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MARCH 31, 2001

NHS-71

NHS-CON8/SCOTTSDALE/FEB. 2002

NIKON JOURNAL



THIS ISSUE

PAGE 1 ~ FAREWELL "MR. NIKON"
PAGE 4 ~ NEW GLASS IS COMING!!!
PAGE 10 ~ SHARAN "MINI NIKONS"!

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U.S./CANADA...1YR \$30....3YRS \$75

OVERSEAS.....1YR \$40....3YRS \$105

>>>>>(NEW RATES EFFECTIVE MARCH 31, 2001)<<<<<

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NHS-72 DEADLINE!!

The deadline for the next issue of our *NIKON JOURNAL*, **NHS-72**, is **JUNE 1, 2001**. Please, you must get all letters and contributions to me by that date! **Thank you! RJR.**

EDITORIAL

I must start this Editorial on a sad note. Mr. Masahiko Fuketa, "Mr. Nikon", passed away on February 24th! I have devoted 3 pages to his memory because Fuketa-san did so much to expand our knowledge about the rangefinder era at Nippon Kogaku. He has been in these pages many times. We have lost the man behind every Nikon camera from the Model One through the Nikon F. An era has passed!

On a second unhappy note I am forced to announce a dues increase for the Society! It has been since **December 1989, NHS-26**, since our last increase, but the last 11 years have seen multiple postage increases (the latest a real killer for overseas delivery), printing costs going up over 20% in the last 5 years, not to mention nothing of labels, envelopes and computer needs. So after 11 years I have to increase the Society dues. Obviously this is something I don't do lightly as I have held off for over a decade! But reality is reality and I can't absorb the recent cost increases. Therefore, effective with the cover date of this issue, March 31st, 2001, the dues for the society are the following:

NEW SOCIETY DUES!!

U.S./CANADA...1 YR \$30...3 YRS \$75
OVERSEAS.....1 YR \$40...3 YRS \$105

I am not happy about this but I think you have to admit that one increase in over 10 years (& only the 2nd in nearly 18 years!) is not bad! Please make note of the new rates.

Besides the above we have great news for you Nikon shooters! Tom Abrahamsson has an article on page 4 about the new Cosina/Voightlander series of lenses until now only made in Leica screw mount. They are coming soon in **Nikon S Bayonet mount! And the NHS may be a source for them!** That's right. I am currently in negotiations with Cosina to bring these lenses in so that my members can get them. See NHS-72 (and Tom's article) for more details!

We also have Nico van Dijk's "Favorite Nikkor", the 55mm/f1.2, in the "F-Spot" on page 8, and what may be the final installment on the Bronica Adapters on page 13 where I correct an omission from a previous article.

Finally, on page 10 you will find a story on the neat little "Sharan Mini-Nikons" recently released in Japan. These are working cameras that use Minox cassettes and they are damned cute! Rich Pinto, who says they are selling very well, wrote this article and I have supplied photos of my black and chrome versions. You really have to see these! I hope the rumored S2 comes to be reality soon.

Nikon have just announced the new FM3A with some ingenious features. See their website for a complete report: www.kit.co.jp/Nikon/Press_Release/fm3a_main.htm

And now for NHS-Con8. On page 16 is more information from convention chairman, Don Dederer, on our next meeting less than a year away! That's right, February 22-24th, 2002, are the dates for the Scottsdale, Arizona get together! It will come quickly, so start making your plans now! It will be a warm and sunny relaxful weekend during one of the dullest months of the year for those of us who live in the "snow belt". So plan on getting away from it all and spending some time with your Nikon buddies in sunny Arizona. Play golf and tennis, swim and ride horses, or just relax and soak up the rays! You can even visit one of the great wonders of the world, the Grand Canyon!

So start getting ready for NHS-Con8 and make sure you contact Don or I as soon as possible! See you there!

A FAREWELL TO "MR. NIKON"

MASAHIKO



It is with great sadness that I must announce to you that Masahiko Fuketa, **Mr. Nikon**, passed away on February 24th from pneumonia at the age of 87. He is survived by his widow, Haruko.

Fuketa-san is familiar to all of you from his many appearances in these pages going back to the first time I met him in the summer of 1991. I ran a series of articles entitled "The Fuketa Tapes", which consisted of excerpts from the nearly 5 hours of interview tapes I made with him on that visit. I met him again in 1996 at the Tokyo NHS convention, where he amazed and delighted all present by spending the entire day with us, answering questions and reminiscing about his career at Nippon Kogaku. At that time he was 82 years old, yet he kept pace with the best of us, and was a most gracious gentleman.

Although I spent much of my time with him constantly asking questions about things he had done nearly 40-50 years before, he made every effort to answer each question either right on the spot, or if he did not know the answer for sure, later in one of his many letters to me. But what most stands out in my mind is that Fuketa-san was a most gracious and kind gentleman. He never made me feel that I was a bother and I think that my many questions reopened in his mind a time that was very important to him. I often said to him that what we were trying to learn and document was basically his life's work. I feel that he realized that another generation had discovered his contributions to photography and that our efforts to preserve his legacy was nothing less than the ultimate compliment to his life's work. Through all of this he remained a humble man and often would down play his importance in the scheme of things, giving credit to others instead of himself. Yes, his work was a team effort, yet every team needs a leader, and Fuketa-san proved to be an admirable one!

We have lost the man who was the guiding force behind the development of our beloved Nikons from the Nikon I through the Nikon F, as well as much of the system that grew up around these cameras. It has been said many times that the Nikon "F" was named in his honor, which I believe it was, yet when asked that question he would smile with embarrassment and decline to answer, yet I always saw a shiny glint in his eyes. Fuketa-san, whether true or not, let we admirers believe it to be the truth, for if anyone deserved such an honor, it was you!

I learned of his death from member Akito Tamla who has supplied me with details of Fuketa-san's life. His information follows...

Masahiko Fuketa was born on July 6, 1913 and graduated from Tokyo University in March 1937, the same month he joined Nippon Kogaku. During the war years he worked on the development of Fire Control Systems used on Japanese destroyers, battleships and submarines. Around 1942 it became necessary for Japan to import much of its war technology from Germany and the Navy decided to send submarines to Germany to obtain various machinery and parts. This was a 3 month trip in each direction! In late 1943 it was decided to send top quality designers and engineers from various fields to Germany to study. Nippon Kogaku chose two; one was Mr. Mizuno and the other was Fuketa-san. However, only Mr. Mizuno was sent and that submarine was sunk off the Azores in March 1944. Fuketa-san would grieve for his friend for many years to come and often would remember that he could have been on that sub!

After the war, he began to design the Nikon I. His career with Nippon Kogaku was long and fruitful.

- 1947 Feb.- Chief designer of the 3rd Section
- 1956 Sept.- Visited Photokina in Germany
- 1962 Feb.- Head designer of the 1st Section
- 1963 June- Director of the Camera Division
- 1964 Managing director of the Camera Division
- 1970 May- Supreme managing director of Camera Division
- 1973 June to June 1979- Vice President of Nippon Kogaku
- 1979 Advisor to Nippon Kogaku

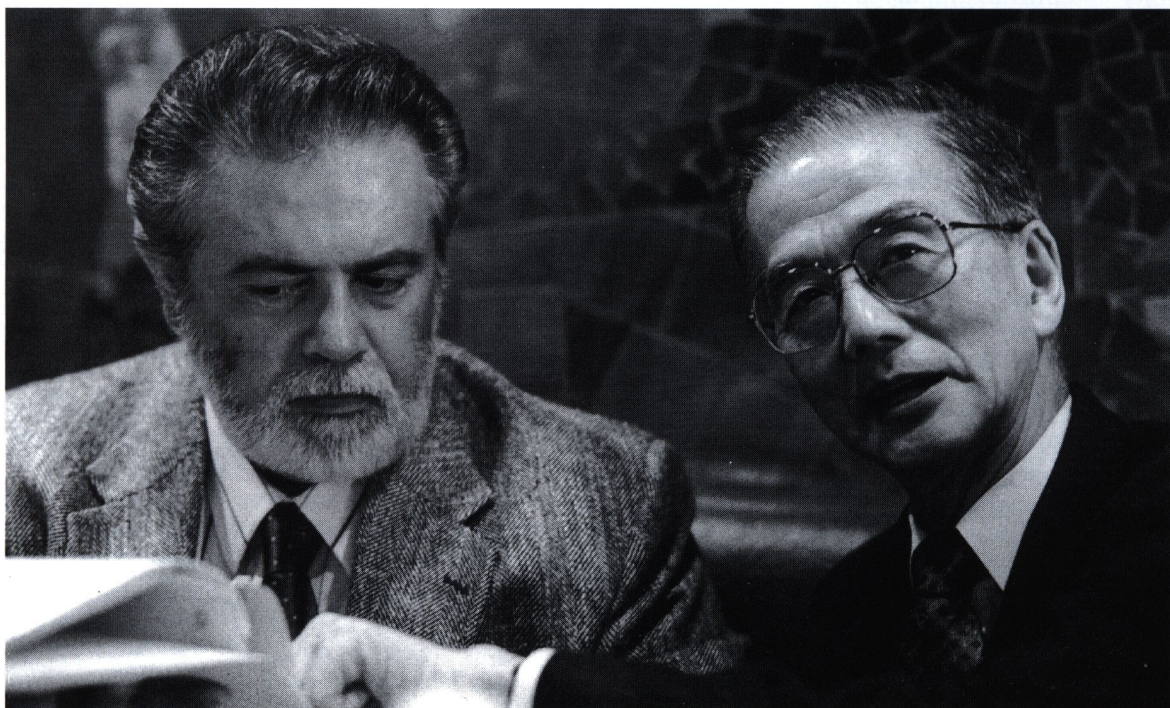
An interesting story told to me by Fuketa-san was that near the end of the war, the Japanese Military Headquarters issued an order to destroy all drawings made by major optical manufacturers such as N-K, during the war. But Fuketa-san thought that the drawings made by his senior designers from 1925 to 1945 were, as treasures of Nippon Kogaku, very important. He decided to preserve them and stored them in cardboard boxes till after the war ended. *(One can only guess how important those drawings must have been to the post-war rebirth of Nippon Kogaku & the swift development of their photographic division!RJR)*



