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Society • Nikon Historical Society • Nikon

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THIS ISSUE
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5..THE NIKON ONE..FINAL EPISODE?
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Society



THE NIKON JOURNAL ISSUE #109

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NHS -110 DEADLINE!

The deadline for the next issue of our NIKON JOURNAL, NHS-110, is November 15, 2010. Please get all your correspondence and photos to me on time so I can bring it out on schedule during the hectic Holiday Season. Thank you. **RJR**.

EDITORIAL

Another year, another anniversary. We have now reached 27 years of continuous uninterrupted publication. I am still having fun. How about you?

The big news item this issue is: **NHS-CON13!!!**

I have a team of volunteers for our next convention, which will be held in: **PARIS, FRANCE**, the week of the annual Bievres camera fair! Plans are already being formulated for us to get together in the 'City of Light' the week preceding the fair. Bievres is the largest outdoor camera fair in the world! An extremely important and famous event that usually occurs the first weekend of June. So, unless something happens to change that date, please put aside the first week in June 2012 for a good time in Paris. I am sure we will check out the Eiffel Tower, the Louvre (and maybe see 'Mona'), Notre Dame, Napoleon's tomb, and Versailles, to drop a few names! Since Bievres is a two-day show and we will want to be there on both Saturday and Sunday, our meeting will need to be on Friday. This is no problem as there is no law that says it has to be on Saturday. This is all the info I have right now but hopefully more in NHS-110. I wanted to get the word out as early as possible so we all can make plans. (I have wanted to visit Bievres for years and have been told by many how huge it is. Should be fun.)

The second big item ties in with the Convention. Inserted in this issue is the official **"NHS Membership Survey"**. Similar to what was handed out in Bruges at NHS-Con12, we have added questions about the Society, conventions, and a project to produce our very first **membership directory**. **PLEASE READ THIS QUESTIONNAIRE & FILL OUT BOTH SIDES!** Follow directions for returning it to either myself or Bill Kraus. And do it soon! Why? Because we are having a contest!! **THOSE OF YOU WHO GET IT BACK TO US BY NOV. 15, 2010, WILL BE ELIGIBLE TO BE ONE OF THREE WHO WILL RECEIVE A FREE ONE YEAR UPGRADE OF THEIR MEMBERSHIP!** That's right. All who get it back to Bill or me by midnight Nov. 15th will have their name thrown in a hat. The first 3 names I draw out get a free upgrade. So get them back to us. Mail them or email them to us ASAP!!

Rotoloni@msn.com

WMKraus@aol.com

We start off this issue with coverage of the rare Nikkor J. We have covered it before but this time around we have photos of some rare literature plus we take a look at the mysterious Black Nikkor J. Is it real? You decide.

On page 5 we have the last episode of Chris Sap's research on the Nikon One. Or do we? Only time will tell but look at the details he's come up with for this issue.

On page 14 we have the third, and final, installment of Dr. Manabu Nakai's scholarly research paper on the groundbreaking Kwanon, which became the Hansa Canon. So much has been written about this camera, yet Nakai-san has come up with new information. A very fine paper.

The Russian Federal Space Agency has completed an order with Nikon for equipment to be used on the International Space Station. A Nikon D3S and two Nikon D3X cameras, and four lenses, including an AF-S Nikkor 400mm/f2.8G ED VR, have been launched into space by the Russians. All right, Nikon !!

GET THAT QUESTIONNAIRE IN BY NOV. 15TH AND START THINKING ABOUT PARIS IN JUNE!

THE 'RARE' NIKKOR J.... &....A BIT OF A MYSTERY

Back in NHS-36 (July 1992) I ran a three-page article on the NIKKOR J, a 'renamed' Nikkorex F distributed only in the German market. The article was written by our resident Nikon reflex expert, Uli Koch, who is German and also the leading authority on the 'NIKKOR' product line. To reiterate why the 'NIKKOR' products even exist I quote a small part of Uli's 1992 article.

"When Nikon items were imported into Germany by the German company Varimax, Frankfurt, who started in 1963, Zeiss Ikon, Stuttgart, thought that the name 'Nikon' looked and sounded very much like their name 'Ikon'. They started a legal battle against the name 'Nikon'..... Zeiss won this battle and so every item with the name 'Nikon' that was imported into Germany must have a different name. Therefore, all Nikon items sold in Germany were renamed 'NIKKOR', the same as their lenses. All items!! Cameras, finders, Photomic meters, motors, bellows, relay boxes, screens, filters, flashes and everything else! Even the brochures and instruction manuals used only photos showing 'NIKKOR' marked items!"

Very little was known about the NIKKOR J back then, and not that much more nearly 20 years later. Using all my sources I still have only '7' confirmed chrome NIKKOR J cameras in my database. They are: 373230, 373268, 373294, 373306, 373380, 373416 & 373419. However, the one used to illustrate the brochure in this article is #350068 or 69 (as best I can read it)?

The 'NIKKOR J' is simply a rebadged Nikkorex F and, therefore, identical in all respects save its name. Although the Nikkorex F is not the most sought after Nikon item (the body was actually made for them by Mamiya) and not held in high regard, the black version of the Nikkorex F is very sought after. We have covered that camera in these pages and having owned one I can tell you it is very interesting. Only 125 were said to have been made for the Swedish government so they are quite rare, and, I feel, quite handsome.

But this brings us to the mystery aspect of this installment of the NIKKOR J story.

At the time of the 1992 article I was unaware of a black version of the NIKKOR J. Since then two such cameras have surfaced. They are bodies 386120 & 386124. The question is: are they real? I put this question to Uli & here are his thoughts on the subject:

'I interviewed the owner of Varimax and he said the following. First, they never ordered a black version of the NIKKOR J. They ordered only one batch of NIKKOR Js, all in chrome and never even ordered a black one on special request or for a special group! Second, in the first 3-4 years they had a lot of problems selling NIKKOR F cameras in Germany, let alone the lesser quality NIKKOR J. German camera dealers told their customers not to buy bad quality Japanese cameras. I think that the batch of NIKKOR Js is about 250 cameras. Their serial numbers fall in the 373xxx batch. The Nikkorex F serial numbers run from 350001 up to about 415xxx, which is about 20,000 plus cameras per year since it was made for about 3 years. Yet the two known black cameras are in the 386xxx batch. So why would Varimax order a black version half a year after they got their first batch of chrome cameras, and were not able to sell them? The only thing that looks like the black cameras are legitimate are their very close serial numbers (386120 & 386124). I do know that one of the bodies was sold by a NY dealer who has also been the source of a few other 'questionable' Nikon & NIKKOR products.'

Is there anything about the black NIKKOR J that suggests it is different from the chrome version? Yes: The engraving of the 'NIKKOR J', especially the letter 'J', is very different between the chrome & black cameras. Why would NK change the engraving only half a year later? The 'J' on the chrome cameras is rounded like the number '0' while that on the black cameras is rounded like the letter 'O'. I own two versions of the brochure and in both the

'J' is rounded like the number '0' and not like that on the black cameras.'

Well, there you have it. The rare chrome NIKKOR J and the mysterious black NIKKOR J. Very interesting indeed. And much food for thought.

I would like to thank Al Brody for loaning me his NIKKOR J to photograph for this article as well as a copy of the rare brochure you see in the photos. And to Uli for his scholarly words on the subject. Also a thank you to Chris Sap and Thierry Ravassod for the photos of the chrome & black bodies side by side! Gentlemen, you helped make a very interesting article! RJR



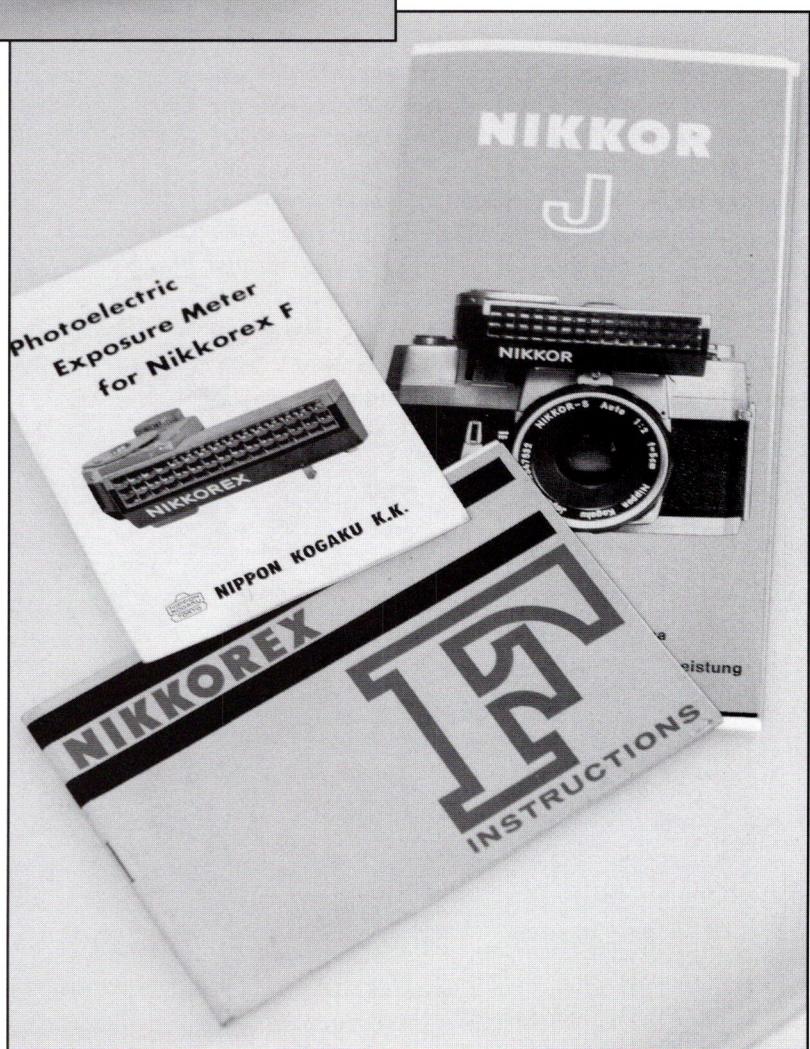
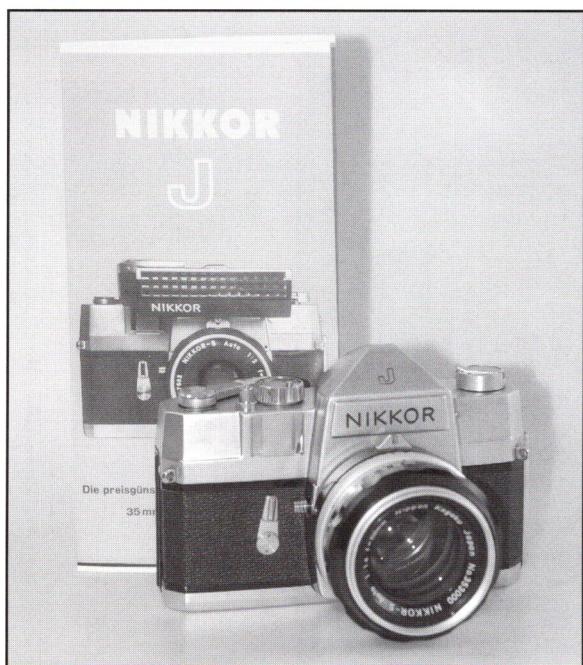


With possibly only a few hundred ever having been made, the NIKKOR J qualifies as one of the more rare and esoteric items from the early Nikon reflex era. Though no Nikon F, it was a serviceable camera for those who could not afford the F or needed a cheaper back-up body, which is the same product category that the Nikkormat series would fulfill nicely for many years. Because it was not made to the same standards as the Nikon F, it is probable that the attrition rate for the entire Nikkorex F/NIKKOR J line is higher than for contemporary F bodies. Therefore, fewer exist today and the NIKKOR J has proven to be very hard to find. All photos on these 2 pages by RJR with equipment courtesy Al Brody.



