Hallelujah Note #2

Once again, our members have responded and have supplied us with some outstanding items for the Bulletin both in the form of articles and in short notes of interest to magic lantern buffs. Keep it up. There are still 40 or so of you we haven't heard from. Your fellow members are waiting to learn more about your pet magic lantern topics (500-700 words, please).

Travelers’ Treasure Troves: The Barnes Cinema Store and the Barnes Museum

A trip to London by any magic lantern or early cinema enthusiast is sure to contain side-trips to the Science Museum to see the motion picture equipment collection, to the British Film Institute to see the latest as well as the earliest movies ever made, and a bus ride north to Kingston-Upon-Thames (still in London), where Eadweard Muybridge retired at the turn of the Century. Muybridge donated all his personal materials, his plates, clippings, Zoopraxiscope and other machinery, as well as his correspondence, to the Kingston-Upon-Thames Library, where they are on view today, protected in glass cases.

A lesser known "mecca" is the Barnes Cinema Store, nestled in one of the many boutiques located on Kings Road, a street also characterized by a large number of fashionable clothing stores and groups of punk-rockers with leather jackets, colored hair, and multi-colored shoes, that roam from one end of the street to the other.

The Barnes Store, owned by brothers John and William, is a nook in a large room of similar small boutiques. It consists of several shelves and glass cases, all packed with magic lanterns, phenakistisscopes, zoetropes, flip-card devices, books, pamphlets - a treasure trove of items that would make any museum curator feel like a child set adrift in a toy shop. But, of course, the prices are commensurate with the historical importance of the stock. The shelves and cases are protected from prying eyes and hands by lengths of cheesecloth which hang from the ceiling like drapes and are lowered to cover the shelves and cases whenever the proprietor leaves.

William Barnes mans the shop, buying, selling and trading materials, and periodically shipping off choice items to his brother John, in St. Ives, Cornwall, to be placed in the Barnes Museum of Cinematography. This two person effort has created one of the finest cinema museums in the world.
St. Ives is located in the south western-most corner of Cornwall, which is the south western-most county in England. Between St. Ives and the sea is only the town of Lands End. A friend and I drove to this remote part of the country, this being the most direct way of traveling, and found St. Ives to be a once-thriving artist's colony, one still with its particular charm but now something of a tourist center.

The Museum, located at number 44 Fore Street, has a small facade consisting only of an entrance and one window. This window is distinguished by a motorized zoetrope that exposes a laughing man to view. Invariably, a crowd is gathered around outside, looking in.

Just inside is the ticket kiosk, and as I approached it, I received quite a shock to discover that William, whom I had met in London, and John, who stood before me, were identical twins! We paid the 25 pence (50¢) entrance fee, I introduced myself, and we were promised a tour later on.

The Museum is located in a two-story house owned by the Barnes. Each floor is packed with historical materials, both machinery and paper artifacts, all of it arranged neatly into glassed-in historical panoramas. The first case holds Japanese and Chinese shadow puppets, other assorted and ancient shadow-making objects from Turkey, and pictures and essays explaining how all the items relate to the history of cinema. In the cases that follow, one finds 19th Century shadowgraphy books and artifacts and learns about the development of the magic lantern slide, the panorama and the diorama, the invention of photography, and the use and sophistication of the camera obscura in the 19th Century.

The second floor houses an unbelievable concentration of materials relating to the magic lantern. In one case, there is a copy of Athanasius Kircher's Ars Magna Lucis et Umbrae (1646), together with Johannes Zahn's Occuliss Artificialis (1685), plus a selection of 18th Century camera obscuras, and early 19th Century lanterns and accessories.

Another case contains an original copy of virtually every book published by Muybridge, and another holds a sample of every variety of magic lantern lighting equipment including every kind of burner system complete with hoses. Another case is devoted to lenses, another to fade and dissolve systems, and another is filled with every kind of lantern imaginable. Parts of other exhibits are devoted to 17th and 18th Century anamorphic images, perspective art, peepshows, the Raleidoscope (with an original copy of Sir David Brewster's pioneering book on stereophony), and much early cinema material.

John Barnes soon joined us, and we toured the Museum again, accompanied by the expert. Then Mr. Barnes took me to his library and storerom which contain, in my estimation, virtually every important cinema book printed in the past 50 years. The Barnes have also collected a large number of magic lantern playbills and announcements. In short, it is one of the finest collections in existence.

