

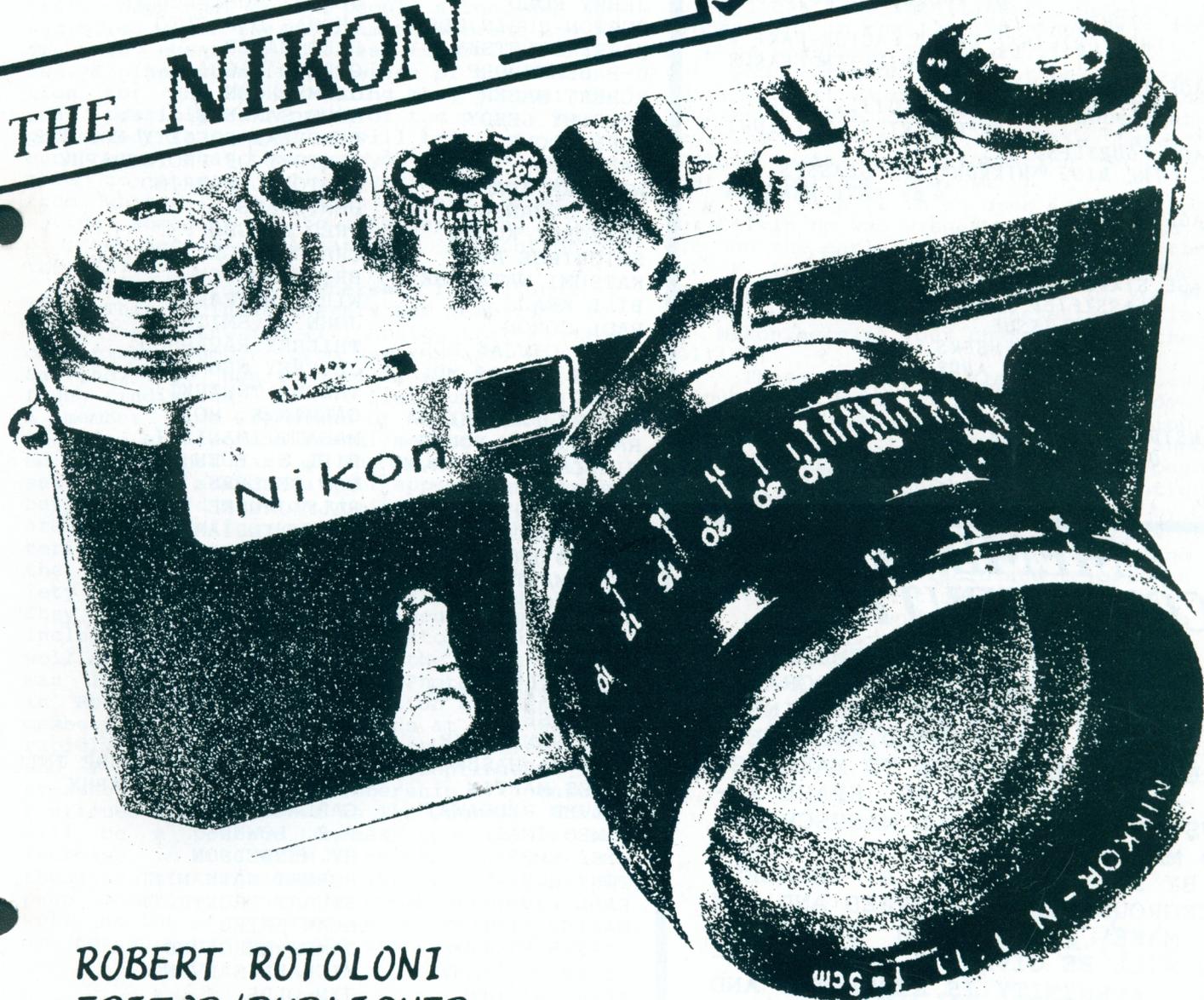
A PUBLICATION OF THE
NIKON HISTORICAL SOCIETY

MARCH 31, 1988



19

THE NIKON  JOURNAL



ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

THE NIKON Journal

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VOLUME FIVE-NUMBER THREE-MARCH 31, 1988
THE "NIKON JOURNAL" IS PUBLISHED FOUR
TIMES A YEAR BY "RJR" PUBLISHING, INC.
AT P.O. BOX 3213, MUNSTER, IN 46321 USA
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ANY CONTRIBUTIONS BY MEMBERS OF
MANUSCRIPTS AND/OR PHOTOGRAPHS
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EDITORIAL

By the time that most of you will have received this issue of THE NIKON JOURNAL, our first Convention will be history. As of the day this editorial is being written, which is March 3rd, as many as 20 members have called or written to tell me that they will attend. An interesting note is that two of our members from Europe have made plans to be here in Chicago the last weekend in March if all goes well, so we may be able to call it the First International Convention of the NHS!! All arrangements have been finalized and our two speakers, John Baird and Joseph Higham, have completed their presentations. I hope to be able to give all of you a detailed record of a successful Convention in the next issue of The Journal. The interest and turnout for this first meeting will determine the time table for any future Conventions. I truly hope that enough people attend and are satisfied with the program to warrant another such event in the near future. We shall see. I plan extensive coverage of the convention for NHS-20, including many photographs and, possibly, a reprint of the papers being presented that day. I will try to do it in such a way that those of you who will not be able to attend will, nevertheless, benefit from what will occur that day and, hopefully entice some of you to consider being a part of the Second International Convention of the NHS!!

Our current membership list stands at 119! This includes the six new members listed on page 16. You will notice that we have our first member from New Zealand, Michael Salvano, who has to qualify as the most far flung individual on our list, unless we get a member from Greenland or Antartica!!? Not included are two additional members who joined after that part of The Journal was typeset. Their addresses will appear in NHS-20, but I should mention their names here. They are Michael Gaffney and The Photographic Historical Society. Many of you will recognize the second name as being the collectors society headquartered in Rochester, New York. They have some rather influential members, including Jack Naylor and Eaton Lothrop, as well as very close ties with the George Eastman International Museum of Photography also in Rochester. With the addition of these two members our list now stands at 121. We are rapidly approaching our fifth anniversary, and I hope that our numbers continue to increase. A sustained membership will ensure continued improvements in The Journal. There will be a postage increase shortly, but no increase in dues will be necessary. I've had thoughts of increasing The Journal to a 24 page magazine, but the postage increase as well as the printing costs may delay this. I am not sure how much the extra 4 pages would

add to postage costs until I can determine how much more the current 20 page magazine will increase. An extra 4 pages does not appear to weigh very much, but if it puts the magazine into a higher weight bracket the increase could be significant when you multiply it out by 120 and add for the overseas costs. I firmly believe that first class is the only way to go and I have no intentions of changing this. We are not big enough for bulk mailing privileges, plus my main concern is the condition of the magazine when you finally receive it. I would not want it to get mutilated by using a cheaper method of mailing, even if it means postponing the idea of a 24 page magazine for awhile. I have had the four page increase in mind for some time, and it is something I will continue to strive for. Once I get over this new postage rate I can more intelligently determine if a membership in the 120-150 range will support a page increase. Therefore, if any of you can get your friends who might be interested to join, and if we can continue to increase our numbers, there is a good chance that YOUR magazine will become a little "fatter" and contain even more information. So lets hope that we continue to grow.

On page 16 is an open letter from member Calvin Ho who wishes to do a future article on the early external meters for the Nikon F, and asks for any information the membership might have. For those of you who've wanted us to move into the early reflex era at Nikon, here is your chance to get the ball rolling!

