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NIKON JOURNAL



THIS ISSUE
PG 1..VARIOUS REFLEX HOUSINGS
FOR THE NIKON RF CAMERAS
PG 7..IT'S THE LITTLE THINGS!
PART II

ROBERT J. ROTOLONI
EDITOR/PUBLISHER



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~ CONTENTS ~

INSIDE FRONT COVER:

NHS-123 EDITORIAL..... By ROBERT J. ROTOLONI

PAGE 1..... VARIOUS REFLEX HOUSINGS FOR NIKON RANGEFINDER CAMERAS-PART II By MICHAEL WESCOTT LODER

PAGE 7..... IT'S THE 'LITTLE' THINGS THAT MATTER-PART II By CHRISTOPHE SAP

PAGE 12/13..... NHS-CON 14 INFORMATION PAGES THE LATEST NEWS!

PAGE 14..... THE SINCEREST FORM OF FLATTERY...THE CONDOR 'S2' COPIES By TSUYOSHI KONNO

PAGE 17/18 THE AUCTION SCENE...LATEST RESULTS

PAGE 19..... LETTERS...LETTERS... BLACK IS BEAUTIFUL BROWSING EBAY

PAGE 20..... CLASSIFIEDS BACKISSUE SERVICE NEW MEMBERS/ADDRESSES

INSIDE BACK COVER..... 'ODDS N' ENDS' SOME RECENT RANDOM SIGHTINGS ON THE INTERNET

NHS -124 DEADLINE!

The deadline for the next issue of our **NIKON JOURNAL, NHS-124**, is **JUNE 1, 2014**. Please get all contributions, letters and photos to me by that date so I can get the next issue out to you on time. Thank you. **RJR.**

EDITORIAL

Welcome to NHS-123, our first issue for 2014. It is also our second to last issue before NHS-Con14 in San Francisco scheduled for October 3rd. So I only have these last two issues to emphasize that it will be upon us sooner than we know and 'IF' you are at all contemplating attending it is time to contact us as well as book your hotel. On pages 12/13 I have all the latest information about the meeting. Please refer to it and let us now if you are coming.

In this issue on page 1 we have Part II of Wes Loder's series on reflex housings. This time Wes looks at some of those weird and wonderful contraptions from the European originators of the concept, and their influence on Nikon's eventual products.

Beginning on page 7 we have Part II of Chris Sap's saga about how the 'Little Things' can not only be quite interesting and varied, but help to make any collection more interesting. Often times the little things are much harder to locate. In this installment you will see multiple variations on all types of Nikon finders, some of which I am sure you were not aware of. In NHS-124 Chris will continue with even more information.

Quite some time ago Japanese member Tsuyoshi Konno sent me a group of photos of a very uncommon series of 35mm leaf shutter RF cameras that looked suspiciously like the Nikon S2. Why? Because they are S2 copies! Not quite as close as all those Japanese Leica copies, but still much closer than you might think. We have had articles on such items in the past (NHS-45 & 48), but never those in this issue; the Condors. See what you think and I have more in store for you in the next issue, including Nikon S copies. See page 14.

The latest Westlicht Auction in Vienna was March 22 and the reason this issue is about 10 days late. I wanted to include its results so I held off going to the printer an extra week or so to keep the information more timely. Otherwise it would have been 3 months out of date. See pages 17 & 18.

Well, our wonderful US Postal System has done it to me again. Yes... another rate increase for both domestic and international. This time issues going outside of N. America went from \$4.60 to \$5.10! An 11% increase. Domestic went up 6%. Will this ever end?

When I took my daughter Cara to visit London a few years back we spent a delightful day with long time member Paul Bonner and his wife Jennie. We had lunch at a proper English Club and we had a great time. To this day my daughter speaks of that day very fondly. Sadly, Paul has informed me that his wife passed away in 2013. My daughter and I, and I am sure all of you who have met Paul, express sincerest condolences. She was a lovely lady.

Are you aware that this issue's back cover by our resident photographic genius, Tony Hurst, marks number 100?! I was not until Tony mentioned it to me. Can you imagine? 100 back covers! That's 25 years worth! And you will see on the back of this Journal that he is as creative and fresh as ever. What would our Journal be without him? Tony, my eternal gratitude.

Remember, NHS-Con14 is around the corner. One of the things we need is a good idea of how many will attend. This aids us in ordering certain things and telling the hotel and other suppliers what will be needed based on the numbers. So please let us know your plans. Thank you. **RJR**

VARIOUS REFLEX HOUSINGS FOR THE NIKON RANGEFINDER CAMERAS

PART II

By MICHAEL WESCOTT LODER

The Munich-based company, Kilfitt, offered one of the earliest reflex housings in either Leica thread or Contax bayonet. Their first housing, the Repriscop, came in mounts for the Leica, Contax, Ektra and Foton. It offered an upright, laterally-correct image at a 45 degree angle. Either a cable or a lever offered connectivity to a camera's shutter release. Their second series from the early 1950s was quite successful and combined greater compactness with versatility. Most came with a Leica thread both front and rear and a body depth similar to the Visoflex I. This allowed an owner to mount almost any Leica-thread short mount lens and retain infinity focus. Housings in Contax mount still featured the Leica thread on the front, but the housing was slightly deeper due to the greater depth of the Contax/Nikon body and its bayonet mount. Kilfitt got around this problem by shortening its lenses 150mm and longer by one millimeter so that they offered infinity focus on a Contax mount housing. When screwed onto the Leica version one only has to rack out the lens slightly to gain infinity focus.



The 150mm/f4.5 Kilar with Kilascope and a Nikon SP.



Landscape taken with the 150mm/f4.5 Kilar.



The Kilfitt Kilfascope mounted on an SP with the 300mm/f5.6 Kilar in front. Behind is the Novoflex housing in Contax mount with the 300mm/f5.6 Noflexar lens

The second Kilfitt series consisted of the Kilfascope and the Kilfiflex. They differ only in their finders. The Kilfiflex has a fixed waist level viewer while the Kilfascope has a 45 degree angled finder that provides a right-side-up and laterally-correct view similar to Kilfitt's earlier Repriscop. The mirror is spring loaded in the up position. Pressing down on a button on the left side lowers the mirror and a connecting cable plugged into the right side holds the mirror in the correct position. This cable screws into the camera's cable release socket. Pressing down on the button causes the pin to withdraw, releasing the mirror followed by the firing of the shutter. It is impossible to get out of synch and the

action is as fast as the photographer's finger, permitting rapid firing and film advancing. Re-lowering the mirror is awkward. The view in the finder is reduced but bright with both the landscape and portrait views outlined by overlapping horizontal and vertical boxes. The camera may be rotated, allowing either view to be used without having to turn the housing on its side, but the camera does not lock in either position. The eyepiece is focusable. The short-mount lenses include a 90mm/f3.5, 135mm/f4, 150mm/f4.5, 300mm/f5.6 and a 400mm/f5.6, still famed for their lightness and sharpness. Many were sold with adapters for use on Arriflex movie cameras. All came in Leica thread and, as noted above, focal lengths 150mm and longer will focus to infinity on the Contax-mount housing. Unfortunately, their single helical focusing rings tend to shift whenever one closes down the diaphragm. In addition, their focusing helicoids turn in the opposite direction of

Nikkor lenses in Nikon mount. Early versions of these lenses had manual diaphragms. Later ones were preset. Kilfitt used rubber bands for its focusing and aperture rings. In many cases these have stretched and no longer fit tightly, or are even missing. The 150mm Kilar lens is particularly sweet; light, compact and it takes 52mm filters. However, its back ring is so thick that it gets in the way of mounting the housing on a large-based tripod.



Nikon SP with Novoflex housing & 300mm/f5.6 Noflexar lens.

The Novoflex housing also came in either a waist-level version or one with a fixed 45 degree finder, which can be rotated 360 degrees, allowing its use from a variety of positions. The mirror box in the Contax/Nikon mount version, 98mm in depth, is deeper than the Visoflex standard, but it still has a Leica thread front mount. The mirror is spring loaded up. A lever on the right side cocks the mirror. A metal bridge release that mounts on the camera links the shutter release to one of two small buttons, one for the horizontal viewpoint, the other for the vertical setting, that in turn, release the mirror. The camera may be rotated for vertical or horizontal and the viewfinder rotates with it in the same way Nikon's second housing does. In action, this housing is one of the best designed and integrated, but if one is missing the bridge, fast action is impossible. It is not known if Novoflex ever offered a bridge to fit Nikon RF cameras. They did offer a special bellows that locked onto the housing using its tripod screw. The bellows has the ubiquitous Leica thread mount and Novoflex sold a wide range of barrel mount lenses to go on this bellows, ranging from 135mm through 300mm. Unfortunately, the bellows must be focused using the right hand knob, the left hand serving as a lock. This limits fast-action photography.

In addition, the Contax-mount version can take longer Noflexar lenses that use their original fast-focus pistol grip. The rapid-focus bellows in Leica thread mount will take 240mm Noflexars and longer focal lengths. The later breech-lock mount focusers will only mount on the Leitz Visoflex II.

The question readers may ask at this point is, Why bother? After all, NK offered its own reflex housing with a wide range of longer focal length lenses, and aren't single-lens reflex cameras superior to any RF housing anyway? The response for Nikon RF users is three-fold: economics, handling and versatility.

ECONOMICS: Both the Kilfitt and Novoflex housings can be found at prices considerably lower than that of the Nikon housing.

Even the rare Panflex II prices average lower.

Of these three, the Kilfitt is the cheapest with prices on ebay sometimes less than \$20 (US). However, many come without the critical cable connector. Unless it is included, the housing is essentially useless. Only about 1 in 10 has the Contax rear mount, so be careful. Oddly enough, all the cable connectors appear to end with an external release thread. This works fine on a Nikon, but how does it work on Contaxes, which all use the internal Compur thread?

The Novoflex housing is harder to find and, as with the Kilfitt, only about 1 of 10 have the Contax rear mount. Prices range close to \$100 or more. I own one that came with the bellows, 135mm barrel-mount lens and other accessories in a beautiful Benser-type case, all for less than \$80. But I had to have a machinist make me a proper bridge.

