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# 30<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY ISSUE!

# NIKON 日本 JOURNAL



**THIS ISSUE**  
PG 1..THE N-K ORION BINOCULARS  
PG 4..THE '620' S2 MYSTERY CONTINUES  
PG. 8..THE 28MM/F3.5 RF NIKKOR

**ROBERT J. ROTOLONI**  
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# THE NIKON JOURNAL ISSUE #121

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Our Official Web Sites are..... <http://www.nikonhs.org> & <http://www.nikonhistoricalsociety.com/>. Also see us on Facebook, at Nikon Historical Society. E-mail.....[rotoloni@msn.com](mailto:rotoloni@msn.com)

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### NHS -122 DEADLINE!

The deadline for the next issue of our NIKON JOURNAL, NHS-122, is NOVEMBER 15, 2013. Please get all contributions and photos to me by that date so I can get the next issue out on time. Thank you. RJR.

## EDITORIAL

Thirty years is a long time. Just think of all that has happened to you and the world around you the last 30 years. Lot's of changes, good and bad. Same here. My collecting, and camera collecting in general, has changed immensely. Digital has destroyed film and those cameras that use it have taken a real hit. However, quality never gets old and quality film cameras have held their own. It's been thirty years since I put together the first Nikon Journal. Lot's of changes there too, hopefully for the better. My interest in all things Nikon has not diminished these last three decades and I hope it never does. I still enjoy the hunt and the discovery of new information, which seems never to stop. It's an endless process, this accumulation of information and facts. I hope that Nikon collecting is still important to you but, better yet, that it still adds a facet to your daily life that enhances it and makes it more fun and enjoyable.

Is it hard for me to believe it has been thirty years since all of this started? Yes and no. Yes because it has been 121 issues, 13 Conventions and thousand of hours putting it all together. No because I feel 30 years older! I was just 35 when it all started, 65 now. And believe me, there are days I feel 65 (or more). But that is no reason to stop doing what you like. As a matter of fact, doing what you enjoy actually becomes more important as you get older. Many of you have gotten older with me, but we still have good times together. Others of you came along later and are younger, but I will try to keep up with you. I promise.

### Welcome to NHS-121, thirty years in the making.

Another full issue that I hope you will enjoy. Wes Loder has another fine article on early NK binoculars, the Orions. Akito Tamla has some very interesting information about the original 28mm/f3.5 RF Nikkor. I recently acquired a variation of the Nikon S2 that I touched on in my book. Now we know of '5' examples and I have finally had a chance to examine one closely. Nico van Dijk has three articles for us this issue. One is the 3<sup>rd</sup> installment of his series on the 55mm/f1.2 Auto-Nikkor. The other two cover some rather esoteric and little known Nikon products you may never knew existed. Very interesting indeed.

NHS-Con14 is almost exactly one year off when you receive this issue. Things are shaping up and this issue's info page will give you all you need to know about the hotel. Also other information that you will need. We will have more in NHS-122. Please see page 15 for what has been accomplished.

I would like to remind the members of our two official Internet sites, both of which are run by members who do this for all of us at no charge to the Society. Firstly, webmaster Fred Krughoff has run our websites (<http://www.nikonhs.org> and <http://www.nikonhistoricalsociety.com>) for nearly two decades! It is a lot of work and very time consuming. On these sites you can find various forums for communicating with other collectors, an available PDF that is a complete index of every Nikon Journal (compiled by member Alan Blake), and all types of links. Also we are on Facebook (who isn't?) Steve Koves runs this for us and we already have over 5,300 'likes'. Also a task that demands nearly daily monitoring. Just go to Facebook and type 'Nikon Historical Society' and join the dialog. Go to both our sites and enjoy your collecting even more.

I hope to see many of you in San Francisco in one year!

RJR

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# THE 6X ORIONS....

# NIPPON KOGAKU'S SECOND

# POST-WAR BINOCULAR

By MICHAEL WESCOTT LODER

In a previous essay, we covered the 7X Novars, NK's best selling binoculars that were critical to the company's survival during the Occupation. The Novars had a kinda' little brother, the six power Orions.

Like Nippon Kogaku's first product, the Victors of 1917, the Orions are prismatic six power binoculars with individual focusing eyepieces. The two types bear a resemblance, although the Orions are not quite as spindly. Although the 6X 24 Orion design may date back to 1923, NK only registered the Orion trademark in 1934 as demands from the military for binoculars in Manchuria increased. NK sold Orions to both the civilian and military markets up until the start of World War II. Their 9.3' angle of view offered the widest viewing of any military glasses used during that war. After 1940, all Orion production went to the Imperial Army. All Junior commissioned officers were expected to carry Orions, or equivalents, and soon the demand was more than even NK could supply. Other companies began making Orion-type binoculars and by the end of the war, more than half-a-dozen companies in Japan and Manchuria were manufacturing Orion-type 6X binoculars. Orions also appeared in an eight-power version, although that size did not reappear after the war. Early serial numbers vary over a wide range but by 1940 seemed to have settled on a five-digit number beginning with 6XXXX (recorded low is 66396 to a high of 79752)—suggesting that NK may have made over 8,000 Orions. Recorded numbers for the 8X-type range from 27282 to 28092 with a 40499 that is way off base.

For a review of some of the many early and wartime Orion types, we recommend the web site.... <http://www.cameraguild.jp/nekosan/milopt/orion.html>.

NK received permission to resume manufacturing civilian products in October 1945. The few remaining employees immediately began assembling the high-demand Novars, and the following month began making a 3.5X opera glass they called a 'Spica'. NK soon planned to offer a full range of binoculars for the civilian market, including 8X Orions, 12X Novars, 8X Antares, 6X Mikrons and 2X Capellas. The Capella opera glasses reached the market in the spring of 1946. The post-war Orions soon followed. The post-war 6X Mikrons came a little later, probably in 1948. NK never did make any post-war 8X Orions or 12X Novars and when an 8X 35 binocular did appear in 1950, it would share the Mikron label with all future NK binoculars.

The post-war Orions never proved particularly popular with the Occupation forces—NK's main market for binoculars. It appears that production peaked in 1947. By May 1948, production had ceased, making this lighter and smaller binocular much harder to locate than the plentiful Novars. As with all but the first post-war Novars, post-war Orion numbers begin with 570001. I have

recorded numbers from a low of 570375 to a high of 575423, suggesting a production of fewer than 6,000. By contrast, NK made over 140,000 Novars during the Occupation.

Construction is compact. The end plates are brass, not aluminum as with the post-war Novars, so the green waxy reaction to leather can be a problem. All exposed metal parts have a black, high-gloss finish. Both back plates are engraved. The left plate of the immediate pre-war and wartime Orions show the Nikko trademark. Below 'Tokyo Nippon' appears. Any Orion with this engraving cannot be post-war. The right-hand cover carries the word Orion, sometimes in quotes. Below is 6X 24, then the serial number. Some also give the coverage (9.3'). The 8X 26 Orions have similar markings. Military Orions have a distance measuring reticle in the right eyepiece. Late-war Orions have a non-leather covering concocted from sawdust or ground up cork and glue and were shipped out in molded canvas cases with leather trim.

The post-war Orions have markings almost exactly like the Novars. The left-hand plate carries the Nikko mark. Below the mark is the word Tokyo, and below that the serial number preceded by No. The right-hand plate has the name Orion. Below is 6X 24mm, and below that is 9.3'. So the post-war markings are quite different. However, the false-leather covering persists. If made after February 1947 (starting around 572xxx), 'Made in Occupied Japan' should be engraved on the right front plate. Late production Orions are coated. Since production ended by early 1948, few, if any, would have the modern 'Nippon Kogaku Tokyo' logo.

The author knows little about early post-war cases, but the one pictured here would date to mid-1947 and is well made with a faded green plush lining and an intact spring-clip fastener. A blue-lined case has also been seen. 'Made in Occupied Japan' is stamped in small letters on the case where the lid and fastener would conceal it. The hinge for the lid forms a belt loop. One could remove the strap and carry the case on one's waist.

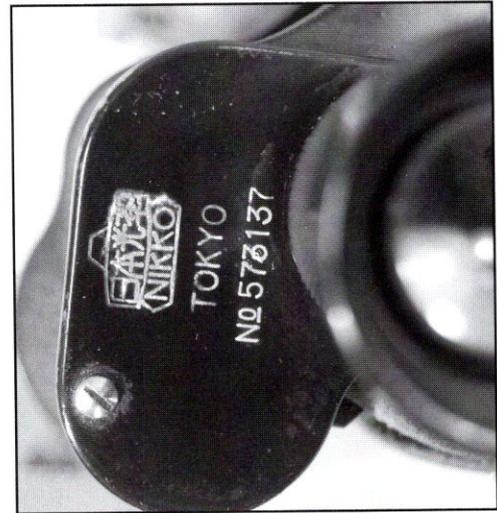
In either 1950 or 1951, NK introduced a new 6X 30 binocular with the "Mikron" name that the company had decided would be the trademark used for all its binoculars except the Novars. Early production 6X Mikrons also are marked MIOJ. Recorded serial numbers range from 27493 up to 274629, but the later ones do not have the MIOJ mark.

So, keep an eye out for NK Orions. They are not common, and with their small entry glass, most do not give a particularly bright view. But they are well made and a symbol of NK's struggles to maintain and sell a good product in the Occupation period.