Those of you who are into antiques have undoubtedly heard of Ralph & Terry Kovel who publish a long lists of books on various aspects of collecting. I am happy to announce that our society has been listed on page 188 of the "Kovels' Guide to Selling Antiques & Collectibles", which is published by Crown Publishers and available at bookstores everywhere. The Kovels are quite famous and even have a syndicated radio and television show on antique collecting. Hopefully this exposure in such a widely distributed book will benefit our Society in the future. Also note on page 15, that the European Society for the History of Photography has again abstracted articles that have appeared in our Journal, so keep those articles coming!



ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

THE "UNIQUE" NIKKOR!

THE 25MM/F4...

BY ROBERT ROTOLONI

In NHS-17 I covered in great detail the widest rangefinder Nikkor ever made, namely the 21mm f4.0. However, the 21mm was a very late addition to the RF system and not available until nearly the very end of the rangefinder era at Nikon. This accounts for its rarity and extreme desirability today. So late was its arrival that it really played only a small part in the lives of those who actually used the Nikon S series to make photographs. It came at a time when many Nikon users were already switching over to the reflex system, which had its own version, making the RF lens less of a reason to remain with the rangefinders than it possibly might have been. If the reflex version of the 21mm had not been announced at the same time as the RF type, one can only wonder how many RF users would have bought what was the widest Nikkor available at that time. Undoubtedly the RF system would have had an advantage over the reflexes at the wider end of the lens line (as well as speed with the f1.1 & the 85mm/f1.5), and one can only guess how this would have affected the time table that led to the discontinuance of the SP in favor of the F. Putting things in perspective one can see that in actuality the lens that served as the widest Nikkor for the bulk of the rangefinder era was the 25mm f4.0 lens, which is the subject of this article. The 21 will always be the fascinating and exciting item it is, and nothing can detract from its importance and value, but from a practical point of view, the 25mm Nikkor served as the widest Nikkor for most of the RF users, and it served them well.

The 25mm f4.0 Nikkor first appeared towards the end of 1953, and was probably actually available in November of that year for purchase. This is exactly six years from the date that the first Nikon I prototypes had undergone testing! If one considers the conditions prevalent in Japan after WWII, what with shortages in all raw materials as well as the massive rebuilding required and the fact that the necessities of life had priority over "luxury" goods, it is amazing that Nippon Kogaku could design, test and produce such an exotic lens at such an early date. If one just looks at the lens diagram reproduced here, it is obvious that the 4 pieces of glass used in this lens were quite unusual and undoubtedly difficult to make in 1953!

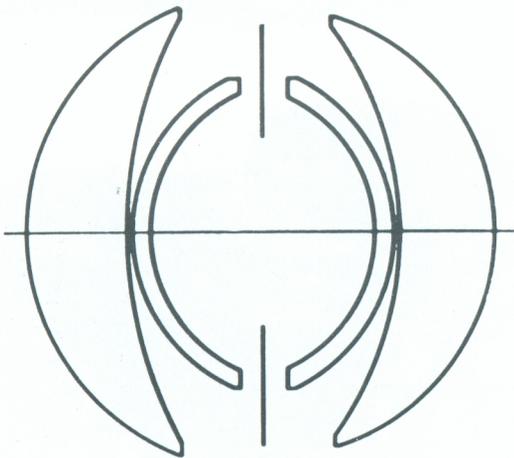
The 25mm would own the wide end of the lens line for six years until the arrival of the 21mm Nikkor. During those six years it proved to be a very popular item and remained in the price lists until at least late 1961. Although its price was actually quite reasonable when compared with other lenses in the system (it listed for \$170 at a time when the 50mm/f1.4 sold for \$150!!), Nikon never made a camera with a frameline for the 25mm which, therefore, required a separate viewfinder throughout its production. Many will say that because of its extreme depth of field and coverage that a separate finder was adequate, but built-in framelines are always more convenient, especially for casual users. One could always use the viewfinder of the camera knowing that the lens would cover much more, but this is guessing and does not always work well. However, the inconvenience of having to use a separate finder does not seem to have affected sales and one has to keep in mind that photographers in the fifties were more adept at this procedure than those of us raised on the SLR. The reflex breeds laziness in the area of focusing and composing that RF users, especially 35 years ago, did not enjoy. Just take your Nikon S with its tiny peep sight and go out to shoot a roll with the 25mm and its separate finder, and see how you have to work a little harder. I've done it many times and I can't help but feel admiration for those photographers in the fifties, especially when you see the fine work many of them did. It wasn't easy with the equipment they had to use, which is why the SLR has taken over so totally, but that's another story.

The earliest lens in my records is seen in the early literature and #402522. Using Nikon's unique system of numbering in those days the first 4 digits denote both the lens speed and focal length ("4025" for f4.0 and 25mm) with the first production lens being #402501, since Nippon Kogaku usually used "01" for the first item and not "00". Therefore, lens #402522 would be the 22nd made & quite early. The 25mm was first made in chrome on brass mount which is heavier than it would appear to be based on its size and the 4 very small elements. These chrome lenses have been recorded as high as #403549 with #403547 illustrated in this article. A few black lenses have been recorded with ear-

lier numbers, but the first that I have seen that is followed by only the black type is #403621, so the gap between the chrome and black lenses is quite small. I have these latter black lenses recorded up to #404735. This would indicate a production of 2,234 pieces with screw mount lenses intermixed. Numbers assuredly run higher but a production of under 2,500 lenses is reasonable to assume at this time. What is interesting is that the 25 is one of the few lenses whose numbers run almost in perfect order and make really good sense. However, there is only one small quirk in the numbering system that I have been able to determine. The above serial number range includes both Nikon and SM lenses. For many years we thought that this was how it was done, with the SM types simply intermixed with the bayonets. However, a few years ago, and after the publication of my books, (it always seems to happen that way!), some lenses in SM were reported to me with very different numbers. They begin with "502" and so far range from #502627-#503629, which is almost exactly 1,000 units. To date every single lens in this group has been in SM! It now appears to be a separate batch with its own unique numbering (Nikon did the same thing with the 35/f1.8). It then follows that these lenses are later production, otherwise how do we explain the other SM lenses intermixed with the bayonets? However, the latest

SM lens I have recorded in the intermixed batch is #402962, so it appears that Nippon Kogaku decided about half way through production to assign a new number type to the SM lenses, and used the original numbers for only the bayonet type. This would place this newly numbered SM batch somewhere towards the middle of the life of the 25, possibly as early as 1956. If we add these 1,000 SM lenses to the above figure we get a possible total production of 3,500 with at least 33% in screw mount! The result is that your mint 25mm Nikkor could be 1 of only 2,000 or so ever made!

Physically the 25mm Nikkor is one of the most unique lenses in the system, and looks and operates differently than anything else they made. From these photos it is obvious that it is a very shallow and compact lens. It protrudes less than one-half inch when it is mounted, yet the front element is still deeply recessed, and is nearly on the same plane as the front of the camera body. What is unique about this lens is the method used to focus it. Notice that there is no focusing ring present! This is also true of the 50mm f1.4 & 2.0 lenses, but they mount to the inner bayonet and are focused with the top mounted wheel! The 25mm is mounted, like all the wideangles and telephotos, to the external bayonet, but lacks a focusing ring! How is it focused? That's right! The only way to



Note the nearly symmetrical optical formula of the 25mm Nikkor and the extreme curvature of the elements. Pictured above are the two basic versions of the bayonet mount Nikkor. Except for some very minor cosmetic changes it was made either in chrome or black. The later black version was significantly lighter than the deceptive appearing chrome lens. At the left is the 25mm Nikkor "dressed" up for storage or travel in its proper rear cap and unique bayonet mounted front metal cap, which will fit no other lens in the Nikon system.

