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MARCH 31, 1999



NHS-63

NEWS FLASH!!!...NHS-CON7 IS SET
FOR HOLLAND-MARCH 3-5, 2000!!!

NIKON JOURNAL



THIS ISSUE
Page 1 ~ THE 'COMMON' NIKON S2
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ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER



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The deadline for the next issue of our *NIKON JOURNAL*, *NHS-64*, is *JUNE 1, 1999*. I hope to have even more info on *NHS-CON7* so start making your plans for attending. I have plans for a couple of articles but I am always in need of more material, so please get all contributions to me by the above date. **Thank you.**

EDITORIAL

First things first....The day I was intending to sit down and write this editorial, Peter Lownds called to tell me the actual dates for *NHS-CON7*! It is set for the weekend of March 3-5, 2000 in Rotterdam! So now you know!! Start getting your plans together for what promises to be a great time for all who attend. There is a card in this issue.....if you have any thoughts of coming, **PLEASE** let us know! The hotel has promised us a large meeting room if we can get at least 30 rooms reserved for the weekend! Believe me, we have a great many ideas at this time and are working on others! More on page 16 and in the next issue so keep in touch. Use my NHS address, fax or e-mail to contact me. For Peter you can use the following.....

Home phone/fax...31-10-262-3638

Work phone.....31-71-565-3096

Museum fax.....31-10-415-9136

email.....plownds@estec.esa.nl

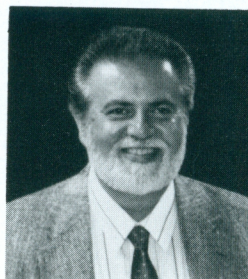
Peter also tells me we may be able to reserve a section of tables for the Houten show. Let us know if you plan to sell and need a table. **Do not hesitate to contact us and do not delay making your plans. We are down to 11 months!**

The main feature this issue is obviously on the Nikon S2. When I started to lay it out I realized just how much variety is out there when trying to put the story together. Maybe I'll have changed a few minds about this quite interesting model so you'll look at the S2 in a different light.

Stephen Gandy has provided us with three items from his "CameraQuest" web site. First is a specially modified Nikon F that may have been used for aerial spying on the Russians back in the sixties. Before seeing it on his site, I had never heard of it before. Second, is a U.S. Navy F3 that is also a first. We've had at least one U.S. government owned F3 before as well as the awesome NASA models, and now a Navy version. Finally, Stephen shares with us a story that is almost unbelievable! When he first told me I thought it was a joke, but it isn't! See page 17 for a very special Nikon M! I'd like to thank Stephen for making all this material available to the Journal!

On page 7 is an update on *NHS-CON7* that was written before I learned of the actual meeting dates! However, please read it and let us know if you have any ideas for speakers or events. We truly hope that many of you will be able to attend since we had 65 for our last convention in Europe. That is really a significant number, but we hope to even surpass it this time. The European members are very enthusiastic and I would hope others from North America, Japan and many other countries attend. You will enjoy it!!!

Lastly, a thank you from Peter Lownds.....the postman came to call the first week in March with a large box. Inside was a near mint black "F" with a 200mm Medical Nikkor in a leather case with just a small note saying would I like this as a gift for my museum. No name, no address. It had US markings but I couldn't read the postmark. Whoever you are, thank you very much!



ROBERT ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER

ALL YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT THE...

COMMON NIKON S2!

OR IS IT????

by ROBERT J. ROTOLONI

What does one say in defense of the most common of any group or type of item, especially in the world of collecting, where only the uncommon is considered interesting, to say nothing of valuable? If it's common, forget about it, and go on to something better! We all do it, for it's only human nature to be attracted to the rare or unattainable. We do it with cars, homes and those of the opposite sex. So why not do it with Nikons? I am of the opinion that *nothing* is so common as to be ignored or overlooked (except for maybe the chrome 135s, but in reality there are some very interesting variations even in that mundane paper weight!). So along those lines I've decided to present to you a closer look at the common Nikon S2. Yes it was made in the largest numbers of any Nikon RF, but is it really common? We all know there are a few obvious variations, but is there anything beyond chrome or black dials that might be of interest? Or are all those many chrome S2s you pass up all the time really just the same item punched out in large numbers like today's automatons? **Of course not!** If that were the case would I be wasting all this space in the Journal, to say nothing of mine or your time? So let us take a more observant look at what many of you might think is a less than inspiring model in the RF series. It's no SP, but then again, it has its own charm!

I often get calls from beginning collectors asking me which Nikon RF is the best 'shooter'. My answer is always, "the S2 is the best, bar none". Why? For a lot of reasons which I usually sound off something like this: it's the first modern Nikon with rapid wind and rewind levers; a life-size image in the viewfinder with a briteline for the 50mm lens; PC socket instead of those silly double-prongs; a cordless contact near the shoe; easy to use and adjust synchro dial; top speed of 1/1000 sec.; easier to grip body covering; single back lock for fast loading; and it was lighter. The end result is a very easy to shoot with camera and a joy to use. The only thing missing is a selftimer (big deal..when was the last time you used one of those?) and an attachable meter. It was fast, easy to use and reliable. It was a quantum leap for Nikon for more than one reason. It was a superbly designed camera; it was no longer a copy of the Contax (as this model was the first to start the trend of leaving Contax in their dust!); it was well made and reliable and has stood the test of time; it owed very little to the preceding 3 models and basically got rid of all of their shortcomings; and it felt right! So now let me put my personal opinions aside and take a more clinical look at the old common, garden variety Nikon S2.

Work began on the S2 in mid 1953 with the first experimental camera, code # T-10141 completed on June 28th. and the second, code # T-10142, on July 3rd. It is not known what they looked like except it is rumored they had a wind knob & not a lever. In early 1987 I examined body #6135002 at the Ohi factory (they began at 6135001), and it was engraved with the code # T-1101-2 and looked very much like the production version. The gestation period was rather long and the first production cameras were not made until October of 1954 with only 10 cameras ready by the introduction date on December 10th. It took 18 months to get it to market.



Factory production orders called for 57,000 cameras to be produced, but only 56,715 were actually made. It was made from December 1954 to March 1958, nearly 3 and a half years. As mentioned the first Nikon S2 is camera #6135001 and to date they have been verified up to 6198375. In between are quite a few variations, some more interesting than others, and some thought provoking serial number anomalies that bear mentioning. Let's start with the variations.



Type I--Standard chrome dial version with standard body covering (shiny) & live shutter release.

Type Ia--Standard chrome dial version with "dull" body covering (but same grain pattern).

Type II--Standard chrome dial version painted in black with live shutter release.

Type III--Standard chrome dial version but used as a "DUMMY" display camera.

Type IV--Standard chrome dial version with dead shutter release.

Type V--Standard chrome dial version painted in black with dead shutter release.

Type VI--Newer "black dial" version in chrome.

Type VII--Newer "black dial" version in black.

Type VIII--Newer "black dial" version in black with coupling for S36 motor.....the S2E.

Type IX--Chrome version of S2E shown at the 1957 IPEX show (may have been the black dial version).

Type X--Standard chrome dial version originally sold with the "Aluminum" f1.4 Nikkor.

Type XI--Those S2s sold with a matched f1.1 Nikkor (in either black or chrome, but were shipped from the factory in a box sized & marked for the f1.1)

Type XII--Those S2s with an SP type serial number.

I hope I've remembered them all! As you can see there are quite a few variations to look for, but since I definitely do not know everything (just ask my kids), there may be even more types out there. In this article I have tried to illustrate as many types as possible, but some are missing due to either I do not own one (or a decent photo), or the variation is such that it is hard to show in a reproduction (the 2 types of skin seen in the early years). Since photos speak very well for themselves, and their captions explain what you are looking at, there really is no use going through the more "usual" types, as the illustrations should suffice. What I want to get into are the more unusual items, things to look for, and some serial number info is rather interesting. So let's start at the beginning.

This is your classic chrome Nikon S2 with chrome dials that we are all familiar with. This particular camera is not an unusual specimen in any way, but merely an example of what is generally referred to as the "common Nikon S2". However, I prefer the word "classic" to describe what I feel is one of the most handsome Nikons ever made!





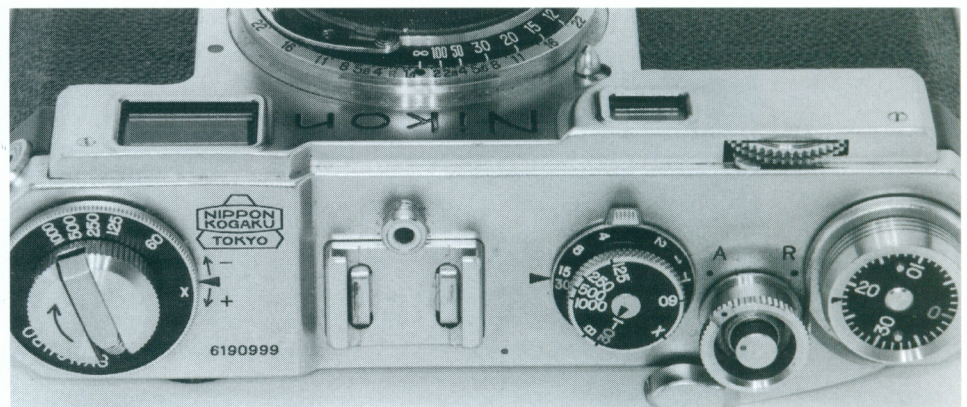
THE EARLY CHROME DIAL YEARS

The Nikon S2 began at #6135001 instead of #6130001. This was reputedly done because Nippon Kogaku was still producing the Nikon S, whose numbers were reaching into the high 612s, and could have gone beyond 6130000. In hindsight they were obviously in error for to this day the highest one reported to me is #6129562. Now this is close for sure, but no one has reported anything over 6130000! N-K probably did not know how long the S would remain in production and the S2 was taking a long time to get to market, so their thinking was sound. It turned out that the 6135001 starting number for the S2 was not needed after all.

