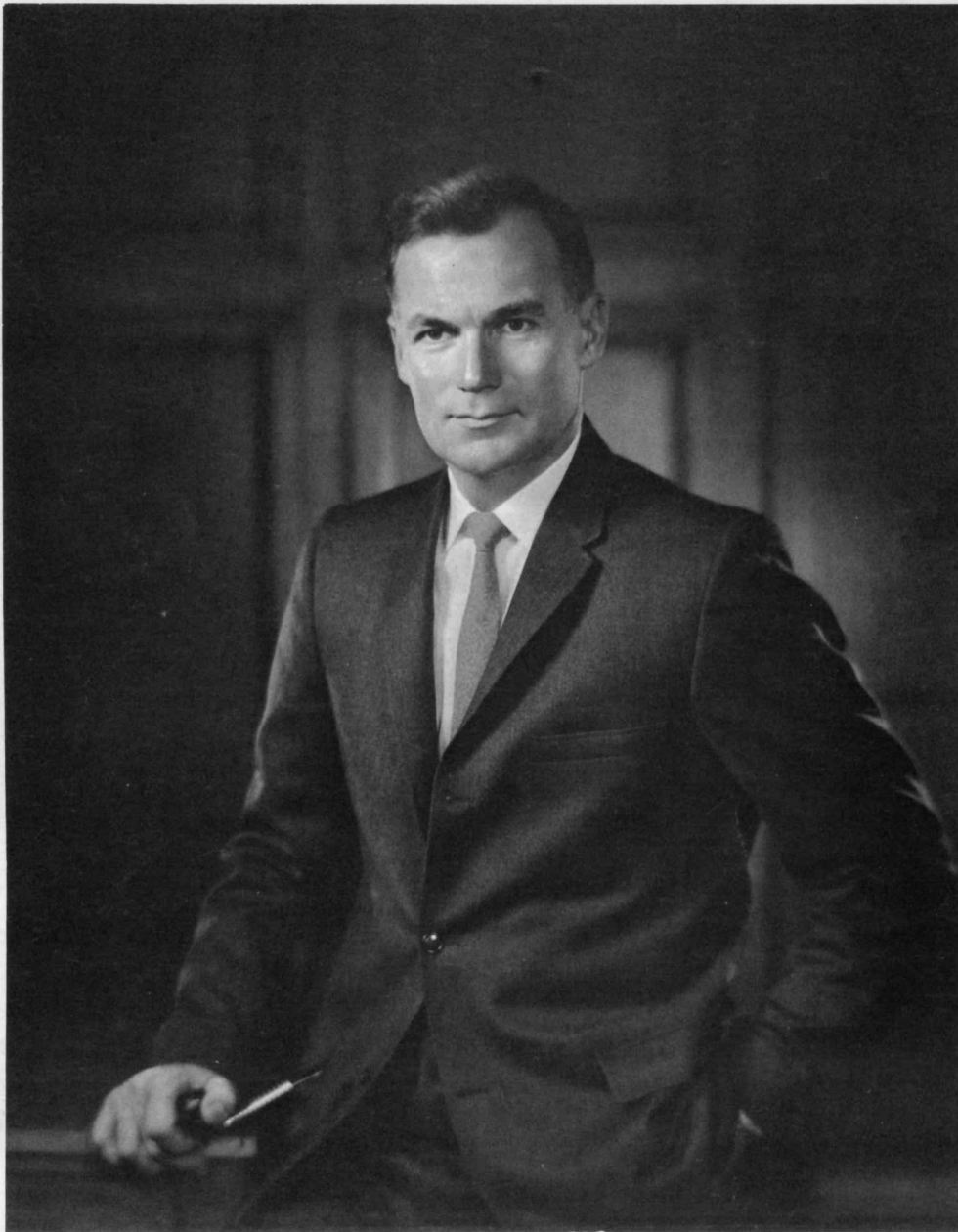


# New Zealand

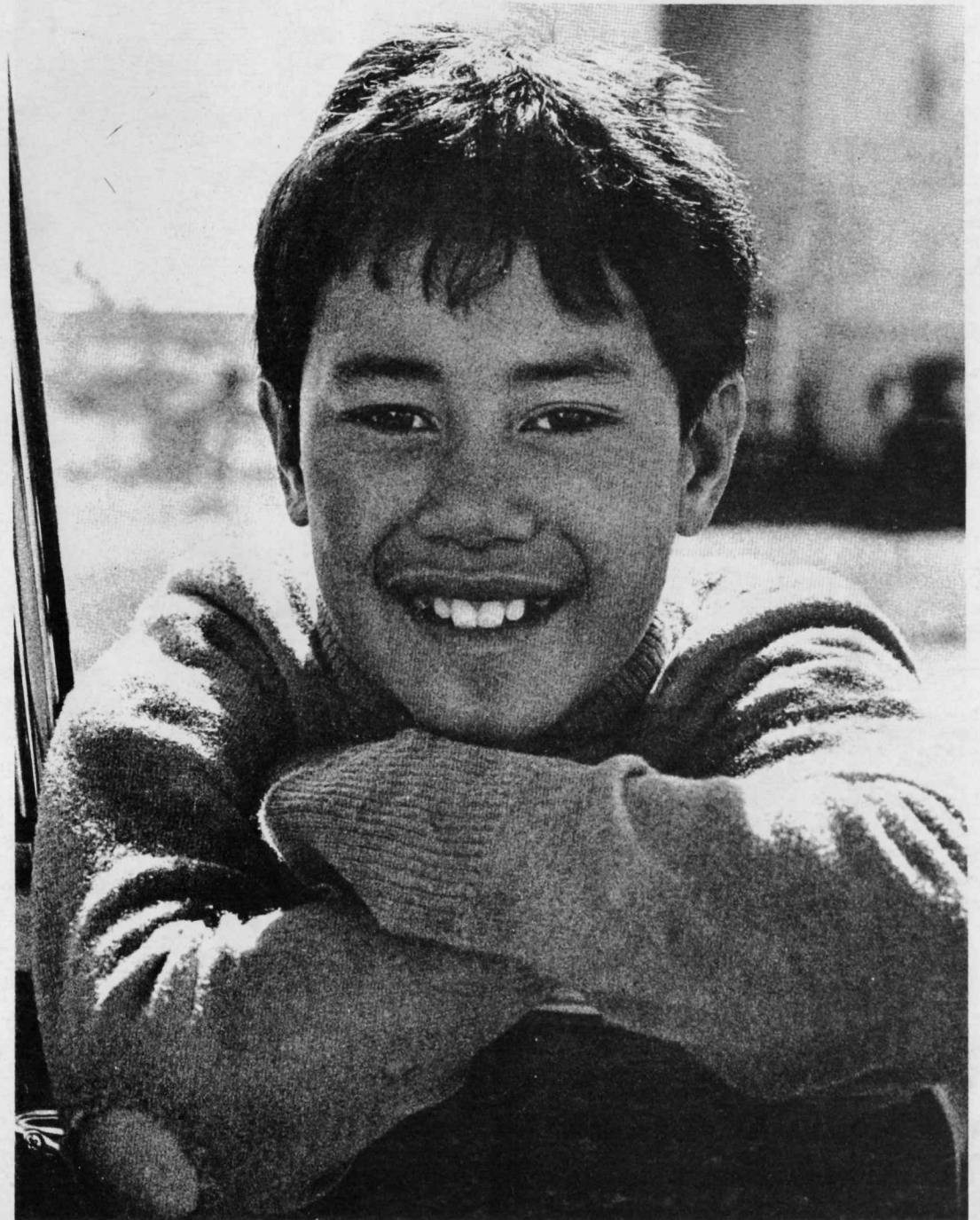
MAY-JUNE 1971 Price 25c

# PHOTOGRAPHY



Photograph by Paul Ness,  
Eastman Kodak Company  
Taken on Kodak Tri-X Pan Sheet Film at 1/25 sec. f 5.6  
Developed in Kodak D 76 Developer and  
printed on Kodak Bromesko Paper.