R. Rotoloni



NHS
NIPPON
KOGAKU
TOKYO

On this page are pictured both the chrome & black versions of the 25mm f4.0 Nikkor, each mounted on a camera to give the reader a better feeling for the diminutive size of this lens. Even the chrome version, which, because of its finish, would normally appear larger than the black type, still strikes one as a very compact optic. The later black barrel lens really would appeal to those who feel that black is less obtrusive than chrome, as illustrated here on a black SP. Talk about a small, nearly invisible shooting outfit!

Note how deeply recessed the front element is on this lens. In most cases the combined shade/filter folder would not be needed with such a deep seated optic, which may account for the relative scarcity of this, possibly, seldom used accessory. Also note that even on the chrome version the front face of this lens is almost entirely black, further reducing any chances of flare and probably adding to its optical quality. Mechanical design of both lenses is identical with each type lacking a focusing ring. Both have the studs for the bayonet cap and require the user to actually reach into the front of the lens to change aperture settings. Note the black lever with the white dot opposite the f4 mark on each lens pictured here. One would reach into the lens and adjust the diaphragm with this tiny lever.

R. Rotoloni



focus the 25mm Nikkor is with the wheel!! It couples to only this and has no other method of focusing. This is possible because of the small mass of the tiny barrel, but the 28mm Nikkor and the 35/f3.5 are nearly as light yet they possess their own rings. Why did Nikon choose this method for only this lens? We will never know, but they didn't use it on anything else including the later 21mm. It does work quite well but seems to be strange since it would have been easy to make the barrel slightly longer to accommodate such a ring. The second unusual feature is the method used to adjust the diaphragm. The user had to literally reach into the front of the barrel to slide a small black clickstopped tab to set the aperture. Why this could not be accomplished with a front mounted collar like the other wides is not known either, but both of these features make the 25mm the most unusual design Nikon used! Another mark of distinction for this lens is the unique (again!) bayonet system used for the front mounted accessories. Both the cap and filter holder/shade are attached bayonet fashion to two small radially mounted studs. Now the early 105/f2.5 Nikkor used the same method for it's shade, but the cap did not! The 25 is the only lens where both the cap & shade are so mounted. The result is that these two accessories are unique to this lens and are not usable on any other!! There is ample space for front threads for a standard 43mm cap, yet no threads are present and you must possess the proper cap or you are out of luck. Believe me, I have seen many 25s missing this special front cap! The other front accessory is also unique to this lens. I am guilty of calling it a shade: it isn't. It's actual use is as a filter holder and is called such in the literature. It is not listed as a shade, but a filter holder! However, if used without a filter it DOES act as a shade and does a good job as well, so I guess we are only half wrong when we call it a shade. This 2 piece, black painted, extremely light and fragile piece of aluminum has not stood the test of time very well. Most are missing or damaged!! They were sold with the lens & even had their own leather slipcase that fit into the lens case, but many have disappeared over the years. The threads jam easily & one can deform the entire ring when trying to separate them to insert a filter. It just wasn't robust enough and today is quite hard to find. Complete sets consisting of the lens, caps, filter holder & finder are quite hard to come by. The rear cap was specially designed for this lens although it will fit the external 50/f1.1 as well as the deep set 35/f1.8. Two versions exist; the early type is black painted aluminum while the latter is black plastic. A felt lined cradle was provided for the 25mm finder.

The finder appears to have been made in only one style, which consists of a black body with a front chrome ring. None have been reported to me as being serial numbered, nor have any obvious variations been seen. It's special cradle fit within the lens case with everything nicely stacked vertically. As for variations in the 25mm Nikkor, it appears that very few exist, especially considering how long it was made. Besides the obvious black and chrome barrels the only differences I have recorded are the existence of lenses calibrated in meters and the fact that the later lenses have their diaphragm scale and the phrase "Nippon Kogaku Japan No.xxx" orientated just the opposite from the early versions. Besides this there are some slight differences in finish on the front caps and at least three versions of the filter holder illustrated here. Other than these small features this lens was made nearly unchanged for it's entire production run.

An interesting structural oddity seen only in this lens has prompted a fair number of letters over the years. People have written me to ask if their 25mm was defective since the diaphragm blades would not open to the full f4.0 aperture! I've had to write to tell them that this is normal and that the blades are visible on every 25mm I've ever seen. It is quite evident and seems to be the same from one lens to another. I don't know enough about optics to offer an explanation for this oddity, but I'm sure that those talented optical engineers at Nippon Kogaku had their reasons. Possibly the front element was made oversized to reduce vignetting and would actually cover a larger aperture than f4.0 with the blades used to reduce it. Nikon did do this with other optics. The front element of the 35/f1.8 was supposedly large enough to cover f1.4, again to reduce vignetting and improve it's evenness of illumination.

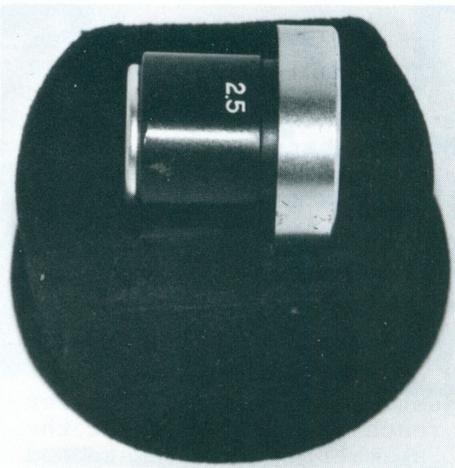
The 25mm Nikkor has so many unique features that the result is a lens with a great deal of "character". It is so different from every other lens in the line that it stands out as unique and interesting and definitely not a me-too design. Although not as difficult to find as the 21mm lens, the 25mm Nikkor is still a seldom seen item and a fine addition to any collection. Finding a complete outfit is difficult with the seldom seen filter holder approaching real rarity and value. So difficult to find is the filter holder that many collectors will now pay more for it than the finder. The future of the 25mm Nikkor is bright. It's low production, unique design and difficult to find accessories will ensure it's collectability for years to come.

ROBERT J. ROTOLONI



To the right is the special finder made for the 25mm Nikkor, shown here in it's velvet lined cradle, which is how it was carried in the case along with the lens and filter holder. The photos below show both the chrome & black versions mounted on cameras of the same finish, but this time with the filter holder also mounted. It does add to the size of the lens but not the bulk, since it's construction was extremely light weight. Even with the filter holder mounted I feel it can still be called a compact shooting outfit & was probably used by many professionals just this way. I've also included a photo of the chrome camera with the finder mounted. This represents the "largest" configuration possible with the 25mm (unless you were using a motorized camera). The finder does add bulk and one cant help but wonder why Nikon could not have designed it with a rectangular housing, which would have made it a little less conspicuous.

R. Rotoloni



This set of photos illustrates the various types of caps used on the 25mm Nikkor, plus the versions of the filter holder known to the author.

