

# THE CHAINLETTER

AN E-NEWSLETTER BY AND FOR THE  
ESCAPE COMMUNITY

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## Ready for the Convention?

It is really happening! The first GEO convention is well into the planning stages. This should be a wonderfully exciting time in

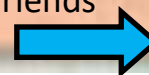
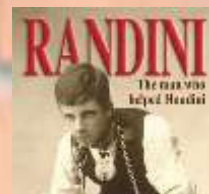


Sheffield at the National Emergency Services Museum. We haven't had a real Escape Artist convention since the

Cannon's last on in 2009, so I'd say people are hungry for this event. What will the Convention feature? Lots of exciting events. There will be a Handcuff escape contest. There will be a straitjacket escape event as well. Who will be the fastest at escaping handcuffs, and who will do the most exciting straitjacket escape?

We have lectures set up!

Author Ann Beedham has published a remarkable piece of Houdiniana, *Randini - The Man who helped Houdini*. This fully illustrated 236 page book reveals "the untold story of Randolph Douglas," a Houdini fan living in the UK who created his own escapes and eventually become friends with Houdini himself.



### This month's Chains...

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Devin has worked in theatre and television since 1989. His technical journey has encompassed stage management, carpentry, rigging, automation and production management. He has toured internationally delivering shows in more than 400 venues across six continents. He was Technical Director for the show "The Illusionists" from 2011 to 2018, handling 70 different magicians and escape artists, providing health and safety oversight for some of the most dangerous acts in magic, including Andrew Basso's full view water torture cell.



Our third guest speaker, will be Chris Gower. Master Locksmith, Houdini Historian and Handcuff expert.

Chris Gower will be joining us to talk about Houdini and his challenge that was set by The

Daily Mirror Newspaper in 1904, to free himself from a pair of handcuffs with a supposedly unpickable lock.

Stuart Burrell is a world record breaking Escapologist, Published author, an award winning performer, one of the longest serving members of the United Kingdom Escape Artists and a member of the Magic Circle in London. Stuart will be presenting a lecture titled, "Escape before Houdini." It will cover some of the more 'real world' escapes that took place before Houdini's day and led/ inspired some of his marketing.



David "Coxy" Cox



Short fat, hobbit like creature that is obsessed with puzzles. (Dave's own words) Got into locks via locksport and literally fell in love with the mechanisms. Discovered the additional challenge of handcuffs and then started to try to escape from them. From bench to stage in 2 years Coxy managed to acquire a handful of online records and a couple of Guinness records as well. An engineer by trade, but a professional idiot as a hobby. Coxy will take us on a journey into gimmicked handcuffs and padlocks.



**How fast can  
you escape from  
a pair of handcuffs?**

**Come to the  
Global Escapology Organisation Convention  
and find out.**

**Will you be crowned the GEO handcuff king/queen?**  
It is time to show the world YOU are the handcuff king!  
Join the competition at [competition@the-geo.com](mailto:competition@the-geo.com) and win the title!

**Tickets on sale now!**

Remember, there are only 40 available...

**Deposit <https://bit.ly/3TloZwk>**

**Full Ticket <https://bit.ly/3UHUpyc>**

**Day Ticket <https://bit.ly/3TmH0ul>**

**Bring your straitjacket  
and be prepared  
to show off!**





# Handcuff Challenge

from Dave Cox

There is a challenge to anyone in Canada that has been made by a new cuff manufacturer. They have implemented a new design regarding over pressure and basically want people to test it. I am trying to source one. <https://hulkkuffs.com/challenge/>

Hulkkuffs® is organizing the Handcuffs Picking Competition.

Enthusiasts from all walks of life are invited to attend.

The competition will take place in Ottawa, the capital city of Canada.

A detailed schedule will be forward to each participant after the registration is completed. Don't hesitate to participate: to show off your skills and talents, or just to have fun with friends.

What you get in return for your registration

If you attend the competition event in Ottawa in person, you will get:

- 1), a souvenir: a CNC machined aluminum souvenir medal.
- 2), a pair of modernized handcuffs: (a latest vision, fully functional police handcuffs).
- 3), the final winner: an unique winner's medal and a grand prize **10,000 (Canadian dollars) in cash.**



# Flashback

## Magic Babe Ning

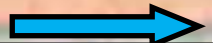
### Female Magician's Controversial Escape Stunt Teases World Record Illusion Act

WEBWIRE – Thursday, June 25, 2009

Singapore - On 21 Jun 2009, Singapore's only professional female magician & escape artist, 'Magic Babe' Ning successfully pulled off a legitimately dangerous escape act called "Inversion", an extreme one-off version of her signature "Straight Jacket Striptease" act which she candidly describes as "Harry Houdini meets the Pussy Cat Dolls".

The stunt saw "the sexiest women in magic" (MagicSeen) escape from a straight jacket while blindfolded, suspended upside down by her ankles high above the ground over a bed of steel spikes.

What made the escape unique was the fact that she did not be use any kind of safety device. Any mistake could have lead to a fatal fall onto the spikes. The choice of not using a safety line in the escape drew concern and criticism from friends, family, clients and peers from across the world.



Joe Notoro - Houdini Historian

HarryHoudiniCircumstantialEvidence.com



"Wild about Harry"

John Cox' Houdini web site

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



Hundreds of anxious onlookers, fans, supporters and media filled the Central gallery (mall) to witness the extreme stunt.

