

# snap shots

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## The 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Roots of Instagram: The Amateur Photographic Exchange Club Sunday, March 1st, 7:30 P.M. EST, via Zoom

Adrienne Lundgren, a Senior Photograph Conservator at the Library of Congress where she has worked for the past 24 years, will discuss the history of the Amateur Photographic Exchange Club and its connections to today's social media platforms at the March 1<sup>st</sup> PHSNE meeting.



Self Portrait, Coleman Sellers in His Home  
Library of Congress Collection, half of stereo image

Exchanging photographs with strangers to build social networks of like-minded individuals is

nothing new. From its invention in 1839, photography was devised as a means of conveying and sharing information. Photographers formed small, informal groups from the start, but it was not until the Amateur Photographic Exchange Club (1861–1863) that a formalized social network based on photography emerged in the United States.

From the initial request to connect to share “selfies,” the Amateur Photographic Exchange Club’s defined structure showed a striking similarity to how we currently engage with platforms such as Facebook and Instagram. Its members’ humorous exchanges, preserved in published literature, offer a grounding point for understanding how sharing images and ideas connected people and facilitated the formation of lasting friendships despite geographical distance, economic disparity, or political differences.

*The 19<sup>th</sup>-Century Roots of Instagram: The Amateur Photographic Exchange Club (1861–1863)* draws on archival documents, a review of contemporary literature, and an examination of exchanged images to explore these early photographic networks and their enduring relevance (<https://tinyurl.com/mr8sv73h>).

Lundgren’s research has focused on the technical aspects of photographic image production, particularly 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century processes. She has published extensively on topics such as coatings applied to daguerreotypes, the use of glycerine in platinum printing, and the materials and techniques of Pictorialist photographers Clarence H. White and F. Holland Day. She is currently working on a history of the dry collodion process.

AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHIC EXCHANGE CLUB	
LIST OF MEMBERS.	
Chas. W. Hull,	\$2 Park Row. New York.
L. M. Rutherford,	175 2nd. Ave. do. do.
F. F. Thompson,	2 Wall St. do. do.
H. T. Anthony,	501 Broadway, do. do.
H. J. Haight,	Care of H. T. Anthony,
J. M. Masterton,	Bronxville, N. Y.
Proff. O. N. Rood,	Troy. do.
Proff. C. F. Himes,	New Oxford, Adams Co. Pa.
Proff. E. Emerson,	Care of Proff. Himes.
Constant Guillou,	615 Walnut St. Phil'a,
Coleman Sellers,	601 North 18th. St. do.
S. Fisher Corlies,	1717 Arch St. do.
Proff. Fairman Rogers,	202 W. Rittenhouse Sq. do.
F. T. Fassitt,	1129 Girard St. do.
J. Dickerson Sergeant,	420 Walnut St. do.
E. Borda,	Woodside, Penn'a.
James Hunter,	Blockley, do.
Robert Shriver,	Cumberland, Md.
Dr. William Mead,	Newark, N.J.
Titian R. Peale,	256 G St. WASHINGTON, D.C.
Charles de Rham,	Cold Spring, N. Y.

Chales Himes, Members List from Dickinson College

Lundgren is the author of *Magnificent Intentions: John Wood, First Federal Photographer (1856–1863)* which was released in 2024. Her most recent book about Diane Arbus and her work for the Social Security Administration, has an expected release date of Spring 2027.

## New Bedford Whaling Museum Hosts Photography Exhibit

“‘Look pleasant, please,’ George F. Parlow (1826-1890) reportedly said to sitters when they faced the camera in his studio. *‘Look pleasant, please’: Early Portrait Photography in New Bedford* highlights the New Bedford Whaling Museum’s collection of portrait photographs made between the time of photography’s invention in 1839 and the start of a new century in the 1900s” (<https://tinyurl.com/4brheezw>).



Manuel Goulart (Portuguese, 1866-1946), two portraits, 5 x 7 in., dry plate glass negative. NBWM 1993.48.19.36.

The work of those early studio photographers is on display in a wide variety of formats: daguerreotypes, ambrotypes, tintypes, carte de visites [sic], cabinet cards, gelatin silver prints, and albums. The artists represented include the first woman photographer of

the area, Hannah H. Worthing, and Black photographer James E. Reed; the subjects of the portraits include Frederick Douglass and other well-known figures as well as lesser-known and anonymous sitters. “The exhibition brings to life the photographic studio of the 1800s with painted backdrops, a large format camera, and advertisements.”

There’s plenty of time to catch this exhibit which runs through September 7, 2026.

### PHSNE Membership

*New members are invited to join for half the rates for the first year.* Regular PHSNE membership (U.S. and Canada) is \$30 for students, \$50 for individuals and institutions, and \$55 for a family; foreign membership is \$60. Join or renew online at <https://phsne.org/join> or <https://phsne.org/renew>, or send a check in U.S. dollars, drawn on a U.S. bank or dollar denominated international money order.

