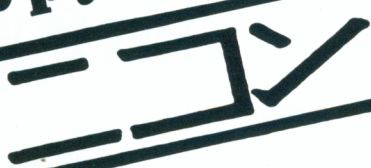


A PUBLICATION OF THE NIKON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



DEC. 31, 1994
NHS-46

Happy New Year!

The Nikon  JOURNAL



THIS ISSUE..

PG.2--THE NIKON VERTEXOMETER
PG.4--THE NIKON STORY BY T. ARAKAWA
PG.8--THE LENS THAT SHOT RONALD REAGAN

ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

NHS THE
NIPPON KOGAKU **NIKON**
TOKYO **JOURNAL**

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NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for the next issue of the Nikon Journal, #47, is March 1, 1995. If you plan any contributions in the form of an article or photos, please get them to me by that date so I can bring out #47 on schedule. Thank you. RJR

EDITORIAL

As we close out 1994 and look back we can see that it has been an eventful year for Nikon collecting and this Society. On a personal level we lost a major force in Nikon collecting with the death of my friend Jose Wu Chang. I've received many calls and letters from members all over the globe concerning Jose, and he will be missed, as will our other losses, Bob Harris and Bill Fraker.

This year saw the fourth NHS Convention. Not only was it the first to be held outside of the United States, it was also the most successful to date with nearly twice the attendance of its predecessors. It will be a hard act to follow but we must begin thinking about NHS-Con5 to be held in 1996. To this end I have enclosed for each of you a separate questionnaire requesting your comments and feedback on this very subject. "PLEASE" take the time to answer it as truthfully as you can and return it to me at the Society address on this page as soon as possible. The more members who respond the better feel we will have for what is needed to make NHS-Con5 a success. So don't throw it away!??!

Nikons keep turning up at major auctions! More rare and unique items came out this year than in any previous one. Yet another important piece was sold at Christie's and is covered on pages 12 & 13 with information on upcoming sales as well.

You will notice the slightest of format changes this issue mainly on this page. Part of the reason is a lack of space, another part is simply trying new ideas to keep the Journal fresh looking, and a third part just may have something to do with the "Griffin" letter in NHS-45 and the response I have received because of it. Thus I have shrunk the Editorial and redone the contents page. I feel it looks better and a smaller editorial is no problem with me. For a good sample of member responses concerning the "Griffin" letter please turn to pages 17 & 18. I plan a response in NHS-47 in the form of an "open letter", but till then I think you will find the letters in this issue interesting.

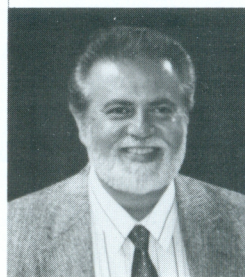
This issue filled up so fast that I literally had to move a few contributions to the next Journal! There have been times when an article did not fit, but this time it was actually 3 pieces! I can't say I mind, since having too much is better than too little! All kinds of interesting items in this issue that I hope you will enjoy.

One not so good note to pass on to you. At the London Show former member Roger Reinke had stolen the following items. Please be on the look out for these items:

Black SP #6210571 w/f1.1 Nikkor #141497

If these are offered to you "Beware!" Also contact Roger or the Society as soon as possible. Thank you.

One last note: on January 1st the U.S. Post Office is raising its rates by 10%! That means this issue went out at the higher prices, so I don't know my actual costs as I write this page. However, a simple 10% means about \$300.00 a year to me. Hopefully, I will be able to hold the line on dues, and will make every effort to do so. Such is life!



ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

THE NIKON VERTEXOMETER

by **PETER LOWNDS**

Just after the end of WWII, under the keen eye of the Occupation Forces and General MacArthur, Nikon needed to quickly find products for civilian use (just to meet the payroll each week was a challenge). Nikon had been reduced in size from a wartime level of 23,000 people and nearly 25 factories, to just 900 people and 2 plants. Four working groups were set up, one being the "Kake Megane Inkai", or glass committee, set up to look into the need for glass for the home market. Nikon had perfected glass melting early on. Some civilian uses seen as a market for their glass included: eyeglasses; microscopes; binoculars; photographic lenses; theodolites & transits.

This is a Nikon "Vertexometer" (or Dioptrimeter), made in "Showa 21", or 1946. What is a Vertexometer, you ask? Well, if you should not be able to read this page without wearing spectacles, chances are your glasses have been measured in a Vertexometer.

This well made optical instrument contains enough metal to make 10 Nikon I camera bodies. It has all the signs of a bench made tool, drilled and machined by hand. Its serial number is 607325 with the first 3 digits signifying the month & year the project was started (6/47). The 4th digit might be for the project itself and the actual number of this unit being 25. On all the parts is stamped by hand #338. This was done so it could be disassembled for painting and finishing, then reassembled. Nikon made about 270 Vertexometers up until about 1954, when Nikon entered the export market for glasses. By 1950 Nikon were making about 50,000 49mm diameter lenses a year, and by 1954, 150,000 a year. However, the diameter had been increased to 52mm to allow for larger Western style frames.

How Does it Work??

Having got older and the eyes weaker, you go to an optician to have your eyes tested. He would measure the eye correction and also the curvature of your eyeball and the distance between your pupils. This information would then be used to make the lenses to correct your eyes, at which point the glasses would be mounted into frames. And this is where the optician would use a Vertexometer.

The term "eyeball" is not accurate as the human eye is elliptical, like a Rugby football. Some people need to have cylinder type glass (a top view of the lens would be like a section out of a bottle). Most just need a round concave or convex lens, but 25% need an anamorphic type lens. When mounting the glasses into the frames, the optician would need to find the optical center of each lens in relation to the pupil. On the first type of Vertexometer, this would be done with the aid of an optical pencil. First the center would be found, then its optical axis. For frame alignment we see in a 2nd type that Nikon had a re-think about this instrument. One improvement is the use of 3 ink pens which, after rotation of the uncut lens in the Vertexometer, the lens axis could be marked with the 3 red pens for later use in mounting the lens into the frames.

TYPE ONE:

Has on the side a lens/view finder which, when the light is switched on, the lens correction can be read on a scale of +/- 10 diopter. A small yoke is used to hold in place the unmounted glass. The mount, made from brass, can be adjusted up/down about 20mm. The lamp is within a heavy chrome on brass mount with "MIOJ" engraved around the base. A 2nd variation can be seen in the "75 Years of Nikon" book with the 3 red pens in place. Only 270 Type I's were made.

TYPE TWO:

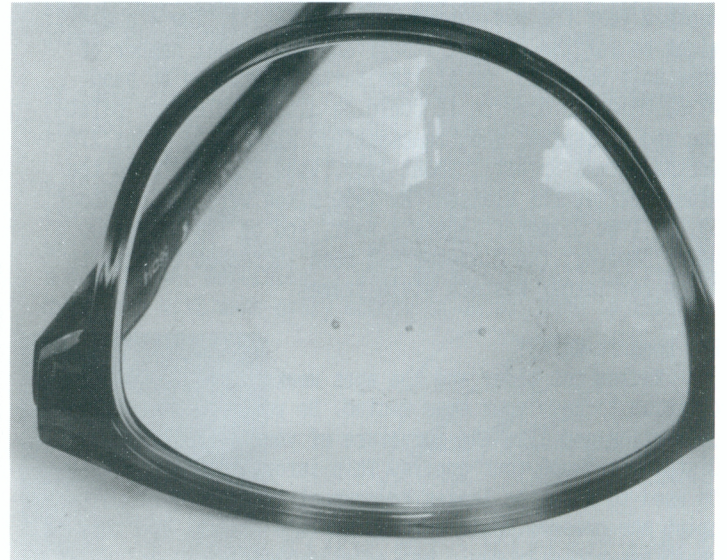
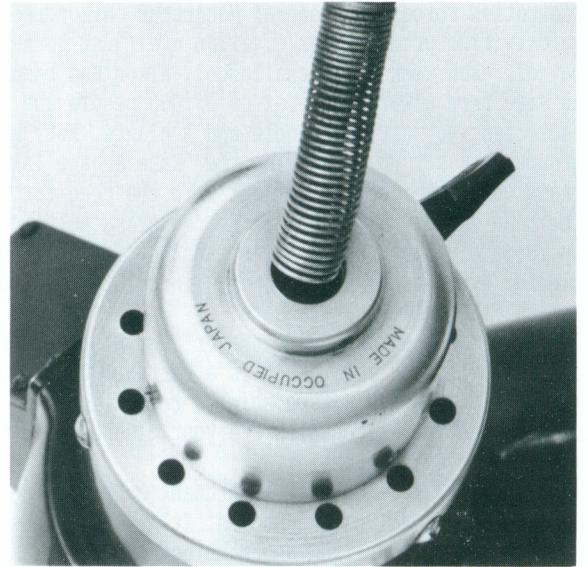
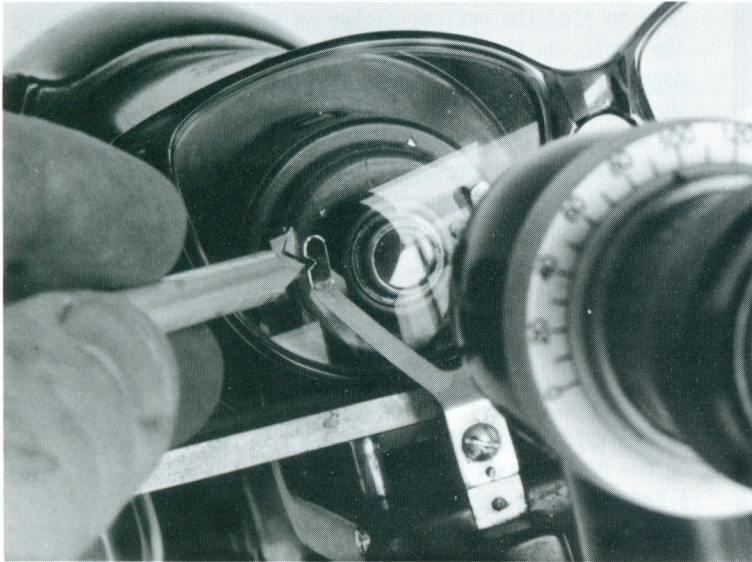
This is a truly mass produced optical instrument made from 1953 onwards. The #5341 must mean that this is unit #41. Made for the expanding export market, according to the Nikon 75 years book, 439 Type II's were made. Unlike the Type I, jigs were used to improve the quality and finish.