Below and bottom...I first met Mr. Fuketa in June 1991 when I was able to interview him extensively. I talked to him on two occasions during that week: at Nikon's headquarters near the Imperial Palace (a 5 hour meeting) and on the Sunday in the coffee house of a large hotel with many members of the Tokyo Nikon Club (another 4-5 hour get together). He was most gracious and made every attempt to answer my many questions! I learned a great deal from him that week & in countless letters over the succeeding years, the last one only a month before his death! Thank you, Fuketa-san!



Above...Fuketa-san spent the entire day with us at the 1996 Convention in Tokyo. He was just shy of his 83rd birthday, yet he kept pace with us that day, answering questions, signing autographs and participating in what turned out to be one great day! Just ask anyone who was there! Here we see him speaking to the convention, with his ever-present smile.





In late 1995 I received two photos from Mr. Tatsuhiko Arakawa, well known to all of you from his writings in our Journal. I carried the two photos with me to the 1996 Tokyo Convention where I showed them to Mr. Fuketa. These two photos were taken by Arakawa-san sometime in 1947 or early 1948, and they show Masahiko Fuketa at his designing table at Nippon Kogaku!! He would have been about 34 years old!

I asked permission of Fuketa-san to publish the photos in the Journal. However, for personal reasons, he asked that I not do it until after his death, a pledge I have honored. But now the time has arrived for the world to see "Mr. Nikon" at his work table. The Leica has its famous photos of Oscar Barnack at his desk! We Nikon collectors now have the same for Masahiko Fuketa!!

MASAHIKO UKETA



NEW GLASS FOR OLD NIKONS!!

by **TOM ABRAHAMSSON**

Since late in 1998 the users of Leica cameras have been lucky enough to be able to buy the new lenses from Voightlander/Cosina in Japan. The first lens was the now famous 15/f4.5 Heliar, a rectilinear ultra wide at a price that was less than most manufacturers would charge for a decent finder. Suddenly the Leica users were almost inundated with new glass; the 12/f5.6, the 24/f4 Snap-Shot Skopar, the classic 35/f2.5, the Pancake 35/f2.5, the 35/f1.7 Ultron Aspheric, the 50/f1.5 Nokton, the 75/f2.5 Color Heliar as well as finders for all of these lenses, compact shoe-mount meter with diode read-out. The lenses were accompanied by two bodies, the Bessa-L, a non-rangefinder body and the Bessa-R, a full-fledged rangefinder with built in meter and 35/50/75/90 frames in the viewfinder. Both the cameras and lenses are designed with the venerable 39mm screw mount. I do suspect that there were times that the Nikon RF users wished that the prototype Nikon I with the 39mm screw mount would have been produced in quantity. Just imagine all of this new glass being made available to the users of old screwmount Leicas, M-cameras and also Canon RF, Niccas, etc, while the Nikon RF users had to sit by the sidelines and long for modestly priced wide angles.

I have had the opportunity to use all of these Voightlander lenses since they started appearing and they are extremely competent optics. When one factors in things like price/performance ratios, they are nothing short of phenomenal! Two years ago I met the man behind this avalanche of optics. He is Hirofumi Kobayashi, President of Cosina Optical in Japan. Apart from running one of the larger camera manufacturing operations in Japan, he is also an avid camera collector with a particular interest in Voightlander lenses and cameras (obviously), but he is by no means restricted to this. He also collects Nikons and Leicas and most likely others too. Cosina is known for making lenses and bodies for other companies in Japan such as the Nikon FM10, Olympus 2000, a Pentax body as well as lenses for these and other cameras. In the mid 90s' Cosina acquired the rights to the Voightlander name from their trading partner in Germany, RingFoto (a large chain of camera stores) and Mr. Kobayashi decided to reactivate this venerable name. The 39mm screw mount was an ideal way to go as it allowed the customers to use modern lenses on both the old "Barnack Leica" (Japanese term for the screw mount Leicas) and the modern M-cameras with the screw to bayonet adapter, as well as the Canon RF, Leotax and Nicca cameras.

Of course we have all thought of what we would do if we had the facility and know-how required to design and build optics and cameras. Let's face it, scratch a collector and you will find a "gear-head". Mr. Kobayashi is in that position and he certainly has made the most of it!

When Nikon announced the Millennium S3 we all hoped for something more than a 50/f1.4, but to no avail. It was obvious that Nikon were not going to make any other lenses and apart from that, the price of the camera put it out of the reach of most of us, at least those of us who use their cameras. My first hands-on experience with the new S3 was at Cosina's factory last November. Mr. Kobayashi brought his own camera in to allow us to see it and also to try out his **new Nikon RF lenses!** Somehow you feel like you've just been handed the Hope diamond and asked to cut some glass with it! What he has done is taken the glass from three of the Voightlander lenses in the 39mm mount and **remounted them for the Nikon RF!** The 21/f4, the 25/f4 and the 35/f2.5 sat there on the table with the new S3 to try them on! Talk about having a good day! I had already used the 25/f4 and the 35/f2.5 extensively prior to this meeting, but the 21/f4 I had only seen as a prototype at Photokina in September and in screw mount. I am no expert on early Nikon RF lenses, particularly the rarer focal lengths such as the 21/f4 and 25/f4, but to my eye they looked like the pictures of the originals (Hey, we all have Robert's book) and they went on the camera like they should. The 25/f4 Snap-Shot Skopar is one of my favorite lenses, but it suffers from a minor flaw in 39mm mount. It doesn't couple to the Leica rangefinder and although it has nice little clickstops at various intervals on the barrel, it takes a bit getting used to. On the Nikon it **does couple due to the built in focusing helicoid on the Nikon RF body!** Nice touch! From the user point of view, the 35/f2.5 and 25/f4 in screw mount are very good. I have a friend who took over one of my 25/f4s and regularly pulls 16x20 high quality B&W prints from this lens! The 35/f2.5 is up there with the pre-aspheric Summicron f2 in quality that is about as good as it gets in my estimation (having used 35/f2s since the early 60s' as my main lens). I can see no reason why the Nikon RF versions would be in any way inferior to the 39mm lenses in this aspect. The mounts are nice, tight and very solidly made and damn it, they look so good too! I have less experience with the 21/f4. I just received my screw mount one this day and rushed out and shot some rolls with it. So far it looks very good and the fall-off at the edges is very modest. There is bound to be some, but this is a function of the wide angle design, rather than this particular lens. To my eye and based on a very small "sample", it looks like the fall-off is less than on my 21/f3.4 Super-Angulon (a bench mark lens).

The issue of finders is an important one. The Voightlander finders are most likely the best finders I have ever encountered! They are amazingly bright and contrasty, almost "brighter than reality"! While we are waiting for the deliveries of these new lenses, one can't avoid specu-



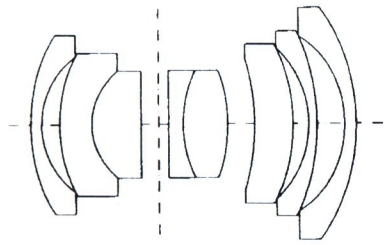
lating about what else the Nikon RF user would want to have! It is obvious that Mr. Kobayashi is looking at more lenses and possibly even a body, if the first 3 products do well. Trust me, Robert and I have already discussed what we would like (50/f1.5 Nokton, an 85/f1.4 and, of course, the 15mm/f4.5 and 12mm/f5.6 in Nikon RF mount! Why should the screwmount users have all the fun!!) Maybe a Bessa-N body with built-in meter and a bright multiframe finder (as well as a baseplate rapid winder!). It is enough to make a Nikon RF user stay sleepless!

