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NHS-57

14th ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!!!

NIKON  **JOURNAL**



THIS ISSUE

PG.1-WWII AERIAL CAMERA
PG.4-135/F4 EXACTA-NIKKOR!
PG.8-ARAKAWA CONVENTION SPEECH
PG.14-NIKON S3 "OLYMPIC"

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EDITORIAL

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It seems like our anniversary issue comes around faster and faster each year. They say times flies as you get older and also when you are having fun! I think they may be right. We now have 14 years under our belts, which still feels a bit unreal to me even though I've lived it everyday. Before I know it I'll be talking about our 15th anniversary on this page!

Well, I've made a little progress with the new computer and I feel confident as time passes I will be able to improve the Journal using the new technology that keeps inundating us daily. In the meantime I've had a disaster with my old system. Hard drive failure! As I write this it is dead and I cannot access my database! Wish me luck that I can salvage 20 years of data collection.

We have in this issue an article on another WWII aerial camera that may be a Nikon product. Al Brody provided the camera and Biagio Guerra the photos. Next is a detailed article on a unique Nikkor! Possibly the only existing example of a 135/f4 in Exacta mount! Peter Lownds supplied the lens and the words while Tony Hurst did his thing with the photos! I have also reproduced part of the speech given by Mr. Arakawa in Tokyo on the day before the meeting at Nippon Kogaku. The translation of the 30 page original was done by Kyoko Saegusa, wife of member George Landon. I want to thank her for taking on the huge task of translating such a large article!

Speaking of translations, member Biagio Guerra had the section on the Olympic S3 in Mikiyo Kuno's book done for us and brought to light some interesting information on this camera. His article is enhanced by a special photo of his black S3 (nearly every photo in this issue is the work of a pro, something I didn't plan but just happened).

And now about NHS-Con6...we have run into some difficulty with the timing of our next convention. As is always the plan, we want to tie in the meeting with a camera show to make the weekend more exciting for those who attend. However, all the groups that put on shows in the New York area have yet to set dates for the spring! Unbelievable, but true! Convention organizer Bill Kraus has been in touch with all parties but no one can give us a date and location! As soon as Bill and I can come up with something I will let you know. It may require a separate mailing as I cannot wait till NHS-58 to do this. Hang in there! We're working on it and it will happen! I will let you know!

NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for the next issue of our NIKON JOURNAL, #58, is November 15, 1997. It is important that all manuscripts, photos, ads and letters be in by this date so I can get the next issue out on time. The December issue is always the hardest because of the holidays, so please remember the deadline date!!!



ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

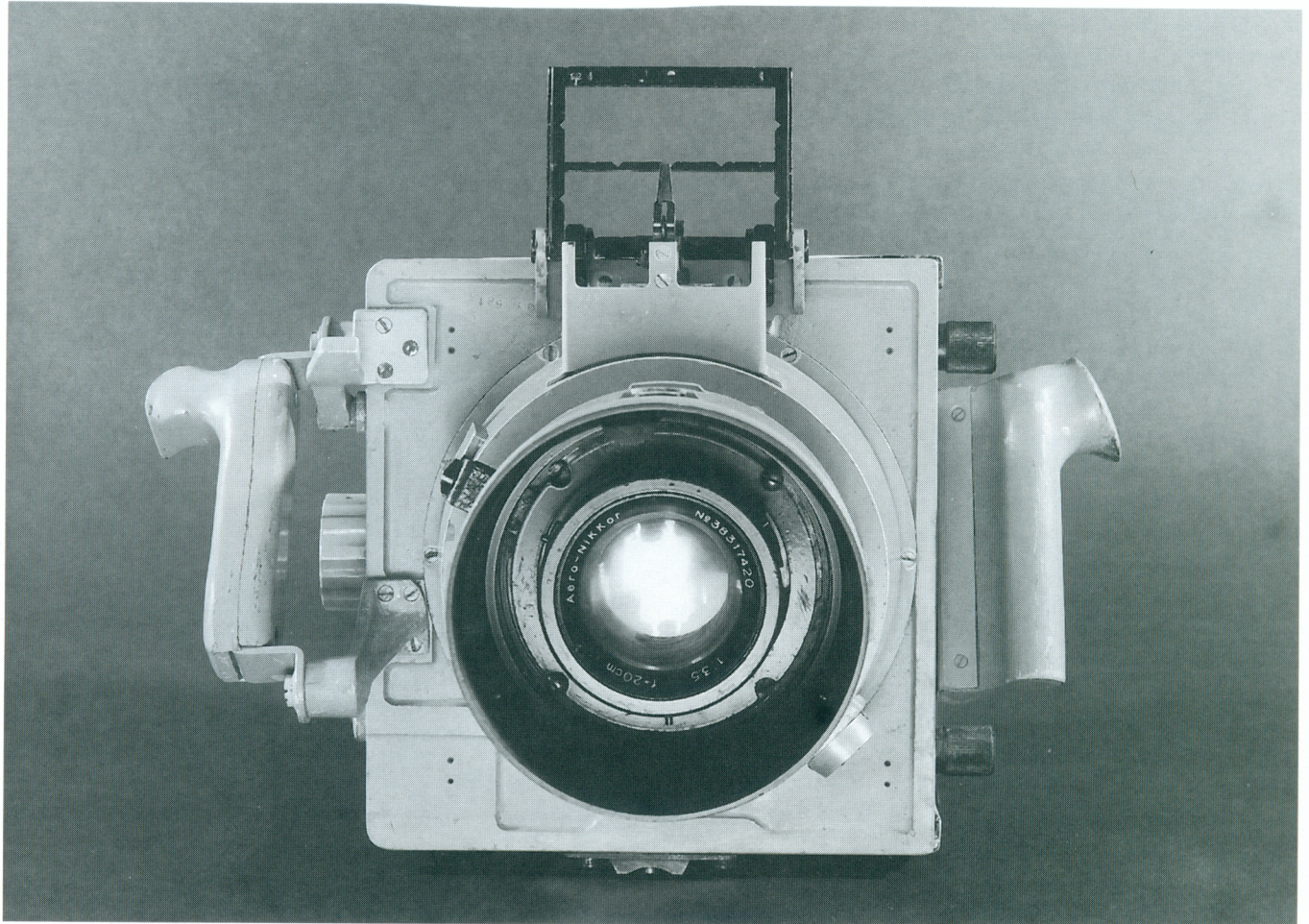
CAMERA COURTESY ALAN BRODY PHOTOS BY BIAGIO GUERRA

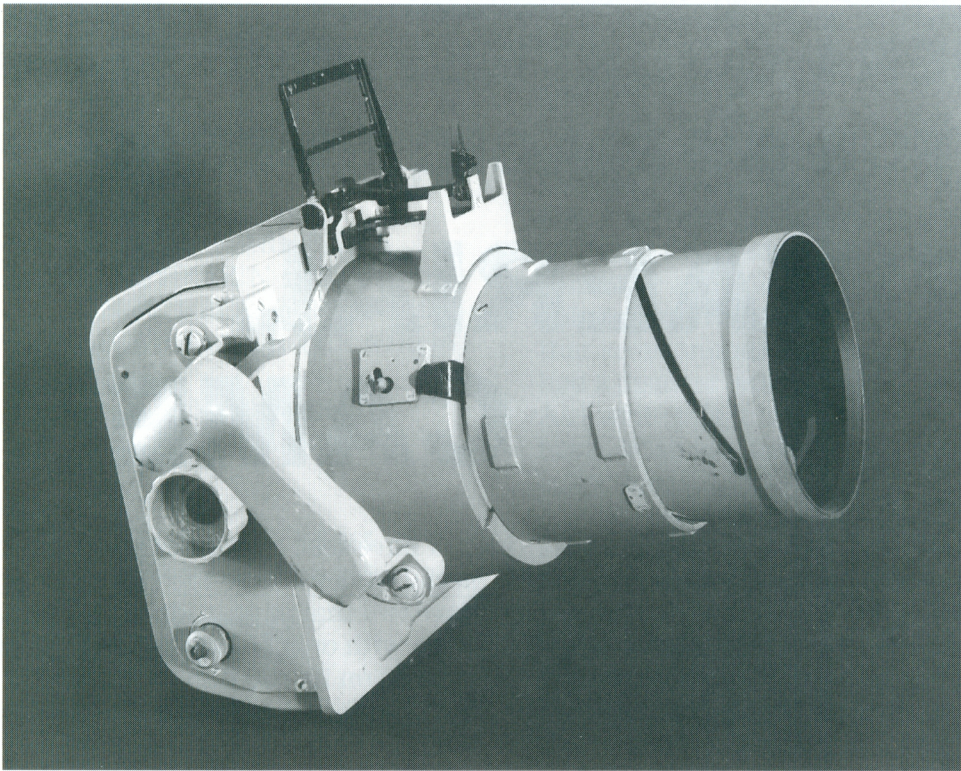
WWII AERIAL CAMERA!!