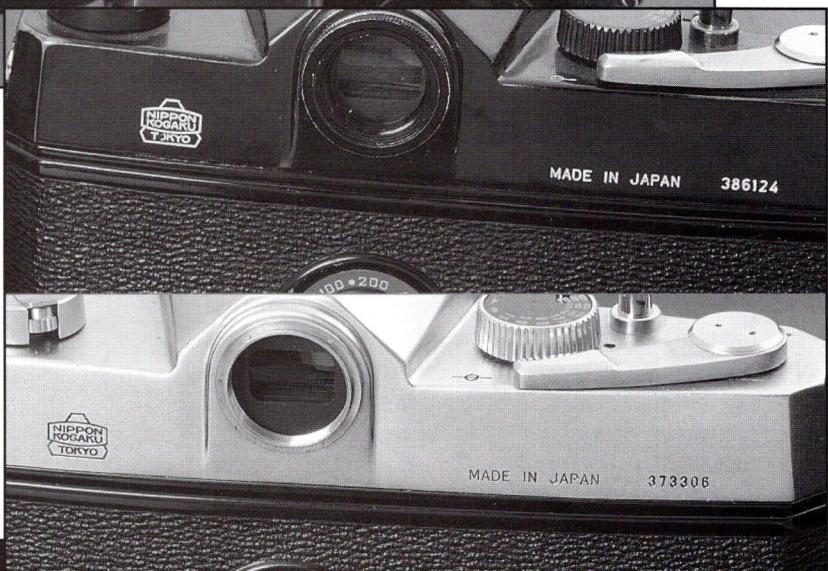


Does a NIKKOR version of the angle finder in the above photo exist? It probably does but I had none available for this shoot. Since Uli tells me 'everything' that was imported into Germany was so marked, they are out there somewhere. Below and right is some Nikkorex and NIKKOR J literature. Note that the meter on the J is also marked NIKKOR. Need to find one of those! This J brochure, supplied by Al Brody, is the blue version. Uli mentions in the text that an orange one also exists. I would imagine that an original brochure is much rarer than the body!





And here we have one of the two known black NIKKOR J cameras. This one is #386124 (the other is #386120). Why have only two shown up and why does the German importer insist that no black Js were ever ordered or sold through his company? Good questions. Please read the text for Uli Koch's thoughts and research on the subject, for he knows more about the entire NIKKOR production than anyone else. Could they have been made in error by Nikon and in only a very small batch? Could they have produced a few intending to offer them to the German importer, then changed their mind? Or were they made by someone other than Nikon? I have no answers for you, but then that's why it's a mystery! (C.Sap)



THE HISTORY OF THE NIKON ONE... THE FINAL EPISODE??

BY CHRISTOPHE SAP

After publication of the 'History of the Nikon One' (see NHS Journals 100, 101 & 102), I continued my research. I went back to Nikon two more times and studied examples of this camera. This article is a follow up with more evidence and detail, especially about the inside numbering system.

The Meaning of the Inside Numbers

During a second visit to Arakawa-san and to the chief archivist at Nikon, we asked about the internal numbers found on early Nikon Ones.

We had found numbers on three distinct locations inside the bodies. And, we also discovered there are three different numbering systems used inside. These numbers have no relation to the body serial numbers.

There are:

- Single or double digit numbers
- Numbers with an 'A' in front
- A very small 'o' next to the inside baseplate number

To be completely original, a body must have three such internal numbers & all three must be the same.

They are found:

- On the right spool side (Fig. 1)
- On the underside of the chassis (Fig. 2)
- At the inside of the bottom (Fig. 3)

None of the backs of those cameras have a matching back door serial number (Fig. 4).

As of August 2010, only FIVE cameras have been found with all three matching inside numbers:

- #2 on the inside of body 60926 (see NHS-77)
- #14 on the inside of body 60933 (Fig. 5)
- #23 on the inside of body 60952
- #27 on the inside of body 60939
- #33 on the inside of body 60959

Just 9 other bodies have been found with only 1 or 2 engraved numbers inside, and 3 with two different numbers. So we now have a record of 12 different numbers used internally. These numbers once belonged to early Nikon Ones, so some of those cameras, most likely, no longer exist, as parts were taken from them to be used for repairing other bodies.

These numbers are:

- #0 is found once inside body 60924
- #3 is found once inside body 609118
- #6 (?) is found once inside body 60924 (this '6' seems to be engraved manually). This body also has the #0
- #8 is found twice inside body 60983
- #9 is found twice inside body 60969

- #12 is found once inside body 60983 (which also has #8 twice)
- #19 is found once inside body 6094
- #21 is found once inside body 609231
- #35 is found twice inside body 60995
- #41 is found once inside body 609223
- #42 is found once inside body 609314
- #50 is found once inside body 609223 (& #41, see above). '50' is next to the '41', but not on the bottom, but on the back itself (Fig. 6a & 6b)

Note: 6091 and 6094 have been assembled with spare parts. On 6094 this is clearly visible as the screw holes for the later fixed spool are seen.

And furthermore, three very strange numbers, including the letter 'A':

- 'A23' is found on the LEFT spool side of 609259 (recall a #23 is found 3 times inside body 60952)
- 'A55' is found on the LEFT spool side of 609279 (Fig.7)
- 'A67' is found on the LEFT spool side of 609322 (It seems this 'A' is found only in later production bodies.)

So far we have found the following internal numbers: 0 or 6, or 0 & 6, 2, 3, 8, 9, 12, 14, 19, 21, 23, 27, 33, 35, 41, 42, 50 and also 55 (see further).

And three strange 'A' numbers: A23, A55 and A67.

Now, back to the meaning of these internal numbers. At that time, Nippon Kogaku did not have many skilled workers. Those workers were not able to assemble a complete camera. The camera was built in (at least) four different steps and locations:

- 1) The body casting
- 2) The chassis
- 3) The bottom with back
- 4) The final assembly where these three sub-assemblies came together to make one complete camera.

The internal numbers were given to insure that the three correct sub-assemblies stayed together, and only then did they receive the top plate.

At that time, there was not much care taken with the top plate. It was just hammered a bit at the inside to fit the camera, but no matching internal number was needed for this final step.

It is not surprising that those early cameras were not of very high quality, and no wonder that so many came back. In the 'Complete Nikon Rangefinder System, Rotoloni 2007', page 23 (bottom right):

"The first 50 were loaded...and sent..."

"However, this shipment proved to be a disaster."

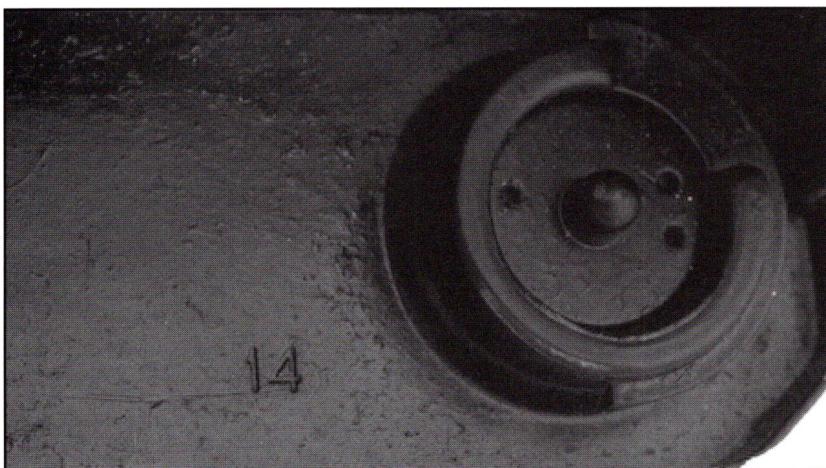
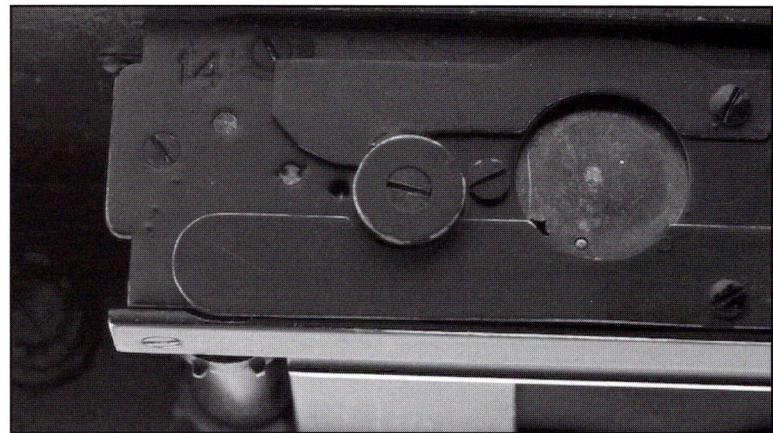


Fig. 1 (upper left)...The #14 found in the right side spool area.

Fig. 2 (above)...The #14 found on the underside of the chassis.

Fig. 3 (left)...The #14 found on the inside of the baseplate.

Fig. 4 (below)...No matching serial number inside the camera back. This lasted only for a very short time, possibly less than 70 cameras.

Fig. 5 (bottom)...Camera 60933 from that very first batch is the one seen on this page. It has all three matching internal numbers (14) and no number inside the back. This tells us it is entirely original.

