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15TH. ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!!!  
HAPPY 50TH BIRTHDAY, NIKON!

NIKON  JOURNAL



ROBERT ROTOLONI  
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

**THIS ISSUE**  
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Page 6 ~ THE MARJORAM REPORT  
Page 14 ~ FM2 'HALF FRAME'!!



# THE NIKON JOURNAL

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## NEXT ISSUE

The deadline for the next issue of our *NIKON JOURNAL*, #62, is **NOVEMBER 15, 1998**. This is a little earlier than is usual because of the Holidays. Time is so short that time of the year and I want to get #62 out on time, so **please** get all contributions to me by that date so the **Journal** can stay on schedule. Thank you.

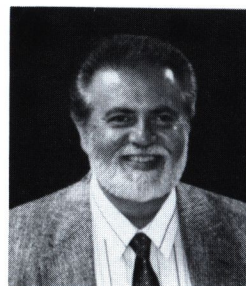
## EDITORIAL

Once again I must apologize for a slightly late Journal. My father went into the hospital on September 2nd and passed away on September 20th, so things have not been very good of late. I hope to get back on schedule with the next issue but with my wife's problems and now my father, I have to admit that I am looking forward to 1999, hoping it must be better.

1998 should have been a good year..not only is it the 50th birthday of the Nikon One, but also your editor, although the Nikon beat me by about 5 months. Unfortunately, from the Nikon Ones I have examined, it appears that they have held up better than I have! I want to thank all those who called or sent letters or e-mails with birthday wishes. I really do appreciate it, although I still might do something drastic to Peter Lownds for putting it on our website! Nothing like the whole Internet knowing you're turning 50!

Now for Nikon's 50th.....This issue is a tribute to that fact. I thought about running photos of some Nikon Ones to commemorate the event, but I decided that it would be of more value if I could do something to give the members a better idea of how the Nikon came about. But not just some dates & production figures....that's been done before. I mean some **HISTORY!** The result is a narrative by Mr. Tatsuhiko Arakawa of his memories of that fateful period of time when the Nikon was still an idea and a few drawings, with a long way to go. So this issue starts off with his inside view of the events that led to the One. I then decided to tie that in with a reproduction of the "Marjoram Report". The what? Well, in 1949 Mr. Marjoram, a highly qualified repairman in Rochester, NY (the home of Kodak!), was given an early production Nikon One to evaluate. The result was a detailed report that is both complementary and critical! In other words, a report on a little known camera by a lesser known maker that pulls no punches. This report hit the designers at Nikon hard, but in hindsight, such a critical paper might have been just what was needed to get things on the right path that would lead to the great cameras we are so familiar with. This report is practically unknown and as far as I am aware, this is the first time it has been printed in its entirety in nearly 50 years. My copy of the report was made available to me by Mr. Arakawa. Fifty years later in might seem unbelievable, but Nikon had to start somewhere, and now you have some first hand information of just how it happened.

Jumping forward a half century you will find on page 19 a photo of the new 50th Anniversary Nikon F5, just released to commemorate the event. Also this issue is Part I of another Peter Lownds/Tony Hurst collaboration. This time they go after the little ole' Nikon FM/FE series. Boring right? Well, not exactly! Check it out on page 14. Next issue....the only Nikon Museum!....a strange lens just found.....and??????



**ROBERT ROTOLONI**  
**EDITOR/PUBLISHER**

# BIRTH OF THE NIKON!

**AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE by TATSUHIKO ARAKAWA**

*The following introduction was provided to us by Arakawa-san in an effort to give the reader a better perspective of the problems and conditions prevalent during the initial planing stages of the Nikon One. In so far as Nikon has chosen to use 1998 to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the creation of the Nikon, as opposed to 1946, this introduction, and the following complete reproduction of the "Marjoram Report", is the best method I know of to bring to "life", and to give substance to, the day-to-day events and the people involved with the "birth of the Nikon". I could have run some nice pictures of some vintage Nikons, but.....I really feel that what follows on these pages is of greater import. Read on and get a feel for what was going on at the very "creation" of the Nikon, the reasons why the Marjoram Report may have been so critical, and how the "birth of the Nikon" was such a "human event"!*

## **How the Marjoram Report Came About**

by Tatsuhiko Arakawa, March 23, 1998

Exclusively written for the *NIKON JOURNAL*

### **Turning into a Camera Manufacturer**

Nippon Kogaku, an optical weaponry maker, was granted a license to produce civilian goods on November 12, 1945. The company, which had been founded to produce optical weapons, now faced the task of manufacturing and marketing products for the general public. It decided to restructure its operational organization to meet the challenge.

As soon as war was over, Nippon Kogaku established a "Committee to Deal With the Post-War Market" and had a special sub-committee within its production section to explore potential marketable products. The results of the study were presented in two parts, on September 20th and 29th, 1945, as a production plan, but the plan did not include any cameras. The plan was eventually revised to include camera production, probably prompted by voices within the company saying that they should not ignore the camera boom that U.S. occupation forces had brought to the war-stricken land. I personally submitted an opinion paper entitled "Basic Ideas for Reconstruction", under the orders of my boss, Noboru Hamashima (who became the President later). This opinion paper may have had something to do with the fact that I later got involved in camera matters within Nippon Kogaku.

With the addition of camera production, starting on January 17, the new operational organization included a

Section of Machine Design within the Division of Design. There were 4 groups in the Section. Group 4 handled "matters concerning the designing of cameras and projectors". Group 2 was to deal with "matters concerning the mechanical designing of microscopes, medical apparatuses and optical glasses". Mr. Masahiko Fuketa, former section chief of the first design section at Kawasaki Manufacturing Co., was appointed to lead both Groups 2 & 4.

### **The Policy Was Too Bold**

Nippon Kogaku thus organized itself to deal with camera production, at least on paper. However, there were several internal problems.

One problem was that there were neither engineers nor workers left in the company who had had experience designing and manufacturing cameras. Before the war, N-K designed and produced the coupled rangefinder and focusing mechanism for the Canon camera. They even assembled the mechanism into the camera body, made adjustments and conducted inspections. However, those who were involved in the production had left N-K for other companies. The engineers who had designed the mechanisms were still with N-K, but they were now in divisions that had nothing to do with camera design and production.

Problem #2 was that there was no one in the company who had had any experience with the camera industry nor knowledge about the distribution of cameras. Thus, they were unable to obtain information on how to market the product.

The third problem was that there were no people in the company who were long time enthusiasts and connoisseurs of high quality cameras. There were some who had used someone else's Leica or Contax a few times, but there were none who were true camera lovers.

Such was the environment in which N-K started its camera production. Interestingly enough, people at N-K, especially the management, were so convinced of their greatness, based on their past as Japan's premier optical maker, that they were over-confident about their ability to make it in camera production, which was unknown territory to them. They didn't take the challenge seriously enough.

The Camera and Projector Committee was established to decide on the specific content of the work for Design Group 4. The committee decided in the meeting of April 4th, 1946, to "manufacture two kinds of cameras: a twin-lens reflex and a

small size high-quality camera. This was a good example of the lack of careful thinking on the part of the management; an average company would have thought it too ambitious to design and manufacture both a twin-lens reflex camera of Rolleicord caliber and a small camera of Leica and Contax caliber at the same time.

The Designing of small high-quality cameras in Design Group 4 began with basic research prompted by the R & D order, Code #6FD. Minoru Takahashi, formerly of Kawasaki Manufacturing Co., followed Mr. Fuketa, the group leader, to Nippon Kogaku, and moved to the Ohi Factory. Takahashi's first job was to take apart the Canon and understand the structure and mechanisms of the focal plane camera. It took him two months to complete illustrations of the disassembled camera. These drawings, from the first completed on February 20th, 1946, to the last from April 11th, were put together as "the reference diagrams of a small camera".

#### Trial Manufacturing Orders & Actual Production Orders

On the day Takahashi completed the final diagram, the camera committee was founded to replace the camera and projector committee. Their first meeting was held on April 14th. On the following day, the trial manufacturing order for small cameras, Code 6FT-1, was issued. This took the project to the next step involving trial manufacturing and testing of actual cameras. Now, at some point, the blue prints had to be completed. The quantity of trial units ordered was 20. However, this order contained a clause that was bewildering. In the delivery date column were entered the figures 21, 12 & 31. The first figure, 21, was the year in the Japanese system, the 21st year of Showa (1946), and the entire sequence meant December 31, 1946. In other words, the project had only 7 and a half months to complete its work!

When an actual production order is issued, the completion time includes manufacturing, inspection and delivery of the product to the warehouse. However, a trial order includes a period where the product is made, tested in many different ways and improved many times, and finally the design is narrowed down to the final version. In this case, the first small high-quality camera was given only 7 and a half months, less than a year, to be tried out.

Another strange thing was that a series of actual production orders, Code 6FB, was issued on June 10th, less than two months after the trial order was issued. The orders had the numbers 6FB-1 through 6FB-4, and the quantities were 300, 600, 600, and 600, respectively, totaling 2,100. The delivery dates were Feb. 28th, March 31st, April 30th and May 31st.

Thus, we see that they had barely begun their trial production, when real production orders were issued. There must have been a reason for this decision, but whatever prompted them to make it, it was too hasty. The issuance of these production orders resulted in great chaos on the production line.

#### Conclusions From the Second Tests

Testing of the trial products for Order 6FT-1 began in earnest in November, 1947, almost a year after the designated delivery date in the order.

