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Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection, A Master's Project to prepare and exhibit images and artifacts from the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection

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Abstract of Thesis

The purpose of this Master's Thesis Project is to implement essential practices in the museum profession in relation to the stabilization, digitization, and exhibition of the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection. Through skills learned in the Museum Studies MA program, negatives from the Beach Collection were systematically chosen, digitized, and researched. This process resulted in an exhibition titled *Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection*, which was on display from February 4-27, 2018 at the Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum, in Buffalo, New York.

State University of New York
College at Buffalo
Department of History and Social Studies Education

Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection

A Master's Project to prepare and exhibit images and artifacts
from the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection

A Thesis Project in
Museum Studies
by
Kimberly A. Bruckman

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements
for the Degree of
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Introduction

The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection contains an estimated 57,000 dry plate glass negatives, along with acetate and nitrate film negatives, business documents, and personal documents dating from the late 1880s to mid-1950s. This collection originates from the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio, which was once located at 469 Virginia Street, Buffalo, NY. This collection sat in the Studio building for nearly 60 years after Beach's death, remaining almost completely untouched. Then in 2011, The Buffalo History Museum (then known as the Buffalo & Erie County Historical Society) acquired the collection from the Giallombardo family; Salvatore Giallombardo, then deceased, had been the owner of the Studio building and collection.

The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection (hereafter, the Beach Collection) is one of the most complete glass plate negative collections in Buffalo. Not only does this collection contain glass, acetate, and nitrate film negatives, it also has its own numbering system and documentation. Through necessity, as an active commercial photographer, Howard Beach kept impeccable records of his photographs and business transactions. Each image has a corresponding index card with a negative number, date, name of the subject or family, and name of the photographer. These index cards are kept in two large cabinets and are alphabetized for ease of use. Along with the negatives and card catalog, the Beach collection is also home to many business records and personal items from the Beach Studio.

Although the collection bears the name of Howard D. Beach, it does not only contain items related to him. There are negatives and documents that also pertain to the

predecessors and colleagues of Beach. Three other photographers have been identified in the collection: Andrew Simson, Eleck F. Hall, and Edith Richardson. Andrew Simson, also known as “Buffalo’s oldest photographer,” became the mentor and business partner of Howard D. Beach.¹ Eleck F. Hall was another well-known Buffalo photographer whose studio eventually became that of Howard D. Beach. The nature of the relationship between Edith Richardson and the Beach Studio is still being researched; however, it is believed that she may have used the Beach Studio to develop her negatives as she travelled across the country.²

Although the Beach Collection came to the Museum relatively complete, it was in less-than-perfect condition. Stabilizing the collection soon became the Museum’s priority. The post-Beach years, during which the collection had been stored in the original studio basement and attic, had not been kind to it. Although contained in their original boxes, many of the glass plate negatives had been exposed to dirt, mold, and water, and some were broken. The numerous ledgers and business documents had also been exposed to these damaging conditions. Unfortunately, after the collection had been obtained by the Museum, it was again threatened by water due to an aging temporary storage building, which was quickly and successfully repaired.

With little funding and staff to focus on the needs of the collection, the Buffalo History Museum entered into a partnership with SUNY Buffalo State, which had a growing Museum Studies program. A plan was created to use students in the Museum

¹ Cynthia Conides, “Preserving and Accessing the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Glass Plate Negative Collection,” *Collections* 11, no.2 (Spring 2015):88.

² Adam Barnes, “Edith M. Richardson: A Woman of Mystery and her Subjects” (Master’s Project, State University College at Buffalo, 2018).

Studies program to clean, digitize, rehouse, and accession the negatives in the Beach Collection. Not only would this collaboration save time and money for the Museum, but it would also give students the opportunity to gain hands-on experience in caring for a museum collection.³ Student work was and continues to be supported by Phyllis Walling, a skilled and dedicated museum volunteer.

In February 2018, an exhibit entitled *Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection* opened at the Porter Hall location of the Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum in Buffalo, NY.* This exhibit was the result of the author's experience with the Beach Collection over a span of three semesters in the Museum Studies graduate program at Buffalo State. This paper is a description of the process and motivation behind the creation of *Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection*.

³ Noelle Wiedemer, "MST623 Digital Collections" (class lecture, MST623 Digital Collections, State University College at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY, Fall 2016).

* The Karpeles Library is the world's largest private holding of important original manuscripts and documents, such as the original draft of the Bill of Rights of the United States and Albert Einstein's famous $E=mc^2$ equation. There are 14 museum locations in cities across the United States, including Santa Barbara, California, St. Louis, Missouri, and Jacksonville, Florida. <http://www.rain.org/~karpeles/>.

Creating an Exhibit

Exhibits are the physical embodiment of the relationship between a museum and its audience. They are created from collections and information that a museum holds, generally, to educate the public about a certain topic. Not only does a museum wish to disseminate information to the public; they also want to create interest in the subjects on which their exhibits are based. Creating interest within your audience establishes a relationship between the information and the viewer, and an association of the museum with something that the viewer has interest in. These relationships between information, the audience, and the museum, ideally, create a strong foundation on which the museum can continue to grow and evolve.

The motivation behind creating *Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection* (hereafter *Picturing Buffalo*) was to create a connection between a general public audience and the Beach Collection itself. After working with the collection for approximately one and a half years, it became apparent that the collection had an extraordinary amount of value, in both an historical and academic context, which was hidden from public view.

The nature of the Beach Collection lends itself to being both a museum resource and a public resource. Not only does the collection include photographs of both individuals who are well known locally and internationally, but it also contains visual histories of their families. As a result of the reputation of the Beach Studio, many families continued their patronage across generations. Combined with the information contained within the card catalog, these family portraits create a genealogical narrative.

Also contained within the collection are several groups of photographs related to various schools, organizations, and businesses in the Buffalo area.

On its own, the Beach Collection forms the narrative of three of Buffalo's most successful photography studios, a narrative of the life of Howard D. Beach and his family, and a general history of the development of photography techniques. When combined with materials and information that are already in existence at The Buffalo History Museum and placed within the context of the city itself, the value of this collection increases exponentially.

Since the Museum acquired the collection in 2011, there have been approximately four exhibits derived from the Beach Collection.⁴ With the exception of *Picturing Buffalo*, all of these exhibits have been located on the Buffalo State campus. Although the Buffalo State is accessible to the public, the audience for these exhibits consisted largely of students. Therefore, the goals of *Picturing Buffalo* were to present the Beach collection in such a way that the audience experienced both the information contained within the collection and the collection itself, and to increase the awareness of its existence and value.

⁴ Noelle Wiedemer, email communication, March 8, 2018.

Literature Review

On the Materiality of Images

More often than not, photographs are valued as information. We focus on what is in the photo rather than as a complete object. The role of photographs in museums has been an auxiliary one. Traditionally, photos have been used to supplement narratives of museum exhibits and presentations. More recently, however, this attitude towards the role of photographs in museums has begun to shift.

Elizabeth Edwards is a professor of Photographic History and the Director of the Photographic History Research Centre at De Montfort University in Leicester, England.⁵ As a former Curator of Photographs at Pitt Rivers Museum, Edwards experience with photographs in a museum setting has influenced many of her works. Her work on the materiality of images, combined with her work on their historical and anthropological value, was particularly applicable in the creation of *Picturing Buffalo*.

In *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology, and Museums*, Edwards suggests that photos constitute “little narratives” but at the same time are constituted by and are constitutive of the “grand narrative.”⁶ However, in a museum setting, photos are primarily seen as supplementary material that is used to catch the eye of visitors and make the exhibit narrative more digestible, when in fact they are a necessary piece in completing the process of resurrecting historical figures and events. The Beach Collection matches Edwards’ narrative theory. It contains “little narratives” of individuals

⁵ “Academic Staff: Professor Elizabeth Edwards,” De Montfort University, accessed March 9, 2018, <http://www.dmu.ac.uk/about-dmu/academic-staff/art-design-humanities/elizabeth-edwards/elizabeth-edwards.aspx>.

⁶ Elizabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology, and Museums* (Oxford: Berg, 2010), 3.

and families, “grand narratives” in the form of the development of photographic technology and relationships between families over time, and recreates the “grand narrative” of the rise and fall of the city of Buffalo.

Photographs, Museums, Collections: Between Art and Information is a collection of case studies edited by Elizabeth Edwards and Christopher Morton.⁷ Once again, it touches on Edwards’ theory on the materiality of images and the function of images in a museum context. In the introduction, the two authors suggest that photos are fundamental to the operation of museums, but the history of photographic collections will always be contingent on other museum histories.⁸ Then, they go on to suggest that photos have a double collections history: one of being collected as images and objects, and the other as instruments of the curatorial process.⁹ The Beach Collection fits their theory of a double history, but does not necessarily agree with their statement that photo collections will always be contingent on other museum histories. The motivation behind the acquisition of the Beach Collection was that the images and objects in the collection itself had value. As the Collection is further evaluated, it becomes clearer that it also has value as a curatorial tool. However, if the Beach Collection has been and is seen as having value in and of itself, then it is not necessarily contingent on other museum histories.

In “Revolutionary Photographs: The Museo de la Revolucion Havana, Cuba,” Kristine Juncker explores the relationship between the museum, the visitor, and the

⁷ Elizabeth Edwards and Christopher Morton, *Photographs, Museums, Collections: Between Art and Information* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2015).

⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

⁹ *Ibid.*, 7.

photo collection.¹⁰ The subject of this chapter is the collection of photographs that relate to the lives of Cuban revolutionaries, including Fidel Castro and Ernesto ‘Che’ Guevara. Juncker explains how the photos are used to invite visitors to interpret the stories through a series of “microhistories,” which offer insight into a much broader history.¹¹ She goes on to say that these photographs offer a sense of incision into the experiences of these revolutionary leaders that visitors would not be able to experience elsewhere. Later, Juncker addresses the topic of reconciling shifting scales of historical narratives and the objectives of the museum.¹² This is a particularly important part of creating museum exhibits because it is not always possible to make use of a large part of a collection while simultaneously ensuring that visitors stay engaged and interested.

Similar to the photo collection at the Museo de la Revolucion in Cuba, the photos and artifacts in the Beach Collection can also be used to lead visitors through a series of “microhistories” that also tie into the broader history of Buffalo. There are hundreds, if not thousands, of these “microhistories” contained within the collection. The relationships that Beach had with his customers, along with the relationships between customers, illustrate the intricate inner-workings of Buffalo in its golden age.

“Unwrapping the Layers: Translating Photograph Albums into an Exhibition Context” by Ulrike Bessel, a Curatorial Assistant at the Royal Engineers Museum Library and Archive in Gillingham, England, describes the challenges of creating an

¹⁰ Kristine Juncker, “Revolutionary Photographs: The Museo de la Revolucion, Havana, Cuba,” in *Photographs, Museums, Collections: Between Art and Information*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards and Christopher Morton (London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 159.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Ibid., 162.

exhibit from various photo albums held by the museum.¹³ Bessel describes these photo albums as both official military photos and personal photos acquired from the Royal Engineers. The collection of albums comprises 342 boxes with 639 albums containing film negatives, glass plate negatives, and loose photographs.¹⁴ In the 1990s, the collection was separated from the Library at the Royal Engineers Museum, received its own numbering system, and became its own collection within the archives at the museum; however, recent donations have been accessioned into the museum's collections.¹⁵

While designing the exhibit, Bessel notes that only photos with ample documentation (e.g. included names, places, and dates) were chosen to display.¹⁶ This decision is an interesting one. Of course, a museum wants to present the most complete version of a narrative, however, the separation and selection of certain photographs from the albums seems to counteract this notion. This process effectively edited the original narratives of the albums and created a museum-constructed narrative which fit the needs of the museum. The decision not to display the albums as a whole also seems to contradict the museum's most recent policy of accessioning new albums into the museum's collections. Accessioning the new albums into the collections illustrates that the museum places value on the structure and completeness of the original album, while their exhibit process only placed value on the most detailed photos from the albums.

¹³ Ulrike Bessel, "Unwrapping the Layers: Translating Photograph Albums into an Exhibition Context," in *Photographs, Museums, Collections: Between Art and Information*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards and Christopher Morton (London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 216.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 218.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, 219.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 222.

Bessel also mentions Elizabeth Edwards' and Janice Hart's three components of photo materiality.¹⁷ According to Bessel, these three components are the plasticity of the image itself, presentational forms (e.g. prints, mounts, frames), and the signs of age and usage.¹⁸ He notes that this theory also suggests that reproductions create fictitious materiality. This is where the issue of creating or using reproductions becomes apparent for museums. How do reproductions (with and without editing) affect how the audience interprets a photograph? In particular, how does this issue affect collections that consist mainly of negatives, which in some cases may be severely damaged? When creating an exhibition, a museum may consider what the goal of the exhibit is, and if it does not directly depend upon the condition or originality of a photo, using a reproduction may be considered.

In *Photographs, Museums, Collections*, one case study in particular had many similarities to the Beach Collection. Damarice Amao describes the process of preserving the Eli Lotar photographic collection at the Pompidou Centre of the National Modern Art Museum in Paris, France in "To Collect and Preserve Negatives: The Eli Lotar Collection at the Centre Georges Pompidou."¹⁹ In 1993, the Centre Pompidou acquired the contents of Eli Lotar's studio, which included 150 documents and photos, many of which were prints made from the original negatives.²⁰ The collection also included an estimated 6000 negatives, but only the ones that were considered the most

¹⁷ Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, *Photographs, Objects, Histories: On the Materiality of Images* (London, Routledge, 2004).