STEVEN C. CHAMBERLAIN

Editor's note: Steve Chamberlain, who has given us this mouth-watering description of the Barnes Store and Museum, is Chairman of the Archival Papers and Historical Committee of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers. This organization of 10,000 members provides all the standards for film and TV technology for the International Standards Organization and the National Standards Organization.

THE MAGIC OF FAR AWAY PLACES

One of the hottest controversies that surrounded the magic lantern during the 19th century was the appropriateness of using it to stimulate people's interest in religion. The idea of presenting a crowd-pleasing show, even on religious topics, in the very House of the Lord shocked the more conservative ministers to the depths of their strait-laced souls. Missionaries, however, embraced the idea eagerly, because they found the lantern a powerful tool in bridging the communication gap created by their limited knowledge of native languages.

David Livingstone (1813-1873)—missionary, natural scientist, and explorer extraordinaire—used a magic lantern in his work almost from the time of his first arrival in Africa in 1840. He considered it such a valuable tool that he sent an urgent request for additional slides when his supply ran low in 1848. "We are at a loss for subjects for our Tuesday evening meetings," he wrote. "We speak of the wonders of creation but have nothing to illustrate them."

Although Livingstone had resolved to carry as little gear as possible when he set out in 1853 on a long journey to the West Coast of Africa, his priority choices are revealing. "I took only a few biscuits, a few pounds of tea and sugar, and about 20 pounds of coffee," he wrote in his journal. "We carried one small canister, about 15 inches square, filled with spare shirt, trousers and shoes...another of the same size for medicines; a third for books...a fourth box contained a magic lantern, which we found of much use."

Arriving at a Balonda village, Livingstone was warmly greeted by its chief, Shinte, who staged a magnificent reception that featured demonstrations with swords and javelins, drum and marimba music, and nine lengthy orations. It was a hard act to follow, but Livingstone was equal to the challenge. As darkness fell, he set up his magic lantern—with
spectacular results. "The first picture," he reported, "was of Abraham about to slaughter his son Isaac: it was shown as large as life, and the uplifted knife was in the act of striking the lad; the Balonda men remarked that the picture was much more like a god than the things of wood and clay they worshipped... The ladies listened with silent awe; but, when I moved the slide, the uplifted dagger moving toward them, they thought it was to be sheathed in their bodies instead of Isaac's... 'Mother! Mother!' all shouted at once, and off they rushed, helter-skelter, tumbling pell-mell over each other... Shinte, however, sat bravely through the whole, and afterward examined the instrument with interest."

Livingstone, like many other explorers of his era, was as much interested in opening the richly productive lands of Africa to commerce with the rest of the world as he was in saving the souls of the natives. His work and that of others who followed him profoundly affected the economic and social history not only of the Dark Continent but of Europe and America as well. As a result, people were thirsty for every scrap of information they could get about the mysterious peoples, animals and plants that these travelers described.

This fascination soon broadened to encompass all the countries that people longed to visit but could not, and created a lively market for lantern slides depicting exotic scenes of almost any foreign land. These ranged from the rudely comic to exquisite, brilliantly colored representations of the costumes and facial characteristics of the native peoples and later; to the stunning reality of black and white photographic slides.

A whole new profession arose. Men set out, not with magic lanterns to interpret Christianity to untutored natives, but with cameras to record glorious scenes for the enjoyment and edification of the stay-at-home public. Returning with their precious hordes of glass negatives, these men developed illustrated lectures that opened whole new worlds to audiences who had no other way of learning about them.

It was a lucrative profession for those who became its stars. In the United States, one of the most successful lanternists was John L. Stoddard (1850–1931), a dapper young man with dark, wavy hair and a handlebar mustache. So dramatic was Stoddard's slide presentation of the Oberammergau Passion Play that it became almost a requirement that at least a few young ladies would be carried swooning from the room during each performance.