The record tells us that the trial products were being completed through April of the following year. Of the 20 ordered,

one failed to function, and they had to borrow one of the 300 that had already been produced for Order 6FB-1. This unit, No. 60921, was included in the list of trial cameras completed in April of 1948.

#### Records of the Completed Nikon Trial Products

|             |   |           |
|-------------|---|-----------|
| 1947        |   |           |
| November 18 | 1 | No. 60911 |
| November 24 | 1 | No. 6094  |
| December 17 | 1 | No. 6096  |
| December 22 | 1 | No. 60913 |
| 1948        |   |           |
| February 13 | 1 | No. 6095  |
| February 18 | 3 |           |
| February 25 | 2 |           |
| February 29 | 2 |           |
| March 12    | 1 | No. 60921 |
| April 5     | 5 |           |
| April 30    | 2 |           |
| Total=      |   | 20        |

Minoru Takahashi conducted three tests using 10 of the trial cameras. The first series were done in November, 1947 involving 2 trial units (Nos. 6094 & 60911), and they tested the following items.

- 1) **Vibration resistance:** The cameras were tested with a vibrating device for binoculars. Vertical & horizontal vibrations were applied to the cameras for 10 minutes. No abnormalities were observed.
- 2) **Light Leakage:** Panchromatic film was not available, so they had to use process film of a lesser sensitivity. The film was put in the trial cameras and a Leica, and they were left out in direct sunlight. It turned out that the shutter curtains of the trial cameras were 4 times more "leaky" as that of the Leica.
- 3) **Heat Resistance:** The cameras were left at 45 degrees Centigrade for 3 hrs, after which the shutter was tested.
- 4) **Cold Resistance:** The cameras were left for 40 minutes in a can which was placed in a beaker containing a mixture of calcium chloride and ice. After that the shutter was again tested.
- 5) **Durability tests;** The shutter was fired successively, and the exposure time was measured, which was compared to the time indicated on the shutter dial.

The report gives detailed data on the first 3 items, but what was most problematic were the results of the durability tests conducted at 1/8th sec., 1 sec., and 1/500 sec. The shutter was released 100 times at 1/8 sec., and 3,000 times at both 1 sec. and 1/500 sec. Measurements were taken after 50 exposures at 1 sec. and 500 exposures at 1/500 sec. The results were very unsatisfactory, especially at the slower speeds. In the report, Takahashi proposes three things: 1) Eliminate malfunctioning of the governor for slow shutter speeds; 2) Eliminate the loss of flexibility of the plate spring (Part #411); 3) Eliminate the slack on the take-up reel.

The second series of tests on durability were conducted in the early part of December, 1947, on 4 trial units (Nos. 6093, 60912, 60917, & 60919), which incorporated improvements suggested by the proposals above (Proposal A). Some parts

had to be improved on during the tests, but they went well, and at the end the cameras endured over 3,000 consecutive firings at 1 sec., half sec., and 1/8 sec., and operated with precision. Takahashi concludes in the final section of the report that "he believes there are 3 things to pay attention to at the time of assembly in order to obtain good results at slow shutter speeds". The 3 things were: 1) the degree of bend of the plate spring (Part #411), 2) the strength of the 2mm shaft (Part #389), and the firmness of the setting of the "slow kick" (Part #353). "Slow kick" is Mr. Takahashi's nick name for the part that sends the second curtain on its way to close the shutter.

### The First Patent

However, Takahashi was not satisfied with the results. About a half month after the 2nd tests he came up with the idea of using a radial ball bearing for the main shaft which adjusts the exposure time, and produced an improved trial camera using this idea, and decided to conduct a 3rd series of tests with this camera.

The first patent presented to the Nikon camera, #178669, had the following quoted purpose:

"This idea concerns the control mechanism of a small focal plane camera whose main time controlling axis is coupled by a radial ball bearing. The purpose of the idea is to eliminate the cause of errors that occur particularly at low exposure speeds."

The 3rd series of tests using 4 trial cameras (Nos. 6095, 6098, 60914 and 60920), which incorporated the above idea, (Proposal D) were conducted in the last part of December, 1947. The results were as predicted. The first 2 cameras produced good results after 3,000 firings of the shutter at low speeds as well as at high settings; no abnormalities were observed. The other 2 had problems after continuous firing, which was found to have been caused by some simple mistakes made during manufacturing and assembling parts.

Takahashi states in his report on the 3rd tests that "the results of the most recent tests are little different from those of the results based on Proposal A, but Proposal D seems to be superior with regard to durability and various aspects of manufacturing and assembly. I therefore recommend that we can begin mass production using Proposal D". Thus he announced the termination of durability tests. At the same time he adds, "I am one last time listing various points to be attended to based upon the test results on the 8 cameras that were manufactured on the basis of both Proposals A & D," as a reminder that careless mistakes should not be repeated.

### The Price of the Hasty Production Orders

The permission to begin mass production was granted with the completion of testing of the shutters, which had caused the greatest problems during the trial period. However, camera production had begun at the factory almost a year prior.

As I mentioned earlier, a trial order was issued on April 15, 1946, for small cameras. Only two months later, orders to mass produce cameras were issued. There were four orders issued at that time along with their completion dates. They

were the end of February, 1947 for #6FB-1 (300 cameras), and the end of March, April and May for #s 6FB-2 through 4. The people at the production site were stirred by the orders. They eagerly waited for the blue prints so they could begin production to meet the delivery dates. The blue prints for the trial cameras were finally delivered to them in September, 1946. The plans, of course, were for the 20 cameras to be used for testing, but they were also used for actual production of finished products! No wonder problems arose.

The official company history, *Forty Years*, describes the chaos as follows:

"The trial plans for the Nikon were completed in September, 1946, and production began right away. However, many inadequacies were found in all parts, and revisions were made one after another. In the meantime, mass production went ahead without waiting to solve the problems, and the people at the production site started to get confused about how to deal with [different versions of] the plans."

People at the production site would complain, telling you that they were at a loss as to which plan to follow. This was what was actually going on.

Things must have gotten really bad. In June, 1947, a "traffic control of plans" was conducted where all the plans at the production site were examined and only the ones with revisions were kept while unnecessary plans were taken back. Finally, in November, 1947, trial cameras were completed, and they were able to get on with the testing.

Although some trial cameras were completed, there still remained lots of problems to be solved, and lots more revisions had to be made. Of the 20 trial cameras, 12 or 13 were tested and modified as testing went on. Supposedly, the rest of the trial cameras were completed in April, 1948, but I suspect that it was just on paper to give the order a closure.

### Continuing Production With Unsolved Problems

The trial production and testing based on order #6FT-1 was completed at last, with a delay of over a year, in 1948. Just about that time, on March 9th, 1948, a "meeting to discuss increasing the volume of mass production" was held. Present at the meeting were Shirahama, Director of the Technical Division and company executive, Murakami and Kunimoto from the First Design Section (optical design), Fuketa and Takahashi from the Third Design Section (cameras), Akechi of the production section of the Manufacturing Division, and from the Marketing Division, Kuratsuji of the planning section, and myself who served as the photography group chief of the sales section.

The meeting began with a speech by the Technical Director explaining the purpose. He went on to tell us of the decision "to go ahead with production using the existing design", which he said would be the basic guiding principle. He also told us that "improvements would be made in the future on Type 2". In the remainder of the time, the participants followed the instructions from the Director and discussed what we would have to do to increase production with the present design. One thing that bothered me in the course of the discussion was a remark by the chief of the inspection section to the effect that "all past KENTSUU had been TOKUSAI"<sup>1</sup>, that is, all past test notifications were "special decisions" or "conditional passes under special circumstances."

Prior to the meeting, the only KENTSUU that had been issued were for the trial cameras for #6FT-1 and one camera that was made for #6FB-1. That one camera was later used as a trial product, so the inspection chief's remark concerned trial cameras only. However, when I heard him make this remark, unexpected uneasiness stirred within me. It worried me that more TOKUSAI might be granted to future products. Of course, I did not dare speak of such concern; everybody at the meeting except myself was an engineer.

With the announcement of the decision to proceed with production using the existing plans, mass production began in earnest. In actuality, the "mass" production was only a reality on paper as you can see from the accompanying chart: The record of the status of completion of 300 Nikon cameras for Order #6FB-1. The quantity produced was small.

According to the record, the first finished camera for #6FB-1 was delivered on March 7th. It is speculated that this camera was the trial run unit, #60921. Therefore, the first true products for sale were the two cameras that were completed on April 30th. Unfortunately, the serial numbers are missing, and the numbers engraved on the camera tops do not always correspond to the sequence in which they have passed inspection!

The management began to get impatient with slow sales, and decided to "assess" the situation at the camera production site in September, 1949. *Forty Years* describes the incident as follows:

"Sales had not taken off as expected by September of the same year. An inspection was conducted at the factory to determine the cause of such poor performance, with Junior Exec. Yagi as the chief inspector. They concluded that "there still were technical problems with the rangefinder, helicoid, shutter & back panel. However, one could repeat the same mistakes even if one decided to stop production of the current Nikon model and start producing the Nikon II, which was already being manufactured on a trial basis. Thus the problems listed above were all to be solved while production continued. A minimum of 100 cameras per month was guaranteed, and 170 would be a sure bet once the metallurgical equipment was in order."

