

snap shots

Volume 19 Number 6

February 2014

Margaret Bourke-White (aka Sally Matson) is the Presenter at PHSNE Meeting, February 2, 2014, 1:30 P.M. The Americal Center, Wakefield MA



Photo by Tim Becker

Sally Matson holding photo of Margaret Bourke-White

The next best thing to hearing Margaret Bourke-White talk about her fascinating experiences as a world-renowned photographer is to witness actress and educator Sally Matson's portrayal of Margaret Bourke-White. According to Matson, Bourke-White's "influential images of industry, war zones and world leaders established her as a groundbreaking photographer in the 1930's—50's."

Matson writes on her website (margaretb-w.com) that Bourke-White "captured the beauty of industry at the Corning Glass Works, Chrysler, and Republic Steel. [Bourke-White's] ability to make powerful machines look like art was just what the country wanted in the 1920's, when we were worshipping industrial expansion. Then, as the Depression brought heartache and despair, she began to concentrate on the people behind the machines.

In this presentation, you will hear about her adventures climbing on skyscrapers, leaning out of airplanes, going into war zones. She covered life during the Depression, went on a bombing mission, photographed Stalin, Churchill, Patton, and Gandhi. She was the first photographer hired by Fortune magazine

in 1929, the first western photographer allowed into Russia in 1930, and she had the lead story and cover of the inaugural issue of Life magazine in November, 1936." Bourke-White developed a long-term friendship with the late Jack Naylor, longtime *Journal* editor and PHSNE secretary, that began during World War II.

Matson holds a teaching degree in English and drama from Northwestern University. Her career includes performing for the Department of Defense, writing and hosting a cable television program and forty years of acting and directing. She appeared in thirteen states as *Susan B. Anthony, the Invincible!* before moving on to portray the equally invincible Margaret Bourke-White.



Margaret at Home, 1964
Wikipedia GNU Free Documentation License

PHSNE Returns to Americal Center

Beginning in February, PHSNE meetings will again be held at the Americal Center in Wakefield MA, except for field trips and meetings at special venues which will be well publicized. Please join us there on February 2nd for this fascinating visit with Margaret Bourke-White. Since it is February in New England, see phsne.org for late-breaking announcements if severe weather conditions arise.

Check Your Mailbox for Journal and Directory

The 40th anniversary issue of the *New England Journal of Photographic History* was mailed the week of December 29th. U. S. members should have received delivery during the week of January 5th; it will take longer for international members to receive their copy.

If you have not received the *Journal* by the end of January, please contact the journal committee at journal@phsne.org.

The 2013 *Membership Directory* was bulk mailed to all members in good standing as of November 17, 2013. Please contact Joe Walters at the next meeting, at membership-chair@phsne.org, or at 617-826-9294 if you have not received it.

Members' information is constantly being updated. Typically there are several changes per month, so there are already changes to the directory including 15 new members! To download updates, go to phsne.org/archive/MembersOnly where you will receive a password challenge. The password appears on page 2 of printed copies of *snap shots*, near the center fold. This password changes from time to time, so you will need a recent *snap shots* to get the current password.

PHSNE Membership

New members are invited to join for half the rates for the first year. PHSNE membership is \$15 for students, \$35 for individuals and institutions, \$40 for a family, and \$45 for foreign membership. Join or renew online at phsne.org/join or phsne.org/renew, 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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Canned Kodak Collection

No more room on the shelf? Not a problem if you want to put your collection in a film can. During my twenty years at Kodak, and since retiring, I have collected many Kodak related items, sixteen of which are stored in two old Kodak film cans.



The collection includes a stand from a 1909 Kodak camera that was converted to a tie pin; an "official" Kodak tie pin; 150th anniversary pins, one bronze, one silver; a pin given to Professional Photography Division staff; a gold forty year service pin (not mine!) and a silver twenty-five year pin (not mine either—I didn't quite make it to twenty-five); photo award pins from the Ko-



dak Camera Club in bronze, silver and gold, each reflecting the category of the award; Kodak tie tacks; a Kodak key fob; Kodak cuff links, and finally a mystery item - wings that say Kodak. I don't remember when or why the wing pin was issued.

This collection confirms the old adage: "Good things come in small packages."
 ~Lew Regelman

Your SLR Film Camera May Go Digital!

New patents are being issued for cameras at a dizzying pace. Every year, perhaps every month, brings new developments, and some are more surprising than others. Collectors who are attached to their film SLRs but want to embrace new technology will find this concept fascinating.