In NHS-48 (6/95) is an extensive article by Richard Lane on the "Type 96" aerial camera made by Nippon Kogaku starting in 1937. The Type 96 can be found in most of N-K's historical literature. In this issue we have a different aerial camera that came with two lenses, both 20cm/f3.5s, one made by Konishiroku (Konica) and Nippon Kogaku! The serial number on this example is '2360' but there are no N-K markings evident. It is of all metal construction save for the two wood handles mounted on the sides. Its configuration is different from the Model 96 as far as the lens cone is concerned, but the general layout is the same.

I have seen a significant number of Japanese WWII aerial cameras over the years by various makers. I have two that appear identical to this model, and both came with only Nikkor optics. The model 96 is clearly marked on its roll film back with the familiar N-K logo, not found on this unit. However, the identification plate appears quite similar, so this might be a product of Nippon Kogaku.

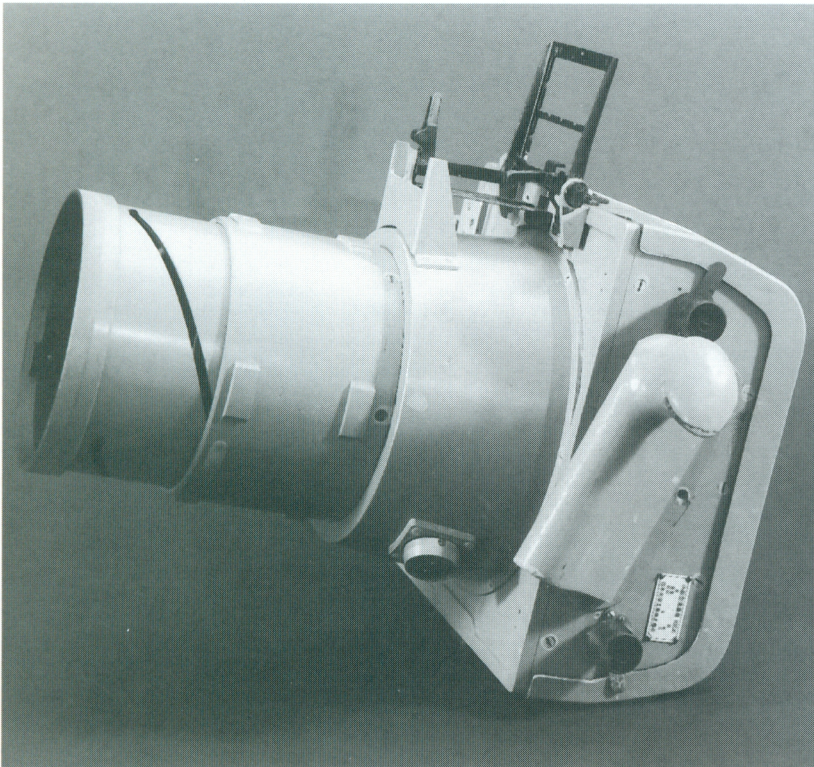
More study needs to be done on this type of item before we can have a full picture of just what Nippon Kogaku produced in the way of cameras before the birth of the Nikon One!

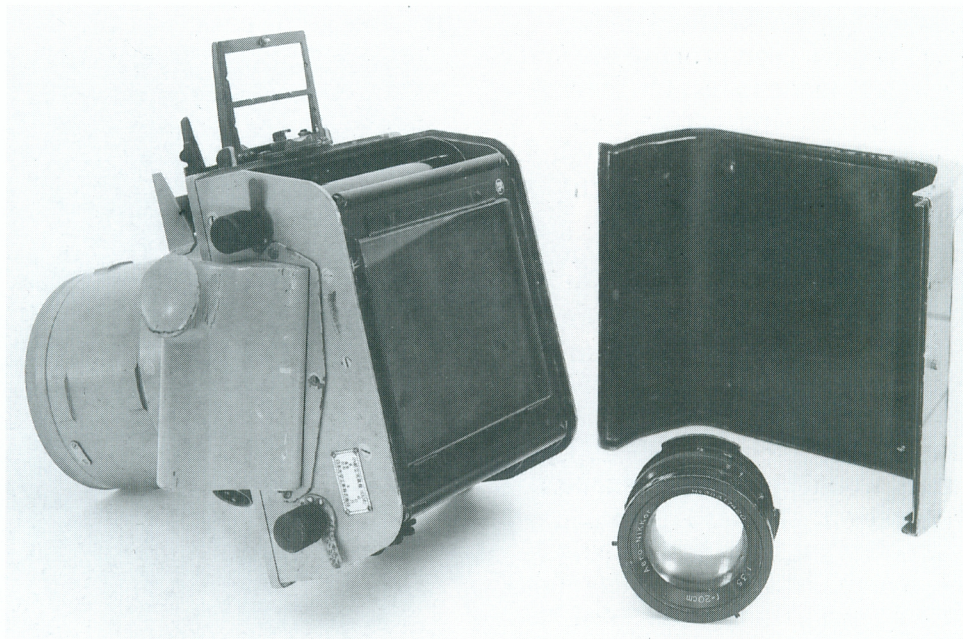
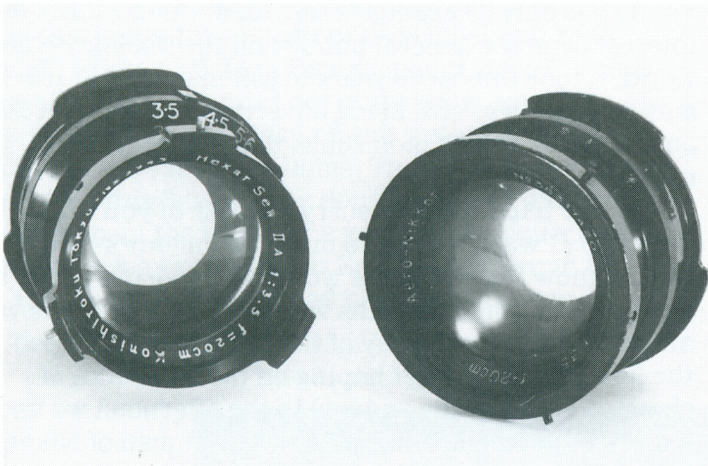
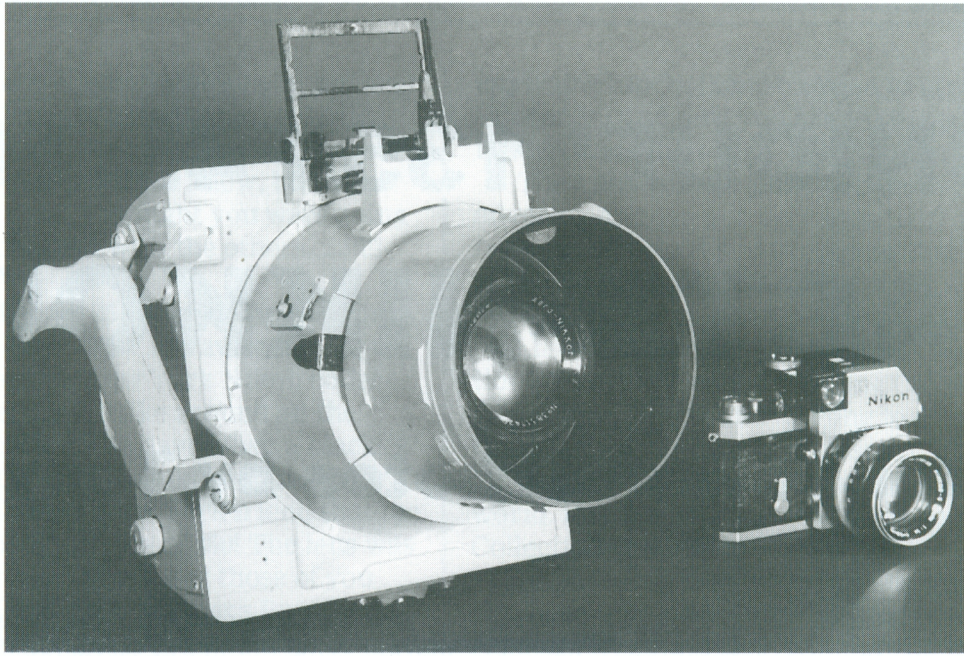