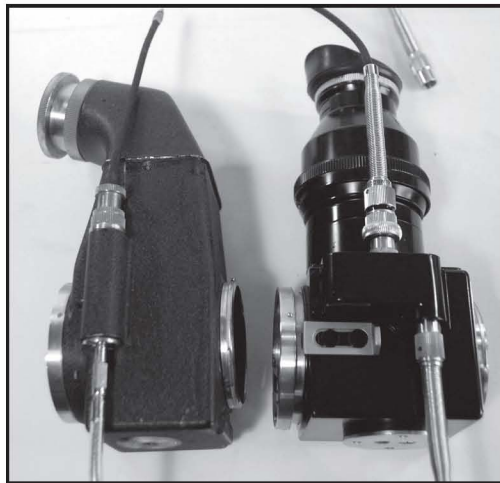


Landscape taken with 300mm Noflexar. Note the vignetting, a problem with all long-focus lenses & the Nikon RF cameras.

The Panflex II housings seem to run close to \$800, but bargains exist, and the ones at the high prices do not seem to sell. Mine cost me less than \$200. Note that the connector cable uses the Compur male thread. You have to have a shallow depth "Leica-Nikon adapter" (AR-1, or equivalent) to make the connection to a Nikon camera.

HANDLING: All three of these housings have better handling characteristics than the Nikon housing. The first Nikon version (see NHS-122) looks like a PLOOT, but it handles like a pre-war Panflex. The release is under the right side of the housing and pushing up on a "Finger-tip release" or a special cable release raises the mirror and then, via a connecting cable, fires the shutter. The release extends below the housing and has a long draw to push up the mirror. In practice, operation is not too bad (although a large tripod mounting base would interfere with the release). One can grip the housing and squeeze upward.

When NK came out with their Model II in 1956, they moved the release socket to the top of the side, but kept the tall release with its long draw plunger. The result is a plunger hanging out in space with no way to release, grip the camera, or advance the film rapidly. Using a cable release creates less of a problem, but the long draw of the release results in the mirror rising slowly, shifting the image and the focus seen through the finder as it rises. The failure to adequately spring-load the mirror in a down position increases this problem.



The pre-WWII Zeiss Panflex & the Nikon Model I housings showing the similarities of the cabling & release systems.

Both the Kilfitt and Novoflex units avoid this problem by moving the release to a position over the camera's shutter release via the cable or bridge. Having mirrors that are spring-loaded "Up" results in fast, quiet releases and virtually no lag between the push on the button and an exposure. The photographer can grip the camera and advance the film without having to re-position his or her hands. The only drawback is the need to re-cock the mirror after each exposure. On the Novoflex this is a small problem, since the re-cocking lever is within easy reach of the release finger. The Kilfitt's left side re-cock button is an annoying inconvenience.

The Novoflex's ground glass is similar to Nikon's and rotating the camera for vertical shots is easy. The Kilfitt view is much smaller than Nikon's and the red and yellow rectangles that outline the vertical and horizontal views are a cheaper compromise.

The Panflex II uses a connector cable that was the model for the Nikon housing. However, the release button is set back against the rear right of the housing, allowing easy contact with the release finger and quick advances. The spring-loaded 'down' mirror snaps up under strong pressure and quickly returns to its viewing position giving results in handling that is as good as the Leica Visoflex II.

How do these units compare with a single lens reflex? One might say "no contest" and leave off at that, but the uncluttered fine-grain ground glass and long mirrors on the Panflex, Novoflex and Nikon units offer bright, beautiful views for focusing longer lenses and doing close-up work. In short, if one has the time, they can be a joy to work with. And remember that at the time these housings were on the market, most SLRs still featured only waist-level finders, dim ground glass focusing, non-return mirrors and non-automatic lenses.

VERSATILITY: This is the final issue. The Contax-mount Kilflescope is one millimeter deeper than the Leica version, but still shallower than the Nikon unit. As a result it will take a wide range of optics. This is a combination ideal for hand-held shots. Both the 150 and 300mm Kilars feature magnesium-alloy bodies, which go a long way toward offsetting the added weight of the housing.

Combine the Novoflex housing with the 300mm Noflexar and a photographer has the fastest handling long-lens combo that would ever work on a Nikon RF.

The Panflex II, blessed with the external Contax mount on its front, is potentially even more versatile since any short-mount Nikkor can be brought out to infinity focus.

NOTE: All reflex housing lenses longer than 250mm for the Nikon and Contax cameras share a common failing: they vignette. This may partly explain why Leica's Visoflex alternative proved more popular. This is particularly obvious with the 500mm Nikkor and 500mm Fernobjektiv, but appears with the 300mm lenses as well. It is not caused by the optics. The 500mm Nikkor in Bronica mount easily covers the two and a quarter format. Nor is the problem apparent when looking through the finder. The problem lies in the small lens throat of the camera's themselves. It shows up on film, or if you view the focused image with a ground glass at the film gate, but does not show in the viewfinder.



Landscape taken with the 500mm Fernobjektiv.



Landscape taken with the 500mm Nikkor-T.

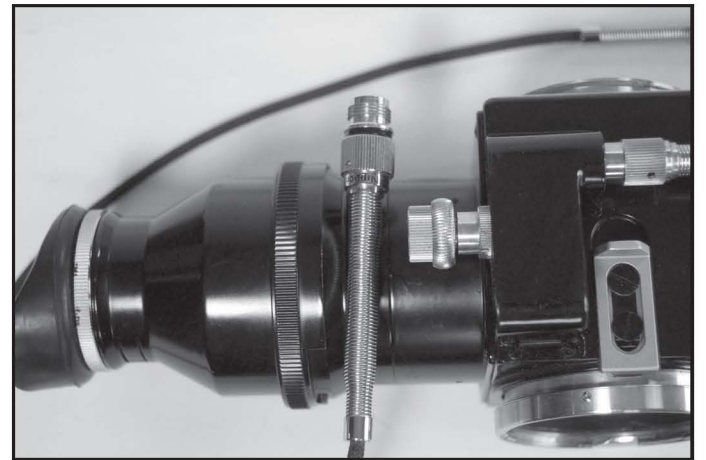
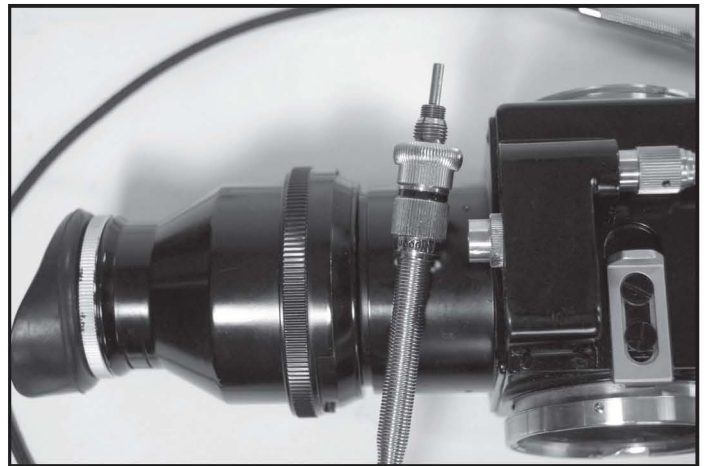
ALSO NOTE: One final caution: The Contax and Nikon RF mounts are the same. The distance for the external bayonet mount to film plane is the same. Which is why all these housings work. [The often discussed focusing differences lie in the rangefinder mechanisms.] However, the gap between the back of the bayonet flanges and the front escutcheon of a camera does vary. It is slightly deeper on Contaxes and early Nikons (I, M and S). It is narrower on later Nikons (S2, SP, S3, S4, and S3M). As a result, some housings with thicker flanges will not rotate all the way on later Nikons. I ran into this problem with one Kilfitt housing I have and the Novoflex unit. The solution is easy. A few minutes of

4

work with emory paper rubbed against the back of the housings' flanges and the housing rotated onto lock position without binding or scratching the camera's finish. This operation does not affect focus since that is determined by the inside of the housing flanges, not the outside backs.



The 500mm/f5 Nikkor & the 500mm/f8 Fernobjektiv posed together with their respective housings. Quite a contrast in size & weight. But note that no one knows exactly how many lenses Zeiss Jena actually made in the Panflex mount. The factory records do not indicate ANY. The few that exist must have been one-at-a-time special orders. A rare lens indeed.



Above... Two photos showing the different ways the connecting cable can be screwed onto the Nikon housing. When the large-to-small male adapter is left on the cable, the pin is secure & the double threading for adjusting the release delay can clearly be seen. When the adapter is left on the housing, the cable is the same as used on the Nikon Model II & the Nikon pistol grip.

Left... The earliest and latest versions of the over-sized cable releases for the Nikon housing. Note the extra deep socket on the early model for guarding the long plunger. The heavy wire coil on the last version performs the same function.



Both Zeiss and Novoflex took a quite different approach to the design of longer focal length lenses than their Japanese competitors. NK, attempting to compete with speed, based their 500mm/f5 Nikkor-T on an aerial lens triplet that features a huge, thick and heavy front element. At almost 20 pounds weight, the lens is certainly not hand-holdable and barely transportable.

In contrast, Zeiss' 500mm/f8 Fernobjektiv and all the longer Noflexar optics feature achromat doublets that reduce their weight to a few pounds. While an achromat formula can offer only limited optical corrections and apertures, the central images can be quite sharp—which is often all that is important when doing sports and wildlife photography.

REFLEX HOUSINGS FOR THE NIKON 'S' SERIES RANGEFINDER CAMERA SYSTEM...A REVIEW

KILFITT:

Compact, light and fast to set up, the Kilflescope is easy to throw in a gadget bag and mount when needed. Add either the 150 or 300mm Kilar lens and you have a setup barely heavier than a modern "full frame" SLR.

The Nikon mount may be tight. Shift from horizontal to vertical with a simple twist of the camera. However, it does not lock in place. View is correct laterally and vertically, but does not rotate with camera. Overlapping rectangles in yellow and red outline the different views. Diopter correction.

Connecting cable allows easy squeezing off of shots. Re-cocking the mirror via lever on left side is inconvenient.

