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MARCH 31, 2005

NHS-87

NIKON JOURNAL



THIS ISSUE
PAGE 1...THE 'NEW SP' IS HERE!!
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PAGE 16...NEW NIKON RF BOOK
ALMOST HERE!

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NHS-88 DEADLINE!

The deadline for the next issue of our NIKON JOURNAL, NHS-88, is JUNE 1, 2005. Please get all correspondence and articles to me by then so I can get our Journal to you on schedule. Thank you. *RJR.*

EDITORIAL

The big news this issue is the arrival on January 14th of the camera that Nikon should have made in 2000 when they decided to get into the production of 'replica retro' cameras. The S3 Millennium was very well done for sure, but the S3 was just not what people really wanted in a rangefinder Nikon in the 21st century. What everyone had hoped for has finally arrived and that is the new 'NIKON SP LIMITED EDITION'. Yes, we have a new SP and it is black! Not only that but Nikon really surprised everyone by their choice of lens to accompany their new SP. They did not use the reissued Olympic 1.4 as on the S3, but instead they remade the beautiful 35mm/f1.8 Nikkor. Then they went one step further. It is the 'black rim' version that was only made in less than 100 pieces back in 1956. What a beautiful outfit it is. Members Michio Akiyama and Bill Kraus have supplied me with photos of two different cameras and I thank them very much.

Rich Lane has come through with another piece of N-K optical ordnance that finally solves a mystery first brought up in NHS-3! Now we know what a very unusual Nikkor was made for. Alex Shishin then tells us of his experiences getting the modern edition of the famous 'Orion' Nikon to Leica adapter/coupler to work properly. It took some time but he did it.

On page 13 Hong Kong member, Matthew Lin, discusses a new variation in the early Nikon F self-timers that he has discovered. This new type has not been covered in these pages before and gives Nikon reflex collectors something else to look for, as if they didn't already have enough! Good luck.

I have used page 16 to bring all my members up to date on the progress of my new book on the Nikon Rangefinders previously mentioned in these pages. Hove Books has already displayed a mock-up at Photokina in Germany last September as well as the London Book Show March 13-15. So they are committed as much as I am with nearly 75% of the book done and over 50% already in their hands. We are shooting for June and I should have the final facts for you in the next Journal, which will be mailed the first of July. If all goes well the book will be ready by the time you receive NHS-88.

See page 17 for further info on the Vienna meeting next May. Only one year away, so start making your plans. On a sad note, page 17 also contains the obituaries of Mr. Takatero Koakimoto, whose signature graced nearly every camera body inspection card during the rangefinder era, and Mark Gehlar, who at 88 was the eldest member to ever attend an NHS convention. He was in Tokyo last year as well as Scottsdale in 2000. Those of you who were there all marveled at his ability to keep up with us 'younger' guys.

Michael Pritchard asked that I insert an information sheet in this issue concerning their June auction in London. It will contain equipment from the Fred Krughoff collection, as well as other major items. There will be some very interesting items and you are the first to know about it since the catalog has not even been printed yet! There is a coupon for NHS members to receive a free copy, so take advantage of Michael's offer.

And finally, I want to wish Tony Hurst a speedy recovery and Tony, I will see you in London in May. We will have a lot to discuss about the book. Your color shots are going to make it very special indeed.

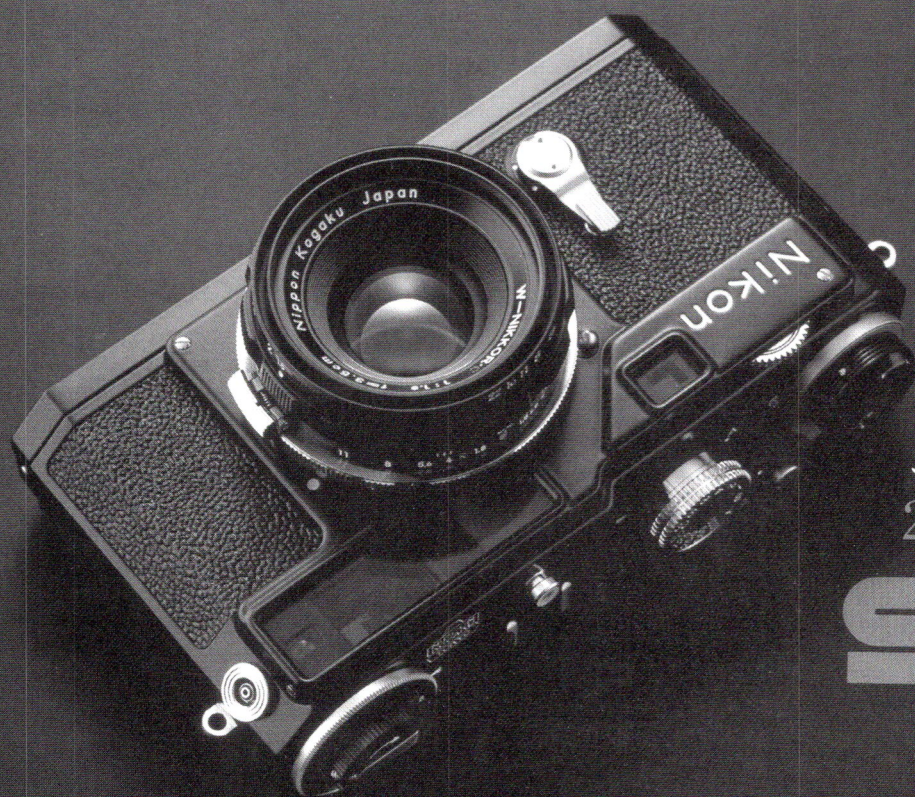
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THEY FINALLY GOT IT RIGHT...

THE 'NEW'

NIKON SP!!

