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28

NHS-CON2 COVERAGE INSIDE!!!

THE NIKON  JOURNAL



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EDITORIAL

Before getting to the main subject of NHS-Con2, a few words about the 28th issue of our Nikon Journal. You may notice that the paper used in the last few Journals seems a little thicker. This is because I have gone to an 80# weight from the former 70#. So far it has not increased postal rates and only adds about \$30 to each issue, but I think you will agree that it produces a better magazine. Besides the extensive coverage of the Convention you will find a detailed article on the RF Micro-Nikkor which is one of the major collectibles in the Nikon system. Also in this issue is, as far as I can determine, the first ever printed information about the virtually unknown black Nikkorex F. Danish member Per Kullenberg wrote the article and brought his camera with him to the Convention, where we all were able to examine it first-hand. Also in this issue is a review of a new book by member Paul Comon as well as the availability of a new limited production Nikon display item for the Nikon man who has everything. On page 15 is the address for obtaining the two books reviewed in NHS-27 that many have asked for plus the announcement of some new NHS jewelry items that may interest you. And now for the second "NHS" Convention.

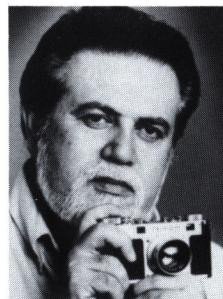
Members began arriving in Chicago Thursday evening with the first being some of our European contingent, namely Tony Hurst, Jaap Kortzen, Peter Lownds and Per Kullenberg. More continued to show up as Friday progressed so that my room, which served as the hospitality suite, was overflowing with Nikon collectors by the early evening. John Angle and I had planned to host an informal get-together on Friday evening, and as it worked out most of those who arrived by then managed to find their way to our room. John agreed to supply the food and I the drinks and snacks. Those who came to room 340 found a spread of meats, cheeses, breads, deserts and beverages of fine quality and ample proportions. Seated around a large dining table or scattered throughout the room, were members renewing old friendships and making new ones, as everyone got into the spirit conventions should foster. Countless conversations could be heard as well as questions being asked and answers being offered, as everyone talked of experiences, Nikons and collecting in general. As far as your editor could tell everyone had a good time Friday as all those present got to know each other. One comment that was made was that it felt good to finally attach a face to voice, as many had already dealt with each other in the past, but had never met in person. And isn't that one of the major advantages of a convention? If for no other reason come and make some new friendships and cement some old ones. In this respect NHS-Con2 as a great success. I would like to thank John Angle for all the effort and expense he went through to make Friday, and Saturday, nights so outstanding.

Events started promptly at 9am Saturday with your editor giving a short greeting followed by the first of four speakers who filled the morning session. John Baird again gave us a glimpse of his immense knowledge of the entire Japanese optical industry with emphasis on Nippon Kogaku. Fred Krughoff covered in great detail the intricacies involved in authenticating the black Nikon RFs and determining what is real and what isn't. This is an important aspect of collecting as prices rise and "fakes" begin to appear, as they have. I'm sure we all learned something new from Fred's presentation. Peter Lownds led a group discussion concerned with the changing world of collecting from a European point of view. Many voiced their opinions about where Nikon collecting has been, where it is now and where it is going. The final speaker was Bill Kraus with a slide presentation he called, "the far side of Nikon collecting." Bill surprised us all with a collection of slides on a myriad of subjects both closely aligned to Nikon, and others on the "fringe". It was great and everyone enjoyed it. In addition, Bill set up a video camera to record the entire meeting. I would like to thank all four speakers for taking the time and making the effort to insure a successful morning session!

Following a lunch break, the afternoon session started off with a surprise. Peter Lownds had once heard me remark that the very first Nikon RF item I had ever owned, an SP body that I had traded off years before, had turned up in Peter Braczko's German book "Nikon Faszination". After much effort he was able to obtain it and presented it to me! Now it is back where it started over 20 years ago! Peter also supplied an awesome number of hand-outs that he hand carried from Europe. Everyone was given a selection of various Nikon pins and patches, reproductions, ceramic tiles, and other memorabilia. You should have felt how heavy his suitcase was! I'm surprised they let it on the plane!

Tony Hurst produced a special commemorative poster for NHS-Con2, and in order to allow all those who could not attend to share at least a small part of the convention, I've reproduced it on the rear cover of this issue! Tony also served as official photographer and contributed most of the photos on the convention.

Without the help of those mentioned, as well as everyone who attended, NHS-Con2 would not have been such a success. I would like to thank each and everyone of you!



ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

Photo: Tony Hurst

THE "ORIGINAL" MICRO-NIKKOR!

by *ROBERT ROTOLONI*

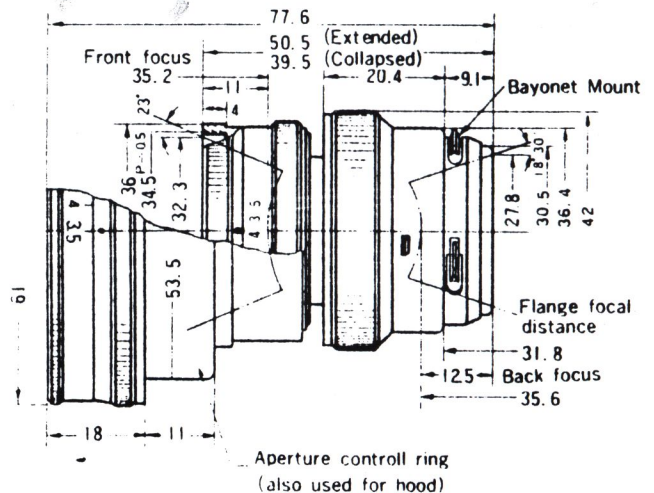
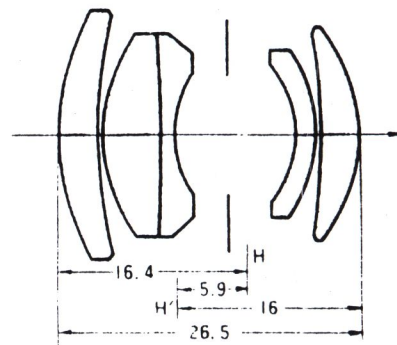
Based on its limited speed and "throwback" collapsible design, the 50mm/f3.5 Micro-Nikkor is one of the least likely candidates for the role of "landmark" or "milestone" member of the Nikon rangefinder series of lenses. Yet this minuscule and unassuming lens is one of the most sought after in the entire system! The reasons for this are really quite obvious once one takes a closer look at the design and production quantities of the Micro-Nikkor.

When it was first announced in October 1956 many wondered just where this new lens with its old-style mount and pedestrian f3.5 aperture fit into the scheme of things at Nikon. They had just the month before released their fastest wideangle, the 35mm/f1.8, and the super speed 50mm/f1.1 Nikkor had caused a sensation only 6 months before. In addition, their famous f1.4 Nikkor was one of the most sought after normals in 35mm photography and was outselling their slower f2.0 lens by a margin of over two-to-one. So what was the meaning of this diminutive f3.5 normal lens, and who needed it? And what about the price! At \$199.50 it cost \$50 more than the f1.4!?! Rather an unusual marketing strategy since this all occurred during the heyday of the "available light" era when every manufacturer was striving for more and more speed, and even the formal stalwart f2.0 lenses now seemed meant only for amateurs and bargain hunters. The 50mm Micro-Nikkor seemed a digressive design, until one looked at what it really represented.

Although it was promoted as an alternative to the other normal lenses for everyday photography, the Micro-Nikkor was a special purpose item destined for a low production run to supplement, and not replace, their normal lenses found in most users equipment bags. So what was the Micro-Nikkor's forte? Based on its design parameters it possessed an extremely high resolving power in excess of 100 lines per millimeter, which was beyond all films designed for normal use at that time! Only the special purpose microfilming material could take complete advantage of the ability of this lens to resolve detail! The major difference between the Micro-Nikkor and ordinary lenses lies in their standard reduction ratio. Other lenses are designed for objects at infinity whereas the Micro-Nikkor is designed for use under close reduction ratios. Therefore, other lenses may be fine for general photography, but their usefulness decreases for reproduction and close-up work. The Micro-Nikkor is designed for precise reproduction & possesses even image flatness. In addition, astigmatism is corrected to an extreme degree and variations due to changes in reduction ratios does not occur. The diameter of the front and rear lens groups are designed larger than required for the indicated aperture so the lens provides ample light transmission for extreme

evenness of illumination even out to the corners of the image. It also has a high level of color correction, assuring precise focus of all primary colors at the film plane. It is ideal for color work, microfilming, copying and general photography where ultra speed is not necessary.