Send payments, changes of address, and other contact information, to PHSNE Membership Chair, 47 Calvary St., Waltham MA 02453, email [membership-chair@phsne.org](mailto:membership-chair@phsne.org), or use the Web form at <https://phsne.org/application>.

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## Boston’s Bicentennial Photographer

Lou Jones, then a young Black Boston photographer, was selected to be the city’s official photographer for the bicentennial celebration of the American Revolution. He was “paid a pittance,” but the job changed his life.

“Instead of simply photographing handshakes and historic sites, Jones journeyed into the neighborhoods, where he took his cameras to out-of-the-way streets to show what the Bicentennial meant to ordinary and marginalized Bostonians.” As the nation currently observes its 250th anniversary, his work is being re-examined.



Amiri Baraka (nee LeRoy Jones) at Boston protest

Jones graduated with a degree in physics from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute and worked briefly for NASA before stumbling into photography with *Boston 200*, the committee organizing and overseeing Boston’s participation in the Bicentennial. With no formal training, his skills are self-taught. His images reside in the permanent collections of Harvard, the Boston Athenaeum, and more than 250

photographs at the Boston Public Library.

Still working at the age of 80, Jones went on after the Bicentennial assignment to photograph “Central American war zones, 13 Olympics, jazz greats, death row inmates, and 19 African countries in a decade-long, ongoing project to show the overlooked, everyday life of each nation on that continent” (<https://www.bostonglobe.com/2026/01/16/metro/photographer-lou-jones-bicentennial-250th/>).

### Getting Started Digitizing Family Papers & Photographs

Numerous services exist to help digitize photos and important papers. American Ancestors offers a free download to help you get started. They also offer a free weekly e-newsletter, *The Weekly Genealogist*.

“We are a member-based nonprofit corporation dedicated to advancing the study of family history in America and beyond, by educating, inspiring, and connecting people through our scholarship, collections, and expertise.” Visit <https://tinyurl.com/yw6d83hv>.

## Old Standard Rollei Makes an Appearance at *Photographica 93*

A 120 roll film Rolleiflex camera from the estate of Henry Weisenberg, will be available for viewing and sale at *Photographica 93* on Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>. The particular model is the Standard 621 with a 75mm f/3.5 Zeiss Tessar lens which dates it from 1934 to 1937. Look for it at the PHSNE table.



The Rollei comes with its original carry case and lens cap. Though the paint has worn off, the original serial number is legible.

According to *camera-wiki*, the “old standard” Rolleiflex was manufactured by Franke and Heidecke, Braunschweig, Germany, from 1932 to 1938 (<https://camera-wiki.org/wiki/>). The Old Standard was the first Rollei to use 120 film.

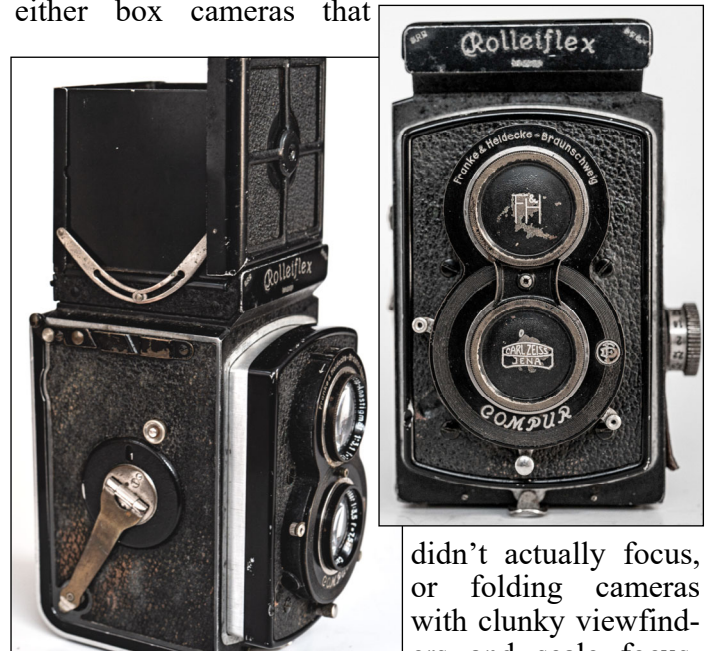
Cameras are now designated as “standard,” “original standard” or “old standard,” but you won’t find these names on the camera. “Rolleiflexes are generally dated and identified by serial numbers. Collectors distinguish between the three sub-variants of the old standard with the factory’s internal type numbers: 620, 621, and 622.”

*Camera-wiki* claims that, “The finder is the best part about this Rolleiflex. When looking into the waist-level finder, the photographer finds a relatively clear ground glass screen. The popularity of the Rollei continued to gain momentum. By 1938, the 300,000th Rolleiflex was sold and the factory numbered 725 employees.



