

The PHSC E-MAIL

Volume 4-11, Supplement to *Photographic Canadiana*, March 2005
The Photographic Historical Society of Canada

Wednesday, March 16th Meeting...



Mary Ledwell, Senior Photographic Archivist with the Archives of Ontario, displays an 1883 composite photograph of the members of the Ontario Legislature by Toronto photographer Bruce. Below: the Archives' new storage location outside of Toronto will provide ideal conditions to preserve holdings.



Our featured speaker for the March meeting will be Mary Ledwell, Senior Photographic Archivist of the Archives of Ontario. There are a lot of changes taking place at the century-old archives with new and modern ways making way for the future. Biggest project that is under-way is the transfer of the province's archival holdings to a newly-built off-site storage facility which offers ideal storage conditions to preserve the province's 410 million dollar holdings. It should take until September 2005 to move almost 300,000 containers. The internet is foremost in the minds of the archivists with the aim of making as much data and resources easily available to all Ontarians as well as those in the rest of the world. More scanned images are available on the Archives' virtual gallery, making them readily available for research – check the sidebar of our PHSC web page where there is a link to an exhibit of photographs by M.O. Hammond.

Mary will present a powerpoint lecture covering a wide variety of images from daguerreotypes, stereoviews, autochromes and silver prints. BRING A FRIEND WITH YOU.

MARCH IS MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL TIME

The PHSC membership renewal notice for 2005-2006 was distributed with the *Photographic Canadiana* journal. A renewal form can be downloaded from the PHSC webpage at <http://www.phsc.ca/Renewal.pdf>

Thinking of joining our Society? Now is the best time with so many activities planned for the next few months. At \$24 for national membership or \$32 for Toronto region membership, it is a real bargain. Download an application.



PHSC Monthly Meetings

are held on the third Wednesday from September to June in the Burgundy Room, Memorial Hall in the basement of the North York Central Library, 5120 Yonge Street, North York, Ontario. The meeting officially begins at 8:00 p.m. but is preceded by a *Buy & Sell* and social gathering from 7:00 p.m. onwards. For information contact the PHSC or Clint Hryhorijiw, 244 Markland Dr., Toronto, ON, M9C 1R7, Phone (416) 622-9494.

Programming Schedule:

March 16th, 2005

-Mary Ledwell, Senior Photographic Archivist for the Archives of Ontario will reveal the new outlook of this 100 year old archives.

Sunday April 3rd, 2005

-The Annual PHSC Auction will be held at the Canadian Legion Branch 344, 1395 Lakeshore Blvd. West. Vendor listings: 10:00AM, viewing: 11:30AM and bidding 12 NOON.

April 20th, 2005

-The Annual General Meeting offers reports by officers and intro of new Executive for 2005-07. Gerry Loban presents "The Evolution of Portraiture."

May 18th, 2005

-Matthew Isenburg, one of America's top Daguerreian collectors is our guest speaker with a presentation on "Collecting Today."

May 29th, 2005, (Sunday)

-The PHSC Spring Fair is at the Soccer Centre in Woodbridge, ON.

FOR PROGRAM UPDATES
www.phsc.ca

Resolving the Vermeer's Camera Question

No need to look for data on Vermeer's camera (per our previous request) as the web site *brightbytes.com*, created by Jack and Beverly Wilgus, has already done it for us. It's worth a visit to check all the information they offer. They point out that **Vermeer's Camera**, a book authored by Philip Steadman and published by Oxford University Press, 2001, includes reconstructions and 3D models of Vermeer's rooms to support the theory that Vermeer used a camera obscura to assist in planning and painting his life-like art pieces. – Les Jones

SEE HOME PAGE

<http://brightbytes.com/>

Direct link to article – <http://brightbytes.com/cosite/vermeers.html>

Yes, Yes we know that it is not the camera used by Vermeer but that is what it was called by its inventor, Anson Kent Cross (1862-1944). The camera is dated September 18, 1934 in a list of 22 of his inventions that Cross published. Cross was a painter and educator who developed systems for the teaching of painting and drawing. He worked from the 1880s until his death in 1944 to promote a series of "systems" and "vision-training aids" in instruction books and at art schools such as the Museum of Fine Arts School in Boston and his Anson K. Cross Art School. His writings include harsh words against the "art teaching establishment" and the art supply companies for their lack of acceptance of his theories and methods. A former student recently described him as an evangelist and the students as his disciples.

This device carries a mounted text panel on one side that explains its use. The text can be seen below. [see website] It was used in the course in *Vision Training* at his Anson K. Cross Art School. This school offered summer classes and home study courses from Boothbay Harbor, Maine in the 1930s and 1940s. The instrument does not have the feel of mass production so appears to be hand made for the school. It is marked "Patent Applied For". Although his biography states that Cross was granted 25 patents we have not yet found any indication that a patent was granted for this instrument.



