



# The Photogram

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No. 2A Beau Brownie cameras in all five colors.  
On top are black (left) and blue; the bottom shows green, rose and tan.  
Rick Soloway, photo.

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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 501(c)3 non-profit corporation chartered by the State of Michigan.

The MiPHS welcomes new members. Dues are \$25 per year (January 1- December 31), \$30 outside the USA, \$15 for students with valid ID. For information and application forms, call 248.549.6026, visit us online at [www.miphs.org](http://www.miphs.org) or write to:

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## MIPHS ANNUAL DINNER & PRESENTATION CHRIS SCHNEBERGER

This year's Annual MiPHS Dinner and Presentation, SATURDAY, APRIL 18, features Chris Schneberger and stereo photography.

With settings taking place in the early 1900s, his surrealist narratives are told through stereo images that combine fact and fiction into imagery that will amaze you. Midway through the program Chris will discuss how he created and staged these masterful narratives. Schneberger teaches photography at Columbia College in Chicago and at the Evanston Art Center. As an active photographer with a B.F.A. from the University of Florida and a M.F.A. from Indiana University, sources of inspiration for his work include Lewis Carroll, Juliet Margaret Cameron and William Mumler.

The evening will be held at the Birmingham Athletic Club, 4023 West Maple Road (just east of Telegraph Road and adjacent to the west side of Oakland Hills Country Club), Bloomfield Hills, MI. Reception with cash bar 6:00PM. Dinner 7:00PM. Lecture after the dinner. Dinner is \$36 per person, and must be paid in advance by Friday, April 10. Seating is limited. Reservations are required. A reservation form is included in this issue of *The Photogram*, or visit our website at [www.miphs.org](http://www.miphs.org). There will also be a SILENT AUCTION to benefit MiPHS, so please donate a photo item and bid generously. Make your reservations now for an enjoyable evening that you won't forget.

## MiPHS PHOTOGRAPHICA SHOW & SALE

Mark your calendar now for SUNDAY, OCTOBER 25, for the Annual MiPHS Photographica Show & Sale. It will be held at the Royal Oak Elks Hall, 2401 E. Fourth Street, just south of 11 Mile and west of I-75.

## JUST LIKE BEING THERE: A COLLECTION OF STEREO PHOTOGRAPHY

MiPHS member James Jensen recently curated an exhibition of stereo photography drawn from his collection at LUMA (Loyola University Museum of Art) titled: *Just Like being There: A Collection of Stereo Photography*. The exhibition surveyed the diversity of subjects (portraits, exotic cultures, local scenery, occupations) and processes from the early years of stereo photography through the beginning of the twentieth century. The exhibition was held from January 31 through March 8, 2009.

## THANK YOU

This is the first color issue of *The Photogram*. It has been funded in part by the generosity of MiPHS member Ralph London. — Ed.



# Beau Brownie Guide for Collectors



Figure 1. No. 2A and No. 2 Beau Brownie cameras in rose. Rick Soloway, photo.

by Ralph London

People often have trouble correctly differentiating certain Beau Brownies, those attractive cameras that came in two sizes, each with five colors: black, blue, green, rose and tan (see cover illustration). For good reasons, it is somewhat challenging to recognize the color of particular cameras, but there is a simple way to get it right. Also noteworthy are the cameras' short time of production in the early 1930s and, given the current value of some of these cameras, the original selling prices. Other facts about the Beau Brownie complete this guide. Keep it handy for show-and-tell presentations, camera shows, email discussion groups, critiquing eBay listings and studying for an appearance on *Jeopardy*.

The Beau Brownie cameras were introduced in October 1930 and discontinued in 1933, according to Brian Coe, *Kodak Cameras: The First Hundred Years* (1988). The Beaus appeared in just two yearly Kodak catalogs, the 1931 and the combined 1932-1933 (but not 1933-1934). In the 1931 catalog it is stated that the Beau Brownies were new items. Each catalog included only three colors: black, blue and tan. Coe states the other two colors, green and rose, were sold in 1930 and 1931 only (Figure 1). *McKeown's Price Guide* says green and rose were made for just three months. A Kodak ad in the December 6, 1930 *Saturday Evening Post* pictured the rose camera and listed all five colors, confirming that at least by then the five were available (Figure 2. I would like to thank George Layne for this reference.)

