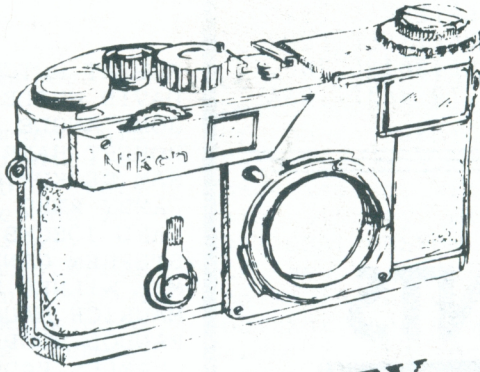


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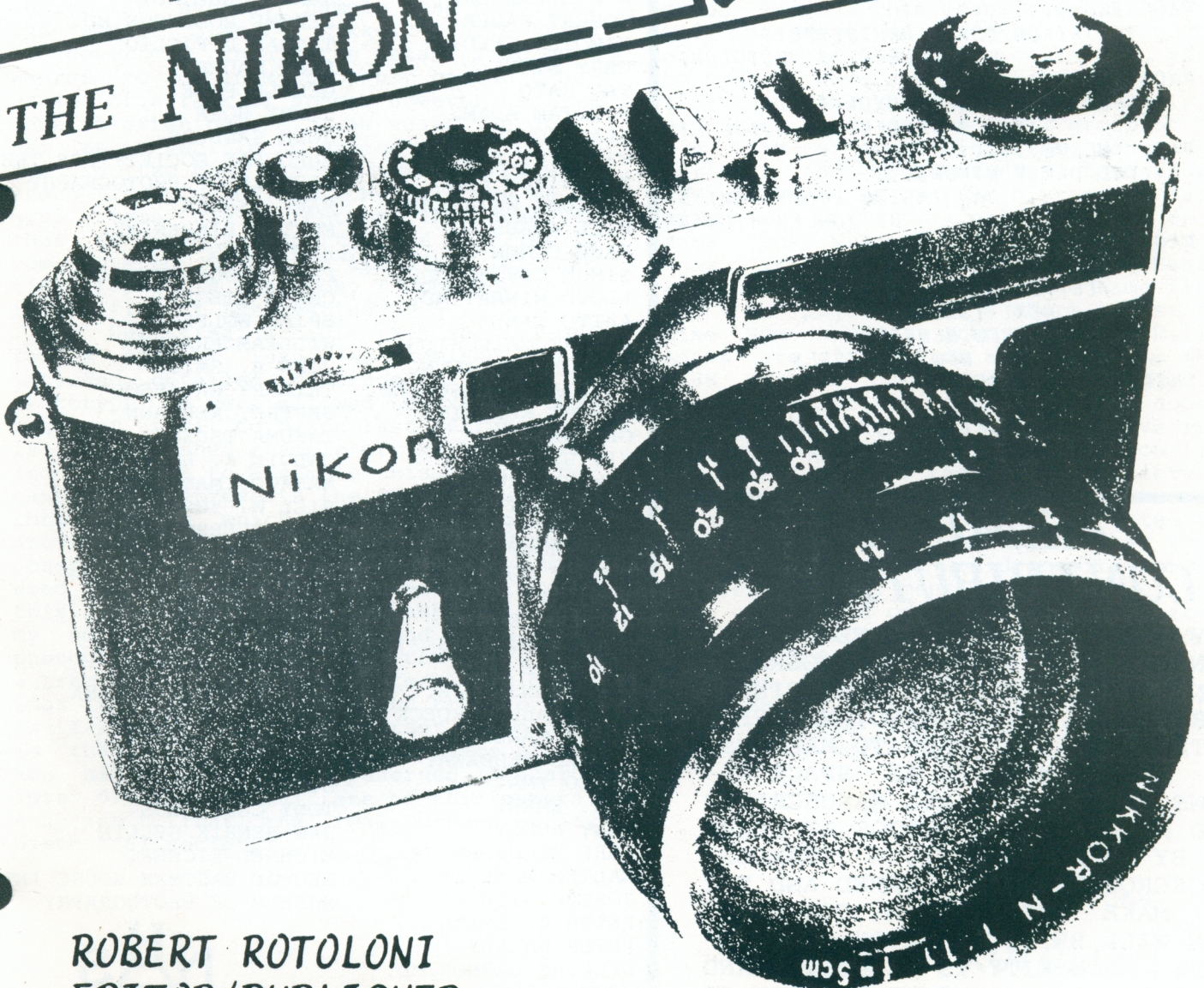
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17

"FOURTH ANNIVERSARY ISSUE"

THE NIKON  JOURNAL



ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

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ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

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 EDITOR/PUBLISHER

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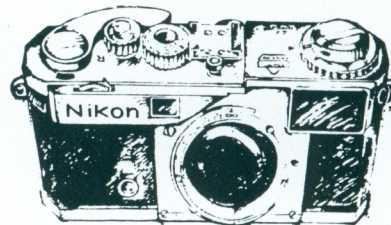
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**MEMBER
 CONTRIBUTIONS**

ANY CONTRIBUTIONS BY MEMBERS OF
 MANUSCRIPTS AND/OR PHOTOGRAPHS
 CONCERNING THE NIKON RANGEFINDER
 SERIES ARE APPRECIATED, AND EVERY
 ATTEMPT WILL BE MADE TO MAKE USE
 OF ALL SUBMITTALS AS SPACE AL-
 LOWS. PLEASE TYPE ALL MANUSCRIPTS
 AND MAKE ALL B/W PHOTOS AT LEAST
 "3 BY 5" AND GLOSSY. A SEAMLESS
 BACKGROUND IS PREFERRED AND TRY
 TO MAKE PHOTOS HIGH CONTRAST.
 YOU WILL BE GIVEN A BY-LINE UN-
 LESS ANONYMITY IS REQUESTED AND
 ENCLOSE AN "SASE" IF RETURN OF
 THE MATERIAL IS DESIRED.....

THANK YOU.



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EDITORIAL

Welcome to the 4th Anniversary issue of THE NIKON JOURNAL! It is very hard to believe that 4 years have gone by and I'm sure this one will also be over before we know it.

As usual I have tried to make this a special issue to mark the beginning of another year of the N.H.S., and I truly hope that you will agree after seeing it. This issue marks the 5th, and final, installment in Joseph Higham's masterful series on the repair of the early Nikon models I, M and S. Again Joe's knowledge of repair is supplemented by his tremendous illustrations, which I am sure you will agree are undoubtedly the finest ever published for the RF Nikons.....and you saw them here in THE JOURNAL!

The central article in this 17th. issue has to do with one of the most important and sought after Nikkors in the entire RF system, namely the beautiful and exotic 21mm/f4 Nikkor. I have tried to cover it in all the detail I so much wanted to do in my book but couldn't because of a lack of space. However, as I've done so often before, I am using The Journal as a vehicle to expand on the coverage in the book since I now control what space is allotted. This has allowed me to give items the attention they deserve, thus an item as important as the 21mm is now covered with ten times the information found in the book. I hope you enjoy it and find it interesting.

Our final article is a special one for a special issue. As promised I have included detailed coverage of the major prototype we were allowed to examine during our visit to Nikon last February! It is the finished example of the Nikon SP2! It took time to assemble this article because it represents the combined work of three people, which had to be coordinated around three very busy schedules. Members Joseph Higham and Fred Krughoff have managed to produce very detailed drawings of this important prototype based solely on my notes, rough sketches and a few small photographs. I think that they have done a tremendous job since the resulting drawings are very detailed and true to life as I remember it. The important thing here is that a rare and important piece of Nikon history has been preserved irregardless of the eventual fate of this camera. And isn't that the real purpose of any historical society?

