

NOTES

All slide images are from the Lucerna Magic Lantern Web Resource, reproduced by permission, and are all from the Nicholas Hiley Collection except Fig. 4 (Mervyn Heard Collection). All photos except Figs 1 and 2 are by the author.

1. No Mason sets have been identified in the hire or retail catalogues of Josiah Chapman, J. Lizars, Onward Publishing Office, Riley Brothers, UK Band of Hope Union, W. Watson & Sons, E.G. Wood or Wrench & Son. They do appear, albeit in small numbers, in the stock of the Church Army, J.W. Butcher (Wesleyan Methodist Sunday School Union), William Lane, Nicholson & Sons and some smaller local distributors. This would suggest that Mason had some less conventional means of distributing their products, but no contemporary advertisements or other clues as to their business practice are known.
2. Most of the Mason family history here, including the portrait, is drawn from information at ancestry.co.uk, particularly research by Chloë and the late Deirdre Mason (great-granddaughters of G.M. Mason) and Jennifer Neary, for which many thanks. I am also grateful for the generous help of Nicholas Hiley, a source of useful enlightenment as always. References for the archive sources referred to can be found in the Lucerna record for G.M. Mason (Lucerna item 6002168) and links from there to his relatives.
3. 35 Bellevue Road was occupied by someone else in the 1895 *Kelly's Directory*, but Mason gave that address when registering *Jim and His Charges* for copyright at Stationer's Hall on 5 May 1896 (National Archives, COPY 1/424/709).
4. The conviction, together with his wife Winnie Wheeldon and her mother Alice, was for conspiracy to murder the Prime Minister (David Lloyd George), for which Alf was alleged to have supplied poison. This episode is well explained in a website created by Chloë and Deirdre Mason as part of an ongoing campaign to have the convictions quashed – see <http://alicewheeldon.org>.
5. Tom Bargate, 'They Don't Much Care About What Happens – But Meanwhile...', *Southern Evening Echo*, 9 November 1963. I owe this reference to Nicholas Hiley, whose attention was drawn to it by Deirdre Mason.
6. Only one Life Model set, *Little Faith* (see Fig. 5), has so far been found which is not in the Mason catalogue; the clothing and vehicles in its images suggest it is from the 1920s. The elderly main male character bears some resemblance to G.M. Mason himself, which would correlate with his age at that time.
7. Only Bamforth (921 sets) and York (193) are known to have made more Life Model sets than Mason. The next most prolific is Piggott with 52, although there are at least 150 sets whose maker is not yet identified which might change these relative figures.
8. A few slides are known with black mounts (as in Fig. 12), though there is no obvious reason for this variation.
9. For comparative figures for other Life Model makers see the previous parts of this series in *TML* 14, 17 and 19, particularly Note 6 of the first article (*TML* 14, p. 10).

HERITAGE IN THE LIMELIGHT: THE MAGIC LANTERN IN AUSTRALIA AND THE WORLD

Sydney Performance

Martyn Jolly

On the evening of 4 October 2019, in a sandstone gaol built by New South Wales convicts in the 1830s, a 30-minute magic lantern dissolving view show was staged by the Australian Research Council Project *Heritage in the Limelight* in collaboration with the National Art School, The Power Institute Foundation for Art and Visual Culture, and Sydney Living Museums.

Produced as the closing event for a symposium on 'The Australian Object', the show responded to the collection of one of the historic houses managed by Sydney Living Museums – Rouse Hill House and Farm, situated 40km northwest of Sydney. In 1860 the wealthy pastoralist Edwin Rouse, who was styling himself as a local squire, purchased a music box from the Sydney clock makers Walker & Jones. A few years later Major Thomas Wingate purchased a Newton & Co. 'improved phantasmagoria' magic lantern, complete with a typical collection of slides from the period including a chromatrope, several sets of story slides including *John Gilpin's Ride*, *Pussy's Road to Ruin* and *The Tale of the Tiger and the Tub*, exotic view slides and comic mechanical slides. Wingate, a retired British Army officer and keen amateur photographer and artist who had married into the family, may have purchased the lantern and slides from Newton & Co.'s Fleet Street shop when he returned to London with his wife to exhibit a photographic panorama of Sydney Harbour at the International Exhibition of 1862, or they may have been purchased from a Sydney importer. The lantern and slides entertained school children from the local district in 1866, and were vigorously played with by successive generations of children at the house, where they remain to this day. Many have been broken, but some are still in good condition. In the 1960s John Terry, the sixth generation of the Rouse family, even incorporated the 100-year-old lantern and slides into some of his experimental psychedelic music performances. Further information about Sydney Living Museums, Rouse Hill House and Farm, its magic lantern and slides, and John Terry's psychedelia can be found at sydneylivingmuseums.com.au.

