

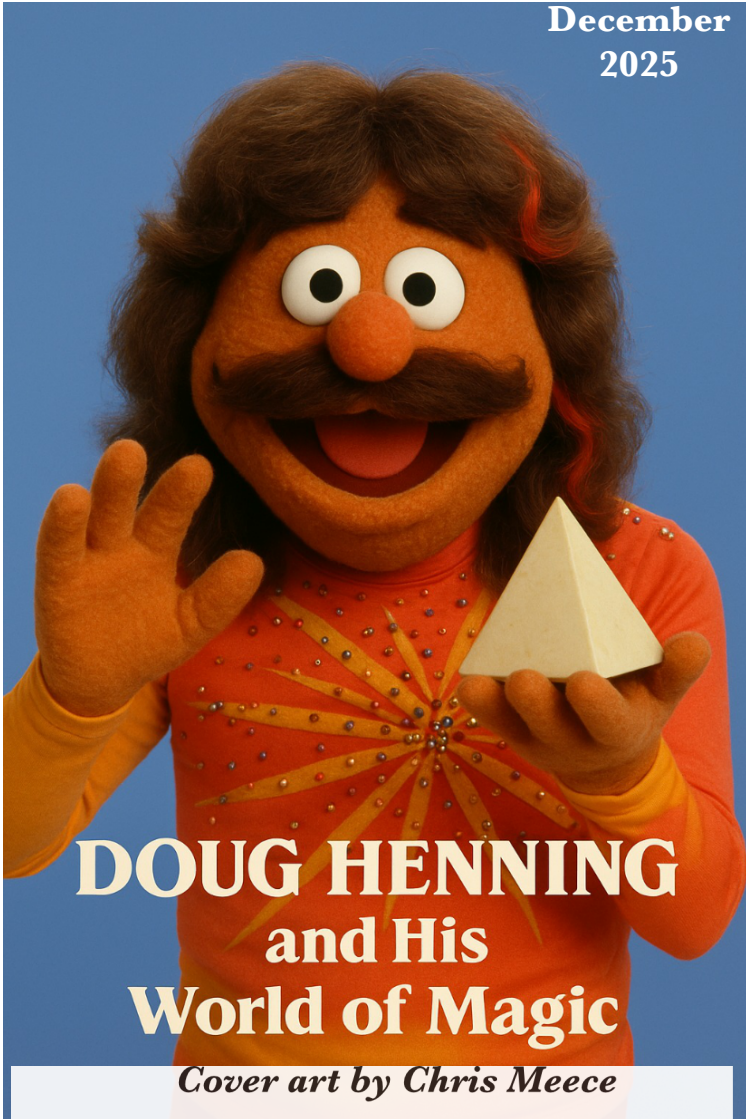
THE SALT CITY MAGIC CLUB

Wandogram



"Harris A. Solomon Ring" IBM #74 Syracuse N.Y.

December
2025



DOUG HENNING and His World of Magic

Cover art by Chris Meece



Harris Solomon

**A monthly newsletter of the
Harris A. Solomon Ring #74
International Brotherhood of Magicians
(the Salt City Magic Club)**

President: Ken Frehm
Vice President: David MacBlane
Secretary: Joey Hoffman
Treasurer: Bruce Purdy
Sgt. At Arms: Dave Hanselman

**IBM Ring #74 meets at 7:00pm
the second Tuesday of every month virtually via Zoom,
and
the third Tuesday of every month IN PERSON**

Please submit material for publication in the Wandogram to:

wandogram@cnymagic.com

or by Snail Mail:

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Questions? Call (315) 256-9095

Submission deadline:
First Thursday of the month

Impossible Illusions

Music and Lyrics by David T. MacBlane

Hear it at: <https://tinyurl.com/3vr7tk3f>

Cards in the air they float like dreams

Silk disappears in a flash it seems

A coin in my palm now it's not there Where did it go?
I just smile - it's in the air

Behind the curtain behind the veil

A secret world where the tricks prevail

It's magic it's a game it's a sleight of hand

Pulling rabbits out of no where they don't understand
An illusion - a trick called the Linking Rings

Don't blink too quick or you won't see a thing

Double lift and shuffle the deck so sly Aces appear as
I lock your eye Smoke and mirrors but the fun is real
What's the secret? I'll never reveal

A wand waves left a wand waves right The spotlight
bends to the dance of light It's not self-working it's a
crafted plan An art of shadows and a steady hand

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Doug Henning

by Bruce Purdy

Doug Henning was born in Winnipeg, Manitoba. He became interested in magic after seeing Richiardi Jr. perform on The Ed Sullivan Show.

