

e-Thoughts — The art of setting and breaking records

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Our e-Thoughts feature provides close-up views on topics and areas of interest from everyday life.

Growing up, the Guinness Book of Records was always on the coffee table in my house. It held such allure for my parents. Hard workers with jobs that were pretty routine, they were thrilled by the amazing and unusual feats described.

The first edition of the book came out in London in 1944.¹ One thousand copies were given away for free. The next year, the first official book enjoyed a big debut. Since then, over 115 million copies have been sold in 26 languages and more than 100 countries.¹

Guinness gets about 1,000 claims per week from people trying to set new records.² They have over 40,000 records on file, but only about 10 percent make it into print after going through the selection and verification process.²

The pursuit of new records

Why are we so interested in record setting and breaking? People love uphill battles. They love the unusual. They want to see what they can accomplish and how far they can push their limits. And the records aren't always about people. There are animal, geography records and more.

Have you ever thought about setting or breaking a record? The records include things you'd expect. And then there are the unexpected:²

- The largest scoop of ice cream is over 3000 pounds
- The largest gathering of people dressed in Superman costumes is 867
- The most spoons balanced on a person's face at one time is 31
- The longest distance keeping a table in the air with your teeth while walking is 38 feet (and this record was set with a 110 pound woman sitting on the table!)

The thrill and the challenge

Like my parents, I'm enthralled by the unusual. I love reading about goals people dream up. And I'm amazed by the achievements many make.

Ready to set a new record? The prospects are almost endless. Good luck!

¹<http://metro.co.uk>

²www.guinnessworldrecords.com