

THE ACADEMY

NEWSLETTER

FROM OUR WORLD-FAMOUS
CLUBHOUSE, THE MAGIC CASTLE



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Deadline for the Next Issue:
The 20th Day of This Month

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Open Sesame

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

MILT LARSEN: THE GURU OF THE GAG

... PAGE 13

NEWSWORTHY NOTES

... PAGE 3

MASTERS OF ILLUSION TAPING

... PAGE 5

NOW PLAYING

... PAGE 15

LECTURE NOTES

... PAGE 16

CARNEY MAGIC WITH JOHN CARNEY

... PAGE 17

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OUR MISSION: *The Academy of Magical Arts* has been and will continue to be the premier organization in the world dedicated to the art of *Magic*. We are an organization that encourages fellowship, promotes the art, and maintains the highest ethical standards in our actions. We will provide a friendly environment where *Members* and their guests can enjoy the art and each other's company. Our goals and objectives are to advance the art and provide a positive image of *Magic* and *Magicians* worldwide.

NEXT

As We Go To Press:

WELCOME TO 2016 and the new-look *AMA Newsletter*. This is not the first time going horizontal—or in the proper parlance, landscape—was tried. When Rich Cowley was our editor, he released an issue formatted this way. I thought then, and as you can see still think, it is the right thing to do for these digital times in which we live.

I did widen the page a bit. I wanted to take up as much of that horizontal space as I could. Those of you on phones and tablets can turn them. We geezers still on computers can't. So there are my reasons.

It is best viewed in "Full Screen Mode" in Adobe Reader. On PCs, 'Escape' takes you back to the normal view. You can advance pages (or go back) by clicking the hands down in the corners of the pages. So there are the simple instructions for use. The rest is just for you to now enjoy this New Year's issue!

My friend **JOHN CARNEY** is mounting his excellent one-man show, **CARNEYMAGIC**, in Burbank. It's one night only—January 9—and AMA members can enjoy a \$10 discount on tickets. I've had the pleasure of seeing this show a couple of times and I highly recommend it. Please see page 17 for details.

Here's an opportunity to watch some great magic while it's being shot for television. In case you didn't already know, **GAY BLACKSTONE** is one of the producers of the **MASTERS OF ILLUSION** television program and she

has arranged for AMA members to be in the studio audience for several days of the show's 2016 season production. See page 5 for the details. Thanks Gay!

Besides the décor, our Magic Castle is known for its secret gags that **MILT LARSEN** has placed here and there. I chatted with him about that and a couple other things. The result is on page 13.

Of course we also have the usual suspects in this issue. Please read their columns and stay well informed about your club.

This just in: As I type, a limited supply of the new AMA playing cards is available at the front desk. A full supply will be offered in the Gift Shop (and online) starting on Founders' Day. FYI: Yes, the Magic Castle playing cards remain available as well.

Thanks for your time. ✍

Dustin Stinett
newslettereditor@magiccastle.com



OUR NEWEST TOYS ... ERR ... TOOLS ARE NOW AVAILABLE

ON THE INSIDE

- 3 ... **Newsworthy Notes**
Staff and Contributors
- 4 ... **President's Message**
Erika Larsen
- 5 ... **Treasurer's Report**
Maurice Newman
- 6 ... **A Note from the Trustees**
Joan Lawton
- 7 ... **General Musings**
Joe Furlow
- 9 ... **The Magic of Membership**
Trish Alaskey
- 11 ... **Outreach News**
Ray Forgette
- 13 ... **Gadgets, Gizmos, and Gags**
A Q&A with Milt Larsen
- 15 ... **Now Playing**
Jack Goldfinger
- 16 ... **Lecture Notes**
Jack Goldfinger and the Board of Trustees
- 16 ... **From the Kitchen**
Chef Jason Sperber
- 19 ... **From the WWL Library**
Bill Goodwin
- 20 ... **-30-**
Staff

NEWSWORTHY NOTES

It's PARTY TIME, FOUNDERS STYLE!

The 53rd annual FOUNDERS' DAY party is on (wait for it) Founders' Day, **January 2**. Festivities start at 4:00 p.m. See the December 2015 newsletter for the amazing menu and even more amazing 1970s throwback prices!



Please email NEWSWORTHY NOTES contributions to newslettereditor@magiccastle.com. The deadline for the next issue is the 20th of this month. Anonymous contributions will not be accepted, however name(s) can be withheld upon request.

MEET THE CANDIDATES

The "MEET THE CANDIDATES" panel for the nominees to the BOARD OF DIRECTORS is on **January 10** in the Inner Circle. Associate member BOD hopefuls gather at 1:00 p.m. Regular members start at 3:00 p.m.

The BOARD OF TRUSTEES will hold their "MEET THE CANDIDATES" panel on **January 31** at 3:00 p.m. in the Inner Circle. **Note there are no lectures on either date!**

QUESTIONS FOR THE CANDIDATES must be emailed to the Election Committee Chairman at Dale175@aol.com by 5:00 p.m. the day before the panel event (January 9 and 30 respectively).

Priority will be given to questions emailed in advance.

Written questions from the floor may be addressed only if time allows.

(Reported by the ELECTION COMMITTEE)

MAGICIAN MEMBER PERK

If you're interested in gathering a crowd and then entertaining them like they've never been entertained before, attend TOM FRANK's Castle Perk for Magician Members only. Tom is a high-energy and highly successful street magician. His work transcends the street and, additionally, creates a wonderful environment for bar magic. This is a perk not to be missed. January 19 at 8:00 p.m. in the Peller Theatre. (Reported by the TRUSTEES)

DID YOU KNOW ...

On January 26, 1964, "The Baker That's a Fakir," better known as ALBERT GOSHMAN, lectured before the AMA membership for the first time. Starting the following Monday night, he began his first-ever week performing in the Close-Up Gallery.

GRAMMY WATCH

OTMARO RUIZ, jazz pianist and AMA magician member is a Grammy Nominee! The honor comes to him for his arrangement of Antônio Carlos Jobim's *Garota de Ipanema* (The Girl From Ipanema), in the category "Best Arrangement Instrument and Vocals," which appears on the CD he produced with his wife, Catina de Luna (singer) titled *LADO B - Brazilian Project*. The Grammy Awards ceremony is on Monday, February 15. (Reported by RAFAEL BENATAR) ✍



THE AMA'S OWN OTMARO RUIZ
GRAMMY NOMINEE

HAPPY 2016!

