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JUNE 30, 2000

**NHS-68**



**NIKON JOURNAL**



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

**THIS ISSUE**  
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Page 8 ~ ANOTHER "HERMES LENS"  
PAGE 12 ~ THE 8MM/F8  
FISHEYE-NIKKOR





# THE NIKON JOURNAL

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## NHS-69 DEADLINE!!

The deadline for the next issue of our *NIKON JOURNAL*, NHS-69, is **September 1, 2000**. Please get all contributions to me by that date! **Thank you!**

## EDITORIAL

Here we are 6 months into the new millennium and it appears that all the doomsday rhetoric about computer bugs was just a lot of hot air. Things still go wrong with my computer and software, but to be honest it has always been my fault and still is. However, I'll keep struggling with the digital age in my own clumsy way and I hope you will all continue to be patient with me as you have been all these years. My printer keeps hinting that he is going to deep-six his old plate camera one of these days and I'll have to go completely high-tech. Well, maybe that's what I need, an ultimatum to get my butt in gear. I'll have to give it some serious thought! Many have written or emailed me to ask when am I going to start selling on Ebay and making my sell list available on the web. To tell you the truth, I need to find the time to do just that and to devote more time to the Nikon Journal as well. We shall see what the future brings.

This issue turned into more of a "rotoloni" item than I had planned on. I have said many times before that I do not wish to monopolize these pages, but sometimes it just happens based on what material I have and what pops up on the collector scene. The first article, on the Bronica-Nikkors, came about because of the availability of the adapter ring that was made in the early years to adapt RF mount Nikkors. I had been looking for one for 25 years and always wanted to do a story on it. Finally one recently turned up, thus the lead off article. Following that are two items that might appear a bit repetitive. One on the Hermes Lens and the other a follow up of sorts on the seldom seen Aluminum f1.4 Nikkor. However, both these articles came about due to the recent discovery of additional samples that either throw new light on the subject, or confuse things even more! But hey, isn't that what collecting is all about? Is there any moment when one can say they have written the "final word" on an item? I don't think so. If I did then I would be doing you a disservice. Collecting is, in a sense, a living and evolving thing. No one knows everything and no one can ever say that their words are the "final words" on any subject. As soon as you do something new comes along to put egg on your face. So we have two articles that add to what was said in previous writings. Not corrections, but additions. It keeps us all on top of things.

Gerald Davies gives us info on a land mark Nikkor, the 8mm/f8 Fisheye, one of the most famous Nikkors ever made! Now a true collectible, its images still fascinate nearly 40 years later, and it is really a remarkable achievement in optical design and construction, even to this day! Like that other well known maker of fine 35s, Nikon has also produced a few golden gems over the years and Tony Hurst gives us a quick look at the rather uncommon glitzy gold Nikon FM.

I continue to expand our e-mail list with the latest edition on page 18. Keep those addresses coming in. The list keeps growing!

Make sure you check out our website. Fred Krughoff continues to do a superb job and all I get are positive comments about our site. Visit it often and support it. You can't go wrong.

No news yet on NHS-Con8! The men in Tokyo would like to give it a go again unless we do one stateside. As soon as I know, you will know!



ANOTHER LOOK AT THE...

# BRONICA NIKKORS

BY ROBERT J. ROTOLONI

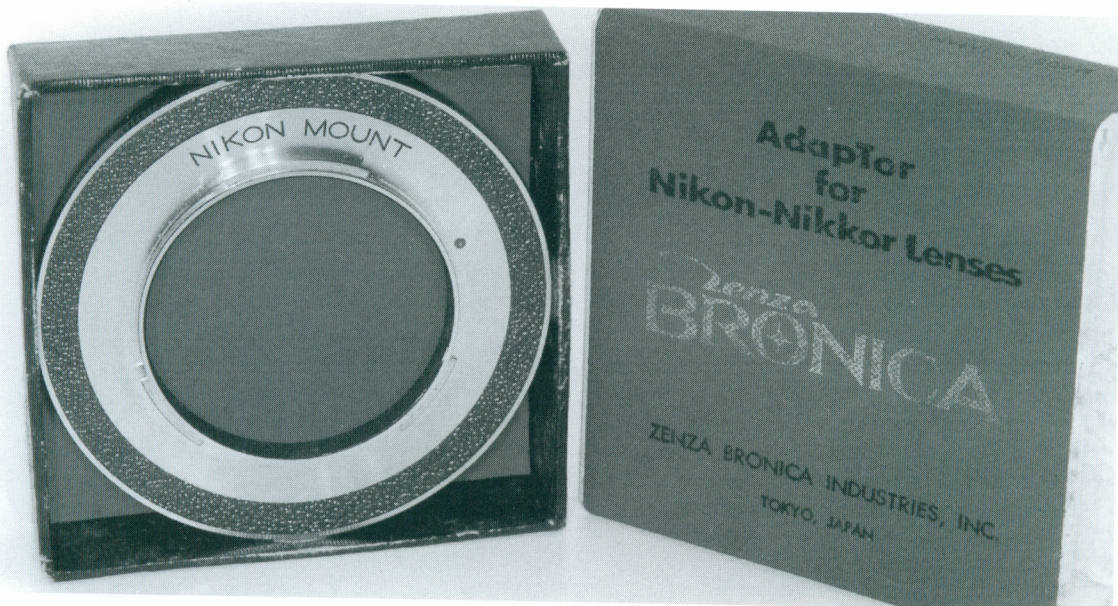
Way back in NHS-16 (June 1987), I wrote an article about the "Bronica Nikkors", wherein I covered the unusual 180 and 250mm Nikkors that were produced in a direct Bronica mount and usable only on the S2 and later models (the front focusing Bronicas), and could not be mounted on any Nikon camera. I am not going to simply repeat that article but add to it with knowledge acquired over the ensuing 13 years.

This time around I want to cover not only the direct mount lenses, but also the adapter that was made by Bronica to allow the short mount Nikkors meant for the Nikon Reflex Housing to be mounted on the earlier Bronica Z (Deluxe) and S side focusing models (it is adapter #81503 which I did not own in 1987 and could not illustrate). Also, unlike the first article, I illustrate both types of lenses mounted to Bronica bodies, something else I didn't have available back then.

The relationship between Nikon and Bronica goes back to 1957 with the original model "Z" and was maintained all the way through the "ECTL" model, after which Bronica switched from focal plane to leaf shutter technology. It was a long and interesting period and Nikon produced a large number of lenses for the Bronica system. Besides these modified direct mount Nikkors and the adapter shown here, Nikon also made the focusing mount for the interchangeable series of lens heads (400, 600, 800 and 1200mm) in Bronica mount, as well as a whole series of Nikkors specific to the Bronica from 40mm to 300mm! Needless to say, a significant number of Nikkors were made for and used with Bronica cameras for many years, producing fine professional quality images used in advertising and fashion photography.

Chronologically, the Nikon short mount lenses used with the #81503 adapter would have been the first Nikkors used on the Bronicas besides those lenses made specifically for the big camera. This adapter mounted directly to the Bronica Z and S models via its outer bayonet mount. These early Bronicas focused by means of the side mounted advance knob, which did double duty. You advanced and focused with the same control, a very convenient method. Once mounted, the adapter immobilizes the camera's focusing mechanism since the Nikkors had their own focusing helix. Now the knob would only advance film. The adapter could take "any" external bayonet RF Nikkor and not just the short mount lenses! However, only the 180, 250, 350 & 500mm Nikkors would focus to infinity. Shorter lenses such as the 85, 105 and 135 Nikkors would mount but could only be used for close-up work (as could the wide angles! Mount a 28 or 35mm and you get "real close", for some awesome images!). The adapter is quite difficult to find today and probably was not made in large numbers. Buy an inexpensive Bronica Z or S body and you can enter telephoto medium format photography at a reasonable price, which was its purpose 40 years ago! With this adapter you could use one series of lenses on two completely different systems for some great photos.

With the advent of the S2 model, Bronica abandoned the dual purpose wind/focusing knob, for what I feel is a more awkward front focusing helix. Holding a Bronica and focusing from the front just isn't as smooth as off the side, but who am I to say? Besides, Bronica had trouble with the original design. It seems it was too complicated and didn't hold up well so they switched. Thus the #81503 adapter was no longer useable! This left only those Nikkors designed for the S2 but it was a limited line. What next?







