



**FORKS  
FULL OF  
APPETIZERS**

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*dedicated to*

*Ronald J. "Obie" O'Brien  
(1932-2021)*



*Edwin John "Eddie" Fechter  
(1916-1979)*



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# FOREWORD

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*Fechter's Finger Flicking Frolic*, that is often referred to as the *4F Convention* and was later renamed *Obie's 4F*, was the first and *Original Close-Up Magic Convention* and was founded in 1971.

It got its name because *Finger Flickers* was a common expression used to describe magicians who were obsessed with sleight-of-hand.

Eddie Fechter, who owned the *Forks Hotel* (which was actually a bar and restaurant) in Cheektowaga, New York was a very skilled and popular magician who often performed for his customers and hired local magicians to entertain them during the weekends. He also attracted many magicians who would travel there to visit him.

After one weekend, where a bunch of magicians showed up, Eddie and his friends Obie O'Brien and Bill Okal got the idea that it would be nice if they held a formal gathering of close-up magicians. A by-invitation-only party with many of their friends. Eddie agreed to volunteer his bar if Obie did all the work.

Obie along with his wife and kids mailed around forty hand-written invitations and almost everyone attended. As word got out more and more magicians wanted to be invited. But it became so exclusive that only the best and most talented magicians would get an invite. Over the years the convention moved several times which allowed it to grow to more than 200 attendees that have similar interests, who spend the week performing, sharing, teaching, and partying.

I was one of the magicians who really wanted to attend. I met Obie in 1978 and hinted that I would love to be invited. I jumped through the many hoops he put in front of me and was put on a waiting list. Two years later I was lucky to get an invitation. I attended every convention since that time (except for one due to an illness in my family). I made lifelong friends and learned more about the art than at any other place. Attending was life changing for me.

After the tenth anniversary convention Obie had the idea of asking the attendees to contribute a trick for a 4F book. That book came out in 1982 and was called *Fork Full Of Appetizers: Book 1*. Two years later a second book appeared called *Fork Full Of Appetizers: Book 2*. Both books were compiled and edited by Bill Miesel and illustrated by Tom Gagnon. A third book was compiled but languished until H&R published a version of it in 2012. There are also a series of videos shot at the 4F convention which were later combined into a lengthy video tutorial called *Secret Sessions*.

What you are holding are the first two books combined into one. The contributors are a whose who of close-up magic during the 1970s and 1980s. Many of the names have become hugely popular creators and performers in our field and many of their contributions are routines and techniques they actually used.

What is also special about this book is that most of the routines were written by their inventors. If you knew them, you could hear their voices explaining the magic. You will also find the crediting is often more than what you are used to. Serious magicians over credit, which allow the readers to search for the pieces that preceded and inspired the final routine. This scholarly approach allows for the advancement of magic.

Shortly after I purchased the rights to the *Stars Of Magic* book Obie approached me about releasing a Stars Of The 4F book where all the guests of honor would contribute a great trick. That never happened but I think this book will get close to making his wish come true and introduce the 4F magic to a wider audience that will hopefully be inspired to push the art of close-up magic forward... in the same way that Obie spent his life doing.

Meir Yedid

April 2022