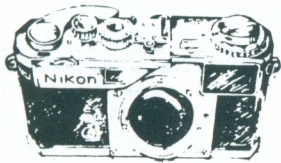
We have a new member from Germany by the name of Michael Eichert. Welcome to the Society. In addition our Journal has been chosen for inclusion in the most important and famous library and collection of photographic literature in the world! Each issue of The Journal, including all back issues, will now be part of the serials library of the GEORGE EASTMAN INTERNATIONAL MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHY in Rochester New York!! This museum is the most famous in the world and houses the most important and complete photographic collection to be found. However, it is not only limited to cameras and hardware. It also houses the largest collection of literature pertaining to the practice and history of photography in existence. I feel that the fact that they have chosen our publication to be part of this great collection should make each one of us very proud indeed. This means that THE JOURNAL will be preserved for generations to come and be read by future collectors yet to be born. I have always taken this publication and the Society very seriously. We are more than just a small group of people with a common interest. Many of the articles and much of the information in THE JOURNAL is of true historical value, which is why I originally decided on the name "The Nikon Historical Society". Now that "THE JOURNAL" is part of the Eastman & European Museums I think the name fits!

On page 16 is a short letter from Mike Symons. He, John Baird and William Adams are planning on attending the March 1988 Chicago camera show. The subject of having a Society convention has come up and I like the idea! We could have it at the same hotel as the Chicago show (I am the treasurer of the Chicago Society. We will be at the Westin hotel near the airport and we always get special rates from the hotel. We could easily have it there) the day before. I could possibly arrange to rent a small meeting room for us. Those who come could combine a trip to Chicago, our show (which is really big!), and the first N.H.S. Convention! Let me hear from you soon. There is only one more issue before March, so send me your thoughts now! Has the time finally arrived for such a convention? Write me!!



ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

THE NIKON "SP2" PROTOTYPE!



BY ROBERT ROTOLONI

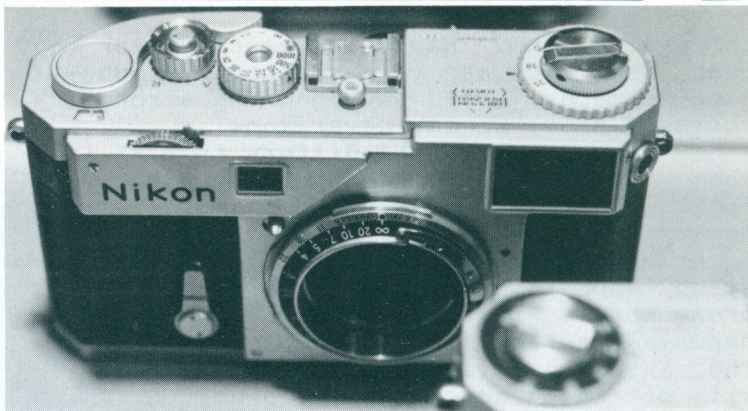
Without doubt the absolute high point of my first trip to Japan was the visit to the original Nippon Kogaku factory in Shinagawa! This event could not have happened if not for the efforts of member Akito Tamla, who had to do a great amount of talking to gain permission for our unusual visit. Tamla-san is one of the charter members of the Society and has been one of my primary sources in Japan for over 8 years. He has provided me with many pieces of information, but what he did for the 3 of us in February was tremendous. He was our guide for the JCII trip as well as the man who arranged for 3 Americans to gain entrance to a place that many Japanese collectors have not been!

The factory proved to be fairly close to our hotel. After a short taxi ride we were ushered into a large meeting room to be greeted by Mr. Shimizu as mentioned in NHS-16. After a long conversation Tamla-san leaned over to say that Mr. Shimizu was going to bring in some prototypes for us to examine!! Among them would be the Nikon SP2!! I am sure a look of disbelief came over my face, for why would three Westerners be shown items that, except for the SP2, had not been seen by the public before. I don't know what Tamla-san said to Mr. Shimizu, but whatever it was it worked! After waiting what seemed an eternity (actually only about 15min.), Mr. Shimizu and an assistant entered the room with a tray containing seven various RF prototypes and placed it on the table in front of us. For the next hour or more we were allowed to examine and handle them to our heart's content. Although we were not allowed to take photographs, I was permitted to make all the quick sketches I could in the time available. This I did as well as many notes. This article will concern itself with the most important item, the finished prototype of the SP2, & consists of drawings made by 2 of our members based on my sketches plus 2 photographs I was able to obtain that showed the very same camera on display at a past Japan camera show where they were under glass for public viewing. I feel that the resulting drawings will provide the members with a very good idea of what that final Nikon RF really looked like!

The SP2 has been a mystery to Nikon collectors for years. I knew very little about it when I did my books (& what I had heard was obviously wrong), but now the real SP2 can be described. I only hope a third book will correct this for those who do not belong to the Society, but for now our membership will be the first to see these drawings. The two photographs reproduced are courtesy of Mr. Okamoto of the Tokyo Nikon club. These were taken at a past Japan New Camera show where they were displayed under glass. Similar photos were seen in a past issue of C.C.N showing the same two cameras. Prototype number 6800004 (the one we were shown) is facing the camera, while 6800005 has it's back to us. They are slightly different but we did not see #5 so a detailed comparison is not possible. There are some obvious differences in external controls but there may also be finder and internal differences as well. Since we did not see it I won't speculate on it at this time. It is #4 that interests us here. Members Joe Higham and Fred Krughoff agreed to make us drawings based on these small photos and my sketches to show as accurately as possible what #4 looked like that day in February that I held it in my hands. Thank you both for your fine efforts. Although a picture is worth 1000 words I feel that I must supplement the drawings with as detailed a description as space allows, so here goes.

The first point that must be made is that, except for a lightly higher superstructure, some redesigned controls, an altered front plate and the obviously different location of the eyepiece, this camera is exactly like the SPs you are all familiar with! I have to stress this. The back would be useable on your SP! The interior is IDENTICAL including the 2 holes that were drilled for a motor (yes it had been drilled!!) It also had a foil shutter. Also identical were the selftimer, eyelets, PC outlet, rewind lever, flash post, focusing wheel, infinity lock, back and the leather! The size and shape were also identical to an SP. It is completely engraved and ready to go! Actually it appeared right out of the box as any regular production camera! There are some dif-

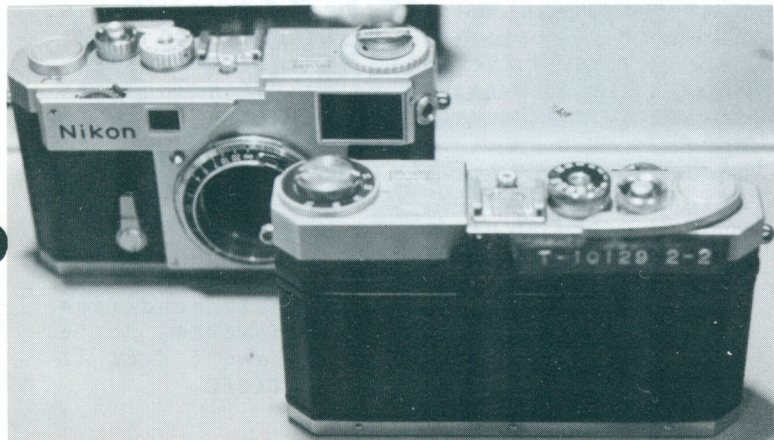
ferences in the controls: the wind lever is very similar to that seen on the Nikkormat cameras; the frame counter is recessed; the AR dial is lower with different ribbing; the speed dial is CHROME finished with very different ribbing and has a stud just like the "F"(for a meter possibly?); the shoe is on the lower level of the top plate, which is stepped like an S2 and NOT an SP!, and is EXTERNALLY attached with 4 screws; the frame selector ring is now the ZOOMING ring since this camera is equipped with a zoom type viewfinder!!, and is CHROME finished; the eyepiece is diopter corrected and located in the CENTER!; the familiar long SP type front window is gone and replaced by an S3 type (but is much larger!), although the word NIKON is still offset and not centrally located like the S3; the edges of the chrome plates have a sharper contour very much like the "F" and similar to the earlier S2 instead of the rounded edges present on the SP/S3/S4/S3M models; the chrome also reminded me more of an "F" than an SP. The camera is in meters and the serial number, Nikon logo and focal plane indicator are exactly the same as the SP. In other words what we have here is an obvious derivative of the SP that has some modernized controls and whose only real changes are the result of the redesigned finder system, which is the real design advance. With eyes closed one would surely think they were holding a stock Nikon SP in their hands for that is how similar it is, yet it is also very different. There was another prototype that day that was obviously an earlier example and it will be covered in later issues. However, it had a zoom type finder as well. Unfortunately, because of all of the excitement of the moment, I cannot remember which camera had which type of finder. One appeared to have a Varifocal finder while the other was more like the Variframe type: Possibly one of the other 3 present that day will remember, but at this time I remember #4 as having a Varifocal(zoom) finder. No parallax correction was apparent and no framelines needed so the frosted window of the SP is gone, thus the S3 type front window. It is possible that actual production



examples were to have some type of parallax indication as well. The code number for this camera was T-10129 2-1, while that for #5 was T10129 2-2. What is interesting is that it is a dymo label instead of an actual engraving, which is what is found on most of the other prototypes we saw. Is it because these were finished items and they didn't want to deface them as an engraving would do?

