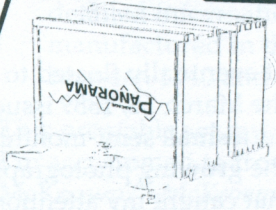




# CASCADE PANORAMA



CASCADE PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY  
Portland, Oregon • Founded 1974

Ralph London - Editor • Charlie Kamerman - Desktop Publisher

May - August 2001

**Next Meeting:** Instrument Sales and Service, 33 NE 6th Avenue, Wednesday,  
May 30, 7:30 pm. Doors open at 7:00.

## May 30th Program —

Mike Hanemann, Death Defying Flash Photography: Using Dangerous Pre-Flashbulb Equipment. Mike did a display on this topic at the PSPCS Puyallup Show. Come see the results. (Rescheduled from March)

## CPHS Calendar

Sunday, August 5 — Summer Shoot, Columbia River Highway and Waterfalls. Details to follow.

September 26 and October 31 Meetings

## For Leica, K is “Kugellager”

by Ralph London

The March issue of the *Cascade Panorama* reported a conversation between Jack Kelly and me in which we concluded the “K” in the Leica IIIc “K-Model” stood for Kältefest. Apparently we were wrong because we incorrectly assumed that the “K” had to mean the same for Leica cameras, other cameras and various binoculars.

I also posted the original conclusion to IDCC. That produced responses from Dieter Scheiba, Marc James Small, Charles Barringer and Jim McKeown. They agree that most Leica authorities believe that Leica used the uppercase letter K to mean Kugellager (ball bearing), and only used it on special shutters equipped with ball bearings. Apparently Zeiss Ikon used the K (lowercase?) to mean “kältefest” (cold weather prepared) on items that could not possibly have been equipped with ball bearings. Nearly any camera can be made kältefest by replacing the existing lubricants with special lubricants.

Thus it seems that Kugellager applies to Leica cameras with ball bearing shutters, and kältefest applies to Zeiss Ikon products including binoculars. The uppercase and lowercase distinction is important because in German

the noun Kugellager must be uppercase and the adjective kältefest would normally be lowercase.

This episode illustrates how knowledge accumulates, even if it happens “one step back, two steps forward.”

## PSPCS Show Displays

by Bobbi London

Once again CPHS members contributed to the displays, one of the highlights of the annual Puget Sound Show in Puyallup. Mike Hanemann prepared an outstanding display “Flash Before Flashbulbs” including equipment, ads, and descriptions. He has collected numerous examples with interesting mechanisms for use in early photography, some of which proved quite dangerous in use. He will bring these items when he speaks about this equipment at the May meeting.

Milan Zahorcak presented an excellent display of the history of early shutters 1839-1900, with examples of many fine items from his extensive collection. His informative writings and descriptions made this a treat to behold. As Ben Ehrman observed, “It’s a fine example of what knowledge, great taste and 25 years of collecting can get you.”

“Identifiable Cameras on Stamps” with enlarged photographs of the stamps was Ralph London’s display. Cameras ranged from the world’s first (Niépce’s) to the camera used by the astronauts on the moon. This offered a different photography-related collecting angle. It was also the April program.

Cascade Photographic Historical Society members receive the *Cascade Panorama* about 8 times per year. Our calendar year dues are \$15. Visitors and prospective members are welcome at our informal meetings. Society information day or evening: 503-692-9108, 503-654-7424 or 503-292-9714.

Other photographic societies and collecting groups may reprint material provided credit is given to the *Cascade Panorama* and any author. We’d appreciate a copy of the reprint. Reprinting by others requires specific permission.

**Deadline for material for September issue — August 29**

John Welch exhibited Contessa-Nettel cameras. It was one of the few displays which contained actual cameras. He gave us an excellent opportunity to view examples of this fine German-made equipment. Also included to make this an interesting display were ads and pictures of the factory.

It is worthwhile attending the show if all you do is walk around the room looking for the balloon-marked displays. Among others we all enjoyed were exhibits on Voigtländer, Vest Pocket Exakta, Argus and subminiature cameras; early movie machines; Kodak vehicles and banks; images of early railroading; birdhouses with camera motifs; and an artistic display complete with running water. Sadly, a planned display on the history of filters suffered when half of the items and all of the informative material were pilfered before setup.