Of course Voigtlander also produces a 75mm/f2.5 and a 125mm/f2.5 Apo-Lanthar in Nikon SLR mount. The latter will focus down to 2" without an extension ring. In November I also saw a small 45mm/f2.8 "pancake" lens for Nikon SLR and rumors have it that this lens has been made available with the new FM3A.

I hope that by the next issue of the JOURNAL I can produce some stuff shot with these new RF lenses. Our President has supplied me with a suitably seasoned SP to try them on, once they arrive. Thanks Robert, and I promise I will add to the scratches and dents by using the camera heavily.

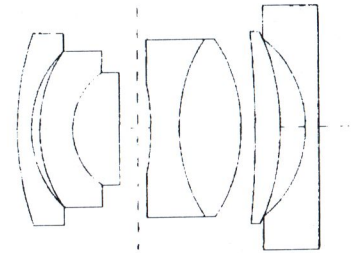
Tom Abrahamsson

A family portrait of the first three lenses in what we hope will be a larger series devoted to the venerable Nikon rangefinder bayonet! From left to right, the 35mm, 25mm & 21mm Voigtlander SC-Skopars, the latter two with their dedicated finders that have received good reviews from Leica users, as have the lenses themselves. By the way the "SC" in their name signifies "S" for Nikon "S" mount, and "C" for Contax! You will note that all three lenses take 43mm filters just like the majority of RF Nikkors! They are nearly identical in size and weight and cosmetics and actually resemble the genuine 21mm Nikkor. Their prices are reasonable, especially in today's world and when you consider that the 21/25 come with finders for that price! But the main point is that they represent the first new optical designs for the RF Nikons in over 35 years! Thus they benefit from new glass technology, computer design and, most importantly, multi-coating, the first ever for our vintage Nikons! Yes, we love our Nikkors, but one has to admit that there is room in the scheme of things for these new lenses, and I for one am very happy to see them!!!



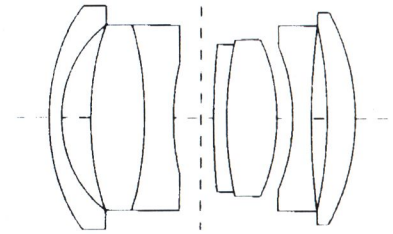
21MM/F4.0 SC-SKOPAR
F4 TO F22
8 ELEMENTS IN 6 GROUPS
CLOSE FOCUS TO 0.9 METERS
ANGLE OF VIEW 90.9 DEGREES
FILTER SIZE 43MM
WEIGHT 140 GRAMS
SIZE 55.8 X 45.3MM
ON SALE IN JAPAN JULY 2001
PROJECTED PRICE WITH FINDER...
ABOUT \$650

21MM/F4



25MM/F4.0 SC-SKOPAR
F4 TO F22
7 ELEMENTS IN 5 GROUPS
CLOSE FOCUS TO 0.9 METERS
ANGLE OF VIEW 82 DEGREES
FILTER SIZE 43MM
WEIGHT 140 GRAMS
SIZE 55.8 X 45.3MM
ON SALE IN JAPAN JUNE 2001
PROJECTED PRICE WITH FINDER...
ABOUT \$600

25MM/F4



35MM/F2.5 SC-SKOPAR
F2.5 TO F22
7 ELEMENTS IN 5 GROUPS
CLOSE FOCUS TO 0.9 METERS
ANGLE OF VIEW 63 DEGREES
FILTER SIZE 43MM
WEIGHT 140 GRAMS
SIZE 55.8 X 45.3MM
ON SALE IN JAPAN MAY 2001
PROJECTED PRICE (NO FINDER)...
ABOUT \$475

35MM/F2.5

I want to thank member Tom Abrahamsson for not only his fine report on these new lenses, but for serving as the conduit between your editor and Cosina. Tom is very well acquainted with Mr. Kobayashi and has followed the progress of these lenses since before they were released in Leica screw mount. Now you may wonder just what I mean by a conduit between me and Cosina. Well, when I first heard of these lenses from Tom I thought that it was a great idea whose time had come. Having seen what good quality Nikkor wides made for the Rfs have climbed to in price over the years, I often wish I had a 21 or a 25 to just go out and shoot with. In addition, after the announcement of the S3 Millennium I thought it possible that Nikon would test the waters with a few new Nikkors that would benefit from modern computer and coating technology. Just think of some of the awesome lenses Nikon makes for the reflexes and imagine what they could do for the Rfs. Well, for now we have to wait for Nikon to make that decision, but in the meantime we have these new Voightlanders. But Tom went one step further. He put me in touch with Kobayashi-san and I have been in negotiations with them since the first of the year. If all goes according to my plans, the **Nikon Historical Society will be an official distributor and source for these new lenses!!** That's right. We will be one of the few distributors for the line and they will be available to our members worldwide! I hope to have all the final

**THE "NHS" IS BEING
 CONSIDERED FOR A
 DISTRIBUTORSHIP FOR
 THESE LENSES!! GIVE
 ME YOUR FEEDBACK!!**

facts together for the next issue of the Journal including delivery and ordering information as well as the final price with shipping. Those of you who are interested **please let me know!** The more information about demand that I can give to Cosina the better. And the more successful these first lenses are, the better the chance that we will see more down the line. Like fast normals (f1.5) as faster 35mm (f1.8?) some short teles like and 85/90 and maybe a 105. Who knows, maybe if there is enough demand for the lenses, Kobayashi-san may decide to produce a body as well. Now that would be interesting! **More in NHS-72!! RJR**

THE --SPOT!!

MY FAVORITE NIKKOR!!

by **NICO van DIJK**

This lens is the successor to the first fast normal lens for the Nikon F series, the Nikkor 5.8cm/f1.4, which was made from October 1959 to January 1962.

The 55mm/f1.2 was announced in 1965 and its production began in November 1967. There is a prototype known with the serial number "970103". A faster lens for the F-series has never been produced. The production of this lens terminated in April 1978, although it was shown in various price lists until the end of 1979.

Technical Data; (for most types)

Focal length:	55mm
Apertures:	f1.2 - f/16
Picture angle:	43' at infinity
Construction:	7 elements in 5 groups
Dimensions:	73.5mm width by 57.5mm length
Diaphragm:	1.2 - 2 - 2.8 - 4 - 5.6 - 8 - 11 - 16
Aperture blades:	7
Coating:	Not all lenses seem to be coated. The front element has been coated with amber, blue and gold.
Focus range:	0.6 meter or 2 feet to infinity
Filter size:	52mm
Weight:	410 to 425 grams
Lens Hood:	HS-3, HS-7 & HN-6; black painted metal engraved as follows: Nikon HS-3(or HS6/7) JAPAN 55/1.2 HR-2; black rubber

TYPE I; (prototype)

The lens barrel is all in black painted metal with a scalloped distance & aperture ring & with a chrome filter ring. The lens was assembled with slot screws with 3 screws in the back plate. Lens inscription in white letters on the front inside of the chrome filter ring: Nikkor-S Auto 1:1.2 f=55mm Nippon Kogaku Japan No.XXXXXX. This lens had a triangular aperture fork and a chrome gripping ring of 5mm width. Possible serial numbers from 970001-970109. The weight was indicated as 15.5 ounces (439 grams).

TYPE II;

The production of this version began in November 1967. The barrel was identical to Type I, but with inscriptions on the front outside of the black filter ring. The distance scale was in feet (yellow) & meters (white) and the weight was 425 grams. Serial numbers probably started with 970110 up to approximately 985000. Highest number known to author is 984431. Total production approximately 15,000 lenses.

TYPE III;

Production probably started in early 1970. The aperture fork is rounded off & it has been assembled with slotted screws. There are 5 screws on the back plate instead of 3, although early lenses up to about 200000, have only 3. The chrome gripping ring is still 5mm wide. All letters are a bit smaller than those on Type II. Weight is 420 grams. Serial numbers start with 184711. The last known with the "Nippon Kogaku Japan" inscription is 215166. Probably all lenses over 220001 bear the newer "Nikon" inscription. And "No." before the serial number disappears. Last known lens is 238985, & the total production is about 50,000 lenses.