It amazes me that although they concluded that there still were such technical problems, they would nevertheless continue the production while solving them "one by one." It meant that they continued to produce while problems remained unsolved.

<sup>1</sup>TOKUSAI is technical jargon in the inspection business and means a conditional pass under special circumstances, even though there are unsolved problems. It must come from expressions such as TOKUBETSU SAIKETSU/SAITAKU, which means "special decision".

KENTSUU is an abbreviation of KENSA GOOKAKU TSUUCHI SHO, which means a notification of passing the test, and it is issued for circulation among the divisions that are affected.

### Three Hundred Trial Cameras

The chart (see attached) shows that the number of completed cameras for Production Order #6FB-1 began to go up drastically a month after the inspection took place. In December, it went above 100 per month. The majority of the cameras manufactured around that time were purchased by the Trade Corporation. At that time, Japan was under occupation by the victors of WWII, and all export was handled through the corporation.

The first recipient of these Nikons was Hong Kong. There is a passage concerning this export in a section called, "A Disaster for Hong Kong," in Chapter 2: Bidding Farewell and Hanging Low, in my book, *The Bright Dark Box*.

"The Nikon cameras also had to get help from the Trade Corporation in order to be exported. The first Nikons they purchased were equipped with a standard lens, and there were 200 of them. The first inspection of export products was conducted in July, 1948. Nippon Kogaku had planned on having all 200 cameras pass this inspection, but only 70 actually did, and even they had all sorts of defects and had to have some old parts replaced with the new in several places. They barely passed the inspection on paper, but their passing should have been more accurately called "provisional".

All 200 finally made it through in September. Along the way, there had been a change of plan just about every week, and inspections were again and again postponed till a later time. Records during that period tell us very vividly how people ran around desperately to get the 200 cameras in order. In any case, all 200 passed inspection, proper paper work was completed, and they were finally ready for export!

The first 50 were to be loaded on the ship in October, 1948. However, this was to become a disaster for Hong Kong customers. One after another shutter failed, the helicoid was loose, and film was scratched. Complaints piled up in no time. One such camera from this period was tested in great detail in Rochester, New York, the center of the U.S. camera industry. The test was conducted by a Mr. E. B. Marjoram who was a specialist in camera testing. The camera had the serial number 609194 and was fitted with a standard F2.0 Nikkor lens #70822.

Of the 300 cameras made under Order #6FB-1, some tens of Nikons which had been returned and stored in the warehouse were destroyed and discarded in the presence of people from the Tax Office. At that time cameras carried a heavy consumption tax, and they were not allowed to be disposed of freely. I could not help feeling sorry for the many Nikons which had this sad destiny. Thinking back carefully, I realize that Production Order #6FB-1 was a continuation of the trial Order #6FT-1, and that the 300 Nikons (#s60921-609320) were simply a trial mass production! It is a pity that the "Production Number Log", which recorded how each camera was sold and disposed of, has been lost. I was promoted to the position of Cost Section Chief in the Accounting Dept., and the chief of the product control group, who took over after me, seems to have discarded this historic document.

**Record of Completion of the 300 Nikons for  
Production Order #6FB-1**

**Date of Completion**                      **Quantity Produced**

**1948**

|                |     |
|----------------|-----|
| March 7th      | 1   |
| April 30th     | 2   |
| May 4th        | 1   |
| May 5th        | 1   |
| May 6th        | 1   |
| May 13th       | 1   |
| May 27th       | 7   |
| May 31st       | 22  |
| June 10th      | 6   |
| June 13th      | 1   |
| June 29th      | 2   |
| June 30th      | 2   |
| July 26th      | 4   |
| August 19th    | 1   |
| August 29th    | 1   |
| September 6th  | 2   |
| September 15th | 4   |
| September 21st | 1   |
| September 30th | 2   |
| October 6th    | 4   |
| October 11th   | 20  |
| October 17th   | 1   |
| October 19th   | 32  |
| October 22nd   | 2   |
| October 28th   | 2   |
| October 31st   | 15  |
| November 1st   | 1   |
| November 29th  | 10  |
| November 30th  | 20  |
| December 15th  | 4   |
| December 25th  | 9   |
| December 29th  | 108 |

**1949**

|              |            |
|--------------|------------|
| January 29th | 10         |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>300</b> |



George Landon has distilled the information in Arakawa's article and put together a short chronology of events.

- 9/20 & 9/29/45..Report of the committee to deal with post-war markets.
- 11/12/45..N-K granted license to produce civilian products.
- 1/17/46.....Section of Machine Design organized.
- 4/4/46.....Camera & Projector committee within Machine Design section decides to make 2 types of cameras:  
a 120 TLR & a 35mm of Leica/Contax type & caliber.
- 2/20-4/11/46..Takahashi disassembles a Canon camera and produces a set of reference diagrams or drawings.
- 4/11/46..The camera committee founded to replace camera and projector committee.
- 4/14/46..The camera committee meets for the 1st time.
- 4/15/46..Trial manufacturing order #6FT-1 issued for 20 trial cameras; completion target date is 12/31/46.
- 6/10/46..Production order 6FB-1 thru 6FB-4 issued for 300, 600, 600 & 600 cameras respectively w/completion due dates of 2/28, 3/31, 4/30 & 5/31/47!
- 9/46.....Blueprints for trial order #6FT-1 delivered 5 months "after" trial manufacturing began and 3 months "after" mass production began!
- 6/47.....Chaos in assembly section from conflicting plans & blueprints finally resolved.
- 11/47.....First series of tests of trial cameras begins one year late! Camera #60921 "borrowed" from mass production lot #6FB-1 (4/15/46) to complete the lot of 20. Testing of these cameras continues to 4/48.
- 12/47.....2nd series of tests performed..early part of month.
- 12/47.....3rd series of tests performed..late part of month.
- 12/47-1/48..Permission granted to begin mass production of cameras that was begun 6/10/46!
- 3/9/48....Meeting to discuss mass production yielded the decision go into production "before" perfecting the design! Perfection would wait for Type II!
- 7/78.....First inspection of production cameras. Only 70 out of 200 pieces pass!
- 9/48.....200 cameras finally pass inspection.
- 10/48.....200 "imperfect" cameras shipped to Hong Kong.
- ?date?....One camera, #609194, from early production reaches E.B. Marjoram in Rochester, NY for testing resulting in the famous "Marjoram Report".
- 9/98.....Complete text of the "Marjoram Report" published for the first time ever in the **Nikon Journal #61**.

**Out of the ruins of post-war Japan, Nippon Kogaku began its relentless rise to world supremacy in the field of fine 35mm cameras. However, the journey was very difficult, with many hardships & hurdles to overcome, as well as errors in design & judgment that are always a part of the birth of a new product, especially for the trying conditions the designers had to work under. No, it was not a perfect product.....yes, there were mistakes made.....but they never gave up! Because of their desire to succeed, the name "Nikon" came to mean the best there was, bar none! The story of the birth of the Nikon is a very "human" one, strewn with human error and frailty, but also human courage and perseverance! They all should be very proud! (RJR)**

# The Marjoram Report

**THE COMPLETE HISTORICAL DOCUMENT FROM NOVEMBER 1948  
PROVIDED TO THE 'NIKON JOURNAL' by TATSUHIKO ARAKAWA**

## REPORT ON THE NIKON CAMERA #609194 & 50MM NIKKOR #70822

Sample item received:

Nikon Camera #609194, 35mm, double frame type.  
Nikkor lens #70822, 50mm, f/2  
Ever-ready case.

General description:

35mm, approximate double frame size.  
Coupled rangefinder, operating off back of lens mount.  
Automatic film transport and shutter cocking mechanism.  
Bayonet type interchangeable lens mount.  
Fully removable back.  
Beveled corners and edges on case.

Remarks;

This camera does not expose the standard 35mm frame size of 24 x 36mm. The actual exposed area in this camera is 23.5 x 30.5mm. This format is considered to be of better proportion than the standard size by artists. Kodachrome and similar factory processed and mounted films, however, will not be mounted in ready-mounts at the processing stations. Mr. Little, of the Eastman Kodak Company, advised us that confusion and errors may result caused by the closeness of this film format to standard size. It is believed that processing station operators will cut the frames while attempting to mount them, upon discovering that they will not fit standard ready-mounts they would return them pre-cut. Automatic cutting would create errors and the films might be ruined.

Shutter mechanism, efficiency:

| Shutter speeds upon receipt; |        | High speeds |        |
|------------------------------|--------|-------------|--------|
| Retard speeds                |        | calibration | actual |
| calibration                  | actual |             |        |
| 1 sec.                       | .70    | 1/20        | 1/20   |
| ½ sec.                       | .45    | 1/30        | 1/25   |
| ¼ sec.                       | .28    | 1/40        | 1/30   |
| 1/8 sec.                     | .20    | 1/60        | 1/40   |
|                              |        | 1/100       | 1/50   |
|                              |        | 1/200       | 1/70   |
|                              |        | 1/500       | 1/80   |

Shutter Illumination across aperture field; Excellent.

(This test should not be considered; shutter illumination does not become critical or interfere until high speeds are actual.)

