



# The Photogram

Newsletter of the Michigan Photographic Historical Society

Volume 32 No. 2

A Michigan Non-Profit Corporation

September-October 2004

ISSN 1082-6874

## FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Hello members,

Well, the summer has just disappeared, hasn't it? Hope you had time to stop and smell the roses. I guess I jumped the gun in telling everyone that Sam Vinegar had sold his photographica trade shows as the deal has fallen through. But such is the way of the business world.

Our own business did well at the MiPHS Outdoor Photo Fair & Trade Show at Dave's Photo Emporium. Some dealers even made some money! I know I spent some of mine on a small but wonderful Grand Tour photo album from Rick Heintzelman. I also bought a couple of daguerreotypes and two vintage optic devices from Les Seeligson of which one was a pair of women's binoculars with their own spiffy case with beveled glass mirror. I went home pleased! We also managed to make a lot of people happy by selling quite a bit of mediocre equipment at minimal prices. The heavier and bulkier (doorstops!) the item was, the lower the price. Almost all the MiPHS Board members were there too. We did have a beautiful Michigan day for it. Dave's Photo Emporium had a circle of shade trees to set up under. (He even rented an outhouse!) As a bonus, we acquired a couple of new members. Dave said he thought the attendance was a bit higher than previous years. We also attracted some folks from the Ann Arbor Art Fair traffic jam on State Street. So we should *definitely* consider doing it again next year. And please . . . think about volunteering, OK? It's *NOT* a one person thing. Our MiPHS Photographica Trade Show (October 24th) is coming up fast. We certainly could use some help there too. Sam Vinegar inadvertently had set up one of his Photorama shows for that date, but he changed it to the Saturday of the same weekend. It wouldn't be good for either of us to hold a show the same date, eh? Hope it works out for both of us.

In addition to an interview with Jim Rutkowski, in this issue of *The Photogram* we are celebrating two Michigan photographic anniversaries. Forty years ago this fall Group Four Gallery opened in Detroit. Seventy-five years ago the Tintype Studio was built at The Henry Ford in Dearborn.

Be safe, Cindy Motzenbecker

Michigan Photographic Historical Society

## 33rd Annual PHOTOGRAPHICA Trade Show

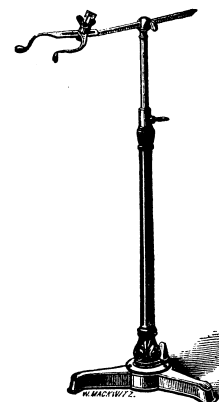
Sunday, October 24, 2004

10:00AM- 4:00PM

Novi Community Center  
45175 W. Ten Mile Rd.  
Novi, Michigan  
(½ mile west of Novi Road)

**ADMISSION: \$5**  
(\$4 with the yellow postcard)

Auspices of the  
Novi Camera Club



## IN THE PHOTOGRAM

*"An Interview with Photo Collector Jim Rutkowski"*

Cynthia Motzenbecker



*"Group Four, 1964-1968"*

Bill Rauhauser



*"The Edison Institute Tintype Studio"*

Janice G. Schimmelman

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*THE PHOTOGRAM* welcomes contributions to its pages from both MiPHS members and non-members. To submit an article, review, occasional photo ad (MiPHS members only) or informational item for publication, write to:

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#### SUBMISSION DEADLINES:

June 1 (July-Summer issue)  
 August 1 (September-October issue)  
 October 1 (November-December issue)  
 January 1 (February-March issue)  
 March 1 (April-May issue)

The MICHIGAN PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY is an organization dedicated to advancing an understanding and appreciation of the history of photography through membership meetings, special events and publications, and through shared endeavors with other organizations and the general public. The MiPHS is a 501c3 non-profit corporation chartered by the State of Michigan.

The MiPHS welcomes new members. Dues are \$20 per year (January 1- December 31). For information and application forms, call 248.549.6026, visit us online at [www.miphs.org](http://www.miphs.org) or write to:

MiPHS  
 P.O. Box 2278  
 Birmingham, MI 48012-2278

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## MIPHS PROGRAMS & EVENTS

✓**Visit to the Detroit Institute of Arts—Photo Exhibition: *The Photography of Charles Sheeler: American Modernist*. Private Tour with Nancy Barr.** Saturday, September 11, 10:00AM. MiPHS members and friends will meet at the entrance to the exhibition at 9:45AM. Nancy Barr, Assistant Curator of Graphic Arts, will give us a private tour. According to the DIA:

