

snap shots

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The Daguerreotypes of Samuel Bemis

A Boston photographic pioneer is the topic for PHSNE's meeting on November 5

Dr. Samuel A. Bemis was a Boston dentist in March 1840 when he attended the lectures and demonstrations of the daguerreotype process given by François Fauvel-Gouraud, a pupil of Louis-Jacques M. N. P. Daguerre and agent for Alphonse Giroux & Cie., sole manufacturer of equipment endorsed by Daguerre. Bemis bought a daguerreotype camera and plates from Gouraud for \$75 (a transaction regarded as the first camera sold commercially in the United States) and four days later, on April 19, he made his first exposure.

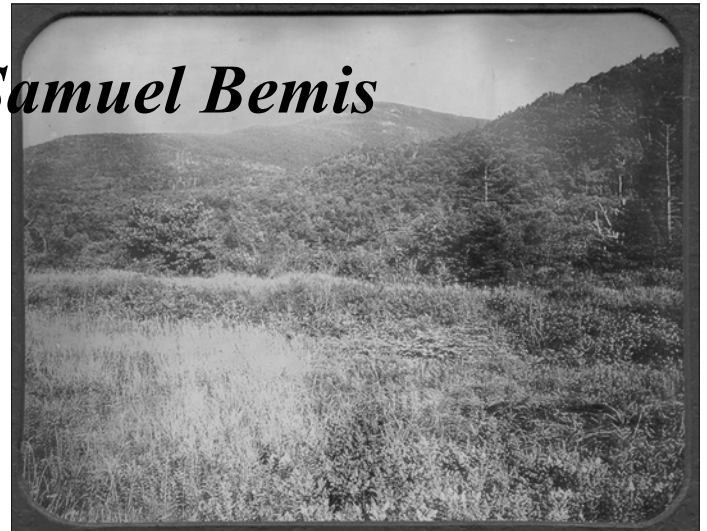


John Anderson

PHSNE member John Anderson will chronicle the Bemis daguerreotypes and memorabilia in the program for PHSNE's next meeting on November 5.

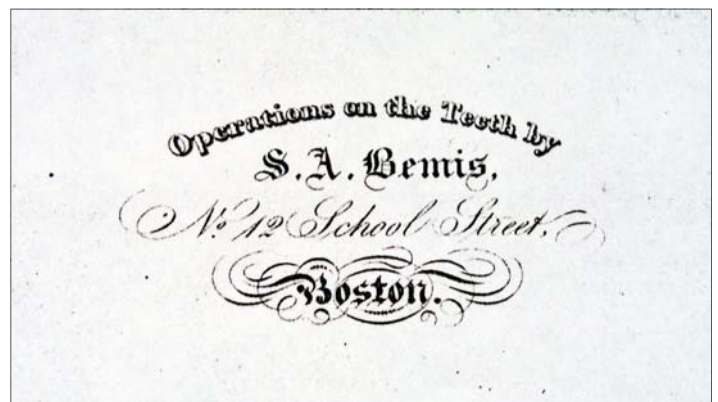
Anderson and his wife Sue became interested in Dr. Bemis when he literally crossed their path while they were pursuing another of their interests, hiking in the Crawford's Notch area of the White Mountains in New Hampshire, an area where Bemis bought property and built a house in the 1840s.

Anderson has located 33 full-plate images in 13 collec-



Courtesy of John Anderson

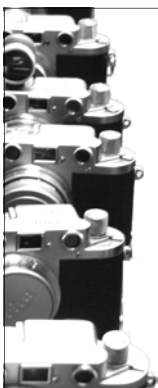
This recent daguerreotype reproduces a view of Crawford's Notch photographed by Dr. Samuel Bemis, an early Boston daguerreotypist. Below, Dr. Bemis's card for his dental practice at 12 School St. in Boston.



tions. In his presentation he ranges from Boston to the White Mountains of New Hampshire to view the sites photographed by Bemis and make contemporary comparisons, as well as to look at other memorabilia from Bemis.

Dr. Bemis continued his photographic hobby for just three years and left Boston in the 1850s to move permanently to his new stone mansion in Crawford's Notch. He is buried on the property, currently operated as a bed-and-breakfast called "The Notchland Inn."