To complement the frontal view on page one, we have both right and left views of our aerial camera. Note the simple sportsframe type finder and sight, perfect for what this unit was meant for. The two large wood side mounted handles make holding the camera secure and comfortable, considering its weight and size. The lens cone collapses and extends with a twisting action

similar to a collapsible drinking cup! When extended the lens is recessed nearly six inches, so flare was not a problem! This example came with two lenses, one of which is a 20cm f/3.5 Aero-Nikkor #38317420. This lens mounts with a special three lobe male bayonet similar to the breech-lock style. Biagio has included a Nikon F Photomic for a size comparison. (Photos by B. Guerra.)





A 'UNIQUE' 135/F4...THE EXACTA-NIKKOR!!

by Peter Lownds/Photos by Tony Hurst

Before you sit down with the Journal, go and get something cold to drink, put your feet on the coffee table, and take some time out now. I have for your enjoyment this issue a look at a never before seen 135/f4 Nikkor in Exakta mount!

Why should any right thinking person want a beautiful Nikkor in Exakta mount??...me!!...me!!...me!! Don't all put your hands up at once because you are not having it! Are you all sitting comfortably, then I'll begin. I'm sure that you all have read in great detail Bob's book. This lens is mentioned on two different occasions; first in the section on the 135/f4 and again in the section on the 135/f3.5 Exakta lens. At the time of publication, Bob was aware of the existence of this lens, but had very little factual data. We know of three different variations of 135/f4s: first is the 611xxx type, then the more common 904xxx type, and finally the little known 523xxx version. The first batch made by Nikon (611 type) had a probable production run of 227+ lenses (current known range is 6114-611227).

This first type 135 may have been proposed in four mounts and factory samples made to test the market. First may have been the Leica 39mm screw mount (about 1.5 inches for our American friends who don't embrace the metric system) which was the bench mark standard for interchangeable rangefinder lenses. Second would have been the Nikon mount, a copy of the Contax type (Why list the Leica mount first? you may ask. Using Nikon's own system would suggest that the 135/f4 611 type dates from November 1946, before there was a Nikon!!) Third would be the Contax mount, different from the Nikon version because of the variation in the pitch of the focusing helix. Last, but not least, would be the Exakta mount, the pre-war and early post-war standard for single lens reflex cameras. Is this what happened? Well, to date Nikon and screw mounts lenses have been found, but no Contax type as yet. And, finally, this lens! The only 135/f4 in Exakta mount known!

This lens was made as a factory sample to test the market. Now the 135/f3.5 Exakta-Nikkor has been covered in great depth in the Journal and Bob's book. Yet he has only 33 examples recorded! Due to a lack of interest from the general public and the photographic world, it took almost 10 years to sell maybe 90 to 100 lenses, and it was still being advertised as late as 1958! Just to correct the Nikon Bible, this lens is "not" marked M.I.O.J.!

On our trip to Japan (sorry to those of you who didn't go...I wasn't going to make any mention of our trip...I know it's salt in the wounds but we did have one hell of a time!) this lens was going to be my "show and tell" item. On the day of the convention I slipped the lens into my pocket hoping on the off chance of showing off my pride and joy! In the afternoon we had a more informal meeting with the great men of Nikon. I took out my 135/f4 Exakta and handed it to Fuketasan. I watched him for a few moments. I could see his thoughts going back 50 years, then a smile came to his



face. He spent a few more moments looking at my lens then turned to his old friend Fukuoka-san and said something very funny, because both men had a good laugh. What was said we may never know, but what might have been said was, "I thought you were going to throw this lens in the trash with the others.....!!!!"

Jumping forward in time 25 years we find this lens has turned up in New York. How it traveled so far we shall never know. A famous New York Nikon collector was out doing the ten mile hike around all the major camera stores back in the days when a black SP could be found for \$300 and you could be mugged for only \$20. Now I'm told by my New York friend that the city has a minimum mugging rate of \$50! The lens was in, of all places, a "Camera Barn". For those of you not familiar with the Big Apple, "Camera Barn" was a retail chain directed more to the 'point and shoot' market (a McDonalds for the photo masses). In the middle of a large display of Prakticas and Zeniths stood this lens with a bright orange label that read "SALE" Nikkor 135/f4 in Exacta mount..\$40. The New York Nikon collector did not quite know what he had in hand. He took this stray off the streets of the Big Apple and gave it a good home. That's the great thing about adopting lenses, they don't need food and water. The lens spent the next 8 or 9 years in the collection of its New York owner until an English gentleman (not me, I'm no gentleman) talked him out of it after an

enjoyable lunch, then returned to England on the Concorde. And now you are asking yourself dear reader, how did it come to be in my possession?

The next time that this lens shows up is in an advertisement in our very own NHS Journal! It must have been about 3 or 4 years ago, half a page of some of the rarest lenses I've ever seen in my life were offered for sale...my lens was on that list.

I later learned that it was part of the King Collection. Why it was called the King Collection we shall never know, but it had nothing to do with the British royal family, nor was it the name of the owner, but by all accounts it was the 8th photographic wonder of the world. Because of ill health the owner of the King Collection had sold most of it off.

On one of my many trips to England I had purchased a copy of the worlds oldest photo magazine, Amateur Photographer. Most normal men have a copy of Playboy in their office drawer, but I have a copy of a photo magazine! I took it to work the next day and in a quite moment I started flipping through the pages...full of all sorts of stuff, the best, and the worst that the modern photographic world has to offer, 95% of the advertising needs only a passing glance, knee deep in Prakticas and Zeniths.....I turned the page and a whole list of lovely Nikon toys amongst which was a 135/f4 Exacta mount Nikkor with the same number as in Bob's book! I couldn't believe my eyes. The 135/f4 Exacta..wow..wow..wow..wow (I have since looked up the Oxford English dictionary defini-



tion of the word "wow", it just says see "Al Brody"!)

