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NHS-86

NIKON  JOURNAL



THIS ISSUE

PAGE 1...SPECIAL ISSUE!!

THE NIKON BULK FILM BACKS

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EDITOR/PUBLISHER



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NHS-87 DEADLINE!
The deadline for the next issue of our NIKON JOURNAL, NHS-87, is MARCH 1, 2005. Please get all correspondence to me by then so I can get our Journal to you on schedule. Thank you. <i>RJR.</i>

EDITORIAL

The Holidays will have just ended by the time you receive this 86th edition of your Nikon Journal. Let me take this moment to wish all of you a healthy and prosperous 2005.

You will all surely remember the special issue on the 50mm/f1.1 Nikkor that Peter Lownds and Tony Hurst collaborated on (NHS-58). It was an awesome issue with words by Peter and simply fabulous shots by Tony. Months back they came to me with the idea of doing the same thing for the 250 shot backs made for the reflexes. An entire issue on these relatively unknown accessories covering the complete series beginning to end. Starting on page one and going all the way to page 13 is their combined presentation on the 'Nikon Bulk Backs' from the Nikon F to the F4.

I have added 3 pages at the end to cover an item that belongs in this issue but for which Peter and Tony did not have all the material. On pages 14~16 I have included what we know up to this point on the nearly mythical S250 Motor for the Nikon SP. You will see samples of the only known printed info from the literature as well as photos of the unit sold at Christies last year. In addition, I have reproduced the 'original' factory drawings of the S250. Please enjoy.

On a sad note I have two obituaries to announce on page 17. It is ironic that the very issue that presents his design drawing for the S250 Motor must also contain notice of his passing. But Mr. Shigetada Fukuoka, 'Mr. Motor Drive', has died and I guess it is fitting that his obituary faces the page with his S250 Motor design. I must also announce the passing of Tom Kostyk who many of you met at the last 2 Conventions. Tom was a very pleasant gentleman who was always smiling.

Now for some better news. Plans continue to be formulated for NHS-Con10 in Vienna in May 2006. So keep it in mind and start making some plans. Member Rich Lane, our resident expert on Nippon Kogaku military optical ordnance from WWII has been featured in a new book entitled 'Japanese Aircraft Equipment 1940-1945' by Robert Mikesh. Rich did the entire chapter on the aerial cameras with color photos of examples from all makers of the period. He also has photos in other chapters such as sunsights and bombsights. You see he is an expert!

You should check out Peter Lownds' website for his 'Quality Camera Shop and Museum'. I was just there in November and, as usual, it is jam packed with Nikons of very vintage and type. A really superb inventory, which changes constantly. Take a look at 'www.qualitycamerashop.com' and see what he and Marco have in store for you.

I have mentioned the website for member Michio Akiyama in the past (<http://homepage2.nifty.com/akiyanroom/redbook-e>) but he has added a new feature you just have to see! When on his site go to 'Nikon Kenkyukai Tokyo' (Nikon Club Tokyo) for complete photo coverage of the monthly meetings in Tokyo. Each meeting has a theme item and everyone brings their examples for discussion. Photo after photo of tables full of some of the most interesting items you can ever want to see. It is really fun and informative. You can go directly to it also (<http://akiroom.com/redbook-e/kenkyukai>). Take a look. Its great!! Because of a lack of space I could not run the entire list of websites this issue. I will try to fit it in NHS-87.

HAVE A GREAT YEAR. RJR

COMPLETE COVERAGE FROM THE NIKON SP THROUGH THE NIKON F4.... THE UNIQUE AND LEGENDARY NIKON BULK BACKS...

BY PETER LOWNDS WITH PHOTOS BY TONY HURST

For those of you who are not interested in Nikon's 250 shot camera backs, now would be a good time to wash your car or do that job your wife has been nagging you about. The rest of you can get yourself something to drink and have a seat while we let you in on a closely guarded secret; 250 shot backs are interesting and fun and every Nikon collector should have at least one. We will try to avoid the pitfall of Leica collectors of counting rivets and checking screw heads. What we will try to do is inform you and show you how interesting the 250 shot backs can be.

Tony Hurst and myself had a few interesting conversations with our leader, Robert Rotoloni, about presenting all this information in one Journal.

We asked NHS members to share numbers. We can only assume that by the lack of response few of you have 250 backs. For those of you who took the trouble to dig out a few serial numbers, many thanks.

I remember back in the good old days before the evil eBay put the axe to camera shows, going to the Chicago event at the Weston hotel. I could buy anything just short of the crown jewels. An SP, S or an M could be picked up after lunch when the dealer would reduce the price by 20%! At one Chicago show I was offered a box full of F250 backs for the Nikon F and turned the seller down! He wanted \$450 for the whole box, power packs included! Six months later I am back in Chicago. Sunday morning the doors open and after 50 plus circuits around the large ballroom, the dealer who had offered me the box of 250 shots called me over. We exchange pleasantries and he starts getting back to the box of F250 motors. Have a good look and make me an offer, he says. I held back for about 10 minutes. He invites me to have a good look in the box. Tongue in cheek I make a joke..ten 250 backs must be worth \$250...but the joke was on me! He accepted my offer!

I stagger back to Robert Rotoloni's table with a huge and heavy box. A look of surprise on Bob's face; What have you

bought now, and how are you going to get all this junk back to Holland? Junk it was not, and with a little help from FedEx five days later my box of junk arrived at my front door. After sorting through all my Nikon toys I had purchased in Chicago, I had a good look at my box of motors.

To say it was very interesting has to be the understatement of the year. The first F250 I unwrapped was #99078, the second #99044 and the third #99020! I could not believe my eyes. I had in my possession, according to the literature, the very first Nikon F250 motor, #99020!

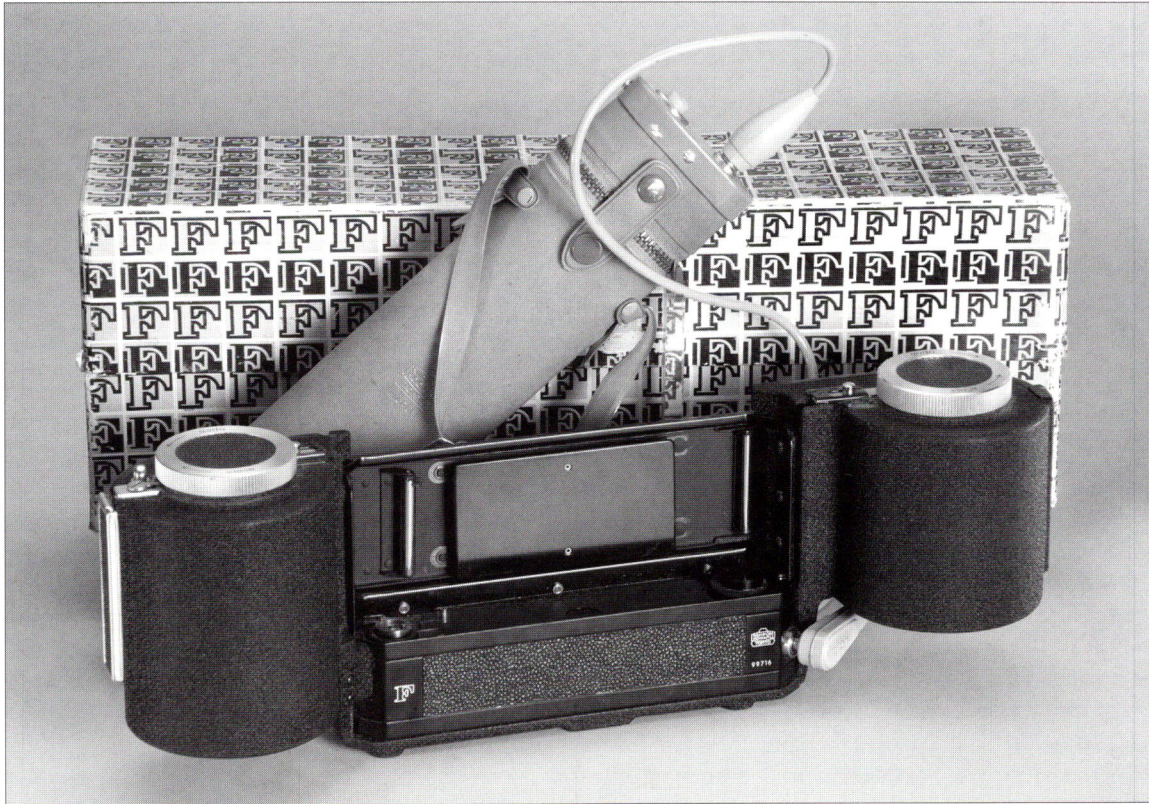
Many surprising facts have come to light after long hours

of research on the toilet. That's where I do my best thinking and it's the quietest room in the house. How the first batch of **F250** backs were not matched to a particular body, and that it took nearly 5 years to sell the first 1000 units, in which time Nikon had produced 150,000 cameras. If we look at numbers it appears that over the 15-year period that the Nikon F was pro-



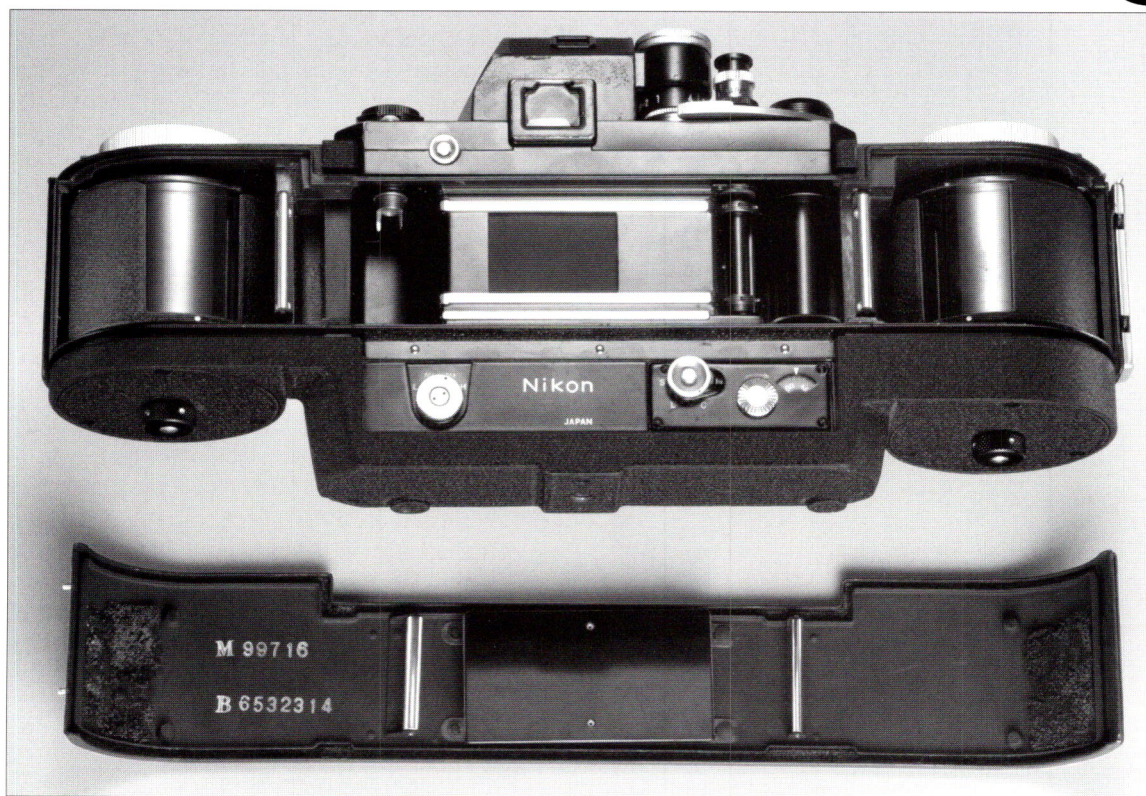
duced, only about 7,000 of these 250 shot motors were made. Add the fact that a lot of numbers could have been used for the F36 model, the number could be as low as 5,000. I recommend that you read Uli Koch's book on the Nikon F to learn more about these wonderful toys.

