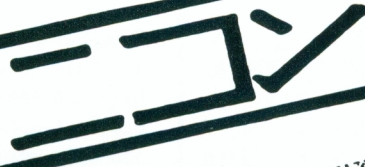


A PUBLICATION OF THE NIKON HISTORICAL SOCIETY



DEC. 31, 1995
NHS-50

The Nikon  JOURNAL



ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

THIS ISSUE..

PG.2--AN EARLY 135MM FINDER!
PG.5--THE NIKON F
PG.10--THE FEA UNDERWATER HOUSING!



THE NIKON JOURNAL

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NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for the next issue of the NIKON JOURNAL, #51, is March 1, 1996. This is the day I return from Tokyo so I must put NHS-51 together in a very short period of time. Please get all contributions to me by this date so the Convention issue can come out on schedule. THANK YOU. RJR

EDITORIAL

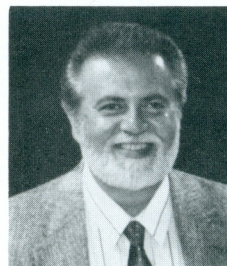
Believe it or not, but this is issue #50 of our Nikon Journal! I guess you could say that it constitutes a hurdle or milestone of sorts, and may even mean more to some than an actual anniversary. What does "50 issues" stand for in the scheme of things? When thinking about this editorial I tried to look back and take in the whole picture of what we have accomplished in 50 Nikon Journals. Some thoughts and figures come to mind.

First of all 50 issues means over 12 years of continuous publication, with only one issue coming out a few weeks late because of an unplanned stay at the local hospital! Looking at the magazine rack in my own pharmacy brings home the fact that most of the titles resting there have not been on the market for that long. Magazines come and go, but we're still here! Fifty issues also means over 1,000 pages devoted just to Nikons, even taking into account covers and content pages. Just think of that fact alone...1,000 pages! As for photographs...well I don't have the time to literally count them all, but taking an average and multiplying it out I come up with over 2,000 photographs of every conceivable type of gear manufactured by Nippon Kogaku from its inception to today! And that doesn't count all of those marvelous Tony Hurst rear covers which, by the way, are known well beyond just our Journal! Another figure would be the number of articles that have appeared within these pages. My guess is well over 300 distinct articles to date. As to how much a stack of all 50 Journals weighs...I haven't tried that as yet!

We have had many "firsts" in these pages. Extensive and fully illustrated articles on some of the rarest and most famous items ever made by Nikon. We have covered many items in greater and more accurate detail than has Nippon Kogaku or E.P.O.I. in the mountain of information they have published over the last 50 years! Many subjects that have graced these pages have never been fully described or illustrated outside of Japan the way we have done it. The list is long and will hopefully continue to grow. Just sit back and think of some!

We currently have over 350 active members worldwide and have had over 500 subscribers over the years. Nearly every industrialized country this side of the former "Iron Curtain" has been represented at one time or another amongst our members, including such far flung countries as South Africa, New Zealand, Greece, Cyprus, Brazil, Israel, Singapore & Taiwan. All the major countries of the Pacific Rim, including Australia, are active, as well as Canada and every country in Western Europe save Luxembourg, Finland and Monaco! We have held four conventions (three here in the U.S. and the last in Holland) with our fifth coming up quickly in Tokyo, the birthplace of the Nikon!

I will be the first to admit that putting together these 50 issues and getting them out on time has not been either easy or without its problems. But I already have heard from over 30 members planning to attend NHS-Con5 from just the U.S. and Europe alone! When we get together in Tokyo I will be reminded why I keep on doing it. It's all worthwhile!



ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

AN EARLY NIKON 135 mm FINDER

First Seen _____

by 'CY' MEYER

Issue #32 of the NHS Journal (June 30, 1991) contained an article describing a serially numbered 3.5cm chrome Nikon "Tokyo" viewfinder. The finder's serial number, which was engraved around the eyepiece, was #50701217. The article contained references to two other serially numbered 3.5cm chrome "Tokyo" viewfinders, #s 50701039 and 50701230. Although no photos of the latter two were available, it was believed that they were probably similar to #50701217, four photos of which were included in the article. These 3 finders are believed to be the only serially numbered single focal length chrome viewfinders reported up to that time (Since NHS-32 a fourth example has been collected, #50701192..Editor).

Now a serially numbered 13.5cm chrome "Tokyo" finder has surfaced! Its serial number is 50701235, only five numbers higher than the highest serial number on the finders mentioned in the referenced article. So far as I know, this is the only serially numbered 13.5cm chrome finder reported to date! At the time of its purchase, it was associated with 13.5cm f4.0 screw mount Nikkor lens #904600!

According to that indispensable reference, "Nikon Rangefinder Camera", the 13.5cm/f4.0 lens was made from 1948 to 1950. Some of those lenses with the higher serial numbers (e.g. 904227 and 904675) had the MIOJ engraving on the rangefinder cam rather than on the barrel of the lens, thus indicating manufacture late in the MIOJ period. (See "MIOJ-From When, To When" NHS-38, pp 13 & 14). The association of this finder with a lens which presumably was manufactured in 1950 leads one to the supposition that the first three digits of its serial number (507) may indicate that the finder was designed in July 1950, with the first two digits indicating the year and the third digit indicating the month in which it was designed. This was often the practice during that period.

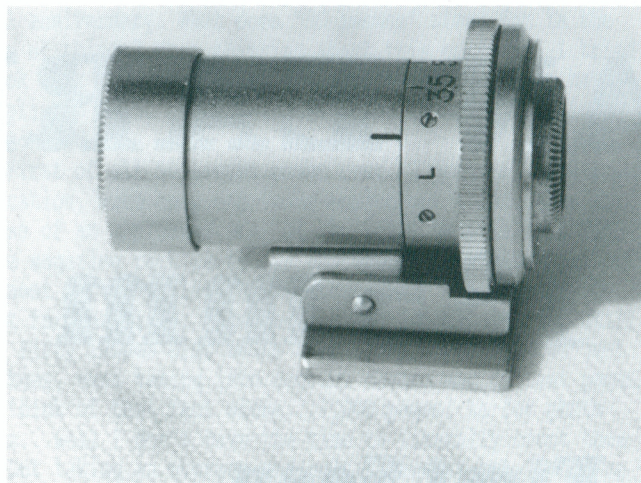
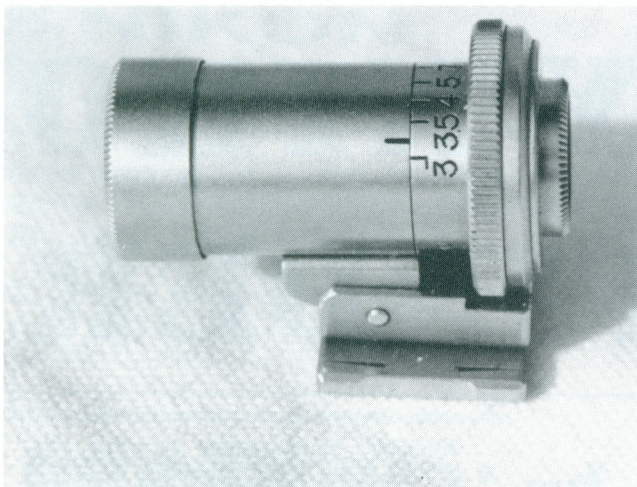
The accompanying photos indicate that this finder differs from other "normal" 13.5cm chrome specimens in the following respects: the engraving around the eyepiece is smaller in order to allow sufficient room for the serial number; the closest focus is 3ft rather than 3.5ft; a tiny "L" (probably indicating that it was intended for use with Leica screw-mount lenses) is engraved on the focusing scale rather than on the underside of the foot; the finder is housed in a suitcase shaped light brown leather case with orange thread stitching and it has a snap button type closure.

Notice that all five serially numbered finders mentioned above fall within a very narrow band of numbers, from a low of #50701039 to a high of #50701235, a span of less than 200 digits. The fact that so few have been reported (only these five have been accounted for to date) is taken as an indication that very few were made.

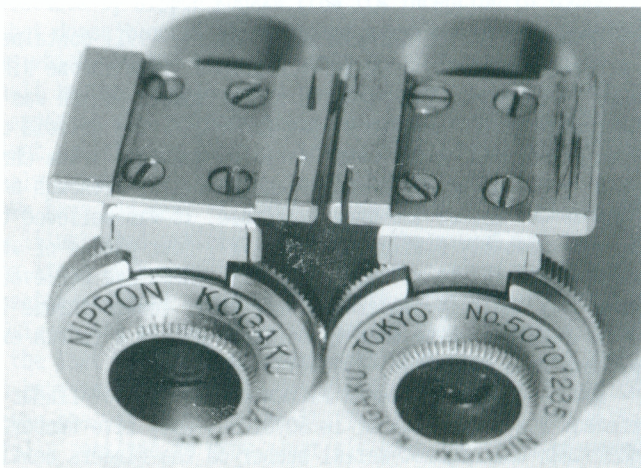
The existence of this viewfinder shows that serially numbered single focal length chrome Tokyo finders were not limited to 3.5cm, which gives rise to the question, were any made for use with the MIOJ 8.5/f2 lens which was made during the same period as the MIOJ 13.5/f4 & f3.5 lenses? My hunch is that some were and that sooner or later one will be found, probably in association with a Leica screw mount lens, and that its serial number will begin with "50701".

Something else to start looking for!