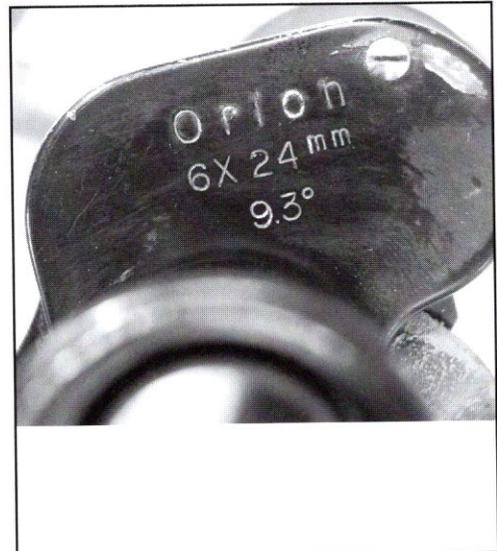
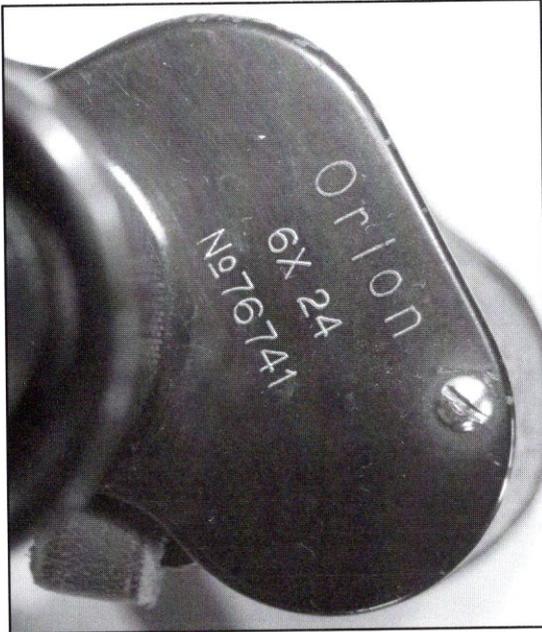
*(There is a correction to the Novar article that appeared in NHS-120. Post-war Novar production was written as just '14,000' but should have read '140,000'. RJR)*

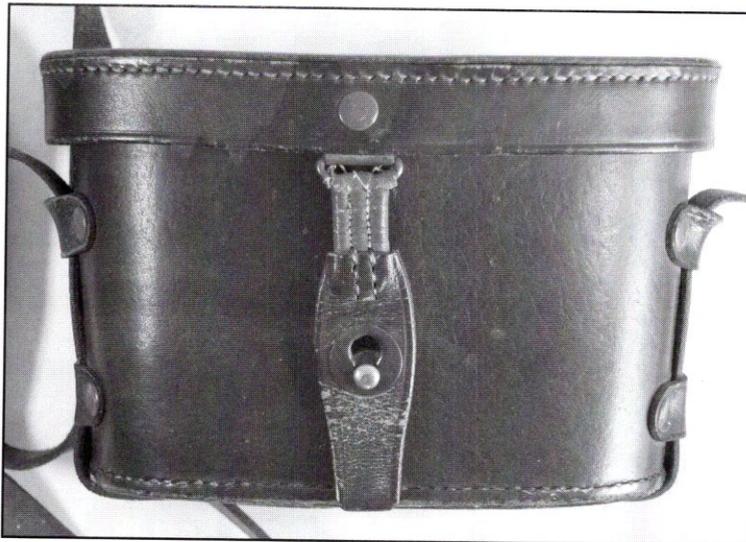


Above-Overhead view of an Orion from late 1930s. Note the nice leather covering & the large eyecups designed to protect the unusually large exit pupils. This pair does not have a reticle & was probably made for the civilian market. Right above-Left back plate of the early Orion.

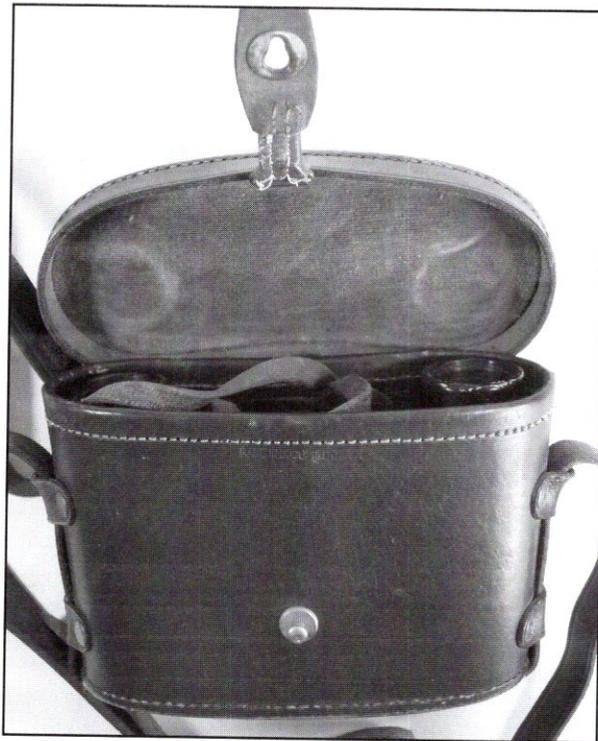


Left-Right back plate of early Orion with its serial number on this side. Above- Left back plate of MIOJ Orions. The word 'Nippon' is not present & the serial number in the 57XXX series is on this side. Below-The right back plate of Occupation Orions. The MIOJ mark appears on the right front plate. Below left-Overhead view of MIOJ Orions. Note the non-leather covering.





Left-Case for the MIOJ Orions. Although the leather is dry, the construction is of a high quality. Left Below-A second view of the leather case for the Occupation Orions.



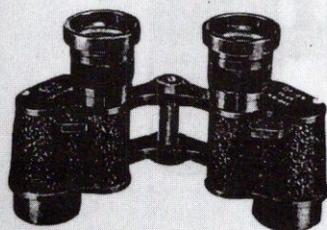
Product	Brand Name	In use Since	Percentage of sales
Reflector	S P H E X	Jun. 11, 1947	} 0%
"	スフェックス	"	
"	P A R A X	Jun. 11, 1947	} 0%
"	パラックス	"	
Reflector for Movie	E L L I X	July 15, 1947	} 10%
"	エリックス	"	
Spectacle glasses	NK	June. 20, 1947	100%
Binoculars, 6x	O R I O N	Sept. 6, 1934	100%
Binoculars, 7x	N O V A R	Sept. 6, 1934	100%
Physical, Measuring and Photographic instruments, Spectacle glasses, and their parts	日本光孝 NIKKO	Dec. 1, 1932	100%
"	NIKKO	Jun. 18, 1936	0%
Physical, Medical, Measuring, Photographic and Educational instruments; Spectacle glasses; Calculators; their parts.	NIKKO	Aug. 16, 1946	20%

VIII - 3 -

Above-The name & a description of the Orions in a product & logo report dated March 1948. It gives a date of September 6th, 1934 for the registration of that trademark name. Below-A picture of the Orions that appeared in NK's February 1947 product report to the Occupation authorities.

Fig. PE4 Prism Binocular

オリオン六倍双眼鏡



"Orion"

Magnification : 6 X  
 Aperture of Objective : 24 mm  
 Visual Field of View : 56°

# 4

## THE 'MYSTERY' OF THE MIS-NUMBERED NIKON S2 HAS 'NOT' BEEN SOLVED!

By **ROBERT J. ROTOLONI**

In my book between pages 98–119, I devoted a lot of space to the most 'common' Nikon RF model, the S2. Of course, once you look closely at something you often discover a great many more variations than you once thought existed and that 'common' item is now much more interesting.

I illustrated the many variants of the S2 including: chrome dial, black dial, black type 1, black type 2, very early examples, 'Antarctic version', Dummy bodies, and the ultra-rare S2E. But if you look at page 109 you'll see I gave that page to a relatively unknown variant. That is the small batch of chrome S2 bodies that are engraved with SP type serial numbers. When doing the book I had personally inspected one such camera (many years ago) plus I had photos of two others. I also had the serial number, but no photo, of a fourth example. The known serial numbers at publication were: 6205001, 6205006, 6205010 and 6205019.

What is this? We know that the S2 began at 6135001 which NK purposely did to prevent any possible overlap with the Nikon S model (which eventually reached a confirmed high of 6129560, only 440 units away from 6130000, thus the added 5000 numbers to the S2 start-up). The model that followed the S2 nearly three years later was the SP, which began at 6200001. So where did these S2s using an SP type serial number come from?

To date all known examples from this batch are chrome dial bodies, not later black dials. All have numbers that are factory engraved with matching font and size and not altered or out of place in any way. One for sure is marked EP while two others are not, so at least one was sold through the Post Exchange stores.

So the questions that come to mind are; are they actually 'first-run' S2s that were mis-engraved?; did NK mean to start the S2 at '620' and not continue on with the 'S' numbers and made a few before changing their minds?; are these replacement tops?;

Until recently I was not able to properly examine one of the '620' S2s and had to depend on photos and my memory (which ain't what it used to be!). But that has changed. A few months back I was able to purchase off of ebay yet another example from this tiny batch. It is camera 6205003! Now I could compare and study

it much more closely. The following words and photos describe these cameras in detail, but most of the questions still persist. It is most assuredly still a mystery that may never be solved. But it is fun trying!

In the comparison photos I have used an early S2, 6135567 which is the 566<sup>th</sup> camera produced as far as we know. I also compared it with yet another in my collection that is even earlier, 6135077 (the 76<sup>th</sup> body). If you look at the photos on these pages you will see that there are NO differences! As far as my eyes are concerned, I can see nothing that would make 6205003 any different from 6135567. Nothing. If you do see something please let me know. I stared so long at them my eyes started to cross!

However, there is one tiny thing I have shown in two of the photos. The A-R collar on 6205003 is about 6mm tall, while the one on 6135567 is about 9mm. But....these slightly different collar heights are present on other early S2s and are scattered. Don't know why, but it is really not a 'difference' I can use to separate the 620s from the 613s.

My observations, after close examination, are; externally they are the same; mine is also an EP so at least two were sold in the post exchanges; backs are interchangeable; finders and internal features are the same; all controls are the same; body covering is the same; no visible external differences of any kind; top plate matches the other chrome plates in sheen and condition and looks to be original.

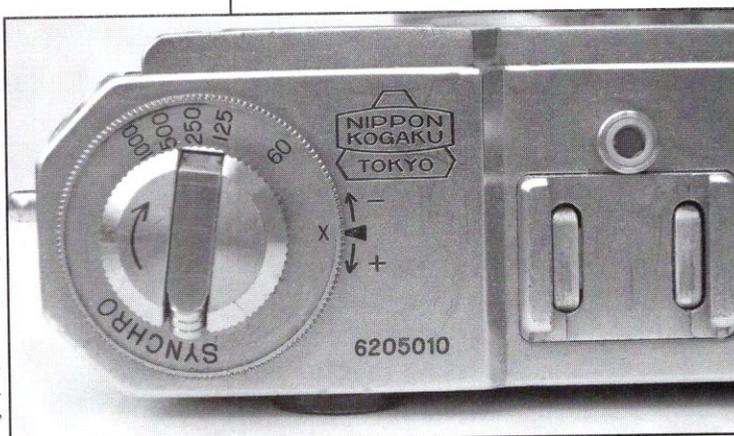
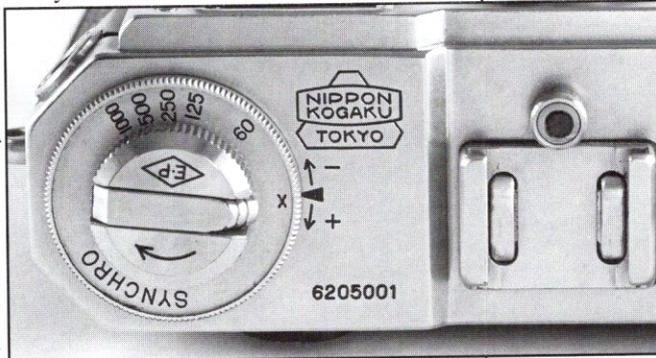
So the questions remain. How and why did it happen? Why was a number sequence that would be used nearly 3 years later chosen? They appear to have been sold through regular channels and were not for 'internal' use at NK (EP marked bodies). Is it just

coincidental that the serial number sequence mimics that of the regular S2s (6135001 vs. 6205001)? They show no evidence of being prototypical in any way.