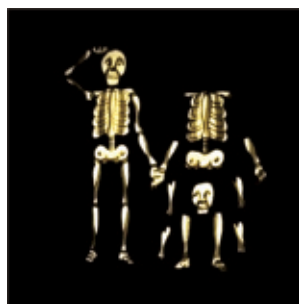
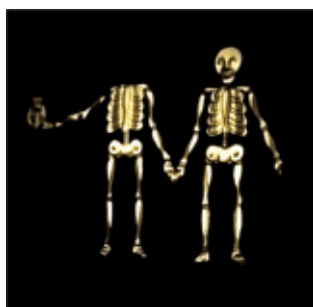
Our magic lantern show was not held at Rouse Hill, but at the site of one of Terry's 1960s psychedelic performances, the Cell Block Theatre, which had been converted from the colonial gaol into an inner-city theatre in the 1950s. Our musician Alexander Hunter and vocalist Heather Keens provided music, electronics, vocals and sound effects and Martyn Jolly and Elisa deCourcy operated the magic lanterns. We did not use the Rouse Hill lantern or slides but instead we projected equivalent slides from the same era in the *Heritage in the Limelight* collection through a pair of dissolving lanterns with a 'batwing' dissolver manufactured by James Steward in the 1880s.

We started with several original chromatropes accompanied by electronically modified recordings from the actual Rouse Hill music box. Next came the popular children's story *Pussy's Road to Ruin* using equivalent slides to those at Rouse Hill and accompanied by a reading from the original script along with improvised vocalisations, sound effects and music. We followed that with various comic slides in the same style as those at Rouse Hill, accompanied by improvised vocalisation, sound effects and music. We concluded with 20 different slides from the 1860s to the 1890s incorporated into a single story of sea voyage, storm and shipwreck. For this epic the contemporary artist Waratah Lahy painted a contemporary 'effect slide' for us, a 2cm by 1cm image of a tropical paradise which we dissolved over a nineteenth century slide of a dockside – a key location of many 19th-century imperial narratives. As can be experienced in the video documentation, our vocalist Heather Keens and musician Alexander Hunter made good use of the



(left) A slide from *Pussy's Road to Ruin* – a similar set is in the Rouse Hill House and Farm collection

(below) A mechanical slide projected at the meeting



acoustic resonance of the one-metre thick, ten-metre high sandstone walls of the old gaol, as Martyn Jolly and Elisa deCourcy produced lightning and storm effects with the dissolving lanterns.

Although there are no shipwreck slides in the Rouse Hill collection, sea and shipwreck slides were an extremely popular subject in Australia, because many people in a typical colonial magic lantern audience would have been on at least one long sea voyage. For instance in 1848 the daguerreotypist and magic lanternist J.W. Newland climaxed his show at Sydney's Royal Victoria Theatre with the animated depiction of the 1825 loss of the East Indiaman *Kent* (also the subject of many popular maritime paintings).

Curators of material culture in galleries, museums and historic houses know that objects such as magic lanterns are embedded in complex webs of historical significance, especially when they have travelled tens of thousands of kilometres from their point of manufacture. They also know that the role objects played in a particular location over time can help audiences understand the historical life of that location. Our intention was to demonstrate that performance can activate both the complex interconnections of the objects in their collections and the personal affective experiences the historical inhabitants of their sites had over time. We believe the term 'use' is key to both understanding and experiencing the historical significance of magic lanterns and their slides. They are forms of media, both 'apparatus' and 'image', 'hardware' and 'software', 'device' and 'content', so they need to be brought together and used. They can't be properly understood as inert specimens to be looked at in a glass case because they were a crucial part of an assemblage that included an apparatus, a place, a performer and an audience.