“This exhibition is the first major retrospective to focus exclusively on the photographic work of Charles Sheeler, one of the master photographers of the 20th century. Featured are 120 rare prints from his major series including images of his house and barns in Doylestown, Pennsylvania from 1916 to 1917; stills from the 1920 film *Manhatta*; photographs of Chartres Cathedral from 1929; and several images of American industry made for *Fortune* magazine in the 1930s. Of special note are Sheeler’s legendary views from the Ford Motor Company’s River Rouge complex commissioned by Edsel Ford in 1927.” ([www.dia.org](http://www.dia.org))

✓**Visit to the Columbus Museum of Art (OH)—Photo Exhibition: *Family Album: The James Rutkowski Collection of American Photographs*.** Saturday, September 25, 3:00PM. The museum is located at 480 East Broad St. We will meet at the entrance to the exhibition. For information on this and other exhibitions, visit the Columbus Museum of Art website at: [www.columbusmuseum.org](http://www.columbusmuseum.org). Also see Cindy Motz’s interview with Jim Rutkowski in this issue of *The Photogram*.

✓**33rd Annual MiPHS Photographica Trade Show.** Sunday, October 24, 10:00-4:00PM, Novi Community Center, 45175 W. Ten Mile, Novi, MI. Use the enclosed canary yellow trade show postcard and save \$1 on admission. An exhibit table application form has been included in this issue of *The Photogram*. They are also available on our website: [www.miphs.org](http://www.miphs.org). You won’t want to miss this event!



Tom Halsted shows his stuff at the MiPHS Outdoor Photo Fair & Trade Show co-sponsored by Dave’s Photo Emporium in Ann Arbor on July 24th.

## AN INTERVIEW WITH PHOTO COLLECTOR JIM RUTKOWSKI

Cynthia Motzenbecker

One of our many illustrious members is Jim Rutkowski. He's been an image dealer at our trade show for quite a number of years. You may have seen him at the various antique shows and flea markets in his hunt for Americana, 1950s pottery and paintings, as well as photography. He's there early, too! Here's a little insight into the man and his philosophy of collecting that has resulted in an exhibition at the Columbus Museum of Art early this fall. I hope you will be able to make the trip to Columbus to see the exhibition with MiPHS members and friends on Saturday, September 25.

Michael Hall, Guest Curator for the Columbus Museum of Art, was the catalyst for this exhibition. Although Michael had known Jim and his collection for thirty years, four years ago he and his wife Pat Glascock, Nannette V. Maciejune and Catherine Evans (both from the Columbus Museum of Art) spent an afternoon viewing Jim's photo collection. They were entranced and began to discuss the potential of an exhibition. The exciting outcome is *Family Album: The James Rutkowski Collection of American Photographs*, which opens at the Columbus Museum of Art on September 11. The catalog which accompanies the exhibition has three illustrated essays. The first is "Self, Collected," by Shirley Teresa Wajda, Professor of Social History at Kent State University. It emphasizes the social content of the collection. The second is "Islands in the Stream: One Collector's Photo Album," by Michael Hall, in which he discusses its artistic implications. The third is by Janine Menlove, "The Photographer and the Collector: A Conversation."



At our first interview, Jim had photographs all over his house because the curator was going to come to make the difficult choice as to what would be included in the Columbus show. It was wonderful to see all these magnificent images everywhere one turned, mixed in with all the vintage accoutrements he has collected to match his fabulous 50s home. He certainly has a lot to share! When asked what his favorite photograph was, he responded that it was a relatively current, black and white image of his wife taken for a publication where she works. Jim went on to say that his favorites are his own family images. What is his family's reaction to his collection? They're interested, but he's not growing any new photo collectors. He says his extended family may think he's nuts, but are too polite to say so.

Jim has been collecting since 1972. It's an artistic and socially focused collection, not one that is monetarily driven: "Dollars don't drive me, a relevant piece is more important than the money." Jim's compass point "is to build a significant collection based on art and social history." His photographic tastes are for images which reveal American situations and thus he looks for things which tell him something about our nation. For example, he was an early collector of snapshots well before it became a common practice and he knows there's a story behind each and every photo. It was kind of "unconscious" collecting. Jim has also looked for and found things at a deeper, more spiritual and even dangerous level, such as KKK images. Interested in Americana, he would go to the Saline Antique Market to look for Native American items, folk art, and only lastly, photography. In hindsight, he wished he had had those priorities in reverse: "There's so much more interest in photography now."