**THE ONE THEY REALLY
SHOULD HAVE MADE IN 2000!**



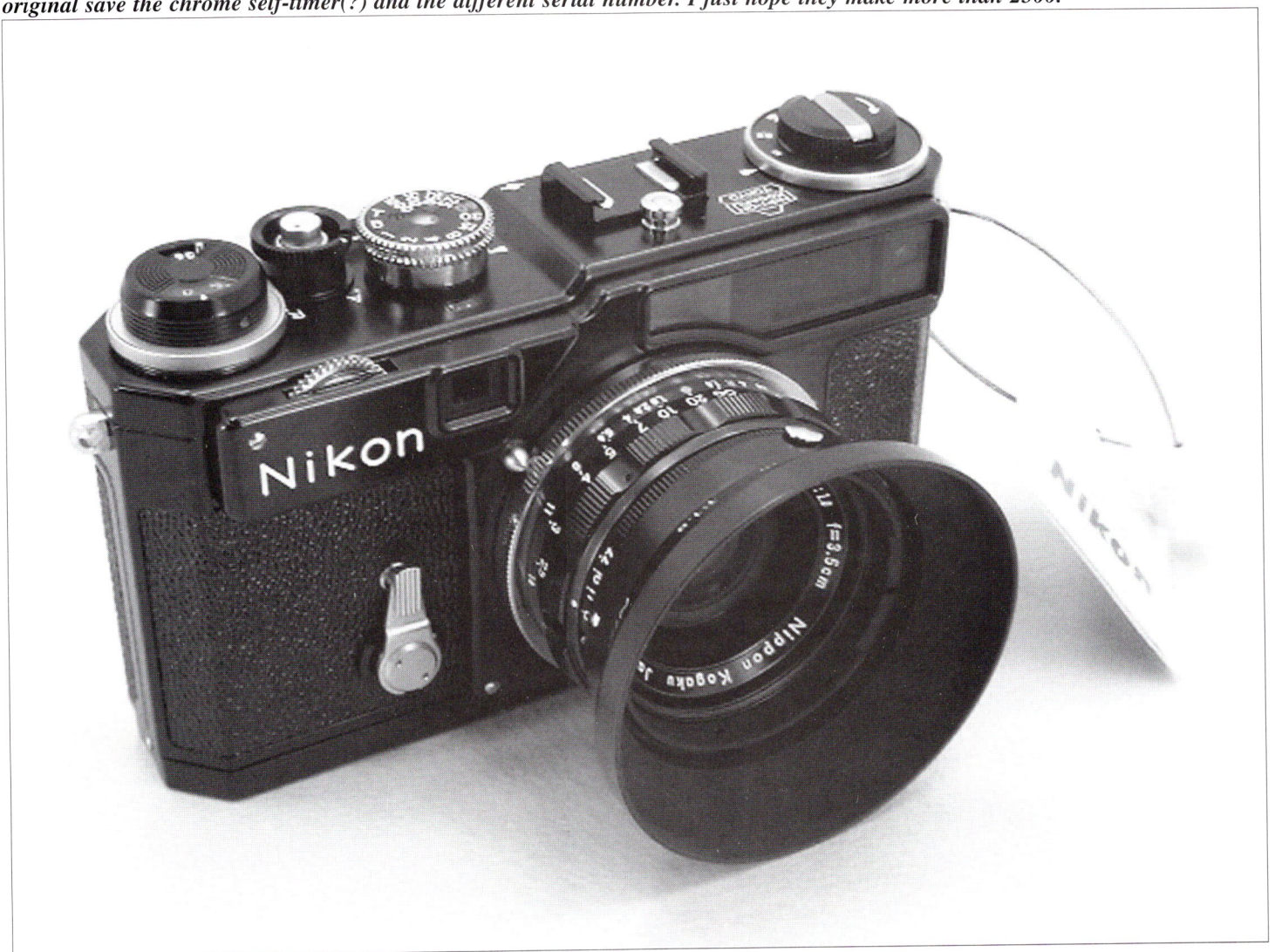
ニコンSP復刻モデル
2,500台限定生産

SP
LIMITED EDITION

約半世紀もの時を経て、伝説の「ニコンSP」復刻。

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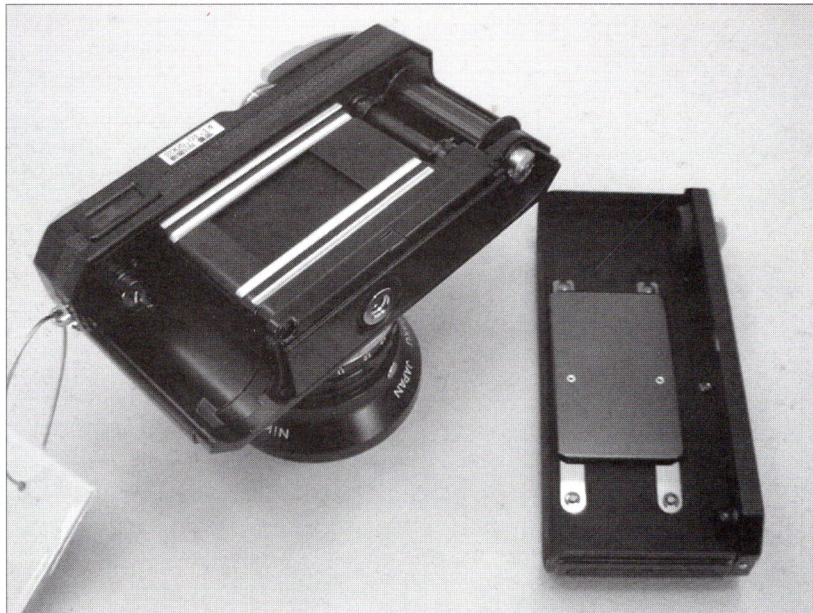
The one they should have made has arrived! The Millennium S3 is a neat camera, especially in black, but N-K should have made their first 'retro-camera' the SP! But the 5 year wait was well worth it! The 'NEW SP' is here and it is in black as it should be! There are two surprises...a cloth shutter (again) and an exact duplicate of the very rare 'black rim' 35mm/f1.8 Nikkor! What a choice for a lens! A very usable optic for sure, but also beautiful in all black but mostly unobtainable in its original form with less than 100 ever made. Now you can get one! On page 1 is the Nikon brochure. These 2 pages are photos off of Michio Akiyama's fabulous site you just have to visit irregardless of these shots. Check it out (<http://akiroom.com/redbook-e/kenkyukai>) and you will love it! This camera was on display at 'Nikon Plaza Shinjuku', who allowed Akiyama-san to photograph it. Look closely and you will note there is no serial number on the body! Supposedly 'two' unnumbered bodies exist, this one and another at the Nikon Ginza Service Center. Camera #0001 with lens #0001 is at the JCI Museum! Only 2500 are to be made for the Japanese market. Why unnumbered bodies? We do not know but the one in the brochure is also lacking a number so maybe there is a 3rd one. Just look at this beauty! Bill Kraus (whose photos follow) was in Tokyo along with other NHSers for the Matsuya show and got to handle it. He says it is worth every penny. Just how many? The Tokyo price is about \$7,000.00! I think it's worth it too! It appears nearly identical to the original save the chrome self-timer(?) and the different serial number. I just hope they make more than 2500.





On the rear of the 'Shinjuku' camera is a small plate with the introduction date of January 14, 2005. The camera(s) in the brochure and in the Ginza Salon do not have this plate. Note the missing serial number on the top plate. The 35mm/f1.8 Nikkor comes with a reproduction of the original snap-on shade, also a rare collectible piece. Although it has a cloth shutter, which is as strange to me as it was in 2000 on the S3, it does have the later style 'F' type wind lever, but a chrome self-timer, unlike the 1957 model that had a black lever. There is a number on the lens but I cannot verify it at this time. Is this not a gorgeous camera?



