MYRA CARDEN

Includes Myra Carden's Magnet Company / Loyola Magnet Variety Troupe

Singer, actress, troupe proprietor/manager, producer, businesswoman

Myra "Emmie" Carden took her Bijou Variety troupe around south-west Queensland and Northern New South Wales in 1884, and over the next decade toured the same region for much of each year. She also travelled further afield on occasions, being identified in the mid-1880s with South Australia and southern NSW. Between 1886 and 1891 Carden toured in partnership with Fred Loyola, initially with Loyola's Magnet Troupe but for the most part under the billing Myra Carden's Magnet Company. In the early 1890s she worked briefly for Dan Tracey and provided a much-used testimonial for Bonnington's Irish Moss. Carden settled in Manilla, NSW in 1894, and soon afterwards became known as Myra Hill-Carden.

- No records relating to Carden's life or career prior to 1884 or after 1901 have yet been located. She had clearly been involved in the theatrical industry prior to 1884, though. It is possible that she had a link to Manilla during her early life, being the niece of Edward Hill, a prominent storekeeper and J.P. in the town. Hill became the subject of national news reports in December 1884 when he was reported missing in the aftermath of a fire in Cripp's Coffee Palace Hotel, Sydney. His body was discovered several days later in the ruins. [For further details see the "Miscellaneous" section at the end of this document]
- After settling in Manilla, Carden established her own business, organised local entertainments, and in 1898 became a national celebrity following her election to the town's Progress Society. She achieved this by defeating two male nominees. Among the headlines and comments were "Fair to the Front" and "Man, Poor Man."
- A racehorse named Myra Carden was active in regional New South Wales during the early-1890s.

Loyola's Magnet Variety Troupe
aka Loyola and Wilson's Magnet Troupe / Magnet Troupe

(1885-1886) Fred Loyola's Magnet Variety Troupe appears to have started out in early 1885 under the joint management of Loyola and Wilson. By the end of the year it was being billed as either Loyola's Magnet Troupe or simply the Magnet Troupe. Although Myra Carden has been identified as being involved in its management from as early March 1886, the troupe did not tour under her name until the following year. Loyola remained as both performer (comedian/dancer) and general/business manager. No details regarding the other artists engaged for Loyola's Magnet Troupe have yet been located. The company's publicity indicates that it operated largely around south-west and north-west New South Wales, and south-west Queensland.

- No details relating to the identity of Wilson, including his first name, have yet been located.
- An "Artists Wanted" advertisement placed in Carden's name in the 10 March 1886 issue of the South Australian Register (1) is the first time she has been identified with the Loyola company.
- This company should not be confused with the Royal Magnet Troupe [2] (1885), Royal Magnet Combination Troupe (1884), Dwarf and Magnetic Lady Troupe (1885) or the first known "Magnet" company to tour Australia, the Royal Magnet Variety Troupe [1] (1872-1873)

Myra Carden's Magnet Company

(1887- ca. 1889) Myra Carden's name has first been identified with Fred Loyola and his Magnet Variety Troupe in March 1886, when a wanted notice for lady vocalists and song and dance artists was placed in her name in the South Australian Register. Between 1887 and 1891 the company traversed through northern New South Wales and southern Queensland each year as Myra Carden's Magnet Company, with Loyola still involved as performer and general/business manager. Other artists identified to date included Nellie Hodson, the Riley Brothers, James White, Tom Edwards, Ernest Hunter, Jennie Grantleigh, Myra St Clair, Alf McDermott, and Fred Lloyd.* The troupe's last known whereabouts were in Penrith (NSW) in September 1891.

- The 1886 South Australian Register advertisement (10 Mar. 1886, 1) indicates that the company was re-organised in Adelaide. Later reports suggest that after playing South Australia the company made its way north through the south-west and north-west of New South Wales to Queensland.
- Fred Loyola may have been erroneously recorded as Fred Lloyd in 1891. Other known performers from that period were Miss Stanbury, Miss Kennedy, Miss Sinclair, and J. Sullivan.
Queensland

Warwick Argus (Qld) 8 Nov. 1884, 2.