The Micro-Nikkor is a modified Gauss type with 4 groups and 5 elements which reached maximum resolution at image reductions of 1:12. It was made only in a chrome mount, with no black version known to exist, and the mount was designed to collapse, a feature that had been almost universal on the pre-war Nikkors as well as most of the post-war normals up to mid 1950. So why revert to this antiquated barrel design? The reason has to do with the dual purpose nature of the Micro-Nikkor. At one and the same time it was promoted as a super high resolution normal lens for general photography, and as the perfect objective for extreme close-ups, microfilming and copying of



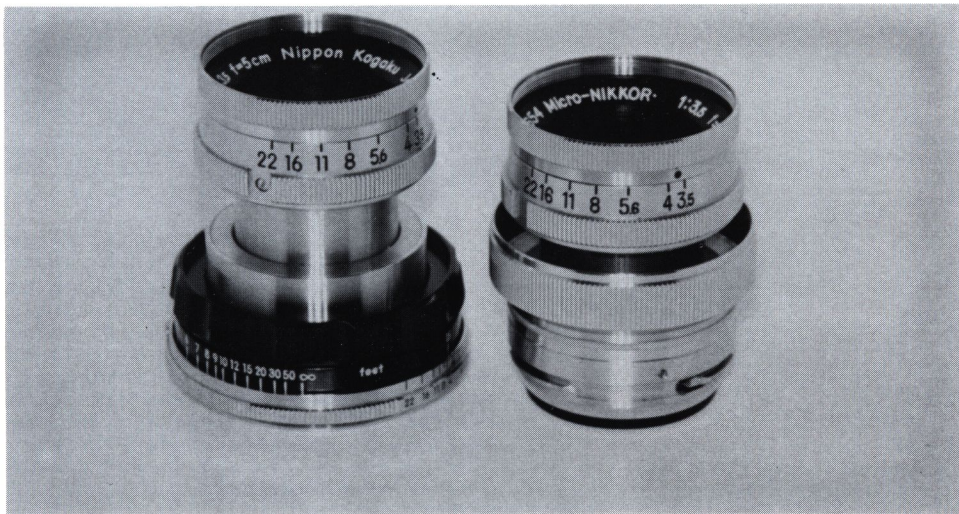


Some, but not all, Micro-Nikkors were packaged with the diaphragm collar, since it was listed as an option in the price sheets. This example came in a plain blue box whose only identification was on its bottom surface. The box is partitioned with room for the lens and its plastic bubble. However, the collar simply rested in its space with no protection of any kind. This example still has its original inspection card.

The two center photos illustrate the Micro-Nikkor in both the extended and collapsed positions. The lens was extended and locked in the time honored Leica method that had been quite common before the war and shortly after, but was fading by the time this lens was introduced. It was used for general photography down to 3 feet in the extended mode, and for close-up work on the copy stands in its collapsed position.

The bottom photo compares the screw mount version (left) and the bayonet type. Note that the screw mount lens is a much more massive item, and is also longer, due to the fact that the Leica-type bodies were thinner than the Nikon. In addition, the necessary focusing ring, finished in handsome black, results in two very different looking lenses, even though the optical units, including the entire front portion of both lenses, are identical. It is not known what percentage of total production was in screw mount, but it is rarer than those in Nikon bayonet.

R. Rotoloni



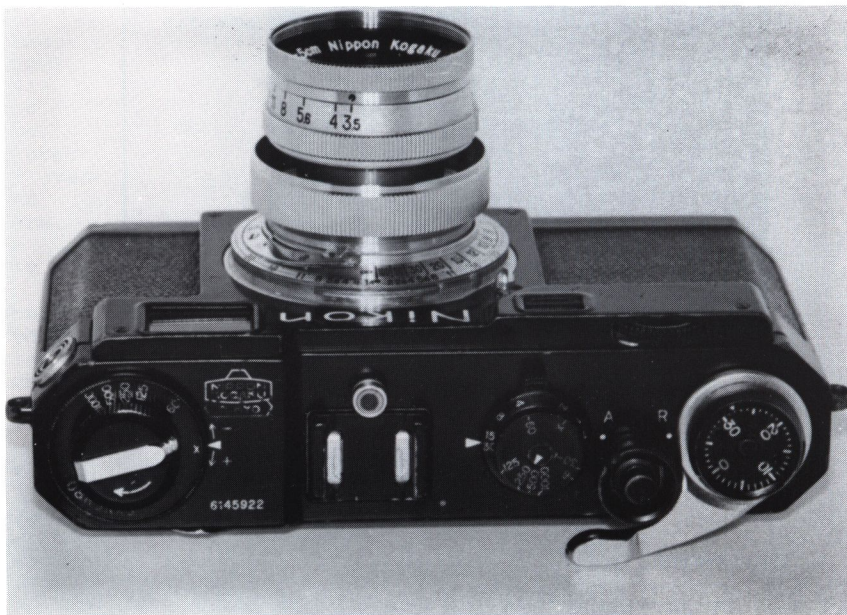


The recorded serial number range for the Micro-Nikkor is between #523001 and #524427, which suggests a run of approximately 1,500 units, with screw mount lenses intermixed. Since the optics are so recessed no shade was ever made, although the previously mentioned diaphragm collar could be so used if one wanted to double the size of the lens! (However, the small plastic shade designed for the screw mount 35/f3.5 & 2.5 lenses could be used and does fit!) It used 34.5mm accessories and plastic front and rear caps were made as well as a whole series of screw-in filters. It appears that no leather case was ever specific to this lens, although they were packed with a plastic case as illustrated here.

There may be two distinct versions of the Micro-Nikkor if one is not prototypical. The vast majority are engraved on the front rim, "Micro-Nikkor". However, in the original press release the illustrated lens is engraved as "Micro-R-Nikkor"! No lens has been verified with this "R" engraving and it may only have been used on the prototypes.

Today the Micro-Nikkor is one of the most sought after lenses in the Nikon rangefinder system. Because of its unique capabilities and design, as well as a rather low production run, it justly deserves such recognition. Add to this the rare and distinctive diaphragm collar and the Micro-Nikkor no longer seems so unassuming!

all types. Therefore, the two-position mount. Locked in the extended mode, the Micro-Nikkor coupled to the Nikon rangefinder and focused from infinity to the standard 3ft. minimum as did any other lens in the line. And many of these lenses were used in just this way, never to be utilized for extreme close-ups. Why? Because close-up photography using the Model S or P copy stands was NOT very common at the time, and this was how the Micro-Nikkor was designed to be used (We all know how hard the copy stands are to locate today. They were sold in very small numbers, so how many of these lenses were ever used in this method!). Thus the collapsible barrel, which was needed when using this lens on the copy stands. This allowed for reproduction ratios for the Type P stand between 1:1-1:4.6, and on the Type S between 1:1-1:5. However, besides having to invest in the Copy stand (and a reflex housing, which was the only way to make the entire set-up at all useful), an additional piece of gear was needed. Called the "diaphragm extension collar", it was needed to allow the user to change the lens diaphragm setting while in the collapsed mode! It sold for the astronomical price of \$8.50 (\$5.53 dealer cost!), yet was an option(!) and is extremely hard to locate today. At such a low price why not package one with every lens? Why would not every customer simply purchase one for future use? Because only a minority of users ever intended to use the Micro-Nikkor for extreme close-ups, and fewer still had the necessary equipment or skill during an era of non-TTL metering and antiquated electronic flash. In reality, Nippon Kogaku realized, correctly, that the Micro-Nikkor would be used predominantly as a super sharp normal lens. And it was! Although it never really hurt the sales of the faster normals, the very same optical formula was used four years later for the reflex version which is, to this day, one of Nikon's best and most popular lenses. In reality it started the trend to extremely corrected, close focusing lenses that almost every manufacturer makes today. So successful are such lenses that the Nikon line now includes three different focal length Micros...55mm/f2.8, 105mm/f2.8 and the 200mm/f4.0.



