

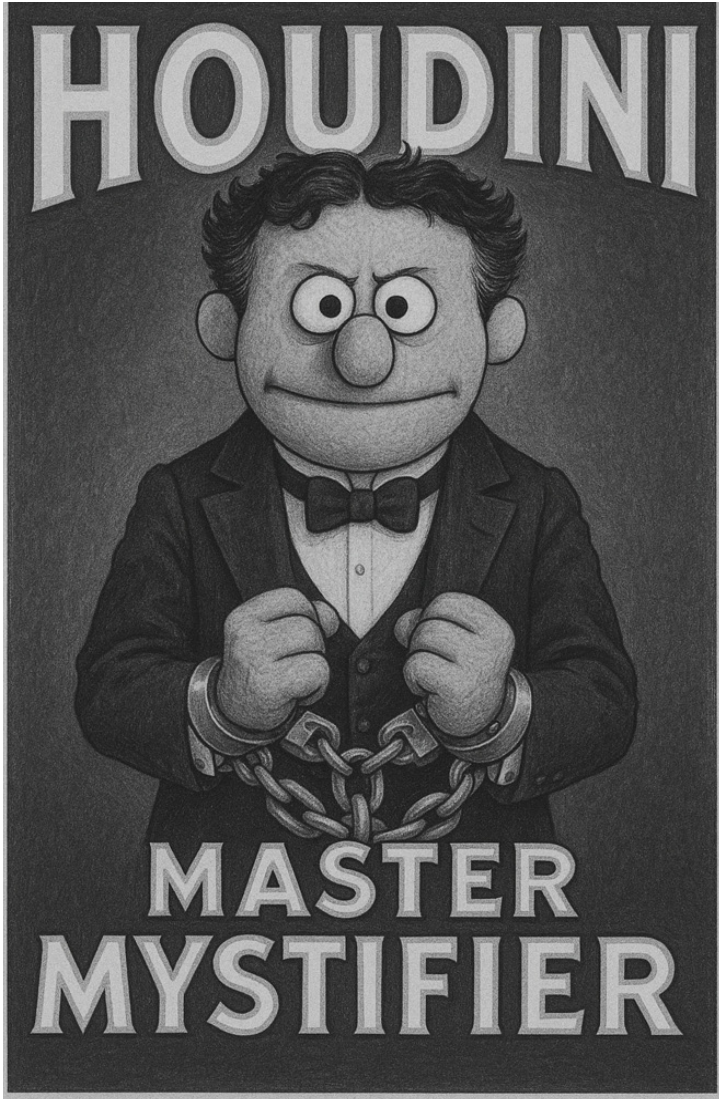
THE SALT CITY MAGIC CLUB

# Wandogram



"Harris A. Solomon Ring" IBM #74 Syracuse N.Y.

October  
2025





*Harris Solomon*

**A monthly newsletter of the  
Harris A. Solomon Ring #74  
International Brotherhood of Magicians  
(*the Salt City Magic Club*)**

<b>President:</b>	<b>Ken Frehm</b>
<b>Vice President:</b>	<b>David MacBlane</b>
<b>Secretary:</b>	<b>Joey Hoffman</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Bruce Purdy</b>
<b>Sgt. At Arms:</b>	<b>Dave Hanselman</b>

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**IBM Ring #74 meets at 7:00pm  
the second Tuesday of every month virtually via Zoom,  
and  
the third Tuesday of every month IN PERSON**

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Please submit material for publication in the Wandogram to:

**wandogram@cnymagic.com**

or by Snail Mail:

**Bruce Purdy**

**P.O.Box 213**

**Cayuga NY 13034-0213**

Questions? Call (315) 256-9095

**Submission deadline:**

First Thursday of the month

# The origin of HALLOWEEN

By Bruce Purdy

***“From ghoulies and ghosties and long leggety beasties,  
and things that go bump in the night, Good Lord, deliver us”***

*a traditional Scottish children's prayer, dating back to from around 1800.*

The above often invoked during times like Halloween, which is associated with Samhain, (*pronounced SOW-in*) a Celtic festival where the boundary between the living and the dead was believed to be blurred.

Celebrations begin on the evening of 31 October, which is about halfway between the autumnal equinox and winter solstice.

Samhain was seen as a liminal time when the boundary between this world and the Otherworld could more easily be crossed. This meant the 'spirits' or 'fairies', could more easily come into our world

At Samhain, it was believed that the spirits needed to be appeased to ensure that the people and their livestock survived the winter. Offerings of food and drink would be left outside for the spirits, and portions of the crops might be left in the

ground for them.