Shutter speeds after trial alteration; First curtain tension lowered 1.5 turns, second curtain tension increased 2 turns. Retarding mechanism for slow speeds at maximum.

| Retard speeds |        | High speeds |        |
|---------------|--------|-------------|--------|
| calibration   | actual | calibration | actual |
| 1 sec.        | .45    | 1/20        | 1/21   |
| ½ sec.        | .30    | 1/30        | 1/28   |
| ¼ sec.        | .20    | 1/40        | 1/33   |
| 1/8 sec.      | .13    | 1/60        | 1/50   |
|               |        | 1/100       | 1/60   |
|               |        | 1/200       | 1/120  |
|               |        | 1/500       | 1/200  |

Illumination at this setting; Excellent.



Test indication:

To correct the high speeds, or bring them into a reasonable limit, without altering the low speeds, the slot width should be reduced and the tension of the rollers left at original tension as received.

Shutter mechanism, design, materials, and machining:

Type;

Secondary release type curtain, Leica design. The first curtain releases the second curtain at an interval determined by the setting of the speed dial

Retard mechanism, Leica design: Inferior machining and construction evident.

Curtain fabric: The fabric in this shutter appears to be the same material used in the Canon camera. This material is not highly serviceable. Under mildly warm conditions the rubber coating disintegrates and adheres to the curtain rollers causing frequent replacement.

Curtain ribbons: Excellent curtain ribbons. Strong edge bound material. Weakly stitched at point of attachment to metal curtain edging.

Lubrication: Heavily lubricated with oils.

Bearings and shafts: Bearing surfaces for curtain rollers are inadequate. Tension roller shafts are not hardened.

Film transport mechanism:

General design is good. It is of a new design. Heavily lubricated with grease. Consistently advances film properly at normal temperatures. It becomes somewhat stiff at plus 35 degrees. Failed to operate after four hours at minus 10 degrees.

Loading:

Requires loading so that both perforated edges of the film are engaged in the sprocket before closing the back to insure proper advancement of film. The mechanism is similar to the Contax in this respect, and was apparently designed for the same paper leader type film.

Rangefinder:

Type;

Swinging prism mechanism of the Leica type. Arm against back of lens mount actuates prism through double arm. The swinging reflective surface is a prism. Focus gear and lock are dummies, used only to move the focus mount. The assembly has no direct connection with the rangefinder as in the Contax. The transparent mirror is formed by placing two 90-45 prisms with the hypotenuse faces in contact. The gold transmitting surface is on one of the hypotenuse faces.

Clarity;

The color of the image splitting mirror is quite deep. High reflection and low transmission. This condition creates a paradoxical situation. When using the viewfinder at low light levels interference will be noted, however, the apparent contrast of the superimposed portion of the rangefinder image makes the image easily distinguishable under the same condition. The whole rangefinder and viewfinder system is well shielded against light.

Construction, disassembly, and adjustment;

The complete rangefinder assembly is easily removable for repairs, replacement, or for repairs to other portions of the shutter mechanism near it.

To remove the rangefinder after having removed the housing cover, set focus mount at .9m remove the screws indicated by #s 1,2,3, & 4 in the rangefinder diagram, fig#1, supplement

'b'. Lift out complete range/viewfinder assembly.

Halving adjustment screw is #4, diagram 1 supplement 'b'. Turning this screw applies pressure on the baseplate section of the prism arm support, altering the halving. Halving is the congruency of the images other than measuring coincidence; in this camera it refers to the vertical relationship of the superimposed images.

Coincidence adjustment screw is #5, diagram 1 supplement 'b'. The knurled edge can be rotated very simply to alter coincidence of the images. Coincidence indicates the lateral image shift used to measure distances. The swinging prism mount and arm are supported by a pivot formed by a single shouldered screw, as diagram 2 supplement 'b' indicates. This mounting system is considered weak. Small amounts of expansion and contraction of the metal, wear, dirt, or poor original fitting of the arm, will cause an image shift in both halving and coincidence.

#### Focus mount:

The bayonet mount design is identical in all measurements with the Contax mount. The back-focus, distance from the zero point of the lens mount to the film plane, is within .0015 inches of the Contax. These two facts indicate that Contax lenses may be used on this camera. The mount is easily removable by 2 screws, after the case front cover has been removed. Back-focus may be corrected or adjusted by shims under the 2 mount screws. Adjustments for squaring the mount by shims cannot be made due to the fact that it has only 2 mount screws.

#### Case and Back:

Castings;

Good castings of durable alloys.

Covering;

Artificial leather of low quality used as covering.

Machining and design;

Machining errors in casting of case front are corrected by shims under assemblies. Shims may be observed under the shutter cover on the back of the inside of the camera by removing the 3 visible screws. These shims provide clearance for the curtains. In this instance, however, a correction for the squaring may be made by increasing shim thickness beyond minimum curtain clearance.

Design is sturdy, but without adequate bearing surfaces where moving parts or rotating shafts go through it.

Appearance;

Excellent. Few casting blows or bubbles are visible, and a good lacquer coating is evident.

Light Traps;

Well light trapped and completely lightproof.

#### Cover plates:

Stampings;

Good and to close fit.

Surface;

The chrome apparently has no nickel underplate. Nickel underplating increases durability and gives a whiter appearance to chrome finishes.

Machining and design;

Threads appear to be approximately 40 to 60%. Threads of this percentage can be easily stripped. Good threads required in precision instruments are generally 70% minimum.

Gears and levers throughout are roughly machined. This is in some instances partially compensated for by heavy lubrication. The take-up clutch post is similar to the Contax. A very practical design.

## Controls;

Well placed controls for right hand operation. The possibility of tripping the camera while winding is negligible, but due to the height of the release and its proximity to the wind knob, a large fingered operator may trip the shutter while winding the camera.

## Lens, mechanical:

Rings and tubes nicely finished.

Threads of set screws poor.

Diaphragm ring and iris blades well made of steel. Iris blade studs are filed at a slight angle to provide clearance for the rear of the front element. This is a hand filed operation, and may be due to an error in design that was detected too late to make jig and fixture changes.

## Optical bench test: Nikkor 50mm f/2 #70822

## Star;

Unbalanced and generally unsatisfactory.

## Resolution;

On optical axis,

| aperture | star image | resolution  |
|----------|------------|-------------|
| f2       | 50 micron  | 20 lines/mm |
| f2.8     | 37 micron  | 27 lines/mm |

Off optical axis at f2.8

| area       | star image | resolution  |
|------------|------------|-------------|
| Field edge | 100 micron | 10 lines/mm |

## Astigmatism;

Highly anastigmatic at 18 degrees off axis.

## Flare;

Very large flare at 20 degrees off axis.

## Distortion;

Considerable distortion at 20 degrees off axis.

## Best image occurs at;

| aperture | star image | resolution    |
|----------|------------|---------------|
| f5.6     | 17 micron  | 58.8 lines/mm |

Decreasing the aperture beyond this point increases the defraction beyond tolerated limits in average photographic lenses.

## Coating;

Uneven, and of unequal densities on different surfaces. (No harm)

## General;

This lens is considered to be of very low quality.

## Speed test after reassembly.....11/16/1948

| Calibration | actual | calibration | actual |
|-------------|--------|-------------|--------|
| 1 sec.      | .68    | 1/20        | 1/25   |
| ½ sec.      | .35    | 1/30        | 1/30   |
| ¼ sec.      | .17    | 1/40        | 1/40   |
| 1/8 sec.    | .13    | 1/60        | 1/55   |
|             |        | 1/100       | 1/87   |
|             |        | 1/200       | 1/130  |
|             |        | 1/500       | 1/160  |

Illumination at this setting; Excellent.

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## REPORT ON THE NIKON CAMERA.....SUPPLEMENT 'a'

### CAUTION

Read before attempting any disassembly.

Front cover plate cannot be removed until top cover plate is removed from camera.

The camera **MUST BE WOUND WHEN TOP COVER DISASSEMBLY IS MADE**. If it is not, the release button shaft will rotate and not allow unthreading of the release button which has to be removed to free the cover. Winding the camera locks the shaft.

After unscrewing the release button, remove the wind knob and the rewind knob after loosening their set screws. As they are threaded on, they will then turn off.

Place tool under edges of counter dial and lift up. Do not lose washer under dial.

Remove set screws from side of wind knob support, and unscrew. Do not lose spider washer.

Lift high speed dial and remove set screw in side of neck of dial. Unscrew speed dial.

Remove screw holding rewind lock lever and lift off lever.

Remove cover screws around edge.

Lift cover slightly, insert thin hook and catch end of lever under cover near rewind lever shaft, draw toward front of case slightly. Lift cover off.

Remove front cover screws will free front plate, which is removed by rotating up from bottom and lifting simultaneously.

### CAUTION

### CAUTION

## REPORT ON THE NIKON CAMERA.....SUPPLEMENT 'c'

### Repairability:

#### Disassembly;

As it has been noted in supplement 'a', the camera does not disassemble as one would be led to believe by external appearances. It is believed that independent repairmen will damage parts and assemblies while removing the cover unless they are given repair advice and parts and special tools are made available to them. If the item is imported, it may be advisable to set up an importers repair dept. This depot would also serve as good advertising. We believe that due to the poor threads, parts, etc., that most independent repair shops will be reluctant to work on this item. Even though the camera is of higher quality than previous Japanese imports, prejudice against Japanese equipment will be hard to overcome. (Many repair shops have lost financially and have destroyed good will by attempting repairs on Japanese equipment.)

The shutter mechanism is installed with a great deal of confusion, and interferes with itself during assembly. This would make repairs costly. With the proper tools, the job could be handled more efficiently (one tool is suggested under supplement 'd'), and the speeds could be altered to make them better than the original actual readings.

