



Photographica Digest

Western Photographic Historical Society

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March 2017

ANSEL ADAMS BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

Matin Kebschull

Ansel Adams 115th birthday (Feb. 20, 1902 – Apr. 22, 1984) was celebrated in grand style in a well-attended (600 to 700 people) Center for Creative Photography (CCP) event, co-sponsored by the WPHS, on February 18th. Before the event, the WPHS members present got a private showing of the archive drawers by Chief Curator, Becky Senf. She selected her favorite pieces throughout his career to show for this event.



Ansel Adams Birthday Cake

Following this there was a print viewing on the second floor. This was preceded by an introduction to the CCP by the Director (former president of the U of A), John Schaefer, who described the historical event leading up to the foundation of the center and how Ansel figured into this.

The print viewing was of selected Ansel's prints from the vault, featuring many that I have only seen in books before (such as El Capitan, Moonrise and others), and described in detail how the image was taken and the prints made. Seeing these prints, first hand in all their magnificence, really astounded me with the depth of detail. The images of El Capitan in prints of various sizes really amazed me.



Archive Drawers with Becky Senf

Three of us from the club brought cameras from their collections of various vintages, that were representative of the cameras he would have used during his career. Mark Sawyer demonstrated the large format picture taking process in great detail to fascinated spectators. Matt Cook gave lively hands on demonstrations of the film loading process. I demonstrated the smaller medium and 35mm format cameras. Many people were fascinated to learn that Ansel was a pioneering user of instant photography. He used cameras spanning their products spanning from their first offerings to the sx70. To my surprise, a retiree from Polaroid, who worked on a team that interfaced with Ansel Adams directly, filled me in on several details.



Mark Sawyer Demonstrating a Large Format Camera

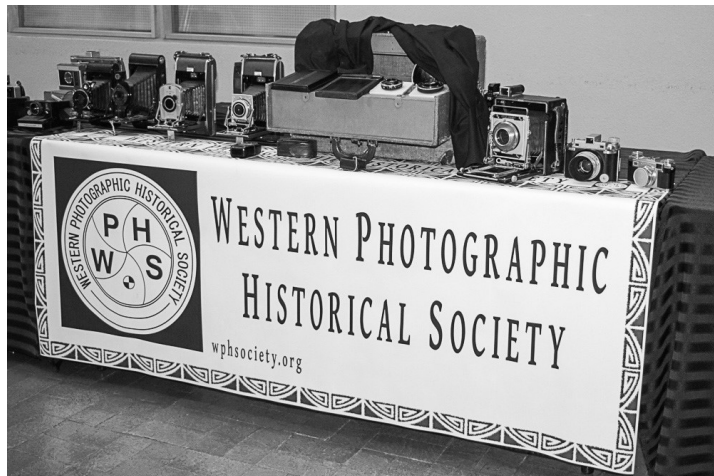
There were other spectators (of all ages) that were equally interesting on other subjects. But mainly the information went the other way. We described everything from the most basic details of f-stops and shutter speeds to how film holders worked and so on (occasionally stumping me more often than I like to admit).

Many folks had not heard of the WPHS and we got a chance to show the flag to them. There were several folks that were very gratified to know that we were in existence, including one teary-eyed woman that couldn't thank us enough. We handed out quite a bit of club and show information.

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

All in all, I believe it was a very beneficial event to both the CCP and the WPHS, and a model of how we can collaborate in the future.



New WPHS Table Sign

More information about Ansel Adams birthday calibration can be found at these University of Arizona publications:

www.wildcat.arizona.edu/article/2017/02/ua-celebrates-birthday-of-photographer-ansel-adams

uanews.arizona.edu/photos/happy-birthday-ansel-adams-your-ua-friends

BOLSEY'S B SERIES

Ron Kuykendall

One of the more interesting cameras from the postwar era was the Bolsey B series. Initially conceived as a plastic bodied model A, it reached the market as the cast metal bodied model B in 1947. Clever design delivered two extra frames on each roll in a very compact camera design; the body was trapezoidal with a flat front. It was heavy for its size, but fitting the hands nicely if they were small- and was often advertised as a ladies' camera that fit the purse. It was available in black, white, red, blue, grey and possibly pink leather coverings. There was no way to grip the camera with the left hand as with larger cameras like the Perfex or the Clarus. You held the camera with the fingers- the shutter release was at the right fingertips and the focus was at the left fingertips. Film wind however was a knob on the top deck making it slow shooting multiple pictures. Otherwise the camera was excellent, feature by feature, a competitor to the C-3, except for the fixed lens mount. In 1949, a clever double exposure feature was added. The Wol-