It was first recorded in 16th century Scotland, that People went from house to house in costume or disguise, usually reciting songs or verses in exchange for food. It may have evolved from a tradition whereby people impersonated the souls of the dead, and received offerings on their behalf.

The ancient festival included people in masks or costumes representing these spirits and the modern custom of trick or treating may have come from this.

Playing pranks at Samhain is recorded in the Scottish Highlands as far back as 1736, and was also common in Ireland, which led to Samhain being nicknamed "Mischief Night" in some parts.

So when the youngsters come to your door asking for candy, (or supposedly they would perform a “trick” (prank), know that this has a long history behind it.

# Houdini

By *Bruce Purdy*

*As there are many books and a wealth of details regarding Houdini, this brief article will not attempt to cover every detail. The cover image is, again compliments of the Magician / AI artist Chris Meece*

October 31st is known, not just for Halloween, but also as the date of Harry Houdini's death. Houdini died on December 31st in 1926 - 100 years ago next year.

As many of you know, Erich Weiss aka Harry Houdini, was born in Budapest in 1874 before his family migrated to Appleton, Wisconsin, in the U.S.

Taking the name of the famous Magician Robert-Houdin, and adding an I to the end of Houdin (Believing that adding an 'I' meant "Like"), he took the name of Houdini. The "Harry" was a tribute to Harry Kellar.

As a young man, Harry attempted to perform as a Magician, and at one point billed himself as the "King of Cards." Magicians of the time felt that he was a competent, but not highly skilled sleight of hand artist.

As he wasn't able to make much headway in that craft, he turned his attention to experimenting with escapes.

Houdini first gained attention in Vaudeville as Harry "Handcuff" Houdini, challenging Police to keep him locked up. Later, adding Straight Jackets and underwater escapes, and even being buried alive.

Houdini Also became the President of the Society of American Magicians (SAM) from 1917, until his death in 1926. He took what had been a club in New York City, and organized it into a nationwide network of local clubs (assemblies) of Amateur and Professional Magicians. Everywhere he appeared across the country, he spoke about the SAM, and helped local Magicians organize local assemblies.

In addition to escapes, Houdini was a master of self-promotion.

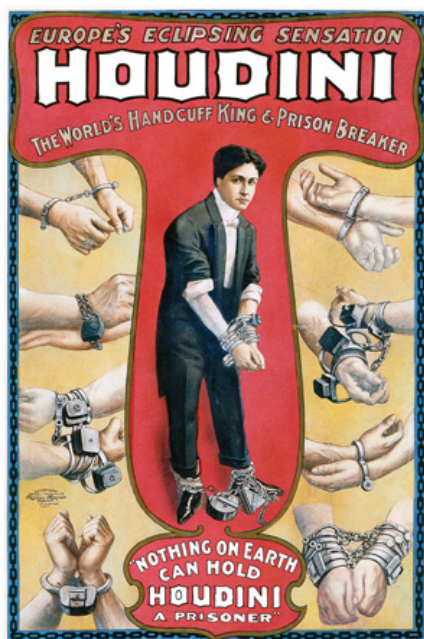
So much so, that today, his name is used as a synonym for escapes. “He pulled a Houdini.” And if you asked an average layman to name a Magician, they are most likely to name Houdini - even though he has been dead for almost 100 years!

Houdini is also commemorated in many ways, by Magicians. I’m aware of two different museums dedicated to his memory. One is in Appleton WI, where he lived with his family, and the other is in Scranton PA, run by Dorothy Dietrich and Dick Brookz. They, together with the SAM work to restore and preserve Houdini’s grave

in the Machpelah Cemetery in Queens NY

The largest collection of Houdini memorabilia, however, is in David Copperfield’s museum (Not open to the public) which he purchased from John Mulholland.

Every year, the Magic Castle holds a “Houdini Seance.” This commemorates ones held by Bess Houdini trying to contact her late husband. Houdini — a famous debunker of spiritualists — had given her a secret message — one his spirit would pass along to her IF it was possible, and the only way she would know that his spirit was actually contacted.





# Sparkles from the Wand of the Silver Wizard

**Kenneth Frehm**

Order of Merlin, Shield  
Life Member of Ring #74

**BOO!** Ahh, the time for witches, warlocks, and magicians is upon us. For some, this time of year is quite replete with shows and seasonal opportunities to entertain and perhaps make some money.

