

snap shots

Volume 16 Number 4

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Your Favorite Cameras - and more Sunday, December 5, 2010, Americal Center, Wakefield, MA



"Every picture tells a story." That's true, but it is often also true for the device that made the picture. *My Favorite Camera*, the theme for the December PHSNE meeting, is a celebration of cameras that are important to the members. People wander into Photographica from many routes, and over time

our interests within the field shift. For many this results in a pile of junk in the house. But it's important



junk, significant junk, junk that we are not going to get rid of because it's not junk to us.

The reasons are as varied as the people. The camera may be the first one you ever used. It may be something technologically very interesting. It may be an outfit put together over years of flea markets, auctions, camera fairs, and plain dumb luck. It may be a camera that served you well during good times and bad. You may finally have acquired that set of the complete run of model changes in that



particular series. It may be a camera that started out for you as a collectible, but proved to be a favorite to use and is now living a second life.

So bring your favorite camera to the December meeting. Since cameras don't make much sense

without images, if you have pictures with a story behind them, bring them along as well.

The meeting format will be a little different — one big Show and Tell. **There will be long tables set up around the meeting room on which you can set up your favorite camera, pictures, advertising items, flashbulbs, in short any pieces of photographica you treasure.** The Master of Ceremonies will call people up to talk about what they brought. There will be coffee, soda, and holiday treats. A fine time will be had by all.

~John Wojtowicz; photos by Lew Regelman



This unusual ceramic teapot is adorned with numerous photographic objects



Kodak's first dissolving slide projector

Letter to the Editor:

**from Warren Patrick
Charter Member of PHSNE
“at the ripe age of 99 years”**

“Just received and read the usual interesting information in [the November] *snap shots*. Jack Billington’s story about finding a 1/4 plate daguerreotype camera brings to my mind a similar acquisition in 1968 when I was living in Jamaica, Vermont.

Knowing I had an interest in old cameras, a friend, who was settling an estate in town, brought to me an old camera he had found in the attic of the house. The house had suffered some fire damage but nothing too serious. There was no maker’s name, but the lens was marked #4417 Voigtlander and Sohn, Wein und Brauschweig.

I did a little research and soon discovered the camera was a daguerreotype. It had a slight burn on one side. Later, I asked my friend if there was anything else in the attic and he brought me the three-legged wooden tripod. Another friend saw the outfit and suggested I offer it for sale at the first all-photographic auction being held by Parke-Bernet Galleries, Inc. I took his advice, and the outfit brought \$2,600. A lot of money then for me. It was featured in their auction catalogue dated 1970.”

~Warren Patrick, Townshend, Vermont

Snap shots welcomes letters to the editor and will print those of general interest when space permits.

PHSNE Membership

PHSNE membership is \$15 for students, \$35 for individuals, \$40 for a family, and \$45 for foreign membership. Join or renew online at phsne.org/paypal or send a check in U.S. dollars, drawn on a U.S. bank or dollar denominated international money order.

Members should check the expiration date on the *snap shots* mailing label before sending in dues.

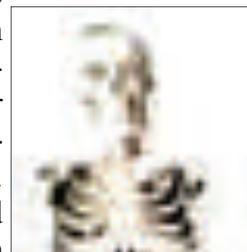
Send payments, changes of address, and other contact information, to Joe Walters Jr, PHSNE Membership Chair, P.O. Box 650189, West Newton, MA 02465 (Call: 617-826-9294; email: membership@phsne.org; or use the Web form at phsne.org/contacts).

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**Sophisticated Photographic Techniques
Identify Fallen Korean War Soldiers**

A combination of film, X-ray, and digital photography may help identify the remains of soldiers from the Korean War. DNA analysis has not been possible because of the way the soldiers’ remains had been processed. Working with new technology, scientists have recently been able to identify soldiers using photographic images of X-rays that are nearly sixty years old.

The arduous task begins at the Chicago Albumen Works, a photo lab located in an old converted mill in Great Barrington, MA. where they work with service-induction x-rays from an old research project on tuberculosis. Missing for years, the x-rays were finally located at a St. Louis warehouse. They were badly decomposed and heading for recycling (to reclaim the silver). But first, high quality photographic images are made from the old images and then digitally scanned.