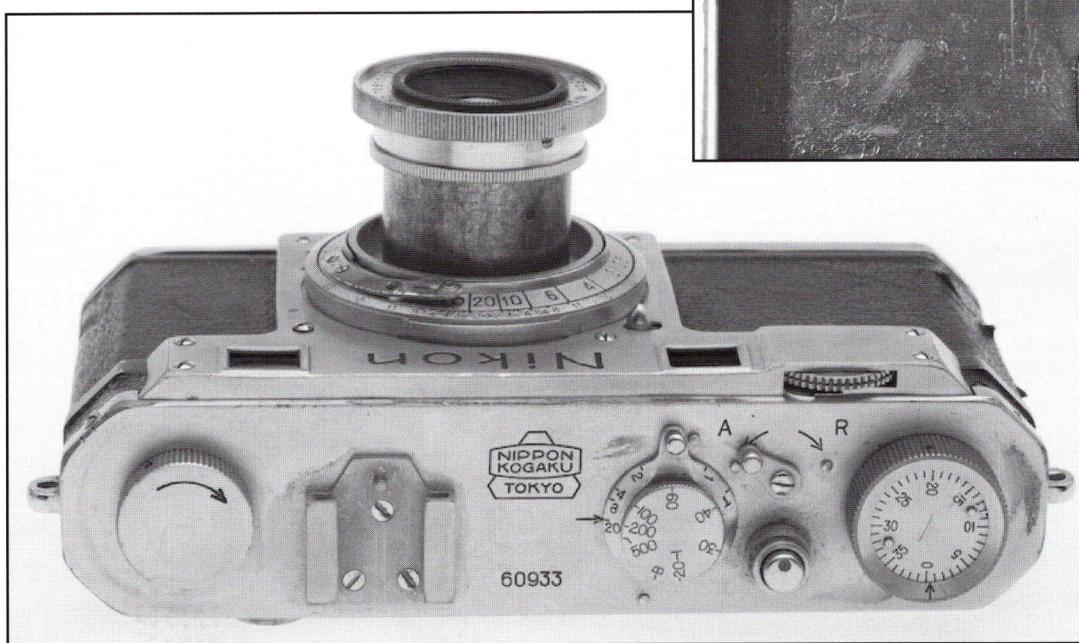


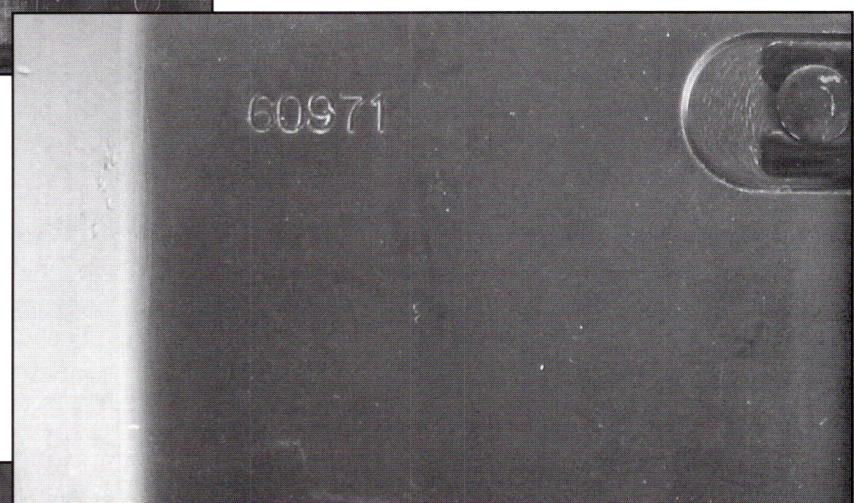


Fig. 6a (above left)...The #50 inside the bottom edge of the camera back below the pressure plate of body 609223.
Fig. 6b (above)...The same camera also has the #41 inside the baseplate.

Fig. 7 (left)...A reversed (or upside down) #55 near the inside matching back serial number of camera 609279.

Fig. 8 (below)...The first verified example of a matching serial number on the camera back is found on body 60971. Body 60969 DOES NOT have such a number!

Fig. 9 (bottom)...An example of the unusual 'A' type number is 'A55' found on body 609279.



"In the end most of those 50 cameras failed and were returned to the factory."

Well, those cameras that came back were dismantled and some parts were stored to be reused. That is why we find some internal numbers in later cameras.

It makes one think: if the first 50 were shipped to Hong Kong, could it be that only those had the internal numbers up to 50? But then what about number 55? And the 'A'? Could this 'A' mean "adjusted" as we learned that Nikon sometimes used the 'A' in serial numbers to indicate adapted bodies? (see F2 H250). Further study is needed.

Body 60969 does not have a serial-numbered back, but #60971 does (Fig. 8). Body 60971 also has a covered chassis and a fixed take-up spool, which only came on later production. (see chapter about early, mid & late Ones). So, 60971 has definitely been repaired.

It is a small amount. 60921~60970 is only 50 pieces, so if 60970 still exists, it would be interesting to see if it has internal numbers and/or a matching back.

What about inside number 55? (Fig. 7) This is found in camera 609279, but it is located at the left side. It also has a matching back and above the backdoor number there is an upside down 55. This body also has A55 in the left spool side (Fig. 9). Why? The questions remain unanswered.

And now the question of the small 'o'. A couple of cameras are found with a very small zero next to the internal number on the inside of the bottom plate. (Figs. 10a-10b) What could this be? A close look at the these bottom plates shows that they have been changed. A normal body has no rivets in the bottom plate to fix the tripod socket, as this socket is welded. But this weld was very weak and could come off when used frequently. If it came off it was reattached with 3 rivets. This is clearly visible on the inside and outside (Figs. 10c to 10g). With later repairs, the zero designation was dropped. This was confirmed by Nikon who were so kind to provide a drawing (Fig. 10h).

One Black Nikon One?

Let it be said outright and without qualification; **there was never a black Nikon One.** It is just another myth like 6091. Body 6091 was never produced. It existed only as a top plate. Many years later this top plate was attached to an early shell.) There are three sources which confirm that Nippon Kogaku never produced this camera in black:

- 1) Nippon Kogaku inventory reports
- 2) An interview with Jun Miki
- 3) A recent confirmation by Nikon

And there is more:

We know the history of the "shiny camera that attracted bullets" during the Korean War. But the war took place from June 1950 to July 1953. The Nikon One was replaced in August 1949 by the Nikon M, and this one by the S in March 1951. Body 609431 was produced in 1949 (February?), so how could they know, at that time, that they should produce a black camera for use in a war that started over a year later?

In the 'Black is Beautiful' list we all know about genuine blacks and fake ones. The fakes are those that were produced in

chrome and have since been painted black, but not by the factory. This 609431 was originally produced in chrome, and according to an interview with Jun Miki, it was so shiny (so it was chrome!), he was spotted by an enemy soldier. It is said that, when he returned to Japan, he asked someone to paint it black. However, we cannot be sure where it was painted, or who painted it. I believe the so-called black 'M' has a similar history. In fact the history of shiny 'war cameras' might have been the reason for the production of black bodies. Who knows?

So if you have a chrome 'S' and you have it painted black, do you have a black 'S'? YES, you do! Do you have an 'original black S'? Will it be reported as a fake in the 'Black is Beautiful' list? So, with all regrets, this so-called black Nikon One is just a 'blackened' Nikon.

Who was Jun Miki?

On the website www.mir.com.my/rb/ we read:

"Life magazine was very active in Japan after the war. A young Japanese photographer, Jun Miki, who eventually became one of the most outstanding photojournalists in Japan, was working as a Life stringer. He used an 85mm/f2 Nikkor on a Leica IIIf to make a casual shot of David Douglas Duncan (Fig. 11), star Life photog who was then on assignment shooting a pictorial about Japanese art. That candid shot of Duncan by Miki turned out to be one of the most important photographs in the course of the history of the Japanese camera."

Jun Miki later became head of the panel of judges for the Nikon World Photography Contest, which started around 1970. He passed away in 1992. In the Nikon Club magazine, issue 26, 1963, you can find an article with Duncan and Jun Miki.

How Many Nikon Ones Were There?

The serial numbers started with 6091 and ended with 609759, suggesting 759 cameras were made (Fig. 12). Numbers 6091 to 60920 were prototypes, but only 5 were ever completed, and afterwards disassembled. If we deduct those 20 we get 739.

Nippon Kogaku inventory records report that 738 were made, so why the difference? One body at the end of the production of the Nikon One is listed in this inventory as being a Nikon M (24x34). Well folks, if you have a late Nikon One, have a close look. If it still exists someone must have the first Nikon M disguised as a Nikon One!

To be totally correct, we have to add the rebuilt 6091 and 6094 (which has the screw holes for a fixed spool, Fig. 13). So, 740 may have existed.

How many remain today? We don't know exactly. So far we have recorded 130 cameras. (Note, 60924 is the first production camera known to still exist)

Serial # block	# verified	actual known range
6091~60999	18 known	60924~60997
	(includes 6091 & 6094)	
609100~609199	18 known	609104~609199
609200~609299	17 known	609205~609296
609300~609399	14 known	609303~609398
609400~609499	11 known	609405~609497
609500~609599	24 known	609500~609599
609600~609699	14 known	609601~609698

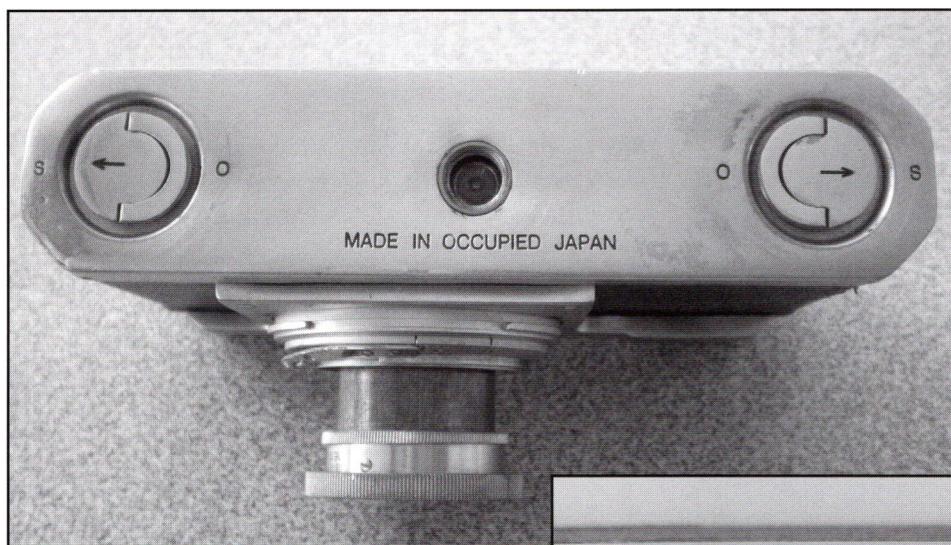


Fig. 10a (top left)...A riveted tripod socket (note the #27 & the small 'o' beside it).

Fig. 10b (top right)...Another example of a riveted socket (note the #0 & the small 'o').

Fig. 10c (above)...This is a later welded type socket (note the #33).

Fig. 10d (left)...The welded type socket results in a smooth external appearance around the socket.

Fig. 10e (below)...The riveted type socket results in a baseplate where the rivets can be seen, albeit faintly.