lensak f/3.2 44mm lens was roughly equivalent to the Kodak Anastigmat and possible a little sharper than the Argus Cintar. The Wollensak was found on many postwar American cameras, either as the Anastigmat or as the Velostigmat. The shutter was Wollensak 10-200. The coupled split-image rangefinder had its own viewing window. The viewfinder window was centered over the lens eliminating almost all parallax. There was an extensive offering of accessories and kits- filters, flash and strobe, microfilm kits, medical kits, darkroom accessories and more.



The most advanced versions, the BB and B Special, seen usually in the medical or the dental versions, had either a set of three snap-in extension rings or helical with three click stops matching the extensions of the rings. Framing was by metal brackets in both sets. The dental set featured a strobe attached to and surrounding the lens. There was also a microfilm set featuring a stand and a projection head. The B22 of 1949 had a mechanical link to provide a linked focus-to-aperture feature for flash. About 1950 the model C appeared- a B body with a reflex viewer in the top plate with the viewing lens attached to the image lens- again with very little parallax due to the closeness of the two optics. The top plate retained the split-image rangefinder, allowing the user a choice at all times. The C series marketed the smallest 35mm SLR marketed and the most versatile, accepting all the Bolsey accessories. I carried one in a shirt pocket in high school. The linked focus/aperture feature for easier flash pictures, appeared on the C series in 1953. In 1955, to lower production costs, the B-2 became the Jubilee, with a Steinheil 2.8 anastigmat and a Gauthier full range shutter. The original model A design was produced in 1956 as a plastic bodied less expensive version without rangefinder. Bolsey ceased production about 1957, after the bookkeeper left for the Caribbean with the company's bank account, and a couple of unsuccessful attempts to reorganize. Bolsey himself died shortly thereafter.

Meeting Notice

We are meeting at the Ward 6 Tucson City Council offices at:

3202 E. First Street, Tucson.

The meetings, for the foreseeable future, will be normally on the first Thursday of the month.

The next meeting will be on
Thursday, April 6th.

**Come
Join Us!**

March 19, 2017

59th Annual WPHS
Camera and
Photographica
Sale, Swap, & Show



Admission

Hotel Tucson

475 N Granada Tucson, AZ

General Admission: \$5.00

Hours: 9:30 to 2:00

Students/Military Free

Info: 520-544-7784 with ID

Wanted

Fisher, McIntosh, Dynaco, Marantz, Pioneer, etc...

Tube & Solid State

1940's, 50's, 60's & Up, Mono & Stereo Consoles,
Receivers, Turntables, Tuners, Amplifiers.

Reel to Reel Tape Decks. Etc.

JENSEN, KLIPSCH, ALTEC, JBL, AR, etc...

Speakers, working or not.

Contact Imre at 520-544-7784 or 775-287-9538(cell)

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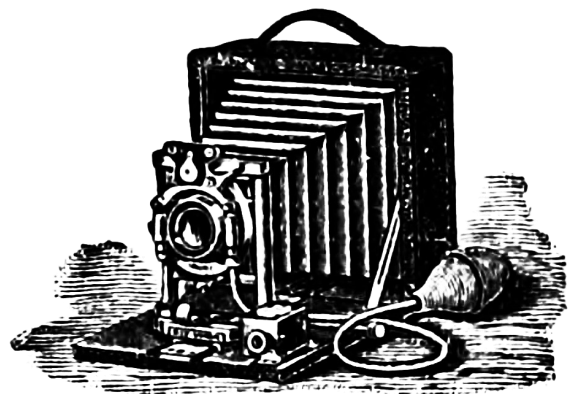
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TALES OF THE BRICK

Matt Cook

How the hell did we aspire to this clunky chunk of Bakelite? How the hell did this become one of the bestselling cameras of its time- (1938-1966)? Argus sold some 2,000,000 of these Argus C-3, brick-sized, brick-shaped, brick-heavy sonsabitches before they were done. Was it that good a camera? Or, was it maybe the best that could be expected of the technology, materials, marketing media, and demands of the camera market of its time? Or, what was it?