#### Reliability;

The camera should stand up under use better than previous Japanese imports, and as well as some of the moderately priced domestic cameras. When considering wear, the fact that the shutter is placed under little strain by its settings on receipt should be noted. Under higher tensions, and with reduced slot widths, wear might be increased due to lack of proper bearing surfaces. The speeds should remain fairly constant at normal temperatures.

No repairman, or original assemblyman, should be expected to make this camera operate over very wide temperature limits. The lubrication thickens and upsets operation. (More lubrication is used than in the Contax, which is noted for shutter sluggishness in cold weather.)

#### Rangefinder;

The camera is designed to facilitate speedy and efficient repairs to the rangefinder. This is almost defeated by the difficulty in disassembly of the top plate cover.

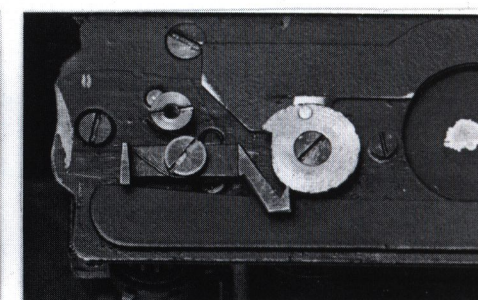
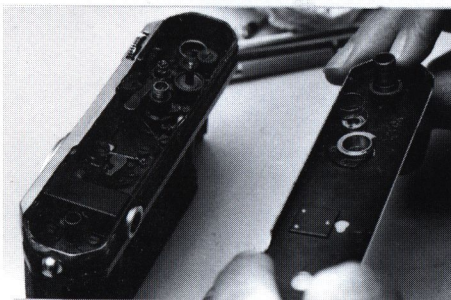
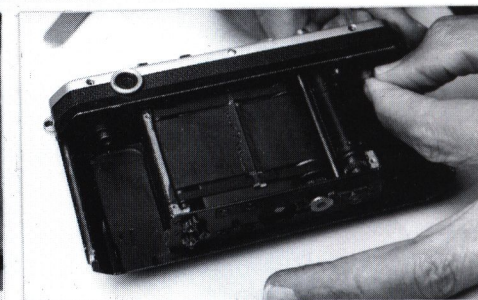
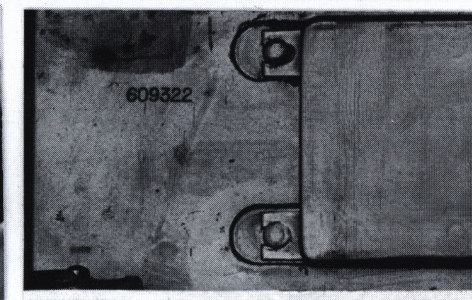
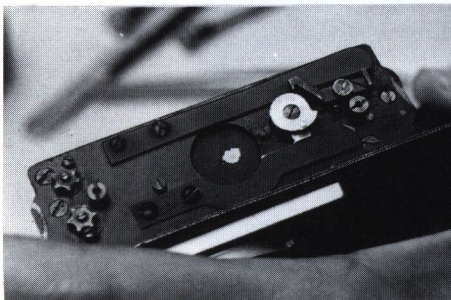
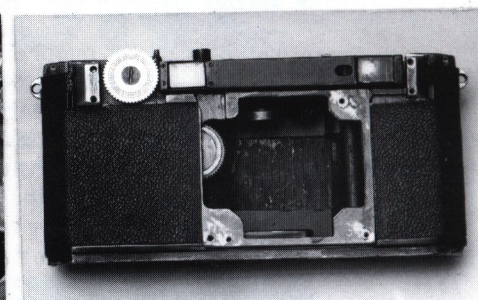
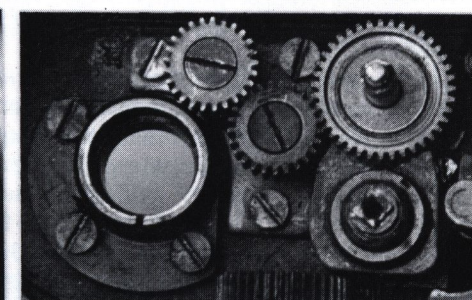
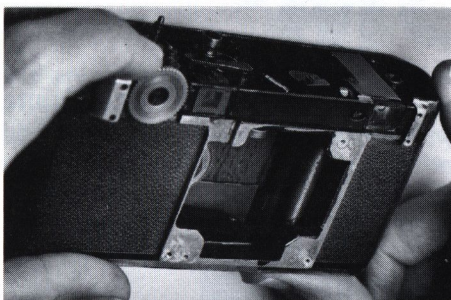
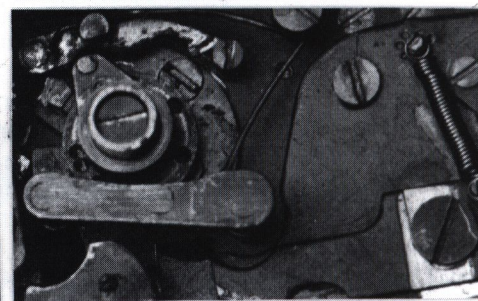
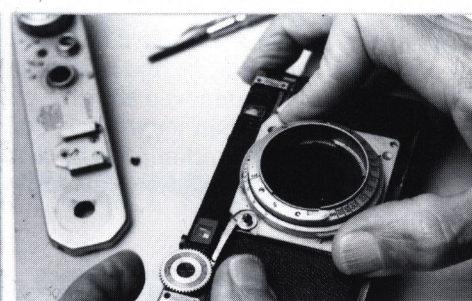
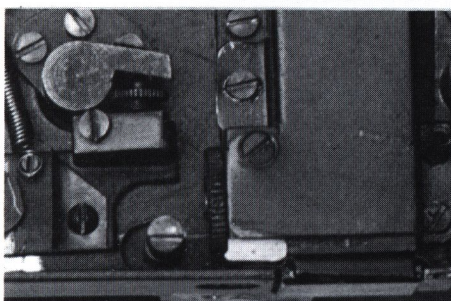
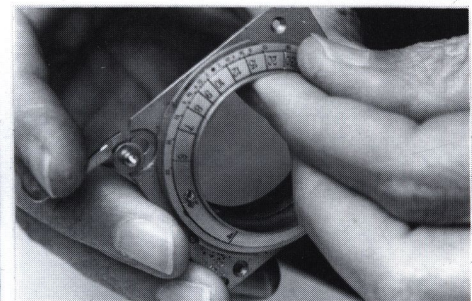
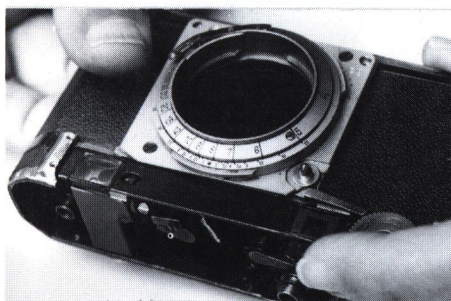
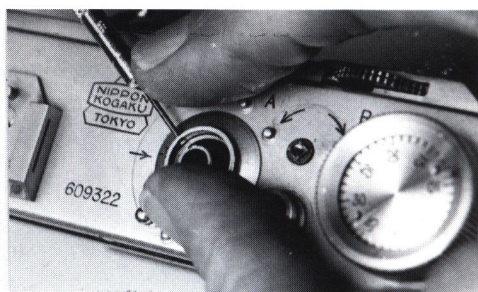
#### General;

It is felt that repair costs on this camera, due to inherent design, machining errors, poor threads, and special fixtures required, would be disproportionate to the camera value. This would be particularly true if guarantees were to be provided.

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**On the facing page 11 is a series of Tony Hurst photos recording the disassembly of Nikon One #609322, the very same camera seen on our rear cover. Repairman**

**Jon Bos is seen working at Tony's kitchen table. So now you not only know what Mr. Marjoram found inside the Nikon One, but also what it looked like!**



## REPORT ON THE NIKON CAMERA.....SUPPLEMENT 'd'

Suggested parts to order for minimum of stocking repairmen.....

Extra top plate covers.

These should be provided to make special tools for repairmen. Sections should be cut out to allow final adjustment of the shutter with the retard cam assembled on this plate. After speed adjustments have been made, this plate would be removed and the cam installed in the camera's true cover plate in the same relative position.

Curtain roller assemblies, complete.

Curtain roller shafts.

Since these shafts are not hardened, changing the tensions for repairs will mark the slot. Continued setting in difficult repair jobs would break off the edges of the slot.

Curtain ribbon, and curtains

Curtains, assemblies complete for first and second curtains.

Wind knob, rewind knob, and counter support knob set screws.

Rewind gear disengaging coil spring.

Threaded release button bushing for top of the top cover plate.

Due to the fact that most repairmen will mark this bushing up while attempting to remove the top cover, it is suggested that these be had in large quantities. It does not come off to remove the cover, and can only be removed after the cover is off the camera. Two holes in its sides appear to be made for a spanner wrench, and since the button cannot be removed unless the camera is wound, attempts will be made to remove this bushing. They would probably destroy the part. (Reference to proper procedure to remove the plate will be found under supplement 'a'.)

## REPORT ON THE NIKON CAMERA.....SUPPLEMENT 'e'

General opinion of this depot of the Nikon Camera:

It is felt that this camera is the finest Japanese camera that has ever been presented to us to repairs or testing. We feel that the camera does not compare favorably with the German imports that it is copied from, and may have to compete with. It does, however, compare favorably with medium priced domestic cameras of today.