The text on the side and several Cross publications mention the theory that Vermeer used a camera obscura in his painting, a theory expounded since the 19th century. (No, David Hockney did not "discover" the concept!) The description of Vermeer looking at the image on a camera's ground glass next to his canvas and then painting what he saw does not match the modern theory by Philip Steadman and others that he actually drew over a projected image. As the text indicates this double viewer allowed a student to view the original subject and the painting of it side-by-side to compare tone and composition. Cross's assumption seems to be that a successful painting and the original subject should be exactly the same. In defense of Cross he does state that the viewer is to be used while the student is developing technical skill and is not to be used in making final paintings.

Each of the two boxes is 8 1/8" X 5 1/8" X 3 3/4" and they are hinged so the relationship can be changed to line up with the original and the painting. The second image on the right [see website and our image] shows the boxes swiveled apart. This appears to be the position in use. One lens is pointed at the subject and one at the painting while the artist compares the images by looking down at the ground glasses.

A trip to Boothbay Harbor, Maine during August, 2004 allowed us to research the use of the camera obscura at the Cross Art School. We enjoyed our trip to this beautiful area and met an incredible group of helpful people.

The staff of the Boothbay Region Historical Society was wonderful. We were given access to all the material in their archives. We will add an additional page as we work our way through the wealth of information we received.

Through the internet we found that the Anson Cross home in Boothbay Harbor is now an inn called Pond House. We stayed there during our visit and highly recommend the B&B to anyone visiting the area. The owner, Mary was a perfect host and the inn was a joy. The view of the pond from the breakfast room is worth a visit in itself.

Mary introduced us to Tom Cavanaugh who owns an antique shop and art gallery, the Bay Street Studio, across the street from Pond House. This building was the Cross art school during the 30s and 40s. Tom, a well known painter and antique dealer, was very generous in showing us the building and sharing information he has learned about the school.

The two lenses on the front focus by sliding up and down in the oval opening. The photograph above [see website] shows the *Vermeer's Camera* with several other Cross teaching aids. We can identify the *Cross Transparent Drawing Glass* the *Vision-training Lenses* and a rectangle of black cardboard with an arrangement of small holes. We found one of these cards in the files but have not yet found any reference to them in the books. – J.& B. W

Sunday, April 3rd is the Annual PHSC Auction

THE PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF CANADA



ANNUAL AUCTION

Sunday
April 3, 2005

Bidding Starts at 12:00 pm

Public Welcome to Buy or Sell
for details call 416 622-0433

Everything photographic
Collectible and usable cameras
& accessories,
darkroom equipment,
images, books, etc.

Canadian Legion Branch 344
Queen's Own Rifles
1395 Lakeshore Bl West (East of Boulevard Club)
Free Parking East of Legion Hall
Admission \$3.00



Since 1974

Vendor's Listings
10:00 am – 11:30 am

Viewing
11:30 am – 12:00 pm

Bidding Starts
Noon sharp!

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PHSC, VISIT OUR WEB SITE AT www.phsc.ca

Come join us at the Annual Auction and find a few treasures and lots of bargains. Vendor's listing of equipment starts at 10:00 AM, viewing at 11:30 AM while bidding commences sharp at 12 noon. Bring lots of cash. Plenty of parking is available 50 yds east of the Canadian Legion Hall.



PHOTOGRAPHS BY ROBERT LANSDALE



FROM THE NET

You can almost hear the splat as photo manufacturers hit the wall succumbing to financial woes as their products do not match to the public's expectations and demands for digital equipment.

The latest crunch comes from Kyocera who confirm that the company is to cease production of film and digital cameras, putting a question mark over the future of *Contax*, one of the oldest brands in photography. Contax cameras have been produced since the early 1930's, when the brand was launched by German optical legend *Zeiss Ikon*. Contax joined forces with Japanese manufacturer Yashica in the 1960's, becoming part of electronics giant Kyocera in the mid-1990's.

Kyocera has had some success in the digital camera market with models bearing Yashica, Kyocera and Contax branding, though the company's first foray into the digital SLR market (the Contax N Digital) was widely regarded as an expensive failure. There is some confusion over the future of the Contax brand, or the widely anticipated digital rangefinder (G digital) and Mark II 645 cameras. Sony is rumored as a potential buyer.

Kyocera has stopped production of film and digital cameras, and the various international operations are being prepared for closure. The reasons given were purely market-related with Kyocera concentrating on its mobile phone and semiconductor business. Kyocera is a leading supplier of telecommunications equipment, cameras, laser printers, copiers, solar energy systems, semiconductor packages and electronic components with sales totaled \$10.969 Billion.

