

20 Years of Cascade Stereoscopic Club

By David W. Allen, with inserts by Shab Levy, Ron Kriesel, Obie O'Brien (Reprinted from Stereo Views, March – May 2014)

The Very Beginning

During meetings of the Cascade Photographic Historical Society in 1993, some members of that group decided that a 3D club was needed in Portland, Oregon. So later that year, this group convened three planning meetings that were held in the homes of Les Konrad, Ron Kriesel, and Michael Watters. The members of this group were Les Konrad, Jerry Weigel, Ron and Jeanne Kriesel, Michael Watters, Jim Apilado, Susie Rydquist, and Cy and Norma Eid. This founding group of the Cascade Stereoscopic Society invited hundreds of stereographers and the first meeting of the club was held January 29, 1994. The following officers were elected: Ron Kriesel, Chairperson; Michael Watters, Vice Chair; Jerry Weigel, Communications; Les Konrad, Librarian; Susie Rydquist, Public Relations; and Cy and Norma Eid, Advisors. Those at the meeting became our Charter Members and voted to change the name of the Society to Cascade Stereoscopic Club. That meeting was held in a Parks & Recreation facility in

the Cedar Hills area north of Beaverton. Warren Callahan from the Puget Sound Stereo Camera Club was an instrumental mentor during the first couple of years.

It is an important part of our history that the projected images were from film slides projected on 3D slide projectors of the 1960's vintage. By 2004 we had a donation, by Dennis Gilliam of Bob's Red Mill, of a modern RBT 3D slide projector. Then, as now, photos were projected on a silver screen, and viewed using polarized glasses. During 2004 and 2005 digital photography began to take hold and dual digital projectors using a computer to show the digital 3D image files became the mainstay.

Like most hobbyist groups, Cascade Stereoscopic Club readily overcame the challenges to find low cost or free meeting space, the equipment necessary to project images, and the skills to organize club activities. One thing CSC never had to struggle with was enthusiasm. The small, dedicated group gradually grew over the years into a unit

of committed and loyal members who were willing to squeeze time from other commitments to keep CSC vital and alive. CSC became an Oregon Non-profit January 5, 1998. From its inception CSC was groundbreaking in its goals and aspirations. The club published three books: *3D Gallery* in 2001, *Cascade 3D Visions* in 2004, and *3D Art and Photography: The First Five Years* in 2009.

Birth of the 3D Center of Art and Photography

In late 2001, the Board announced the intention to create a national 3D museum and learning center in Portland. It would be a museum/gallery to house 3D equipment and imagery; a public place to teach classes, do workshops, have exhibitions, a place to preserve the images and equipment of the past and provide a permanent home for the club meetings and outreach. The concept was part of CSC's second "Five Year Plan" and the hope was that such a facility could be located and opened as early as 2004 or at least by 2007.



Meeting at Kem Sypher's home, 01-12-1997, by Ron Kriesel.

L-R: Greg Marshall off camera, Shab Levy, David Allen, Jerry Weigel, Kem Sypher, Obie O'Brien, Les Konrad, Diane Rulien.



Stereo Card Judging, January 1997, by Ron Kriesel.

This was at XYZYX before 10 foot screen was installed. Judges and helpers left to right: Obie O'Brien, Ted Welker, Neil Steller, Shab Levy, Les Konrad, Don Birkley and unknown.

CSC member, Mark Gehlar's, resulting donation combined with the existing resources of the club, allowed the Board to finally vote in favor of leasing a storefront and embarking on a great adventure.

The 3D Center of Art and Photography (or "3DC" or "3D Center") was the only gallery/museum in the United States dedicated solely to contemporary and antique 3D art. Located at 1928 NW Lovejoy between Portland's trendy Nob Hill and Pearl districts, the 3D Center began by being open every Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 1 - 5 pm, as well as in the evening on the first Thursday of each month (a tradition among Portland's art galleries.) For more than a year it was staffed entirely by volunteers.

The Center's quarterly newsletter, Center News, matured into an eight-page, full-color magazine that included 3D Center information and also specialty articles on 3D imagery and interviews with contemporary stereo artists. Directors of the 3D Center were Diane Rulien, then Annie Dubinsky, then Paul Brenner, and finally, Stacy Webb.