TYPE IV;

Production begins in October 1972. This lens looks like Type III but now bears the inscription "Nikkor S-C" with the "C" for coating. The lens, indeed, has an amber coating. The "NKJ" inscription is replaced by "Nikon" with the "No." gone before the serial. The chrome gripping ring is now 6mm wide. The entire lens has been assembled with cross screws (but some lenses up to about 260000 have been seen with slot screws) and the back plate still has 5 screws. Weight is 415 grams & the numbers start with 250001. The last known is 300556 for a production of about 50,000 lenses.

TYPE V;

This lens debuted in April 1976. The entire barrel was changed, The scalloped ring became a rubber grip & the closest focus distance was 50cm. Its weight is 410 grams. The inscription now reads "Nikkor 55mm 1: 1.2 & "Nikon". Serial numbers start at 350001. Last known is 383842 for a production of about 34,000 lenses.

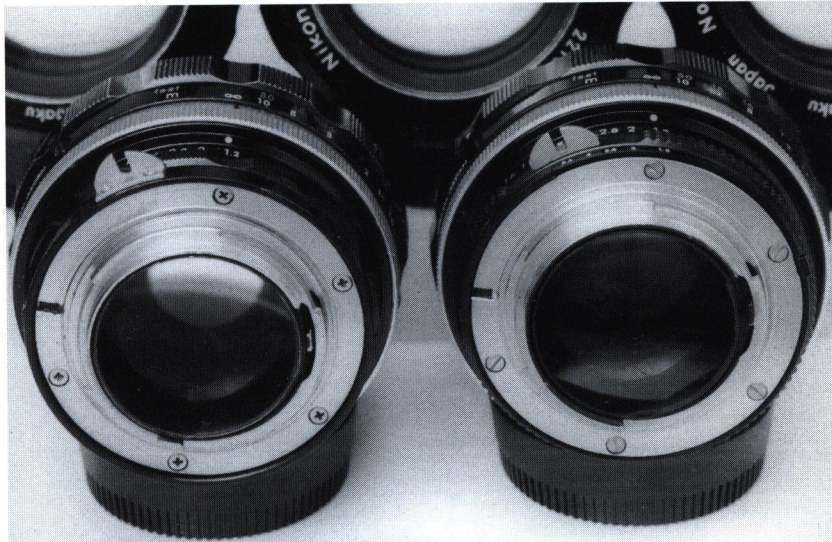
TYPE VI;

This is like Type V but changed in early 1977 to AI and the aperture ring has 2 sets of numbers. Numbers start at 400001 and go to 421812 for a run of about 22,000 lenses.

The total production of all types in ten and a half years is around 170,000 lenses. Other types have been made. AI-S in September 1981. All lenses of Type II-V can be converted to AI, not to AI-S. All lenses with the fork can be used on all bodies that can take it. All lenses converted to AI can be used on all cameras, even the AFs, except the F80. The F5 can be modified. As said before, the lens was produced until April 1978 & was succeeded by the Nikkor 50mm/f1.2.

Some 18 lenses were converted for and used by NASA. These lenses also exist as dummies for exhibition. NASA lenses are extremely rare. It is said that some were left on the moon by the astronauts.

This article would not have been possible without the help of Peter Lownds(Holland) & Roland Vink(Auckland).



Top photo..Five versions of the scalloped barrel lenses on parade. Some of the differences are visible from the front, others from the rear. A nice collection of glass! Left..The rear view showing what is meant by slotted screws (R) and cross screws (L). Bottom left...A Type III lens nestled in its unique snap-on reversing hood. Hoods for the f1.4 lenses are plentiful while the f1.2 type is harder to come by.

Bottom right...A Type V lens that marked a basic redesign of the barrel with the adoption of a rubber focusing ring. This is still a pre-AI lens and not down sized!

(All photos by Nico van Dijk)



10 THE SHARAN “MINI-NIKONS!”

by **RICH PINTO & ROBERT J. ROTOLONI**

Watching one of my customers disassemble a Nikon F that he was about to buy, it occurred to me how “macho” these heavy metal tanks really are. When he was done taking the camera apart, the pieces all scattered on the table before us, he made a few manly grunts and then reassembled it like a marine would an AK47 gun. He clicked the shutter with smug satisfaction. “Ker-chunk!” he said imitating the mirror slap and shutter sound.

I then pointed out to him something new with the “Nikon” name on it, something small enough to fit in the palm of his hand!

The Sharan “1959 Nikon F Classic Camera” is so tiny and well detailed that even the manliest of photographers or hardware affectionatos, must call it, well, cute!!

Sharan Megahouse has produced a new line of subminiature cameras that are 1:3 scale replicas of our favorite classic cameras. This series started with a miniature of the Leica IIIf in chrome, which was rebranded by Minox in the US. The line has now expanded into the Nikon F in chrome and black!

Standing under two inches high, all of the cameras in this mini-series accept 8x11mm film and share a line of subminiature accessories that include embossed logo lens caps, mini ever-ready cases, genuine leather straps and a small, but powerful, flash unit.

The chrome mini Nikon F features a “pop up” finder that is hidden beneath the faux-prism. While the camera is still a rangefinder, it has a bright view and a turning focus ring that really will convince subjects that you are focusing the camera when you shoot an image! The rewind knob turns about a quarter turn to the left to reveal this hidden finder.

The black mini Nikon F has all these features and a few better. Not only does it sport the pop-up viewfinder, but its rewind knob also has a flip up rewind lever and a moving faux self-timer that has a wonderful feeling to it. This limited edition camera also comes with a wrist strap and a Nikon embossed lens cap, which really completes the look of the whole package. This camera also features a release on the bottom plate that mimics the real back release on an actual Nikon F. This is a nice touch in keeping the realism of high detail!

Both cameras feature a moving film advance counter, real strap lugs, serial numbers on the top plate, and a red dot on the front emblazoned with the handsome Sharan logo. Each of these cameras are dated on the bottom with the year it was produced, which is another great detail for them to have thought of.

My experiences shooting with this camera have been very positive. I was a bit skeptical of the fixed focus lens with a range of about 3 inches to infinity. However, when I got my film back I saw all but one of my images were in focus and just about all of them were properly exposed too.

Recently released besides the Leica IIIf chrome and the black and chrome Nikon Fs are three more models. The Leica M3 has now been released in Japan and is slowly making its way over here, as is a black “Swedish Military Leica IIIf” camera. Future classic cameras are rumored to include a Nikon S2, and I hope these rumors are true!

Most of these cameras retail between \$325-400 in the US and I currently have stock of almost all of them. They are quickly invading the US and world wide camera collector markets and are being received with great enthusiasm.

I believe these cameras will reawaken the desire for subminiature cameras and photography. At the very least we have a new line of collectible cameras that will have lasting appeal with subminiature collectors and Nikon enthusiasts alike.

(Rich Pinto/Photovillage.com)

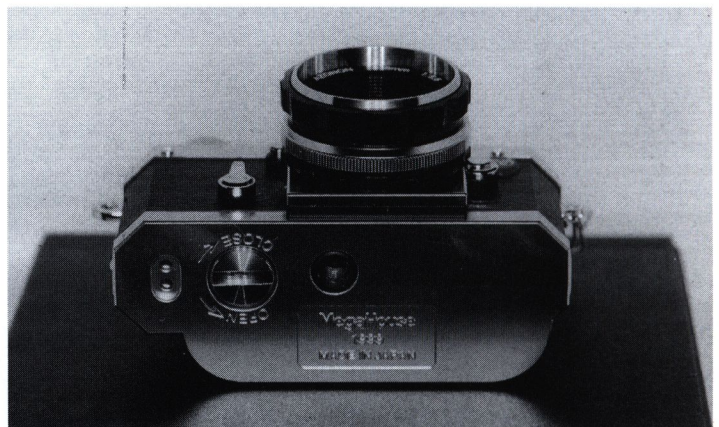
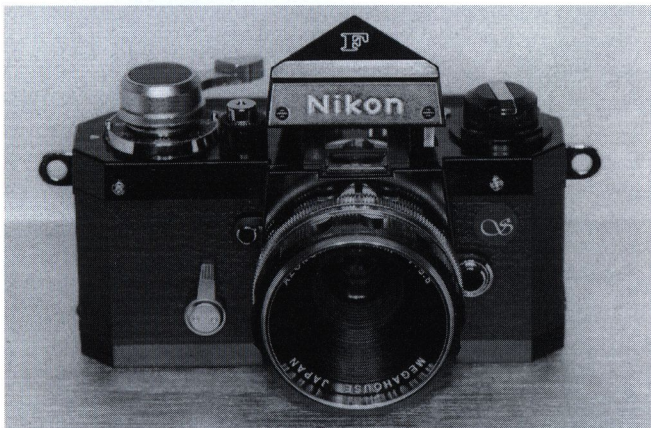


Black and chrome versions of the Sharan Megahouse “Mini-Nikons”! Note that they are not identical with the most obvious differences (from this view) being the wind lever/knob & selftimer levers.