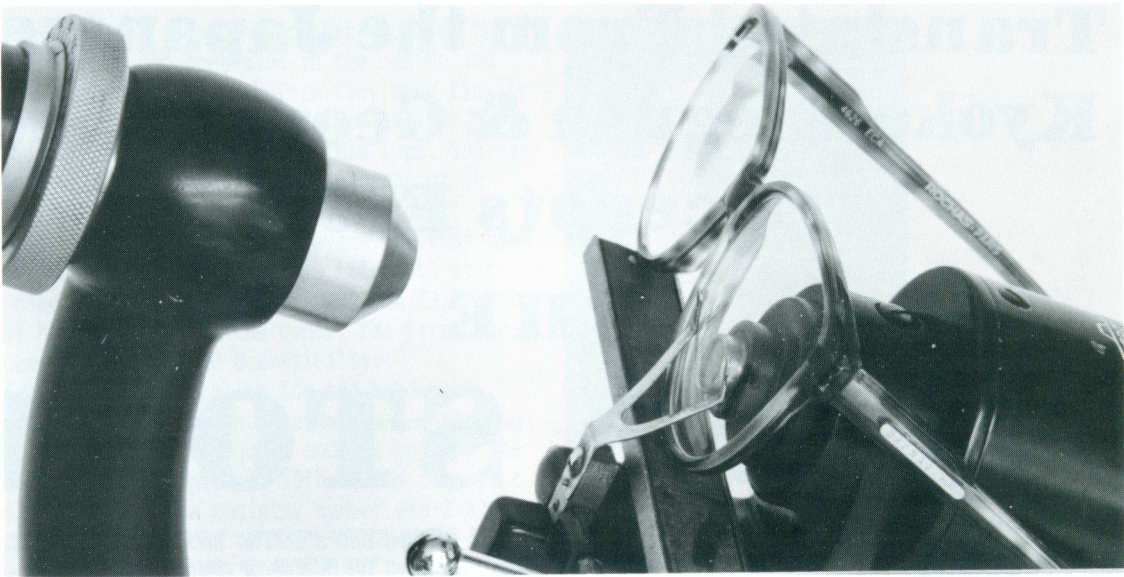
With the light switched on and a lens in place, looking through the eyepiece, the diopter of the glass can be seen, plus a cross. The cross is used for lens alignment. After centering the axis could be read and marked with the 3 red pens. The middle pen showing the center, and the left and right dots showing the direction of the lens. Draw a line across the 3 points and the center & direction of the lens is now known. In this model Nikon used a lot of bakelite to lessen weight.

I have a book on Japanese optical instruments printed in 1974. It shows a Type III & IV. Nearly 28 years after the Type II it looked much the same, save for the cream grey finish. I do not as yet have one in my collection, but when I do I'm sure it will find its way into the pages of the Journal.

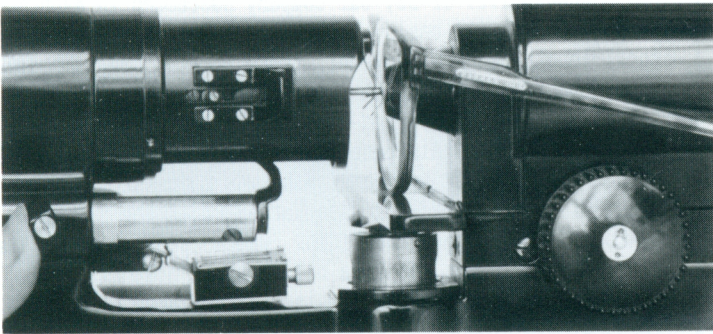
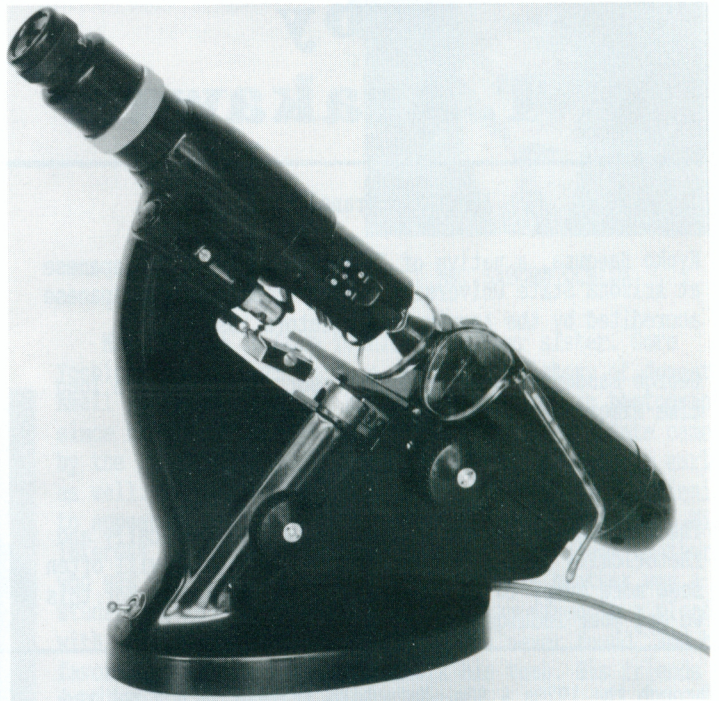
AT RIGHT IS THE TYPE I NIKON VERTEXOMETER. THIS PARTICULAR UNIT IS #607325 (WITH THE FIRST 3 DIGITS DENOTING THE YEAR AND MONTH OF PRODUCTION...IN THIS CASE JULY 1946), WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN DURING THE OCCUPATION. THIS IS VERIFIED BY THE "MIOJ" ENGRAVING FOUND ON THE HEAVY CHROME ON BRASS BASE OF THE LAMP HOLDER. THE PHOTO BELOW ILLUSTRATES HOW THE OPTICIAN WOULD HAVE MARKED THE GLASSES WITH A PENCIL. FIRST THE CENTER WOULD BE FOUND, THEN THE DIRECTION OF THE LENS. THE TYPE I VERTEXOMETER REQUIRED THE USE OF A SPECIAL OPTICAL PENCIL. THE LATER TYPE II MODEL MODERNIZED THIS PROCEDURE BY USING THREE INK PENS. THE BOTTOM RIGHT PHOTO SHOWS HOW THE TYPE II VERTEXOMETER WOULD "MARK" THE OPTICAL BLANK.

(PHOTOS BY PETER LOWNDS)





THE TYPE I MODEL REQUIRED THE USE OF AN OPTICAL PENCIL TO MARK THE GLASS. THE NEWER TYPE II IMPROVED ON THIS WITH A SYSTEM OF 3 INK PENS. THE BOTTOM PHOTO SHOWS THE STAGE WITH THE PENS AT A 45 DEGREE DOWNWARD ANGLE IN THEIR INK WELL. THE PHOTO DIRECTLY BELOW ILLUSTRATES THE INK PENS IN THEIR WORKING POSITION ABOUT TO MARK THE MOUNTED OPTICAL BLANK. THIS NEW CONFIGURATION ALSO ALLOWED FOR LARGER LENS BLANKS SINCE NIKON WERE NOW USING 52MM BLANKS FOR THE EXPORT MARKET INSTEAD OF 48MM. (PHOTOS BY PETER LOWNDS)



Translated From the Japanese by Kyoko Saegusa & George Landon Excerpts From

THE NIKON STORY

by
T. Arakawa

About the Translators

Kyoko Saegusa, a native of Japan, is Lecturer in Japanese at Arizona State University, and a translator of Japanese accredited by the American Translators Association.

George Landon is a retired professor of English and long time Nikon user.

About Translation

The English and Japanese languages are grammatically and rhetorically very different. A translated text will often seem more bumpy to the reader than the original. For this we beg your indulgence.

Through the 1970s & 80s, Tatsuhiko Arakawa, a now retired employee of Nippon Kogaku, published a trilogy of books tracing the development of the small precision camera industry in Japan. These books, *The Bright Darkbox* (1975), *The Nikon Story* (1981) and *The Founding* (1986), are well known to collectors and researchers in Japan, but since they have not been translated into English, they and the stories they tell are relatively unknown in the West. The books deal not only with the various products, but also with the people who founded the companies, both Nippon Kogaku (Nikon) & Seiki Kogaku Kenkyujo (Canon), and then went on to design & manufacture their now famous products.

Here, we present in translation two small tidbits from "The Nikon Story". These two short sections are the first of 4 which will reveal the special character of the relationship between Nikon and Canon at the time the latter company was founded.

THE NIKON STORY-CHAPTER 1: RESIDENTS OF THE GERMAN VILLAGE.
Section 5: THE BIRTH OF THE HANSA CANON

1) HOW CANON GOT STARTED

The number of 35mm lenses manufactured during the war years was insignificant; optical weaponry manufacturing was the mainstay. However, under the pressure of the military authority as the state of war became more intense, it became more difficult to maintain the production of even this small number of lenses.

In 1931, Nippon Kogaku chose the uniform name "NIKKOR" for all photo lenses. The following passage appears in the book "Forty Years" (the title of the official history of Nippon Kogaku!):

"Around 1929 or 30, our company succeeded in manufacturing, on a trial basis, an advanced quality lens with a focal length of 50mm. However, there were no camera bodies made domestically on which to mount the lens. Thus, there was no prospect of selling the lens." (p.63)

According to this passage, an advanced quality lens, which seems to have been an f/3.5, was successfully made around 1929 or 30 and sold soon after under the name of NIKKOR. However, the name NIKKOR was adopted in 1931. The above account, thus, seems a bit ahead of history.

There is another passage in "Forty Years" concerning the 5cm/f3.5 NIKKOR. According to this passage, the lens was completed in 1937, which complicates the story further:

"...(The lens) was originally designed for 35mm cameras. Such lenses require greatly reduced aberrations because negatives had to be enlarged to great magnifications. In the beginning the calculated figures seemed exceedingly small compared to the various lenses we had made previously. We made a pilot and discovered that it was a little inferior to the ELMAR produced by Leitz. We then made several pilots and perfected the lens in July 1937. This was the standard 5cm/f3.5 that was mounted on Canon cameras and released into the market." (p.527)

As you can see, there are contradictions in the account of the history of the company. However, it's quite possible that they began developing this lens in 1929 or 30. It had been a few years since the Leica was introduced, and the ELMAR lens that Professor Berek had designed was earning a greater and greater reputation for itself. It's conceivable that Kakuya Sunayama got very interested in this lens and

began designing a lens for 35mm cameras that equalled the ELMAR. Many improvements had been made in the design and much research had gone into pilots before they were finally convinced that it would stand as a product in 1934.

Sunayama had great expectations for this lens. You can catch a glimpse of his dedication from an excerpt of an interview in "A Round Table Talk on the Nikon Story."

"Morita: As for the 5cm/f3.5, Mr. Sunayama, at that time you looked as though you threw your whole life into it."

The first camera that mounted the NIKKOR 5cm/f3.5 that Sunayama's zeal had created, was the Canon, the first precision small camera manufactured domestically.