My first encounter with a Nikon 250 shot back was the introduction of the F2 model. I remember drooling in front of a camera shop in Romford, England, in the early 70s'. The F2S had just been released. There is a set in the shop window with aperture control unit, Motor Drive MD1 and the MF1 250 back. I had 15 well spent minutes in front of that window admiring the set and wondering where the money could be found. The price was 2,600 British Pounds! And it weighed a ton! I am sure that there are many photographers worldwide who have bad backs from just hauling around one of these sets!

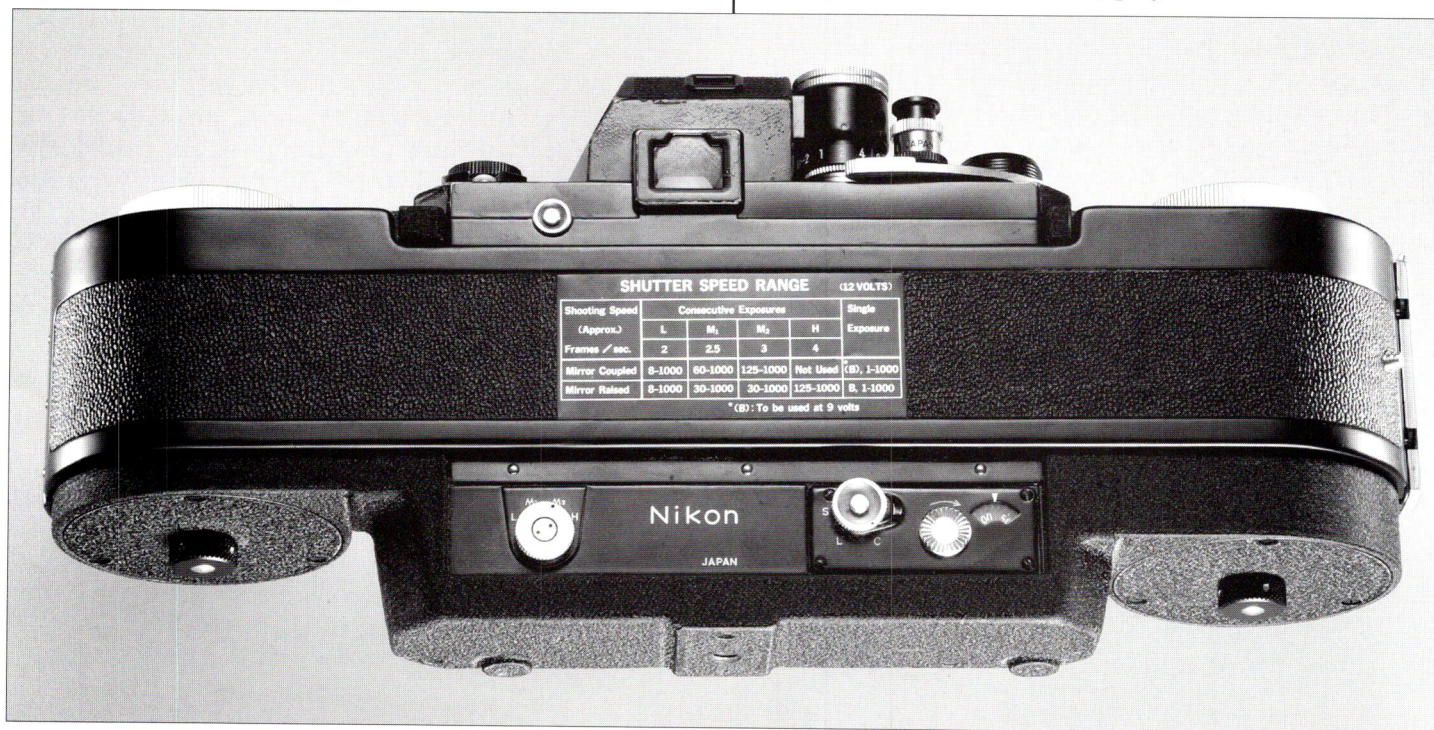


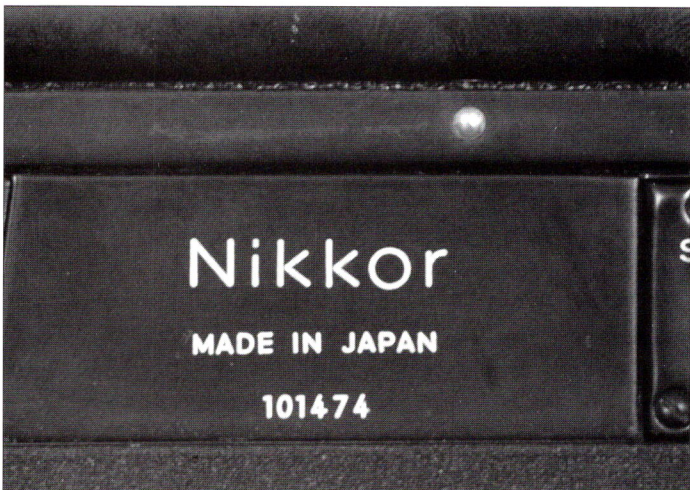
The F250 Motor Drive Bulk Back for the Nikon F in its original box with the early gray vinyl battery pack and matching gray cord. Even earlier examples can be found in a plain gray box with a dark blue bottom. Unlike all the bulk backs that followed it, the Nikon F version included the motor drive as well as the back. Later models used the 36 exposure motor while the back was a simple film chamber. Below is a slightly later model with the brown pack and black and gray cord. A well integrated and handsome design.





Even from the rear, the F250 is an imposing sight! Early versions lacked the shutter speed table on the back. Note how the motor is completely encased in the massive krinkle finished housing. This motor was designed at the same time as the smaller F36, thus it is well integrated and not something that was added on as an afterthought. Its original design goes back even further than you might think, as you will see. The back is completely removable for loading, which is easier than you would think, using the special cassettes. Left...the subtractive frame counter set at '250'. A very well thought out design that proved to be quite durable under heavy professional use.





Top..According to our information, what may be the very first F250 Motor made is unit #99020. No F250 has been recorded with an earlier serial number.

Above..A very small number of F250 'NIKKOR' motors were made for Germany during the period of the court litigation between Nikon and Zeiss. F36 versions can be found but only 3 examples of the more unique F250 type have been recorded.

Bottom..Both the F36 and F250 motors can be found with a small white dot before the serial number. Peter contends it must have been a mischievous factory worker (!), but why it is there? If it doesn't belong then why paint it in? We do not know its significance, but it's fun looking for them.



Leitz were the first to introduce a 250 shot camera in 1933. It came about by way of default. There was a huge market for still pictures and nearly all film was B&W. There was a lot of unused long rolls of B&W film available. Put the two together and you could save a fortune on film. The next modification to the 250 concept was to add a motor drive. This Leitz did during the last disagreement between the Germans and the rest of the world. The first time I saw a Leica 250 with motor was at a Chicago camera show. One was on display at the table of the then president of the American Leica Historical Society. I had made quite a few passes around the hall amassing a huge bag full of Nikon toys. The late, great John Angle and myself walked over to that table and, with a straight face, I asked the seller what was the asking price. Quick as a flash he says \$50,000. Mmmmm, nice, but does it include a Messerschmidt and the bones of the Luftwaffe pilot as well? John and I went back to our table laughing. We sent quite a few people over to the Leica table to ask the very same question. After about two hours the Leica 250 motor was put under the table.

And now for some Nikon variations for the collector.

THE FIRST NIKON 250 SHOT MOTOR

At a Christies' auction last November a Nikon rangefinder 250 shot camera back was offered for sale. The RF version is about as rare as it gets and when I saw the photos I could not believe my eyes. It looked like the back made for the Nikon F that had been cut down and made to fit an SP. I had seen pictures of the S250 before. Simon Nathan shows one in a Fawcett book he did and another is shown in an Ehrenreich ad mounted on a black SP (both are reproduced here). But they are very different from the one at Christies'. If you study the one in the Fawcett book and the ad, you can see it is loaded from the top, not the back, and has a slightly different shape and very different top mounted locking knobs (actually d-rings like the camera back. More on this type at the end of the article.)

F250 BACK WITH A WHITE DOT BEFORE SERIAL #

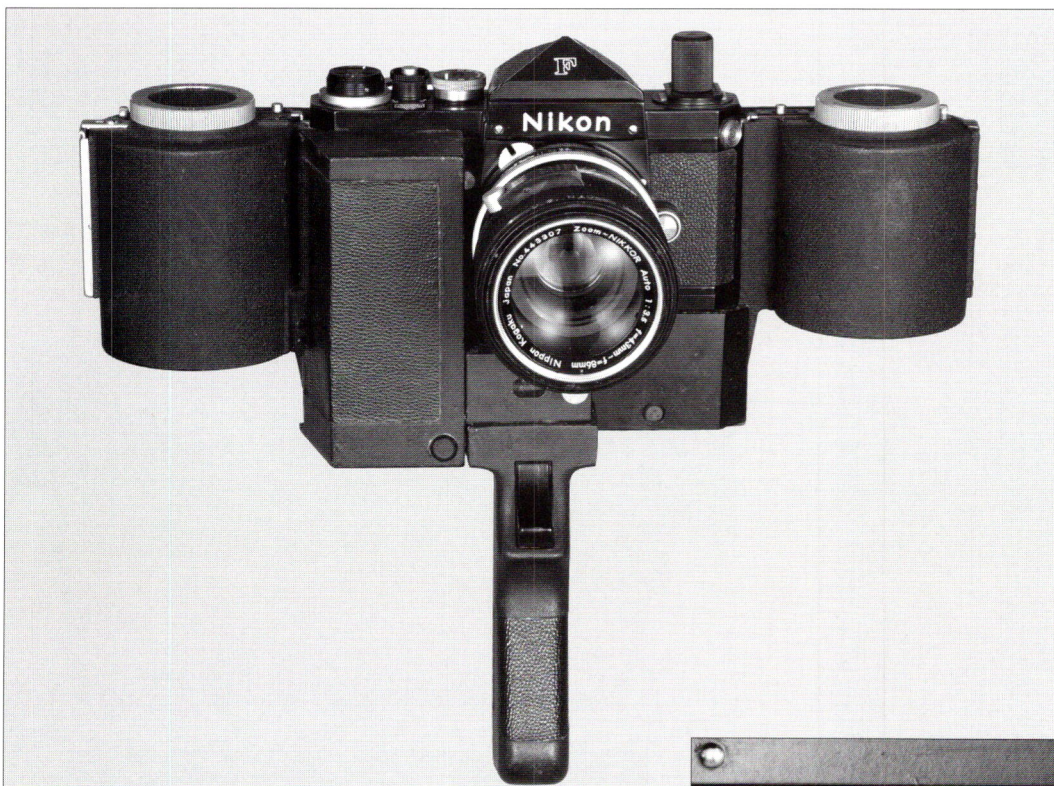
This is something of an oddball item. I have had my repairman carry out a professional inspection to see if there is a difference in these white dot motors. He can see no modification to warrant this special marking. I have heard many theories about it: it was a special order for Time-Life; the grease was adapted for cold weather use, i.e. under the wing of a spy plane. (My personal theory is that a frustrated cleaner had been given a center punch for Christmas, worked long hours and stayed over late at night just to play with his center punch, stamping 250 backs and 65xxxx Nikon Fs.) But we will never know. Numbers range from about 102500 to 103500, but this does not mean 1,000 were made.

