

# snap



# shots

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## Trip Down Memory Lane

Along with the cancellation of the April *Photographica*, the May trip scheduled for the Davis Museum at Wellesley College was also cancelled because of the COVID-19 social distancing requirements. Instead, take a trip down Memory Lane; view photographs from past *Photographica* shows, PHSNE auctions, and PHSNE field trips. Photos courtesy of Dick Koolish.

At this time, no determination has been made concerning a meeting in June. It will depend on the status of the health crisis in late April or early May. Updates will be posted on the website—go to [phsne.org](http://phsne.org) for the latest information.

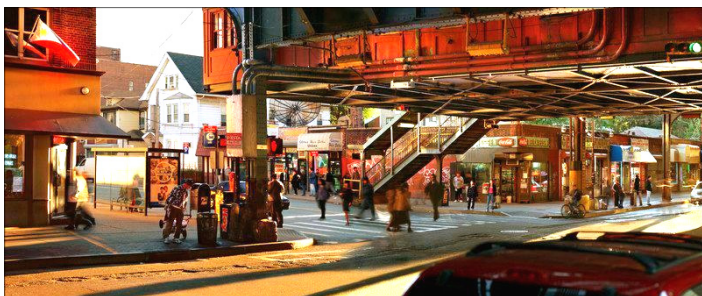




## PEM Receives Major Gift Of Asian Photography

Adding to its already substantial holdings, a donation of over 1,600 prints by the Joy of Giving Something Foundation elevates the Peabody Essex Museum to a top ranking institutions for Asian Photography in this country and in Europe.

Much of its previous collection was from the 19<sup>th</sup> century; the gift adds significant representation from the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It is worth noting that twenty-five percent of the donated image are works by women.



Woodside, Jeff Chien-Hsing Liao

Almost 125 artists are represented, either photographers of Asian descent or those working in Asia. The PEM is planning *China Through the Lens*, a traveling exhibit that will showcase some of the newly acquired images.

### PHSNE Membership

*New members are invited to join for half the rates for the first year.* Regular PHSNE membership (U.S. and Canada) is \$20 for students, \$40 for individuals and institutions, and \$45 for a family; foreign membership is \$50. Join or renew online at [www.phsne.org/join](http://www.phsne.org/join) or [www.phsne.org/renew](http://www.phsne.org/renew), or send a check in U.S. dollars, drawn on a U.S. bank or dollar denominated international money order. Please check the expiration date on the *snap shots* mailing label before sending in dues.

Send payments, changes of address, and other contact information, to Joe Walters Jr, PHSNE Membership Chair, 47 Calvary St., Waltham MA 02453. (Call: 617-826-9294; email: [membership-chair@phsne.org](mailto:membership-chair@phsne.org); or use the Web form at [phsne.org/application](http://phsne.org/application)).

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### Souvenir Photo Viewers: a Touch of Nostalgia

At a time when a single souvenir or vacation photo can be shared instantly with friends, family, and their friends and families, it's interesting to think back to a time when that single image was placed inside a simple viewing device where it could be viewed by one person at a time.

"Souvenir photos weren't always so easily reproduced. My grandmother's nightstand displays a bouquet of key chains, each a truncated pyramid with a hole on one end and a piece of flat, once-white plastic snapped onto the other. They resemble loupes for examining gemstones, and most are emblazoned with the name of a resort, in tacky metallic gold" (<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/10/15/magazine/letter-of-recommendation-souvenir-photo-viewers.html>).



To view the backlit transparency, you have to lift the device to the light and look through the small opening. "The photos themselves are largely unremarkable, as they weren't intended to prove that a person *mastered* a vacation—by capturing the photo intended to amass the most desirable number of 'likes'—but only that he or she took one."

These photo souvenirs were popular from the 1950s to the 1990s. The images were often taken and sold at major tourist sites. The current version of the souvenir photograph is being captured on film, sometimes without knowing it, riding an elephant, whitewater rafting, on a cruise, etc. At the end of the day, you are "encouraged" to purchase a glossy photo in a cardboard frame.

These viewers were a more modern version of Stanhopes, microphotographs visible without a microscope, that were often inserted into jewelry.

## Love that Leica—the R4

A PHSNE member is thrilled with the newest acquisition to his collection, a Leica R4. “The Leica R4 family of Leica 35mm SLR cameras was launched in 1980. The initial design was a joint venture based on Leitz's co-operation agreement of 1972 with Minolta, whose own version was launched in 1977 (Minolta XD series). The subsequent models introduced improved electronic features and TTL flash metering” ([http://camera-wiki.org/wiki/Leica\\_R4%E2%80%93R7](http://camera-wiki.org/wiki/Leica_R4%E2%80%93R7)).