***“I have been proud to serve
on the current board.”***

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

ERIKA LARSEN

PRESTO-CHANGO ... it's 2016. Happy New Year Everyone! The recent holiday celebration at our clubhouse was as festive as ever, and I would like to personally thank our tireless staff—as well as our many volunteers—for all their hard work.

Last year was another successful year for the Academy. We had a few ups and downs, but they were relatively minor and the AMA reached new heights. I look forward to this trend continuing as we move into a new year. As usual, our ability to flourish is the result of the support and loyalty of you, our members. I sincerely hope that each of you continues to visit your club often, attending special events and sending friends and family in for a magical experience like no other. The BOD, BOT, and management are very proud of all that has been accomplished over the past few years, and we are eager to continue to make this one of the best private clubs ever.

January finds us in the middle of our elections. Thank you again to those who are running. Serving on one of the boards is a challenge, but it is also

rewarding. I have been proud to serve on the current board. We have put things in place that will benefit the AMA for many years to come. However, there is still work to do. I ask our members to please pay close attention to what each candidate has to say and vote accordingly. It is imperative that the AMA continues to make the type of progress that will ensure our future survival. Please keep this in mind when you vote.

I was hoping we would wrap up our agreement with Magic Castles, Inc. before the end of last year, but we are not quite there. We're close though, and hopefully, by the end of this month, we'll have everything in place. Both MCI and the AMA are excited to get the contract signed so we can move forward together. There will be a discussion of this at the Annual General Meeting in March.

Founders' Day is January 2, and I can't wait to celebrate! I hope to see many of you at the Castle that evening. This time of year is also special because not only is December 31 New Year's Eve, it is also the birthday of our patriarch, my grandfather,

WILLIAM LARSEN, SR.

Without his dream, and the foundation he laid down in *Genii*, there would be no AMA and no Magic Castle. Bill Sr. was truly a remarkable individual. I am proud to say congratulations and thank you to our wonderful Founders. What an amazing legacy they have created!

Although my tenure on the Board of Directors will end in a few months, I have many plans for the future of our club and a lengthy list of goals. You don't need to be president, or even serve on a board, to make a huge difference to our organization. I am looking forward to working hand in hand with many of you in 2016. Great things are in store! ✍

Yours in Magic,

Erika

elarsen@magiccastle.com





OUR OCTOBER 2015 numbers find us with gross revenue of \$1,049,762. 64-percent of this was food and beverage sales of \$673,860. Food sales were \$416,529 with beverage sales of \$257,331. Membership sales were \$9,465 and gift shop revenues at \$12,737. Door fees were \$130,529. Uber and Lyft continue to impact our parking revenue and as such our valet income was \$38,817. No-show fees amounted to \$6,575. The profit for the month totaled \$22,482.

ELECTION THOUGHTS

The election process is under way and I ask each one of you to become involved whether you're running or not. You may know the members running on a personal basis. However, I implore you to ask the questions of the candidates about what they want to do and how they would implement their proposed changes.

Voting for the leaders of our club is more than just selecting someone you know. It involves what their platforms are and how those things will be accomplished. Merely saying "I will work to achieve this" is not enough. Ask the candidate how he or she will achieve it. Get involved in the process and not slogans or conclusory statements made without substance.

Most importantly, ask questions and then cast your ballot. Voter turnout is disappointingly low. So please vote and let's see the highest number of voters this year than has ever turned out before.

If you see me at our club please stop and say hello. ✍

Maurice
mnewman@magiccastle.com

TELEVISED MAGIC SHOW NEEDS AN AUDIENCE!

MASTERS OF ILLUSION

AS SEEN ON

All Magic Castle members are invited to
 attend a FREE taping of the hit TV series
 "Masters of Illusion" for The CW!

WHEN:
 January 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th
 (Please arrive by 6:30 PM)

WHERE:
 RED Studios
 846 North Cahuenga Blvd.
 Los Angeles, CA 90038

RSVP by email to
moiaudience@gmail.com to
 reserve your seats NOW!

When responding include your
 Name, Email, Date you wish to
 attend, and number of people
 in your party.

Confirmation and further information
 for the show will be sent to you via
 email during the week of taping.
 Come to one night or come to all
 three!
 Kids age 6 and up are welcome!

TICKETS ARE GOING FAST! RSVP NOW!

A NOTE FROM THE TRUSTEES

FOUNDERS' DAY

FIFTY-THREE YEARS. That's hard for some of us to believe, but it's true! David Regal will be hosting the festivities. That's a double whammy: One amazingly witty and creative man walking us through the 53rd anniversary of The Magic Castle. Please see Joe Furlow's column for the details, but I want to add this: with David Regal involved, it's going to be memorable!

ELECTIONS

If you can't get to the club in person for the Meet-the-Candidates panels to be held on January 10 (Board of Directors) and January 31 (Board of Trustees), drop in electronically. Details will be sent out via our Flash Paper notes and probably on Facebook as well. These panels are your best chance to get to know all of the candidates.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS PERK!

A Castle Perk specifically for Associate Members will be held at the end of January or the beginning of February. Check the Flash Papers for details. We are putting all the pieces together now. A decision whether or not Magician Members will be allowed to attend is pending.

WEEKEND SEMINAR TWO

It's just six months away, and we're still in talks, but I can assure Magician Members that you'll want to register. June is almost certain to see an international icon visiting The Magic Castle for a Weekend Seminar, a special dinner, a lecture (with material not included in the seminar), and a possible lecture for the Juniors! I'm not at liberty to disclose more at the moment, but just know that he's an AMA Fellowship recipient and is admired and respected throughout the world.

WHOSE HANDS ARE THESE?

The hands pictured last month are those of Larry Jennings (1933-1997). Originally from Detroit, he learned his first card trick in his mid-teens. At 16 he joined the U.S. Navy where he pestered a shipmate to teach him some card tricks he'd seen the guy do. He was honorably discharged in 1953.

A friendship formed with Ron Wilson, then living in Windsor, Ontario. The two aspiring magicians met Dai



JOAN LAWTON



Vernon at a magic convention in the early 1960s. Like so many, Larry moved here to be near The Professor.

A devotee of Vernon, Larry, too, became a legend at The Magic Castle. Larry was also an opera fan and a writer; sort of. For a while, I was honored to be among his ghost writers. The rest is history and you can look up a lot of it in the AMA library. I'm sure Bill Goodwin can point you in the right direction.

There are so many stories about Larry Jennings. If you are not already a fan of Magic Castle history—or 20th century magic—when you learn more about Larry you'll become one.

