

snap shots

Volume 11 Number 5

January, 2006

TALL TALES: 3 (Short) Member Programs

Collecting stereoviews, a program of stereo photographs, and a trip fueled by free cameras are the program for the Jan. 8 meeting

Gibson “Bud” Midgley, David DeJean, and Ralph Johnston are three of the taller members of PHSNE, but they’ve promised to keep it short when they combine to do a three-part program for the January 8 meeting at Waltham High School.

Bud Midgley, a mainstay of the show-and-tell segment of society meetings, will expand his scope, if not his budget, to show off a collection of cameras used for advertising and promotion. For “Travels with Advertising Cameras” he’s booked a trip from Boston to Savannah — and has a logo-loaded camera for each step of the way, from AAA (maps) to Hertz (rental car) to Marlboros and Crown Royal (provisions?) “These advertising cameras are insane, they’re so cheap,” he says. “I’ve got cameras from banks that couldn’t have cost 49 cents, yet you had to open a \$10,000 account to get one.”

David DeJean’s “Collecting Stereoviews” scouts territory of a different sort — the history and variety of col-



lectable stereo images and viewers, illustrated (in 2D) with photos from his own collection and the Web site of PHSNE member Bryan Ginns, who deals in much better images and equipment than DeJean can afford.

Ralph Johnston will present a show of stereo images, including the work of Jacques Henri Lartigue, and his own stereo photography from PHSNE-sponsored tours overseas. Many of Lartigue’s famous images were originally shot as stereo, and Johnston’s show will draw on a set of print stereoviews, recently published by an English company, that makes them available in their original form, some for the first time.



Daguerreotypes of Southworth & Hawes Come Home to New England

“*Young America: The Daguerreotypes of Southworth and Hawes,*” billed as the most comprehensive exhibit of the artistry of the Boston photographic partners Albert Sands Southworth and Josiah Johnson

Reverend Rollin Heber Neale, ca. 1850. Gift of Alden Scott Boyer. George Eastman House.

Hawes, will visit New England at the Addison Gallery of American Art on the campus of Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts, from January 28 through April 29, 2006 (180 Main Street, Andover, MA 01810, 978-749-4015, on the Web at www.andover.edu/addison/home.htm).

— *James Hill*

Girl Scout Troop 2264 at Photographica



Photographs by Lowell Bursch



Far left: Sarah Bursch holds a Yashica 44 TLR. At left: Pricilla Velasco and Mary Kate Foley take notes on daguerreotypes. Above (l. to r.) Mary Kate Foley, Ruth Thomasian, assistant show manager, Maurice Bursch, PHSNE member and proud grandfather, Pricilla Velasco, Sarah Bursch, troop leader Susan Bursch, and in front, Linda Bursch.

Show of Surrealist Prints at the Portland Museum of Art

By James Hill

The **Portland Museum of Art** (Seven Congress Square, Portland, Maine, 207-775-6148, on the Web at www.portlandmuseum.org) from January 19 to March 19, 2006, will feature "*Accommodations of Desire: Surrealist Works on Paper Collected by Julien Levy*." Julien Levy was one of the most influential and important dealers in the 1930s and 1940s of avant-garde art and was an important early supporter of photography as fine art. After leaving Harvard University in 1927 to go to Paris (where he hoped to work with Man Ray on a film), he met and became friends with many of the important artists in the Dada and Surrealist movements and formed a partnership with photographer Berenice Abbot to preserve the work of Eugene Atget. He opened his first New York Gallery in 1931, and in 1932 that gallery featured the very first exhibition of Henri Cartier-Bresson's photographs. Levy, who was first mentored by photographer Alfred Steiglitz, was a dealer and collector of a wide array of images, from

Walker Evan's documentary photographs to the careful compositions of André Kertész and the stylized works of Lee Miller and Man Ray. Many of the works in this exhibition are by these artists promoted by Levy, as well as Joseph Cornell, Marcel Duchamp, Salvador Dalí, Max Ernst, Arshile Gorky, and others.