The earliest serial numbers are a story onto themselves! Here are some examples of the earliest known S2s:

6135002...Prototype seen at Ohi factory marked T-1101-2
 6135003...Japanese language brochure. Appeared normal!
 6135012...Reported seen at 1980 Matsuya Camera show.
 6135013...Used in the earliest instruction books & ads!
 6135019...Seen in Japan. "SAMPLE" engraved in red!!
 6135020...Introduction ad & U.S. Camera test report!!
 6135024...Used in Tydings Nikon Guide.
 6135042...Back on **Dummy** #6137628!!! (More later!)
 6135052...Popular Photography test report!!
 6135058...Back on **Dummy** #6137600 illustrated here!!!
 6135068...Seen in a 1957 Nikon brochure! (See next entry!)
 6135068...Back on #6135077 illustrated here!!!
 6135077...In this article with above back #!!
 6135079...Back on **Dummy** #6135700 illustrated here!!!
 6135081...Back reported on camera #6146028!
 6135098...Asahi Camera article dated 12/55!

And now the "black dial" version. Note that Nippon Kogaku was actually able to make the classic S2 look even better! This is a more modern camera in both appearance and design. The black facing for synchro, shutter speed, frame counter and focusing scale is a definite improvement in function and form. They are much easier to read in nearly every lighting situation when compared to the previous chrome dials.



Whew! And this is in the first 100 numbers!! Who said the S2 was boring! From the above it is obvious that the earliest cameras went to magazines & reviewers & into advertising literature, all of which is quite normal. What is not so normal are the 5 "mismatched" backs, 3 of which turn up on Dummy display cameras, and are "defective" or "different" in some way. Except for back #6135068 which came to me on camera #6135077, and whose matching body can be seen in a 1957 Nikon brochure, no bodies have been reported for the other 4 mismatched backs! We are not certain just what was going on here. These backs all appear defective in some way, mainly with poorly cut skin, different feel to the skin, or ill-fitting when mounted to a body. Pressure plates are missing in most cases and never appear to have been there. Where are the bodies to match these backs? How did they end up on Dummies, usually with much later numbers? Where are the matching backs for the Dummy camera numbers? If these early backs did not pass inspection, did the bodies also fail, and what happened to them? Why were they not made into Dummies along with their backs? Why did Nikon have problems with the early backs? Would they not have perfected things before running off serial numbered parts? This mismatching of early backs seems to only occur on the S2, not on the preceding three models (later models don't apply as their backs were not numbered.). We may never know all the answers, but doesn't it make looking for really early Nikon S2s rather interesting?



The black S2 is gorgeous in either version! This is the earlier type based on the S2 with chrome dials seen on page 2. Made in relatively small numbers, all black S2s are over 40 years old at this time! Finding one in nice condition is, therefore, very difficult. But when you do, you'll fall in love with it!





The second and final type of black S2 is that version based on the "black dial" cameras such as the one on page 3. Compare it with the camera on the facing page. Note particularly the shutter speed, syncho and focusing scales. They are lifted right off the chrome version. Also note the strap lugs are still black but the body panel screws are chrome.



THE BLACK NIKON S2

Regardless of the fact that a few Nikon S bodies, and at least one Nikon M, were made in black by the factory, the S2 is the first Nikon that was available to the general public in black, although for most of the time it remained a special order item. The earliest **verified** black S2 to date is camera #6137647. This is actually quite early, less than 3000 units into the production run. No others show up until the following "batches" appear:

#6140800 to about #6140850, or 50 cameras.

#6144660 to about #6144690, or 30 cameras.

#6157500 to about #6157600, or 100 cameras.

#6170900 to about #6171000, or 100 cameras.

#6180600 to about #6181000, or 400 cameras.

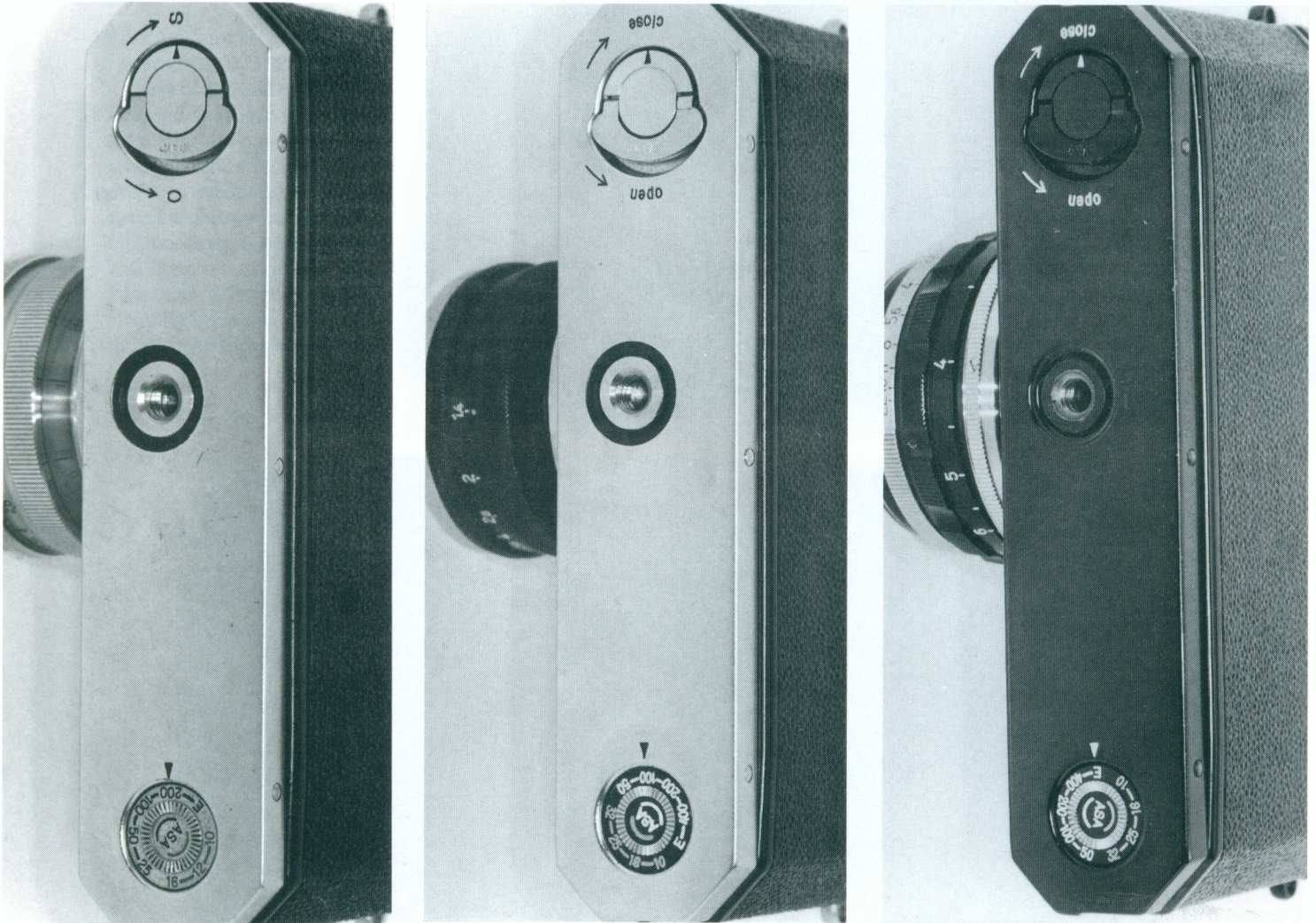
#6194000 to about #6194300, or 300 cameras.

There are a few others sprinkled amongst the thousands of chrome cameras, but only a few. However, a significant number of "fake" black S2s are out there. As a service to my members I'd like to list those "fakes" that I am aware of. Now some of these have been reported to me as being for sale in various parts of the world, and some I've seen myself. Keep your eyes open for these: 6145694, 6146295, 6147301, 6158900, 6160051, 6162631, 6165004, 6165628, 6176259, 6182930, 6192296, and 6195592. There are probably more.

Naturally, there are two major types of black S2s. One would be the black version of the earlier chrome dial model, which would have a chrome focusing mount, and the black version of the later black dial model, with a black focusing mount as well as a few other differences. Either type is a must for any Nikon collection, and clean examples are very difficult to find today. Besides, I think the black Nikon S2 is the most handsome of all the rangefinders!