Jim's collection is neither an archive nor a hoard, and it didn't happen by accident. Instead, it's a point of view, "an American stew with many masterpieces that bubble to the top when you lift the lid and look in." Jim has the ability to discover an item for both aesthetic and intellectual enrichment. The immensity of the field is analogous to surfing a giant wave. One must be sensitive to what is "the best." He's not interested in collecting simply to fill a niche. It's not like collecting stamps. He wants to discover something new. He has collected images that other people walk by and consider unimportant. As he says: "It's like finding a gold nugget on the ground where others have passed by before." He learns as he goes, always expanding his knowledge.

Jim says a photo is more than an object, it is biography. He illustrated this with a large photo medallion button depicting a man and a woman in separate shots, the faces looking in two different directions. The granddaughter of this couple from whom he purchased it said that her grandfather had murdered her grandmother in a carriage when she had asked for a divorce. That disturbing little tid-bit of information certainly added a lot to the minimal body language displayed on the metal photographic disc.

Jim talked about the importance of daguerreotypes and how he collected them (as we all would have liked to have done) "ahead of the curve." He saw daguerreotypes as the grass roots of photographic collecting. Now the best daguerreotypes are very pricey and can be out of range for a family saving for two college educations. Jim had four very distinctive daguerreotypes from his collection exhibited at and illustrated in *Secrets of the Dark Chamber: The Art of the American Daguerreotype* (1995), an exhibition and publication of the National Museum of American Art (Smithsonian Institution). He spoke of the ever-growing competition in collecting photography. The world appreciates photography more now than ever before, the new as well as the old. That is because photography is ever-changing and expanding in its uses in our everyday life.

There are three levels in Jim's collection: A, B & C is the easiest way for him to explain it. There is a big difference between the exceptional and the ordinary in his eye. The A-group is a deliberate collection of extraordinary images. This includes a daguerreotype of a chemist posing with bottles and laboratory equipment which also records the man's horrific, chemically damaged face. Also included in this group is his best Native American photography. It also has a disturbing KKK family image of a 4-year old child speaking to a gathering of 3,000. The B-group contains great photos, but they are things he would be willing to part with to help build his collection. In the C-group are the images that he brings to our trade show. (Take note!) In addition, Jim organizes his images by themes, reflected in a manuscript for a book on his collection which he calls "Evidence of Reality." The headings, which reveal the range of his photo collection, include Spirit and Body, Dominance Over Nature—Dead Birds, Boys to Men—Passive and Aggressive, Sailors—Romance of the Sea, Occupations, Women—Strength and Love, Old Fashioned Patriotism, Native Americans, Masks and Motives, and African Americans—Love Thy Neighbor. He has some mini collections as well, exemplified by his fascination with motorcycles as a child. That fascination is reflected in a motorcycle collage on display at the Columbus exhibition.

Jim has also championed Howard Ross, who recently died. Ross was a chemist for Corning Glass in the 1950s, came to Detroit and worked with glass for Ford. He did his photographic work with photomicrographs. He was a scientist and a serious camera guy. He even patented a specialized camera filter of didymium glass, which gave a rosier tint to color film. Howard Ross's work enjoys a dominant place over Jim's mantelpiece.



Looking at photographs has had a social, intellectual and creative impact on Jim. They give him a deep, quiet pleasure, similar to those who are calmed by petting animals. He also likes discovering new concepts and ideas and things in his photos. He also uses their ideas to stimulate his own creative work in metal sculpture. Jim easily combines his love of photography with his love of primitive art and modern industrialism. Although folk art shaped his identity as a young collector, he has matured into a serious photo collector who has gained a vast amount of knowledge along the way. So if you notice Jim scooting through the early morning flea markets with a grin on his face, you can bet he has made another discovery to add to his collection.

*Jim Rutkowski was born on the east side of Detroit and attended Osborn High School. He earned a B.F.A. from Wayne State University and a M.F.A. from the Cranbrook Academy of Art with a major in sculpture and a minor in painting. He has taught studio art at Macomb Community College off and on for 25 years. He and his wife Kristine along with his children Evan and Page live in Beverly Hills, MI. Cindy Motzenbecker has been an electrical engineering technician for the US Army for 26 years. She's married to Peter Motzenbecker, who has been very understanding (tolerant!) in her collecting of photographic images. They live in Royal Oak, MI. Cindy provided the digital images for this article.*

**Family Album: The James Rutkowski Collection of American Photographs** will be on exhibition at the Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH, September 11, 2004—January 2, 2005. Monday Closed, Tuesday-Sunday 10:00AM-5:30PM, Thursday 10:00AM-8:30PM. For more information, visit the museum's website at: [www.columbusmuseum.org](http://www.columbusmuseum.org)

