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EDITOR/PUBLISHER

THIS ISSUE
PG 1.. 'DDD'-THE INTERVIEW!
PG 8..A NIKON PANORAMA CAMERA?
PG 14..NK TELESCOPE ADAPTERS



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NHS -110 DEADLINE!

The deadline for the next issue of our **NIKON JOURNAL**,
NHS-111, is **March 1, 2011**. Please get all your correspon-
dence and photos to me on time so I can bring it out on sched-
ule. Thank you. **RJR.**

EDITORIAL

Welcome to issue #110 of your Nikon Journal. I will begin with an NHS-Con13 update.

I only received about 60 replies to the questionnaire that was inserted in NHS-109. A bit disappointing to have less than 1 in 5 members respond. However, they will be tabulated to help us with future conventions. The 3 winners of a 1-year membership extension are: Kiu Kaffi (US), Veli Miettinen (Finland) & Andrew Price (England). Congratulations, gentlemen and thank you to all who responded. It is still too early to have many facts about the Paris meeting, but I can tell you that Thierry Ravassod has been in touch with Nikon, France, and they want to help us. Not sure to what extent but we will know more later. Sounds like a good start to me. Hopefully more next issue.

We have some interesting articles this issue starting with a landmark interview with the man who ‘discovered’ the Nikkor lenses and made the West aware of them. Of course I am speaking of probably the most famous photojournalist of them all: David Douglas Duncan! Chris Sap and Thierry Ravassod traveled to his home in Southern France to spend a delightful day with DDD. See page one for the whole story.

On page 6 we have a second installment by Ian DC Shephard on the array of underwater housings made for the Nikon system over the years. It is amazing how many there have been.

Biagio Guerra has been working on an article about a special panorama modified Nikon F for some months. On page 8 you can finally see the results. The ‘Pannaroma 1x3’ custom panorama camera is discussed in detail along with photos by the designer and builder, Thomas Roma, and member Carlo Rivolti who is the proud owner of one of only 31 examples ever made! Not only a rare camera, but a fascinating and beautifully made modification of the venerable Nikon F. Man, I would love to have one of these.

Mike Symons and Uli Koch have collaborated on an article about a rare and rather esoteric rangefinder accessory. How many of you have seen the telescope adapter for the RF cameras? Better yet, have you ever seen one for the Leica SM cameras? Me neither! I wish I would have had this information when doing my book. This accessory is not covered there. See page 14 for all you need to know.

A lot of book updates this issue, along with photos this time of some really interesting new material, including an item not in the book at all. See page 17.

There is a new book just released and, although it is not about Nikons, it is done by one of our members and it is a fascinating item. Lars Netopil of Germany is best known as one of the leading Leica dealers in the world. He has just published a beautiful 487-page book on ‘The Prototype Leicas’. This all color book has hundreds of photos of one-of-a-kind prototypes from the Leica factory museum as well as private collections from around the world. The photos are just gorgeous and well reproduced on fine paper in this ‘printed in Germany’ volume. It comes with a dust jacket and a sturdy slipcover. You can contact Lars directly at www.lars-netopil.com or lars-netopil@lars-netopil.com.

I want to wish a full recovery for British member Paul-Henry vanHasboeck. Get well Paul, and see you in Paris in 2012!

RJR

....DAVID DOUGLAS DUNCAN....

AN INTERVIEW WITH 'DDD'

By CHRISTOPHE SAP With THIERRY RAVASSOD

In my continuous research on the Nikon One, the so called black Nikon One was somewhat mysterious, and when I got evidence that Nikon never made a black One, I would have loved to have met Jun Miki.

But as Miki had passed away, who else better than his very good friend DDD (Yes, David Douglas Duncan!) would be able to tell me more. So a new search began. Locating him wasn't that difficult, but contacting him wasn't that easy. However, with a detour it worked. A certain Miss Linda asked me to mail her a letter to DDD, which she would forward to Mr. Duncan by fax, as he has no e-mail. I can't thank her enough. Thank you dear Linda.



DDD, 1964 Lausanne (Switzerland), with custom built prismatic lens on Nikon F. (Photo, Sheila Duncan)

One evening, many weeks later, the telephone rang:

"Mr. Sap?"

"Yes."

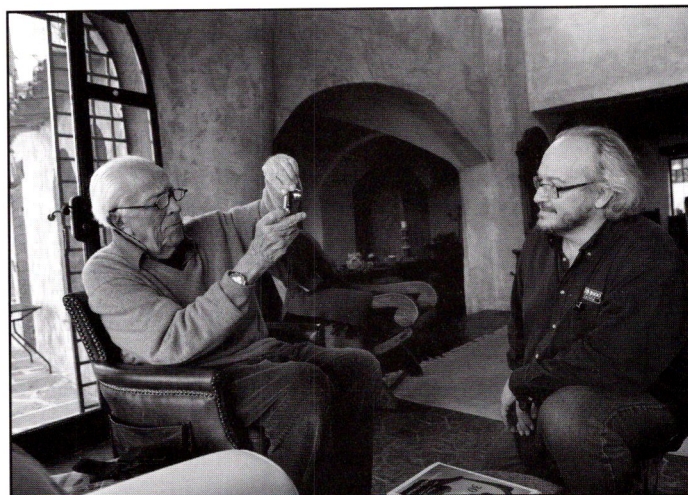
"This is Duncan speaking."

"euh."

Yes, that is what I said first. But we got to talking and he would call me back for a meeting in the autumn.

That meeting took place on Oct. 7th, 2010 at his beautiful home in a breathtaking landscape. His wife Sheila had prepared a very good lunch for us, which, beside David (he told me to call him David) and myself, included NHS member Thierry Ravassod. Indeed, when I told Thierry I was going to meet DDD he was most willing to join the party. An appointment was made and I would arrive at Nice airport where Thierry picked me up (coming all the way down from Lyon and driving back in the late afternoon).

It took us about 100 minutes to cover the 29km from the airport to David's home. Yes, very hard to find. Even though it is close to the airport, it is not that easy to get back without a private car. When it was my time to leave it was impossible to find a taxi. Sheila was most kind to drive me back to the Nice airport.



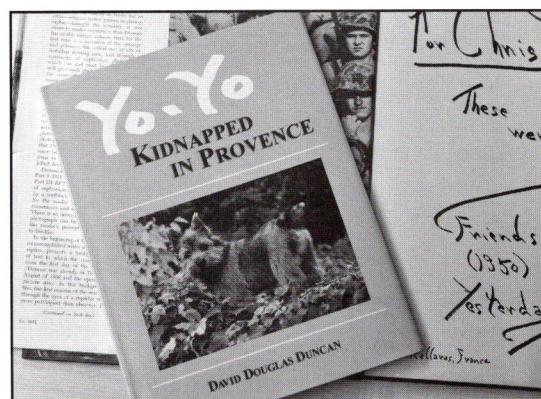
David picturing NHS member Thierry Ravassod. (Photo C. Sap)

There was so much traffic that I felt uncomfortable, knowing she had to drive all the way back while I could comfortably wait for my plane to Belgium. I arrived home early the next morning, but it was worth it. Terry and I were both most impressed and pleased to have had the opportunity to visit David and Sheila, a couple we both admire very much.

Some friends knowing about this visit had mailed me some questions, which I had printed intending to ask them all.

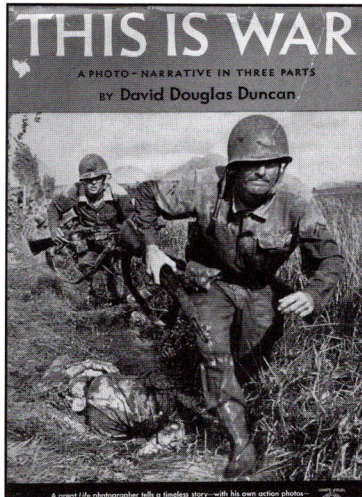
Upon arrival at David's home we were both warmly welcomed. During the meal he entertained us not only about his professional life but others things as well. One was the story of the kidnapping of Yo-Yo, full name Yankee-Yoshii (so named for David's' homeland and his friend Mr. Chozo Yoshii, president of Galerie Yoshii in Tokyo, Paris, New York—perhaps one of the most famous of all Japanese art dealers).

I will not tell the story here as it can be found in the book he wrote entitled: "Yo-Yo Kidnapped in Provence". Both Terry and I were most happy when he presented us signed copies when we were leaving. He did tell us that the ransom he paid was more than what he had paid for his Mercedes Gull Wing!



For most of us, DDD is best known for his book: "This Is War!" It is said that thanks to his photo work with Nikon lenses, Nippon Kogaku became well known amongst professionals.

At the end of that book he gives some photo data. Let me just quote some. About half way down the first column he writes: "Every photograph in This Is War! Was taken with a Leica camera, but fitted with Nikkor lenses...made in Occupied Japan." And he continued praising Nippon Kogaku for the superiority of these lenses: "were far superior, in our opinion, to any standard 35mm lenses available in the open market....British, American or German."



So this most of us already know, but did you also know that Canon missed the opportunity!

Indeed, David did not only try Nippon Kogaku lenses, but also other makes. When he asked if there were other lens makers besides NK, he was told about Canon. So Miki contacted them but they had no time. Can you imagine!



DDD during the Korean War, September 1950. (Leica camera with Nikkor 13.5cm lens.)