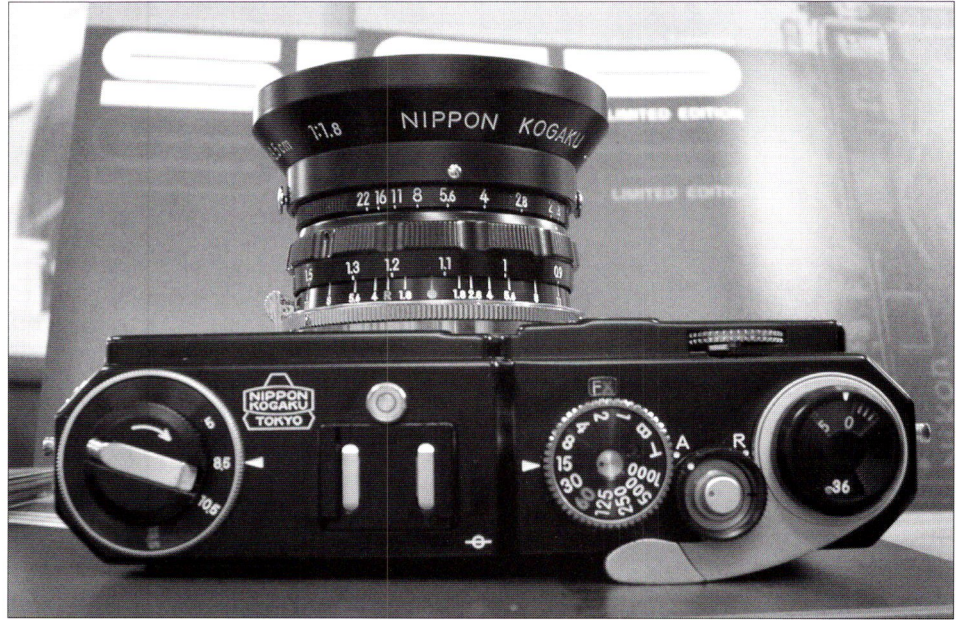


Top..One last shot of the 'Shinjuku' camera by Akiyama-san showing that even the interior is exact. The curtains are cloth and the camera 'is not' drilled for a motor! Too bad for if it was then that might mean one was in the works. What an idea. The remaining 2 shots on this page and those on the next are by Bill Kraus of the camera on display at the Nikon Service Center in the Ginza. It is a different camera, but also unnumbered! It, however, does not have the plate on the back.



Its lens is #9918! I do not have enough information right now to speculate on the lens numbers. The JCII unit is #0001 and it was thought lens and body numbers would match. But this is #9918 and the one in the brochure has no number!! We need to see more examples of this camera before we can determine just how everything will be numbered. On the Millennium S3 the first f1.4 Nikkors had a number sequential to the original Olympics but the production lenses did not, so all is speculation right now. But these unnumbered bodies and lenses is something I have never seen Nikon do before.





The top plate of the 'New SP' is identical to the original but does have the later style wind lever that was adopted after the arrival of the Nikon F. The 35mm/f1.8 lens was also a very handsome optic and modern looking even in 1956. The all back version was even better. It is a surprise to me that Nikon chose this lens for their new SP, but a pleasant surprise. Like the Millennium S3, the New SP comes in a replica of the original box plus a boxed leather case all contained in an outer box. At left is the outer one that holds the entire kit. Note the official name: 'NIKON SP LIMITED EDITION'. Even a duplicate of the instruction manual is included. The entire kit consists of the following: camera body; 35mm/f1.8 Nikkor; lens shade; lens cap; everready case; instruction book and boxes for all. Very nice indeed. Do I sound more enthusiastic than I was in 2000 when the chrome Millennium S3 was announced? You bet I do! I want one! Or two! (Thanks to Akiyama-san and Bill Kraus for these fine photos.)



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NIPPON KOGAKU BOMB STRIKE CAMERA BY RICHARD LANE

For over twenty years, the *Nikon Journal* has featured an impressive array of Nikon Rangefinder and SLR cameras. Likewise, the *Journal* has featured cameras made before the Nikon I such as the Artillery Telescope Camera (NHS-39), 6x6 X-Ray Camera (NHS-40), SK-96 Aerial Camera (NHS-48), and SK-100 Aerial Camera (NHS-57). It appears Nikon was aware of some, if not all, of these pre-Nikon I cameras and mentioned them in their 40/50/75 year corporate history books. But could they have made a camera so specialized it has eluded Nikon historians and collectors for over 60 years? I believe this article features such a camera...a N-K Bomb Strike Camera Model II produced in September 1941 for the Japanese Army Air Force (JAAF).

When I first saw this camera, I immediately recognized the 150mm Nikkor lens. More than twenty years ago, in NHS-3, Bob Rotoloni featured a 150.3mm F4.5 Nikkor lens, S/N #150247 he found on an old view camera. The lens was mounted on a KI-TIYOKO leaf shutter and was equipped with a Nippon Kogaku Aeyo-47 yellow filter, S/N #1117. In NHS-7, Tsuyoshi Konno provided feedback to Bob on the lens and thought it may have been used for some type of map making or surveillance work. He also identified the KI-TIYOKO shutter as a Chiyoda Kogaku (Minolta) product.

Fast-forward over twenty years to December 2004. On an unusual camera body I notice this same type of 150mm Nikkor lens. The Nikkor lens (precisely marked 150.63mm) has a S/N #150231, a KI-TIYOKO shutter and a N-K yellow Aeyo-47 filter, S/N #1101. Bob's lens and filter serial numbers are 16 numbers apart from this example! It appears that both of these lenses were used for the same type of camera. And now for the first time, we can discover exactly what type of camera this rare Nikkor lens was used on.

The camera body measures 11 inches long by 9 inches wide by 8 inches tall and is painted light grey that is typical for WWII

JAAF cameras. The KI-TIYOKO shutter is marked with speeds of T, 1/50, 1/100 and 1/200 seconds but only the 1/100 and 1/200 speeds are available on the camera body control lever. A hinged cover pivots 180 degrees revealing the 150mm Nikkor lens, shutter and data chamber window. The data chamber window is an opaque round disk that gathered ambient light for the internal chamber. There is also an aluminum shaft that attaches to a knob on the rear of the camera that provides an option to

