

PCC Picture Gallery



Have you felt like you've needed to make a big investment in photography equipment in order to join the Portland Camera Club? Fear not because every image on this page was taken with a one time use point-and-shoot camera. The lighthouse image, as seen at our webpage, was shot with a camera that sold for \$1.99! Learn how to take better pictures with your camera on October 16th at the PCC for no charge!



Images by: Bruce Burnham, Lila & Dave Kirkwood, Michael Leonard, and Ed Richardson Jr.

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Three other countries established restrictions nearly identical to Britain's. Belgium's current limits are "one piece of carry-on baggage" but the United Airlines website does not state what dimensions are in effect. Anyone traveling to Belgium or through the country needs to check for details.

France and India also established the laptop dimensions as the largest carry-on. Neither are mentioned by United or Delta. Presumably, they have conformed to the UK rule, but can a traveler be sure?

Another *caveat*: Delta Airlines uses its own slightly more restrictive dimensions. (It probably thought it was being quite clever when it named the dimensions its SizeWise program.) Here, your one piece of cabin baggage can be 22 inches x 14 inches x 9 inches., or about two-thirds the bulk of the UK restrictions.

Another Foreign Danger to Film

It can't be emphasized too often that all baggage will be x-rayed at any airport in Europe—and probably anywhere outside the USA. You have the right to have your film hand-inspected at any US airport (though the security people sometimes glower and act as though as though they're being put upon.)

Not so in foreign airports! Your film *will be zapped*. The security people will tell you it doesn't hurt the film (unless it's a high ISO type), and once time through will not damage it. But you will, in all likelihood, pass through security again—you're planning to return home, aren't you?— and undoubtedly more than once, if you are in transit to another destination or planning another flight later

The problem is that the damage to film is cumulative. Kodak has experimented in this area and states that four passes will not show visible damage. More than four, though, and you will begin to see cloudiness (and one second later, probably use language that would make a sailor blush.)

The solution is to plan to go through as few x-ray machines as possible. And if you bring unused film home after a trip, use it first, so that you don't accidentally take it with you next time.

This caution about x-rays applies only to film users. Digital cameras are in no danger from a zapper.

So for now, photographers shouldn't have too much trouble getting their equipment out of Britain that is, until the next bomb threat – and let's hope it's only a threat.

Sexton Seminar/Workshop Still Has Openings Available

John Sexton got his early training as an assistant to Ansel Adams and later became his technical advisor. In his 30 years as a professional, he has gone on to become one of the country's first-rank photographers, publishing three books, with a fourth due out this fall, and having his images shown widely in galleries and publications. He has led many workshops and seminars across the country.

That's all background. Students of photography and art can benefit from his teaching and experience through a seminar he will hold at the Portland Museum of Art on October 28th. The all-day class will last from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and cost only \$35 .The event is sponsored by the Portland Camera Club and the Capital Cities Camera Club.

Though Sexton is primarily a black-and-white film photographer, his emphasis will be on lighting, composition, subject selection, and choice of equipment— topics that are universal to both amateurs and professionals, whatever their preferences for equipment.

The seminar is limited to the seating capacity of the room. There are two methods of payment: a check, made out to the Portland Camera Club, can be sent to the seminar co-ordinator Bruce Burnham, at P.O. Box 580, Boothbay, ME 04537; or access the club website (address on page one) and click on the Paypal item.

REMINDER— This year sees major changes in the way print competitions are conducted. To enter, prints must now be at the club no later than one week before the competition. Specifically, for October's, by October 2nd.

The Leaves Are Starting to Turn; Here's Where to Find out Where

The foliage season is here, but you don't want to go off on a wild-goose chase, not knowing if the area you're headed for is nearing peak. Here are a few "foliage hot lines" that may give you some guidance before you start out:

Maine: telephone: 1-800-777-0317
Or 1-888-Maine-45 (Dept. Of tourism)
Or 1-800-533-9595
Website: www.state.me.us/doc/foliage/foliage.htm

New Hampshire: 1-800-262-6660 or 1-800-258-3608
Updated on Mondays and Thursdays

Vermont: 1-802-828-3239 (There's no 800 number.)
Also updated Mondays and Thursdays

Massachusetts: 1-800-632-8038 or 1-800-227-MASS

Looking a little farther afield? Here's the New York State leaf-line: 1-800-CALL-NYS

Two Portland Museum Shows Give Opposite Views of Maine

They couldn't be much farther apart in subject matter and tone. One is idyllic and romantic, the other grimly realistic. They're the two photo shows now on exhibit at the Portland Museum of Art.

The first is the Pictorialism show, extended to November 1st, featuring work by Maine photographers who advocated the soft-focus, moody tradition that was prominent in the early years of the Twentieth Century. They tried to make photography imitate painting as a way of elevating their art. Theirs was a serene, often ethereal view of the world, ignoring the mundane in favor of an esthetic of misty beauty. Even city scenes were given a halo of light that disguised the harshness of life, brick and mortar.

