

snap shots

Volume 14 Number 2

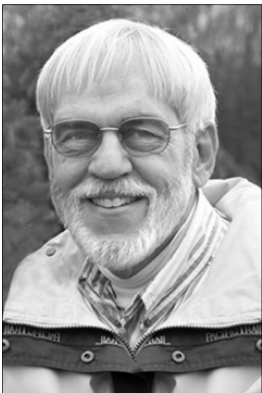
October 2008

Digital Photography BC¹ to AD²

¹Before Computers; ²After Digital

What's been lost in the transition from traditional film-and-chemicals technology to digital photography, and what's been gained? That's the subject of Gordon Brown's program for PHSNE's meeting on Oct. 5.

The transition to digital photography has involved a convergence of concepts whose time has come, and digital photography depends heavily on the instruments, ideas, inventions and ingenuity of the past. Without these historical concepts and contributions, Gordon says, we would not be where we are today in digital photography.



Gordon Brown

His presentation will review the history of digital photography from its beginnings. He will compare digital photography with the historical technologies, processes and techniques of conventional photography.

Some things, he says, have changed for the better, and other changes make things more difficult. He will compare the quality and imaging chain of both systems, and why they work as they do, and discuss



Photomontage by David DeJean

cautions on both sides along the way.

Gordon Brown enjoyed a 33-year photographic career at Eastman Kodak Company where he taught workshops, wrote publications, worked in scientific photography and in marketing, where he managed scientific and black-and-white products, and originated the name "T-Max."

Gordon has authored three books on photography: one on the Stop System developed by Pierre-Yves Mahé and two for teenagers. He is currently writing a book about digital photography.

Gordon is a consultant to Epson, NIK software, tests cameras for Nikon and Kodak, and holds six patents on professional photo equipment. Now in his "retirement" he gives lectures and week-long workshops on photography, Photoshop, digital printing and color management.

Photographica 70 is Sept. 27-28 — And Your Help is Needed

PHSNE's 70th Photographica show and sale is Friday, Sept. 27 from 9 am to 5 pm and Sunday, Sept. 28, from 10 to 4. The show, at the Americal Center in Wakefield, MA, will feature 80 tables of dealers. General admission is \$5, students and seniors \$4, and \$3 for PHSNE members. For more information see the PHSNE Web site at www.phsne.org.

Dealer tables are nearly sold out, according to show

manager John Dockery, and he needs to hear from PHSNE members who would like to do Discovery Tables devoted to their special interests. He also needs volunteers to help with setting up on Friday, working during the show, and helping shut it down on Sunday. If you're interested in doing a Discovery Table or can give a couple of hours to the show, please contact John at 781-592-2553.

Shows and Exhibitions Around New England

"*Steam and Steel: The Photography of O. Winston Link*" at **George Eastman House** includes many of Link's famous series of dramatic night photographs of America's last steam locomotives. Link created the images for the Norfolk & Western Railway over a five year period that ended when the last steam locomotive was taken out of service in May 1960. A companion show, "*Tracks: The Railroad in Photographs from the George Eastman House*" draws on the museum's collection to cover more than 160 years of photographic history including works by Lewis W. Hine, Aaron Siskind, William Henry Jackson, and Alvin Langdon Coburn in an exhibition intended for historians, lovers of the American West, and train enthusiasts. October 11, 2008 to January 25, 2009. (GEH, 900 East Ave., Rochester, NY, 585-271-3361, www.eastmanhouse.org.)

"*Beyond the Familiar: Photography and the construction of Community*" at **Williams College Museum of Art** draws together work by 10 artists who tried to reveal the character of an entire population through images of representative individuals. The photographers span the history of photography: works from the 19th century by Felice Beato and Peter Henry Emerson; from the 20th century by Edward Curtis, Robert Frank, David Goldblatt, Barbara Norfleet, August Sander, and Aaron Siskind, and recent images by Tina Barney and Zwelethu Mthethwa. September 20, 2008 to March 8, 2009.

PHSNE Membership

PHSNE membership is \$15 for students, \$30 for individuals, \$36 for a family, and \$40 for foreign membership. Please send checks in U.S. dollars drawn on a U.S. bank or dollar-denominated international money orders for dues payments.

