

THE SALT CITY MAGIC CLUB

# Wandogram



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

May 2026



*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**

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**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**

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Please submit material for publication in the Wandogram to:

**wandogram@cnymagic.com**

or by Snail Mail:

**Bruce Purdy  
P.O.Box 213**

**Cayuga NY 13034-0213**

Questions? Call (315) 256-9095

**Submission deadline:**

First Thursday of the month

At the June meeting, we will hold our annual election of Officers. These form the Executive Committee - the people that steer the direction that the club takes.

If YOU are interested in being part of this group, and are interested in having a hand in who we are as a club, please think of running for office!

At present, the current officers are running for re-election unopposed. It doesn't have to be that way.

Are you are a member in good standing of both the International Brotherhood of Magicians and Ring 74? Would like to be more involved? Please consider putting your hat in the ring.

The positions to be elected are:

**President** (Currently Ken Frehm).

*Preside at all meetings and serve as an ex-officio member of all committees.*

**Vice President** (Currently David MacBlane)

*Assist the President in the duties of that office, and in the absence of the President serve as the Ring's presiding officer. The Vice President may serve as an ex officio member of committees in substitution for the President and assume other duties delegated to him.*

**Secretary** (Currently Joey Hoffman)

*Keep a true record of all meetings; maintain files of significant correspondence related to the Ring; execute in a timely manner the Ring correspondence including submission Ring reports reports and requested information to the Linking Ring and to the Wandogram.*

**Treasurer** (Currently Bruce Purdy)

*Oversee all deposits and receipts of the Ring's money and shall assure prompt payment of all properly approved Ring obligations. The Treasurer shall maintain accurate accounting records of all receipts and disbursements*

**Sergeant At Arms** (Currently David Hanselman)

*Assure the hospitality of the Ring is extended to members and guests. The Sergeant of Arms will assure that all persons attending Ring closed meetings are members of the Ring in good standing or approved guests.*

If you would take on any of these responsibilities and be a part of the executive committee, please let Ken know, or speak up at the May meeting!

# Dai Vernon

by Bruce Purdy

David Frederick Wingfield Verner (better known as Dai Vernon) was born June 11 1894, in Ottawa, Canada.

Vernon first fell in love with magic when he was seven years old after his father (an amateur magician) took him to see a magic show.

What really seems to have sparked a childhood obsession with magic and cards was a book called *Artifice, Ruse, and Subterfuge at the Card Table*, which was first published in 1902 by S.W. Erdnase. He was 8 years old then, but he discovered it a couple of years later.

Young David not only studied the book, but he practically memorised all of it!

Dai Vernon often said that he had learned his first trick from his father at seven years old. "I wasted the first six years" of his life he would quip.

As a teenager, another young magician asked Vernon what kind of magic he did. Vernon asked the kid to name a card, then proceeded to take a deck from his pocket, remove

the cards, turn over the top card, show it as the named card and put the cards away. "That's the kind of magic I do. What kind of magic do you do?" he asked.

As a young man, he moved to New York City. There he quickly became part of the "magic scene," due to his skill and versatility. He became friends with some of the biggest names in magic.

His Linking Rings and Cups and Balls routines are still performed today all around the world. But it was his prowess with a deck of cards that really established him as a force to be reckoned with.

Dai Vernon was famously nicknamed "The Man Who Fooled Houdini" after he performed the Ambitious Card trick—including a signed card rising to the top—not just once, but seven times in front of Houdini himself—who couldn't figure it out! Houdini finally had to admit defeat.

His name change came about in stages. Many people had trouble pronouncing his last name Verner, so he

changed it to Vernon after the then well known dancer Vernon Castle.