Kilar lenses come in magnesium-alloy mounts that are light-weight and easy to hand hold. Helical turns the opposite direction of Nikkors and closing the diaphragm can cause the focus to shift. Early Kilars have manual mounts; later models came preset. Focal lengths 150mm and longer focus to infinity.

The most inexpensive of housings. Lens prices are not too bad either.

NOVOFLEX:

Beautifully made with nice handling. Not as light or compact at the Kilflescope. With proper bridge and Noflexar fast-focusing lens, as easy to operate as any concurrent SLR.

Nikon mount may be tight. Shift from horizontal to vertical with simple twist of camera. View in the finder shifts with the camera. Diopter correction. Mirror reset is convenient and fast. 45 degree finder can be rotated 360 degrees and even removed. Mounting the bridge slows the changing of the housing and lenses.

Bellows-mount optics from 135mm, with focusing grip from 300mm and longer. Older lenses may be hard to locate.

Left...Page 4 bottom...

Six reflex housings for the Nikon rangefinder cameras.

Left to right.....

Kilfitt Kilflescope with its correct connecting cable; the Novoflex reflex housing; the post-war Panflex Model II; the original pre-war Panflex Model I; the original Nikon Model I & the final version of the Nikon Reflex Housing, the Model II.

ZEISS PANFLEX II:

Easy to mount, but limited range of Zeiss lenses (only 115mm Panflex Tessar officially sold) and they are hard to find and expensive. Connecting cable requires shallow-depth adapter. Easy to operate and use. Finder shows non-rotating correct view with diopter correction. Tripod mount rotates from horizontal to vertical. Nice handling, compact and not too heavy.

NIKON MODEL I:

Rare and strange. Waist-level finder and body modeled on the Leitz PLOOT housing, but cable system follows ideas of Panflex Model I. View is upright but laterally reversed. Exchanging finger-tip release for cable release inconvenient. Release delay is adjustable. Body can be rotated to vertical with spring-loaded lock to set position. View does not rotate. Instead, a cross-shaped mask over the ground glass allows both views to be seen. The Nikon housings have the greatest depth, limiting focal lengths to 180mm and longer except for the bellows-mount 135mm. Quality construction throughout.

NIKON MODEL II:

Body rounded and finished in crinkle-black. Takes same connecting cable as Model I, and one can substitute the cable for the Nikon pistol grips. Socket for release is on top of side and forward. The socket is threaded for an external cable release but only the Nikon "Finger-tip release" or the special cable release will work without modification due to the long, narrow plunger needed to push up the mirror. Mirror is spring-loaded down but the slightest pressure on the release will cause it to start to rise, shifting focus. This is probably the most awkward and user unfriendly housing for the RF Nikons. Shutter release delay is adjustable. 45 degree finder is removable. A few 90 degree pentaprism finders were made later in the RF period. Viewer is bright with plain ground glass and large enough that taking in the entire screen can be difficult. A button on the left side allows camera rotation with a locking position for vertical and horizontal. View in finder shifts with the rotation. Quality construction.

**TEXT AND ALL PHOTOS BY..
MICHAEL WESCOTT LODER**

6

COMPARISON OF THE 500MM LENSES FOR THE NIKON RF HOUSING

500MM/F5 NIKKOR-T

Three elements in a triplet long-focus design

19.5 pounds (lens only-without housing or camera)

23 & 3/8 inches long (57cm)

6 & 1/2 inches at largest barrel diameter

108mm screw-in or 110mm drop-in filters

Closest focus distance is 25 feet

F5~f45

Production:

Probably in 4 lots averaging about 60 lenses each for a total of about 250 from 1954 to 1959 (last few were in direct Bronica mount only).

500mm/f8 FERNOBJEKTIV-T

Two elements in a single component, achromat, long-focus

4.5 pounds (lens only-without housing or camera)

19 inches long (47.4cm)

3 & 3/4 inches at largest barrel diameter

77mm screw-in filters

Closest focus distance is 6 meters (19.1 feet)

F8~f45

Production:

Unknown. In mounting for Panflex, post-war, maybe 6 to 12 in one lot in 1948.

SOME THOUGHTS ON THE TWO 500MM LENSES FOR NIKON RF HOUSING

These two lenses are a study in contrasts. The Nikkor is so heavy that even tripod-mounted operation becomes a challenge. However, the focusing is smooth and the placement of the focusing helicoid close to the camera makes operation comfortable. The F5 opening yields a bright and easy to focus image.

The Fernobjektiv is light and compact enough to allow hand-held shots using a pistol grip and/or brace. It also focuses closer, a plus for some wildlife photography. However, the placement of the focus ring toward the front of the lens requires an awkward reach that makes rapid focusing difficult even under the best of conditions.



So each lens has its points. Both vignette badly when used on an RF camera with a reflex housing, the Fernobjektiv more than the Nikkor. This is the consequence of the distance of the rear glass from the focal plane and the small size of the camera's lens throat. Both are capable of producing sharp images in the center of their fields. It is probable that an owner of both lenses would use the Fernobjektiv more often simply because it is easier to carry around.



IT'S THE 'LITTLE' THINGS THAT MATTER...PART II

By CHRISTOPHE SAP

In NHS-122 I started a series about the variations that one can find in those little things, such as the chrome finders.

In this second part I will entertain you with the differences and variations in other finders.

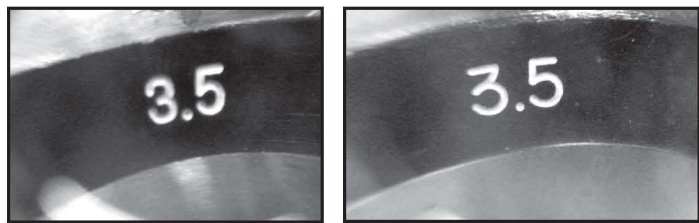
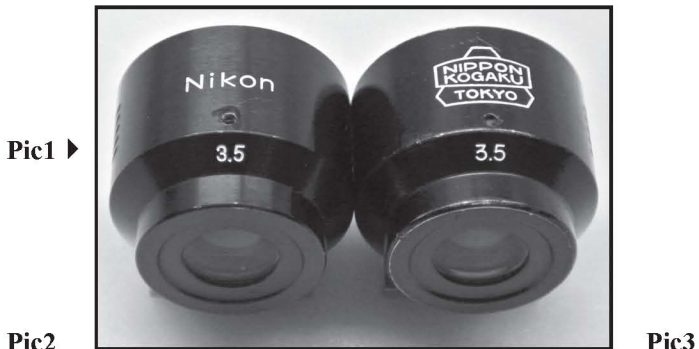
I will start with the black bright-line finder system

Except for a few words in "Nikon Rangefinder Camera" by Robert Rotoloni (1983), not much has been said about these nice finders. The book tells only about some variations found in the 13.5 finder (some not as glossy, some numbered). And you know that some can have an 'EP' on the shoe. Is that it folks?

Well, of course not. So this article is not about the variations mentioned in the book. There are not as many as with the chrome finders, but those that I found are interesting.

All bright-line finders are engraved with the white painted NK logo on top. But are they?

Have a look at pics 1-2-3. To find 'Nikon' instead of the triangular logo is clearly visible, but the two different ways of writing the '3' is more difficult to spot. The same '3' variation can be found on the 13.5 finders.



Just above the shoe they also have 'Japan' engraved, but the engraving can be painted in white or left unpainted, a third variation. (pic 4)

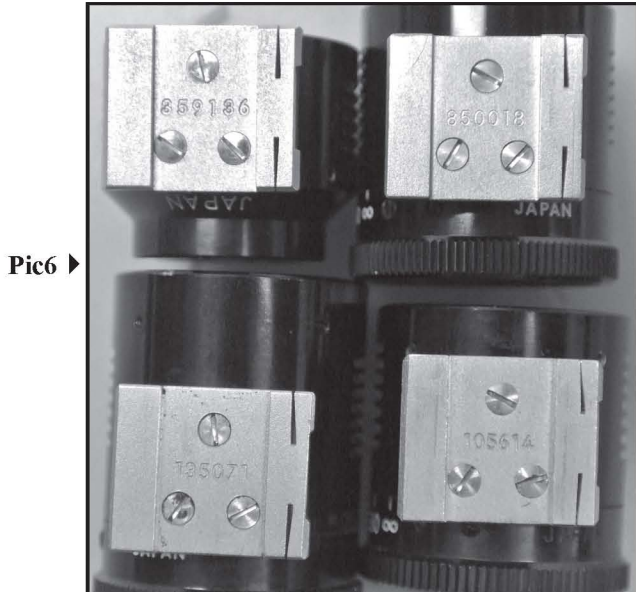
A fourth variation is possibly very rare and, therefore, often goes unnoticed. Calibrated in 'm' instead of 'ft'. (pic 5)



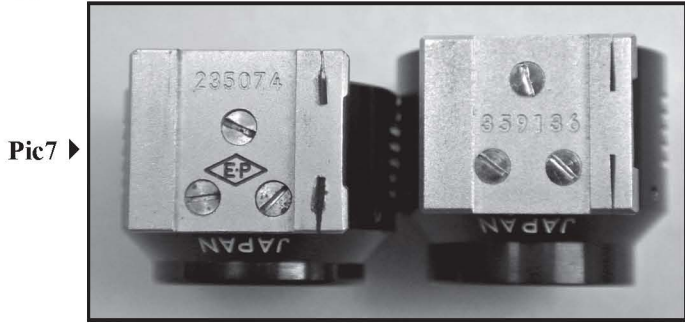
And no, it is not only the 13.5 that can be found numbered. I have them all with & without serial numbers. Except for the 5cm!

The serial numbers start with the focal length, so 35xxxx for the 3.5 finder; 85xxxx for the 8.5, etc. All have 6-digit serial numbers, even though the 10.5 and 13.5 start with 105 and 135 respectively. Pic 6 shows 359136, 850018, 135071 and 105614.