Current members can read their renewal date from the mailing label on snap shots. For example, "Dec 2008" means your membership expires in December of 2008. Please check your label before sending in your dues.

Send payments, changes of address, and other contact information, to Joe Walters Jr, PHSNE Membership Chair, P.O. Box 650189, West Newton, MA 02465 (phone: 617-694-5594; email: membership@phsne.net, or use the Web form at www.phsne.net/contacts).

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August Sander Archiv, Cologne; AFS, New York, 2008



"Road workers" by August Sander (German, 1876-1964) is included in the current exhibition at Williams College Museum of Art. Sander's life work was an "atlas" of portraits that grouped his fellow citizens by class and profession. He identified seven groupings (farmers, skilled tradesmen, women, classes and professions, artists, the city, and "last people," the disabled and the disenfranchised).

(Williams College Museum, 15 Lawrence Hall Drive, Williamstown, MA, 413-597-2429, www.wcma.org.)

The Lee Gallery is offering a selection of images by William Henry Jackson, one of the preeminent photographers of the American West. The pictures date from 1871, when Jackson joined a U.S. government survey of the Yellowstone River and Rocky Mountains led by Ferdinand Hayden, an expedition that also included landscape painter Thomas Moran. Jackson won early notice as a painter, and fought in the Civil War before becoming fascinated with the West. He worked in the wet-plate collodion process with cameras as large as 18 by 22 inches. The Lee Gallery images are typically smaller, 5 by 9 or 6 by 9 inches. For more on Jackson, see www.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Henry_Jackson. (Lee Gallery, 9 Mount Vernon Street, 2nd Floor, Winchester, MA, 781-729-7445, www.leegallery.com.)

Cindy Stebbins

Cindy Stebbins, a former PHSNE board member, died August 19 of breast cancer. She and her husband Jim Parsons were committed volunteers and familiar figures at PHSNE meetings, auctions and Photographica events. Cindy had worked for the Red Cross and Hunt's Camera in Hingham.

Donations in her memory may be made to Northeast Animal Shelter, 347 Highland Ave., Salem, MA 01970.



Cindy Stebbins

Rollfilm Program Is Moved Up to November

A change in the scheduling of upcoming monthly meetings has moved the Rollfilm Shootout, a program devoted to members' photographs taken with American-made rollfilm cameras, from December to November.

The change means that all images for the program must be submitted by the October meeting so they can be included in the show. The program will be a



digitally projected show of images shot on rollfilm using American-made cameras. They should be American-made, body, shutter, and lens, according to Paul Nisula, who is managing the show and collecting the entries.

The schedule change means you only have a couple of weeks left to put together an entry. You can enter up to six images.

Here's a Flash — Artificial Light Has a Long History

An article by Farri Cress in the latest PHSNE *Journal* looks at the history of flashbulbs. But even before flashbulbs, there was artificial light. The ad at right shows two devices — one for taking pictures, and one for printing them.

The ad comes from Gardner Sherman, PHSNE Life Member and long-time collector. Gardner says he once owned two of the magnesium-ribbon holders (their labels said only "Kodak," he notes, not "Magnesium Ribbon Holder.") The source of the ad, and its date of publication aren't known — other the obvious fact that the publication was British, because the prices are given in shillings and pence.

There is some internal evidence that points to a date after 1900 and before World War I. The magnesium-ribbon device is intended "for printing on Velox Paper, Lantern Slides, etc." Velox was a chloride paper intended for contact printing and marketed to amateurs, and the earliest mention of it I've found is 1906. And after the Great War electric light became widespread in homes — and in amateur darkrooms.

The ad is an interesting reminder that contact printing, rather than enlarging, was the way most amateurs worked well into the 1930s: it was the introduction of Edison's light bulb that made amateur enlargers practical, and the popularity of 35mm cameras like the Leica that made them a necessity. (For more on the early history of artificial light in printing, see Eugene Ostroff's article, "Photographic Enlarging: A History," in the Nov.-Dec. 1984 *Journal*.)

— David DeJean

Flash powder for taking photographs is a familiar technology — although the device at the top of this ad may be rare. Artificial light for printing before electricity, like the magnesium ribbon device below, may be less familiar.

Flash Light Apparatus

Kodak Amateur Flashlight Outfit



With this Outfit the amateur photographer is independent of daylight. It is simple to work and thoroughly efficient. No flints or caps are used. The Outfit consists of a metal tray, two tapers, sufficient flash powder for about 25 exposures and the metal containing box.