There are six categories in which competition is held: pre-1910 cameras; post-1910 cameras; all cameras smaller than 120 including 35mm; subminiature cameras including movie cameras; all images, cases, albums, viewers, etc.; and general — anything not fitting elsewhere. Recently, the number of participants in the general category has increased, so Don Friend, who is the current chair of this activity, is seeking ideas for changes. Contact him at [Alpafriend@aol.com](mailto:Alpafriend@aol.com) with your suggestions.

## As the Glue Sets

### So? What Do You Do for a Living?

by Milan Zahorcak

By now, it must be apparent to my legions of loyal readers (and I'd like to thank both of you for your support), that I collect ancient lenses and fancy myself something of a practical historian. In truth, however, what little "I know" is largely the result of decades of fooling around with the old gear, mentally cataloguing scraps of information, and occasionally being able to put two and two together and getting a reasonably close approximation of four. Over time, you simply develop a feel for how things work. Occasionally, though, I stumble upon a historical nugget and have an "ah-ha" experience, such as reading an old tome and finding an ad that reveals that the lens I just traded away was made by the chief optician at Holmes, Booth & Haydens. Painful, I admit, but after I stopped swearing, I found myself with a greater sense of clarity and focus. And occasionally, it's also surprising, what else comes to you along the way.

At the recent PSPCS-sponsored show in Puyallup, Washington, I found myself set up next to fellow CPHS member Mike Kessler. Mike, stacking decades worth of

photo-arcana on his table, and I rummaging happily through it all, looking for nuggets to fill up the newly created empty spaces in my garage that resulted from a year of my getting rid of stuff exactly like this myself. Serious collectors may not fully understand Robert Downey Jr.'s problems, but in their own way, can relate.

Anyway, one of the items that eventually floated to the surface on Mike's table was the March 16, 1889 issue of *Wilson's Photographic Magazine*, a small semi-monthly journal devoted to covering the growing photographic scene in the US. The article that caught my attention was a review of an Anthony "Lilliput," a small "detective" camera disguised as a leather case, but as I thumbed through the magazine, my eye caught a mention of Holmes, Booth & Haydens, and I anxiously paged back to check it out. What with my poor luck in things associated with HBH, I was quite delighted with what I found.

As it happens, this issue of *Wilson's* was largely devoted to the history of photography and dedicated a good deal of space to the great names and early years, 1889 being the golden anniversary of the announcement of Daguerre's process and the "birth of Photography." One of the articles dealt with Daguerre's experimental work and a little bit of history that I had never known.

It seems that in 1838, the year before Daguerre went public, he was in need of several finely polished, silver coated, copper plates. Rather specialized stuff. He took his request to a large manufacturer (the article does not mention of what) in Paris and met August Brassart, a metal polisher by profession and in their employ. Brassart undertook the task, and over the course of about six weeks, eventually came to learn what the plates were to be used for.

At first, Brassart refused to believe that anything could come of this, but he got to see some of Daguerre's experimental work and was amazed. He quickly became Daguerre's helper and spent much of the next year as Daguerre's "first lieutenant." At about the time of Daguerre's announcement in 1839, Brassart joined the army and served for seven years.

At the end of his service, Brassart started his own daguerreotype business and, being well-versed in all aspects of the work, became quite successful and well-known in his own right as a daguerreotypist. His prosperity led him into politics (what a surprise) and then quickly into disfavor (ditto) and a very strained relationship with the French government.

Meanwhile, back in this country, the American firm of Holmes, Booth and Haydens had become one of the leading manufacturers of daguerreotype plates, but as demand increased and their facilities expanded, quality control became a serious issue. In time, quality control would also come to taint their reputation as makers of

fine lenses and in part, led to their securing the services of Charles Usener, a prominent New York optician (as many of you groan), but that's another story. In fact, I think I did that one already.

