

The Chainletter

An e-newsletter by and for the escape community

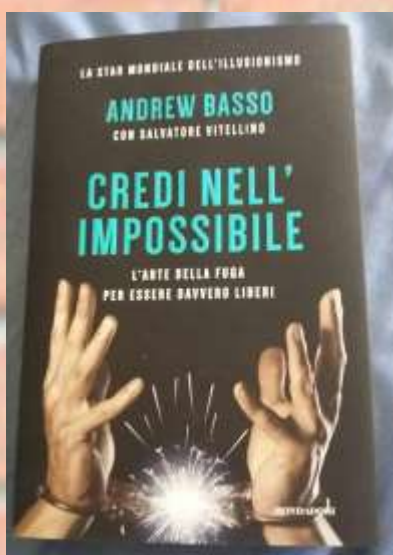
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Andrew Basso



Read all about it!

This month's Chains...

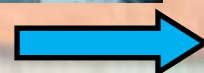
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What could go wrong?

From Tony Chapparo

In October 2005 I was practicing my timing of my 55 gallon drum escape with my Wife as she had never assisted me before. The drum was filled with water, I was shackled with leg irons and handcuffs and my Wife locked me in the drum. I had built the escape myself and was OVER confident in my design so I had not warned my wife of what to do if I did not escape within a pre-set time limit. Well, I escaped from the cuffs and leg irons quickly and then it happened... my own design FAILED and I was there in the locked drum with no way out thinking about how I had not warned my Wife, this was the dumbest thing I have ever done! .



I started to pound on the drum and stupidly once again actually yelled! I lost some precious air and time that I did not have to spare. I used to hear about how your life passes before your eyes right before you die or believe you are going to, well what actually

passed through my head was my poor Wife pulling my dead body from the drum calling the paramedics



and having to inform my parents and Children that Daddy was dead because he was arrogant! The one saving grace was that I had done my pre-escape two to three months of breath training with a lung expander device and daily breath holding sessions starting at 2:00 minutes and building to 4:00 to 5:00 minute holds.



**WARNING
TROUBLE
AHEAD**

My Wife initially thought that I was just playing it up, but after a good 4

minutes she ran to the drum and unlocked the padlocks and pulled me out just as I passed out, saving my life. I was able to fix the flaw and perform the escape the next night on Halloween 2005, and the most amazing thing is that my Wife still assisted me! Only this time she was aware of a strict time line and to listen carefully for a "I am in trouble" Knock from inside the drum! I also installed a rubber plug on the bottom of the drum that can be pulled, draining the drum, in case of emergency from the inside.



"Wild about Harry"
John Cox' Houdini web site
www.wildabouthoudini.com



Dick Osland Rest in Peace

According to Harley Newman, Dick Osland passed away in early December.

Dick was a long time contributor to the "all tied up" section of the magic café. His insights and real world experience were appreciated by many.

He had not worked in escapes for a while, but he used to, and he was always will to share his experiences with anyone.

Rest in Peace...



A great tribute site to the amazing
David De-Val



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

The Magic Nook
www.magicnook.com

"Do-It-Yourself" Magic for
"Built-It-Myself" Magicians



Do you want to join the only recognized club in the UK for escape artists?

Established in 2004 Many Guinness World Records held between the members.

Several members are Members of The Magic Circle and Equity.



Members have included Pete McCahon and Mick Hanzlik, Life Time members include Nick Janson and Alex Nichols. Some of our recent escapes have included:

Escape from the condemned cell at York - Dan Robinson, Escape from Peterhead Prison Cell under test conditions - Andy Robertson. Escape from Ripon Police Cell under test conditions – Riley, Modern Transport cell escape by Tm Houlton.



We can also offer Health and Safety Advice and carry out a Risk Assessment for TV or Corporate events.

Join us in Northampton on Saturday 14th March for our annual meeting, take part in the Mick Hanzlik award, listen to lectures and watch some amazing demos.

Mail us now members@theukea.co.uk

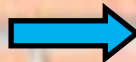


A UKEA Interview With Allan Taylor

For our regular readers you will know that we have been reporting on the U.K.E.A (United Kingdom Escape Artists) for several years now and with escapology in the spotlight recently – especially on Britain's Got Talent - we thought we'd better get our act together and find out what's really going on in the world of escapes. We chatted with Allan Taylor from De-Val Magic and Escapology, newly elected chair of the U.K.E.A Firstly, congratulations on your new position! Can you let us know a little more about the group and how to become a member?



First of all, we have a wide range of members, from those that are very academic, focusing on the history of the art itself, through novice / semi-professional performers who are keeping the art form alive, to full time escapologists and members of a number of trade and professional bodies, including Equity and UK Theatre.



This site is well worth the time to study if you want to learn about lock picking
www.lockpickguide.com

Begging Box!

Your input
is our output!

This is the part of The Chainletter where the editor begs for you to give him some material to publish. No idea what to write?



Well, How about...

- ♦ Your first escape.
- ♦ How did you learn to escape?
- ♦ Your creative process.
- ♦ Your last escape.
- ♦ Who is your hero? Why?
- ♦ What makes a good escape.
- ♦ Your escape bio.
- ♦ An escape you saw on TV.
- ♦ An escape you saw live.
- ♦ Anything escape related.



If you are interested in occult escapology, you want S. Rob!
<https://www.srob.co.uk/>

"Without a key"
For all your lockpicking needs
www.withoutakey.co.uk

Each member has his or her own take on Escapology and approaches the art from their own point of view, from lecturing on it through to side show and street performances to world record attempts and larger shows. As a result our members have set over twenty world records in various categories, not just pure escapes.

I mention all of this to show how diverse the background of the membership is, so coming from a magical point of view is not a handicap at all, quite the reverse.