THE 'BLACK DIAL' S2

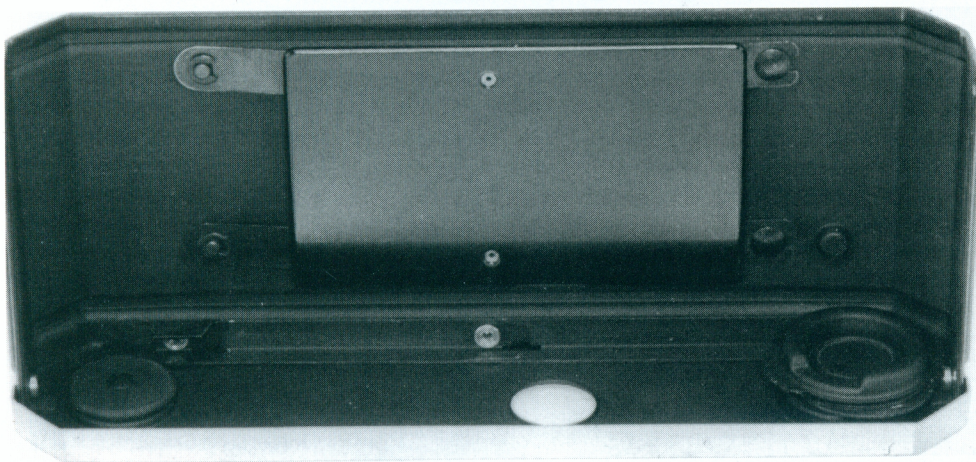
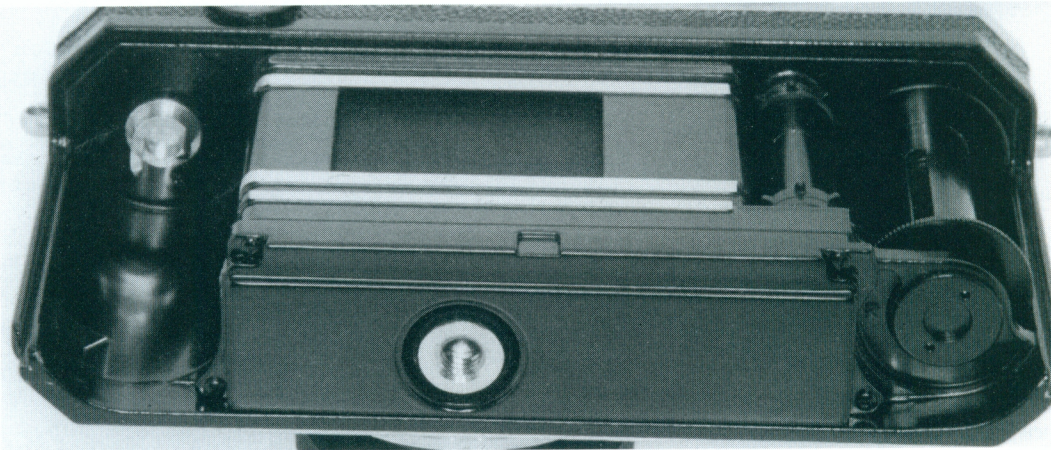
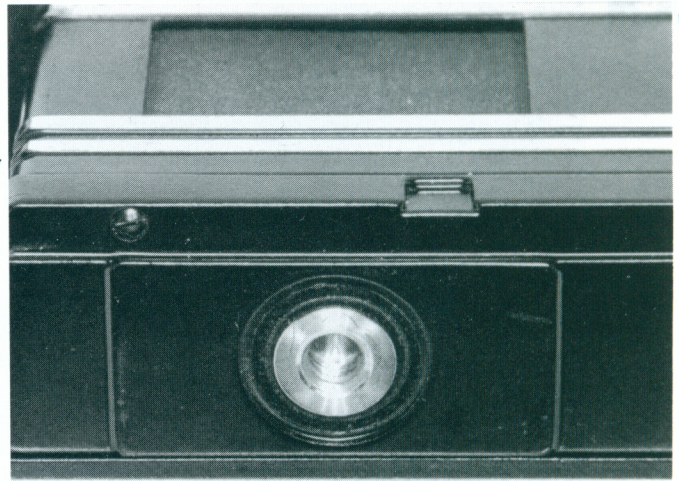
The S2 production can be neatly divided into two major models: CHROME DIAL & BLACK DIAL. Functionally they are basically the same and most people assume that the real difference is merely cosmetic. For the most part they are correct. Externally, the new Black Dial version is a definite cosmetic improvement which is also a functional upgrade in that the new style dials are much easier to read in all light and actually make sense. It's a hell of a lot easier to read the white shutter speed on a black background than a black one on a shiny chrome background! But the emergence of the black dial model (which was never really promoted by Nikon as "new & improved" and, for the most part, hardly ever mentioned), also coincides with a few internal changes. The pressure plate was enlarged "sometime" around the introduction of the black dials. This longer plate was needed with



Three of the types of baseplates found on various vintage S2s (there are probably more). The one on the left is early and has a chrome ASA dial & "O&S". Later they went to "open &

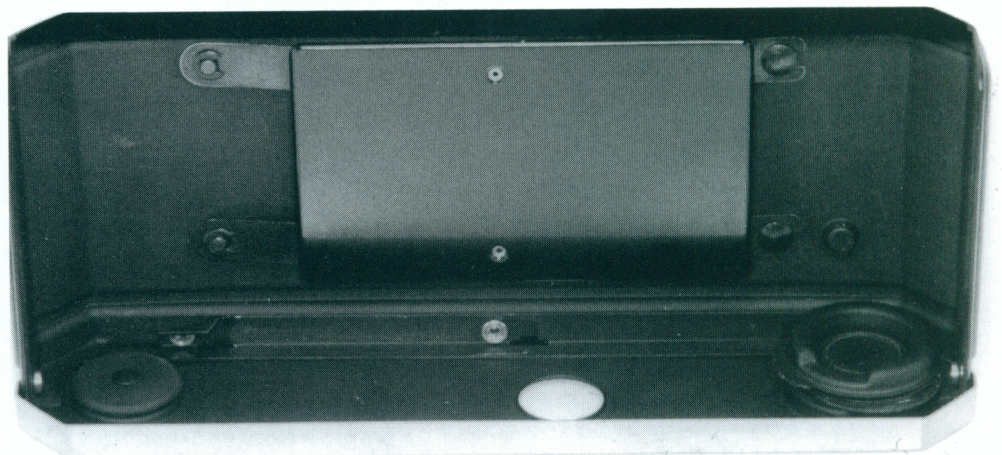
close" and black faced ASA dials. I have also seen black S2s with chrome locking keys & chrome tripod sockets although they may not be original.

the arrival of the 50mm/f1.1 Nikkor, and literature from the period (early 1957) attests to this fact. The black dial was in production at or near this point in time. Also the chassis cover plate is changed with the arrival of the black dial. In earlier bodies there is a raised rectangular area around the tripod socket, which is gone in the black dial. This plate now resembles that seen on the later SP and is not interchangeable with earlier cameras because the screw locations are not the same! Why was this plate changed? Could it have anything to do with a redesign of the shutter? Could it have anything to do with the arrival of the Electric Motor Drive? Could it have anything to do with the fact that at about the same time the literature talks about the enlarged pressure plate there was this camera Expo and at the Nikon booth they were showing their new motorized Nikon S2E?? Could be a connection, right?



The two upper photos illustrate the chassis cover types mentioned in the text. The earlier chrome dials have a raised rectangle by the socket while later ones have a smooth plate. Also, they can't be interchanged! Note the screw at 10 o'clock is in a different position on the later type.

The two basic camera backs & pressure plates. The later black dials, or at least those being made after the arrival of the f1.1 Nikkor, have the longer pressure plate. This is what is meant in the letter by the "new pressure plate" needed for the f1.1 lens!



Cable Address:
NICAMERA



Nikon INCORPORATED

251 FOURTH AVENUE, NEW YORK 10, N. Y. • OREGON 4-7970

January 14, 1957

Mr. Peter Dechert
Box 648
Bryn Mawr
Penn.

Dear Mr. Dechert:

As you have requested, we are enclosing our information on the Nikkor 50mm F1.1 lens as well as our booklet, "35mm photography a new art".

At the present time, in order to insure accurate performance of the Nikkor 50mm F1.1 lens, we are supplying this lens complete with a camera body to which the lens has been accurately matched, insofar as back focal length is concerned. This camera body will of course accommodate all our other lenses with no problem. In addition, we have increased the size of the pressure plate in all Nikon cameras now being supplied.

At some future date, we expect to be able to supply the 50mm F1.1 lens by itself, at which time we will have the necessary equipment to accurately match the lens to your Nikon camera body. This fitting will include the new pressure plate. However, I do not believe we will be ready for this until the latter part of the year.

Please do not hesitate to write for any additional information you may require.

We do wish to thank you for your continued interest.