The 3D Center had a donated silver screen with documentation indicating it may have been used in the White House during the Cuban Missile Crisis to view aerial 3D images of Cuba. Annie invited PBS to the 3D Center, where they filmed a segment of History Detectives. This episode, which was filmed in 2D, aired on Monday June 25, 2007, 9:00 PM PST on Public Broadcasting Stations all over the United States. The Detectives did not really prove or disprove the speculation regarding prior use of the screen, but they did an excellent episode based on the information they had.

The Center also held the first ever Friends of the Center meeting during the NSA/ISU Convention in Boise. In addition the Center had a trade fair table to inform stereo enthusiasts about the Center's work. This tradition continued at the NSA Convention in Grand Rapids. A more complete history of the 3D Center can be found online: <http://www.3dcenterusa.com/History.html>.

Dave's First Contact With the Club

I can remember my first contact with the Cascade Stereoscopic Club of Oregon. It was probably in 1998 when I was working for NuVision on some consumer 3D glasses called "3-DSpex". As I recall, desiring some good 3D images to be included in the 3-DSpex glasses package, NuVision had offered 3-DSpex glasses to anyone who would provide some 3D images. We got a lot of images from the Portland area and I'm sure some of them came from members of CSC. About that time Shab Levy came to NuVision and invited anyone interested to join the club. Several of the NuVision employees joined, and I've been a member ever since.

As mentioned above, the first meeting of the Cascade Stereoscopic Society was in January of 1994 and about 40 people attended. Les Konrad worked up the first club logo. The club later had a competition for a new logo and the one which we now use, designed by Craig Daniels, was chosen. At first the club met at the Cedar Hills Parks and Recreation Center, they had to block the windows to view the projected slides. Shab Levy was elected as the second president. Shab served as director of design and exhibit fabrication at the Oregon Museum of Science and Industry from 1967 through 1987, so Shab had good connections at OMSI.

In 1996 the club started meeting at OMSI continuing through 2000 when OMSI reorganized and decided to charge for the use of the room and storage. In 2001, with CSC no longer able to use OMSI's facilities at no charge, Rich Dubnow, owner of XYZYX (zy-zicks), generously allowed us to use his facility that at the time was located in Tualatin Oregon. XYZYX was a manufacturer of View-Master™ compatible reels in small quantities with fast turn-around times.



3D Center (2007), by Shab Levy

With a larger meeting space we were able to purchase a fine 10 foot silver lenticular screen from a 3D club in the Netherlands. We also were allowed to keep it semi-permanently mounted on the wall there at XYZYX! Dwight Cummings, WyEast founder, from the Puget Sound Stereo Club donated the funds for that screen. Over the years many gracious members donated many pieces of equipment, funds and time to keep the CSC going. There has also always been a small membership fee which included a copy of the Stereo Views newsletter. The Stereo Views began in January 1994 and the editors have been Ron Kriesel, Diane Rulien, Colin Johnson, Lisa Metzger and now Herb Weiner. The Club eventually set up a CSC website and the webmasters of the CSC website have been Michael Kersenbrock, Ron Kriesel and now Herb Weiner. Obie O'Brien continues to be our Stereo Views fastidious proofreader.

As a club member, Rich let us meet at his business "XYZYX" for three years. Rich's business changed and he moved it to Beaver Creek Oregon, much too far away for club meetings, so for a few months we met at the Beaverton Resource Center. To schedule our meetings, Mike Kersenbrock (club web master) had to call at midnight on the 1st of each month to make sure we got the date and time we wanted.

First CSC meeting at the 3D Center!

Although not ready to open, the CSC's project, the 3D Center of Art and Photography, hosted the CSC's meeting for the first time on January 10, 2004. There was snow on the ground outside (unusual for

Portland). This meeting was also used to celebrate the 10th Anniversary of the CSC. A 3D image was made of those attending including the anniversary cake furnished by Jeanne Kriesel.

The club met at the 3D Center until it closed, then we met at the PGE building in downtown Portland for a while, and now meets at the Somerset Assisted Living Center. We are currently looking for a new meeting location closer to downtown Portland.