The mystery remains unsolved! We may never solve it. RJR

*6205001 photo courtesy Katsuharu Takashima.*

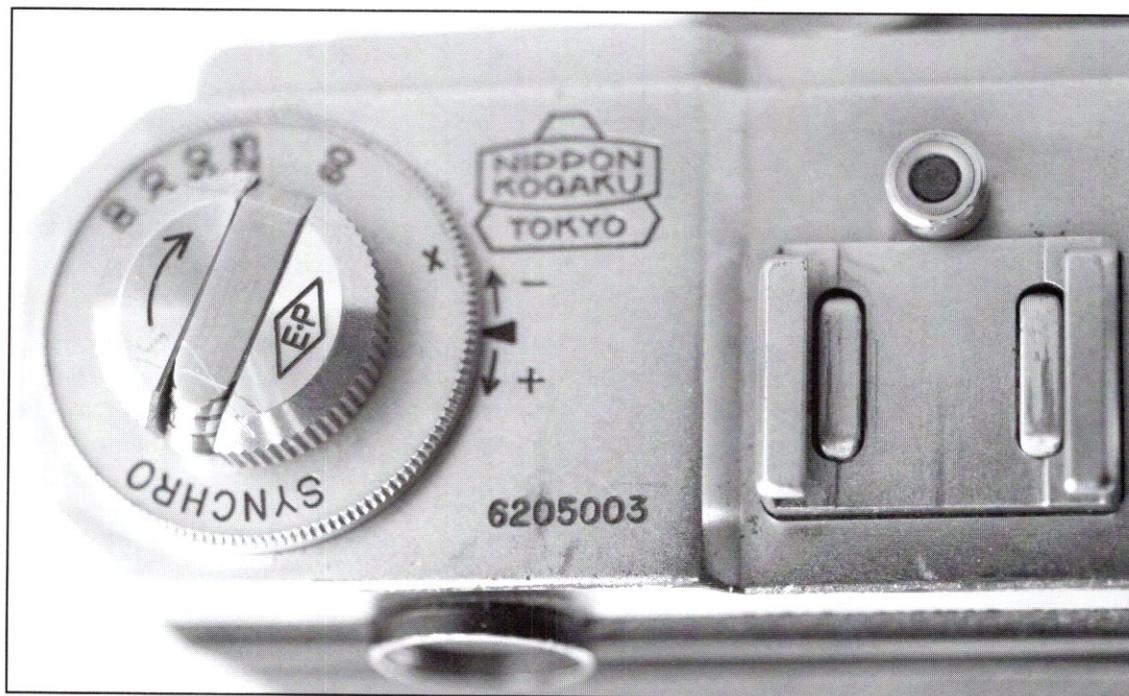
*6205010 photo courtesy William Kraus.*





*Above photo of 6205006 by Tony Hurst.*

*Camera 6205003 recently appeared on ebay and I was fortunate to have been the winning bidder. All photos of this camera are by the author. Note that it also is an 'EP' marked body (as is 6205001), proving that at least two examples were sold through normal channels.*



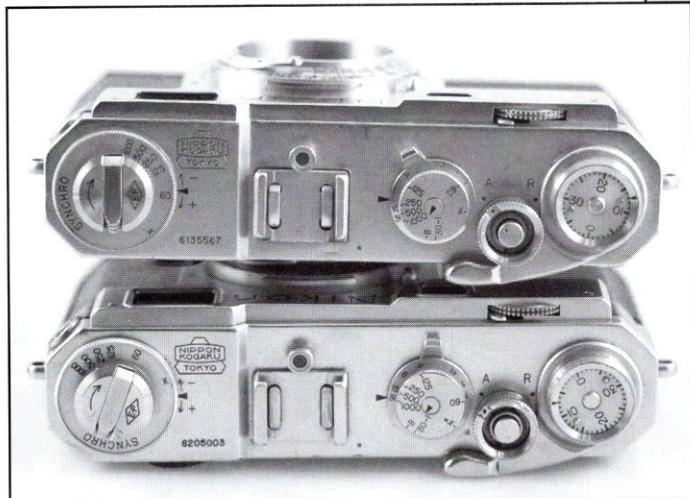
# 6



*Left & Below-Front and top views of 620 type Nikon S2 #6205003. Note the EP marking on the rewind. There are no visible external differences between this camera and other early chrome dial S2s. At least none that I can see. The reason for its SP type serial number is still unknown.*



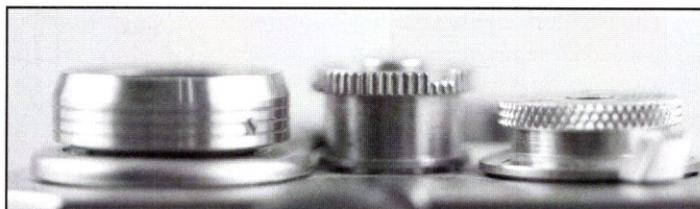
*Left & Below-Early Nikon S2 #6135567 is shown on these pages for comparison purposes. Sometimes the only way to see small differences between two items is to set them side-by-side and do your viewing. But they look exactly the same to me right down to their EP markings!*



*Left-Setting them side-by-side as closely as possible would normally point out any visible differences. However, in this case it doesn't work. They look like twins to me. If you can see a difference please let me know. Also, if any of you know of other examples from this strange batch of S2s please contact me. Photos would be very much appreciated. And if the camera is yours why not do your own comparison and tell me if you spot any differences. Thank you. RJR*



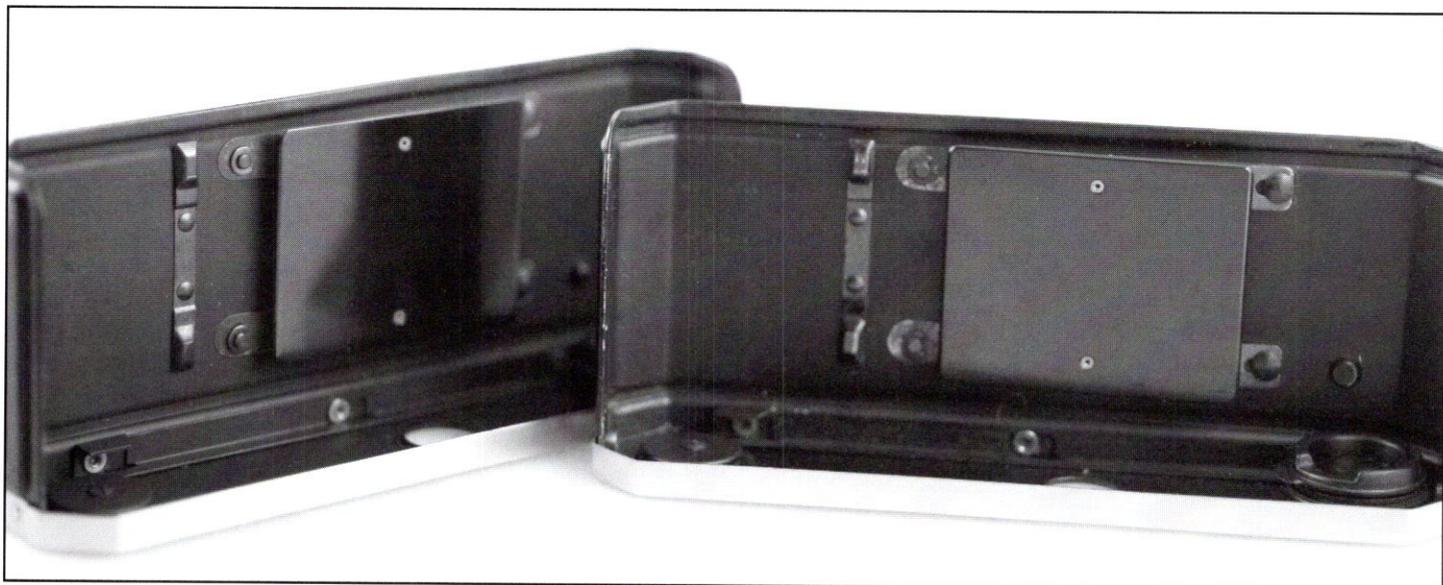
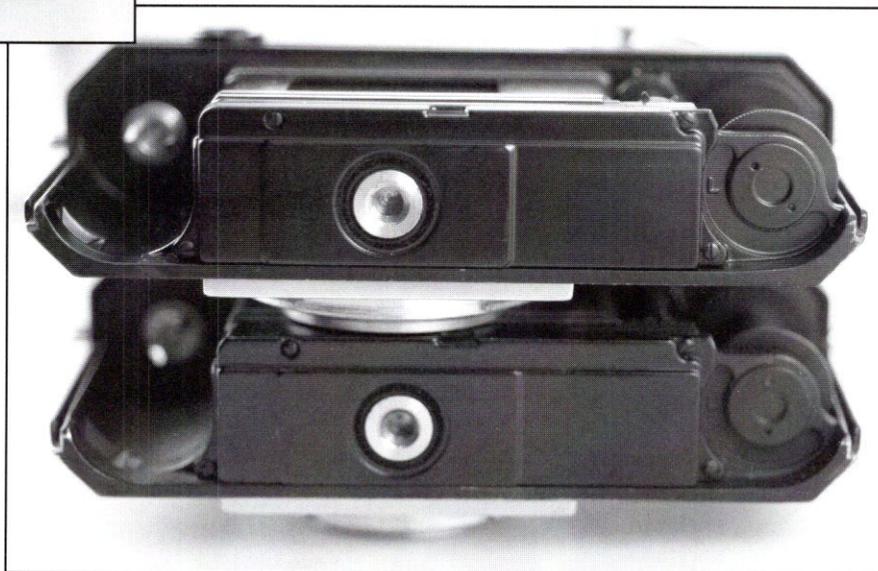
*Above-Camera 6205003 has an A-R/shutter release collar that is about 6mm tall. Below-On camera 6135567 this same part is about 9mm tall. This would result also in a slightly higher release button. However, this variation is not unique because in the early period cameras are found with both types of collars and it is nearly random.*



*Above-As you can see the baseplates of both cameras are identical and are of the same vintage. However, I must mention that neither camera came to me with a matching back, so are these original?*

*Bottom-Interior view of both backs. Again they are identical in all respects.*

*Right-Interiors of both cameras showing the chassis covers and tripod sockets. There are no visible differences.*



## THE INTRODUCTION OF THE 28MM F3.5 RF NIKKOR.....OR WAS IT F4.0??

BY AKITO TAMLA

The original development code for the 28mm(2.8cm) RF Nikkor was '6FL34'. The first lens was shown on Jan. 7, 1952, and was a 28mm (2.8cm) f4.0 lens. Soon the aperture was revised from f4.0 to f3.5 on March 19, 1952. It first appeared as a 'New Product' with a tiny picture in the Japanese photo magazine Asahi Camera in the issue dated Aug. 1952.