*On page one is a photo of the Bronica-made adapter #81503 that allowed the short-mount RF-Nikkors, originally designed for the Nikon Reflex Housing, to be used on the early side focusing Zenza Bronica Deluxe, Z and S models. This would include the 180/2.5, 250/4.0, 350/4.5, 500/5.0 & 1000/6.3 lenses! What a line-up of telephotos for medium format in the late 50s' and early 60s'!*

*On this page upper left: Bronica S model with lens removed. The rapid wind knob assembly doubled as the focusing mechanism on these early Bronicas. Note the large bright chrome outer bayonet ring. Left: With focusing racked all the way out. The inner sleeve with its own bayonet that mates with the Nikkors made specifically for the Bronica can be seen. This smooth in-and-out focusing was a very good idea! And it was quick! Bottom left: The adapter #81503 mounted. The larger outer bayonet mates with the adapter and this locks the inner sleeve completely, so no focusing can be done from the camera wind knob! The bayonet you now see is the Nikon RF mount exactly as it would be on the Nikon Reflex Housing, etc! Top right: 250/4.0 Short Mount Nikkor ready to be mounted. Bottom right: The short mount Nikkor now firmly mounted to the medium format Bronica. You would now use the lens' own focusing and the camera's knob just for winding.*

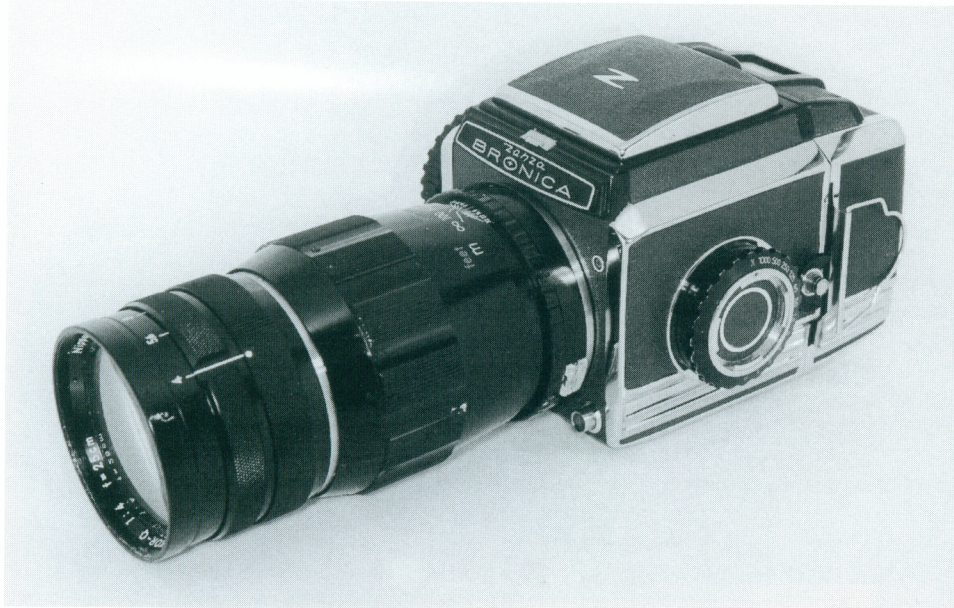






*Top, left to right: RF Nikkor 250/4.0 with and without the adapter mounted. You could do it either way; mount the lens and adapter together, or the adapter to the body and then the lens to the adapter. If you had multiple lenses leaving the adapter on the body allowed for rapid changing of optics for fast shooting. Remember, you could do this all the way up to 1000mm!!*

*Bottom right: Yet another Nikkor 250/4.0, but now with a slightly different profile. That's because this Nikkor is in a direct Bronica mount! The #81503 adapter is not needed and, in fact, cannot be used. Bottom left: This second type lens mounted to a later model Bronica, the S2A. This lens mounts directly to the camera with no adapter of any kind. However, it cannot be used on any Nikon camera!*





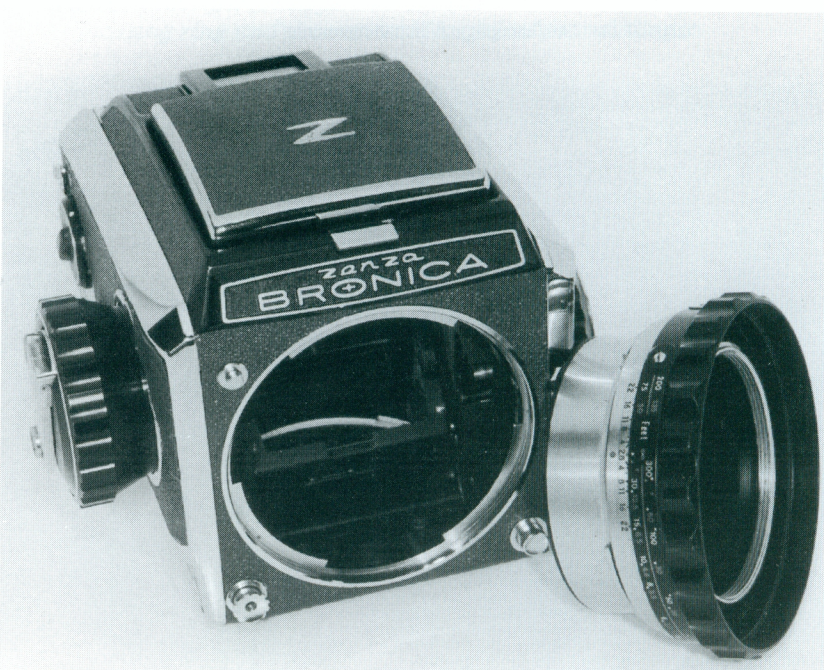
It was at this time that Nikon did two things to help make the Bronica a more complete system. They made the mount for the interchangeable head Nikkors in Bronica bayonet and began to produce the short mount RF Nikkors in a direct Bronica mount! This gave Bronica the most complete telephoto system of any medium format camera in the world, with more focal lengths and larger apertures! A truly awesome system that was never really appreciated by the public and overshadowed by the Hasselblad. But looking back you could do a lot with the Bronica and its Nikkor lenses.

The direct mount lenses do not seem to have been made in very large numbers. Let me phrase that differently. The direct mount Nikkors are damned rare! How rare? Well, to date I have recorded six 180s', five 250s', two 350s' and two 500s'! I'd call that rare! I've seen more short mount Nikkors in screw mount than Bronica mount! This is a bit surprising since the popularity of the Bronica system was growing in the early 60s' when these lenses were made. What could account for their lack of numbers is weight and price! The RF short mount lenses were never cheap, especially the 180 and 500mm optics, both of which sold for over \$500 back then. Besides, Nikon developed the 200/f4 Auto lens for the Bronica so who needed a preset 250? Whatever the reasons, the direct mount RF Nikkors never caught on and today are very collectible. Since I do not possess either a 350 or 500, only the 180 and 250 are illustrated here. Both lenses are very well balanced on the large and heavy Bronica body, more so than when used on the Nikon Reflex Housing! Both are quite easy to use and the 180 throws a beautiful bright image on the Bronica screen.

*Bottom left: A closer look at the direct mount. This mount can only be used on the later front-focusing Bronicas. Top right: The later Bronicas had a removable focusing helix that was mounted between the body and its series of lenses which did not have their own focusing rings. Bottom right: The helix could be removed leaving behind a large flush bayonet mount. Compare this with the camera on page two. This large bayonet is the one the Bronica-RF-Nikkors mated to. The helix would have to be set aside for safe keeping.*



Because of the large Bronica bayonet, the physical shape of the Nikkors is slightly altered as Nikon also chose to modify the focusing rings a bit. However, the direct mount Bronica-Nikkors are immediately recognizable as members of the Nikon family. I have attempted to illustrate these lenses as well as the adapter ring in such a way that more words are really not necessary. Just keep in mind that the adapter ring is difficult to find today to say nothing of the direct mount Bronica-Nikkors. Even working Bronica Z and S bodies to use the adapter with are becoming scarce as they are now over 40 years old. Nearly every item shown in this article is becoming harder and harder to find in today's collector market and all are well worth keeping an eye out for. If nothing else you will discover that Nikkor lenses can produce some quality work in the medium format field.







Two of the direct mount Bronica-RF-Nikkors are seen here, the 180/2.5 and the 250/4.0. Top right: Both lenses shown with their Bronica made rear caps, the only kind that will fit these lenses. Bottom right: The massive 180 on a Bronica S2A where it actually seems more at home. Because the Bronica bodies are much larger and heavier, these big Nikkors actually feel more balanced than when used with an SP and the Reflex Housing! They sure look like they go together! Note the shade..it's marked for the 180 but is much shorter than those for the Nikons! Left top & bottom: Two views of the 180. The Bronica bayonet can be unscrewed leaving behind a very large thread usable on nothing. The rear mounts of these lenses were modified just for this purpose and cannot be retrofitted to the Nikon RF type. Note the tripod socket.