**Kodak**





Photography: Richard Wallace, Otorohanga.

Equipment: Mamiya 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ -square Twin Lens Reflex.

(Distributors for Mamiya: Photographic Wholesalers Ltd.,  
Auckland, Wellington, Christchurch)

# New Zealand Photography

No. 5 May-June 1971

(Formerly Photographic Art & History)

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Devoted to the appreciation of  
Fine photography, past and present

## Editorial

This magazine's new name may offend many of its early supporters, and perhaps for good reason, as the motive was purely commercial, to attract new supporters. As such it is a move away from the idealism with which "Photographic Art and History" was started a little over a year ago. Our answer to any objections is two-fold. The first is the uneasy answer heard throughout human history when ideals have given way to expediency: we can better survive and hopefully improve because of the benefits the change will bring. The second is that the new name is a simple and honest description of what the magazine has come to deal with: New Zealand photography. The new name does not signify any change in the ideals which the magazine is trying to promote. The editorial policy, the sort of material we seek to publish, will not change. The change is in the externals, and is an affirmation of our confidence that the magazine can now face the world with a name which seeks to appeal not to a minority but to everyone interested in photography. If we are wrong, we lose not only our present supporters but also fail to attract the new support hoped for. That is the risk we take. If we are right, we will in our small way, with your support, have been able to do something to promote the cause of photography in New Zealand.

B.W.

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Contributors to this issue: Tom Hutchins, John Turner, Keri McCleary,  
Colin Earl, Alan Webster, The Hawkes Bay Art Gallery & Museum.

COVER: "Boy is what they call me in our street. But my real name is Charlie, like Dad's. My Dad's people come from Tahiti, and my mother's people are northern Maori, who were great warriors. So as Dad says that makes us half hula and half haka."

Jane and the late Bernie Hill's 1962 portrait of an urban Polynesian family in their book "Hey Boy!" had a happiness and optimism which seems a little unreal in 1971 with its pressing racial problems of gangs and near-ghettos. But the book was a landmark in New Zealand photography and an honest and human study of real people. The cover picture and others on page 17 are our small tribute to Bernie Hill.



# Keri McCleary

Where does the drive to make good photographs come from? What makes an otherwise normal human being adopt an expensive, time-consuming activity which is often given only grudging status, if any, as one of the arts through which mankind tries to say something about the world? Pointless questions, because they're generally unanswerable. But in Keri McCleary's case an at least partial answer is possible. He gained his initial inspiration from Ans Westra, a close neighbour in the Wellington suburb of Karori. This initial push was helped along by a series of film and discussion evenings organised last year by Des Kelly and John Turner (who is now in Auckland) to promote awareness of fine photography.

An interesting point which arises is that Ans Westra, who is undoubtedly New Zealand's best and best-known photographer in the field of social documentary, acknowledges that her own original inspiration came from the New York Museum of Modern Art's famous "Family of Man" exhibition which she saw as a schoolgirl in Holland about 15 years ago. That exhibition was of course organised by Edward Steichen to document his conviction that life and people were the proper subjects of photography. Steichen's inspiration in turn came from....where? Alfred Steiglitz played a part, so that takes the chain of inspiration back a bit further, but the path becomes confused. So we see even here in New Zealand photographers taking part in the continuing development of photography.

Getting back to Keri McCleary, who with the photographs seen here is the subject of this article, it's worth noting that he has been seriously interested in photography for little more than a year. Before that, his camera was used largely for family snapshots and the like. This serious interest had been active for only a few months when Keri took the photographs seen here. To me, they show an imaginative freshness of vision, a willingness to try to record clearly and accurately things which appealed to the photographer himself. These photographs are not restrained, probably by a fortunate ignorance thereof, by any rules or conventions about the proper subjects for photography and the proper way to treat them. They may not be world-beaters, but how many of the rest of us can claim to have produced anything as good less than a year after taking up a serious interest in photography?



Do you feel your photographs are as worthy of publication as these by Keri McCleary? If so, send us up to half a dozen to choose from, and we'll try to find a place for them. Our financial resources are not yet such that you can make a living out of us, but we'll pay two dollars for each original photograph published. All photographs will be returned, but be sure to pack them well with a cardboard stiffener when posting. And be prepared for criticism as well as praise for your work. The one is as important as the other if standards are to reach the levels we seek.

These photographs were taken last year. Nowadays, Keri McCleary has developed a fascination for photographing trees, severally and singly, in whole and in part. One day perhaps, this magazine will be able to publish some of those photographs.

For the record, Keri McCleary is 21-years-old, and although he has a vocational connection with photography it is as a laboratory technician at the Kodak Processing Laboratories, so he can hardly be called a professional photographer.

B.W.



# NAPIER'S DAGUERROTYPE

(and much besides)

A year ago this magazine asked the question "Where are the Missing Daguerreotypes?" At that stage several daguerreotypes were extant in private and public collections in this country, and it was known that daguerreotypists had been working in New Zealand in the 1850's and possibly the 1840's. But no daguerreotype had been found which could be identified positively as having been made in New Zealand rather than brought or sent from the colonists' homelands.

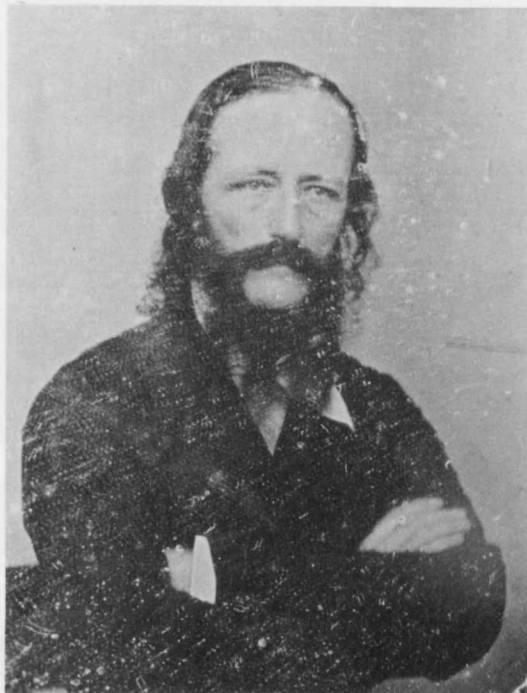
Now, a New Zealand made daguerreotype has been identified, by the Librarian at the Hawkes Bay Art Gallery and Museum, Mrs Joyce McLeod.

"While looking for a portrait of Colenso as a young man, for a book illustration," she writes, "I found we had two portraits of Colenso which were not with the rest of the photograph collection, but were in Box X of our collection of Colenso papers. Both are in leather cases with mats under a glass cover and one is definitely a daguerreotype. The other could be an ambrotype but I am not qualified to judge.

"The most exciting thing about them is that both have a note in Colenso's handwriting enclosed. The note in the daguerreotype states 'W. Colenso taken by Crombie. At Napier (Ahuriri) 1856-7.' The other note states 'Taken by Crombie at Auckland 1862. When I was a member of the Ho. Representatives.' "

The Crombie who took these photographs was undoubtedly the J.N. Crombie whose career as a photographer in Auckland was described in our last issue by Janice Mogford of the Auckland Museum Library. Miss Mogford noted that in September 1856 Crombie set off on a tour of the southern provinces. It would seem that during this tour he visited Hawkes Bay and photographed William Colenso.

