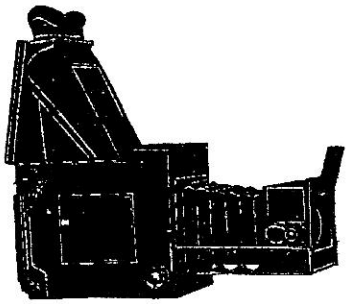
GRAFLEX HISTORIC QUARTERLY



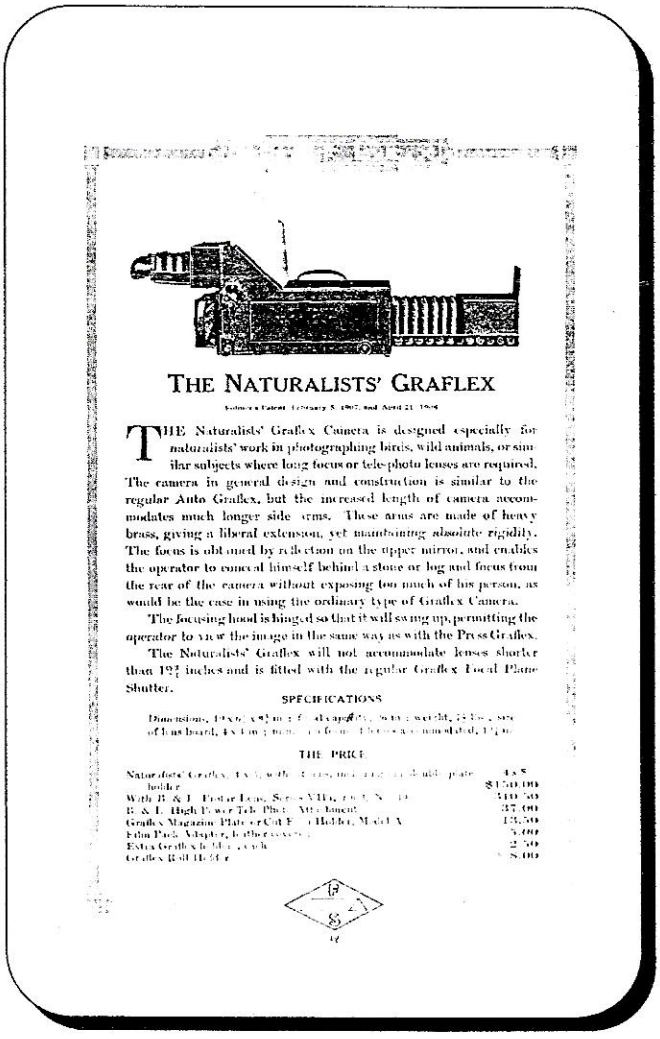
VOLUME 6 ISSUE 1 **FIRST QUARTER 2001**

FEATURES

The Graflex Naturalist Camera 1907-1922
by Mike Hanemann

One of the most unusual and uncommon Graflex cameras is the Naturalist. I was offered one in trade a few years ago and the owner sent it to me to look over before the trade was completed. Prior to this trade, I had the opportunity to examine two Naturalists in the collection of the George Eastman House.(GEH)

The two at GEH differed from the Graflex catalog illustrations. The catalog illustration is the same in all catalogs 1907-1922.[see figure 1] The camera is shown with a door that protects the lens and looks like a single sheet of metal. The cameras at GEH have this same door but with an added side shield on both sides. The catalog does not show these side shields [figure 2]. In the GEH samples, the side shields have a dimple which fits into a depression in the box to hold the cover up. Over time, this dimple scribes an arc in the width. The GEH sample has 4 sides to the front box. The finish is black enamel. The metal plate lens hood with thin metal quarter round "wings" is attached with a hinge to the top of the front box. The "wings" have scribed an arc in the wood on both sides.



THE NATURALISTS' GRAFLEX

THE Naturalists' Graflex Camera is designed especially for naturalists' work in photographing birds, wild animals, or similar subjects where long focus or tele-photo lenses are required. The camera in general design and construction is similar to the regular Auto Graflex, but the increased length of camera accommodates much longer side arms. These arms are made of heavy brass, giving a liberal extension, yet maintaining *absolute* rigidity. The focus is obtained by reflection on the upper mirror, and enables the operator to conceal himself behind a stone or log and focus from the rear of the camera without exposing too much of his person, as would be the case in using the ordinary type of Graflex Camera.