In the top photo are shown both versions of the rear cap that are known to exist. On the left is the early black metal type that is generally found on all the chrome lenses and the early black type as well. On the right is the later plastic cap that, to this day, has been found brand new in it's own little grey box by some collectors. I once was browsing in one of the stores in New York and found such an example. Written on the bottom of the box was "Rear cap for 25mm Nikkor." Of course I bought it! The second photo shows both the front and rear aspects of the special bayonet mounted metal front cap unique to this lens. There is no way to use a snap on cap, since there are no threads, and I've never seen a slip on cap that could clear the bayonet studs. This cap will not properly fit any other Nikkor.

The third photo is a group shot of the caps and the filter holder, while the two bottom photos illustrate in detail the difficult to find filter holder (or shade if you prefer). Note how it screws apart to insert a series VII filter. If these threads would bind you probably would destroy the entire item trying to separate them! It is constructed of a very light weight aluminum and would deform quite easily. I have one I cannot separate & I don't think I will try! Note that the bottom right photo shows three different versions. Two differ merely because of the orientation of the word "JAPAN" engraved on their rim, which is all that appears on these two. The third type perched on top is quite different. It came to me without a lens so I cant say that it definitely belongs on a later production lens, but I have a feeling that it does. It differs in that it is engraved NIPPON KOGAKU JAPAN and not just JAPAN like the others. In addition it is marked "48B-VII" (they are separated by a dual facing arrow) representing the size filters required. Although I am sure they exist, this is the first such that I have seen.

R. Rotoloni





RESEARCH PROJECT...

BY WILLIAM A. FRAKER

THE "ORIGINAL LENS" PART 2: FACTOR

Gathering data for any research project can be very tedious, but I find that learning and drawing conclusions from the data is always inspiring. As Mark Twain once said, "Get your facts first, and then you can distort them any way you please." My list of body and lens numbers has now exceeded 320 pairs. I would like to thank those members who sent me numbers and relate an example of the practical side of this project. One of our members sent me a list including the numbers: M6092265/50050370 & M6092697/5005823. The lens number 5005823 is obviously a mis-engraving. One would think that the missing digit was a zero and the lens should read as 50050823. This is because the difference between M6092265 & M6092697 is about the same as the difference between the lens numbers. However, this is not the case! Upon examining my list I found that M6092697 should take a lens in the 50051800 range! M6092697 takes this late a lens because of two gaps for SM batches of about 500 lenses each between numbers 50050370-50050902 & 50051299-50051760. This 1000 lens difference causes M6092697 & lens 5005"1"823 to fit the list nicely!

A great amount of information can be drawn from examining serial numbers of bodies with documented or highly suspected original factory coupled lenses. Since the first installment many new ideas have developed about batch assembly, screwmount batches, body production overlap, camera and lens matching and production dates. The following is based on data received as of the date of publication of NHS-19.

Camera bodies with close and sequential serial numbers will not always have close or sequentially numbered lenses. This is due to the fact that after a certain point, bodies and lenses were coupled in batches. These batches show patterns of either linear, backwards or random assembly. In very early production they show only linear progression through early Nikon I and M production up to about M6092000. Later Nikon I's, after body 609400, display a random coupling of the 708 series of 50/f2.0 lenses. This is probably due to lens production exceeding body production. After M6092000 the batches then begin to show linear, backwards & random assembly patterns in groups of about 100 cameras. By the 610...series Nikon S's the size of these

batches has risen to 500 units. In the 614.. series S2's the size of these assembly batches has risen again to 1000 cameras. Early SP's exhibit patterns of 2000 units in which the batches are coupled in either linear, backwards or random order. However, some continuity from batch to batch seems to be maintained throughout production thus preserving the generally linear rise in numbers.

It is possible to detect body production overlap and concurrence by noting where original lenses overlap. The list would seem to indicate that Nikon M production begins around Nikon I #609400. This seems to support Robert Rotoloni's statement on page 58 of his book that there may have only been 400 Nikon I's actually produced. However, as you can see from pages 59-60 of his book, production dates do not overlap. Now that Nikon I's in the 609600 & 609700 range have been uncovered, it seems more likely that the 230 Nikon I's that were converted to Nikon M's lie in the M609760 to M609990 range! If this is correct, it means that Nikon must have corrected their records at some point and that there may be more Nikon I's out there for collectors. As for my list, the assumption that Nikon I's and M's overlapped was based on only one camera that, upon consultation with the owner, may have a replacement lens. The Nikon S seems to begin at M6093800 with main S2 production starting up around S #6120000. However, the first S2 may have been completed by S #6115000! This appears very likely now that we know Nikon S prototype #6110524 had a Nikon S2 type shutter speed dial. The first SP seems to have been produced around S2 #6183400 with main SP assembly starting around S2 #6188000. The S2 seems to continue through to about SP #6205500. The Nikon S3 begins in the area of SP #6208500, though the first S3 may have even overlapped the last S2! The S3 ends production around SP #6216000 which may be another reason why the pre-Olympic S3 never acquired a metal shutter. The S4 production begins at about S3 #6303500 and runs through to S3 #6310000. It is difficult to compare the S4 to the SP production, since the vast majority of SP's were equipped with the f1.4 Nikkor lens, almost the entire S4 production was shipped with the much more economical 50mm. f2.0 Nikkor lens.



The SP era is a confusing time to try & categorize because there are from 2-3 models in production at the same time; because there was a greater choice of 50mm lenses as well as the option of no lens; and because large blocks of lenses seem to have been allocated to different models arbitrarily. The combination of these three factors makes it difficult to record cameras with original lenses.

As the Original Lens list grows, it becomes easier to pick out gaps in lens production, which are probably screwmount batches. The following groups are possible screwmount batch candidates.....

50mm. f1.4	50mm. f2.0
50050370-50050902	811180-8111157
50051299-50051760	8111482-8112373
318716-319583	618800-620698
399394-402073	714000-731153
	50mm. f3.5
	705248-7051107
	7051107-7051973
	7051973-7052290

These groups do not come close to representing all the screwmount batches and probably point out as many gaps in my list as screwmount lenses. Only more recorded numbers will let this list grow long & accurate.

Camera body gaps are also apparent. As we know, there were 22,348 Nikon SPs produced, but the recorded serial numbers run up through #6232150. Gaps must exist, and in SP production there is one large and very interesting gap. This void lies somewhere between 6223719 & 6231766. The interesting thing about this 7000 camera gap is that it contains a batch of replacement top plates! In my collection is SP #6224288 & the top plate is a replacement. I know this because it has a cloth shutter and other early SP parts. I have recorded 4 other replacement top plates in this serial number range. So if you have an SP in this area, check to see if the shutter, counter cover, selftimer and wind lever are the Nikon F style. If not, you may have a replacement top. NHS member Joe Higham has suggested that as Nikon F production boomed, the S3 was canceled and SP production dwindled to the point that batch 26F2B-11 was never finished and the last remaining numbered top plates were designated as replacements. Later, demand dictated the construction of the last two batches of SPs and the Olympic S3s. It is interesting to note that the gap between the last regular S3 and the first Olympic body is also 7000 cameras. However, all replacement S3 top plates found to date have been unnumbered. These large gaps may account for the difference between the production figures and the serial numbers.

In the course of collecting I often locate bodies without lenses or lenses without bodies. I once purchased a lens in the Southwest and a body from the East Coast and, upon

assembling the Original Lens list, found that these two items had been originally coupled at Nikon over 36 years earlier! It seems that most collectors like to mate their bodies to lenses of the same vintage. Hopefully the following information will assist you.

1) The "705" series of f3.5 lenses appear on the early to mid-production Nikon I's. Also present only on the Nikon I are the "609", "708" & "806" series of f2.0 lenses.