¹⁸ Bessel, "Unwrapping the Layers," 225-226.

¹⁹ Damarice Amao, "To Collect and Preserve Negatives: The Eli Lotar Collection at the Centre Georges Pompidou," in *Photographs, Museums, Collections: Between Art and Information*, ed. Elizabeth Edwards and Christopher Morton (London, Bloomsbury Academic, 2015), 233.

²⁰ Ibid.

interesting (around 5%) were cataloged.²¹ Amao also writes that the museum capitalized on distributing prints and loaning these items to other museums.²²

In relation to the Beach Collection, the process of accessioning the Eli Lotar collection has progressed much further. However, the commonalities between the two collections are notable. Each consist of both documents, prints, and negatives that come from a single source, many of the negatives have gone through (or are currently in) the process of digitization, and both museums seek to capitalize off of the prints that can be made from these collections. Aside from exhibitions on photography, the negatives would be completely unusable in a museum setting without having first been digitized. Amao also poses the question of the post-digitization relationship between the museum and the collection.²³ Ideally, when digitization is complete, the digitized files and documents would be available to the public as a resource for research or as a commodity. In this regard, the collection, being the theoretical “middle man,” is cut out of the equation entirely, ceasing any unnecessary contact with the outside world. Subsequently, the theoretical issue becomes one of visitor-collections experience and interactions in a post-digitization museum environment.

Historical and Beach-Specific Material

Dr. Cynthia Conides, former Executive Director of the Buffalo History Museum and current Associate Professor and Director of the Museum Studies program at SUNY Buffalo State, authored an article about the Beach Collection which appeared in the

²¹ Amao, “To Collect and Preserve Negatives,” 238.

²² Ibid.

²³ Ibid., 242.

spring 2015 edition of *Collections*.²⁴ Entitled “Preserving and Accessing the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Glass Plate Negative Collection,” the article describes the contents of the collection, the assessment and acquisition of the collection, and a brief historical background on Howard D. Beach and his contemporaries. Written four years after the Buffalo History Museum acquired the collection, the article describes the potential future plans for the Beach Collection, which includes making a database of names that will be accessible to the public.²⁵ Perhaps the most noticeable theme of this article is the urgency to remedy the collection’s current state. With an estimated 57,000 glass plate negatives, along with numerous business documents, the task of cleaning and digitizing the contents of the collection is overwhelming at its best. Although the Buffalo History Museum enlisted the help of the Museum Studies Program at SUNY Buffalo State in 2013, by 2015 only 1,200 negatives had been cleaned and digitized.²⁶ As of spring 2018, approximately 2,000 negatives have been cleaned and digitized.²⁷

Students in the Museum Studies program at SUNY Buffalo State not only learn skills that will be useful in a museum environment, more specifically in collections management, they also gain experience in researching historical information. A museum is only as good as the information it disseminates, therefore, historical accuracy and having a diverse knowledge of informational sources is absolutely necessary for museum professionals.

²⁴ Cynthia Conides, “Preserving and Accessing the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Glass Plate Negative Collection,” *Collections* 11, no.2 (Spring 2015):88.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, 98.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 97-98.

²⁷ Noelle Wiedemer and Phyllis Walling, email message with author, May 16, 2018.

These sources can take many forms and include primary and secondary resources. Primary sources can include personal diaries, census information, and objects themselves. Primary sources of information are extremely beneficial, often due to their level of detail in the information contained within them. However, primary sources can also be misleading. Misinformation caused by human error is something that every researcher must be aware of; however, inaccuracies can often be validated through cross-referencing with additional sources. Primary sources are often difficult to find, especially within a historical context, which makes their information much more valuable to someone such as a museum professional.

Secondary sources are much more prevalent when researching historical information. This category includes books, biographies, newspaper articles, and websites. These sources may offer less detail about specific persons or events, but may offer more information overall. Again, these sources can also be tainted by human error or subjectivity, which stem from improper research techniques and personal bias.

When designing an exhibit, perhaps the most important source is the artifact. In the case of *Picturing Buffalo*, the initial source of information was the Beach Collection itself. The information one can collect from each negative combined with the information found on each catalog card is an ideal starting point for any researcher. This information includes names, dates, and possible family members, which facilitates researching each family that is in the collection. The Beach Collection is unique in its wealth of information; however, an artifact will always be the starting point for researching information for an exhibit.

To create an accurate picture of each family history, the use of census and cemetery records was required. Both federal and local censuses can provide essential information about a family. They list family members, addresses, birth dates, occupation, immigration dates, and sometimes marriage dates. These records can be used to track family movements and growth. Websites such as FamilySearch.org provide users access to government documentation including census lists, marriage records, birth and death records, immigration records, military records, and user-generated family trees.²⁸

When combined with records from cemeteries, census information can be confirmed and also enhanced. It is becoming more common for cemeteries to make their burial records available to the public through genealogy centers and online databases. One such cemetery is Forest Lawn Cemetery in Buffalo, New York. In recent years, they have made burial permits and lot registers available to the public through the Margaret L. Wendt Archive and Resource Center and the “Locate a Loved One” feature on their website.²⁹ Burial permits include information such as parents’ names, date of birth, place of birth, occupation, marital status, and place and time of death. Lot registers list persons who are buried in a specific plot at the cemetery, who are, most often, family members. When combined with the information from census lists, and then compared to the information on a catalog card, it is possible to confirm the identity of the subject in the photograph.

²⁸ FamilySearch, 2018, <https://www.familysearch.org/>.

²⁹ “Locate a Loved One,” Genealogy, Forest Lawn Cemetery, 2018, <https://www.forest-lawn.com/genealogy/locate-a-loved-one>.

When doing historical research, biographies can also be helpful. *Memorial and Family History of Erie County, New York* contains narratives of prominent Buffalo residents along with brief genealogical information relating to each family. The publishers of this volume state that it was their intent to “grasp the salient traits of [each] subject and to show, in a clear light, the chief points of his career,” while providing genealogical information in such a way that the average person can easily use it for reference.³⁰ The publishers also ensure the reader that “exceptional pains” had been taken to ensure accuracy, compiling information from original sources and correcting any errors that were found.³¹ Each entry in this volume gives a brief biography of one or more subjects, also occasionally accompanied by a brief family history.

Genealogical and Family History of Western New York: A Record of Achievements of Her People in the Making of a Commonwealth and the Building of a Nation is similar in nature to *Memorial and Family History of Erie County*.³² It also contains family histories and genealogies, however, describes family genealogy in much more detail. Often, entries in this volume include genealogical information that dates as far back as the 17th century and information regarding the family name origin. No direct reference is given to many of the sources of information from which this text was compiled, however, the author, William Richard Cutter, is noted as a corresponding secretary and historian of the New England Historic-Genealogical Society, librarian

³⁰ The Genealogical Publishing Company, *Memorial and Family History of Erie County, New York, Volume 1* (New York: The Winthrop Press, 1906-8), Preface, <https://archive.org/stream/memorialandfami00goog#page/n7/mode/2up>.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Preface.

³² William Richard Cutter, *Genealogical and Family History of Western New York: A Record of Achievements of Her People in the Making of a Commonwealth and the Building of a Nation, Volume 2* (New York: Lewis Historical Publishing Company, 1912), https://books.google.com/books?id=mMQLAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&source=gbs_atb#v=onepage&q&f=false.

emeritus of Woburn Public Library, and the author of two additional works.³³ Albeit, slightly more detailed than a museum professional may require, this volume provides a wealth of information about each family contained within it.

The Chapin Book of Genealogical Data, with Brief Biographical Sketches, of the Descendants of Deacon Samuel Chapin is a much more traditional genealogical resource.³⁴ The foreword of the volume includes a note from Gilbert W. Chapin, Terry J. Chapin, and Howard M. Chapin, trustees of the Chapin Genealogical Fund, which states that the purpose of this work is “not only to record the data of the descendants of Deacon Samuel Chapin, but to state briefly, the facts that will indicate character.”³⁵ Along with a section praising the efforts of Gilbert W. Chapin, the preliminary pages of the volume cite several sources of information that were used to gather information about the Chapin family’s English heritage.³⁶ This information includes a certification of authenticity of English records from A. Linzee Giles, the Vicar of Paignton, England, a note from the 1908 Oxford Dictionary about the use of the term “nephew” in England from the year 1297 to 1699, and a citation for a 1908 biography of Deacon Samuel Chapin.³⁷ Overall, this work focuses heavily on the genealogy of the Chapin family, with much less biographical information than the aforementioned works.

Occasionally, when researching local historical figures and events, research papers or news articles may be used as a source of information. “The Knox Summer Estate,” produced by the Junior League of Buffalo and The Buffalo News, is one such

³³ Ibid., Title page.

³⁴ Gilbert Warren Chapin, *The Chapin Book of Genealogical Data, with Brief Biographical Sketches, of the Descendants of Deacon Samuel Chapin, Volume 1* (Hartford: Chapin Family Association, 1924).

³⁵ Ibid., V.

³⁶ Ibid., VI-VII.

³⁷ Ibid., VIII-XIII.

example.³⁸ Using information collected from sources such as Knox family members, privately published works by the Knox family, local history journals and organizations, news articles, and more, this work gives both the history of the Knox family and their summer estate located in East Aurora, NY. Each member of the Knox family and each building on the Knox estate is dedicated a section in this composition. Written for the public, this work is extremely easy to comprehend, but also offers the reader extensive historical detail.

“The Coit House Mystique” written by Christopher N. Brown, author and former president of the Allentown Association of Buffalo, is also a locally produced historical overview.³⁹ With contributions from parties such as local researchers David F. Granville and Martin Wachadlo, The Buffalo History Museum, and the New York State Historic Preservation Office, this work seeks to confirm the history of the Coit House and the Coit family, and assert the historical significance of the structure.

Works such as these are valuable resources to the museum community and also to the public. They use reliable resources and extensive detail to preserve local history in such a way that it is accessible to everyone, unlike strictly academic works which may be lost on the general public. Like museums, these works seek to educate and instill interest in the public about local history on a greater scale than, for example, a simple newspaper or journal magazine article.

However, news articles can be an important source of information for museum professionals. Not only are they useful in providing current information about a topic, the

³⁸ Junior League of Buffalo and The Buffalo News, “The Knox Summer Estate,” April 16, 2013, <http://www.buffaloah.com/a/EastAur/knox/hamilton.pdf>.

³⁹ Christopher N. Brown, “The Coit House Mystique,” June 4, 2007, <http://buffaloah.com/a/va/414/coit.pdf>.

information they provide can be used to connect an exhibit to current events, which can further the level of interest of the audience. Information obtained from newspapers can heighten the level of detail of an exhibit. Often, the narrative that a museum wishes to create in their exhibit can reach a dead end when using only historical documents and sources. To extend that narrative and achieve a higher level of detail, one must gather information from more recently published sources. Since the creation of historical compilations, outside of an academic context, has waned, an informational gap has formed. The gap that has formed is most often filled by newspaper and journal articles.

In creating the family narratives for *Picturing Buffalo*, it was imperative to use newspaper articles. Similar to using census and cemetery records, the information supplied by the articles helped to corroborate and complete information. Articles such as “A Big Deal on Virginia Street,” “Knox Family Members and Friends Leave State Park Board,” “Blizzard Soccer Team Left Out as New League Forms,” and “Buffalo’s Oldest House is Up for Sale” provided information about each family and the Beach legacy that helped bring *Picturing Buffalo* into the present.⁴⁰

In addition to recent news articles, information was also utilized from older news articles. Some websites, such as FultonHistory.com, provide users with a searchable database of newspapers. Using this feature, one can search names or topics within archived newspapers. In the case of *Picturing Buffalo*, this platform was again used to

⁴⁰ Newell Nussbaumer, “A Big Deal on Virginia Street,” *Buffalo Rising*, September 27, 2017, <https://www.buffalorising.com/2017/09/a-big-deal-on-virginia-street/>; Michelle Kearns, “Knox Family Members and Friends Leave State Park Board,” *The Buffalo News*, October 17, 2014, <http://buffalonews.com/2014/10/17/knox-family-members-and-friends-leave-state-park-board/>; *Buffalo Business First*, “Blizzard Soccer Team Left Out as New League Forms,” August 8, 2001, <https://www.bizjournals.com/buffalo/stories/2001/08/06/daily29.html>; Mike Randall, “Buffalo’s Oldest House is Up for Sale,” *WKBW Buffalo*, December 12, 2017, <https://www.wkbw.com/news/buffalo-s-oldest-house-is-up-for-sale>.

supplement missing information. Before the predominance of radio and television, newspapers were used to inform readers about important events and also as a social platform. Similar to today's social media platforms, members of the public could post announcements in the newspaper to inform their family and friends of things such as marriages, births, deaths, social functions, and travel arrangements.⁴¹ As radio and television became more prevalent, newspapers were reduced to reporting less personal information and mainly turned to current events and business.⁴²

One final option for gathering historical information is a web-based source. This option is perhaps the most convenient of all, especially when working within the museum profession where funds and time for travel are limited. Many web-based sources have information that has been consolidated from other sources. However, many museums and organizations also provide historical information on their websites. Meibohm Fine Arts, an art gallery in located in East Aurora, NY, holds several Mutotones and other works associated with Howard D. Beach. On their website, they have compiled a biography of Beach and summary of his achievements.⁴³ Sometimes information can be found through current business websites. The Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, located in Buffalo, is the existing legacy of Dr. Roswell

⁴¹ "This End of the State," *The Daily News*, October 25, 1915, <http://fultonhistory.com/>

⁴² Bob Watson, "Buffalo Interests Offer to Purchase Weed & Company," *Buffalo Evening News*, May 2, 1963, <http://fultonhistory.com/>; *Buffalo Evening News*, "L.A. Company Buys Weed & Co., Oldest Business in Buffalo," July 30, 1963, <http://fultonhistory.com/>.