HBH sought help in France where daguerreotype plate manufacturing was well-established and significantly ahead of US capabilities. Henry Haydens, one of the founders of HBH, traveled to France and enlisted the aid of an American citizen living in Paris, one "Mr. Johnson," to help find someone familiar with the manufacturing side of the business, who was aware of the photographer's demands and was willing to resettle in the land of "milk, honey and tobacco."

As it happened, Johnson enjoyed having his portrait "taken" and was already a devoted client of Brassart's studio. Johnson made the introductions, Haydens made an offer difficult to refuse, and Brassart was delighted to accept. In 1853, Brassart sailed to America and remained in the employ of HBH until 1867 when tintypes were all the rage in this country, and the demand for daguerreotype plates collapsed.

Brassart left HBH and went into business for himself, eventually settling down in Naugatuck, Connecticut where he opened a photographic studio in 1880. At the time of the *Wilson's* article, Brassart was described as being "a short, thick-set gentleman, with a beard of snowy white, whose broken language, high strung nerves, and suave and urbane manners stamp him as a typical Frenchman." At the time, he had been the only photographer in town for those nine years. The editors were surprised to find that almost no one knew that he was the very first person in the world to have made daguerreotype plates and had assisted in developing the process itself. How cool is that?

### **BBC Recognizes Quality**

Congratulations to member Rob Niederman whose superb website *Antique & 19th Century Cameras* (<http://www.usinternet.com/users/rniederman/>) was recently honored by BBC as one of their "Best Of" top three sites of the week. Sometime during the week of April 15, he received an email from a BBC (British Broadcasting Corporation) representative noting that his camera website was included on their website, and that his website would be featured the following week as one of their "Best Of" top three sites of the week. The representative also asked permission to use an image for the posting.

Rob does not know the selection process and actually was not even aware of a BBC "Best Of" website. He knows the BBC site encourages people to submit websites for consideration. He can only guess the specific review process and how his site was found, for example, if someone submitted his or if the BBC folks found it on their own. Regardless, all of this came as a pleasant surprise. — Ralph London

## **3-D is Not a Triangle**

### **Does Bath Mean to Bathe?**

by Ron Kriesel

The RPS, the Royal Photographic Society of the United Kingdom, has asked themselves that question many times in the past several years. Many questions and suggestions have been made about what to do with a country's national treasures when the finances wash out. So what is this all about?

It relates to what and who we all are in this world of collecting, preserving, and exhibiting items of history — in our case, photographica. The Photographic Society was founded on January 20, 1853 at a meeting at the Society of Arts, London. In 1894 it had the Royal accolade added to its name. In only a few weeks after that first meeting, they had won patronage from Queen Victoria and Prince Albert.

The RPS has one of the most extensive photographic collections in the world. However, the economic twists and turns of modern society have given the society pause as to what to do with that great collection as they reached an impasse with their landlords at the Octagon in Bath, England. That has been the Society's headquarters and archive location for a number of years now. Over the years the Society had moved to Princes Gate, Maddox Street, South Audley Street and in 1980 to Bath. Negotiations had been underway to move to facilities in Devizes.

In Bath the RPS is housed in a facility on Milsom Street known as the Octagon. A slim, declining budget and needed repairs to continue at the Octagon have forced the Society to seek the a new location. Perhaps we, of the CPHS, can relate to the RPS as we occasionally contemplate where we are in this collecting business. It is always a dream or desire that one could have a permanent and well funded facility in which to archive materials; hold seminars, workshops and exhibitions; and meet with our peers and contemporaries. That is even a stated future goal of the Cascade Stereoscopic Club here in Oregon.

In the United States and many countries, the process of preservation/collection has been mostly left to institutions such as universities or museums, facilities such as Eastman House or the RPS Octagon in Bath, and of course private collectors. Each entity has its pros and cons. Public institutions do give us a place to contribute or donate items or estates as meets our desires. Public places, most of the time, do not have much of their collection available to the public. In most cases they are continually strapped for proper funds and have a lack of space in which to display or conduct activities. Private collections have the plus of being able

to acquire what they desire. However, private entities may also lack the ability or desire to properly archive materials and/or make them accessible to the public.