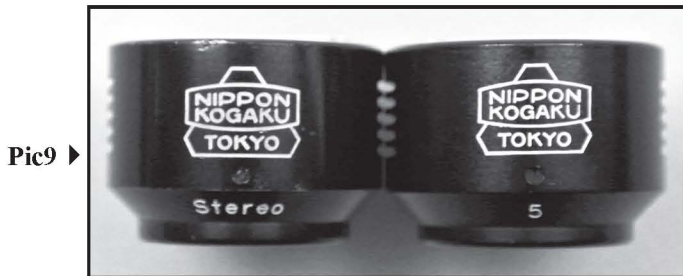
How many were made? I don't know, but in Rotoloni's book "The Complete Nikon Rangefinder System" you'll find a 13.5 finder number 136676 on page 356.



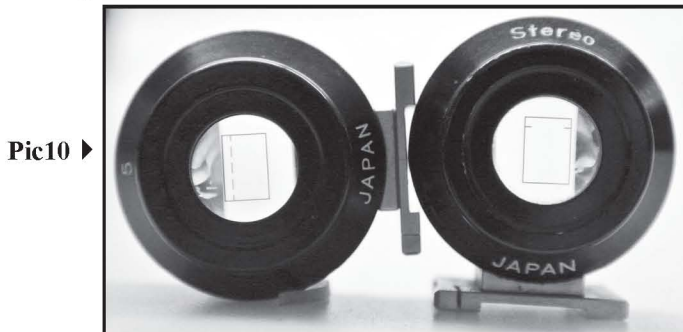
And don't forget, this is Nikon, so it is never simple. The 3.5cm bright-line finders can have no number, a number 35xxxx but also 235xxx (pic 7) Why should that be? Simple, the 235xxx type is for the Stereo 3.5 finder!



And this brings me to my last remark. The Stereo finder is not the same size as the standard 3.5 bright-line. It is, instead, exactly the same physically as the rare 5cm finder (pics 8-9).



And, when I put the Stereo next to the 5cm and turn one of them on its side, I was surprised to see exactly the same image frame (pic 10).



Now let's move to the Varifocal (Zoom) finders.

In "The Complete Nikon Rangefinder System" you will find descriptions of the various types of Varifocal finders. BUT... is that all there is? Remember, this is Nikon, and they always have some surprises.

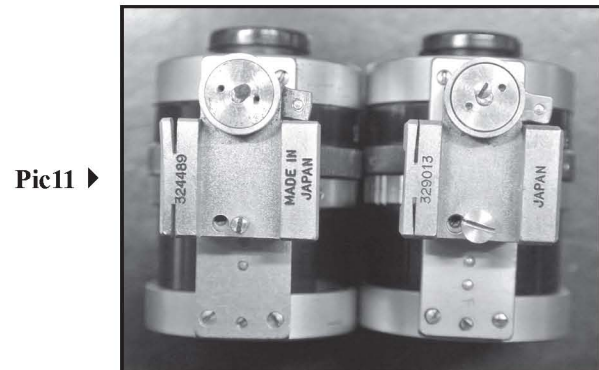
Page 470 of the book, Type I. "I only have one in my collection (323339), so I cannot compare to others, and therefore cannot tell if there are any differences."

The type designated IB, page 470-472, is something else. The book lists these variations:

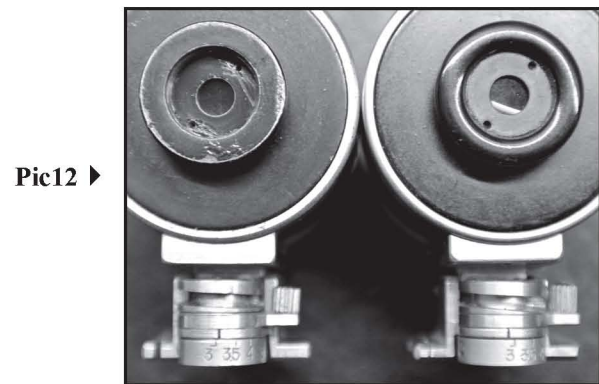
- No longer MIOJ
- With or without 10.5 marking
- With 7.3 and 9 for Leica
- Some are in meters
- Contax type shoe 11049-11483

Well, there are a lot more of Type IB. The earlier ones are most interesting as they show several variations, compared to later ones:

- 'Made in Japan' later becomes just 'Japan'. The screw head near the leading edge of the shoe is first small, then larger. The 2 small screw tips on the early type (left) are nearer to the shoe and protrude a bit. The later ones (right) are closer to the front & no longer protrude. (pic 11)



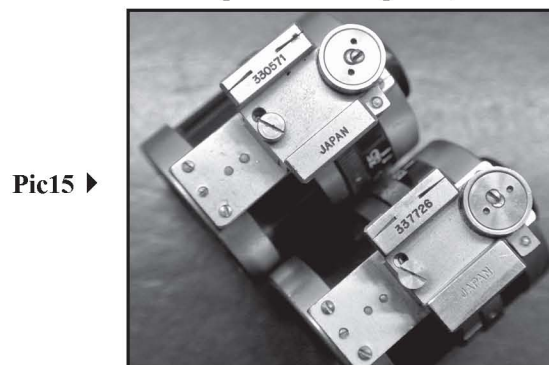
- The eyepiece is flat. In later ones it is rounded. (pic 12)



- The supporting plate holding the shoe to the housing is thicker on the earlier type. (pics 12-13-14)



- Up to at least 330571 'Japan' was painted in with black while later ones are not painted at all. (pic 15)

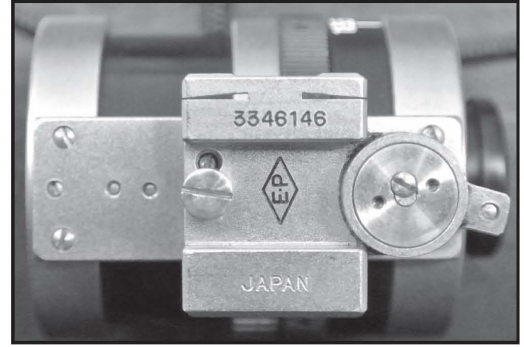


Pic16a ▶



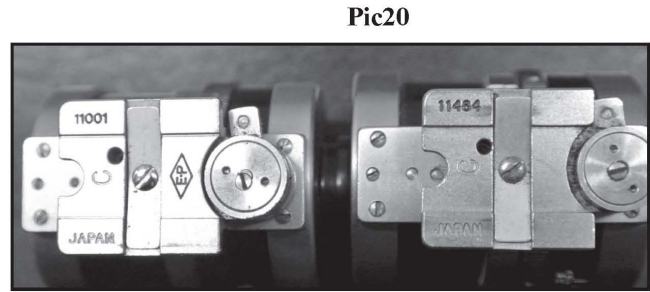
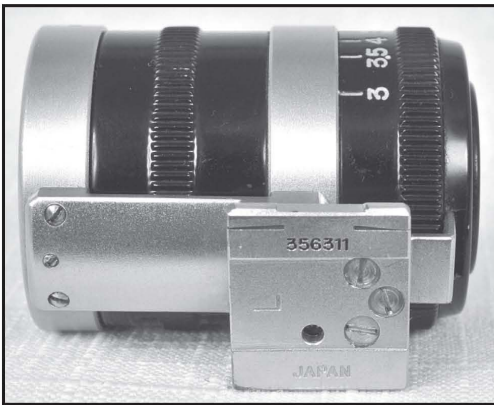
◀ Pic19

Pic18



- There is a second type for Leica. Not only markings for 7.3 and 9, but also 12.5 for the Leitz Hector. (pic 16a) The shoe is interesting as well, as it is marked with an 'L'. On other varifocals with the 7.3 & 9, I did not find the 'L'. (pic 16b)

Pic16b ▶



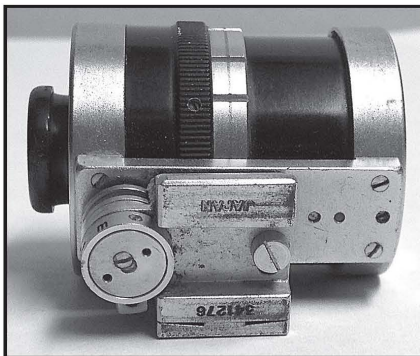
Pic20

For the Type II (page 472), beside one minor variation I found, there is a much more interesting one. In pic 21 you will see that the '3', just like with the bright-line finders, has changed. In fact, all number figures changed, but most are hardly visible except for the '3'. Near the end they changed the engraving to a much neater font, and the '3' became 'rounded'.

(Pics 16a & 16b courtesy Mike Symons)

That's it for my Varifocal differences, but I would like to find one like that in pic 16a/b to complete my collection.

Page 472 says some are in meters. Did you ever see one? Well I didn't until last January; ebay starting price \$29.99, buy it now \$49.99. What do you think? I did not hesitate for a moment and bought it. (pics 17a & b) Page 473 states the last Varifocals sold for \$45 with case. Fifty years later I paid about the same, without the case, but still quite happy with it.



◀ Pic17b

Pic17a

Pic21 ▶



Photo 22 might be the most interesting item in this article. A Type II in the Contax-type shoe! As with Type IB, it has its own number scheme. Pictured is my #21361. Type IB starts with a '1' while Type II starts with a '2' as the leading number.



Pic22

Picture 18 shows another interesting variation, perhaps one of a kind. A seven digit (3346146) serial number! And I do hope you like the mis-engraved one in pic 19.

To finish, a photo of two Type IB Varifocal finders with a Contax-type shoe. According to the book (page 472), "Known numbers range from 11049 to 11483". See the 'first' and the 'last?' in pic 20.

Not to be left out are the leather cases. Let me say that, until now, cases have been shabbily treated. However, they are nice to study too, as there are a lot of variations, even in the smallest ones. But I understand, we all like the hardware, and these leather cases are not very sexy.

And now for the Variframe finders

Here, too, there are some nice surprises. Let me start with two 'problem' finders. Type 3B, M901414, has a diopter attached by a chain. The problem is, this diopter does not fit onto the eyepiece of the finder for storage like the others. The internal diameter of the diopter is smaller than the external diameter of the eyepiece. So it cannot be stored. (pic 23)



Pic23 ▶

To show you more clearly I add pictures 24 & 25, where you will see that there is indeed a mismatch. The difference seems small, only 0.3mm, but on such a small item that is big.