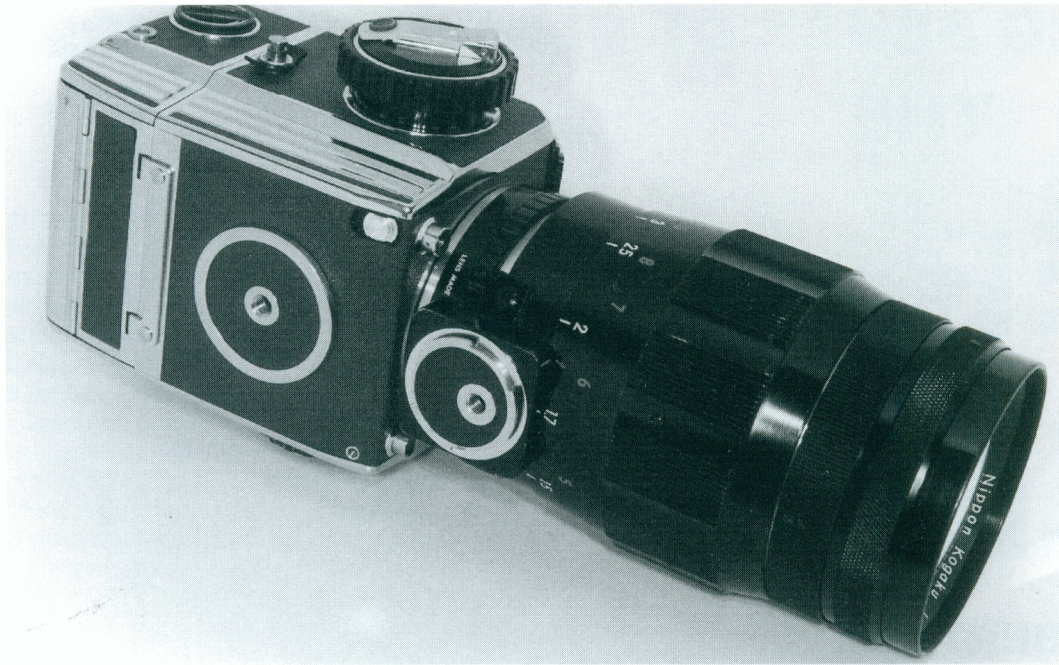


*It appears that the direct mount Bronica-RF-Nikkors did not enjoy a long and productive life. Very few have turned up and there could be more than one reason. The #81503 adapter was needed on all Bronicas made from 1958 to 1965. These were the Deluxe (D) or Z, and the S. The first front-focusing model was the C in 1965. Only with the release of the C and the S2, also in 1965, would there be a need for the direct mount lenses! By 1965 few of the Nikkors were being made since the RF system was nearly completely eclipsed by the Nikon F! So how long were they made? Nikon made the interchangeable head tele series (400,600,800,1200) available for Bronica by 1966 or so, and also started to release Nikkors designed specifically*

*for the new Bronicas, such as the 200/4.0 in the two bottom photos on this page. Not only is the new 200 smaller and lighter, but it had auto diaphragm as well! So did the interchangeable head system except for the 1200mm)! So who needed the big and heavy and expensive 180/2.5, 250/4.0, 350/4.5, 500/5.0 and 1000/6.3 Nikkors? It would seem that very few did! So how long were they made? Maybe just a few months. How many? Maybe 50 or each or maybe only 10! Who can tell? Maybe Nikon just used up some left over RF lenses & Bronica bought them just to flesh out the lens line till more modern optics were available. Whatever the reason, the direct mount Bronica-RF-Nikkors can truly be classified as rare.*



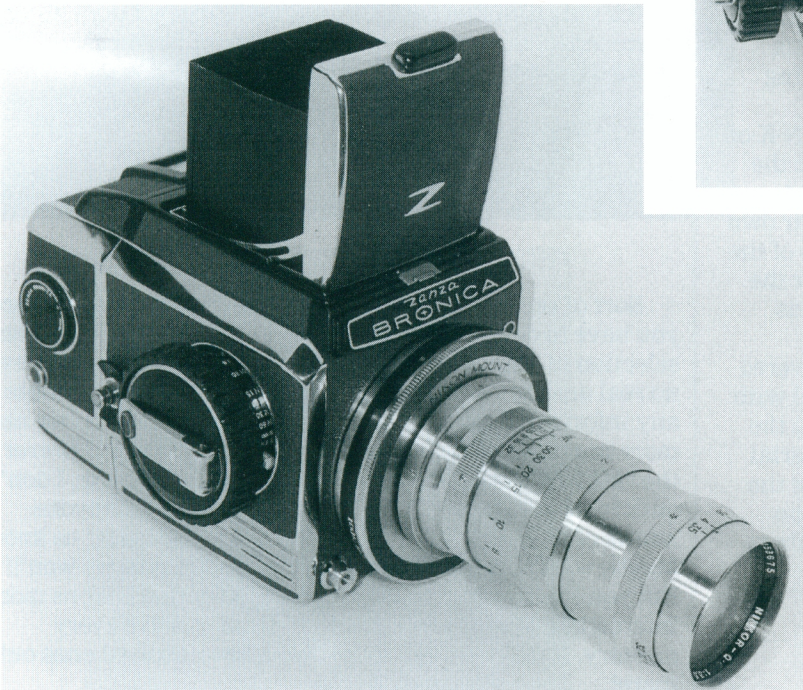




*Some parting shots. Top: The 180/2.5 Nikkor in my collection sports an interesting tripod socket. It appears identical to that on the Bronica body and even the leatherette matches! It also has a bayonet quick-release mechanism often seen on medium format cameras. Did Nikon do this or did Bronica modify the lens once they received it?*

*Right and bottom: As mentioned in the text, the #81503 adapter has the external bayonet of the RF cameras so lenses other than the short mounts can be fitted. Of course they will not focus to infinity, but can make some really interesting close-up shots. Here you see a 135/3.5 Nikkor being used. It seems to focus at about 15 inches. Can you imagine an 85 or a 35 or a 28, and how about the external f1.1?? Now that would have been a hell of a shot!*

*(All photos by RJR)*



**NHS**  
**NIPPON**  
**KOGAKU**  
**TOKYO**



# MAKING SENSE OF SERIAL NUMBERS

## THE

# HERMES LENS

by **ROBERT J. ROTOLONI**

We have previously covered the "HERMES" enlarging lens in these pages (see NHS-56, June 1997, Page 1), but another example of this very rare item has recently been discovered and, instead of solidifying our knowledge by fitting nicely into the scheme of things, this specimen, as is often the case with the study of Nippon Kogaku, throws us another curve ball! I guess this is the reason I can't get my fill of studying the history of this formidable company, for no matter how sure I am of something there is always a little surprise around the corner! However, this time around it is more of a twist than usual. First let me sum up what we know about the "HERMES" to this point.

This lens is one of the very first "commercial" items produced by Nippon Kogaku and dates to about 1936. It is part of a group of products that marked Nippon Kogaku's initial entry into the photographic market in conjunction with the release of the famous "Hansa Canon". We all know that Nippon Kogaku manufactured, and probably installed, all of the optical parts needed to produce the Hansa. This included the optical rangefinder and the coupled focusing mount that successfully bypassed the patented Leica method, thus allowing the Hansa to reach the market. N-K of course also made all of the lenses that were mounted to the Hansa as well as succeeding Canon models up to at least 1946-47, after which Canon decided to manufacture their own optics. Besides providing these very important aspects of the camera itself, Nippon Kogaku also supplied the lens for the "Hansa Canon Enlarger". That is the "HERMES" lens pictured here and in NHS-56.

I am not going to go over what has already been covered in the previous issue, for this article is more concerned with this newly found lens and how it fits, or doesn't fit, into the picture we have of the Hermes. In NHS-56 I listed the serial numbers of the Hermes lenses that were known to us at the time, which is actually still accurate save this lens, as no others have been reported to me since 1997! Those numbers are.....