The historical value of this rare and so far unique daguerreotype is enhanced by its subject being such a notable historical figure as Colenso, the first European explorer of the North Island's interior, first printer in New Zealand, naturalist who told the outside world about the extinct moa, first settler in Hawkes Bay, missionary, politician and much else besides. The fact that the photographer was the notable Mr Crombie is also of more than passing interest.



This daguerreotype is one of many items which make the Hawkes Bay Art gallery and museum's photographic collection one of

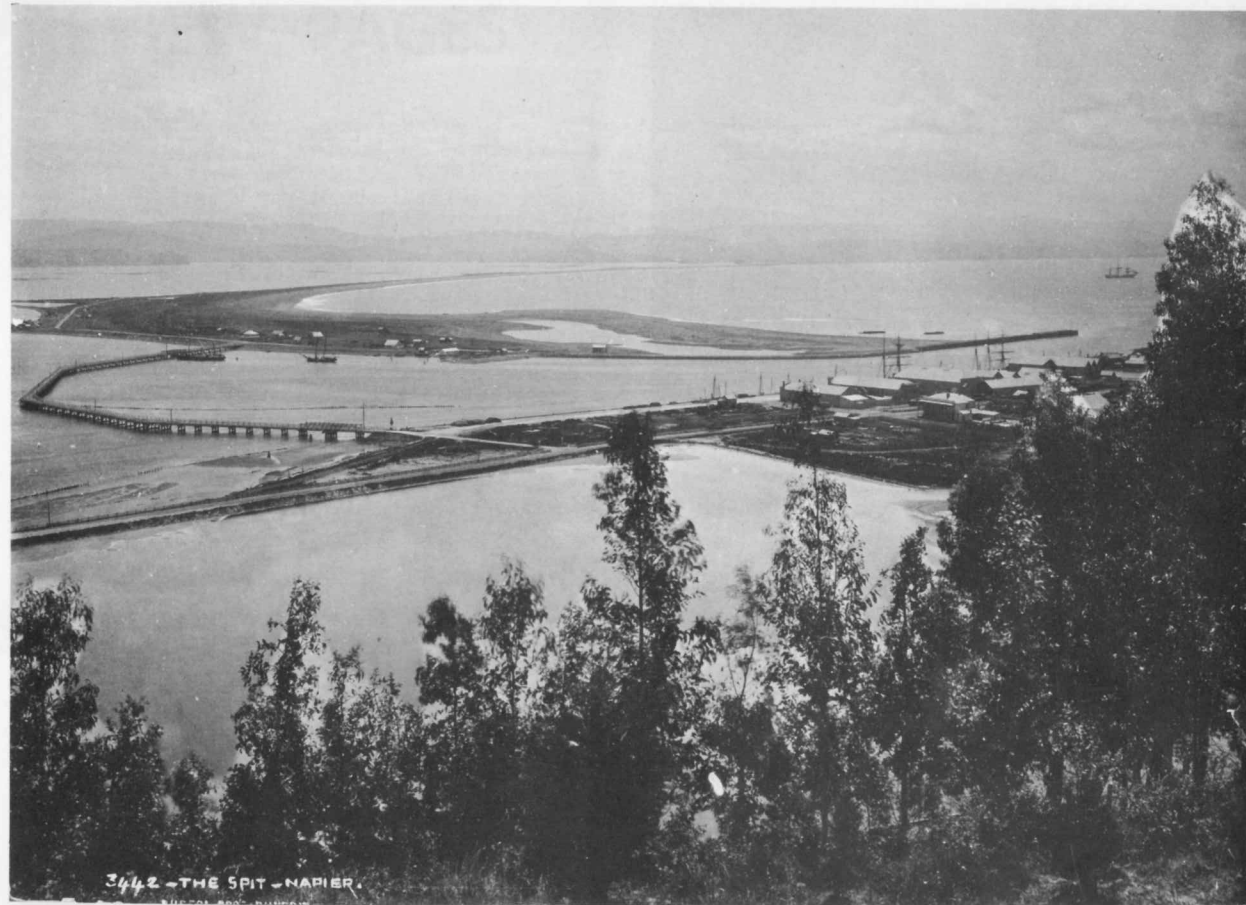
the major such collections in New Zealand. The museum's former librarian, Miss Alice Woodhouse, wrote to us several months ago:

"Soon after the Gallery and Museum was opened in 1936 a group of people known as the Historical Affairs Committee began collecting material on local history, including photographs.

"There are now in the museum about 4,300 photographs of places and people in Hawkes Bay, including some dating back to the 1860's and 1870's, though some have been copied and recopied so often at different times that it is difficult to tell which are the originals.

"All the photographs have been catalogued in a card catalogue under suitable headings, so that it is quite easy to find any particular photograph in its storage box. A few have been selected for display in hinged frames attached to the walls, and these arouse much interest among visitors, especially photographs of the earthquake of 1931. The collection is frequently drawn on by the newspapers for illustrations to historical articles, and by other people interested in some aspect of Hawkes Bay history."

"There is also a collection of negatives and slides, and these are in the process of being sorted and catalogued."



Above: The Spit (now Westshore), Napier, a Burton Bros. photograph from the 1880's.  
Opposite: The Colenso daguerreotype (copied for publication by Russell Orr Ltd., Hastings.)

From Mrs McLeod, who in February this year succeeded Miss Woodhouse as the Museum's librarian, comes the information that a very large number of the museum's prints and negatives are always referred to as the "Cornford" photographs. It appears that the late Mr C.D. Cornford had set out to do for Napier exactly the same as Mr Russell Orr did for Hastings in preserving and copying historic photographs of the area (see Photographic Art & History No. 2, August 1970, p.7)

Recently Mrs McLeod had to look through the museum's collection for "anything to do with Te Kooti" and besides some photos of the great Maori religious and guerilla leader himself she found one of his granddaughter taken by "Mrs Cobb, Napier & Hastings" ....apparently a woman professional photographer working in Hawkes Bay in the early 1900's.

Another of Napier's early professional photographers was also more than an ordinary member of his profession. Probably about 1870 Mr S. Carnell came to Napier to manage that town's branch of the leading Wellington photographic firm of Swan and Wrigglesworth, which was founded in 1864 and later became Wrigglesworth and Binns whose name still adorns the front of a building in Willis Street, in the heart of Wellington. This building is still occupied by a photographic studio, that of S.P. Andrews Ltd.

Carnell soon purchased the Napier branch studio and went into business on his own account, finally selling out in 1905. While still a photographer he was Member of Parliament for Napier from 1894 to 1896, and was Mayor of Napier from 1904 to 1907. A street in Napier is named after him.

Have any other professional photographers become Parliamentarians, Mayors, or had streets named after them? Somehow it does not appear to be a profession which leads to such distinctions.





Above: By S. Carnell, the photographer who became a Member of Parliament and Mayor of Napier. Captain John Campbell, one of the founders of Richardson's shipping line, with his family c 1871.

Opposite: Te Kooti

The museum also has items which are of some interest to the historian of photography, as distinct from the historian of the Napier or Hawkes Bay area. For instance, there is a little album measuring 3½ by 3 inches, with four one-inch by three quarters-of-an-inch photographs on each page, all head and shoulders portraits. The flyleaf states "S. Wing & Co.'s Gem Albums and Patent Cameras, Boston, Mass." The Wing camera was one of several made in the 1860's of a type with several lenses so that a number of portraits could be taken simultaneously on a tintype plate. The plates were then cut up so that the customer had, for the price of one photograph, several small portraits called "Gems."