⁴³ Mark Strong, "Howard Dwight Beach," Meibohm Fine Arts, <http://www.meibohmfinearts.com/artists.aspx?ID=71>.

Park. In a page dedicated to Dr. Park, visitors to the website can read about his life and achievements.⁴⁴

Other organizations exist almost entirely online, for example, The Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame. Created in 1991, this organization has only a small display that is currently housed in the KeyBank Center in Buffalo, which causes the majority of information about inductees to be held on their website. Information on inductees, such as Seymour Knox III, include achievements up to the time that they are inducted into the Hall of Fame, with a note that each biography is written at the time of induction and no attempts have been made to update the narratives to reflect current events.⁴⁵

Buffalo Architecture and History is a source of information that exists entirely online. This completely web-based existence does not, however, lessen the value of the information contained within the website. The creator of the website, Chuck LaChiusa, a former English teacher at City Honors High School in Buffalo, states that he maintains the Buffalo Architecture and History website as a public service.⁴⁶ This website contains both architectural history of the buildings of Buffalo and biographies of many of the historically prominent members of the Buffalo community. Gathering information from local newspapers, museums, libraries, and published works, LaChiusa has created a virtual treasure trove of historical information for historians and the general public.

⁴⁴ "Who Was Dr. Roswell Park?," Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, January 19, 2016, <https://www.roswellpark.org/cancertalk/201601/who-was-dr-roswell-park>.

⁴⁵ "Seymour Knox III," Hall of Fame Members: Class of 1992, Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame, <http://www.buffalosportshallfame.com/member/seymour-knox-iii/>.

⁴⁶ Elena Cala Buscarino, "Mr. Architecture: Chuck LaChiusa," *Buffalo Rising*, February 23, 2008, <http://www.buffalorising.com/2008/02/mr-architecture-chuck-lachiusa-2/>; "Home Page," Buffalo Architecture and History, <http://buffaloah.com/>.

Chapter 1

Image Processing

Locating, Cleaning, and Digitizing

The first step to creating any exhibit is choosing a topic. In the case of *Picturing Buffalo*, this topic was addressing the historical and academic value of the collection. More specifically, using family narratives to illustrate the depth of information and detail contained within the Beach Collection. The decision was made to highlight five families of Buffalo, including the Howard D. Beach family. To choose the other four, preliminary research had to be done on several families within the collection.

It was already known that prominent Buffalo families such as the Pierce family of the Pierce-Arrow Motor Car Company and the Larkin family of the Larkin Soap Company were listed in the card catalog of the Beach Collection. To best illustrate the historical breadth of the collection, research was focused on families who had the largest number of family members listed in the card catalog. To accomplish this task, the digital database that had been created from the card catalog was used. Such families included the Weed family, the Noyes family, the Adam family, and the Kellogg family.

Initially, the five families that were chosen for the exhibit were the Beach family, the Weed family, the Rich family, the Rogers family, and the Townsend family. Specific interest was taken in the Rich, Rogers, and Townsend families because it was discovered that these three families not only had a sizeable amount of negatives listed in the collection over a significant period of time, but were also related. These three

families perfectly represented the idea that the Beach Collection is an unintentionally created genealogical resource which contains genealogical information across a significant span of time in Buffalo's history. In addition to the size of the Rich-Rogers-Townsend section of the collection, ample information existed about the histories of each of these families.

After evaluating the list of families, which totaled 22, it was determined that the Rich-Rogers-Townsend group would not be the best choice for the exhibit. The level of informational detail is not always the most important characteristic of exhibit design. The most important element is creating interest, because without interest, there is no audience. Therefore, it was determined that a mixture of families, ranging between well-known and relatively unknown, would be needed for this project for it to be successful.

The families that were ultimately chosen for *Picturing Buffalo* were the Beach family, the Weed family, the Knox family, the Park family, and the Coit family. The Knox, Park, and Coit families were chosen to replace the Rich, Rogers, and Townsend families because of their higher level of significance in the Buffalo community. The Knox and Park families are perhaps most well known in Buffalo because of their more recent and ongoing contributions to the city, which connected the exhibit to modern-day knowledge and events. The Coit family enhanced both the historical and modern-day connections because the Coit House is still in existence, carrying the title of the oldest house in Buffalo.

With the families to be featured in the exhibit chosen, the next step was to create a list of each negative related to each family, and begin the process of locating each

negative. The digital database that had been created from the card catalog was essential to this process. Through a computer program, a list of negatives was created for each family, which was extremely efficient, compared to sifting through the card catalog and making a list by hand.

Locating the negatives to be used in the exhibit was approximately a six-week process, which started in late August 2017. The challenge with the Beach Collection is that there is almost a guarantee that not every negative that is being looked for is going to be located. This is a result of the post-Beach private ownership, in the sense that some negatives may still be privately held or were discarded or given away, and also a result of the Great Depression. The Beach Studio did feel the effects of the Great Depression, as evident in some of Beach's correspondences found within the collection.⁴⁷ It is believed that Beach may have used some of the glass plate negatives to make a profit through the extraction of the silver from the emulsion on the plates.⁴⁸

Along with these factors, another reason that a negative may not be located is the presence of water damage or mold. Several groups of negatives have been damaged by water, in which case the negative number, name, or parts of the image may have been obscured. Some negatives that received heavy water damage, or were compromised by mold, have been placed in storage areas separate from the rest of the collection for safety purposes. In some cases, these negatives were not able to be organized within the collection when it was acquired due to a lack of identification numbers.

⁴⁷ Conides, "Preserving and Accessing," 93-94.

⁴⁸ Noelle Wiedemer, "MST623 Digital Collections" (class lecture, MST623 Digital Collections, State University College at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY, Fall 2016).

Aside from the challenges created by water damage or mold, the Beach Collection is organized in such a way that makes it easy for specific negatives to be located. Stored in banker's boxes, the original boxes of glass plate negatives are marked with identification numbers in groups of ten. Each banker's box contains approximately ten original boxes and is marked with a number sequence indicating the series of boxes contained within, as seen in **Image 1**.



Image 1

Each banker's box is also marked with a color-coded dot; a black dot indicates 5x7 negatives, a red dot indicates 8x10 negatives, and a green dot indicates 6.5x8.5 negatives.

After locating approximately 220 negatives from the five families combined, they needed to be cleaned, rehoused, and digitized. The cleaning process consists of using a static-free brush to remove any loose particles or dirt from the negative. Then, details such as negative number, subject, size, and condition are recorded on a cleaning sheet. After the negative has been cleaned and documented, the negative is digitized using a high-resolution digital camera. Then the negative is rehoused in an archival envelope that is marked with the negative number and name of the subject in the photo. Eventually, the cleaning records are checked for errors, after which the negatives are incorporated into the group of rehoused negatives which are stored in numerical order

in archival boxes, and the cleaning notes are used to add each negative to the digital database collections software known as PastPerfect.

For this project, in the interest of saving time, not all 220 negatives were cleaned, rehoused, and digitized. Often there are several negatives with the same negative number. This usually indicates that these photos were taken on the same day. For this project, in some cases, there were nine negatives with the same negative number. Due to the focus on illustrating the time span that the Beach Collection covers, ideally, only one negative from each year was needed. To expedite the cleaning and digitizing process, the negatives were separated by family, then by individual, and one negative from each series with the same negative number was chosen. A total of 154 negatives went through the cleaning, rehousing, and digitization process, in addition to ten negatives being re-digitized. The entire process of cleaning, rehousing, and digitizing the negatives took approximately two and a half months to complete, beginning in mid-October and ending in early December 2017.

Method of Presentation

When the process of cleaning, rehousing, and digitizing is complete, the images that have been produced need to be digitally processed. This involves the use of a computer program, such as Adobe Photoshop. After the images are transferred from the camera to the computer, the first step in image processing is to invert the image. Inverting the colors of the image converts it from a negative to a positive, which is what we recognize as a photo. The second step is to flip the image horizontally. This step is required to recreate the image as if it were being produced as an original print because

during the digitization process, each negative is photographed emulsion-side up to protect the image from damage. The next steps in processing the images are to convert them to grayscale, crop them, and make other small adjustments to the image.

When processing each image for *Picturing Buffalo*, the goal was to keep each image as close to the original as possible. Each image underwent the necessary steps of inversion and conversion to grayscale, however, the decision was made to refrain from cropping out the edges of each image. Without cropping the images in such a way as to exclude the borders of the negative, each image was a representation of the original image and also the negative itself. This way, the audience not only came into contact with the image of the subject, but also all the details involved in Beach's creation of each photograph.

The idea of presenting each image as the photograph itself and as a negative came from previous museum experience. Since each negative is a three-dimensional object and the goal of the exhibit was to introduce the images as well as the collection to the public, it was determined that each image should be presented as an object. Common practice in museums when digitizing three-dimensional objects is to photograph them on a neutral background and to capture the entire object in the photograph.⁴⁹ In accordance with this practice, each image was edited as little as possible and cropped to approximately a quarter of an inch from the edge of the negative itself.

⁴⁹ "Guidelines for the Creation of Digital Collections: Digitization Best Practices for Three-Dimensional Objects," CARLI Digital Collections Users' Group, Consortium of Academic and Research Libraries in Illinois, https://www.carli.illinois.edu/sites/files/digital_collections/documentation/guidelines_for_3D.pdf.

Two other decisions related to image presentation arose in the preparation of the images for exhibition. One of them was whether or not to present an image in such a way that would reflect the original customer-preferred processing method. Each negative contains information in its borders which was written by Howard D. Beach. This information includes the negative number, name of the subject, what type of print was to be made, and sometimes information such as number of prints or a date for delivery, as seen in **Image 2**. Several of the images that were chosen for the exhibit contained information that indicated that the original print was produced in a sepia tone. Due to the nature of the digitization process, it was possible to produce images in a sepia tone. Ultimately, it was decided that presenting some of the images in a sepia tone would distract from the other images in the exhibit. The yellow coloration of these pictures may have given audience members the notion that these images were being highlighted to make them stand out from the other images in the exhibit.



Image 2

The second decision that needed to be made was about the size of each image. The group of images chosen for this exhibit included both 5x7 and 8x10 size images. Keeping with the method of presenting each image as both an image and an object, the decision was made to keep each image at its original size. This way, the audience could

experience the images in a way that would be almost exact to what each customer ordered, and in a way that accurately represents the negatives in the collection.

Presenting the images as objects required one more step, which was creating a label for each image. Museum labels contain information about each object including object name, origin, age, and perhaps the collection to which an object belongs. In this case, it was imperative that each label contain the negative number, name of subject, and the date on which the photo was taken. The decision was made to also include any additional notes or information that might be useful to the audience. In this case, the “Notes” section on each label included the material of the original negative (gelatin dry plate glass negative, acetate, or nitrate film negative), the location of any water damage or tape on the negative, a specific size designation (locket, passport, etc.), and a note if the image was indicated to be a copy of the original. The labels also included a note indicating ownership of the image by The Buffalo History Museum.

Identifying the acetate and nitrate film negatives presented a slight challenge. Luckily, a page on the website of the Northeast Document Conservation Center is completely dedicated to information regarding identification, care, and duplication of film base photographic materials.⁵⁰ Coincidentally, the information on this web page was based on film produced by the Eastman-Kodak Company, which is the brand of film that Howard D. Beach used in his studio. It was discovered that each film negative has a specific notch sequence on one edge of the film that indicates whether it is an acetate

⁵⁰ Monique Fischer, “5.1 A Short Guide to Film Base Photographic Materials: Identification, Care, and Duplication,” Photographs, Northeast Document Conservation Center, <https://www.nedcc.org/free-resources/preservation-leaflets/5.-photographs/5.1-a-short-guide-to-film-base-photographic-materials-identification,-care,-and-duplication>.

or nitrate film negative.⁵¹ This information was able to be confirmed through the digitized images of the film negatives, which also revealed that many of the film negatives are stamped with the words “safety,” which indicates acetate, “acetate,” or “nitrate.”

During the exhibit design process, the option arose to include two Beach-related artifacts in the exhibit that were not a part of the collection. It had been determined at an earlier date to include original prints and other artifacts from the collection in the exhibit. These two artifacts were a portrait of Margaret Beach, which belongs to a member of the Giallombardo family, and a camera which was believed to belong to Howard D. Beach himself, which is in the possession of a professor at SUNY Buffalo State. The decision was made not to include these items in the exhibit because they are not currently items in the Beach Collection. The intention of the exhibit was to highlight the Beach Collection, and including these outside objects would have been misleading to the audience.

Included in the initial stages of designing the exhibit, was the decision to present short biographies of the five featured families. These narratives would accompany the groups of images as a supplementary material. Normally in museum exhibits, there is a mixture of information and graphics, excluding certain art exhibits. The diagrams and images included in an exhibit are meant to be supplementary to the informational material. In the case of *Picturing Buffalo*, the motivation was to have the images be the main focus and have the narratives be the supporting material. The narratives were also seen as a way to make the exhibit more digestible and appealing to the general public.

⁵¹ Monique Fischer, “A Short Guide to Film Base Photographic Materials.”