597.....Peter Lownds  
5555.....Camera Collector's News 12/1992  
55447.....in Japan  
55498.....Ueyama "Canon" book

Peter's lens remains a mystery as it just does not fit in! The Hermes is a 5.5cm f/3.5 optic and the first two digits "55" obviously follow Nippon Kogaku's then numbering practice of incorporating the focal length and/or aperture into the serial number. Thus they may have started at "551" or possibly "5535". This would, for example, make lens "5555" either the 54th or 19th lens made and "55498" the 497th or 462nd one produced. OK, so where does lens "597" fit in? In NHS-56 Peter speculated that his lens is an error and that it should have been "55597", although it is hard to believe they would leave 2 digits off in error. It is more likely that 1 digit was missed and the number was to have been "5597". This is assuming an error was made! It may not have been and "597" is the correct number and may represent a second batch or run of lenses. But you know, how many of these early lenses could have been made? How many enlargers would have been sold in pre-war Japan at a time when even the Hansa Canon sold in very small numbers because it was priced beyond the means of the vast majority of Japanese? Could 400-500 have been made? I doubt it. Would even more than one serial number batch have been necessary? Again, it sounds unlikely. That is it once sounded unlikely to me. But now we have a 5th lens to add to our list and its serial number is....."915".....?? Am I confused?

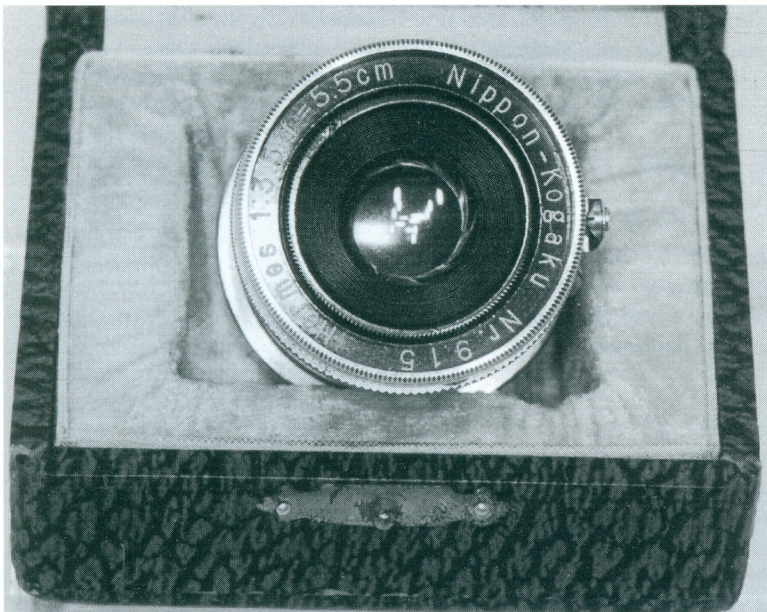
**You bet I am!**

So now we really have a mess and I have no answers at this time. But there are some theories (there are always theories!). Number 1: it is yet a 3rd batch of lenses beginning at "900" or "901" making this the 14th or 15th made. Number 2: the first 2 digits were again "forgotten" and its real number is "55915" making it the highest one seen to date. Number 3: an error occurred but not one of forgotten digits but this time "reversed" digits and its real number is "519" which puts it in line with Peter's "597". Whew!! Does all this make sense? So our "massive" database of Hermes numbers could be any one of the following;

519	5555	5555	5555
597	55447	55447	55447
5555	55498	55498	55498
55447	55597	597	55519
55498	55915	915	55597

Sort of reminds one of those "brain teaser" games where you have to determine a pattern from an apparently random selection of numbers or letters. Anyway, at this point I have no real answers and I invite the membership to contribute any information they might have. It is apparent that we need more numbers to make sense of what is going on. However, the "HERMES" lens is such a rare item at this time, I don't anticipate a deluge of numbers to come in, but if anyone knows of any other examples of this item, please let us know. Maybe we will someday figure it out, and maybe we won't! But you know, things like this make collecting Nikons more interesting. Maybe we really don't want to solve every mystery. It may do us good to have a few unsolved ones out there!

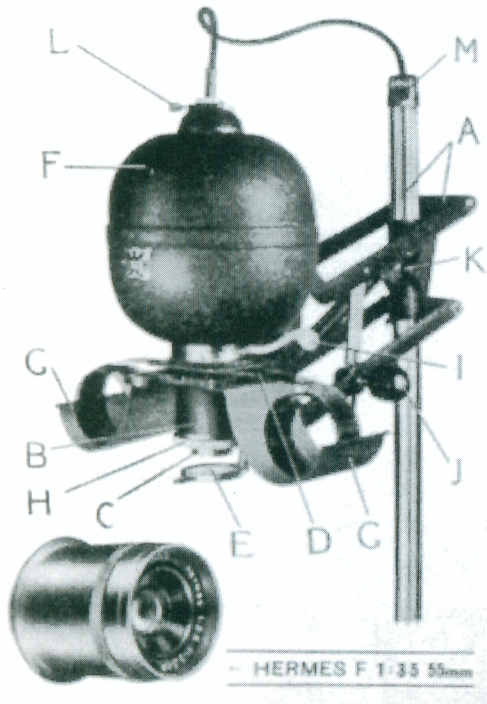




*The "Hermes Lens" and its original box. Please look closely at the top photo. I have tried to shoot it so the faint impressions can be read. First is the word Nikkor in lower case, then HERMES LENS in upper case, then the Seiki (Canon) eagle, then SEIKIKOGAKU, K.K., with no spacing. Inside the lid can be seen NIPPON KOGAKU. An obvious cooperative venture between Nikon & Canon like the Hansa camera was! Left is newly found lens #915 and at the bottom, Peter Lownds' #597. These 2 numbers, at this time, do not quite fit with other known samples!*



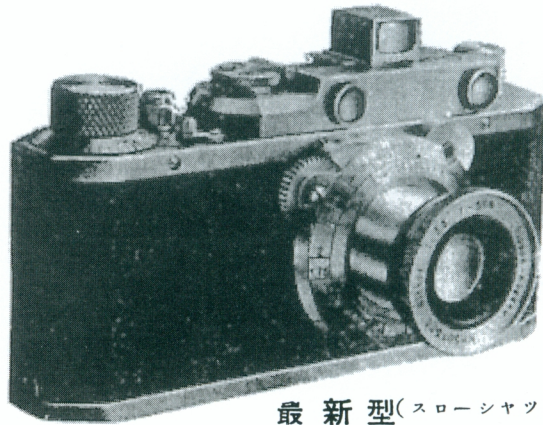




Here are two "vintage" Japanese ads for the Canon camera, the Seiki enlarger and its "HERMESLENS". Note that the Canons can only be had with various Nikkor normals! The Hermes is a rather simple lens as can be seen in the bottom photo. The lens is probably very similar to the 50/f3.5 Nikkor used on the Hansa Canon and also after the war on other Canons, Niccas and their own Nikon One. Note the very high polish finish on this lens. Also the very "primitive" click-stop mechanism consisting of an externally mounted metal tab making contact with engraved index lines.



## 新標準型 Canon



最新型(スローシャッター付)

Nikkor	1:2.....	¥ 550
"	1:2.8.....	¥ 480
"	1:3.5.....	¥ 395

新標準型

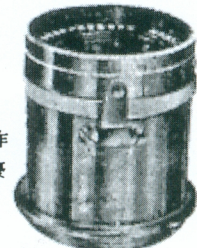
Nikkor	1:3.5.....	¥ 380
"	1:4.5.....	¥ 330

セイキ高級引伸機用

### HERMESLENS

レンズ HERMES F=5.5cm 1:3.5

日本光学工業株式会社に於て 35mm 判引伸機用に設計製作された四枚組合せテッサー型の最高性能を有する最高級優秀レンズにして絞りは暗中使用の便に改良してあります。



HERMES LENS F=5.5cm  
1:3.5

ヘルメス鏡玉はそのままライカ引伸機にし使用出来ます

—カタログ御請求下さい—

東京・目黒 精機光学工業株式会社 中根可貞





Since we are on the subject of numbers and how sometimes they can be a bit confusing, I remind you of the small article in NHS-66 on the "Aluminum 1.4" Nikkor. I talked about a recently discovered lens that should have been an Aluminum based on its serial number, but, surprisingly turned out to be a standard chrome lens. It also had the colon (":") following the number which denotes a duplicate serial number! This new lens was the third such marked standard chrome lens within the Aluminum batch so far found. As I said in that article, keep your eyes open whenever you see an F1.4 Nikkor in the "358" batch for you never know what you might find. Well...another "misfit" has shown up to add to our gallery and this one is also consecutive to yet another known lens (and to make things worse, my lens!)