Not doing shows? Most of us may have the opportunity to mystify some of the goblins who show up and exclaim, “Trick or Treat?” My standard comeback is, “How about a trick AND a treat?” Of course, I invite the parents accompanying them to step in closer and take part in the fun. I use an empty Dove Pan and when they all yell, “Abracadabra” the pan becomes filled with candy!

Many of our Ring’s friends and families enjoyed our Summer BBQ and public show. Thanks to our dues paying members, we were able to provide hamburgers, hotdogs, sodas, and the necessary

grilling accoutrements. A big wave of the magic wands goes out to those of you who made this event successful. Special thanks to David Kilpatrick who rounded up the performers and MC’d the show. The wizards who did the acts received many kudos and applause from the gathered audience.

We appreciate our grill masters, David MacBlane and Chaz Featherstone as well as all who pitched in with helping hands. We really enjoyed the food, salads, and desserts that were donated. Thank you! The weather was a bit chilly and breezy. The wind made some effects from our stage a bit challenging. Cards and silks seemed to have a mind of their own as they flew off the performance tables.

Due to the inclement weather, we did not draw many folks from the park. However, we were in for a big, and pleasant surprise as a

large group from a local church showed up. As we had a lot of space in the pavilion, we invited them in. They gratefully served as a spectacular audience. There were about thirty youngsters and twice as many adults! It was a double win! We had a sizeable and very grateful audience, and they enjoyed a terrific show. Master performers included Jim Turner, David Kilpatrick, Joey Hoffman, David Sorenson and yours truly, Ken Frehm.

Our officers had a Zoom planning meeting during the month. We agreed upon a date for our holiday banquet. Please mark your calendars. We will be hosted by The Spaghetti Warehouse on Saturday January 10, 2026.

We will formally initiate officers and any new members.

Of course, there will be prizes, awards and a holiday show. Thanks go out to T.J. Yeldon who volunteered to be the chairman in charge of this event. Watch for future details.

Our Ring stands tall among the many who belong to The International Brotherhood of Magicians. We have two well-attended meetings every month. Our Zoom meeting is on the second Tuesday, and our In-Person is on the third Tuesday. The link for our E-Meeting is always the same and it appears in our website as well as in The Wandogram.

Have fun, enjoy the changing season and most importantly; “Do Magic.”

Abracadabra

Kenneth Frehm

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## Note:

In October (This month only) we will **NOT** be meeting on the third Tuesday as usual (the 21<sup>st</sup>), but rather on the 4<sup>th</sup> **Tuesday (28<sup>th</sup>)**.

Our meeting room was booked on our usual date, and the new date puts us closer to Halloween. Whilst not a requirement, see if you can come up with a Halloween themed or spooke Magic to perform.

OR perhaps, an escape , in honour of Houdini.

## **A New Deck of Cards ~ A Magical Experience ~ A Ritual for Card Entertainers**

*Written by: Ag Conjur*

**O**pening a deck of cards is truly a magical experience. A red deck? Or a blue one? Or perhaps another interesting design? Which one to choose? So many designs for the front and the backs. A clear plastic coating usually ensconces the entire deck and is the key to beginning this wonderful ritual.

Maybe you will find that the colored ribbon tears off easily. Maybe you'll need to employ some kind of instrument, perhaps your thumbnail, a knife, or other sharp tool. Carefully take off the cellophane. Now for your second minor challenge. Try to remove the sticky deck-stamp closure. Getting the glue off cleanly without leaving a residue is difficult at best. You might want to employ alcohol as a solvent (or as an adult beverage.

during this process. What about those pesky side flaps? Should you leave them in place? If you do, you will deal with them whenever you present the deck from its' case. Just tearing them off and eliminating them works

for some. Now look at, read, and discard the advertisement cards. Perhaps you can utilize them, or insert other ones and create your own special customized deck? You'll deal with the Jokers next. Do you leave them in or not?

Ah, at this point you have a virgin card deck ~ the fresh scent, so arousing, the chalk-white clean sides. Completed by their new inherent virgin-like stiffness and their total unawareness to what's ahead and especially, the pleasures they will bring. Their unwillingness to bend cries out to be tamed. Relieve them of this detriment. You need to work, break in and massage them a lot. This is your first major challenge.

Riffle, riffle again and then do it many times more! Do multiple shuffles and perform many Farro-type interweaves. Accomplished card men employ their own special personalized break-in routines. Will you? Now, cut, cut, cut! Keep bending this unblemished, untouched deck. Side to Side. Up and down. Don't forget, corner to corner. Make it

yours! Surely this takes time and patience. It is well worth it when you start performing with your new magic cardboard friends. This ritual will pay off. They will respond. They will get used to your hands as they nestle in and warm to your touch. Believe it or not, they are now actually anxious to do your bidding. Perfect for creating your own pasteboard miracles!