The focusing hood is hinged so that it will swing up, permitting the operator to view the image in the same way as with the Press Graflex.

The Naturalists' Graflex will not accommodate lenses shorter than 12½ inches and is fitted with the regular Graflex Focal Plane Shutter.

SPECIFICATIONS

THE PRICE

figure 1

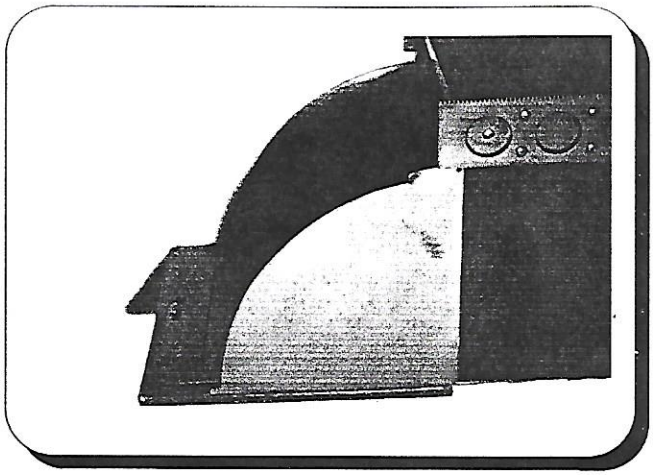


figure 2

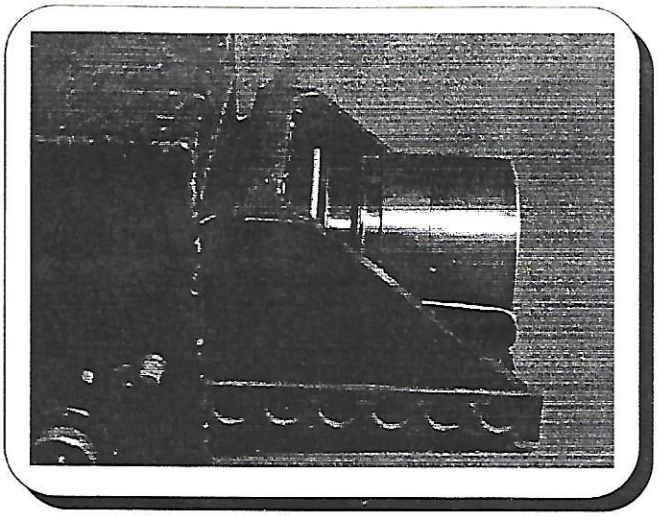


figure 3

The camera sent to me has been modified, possibly by the company. The camera came with a large lens and the front "box" has been cut off on a 45 degree angle to permit the operator to adjust the lens. [figure 3]

In my sample, the top of the box is gone and the sides of the box have been cut to a 45 degree angle covered in leather matching the rest of the camera. There are no arcs scribed in the leather.

It's obvious to me that someone modified this camera to use the large telephoto lens, a Taylor 20 inch f 5.6. A discovery in old photographic magazines, 1888-1904 gave me a clue. In a 1901 Photo Miniature I found an ad for Folmer & Schwing Mfg. Co., New York. In that ad [figure 4] the company offers to build any camera desired. In my two trips to Rochester, New York, I have spoken with many people who worked for Graflex, Kodak, and other companies, and they believe its an even chance that Graflex did the conversion. Whoever did it, its still a unique camera and no less a Naturalist.

We Will Build a Camera Specially for You

FROM YOUR SPECIFICATIONS

WE build more special outfits to order than any other house in America. Our regular line includes a greater variety of Cameras for special purposes. Many times customers come to us to have a special Camera built and find just what they wanted already on our shelves.

Our Deceptive Angle Graphic

is the most perfect detective Camera made, and enables you to get "get" subjects absolutely impossible with an ordinary Camera. Our catalogue tells all about it and about other special Cameras.

FOLMER & SCHWING MANUFACTURING CO.