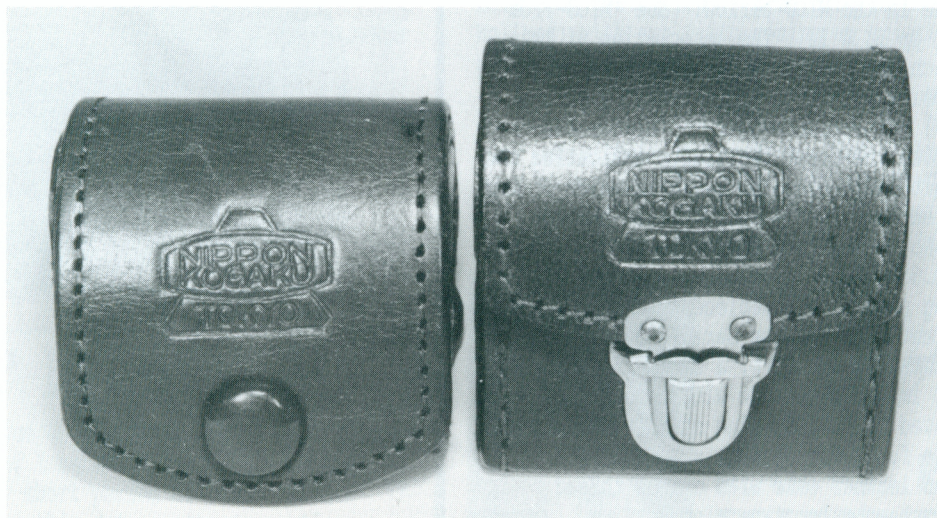
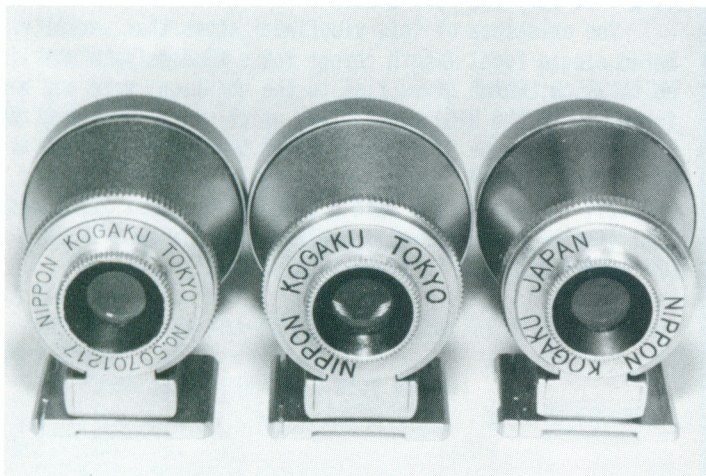




Above photos..Unusual 13.5cm finder #50701235 illustrating both the "3ft" closest focusing distance (left) and the tiny "L" engraving denoting "for Leica". Left..Rear view along with standard 13.5cm finder showing obvious differences in engraving caused by the addition of the serial number.



Left..Photo from NHS-32 illustrating 3.5cm finder #50701217 compared to standard versions. Why are the numbers so close? Below..Also from NHS-32 is a photo showing the obvious difference in the leather cases supplied with these very early finders. Note the smaller size and snap closure. What is not obvious is the colors..early case is a lovely light brown with a hint of orange while the later case is the drab dark brown we are all familiar with.



A Make Believe Nikon S!

In NHS-45 we began a series on "Nikon Copies" with one of the more unusual examples, the "Rafuray". Although this category of Nikon collecting will never approach that found in the world of Leica (with a possible 300 varieties as per NHS member Patrice Herve-Pont's "300 Leica Copies"), the real scarcity of Nikon copies make them inherently more difficult to locate. We had a follow-up article by Chris Kok in NHS-48 on the "Avigo", which is an even rarer version of the weird little "Rafuray". To date both articles have dealt with cameras that are copies of the Nikon S2. Therefore, the obvious question is, "did anyone make copies of other models of the Nikon rangefinders?". Sure they did! Just check out the two cameras in this installment.

Though not as precise a copy as the Rafuray and Avigo (with their nearly interchangeable frontplates with the S2), these two exhibit a shape and lines very much like that of the venerable Nikon S! The Neoca 2S and its nearly identical sibling, the Brumberger 2S, date from the mid 1950s. Both cameras sport the same 45mm/f3.5 Neokor lenses, wind levers,

THE NEOCA NIKON

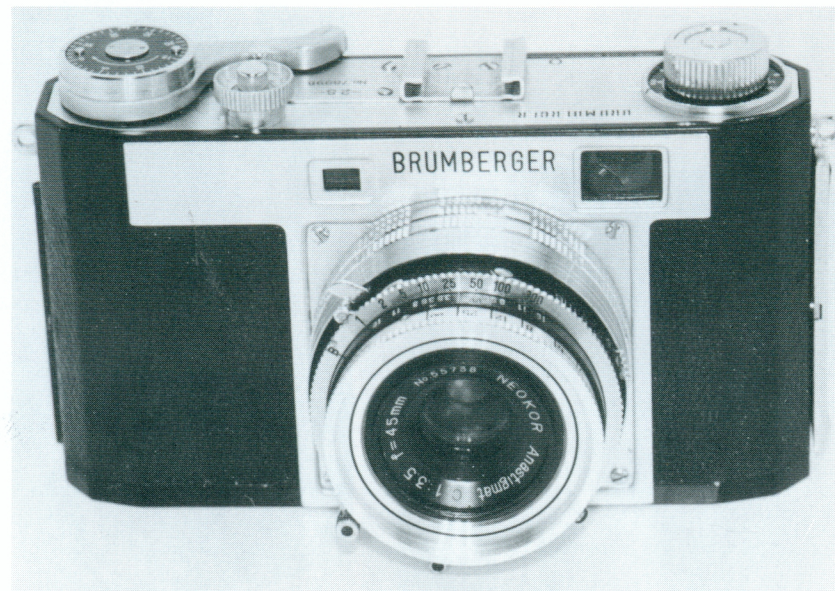
Robert J. Rotoloni



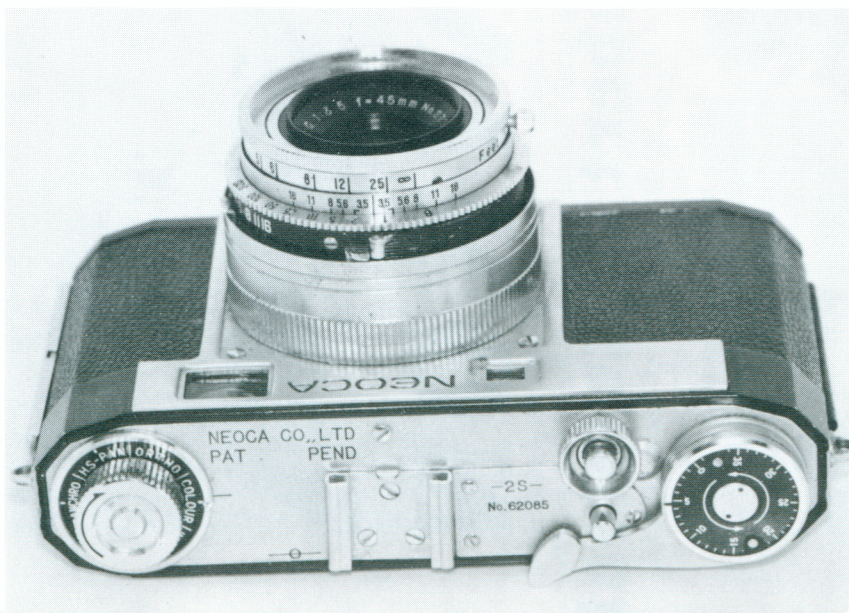
release buttons, rewind knobs, and frontplates, all mounted onto the very same body. They are fixed-lens rangefinder coupled 35s with leaf shutters. But there is one weird aspect of these two cameras. They have the same lens mounted in what appears to be the same shutter, with identical speeds and operating controls. However, the one on the Neoca body is called a "Rectus" (not the best choice!), while the one on the Brumberger is called a "Neoca"?? It doesn't make sense to me either!

There are other Neocas out there, as well as Brumbergers, to say nothing of other copies we haven't covered as yet. So keep on looking!





Looking at these two cameras it is immediately obvious they are the same save for nomenclature. They are functional and actually well made little cameras, sporting all metal construction, good quality finish, and a decent lens. They don't make them like this anymore, not even in Japan! RJR.



THE F--SPOT!!

THE NIKON F

There is nothing quite as satisfying as the sound of the shutter tripping and mirror flopping on a Nikon F. Nothing! Oh sure, my S3 sounds nice too, but the "F" has such a distinctive and soothing ka-chunk...it's music to my ears. This love affair with the Nikon F began in 1961. A casual interest grew into passion. And that passion has become an obsession.

Today I shoot with F4s. But I am surrounded by Nikon Fs, a growing collection of bodies and lenses and accessories that were mythical objects in my youth. It seems to have surprised many that in the past few years the Nikon F has come into its own as a collectible. One might not consider a model with a production run of nearly one million very desirable. Certainly there are those obvious exceptions, like the F High Speed and the Navy KS-80A, that are extremely rare. But where does one draw the line on what defines a genuinely collectible standard production-run Nikon F?

The Nikon F was introduced to America thirty six years ago, in June 1959! It was an immediate hit, having many advanced capabilities no other single lens reflex could match. As Calvin Ho enumerates in his valuable and informative "30 Years of the Nikon F" (NHS "Journal" #24, still available in reprint form from the editor), the "F" was the first and only reflex camera to offer such exclusive features as mirror lock-up, depth of field previewer, completely automatic re-opening lens diaphragm, provision for motor drive, dual coupled metering, 100% exact field coverage: in short, features that since have been maintained in each of the F's successors up to and including the new F4, and which are now taken for granted as standard offerings in any professional 35mm SLR."

We know from contemporary advertisements and instruction books that the first F carried the serial number 6400001. Production ceased in 1974, over 784,000 units later!

A lot of dealers think that just because a Nikon F has a 64xxxxx serial number it's worth more. Bunk and poppycock! As we shall see, only the first quarter of the 6400000 series is genuinely collectible. After that, there is (with some dramatic exceptions) nothing really notably different between the 50,000th and the 650,000th Nikon F body.

Black Nikons have always commanded a premium, and the "F" is no exception. Calvin Ho postulated that the first black Nikon Fs showed up in the 6400900 block...examples cited included 6400908 and 6400966. But Peter Braczko, in his landmark "Nikon Fascination", shows us 6400825, and says it is the first black Nikon F. Another block of early black cameras is in the 6401800 range (6401824).

by Steven T. Smith

It's not widely known, but not all "Fs" had titanium foil shutters. While cloth shutters on early SPs and S3s were common, cloth shutters on early reflexes were decidedly not. A handful of the very first "Fs" had cloth shutters...6400037 and 6400086 among them. If you happen upon one of these you will have yourself one of the rarest, most valuable Nikons of any persuasion ever!