Perhaps one of the most mindboggling things you may come across is when the cards actually move by themselves! They may slide into new positions or fall off the table without any prompting from you, the wizard. No matter how they are released, or how they are set upon your close-up mat, they move! Do they really have a mind of their own? Is this deck mesmerized or haunted? Perhaps! All the better. Only if you can control and manage their behavior!

Some decks have their own inherent qualities. They might have different-sized borders, different widths, maybe different shapes? A one-way deck? Perhaps you're experimenting with a special deck? Shaved sides? Beveled? Maybe half-blank or will they contain a plethora of a

uniquely desired selection? Possibly double-sided? Could it be a "Forcing" deck? Will you employ a stack or a memorized order? Mr. or Ms. card person, there are so many special decks and set-ups available to you.

After your concentrated behind-the-scenes efforts, then and only then, can you put them to use. You will be calling upon your finger-flicking skills to perform amazing, mind-boggling miracles. You now have the skill, the ability, and the means to truly amaze your friends and family. You're armed. You will be able to perform a couple of short mind-benders or even have an entire show in your pocket.

What a special experience! What needs to be done now? What is your routine? Think about it and enjoy this special time with your newly warmed-up and personalized deck of pasteboards. Practice, practice and then practice again. Use your magical skills to produce happiness. Remember, "There is Magic in a Smile." Quote from George Becker ~ The world needs more smiles. You can do it. Now, go for it

# Magicians , Spirits & Halloween

*By*  
*Bruce Purdy*

**H**arry Houdini wrote “A Magician Among The Spirits” in 1924. In the book, he wrote about the Spiritualism movement, starting from 1848 and the Fox sisters, the Davenport brothers & Dr. Slade though to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle.

Although wishing to believe in communicating with spirits — **IF it could be proven**, — he led a campaign against the charlatans and phony mediums.

## Ghost Shows

Midnight Ghost Shows started during the Great Depression, between 1929 and 1939. Elwin-Charles Peck (who performed as "El-Wyn") was the first to introduce the concept. The genre experienced a resurgence from the 1950s through the 1970's.

Over the years, performers like Jack Baker (Dr. Silkini), John Calvert (Dr. London), Ormond McGill (Dr. Zomb) and Philip Morris (Dr. Evil) presented such sghows. Com-

binig Magic illusions like dismembered women, Cremation Illusions and the like, with staged “Hypnotism” and attempts to contact ghosts. The shows usually ended with a complete blackout in which ghostly manifestations appeared to fill the theatre.

## Modern times

Modern versions of these ghost shows as well as other spooky shows still appear around Halloween around the country.

Many Magicians today present Ghost Tours, and seances (purely as entertainment) throughout the year, but especially closer to Halloween. Others present a more lighthearted “Halloween themed” Magic shows either for adults or for children.

Whether in a school, a community centre, library or someone's home, they may feature either Bizarre Magic or Halloween themed kid's tricks.

Ghosts, Spirits and Halloween fun have — in one way or another — been a part of the Magic scene for a long time.

# Next meetings:

**Tuesday, 14<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

**ON LINE Virtual meeting.**

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7941606677>

(Please sign in at about 6:45pm)

**Tuesday, 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025**

**In Person meeting.**

**Spaghetti Warehouse**

*689 N. Clinton St., Syracuse NY*

*(Please come at 6:00 if you plan to eat)*

*(Magic starts at 7:15)*

*Suggested Theme: Halloween /Spooky*

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## Save the Date!

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**Tue.14th October**

**ZOOM meeting**

**Tue.28th October**

**In Person meeting**  
*Spaghetti Warehouse*

**Tue.11th November**

**ZOOM meeting**

**Tue.18th November**

**In Person meeting**  
*Spaghetti Warehouse*

**Tue.9th December**

**ZOOM meeting**

**Tue.16th December**

**In Person meeting**  
*Spaghetti Warehouse*

**Sat. 10th January**

**Post-Holiday Banquet**  
*Spaghetti Warehouse*

**Harris Solomon Ring**  
**IBM Ring #74**  
**P.O.Box 213**  
**Cayuga NY 13034 - 0213**

**[www.saltcitymagicclub.com](http://www.saltcitymagicclub.com)**