2) The "811" series of f2.0 lenses seem to appear mostly on Nikon M's. It is the only lens seen on M's up to M6091050 when the f1.5 is first seen. They have been found on M's up to around M6092050 where it reaches into the 81125XX range. Few "811"s are seen between M6091780 & M6092050 due to the appearance of the "5008" series.

3) The rigid mount "5008" f2.0's first emerge in the late M6091700's but are not regularly seen until the early M60920XX range. They run steadily up to M6093200 & then are only seen occasionally to about M6093500 where these lenses reach into the 500810XX range.

4) The "617" f2.0's first appear around body M6093200 and run up through M60940XX. A late "617" lens could also be seen on early Nikon S's under 6094400 due to the production overlap of M's and S's beginning at M6093800. This series continues up to 622000 where the TOKYO engraving is replaced by JAPAN. This happens around S #6099000.

5) The "905" series of 50/f1.5 lenses begins around M6091050 and goes to M6091450 showing up on the majority of cameras in this range. The "907" series could run from as early as M6091700 to as late as M6092200. The gap in deployment between "905" & "907" types could be due to the development of the 50mm/f1.4, which is first seen in the M6091700's just prior to the first solid batch of "907" 's, which is concentrated around M6091900. They are last seen in the early M6092200's where it reaches into the 907734 range.

6) 50mm/f1.4's in the "5005" series are first seen around M6091720 with 500501XX's but are not seen in great numbers until M6091980 because the f2.0's & 1.5's dominate to that point. The "5005" series continues through to 500520XX around camera M60935XX and then is seen sparsely until M60938XX where it rises into the 50052100's. It is possible for an early Nikon S in the 6094100's to sport a "5005" 1.4 since lens overlaps indicate that Nikon S production began around M6093800.

7) The "316" series begins around M6093700, though it may run earlier, and continues to M6094000's where it reaches into the #316500 range. The "316" 's are also found on S's in the 6094300-6094400 range. By 6094800 the series has progressed to "317" and continues through to "322", where the TOKYO engraving is replaced by JAPAN. This occurs at about Nikon S 6098000. Eight digit S's originally

came with lenses in the 3242XX to 3255XX range. For a more precise match of cameras & lenses, please refer to the list at the end of this article.

The next major change in the 1.4's is the black finish. (It appears that the f2.0 lenses gained their black finish at the same time as the 1.4's, but I have too few lenses recorded at this time to tell exactly.) Main production black lenses begin at 374000. This serial number first appears around Nikon S2 #6163000, but the changeover is not a clean one, and after #6167000 only black lenses are seen.

As one would expect, Olympic 1.4's of the 140XXX range appear on black Olympic S3 bodies from about #6320411. At this time evidence suggests that very early Olympics were coupled with the last regular S3 lens batch which seems to be in the late 409XXX range.

The 50mm /f1.1 lenses first became available on S2's around #6174000. It seems that the f1.1 changed to the external mount by SP #6212000.

It appears that during the SP era Nikon began a policy of assigning large batches of lenses to a particular model. No longer did they simply put the last batch of lenses on the last batch of cameras, although, in each assigned model batch, the camera/lens numbers generally rise together. This new poli-

cy makes sense because production had increased tremendously in this period, and it would have been inefficient to be continually sending lenses to where the different camera models were being assembled. I came across an example of this in comparing SP and S3 lists. It seems that the vast majority of 50mm f1.4's between 402000 & 405000 was missing from the SP list. However, this group neatly appeared on the S3 list beginning with the first S3.

From the introduction of the f1.4, it and the f2.0 were coupled to bodies in a 1:1 ratio until the middle of S2 production, when the f1.4 slowly emerged as dominant. Nikon SP's were mated mainly with f1.4's, Nikon S3's with half 1.4's and half 2.0's, and S4's had almost exclusively f2.0's. This makes sense when you consider the cost and quality of the cameras and lenses.

The following is a list showing camera and lens serial numbers of the same vintage. Please bear in mind that this list should be used only as a general guide for coupling bodies and lenses. Absolute accuracy is impossible due to the following circumstances: a) assembly out of numerical order; b) gaps in production; c) batches of screwmount lenses. Further recorded numbers should increase the accuracy, especially in the area of the 50mm f2.0 lenses.

CAMERA & LENS VINTAGE GUIDE

CAMERA SERIAL NUMBER	LENS SERIAL NUMBER	
S	f1.4	f2.0
6100000 - 6109999	3260XX - 3352XX	6252XX - 6338XX
6110000 - 6119999	3352XX - 3431XX	6338XX - 6430XX
6120000 - 6129999	3425XX - 3460XX	6430XX - 6512XX
S2		
6135000 - 6139999	3387XX - 3515XX	640XXX - 653XXX
6140000 - 6149999	354XXX - 361XXX	651XXX - 656XXX
6150000 - 6159999	361XXX - 370XXX	659XXX - 662XXX
6160000 - 6169999	370XXX - 375XXX	662XXX - 731XXX
6170000 - 6179999	376XXX - 383XXX	731XXX - 734XXX
6180000 - 6189999	382XXX - 389XXX	735XXX - 745XXX
6190000 - 6196999	390XXX - 396XXX	746XXX - 747XXX
SP		
6200000 - 6204999	384XXX - 397XXX	737XXX - 746XXX
6205000 - 6207999	397XXX - 399XXX	746XXX - 748XXX
6208000 - 6209999	402XXX - 405XXX	748XXX - 749XXX
6210000 - 6214999	405XXX - 409XXX	
6215000 - 6229999	409XXX - 414XXX	S3 AND S4?
6230000 - 6232999	414XXX - 418XXX	760XXX - 766XXX
		766XXX - 768XXX
S3		
6300000 - 6302999	402XXX - 403XXX	746XXX - 748XXX
6303000 - 6305999	402XXX - 403XXX	748XXX - 750XXX
6306000 - 6308999	403XXX - 404XXX	750XXX - 752XXX
6309000 - 6313999	404XXX - 409XXX	752XXX - 757XXX
S4		
6500000 - 6505999	SP AND S3?	749XXX - 757XXX

BODY & LENS	DATE
I	
60939 - 70815	05-48 (p. 59 RJR)
609536 - 708651	04-49 (p. 59 RJR)
M	
M609841 - 81157	10-49 (p. 60 RJR)
M6091857 - 50080125	7-14-50 (?)
M6091890 - 907323	8-05-50 (IS)
S	
6095741 - 318079	8-20-51 (IS)
60910012 - 324304	6-05-52 (IS)
60910810 - 625408	7-08-52 (IS)
6102010 - 326477	9-03-52 (IS)
6103953 - 328226	12-10-52 (IS)
6109471 - 633832	8-07-53 (IS)
6109962 - 633805	8-17-53 (GC)
6115871 - 635651	12-17-53 (GC)
6122131 - 344142	6-24-54 (IS)
6129418 - 650839	12-08-54 (GC)
S2	
6163385 - 375472	8-24-56 (GC)
6167692 - 374989	8-21-56 (GC)
6191323 - 391588	9-04-57 (GC)
SP	
6209127 - 402810	9-30-58 (GC)

Another possible aspect of this project that may be helpful to collectors was mentioned to me by NHS member Cy Meyer. Cy has suggested that I also record the dates from inspection slips and guaranty cards along with the serial numbers of the associated bodies and lenses. A listing of the information would allow us to date our cameras, perhaps to the month of production! Listed here are both inspection slip (IS) and guaranty card (GC) dates. Please keep in mind that guaranty card dates are typically later than inspection dates, which are used by many collectors as the production date. Up through Nikon S production, guaranty dates are only a few days later. In S2 production this increases to as long as two weeks, and the SP guaranty cards may date a few months after initial inspection.

