



Dr. Charles Styer is exhibiting some of his photographic creations at the UGA Tifton Campus Conference Center boardroom this summer.

Photographic Autobiography Charles Styer

My current exhibit traces the development of both my artistic and photographic skills and interests, as well as the development of photography itself. The exhibit also is a reflection of the various directions my life has taken.

One of the first photos I ever took, using a Kodak Brownie box camera, shows the home where I lived in Bucks County, Pennsylvania in 1954. Both my skills, and the quality of the camera are primitive. I didn't manage to hold the camera straight, and the quality of the image is distinctly blurry.

About 5 years later, I bought my first 35 mm camera, a Minolta A-2 — Minolta's second model! This was a decided step up in quality, and I started taking pictures of flowers. Consequently, flower photography has been a life-long passion represented by the flower pictures in the exhibit.

As a student at Cornell University, I bought my first SLR, a Nikon Nikkorex F. This allowed me to get in to the world of macro photography for the first time. The close inspection of everyday objects and the flowers of common weeds has fascinated me ever since.

I left Cornell with my new bride, Eloise, and traveled to Maryland where we both received our Ph.D.'s in the Botany Department at the University of Maryland. I majored in plant anatomy and in order to record my findings properly, I studied photography and learned darkroom and microscopic techniques, represented in this collection by photographs of sections of the wood of *Moutabea* — the South American vine I studied for my Master's Degree. The photo of the flower of *Philadelphus* represents one of the genera I studied for my Ph.D. dissertation.

Upon arriving in Tifton in 1980, I studied the effects of moniliformin on mitosis in corn, illustrated here by a photo of cell division in a corn root. When we bought our current home on Park Avenue, we became involved in the creation of Tifton's historic district, and I then served as chairman of the Historic District Commission for 18 years. Since I was a child, I had always been interested in architecture, and this interest joined with my photographic and historic interests led me to photograph many buildings, and architectural features, not just in Tifton, but elsewhere in our travels, as represented by the photos from the old region of the city of Quebec.

With the arrival of digital photography, and the ability to modify and print one's own photographs at a modest cost, I started producing fine art photographs.

So here is my life — from a country boy in Bucks County taking crude black and white photos sent out to the photo lab, to a retiree in Tifton creating and printing my own artistic creations via digital camera, computer and inkjet printers.