To join, recruits need to send an email to members@theukea.co.uk, we do require each applicant to demonstrate one of more of the following, that they are currently part of a recognized magic association, a full time or retired performer, an author, someone who has an academic interest in the art or someone who has been recommended by a current member. We will send out an application form along with our important Code of Ethics.

The first part of the membership will be access to our private Facebook group, from here members will have access to our group chats, documents, photos and videos. To apply for full membership is a cost of £20 per year and this will give



access to our annual meeting(s) that is full of lectures demos and competitions.



Now, every year you have an Award for the best escapology routine – which is named after the late Mick Hanzlik, who created some sensational effects. What was your connection to Mick? ‘

We knew Mick for many years through our connection with the U.K.E.A and we became great friends. Mick was also a friend of my wife’s late father David De-Val,’ says Allan, ‘Mick supplied David with a lock back in 1984 when he performed his rollercoaster escape at Blackpool pleasure beach, a lock that Mick kindly passed onto my wife Rebecca.

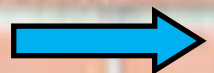
‘ Tell us about this year’s award. ‘

The Award is named after Houdini historian and Master

Locksmith Mick Hanzlik and is presented for the “Best Escape” of the day as voted for by all members of the U.K.E.A. ‘As a previous



winner I understand how much this award means to the escapology community and trust me when I say the competition is getting hard. Everybody wants



**Have the lads at
Guinness turned down
your world record?
Online World Records
can help...
Contact Fenyx Fyre
info@fenyxfyre.ca**

to win the coveted Hanzlik award. This year, the award was won by Tim Houlton from Hull. Tim came up with an unusual escape and possibly the first of its kind anywhere in the world.' Tim combined his love of motorcycles and escapology. The escape comprised of getting secured into a straitjacket, and then as if this wasn't hard enough, he then put on a pair of full body motorcycle leathers, with the straps from the straitjacket being inserted through the arms of the leathers. Motorcycle helmet and full boots were also worn. Says Allan, 'This was surely enough to secure Tim! After around 5 minutes of wrestling with the suit and straitjacket and even throwing



in some comedy air guitar, Tim much to our amazement managed to escape

successfully. A very well deserved winner!'

Allan speaks about Mick with obvious affection, continuing,

'Mick had a lot of great effects and his most famous is probably the Supalok. However, it was his research into the Houdini Mirror Cuffs that really amazed me. This was something we spoke about with David Copperfield last year when we were lucky enough to be invited to David's International Museum and Library of the Conjuring Arts.'



So what have the U.K.E.A been up to recently?

It's been a busy time since my promotion to chair but our largest event was a modern day transport cell escape, performed by Tim Houlton (full article in next month's Chainletter) we are also underway with the planning for our next Annual meeting in March,



There were one or two escapologists on BGT this time... Jonathan Goodwin etc., what did you make of it?

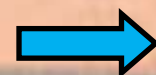
I loved it, we have obviously seen a rise in Magicians over the last few years but it's



great to see some real escapologists on TV, Matt Johnson did an amazing job last year with some of his

underwater stunts, Matt is one of the hardest working people I know and is now working with the Illusionists tour.

Jonathan Goodwin also did an amazing job and I was shocked that he didn't get through to the final 3, his take on the water torture cell \ buried alive was amazing and deserved to go further. Jonathan is also part of the Illusionists and is part of the London show.



What is the state of escapology at the moment?

Here in the UK it's absolutely buzzing, BGT has obviously done it well and here at the UKEA (United Kingdom Escape Artists) we are getting more and more people reaching out to us to find out how they can join or how they can start up in escapology. We are also getting asked for more and more escapology products at De-Val magic so we have just brought out a range of padlocks, handcuffs and straitjackets. We are also seeing more TV coverage,.



Can you see a time when there's a BGT/AGT world star of escapology?



I think the inclusion of Matt Johnson and Jonathan Goodwin being part of the global illusionist shows definitely proves that we have stars of Escapology,

however I would like to see a full Escapology show on tour, I think once that happens and only then will we have the world star.

Which escapologists have been the most inspirational/memorable for you?

My wife's late father David De-Val has had the greatest impact on me but I can't possibly leave Houdini and his Brother



Theo Hardeen out – they are the ones who have probably inspired most escapologists out there more than anyone else.

Your all-time fav escape routine was by...?



Wow that is a tough one, an American escape artist called Norman Bigelow performed "The Doors of Death" very dangerous indeed, but for the sheer skill then I would say the York Cell escape

performed by David De-Val, something that the great Houdini refused.

David was challenged to escape from the condemned cell in the Debtors prison. The cell walls are six feet thick and the tiny windows are securely barred. Under the skeptical scrutiny of the press, David allowed the steel waist band to be locked tightly on



him. Then his wrists were locked on each side of the waist band. His ankles were secured in

heavy leg irons and finally a short chain was locked at one end to the waist band and to a ring attached to the wall at the other end.

Security guards checked both ends of the passage where the cell door was. No-one was allowed to open the door from the outside.

Five minutes or so after the cell door had been slammed shut there was a cry from the press of 'He's out!' Not only was David out of the shackles and the cell, but he had already escaped from the prison and was found fully dressed in his street clothes (but these were locked in the cell adjoining the condemned cell)! They found David some three hundred yards away from the prison, drinking a pint of milk. The press fired questions -Was a double of David used? Was a confederate involved? Was there a tunnel between the condemned cell and Clifford's tower, where David was found? These were the questions and a little thought showed them to be very wide off the mark. How did David do it? That's a good question isn't it?

Thanks to All and remember if you are from the UK and are interested in joining the U.K.E.A then send a mail to members@theukea.co.uk

