

February 17, 2005

Puget Sound Photographic Collector's Society, Inc.

Vol. XXVI, No.6

WHAT	NEXT REGULAR MEETING OF PSPCS
WHERE	DES MOINES MASONIC TEMPLE 2208 S. 223rd St. (Take Midway exit #149 west off I-5...go to first stop light west of Pacific Hwy. South...Turn right.)
WHEN	Thursday, February 17th..7:00 p.m. till 10:00 p.m. (doors open about 6:00 p.m.)
WHY	A short business meeting..auction (one item lot per member please)..door prize..Show & Tell..Member's trade and sell tables (free to members, please cover during business meeting.) <u>Program:</u> Bring to share your favorite non-camera photographica item from your collection. An album, a photo. medal, a Dag. photo, darkroom item, an early catalogue, tripod, figurine, or....?

SHIRLEY PROVIDES LAST CHANCE:

Thats right! If you have an unhappy face on your address label our wonderful Secretary/Treasurer has allowed you one last copy of The Bellows and other Club perks eventhough you have not yet paid your \$20.00 dues for 2005. (if you have paid but still have an unhappy face...Never Mind!!) So, if you don't pay at the meeting, or send payment to Shirley Sparrow..300 Pease Raod..Cle Elum, Wa 98922, you will be dropped from membership. The Club would hate to lose such a nice person as you so please take a moment and join us for our 26th great year.

ED FREY PASSES:

I know all of you who knew him will be as shocked as I to learn that Ed died of a probable heart attack at his apartment on or about January 25th. Ed, who was in his mid sixties, had come west from New England about 12 years ago. He had become a member of P.S.P.C.S. and a partner in Jims Cameras on The Ave close to the University of Washington. Ed was an active Club member and had been on the Show committee in charge of advertising for the past few years. His insightful questions, coments and wry sense of humor will be missed at our meetings..both Club and Show. Ed knew he was not well but kept it hidden from most of us. He will be missed! Ed.

SHOW UPDATE:

As you have just discovered this is the month you receive your display tables sign-up form with your Bellows. If you are a P.S.P.C.S. Club member why don't you take us up on our offer of a FREE 6 Ft. display table for our 25th great Show. Even if you don't have any treasures you want to sell come, take part in our Show Experience Weekend..show off some of your treasures..have fun and maybe win a prize ribbon. One of the best parts of our Club is letting the public see what neat treasures we photographica collectors have. We have twenty tables FREE for the asking. Don't ruminate or hesitate...just do it!!

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THIS MONTH'S MYSTERY QUESTION:

Answer at end of Newsletter

With thanks to the Western Photographic Historical Society:

What 1979-84 Nikon 35mm camera features aperture-priority AE as the only exposure mode? It has shutter speeds from 1-1/1000 and is equipped with a flash sync and self-timer. Interestingly it does not seem to be listed in McKeown's!

**\*\*BACKSIDE INFORMATION\*\***

The January meeting of the Puget Sound Photographic Collectors Society came to order at 7:10 p.m. There were 30 members and guests in attendance. Minutes of our special Christmas meeting were read from The Bellows. There was no tressurers report as Shirley was on vacation. Stan Kirlin took the minutes.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

President Darrel told the membership how he aquired the Baby Brownie New York World's Fair Model box camera pictured in the January Bellows mystery question answer. The camera pictured is his. Jim McKeown took a picture of it for his price guide years ago.

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Bill Kimber gave a short Show report. Everything is on schedule. However, we will have to move the friday night hospitality room location. We will put a map in the sellers packet to direct them to the new location. Don Tempel announced that our guest speaker for our special Thursday evening meeeting on April 21st, that begins our Show Experience Weekend, will be Mr. Mike kessler who will speak on Albums & Images. Mike, who is from southrn California, is one of the top photographica collectors is the Country and is a very knowledgable and entertaining speaker.