Pic24 ▶



◀ Pic25

The other 'problem' Variframe is a black Type 7 #544912, but this problem is 'worthwhile'. Another mis-engraving. Can you see it? (pic 26)



Pic26

Otherwise I did not find many unknown variations, but those I found are interesting, especially regarding Type 4 (Leica). Picture 27 shows you four such finders. They are numbers 9026, 90239, 902560 & 9021099. So a very early one, & maybe the last one, with two more in between. So far so good, but look closely at pic 28.



Pic27



Pic28

Finders 9026 and 90239 are engraved 'NIKON' and 'NIPPON KOGAKU TOKYO' around the eyepiece. The later two have lost the 'NIKON' name, maybe because you can hardly expect Leica lovers to openly use Nikon gear? Pic 29 is a closer view.



Pic29

And there is more! Not only is the Nikon name gone, but what you can't see from the black and white photos here, is that the distance markings (3.5-5-7-15 & feet), which are all black on the first two, now are red for the 3.5 and 5, but black for the others on the later ones.

Type 6, as indicated in the book (page 482) is 'an interesting group'. Let me start with finder 364043. Page 482 says "363985 is not threaded, while 364091 is". Well we can now narrow this gap down, as 364043 is NOT threaded. So the split can be between 364043 and 364091. It has no chain, as no finder meant for the Leica ever possessed one. However, the hole where the holding screw for a chain would normally be is present. (pic 30)



Pic30

Finder 364160 has the chain (pic 31) and both 364043 and 364160 are MIOJ.



Pic31

**ALL PHOTOS EXCEPT
#s 16A & 16B PROVIDED
BY CHRIS SAP.**



Pic32

Finder 364670 (no longer MIOJ) has no chain, and the hole is still there but has now been capped off with a screw. (pic 32)



Pic33

Finder 364874 has no chain and no hole is present at all. (pic 33). This number is much higher than the recorded high mentioned in the book (which is 364288).

So not only is this group interesting because the MIOJ or MIJ engraving, or the threaded or not threaded nose, but also because of the chain, screw or no chain nor screw.

In the next installment I will continue with:

- Sportsfinder
- Mini finder
- Exposure meter
- Panorama head & bubble
- Close-up attachments
- 5 cm lens hood
- and...something big

SAN FRANCISCO: THE GATEWAY TO NIKON IN NORTH AMERICA



There is only one more issue of The Journal (June 30th) before our meeting in San Francisco. Therefore, I need to summarize things for you and also make some announcements. Time is running short. So here goes.

The meeting will begin at 9AM sharp on Friday, October 3rd. Our list of speakers is now complete and they will provide you with varied presentations and a few surprises. Our speakers are;

Jeff Felton (USA) will give a detailed illustrated talk on the flash units for the rangefinders with all current information.

Yuki Kawai (Japan/USA) will have a surprise for us as he did in Paris. (As in Paris, 'I' don't even know what it is!)

Uli Koch (Germany) will discuss the early Bronica/Nikkors and variations in the Nikon focusing mount for Bronica.

Bill Kraus (USA) will give two talks, one on the Nikon Aerial cameras as well as another surprise subject. (Don't ask me!)

Wes Loder (USA) will discuss Nippon Kagaku at a Crossroads, detailing their relationship with MacArthur and SCAP that had a lot to do with N-K's post-war survival and near failure.

Chris Sap (Belgium) will now have 3 talks for us entitled "Something Special Times Three". And this time I DO know the subject matter but I ain't talking!!

Mike Symons (Canada) will deal with the Nikkormat series of fine, but often underrated cameras.

As mentioned last issue we want to recognize San Francisco as 'The Gateway to Nikon in North America'. SF was the 'ORIGINAL' point of entry, not New York, and it all came about because of the efforts of two men and a small importer called 'Overseas Finance & Trading Company' (OFITRA). It was a long time ago and only lasted a few years so information and literature from the period are rare today. We ask that those attending look through their collections and bring with you anything from the OFITRA era you may possess, such as literature, price lists, letters, receipts and any product bearing the OFITRA label. We will try to have a separate table for these so they can be displayed throughout the day and, time permitting, be part of a short Show n' Tell during the afternoon session. So keep OFITRA in mind as we get closer. (Show n' Tell can also be 'anything' you think might interest us that you are proud of. It does not have to be just an OFITRA item.)

We do need to begin to hear from you ASAP if you are planning to attend. We need to have some idea of how many members and spouses will be in the meeting room and how many will participate in the closing dinner. The hotel needs these figures as well as the committee. Many things have to be paid for well in advance of

the meeting date (room/dinner deposits, gift items, tour deposits, printing, etc) so we need for you to begin sending in your monies as soon as you are sure you are coming. I know it is over 4 months off when you receive this issue but it will be upon us very quickly. Here is what is needed;

**CONVENTION FEE...\$175 PER PERSON IN THE MEETING
CLOSING DINNER...\$77 PER PERSON**

NAPA WINE TOUR...\$75 PER PERSON (more later!)

Either mail it to me at the Society address or **Paypal** me at rotoloni@msn.com. You may combine the dinner and tour all in one transaction if you wish. No problem. But please get your monies to us ASAP so we can set up both the dinner and tour. The sooner the better so we can get an idea of numbers. Remember that the convention fee covers the room and AV equipment rental costs, and the lunch and coffee breaks (morning, mid-morning and afternoon) for the meeting. It also covers the gift each attendee will receive as well as those for the speakers. When paying any of these fees with a check do not make it out to the **Journal** as I cannot cash those. **The Nikon Historical Society, RJR Publishing, or myself are all fine.**

We have contracted the closing dinner with the hotel so we never have to leave the building. The current quote for a complete dinner is \$77 per person with a choice of three entrees. We will have that info in NHS124 so you can decide your entrée ahead of time and we can inform the hotel. However, I do need to qualify that price as the hotel did with me. No one can completely predict food prices that far in advance but we hope it will not change. It is a complete dinner including desert and non-alcoholic beverages/ coffee and your choice of entrée. It should be a good time like all our previous dinners.

Also please contact the hotel as soon as possible to book your room. There is a lot going on in town that week and hotel rooms will be tight. The earlier you book the better. Don't forget that the room rates **INCLUDE** a **FREE** daily breakfast buffet as well as a complimentary two-hour 'HAPPY HOUR' from 4-6 everyday! We all know how much food and drinks cost in any city center and these two perks can be worth as much as \$30-\$50 per day per person if not more. If you have any questions about the hotel please go to their website. On that site is information that you can print yourself giving you driving directions, parking info, and close-by-local shops/eateries. There is also info on getting to the hotel from the airport with prices as well as websites for public transportation.

Please see the list of various website addresses at the end pertaining to the hotel, public transportation, local shops and restaurants, various tours, the Saturday camera show, museums and, most important of all, the site you go to for your room reservation. I had it in the last issue and used it myself and it worked perfectly. Then there is our official Convention website maintained by Thierry Ravassod. Keep checking there for real time info between now and the meeting.

The hotel is one of the best in San Francisco. **Please see page 15 in NHS-121 for room rates.** And you can't beat the location.

This hotel has been a tough negotiation. Because we will be in town during the height of the tourist season, getting this hotel was not easy. Also, they have 'minimums' that are directly linked to our meeting costs. We need so many people present (at least 50) in the meeting room to get the right price as well as the room for the closing dinner. If we fall below their minimums then the Society has to pay the difference! In addition we need to have a minimum of so many booked room nights or, again, all the rental costs go up beyond what the fee will cover, and I will be billed for the difference. Unfortunately, I can only wash so many dishes!

We meet on Friday for the same reason we did in Paris. The camera fair (formerly known as the San Jose show) is on Saturday just like Bievres was. The organizers are NHS members Ken Morton and Petra Keller. Ken has sent me an info sheet on the show with all the particulars. We hope to have a NHS table and an early bird rate for our members. If anyone actually wants a seller's table for the show please contact Ken and Petra directly.

Here is the probable schedule for the Friday meeting.

Start time will be promptly at 9am and coffee/rolls will be in the room. (They also tell me there will be a mid-morning coffee serving as well.) We must start on time in order to get all the speakers and speeches in, so **PLEASE BE ON TIME!**

We will break for lunch, which will be in the same room so it is very convenient.

We will continue with speakers, gifts and Show n' Tell after lunch. We hope to finish up early enough to allow time for some private trading amongst the members.

Between the meeting and the show we do not have very much time for planned outings. Tuesday and Wednesday are usually too early for any large undertaking because not everyone will be in town. Those of us who are present will, of course, keep busy on those days plus we need to be around for the happy hour to greet new arrivals. This has worked at all our previous meetings. We can do short adventures as one or multiple groups depending on interests, and still get back to the hotel for drinks! We can eat at various restaurants as well as that in the hotel, so I am sure we will keep ourselves entertained. We always do. But we do have a special tour set up for Thursday.

It is a bus tour of the **Napa Valley/Sanoma Wine country!** We will visit three wineries where we will be able to do some wine tasting, sightseeing and some shooting. Bob Rogen tells me that if we get the usual fall weather in the area it will be a glorious day. We will be picked up at the hotel at 9am sharp and returned at 6pm. We will stop at Sanoma Square for lunch where we can disperse to various restaurants of our liking. We will have at least an hour for lunch. The tour fee does not cover lunch so we are on

our own. **The fee is \$75 per person**, which includes the bus and the wine tastings at the three wineries. **BUT...we must fill the bus to get this price!** We need a minimum of '37' people to commit to the tour. Otherwise, the cost is divided amongst those who are present and will be higher. Therefore... we definitely need to hear from you on this part of the week. We can't book until we are sure we can fill the bus! So please, let us know ASAP and you can pay that when you pay the fee and dinner.

Other options for Tues/Wed include Chinatown, Fisherman's Wharf, Golden Gate, Alcatraz and local museums and shopping. (I am sure the ladies will do a lot of that on Friday and Saturday while we are doing our thing.) At this point I will list all the websites to help you plan your stay in San Francisco.

