



# Photographic Collections

Research Guide: 210

Most Recent Update: February 2019

## Getting started

### Photography in Ottawa

Ottawa has a rich history of photographers working in the area from the early days of photography to the digital age, documenting the people, places, and events, as well as the political, social and economic life of the city.

Photography's development began in 1839 with the introduction of the daguerreotype. Early itinerant photographers would travel around the area with their equipment and often stop in Bytown, including daguerreotypist Henry E. Insley who briefly stayed in 1844. By the end of the nineteenth century, photographic studios had come to flourish in the city.

With the rise of the Kodak camera in the mid-twentieth century, amateur photography became a popular pastime. In 1894, the Ottawa Camera Club was formed, followed by the Ottawa Photographic Art Club in 1904 and the Camera Club of Ottawa in 1922.

The City of Ottawa Archives holds original photographs for the majority of the photographers and photographic studios listed below.

**Joseph Lockwood** (1817-1859) established the City's first permanent studio in 1851, which was continued after his death by his daughter **Alvira Lockwood** (1845-1925) until 1891.

**Samuel McLaughlin** (1826-1914) was first commissioned by the federal government to photograph the construction of the Parliament Buildings in 1859. He was appointed "photographer" for the Department of Public Works in 1861 and later Chief Photographer for Public Works and the Department of Railways and Canals.

**Elihu Spencer** (1818-1898) established his studio specializing in portrait photography on Elgin Street between 1859 to 1869.

**William James Topley** (1845-1930) arrived in Ottawa in 1868 to manage William Notman's new Ottawa studio. In 1872, he purchased the studio from Notman and operated it under his own name until 1924. He was appointed official photographer to HRH Princess Louise and the Marquis of Lorne, Governor General of Canada in 1878.

**Alfred Pittaway** (1858-1930) and **Samuel J. Jarvis** (1863-1952) apprenticed for three years under Jarvis's uncle Samuel who had a studio on Sparks Street. In 1882, they opened their own studio, **Pittaway and Jarvis**. In 1890, they severed their partnership and operated two separate studios until 1907 when they reunited. Pittaway specialized in sports photographs and for a period of time kept the Stanley Cup in his studio as a prop for hockey team photos. Jarvis was a member of the Canadian Photographic Association and won awards at exhibitions such as the Chicago World's Fair. Pittaway retired in 1925 and Jarvis remained active until 1936.

**Photographic Stores Limited** (1907-1987) was first established as United Photographic Stores Limited at 65 Sparks Street. In 1919, the name was briefly changed to Supplies Co. of Canada but changed again to Photographic Stores Limited in 1920. They sold photographic supplies, cameras, and processing and printing services, as well as phonographs, radios, motion picture equipment and pens. In 1921 they added a commercial photographic department and in 1928 a portrait studio. **Dave Sproul** (1947-2005) was an Ottawa photographer who was Store Manager for Photographic Stores prior to its closure.

**Alex Castonguay** (1877-1972) was a local portrait photographer. Largely self-taught, he travelled to New York and attended conventions. He started out by renting a camera and taking snapshots of people swimming at Pointe-Gatineau, selling them to his subjects. He opened his first studio in 1910 and photographed political figures, as well as artists and poets. He was a member of the New York Society of Professional Photographers and the Professional Photographers of America and the Photographic Society of America.

**Yousuf Karsh** (1908-2002) was born in Armenia and immigrated to Canada in 1924 to stay with his uncle George Nakash, a photographer in Sherbrooke, Quebec. He later studied in Boston under photographer John H. Garo. In 1931 he worked with photographer John Powis who had a studio on Sparks Street. When John retired, he took over his business. Specializing in portrait photography, Karsh gained world renown for his portraits of artists, political figures and visiting dignitaries, as well as Ottawa residents. Throughout his career, Karsh was known as Karsh of Ottawa. He later moved his studio to the Chateau Laurier in 1973, where he stayed until he retired in 1992.