The Portland Camera Club's own Francis Orville Libby is one of the highlights of this show. Few photographers went farther than he did in creating a world with no sharp edges. His pictures are all mood,

and the subjects exist only to enhance the mood he desired.

Also featured is Alfred Brinkler, a contemporary of Libby. Though not as hard-edged as most modern photographers are, he is more devoted to portraying his subjects than to conveying a mood. He's realistic, but his focus is on beauty.

The Other Side of the Coin

The second show sees no romance in Maine. On the contrary, it sees little beauty here. It gets down to some of the worse sides of life—poverty, polluted landscapes, urban blight, a struggling middle class, and sweat and despair.

The show is titled, "*Maine: The Way Life Is*", parodying the state's up-beat slogan and saying it's nothing more than a baseless vision. The show is made up of 34 photos, all from Maine photographers, and will remain on view until November 26th..

And yet the pictures have a paradoxical air about them. How do you portray pollution or slums—ugly and repellent—and still want people to study and admire your picture? These subjects are scarcely beautiful, yet as pictures, they have their own beauty and impact through the artistic measures taken to create them. The viewer is simultaneously pulled toward these images and thrust away, and that's the measure of their power to affect the emotions.

Coming away from both exhibits, we may lean towards one or the other, depending on our outlook on life, but you sort of hope we're someplace in the middle. For info on the museum or the two shows, call 775-6148 or go to www.portlandmuseum.org.

Curator to Speak at Club

Susan Danly, the curator of graphics, photography and contemporary art at the museum and director of these exhibits, will be the speaker at the club on November 20th.

She will reprise a presentation she made at the museum as part of a symposium on "*The Luminist Landscape*," which amplified the Pictorialism show. She will speak in general about Pictorialism and concentrate on the influence members of the Portland Camera Club had on the movement both in Maine and in the country, which in those days was very active in

sending its prints and lantern slides to other clubs and to exhibits. As a result of her study to gain background for the show, she probably knows more about the club's early history than any member today.

Correction (Sorta): Inness Photo Still Located in Scarborough Too

Last month's issue of *The Photogram* stated that Inness Photo, one of the longest continuously operating photo stores in the Portland area, had moved to South Portland. True—but no true.

What would have been accurate to say was that Inness Photo had *expanded* to South Portland. The store that has been operating at 201 Route 1 in Scarborough for the last five years is still there. The new store has taken over the former quarters of 60-Minute Photo at 37 Ocean Street, about three blocks from the location Inness had before it moved to Scarborough.

Famed Aerial Photographer William Garnett Dead at 89

You hadn't heard of William Garnett? You've seen his work, though. All by himself, he raised aerial photography to the level of art.

His photographs are in the collections of the Metropolitan Museum of Art and the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC and the Getty Museum in Los Angeles.

Every photographer is looking for that new and unique angle to set his or her picture off from everyone else's. William Garnett not only set off *a* picture from those of other photographers, but he set off *all* of his pictures. He saw what no one before him had seen: looking straight down from 2000 feet could reveal shapes, forms and designs that created compositions as beautiful as any seen by an artist with an easel or a Hasselblad, looking horizontally.

Aerial photography wasn't his invention; it was in existence long before his first flight. But it had been only a utilitarian form of expression, in effect

snapshots used as an adjunct to surveying, geology, land use, and building portraiture. To mix a metaphor, Garnett's approach to aerial photography was ground-breaking.

His studio was a single-engined 1955 Cessna. He did his own flying—alone, and for more than 50 years and 10,000 hours of flying time. He photographed out the window, often banking steeply to get a shot looking vertically downward. His pictures rarely showed a horizon; it was only a distraction from the arrangement of forms on the ground. Forget about that rule of placing your horizon in the upper third of the picture. He knew rules were made to be broken.

These land forms Garnett studied might be sand dunes, expanses of forest, farms or crop land, even suburban street and housing grids, all chosen with an eye to composition, balance, geometric patterns or sweeping lines that are invisible from the ground.

Although his career was a checkered one, he had a life-long passion for photography. He was chief photographer for his high school yearbook, even going up in a biplane in 1933 to shoot the school from the air. He was a commercial photographer and at one time was in charge of a police department's crime-scene photography. His artistic career took hold when he was included in the landmark exhibition "The Family of Man." in 1954. He was associated with Time-Life for 20 years, and in 1968 began an 18-year stint as chairman of the department of design at the University of California, Berkeley, where he also taught. He taught as well at MIT and at the Ansel Adams Workshops in Yosemite.

He published only two books of his work: *The Extraordinary Landscape* and *William Garnett Aerial Photographs*.

When you're next trying for that unusual angle, think for a moment about William Garnett. He found a way to do it every time.

Lost in the Mail: A Nightmare We All Wish We Could Prevent

Ever lost photos in the mail? Let's hope not, but Editor Mike Leonard knows that it can happen, because it recently happened to him.