I phoned the store in question, trying to stay calm, "good morning, I see in your last ad in the A.P. you have a 135/f4 Nikkor in Exakta mount. Do you still have it for sale? Just one moment, I'll check for you.... a long silence then.....yes we still have it. Is that number 611185 correct? Yes. What is the condition? Excellent plus. What's your best price? More silence but I could hear someone working feverishly on a pocket calculator. Well sir, I've checked with the owner, how does \$1300 sound. As quick as a flash, yes, yes! I gave my credit card number and two days later a parcel arrived on the door step. I had become the proud owner of the only 135/f4 Exakta mount Nikkor!

The lens design is based on the Contax 135/f4 Sonnar, but where the Sonnar had been constructed of very light aluminum, Nikon had chosen to make their lens from the much heavier metal brass. We can see that there was no shortage of chrome as it has a rich silky feel of quality to it. It's my opinion that this might have been because there was an ample surplus of brass melted down from, for instance, shell casings, gun barrels and the like, whereas aluminum would have been in short supply.

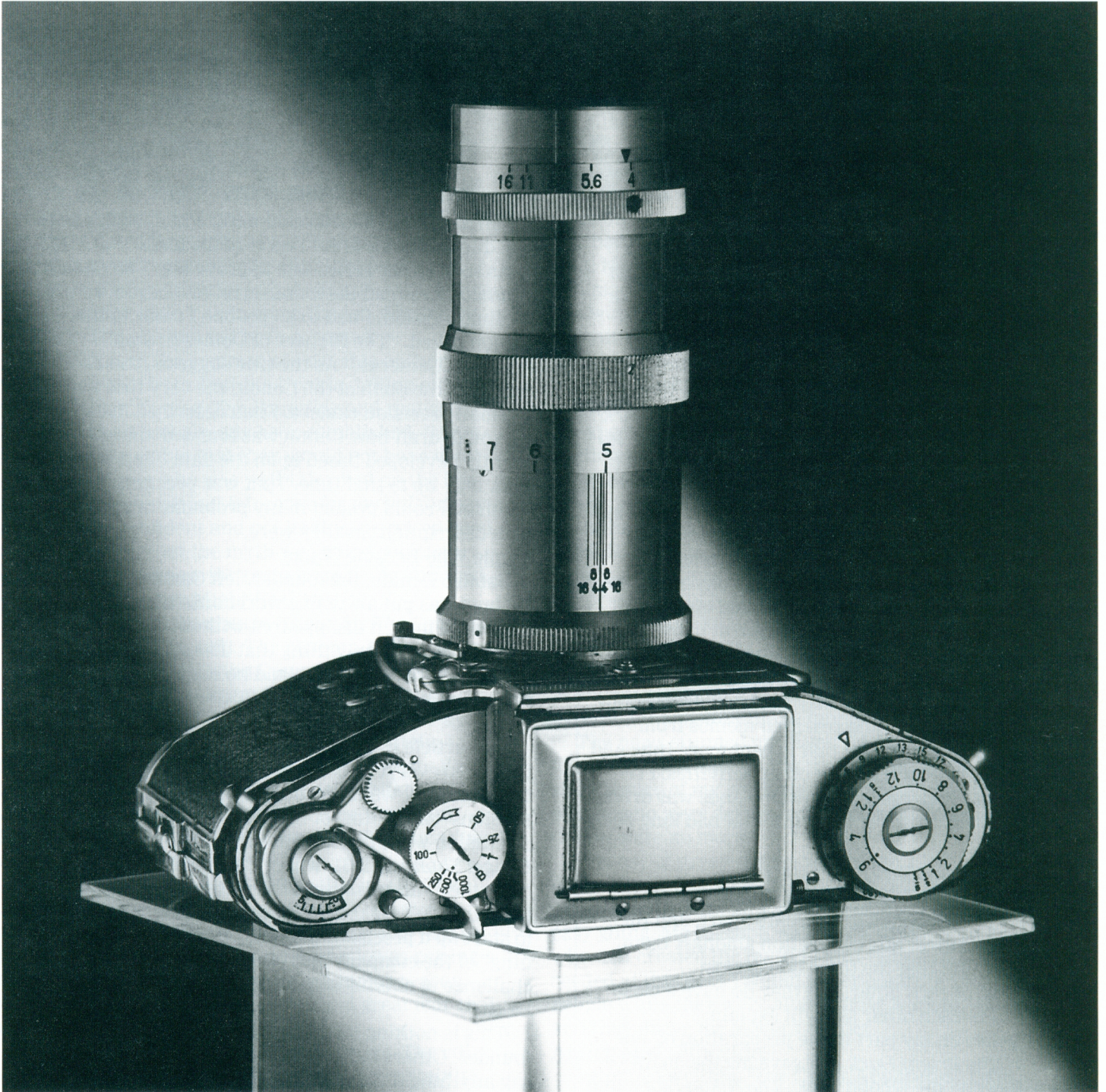
On reflection we can see how getting it right the first time can have a great influence on the fortunes of a large camera manufacturer. Nikon had the presence of mind to see that the Exakta mount was in fact a

sinking ship, and dropped it like a hot potato. They went on to produce the world famous "F" mount. If Nikon had gone the way of Topcon and Exakta, we might now be collecting Canons (heaven forbid!). The Exakta mount is far too small to accommodate long & large aperture lenses. One other factor in the death of the Exakta mount was that it would have been impossible to build auto-focus electronics into it. Nikon would have had to gone down the same path as all the other large Japanese makers. With the introduction of auto-focus 15 years ago, a mount change would have been needed, with a great loss of trust. We have talked about the "F" bayonet many times, but is the only mount amongst the large manufacturers that has not been changed, only improved, in the last 40 years! Down with Exakta, up with the Nikon bayonet!



On this and the preceding two pages we have photos of the unique 135/f4.0 Exakta-Nikkor compared to the later f3.5 version as well as the 135/f4.0 in Nikon mount. Note that, as is the case with the f3.5 type, the Exakta mount lenses used the same serial numbers and were not given a special serial number block. We have here 135/f4 in Nikon mount #611181 & our Exakta lens is #611185. I can't help but wonder about two curious points concerning this lens. One, it is not marked MIOJ as it should be, and, two, why are there no known Exakta-Nikkors between this first batch (611) f4.0 and the later non-MIOJ f3.5 lenses? No 904s, no 523s and no 5006s nor 25s until after the MIOJs are gone? Something to search for I would think.

ALL PHOTOS
by
TONY HURST



**NIKON'S FIRST 35MM SLR LENS!
THE 135MM/F4.0 EXACTA NIKKOR**

NHS-CON5...THE ARAKAWA SPEECH

A Sense of Mission and Impulse

I wrote three books on Nikon and Canon...the two camera companies that represent Japan. An enthusiastic reader calls those books the "Arakawa Camera Trilogy". Today I would like to talk about the background concerning why those books were written.

"*The Bright Dark Box*" was published in 1975, "*The Nikon Story*" in 1981, and "*The Founding*" in 1986. I started to write the manuscript for "*The Bright Dark Box*" in 1971, as it was meant to be a series of articles in a photo journal. It took about 15 years to complete the trilogy.

I was not solely occupied with writing the trilogy during those many years. I have been a founding member of the Japan Cost Calculation Assoc., and during those years I published three books and some 10 articles on cost calculation & lectured on accounting and budget control in the department of management at a university. I did the research and writing of the trilogy in between those other activities.

Writing the trilogy, thus may sound like my hobby. However, my journals and research memos from those years seem to tell me that I spent more time and energy on the trilogy than the other activities. I remember that I had a sense of mission and was driven by an impulse to uncover the truth that had long been concealed.

The Three Books Are A Real Trilogy

The three books have come to be called a trilogy, but they were published 5 or 6 years apart, and the titles do not suggest any connection amongst them. Some may think that the three books exist independent of each other. But they do have a close connection to each other as I will explain.

Negligence on my part in the preparation of one article in *The Bright Dark Box* gave me the main motive to write the second book: *The Nikon Story*; and a protest to some remarks in *The Nikon Story* led me to write the third book: *The Founding*. The three books are thus closely related to one another.