These two photos illustrate the Micro-Nikkor in its extended position, as it would be used for general photography. Locked in this mode it coupled to the Nikon rangefinder and focused down to the standard 3 feet, as did all the other normals in the line. It extends a bit further than the f2 and f1.4 Nikkors, but its lighter weight (4.7oz), and slimmer barrel make the lens appear less massive. For added compactness, the user could collapse the lens, allowing the entire rig to fit inside the standard everready case.

R. Rotoloni



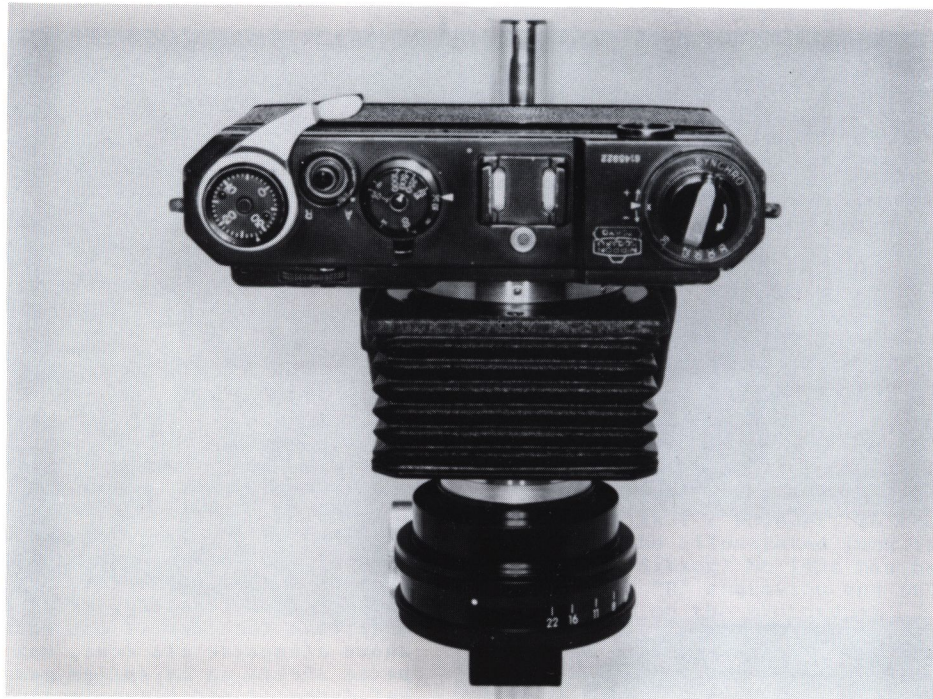
An interesting aspect of collecting the Micro-Nikkor is obtaining its major accessory, the elusive diaphragm collar. Here is an instance where, proportionally, an accessory is worth more than the item it was made for! The collar, shown alongside its lens, was listed in Nikon price sheets as an option and sold for \$8.50, yet today it fetches as much as 30 times that figure! Compare this with the lens, which is generally worth in the area of 8 times its original price in today's market.

The diaphragm collar could conceivably be used as a lens shade, but what a monster that could create! The photo on the left illustrates just how massive and ungainly such a combination is resulting in an item over twice as long as the lens by itself.

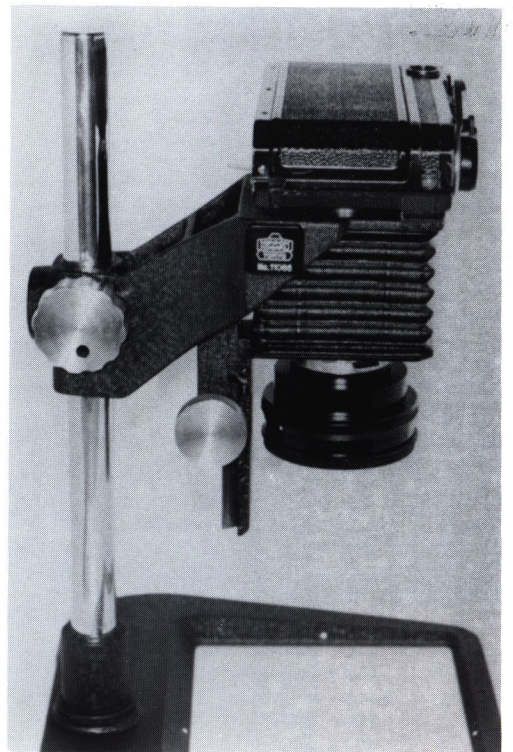
It appears that far fewer collars were made than were lenses (unless an extremely large percentage of collars have disappeared off the face of the planet!), as a great many lenses have been collected minus the collar. It has always been one of the rarer pieces, but now it appears that at least two versions were made! In the bottom photo can be seen two different collars. The one on the left has an additional ring at the front that is missing on the right example. There is no way this second ring can be added to the right collar and its purpose is not known. So now we have two collars to look for!

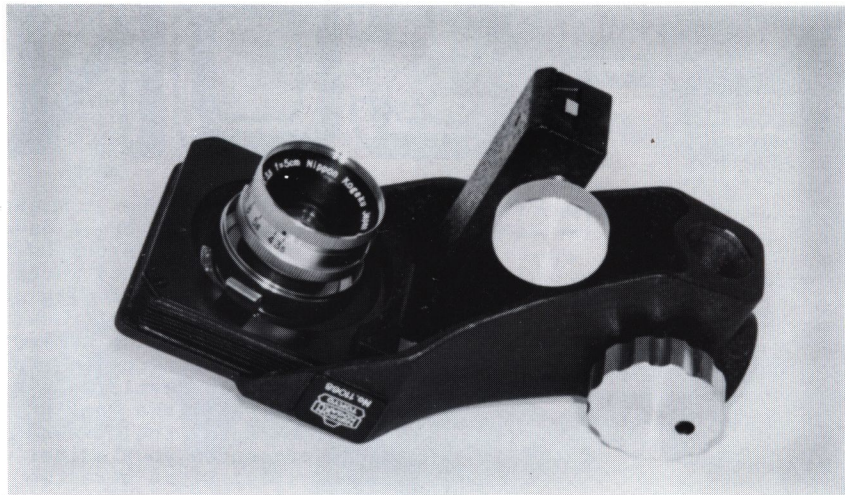
R. Rotoloni





Three views of the Micro-Nikkor mounted the "SA" type copy stand. When used on the copy stands, the lens would be mounted in its collapsed position and the optional diaphragm collar was now a necessity, allowing the user to easily adjust the diaphragm settings. (For illustrative purposes I have not included the reflex housing in these photos, since it would have made the resultant images of the Micro-Nikkor too small. In actual use the housing would be used.)





Top photo..A detailed view of the Micro-Nikkor mounted on the "SA" copy stand bracket with the collar removed to better illustrate how the lens is mounted. The small metal tab at 9 o'clock is the lens mounting lock.
 Right photo...Two versions of the plastic front cap were made. They measured 34.5mm and both were of the snap-on type. The earlier version, mounted on the bayonet lens, has the Nippon Kogaku logo, while the later type has the word "Nikkor".



Bottom photo...The RF Micro-Nikkor is the progenitor of the entire line of Micro lenses marketed by Nikon to this very day. It is one of the most successful and influential series of optics ever made by Nikon, and a group of lenses that played a large part in building and maintaining their world famous optical reputation. It's immediate successor (they were actually made concurrently for a few years) was the first version made for the Nikon F reflex. I am not talking about the Auto-Micro-Nikkor that nearly everyone on the planet has heard of, but the original preset lens introduced in 1960. Pictured here are the RF version and the preset reflex version for comparison. Because of a vast difference in focusing design, and capability, the reflex lens appears to be totally unrelated. In actuality their optical formulas were identical and only the barrels were different. I hope to eventually do a detailed article on the preset Micro where its unique features will be showcased.
 R.Rotoloni

NHS-CON2!