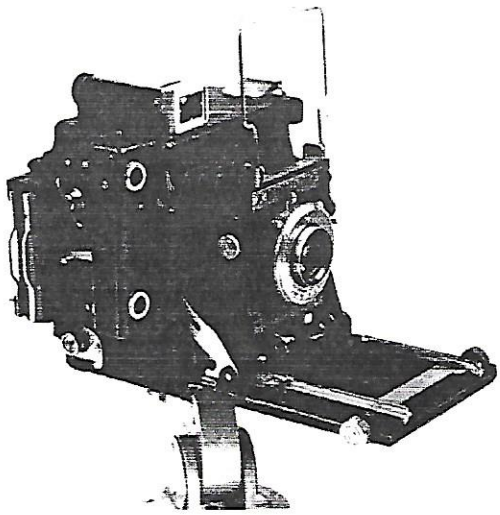
404 Broadway, NEW YORK

Kindly mention THE PHOTO-MINIATURE

figure 4

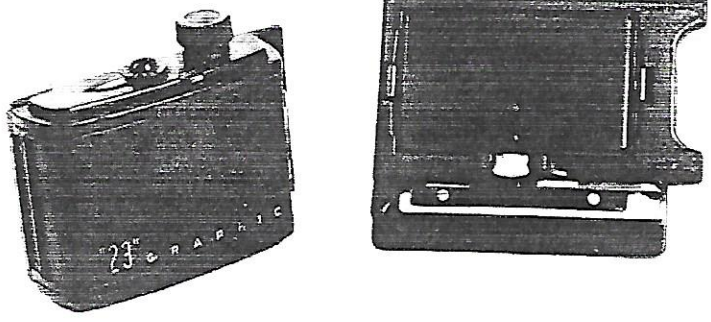
The Graflex 21/4x31/4 Miniature Speed Graphic
By William E. Inman Sr.

In 1938 Graflex introduced the 2x3 Miniature Speed Graphic. It was undoubtedly one of the first medium format cameras. The box was made of tight-grained Honduras mahogany like its big brother, the 4x5 Speed Graphic. Its smaller size made it extremely rugged and it could take a lot of punishment. The camera came equipped with 105mm Tessar f4.5 lens in a Compur shutter, 101 mm Kodak Ektar f/4.5 in a Graphic Supermatic shutter, or 101mm Graflex Optar f/4.5 in the Graphex shutter. During WWII German optics such as the above mentioned Tessar of course became unavailable. Additional features of the camera were a right and left hand focusing control, double extension bellows for closed up photography, a rising front lens standard, interchangeable lens, a new tubular viewfinder, a sports finder, and a coupled Kalart rangefinder. The camera could be ordered with a Graphic or Graflex back. The cost of the camera with a Kalart rangefinder and Graflex flash unit was about $285.00. The camera weighed about 3 3/4 Ibs.



Graflex 2 ¼ x 3 ¼ Miniature Speed Graphic 1938 to 1947

A number of the 2x3 Miniature Speed Graphic features were later incorporated into the 4x5 Anniversary Speed Graphic in 1940. One of the best features of the 2x33 Miniature Speed Graphic was the 24-speed focal plane shutter. I had speeds from 1/10 second to 1/1000 second and featured built in synchronization for flashbulbs, a first in the industry. Synchronization of the focal plane shutter was easier because of the shorter distance the curtain had to travel. In those days, synchronization of the flashbulb with between -the-lens shutters and focal plane shutters on all sizes of cameras, from 35mm to 4x5, was still in the experimental stage. The Wabash #2 and #3 [focal plane] flashbulb could be used at a 1/1000 sec. G.E. made a #1 and #16 that could also be used with the 2x3 Miniature Speeds. The G.E. bulbs were later replaced with the #31 flashbulb. The introduction in 1939 of the #5 flashbulb by G. E, while aimed at the amateur photographer, inspired the professional photographers, especially the press corps to push hard to get the between-the-lens leaf shutters synchronized. As a result, solenoids were created to mount on the front lens standards of the cameras to synchronize the flashbulb with the front leaf shutters. Wabash/Sylvania followed in 1940 with the Press 25 bulb.