In spite of the great variation between the calibrated and actual speeds, we feel that the average user would not detect this since all instructions for exposure, exposure guides, and exposure meters include statements which indicate that corrections must be made for the variations of individual shutters and optical systems. Advanced amateurs and professionals would be more likely to find fault with the shutter and lens than the novice amateur.

Opinions expressed about the Nikon Camera by amateurs;

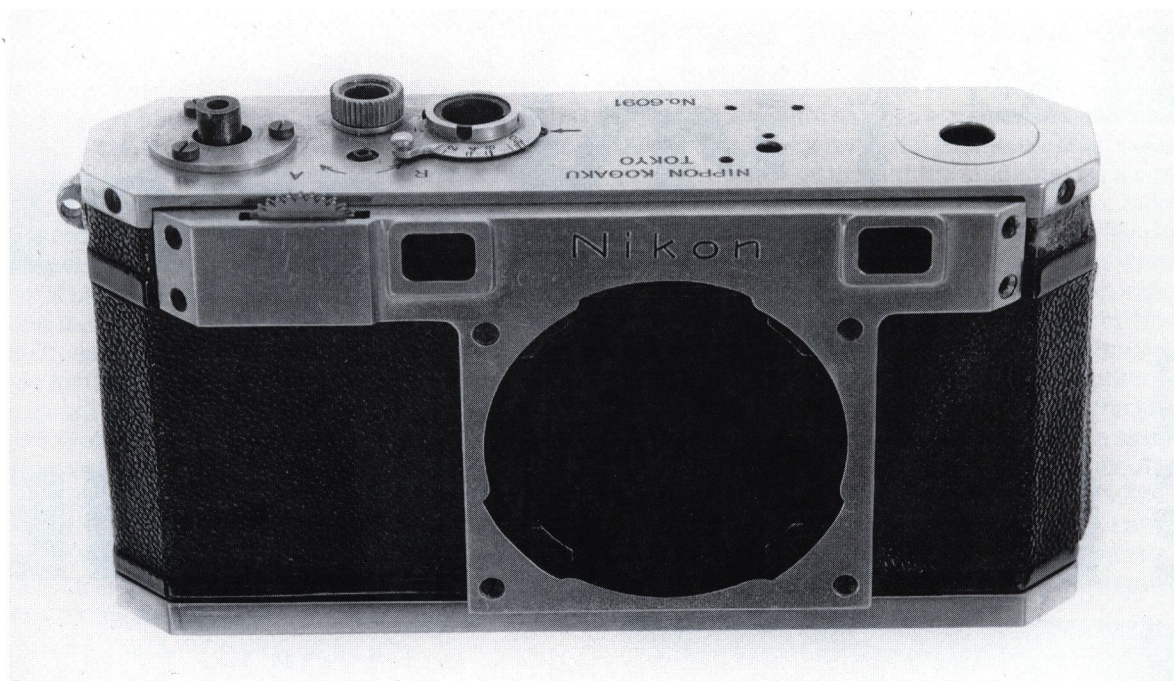
Dealer interest locally is poor, due possibly to past experiences with merchandising and attempting to obtain repair service on Japanese equipment. It is possible, we believe, that this could be overcome if the item is properly publicized and an authorized repair station or stations are established.

Amateur interest, advanced group, indicates a skeptical attitude toward the camera. The novice group, however, indicates an enthusiasm and respect for the camera.

Professional interest indicates poor reception.

It is felt that present Contax owners would be interested in the camera to provide extra boxes for the use of more than one type of emulsion without reloading. This, of course, would depend upon the price relative to the price of a Contax box, less lens.

E.B. MARJORAM....Camera Repair and Research  
77 South Avenue, Rochester, NY

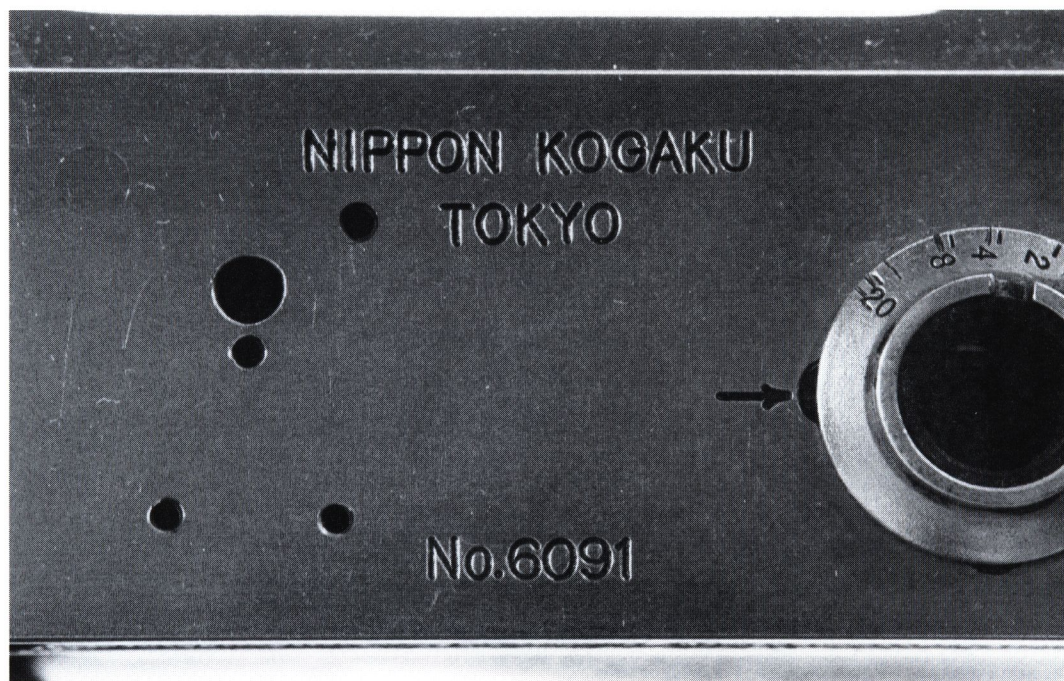


## MORE PHOTOS FROM NIKON'S ARCHIVES

# 'MOTHER ONE'

We are again grateful to the Nikon Corporation and Mr. Mikio Itoh of the PR Department, for these exclusive photos of the "original Nikon prototype", better known amongst Nikon collectors as "Mother One"! Mr. Itoh

tells me that the "First Nikon" was discovered in the warehouse of the Nikon Ohi-plant (the same one we visited at NHS-Con5) & that the number 6091 means the first camera! Thank you Nikon for sharing this with us!



**14**

**THE**

**F**

**--SPOT!!**

**FM2**

**HALF FRAME**

by **PETER LOWNDS** with **PHOTOS** by **TONY HURST**





Down in dingily dell, Pixie the magic fairy came across Cinderella-FM crying under the big yum yum tree. I'm always left at home, she sobbed, I never get to go to the big photo shoots. I always have to clean up after my five big ugly sisters, F, F2, F3, F4 & F5. I'm always waiting in the wings to help out, used only by the boy photographer who has just left art college to earn fame and fortune in the rough world of commercial photography. Cinderella-FM said, with tears in her eyes, I'm always left in the camera bag and only used as a second body if needed. Then one night, the winds were blowing in the tall trees, and there was a knock at the door. "Who are you?", asked a very frightened Cinderella-FM. "I'm your fairy god mother and I've come to stay with you, but why are you so sad living in this big old house of the famous photographer? Nobody ever put a roll of film in me! Well, I'm here to change all that! With one wave of a mono-pod she changed a Billingham bag into a Volkswagen bus, "you will go to a nude photo shoot on some far and distant tropical island. But be home by midnight next Thursday week! Oh, thank you, cried Cinderella-FM. She stepped into the sunlight and tried on the Nikkor glass lens. The fairy god mother gave one more wave of her magic mono-pod..." you will have a long lens and a motor drive and you will go out into the world and be used by all the pro photographers, and be happy ever after!