On the following pages are as many photos of NHS-Con2 that I could possibly fit into the available space! Thanks to Tony Hurst, who was our "official" photographer and the source for most of these shots, as well as Mike Symons & Peter Lownds, a very extensive record was made of our meeting. I wish I could run more, but I am out of room!! Tony also produced a truly exquisite full collar photographic poster for NHS-Con2 that was given to those who attended. I have reproduced it on the back cover of this issue so all can see what it looked like! It was Tony's idea, and a marvelous one at that! Four members contributed a series of fine presentations that filled the morning session. John Baird covered the history of the Japanese optical industry going back to its beginnings as well as some interesting Nikon items. Fred Krughoff enlightened everyone with words and slides on the fine points of identifying and authenticating the black Nikons, which is quite important as refinished and fake samples are reaching the marketplace. Peter Lownds led a discussion of the changing collecting scene in Europe with emphasis on Nikon. This led to a very spirited exchange about how the market

has changed and where it might be going. Charter member Bill Kraus gave a very entertaining slide show he coined "the Far Side of Nikon". Bill documented countless items on the "fringe" from Nikon jewelry and promo items through all types of off-beat items close to the heart of any Nikon collector, to say nothing of the interesting "scenic" photos interspersed to develop "atmosphere"! Bill also video taped the Convention.

Also during the morning session Peter Lownds presented your editor with a special set of gifts. First were two brushed aluminum reproductions of the covers of the current NHS-27 and NHS-19 which was current at the time of NHS-Con1 two years before! Next he magically produced an SP body that I had not seen in over 15 years, but remembered very well. I once owned it and it actually was the very first Nikon RF item I ever bought! It was pictured in Peter Braczko's book (how things get around!), and Peter used his influence with Mr. Braczko to obtain it for me. Thank you is not enough!.... but I extend it to all who helped and attended NHS-Con2! It could not have come off without each of you!

Peter Lownds "decorating" the Convention room prior to the start of the meeting. Multiple copies of the current NHS-27 as well as photos

from the Jun Miki article filled much of one wall of the meeting room. This was just part of what Peter contributed to the whole affair!





THANKS FOR COMING.....JOHN ANGLE, BILL ADAMS,
JOHN BAIRD, CHUCK BARRETT, JIM BERGLUND, SAM
DECKER, PETER DECHERT, CHARLES DUCKWORTH.....



THANKS FOR COMING.....MARK GEHLAR, ALLAN
GLENWRIGHT, JOHN HANSEN, BOB HARRIS, RANDOL
HOOPER, TONY HURST, JAAP KORTEN, BILL KRAUS....

Top photo-Fred Krughoff gave a well documented and illustrated talk on determining the authenticity of the black Nikon rangefinder cameras. Fred explained in great detail what to look for when examining the black cameras, and how to spot fakes and refinished examples.

Left to Right-John Angle, John Baird and Mike Symons in the midst of a deep discussion of some sort! It is hard to tell just what they are talking about, but maybe John Angle will someday enlighten me as to just what he has in his hand!! Well John...is it rare???



THANKS FOR COMING.....FRED FRUGHOFF, PER
KULLENBERG, PETER LOWNDS, JIM MARTIN, CY
MEYER, MIKE OTTO, JERRY ROLD, DAVE SADOWSKI....

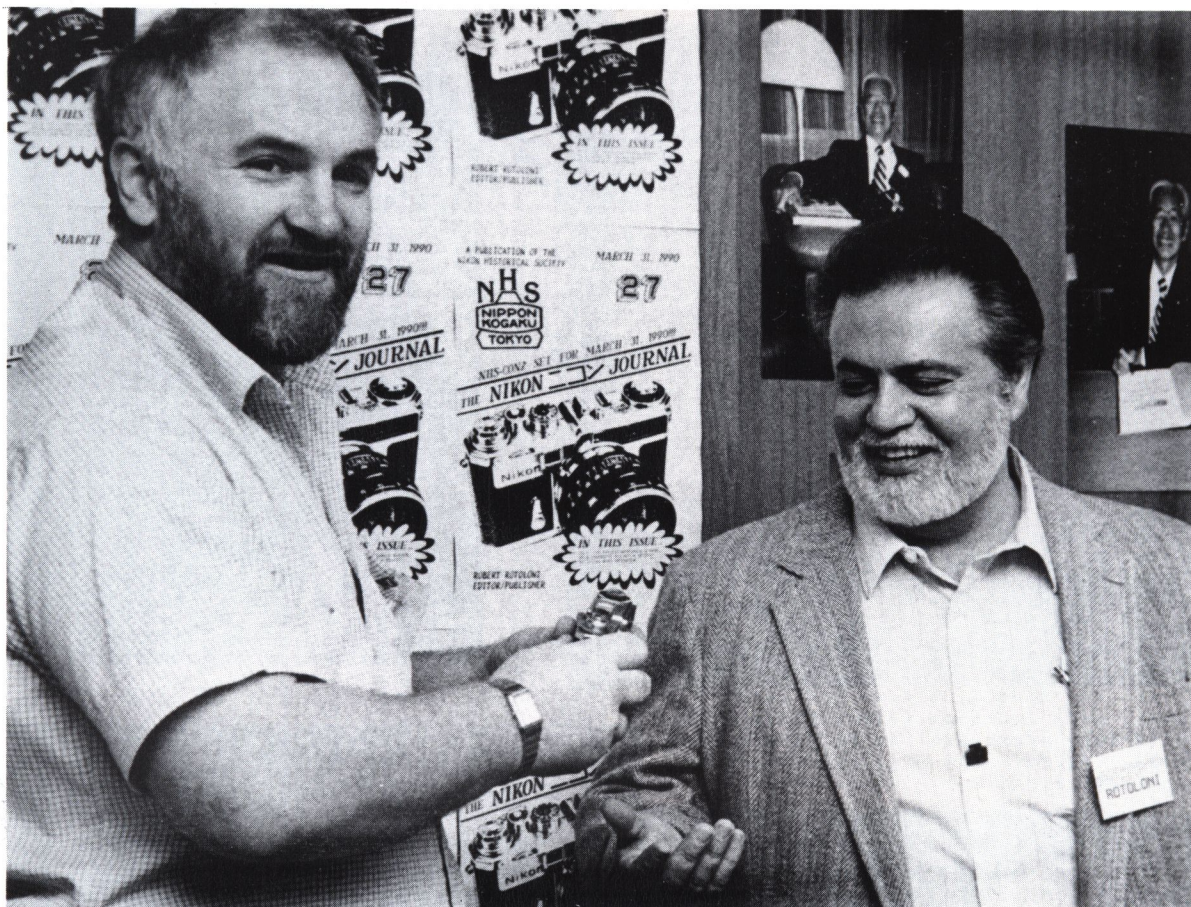


THANKS FOR COMING.....DON SELLERS, CHUCK
SKIBO, HARRY SOLETSKY, MIKE SYMONS, DAVE
WEILLER, RAY YOUNG.....

Top photo-Veteran Nikon collector from way back, Bill Kraus, giving the "thumbs up" to a successful Convention. Bill finished up the morning session with a great slide show about the "Far Side of Nikon Collecting" that really opened everyone's eyes! Nice shots, Bill!!