We wanted to demonstrate that it is possible to give audiences in the present something of the same affective experience historical audiences had in the past – their emotional responses to witnessing distant events, their collective joy in experiencing music or laughter, their involuntary 'aaahhh' at an uncanny special effect – in short, the magic of the magic lantern. While a straight re-enactment, where everything is done as closely as possible to how we think it was done in the past, can replicate the basic form of a magic lantern show, it cannot generate a similar frisson in a contemporary audience, one inured to a century and a half of subsequent media thrills. In order to recover the magic lantern as a more historically accurate 'experiential object' we have introduced contemporary elements such as music, voice and electronics. Although these elements come from the present, and would be unrecognisable from the perspective of the past, we are confident that the process through which we have incorporated them comes just as assuredly from historic practices when all magic lantern shows were occasions for improvisation and bricolage. We hope our creative re-enactments invite the fleeting manifestation of something that our audience can feel they are perhaps sharing with an audience of 150 years ago.



A tropical scene painted by the contemporary artist Waratah Lahy dissolved over a vintage slide of a dockside scene – the poster in the original slide has been blacked out

THE ELSBURY BRISTOL 'AT HOME'

A full house of enthusiasts met up and was treated to a veritable potpourri of magic lantern delights in Bristol, UK, on Saturday 7 September. **Keith and Jennifer Utteridge** hosted this much-anticipated event originally run by David and Eunice Elsbury. **John Finney** provided the lantern and projection back up.



After some tricky fish and chip mathematics, **Pat Furley and David Bayley** started proceedings with *Fishin' Around* featuring Mickey Mouse and Pluto going fishing with predictable mishaps. While Pat dealt with the slides, David read assisted by an oil (homemade mixture) burning reading lamp, clicker and bell. **Robin Palmer** then showed two



Gordon Casbeard's sartorially elegant frog

panoramic slides of historical battles by W.C. Hughes – possibly the Crimean War (1853-56) but more likely the Russo-Turkish War of 1877-78. He then showed a very different battle – of frogs fighting with swords accompanied by cats! **Gordon Casbeard** continued the frog theme with a lovely set of *A Frog He Would a'Wooing Go*. This story first appeared in 1548

relating to the Duc d'Anjou's unpopular courtship of Queen Elizabeth I. These slides dated from 1867 with the reading slightly adapted in Gordon's inimitable style (antibiotics in 1867??).

Next **Richard Crangle** talked about Graystone Bird (1862-1943) having come across a large number by the eminent photographer among the 34,700 slides from the Manchester Museum collection that he had recently finished photographing for the *Million Pictures Project*. Many were numbered but exhibited both style and label differences. Most members have some Graystone Bird slides (and **Andrew Gill**, who joined in the discussion, has many) – whether seaside scenes, storms at sea, hymns or lecture sets from home and abroad – but there is no catalogue of his output. Could this be an MLS project?

Kevin Varty then took us to St Dunstan's Hostel for blind veterans in Regent's Park. Founded in 1915 by Sir Arthur Pearson, World War I veterans were taught many new skills as shown in Kevin's slides, such as basket making, woodworking, piano tuning, cobbling and bone handling (to become physiotherapists). They did not wear uniforms to mark them as disabled because Pearson insisted they were not disabled but had a disability. When a temporary wood and plaster (with real wreath) version of the Cenotaph was erected for the 1919 Peace Day celebrations it proved so popular that the current Portland stone version was built for 11 November 1920 and St Dunstan's residents carved some of the 1919 wood into replicas – Kevin admitted to having 11 of them!

Allan and Rene Marriott recreated a section of their Armistice Day show from 2018 of 'Snoopy versus the Red Baron', with suitable music, using slides of early flight including biplanes attacking a ship. They then showed a beautiful photographic set of luxury yachts in the Solent concluding with George V on his yacht *Britannia* that was scuttled when he died. **Keith Utteridge** regaled us with tales of the perils of live music and "pianos we have known" such as a curiously silent one (nothing