## GROUP FOUR, 1964-1968

Bill Rauhauser

On November 29, 1964, the *Detroit News* published an article by feature writer William T. Nobel with the following headline: "Photo Gallery opened here for pros and amateurs." His article reflected the ideas he and I had discussed in an interview in the Kresge Court of the Detroit Institute of Arts a few weeks earlier. During the interview I had expressed my concerns that progress among local photographers was being hindered by the narrow rules and regulations of the camera club judges and by antiquated operating rules and regulations. All attempts to achieve a more contemporary approach was discouraged. It must be understood that at this time the camera club offered the only place one could show work in metro Detroit and indeed anywhere outside of the New York area.



Exterior of the Group Four Gallery on Indiana Avenue at Grand River in Detroit. Andee Seeger, photo.



Interior of Group Four Gallery with (left to right) Joe Dworkin, Bill Rauhauser, Russ Pfeiffer, Jack Vastbinder, Gerald Bray and Max Sholz. *Detroit News*, photo.

Mr. Nobel's article stated that in order to offer an alternative to the stagnant camera club environment, Bill Rauhauser and four of his associates (Jack Vastbinder, Max Scholz, Russ Pfeiffer and Eizo Nishiura) had opened a gallery called "The Group Four Gallery." At the time we did not appreciate the significance of opening a purely photographic gallery or how well it reflected photography's growing acceptance as an art form.

My interest in photography began in high school. What little money I had was spent at the Silhouette Camera Shop located at the corner of Grand River Avenue and Indiana. The shop was owned by Fred Eggert who patiently answered all my questions and eventually invited me to become a member of the Silhouette Camera Club which held its meetings in the rooms over the shop.

Like most clubs the Silhouette Camera Club was organized around a monthly print competition. The membership was divided into three groups (beginners, advanced and salon) based on their degree of competence. Prints were judged on technical excellence, composition and on how well they met the monthly assignment. Points were then awarded based on how well the print met these criteria. Each print was subjected to analysis by the evening's critic, usually a member of the salon group. The best prints were submitted to yearly salons held in cities around the world; acceptances were added up and the results published in the *American Annual of Photography*. These salons offered virtually the only place where the serious photographer could exhibit. For a few years in the early twentieth century, the Detroit Institute of Arts allowed the Detroit Salon to be hung in one of their galleries; but in the 1950s the director of the museum refused to continue this practice, citing the poor work and stating that it was not up to DIA standards.

The organization of the clubs, as well as subject matter, methods of printing and presentation, followed the traditions established by the pictorial movement of the late nineteenth century. By the early years of the twentieth century that tradition had begun to weaken. It was replaced by what was referred to as the New Photography, which was influenced by photojournalism and the Bauhaus, an art school established in Weimar, Germany, in 1919. The development of the small hand camera had a tremendous influence on both these movements.

By the 1950s photography was rapidly becoming recognized as a significant art, but in a very different form from its pictorial traditions. The movement in this country had its beginning in New York and slowly worked its way west. In 1951 Edward Steichen visited Detroit to speak at the DIA. A small group of about 15-20 people heard his talk about an exhibition he was planning for the Museum of Modern Art in New York to be called *The Family of Man*. He invited everyone to submit work.



Interior of the gallery with Max Sholz and his friend. In this view the photographer reversed an enlarger lens and mounted it inside the camera for the panorama effect. John Naslanic, photo.



When *The Family of Man* opened on January 26, 1955, it began its sensational journey in becoming the most popular exhibition in the history of photography. The photographs in the show were a clear indication of what was taking place in the photographic world. In addition, in 1952 Minor White published his first issue of the very influential journal *Aperture*, and on May 13, 1954, Helen Gee opened the Limelight Gallery, a combination coffee house and photo gallery in New York City. During its seven year existence, many of the world's great photographers were shown. While all this was happening, the DIA

informed the Detroit Salon Committee it could no longer hold its annual exhibition in the museum's galleries. In exchange, the DIA began for the first time to include photographs in the Annual Exhibition for Michigan Artists where they could be judged along with all other entries.



Gallery interior with photographs by Andee Seeger. The exhibition ran from February 14 - March 14, 1965. According to Andee, the building stood on the corner of a sharply angled intersection. No two walls were parallel in the building. Not an optical illusion: the gallery walls really were at odd angles. Andee Seeger, photo.



Taken at the opening of the gallery on May 24, 1964. Max Sholz stands on the right talking to an animated Ms. Boram.