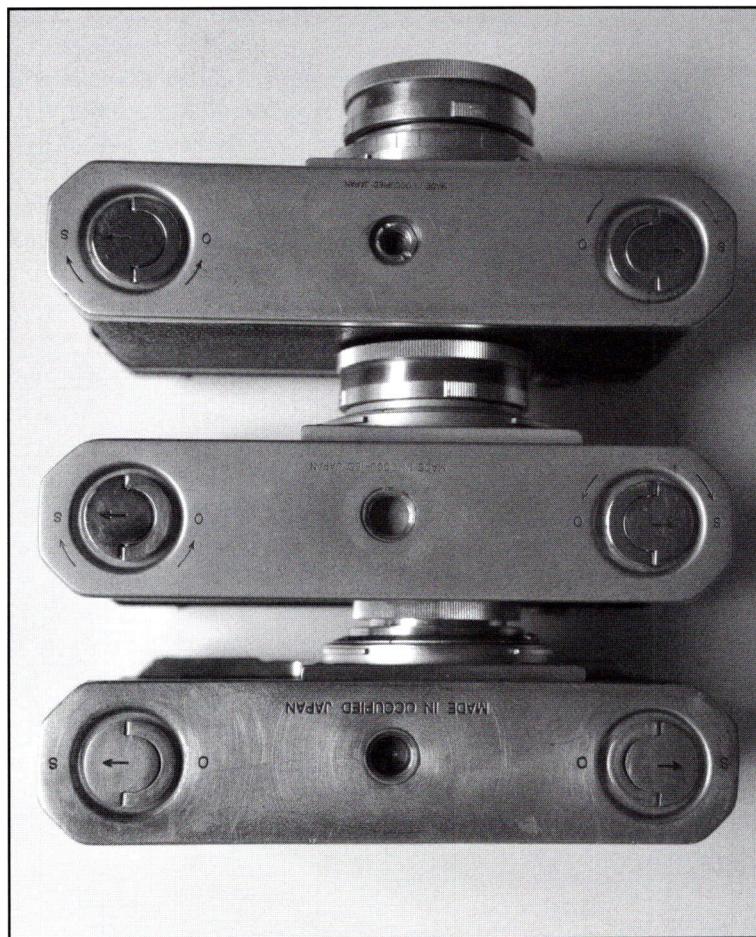
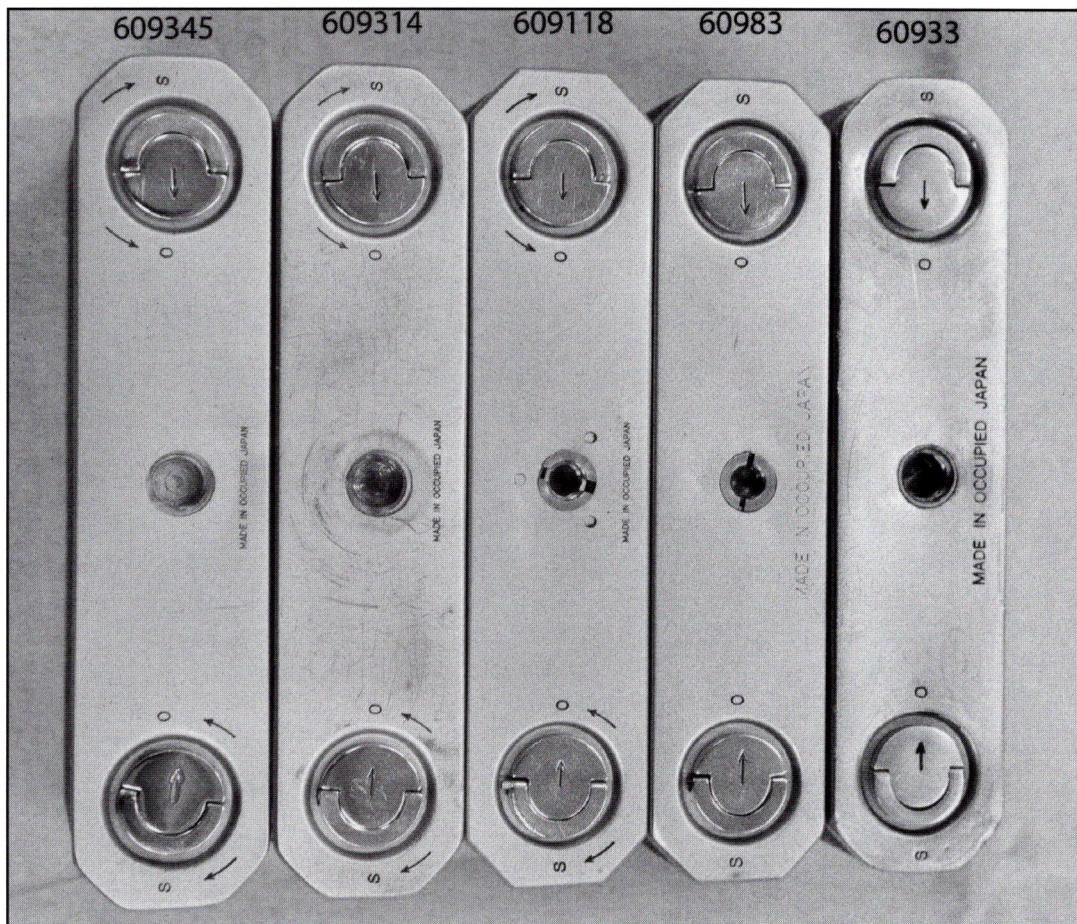
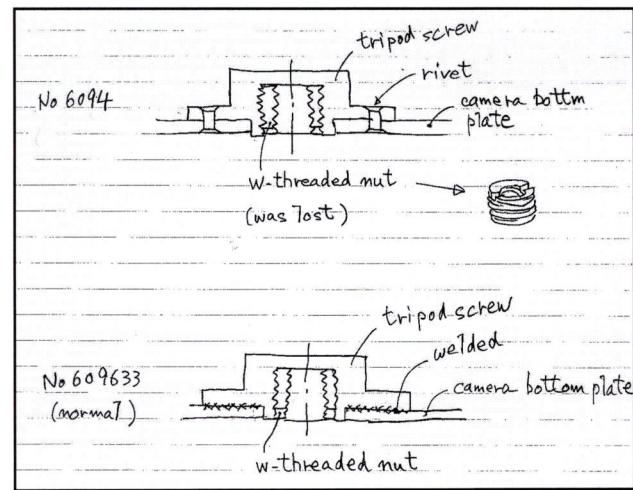


Fig. 10g (above)...A selection of riveted and welded base-plates with their corresponding serial numbers.

Fig. 10f (left)...Early, mid and late model Nikon Ones with no rivets.

Fig. 10h (bottom)...The drawing provided by Nikon showing the two methods of attaching the tripod socket on the Nikon One cameras.



609700~609759 12 known 609701~609759
 In total 128 production bodies and two prototypes.

106 of those 130 bodies are believed to have their original lens.
 —6 bodies have a lens with the prefix 609
 —23 of them with the prefix 705
 —53 of them with the prefix 708
 —24 of them with the prefix 811

Some bodies no longer have a matching back, and at least 2 have an 'M' back. Two have been stolen: 609497 and 609505 (see NHS Journals 49, 52 and 53). Some have been synchronized (Fig.14) and some of these have been restored back to original "non-synch".

Also included is a picture of a Nikon One certificate (Fig. 15), and a Nikon One promotion pamphlet (Figs. 16a & 16b).

A "NIKKOR ONE"

On all known Nikon Ones, we only see the word "Nikon". The Nikon. So what about the reference to a 'NIKKOR ONE' that turned up. Did one ever exist? No, but in 1968 a pamphlet was printed for Photokina which referred to one.

In that document they speak about the legendary rangefinders

and the Nikon F, but remember, Photokina is in Germany. There was the big legal issue with Zeiss. The name NIKON was too similar to IKON. To settle, Nikon products destined for Germany were renamed NIKKOR. So, even in a simple brochure relating the history of Nikon cameras, the Nikon One was referred to as a Nikkor One, this to avoid a possible lawsuit. I think they just did not dare to use the name Nikon, even in a document speaking about the past, but funny to see a printed name 'Nikkor One'. (Thanks to Uli Koch who sent me a copy of this document, Figs. 17a & 17b)

The Nikon One is the most interesting Nikon rangefinder model. Its' study will never be complete. Just as I was finishing this article I found more information in a Japanese book and in the NKK inventory records. Yuki was so kind to make the translation. But this is for another time.

If you have any comments or information, please mail the author at: csap@skynet.be. Thank you.

And last but not least, I give a warm thank you to all who have contributed to these articles, and, not to forget Bill Kraus for his most appreciated corrections, the Nikon staff for the answers to my never ending questions, a very special thanks to Arakawa-san where I was welcomed back as a friend, and not to forget my wife Caroline for her never ending patience.

Fig. 11...One of the photos of David Douglas Duncan taken in 1950 at the Tokyo office of LIFE magazine and attributed to Jun Miki.