A question that comes to mind is.... where are #s 1, 2 & 3?? Could the earlier prototype we saw be one of those and simply not engraved, or are three more SP2s hidden somewhere in that Shinagawa plant? We may never know. Another interesting point is that on the earlier prototype (which I promise we will get to in the next issue in detail so that all of this will make more sense), a date is also on the back of the camera as a dymo label. It is 38-5-10! Now, based on the Japanese way of dating things, this would translate as May 10, 1963!!! Four years AFTER the release of the "F"! Also by this time the S3, S4 and S3M were gone and the SP was probably a special order item. The Olympic S3 may have been in the works, but the rest of the rangefinder line, save the SP, was basically history. This could account for the obvious similarities between this camera and the Nikon "F" and Nikkormat cameras. Surely the designers would be influenced by their other current cameras when working on this prototype.

Joe Higham brings up an interesting point. There is no synch window present on this camera such as that found on the SP and F. Could flash synch have been automatic like on the F2? Or is it simply missing and would have shown up on later prototypes? No one knows. Fred Krughoff points out that the 35mm frame is finally included, which corrects one of the largest flaws of the SP. He also speculates that the larger front window might allow for that 35mm to be lifesize! Possibly! He also noticed the one glaring digressive design element of this camera (which is also present on #5 as well as the earlier unnumbered camera). That is the externally mounted accessory shoe! Not since the models I, M & S had Nikon used such a system! The method used on the S2-S3M models was much superior. Could this be just a



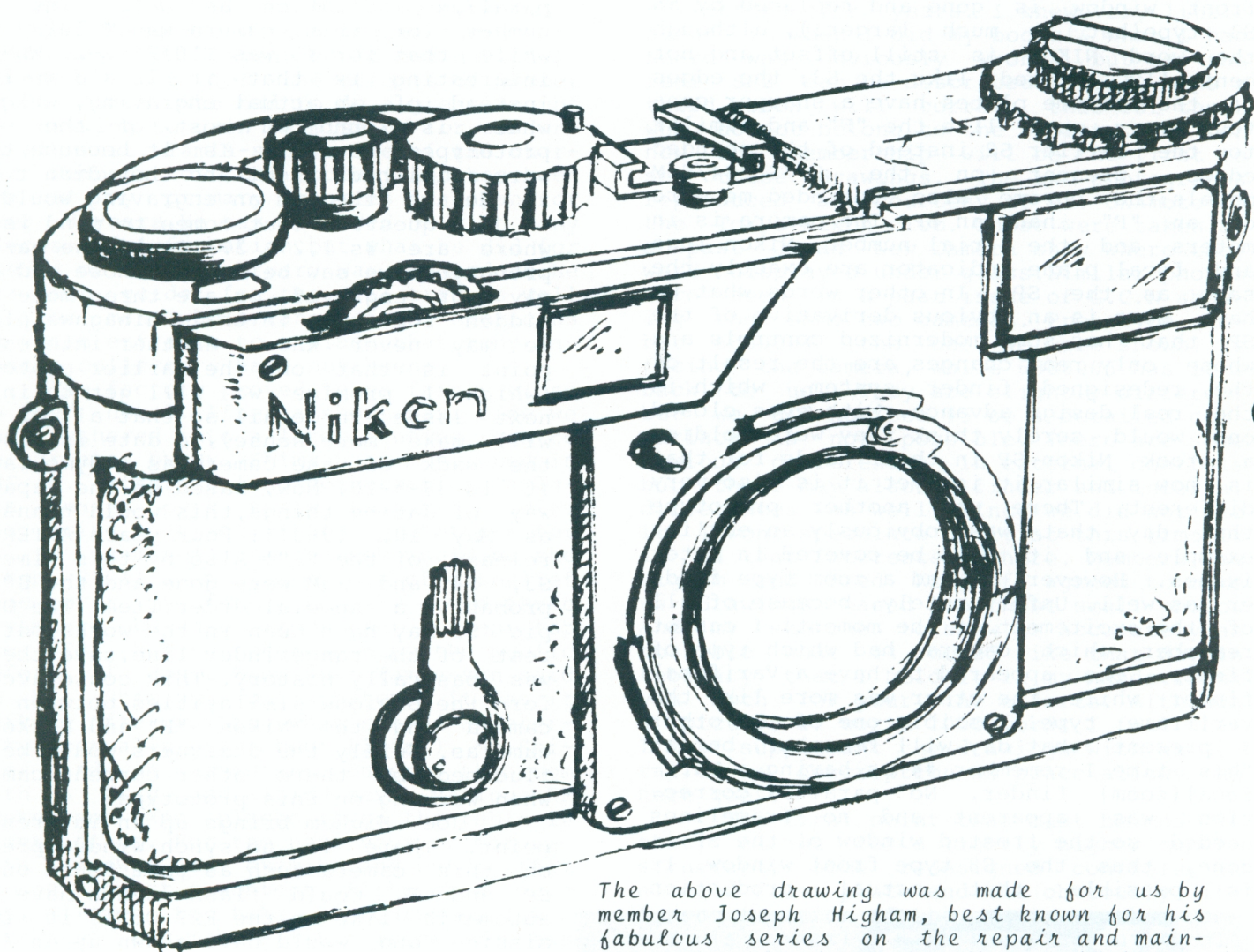
temporary item? Maybe the casting hadn't been modified as yet and actual production cameras would have had the stronger recessed shoe. We may never know.

Also note that #4 differs from #5 in that it has more modern controls (or at least different ones). Although the wind levers and built in frame counters are identical, #4 has chrome finished shutter speed and zooming dials with a much more pronounced "fluting" of the edges as opposed to the finer knurling of the SP. The A/R ring also has this same fluting, all of which never showed up on even the