I first became aware of the potential of the New Photography on seeing an exhibition of the work of Cartier-Bresson at the Museum of Modern Art in 1947. I realized its superiority compared with what I had become accustomed to in the camera club. I enthusiastically attempted to change the direction of its members, but made little headway. They did, however, allow me to add a fourth membership group to the traditional three. There would be no assignment, no points given and no judging. Instead, there would be a general discussion of each print. I did attract a few members to "Group Four." One of them, Floyd Radike, worked with me to write a manifesto which reflected our views. It was published in the club paper *Exposure* in early 1958; the first prints were submitted to Group Four on May 13, 1958.

The Group Four manifesto criticized the club's adherence to the antique rules and regulations of the Photographic Society of America (PSA), which tended to channel members into producing conventional and stereotypical work. It soon became apparent that the members were not interested in change. So I left the club and convinced a number of like-minded friends that we should work together in an attempt to energize the photographic community. As a group (which we referred to as Group Four after the name established in the camera club) we proceeded to exhibit work, both ours as well as other deserving photographers, in whatever space we could find. The most successful of these was an exhibition held at the Birmingham Art Center in 1963. Howard Dearstyne, who had studied with Mies van der Rohe at the Bauhaus and worked with him in Chicago, was featured. Also included were works by Harvey Croze, Jane McIntyre, Bob Wagner and myself. I decided at this point that we should establish a gallery that would be available on a permanent basis and would be exclusively for showing photographs. The initial group included, beside myself, Max Scholz, Eizo Nishiura and Jack Vastbinder.

I talked to Fred Eggert about renting the store facing Indiana Avenue. Part of the building was owned by Fred and contained the Silhouette Camera Shop which fronted on Grand River. Fred agreed to rent the store for \$25 a month and immediately installed a unit heater. We cleaned, painted and built display boards.

The grand opening of Group Four Gallery took place on May 24, 1964. The first exhibition featured the work of Robert Boram, an automotive photographer for the Ford Motor Company. Boram was followed by Joe Clark, Andee Seeger and Robert Wilson, among others. I had contacted Harry Callahan and Ed Bailey but was unable to complete arrangements. Over the next few years we added Gerald Bray, Joe Dworkin, Russ Pfeiffer and Frank Dropsho to the group. While we enjoyed large enthusiastic groups at each opening, traffic fell to a trickle between openings and the number of photographs sold was embarrassingly few. It soon became clear that the gallery was not going to be a success and not worth the time, effort and money to continue. In 1968, after four years, we decided to close.

Even though the Group Four Gallery was not a successful financial venture, I believe it did exert some influence on the local



photographic community by acquainting it with the potential of photography as a viable art medium. It was the first purely photographic gallery in the Detroit area. In her book *Limelight*, published in 1997, Helen Gee claims to have had the first such gallery in the United States based on her belief that Alfred Stieglitz's 291 Gallery was more involved with painting than photography. Based on this logic, I believe I can claim that the Group Four Gallery was actually the first photographic gallery in the country and perhaps the world. Gee's gallery was primarily a coffee house.

*Bill Rauhauser is Professor Emeritus of Photography at the Center of Creative Studies in Detroit. He has exhibited his works at numerous galleries in SW Michigan and has lectured on the history of photography at galleries, museums and universities. His photographs have illustrated well-respected publications. Bill wrote an article about the Silhouette Camera Club in The Photogram 26, no. 6 (May-June, 1999). His most recent publication (co-authored with Marty Magid) was Bob-lo Revisited (2003). After years of collecting photo-books and prints, he now collects cameras, especially Leica. Bill lives in Southfield, MI.*

## ***THE EDISON INSTITUTE TINTYPE STUDIO: CELEBRATING 75 YEARS***

Janice G. Schimmelman

The Tintype Studio has reopened its doors at Greenfield Village in Dearborn, Michigan. Although tintypes are no longer made there, it is wonderful to be able to step inside the gallery and imagine what it must have been like to sit for a photograph in the 19th century. Few such studios exist today (I visited such an establishment in Scotland once). Built overnight for the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of Thomas Edison's electric light and the opening of the Edison Institute (The Henry Ford) on October 21, 1929, it was originally located on Christie Street opposite the Post Office. Based upon 19th-century models, it was a modest, one-story, wood clapboard structure heated by a wood-burning box stove. The studio was divided into three rooms. One entered a short entrance hall. To the left was a small "primping" room. To the right was an even smaller darkroom. Before you was the gallery—open and well-lit by both a large skylight constructed of glass "shingles" and a mullioned sidelight.