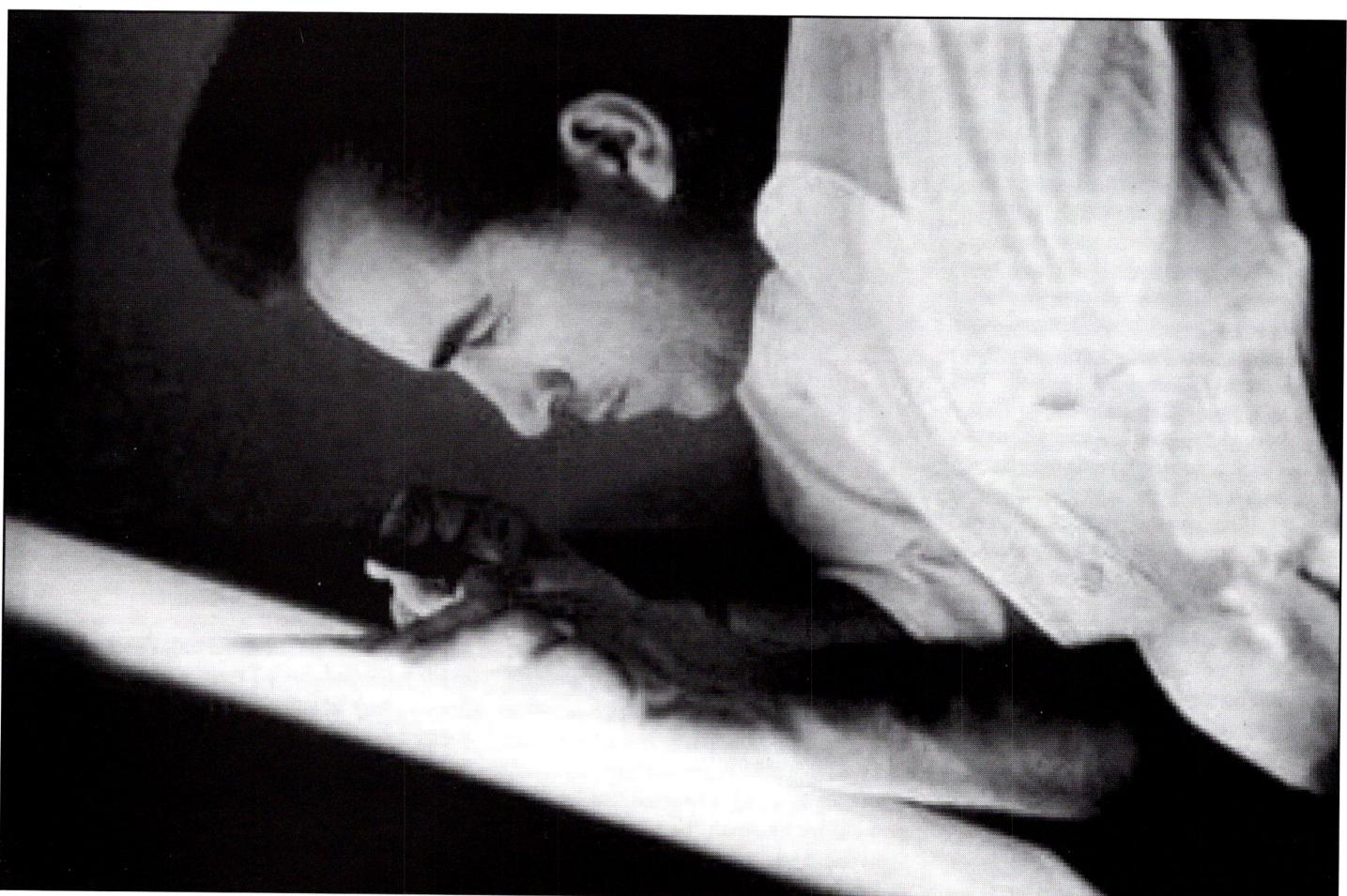
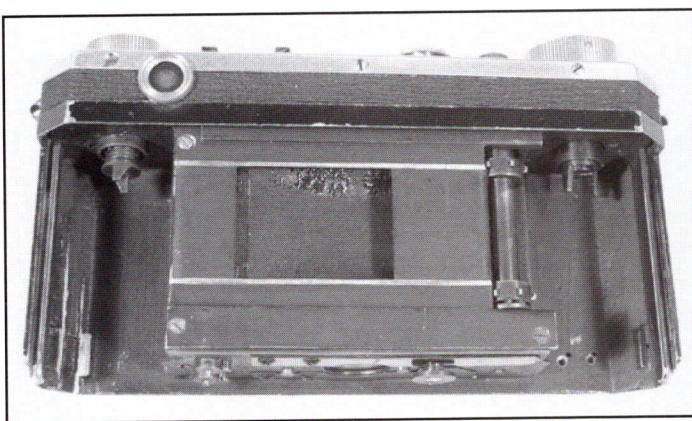




Fig. 12 (above)...This is camera 609759 which, according to the factory, is the last serial number allotted to the Nikon One!
 Fig. 13 (below)...Prototype 6094 with visible screw holes for a fixed take-up spool. Fig. 14 (bottom left)...An example of a Nikon One that has had flash sync added (twice!). What a shame! Fig. 15 (bottom right)...The original inspection certificate for 609370 from February 1949!



NIPPON KOGAKU K. K. (Japan Optical Company, Ltd.) 5447 Oi Morimae-cho, Shinagawa-ku, Tokyo.	
<u>INSPECTION CERTIFICATE</u>	
<u>Article</u>	Nikon Camera with F: 25cm Lens
<u>Serial No.</u>	Body No. 609370 Lens No. 708316
<u>Date of Inspection</u>	4th February 1949
<u>Inspection Results</u>	
Items of Inspection	
Appearance	Results : good
Mechanism	Shutter Speed : good Range finder : good Lens exchange : good Other mechanisms : good
Resolving Power with Picture Taking	at full aperture : Center 1000 line Periphery 570 line at F:1.6 aperture : Center 1000 line Periphery 960 line
This article has passed each of the above tests.	
JAPAN OPTICAL COMPANY, LTD.	
Signature <u>Y. Nakamichi</u> Chief of Inspecting Section	



JAPAN OPTICAL CO., LTD.

Precision Miniature Camera

Nikon



SCALE 1/3

1. Size of picture. 24×32 mm.

Slightly shorter than ordinary double frame picture (24×36 mm). More convenient form for picture trimming with the least waste of negative material.

2. Number of exposures.

40 exposures can be taken from one roll of ordinary 36 exposure film.

3. Lenses.

Fine "NIKKOR" anastigmat lenses, fully corrected for color and luminous to cut flare, with minimum resolution of 750 lines per inch over the entire picture area.

Interchangeable lenses, instantly converting the "Nikon" camera to a wide angle or telephoto camera by the bayonet fashion fixing device, the following five lenses being available:

HISTORY OF NIPPON KOGAKU K.K.

Last year, Nippon Kogaku K.K., or more popularly known throughout the world as Nikkor, celebrated its 50th anniversary. In this relatively short span of five decades, Nikkor has not only continued to pioneer the optical industry in Japan—in fact, its history chronicles the development of the Japanese optical industry—but it has also become a respected leader in all things optical. How has this worldwide recognition of Nikkor as synonymous with all that is best in quality optics become possible?

This recapitulation will attempt to answer this question.

ESTABLISHMENT

Nippon Kogaku was established in 1917 by the Mitsubishi Family as a maker of optical instruments on almost exclusive appointment to the Japanese military establishment. The military required binoculars, telescopes and rangefinders of only the highest optical and mechanical precision performance, and Nikkor had to meet the necessarily severe requirements set by the military. Thus began a tradition of superb craftsmanship that today, more than half a century later, Nikkor has become a treasured name in the world of optics for its standard of quality which is as uncompromising as it is high.

EARLY LENS PRODUCTION

In 1932, "Nikkor" was first used as a trade name for lenses produced by Nippon Kogaku. In 1935, Nippon Kogaku began the manufacture and sale of camera lenses but its main products were still those destined for the military. The first Nikkor lenses came in the 75mm, 105mm, 120mm and 180mm focal lengths. The first 50mm lenses with apertures of f/4.5, f/3.5 and f/2 all came out in 1937. In 1939, the 50mm f/1.5 was introduced followed soon by the 50mm f/1.4.

NIKKOR RANGEFINDER CAMERAS

After many years of concentrated research, Nippon Kogaku in 1948 introduced its first camera, the Nikkor Model 1, followed by the Nikkor M in 1949. Two years later, the famous Model S series cameras were placed on the market. Publication of startlingly realistic photos of the Korean Conflict by a LIFE magazine photographer contributed greatly toward the worldwide recognition of Nikkor. The worldwide acceptance of the Nikkor cameras stimulated the camera industry in postwar Japan. Nippon Kogaku is proud to have played the vital, leading role in the remarkable progress in Japanese camera production and export volume.

NIKKOR F

The year 1959 really established Nikkor as identifiable with quality camera craftsmanship and engineering originality. This was the year all lovers of fine cameras throughout the world will long remember. The Nikkor F made its auspicious debut that year and set a new high criterion in 35mm single-lens reflex camera performance. Now, almost a decade later, the Nikkor F still remains supreme. The Nikkor F offers all the technical refinements demanded by the most discriminating professional as well as the many conveniences for the creative amateur photographer.

NIKKOR RANGEFINDER CAMERAS

After many years of concentrated research, Nippon Kogaku in 1948 introduced its first camera, the Nikkor Model 1, followed by the Nikkor M in 1949. Two years later, the famous Model S series cameras were placed on the market. Publication of startlingly realistic photos of the Korean Conflict by a LIFE magazine photographer contributed greatly toward the worldwide recognition of Nikkor. The worldwide acceptance of the Nikkor cameras stimulated the camera industry in postwar Japan. Nippon Kogaku is proud to have played the vital, leading role in the remarkable progress in Japanese camera production and export volume.

Standard lenses 1. F/3.5 f=50 mm.
2. F/2 f=50 mm.
3. F/1.8 f=50 mm.
4. F/1.5 f=50 mm.

Wide angle lens F/3.5 f=35 mm.
Telephoto lenses 1. F/2 f=85 mm.
2. F/4 f=135 mm.

Critically sharp negative can be enlarged to practically any size.

4. Very compact size.

Length.....5 1/4" Height.....2 3/4" Width.....1 1/4"
Weight.....1 lb. 7 oz. with F/3.5 50 mm lens.

5. Combination range and view finder coupled to lens.

Capable of quick automatic focusing with utmost ease in snap shot.

6. No double exposure.

Shutter winding and film advancement in one operation.

7. Shutter speed and its control.

Focal plane shutter with following speed ranges:

Slow speed group.....T, B, 1, 1/2, 1/4, 1/8, 1/20 sec.

High speed group.....1/30, 1/40, 1/60, 1/100, 1/200, 1/500 sec.

Shutter speed dials for the above groups are conveniently located one upon the other with the same axis.

8. Easy operation of the camera.

The position of the focusing geared wheel, the shutter release button, the view finder, etc., is carefully studied for snap shot.

9. Easy film loading.

Loading can comfortably be accomplished by removing the back plate of the camera case.

10. High reliability and long durability.

A tough strong die-casting aluminium body, precision mechanism with carefully selected materials and superior workmanship in optical and mechanical construction throughout.

JAPAN OPTICAL CO., LTD.

(NIPPON KOGAKU K. K.)

MAKERS & SUPPLIERS

Oi-Morimae-cho, Shinagawa, Tokyo

Tel. Omori (06) 2111~5, 3111~5

Fig. 16a & b (above)...An original factory brochure for the Nikon One. You can imagine how rare this item must be!

Fig. 17a & b (left & bottom)...The brochure mentioned in the text that was distributed by the German importer during the 1968 Photokina where even the long discontinued Nikon models are referred to as the 'NIKKOR' and not the 'NIKON'. This is what can be called 'misinformation'!

A STUDY OF

THE 'KWANON'

BY DR. MANABU NAKAI

VARIOUS MECHANISMS OF THE HANSA CANON

The camera for which design efforts began under the name 'KWANON' would be initially released approximately two years later under the name 'HANSA CANON'. Following Yoshida's departure from Seiki Kogaku Kenkyusho, development of the camera's body proceeded primarily under Kaneko and Oshida. Oshida came over from aircraft manufacturer Nakajima Hikoki K.K. It was pointed out to the author by Yamada that at the time he entered Seiki Kogaku, Kaneko and Fukazawa were the core personnel of the technical department. According to unreleased research documents belonging to Ueyama, Kaneko resigned around 1937 after taking responsibility for the failure to properly build a 4.5cm X 6cm format camera [4], which had been undergoing development up until then.