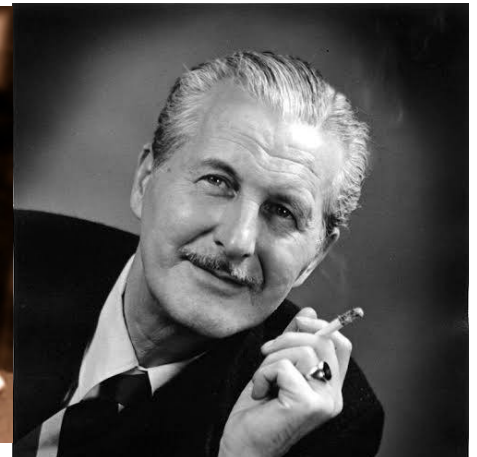
As a teenager, his friends started calling David "D." After NYC newspaper mis-printed it as "Dai," he adopted Dai as his name, pronounced as in day. It wasn't until he moved west to California, people there pronounced it Dai (pronounced like "die.") That's the way we pronounce it today.

Relocating to the West Coast in the 1960s, Vernon helped establish Hollywood's Magic Castle, where he spent his final decades as magician in residence. There he became known as "The Professor," inspiring and mentoring countless magicians, including some of the best in the business.

Nick Lewin writes "I first met Dai when I joined the Magic Castle in Hollywood. He was every inch the master when

you saw him holding court in a corner of the Castle with brandy in a snifter, a cigarette in the ashtray, and a deck of cards in his hand. Magicians would discretely shadow him for hours just to add a little touch or move from his endless store of wisdom. Dai was very subtle, nothing he did was flashy or "show-off", it was just right. For any situation that might present itself during a card trick, the professor had at least half a dozen ways to get where he wanted to go. Some of the greatest books of sleight of hand routines can be traced directly to gems from his fertile mind; he was also generous and a true gentleman."

Vernon died on August 21, 1992, in Ramona, County of San Diego, California. According to biographer Karl Johnson, he was cremated and a box with his ashes was brought back to the Magic Castle.



# Ring #74 Scribe's Report

By  
Joey Hoffman

We had eight members for our monthly in-person meeting, including a new prospective member, Travis Knight. Welcome, Travis, we look forward to getting to know you better. We also have our "Spring Into Magic" show Saturday, May 30th at the American Legion in East Syracuse at 2 P.M. Tell your friends, and spread the word!

Bruce Purdy started off the evening performing a very unique and humorous take on the "Reappearing Bottle" routine. Bruce used AI to tell him how to do the effect. He would place a bottle on the table, cover it with a tube and would be instructed by the AI to pick up the tube and grab the bottle and place it in a box. Only after it was gone, the AI reminded him he had to do it without the audience seeing it. So, it told him to start again. He picked the tube up, and the bottle was back in its starting position. Great stuff Bruce!

Our new prospect, Travis Knight went next. He took a few different coasters with different beverages on them and asked Tom to choose any one of them. Tom chose, and Travis turned them all over. They were all blank, except for one, matching Tom's choice.

Travis also did a miniature "saw a card in half" effect, which looked really good.

David Hanselman had a beautifully constructed box with a lit candle inside of it. He told a story of how they used to keep track of time with a candle, and a man wanted to steal some of that time. He closed the door to the box, and stuck a blade horizontally through the box and candle towards the top half, and again towards the bottom half. When he opened the doors, the middle of the candle was missing, but the base and lit top still remained. He closed the door and removed the blades. When he opened it again, the candle was fully intact, still lit.

David Sorensen took out four ice cubes, and performed a matrix effect with them! He placed one on each corner of the table, waved a hand over one, and it disappeared, reappearing across the table. He did this one by one until all four cubes ended up on one corner of the table. He then grabbed the cubes, placed them in the middle of the table and waved his hand over them once again. The cubes were gone, and all that was left was a little pool of water on the table.

David Kilpatrick had a rectangular box with four different colored balloons stuffed inside each little circle. He asked Tom to choose any color balloon, and he would pop that choice. Dave stayed true to his word and popped all three colors Tom called out. When we left with just the yellow balloon, he turned the box around showing one balloon on that side, too. It was yellow!

