

PHOTOGRAPHING THE CENTRAL COAST

A particularly welcoming gateway to rich primary source materials, images are an integral part of conducting historical research. As powerful records of people, places, events, and landscapes that change over time, they provide raw data and basic building blocks for understanding and interpreting the past.

For 150 years, California's central coast has captivated photographers who have been drawn to its unparalleled scenery and who have witnessed both changes and continuity through their lenses. Their work is assembled in the photo archives of organizations and institutions, preserving a vivid pictorial account of the region.



The photo archive California Views, whose images date from the 1850s, has contributed to the study of the central coast for more than thirty years. The most comprehensive historical photograph collection in the Monterey Bay area today, it was established in 1970 by photographer and photo archivist Pat Hathaway following his acquisition of some 5,000 5-x-7 glass and film negatives by Lewis Josselyn (1883–1964), a local photographer. A treasure of rare and unique images, the archive has grown to approximately 81,000 historical images—including glass plate negative, original prints, and stereographs—with more than 32,500 photographs cataloged in a database and 5,000 plus images online (www.californiaviews.com).

Hathaway built on his original acquisition using a 1924 city directory and other sources to track descendants of local photographers, augmenting his collection with works created by C. W. J. Johnson, R. J. Arnold, L. S. Slevin, E. A. Cohen, C. E. Watkins, I. W. Taber, and many others. In the archive's early days, he made prints from negatives in his darkroom on a large-format Durst enlarger. Today's twenty-first-century digital technology allows him to utilize techniques that were not possible in the darkroom.

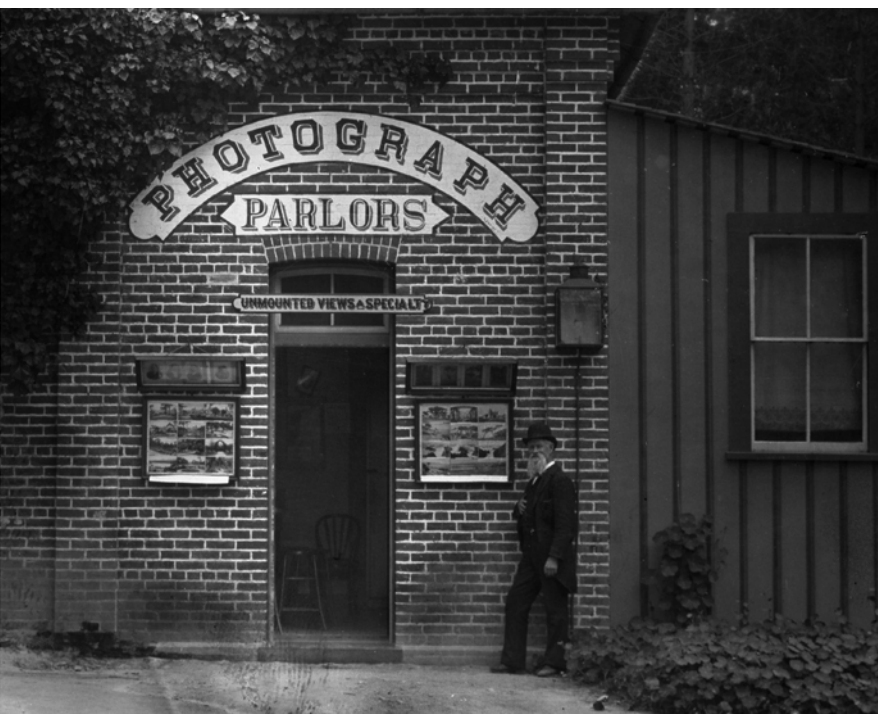
Many of the archive's photographs of Monterey, Pacific Grove, Cannery Row, Carmel, and Big Sur illustrate books and magazines; others appear at museums and attractions across the state, such as Monterey Bay Aquarium (which features a 12' x 12' print of Cannery Row), National Steinbeck Center in Salinas, and Pacific Wharf at Disney's California Adventure.

—Editors

C. W. J. Johnson at his retouching stand, ca. 1890
6½" x 8½" glass plate negative
California Views, 79-088-0002



Photographers on the Beach, ca. 1887
 5" x 8" glass plate negative
 California Views, 79-083-0004;
 photograph by Frank B. Rodolph



"Photographers are the least photographed people, as they are on the other end of the camera," observes Pat Hathaway of California Views. Hathaway's passion for ensuring that photographers get credit for their work is represented in these images of local nineteenth-century photographers from his collection. Through his photographs, Charles Wallace Jacob Johnson (1893–1903), Monterey's first prominent photographer, left an expansive record of life in the Monterey Bay region. (Above) Frank Bequette Rodolph (1843–1923), a commercial photographer active in Oakland during the 1870s and 1880s, made many photographs on his extensive travels throughout California, including this image of photographers on the beach.

C. W. J. Johnson standing by his photo parlor at the Hotel Del Monte, Monterey, ca. 1887
 8" x 10" glass plate negative
 California Views, 78-010-0001