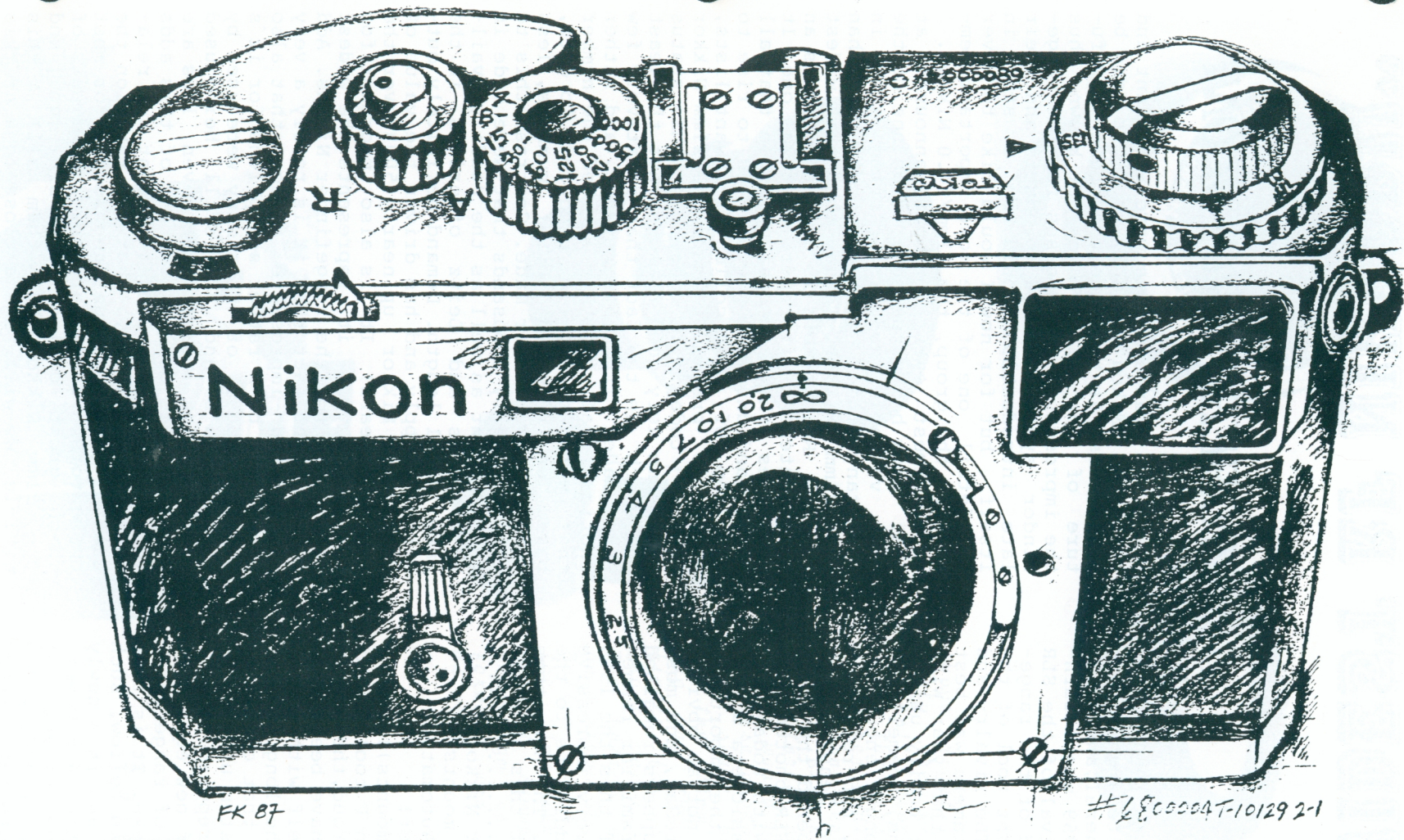
reflex Nikons. However, #5 has the same shutter speed and zooming dials as does the standard SP as well as the same A/R ring. Therefore, #4 appears to be a bit more advanced (or experimental?) than #5 and one wonders which type would have won out if this camera had ever actually been manufactured. Personally I prefer the type seen on #4, if just because it looks so different.

After having seen and held #4 I am left with one thought. Oh how I wish they would have made it!!!

Robert J. Rotoloni



The above drawing was made for us by member Joseph Higham, best known for his fabulous series on the repair and maintenance of the early Nikons, which concludes in this issue. His outstanding graphics ability prompted me to ask him to make some drawings of the prototype. The three-quarter perspective resulted in a slightly different effect that I thought would complement the drawing on the opposite page. Joe made this free-hand sketch before passing on the information I had sent him to Fred Krughoff, whose rendition has much greater detail. However, Joe's drawing has it's own charm and I feel it adds a great deal to this article.



On this page we have member Fred Krughoff's rendition of the Nikon SP2 prototype. Using the same materials as Joseph Higham to guide him, he came up with a distinctly different result. Having more time to study the photos and drawings that I was able to provide, Fred has produced a much more detailed illustrative type drawing that is true to the original to a tremendous extent. It has been over seven months since I held this camera, yet this drawing makes it all come back like it was just yesterday. This illustration is correctly proportioned and scaled and, being larger than life-size, gives the

reader a VERY good idea of what the SP2 really looked like. Note the top controls and how they differ from the SP's. Also note the very different front plate and the altered top plate as well. However, so many other aspects of this camera are identical to the SPs we are used to that the end result is that, although it is different, it is still so very much the same! Now you know why I said that if my eyes were closed I would have thought it was a standard SP or S3! I wish to thank both Joe and Fred for their efforts and I feel fortunate that the Society has such talented and sharing members!!

THE "WIDEST RF NIKKOR!!"

BY ROBERT ROTOLONI

In retrospect, the June 1959 "IPEX" show has proven to be quite significant for both photography in general, and Nikon in particular. The year 1959 was a turning point that saw the arrival of the SLR and the beginning of the end of the rangefinder "35" as the dominant tool of the working photojournalist. The rivalry and debate over which type of camera was best was, more or less, decided that year with the arrival of the first really usable and successful SLR designs, namely the Nikon F and Canonflex. No longer encumbered by waist level finders, non-returning mirrors, and preset or manual lenses, cameras such as the Nikon F opened the doors to the modern era of 35mm SLR photography that we are so familiar with today, and marked the end of the classic era of the rangefinder "35". However, the importance of these new designs were not as obvious at the time as they are today, and most manufacturers and photographers remained strongly attached to their familiar rangefinder systems. Because of this the 1959 "IPEX" also included some very impressive and eventually valuable additions to the Nikon S rangefinder system. The new items announced and first shown at this show included the following.....

50mm/f1.1 External Mount Nikkor!
105mm/f4.0 Nikkor(S & F mounts)!
350mm/f4.5 Nikkor Semi-Automatic!
1000mm/f6.3 Reflex-Nikkor!
21mm/f4.0 Nikkor(S & F mounts)!

All of this and the Nikon F too!!!! Can you imagine how busy, and proud, the people at the Nikon booth must have been! This article will concern itself with one of these final additions to the long and impressive list of equipment that comprised the Nikon S rangefinder system upon which was built the famous Nikon reputation.

This final barrage of new equipment marked the closing chapter of rangefinder development at Nippon Kogaku. It is true that a few items were yet to follow, such as the S3M, the Olympic S3 and it's newly redesigned 50mm/f1.4, and the S4. However, these were only derivatives of existing designs and didn't break new ground, while this final group of products represented new and extensive research and design that is lavished only on a current and viable system. Nikon must have still felt

that the rangefinders were important and that the Nikon F might, or might not, be a success. At the time the tremendous future of the Nikon F was not known, thus the impressive new releases for the rangefinder system. These products and their late introduction could be a story in itself, but for now I would like to cover in detail one of the more important members of the group, the 21mm/f4.0 Nikkor.

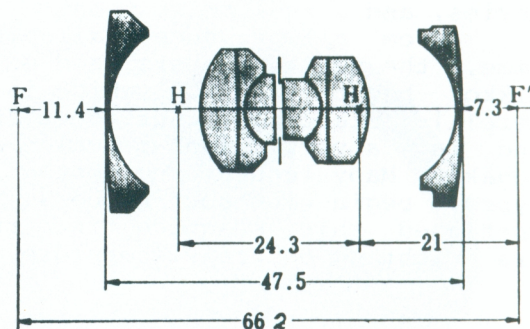
Almost every product announced at that show has turned out to be one of the more valuable and interesting items in the rangefinder line, but none more than the 21mm Nikkor. To say that this widest of all RF Nikkors is a "hot" item is an understatement if there ever was one. It possesses that special mystique that all "rare and unusual" pieces need to rise to the top of most collector's want lists, which is precisely where the 21mm Nikkor resides today. It deserves this status for some very good reasons, not the least of which is the fact that relatively few were made. It's late release, and rather exotic focal length, limited the number that were eventually produced. To date, based on recorded serial numbers, less than 600 were ever made. Contrast this to the literally thousands that were made in the F mount as well as the readily available Zeiss and Leitz offerings in the same focal length. Demand definitely outstrips supply and has driven the value of the 21mm Nikkor up nearly 500% over the last 5 years! It is also important for the fact that it represents the widest lens made for the rangefinder Nikons. Add to this the fact that it is really a very modern and impressive design that also proved to be a rather sharp lens for it's time. Because of this many were used by professionals and are still being used today, which means that even less are available to collectors. All of this adds up to an impressive, important and relatively rare item, that has taken on the status of a "virtual necessity" for most collectors. These are the ingredients of which great collectibles are made, and the 21mm Nikkor has them all! In this article we will take a close look at this important lens and cover it in greater detail than I could in my book, where I had only limited space and could not give it the coverage it deserved.



Above right...Lens #621001 which is probably the first production lens in this series!! Nippon Kogaku would generally give the first item off the assembly line a number ending in "001" and not "000". It is shown here with its proper screw-in shade...Bill Kraus.