Family Research

The goal of the family biographies was to provide ample information in a concise manner that would not detract from the images. In the fall 2017 Exhibit Design and Interpretation class in the Museum Studies program at SUNY Buffalo State, the students helped to design an exhibit entitled *Witnesses: Buffalo's Holocaust-Era Stories*, which included biographies of survivors, images, and artifacts. During this process, students learned that text panels should normally not exceed 150 words to ensure that the information is successfully relayed to the audience without audience members losing interest.⁵² Remembering this recommendation while doing research on each of the five families, it became clear that these biographies would need to exceed 150 words in length. If the biographies followed the 150-word recommendation, information that was vital to the effectiveness of the exhibit would have been omitted.

Each biography followed a similar format. They started with the patriarch of the family most closely associated with the images in the collection, with the exception of the Coit family biography which started with the father of the earliest family member in the collection. Information about each patriarch included personal details and achievements, and then proceeded on to their marriage and children. The information continued with the line of persons most closely related to the ones featured in the Beach Collection, and their families and personal achievements. Biography information also included birth and death dates for each person to enhance the emphasis on the historical value of the Beach Collection.

⁵² Noelle Wiedemer, "MST625 Exhibit Design and Interpretation," (class lecture, MST625 Exhibit Design and Interpretation, State University College at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY, Fall 2017).

The Beach Family

Howard D. Beach was born on March 21, 1867 in New Britain, Connecticut to Jeremiah Osgood Beach and Caroline Louisa Dyson.⁵³ In 1884, Beach moved to Buffalo, NY to apprentice with photographer Andrew Simson (c. 1837-1922), who was known as Buffalo's oldest photographer.⁵⁴ Within twelve years, he became Simson's official business partner. While in Buffalo, Beach studied at the Bryant and Stratton Business Institute, the Buffalo Art School, the University of Buffalo, and with painter John Rummell.⁵⁵

The Simson & Beach Photography Studio was located at 456 Main St. in Buffalo.⁵⁶ In 1900, Beach took over the business, and in 1901, he was one of the photographers chosen to photograph the Pan American Exposition in Buffalo. Beach had been in charge of photographing the Native Americans who were part of the Indian Congress at the Exposition. Sixteen of these prints are now housed at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, DC.⁵⁷ In 1908, Beach purchased the studio of Eleck F. Hall (1857-1910) located at 469 Virginia St. in Buffalo, which is where Beach's studio would remain until its closing.⁵⁸ Hall would remain a photographer at the studio for several more years.⁵⁹

⁵³ Mark Strong, "Howard Dwight Beach."

⁵⁴ Conides, "Preserving and Accessing," 88.

⁵⁵ Mark Strong, "Howard Dwight Beach."

⁵⁶ Ibid.

⁵⁷ "Howard D. Beach portraits of American Indians at the Pan American Exposition, 1901," Smithsonian Online Virtual Archives, Smithsonian Institution, <http://sova.si.edu/record/NAA.PhotoLot.2001-1>.

⁵⁸ Conides, "Preserving and Accessing," 89.

⁵⁹ Howard D. Beach, Private Collection, Buffalo, NY.

Along with being an award-winning photographer, Howard Beach was also an accomplished painter, poet, and inventor. He created the Mutotone photographic process, a new multi-focal lens, and the first concentric varifocal lens. These lenses were used for camera lenses, microscopes, and eyeglasses. In 1941, Beach formed a lens manufacturing company, the Beach Lens Corporation, which would exist until 1992.⁶⁰

On June 23, 1892, Howard D. Beach married Catherine Lobstein (1870-1937). They had one child, a daughter, named Margaret C. Beach (1899-1993).⁶¹ Margaret was very active in the Buffalo community and was a member of the Zonta club.⁶² Catherine Beach died at the family home on May 5, 1937 at the age of 66.⁶³ Margaret married her cousin Howard A. Beach (1905-1989) on December 27, 1952. The two moved to New Britain, Connecticut in 1986.⁶⁴ Howard D. Beach died at his home on March 23, 1954 at the age of 87.⁶⁵ Margaret kept the Beach Lens Corporation in business until dissolving it in 1992.⁶⁶ She died a year later on November 14, 1993 in New Britain, Connecticut.⁶⁷ Howard D., Catherine, Margaret, and Howard A. Beach are interred at Forest Lawn Cemetery in Buffalo, NY.

⁶⁰ Mark Strong, "Howard Dwight Beach."

⁶¹ Ibid.

⁶² Howard D. Beach, Private Collection, Buffalo, NY.

⁶³ "Burial Permit: Catherine M. Beach," Forest Lawn Cemetery, May 8, 1937, <https://www.webcemeteries.com/private/cemeteryreports/coop/404/dead/16382867/00000166.pdf>.

⁶⁴ "Margaret Caroline Beach Obituary," *The Hartford Courant*, November 16, 1993, <https://www.newspapers.com/image/175898380/>.

⁶⁵ "Internment Permit: Howard D. Beach," Forest Lawn Cemetery and Crematory, March 27, 1954.

⁶⁶ "Beach Lens Corporation," Entity Information, NYS Department of State, March 26, 2018, www.dos.ny.gov.

⁶⁷ "Margaret Caroline Beach Obituary."

The Knox Family

Seymour H. Knox was born on April 11, 1861 in Russell, NY to James H. Knox and Jane E. McBrier. After unsuccessfully starting his own five-and-ten-cent store in Reading and Newark, Knox partnered with his cousin, Frank W. Woolworth, and opened Woolworth & Knox in Erie, Pennsylvania.⁶⁸

With the success of this business, Knox moved to Buffalo, NY and opened two stores of his own. In 1912, his company merged with other stores and became part of the F.W. Woolworth empire. Knox was made the first vice-president of the company, which in time grew to 596 stores worldwide. He also became a large influence at Marine National Bank, later known as Marine Midland Bank, after buying a large interest in 1913.⁶⁹

In 1890, Seymour Knox married Grace Millard of Detroit.⁷⁰ Together they had four children: Gracia M. Knox (1893-1895), Dorothy V. Knox (1896-1980), Seymour H. Knox II (1898-1990), and Marjorie Knox (1900-1971). Seymour H. Knox died on May 16, 1915 in Buffalo.⁷¹ In October of the same year, Dorothy Knox married Frank H. Goodyear, Jr. (1891-1930), and Mrs. Knox announced that she would build a new home at 806 Delaware Ave in Buffalo. Marjorie married J. Hazard Campbell (1900-1938) in

⁶⁸ Edward T. Dunn, *Buffalo's Delaware Avenue: Mansions and Families* (Buffalo: Canisius College Press, 2003), <http://www.buffaloah.com/h/knox/bios/>.

⁶⁹ Dunn, *Buffalo's Delaware Avenue*.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ "Burial Permit: Seymour H. Knox", Locate A Loved One, Forest Lawn Cemetery; "Lot Register: Grace M. Knox," Locate A Loved One, Forest Lawn Cemetery, <https://www.forest-lawn.com/genealogy/locate-a-loved-one>; "Seymour Horace Knox," FamilySearch, <https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/details/K64S-366>.

1927 and later Benjamin Klopp (1898-1972) in 1948. Dorothy remarried in 1931 to Edmund Pendleton Rogers (1882-1966). Mrs. Knox died in 1936.⁷²

The family spent summers at their estate in East Aurora, which was purchased in the late 1890s. The estate, now known as Knox Farm State Park, would stay in the Knox family until July 2000 when it was sold to New York State.⁷³

Seymour H. Knox II married Helen Northrup (1902-1971) in 1923. They had two sons, Seymour III (1926-1996) and Northrup (1928-1998). Along with continuing the family businesses, Seymour II had an interest in playing polo and collecting fine art. In 1962, he funded the building of a new wing at the Albright Art Gallery, which, along with donating millions of dollars of art, led to the name being changed to the Albright-Knox Art Gallery. In 1986, Seymour II was awarded the National Medal of Arts by President Ronald Regan.⁷⁴ Seymour III and Northrup were the founders of the Buffalo Sabres (1970-), Buffalo Bandits (1991-), and the Buffalo Blizzard (1992-2001). The brothers were also instrumental in building Marine Midland Arena, now known as KeyBank Center.⁷⁵

The Weed Family

Thaddeus Weed was born on November 15, 1791 in Stamford, Connecticut to

⁷² Dunn, *Buffalo's Delaware Avenue*; "Façade - Grace Millard Knox House / Computer Task Group Building," Buffalo as an Architectural Museum, <http://www.buffaloah.com/a/del/800/facade/index.html>.

⁷³ Junior League of Buffalo and The Buffalo News, "The Knox Summer Estate," April 16, 2013, Introduction-1, <http://www.buffaloah.com/a/EastAur/knox/hamilton.pdf>.

⁷⁴ Junior League of Buffalo and The Buffalo News, "The Knox Summer Estate," 15-16.

⁷⁵ "Seymour Knox III," Greater Buffalo Sports Hall of Fame, <http://www.buffalosportshallfame.com/member/seymour-knox-iii/>; *Buffalo Business First*, "Blizzard Soccer Team Left Out as New League Forms," August 8, 2001, <https://www.bizjournals.com/buffalo/stories/2001/08/06/daily29.html>

Ananias Weed, a Revolutionary War veteran, and Sally Brown.⁷⁶ After living in Troy, NY, he and his cousin George T. Weed traveled to Buffalo, NY. After the burning of Buffalo in 1813, which left only three buildings standing, no tools were obtainable west of Batavia, which was then considered the metropolis of the new west.⁷⁷ On September 23, 1818, Thaddeus and George opened G. & T. Weed, Buffalo's first hardware store and ironmongery, at the corner of Main and Swan streets. The store later adopted "1818" as its trademark, which was stamped on all goods sold there.⁷⁸ At this time, Buffalo's population consisted mostly of Native Americans, which was reflected in the business records of the store. Customers of the ironmongery included Red Jacket and Young King, two prominent Seneca chiefs.⁷⁹ Thaddeus was also a charter member of Buffalo's first fire engine company, founded in 1824.⁸⁰

In 1823, Thaddeus Weed married Louisa Maria Chapin (1803-1894), who was the daughter of Dr. Cyrenius Chapin, who came to Buffalo in 1801 and founded the first drug store in Buffalo. They had five children: DeWitt Chapin (1824-1876), George Thaddeus (1829-1853), Sylvia Louisa (1836-1880), Walter Irving (1838-1842), and Hobart (1841-1915). Thaddeus Weed died on February 4, 1846.⁸¹

In 1851, DeWitt C. Weed took ownership of Weed & Pratt. The business was then renamed DeWitt C. Weed & Company. In 1876, with the death of his brother

⁷⁶ The Genealogical Publishing Company, *Memorial and Family History of Erie County*, 54; "Sally Brown Weed," Find A Grave, <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/30676237/sally-weed>.

⁷⁷ *From Ox Cart to Aeroplane: One Hundred Years of Successful Business 1818-1918* (Buffalo: Weed & Company, 1918), 7, 43; "War of 1812," Visit Buffalo Niagara, <https://www.visitbuffaloniagara.com/business-type/war-of-1812/>.

⁷⁸ Chilton Company, "Weed & Co.'s 90th Anniversary," *Iron Age* 82, no. 1 (September, 1908):886.

⁷⁹ *From Ox Cart to Aeroplane*, 8.

⁸⁰ Matt Endres, *History of the Volunteer Fire Department of Buffalo, NY* (Buffalo: William Graser, 1906), 58.

⁸¹ Gilbert Warren Chapin, *The Chapin Book of Genealogical Data*, 754; The Genealogical Publishing Company, *Memorial and Family History of Erie County*, 52.

DeWitt, Hobart Weed took ownership of the company, which was renamed Weed & Company.⁸² In 1865, Hobart Weed married Harriett Monteath (1845-1909).⁸³ They had three children: Emilie Monteath (1870-1951), Shelton (1873-1946), and Walter Irving (1876-1911).⁸⁴

In 1901, Weed & Co. moved to the middle of the block and the Weed building was demolished and replaced with the Fidelity Trust Building in 1909. Shelton and Walter Irving Weed would become vice-president and treasurer of the company, respectively.⁸⁵

In 1903, Walter Irving Weed married Frances Register (1878-1957). They had three children: Frances Monteath (1904-1963), Harriet Monteath (1910-1974), and Walter Chapin (1911-1993). Walter Irving Weed died on August 17, 1911 and Hobart Weed, died September 23, 1915.⁸⁶ The last Weed & Co. retail store closed in 1959 and the company lost all family ties in 1963. Weed & Co. was in operation for 165 years.⁸⁷

The Coit Family

George Coit was born on June 10, 1790 in Norwich, Connecticut to Benjamin Coit Jr., a shipbuilder and commander in the Revolutionary War, and Sarah Coit. George worked as a clerk in a drug store in Norwich, where he met his life-long friend

⁸² *From Ox Cart to Aeroplane*, 44-45.

⁸³ "New York Marriages 1686-1980," FamilySearch, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F645-T5J>.

⁸⁴ "Locate A Loved One," Forest Lawn Cemetery, <https://www.forest-lawn.com/genealogy/locate-a-loved-one>.

⁸⁵ *From Ox Cart to Aeroplane*, 25-26.

⁸⁶ "Walter Irving Weed," FamilySearch, <https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/details/K4YD-2CJ>; *From Ox Cart to Aeroplane*, 28-30, 38.