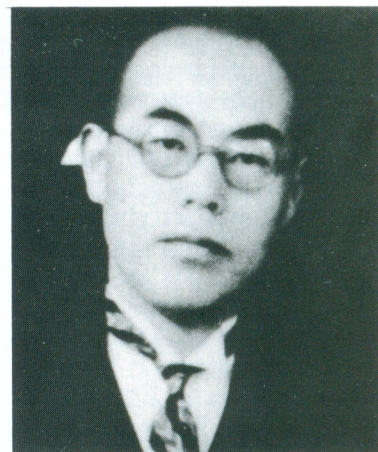
On June 26, 1935 the application for the trademark "Canon" was filed by Saburo Uchida. The designated merchandise was in category #18 (photo equip. and its parts). The registration was posted on September 19th of the same year (Trademark Bulletin #475). The registry number was 278297.

Saburo Uchida is the founder of Canon and he named the company. He describes the history that led up to the founding of the company in his memoirs as follows:

"In October 1923, when the Leica had been imported for a short while, Goro Yoshida, a relative of mine, came to my house with a Leica camera and suggested that we plan to manufacture advanced quality domestic cameras that were comparable to the Leica. Yoshida was an expert on camera mechanisms, but I had no interest in such things. He was quite enthusiastic but I was not. Later, I remembered what President Ayukawa had said and decided to take the risk. He had told me that in Japan, where resources were scarce, we must focus on enterprises that capitalize brain power and high technology."



MR. GORO YOSHIDA



MR. SABURO UCHIDA

Mrs. Uchida is Goro Yoshida's younger sister. Goro Yoshida, who appears on page one of the history of domestic small precision cameras, had been interested in photography since he was small. He already had a small dry plate camera by the age of 7 or 8. He began developing film quite early as well. He most enjoyed the process of the image beginning to appear on the dry plate submerged in the developer. His interest in photography was fostered by his older brother, who was more than 10 years his senior. His brother was a student at Keio University when he disappeared in a flood with some of his friends. His body was never found, and his favorite camera was buried to mark his tomb. His friends published a collection of his photos.

Yoshida, having been familiar with cameras for a long time, eventually took an interest in camera mechanisms. He was naturally good with his hands. While he worked in a machine related business, he would take apart various kinds of machinery to study the inner construction and enjoyed designing and piloting devices of his own. He took special interest in talky movie projectors, which had just come to Japan from the U.S., and helped manufacture the sound reproduction system domestically. He was a close friend of the Dobashi brothers, who later worked on the recording of the first full-scale Japanese talky film, "Madam and Wife". When Leica cameras, which opened a new era in the camera world, were imported, he thought of manufacturing small precision cameras comparable to the Leica. He made pilots, incorporating his original ideas, made test shots of views of the Ginza, and so on. Eventually, he went to Saburo Uchida, his brother-in-law, to discuss the possibility of producing one commercially.



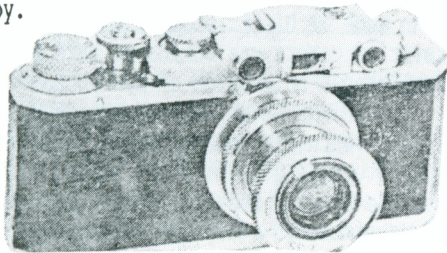
THIS IS A COPY OF THE "ASAHI CAMERA" AD MENTIONED IN THE TEXT, WHICH DEPICTS THE "TYPE a" VERSION OF THE "FIRST TYPE" OF KWANON CAMERA, GORO YOSHIDA'S CREATION.

Saburo Uchida was born in Okayama Prefecture, studied political science at Tokyo Imperial University, and, upon graduation, was employed at Yamaichi Securities and entered the world of the stock exchange. A Tokyo Imperial University alumnus as a stock broker was a rarity then. He worked at the Osaka branch, the research division at headquarters, and later as a clerk on outside duty. He had many young employees gathered around him from when he worked at the Osaka branch. Among them were Takeo Maeda & Kazuo Shimura, who later joined Seiki Kogaku Kenkyujo (Precision Machinery-Optics Research Laboratory).

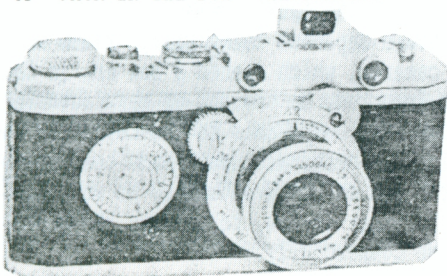
Yoshida's suggestion didn't move Uchida, as he was a total novice with cameras. So, who was President Ayukawa who made Uchida decide to take the risk? He was Gisuke Ayukawa, the commander-in-chief of the Nissan Konzern (a very prominent conglomerate at the time. Translators Note).

In November 1933, Uchida rented part of the Takekaway Building in Roppongi, Tokyo & founded Seiki Kogaku Kenkyujo to begin manufacturing cameras. The shabby, wooden building was three-storied and had been constructed as apartment housing. This was where the history of domestic small precision camera manufacturing began. The initial investment was provided by Uchida, and Yoshida was in charge of the actual operation. At Yoshida's request, Takeo Maeda, who at that time was at a Zen temple in Hachioji, was invited to become his assistant. Maeda had quit Yamaichi Securities of Osaka, come up to Tokyo, and had studied at the technical division of Waseda University. For certain reasons Maeda was training as a lay priest at the Zen temple, having been introduced to the temple by Uchida.

Sensing that the release of the camera would not be long delayed, Yoshida put ads for Seiki Kogaku Kenkyujo in photo magazines (Asahi Camera, June 1934, etc.). His copy read, "If it's a submarine it's the 'I' model, if it's an airplane it's the 92 model, if it's a camera, it's KWANON. They are the best in the world." He also designed the logo KWANON which is shown casting a long reflection (caused by strong backlighting used in the ad. Translators note.) He called the Ministry of the Navy to get permission for the wording of the copy.



ABOVE IS THE "SECOND TYPE" OF KWANON, WHICH IS A COPY OF THE LEICA D MODEL. GORO YOSHIDA DID NOT MAKE THIS MODEL! THE PRODUCTION HANSA CANON WE ARE ALL FAMILIAR WITH. NOTE THE POP-UP "JACK-IN-THE-BOX" VIEWFINDER!



2) THE JACK IN THE BOX

It is well known that Canon was formerly called Kwanon (pronounced kan-non).

Mr. Yoshinobu Sakagami's memoir, "A Story of Old Cameras", published in the quarterly magazine "Shimizu #11 (1978)", has a passage that reads: "My brother-in-law was an employee at the Osaka branch of Yamaichi Securities. At the same branch there was an astute and sincere colleague from the same home prefecture named Takeo Maeda. One of the bosses was Mr. Saburo Uchida, for whom I had absolute respect. These three people quit Yamaichi one after another, went up to Tokyo, and started working to manufacture the Kwanon Camera, which Mr. Uchida made into an enterprise in 1934. The word Kwanon comes from "Avalokitesvala (a Sanskrit term whose Chinese translation is pronounced kwan-in in Chinese and kan-non in modern Japanese, but was written kwanon in Uchida's time). Mr. Uchida, the manufacturer of the pilot Kwanon camera, had a family member who was a devotee of Avalokitesvala, and that is how the name came about. However, Kwanon was just not suitable as a product name, and Mr. Uchida renamed it "Canon" for the market."

The person referred to above as "my brother-in-law" was Mr. Kazuo Shimura (Mrs. Shimura is Sakagami's sister), and the member of Uchida's family who was a devotee of Avalokitesvala was Goro Yoshida. Mr. Shimura was good at painting. He designed the calligraphy for the word "Canon" seen in the application to register the trademark.

Yoshida named the camera "Kwanon" and the lens "Kasapa." Uchida had invited Yoshida to do some Zen training at a Zen temple in Hachioji, but Yoshida wanted more than Zen and read lots of sutras, in the course of which he became fascinated with the Humon-bon, a chapter entitled The Wide Gate in the Lotus Sutra. He then became a devotee of Avalokitesvala, who had vowed to save all the creatures in the 6 worlds by assuming 33 different forms or manifestations.

Yoshida worked hard to design the Kwanon logo, which depicted the thousand-armed Avalokitesvala. The characters for Kwanon signify flames.

"Kasapa" is "kashapa" in the Sanskrit word Mahakashapa. He was one of the 10 disciples of Buddha, and the first of the 16 arhats (saints of the highest stage attainable in Hinayana Buddhism). After Buddha passed away, he became the leader of the sect and was the supervisor of the first collection and compilation of the sutras.

There are two kinds of cameras with the Kwanon inscription. One of them (the first type) is seen in places like the ad that was published in Asahi Camera and other photo journals. The wind on knob is on the front of the camera, and it has no rewind knob. There were 2 or 3 variations (referred to below as types a & b), that had slightly different rangefinders and viewfinders. The actual cameras do not seem to exist anymore. Yoshida lost most of his old documents in a couple of wartime air raids.

The second kind of camera bearing the Kwanon inscription had a rather angular body, but other than that, it was a Leica II (or D) copy. The ads published in Asahi Camera in the first half of 1937 for the Shinbido Camera Store mentioned a "Leica D type chrome Kwanon" and a "Leica D Type Kwanon Camera." From this we know that they were marketed to the general public.

Yoshida had made the first Kwanon as a pilot. The finder mechanism on the first type (type a) looks identical to that on the Leica. It was manufactured in the first half of 1934. On the second type (type b), the viewfinder window was removed from between the two rangefinder windows, and a foldable viewfinder was attached above the rangefinder. It was manufactured around July of the same year. Some say the "type a" was only a dummy model. It is also speculated that the Kwanon that was presented to Nikon when Uchida later went to discuss business with them was a "type a". In any case, Canon's roots trace back to the Kwanon "type a".

The mechanism that placed the wind on knob on the front of the camera was the greatest characteristic of the Kwanon Yoshida created. It was a unique mechanism Yoshida had worked hard to create. The application to register this idea as a new design for practical use was filed on August 15, 1934, under the caption, "a camera in which the shutter and film are coupled."

The inventor was Goro Yoshida, and the applicant was Saburo Uchida. The application was posted on July 18 of the next year (Public Notice #10515), & registered as #214536.

The detailed application reads: "On a camera where the shutter and film are coupled, a mechanism based on this idea will streamline the movement greatly and improve precision." Yoshida must have spent a long time finalizing his idea. He conducted careful tests before he took his mechanism to Uchida. This and other of Yoshida's ideas show that he was trying hard to come up with a product that was very unique, and not Leica-like. His plan was to manufacture "a high quality, domestic camera comparable to the Leica" and not "a copy of the Leica."

The second kind of Kwanon was different in nature from the first kind. Yoshida did not make it, and it was manufactured much later. Yoshida was absorbed in his own ideas, and would not have thought of spending his time making Leica copies. Even Uchida, the owner, didn't know about this second type of Kwanon, which means that it was manufactured outside of Seiki Kogaku. Who, then, made the Leica D type Kwanon, and when and why? And why did it appear on the market? Uchida says he never took a single Kwanon outside the company. I have some ideas as to where the camera came from, but I won't go into it here, as it has no direct bearing on this story.