So with that as background, let's go back to look at how the bathing is going in Bath. By the end of 2000, a comprehensive plan was published on how to graciously end the tie to the Octagon and move to a new location in Devizes. Goals were also set on how to handle exhibitions during this moving period, how the archives would be handled and future goals as to how to use the collection to generate funds on which the Society could survive. There was the promise of Heritage Lottery Funding. The scheme was to be called the Wharfedale International Heritage Centre and would be the home of ten major collections. The RPS collection would be one of the largest of those.

In February the RPS learned the Heritage Lottery Funding had rejected their proposal. New initiatives were being investigated. A new 5-year lease at the Octagon continues to be investigated. Through March, meetings with the Heritage Lottery Funding and all the publicity surrounding the situation of the RPS have been favorable. The Heritage Centre idea has been put on the shelf, but 14 towns in Great Britain have come forth offering possible collaborations.

So in concluding, we can look at another international organization, CPHS. Lowly though we may be compared to the likes of RPS or the Photographic Collectors Club of Great Britain, CPHS exists with gratitude to its members and by being given meeting space by the likes of Ron Panfilio at his studios, Jim Apilado at Wilson High School or Jack Kelly at his Instrument Sales and Service company!

Footnote: Last month I mentioned the new book, *3D Gallery-Stereo Images* by members of Cascade Stereoscopic Club, had been published. This will be a wonderful contemporary collectible and is available for \$20.00 in USA funds. The book is also available in CD-ROM media for \$10.00. Please contact Shab Levy at 503-977-9876 or email [shab@easystreet.com](mailto:shab@easystreet.com).

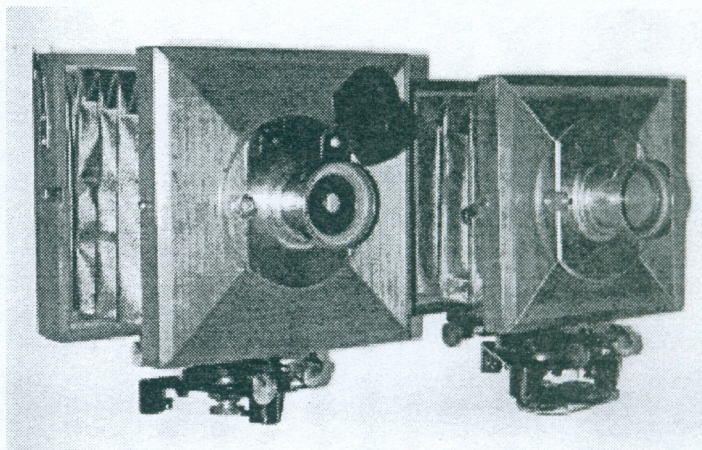
## Two of a Kind!

by Mike Kessler and Ralph London

Recently Ralph acquired an extremely rare and beautiful treasure, a "Walker's American Challenge" monorail view camera from about 1883, manufactured first by William H. Walker & Co. and then by the Rochester Optical Co., probably selling previously manufactured Walker stock. Walker is a co-inventor of the Eastman-Walker Roll Holder before he went to work for George Eastman. This quarter-plate beauty is highlighted by a unique, ball-and-socket tripod top which incorporates one of the earliest monorails. Mike is fortunate to have one also, a four-by-five pristine version (see *the Photographer*, Spring 1991, cover and pp. 9-11). Ralph's was offered to him, and many others,

via email. The story of how Mike got his is far more involved and defies simple explanation.

Since there are only about five of these known, we planned for the Puyallup weekend a photo session of the two together and a comparison of the two cameras. Except for the quarter-plate and 4x5 sizes, the comparison showed essentially no differences. Mike had earlier observed that since the camera is so rare, we should introduce them to each to see if we could create some more of them. In fact, both cameras were left together unchaperoned at the Londons while we all were at Puyallup. It's too early to report the results of any tryst. We can, however, show their "formal portrait" taken by Ben Ehrman.



Two Walker's American Challenge cameras.  
Mike's 4x5 (left) and Ralph's quarter-plate.  
Photo by Ben Ehrman.