The Pioneer of Domestic Small Precision Cameras

The Bright Dark Box was a compilation of the articles I wrote for *The Camera Mainichi*, a monthly photo journal from the *Mainichi Shinbun*, over a period of a year, with a chapter added on the history of the Nikon F, the first single lens reflex Nikon. The latter chapter is called "Quick Return," and tells of

the birth and death of that camera, which went out of production to the great regret of the fans.

As soon as the series was approved by *The Camera Mainichi*, I re-read the manuscript and began writing the final version. I had to stop when I came to the section called, "The Pioneer of Domestic Small Precision Cameras." As the title suggests, this section describes the birth of the Canon, the very first domestic small precision camera. I had described in detail in my rough draft how Canon was founded and subsequently developed based upon the data I had collected from 1944 up to that time. That was precisely the problem. I could predict many problems in publishing such descriptions as they were.

People Who Became Clams

Saburo Uchida, the founder, left Canon in 1949, and his bust was put away in a warehouse to collect dust for awhile until it disappeared without any notice. His bust was not the only thing that disappeared. No one now mentioned his name, and no employee would reminisce on the founding days. Everyone became a clam.

One article in the *Bungei Shunjuu* magazine made it clear to everyone concerned that people had better not talk about what had happened "in the top echelons" at the time of the founding. A round table discussion was published in the February issue of *The Bungei Shunjuu*, 1951, where Takeshi Mitarai says that "they" had discussed the status of the Japanese industry 27 years prior to that time, and had decided to start up a precision industry, which was "the beginning" of the company and "they had stood up to the challenge of making something comparable to the Leica."

This is nothing but a declaration that he was the founder. Others must have thought they should not say anything if the boss made that kind of statement.

The Founding tells in detail how the myth of Canon's founding was created and spread. I will not go into it in detail here. I will only tell you of the bitter memory of a former woman employee at Canon when Saburo Uchida was still active there.

You Are Not Welcome If You Know Too Much

It was May 7th, 1965. A middle-aged woman saw a help wanted ad in the paper for a part time position at a firm named Welcon who distributed Canon products & she visited the firm. Her name was Toshiko Uchida.

She had been an employee of Canon around 1940. The job at Welcon would pay well, but what made Toshiko apply for the job was the natural expectation that they would see her background as a former Canon employee as an advantage.

An older man interviewed her. He asked if she was related to Saburo Uchida. Toshiko said no, and the man left the room and came back with a booklet. He handed it to her saying that it contained photos of Canon about the time Toshiko was employed there. The booklet was "*The Canon Life*", the in-house Canon newsletter dated December 1946. Toshiko took the booklet home and waited with anticipation for the good news. To her surprise, what she got was a notice saying that she hadn't been given the job. She never found out why she had not been accepted.

Much later, in the summer of 1986, this author received a letter from Toshiko Uchida, telling of her visit to Welcon: "I read *The Founding* and realized that if the myth had already been established, it was quite understandable that they would not have wanted to hire anyone who was well-informed on the history of precision optics. I felt sorry for myself for having been overconfident and not having exercised good judgment." I felt that the myth was doing serious harm; those who knew the truth were being shunned. Fear That The Series Might Be Canceled

The Bright Dark Box began its run in *The Camera Mainichi* on July 3rd, 1973. The chapter, "The Pioneer of Domestic Small Precision Cameras," was to be published as the 2nd installment in the August issue. The deadline was approaching, but I could not make up my mind what to do with the article. Ultimately, I made a compromise and quoted from *The Forty Years*, the company history of Nippon Kogaku (Nikon). This, however, left me with regrets for a long time, and drove me to write *The Nikon Story* and *The Founding* later.

I wrote in the section called "Negligence in *The Bright Dark Box*" in *The Founding* that the reason I simply quoted from the company history was that I needed to do more research and the task was getting a bit overwhelming. That was surely a major reason, but I need to add that at that time I had great fear that my series might be canceled.

Revealing the truth could bring protests. The editorial staff at *The Camera Mainichi* would certainly meet the challenge. However, the *Mainichi Shinbun*, the parent company, might have different priorities. I didn't want to create a second "Stories of Rivals" incident.* The series, *The Bright Dark Box*, concluded with its 12th installment in the July 1974 issue, and was published as a book by *Asahi Sonorama* in February the next year. I have deep affection for this book. The Tricky Mechanism of Production Planning

The laziness on my part in simply quoting the company history left me with regret for a long time. However, my sense of guilt began to go away as I be-

came engrossed in my next project. My new project had to do with a story called, "The Crazy Apparatus," and would be a companion to the previous work. As I mentioned in *The Bright Dark Box*, Chapter 4, Sec. 3, Nippon Kogaku was going down the drain financially despite its astounding success with its new product, the Nikon S2! It eventually had to change over its entire management. The main problem centered on products other than cameras, products that were called "apparatus." Low productivity in the apparatus division was especially problematic; they hadn't reached their production goals for years in succession. Management consultants had conducted surveys and made recommendations to no avail. My own project would reveal the tricky mechanism of production planning, which was the cause of the company's long time low productivity.

I had finished sorting out documents, and had started to write the introductory chapter when an unexpected incident took place. It reminded me of my negligence in *The Bright Dark Box* and began to bug me about my responsibility.

Sense of Urgency

In the spring of 1977, two years after *The Bright Dark Box* was published, both Hideo Araki and Takeo Maeda passed away. Araki was a junior exec (later the president) of Nippon Kogaku, and was also an exec with Seiki Kogaku Kogyo (later Canon). Maeda was the first employee at Canon. He had supported Takeshi Mitarai in the "coup" in 1942, and later became the president of Canon. Both would have been invaluable in telling the history of the founding years of Canon.

The news stunned me. Even if I could expose the founding myth and tell the truth to the world, the significance of my work would be lessened if the people who were deeply involved in the founding of Canon were no more.

A sense of urgency rose within me. I felt I must interview as many people from the old days as I could and write the book as soon as possible. I had been too easy going. My mission was to tell the very people who had created the myth to quit telling lies. If I proceeded at this pace I would never confront those people while they were alive. Those were my thoughts and they drove me to work harder.

Anticipated Difficulties

I stopped writing "The Crazy Apparatus" right away and began working on the founding of Canon. I sorted out and re-read the documents and interviews that I had collected so far, and realized that the project was going to be much harder than I had thought. I needed a lot more documents.

For instance, I had never met Saburo Uchida, the founder of Canon. Of course I knew of him and his accomplishments to a degree. I still needed to meet him in person and check a few "facts" with him.

The same was true for the so-called Leica "patent". It had been said that the Leica "patent" had been an



As a taste of what will follow in these pages in future issues, I have two vintage photos that I believe have never been published before! They were taken by Arakawa-san who generously supplied them to the

Society for the Journal. Above is how the Ohi factory in Shinagawa appeared about 1948! Below is the camera and lens design room, about 1950. Who is the gentleman in the photo? Stay tuned! (Photos by T. Arakawa)



obstacle to developing small precision cameras, but did it really exist? If it did, what was the nature of the patent? I had no knowledge of it.

I had a lot of people to interview, and a lot of documents to collect. All along, however, there was this worry in the back of my mind that my work would not necessarily be welcome. Rather, there was a power structure that not only would not welcome my work, but would also interfere with it if necessary. Would my work have an opportunity to be published? Even if it was published, would it be canceled because of "protests"? I thought of the "Stories of Rivals" incident from 22 years earlier, and about how to avoid any difficulties that might lie ahead.

The Foresight of Changing Course

The trick was to present the facts concerning the founding of Canon in a way that would minimize objections. There would be no chance of publishing the story if I simply described the facts as they were. I could not think of an easy solution to the problem.