Please note that the first production black lenses appear on S2's around August of 1956. With a little arithmetic one can figure monthly production and then production dates for almost any M, S, or S2. More dates are needed for SP, S3 and S4 production.

This is an ongoing research project and I feel confident that, with the help of NHS members, the above information can be expanded and made more accurate. Only 300 pairs of recorded serial numbers is not enough so I'm still asking for your help. I require the body and lens serial numbers and any dates from inspection slips or guaranty cards of any known or highly suspected original factory coupled body/lens combinations. My goal is a list of 1000 pairs and I am in particular need of numbers in the early "609" S, SP, S3 and S4 ranges. Any assistance you can supply will be of immense importance and greatly appreciated. Again, I send my thanks to those who sent me their serial numbers and especially to Robert Rotoloni, who has single-handedly tripled my data base. You may send any correspondence to the following:

BILL FRAKER
15516 SUNSET BLVD. #302
PACIFIC PALISADES, CA 90272



THE "NUMBERS GAME"...!! PART II

BY ROBERT ROTOLONI



In NHS-18 I had two pairs of M10J 35mm/f3.5 Nikkors with consecutive serial numbers. They were lens sets #9107/#9108 and #910878/#910879, and made for an interesting family portrait. However, since publication I have acquired yet another M10J 35mm that turned out to also be consecutive with one I already owned. Therefore, at the risk of being redundant (as well as courageously fighting off the temptation of shooting all 3 sets!!!), I include here a photo of a third set of M10J 35mm Nikkors. They are lenses #9101313 & #9101314. These were also acquired many years apart and from different parts of the country.

R. Rotoloni

Pictured at the right is something I've wanted to do for many years. That is to find two bodies with consecutive serial numbers. Over the years I've acquired various bodies with very close numbers but never consecutive. Now I can say that I have a pair. Within the last year I acquired Nikon S3 #6300057, which goes very well with camera #6300056, an item I've owned for many years! Now they are together again. There is a very good chance that they were sitting side by side on the assembly line some 30 years ago since they are very early numbers from the first 100 made.

R. Rotoloni



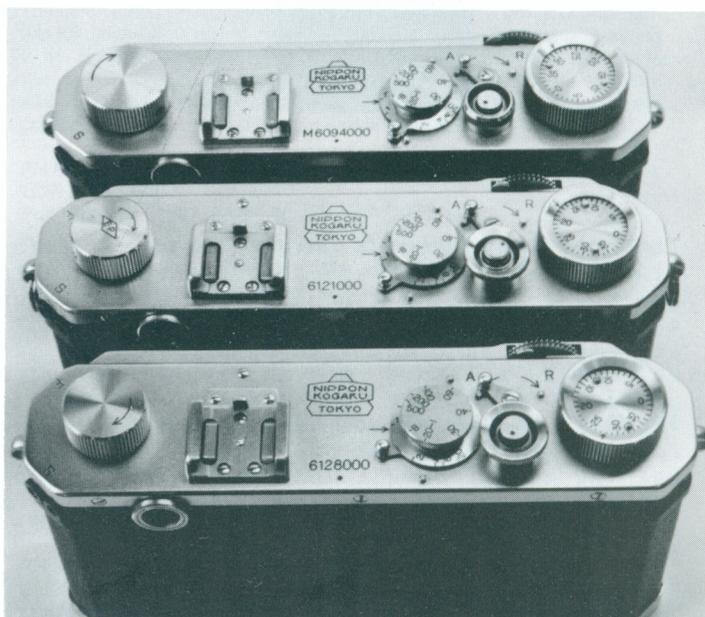


On this page we have some very interesting items from member Katsuharo Takashima. The top 3 photos are of a pair of MIOJ 85mm/f2.0 Nikkors with consecutive serial numbers. They are lenses #903547 & #903548. What is really interesting is that they are different in two respects. Note that #903548 has the MIOJ engraving on the outside while #903547 does not! It's MIOJ is on the rear cam! Also note that #903548 has a small triangle for the index mark for the aperture ring while #903547 has a dot! It is amazing how much variation there is in the early MIOJ period, and this is a good example.

K. Takashima



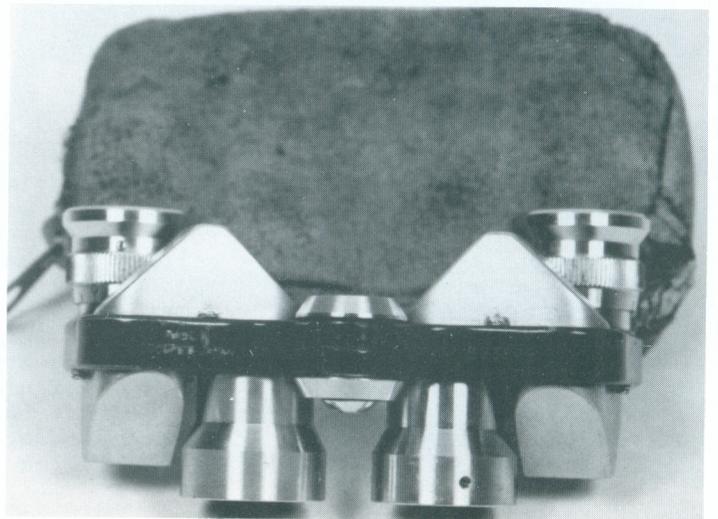
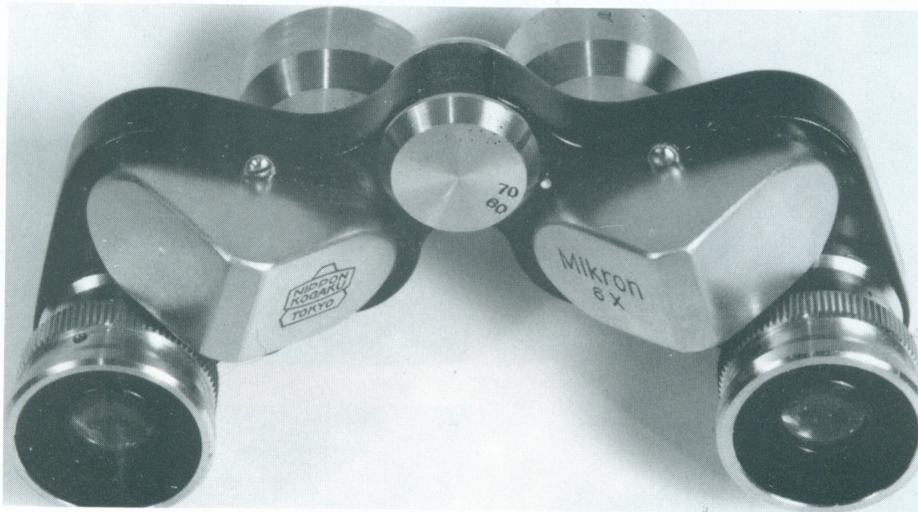
Here is a photo of three very interesting cameras. From top to bottom we have Nikon M #M6094000, S #6121000 and S #6128000. Three bodies all ending in triple zeros! This set brought to mind the time I received a call from the West Coast from a man who sometimes would find items for me. He called to tell me that he had been to a show that day and that a fellow was carrying around a Nikon M and trying to sell it. My friend did not buy it to my utter dismay. It's serial number was M6094000! Such is life! K. Takashima



THE MIOJ "MIKRON" SPY GLASSES...