Graphic 2 ¼ x 3 ¼ Roll Holder
&
2 ¼ x 3 ¼ Graflok Back for the Min Speed Graphic
1949

During WWII synchronized between-the-lens leaf shutters were produced, and later introduced to the civilian market after the war. There were two models, the X-sync model for the new Speedlite electronic flash, and the M-X model for both flashbulbs and the new electronic

flash units. H. E. Edgerton of M.I.T introduced the Speedlite electronic flash in 1940 for commercial and scientific use.

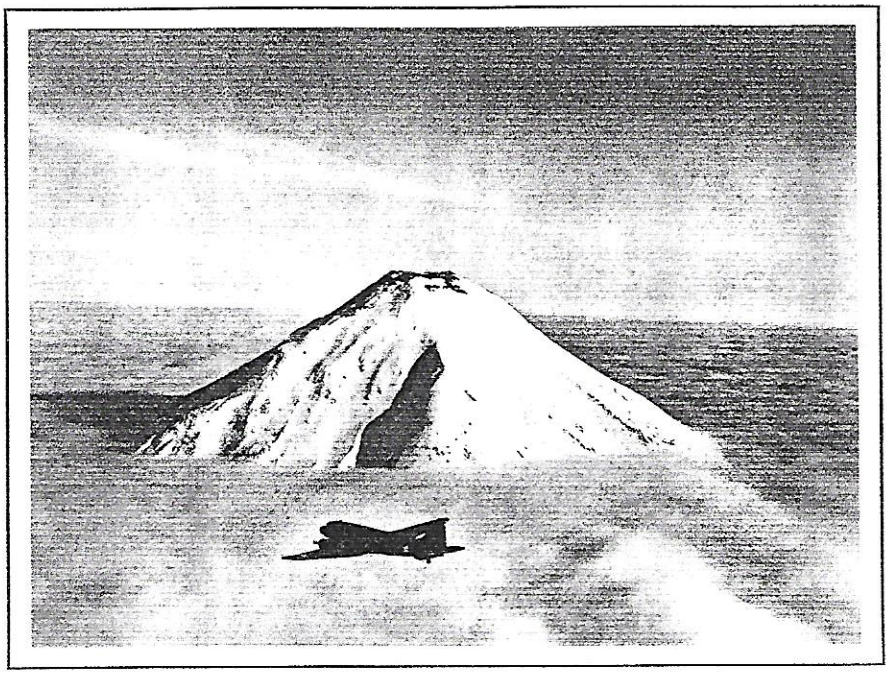
Its also important to remember that back in 1938, as a professional photographer taking commercial, weddings, or the press, B&W sheet film was the primary medium. There were cut film holders that held two sheets of film, or film pack adapters that held 12 sheets of film in a pack much like the Polaroid pack film of today. You had your own darkroom where you processed and printed your own work. Roll film cameras were relegated to the amateur photographers. The range of the B&W film speed was from 8 to 80. Professional Kodachrome sheet film was rated at ASA 6, a far cry from the film speeds of today.

It's worth noting as well, that the 2x3 Miniature Speed Graphic played a small part as a combat camera for the US military during WWII. The military version was designated the C-4. The 2x3 Miniature Speed Graphic was discontinued in 1947. Approximately 31,000 had been manufactured by that time. With the ever growing popularity of the medium format camera as well as 120 color negative roll film (Ektacolor in 1947) for the professional photographer, Graflex introduced in 1949 the 2x3 Graflok back plus the 2x3 Graphic 8 exposure 120 roll film Holder. You could convert your 2x3 Miniature Speed Graphic from a Graphic or Graflex back to a Graflok back to use the Graphic 120 roll holder for about $21.00. A year later in 1950 the 2x3 Grafmatic sheet film magazine was introduced which could be used on the Graflok back as well, and cost just $18.00.

So began the medium format era of Graflex professional photography.