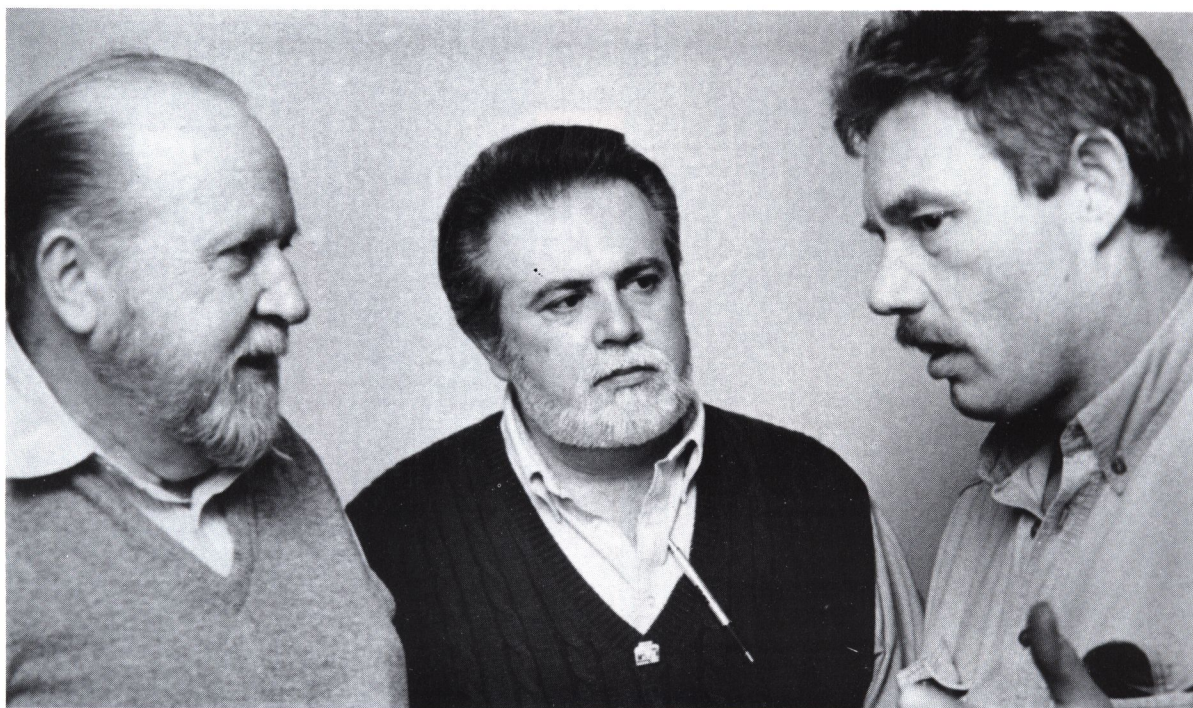
Peter Lownds before many of his wall hangings. Note the special NHS-Con2 poster provided by Tony Hurst on Peter's left. In his hand is a special SP that he hand carried from Germany and presented to your editor as a gift! Why? Because it once belonged to me.....!!





Top photo-Peter presenting me with the SP body that started it all for me over 20 years ago! I bought this very same camera in Des Moines Iowa in 1968 as my very first RF item! Traded away a few years later, it showed up in Peter Braczko's Nikon book and, with the help of Peter Lownds, it is now back home again!!

Left to Right-Peter Dechert, Robert Rotoloni and Per Kullenberg talking Nikons (or was it Canons?). Peter again made the trip from Santa Fe and Per Kullenberg came all the way from Denmark! For Per it was not only his first Convention, but also his first trip to the United States!



From Mike Symons...

Bob, just a short note to thank you very much for another job well done. I thought this Convention went smoother than the first one. I suppose this is natural, and I also think they will continue to get even better. Probably the one downside (if there is one) is the number of people attending. I thought that perhaps there would be more...say about 50, but that wasn't the case. We will probably continue to see the same interested faces there for each Convention (with a few new ones thrown in along the way), but that's OK with me! Thanks also for the fun time in the hospitality room on Friday night.

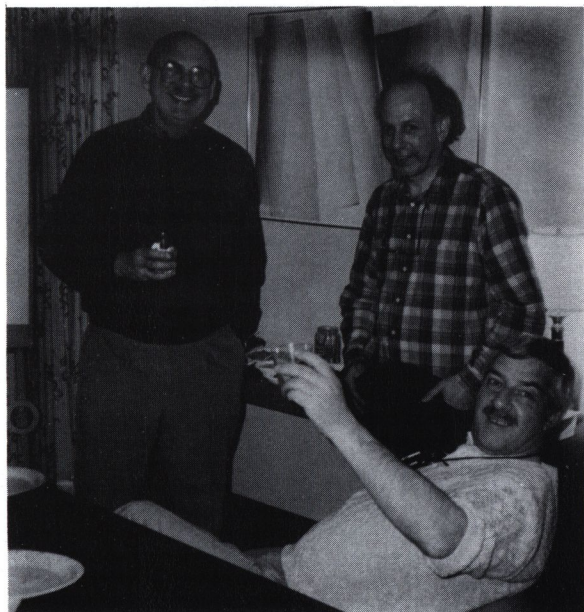
Here are some shots of the Convention. Perhaps you can use some for the Journal. NHS-27 was great. I read it cover to cover on the flight home.

From Bob Harris...

I really did enjoy the Convention. You did an excellent job of planning, organizing and conducting the entire operation and the fellows selected for the speakers all did a fine job. I would like to see the Convention made an annual event but.....?

John Angle brought his Nikon I outfit for the show n' tell session. It is a complete outfit including all the lenses, shades and finder! Peter Dechert with two 55mm/f1.2 Nikkors whose use we could only speculate on. Peter presented one to your editor as a gift and it is now part of my collection.



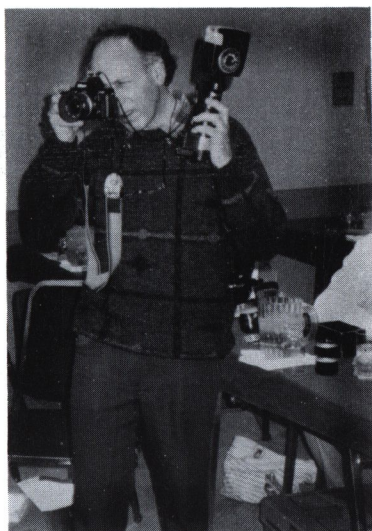
CHEERS!!

From Peter Lownds...

Had a great time at NHS-Con2 and well worth the trip, as was the first Convention 2 years ago. Looking forward to #3 in 1992! Why not have it in Tokyo? 1992 will mark the 75th anniversary of the founding of Nippon Kogaku, and an appropriate excuse to celebrate it in the "land of Nikon". Lets here from the members...how many would like to get together in Tokyo in the spring of 1992!:



Clockwise from upper left-Mike Symons toasting Bill Adams (l) and Tony Hurst. Peter Lownds, Per Kullenberg & Jaap Korten, three of our European members, discussing an interesting computer Per had brought with him. Cy Meyer behind his very well stocked table during the Sunday show. Official photographer Tony Hurst doing his thing! Baird, Symons & Angle Friday evening in the hospitality room where everyone enjoyed good food, drink and friendship (and did some awesome buying/trading as well!!!).





Counter-clockwise from upper right-Bob Harris (left) & Don Sellers wheeling and dealing! Kullenberg, Symons & Hurst at the Sunday show. Rotoloni, Lownds, Baird & Kullenberg on Sunday during the Chicago Collector's Show. Ah, the end to a very long day!!!! Tell me Peter, are you dreaming about a Nikon I, or home? The parting shot...Monday morning and its time to go back to work. Those still remaining see me off, but first one last shot with that license plate! See all of you the next time!!



THE
HISTORY OF THE
JAPANESE CAMERA
MONOGRAPH COLLECTION

NIPPON KOGAKU
AND
THE NIKON CAMERA

— ROBERT —
ROTONI

HCP
HISTORICAL CAMERA PUBLICATIONS



NEW "N.H.S." PRODUCTS!

Those of you who attended the Convention may have noticed that Peter Lownds and I were wearing a special NHS lapel pin. At that time they were the only two examples in existence, and many of you asked how to obtain them. Well Peter and I were in the process of having some of those pins, as well as cuff links and a tie clasp, made up for sale to Society members in an effort to offset some of the costs of producing the Journal. Unfortunately, they were not ready in time for the Convention, but they are now! Peter had these made up in Holland, & Tony Hurst has supplied me with a superb shot of the entire set. Consisting of a black and silver rendition of a Nikon SP and our Society name, they are a unique group that will only be available to Society members. They are available for immediate shipment and all orders should be sent to my post office box. Prices are as follows..

Tie Clasp & Cuff Link Set.....\$15 ppd in US.
Lapel pin.....\$5 ppd in US.
Airmailshipment to Europe and the Pacific please add \$3 per order.

Please support this project which, if successful, could lead to other unique "NHS" products for the collector. It will help us defray some Society expenses plus you will own something only NHS members can obtain that in itself could very well be collectible someday!

In addition I have had printed up a reproduction of the Nikon SP repair manual! Over the years many people have asked for such an item. They are available for \$10 ppd in the US and \$12 overseas. Copies of my monograph on the history of Nikon are also still available.

PLEASE NOTE!!

In response to many calls and letters concerning the availability of the NIKON and CANON books that were reviewed in NHS-27, I now have the information. I did not receive the following in time for it to be included in NHS-27, for which I apologize. However, I felt that the reviews themselves could, and should, not wait until this issue, and that ordering information would follow in time for NHS-28. Member Akito Tamla was kind enough to supply me with the following details.