The German web site, *Spiegel Online*, has reported that *Leica* is in financial crisis after many banks partially terminated their credit lines following an announcement which said the company stood to lose half of its operating capital. The remaining

credit lines still cover the current liquidity requirements. *Leica*, which introduced the first 35mm still camera in 1924, is also expected to close the financial year with an operating loss of \$13 million. Last year Leica Camera AG, Solms, reported a loss of \$2.1 million. Shareholders will hold a meeting on May 31 to discuss the future of the company. *Spiegel Online* says that *Leica* has missed the boat where digital photography is concerned and it is also suffering due to the low rate of the US dollar versus the Euro. *Leica*, always slow to change and concerned with producing the very best, has been swept aside by the fast pace of the digital world. This adds new light to a report on delivery problems for shipments of the much anticipated *Leica Digital Module-R*, a 10 MP digital camera back designed to fit regular production Leica R8 and R9 cameras. Deliveries were shifted to April 2005. The R8 and R9 Leicas would become the world's first hybrid 35 mm cameras that could be used for digital or analog photography. Nearly all high performance lenses in the Leica R system since 1965 could be used for digital and analogue image recording, something the company was banking on to retain their dedicated followers.

We can sympathize with the drastic changes that Kodak instituted in the restructuring of their manufacturing to emphasis digital products to catch up with fast changing world demand. With manufacturing closed at Kodak Canada, their landmark Kodak Heights may be vacated by early fall with reduced staff move to office space.

Meanwhile Canon is predicting that its latest digital SLR will be its highest selling item. The EOS 350D packs eight million pixels into a model that is 10% lighter and 255 smaller than its predecessor, 300D. Despite being aimed at the high end amateur market, this entry-level SLR shares much technology found in Canon's professional EOS products, including a second generation low-noise APS-C type CMOS sensor and

the DIGIC II image processor. The 350D has a 0.2 second start up time, records three images per second for up to a maximum 14 frames burst.

Not to be outdone, Nikon introduces an improved version of its D2H digital SLR camera. Primarily aimed at press and sports photographers, the D2H delivers longer bursts of up to 40 RAW files or 50 JPEG images. Nikon says the newcomer boasts improved digital processing of images captured on its DX-format JFET sensor, featuring a lateral Buried Charge Accumulator and Sensing Transistor Array (LBCAST) which is claimed to deliver optimum speed and quality that translates into smoother shading in gradual colour changes (tone of blue sky).

With so many digital SLRs available, third-party lens manufacturers have new products for the market.

Sigma announced a batch of 13 new lenses, three designed with a reduced APS-C image circle and solely for use on digital SLRs, while the remaining 10 are 35mm lenses for either film or dSLRs. Eight of the new lenses are zooms, while the remainder are fixed focal length lenses, varying from 30mm to 800mm focal lengths. The star of the lineup is a 10-20mm F4-5.6 EX DC HSM super wide-angle zoom lens designed exclusively for dSLRs. It covers a wide view of 102.4 degrees at 10mm to 63.8 degrees at 20mm. Tamron announced two interesting lenses for APS C-sized dSLRs. Dubbed "Di" for Digitally Integrated design, the lenses are meant for 24x16mm sensors and are not intended for 35mm SLRs. The SP AF11-18mm f4.5-5.6 Di-II LD Aspherical lens has a 35mm focal length equivalent of 17-28mm, offering true wide-angle zooming. It uses one high dispersion glass element with a low dispersion one to "minimize on-axis and lateral chromatic aberrations." The AF18-200mm f3.5-6.3 XR Di-II LD Aspherical Macro picks up where the former leaves off, with the 35mm equivalent of a 28-300mm lens. It uses what Tamron calls XR elements (for Extra Refractive Index) to overcome some of the limitations of wide-ranging zooms.

Coming Events

Sue Wootten sends a reminder that the Toronto International Camera Show is on this coming Sunday, March 13th, 2005 at the Thornhill Community Centre, 7755 Bayview Ave., Thornhill, 10:00 AM to 3:00 PM, Entry \$7.00... with coupon \$5.00

Sunday, April 3rd, 2005. The Annual PHSC Auction will be held once again at the Canadian Legion Branch 344, Queen's Own Rifles, 1395 Lakeshore Blvd. West (just east of the Boulevard Club). Admission is \$3.00. Vendors Listings commences 10:00 AM to 11:30 AM, viewing 11:30 AM to 12:00 NOON, Bidding commences at noon sharp.