I performed an effect called "Cut and Run". I placed a deck of cards on the table and asked Tom to pick up a chunk and look at the card he grabbed. I instructed Travis to do the same. Both packets were placed back onto the deck, and the cards were spread, revealing two face up Jokers. I explained that the Jokers would tell me where their cards were. They said 18 and 42. We counted down to those cards, and sure enough, they were the cards selected.

Thomas Yeldon shuffled a deck of cards and had Travis select one and keep it face down. Tom then had a bunch of little pieces of paper with different cards on them, and had Travis shake them up and dump them on the table. Tom then removed all the papers that landed face down. He scooped them back up, and Travis once again shook them and dumped them out. This repeated until there was one piece of paper left, with the Seven of Hearts. Travis flipped his card over and it was the Seven on Hearts!

Ken Frehm had a deck of cards and had David and Travis name any card. Ken went through and took out the two selected cards, as well as a joker. Ken explained the Joker was a wild card and we needed a value. He had Tom name any number, and four was chosen. Ken then took the chosen ten, eight, and Joker (four), and placed them in different spots in the deck face up. When the cards were spread out, he took out the face up cards, as well as the card next to them. He squared up the deck, turned the cards over and they were three Aces! He told us to find the last Ace, we had to add up the value of the chosen cards, which was 22. Ken counted to the 22nd card, and it was the last Ace.

As it stands, the date for our Zoom meetings will be the second Tuesday of the month, and our in-person meetings will be the third Tuesday of the month. The address for the Eastwood American Legion is 3701 James Street, Syracuse, 13206. Both meetings start at 7, so try to sign on or get there a little before. Interested? Email [kfrehm@gmail.com](mailto:kfrehm@gmail.com) and a link will be sent.

Joey Hoffman





**Sparkles from the Wand  
of the Silver Wizard**

**Kenneth Frehm**

Order of Merlin, Shield  
Life Member of Ring #74

May will be a busy month for the Brotherhood of I.B.M. Ring #74 (aka The Salt City Magic Club.) Of course, we will hold our Zoom meeting on the 12th, and our In-Person meeting on the 19th. Both of last month's meetings were very well attended.

All attendees, at both meetings took the stage and demonstrated their latest magical effects. We never require folks to perform. However, when everyone participates, it's a real treat. The type of tricks our members perform ranges widely, both in scope and theme.

Vice President David MacBlane is the honcho for our upcoming public show. He has buttoned down on the performers, the show order and the time limits. Performers will have a maximum of ten minutes to do their act. A ten-minute break will be taken for everyone to visit the bar, chat, and socialize a bit. Besides adult beverages,

there will be soft drinks, and milk for our younger guests.

We have nine tentative members who will take the stage. I have been given the honor of being the Master of Ceremonies for the show. The most important aspect is upon all of us to guarantee this show's success.

That includes marketing, advertising to our family, friends as well as others we know in the community. Invite your barber, your beautician, your mechanic, your postal person, and anyone else you come in contact with.

Now is the time to invite them and have them hold the date. It will be a great exhibition of our members' talent. Our Treasurer, Bruce Purdy has made early ticket buying very easy and early buyers will enjoy a price discount.

Club members who are performing in the show should be

prepared to do a dress rehearsal at our meeting on the 19th. This will be a great opportunity to work out any potential glitches and consider well-meaning suggestions for improvement. Of course, non-show performers will have an opportunity to do magic.

Last week, we upstate magicians had a great opportunity to attend a full-featured magic convention. MAUNY, the one-day extravaganza was held in Buffalo. In the morning, an auction and terrific bargains were in the offerings. A close-up session, lecture, workshop and a wonderful dealer room rewarded those who made the trip. The evening banquet and closing evening show were both fantastic. MAUNY takes advantage of the stars who were in town for the prior 4F Close-Up convention. These men

and women are truly the "Best of the Best" and hail from many different countries around the world. Being able to feature these superstars is a benefit that is generally not open to other magic conventions.