The lens for actual marketing appeared in a Nippon Kogaku ad in a Japanese magazine dated Jan. 1953. In the ad the lens is shown being used with a Varifocal (Zoom) finder with the 2.8cm attachment!

The first crisp photo of the lens was in a magazine dated June 1953. In it you can see that the external barrel is somewhat different from the one that was actually marketed. It has opposing arrows with f22 engravings on the surface just forward of the mounting ring.

What is considered the earliest 'official' photo of it appeared in the Dec. 1954 issue of Asahi Camera. It is serial number 352801 ('35'=f3.5 & '28'=2.8cm and '01'= lens #1!!). It is mounted on

a Nikon S camera with the Varifocal finder and, again, the 2.8cm attachment.

Why in so short a time (2 months and 2 weeks) did the aperture change from f4.0 to f3.5? The reason why is the following. The day that the development code for the Nikkor f4/2.8cm was issued, Canon's Serenar f3.5/2.8cm had already appeared as an ad in the Feb. 1952 issue of Asahi Camera. An ad appearing in the February issue would have to be submitted during January to the advertising department of the magazine. For the record, the date of the patent application for the Serenar 28mm/f3.5 lens is Jan. 31, 1951!

After learning of Canon's ad, and wanting to compete with them, Nippon Kogaku immediately changed the lens aperture from f4.0 to f3.5.

A trial run of one Nikkor f4.0/2.8cm lens was made with the serial number 342402 in Nikon mount. It was given to Margaret Burke White for testing in late 1952 and she used it for taking photos around Japan. Presently the lens is kept in the Margaret Burke White Memorial at Syracuse University in New York state.





**ニコン用交換レンズ**

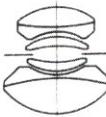
2.8 cm f / 3.5
3.5 cm f / 2.5
3.5 cm f / 3.5
5 cm f / 1.4
5 cm f / 2
8.5 cm f / 1.6
8.5 cm f / 2
13.5 cm f / 3.5
25 cm f / 4*

(\* 印の付近に発売予定)

新発売!

待望のニッコール超广角レンズ

## 2.8 cm f / 3.5




開放時の尖鋭描寫  
周辺部の光量充分

ニコン用・ライカ用  
(発売中) (近日発売)

変倍フアイインター用 2.8cm アタッチメント  
発売中です (ニコン用・ライカ用に兼用)

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**日本光学サービスセンター**

東京駅前新丸ビル1階・9時~5時(除・日曜祭日)

日本光学サービスセンターに於て

ニッコールクラブ

「寫眞の相談室」開設

著名作家交代出席

毎週土曜日正午より2時迄



**日本光学工業株式会社**

## 待望のニッコール超广角レンズ

# 2.8 cm f / 3.5



開放時の尖鋭描寫  
周辺部の光量充分

ニコン用・ライカ用  
(発売中) (近日発売)

変倍フアイインター用 2.8cm アタッチメント  
発売中です (ニコン用・ライカ用に兼用)

This is a scan of the full page ad that appeared in the June 1953 issue of Asahi Camera along with a blow-up of just the 2.8cm f/3.5 Nikkor (above). This is the first really crisp image of the new Nikkor to appear in print. It is clear enough for us to make out some details. It is lens #352801, a number explained in the text as denoting the first production lens! It appears identical to the production lenses save for one unusual feature. Note that on the depth of field scale the f22 markings with two arrows pointing towards each other! What do they mean? I have seen no production lens so marked. By the way, please also note the all black f1.4 Nikkor on the S body. This would be from the first batch starting with '331' that were sold on S bodies as they were too early for the black S2. A rare lens indeed.

# ニッコール

## 広角レンズ



最大の口径比  
比類ない解像力  
豊富な周辺光量

2.8 cm f:3.5

3.5 cm f:2.5

3.5 cm f:3.5

Above-Asahi Camera ad of Dec. 1954. Note that it is also lens #352801, which is a number sequence not used on the production lenses! Also note the 28mm attachment on the Varifocal (Zoom) finder! Will this lens ever be found?

### 御通知申し上げます!!

新工場への移転が完了致しました

新発売!!!

新春を期して新構想の  
セレナーレンズを続々  
発売に移す予定です



セレナー f:3.5 28mm

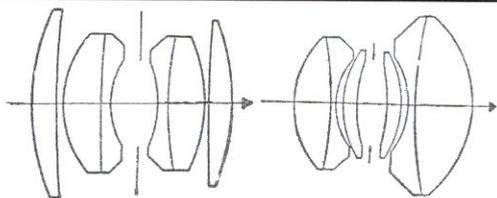
超広角レンズ

キヤノンカメラ株式会社

東京都大田区下丸子町312

キヤノンカメラサービスステーション

東京都中央区銀座5-3

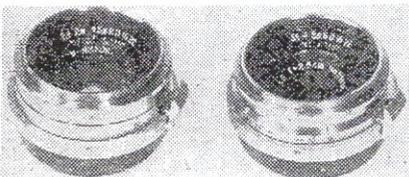


35ミリ F2.5

28ミリ F3.5

他の一つはF2.8  
ミリという大広角レン

一番明るいレンズである。六枚構成で全面に硬質コーティングがほどこされている。七月下旬発売(ライカ用は八月予定)である。



Left-Asahi Camera 'New Products' section of August 1952 announcing both the new 28mm/f3.5 and 35mm/f2.5 Nikkors. Above-This is the February 1952 ad in Asahi Camera for the new 28mm/f3.5 Canon Serenar lens that forced NK to modify their 28 that was still in development but was only an f4! They changed theirs to an f3.5 to meet the competition resulting in one of the longest running and best RF Nikkors ever made.

# HAVE YOU EVER HEARD OF THESE TWO NIKON ITEMS? YOU HAVE NOW!

By NICO VAN DIJK

In mid-1960, Nikon Corporation (in those days better known as Nippon Kogaku, K.K.), introduced the Nikkorex product line originally consisting of the Nikkorex 35 single lens reflex camera with noninterchangeable standard lens and equipped with a between the lens leaf shutter. At about the same time a Nikkorex 8mm movie camera was released along with the Nikkorex 8mm (silent) movie projector called the Nikkorex 8P-Zoom. We (now) all know that these products were really not made by Nippon Kogaku itself. The Nikkorex 8P-zoom movie projector, which this article is concerned with, was made by Sankyo. They (Sankyo) introduced that same year their own Sankyo 8-SP 8mm projector, thus being the (nearly) twin brother of the Nikkorex. The Sankyo has a prime projection lens (18mm/f1.2) while Nikkorex has a 'Pro-Nikkor Zoom 12-25mm/f1.5'. Both projectors used an 8volt-50watt projection lamp and can project movies (silent only) at speeds of 16, 18 and 24 frames per second. As both projectors had a voltage of 110V they were mainly sold only in Japan at the then relatively high price of 24,800 yen.

Although Nippon Kogaku produced and sold Nikon movie cameras until 1979, no other Nikon projector has ever been released. That makes this Nikkorex 8P-Zoom projector a rather rare and collectible item today.



*Two views of the Sankyo-made Nikkorex 8P-Zoom projector for 8mm silent movies. Built like a brick as all things were back in the sixties. No plastic here. It was probably a very competent, although not very exciting, machine capable of doing its job efficiently. Technology being what it was back then it was nearly cutting edge, if such a thing existed in 8mm projectors.*

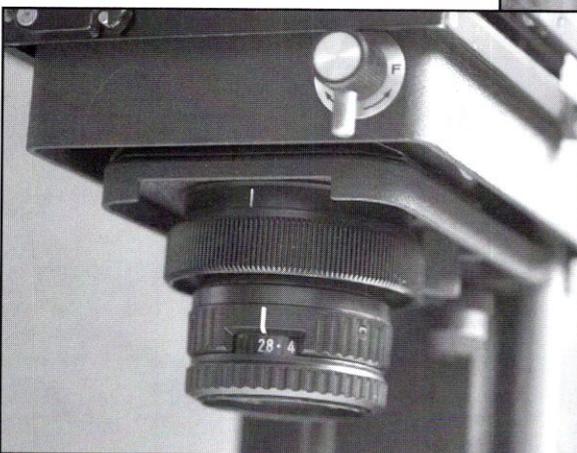
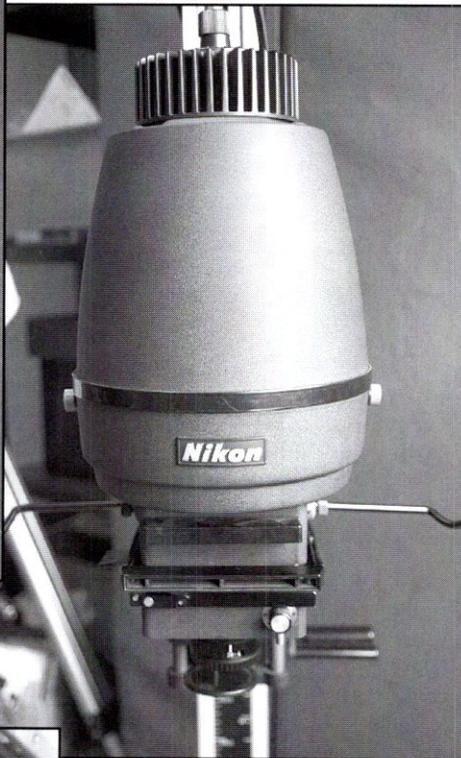
*Below-What made the Nikkorex version different from the Sankyo badged product was its lens. It came with a Pro-Nikkor Zoom 12-25mm/f1.5 optic. Now that was probably cutting edge in this product category.*