On behalf of all the members of the AMA Board of Trustees, I wish you a happy, healthy, and successful 2016. ✍

Joan
jlawton@magiccastle.com

“... due to recent events, we have added security to our property.”

HAPPY NEW YEAR! As we wrap up 2015 and our focus shifting to 2016, many new and exciting things are in store for us and the New Year will be a great one. Here at the Castle, our Senior Management team will be focused on making 2016 the best year yet!

FOUNDERS’ DAY 2016

January 2 is a very special day here at the Castle: our Birthday. As we celebrate 53 years inside the historic Lane Mansion, I sometimes wonder what it was like that first week in 1963, and whether or not Bill, Irene, and Milt ever thought we would be thriving in 2016.

If you have made plans to join us on January 2, know that it will be a spectacular event. The ceremony and toast begins at 4:00 p.m. Our emcee for the evening will be Board of Trustee member and outstanding

performer, Mr. David Regal. The 40-minute ceremony will include speeches from Trustee Chairman Jon Armstrong, Irene Larsen, Milt Larsen, and outgoing President of the Academy Erika Larsen. Appetizers and specialty cocktails will be available in the Inner Circle at the conclusion of the ceremony.

Chef Jason Sperber has put his amazing touch on our menu for the evening, which will highlight pricing from the 1970s. The show times will remain the same, but the Palace might include five minutes from a very special performer. Come join us!

SECURITY

As many members have noticed, due to recent events, we have added security to our property. In early November, at 11:30 a.m., someone broke into the General Manager’s office via the window. Although no

GENERAL MUSINGS

from General Manager Joe Furlow



one was hurt, the LAPD was called. Security surveillance was turned over to the LAPD and fingerprints on the scene were found. However, to date, no arrests have been made.

Immediately following that incident, we have noticed suspicious persons in and around the property at all hours of the day and night. Our Senior Management team has done a superb job communicating with each other and the LAPD to stop any potential issues. Break-ins in our lower parking lot into two cars one evening was enough to cause immediate action.

I have hired an outside security firm, with the Board’s blessing, as an immediate deterrent. The security guard arrives at 5:00 p.m. and patrols the lot until 5:00 a.m. He is in direct contact with his company and with the LAPD. I have been reluctant to alert our members, as the LAPD and I both feel the issues we are

having might be connected with someone with knowledge of the Castle; aka an “inside job.” However, recent information has surfaced that neighbors around our address are experiencing a string of thefts which leads one to believe that our surrounding area is a current target.

We have also installed, with our landlords’ approval, new security fencing to protect against a theft from the top level of our property. The fence, installed in early December, will allow our Administrative Offices to be more secure.

Throughout 2015 we installed new security cameras around our property. The upper parking lot, the lower parking lot, the showroom waiting areas, hallways, dining rooms, our driveways, and kitchen are now covered from every angle and we will continue to add more in the coming months. The security cameras have

(CONTINUED: JOE FURLOW)

protected the AMA from possible litigation due to slip and falls, as well as member vs. member issues and guest vs. guest issues. We use footage to investigate allegations and also for training purposes.

With the recent events in San Bernardino, and with conversations with Darren Ross from the Magic Castle Hotel, this might need to be a "new normal." We will continue to fine tune the operation and address any potential weakness I feel we may have on the property. But the security is here to allow our members, guests, and employees to feel safe while on the property.

GOALS FOR 2016

As we make New Year's resolutions, I have made a few of my own. As we chart a path to greater financial security, my staff and I will be working hard to cut expenses and continue to maximize the member experience. In the last few weeks, members on the Facebook page have commented on a variety of topics, but one that

seems to be near and dear to those expressing their disappointment, is that the club "no longer feels like a private club." I take those concerns to heart, and will take the necessary steps to add to your day to day experience. Although our current business model does depend quite heavily on guest passes being issued and guests dining in our dining room, we can do a better job adding more days for our members to enjoy. I will make that a priority in 2016 and will work with the both Boards to generate ideas to add to the overall satisfaction of the club.

I am looking forward to improving the overall experience and expect us to have a great 2016!

I hope to see you around the club soon! ✍

Joe
jfurlow@magiccastle.com



EMPLOYEE OF THE MONTH

Jeff Johnson

IN OVER TWO YEARS of service to the AMA, JEFF JOHNSON has established himself as a leader in his department, dedicated to providing top customer service with a smile. He has the ability that most bartenders possess: communication skills. However, Jeff also has an infectious laugh and always greets all of our members and guests with a loud, "hello!"

A native of Shreveport, Louisiana, Jeff arrived in Los Angeles in 1991 as an aspiring actor. For those who remember the final episode of *Seinfeld* (1998), Jeff is not surprising in the role of the "car thief" and at the end of the episode he becomes a scene stealer. A quick IMDb.com search of him shows *Contact*, *The Postman*, and *The Brave* among his many credits.

Jeff is still very busy in Hollywood, and loves the Castle for the flexibility it allows him to follow his dreams.

He has worked all over Los Angeles's nightclub scene and managed a few establishments as well. You normally see him working in the Palace Bar, but as versatile as he is, we can move him anywhere inside the building.

Jeff exemplifies "The Castle Way." We are very proud to have him on our team. Congratulations to Jeff on being chosen as the AMA November 2015 Employee of the Month! ✍



"The reason why we're here is because of love—the love of magic."

Irene Larsen, Co-Founder

The Magic of MEMBERSHIP

Trish Alaskey



HAPPY NEW YEAR! I hope you all had a beautiful holiday season. We have been busy little elves, making sure "dues season" runs as smoothly as possible for everyone. For those of you who have paid your dues for 2016 up through the last week of December, you should have received your renewal packets in the mail by now, or will very soon. If you are a Life Member, your special packets are being mailed out as I type. For anyone who has not received their package, and it's been longer than two weeks since you've paid your dues, please let me know so we can investigate the situation. Both the Life Member News mailing and the Renewal Thank You packets with your passes in them are stuffed and mailed manually, so your patience and understanding is greatly appreciated.

For any member who has yet to renew their membership, you have until the 31st of January to pay your dues. If you do not pay by then, there will be a non-negotiable \$50 late fee automatically applied to payments made from February 1 to March 15. Any payments not received by March 15 will not be accepted and you will lose all benefits of membership. Associate Members and Magician Members will be allowed to reinstate but will be subject to additional (non-negotiable) reinstatement fees.