## Nikon Notes

### Visits to a Pawn Shop

by Mike H. Symons

This Nikon-related story began about fifteen years ago in the "tenderloin" district of Seattle: 1st Avenue. Fellow Nikon collector, Nikon Historical Society member and good friend Bill Adams and I entered one of the many pawn shops in that area, an outfit by the name of Friedman's Pawn and Loans. When we asked the owner whether he had any older Nikon equipment, he shuffled around the counter and pushed a dusty old box in front of us. Inside this open topped box was a rather scruffy and pedestrian looking chrome Nikon "S" rangefinder outfit. Yawn!! There was a chrome Nikon S body in the leather case with a chrome 5cm/f2.0 Nikkor (Tokyo), a chrome "old series" 3.5cm/f3.5 Nikkor, a chrome 8.5cm/f2.0 "Tokyo" Nikkor-P, a chrome 13.5cm/f3.5 Nikkor-Q, plus a Nikon Varifocal viewfinder (this is a multi-focal length finder which provides 5 varying focal lengths from 3.5cm to 13.5cm).

All the lenses, plus the Nikon Varifocal Finder had their original brown leather cases. When we asked him his best price, he stated "\$500 and no bargaining. That price is firm!" Bill and I glanced at each other and smiled. \$500 for that "common" Nikon stuff? No way! First of all, we both had everything that was shown to us. In those days, the Nikon S was selling for between \$100-140. The other chrome lenses regularly sold for \$40-60 at camera shows, and the Nikon Varifocal finder sold for \$25-35. No bargain there. We thanked the owner and left chuckling to ourselves. I think our comment to ourselves as we were walking away was "Typical pawn shop prices! Forget it!"

Every time I visited Seattle from that point forward, I always checked out the pawn shops on 1st and 2nd streets. Every time I went into Friedman's, I asked about the box of "old" Nikons. "Still \$500 and no room for bargaining". I think they got tired of seeing me, and after a while I didn't even ask to look at it. I knew where it was under the shelf, and just asked if the price had been lowered. It became a bit of a joke between Bill and me. I'd tell Bill that I had made a tour of the Seattle pawn shops and had visited that old chrome Nikon S outfit again. Every year the dust got thicker on that equipment, but the price was never lowered, despite the serious offers. Forget it!

We now move forward to February 1991. I agreed to meet Nikon historian Robert Rotoloni, author of the book *The Nikon Rangefinder Camera*, at the Seattle-Tacoma airport. He and fellow Illinois member John Angle (since deceased) had flown from Chicago and were on their way to Tokyo, Japan to meet with Nikon officials and tour the Nikon factory. Since they had an overnight layover, I decided to give them a tour of the better Seattle camera and pawn shops in the downtown Seattle area. One of the stops was to show them the dusty old chrome Nikon S outfit at Friedman's Pawn Shop. Bob and John were both anxious to purchase as much older Nikon "goodies" as they could carry during their short layover. Bob always maintained that there were more old Nikon cameras and accessories in the Pacific Northwest than the Midwest. This was due in part to the military influence here on the coast, plus the closer proximity to Japan.

I picked them up in a driving rainstorm, rain that lasted all day! Even the terrible weather would not detract these two "Nikoholics" from a tour of the possibility of finding the "mother lode." We found an underground parkade in the downtown area and started the tour, running from one shop to the next. After an hour of this, we were soaked to the skin. Both Bob and John were muttering to each other about how much better snow and cold was to this "liquid winter." From the six or seven establishments we had visited, we found nothing of consequence. Desperation had set in, as these two Midwesterners were determined not to leave town empty handed. Surly there must be some old Nikon "stuff" in this waterlogged city.