Correction

The photo on page 8 of the last issue got into our system without the proper credit. This amusing photo is one of many in the book, A Funny Thing Happened On The Way to The Darkroom by Margaret Lansdale. The book is a collection of stories about Canadian photographers' successes and failures. The period covered includes lots of experiences with Speed Graphics. Copies are available from the author, 18 Ashfield Dr, Etobicoke, Ontario M9C 4T6



For 1944

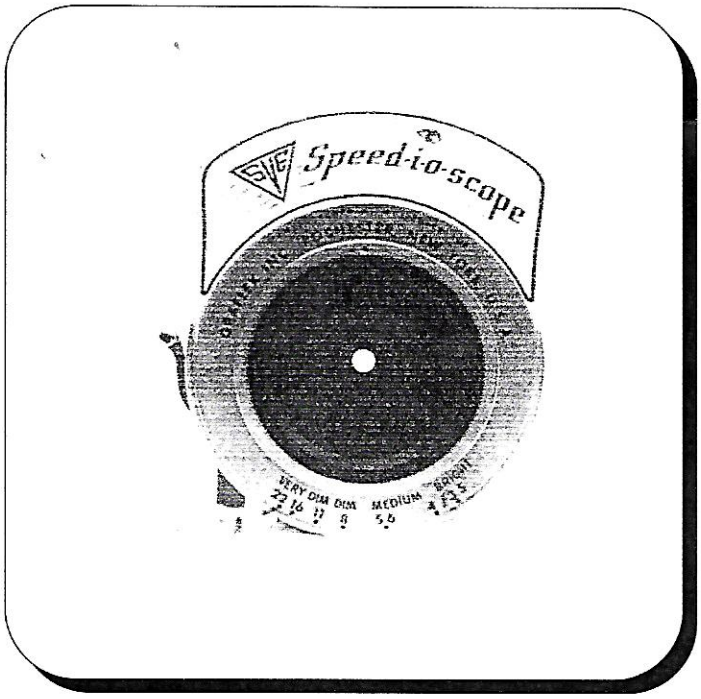
ENTERING a year that promises new gains and ultimate Victory, we repledge our steadfast purpose in this War while we yet look ahead to the Peace when everyday living will be the better for all of us. ★ THE FOLMER GRAFLEX CORPORATION.

The Speed-I-O-Scope
by Jim McKellar

[editor's note: the subject of this article is an odd device commonly seen at camera swap meets, but rarely identified. Jim clears up the mystery]

The question is, what is a Speed-I-O-Scope and what was it's intended use? Not all Speed-I-O-Scopes were manufactured by Wollensak and not all were labeled Graflex, Inc. It appears there were multiple suppliers and distributors of this product but the intended use was the same. For the sake of this article I will refer to and describe the one in my possession and make some reference to others. I will further refer to this as a lens even though that is questionable.

Description: The lens came in a type of display or carry case, best described as a vinyl wrapped box with a snap lid and felt lined interior. The face of the device itself is 3 inches in diameter and labeled across the top, "Manufactured by Wollensak for Graflex Inc., Rochester, New York, USA." The bottom of the face is labeled with f/stops of 22 to 3.5 and marked "Very Dim" to "Bright" accordingly, with lever control.