Here is a quick review of the remaining dues deadlines:

- January 31: All member privileges, including voting rights revoked for unpaid membership dues
- February 1: \$50 non-negotiable late fee applied to payments
- March 15: Unpaid memberships officially expire

On a lighter note, I hope to see as many of you as possible here at the club to celebrate Founders' Day! For those of you who do not know, January 2, 1963 is the day we opened the doors of the world famous Magic Castle for the very first time. Each year we take this day to thank our Founders Bill Jr., Milt, and Irene Larsen. Sadly, on February 11, 1993, we lost our "President for Life" Bill Larsen, Jr. But, fortunately for us, we still have Milt and Irene with us to celebrate our Anniversary! If you do come, please be sure to take the time to thank them for giving us this wonderful, magical club. It is because of them that it exists and they deserve all of the love and thanks that we can possibly give. The event starts at 4 p.m. in the Palace of Mystery to be followed by delicious appetizers in the Inner Circle. Make your dinner reservation ASAP, because Chef Jason Sperber has put together an incredible menu and will be knocking back dining room prices to what they were in the 1970s! Get here early and have a wonderful time!

Membership benefits with the Academy of Magical Arts continue to grow. Please enjoy your membership with us and be sure to take advantage of the many opportunities you have available. If you need anything at all, you know where to find me! ✍

Enjoy!

Trish

talaskey@magiccastle.com



Gary Angiuli, Annette Angiuli
 Nick Ivory
 Daniel Goldberg
 Paul Rubin
 Jeff Sargent
 Donald Voltz, Cassandra Voltz
 Dennis Watkins
 John Slicer
 Ryan Bart
 Andy Peters
 Kyle Elder
 Nicholas Hosking
 Mollie B. Casey
 Andrew Evans
 Andrew Maynard
 Simone Turkington, Gregg Turkington
 Jeremiah De Matteis
 Ron Torres
 Tiffany H. Le
 Christopher Winter
 Zahi Nassoura, Lydia Nassoura
 New Members: Don't forget to sign up for
 your New Member Orientation! Contact:
memberservices@magiccastle.com

ATTENTION MAGICIAN MEMBERS:
ANOTHER BENEFIT of MEMBERSHIP in The ACADEMY of MAGICAL ARTS!

Genii

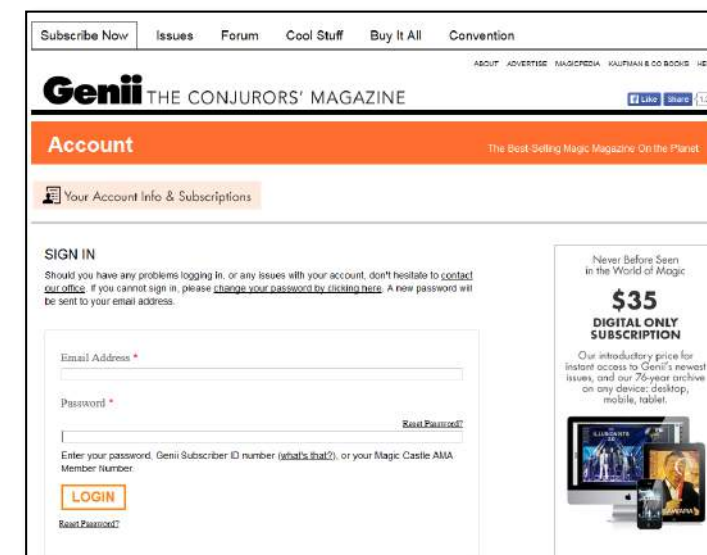
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HOTLINE

9:30AM-6:00PM
SEVEN DAYS A WEEK!

(323) 928-7040

Outreach Committee News

THE HOLIDAYS are always a busy and gratifying time for the members of the **ACADEMY OF MAGICAL ARTS OUTREACH COMMITTEE**. Here are just some of the events in which we participated during that festive season.

CHILDREN UNITING NATIONS

On Sunday, November 15, 2015, **LARRY HOROWITZ**, **ALFONSO**, **DAVE RAMEY**, and **BILL** and **SHARON KINNEY** strolled at **CHILDREN UNITING NATIONS' DAY OF THE CHILD** event. **HILLEL** was on stage performing his signature act. The event was a great success.

MILLER CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL

On Tuesday, December 2 members of the Outreach Committee appeared at Santa's Workshop at **MILLER CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL** in Long Beach. **RANDY GASTREICH**, **SAM KONUGRES**, and **VICTOR GLOBA** entertained approximately 100 patients, their family members, and staff. It was a festive environment that was well worth the effort.

LAUREL FOUNDATION

On December 6, **BEN BENJAMINS** performed at the **LAUREL FOUNDATION'S** holiday party, bringing some holiday cheer to 200 families affected by HIV/AIDS.



RANDY GASTREICH AND SAM KONUGRES AT
MILLER CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL



WACKO, DAVE RAMEY, AND BILL GOODWIN AT
CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL LOS ANGELES

VETERANS' HOLIDAY CELEBRATION

On December 6, for the 10th year, Outreach Committee volunteers supported the **VETERANS' HOLIDAY CELEBRATION** in Westwood. The 23rd annual event hosted over 5,000 veterans who were honored and fed in the spirit of the holidays.

Performing magicians included **PETER DEYELL**, **BRANDON SCOTT**, **ELROY CODDING**, **SCOTT SMITH**, and **DENNIS FOREL**.

CHLA

Outreach members attended the **CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF LOS ANGELES "Catch" Holiday Party** on December 11. **WACKO**, **DAVE RAMEY**, and **BILL GOODWIN** performed. A grand time was had by all.

CHOC

On Tuesday, December 15, the Outreach Committee performed its annual holiday program at **CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL ORANGE COUNTY (CHOC)**. This year's performers included **TERRY LUNCEFORD**, **BARRY MATAS**, and **VICTOR GLOBA**. Shows were performed in the Oncology and General playrooms. Additionally, some strolling was done for children who could not participate in the playrooms. With the patients were parents, siblings, and CHOC volunteers.

(CONTINUED: OUTREACH)

It's not easy to see kids who need to be hospitalized, especially during the holiday season, but it is always nice to put a smile on a kid's face using magic. Would you like to join us for these kinds of heartwarming events? Please contact the Outreach Chair, **RAY FORGETTE** at outreachchair@magiccastle.org.

ONE VOICE HOLIDAY PROGRAM

The Outreach Committee combined with **ONE VOICE** again this year to not only share the magic of the season but to create some as well!