BY KARL MANTYLA

Here are some photos of an early Nikon "MIKRON" binocular set which are MIOJ! The serial number is 5039190 and the optics are uncoated! Along with the expected N-K logo they are engraved "Made in Occupied Japan". The eyepieces and lens barrels are in stainless steel, the prisms are chromed and the housing standards are black enameled. The set predates the convenience of center focusing, so they have individually focused eyepieces. The optical quality and clarity is nothing less than extraordinary! The original case is a petite, silver split leather lined with a "hot pink" satin or silk like material and the carrying strap is a woven grey colored light cord. I hope that readers of our "NHS" Journal enjoy seeing pictures of these interesting byproducts of Nippon Kogaku's immense capabilities in optics!.....Karl Mantyla



The two top photos are of Karl's "Mikron" binoculars, serial #5039190. Note the MIOJ engraving in the top photo and the "Mikron" engraving in the second shot. I knew that I had such a pair but I thought that mine were different in some way so I dug them out of storage. Mine are on the right and serial #503579, which would make them earlier than Karl's. It may not be visible in the photo but my serial number and MIOJ engravings are on the black painted standard facing you. So it looks like we have at least two versions of these little glasses, if not more. Karl is quite right when he talks about the quality of these glasses. The optics and construction are superb!

letters TO THE Editor

From Harry Soletsky...Regarding the NHS covering the reflex cameras, there are pros and cons. Certainly a very good case can be made that the original F was a landmark camera. However, I would question the historical importance of the F2 & F3. Giving some recognition to the newer cameras may interest some present Nikon users and help the Society to grow. By dealing with the reflex cameras Nikon itself may be more helpful to the organization. Certainly when Leitz realized that Leica collectors were also often buyers of new Leicas, they were a little more helpful at our meetings and tried to help with historical investigations. However, it certainly bothers me that the truly significant material may be overwhelmed by preoccupation with the assorted Nikon models beginning with the letter "F"!

From Calvin Ho...Thank you for another fine issue of the NHS. One suggestion I have for the JOURNAL would be a section appearing occasionally on miscellaneous questions and answers about Nikon gear. You've provided very interesting answers to my questions and I'd enjoy hearing what others have asked. Also I would think that a good place to start some coverage of the reflex Nikons would be those cameras and accessories made concurrently with the RF gear up to about 1963-4. Here in southern California classic Nikon F items made between 1959-60 are becoming harder and harder to find, especially in good cosmetic condition. Many of the early F items I have seen show an incredible wealth of variation and are often better finished than the later production. Virtually nothing is published concerning serial numbers and varieties. For those partial to the RF gear I'd add that we have seen, in the excellent article on the 21mm Nikkor, how knowledge of the early F items can provide new and parallel information about the contemporary RF equipment.

Our Journal has again been represented in the latest edition of "PHOTOHISTORICA" published by the European Society for the History of Photography. I have reproduced here page 10 of the November 1987 issue which has listed no less than six articles that have appeared in our JOURNAL. Keep them coming!!!

une description des pièces de l'appareil et de leur mouvement basée sur le brevet d'invention. Egalement en 1901, Alfred Gendrand, sollicita la prise d'un brevet concernant un nouveau procédé s'appuyant sur le tirage au charbon imitant la peinture monochrome sur toile, la *Gendrographie*.

PH 87-4227 **Les appareils français.** DELVAL, G.
Club Niepce Lumière, 1986 (28), 17-19.

Présentation des appareils Alsaphot: Dauphin; D'Assas; Norlin; Ajax; Cady et Le Maine.

PH 87-4228 **Les appareils français (Goldy).** DELVAL, G.
Club Niepce Lumière, 1987 (29), 16-17.

L'auteur présente quelques modèles de luxe ou simplifiés du box Goldy (6x9), vendus sous appellations différentes: Box Goldy; Monococ; Riviera; Week End; Rallye; Sporting et Camping.

PH 87-4229 **The Early Nikons: An "Inside" Look.** Part 2. HIGHAM, J.
The Nikon JI., 1987 (14), 6-11.

The article covers the shutter, wind and release mechanisms of the Nikon S, listing the parts and their functions.

PH 87-4230 **The Early Nikons: An "Inside" Look.** Part 3. HIGHAM, J.
The Nikon JI., 1987, 4 (3), 2-7.

The article deals with the slow speed mechanism, the vertical movement of the retard rod, and the adjustment of the slow speed escapement. A very detailed technical description is presented.

PH 87-4231 **The "Other Nikkors".** Part 5. HOOPER, R.
The Nikon JI., 1986 (14), 2-3.

Discussion of the Nikkor Q 135 mm/f4.0 (1946-1950); Nikkor Q 135 mm/f3.5 (1950-1960); Nikkor H (180 mm/f2.5); Nikkor SM (500 mm/f5.0).

PH 87-4232 **The "Other Nikkors".** Part 6. HOOPER, R.
The Nikon JI., 1987, 4 (3), 11-13.

The article covers various accessories made for the screw type Nikkors, mainly the adapters BR-1, 16f and N-F.

PH 87-4235 **The "Nikoflex" TLR.** KONNO, T.
The Nikon JI., 1987 (14), 12-13.

The Nikoflex TLR was registered in 1947 when Nikon had to produce consumer goods instead of military material. In 1950 Nikon Optical Research Comp. released the Nikkoflex TRL. Because of the existence of the Nikoflex TRL, the Nikkoflex was renamed Nikkenflex. Nikoflex specifications and the Nikoflex development plan (1945-1949) are given.

PH 87-4236 **The Miranda "Mirax".** KRUGHOFF, F.
The Nikon JI., 1987, 4 (3), 8-10.

The Orion Camera Co., later known as Miranda, built a group of accessories for close-up work with both the Leica and Nikon. The most interesting to the collector are the pieces made in direct Nikon mount. They include the Mirax B reflex housing in Nikon mount and two lens adapters, the CS-F and the CT-F. Attention is also drawn to the beautiful presentation boxes covered with red imitation leather, and lined with satin.

PH 87-4237 **Fifty Collectible Cameras: An Anniversary Assortment.** LOTHROP, Jr. E.S.
Pop. Photogr., 1987, 94 (1), 30, 32.

The author suggests an assortment of 50 cameras that would be excellent in any unspecialized collection. This group, presented in chronological order, shows aspects of the evolution of photographic processes and camera design as well as some of the diversity of forms that resulted from the search for the ideal photographic instrument. The cameras are not necessary rare or the first of their type, but they are representative of a particular kind.

PH 87-4238 **Time Exposure (Subminiature Cameras).** LOTHROP, Jr. E.S.
Pop. Photogr., 1987, 94 (4), 76.

Présentation of five pre-1950s American subminiature cameras: Micro 16 (1946); Tynar (1949); Micro 16 Pixie (1949); Minute 16 (1950); Ulca (1935).

PH 87-4239 **Chrestomatie du Focophile.** MULLER, E.
Club Niepce Lumière, 1986 (28), 10-15.

L'auteur examine les différences de détails pour les appareils Foca en fonction des numéros de série. Lors de la fabrication de la présérie et du

Classified

WANTED...A black Nikon rangefinder body for my collection. Jeffrey Neumann, 9960 Mt. Eaton Rd, Wadsworth, Ohio 44281..216-336-4790.