⁸⁷ Bob Watson, "Buffalo Interests Offer to Purchase Weed & Company," *Buffalo Evening News*, May 2, 1963, <http://fultonhistory.com/>; *Buffalo Evening News*, "L.A. Company Buys Weed & Co., Oldest Business in Buffalo," July 30, 1963, <http://fultonhistory.com/>.

Charles Townsend (1786-1847).⁸⁸ In 1811, Coit and Townsend came to Western New York, and in 1812, they opened a drug store at Pearl and Swan streets. This store was burned to the ground along with the rest of the village in 1813. After escaping to Williamsville, they returned to Buffalo and opened another store.⁸⁹

In 1816, George Coit married Charles Townsend's sister Hannah Townsend (1789-1835). They had 8 children: Sarah F. (1816-1894), Charles Townsend (1819-1880), George Jr. (1821-1881), John Townsend (1824-1863), Francis E. (1826-1894), Nathaniel T. (1829-1835), Eliza Ripley (1832-1891), and William B. (1835-1835).⁹⁰

In 1818, Charles Townsend and George Coit sold their drug store and entered the shipping business.⁹¹ Buffalo needed a harbor to be chosen as the terminus for the Erie Canal, so George Coit and Charles Townsend helped fund the building of the harbor.⁹² The Erie Canal was opened on October 26, 1825 and the men are remembered in a frieze, called the "Wedding of the Waters," which is carved into the Buffalo History Museum. George Coit died on May 9, 1865, remembered as the last of the men who built the harbor.⁹³ George Coit was also a charter member of the first fire engine company in Buffalo, which was founded in 1824.⁹⁴

Charles T. Coit moved out of the Coit house in 1867 and was the last member of family to live there. The same year, Anson Becker moved the house to a plot of land on

⁸⁸ William Richard Cutter, *Genealogical and Family History of Western New York*, 746.

⁸⁹ Christopher N. Brown, "The Coit House Mystique," 5.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 5-6; "Lot Register: George Coit," Locate A Loved One, Forest Lawn Cemetery, <https://www.webcemeteries.com/private/cemeteryreports/coop/404/MultiPlot/30270/000013.pdf>.

⁹¹ William Richard Cutter, *Genealogical and Family History of Western New York*, 746.

⁹² Jerry M. Malloy, "Samuel Wilkeson, He Built Buffalo, by Building its Harbor," *The Buffalo History Gazette*, March 13, 2013, http://www.buffalohistorygazette.net/2013/03/samuel-wilkeson-he-built-buffalo-by_13.html.

⁹³ Christopher N. Brown, "The Coit House Mystique," 9-10.

⁹⁴ Matt Endres, *History of the Volunteer Fire Department*, 58.

Virginia Street that he had bought from Charles Townsend. Believed to be built in 1818, the Coit house still stands near the corner of Virginia St. and Elmwood Ave., and is regarded as the oldest house in Buffalo.⁹⁵

Francis E. Coit was involved in the lumber business until 1860.⁹⁶ He married Caroline E. Hamilton (1830-1902) in 1851.⁹⁷ They had five surviving children: Henry Hamilton (1852-1918), George (1854-1920), Mary Atterbury (1862-1937), John Townsend (1865-1935), and Mabel Barton (1870-1922).⁹⁸

George Coit, the son of Francis, married Carrie Hersee (1854-1930). They had six surviving children: Thompson H. (1886-1956), George Jr. (1889-1944), William H. (1891-1965), Walter H. (1894-1949), Annette (1895-1980), and Henry H. (1899-1983).⁹⁹ Henry H. Coit married Gertrude Mann (1901-1994). They had 3 children: Henry Jr. (1922-1934), Stuart (1927-), and William H. (1928-1995).¹⁰⁰

The Park Family

Roswell Park was born on May 4, 1852 in Pomfret, Connecticut to the Rev. Roswell Park, DD. and Mary Baldwin. Soon after, the Park family moved to Wisconsin where Rev. Park founded and served as the first president of Racine College.¹⁰¹ After receiving his B.A. in 1872 and M.A. in 1875 from Racine College, Roswell Park taught in

⁹⁵ Christopher N. Brown, "The Coit House Mystique," 3, 12.

⁹⁶ William Richard Cutter, *Genealogical and Family History of Western New York*, 747.

⁹⁷ "New York Marriages 1686-1980," FamilySearch, <https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/1:1:F645-RGM>.

⁹⁸ William Richard Cutter, *Genealogical and Family History of Western New York*, 747; "Lot Register: George Coit," Locate A Loved One, Forest Lawn Cemetery, <https://www.webcemeteries.com/private/cemeteryreports/coop/404/MultiPlot/30270/000013.pdf>.

⁹⁹ William Richard Cutter, *Genealogical and Family History of Western New York*, 747; "Lot Register: George Coit," Locate A Loved One, Forest Lawn Cemetery.

¹⁰⁰ "Henry Hopkins Coit, Sr.," FamilySearch, <https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/details/LT1S-4MT>.

¹⁰¹ "Who Was Dr. Roswell Park?: He Might Surprise You," Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, January 19, 2016, <https://www.roswellpark.org/cancertalk/201601/who-was-dr-roswell-park>.

Chicago and entered the medical school at Northwestern University. He graduated with his M.D. in 1876.¹⁰²

In 1883, after studying at hospitals in Germany, France, and Austria, Dr. Park accepted an offer to become chairman of the Medical Department at the University at Buffalo. Soon after arriving in Buffalo, he took on the role of chief surgeon at Buffalo General Hospital.¹⁰³

Dr. Park was appointed medical director of the Pan-American Exposition in 1901.¹⁰⁴ On September 6, 1901, President William McKinley was greeting visitors at the Exposition when he was shot twice. Having been known for his surgical skill, Dr. Park was the first choice to operate on the President. However, Dr. Park could not conduct the operation because he was performing surgery in Niagara Falls.¹⁰⁵

Not only was Dr. Park a pioneer in neurosurgery and the first American surgeon to successfully treat spina bifida, he also had a strong interest in treating cancer.¹⁰⁶ His interest in cancer led to the establishment of the Gratwick Laboratory at the University at Buffalo, which became the New York State Laboratory and Hospital for the Study of

¹⁰² "Biography of Dr. Roswell Park," Pan-American Exposition of 1901, State University of New York at Buffalo, <https://library.buffalo.edu/pan-am/exposition/health/rpbiog.html>.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid.

¹⁰⁵ Roswell Park Editorial Team, "One Day in September: Roswell Park and the Assassination of President McKinley," Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center, April 20, 2016, <https://www.roswellpark.org/cancertalk/201604/one-day-september>.

¹⁰⁶ "Dr. Roswell Park: Medical Pioneer," Forest Lawn Cemetery, <https://www.forest-lawn.com/famous-residents/dr-roswell-park>.

Malignant Diseases.¹⁰⁷ Today, this organization is known as the Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center.¹⁰⁸

In 1880, Dr. Park married Martha Durkee (1856-1899). They had two children: Roswell II (1885-1949), and Julian (1887-1965).¹⁰⁹ Roswell Park II was a lieutenant in the U.S. Army during World War I and was wounded in combat.¹¹⁰ After returning to Buffalo, he worked in the real estate industry and was the president of Park, Harrison & Thomas of Buffalo.¹¹¹ Julian Park received a B.A. from Williams College in 1910 and studied at the University of Paris and Columbia University. From 1917-1920, Julian served as the French Consul for Western New York. In 1918, he was named Dean of the newly formed College of Arts and Sciences at the University at Buffalo. Julian was also a trustee and the wartime director of the Grosvenor Library (the current Buffalo and Erie County Public Library), president of the Buffalo Historical Society, and was named the first historian of the University at Buffalo.¹¹²

¹⁰⁷ "Biography of Dr. Roswell Park."

¹⁰⁸ "Who Was Dr. Roswell Park?."

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.; "Locate A Loved One," Forest Lawn Cemetery.

¹¹⁰ Daniel J. Sweeney, *History of Buffalo and Erie County 1914-1919* (Buffalo: Committee of One Hundred, 1919), 219.

¹¹¹ "Biography of Dr. Roswell Park."

¹¹² "Finding Aid for the Julian Park Papers, 1834-1965: Chronology," University Archives, State University of New York at Buffalo, http://libweb1.lib.buffalo.edu:8080/findingaids/view?docId=ead/archives/ubar_0119.xml.

Chapter 2

Details of Exhibit Design

The next step in the exhibit design process is working on logistics. The most important aspect of designing an exhibit is choosing what the exhibit will focus on, but the second most important aspect is how to present the information to the audience. This takes many forms, from text panel size, to font choice, exhibit materials, location, and advertising. The logistics and technical aspects of an exhibit can be the determining factor in how effective the exhibit is. These factors control the perception of the audience. If the presentation of the exhibit is poorly executed, the audience will not respond to the information being presented in the same capacity as if the exhibit was successfully executed. The ideal outcome for any exhibit is for the exhibit materials, structure, and location to fully disappear while the audience becomes fully immersed in the narratives of the exhibit.

Creating Text Panels

Text panels are an integral part of any exhibit, especially a history-based exhibit. These parts of the exhibit present readers with vital information that supports or drives the narrative being created by the exhibit. When designing an exhibit, every detail matters. These details include the size, fonts, and overall design of the text panels.

Font type and size are crucial to the effectiveness of a text panel. Fonts should be a medium thickness, letters should be intermediately spaced, and the font should be relatively plain, making it easy to read. According to the Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design, certain font characteristics may make reading a text panel

difficult for audience members. These characteristics include condensed, extended, or relatively light typefaces, a wide variation in stroke width, thin strokes that fade, break, or disappear, and letters and numbers that closely resemble each other.¹¹³

Font type may also be chosen to reflect the theme of the exhibit. Staying within readability guidelines, fonts that reflect a certain era may enhance the exhibit experience. For example, for titles and headings on text panels in *Picturing Buffalo*, the FrankRuehl font was used and for all other text, the Palatino Linotype font was used (both font names are shown here in their respective fonts). The set of images being shown in the exhibit had a year range of roughly 1906 to 1947. Both fonts reflect the date range; FrankRuehl was designed in 1908 and Palatino Linotype was designed around 1949.¹¹⁴

Another factor to take into consideration when choosing a font is viewing distance. The viewing distance for a text panel affects the size of text that should be used. When determining what font size to use on a text panel, factors such as crowd size and position of the panel should be taken into consideration. For example, if a text panel is going to be viewed at a distance of 1 meter (39 inches), the suggested minimum font size is 48.¹¹⁵ The size and position of the text panel also affects the size of the font used. For each family information panel in *Picturing Buffalo*, the title font size was set to 100, and the body text size was set to 36 to achieve maximum readability while including all necessary information on the panels. For the text panels that included

¹¹³ "Smithsonian Guidelines for Accessible Exhibition Design," Smithsonian Accessibility Program, 17, accessed March 28, 2018, <https://www.si.edu/accessibility/sgaed>.

¹¹⁴ "Frank Ruehl," Identifont, <http://www.identifont.com/similar?K6X>; "Palatino," Typophile, <http://www.typophile.com/node/16864>.

¹¹⁵ "Smithsonian Guidelines," Figure 12, 24.

information about the Beach Collection and the exhibit itself, title and body font sizes were set at 128 and 51, and 96 and 64, respectively.

When creating text panels, size of the panel and position in the exhibit are also important decisions to be made. In the case of *Picturing Buffalo*, the text panels were, in effect, supplementary material. This meant that the size and position of the panels should not distract from the images in the exhibit, but should be positioned such that the audience would see them as introductory or supporting material. Sizes of the text panels were determined through careful inspection and documentation of the exhibit location, and experimentation with materials that were readily available. Factors such as cost and ease of installation were also taken into consideration when designing the text panels. Each family information panel measured 20x25 inches, the panel containing information about the collection measured 20x30 inches, and the panel about the exhibit itself measured 15x20 inches.

In the case of the text panel that solely informed the audience about the Beach Collection, the decision was made to include four images. This decision was made to help readers fully connect with and comprehend the information that they were receiving. When describing a collection that has many different factors, and is not necessarily something that the average person would be familiar with, it was deemed necessary to include images within the text to enhance the effectiveness of the panel.

Location, Location, Location

Normally, the only location that one would be choosing for an exhibit is a gallery within the museum. Since *Picturing Buffalo* was part of a Master's thesis project, the

location situation was a little different; in this case, it was similar to the process that a museum may go through when looking for locations for a traveling exhibit. Because the motivation for this project was to further introduce the Beach Collection to the public, more specifically, an audience that consisted mainly of the general public, the decision was made to not hold the exhibition in E.H. Butler Library on the SUNY Buffalo State campus.

Since there were not many other locations that could accommodate the exhibit on such short notice, it was suggested to approach the Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum about hosting the exhibit. After contacting the director of the Karpeles museums in Buffalo, Christopher Kelly, an agreement to tour the Porter Hall location was arranged. Both of the Karpeles museums in Buffalo are housed in former churches, however, the Porter Hall location was chosen because the interior of the building provided a dedicated exhibit gallery, compared to the North Hall location, which still contains the original church pews.

The Porter Hall location offered several rooms that could have been used for the exhibit. Two of the rooms in particular were optimal choices, with one being on the ground floor and one on the second floor. With the goal of drawing as large an audience to the exhibition as possible, it was decided that the room on the ground floor would be the best choice. If the room on the second floor had been used, it may have deterred some people from attending the exhibition because of mobility issues, since there was no lift or elevator to take guests to the second floor.

