



BRIGHTON CONVENTION

INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF MAGICIANS

By KEN DE COURCY.

For four-and-a-half glorious September days the British Ring encircled Brighton and seven to eight hundred magicians and friends descended on the town for the highlight of the year. Magic in cafes, magic on street-corners, magic in hotels, and a convention programme more crowded than ever before.

One or two popular convention-personalities were missing this year, and some considered the general spirit was, on the whole, quieter but it was thoroughly enjoyable in every way.

From the beginning—the conclave (and the good people of Brighton) were treated to Robert Johnson's Outside Publicity Stunt featuring the Fabulous June, the Mayor, and a veteran car named "Fifi".

Television's "Top Town" plot was borrowed in "North v. South," a friendly magical competition between broad localities.

"Round in Sixty" was the appropriate title of an hour's programme of magic, and one act that stood out (in more ways than one) was a Female Day (we could be wrong!) miming to records. Here, too, was the introduction of the Overseas Visitors who were present in great force.

The Thursday morning brought the popular Dealer's Demonstration and, somehow, the effects shown this year seemed brighter and more novel.

So popular last year was the Grant Magic Film that Mystic Craig brought with him another from the same stable, twice the length of the last epic. This was shown a number of times to allow late-comers a chance, and the booklet (which, at 5/- was cheap) helped to keep the tricks in the mind when one had left Brighton far behind. Along with this film was screened another, Craig's "Hilites of Miami," the record of the 1956 Convention there.

Seeking something new for the Ladies (who, we understand, can't tolerate Bottom Deals and One-Handed Passes all the time) the Committee arranged a Cosmetic Demonstration which was carried out by Eve Gardner of the Max Factor Organisation.

The Civic Reception held at the Dome went without a hitch. George Smallwood's "Tombola" was kept busy and, eventually, broke all records by amassing a grand total of sixty-five pounds for the Benevolent Fund.

"International Magic" was, as implied by the title, a programme of magic by our visitors from abroad.

The Competition for the Shield proved as interesting as ever and the trophy was won by Geoff. Gregson and Doreen.

Peter Robinson Ltd. organised a Fashion Display for conventioners' wives, and forty of them (with one curious male) attended this mannequin parade. The mere man probably wasn't interested in the parade but made good use of the refreshments afterwards.

Friday evening saw the Hotel Metropole's Winter Garden crowded for the Banquet. The meal was excellent and the speeches and presentations to the point. The Cabaret that followed may have been marred a little by people strolling in and out but that was only to be expected as the Winter Garden was mid-way on the route through the hotel.

One unusual item was a series of very old films loaned by the British Film Industry. These were mainly examples of trick photography and, despite their age, caused many gasps from the audience.

Saturday morning brought the "Children's Playtime" in the West Pier Pavilion, the programme for children that's also patronised by grown-ups.

In the afternoon or evening every registrant made his way along to the Dome for the Grand Gala Show, and this year will be as difficult to beat as any other. Here was a mixture of English and Continental Acts along with Johnny Giordmaine, a miniature whirl-wind from Canada, who took the audience by storm.

No Convention would be complete without the midnight demonstration of the New Era Magic Co. So they held it, and the Benevolent Fund swelled accordingly.

The educational side was looked after by "See a Trick in Colour" by Lewis Ganson, and "Relics and Recollections" by Stanley Thomas. Both lectures were superb, although the latter was missed by many leaving early on the Sunday morning.

Magic at midnight, and Close-up sessions were well to the fore and many members worked hard to entertain the others. When Eddie Dexter handed over to Jeff. Atkins the President's Chain of Office we realised the 1956 Convention was at an end. What else can we say but...

ROLL ON SCARBOROUGH!



EDDIE DEXTER, President 1955-6



JEFFERY ATKINS, President 1956-7



LES LEVANTE, President-Elect



GROUP PHOTOGRAPH



KEY TO THE ABOVE PHOTOGRAPHS

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| 1. The Tomoko Staff with George Smallwood, Dorothy Fiddick and Walter Gray. | 6. Malheson Taylor in Shield Competition. | 11. Frank Richmond rewards Inspector Charlie Spratt. | 17. Eddie Dexter (President), at the Children's Playtime. | 23. Two Americans enjoy a joke. Dorothy Fiddick and Myrtle Craig. | 29. Mrs. Zola Hughes, Glenn McKelown and friends. | 35. Part of the "Mug" competition. | 41. Mr. and Mrs. MacArthur with Mr. and Mrs. Joe Marie and friends. | 47. Don MacArthur with his own orchestra. |
| 2. The Vampire Prize-winning Stand. | 7. Members of the Order of the Mace with Dr. Ima Bennett. | 12. Alex and Owen McKelown. | 18. Late night session. | 30. Shield Competition. Arthur and Mrs. Lawrence appearing in Round in S. 115. | 31. Cliff, Gordon and Dorem. | 42. A smiling group at the Civic Reception. | 48. Charlie Spratt at the Competition. | 54. All the local dignitaries, the Mayor and Council members, the Governor and Mrs. MacArthur. |
| 3. Chang Kuo Shield Competition. | 8. Geoff. Croghan surprises Mrs. MacArthur. | 13. Joe Marsh surprises Mrs. MacArthur. | 19. Les Levants with friends. | 32. A group in the morning. | 33. Children's Playtime. | 43. Geoff. Croghan receiving the U.S.M. Knit at the banquet. | 49. Alex and Glenn MacArthur with Charlie Spratt and Frank Richmond. | 55. A group of boys receiving... |
| 4. Joy (Finny Bridg). | 9. Edwin Ramsey, Ima Bennett and Tom Harris. | 14. George Blake, Len, Cyrn and John Remyssy and John Goodmalme. | 20. Chung Kuo. | 34. A view of the "Top Table" at the banquet. | 36. Rita with her competition at... | 44. Matteson Taylor talking to... | 50. A group of boys receiving... | |
| 5. Dennis Gardner in the Shield Competition. | 10. Under the "Turner" of Edwin Meath. | 15. John Remyssy and John Goodmalme. | 21. John Todd and Jill. | 35. Alex and Cis Gabriel. | 37. A group of boys receiving... | 45. A group of boys receiving... | 51. A group of boys receiving... | |
| | | 16. Closing of the Convention. | 22. Charlie Spratt along his staff. | 38. A group of boys receiving... | 39. A group of boys receiving... | 46. A group of boys receiving... | 52. A group of boys receiving... | |