The computer images and X-ray photos are sent to the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command (JPAC) in Hawaii for analysis. There, according to lab director John Byrd, the photos could potentially identify up to 200 soldiers buried in the national military cemetery in Honolulu. The Z Corporation, manufacturer of the highly specialized 3D ZPrinter, claims that “JPAC is the only laboratory in the world engaged in this project, and its work with ZPrinting will make the technique available to any qualified, trained investigator.”

Recovery efforts remain difficult for the more than 8,000 Korean soldiers still missing and unidentified because of poor relations between the U.S. and North Korea. This project is important to their families.

**For West Coast and traveling members:
Photographic Still Lives**

A “small but choice exhibition” at the Getty Museum in Los Angeles features still life images, a format usually associated with paintings. Twenty-six photographers have work displayed including Edward Weston, Josef Sudek, Man Ray, and Irving Penn. The exhibition continues through January 23, 2011 at the Getty Museum, 1200 Getty Center Dr., Los Angeles, CA. For additional information, visit getty.edu.

Patently Photographic: Early US Autoexposure Patents

In the October 2010 *snap shots*, the Super Kodak Six-20 autoexposure camera was discussed. Introduced in 1938, it was the world's first autoexposure camera and sold for \$225. Only a few more than 700 were made between 1938 and 1944.

The Six-20 introduced the basic trap-needle autoexposure system used for decades until the advent of electronic metering and shutter control systems. The meter needle moved in response to the light level - just as on an analog exposure meter. The needle was mechanically trapped to prevent movement when the shutter was depressed and a mechanism sensed the position of the needle and set the aperture accordingly. See Super Kodak Six-20 notes and a photo at the GEH Technology Archive: bit.ly/geh-super-six-20.

Researching the Super Kodak Six-20 led me to explore early autoexposure technology - and that led to US patent 2,058,562, filed in 1935 for a Light Intensity Self-Adjusting Camera. This design used a meter

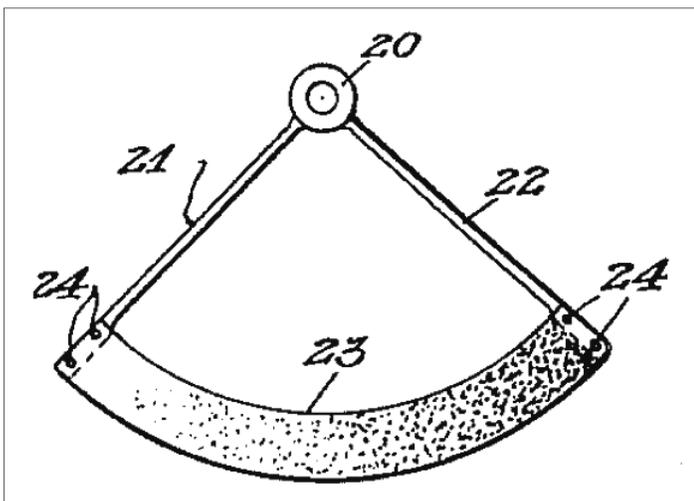


Fig. 1: Circumferential ND Band (23) to attach to meter movement shaft

movement as well. But rather than trapping a needle, the inventors employed a circumferential variable neutral density (ND) band (Item 23 in Fig 1), in a wedge shaped holder attached to the meter shaft (via Item 21 to Item 15 in Fig. 2). The ND band varied from clear to dark so that light attenuation varies along its circumference. The ND band was placed in the optical path of the lens and as it moved in response to the light intensity the band controlled the amount of light reaching the film.

Perhaps most interesting about the patent are the inventors - Gustave Bucky of New York, NY and Albert Einstein, of Princeton NJ. Yes, that Albert Einstein! At the time this patent was filed, Einstein was in residence at the Institute for Advanced Study, never to return to Germany. Einstein has 12 patents including a refrigerator design licensed to the Electrolux corporation. Bucky was a physicist and radiologist of some note, making major contributions to the field of x-ray imaging - so much so that radiologists once referred to the "Bucky room" to indicate a radiology lab. He invented the antiscatter grid that significantly improved the contrast of x-ray imaging.