Early Nikon Fs have several distinct identifying features. The one most commonly cited in the literature is the "hollow wind lever". But in fact, this is not a reliable indicator of a very early camera, for there were at least three varieties of hollow wind levers up through the end of the 6400000 run, when solid levers became the norm (6491132).

The earliest Fs...the first few hundred...have a lever that has two hollow recesses machined out of a solid piece of metal (6400293). By 6401824, the winder now appears to be a casting or stamping. And by 6424447, the winder takes yet another form, appearing surely to be a stamping. The fact that a 64xxxxx has a hollow wind lever is not in any way significant.

Nor it is significant that a reflex has the triangular Nippon Kogaku Tokyo logo on the top plate. This was present until September 1966, when it was replaced by the single word "Nikon". You'll find NKT logo-ed cameras up through the mid 6700000s.

What is significant as an identifying mark is the so-called "slanted grooves" selftimer lever. The vast majority of "Fs" had a lever with six vertical grooves. But early "Fs" had a selftimer lever with a distinctive slanted pattern.

The second significant feature of an early "F" is the single screw on the top of the shutter speed dial. The majority of reflexes had two retaining screws holding this dial.

Both of these features...the slanted selftimer grooves and single shutter dial screw...have been found on cameras up through 6424447, but are gone by 6431521. One might conclude that these early features disappeared around 6425000; i.e., that the first 25,000 Nikon Fs had these unusual features. These two features form a sharp demarcation between a collectible "early" F and a piddling "run-of-the-mill" Nikon F.



Both the Hove BLUE BOOK (1994-95) and McKeown's PRICE GUIDE (1995-96) tell us that the first 1,000 bodies are the most sought after. No argument there. Others say the first 3,000 cameras are significant. Sounds reasonable. But as more and more collectors begin to search out early "Fs", pressure will build on the supply, and later and later serial numbers will come to be regarded as genuinely collectible. Of course 25,000 bodies may seem a big run for something to be considered collectible. We all agree that the Nikon S2 and SP are eminently desirable. So let us not forget that the SP had a run of 22,348 and the S2 was mighty prolific at 56,715 examples (source: Rotoloni).

Your best bet for picking up an early reflex body is at a photo show, through a dealer of the fine and rare, or at auction. Christie's has sold two pretty early "Fs" in the past year...6401824 (black) and 6407018 (banged up, but with original boxes). You can scour camera shops, but unless you are really lucky, a pre-6425000 Nikon will be elusive. Don't expect to find "mint-in-box" early Fs. These cameras are over three decades old and the first units were put through their paces by demanding professionals. Excellent to excellent plus is about the norm, though a few mint bodies do exist.

Besides the earliest "Fs", there is another block of readily collectible reflexes...the 17,000 or so "Red Dots". These are easily identified by the red dot next to the serial number. "Red Dots" were cameras modified to accept the Photomic T...the first of the TTL meter finders (1965). The black shroud surrounding the top of the mirror box, where the viewfinder snaps in, was cut out in the rear to accept the meter finder. Unmodified "Fs" had a shroud that was almost as high in the back as on the sides and front. Those built to accept the Photomic-T have the back shroud nearly cut away, flush with the top plate. Some say the "Red Dots" are simply modified standard production "Fs", others have characterized them as prototypes for the Photomic-T. But that's a lot of prototypes! There are about 15,000 "Red Dots" in the 6500000 range including 3,000 black bodies. All these "Red Dots" are at the end of the 6500000 run (6597612 (black), 6599960). The rarer "Red Dots" are the approximately 2,200 made in the very early 6600000 block (6600595, 6600664, 6600975), all of which are thought to be chrome. It appears that very few Nikon Fs carry 66xxxxx numbers. Braczko says Photomic-T body production began at 6700000, which would help account for the existence of the "Red Dots". They turn up fairly often in dealer listings in "Shutterbug". They can be pricey, especially the rarer 66xxxxxs. I've never found one just browsing camera shops.

Finally the last Nikon Fs, the so-called "Apollo" models, have already become collectible, particularly those with serial numbers in the mid-7400000 range and up, which command prices higher than earlier cameras. The Nikon F2 came out in September 1971, even while F production continued. In 1973, Nikon decided to style the F after the F2 and so added, among other small changes, a plastic tip to the wind and selftimer levers. This change occurred sometime between 7359214 and 7378962. It makes the "Apollo" bodies quite distinctive compared to the 700,000 Fs that precede them. I should think that the final 1,000 Nikon Fs will someday be nearly as sought after as the first 1,000!

There appears to be some confusion about the serial number of the final Nikon F body. Braczko says 7451048 was the last chrome body, and 7451052 the last black one. But this does not account for 7455909, sold at Christie's on June 8, 1995. That's almost 5,000 units more! Can any member shed some light on this?

Apollos turn up frequently, often with the FTn finder. Check newspaper classifieds and your regional camera shops. Savvy dealers will charge a premium, but most shops won't know they have a desirable piece on their shelf. Mint ones do turn up with some frequency.

A minor note...some Fs in the 6400000 and 6500000 (and perhaps later blocks) were sold at military PX shops and have <EP> stamped onto the rewind lever (6424447, 6541254). But it's debatable if this feature makes them more collectible.

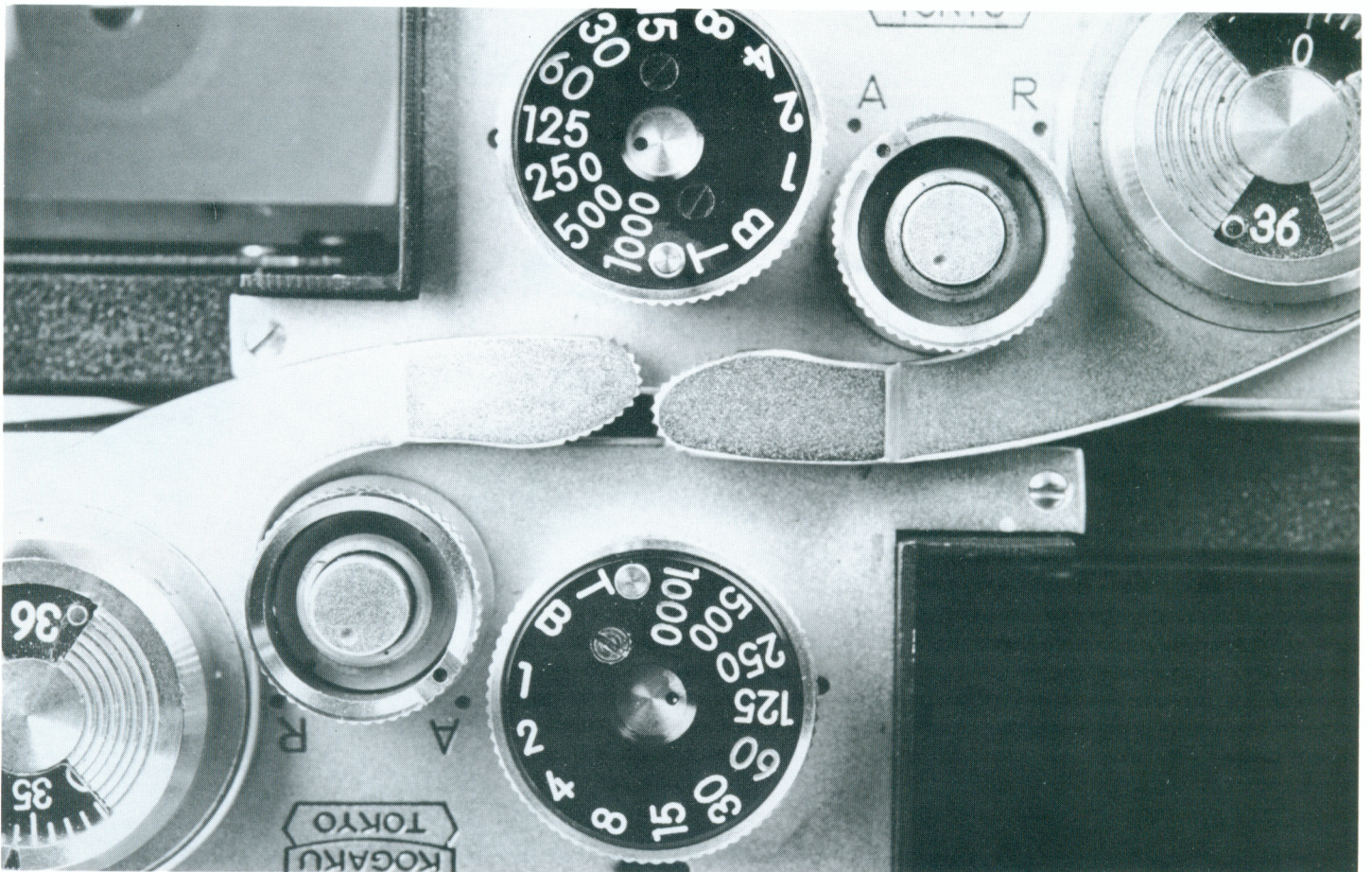
In the context of collecting, a word about Nikon viewfinders is in order. Early Fs had the standard eyelevel prism with a rectangular eyepiece and the words "Nippon Kogaku

Japan" stamped on the underside. Calvin Ho calls the eyepiece frame "square", but in fact it is a rectangle. These models used a slide-in diopter lens for eyeglass correction. Version II prisms had the words "Nikon F Japan" on the underside. The Version III finders had a square plastic frame with a round eyepiece, into which threaded diopters could be screwed, and the words "Nikon Made In Japan".