Very truly yours,

NIKON INCORPORATED

Joseph C. Abbott
Joseph C. Abbott, Manager

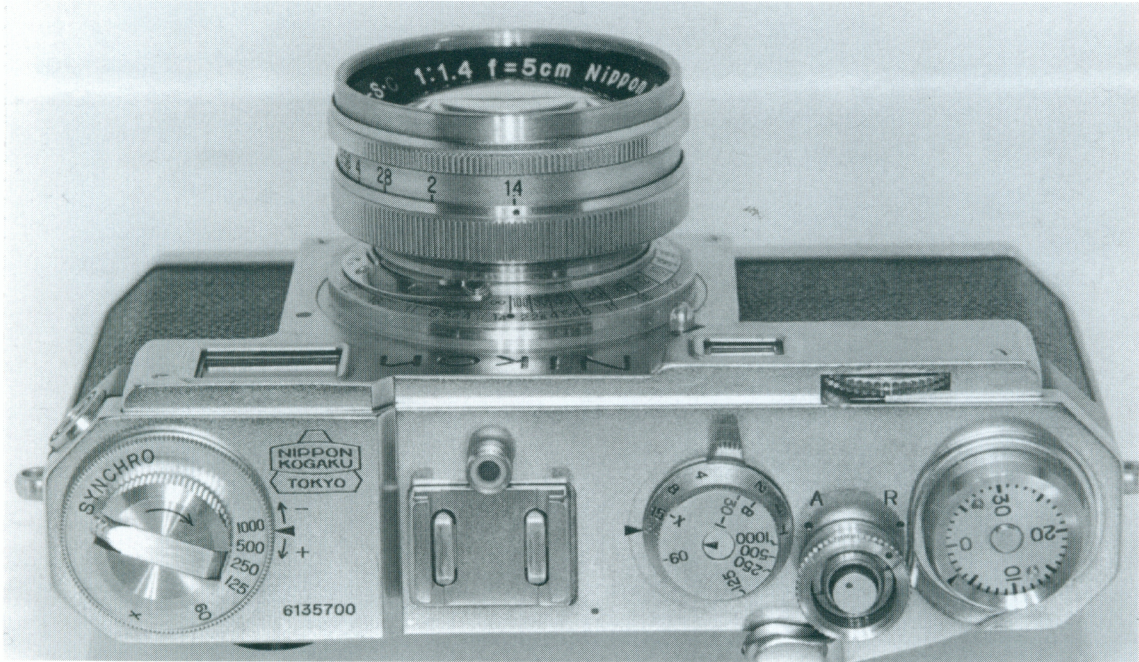


THE S2 & THE 50MM/F1.1 NIKKOR!
The awesome f1.1 Nikkor was released in 1956 and shown on an S2 in its introductory ads. The first F1.1s were sold only on matched S2 bodies with the newer pressure plates. The letter reproduced on this page tells it all!



THE S2 & THE "ALUMINUM F1.4"!
 Everyone has heard of the rare and elusive Aluminum f1.4 Nikkor. This lens almost invariably surfaces mounted to a Nikon S2, since they were contemporaries. It was not too long ago that we were not sure if the Aluminum lenses were ever actually sold to the public, or just an experiment that never saw the light of day. We now are sure that this rare lens was sold to the public like any other. Proof is in the literature, specifically, the certificate that came with the S2 and Aluminum shown here!

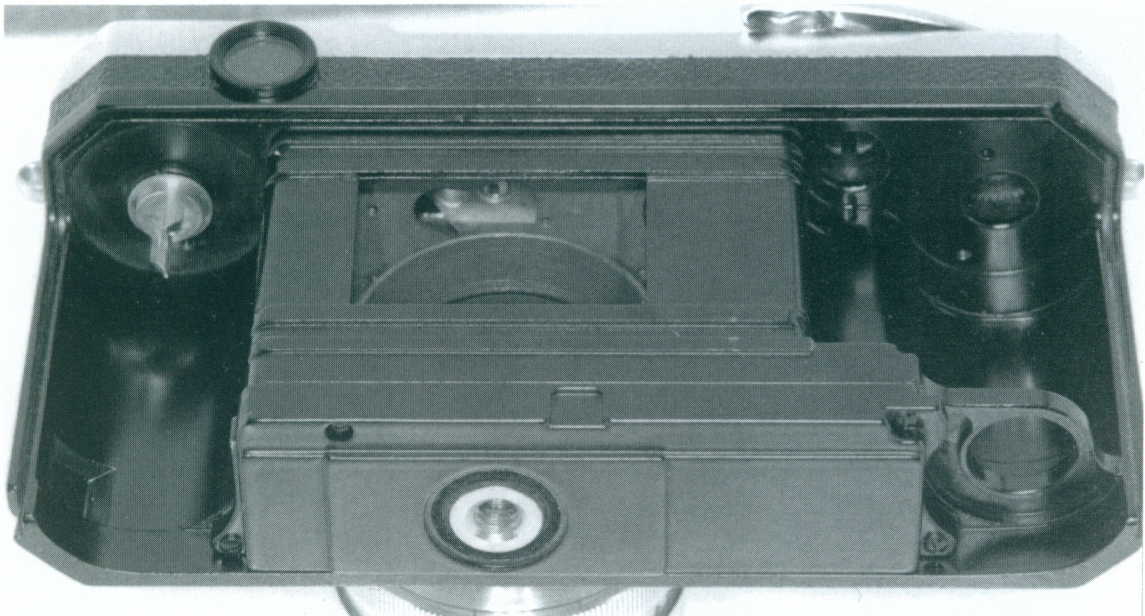




THE DUMMY NIKON S2

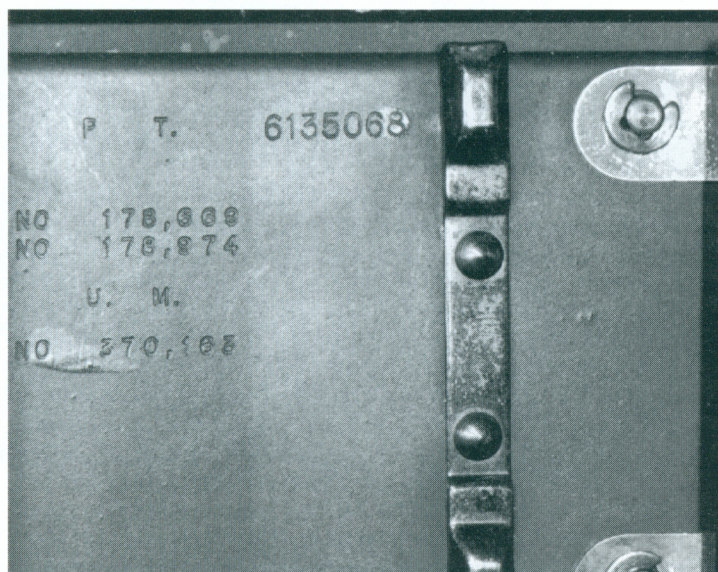
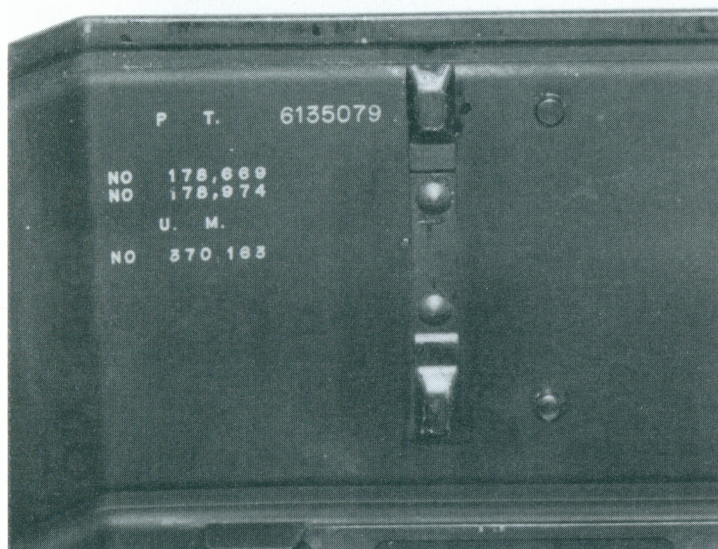
Although we now know of at least two Dummy SPs and one Dummy S3, the S2 appears to have had a fair number of display models produced. I know of at least seven examples: 6135700, 6137600, 6137628, 6141482, 6141633, 6151505, 6165326. More probably exist, but it is obvious that selection was a bit random. Was a body pulled off the line only when a dummy was ordered? Or were defective bodies put aside to be used later when a dummy was needed. In other words, which came first, the chicken or the egg? Actually I can't tell you,

but what I do know is that dummy bodies have chassis that have been removed from the line prior to having their film guide rails ground. Were they too far out of spec to be used? Were they warped or defective in some other way? Or were they simply used for a dummy, and not really defective? Except for the backs, all other external parts seen on the dummies appear first rate. I see no evidence of ill-fitting parts, defective plating, or hand fitting. A Dummy S2 looks like any other S2 until you pick it up! They look that good. That is, except for those backs!