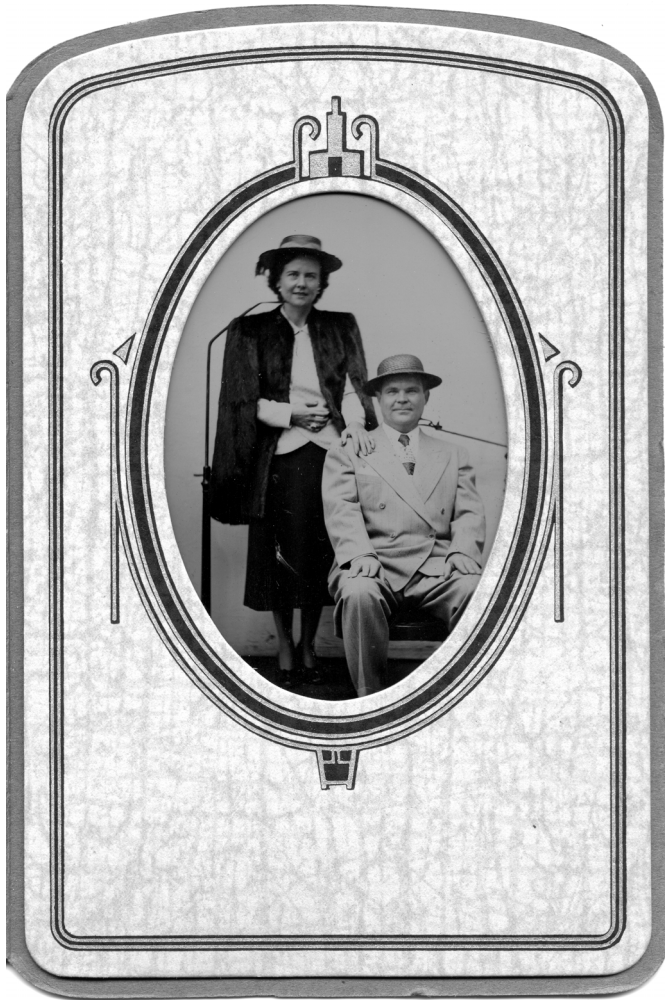
*Snapshot of the Tintype Studio (left), from an amateur snapshot album of structures in Greenfield Village, ca. 1930-35.*

Charles H. Tremear (1865-1943) was the Tintype Studio's first photographer. Trained by the Detroit photographer William J. Walker, he made both tintypes and daguerreotypes at the studio until his death in 1943. Before becoming an auto worker at the Highland Park Ford plant, he had built a traveling car for making tintypes (first located on Fort Street then on Gratiot in Detroit) which he used during his photographic sojourns in southern Michigan and northern Ohio. Such cars he noted often became chicken coops when they lost their original purpose. Later he used a portable photographic house which could be shipped in sections, and occasionally he set up a tent at local fairs. Dick Wolfe, the first president of MiPHS, worked at the tintype studio in the 1970s.

Postcard of the Tintype Studio, ca. 1938. A tintype display panel has been added to the right of the door. This is part of a series of postcards of the buildings at Greenfield Village.



Upon entering the studio one saw a green velvet drape separating the “priming” room from the short hallway. Inside was the requisite mirror to be used by the discerning sitter, an old portrait album on a mahogany table, a small library of early photographic manuals and journals for those with a more scientific interest in the process, a print of George Washington and his family, a copy portrait of the French inventor of the daguerreotype Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre taken by the Meade Brothers, and a copy portrait of the quintessential American inventor Thomas Edison, from a daguerreotype taken by Tremear on December 4, 1930 (Edison’s last visit to the Institute).