It was the Crucifixion scene that did it. As Stoddard murmured softly, "The head droops wearily upon the breast," the audience actually saw Christ's head drop forward. "The silence of the darkened house," Stoddard's biographer reported, "was broken by hundreds of sobs, some hysterical. Ushers moved forward in the aisles and at every performance carried out from five to twelve prostrate women." The effect, of course, was achieved by use of a pair of dissolving slides in Stoddard's double projector.
By 1897, when Stoddard was 47, he was bone-weary and feeling the strain of 18 years of energetic showmanship. He was also very rich. He retired to a luxurious Italian villa, leaving his desolate fans to console themselves by reading and re-reading their leather-bound copies of his lectures. The words were the same, the pictures were the same, but somehow the magic was missing—the magic that only the lantern and its projected images could convey.

LEORA WOOD WELLS

Principal sources of information:
Livingstone's Travels and Researches in South Africa, from the Personal Narrative of David Livingstone; J.W. Bradley, Philadelphia, 1858
Life & Explorations of David Livingstone, L.L.D., John Roberts, E.D. Allen & Co., Augusta, Maine, 1875
John L. Stoddard's Lectures, 10 vol, Balch Brothers Co., Boston, 1897

NORTHWESTERN MEMBERS HOLD SUCCESSFUL MEETING

Twenty-eight magic lantern buffs—including two new members who joined on the spot—met on April 12 at the home of Bob and Carm Bishop in Seattle, Washington. Dr. Robert Monroe, Director of the Special Collections Division of the Suzzallo Library, University of Washington, discussed early uses of photography. During the 19th century, when many families were separated by the Civil War and by migration to distant states, he said, photographs were a cherished means of keeping in touch with absent loved ones.

Early photographers were not above high pressure sales tactics. Setting up shop near a dentist, druggist or undertaker in order to have easy access to chemicals, the photographers would drum up business by advertising that they would be "going out of business" or "leaving town next week." Undertaking parlors were especially sought-after locations because the furnishings and draperies provided elegant backdrops for portrait photos.

During these early years, photographic equipment itself was a fascinating novelty. Dr. Monroe reported the wistful saga of one early photographer whose equipment was ruined by inquisitive soldiers who took it apart to see how it worked.

Photographers often doubled as showmen. One who was well known in the Puget Sound area, Dr. Monroe said, was E.M. Sammis. According to the Olympia Washington Standard of July 18, 1863, the 50 cent exhibition included dioramic views of scriptural, historical, comic and sentimental topics and "a set of automatic figures which were made to perform a variety of amusing things." For good measure, Sammis threw in "various tricks of legerdemain."
The photographic collection of the University of Washington contains more than 200,000 items, including 20,000 magic lantern slides. Dr. Monroe has assembled some of these into a documentary series which he presents to interested groups. Organizations like the Magic Lantern Society, he said, are useful in preserving knowledge of an interesting part of our cultural heritage.

Several attendees at the meeting brought favorite lanterns and slides with them. The Old Projectionist, as Bob Bishop calls himself, presented one of his spectacular shows and a sound tape of a program by one of England's leading lanternists.

The Northwestern members plan to meet quarterly. The next meeting will probably be held at the home of Joe and Alice Koch in Auburn, Washington. Members from any part of the country are welcome to attend these regional meetings, as the major purposes in holding them are to enable members to get acquainted, share enjoyment of their collections with each other, and move the organization as a whole toward an increased level of activity.

Editor's note: Our thanks to Alice Koch and Bob Bishop for the notes on which this report is based.

Koch's Corner: The Chairman's Comments

Perhaps the success of the first quarterly meeting of the Northwestern members of our Society will motivate members in other areas to plan similar get-togethers. It was a most enjoyable occasion, and I'd like to thank Bob and Carm Bishop for their hospitality and their initiative in getting us off to such a fine start toward increased activity, at least on a regional basis.

We were sorry to hear from the British Society that spiraling costs have caused cancellation of the proposed meeting in Brussels. We still have hopes of a national meeting of our own group, but nothing is firmed up yet. Ed Lennert is trying to arrange for it to be held in Rochester, New York. Perhaps some members of the British Society will be able to join us when our meeting does materialize. But in the meantime—do try to get members in your own areas together. If our experience in the Northwest can be used as a yardstick, you'll have a thoroughly enjoyable time of it. Be sure to give us reports of any such meetings so we can include items about them in the Bulletin.