'NIKKOR' F250 BACK

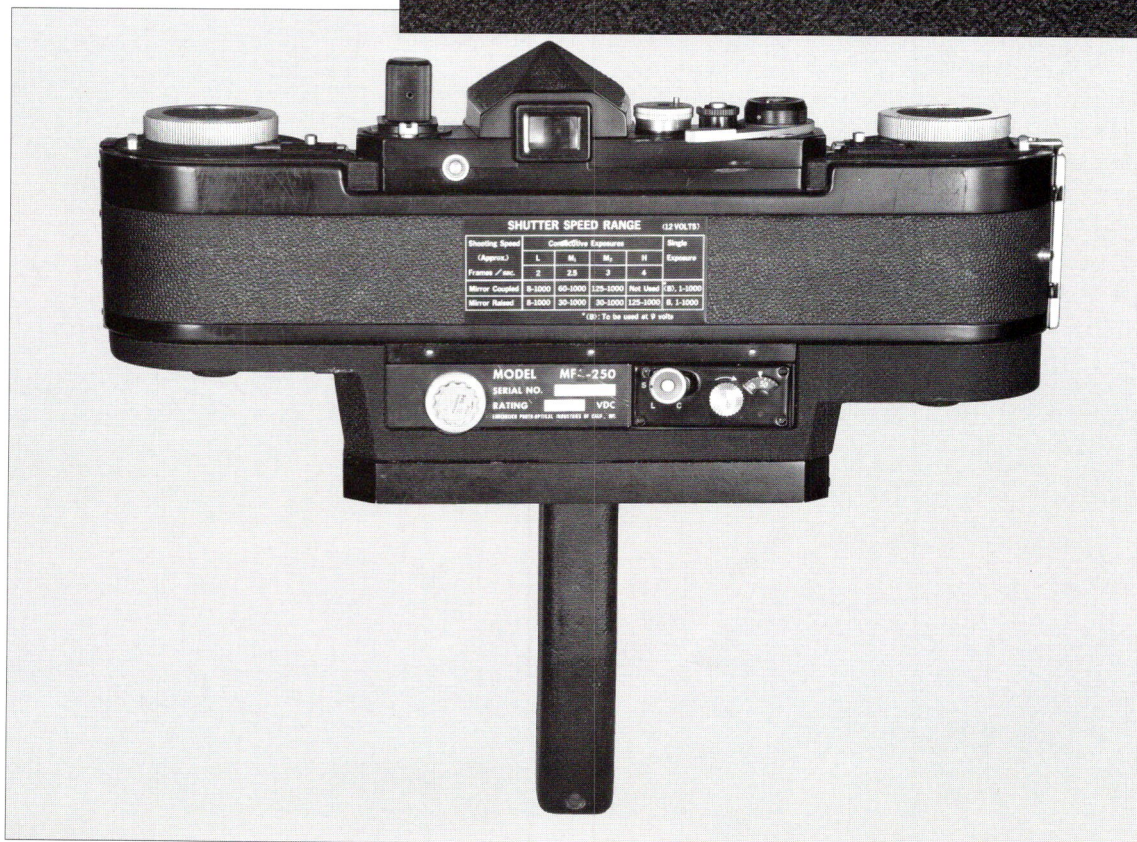
Another variation is engraved 'Nikkor' and made only for the German market. After a lengthy litigation battle with Zeiss Ikon about the use of the similar word 'Nikon', Nippon Kogaku won the day. The rest is history. To date we know of 3 of these backs!

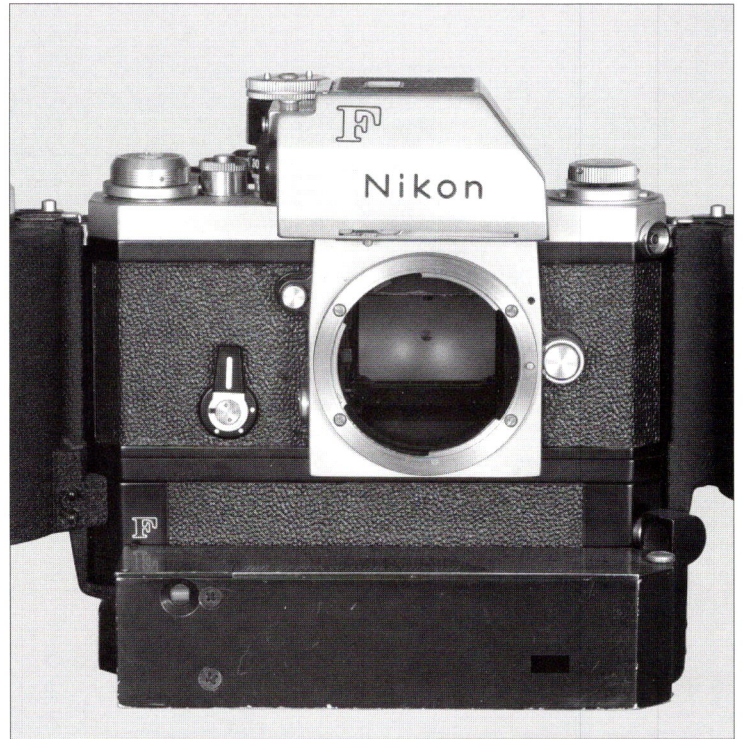
HIGH SPEED F250 BACK

Only one such back is known and was probably made on special order for the famous Sports Illustrated photographer John Zimmerman. It is #152304. See NHS-34.

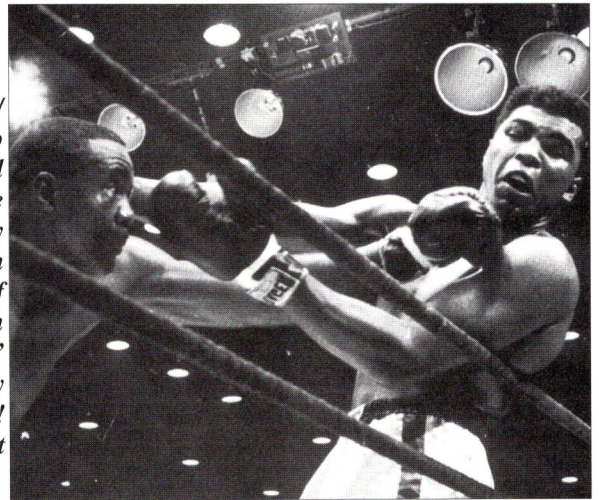


The KS-80A U.S. Navy air-to-air 'Scramble' camera is fairly well known and can be found. However, it appears that an order for 10 F250 versions was placed with EPOI. They proved to be less than usable inside the cockpit of a jet fighter and were rejected. Most may have been converted to the more common 36 exposure configuration. This unit, #5, may be the only surviving unit. Note the special rewind knob, correct for the KS-80A model.





Above & right..Two famous photos that first appeared in the original Cooper/Abbott book in May 1968 show how UPI used the motorized Nikon F to record the fight between Sonny Liston and a young Cassius Clay (Mohammed Ali). On the table are 7 Nikons with F36 motors and 3 with the F250s. The big motors were mounted to wooden boards with a battery pack and a relay box that were suspended above the ring (you can see one at the top center in the photo at right) for remote recording. Also note this was before the era of cordless packs as all the cameras seen have cord packs. The motorized Nikon F literally took the world of sports and photo-journalism by storm in the 60s' and 70s' to the point of monopolizing the field. Above right..the very uncommon cordless 'Remopak' made for the F250 eliminated cords! Below..the special "NASA" F250 mentioned in the text with sticker and front mounted modification.



KS 80 A F250 MOTOR

As far as we know there were 10 F250 motors made for the KS 80A air-to-air scramble camera made for the US Navy. Only one is known at this time. The original order was placed with EPOI, the US importer. But the US pilots found them much too heavy in a tight turn pulling 4 Gs with one hand on the joystick. After a long evaluation, the Navy gave it the thumbs down. All 10 were returned to EPOI for modification back to the F36 version. One was kept by Joseph Abbott of Cooper/Abbott fame and came to me via John Angle. We see on the back it has all the markings of an experimental model. This one is #5. Even a big guy like me finds it too heavy on my wrists and arms.

MF1 BACK FOR THE NIKON F2

The MF1 was introduced at the same time as the F2 body. With the arrival of the F2 era, Nikon gave every part a model number and the new 250 back was called 'MF1'. It was much better engineered than the F250. Quite a few MF1 backs were sold here in the Netherlands. The department of Water and Transport had a fleet of cars driving round the Dutch road system day and night taking pictures of car registration numbers. This job was done by men who are not intelligent enough to be traffic wardens. One qualification for the job was and I.Q. at least equal to your age, and they could retire at 55!

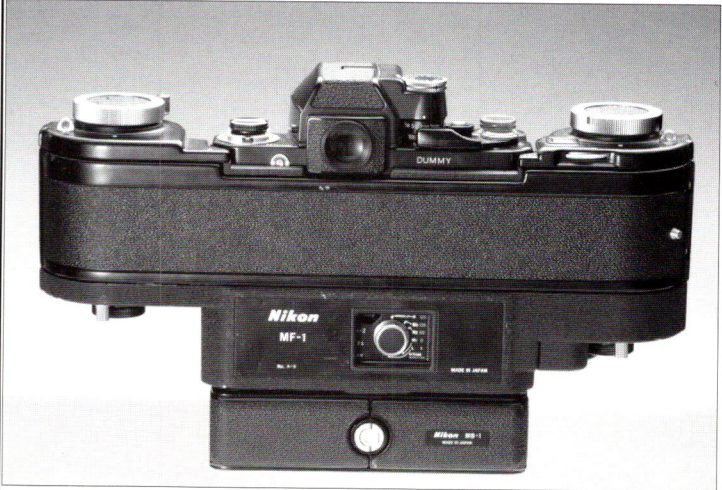
NIKON MF1 DUMMY BACK

This Dummy came to me via a friend in Purley who wants to remain anonymous, but we know him better as Tony Kowal. Nikon is one of the few companies to have produced dummy items such as cameras, lenses, etc, for display and evaluation purposes. This made life much easier for the shipping department. An item could

be sent back and forth across international boundaries with a little green sticker on the box with 'N.C.V.' (no commercial value). No customs or duty to pay. This unit is engraved 'A6'. In German the word 'Atrapp' means dummy and the 'A' often precedes the number. So this could be Dummy #6. We see also that this dummy is a prototype. Quite a few small differences from the standard MF1. It has 6 rollers instead of 3; a much smaller space for the prism release; it has the body covering used only on the first type F2 cameras; the plug connecting the back to the motor is slightly different; and the release knob on the top right cover is different. On my travels I have never seen a dummy motor MD1, MD2 or MD3, but I am sure some must exist.