Warwick Argus (Qld) 15 Nov. 1884, 2.

Warwick Examiner and Times (Qld) 12 Nov. 1886, 3.

Cambooya (says a correspondent) has just had a lively spurt again. Eighteen teamsters, wool-laden, arrived from Goondiwindi during last week. Wallis, the trainer, is in charge of a number of race-horses now in preparation for the 10th December races. Court has sold out the Cambooya Hotel for £650, to Mansfield, and gone to Sydney, on account of his wife’s ill-health. The Bijou Variety Company are convulsing the local play-goers. An energetic subscription is being got up towards a State School, and, altogether, Cambooya has a brisk pulse just now.

Loyola's Magnet Troupe (Queensland)

Oddfellows' Hall, Tuesday, November 2.

Loyola's Magnet Troupe will open at the Oddfellows' Hall, or Tuesday night next, with their first-class entertainment consisting of songs, dances, farces, etc.

Prices of admission as usual.

The Loyola Magnet Troupe opened at the Oddfellows' Hall last night to a good house. The performance consists of a selection of entertaining pieces, known as "varieties" and was well carried out. The company is a very good one, and has had a very successful tour all the way from Adelaide, playing for six weeks at the silver mines on the Barrier country. They have come by way of Wilcannia, the Darling, and have visited the western districts of Queensland. The loud plaudits of the audience last night testified to the excellence of the performance. The necessity of going to press early precludes the possibility of a more extended notice in this issue, but the Magnet Troupe is not going away just yet, and will play again this evening.

Western Star and Roma Advertiser (Toowoomba, Qld) 3 Nov. 1886, 2.
WANTED, LADY and GENTLEMAN, Variety Artists, to travel, sure engagement six months; none but professionals need apply. Apply to Miss Myra Carden, 30, Francis-street, Hyde Park.

—Miss Myra Carden's "Magnet" Variety troupe are pianiste. At latest they were in some nice request spot rejoicing in the poetical name of "Mullaloo" have the good fortune to drop into most towns due the race time. They should have prosperous times of it.

—A distinguished member of the troupe.

Misses Myra Carden, Nellie Hodson and Company last heard from in Croydon (Queensland). They report good business. The whole company very favourably spoken of.

—The Magnet troupe are doing Queensland. The entertainment is essentially a "variety show," nigger business and step dancing being the chief features. Miss Myra Carden, the proprieless, though suffering from a severe cold, sings nicely both in sentimental ballads and serious comic music-hall ditties. The lady is a very good actress, possessing lively spirits, arch looks, and great charm of manner. She literally throws herself into the part—a regular case of here goes, slap dash, and saute qui peut. She is especially good as a timid young lady, and in a song having for its refrain the root of all evil (when you've got none)—"money." The other lady, Miss Nellie Hodson, is, as is her companion, a fine pianiste. As dancers, it would be hard to find two better than the Riley Brothers — the papers say they have never seen anything travelling.

In clog and big shoe business they are simply unique, and when joined by Mr. Fred Loyola, in what is called a clog clog dance, unequalled. With Miss Carden, the latter performs a clever optical illusion called the "Vanishing Lady," and he is also very clever in legerdemain and juggling. But he is at his best in the conique business, and in the delineation of an old Irish girl, "on the track" of an absconding spouse, with song and jig, to the familiar tune, "The Knickerbocker Line," is immense. The latter's rich brogue, after a rattling step, "Thee's none o' yer polka majurers about that," fairly brings down the house. "Thompson's Dead," and "Symon's Dog," afford a great amount of fun, especially to the youngsters, who, it is needless to say, assemble in great force. The company are to visit Afton Downs, and then, strengthened by the arrival of a fresh lady star from Melbourne, will again pay a number of return visits.
The Missing Pianist.