Membership News

PHSNE's membership chairman has moved. Please send dues, changes of address and other status information, to: Adrian Levesque, 4 Sugar Hill Drive, Nashua, NH 03063. PHSNE membership is \$30 for an individual, \$36 for a family, and \$40 for foreign members.

New members — Cindy Bittker, Hull, MA, interests: restoring photos; Sally Felt, Royalston, MA; John Ghoreyeb, Charlottesville, VA, dags and stereoviews of southern USA; Nancy Greene, Fort Lauderdale, FL; Richard Hess, Fall River, MA; Steve Jarecki, Holden MA; Bethany Jones joins mother Marti in a family membership; Filippo Laveneziana, Beverly Hills, CA; Douglas Napier, Fort Erie, Ont., Canada; Stephen Shuart, South Harwich, MA; Peter Sinclair, Toronto, Canada, stereo, 2D-3D lenticular conversions, converting stereoviews to lenticulars; Charles Swedlund, Cobden, IL, historical color; Stacy Waldman, Northampton, MA, snapshots; James W. Wilson, Belmont, MA.

New Life Member: Dick Welch, Concord MA, 4x5 wood cameras.

For contact information on these new members or changes to your own information send e-mail to ALevesque@aol.com with "PHSNE" in the subject line.

Get Ready to Empty Your Wallet — and Your Closet — for the Members' Auction in February

The annual Members' Auction is on the agenda for the February PHSNE meeting. The auction is always a good time to sell unneeded items, get a bargain, and just have a good time in general. If you have items to auction, advance notice is appreciated: please contact Alfred Wolsky, auction manager, at 781-648-4198 ext. 15, so he can include them in his plans. If you clean out a drawer at the last minute, though, you can bring items for the auction with you to the meeting.

A Member's Book Finds the Meaning in Photo Postcards

AS WE WERE: American Photographic Postcards 1905-1930'

Rosamond B. Vaule

Published by David R. Godine, Boston, 2004

By Greg French

My brother, Bob, read this book before I did. He's a Harvard graduate with a PhD and has an extensive vocabulary, but he's a populist at heart and in practice. He was animated and enthusiastic about the book. Nodding and gesturing he said: "She gets it."

As We Were by PHSNE member Rosamond Vaule covers its subject, American photographic postcards, thoroughly and with insight, but the book does more than that. It transcends the genre and becomes a book about life: "We're face to face with both their moment of reality in the card and their absolute transience." The author's scholarly approach is laced with wisdom and humanity. Who would think that a book about real photo postcards (to use the vernacular) would be so compelling?

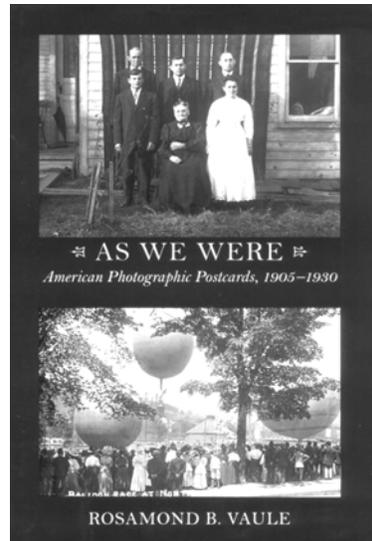
Real photo postcards were made by professional photographers and amateurs alike. Real photo postcards were "unpretentious, on home ground, cheap, and ready for mailing..." Surprisingly, the majority were not mailed but were used as souvenirs or gifts.

Real photo postcards showed people in their everyday clothes standing in front of the clapboards of their homes. The author elaborates on one such photograph: "This is such a stable picture, all verticals and horizontals except for the collar and windswept skirt. Rebecca, her left foot solidly at center, is a pillar of cheerful strength."