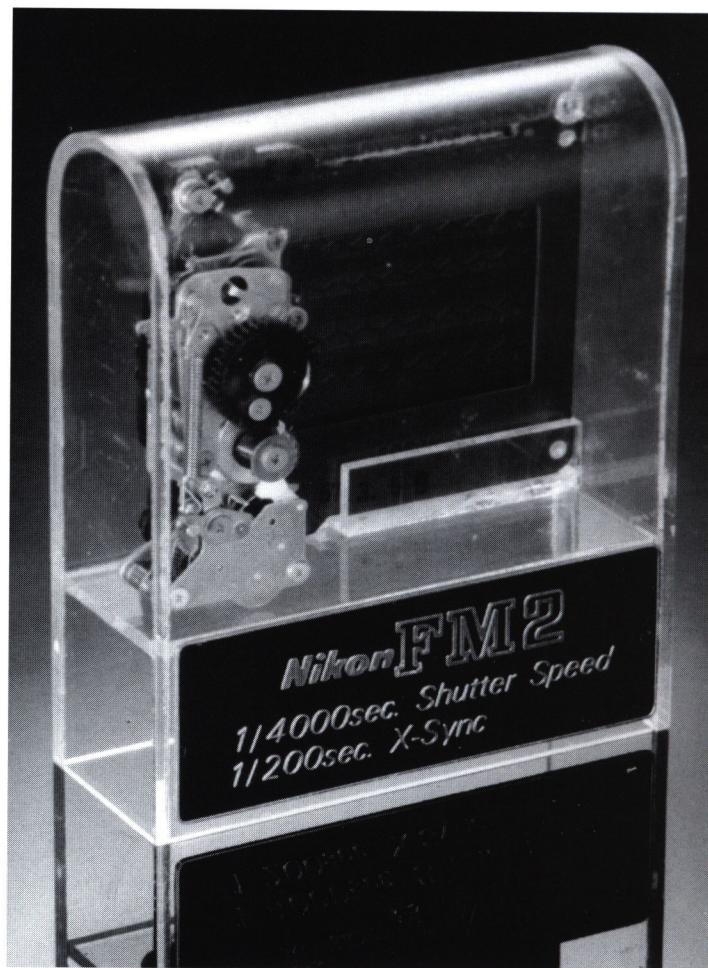
The challenge was to take a regular camera, in this case the Nikon FM-FE-FM2-FE2, and dig around to see if we could unearth a few jewels. What we found will knock your socks off. I've always had a soft spot for the FE and have used one for the past 16 years. I purchased it second hand with a small ding in the top cover. The ding came free but, "oh how I hate that ding." But it led me to handle my FE less carefully than I normally would, and it's still going strong. Many of the pictures taken by Tony Hurst, and used in the Journal, are shot with an FM2! This is not saying that if you use an FM2 you will get the same results as the master! (I also use an old FE to shoot for the Journal..RJR). We hope this makes Nikon collectors the world over take another look at the Fms in the shop windows, although your chances of finding one of these rare beauties is slim. There's no harm in dreaming and looking and it cost nothing.

I remember just after the introduction of the FM in 1978, going out and having some camera salesman pry out of my hot sweaty hands the princely sum of \$400 for a black FM. One of the few times that I've purchased a new camera body, and that's more than 20 years ago. The shape and style of the series is still the same, like the British Mini (40 years old). The Nikon FM/FE range has been around forever, well almost forever. Nikon got the combination of strength, weight and durability right on this model. If you don't believe me kick the tires (car salesman talk).

Tony Hurst and myself have been working on a project to "un-bore" a boring camera, the Nikon FM series. This was Nikon's answer to the Olympus OM1, the little lightweight that took the world by storm 25 years ago. After the arrival of the OM1, the day of the big heavyweight was numbered (this doesn't refer to me though..I hope my days aren't numbered). September 1998 sees Nikon's birthday. Fifty years ago the first crate of cameras was shipped to Hong Kong. The FM/FE has been around for 2/5ths of that time, or 20 years. Quite a remarkable achievement!

Most boy photographers and art students, and any amateur worthy of their salt, have cut their teeth on Nikon's FM/FE range of cameras. Why?, you ask yourself, looking a little puzzled!...no auto exposure, no cheating. Yes, you've guessed it, a very limited light meter. Most colleges teaching photography require that the students use a non-auto exposure camera for the duration of the course. Nikon's argument for the introduction of the FM2 was: The quantum leap forward was in the higher flash synch. The design team at Nikon had been working to achieve a flash synch speed of 1/200 sec., which would make fill in flash in daylight almost possible. As a bonus, a much higher top shutter speed of 1/4000 sec was reached. With the introduction of the FM2, the advertising department thought that the high shutter speed was a much better selling point. The sales folder had on the cover a picture of a jumbo jet just about to land, with smoke coming from the tires shot with an 800mm/f5.6 lens!

I'm not going to bore you with the ins & outs and the day to day workings of these cameras. If you want to know such things buy a book, or better yet, read the manual.



**The Nikon FM2 shutter module in a plastic display case. Notice the honeycomb titanium shutter (even more visible in the photos on page 17). Here we also see how the higher shutter has been given preference over the higher X-synch. This is the shutter type used in the Nikon FM2 Half Frame model.**

## THE FM2 "HALF FRAME"

If you read all the correct books, talk to any knowledgeable Nikon collector worth his salt, you will hear that Nikon have only ever produced one half frame 18x24 camera, the S3M. And only 195 of those, right? Wrong! Contrary to popular belief, Nikon made quite a few half frame cameras. Hands up all of you who have had one of those M35S microscope bodies with its built in barn doors, which made it possible to change formats between 18x24 and 24x36. Makes you wonder where Kodak got the bright idea for the APS feature of mid-roll format change. First let me put forth my theory about the S3M. An S3 with a motor, no big deal. But the "M" is for "microscope", not motorized. It gave scientists the ability to take 72 shots on a roll. Not a proven theory, but open to debate. I look forward to a deluge of correspondence from you all. The format lends itself better to microscope work, where the normal image size is an 18mm circle. For those who are not familiar with photo microscopy, its nearly always a round image, and 95% of the pictures are used only for reference, but that we shall leave for another day.

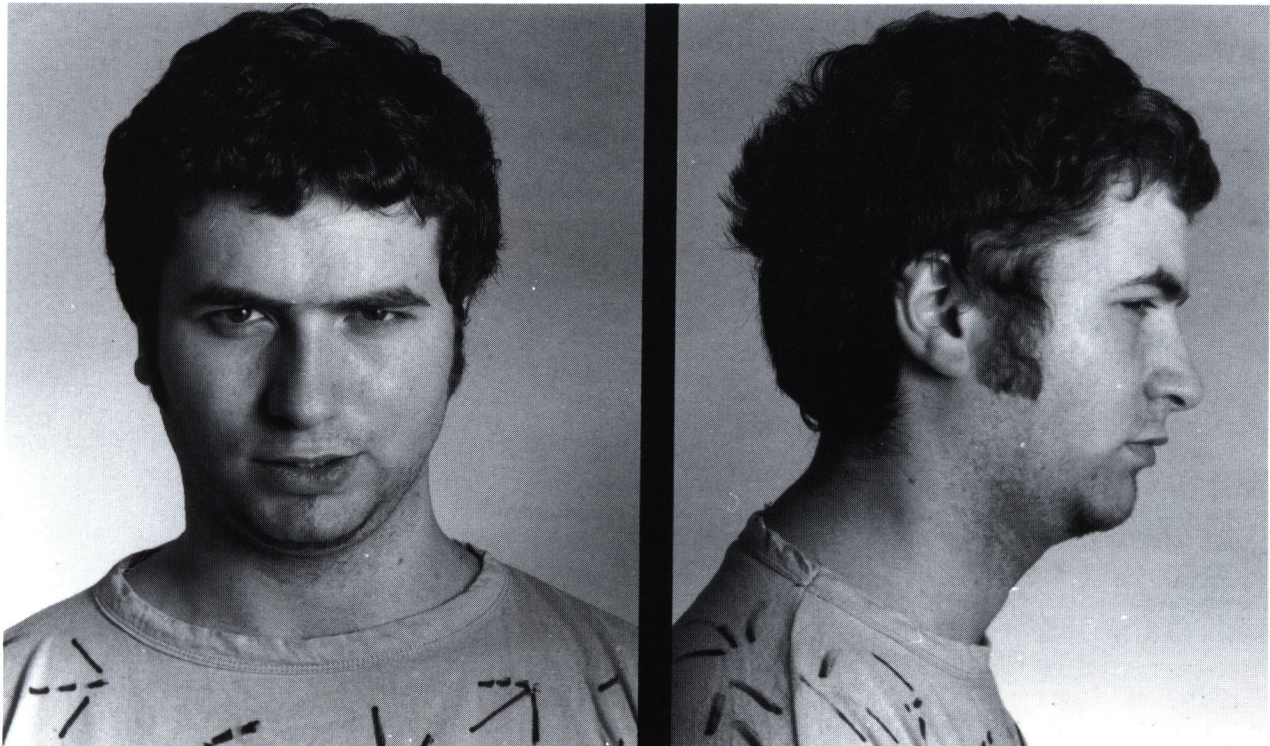
So what's this got to do with the FM2???.....a half frame!!! Wow! This is not a trick done on my Apple computer. What you see before you is a genuine 24 carrot Nikon FM2 Half Frame! The Nikon importer in Norway placed an order for 150 half frame FM2 bodies for use by their Norwegian police. The first batch of 34 pieces was delivered....29 were shipped off to various police departments around Norway, one was kept by the Nikon importer, and 4 were sold to school photographers. The rest of the order was never filled! The powers that be in Tokyo were not very happy about the idea of a special camera that was too costly, and so the order was cancelled! Pictured here is one of the 34 that were produced!

Because all the cameras had to be hand assembled, with a special die cast body, the light meter does not work. I have had Jan the repairman open up my FM2 half frame body. After careful examination he said "it has all the tell tale signs of a hand assembled camera". Wires have been removed or not soldered, masks have been cut and specially mounted to match the 18x24 frame, lots of hand work. The film transport had to be modified to advance the film only by 20mm, quite a complex operation to get it all to work. Truly a collector's dream....and a manufacturer's nightmare!