We need everyone, our members, associates and friends to help publicize our "Spring Forth" Magic show. Feel free to copy, print and distribute the flyer printed in this Wandogram. I've always lived by the maxim; "If it's to be, it's up to me." I challenge you to take up this mantra, act now and help ensure our club's SUCCESS!

Abacadabra

Ken Frehm

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***A special thank you goes out to David Kilpatrick for proofreading articles submitted to the Wandogram!***

***In edition to catching a lot of errors in spelling and grammar, Dave often suggests slight adjustments to badly worded sentences, offers improvements to punctuation and more.***

***David Kilpatrick is truly a great magician— not just on stage, but in what he does for the Wandogram!***

***Thank you, my friend!***

***Bruce***

# Memorizing?

*By David MacBlane*

We all know that when you're learning a trick you start with the book, video, or instruction sheet and then you blend and repeat. What I mean by that is if you want this to be a performance-ready illusion you have to memorize the steps involved and then practice it until it becomes second nature.

But to memorize that random trick, it proves you can memorize anything especially for magic performances. Many people stay away from the memorized (or stacked) deck thinking it will be too hard to memorize. There's the simple cyclical order like Si Stebbins

or jump to the Aronson (Simon Aronson) or the most difficult (in my opinion) Mnemonica (invented by Juan Tamariz).

I admit, I don't pay as much attention to the memorized deck as I used to. In fact, I used to know Mnemonica, but since I've never used it much, the memory faded away.

But to really get to the point of the issue, memorizing things brings a boost to your magic.

Let's imagine this as a quick thought experiment.

A young and ambitious high school graduate wants to become a great surgeon. He goes to his uncle, a respected physician, and asks him "Uncle, I want to become a great doctor like you. What do you advise I do?"

The uncle replies, "Well, I would probably start hitting the textbooks if I were you. As a doctor, you'll need to have an in-depth understanding of the sciences, math, and many other topics. It will take you years to study and master all the material, but once you do, you'll be well equipped for a lifetime of professional healthcare."

So the nephew responds with "Wait, I have to work to become a doctor? I have to memorize stuff? I need to study for hours a day? I can't do that. Is there any way to skip the learning and memorizing system and still do magic?"

Okay - it's a bit extreme for an example, but the point should hit the target.

It's a simple example, but I hope it makes an obvious point: Every profession in literally every line of work demands some level of expertise and hard work to reach the pinnacle to reap the rewards of getting to that level without hard work is preposterous.

But how many times have you met a magician who claims that magic is his passion and profession...but also tells you that they don't have the time to memorize a deck of cards? Or that "anagrams just aren't for me - they're too much work"? Or that "magic theory is too boring" to study?

Magicians all too often have an absurd aversion to anything involving hard work, especially when compared to other professionals.

This is not pointed at amateurs who just enjoy learning a card trick here and there. Those are exceptions to the main point.

I'm not going to espouse the uses of memorized/stacked deck. However, it is something you should think about.

For example, I can almost guarantee you that memorizing a single deck of cards is a trivial amount of work compared to what the average medical student is expected to learn and

remember in just a few weeks of university.

Although it's been a long time, I spent some time in the medical industry, so I do have an advantage. The average medical student is expected to learn over 600 muscles, 200 bones, and countless more physiological systems in the human body—and that's just one small slice of their work. A deck of cards, on the other hand, is just 52 pieces of information.

I've been chatting with my colleagues in a lot of conversations recently about the power of "memory as method" with some well-respected mentalists. It stemmed from watching a mentalist perform a trick that could only have been possible if they had memorized a very particular set of seemingly trivial bits of information.

I realize that there are an incredible number of effects that could be made possible just by doing the work to memorize information most people wouldn't. For instance, memorizing the page on the dictionary corresponding to the 100 most commonly chosen words in the English language—giving you a powerful kicker reveal anytime you peek those words during a routine.

I guarantee there are very,

very few magicians who would do this, but I genuinely can't understand why not.