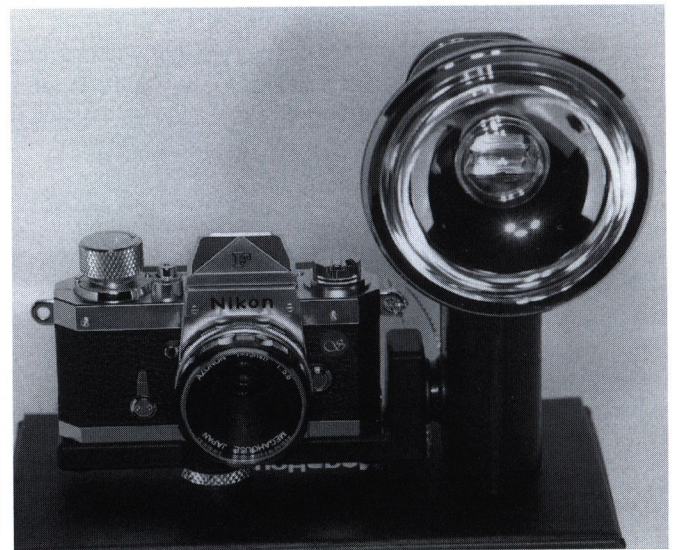
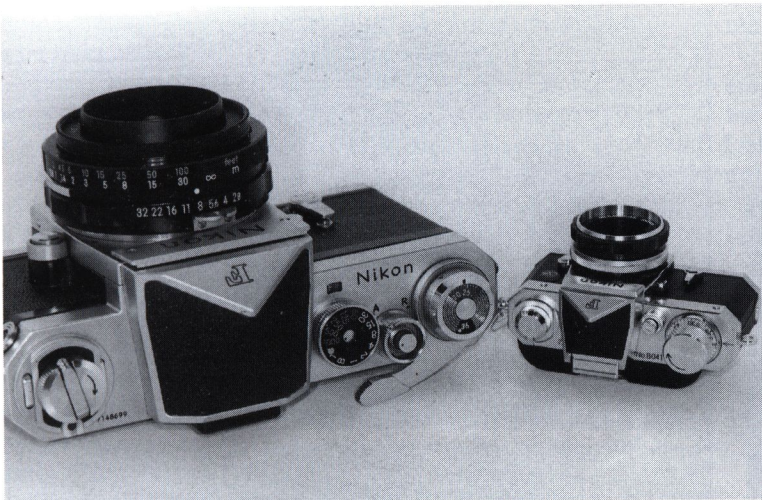




Left..Both types with their boxes and the bases to their plastic cases. The chrome camera comes in a black box and the black camera in a silver one! Interesting! Below left..With the prism popped open the actual viewfinder can be seen. The spring-loaded prism works off the rewind knob. Below right..Note the serial number location. Each body is individually numbered! Bottom 4 photos..Comparing the chrome and black versions: Note the rear emblems are a little different. Also the different back-lock mechanisms! The obvious difference of the wind lever as opposed to the wind knob on the chrome camera! These two cameras are not identical, but each unique in its own way! Lastly, note the “motor drive” contacts on the bases!! Now why is that there? The real “F” never had one!



Right & below...The "Minis" next to the real thing! Now you have an idea of their actual size but also how closely they mimic their full-size inspirations! Below right...The accessory flash unit that works with all the models in the series, not just the Nikons. Bottom..The black version with all of its packaging. Unlike the chrome type, it is supplied with a wrist strap and a perfect replica Nikon front lens cap! As I said, these two models are not identical, have their own manuals, and the black type is labeled "Limited Edition". So you will need one of each! Rich tells me that he has sold many of these and has them in stock. Contact him at rich@photovillage.com



THE BRONICA ADAPTER SAGA!

THE FINAL CHAPTER! RIGHT!?

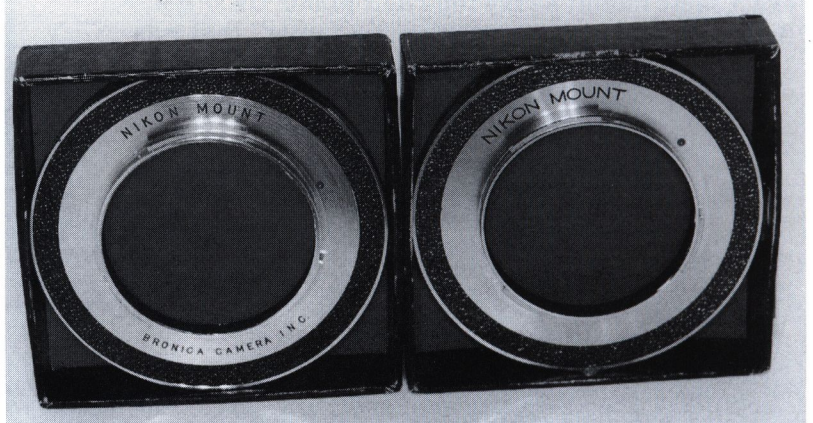
by **ROBERT J. ROTOLONI**

In NHS-68 I revisited the Bronica-Nikkors and the adapter that was used to affix the short-mount telephoto Nikkors to the early Bronicas. In that article I discussed adapter #81503 which mounted directly to the side-focusing early Bronicas, models Z, D and S. Once installed, those Nikkors with the standard rangefinder reflex housing bayonet would mount directly to the Bronica body. In this issue I again show this adapter and also the fact that there are at least two versions of it. However, I made an error of omission in that article. I wanted to show how the later, and more rare, direct-Bronica-mount-Nikkors could be used on the later front focusing models, such as the S2, S2A, C and EC series. Unfortunately, I ran the wrong photos when illustrating a second adapter, called the "Large Bayonet Adapter", which is necessary to attach the direct mount Nikkors! This was pointed out to me in feedback letters from members Peter Brunner and Chris Brent that were published in NHS-69. So this article is meant to clear up my error and illustrate the second adapter. Here goes!

First of all there are now two versions of the #81503 adapter known to us. Both are illustrated here, and even though the difference is purely cosmetic, they do exist so I felt I would show them. It does suggest that the adapter was produced for a significant period of time. This adapter mounts directly to the outer bayonet of the Z, D & S bodies, and allows those Nikkors with a Nikon RF bayonet to be attached. It does not let you mount the Bronica-Nikkors! So how do you mount the Nikkors made with the Bronica bayonet to the side focusing bodies? They attach to the large external bayonet on the body itself with no adapter needed! So if you have only the #81503 adapter you can use either type of short-mount Nikkor on your early Bronica Z, D or S side-focusing bodies.

But what if you have a later model, such as the S2, S2A, C or EC/ECTL, with their front focusing system and the removable focusing helix? How do you get those fantastic Nikkors on them? This is where the second adapter comes into play. The "Large Bayonet Adapter" actually "replaces" the focusing helix on these later models! Remove the helix and you will see a very large bayonet mount. It is to this bayonet that you attach the second adapter. Once you do this the visible bayonet is the same as that on the older cameras and it mates perfectly with the rarer direct-mount Bronica-Nikkors! (So that's how it's done!? Yes, RJR, now you have it right!?) But what if you don't have a Bronica-Nikkor? Say you have your handy 180/2.5 from your reflex housing and you want to use it on your Bronica ECTL with TTL metering? Can you? Of course! You now take the venerable #81503 adapter and mount that to the Large Bayonet Adapter! Yep, they go together! Once you do that you now have the standard Nikon RF bayonet available! So that is what was missing in NHS-68's article. Herein you will find photos describing all of this and hopefully making sense of it. Rest assured, both adapters do their job perfectly, and the short mount Nikkors, in either bayonet, really are awesome on the Bronicas. Put a 180/2.5 on an ECTL and you have a fast, bright tele and TTL metering in medium format. Or how about the 350 or the 500 or maybe even your trusty 1000mm Reflex-Nikkor! And all of this from two systems designed in the late 50s' and early 60s'. Makes you wonder how far we have really come, doesn't it? (RJR)

Bottom left...The Large Bayonet Adapter that was not shown in NHS-69! Bottom right...Two versions of the #81503 adapter are now known. Note the different engraving styles. One looks more rangefinder like!