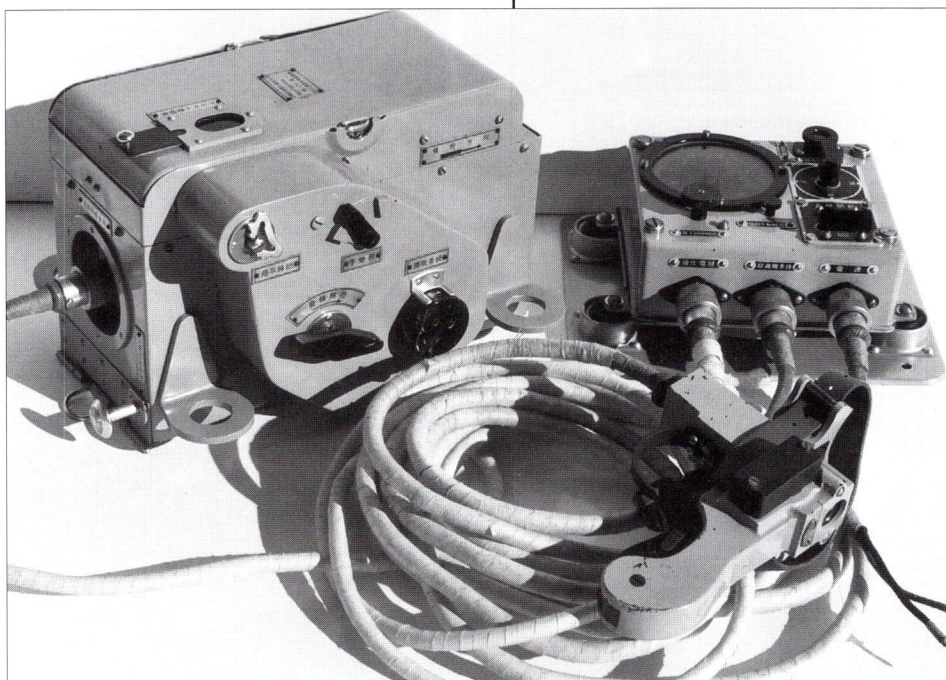
mechanically cock the main leaf shutter. When the hinged cover is closed, a dark slide protects the Nikkor lens and data chamber window. This dark slide can be moved allowing light to enter the lens and data chamber window without pivoting the hinged cover.

The right side of the camera body houses a mechanical film transport mechanism. This mechanism is the "motor drive" for the camera's 3 1/2-inch roll film. There are several levers and knobs that control the advance, rewind, start/stop, and winding for the

film. The left side of the camera body has one lever for the main lens shutter speed and a small control knob for the data chamber shutter speed (marked for "T" and "1/70"). The rear of the camera has an electrical connector input and the manual shutter cocking push knob at the lower right. On the camera back, there is dark slide that can be opened to reveal a dark red filter. This opening was used to check the film advance during loading or perhaps during operation. The camera back also has small aluminum manufactures data plate that translates to:

Bomb Camera Model II
Number 1101
September 1941
Nippon Kogaku K.K.

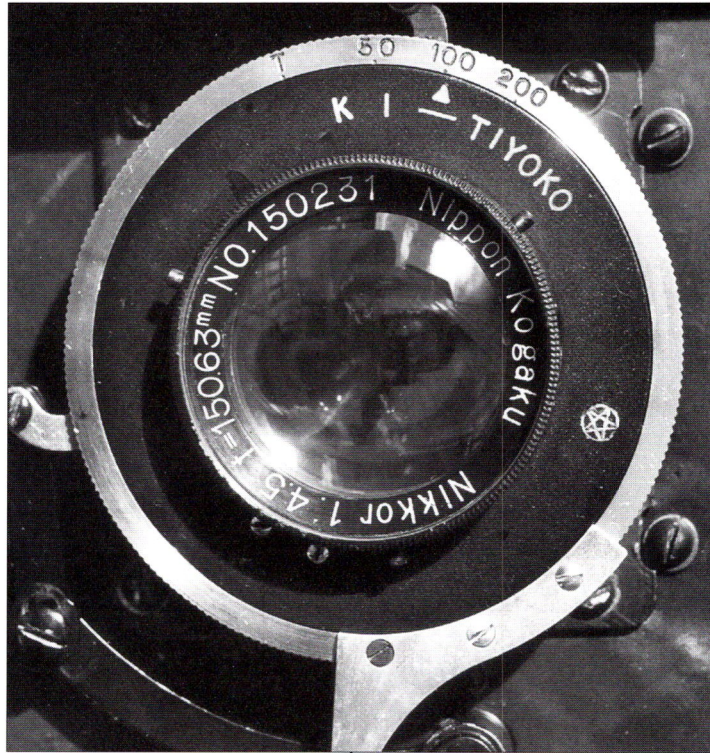
The data plate has a stamped star in a circle that is a property mark for JAAF equipment. The camera back can be removed from the camera body by depressing two small silver latches on the left and right hand side. Once removed it reveals an en-



graved glass plate screen with rectangular grid pattern. The glass plate frames a 5 1/2 long by 3 3/8 inches wide image onto the film. Below the glass screen are the data chamber housing and three electrical solenoid switches.

The data chamber was unusual and I wanted to find out what it projected. I set the shutter speed on the "T" setting, opened the shutter and looked through the data chamber lens. I could see there was debris blocking light through the lens. In order to remove the debris, I had to disassemble the data chamber. Once removed, I could see the data chamber was equipped with a "Durax" (this type was used on early Konishiroku cameras) shutter and it was composed of several parts. With the debris removed from the bottom section of the chamber, I was able to see a curved rectangular glass grid pattern with a small ball bearing inside. This grid pattern was projected from the data chamber to the film. It must have been designed to measure the pitch and roll of an aircraft during a bomb run. The other part to the data chamber was the lens assembly. The lens was not marked on the outside of the data chamber but on the inside it was marked "Nippon Kogaku 30mm f3.5". The lens is so small that N-K did not have any space to engrave their Nikkor trademark! It is also interesting that N-K marked this lens with the same serial number as the camera body, S/N #1101.

