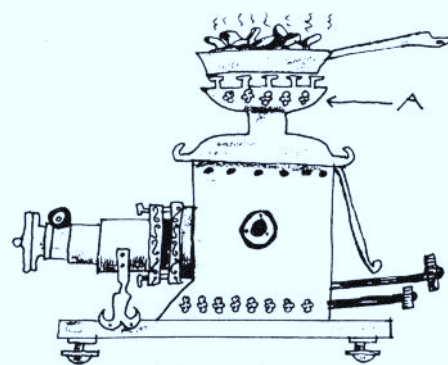


OBITUARY DEREK JONES

Derek Jones, who sadly died at the end of last year, helped to uphold the lighthearted look and flavour of the Magic Lantern Society *Newsletter* for over thirty years with his witty, Heath Robinson-esque cartoons. His first submission, reproduced here, was published in Issue No. 4 (June 1981), and a variety of editors, all lacking Derek's staying power, continued to receive and feature his musings almost without a break until his departure. I recall from the time I was editor of the *Newsletter* that the drawings would usually arrive in a large hastily recycled envelope. The sketches were haphazardly cut from pieces of paper of varying sizes and often with small corrections pasted over the originals. I always thought this wonderfully consistent with the ramshackle style of his humour. In 2007 he collected many of his cartoons and self-published them under the title *An Almost True Social History of Magic Lanterns and their Uses – in Cartoons*.

Derek taught biology and ecology for many years at the University of Bangor School of Education and, as well as nursing a shared unhealthy passion for the lantern and antique gadgets with the rest of the membership, was also a keen appreciator of art, music and the countryside. He lived with his wife on Anglesey, which, as British readers will know, is located in the far north-western corner of Wales. As a result he rarely made the long trek by stagecoach and carrier's pony and trap to quarterly meetings in London and Birmingham. When he did I recall that he was always an enthusiastic contributor, unnecessarily dismissive of his artistic abilities, and very good company.

Professor Mervyn Heard



A diagram of a rare 1903 'Magicook' Lantern fitted with its accessory chimney (A). Though a useful model for domestic use, few were made.

"THE LANTERN - SLIDE COLLECTOR" - A fable based on fact.

The collector has just entered a previously unsampled 'curio shop'. He (for purposes of brevity) spots a box of slides and stands squinting at their dusty images - garnished by a fragmented family of Edwardian spiders. The collector's body twists painfully towards inconveniently positioned light to inspect his finds.

Leaps of soul as unusual images stare back; mental belches at ill-focused landscapes. Pumbling at slides stubbornly wedged in the base of the box.

Mental calculation of repair potential of cracks sprawled across a hand-coloured face. Glances at proprietor, attempts to assume more relaxed and casual air.

More adrenalin as another black box with broken hinges is unearthed.

Renewed gentee clawing at slides. Confetti of border-papers.

Hymn verses present self-righteous messages of joy.

Collector, unmoved, replaces them.

Negotiations secur the glass pile.

Small parcel tenderly nursed homewards.

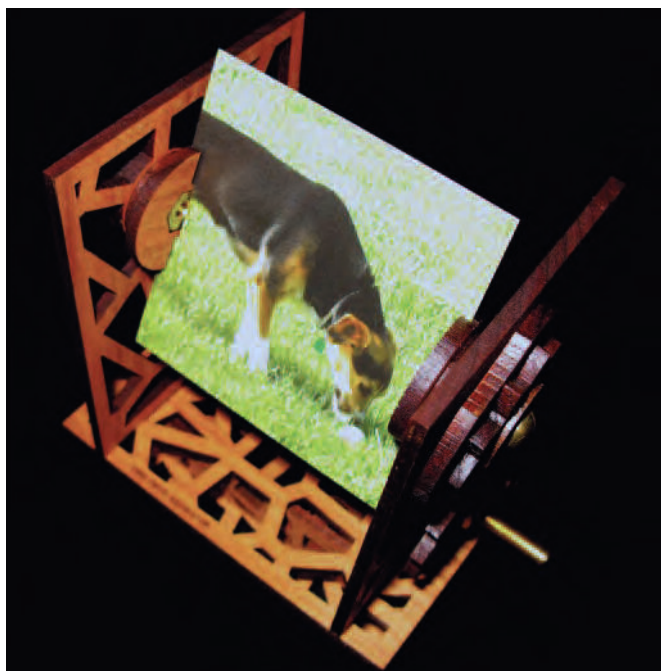
Family groaning as the lantern invades the lounge.

Hot beams cast rare treasures to the screen. Time-traveller sets off on a successful mission.

Derek H.T.Jones.

SOME BRING, SHOW AND TELL ITEMS FROM THE MEETING AT THE BMI 11 OCTOBER 2014

George Auckland demonstrated the 'Two Foto Animator'. Beautifully constructed from cherry and walnut hardwood, this American-made optical toy operates a little like a thaumatrope, but with a special set of gears that briefly pauses each image to create a remarkably convincing animation. Supplied with three pairs of sample cards and free software to construct your own, the Animator retails at \$125. See <http://leafpdx.bigcartel.com/product/two-foto-animator>.



Robin Palmer brought the meeting up to date with his experiments using LED illuminants. With rapid developments in this technology being introduced all the time, this must surely represent the future of magic lantern illumination. A virtually heat-free source of bright light, available in a range of colours and increasingly suited for dimmers, must be good news for the prevention of cracked lantern slides and over-heated condenser lenses.



Bernd Scholtze brought two nightmarish slides well suited to the Halloween theme of the meeting. Bernd was uncertain of the origins of these ghoulish images, which resemble Gustave Doré's famous illustrations to Dante's 'Inferno'.

John Finney showed his 'Fireworks Light Show in My Room', a portable projector designed to create a 'spectacular impression of lively fireworks on the walls of your house', complete with sound effects. Currently retailing through Amazon for £26.33, this would make a fitting and unusual ending to any magic lantern show.



See <http://www.amazon.co.uk/Fireworks-Light-Show-My-Room/dp/B0051MMFRS>.



Andrew Gill brought along another rarity, an optical toy based on the principle of Jacob's Ladder. This created very pleasing transformation effects. It seems surprising that such a simple but ingenious device was not commonplace, and yet no one at the meeting recalled seeing one before.

Jeremy Brooker announced that coinciding with the publication of the Society's new print publication *The Magic Lantern*, which he co-edits with Gwen Sebus, all the old *Journals* and *Newsletters* have now been digitally scanned. The details of how these will be disseminated to members, and the extent to which they will be made available to researchers outside the Society, are still matters up for discussion by the Committee but this marks a significant moment in the history of the Society.