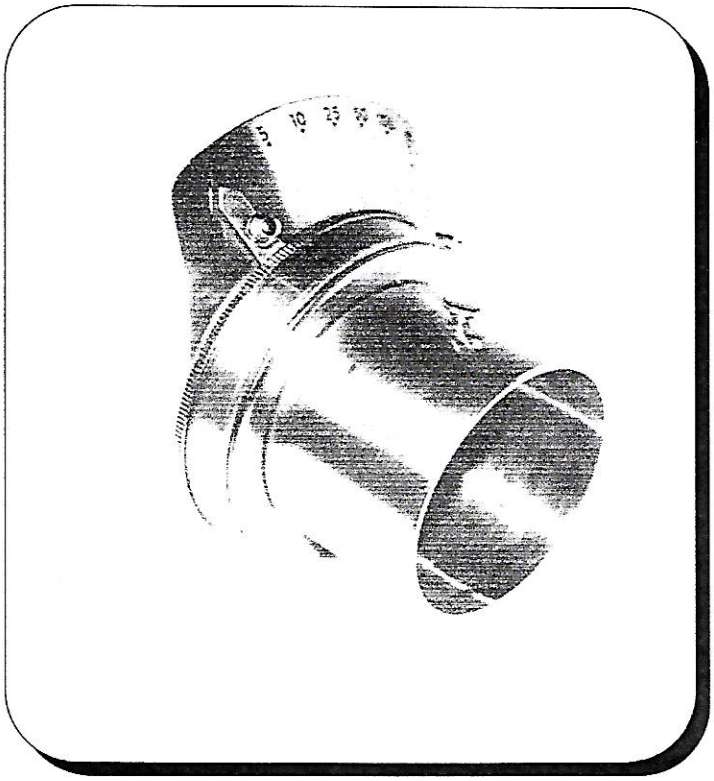


The top of the face has a shield protruding up at an angle and is marked with a logo "SVE" and the very ornate wording "Speed-I-O-Scope". On the reverse of the shield are the speed settings of 1, 2, 5, 10, 25, 50, 100, and B. The side of this face is equipped with a shutter release. It has a leaf shutter and only a front cell which appears to be flat and clear with no magnification. The rear cell is exposed. Protruding from the rear is a tube or barrel 2 inches in diameter and 1 1/2 inches in length. It has a setting screw midway at the top. All surfaces are a highly polished metal, and all print is black. I have found Ilex Optical Co. Inc. of Rochester, New York to be another manufacturer and SVE, Society for Visual Education Inc. of Chicago, to be a distributor. There may very well have been others.

What Is the Speed-I-O-Scope? First, what it isn't: it is not actually a lens. The scope has only a front cell only with no curvature whatsoever. It is a shutter mechanism designed to project light, not accept it.

What Is It's Intended Use? A popular opinion that I encountered is that this scope was used for oscilloscope photography. I found this to be incorrect. Simply put, it was designed to slide over the lens of a common slide projector, with the screw tightened down to fit and allow the operator to control the timing of the image to be displayed. This is also known as a tachistoscope. It has a subliminal effect that was found to be very beneficial in training and education.

Since human behavior is often an outer manifestation of inner belief systems, subliminal messages can act as the stimulus to condition a more beneficial response. These messages have the potential to excite, arouse, anger or pacify human behavior as well as assist in memory and retention of knowledge. The human brain takes in all the information it needs to build a response from even an image flashed at 100th of a second. An



example of this took place in 1957 at a Ft. Lee, N.J. drive in theater when management tachistoscopically flashed the words "drink Coca Cola" and "eat popcorn" for 1/3000th of a second every 5 seconds throughout the movie during a 6 week run of the film "Picnic." These subliminal messages raised Coke sales in the lobby 58% and popcorn 18%.

The Speed-I-O-Scope allowed educators to take an everyday slide projector and apply subliminal messages to be displayed to their students. This allowed them to educate in a way that was difficult, if not impossible, in the more traditional methods. It was like an electronic flash card.

Some Specific Uses:

Military: During WWII, tacticians found that pilots and gunners were unable to distinguish the silhouettes of planes at a distance. In some instances, pilots and gunners even shot down "friendly" aircraft. To solve this problem, Air Force psychologists developed the tachistoscope. By flashing fairly large pictures of friendly and enemy aircraft at slow speeds, while gradually increasing the exposure speed and decreasing the size of the image, pilots could be quickly trained to recognize even speck-like images of different planes when flashed at only 1/100th of a second. In fact, the U.S. Navy ship gunners were trained to identify over 2,000 silhouettes at one sitting without a mistake.

Sports: After WWII, Indiana University used a tachistoscopic technique to teach football quarterbacks how to spot the open pass receiver almost automatically.

Police: During the 1950"s, the Los Angeles Police Department used this technique at their academy. By displaying images of accident or crime scenes for specific short periods of time, they were able to increase officers' attention spans and their attention to details.

Public Education: My scope's logo of "SVE" represents a company that was known as the Society for Visual Education. These folks, as well as others, used the scope as a means of improving reading skills. SVE was funded for the education of children with attention deficit disorders and dyslexia. Their theory was that by flashing letters, letter combinations, or word pictures that they would build the ability to begin reading.

jwmckellar@mcsi.net

Editor: the use of subliminal messages has aroused much controversy. But note that they were used in Jim's examples by externally projected methods. Film and television use frames at closer to 1/25th second and messages can be detected pretty easily.

Cooke Lenses for Graflex

....were at the top of the list of quality lenses available to the Graflex buyer. The SLRs aren't often found with them because they were an expensive option.

Amazingly, a representative of Cooke Optics [yes, they're still in business!] has advised us that the manufacture of a Cooke lens which could be used in vintage Graflexes is under consideration. They still have the original formulas.