Finally we hit the 1st Street pawn shop district. I told Bob that at least he would see the older chrome Nikon Rangefinder outfit, the \$500 Nikon S outfit in Friedman's Pawn Shop. I had described each component to Bob, so he was totally aware of what the outfit consisted of. He appeared to pick up his pace as we rounded the corner onto 1st Ave. With our coats pulled over our heads to shield us from the driving rain (why bother at this point!), we entered Friedman's. The owner looked at us dripping all over the floor of his shop but recognized me. When Bob asked him if he had any old Nikon "stuff," he smiled at me, reached under the counter and handed Bob a business card. My heart sank as I recognized Bill Adams' white business card. Bob looked puzzled as he turned the card over and read what was written on the reverse side. Right away I recognized Bill's neat writing, and saw the message, "Sorry boys ... inflation caught up with this outfit, so I beat you to it!" You could have heard a pin drop, as Bob reread the message. We had been duped by our friend Bill Adams! Bob swore softly to himself, and then smiled as he turned to me. "Were you aware of this, Symons?" "No, Bob, this is as much a shock to me as it is to you". Bill knew we were coming and presumed we would be touring the camera stores and pawn shops in this area. If memory serves me correctly, he had dated his message to the day before! As we later found out, he was actually able to buy the outfit for \$480, with a Zeiss Biogon 35mm/f2.8 lens thrown in to cement the deal! He left the business card with the pawn shop owner, knowing that we would make this one of our stops. We all knew Bill was correct about inflation catching up with the pricing on this outfit over the years since we first looked at this outfit.

After just returning from the large Puyallup camera show on April 28th, I saw examples of the "common" Nikon S selling for over \$500 for camera and standard lens only! Inflation has really hit this side of the collectible camera market, and Bill made us painfully aware of this ten years earlier on a rain-soaked Seattle day.

## **Reviewing *The Thomas Dictionary***

by Geary Hufstedler

Like most collectors I have lots of books on old cameras, and I am always on the lookout for more. Because I collect the old stuff, most of my books follow that vein. Whenever I stumble across a "new" one, I always find myself wanting to discuss it with others who share the interest. Because my camera club is 2309 miles away, this is a little difficult to do. So I thought I'd just share my observations with you.

Here's my take on *The Thomas International Photo Dictionary of Antique Cameras 1840-1940*, by Douglas B. Thomas, published and distributed by Thomas International, Washington, D.C., copyright 1983. This is a hardback book with 311 pages of photos and

descriptions and a 26 page index. The preface indicates that the intent of the *Dictionary* is

in response to a need of collectors, museum curators, and historians for a comprehensive directory of antique cameras. ... [It] provides detailed information on 3905 camera models manufactured in the United States and Europe between 1840 and 1940.

This preamble set my expectations a little above what I'm accustomed to from the "Gospel According to McKeown." *McKeown's Price Guide* of course is the *Bible*. For whatever one may think of it, we all have a copy; use it frequently; quote it; cuss it; and get real antsy when we can't find what we're looking for in it. But that's a discussion for another time. Back to the *Dictionary*.

The author divides the book by country and arranges the entries by manufacturer. The entries are numbered sequentially from (1). The first company is Acro Scientific Company with one entry, with halftone of the camera.

(1) Acro Model R. c. 1940 Size 1 1/8 x 1 5/8 inch exposures on No. 127 roll film. Built-in rangefinder and exposure meter. F 3.5 or F 4.5 Anastigmat lens. Acro shutter; 1/25 to 1/200 sec., B., T.

Adams and Westlake Company is next, again with a halftone from an old ad.

(2) Adlake Magazine Box Camera. c. 1898. Size 4x5 inch plate exposures. The magazine holds 12 plates.

So far so good. He describes four Adlakes and shows two pictures. Generally there are about seven or eight pictures per page, and this format continues throughout the book.

Anthony is nicely represented with 71 entries and 59 half tones, except that a lot of cameras are duplicated and simply titled "View Camera." Blair gets a pretty good review except for the Hawk Eye which gets only two entries. And someone stuck the "(240) Premier Box Camera" under Blair. There are other problems also. The Tourist Hawkeye shows up twice: once correctly as (237), and again as "(223) Folding Pocket Roll Film Camera."

The descriptions are very inconsistent. Some are very good while others leave something to be desired.