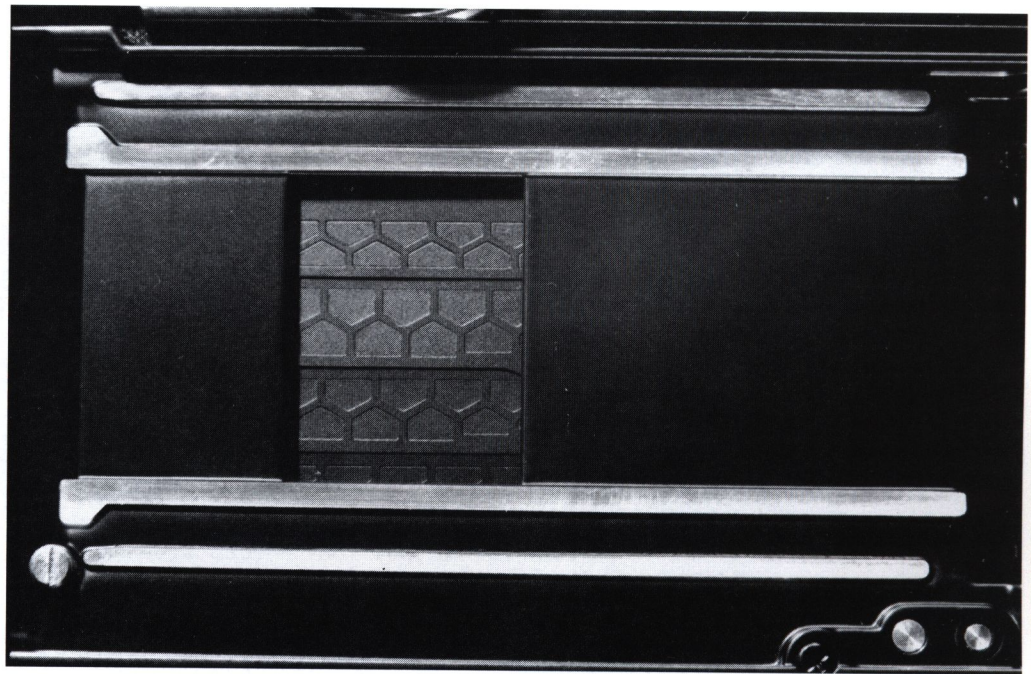
The whole idea was film economy. Someone in the Norwegian police force had the bright idea of using the half frame format for taking mug shots of Norwegian criminals! Why?... you ask yourself, are all Norwegians criminals?? Did Kodak need to work overtime just to produce enough film to photograph the criminal element in the Scandinavian countries? I don't want to break any diplomatic windows by throwing stones. We don't want the Norwegian government dragging the NHS up before the court of human rights, and I for one would not insult the Norwegian people.

The Olympus Pen F 18x24 system was very popular with all the major spy organizations and police departments (FBI, CIA, MI5 and the KGB). The 400mm and 800mm Olympus lenses for the Pen F were a special order for the CIA. Great for taking pictures of undesirables, whatever side of the political fence you sat on.

In Part II we will look at more not so boring FMs that you may not have heard of or seen before. Needless to say that we have started things off with what has to be the rarest and least known variation of this venerable Nikon system, the "FM2 Half Frame"!!!! Peter Lownds/Tony Hurst

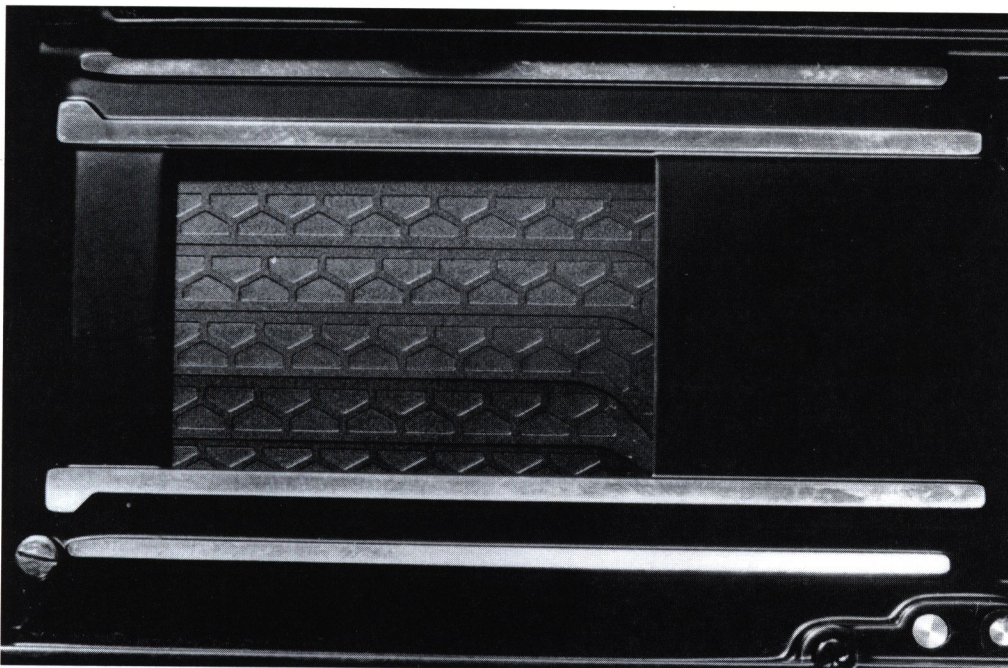


**We see here a picture of one of the most wanted men in Norway....all the girls want him! This is, in fact, Tony's son, who would like to go to Norway but not have his picture taken like this!**



Here we have close up views of both the standard and half frame versions of the Nikon FM2 shutter curtains. The honeycomb pattern was one feature that made the top speed of 1/4000sec (almost unheard of when this item hit the market) possible. Literature mentioned

that the pattern reduced friction as the leaves passed each other. Note how the half frame format was done from the casting up, not by simply masking the opening. Nikon also used this more elegant method for the famous Nikon S3M model.



**ALL  
PHOTOS  
BY  
TONY  
HURST**

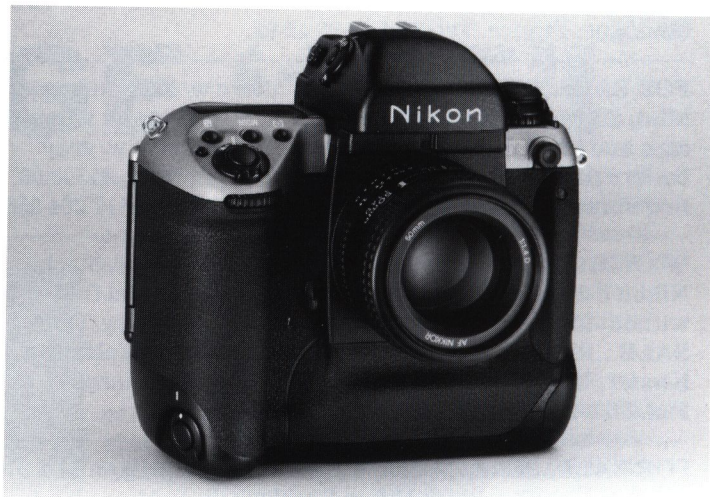


# 50th ANNIVERSARY

## NIKON F5!

To commemorate the 50th Birthday of the "Birth of the Nikon", the corporation has issued a special model of the flagship Nikon F5 model! This photo from their PR Department shows a very handsome F5 with a lighter finished top plate to offset the black body & prism. On the rear is engraved the famous triangular N-K logo as found on all Nikon cameras up to about 1967! But also notice the prism....yes, the word "Nikon" has been done in the original type style as seen on the Nikon One! Only 2000 were made for the home market, and they sold out quickly! However, world demand resulted in another 1000 pieces produced. But that's all folks!! So get one while you can!!!!

(Photo courtesy Nikon Corporation, Tokyo, Japan.)



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**WANTED...**SP, Nikkor-O 2.1cm/f4 w/finder for F, black Nikon F & chrome or black Nikon F2 with eyelevel finder, or without finder. Condition should be Mint- or better. **FOR SALE...**RF Nikkor 35/f2.5 chrome, Mint-, \$280. **Wolfgang Kuster**, Kreuzweg 15, D-64720 Michelstadt, Germany. Fax...011-49-6162-912846.

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**SELLING//TRADE LIST...**My new list has a large new consignment that just arrived 9/12/98! Includes 6 bodies & 12 lenses, all of which are in fine condition. Those of you on my mailing list will receive all editions automatically! **Robert Rotoloni**, P.O. Box 3213, Munster, IN 46321. Fax #.. 708-895-9663.....e-mail [rotoloni@msn.com](mailto:rotoloni@msn.com).

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# odds 'n ends

## A STRANGE '135'!

Bob Thompson recently sent me some photos of a 135mm Nikkor with an unusual serial number. All recorded examples from the second series of numbers begin at about 253000 with nothing seen with an earlier one. So here is #250166:....what is this? Not only an unheard of number, but it has a colon as well! Here are Bob's thoughts.

Thanks much for your informative note regarding my "250166" 135mm lens. I was certainly glad to get confirmation that it is a strange one. And to think it may be "one of a kind" (well, one of two since it seems to be a duplicate!). That's enough to make any collector happy for a whole day! A thought came to mind regarding the colon after the serial number; was the colon used only to indicate a duplicate number, or was it also used to show that a mistake of some kind (but not necessarily a duplicate) had been made? If the colon was used to indicate a mistake of any kind, then that might solve the riddle of why such an odd numbered lens would also have a duplicate....maybe the engraver noticed his mistake and used the colon to show his error, but saw no reason for the lens not to be sold, since the number was only needed for warranty purposes. Any thoughts from the members?





**THE NIKON ONE!**

**HAPPY 50TH BIRTHDAY!**

**Created For The 'NHS' by TONY HURST**