The first meter finder, the direct-read "Photomic-F", was not available until April of 1961, nearly two years after the introduction of the F. Once the Photomics went into production, they became very popular with the non-professional crowd, and thereafter a great many Nikon Fs were sold with a meter finder rather than the standard prism. The two versions of the Photomic-F used the same slide-in diopters as the early prisms. Only with the introduction of the TTL metering Photomic-T (in 1965) did the eyepiece become threaded.

The early standard prisms have become difficult to find and are very expensive...often costing more than the body! But a body up through 6425000 is simply not "correct" if it has a eyelevel prism that does not say "Nippon Kogaku".

Want to know more? There are myriad books out there. But a curious thing about collecting Nikon Fs is how little really "useful" written material exists. That may sound strange, but one must pore over the dozens of volumes available just to come up with a cloudy picture of what the F is all about. Just to write this piece I consulted eight published sources plus my own notes. Unlike Rotoloni's "Nikon Rangefinder Camera", there is no single, comprehensive source on the Nikon F reflex!



The best book is Peter Braczko's "Nikon Faszination", which is currently available only in German. It is full of interesting information and many wonderful photos. It covers the entire gamut of Nikon's photographic activities. I have not found this volume in the US. I suggest contacting Gray's of Westminster...they may have a copy.

In the same league is Braczko's little "Nikon Pocket Guide"...a very handy tome indeed. It's available in the US from A Photographers Place in New York, and in London, at Gray's and the Classic Collection.

A good guide is Cooper & Abbott's "Nikon F Handbook of Photography" (Amphoto 1968). This is "the" reference bible for the Nikon F fan! It doesn't go much into the history or quirks of the F, but it is chock-full of really useful photos and esoteric data (all circa 1968). You'll have to look hard to find a copy...it's been out of print for decades.

Calvin Ho's June 1989 NHS "Journal" piece is a must read! It brings together in one place more information on the early Fs than all other sources combined. Also, comb the "Journal's" index of past issues for F articles (usually the "F-Spot") and order them from Bob. Some are absolutely fascinating. All help fill in information gaps.

Expect to see prices rise quickly on those first 25,000 Nikon Fs. They are already hard to find. If you want a really early one, in the first 1,000 block, you'll pay dearly. But you'll also have a tidy little piece of Nikon history. And be sure to savor that sweet shutter/mirror song!

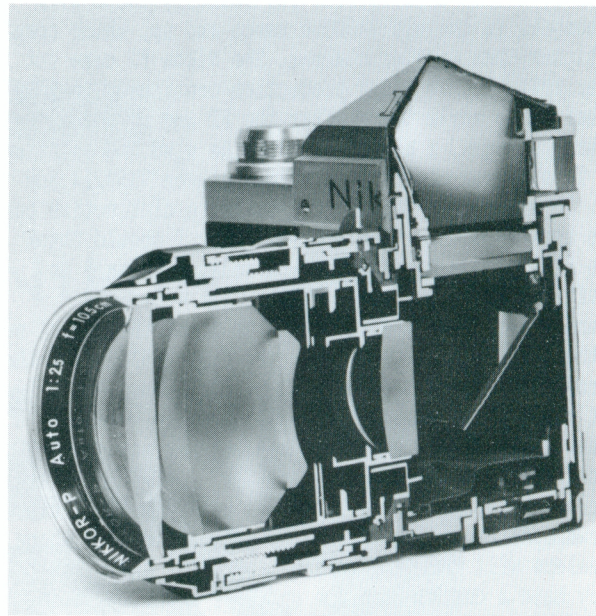
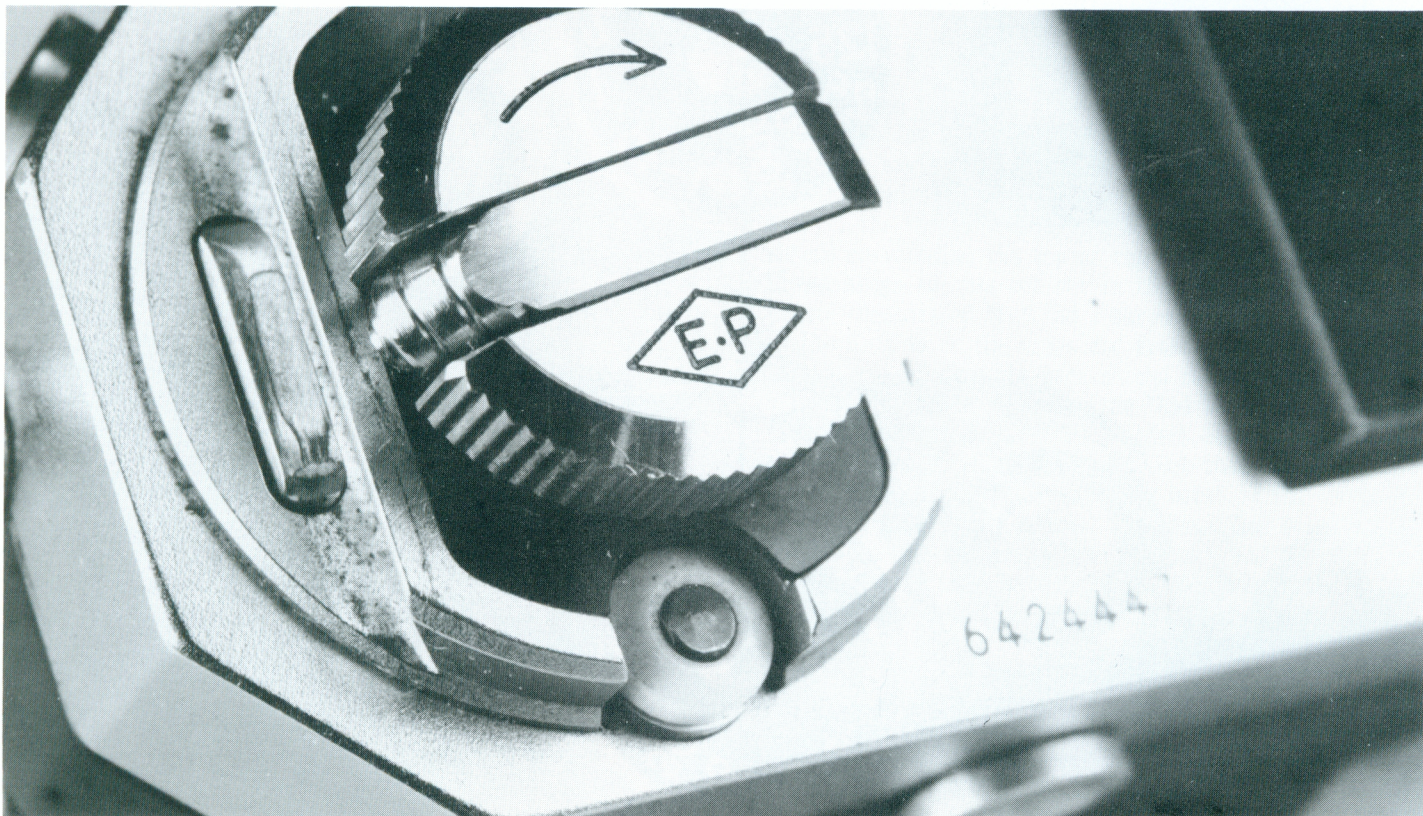
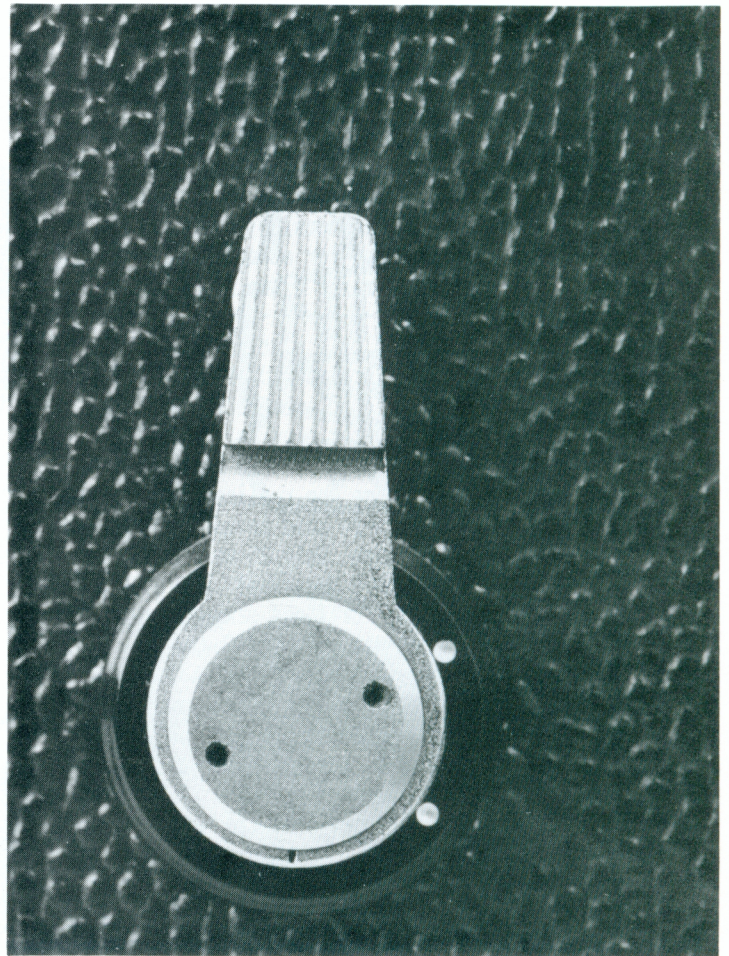


Photo on page 7 is a comparison of single-screw shutter-speed dial (bottom) on an early Nikon F (6400293), to the two-screw version that lasted until the end of F production in 1974. This page top..A cutaway view of what is considered by most to be the strongest and most resilient 35mm reflex body every made..the Nikon F!