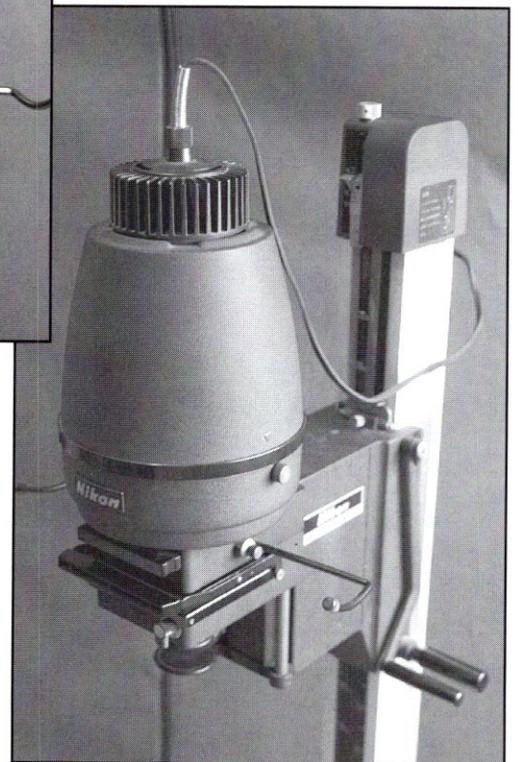
Before the advance of digital photography, photographers were shooting with film or glass plates (of whatever format), then had to develop it in a chemical process and had to use an enlarger to produce a visible image on paper. During nearly two centuries many famous manufacturers (Leitz, Durst, Meopta, Simon-Omega, Beseler, DeVere and many others) produced a great variety of enlargers for nearly all available, or existing film sizes and glass plates. In fact, an enlarger is just a projector through which films or glass plates can be projected onto light sensitive paper. Nowadays a darkroom (remember those?) isn't needed anymore. The digital camera and processing technique has made the darkroom obsolete for most (but not all) photographers. Nippon Kogaku, K.K. have made enlarging lenses since the early 1930s starting with the famous and much sought after Hermes 5.5cm/f3.5 optic which opened up their long line of enlarging lenses, eventually known as the 'Ei-Nikkors'.

Relatively late – in November 1975 – a monochromatic enlarger, the Nikon Enlarger RA-350 Autofocus, was released. It was based on the concept: 'If Nikon participates in the photographic industry, Nikon must be responsible for the overall quality of photographs, playing a part in the procedure after shooting.' A nice statement, but, unfortunately, the enlarger was not a great success. It was sold in Japan only. Production of this produce ceased in December 1980.

The various Ei-Nikkors are very interesting lenses for macro-photography. Most of them have the standard 39mm Leica thread mount or a 50mm thread. With the use of the Nikon BR-15 adapter the 39mm mount Ei-Nikkors can be used on nearly any Nikon SLR. The Nikon BR-16 adapter will do the same for those in the 50mm mount. However, both mentioned adapters have become rare items today and may be difficult to find.



*Yes, Virginia, there really was a Nikon enlarger! Photo, upper left, is the front of the Japanese language brochure. An English one may not even exist since this item as sold only in Japan. The other 3 photos are of an actual production unit. Left-It came with a fine 50mm/f2.8 Ei-Nikkor lens, or course! Have you seen one of these? I haven't.*



# NIKONS FIRST REFLEX 'SPEED' LENS...

## THE NIKKOR-S AUTO 55MM/F1.2

### PART THREE

By NICO VAN DIJK

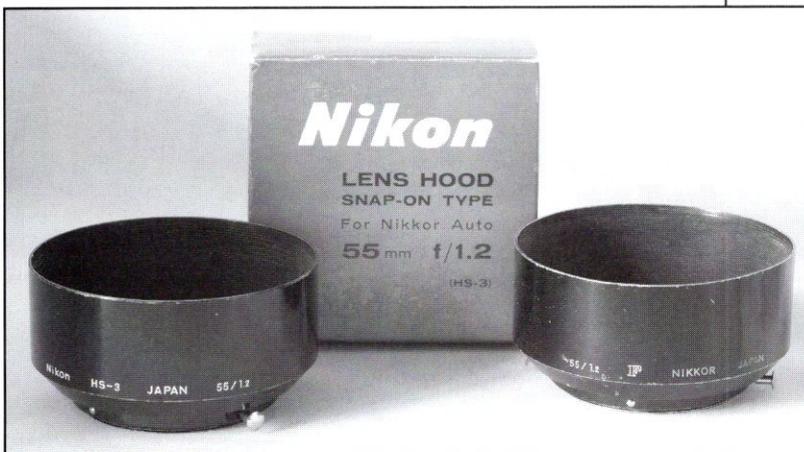
In the previous two issues of The NHS Journal I've introduced the various versions – with their technical specifications – of this true landmark lens. In this third part of the story I'll show you some rarities and the accessories Nikon made available for this lens. To start with the latter category, this lens, out of all other Nikkors, has probably the largest number of hood variations! As you can see from the photos, the very first hood (which you had to pay extra for) had no code or model number/name. It has an open 'F' preceded by 55/1.2 and followed by NIKKOR JAPAN. It is a snap-on type hood with two chrome push buttons. An identical hood received the HS-3 code later. Some years after that a version engraved with Nikon HS-7 JAPAN 55/1.2 and now without chrome buttons, but just one plastic one, was introduced. A hood with a screw thread of 52mm was introduced as the HN-6 engraved Nikon HN-6 JAPAN 55/1.2. The fifth hood for this lens is the HR-2, a black rubber foldable type with a 52mm thread and text on the outer ring that reads Nikon HR-2 JAPAN 55/1.2 R8. That R8 refers to the Nikon R8 movie camera, which could use this hood as well. All the hoods mentioned hereto had to be paid for extra, as Nikon followed for many years the policy to ask extra money for an original hood, no matter how expensive the lens! It seems that Nikon Corporation changed that policy in modern times. All the lenses in the series use the well-known 52mm thread for filters and hoods.

Recently our editor-in-chief led me on eBay to a very rare mis-engraving of the very first series of this lens. Lens #970172 is engraved '1:1:' instead of '1:1.2'. This is the only mis-engraving that I know of for all versions of this lens. It is also known that someone took the internal lens module and put it into a specially made barrel to fit the Leica M series (see photo). Nikon can't get a better compliment, can it?

A very special lens with nearly the same technical specs was introduced in the early 1960's. It is the Nikkor-O 1:1.2 f=55mm so called 'CRT' lens. CRT stands for Cathode Ray Tube, which was used on early oscilloscope screens. This lens is corrected to render phosphorus colors and it has an optical formula of 8 elements in 6 groups with 13 diaphragm blades and a very long 39mm Leica thread. It has a fixed working distance of 110mm. If used at infinity the maximum aperture would be f/1.2, but as picture angle and aperture of all lenses decrease while focusing towards the shortest possible distance, the maximum effective aperture at the fixed focus (working) distance of this extraordinary lens is f/1.4. I don't know how many were made, but given the serial numbers (which have two ranges – 7xxxxx and 8xxxxx) it might come to some tens of thousands. The '8' series has an additional M=1/5 (in red) engraved on the name ring referring to the standard magnification of 1.5X life size.

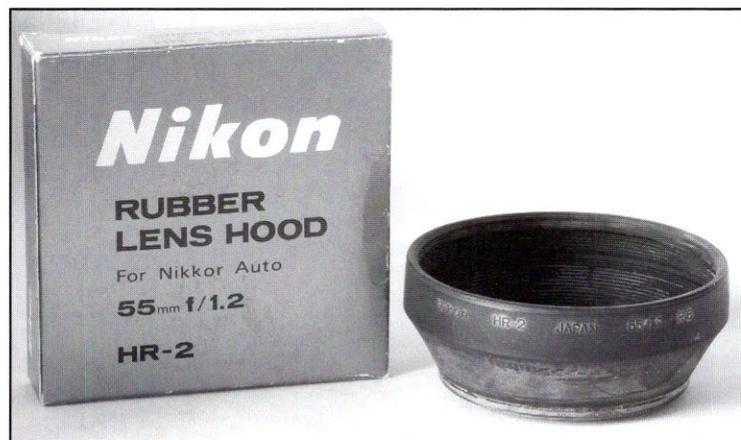
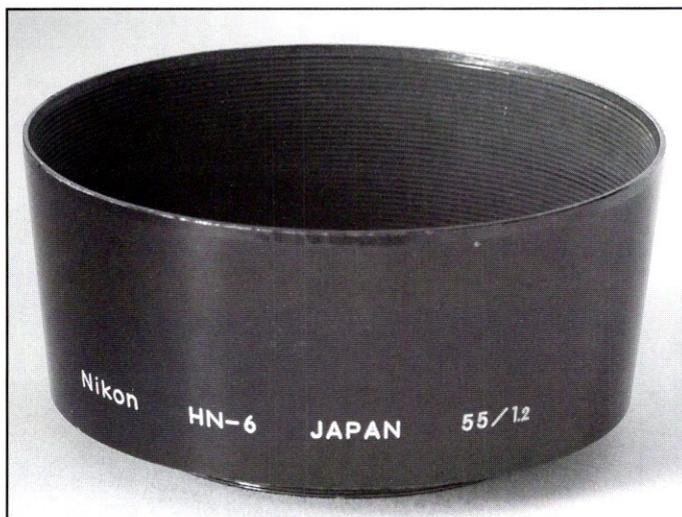
Some readers have asked me about the performance of the 55mm/f1.2 Nikkor-S. In 2013 it is very easy to say that it has lousy optical performance, but given the fact that it was designed in the early 1960's when computers and others aids were not available, its optical performance isn't bad at all. Full open at infinity there are many more standard lenses (e.g. Nikkor 1.2/50mm) with far better performance. Field curvature and maximum resolution full open are, however, very well acceptable. I think the lens is at its best at f2.8~f4. When fitted with an AI-ring on most digital SLRs this lens will perform with great satisfaction at distances between 2 and 10 meters. In dark places, like theaters and sports halls, this lens will capture nice images with a very interesting bokeh. On DX DSLRs it is a wonderful portrait lens, as it nearly equals an 85mm lens.