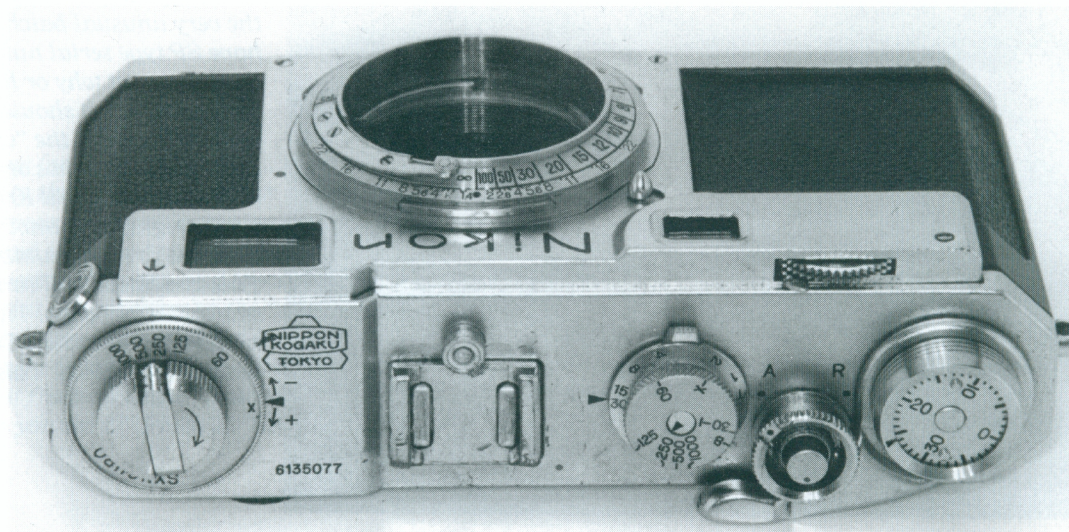


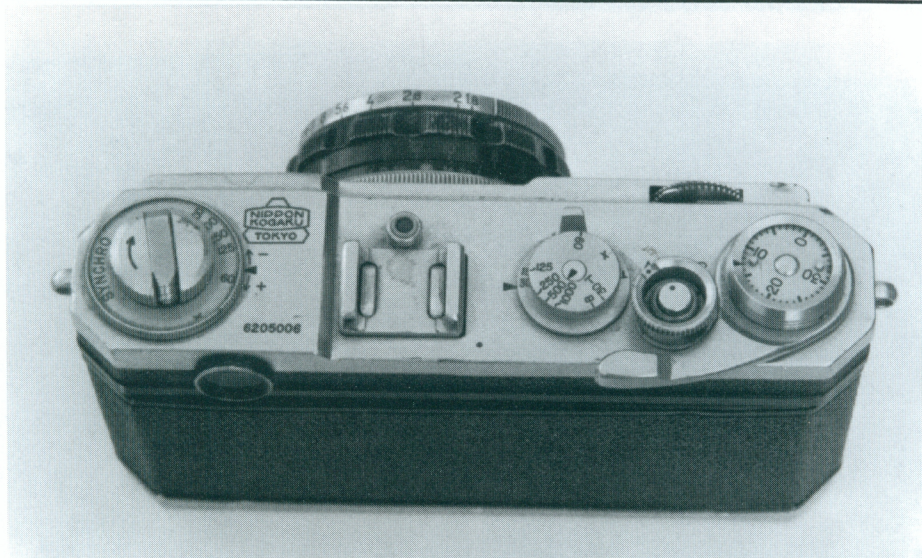
Note that in the upper photo the Dummy S2 looks like any other S2! If you saw one on a shelf you would think it the real thing until you picked it up! Then suddenly its light weight would tell you something was different here! The lower photo shows "most" of what makes a Dummy a Dummy...film guide

rails not yet machined; take-up spool and sprocket wheel are missing; no shutter mechanism or curtain; and no rangefinder either (note the opening near the top of the focal plane...the RF cam would protrude from this point). Also, all lenses seen on Dummy S2s are also incomplete, with missing elements.



Even though the Dummies are interesting in themselves, they also figure into the fascinating saga of the early serial numbers. As mentioned in the text, a good percentage of the first 100 allotted numbers have been accounted for, albeit not as "whole" cameras in some cases. The bottom photo is of Nikon S2 #6135077, the 76th number! This is not a Dummy but a functional camera. It came to me with back #6135068 in the left photo! A mis-match, but still from the first 100 numbers! It is even more interesting since the camera belonging to back #68 is seen in an early Japanese brochure! Where is back #77? Who knows! The top two photos are of even more backs from the first 100 numbers! On the right is #6135058 which came to me on Dummy #6137600!!! But the most interesting back of all is the left one, #6135079! Why? First it came to me on Dummy #6135700 and, second, it's the **ONLY** back I have seen with the numbers & letters painted in!! Go figure! One page.....four numbers from the first 100.....and none came on matching bodies! Isn't the S2 interesting? (All photos to this point by Robert Rotoloni)





THE S2 WITH WHAT NUMBER?

And now I'll make one last effort to prove that the common Nikon S2 "ain't" so common after all. After looking at most of the known variations and oddities that can be found amongst the many thousands of S2s produced, you must by now feel as I do, that the S2 is a very interesting model to collect and that there are a lot of neat things to search for out there in S2 land. So here is one more! How many of you have a Nikon S2 with a Nikon SP serial number? Say what?! You say you don't have one? Well don't complain for most of us don't either. I have four such cameras recorded to date and I've personally examined three of them. They are.....

6205001 6205006 6205010 6205019

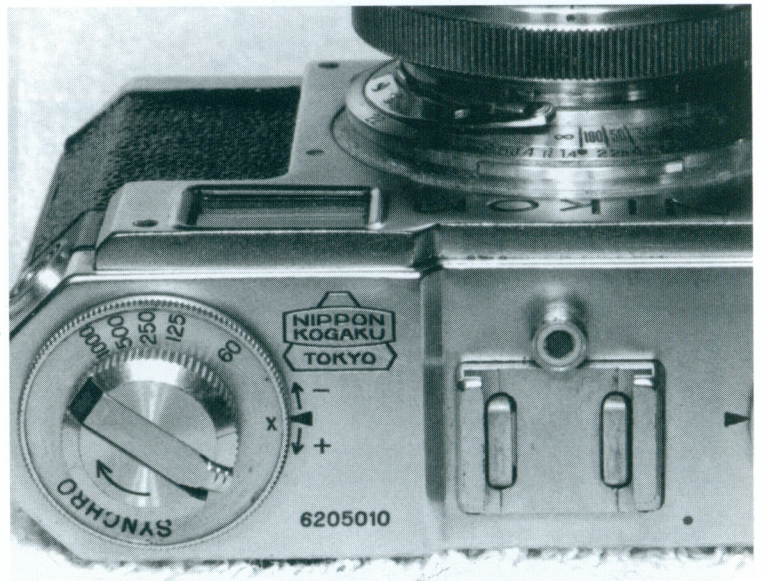
Yes, these are SP type numbers!

Yes, all four cameras are chrome dial models.

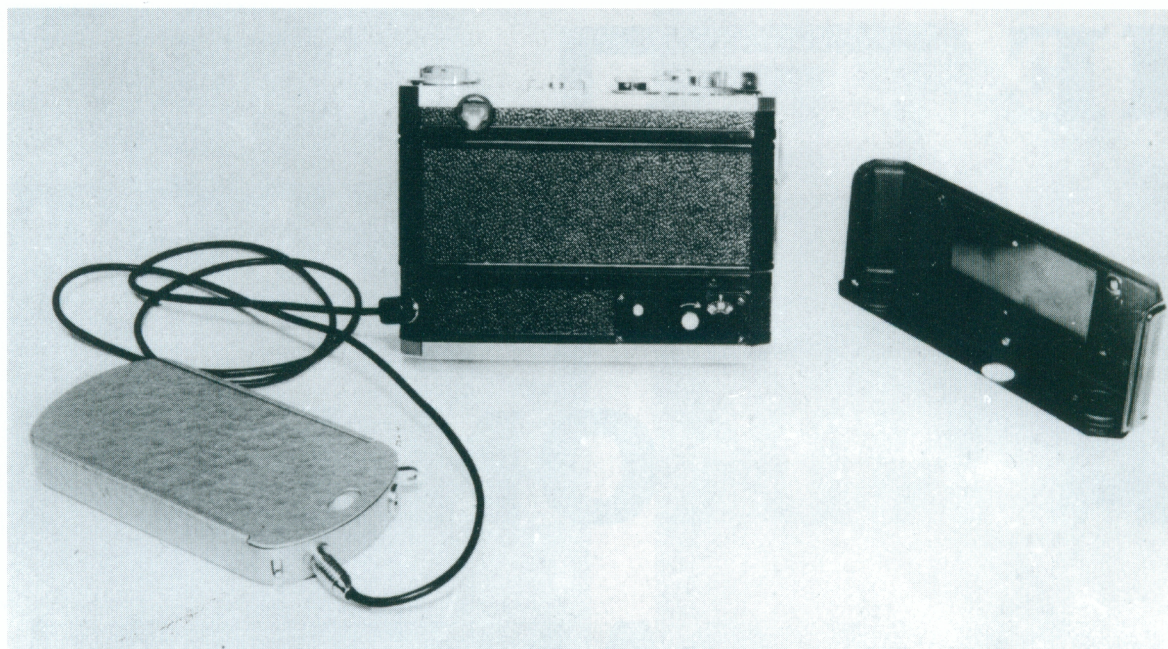
Yes, these numbers are for real, not mis-engravings!