Some time ago Figaro instituted enquiries respecting a missing pianist, named James White, whose friends down South are very anxious as to his safety. A week or two since, I received a communication from a Thursday Island man to the effect that White had been recently among the pearl-shellers. Now, a Normanton chum, writing under date 9th inst, says:—

"I noticed the enquiry for a James White, pianist. I can give you some information about him. He came up here with the Myra Carden Variety Troupe and went to Croydon with them. He left them at Croydon and came again to Normanton, where he resided some time. He has left here again and is, I think, at present at Croydon. If that address cannot find him, I will fossick out his whereabouts for you."

I publish this information with thanks, and for obvious reasons. If it eases the minds of Sydney relatives, I shall feel amply rewarded for my trouble.
Northern Star (Lismore, NSW) 13 Feb. 1889, 3.

Coraki (NSW)

The "Magnet" Company.

Miss Myra Carden's "Magnet" company gave an entertainment at the Bridge-street Hall, Coraki, on Saturday evening last. The attendance was only moderate, and not what the genuine character of the performance warranted. The entertainment was varied, and during its two hours duration the audience were kept in a high state of merriment. Miss Carden sang several songs, in one of which her imitation of a magpie was very good. Miss Grantleigh and Miss St. Clair brought down the house by the rendition of a variety of songs and some dancing. Mr. Fred. Loyola and Mr. Edwards were quite up to the mark in the bigger business, and their songs, dances, and witicism drew forth much applause. The impersonation of a female character by the former was perfection. A short laughable farce brought the entertainment, which is well worth seeing, to a close. The pianoforte accompaniments by Mr. Ernest Hunter were very nicely played during the evening. It is probable the company will again visit Coraki, and we can recommend them as well worthy of patronage.

Clarence and Richmond Examiner and New England Advertiser (Grafton, NSW) 2 Mar. 1889, 5.

The Theatre Royal, Grafton. Wednesday & Thursday Evenings next, March 6 and 7.

FIRST APPEARANCE OF Miss Myra Carden's "Magnet" Company of Metropolitan Artists, who will appear in their sparkling and refined Drawing-room Entertainments, introducing all the latest London and American novelties, never before seen in Grafton. All our business is new, novel, and sensational, abounding with Mirth, Music, Fun and Frolic. For full particulars see day-bills and posters. Remember, our stay is limited, so do not fail to see us. New and costly wardrobes. Popular prices of admission; children under 12, half price. Doors open at 7.30, overture at 8 o'clock.

FRED. LOYOLA, General Manager.

Entertainment.—Miss Myra Carden's Magnet company performed here on Tuesday night, to a rather small, but very appreciative house. The performance is certainly what it pretends to be, "sparkling and refined," from beginning to end, and the amount of work this company gets through is truly astonishing. Interest is not allowed to flag for a moment, no time being lost between each number. In fact the audience could scarcely recover from one fit of laughter before they were convulsed at some fresh well executed joke. The singing is very fair, and the step dancing is the best I have seen on our boards. In fact the Garden troupe must rank among the very best shows that have yet visited us, and I strongly recommend any one who has not seen them, and can spare the time, not to lose the opportunity.

Clarence and Richmond Examiner and New England Advertiser (Grafton, NSW) 9 Mar. 1889, 4.

WANTED, SONG and DANCE ARTIST, able to work on corner; none but first-class men need apply. Myra Carden, Windermere House, 133, Botany-street, Moore Park.

WANTED to Travel, Song and Dance ARTIST, able to work on end; sure engagement three months. Apply from 1 till 5, Miss Myra Carden, Haymarket Music Hall.
Ulmarra

Clarence and Richmond Examiner and New England Advertiser (Grafton, NSW) 2 July 1889, 2.

Grafton

THEATRE ROYAL,
For Six Nights only, commencing
MONDAY NEXT, 8TH JULY, and
Each Evening during Race Week.

MISS MYRA CARDEN'S MAGNET TRouPE
comprising
Miss Myra Carden, Miss Jennie Grantleigh,
Miss Myra St. Clair, Mr. Fred Loyola,
Mr. Albert McDermott, and Mr.
Ernest Hunter,
who will appear in their
SPARKLING AND REFINED DRAWING-ROOM
ENTERTAINMENT,
Introducing all
THE LATEST LONDON AND AMERICAN NOVELTIES.