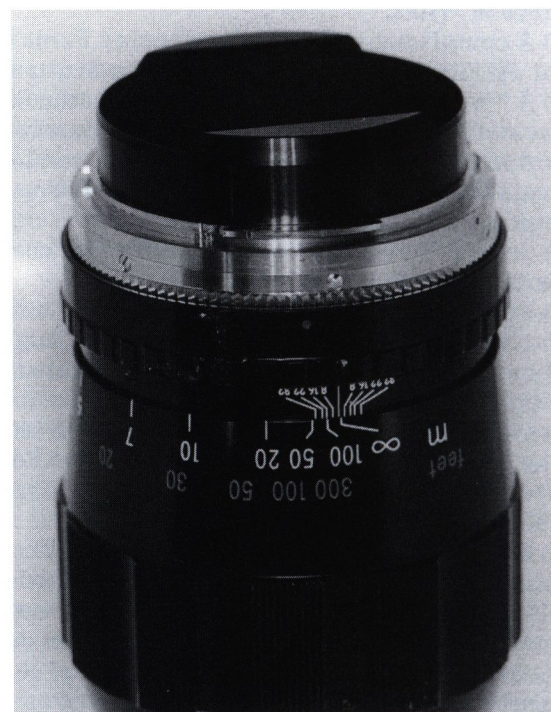
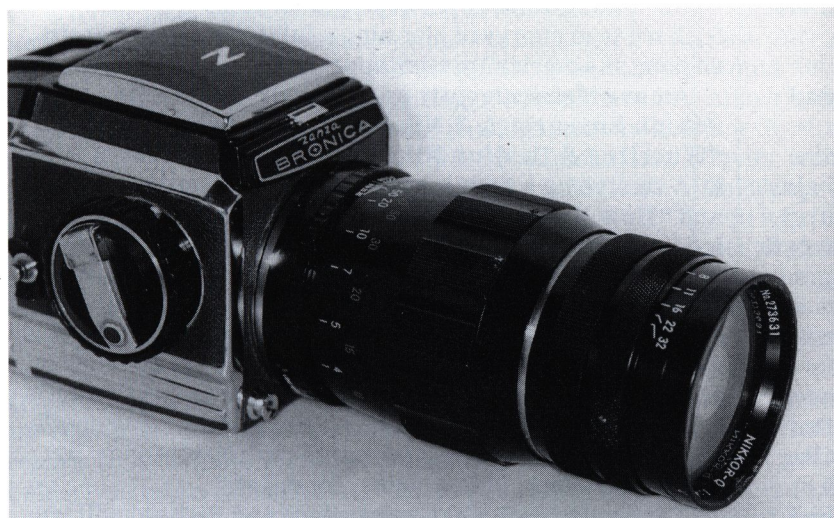


Top row L-R.S body showing larger external bayonet
 ...Same with #81503 adapter to mount the Nikkors in
 standard Nikon RF bayonet...Middle row L-R..S2 body
 showing large bayonet seen after removing the focusing
 helix...Same with "Large Bayonet Adapter" which
 gives you the exact same mount as the top left photo!!
 Bottom right...Same with the #81503 adapter mounted
 to the "Large Bayonet Adapter" which gives you the
 exact same mount as the top right photo! OK?? Whew!!
 Bottom left...The "Large Bayonet Adapter" that was
 "missing" in NHS-69! Sort of makes sense of things!!





Top left...Bronica-Nikkor 250 between S2 and S bodies ready to mount. Right top & middle...Same 250 with the Large Bayonet Adapter. Below...Same 250 on the S side-focus body (no adapter needed). Bottom left..Same 250 on the S2 front focus body (with adapter)! Bottom right...Both adapters mated. This combo duplicates the depth of the removable helix of the S2 & later models.



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NHS-CON8 INFO!!

FEBRUARY 22-24, 2002!!

IN SUNNY SCOTTSDALE, ARIZONA

Plans are firming up for the 8th. International Convention of the **Nikon Historical Society!**

When: Feb. 22-24, 2002

Where: Chaparral Suites Resort Hotel located in Scottsdale, Arizona, in the great American Southwest.

What: One entire day, Saturday Feb. 23rd, of Nikon presentations in a spanking new convention facility with state-of-the-art audio/visual projection equipment. The theme for NHS-Con8: "Nikon in America".

More of What:

- 1) A complimentary social gathering Friday the 22nd for drinks and Mexican cuisine in a Scottsdale home.
- 2) A "White Glove" Trade Fair of Nikon collectibles exclusively for NHS members immediately following and in the same room as the business sessions. Tables available for everybody who wants to swap. Just looking is okay, too!
- 3) Saturday evening "Western outdoor" cookout and barbecue at the hotel.
- 4) Plus optional activities (based on demand) before, during and after the convention, including world-class shopping in picturesque Scottsdale, visits to cultural attractions such as exhibits of American Indian arts & crafts, and a land &/or air tour of the Grand Canyon, one of Earth's greatest natural wonders! For those who wish, a round of golf on one of Arizona's numerous golf courses.
- 5) Efforts will be made to provide activities for quests who accompany NHS members. Nancy Dederer is the planner/hostess for this part of the convention. Also, special courtesies (such as language translators & dietary considerations) will be extended to our Japanese & European attendees.

More details: the room rate is \$159 per day single or double, which is far below the rates that prevail for such luxurious accommodations at the peak of the tourist season in Arizona! **All rooms are suites**, with private sleeping chamber and separate outer room. The rate also applies to those who arrive some days earlier or remain for some days following NHS-Con8.

This rate includes **free limousine shuttle** from and to Sky Harbor International Airport, only 20 minutes away. Also, **complimentary prepared-to-order breakfast, evening cocktail hour, use of swimming pools, spas, tennis courts & fully equipped fitness gym, & unlimited access to a business center with fax, online computers & copy equipment.** At modest additional cost, internet connection is available at all hours in every suite!

Phoenix has grown to become America's 6th largest city. Sky Harbor International Airport, only 1 hour from the West Coast, enjoys non-stop service with a hundred of

the world's cities. Soon to be inaugurated: non-stop Luft-hansa daily flights between Frankfurt and Phoenix, and non-stop British Airways service between London and Phoenix. Check with your travel agent.

Here are some internet locations where members can keep abreast with NHS-Con8 details. Fred Krughoff will soon open an NHS-Con8 link on the Society's home page at www.nikonhs.org and for terrific info on the hotel go to www.chaparralsuites.com. Make your reservations directly with the hotel, & **be sure to mention the Nikon Historical Society to qualify for the convention rate!** Inquiries are also welcome via email to Don Dederer, your meeting coordinator at: dondedera@aol.com.

"Nikon in America" is our theme for NHS-Con8. Chairman of the business sessions is Richard de Stoutz of Thun, Switzerland, email destoutz@swissonline.ch. Richard is in charge of planning a full schedule to feature "Nikon in America" presentations.

Among ideas currently under review: "The Story of Joseph Ehrenreich & Nikon", by Robert Rotoloni; "Wheeling & Dealing Nikon", personal experiences & a Q/A session by a prominent New York mail order operator; and "How Nikon Won the Vietnam Camera War", recollections of a war correspondent who witnessed some of the competition between Leica, Canon, Minolta and Nikon, and some hints as to why the Nikon SP and F prevailed.

Of course, our program will have room for our traditional contributors: Bill Kraus, who is always ready to talk about Nikon collecting; Uli Koch if he is ready to tell us about his new Nikon book!; Peter Lownds if he has unearthed another rare item; and another smashing multimedia show by resident photographic wonder, Tony Hurst.

And what else? Make suggestions and Richard will try to find a way. Remember, it is **YOUR** Convention, and its success depends upon **YOUR** participation!

Okay, people, the time is getting close! In less than ten months after you receive this issue, NHS-Con8 will be here! So it is time that we begin making our plans for a great weekend in the American Southwest right in the middle of winter when most of us are thinking about a few days in the sun! Set the time aside and start to give us your feedback, but make plans to enjoy yourselves because our conventions are "social" events, not just meetings! Our goal is to have fun and get to know each other on a personal level. Those who have attended previous "Cons" know exactly what I mean! Contact the hotel directly at 1-800-528-1456 or visit their web site. I will try to get brochures for those who plan to attend with more hotel info. But you must stay in touch with Don and I. E-mail us with ideas and if you are coming. In the next issue will be even more facts. **But start getting ready for NHS-Con8 in the sun!!.....RJR**

LETTERS..LETTERS

From Peter Abrahams....