Yes, they all mimic the starting numbers for the S2 except they use "620" instead of "613" but start at "5001"!

So, what are they? Well.....the numbers are engraved just as they should be, in the correct spot. There are at least four of them! But as to what they are.....I can't tell you!



The top two cameras are from the very unusual batch found to have SP type serial numbers! No one knows yet why or how this happened, but it should make you check out all the "common" S2s you see at shows or shops! (Photo courtesy Bill Kraus) To the right is yet another S2 from the first 100 numbers! This is a functional camera I saw while in Tokyo. The word "SAMPLE" is in red! Camera #6135019. (Photo K. Takashima)



The photo above is an EPOI promo shot that I acquired from Mr. Al Levin. It shows a chrome Nikon S2E with motor! No numbers can be seen but note the following points.....

- a) The pressure plate is the newer type found on the black dials*
- b) The camera is a black dial S2....note the shutter speed dial!*
- c) The motor has a chrome baseplate, a feature not seen in production models for at least 2 years!*
- d) The power plug is on the rear beveled corner instead of on the front like the production version.*

I have no other quality photos of an S2E save for some less than usable "grab shots" of the late Dr. Kuno's black S2E I was able to examine while in Tokyo in 1987. For some great shots of it see pages 43-46 & 148 as well as one of the color plates in his fine book.

THE NIKON S2E

Just what is the S2E? The 2 cameras that were at the Nikon booth at the IPEX show in March 1957 were chrome cameras. Were they black dials? We don't know for sure, but I'd bet they were. So how come the only S2E cameras that I have heard of to date have been black, not chrome? That is except for one, whose portrait is in this article.

In Tokyo in 1987 I was able to examine an authentic S2E belonging to the late Dr. Kuno. This same camera is pictured in his book. It is camera #6194013 in black with motor drive #94135. We know this was a set, since Dr. Kuno had the box for the motor with the matching serial numbers on the bottom! I have 3 other verified S2E bodies in my database and they are #s 6194007, 6194009 & 6194051, all black. Until we can discover more of these elusive cameras, we can only speculate about the numbers produced.

When I decided to do this article the first thing I did was make a list of the various types of S2s I was aware of. I knew the S2 was an interesting model and I wanted to show just that, but even I was a little surprised how much there is out there for the collector. I hope that I've been able to give many of you a better appreciation for the not so common Nikon S2!

And now for the parting shot....check out the Nikon S2 to the right. Does it look OK to you? Does it appear unusual in any way? It is not a Dummy and the serial number, 6173259, is nothing special. So what is so special about it? Here's a hint...it is known as the "ARCTIC S2" & has been internally modified for cold weather use. But there is something else about it that separates it from all those "common" S2s out there. Can you see it? (Photo K. Takashima)



14

THE

F

--SPOT!!

A NIKON F

“SPY CAMERA”!!

by **STEPHEN GANDY**

ALL PHOTOS COPYRIGHT 1999

BY **STEPHEN GANDY**

When my friend Axel Bieringer offered to sell a very unusual Nikon F, I knew it was rare and I would buy it, but I had no idea what it was. Well, I can't prove it, but I am now fairly certain it's a specially modified US Navy Spy Camera!

It was made by the famous Lockheed Skunk Works in California, the same guys who made the SR-71 Blackbird super spy plane. In the late 1960s' the Skunk Works received a US Navy contract to modify Nikon F bodies for special reconnaissance requiring accurate measurement of the subject. My source? A friend at Nikon.

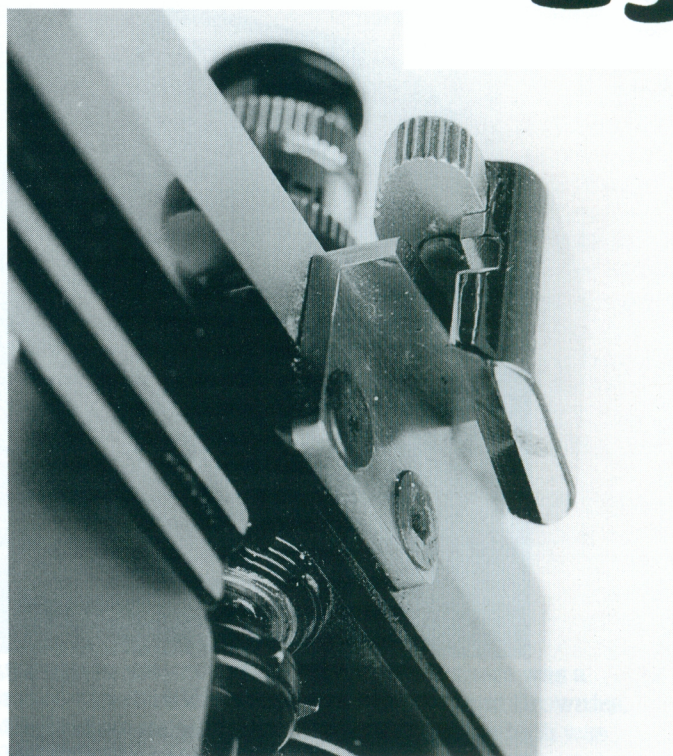
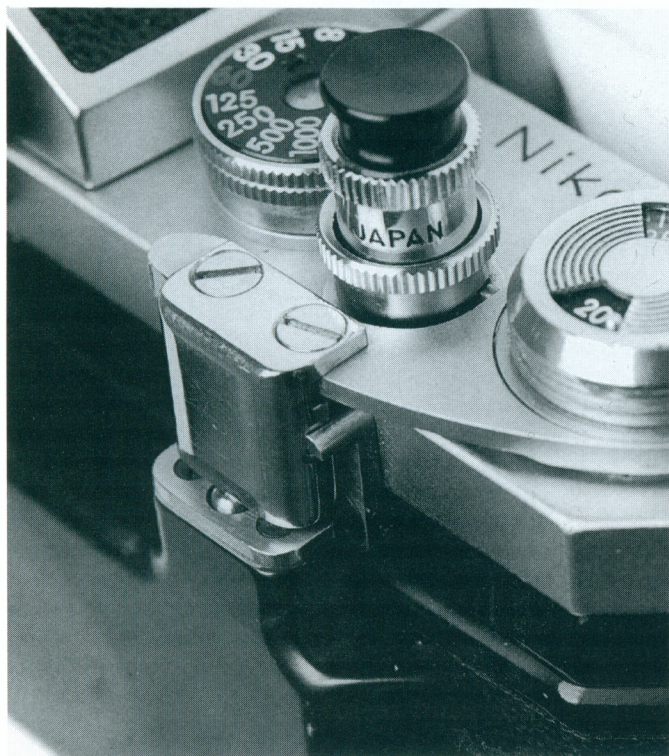
The bodies were modified to keep the film **ABSOLUTELY** flat with a special locking film pressure plate. The lenses were specially calibrated to determine the **EXACT** focal length. This combination, combined with the exact distance of the subject, allows precise measurements of the subject photographed. This is not a unique idea. Rollei fans may be

familiar with the specially modified Rollei 35 made for making exact measurements photographically, the Rollei "Metric."

What would the Navy photograph? Well, how about those Russian "fishing trawlers" off the US coast in the late 60s' that were loaded down with radar gear? With this camera, it was easy to determine the exact sizes of the radar antennas and so guess its capabilities.

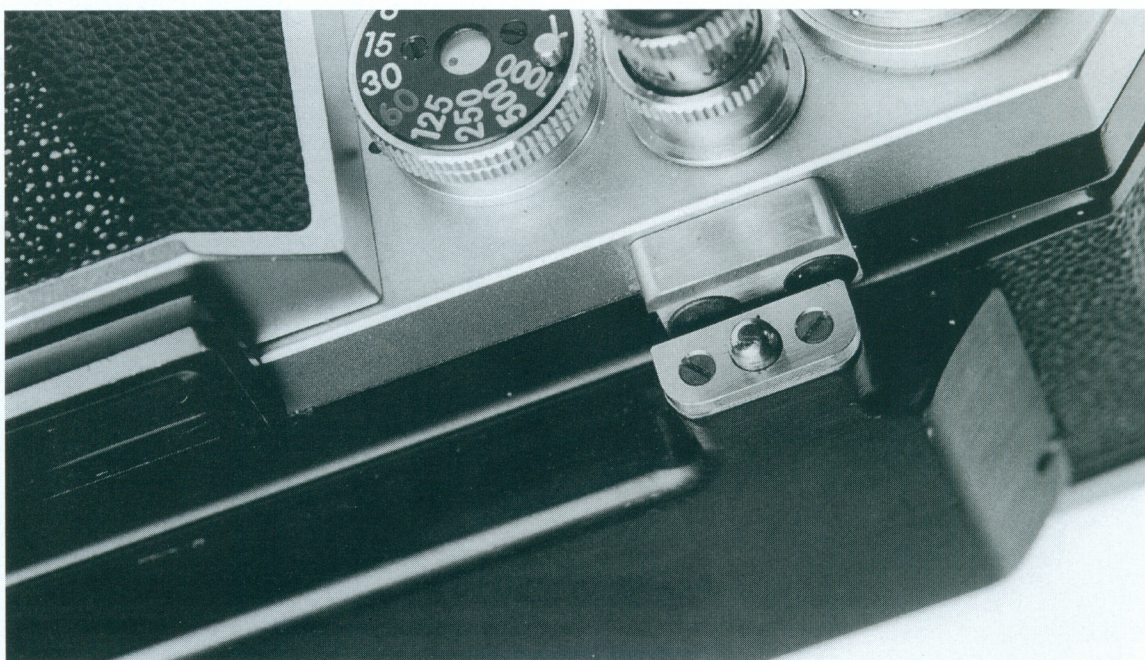
How did the Skunk Works do it? A special large pressure plate presses down and locks the film flat! The hump on the back of the camera hides the pressure plate. The plate presses the film flat when the advance lever is locked in place, and then ***pulls back when the film is advanced!*** Advancing the film unlocks the plate and allows the film to move through to the next exposure! The film gate rails were also modified, so the new pressure plate could push the film completely flat.