F2 MF11 'DATA' VERSION

Another version of the 250 back for the F2 is the Data version. This was sold as the MF11 set. It came in a large black and gold box with a label listing the contents as 'F2AS Data body, Motor Drive MD2, 250 back MF1, Battery pack MB, Data back MF11'. We think that the F2 Data came about because of a large order placed by the British Armed forces. Ten years ago over 150 sets were sold as Army Surplus in England and also in Germany in 1990.

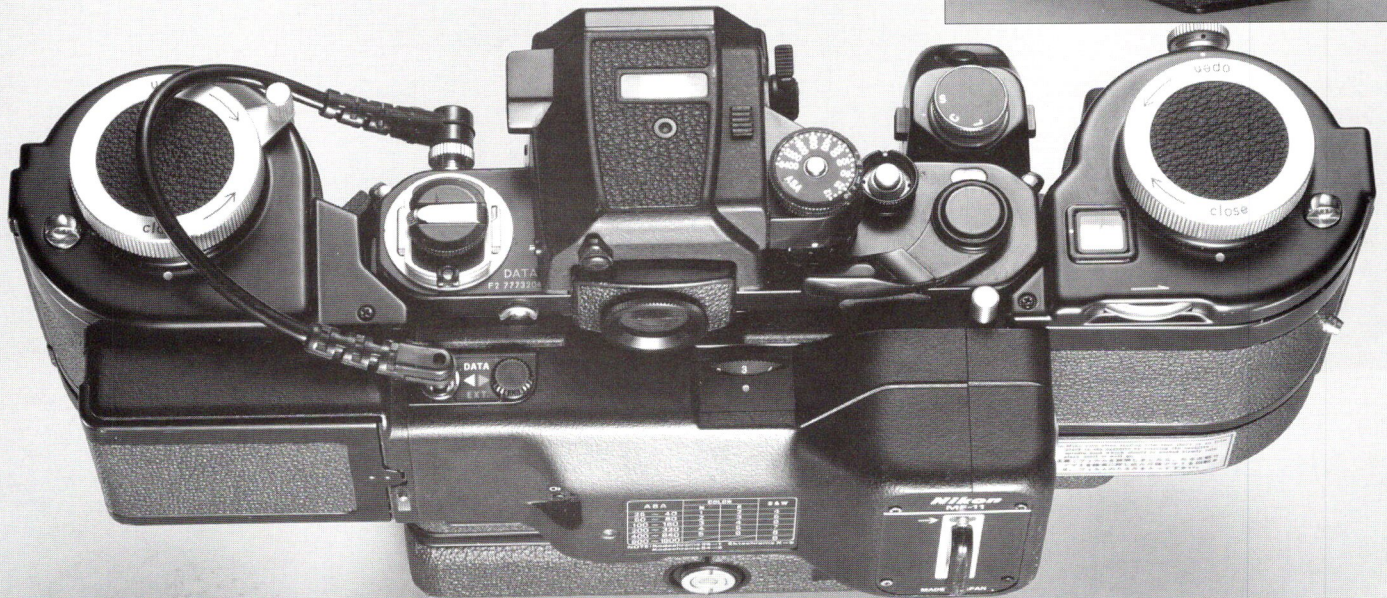
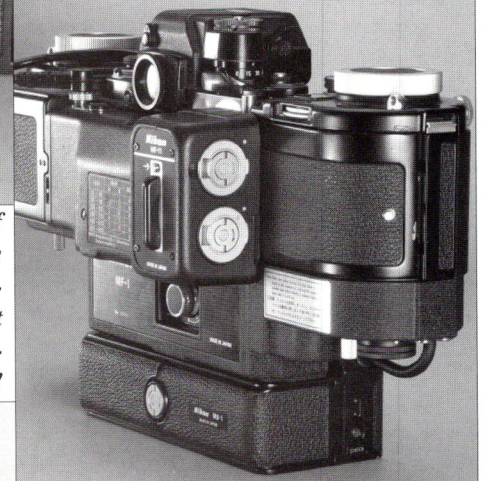


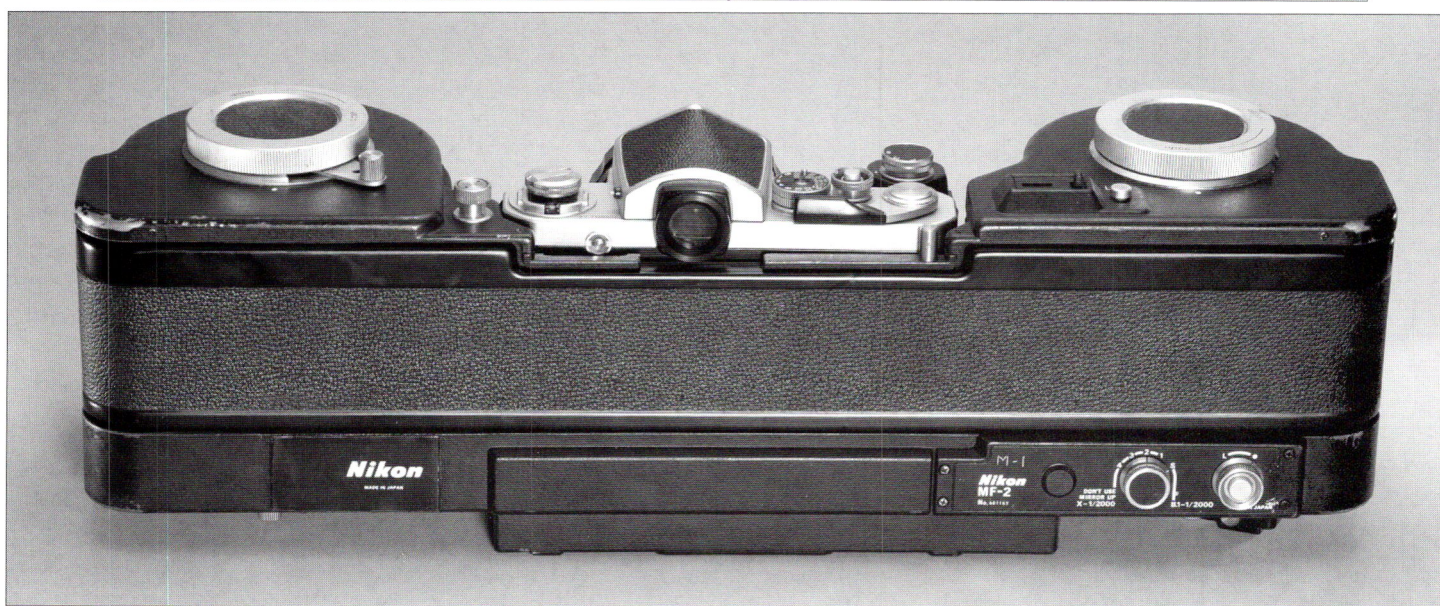
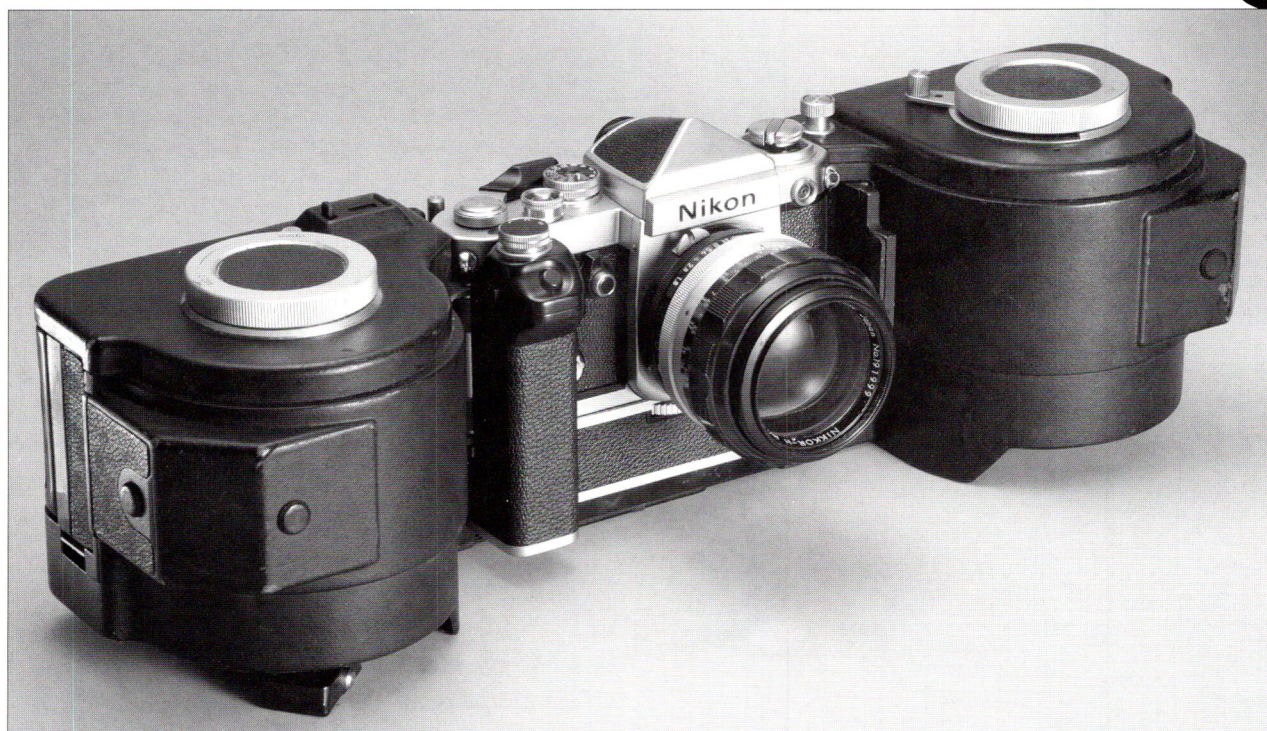
The 'Dummy' MF1/F2 mentioned in the text (upper right). Note 'Dummy' on the rear below the wind lever. The MF1 back is engraved 'No. A-6', a unique piece. Right..Brand new MF1 back with box and manual. Note that with the F2 you used your standard 36-shot motor and inserted it into the back housing. Below.. the MZ-1 cassettes for the F2 motor system. This design made loading the bulk backs quite easy.