Nico Van Dijk



Above-The first two versions of the hood specific to this lens mentioned in the text. Note the engraving differences. Right-The third hood type, now with a plastic mounting button, not metal.

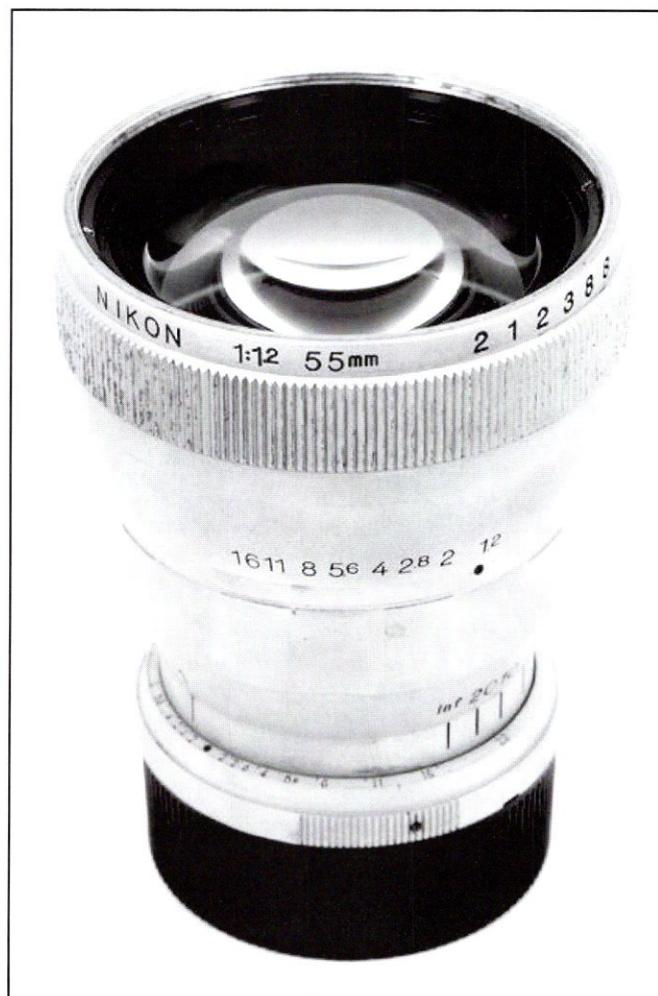


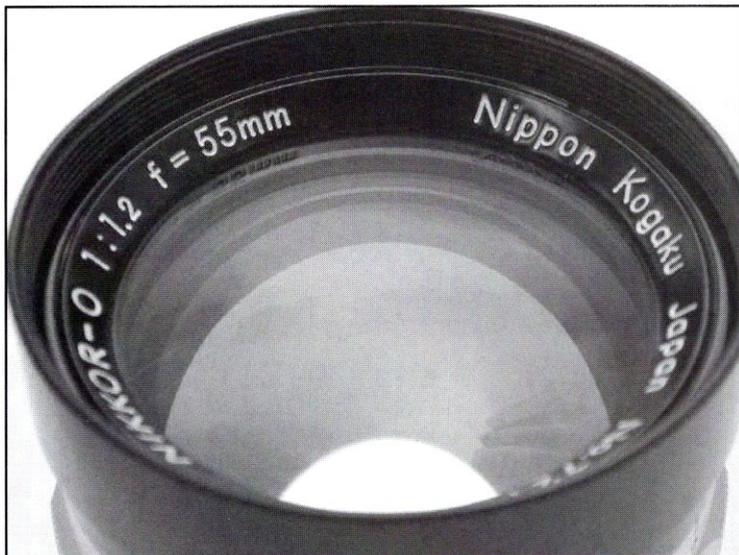


*Above—The fourth version of the hood, still made of metal. However, unlike the previous three types, this is a screw-in shade, not a snap-on. Because of this design it cannot be reversed for storage as you can with the snap-ons. It is in Nikon's standard 52mm mount. Right—The fifth and final type is this rubber collapsible version which can also be used on the lens for the Nikon R8 movie camera.*



*This is something I had never heard of before receiving the text and photos from Nico for this article. It appears to be the entire optical component, or tube, that has been remounted in a chrome barrel with a Leica M bayonet mount! It is a focusing mount and, from the cut of the rear cam, is rangefinder coupled as well. It looks like they even reused the original serial number from the 55/1.2 they removed the parts from. It sure does seem like a lot of work to go through, to say nothing of the expenses. Of course, have you ever priced the high-speed normals for the Leicas such as the Summilux 1.4 and various Noctilux lenses?*





Three views of the 55mm/f1.2 Nikkor-O, commonly known as the Oscilloscope Nikkor. Although not a rare lens, it is certainly a very interesting one. I have owned a few in my day and I can attest to the fact that this is one heavy optic! Built like a tank for sure. Sold through the Instruments Division to the scientific and industrial markets where weight, and price, were secondary. I have never been able to find its original list price but I am sure it was high. A truly high quality item.



Right-A while back this lens came up for auction on eBay. Although it is not in the best of condition, it is an early example of the 55mm/f1.2 Nikkor. However, its condition can be partially overlooked when one realizes that there is an engraving error on this lens. Note that the lens speed is engraved as '1:1:' and not '1:1.2'. Nico tells me that this is the only engraving error he has recorded for this venerable Nikkor.



# NHS-CON14-OCT. 3, 2014 IN SAN FRANCISCO

## SAN FRANCISCO: GATEWAY TO NIKON IN N. AMERICA

The first step in putting together our Convention is always setting up the hotel for the meeting & accommodations. This has been completed. As mentioned in NHS-120, the Convention hotel will be 'The Marines Memorial Club & Hotel' located at 609 Sutter Street in the heart of San Francisco right off of Union Square. It is a fine hotel familiar with meetings such as ours (the Leica Historical Society is having their meeting there a few weeks after you receive this issue), so all should run smoothly. Please visit their website for all the info you will need about the hotel itself.

[www.marineclub.com](http://www.marineclub.com)

We have negotiated a room rate of \$219/night standard or \$239 for a deluxe (plus taxes), single or double occupancy. These rates are guaranteed for 3 days before & 3 days after the meeting. We will meet on Friday October 3<sup>rd</sup>, so the rates will include the Tues/Wed/Thurs before and the Sat/Sun/Mon after, for a total of 7 days at this rate. The room cost includes a buffet breakfast and a free 'Happy Hour' between 4 & 6PM, EVERY DAY. Breakfast in a large city center can easily run \$10-15 per person and we all know how much drinks can be! So the room rate is reasonable for this prime location, especially if you use these two added features. The sooner you make your reservations the better & make sure to tell them you are attending the NHS Convention. (I have been told that the giant software company, Oracle, is having their annual meeting in SF the week before & it ends on Tuesday. If you wish to arrive on Tuesday you must book early. They can guarantee the rate but not the room. Why? Because 30,000 people are expected to be there for the Oracle meeting, so Tuesday rooms will be tight.

If you go on their website you will find info about getting to them from the airport & parking info for those who drive. We will also put together info sheets on getting around the area & parking facilities/costs. Remember that you are in the middle of a large city with a huge tourist industry!

The day of the meeting we will provide a meal package for each attendee that will consume over 1/3<sup>rd</sup> of the Convention fee. You will receive early morning juice/coffee/rolls etc., then a mid-morning coffee/tea service, and then a deli Buffet lunch in the room with all sorts of meats/cheeses/breads/pastries & beverages. There will also be a mid-afternoon beverage serving with cookies/brownies. This is all covered by your fee, which also pays for the meeting room, various costs & all the A/V equipment rentals.

The fee for NHS-Con14 will be \$175 per person who is in the meeting room. If we get at least 50-60 attendees we will be OK. Less & I may have to wash some dishes! The fee is payable directly to me at the Society address by check made out to the Society (NOT the JOURNAL!) or to me via my Paypal account

([rotoloni@msn.com](mailto:rotoloni@msn.com)). Please get it to me once you are sure you are coming. A \$1000 deposit has already been made so we are already in the hole as I write this.

Hotel rooms are your responsibility so act early & make sure you mention the NHS Convention rate.

Please go to the official NHS-Con14 website manned by Thierry Ravassod for any additional info as we learn it & to keep up.

<http://nipponkogakuklub.com/NHSCON14>

The closing dinner on Friday will be in the hotel very near the meeting room for convenience. It will be a 3-entrée buffet with coffee/tea, salads, veggies, potatoes, and choice of 3 entrees & dessert (cash bar). Should be a very nice event. Cost will be \$77 per person, which you can also pay directly to me. I hope all attend as we do have minimums to satisfy. This is a 'tough' hotel & negotiations took some doing. Thanks to chairman Bob Rogen, things are falling into place just fine.

We are working on speakers right now & should have a full slate. Also activities for us to do such as Alcatraz, Napa Valley wine tour, Golden Gate Bridge/Park & Fisherman's Wharf are all being looked into.

We meet on Friday for the same reason we did in Paris; the camera fair (formerly known as the San Jose show) is on Saturday just like Bievres was. So we must keep that day clear to go to the show. The organizers are NHS members Ken Morton & Petra Kellers. Ken has sent me an info sheet with all the particulars on the show. We hope to have a NHS table & an early bird rate for our members. If members actually want a table to sell off of they can be had directly from Ken & Petra. There will be more info on the show as we get closer including transportation options. It should be a great finale to the meeting as Bievres was in Paris.

This leaves Sunday open so for those still in town we hope to have one of the above mentioned excursions lined up.

If you have any comments/questions/concerns please do not hesitate to contact anyone on the committee. Their email addresses  
**ROBERT ROGEN (chm)** ..... [teamrogen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:teamrogen@sbcglobal.net)  
**ROBERT ROTOLONI** ..... [rotoloni@msn.com](mailto:rotoloni@msn.com)  
**MIKE SYMONS (speakers)** ..... [msymons6456@telus.net](mailto:msymons6456@telus.net)  
**BILL KRAUS (speakers)** ..... [bildot@comcast.net](mailto:bildot@comcast.net)  
**STEVE KOVES (marketing)** ..... [stevenkoves@aol.com](mailto:stevenkoves@aol.com)  
**THIERRY RAVASSOD (website)** ..... [terry@magicworld.fr](mailto:terry@magicworld.fr)

More info next issue. When you receive this issue we are about 50-51 weeks from the meeting & it will come fast! So start thinking about joining us in San Francisco next October. It should be a great time for all.