Martin Quigley's excellent book, Moving Shadows, published in 1948 and 1960, has been reprinted by the Arden Library, Mill and Main Streets, Darby, Pennsylvania, 19023. The price, at last report, was $10. This is one of the best and most comprehensive references currently available.

Our Society has now been in existence for a little more than two years. Ads in several magazines and an article in Photography magazine brought many inquiries and a good many members. Altogether, we have received between 250-300 inquiries about the Society and around 50
requests for information about various aspects of the magic lantern from private individuals, museums and photographic societies in this country, England, Holland, Argentina and Brazil. We have sent out about 250 applications. Our membership is now well past the half hundred mark.

As of mid-April, we had taken in $637.81 from dues, ads in the Bulletin and copies we had made of various items requested by members. We have spent $473.72 for printing, postage, ads, supplies and membership cards. We had a balance of $360.15 in our checking account, but $195.72 of this represented money I had advanced to meet operating costs. When the Society’s financial situation becomes stabilized, I will withdraw the amount I have loaned to keep the organization functioning, or if this is not possible, I will turn the loan into a gift. The Society has tax-free status with the IRS. All Society records are open to any member who wishes to inspect them, and I shall be glad to respond to any questions about our finances.

Membership renewals fall due on January 1 each year. We have been able to round up several members who were delinquent and were thus able to avoid dropping them from the mailing list.

Would you like to be more active in the Society? Are you interested in serving as an officer? Helping organize meetings? Supplying articles for the newsletter? Please drop us a note.

NOTES FROM HERE AND THERE: THE EDITOR’S SCRAPBOOK

A Real Po' Show

It sounded like a fantastic night out: "Edgar Allan Poe—a combined reading and psychobiography of the poet, complete with music, dancing, a silent film and slide projections," presented by the Attic Theatre of the Washington Project for the Arts. So—with visions of our own superb set of lantern slides illustrating "The Raven" haunting our minds—we hauled ourselves 12 miles into the District of Columbia to see the Poe Show. It turned out, if, you'll pardon the pun, to be a real po' show.

There was one exception—a stunning number in which the rhythmic stamping of bare feet on the hard wooden floor, accelerating to hysterical intensity and pace, was used as the percussive background for an eerie, chanted rendition of "The Raven." But where were the anticipated lantern slides? Absent. Both the "silent film" and the "slide projections" simply showed the same actors who were on stage doing different things. The technique did give an appropriately schizophrenic feel to the show, but it ended up being a good notion badly executed. Still, the kernel of an idea for an absorbing multi-media show is there. Any of you who have kids in dancing or drama school might explore the possibilities of working up a show integrating their talents around a theme suggested by your favorite set of slides.
Day Brighteners

Editors of publications, especially ones that come out as infrequently as this one, often feel they are talking to brick walls because of the lack of direct response. But then something arrives in the mail—a brief note, a clipping, a xerox of an article that is enough to convey the message that the publication has, indeed, hit its mark and supplied information or enjoyment for some of its readers. This month's day brightener was from Don Spiegel, one of our Canadian members, who took the trouble to share an article about the "Newtonian Dissolving Lantern" and to types of slides to be used in scientific demonstrations. The article appeared in the Scientific American Supplement No. 104 of Dec. 29, 1877. The lantern, which was patented by Mr. H. Keevil of Bath, England, used prisms to provide the optical effects of dissolving scenes through the use of a single lantern rather than the usual paired lanterns. The slides provided for projected demonstrations of the movements of a galvanometer needle and the movements and structure of live biological organisms housed in shallow glass-encased cavities within the slides. This may broaden the horizons of some of you who are new to the magic lantern field and haven't yet discovered the enormous range of types of lanterns used in the 19th century for a great variety of purposes—-from serious scientific education to the most hair-raising spook shows.

Thanks, Don.

Through the Magic Door

One of our members, James P. Flanagan of Sparta, New Jersey, has recently returned from a trip to London where he visited Mike and Elisabeth Smith of the British Magic Lantern Society. After this heady exposure, Jim returned to his law practice vowing to become a serious collector—and still bedazzled by his experience. "The piece de resistance," Jim reports, "falls into view as soon as one enters the front door at the end of Mike's beautiful, oblong living room. Against the far wall, some 36 inches high, is a triunal mahogany and brass lantern. Extending from each level is a 15 inch focusing unit of shining brass. The lantern is operated by gas with the flame tongue causing the lime chunk to produce a brilliant light."