THE MARINE CLUB HOTEL

Main website iswww.marineclub.com
Reservations..<https://gc.synxis.com/rez.aspx?Hotel=15825&Chain=6660&group=Nikon%20H.S%202014> (see NHS122!)
Things to do..www.marineclub.com/areaguide/thingstodo.php

The official NHS-Con 14 website is:

<http://nipponkogakuklub.com/NHSCON14>
Wine tour....

http://www.towertours.com/tour_napa_sanoma_wine.html
Camera show & directions to it... <http://www.photofair.com>
BART station map for getting around SF plus when we go to the show we take the Powell Street BART to the Fremont BART station, then take a bus to the show area (bus to be determined)

<https://www.bart.gov/stations>

Other things to do or go to on your own or small groups include the following.

Alcatraz....the same company that does the Napa tour also has a city tour that includes a boat trip to Alcatraz. However, we were told it is fully booked for October 2nd but you might want to go on Wednesday the first.

http://www.towertours.com/tour_alcatraz_grand_city.html
De Young Museum: a beautiful structure and grounds and always interesting exhibits...<http://deyoung.famsf.org>

Pier 24 Photography Gallery: we would need to set this up and only on a weekday, possibly Wednesday for those who wish it.

<http://www.pier24.org/visit/index.php>

Yom Kippur... We recently realized that the Saturday camera show is on Yom Kippur, the holiest day on the Jewish calendar. There is a synagogue near the hotel: Congregation Sherith Israel. Their site is: <http://www.sherithisrael.org>

Of course there are many things to see and do in San Francisco and I am sure everyone will find time to do those things they like to do. This is the way it always is. I never worry about my members being bored. We are old and new friends and friends always find things to do to enjoy themselves. So come on and join us. We can have some fun!

Finally.....did you notice our official Convention logo at the top of this page and on the front cover? French member Thierry Ravassod, who designed the last one for Paris, also did this one for us. He even survived the feedback from the committee! Great job Thierry!!

...THE SINCEREST FORM OF FLATTERY...

By TSUYOSHI KONNO & ROBERT J. ROTOLONI



They say that imitation is the sincerest form of flattery. That being true, then the screw mount Leicas have to be the most flattered series of cameras on the planet (followed closely by the Rolleiflex/Rolleicord TLR cameras). And the vast majority of imitation Leicas and Rolleis came out of Japan, both pre and post war. But only N-K decided to add the Contax to the mix to come up with their interchangeable rangefinder 35. So they cannot be grouped with all those Leica imitators, including Canon. But did anyone else in Japan decide to deviate from the Leica-like crowd and lean towards the Contax style? Actually...no. Only N-K did it. But did anyone imitate the Nikon? Actually...yes! Sort of.

About 20 years ago I ran a short article about a copy of the Nikon S2 called the "Condor", made in the mid 1950s by the small Japanese maker 'Sankyo Kogaku-Kikai Co. Ltd.'. *(These Condor cameras are not to be confused with the series of Italian Galileo Condor rangefinders, which bear no resemblance to either the Nikon S2 or the Japanese cameras being discussed here.)* McKeown's lists one model of the Condor (plus a stripped down version we will get to later) but there were at least two full-featured models, both of which are illustrated here. All photos of these Condors are courtesy of Japanese member Tsuyoshi Konno.

From the photos it is obvious that the Condors are close copies of the Nikon S2 even though they are fixed lens leaf shutter cameras. Just a quick look tells you that the maker was trying desperately to mimic the famous S2. But how close did he get?

Well, functionally not very close. As mentioned they are fixed lens leaf shutter cameras so no comparison there. Also they have swing backs, not the removable type. A frame counter mimics the S2 shutter speed dials and the release is slightly moved. However, look a little closer and you will notice a nearly identical rapid wind lever, accessory shoe, rewind assembly and chrome front decorator plate. Also the interior film guide rails are very similar to the Nikon. But it is that front decorator plate that really jumps

out at you. The shape is identical including the name location and curved shape of the protruding hump for the RF window, and the raised area around the viewfinder window. In addition, the 4 screws are in their identical locations. Now tell me, is that a clone of the S2 front plate or not? Seems just as close as the top plates on all those screw mount Leica copies out there.

Konno-san has sent me photos of two Condor models. The first is very S2 like save for the slightly higher rewind assembly. The second, a model IIIs, appears nearly the same but its rewind lever is identical to the S2. Also note the ASA dial under the rewind on both models mimics the synchro dial on the S2.

Are the Condors really that close in appearance to the S2? The wind and rewind assemblies are for sure but that front decorator plate really needs a closer look. I'll go into that little feature in the next Journal.

RJR



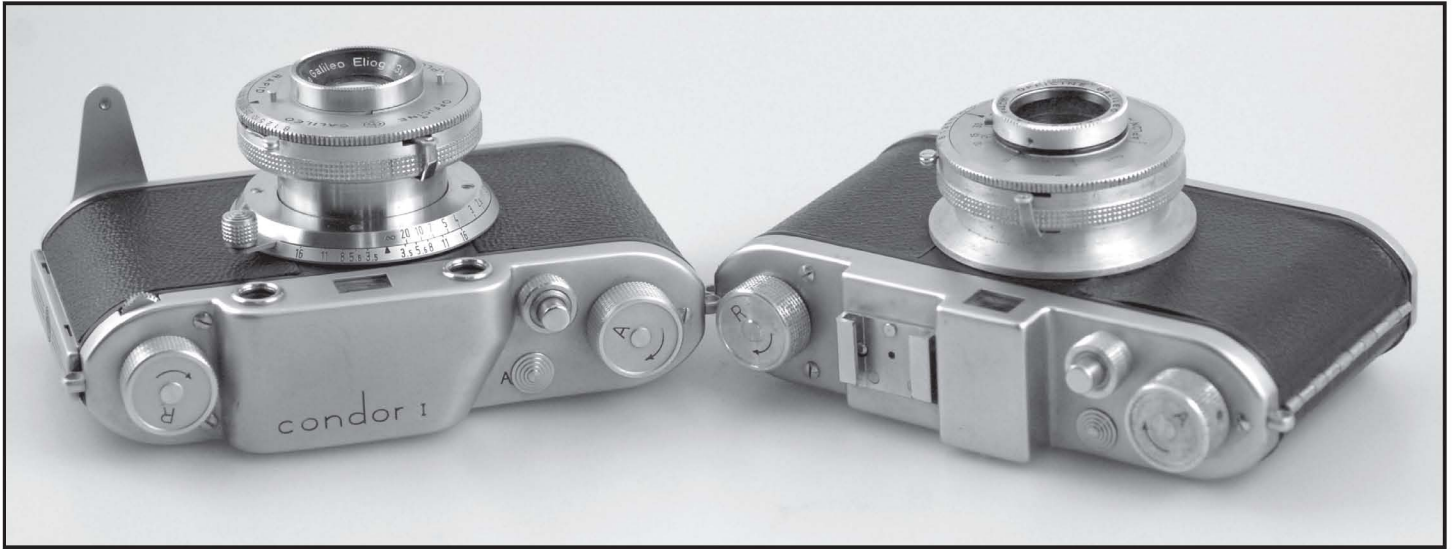
Top photo..The standard Condor alongside its inspiration, the Nikon S2. Note the arrangement of the top controls and that frontplate! Above..A closer view of the standard Condor. This is the only model listed in the latest McKeown's on page 211.



Above 2 photos...Views of the standard Condor model, which came with a 4.5cm/f2.8 Condor Delta lens. Note that the interior resembles the Nikon S2's four film guide rails. Also, more visible in these shots, the top controls and the front decorator plate.

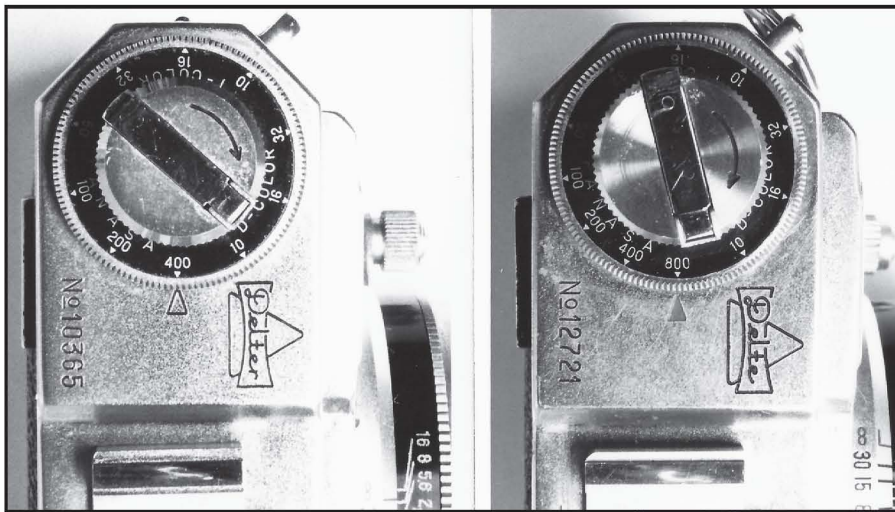
Bottom 2 photos...This is the later, more upscale, Condor III S, with a rewind assembly even more S2-like. However, the top plate step is less like the S2 but the front plate is still a match for the Nikon's.





Above..The 'Condor' name was also used by the Italian camera maker Galileo. (Some cameras are also marked Ferrania, another Italian company from the 1950s.) Obviously these cannot be confused with the Japanese Condors.

Left..Two of Konno-san's Condors have engraving errors. Strangely, they occur in their logo! Both should read as 'Delta' like their lenses. But, one is actually engraved 'Delter' and the other 'Delte'. In this photo note how the Condor ASA dial is designed to look like the Nikon Synchro dial, right down to the serrated edge & index mark.



Next issue will contain information on a 'cheaper' version of the Condor called the Rafuray. Also, a close comparison of that copy-cat front plate to the real thing. We will also see copies of the Nikon S model you may not be aware of. Were there any SP/S3 copies? Well...maybe.



THE AUCTION SCENE

Normally I would try to bring the final version of the March 31st Journal to the printer on or about the 15th of the month. But I needed to wait till the 22nd so I could get the results of the 25th Westlicht Auction in Vienna. Thus this issue is about 10 days late getting to you but I wanted to keep the results of the sale as timely as possible. If I waited till the June issue it would be three months out of date and old news.