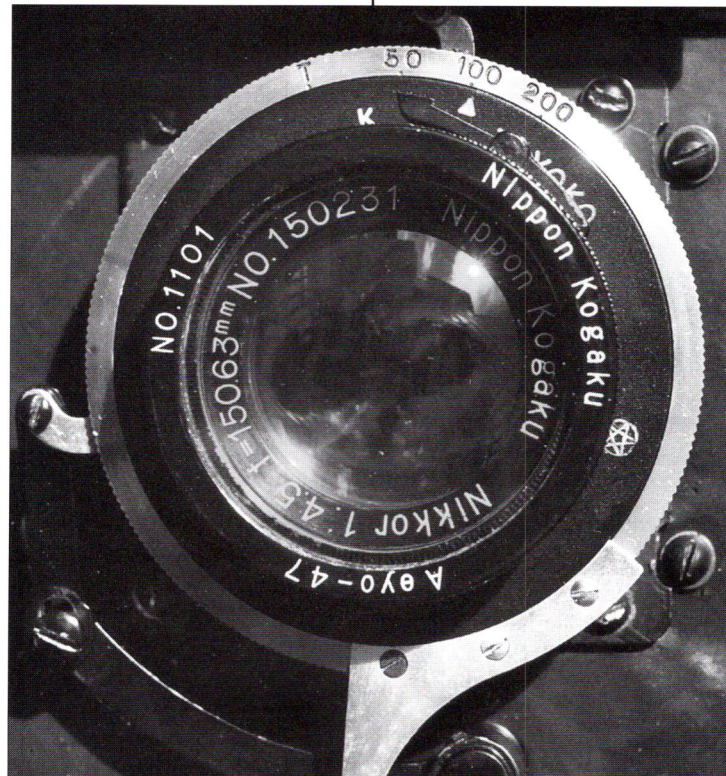
In operation, this camera was mechanically wound and then connected with a power cord at the rear of the camera. This power cord was connected to an intervalometer that was in turn connected to a control switch (looks like a gun trigger). A separate cord connected the intervalometer to the aircraft's 24-Volt power. The intervalometer and gun trigger for this outfit were made by Fuji Koku Keiki. When you depress the gun trigger, the camera's electrical solenoids would fire the main lens and data chamber shutters. After a photo was taken, another solenoid would advance the film to the next frame. The intervalometer and trigger mechanism are mechani-



cal camera.

When N-K made this camera, they extensively stamped almost every cast part with a small N-K logo. I counted four of these small N-K logos on the data chamber assembly alone. Another N-K logo is stamped on the aluminum shaft that connects the push knob to the main shutter. Unlike the SK-96 camera, there are no "NIKKO" logos present on any part or accessory of the camera. Several parts of this camera were not made by N-K and include the two leaf shutters (KI-TIYOKO and Durax) and the intervalometer and gun trigger assembly.

Production numbers for this camera are not known. Bob's 150mm Nikkor lens and filter are important as they help establish this camera as a production and not prototype/experimental unit. I don't believe the serial number of this camera indicates the total number produced. It is possible that N-K started serial numbers for this camera at 1,000. The only published source I have seen that discusses

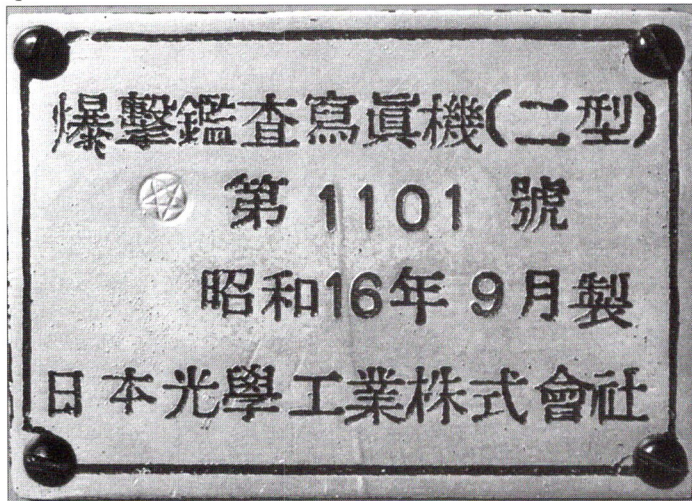


On facing page..Camera, Intervalometer, gun trigger and cords. This page..150.63mm/ f4.5 Nikkor with and without its special yellow filter whose number matches that of the camera! Note the KI-TIYOKO shutter exactly like that on my lens shown in NHS-3 over 20 years ago.

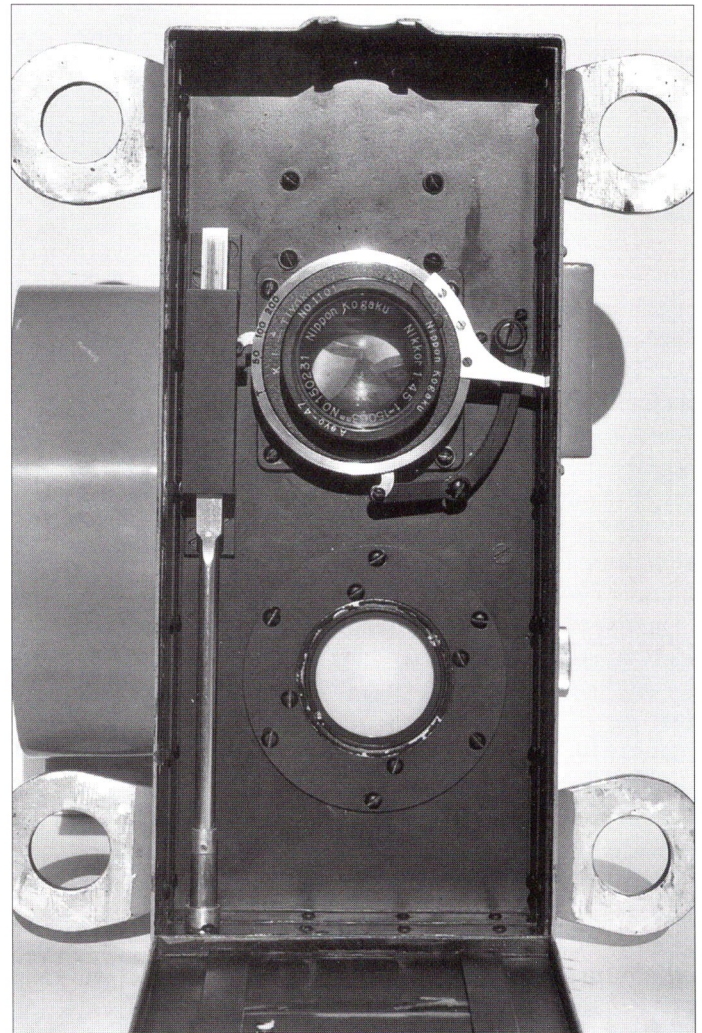
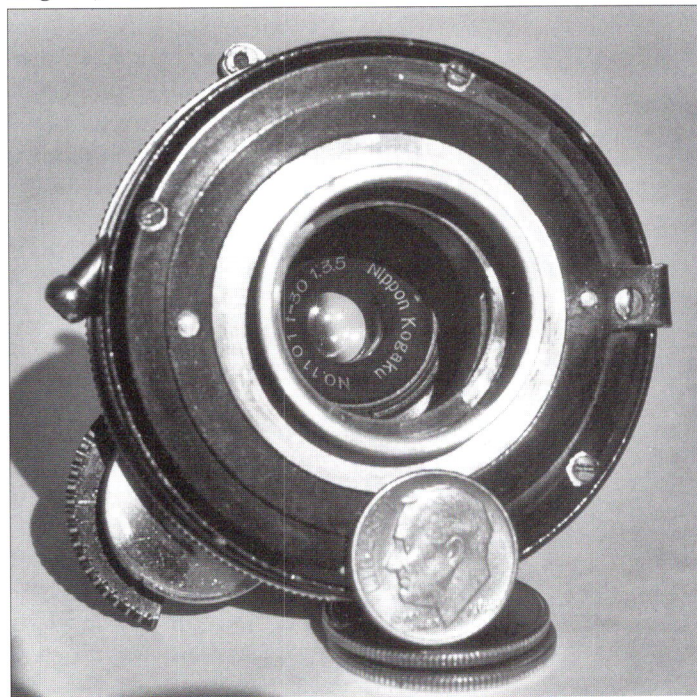
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this camera is a study produced by U.S. Air Technical Intelligence Review, Nov 1946, titled *Japanese Photo Intelligence Equipment in WWII*. The study has a photograph of two bomb strike cameras but does not have any detailed information about the camera or the manufacture. The study has an appendix with a summary of captured enemy aerial photo equipment that was shipped to Wright Field, Ohio. This appendix indicates that three bomb strike cameras were shipped from Mibu Japan to Wright Field on 5 Dec 1945.