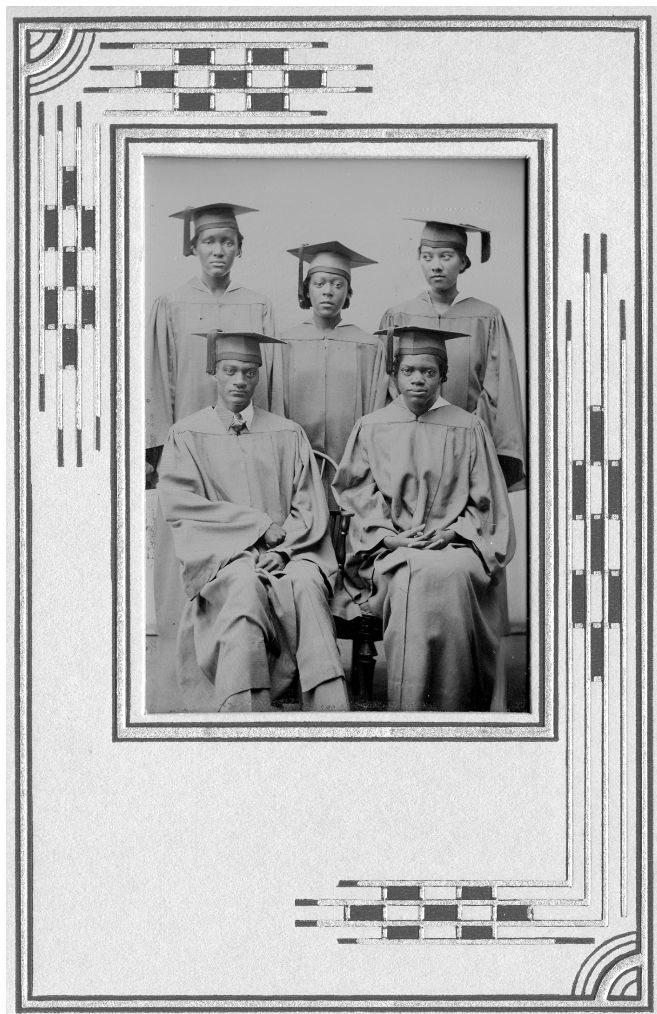
The gallery was separated from the entrance and the priming room by a black velvet curtain which helped to control the light in the gallery. Large sheets of white tissue paper (or muslin) hung from wires beneath the skylight to modify the sun’s intensity. A white screen provided the backdrop for most tintypes, although a dark screen was preferred for daguerreotypes. A moveable reflector of white canvas focused light on the sitter and a tissue-paper fan (three feet in diameter) was used to cast shadows on overly bright areas in order to visually separate them from the white background. Three chairs were available for sitters: an early 19th-century Windsor chair with ash spindles, poplar seat and maple legs, a red plush chair with a circular arm rest, and a blue plush chair from the Foerster Gallery in Detroit (est. 1869) with a double removable back (one full back, the other a semi-circular rim for resting one arm while sitting). The several head rests available in the gallery were also from the Foerster Gallery. Tremear used a four-lens camera resting on a three-foot tall movable stand. Plates were prepared using a wet-plate process, standard for making tintypes prior to 1880, but not popularly used by contemporary street tintypers. Exposure was timed by a pendulum made of a small brass ring hanging from a piece of string one meter long. Each swing of the pendulum equaled one second. All tintypes were reversed.

*Fashionable Couple*, ca. 1940. Posing stands have taken on a comical function in this tintype. They playfully reveal rather than conceal their function as stabilizing instruments.



The closet-like darkroom was originally lit by a kerosene lamp fitted with a movable red-glass screen. The studio was set up to have a small window in the darkroom covered with red paper, through which light from a kerosene lantern in the entrance hall could shine through, but the light was insufficient under which to work. Above the darkroom door were shelves which held the paraphernalia of the photographic process: boxes of compounds and chemicals, plate holders, etc.

*Sitting on the Windsor Chair*, ca.1935. This handsome gentleman has taken a relaxed pose on the Tintype Studio's Windsor chair. His hand cups the back of his neck and he smiles confidently at the viewer. He is obviously either comfortable with himself, the photographer or the situation. In any event, he is not the typical tourist to the Village.



Framed panels of portrait images covered the walls of the gallery. Behind the stove hung a group of daguerreotypes made in 1850-54 by Sterling & French from Canandaigua, New York. Among the well over one hundred contemporary tintype portraits of famous individuals shown in the studio were those of inventor Thomas Edison; prizefighter Joe Louis; editor of *Time*, *Life* and *Fortune* magazines Henry R. Luce; actors Helen Hayes and Tex Ritter; and photographer William H. Jackson. The price for four tintypes in 1938 was only fifty cents.

The month before the Edison Institute opened its doors on Monday, October 21, 1929, America had experienced its greatest economic growth; the stock market boomed. Less than a week later, the market began its downward spiral (Black Thursday). By Tuesday, the 29th it was over; the Great Depression had begun. How did the Tintype Studio fit into this historic moment? Like the Institute itself, it began as a celebration of American ingenuity at a time of great prosperity. As the Depression wore on, it also provided a concrete look at a knowable and nostalgic past—a tangible reassurance during a decade of uncertainty. This fall marks the 75th anniversary of the Tintype Studio at The Henry Ford. Congratulations!