Left three photos...This is lens #621011 which would be the 11th 21mm Nikkor made. In these photos is shown not only the correct shade but also the rear cap as well as the 21mm finder. Note that the rear cap has the provision for mounting the finder for storage purposes and that the front cap is the usual 43mm snap-on type. The bottom photo shows this lens mounted on a Nikon SP...Mike Symons.

Bottom right...The optical formula for the 21mm Nikkor. Note that it is nearly a perfect symmetrical design and that the diaphragm is centrally located. This same formula was used for the reflex version as well.



Optical formula of Nikkor-O 1:4 f=21mm.



The eight element 21mm/f4.0 Nikkor was of an advanced optical design using rare earth elements and modern coatings. It's layout was nearly symmetrical with the diaphragm placed squarely at the mid-point. Except for a small modification to the rear element, the S and F versions of this lens were optically identical, since the reflex lens was used with the mirror locked up and a separate finder. The barrel design of the RF 21mm Nikkor was very similar to the new series of Auto-Nikkors released with the Nikon F. That is it had the same satin black design accentuated by one or more chrome rings. The diaphragm was of the more modern equidistant type and the engraving of the front identification was identical in style to that used on the new 50mm/f2.0 Auto-Nikkor. The end result was a lens that appeared more reflex like than the one that was actually made for the "F" and very unlike any of the other wide angles made for the rangefinder series! It looked, and still looks very modern, even by today's standards. I am pointing all of this out in order to support my statement that Nippon Kogaku still felt committed to the rangefinder series. Here we have a lens that arrived very near what turned out to be the end of the RF era at Nikon, yet it is more impressive than its reflex counterpart, and demonstrates that Nikon was willing to put new research and development into the rangefinder system. This lens, along with the 1000mm/f6.3, 350mm/f4.5 in semi-automatic mount, and a completely redesigned 50mm/f1.1, represent many hours of work as well as a great deal of Yen. It seems doubtful that any company would put this amount of effort into a system they were ready to discontinue. I feel that Nippon Kogaku really thought that the "S" and "F" series would coexist for quite some time, possibly through the sixties, and didn't foresee the massive success of the Nikon F and eventual "squeezing" out of the rangefinder system. Whatever the circumstances, the result was one of the most collectible Nikkors in the entire RF series, and a real prize today!

From all evidence available at this time, the serial numbers used on the 21mm Nikkor begin at #621001 (which is pictured here!!). Starting a series at "001" was, and is, a very common practice at Nippon Kogaku. Many lenses, and most of the body types, begin with such numbers. They even continued this practice into the reflex era right up to today. Therefore, the first

production piece is usually "001" and not "000" (which might be reserved for the prototype). When I first wrote my book the highest recorded number was #621330, but I estimated production at around 500 units, allowing for the possible appearance of higher numbered specimens. Since then lens #621526 has been reported to me so production did exceed 500 lenses. How high they really did go is still not definitely known, but the picture will become clearer as more numbers are reported. It is possible that the final figure may go as high as 600, or even 700! But anyway you look at it, production was low and I doubt if supply will ever meet the demand for this lens, especially for collector quality specimens.

One reason that I went a little high with my original estimate had to do with the evidence concerning the special finder made for this lens. Almost from the beginning the serial numbers seen on the finders appeared to go much higher than those for the lenses themselves. The numbers used on the finders appear to begin at either #600001 or #600101 and have been recorded as high as #601656. To date the earliest seen has been #600112, so the actual starting point is unclear. But either way, the numbers suggest between 1600 to 1700 finders were produced, which is entirely out of line with the lens production. The probable answer to this paradox has to do with those lenses made for the Nikon F. As I mentioned in the book, those finders meant for the Nikon F had an entirely different mounting shoe and a different serial number type. This was necessary because the "F" had a unique dove-tail type shoe and no room for the standard type that had been used on 35mm cameras since the Leica A. Because of a lack of space this different finder was not illustrated in the book, but I have included it here for comparison. From the photos it is obvious that, except for the mounting shoe, the two types are actually the very same finder!! As a matter of fact, the "F" version can be used to repair an "S" type, including the glass! The factory simply mounted the special dove-tail shoe the "F" needed and gave it a different number beginning with "200". This brings us back to the inconsistency between the number of lenses and finders produced. From evidence available at this time it appears that during the earlier life of the "F" many of the 21mm reflex lenses were shipped with finders that had



This series shows lens #621302 along with its various accessories. Note the method used to mount the finder to the rear cap for storage. It is compact and works and one wonders why they didnt do the same with other lenses such as the 25mm! Top photo shows the lens and finder mounted on Nikon SP #6200207. Below left illustrates the very deep set rear element of this lens. The small protruding tab helps to prevent scratching the rear glass but careful handling was still necessary! The bottom photo shows boxed versions of both the finder and shade for the 21mm Nikkor. Note that they are plain unmarked boxes with that for the finder finished in grey and the shade in dark blue...R. Rotoloni.



the standard rangefinder type shoe and serial number (which is stamped on the shoe itself)! I have talked to people who recall buying the reflex lens only to discover that they also needed to purchase the small accessory Nikon made that allowed flash units with standard shoes to mount on an "F". This item was made of plastic and metal and fit over the unique "F" rails and was topped with a regular shoe we are all familiar with. Although really meant for flash units, it worked perfectly in this case and allowed any RF finder to be mounted on an "F" if wanted. The point is, however, that reflex 21mm Nikkors were shipped with finders that were originally meant for the RF series, and that it was a random process. The official reflex version of the finder is shown in the earliest "F" literature and was available from the very beginning. If this is what did occur it would explain why at least 3 times as many finders as lenses appear to exist. A further bit of evidence is the fact that this author has actually found two RF 21mm finders with reflex lenses (which I promptly sold but retained the finders!). I have also used a reflex finder to repair an RF version and they are identical in all respects save for the mounting shoes! I have included photos of the reflex version that were missing in my book to make all of this a little clearer.

Another accessory unique to the 21mm Nikkor was the special plastic rear cap. It must qualify as the most elaborate in the RF series, save for that made for the screw mount 50/f1.1 that also had provision for mounting the 50mm finder unique to that lens. Over 2 inches deep to clear the rear element of the 21mm, it also had the ability to retain the finder, although externally as opposed to internally in the case of the f1.1 lens. On its rear surface was molded an actual accessory shoe similar to that found on the cameras themselves. One would simply slide the finder onto the rails for storage, which made for a very compact arrangement. This is illustrated here as well, since there was not sufficient room in the book.

The final accessory made for the 21 has proven to be the most elusive for collectors. Although not every lens is found with its proper rear cap, most are. As for the finder, many have been separated from their matching lens over the years, but many were also used with other makes such as Zeiss and Leitz and can be found,

