



ZOOMING UP TO CHRISTMAS

19 December 2020

To add a little much-needed Christmas cheer, the MLS ran an extra 'meeting' for members to enjoy. Sultan (or wizard) **Jeremy Brooker** (it was pantomime season!) introduced the festive treats and thanked **Frog Morris**, **George Auckland**, **Richard Crangle**, **Monique Wezenberg** and **Martin Gilbert** – our host. During the day the following shows had been available to view (links are on the MLS website under 'past events'):

- * *Davy's Sacrifice*, a Christmas life model set, Bamforth & Co. 1903 by **Peter and Delia Gilles**
- * *Charles Dickens in the Light of the Magic Lantern*, performed at the Dickenstheater, Laren, Holland by **Else Flim and Adrian Kok**
- * *The Christmas Dream or Le Rêve de Noël*, a 1900 Georges Méliès film featuring Méliès himself
- * *A Lockdown Liturgy* by **Mrs Zenobia Haskin-Davies** (a.k.a. **Juliette Harcourt**)
- * *A Magic Lantern Christmas Show 2009* by **Henk Boelmans Kranenburg and Robert Conrad te Pas**
- * *Festive Frost and Frivolity* by **the Spencers and Son**
- * *A Child's Vision of Christmas* by **Gilbert's Galantee Show**
- * *'Twas the Night Before Christmas* by **Terry Borton**
- * *A Radioptican New Year* from **B-magic**

And if that wasn't enough around 70 members then enjoyed 'live' online presentations from:

Lester Smith with 12 long slides featuring a band, dancing, cooking, hair and beard dressing, riding animals from a horse to a turkey, a chase pursuing ... a lion in blue spectacles, and skaters moving along the ice.

Monique Wezenberg gave a show on her biennial themed around 'the night before Christmas', featuring chromatropes, dissolving views, snow, pre-Christmas activities, presents, Father Christmas in different guises and concluding with the famous **Clement Clarke Moore** poem.

Before the finale from **Henk Kranenburg** and **Robert te Pas** we had a short film with Henk showing us around their **Nico's Toverlantaarmuseum** in **Scheveningen, Den Haag, the Netherlands**. Then they projected a feast of slides featuring winter scenes, seasonal music, sleigh rides, skaters and snowballing, even sheep, goats, **Charles Dickens** and the **Northern Lights**, all illustrating their version of *A White Christmas* – the story was left to the imagination of members whose Dutch language skills were not up to scratch!

A lively discussion followed. Green felt at the ends of long slides was recommended for blocking out light when projecting them one after the other. There was much debate about how Father Christmas evolved from a small figure in brown (or other colours) to a large figure in red. **Terry Borton** showed an 1870 book with a red-coated figure – so **Coca-Cola** had nothing to do with it – and believed Santa's size increased around 1900. The lantern on **Laura Zotti's** Christmas card, showing an unusual four vents in the top, also caused lots of comment ... we are awaiting the article!



Monique's projection of a chromatrope and a Dutch Christmas slide: *Genoegelijk Kerstfeest* (Merry Christmas)