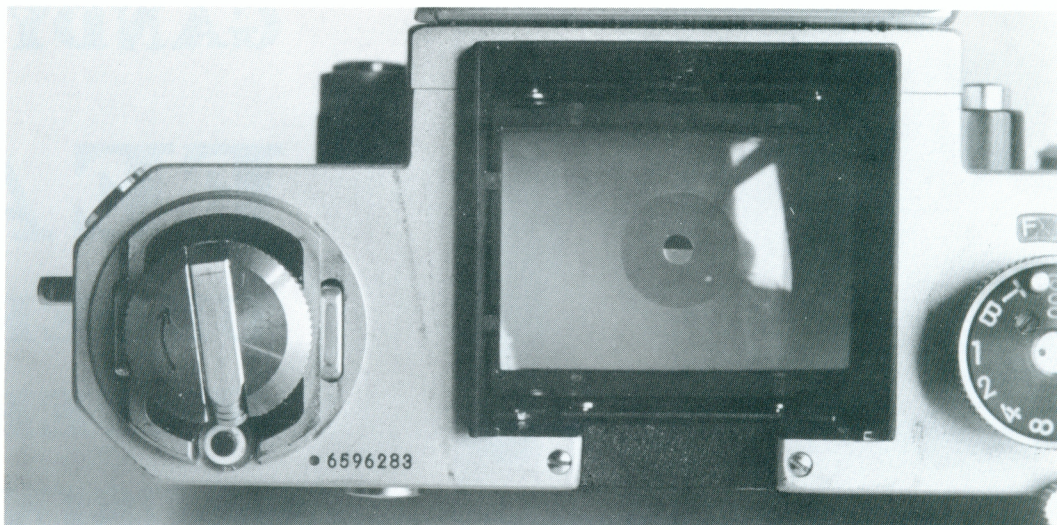
Bottom..An early Nikon F with <EP> stamped on the rewind knob, signifying it was purchased at a military Post Exchange somewhere in the world (probably Asia in the early 1960s').





Above..Slant grooved self-timer lever found on the first 25000 Nikon Fs (left) and the vertical grooved self-timer lever, which appeared around 6425000 and lasted until about 7360000.

Below..Camera #6596283 with a red dot preceding the serial number as described in the text.



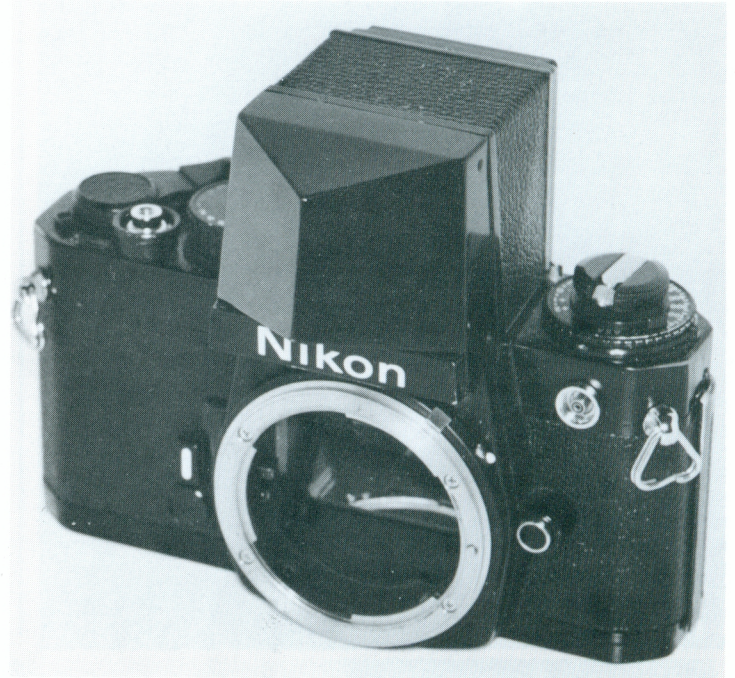
Most of you will recall our very extensive coverage of the Nikon FEA Action Camera in NHS-44. It is thought that only 100 of these special cameras were made, presumably for National Geographic Magazine, and our story was the first ever on this rare camera. Since these cameras were designed essentially for use underwater, it is obvious that a housing must also exist. However, at the time of the original article there was not enough info on the housing to include it at that time. However, in our quest for accuracy and completeness, we now present the even rarer Nikon FEA Housing!...RJR.

The article in NHS-44 was only part of the Nikon FEA story. These cameras were the brainchild of underwater photographers in about 1976/77. I found out the whole story from the manufacturer of the underwater housing. Only 100 of the FEAs were actually made. Of those, 50 were kept by Nikon and sold within the company to those who realized its instant collectibility. A further 25 were sold to underwater photographers but without any housing. Only 25 were actually delivered to National Geographic Magazine!! National Geo then specially ordered 25 housings for these cameras from a now defunct company called "Niko-Marine". The design was fabulous using a steel casing 3/8ths inch thick! Focus, shutter speeds and f-stops were all changeable by the diver underwater. Also pictured on these pages is an accessory lens housing which could be used with tele lenses. Note all the gearing necessary to mate with the focusing of the lenses.

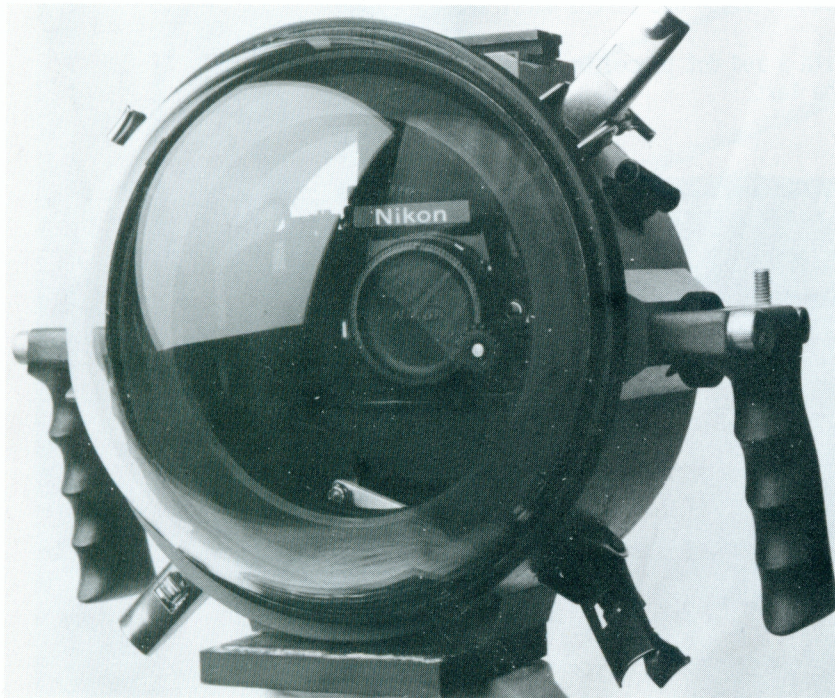
A strong argument can be made that the Nikon FEA is incomplete without the underwater housing made for it. At a production of only 25 pieces, it is surely one of the rarest of Nikon items!

Interestingly, a few modified Nikon FMAs' turn up. These are cameras modified by repairmen from FEA parts for a manual camera. They are not a Nikon product. National Geographic made two of them from damaged FEA bodies.

ANOTHER "NHS" EXCLUSIVE!



Above..The very rare Nikon FEA as seen in NHS-44. Left..Front view of the special Niko-Marine housing for the FEA with its standard domed glass front for normal in wideangle lenses.

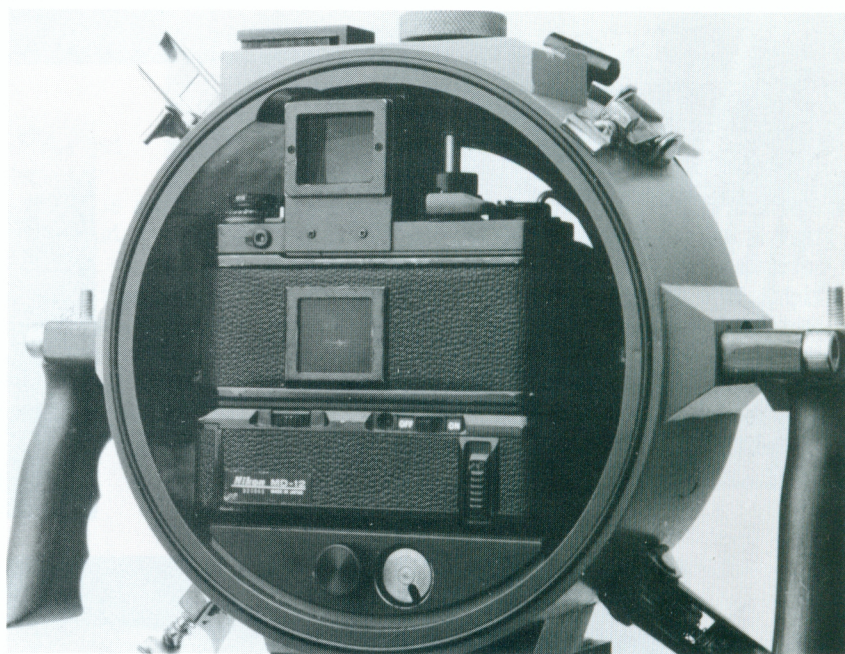


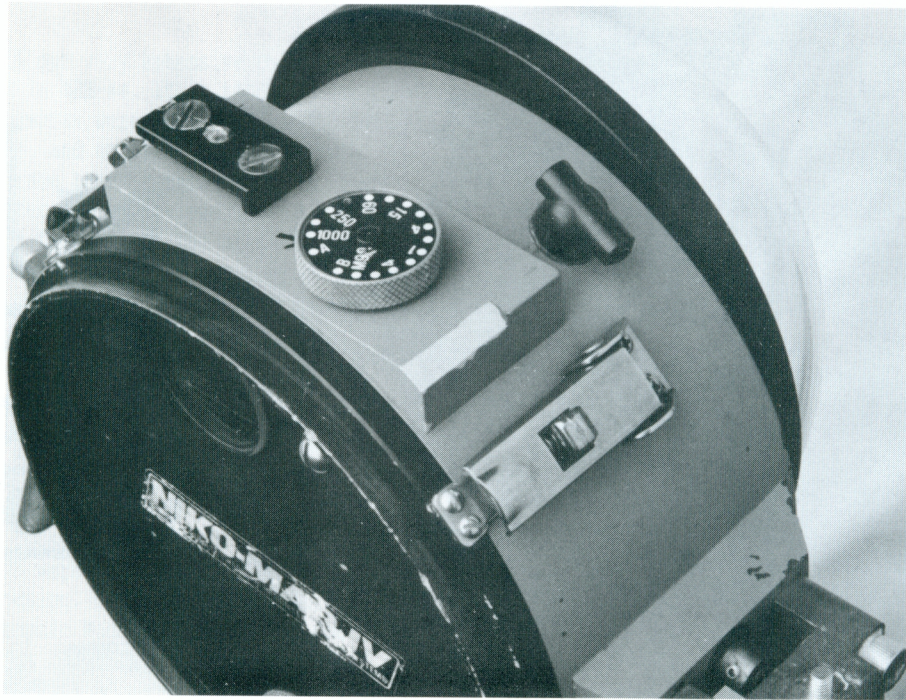
STEPHEN GANDY FEA UNDER WATER HOUSING



NHS
 NIPPON
 KOGAKU
 TOKYO

The Niko-Marine from the rear. Top with back plate mounted..right with it removed. Note that it was designed to accommodate the MD-12 motor as well! Bottom..close-up of finder eyepiece which is where the design of the Nikon Action Finder really shines! That beautiful eye relief must have made this rig a joy to use underwater.