David signing 'THIS IS WAR!', first edition. (photo C. Sap)

DDD was not a photography student. Here I quote him word for word:

"23, January, 1934. University of Arizona, Tucson: Archaeology student. 0700 radio news. Huge fire at Congress Hotel- probably gutted by flames because of brick walls. I'd just unwrapped a birthday gift from Jean my younger sister in Kansas City. Found 39 cent plastic Univex camera one roll of film. My first camera learned how to load running to Congress Hotel in the center of Tucson, mile-and-half away. Flames erupting from all windows. Film in Univex shot my first-ever news story of a half-wild guy arguing with firemen. Really hysterical about suitcase he dropped in smoke-blinding corridor. Two firemen charged back inside, staggered out with his bulging suitcase and he took off. So did the firemen, all yelling for cops. The suitcase had popped open full of guns – slammed shut! I'd been wondering what happened while I hit the throttle for Dean Cummings "Never be Late!" class with my final exam essay on Mayan ruins in sweating hands. Next day's Tucson Citizen's exploding front page: "John Dillenger America's Number One Cop Killer Captured Alive After Fire". Down to photo editor of Citizen with my 'scoop' – left on his desk. He was sending his chief photographer to jailhouse hoping for close-up of FBI's Numero Uno staring through those bars. He also lost that film. Sent a years' gift of the Citizen with note of regret."

We continued talking about many things, just like old friends. Amazing how Terry and I felt at home. David and Sheila, a couple never to forget.

And of course we talked Nikon. While doing so using Nikons as well. I started with a question about an article that was published in NHS-23 (3/89) pages 18-19, in which it was said that a marine Captain was pictured in his book "This is War!" and bought a Nikon M on Duncan's advice. This was important to me as the pictured camera in that article (M6094025) was offered for sale. Somebody invented this idea, as Duncan said the story was not true as he got hundreds of letters from people saying that they were in the book. "But, if it makes them happy, that's okay".

No, I did not buy that camera.

A second question was about a 20mm/f3.5 wide-angle lens that Duncan might have used when he pictured his good friend Picasso for his book, "Picasso & Lump, a Dachshund's Odyssey".



Picturing each other. (Photo by Thierry Ravassod)

He photographed Picasso for many years, not just for this book. He used many lenses and cameras, mostly Leica M3Ds. He used Nikkors and Leica, and a 50mm/f1.2 Canon lens, which can be seen on page 3 of his book "Photo Nomad". Later Nikon gave him several historic cameras.



DDD in 1956 with Mr. Hiroshi Shirahama, president of Nippon Kogaku, when he received the 200,000th Nikon F as a gift. Below...Chris Sap & David Douglas Duncan (Photo by Thierry Ravassod)



And then of course the question about the so-called black Nikon One and the Jun Miki story. Here he was very firm: Miki in those days only used Leica cameras with Nikkor lenses. He didn't use Nikon rangefinder cameras. He made a copy from a page of one his books, and I quote:

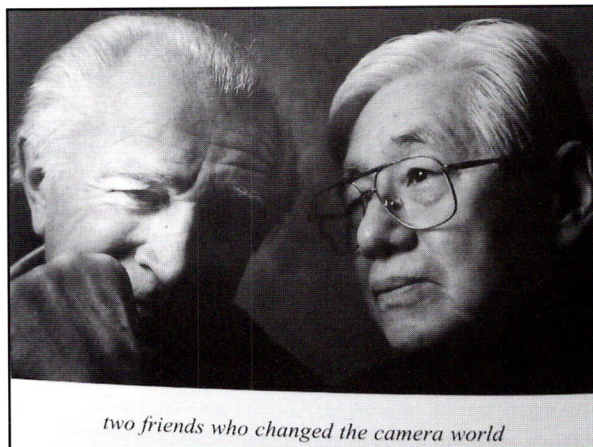
"Japan 1950

Jun Miki, LIFE's Tokyo-based photographer, banged off a new lens test shot while I sat in the office's evening post-war gloom awaiting prints thinking, 'Jun-san you're wasting film in this half-light.' Really! That negative bombed the foundation from beneath the prewar miniature 35mm world. Miki showed me the print the next morning. I asked him to phone Nikon's president, Dr. Masao Nagaoka (never heard of him or his camera before) for an invitation to his nearby miraculously un-bombed factory at his convenience, which became....now! I postponed my Japanese arts story at the Ueno National Museum, spent two weeks at Nikon's optical bench testing Leitz/Zeiss/Nikkor lenses soon adapted to my Leicas. I was ready for culture again but interrupted for the next 6 months by the Korean War." (a major NY Times feature about 'Made in Japan Nikon Cameras'.)

Years passed, Nikons swept the camera world (Canon had also been phoned but too busy to reply or show me their lenses). Another question was about the developing of the film. This wasn't done in Korea, but films were rushed by plane to LIFE lab in the US (David was a LIFE photographer for 10 years).



"My Nikon & me", photo taken as a gift by DDD, Oct. 7, 2010. Below..DDD & Miki, two good friends. (Photo by Taikan Usui)



two friends who changed the camera world

Could I ask all my questions? No, as we talked so much about other things, mostly Nikon, and time ran out so quickly. Were we happy? Oh yes, very happy. And more, when David took our picture and sent us prints. I made a lot of pictures and also some video with a Nikon Coolpix S200. (I had just learned there was a video function while visiting at Bill Kraus' house a couple of months earlier, and Terry made a sound registration on his I-pod).

All of it is on my computer, so there is more than in this short article. I hope that for NHS-Con13 Terry and I will be able to present some parts of it, but then first I will have to learn how to cut and paste video parts and make a decent video.

David is now working on a new book. He underwent surgery for a broken hip, and has made a photo-reportage of this event, shot with his black Nikon Coolpix S620.

What did he use for cameras during his professional life? Well, let me quote him:

"Camera DNA of a Veteran photojournalist..

Univex – Kodak – Graflex – Rolleiflex

M3D Leicas for Picasso and WWII Leica with 1950 Nikon lens
Nikon F – Nikon S620 Coolpix"

Remember, DDD was born in 1916, Nippon Kogaku 1917.



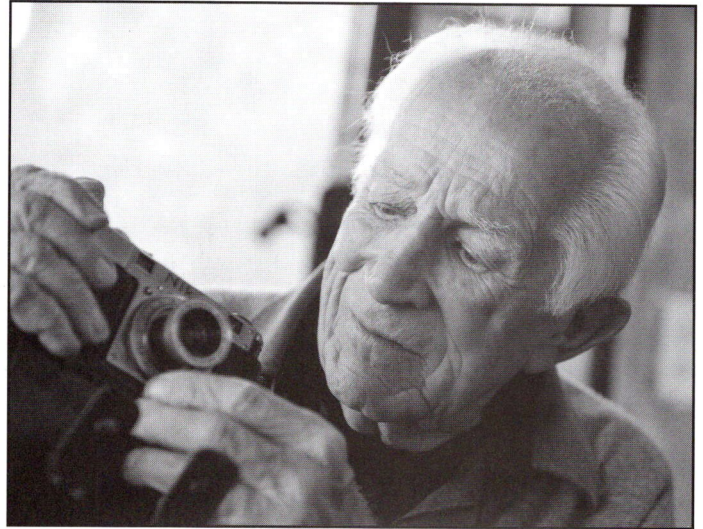
And to finish, one more special photo.

The kneeling man is Max Desfor, Associated Press, Pulitzer Prize winner 1950 for "Bridge at Seoul". This photo was taken on Dec. 23, 1950, in the port of Hungnam, North Korea. DDD is the second from the right, with two Leicas, one with a 13.5cm Nikkor, the other a 5cm Nikkor. (Photographer unknown)

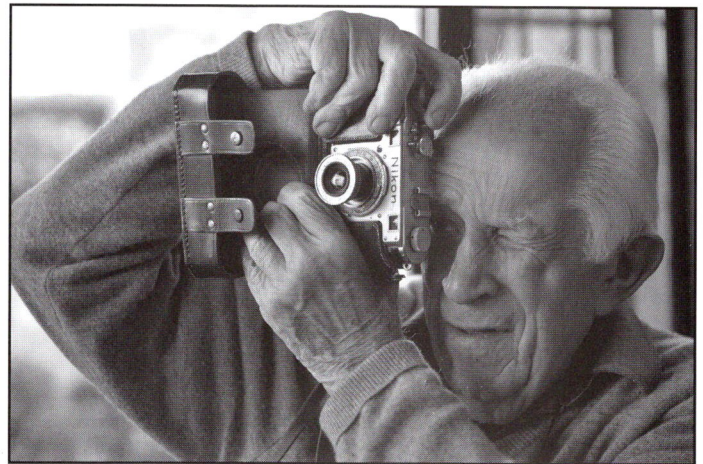
Thank you David and Sheila for this unforgettable moment, which we had to honor to spend with both of you and little Duzi.

Chris Sap, Deinze-Belgium Oct 2010

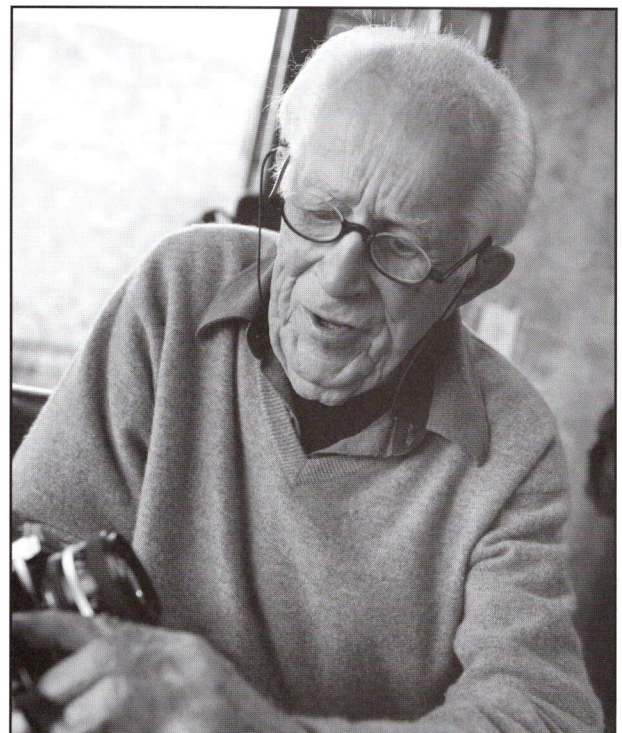
(approved by David, phone call November 20, 2010. "It is a damned good story, well done, great job. THIS MADE ME HAPPY!")