Another item is a "Mammoth Mailing Card" showing Napier's Hastings street around 1905. The standard postcard, made by the million, measured 3½ by 5 inches. The Mammoth measures 8 by 10, and "If posted without any writing matter, except short dedication of not more than five words, such as "with Best Wishes from \_\_\_\_\_" could be posted anywhere in the world for a halfpenny. What was that about inflation?

Between the work of the Hawkes Bay Art Gallery & Museum in Napier and that of Russell Orr in Hastings, it would appear that Hawkes Bay has preserved a photographic documentation of its history unmatched by any other area of New Zealand. It's to be hoped that other areas take note and do likewise before these fragile records vanish forever.

## REVIEW PAGES

### BRASSAI

Seventy-one photographs on show at the Auckland City Art Gallery from 17 May to 13 June 1971. The exhibition will also be shown in the National Art Gallery, Wellington (21 June - 16 July) and the Govett-Brewster Art Gallery, New Plymouth (26 July - 9 August).

Originally shown at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, this retrospective exhibition was selected by John Szarkowski, director of the Museum's department of photography. It is being circulated abroad under the auspices of the Museum's International Council and sponsored in New Zealand by the Auckland Festival Society.

Born Gyula Halasz in 1899, Brassai coined his pseudonym from Brasso, his home village in Transylvania. After study at art academies in Budapest and Berlin he went to Paris in 1923, where he worked as a journalist and made many friends in the literary and artistic arena including Henry Miller, Picasso, Salvador Dali and the photographer Andre Kertesz. About 1929 Brassai borrowed a camera to try to capture the Parisian night life which so excited him. Thousands of photographs later, he published *Paris de Nuit* in 1933 which gained his reputation as the "eye of Paris".

Brassai's horror of specialisation led him to become an outstanding practitioner in many mediums of expression including drawing, painting, sculpture, writing, engraving, theatre decor and photography. He has also made short films and published more than a dozen books, no two of which are alike. In 1956 the Museum of Modern Art in New York presented an exhibition of his *Graffiti*. The current exhibition, his first retrospective, was accompanied by an excellent monograph, *Brassai*, with an introductory essay by Lawrence Durrell. (MOMA, 1968).

Seeing important overseas exhibitions is an exciting business, and somewhat chastening. The Brassai exhibition is no exception. It brings home many points about the nature of photography and highlights some problems and decisions which photographers face.

Brassai has solved his problems in a deeply personal way. For subject matter he prefers the night, his friends: famous artists and writers along with known and unknown socialites, prostitutes, pimps, hoodlums, tramps and more ordinary people; not to mention the parks, monuments and wall scribbles of his beloved Paris.

by John B. Turner

His equipment is simply functional; nothing bigger than a 6.5 x 9 cm which Lawrence Durrell described as "a very old camera with a cracked lens hood and a tripod which kept kneeling down like a camel". When the lighting is not good enough, Brassai uses beautifully controlled flash-light.

Hunting for what is "permanent", Brassai likes to render the immobility of the face because he considers fleeting expressions to be accidental. He wants his subject to be fully aware that he is taking part in an artistic event, an *act*. He makes only one, two or three exposures of a subject unless he gets carried away, because he has found that it concentrates one more to shoot less.

He is fully aware that "the photograph has a double destiny.... It is the daughter of the world of externals, of the living second, and as such will always keep something of the historic or scientific document about it; but it is also the daughter of the rectangle, a child of the *beaux-arts*, which requires one to fill up the space agreeably or harmoniously with black-and-white spots or colours".

Brassai enjoys processing his own photographs so he's to blame for all the processing defects - scratches and dust marks etc., and presumably for the extremely crude "spotting" of these prints. He has said that: "of all printing papers I love the glossy - it's the only type which tells you straight away that you have to do with a photograph and nothing else". Unfortunately, he prefers highly glazed to unglazed glossies, so his prints on display in this exhibition really multiply unwanted reflections over and above those of the protective plexiglass. The pictures, particularly the bigger ones which go up to about 16 x 20 ins, wouldn't be quite so difficult to see if they had been mounted flat to iron out the many crinkles. The annoying part is that the gauntlet of reflections never seems to end. Never mind, you can have fun looking at your face on Picasso, "Bijou", or the rump of a horse.

The most overpowering group of photographs in this show are those of the prostitutes, pimps, transvestites, socialites, artists and tramps of Paris in the early 1930's. The fact that these photographs were made during Brassai's first few years in photography are a measure of his natural talent. Many of the photographs, like his famous "*Bijou*" of *Montmartre* are classics; among them the dance hall groups (cat. Nos. 4, 5, and 9),

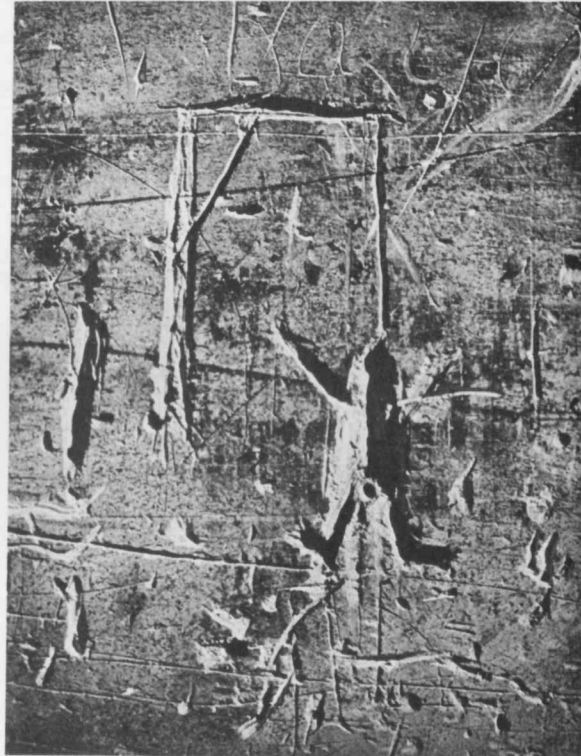


Girl at Snooker (21), The Assistant Madame (6), Female Couple (11), Woman at Le Monocle (17), Lulu de Montparnasse with a Woman (19), Boulevard Rochochouart (35), and Pimp and Girl (26). A superb picture, Soiree at Maxim's (32), made about 1946 can be included among the earlier works, so close is it in feeling.

Brassai's distinctive portraits are usually bold and muscular. Sculptural in effect, they emphasise the substance and volume of people to an amazing degree. They range from the piercing images of Salvador Dali and Jean Genet to the more gentle portrayals of Giacommetti and Germaine Richier. The photographs of Pierre Bonnard, Henry Miller, Mlle. Sabourdy and Picasso are disappointing as big enlargements.

Brassai's delight in the more fantastic, strange and ambiguous aspects of reality is put to many uses. He uses mirrors to trick and at the same time to inform and to effect intriguing spatial depth. A huge billboard bowl of salad hovers dreamlike over a Tramp in Marseille (1), a poignant comment. Familiar streets, parks and rivers take on an eerie enchantment at night - perhaps the perfect respite from the excitement and tension of the cafes and brothels. The Avenue de l'Observatoire (30 & 42) and Pont Neuf (59) are perfect settings for contemplation, as Brassai knows. By day, the Place de la Concorde (63) and Vine Stock in a Wine Cellar (40) become beautiful mysteries to unravel time and again.

The nine photographs of graffiti are perhaps the most difficult for many people to understand judging from viewer reactions. I think they are among the best, most deeply moving images in the show. (Unfortunately they have been strung out in series instead of occasionally springing up between different subjects.) They are public works more than any motorway and they are private, deeply personal yet universal symptoms of man's anxiety and fears. "Walls attract me by their graffiti, because, in our civilisation, they replace nature", Brassai once explained.