For exclusive behind the scenes photos and videos of "Inversion", visit [www.jcsum.com/inversion.html](http://www.jcsum.com/inversion.html)

This escape stunt was a promotional teaser to the closing highlight of the Singapore River Festival 2009 that 'Magic Babe' Ning and partner, J C Sum, are helming this Saturday, 27 Jun 2009.

Entitled "The Impossible Record", the magic duo is attempting to set a world record for "most number of grand illusions in 5 minutes" on 27 Jun 2009, 9.30pm at the Central Promenade by the Singapore River. They will be attempting a record-setting 15 grand illusions in 5 minutes.

The attempt will be officiated by the Singapore Book of Records and the International Brotherhood of Magicians (Singapore & U.S.A). The record is also being submitted to Guinness World Records.

"The Impossible Record" has garnered wide mainstream interest from both the public and media. Multiple media outlets throughout the region have reported on the event and will be

covering the feat. International magic news websites have also reported on the event over the weeks. MagicSeen, U.K's largest magic magazine, will also be flying down to cover the act as well.



For a full list of media features, video and more info, visit: [www.jcsum.com/record.html](http://www.jcsum.com/record.html)

### About The Illusionists

In recent years, J C Sum & 'Magic Babe' Ning have cemented themselves as Singapore's celebrity magic duo. Channel News Asia highlighted that they represent "The New Faces of an Age-Old Art Form".

Millions across Asia have seen their performances in live shows, high profile mega events and on television.

The duo currently stars in "Ultimate Magic" at The Arena in Clarke Quay, Singapore's only

magic tourist attraction endorsed by the Singapore Tourism Board. Info on tickets & promotions is available

[www.ultimatemagic.sg](http://www.ultimatemagic.sg)



**The Magic Nook**  
[www.magienook.com](http://www.magienook.com)

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



A great tribute site to the amazing  
David De-Val



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





## Escape in the Media!

I found an interesting YouTube channel while I was scrolling, it is called Femmeescape. I don't know about the spelling, but it does claim to be a clearing house for videos of female escape artists. You can find it here.

<https://www.youtube.com/@femmeescape/videos>

This website seems to be Asian in origin, and many of the videos are of Asian women doing the escaping. The videos are in one of the Asian languages as well. There are a few exceptions, Melinda is here with her drill of death. Is that an escape or an illusion?

Several of the escapes seem a bit amateurish. An example is a woman wearing a straitjacket walking into a swimming pool and getting out with her head out of the water nearly the whole time. There are a few diamonds in the rough though. Some of the women are quite professional. Magic Babe Ning escapes from chains by picking locks with a paper clip in front of a live audience.



Many of the friends of The Chainletter seem to be missing from this website, but maybe that will change one day.



**This site is well worth the time to study if you want to learn about lock picking**  
[www.lockpickguide.com](http://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](http://www.withoutakey.co.uk)



# Cuff Linked from Jim Gerrish

Here is a cool little bit of business for an escape artist who wants a quick but meaningful escape to make the audience scratch their heads. It is based on a bit done by Harry Anderson years ago, and it involves a pair of handcuffs that you will have home gimmicked. There is a link to where you can purchase Harry's routine on video. The work to be done is pretty easy and with just a bit of misdirection, the audience will never know the secret. There are a number of ways to end this, but the basic set up is that the magician is handcuffed to a volunteer and then gets free.



Included is an exciting ball and chain description as well as a rope handcuff business that you can easily self create at home.



Routines are included here and I think this is one of the most densely packed and valuable articles at the

magic nook. Check it out and see what you might make and do with it. Remember the Magic Nook caters to "Build it yourself" types of magicians. A good price saver and some very nicer routines.

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

Wizards Journal #43-03



# Escape Artist Calendar

Your editor is hard at work on the 2023 escape artist calendar. Did you want to be part of it? All you need to do is send me your name, birth month and birth date. Do not send the year. I have no need of it, nor do I want to know your age. Include a nice clear photo of yourself, preferably in an escape situation and showing your face. If you have other things you think would be good to include on an escape artist calendar, let me know and send that along as well. Houdini's birthday? Sure. Houdini's day of death? Sadly. Are there other famous escape artists who should be included? How about some world records? Tell the record and the date you achieved it, that can go in too.

I have no plan to profiteer This is not a calendar I plan to sell. Rather it is going to be available to T.I.E.S. members and other escapologist types of people free of charge and ready to download and print. How high quality you print? That is up to you.



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



# Next Generation

Our Canadian friend Chris Campbell has just taken a huge step in the direction of teaching and training our next generation of escapologists. Meet Kyle!

*Kyle is a 15 year old that saw my show first in 2019. He has been a regular fan since then. It is always a pleasure to see him in the audience. He took my introduction to Escapology at Something Strange Sideshow School with his dad. He was a natural and soaked up the knowledge. After class he reached out for further lessons. During the conversation I asked his parents and him if he would like to join my next show and do an Online World Record and he was happy to do so. During the show he successfully escaped 8 Friction Buckles on a Posey Style straitjacket in the time of 57.58 seconds.*

*Kyle is wanting to further learn a mix of sideshow and Escapology. It is nice to see his commitment and his parents commitment to his learning.*



Chris gifted Kyle with the straitjacket so he can continue to study and improve his escapes!



**Wait, you haven't signed up for the Geo Convention yet? Well, scroll back up to page two and sign up now!**