Many Projects

The Club has always had big projects, thanks to members like Ron Kriesel, Shab Levy, Diane Rulien, Mart McCann, Claire Dean and others. While at OMSI, CSC put on the "3D Scope Exhibition" where we showed the public many forms of 3D experiences including; current 3D hardware, 3D memorabilia, 3D slide shows, 3D cards, digital images with 3D glasses and 3D card mounting techniques. For a small fee we even took digital pictures of people and while they watched, we printed their 3D image, both in anaglyph and stereo pairs and provided a small 3D viewer to take home.

Two 3D Movies

The Club has made two 3D videos. The first video, "Dad's Old 3D Camera" stars Obie O'Brien, Mary Lou O'Brien (Obie's mother), Ray Rowe and many other club members and was produced in early 2004 by David W. Allen. We don't know the precise date that this first video was made. The theme of this video is: Obie receives his dad's old 3d camera from his mother, meets Ray of the club, takes a lot of images and at the end he wins first place in a club competition.

The second video "Out to Lunch" stars Diane Rulien, Ryan Menard and Robert Schlesienger and was produced by Shab Levy. It was first aired on July 2011 (more details here: <http://vimeo.com/27556617>). The theme of this video is: Diane orders a lunch and ends up unwillingly sharing it with Ryan, a real shady character. Then, she discovers that all the time her lunch was waiting for her at the other table where she left it. Thanks Ryan for sharing your lunch with Diane.

National Stereoscopic Convention 2004

Another major club undertaking was the 2004 NSA convention. We talked about sponsoring the first NSA convention of the 21st century, but finally succeeded in 2004. Diane led the effort and we had many planning meetings. We finally came up with a schedule arranged with many sessions held twice, so that an attendee had the possibility of seeing every presentation. In the theater, we had large format 3D slides, regular slides, digital images, and digital movies. Ron Labbe said he would have the most real 3D show. He actually got up on a table, in the dark, and when the projector turned on with no slide inserted, he did a dance on the table to the music and almost fell off the table because he couldn't see for all the light. (You'd have to know Ron to understand.) There were the flea markets, room hopping, brunch and banquet as is the custom in the NSA convention. The convention was a success and I think NSA even made a profit.

You are invited to a meeting of Cascade Stereoscopic Club. Guests are welcome at all meetings and there is no charge to attend. See <http://www.3dpdx.org>

Major Accomplishments

A major effort was the Cascade International Stereoscopic Exhibition sanctioned by Photographic Society of America. Shab Levy got it all started in 1999 with over 100 participants sending in stereo cards and slides. For the first exhibition we arranged with the Marci Gallery in Portland and had cheese, crackers and wine for the public to enjoy while they viewed the winning entries.

The next year, Shab petitioned the PSA to sanction a new venue of the Electronic Digital Internet section. So, CSC conducted the first Internet PSA Exhibition in 2000. Entries could be emailed to the Club, or if desired, could be mailed to the Club on a CD. After the closing date, the images were all collected and put on a secret URL on the club web site. The judging was done over the Internet by 3 separate judges: one in Australia, one back east and one here in Portland. Each judge used the secret URL to judge the images and record his score. After all judges had finished, the scores were tallied, the images ranked, and the top 40% were accepted. After the judges selected their favorite image, a conference call was arranged and the judges discussed their results, inspected the images on their own monitors, and picked the first, second, and third place winners and the Honorable Mentions.

We soon realized that with 3 different monitors at remote locations, each judge had a slightly different impression of the winning images. A long discussion was needed to pick the winners. We now treat the Digital judging the same as the cards and slides — with the three judges looking at the exact same monitor/TV.

The Cascade Exhibition also sponsored a special digital event “stereoIMAGEnation” which accepted digital stereo images of any form. In 2005 the Cascade Exhibition expanded to 4 sections with cards, slides, digital and the new section for Phantograms. There were not that many people doing Phantograms so that section only lasted for about 3 years. PSA changed its rules to allow individuals to enter up to 4 sections, so we introduced a new section called Digital Altered Reality. In 2013 we dropped the slide section as more and more photographers had changed to digital cameras. We have been sponsoring the Exhibition for 15 years now.

