

snap shots

Volume 14 Number 7

March 2009

Sesquicentennial Program about Abraham Lincoln Presented again for 200th Anniversary Celebration

Sunday, March 1, 2009, 1:30 PM, Waltham High School



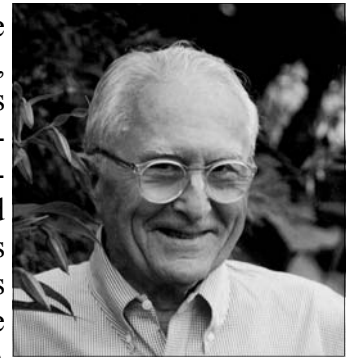
The date was June, 1958, and the tough question facing NBC's *Project 20* documentary production team was how to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Abraham Lincoln's birth due in February of the following year.

Over most of the preceding decade, we had turned out hour-length historical documentary films selected from motion picture footage preserved in American and European film archives. But to present a tribute to Lincoln, the images would have to be filmed from 19th century still photographs—a technique new to us and NBC at that time.

With good luck, seven months of hard work, and grant support from many sources, our show *Meet Mr. Lincoln* was finished in time, with particular thanks to the National Archives, the Library of Congress, the Chicago Historical Society, Illinois State Archives, and the New York Historical Society. This new-style program, sponsored by the Lincoln National Life Insurance Co., was presented on the NBC network in prime evening time to a large audience on the eve of the 150th anniversary of President Lincoln's birth.

- Dan Jones

Using materials from the *Project 20* production, Dan Jones will explain his work as Director of Research, how he located images, both paintings and photographs, in archives and private collections around the country. He will introduce you to the arduous business of turning still images into a series of photos by zooming and panning still photos,



Dan Jones, 2009

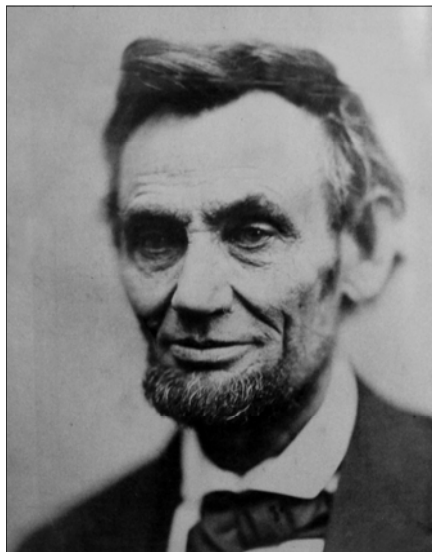
turning them into a series of images that gives one the feeling of being there.

This was done in an era of specially made copy prints, animation camera stands, directors' instructions penciled on tissue overlays, and specialized timing stopwatches.

Documentaries involving still images are commonly seen today, but Dan Jones will be our guide to the pioneering effort of a half century ago.

An education edition of the Lincoln program was released, but even this has been very seldom seen in recent years. We are fortunate to have an opportunity to hear from someone involved in the original production and hope you can join us for this special program.

- John Wojtowicz



Hundreds of Items Sold at PHSNE Members' Auction



Dollar Table Bargains

Over 200 items were auctioned off in record time, about 2 1/2 hours, at the February 1st Members' Auction. About forty people were present, including members, guests, and the general public.

Most cameras, unless rare or very old, sold at bargain prices. Gag items like a tripod that really is a lawn watering device drew some

laughs. Prints and posters sold for little more than the value of the frames.

The dollar table, loaded with darkroom supplies, lenses, filters, books, and damaged cameras suitable for parts cleared over \$300 and was the highlight of the afternoon for many participants.

The auction netted about \$1000 for the PHSNE operating budget. A good time was had by all.

-Lew Regelman, auction coordinator



Auction Feedback

Someone spotted this comment posted on the web: "We went to a real live auction today. It was put on by PHSNE. They had all kinds of neat items outside the auction hall on dollar tables. Each item for a buck! [We] picked up all kinds of filters and lens caps from the dollar tables. And we enjoyed the heck out of it. [My wife] came home with a Yashica TL Super and 3 lenses and I came home with 2 Canon T-50 bodies, a Minolta XE-7 and a Nikon EM and 4 lenses. What a great day!!" -Bob Iozia

One participant told us it was her first auction. She didn't intend to stay but had such a great time that she plans to come back next year.

Bargain Corner

Every once in a while we find a good source of excellent photographic books offered at deep discounts. The latest discovery includes *Satellite Photos of Earth*, *Pictures of Paris*, *Photoguide to Canyon Country*, and *Photos by William Wegman*, all priced at less than \$5.00.

They also have books that are slightly more expensive on Matthew Brady, Edward Curtis, Ansel Adams, Cole Weston, Galen Roswell, and Atget (France) and books like *Photography and the Smithsonian*, *Fashion Photography*, and *Margaret Burke White*. Most are under \$10.00.

These and many more are available at Edward R. Hamilton Books, Falls Village, CT 06031-5000.

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.org, or use the Web form at www.phsne.org/contacts).

Serious Collectors take note:

Major auction coming up

Lifetime photographic collection belonging to the past president of the Western Reserve Camera Collectors Society. Hundreds and hundreds of items: Still cameras; cinema cameras; over 150 large-format lenses; dozens of large wood and metal tripods; hundreds of accessories for classic cameras.

Auction date: Saturday, April 4, 2009 in Willoughby, Ohio, a suburb of Cleveland. Presented by nationally-known auctioneer, Paul Fusco of Fusco Auctions. 15% Buyers Commission. All major credit cards accepted. Complete listings are available. Phone for additional information: 440-975-8938. www.fuscoauctions.com. Absentee and online bidding available through www.artifact.com. Email—pfusco@fuscoauctions.com.