After Bemis' death in 1881 his daguerreotypes were not seen again until an estate auction in 1981, when the mansion was cleaned out. His camera apparatus, the original bill of sale, and several of his plates are included in the collection of the George Eastman House.



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Exhibitions and Shows in the New England Area

By James B. Hill

If the fall foliage or an apple-picking expedition takes you to the western part of Massachusetts this month you might include a visit to the **Smith College Museum of Art at the Brown Fine Arts Center**, where *Garry Winogrand: Women Are Beautiful* is on display from September 8 - December 3, 2006.

This exhibition features photographs by the noted photographer Garry Winogrand (1928-1984). The 45 works in the exhibition represents selections from Winogrand's *Women are Beautiful*, a 1975 book featuring photographs of women in a variety of situations and places in and around New York City. The book was issued as a portfolio of prints in 1981.

Winogrand once explained why he chose to photograph these particular women: "I respond to their energies, how they stand and move their bodies and faces. In the end, the photographs are descriptions of poses or attitudes that give an idea, a hint, of their energies." (Route 9/Elm Street, Northampton, MA 01063, 413-585-2760, on the Web at <http://www.smith.edu/artmuseum/index.htm>.)

Online Exhibitions from Historic New England

There is nothing to compare with seeing a well-made, well-preserved, unique photograph at a local museum, library, or historic site. However, sometimes it is just not possible to make a trip to see some of these treasures on exhibit. Recognizing this, the "on-line exhibition" has

Don't Forget The Great American Thirty-Five Exhibition in December



Now is the time to prepare your entry for PHSNE's December program, The Great American Thirty-Five Exhibition.

The program will feature slides shot by members.

It's not a contest, but the rules are strict: All photographs submitted for the show must be shot with an American-made 35mm camera (and if you use a light meter, that must be U.S.-made as well).

For the complete Great American 35 Exhibition program rules, see the PHSNE Web site at www.phsne.org.

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become a popular choice for many repositories of historic images in our area, and **Historic New England** is at the forefront of this trend.

The organization (formerly the Society for Preservation of New England Antiquities) has one of the most important collections of historic photographs of New England.

In the online exhibition "*Boston Close Up: Windows on a New Century*" (http://www.historicnewengland.org/resources/boston_closeup.htm) some of these rare photographs are paired with audio commentary about the businesses, neighborhoods, and daily life in the growing city of Boston at the turn of the 20th Century. Viewing requires the Real Player™ media viewer, which is downloadable at the site.

Other online exhibitions at the Historic New England site include "*New England in the Photographs of Verner Reed*," "*Lost Gardens of New England*" and "*From Dairy to Doorstep: Milk Delivery in New England 1860 - 1960*" (http://www.historicnewengland.org/resources/online_exhibitions.htm.)

PhotoPlus 2006 Expo and Conference at Javits Center in New York Nov. 2 to 4

PhotoPlus Expo 2006 Photography & Design Conference will combine an exhibition with more than 200 manufacturers showcasing digital products and technologies and a seminar program that offers 11 different tracks on photo information, solutions, ideas, and networking.

Keynote speakers include Tom Wujec on the studio of the 21st century; David Friend, *Vanity Fair's* photography director, on how 9/11 changed the way we view images; and Joel Meyerowitz on the New York City Parks project.

The Expo includes an exhibition of the winning entries in the travel photography contest, "The World in Focus," sponsored by *National Geographic Traveler* and *PDN*.

PhotoPlus Expo 2006 will run from Thursday, November 2, 2006 to Saturday, November 4, 2006 at the Jacob Javits Center, 11th Avenue between 34th & 39th Streets in New York City. PhotoPlus Expo is produced by VNU Expositions. The educational conference is produced by Photo District News. For more information and online registration forms, visit www.photoplusexpo.com.

PHSNE Member Davis B. McKee III Dies

Long-time member and Photographica show dealer Davis McKee of Bedford, New Hampshire, died October 9 after a brief illness. His interests covered both antique cameras and photographs. He will be missed.

PHSNE Is Back from Alaska and Packing for Another Trip

PHSNE's cruise to Alaska's Inside Passage in early September yielded good times and great pictures. And another Ed-venture is already in the works: PHSNE will return to China, beginning on June 15, 2007. The 15-day trip will cost \$2,300 plus taxes and fees. For information, call Ed Shaw, 617-965-0807. Ed is also putting together plans for a trip to Germany for September 2007, to tour the castles along the Rhine.