The second kind of Kwanon supposedly was advertised and sold, but not on a large scale; the mechanism infringed on new ideas for practical use applied for by the Ernst Leitz Company in the name of the inventor, Oscar Barnack.

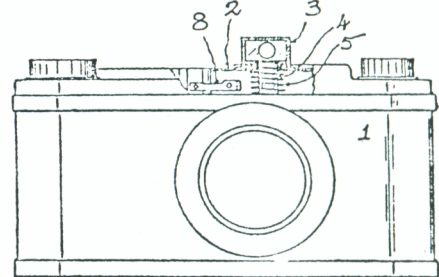
The first attempt by Seiki Kogaku to deal with the fact that its own product infringed upon the work of Oscar Barnack was the revision of the viewfinder mechanism. The revised viewfinder appeared on the "type b" Kwanon.

Leitz had three new ideas for practical use, all of which were submitted in July 1932, and all of which were marked "the date of application is invoked from its prior patent application." They were all submitted as patent applications, and were later changed to registrations for new ideas for practical use. The date of their initial patent application was carried over to the application for new ideas for practical use.

The first idea, published on January 9, 1934, was submitted as "a camera" and registered as #198763. The scope of the registration claim reads: "As shown in the figures, this is a mechanism where the finders are placed between the two projection windows, which form the base of the rangefinder inside the rangefinder box." In short, no others may manufacture a camera that has viewfinder windows between the two rangefinder windows. The foldable viewfinder shown on "type b" was an attempt made in desperation to avoid this restriction, but it was too crude for a precision camera.

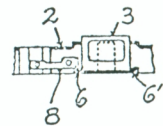
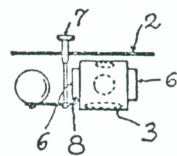
The unique "pop-up" viewfinder mechanism nick-named "The-Jack-in-the-Box" on the Hansa Canon, was submitted for registration on June 8, 1935 and published on April 4th of the following year as "a device which exposes and conceals the viewfinder mechanism on a camera." The registration number was #225437. According to the detailed application, the device based upon this idea would do the following: "As needed, one presses the button with his finger and the latch releases, allowing the viewfinder to be pushed up to the point where two protrusions will touch the backside of the upper lid, so that the viewfinder performs its function. Once the job is done, the viewfinder will sink with a push of the hand."

This idea, "The-Jack-in-the-Box" viewfinder mechanism that appeared on the Hansa Canon, was also conceived in desperation, but at least they solved the problem of the viewfinder by themselves. However, there was a big problem looming ahead, a problem which Seiki Kogaku would not be able to solve with its own technology.



圖二第

圖三第



GORO YOSHIDA'S PATENT APPLICATION DRAWINGS FOR HIS NOW FAMOUS "JACK-IN-THE-BOX" VIEWFINDER THAT CIRCUMVENTED EXISTING LEITZ VIEWFINDER PATENTS.

 CORRECTION!!!.....THERE WAS A SMALL TYPOGRAPHICAL ERROR IN THE INTRODUCTION TO PART I OF THIS SERIES WHICH APPEARED IN NHS-45. TOWARDS THE END OF THE INTRODUCTION IT READS..... "WRITTEN BY MR. S. ARAKAWA."...THE CORRECTED COPY SHOULD READ AS...."WRITTEN BY "S"....OBVIOUSLY MR. ARAKAWA WOULD NOT HAVE WRITTEN HIS OWN REVIEW AND THIS ERROR WAS CAUSED BY MY MISREADING THE ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT. MY APOLOGIES! RJR

THE

F

--SPOT!!

THE "REAGAN RANCH" NIKKOR

by Steven T. Smith

You probably remember seeing them on the evening news: those shimmering long lens shots of President Ronald Reagan relaxing at his ranch in the mountains above Santa Barbara. Usually he'd be on horseback. The video images were fuzzy and indistinct, as though they were made with a telescope from miles away. In fact, they were!

The networks employed different strategies to "sneak" their photos of the President at play. At first video cameras were mounted to standard long-range zooms, the kind used for sporting events. In the early 1980's the biggest of these lenses had a ratio of 30:1. The 2/3rds inch imaging tubes used on the video cameras of the day took a "normal" picture at a focal length of about 20mm. A 30x zoom typically ran from 15-300mm, and had a built in doubler, yielding 600mm. On a video camera, 600mm is the magnification equivalent of roughly a 1500mm lens on a 35mm camera! The resulting images on the home screen revealed an "ant" sized President on a "bee" sized horse.

So the TV news organizations began to use long primes--800mm & 1000mm. The President got a little bigger. Doublers were quickly added. Bigger, but not big enough. A "Glass War" erupted between the networks. Who could get the clearest image of Reagan? In a major escalation, a CBS White House cameraman, Greg Amadon, decided to try a mirror lens. He might have employed a 2000mm Reflex-Nikkor, but instead went for a full-blown telescope. Amadon developed what became known at CBS as "The Devastator," an astronomical telescope set in a huge mount and attached to a Sony BVP-300 color video camera.

NBC moved in an entirely different direction. Sometime around 1982 they acquired one of Nikon's rare 360/1200mm f11 Zooms. The lens was #174033, the third off the line!

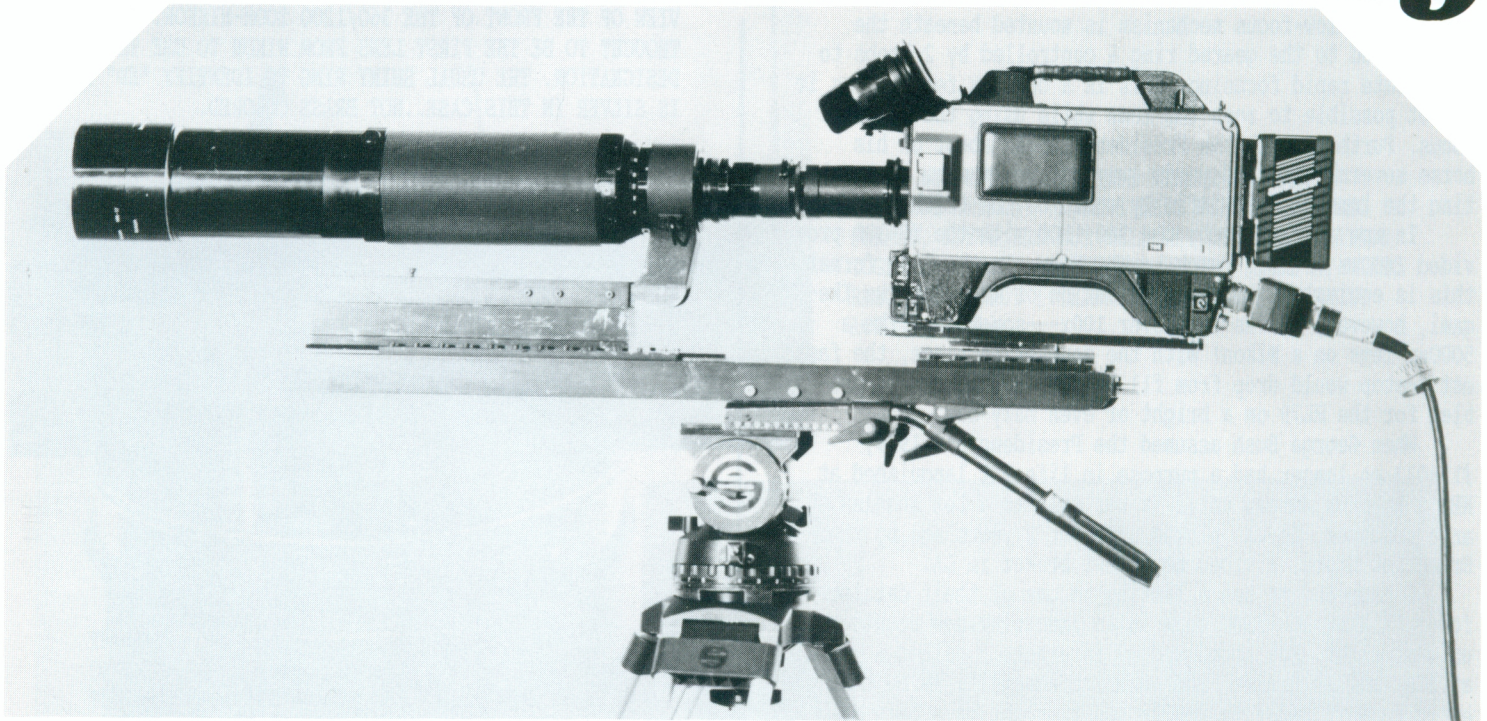
The Nikon 360/1200 was introduced at Photokina in 1974. Of all the Nikon lenses and accessories introduced that year, the 360/1200 was clearly the hit (the F2 Data, also seen for the first time that year, has only recently become a hit with collectors). As a young photojournalist I well remember staring at this giant lens at the Nikon booth at Cologne, wondering just what application it might have in real life. For the 360/1200 is not a lens for the faint hearted. With its' HN-17 hood it measures over 31 inches in length. It takes 122mm filters--Nikon's favorite size for its super-telephotos. And it weighs in at 15.6lbs. (7.1kg).

It is one of the biggest lenses ever produced by Nikon. There are 20 elements, two of which employ ED glass, in 12 groups. There is a very substantial rotating tripod collar which attempts (& fails) to balance the huge set of front elements. It focuses to an astonishingly close 20 feet and Nikon Integrated Coatings were applied. While it came with an auto diaphragm, there originally was no meter coupling. A second version, introduced in 1982, had the AI-S mount, providing meter indexing on the F3 & later models. F-stops were 11,16,22 & 32. With the large diamond-pattern rubber covered focus/zoom ring pushed fully forward, the lens was at 360mm. Pulled all the way back to the tripod collar gave you 1200mm. But it was a long throw.

The 360/1200 first showed up as a "new product" in the Nikon (US) Price list of 12/1/74, but without a price! The 5/1/75 list still had no price. When the lens did become available, the cost was \$7,318.00!

NBC News sent 174033 to Hollywood's famous Century Precision Optics for modification. There, the auto diaphragm was removed and the Nikon bayonet replaced with Century's own "neutral mount", a sturdy professional locking pin & ring design which could take a large number of different camera adapters for still, film & video. NBC asked that the lens be setup for the Ikegami video mount. They cut a gel filter slot near the rear, for use with standard 2x2s. Century also modified a Nikon TC-300 2x converter for use with the 360/1200. The extender has the Century neutral mount at both ends.