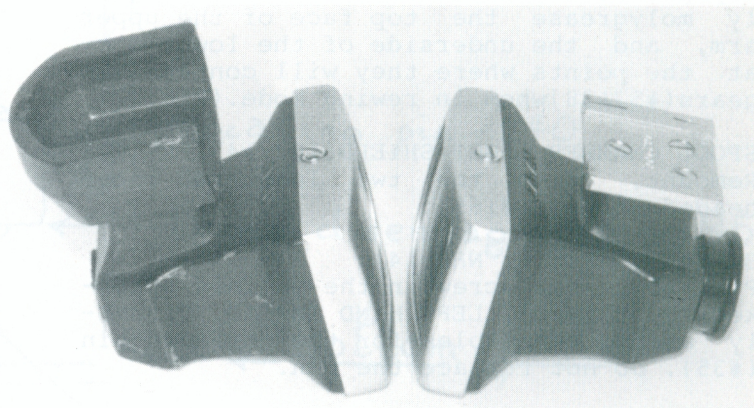
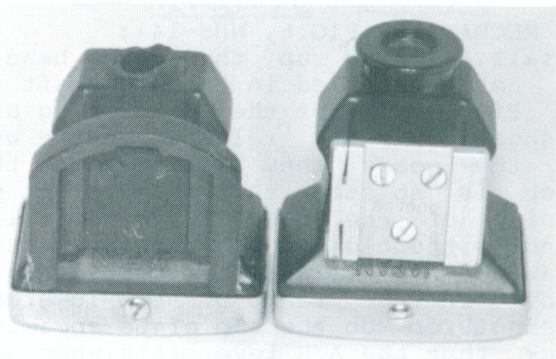
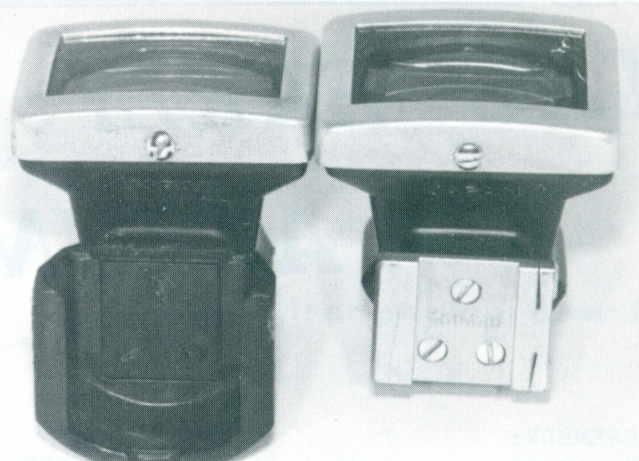
as mentioned, mated to reflex versions of this lens. Unlike the cap and finder, this last item was not sold with the lens as standard equipment, which may account for its rarity today. In addition, it isn't the most impressive item and many were probably set aside and forgotten since it wasn't absolutely necessary for the operation of the lens, as was the finder. I am talking about the extremely hard to locate shade made only for this lens! After collecting Nikons for awhile one realizes that many times small accessories turn out to be the most difficult to find. And shades for certain lenses are a case in point. Take for instance the special filter holder/shade for the 25mm, the massive f1.1 vented shade made in both metal and plastic, the 85/f1.5 shade and the very elusive diaphragm collar for the Micro. In the Nikon system the shade for the 21 has to rank as one of the most desirable and elusive of all. The only sample I own was found separately and did not come with any lens. As a matter of fact, none of the 21s that I have been able to buy have come with the shade. The one pictured here was found in a West Coast store new in its original box having never been mounted. I have only seen 3-4 others over the years and this is the only one I have seen boxed.

It does not bayonet on as does the 25mm type, nor does it snap on like so many others in the Nikon system. It has a 43mm screw mount and does not reverse for storage. Although it is not overly bulky when mounted, it does turn a rather compact outfit into a not so compact one. Add to this the fact that it could not be reversed for storage, and one can see just why so few seem to have been made. Whatever the reasons, the shade for the 21mm Nikkor is today one of the most sought after accessories in the entire Nikon RF system. I have included photos with the shade mounted as well as in its box.

As far as I can determine the 21mm Nikkor was only made in one version, save for those with "EP" markings and the few calibrated in meters. I have examined lens #621001 as well as #621302 and #621330, all of which appear identical. Also pictured here is lens #621011 and it seems to be identical as well. There are two design aspects of the 21 that have always struck me as rather unusual for such a late lens. The first is the extremely reflective front aperture ring. Although it is the satin type, it is really bright!

It's inner surface containing the filter threads is of the same finish. One would think that flare would be an item of extreme concern on such a wide lens, yet this bright chrome ring seems to be just waiting to reflect light. A black finished ring with white lettering would seem to make more sense here. Secondly, the focusing ring has a very fine knurling pattern that is unique to this lens. However, it seems out of place here. By the time this lens was designed Nikon had begun to use it's familiar scalloped focusing ring design on many of its lenses. The new 50mm/f1.1 had it as did the 35mm f1.8 and the new 105/f4.0. The long 180, 250 and 350mm lenses also had this easier to grip design and those other lenses that didn't have it at least had their rings "roughened" over the years for better feel. Also those lenses just introduced for the "F" all had the improved scalloped focusing rings. Why such a late lens as the 21 was not given a version of this new ring instead of one with such fine knurling doesn't quite make sense. However, Nikon did do the same thing with the even later redesigned "Olympic" 1.4, so your guess is as good as mine. Except for these two small points, this widest of all the RF Nikkors is also one of the most impressive in the system and ranks as a true collectible today.

Robert J. Rotoloni



The photos on this page illustrate the differences between the RF and reflex versions of the finder. I did not have space in my book to show this although I did mention it in the text. Except for the different shoes these finders are absolutely identical! Yet another type was made for the "F" which has a metal shoe instead of plastic, but I could not obtain one for this article. However, again the finder is the same and only the shoe varies. The photo to the left shows the "F" version mounted on the special dovetail shoe unique to the reflex Nikons. So now I hope what I was talking about in my book finally makes sense!...R. Rotoloni.

THE EARLY NIKONS,

AN "INSIDE" LOOK.....

BY JOSEPH HIGHAM

PART 5:

REASSEMBLY:

Have issues 13,14,15,& 16 at hand & keep to the following sequence...

A/R MECHANISM-(FIG.6, NHS-14):

Install, lining up the screw head with the notch we filed in the A/R shaft (83). See Figure 19 for the positioning of the disengaging arms, relative to the worms, and the gears they actuate. The thread pitch is so steep that the correct positioning of the disengaging arms will be found without difficulty. Insure that the locating pin (#140) is seated in the groove at the rear of the lower arm's housing. Drop on the top plate loosely, and check that the A/R lever (#18) when seated on the squared top of the A/R shaft, can be positioned at the correct angle (i.e. butting against the "A" stop post on the top plate). Do not actuate the lever. Lightly molygrease the top face of the upper arm, and the underside of the lower arm, at the points where they will contact the gears (#57&38) when in rewind mode. (Fig.22)

SPOOL CHAMBER LIGHT SHIELD(182/143,NHS16)

Remount, using the two lacquered round headed screws (#165).

SPROCKET (FIG.6, NHS-14):

Position, then screw in the splined sprocket gear (#60), LEFT HAND THREAD. Visually align the holes for the threaded pin (#35). Do not replace the pin.

WIND ASSEMBLY (FIG.17, NHS-16):

Replace, lining up the flanged mounting (#153) with the scribe marks.

SPOOL:

Insert the spool's cross shaft in the drive sleeve (#179), then remount the bottom bracket (#141) using the two lacquered round headed screws (#142).

CLOSING CURTAIN LATCH SHAFT (FIG.11, #78, NHS-15):

Pass the shaft through its upper bearing, insuring that it is correctly located in the bottom plate and resting on the flat release spring (#63). Note the position of the shaft (FIGURE 20) between the