Saturday, April 9th, 2005. The Michigan PHS holds its Annual Dinner & Lecture, 6 pm at the Birmingham Athletic Club, 4023 West Maple Rd., Bloomfield Hills, MI. Reservation form available at www.miphs.org.

Sunday, April 10th, 2005. The Western Canada Photographic Historical Association's (WCPHA) will hold its **Spring Camera Show & Swap Meet** on Sunday April the 10th at Cameron Recreation Centre in Burnaby, BC. Check the map at <http://www.wchpa.com/Camera%20Show%20Location.htm> Further information contact Tom Parkinson, WCPHA at tompark@telus.net

Sunday, May 29th, 2005. Mark your calendar for the PHSC Annual Spring Fair to be held again at The Soccer Centre on Martingrove Road in Woodbridge, Ontario. To pre-register a table call Chairman Mark Singer on his CELL: (416) 879-7168 or email string@outer-net.com

Sunday, October 23rd, 2005. 34th MiPHS Photo Trade Show, Novi Community Center, 45175 W. Ten mile Rd. Novi, MI., 10 am to 4 pm.

October 20 to 22, 2006. Note the year 2006 and reserve the dates for PHOTOHISTORY XIII held every third year at GEH in Rochester. Information will be posted on host web site www.tphs.org

Photo Educators FORUM May 6th and 7th 2005

A Conference for Photography and Imaging Educators will be held at Ryerson University in Toronto on Friday, May 6th and Saturday, May 7th with a variety of workshops to choose from. Both days – \$275 or one day at \$175. Register information at (905) 726-3286 or check the web at www.photoeducators.ca

SPRING PHOTO SHOOT April 1 to 3, 2005 in New Orleans

The Leica Historical Society of America will hold its Spring Shoot 2005 in beautiful New Orleans, Louisiana with everyone meeting at the Fairmount Central. Questions? (866) 441-5472 & lhsa@bellsouth.net

Image Explorations EAST Aug. 21 to Aug. 25 2005

Looking for photographic training at a professional level, then consider the intensive 5-day hands-on workshops to be held at Brock University in St. Catharines from Sun. Aug. 21 to Thurs. Aug. 25, 2005. Visit web site <http://imageexplorations.com>

OPAW Workshops August 5–7 2005

Hosted by the Central Okanagan Photographic Society, the Okanagan Photographic Art Workshops will be held from August 5th to 7th in Kelowna, British Columbia. For full details check their web site at www.opaw.org

DAGUERREIAN SOCIETY to meet in Rochester October 27 to 30 2005

The Daguerreian Society will hold its fall symposium in Rochester this year at the George Eastman House which will feature a special Southworth & Hawes exhibit. Offered will be a roster of top speakers, a Trade Show with thousands of shiney cased daguerreotypes and photographica, Auctions (live and silent) and a banquet. The Clarion Riverside Hotel is headquarters – book reservations (585) 546-6400. Symposium info will be posted at www.daguerre.org/symposium.php or (412) 343-5525.

ART GALLERY OF ONTARIO March 5th to May 15th, 2005

The Art Gallery of Ontario, 317 Dundas St. West, Toronto, exhibits *Sweet Immortality* by Douglas Clark until May 15th, 2005 in the Sandra Rotman Gallery. Clark (1952-1999) was a prime animator of art photography in Canada. Through curating exhibitions, writing, teaching and his personal work, Clark left an extraordinary legacy. This exhibition focuses on Clark's expressive world of phenomenal strangeness and everyday beauty. In association with *Sweet Immortality* a selection of Douglas Clark's work is displayed at the Stephen Bulger Gallery, 1026 Queen Street West, Toronto, until April 2nd.

Advertisements

Members are invited to submit one free advertisement to the classified section of each issue, limit 50 words, used at the editor's discretion.

Wanted

Alex is looking for the adaptor-fixture fitting the top of the Nagel Pupille as a shoe for the vertical standing rangefinder. Call (416) 493-7510

For Sale

If you're a Leica M user then visit the website of Tom Abrahamsson at <http://www.rapidwinder.com> for a review of his *Rapidwinder* and *Rapidgrip* for Leica M cameras, and his *Softrelease*. Good illustrations.

Selling on eBay

Got vintage or contemporary photographica to sell? PHSC member James Marr in Hamilton says he can get the best retail price by selling internationally for you. A professional eBay seller (jay3jay3), he will accept equipment on consignment and avoid pitfalls. Contact: 905 529-0582, email: jmarr2@cogeco.ca.

Wanted

Bicycle & Motorcycle photography, medals, ephemera, stereoptics, catalogues –all related items. Contact Lorne Shields, P.O. Box 87588, 300 John St. Post Office, Thornhill, ON., L3T 7R3 at (905) 886-6911, or e-mail at lorne-shields@rogers.com