Although Brassai's sympathy shelters his subjects from ridicule and scorn, his ironic humour penetrates into the darkest corners where, amazingly, depression and morbidity are absent. He seems to be able to laugh at his own preoccupations and enjoy the subject both for itself and the aura - the visual excitement he has helped create. He is more interested in the joy of seeing than in being humorous.

However, outright humour does bubble to the surface now and again. In a 1933 brothel scene (16) a fully clothed man, in intimate conversation with a transparently clad woman, discreetly stands behind her with his face hidden from the camera. Another prostitute laughs at the little act from the comfort of her chair, little knowing that she is also in the picture.

(Continued on p.20)

#### PHOTOGRAPHY 1971

Group exhibition of 32 photographs by John Fields, Mac Miller, Roy Long, Richard Collins, Ans Westra, Michael Hawkins and Bryan James. Waikato Art Gallery, Hamilton, 17 May to 16 June.

PHOTOGRAPHY 1971 was selected and organised by Gordon H. Brown, Director of the Waikato Art Gallery, along with Hamilton photographers Mac Miller and Roy Long, to show the kind of work some of our best photographers are currently doing. Invitations originally went to nine photographers: three in Auckland (one declined), three in Hamilton, one in Wellington, and two in Christchurch to minimise northern parochialism. Unfortunately, the work of one Christchurch man wasn't up to standard, leaving Michael Hawkins to represent the whole of the South Island. This caused the organisers some concern and they are still not sure whether the best South Island photographers are extinct or merely in hiding. Come to think of it, where are the contenders from the other North Island centres?

Three photographs by John Fields started the show off. The first, a row of parked motorcycles, doesn't quite work in spite of an exquisite mirror reflection of the sun pouring through wind-blown leaves. It seems to me that the main reflection is not backed up by or contrasted strongly enough with the solemnly printed background confusion of bikes and minor reflections. The next was a rather sober detail from a Swanson graveyard. A fat glass dome lies broken in two separate pieces (or is it two broken domes? The picture doesn't seem to tell.). A bunch of plastic roses has dropped from the dome to the concrete, but too late. Like a bumble bee kept in a jar far too long, they are dead. Scattered pebbles spill over the few inches of ground in front. A final mysterious note is added by a ring of trees reflected from the dome. A quiet, beautiful puzzle.

John Fields Coromandel, a close view of the back of a school bus, works quietly with strength.





It is perhaps ironical that one of Roy Long's photographs should so aptly express my feelings about his current work. His first photograph, Television, seems like an apology for the work to follow. The photograph is a rather banal close-up of a television set experiencing technical difficulties. It reads simply: AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, NORMAL TRANSMISSION. There's hope here.

With one notable exception, there is a general laxity about Long's photographs in this show. he may be giving his work too little previsualisation and too much (dare I say it?) "expressive" printmaking. For instance there is a picture of his son Colin staring up at the viewer with a quizical, almost pleading expression. The little boy is standing in a suburban park during what looks like a school sports event. A few kids are streaking off in a race towards a group of adults on the far left of this wide-angle view. Other children are scattered around the park. Colin looks like he feels out of place and doesn't know what to do about it. It's a fine photograph probably, but all except Colin's face and the sky are hidden under a mask of beautifully printed darkness.

Roy Long's Victoria Street, Hamilton, showing a signwriter's establishment half-hidden by a large stretch of grass, is printed too small for its scale. But enlargement would't rescue this diluted wide-angle view. Nor would it save the snapshot of Darren, Colin and Gary. Unfortunately, a beautifully printed photograph of Darren and Colin in the kitchen just doesn't quite come off. The exception is his Waterloo Street, Frankton; a warm, spacious image with a sly touch of humour.



Ans Westra was represented by three superb images, and one flop: Wellington Cuba Mall (reproduced as Student Arts Festival Display in Photographic Art and History, No.3, p.10.). One of the best of the three, Wellington Trades Fair was also seen in that issue. It shows a handsome young man eyeing a rather serious young lady in a St John's uniform. The other Ans Westra pictures were of two Polynesian women in a seated pub conversation, the biggest woman with a slightly patronising arm on the other's shoulder as if waiting her turn to speak; and a delightfully engrossed farmer in sheepish contemplation at a stock sale.

Mac Miller's Puddle is rich and beautifully seen. So is the picture of Kim with her "Sweet Fanny Adams" sweater. There is a delightful interplay where landscape and people appear through the windows of the station wagon Kim leans against. It appears to be a nudist camp scene. I had seen Miller's Girl on a Bus before without being impressed. This time I could see the dawning apprehension in the schoolgirl's face and the way she holds her ticket and coat. It's a fine, sensitive statement. School Girl is a rather blatant close-up of a frowning little girl, backed by a barren playground and distant classrooms. It doesn't quite come off. A crying boy, a girl with a strangely blurred,

Weegee-like face, and other dark blurred figures and shadows make Merry-go-Round strangely ambiguous. An accident, I think, which almost worked.

Richard Collins' five photographs represent a change in approach from 35mm to larger formats. All succeed, except a small portrait defeated by a domineering background. Two Warkworth interiors are

superb. Contemporary graffiti: "Let the Peace fill you" warms a dank burned out Interior I; and a pathetic graffiti-riddled Interior II proclaims "Free fucks for the workers" in bold chiselled letters high on the wall. These and Collins' Door, Pakiri and Facade, Auckland are fine photographs with deep rich blacks and luminous highlights.

Michael Hawkins' work is rough but not always tough in the right places. There's a lot of wasted muscle in a well-seen back view of a middle-aged woman with a little flag and fluffy slippers. Her skin is rendered like cement. A battered and stripped piano, incongruous in a stark landscape pays an unexpected, though small dividend. But despite generously enveloping folds an



image of a man poking his head into a big tent doesn't work above the literal level. Nor does a loose close-up profile of a young woman (or man) at a pop festival.

Bryan James' strongest photograph is Auckland Harbour, a well-seen symmetrical image with a beautiful interplay between the foreground boat ramp, a protective fence running horizontally across the scene, boats beyond the fence, with land in the distance. Unfortunately it's badly printed, with fuzzy edges. Other James prints suggest inadequate enlarger-lens coverage or some such trouble. Also, judging from the lifeless shadows and highlights, it appears that his negatives were underexposed and in common with Michael Hawkins, he's unnecessarily overdeveloped them.

I feel that Bryan James' lack of technical control is blocking a sensitive vision. For instance, in Tree, Fence and Power Poles he has made an essentially restrained image meant, I guess, to show how nature has been raped and left to die in fenced-in suburban ugliness. But because a few houses in the middle distance are camouflaged in murky darkness (out of sight, out of mind), one can be forgiven for thinking the photographer was just trying to show the delicate interplay of power poles, wires, fence and the stark naked tree. James' Boats is a dull lifeless image and so is Gate, Motuotaraia. Horse is overprinted to the point of becoming obscure.



W. EUGENE SMITH, His Photographs and Notes

An Aperture monograph, New York, 1969. Afterword by Lincoln Kirstein, 148 pages, 124 photographs. U.S. price \$8.50 cloth-bound.

An almost incredible passion for life and for truth in photography pervades the work of W. Eugene Smith. His best photographs have an actual presence - an intense emotional force which is undeniable and amazing. But it's no good trying to describe his photographs in words. They must be fully contemplated to be properly seen at all. Smith's work is deeply rewarding whether the subject is the funeral of his daughter's mouse, a country doctor, a street in snow or the horror of war. With constant attention to fine details from visualisation to the final print, he makes 100 per cent sure that his message is not distorted in any controllable way. The rest is up to you!