The latest is lens #358255 which is a standard chrome lens but possesses the colon (":") following the number. I have re-run the 3 photos from NHS-66 along with the newest addition to pull everything together. You will remember that lens #358256, a true "Aluminum", was shown and now we have #358255; but a standard chrome lens! Out of a total of 30 numbers within the "Aluminum" batch so far reported to me, this makes the 6th such lens with a colon (":") and the 6th non-aluminum barrel within this small sample! I am beginning to wonder if the entire experimental batch of "Aluminum" Nikkors was given already used serial numbers and if it was intentional or an accident. As with the "Hermes", we need more numbers to clarify the picture, so please give me any feedback you can. If you own or have seen any lenses within the "358" batch, please let me know what its characteristics are and maybe we will be able to make some sense out of this little mystery. Thank you. RJR.

## MAKING SENSE OF SERIAL NUMBERS! THE "ALUMINUM" 50/F1.4 AGAIN!!

by **ROBERT J. ROTOLONI**

Recorded numbers for the "Aluminum" F1.4 Nikkors and the intermixed oddball types are as follows....

358055 FIRST VERIFIED ALUMINUM LENS!!  
358082: ALUMINUM & A DUPLICATE NUMBER!!  
358086  
358092  
358093  
358103  
358109  
358125: CHROME & A DUPLICATE NUMBER!!  
358129  
358148 CHROME BARREL!!  
358158  
358162  
358163  
358181  
358192  
358199  
358229  
358230  
358231  
358232  
358255: CHROME & A DUPLICATE NUMBER!!  
358256  
358261: CHROME & A DUPLICATE NUMBER!!  
358262  
358267 CHROME BARREL!!  
358294: CHROME & A DUPLICATE NUMBER!!  
358304: ALUMINUM & A DUPLICATE NUMBER!!  
358311  
358338  
358341 LAST VERIFIED ALUMINUM LENS!!  
(Lens #358148 also exists as an "all black" lens and neither have the colon (":")! A rare case where 2 lenses have actually been found with the same number! Makes things even more interesting!)

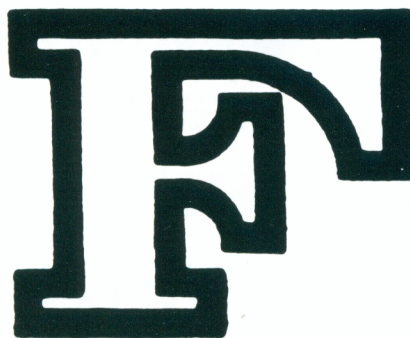


*So now we have 2 sets of consecutively numbered lenses with one half Aluminum and the other chrome, and both chrome lenses possessing the colon (":") denoting a duplicate serial number! What we need at this point are more numbers to make the picture a little clearer. Just how many duplicate numbers are there within this small group of lenses? Surely this small batch of 50/F1.4 Nikkors must rank as one of the most interesting so far discovered.*



# 12

# THE



# --SPOT!!

## THE 8MM/F8

# FISHEYE-NIKKOR

by **GERALD DAVIES**

The original Nikon fish-eye was introduced for the medium format Nikon "sky or cloud" camera, the lens being a 16mm/f8.0 optic. It was designed as a special order item, for scientific agency work, its use being for meteorological and astronomical surveys.

In the 1960s' Mr. K. Miyamoto of Nikon designed the first fish-eye lens for the 35mm format, the 8mm/f8.0 optic. It was introduced by Nikon as a special purpose lens.

Constructed of nine elements in five groups, it had a picture angle of 180 degrees with hemispherical coverage seeing everything in front, above and to the side. The image on the negative being recorded as a 24mm circular composition, with focus sharp to the edge, the lens was also color corrected. It was also provided with a fish-eye finder with an angle of view of 160 degrees.

Because of its large 69mm diameter front lens, Nikon had to resolve how to provide filters, as well as operate the diaphragm. This was operated by a lever, with click-stops for f8, f11, f16 and f22. The six filters were built into the body on a rotating turret, the colors being; orange (O57), medium yellow (Y48), dark yellow (Y51), skylight (L1A), yellowish green (XO), and finally red (R60). And to add to all of this, the color of each filter is painted onto the turret.

The lens did not come by itself. A very large screw-in front cap, a rear plastic cap (3F), and a fish-eye finder, which is also provided with a rather diminutive lens cap that, when not in use, sits on top of the rear lens cap to minimize its loss. All of this then goes into a brown leather case.

Originally intended for meteorology and astronomy, the lens also had uses in industry; interiors of boilers, oil lines, cylinder bores, and other constricted places. Special use was made in photojournalism and advertising, where attention getting pictures with special impact were required. Here the spectacular pictorial effect of the Nikon Fish-eye lens came into its own.

The 8mm/f8 Fish-eye lens can only be used on Nikon cameras with mirror lock-up facility. This includes the Nikon F range (F, F2, F3 etc.), as well as other Nikon and Nikkormat models.

The most suitable of the Nikon cameras is either the F or F2. If fitted with Photomic finders these must be removed and replaced with standard prism finders, as the Fish-eye cannot clear the overhanging front plates of the metered prisms. Metering would now of course be off-camera.

To mount first ensure that the mirror is locked up, attach the lens and lock into place in the usual Nikon manner. The rear of the lens protrudes quite deeply into the body and does come very close to the camera's shutter curtain. Composing is done through the fish-eye finder which fits into the camera's accessory shoe atop the rewind crank.

The 8mm/f8 Fish-eye can also be fitted to the F3 with the advantage that the prism need not be changed. Once the mirror is locked up the AI meter coupling lever is raised out of its working position, allowing the lens to be mounted. Once again no meter is available, despite what the camera's meter tells you. To mount the accessory finder the flash coupler AS-2 or AS-4 must be used.

The Fish-eye Nikkor can be used on other Nikon cameras as long as they possess a mirror lock-up and one can move the AI meter coupling lever out of the way. Also needed is an accessory shoe to fit the AS-2 coupler. Unfortunately, the lens will not fit the Nikkormat cameras as the meter coupling pin prevents the lens from mounting. However, it will fit the last of the Nikkormats, the FT3, as well as the meterless model FS.

With the lens giving an angle of 180 degrees and the finder only 160, there arises the problem of angle of view. It is so great that something or someone unwanted will often appear in the photograph. So watch for your tripod, your feet and fingers, or they will appear in the final photo!

Finally, flare is a problem. There is no lens hood, so care should be taken when using this lens. One way around the problem is to create a shield that can be held by some suitable wire, so that it can be extended to wherever the direct rays of the sun strike the lens.





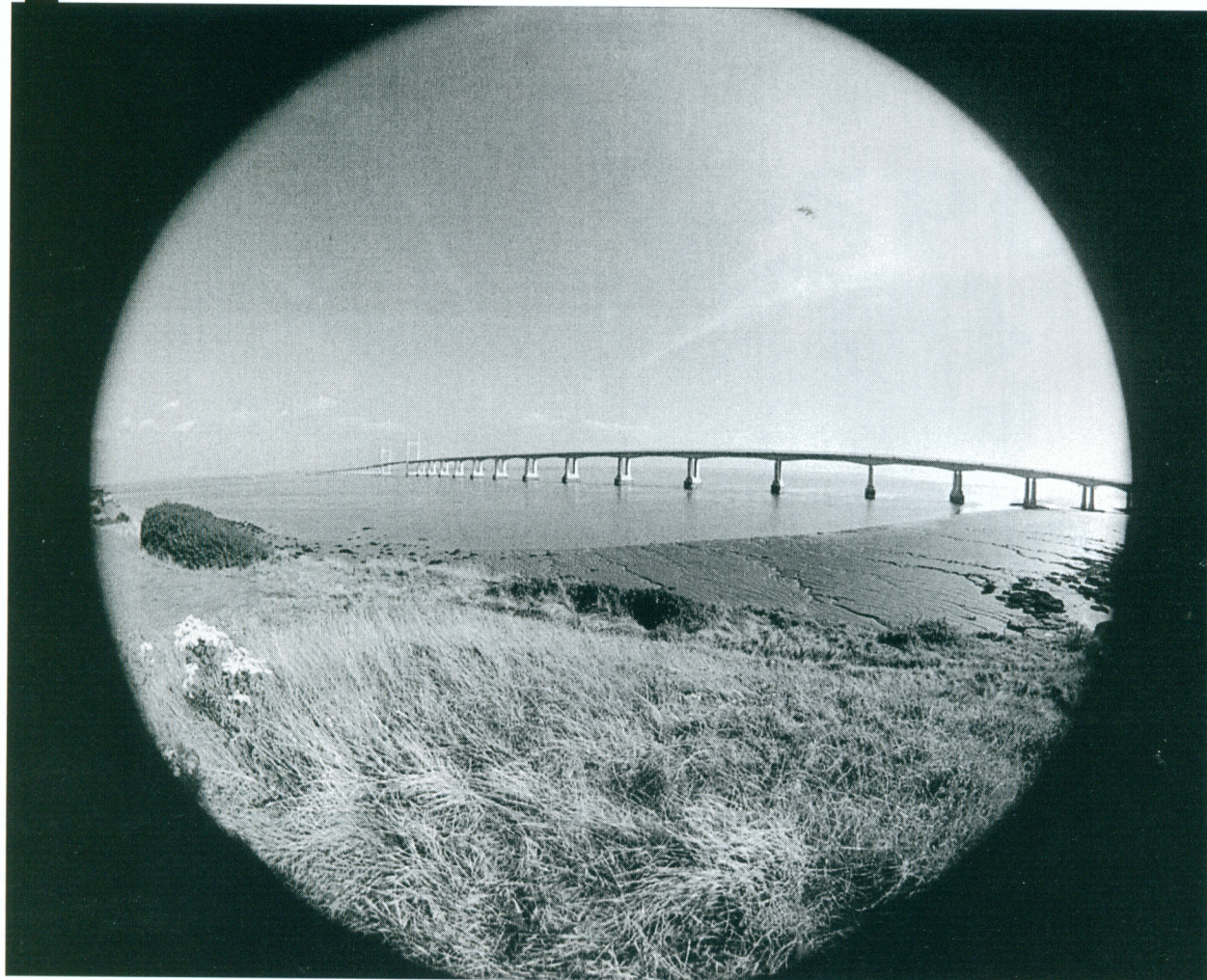
*Bottom photo: A complete 8mm/f8.0 Fisheye-Nikkor outfit save for the leather case. When you purchased your new exotic lens you received the unique front and rear caps as well as the equally unique Fisheye-Finder and its own front cap! (That finder front cap was a nice touch!) The rear cap was designed with a built-in set of rails duplicating those under the F's rewind lever to hold the finder. A well thought out setup.*

