

The PSA Journal's History Series

Celebrating 75 Years of PSA

Dedicated to the memory of longtime
PSA Historian, Tony Patti, Hon PSA, FPSA

Well-known PSA Members

Joanne Stolte, APSA, EPSA • Membership Vice President



Joanne Stolte,
APSA, EPSA

Over the last 75 years, the membership of the Photographic Society of America (PSA) has included several well-known photographers. Many of these photographers made significant contributions to the evolution of the art and science of photography.



A. Aubrey Bodine, Self-portrait (c. 1936) ©
Jennifer B. Bodine. Photo courtesy of
www.AAubreyBodine.com

A charter member of the society (1934), world-renowned photojournalist **A. Aubrey Bodine, APSA**, worked at the *Baltimore Sun* for 50 years from 1920 to his passing in 1970. He participated in PSA exhibitions every year from 1934 until the late 1950's. His work regained prominence in 2006 with the publication of "*Bodine's Chesapeake Bay Country*" and his daughter Jennifer maintains a web site where his photographs and books are increasing in popularity.

William Mortenson bucked the "realism" tradition of the 1930s and became the "master of the constructed image." He was highly influential, writing numerous books about the theory and practice of photography until his death in 1965; however, his work slipped into obscurity. In the last decade, Mortenson has been rediscovered and the 45 prints that he left to PSA are now individually valued at over \$4000.



Yousuf Karsh, FPSA

Yousuf Karsh, FPSA, one of the most famous and accomplished portrait photographers of all time, joined PSA in 1944 and remained a member until his death in 2002. He was elected a Fellow of the Society (FPSA) in 1947. His portrait of Winston Churchill, taken during WWII, brought Karsh international prominence and is claimed to be the most reproduced photographic portrait in history. The Canada Post honored the 100th anniversary of his birth

by releasing an artist's series of three stamps of Karsh images.

Ivan Dmitri, APSA, (born Levon West) was a skilled watercolorist. Following the transatlantic flight of Charles Lindbergh, he published his etching "*The Spirit of St. Louis*" and gained international recognition. He used the name Ivan Dmitri when he became a color photographer and he helped to gain acceptance for photography as an art medium. In 1959, he founded Photography in the Fine Arts. Ivan Dmitri is also known as the photographer for the American Airlines Flagship series of postcards. He was elected an Associate of the Society (APSA) in 1956.



Ansel Adams, FPSA

The PSA member whose photography and name are the most recognizable is **Ansel Adams, FPSA**. He is best known for his black-and-white photographs of the American West, primarily Yosemite National Park. Adams joined PSA in 1944 and, when the Color Division started its first three slide circuits (now Study Groups) of ten members each, he was in one of these circuits. Also participating in his slide circuit was **Yousuf Karsh, FPSA**; **Ivan Dmitri, APSA**; and **Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr.** Adams was elected a Fellow of the Society (FPSA) in 1949. In 1969, he received PSA's highest award, the PSA Progress Medal, which is given to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the art and/or science

of photography. Ansel Adams left several of his prints to PSA.

Current well-known PSA members include: **Andre Cabuche, John and Barbara Gerlach, Darrell Gulin, George and Kathryn Lepp, Frans Lanting, and Art Wolfe.** ■

Historical Vignette: *Points of Interest*

Stereo activities started in the Color Slide Division (CSD) with a stereo competition, stereo circuits, library and a planned annual exhibition. In 1952, the PSA Board of Directors decided that there should be a separate Stereo Division and all activities were transferred to the new division.

PSA Journal

In the 1940's, CSD started its first three slide circuits of 10 members each; new members included Yousuf Karsh, Ivan Dmitri, Mrs. Theodore Roosevelt, Jr., and Ansel Adams.

PSA Journal, February 1994

Due to wartime cutbacks, the *PSA Journals* published in 1945 and 1946 did not have pictures on the cover. The format was smaller, 6 1/2" wide by 9" inches long, and all covers were the same, consisting of the Society name and address, the PSA logo plus the date and volume number. The 1945 issues were tan stock with brown ink and in 1946 the *Journals* used light blue stock with blue ink.

PSA Journal, April 1988

PSA's 50th International *Convention* was held in Innisbrook, Florida in 1988. Then President **Ralph E. Venk FPSA** (later Hon. FPSA) stated, "I suspect that most of us are involved with photography and PSA because we find it a good way to create and communicate our creative talents to others. Now we have to find ways to extend our reach beyond our membership to all." **Richard Frieders, APSA** (later Hon. PSA, FPSA) was the Conventions Vice President.

Florida Suncoast Program, 1988

PSA's 65th Annual International *Convention* was held in Houston, Texas in 2003. **Mary Hall, APSA**, welcomed Eastman Kodak and Fuji Film as the sponsors of two featured speakers, Gustav W. Verderber and Frans Lanting. At that time, **Icy Sowards, APSA**, was the Convention Vice President.

Houston, Texas Program, 2003

"Before 1840 avid photo hobbyists dabbled with the new art in a manner similar to the early radio enthusiasts who got a big thrill when they heard a few recognizable syllables and a lot of static. Just being able to prove to oneself that, indeed the effects of photo recording were real and could be demonstrated was enough, and the final product didn't matter...in 1842 a new lens was developed with a four stop improvement."

Tony Patti, FPSA, July 1987, PSA Journal