Gene Smith's photographs have been published in dozens of magazines and books for over 30 years but this superb Aperture monograph is the first book about him. Although it does not say so, the monograph was edited by David Vestal who reviewed it himself, explaining that "Editing, in this case meant two things. I fought on Gene's side against Mike Hoffman, of Aperture, who wanted to leave out certain pictures and to change Gene's sequences to suit his own taste; and I edited Gene's writings, working over it with him trying to keep his style and meaning intact while gaining clarity and economy.....The pictures Mike wanted to dump are in the book where they belong, and Gene's sequences are substantially intact....." (Camera 35, November 1970, page 76.) Enough intrigue just to show that even the greatest photographers have to continually fight to get their message across. Knowing this, I'm prepared to keep trying to learn why Smith included the handful of pictures which leave me cool, and why he used one of the Ku Klux Klan pictures twice, in different croppings?

There are far too many superb photographs in this book to warrant individual mention. They are arranged throughout in a series of small portfolios but sequenced to be seen as individual pictures first and foremost. Many famous photo-essays are represented: World War II, Country Doctor, Nurse Midwife, Ku Klux Klan, Albert Schweitzer, Haiti, Japan, and the monumental Pittsburgh essay; by from 2 to 10 images with brief notes. These severely edited portfolios nevertheless amply demonstrate Smith's photo-journalistic genius. One can only hope that his essays will soon be republished in their entirety as individual portfolios.



W. EUGENE SMITH includes an excellent chronology of his life from 1918 to 1969, a well-informed but show-offish Afterword by Lincoln Kirstein, and an excellent bibliography by Peter C. Bunnell which is particularly interesting. It lists over 170 of Smith's Life assignments ranging from the first like "Old Age", and "Life Goes to a Rubber Ball" in 1938 up to his Schweitzer essay "A Man of Mercy" in 1954, his last Life assignment.

Several excellent articles about Smith, published in the last few years, also help give a good idea of the man and his working methods. They are well worth following up:

POPULAR PHOTOGRAPHY, December 1966, page 114 ".....A Great Unknown Photographer - W. Eugene Smith", by David Vestal. CAMERA 35, May 1970, page 36. "W. Eugene Smith: Conscience of the Print". The feature includes a fine article about "The Technique of W. Eugene Smith" by Bob Combs. PHOTOGRAPHY ANNUAL 1971 (Popular Photography's annual), page 162. "Why Does W. Eugene Smith Write on Walls?" by John Durniak.





## G. Leslie Adkin

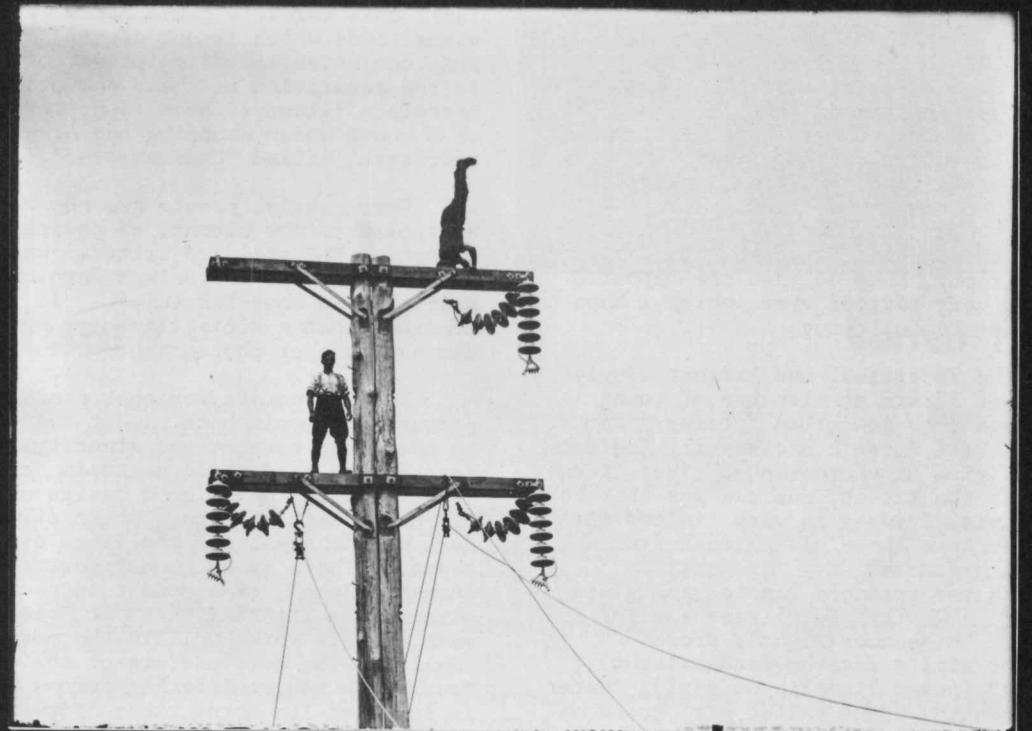
When George Leslie Adkin died a few years ago he was not famous as a photographer. The fields in which he made his mark were the sciences of geology, archaeology and ethnology. Originally he followed these pursuits as an amateur, but in 1946 his son took over the family farm at Levin and, at the age of 58, Leslie Adkin joined the New Zealand Geological Survey to devote his full time to his scientific interests, in particular his studies of the patterns of pre-European Maori settlement in New Zealand. In his lifetime he published two books, on the place names of Horowhenua and Wellington areas, and 32 scientific papers.

Amongst the vast amount of material he bequeathed to the Turnbull Library\* were a large number of immaculately kept photograph albums, and these revealed him as not only an excellent scientific photographer but also as a photographer who made quite outstanding pictures of everyday things. What in most other photograph albums would be called family snapshots were, in Leslie Adkin's album, images often of rare beauty. There is no evidence in the pictures that he deliberately set out for pictorial effect; rather, he photographed simply and directly the things which delighted him. And his ability was such that his delight is transmitted to the viewer of the photographs.

\*and Dominion Museum

It is always dangerous to be too specific about a photographer's emotional reaction to a scene, when the photograph is the only evidence we have of that reaction. In Leslie Adkin's pictures, so much comes through that one can afford to speculate on his feelings. Take for instance his photograph from about 1919 of his wife Maud bathing their baby son Claud. Adkin had the ability to overcome the effect of the harsh, contrasty lighting and made an eternal statement about the gentleness and love of mother and child. One feels his delight at the scene. A linesman standing on his head on the crossarm of a power pole amused and delighted him with the unusual and humorous pattern thus made; so he photographed what he saw. Hundreds, maybe thousands of pictures must have been made of the wreck of the Hyderabad at Hokio Beach more than 50 years ago. Leslie Adkin counterpointed the vertical and horizontal lines of the hulk with a line of people, and even a bit of driftwood in the foreground and a small boy paddling in the sea seem essential parts of a scene which Adkins photographed, simply and directly, posed perhaps but in no way artificial.

The phrase "a fruitful sense of wonder" has been applied to what is regarded as an essential part of a poet's equipment. It was something Leslie Adkins had in full measure, and was able to communicate in his photography. A less able photographer would have produced no more than snapshots; or would have produced something corny in a striving after artistic effect. Leslie Adkin produced very fine photography.