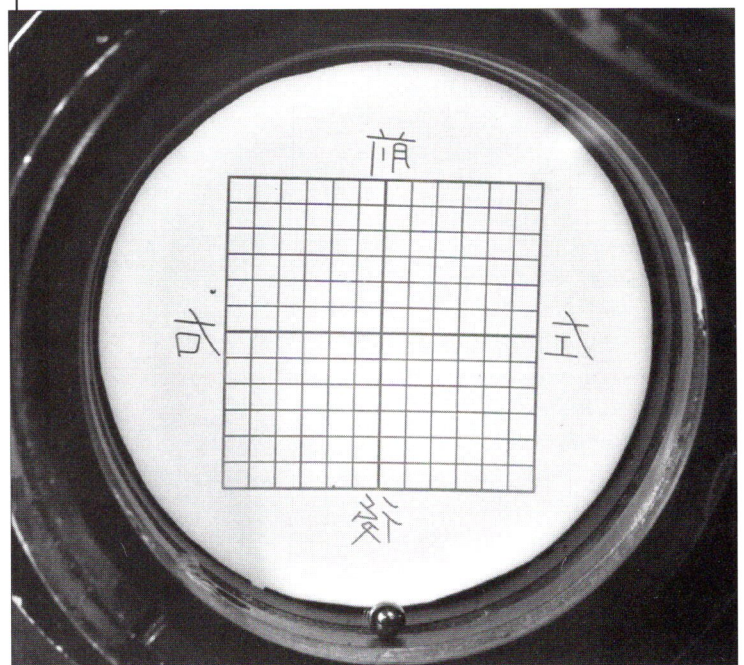
The *Nikon Journal* has featured another camera produced by N-K before the Nikon I. Could they have made other undiscovered cameras? Several years ago I obtained a U.S. WWII translation of a captured Japanese Navy document on aerial cameras from the National Archives. The document mentions an experimental stereo type camera/analyzer for Japanese machine gun cameras and lists the manufacture as Nippon Kogaku...the quest continues.

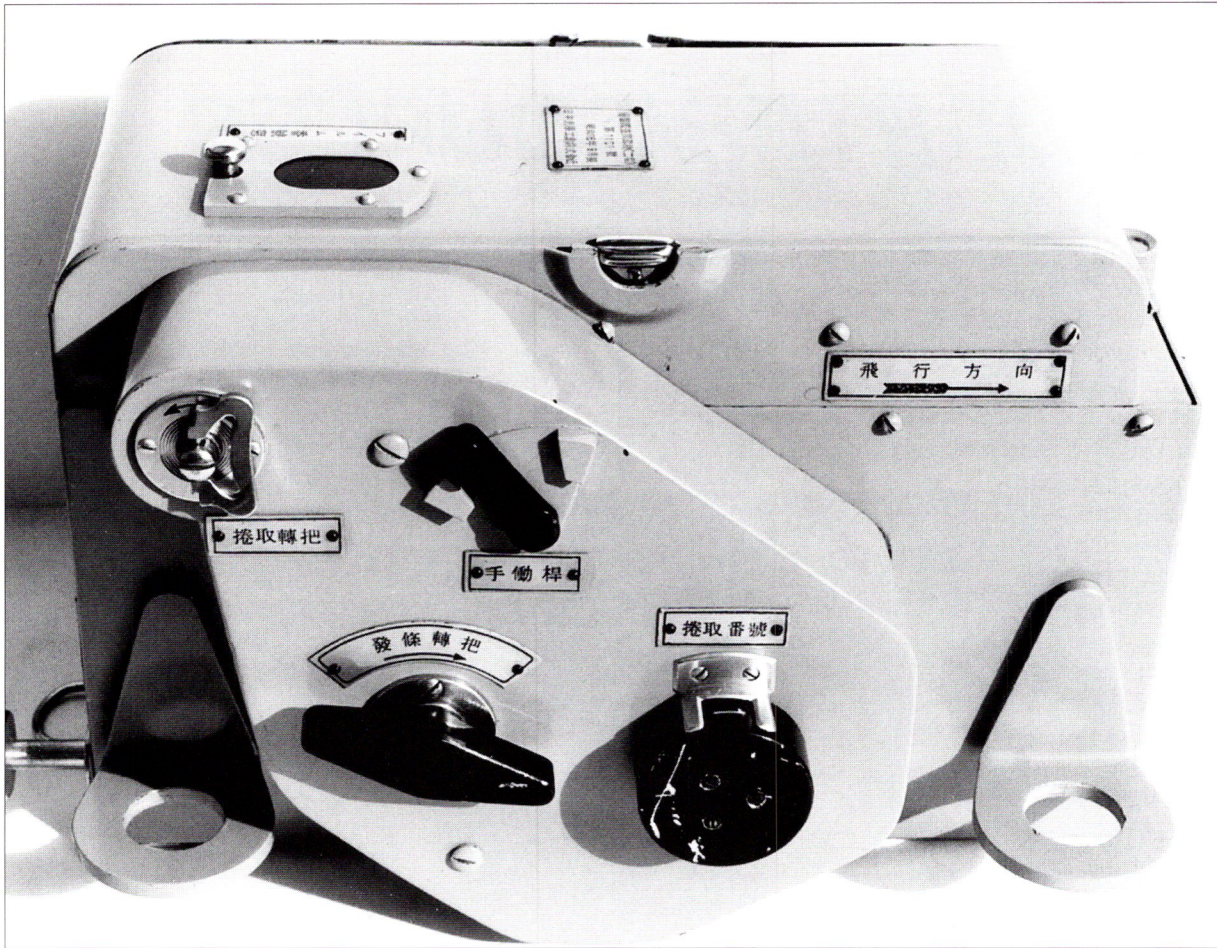


The identification plate gives the serial number of this unit as #1101 and the date of manufacture is the 9th month of Showa 16, or September 1941. The bottom line translates to 'Nippon Kogaku, K.K.'