**SHOW & TELL:**

Six members showed their photographica Christmas gifts. All were very nice and interesting. Bill Adams showed his Nimslo 4 lens camera and explained how he used it for stereo work.

**PROGRAM:**

Bill Kimber gave a "fire sale" update and showed pictures, taken by Stuart Curry, of the damage. Bill reported that everything he owns, including the remaining phtographic items, are currently in 746 boxes being cleaned one item at a time. He hopes to be back in his redone home sometime in early March when we will all be invited to his house warming and get a look at his empty camera room.

**AUCTION AND DOOR PRIZES:**

Three items were put up for auction. One received no bids. The other two brought in \$29.00 dollars to their old owners.

Bill Adams and Stuart Curry won the door prizes.

Meeting adjurned at 9:25 p.m. for more buying, selling and nummie munching.



THE BELLOWS Newsletter is published 10 times per year by Puget Sound Photographic Collector's Society, Inc. Information for The Bellows should be sent to Bill Kimber 1413 Weathervane Dr., Tacoma, WA 98466-5712 (253) 564-4046, billkimber@webtv.net

The P.S.P.C.S. internet address is [www.pspcs.org](http://www.pspcs.org)

Dues are \$20.00 per year and should be sent to Secretary/Treasurer Shirley Sparrow, 300 Pease Road, Cle Elum, WA 98922 (509) 674-1916, [ssparrow@eburg.com](mailto:ssparrow@eburg.com) P.S.P.C.S. members receive first notification of our 4th Saturday in April yearly show.

PRESIDENT: DARREL WOMACK (206) 244-6831 [DARRELCAM@COMCAST.NET](mailto:DARRELCAM@COMCAST.NET)

The following is by P.S.P.C.S. Member Don Tempel. The rest of you are urged to join Don and send articles to The Bellows. They are always welcome. Ed.

A Famous Graflex Photo  
by Don Tempel

This is a story about a fine photographer, a Folmer Graflex camera, and a bridge called, with good reason, "Galloping Gertie." On a fateful November morning in 1940, circumstances brought these three elements together. In a split second a prize winning photograph was produced.

The photographer was James Bashford, a long time Tacoma, WA newspaper reporter, photographer, and raconteur who wove many a colorful story with both typewriter and camera. Here is a more personal insight

compiled by Mr. Bashford's namesake grandson, James Bell: "On Nov. 7, 1940 James Bashford used his Graflex to record the collapse of the Tacoma Narrows Bridge. He had been employed by the Washington State Toll Bridge Authority to record the construction progress on the bridge. During the period from December 1938 until Gertie galloped to a watery grave, Jim produced four thick volumes of photographs. He related many anecdotes about the bridge to his daughter. Among those recalled is how the workers used to suck on lemons to keep from becoming seasick as the bridge swayed while they worked

on it. Jim was in his sixties while clambering around on the bridge with his trusty Graflex.

Here is an excerpt from a letter to the editor in the Nov. 10, 1980 Tacoma News Tribune Robert J. Tresch responds to Howard Clifford's article "Galloping Gertie" (TNT 11-2):

James Bashford, an elderly, highly respected and courtly photographer made the TNT file photo accompanying Howie's article (Howard Clifford). Jimmy Bashford made the remarkable photograph with his mid-30's, four/five Folmer Graflex camera. This was the press camera of the day and came complete with revolving back and hand shifting 12-exposure cut film magazine. Needless to say, until the day Jimmy Bashford died, this spectacular photograph gave the old gentleman in the celluloid collar a new lease on life.

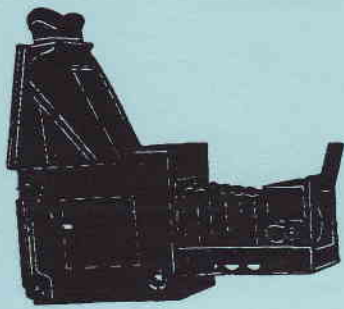
continued on page 4...