Smith, who has been collecting about 15 years, purchased this lantern several years ago in poor condition. He pulled out every one of the hundreds of parts, soaked each in acid, repaired some and had replacements made for the missing ones and now has a museum-quality lantern in perfect working condition.

Jim was also fascinated by Mike's extensive collection of many types of slides and by his candle-powered lecturer's lantern. This has a small, round opening with hinged cover on one side. When the lecturer is ready for the next slide, he swings the hinged cover aside and the beam of light signals his assistant to change slides.

Jim says he almost hesitated to "tell it like it was" for fear the Smiths might have a steady stream of visitors "from the colonies" knocking at their door, but he cherishes the warmth of the reception he received, not only from Mike and Elisabeth but also from their large black and white sheep dog.
To Catch A Sunbeam

Mike Smith came to our attention in another context recently when his book, To Catch A Sunbeam, was published by Michael Josephs of London. Editing and layout were done by G.A. Household. The book contains about 20 Victorian short stories, some written specifically for lantern shows and others not. It is, Mike reports, profusely illustrated from the original slides used in the shows, which covered such topics as the evils of alcohol, gambling and the neglect of children. Although the book has only 144 pages, it contains about 150 illustrations, approximately one third of them in color. It can be purchased in this country through Barbara Gillespie, Merimack Limited, 99 Main Street, Falen, New Hampshire 03079.

The Magic Lantern Society of Great Britain

After two years as Secretary of the British M.L. Society, Mike Smith has turned over the job to Anne Henkel, 60 Glasslyn Road, London, N8 8RJ, England. He suggests that correspondence concerning the Society be sent to her, although he continues as Treasurer of the organization, and, as Jim Flanagan's report above indicates, is a responsive host to visiting magic lantern buffs.

Mike reports that the British society, now four years old, continues to grow at "a very acceptable rate." He attributes this primarily to their journal, which provides the major contact among the Society's members, many of whom live in countries other than England. (Back issues of the Journal are available at £1 each plus postage.)

Mike says the Society's meetings, held four times a year, are well attended, and individual members often get together in the intervals. "One of our strengths," he adds, "is the quality and enthusiasm of our members, all of whom are keen to learn more and pass on knowledge to others." Members of our American Society are welcome to join the British Society, as indicated in a previous Bulletin.

New Exhibit and Film

Steve Chamberlain reports that the 1980 Fall Conference of the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers, to be held in New York City, will feature an exhibit of 19th Century optical motion-producing devices such as the zoetrope, phenakistoscope, etc. He also reports that a new film on glass slides and projectors, called "Magic Lantern Movie" has recently been completed. Information about the film can be obtained from Cecile Starr, 50 West 96th Street, NY, NY 10025.

ML Article Available

Steve has asked us to report that the Society of Motion Picture and Television Engineers is offering back issues of its Journal for sale. The journal is highly technical, but one issue contains an article of interest to MLS members. The article, "Origins of the Magic Lantern" by
CAN YOU TELL ME?—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT MAGIC LANTERNS

Q. Will members share a bit of their research? If they will check their magic lantern literature and catalogues for dates, addresses and correct names of manufacturers of lanterns and slides, a list could be compiled for the mutual benefit of us all. Since the slide mounting often carries the name and address of the manufacturer or distributor, placing him at that address on a given date makes it possible to determine the approximate date of the slides.
Nancy Bergh, 1324 W. Minnehaha Parkway, Minneapolis, MN 55419.

A. Chairman Joe Koch asks members to send this information directly to Nancy and hopes she will compile it for publication for the use of all members. Just for starters, Nancy, the 1882 volume of Harpers Monthly Magazine contains an ad for magic lanterns, microscopes, field glasses, philosophical and chemical apparatus and mathematical instruments available from James W. Queen & Company, 924 Chestnut Street, Philadelphia.

Q. Could the Society publish bibliographical materials? We might solicit from the membership citations they have collected and locations of collections of m.l. related materials. Stephen C. Chamberlain, Apt. 53, 181 Claremont Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10027

A. This is one of several requests of this kind we have received. It is an excellent idea if we can find someone with the time and inclination to take on the task of compiling information sent in by members. For the present, please send your lists to Joe Koch. He will try to find someone to organize them in consistent form for publication.