In the fall of 1978 I began writing a series of articles for *The Camera Review*, a quarterly journal published by *Asahi Sonorama*. The series was titled "The Bright Dark Box Tidbits." The project was a last resort effort to clear my mind, as I was frustrated from not being able to find a solution to my problem. Readers sent me their thoughts and questions after they read *The Bright Dark Box*. I chose topics from the reader's responses for the tidbits series. The series only had five installments, but a plan was born in me during that time to write about the truth of the birth of Canon as a segment in the history of Nippon Kogaku.

Nippon Kogaku was an optical weapons manufacturer before the war ended. After the war it would eventually become a camera manufacturer. The role Nippon Kogaku played in founding Canon was a significant one; Nippon Kogaku also showed how important it was to change course when others had not even thought about it. I thought it would be legitimate to include facts about the founding in my book.

I took my ideas on this point and the new book, *The Nikon Story*, to Tatsuo Shirai, the editor-in-chief of *The Camera Review*. Shirai approved of my plans and I renewed my research and interviews for the book. Pretending To Be Not at Home, The Kotatsu Heater, and The Tokyo Kaikan Hall

A revised edition of *The Bright Dark Box* was published in February, 1980. I had the busiest months of my life starting in March of that year and continuing on through the end of December.

My first job was to interview many of the people involved who were on my list, and have them share with me any documents they might have. At times the person was deceased, and I had to meet with members of the surviving family.

Several dozen people agreed to my interviews. An ex-officer of Seiki Kogaku declined my interview, having his family tell me that he was not at home. One person invited me into his home one cold night to

share for hours the katatsu heater and his memories of long ago.

My meetings with Saburo Uchida, the founder of Canon, were very impressive. He was very cautious in the beginning. He called me up on the phone many times before he was clear about the intention of my interviews. Apparently, Uchida had been interviewed by several people, but the outcome had always been contrary to his expectations.

He designated the 2nd floor of the Tokyo Kaikan Hall as our meeting place. He showed up with Morikazu Sato on September 3rd. He again brought Sato to our 2nd meeting. Starting with the 3rd meeting, he came on his own. He probably had decided to trust me.

The Truth the Patent Bulletin Tells

I began visiting the Patent Office on August 21st. It was my very first visit there and to its International Hall of Documents on Proprietary Rights. There I was to discover much more important information than I had expected. I learned for the first time that the so called Leica patent was not a "patent" but a "new design for practical use." I also learned that the date of the patent application was claimed as the date of application for the new design for practical use. The Leica idea was first submitted as a patent, but was rejected. They then applied for a new design for practical use.

I paged through the bulletin of applications for new designs for practical use, and found many more interesting facts. I found Saburo Uchida's application. A Jack-in-the-Box type device to pop up and collapse the finder. One thing that really caught my attention was the fact that Nippon Kogaku submitted an idea for an adjustment mechanism for the Hansa Canon's coupled rangefinder! An engineer named Eiichi Yamanaka of Nippon Kogaku was the designer, and the application for this new design for practical use was entitled: A device that adjusts the position of the object lens to match the shooting distance of the camera. This application bulletin was irrefutable proof that Nippon Kogaku and Canon were very closely related at the time of Canon's founding.

The Fourth Installment of The Nikon Story

The series, *The Nikon Story*, began in June. The first installment was published in the July issue (#12), 1980, of *The Camera Review*. The first three installments talked about the history of Nippon Kogaku when it was an optical weapons manufacturer. It was relatively easy to write these segments. The hard part was to write the 4th installment that was to talk about the relationship between Nippon Kogaku (Nikon) and Seiki Kogaku (Canon) at the time of Canon's founding.

The Camera Review had become a bi-monthly journal by now. The 4th installment was to be included in the January issue of 1981, published in December. I had to have the manuscript completed by mid November. I had been busy preparing my manuscript, and the information I gathered in my trips to the Patent

Office gave me great confidence. Mr. Shirai, the editor-in-chief, saw my manuscript and gave it the go ahead, without altering a single letter or phrase.

The 4th installment was titled, "The Birth of the Hansa Canon," and I paid particular attention to the following two points:

- 1.) Telling the truth about the founding of Canon by Saburo Uchida, and the role of Nippon Kogaku in it, with credible proof.
- 2.) Not referring to the power structure behind the creation of the founding myth that had concealed the truth, nor criticizing any of it.

I concluded the installment with the following remark: The founding of Canon was carried out in close relationship with Nippon Kogaku.

It Was Supposed to Have Been the Last

When I received a copy of *The Camera Review* with the 4th installment, I thought I would never write about cameras again during my life; it was over. The installment tells the truth about the founding of Canon by Saburo Uchida and the support from Nippon Kogaku that made the first Canon product possible, with some irrefutable evidence and testimonials from people who were involved. Many readers might have been caught by surprise because to them it was the first time the mythical vale had been lifted from the true story of the founding of Canon. I was convinced that many readers would eventually understand that my article told the truth.

I finally felt that I had done my duty and would be forgiven for the compromise I made when I quoted from *The Forty Years* in my book, *The Bright Dark Box*. For a while I enjoyed a sense of freedom and peace. Unfortunately, it was over in 10 days!

Don't Mess With the Top Echelons

On the morning of December 29th, 1980, Mr. Shirai called me up on the phone. He told me that a few Canon employees visited his office the day before and made a protest against the content of the 4th installment of *The Nikon Story*. So they had come after all. I had to smile a sour smile, remembering the "Stories of Rivals" incident from 25 years earlier.

Later in the afternoon Mr. Shirai explained in detail the content of the protest made the day before. Normally a protest of this nature would be a demand to rectify inaccuracies. This was totally different. Mr. Shirai explained to me that they felt that the story about the founding of Canon should not have been published as it pertained to the top echelons. In short, they thought it was inappropriate that the truth had been told in "The Birth of the Hansa Canon."

I suspect that the protest made to the editorial section of *The Camera* concerning the content of "Stories of Rivals" a quarter of a century earlier must have been of the same nature. I could not but think of the remark that the then editor-in-chief, Mr. Ikegami, made: "What's wrong with writing the facts?"

A Resolution Made in the Midst of the Crowd

I had parted from Mr. Shirai, and was walking in

in the end-of-the-year crowd at dusk in the Ginza. I kept walking while muttering that I could no longer say this would be the last time.

As I mentioned earlier, I had made sure of two things and stated only the facts backed up by evidence and testimonials in "The Birth of The Hansa Canon". Even so, a protest was made. This was an indication that the power structure demanded blind acceptance of the founding myth. Protests of this nature might well be repeated. If so, a very important part of the history of the Japanese camera industry and products might be forever covered up by fiction. Many thoughts passed through my head. I continued walking around trying to find an appropriate response to the protest, when I heard a voice out of the clear blue saying that I should just do it. That was when I decided to challenge Canon's founding myth.

This meant that I would abandon the 2nd point I had made. I made up my mind to point out that there existed a myth that concealed the truth, and to reveal the intentions behind the creation of the myth.

Good-Bye in an Intensive Care Room

I had made up my mind about a third book that would follow *The Nikon Story*, but circumstances did not allow me to get on with it right away; I had other business to attend to.

One thing that was pending was the future of the series, *The Nikon Story*. Was it to be continued? How was it to be continued? Luckily, as soon as 1981 arrived a new policy was announced. I stopped by to say happy new year to Mr. Shirai, who told me that there would be 2 more installments in *The Camera Review*, and a book, *The Nikon Story*, would be published as soon as possible with additional unpublished chapters included.

I could not help asking him what he was going to do with the section about the birth of the Hansa Canon. He looked me straight in the eye and said that it would remain as it was. He did not give a damn about the protest. I remember clearly that suddenly the world became bright.