One Voice started as a simple holiday distribution by two co-eds as a college project. Today, more than 25 years later, One Voice transforms seven Los Angeles locations into a Winter Wonderland from which they distribute holiday food, toys, books, and hugs to over 2,300 Head Start families.

On December 22, AMA first-timers to the One Voice Holiday Program **EDDIE MEDRANO** and **LARRY "ZEEZO" CAMPBELL** joined repeat performers **KEN GERENRAICH**, **JOSEPH GUZMAN**, **SAM KONUGRES**, **GERALD SCHILLER**, and **WENDY SOBEL**, and to entertain over 200 families per performer in just a single day!

BLANKETS FOR HOPE STREET

Our **BLANKETS FOR HOPE STREET** program continues through February 29. Please bring your new or gently used (and cleaned) blankets to The Magic Castle for collection and delivery to the Hope Street Foundation. Our parking valets will collect them from you. Thank you for your continued support! ✍

Victor Globa, Sam Konugres, Brandon Scott, and Ray Forgette
outreachchair@magiccastle.org



Magic & Mystery SCHOOL

25TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION

Saturday, January 23, 2016
3:00 to 5:00 p.m. ~ Magic Castle ~ Inner Circle

Join us as we celebrate 25 years of Magic & Mystery School with a cocktail reception, light fare, special guests, and more! Hosted by Jeff McBride, all members and their guests are welcome. Dress is formal evening attire for guests (age 21+) who plan on remaining in the club after the party. Otherwise, brunch attire is acceptable. Guests under the age of 21 must leave the club at 5:00 p.m. when we open for the evening. Come one, come all!

Questions? Contact Ben Roman, Special Events Manager, at: broman@magiccastle.com

Please see "Now Playing" on page 15 for the schedule of performers appearing during Magic & Mystery School Week at The Magic Castle!

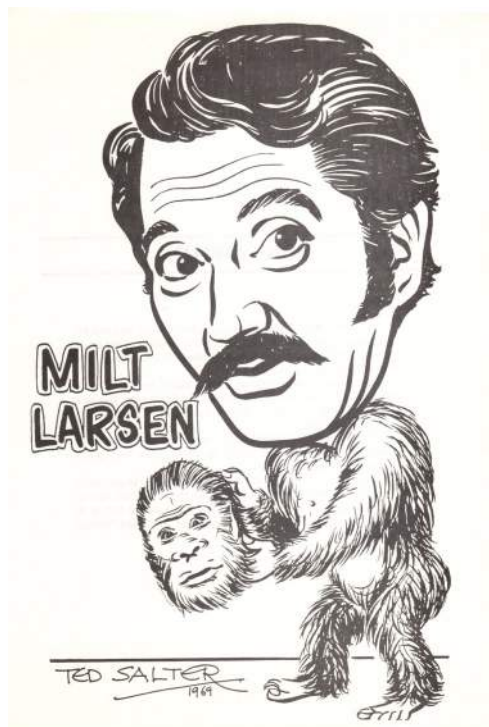
MILT LARSEN: GADGETS, GIZMOS and GAGS

In looking toward the New Year and Founders' Day, we caught up with co-founder Milt Larsen for a quick chat.

We wanted to focus on his "tinkering" here at the old house, both over the last 53-plus years and what he has in store for us.

AMA: The Magic Castle is starting its 54th year of continuous operations. By any chance, did you win a bet? After all, so many people said to you, "This joint won't last a year."

MILT LARSEN: Bill and I had good jobs



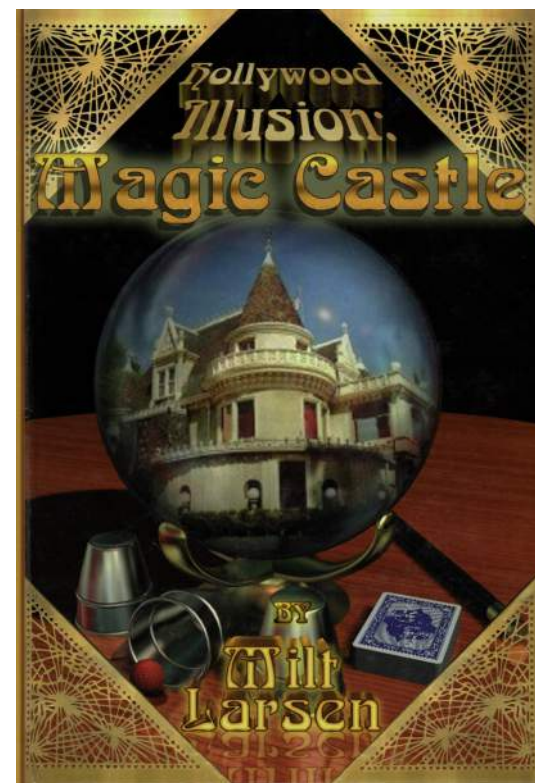
in television and endless faith in the project. All bets were off.

AMA: We all know the story of how you and Bill started this place, and also the legends of getting it open (and for those who don't should get your book, *HOLLYWOOD ILLUSION: MAGIC CASTLE*, in the Gift Shop), are there any stories that you have never shared publicly that you'd consider sharing now?

MJ: I used to write stories every week for the Friday lunch menu. When the lunch menus were eliminated with the new lunch buffet, I satisfied my

writing needs with almost weekly stories for my Milting-Pot blog. The archives are available to anyone at www.miltlarsen.tumblr.com. At this time there are 54 stories.

AMA: We know your admitted prowess of bad taste—countered by the good taste of John Shrum—and the Castle is still a work in progress for you. What, if anything, do you have planned décor-wise for the Castle?



MJ: John Shrum taught me the fine art of building a standing set (The Magic Castle). After John passed away, art director Joe Hoffman kept up the designing quality until his untimely passing two years ago. I had great teachers and I learned my lessons well. As for plans, everyone has to wait and see.

AMA: You have an affinity for gadgets, gizmos, and gags. As a result, the Castle is famous for them. What was the very first gadget, gizmo, or gag you installed at the Castle?

MJ: The "Open Sesame" bookcase entrance door.

AMA: What is your favorite gadget or gag?

MJ: Invisible Irma.

AMA: Recently you did something with the caricatures. Tell us about that.

MJ: Yes, the Magician's caricatures display is back. Thanks go out to Rich Cowley and Steve Twarowski. But I have to tell you this story before I can tell you that one.

When we removed my Bob Hope

(CONTINUED: MILT LARSEN)

Grecian Urn gag, due to it being in the way of traffic, the card reader got lost. Now it's back and obvious if you know where it is and what it does.