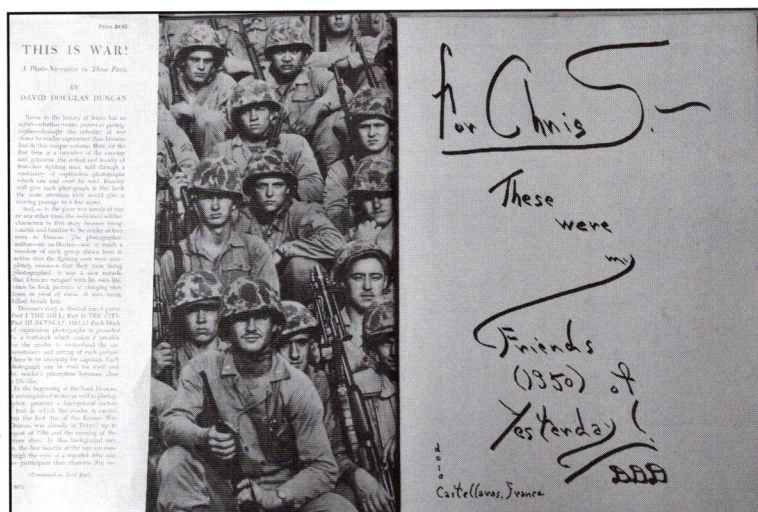


DDD with Chris' Nikon One #60933. (photos Chris Sap)

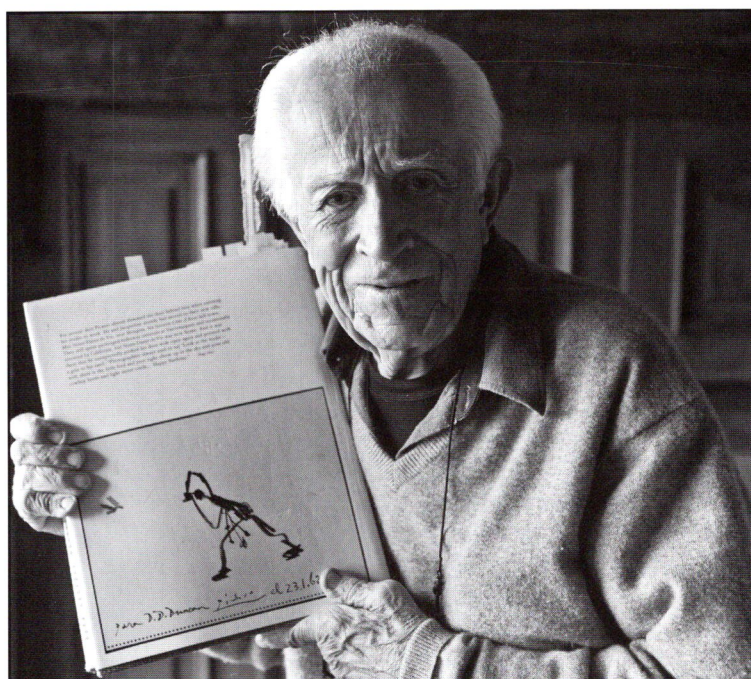


Below...David with a Korean built Nikon-Lemix FM. (Photo by Chris Sap)





David signed this first edition copy of "THIS IS WAR!" to Chris during his visit.



Above...David and Duzi. Above right...in his home. Right...at work in his office.
(All photos by Chris Sap)



FROM THE LITERATURE.....

MORE 'UW' HOUSINGS FOR THE NIKON F...PART II

By IAN DC SHEPHARD

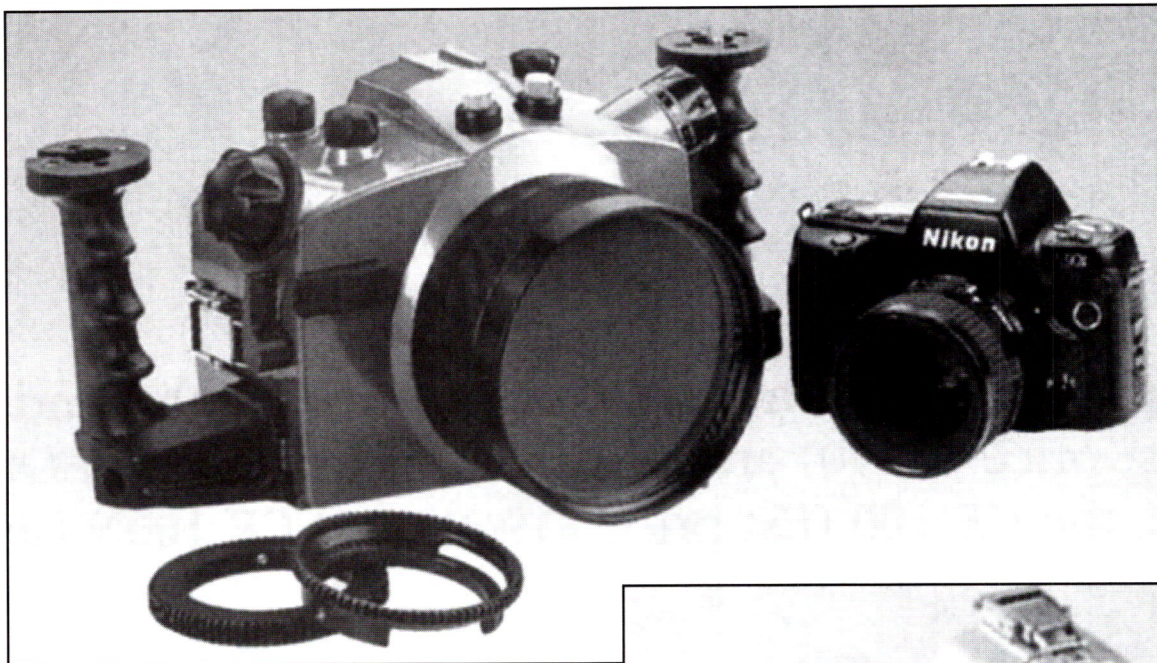
You will recall that British member Ian DC Shephard had an article in NHS-105 on additional underwater housings made for the Nikon F/F2 series that were not covered in Uli Koch's original article in NHS-104. Ian had uncovered five different housings, one of which accommodated a Nikon F2 with a 250 shot motor and an Action Finder! All of the information had been gleaned from the literature as are the items featured in this issue. So what we have is basically Part II to Ian's NHS -105 article.

This time around he covers three additional units that can be used with even later models up to the F5! He also shows us a special add-on for the Nikonos system that is awesome. Again, he has uncovered all this information from the literature, and I find it amazing just how many companies produced these specialized, low production, items for the Nikon reflex system. But then, Nikon has always been the predominant player in 35mm underwater photography.

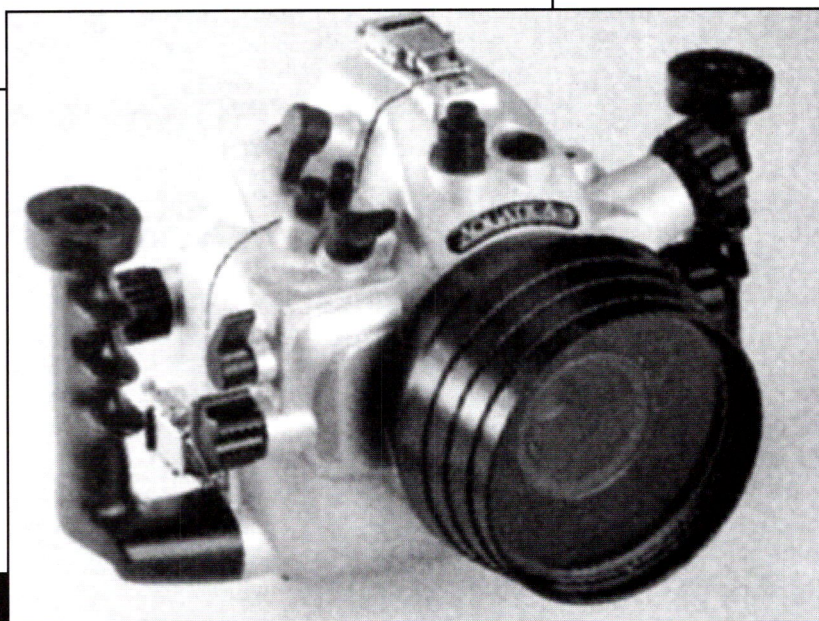
RJR

On this page are two photos of the SUBAL, another well made alloy housing designed for the AF bodies from the F80 (N80) all the way up to the flagship F5! You can still use most of the control buttons atop the camera and there is a lever on the front of the housing that allows you to turn the lens control from AF to manual. There are 2 ports, one for lenses 60 or 105mm micro, the second for zooms up to 105mm, but ideal for the popular diver's lens, the 18~35mm.