All our business is
NEW, NOVEL, AND SENSATIONAL,
abounding with
Mirth, Music, Fun and Frolic.

For further particulars see posters and handbills.

Remember, Grand Opening Night,
MONDAY, JULY 8.

FRED. LOYOLA, Business Manager.

Clarence and Richmond Examiner and New England Advertiser (Grafton, NSW) 6 July 1889, 5.

Toowoomba (Qld)

Darling Downs Gazette (Toowoomba, Qld) 28 Sept. 1889, 4.

1890

Sydney Morning Herald (NSW : 1842 - 1954) about Friday 14 February 1890

WANTED, Song and Dance Artist, able to work on end, sure engagement 3 or 6 months. Apply till 4, Miss Myra Carden, Cambridge Hotel, corner Market and Castlereagh streets.

Bingara (NSW)

Sydney Mail and New South Wales Advertiser (NSW : 1871 - 1912) about Saturday 29 March 1890

Miss Myra Carden's Troupe were here on Friday night, and had a good house; they left next morning for Moree Races.
Bingara (NSW)

Miss Myra Carden’s Magnet Troupe played to a fairly filled house at Miller’s Hall on Thursday evening last. The audience were very enthusiastic, and applause and encores were showered upon the performers, which were well deserved. There is no doubt Miss Carden spares no expense to make her show attractive, and for a travelling affair is by far the premier show of anything that visits Bingara. The company consists of Miss Myra Carden, Miss Stanbury, Miss Kennedy, Miss Sinclair, Mr. Fred Lloyd, and Mr. J. Sullivan, and one and all appear to be well up in their several parts. To particularise the merits of each would take up too much valuable space, but I should like to give a word of praise to the Scotch lassie, Miss Kennedy, for her song “Mora Irinee,” which was without doubt the gem of the evening. Miss Carden expects to visit us during the annual races, when there is no doubt of the good reception she is likely to receive from the Bingarites.

1891


Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser (NSW) 18 Apr. 1891, 5.
At the School of Arts, Mr. Dan Tracey’s Vandeville Minstrel and Specialty Company continue to draw packed houses nightly. The change of programme on Saturday evening was positively refreshing, as also was the appearance for the first time of Miss Myra Carden, a serio-comic singer of undoubted ability. The curtain rises on Mr. W. Mathews’s burlesque

CIRCUS.—Mr. G. Perry’s Jubilee Circus appeared in Penrith on Wednesday and Thursday night. This travelling show is one of the best that has visited us, and the proprietor, unlike many of his predecessors, is a thorough straight-goer and well worthy of encouragement. On each night there was a large attendance and the several items on the programme were loudly applauded. There were altogether four clowns and a dummy, and these by their farcical movements and many original jokes caused throughout each entertainment roars of laughter. The bare-backed riding by both male and female performers, was equal to anything we have seen, and the daring acts of Master Perry, Miss Perry and Mr. Tonney (the latter essaying the somewhat difficult task of keeping on to a bare-backed horse at full gallop) were highly appreciated and loudly applauded. The horizontal bar business too was the best ever seen here, and the ground and lofty tumbling par excellence. The wonderfully trained mare Ruby did remarkably well and the dogs and monkeys caused much merriment among the juvenile members of the audience. The song dancing of Miss Perry is particularly good. This circus, unlike many others, is capably managed, there are no coarse or vulgar witticisms allowed and every item is carried out in a manner that could not fail to please the most fastidious. At the close of the second night’s performance Mr. Perry’s manager spoke a few good words for Miss Myra Carden’s Company, who appeared at the Temperance Hall on Friday night.

Nepean Times (Penrith, NSW) 12 Sept. 1891, 4.

1893

WARRIALDA RACES.
(From our Correspondent.)