Handyman's Corner:

Dead Battery (RIP)

As you settle down in front of the fire with a glass of very good "medicine," you gaze fondly at your newly acquired Photofantsiamatic. You jump up when you realize the battery it uses is no longer made.

Rushing to the workshop door, you tear off your shirt revealing a grease stained, oil splattered tee shirt emblazoned with *Super Fixer*. A few pieces of plastic tubing, a couple of assorted springs, a bit of Superglue™ and voila, a workable battery! As strange as this sounds, the photos show proof it can and has been done.

To accomplish this, imagine the unimaginable. A glass of good "medicine" helps the thought process, or at least dulls the pain of failure.

A Yashica Electro 35 (1966) used an E164 5.6 volt mercury battery that is no longer manufactured.



Using a 6 volt battery will have some effect on the exposure meter, but the wide latitude of today's film should more than compensate for this.

An A544 is a current 6 volt battery. It fits easily into a piece of 3/8" OD plastic tube, 1 5/8" long, after the tubing is slit lengthwise. A couple

of spare spring battery contacts soldered to copper washers for spacing and contacts complete the product

An Olympus 35 EC2 (1966) used a pair of EPX640 1.4 volt mercury batteries. Again, no longer produced. In this case, a common A76 bat-

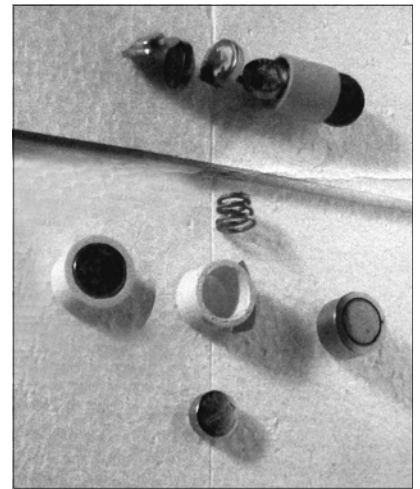
PHSNE Needs Your Help

We need volunteers to help with setup on Photographica 71 to be held at the Americal Center, Wakefield, MA, April 25th and 26th . We expect to have about 80 tables along with special demonstrations and guest speakers. Volunteer to help set up, work the show, tear down, and/or transport materials back to the warehouse.

Contact John Dockery at 781-592-2553.

tery is used. Slipped inside a piece of plastic tubing, negative contact made with a spring and washer allows for business as usual.

No plastic tubing? You can roll thin cardboard, construction paper, poster board, heatshrink tubing, etc. for the outside. This was done by manufacturers as the photos show.



For springs, use your imagination. Old clocks, flashlights, cameras. Perhaps a trip to the local hardware store.

In some cases, it may be easier to solder a couple of batteries together to insure good contact and correct spacing. A warning — use a very minimum amount of heat!

Proper cleaning and fluxing are required, as is wearing protective eyewear. Too much heat can cause a battery to rupture, sometimes violently. Not a pretty sight.

Finally, have fun with this. If I can be of any help, please contact me at budmidgley1@verizon.net.

- Bud Midgley

**Photographic Figures:
First Show in Herb Ritts Gallery**

Boston's Museum of Fine Arts has opened its Herb Ritts Gallery, its first space permanently dedicated to photography (see *snap shots*, May 2007), with an exhibition exploring the camera's ability to capture expressive images of the human form. The exhibition presents nudes, facial close-ups, and figural groups that include the personal modernist viewpoint of Alfred Stieglitz, surrealist works by Man Ray, the visual wit of Lee Friedlander. and the celebrity culture of Herb Ritts. *Photographic Figures* comprises about seventy-five works, drawn primarily from the Museum's collection, and includes new acquisitions and several works by local photographers. The exhibition runs through May 10, 2009. Museum of Fine Arts, Boston (MFA, 465 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA, phone 617-267-9300, www.mfa.org.)

- David DeJean

Eastman House displays Abe Lincoln's favorite image

George Eastman House in Rochester, NY, has put on exhibit a shattered glass plate that Lincoln called his personal favorite portrait. The image, depicting a "handsome" and beardless Lincoln, was taken when he was beginning his presidential run. It is celebrated as one of the best portraits made of the 16th president, and he was in agreement. "That looks better and expresses me better than any I have ever seen; if it pleases the people I am satisfied," Lincoln said, in response to the portrait.

The 8X10-inch plate is an interpositive, an intermediate format used to generate negatives for volume production of prints. It was made directly from the original wet-plate collodion negative, made during the June 3, 1860 sitting. This is the only known interpositive of this portrait.

The original portrait was taken by Alexander Hesler. This image "is the closest you will ever get to seeing Lincoln, short of putting your eyeballs on the man himself," explained Grant Romer, director of the museum's Advanced Residency Program in Photograph Conservation, who is one of the world's leading experts on 19th-century and Lincoln photography. "This is Lincoln in high definition. You can see more detail than you'll ever see in a copy print." George Eastman House, 900 East Ave., Rochester, NY, 585-271-3361, www.eastmanhouse.org.)

- David DeJean

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.

Mar. 1 — Dan Jones, Lincoln Sesquicentennial film

Apr. 5 — Ed Jameson, Planetarium technology
(to be held at Framingham State College)

May 3 — Steve Jarecki, Military photography

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. George Champine is the Webmaster.

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



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

Photographic Historical Society of New England
Next Meeting: Sunday, March 1
Waltham High School, 1:30 P.M.

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