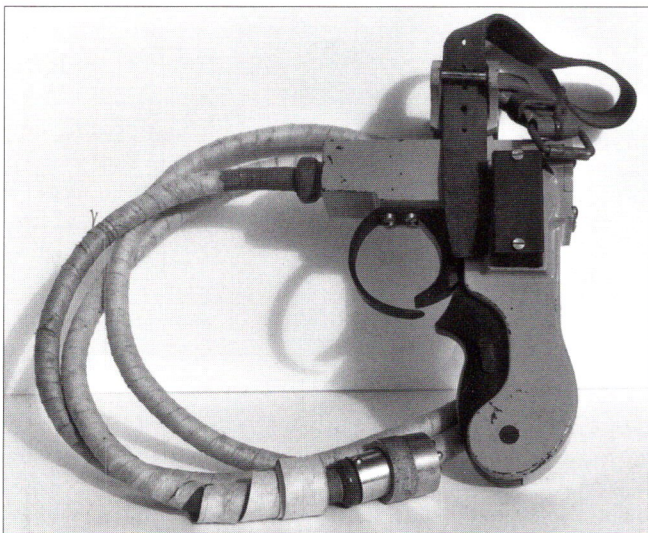
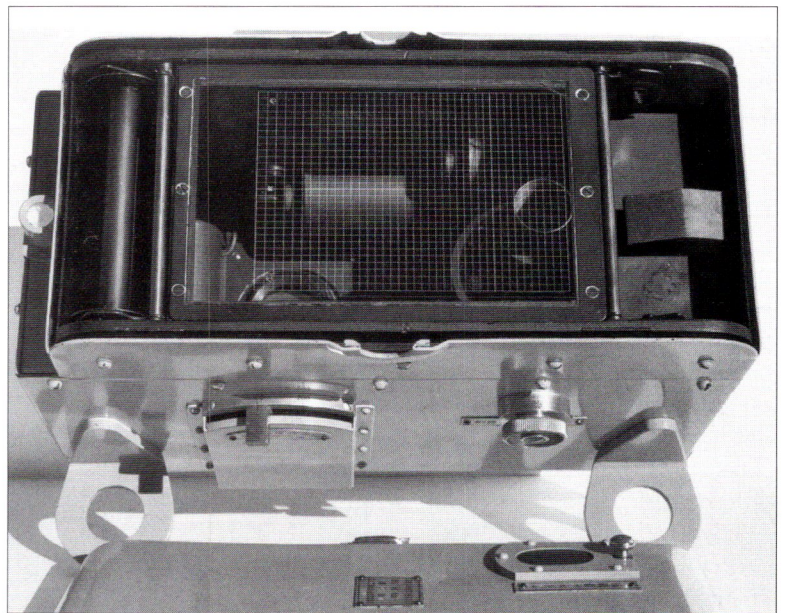


Above...View of the bottom of the camera with the door pivoted 90 degrees showing the 150.63mm Nikkor lens. Below...A close-up of the data chamber grid. A small ball bearing is visible at the bottom of the grid. Left..The data chamber lens 30mm/f3.5 #1101, from the inside. A dime is shown for size comparison.





Above...A view of the right side of the N-K Bomb Strike Camera with mechanical winding controls/knobs. Right...The camera with its back removed depicting the glass plate with the grid pattern. The solenoid motor and the end of the data chamber housing is also visible in this photo. Bottom...The gun trigger mechanism and its cords.



THE NIKON 'S' TO LEICA ADAPTER/COUPLER

BY ALEX SHISHIN

The happy marriage between my Nikon S adapter / coupler and my Leica screw and bayonet mount systems had, like many successful unions, a rocky beginning.

The first time I considered buying the adapter at OS Camera in Uemeda, Osaka I turned it down because it would not take my Voigtlander SC 24/4 and 35/2.5 lenses. (Their rear elements protrude too far.) The second time I turned it down, six months later, was because I had trouble mounting my Nikon 105/2.5 on it. Six months after that, I returned again to OS Camera to ask about this adapter. I'd grown fond of my S3 2000's Nikon 50/1.4 and wanted to use it on my Leica Ms.

By this time the OS Camera guys were getting a little sick of me. The adapter hadn't changed, they said. "Well, I have," I answered. That was all very nice, but they'd sold the last adapter in the store. Maybe their head store had one. They called. It did. Ten minutes later a fellow came in with the adapter.

I put it on my M6 and again I was disappointed. Unlike my S3 2000's silky smooth focusing mechanism, which allows you to turn the 50/1.4 by gently running your finger under it, the adapter was stiff and jerky. It would not work well in combination with the Abrahamsson Rapidwinders that I use on my M6s and M2s.

I bought it anyway. Total price: 50,000 yen, or just under \$500.00 at current exchange rates. This is not a bad price considering what the old and rare Orion adapter goes for. At this writing Stephen Gandy's Camerquest is selling one for \$1800.00. I saw one at a camera show in Osaka recently for 260,000 yen, or around \$2500.

I soon transferred the adapter from my M6 to my under-used Canon 7s. I'll say more about this later. But first a word about the Nikon S to Leica L adapter itself.

There is no manufacturer's name either on the adapter or the box mine came in. I later learned that OS camera got the adapter through Kindai International, a company located in Shinjuku, Tokyo. According to Stephan Gandy's Camerquest article "Use Contax and Nikon

Rangefinder Lenses on Leica RF!" mentions that adapters for Nikon and Contax lens to Leica L, based on the old Orion adapters, were manufactured between 2001 and 2004, then discontinued. My adapter's little black box, which comes with red velvet lining, has "COUPLER S—L FOR NIKON S MOUNT LENS" written on its top. The included photocopied instruction sheet, written in Japanese, says that the reason the makers insist on calling their device a "coupler" and not an "adapter" is because it couples with the Leica focusing mechanism.

The instruction sheet explains which Nikon S lenses can and cannot be used with their adapter-coupler. The 21/4, 25/4, 35/1.8 and 50/1.1, both internal and external mounts, will not work. This is all due to their extended rear elements, though the two versions of the 50/1.1 do work on the Orion adapters. All other lenses are okay, but the instructions warn that close focusing might be problematic with the 28/3.5, the 35/2.5 and the 35/3.5, on some cameras. My Nikon 35/2.5 can close-focus without a hitch on my Canon 7s but not on my Canon 7 and M6 where it tends to stick after about five feet.

What's coupling like in reality? In a word: quirky. My Voigtlander APO Lanthar 85/3.5 has always coupled with the adapter without any problems. From the beginning, on the other hand, my Nikon-P 105/2.5 often

required considerable coaxing to couple. Its inability to couple with the adapter increased over the months. A chrome W-Nikkor 35/2.5 that I bought recently also had trouble coupling consistently. I also had problems coupling my Nikon 135/3.5 Q. I didn't know what was wrong. Lens springs? Lens wear? Anomalies in manufacture? (The guys at OS camera told me that each adapter was handmade.)

