monday afternoon and I offered to buy Mike a farewell dinner at his favourite restaurant, Outback! An Australian themed restaurant, where the food was divine. Mike had a 9oz steak, and I had Alice Springs Chicken. This has been the best piece of Chicken I have ever tasted. Covered with bacon, cheese and the best Honey and Mustard sauce. We had bread, salad and a massive deep fried onion with dip as a starter. I will definitely be going back to Outback.

We got home and were very tired from the days events. Mike was falling asleep and so was I. An early bedtime for both as Monday became Tuesday and it was time for me to go home. The last few hours of my time, I spent with Mike and his family. Saying goodbye is always difficult, but it can be a good thing as most show their appreciation of each other at this point.

Mike took me to 'Bob Evans' for one last taste of America. My belly full, it was time to get to the airport for the long trip home. I looked at Mike, after our last farewell embrace and he could sense how upset I was. The tears in my eyes were a dead give away.

I had gone to Toledo to do 3 things and received so much more. I had gained a mentor and friend in Ron Bauer. I got a chance to bury my inner demons and instead of hating Toledo, it is full of the people I admire, love and respect. I can truly call Toledo.... 'home!'. But the one thing, above all else, I got to share every single experience with Michael Jay. Mike, this ones for you! Thank you for being there 24 / 7 for me, You got me through hell on earth, the worst time of my life. I won't let the mother f*ck*rs get me down no more! Wish I could be there with you, doing the magic thing and just having fun. Thanks for making me an international performer. It was an honour watching you work. You became the big brother I never had and I want the world to know how self-sacrificing you are. With you, for a little while, I lived the American dream. You said to me, " Lil' bubba.... This whole week has been like a dream!" .. yeah, I know Mike and what an amazing dream it was too. No worries Big Bro'...I'll be coming home... real soon! . On Magic bunny we dub Mike 'the pitbull' .He really takes life by the teeth and doesn't let go! I'm so proud that I met Michael Jay, and I know that everybody who is a long time participant on MB also wants to. You won't regret it, if you do! I suppose to finish I could say... I just came for the food and did some magic along the way.... but it was so much more than that....

Next Top Hat... Outs Revisited!...Just for Mike!
Siya all on Magic Bunny

Gary Scott

Many thanks to all contributors for another great ezine.
See you next year!

Jon Snoops
MagicBunny.co.uk