But the experience wasn't a complete loss. It opened up a window into a back room of a business that we take for granted.

Recently, he mailed a page of slides and a couple of CD's to an organization in Southern Maine. A week later came a phone call: Is there any reason you haven't sent the discs and the slides? It soon became clear: They had been lost in the mail.

In trying to trace the parcel, he was introduced to the Portland Post Office's lost mail department where he learned something very interesting - that lost photos are *not* a particularly strange occurrence at the post office. In fact the post office has an entire bin of photos that have been separated from senders mail. Photos are heavier and much slipperier than sheets of paper and if the sender fails to properly seal the envelope - out can pop the pictures at some point in their journey. Rarely does anyone ever put their mailing address on photos that are sent in the mail. So the post office personnel have no way of knowing how to reunite the photos with the intended recipients -or senders.

So What might Be Done?

Mike was fascinated by this bin of lost pictures. Looking through it, he found what looked to be a set of senior pictures - complete with proofs containing a name and a sitting number. The post office clerk, who had charge of the bin, said that no one had the time to attempt to trace the pictures much beyond looking for a name and address so there they sat in the bin with the rest of the 100 or so pictures.

Mike noted the Studio name, the sitting number, and the name on one of the pictures, via the internet found a phone number to the studio, placed a call and as luck would have it, discovered that the family had ordered a second set of prints on account of some loss - presumably the loss of the photos in the mail. Mike was able to furnish the Portland Post Office with an address to get the prints back to the family who happened to live in Florida. One case solved out of perhaps several hundred.

Now what's the point of this little story? It's this: For one person to try to locate the owners of all these orphan photos would be an immense task. But Mike is hoping that the post office will agree to letting the

Portland Camera Club occasionally take this bin of lost pictures under its wing (so to speak) and let club members have a go at trying to recognize people or to find some manner of identification, such as what Mike did, that might ultimately lead to the return of the lost photos. This might be a service that the club could perform, and while it's certain that many, if not most, pictures would remain orphans, getting even a few back to their owners would be a rewarding experience.

We all know how much we treasure our own photos. The tip here is when sending pictures though the mail, in addition to securely taping the envelope shut, put a return mailing address on the backs of the pictures just incase something did inadvertently happen to the envelope while in transit.

Here's a Little Stocking Stuffer For He/She Who Has Everything

The Portland Camera Club has said frequently that you don't have to have expensive equipment to take good pictures. Of course, there are always those who won't believe that. But what to buy when you just need to have the very best? A fancy Nikon or Canon is still just a Nikon or Canon. Now, at last, the camera has finally come out just for those disbelievers. Leica, after dragging its feet for years, has come out with a digital. It's called the M8.

You might try taking out a second mortgage: the price is just under \$5300. But wait! Fret not! It's not all that bad. Just about every Leica M-series lens made since 1954 will fit the M8. Whew!, All those Leica lenses you tucked away in the back of the drawer when you went to digital are now back in play.

Leica didn't stint when it developed this little machine. It's has a 10.3 megapixel sensor and a 2.5-inch color display. Would you be surprised to learn that it's a rangefinder? Ah, tradition! It takes SD cards for storage and can create compressed JPEG's or uncompressed DNG format images.

You who must have the best will always be aware that you're carrying the best: it weighs in at 20 ounces. A nice touch that will help keep your costs down is a rechargeable battery.

Visually, the new Leica M-8 looks just about like

every other Leica. That is, it comes right out of the 1960s, a really retro, stick-to-tradition appearance. The controls, which are on top, are even more so: you get to set shutter speed and exposure. (None of this flash-in-the-pan automatic stuff!) Except for the rangefinder window, you might think you're seeing a Pentax K1000. What anyone buying one of these needs is a 1967 Cadillac to make his or her image perfect.

Still interested? It'll be released in mid-November, but can be pre-ordered at on-line camera stores now.

Did you detect a little editorializing in this article? Never happen!

Judging Night a Success-- It's How to See Your Own

Judges for the Portland Camera Club's competitions are drawn from among its own members--and some find this a daunting experience. And it can be! But when a potential judge has an esthetic basis against which to rate an image, it becomes a much less tense time. And that's what Judging Night, led by Dave Higgins on September 18th, was on the surface intended to be.

He taught that an image isn't just a pretty picture or a great subject. There are three elements to look for in an image: content (is the image significant?), composition (did the maker make the most of the image by viewpoint?) and technique (was the way the camera was used acceptable?).

But learning to evaluate someone else's images--the stated reason for Dave's presentation -- wasn't the real point. It was to learn to look critically at your own pictures. Especially by taking the time to improve them when you're still looking through the viewfinder.

The Photogram is published monthly, Sept-June, by the Portland Camera Club, Dave Kirkwood / Mike Leonard editors. The club is a charter member of the Photographic Society of America (PSA) and the New England Camera Club Council (NECCC), and is open to all interested in good photography. Contact the club through the website at www.portlandcameraclub.org.

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