*James Bashford*



*The famous photograph, taken by a Graflex*



As a fellow photographer. I feel it is unfortunate his name wasn't mentioned [in the article noted above]."

It was standard practice in those days for progress photography to be done on large format negatives, enlarged to 8x10 inches, and mounted on linen. Some of the more scenic views were often toned, and upon completion the entire record was loose-leaf bound into individual volumes. As I study these beautifully produced volumes some fifty-six years after the fact, it is evident that this is a priceless record. The detail, the human interest, the composition and careful craftsmanship are the evident marks of a true professional.

The historic camera that Jim Bashford used to record the end of Galloping Gertie was a workhorse of the era, a 4x5 Graflex RB-D. The camera has passed down through the family to Jim Bell. Jim has graciously entrusted me with the camera to take pictures with and examine in detail. The lens on the camera is a magnificent Schneider Xenar, 21 cm. f3.5. The lens serial # is 222601 which places its manufacture in late 1928. The glass is exceptionally clear with the front element showing only minor cleaning marks. The camera has had a long and productive life as attested to by the amount of gray paint worn off all working [metal] surfaces. There are no less than 34 screw holes all around the body where accessories have been added and removed over the years. The camera serial number is 161574 and is stamped under the front edge of the hood cover. As might be expected, the shutter tension springs are weak and the curtain is stiff, so allowances should be made for exposure.

The bridge in this story is the first Tacoma Narrows, begun in 1938 and opened to traffic on July 1, 1940. Even before the span was completed it had a reputation of galloping in the winds which whistled through the ventouri of the narrows. The problem was so severe that stabilizing cables were added to both bankside spans and ironically contributed to the ultimate failure of the design. It is not recorded who coined the sobriquet "Galloping Gertie," but gallop she did. Local residents were fascinated by the antics of Gertie.

Young people used to pay the ten cent pedestrian toll to take dates on the bridge and experience the thrill of

watching one's date disappear in the trough of one wave and reappear on the crest of the next. It was only two days after Franklin D. Roosevelt had won an unprecedented third term that Gertie dropped politics off the front page. On the morning of Nov. 7, 1940 the word went out that the bridge was really bouncing. Many residents and news people assembled to watch and record the action, and of course Jim Bashford was there with his Graflex.

About ten o'clock the bridge took an alarming 45 degree rocking motion due to the slipping of one of the stabilizing cables. This coupled with the spanwise oscillation exceeded the design limits, and the roadway began to tear apart. Two men on the bridge at that time literally had to crawl to the safety of the shore. The only casualty was a dog that refused to leave a car trapped near the east tower. If you check page 256 of The Graphic Graflex Photography Manual, 8th Edition, 2nd Printing, you will see two photographs that Jim Bashford took on that historic morning. The car carrying the dog can be seen in the lower photograph.

It is a shame that the association that Jim Bashford had with the first Tacoma Narrows Bridge did not end on a high note. There is no doubt that the body of work he produced during the construction phase aided in reconstructing the bridge in 1950. I had the pleasure of photographing the new bridge with Mr. Bashford's camera from about his vantage point. Considering film speeds in 1940 and converting to "Graflexese," I guess he might have used a tension number of 5 or 6 and a curtain aperture of 3/8 inch. This would have been a shutter speed of 1/235th second with f8 or f11. Whatever the numbers were, Jim stopped the collapse in mid-air and recorded that split second of history alluded to earlier. By any standard it was a job professionally done from start to spectacular finish.

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**So** What 1979-84 Nikon 35mm camera features

aperture-priority AE as the only exposure mode? It has shutter speeds from 1-1/1000 and is equipped with a flash sync and self-timer.

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Photo from Nikon's website

Answer: The EM camera by Nikon. This was one of the simplest SLR Nikons made according to McBroom's Camera Bluebook. McBroom's list an excellent one (Published 2 + years ago) going for \$90-125.