The awesome Nikon F2 MF11 250 exposure 'DATA' set! You have to see and hold one of these in person to appreciate the construction, high tech looks and sheer weight of this rig! It is absolutely gorgeous! Professional all the way with no compromises. Even Japan can no longer produce items such as this for the general consumer, but in the 70s' it could be had. The 'Databack' protrudes quite a bit. In the right photo notice the 2 D-rings. Turn and pull and you have a miniature clock and calendar for imprinting negs!





And now for the simply breathtaking! The Nikon F2 MF2 750 exposure set. Yes, 750 shots without reloading! Using the special MZ-2 cassettes a full 100 foot bulk roll of film could be loaded without any cutting, right out of its original storage can. Possibly only 100 or so were ever made. Can you imagine the costs of tooling up for such a special low production item? But through the 70s' Nikon was more than willing to produce items such as this to satisfy the professional, industrial, scientific, military and government sectors. As far as I can tell, no other Japanese camera maker ever became so involved with such special purpose equipment as did Nikon. It is an era long gone as today the market is driven by different forces than 30 years ago. Labor costs have changed as has competition. Yes, today's cameras are high tech computerized wiz-bangs but, you know, they just don't look or feel like this. And they never will. No way.



NIKON F2 HIGH SPEED

On a recent visit to Japan I saw on display in a camera store an F2 High Speed in makers box together with a 250 back. I asked to see the item but was told by the shop owner that it was being held for a customer, and he was not allowed to take it out of the display case. I could see that the power cable had been modified, the small connection usually seen had been replaced with a plate that fitted between the battery pack and the camera body. It all looked very professional from a distance. It was not possible to see the serial number of either the camera or the MF1. If it was a factory experimental model or something that was modified by someone with a good technical background with an insight into the workings of a very specialized camera, and it did work, how did the technician manage to solve the problem of stopping and starting the film transport 10 times every second?

THE 750 EXPOSURE MF2

The 750 back was produced after an order was placed, via Nikon Europe, by the same Dutch department of Water and Transport. As far as we can tell over 100 were delivered. The reason-



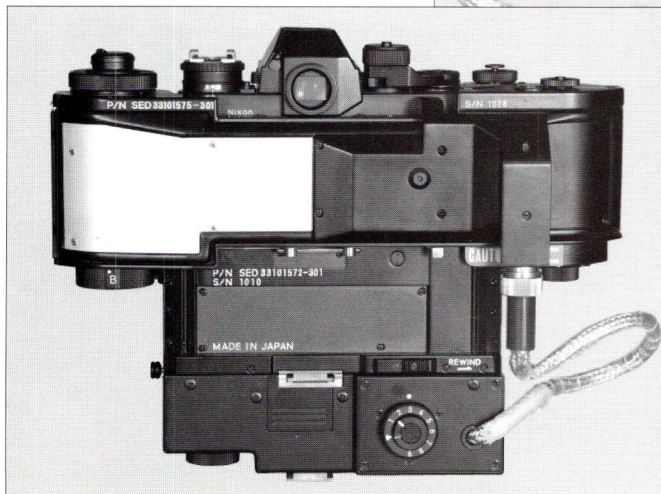
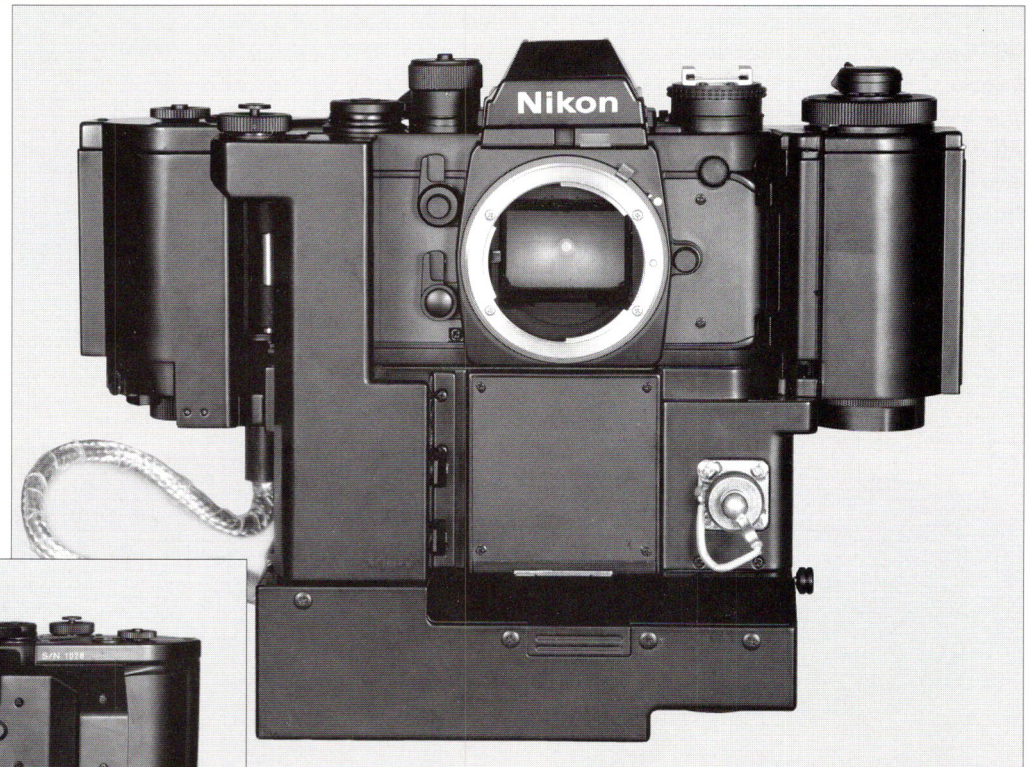
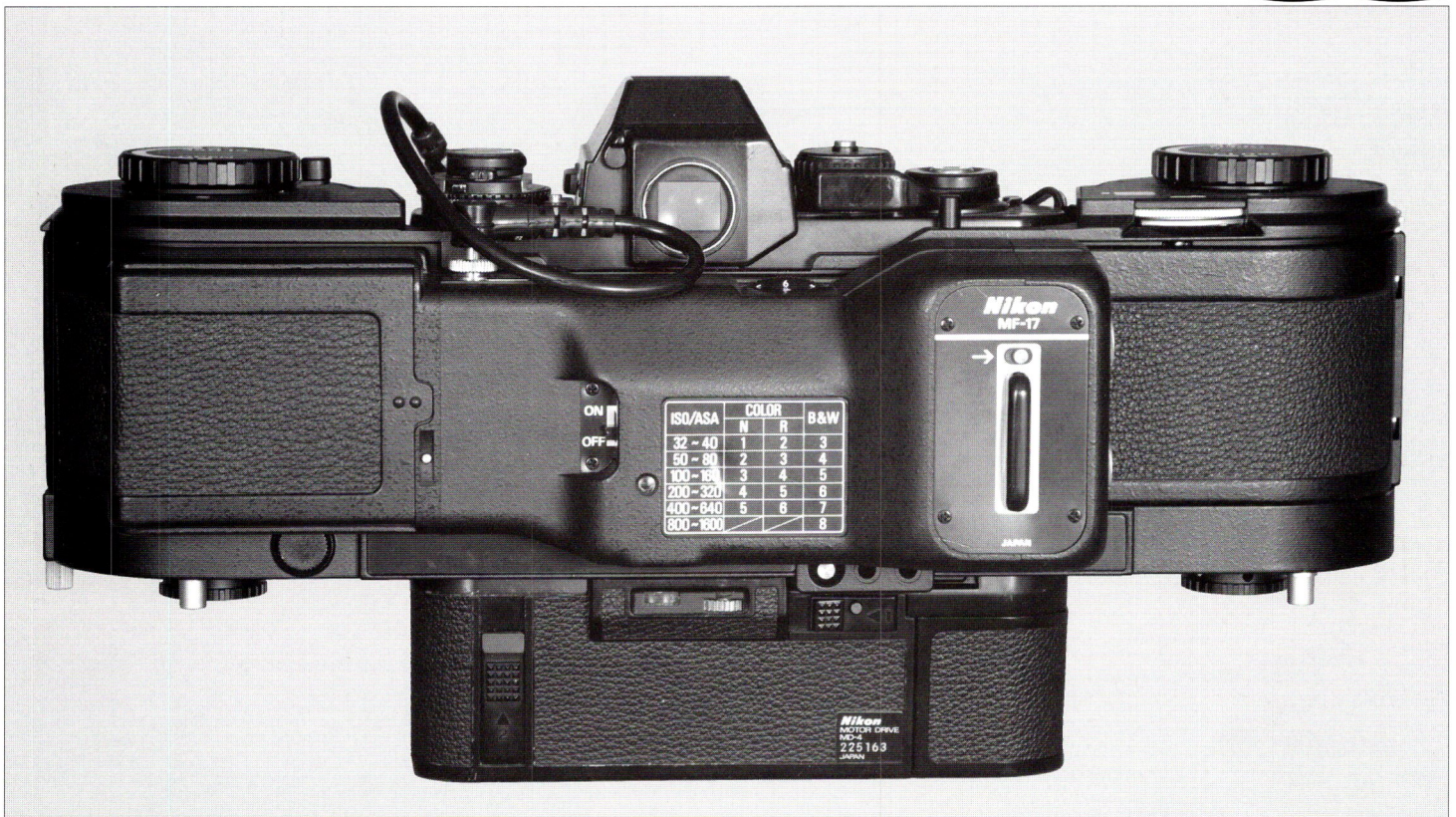
ing for the 750 back was that standard 100ft bulk rolls of film could be directly loaded in their entirety producing 750 exposures. This made loading and unloading of the cassettes much easier. All of this to catch motor vehicle tax dodgers. Our vehicle registration number plate was photographed 2.5 times per year. And this is from the country that gave the world the Gatsco Speed Trap camera and where drugs are freely available.

The Nikon F3 was launched at Photokina in 1980 as a total camera system for the professional photographer. Much more time and money had been spent on getting the form and shape right. Words like 'feel good factor' were being used for the first time. The F3 with motor drive, the MF4 250 back and the 105mm Micro Nikkor was the first such rig that would stand on a table without falling over and committing camera suicide. The MF4 was part of a system as opposed to something that had been stuck on afterwards.

Just a little bit of useless information about the Nikon F3 and the MF4 250 back. During the filming of the second Indiana Jones movie there is a sequence in the middle where Jones

With the arrival of the F3 in 1980, a new bulk back was needed as the F3 motor shared no design features with the F2. The new MF4 back is a slightly more elegant design as it should be. The third such version (actually the 4th as you will see) it should have benefitted from past experience, and it did. It is a well integrated design that worked flawlessly with the new MD4 motor drive. As with the F2, the standard motor was used and the bulk back was simply a film chamber. According to Nikon they began at #100020. At left is #100021! Nice! Page 11 top..a 'DATA' version similar to the MF11 for the F2 was made for the F3 and called the MF17. It appears to re-use some of the MF11 parts and was made in very small numbers! Not quite as intimidating as the MF11, it is still an awesome piece of gear, though a 'cleaner' design. Not as many bulk backs were produced during the F3 era. Sales were falling off. Why?