As always Peter Coeln's auctions are large and diverse with a really first class assortment of items up for sale. And also as always, Leica leads the way with 285 of the total 578 lots! However, our favorite brand was well represented again and I have listed the most interesting along with their final hammer prices. That final price includes the 20% buyer's premium but not the added VAT that EU buyers must pay on certain items, which can run as high as an additional 24% above the 20% premium. So prices listed are what a buyer outside of the EU would expect to pay and is, in many cases, lower than what an EU resident would pay.

Nikon M6093077 w/f1.4 #319630 in original condition...\$2150.
Nikon M6093524 w/f1.4 & 85mm/f2 MIOJ lenses\$2000.
Nikon S outfit consisting of body, 50mm/f1.4, 85mm/f2, 105mm/f2.5 (all Nikkors) plus a boxed BCB flash\$2300.
Nikkor 50mm/f1.1 #120170 Internal w/HOOD!/caps\$5700.
Nikkor 50mm/f1.1 #120319 in Leica SM! W/caps and HOOD and case for hood. A very rare and beautiful item!... \$21,750.!
Fujinon 50mm/f1.2 #260097. A rare item indeed! \$7000.!
Double Boxed Nikon F Photomic w/f1.4.....\$1000.
Boxed Nikon F Photomic T w/f1.4 Nikkor\$1100.
Boxed Nikon F Photomic Tn w/f1.4 Nikkor.....\$2150.
Boxed Nikon F Photomic FTn 'Apollo' #7421561\$1800.
Boxed Nikon F Photomic FTn BLACK w/F36 Motor Drive and Cordless Battery Pack..ALL 3 BOXED!\$2300.
Nikon F HIGH SPEED 'SAPPORO' #7289894. First version 7 FPS w/correct prism & special 135-300mm finder & special battery pack. A very rare outfit!..... \$18,500.!

And now for two very special reflex Nikkors....

6mm/f2.8 Fisheye-Nikkor#628003. THE BIG ONE! With special cap & metal carry case. Extremely rare lens!..... \$31,800.!
300mm/f2.0 Nikkor#182291 w/special cap/special hood and case & special extender TC-14C. \$25,000 in the 80s! \$20,000.!

As is usually the case there were some surprises. What went cheap, or at least reasonable? The MS with 2 lenses was a good buy as was the Double Boxed Nikon F. Both buyers did well and that double boxed F should have gone for \$1500. The black Nikon FTn outfit with F36 & pack all in their original boxes was too low. The buyer got a deal as I feel it should have gone for about \$3000. What went for about what it should have? Believe it or not I feel that the 6mm/f2.8 Fisheye, the 50mm/f1.1 in Nikon mount and the 300mm/f2 went for the correct amounts. The Fisheye was not mint (someone actually used it!) while the 300mm has definitely held its value over time. And since the f1.1 included its shade (a little damaged) it still went for a fair price.

And what were the surprises (there are always surprises)? The HS Nikon F Sapporo is a hard one to call as so few have changed hands. However, the hammer price could be high or low depending

on your opinion. But it is always the items that sell for more than we expected that are the biggest surprises. And, yes, the Leica SM 50mm/f1.1 did go for a lot more than I thought. Maybe \$10,000 would have been more realistic. Remember, it did NOT include the 50mm finder. But the biggest surprise of all was.....

The 50mm/f1.2 Fujinon! Someone actually paid \$7000 for a heavily worn example! I have seen mint ones go for between \$2-3000 but this baby was nowhere near mint. I hope he is happy with it!



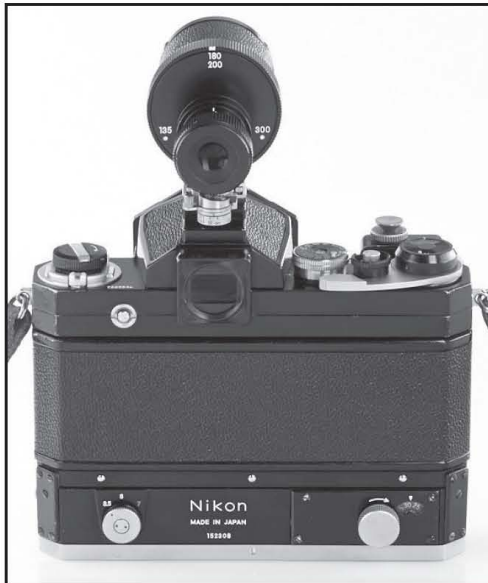
Top..An Internal 50/f1.1 w/cased hood is worth the \$5700 this one went for. Middle..Although it is rare, \$21,750 for a SM f1.1 is a little much! And no finder! Bottom.. But the biggest surprise of all has to be the 50/f1.2 Fujinon. An 'uncommon' lens, but the barrel has a lot of wear. Still, someone obviously felt it was worth \$7000 to them.

There are two other auctions coming up that I will try to cover in NHS-124. The first is the March 29th sale at Auction Team Breker held in Cologne Germany. I have never listed results from this house because, although they have literally hundreds of very diverse lots each sale (this time over 500), there are seldom very many Nikon items. This time there are some interesting pieces so I will try to get the hammer prices into the next Journal. Items of interest include two SPs (1 very early), an S4 with an all black 50mm/f2 Nikkor, a reflex housing and a double boxed black Olympic S3 outfit.

On May 29th Stan Tamarkin has another sale and I will have the results. I don't know details as yet but sale items should include a black Nikon SP, a copy stand and a Micro-Nikkor.

More next issue.

RJR



Above... This boxed set included a black FTn body, F36 motor & Cordless Battery Pack. Beautiful, yet it went for only \$2300. A fair price. Below.. The very rare 6mm/f2.8 Fisheye sold for a whopping \$31,800, but that is really not too far out of line. The condition could have been a little better. Left.. Two photos of the very desirable 7FPS Nikon F High Speed made for the Sapporo Olympics. A truly fascinating item & worth the \$18,500 price.



FOR IMMEDIATE SHIPMENT

Those of you who wish to obtain a signed copy of my book from me need only to contact me. Besides personally signing the book, I have also had made up labels stating to the fact that 'this copy has been purchased directly from the author'. Prices are as follow and include all shipping and postage costs. .

United States.....\$100 including Priority shipping.
Canada \$125 including Int. Priority shipping.
Europe/Japan/Aus..... \$140 including Int. Priority shipping.
 I can accept checks (US/Canada only), money orders, bank wires, cash or PAYPAL. My email addresses (rotoloni@msn.com & r.rotoloni@sbcglobal.net) are my Paypal account numbers.

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THANK YOU.....RJR



LETTERS...LETTERS...LETTERS

From Rick Lent... As a boy in the 50s, I liked to watch my father photograph with his Leica IIf, usually with a LTM 35mm/f3.5 Nikkor. When I started reading my father's 'Leica' and other camera magazines, I was always fascinated by the ads and use examples for RF reflex housings—mostly for the Leica. While I've never owned one, I've handled a Visoflex a few times as an adult, and found it amazing that anyone could make photographs with such a Rube Goldberg-seeming contraption. As I've come to understand since, each pro interchangeable lens RF system must have had some kind of reflex attachment option for use with telephoto lenses.

Which brings me to part 1 of Mr. Loder's wonderful series about reflex housings for the Nikon RF system in NHS-122. Interesting to consider that Contax reflex housings could be used on the RF Nikons, and presumably, vice-versa. One thing in this article struck me, and I wanted to offer this as a comment on Mr. Loder's descriptions of the design of the Zeiss 'Flektoskop' and 'Panflex' housings.

He mentions the 'Flektoskop' finder view is "laterally-reversed and upside-down (!)" – and then mentions the 'Panflex' was very similar, but smaller, saying "It mainly served for copy stand work." Visualizing the use of a reflex housing on a vertical copy stand, I wonder if both designs were based on that application?

Based on Mr. Loder's description of the Flektoskop, using it with a chimney-style finder would result (I think) in a right-side up and laterally correct image. The spring-loaded down mirror would also be necessary for vertical work. Does it seem reasonable, based on his description, that the Panflex design intended for copy work might have preceded the Flektoskop, with the later unit incompletely adapted for use in an 'upside-down' position (considering the photographer's orientation) when used for conventional photography?

This article reinforces my fascination with RF reflex housings, Rube Goldberg or not. I look forward to Wes' next installment!

From Al Satterwhite... In reference to the Margaret Bourke-White story, I got to thinking about all the photographers over the years who have used Nikons from the RFs through the bullet-proof Nikon F/F2. Most Nikon collectors seem to be focused on the newest, best condition camera/ lens they can find. Nothing wrong with that. But have you ever thought about collecting those battle-scarred or worn cameras that have lots of history attached to them from shooting well-known photos? It seems that having a camera or lens that has some history behind it would make that item far more interesting. Collectors of racecars cherish the racing history of the cars they buy (in the millions of dollars). I have a Nikkor 8mm/f2.8 Fisheye, the 5th one produced, that I bought in Miami in 1973 from a photographer who had decided round pictures weren't for him. I have used this lens over the years to shoot well-known ads including a series for Tuborg/Germany and even some ads for Nikon. I still have most of my trusty old Nikons from days past (I shoot mostly digital now), black, brassed, and dented, but all work. The great Marty Forscher used to overhaul everything between Christmas & New Years when I knew I wouldn't be shooting. I'd dump 12 bodies and around 30 lenses on him to be cleaned and tweaked. Those were the days.

SOME BOOK UPDATES..... AND BROWSING EBAY

Here are some ebay happenings for this issue....