A disassembly of a later model Hansa Canon and a detailed examination of its mechanisms were conducted for the purpose of this study. The numbers engraved on the inner surface of the base plate and on the lens' focusing unit were 2895 and 1441, respectively. Remains carried over from the Kwanon included the octagonal body case, the rangefinder cover shielding the entire upper surface of the top cover and the film counter on the camera's front surface. Out of these elements, the shape of the body case was carried over to all subsequent high-end rangefinder cameras and a number of single-lens reflex models. The other elements were replaced by those of the Leica type with the arrival of the next new models, likely due to the rational build of the Leica. The reason why the film counter remained on the camera's front surface may be attributable to either any amount of parts produced or an inability to modify the design in time.

While the Hansa Canon incorporates several original mechanisms, it owes its basic build to the Leica (see Fig. 14 & 15). The parts were placed masterly in early Leica models, with each mechanism simplified to the utmost extent. One could easily believe that the camera had already been rendered into its



most optimized form. For this reason, a number of mechanisms incorporated in the Nikon were also based on the Leica. Shown in Fig. 16 is the build of the bevel gear unit that carried over from the Kwanon, which Yoshida put so much passion into developing. The horizontal bevel gear shaft of the Hansa Canon has a large clearance in the bearing and a short bearing width. For this reason, the diameter of the film counter plate has been enlarged, and the resulting periphery serves to stabilize the bevel gear shaft.

What follows is a look at the pop-up viewfinder, which had been registered as a utility model for the Hansa Canon. The viewfinder, upon pressing a button, pops up in a satisfying motion. The durability of the viewfinder system upon activating it repeatedly, is typically a matter of concern. However, the inner surface of the copper-alloy cylinder located on the lowest part of the viewfinder is led through the outer surface of a thick-walled cylinder fixed to the top cover, thereby eliminating the need for such concern (Fig. 17). This viewfinder is highly unique, and represents a symbol of the Hansa Canon.

THE NIKKOR LENS & MOUNT OF THE HANSA CANON

What is the specification of the lens mount for the Hansa Canon said to have been developed by Nippon Kogaku K.K.? The flange-focal distance of this camera is estimated to be 27.5mm. With the flange-focal distance of the screw mount

Leica measured at 28.8mm, how should the figure 27.5mm be interpreted? Next, a J-mount lens was found to fit onto this mount when screwed on. The unique J-mount was used on Canon's J and J-II as well as its early S models from 1939 through 1946. The J-mount has a screw with 24 threads per inch. The angle of the screw threads has not been publicly disclosed, creating speculation as to whether they are metric screw threads with 60-degree angles or Whitworth threads with 55-degree angles.

PART THREE

With cameras said to be copies of the Leica, generally the Leica screw mount is used. According to Leica Camera Japan Co., Ltd., the specifications of this mount have been fully disclosed at present. The outside diameter of the male screw is 39mm, the angle of the screw threads is 60 degrees, and the number of threads per inch is 26. On the bottom portion of the logotype engraved on the finder cover of the Leica D, the characters "D.R.P." are engraved, signifying a German patent. This engraving likely caused Japanese camera designers to feel heavy pressure that the various mechanisms of the Leica were protected under German patents. It is the personal opinion of the author that the number of screw threads and the flange-focal distance of the Nikkor lens for the Hansa Canon avoided the specifications of the Leica screw mount. However, Leica Camera Japan Co., Ltd., has confirmed that neither patents nor utility models were registered for the Leica screw mount in Germany.

Regardless, the sense of utilizing the screw mount on the Hansa Canon was exquisite. Surely a master of screw cutting, Nippon Kogaku K.K. lathed it to perfection. Drawings for the Hansa Canon's focusing unit are kept on file at Canon Inc. in the form of microfilm, but no such records are to be found at Nikon Corporation. It is said that the Hansa Canon bodies were brought to the factory of Nippon Kogaku as semi-finished goods, where a lens and a few other parts were installed on it. But examining the method of attaching a rangefinder shows that it is secured to the camera by being screwed in from the bottom side of the top cover. These machine screws used to secure the rangefinder are difficult to tighten without removing the body case. It is possible that upon assembly, the rangefinder or rangefinder case was fixed to the top cover at Seiki Kogaku Kogyo K.K.

The Nikkor 5cm F3.5 for the Hansa Canon, which was designed by Sunayama, was completed around January 1935. According to Canon's website, upon the debut of the company's new model of the rangefinder camera in April 1939, 5cm F2, F2.8 and F4.5 Nikkor lenses, in addition to the new F3.5 lens, were released. The F2 lens consisted of six elements in three groups, and the F2.8, F3.5 and F4.5 lenses consisted of four elements in three groups.

A HARSH APPRAISEMENT OF THE KWANON

A number of mysteries continue to surround the Kwanon. In literature by Iwao Ogura [5], a figure, which contains five different types of Kwanons, is shown. The figure was drawn by Yoshida himself. Establishing consistency between these cameras and the Kwanons featured in the aforementioned advertisements is important in order to understand the Kwanon. However, where all the cameras drawn by Yoshida possess a rewind knob, those featured in the advertisements have no rewind knob whatsoever. It is difficult to establish any kind of logical consistency between the two; one may take that as a sign of Yoshida's romanticism.

The contrast between the Kwanon in the catalog and the Kwanons in the advertisements has led to the conclusion that the Kwanon in the catalog was created circa June 1934. The numerous examples of pictures in the catalog point to the fact that a Kwanon that could make photographs existed at the time. However, a detailed examination of the Kwanon camera assembly drawing reveals a number of problematic points. While work on

the prototype had been conducted with great enthusiasm, it would appear that a perfectly working prototype had not yet existed.

Ernst Leitz GmbH and Zeiss Ikon AG, corresponding to the Leica and Contax respectively, were without a doubt the world's leading companies in the fields of camera and optical technology at the time. Conversely, Seiki Kogaku Kenkyusho was an inexperienced small laboratory. It is, therefore, unavoidable that any comparison made between the Kwanon and the likes of the Leica and Contax will result in the former coming up short. However, considering the level of Japanese industry at the time, the challenge undertaken by Seiki Kogaku of attempting to create a domestically manufactured 35mm focal-plane shutter camera is worthy of praise. The Kwanon has evolved into the EOS-1Ds Mark III through the efforts of Canon's employees today. One can only imagine the uncommon surprise that Yoshida and his staff members at the time would express if they saw Canon's modern headquarters as it exists today, or the actual place manufacturing digital cameras in Oita Canon Inc.

Nippon Kogaku would enlist Seiki Kogaku Kogyo one more time with regards to lenses. In 1938, Nippon Kogaku, which was busy with production duties for the military, became unsure of its capacity to supply Nikkor lenses. Concerned that there was a lack of in-house lens design and manufacturing technology, Saburo Uchida issued a request to Nippon Kogaku that it provide Seiki Kogaku with such technology. Yoshio Hatano, then the special managing director of Nippon Kogaku, boldly agreed. Interestingly, at the time, the post of president did not customarily exist at Nippon Kogaku. In February 1939, Ryozo Furukawa, a lens designer at Nippon Kogaku, made the move to Seiki Kogaku and the necessary lens manufacturing equipment was also prepared. Furukawa designed a wide variety of lenses, including the R-Serenar lens for the indirect X-ray camera of 1942. Beginning with the Canon J-II, which was released in January 1946, both Nikkor lenses and Seiki Kogaku's own Serenar lenses were featured on the camera. Combining their camera body with a Nikkor lens continued up to the early stage of the Canon S-II, which was released in October 1946. It is safe to say that the roots of Canon's lens technology can be found in Nippon Kogaku.

ENJOYING A RANGEFINDER CAMERA WITH WAJIMA RAISED LACQUER WORK

Raised lacquer work in Japan is a unique craft all its own, that has been passed down over generations. That from Wajima City in Japan's Ishikawa Prefecture is particularly well known, and is imbued with strong Japanese sensibilities. Upon making a visit to Wajima City's "Ohmukai Koshudo", the famed creator of raised lacquer work, the author attempted to decorate a lens housing and other parts of his camera with raised lacquer work. On the right side of Fig. 18 is a lens hood for the Nikkor 5cm F1.4 lens, which was decorated with a gold-relief image of fans by traditional raised lacquer worker Masaji Mukai. The gold-relief image featured on the Canon IVSb body cap seen in the middle of the figure is an image of dancing cranes provided by creator Shota Teranishi. The image featured on the lens housing of the Mountain Elmar seen on the left side is of orchids by Mukai. Incorporating such designs on camera parts gives them a unique identity all their own.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to express his deepest respect for Nikon Journal Editor Mr. Robert Rotoloni, who graciously allowed this paper to be inserted.

This study would not have been possible without the advice of Mr. Hayato Ueyama. Additionally, the author wishes to express his gratitude to Mr. Hideo Uryu, President of Kanto Camera Service Co., Ltd., which provided prompt service with regards to the disassembly and repair of the rare cameras featured.

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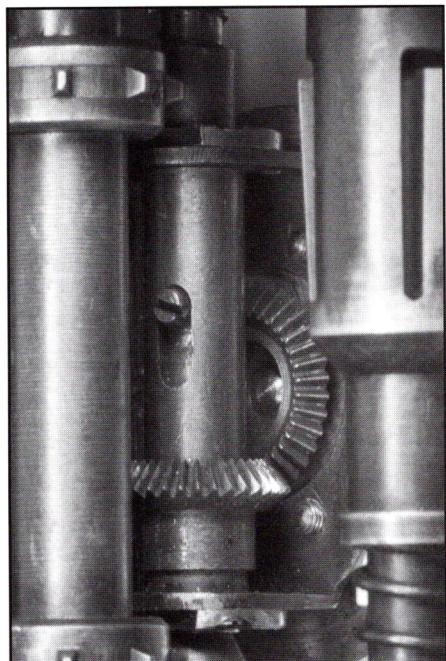


