



# Shell Game

A Monthly Newsletter for the London Magic Community  
January 2015  
Volume 10, Issue 5

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## December's meeting

"*Rope magic*" was on the bill for the December meeting. But first up was a performance from **Matthew Stafford** trying to become a member.

His first affect was "What's Next", where dots kept appearing in a number of arrangements on a card. Next up was a fine *sponge bunnies* effect, followed by "Healed and Sealed" – where a Coke can comes back to life! He presented a nice iPhone effect called "Doodle" where he predicted what dollar bill a spectator pulled from their wallet. And he ended his performance with a terrific *3-Card Monte*. The votes were unanimous – Congratulations to Matthew, on being our newest member!

It was time for magic with ropes – and Mark Hogan was up to present his *Ring & Rope* routine as a fairy tale where 3 magicians sought the hand of a fair princess.

**Peter Mennie** showed us an effect he came up with where cutting the bottom of the rope with his figures caused the top part of the rope to fall – twice! He also did the one-handed knot using a skipping rope, then cut the rope at various points and moved the cut to different parts of the rope! He then performed "*Professor's Nightmare*" but with two variations – the initial display and change to 3 equal-length ropes being done between the fingers, and ending with one long rope at the end!

**Mike Fisher** brought in his latest find – a beautiful "*Dean's box*" – and showed us his routine – a Christmas gift with red and blue ribbon (actually

### Next Meeting:

Wednesday, January 14

Time: 7:30 PM

Topic: **ANYTHING GOES!**

**Beal Secondary School  
525 Dundas Street, London  
T-253**

rope!) linked together inside the box – and then unlinked – and then penetrated the box! He also performed his *Rope Tie escape* where he escaped from having his hands tied behind his back – and found a new way to end the effect by putting on his jacket!

And **Paul French** was on hand to show a very cool origami effect where a card turns inside out while being held by the spectator! We all made one before we left!

Thanks to everyone who came out and shared their effect and ideas on rope magic!

Mark Hogan

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## December's Meeting

**DATE: Wednesday, January 14**

**TIME: 7:30 PM**

**PLACE: Beal Secondary School  
T-253**

## TOPIC: ANYTHING GOES

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Maybe you got some new magical stuff for Christmas. Maybe you've been working on something and want some help or critique. Or maybe you just want to show of your favourite stuff.

This month – anything goes. Just bring in something to share. It's that simple!

Hope to see you on January 14!

**We Want Your Reviews and Tricks!**

Please send any original reviews, magic tricks or routines to:

[magic\\_london@yahoo.ca](mailto:magic_london@yahoo.ca)

## News Of Interest



### Murray Sawchuk astounds at Sin City Theatre

(Las Vegas Sun)

It might be the closest an audience has ever sat at a magic show. Certainly the closest when it comes to a magician squeezing his gorgeous wife into a box before vanishing her.

Magician **Murray Sawchuk** is just inches from the front-row audience along the stage of *Sin City Theater* in *Planet Hollywood* when he helps his "Fantasy" dancer wife into the magic box. Chloe's hand is the only thing left hanging outside the apparatus as Murray pushes objects in, making it impossible for her to become a contortionist around them.

Then the coup de grace when he pushes one half of the box completely away from the other half to hang outside the frame. It's impossible. It can't be true. Your eyes are playing tricks. However he pulls off the impractical is a miracle in itself, but it really becomes genius being done so close to the audience they could reach out and touch her still-wiggling hand.

"It's what I wanted to create," said Murray. "The most intimate magic show. It seems inches from their faces because this new stage is higher than my old one. But it's really neat for me to see the audience faces as Chloe goes from being imprisoned in half and then vanished.

We're so close I can hear their intake of breath and disbelief. That's so neat. I can hear them whispering through their open mouths, 'How did he do that?'" Those reactions are what makes doing magic such a joy."

**Chloe** and **Murray** have been married three years, and they held their new show red carpet opening Sunday so that both sets of their parents, **John and Arlene Sawchuk** from Canada and **Jim and Jane Sutherland** from England, could see the debut show in its new Planet Hollywood home.

"It was a nice family thing, a real highlight, to pull off for the holidays," he told me. "Even after 30 years of doing magic, I'm still trying to impress my parents. All of us being on the red carpet together made it worthwhile. Mom and Dad are very critical about what I do, but they gave me a thumbs up for this new show."

Murray has been in Las Vegas for more than a decade and for the last three years was a resident at *Laugh Factory* in the Tropicana. His new home

with a wider and larger stage, curtains, new lighting and new music has brought welcome changes to his 4 p.m. daily attraction.

"I can now have Chloe and my magical assistant Lefty onstage to help with the tricks. They are now in the opening, and we quickly follow with a Houdini handcuff's effect. I vanish, while handcuffed, an audience watch and an audience wedding ring. They turn up on Chloe's finger and Lefty's wrist while I'm still handcuffed," he explained.