*Top photo: The shooting outfit. The finder mounted under the camera's rewind lever. The mirror is locked up and the lens mounted and you are ready to go. Everything from about 8in to infinity is in focus and the finder was really used just for centering the image. The standard F prism works best since the Photomics overhang too far and interfere with the lens. Besides, you don't need a meter nor the added weight, so the prism is best.*

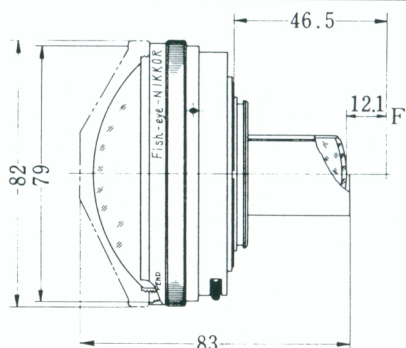
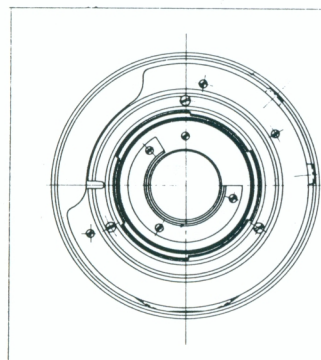
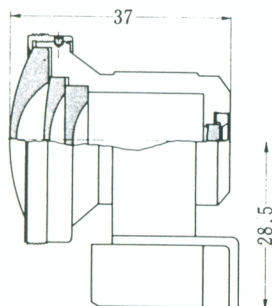
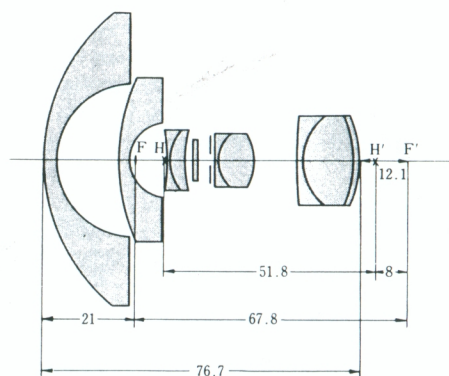
*(All photos by Gerald Davies)*



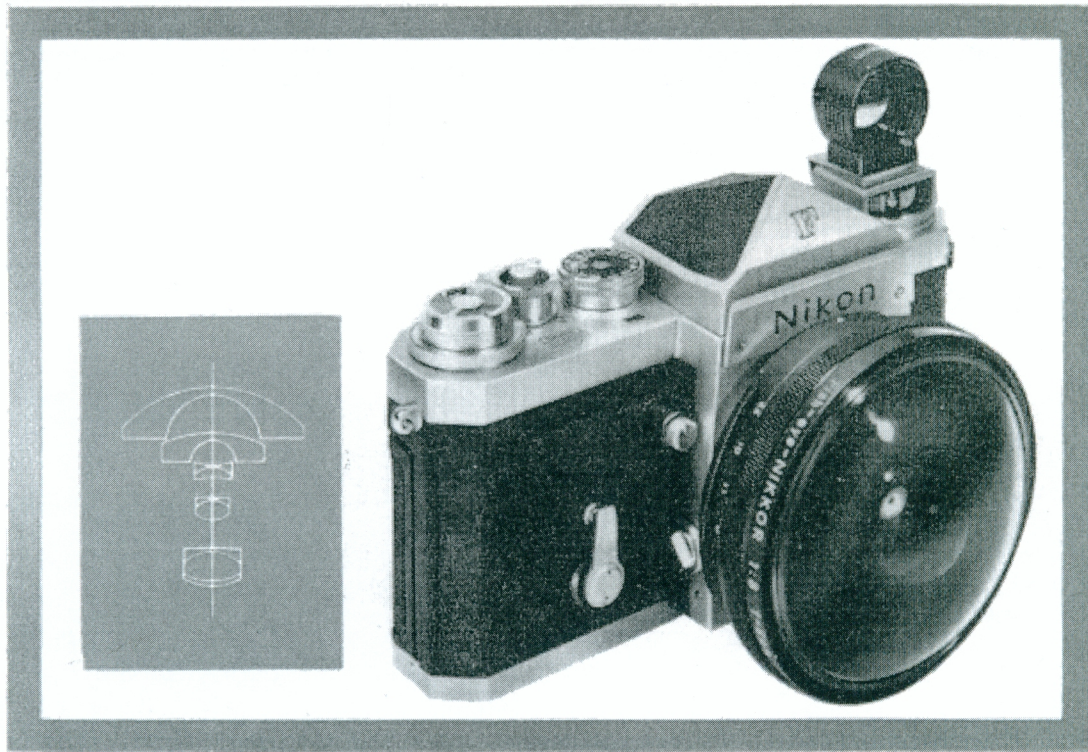




*A great example of what the 8mm Fisheye-Nikkor could produce! Absolutely awesome perspective that was very new and quite sensational back in the sixties, combined with really impressive sharpness even to the edges. Professional photographers flocked to it in droves and suddenly you were seeing the characteristic round photos everywhere from fashion catalogs to long play album covers (remember those?!). The drawings are from official Nikon publications including Cooper/Abbott. I remember how fascinating these detailed drawings were back in the sixties.*