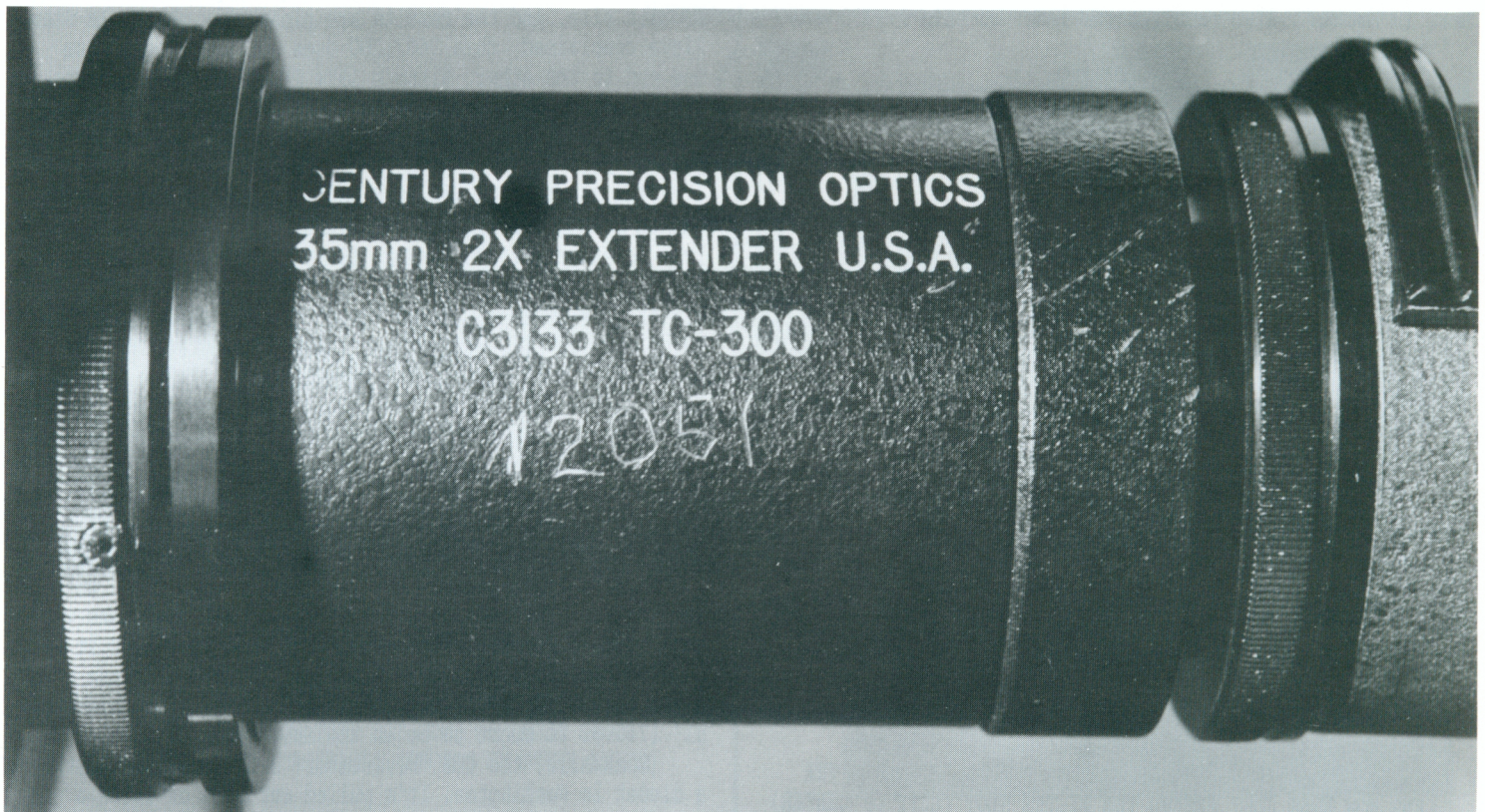
It is not clear who designed & built the massive camera/lens support. When I bought 174033 it seemed permanently attached to this gigantic metal structure. The Nikkor's tripod shoe was screwed to the bracket no fewer than 9 times from 3 different angles! It is obvious the designer of the mount did not want this lens to shift even a micron. At the rear of the support is a raised plate, to which an Ikegami HL79 color video camera was attached. A huge follow-focus gear was carved by someone from a solid piece of aluminum. This was attached to the Nikkor at the rear of its focus/zoom ring. The 360/1200 has 4 stainless steel threaded inserts near the focus scale, into which chromed pegs are screwed. Nikon provided this feature to aid the shooter trying to twist the weighty ring rapidly. NBC mounted the focus gear on this ring, fastened by hex screws to the in-



"REAGAN RANCH" NIKKOR OUTFIT WITH 360/1200, TC-300 DOUBLER, IKEGAMI HL79E PROFESSIONAL COLOR VIDEO CAMERA, SUPPORT BRACKET AND SACTHLER 30 FLUID HEAD TRIPOD. OVERALL LENGTH IS 51 INCHES. TOTAL WEIGHT (NOT INCLUDING TRIPOD) IS 54 POUNDS! MISSING IN THIS PHOTO IS THE FOLLOW-FOCUS RIG, WHICH INCLUDES A HUGE GEAR THAT ATTACHES TO THE FOCUS/ZOOM RING JUST AHEAD OF THE SUPPORT COLLAR. THE OUTFIT IS VERY DIFFICULT TO CONTROL WHEN THE ZOOM IS RACKED ALL THE WAY OUT TO 2400MM.

THE MODIFIED NIKKOR TC-300 EXTENDER ON THE 360/1200 (RIGHT) THE TC-300 ATTACHES DIRECTLY TO THE LENS WITH THE "NEUTRAL MOUNT." IT ATTACHES TO THE VIDEO CAMERA WITH AN IKEGAMI MOUNT ADAPTER. THE AUTHOR HAS SUCCESSFULLY MOUNTED A NIKON F4 TO THE REAR WITH THE APPROPRIATE T-MOUNT RING. THE 2X2 FILTER HOLDER/SLOT IS AT THE FAR RIGHT.

(ALL PHOTOS BY STEVEN SMITH)

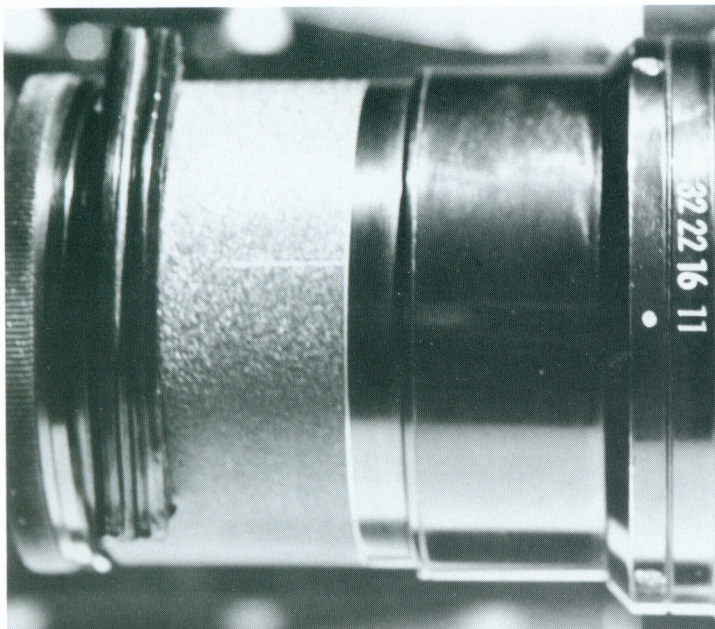


serts. A follow-focus mechanism is mounted beneath the lens, mated to the geared ring & controlled by 2 knobs to facilitate rapid focusing. This is a curious feature, as it is not possible to zoom the lens while using the follow-focus. Further, with the President loping about on his horse several thousand yards away, it would seem that setting the lens once at infinity would do the trick.

In use at the Ranch, the 360/1200 with the TC-300 provided 2400mm of long reach to NBC News. In the 35mm format, this is equivalent to a magnification of 48x. For the Ikegami, however, it was well over 100x---something like a 5000mm lens on a Nikon! With the doubler in place, the fastest f-stop would drop from f11 to f22, not much of a problem for the HL79 on a bright or even hazy day.

When George Bush assumed the Presidency in 1989, #174033 no longer had a purpose in life. It languished at NBC's Burbank Bureau until it was sold to a Los Angeles area producer. It was picked up about 2 years ago by the Broadcast Store, a video equipment broker in LA.

I happened to see a listing in one of their catalogs for a "Nikkor 360-1200 zoom in an Ikegami video mount"---an unusual sight. But it piqued my interest. I called a friend at BCS, Walter Druker, and enquired about it. As he described it to me I began to wonder how it might have been used. It had a huge focal length and was set up for one type of video camera. Those shimmering images of Reagan came to mind. Perhaps, just perhaps. Walter had no idea, but promised to ask the LA office for more details. In the meantime, I set out on my own quest for 174033's provenance. I checked with friends at CBS & ABC, quickly learning it had not been used by them. Then Walter called to say that indeed it had been used at the Western White House--by NBC. A morning spent on the phone got me to Stan Zieve, a manager at NBC News in Burbank. Stan recalled the lens. He said 174033 had



DETAILS OF THE REAR OF THE 360/1200. THE APERTURE RING CLICKS TO F11, 16, 22 AND 32. THE JOINT IN THE CENTER, BETWEEN SHINY BLACK AND CRINKLE BLACK, IS WHERE THE ORIGINAL MOUNT WAS CUT OFF AND THE NEW MOUNT ADDED. THE LENS NOW ENDS JUST BEHIND THE FILTER SLOT (LEFT OF CENTER) IN AN "CENTURY NEUTRAL MOUNT."

VIEW OF THE FRONT OF THE 360/1200 ZOOM-NIKKOR. THIS IS THOUGHT TO BE THE FIRST LENS FROM NIKON TO USE THE "ED" DESIGNATION. THE USUAL SHINY RING TO IDENTIFY "ED" LENSES IS SILVER IN THIS CASE..NOT BRASS COLORED.



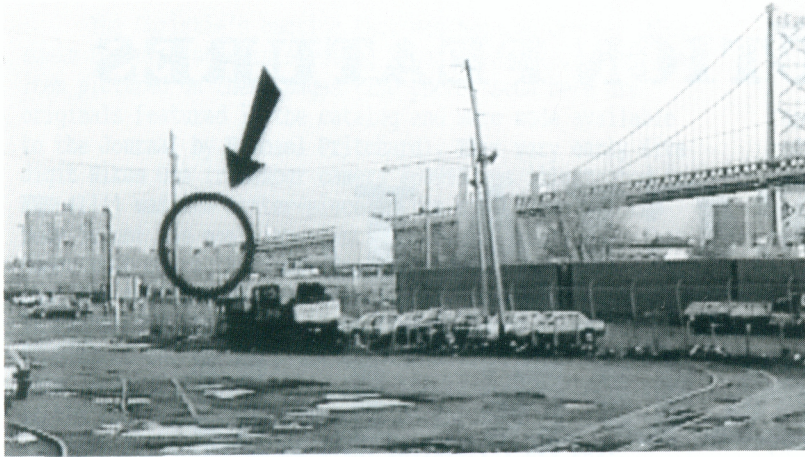
not worked well for this application. For one thing, he said, the lens would not hold focus when zoomed. Stan was unable to provide any details on the Nikkor's acquisition or modification. He promised to talk with some of his cameramen to see what they might remember, but so far no one has come forward. A call to Jeff Giordano at Century was totally fruitless.