The renowned industrial designer Walter Dorwin Teague is credited with the appearance and styling of the camera for Eastman Kodak Company, a major client of his. Teague's U.S. design patent number 83,021 for the decorative front plate was filed on July 26, 1930 and issued on January 6, 1931 (Figure 3). The very striking design, as described in the 1932-1933 catalog, "consists of an etched plate, ornamented with highly polished nickel and inlaid with colored enamels that complement the unusually handsome, 'foam-grain' covering of the body." Each front plate featured two harmonizing and contrasting enamels. The 1931 catalog advertised cases with matching handles: "Beau Brownies fit snugly into trig [stylishly or jauntily trim, according to my dictionary], newly designed cases, covered and colored to

match the cameras. The cases are lined with suede-like material, and their tapering bottom has sufficient space for two extra rolls of Kodak Film." The later catalog emphasized that the cases were small in size, extra-compact and had *spare* space for film. The two long wooden spacers inside the case are different to protect the winding knob side of the camera.

On the smaller No. 2 Beau, the catch on the side for locking the camera is above the winding knob while the same catch on the larger No. 2A is below. The ring around the lens on the No. 2 is thinner than on the No. 2A. The doublet lens on the cameras reduced the depth of the body compared to the No. 2 and 2A Brownies on which the Beau Brownie was based. The words, "Doublet Lens," were highlighted on the front plate. The shutter took either instantaneous or time exposures through one of three stop openings (diaphragms). Choices were made using two slide controls. Compared to the middle opening, the larger opening admitted twice the light, the smaller opening one-half.

What did Teague's creation cost? In the catalogs, the No. 2 Beau using 120 film for 2-1/4 x 3-1/4 pictures was priced at \$4.00. The No. 2A using 116 film for 2-1/2 x 4-1/4 pictures was priced at \$5.00. The cameras with a case cost \$1.50 more. The flimsy cardboard box shipped with each Beau showed color graphics similar to the front plate pattern (Figure 4).



Figure 2. Part of *Saturday Evening Post* ad, December 6, 1930, shows No. 2 rose camera and lists all five colors.

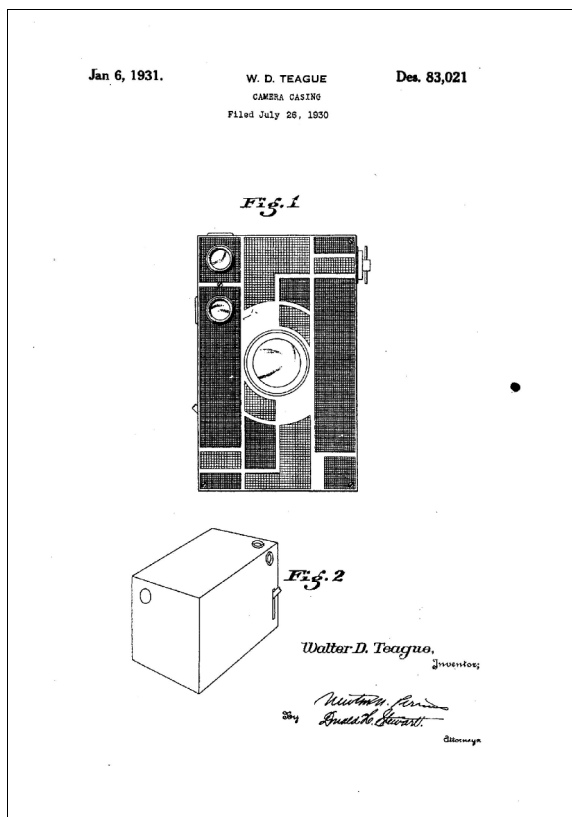


Figure 3 (left). Design patent number 83,021 drawing in black and white for the front plate.



Figure 4 (right). Cardboard box for No. 2 Beau Brownie in Charlie Kamerman's collection. The box was acquired with a tan camera, but the box might be for the rose camera. Rick Soloway, photo.





Figure 5. Blue (left) and green No. 2A Beau Brownies showing the three rings for identifying the color of the camera. Rick Soloway, photo.

Few boxes have survived and then usually without the end flaps. Caring for the camera and case was included in the instruction book (coded 10-30-CH-75, believed to mean October 1930). It warned against possible fading of both coverings from “prolonged exposure to direct sunlight.” To clean both “use Ivory Soap and water, sparingly,” not a cleaner with alcohol.