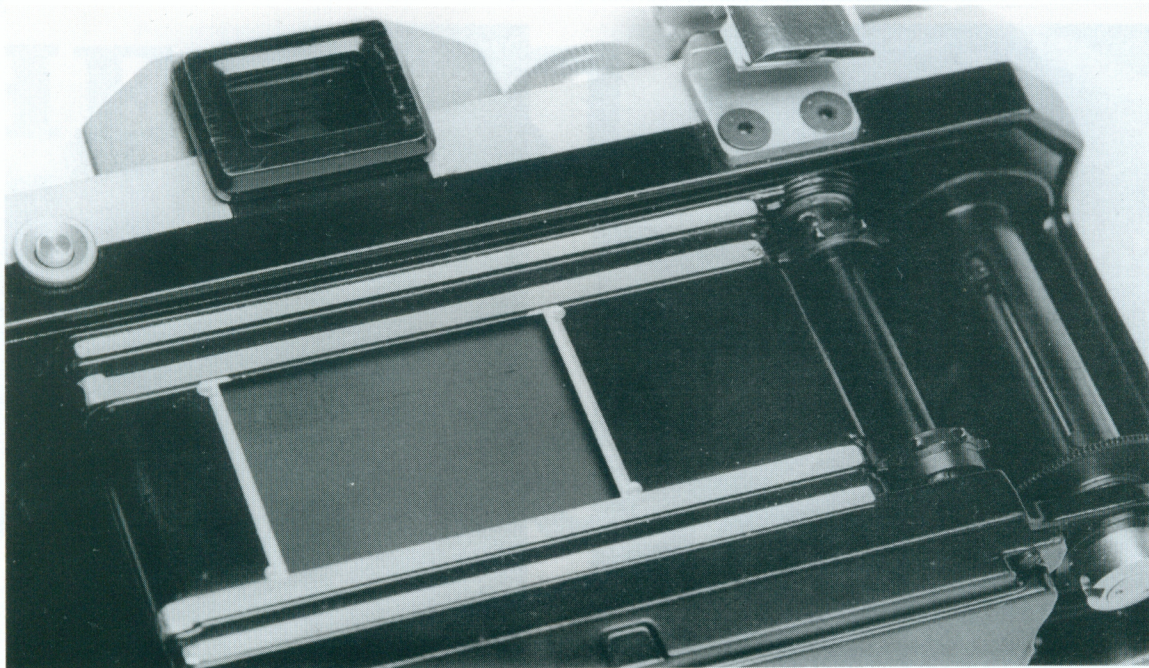




Some close up views of the special advance lever locking mechanism mentioned in the text. When the lever is in the locked, or parked position, the large bright metal rectangle extending down presses against the small "ball" near the top of the hump on the camera back. When this ball is depressed the pressure plate pushes against the film for maximum flatness. When advancing the film the ball rises releasing tension on the pressure plate allowing the film through. The "L" bracket mounted to the body mates with the lever, holding it firmly in place.

(This article (as well as the US Navy F3 and the 'trash can' Nikon M) is made available to **The Journal** by member Stephen Gandy, and is excerpted from his **CameraQuest**. This is probably the first time the Nikon F Spy Camera has been written about outside of classified military documents. You will certainly find it in no other Nikon collector's guide. Production is unknown, but it was probably very low, in the tens of cameras. It's official military designation is also unknown, but calling it a Spy Camera sounds a lot more interesting than a Trawler Camera! Revised 3/3/99. Copyright 1998 Stephen Gandy. All rights reserved.)





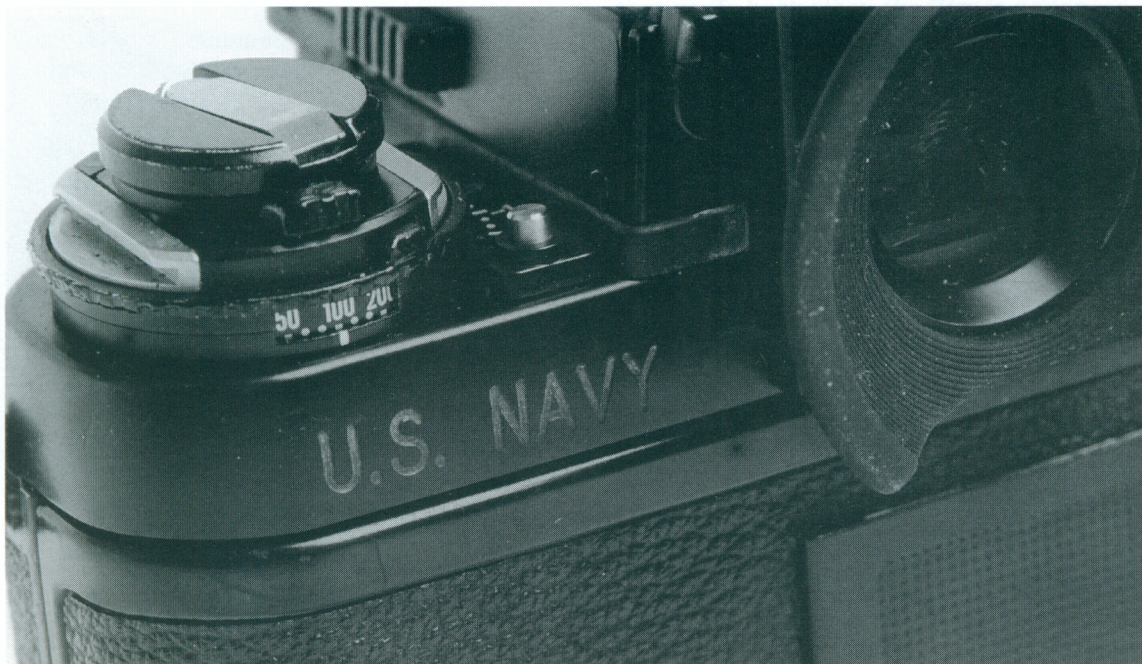
The familiar overly long guide rails we are so used to seeing on most Nikons has been supplemented by some additional machining on the two vertical edges of the focal plane opening. This and the added force from the special pressure plate insured perfectly flat film.

U.S. NAVY NIKON F3!

by **STEPHEN GANDY**

While the Nikon F KS-80a US Navy camera is well documented, this Nikon F3 US Navy is probably the first to be documented in Nikon collector's literature. A standard F3 HP, it has the **US NAVY** engraving on the back edge of the top plate near the rewind.

Exactly what this camera was used for, or how many were used in US Navy service is undocumented and needs further research. Even so, it's exciting to occasionally run across something that is "new" and unknown. It's a comforting thought that collectors are probably a long way from knowing ALL Nikon variations....it helps keep collecting a lot more interesting!





“TRASH CAN” NIKON M!!!!

by **STEPHEN GANDY**

Once upon a time, in a place far, far away, there was a man named Tim. Tim's wife collected Kodaks and Brownies. Tim added to her collection whenever he could, which was fairly often. Tim was a sanitation engineer, which means he drove a trash truck. One fine day Tim found a cheap looking plastic camera bag in a trash dumpster. Without bothering to open it, since he was on the job, he just threw it in the cab, to deliver to his wife that evening. That night, Tim and his wife were surprised to find a camera he had never seen before, a funny looking old Nikon!

Tim's find included:

- An unsynched Nikon M with collapsible 50/2 Nikkor complete with cap and original case.
- M Variframe viewfinder, with eyepiece and chain, and original case.
- 135/f4 Nikkor of the almost unknown “523” series, complete with caps, shade and case.
- Push-on Yellow filter with case.
- Inspection certificates for the camera and lens.
- Early instruction booklet.

Oh yes, all were in Mint- condition. Geez, I guess that is one way to collect Nikon. If it's not mint **throw it out!!**



LETTERS..LETTERS

From Alan Blake...

The quality of photographic reproduction in the Journal remains first class and it really needs to be so. As I think I wrote once before, soon after joining, the Journal is the nearest that many of us will ever come to seeing, let alone owning, most of the items illustrated. The quality of the type setting has steadily become more professional over the years and is greatly appreciated but text can be printed on any paper and, as the old saying goes, "a picture is worth a thousand words". Through your efforts and the pages of the Journal, it is indeed almost as if the whole membership can examine these Nikon goodies at first hand.

