

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



George V's yacht – the Marriotts' slide

inside) and another that lurched sideways when its leg broke, with posing punter plus pint still leaning on it.

Jerry Fisher showed three extraordinary slides made from intricately cut paper. One had a date of 1839 but Jerry was not convinced this dated the slide. He raised the interesting question of

whether some slides are better looked at than projected. Peter Gillies showed slides by designer, artist and illustrator Lawson Wood (1878-1957). The first group featured ancient Britons (cavemen) and dinosaurs and the second was a Newton set – *The Story of Strong Tail*, the kangaroo who won a jumping competition by landing next to the Old Man in the Moon. John Finney then gave us his version of the 1980s real fire advert with dog, cat and mouse – but his mouse escaped through a hole in the skirting board.

After lunch Keith introduced "a fairly quiet one" with David Bayley recreating a raucous 'surround-sound' phantasmagoria show with objects from his shed (not necessarily 18th century) 'played' by members of the audience. Skeletons and various beasties appeared accompanied by chain in a tin pail, sewing machine wheel, bells, crowbar, etc. Order was restored by Linda and Edgar Gibbs showing a



One of Jerry Fisher's paper cut-out slides

film by Sir George Pollock given to them by his family. *Transformations*, made with John Barnes, traced the history of the magic lantern, focussing on dissolving views and slip slides. They then showed one by John and Elizabeth Horton (see TML 14) featuring *The Night Before Christmas*, also with magic lantern history.

Keith projected 15 slides from the set *Children of a Great City*, which had belonged to the Elsbuys. These included photographs of child musicians, boot blacks and cane workers. Gordon Casbeard then showed a salutary tale of what happens when you leave children in the house with something they should not touch – in this case hair restorer.

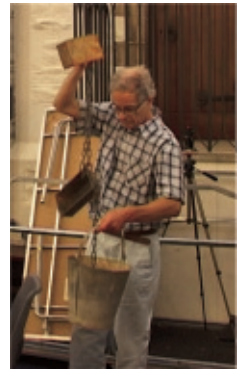
The remarkably effective product resulted in a rather bald child growing a beard. The Utteridges went 'political' with "the ayes/eyes have it" (moving eyes slide) and "the noes/nose have it" (growing nose slide) – Keith should have been the new House of Commons Speaker!

Robin Palmer educated us all about the broad gauge GWR ('God's Wonderful Railway'). In the 1830s Brunel surveyed the line and built the infrastructure but proved a poor designer of locomotives – a job successfully taken over by 23-year-old Daniel Gooch. GWR became famous for passenger comfort but staff braved the elements, although later locomotives had cabs. Even the non-trainspotters found the images and story fascinating. Increasingly out of step with the rest of the system, GWR switched gauge over one weekend in 1892 and all the locomotives were scrapped. John Finney then showed a David Elsbury set with Richard Rigby reading from David's own handwritten script. The subject was *Abstinence and Hard Work*, showing abstainers fared better as, for example, blacksmiths, glassblowers, printers, railwaymen, miners, navvies and even Arctic explorers (there may have been some scepticism in the room).

Richard Crangle picked up his earlier theme with Graystone Bird slides he had bought over the lunch break, featuring hymns, people in fishing boats and lady bathers on Brighton beach. Richard Rigby showed some 'no bits' kaleidoscopes (they pick up what they see) and a fascinating selection of slide carriers able to take different size slides (3¼ inch and 4 inch). One had two carriers within a frame and another blanked out the slides as it changed over.

The day drew to a close with the audience singing along to three life model song sets from Andrew Gill. 'Annie Laurie' (written in 1835), 'Goodbye Dolly Gray' (written in 1898 – well before WWI) and 'The Bonnie Banks o' Loch Lomond' that probably dates back to the Jacobite uprising of 1745 – the "low road" may well be the route of the dead. Then on to the cheerier subject of fish and chips!

Mary Ann Auckland



David Bayley with sound effect



Strong Tail and the Old Man in the Moon

THE QUEEN ON SCREEN ... REVISITED



Queen Victoria looking out of a train crossing the Tay Bridge which she did on 20 June 1879, six months before it collapsed. One of a Walter Tyler set of (at least) 48 slides from David and Lesley Evans' collection

As Queen Victoria's 200th birthday year draws to a close, here are three more slides following on from Jeremy Brooker's 'The Queen on Screen' article in TML 20.



This slide (left) is from Franz Xavier Winterhalter's painting 1 May 1851. An ageing Duke of Wellington presents a gift to his namesake Arthur, Duke of Connaught, aged 1. Prince Albert is gazing at the Crystal Palace, home of the Great Exhibition that year (Lester Smith collection)



... and just a reminder that it is Prince Albert's 200th birthday too (David and Lesley Evans collection)