"I aimed to make this a family show — good for everybody from a 5-year-old son to an 85-year-old grandmother. I write some of my own comedy, which explains why it's corny, but kids of all ages can laugh."

I asked Murray if he was going into direct competition against day magician Mac King. "We have so many magicians in Las Vegas with shows, we're all competing and although Mac and I both want the family audience, we're not in direct competition, and I have the greatest of respect for him. Nothing is different on that score than it was before with the audience at the Tropicana.

"I'm not about to take on **Criss Angel** or **David Copperfield**, which is why I wanted far more of a cabaret room than a big theater. Of course my dream show would be where I could vanish a monster truck or the steam train I did on 'America's Got Talent.' I just can't get the locomotive up the escalators and through the door yet!

Vanishing the 1918 all-steel, 12-feet high, 24-feet long steam train was the largest trick ever performed on "America's Got Talent." Here's the YouTube video of his appearance on Season 5 in September 2010.

He also dazzled with a transposition illusion where his assistant in a clear chamber wearing judge Piers Morgan's jacket turned into a 450-pound Siberian tiger as she wound up alongside **Howie Mandel** at the judges desk.

"I'm doing the best show that can be done in the space available," said Murray, who turns up regularly on "*Pawn Stars*" as a magic expert and weekly on the new *Reelz TV* series "*Extreme Escape*."

"Having been on 20 reality-TV shows now, I know we have to entertain a reality-TV world generation. So I've been able to add in reality-TV show tricks I'm known for on TV into the live show. I really love that I can go right into the audience handcuffed and perform impossible magic."

## Queen's Service Award goes to a magician

(ONE News)

A lifelong dedication to promoting and practising the art of magic has earned an Auckland man the first ever *Queen's Service Medal* awarded for services as a magician.

**Alan Watson** was introduced to magic at age seven and started out performing tricks for charity at hospitals and retirement homes, before spending decades as a commercial entertainer.

"I was really thrilled for the magicians in New Zealand because it meant our art form was being recognized with a royal honour," Mr Watson said of his surprise award.

A member of the *International Brotherhood of Magicians* for more than 33 years, he has organized over a hundred international lectures on the art of magician, and in the past decade has arranged \$70,000 of sponsorship for young Kiwi magicians to learn their craft

"I have a great love for it, in fact for me it's not a job, it's my hobby - I'm working in people's good times," he says.

"There's been a lot of changes, it's like every art form, you have to keep reinventing myself [and] I've done that many times over the years."

Watson's citation praises him for raising New Zealand's profile in magic circles through his weekly online publication, "*Magic New Zealand*", which has more than 17,000 readers. He admits he's in awe of the new generation of TV magicians and believes they've helped revive the art.

"They're inspiring, they're great, I love seeing them come to New Zealand because it inspires our younger magicians, gives them an opportunity to actually meet them first hand and talk to them", he says.

"Quite often I've even managed to get them do lectures and that's helped inspire and lift the standard of New Zealand magic."

# Magic on TV in January

(Magic Times)

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| ★Jan 7:  | <b>NEW!</b> American Horror Story: Magical Thinking on FX.         |
| ★Jan 7:  | <b>NEW!</b> Penn & Teller: Fool Us: Penn Gets Nailed on CW.        |
| ★Jan 7:  | Fairy Tale: A True Story on STARZ.                                 |
| ★Jan 8:  | <b>NEW!</b> Pawn Stars: Hiding Houdini on HISTORY.                 |
| ★Jan 8:  | <b>NEW!</b> The Carbonaro Effect: 3 episodes on TRUE.              |
| ★Jan 9:  | <b>NEW!</b> Masters Of Illusion: Behind The Illusion on CW.        |
| ★Jan 10: | <b>NEW!</b> The Murdoch Mysteries: Houdini Whodunnit? on ABC.      |
| ★Jan 10: | <b>NEW!</b> The Carbonaro Effect: 2 episodes on TRUE.              |
| ★Jan 13: | <b>NEW!</b> Troy: Street Magic on SYFY.                            |
| ★Jan 23: | <b>NEW!</b> American Masters: Ricky Jay Deceptive Practice on PBS. |

## Shell Game Vol. 10, Issue 5 January 2015

Concept by: Steve Seguin

The Shell Game is a free newsletter sent to members of the London Magicians Guild and other people in the community interested in magic.

Opinions expressed do not reflect the views of the London Magicians Guild.

London Magicians Guild web site:  
[magiclondon.brinkster.net](http://magiclondon.brinkster.net)

London Magicians Guild e-mail:  
[magic\\_london@yahoo.ca](mailto:magic_london@yahoo.ca)