Above and right...A top of the line all alloy housing is that made by Aqua Vision Systems of Canada. These are made to military specifications and are tested in-house to 330 feet. These are so good that Nikon U.S.A. are the importers. They are made for the AF's like the F801 (N8008), F90 (N90), F100, F4 and F5. Now also the 'D' series of digital SLRs! They also can handle the manual models like the FM2, FA, F2 and the F3, all with motor drives fitted. The dome accepts over 14 Nikkors from the 16mm fish-eye to the 200mm Micro. A big plus is that by changing the back door on the 'AF' housing, you can fit the 8mm camcorders from Sony/Nikon. Even the hand grips are custom made to various sizes to give the diver a more positive feel.



Left...An amazing add-on extra for the Nikonos cameras, the 'AQUALENS', is a sealed housing for Nikkor 'land' lenses. It's 8 inch fish-eye dome is made to accommodate lenses from 14mm to 24mm. Also optional viewfinders were available giving you 170 degree full-frame viewing!

THE 'PANNAROMA 1X3'

A SPECIAL NIKON F!

BY BIAGIO GUERRA WITH PHOTOS BY
THOMAS ROMA AND CARLO RIVOLTI

Over twenty years ago I was cruising around at the San Jose, California camera show (when shows were shows!), where at the fairgrounds you were able to buy all kinds of unusual and hard to find photo gear, including vintage Nikon reflex and rangefinder stuff, some of it quite rare. At that time I do recall seeing a strange medium format camera with an unheard of name. I just remembered "Siciliano, Brooklyn". I did not pay much attention to the camera, as it did not fit my interests, but the name did sound interesting. I thought, 'was it made by a Sicilian immigrant to the U.S.'? Sure enough, a couple of years ago a dear friend of mine, Mr. Carlo Rivolti (a prominent Nikon collector in Italy) called me up saying that he had just acquired a Nikon camera modified for panoramic photography made in Brooklyn by 'Siciliano'. So it was not the medium format camera that I saw twenty years earlier, but a Nikon F body modified for a panoramic format.

The camera is labeled "PANNAROMA 1x3" made by 'Siciliano Camera Works, Brooklyn, N.Y.' with a Mamiya 50mm lens from their Mamiya Universal system.

I was really surprised because I was not aware of a 35mm panorama camera with a non-rotating lens. Most of the customized panoramic cameras made in the US were medium format 6x12cm and even 6x17cm, using aircraft torpedo 120 roll backs. They also used mainly large format lenses such as Schneider Super Angulons or Rodenstock Grandagons. The only other 35mm camera modified for panoramic work made in the US that I recall was by Jim Lipari in Omaha, Nebraska (famous for repairing and refurbishing Kodak Cirkut cameras). It was called the 'LIPARIRAMA', but those were motorized rotating cameras.

The 'PANNAROMA 1x3' is a wideangle camera instead, offering a panoramic negative of 24x72mm on 35mm film, using a Nikon F body with a Mamiya Sekor 50mm/f6.3 lens. This is probably the best wideangle lens that Mamiya ever made for the Universal Press 6x9 system. It is perfect for the 24x72mm format as it can actually cover almost the 4"x5" format!

The designer and builder of this fine customized Nikon F is Mr. Thomas Roma, fine art photographer and professor at the School of the Arts at Columbia University in New York. All his cameras were manufactured under the name of "SICILIANO CAMERA WORKS" in his own machine shop in Brooklyn where he still builds cameras today. He started developing custom 6x7 and 6x9 cameras in 1972, with official production starting in 1975, adapting always the Mamiya lens from the Universal Press. All the early 120 cameras had the name "Siciliano Camera Works".

When I asked Mr. Roma why he chose the Nikon F body for his 35mm panorama cameras, the answer was simple; "because it is the strongest and most reliable 35mm camera ever built at that time...do you know of any others?"

He named the camera to honor his wife Anna Roma: P (panoramic) + ANNA + ROMA. A total of 31 cameras were made. The first PANNAROMA prototype was made in 1987, and it was not partially black anodized like the production models. The serial number range is #13001 to #13031. Mr. Roma started making them originally for close friends and famous photographers. Amongst them were Lee Friedlander, Raghurbir Singh, Joseph Koudelka (Magnum), Gilles Peres (Magnum) and Mike Yamashita (National Geographic). They did gain immediate success with the pros, for the need at that time for a 35mm wideangle panoramic camera was there. Remember, in those days we did not have any Hasselblad X-Pans or Mamiya 67 rangefinders with panoramic adapters, etc. so the 'Pannaroma' was really ahead of its time.

It was built to accept the Mamiya Universal Press lens system. Some of them were sold through Ken Hansen Photographic and K&M Camera in New York city. The original price in 1987 was \$3500. It was a hand made limited production camera never meant to be mass-produced. And all 31 cameras made are still in existence and being used today.

NHS member and friend Carlo Rivolti proudly showed me his PANNAROMA 1x3 built on an early F body (6752xxx) with the serial number #13015. I must say that it gives a first impression of a combination of the best Japanese components (camera & lens) with exquisite US craftsmanship bringing together two products that were originally designed for two different applications.

The custom work is absolutely superb. Thomas Roma was cherry picking all the mintish Nikon F bodies that he could find, with no preference as to the age of the camera. In order to accommodate the big Mamiya lenses, the reflex mirror housing was completely removed, including the entire focal plane shutter mechanism, and an aluminum drum is added on the front to receive the interchangeable Mamiya lenses. There is also a 'U' shaped bracket on top for a new strap lug location, which is more efficient because of the weight and balance. Don't forget that you now have the weight of medium format lenses on a 35mm body. The normal 'F' prism was removed and replaced with a flat platform to accommodate the custom built viewfinder with a three-way bubble level for the 1:3 format ratio. The finder for the 50mm is a brite-line type specifically built by Thomas Roma for the Mamiya 50mm lens. The 'Pannaroma' accepts all the other lenses for the Mamiya Universal Press (65mm/75mm/90mm/100mm/127mm/150mm/250mm). If any of these lenses are mounted you can use the Mamiya finders with custom masks made by Siciliano Camera Works.

Because of the new 24x72mm format size, the standard 24x36mm frame of the Nikon F as well as the pressure plate and the guide rails all had to be rebuilt from scratch in order to provide perfect film flatness at the focal plane. Taking a closer look at the

pressure plate you can't tell the difference between the custom Thomas Roma plate and that from the Nikon factory! The entire film transport gearing is completely reworked in order to provide 18 exposures on 35mm film.

Shooting with this camera is similar to using a Linhof Technorama 6x17 but on a smaller scale. You set the focusing distance on the lens, set the combination of F stop/shutter speed, cock the lens shutter and press the cable release. Remember that you are dealing with a leaf shutter lens, so you get the benefits of full flash synch at all speeds and a double exposure capability. Probably the very best application of the 'Pannaroma' is with the wideangle lenses (50/65/75mm) as they are easier to guess focus because of their depth of field. Focusing would be more critical to estimate with normal and telephoto lenses.

The only other wideangle customized Nikon that I have seen before was again an F body apparently modified by a camera repair shop in New York. It was completely stripped down to accept the Zeiss Hologon 15mm/f8 removed from the Hologon Contarex and permanently attached to the Nikon F body with a special finder replacing the standard prism. At that time Nikon did not have on the market as yet the Nikkor 15mm/f5.6 that came out later in 1972.

We may say that the need for panoramic photography had its first application in the US from the early 1900s' in landscape, sports and military photography. They often used the famous big motorized Kodak Cirkut cameras (with film on a spool up to 16 inches high and several feet long!) and the very large so called 'banquet cameras' with 7x17 and 12x20 inch formats (Folmer Schwing, Gundlach Manhattan, etc.). Enlargers were not in

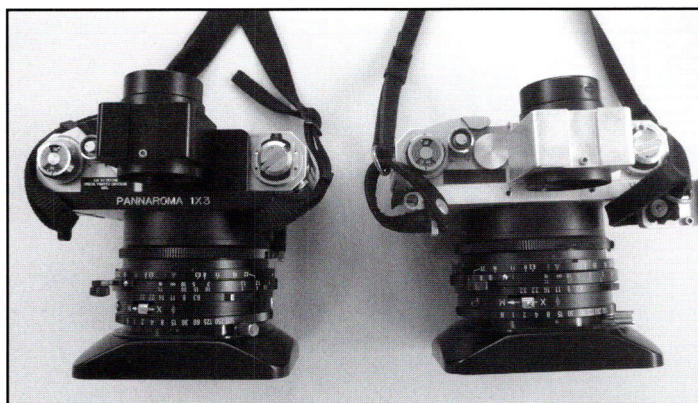
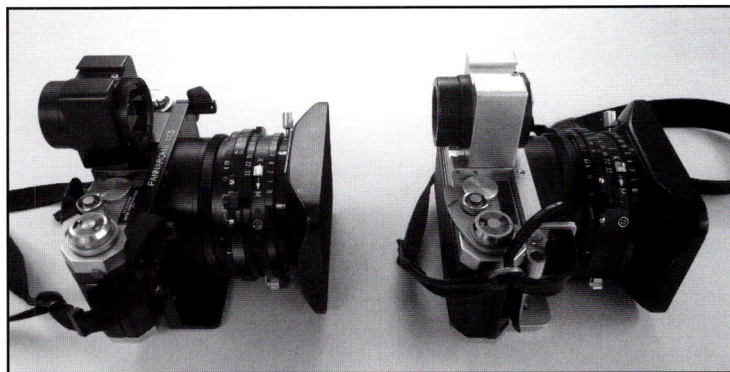
general use at the time and the only way to get big sharp prints was from contact printing big negatives. Possibly this US tradition of panorama cameras had an impact on Thomas Roma when he decided to 'enlarge' the inner guts of the Nikon F and stretch the negative up to 72mm in width. You do get twice the negative area of the regular 24x36 format, therefore a sharper image on standard 35mm film. Kodachrome was still alive so you can imagine the results! Using the wideangle Mamiya 50mm lens on the 24x72mm format is like using a 25mm lens on a 12x36mm negative, so it offers a pleasant wide view without any unpleasant distortion at the edges.