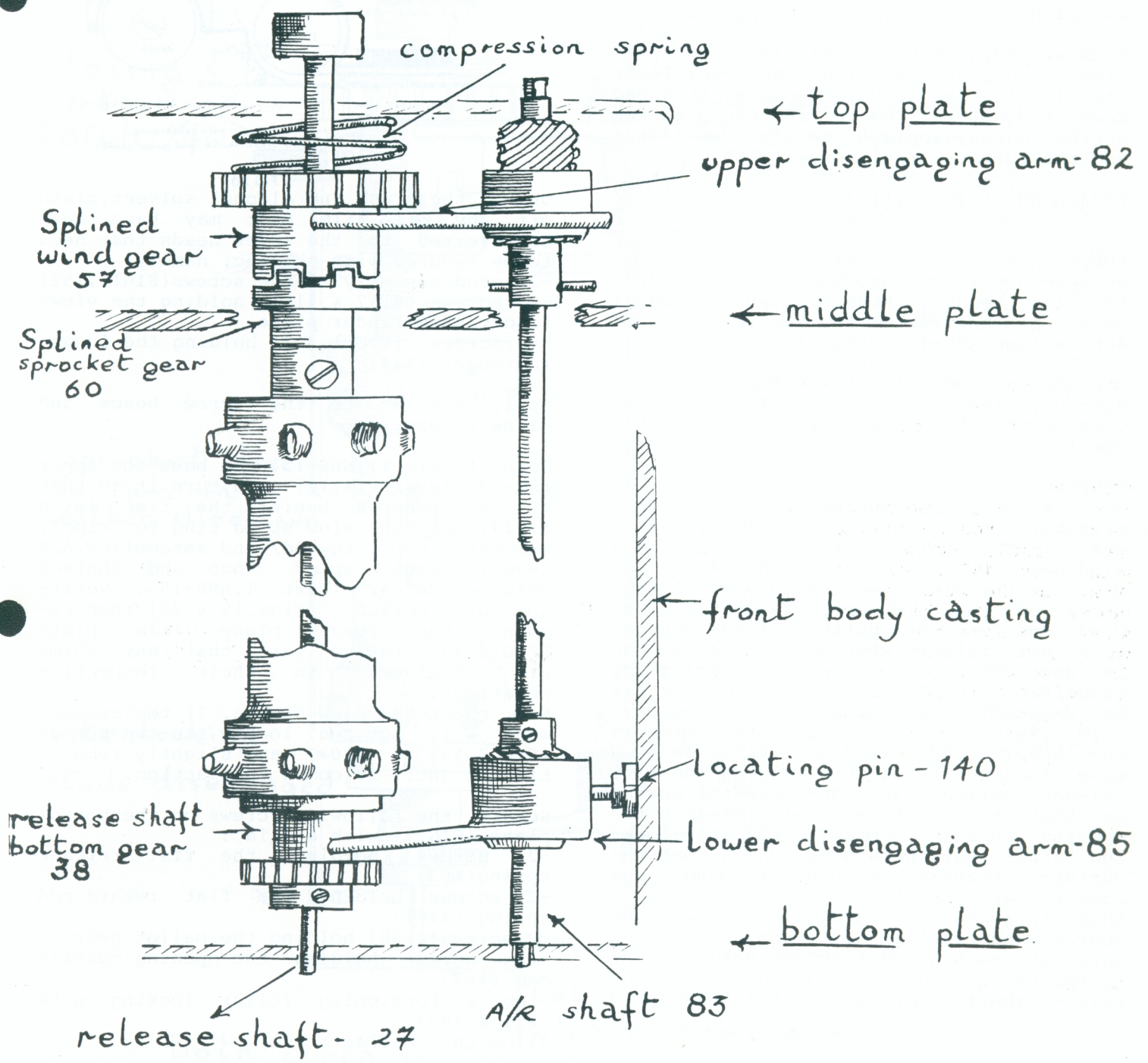
sprocket and the spool chamber light shield. Check for clearance. The latch itself (#74) must be positioned BEHIND the latch positioning post (#75) as in Figure 21. The high speeds can be adjusted by moving the striking point of the disengaging cam (#76) towards or away from the cam by turning either the eccentrically mounted positioning post (#75), OR, on later models, the eccentric stud (FIG.21). This delays or advances the release of the closing curtain, and changes ALL the high speed settings. It can be considered as a final trimming adjustment for the high speeds, as the basic timing is controlled by the curtain overlap and spring tensions. Do not adjust the eccentric stud or post without a shutter speed tester. Lightly molygrease the striking lobe or eccentric stud and the hooking post (#88) for the closing curtain latch spring (#115), which should be remounted.

RETARD ROD (FIG.11, #105):

Position, with its stepped end located in the bottom plate and resting on the flat retard spring (#101). Replace the coil spring (#106), oil the post (FIG.16, #150), replace the follower (#104) and its spring (#114), the tail of which presses against the latch spring post (#171). Now lightly grease the lobe of the follower where it will contact the slow speed cam (see Part 3), and the outer leading edges of the upper retard lever (FIG.11, #118).

FOCAL PLANE LIGHT SHIELDS(FIG.17,18-NHS16)

First replace the lower (#144) and then the upper (#145), noting the position of the threaded cleat (#146) by its scribe mark. Pay particular attention to the clearances (FIG.20) so that the light shields do not rub against the drum, curtains, tapes or metal curtain tabs (they overlap) or the tensioning rollers. The focal plane light shields have elongated screw holes to allow for adjustment. If necessary, reform the shields to avoid contact with moving parts.



A/R Assembly in "advance" position

FIG 19

Insure that the flat headed screws (#147) are used to secure the upper focal plane light shield (#145), and that they are seated below the level of the plate.

VIEW/RANGEFINDER PLATE (FIG.15):

Clean the platform, align the lower lever (#156) with the keyhole opening, then bed down the plate. Match the edges to the scribe marks, replace the 3 screws (#167) and the forward small screw (#168).

ESCAPEMENT (FIG.11,#123):

Replace (see Part 3, NHS-15).

FOCUSING MOUNT (FIG.1,#44):

Replace, noting that the top right screw is flat headed. Mount a lens and reset both the horizontal and vertical coincidences (see NHS-13, page 11).

DISENGAGING CAM (FIG.16,#76,NHS-16):

Remount. Insert the spring (#174) and secure with the screw (#173). Grease the cam lobe.

TESTING:

NOW, without remounting the top plate, reinstall the release shaft (#27), bottom gear (#38), collar (#39), and splined wind gear (#57). See Part 2, NHS-14. Drop on the wind gear assembly (FIG.2,#15) screw on the high speed knob (#16), and wind and fire the shutter. If the shutter will not release when the shutter button is depressed, then check the interlocking studs (FIG.6,#61&62-Fig22): they may still be engaged, even though the locking pawl (FIG.7,#64) has moved out of the notch in the opening curtain cam (#65). In this case loosen the screws holding the flat release spring (#63) and move the spring so that the locking pawl releases the opening curtain cam AFTER the interlocking studs have separated. Check that the curtains traverse without rubbing, and that the drum rotates freely. Look through the focal plane at a light source and verify that there is an exposure at each speed setting. Make any adjustments needed and then dismantle the release shaft mechanism (Part 1, NHS-13).

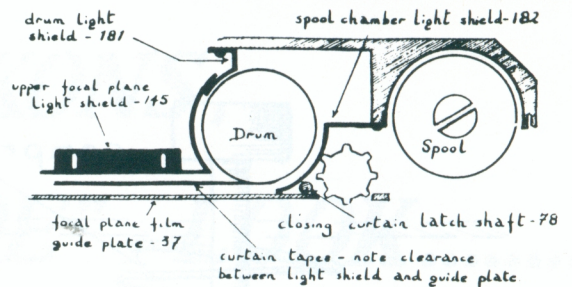


FIG 20

Using the brush and alcohol solvent, clean off any oil film that may have been transferred to the screw heads that need to be secured with shellac, namely:

- 3 wind assembly flange screws (FIG.16, 152)
- 4 screws (#167 & #168) holding the viewfinder/rangefinder plate
- 4 screws (FIG.1,#42) holding the focusing mount (#44)

Apply shellac to the screw heads and allow to dry.

Turn to Fig.11, NHS-15. Push back the upper retard lever (#118) and turn it so that it is propped behind the time latch (#117). Set the slow speed ring to "time". Remount top, rewind/wind assemblies, A/R lever, high speed knob and shutter release collar (Part 1, NHS-13). Verify the A/R action (Figs.19 & 22) then remount the focal plane film plate (FIG.3,#37), taking care that any shims are replaced in their respective positions.

Now check the slow speeds. If the escapement will not run, loosen the two screws (Fig.7,#93 & #103) and slightly reposition it until it comes into action.

Secure the following screws on the bottom plate (FIG.7) with shellac:

- 2 screws holding the flat release spring (#63)
- 2 screws holding the flat retard rod spring (#101)
- 2 screws (#100) holding the pallet gear
- the screws holding the opening curtain cam (#65)
- the 2 tensioning roller locking nuts (#91 & #92)

Allow the shellac to dry.

Replace the bottom cover (FIG.7,#89) and the front plate (FIG.1,#43) using the long chrome trim screws (#41) at the bottom. Replace the camera back and lens, and put it back in the showcase!!

I sincerely hope that this series has brought you enjoyment and heightened your interest in these bench-built specimens from the all mechanical camera era. The early Nikons echo the turning points of history, where great events had small beginnings!