Soon, he learned a variety of tricks which he performed for his relatives.

Later, his family relocated to Ontario. Eventually he named himself "The Astounding Hendoo" and started advertising in local newspapers.

After graduating from High School, he stopped doing magic, not wanting to do it for a living. He felt that there were only two kinds of magicians: "magicians for kids, and magicians for nightclub acts. I didn't want to be either kind."

So, instead, he studied psychology, at McMaster University in Hamilton, Ontario in preparation for a medical degree. There, Henning met Ivan Reitman, when he appeared in the 1968 Reitman-directed production of *Li'l Abner* in the role of

Lonesome Polecat.

he, together with Mars Barrick, formed the partnership of Henning and Mars, and they performed at local bars and nightclubs.

Henning graduated with honours, earning a degree in science and psychology. He subsequently decided to take a couple of years to concentrate on his magic before entering medical school.

Henning and Mars successfully performed with the top entertainers in Canada and travelled from one end of the country to the other.

Realizing that he needed more theatrical training as well as in the principles of magic, Doug applied for a grant from the Canada Council for the Arts in the theatre division with a proposal that used the equation that magic plus theatre equals art.

Henning was awarded a Canada Council for the Arts grant for \$4,000.^[1] After being awarded the grant to study the art of magic for a year, he

studied mime under Adrian Pecknold as well as dance with a Canadian choreographer. He sifted through magic literature in the hopes of developing an all-around magic education in manipulation and illusionism.

When he visited the Magic Castle in Hollywood, California, a private club for magicians, he gave an impromptu performance in the Wine Cellar, when he met resident magician, guru, and fellow Canadian Dai Vernon. Since the terms of the grant required Henning to study magic, he got up the nerve later in the year to write Vernon, and asked him if he could take lessons with him.

Thereafter, Henning travelled to Hollywood to study with Vernon and then with another magic great, Slydini, whom he came to consider his primary teacher of magic.^[6]

Intending to return magic to its "glory days", Henning worked to perfect his craft. Garnering financial support, he developed a live theatrical show, *Spellbound*, written by David Cronenberg and directed by Henning's college friend Ivan Reitman. Along with music by Howard Shore and co-starring actress Jennifer Dale, Henning created a musical that combined his magic with a dramatic storyline.

Henning borrowed money for the project and spent \$5,000 to build and design illusions. They set up a backer's audition in Toronto. One man found potential in the project and invested \$70,000.

The show opened at the Royal Alexandra Theatre in Toronto, where it broke box-office records. Henning reworked the show after catching the attention of New York producers and took it to Broadway as *The Magic Show*, with songs composed by Stephen Schwartz. Debuting in 1974, the show ran for four and a half years and earned Henning a Tony Award nomination.

Following his Broadway success, Henning approached NBC with the idea of producing a television special. It was not until Henning suggested that he would reproduce live Harry Houdini's famous and dangerous water-torture escape—for the first time since Houdini performed it himself—that the NBC executives signed him.

Henning spent the next eight months reworking his stage act for TV and practising the water-torture escape act. More than 50 million viewers tuned in for the December 1975 broadcast of *Doug Henning's World of Magic*, hosted by Bill

Cosby.

This would be the first of seven annual broadcasts, which eventually brought Henning seven Emmy Award nominations, including two back-to-back in 1976 and 1977 for *World of Magic*.

Doug Henning's World of Magic II aired in December 1976, hosted by actor Michael Landon, with guest star Joey Heatherton. The show included Henning vanishing an elephant. A segment of the show featured special guest magician Ricky Jay.

