



# A MAN OF MYSTERY...

Cheltenham based magician **Richard Parsons** speaks to Claire Nowacki about magic, weddings and unusual gigs

## What inspired you to want to become a magician?

A friend of mine called Mark Vasey did a card trick for me which completely floored me! He is also a member of the magic circle, he then sent me some books on magic and started me on the path to become a magician and remains a good friend to this day.

## You are a member of the magic circle, how do you become a member?

You have to be nominated by 2 existing members of the magic circle and then go for an audition in London at the Magic Circle headquarters, which is a private members club. You have to perform for 8 minutes in front of 3 judges and an audience of magicians and are assessed on your performance, tricks and presentation. On the night I auditioned, out of 4 of us, only 3 made it. It was very nerve wracking having to perform in front of established magicians.

## What was the first trick you ever learned to do?

It was the trick that Mark Vasey showed me called the 'Chicago Opener'. It's a brilliant trick that I still do now, but mainly I started with card tricks and progressed onto other things.

## You do a lot of weddings and events, what's the oddest thing to have ever happened during a trick?

I do get strange reactions sometimes, once a lady asked to shuffle the pack and then proceeded to throw the pack away, it was quite odd! I often perform at events where people have been drinking and the reactions can be quite unpredictable, so it's quite normal for me to have to deal with different situations.



## Any unusual gigs to remember?

I recently did the SAS base in Hereford to entertain the troops and their wives. I had to be escorted by armed police anywhere I went and was told under no circumstances to wonder off on my own for safety purposes! It was quite daunting.

## Finally what is the best thing about being a magician?

The reactions from people are definitely the highlight and it is also rewarding to be a part of someone's special day. It is pretty amazing to be able to turn a hobby into an income, I get to do something I really enjoy and I'm making people happy. ■

**Richard Parsons is available for Christmas party bookings now!**  
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