The Nikon telescope in NHS-70 is one of a handful of vintage Nikon amateur instruments that have been seen in the U.S. They are very occasionally seen for sale in amateur astronomy circles, where their reputation is excellent. The example in NHS-70 is mounted on a rather flimsy looking mechanism, which might or might not be original but is certainly not adequate. The right angle sight mounted by the eyepiece is unique to Nikon, as far as I know. It appears in catalogs that are undated but probably from the 1960s'. The eyepieces marked "H" are Huygenian; those marked "O" are Orthoscopic. Both are standard types that can work very well. The 'very dark' neutral density filter is likely a solar filter, and they are not considered safe, because they are placed at focus where the heat from the sun cause them to crack, allowing focused sunlight into the eye! However, if you can look elsewhere than at the sun and see through it at all, it is a moon filter; a common accessory because the moon is uncomfortably bright through a telescope. The white sheet metal piece in the lid is used for projecting the solar image; but the Huygenian eyepieces must be used, since cemented ones such as Orthoscopics can overheat and damage the cement during solar observing.

Nikon makes amateur telescopes today for the Japanese market. Occasionally a U.S. dealer will have one for sale, but it is never clear whether they are imported from the factory or obtained on the secondary market.

I have a web page on the history of the telescope and the binocular. One ongoing project is a listing of Nikon binoculars. If anyone has any Nikon binocular catalogs and would consider copying them, please contact me. Of course, a listing would also be published in the Nikon Journal. My web page address is...

<http://www.europa.com/~telscope/binotele.htm>

From R.J. Warwick....

I read with interest the goings-on at the Mito-Nikon factory and it occurred to me that while our chums at Nikon are busy with the 'new' S3, they could make a few spare viewfinder inserts--with & without the 35mm frame--to replace some of those that have deteriorated so badly in our elderly original S3s and S4s. What do you think? Do you think it's worth a try & who would one contact to ask? What other spares & replacements might become available? *(Now isn't that an interesting idea? Nikon...are you listening? Why not make some of the parts available to repairmen so we can upgrade our vintage S3/S4/SP bodies? It could be a very lucrative marketing idea! Maybe our Japanese friends can "mention" it to them? RJR)*

From Gerald Davies....

I enclose a copy of a letter from the British weekly photo magazine 'Amateur Photographer', entitled "Oh Dear Me!". This you may like to read, as it concerns a rangefinder Nikon lens that was once attached to a Hansa Canon! "Having read your article about classic Canons I note the request for information. Unfortunately, I do not possess any of these desirable models but in my earlier days, in 1952 while visiting Australia, I purchased a secondhand well-used Hansa Canon. I used it for several years but eventually, after trouble with the shutter blinds, I threw it

out (I am horrified now but it seemed sensible at the time)! This Canon was fitted with a 50mm f/3.5 Nikkor lens which I still have. I only discarded the body. The lens was removable in similar fashion to the old Contax, with the focusing mechanism remaining as part of the body, but not having an external bayonet. Presumably only 50mm lenses were available. As far as I recollect, the only serial number was engraved on the edge of the focusing mount, which was an integral part of the body. The engraving read "No. 676 Nippon Kogaku Tokyo". I hope this is of interest. *(Can you believe it?? RJR)*

From Rutger Teuscher....

Isn't it amazing how time can bring us Nikon enthusiasts valuable knowledge about the past. Time and again I am fascinated about every piece of information you and all the other contributors to the NHS Journal discover & present so well. In the last two issues I particularly appreciated the report on the "new" S3. NHS-Con8 will certainly be a great opportunity to see you again. I will try to manage to get there next year.

From Uwe Flammer...

Some days ago I received NHS-70. Thank you very much, especially for publishing the great report about the manufacturing of the Nikon S3-2000. But I also have a criticism.

About the mysterious 1000mm Nikkor and the Photomic clearance problem. O.K., I understand that any F Photomic would not fit to this lens, but it does not make sense to attach a Photomic Model I to it, and to criticize that it does not fit, although it was released in 1962! How would you meter with this Photomic, using the external cell behind this huge lens? If you want to do any reasonable metering, you would have to use the Photomic T at least, which was not available before 1965.

Although I cannot recommend Terrence Sheehy's publications because I found them to be heavily overpriced for what information they deliver, I do have some books that I feel the members should be made aware of. First is Peter Braczo's "Nikon Handbook" second edition. This is much more than reasonable value for the money! And it is first hand information, written by Peter himself after years of research, with lots of good photos. Finally, I want to mention 2 books that I recommend to any camera collector, especially if he wants to use historic cameras, and not only collect them. These books should be mentioned in the NHS. They are "Collecting & Using Classic Cameras" and "Collecting & Using Classic SLRs", both by Ivor Mantanle. I do not know of any other publications which give a better impression of collecting and using ancient photographica.

AUCTION NEWS!

Besides setting a new world's record for a camera sale (\$216,603 for the prototype "Phantom" camera), Christie's January 16th auction also saw two Nikon items sell for significant figures. A chrome Nikon SP #6217331 went for \$5,203. Nothing like the \$25,000+ paid for the black one at Stan Tamarkins October sale, but still a hefty price. But the real surprise was a like new black Nikon F with box that sold for \$9,538! Now that is a shocker! It appears that the venerable Nikon F is beginning to come into its own! RJR

'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. If you want to be included 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 and others may change! Any addresses added or changed since the last issue are in **italics!!** This listing revised as of 3/31/2001)

PETER ABRAHAMS.....*telescope@europa.com*
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 TED BACHO.....*tedbacho@aol.com*
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www.wide-angle.nl
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 DANIEL ZIRINSKY.....*camrabug@aol.com*

A NEW NIKON F BOOK IS COMING SOON!!

One evening in my room during the Rotterdam convention, Uli Koch came to show me something. It was a large binder with preliminary page layouts for a new book he was working on dedicated to the Nikon F series. I could see that he already had a tremendous amount of information cataloged and that he was going to go into great detail about the different variations of the bodies, lenses & accessories. Just paging through it I saw such things as a listing of the variations of the standard prism for the "F", and the versions of the F36 motors. He told me that it would be extensively illustrated and probably divided into two or more volumes. Now, a year later, he has much more information as he gets closer to publication. He has sent me a photo of a mock-up of the slipcase, which is quite handsome, and also a very good idea. As you will see below, the projected size of this work is about 600 pages! It will be much easier to handle if it is broken up into the 3 proposed volumes, and a slipcase is the best method to contain them. This is really quite exciting for me to relay to you because I feel that the Nikon F now deserves such detailed treatment. I am often asked when I am going to do a book on the reflexes and have had to say that both time and knowledge prevent me from doing such a project. I have been waiting for someone to give it a try and now it is happening. The "F" system is much larger than the earlier RF era, and was also produced in much larger volume and for a longer period of time. The result is a tremendous number of variations of a large and diverse body of equipment. I can see why it has grown to a

600 page publication! Its time has come and I am happy to say it is getting close to reality. I will have more info in the next issue and I've asked Uli to speak about his project at the next Convention in Scottsdale! I've received the following information in the last month from Uli:

My Nikon F book will be published in English and have a format of 280mm x 220mm. The work consists of 3 volumes with the following approximate number of pages & photos.

Vol. 1....The Camera...170 pages....230 photos.

Vol. 2....The Accessories...220 pages....230 photos.

Vol. 3....The Lenses...210 pages....190 photos.

The total for all three volumes should be approximately 600 pages and 650 photos! About 15% will be in color. The three volumes will be presented in a beautiful printed slipcase. The expected publication date is Mid June of 2001. A brief description of the contents is as follows:

The Nikon F system is described in all its complexity at a level of detail never seen before. Countless photos show the various models of the body, accessories and lenses throughout the production era. Numerous tables with serial numbers supplement this invaluable information for collectors and users of this unique camera system. Readers are also presented with comprehensive research on a special aspect of the history of Nippon Kogaku: the German "Nikkor F" episode. Excellent photography and an appealing layout further enhance the value of this work. You may keep informed about the progress of my book by visiting my homepage at www.nikon-f.de starting in April. At the end of April/beginning of May, I'll have a complete homepage with several pages about the book and some links as well. The approximate price is projected to be EURO 159.