A year later, *Doug Henning's World of Magic III* aired live with guests Glen Campbell and Sandy Duncan; the hyped illusion was "Walking Through a Brick Wall".

Then on December 1978, *Doug Henning's World of Magic IV* aired with the theme "A Magical Journey Through Time"; however, due to numerous problems that occurred during the telecast, this was the last special broadcast live.

The fifth special came on February 1979, which was taped at the Las Vegas Hilton.

VI was taped at Osmond Studios in Orem, Utah, and was broadcast February 1980.

Henning's last TV special came in 1982. In the show's finale, Henning created the illusion of turning a black horse and a white horse into a zebra.^[1]

At the end of each *World of Magic* performance, Henning addressed the audience with the same monologue: "Anything the mind can conceive is possible. Nothing is impossible. All you have to do is look within, and you can realise your fondest dreams. I would like to wish each one of you all of life's wonders and a joyful age of enlightenment."^[1]

Doug Henning created illusions for an Earth, Wind and Fire tour in 1979, and for two of singer Michael Jackson's concerts.

In 1983, Henning was the producer and star of the Broadway musical *Merlin*. In 1984, he began a solo Broadway show, *Doug Henning and His World of Magic*.

In the mid-1980s, Henning quit his profession, sold his props, and moved to India in order to devote his time to Transcendental Meditation, in which he had an increasing interest.

In 1992, Henning and Transcendental Meditation founder Maharishi Mahesh Yogi drafted plans for a \$1.5

billion project, Maharishi Veda Land, near Niagara Falls, Ontario,^[2] that would "combine astonishing, unique visual and sensory effects, state-of-the-art 3D imagery, and ultra high-tech entertainment technology with his best original magic illusion secrets". Attractions were to include a building suspended above water and a journey into the heart of a rose, but at the time of Henning's death the project's status was uncertain.

Henning died at the age of 52 on February 7, 2000, five months after being diagnosed with liver cancer. His ashes were scattered in the Pacific Ocean off Redondo Beach, California.

James Randi said that Henning had immersed himself so thoroughly in Transcendental Meditation that he "abandoned regular medical treatment for liver cancer, continued to pursue his diet of nuts and berries, and died of the disease."



Doug Henning

A Personal Remembrance

By Bruce Purdy

The year was 1974. I was a Theatre major at Syracuse University, and quite involved in the University Union, where the student run "Synapse" cable TV group was wiring the dorms for cable. They also had a full colour TV studio, and a lending library of portable video equipment.

I, of course was a Magician, and was keenly aware of an exciting new show on Broadway, entitled "The Magic Show," starring a hippie Magician named Doug Henning. To say that I was a fan would be an understatement! I was determined to find some way to meet my hero, when I came up with a hair-brained plan: I would make a documentary film about Magic, and the centrepiece would be an interview with Doug Henning!

This was the entire plan - no details, and no actual knowledge of how to do any of this. I signed out some equipment and travelled to New York City, where I found a

hotel room.

The next day, I left the hotel and walked down to the theatre, carrying a porta-pack (Portable open-reel video recorder, about the size of a briefcase) over my shoulder, a big video camera in my hand with the heavy cable hanging around my neck, and a microphone and coiled cable in my other hand. I also wore a small backpack with spare batteries and tapes. I looked ridiculous.

I timed my outing to about the time that the matinee ended. I was hoping to meet my hero at the backstage door when he came out. Much to my chagrin, there was a long line of kids waiting for autographs right from that stage for, and always around the front of the building! So, I got in line, and waited my turn.

As the line moved along, and I finally rounded the building and in sight of that stage door, the great Doug Henning pointed at me and singled me to come to the front of the line - where he asked me

who I was, and what I was doing.

I stammered to the effect that I'm a college student, and a "fellow magician," and that I was hoping to get an interview. Doug asked me if I'd seen the show, and I replied that I had a ticket for that evening's performance. With incredible charm and grace he said that he'd see me after the show - to come back to that stage door, and he'd let me in.

