Catalogs
The catalogs—one for each photographer—are 8.75 inches by 11.5 inches, 80 pages, printed in full color to bring out the subtleties of the toned black and white images, on archival quality paper. Boxed sets are also available.

Reviews
“Stories, though, are at the heart of everything the Massillon Museum does. History, art, culture—all of it is built around the human experience and the stories we live to tell. It took two years, thousands of dollars and endless amounts of time, but the Massillon Museum has uncovered some treasured stories that time had begun to erase.”
Erin Pustay, The Independent, Massillon, Ohio

“...Faces of Rural America, an ambitious and enlightening exhibition at the Massillon Museum.”
Dan Kane, The Repository, Canton, Ohio

“Viewing the portraits collectively is to be utterly immersed in another world, really. There is an astonishingly diverse range of faces, walks of life, and moods present. Men, women, babies and children. Couples, families. Rich, poor. Expressions that are playful, scowling, angelic, demure, contemplative, proud, tired, enigmatic. Wondrous, lyrical humanity.”
Tom Wachunas, Artwatch.blogspot.com

“Compared to contemporary photographs, the people in these images project an endearing sense of sincerity and innocence and a complete lack of the irony and almost jaded sense of self that today’s sitters possess.”
Dottie Shinn, The Beacon Journal, Akron, Ohio
Faces of Rural America

Faces of Rural America encompasses century-old images by Belle Johnson of Monroe City, Missouri (located near Hannibal, Missouri), and Henry Clay Fleming of Ravenswood, West Virginia (along the Ohio River), where they served for decades as their small towns’ lone professional photographic portrait artists.

Belle Johnson (1864–1945) began her lifelong career and passion for photography as a photographer’s assistant in 1890. She soon took over the studio, which she operated for more than a half century, artistically depicting the babies, graduates, brides, families, teams, hoboes, soldiers, and the general population of Monroe City and surrounding farms. Johnson actively participated in regional, national, and international photography competitions, earning medals and recognition. She was frequently invited to exhibit her work in salons and was awarded honorary membership in the Photographic Association of America in 1907. Johnson’s most noted photograph, “Three Women with Long Hair,” has been seen around the world in exhibitions and documentaries, on postcards and posters, and as a book illustration.

Henry Clay Fleming (1846–1942) started his photographic career as a daguerreotype artist by 1870, but, like Johnson, he soon began recording images on glass plate negatives. He, however, continued to use that medium until the end of his career, despite more modern methods that were available. He is thought to have been Ravenswood’s sole photographer from the 1910s through the 1930s, recording the faces of the town’s residents as well as those who lived in the surrounding hills. Fleming concentrated strictly on the people who sat for his portraits. Consequently, it’s their faces, their relationship to each other, and their attire that appeal to the viewer. Props and careful composition were less important to Fleming’s style. In the six decades since the glass plates were packed away, they have acquired intriguing deterioration around the edges from changes in temperature and humidity, framing the faces accidentally in an artistic manner.

Traveling Exhibition Content

- Photographs—choose among six exhibition configurations
  1. 50 Fleming images & 50 Johnson images
  2. 25 Fleming images & 25 Johnson images
  3. 50 Fleming images
  4. 50 Johnson images
  5. 25 Fleming images
  6. 25 Johnson images
- Introductory panel—
  available as a Word document or as a ready-to-hang panel (additional fee)
- Biographical panel(s) of photographer(s)
  available as a Word document or as a ready-to-hang panel (additional fee)
- Portrait(s) of the photographer(s)
- Introductory video for each photographer’s work
- Comprehensive educational/programming guide
- Catalogs devoted to individual photographers (additional fee)
- Family activity guide (additional fee)
- Registrar’s packet
- Publicity packet including media release and images for publication
- Installation instructions

Website—facesofruralamerica.org
- Faces
  2,093 images—all Johnson and Fleming images
  studied during the Faces of Rural America project
  198 Belle Johnson images
  1895 Henry Clay Fleming images
- Places
  Overview of each town represented:
  Monroe City, Missouri & Ravenswood, West Virginia
- Photographers
  A biography of each photographer:
  Belle Johnson & Henry Clay Fleming
- Education
  Ideas for using the exhibition or the website for meaningful family dialogue and learning opportunities—art, history, geography, social studies, science, and more!

Project Toolkit—within the website
- Replicate the Project
  Learn how to facilitate a similar project for your family or your community with step-by-step instructions, examples, and forms.

Exhibition Details
- Size
  50 photographs: 110–150 linear feet
  25 photographs: 70–125 linear feet
- Rental Period
  12 Weeks beginning January 2012
  (as availability allows)
- Rental Fee
  Option 1
  $6,500 plus shipping (100 photographs)
  Option 2, 3 & 4
  $4,000 plus shipping (50 photographs)
  Options 5 & 6
  $2,000 plus shipping (25 photographs)
- Security
  Limited
- Shipping
  Andy Rock Fine Art Services
- Contact
  Alexandra Nicholis
  Executive Director, Massillon Museum
  330.833.4061
  anicholis@massillonmuseum.org

The original Faces of Rural America project was launched with funding from the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

Share the Exhibition with Your Town!
Interested in bringing Faces of Rural America to your community? There are several exhibition packages to accommodate a range of budget levels that can include a combination of framed photographs, audiovisual materials, educational guides, and interpretive text.

By bringing the Faces of Rural America exhibition to your town, you have an opportunity to connect your community to an experience. Museums, libraries, historical societies, community centers, and universities, upon approval of facility reports by our curatorial staff, are among the different venues that can host this exhibition.