Please include the author's full name, full title of the publication, name and location of publisher, date of publication, and types of information contained if this is not evident from the title. Include books, pamphlets, catalogues, magazines and—if you know—whether the item is still in print.

In listing materials in your personal libraries, please indicate whether you are willing to lend these out to other members. Perhaps—if you don't want to trust valuable references to the U.S. mail—you may be willing to look up information on specific points for other members.

Also please include the second type of information Steve suggested: the location of collections of m.l related materials (such as the University of Washington collection listed earlier). Be very specific. Large agencies such as the Library of Congress or the New York Public Library often cannot direct people to correct sources unless they know the name of the specific collection to which the items belong.
Q. As a collector of stereo views (and a stereo photographer) I am aware that the major 20th century publishers put out some of the same views as lantern slides. Through the Society, I hope to learn more about the relative values of such slides and hope to be able to find some to match those in my collection of stereo views. I know very little about magic lanterns but hope to learn more about what is available. Douglas Smith, 7215 Tyler Ave., Falls Church, VA 22042

A. Are you familiar with *Stereo Views, A History of Stereography in America and Their Collection* by William Culp Darrah, printed by Times and News Publishing Co. Gettysburg, PA in 1964? This contains much valuable information, although the prices listed are, of course, out of date. *Two Points of View, the History of the Parlor Stereoscope*, by Harold F. Jenkins, published by World in Color Productions, Elmira, NY in 1957, is a much briefer summary. For information about the early, interrelating development of the stereoscope and the magic lantern, see Quigley's *Magic Shadows* mentioned in the Koch's Corner section of this Bulletin. I suggest you also contact the National Stereoscopic Association in Columbus, Ohio (see list of new members in this Bulletin).

**BUY/SELL/TRADE**

For sale: Vertical biunal lantern with several focusing lenses and other accoutrements. Distributor was McIntosh of Chicago. Needs cleaning. Also lantern slide contrast plates (expired 1952). Write Pilecki's Antique Camera and Image Exchange, 1109 Solano Ave., Albany, CA 94706 or phone (415) 525-4804.

**NEW MEMBERS**

We do get members by roundabout routes, sometimes. Two of our new members read about the Society in the Antique Journal and showed up to join at the Northwest regional meeting. Two others joined after encountering Joe & Alice Koch at a camera show. Another contacted me after learning about us through Roger Orme of Great Britain, and joined up after I sent him Joe's address. Welcome to all of you.

Jack E. Boucher
37 Laurel Avenue
Limwood, NJ 08221

(609) 653-1776 home phone
(202) 343-6217 business phone


Occupation: Architectural photographer (historic structures only).
Wes Lambert  
1568 Dapple Avenue  
Camarillo, CA  93010  

Interests: Early motion picture equipment. Will buy, sell or trade.  
Kinetic devices - 35mm 28mm 171/2mm hand crank motion  
picture projectors.

Occupation: Retired from optical instrumentation.

James Parker  
752-5078 home phone  
3457 Spruce  
756-2539 business phone  
North Bend, OR

Interests: Lantern - tin 15" high 8" side. Slides - 4x7" wood framed,  
round picture in center. Gives shows.

Occupation: Retires in July 1980.

National Stereoscopic Assn.  
(614) 855-9057  
Oliver Wendell Homes Stereoscopic  
Research Library  
P.O. Box 14801  
Columbus, OH 43214  

Interests: Slides - made from stereo pairs. Literature - All types C.  
1800 to present.

Larry Rakow  
(216) 321-8401 home phone  
3533 Raymont Blvd.  
(216) 398-1800 business phone  
University Hghts., OH 44118  
ext. 41

Interests: Slides - wood-mounted, mechanical, portraying social  
issues. Zoetropes, praxinoscopes, daguerrotypes,  
stereographs, CDV's. Will buy, sell, trade. Gives shows.

Occupation: Librarian.

Douglas D. Smith  
7215 Tyler Avenue  
Falls Church, VA 22042  

Interests: Primarily stereo views, but interested in learning more  
about the relationship between stereo views and magic  
lantern slides. Will buy/sell/trade.