She requests that our readers contact her if they think there might be a market for such a lens, and if so, for which camera [i.e. which focal length].

Please send her any information you can at:

barb@cookeoptics.com or mail a note to the editor and we will forward the message.

Cooke also has a website with an expanded history section: www.cookeoptics.com

pair of unidentified photographers posing in publicity shot

WANT AD POLICY:

Any subscribers wishing to place a want ad selling or seeking Graflex-related items may send them to the GHQ for inclusion at no charge (at this time). The editors reserve final publication decisions.

SUBSCRIBER NOTICE:

If anyone did not receive the previous issue of this newsletter, please contact the address below. Sometimes one goes astray!

By now I'm sure you know that Harvey Zucker has ceased(or will shortly cease) doing business as " A Photographer's Place" in New York. Harvey had procured the rights from Dick Paine to reprint and sell his 1981 classic " A Review of Graflex". Seeing as how I am retired and have no wife, Dick cleverly prevailed on me to store the remainder of Harvey's copies at my house. Please mention in the next issue that I'll sell them to GHQ subscribers at Harvey's price of $ 15 + postage. Thanks. Jerry Laderberg misterjelly_22207@yahoo.com

Publisher: Mike Hanemann
Editor: J.C.Welch
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Contact: Mike Hanemann
P.O. Box 22374
Milwaukee, OR 97269
or J.C. Welch
1777 Lake Dr.
Eugene, OR 97404
e-mail hanemann @ europa.com
or equinox@pond.net (J.C.W's email)

Graflex Historic Quarterly

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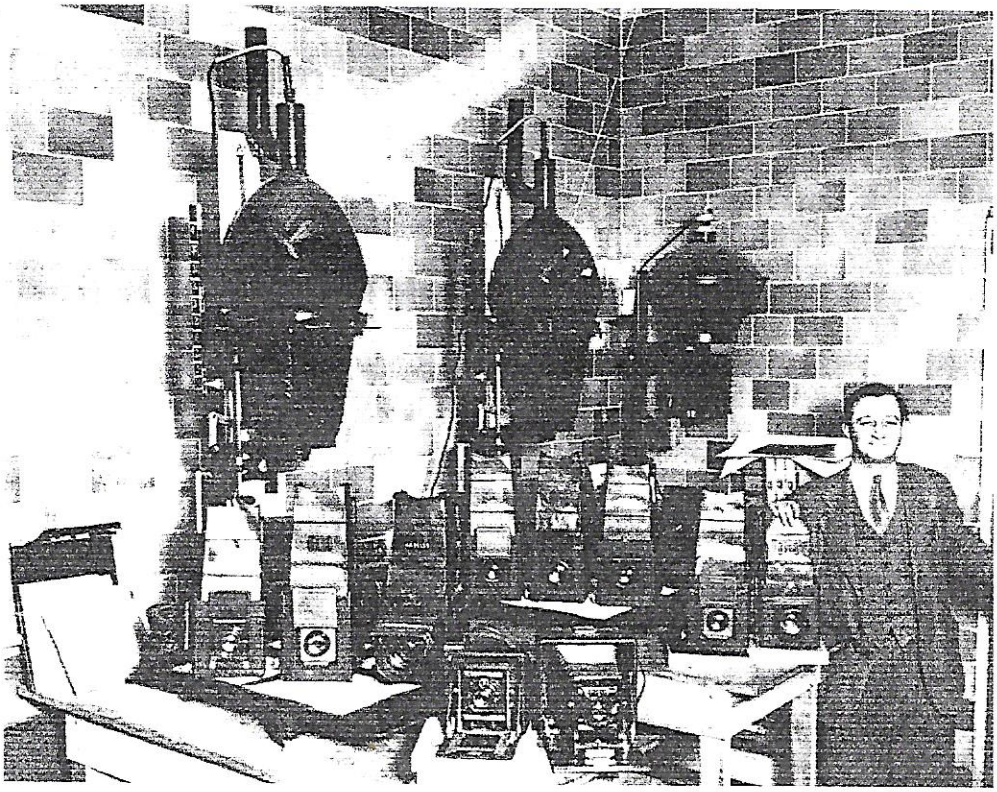

An unidentified darkroom setup noteworthy for its proud collection of Graflexes.