A recent patent was awarded to Nikon for a replacement back for old SLRs that will transform the film cameras to digital in one easy step. However, Michael Zhang noted in a December 17th posting (petapixel.com/2012/12/17/nikon-patent-shows-a-back-for-turning-film-slrs-into-digital-cameras), “The downside to Nikon’s method would be that the backs would be far from universal; each one would have to be specially made for specific camera models or lines.”



*Photoshopped mock-up made from a Canon EOS Elan film camera and a Kodak Easyshare Digital camera
With a Tamron zoom lens*

While no model is on the market yet, a resourceful PHSNE member, curious to know what it would look like, crafted his own by combining parts of a film and digital camera — with considerable help from Photoshop.

Nikon is not alone in this endeavor. Another *petapixel* posting (petapixel.com/2013/08/16/convert-your-old-film-slr-into-a-digital-camera-with-the-digipod) provided this report: “The DigiPod is the first product we’ve seen actually become a reality. It’s a digital cartridge that fits inside your old film SLR, and if it makes it to market, it could be quite groundbreaking.

The DigiPod was designed by UK developer and former photographer James Jackson, who has spent the last five years perfecting his design for this Digital Film Pod that could put his old Nikons, Canons and Leicas back in the game.”

While the possibility of converting your SLR camera to digital is new, the concept of a digital SLR dates back to 1991 with the release of the Kodak Professional Digital Camera System



*Kodak DCS 420
en.wikipedia.org*

(DCS), the first commercially available digital single-lens reflex camera. According to Wikipedia, “It was a customized camera back bearing the digital image sensor, mounted on a Nikon F3 body and released by Kodak in May 1991; the company had previously shown the camera at Photokina in 1990.” The Wikipedia write-up notes that, “The DCS prototype was developed for trials by the Associated Press. Kodak researchers chose the Nikon F3HP SLR because it was the most widely used professional camera at the time.” Visit en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kodak_DCS_100 for additional information.

Finally, as a side-note, Super 8 may be going digital as well. According to a *petapixel* posting by David Becker on Dec 9, 2013, “Nolab is working on building a digital adapter that will allow any Super 8 camera to shoot 720p HD video. This would be a boon for lovers of Super 8 as it gets increasingly difficult to obtain film cartridges. Becker notes that, “The Nolab cartridge uses a 5-megapixel sensor similar to an average smartphone chip but adapted to sync with a Super 8 camera’s shutter and 4x3 aspect ratio.” Visit petapixel.com/2013/12/09/startup-nolab-building-hd-digital-adapter-super-8-film-cameras for additional information.

If any of these patents become commercially viable, the value of your collection of old film cameras may be greatly enhanced.

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall

At certain angles, a daguerreotype will reflect the viewer's image. This is the source of the title *The Mirror of Race, Seeing Ourselves Through History*, an exhibit at the Adams Gallery of Suffolk University of nearly one hundred historical images, many of them daguerreotypes.



*Learning is Wealth, Charles Paxson (NY)
Carte-de-visite, 1864
Collection of Greg French*

The University's press release notes that the exhibit "challenges viewers to think about what they see when they look into this mirror onto an earlier time. Interactive elements suggest reflection about how one sees race – in oneself and in others."

On January 31, 2014 Suffolk University will hold a conference that will "include speakers on the history of race and photography and on how narrative forms our identity."

The exhibit runs through February 25th. The museum is located in David Sargent Hall, 120 Tremont St., Boston. Admission is free. For more information, visit suffolk.edu/explore/21744.php.

PHSNE Meetings

Meetings are usually held on the first Sunday of each month at the Americal Center, unless otherwise noted, September to June, at 1:30 p.m. preceded by a mini trade fair at 12:30 and an open meeting of the PHSNE Board at 11:00 a.m.

Upcoming meetings:

March 2—Photo editing, Suzanne Revy

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.

Free 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 MBTA buses #136 and #137 stop in front of the building. Details are available at mbta.com. Use weekend schedule

PHSNE Online

PHSNE's Web site is online at phsne.org. 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. Scheduling changes due to weather conditions or other factors will be posted on this website.

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Photographic Historical Society of New England
Next Meeting: Sally Matson as Margaret Bourke-White
Sunday, February 2, 2014, 1:30 P.M.
The Americal Center, 467 Main St., Wakefield MA



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