Don't get me wrong, I'm not hating on The Brick. I'm just trying to get into its historical context, fifty-plus years after I owned my first C-3. When I started into Photography, it was with a \$6.50, Argus A2F, and an obscure 127, 620, or 120 rollfilm rangefinder I only remember as a "Wollensak", I then moved up to an Argus C-3, "Brick," because it was also a flash camera. This was 1961. I was a Sophomore in at Stevens Academy in Hoboken, New Jersey. I became the sports photographer on the school newspaper and yearbook, by default (by de fault that there was nobody else that was willing to do it. And, by de fault that there was this girl I wanted to impress by it.)

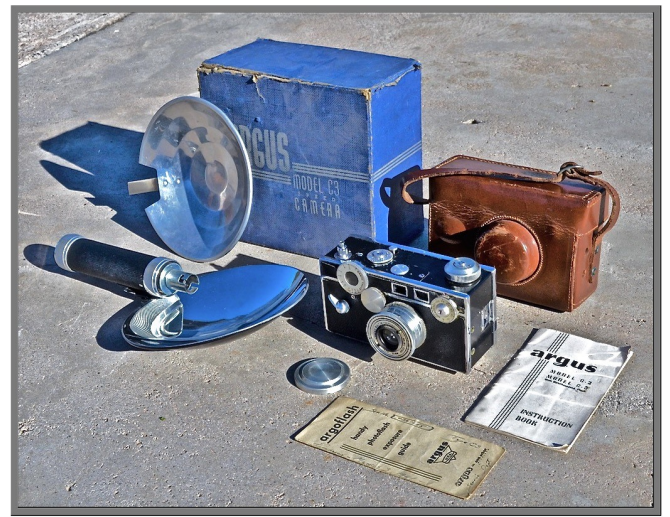
I bought the Argus C-3/Brick because the whole outfit, including case and flash unit cost less than \$20.00, and because our editor had dibs most of the time on the school's 4X5 Speed Graphic... with Tri-X film packs: light-tight metal containers that held a pack of 16 sheets of flexible photographic film. (I'd like to write something about living with nothing but film, way back in the Day, in Pre-Digital-Historic Times.)

The Brick was the camera with which I learned much about photography, especially about unintentional double exposure. If you did not reflexively wind the film to the next exposure, you were in danger of committing a double-exposure, when you cocked the shutter, not realizing you hadn't wound onto the next exposure. Although your double image could be interesting in a post-modern, ironic sense, that action usually just ruined two images and made you look stupid on your contact sheets, or worse if you had sent your film through the drug store development service (where you just knew that the intelligent, cool, and even pretty, to your nerdy eye, girl at the photo counter of the drug store had looked through the photos in the pick-up bin, and must have seen your double exposures. You could read it in her smile – just a little too broad – just so subtly forced.)

The Brick was also the camera with which I learned flash. I learned how to use flash from Rudy, our Newspaper and Yearbook editor, and the possessor of that Speed Graphic and the

key to our small physics department-closet darkroom.

One day Rudy, a Senior, and the actual knowledgeable photographer at school, took me out to the park across the street from school to show me how to balance flash with daylight. I had a 20 exposure roll of Panatomic-X in the camera and a sleeve of Sylvania Blue-Dot, Press 25 bulbs. Rudy had me make photos of him in full, mid-day overhead sun, first with no flash, then with full flash, then with flash with one layer of handkerchief over the flash, then two layers, and bracketing each series of exposures. Rudy taught me to keep a small spiral-wire notebook and a pencil in my camera case, to make notes on each exposure (metadata before metadata was metadata).



An Early C-3 Outfit, Purchased March 3, 1941

The contact sheet, the first one I ever made, was quite interesting. It not only showed me the variations in technique, but since Rudy had me bracket one-stop-under, right-on, one-stop-over, I first really saw what one-stop looked like. It was also the first time I used the Kalart Synchro-Sun exposure calculating dial, a rotating dial graph which coordinated film speed and lighting condition with the range of equivalent shutter speed and f-stop combinations and the type of flash-bulb you were going to use. It was more reliable for a ranked amateur than an electric exposure meter (which, incidentally, actually worked by the principle for which Albert Einstein was awarded his Nobel Prize in Physics, in 1921).

Today, I've got a few Bricks with which to offer some future neophyte basic instruction in classical photography. I've even got seven one-hundred foot rolls of Kodak Panatomic-X film, with 1970 expiration dates, in the fridge. Last time I tested a strip, (years ago) the results were acceptable.