RJR

# 16

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

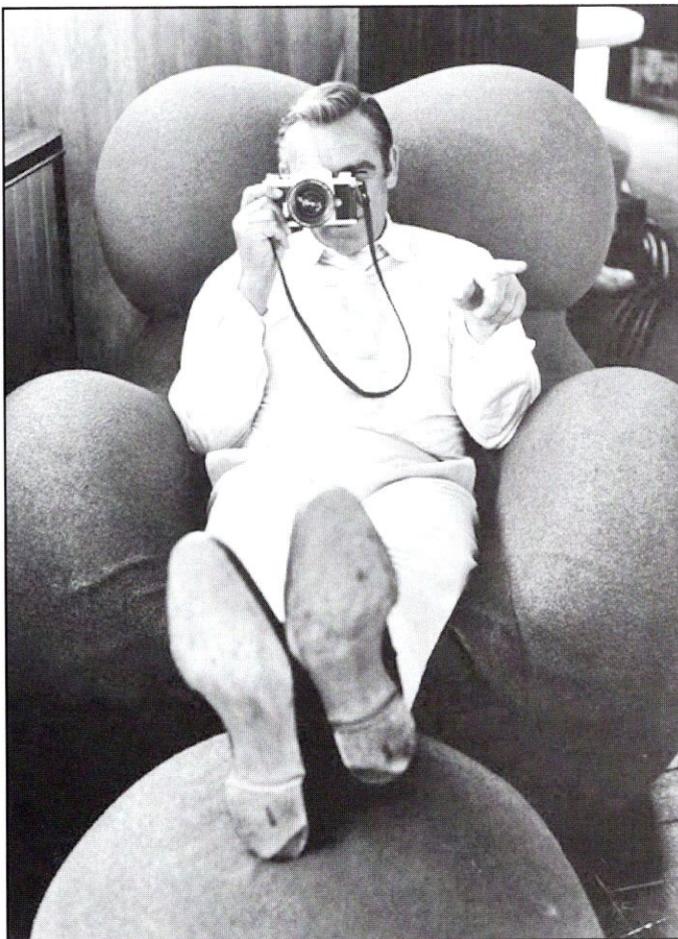
I have continued to pursue photos of rich or famous people using our favorite camera system. In this installment we have two very famous war photographers and probably the most influential female photographer in the 20th century. In addition a couple of shots of 'James Bond' with a Nikon!

At right we have Margaret Bourke-White who was one of the most famous of LIFE Magazine staffers. This photo is attributed to between 1947-1951 when she was shooting in Japan. Note the two Nikons (probably Ss) around her neck.

Bottom left is the 'original' James Bond, Sean Connery. He is seen here 'shooting' at whomever was shooting him using a Nikon F. Was it his? Probably belonged to the photographer who took this shot.

Bottom right is one of the more famous successors to Connery, Roger Moore. He is shown with a black motorized Nikon F2. Is the fellow next to him the owner? Could be. So even 'James Bond' used Nikons!

The most famous Vietnam photographer was probably Eddie Adams. He took the awesome shot of the police officer executing a suspected Viet Cong prisoner. A Pulitzer Prize winner that made him world famous. Possibly the 2nd most famous Nam shooter was LIFE staffer Larry Burrows. A tremendous talent that was lost somewhere in Laos and never found. RJR



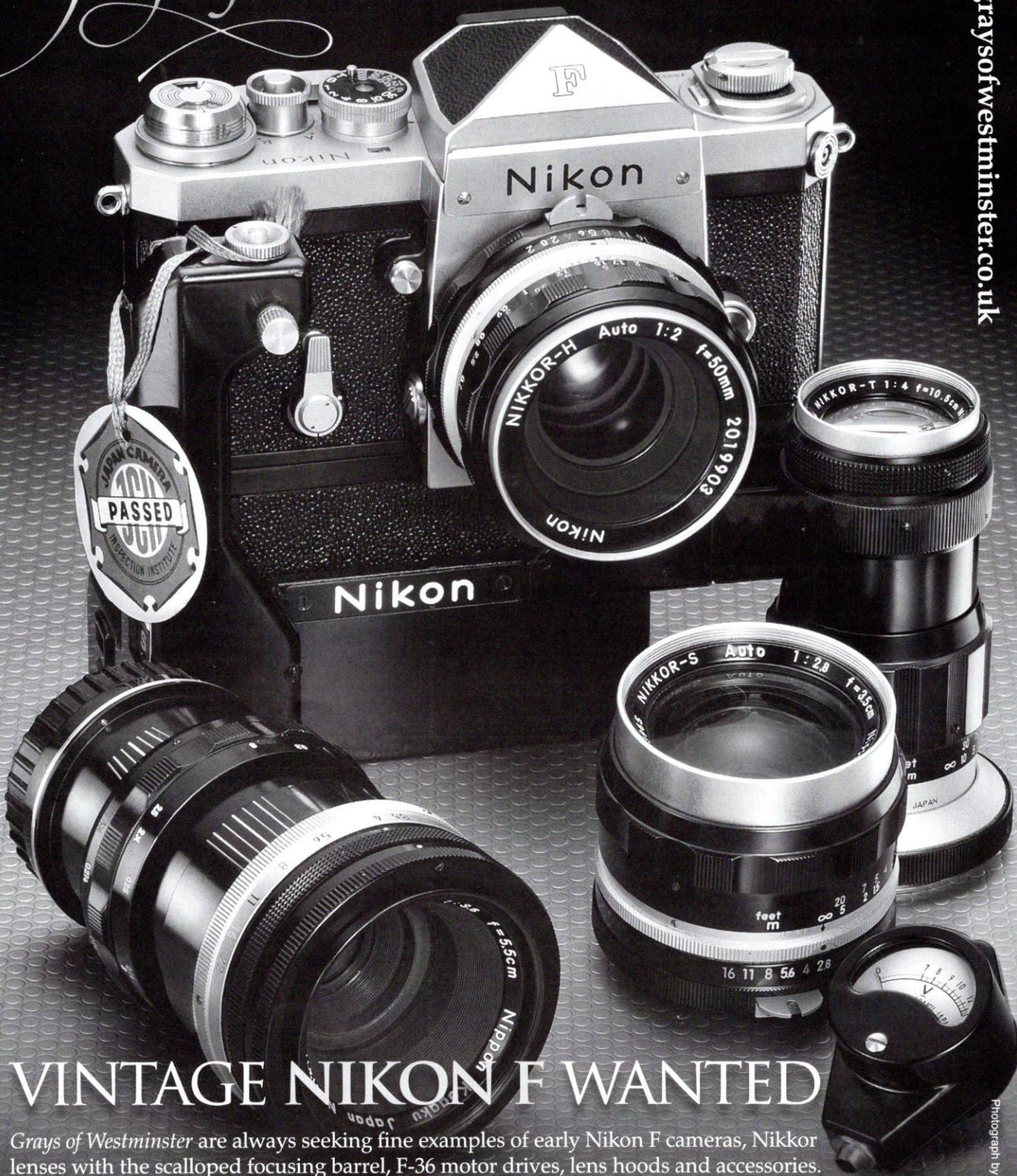


*Above—Eddie Adams in a more serene time. Right—Ready to cover the war. Note the Nikons including an S3 as well as a Leica M camera to compliment his Fs. Below, left & right—LIFE Magazine staffer Larry Burrows. I count two Nikon Fs & a Leica in the left shot & three Nikon Fs, with motors, & two Leicas in the right shot. Nam was almost exclusively covered with the Nikon F & the M Leicas. It was the most photographed war in history & the first to be almost entirely shot in 'living' color!*



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](mailto:info@graysofwestminster.co.uk)

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

Photograph by Tony Hurst

## LETTERS...LETTERS...

From Rolf Eipper...

The mention of the passing of Hans Liholm brought to mind a story you and the members may find interesting. I lived in San Francisco from 1963-73. I was already collecting cameras at that time and used a Nikon F and a Bolex H8 movie camera. One day, a friend from the movie club gave me a Zeiss 35mm Contaflex in a shoebox, all in parts. He said if you want it you could have it. He had tried to fix it but could not. I never repaired a camera before but one day I started to see if I could do something with it. I was actually able to put it all back together, no screws or springs left over. It even worked in some fashion. Since I had so much fun putting this camera together, I thought about becoming a camera repair technician. I started off by visiting Nikon in San Francisco. The place was not exactly inviting. It was in an old building in the old part of town and actually a bit depressing. I expected something else since I loved their Nikon F camera. To make the story short, one day I ended up at Adolph Gasser's on Geary Boulevard. I didn't know that he was also Swiss and I don't know if he noticed that I was Swiss by my accent. We never talked about it. Anyway, he took me on. I worked for him in the repair department for about 2 years. There was a fellow in the sales department from Vancouver. Not sure if he influenced me or not, but I took a ride to see it and fell in love with the city. I started to look for a job but for some reason I didn't find Nikon, which was handled by Anglo Photo at that time, but did find work at Steve's Cine, which had a machine shop even better than Gasser. After a few years working there I got a call from Anglo Photo to come and work for them as a repair technician. They made me an offer I couldn't refuse so I started working for them. Not too long after that Anglo Photo was split up, Minolta going their way and Nikon took over the building. Shortly after that I was made responsible for the Nikon repair service. A few years later Nikon moved to Richmond, a suburb of Vancouver. I retired from Nikon in 2000 having worked for them for 23 years. All that, just because Adolph Gasser gave me a chance to become a camera technician 30 years earlier.

From Dave Howard...

Robert, in case you are not aware of them, I ran across a couple of Nikon T-shirts (a SP and an F) at [www.dodgeandburn.com](http://www.dodgeandburn.com). Click on 'shop', then 'men' and scroll down. You might find it interesting.

From John Biava...

A few days ago I renewed my subscription to a British camera magazine, Nphoto. If you have not seen one, it is exclusively Nikon oriented. They claim to not be affiliated with Nikon in any way. They are about modern Nikons and digital techniques. It is expensive because none of their advertising plays here. You can find them on the magazine rack at Barnes & Noble.

## SOME NEW BOOK UPDATES

Eight digit S #60910216 was recently seen as well as an S4 with a '630' type #-6309051. Two all-black f1.4s have been reported. They are #s 365365 & 365411. Also add to our knowledge Micro-Nikkors #s 523247 & 524266. Another Exacta 135 Nikkor has been seen. It's #256558 & is an EP! We have another lens to add to that wierd '358' batch of 1.4s. It's #358384 & it's CHROME!