Dear Bob,

A new Nikon book was released by Dr. Kuno entitled "NIKON---A World of Nikon RF Models". We of the Nikon Club Japan would like to advertise it in your Nikon Journal. It is available for \$40.00 US, including airmail postage, from:
Katsumi-do Camera Shop
Chuo-ku, Ginza 5-9-1
Tokyo 104 Japan
Phone...03-571-0468
Fax.....03-575-4808

Payment can be made by International Money Order, bank draft, or personal checks can be acceptable. Katsumi-so camera shop also sells the CANON book by Ueyama-san for the same price. An English edition of the Canon book is planned for the near future, but not for the Nikon book?!?!

(I hope those of you interested in either book will take the opportunity to order. They are worth the price. RJR)

THE F-SPOT!!

THE BLACK NIKKOREX "F"!?

by PER KULLENBERG

The following article and photographs are the work of Danish member Per Kullenberg. Per was able to attend the Convention and was kind enough to have actually carried his prized black Nikkorex F to Chicago to share with the members. Needless to say it was one of the hits of the weekend and proved to be a real conversation piece. Your editor spent a great deal of time examining this never before documented Nikon. Along with this personal inspection is the information in this article, which documents the existence of a batch of these unique Nikons, and leads one to the conclusion that the black Nikkorex is a genuine variation to be actively sought after. Good luck!

I would like to thank Per Kullenberg for sharing this information with us. Articles such as this is what the Journal is all about!

An almost unknown Nikon variation is described in this article. The camera is the Nikkorex F in black paint finish! The reason why most collectors do not know of it is that it was probably only exported to and sold in Denmark and Sweden. So far to my knowledge only 5 such cameras have been seen and all have been found in Denmark and Sweden. I only have the serial numbers for 4 of the cameras and they are...

377020

377076

377081

377139

The earliest serial number, 377020, is mine and was found in a shop in Copenhagen. The other 3 numbers have all been reported to me from Sweden. One or two more have been seen, but no serial numbers are known.

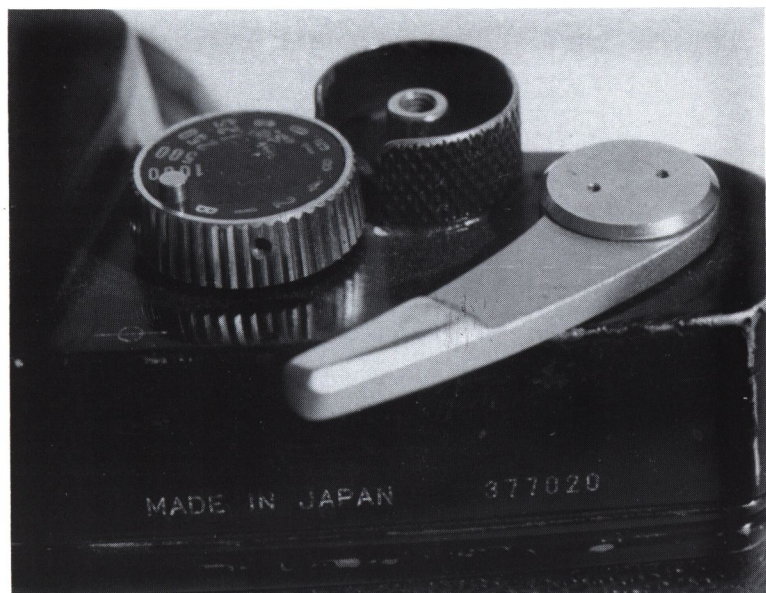
The 4 known serial numbers clearly point to a batch of black Nikkorex F bodies as the numbers suggest a pattern. It is possible that the first such camera bore the serial number 377001, and that the batch could have gone as high as 377150-200 for a run of 150-200 units. At least 139 may have been made, which is suggested by the last number in our list. If less than 200 of the black Nikkorex F cameras were made then it is really one of the rarer members of the Nikon family.

There doesn't appear to be any structural differences between the chrome and black cameras. However, my camera, which is illustrated here, has a guard around the shutter release. It is very hard to tell if it was added by Nikon on special order, or if someone had it done at a later date.

I would have liked to give more information but the Danish Nikon importer really can't tell me anything about the black Nikkorex. In Sweden, however, there was once an ad in a photographic magazine where a black Nikkorex F was shown, and that could lead to the possibility that they were made available to the general public.

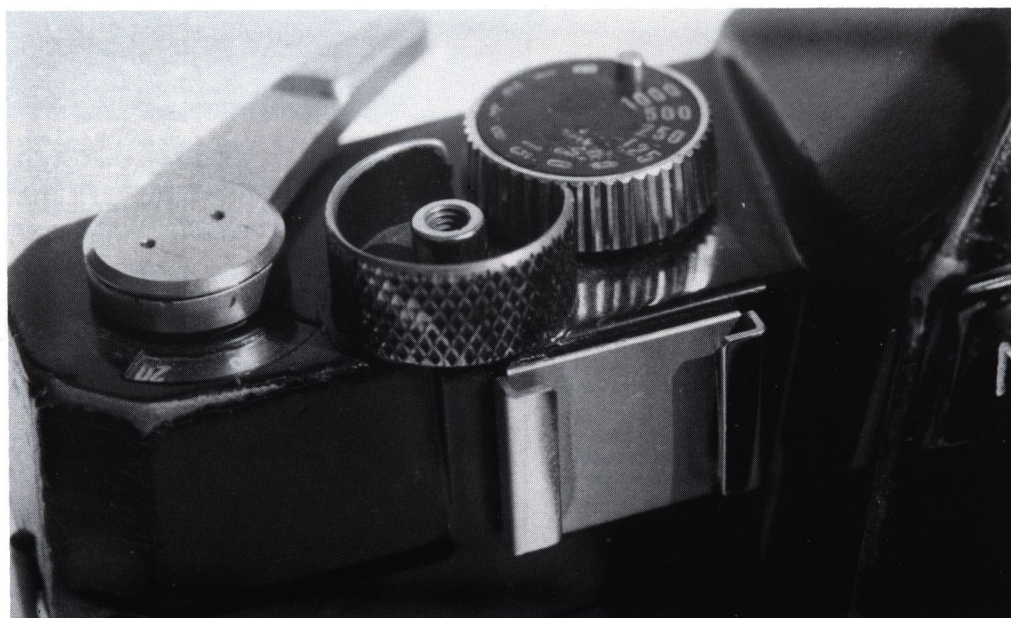
One thing that the Nikon Historical Society members could do would be to look for chrome Nikkorex F bodies with numbers between 377001-377200, as well as more examples of the black cameras. So to all you Nikon collectors--open your eyes for the "new rare Nikon!"





On this, and the preceding page, are four photos of the very unusual black Nikkorex F belonging to member Per Kullenberg. Rumors of such a camera have been in circulation for a few years, but verification is only now being presented here in the pages of the Nikon Journal. One interesting point was that every time this variation was mentioned, it always seemed to come from someone in Europe. Based on Per's article and the information he has collected, it now appears probable that this unusual variation was meant for only the European market, and specifically, Scandinavia. Note that in the two close-ups of the shutter release the only obvious external difference between this black camera and the chrome type can be seen as the protective collar, which could have been added at a later date. In all other respects it appears identical.

Per Kullenberg



IN THE SHADOW OF FUJI..

TALES OF NIPPON KOGAKU!!

BY JOHN BAIRD

You people have to agree that NHS-Con2 was successful in every respect. I had the chance to see some folk that I haven't seen since the last Convention, looked at some great pieces of brass and glass, and heard some new...and a few old...stories. But anyway...fun was had by all who were there.

It was Robert's and my intention to have a monograph ready for the Convention, but problems with type-setters and printers put us back a notch. Hopefully, if everything falls into place, "THE JAPANESE CAMERA", published by Historical Camera Publications, will be out by this fall....packed with bits and pieces of lore and lies about Nippon Kogaku and other Japanese camera and lens makers. In order to preview this monograph and answer a couple of questions that came up at the Convention, I have decided to print a small section from the monograph concerning Nippon Kogaku's war time activities.