In 2003, Jim Olsen made contact with the Oregon Salon at the Oregon State Fair. CSC was invited to put on a display of 3D art. We showed 3D slides, displayed vintage and

new stereo cards and had various modern and old cameras on display. We had 6 slide shows a day and over 600 people viewed our art. In 2008 we were invited again and we showed some anaglyph wall art and some Phantograms. Many people were impressed with the Phantograms, as they had never seen such an image. Again in 2010 we were invited to participate and we provided many large anaglyph images. There was one panoramic view of Portland that was 25 feet long and six 4' by 8' images – we had the whole west wall of the exhibition hall. In 2012, the club was invited to participate and we spent most of the summer learning how to make lenticular images. Eight members contributed a total of 44 lenticular stereo images (no 3D glasses required) that CSC presented at the Fair.



Card Display at 2003 State Fair, by David Allen



Slide Show Viewers at 2003 State Fair, by David Allen

The most ambitious project of the Club was the 3D Center of Art and Photography. By the NSA convention in 2004, the 3D Center was up and running and we had regular convention tours to the 3D Center. Volunteers from the Club manned the 3D Center, and CSC hung two of the exhibitions at the 3D Center from club members. The Club provided many of the digital 3D images, 3D memorabilia, and other items. CSC prospered and it enjoyed holding its meetings and outreach events at the 3D Center.

The Club has had many field trips, the earliest being to Canon Beach Kite festival in 1994 and later trips to Pioneer Courthouse Square, Brooklyn roundhouse, Nike Campus, Landslide Area in Kelso Washington, The Pearl District of Portland, Train Ride between OMSI and Oaks Park, PT Boat Restoration, Military Museum, Fareless Square, Various Parks, Christmas lights 2010, Peacock Lane, Keep Portland Weird, Washington Square, Model Train Club, Bob Davis Field Trip, Art on The Max, Crystal Springs and The Three Ferry's Trip. In each trip, many images were taken and prepared for showing at the Club.

The Club has had several Club Picnics, the first being in 1999 at Multnomah Falls. When we got there, there were no picnic tables, so we had to enjoy lunch on one of the benches (a little bird told me that Obie lost his tripod over the bridge and never was able to retrieve it). In 2000 the Club picnic was at Laurelhurst Park. Another picnic was held at Oaks Park and the last one I remember was at Cathedral Park. At Cathedral Park, some of us met at a picnic table down close to the river and the rest chose a table close

to the entrance. We both had our lunch and then started taking 3D pictures and noticed other photographers doing the same. We finally got together and enjoyed the outing all the more.

Countless outreach activities

Early on we presented a slide program at the Columbia Council of Camera Clubs annual convention in Portland. Much of the CSC outreach was done in collaboration with the 3D Center. We set up the Minthorne Museum 3D Exhibit in 2001 for a weekend at the Newberg (Oregon) Festival. We also presented a slide show for the 2007 PSA Convention held in Portland. Also in 2007 we held our second Silent Auction event. Many young and old students took classes taught by club members at the 3D Center. In 2009 we sponsored a 3D display at the Maryhill Arts Festival in the Columbia Gorge. In mid-2009 in collaboration with the 2008 Watkins exhibit at Oregon Historical Society, CSC members compiled a Then and Now Exhibit at OHS comparing Watkins' stereo-cards from 1867 and the 1880s to our members contemporary views of the same scenes. This exhibit was also hung at the Glatt House Gallery of the Woodburn Art Center in July 2009. In late 2009 we curated a 6 month long 3D Display, "1 Brain + 2 Eyes = 3D", at the Oregon Historical Society Museum. That was one of the highlights of

the 3D Center's heyday. A few years ago Shab proposed to do a "Project Box". This was a box with 10 or so items in it and each participating club member would schedule a week to take the box home with all its goodies, set up a still life scene of whatever suited his fancy and show the images at the next club meeting. Shab provided many things from his shop, I gathered up about 10 items from around my home. Other members took their turn for this project for about the next three years. It was an interesting exercise. There were and continue to be 3D presentations at local schools and retirement centers.

In Memorium

Special friends of CSC who passed on are Mark Gehler, Ray Rowe, Jim Apilado, Loren Mills, Paul Moeller, Mike Kersenbrock Dr. Richard Markley and Phillip Pennington.

Looking at the future - 2014

The Club regularly has a monthly theme and images are shown at each club meeting on that theme. Club meetings also include show and tell items and the occasional PSA exhibition image selections. Current CSC activities are found on our website: www.3dpdx.org. Although our 20th Anniversary was in January, we are celebrating with a 20th Anniversary Dinner at Ernesto's Italian Restaurant on May 18.