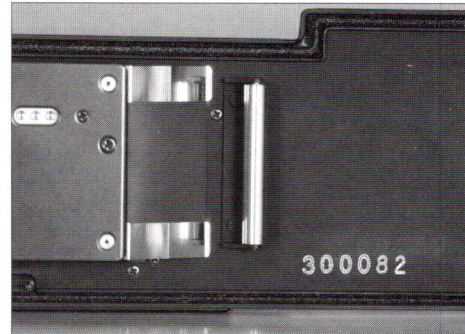




Nikon and NASA has had a good relationship going back to the Nikon F era in the 60s'. Nikon has always been their first choice in 35mm gear, and shared the spotlight with Hasselblad. In 1983 Ehrenrich signed a contract to deliver 18 special 250 shot F3s for the space program, most likely the Shuttle, at a cost of \$2.8 million! These were used for quite some time but have been replaced by the F4 and D1X. A 'Dummy' version has also been featured in the Journal in NHS-60. It is very 'scientific' looking and imposing in its own right. Luckily, in space it doesn't weigh anywhere near what it does on earth!



After the release of the F4 in 1988, Nikon had to again redesign their bulk back since the F4 had a built-in motor very different from the F3. But the F4 was designed from the beginning to take such a backis elegant and again well integrated. They chose to utilize their multi-function MF23 to produce the 250 shot MF24 bulk back. It has always been a special order item and appears to have been made in even smaller numbers than the F3 backs. The serial number appears on the inside of the back door, not on the outside. With even cleaner lines than the F3 version it was not made in large numbers at all. Were sales of such bulk backs declining that much by the early 90s'? With each succeeding model the number of units continued to decline, even though they became easier to use and more automated. Why?



together with the girl and small boy ride a mining truck/railcar underground at very high speed. Well that entire sequence was shot on a 10-meter long film set with an F3 and the MF4 back mounted on a rail. Make a mental note the next time you see this film, and watch out for this sequence. The MF4 250 back was also sold in a 'data' version complete with a special 'S' type screen. On close observation we see that the MF17 Data back was probably made from left over parts from the MF11 model made for the F2 data camera. Many of the parts are interchangeable.

Only a few recorded numbers. I have seen 8 MF17 backs in the last 10 years. This gives you some idea as to how low production was on these units. I think we are looking at about 100 produced. In February 2004 we had the NHS convention in Tokyo and I found a complete Nikon F3 250 set serial #100021 with an MF17 data back. I have since checked with Nikon Europe and repair manuals start at #100020, which means this is the second one made. Lucky old me.

250 EXPOSURE BACK MF24

The MF24 250 multi function back was made to fit on the Nikon F4. With the introduction of the F4 in 1988, Nikon, in their infinite wisdom, brought out a multi functional back, the MF23. Then it was decided to introduce a 250 back with a built-in MF23, the result being the 250 back marketed as the MF24.

I have seen only a few for sale. I was informed by Nikon Europe that it was a special order item only. Most of the importers have just one in stock. I have seen 2 variations of serial numbers. All but one falls in the 300000 sequence. But I have seen one back with a 400000 type number. I can't help but wonder if it is an engraving error, or were 2 batches actually made. As you can see in the photo I have #300080 and have since found #300012!

NASA MODEL F250 BACK

We have a photo here of a Nikon F with 250 motor with a NASA sticker on the front. What we can also see is that the camera has been modified to take some form of data link. This is not a Nikon modification. Most likely it was done by NASA.

NIKON F3 'NASA' 250

We have saved the best wine until last. Of all the 250 camera backs I have in my collection, this has to be the rarest. I remember reading where Joe Ehrenreich had signed a contract with NASA for the production of a special F3 with 250 back. And in 1983 the price tag was \$2,800,000.00 for 18 of these units! I have in my collection one of them that have been up in space on the Shuttle, where it has many uses. The NASA F3 also has an electronic data back that can be removed from the body by inserting a dark slide, a combination that would be most useful with the advent of digital photography. I also have a DUMMY version of this set which was used for training in a flight simulation situation.

The F3 250 has now been retired. All 18. For the last 3 years NASA has been using the D1X and the F4.

One might wonder why unnecessary that got better with each edition would fall off in sales, especially one meant for professionals. Would not the 'need' that warranted the very first version still be there for the pro, requiring this type of equipment? It should. Sports photography is at an all time high and the space program is still going strong. Security cameras are in even more use now than ever. Maybe Nikon saw the writing on the wall long ago. Maybe they knew what we did not. Maybe the photo at right is the real answer to our question.

SOME RECORDED NUMBERS.....

The following is a selection of serial numbers for the various Nikon bulk backs. By no means a complete listing, it is provided here to give you an idea of serial numbers used by type of back, a recorded range seen by the author, and an idea of relative scarcity of each type.

NIKON F250 MOTOR DRIVE

99020, 99043, 99149, 99151, 99178, 99275, 99532, 99639, 99664, 99716, 99751, 99889, 100830, 100959, 101116, 101449, 102669, 102836, 102904, 103027, 103084, 103126, 103290, 103506, 104049, 104717, 104746, 104809, 105173, 105225, 105577, 105854

NIKON F250 MOTOR DRIVE WITH *WHITE DOT!*

102836, 102904, 102989, 103027

NIKON F250 MOTOR DRIVE MARKED '*NIKKOR!*'

101474

NIKON F250 MOTOR DRIVE..*HIGH SPEED!*

152304

NIKON F2 MF-1 250 BACK

301154, 301193, 301617, 302198, 302356, 302516, 304224

NIKON F2 MF-11 250 BACK..*DATA!*

71194, 71244

NIKON F2 MF-2 BACK..*750 EXPOSURE!*

601152, 601273, 601241, 601258

NIKON F3 MF-4 250 BACK

100021, 101477, 101702, 101742

NIKON F3 MF-17 250 BACK..*DATA!*

16077

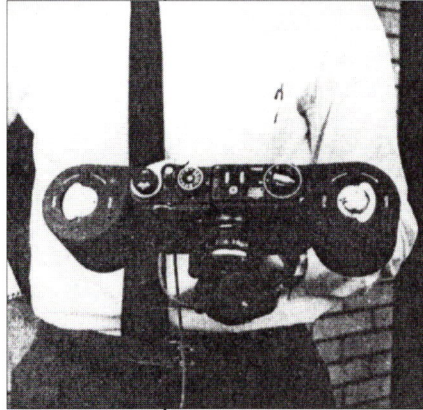
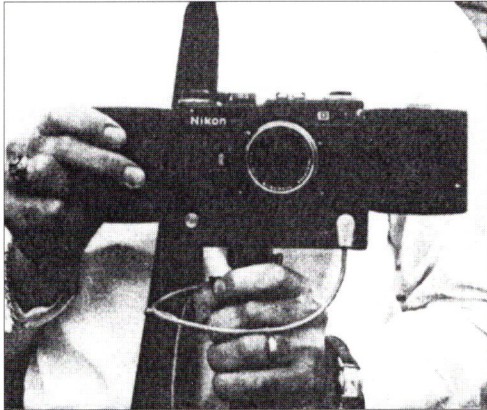
NIKON F3 '*NASA*' 250 BACK!

102989

NIKON F4 MF-24 250 BACK..*MULTI-FUNCTION!*

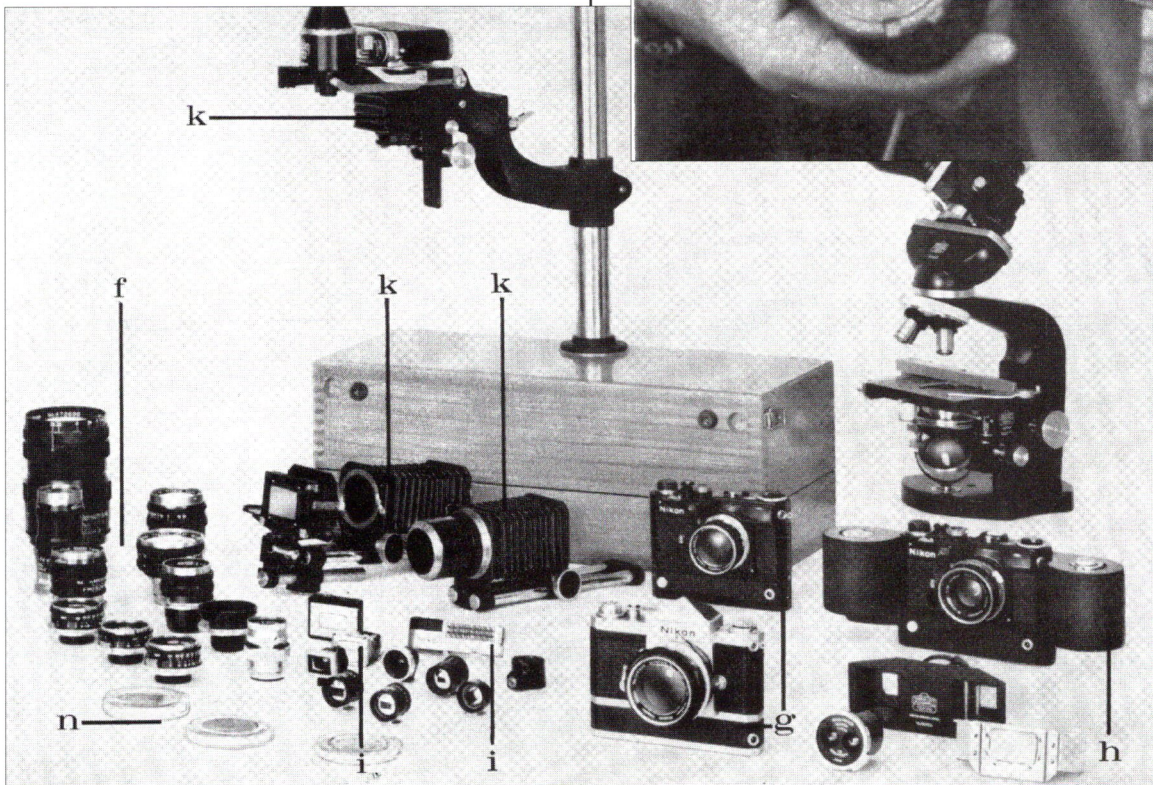
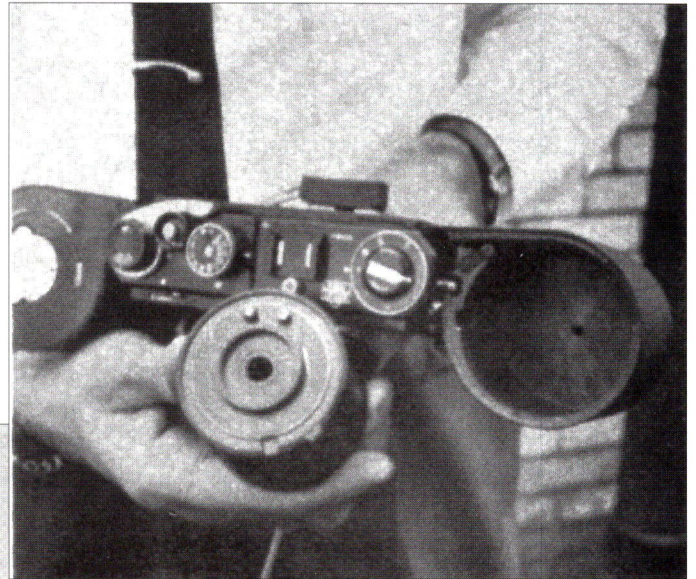
300012, 300061, 300082, 4000XX