FIG. 16

FIG. 14

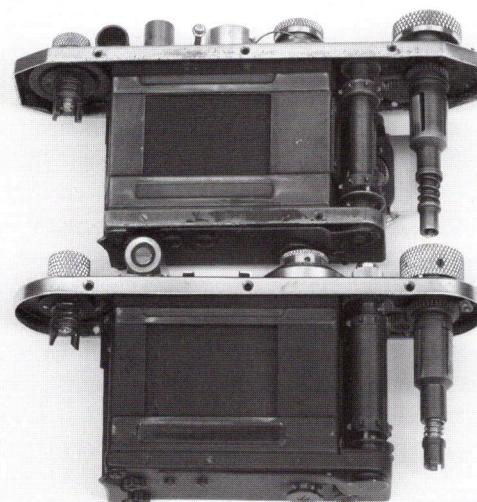


FIG. 15

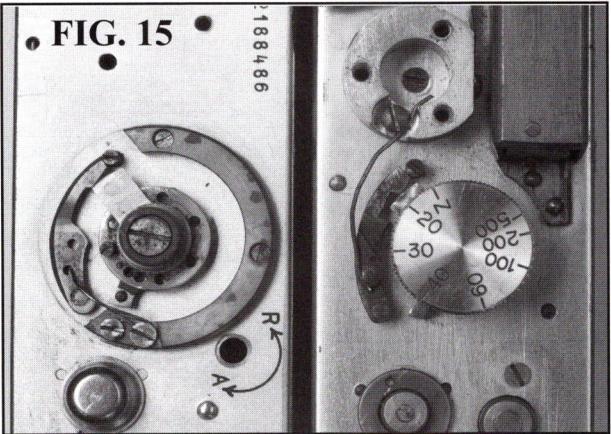


FIG. 17

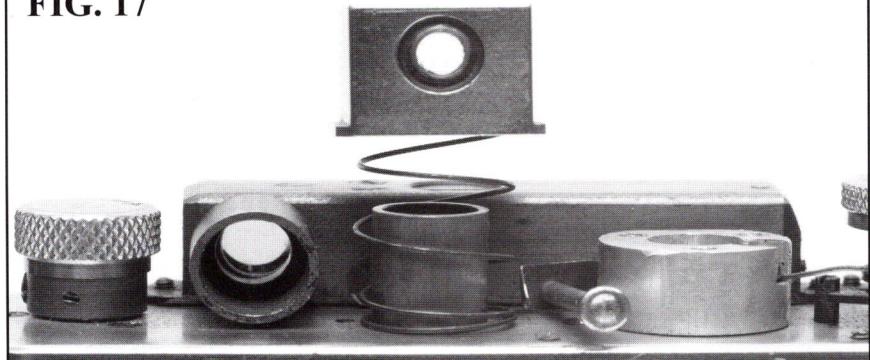
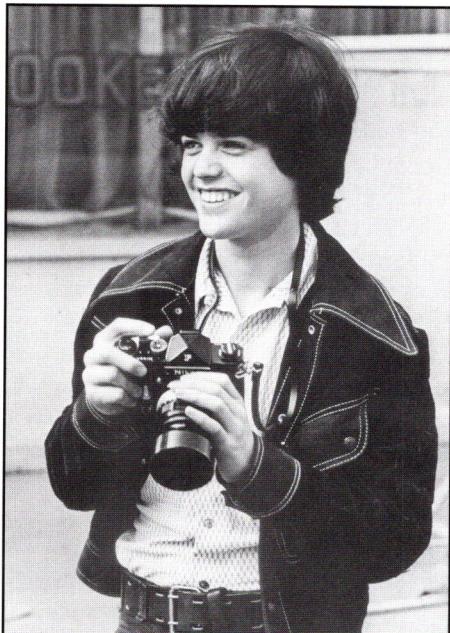


FIG. 18

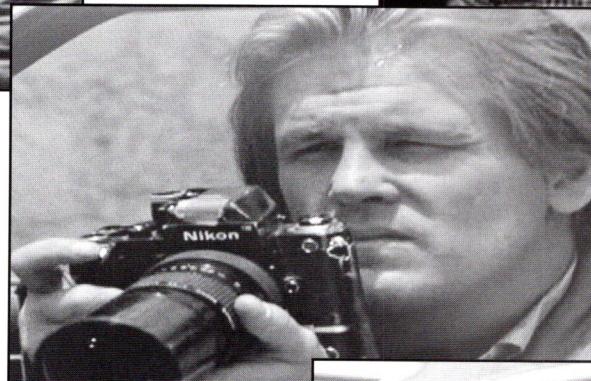
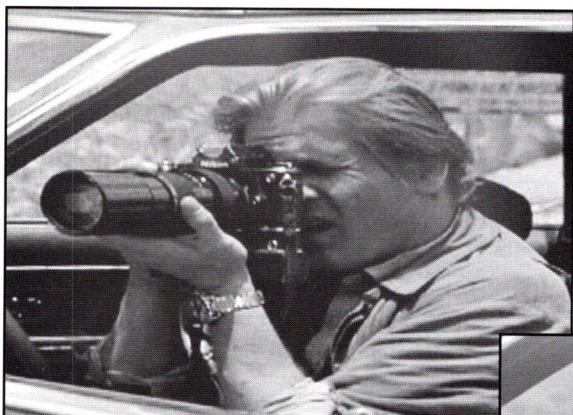
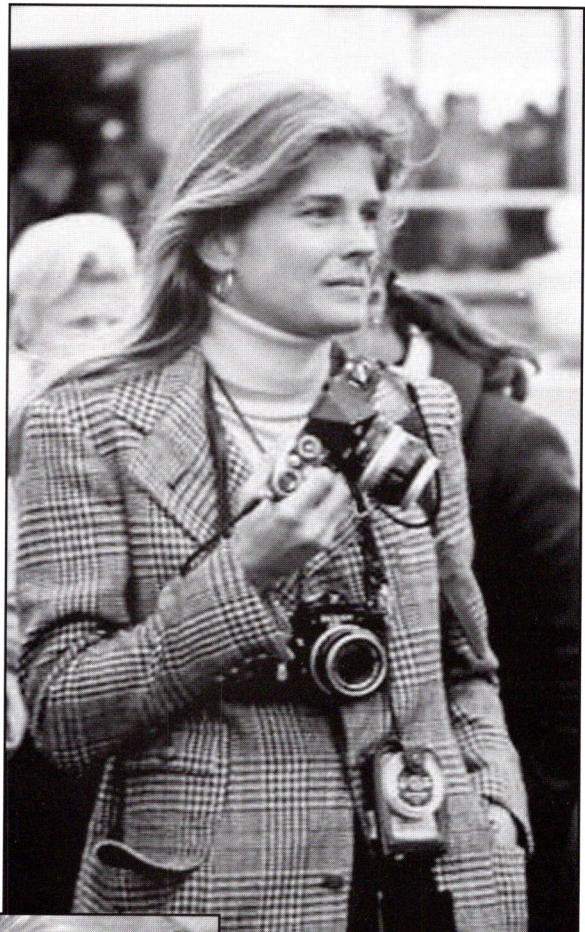
Fig. 14..Comparing the main body design of Hansa Canon (top) and Leica. Guide rail design is similar. Fig. 15..Similar shutter speed controls of Hansa (right) & Leica Standard. Fig. 16..Detail of the unique bevel gear unit described in text. Fig. 17..Internal design of the unique pop-up viewfinder of the Hansa Canon. Fig. 18..Lens and camera parts decorated with raised lacquer work.

NIKONS IN THE HANDS OF THE RICH AND FAMOUS...

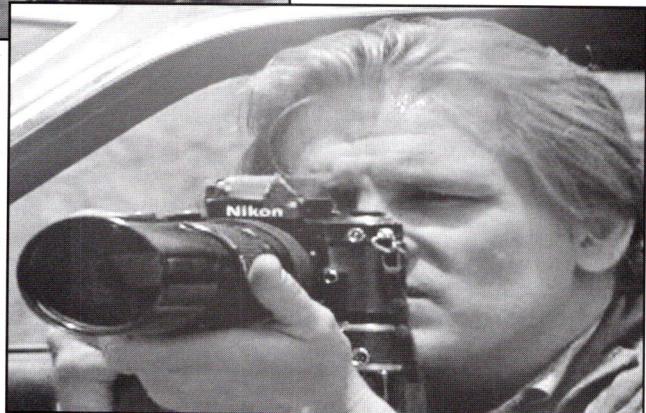
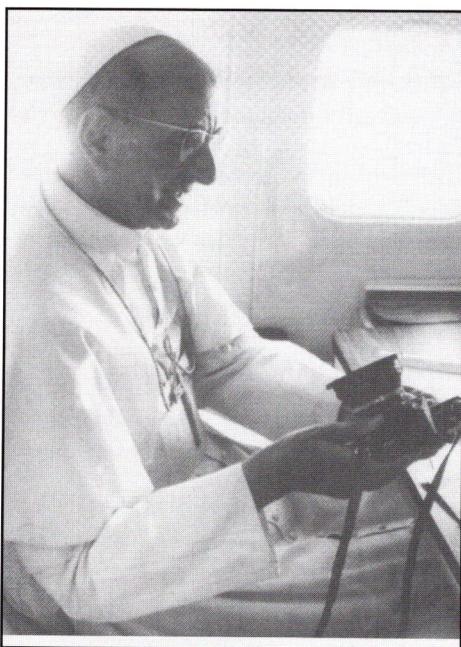


More of the rich and famous with their Nikons. Three are celebrities but only one is using Nikons as a part in a movie. The other two appear to be just enjoying shooting with their Nikons.

*At left is a very young Donny Osmond with his straight prism black Nikon F. (Rich Lane)
At right is the actress Candice Bergen, who is an avid photographer, with her pair of Nikons, again black straight prism models. (Chris Sap)*



Three-shot sequence of Nick Nolte using a motorized Nikon F2 in the movie 'Under Fire', based on an incident in the Nicaraguan civil war where an American journalist was murdered. Gene Hackman played that part. (Chris Sap) Left is a photo of Pope Paul VI holding a Nikkor F. Was it his? Don't know. (Chris Sap)



LETTERS...LETTERS...

From Brad Lukies... Thanks for the great job you do for all in the Nikon community. Your latest book is wonderful. I am wondering if you have a succession plan for the NHS when, sadly, you are no longer able to serve in the leadership role? I would like to see the NHS continue well into the future (I'm 45) and I appreciate that you obviously spend a tremendous amount of time to produce such excellent publications and do the supporting research. I suspect that you will need a team of folks to replace you one day, hopefully in the distant future. Perhaps a poll of members on their thoughts? (Something to think about. I am writing this issue a few days after my 62nd birthday. Hard to believe I was only 35 when I started it. Any feedback? Let me hear from you!! RJR)

From Kent Joosten... In a recent NHS Journal, one of your members expressed frustration with the lack of Coolscan drivers compatible with newer Microsoft systems and this presented difficulty in using NikonScan. The community should be aware that Hamrick Software produces a product called "VuScan", a simple, inexpensive yet quite useful substitute for NikonScan. More importantly, it includes Coolscan drivers compatible with all contemporary MS operating systems including Vista and '7'. So after installing VuScan (even the demonstration version), NikonScan will recognize the new drivers & operate correctly.

From Ryck Lent... Book and first issue received in perfect shape. The book is, frankly, even better than I imagined it could be. My sincere congratulations and thanks for the enormous scholarship, effort and aesthetic sensibility it represents, largely by you but also the other collaborators. It is a remarkable achievement!

From Juan Soriano... Thanks for welcoming me to the Nikon Historical Society. I am very happy to join this community. I want to say how impressed I am with your wonderful work in your new book. People like you and your work makes a fantastic reference tool available to collectors. I am a collector in Spain, and I collect Nikon and Hasselblads.

From Paul Bonner... NHS-108 made me feel that I hadn't missed any part of the Convention week....despite my limitations of movement. You did a really great job on the coverage.