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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 IIg 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... Many Nikon RF & reflex items for sale or trade as well as quality products from makers such as **Bronica, Canon, Minolta, Pentax, Rollei, Zeiss, Kodak, Mamiya** & others. Also consignment items are always welcome. 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'm open to trades. **Robert Rotoloni, P.O. Box 3213, Munster, IN 46321. My "NEW" 24 hour fax line is 708-895-5368 or rotoloni@msn.com.**

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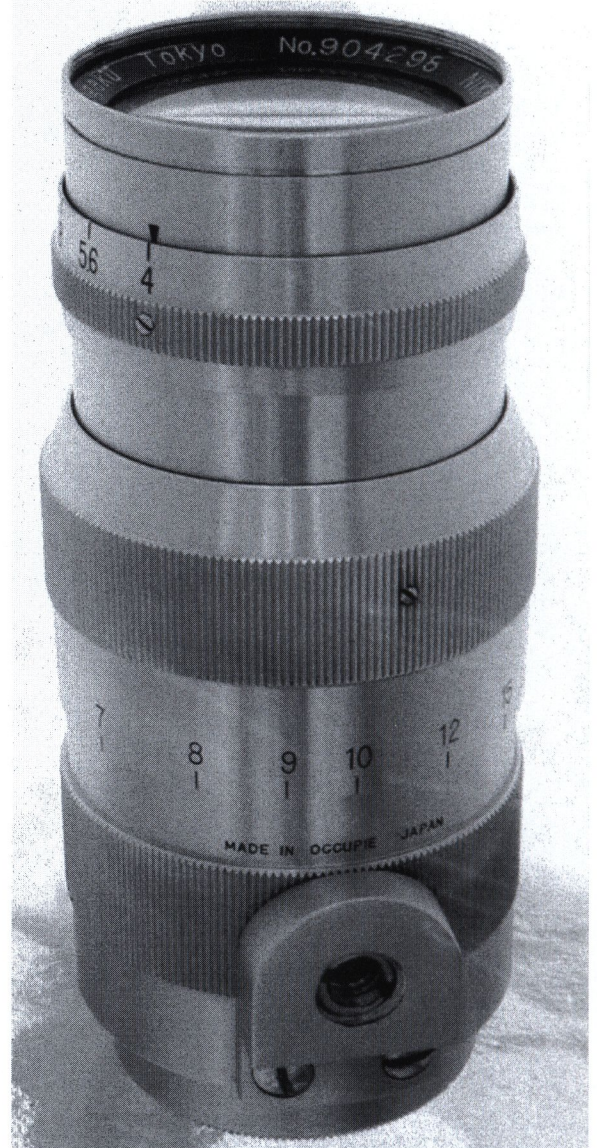
WEB SITES TO SEE!

This list will appear in each issue and will contain sites that the members may find useful from both a commercial and information point of view. If you discover a site you feel the members would be interested in please let me know and I'll run it in future issues. RJR

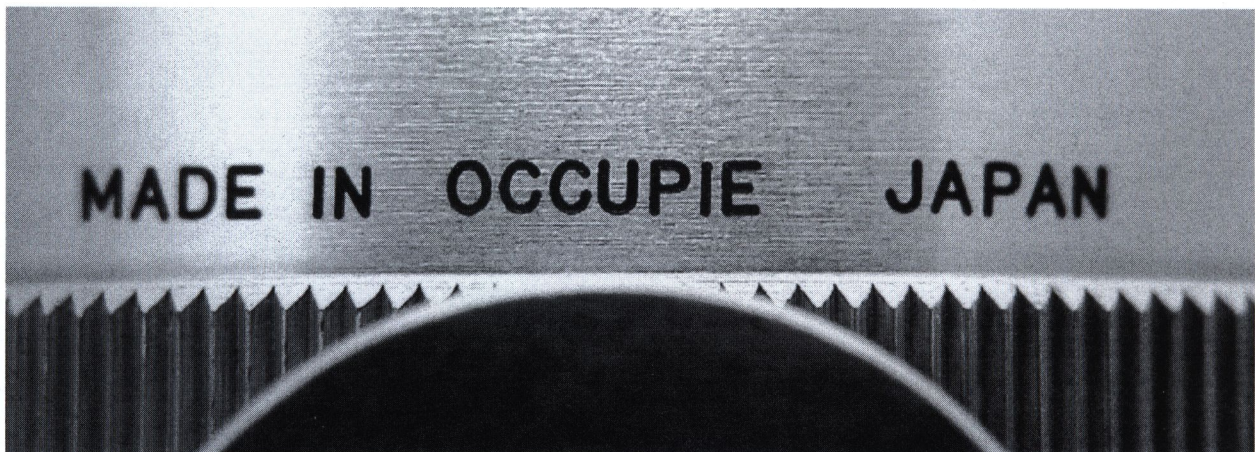
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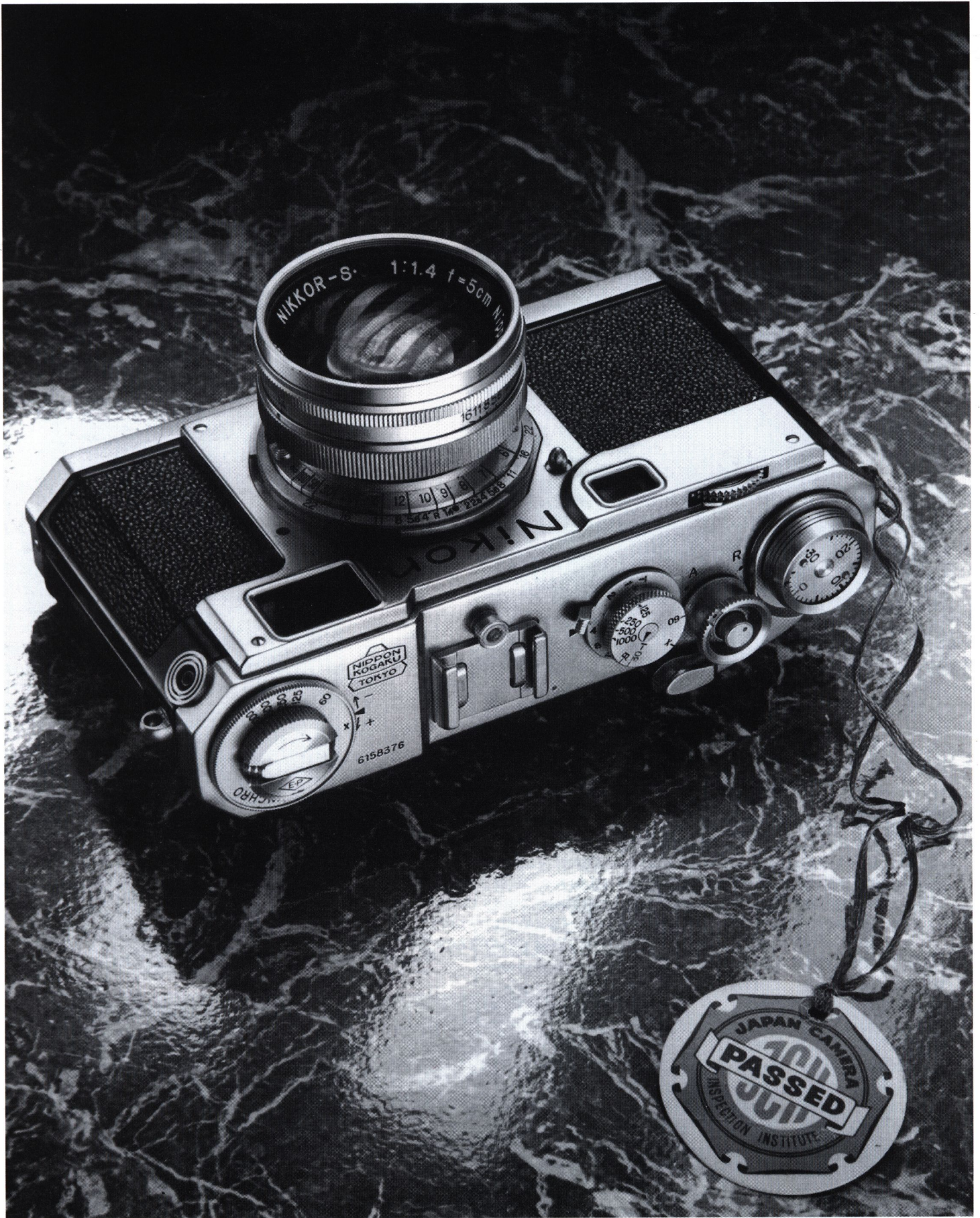
This is the site with the new F3Ma information.
www.nikon-magazine.com...British site for modern gear.
www.zoom-net.com.....New site for the international magazine "Classic Camera".
www.yoshino.ne.jp/kato/english.htm...A commercial & information site worth looking at.
www.mir.com.my/main.shtml...A Malaysian site...see
www.mir.com.my/rb/photography/photography.htm

odds 'n ends



Member Bob Thompson sent along these photos of a very fine 135/f4 screw mount Nikkor made during the era of the Occupation of Japan. This is a difficult to find lens today, especially in this condition. But what makes this example even more interesting is an engraving error. As you can see the final "D" in "Occupied" is missing. Errors such as this are not often seen on Nikon equipment. In my database are less than 30 such errors reported to me. Most consist of missing or incomplete letters and numbers. Many times these errors are not even noticed at first by their owners. So why not go through your collection. You never know what you may find!





Created For The 'NHS' by TONY HURST