During 1941-42 the war in Europe reduced Germany's industrial output pertaining to optical glass. It would appear that Nippon Kogaku expected the war to worsen this situation...thus the company began to look for an additional building site near Tokyo. It was the company's intention to construct a new glass making plant with a capacity equal to that of the main Ohi factory. To this end, in 1943 Nippon Kogaku was able to secure the mining rights in Fukushima Prefecture for natural flint used in the production of fine optical glass. This acquisition, along with subsequent improvements in Nippon Kogaku's manufacturing abilities, made it possible to supply, in limited quantities, a few advanced types of optical glass that had here-to-fore been imported from Germany. Still the Japanese

Navy requested more and more from Nippon Kogaku, forcing a continued dependence on German made glass, and increased efforts for more domestic supplies. Unlike other Japanese optical manufacturers, Nippon Kogaku, through its connections with the Imperial Japanese Navy, apparently continued to import glass materials from Schott during the late war years (1943-44) for large aperture optical ordnance. Presumably the Japanese military required sophisticated binocular telescopes for critical long distance observations in order to offset the Japanese laggardness in developing radar systems, as best illustrated by Gen. James Doolittle's "Shangri-La" surprise first air bombing of Tokyo in April '42.

By 1944 glass production peaked at Nippon Kogaku with a total of 38 different types of optical glass. The company's new glass factory was completed in early 1945, but by this time Japan was losing the war. The combination of the lack of materials and air raids reduced glass production by one-third. Nevertheless, by the end of the war in August 1945, Nippon Kogaku had produced nearly 1,700 tons of optical glass!

It is interesting to note that in 1943 and 1944, optical glass for special projects was brought to Japan by submarine. To avoid detection and possible destruction by the Allies if transported by surface ship.... blocks of German-made optical glass were placed into rubber boats and towed to the Orient by submarines! In Japan the glass was retrieved and sent to the glass manufacturing shops at Nippon Kogaku. It has been reported that this glass was used in lens systems for X-ray equipment at the Imperial Navy's base at Yokouka, near Tokyo.

NEW "NIKON DATA"

Yet another NHS member has joined the ranks of published authors. Paul Comon, along with Art Evans, who wrote the fine Rollieflex book, have collaborated on a rather unique item called "NIKON DATA", which was just shipped the mid part of May. It is an 8.5 x 11 softcover, 150 page book that approaches our favorite subject from a slightly different direction than anything I have seen before. Encompassing the entire body of Nikon photographic production from the Nikon I through the F4, it also contains bits of historical information going back to the founding of N-K & the rangefinder era (for which this author was pleased to have been asked to contribute), as well as reams of practical information that the everyday user of Nikons has probably never seen between two covers! As the name implies, this book is a source of "data" about the immense body of photographic equipment produced by Nikon. The surprising range of "data" includes everything from the extremely practical & useful, to the esoteric and offbeat (did you ever wonder what battery a Nikon ELW used and what its code number from 7 different makers was?), to the types of things one would never think of until the need arose (such as the address & phone number of every Nikon factory, importer, distributor and repair facility in the world!), to inside dealer information such as what are "repacks" and unauthorized importation!

Much of the information is culled from official Nikon literature, some of which was made available only to dealers, which is what Paul Comon has been for years. What he and Mr. Evans have done is take this vast amount of printed information, most of which has to do with the reflex system, condensed and organized it, and presented it in a way that puts it all at ones' fingertips, for rapid referral. I have to admit that some of the subjects covered would have slipped my mind but are now readily available between the covers of this book. Also there are a great many things included that one would have trouble finding, such as the listing of all those addresses and phone numbers!

The authors have made good use of many fine original Nikon photos, drawings & charts as well as original advertising copy going back to the rangefinder era. As a company, Nikon has, for the most part, always produced a massive amount of very useful and intelligent literature on their products. Putting some of it together like this makes for a very handy and useful reference that every Nikon user, and collector, should own.

It is available at this time directly from the authors for \$22.00 ppd (CA residents add \$1.35 tax) and may be purchased by check, money order or VISA/MC/DISCOVER. Foreign buyers should write for shipping costs. Address all orders to: PHOTO DATA RESEARCH, 627 SOUTH IRENA ST., REDONDO BEACH, CA 90277. FAX number is 213-540-2607 or phone 213-540-8068.

THE HISTORY OF Nikon CAMERAS



1948 Nikon I



1950 Nikon M



1951 Nikon S



1954 Nikon S2



1957 Nikon SP



1958 Nikon S3



1959 Nikon F

1971 Nikon F2
Photomic

1980 Nikon F3



1988 Nikon F4

Nikon

FOR THE NIKON-MAN WHO HAS EVERYTHING...

The photo above illustrates a new display item that has recently been released by Nippon Kogaku in Japan. It is called the "History of Nikon Cameras" with representations of ten of the most important Nikon models ranging from the Nikon I through the Nikon F4. Made for the Japanese market, they can be obtained by the Nikon collector who has everything. How? By contacting NHS member Gray Levett. Here's how.

Dear Bob,

Enclosed is a photograph of the "History of Nikon Cameras" I mentioned in my previous letter. As stated, according to my contacts in the Far East, Nikon Japan made up 1,000 for

sale in Japan only. I directly imported them into the UK from my buyer. It is approximately 9in x 11in, framed and glass fronted, with each camera silver plated and mounted on a black velvet backing. It is supplied with two hooks and a cord for wall hanging. Nikon UK had no knowledge of these until their area manager visited our store recently, so it appears that there are no plans within Nikon to distribute them outside of Japan.

They are available for 200 pounds plus shipping from.....Grays of Westminster, 40 Churton St., Pimlico, London SW1V 2LP, England. Tel. (071)828-4925..FAX. (071)976-5783. (Photograph by Jose King)

CLASSIFIED

FOR SALE...Nikkor-P 105/f2.5 w/original case, no shade, #9240xx..\$195. Nikkor-Q 135/f3.5 w/shade #2747xx..\$85. David Miller, 5384 Jeanne-Mance, Montreal, Que., Canada H2V 4K4 Tel. (514) 274-1468.

FOR SALE...Last chance to acquire a wonderful & extensive collection of those famous Nikon RF ads from the 1950s & 60s reproduced life-size as they appeared in such magazines as Popular & Modern Photography. Includes Bob Schwalberg's famous review of the "new" Nikon S2!..\$7 ppd! Wes Taft, P.O.Box 2072, Gearhart, OR 97138. Tel. (501)738-8484.

WANTED...Nikon pistol Grip with the built-in microswitch for use with the Nikon F w/F36 motor and battery pack. Should be working or at least repairable-cosmetics don't matter. If you have one or know someone who does, please call or write! Donald J. Statt, 10 Tobey Village Office Park, Pittsford, NY 14534. Tel. (716)383-8242, 9-5 EST.

WANTED...Clean Nikon rangefinder. I'll pay 25% more than McKeown's Price Book. Write or phone Peter Lownds, W. de Zwijgerstraat 24, Rotterdam 3043 VD, Holland. Tel. (010)4159136.

WANTED...Nikon S2 before #6135721; 135/f3.5 blk/chr new in box; 105mm and 85mm brite-line finders; 85/f2.0. Write to: Fred Jansz, P.O. Box 252, 3700 AG Zeist, The Netherlands. Tel. (011)31340461431.

WANTED...Nikon RF; F2 series (F2A, F2AS, F2T, F2 High Speed, F2AS Data, special editions, dummy models wanted. Also want Nikon F & F2 sales manuals, brochures, books wanted for cash. Contact; Grays of Westminster, 40 Churton Street, London SW1V 2LP England. Tel. (01)828-4925 & 828-3218. Fax-(01)976-5783

FOR SALE/TRADE...85/2.0 Nikkor, MIOJ, rear cap, case, EX+; 135/4.0 Nikkor-Q Bellows lens number 578992, cap, bottom bubble case, Mint-; 135/3.5 Nikkor, chrome, caps, cs, EX+/Mint-; 8.5cm chrome optical finder, cs, EX+; 3.5cm chrome finder, cs, EX+/Mint-; boxed BCB-IV flash Mint-; some other Nikon RF items.

WANTED...Black Variframe finders, types 7 & 9, EX+ or better; Microflex type 1 or 2; Copy outfits (S, SA, or P, complete); original Nikon RF or early F literature. I have some duplicates to trade. Mike Symons, 3844 Merriman Drive, Victoria, B.C., Canada, V8P 2S9-(604)477-1867.