In mid March, I finished the final installment for *The Camera Review*, to be included in the May 1981 issue. For the next 2 months I was absorbed in the preparations for the book, writing new chapters and editing and adding to the segments already published.

The Nikon Story came out in late June. By then Mr. Shirai was critically ill with an incurable illness. He was the foster parent of the book, and would have been the first person to celebrate its publication.

I saw him for the last time on a hot day in late August in a hospital along the Yokosuka Line. He was in a coma in a bed in the intensive care room. I whispered into his ear: Mr. Shirai, thanks to you, the history of the Japanese camera industry won't be smeared by "the myth." I greeted his wife and daughter in the hall outside his room, and as I walked down the hall to leave, I choked up and could not stop crying.

The Birth of A Long Seller

At the beginning of that year, a publisher asked me to write an introductory book on cost calculation, and I had promised them to complete my manuscript early the next year. This was my 2nd obligation to be fulfilled. As soon as I finished *The Nikon Story*, I began working on this project. It turned out to be a tough job. An introductory book is deceptively easy to write, but it actually tests the author's true skills and accomplishments. I worked on this project with a passion that I had not expected to pour into it. I even drafted all 40-50 illustrations myself. I remember spending all day designing just one illustration.

The manuscript for *The Illustrated Cost Calculation Made Comprehensible* was completed in January 1982, as planned, and was published in March of the same year. The book has been reprinted every year since then, and the 20th printing was published in June of this year (1996). I had never thought that the book would be supported by readers for 14 long years, and I feel honored. Someone in the publishing business once told me that the book had power. It could be that some other energy helped create this book.

Some Days at the National Diet Library

I was finally able to start working on the third book in March of 1982. One year and two months had passed since I made that resolution in the crowd. As I had planned, I visited the National Diet Library for the first time in a long time. As I entered the building, I renewed my resolution.

The research at the National Diet Library was the most important part of my preliminary work for the writing of the 3rd book. I made over 30 visits through May, 1984, and paged through several hundred books, totaling several thousand pages. I was impressed with my own perseverance. There were unexpected discoveries, and there was never a dull moment. What was most significant was that, during the tedious routine of research, various ideas would float up to the surface of my mind and disappear. Eventually those ideas lined themselves up and formed the entire framework for the third book.

This IS Going To Be the Last Time

I finally sorted out the enormous amount of data in March, 1985, and began writing the third book. I named my project tentatively, *A Brief History of the Founding of Canon and Related Matters*. On one day in late May, I was riding a train, when I decided that the book would be called simply, *The Founding*. The third book is not only "a brief history" of the founding of Canon, but its main objective was to challenge the fiction that was created around the founding.

I worked on *The Founding* throughout the year. The first manuscript was completed in February of 1986. Only then did I tell the editorial staff at Asahi Sonorama that I had been writing a third book. I told them about the content of the book and asked if there was a possibility of publishing it.

I had always thought that it would take a lot of

maneuvering to get *The Founding* published. And if it did get published, this time there would certainly be more than just a protest. The editorial staff, however, dispelled by worries. I thanked them for their courage and began working on the final draft. I handed the entire manuscript, including the postscript, to the editor on April 19th. On that day, I said to myself, "This IS the last time!"

The Founding came out in mid June. With the book in my hand, my mind spun like a revolving lantern, busy going over various memories from the 15 years I had worked on the three books. I was quietly proud that I was able to light one candle in the history of the Japanese camera industry.

Thank you very much for listening.

"Stories of Rivals" is the name of a series of articles that began appearing in the prestigious monthly magazine *The Camera* in January, 1955. Each article dealt with the activities of a "rival pair" of companies, individuals, or institutions that were prominent in some area of photography or phototechnology. The first four articles dealt with; 1. Fuji/Konica; 2. Kelo University/Waseda University; 3. Leitz/Zeiss; and 4. Nippon Kogaku/Canon. The fifth article was devoted to the pair of photographers Ihei Kimura and Ken Domon. At this point, astute readers noticed that the name of the series editor, Yuuichi Ikegami, did not appear; credit for the 5th article was given instead to the publisher. Further, this 5th article in the popular series turned out, unexpectedly, to be the last. Mr. Arakawa feared a shake-up and suppression of publication at *The Camera Review* similar to the one that had occurred at *The Camera* in 1955 in response to pressure from the power structure of the photographic industries.

Editor's Note: It is not baseless rumor that Mr.

Arakawa is again writing.

The Society is again indebted to member George Landon's wife, Kyoko Saegusa, for her generous gift of time to translate the original 30 page document that is this article. The above was part of the speech given by Mr. Arakawa to attendees at NHS-Con5 on the Sunday afternoon following our visit to the JCIH Museum. However, only about a third of this document was used that day in combination with other information. It was Mr. Arakawa's hope that we would be willing to publish this paper without modification, which I have done. As is always the case, researchers hoping to uncover all of the facts so as to tell the complete story of any event, run into many obstacles along the way. Perseverance on the part of the researcher is needed, and the pay off is the telling of the story as it happened. Historical research can be a lonely task, but it is worth the effort, as I am sure Mr. Arakawa will agree.

(The Editor/RJR)

NEW INFORMATION & THOUGHTS ON..

THE 'OLYMPIC S3'...

by **Biagio Guerra**

PHOTO by the Author

Of all the black models of the later Nikon rangefinder cameras, SP, S3, S3M, the black S3 has been of particular interest to collectors, and not just because of its nice professional black finish. There are actually two versions of the black S3: the first type made during the original run of the S3 model starting in 1958 with controls identical to the chrome version as well as a cloth shutter; the second type made about the time of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics (and affectionately known as the "Olympic S3") with slightly modified controls much like the concurrent Nikon F, and with a foil shutter. It was this second model that was shipped with the new modified 50mm/f1.4 Nikkor that has also acquired the moniker "Olympic", even though many were sold on late model SP bodies made in 1964 or so. The term "Olympic" has been associated with this "revised" black S3 that it is universally referred to as the "Black Olympic S3".

Well, apparently, in the late Mikio Kuno's book "NIKON" (written in Japanese only), Dr. Kuno offers a slightly different explanation of this model along with some very interesting bits of information. The following is a translation that I had done of the chapter on the black S3, page 55, and you will find some interesting statements that may not be known to many Nikon collectors outside of Japan.

THE NIKON S3

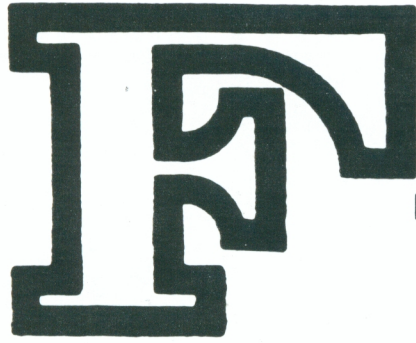
First sold in March of 1958. Simplified by taking away the complicated universal finder system of the SP and reducing its price to 86000Yen. The new finder has 3.5cm, 5cm and 10.5cm frames and they are always visible. The color of the 3.5cm frame is green and the others are white. Parallax correction is not automatic. A small triangle serves as the parallax correction mark. The outside appearance is very different from the SP, without the finder selector dial. The finder eyepiece is different but easy to use.

The production number block was 63xxxxx and was first put on sale in 1958 and production ceased after 12,310 units were made. In 1965 they began to make it again and produced about 2,000 cameras. So 14,310 S3s were made in total. The first production is numbered 6300001 to 6312310, but some numbers are missing, so they go over 6318300. The revised version number block was 632xxxx and it is said that 2,000 were made. So the last number should be 6322000, but there are also missing numbers. Revised models are said to be all black painted, but there are exceptions.