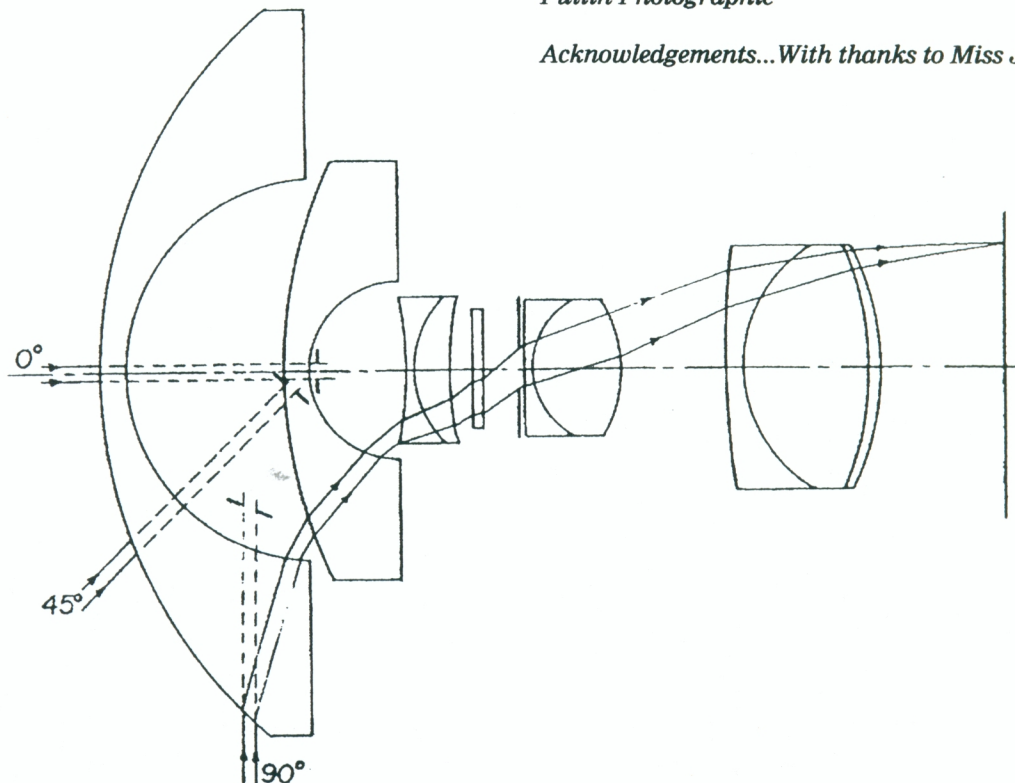


Above is the cover of the first brochure for the Fisheye-Nikkor. Note the finder...the very first version finder supplied was no more than the old 35mm bright line finder from the RF era, now with a small circle in the middle used simply for aiming the lens. Later, the Fisheye Finder replaced it and these early versions are very rare today! Below: The 8mm/f8 Fisheye lens designed by K. Miyamoto, showing the tilted entrance pupil. (K. Miyamoto Fisheye lens. *J. Opt. Soc. AM* 54 1060 (1964) *History of the Photographic Lens*, R. Kingslake (1989)

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Acknowledgements...With thanks to Miss J. Karn





# THE "GLITZY" GOLD NIKON FM

by TONY HURST

Love them or hate them, whatever your feelings as regards gold finished cameras, the real value lies on the plaque. Especially the part that reads "Birth of the first Nikon compact 35mm SLR".

Little did they know that 23 years later the FM series would still be available from your local Nikon dealer, making it the longest production run so far for any Nikon model.

It must have been challenging to design a mid market compact SLR. Not a scaled down Nikkormat, but a completely independent design. The launch of the Nikon FM was very much a state-of-the-art product, incorporating an AI system, a compact design and the concept of Value Engineering along with automation, among many other ideas. This was cutting edge stuff.

But there is another side to the Nikon FM. Against the background of the oil crisis, cost effective production became essential and the accountants were in town to stay. Canon, with its latest automated production line, was producing the Canon AE-1. Not only were they slashing production costs, but also outputting a quality product. This had a profound effect on Canon's competitors. It was against this background that the FM was finally conceived.

This baby has been around the block a good many times, and is still rattling along with the most basic facilities. Its younger siblings have a huge array of "mod cons". So how has the FM series lasted so long?

The essence of this machine is its simplicity. When it comes to taking pictures, as opposed to point and shoot, increased technology for the average situation can be counter productive. The simpler the tool, the more refined its implementation. This is not to advocate going back to the dark ages, but to highlight the strengths of the FM's design.

In the grand scheme of creating a picture, the camera plays only a minor role. Cameras do not create pictures but indiscriminately record a moment in time. Most manufacturer's promotional literature is questionable, often relating its latest product to increased creativity. Of course nothing could be further from the truth, and Nikon is as guilty of this as any other maker. The camera's importance is in its ability to record an image efficiently.

So what's this guy doing telling me to trash my latest F5 and go back to nature? He must be a tree hugging nut. Maybe I am for the strait jacket, but then it was a good excuse to show a few snaps of a glitzy Nikon FM.







*Left: This 1977 Gold Nikon FM along with its modest plaque. Above and below: The 60th Anniversary Gold Nikon FM with matching serial numbered lens. This camera was never available to the general public. Production was limited, and could be less than 200 units! (Photos by Tony Hurst)*





## 'NHS' e-mail LIST!!

The following is an **updated listing** of e-mail addresses for members of the Society who asked to be included in this directory. Those of you familiar with the Internet are very much aware of how easy and useful communications via e-mail can be. I personally feel that it is the best form of communication available to our wide spread international membership! You can't beat it for speed and ease, so if you want to be included on our list just let me know.

**ROBERT ROTOLONI.....rotoloni@msn.com**

(As a service to the members I will run an updated list each & every issue of the Journal, so keep me informed. Please check this list each issue as new addresses are added & others may change! This list revised 6/15/00)

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## LETTERS..LETTERS

From Luigi Cane....

I am back in Milano and I have been happy to announce to the many people who have inquired about the NHS convention that few experiences were so nice, warm and friendly as your meeting! Mario Muraro and me can sincerely say that we never could have imagined such warm heart felt hospitality from Hans and Peter and, obviously, from you who have crossed the ocean to be there. Please accept from Mario and me our most true and sincere thanks for a wonderful time.

From Xaxier & Veronique Cristau....

Thank you for the warm welcome you extended to us at the Nikon Con- vention in Rotterdam. It was great seeing you again. Veronique and I enjoyed the time in Rotterdam. I personally have been very impressed by the quality of the presentations and organization.

From Tom Abrahamsson....

A long overdue thank you for the excellent NHS meeting in Rotterdam. It was truly a good time and I can now report to the LHSA that the Nikon guys are actually very nice and not at all the "monsters" that the Leica folks think! I got so taken by the NHS that I bought yet another Nikon F in Sweden, a good old brassy black one with the standard prism. Just felt like having another one around.

Tuulikki and I, we had a great trip after Rotterdam and the only fly in the ointment was that we picked up some kind of Euro-flubug along the road and it put us both down for almost 3 weeks!

Robert, hope to see you in Boston at the LHSA meeting and Peter, I hope to see you at Photokina in September. Still thinking of bribing Tony Hurst to set up a slide show for the LHSA. His was a superb presentation. Thanks again and may all your Nikons be black and beautiful!

From Tony Kekalos....

I received my first issue of the "Nikon Journal" this past Thursday and I am quite impressed with the quality of the magazine. Quite a bit more than I expected and I'm looking forward to subsequent issues. Would be nice if I could make it to one of the conventions someday.



## AUCTION NEWS!!

The auction scene has been rather active the last few months, and I'm not talking about Ebay (that is a story onto itself that I think we will have to address down the road !)! Auction Team Koln, Christie's and Tamarkin Photographica have all been busy of late. And each has had a selection of Nikons on offer, although a significant percentage has been late vintage reflex items that can be classified as usable and not collectible. As always, the volume of Leica equipment has far outweighed everything else being offered, and I doubt this will ever change. But Nikons, including rangefinder and early reflex items, are invariably present in every auction of any consequence, which is a good sign indeed. Some of the recent results are as follows:

### Tamarkin Rare Camera Auction..5/12/2000

Besides the customary Nikon S & S2 cameras and some common lenses, there was also an SP exposure meter, an MIOJ Variframe Finder in Leica version and a screw mount 25mm/f4 Nikkor, which is a very hard to find item today, as many Leica users find it to be a sharp and valuable lens. Also included were two high ticket items, both of which sold. One was the rare 21mm/f4 Nikkor-O (less than 400 made!) which sold for \$6,600.00. The other was a clean Nikon SP w/f1.4 that went for \$3,850.00. Both prices include the 10% buyers fee. Make sure you get on Stan's mailing list as he seems to have some good Nikon items in each offering.

### Christie's South Kensington..6/8/2000

This was a sale that had an utterly huge amount of Leica equipment (I don't know how the Leica guys can decide what to bid on, the selection is mind numbing!), a large amount of late vintage Nikon reflex items, and only two Nikon range-finder pieces. But if you only have two items they might as well be good ones! And they were! The first was Nikon One #609352 with collapsible f2 Nikkor #8117, a very early production lens. I had been given information on this camera and also received a first hand report from an NHS member who was present. The camera was not in the best of shape. As a matter of fact it was quite poor. However, the lens was an early one and probably attracted most of the bidders. It went for nearly 8,000 pounds, so I guess that old saying that a "Nikon One is a Nikon One" still holds some weight.

The second item was a camera that had previously sold at Christie's in August 1997 and was now being offered again. This was a very early Nikon M #609858 with an early f1.4 that had originally been the property of Mr. T. Yagi, who was the director of development during the early postwar years at Nikon. It sold for nearly 18,000 pounds, so this was a significant auction.