Photos by Adrian Levesque



The Alaska cruise offered excursions by air and sea that gave photographers striking views of natural wonders. The Mendenhall Glacier, just 13 miles from Juneau, flows through a winding valley (above). A whale watching trip got up close and personal.

A Necrology of Film, Continued: B&W Survives, Just Barely

By David DeJean

The steady march toward extinction for silver-halide chemistry and film cameras took one brief respite earlier this year. When Agfa-Gevaert announced in 2004 that it would phase out its photographic film business, among the casualties was Scala, a black-and-white reversal film especially beloved by stereo photographers.

But reports of Scala's death have turned out to be premature. Scala 135 is still being manufactured by a successor company. B&H Photo (www.bhphotovideo.com) is still selling the film and processing mailers, and two labs are still processing it. Main Photo, of Santa Ana, CA, says on its Web site (www.mainphoto.com) that it has "secured new sources for chemistry" that will allow it to continue processing the film for years to come. Dr5-lab of Denver (www.dr5.com) also processes Scala, as well, but using its own proprietary reversal process.

More good news for black-and-white photography came this June when Harman Technology, which acquired the B&W business of Ilford in Europe, announced that it had found a U.S. distributor for Ilford film, papers, chemistry, and accessories -- WYNIT, Inc., a distributor of electronics, computer peripherals and digital imaging equipment.

The availability of Ilford materials through WYNIT may help soften the blow of Kodak's exit from the black-and-

white printing paper business at the start of this year.

Konica Minolta is another film manufacturer that exited the business this year, announcing in January that it would withdraw from its camera business, including film cameras and digital cameras, by March 31. The company also said it would cease production of minilabs by March 31, and phase out color film and color paper production by March 31, 2007. (Konica Minolta's camera technology was sold to Sony, which continues to make digital cameras that use Konica Minolta lenses.)

Camera Makers Shift Focus to Digital

Also in January, Nikon, one of the most successful and prestigious film camera brands, announced it would stop producing its film cameras and lenses -- except for its flagship F6 line. Nikon had seen its sales shift almost entirely to digital cameras in recent years.

Canon and Pentax followed suit in May and June, respectively, making similar announcements that they would "cease the development" (in Canon's words) of film cameras to "focus on digital" as Pentax put it.

Both companies continue to manufacture and sell film cameras, though -- the Pentax catalog still includes what must be one of the longest-lived camera designs in history, the medium-format 67 II, first sold as the Pentax 67 in 1969.

2006 Daguerreian Society Symposium In Pittsburgh November 16-19

The Daguerreian Society's annual Symposium is scheduled for Thursday, November 16, through Sunday, November 19 in Pittsburgh. The program includes presentations and panel discussions and a special symposium exhibition.

The speaker at the annual dinner will be R. Bruce Duncan, a long-time Illinois collector whose daguerreotypes have appeared in major exhibitions, most recently including "Young America, the Daguerreotypes of Southworth & Hawes." Other program events include a roundtable discussion, "Daguerreotype Collecting Today."

The exhibition will draw from a number of important regional collections.

It will be presented in the Society's own gallery space on the first floor of its new headquarters in Pittsburgh. The host facility will be the Omni William Penn Hotel. For more information contact the Daguerreian Society, 3043 West Liberty Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15216, 412-343-5525, www.daguerre.org.

Membership News

New members — David and Celeste Wilson, Billerica, MA. Interests: 3-D and Nikon.

PHSNE membership is \$30 for an individual, \$36 for a family, and \$40 for foreign members. Please send checks or money orders drawn in U.S. funds for dues payments. Communicate all changes of address and other contact information, to: Adrian Levesque, 4 Sugar Hill Drive, Nashua, NH 03063, or e-mail ALevesque@aol.com.

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.

December 3 — "The Great American Thirty-Five Exhibition," a slide show by PHSNE members.

January 7 — The annual "Three Short Programs by PHSNE Members."

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
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Photographic Historical Society of New England
Next Meeting: Sunday, November 5, 2006
'The Early Daguerreotypes of Samuel Bemis'

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