# One Man's View

Editor's note:

Late last year the Auckland Society of Arts staged an exhibition of photography by Auckland photographer Murray Freer. The exhibition, and the pictures which appeared in it, do not concern us greatly here. What does concern us is this review of the exhibition, written by Tom Hutchins, Senior Lecturer in Photography at the Auckland University of Fine Arts. In it Mr Hutchins reveals a personal view of photography which is very relevant to the aims and goals of this magazine. It also involves an important attitude to the criticism of photography, because it was rejected for publication by the Auckland Star in spite of the exhibition having been publicised earlier in that paper's Arts page. The reasons for the rejection are not clear, but we suspect it was because the review in places makes strong and pointed criticism of the exhibition. Criticism of the arts in this country has barely passed the stage of being nice to the artists for having produced an exhibition or performance at all. Neither the arts themselves nor criticism of them will get very far until this attitude changes. After all, no sports writer would be thought worth his salt if he was as respectful of his subjects as most so-called arts critics are of theirs: is there any correlation here with the relative strengths of the sports and the arts in New Zealand?

This exhibition marks the beginning of photography tutorials under the auspices of the Auckland Society of Arts. We note in the catalogue that the society was founded in 1869 "to cultivate and advance the fine arts in New Zealand." We can fairly ask, do these photographs do just that?

My own conclusion is, that in relation to photography, they do just the opposite. This is a very serious view, which I hope to support in the following.

Of the 76 titles, the largest single category of 37 are of pictures of young women, nudes, or so-called "glamour" shots. This of itself doesn't necessarily indicate a limited view of photography. But if one glances at the titles, one can see that the range of visual ideas is very limited indeed. We have these old cliches from a long-past pictorialism - "Tranquility" (girl with two arranged candles and glass of wine); "Purity" (girl reaching for a flower); "Midsummer Night's Dream" (sketch of girl's face by candle-light); "Serenity" (posed lighting on girl); "Water Fairy" (healthy husky ballet girl posed on rock in stream.); "Woodland Fairy" (healthy husky girl in fancy costume with all the evidence of solid material existence which photography supplies!)

## Tom Hutchins

The very strength of photography - its ties with reality - is here the weakness which undercuts the contrived, the false and the make-believe. There is a nude called "Meditation". Photography turns it into a picture of a young woman on the end of a suburban sofa looking down to her bare buttocks, and apparently wondering if the mark where her panties were too tight still shows. (It does). Far too much of this exhibition depends upon dressing up or undressing. There is "Ebb Tide", which has a young woman in net panty-hose showing up to her waist through an artfully parted coat, with white gloves, posed on the beach, straining for some impossible effect.

If you put your lens between the thighs of a nude model and don't know what you're about, you can come up with something like pictures No. 63 and 65. They lack a sense of the abstract or formal qualities which can underly a sensitive viewing of the body. There is little evidence of the subject being treated as three-dimensional form. In spite of no subtlety in lighting the impact fades. There is not even a sense of outspoken eroticism or a comment on sexuality such as Halsman made of similar poses in the late thirties and which have a place in art. The whole situation is saved, so it appears, by calling the fuzzy version "Symphony" and the sharp version "Symphony in Brass". But isn't this merely a tired "arty" prop to a visual idea which is not clear? Supporting this coy voyeurism being passed off as "art" is the separation of these two prints by a tasteless "glamour" shot of poor technique of a young women exposing one breast as she undresses, called "Underexposed".

Fortunately, people are now no longer unexposed to the history of photography as an art. The standard critical works by Beaumont Newhall and Helmut Gernsheim are available in most libraries. It is incredible that a society such as this should not be aware of photographic values.

This is not to say that there are no pictures of merit here. But they tend to be the least pretentious minority. There is the very good child portrait called "Bryon", which makes good design use of an old house setting with a white pillar, a dark window area, and the lines of weather-board. There is an honest portrait in "Brother John", of a priest in church. The strong side-lighting which Mr Freer uses so much, really works well in the portrait "Gail". The news picture of the crashed truck with the conflicting arrows is good, in spite of its corny title "Forward Ho". A modest little print of barnacles has a humble honesty about it. There is a compelling news shot of the crashed DC8, with its contrast of the rigid runway lines and

(Continued on page 20)



## Obituary

### Bernie Hill

We regret to note the death in March of Bernard Hill (41), editor of EVE magazine. He was killed on the Auckland south motorway when his car struck some drums and hit the back of a road roller. Bernie Hill is perhaps best known to photographers by his picture book Hey, Boy, co-authored with his wife, Jane, who has taken over the editorship of Eve.

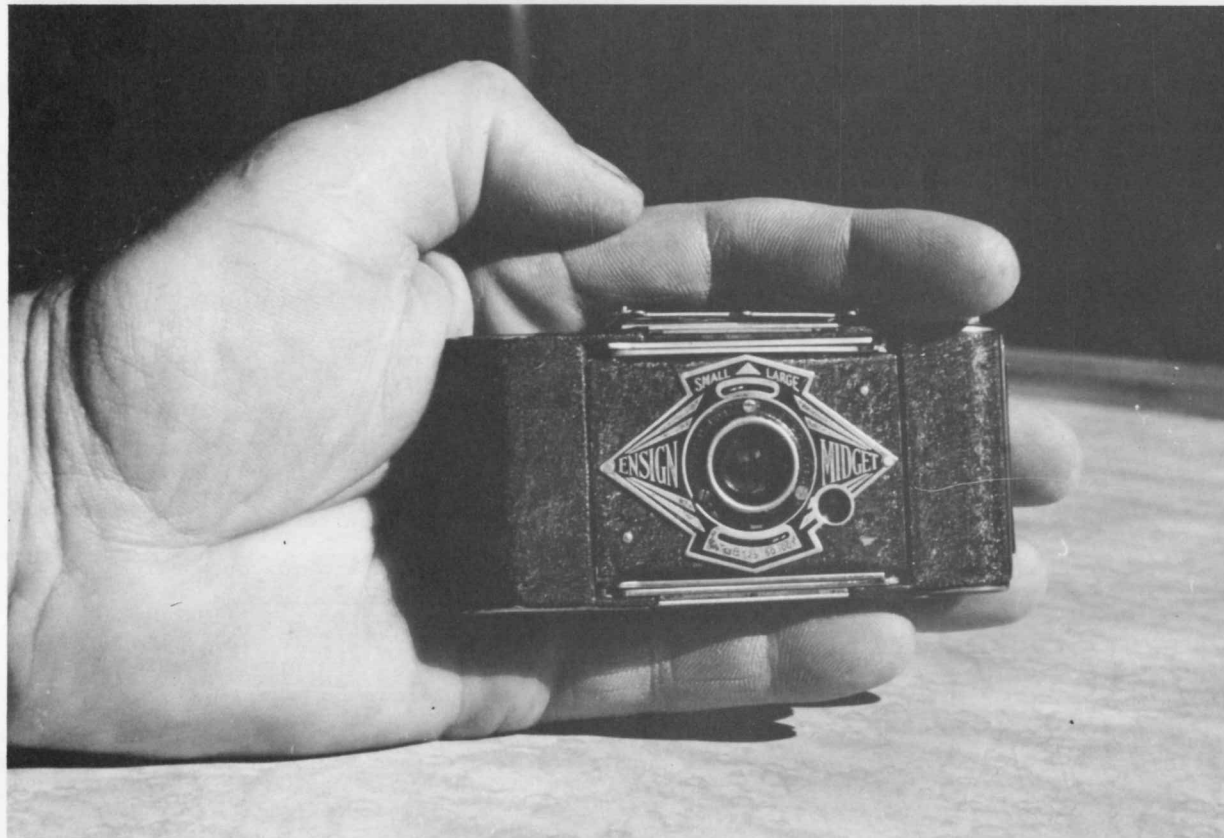
Mr Hill went into photography after leaving school. Soon afterwards he went to Canada and Britain, contributing photographs from there to the New Zealand Pictorial, then published by New Zealand Newspapers Ltd. On his return to New Zealand he joined the illustrations department of the Auckland Star in May, 1956 and afterwards became the first full-time photographer for the N.Z. Woman's Weekly, being largely responsible for the first coloured photographs used in that magazine.