Joseph G. Higham

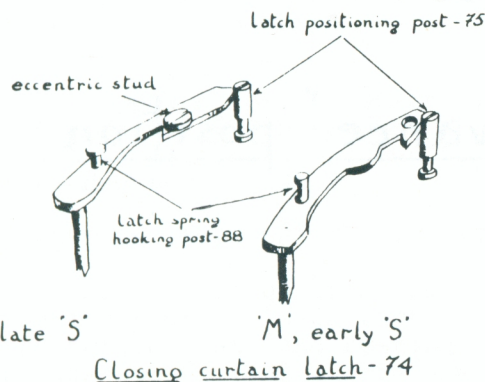


FIG 21

shutter button lowered

closing curtain latch, 74

upper disengaging arm raised, separating the splined gears and releasing the closing curtain, by lifting the latch. -74

sprocket free to turn in either direction

interlocking studs disengaged

lower disengaging arm moved down

release shaft lowered

flat release spring deflected, releasing the opening curtain.

Both curtains traverse together, overlapped, so that there is no accidental exposure of the last frame.

A/R Assembly in rewind position

FIG 22

Classified

WANTED...Shade for 25/f4.0; shade for the 50/f1.1(either metal or plastic version); case for 21/f4.0; 85/f2.0 MIOJ outfit w/caps,shade,cs;l05/4.0 outfit; close-up device for S & S2,either lens; mini-35 fdr. w/box; SP illuminator w/cs.

TRADE...l35/f3.5 Exacta mt #264542,outfit Leitz early Valoy (Cento) 40" post enlarger w/Varob 5cm 3.5 lens #546103, Leitz slotted 9x11 easel, EX++.

Mike Symons, 3844 Merriman Dr, Victoria, B.C. Canada, V8P 2S9-(604) 477-1867 after 6:00 PM Pacific time.

WANTED...Nikon S3 (preferably black); S36 motor drive; 28/f3.5; 85/f2.0 (black);and 50/f1.1. Please write to....

Jan-Henrik Sellin, Humboldtallee 26, 3400 Gottingen, West Germany-phone (551)47110.

WANTED...21/f4.0, Micro-Nikkor, 85/f1.5, 180/f2.5, 250/f4.0...Jeremy Rowe, 2331 E. Del Rio Dr., Tempe, Arizona 85282 (602) 839-3713

WANTED...Micro-Nikkor; 105/f4.0; 350/f4.5 for rangefinder. Have many Nikon Rf items for trade. List on request. Purchase &/or cash and trade are alternatives.

Joseph Higham,4328 S.Union Ave,Alliance, Ohio 44601-(216)821-3510 days or (216)823-7465 evenings.

NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for the next issue of "THE NIKON JOURNAL" will be December 1,1987.It is important that I receive any articles and photos by this date so that I can get NHS-18 together before the Christmas holidays. It is a busy time of the year and the most difficult issue to produce on time, so please get all contributions to me as soon as possible. I hope to have further information on the prototypes we saw at Nippon Kogaku. Also it is the last issue before the March Chicago show and "IF" we will actually have some sort of convention I would need to publish & put together as much information on it as is possible. If you have any thoughts, ideas or suggestions on such a meeting PLEASE get your letters to me as soon as possible so I can have a good idea of where this idea is really going. Let me hear from you! Believe me, March is usually one of the best months to travel to this part of the country!

letters TO THE Editor

From Mike Symons...John Baird, Bill Adams and I are planning to come to visit you at the Chicago show next March.This might be a good opportunity to think about an N.H.S. convention! I'll bet we could interest about 40-50 members to attend! Lets think about this over the next few months and see. What a ball we could have! We could either have our convention a couple of days before the show, or after. We could hold our own "in-house" swap meet, some agenda items, guest speakers, talk about your trip to Japan, socialize, etc. Please let me hear your comments on such a happening.

I have envisioned some sort of convention for the members since day one. However, I knew it couldn't happen until the Society was more or less firmly established. We needed to get a few years under our belts and I needed to prove to the members that I was serious about this group and that I planned on staying with it. Now that we are 4 years old it should be obvious to everyone that I am committed to keeping the Society going as long as I possibly can. Please refer to the Editorial page for my thoughts on this matter. R.J.R.

NEW MEMBERS

Michael Eichert
Kirchstrabe 18
7149 Freiberg-Heutingsheim
West Germany

International Museum of Photography
George Eastman House
900 East Ave.
Rochester, N.Y. 14607

NEW ADDRESSES

Jeffrey Neumann
9960 Mt. Eaton Rd.
Wadsworth, Ohio 44281

Gerald Page
507 Superior Ave.
Newport Beach, CA 92663-3630

Jeremy Rowe
2331 E. Del Rio Dr.
Tempe, Arizona 85282

Roy Vose
13434 Christian Barrett Dr.
Moorpark, CA 93021

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.

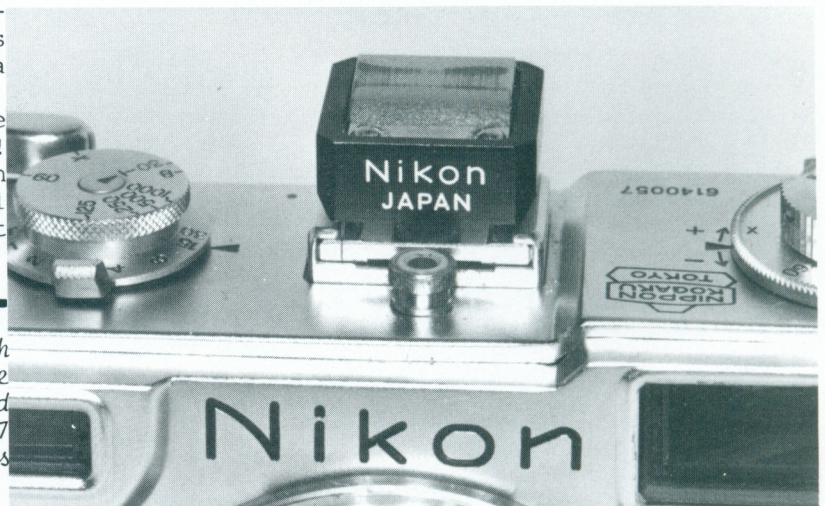
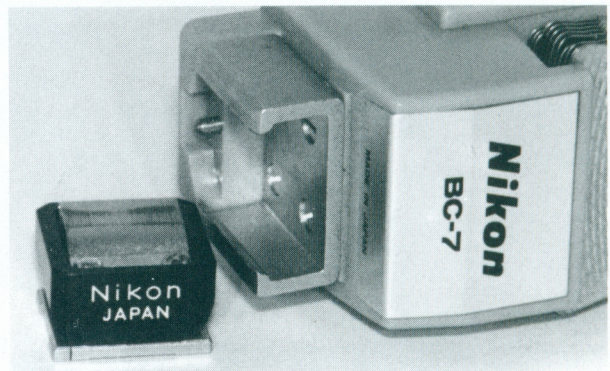
THANK YOU.

In the last issue of THE JOURNAL I published a small photograph of a very unusual accessory and asked if anyone could identify the item. I felt it would be a challenge since it is really a rather obscure little piece I'd never seen until member Steve Fischer sent it to me about a year ago. However, I did receive one correct answer, and the winner is..... Bill Kraus (who else!). Bill has always been the most knowledgeable source of information on the more obscure & esoteric items made by Nikon. For well over a decade Bill has amazed me with all sorts of little accessories he seems to find on a regular basis, so I felt that if anyone would know the mystery item he would. Well I was right. Within days of mailing the Journal I received a card from Bill with the correct answer.

The item in question allows the BC-7 flash unit to be used on the Nikkormat or any camera with a standard type accessory shoe (which the Nikon F DID NOT have!). It converts the standard shoe to the special dove-tail shoe found under the rewind assembly on the F. Naturally it could also be used on the RF cameras for the same reason. Therefore, if you had a BC-7 unit you could use it on your SP with this adapter. A synch cord would be needed and was sold as an option with the BC-7. So there you have it. One of those little obscure items that every system camera maker produces sooner or later. The photos show how it works and are better than a 1000 words anyway.

Congratulations Bill for being the winner of the First N.H.S. Booby Prize!!! I will send you a genuine Booby as soon as I can find one!!!!!!?? Maybe one will turn up at the next show I attend. I just hope it will be one made by Nikon!???

The 2 top photos show how the BC-7 flash would slide onto this special shoe while the bottom photo illustrates it mounted on a Nikon S2. One can see how the BC-7 could be used on an RF Nikon as well as the "F" for which it was designed!



NIKON JOURNAL



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SUBMITTED BY STEPHEN GANDY