



# Society of Memphis Magicians

International Brotherhood of Magicians Ring 16  
February 2019 [www.ring16.com](http://www.ring16.com)



## A Few Words from the President

*Jeffrey Day - President*

### Buried Beneath The Ice / Harry Houdini

With these frigid temperatures that have gripped the South lately, it reminded me of how the escape artist, Harry Houdini, had to endure the cold while trying to keep his wits under water and try to survive the ice-cold waters of the North. Below is a telling of an escape story in Houdini's own words in a biographical article he wrote for Hearst's in 1919 called "Nearly Dying for a Living." Here the location is Pittsburgh and, interestingly, it's not a handcuffed bridge jump, but an overboard box escape, just like in the Tony Curtis movie. It's fascinating, and chilling, to hear the version as told by Houdini himself: Although there is no supporting evidence of his "frozen river escape", you must hand it to the "handcuff king", he had quite the imagination.

"My Battery predicament, however, wasn't quite as terrifying as a situation in which I found myself in Pittsburgh several years ago. During an engagement there it had been advertised that on a certain day I should be handcuffed and chained and placed in a box and dropped into the river from a bridge.

Nature was unkind, however, and when the day came the river had been frozen over to a depth of seven inches, which, as a matter of fact, wasn't surprising, as it was midwinter. But ice-water never has had any terrors for me, and a hole was cut in the ice just below the bridge and everybody, including a crowd of several thousand of persons, arrived on time.

With the handcuffs and chains in place, I was put into the trunk, with in turn was bound with ropes and chains.

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## Notes from the VP

*Bill Canaday—Vice President*

### Fellow Ring 16 Members:

It has been awhile since I recommended something in our articles for our Newsletter. I always like seeing reviews of tricks, routines, DVD'S, books, etc. Now I can mention a purchase of mine; John Bannon's Destination Zero. True, this has been out a while, and I know there are a lot of experienced sleight-of-hand Magicians and Mentalists in Ring 16 and there are Members like me as far as skill on sleights, moves, go. Mr. Bannon really does a great job in this book, and explains everything fully. There are quite a bit of routines in this book, and I am glad I got it. All of the routines are really good, and if you are a sleight-of-hand performer, or like myself and others, that really look for self-working routines that play well, then you may want to pick up a copy of this book. As a side note, I had some brief correspondence with Mr. Bannon, and he is really nice, and was helpful in helping me choose something for my skill level. He told me that he has been to Memphis, and enjoyed The Peabody with The Ducks. A book that I feel will find a good place in your collection. Hope to see you on Tuesday! ♦♣♥♠

### **RING 16 FEBRUARY MEETING**

**Tuesday February 5th - 7pm**

**Memphis Botanic Garden**

**Valentine Magic & Mentalism**

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Then the trunk was dropped into the river through the hole in the ice. The handcuffs and chains about my arms and legs and the bound trunk offered no more than the usual difficulties, but when I found myself free of them all I discovered that I had drifted with the current and when I attempted to rise my head bumped against the seven inches of ice. Fully conscious of the seriousness of the situation I looked about in the hope that a greater light might come through where the hole was and give me my directions. But there was no guiding light.

Then I knew that I must breathe. I was under the water longer than the allotted time. And breathing meant that I should drown and go on drifting for weeks and months. But as I had never before given up, I didn't give up then. Instead, I found an "air pocket" a space in which the ice seemed to curve upward, leaving an inch or more of room between the surface of the water and the ice above. I lay flat on my back, tight up against the ice, and breathed. Then I found that the water came in little intermittent waves and that by keeping my face close against the ice I could move about and get an occasional breath. I still held in my hands the handcuffs that I had removed from my wrists, and with these pressed against the ice I began a circular movement. And suddenly I bobbed up through the hole, and the men reached down and lifted me out onto the ice, wrapped me up and hurried me to my hotel.

The crowd that had come to see me and my assistants believed that I had been drowned and, although I didn't hear it, they say that a mighty cheer went up when I appeared."



Houdini – Fox River Bridge Jump (Appleton, WI)

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January was the time again for us to collect the Ring 16 Annual Dues.

### January 8th Business Meeting—Kathy Kalagias

The January meeting of Ring 16 was well attended. Jeff Day, President, discussed the importance of membership. How to maintain your membership with the IBM, and how to build membership. Jeff Day has been in the process of putting together some brochures for us to give our guests. Putting on public shows by Ring 16 was also mentioned and we will be discussing those more in the upcoming meetings. Bill Canaday, Vice President, discussed future lectures. Larry Dufrene, Treasurer, presented his financial report.

Last month had many of our Ring 16 members performing magic at various events around the Mid-South. Doug Green did some strolling magic at the Magic of Memphis show by the Memphis Symphony Orchestra with Magician Lyn Dillies. Rocky Yarbrough and Joey Butler both performed at Christmas parties. Railgarten is a bar and diner that has a volleyball court, ping pong, several stages had several Magic Brunch events during the month of December. Several Memphis magicians performed including Grayson Smith, Mike Speros, Larry Clark, Jeff Day, and John Campbell. Grayson could also be seen performing at the VA Hospital. Jeff and Grayson performed at several events together including a wedding at the Peabody Hotel, and a breakfast with Santa.

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In addition to performing magic, Jeff Day performed a Victorian style magic show at A Victorian Holiday with Opera Memphis held at the Dixon Gallery. Kathy Kalagias assisted during several of Jeff's performances. Michael Clayton performed at LeMoyne-Owen College.

Magicians have been in the news a lot lately including Memphis Magicians. Jeff Day was in Storyboard Memphis, The Daily Memphian, and is also in the January issue of Vanish Magazine. There was also a great article about Larry Hass in Memphis Magazine. Larry Hass is the Dean of McBride's Magic and Mystery School.

Grayson Smith went to see to see "Magical Life - an evening with Lawrence Hass." Upcoming Shows for this month include Bradley Fields at Bartlett Performing Arts Center on January 19. Also on the 19th and again on the 26th Jeffrey Day will be performing his one man show, "The Mesmerist" at the historic Woodruff-Fontaine House.

The theme for this month was "magic you received for the holidays". ♦♣♥♠



## JANUARY MEETING MAGIC PHOTOS

*Grayson Smith & Larry DuFrene*