The R4 series included the R4 Mot electronic Leica R4, Leica R4 chrome, and Leica R4s-2, all produced between 1980 and 1985. In 1984 Leica offered a special limited edition R4 in gold and brown skin.

Features of the R4 include a Leitz mirror box, metering, and a distinct body design. The same body



and chassis were used for all subsequent Leica R models through to the R7. “Like the trend setting Olympus OM-1, the R4 was much smaller and lighter than its predecessors. Also the design was sleek and rounded in contrast with the starkly angular appearance of the R3.”

At its 1980 launching, the camera was named Leica R4 MOT Electronic, suggesting advanced technology. But with the motor drive optional, the name did not catch on and it soon was known simply as the Leica R4. With the motor drive optional, “Leica recommended using only 36 exposure rolls as the camera would stop at exposure 36, preventing film tear out.” Two SR44 or LR44 batteries are required to power the R4; without them only 1/100s and bulb shutter speeds work.



The R4 features a metal bladed electronically controlled shutter. The manual settings include whole stops from 1s to 1/1000 sec., X flash sync, and an automatic stepless from 8sec. to 1/1000 sec. A 1/100 sec. mechanically timed speed was provided in event of a dead battery.

“Although developed as a joint venture, Leitz made their version somewhat differently, especially the exposure metering system and the top cover design and controls. Unfortunately three of the four series of this camera were encumbered with electronic circuits problems. This relates to cameras with serial numbers below 1.600.000. However, those working after 20 years, or more, are either repaired or not likely to give problems” ([https://camerapedia.fandom.com/wiki/Leica\\_R4](https://camerapedia.fandom.com/wiki/Leica_R4)).



## BCC Digitizing Its Collection

The Boston Camera Club (BCC) was founded in 1881. From its exhibitions, international photo salons (1931–1981) and interclub competitions, it has accumulated a print collection, by gift and happenstance, which it is now photographing digitally for posterity. All the prints are matted, usually 16"x20", with maker, city, and occasional exposure and printing data recorded on the verso. The makers, most of them little-known amateurs but often professional in skill, lived around the U.S. and as far away as India, Japan and Europe. On the verso of some mats are colorful decals of the camera clubs and other venues in which the prints were exhibited or competed.



On Beacon Hill, Frank Roy Fraprie, early 1930s

Illustrated here is a 10½"x13½" silver-bromide print of the early 1930s, "On Beacon Hill," by prominent club member Frank Roy Fraprie (FRAYP-ree, 1874–1951). The top edge has deteriorated with a bit of silvering. On the verso are decals from San Diego, Minneapolis, Cleveland, Syracuse, Dover, N.H., Quincy, Mass., and MIT. Fraprie was head of Boston's American Photographic Publishing Co., issuer of many books and serials including *American Photography*. A

### PHSNE Meetings

Meetings are usually held on the first Sunday of each month, September to June, at 1:30 p.m. preceded by an open meeting of the PHSNE Board at 11:00 a.m.

### Upcoming meetings:

#### Status of June meeting TBD

#### PHSNE does not meet in July or August

#### Connect to PHSNE Online and by email:

PHSNE's Web site is online at <http://phsne.org>. See <https://www.facebook.com/PHSNE/> for items of PHSNE interest. Comments are welcome, so join the discussion of photo history. Visit <http://phsne.org/member-services/archives/> for PHSNE history and *snapshots* issues. Scheduling changes due to weather conditions or other factors will be posted on this website.

Stay connected to PHSNE via our emails: a *snapshots* e-copy, and *Photographa* show announcements. Sign up at <http://phsne.org/emails>.

prolific author, editor and collector, he wrote many books in the field as well.

Thanks to architecture historian Stephen Jerome of Boston, who identified the scene, we are standing on Somerset Street, not far from the State House, looking north down the slope toward Cambridge Street. The dark façade at right is the building now called John Adams Courthouse, housing the Mass. Supreme Judicial Court. The building looming in the distance, spectrally lit up—did Fraprie do some masking and dodging, artificially brightening it?—is now called the Verizon Building, completed in 1930. The Minneapolis decal is marked December, 1933, confirming the vintage.

But all is not right here. How can the Verizon Building be that bright? Fraprie may have done some masking and dodging here. Also, the upper part of the building is accurate, but the lower parts don't seem to jive. Fraprie may have exposed more than one image onto the paper in that area.

Executing the club's effort are four past presidents—Erik Gehring, Beth Luchner, PHSNE member Jim Luedke and—no stranger to PHSNE, either—Henry Weisenburger (BCC president 1965–1967 as well as president of PHSNE for over five years), not only the Boston Camera Club's longest member by far, having joined in 1954, but indisputably the longest-active exponent of amateur photography in New England. Also assisting is Boston photo historian, PHSNE's Ron Polito.

~Jim Luedke