*African-American Graduates*, ca.1935. The five matriculating students have taken their tintype photo most seriously. The girl in the back on the right has been distracted by something or someone to her right. Keeping in mind that tintypes made in the Tintype Studio were reversed, one must assume that she is looking through the studio's mullioned sidelight.

Most of the material for this essay came from an anonymous manuscript, which includes "Reminiscences" by Charles H. Tremear (October 1939), see "The Tintype Studio," ca. 1939-40, ms, Benson Ford Research Center, The Henry Ford. For an excellent article on Charles H. Tremear as a daguerreotypist; see Dave Tinder, "Charles Herbert Tremear: The Patriarch of Twentieth-Century Daguerreotypy in America," *The Daguerreian Journal* 1993 (The Daguerreian Society, 1993): 45-73. All photographs in this article are from Jan Schimmelman's collection.

*Jan Schimmelman teaches art history at Oakland University. She has published books and articles on 18th-century and 19th-century American art bibliography, as well as American Photographic Patents, 1840-1880. A collector of tintypes, she is the editor of The Photogram. She and her husband John Cameron live in Rochester Hills, MI.*

### NEXT IN THE PHOTOGRAM

*"History of the National Photographic Association"*

James Jensen



*Girl Wearing Nifty Knee Socks, ca. 1935. This girl sits on the blue plush posing chair with its double removable back and delightfully engages us with her smile.*

## PHOTO-HISTORY CALENDAR

### Exhibitions:

September 8-December 5: *The Photography of Charles Sheeler: American Modernist*, Detroit Institute of Arts, Detroit, MI, [www.dia.org](http://www.dia.org)  
 September 11-January 2: *Family Album: The James Rutkowski Collection of American Photographs*, Columbus Museum of Art, Columbus, OH, [www.columbusmuseum.org](http://www.columbusmuseum.org)

### Trade Shows & Events:

September 11: **MiPHS** - Visit to the Detroit Institute of Arts—Photo Exhibition & Tour: *The Photography of Charles Sheeler*, 10:00AM  
 September 12: Chicago Photographic Collectors Society, International Camera & Image Show, Oak Brook Marriott, near Chicago, IL, [www.chicagophotographic.org/shows](http://www.chicagophotographic.org/shows)  
 September 12: London Photograph Fair, Bonnington Hotel, Bloomsbury, London, England, [www.photofair.co.uk](http://www.photofair.co.uk)  
 September 12: Marty Raskin Postcard & Paper Show, Holiday Inn, Troy, MI, [info@martymap.com](mailto:info@martymap.com)  
 September 19: Wally Jung Postcard Show, Holiday Inn, Midland, MI, [postcardwally@msn.com](mailto:postcardwally@msn.com)  
 September 19: Detroit Photorama USA, Sheraton, Novi, MI, [www.photorama.com](http://www.photorama.com)  
 September 25: **MiPHS** - Visit to the Columbus Museum of Art—Photo Exhibition: *Family Album*, 3:00PM  
 October 3: Chicago Camera Show & Sale, Radisson Hotel, Schaumburg, IL, [www.photorama.com](http://www.photorama.com)  
 October 3: Cologne Photo Fair, Köln, Germany, [www.koelnfoto.com](http://www.koelnfoto.com)  
 October 9: Wally Jung Postcard Show, Kalamazoo Fair Grounds, Kalamazoo, MI, [postcardwally@msn.com](mailto:postcardwally@msn.com)  
 October 10: Cleveland Photorama USA, Cuyahoga County Fairgrounds, Berea, OH, [www.photorama.com](http://www.photorama.com)  
 October 17: Photographic Historical Society of Canada, Photographic Fair, Soccer Centre, Toronto (Woodbridge), Ontario, [www.phsc.ca](http://www.phsc.ca)  
 October 17: MPM All Image Show, Holiday Inn, Emeryville, CA, [www.mmpmpresents.com](http://www.mmpmpresents.com)  
 October 23: Detroit Camera Show & Sale, Holiday Inn, Southfield, MI, [www.photorama.com](http://www.photorama.com)  
 October 24: **MiPHS** - 33rd Annual MiPHS Photographic Trade Show, Novi Community Center, Novi, MI, 10:00AM-4:00PM  
 November 7: London Photograph Fair, Bonnington Hotel, Bloomsbury, London, England, [www.photofair.co.uk](http://www.photofair.co.uk)  
 November 11-14: The Daguerreian Society Symposium, Newport, RI, [www.daguerre.org](http://www.daguerre.org)  
 November 13: Wally Jung Postcard Show, Cobblestone Events Center, Mason, MI, [postcardwally@msn.com](mailto:postcardwally@msn.com)