(321) Wonder Cannon Ferrotypes Camera. c. 1910. The camera holds 100 metal film plates, one-inch in diameter. After exposure, each plate was dropped into the tank at the base of the camera where it was developed and fixed. (Good, with picture)

(323) Henry Clay. Plate Camera. c. 1892. Size 5x7 inch exposures. Rising, falling, crossing, tilting, and swinging lens and shutter mount. (Not so good, with no picture)

So far a little less than expected. The layout is very McKeown-like, but I expected a little more accuracy, and at least some info on manufacturer. With no manufacturer's info, like dates in business, it gets real confusing, especially when you get to companies like Rochester Optical/Camera/Manufacturing/Supply Co. He identifies each company separately by name, then starts listing cameras. All of the "Rochester" family names appear with their own list of cameras. Consequently the same cameras appear several times. For example, Pony Premo No. 5 is listed as item RO&CC (1068) and ROC (1105) with different pictures; the same for Stereo Premo A RO&CC (1071) and ROC (1113). Even worse, the No 4 Magazine Cyclone appears four times: RC&SC (1017); RO&CC (1038); ROC (1079) and finally under Western (1350) with "Improved" added to the name. I'm certainly not an expert on what ROC made or didn't make, but in the last 20 years I've never heard of an ROC "Square Bellows Type View Camera" with scissors struts (1132). I wonder what evidence he has for identifying this little jewel as an ROC. [Identifications were often provided by the person submitting the entry. — Ed.]

I talked with some folks who know this book. They think it was put together by a publisher and not a collector, which makes sense. He saw a market and asked some knowledgeable people for input. But it looks like he failed to ask for their review before publishing.

I'm not sure how helpful this book might be to "collectors, museum curators and historians" with all its errors and confusing duplicates. But for me the *Dictionary* has a fair amount of correct information and a few pictures of cameras that McKeown doesn't. I think that is one of the main reasons for having as many reference books as you can in the first place, right? This leads me to the old question, "Is some information better than none, even if it's wrong?" We all know about the errors in Gross' book, but we've all got one anyway. I think the real answer is "Yes." The more references we have, the more likely we are to get it right. Books like this stimulate me to do some research. It tests my knowledge and makes me dig out old books to see who is right. Who knows, maybe Blair did make the Premier Detective Camera and sold it with Rochester Optical Company's name on it.

Now everybody's going to want a copy of *The Thomas International Photo Dictionary of Antique Cameras* just to see where the errors are. I'll let you have mine for a hundred!

# Southern Exposure

## Star Struck

by Mike Kessler

One thing about collecting in Southern California, there's always a chance that you'll run into a celebrity or two. As I was free associating recently, I suddenly remembered the various times I found myself in the position of "Camera Purveyor to the Stars!"

I get as geeky as the next person if I get a glimpse of a famous personality, so I really impressed myself with my cool demeanor when, during an ASCC (aka Gene Lester's) show some years ago, I found myself in an involved conversation with Frank Foster — you know, the recurring character on the Jack Benny Show who was famous for his classic line, "Train leaving on track nine for ... Anaheim, Azusa and Cuk ... amonga! Frank was more into classic and user cameras than antiques, but I had grown up with all those old radio (and later TV) shows, and I couldn't have been more excited if I had just won the lottery. It was really hard to keep from laughing at every word he said.

Then there was that time during a WPCA show at Pasadena City College when I had to get down on one knee to make a sale. A wave of excitement swept around the room when a popular TV character dropped in. You could hear several people whispering, "Da Plane, boss, da Plane" as Herve Villechaize, along with his wife and a small entourage moved from table to table, checking out the wares. The group stopped at my table, and Herve asked to see one of my cameras. I actually got down on one knee as I demonstrated the workings of an exceptionally attractive French field camera. It was polished like a mirror and embellished with an exceptionally thick, oval ivory nameplate. The camera sold itself, and Herve happily carried it off through the crowd of admirers. Actually I think his wife did the carrying while Herve took on the admirers.

