

Greater Florence Area  
**Business**  
Quarterly

# Restoring Marilyn

*Florence's The Archives LLC restores the Milton Greene collection to its original beauty*

BY JARED ANDERSON  
Siuslaw News

The photographs of Marilyn Monroe needed help. It's not that they had been poorly cared for over the decades — they had been stored with meticulous care. Their condition was an inevitable byproduct of time.

The deep red lips of the actress had faded. The platinum blond hair was riddled with scratches. Mildew spots covered the iconic beauty mark.

But after thousands of hours and years of work, the crew at the Florence-based business The Archives restored thousands of Milton H. Greene's photographs of Monroe, along with other Hollywood royalty from the golden age of film.

The crew's latest achievement is "The Essential Marilyn by Milton H. Greene," an internationally-released tome of more than 250 images, 100 of which have never been released publicly.

The photographs were taken by The Archives owner Joshua Greene's father, Milton, a world-famous photographer best known for his work with Monroe, who was a close friend of the Greene family. In fact, Greene said questions usually posed him



PHOTOS COURTESY OF THE ARCHIVES' MILTON H. GREENE COLLECTION

Photographer Milton H. Greene took hundreds of photos of actress Marilyn Monroe. Many of the iconic images needed special restoration — a mission that became his son Joshua Greene's business, The Archives LLC.

about the book often involve his own personal history with the actress.

While Greene spins a tale of the legendary Monroe with enthusiastic panache, he is also proud to discuss the process that brought her iconic images back to life.

With a regiment of four employees, The Archives took on the daunting task of cleaning up the photographs one picture at a

time. Greene started The Archives for a number of reasons, first and foremost to protect his father's legacy.

"Knowing he had died, and thinking that all his pictures had faded away in his lifetime," Greene said, "was an emotional draw."

Milton shot hundreds of thousands of images in his lifetime, covering celebrities from Frank

Sinatra to Audrey Hepburn. His Monroe collection holds more than 4,000 photographs, which Greene has spent decades restoring.

But it wasn't just the restoration project that got Greene into the business.

"I was also tired of doing photography," he said. "Photography was going digital, and my specialty was location photography. That was the first thing

that was getting cut on the budget. All the advertising and all the clients I had in food, home furnishings and architecture went digital. I looked at that reality and said, 'No, I'm not doing this.' If I'm going digital, I'm going to do it my way. I'm going to live in the country with a nice quiet place. I want to focus on what I do and run the company. I want to save photography instead of being a commercial

photographer anymore." But to restore the images, Greene had to jump head first into the digital world. The problem? He didn't know what he was doing.

"I'm really an old-fashioned photographer who has darkroom training," he said. "My background is printmaking. I can look at the picture and know what it needs, but I can't necessarily do it. The restoration is very time consuming, and I don't have the patience for it."

This is where the team at The Archives comes in — James Penrod, Shawn Penrod, Rob Welles and Stephen Jones.

The first part of the process is scanning the original photograph into The Archive's computer system, which is done by James.

The youngest of the group, James came with no formal education in computers or photography, which he views as a positive.

"I feel like my non-background in photography has aided me," he said. "I don't have my own ideas on how things are supposed to be or how I think things should be. 'By the book' doesn't always work. You have to figure out ways to get things from the screen to page."

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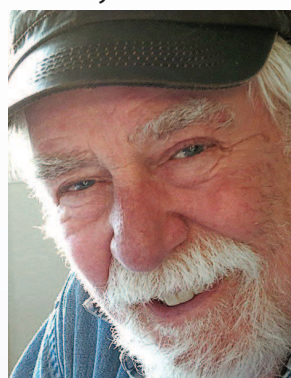
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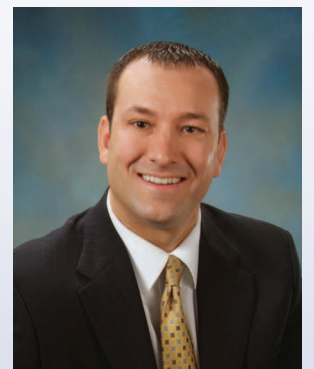
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