Following are nominations for the two principal events at the annual races—
Town Plate.—Tallyman, The Swift, Grey Dot, Darken, Myra Carden, Manfred, Jeweller, Ina, Boomerang, Redna, H-hiday, Erin’s Isle, Odd Fellow, St. Elmo, Courtesy, Oroya, Supertrix.
Jockey Club Handicap.—Tallyman, The Swift, Grey Dot, Darken, Myra Carden, Manfred, Jeweller, Ina, Boomerang, Redna, Holiday, Erin’s Isle, Odd Fellow, St. Elmo, Courtesy, Starling, Honking, Lord Lovel.

Maitland Mercury and Hunter River General Advertiser (NSW) 21 Mar. 1893, 5.
For further details regarding Bonnington's Irish Moss see the Australian Variety Theatre Archive's entry in the Industry Misc [1] section - click on "Celebrity Endorsements."
Miss Myra Carden has been elected a member of the Progress Association of Manilla.

A somewhat novel departure took place at Manilla on Saturday last by the election of Miss Myra Carden to a seat on the Progress Committee.

The Fair to the Front.

The Manilla correspondent of the Tamworth News writes:—A somewhat novel departure took place here on Saturday last by the election of Miss Myra Carden to a seat on the Progress Committee. There were three candidates for the position, viz., G. Oliphant, M. Mandell and Myra Carden. The young lady beat G. Oliphant by 5 votes, the numbers being: M. Carden 28; G. Oliphant, 23; M. Mandell 11. Great amusement and a little excitement prevailed at the announcement by the Returning Officer of the number polled.

Man, poor Man! The election held at Manilla recently to fill a vacancy on the Progress Committee resulted in Miss Myra Carden defeating two male aspirants for the honour.

Band Entertainment.—Matters in connection with rehearsals for the above are progressing very well under the able musical direction of Miss. Myra Carden.
Amateur Entertainment

The second performance by the La Mascotte Minstrel and Variety Company, given in the School of Arts on Wednesday evening, was a distinct success. The attendance was very fair, and those who were present spent a capital evening. The performers were frequently applauded, and some of the items created much laughter. The first part consisted of a "refined drawing-room concert," in which Miss Carden figured as conversationalist, and Messrs. Whiting, Vincent, Morgan, and Stark as cornetmen. An overture by the orchestra preceded the uplifting of the curtain, which was raised to the accompaniment of "Old Folks at Home." A medley made a fascinating opening chorus, and Mr. C. Morgan followed with a catchy comic, entitled "Giving them all a Turn." Mr. M. Mandell, who sang "The last Farewell," was in good form, and his contribution was very enjoyable. Miss Carlen contributed a sweet little noon song, "Mammy's Lullaby," and Mr. C. Vincent sang "That was enough for me." Mr. G. Stark gave a local ditty, which was relished, and a extra-special verse was sung. "Norine Morine," rendered by Mr. C. Heyes, gave immense pleasure to the listeners. "Swim out for Glory" was sung by Mr. W. Whiting, who, by the way, was the humorous backbone of the whole company. His jokes and antics never failed to create hearty laughter. The finale consisted of a story about a man named Brown and a dead horse. Said story drove everybody off the stage, and just as the chair began to move off the scene dropped. Miss McNamara presided at the piano throughout the evening, and was assisted in accompaniments by Messrs. Simpson and Smith on the violin.

PART II.

Selection ... ... ... ... Band.
Song, "Then We Had Another One," ... Mr. C. Vincent.
Patriotic Song, "Old England and the New" ... Mr. M. Mandell.
Comic Recitation, "Maloney's Fenian Cat" ... Mr. W. Whiting.
Irish Character Song (by special request), "Come Back," ... Miss Myra Hill-Carden.

TYBOLEAN SONG, "Pretty Flowers," ... THE TYBOLEAN WAILERS.
SERIO - COMIC SONG, "Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Bow Wow" ... THE BABY SERIO-COMICS.
Ballad, "Irene, Good Night" ... Mr. C. Hayes.
Dutch Character Sketch, "Little Beer," ... Miss Myra Hill-Carden and Mr. O'Leary Vincent.

@ INTERVAL @

To Conclude with a Farce, entitled, "All's Fair in Love and War."