Between auctions, now and later, and the immense amount of equipment showing up on Ebay, I have much info to list this issue. RJR

Some Nikon M/MS cameras have been on ebay recently. They include: **M6094025 w/f2 #50080282 priced at \$2000, no buyers as yet, but a very late M. Also M6091061 w/f2 #811497 is an early M with a collapsible f2 & the body is in METERS, which is not very common at all. You may have noticed M609857 being offered for \$6200. Look closely at all 3 of my books and you will see that very camera. The seller is not aware of it. However, he also has listed 50mm/f1.5 #907504, which is also in my book and he quotes that. His asking price is \$5000! Maybe I should have kept it, especially since I now own #907503! Oh well, you can't win them all. Also M6092670 is out there for \$2000 as well as M6093263 and M6091904. Quite a few choices. There have also been a few 8 digit S cameras lately including: 60911174 (\$745) & 60910472 & 60911216. Even a few 'common' S cameras have been recently listed such as: 6129509 (very late!) & 6094402 (very early MIOJ body that sold for over \$700 even though it had a name engraved on the top plate)! Also very early S #6094513 is being offered for \$1700. But the kicker is Nikon S #6099066 w/f1.4 #322228 in GOLD! From a small series of gold plated Nikons made in Como, Italy by S. Mello. It is #9 in the series but DNS at \$1500! As for gold how about a Gold Nikon F #6468625? Seller has listed it at least 3 times for \$10,000 but no buyers as yet! Besides the 6mm/f2.8 Fisheye Nikkor in the Westlicht auction, at least 3 others have been listed recently! That's right, 3! Two in France, one in Utah! Asking price is in the \$40,000 range. At the opposite end of the Nikon lens line, how about a 2000mm Reflex-Nikkor? There's one in Hong Kong (\$81,000!) and one in Germany. Take your pick. A very rare 90 degree prism for the reflex housing is being offered for \$8,000, which is not that much out of line. It is #77056. Some common items that might not be that common include: 135 #265790: not only has a colon but...it is the new style black barrel & the number is way too early. Is there a chrome or all-black lens with the same number? Another 135, #257913, is a BLACK ORIGINAL! Way too early a number!? How about a SM 50/f1.4 a not uncommon item. But how about this number...50050500! MIOJ vintage and one hell of a number. We all know that metric Nikon RF items are very uncommon. Here is what has popped up recently. 85mm/f2 chrome #404533 (late); black 135s #277883 & 280479; and Nikon S2 body #6147316 in England! Two Olympic 1.4 lenses are #s 140571 (\$1300) & 140892. KEH has a nice Nikon S2 with an Aluminum 1.4 if you are interested. Only \$4300! A bit high! Finally, black NIKKOR F #7046396 recently sold on ebay. RJR**

BLACK & BEAUTIFUL!

PLEASE ADD THESE NUMBERS TO THOSE IN NHS-112, WHERE OUR OFFICIAL NHS BLACK BODY LIST APPEARS.

6140847	6194117	6202657	6320563
6321074	6321176	6322387	6600026

THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS ARE THOSE OF FAKES!
6147230 6208788 6210953 6212023 6214590 6230874

CLASSIFIED ADS

SELL LIST... I am now on EBAY on a regular basis! You might want to make me a preferred seller so you can keep track of what I have currently listed. My ID is '6091'! . **RJR rotoloni@msn.com**

WANTED...Photos wanted if possible for any of the following lenses: NIKKOR 21mm.f4.0 in LTM; NIKKOR 25mm/f4.5 in Nikon mt; NIKKOR 28mm/f4 in Nikon mt; STEREO-NIKKOR in LTM!; KINEGON 35mm/f2.5 in Nikon mt; KOMURA 28mm/f2.8 in Nikon mt. Rare non-Nikkor wide angle lenses for Nikon RF mount. **Akito Tamla, Suginami-ku, Kami-igusa 1-25-11-104, Tokyo 167-0023 Japan. Cell phone email akito49@wm.pdx.ne.jp Thanks.**

WANTED...ALL NIKON RANGEFINDER ITEMS, also F bodies, scalloped AI and non-AI lenses and anything else interesting. What do you have? **Peter Walnes, PO Box 332, Penzance TR18 9PD UK. Tel +44 1736 719461. Fax +44 1736 719538. Email; pwalnes@truemesh.com Website; www.peterwalnes.com**

FOR SALE/TRADE...Nikon 'MR' case in **BLACK!** First known about only a few years ago & only the 4th one I am aware of. Not Mint, but the nicest one I have seen. Not cheap, but if you own a black SP/S3/S3M, only a drop in the ocean & your camera deserves it. Offers accepted, or will trade up, down or sideways for interesting early F or Nikkor items. I can deliver it at NHS-Con14 if you wish. **Bill Pringle, (209) 848-2616, (209) 988-6886 or redchips@aol.com**

WANTED...Nikon 35mm/f1.8 in Leica SM. Prefer clean glass & cosmetics. Authentic **BLACK** Canon rangefinder body, preferably a VIT or VIL model. NO repaint-only original. Nikon 3.5cm bright line finder. **Bob Roggen teamrogen@sbcglobal.net**

WANTED...NIKON F 'RED DOT' BLACK BODY; exposure meter for Nikon F model 1-type 1 (Uli Koch pg. 20-The Accessories) possibly with incident light plate & booster; telescope adapter for Nikon F in case with its filters & screen in plastic bags. **Carlo Rivolti, Italy. please email to rivolti@libero.it**

WANTED... 8mm/f2.8 **FISH EYE NIKKOR**, 13mm/f5.6 NIKKOR, **120 FISH EYE SKY NIKKOR**, experimental NIKON cameras and/or lenses/accessories, even if broken. **NIKON S2 & SP (BLACK), ALUMINUM 5cm F1.4 NIKKOR. PH Van Hasbroeck, 56 Albert Court, Prince Consort Road, London SW7 2BE. tel: 0044 (0) 20 7584 0077. Fax: 0044 (0) 20 7591 3848. email address: HASBROECK@AOL.COM**

WANTED...Common models of Autographic Kodaks, & also large size Ansco models. Contact: **Tony Hurst (Dublin) at email nippon54@hotmail.com or telephone me at (353) 1288- 4896.**

NEW ADDRESSES

PAUL BONNER
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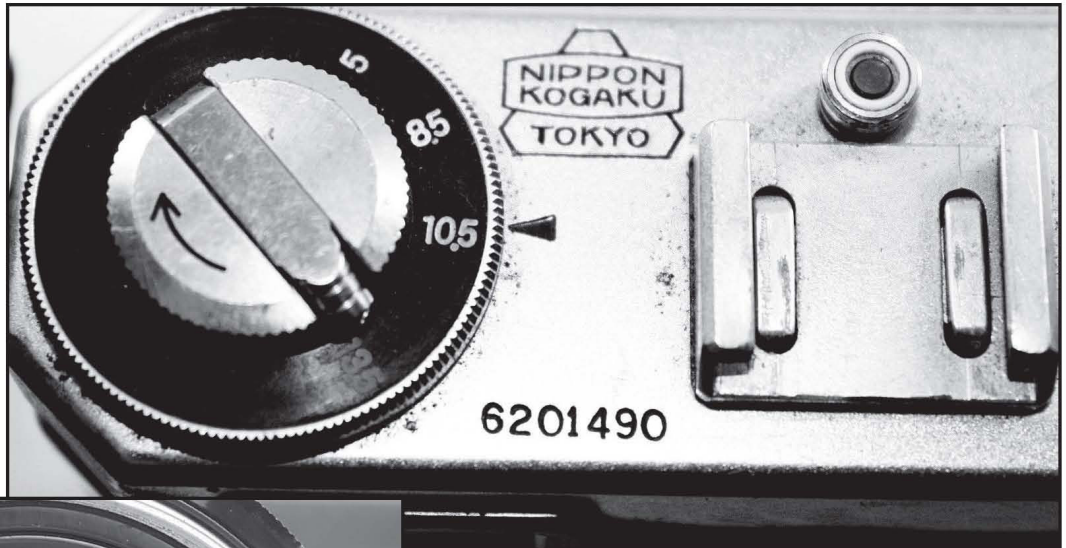
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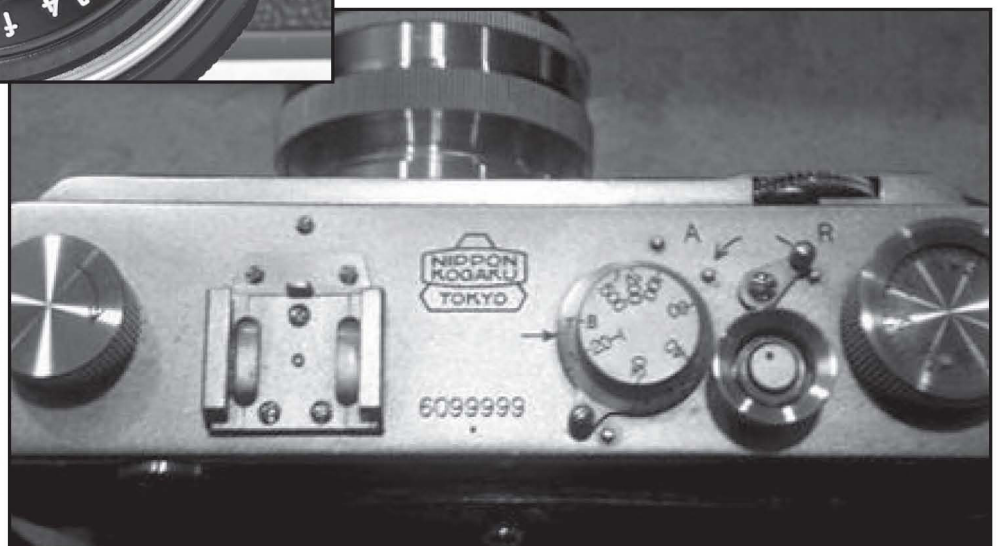
Right...This Nikon SP was recently for sale on Ebay where it did eventually sell. However, I wonder if the buyer was just after an SP or might he have noticed that there was something a little different about this one. Take a good look at your SP (or any Nikon from the S2 through the F2) and compare this serial number to yours. Notice that this number just doesn't look right. The font is not right nor is the number engraved correctly. It slants off to the right. Very interesting!



SOME RECENT RANDOM SIGHTINGS ON THE INTERNET

Above...Do you own one of these? It is the 'ultra rare' 50 meter f1.4 Nikkor! Wow, that's a really fast super telephoto I'd love to own. Wouldn't you?

Right...We all know that when Nikon reached S body #6099999 they went to 8 digits and used 60910000. I am sure we all have wanted to find either camera. Well this photo was recently on the 'net' and said to be somewhere in the NY/NJ area on the east coast. Is it legit? Don't know and can't tell from the photo, but wouldn't you just love to have it in hand to examine it? I certainly would.





Tony Hurst's
100th Back Page
for the
Nikon Historical Society