To use:—The metal tray is attached by its spring grips to the top of the container, which serves as a handle; sufficient flash powder is heaped inside the embossed circle at the shallow end of the tray and an unlighted taper is fitted into the spring clip at the other end.

When ready to expose, the taper is lit and the tray gently tilted forward, as shown in the illustration. The falling flash powder ignited by the lighted taper burns with a quick, brilliant, highly-actinic flash.

Complete Outfit	..	..	..	..	..	s.	d.
Small Refill of Flash Powder	..	..	..	..	..	1	0
Large	..	..	..	..	..	3	0

Kodak Magnesium Ribbon Holder For Printing on Velox Paper, Lantern Slides, etc.



This handy little apparatus provides a convenient method of burning magnesium ribbon for photographic purposes. It is a compact magazine for storing the ribbon, a convenient holder when burning it, and a ready means of measuring definite lengths of the ribbon.

For printing on Velox and other gaslight papers, and lantern slides, the ribbon is pushed forward by the movement of the thumb on the projecting wooden disc until the length of ribbon projecting equals the measure indicated by an arrow on the holder. The ribbon ceases to burn when the projecting length has been consumed.

As the movement of the ribbon in this holder can be made continuous, this apparatus is particularly well adapted for burning any length of ribbon, as in the case of photographing dark interiors, copying, or portraiture.

Loaded with magnesium ribbon for over 300 exposures, each holder in cardboard box.

Price each 1/-



Two PHSNE stalwarts awarded Honorary Life Memberships

At its September meeting, the PHSNE Board of Directors granted honorary Life Memberships to two persons who have served the organization long and well.

David Berenson was PHSNE's treasurer from 1986 to 1993, and for a decade in the '80s and early '90s he managed the Photographica shows. He joined PHSNE soon after it began in 1972, and for several years also sent out meeting announcements and membership notices and collected dues.

John Felix joined PHSNE in 1979 and was elected to the Board of Directors in 1994. He served a two-year term as president in 2000-2001 and worked to help PHSNE re-define its organizational structure.



John Felix

PHSNE has awarded several Honorary Life Memberships in its long history. Jack Naylor was honored, much like David and John, for his service to the organization just as, more recently, Ed Shaw and Ruth Thomasian were. James P. Hopkins donated his collection to PHSNE. And honored figures from the larger world of photography have included Eaton Lothrop, Harold Edger-ton, Brian Coe, and Brad and Barbara Washburn.

PHSNE Meetings

Meetings are usually held on the first Sunday of each month, September to June, at 1:30 p.m. at Waltham High School, preceded by a mini trade fair at 12:30 and an open meeting of the PHSNE board at 11:00 a.m.

Nov. 2 — Rollfilm Shootout projected show

Dec. 7 — Reflections on Jack Naylor

Jan. 4 — Member programs

Directions

Waltham High School is at 617 Lexington St., Waltham, MA. The high school is at the top of the hill, behind other school buildings.

From I-95 (Route 128) Northbound: Take Exit 27 and follow Totten Pond Rd. 1.2 miles east until it dead-ends into Lexington St. Turn left and go .5 miles north. Turn right into the school complex.

From I-95 (Route 128) Southbound: Take Exit 28, Trapelo Rd., east 1.3 miles to Lexington St. Turn right and go south .8 miles to school complex on the left.

From Boston/Cambridge: Take Rte. 2 west to Exit 54B, then Lexington St. south 1.7 miles to school complex on the left.

From Lincoln and West: Take Route 2 east to Exit 53, Concord Ave. Go east 1 mile, then right onto Lexington St. and 1.3 miles south to school complex on the left.

PHSNE Online

PHSNE's Web site is online at www.phsne.org. Ralph Johnston is the Webmaster.

Join the PHSNE Forum online discussion: sign up and log in at www.phsne.net/forum, moderated by Joe Walters. For an archive of back issues of *snap shots* and meeting presentations, visit www.phsne.net/pubs.



PHSNE
P.O. Box 650189
West Newton, MA 02465-0189

Photographic Historical Society of New England
Next Meeting: Sunday, October 5:
"Digital Photography BC to AD"

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