Dr. Brown ... ... Mr. C. Hayes.
O. M. Paul Guppy, Esq ... Mr. Mandell.
Charlie Jenkins ... Mr. C. Vincent.
Fanny Brown ... Miss M. Hill-Carden.
Augustus ... ... Mr. W. Whiting.

PRICES: Front Seats, 2s.; Back Seats, 1s. Seats may be reserved at Whitehead's.

Stage Managers: Miss Hill-Carden, Miss M. Hill-Carden.
Assistant: Mr. W. Whiting.

MYRA HILL-CARDEN.
Hon. Secretary.
Miss Myra-Hill Carden will shortly organise an entertainment in aid of the Patriotic Fund.

TO-NIGHT.

Grand Entertainment
in aid of
HOSPITAL FUND
and
MECHANICS' INSTITUTE

Our Programme is Sparkling, Refinced, Varied, and Entertaining.
Read our Drawing-room First Part.

PART I.

Tango : Mr. Harry Howard; Boure : Mr. Brewer.
Conversationists : Miss Myra Hill-Carden.
Ballad, ‘Bring me back one I Love,’ Mrs. Brann.
Comic Song, ‘Little Widow,’ Mr. G. Brewer.

PART II.

Overture, ‘Ludlow March,’ Professor Adrian.
Song, ‘Sleeping Camp,’ Mr. S. Bailey.
Comic Song (selected), Master Donoghue.
Ballad, ‘Forget and Forgive,’ Mrs. Brann.
Cornet Solo, ‘Killarney,’ Mr. Sutton.
Ballad (selected) . . . . Dr. Lowson.
Sketch, ‘Man, Poor Man,’ ‘Miss Myra Hill-Carden and Mr. Harry Howard.
Ballad, ‘The Anchor’s Weighed,’ Mr. Syd. Young.
Club Swinging, Master Bert Donoghue.
Violin Duett, Miss Cissy and Master J. Donoghue.

Ballad . . . . . . . . . . . Mr. Heys.
Character Song, ‘Come Back,’ Miss Myra Hill-Carden.

To conclude with the evergreen and laughable Farce.

“Irish Justice.”

Judges Substitute : Mr. Harry Howard.
Crown Prosecutor . . . . Mr. Syd. Young.
Clerk of the Court . . . . . Mr. S. Bailey.
Constable McGinniss . . . . Mr. G. Brewer.
Prisoners, by the remainder of Company.

POPULAR PRICES: Reserved chairs
(at Satchell’s) 2s 6d; Front Seats
2s; Back Seats 1s.

A Social after each Performance.

JOHN D. KENNEDY, Joint
T. N. JOHNSTONE, Secs.
In Memoriam

HILL.—In loving memory of Edward Hill, who lost his life by fire in Cripps' Coffee Palace Hotel, Sydney, on December 23rd, 1884.
Inserted by his loving niece, Emmie (Myra Hill-Carden.)

To Let

HANDSOME BRICK SHOP, two large plate glass windows, situated corner of Manilla and Market Streets
Apply

MYRA HILL-CARDEN,
"La Mascotte."
The Coffee Palace Fire.

On Monday morning Superintendent Beare proceeded to search amongst the debris of the late fire which resulted in the destruction of the Coffee Palace Hotel (better known as No. 2 Coffee Palace). Some rumours have been rife during the past few days that a gentleman named Mr. Edward Hill, a storekeeper in Manilla, who is supposed to have been staying at the Coffee Palace at the time the fire took place, lost his life in the flames. Mr. Beare is of opinion that there is some ground for the rumour. He says that he has noticed a peculiar smell coming from the ruins. Mr. Cripps, the late proprietor, declares that he has no knowledge of the arrival of the gentleman referred to. Mr. William Hill asserts that his brother left Manilla the week before last with the intention of staying in the Coffee Palace. Later news states that the body of Mr. Hill, charred almost beyond recognition, was discovered under the debris, buried in 5ft. of rubbish. Near his body, his watch was found.


Evening News (Sydney) 31 Dec. 1884, 4. Click on the URL below to read the rest of this article. http://trove.nla.gov.au/ndp/del/page/11783856

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