This is obviously a well-made lens. There is excellent contrast, much more than you might expect from a lens of this size. And the results are pleasantly sharp. As Stan Zieve complained, this 360/1200 does not hold focus from one end to the other. Nikon's 1974 Photokina New Products brochure says "pictures remain sharp throughout the zooming range, even at full aperture." This may have been true once but not now.

The 360/1200 is one of Nikon's rarest lenses. In the "Nikon Compendium" it indicates the first series was made from November 1974 to January 1981, starting with 174031. The first prototype may have been 614001, and the Fall-Winter 1974 issue of "Nikon World" clearly shows 614002. In March 1982 an AI-S version was introduced, starting with 174701. Grays of Westminster recently sold 174740, so these do exist. In the "Nikon Pocket Book" Peter Braczko says the second series had internal focusing. This would have been a stunning mechanical/optical achievement in 1982. I've never seen a Type II lens. Perhaps a reader could verify if it is IF or not. Curiously, the Type II weighs an additional 800 grams (1.7 lbs.).

So here I sit with a very rare Nikkor used for a unique application. It takes up a lot of space, but impresses visitors no end. People marvel at the rig when they hear it was used to capture images of a President riding his horse atop a mountain miles away. It's a bit of true American history, ol' 174033. It ought to be in the Smithsonian.

Meanwhile, the CBS "Devastator" sits gathering dust in a closet in Washington. It's pulled out once or twice a year to get that "special" shot, usually Presidential.



IN AN ATTEMPT TO GIVE THE READER AN IDEA OF THE TRUE "REACH" OF THIS LENS USED ON A VIDEO FORMAT, STEVE HAS PUT THIS LITTLE DEMONSTRATION TOGETHER. THESE ARE "VIDEO PRINTS" MADE AT VIDEO RESOLUTION, BUT I THINK THEY GET THE MESSAGE ACROSS. (RJR)

THE TWO WIDE SHOTS ON THIS PAGE ARE OF THE DELAWARE RIVER WATERFRONT IN PHILADELPHIA. THE WALT WHITMAN BRIDGE IS ON THE RIGHT. THE CAMDEN, NEW JERSEY PRISON IS A MILE ACROSS THE RIVER! THE CIRCLED ITEM IN THE TOP PHOTO IS SHOWN AT RIGHT. WHAT IS IT? IT'S THE GUARD TOWER AT THE PRISON OVER A MILE AWAY!



THE CIRCLED ITEM IN THE LOWER PHOTO IS SHOWN AT RIGHT. WHAT IS IT? IT'S THE AIRCRAFT WARNING LIGHTS ATOP THE WALT WHITMAN BRIDGE TOWER! NOW YOU KNOW HOW THEY GOT SOME OF THOSE SHOTS OF REAGAN ON HORSEBACK! (PHOTOS BY STEVE SMITH)



12

CHRISTIE AUCTION FEATURES

**A SPECIAL
NIKON "1" !!**

LATEST AUCTION NEWS



The Christie's auction that was held on October 20th again featured some interesting Nikon items, including the item pictured on these pages (The photos seen here are originals featured in the catalog and were made available to the Journal by Michael Pritchard). This very early five digit Nikon One (remember camera #60995 was illustrated in NHS-41!!) was the center-piece of the sale. However, the body is not the most important item in this case, for that honor must go to the lens. Look closely and you will see that the serial number of this 50mm/f2.0 Nikkor is 6099!! It is the 9th production piece from the very first run of f2 Nikkors and actually the earliest "verified" example of this landmark lens! In this case the lens is worth as much as the body. The final hammer price for this rare Nikon item was 12,100 pounds or about \$18,200.00! Not bad!

The latest Christie's sale is slated for January 12th (just about now) and features such items as a motorized SP, an 8-digit S, a black S2, a screw mount 135/f4 as well as a rare screw mount Micro-Nikkor! Also in this sale is a very nice Condor like those covered in NHS-45! This particular

model is slightly different from those covered in #45, but will be seen in a future issue.

When Michael faxed me with the information on the Condor he also made an offer to the Society that is hard to refuse. I quote: "We have a large collection of Nikon rangefinder equipment and, particularly, Nikon F series cameras and lenses coming under the hammer on 2 February. The lenses range from 8mm-1000mm F-fit plus some rangefinder fit. As a special offer to NHS members...if they would like to contact me by phone, fax or letter I would be happy to send them a free catalog...but they must contact me directly. The catalog will be published the second week of January."

For those of you who wish to get your free copy please contact Michael Pritchard as soon as possible:
Christie's South Kensington, 85 Old Brompton Road, London SW7 3LD, England. Direct phone line: 0171-321-3279. Or by Fax use: 0171-321-3321.



VOIGHTLAENDER NIKON S2?

Nikon users and collectors are very well aware of the competition between the German and Japanese camera makers, which became acute during the 1950s'. As a response to the growing market share of some Japanese cameras, especially in the United States, the German manufacturers, whilst improving their models and well protected by high taxes and very strict import regulations, did not hesitate to maintain the myth of poor quality and lack of creativity of the Japanese camera industry. Nippon Kogaku was one of the favorite targets for these critics, not only because their bodies became popular amongst professionals in direct competition with German producers, but also because their cheaper, but excellent, lenses found their way onto German cameras!

As American magazines continued to report the high quality of Nikon lenses compared to their German counterparts, the company most concerned (Zeiss Ikon) tried to convince journalists (or themselves?) that counterfeits, and not genuine German made lenses had been used for these comparisons! In fact, it seems that apart from these self-protecting critics, the German manufacturers had already shown some interest in Japanese technology many years before they began to cooperate with some of them in order to maintain production of their brand names.

One Nikon S2, which was recently found in Germany, seems to bear witness to this (surely involuntary) Japanese cooperation in the 1950s'. This chrome dial camera #6145615 was once owned by the Voightlaender company in Brunswick. It was listed in the records of the Research & Development Department under the number V1090 (see photos). The place of purchase is unknown to the author, but it can be assumed to have been the United States, as the focusing mount is marked in feet, a feature not found on those imported into Europe. Based on the serial number, the date of purchase could be the end of 1955 or the beginning of 1956 (batch #16FB-6 or 16FB-5, if gaps existed). The reason for the purchase by Voightlaender is not known to the author. It was surely not because Nippon Kogaku was suspected of copying Voightlaender, whose cameras did not inspire them and the use of pre-war German patents was free.

During the period of this S2, Voightlaender was not completely owned by Zeiss and continued to produce models of its own design. Its most advanced camera of the time was the Prominent I with rangefinder, leaf shutter and interchangeable lenses made from 1952-58. This camera was improved during its life with the addition of a rapid wind lever in 1956, making it one of only 3 such models, the others being the Leica M3 and the Nikon S2. Therefore, it cannot be ignored that a so-called bad copy of the excellent Leitz & Zeiss technology was effectively examined by another German producer wanting to improve its most sophisticated model.

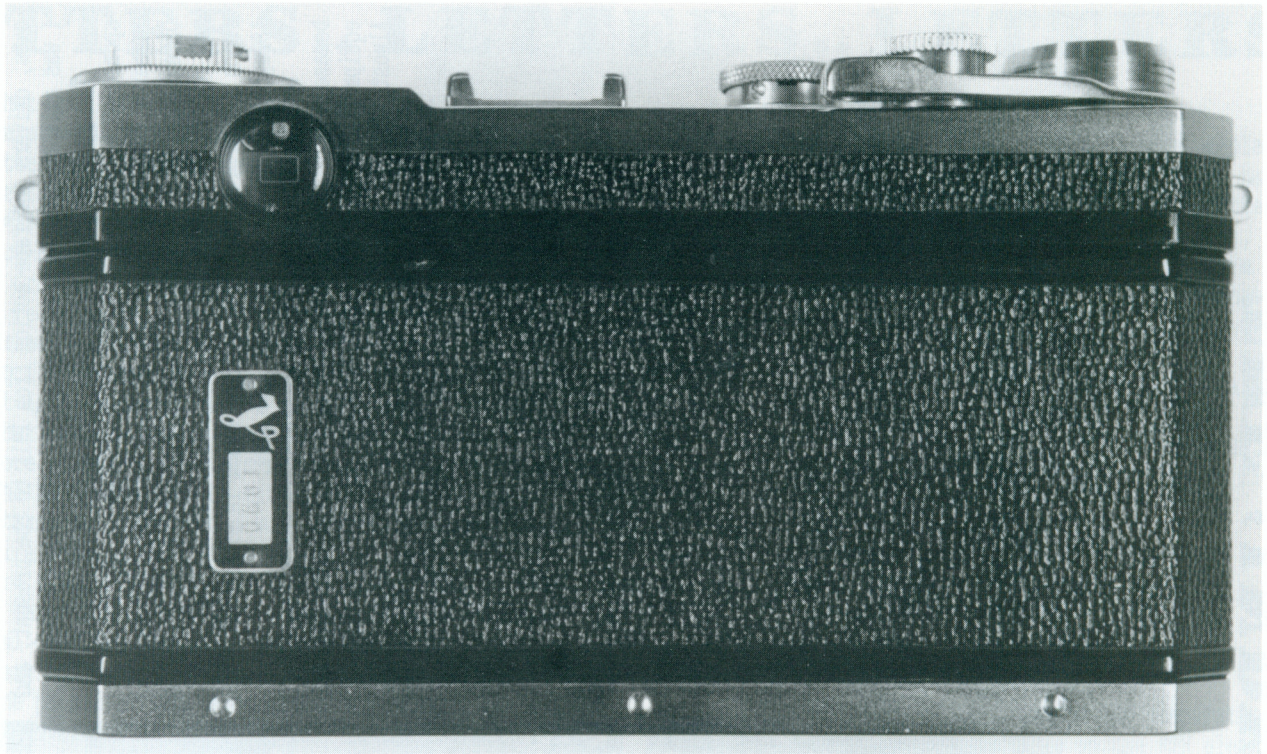
JEAN-PIERRE VERGINE

It is of course, for any manufacturer, an economical and technological necessity to take advantage of the products of competitors, and the camera industry is no exception. But, given the German-Japanese struggle in this significant period, any "Made in Japan" camera found as having been used by Research & Development Departments of German makers is very interesting indeed.