To identify the colors, look at the ring around the lens, the ring at the winding knob and the (rectangular) rings around the two finders. (Thanks to my wife Bobbi London for creating this key many years ago.) This method makes it easy to spot whether the front and back sections are from cameras of different colors because the ring at the winding knob is on the back section, and the other three rings are on the front (Figure 5).

Two other potential methods of identification fall short. The first, using just the two shades on each front plate works well only for rose and tan since blue and green are difficult to decide, while black has a different problem. The black version has areas on the front plate often described as

maroon or burgundy, or as the 1931 catalog explained, “On the black model, color and contrast are introduced by means of a pleasing maroon.” Because a rose camera is currently so valuable, black is sometimes optimistically and hopefully confused with rose. Teague presumably had no reason to anticipate that his choice of tones for blue and green or his use of “pleasing maroon,” would later cause identification problems for collectors. The second method, using the decorative foam-grain body covering works for black, rose and tan, but still not for blue and green.

One final point is that, only for the No. 2 Beau Brownie, Coe wrote, “green and rose models . . . were not available in UK, although a maroon version was available.” I believe “maroon version” is a reference to the common black model with maroon because three knowledgeable, longtime collectors from the U.K. all told me that they think they would have seen a different maroon version if it existed.

Readers are now guided for their forays into the world of the Beau Brownies.

MiPHS member RALPH LONDON (London@imagina.com) collects mainly early wood and brass cameras from the 1840s to the early 1900s plus relevant catalogs and ads. A retired computer scientist living in Portland, Oregon, he contributes frequently to photohistory publications. For many years he edited the *Cascade Panorama* for the Cascade Photographic Historical Society. He also maintains an extensive topical collection of postage stamps on cameras and photography.

Figure 1. *Remington Portable.*

# MAKING DAGUERREOTYPES

By Gregory Popovitch

In 2002, I went to a camera show. I didn't go because I was looking for anything in particular. I just went because I love photography, and I enjoy looking at cameras and photographic equipment. Sometimes I discover an interesting gizmo, which I just have to buy because it is ingenious or well made, or because I just want it. In any case, that day I didn't buy anything, but what I learned did have a profound effect on my life ever since, and completely reoriented my photographic interest.

Of course I knew about daguerreotypes, the first photographs made using Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre's process during photography's early years. I saw examples regularly at camera shows, but I hadn't paid them much attention. It seemed that the nicer ones were often kept in display cases, and since I had no particular interest in these, I had never asked to take a closer look at them.

Well that day, as I walked down the aisles, I happened to glance at a nice daguerreotype portrait in a union case. Since it was just lying down on the table, I picked it up and really looked at it. I was immediately taken by the beauty of the image, which seemed to pop right out of the plate. Indeed, it seemed as if the lady photographed was coming back to life in front of my eyes.

After tilting the image back and forth in my hands and admiring it for a while, I struck a conversation with the seller. He wanted \$175 for the piece, which with hindsight seems pretty reasonable, but please remember that I wasn't really interested in daguerreotypes at the time.

Still, I marveled at the beauty of this image, and especially at the exquisite detail the daguerreotype process was capable of reproducing. The seller must have sensed a serious interest

on my part, as he kept talking up the piece, even mentioning it was early and surely made before 1845. Now, that piqued my curiosity, and I asked how he could state this with such certainty. It is easy, he said, when you know about daguerreotypes. If you don't believe me, just go ask Tony down there who is an expert.

So I walked over to Tony, introduced myself, and asked the question. "Hard to tell for sure, he answered, but I would likely date it to the 1850s." OK, I guess the "experts" disagree! I was ready to walk away when Tony asked me why I am interested in this image, and in daguerreotypes in general. This was the start of a wonderful two hour discussion, which I had to reluctantly end in order to go have lunch with a friend who had been waiting for me patiently.

It turned out that Tony is Tony Ventimiglia, a MiPHS member, who was incredibly kind in sharing his vast knowledge about daguerreotypes and photography in general. He collected hard images himself, he told me, especially those with an Oriental theme. But what really twisted my world was when he said: "I even bought the equipment required for making daguerreotypes, but I haven't had time to start making them yet."





Figure 2. *Vertical Trees and Snow.*





Figure 3. *River View, Chesaning, Michigan.*



Figure 4. *Tuolumne Meadows.*



Figure 5. *A Daguerreotype Experiment.*

Making daguerreotypes! Of course I knew that there were many practitioners of alternative processes, like platinum, gum bichromate, cyanotype, etc., but I had never heard of anyone making daguerreotypes. It hadn't even crossed my mind that it could be done! But thinking about it, why not? If they could make them at the dawn of photography, using primitive equipment, without electricity, and with a rudimentary understanding of chemistry, surely it should be easy today with all our technological advances. Well, of course, it turned out to be difficult. Very difficult! But I'm getting ahead of myself.