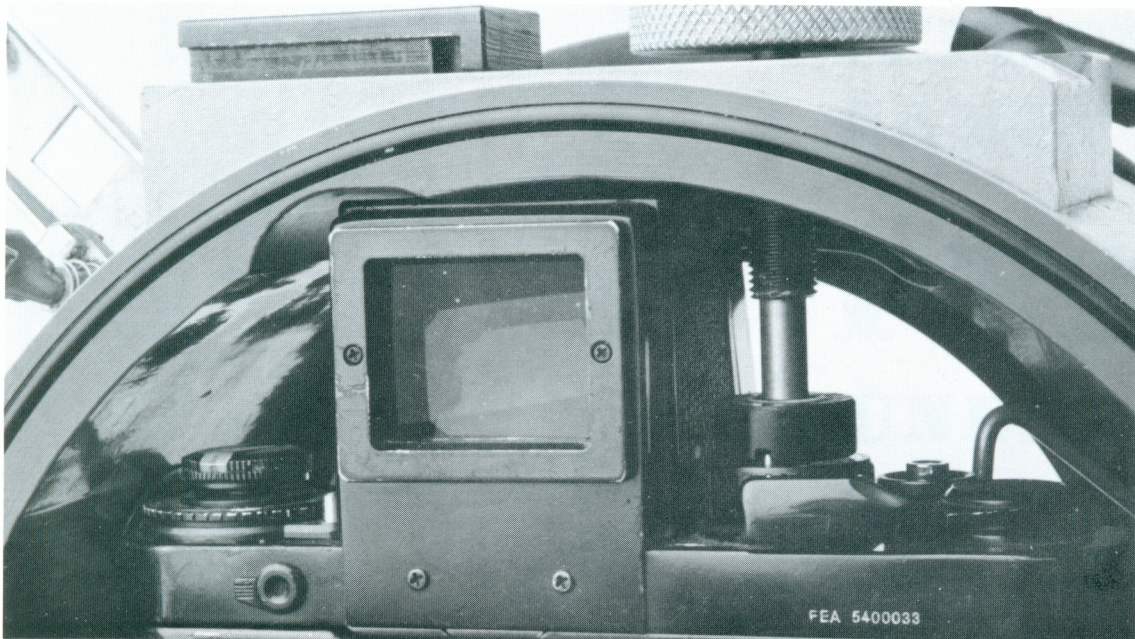
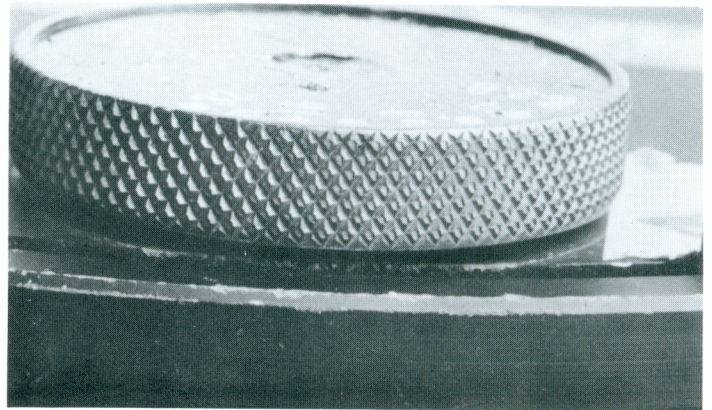


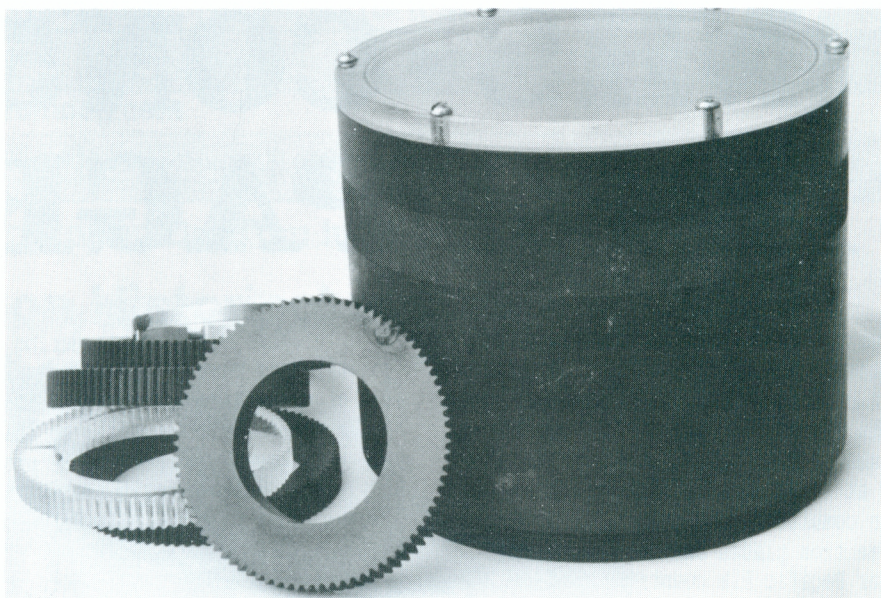


Top..Top of housing showing shutter speed dial which matches that of the camera right down to the "Auto" and "M90" settings!

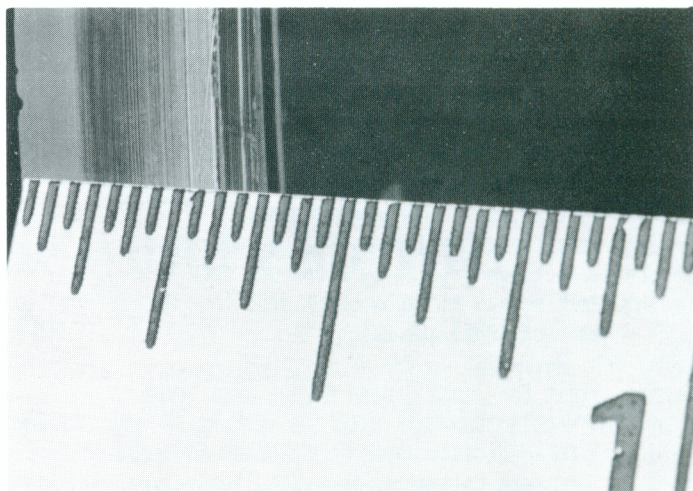
Right..This is the aperture dial which can be seen in the top photo on page 11. It mates with controls that are visible in the middle photo just below the MD-12 motor platform.

Below..Roof of the housing has a small cut-out to clear the high top of the action finder. Note the shutter speed dial is linked to the external dial by means of a very robust shaft.





Top..This is the accessory housing for telephoto lenses and its set of special gears needed to mate with the lenses.
 Right..Everything about the construction of this housing is really robust. This baby is very well made. A case in point is the 3/8ths inch thickness of the steel casing used!
 Bottom..All controls are very large and well made. This is one of the four spring loaded clamps used to lock the rear of the housing against its "O-ring" for water tightness! All in all one well made piece of equipment meant for professional use. And they only made 25 of them!



'NHS-CON5' INFO PAGE!

Since our last issue I have been faxing back and forth between here and Tokyo keeping in touch with my friend Akito Tamla, who is doing most of the groundwork for NHS-Con5. From his latest faxes it looks like everything is falling into place very well and we should have a memorable week in Japan.

As of this writing at least 30 members from Europe, Canada and the U.S. have committed to attending! Add to that number those who may come from places such as Australia, Hong Kong, Singapore and other Pacific Rim countries, and the many Japanese members and guests who will be present, and I can see that NHS-Con5 might be even bigger than our previous record setting meeting in Holland two years ago! What follows is my current information and those of you who have contacted me will receive an update mailed directly to you in the first part of February with any changes or additions. Here is the tentative schedule of events as of 12/22/95.

SATURDAY Feb. 24, 1996: NHS-Con5 Begins.

Morning..Reception with Japanese Nikon collectors.

Afternoon..Lectures & talks by Nikon men (see below).

Evening..Talking and an exchange of greetings and information amongst those attending.

SUNDAY Feb. 25, 1996:

Morning..Visit the Japan Camera Museum as a group.

Afternoon..Meeting and talk with the writers of "The Collectors Guide to Japanese Cameras" and publisher of "Camera Collectors News (CCN)" magazine.

MONDAY Feb. 26 & Tuesday Feb. 27, 1996:

Possible visit to the Pentax Gallery (The Pentax Gallery has moved from Tokyo to a location about 60 miles distant, so this visit is tentative at this time.)

Visit the Nikon Oi factory in Shinagawa where it all began with the Nikon I.

WEDNESDAY Feb. 28, 1996:

Morning..Visit the opening day of the Japan Classic Camera Show at the Matsuya Department Store in the Ginza.