There's one thing, he said, there are no cameras allowed at the show, so here's what you should do: Put that camera and microphone inside that backpack - no one will know what that portable-pack is. And so, with his guidance, I smuggled all the equipment into the theatre, and enjoyed a spectacular show!

Between that first encounter, and the evening, it occurred to me that I should actually have some questions to ask if I was going to do an interview! so I sat at a cafe and wracked my brain to come up with things to ask. I jotted some thoughts on a paper napkin, which I stuck in my pocket.


After the show, I went back to the backstage door, and indeed, Doug Henning invited me in, and we went to his dressing room. After hooking up the camera, microphone

and all the cable, I pulled out the napkin, and started the worst interview in the history of photojournalism!

Throughout the entire event, Doug Henning was incredibly kind, relaxed and comfortable. He made sure that I was comfortable and as relaxed as I could possibly be under the circumstances.

After the memorable event, I went back to the hotel look at the resultant tape, only to find it hadn't come out at all! The video was full of "snow" distortion, and the sound was unintelligible. Back on campus, I tried in vain to resurrect the video, but I was able to resurrect the sound. I eventually copied the sound onto a cassette tape, and now have it in digital form.

Listening to the tape from time to time, and think about how horrible the interview was, how young and clueless I had been - and how this was one of the highlights of my life! I actually got to sit and talk with my biggest hero in Magic (Then and now). And I think about what a kind, warm and giving man Doug Henning was!



Sparkles from the Wand of the Silver Wizard

Kenneth Frehm

Order of Merlin, Shield
Life Member of Ring #74

November Highlights

The most memorable event in November was the presentation given by our Vice President, David MacBlane, at our In-Person meeting. David is not only a skilled magician but also an accomplished professional musician, writer, and entertainer.

He unveiled his latest masterpiece, "Impossible Illusions," which he wrote specifically for our Ring, as well as for all our fellow magicians.

The lyrics to this new song are included in the current issue of The Wandogram. David went above and beyond for our local community by producing this rock song, and there is a strong belief that it will become our official club anthem.

Our goal is to share "Impossible Illusions" with a broader magic audience, both regionally and potentially on a national scale.

David has also announced his new stage name: "The Conjurer King."

November Meetings

Our fellowship gathered twice in November, with both a Zoom meeting and an In-Person meeting. Each event was well-attended and filled with magical performances and engaging discussions.

Many members presented their magic routines, and one member (TJ) shared a ACAAN 'Work In-Progress,' sparking further conversation and interest. President Kenneth Frehm introduced a DT&S (Demonstrate, Teach and Share) packet effect called "Your Chosen Card." This effect was originally shared with our club by Professor Rem.

Two audience members used their "thought of" numbers to arrive at cards which had their selection pre-written on the faces. All other cards in the packet were non marked. Four members chipped in \$5 each

to purchase this terrific mind-boggler. All monies collected were donated to our Ring's treasury!

Treasurer Bruce Purdy used his laptop and a projection screen to show a video taken in the mid 70's of a Central New York Magic Fest convention. Seeing so many old

timers was quite nostalgic. Many of us even sported full heads of hair!

Season's Greetings

Wishing you, your families, and all your loved ones a joyful holiday and a magical season!

Last month's Aswers



SILVER WIZARD'S MAGIC SCRAMBLE

1. P H T T M I U B THUMB TIP
2. N D A W WAND
3. P H T O T A TOPHAT
4. R M H A G U B HAMBURG
5. N E E U C A I D AUDIENCE
6. R C N T A E E G E T S CENTER STAGE
7. A N M R A D W G O WANDOGRAM

"As I Say, So Shall It Be!"

A B R A C A D A B R A

11/2025 V.1

Persistence

By David MacBlane

This month, I'd like to write about something we don't really think about in our journey through magic. Ultimately, there are probably few of us who think about this factor when we practice and perform.

That ONE factor stands head and shoulders above the others to improve your magic.

What is that factor?
Persistence.