One thing for sure, I had made up my mind that day. I would make daguerreotypes. Before leaving the show, I took a last glance at the daguerreotype which had started it all, again marveling at its beauty, but now with a new excitement stemming from the expectation that this would become my photographic process of choice.

First, I read all I could find on the process. A few technical manuals from the 1850s have been scanned and made available on the internet. Those, along with Charlie Schreiner's excellent web site, [newdags.com](http://newdags.com), became my first sources of information. Soon enough, I began to understand the main steps of the process and the principal articles of equipment which would be necessary.

Unlike in the 1850s, you can't walk to your corner photographic supplier and purchase a daguerreotype equipment set, complete with the required chemicals and a box of silvered plates cut to the appropriate size. In addition, doctors in the 1850s believed that mercury possessed wonderful therapeutic properties, so much so that unfortunate patients were directed to ingest, or even inhale mercury using a specially made apparatus. As you can imagine, few safety precaution were taken by our

Figure 6. *Piano.*

Daguerreian ancestors, and very likely many of them suffered severe consequences in their older age.

We now have a better understanding of the toxicity of the chemicals involved, and I knew that a lab-grade fume hood was an absolute requirement for indoor work, especially since I had decided to forego the Becquerel process and to jump straight into the mercury process. The fact that I was trained as a chemical engineer might explain my temerity. At least I was used to manipulating dangerous chemicals, and felt reasonably confident that I could do so safely.

It took a while to get ready to start my experiments, almost a year actually, but my excitement was growing as each little piece of the puzzle found its place and I was getting closer to practice daguerreotypy. One surprisingly difficult item to obtain were the daguerreotype plates themselves, thin sheets of copper, either plated or clad, with a layer of pure silver on one side. This last hurdle was solved by purchasing a lot of ready to use plates from Mike Robinson, an experienced modern daguerreotypist, who once came down from his Toronto studio to demonstrate the process to MiPHS members in Detroit.

My first attempts were extremely frustrating. I was photographing a B&W silver print on a daguerreotype plate, but I wasn't able to get even a hint of an image. I tried changing the variables (polishing, exposure, development, etc.), but still no image was forthcoming. Finally, after a couple weeks of experimentation, I tried a longer exposure time of five minutes and a faint image appeared. To say I was delighted would be an understatement! Although my joy was hard to understand for my family, I knew I was now on my way to becoming a daguerreotypist. Figure 5 shows one of these original experiments on a quarter plate.





Figure 7. Woodward Furniture Factory.

That was six years ago. Since then I have built more equipment, learned to make my own plates, and discovered a lot of ways *not* to make a daguerreotype. Most of the brilliant ideas I tried led nowhere, and had more than my share of failures and enduring problems. But all the hard work and disappointments fade away when the Daguerreian gods smile at you and let you have a nice image. To me, the beauty of the daguerreotype process is without equal, and I agree wholeheartedly with Grant Romer who said:

“Photography was born perfect,  
and has been going downhill ever since.”

GREGORY POPOVITCH grew up in France, where he developed (pun intended) a lifelong love for photography, apparently triggered by the dipping of his fingers into the developer in middle school. Early on, he was more interested in street photography, and worked on releasing his inner Henri Cartier-Bresson during lonely walks through Paris. After moving to Michigan, he adopted a more introspective approach, started using larger and larger cameras, and delved with some amount of success in the daguerreotype process. In real life, he works as a software development engineer, and enjoys raising his three beautiful children.



Figure 8. Savannah Gravestone of Johnnie Kriete.