Evening..Ending session of NHS-Con5.

I have recently learned the following. In addition to Masahiko Fuketa we will also have a chance to meet with Mr. S. Fukuoka, Chairman of Nikon, and also the man who designed the S36 motor for the Nikon S2E!! Tamla-san also tells me that they are talking to other former Nikon men who worked in body and lens production and inspection as well as optical design and repair! They are also negotiating the possible showing to us by Nikon, of some experimental items!

This could happen during the visit to the Oi factory which is what happened to me in 1987 when I was shown a tray of seven Nikon prototypes, including the two known Nikon SP2 models! Tamla-san tells me that the Nikon company will help in some way and seeing the prototypes could be one aspect. It is not known exactly what will occur at this time but it is exciting to think that Nikon has agreed to help the NHS in some way. Unfortunately our convention occurs at the same time as the PMA show in Las Vegas, so many Nikon men will be there and not in Tokyo.

Hotel information has been verified as follows..

SHINAGAWA PRINCE HOTEL "NEW TOWER"

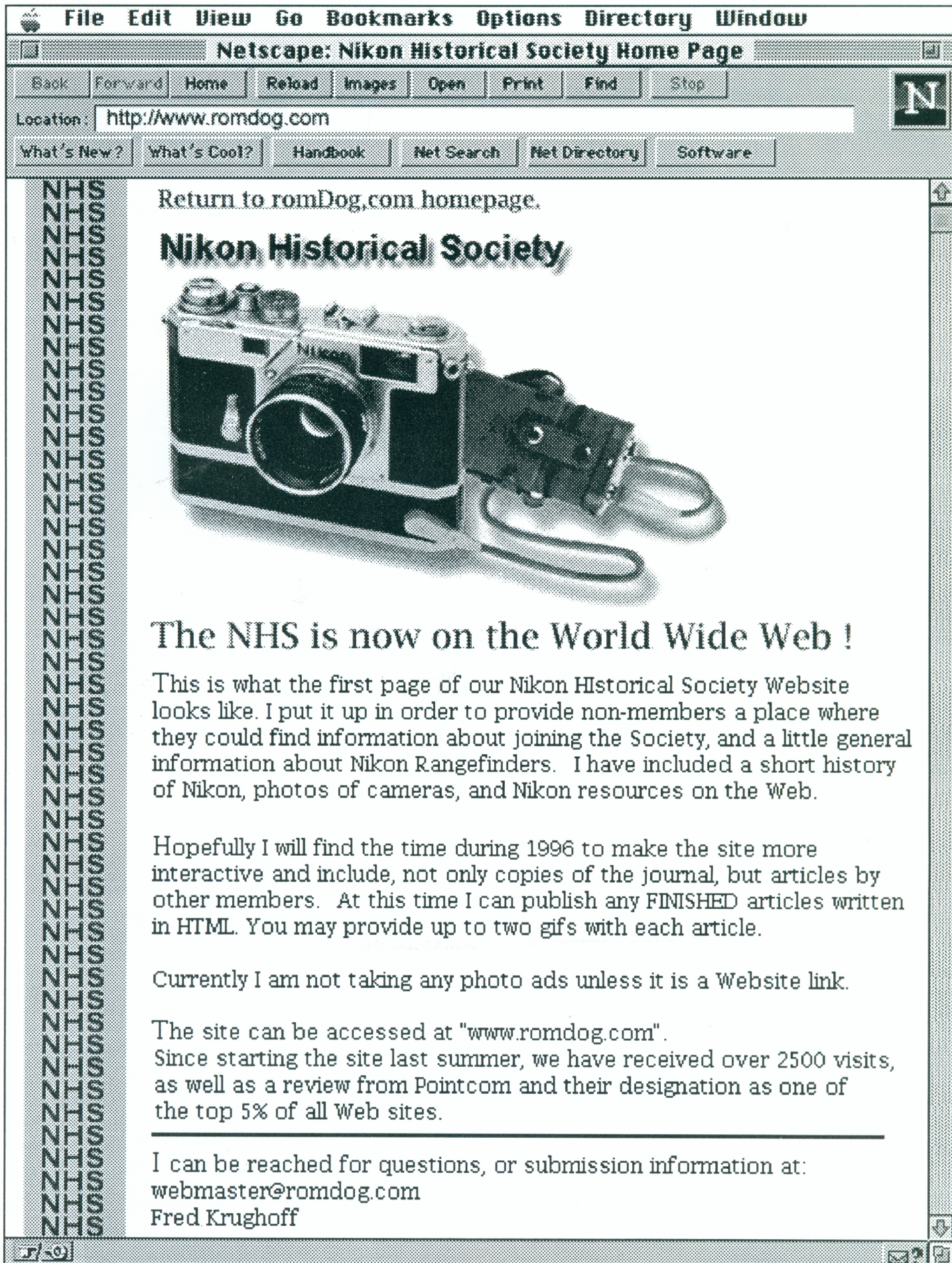
Phone # in Tokyo is (03)-3440-1111.

A total of 18 twin rooms and 5 single room have been reserved from the night of the 23rd to the morning of the 29th at a special rate of approximately \$100 per person per night which includes taxes and breakfast! It has been verified that we will be in the "New Tower" which is one of 3 buildings that make up the Shinagawa Prince complex.

Getting from Narita Airport to the hotel is not difficult or overly expensive if you use the Airport Limousine Bus service. Within the Terminal you will see the counter where your bus ticket may be purchased, which runs about \$30 since Narita is nearly two hours from downtown Tokyo! The signs tell you which bus to take. However, the Shinagawa Prince is "NOT" one of the hotels where the buses stop...but they do stop at the Takanawa Prince & the Pacific (Meridian). I have stayed at both hotels and they are almost next door to the Shinagawa Prince! Take the bus to the Hotel Pacific which puts you within 300 meters of the Shinagawa, only a short walk. Those attending will be sent a map with directions! If you have questions do not be afraid to ask at the limousine counter at the airport. And believe me, English is understood more than most people realize!

Because of the language barrier I do not expect NHS-Con5 to be as structured as previous meetings. That is I see it as being more of a friendly social get together as opposed to a series of lectures. However, we hope to have some visual entertainment and it would be great if everyone tried to bring along something interesting for "Show n' Tell"! I remember from previous trips how much we all enjoyed looking at equipment brought into the room. Admiring and enjoying such things is a universal language with no barriers!

So if you plan on attending and have not contacted me to verify for sure, please do so NOW! Some have written to say they might...well it is now too close to just say you might come. In order to get hotel space we need to know NOW! My address and Fax number are on our masthead!



NIKON - TO - CANON

ADAPTER??

by **PETER LOWNDS**

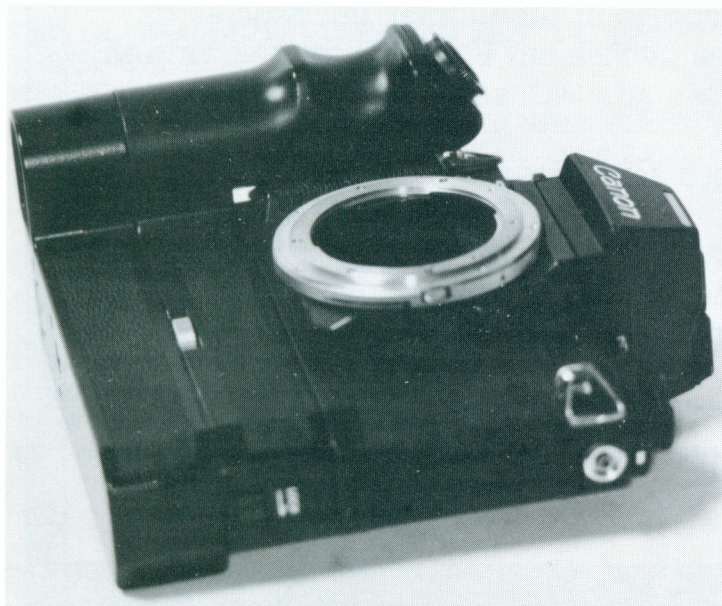
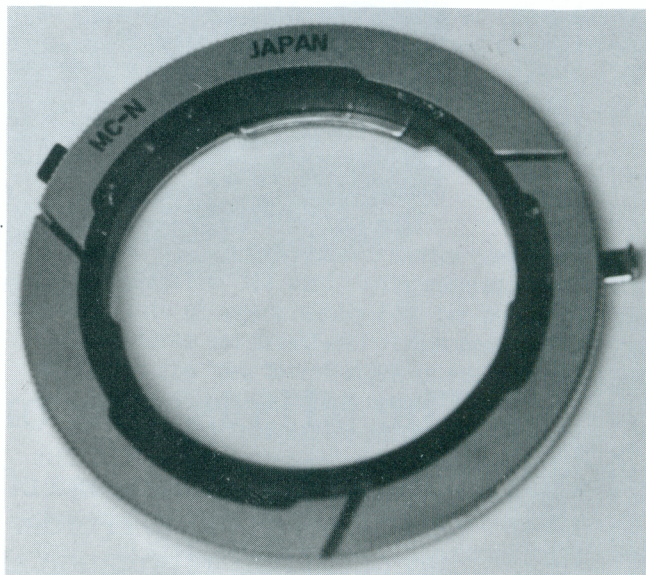
A war is being waged across the land today at every sporting event. A war where not a drop of blood is being spilled, but only lots of sweat. It's the battle of the long glass between the two photographic "shoguns" of Japan, Nikon and Canon! Who will win, nobody knows. But back in the days when royalty and the rich could swim naked with a rubber duck in a friend's pool in the south of France without the prying eyes of the world's press watching them through two foot photographic howitzers are long gone!

Back in those seemingly more gentlemanly days of the early 70s', Canon knew they were playing second fiddle to Nikon. Canon made many, many attempts to convert the great unwashed to Canon. One thing they tried was to make a bayonet adapter to mount Nikkors onto a Canon body! This was possible because Canon had such a large bayonet mount and their bodies were not as deep as Nikon's were.