Definitely the "PANNAROMA 1x3" Nikon F is a real gem. It will rarely break down as the Nikon F body plus the Mamiya Universal lens is a real tank! About 1500 grams. The modern plastic/electronic battery operated panoramic cameras that we have today cannot compete with it. It is fun to use for landscapes, architectural & aerial photography. And it is a fine rare piece to be treasured in any Nikon collection!

[Thomas Roma is also the author of 12 photography books, and he uses his custom cameras for all his photography work. His latest book is "Dear Knights and Dark Horses", images of citizen-soldiers of the Army National Guard preparing to deploy to Iraq. You can get a preview on You-tube at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aCsYvmBfsok>. He also still builds custom cameras and his latest creation is the "Psyclops" which you can see at <http://sicilianocameraworks.com/>]

[[PANNAROMA camera #13015 in this article is from the Rivolti collection. All photos of it are courtesy of Mr. Carlo Rivolti, Italy.]]

[[The photos of the prototype and final production camera courtesy of Mr. Thomas Roma.]]

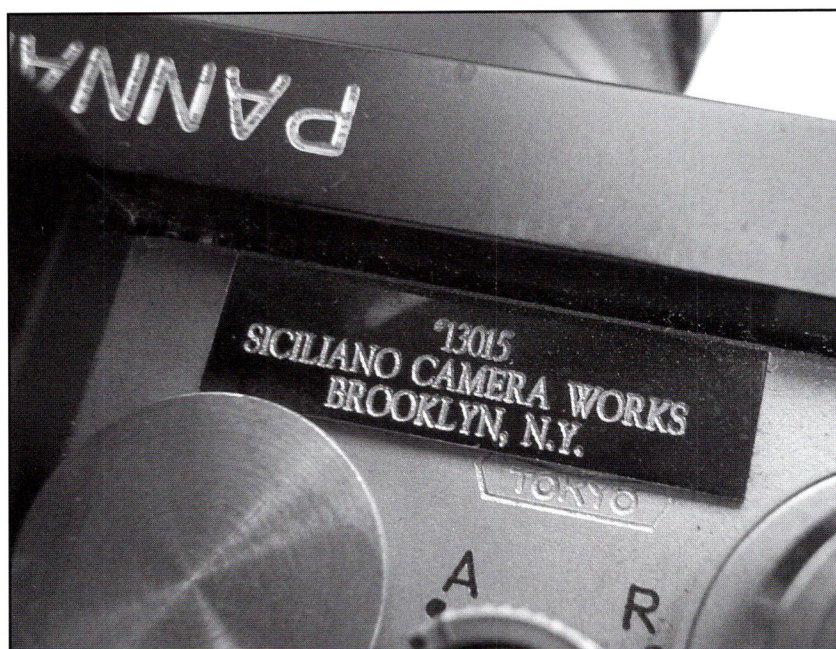


Three photos from Thomas Roma of the original prototype and the final production camera. The prototype is on the right in all three shots. Note the extensive use of fine black anodized surfaces on the finalized version. (Photos Thomas Roma)

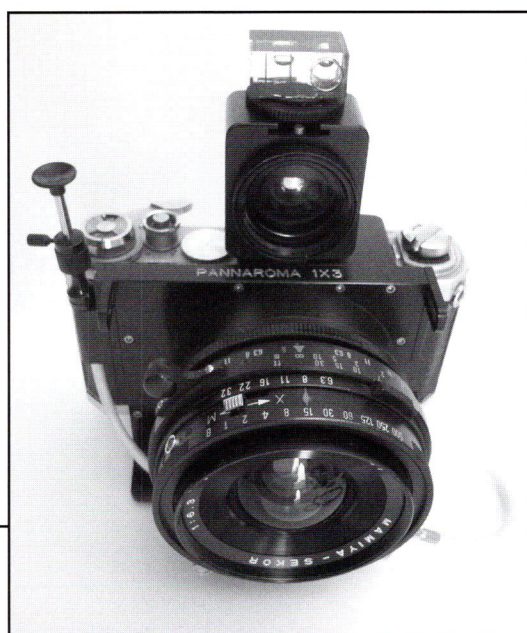


The Final Production Camera #13031

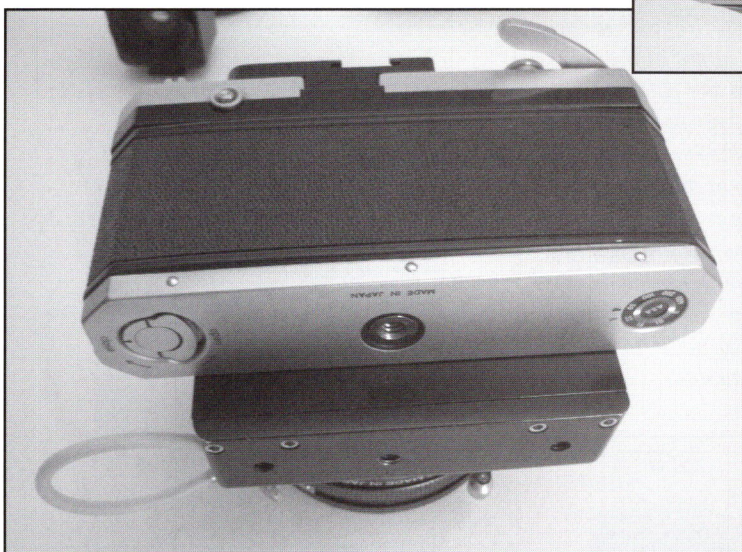
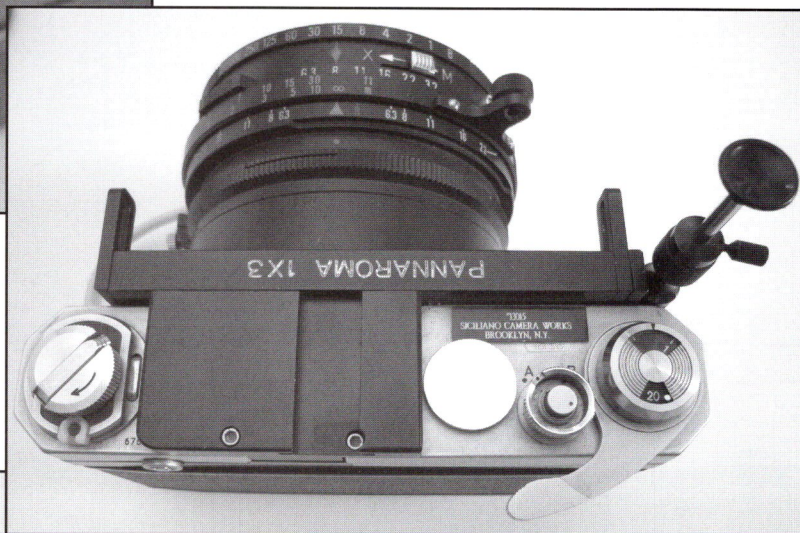




