

# THE MAGIC LANTERN IN GOLD RUSH CALIFORNIA

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Columbia, California is an 1850s Gold Rush town where 87 million dollars of gold was discovered. It lives on today as an active town for tourists and visitors as well as a State Historic Park. I spent Saturday and Sunday of Easter weekend (8 and 9 April) in Columbia with my magic lantern and tintype studio. I thought folks would enjoy a few photos of the event!

I was set up in what is called 'Miner's Hall' – a reproduction of an older building located on the main street. We also set up a sign on the main avenue for visitors to come and see our shows. I like doing shows in small venues like this because people wander in as part of a small group. Then I can give short shows tailored for that particular audience. It also gives me a chance to try different jokes or spin stories in different directions and see which



*Gotta watch out for those travelling magic lantern performers!*



*The magic lantern show (above) and the camera pointing the way (bottom right).*



*My daughter Emily getting ready with the camera and darkroom*

resonate better with different groups, adding a bit of 'improv' to my routine!

We also brought our tintype studio and made some portraits for folks, using the

outside north-facing wall of the magic lantern theatre. Our larger camera was put in the doorway to let visitors know that there was something interesting inside in case they missed the signs. Overall a fun event doing magic lantern shows and making tintypes in 1850s Columbia.