**Malak Karsh** (1915-2001) immigrated to Canada in 1937 to apprentice with his brother Yousuf. Malak specialized in industrial photography and landscapes, both urban and scenic. In 1941, he set up his first studio on Sparks Street and was known by just his

first name, Malak. Fascinated by tulips, he helped establish the first Tulip Festival in Ottawa.

**Alex Onoszko** (1910-1994) began his aerial career as a test pilot in Poland. He served as a Captain in the Royal Air Force with the Polish bomber squadron during the Second World War. In 1953, he emigrated to Canada and joined the staff of Spartan Air Services of Ottawa and served as a pilot, air navigator, photographer and lab technician. He later worked for Capital Air Surveys and Kenting Earth Sciences Limited where he was Supervisor of Air Photo Operations specializing in aerial photography.

**Bill and Jean Newton** established a news photography business out of their home on Wilbrod Street starting in 1942. Newton Photo and later **Newton Photographic Associates** became the official photographers for the Ottawa Citizen from 1947 until 1959. They added wire service to other newspapers in Toronto and Montreal as well as branching out into commercial and portrait photography. In 1961, Bill Newton re-established his business on Sparks Street, and was joined by his son Greg Newton in 1963.

In 1959, **Andy Andrews** and **Stan Hunt**, both former Newton photographers, formed their own studio **Andrews-Hunt Photography**, specializing in commercial photography, such as construction and local manufacturers. Andy's son Dave joined the business in the 1960s and the business name changed to **Andrews and Son**. In 1974, Greg Newton and Andy Andrews formed **Andrews-Newton Photographers Ltd.** specializing in commercial and portrait photography until 1994.

Another source for local news photography are negatives from the **Ottawa Journal**, which was founded in 1885 and ran until 1980. Negatives along with photo assignment job lists cover the time period 1971 until 1980.

## Resources

Below is a listing of some of the major photographic collections in the City of Ottawa Archives' holdings and the format in which they are available.

### **MG393: Andrews-Newton Photographers Limited fonds**

Format: negatives

- Bill and Jean Newton Photography, 1945 - ca. 1952
- Newton Photographic Associates, ca. 1952-1973
- Andrews-Hunt Photography, 1959-1973
- Andrews- Newton Photographers, 1974-1994

### **MG397: Dave Sproul Photo Collection**

Format: negatives

- Photographic Store Limited, ca. 1895 - 1970
- Dave Sproul, 1990

### **MG110-JARV: Samuel J. Jarvis series, Historical Society of Ottawa fonds**

Format: Prints and some negatives

- Samuel J. Jarvis, ca. 1885 - 1933
- Pittaway & Jarvis, 1882-1890; 1907-1925

### **MG011: Ottawa Journal fonds**

Format: negatives and prints

- Negatives, 1971-1980
- Subject print files, ca. 1970-1980
- People print files, ca. 1970-1980

### **MG159: Alex Onoszko fonds**

Format: negatives and prints

- aerial photography, ca. 1956-1984

### **Photographs in other fonds:**

- MG001 and MG002: Billings Family fonds
- MG162: Billings Village fonds
- MG017: Stewart Family fonds
- MG027: Ogilvy Family fonds
- MG037: Lett Family fonds
- RG045: OC Transpo fonds
- P01-OTT1-HD series: Ottawa Heritage District planning photographs
- P01-OTT1-PS series: Property Standards photographs

### **Access:**

Most photographic holdings for the City of Ottawa Archives are available for access through the Archives Reference Room. Some access restrictions may apply for preservation purposes.

## **Reproduction:**

Photographic prints or digital images of photographic material may be purchased through Reference Services. Contact the Archives for more information on fees and the process for requesting reproductions. Be sure to give plenty of time for research before submitting a photo order, as items that have never been digitized may take time to reproduce.

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## **Additional services**

We do not provide research services, however our reference staff are willing to assist. Researchers may telephone, write by mail or email, or visit the City of Ottawa Archives in-person. Please note there may be a delay in accessing certain materials; it is recommended that you contact Reference Services well before the date of your intended visit.