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| 1. The Ladies' Staff with General Secretary, Dorothy Fiddich and other staff. | 17. Eddie Dexter (President), at the Children's Playtime. | 31. Alex McKewen chatting with American musician stationed in England. | 45. Part of the 'Mass' entertainment. | 58. Charlie Spratt at the Competition. | 59. Gus Southall, Fabian and Dr. Park Shushkin. |
| 2. Frank Whitcomb awards trophy to Charlie Spratt. | 18. Late night session. | 32. Ben Lawrence appearing in Round in G.V. | 46. Mr. and Mrs. Macarney with Mr. and Mrs. Joe Marsh and family. | 60. Mr. and Mrs. Macarney with Mr. and Mrs. Joe Marsh and family. | 61. At the Civic Reception. The Mayor and Mayoress with Mr. and Mrs. A. B. Green. |
| 3. Mrs. Marjorie surprises Mrs. Whitcomb. | 19. Lea Levander with friends. | 33. A smiling group at the Civic Reception. | 47. Yvonne with friends. | 62. Geoff. Gregson receiving the I. B. M. Shield. | 63. 11's that man. The again! |
| 4. Mrs. Marjorie and Mrs. Whitcomb. | 20. Children's Playtime. | 34. Geoff. Gregson receiving the I. B. M. Shield at the banquet. | 48. Charlie Spratt at the Competition. | 63. 11's that man. The again! | 64. Norman Cliffe, Gus Southall, 'Sonny' James, Mrs. Macarney. |
| 5. Mrs. Marjorie and Mrs. Whitcomb. | 21. Chava Koo. | 35. A view of the 'Top Table' at the banquet. | 49. Alex and Owen McKewen with Charlie Spratt and Frank Rummant. | 64. Norman Cliffe, Gus Southall, 'Sonny' James, Mrs. Macarney. | 65. A happy party from Yorkshire. |
| 6. Mrs. Marjorie and Mrs. Whitcomb. | 22. Closing of the Convention. | 36. The Amazing Champ (centre). | 50. Geoff. Gregson receiving the I. B. M. Shield. | 65. A happy party from Yorkshire. | |
| 7. Mrs. Marjorie and Mrs. Whitcomb. | | 37. Two Americans enjoy a joke. | 51. Alex and Owen McKewen with Charlie Spratt and Frank Rummant. | | |
| 8. Mrs. Marjorie and Mrs. Whitcomb. | | 38. Dorothy Fiddich and Mystic Circle. | 52. A group of people at the banquet. | | |
| 9. Mrs. Marjorie and Mrs. Whitcomb. | | 39. Shield Competition Audience. | 53. A group of people at the banquet. | | |
| 10. Mrs. Marjorie and Mrs. Whitcomb. | | 40. Ben Lawrence appearing in Round in G.V. | 54. A group of people at the banquet. | | |
| 11. Mrs. Marjorie and Mrs. Whitcomb. | | 41. Geoff. Gregson receiving the I. B. M. Shield. | 55. A group of people at the banquet. | | |
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57. The Welfare Stand.
58. John Ramsey's Annual greeting to Gwen McKewen.
59. Madge E. Wood and friend preparing flowers for Welfare Stand.
60. Frank Baynell assisted by Jim Passy, Val Andrews.
61. Even Magic sings for tea. Civic Reception.

62. John Gurdaine—Gala Show.
63. Jack Driess showing 3 short game. Metropole, 3 a.m. Sunday, 11th September.
64. Ben Barnes, Max Howarth and Colin Cook.
65. Will Tyler and Tom Harris at the Children's Playtime.
66. Joy in the Shield Competition. (Fenay Bridge).

67. Harry Postlethwaite, John Ramsey, Mystic Craig.
68. Jack Lewis, Barry Thomas, Cliff Stanton, Charlie Arnold.
69. Harry Robinson, Gwen McKewen, Frank Richmond.
70. Stanley Thomas during his Lecture on Sunday morning.

71. Stanley Thomas.
72. The Children's Playtime. (Ram Day—Civic).
73. The installation of the new President, Jeffrey Atkins.
74. Lewis Gordon mounts.
75. Chan Kow and assistant.
76. The opening of the Convention.

77. Yvonne, winner of the Theo Speaker Cup and Ladies Trophy.
78. Jerry Seabrooke, Barry Foster and John Hayward.
79. The lower green, 3-30 a.m. Saturday, 18th September.
80. Chiffie Sowden, Mrs. Hidge and Mary Sowden.
81. Len Linsell with Johnny Gurdaine and friend.