## BOOK REVIEW

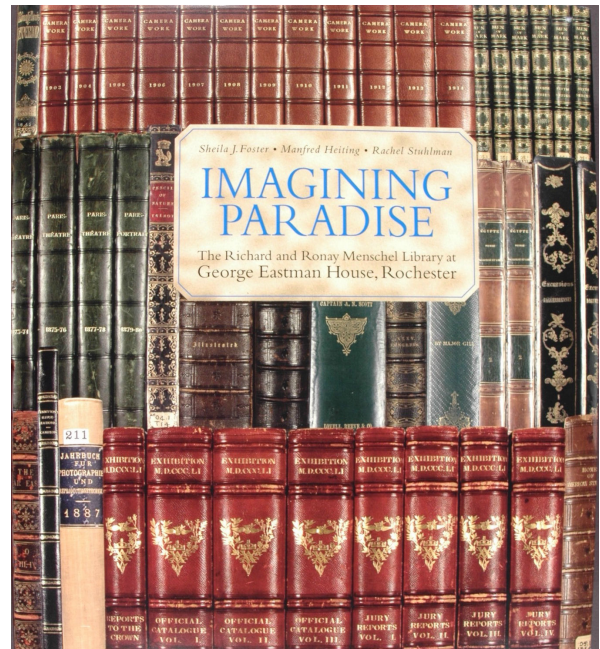
### IMAGINING PARADISE: THE RICHARD AND RONAY MENSCHEL LIBRARY AT GEORGE EASTMAN HOUSE, ROCHESTER

Edited by Sheila J. Foster, Manfred Heiting and Rachel Stulman  
Steidl and George Eastman House, 2007

12.5 × 11 inches, 288 pages

There's an old saying that "You can't judge a book by its cover," or in this case by its dust jacket. That certainly applies to *Imagining Paradise: The Richard and Ronay Menschel Library at George Eastman House, Rochester*. For once you look inside this book there are many surprises.

To begin with, it is filled with beautiful illustrations combined with wonderful layout and design for which much of the credit goes to Manfred Heiting. And being co-published by Steidl, the printing is excellent. But even more important is the scholarship. There are twenty-eight well written essays by authors such as Sheila Foster, Grant Romer, Rachael Stulman, Larry Schaaf, Denise Bethel and Pamela Roberts, to name a few.



For those interested in the daguerreotype there are three essays of special note. With "Daguerre in the Library," Grant Romer discusses Daguerre and the many different editions of his manual, including research on which was indeed *The First Manual*. Rachel Stulman provides a very informative discussion on the early reproduction of daguerreotypes on paper in "The Daguerreotype Translated," which includes *Excursions Daguerriennes*, *Incidents of Travel to the Yucatan*, and *The Gallery of Illustrious Americans*. Finally, as the holder of the largest collection of Southworth & Hawes material, Eastman House's collection of S&H's studio records is covered in "Southworth & Hawes and the Business of Daguerreotypy" by Sheila Foster.

But there is much, much more: "The Paper Multiple: Talbot's Invention and Early Photographic Books"; "Images of the Illustrious, Portraits of Celebrity"; "The Stereoscopic Illusion"; "India: The Jewel in the Crown"; "Travel and Exploration"; "Reverie and Description: Maxime Du Camp, Francis Frith, and the Exploration of the Middle East"; "Nineteenth-Century Photographic Journals"; "Early Photojournalism"; "Documentation of War"; "Emerson's Vision"; and "Alvin Langdon Coburn." In "Far East," Denise Bethel points out that early photographic illustrated books of the Far East are among the rarest of 19-century travel books. This geographical area was one of the last to be covered by the camera and she specifically examines volumes that document Japan, China and Cambodia.

In addition to being an informative resource, *Imagining Paradise: The Richard and Ronay Menschel Library at George Eastman House, Rochester*, provides a few pleasant surprises in its after-section which includes "George Eastman House Notable Alumni." There you will find photographs of Anne Tucker, Larry Schaaf and Keith Davis in their much younger years. Oh, to be young again!

The foundation of Eastman House's vast holdings of photography is based on numerous collections that were acquired over many years, beginning with the holdings of Kodak's research library. However, the personal libraries formed by four collectors are highlighted in the book's lead-off essay, "Portrait of a Library." The story of each of these collections (Eder, Cromer, Boyer and Sibly) points out the significance of forming a research library that complements a photographic collection. From my own experience I can appreciate the importance of being able to not only increase my knowledge of photography's rich history by having a personal library, but also the pleasure of having it at arms length for conducting research. Most serious collectors and connoisseurs of photography I know take great pride in their personal libraries. When Beaumont Newhall retired from George Eastman House as director of the museum he said, "The one thing I most hate to leave here – besides my friends and emotions – is the library at Eastman House."

*Imagining Paradise* is the perfect compliment to Keith Davis's recent book, *The Origins of American Photography: From Daguerreotype to Dry Plate, 1839 – 1885*. Both are wonderful references for anyone interested in photographic history and are highly recommended.