## **Contact us**

Central Branch

Tel: 613-580-2857

Fax: 613-580-2614

Email: [archives@ottawa.ca](mailto:archives@ottawa.ca)

Address: City of Ottawa Archives, 100 Tallwood Drive, Ottawa, ON K2G 4R7

Hours:

Tuesday to Friday: 9 am to 4 pm

Saturday: 10 am to 5 pm

## **Website**

For information about the Archives' holdings, as well as access to research guides and other customer service materials available through the City of Ottawa Archives, please access our website, [ottawa.ca/archives](http://ottawa.ca/archives).

## **Glossary: Photographic types/formats and processes**

### **Albumen print: 1850 – ca. 1900**

- Semi-gloss image printed on paper that is coated with egg albumen and sodium chloride and mounted on heavy card.
- Rich sepia tone
- Can develop small cracks and fading, or overall yellowish discolouration

### **Ambrotype: 1851 – ca. 1880**

- Produced a negative image on glass with milky gray highlights with a black backing in an ornate case
- Black backing turned image into a positive.

### **Cabinet card: 1866-1906**

- Larger format carte-de-visite, usually mounted on cardboard

### **Carte-de visite: 1860-1891**

- photographic prints mounted on card about the size of a business card, often in albums
- Photographer's name often on back

### **Cellulose acetate negatives: 1925 to present**

- Also called safety film
- Degrading negatives produce a strong vinegary smell and image layer becomes channeled

### **Cellulose nitrate negatives: 1890 – early 1950s**

- Very flammable and inherently unstable
- Degrading negatives produce an acrid smell and become yellow, brittle and sticky

### **Chromogenic print (colour print): 1942 – present**

- Made from a colour transparency or negative

- Colours formed through chemical synthesis during developing process
- Possible colour shifting and fading

### **Daguerreotype: 1839 – ca. 1860**

- Produced a mirror-like image on a silver plated copper plate, protected under glass in an ornate case
- Image goes from positive to negative when tilted backward or forward
- Reversal of image: mirror-image of subject
- Often hand-coloured

### **Glass plate negatives:**

- Collodion wet plate 1850-1880: wet emulsion hand coated on glass plate with edges often ground and varnished
- Gelatine dry plate 1880s-1975: Glass plate machine coated with smooth-cut edges and sometimes varnished

### **Polaroids / Dye-diffusion prints: 1948 - present**

- Produced a finished print in seconds from a Polaroid camera: instant photography
- Introduced colour in 1963

### **Polyester negatives: c. 1965-present**

- Very stable film base

### **Silver gelatin print: 1890 – 2000**

- Paper is coated with gelatin that contains light sensitive silver salts
- Black and white printing process
- Can develop silver mirroring or yellowing of image

### **Slides/transparencies:**

- Glass lantern slides: 1850 - 1950
- Film transparencies: 1950 – present
- Transparency is mounted in an enclosure making them safe to handle or put into slide projector
- Light is transmitted through image and projected onto a screen

## **Stereographic cards**

- Has two similar images mounted side by side on card which when viewed through a stereoscope produces a 3D effect
- Cards intentionally curved to increase this effect

## **Tintype: 1854-1930s**

- Image has milky gray highlights and is on an iron sheet with a black varnish
- Often hand-coloured
- Also called ferrotype

## **Select Bibliography:**

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*Reflections on a Capital: 12 Ottawa photographers*. Ottawa: Information Canada, 1970

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Dryden, Jean. *Demystifying Copyright: A Researcher's Guide to Copyright in Canadian Libraries and Archives*, 2nd edition. Ottawa: Canadian Library Association, 2015

[Karsh Sittings Database](#)

[City Archives online database](#) (catalogue)

[LINGUA FRANCA: A Common Language for Conservators of Photographic Materials](#)

[Image Permanence Institute: Graphics Atlas](#)