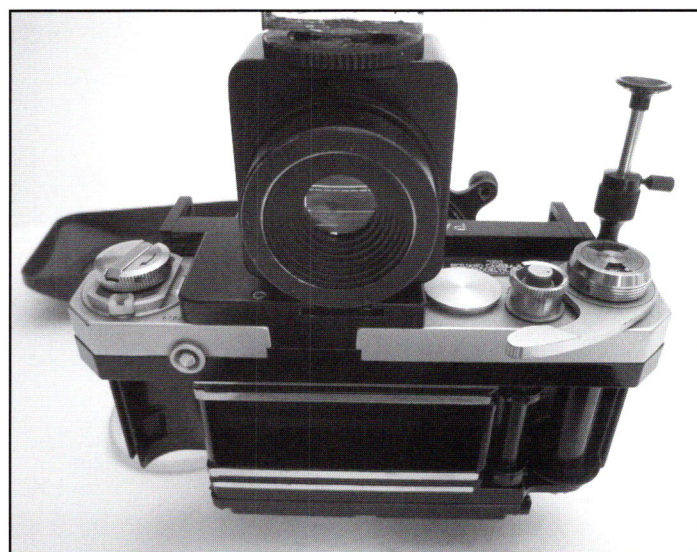
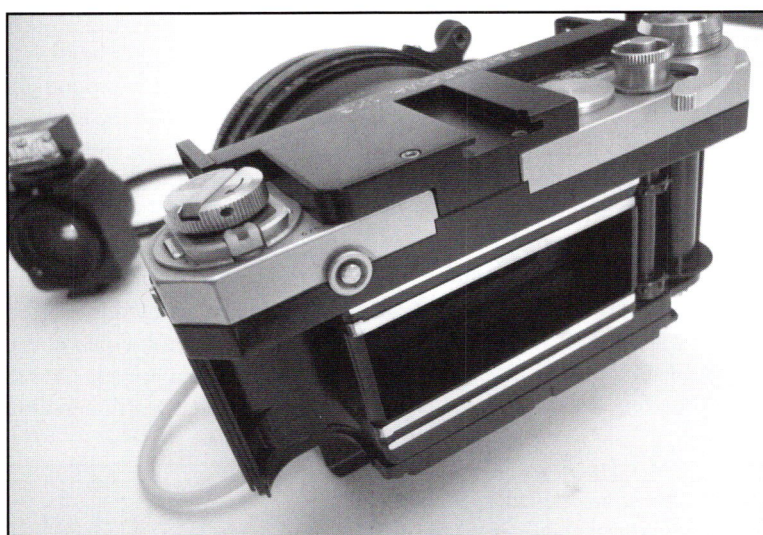
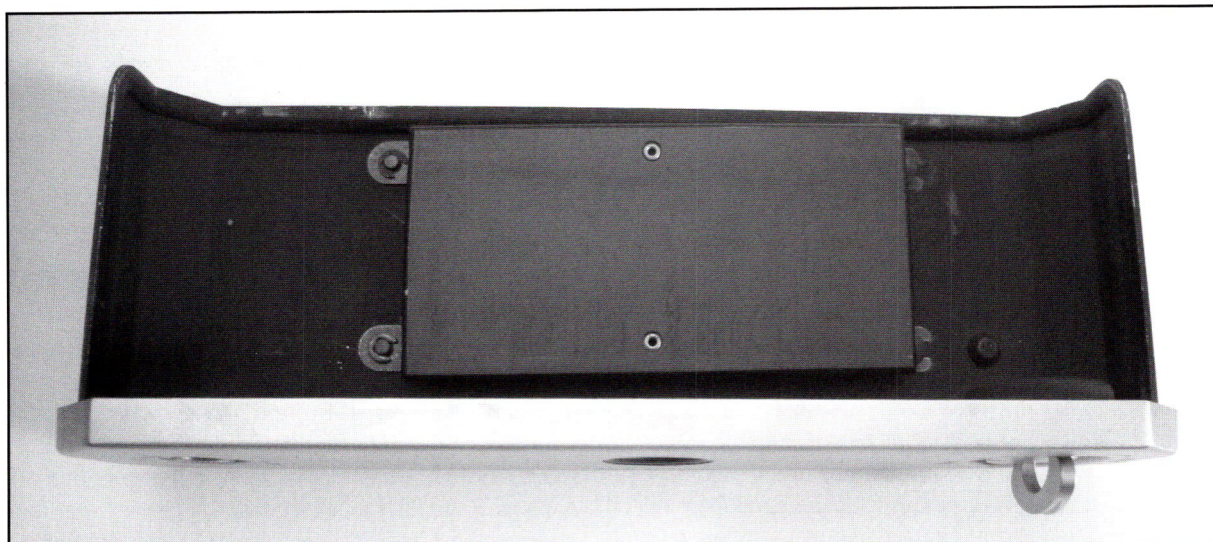
This is camera #13015 from the collection of Italian NHS member Carlo Rivolti. Note the serial number and maker's name in the upper photo. At the right and below you can see the elaborate bubble level positioned at the top of the finder. Such a feature is very important in any panorama application. The Mamiya lens is quite large but even with the shade it appears to be very hand holdable.



**ALL PHOTOS ON
THIS AND THE
FOLLOWING
PAGES ARE
COURTESY
OF CARLO
RIVOLTI**



Biagio sent along this photo (left) of a standard Nikon F body and a 50mm/f6.3 Mamiya lens from the Press system. You can see that the lens really dwarfs the camera. This is not quite as obvious when looking at the assembled camera.



THE NIPPON KOGAKU 'SM' TELESCOPE ADAPTER

By **MIKE SYMONS & ULI KOCH**

Very little is known about an interesting item, the Nippon Kogaku Camera Adapters for their 2" and 2 & 1/2" Telescopes. This camera adapter exists in two versions: a Nikon/Contax RF mount and one for Leica Screw Mount (SM) cameras. Over decades many of you have tried to search for one or other of these adapters. Only three photos of the Nikon RF camera adapter are known to exist: one shown in Dr. Kuno's "Nikon" book on page 138; one shown at the Nikon Kenkyukai Tokyo meeting on March 18, 2006; and finally in the instruction books of the N-K telescopes. Photos of the Leica SM type are unknown. In this article, Mike Symons and Uli Koch show us not one...but three of the rare Leica SM adapters!

Recently Mike was able to acquire a fairly complete N-K 2 & 1/2" telescope with two unmarked yellow boxed camera adapters. He naturally assumed that he had found one of each version....RF and SM. What he got were two of the SM adapters...but what a find! Both adapters were complete and in mint to near mint condition, some parts still seal-wrapped in the wax-paper of the day. If you look at the serial numbers you'll discover another exciting fact: consecutive serial #s 1187 & 1188! These unmarked yellow boxes are not unheard of as they were used for a few RF items, like the first type of relay box.

Last year Uli found a telescope SM adapter kit in a nice leather-like case. His first reaction was that someone had made a beautiful case for all the parts that came with the adapter, as the case does not show any brand name. The case is so constructed that all the parts fit in their proper partitions. Uli remembered photos of the March 2006 Nikon Kenkyukai meeting on the Internet and found the N-K telescope for the Nikon RF. The case, which housed that set, was identical to his. Therefore, chances are that this case was made by Nippon Kogaku. Perhaps you'll remember that very early leather cases for lenses and Variframe finders were also often unmarked.

The two photos of the RF mount adapter do not show a serial number next to the N-K logo. It is not known if there is a serial number on the rear side of the tube. The SM adapters have their numbers below the N-K logo. The production quantity of both types is not known. Based on the fact that only four adapters (plus the one in the instruction books) are known over the decades.... perhaps about 100-200 adapters were ever produced...if that!

Each set contains:

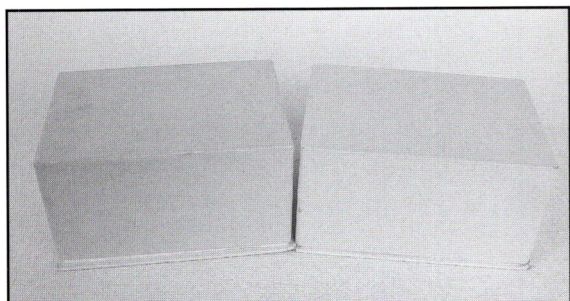
- Telescope adapter tube
- Focusing tube w/ground glass (w/cross hair grid)
- Clamp to attach the extension tube to the telescope
- Yellow filter which has to be mounted on the telescope tube before sliding the focusing tube or camera adapter onto the telescope's extension tube

On both versions the accessories appear to be painted in a black crinkle finish. However, the two photos of the RF mount adapter show a glossy painted finish for the adapter. Could these photos have been of a prototype version? In any event, both the RF and SM versions of the N-K telescope adapter are considered quite rare and are well worth pursuing!

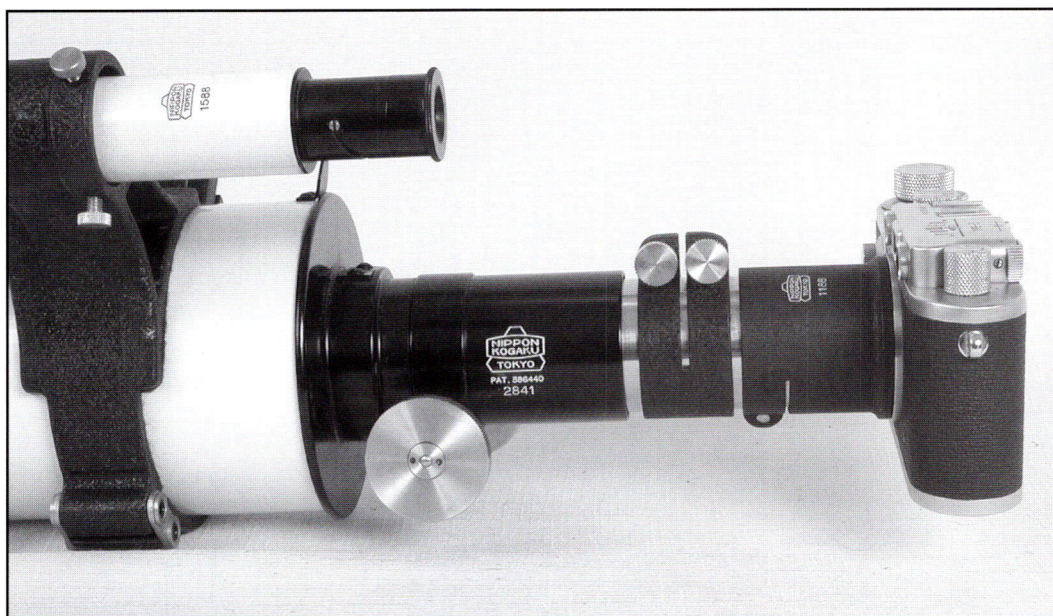
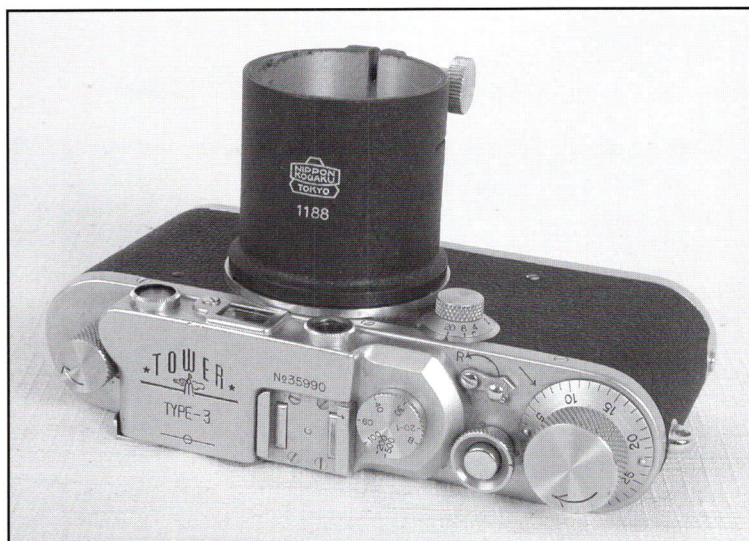