As an aside, if you already have an affliction that affects your memory, my apologies and hope you understand we have no conflict

So if you're unencumbered by too many other issues, that means you can put in a decent session to do some memorizing. Sure, it would be a decent amount of work—but again trivial to the work put in by other professions. Medical students spend nearly a decade studying intensely. So do lawyers, architects, musicians, and so many other professionals. Great sacrifice of time and effort is understood to be a prerequisite to great art in so many other domains, so why not magic? As many of you know I'm also a musician and I put in not just hours, but years to really call myself a musician.

Think of elite runners, climbers, and bodybuilders. These people spend hours upon hours each day doing intense physical activity in order to excel. Top marathoners don't bat

an eyelid at spending 2 hours on the road getting a long run in. Honestly, I couldn't tell you the last time I sat down and spent 2 hours drilling one specific sleight.

Imagine there was such a thing as a "magic university" where you had to spend 4 years memorizing anagrams, lists, cards, patterns, principles, probabilities, sleights, and all kinds of techniques. I guarantee you'd come out the other side as one of the best magicians in the world.

So why not create a self-imposed "university of magic"?

Atlas Brookings performs Train Tracking, and how hard I thought it would be to learn to do that effect. I expected to spend hours.

"Well," I said. "I won't lie to you and say it wouldn't be hard. But it's only hard in comparison to most of what magicians are used to. Compared to a self-working cutting Aces routine, it's pretty flipping hard.

But it's not rocket science. Literally, I mean it. It's not a fraction as hard as rocket science, or advanced mathematics, or even most basic mathematics. It's not as hard as most of the stuff children learn at 16 in order to pass their school exams. It's not as hard as qualifying to pass the bar as a lawyer. It's not as hard as learning the roads of London if you want to become a Taxi driver there. In fact, in order to drive a taxi in the U.K. you have to have "The Knowledge." This is a

real requirement and test.

So if you compare Train Tracking to most other magic...it seems hard. But just compare it to all these other things that the human brain is capable of, and it's honestly pretty easy. The fact that magicians even debate this question tells you a lot about how we think about the craft, and how far behind most other arts we are in our dedication to greatness."

We need as a group of ded-

icated magicians to memorize more (of anything including art or performance of our craft). We need to bring our art up to current day level.

But, I promise if you learn something you've been putting off for a while you will feel absolutely powerless. It will enlighten you to embrace our art even more!

Until next month, remember there are "Impossible Illusions."

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# FOR SALE

## Complete Tarbell Course

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**\$200.00\*** o.b.o.  
+ Shipping

(\*Usually sells for: \$250.00 + Shipping)

Contact: Ken Frehm~[kfrehm@gmail.com](mailto:kfrehm@gmail.com)

# Public Show



**Spring Forth**

**With A**



# Family Magic Show

The American Legion Hall

3701 James St. Syracuse, N.Y.

Saturday May 30, 2026

Starts: 3:00 P.M.

Adults at Door ~ \$15

Discounted Advance Tickets\*\* (before 5/30) ~ \$12

Kids (12 yrs. & Younger) ~ \$8

Kids (4 yrs & Younger ~ Free

\*\*For Discount ~ Scan QR Code below:



<https://www.zeffy.com/en-US/ticketing/spring-forth-into-magic>

## Next meetings:

**Tuesday, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2026**  
**ON LINE Virtual meeting.**

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

(Please sign in at about 6:45pm)

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**Tuesday, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2026**  
**In Person meeting.**  
**Eastwood American Legion**

*3701 James St., Syracuse*

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## Save the Date!

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Tue. 12<sup>th</sup> May

ZOOM Meeting

Tue. 19<sup>th</sup> May

In-Person Meeting

Sat. 30<sup>th</sup> May

**Our Public show**

Tue. 9<sup>th</sup> June

ZOOM Meeting

Tue. 16<sup>th</sup> June

In-Person Meeting  
(Election of Officers)

**Harris Solomon Ring**  
**IBM Ring #74**  
**P.O.Box 213**  
**Cayuga NY 13034 - 0213**

**[www.saltcitymagicclub.com](http://www.saltcitymagicclub.com)**