OF INTEREST!

For those of you with plans to attend the next Photokina in Cologne Germany the first part of October, I have some news for you. The Society just received notice that there will be a special auction of classic & collectible photographica in Cologne on October 5th. It is presented by "Auction Team Koln (Cologne)" and is open to the public. They are presently in search of equipment to offer for sale for those wishing to sell. There will also be a catalog with photos of all items offered at the sale. The catalog is available for \$22 US and can be purchased with your Mastercard. The price includes airmail postage. Those of you wishing more information about the sale and catalog can write to.....Auction Team Koln, Postfach 50 11 68, D-5000, Cologne 50, West Germany. Fax 02 21/37 48 78.

NEW MEMBERS

CHUCK BARRETT
168 THORNTON AVE.
LONDON, ONTARIO,
CANADA N5Y 2Y8

JOSEPH CURCIO
518 PEACE ST.
HAZLETON, PA 18201

CHARLES DUCKWORTH
SIERRA CAMERA & PHOTOGRAPHY
10350 MOUNTAIN DEW CIRCLE
RENO, NV 89523

JOHN L. GOMPFF, JR.
116 WALNUT ST.
NORTH PLAINFIELD, NJ 07060

DICK HESTER
2400 McCUE #73
HOUSTON, TEXAS 77056

LAU JORGENSEN
VODROFFSVEJ 5
1900 FREDERIKSBERG C.
DENMARK

WOLFGANG KUSTER
IN DER WEHRHECKE 6
D-5300 BONN 1-ROTTGEN
WEST GERMANY

ROGER REINKE
5 WHITE OAK HILL
WEAVERVILLE, NC 28787

KAZUO SATODA
1-9-1006 YANAGI-BASHI 2 CHOME
TAITO-ku
TOKYO 111, JAPAN

DONALD STATT, JR.
10 TOBEY VILLAGE OFFICE PARK
PITTSFORD, NY 14534

HARRY SCHMUEL
6301 N. SHERIDAN RD., #17R
CHICAGO, IL 60660

DIETMAR H. MACHOLD
c/o GEIGENBAU MACHOLD GMBH.
AUSSER DER SCHLEIFMUEHLE 46
D-2800, BREMEN, WEST GERMANY

NEW ADDRESSES!!!

EUROPEAN SOC. FOR THE
HISTORY OF PHOTOGRAPHY
ACORN HOUSE
74-94 CHERRY ORCHARD RD.
CROYDON, ENGLAND CR0 6BA

GRAY LEVETT
GRAYS OF WESTMINSTER
40 CHURTON ST., PIMLICO,
LONDON SW1V 2LP, ENGLAND

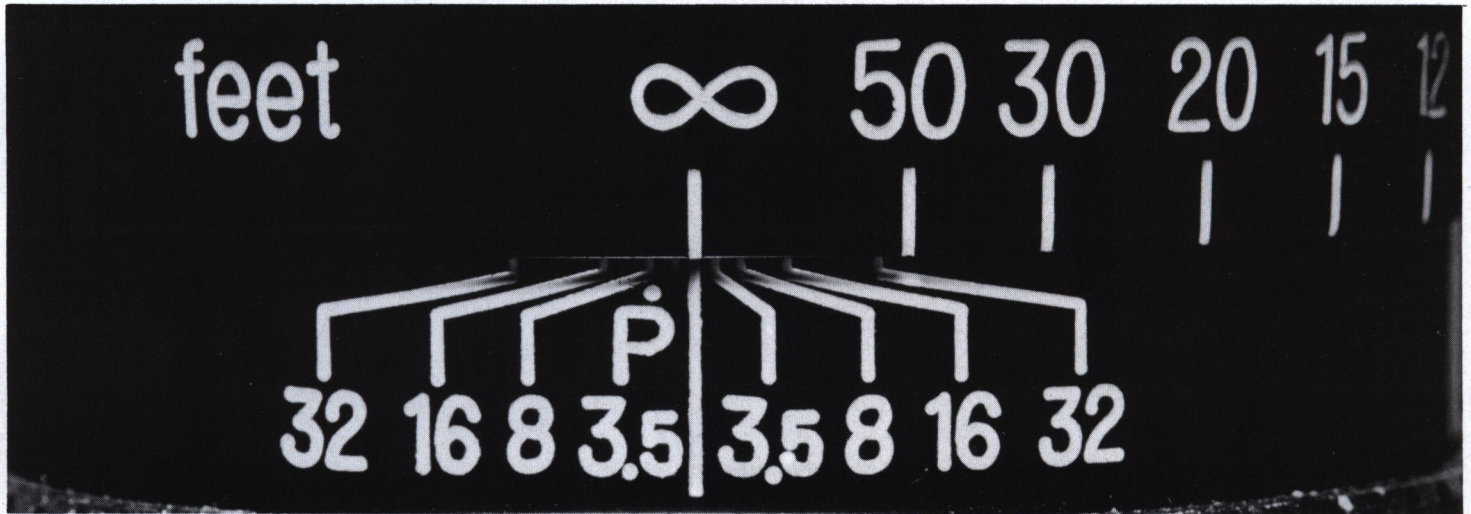
DON SELLERS
32 LEISURE LANE
WOODLAND PARK, CO 80863

BOB THOMPSON
30 PAW PAW HOLLOW LN.
LEONARDTOWN, MD 20650

odds 'n ends

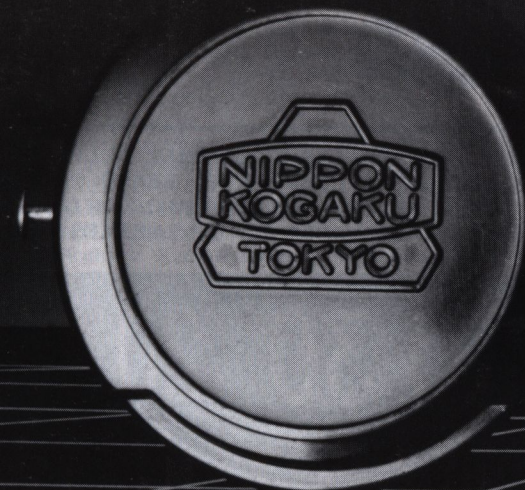
THIS "ODDS N' ENDS" PAGE WILL BE RESERVED IN ALL FUTURE ISSUES OF "THE NIKON JOURNAL" AS A SHOWCASE FOR THE RARE, THE UNUSUAL & OFFBEAT, OR JUST THE OUT OF THE ORDINARY! IF YOU FEEL

THAT YOU POSSESS AN ITEM THAT FULFILLS THESE CRITERIA, PLEASE SEND ME AT LEAST TWO OR MORE VARIOUS VIEWS OF YOUR ODDITY ALONG WITH ANY INFORMATION THAT WOULD BE OF INTEREST. THANKS!



NIKON "ERRORS"

Member David Miller from Canada sent in a photo of a misengraved 135mm/f3.5 Nikkor. It is a later black barrel version with a very subtle error that could easily be missed and just as easily have occurred in the first case. Note that the infrared "R" index has been misengraved as a "P"! Not easy to spot and probably repeated on other lenses as well. Dave's photo reminded me of two engraving errors in my collection that I have been meaning to include in the Journal eventually, and this seems like the appropriate time. To further develop this theme of misengraving, here are two additional examples. First is another 135mm Nikkor #260930. Note that this lens would not be very usable except in the brightest of light, since this is one of the slowest Nikkors ever made! Yes it is the infamous 135mm "F35" Nikkor! A real marketing disaster I am sure!?! Another example is a lens that could prove very confusing to the user. If your light meter called for a setting of F8 just how would you adjust this lens? It is 105/f2.5 Nikkor #914211 with two "F8" settings!?! In this case the engraver completely forgot about the "2." and just engraved an "8"! By the way, the duplicate scale on the reverse side of the lens is correct! Now I wonder how many members will be going over every piece in their collections with a magnifying glass looking for such errors? It might prove very interesting!



NHS CON2

The Nikon Historical Society

The

WESTIN HOTEL O' HARE

6100 RIVER ROAD, ROSEMONT,
ILLINOIS

MARCH 31
1990