Finally, for historical accuracy, you must be made aware it's much more historically appropriate to shoot film photography at EI/ASA 25- 32 than at 400, because real photography, especially with a camera like the Brick, is supposed to be a physically and existentially demanding effort to wrest a deliberate image from the cruel world of decisive moments, as they tick along much too fast. No Knight-in-Shiny-Armor ever slew his dragon with an Armalite AR-50, 50 Caliber, Sniper-Rifle from a half-mile away. A thorough search of the world's myths and legends will confirm the old runic adage, "When you're gonna slay a dragon, ya' gotta use a big, heavy, unwieldy sword... and you gotta be close enough to feel his, or worse, her, fiery breath!"

Otherwise it's just another picture.

OUR CENTER FOR CREATIVE PHOTOGRAPHY

The Center for Creative Photography, on the University of Arizona campus, is the premiere research collection of American photographic fine art and archives, promoting creative inquiry, dialogue, and appreciation of photography's enduring cultural influence.

The Center houses over 100,000 photographic artworks by more than 2,000 artists and an archival collection of over five million objects. Beginning with the archives of five renowned photographers—Ansel Adams, Wynn Bullock, Harry Callahan, Aaron Siskind, and Frederick Sommer—the collection has grown to include some of the most recognizable names in 20th century North American photography including W. Eugene Smith, Lola Alvarez Bravo, Edward Weston, and Garry Winogrand. The research collections at the Center provide an unparalleled resource for research, exhibitions, loans, and traveling exhibitions.

ATTENTION WPHS MEMBERS

The club is interested in purchasing your camera collection. Please contact me at:

Imre dePozsgay
520-544-7784



MARCH MEETING

Brian Nemetz

Rachel Castillo-Larriva, manager at Photographic Works, gave an informative presentation on photographic services offered by Photographic Works and on The Curious Camera Competition. Rachel show samples of images printed on metal, on acrylic blocks and on ceramic tile, all services offered at Photographic Works. Photographic Works still offers processing of B&W and C41 color film, but, sadly, not E-6.

Rachel also presented information on Curious Camera Competition — a photo contest where entries must be shot on film with "curious cameras", e.g. pinhole, vintage, instant or toy cameras. (See the article below for more information.) Rachel had a show-and-tell of several toy cameras (Holga, Diana,...) and pinhole cameras (such as the Ilford Obscura Pinhole Camera). 'LowFi' at its best!



CALL TO ARTISTS

ArtsEye Gallery and Photographics Works is holding their 9th Annual Curious Camera Event 2017.

The Curious Camera Competition is a friendly photo competition calling on artists worldwide to embrace the unpredictability and fascination of photography using their favorite cameras and processing techniques.

Images must be made with one of the following camera categories or processing techniques:

- Pinhole: homemade or manufactured
- Plastic Lens: Holga, Diana, Blackbird Fly, etc.
- Vintage: older than 1960; ex: No. 2 Brownie, Leica II etc.
- Instant: Polaroid, Fuji Instax, Impossible, etc.
- Alternative Process: Cyanotype, Vandyke, Gum Bichromate, Salt, Lumen, etc

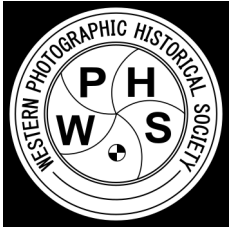
Submission deadline is Sunday April 16th, 2017, Midnight.

For complete details on the Curious Camera Competition, please visit:

www.curiouscamera.com

The above information was collected from the competition's web page.





Western Photographic Historical Society

PO Box 14616 - Tucson, Arizona 85732-4616

www.wphsociety.org

Email: postmaster@wphsociety.org

UPCOMING EVENTS AND EXHIBITS

Mar 19th 59th Annual WPHS Camera and Photographica
Sale, Swap, & Show

Apr 6th Monthly Meeting

We'd like your help in developing new programs especially product presentations. Please contact Robert Suomala, Program Chair, at 520-399-2796.

MONTHLY MEETINGS

Next WPHS Meeting April 6th

Join us at a new meeting place, the Ward 6 Tucson City Council offices at:

3202 E. First Street, Tucson.

Consignment and member camera sales, show and tell and a brief program are featured every month (except the last two summer months). The meetings run from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM with show programs beginning at 7:00 PM.

All are welcome!

WPHS is a non-profit
501(c)3 organization