The Selection of Photographs Is Especially Rich

Real photo postcards showed how people worked, and what they wore when they worked. There is an outdoor portrait of a group of postal workers, who hold their packages of mail like trophies. Their humble presentation becomes our treasure.

The selection of photographs is especially rich. We see a group of children arm in arm, running in a joyous dance on the beach in Santa Barbara. We know it wasn't as



“ ‘Real photo postcards were ‘unpretentious, on home ground, cheap, and ready for mailing...’ Surprisingly, the majority were not mailed but were used as souvenirs or gifts.’ ”

spontaneous as it appears, but who could've choreographed the two children to the right who are side by side with legs raised, or the bunching that occurred to the line at the left?

In looking through the imagery in this book, we have to abandon the concept that all is naive, for much of the work is informed, even if it's informed by an earlier time. There are the Montpelier boys in front of the ruins of a still smoldering fire. Their dark clothes provide great contrast to the snow around them. A pedestrian is a blur and the dog is a 'ghost' image. This depiction of action is now perceived as a modern value, yet it's as old as photography itself.

We bring ourselves into these photographs. What's more surreal than the Cincinnati flood scene showing an urban landscape populated only by people in boats with oars? This particular scene has added significance since Hurricane Katrina.

One senses the hope and changing values of the time. A small town shows off its shiny fire engine. The store advertising "New & Second-Hand Furniture" reminds us that the recycling industry is not completely new. A young woman dives off a dock to this response: "I guess by the picture that the College girls have fully as good a time as we do."

Ms. Vaule's sense of inclusion truly reflects the American experience. While celebrating diversity with pictures, the author points out the racist language on the reverse of an image of people in an alfalfa field as well as the disturbing sign above the Hopi and Navajo dancers. We marvel at the beauty of "Alaska woman" and are intrigued by the woman holding the puppy and an empty chair.

Don't let the title *As We Were* deceive you. It is accurate, but this is not a nostalgic book. It offers insight to who we are and how the past precedes the future. My brother is right. Rosamond Vaule does get it. And while she gets it her greater gift is in the telling.

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And the Winner Is...

Photographica show manager Ed Shaw announced the winner of the fall 2005 Photographica Show door prize: Pete Hubbell of Marshfield, MA. The door prize, compliments of PHSNE member Hunt Photo and Video of Melrose, MA, is a Kodak EasyShare C300 digital camera.

In addition, Pete receives a complimentary one-year PHSNE membership. PHSNE extend a warm welcome to Pete and an invitation to join us at our monthly meetings and participate in our activities.

Everyone who purchases a ticket and fills out a door-prize ticket at the show is eligible to win.

PHSNE History Needs Your Photos

The *Journal* need photographs that depict the second decade of PHSNE's history — 1983 to 1993 — to illustrate the next in its series of articles on the organization's history. Dig out your box of photos and become a published photographer!

Journal editors are looking for well focused, interestingly composed photos that depict our members involved in every aspect of the society from Sunday meetings to work at the auction warehouse and fun on field trips.

Label your photographs to the best of your ability with the date, place, event, names of people, and the name of the photographer. (If you need help doing that, bring your photo to a meeting or pass them around via email, or Xerox them and send them to members.)

Please be in touch with Ruth Thomasian: 617-923-4563 or email her at archives@projectsave.org to discuss the details of sharing your photos.

PHSNE Meetings

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

Feb. 5 — Member's auction, Waltham High School. If you have items to auction, please contact Alfred Wolsky at 781-648-4198 ext. 15.

Directions

Waltham High School is at 617 Lexington St. in 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 Road 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 Road, east 1.3 mi. to Lexington St. Turn right and go south .8 mi. to school complex.

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

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

PHSNE Online

PHSNE is online at www.phsne.org. PHSNE member Ralph Johnston is the Web master.

FIRST CLASS MAIL
Address Service Requested

Photographic Historical Society of New England
Next Meeting: Sunday, January 8, 2006
"Tall Tales: Three (Short) Member Programs"



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