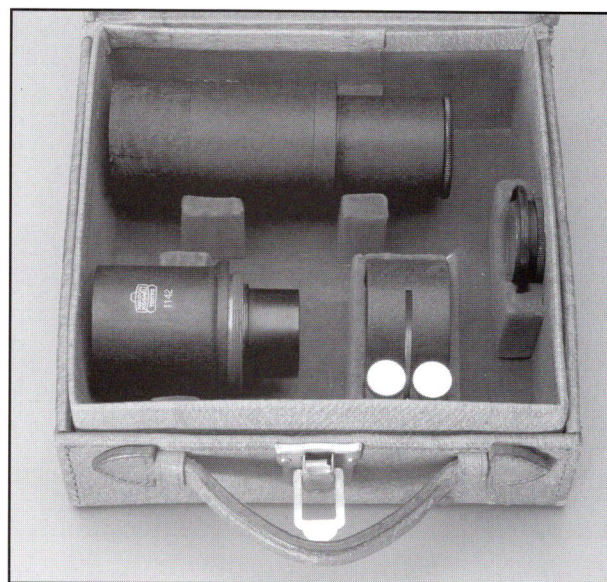
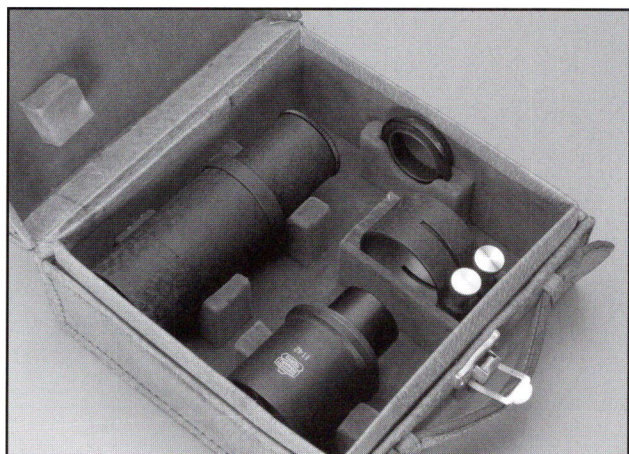
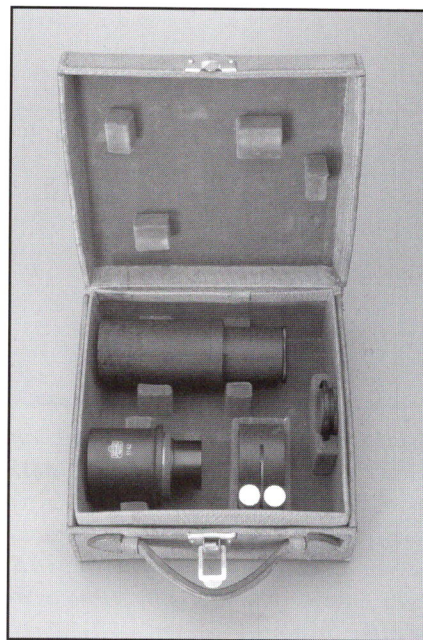
At left is a group shot of Mike's two unmarked yellow boxes each containing a rare 'SM' version of the camera adapter for the N-K telescopes. Above is a closer view of one of the adapters. Everything is in like new condition and may have never actually been used.





Mike's two adapters have an additional attraction. They have consecutive serial numbers (1187 & 1188)! Nice! Below are photos of the adapter on a Leica type SM body (in this case a Tower) and, finally, at the bottom the entire setup assembled and mounted on a Nippon Kogaku Telescope ready for astro-photography! (Photos on these two pages by Mike Symons.)





Uli Koch's SM adapter came to him in a beautiful fitted leather case with all parts nicely held safe and secure. At first it was thought it was an aftermarket case or one custom made for a previous owner. However, an identical case is known in Tokyo and was once seen on the Nikon Kenkyukai website in 2006. So it looks like N-K did provide a case for this set. (Photos this page by Uli Koch.)



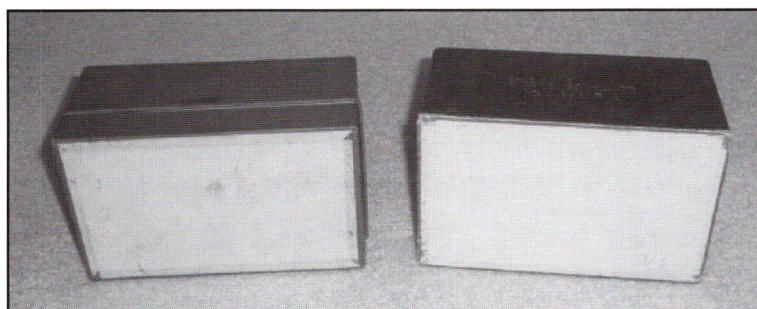
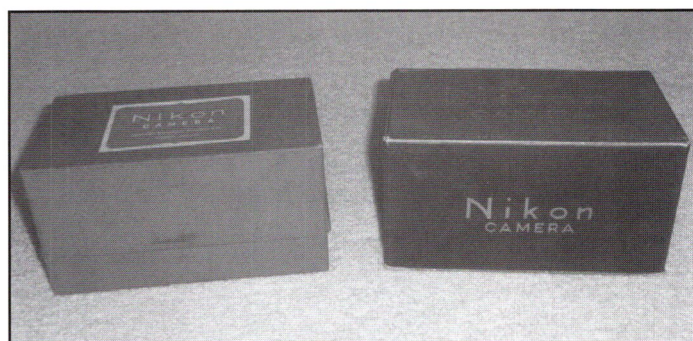
BOOK UPDATES....NEW INFO.... NEW DISCOVERIES....

New information keeps pouring in from our members as well as others who have purchased my book. Sometimes it is nothing more than a few new serial numbers. Other times the numbers expand on the ranges given in the book and are, therefore, really new to us. Then, once in a while, a photo of a significant item surfaces to verify it still exists. Finally, a 'new' version or type suddenly comes on stage and this can be exciting indeed. This time around we have a little of each but first just some numbers.

A new high for the 45' finder for the reflex housing...67631. In the book I quote 67629 as the high. Another of the very rare 'black rim' 35/1.8 Nikkors has surfaced. It is 351853 still suggesting less than 100 made. An MIOJ 35/3.5 #427455 has been

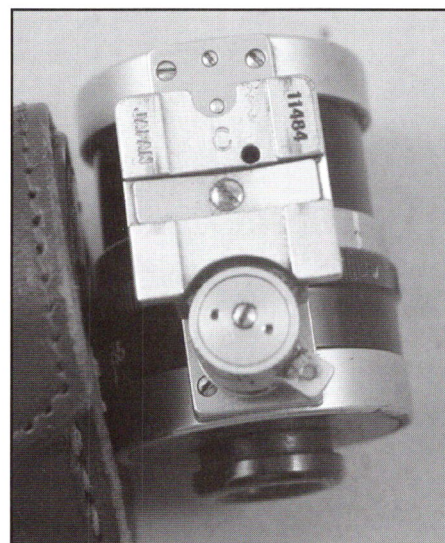
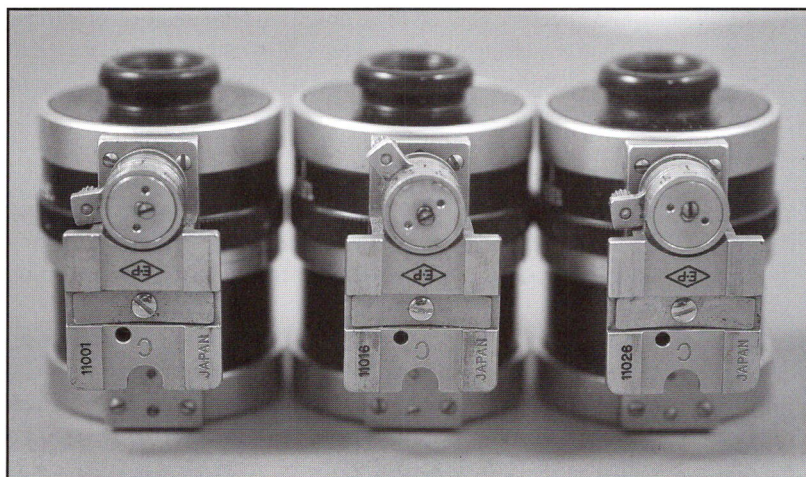
recently collected. This is beyond the high listed in the book (426569). Now to the items pictured on this and the following page....

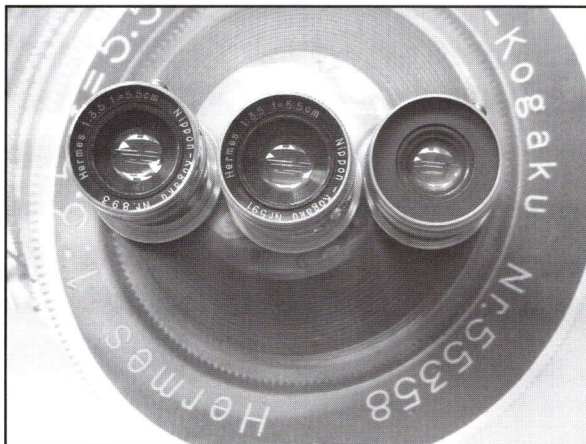
Bill Kraus provided the 3 photos of the camera boxes. What is of interest here? Well, we are all familiar with the blue velveteen boxes that Ones, Ms & Ss came in as well as many early lenses. Also, the first Ones came in yellow boxes. But the left box in these shots is blue paper like that seen for the flash units and some shades & finders! Where does it fit in? All I know is that I have seen only 2 of these and also only 2 of the yellow type!