From Biagio Guerra...

Congratulations on the last Journal! The article about the Nikkor is really interesting. Do you really think that the combination of lens and camera may be a mismatch? It is also so strange that the lens happened to be mounted on a Nikon S MIOJ, another rarity!

My personal "modest" opinion on the lens is that "maybe" Nikon tried to market lenses for the Contax rangefinder camera because that lens has really all the cosmetics of the Zeiss Sonnars. There are so many German cosmetic factors in there! I may be wrong, but the lens profile seems very "Zeiss" to me! But it is definitely a big shock for the Nikon world of collectors.

NHS-CON7 UPDATE

The clock has started for the count down to the next NHS convention in Holland in 2000. We want to make you all feel welcome. Plans are being made for your enjoyment as you read this. The Dutch collectors club who manage the Houten show can't give us a firm date as yet, but it should be on the first Sunday in March, as it has always been. However, Murphy's Law states that if it can go wrong it will, but we should know for sure by the 3rd quarter of this year. So keep March of 2000 open! The Houten show has become one of the major European events; great organization in a fantastic location with large tables and plenty of space. The March 1999 show had over 4,500 people through the door, with a total of 340 2-meter tables sold out and well stocked with every conceivable photo related item one could think of. It looks like we will be holding NHS-CON7 in the Rotterdam Airport Hotel. We hope to have a large room at our disposal. As much as 300 square meters (for our friends in America and England who haven't joined the rest of the metric world that's about 2800 square feet). So now you have no reason for not coming because of a lack of space. As always we will have a small charge for members attending.

We intend to give a few major Nikon dealers the opportunity of sponsoring part of our convention. In return members would be actively encouraged to support those dealers who were generous and forthcoming with financial help.

We would like to see more members getting up to speak so why not give a talk on your favorite or most interesting item and there is no law stopping you working with a fellow member on a joint project. Some ideas on the table are..... Nikkormats; tick marked lenses; nikkor zoom lenses; the Nikkorex F; number crunching on the Nikon F; Nikon on the

Internet; enlarging lenses; Nikons used by pros; other makes with Nikkor lenses (Bronica, Marshal Press, Aires, Nicca, Tower, etc.); viewfinders for the RF series; motor drives for S & F series; Nikkor F number crunching; mis-engravings.

Plenty to think about. We plan to have a multi screen projection system for your enjoyment, so try to have some slides with your talk. We hope that Robert Rotoloni and Bill Kraus will speak as they always do. Tony Hurst is working on a large multi-screen slide show and I have a little something to share with you, but you will have to come to Holland to find out what it is!

We hope to have enough space to hold a photo exhibition, so this is your chance to show your stuff. The theme is.....the photo must show a Nikon camera or lens or try to work the word "Nikon" into it. So it could be a shot of your small child playing with your F5 in the sandbox or dropping your SP in the swimming pool....whatever you can come up with! Shots should be framed no larger than 30x30cm (12x16in). You have a year!

The Rotterdam Airport Hotel is a 4-star luxury hotel only about a 10 minute walk from my museum and home, so it seemed an ideal location. Bring the wife. The hotel is only 15 minutes by taxi from the center of town and about the same distance from the beautiful old town of Delft. But before letting your partner loose, make sure you hide the credit cards! A local bus service to and from the Rotterdam Central Station will connect you with the rest of Holland.

We need to have some sort of head count (bodies are allowed!) but it's most important that we know who will be coming so we can block book rooms. You will find in this issue a 'reply card'. Please fill it in as soon as possible!!

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NIKON SAGA #2!

French member Patrice-Herve Pont has just released the second and enlarged edition of his "**NIKON SAGA**". This new book has two additional chapters covering the Nikonos system and the newer digital Nikons. The rangefinders are well covered with each model illustrated and all points of identification listed along with dates and serial number ranges. Naturally the pros cameras (F through F5) are covered with emphasis on the groundbreaking Nikon F. But Patrice also covers every other reflex model made from the lowly Nikkor- rex series and the EM to the wonderful FM/FE and Nikkor- mat cameras. A great little book you must see!

Stephen Gandy's CameraQuest

Charter NHS Member. Internet Camera Dealer of Classic Collectible Cameras, especially collectible Nikon. Large Collectible Nikon informational section. Nikon and Leica Rangefinder Repairs.

Rare items available at press time include the last known production 1000/6.3 Nikkor, complete US Navy F KS-80A, Titanium FM-2 Year of the Dog, Nikon F3 Limited, 523 series 135/4 Nikon RF lens, 300/2 Nikkor, and the 20th production Leica M6.

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**JUST LOOK AT SOME OF THE RARE
JEWELS WE HAVE SOLD RECENTLY:**

Black point **M2/M3/M4**, grey enamel **M2**, olive green **M1** and **M3** bodies, **M3 Betriebsk #1004** with 'Summikron' (Lager vol.1 p.181), 2 very early production **M3** bodies (numbers under 700150), 3 **chrome MP** (inc. no.366, p70 'Leica in Colour' van Hasbroeck), **black MP** no.123 (as illustrated p.81 'Leica Collectors Guide', Dennis Laney), **M2M** and **M4M** (both with motors), **black M4** with 'Midland Canada' top plate, **M4-P** half frame, **M3** prototypes, dummies, **Betriebsk** and cutaways. 50 year anniversary **CL**, **M4** and **M5**. **Chrome MP2** with motor!

Leica 0 (null series) no.126, **Leica I Anastigmat** no.221 (illustrated p.126 'Leica Collection', Shinichi Nakamura), **dialset and rimset Compurs**. **Leica II 'Luxus'** (illustrated p.34 'Leica in Colour' van Hasbroeck). **Leica 72**, (Canadian, German and prototypes). 250 'Reporter' both **FF** and **GG**, **black IIIf** and **IIIg** (Swedish army), pre-production **Ig** and **IIIg** bodies (some illustrated in Lager vol.1), **33/3.5 Stemar** set, **35/3.5 Stereo Elmar** (only 32 ever made!) and **90mm f7 Stereo lens**. **Mooly** motors, chrome, grey and black!

Very many early **prototype Leicaflex** models, some with interchangeable prism, some with unusual motors and some finished in black paint. Also **Leicaflex mk.1** and **mk.2** bodies in black paint finish. Early **Leica** copies including several **Hansas**, **Canon J**, **Canon JS**, **Canon S**, **Leotax Specials** (various models, all with correct and original Letana Anastigmat lenses). **Nikon** rangefinder equipment including **Nikon 1**, **black Nikon S3**, **S3 Olympic**, **black SP** with motor and **black S3M** with motor. **35/3.5 Stereo Nikkor**. **Nikon F# 6400xxx**.

CLASSIFIED ADS

SELLING/TRADE LIST... My latest list is now nearly four pages long and includes many **Nikon RF and Reflex** items ranging from \$100 to \$10,000 as well as many other fine items from makers such as Canon, Pentax, Minolta, Leica, Zeiss, Rollei, Kodak, Mamiya, Konica & others. Those of you on my mailing list will receive all editions automatically!

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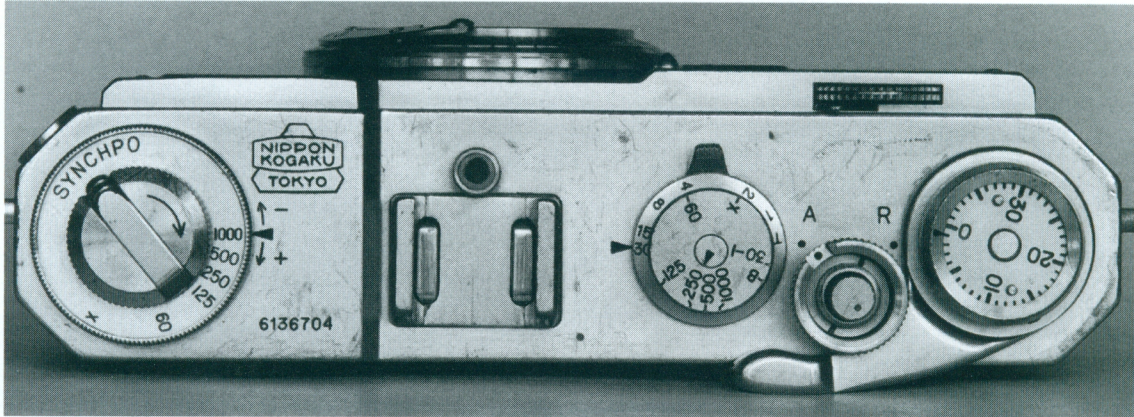
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odds 'n ends



AND FINALLY.....

JUST ANOTHER S2??

To put the final touch on what is basically an "S2" issue of the Journal, I have some photos just received from French member Gilbert Goulard. Although relatively early, this camera would easily qualify for..."just another S2"...if it were not for one thing. This is the only Nikon S2 so far recorded with a "SYNCHPO" dial! Does this mean it's rare?

(Photos Gilbert Goulard)





Created For The 'NHS' by TONY HURST