## BROWSING EBAY...

Without a doubt the largest source of information today, including serial number & prices, is to be found on Ebay. For years I culled a very large part of my serial number database by looking over what was for sale on the tables at countless camera shows & stores. Well, those days are gone my friends. The shows are fewer & smaller with much less to see & many of the stores are gone or no longer carry vintage used equipment. So where can we go to find what is for sale & its price? It's Ebay, like it or not!

**Nikon M 6093439 w/50051722. Buy it Now was \$3570.00 but DNS! Hybrid 50/f2 #8112520 was listed for \$3850 but DNS! A complete 21mm/f4 REFLEX outfit was asking \$10,000! Obviously it did not sell either! (Can you believe that price?) A SM 50/f1.4 #50050402, nice with cap for \$2000? No buyers for that one either. How about a shade for the SM 35/f1.8 for \$668.88? I know it is rare but at that price no one thought it rare enough! A Gold plated Nikon F #6468625 w/f2 #2145933 has been on Ebay twice now as I write this. Not a factory made item with an asking price of \$10,000! No takers here either! How about a Reflex 21mm/f4 #225226 with a homemade adapter for the RF cameras being advertised for the Rangefinders? Yeah, right. And for \$1100. That one has been on twice and still no takers. Doesn't surprise me. But the most surprising item of late was a 'FAKE' black S3 Olympic #6303444 with a 'FAKE' S36 motor with no number! Body chassis is Olympic but not the rest & the motor has been fashioned from an F36! So what happened to it? It actually sold for \$1700!! Ain't Nikon collecting fun?**

RJR

## THE AUCTION SCENE

I have no auction results to report this issue as there have been so sales since NHS-120. However, Peter Coeln's Westlicht Auction House in Vienna has its 24th sale scheduled for November 22nd. As always it will probably be heavy in Leica equipment but also, as always, Nikon will be well represented for sure. There is no catalog available as I write this so I cannot mention any specific items that will be in the sale. I hope to have all the results in the next Journal, #122. Stan Tamarkin's next sale is Oct. 27th. I also have no catalog to quote from at this writing but I will have any & all Nikon results for you in NHS-122. Look for them there. RJR

## FOR IMMEDIATE SHIPMENT

Those of you who wish to obtain a signed copy of my book from me need only to contact me. Besides personally signing the book, I have also had made up labels stating the fact that 'this copy has been purchased directly from the author'. Prices are as follow and include all shipping and postage costs. There has been a significant increase in Priority shipping costs (15%!).

United States..... \$100 including Priority shipping.

Canada ..... \$125 including Int. Priority shipping.

Europe/Japan/Aus..... \$140 including Int. Priority shipping.

I can accept checks (US/Canada only), money orders, bank wires, cash or PAYPAL. My email addresses ([rotoloni@msn.com](mailto:rotoloni@msn.com) & [r.rotoloni@sbcglobal.net](mailto:r.rotoloni@sbcglobal.net)) are my Paypal account numbers.

Please make all checks/money orders payable to:

**RJR PUBLISHING or NIKON HISTORICAL SOC.  
or MYSELF**

**THANK YOU.....RJR**

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## CLASSIFIED ADS

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

**WANTED...**Photos wanted if possible for any of the following lenses: NIKKOR 21mm/f3.5 in LTM; NIKKOR 25mm/f4.5 in Nikon mt; NIKKOR 28mm/f4 in Nikon mt; STEREO-NIKKOR in LTM!; KINEGON 35mm/f2.5 in Nikon mt; KOMURA 28mm/f2.8 in Nikon mt. Rare non-Nikkor wide angle lenses for Nikon RF mount. **Akito Tamla, Suginami-ku, Kami-igusa 1-25-11-104, Tokyo 167-0023 Japan. Cell phone email akito49@wm.pdx.ne.jp Thanks.**

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

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

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

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

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

**DUPLICATE ITEMS FOR TRADE OR BUY.**I have the following 135mm Nikkors that are duplicate #s: **250148, 253653 (Contax), 254200, 255426, 260671, 260996.** Willing to trade 1 of them (except 255426/260996) for a matching # on the list or buy one at normal price. In 50/f1.4s I have: **337332, 337860, 358006, 358079.** Willing to exchange 327332 or 337860 or buy their mates. **Chris Sap, email me at csap@skynet.be Thank You**

## NEW MEMBERS

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ROCKFORD, IL 61125-0641

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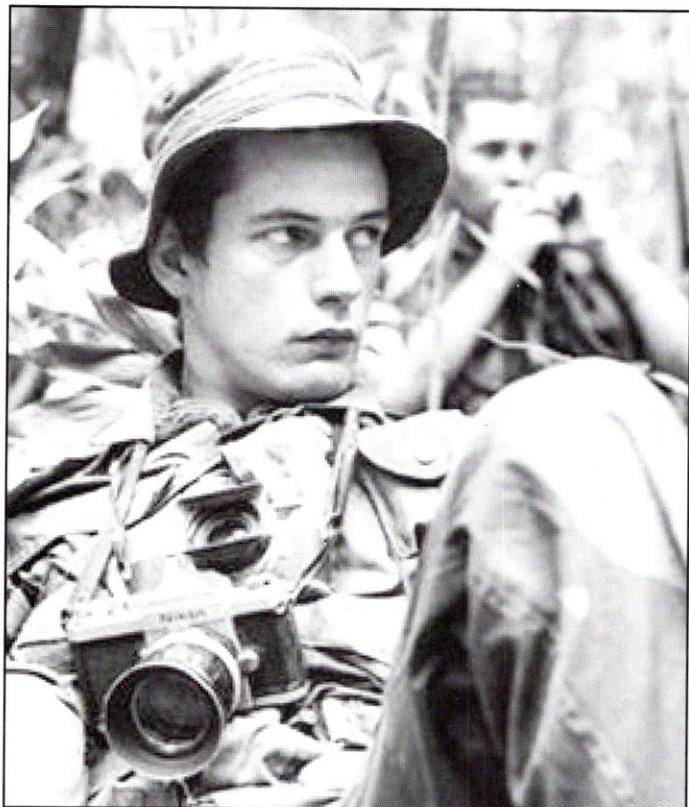
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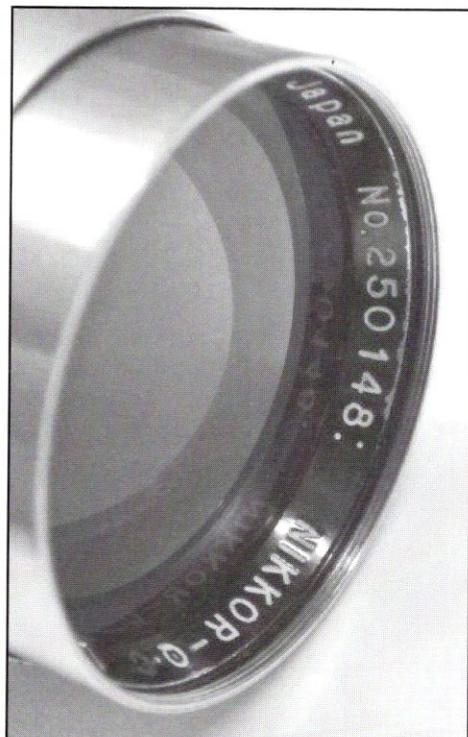
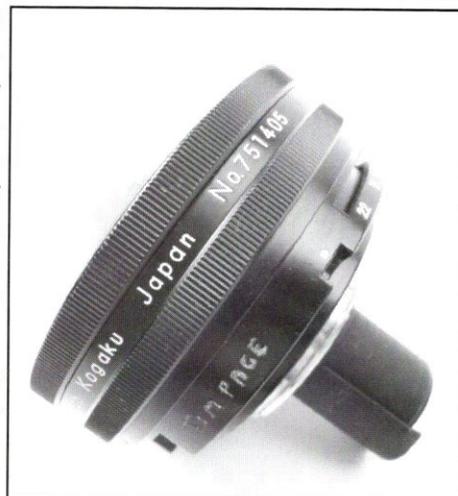
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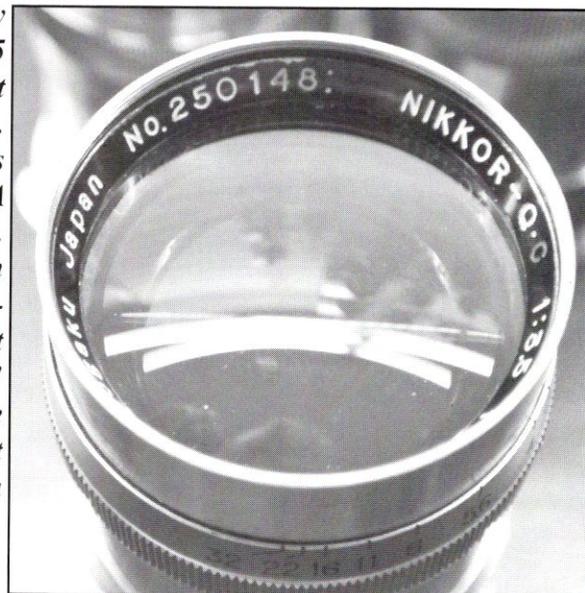
# odds 'n ends



*Left-Tim Page was one of the more influential Vietnam War photographers. Recently, NHS member Al Sat-terwhite found this 7.5mm Fisheye Nik-kor lens. Turns out it was once owned by Tim Page. Was it in Nam? I doubt it but the provenance is just great!*



*Member Chris Sap recently added another 135mm/f3.5 Nikkor to his collection. But it is not just another 135mm. Note the serial number. It is 250148: duplicate number. A nice feature in itself but..... there are no 135s starting with '250'! They start at '253' during the Occupation. So what is this? It must be an error! Maybe 260148? But are there 2 of them? The colon suggest there are. An error lens & a duplicate! WOW!!!*





検査合格証  
CERTIFICATE  
このレンズは本社の検査規格に合格したものであることを証明します。  
This lens has passed the inspection and meets the following specifications.  
MODEL: Apo-Nikkor 180mm f/9  
SERIAL NO. 492760  
CHIEF INSPECTOR: *Sagara*  
NIKON KOGAKU K.K. TOKYO

CREATED FOR THE "NHS" BY *Tommy Hunt*