One reviewer explained the camera’s commercial success this way: “What made the Rolleiflex so innovative was its combination of the combination of a reflex focusing mechanism and the compact size of a roll film camera. Cameras with reflex focusing were available, and there had even been twin lens cameras, but they were large

and expensive. Cameras that used roll film were smaller and more affordable, but most of them were either box cameras that



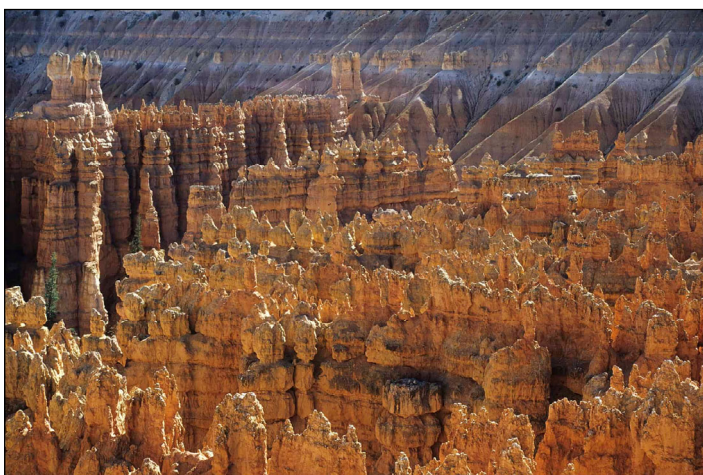
didn’t actually focus, or folding cameras with clunky viewfinders and scale focusing.

The Rolleiflex integrated the ease of the reflex finder with the small size of 120 film in one portable, relatively affordable package” (<https://casualphotophile.com/2021/07/26/rolleiflex-old-standard-review/>.)” Almost 100,000 Old Standards were manufactured over six years.

~Photographs by PHSNE Treasurer Sid Chatterjee

## *Landscape of Wonder at the Griffin*

The Griffin Museum is hosting *Landscape of Wonder* at the Jenks Center in Winchester, MA., senior community center that offers cultural, social, and educational events. The exhibition “offers a view into the wilderness and the vast expanse of the American landscape” ([https://griffinmuseum.org/show/jenks0126\\_landscape/](https://griffinmuseum.org/show/jenks0126_landscape/)).



Stephen Schmidt, Hoodoos, Bryce Canyon

Thirty-six images were selected from more than 740 submitted. Thirty-nine photographers are represented, “each offering a distinct perspective on our shared environment. Together, their works form a visual conversation about scale, permanence and change, solitude and connection. The photographs ask us not only to look, but to pause—to consider our relationship with the earth and our responsibility to preserve what cannot be recreated.” Viewing hours are 9:00 A.M.—4 P.M. Monday through Friday.

“Inspired by the extraordinary range and quality of submissions, [the Griffin] created a second online exhibition to showcase an additional 56 works, further celebrating the landscapes of America’s National Parks.” For information about this exhibit, *Enduring Ground*, visit ([https://griffinmuseum.org/show/enduring-ground\\_online0126/](https://griffinmuseum.org/show/enduring-ground_online0126/)). Each image highlights a unique corner of the country—places of beauty, resilience, and wonder that many may not often have the opportunity to see.

### **We’ll See You at *Photographica 93***

This is a reminder to mark your calendars for the largest photographic show in New England. It will take place on SATURDAY, APRIL 25<sup>th</sup> at Newton North High School in Newton, MA. For details visit the PHSNE website at [phsne.org](https://phsne.org).

### **PHSNE Meetings**

Meetings are usually held online on the first Sunday of each month, September to June.

#### **Upcoming meetings:**

**Saturday, April 25<sup>th</sup>**—*Photographica 93*

#### **Connect to PHSNE Online and by email:**

PHSNE’s Web site is online at <https://phsne.org>. See <https://www.facebook.com/PHSNE/> for items of PHSNE interest. Comments are welcome, so join the discussion of photo history. Visit <https://snapshots.phsne.org> for *snap shots* issues Volume 11 (Sept 2005) to Volume 29 (June 2024).

Stay connected to PHSNE via our emails and show announcements. Sign up at <https://phsne.org/emails>.

For information on all available PHSNE publications, see <https://phsne.magcloud.com>.

### **Check Out *Film Atlas***

*Film Atlas* is a recently launched website that offers an “interactive guide to every motion picture film format, soundtrack, 3-D and color process ever invented” (<https://www.filmatlas.com/>). The site is “designed for experts, open to everyone.”

Headlines at the site proclaim, “This encyclopedic resource continues to expand with new essays published regularly” and “Guest curators offer their personal highlights from the hundreds of essays published on the site.” To date, there are over 150 contributors from 23 countries, and they intend to publish over 650 entries in the next five years with world-wide support from archives and museums.



The project is a collaboration of the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) and George Eastman Museum (GEM). *In Focus: Film Atlas*, a video featuring core project team members, was produced by GEM and can be viewed at <https://tinyurl.com/4jskymuz>.

### **Correction**

The speaker for the February program was Dr. David L. Jentz. His name was inadvertently misspelled in February issue of *snap shots*.