While it did offer a public space centrally located in Downtown Buffalo, a room

large enough to accommodate the exhibit, and ease of accessibility, the Porter Hall location had some challenges; the first being the operating hours of the museum. During the winter months, both Karpeles museums in Buffalo restrict their hours. The Porter Hall locations hours were restricted to Sundays, Mondays, and Tuesdays from 11:00am until 4:00pm. Since many people work on Mondays and Tuesdays, these hours may have slightly restricted the audience for the exhibit. However, the exhibit was on display from February 4 until February 27, 2018 to allow maximum chances for viewing.

The second challenge that the room at the Porter Hall location offered was structural. Completed in 1911 by C.K. Porter, the Plymouth Methodist Church was active until 1968 when the church was dissolved. After years of talk about demolition, in 1989 the building was designated a City of Buffalo Historic Landmark, but remained vacant until the Karpeles organization purchased it in 1996. It was estimated that the building needed over two million dollars in renovations.¹¹⁶ While some necessary improvements have been made, the building still requires extensive structural improvements.

The room that was chosen to house *Picturing Buffalo* had several challenges. First, it was revealed that the walls in the room were made of varying materials. This posed some challenges



Image 3

¹¹⁶ "About the Karpeles – Buffalo," Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum, <http://www.rain.org/~karpeles/buinfo.html>.

during installation; however, these problems were easily remedied with a change in hardware. As seen above in **Image 3**, one of the walls in the room had problems with water damage. This wall was on the exterior of the building and required further waterproofing, however, the wall had already begun to deteriorate.

Because of the potential exposure to moisture, all of the images and exhibit panels had to be printed on vinyl and then mounted on board made of lightweight plastic. This proved to be a good decision because when the exhibit



Image 4

was deconstructed, the wall pictured in **Image 3** was damp. The dampness of the wall caused the painter's tape, which was used to help support each image, to remove patches of the paint and plaster from that same wall, as seen in **Image 4**.

Advertising and Exhibit Supplements

No exhibit is successful without advertising. Traditional advertising techniques like sending out press releases and distributing flyers are still in use, while newer advertising techniques, such as using social media, are gaining popularity. Press releases are still very relevant in today's society. These types of notices about exhibition openings reach a very wide audience through notification of local and national organizations. These organizations then use their resources and advertising techniques to increase awareness of the event exponentially. A typical press release includes the

date, time, and location of an event, and also describes to readers what they can expect when attending an event. Press releases should describe the event in such a way as to notify the reader of the theme and structure, however, it should not go into so much detail as to make the reader feel like they know everything about the event and no longer need to attend.¹¹⁷

Flyers and posters also provide ample advertising for an event. While these methods of advertising do not include as much information as a press release, they can spark just as much interest. Flyers and posters are often brightly colored and include eye-catching graphics to attract attention. They also contain important details such as the place, date, and time of an event. Three images were chosen for the *Picturing Buffalo* flyer, one of Howard D. Beach, one of the Knox family, and one of a copy of an original photo of Edith Weed (as seen in **Image 5**). These photos were chosen to reflect the themes of the exhibit and illustrate the diversity of images included in *Picturing Buffalo*. The information on the flyer was designed to be eye-catching and concise, but also to deliver as much information as possible.

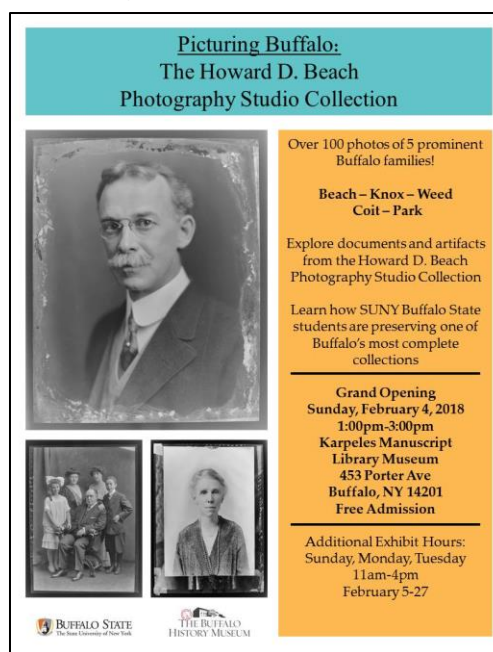


Image 5

As previously mentioned, social media has become a popular resource for advertising events. Museums, in particular, have capitalized on the use of social media to connect with their existing audiences and create interest within their target audiences.

¹¹⁷ Noelle Wiedemer, "MST625 Exhibit Design and Interpretation."


Facebook is an especially useful social media platform for advertising events. This site allows a user to create an event page that can contain every detail that someone may want to know about an event. This feature also allows the public to invite friends to an event or share it on their personal Facebook page to increase awareness of an event. Social media essentially does the job of press releases and flyers combined. An extra benefit of using social media to advertise events such as exhibit openings is that members of the public can communicate directly with the host of the event, and in a more convenient manner than contacting the host through more traditional channels.

Often, when exhibits are being designed, a museum may want to include something that audience members can take home with them. Takeaway materials that are included in an exhibit are often seen as a way to build or maintain a connection with audience members. These materials can also lend themselves to further advertising through word-of-mouth. Exhibits may include postcards, brochures, or booklets that can be used by audience members while they are attending the event and after they leave. The brochure that was created for *Picturing Buffalo* (pictured in **Images 6 and 7** on the next page) included information about the exhibit itself, such as time and location, general information about the Beach Collection and the curator, and a list of informational resources and acknowledgements.

Image 6

<p>Acknowledgements</p>	<p>About the Creator</p>	<p>Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection</p>
<p>   SUNY Buffalo State Graduate Student Association Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum Dr. Cynthia Conides, Museum Studies Director Prof. Noelle Wiedemer Phyllis Walling The Giallombardo Family </p>	<p>  Kimberly Bruckman is a native of Buffalo, NY. She is currently a graduate student at SUNY Buffalo State, pursuing a Masters degree in Museum Studies. After her expected graduation in May 2018, Kimberly hopes to stay in WNY and continue her work with local museums. </p> <p> Biochemistry Hutchinson Central Technical High School 2012 </p> <p> German and International Relations, B.A. Canisius College 2016 </p> <p> Museum Studies, M.A. SUNY Buffalo State 2018 </p>	<p>  Explore documents and artifacts from the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection </p> <p> Learn how SUNY Buffalo State students are preserving one of Buffalo's most complete collections </p> <p> Grand Opening Sunday, February 4, 2018 1pm-3pm Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum 453 Porter Ave Buffalo, NY 14201 Free Admission </p> <p> Additional Exhibit Hours: Sunday, Monday, Tuesday 11am-4pm February 5-27 </p>

Image 7

<p>About the Exhibit</p>	<p>About the Collection</p>	<p>For More Information</p>
<p>All the photos in this exhibit have gone through a five step process. First, the negatives were located in the collection through the use of the catalog cards. Then, they were cleaned, documented, digitized, and re-housed in archival envelopes. Every photo in this exhibit has been kept as close to the original as possible. They have been kept at their original sizes and have undergone minimal editing regarding tone, contrast, etc. Due to the nature of the card catalog, occasionally the subject in the photo is not identified. Using the card catalog and/or outside information, all subjects in this exhibit were identified to the best of our ability.</p> <p>  </p>	<p>Donated to The Buffalo History Museum in the Spring of 2011, the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection is one of Buffalo's most complete collections. It contains over 57,000 glass plate and film negatives that date from the late 1800s to the 1950s. Also included in the collection are many of the business and personal documents from the Beach Studio.</p> <p>Having been stored in the Studio until it was acquired by the Museum, the collection was exposed to hazardous conditions. Many of the negatives and documents have been damaged by water, mold, heat, and dirt. In an effort to fight its continuing deterioration, Museum Studies students at Buffalo State are working to preserve the collection.</p> <p>As one of Buffalo's most valuable historical assets, the collection has a bright future. Not only does it give us a glimpse into the past, it is also a source of historical information, gives insight into the techniques of early photographers, and can be used as a genealogical resource.</p> <p> Help Support the Collection: buffalohistory.org/support/donate/library </p>	<p> Forest Lawn Cemetery forest-lawn.com </p> <p> Buffalo Architecture and History buffaloah.com </p> <p> From Ox Cart To Aeroplane Weed & Co History 1818 1918 by Weed & Company of Buffalo NY USA Archive.org </p> <p> Memorial and Family History of Erie County, New York by Genealogical Publishing Company (N.Y.) Archive.org </p> <p> Buffalo's Delaware Avenue: Mansions and Families by Edward T. Dunn, 2003 </p> <p> For Historical Newspapers: Fultonhistory.com </p> <p> Working Methods: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio of Gelatin Dry Plate Negatives By Noelle Wiedemer digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu </p>

Chapter 3

The Grand Opening of *Picturing Buffalo*

Picturing Buffalo officially opened at the Karpeles Manuscript Library Museum's Porter Hall on February 4, 2018. Approximately 34 people attended the grand opening, most of whom stayed the duration of the event, which lasted from 1-4pm. A guest book was provided for guests to sign and was present throughout the month of February until the exhibit was taken down, however it appears that several guests may have not signed the book, as there are only 33 signatures in it. However, overall, the exhibit was a success.

The exhibit included 102 images, chosen out of a group of 188, 5 text panels that provided biographical information about each family, one panel about the collection itself, one small panel about the exhibit and its sponsors, and two glass cases which contained a total of 16 artifacts from the collection and two glass plate negatives. Two families were placed on each wall, with the fifth located on the smaller back wall. The images were arranged chronologically from left to right, and generationally from top to bottom, with miscellaneous images at the lowest point of the group where applicable (as seen in **Image 8**). This arrangement was chosen to simulate the passage of time through the aging portraits of each individual, and to emphasize how much of a time span the Beach Collection actually covers. Additional images of the exhibit and artifact cases are provided in the Appendix.



Image 8

Visitor Turnout and Reaction

From observations made in between interactions with guests, the overall reception of the exhibit was great. Guests were interacting with the exhibit in the way that had been intended when designing it. The nature of the room allowed guests to get close to each text panel and image, which

allowed them to absorb every detail of Beach's work and the information contained on the panels and image labels (as seen in **Image 9**).

Instead of quickly moving from one family set to another, the guests were spending



Image 9

extended periods of time examining each group. A few observations by guests were made that had not been previously realized. For example, one guest noticed that February 4, the day of the opening, was the death date of Thaddeus Weed, one of the featured family members, and was also the date on which four of the Coit family images were taken.

A comment made in the guest book by a current graduate student in the Museum Studies program at SUNY Buffalo State illustrated the impact of *Picturing Buffalo*. "As a new Buffalo resident, this exhibit is a great teacher! I've enjoyed learning about families of Buffalo, NY and Buffalo's history through them."¹¹⁸ Visitors to museums are often visitors to the area in which the museum is located. This means that museums have the role of offering a first impression of their city to a visitor. Information contained within exhibits can shape and even define the relationship a visitor has with

¹¹⁸ Melissa Fanten, comment in guest book for *Picturing Buffalo*, February 2018.

the people and places that they encounter on their journey through a city. As evidenced by the comment left in the guest book, *Picturing Buffalo* was successful in introducing pieces of Buffalo's foundational history to someone who had little to no previous knowledge of the topic.

Creating Connections

Exhibits are a museum's way of interacting with the public. They can be used as a way to educate the public about a certain well-known topic, or as a way to create interest in a topic that is largely unknown to the public. Often times, the hope is that an exhibit will create such an interest in an individual that they will want to increase their involvement with the museum. This involvement can take the form of making a donation, becoming a volunteer, or even sponsoring an event.

In the case of *Picturing Buffalo*, the main goal was to increase public awareness about and interest in the Beach Collection. The possibility of attracting members of the families quickly arose. This possibility had the potential of creating an even deeper, more personal connection to the collection, which is something that had previously rarely been addressed. Since the opening of *Picturing Buffalo*, two connections with family members of those who were featured in the exhibit have arisen. Seymour Knox IV, whose grandfather was featured in the exhibit, attended the grand opening. As a result, further communications and interactions with Mr. Knox about the Beach Collection have taken place. The second connection was with Susie Coit, whose grandfather was also featured in the exhibit. She expressed great interest in the Beach

Collection on behalf of herself and other Coit family members who still have connections to Buffalo.

Another connection that was made through the grand opening of *Picturing Buffalo* was with the current owner of the Beach Studio building, David DePasquale. Sometimes exhibits can be accompanied by presentations by a special guest or a lecture by an expert on the topic of the exhibit. Mr. DePasquale's presence at the grand opening of *Picturing Buffalo* resulted in a sort of unexpected guest lecture. After expressing great interest in the Beach family's section of the exhibit, and the photographs on the interior of the Beach Studio in particular, Mr. DePasquale proceeded to explain the current renovations that are underway at the Beach Studio as other visitors to the exhibit gathered around. This impromptu discussion further illustrated the connection of the Beach Collection to the modern developments taking place in Buffalo.

Envisioning the Future of the Beach Collection

Preservation of the Beach Collection is an ongoing process. With continuing progress being made by students at SUNY Buffalo State, more negatives are cleaned, rehoused, and digitized every year. Even with this help, the Beach Collection will take years to fully stabilize and accession. However, this process does not hinder the use of the collection. Students in the Museum Studies program often become so interested in this collection that they choose to use it as the foundation for their thesis papers or projects, similar to the case of *Picturing Buffalo*. Research that is done on the collection by students also continues to uncover just how much information is actually contained within the collection. As each semester passes, new narratives are being uncovered and old narratives are being improved through the discovery of new information. This ongoing work is proof that there is a promising future for the collection. With every paper or exhibit that is produced, public awareness of the collection is heightened and its value increased.