Before I begin how persistence guides your magical road map to success, I'd like to reference a quick story that I uncovered while doing research for this article.

I came to find a book written by Alfred Lansing. It's a gripping account of Sir Ernest Shackleton's iconic expedition in the Antarctic.

It's quite a long story, however, the essence of the story follows.

Shackleton and his crew were making for Antarctica via the Weddell Sea when there boat was trapped in ice. For around 10 months, they were

stuck in the boat until they were forced to abandon the ship when it was finally crushed by the ice pack. For the next set of months, they camped out on the ice, living off the bleak icy landscape, simply waiting for the ice pack to open up.

After many months living on the ice, they finally were able to launch the lifeboats, and made the grueling journey across the unforgiving open ocean to land on the tiny Elephant Island - a feat of incredible navigation and tenacity.

Elephant Island was little more than a black rock jutting up from the ocean - completely exposed to the blistering wind and spray of the ocean. It was clear that they would need to attempt to reach other land, and soon. So Shackleton and five others took one of the boats and decided to undertake a feat that is perhaps one of the most impressive in sailing history - an 800 mile journey across some of the most difficult seas in the world, in an open boat, navigating using whatever worn and battered equipment had survived, aiming to land on South Georgia island. And

somehow, by sheer Herculean effort, they managed it.

But the journey wasn't over yet. They traveled by foot to attempt a rescue of the remaining travelers stuck on Elephant Island. Their goal had been to land at a whaling harbor, but they were on the wrong side of the island, so the men persisted and crossed the island by foot.

The only alternative was to accomplish something that had never been done before - to cross the island on foot, passing through mountain ranges and glaciers.

Ultimately, they rescued their compatriots and, in the end, the story ended in success.

They were relentless in their pursuit overcoming the challenges and there was no complaining. No moaning about how unfair it was, how they'd already pulled off enough impossible tasks for one expedition.

Instead, they just shrugged their shoulders and got on with it. What other option was there?

How did they do all of this? Persistence!

So how does all this relate to your magic?

In order to give you a

complete picture of this I'll use music as an example. As a guitarist, I started knowing almost nothing to where I am today.

The point is, I rarely or never think about where I used to be, I kept looking forward to get better and better.

Do you remember how much you knew about magic when you started? Probably not - and for a good reason. We rarely think about the journey of persistence that we utilized to get from a rank beginner to what you're capable of today.

This is a good thing! You don't look back at your first trick or performance and say "Man, I sucked!" No, through persistence - something we rarely think about. But that persistence and hours of practice is what leads you to become a better magician every day.

Anyone who succeeds knows that you should be looking forward to continually improve and not to look backward at your previous skills. Downhill ski racers who reach 60-70 mph don't think about the days when they were learning how stand up and turn on the snow.

In every case, persistence is there when you may not

EVER think about.

Don't worry so much about where you came from and focus on better skills going forward in your magical journey.

In other words, just...do

magic.

Each day.

Even when you don't feel like it. Even when you think it's pointless. Even when you think you're already good enough. Keep doing it.



SILVER WIZARD'S MAGIC SCRAMBLE

K (R) D M (A) E _____
S (H) U C O U C O P (S) _____
H N (I) E (N) G N _____
E (L) E N D (E) _____
N I G (W) _____
R (A) (H) I _____
L O (F) E (D) O _____

The Audience Gaspd When The Magician:

MAGICAL PRIZE AWARDED TO FIRST CORRECT ANSWER

Send to: kfrehm@gmail.com

12/1/2025 V.2

Next meetings:

Tuesday, 9th December 2025
ON LINE Virtual meeting.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7941606677>

(Please sign in at about 6:45pm)

Tuesday, 16th December 2025
In Person meeting.

Spahetti Warehouse
689 N. Clinton St., Syracuse NY

(Please come at 6:00 if you plan to eat)
(Magic starts at 7:15)

Save the Date!

Tue. 9th December

ZOOM meeting

Tue. 16th December

meeting

In Person

Spaghetti Warehouse

Sat. 10th January

Post-Holiday Banquet
Spaghetti Warehouse

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