WANTED...Any Nikon rangefinder equipment in good condition. Please send photo together with price to..P. Lownds, W.de Zwijgerstraat 24, 3043 VD Rotterdam, Holland.

FOR SALE/TRADE...Leica A #12701 w/f3.5 Elmar in meters with dimpled shutter release. All original & unmodified and VG condition with the normal amount of brassing usually seen on these cameras. Would like an interesting Nikon RF trade if possible. Robert Rotoloni, PO Box 3213, Munster, IN 46321..312-895-5319.

FOR TRADE..."NEW IN BOX", w/original blank guarantee card, Nikkorex "8" movie camera. I also have original matching leather case, new in box. Will trade for Nikon "RF" equipment. Send a card/letter with your tradable items to: John Williams, 522 Colina Terrace, Monterey Park, CA 91754. Phone (213) 262-6287.

PLEASE NOTE...

Dear NHS members,

I hope to contribute an article on the early Nikon "F" selenium clip-on meters in an upcoming NHS issue, and am interested in information anyone may have concerning varieties, serial numbers, cases, instruction books, and mention of them in price sheets and photo magazines. Other topics I am also researching are the early "F" motors (#96000-#99999) and variations in the 6400000 series "Fs". Any information on these would be appreciated &, of course, will be kept confidential.

I am also looking to purchase a users Micro Nikkor for the F for making photos for the article...Calvin Ho, California Institute of Technology, Biology Div. 147-75, Pasadena, CA 91125..(818) 356-3797 (work).

I truly hope that all of you who have wanted some articles on the reflex system will welcome and respond to Calvin's letter. He has picked a subject about which very little is known, which, I feel, is the only way we can approach the reflexes without going over the same information that has been published in numerous books and article on the F. Here is our chance to begin to give some attention to the reflexes so lets' see some exchanging of information so we can do it right!...RJR.



NEW MEMBERS!!!

Robert Nathaniel
605 Pleasant St.
Belmont, MA 02178

Stuart Frontroth
108 Williams Rd.
Taylors, S.C. 29687

Alan J. Baird
12011 Highway 12
Naches, WA. 98937

James Berglund
3809 N. Avers Ave.
Chicago, IL. 60618

Michael Salvano
110 Aro Street
Wellington, New Zealand

Jim Olds
P.O. Box 308
Minneapolis, MN 55440

NEW ADDRESSES!!!

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1309 McKenna Blvd.
Madison, WI 53711

Tad Sato
1-10-9, Haneki,
Setagaya-ku,
Tokyo 156, Japan

Takayuki Kawai
3-2-7 Miyazaki,
Miyamae-ku,
Kawasaki 213, Japan

Peter Walnes
Units 19/20, Williams Industrial Pk.
Gore Road, New Milton,
Hampshire BH25 6SH, England

BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL!

PLEASE ADD THE FOLLOWING SERIAL NUMBERS TO OUR LIST OF BLACK NIKON RANGEFINDER BODIES!

6202469

6320411

6322405

"NEXT ISSUE"

The deadline for the next issue of The Nikon Journal will be June 1, 1988. Naturally much of NHS-20 will be devoted to coverage of the First NHS Convention, which will be history by the time most of you read this issue. However, I would still need any letters, photos and articles you wish to submit by the above date. Hopefully the Convention will be a success and I will have met many of you by this date, but for those of you who could not attend, ample coverage will be given in NHS-20.

odds 'n ends

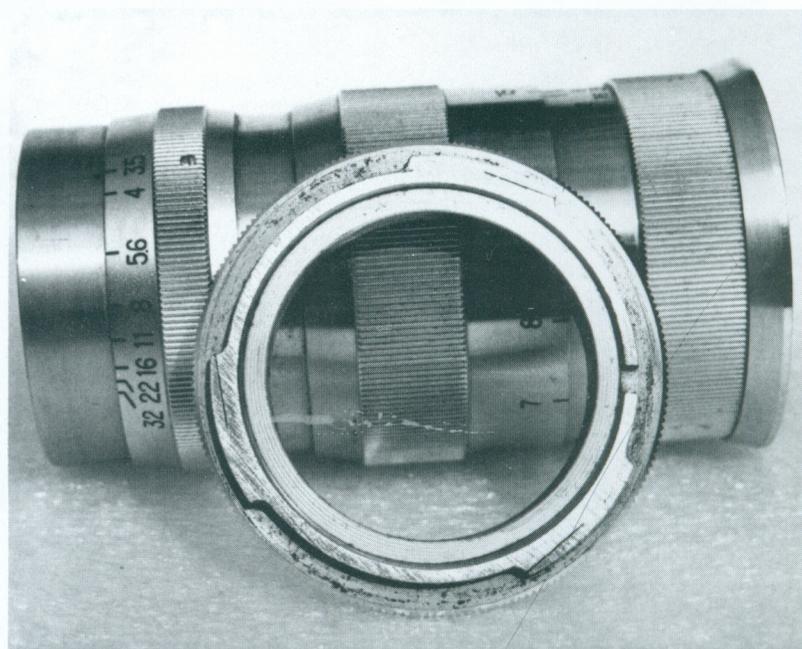
THIS PAGE WILL BE RESERVED IN ALL FUTURE ISSUES OF "THE NIKON JOURNAL" FOR THE RARE, THE UNUSUAL OR OFFBEAT, OR JUST THE OUT OF THE ORDINARY. IF YOU POSSESS

ANYTHING THAT YOU FEEL IS DIFFERENT OR UNUSUAL PLEASE SEND ME AT LEAST TWO VARIED VIEWS OF YOUR ODDITY.

THANK YOU.



Here is a very unusual item from Stephen Gandy. It is a highly modified 135mm Nikkor with an as yet undetermined mount. To quote Steve's letter...The serial number is 255870 which is early enough to be MIOJ, yet it is marked Japan and stops to f32. It does not have a Nikon, Leica or Exakta mount! As the photos show, it has a shallow three pronged wide mouth bayonet. The finish is consistent with the rest of the lens and doesn't appear to be an add on. The mount is easily screwed off thanks to a missing set screw not seen in the photos. The outside diameter of the mount, not counting the bayonet extrusions, is 49mm. The mount has an inner diameter of 39mm. There is no rangefinder coupling cam, although there is a cutout where one might have been. Taking off the mount and placing the lens up to a Nikon F reveals that this lens will only focus up close and not to infinity. Whoever did this modification did a superb job, since the fit and finish of this adapter matches the lens perfectly. Could it be a factory experiment? A prototype for a new bayonet mount that could have eventually become the Nikon F version? Or is it some repairman's work of art? But for what type of camera?



choose and use
interchangeable lenses
faster and more effectively

NIKON SP

with Built-in Universal Viewfinder System



The Nikon SP is the first rangefinder-coupled '35' to realize the full potential of interchangeable lenses. Built right into the SP is the Universal Viewfinder System, which provides the correct viewing fields for six different focal lengths—from 28mm wide angle through 135mm telephoto.

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Nikon SP with 50mm Nikkor f/2 \$369.50;

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Nikon S2 with 50mm Nikkor f/2 \$299.50;

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A copy of the fully illustrated SP brochure is available at your Nikon-franchised dealer, or by writing to Nikon Incorporated, 251 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, New York. In Canada: Anglophoto, Limited, 880 Champagne Avenue, Montreal.

**THIS AD APPEARED IN THE
FEBRUARY 1958 ISSUE OF CAMERA 35.
SUBMITTED BY DAVID WEILER**