As the Beach Collection is processed and information gathered, questions may arise as to which items are relevant to the collection and which are not. Cases like that of the Royal Engineers Museum in England relate to the Beach Collection very well. Photo albums and other items that are donated to the Royal Engineers Museum often come with a note that the Museum may do as they please with these items. Ulrike Bessel writes that items in these photo albums that are deemed irrelevant or unimportant, are often discarded.¹¹⁹ This practice may be common in museums or other collecting institutions with limited storage space and/or funds for conservation.

¹¹⁹ Bessel, "Unwrapping the Layers," 218.

With the Buffalo History Museum being one of these institutions with very little storage space and funding for the Beach Collection, a situation similar to that of the Royal Engineers Museum has the potential to arise. Although the Beach Collection has not yet been fully evaluated, some of its contents beyond the negatives that have already been processed are known. For example, some of the office materials have been examined. Discovered within these materials was a receipt for ice cream that Beach had purchased.¹²⁰ Items such as this are ones that may suffer if the decision is made to discard some materials that are deemed irrelevant or unsalvageable. In an ideal situation, decisions like this would never have to be made, as it would be possible to keep everything that a museum may receive, however, this is not the case. Sometimes museums must make difficult decisions in regards to the feasibility of items within their collections.

Although current funding for the collection is an issue, the range of use for the Beach Collection is endless. The first and most obvious use for the images in the collection is to incorporate them into current and future exhibits at The Buffalo History Museum. There are images in the collection that could have been used in several current exhibits at the Museum. *For Home and Country* is a current exhibit that focuses on Buffalo's involvement in the war effort during World War I. Extensive research has been done by the students at SUNY Buffalo State on women from Buffalo who worked as canteen workers during the war and were photographed, often in their uniforms, by Howard D. Beach during this time period. *Icons: The Makers and Moments of Buffalo*

¹²⁰ Noelle Wiedemer, "MST623 Digital Collections."

Sports, another current exhibit, “explores [Buffalo’s] rich sports history.”¹²¹ Included in the Beach Collection are several yearbook portraits of sports teams from local high schools such as Hutchinson Central Technical High School and Lafayette High School.

In addition to these two recently installed exhibits, the Resource Center near the Museum houses an extensive exhibit on the Pan-American Exposition that took place in Buffalo in 1901. *Spirit of the City: Imagining the Pan-American Exposition* was first created to celebrate the centennial anniversary of the Pan-American Exposition. Since this exhibit was created in 2001 and then rehoused in the Resource Center building, and the Beach Collection was acquired in 2011, obviously images or information from the Beach Collection was not available to include in this exhibit.¹²² However, now that it is known that Howard D. Beach was one of the photographers of the Pan-American Exposition, it may be possible to include this information in the existing exhibit or create a “pop-up” exhibit that features the images of the Indian Congress taken by Beach. There is also the possibility that additional artifacts from the Pan-American Exposition will be discovered in the personal and office materials in the Beach Collection that have not yet been processed.

The next step to utilize the Beach Collection would be to include its images in upcoming exhibitions. The 195th anniversary of the Erie Canal is in 2020, so it is probable that The Buffalo History Museum will construct an exhibit for this special event. Images of both the families of Charles Townsend and George Coit, men who had great influence on the construction of the canal in Buffalo, are housed in the Beach Collection.

¹²¹ “Exhibits,” The Buffalo History Museum, 2018, <http://www.buffalohistory.org/Explore/Exhibits/Exhibits.aspx>.

¹²² Ibid.

These images may include a copy of Charles Townsend himself, which would correspond with the “Wedding of the Waters” frieze on the Museum that depicts both of these men.¹²³ Also in 2020, the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which gave women the right to vote, will take place.¹²⁴ In addition to hundreds of images of women from this time period in the Beach Collection, there are also potentially several images of women who were directly involved in the suffrage movement, which would be easily incorporated into anything that the Museum may create in accordance with this event. The final step of this process would be creating exhibits that focus solely on materials from the Beach Collection. It has been demonstrated by the work of the students at SUNY Buffalo State that numerous narratives and topics can be extracted from the Beach Collection that would be able to stand alone in an exhibit if expanded upon.

Another option for using the Beach Collection could be to use it to forge connections with other cultural institutions. The first and foremost institution in Buffalo that would have a potential interest in the collection is Forest Lawn Cemetery. The Buffalo History Museum has an existing relationship with Forest Lawn, as they host collaborative Pan-American Exposition Trolley Tours.¹²⁵ In addition to several trolley and walking tours that feature famous residents of the cemetery, Forest Lawn hosts small exhibits in its newly constructed Margaret L. Wendt Archive and Resource Center. Many of the people pictured in the Beach Collection, including Howard D. Beach

¹²³ Beach, private collection; Brown, “The Coit House Mystique.”

¹²⁴ “Amendment XIX: Women’s Right to Vote,” National Constitution Center, <https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/amendments/amendment-xix>.

¹²⁵ “Plan Your Visit: Take a Tour,” Forest Lawn Cemetery, <https://www.forest-lawn.com/plan-your-visit/take-a-tour>.

himself, are buried in Forest Lawn Cemetery. Images from the collection could be used for a temporary exhibit in the Margaret L. Wendt Center, or used in Forest Lawn's weekly blog "Keeping the Promise," which regularly features some of the famous "residents" of the cemetery.¹²⁶

Subjects pictured in the photographs of the Beach Collection which may be of interest to other Buffalo cultural institutions include many locally and internationally known figures, including famed actress Katherine Cornell, F. Scott Fitzgerald, George N. Pierce of the Pierce-Arrow Motor Car Company, and many families who resided in the mansions along Delaware Avenue in Buffalo.¹²⁷ Other cultural institutions that may be interested in creating temporary or permanent exhibitions from the images in the Beach Collection include Shea's Performing Arts Center, social clubs such as The Buffalo Club and The Saturn Club, the Buffalo Public Library, local schools such as Lafayette High School, and other museums such as The Buffalo Museum of Science, the Buffalo Transportation Pierce-Arrow Museum, the Elbert Hubbard Roycroft Museum, and the Family Photography Museum at Knox Farm State Park.

Aside from public use in exhibitions and other cultural institutions, the Beach Collection has an enormous capacity for being used as a public resource. The information contained within the collection has great value to persons conducting genealogical research. Aside from the images themselves, the cards in the card catalog provide names of family members which are sometimes accompanied by notes that supplement the standard information, such as "mother Mrs. Peter Meyer" found on the

¹²⁶ "Keeping the Promise: The Forest Lawn Blog," Forest Lawn Cemetery, <https://www.forest-lawn.com/blog>.

¹²⁷ Beach, private collection.

card for Mrs. Katherine Bothwell.¹²⁸ There is also the potential of discovering information with genealogical value in the archival records that have not yet been processed. The collection could also be used for academic research relating to photography techniques or businesses in Buffalo.

The Beach Collection also has the potential to be a source of funding for the Buffalo History Museum. Like many other institutions, The Buffalo History Museum receives a portion of its income from gift shop sales and allowing access to their library. Direct access to the Beach Collection would fall under the fees that have been predetermined for access to current library materials and resources.¹²⁹ The collection could be transformed into a gift shop commodity through further digitization. Once images from the collection are digitized and processed properly, they could be made available on the Buffalo History Museum website. From there, customers could order reproductions which would be priced according to the already existing guidelines for photographic reproductions.¹³⁰

The public could also be a resource for information regarding the Beach Collection. As a result of water damage, some of the negatives in the collection are not able to be identified by name or negative number. The creation of a weekly or monthly blog that features an unidentifiable negative could lead to the identification of the people in the photographs. Other museums have used this technique in the past when they are

¹²⁸ Beach, private collection.

¹²⁹ "Research Library," The Buffalo History Museum, <http://www.buffalohistory.org/Learn/Research-Library.aspx>.

¹³⁰ "Image Licensing Rates: Photographic Reproductions," The Buffalo History Museum, <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1YwVOQKc-VlGMvEXWkfbV86XPfVX8o47sJqhV1pjnuJA/edit#gid=0>.

unable to identify an artifact.¹³¹ This method could result in the identification of some of the people pictured in these portraits and would enrich the Museum's relationship with the public by fostering a sense of partnership between the Museum and the community.

Through the incorporation of the Beach Collection into the ongoing activities of The Buffalo History Museum, collaborating with local and potentially national cultural institutions, and increasing public interaction with the collection, the full potential of the collection can be achieved. This process would uphold the Museum's mission of "remembering, discovering, and sharing our stories" and "sparking emotional and social connections within our unique community" through reviving an integral piece of Buffalo's past while inspiring Buffalo's future.¹³²

¹³¹ David Krop, "Help Identify a Mystery Artifact," The Mariners Museum and Park, March 25, 2015, <http://www.marinersmuseum.org/blog/2015/03/help-identify-a-mystery-artifact/>.

¹³² "About the Museum," The Buffalo History Museum, 2018, <http://www.buffalohistory.org/Learn/About.aspx>.

Conclusion

The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection is one of Buffalo's premier historical collections. Spanning from the late 1800s to the mid-20th century, the images and documents in this collection shed light on unseen and unknown parts of Buffalo's history. There are an estimated 60,000 negatives in the Beach Collection, some of which have not been seen since their initial creation, and most of which have not seen the light of day since the Beach Studio went out of business in the 1950s.

A virtual treasure trove of information, the Beach collection is an unintentional archive of the history of Buffalo that features people who were essential to the city's development and success. Not only does this collection shed light on the most intimate parts of life during the late 19th and much of the 20th century, it tells the story of a photographer, painter, author, and inventor. The negatives contained within this collection reflect the lifelong passion of Howard D. Beach and the technological advances that he made during his lifetime, some of which are still relevant to the optical technology being used today.

Through the work of students at SUNY Buffalo State, the Beach Collection will be preserved for future generations to enjoy and learn from. Not only does this collection have immense historical value, it has the ability to teach students proper collections care techniques. The skills learned through work with the Beach Collection will shape the future of the museum profession and hopefully the attitudes that museums have towards photographic collections such as this one. The importance of photographic collections within museums cannot be stressed enough. Photographs are an essential

part of the process of reviving history. They connect visitors to information in a way that nothing else can. The sheer relatability of photographs takes away the ethereal, untouchable quality of the past and makes history something tangible.

As one of the few public exhibitions featuring items from the Beach Collection, *Picturing Buffalo* was a huge step forward in the process of solidifying the collection's historical value, particularly in a museum context. This exhibit demonstrated that there is a viable market of interest in the community for artifacts such as the ones contained in the Beach Collection. Both the direct relevance of the collection to the city of Buffalo and the national and international relevance of the people photographed by Beach and Beach's own achievements demonstrate the immense value of this collection. These images and artifacts offer insight into past narratives, some of which have been forgotten, that are still extremely relevant to the growth of Buffalo today.

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Wiedemer, Noelle. "MST625 Exhibit Design and Interpretation." Class lecture, MST625 Exhibit Design and Interpretation. State University College at Buffalo. Buffalo, NY. Fall 2017.

Appendix A

Images and Supporting Material from *Picturing Buffalo*



Negative Number: 35512 1/2

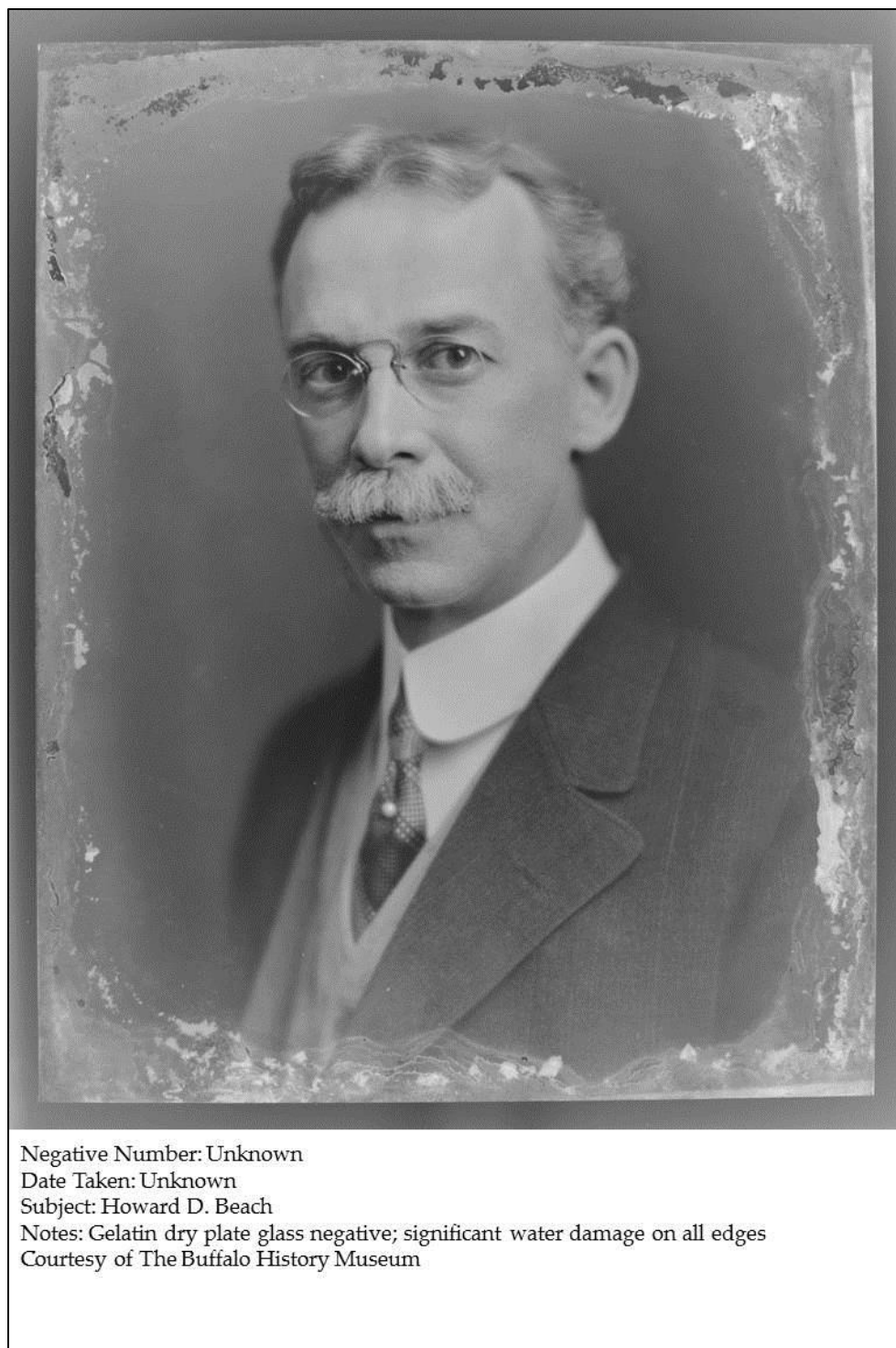
Date Taken: October 11, 1911

Subject: Margaret C. Beach; Esther Brainard in
Halloween costumes

Notes: Gelatin dry plate glass negative; tape on top,
bottom, left, and right edges

Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

Example of a 5x7 image panel; actual panel size was 5x9 inches.



