

# THE CHAINLETTER

AN E-NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR THE  
ESCAPE COMMUNITY

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## Your Editor



## At work & on stage

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## Magician to bring latest show to city

Jasmin Griffin [jasmin.griffin@iconicnews.ie](mailto:jasmin.griffin@iconicnews.ie)

Limerick man and master magician Steve Spade, fresh from his recent triumph at the International Merlin Award for Magic & Escapology in Las Vegas, has launched his latest tour.



The Lost Magic Tour began its countrywide enchantment in Killarney last Sunday, and Spade, as he prefers to be called, opened the vault to unveil over a century's worth of magical marvels.

The tour, which is due to run until June 2024, is soon to see Limerick fans wonder at the many tricks the Coonagh man has up his sleeve.

"The tour kicked off at the INEC, and it was a blast," Spade said. "I got some incredible feedback after the show and can't wait for the next one."

The magician describes his show as a personal challenge as he endeavours to recreate magic and illusions from magicians that have been lost to time.

Fans are urged to keep an eye on [stevespademagic.com](http://stevespademagic.com) for the Limerick dates which the local man hopes to announce soon.





# Curtis Lovell Escape Equipment For Sale!

Our friend Curtis has retired from the world of escapes.  
Would you like some of his material?



Transport belt by Steve Baker

\$700 Listed in Palm Springs

\$25 for shipping

Condition: Used—Good



Changing places - trick \$800

Condition Used—Good

## Flash Appearance

In good working condition. Use flash pots (not included) or curtains (Included)

\$625 Pick up only, located in Palm Springs.



Magician gets locked in and changes places with assistant- Great trick- curtain not included. Located in Palm Springs Ca Good condition, might need some tightening- I retired from performing- Very portable and not too hard to master Pick up is Palm Springs, CA

[magicofcurtis@mac.com](mailto:magicofcurtis@mac.com)

310-746-7483

**If you have escape equipment for sale, you can advertize here too!**



## British escape artist tackles death-defying trick Houdini failed in tense scenes on live TV

[Alistair McGeorge](#) Dec 15, 2023,

[Dynamo](#) Is Dead was an ominous name for his new special, but the escape artist will live on after conquering a death-defying stunt even Houdini couldn't complete.

The 40-year-old magician, whose real name is Steven Frayne, had spoken of his desire to lay his alter ego rest as he [tackled his most dangerous act yet](#) by burying himself alive on live TV – including digging his own grave and covering himself in dirt so he ended up six feet under – without a coffin.

Iconic escapologist Harry Houdini attempted the stunt in 1915, but panicked while digging his way out and fell unconscious, with his assistants having to pull him free by the time his hand reached the surface.



Viewers were absolutely hooked by Dynamo's attempt, as he had five tonnes of dirt thrown over him

with the clock ticking down the three minutes he knew he could hold his breath for.

A helper grabbed a shovel after two minutes and 47 seconds, but the magician escaped just in time, achieving the feat Houdini and several others have failed to do.

In a creepy but powerful moment, the credits started to roll as he got his breath back in pure silence, seemingly

[bringing an end to](#)

[Dynamo](#) with the star appearing to be reborn under his real name.

The British magician was buried alive without using a coffin. Fans

couldn't look away from

the scary scenes, 'I honestly thought he was gone, but my God that was scary. Then that's how it ended??? I need to know he's okay,'

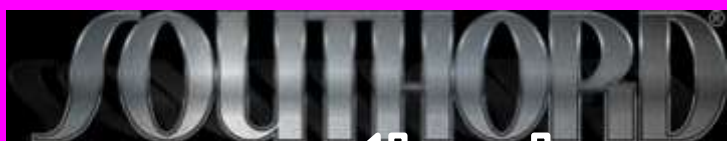
added a fan The special was a full circle moment for the magician himself, who has had an extremely tough four years, including intense battles with Crohn's disease and arthritis, as well as dealing with depression and grief.

'My nana and my dogs died in the same weekend just over a year ago. It crushed me,' he told metro.co.uk before the latest special aired. 'My mum had me really young, and my nana was my second mum. When she died, I felt like the magic in me died with her. I felt like I didn't have a reason to live.'

He has 'put Dynamo to rest' (Picture: SkyTV/Instagram)

In the programme, he revealed he wanted to 'bury his past' and be 'reborn', and did just that at the burial site underneath the Angel of the North statue.

In the show, he explained the decision not to use a coffin, pointing out: 'If a magician's in a box, people assume it's a trick box.'



[www.southord.com](http://www.southord.com)







In the build-up to the burial, there was plenty of pre-recorded footage of Dynamo meeting various celebrities to chat about mental health while he left them gobsmacked with close-up illusions.

From Tyson Fury, Pete Davidson, Demi Lovato and Coldplay to Cara Delevingne, Kate

Beckinsale, Tony Hawk and Bugzy Malone, they were all stunned by his skills while opening up on very a very serious topic. His experiences mean the Dynamo fans saw on the show was different, as he felt that a rebrand was necessary to reflect who he is today.

‘I didn’t feel like continuing as I was before because I’m not that same person anymore,’ he explained to **Metro.co.uk**.

‘Maybe it’s time to put Dynamo to rest with nana and move forward to something new.’

***Dynamo is Dead is available to stream on NOW in the UK.***



# Six Time Fooler!

On Friday, December 22, 2023 the CW network aired Penn and Teller Fool Us Season 10 episode 7.

On this episode, our dear friend Helen Coghlan became the first person in history to fool Penn and Teller six times.



Helen did not do an escape this time, but rather an incredible piece of magic. If I told you she put a large needle through the hole in a phonograph record, that would not be impressive, but that is not what Helen did. Helen took a phonograph record and slid it into a frame with the needle already through the frame. When she opened the frame, the needle was somehow through the hole of the record.

Once that was done she pulled it out and gave it to Brook Burke to bring to Penn and Teller. Penn checked to see if the needle could come into pieces, and it could not.

A well deserved tip of the hat to Helen Coghlan and her father Arthur who is the genius behind the designs of her work.



Joe Notoro · Houdini Historian

[HarryHoudiniCircumstantialEvidence.com](http://HarryHoudiniCircumstantialEvidence.com)

**"Wild about Harry"**  
**John Cox' Houdini web site**  
[www.wildabouthoudini.com](http://www.wildabouthoudini.com)







## When do I Publish?

So, some people have asked me when do I publish The Chainletter and how often. When I started the publication back in October 2010, I would publish, usually on the 1st of the month and pretty much every month. Of course, back then I had things going for me that I not longer can count on.

Consider that I got permission early on from

The late, great Norman Bigelow to publish his articles on various topics in escapes. That well bolstered the newsletter and lent it some class as Norman put his money where his mouth was and knew what he was talking about.

I had many years to draw on of many escape artists experience. This meant mini-biographies, reviews of escapes in the media, reviews of current and past shows as well as the occasional article about equipment and procedures.

Norman was prolific, but he passed on. The Magic Nook sold interesting stuff and gave good articles, but they too are gone.

My job was made much harder about 15 years ago when the “escape room” craze hit. Now I have to sift through the internet and try to screen out this topic that I do not care about.

Remember, the job of The Chainletter is to keep a permanent record of what is going on in the escape world.

This is where I need you. What are you working on? Is there a review of a show you did you can share? Photos? Did you read a book or see a movie with escapes in it? Let me know, I will write about it!



When do I publish? As often as I can.

A great tribute site to the amazing  
David De-Val



<http://www.davidge-val.com/>

**Have the lads at  
Guinness turned down  
your world record?**

**Online World Records  
can help...**

**Contact Fenyx Fyre  
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