Another time I took pity on a poor kid who was obviously suffering from a serious illness. It was at another ASCC show when this skinny African-American kid and his chubby, Anglo girlfriend came up to my table and began to inspect the merchandise. It was really hard to look the poor guy in the eyes as his face was hidden behind a surgical mask. There was just enough red, oozing stuff around the edges of the mask to repel any second glance, but gratefully I saw that he wasn't going to speak to me anyway. His lady did all the talking, saying that her friend was interested in my Keystone pedestal stereoscope with the electric light on top. Could I show her that it worked? I took them over to a wall plug and demonstrated the light. Then she asked if I could do better on the price. Now I ask you,

what was I going to do? I cut the price way down, of course. Then, because you just knew that the poor guy was probably dying from some horrible, flesh-eating disease (this was pre-AIDS), I threw in a whole stack of views.

Some time later I had pretty much forgotten the incident when someone came up and asked me (now you knew this was coming, didn't you?), "What did you think of Michael Jackson?" Look up the word *stupid* in the dictionary, and you will find a picture of me. I think I was the only one in the entire room who hadn't recognized the talented, eccentric performer. At first I felt pretty foolish, having been so taken in, but later I decided that, what if he had been legitimate? In that case I did the right thing. On the other hand, I had just about had it with certain weird celebrities and their weird sense of humor, and I nearly said as much when the same fellow showed up at the next year's show wearing a rubber ape mask, complete with a rubber cigar. Instead I showed him. I only gave him half of the previous year's discount.

## Humor in the Field, Field Cameras That Is!

### Roller Derby and a Speed Graphic

by Ken Hough

Before my interest in Deardorff had become a complete obsession, I wanted a Speed Graphic. I was 14 and just knew a big negative was the king. All the old photographers in town had told me this. (See "The Hunt," *Cascade Panorama*, March 2001.) What I needed was a Press camera. I had read all there was to read about Press cameras. I had to have one. Our local camera shop had an Anniversary Speed on the shelf for \$125. A fairly clean camera too. It came with a 3-cell Graflex flash, a couple dozen Press 22 flash bulbs and a holder. I talked my parents into it and off I went. I soon learned that you needed to really clean these up before you used them. My first negatives were dusty! This was using the focal plane shutter. The negs were better when I used that mighty Rapax shutter. I exposed both sides and went to a closet and changed film. Remember, it was a holder, not holders. The first contact prints were pretty good. A lot better than the #2 Brownie I had. I shot cars, the plane I took lessons in and railroads. (I still shoot trains.)

I had seen an old magazine that had some 1950 vintage sports photos in it. You remember, the football player in mid air, arms spread coming at you with fill flash? That's what I wanted to do. Well it was mid winter and all the local sports teams had finished their seasons.

But wait! Valpo University had an event coming up. Roller derby! That had action. From Sunday morning TV Derby, it looked really neat. So I got a ride that Saturday evening to the big gym and waited for the fun to start. I set up near the end of a curve where all the TV action seemed to be. I watched a couple of matches to get the idea of what happened. The first thing I saw was that these women were big. Not just because of the skates but everywhere else too. Lots of missing teeth also. I shot a couple of pics and went to the wash room to change the film. I had been given a home-made changing bag that made film changing easier. But wait, my flash was not working. A security guard gave me his batteries from his flashlight. I set up again and pre-focused on the railing. A great shot happened and I fired. FLASH!!! The next thing I knew, one of these women was saying things that I only heard guys at the airport say when they dropped something. Come to think about it, those guys were really polite. Not this gal. She let me have it. She was pushed on down the track while another woman gave me the thumbs-up

sign! I flipped the holder and waited for another shot. It came and I fired. Same gal! This time she was dazed. I guess I was just 5 feet from her. She stumbled out of the track and went after me. She probably had a great flash spot before her eyes. That helped me escape. The profanities were really an added feature for the audience. The skater who gave me the thumbs-up got between us and decked the gal. The audience was on their feet screaming. The security guard thought it was part of the show. I got away and hid in a bathroom stall. I walked home with some great new words to use around my friends. I could hardly wait to try them.

### **Future Northwest Show**

Saturday, June 16 — Columbia Gorge Camera Club Sixth Annual Gresham Camera Swap Meet, Gresham Grange, 875 NE Division St., Gresham, Ore. Contact Krystal White, 1640 SE Ellis St., Portland, OR 97202, 503-239-8912.



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