Example of an 8x10 image panel; actual panel size was 8x12 inches.



Negative Number: 34301

Date Taken: September 29, 1910

Subject: Beach Studio

Notes: Gelatin dry plate glass negative; significant water damage at right edge; tape on top right and right edge
Courtesy of The Buffalo History Museum

Example of an 8x10 landscape-oriented image panel; actual panel size was 10x10 inches.

About the Collection

In the Spring of 2011, The Buffalo History Museum received a donation of over 57,000 glass plate negatives and business documents from the former site of the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio in Buffalo, NY. Unlike most items that are donated to museums, this collection came with its own documentation. Included



in the collection is a card catalog that lists every negative by number and customer name, along with any additional information about the photo or subject. All of the negatives in the collection range from the late



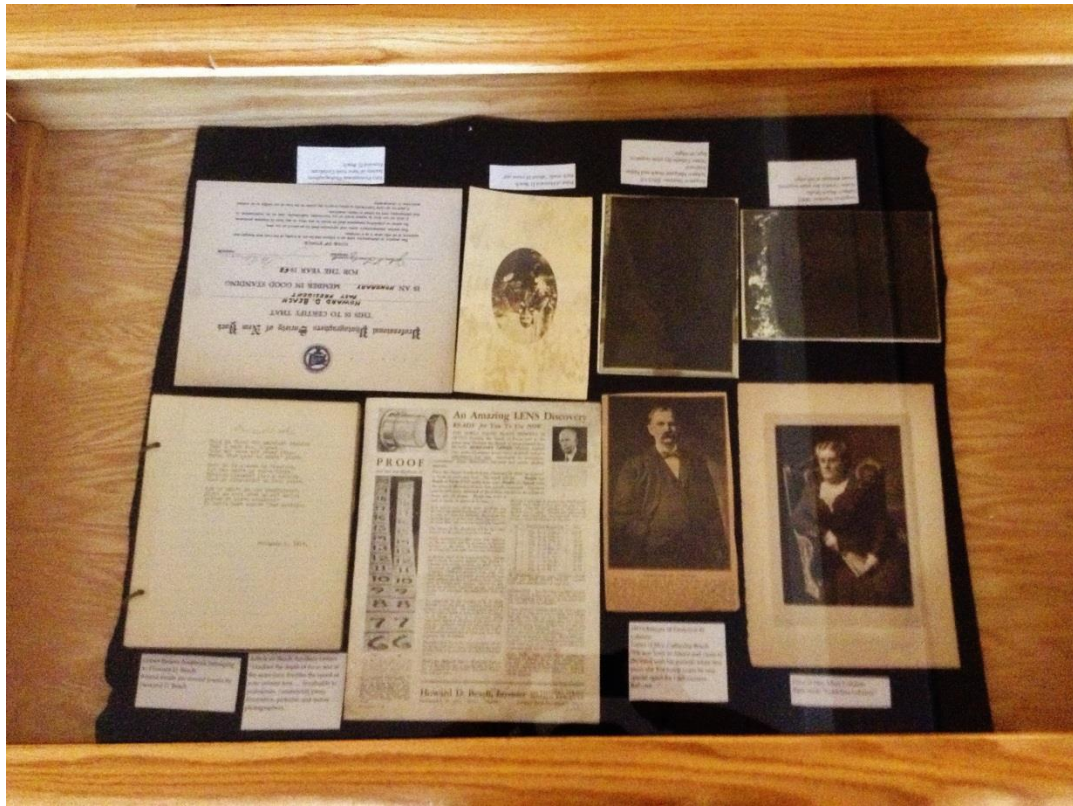
1880s to the 1950s, are housed in their original boxes, and come from one of four photographers: Andrew Simson, Eleck F. Hall, Edith

Richardson, and Howard D. Beach. Subjects found in the collection include a young F. Scott Fitzgerald, John D. Larkin, Grover Cleveland, and John R. Oishei. Unfortunately, many of the negatives in the collection have been damaged by water, mold, heat, and dirt. Because



of this, the Museum enlisted the help of Museum Studies students at SUNY Buffalo State. These students clean, document, digitize, and re-house the negatives in archival envelopes. The negatives are then placed in archival boxes for clean and safe storage.

The exhibit panel explaining what the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection is.



Two exhibit cases containing artifacts from the Beach Collection with corresponding labels.



Wall with the Beach family photographs and information panel.



Wall with Weed family photographs and information panel.



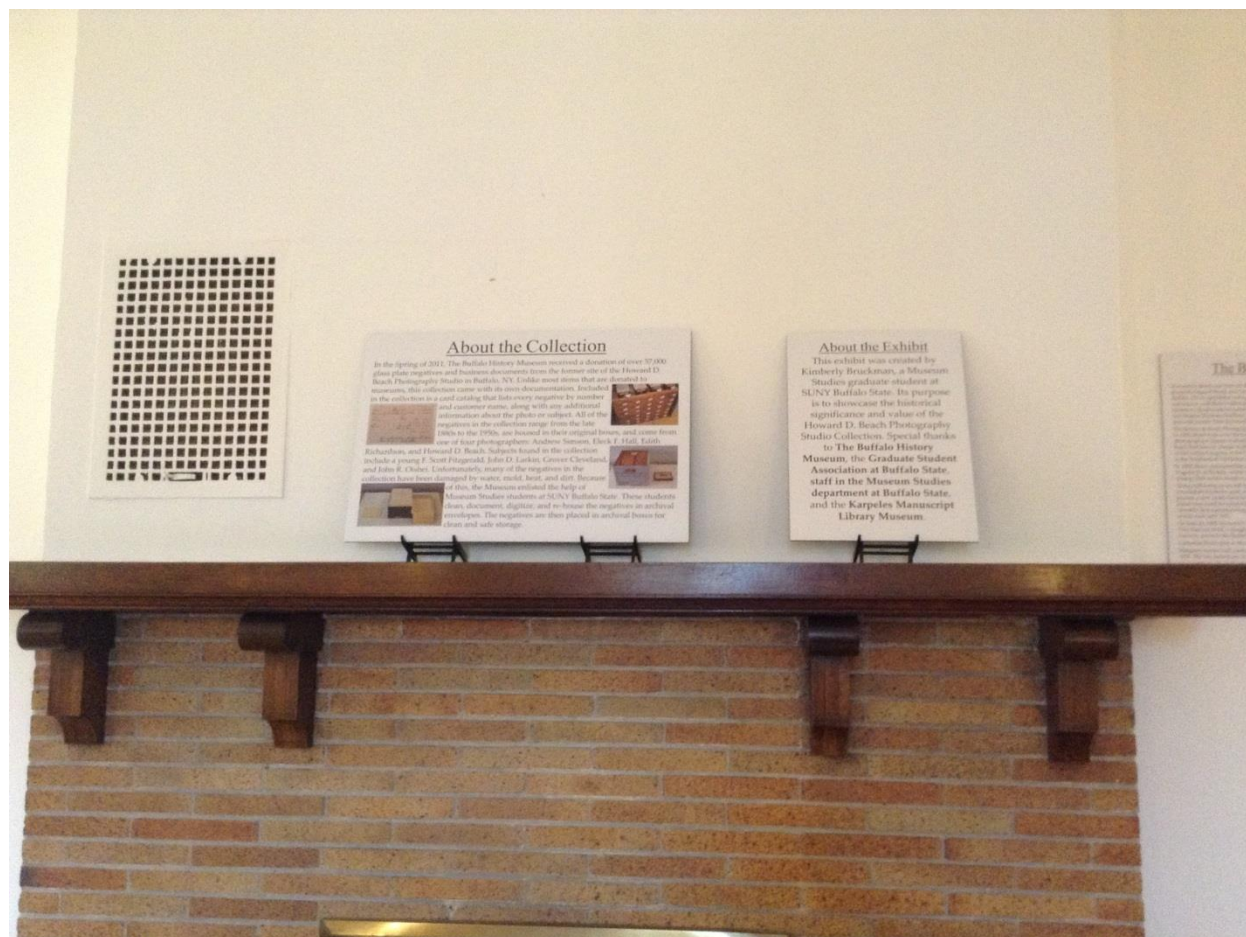
Wall with Park family photographs and information panel.



Wall with Coit family photographs and information panel.



Wall with Knox family photographs and information panel.



“About the Collection” and “About the Exhibit” panel situated above the fireplace.



Artifact cases situated in the middle of the room for optimal viewing.

Picturing Buffalo: The Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection



Over 100 photos of 5 prominent
Buffalo families!

**Beach – Knox – Weed
Coit – Park**

Explore documents and artifacts
from the Howard D. Beach
Photography Studio Collection

Learn how SUNY Buffalo State
students are preserving one of
Buffalo's most complete
collections

Grand Opening
Sunday, February 4, 2018
1:00pm-3:00pm
Karpeles Manuscript
Library Museum
453 Porter Ave
Buffalo, NY 14201
Free Admission

Additional Exhibit Hours:
Sunday, Monday, Tuesday
11am-4pm
February 5-27



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Graduate Student
Association

Karpeles Manuscript
Library Museum

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Museum Studies
Director

Prof. Noelle Wiedemer

Phyllis Walling

The Giallombardo
Family

About the Creator



Kimberly Bruckman is a native of Buffalo, NY.

She is currently a graduate student at SUNY Buffalo State, pursuing a Masters degree in Museum Studies. After her expected graduation in May 2018, Kimberly hopes to stay in WNY and continue her work with local museums.

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Hutchinson Central Technical
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Canisius College
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2018

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Inside flap, back panel, and front panel of the exhibit brochure.

About the Exhibit

All the photos in this exhibit have gone through a five step process. First, the negatives were located in the collection through the use of the catalog cards. Then, they were cleaned, documented, digitized, and re-housed in archival envelopes. Every photo in this exhibit has been kept as close to the original as possible. They have been kept at their original sizes and have undergone minimal editing regarding tone, contrast, etc. Due to the nature of the card catalog, occasionally the subject in the photo is not identified. Using the card catalog and/or outside information, all subjects in this exhibit were identified to the best of our ability.



About the Collection

Donated to The Buffalo History Museum in the Spring of 2011, the Howard D. Beach Photography Studio Collection is one of Buffalo's most complete collections. It contains over 57,000 glass plate and film negatives that date from the late 1800s to the 1950s. Also included in the collection are many of the business and personal documents from the Beach Studio.

Having been stored in the Studio until it was acquired by the Museum, the collection was exposed to hazardous conditions. Many of the negatives and documents have been damaged by water, mold, heat, and dirt. In an effort to fight its continuing deterioration, Museum Studies students at Buffalo State are working to preserve the collection.

As one of Buffalo's most valuable historical assets, the collection has a bright future. Not only does it give us a glimpse into the past, it is also a source of historical information, gives insight into the techniques of early photographers, and can be used as a genealogical resource.

Help Support the Collection:
buffalohistory.org/support/donate/library

For More Information

Forest Lawn Cemetery
forest-lawn.com

Buffalo Architecture and History
buffaloah.com

From Ox Cart To Aeroplane
 Weed & Co History 1818 1918
 by Weed & Company of Buffalo NY
 USA
Archive.org

Memorial and Family History of Erie
 County, New York
 by Genealogical Publishing
 Company (N.Y.)
Archive.org

Buffalo's Delaware Avenue:
 Mansions and Families
 by Edward T. Dunn, 2003

For Historical Newspapers:
Fultonhistory.com

Working Methods:
 The Howard D. Beach
 Photography Studio of Gelatin Dry
 Plate Negatives
 By Noelle Wiedemer
digitalcommons.buffalostate.edu

Inside left, middle, and right panels of exhibit brochure.