— LEONARD A. WALLE

**CORRECTION** : An error occurred on the final page of Leonard Walle's article, "John Martin Schaeberle: Michigan's Forgotten Astronomer and His '40-foot Camera,'" in the last issue of *The Photogram* 36, no. 4 (February-March 2009): 14. It should have read:

Although he never married, John Schaeberle's legacy lived on through his camera-telescope. After first being used to photograph the 1893 solar eclipse in Chile, it continued being assembled and operated to photograph thirteen more total solar eclipses on six continents in far away places, such as India, Sumatra, Egypt, Flint Island (500 miles northwest of Tahiti) and Australia. Schaeberle's camera-telescope was finally retired after being loaned to H. D. Curtis, Director of the Astronomical Observatories of the University of Michigan, for his expedition to Maine to photograph an eclipse in 1932. By now this well-used instrument is long gone. What remains is a collection of more than 100 glass photographic plates measuring up to 18 × 22 inches that record total solar eclipses that occurred over almost a 40-year period.<sup>17</sup>

And how did the glass photo in the brass window hanging frame that documents the inaugural use of Schaeberle's 40-foot camera-telescope end up at a Michigan Photographic Society Annual Photographica Sale? I have concluded that it belonged to John Martin Schaeberle, was disposed of when his Ann Arbor home on Second Street was vacated and sold, surfaced at a garage sale or resale shop such as the Treasure Barn, acquired by a MiPHS Ann Arbor camera collector, and eventually made its way to the MiPHS Show held five years ago.

Relatively little is on record at the University of Michigan Bentley Historical Library concerning John Martin Schaeberle other than his obituary, record of service at the University, a report on his 1893 eclipse expedition, and a few family photographs. During his relatively short career this quiet, hard-working astronomer's crowning achievement appears to have been the expedition he led to Chile where, using his 40 foot camera-telescope for the first time, he produced some of the best large-scale photographs of the solar corona that have ever been made. The black and white glass photograph discussed in this article is a record of that achievement, and I strongly suspect it was something that Schaeberle treasured and proudly displayed. — Ed.



Dietmar Haenchen, photo.

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hope this finds you in good form for impending spring. Soon the outdoor flea markets will lure you away from the winter doldrums.

I'd like to thank all who attended Doug Aikenhead's wonderful presentation on "Real Photo Postcards from the Early 20<sup>th</sup> Century," at the William L. Clement's Library, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. Doug (left) had us mesmerized for over an hour as he dazzled us with his prose and astounding images. We also appreciated the exhibition on Abraham Lincoln at the library, including numerous cartes de visite.

The final details are almost in place for the new fall show. As you may recall, the Novi Community Center dramatically raised their rates over twenty times. The Board did not want to raise table rates or the entrance fees so we've moved the show to the Royal Oak Elks Hall just south of 11 Mile and west of I-75. Mark your calendar for October 25.

It's dues AND election time. So please do return both your membership dues and ballot so we can update the information going into the directory.

Drive safely and see you at the shows!

— CINDY MOTZENBECKER

## PHOTO-HISTORY CALENDAR

April 18: **MiPHS**—Annual Dinner & Presentation (Chris Schneberger), Birmingham Athletic Club, Birmingham, MI, reception 6:00PM, dinner 7:00PM. Reservations required, [www.miphs.org](http://www.miphs.org)

April 25: Photographica Show, PHSNE, Americal Center, Wakefield, MA, [www.phsne.org](http://www.phsne.org)

April 26: Detroit Camera Show & Sale, Holiday Inn, Southfield, MI, [www.photorama.com](http://www.photorama.com)

May 2: Michigan Postcard & Paper Show, Knights of Columbus Hall, Clawson, MI, [postcardwally@comcast.com](mailto:postcardwally@comcast.com)

May 3: International Camera & Image Show, Holiday Inn Chicago North Shore, Skokie, IL, [www.chicagophotographic.org](http://www.chicagophotographic.org)

May 10: London Photographic Fair, Bonnington Hotel, London, [www.photofair.co.uk](http://www.photofair.co.uk)

May 16: Ohio Camera Collectors Society Show, Haimel Center, Columbus, OH, [historiccamera.com](http://historiccamera.com)

May 31: Photo Fair, Photographic Historical Society of Canada, Soccer Centre, Woodbridge, Ontario, [www.phsc.ca](http://www.phsc.ca)

June 13-14: Bièvres Photo Fair, Bièvres, France, [foirephoto-bievre.com](http://foirephoto-bievre.com)