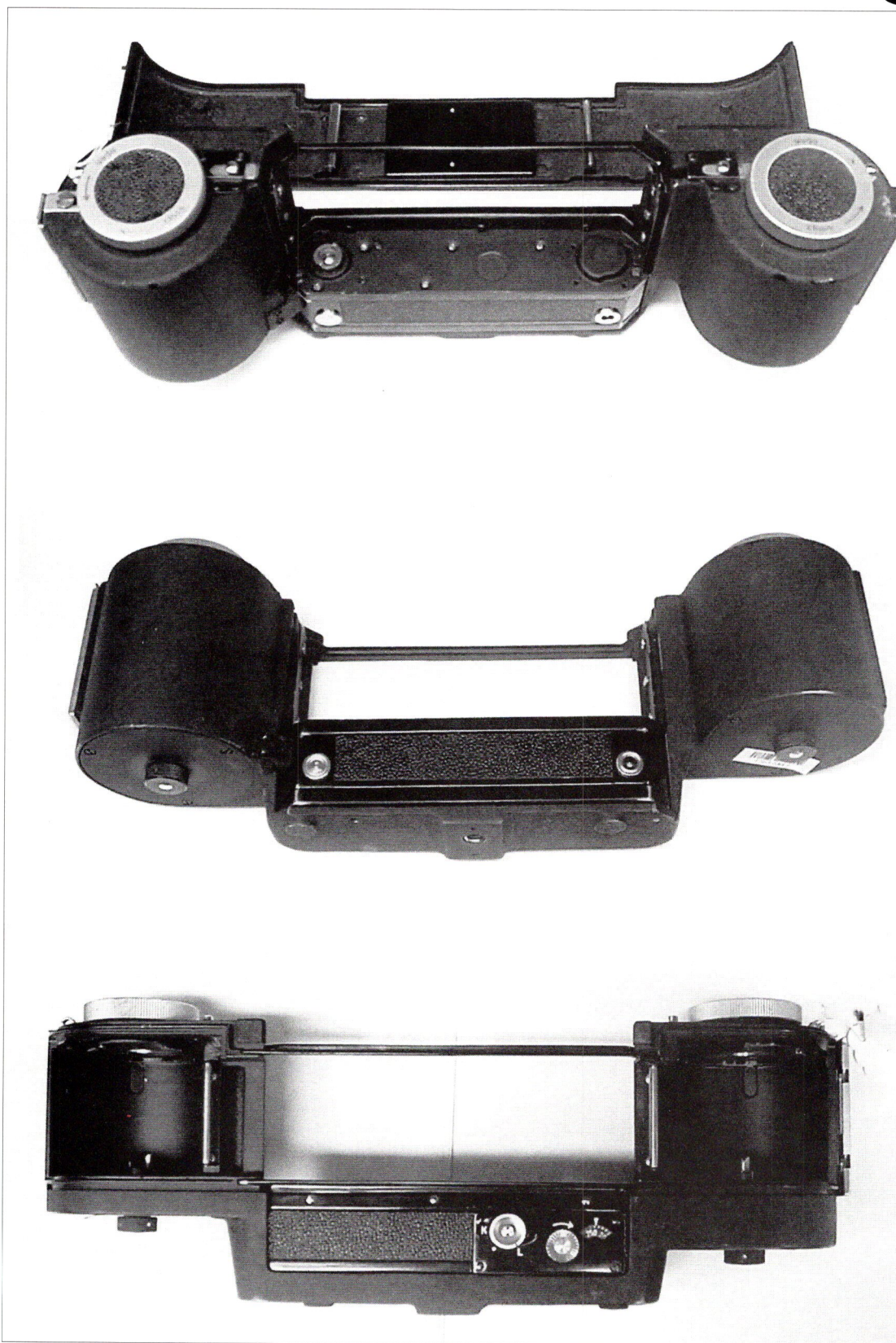




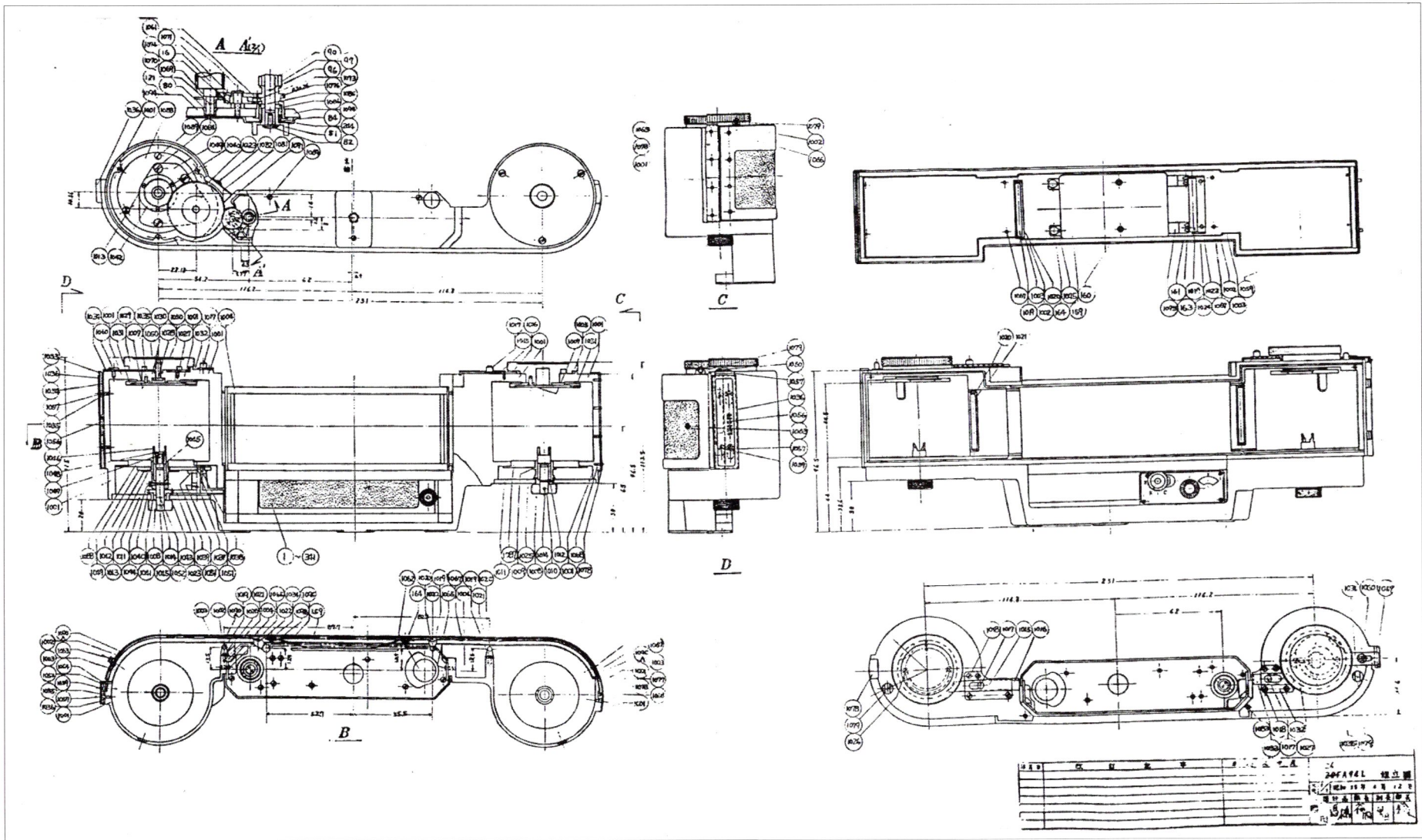
We now come to a section I have grafted onto Peter's and Tony's article only because I have some material they do not. The F250 motor for the Nikon F WAS NOT the first bulk back for a Nikon. That honor goes to the S250 made for the Nikon SP! The problem has always been to find them. None of the prototypes have been reported to me the last 30 years. All we have are a few fuzzy photos and an old ad. On this page I have reproduced part of the EPOI ad (bottom) and 4 shots off a paper copy of a contact sheet given to me by the late Simon Nathan (I do not have the original thus the poor quality). In both cases we see a black SP mounted on a 250 shot back with what appear to be a standard S36 motor underneath. We cannot tell if the motor and back are separate like the F2 or combined like the F. What we can see is that the film loads from the TOP, not the back! Two large D-rings are where the large knobs are on the reflex type. When unlocked they lift off the caps on the cassette chambers. The back appears fixed but sports a strange rectangular protrusion at the center corresponding in size to the regular camera back. The cassettes look very familiar. Note that in the ad no Nikon F250 is shown, only the S250! The ad is found

in the June 1960 issue of Modern Photography. Could this be the same unit that Ehrenreich loaned Simon? He used his in France but could not remember which importer loaned it to him. Could there have been 2 units? Obviously there was 1 available for the ad shot and Simon's was a fully functional unit. We believe this to be the very first bulk back built by Nikon but it does not match what is seen on the next two pages! Hmmm





The November 2003 Christie's auction featured the item you see on this page (Photos Courtesy Christies South Kensington). It is an S250 motor drive, the first so far to surface amongst the collector's community! There has been a great deal of controversy about this piece since it does not match that seen on page 14, the only other photos we have been able to uncover. It looks exactly like the F250, and I mean exactly. So what have we here? I have been able to personally examine this item while in Japan for NHS-Con9 and everything fits. Perfectly. It sports a 'K' motor which is early but no number can be seen because the S36 has it on the bottom, not the front or back like the F36. There are no shims or spacers to make the smaller RF body fit because the housing is exactly the size it needs to be. But it does not look like the one on page 14, which we think is the prototype. However, if you turn the page.....



On this page is a drawing I received from the late Mr. Shigetada Fukuoka following NHS-Con5 in Tokyo in 1996. (Fukuoka-san's obituary is in this issue!) His accompanying letter states..."Regarding the 250 exposure motor for the SP, we made only the prototype and did not mass-produce it for the market. This prototype does not exist now because it was used for the prototype of the 250 exposure motor for the Nikon F, which also does not exist. I was able to find the drawing of the SP 250 exposure motor prototype for you and I am enclosing a copy for your studies."

Look closely. This is an S250, not an F250! Note the front aspect shows the power socket like an SP, not an F. No decorator button is seen but no F on the other side either. The back aspect shows an S36 motor, not the F36. Note only the SP type controls, no rate control wheel like on the F! But it looks just like the F250! Could the S250 and F250 have been on the drawing boards at the same time? Could the item on page 14 have been an even earlier exercise that was abandoned? This drawing tells me that an S250 motor can look exactly like the F250, which evolved from the RF type!!

SPRINGTIME IN EUROPE...

NHS-CON10.....SEE YOU IN VIENNA!!