It's one of my favorite gags in The Magic Castle. It's in the "Hall of Fame" and it allows any member that has a JPG portrait on file to have his or her moment of fame displayed in a gold frame as you come down the stairs towards the Palace of Mystery. It was one of my best ideas, but it took the technical talents of Rich Cowley, Alan McFarland, and others to make it work.

After the 2011 Halloween fire, a number of changes were made. One of them was limiting the number of those wonderful caricatures of our magician members started by the late Ted Salter and carried on later by other artists. After many years there were simply too many drawings and not enough wall space. The caricatures displayed were limited to only AMA Award winners.

About 400 magician members were really unhappy that they were relegated to the library storage area.

"About 400 magician members were really unhappy that they were relegated to the library storage area."

So my new gag in the Castle is our "Wall of Fake." I came up with the same gag as in the "Hall of Fame" but in a different way. Just before you go down the stairs to the Inner Circle you will find a prominent frame with nine caricatures of our famous magicians like Doug Henning, Lance Burton, Goldfinger and Dove ...

AMA: Dale Hindman ...

ML: [Laughs] Yes, and Dale. Bill, Irene, and I are there too. The center one is actually a TV monitor screen that looks exactly like the framed drawings. If a magician member has ever had a caricature on the wall of The Magic Castle, that drawing can be made to appear in the frame and will remain there until some other member changes it. Former BOD member



Rich Cowley created the computer file.

The key to retrieving your art is simply your membership card. The computer file recognizes your drawing by your membership number. If you ever had a caricature displayed at the Castle it should be there.

AMA: So blame Rich if it's not. He's used to that.

ML: Right; don't blame me. So, you slide your membership card through the reader—which is now located on the bar rail across from the Palace Bar close-up table. It's not obvious, but it's there, just to the right and under Bill's portrait. That's it, very simple. Slide your card and enjoy!

By the way, as in all my favorite Castle

gags, don't let your friends see you slide the card. They should think you are as famous as our celebrity members. Don't tip any of the gags. Example: "Sit on this bar stool. It sinks and you will hardly notice it!" Or "This is the Irma table that revolves." The Magic Castle is a stage and all our members are players.

AMA: Any new gags in the works for us (or do we just have to wait for a new surprise)?

ML: The fake elevator to the eccentric millionaire tower. The Boards still have no idea of what I'm talking about.

AMA: Anything else you'd like to add; a message for the members?

ML: The Magic Castle is a success beyond my wildest dreams – but my wildest dreams are yet to come. We have many projects in the mill that may or may not happen. I love magic, writing, inventing, and dreaming impossible dreams. I have a lovely, talented, and caring wife Arlene and a great life and above all, thanks to the AMA, we have about 5,000 children.

AMA: Thanks Milt ... thanks for everything. ✍

NOW PLAYING AT THE MAGIC CASTLE

Jack Goldfinger, Entertainment Director

DECEMBER 28 TO JANUARY 3

CLOSE-UP GALLERY

Early-Early: Greg Otto
Early: Armando Lucero
Late: Hannibal

PARLOUR OF PRESTIDIGITATION

Early: Arthur Benjamin
Late: Shane Cobalt

PALACE OF MYSTERY

Larry Wilson
 Lindsay Benner
 Dan Birch

PELLER THEATRE

Shoot Ogawa
 Simon Coronel

W. C. FIELDS BAR

Pop Haydn

FRIDAY LUNCH

Closed For New Years

SATURDAY & SUNDAY BRUNCH

Lisa Cousins

JANUARY 4 TO 10

CLOSE-UP GALLERY

Early-Early: Steven Himmel
Early: Bjorn Hanson
Late: Karl Hein

PARLOUR OF PRESTIDIGITATION

Early: Pete Firman
Late: Diamond Jim Tyler

PALACE OF MYSTERY

Chipper Lowell
 Steve Owens

PELLER THEATRE

Joseph Tran
 Arthur Trace

W. C. FIELDS BAR

George Tovar

FRIDAY LUNCH

Karl Hein

SATURDAY & SUNDAY BRUNCH

Tim Mannix

JANUARY 11 TO 17

CLOSE-UP GALLERY

Early-Early: Paul Green
Early: Liberty Larsen
Late: Georges-Robert

PARLOUR OF PRESTIDIGITATION

Early: Chris Capehart
Late: Phil Van Tee

PALACE OF MYSTERY

Chuck Jones
 And
 Company

PELLER THEATRE

Justin Willman
 Brett Loudermilk

W. C. FIELDS BAR

Danny Magic

FRIDAY LUNCH

Paul Green

SATURDAY & SUNDAY BRUNCH

Bonaparte

JANUARY 18 TO 24

MAGIC & MYSTERY SCHOOL WEEK

CLOSE-UP GALLERY

Early-Early: Tom Messeroll
Early: Lawrence Hass
Late: Butzi

PARLOUR OF PRESTIDIGITATION

Early: Ross Johnson
Late: Master Payne

PALACE OF MYSTERY

Jeff McBride
 Abigale Spinner-McBride

PELLER THEATRE

Eugene Burger
 Rob Zabrecky

W. C. FIELDS BAR

Bill Cook

FRIDAY LUNCH

Butzi

SATURDAY & SUNDAY BRUNCH

Bill Cook

JANUARY 25 TO 31

CLOSE-UP GALLERY

Early-Early: Alex Iverson
Early: R. Paul Wilson
Late: Jared Kopf

PARLOUR OF PRESTIDIGITATION

Early: Rob Gould
Late: Joe Monti

PALACE OF MYSTERY

Mike Caveney
 Guy Hollingworth
 Handsome Jack

PELLER THEATRE

Titou
 Joel Ward

W. C. FIELDS BAR

Masahiro Yanagida

FRIDAY LUNCH

R. Paul Wilson

SATURDAY & SUNDAY BRUNCH

Frank Thurston



3:00 to 5:00 p.m. | Parlour of Prestidigitation*

(Magician Members In-Good-Standing Only)

JANUARY 3

HANNIBAL

Hannibal has forty years of performing experience with twenty of those making a living as a professional magician. In this lecture, he will recreate a live version of a very popular feature of his social media. His promise: "It will get intense."

JANUARY 10

NO LECTURE

Board of Directors "Meet the Candidates" Forum

JANUARY 17

EUGENE BURGER

Performing Fellowship recipient and two-time AMA Lecturer of the Year Eugene Burger brings members a magical afternoon that will feature magic performance, teaching, and philosophy. This icon and one of magic's most popular world-wide lecturers is someone not to be missed.