This is the "MC-N" Canon-Nikon mount adapter! It is an item which, at first sight, you could be forgiven for not picking up at a camera show. It looks like a thousand and one other rings, but take a second look dear reader. The adapter is not stamped "Canon", but was sold by them as a Canon manufactured item. It was not cheap as quality never is. This well made adapter allows almost all the Nikkor lenses to be mounted on the front of a Canon body, and focus to infinity, with the lens showing the correct scale.

Make a mental note and take a second look at the camera shows. Check out that box of junk. You may find a ring around your finger worth more than its weight in gold. Happy hunting.

(Many thanks to "misguided member" and Canon collector Ernst Thiel for letting me use this rare item. And let us pray that one day he will see the error of his ways and start collecting Nikon!!)



by PETER LOWNDS

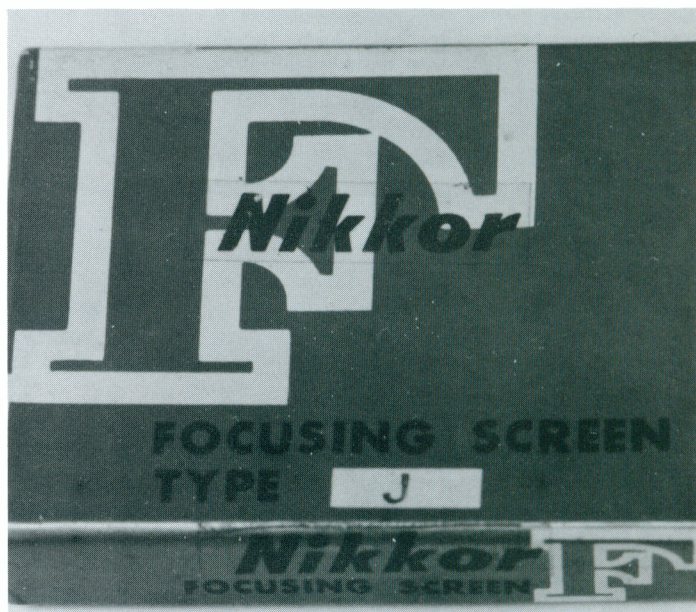
The very stuff that drives collectors wild the world over...the reason that we will go to the ends of the earth to hunt down and find the rare pieces...all those lovely "never did sell well" things...the toys that seemed like a good idea at the time...the one item that was made in blue or only sold for a very short period at a shop in Lansing...or were the last few made before the painter went blind...you see before you such an item.

Think back to Germany in the late 60s'. Nikon were trying to make inroads into the very lucrative German market but were having all kinds of trouble with Zeiss Ikon. It seems that Zeiss felt that "Nikon" sounded too much like "Ikon" and were successful in preventing, for a time, Nippon Kogaku from using their very name! To get around this problem, Nippon Kogaku decided to use the moniker "Nikkor" on their equipment sold on the German market (not a bad idea since the name for their lenses was even older and more famous than the name for their cameras!). This meant that they had to stamp new name plates, and other parts, for their equipment, but Nippon Kogaku thought it worth while. Even the instruction books, advertising literature and boxes had to be changed!

Our first item is a lens shade which would not normally turn heads. But take a second look! The people at Nikon have gone to the trouble of placing a sticker over the name Nikon on the shade itself, changing it to Nikkor! In addition they have applied a transparent Nikkor sticker to the box as well! I am sure the sticker would have worn off the shade with use but this example is unused, so it is still present!

The second item is a boxed "J" screen where, with tender loving care, two transparent stickers reading Nikkor have been applied to the box! The total buying price for the two items was \$15, but priceless for the true Nikon collector and great companion pieces to the German market Nikkor F cameras. I also have a grey flash shoe somewhere marked in the same way! Happy Hunting!

NIKKOR STUFF !!



From Wolfgang Kuster...

The latest issue of the Journal was great again! Very interesting were the articles on the Nikon Hand Fundus camera, the "1960 Seminar" and the F3P. But the absolute hit were the photos and drawing of the Nikon L!

Of course I had read about this camera in the Braczko book and had played the interesting game "Imagine what would have been if...". Now I've finally seen a photo of this phantom, and I don't find it ugly. Do you? If the Nikon L had appeared in, say 1951, I think it would have been an interesting alternative for Leica owners who had some screwmount lenses but found the Leica bodies a bit small and fumbly (as I do).

Since it would not have been an extensive technological effort in my opinion to produce a camera in both Nikon BM and Leica SM versions, even more interesting would have been possible later models such as the "S2-L", "S3-L" and "SP-L". Because the latter two could be motorized, they might have been an alternative to the Leica M3 for screwmount users! If many pros had turned to the "L" and its successors, the continuing demand for SM lenses could have caused Leitz to produce SM versions of their fine M-lenses longer than they did. Also, Nippon Kogaku would have produced their SM lenses into the sixties. Imagine a motorized SP-L with a 35/2 Summicron or 21/3.4 Super-Angulon or 21/4 Nikkor or 50/1.1 Nikkor!

As everybody knows, canon also produced SM cameras and lenses. At first Leica copies, they later built really modern cameras like the VT, VI, L1 and 7 (which I like), they lack the professional feel of a Nikon SP/S3 or Leica M3. Most of the late Canon lenses, however, are gorgeous. Imagine a Canon 50/1.4 on an SP-L or a 85/1.8 on an S3-L!

So: Why, oh why, Nippon Kogaku, didn't you produce the "Nikon L"??

Not all members of the "NHS" are just collectors. Many are deeply involved in photography at all levels ranging from advanced amateur to full-time professional. Some have made their living with photography for years, if not decades, and some are quite influential in their chosen field. One of our long time members is professional photographer Al Satterwhite who is one of the major advertising and illustrative pros in the country. Al has had a number of books published over the years and many of you have admired his work in various publications without always being aware of it. Al has been a user of Nikon equipment for years and is familiar with both the early gear as well as the latest state-of-the-art items made today. He is so prominent in his field that Nikon chose to showcase him and his work in a recent two-page ad in Popular Photography! Pages 22 & 23 of the December issue feature Al and his comments on the new Nikon N70 and how he used it to produce the photo in the ad. Check it out and see what one of your fellow members is up to!

Patrice Herve-Pont is familiar to all of you as not only a member but also the author of books (300 Leica Copies, etc) and a series of what he calls "Fotofiches". His books have been reviewed within these pages before and I have mentioned the Fotofiches as well. I just received the latest addition, which is Fotofiche #45, devoted to the entire line of world famous Micro-Nikkors. This 8-page pamphlet covers every version of every Micro-Nikkor made from the 50/f3.5 for the RF cameras up to the latest AF lenses. Although written in French, it is still full of very useful information. Contact him at "Fotosaga, Flassy 58420 Neuilly, France."

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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.

Grays are usually the first place that collectors contact for early and rare Nikon cameras, lenses and accessories. We are regularly consulted by writers, researchers, television and film production companies for advice and supply of Nikon equipment for both period and modern films. All this can be viewed in delightfully comfortable old-fashioned surroundings where we welcome part exchanges of other quality equipment.

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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 and mount. Per Kullenberg, Ollingvej 11, 6933 Kibaek, Denmark. Tel-011-45-971-91393.

FOR SALE...Nikon Rangefinder and Nikon F collection for sale. All in Mint or near Mint condition. Some items New or as New! Phone or Fax for my list. Behram Kapadia, Chequers Lane, Pitstone, Bedfordshire LU7 9AG, England. Tel: 44-1-296-668573. Fax: 44-1-296-661315.

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"NHS" PRODUCTS

To the right is our latest list of "NHS PRODUCTS". You will notice 3 new items, 2 of which are a little different than our normal fare. Along the lines of our previous efforts at reprinting interesting & important Nikon literature we now have the "Lens List of Special Optics..Nikon Industrial and Commercial Lenses", which contains info on some really rare & unusual Nikkors, many of which you may never have heard of. The other two items are our NHS Membership Directory and our Nikon Journal Index for the first 46 issues. Sales of these products help hold down Society dues.

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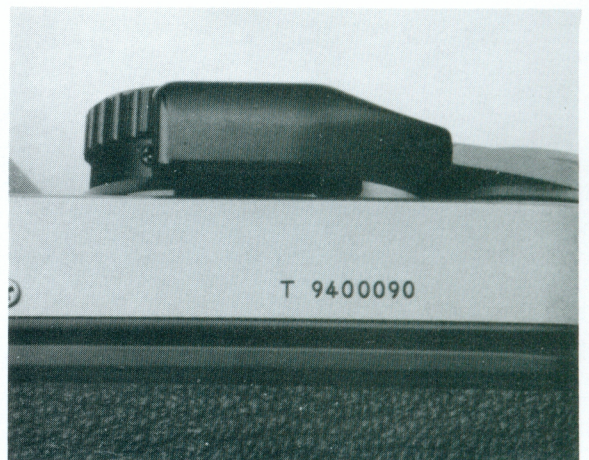
THIS "ODDS N' ENDS" PAGE WILL BE RESERVED IN ALL FUTURE ISSUES OF "THE NIKON JOURNAL" AS A SHOWCASE FOR THE RARE, THE UNUSUAL & OFFBEAT, OR JUST THE OUT OF THE ORDINARY! IF YOU FEEL THAT YOU POSSESS AN ITEM THAT FULFILLS THESE CRITERIA, PLEASE SEND ME AT LEAST TWO OR MORE VARIED VIEWS OF YOUR ODDITY ALONG WITH ANY INFORMATION THAT WOULD BE OF INTEREST. THANKS!



Member Stephen Gandy sent along these photos of a current and future Nikon collectable that I must admit I was not aware of! To quote Stephen...

"THE YEAR OF THE DOG"

Enclosed please find some photos of Nikon's newest commemorative, the "Titanium FM-2 Year of the Dog". It is interesting that Nikon would make the camera at all, but the limited production of only 300 pieces makes it even more interesting. This little camera is rarer than either a Nikon I or a Black SP!!"





Created For The 'NHS' by TONY HURST

NIKON JOURNAL DEC. 31, 1995