From Leo Welkenhuysen... I do hope you returned safe and well to Chicago. I really enjoyed the Convention. Just a suggestion: it would be nice if there was a list available of all NHS members with their contact information and special interests. Could there be a form mailed to the members to fill out and return? What do you think? (Leo, that is exactly what is in this issue. See the backside of the enclosed membership survey for just such a request. It is a good idea so those who wish to participate make sure you get the form back to us soon! (RJR)

From Herman Franssen... My copy of your book arrived today. Thank you for the fast service. It's an amazing book. I have been reading and browsing through it ever since its arrival, and only laid it aside to write you this email. It is truly your magnum opus. Thank you for investing your time, money and love in this project, and that you persevered so that the rest of us can enjoy it.

DON'T FORGET TO GET THE SURVEY BACK TO US..ASAP!!

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE MEMBERS FROM HANS PLOEGMAKERS.....

Dear friends, Nikon collectors & lovers, visitors to NHS-Con12 in Bruges...On behalf of Arlette and myself, I want to say thank you very much for all the warm compliments, post cards, letters and phone calls. To receive all these nice messages made all the work worthwhile. Thank you very much. Hans and Arlette. On behalf of Bob and myself I want to say..Thank you very much: **To Wim Blonk** for his support and all the work he did for the excursion to Brussels. He guided us and explained the interesting buildings and architectural highlights we passed during our coach ride in Brussels. He also explained the history of the many buildings that we saw as we walked around the center of the city. **To Hans Braakhuis** who designed and built our website so everyone had access to all the latest information about the meeting. Also what you needed to know for making the journey to Bruges and to choose the trips to make during your stay in Belgium. **To Uli Koch** who helped with the computer and also made the photos for the beautiful glass block of the Nikon F that was the special convention gift. Uli had this custom made for us and only 80 were produced, making it an instant Nikon collectible! **To Peter Lownds** for carrying the 'Tony Hurst Wall' to yet another NHS Convention! It is hard work and much appreciated as it adds so much to the meeting and makes the perfect backdrop! And I want to personally thank all the speakers and presenters: Wim Blonk, Hans Braakhuis, Peter Coeln, Gerald Davies, Tony Hurst, Uli Koch, Yuki Kawai, Bill Kraus, Wes Loder (presented by Bill Kraus), Peter Lownds, Lars Netopil, and a special thanks to Al Brody for giving me the opportunity to make many photos from his great collection for use in my presentation. Your contributions made the week, and the convention day, very special. You shared your knowledge and doubled the joy. To know these things makes you collect with more understanding of the history. Each and all of them made these days special! Not only for the support but, above all, it is the friendships that count.

FOR IMMEDIATE SHIPMENT

I am pleased to announce that the US inventory of my book is in place and all orders can be processed for immediate shipment. Since it became available the beginning of March 2008, I have been shipping within 48 hours of receiving payment.

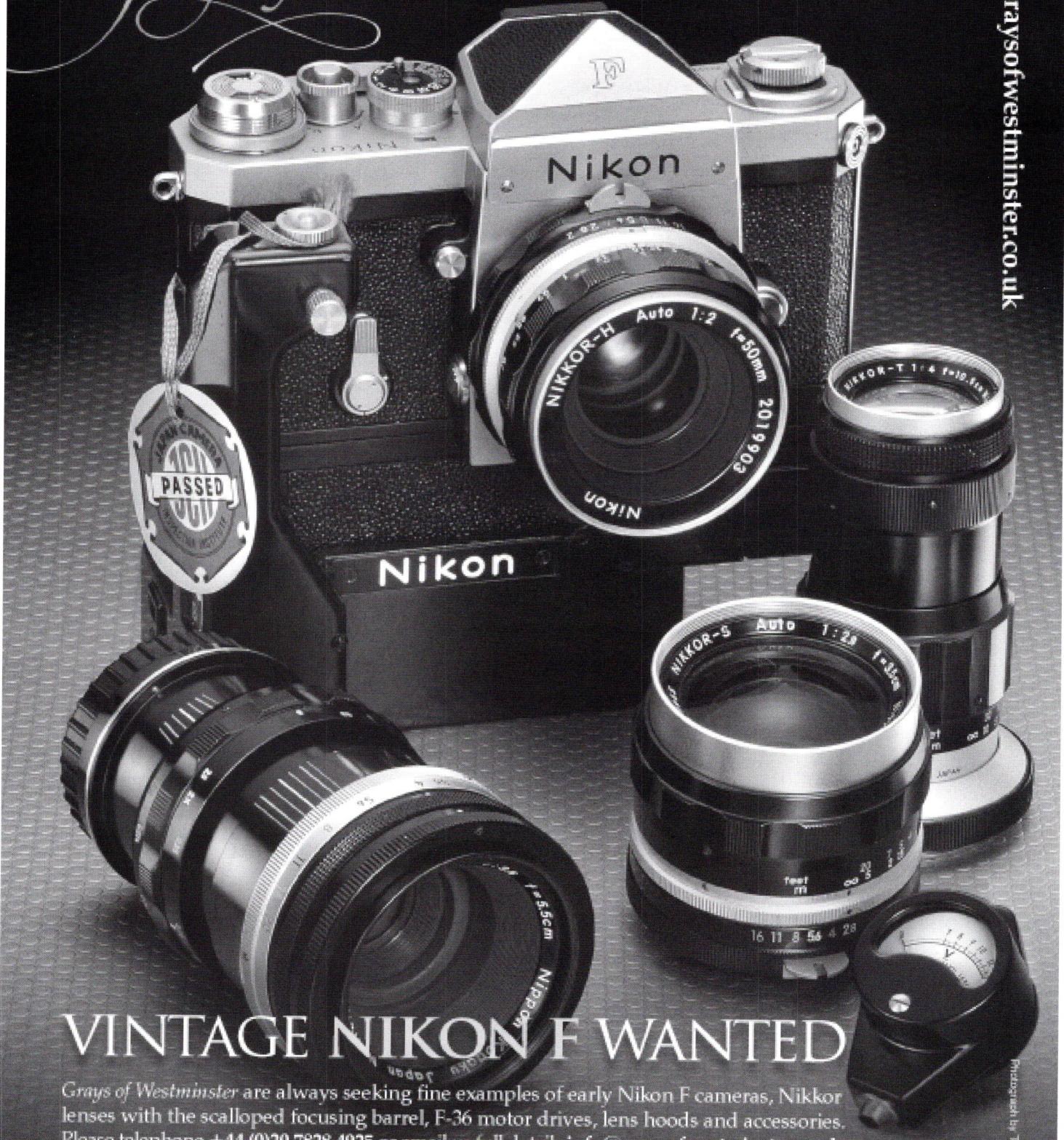
Those of you who wish to obtain a signed copy from me need only to contact me and it will be done. I did not mention previously that, besides signing the book, I have also had made up labels stating to the fact that 'this copy has been purchased directly from the author'. Prices are as follow and include postage:

United States	\$100 including Priority shipping.
Canada	\$115 including Int. Priority shipping.
Europe	\$125 including Int. Priority shipping.
Japan/Australia	\$130 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@sbglobal.net) are my Paypal account numbers. Please make all checks/money orders payable to **RJR PUBLISHING** or myself (**NOT THE SOCIETY!**). **THANK YOU.....RJR**

Grays of Westminster®

www.graysofwestminster.co.uk



VINTAGE NIKON F WANTED

Grays of Westminster are always seeking fine examples of early Nikon F cameras, Nikkor lenses with the scalloped focusing barrel, F-36 motor drives, lens hoods and accessories. Please telephone +44 (0)20 7828 4925 or email us full details info@graysofwestminster.co.uk

GRAYS OF WESTMINSTER, 40, CHURTON STREET, LONDON SW1V 2LP, ENGLAND

Photographed by Tony Hall

20

CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE... Transparent Nikon F90, mint in box, one of only 26 made, 950 euro; **Nikon F2 High Speed**, mint-, 4500 euro; **Nikon Model H hand microscope**, neck chain & all correct pieces, mint-, 3500 euro; **Nikon FM2 'Half Frame'**, only 34 were made for the Norwegian police, mint-, 5000 euro; **Nikon S3M black body #6600207**, 27,000 euro; **Nikon Model One #609319 w/f2 #708723**, 15,000 euro. Please call or email me for photos. **Peter Lownds**, tel. **0031 654694193(Holland)** qcsman@gmail.com

WANTED... I am looking for Nikon One back #609598. Will purchase outright, or trade for my back #6114402, plus some cash in your direction. **Paul Comon.....** pr.sr@verizon.net

FOR SALE... Nikon, Mamiya, Bolex, Contax/Kiev, Bessa literature, books, brochures, test reports, manuals, promo items, etc. Also Sunpak flash items, Lowepro bags, Manfrotto items, backdrops & reflectors. Possibly trade for Nikon items. **Ian DC Shephard**, email me at dcian@fastemail.us

WANTED... Nikon F3P body. Prefer Mint with instruction book & box. Nikon SP with titanium shutter, EX+ or better. **Thank you. Bob Rogen, (916) 454-3317.....** teamrogen@sbcglobal.net

FOR SALE... Nikon literature for sale. Original price lists from 1973, 2 sets of 1968-74 Nikon Handbooks, complete Nikon product guides from Vol. 1, NHS Journals from #1 to current! Plus much, much more. Also included are Hasselblad catalogs & literature and much more. I photographed many of the images in the catalogs and ads for Nikon over the past 40+ years. **\$600 or best offer**. email me for a complete list. al@alsatterwhite.com Thank you.

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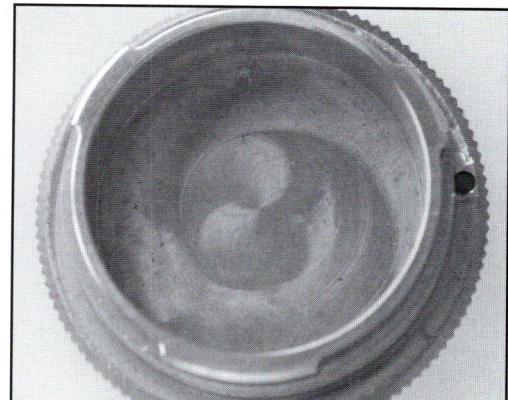
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odds 'n ends

A REALLY UNUSUAL & UNIQUE BODY CAP

Chris Sap sent me these photos of a very unusual Nikon RF body cap that he recently acquired. This is really a strange item that I have never seen before nor had any hint of its existence from the literature. Made of chrome plated brass, it bayonets on just like a lens and even has a red alignment dot. They even serrated the edge so you can grip it easily. And look at that N-K logo. Could this be a Nikon made item? The only body cap I am aware of is the black metal press-in item that appeared during the Nikon SP/S3 era. I know of no earlier body cap. So what is this? I don't know but I sure would like to have one! Wouldn't you?



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Created For The "NHS" By *Tony Hurst*



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