JANUARY 24

LAWRENCE HASS

In this lecture, Lawrence Hass will discuss "Building Better Shows" by performing and teaching magic from his acclaimed new book, *Inspirations: Performing Magic with Excellence*.

JANUARY 31

NO LECTURE

Board of Trustees "Meet the Candidates" Forum

**Time and location are subject to change pending capacity, scheduling, and popularity.*



Executive Chef Jason Sperber



JANUARY 4, 5, & 6

Academy smoked New York strip loin, roasted garlic mashed potatoes, seasonal vegetables, cabernet demi glaze.

VEGETARIAN: Eggplant Parmesan, gemelli pasta primavera, and Academy cheese bread.

VEGAN: Roasted acorn squash stuffed with wild rice, sesame ginger vinaigrette.

JANUARY 11, 12, & 13

Chicken Parmesan, gemelli pasta primavera, and academy cheese bread.

VEGETARIAN: Wild mushrooms, spinach, roasted peppers and goat cheese in puff pastry, spicy tomato sauce.

VEGAN: Gemelli pasta primavera, roasted cauliflower, asparagus, cured tomatoes, zucchini, capers, white wine, spicy tomato sauce.

JANUARY 18, 19, & 20

Sautéed rainbow trout, wild rice pilaf, green bean almandine, lemon caper butter.

VEGETARIAN: Roasted butter nut squash, wild mushroom and kale lasagna, vodka tomato sauce.

VEGAN: Tofu stir fry over wild rice pilaf

JANUARY 25, 26, & 27

Beef stroganoff over tagliatelle pasta.

VEGETARIAN: Parmesan gnocchi, butternut squash, cured tomato, organic kale, asparagus tips.

VEGAN: White bean ragout and roasted vegetable ragout with petite herb salad.

If you any questions about these or any items on our menu, please contact me. ✉

Jason

jsperber@magiccastle.com



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Dustin Stinett / newslettereditor@magiccastle.com

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Jan. 1: Closed for New Year's Day

Jan. 2: Founders' Day Celebration

Jan. 10: Board of Directors Meet the Candidates

Jan. 18-24: Magic & Mystery School Week

Jan. 19: Perk: Street Magic with Tom Frank
Magician Members Only

Jan. 31: Board of Trustees Meet the Candidates

Feb. 2: Perk: Castle Puzzle Hunt with David Kwong

Feb. 7: Super Bowl Viewing Party

Feb. 14: Valentine's Day Celebration: "Love Potion"

Feb. 28: Oscars Viewing Party

Mar. 21-22: Young Adults Nights

May 15: AMA Awards Show

Events are "All Members Welcome" unless otherwise indicated.
Keep an eye out for detailed information on these events and more in upcoming
AMA Newsletters, Flash Paper Emails, our online member calendar on
www.magiccastle.com, and our Members Only Facebook Group!

Questions? Contact Ben Roman, Special Events Manager, at:
broman@magiccastle.com



ONE NIGHT ONLY!



*The Magic Castle's Most Awarded Performer
As seen on David Letterman's Late Night
CarneyMagic is a show that will amaze you,
as it charms and delights.*

*"High Energy ... Combines magic tightly and inventively
with his comedy." VARIETY*

*"Knocking em' dead ... Personable and funny ... Got you
laughing as much as mystified." DRAMALOGUE*

*"... smart, engaging, and hilarious ... Carney has the knack and
charisma to delight us in a spectacle we all crave ... amazing
surprises in store throughout every moment of the show."*

TOLUCAN TIMES

JANUARY 9 AT 7:30 P.M.

THE COLONY THEATER

555 North Third Street

Burbank, California 91502

TICKETS: <http://www.colonytheatre.org/carneymagic.html>

MEMBERS-ONLY MAGIC-II / CARDS CLASS SATURDAYS, FEB. 20 - MAR. 26

Associates: Want to perform some really cool magic for your family and friends?

Magicians: Want to sharpen your close-up skills?

Our Magic University is offering a new class to Academy members only, with an emphasis on tricks and techniques using just an ordinary pack of cards.

Don't worry about prerequisites: Registrants get access to a set of videos with all the background needed to 'hit the ground running'.



Don't wait; here's your chance to learn some amazing magic!

For details, just contact Rich Cowley at RCOWLEY@SOCAL.RR.COM or 714.313.5780.

AMA Newsletter Advertisement and Announcement Policy

- All advertisements and announcements must be approved by the General Manager and/or the Boards of Directors or Trustees. This includes all text and artwork.
- All advertisements and announcements must be coordinated through the Group or Special Events Departments.
 - Points of contact include Erin Chick and Ben Roman—please see page 17 for their individual contact information.
- Any off-site event, product, or service being advertised to AMA members must include a discount and explicit instructions, rules, and regulations on how to take advantage of the discount.
 - On-site events do not require a discount offer.
- All Internet and/or email links must be functional prior to publication.
- All advertisements and announcements should be laid out via appropriate software for insertion into Adobe InDesign. The Events staff and/or the Newsletter staff is not responsible for ad or announcement development unless so directed by the General Manager. Acceptable file formats include PDF, JPG, PNG, and PSD.
- The deadline for the next month's issue is always the 20th day of the current month. (Example: the deadline for the July issue is June 20.)
- Ads must follow strict specifications. High resolution graphics—300 dpi minimum—only please. Accepted dimensions (height by width in inches):
 - 1/8 Page: 3.75"H x 3.125"W
 - 1/6 Page: 3.75"H x 4.25"W
 - 1/4 Page: 7.5"H x 3.125"W
 - 1/4 Page: 3.75"H x 6.5"W
 - 1/3 Page: 7.5"H x 4.25"W
 - 1/2 Page: 7.5"H x 6.5"W
 - 2/3 Page: 7.5"H x 8.5"W* (editor's approval required)
 - 3/4 Page: 7.5"H x 9.75"W* (editor's approval required)
 - Full Page: 7.5"H x 13"W* (editor's approval required)
- ***No Full Page, 3/4 Page, or 2/3 Page ads will be accepted without prior editorial approval.**

THE WILLIAM W. LARSEN MEMORIAL LIBRARY

HAPPY NEW YEAR! The library staff wishes all of our members a healthy and prosperous 2016.

I'd like to thank **RICH COWLEY** for making a new sign for the entrance to the library. It is a big help in letting our guests know that the library is for Academy members only. He was also kind enough to supply a new frame for the sign. Thanks, Rich.