As I briefly introduced this Nikon S2 during NHS-Con4 in Utrecht, I understood that the participants were not aware of the details of other such cameras found in Germany, although they logically assumed that they must have existed. I hope that, after this modest article, other NHS members will trace new examples to complete a possible new chapter in the history of German cameras, of which the title could be "How Did Nippon Kogaku Help the German Camera Industry"?

Finally, despite the fact that such cameras can suffer from repeated testing and disassembly, this example is still in very good condition. Many thanks to the technicians at Voightlaender.





ADDENDUM

In NHS-45 I reviewed the German edition of Peter Braczkó's new NIKON POCKET BOOK. No sooner had I finished my erstwhile translations than I learned that the book was out in English. I dashed off an order to A Photographers Place, Box 274, Prince St, New York, NY 10012, tel: 212-431-9358. The price was \$34.95, plus shipping. Only 1000 copies were imported, so act now!

You've no idea what a treat it was to open the little red volume and find all the words in English. As I read through the entries I would come across some section that had totally stumped me and my German dictionary. "Intensely blue coating": so that's what they meant by "stark blaue Vergütung!" I preferred my translation of "geriffelter Blendenring" as "fluted iris ring" to the book's "finely grooved aperture collar." But on the whole, the German has been translated with intelligence and clarity. There are occasional odd constructions, like a reference to the 35-70/3.5, "It has generously sized adjustment collars, solid workmanship, and has excellent definition characteristics," but they certainly do not distract from the enjoyment of reading Braczkó. In my original review I complained that "there are nuggets of detail in there that are simply not accessible with a casual translation." That's no longer a consideration. The book is so full of so much neat information that it is must reading for all with a serious interest in things Nikon.

Though both published in 1994, the English edition is actually more up-to-date in that it includes entries on the new R-UW AF-Nikkor 13mm/2.8 and the N50 SLR. Also included is a camera specifications chart and a lens hood guide. Otherwise, they seem identical.

"NHS" PRODUCTS

Below is our current list of "NHS PRODUCTS". The soft cloth camera bags are a sellout! Gone! Thanks for your support. Sales of these products help hold down Society dues.

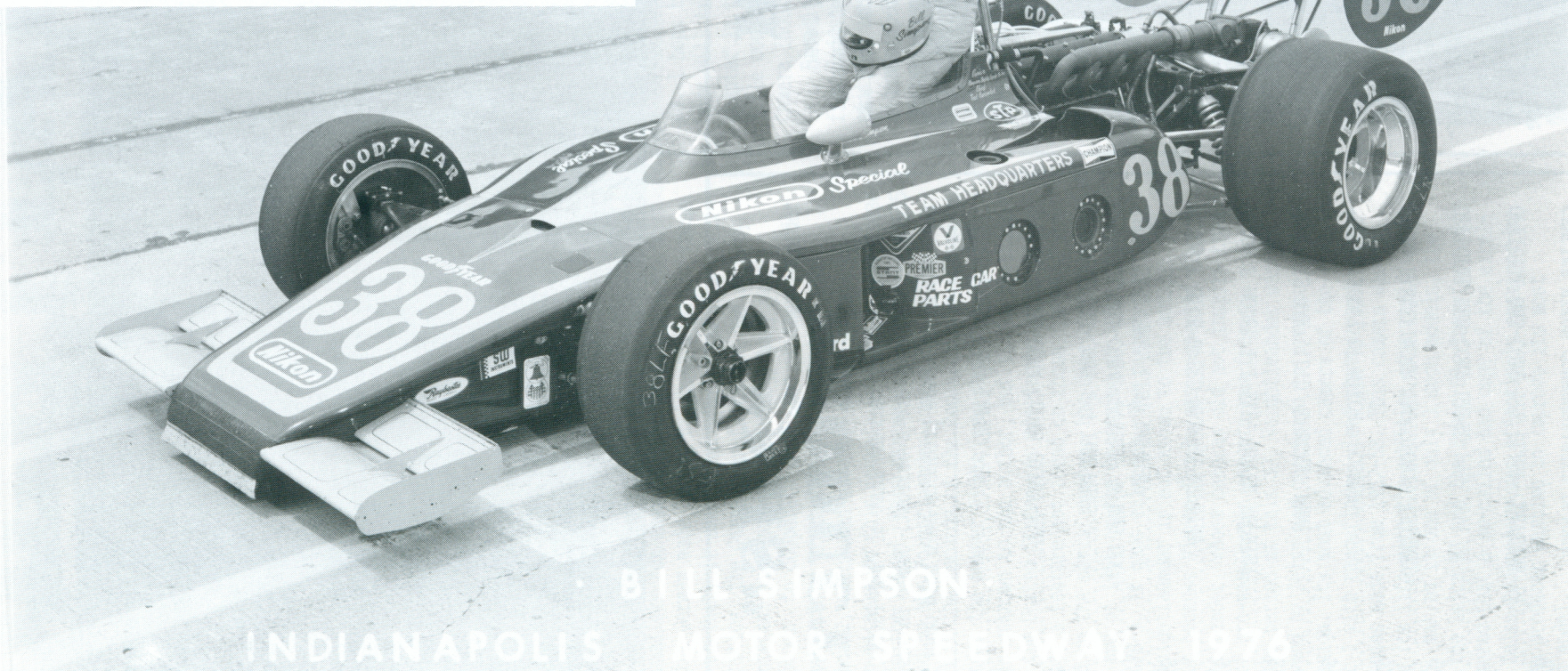
OFFICIAL NHS-CON4 LAPEL PIN.....	\$5.00 US
	\$6.00 OVERSEAS
OFFICIAL NHS-CON4 CLOTH CARRY-ALL.....	\$5.00 US
	\$6.00 OVERSEAS
OFFICIAL NHS-CON3 & 4 INK PENS.....	\$2.00 ALL
OFFICIAL NHS-CON4 "PUZZLE" W/NHS LOGO.....	\$3.00 ALL
NIKON S GENERAL LIST REPRINT.....	\$17.00 US
	\$20.00 OVERSEAS
NIKON F HIGH SPEED MANUAL REPRINT.....	\$10.00 US
	\$13.00 OVERSEAS
NIKON F MODEL III EXP. METER REPRINT.....	\$10.00 US
	\$13.00 OVERSEAS
"THIS IS WAR"..D.D. DUNCAN..NEW!.....	\$25.00 US
	\$40.00 OVERSEAS
"THE HISTORY OF NIKON" POSTER.....	\$20.00 US
	\$25.00 OVERSEAS
NIKON RANGEFINDER..ROTONI..(SIGNED).....	\$30.00 US
	\$40.00 OVERSEAS
OFFICIAL NHS-CON2 LAPEL PIN.....	\$5.00 US
	\$6.00 OVERSEAS
OFFICIAL NHS-CON2 TIE CLASP/CUFFLINK SET.....	\$15.00 US
	\$18.00 OVERSEAS
GENUINE NIKON COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE.....	\$130.00 US
	\$155.00 OVERSEAS

NIKON HISTORICAL SOCIETY JOURNAL

While at the Indianapolis Motor Speedway prior to the 1994 "Indy 500" race, I discovered a battered photograph in a bargain bin at the Speedway's photo shop. Their Photo Department has over 4 million photos on file that include cars, drivers and race action from 1911 to the present, and I was able to order a new print.

The photograph is of a 1976 "Nikon Special" entry sponsored by Nikon and driven by Bill Simpson. A little research revealed the car was an Eagle chassis with an Offenhauser four cylinder turbo charged engine. The car did not reach competitive speeds in practice and failed to reach a four lap, ten mile average speed in excess of 182mph in order to qualify for the race.

We know what happened to the sponsor; the driver became a leading manufacturer of racing helmets and safety equipment; but the fate of the "Nikon Special" is unknown! Almost brings a tear to your eye, doesn't it? Jerry Rold.



BILL SIMPSON
INDIANAPOLIS MOTOR SPEEDWAY 1976

THE 'INDY-500 NIKON SPECIAL'

LETTERS.. LETTERS.. LETTERS

It seems that the letter from former member Griffin that appeared on page 20 of NHS-45 has sparked a storm of comments & letters never before seen within these pages, as witness the following.....

From Patrice-Herve Pont...

As regards Griffin's complaints, I don't share his ideas. First, the features he is waiting for are to be found in a photo magazine, not in a club journal. Two, he is wrong when asking for a redesigned paper. Don't change anything! Your layout is agreeable, clear & so different. The NHS is like no other review. Please keep the same cover: no one could be more beautiful and this way one will recognize at a glance the NHS amongst other titles. Large page numbers are no mistake, but a very good way to give graphic unity to the entire Journal. Not "amateurish" at all (I say it to you as a pro since I formerly worked as an advertising copy-writer..). Three, is it Rotoloni's magazine? More or less. But Rotoloni does all the work, doesn't he? This is the same with any collector's journal. Members give little support and the president has to do almost everything, up to folding the envelopes and throwing them in the mailbox! I am sure Rotoloni would welcome anyone with interesting articles, but if they do not arrive shall the Journal be published with white pages? Obviously not-and this is why Rotoloni must come back with article after article!

From Thomas A.J. Carr...

I felt I should write to you because I agree fully with most of what Mr. Griffin says in his letter. Like him I am a Nikon USER as opposed to a collector. I too search each issue for items of interest or use to me. Admittedly, I do not find very many of them. I do however, believe in giving credit where credit is due. You do an excellent job as editor and should be congratulated for that. On the down side, you do too much. One gets the impression from reading any copy of the Journal that there are only a small handful of contributors, and that if you did not write for one issue that issue would be less than half the normal size. Having been editor of my photo club's newsletter for several years I know that it is difficult to get contributors, especially regular ones. However, I also know that you do not do yourself any favors by trying to write and edit at the same time. I do have some difficulty with Mr. Griffin's three comments on the magazine layout, although his comment on the membership list is valid.....I do not feel that the Journal needs to undergo a complete change in philosophy. It was started by collectors and should certainly continue to serve them. However, Nikon collectors are only a small segment of the Nikon buying and using public. I feel that the Society should stop looking at the world through an 800mm lens. Put on a 20mm and widen the field of view a bit. Start catering to the Nikon user as well as the collector. Perhaps then I will be able to convince some of my friends that they should join.

From David Simon...

Regarding Mr. Griffin's letter: There are some people who are never pleased with another's work. Mr. Griffin has no idea how much time goes into producing each newsletter, nor even realizes that the editor publishes out of love, not money. It is easy to complain but I did not hear him offer to help produce future editions. I find it funny that Mr. Griffin wants an article on how to use a Nikon F better. On top of that, written by an expert. Well, all I can say, if he is seeking instructions on how to properly use a Nikon F, a college course should be considered. Finally, I sent a letter to Mr. Griffin with an SASE, but I have never received a reply. Hmm? I guess he was too busy trying to figure out how to use his Nikon F.