In June 1962 he and his wife left for overseas. He worked as a freelance photographer in Britain and undertook work on some large murals for New Zealand House in London. Returning to Auckland in 1965, he established the magazine Eve, with his wife Jane Hill as assistant editor. In the capacity as editor, Bernard Hill also did a great deal of the editorial and fashion photography for the magazine.



## Collectors South . . . . .

An Ensign Midget from the 1930's is one of Timaru collector Colin Earl's favourite pieces. The Midget produces negatives 1 5/8 by 1 1/2 inches, a bit larger than full-frame 35mm, but its size when folded, 3 3/8in by 1 7/8in by 1/2in takes some of the gloss out of the current fashion for compact 35's: even the Rollei 35 is an eighth of an inch longer and a monstrous half an inch wider and thicker. It's not unlike the Vest Pocket Kodak, although the lens board, which pulls straight out from the body is supported not by the "lazy tongs" type struts of the V.P.K. but by four straight struts, one from each corner of the lens board to the camera body. This system was popular in Europe for press-type cameras, notably the Goerz Anschutz, as it provided a very rigid support for the lens board. It was also used in some Ansco roll-film cameras of fifty years ago. Disadvantages were that the lens and shutter did not have the protection of the drop-bed front of the Speed Graphic and Folding Pocket Kodak types, and focussing was limited by what could be obtained by lens movement alone: no extra bellows extension was possible.



The Ensign Midget was first produced in 1934, but it's clearly a descendant of the Ensignette, a tiny camera which first came out before World War 1 and proved so popular that even Kodak made films to fit it. Film for the Midget, in E10 size, is no longer available but Mr Earl has been able to use his camera by respooling 828 size film, which fits nicely, even though he had to get an engineer friend to make another spool to match the one which was in his Midget when he obtained it.

And the Midget could take very good pictures. Even today the occasional nostalgic correspondent to English photographic magazines speaks of the sharpness of its lenses. This is borne out by a 10X enlargement from a negative taken by Colin Earl's camera: it may not challenge say a Leica, but for a low-priced camera with a simple fixed-focus lens it's as good or better than what could be produced by any of today's comparable cameras. And Mr Earl says another model of the Midget, one with a focussing 6.3 Ensar lens, produces images which are very sharp indeed.

## . . . . . and North

Cameras need not be very old (going back to the wet-plate or daguerrotype eras) or very rare and valuable (like the original Kodak or the Leica B) to make worthwhile collector's items. Two of the smaller private collections in this country contain few items of great antiquity or rarity, but give their owners plenty of interest and satisfaction at no excessive cost. And what more could one ask of a hobby, especially when it's associated with the much wider enthusiasm of photography itself?

One collection which has received wider recognition is that of Alan Webster, of Cambridge in the Waikato. The local historical society has given him space in their museum to display part of his collection. The equipment is displayed in a glass case with cards giving details of the items and information about the invention of photography by Niepce, Daguerre and Fox Talbot.

Mr Webster's collection is made up of about forty cameras and associated bits of equipment. The oldest item probably dates from about 1890 or perhaps a little earlier. It falls into the general category of what were then known as detective cameras. Its a small (compared with the unwieldy stand cameras of the day) box-type camera carrying a stack of plates which were manipulated into position by means of a soft leather bag over the top of the plate magazine. As such it's a predecessor of that large group of cameras known as magazine hand cameras; some-



times quite complex machines of box form carrying a magazine of plates with various types of plate changing mechanisms. There were produced for about thirty years till the rollfilm box cameras, much easier to load and operate, finally displaced them in the early 1920's. Many manufacturers' made them. Ensign produced one of the best known, the "Klito" and a number of New Zealand retailers imported and sold these cameras under the retailer's own name. Which makes determining the origin of many of these cameras quite a problem.

Alan's camera provides even more of an identification problem, because it carries no identification marks of any kind. But in spite of this and it's fairly crude construction (it may even be a home made job) simple lens and shutter, it's a fascinating bit of photographic.

The rest of Mr Webster's collection includes Thornton Pickard and Lancaster view cameras from around the turn of the century, a 1A Graflex (one of the few roll-film models of that big family) a Number 4 Cartridge Kodak (a sort of cross between a Folding Pocket Kodak and a small view camera, and fairly rare) a few 35mm's and a clutch of box and folding cameras, mostly Kodaks and Ensigns of varying ages and sizes. Few great rarities perhaps, but enough to give a fascinating insight into the tremendous variety that the evolution of the camera has produced. And amongst the miscellaneous equipment in the collection: a "Sashalite" flashbulb which was part of the first shipment of flashbulbs to reach New Zealand back around 1930.



BRASSAI continued.....

Humour is strongly evident in Street Fair (23), Buttress of the Elevated (34) in which a shadow profile of Picasso (my guess) appears, Bal Tabarin (43), Parc Montsouris (61), and The Royal Show, England (66). Others like Folies-Bergere (46), Balearic Islands (71) and Rome-Naples Express (65) are in part humorous by association.

PHOTOGRAPHY 71 continued.....

Uneven in quality and by no means comprehensive, Photography 1971 undoubtedly reflects much of the variety and excitement of the current revival of serious photography. I am pleased to report that New Zealand photography is alive and kicking.

Footnote: A good 16-page catalogue with seven plates is available as Waikato Art Gallery Bulletin No.3/1971, price 40c. Write to the gallery, Box 937, Hamilton.

Gordon H. Brown left Hamilton in May to take up a position as curator of the Hocken Collection, University of Otago, Dunedin, so the gallery is without a Director

HUTCHINS continued.....

the jagged edges and bruises of the broken volume of vulnerable fuselage. It is, I feel in bad taste to call this: "DC8, The Litterbug". The picture is tragic in its impact, and needs no such title. But on the way out one sees the incredibly corny set-up of "Madonna". This is a side-lit profile of a girl curved around in a wooden-framed niche with a real candle in a brass candle-base stuck in front. This could easily be seen as a send-up of the bad taste which underlies so much of this show. I only wish it were. I can imagine the

As a point of interest the American prices of Brassai's photographs range from \$50 to \$150 each and the show is insured for over \$8,000. But that's by no means the true value of his work. Give yourself plenty of time to feast your eyes and mind on this memorable exhibition. (Photographs in this review from New York Museum of Modern Art Collection.)

at present and it's uncertain whether the exhibition will travel as originally intended.

Mr Brown was responsible for starting the gallery's small but important collection of fine contemporary New Zealand photography, the only public collection of its kind in the country. The collection was started last year with the acquisition of four prints from Mac Miller's show "Facts, Figures and Faces" and the gallery is at present negotiating for the purchase of ten prints, mostly from the current exhibition. The collection includes two prints by Alfred H. Burton (1834-1914).

gallery being a set in a student film on kitsch.

Photography has to be honest, above all else. It has to be sincere. It should reflect a genuine response, to the subject matter for its own sake, for its abstract or design qualities, or for some other significant quality which has struck the photographer and is worth transmitting to viewers. As a whole this exhibition does not do this.

Robert Hutchins

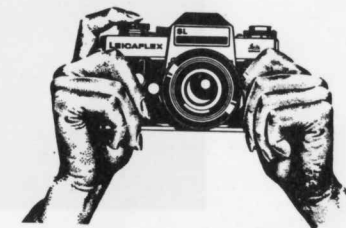


Photo: David McVicker

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