But the Bucky and Einstein patent was not the earliest autoexposure patent I found. Diaphragm Control for Photographic Apparatus, 2,058,483, filed Mar 13, 1934 patents the type of trap-needle mechanism used in the later Super Kodak Six-20. An even earlier filing, Exposure Control for Photographic Apparatus, 2,059,032, filed Oct 23, 1930 uses another approach. You can find these patents on the Web by typing "patent" and the number, for example, "patent 2,058,562" into Google search. You will find several sources for free downloads of the patents.

As far as I know the Bucky and Einstein design was never used in a commercial camera - although some cameras have an autoexposure system that automatically inserts a fixed ND filter into the optical path if high light levels are sensed. If a reader knows of Bucky & Einstein's design being used commercially please send a note or contact me via snapshots@phsne.org. And, any reference to earlier development or patents for autoexposure would be welcome.

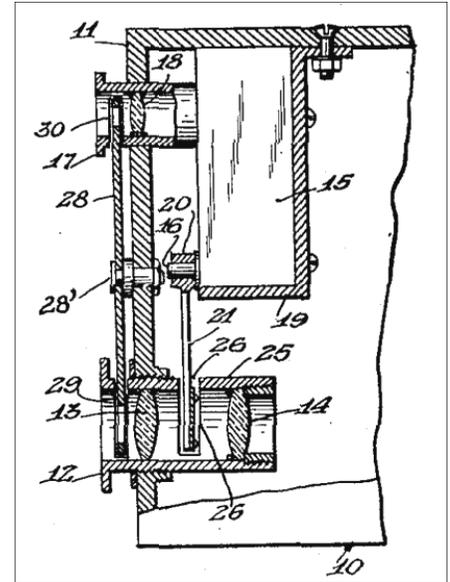


Fig. 2: ND band arm (21) shown attached to meter (15) movement shaft (16)

Area Exhibit:

No Man's Land: The Women of Mexico
Brandeis University, through December 16, 2010

This exhibition of color photographs by Dana Romanoff explores the changing role of women left behind in rural towns of Oaxaca, Mexico, after their husbands and sons travel to the United States in search of work. Traditionally, the woman's role was in the home, performing domestic chores and caring for the children. With their husbands and sons away, the women are now in charge of their families and finances. Some men never return and leave the women as the sole breadwinners for their households. And thus, machismo is giving way to a new structure the women call "pura mujer"—purely women.



Dana's work as a freelance photographer and multimedia producer has appeared in numerous magazines, newspapers and anthologies. She has exhibited in New York, Los Angeles, Atlanta, Boston, Charlotte, and other cities and was part of a Charlotte Observer team in 2008 that became a Pulitzer Prize Gold Medal Finalist. Her documentary video "No Man's Land: The Women of Mexico" was short-listed for the 2010 Anthropographia Multimedia & Human Rights Award.

Kniznick Gallery, Women's Studies Research Center, 515 South Street, Waltham, MA 02454, 781-736-8102. Gallery hours: Mon. - Fri., 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. or by appointment. Visit brandeis.edu/ws/src/arts/nowshowing for more details.

PHSNE Meetings

Meetings are usually held on the first Sunday of each month, September to June, at 1:30 p.m. at the Americal Center, 467 Main St., Wakefield, MA, preceded by a mini trade fair at 12:30 and an open meeting of the PHSNE board at 11:00 a.m.

Upcoming meetings:

January 9—Lantern slide show # 2 on 1940's projector, Lew Regelman; Hitler in Poland, digital stereo slide show, Ralph Johnson

Driving directions to Americal Center:

I-95 to exit 39, North Ave. toward Reading/Wakefield (right turn on North from the south; left turn from the North). Drive approximately 1.5 miles, then turn left at Main St. Destination is on the left: 467 Main St., Wakefield, MA 01880.

Parking available next door at the school, behind the building, and on Main St.

Public transportation:

The Wakefield station of the Haverhill rail line is within 1/2 mile of the Center, and a bus line stops in front of the building. Details are available at mbta.com.

PHSNE Online

PHSNE's Web site is online at phsne.org. George Champine is the Webmaster.

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

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Photographic Historical Society of New England
Next Meeting: Sunday, December 5
Members Present their Favorite Cameras
Americal Center, 1:30 P.M.