From Robert Mazziotta...

I am sorry to say but John Griffin hit the nail on the head. I think he has some excellent suggestions.

From Alan Blake...

I was interested to see the article on the comparatively recent F3AF (now an in depth article on the F2H please). I agree that it was an unusual and significant camera and is destined to become a collector's item in time. Finally, one cannot please all of the people all of the time, but I cannot help but think that Mr. Griffin has totally ignored the word "historical" in the Society's title. He seems to be advocating something along the lines of a commercial popular photographic magazine, albeit dedicated to Nikon, and has clearly misjudged the purpose and scale of the operation. As to credits: they must surely go where the leg-work comes from.

From Craig Swearingen...

Issue #45 was another great one, especially the articles on the Rafuray and the Arakawa Trilogy, which were very informative. I don't think I'll be crying over John Griffin's decision not to continue as an NHS member. I found his letter to be extremely ignorant and insulting, not only to you, but to us other satisfied NHS members as well. One of the many things I have learned working in the retail camera business for the last 15 years is no matter how hard you try there are just some people you cannot please at all. Griffin is one of them..enough said.

From Wolfgang Kuster...

John Griffin is right when he claims that the Journal goes very much (perhaps too much) towards collecting (and not using) of the Nikon classics. I for myself am also not so deeply interested in, say engraving styles, serial numbers and so on. For example: I'd never consider purchasing an expensive Leica M4 "50 Jahre", which is exactly the same camera as the normal M4. Nevertheless, I enjoy reading the Journal. He is not right when he says that your name appears too often...you are the editor and the author of many articles...so what?

LETTERS..

From James Berglund...

In my opinion, Mr. Griffin confesses his ignorance by subscribing to a publication which apparently he didn't bother to check out beforehand. We NHS members already know how to make a picture. That isn't why we belong. Nikon Journal subscribers ARE interested in the history of the Nikon camera and the company, as related to lenses and accessories, accurate research and collecting the truth, not "myths". The order of importance varies with individuals, but I am sure all NHS members do share these interests. I have about 10 years issues of Modern Photography in my attic that he is welcome to (freight collect) at no charge. Possibly he could use them for source material (to learn how to use an F maybe). Alas, while Modern Photography has given up the ghost, the Nikon Journal has not.

From Richard Lane...

I don't agree that the Journal should focus on new Nikon equipment and photography tips. This information can be obtained from any off the shelf photo magazine. I don't feel the format is "amateurish" as Griffin suggests. The detailed photos are outstanding and the informative articles simply cannot be found anywhere else! The fact that you have contributed so many articles should be considered a positive and not a negative, as Griffin suggests.

From Steve Smith...

John Griffin wrote a thought provoking letter. He may have expected too much from the Journal, which has never billed itself as anything other than a publication focusing upon the history of Nikon products. Sure, it would be nice to read pieces about Nikon boosters like DDD, but who's going to write them? I disagree with his assessment of collectors. We do cherish our Nikons. Many of us use them. And we're always trying to understand more about them. His comments about the layout of the Journal are understandable. When the first issue arrived I thought there was a lot of clutter. Now that I've read through a couple of dozen issues the layout doesn't seem to matter much anymore. People get used to the way a thing is, so long as it's readable. Like Mr. Griffin, I would also like to see a better membership list.

I felt that it was both necessary and important that I run a selection of member responses to the Griffin letter, pro and con. An interchange of views such as this is healthy and gives us all a chance to express our feelings. Space does not allow me to answer his letter in a way I feel it should be done, so I will refrain from doing so until the next Journal. This will also give each of you a chance to evaluate the letters on these pages. I will respond because I must, but I feel such a response will be more balanced if I give it a little more time. Needless to say, I find it hard not to directly address some of his statements (some of which were very much off the mark), but let it rest for a few months. In the meantime here is the latest Journal in which I have not done a single article! Dare I initial this little paragraph? Guess not!

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This is not a complete list. Contact us if you have ANYTHING you think may be of interest to us. Thank you!

Ask for Peter Walnes or Jon Harris (both NHS members!). Available for advice from 4:30am E.S.T. Monday thru Friday!

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The famous Nippon Kogaku Room where early Nikon items are on display is situated in a separate area of Grays of Westminster. It was opened on the 25th July 1992 as part of our celebrations of the 75th Anniversary of Nikon. The name Nikon comes from the first four letters of the original company name: Nippon Kogaku to which the letter 'N' was added. The stock is, of course, ever-changing, but typically includes Nikon Rangefinder, the Nikon F family and all the F2 models, lenses and accessories. Grays of Westminster have become renowned for the quality of their equipment, and have set a standard to which other dealers aspire. People who demand and value top quality will not be disappointed. Furthermore both written and telephone queries will always be dealt with in a prompt, friendly and helpful manner.

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FOR SALE...35/3.5 Nikkor, Tokyo, EX, \$200: 35/3.5 Nikkor, old style, not Tokyo, rear cap/clean cs, Mint, \$250: 35/3.5 Nikkor black, bubble, Mint, \$375: 85/2 Tokyo #286816, 2 pc. screw-in shade, Ex/Ex+, \$350: 135/4 SM Nikkor MIOJ #904600 w/2 unusual features; tripod socket w/european thread & 1/4 by 20 adapter usually found on later f3.5s; black plastic cap has NK logo on front, MIOJ on inside & fits onto shade (included) whether mounted for shooting/reversed! EX, \$400: 135 finder #50701235 on rear eyepiece rim w/Nippon Kogaku Tokyo. This 8 digit # is factory engraved! "L" (Leica) engraved on parallax scale, Ex+, w/cs, \$300. To receive my list: Bruce Pick, 42 Harvard Lane, Mystic, CT 06355 USA. Fax..203-536-0271. Voice..203-536-6518.

WANTED...S3, S4, Nikkor 35/1.8 and following accessories: front caps & shades for RF Nikkors black 50/2, 50/1.4 and chrome 85/2 (all Japan), everready cases for S, S2 and SP. Jean-Pierre Vergine, 201, av. Moliere, B-1060 Brussels, Belgium. Fax..32/2/2964265.

FOR SALE..Nikon S outfit consisting of the following items: S#6105913 w/f2#626664; 35/2.5#248468; 85/2.0#294520; 135/f3.5#262383; 35mm finder; zoom finder #338094; close-up for 3/f2 #21772. Lenses have f/r caps & everything has cases! All for \$1650.00. All items Ex++ to Mint condition. Larry Jessie, 1308 Parkington Lane., Bowie, MD 20716. 301-249-9648(H)/301-286-2052(W)/301-286-0213(FAX)

FOR SALE...Nikon F #74, black, Mint w/F2 cosmetics, \$850; Nikon F #642, black, Mint w/NK finder, hollow wind lever, cross hatched selftimer, \$1500; Waist level finder Model 1 w/NKK logo, Mint w/cs & display cloth, \$150; Waist level finder Model 3, Mint, \$90. Ron Wilson. Tel..(713) 578-2594.

WANTED...Varifocal finder Type I & II; black Nikon F body with eyelevel prism; Nikon SP chrome, condition should be around Mint-. Wolfgang Kuster, Schubertweg 2, D-64823 Gross-Umstadt, Germany. Fax..011-49-6162-50182.

FOR SALE...Nikon Reflex housing Type II, 45 degree prism, long cables, rear cap, MINT, \$3000. Al Satterwhite, P.O. Box 398, Concord, VA 24538. Fax..804-332-7832.

WANTED...Collector seeks RF items: bodies, lenses and accessories. Nikkors in SM. Canon bodies and lenses like 19mm, 25mm, 50/0.95, 200mm & Mirror box. All types of Leica copies. Nikkors for F like Fisheye OP, 55mm UV, PS Micro, 400-600-800-1200 heads & mount. Per Kullenberg, Ollingvej 11, 6933 Kibaek, Denmark. Tel. 011-45-971-91393.

SELLING LIST...I periodically send out a list of Nikon RF and reflex items as well as other quality gear for sale or trade. To get on my mailing list just drop me a line telling me so. Robert Rotoloni, PO Box 3213, Munster, IN 46321. Fax...708-895-9663.

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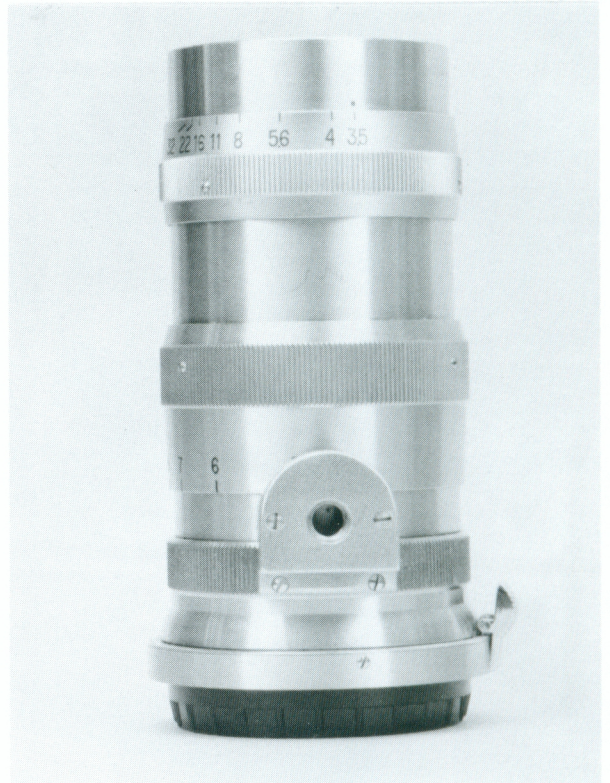
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WANTED...Nikon F bodies, accessories, "cm" lenses, instructions, publications (Nikon World, early Cooper/Abbott). Richard de Stoutz, Fliederweg 11, CH-3600 Thun, Switzerland Tel. 011-41-33-222767, Fax. 011-41-31-38-96830.

odds 'n ends

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

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



From Japan comes photos of what appears to be an ordinary 135mm/f3.5 Nikkor just like the hundreds that we all seem to have seen at one time or another. I am sure that many of you are just like me..so many chrome 135s have crossed your path that you just don't seem to pay any attention to them anymore. Well, maybe we should change our ways! This very pedestrian looking 135 is one unique piece! After getting past the ordinary we get to the serial number, and what do we find? Not only is it followed by a colon (:), denoting a duplicate serial number, it also has 7 digits instead of 6! Its probable number, based on cosmetics, would be 258522 with the last "4" the oddball. Why an extra number? Does the colon and the "4" mean that this is one of 4 duplicate lenses all with the number 258522? Or is there another 7 digit 135 out there with the same number? Are there other 7 digit lenses? The possibilities boggle the mind!!





Created For The 'NHS' by TONY HURST

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