I have just received Christie's catalog for the July 13th sale this very day. This time they have an S, a couple of S2s and an SP, as well as about a dozen lenses including two 35mm/f1.8 Nikkors. Hey, you can't have a Nikon One every time! But still an interesting catalog. If you don't want to subscribe to the catalogs, then at least check out their web site at [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com) for up to the minute results!

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

Black paint 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.



Contact: PETER WALNES (LHSA AND NHS MEMBER SINCE 1982)

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## CLASSIFIED ADS

**WANTED...**Focusing mount for the interchangeable Nikkor lens heads 400mm, 600mm, 800mm and 1200mm in **Bronica** mount! This allows these lenses to be used directly on the older Bronica S series cameras. **Job Bakker, Straatdijk 13, 3247 BX Dirksland, Holland. Fax.31-187-603643 E-mail.....visual.art.productions@wxs.nl**

**SELLING/TRADE LIST...**Many Nikon RF and reflex items for sale or trade as well as quality products from other makers such as **Bronica, Canon, Minolta, Pentax, Rollei, Mamiya, Kodak, Zeiss** and others. Also some consignment items. You can be added to my mailing list by simply letting me know! If you have a list make sure to send me a copy. I am always open to trades.  
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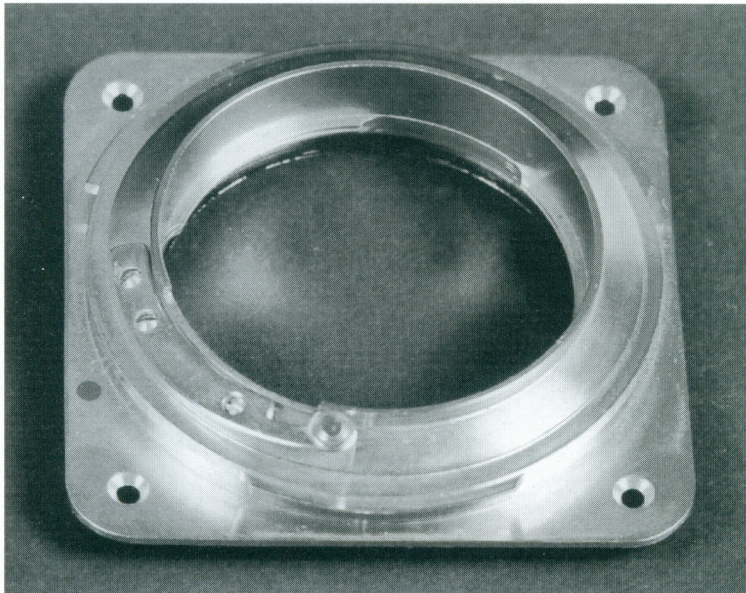
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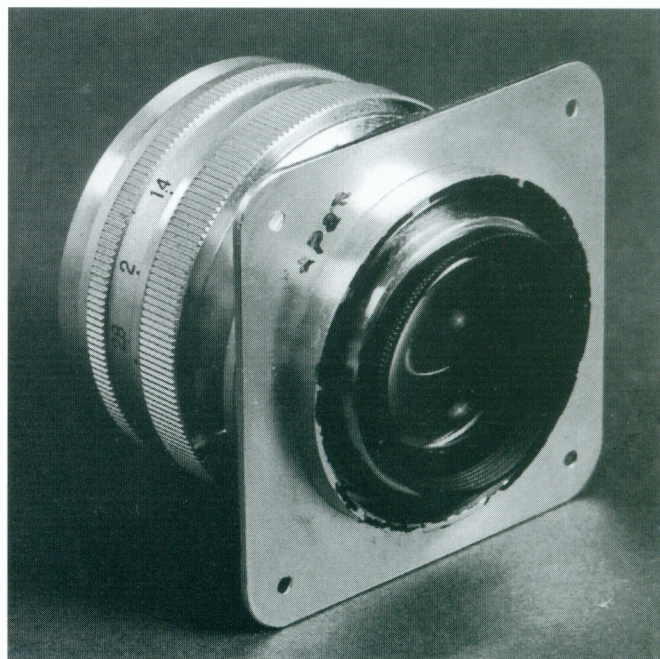
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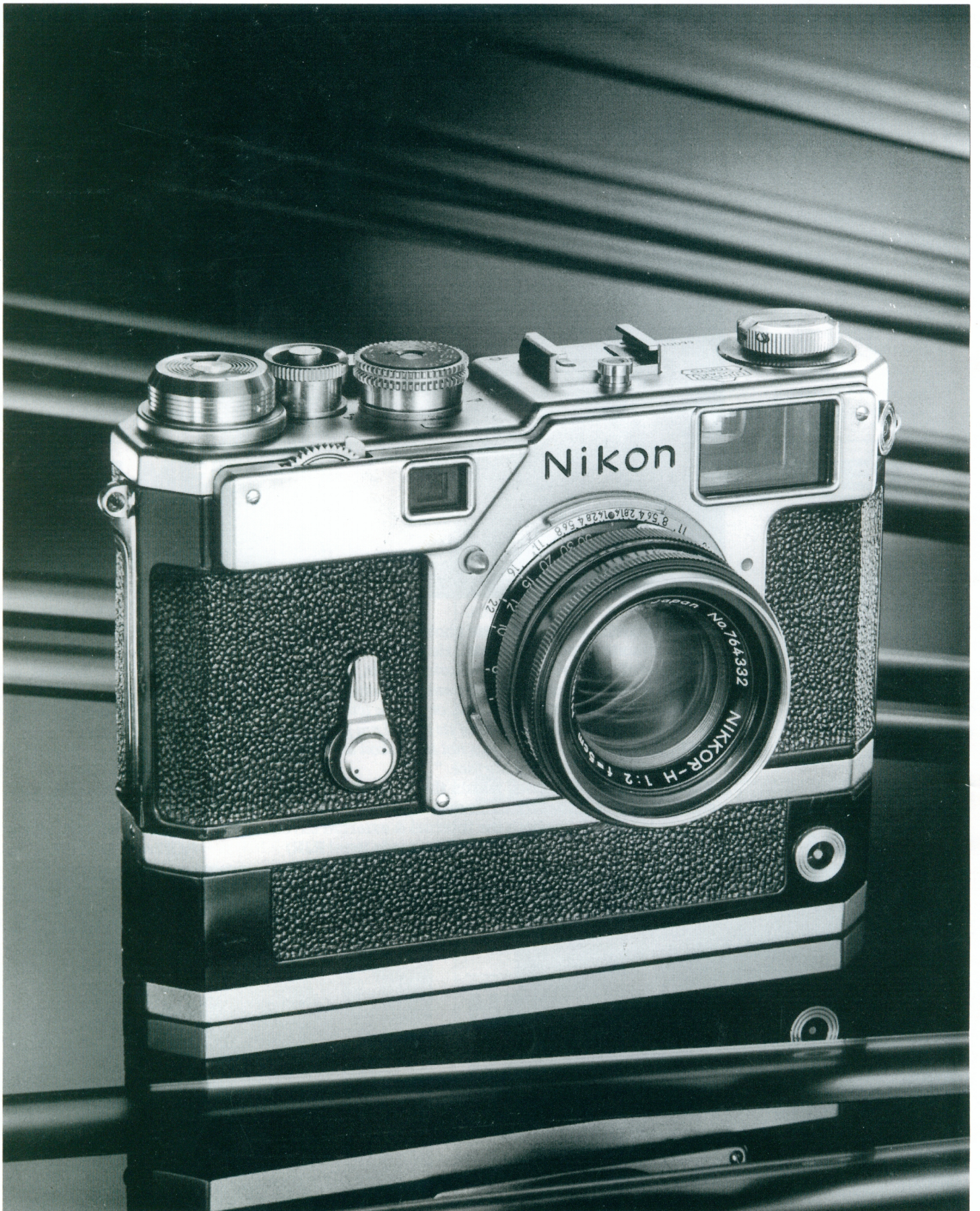
Biagio Guerra sent me these photos of an unusual board with a Nikon rangefinder mount. He writes...

*"This board does not have the helicoid built in, and it just mounts the lens. I am sure it was used with some kind of focusing device, like a bellows unit, or maybe with a camera that had a focusing mechanism of its own. I am positive it was made by Nikon, although it does not say Nikon on it, but just Japan stamped on the rear surface."*

(Could this have been used within the factory or repair station to check lenses for focus and centering? Possibly. It is interesting that it has both the internal & external bayonet mounts. It sure does look like a Nikon-made item! RJR)







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