I want to remind our members about

Library Hours

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday:
6:30 to 10:30 p.m.

Friday & Saturday:
1:00 to 3:00 & 6:30 to 10:30 p.m.

Sunday (if lecture):
1:00 to 3:00 & 5:00 to 10:30 p.m.

Sunday (if no lecture):
1:00 to 5:00 & 6:30 to 10:30 p.m.

our Saturday afternoon hours. Every Saturday the library is open from 1 p.m. to 3 p.m. These new hours were implemented last year and many may still not know that we are open during this time. Typically, Saturday afternoons in the library are quieter than other days, so it is an ideal time to study.

Finally, don't forget our sales shelf in the library. When we receive a book that we already have on our shelves, the duplicates are sold at discount prices. Currently, we have brand-new copies of **LAWRENCE HASS's** *Inspirations* and **JEFF PIERCE's** *The Card Warp Tour* for sale. They are priced at a discount with no shipping charges.

Of course, we are lucky enough to receive donations monthly. Thanks to the following who have given to our members this

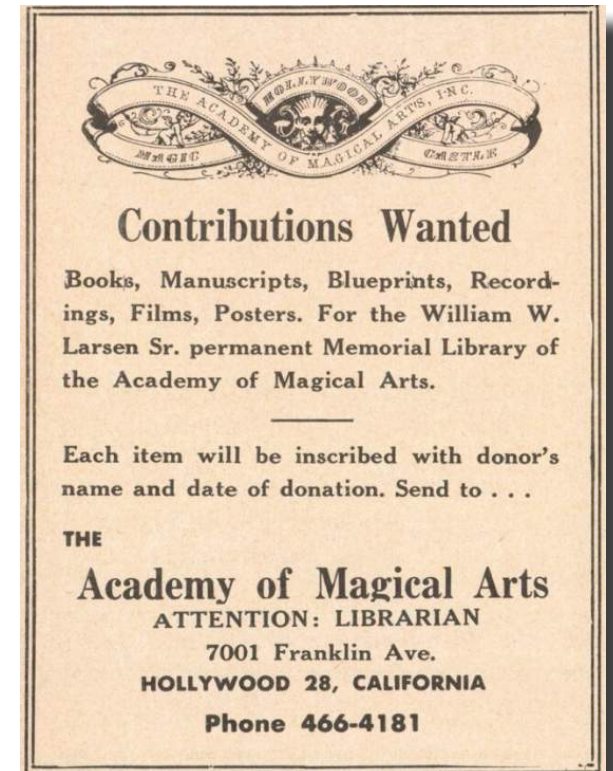
month: **MARTIN LEWIS**, **RON KATZMAN**, **ROB ZABRECKY**, **MICHAEL VINCENT**, and **JOAN LAWTON**. In addition to gifting us his new set of notes after his recent lecture, Martin Lewis sent us a box of additional donations. Please click on the link to see and print the entire list of items given by these generous individuals.

Once again, Happy New Year to you all. ✍

Bill

bgoodwin@magiccastle.com

Bill Goodwin



THE FIRST AD REQUESTING BOOKS AND OTHER ITEMS FOR THE LIBRARY AS IT APPEARED IN THE SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 1963 DOUBLE ISSUE OF *GENII*.

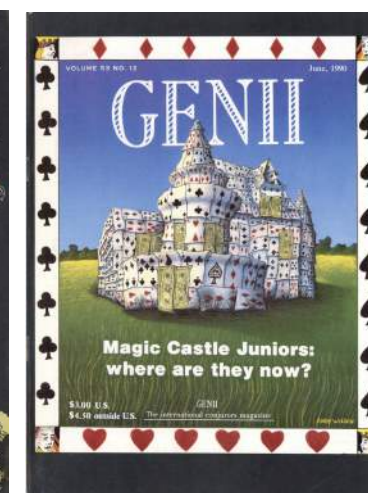
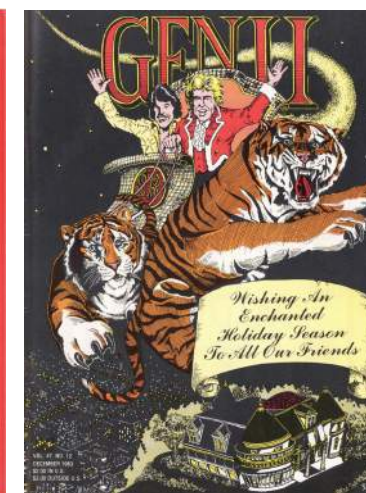
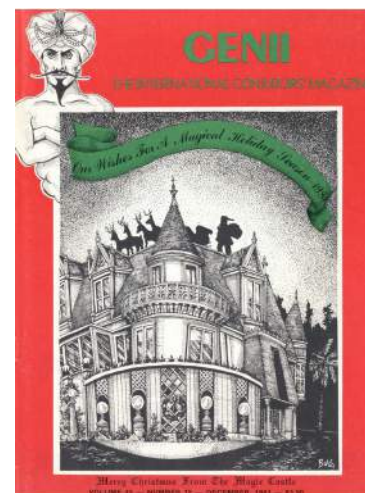


ANOTHER FIRST



THE MAGIC CASTLE first appeared on the cover of *GENII* magazine in April of 1964. Within its pages, co-founder **WILLIAM LARSEN, JR.** wrote about how the **ACADEMY OF MAGICAL ARTS** and the clubhouse came into being. **Lou DERMAN** penned a piece about the magic—at the time all of it being of the close-up variety—that could be seen at the Castle on a nightly basis. A huge section of magic was dedicated to, and contributed by, Castle regulars **EUGENE E. GLOYE**, **JAY OSE**, **GERALD KOSKY**, **BILL DERMAN**, **DICK ZIMMERMAN**, **ADOLFO CERCEDA**, **LEO BEHNKE**, **FRANCIS B. MARTINEAU**, and **DAI VERNON**.

It might come as a surprise, if not a shock, that over the next 52 years the image of our venerable clubhouse would appear—thus far—only four more times on the cover of that equally venerable publication. On one of those, the **CHARLIE MILLER** issue, it served as the background. The others were caricatures, one with **SIEGFRIED & ROY**. **MILT LARSEN** and the **HOUDINI SÉANCE ROOM** were the cover for the Castle's 40th anniversary, so that doesn't count. But rest assured that the number of times The Magic Castle has appeared *inside* the pages of *Genii* is countless. ✍



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