PLANS CALL FOR A MAY 2006 MEETING

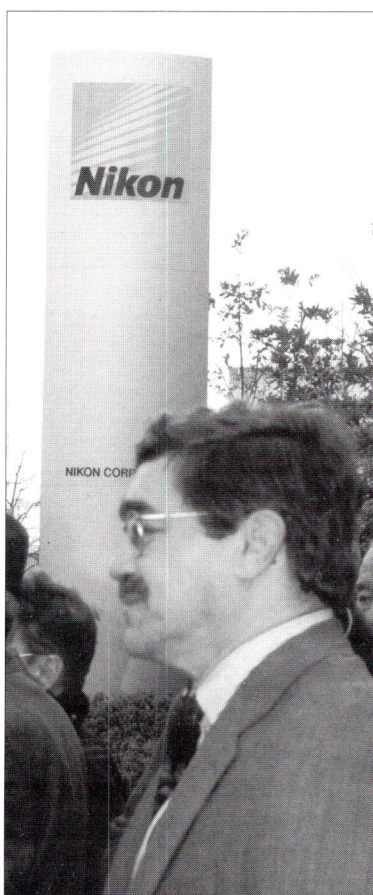
Since the last issue I have been in touch with the co-chairmen for NHS-Con10 set for May 2006 in Vienna, Austria. Both Uli Koch and Hans Ploegmakers have been doing a lot of ground-work even though the meeting is over a year away. I was just in Holland in mid November for the Houten show where I met with Hans (and had another awesome gourmet dinner at his home in Delft prepared by his wife Arlette!). We talked about the Convention and passed around some ideas.

The meeting itself will be on a Sunday, the day after the Westlicht Auction. Therefore those who come can view the auction on Friday and participate on Saturday if they so desire. However, Hans and Uli have plans for our entertainment beginning on the Tuesday before the auction! As things look now scheduled events will begin on the Tuesday and lead up to the auction and meeting on the weekend. So please keep this in mind. Try to arrive by Monday or early Tuesday and plan to stay till

Monday! It will be a full and entertaining week.

Hans and I discussed various ideas for sightseeing and photo-ops for the members and their wives. You can imagine the photo opportunities in a beautiful and historic city like Vienna. Hans and Uli are looking into museums, castles, cathedrals, boat rides, the Opera and symphony, restaurants, hotels and shopping areas. It will be a full schedule for the four days preceding the Saturday auction. However, plans also call for events to keep the wives occupied on Saturday and Sunday when they will probably be spending more money than we do! Just kidding!

So start making your plans, slot the time, talk to your boss, set up baby and pet-sitters, etc., but if you ever wanted to see Vienna and a major photographic auction and attend one of our NHS Conventions, now is your chance to do all three at one time. There will be something for everyone! And remember, you still have 16 months to save up for it!



IN MEMORIAM

I have again this issue to report the loss of someone involved with the world of Nikon. On September 19th, Mr. Shigetada Fukuoka passed away at the age of 86. Known as "Mr. Motor Drive", Fukuoka-san was the person at N-K that came up with the idea of a motor drive and set about designing it. His first prototypes were finished during the S2 era, and thus the first motorized Nikon was actually the S2E, not the SP. However, the SP was close to completion and the final version of the S36 motor was released with that model and, as they say, the rest is history. In 1996 at NHS-Con5 Fukuoka-san graced us with his presence and spent the day seated beside his long-time co-worker Masahiko Fuketa. He was 78 at the time but stayed the entire day and answered many of our questions. His brainstorm, the Nikon Electric Motor Drive, will forever reserve him an honored place in any history of Nippon Kogaku and their Nikon camera.

A second sad note concerns member Tom Kostyk. Those of you who attended Scottsdale in 2002 or Tokyo last February will remember Tom as the smiling and friendly fellow with the dark mustache who specialized in display and Dummy cameras. Tom passed away on the 4th of July at the young age of 52!



'NHS' e-mail LIST!!

NEW! ROBERT ROTOLONI...r.rotoloni@sbcglobal.net NEW!

As a service to my members I will run an updated list each issue of the NIKON JOURNAL, so keep me informed. Any addresses **added or changed** since the last issue are in bold italics! This listing has been updated as of Sept. 30, 2004.

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'NHS' eBAY LIST!!

In the last issue we talked about starting a list of member's 'eBay' screen names. This could be helpful when buying or selling on the Internet. More than once I have won a bid or sold an item to only find out after the auction closed that it was a member. I have also dropped out of bidding when I have recognized my competition to be a member or friend that I just did not feel right bidding against. So here we go with our NHS 'eBay' list.

Dave Barth.....	flier
Luigi Cane.....	Innelda Isher
Steve Fischer.....	selma-1
Don Gresock.....	Roller6519
Mark Hardy.....	cielle926
Lothar Koenig.....	L.KOENIG
Jim Leathem.....	Nikonsrme
Bud Presgrove.....	budbudwatch
Bill Pringle.....	BigChips
Robert Rotoloni.....	6091
Mike Symons.....	NIKMIKE

'NHS' RED DOT F LIST

PLEASE ADD THE FOLLOWING NIKON F RED DOT BODY SERIAL NUMBERS TO OUR COMPLETE LIST PUBLISHED IN NHS-82.

6575738(BLACK) 6590135 6590163

THE AUCTION SCENE

Things have been a little quiet of late but that is not so say there was a lack of sales, only that few rare and interesting items have been offered. Christies' held a sale on November 16th in London that, if you are a Leica-man or into Leica copies, would have been an exciting sale. Unfortunately, very little in Nikon was offered save for the following :

Nikon S2 w/f1.4 in original box.....\$600.00
Nikon F #6400691 no lens...the 690th made!.....NOT SOLD
Boxed Nikon FTn set (body, motor & pack.....\$965.00
 For complete results go to www.Christies.com

November 6th was the date for the sixth Westlicht Auction in Vienna. With nearly 800 lots it was a large and diverse sale with some really interesting Nikon items, most of which sold:

Nikon S4 #6501934 w/f1.4.....\$2,100.00
Nikon SP w/f2.0...foil shutter.....\$4,400.00
Nikon S3 black Olympic w/Olympic 1.4.....\$9,900.00
50mm/f1.1 Zunow chrome.....\$3,500.00
Screw mount Micro #523955.....\$3,500.00
Shade for 50mm/f1.1 Nikkor.plastic w/case.....\$3,200.00
 For complete results go to www.westlicht.com

By the time you receive this Stan Tamarkin's December 5th auction will be history. I hope to report on it in the next issue of the Journal. There are 3 SPs, 2 S3s, 4 S2s, and some lenses and accessories, and we will see what they go for. For more information go to www.auctions@tamarkin.com.

LETTERS...LETTERS..

From Wolfgang Kuster...The current Journal was great, again. Most interesting for me were the prototypes. Here are my comments in this respect.

In my humble opinion the technically most significant point of the F3 prototype in F2 disguise on page 8 is that the dial on top of the 'Photomic Finder' displays the shutter speeds, not the ASA numbers. Therefore, there is a white index on top of the finder that the F2 does not have.

The photo on top of page 9 shows *two* prototypes, not just one! The first is the camera, of course. The second is the lens! At first glance it seems to be a normal manual focus 35/2.0 AIS lens. But this is not the case. The regular production version had a front lens element with a much larger diameter. The lens in the photo seems to have the optical system of the later AF Nikkor 35/2.0 mounted in the barrel of the manual focus lens. Since I like the 35mm focal length, this would have been a nice lens for me. Some time ago I tested my MF 35/2.0 AI (optically identical to the AIS) against my (plastic) AF 35/2.0 and my solid, but heavy, MF 35/1.4, and the MF 35/2.0 was clearly inferior to the AF 35/2.0 and MF 35/1.4. Therefore I sold it.

I am anxiously awaiting your new rangefinder book!

How is that for feedback! I did not notice the F2 finder nor the 35/f2.0 lens! Thanks, Wolfgang. RJR

20

CLASSIFIED ADS

WANTED... 50mm/f1.4 Nikkor 'Olympic' lens; 50mm/f1.5 Nikkor; 50mm/f1.4 'Aluminum' lens. **Mr. Paul-Henry Van Hasbroeck, 34 Sydney St., London, England SW3 6PP. Tel..020-7351-5588. Fax..020-7349-0517**

SELLING/TRADE LIST... Those of you who would like to receive my list with each issue of **The Journal** need only tell me so and it shall be done. I try to add items with each edition & always include a large amount of **Nikon RF & Reflex** items. Also included are products from other quality makers such as **Bronica, Canon, Pentax, Zeiss** and others. Consignment items are always welcome! If you have a list make sure to send me a copy! I am always open to trades of all kinds! **Robert Rotoloni, P.O. Box 3213, Munster, IN 46321....You can e-mail me at rotoloni@msn.com or r.rotoloni@sbcglobal.net**

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KIUMARS KAFFI
102 ORCHARD HILLS DRIVE
GAITHERBURG, MD 20878

JIM LONG
2134 WEST COLLINGSWOOD DRIVE
BELOIT, WI 53511

RICHARD M. MISCHKE
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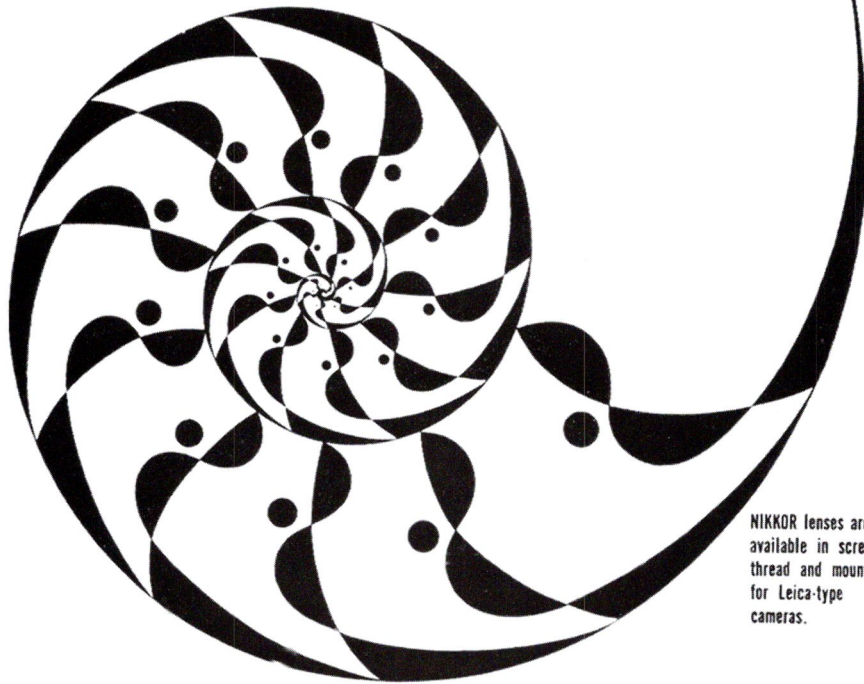
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ROBERT ROTOLONI

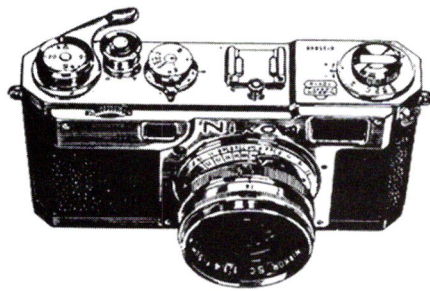
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Created For The "NHS" By *Tony Hurst*