Below...L & R..The Contax version of the Varifocal was only mentioned in passing in my book. Its range was given as 11049~11483. Jim Emmerson sent this group shot of 3 units, #s11001, 11016 & 11028, a new starting low! Could it actually be #1? Chris Sap also sent in a photo of his #11484! A new high by 1 digit!! I love it!

Above...The previous high for the Type 7 Varifram was 544800. This unit, 544993, surpasses it by over 1000 ! (C. Sap)





The Hermes lens is rare, period! In the book I knew of six! Now we can add 5 more, nearly doubling our knowledge! Please add #s 591, 690, 850, 893 & 55358! Still confusing #s but great info!



The earliest known black 1000mm Nikkor in my book was #100633 pictured here. Lens #100632 is white & #600631 (the first) just sold at Westlicht! So it does exist! (Photos by Biagio Guerra)



THE AUCTION SCENE

Peter Coeln's 18th Westlicht Auction took place on December 4th in Vienna, and it was something else! A nice selection of Nikon gear was featured and a new 'world record' price for a Nikon item was set! But...not once but twice!! Here are some selected results converted to dollars including the buyer's premium:

BLACK S3 OLYMPIC/F1.4 OLYMPIC NIKKOR.....	\$4,000.
500MM/F5 NIKKOR W/WOOD BOX & FILTER.....	\$7,600.
NIKKOR F1.1 PLASTIC HOOD W/CASE.....	\$2,300.
NIKON F #6400086! CLOTH SHUTTER!	\$12,300.
NIKON F2 HIGH SPEED COMPLETE	\$6,000.
'NIKKOR' F BLACK W/PRISM	\$3,100.

And now some 'more expensive' items....

NIKON I #609339/50F3.5 NIKKOR	\$21,500.
NIKON I #609474/50F2 NIKKOR	\$17,200.
BLACK 1000/F6.3 #100631 (LENS #1).....	\$36,500.
NIKON F HIGH SPEED SAVORRO 250 SHOT	\$31,200.
NIKON F3 'NASA' OUTFIT (4 LENSES)	\$46,000.
NIKON F3 'NASA' OUTFIT	\$65,800.
NIKON S72 MOTOR FOR S3M #95060	\$42,800.
NIKON S250 MOTOR (NHS & MY BOOK).....	\$39,500.

And now for 2 items that set a new world record for Nikons. They sold for the same price!

NIKON F3 'NASA' 250 SHOT OUTFIT. ONE OF ONLY 19 EVER MADE & SOME WERE LOST IN SPACE!!...AND...

(Those of you who attended NHS-Con12 in Bruges will remember the fabulous S2E outfit that Peter showed us. Some of you also saw it in 2004 at NHS-Con8 in Tokyo.)

NIKON S2E OUTFIT COMPLETE W/BOXES.....

BOTH ITEMS SOLD FOR \$232,000 EACH!!! WOW!!

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.

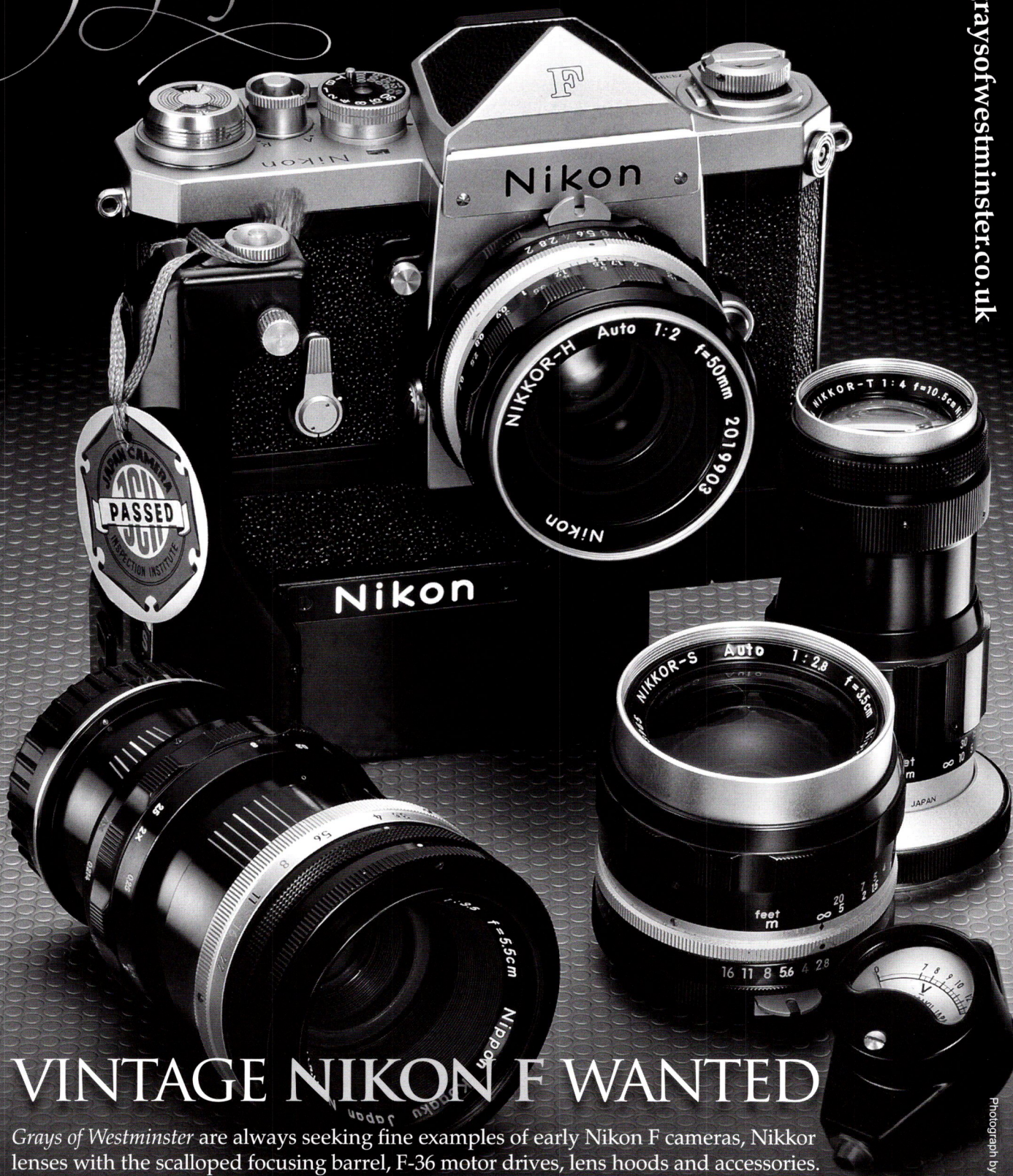
Those of you who wish to obtain a signed copy from me need only to contact me and it will be done. I did not mention previously that, besides signing the book, I have also had made up labels stating to the fact that 'this copy has been purchased directly from the author'. Prices are as follow and include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

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Photograph by Tony Hurst

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

TRADE... Wish to trade a Leica thread-mount camera mount adapter outfit for a Nikon/Contax Rangefinder camera mount adapter outfit for the Nippon Kogaku 2&1/2" telescope. **Mike Symons**: 1-250-383-6456 or email me at: msymons6456@telus.net

FOR SALE... Unused Noct Nikkor 58/f1.2 AI-S lens in box w/ US warranty papers & instructions. \$4500 +S&I. **Rare UV/IR package** consisting of a mint UV-105mm quartz optics lens in box & a mint Nikon SB 140 IR/UV flash unit complete with filters, battery pack, cords, etc. in box, \$7000 +S&I. Rare in box unused **Nikon Model H** microscope with leather case, straps & instructions. Has 4X, 10X, 40X & 100X (oil immersion) objectives with a 10X ocular giving mags from 40X to 1000X & is about the size of a Nikon RF camera. Also included is a very rare, **unused, Nikon Toma's blood counting chamber** & a polarizer/analyzer, both especially made for this model. \$11,000 +S&I. **Professor Edward Stanley**, 717-651-0786 or eas.aquila7@verizon.net.

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

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(Please see the website of NHS member Matthew Lin. He keeps a running list of Red Dot Fs on his site and updates it regularly. Look to his site for the most complete & accurate listing.)

www.matthewlin.com

odds 'n ends

A NIKON MS WITH A DIFFERENCE!



Chris Sap recently sent me these photos of Nikon MS #6092989. A nice item with a collapsible F2 Nikkor, which is always a bonus when finding such a camera. Note that this body falls within that small number with 'JAPAN' in the accessory shoe. Not many are known. However.....look closely at the last photo.



What is really interesting can be seen in the bottom photo. Some sort of 'pin' has been added to the baseplate of this camera. It is not known at this time if it was done by the factory or at a later date. Also, its purpose is not obvious. Could it be some type of 'registration' pin used in an industrial or scientific setting? Possibly. But... who would have been using an early Nikon in such a way? It does not sound like the answer to me. Any ideas? (photos Chris Sap)





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