This revised model of the S3 is called "Olympic model", but the Tokyo Olympics were held in 1964 and this S3 was sold in 1965, so it was too late! Some parts on the revised model are considerably different from the first type: the film advance lever is solid metal; the knob on the rewind crank rotates; the selftimer lever is like the F-type made at that time; the film counter cover is changed to have 7 concentric circles instead of 3. As for the first production run, there was some noise heard from the slow speed shutter below 1/30 but the revised model made almost no such noise. So this revised version can be thought to be almost a new model.

The price with the f1.4 lens was 86000Yen (with case) in 1958. But in 1965 the black S3 with the new F1.4 Nikkor was only 75200Yen (with case). The purpose of producing the S3 was to make a less expensive model to compete with other makers. The flagship model cameras at Canon at the time were the VIL and VIT, costing 91500Yen with meter, magazine, case and f1.2 lens! On the other hand, the Nikon SP was 139500Yen with the f1.1 lens and 98000Yen with the f1.4 lens. They were too expensive. Besides, Canon had even cheaper models like the VL2 and VL3, and the L3 with f2.8 lens was only 48000Yen! When the Canon P with f2.8 lens went on sale in march 1959 for only 37700Yen, soon Nippon Kogaku came out with the model S4 with f2 lens for 52700Yen in April 1959.





--SPOT!!

NIKON KE-48C

Back in NHS-51 the “odds n’ ends” page featured an unusual Nikon F called the “CAMERA, STILL PICTURE KE-48C”. That particular camera bore the engraving “US GOVT PROPERTY” below the eyepiece. I had only one shot for the page and, although the camera was in well used condition, its uniqueness warranted its presence. That was body #7082351 and production is thought to be in the 200-300 range. Since then I’ve obtained camera #7087745 which is interesting for the fact that it is in near MINT condition, possesses the same ID plate on the camera back, but does NOT have any government markings! Obviously this example never got into the pipeline and appears to be unused. Such special run cameras are difficult to find today, but one in this condition is nearly impossible.



LETTERS..LETTERS..

And now for (possibly) the final word on the Questar Nikon F we have these three member contributions!!

From Ken Reisher...

Of the possible theories on who actually modified the cameras, I think I can discount one of them. Not long ago I bought a Questar F from a man who worked for Nikon back in the late 60's, early 70's. The camera was an absolute virgin, never used, probably never taken out of the box. At the time I asked him where he got the camera from? The answer was that he had purchased it right off the shelf at the EPOI warehouse!!! If the cameras were modified by Questar it would be very odd for Nikon to have had these cameras in their warehouse!!!!

From George Landon...

Back in 1955, while I was a student of astronomy at Dearborn Observatory, Northwestern University, I was posted to Lowell Observatory, Flagstaff, Arizona to serve as the summer observational and darkroom assistant to Dr. K. Strand. Among the things that Dr. Strand brought along with him to Arizona was a Questar lent to him by the manufacturer for assessment. I had the machinist at Lowell make a pair of couplings with which I could mount an old Praktiflex FX at the Questar's prime focus. One coupling was made as short as possible, the other perhaps 3 inches long. I took slides of various objects with this rig and, in the autumn of 1955, after Dr. Strand and I had returned to Northwestern, he returned the Questar, the couplings I had made, the slides I had taken and the old Praktiflex FX to Questar for their consideration. As I recall, the pictures weren't great; they were a little blurry. The problem wasn't mirror slap, for it was possible to defeat the mirror release on that camera and raise it out of the way independent of the shutter. The blurry images were due in some part to the optics and atmospheric excursion, but most crucially to "torque flip" & "shutter slap". The torque flip effects were induced in the unit by the lightning unfurling & refurling of the shutter curtains; the shutter slap by the crash stop of both curtains at the ends of their travels. These factors accounted for the poor performance of the unit I rigged up and provided Questar the basis for its quest to find an SLR with a smooth functioning shutter. That Questar 'pushed' different cameras at different times over the decades may well reveal something about Questar's assessment of the smoothness of various shutters.

From Harry Verschuren...

It was very interesting to read your article about the Nikon F with mirror lockup button. In my collection I have 2 such cameras with the small button; they are

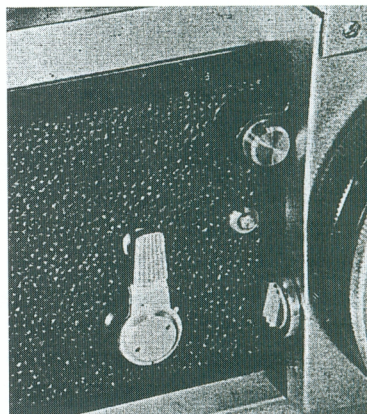
#s 6486777 & 7435082, the last an Apollo. I have two inserts for the instruction books (note text of both is not 100% identical), one of them with a date code. The one without the code came with an early white manual & the one with the code a much later gold type manual.

NIKON F CAMERA WITH MIRROR
RELEASING BUTTON

This type of the Nikon F camera has been designed with a device permitting disengaging the operation of the reflex mirror from that of the shutter releasing, in view of avoiding camera jarring at the instant of shutter releasing, thus satisfying a rigorous requirement in photomicrography, slow shutter exposure, etc.

After charging the shutter, depress the small, additionally provided button. (See the photograph below.) Then, the reflex mirror in the camera will spring up and lock in position. Push the shutter release button. Then, the shutter will be released and the mirror will automatically return to the original position. This provides convenience in viewing the finder viewfield for the next exposure.

Note: The button does not operate when the mirror has been locked in the up-position by manipulating the mirror lock button found underneath.

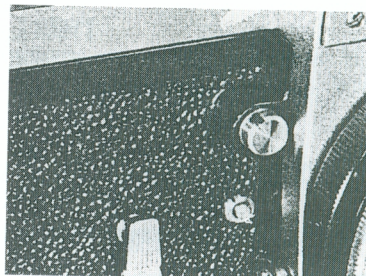


(65. 11. A) B

This type of the Nikon F camera has been designed with a device permitting disengaging the operation of the reflex mirror from that of the shutter releasing, in view of avoiding camera jarring at the instant of shutter releasing, thus satisfying a rigorous requirement in photomicrography, slow shutter exposure, etc.

After charging the shutter, depress the small, additionally provided button. (See the photograph below.) Then, the reflex mirror in the camera will spring up and lock in position. Push the shutter release button. Then, the shutter will be released and, thereafter, the mirror will automatically return to the original position.

Note: The button does not operate when the mirror has been locked in the up-position by manipulating the mirror lock button found underneath.



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WANTED...SP, black Nikon F with eyelevel finder or without finder, 1 meter cord for F36 motor (to connect it with the battery pack), Nikon F2 with eyelevel finder or without finder. Condition should be Mint- or better. Wolfgang Kuster, Schubertweg 2, D-64823 Gross- Umstadt, Germany. Fax: 011-49-6162-912846.

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odds 'n ends

85MM/F1.0 REPRO-NIKKOR

WHAT EXACTLY IS IT & WHAT DOES IT DO??



My small contribution this issue is a strange optic; an 85mm/f1.0 Repro-Nikkor. I have searched my library but cannot find any detailed information, so I'll just describe it to you. This 20 ounce lens is 4 inches long with no focusing mount, so it does not change. In the center is a chrome click stopped aperture ring calibrated from f1.0 to f8. It appears to be symmetrical as the aperture opening is the same size when viewed from either end. There is a 52mm male thread at each end. Obviously for scientific/industrial use, it could be a relay lens of some type, but not for copiers as it has an aperture ring. It is built to extremely high standards and when wide open appears to be all glass! I cant tell if the weight is the barrel or the glass, but it is a gorgeous piece! Any ideas?



From Doug Napier...
NHS-56 Odds n' Ends..Not a body cap! Its the front
lens cap for the Medical Nikkor 200mm/f5.6!!!!!!
(Can't fool Doug! Old Eagle-eye caught it!!!) RJR



Created For The 'NHS' by TONY HURST