After six months of tribulation and experimentation I had a sudden inspiration. While setting the lens to infinity, I violated



the instructions (and standard practice) by setting the adapter not at infinite but at an angle. Problem solved! All formally problematic lenses, including the 105/2.5, now click in every time.

The adapter appears to focus past infinity when you turn it completely to 12 o'clock. But in fact this only represents a misalignment of the focusing scale. None of my lenses focus beyond infinity. It is only a problem if you are range-focusing your internal mount Nikkor 50mm lens at fast apertures and at close range (which I seldom do). With external mount lenses, which have their own focusing scale, there is absolutely no problem.

You will find a certain amount of "play" when lenses are mounted. In my case, the Nikkor 50/1.4 (Millennium 2000) had the most play and my near-mint Nikkor 135/3.5 for Nikon S (see below) had no play. The others had a little play. All of these lenses had the same amount of play on my S3 Millennium 2000. Conclusion: amount of play depends on each lens, not the adapter, which appears to have the same tolerances as the regular Nikon S mount.

The "arm" that couples internal mount lenses is a slightly simplified (cheaper) version of the coupling arms found on the Nikon S and Contax mount cameras. The screws holding it to the mount are bigger and more likely to come loose over time. (I've had to tighten mine twice so far over the last half year.) There is no hole in the arm over the stabilizer screw (absent on the adapter) that one finds on Nikon and Contax mounts. This adapter is not as well made that the Orion Nikon and Contax adapters and the current mounts of the Cosina / Voigtlander R2-S and R2-C cameras.

With a Nikon S mount adapter, the Canon 7s has a few advantages over its closest equivalent, the Nikon SP. The Canon 7s, though rarer than the Nikon SP, (according to Stephen Gandy) is considerably cheaper, and yet has all the frames of the SP except 28mm. (The Canon 7 is even cheaper than the 7s.) The 7s has a built in CDS meter that is very accurate. But it only goes up to ASA (ISO) 400. (The Canon 7's meter is selenium.) The Canon 7s finder is brighter than that of any Nikon rangefinder, including the SP. Also its fuzzy focusing patch is a little easier to focus with than the Nikon fuzzy focusing patch. The 7s other advantage over the SP is you can always switch to Leica

screw mount lenses if you have to. Of course the straight-out advantage the SP have over a 7s with Nikon S adapter is that it can take any lens in the Nikon S / Contax mount without problems.

The absence of the little Contax-style focusing wheel on the Canon 7s can be an advantage, or disadvantage depending on your point of view. Either you love or you hate the little wheel. I happen to love the little wheel because I can focus and shoot a Nikon rangefinder one-handed while holding on to a strap on a crowded commuter train. But experience has made me painfully aware of how vulnerable the little wheel is. Bump it too hard and your focusing mechanism is dead.



To see how my Canon 7s / Nikon would hold up in a situation where changing lenses quickly and decisively would be crucial, I used it to photograph two presentation sessions at the bi-monthly meeting of the Kobe Classic Camera Club, of which I am a member. Our group, consisting of about 20 people, always meets in a fairly tight room. People's heads constantly block presenters who pick up cameras, hold them up, put them down and turn this way and that. This necessitates shooting fast and being able to change lenses quickly. Conclusions? Even with the quirks described above, changing lens on my Nikon-Canon system was practically as fast as with a regular Nikon S system—though not as fast as with Leica Ms. I should add that I've bonded the internal mount caps for the 50/1.4 piggyback onto the external mount caps, which greatly speeded up lens-changing.

One of my fellow Kobe Classic Camera Club members runs a little used camera store in Kobe's Motomachi district. For months I'd been eyeing a Contax to Leica screw mount adapter in his shop. One balmy October afternoon I went and bought it.

The name Kindai International appears on my Contax to Leica adapter box. The construction of this adapter, which is silver like all Contax mounts, is built exactly like my Nikon S adapter. The instructions are practically the same as those I got with my Nikon to Leica adapter. But the revisions in the text and layout suggest the Contax adapter might have been made later.



My Sonnar 50/1.5 and Sonnar 85/2 worked as well as I had expected on the Contax to Leica adapter, but I got a big surprise. My friend pointed to the 'C' engraved on my Nikkor 135/3.5 and said it was actually made for Contax. After humbly admitting my elementary ignorance, I clicked the 135/3.5 into the Contax adapter. The tripod mounting socket that had been slightly skewered (at about 7 o'clock) with the Nikon adapter straightened out.

Amazingly, none of the photos I had taken with the 135/3.5 on the Nikon S adapter showed any noticeable signs of the back focus discrepancy between Nikon and Contax mounts. (See Stephen Grandy's on-line Cameraquest article "Nikon RF - Contax RF Lens IN-compatibility.") For wide angle lenses the discrepancy is negligible. But from 50mm you begin to have problems. These increase the longer your focal length gets. At 135mm there should have had severe problems. I was probably just lucky.

It was at this point that the Nikon adapter was giving me grief and I hadn't yet figured out what to do. As the Contax adapter was trouble-free I decided to attach it to my 7s. I transferred the Nikon adapter first to my Hexar RF and then to my one motorized M6. The 75mm frames in the M6 and Hexar RF are almost the same as the 85mm frames in the Canon 7s. The 75mm is just a tiny bit wider, which in the field makes little difference most of the time. Nevertheless it requires extra care in framing. I used a tiny chrome Nikkor 85mm finder for close-ups.

There is an obvious drawback to using the Nikon S adapter on Leica Ms. To change frames you have to change Leica screw mount to Leica M mount adapters on the Nikon S adapter or use external finders. So I tried something else: mounting the Nikkor 50/1.4 on an old Komura Telemore 95 doubler for Leica screw mount with 28/90 M adapter. Presto! An instant lightweight 100.2.8. But with it I had to be not only extra careful in framing but also consider the consequences of lower resolution.

After getting a near-mint Canon 7, I put the Contax mount on it & put the Nikon adapter back on the Canon 7s. In late November, 2004 I bought a mint condition 135/3.5 for Nikon S mount in Tokyo. Now my Canon 7s/Nikonkit is complete. The only drawback is that the tripod socket skewers to 7 o'clock. (The Nikkor 135 'C' skewers to 5 o'clock on the Canon 7 + Contax adapter.)



In sharing my Nikon S and Contax adapter adventures with other photographers, two questions invariably arise. How can they get one? Why aren't these adapters readily available? The answer to the first question is that nowadays availability is a matter of luck. The answer to the second one is more complex. That camera stores are not flooded with Nikon (and Contax) to Leica adapters shows there was never an overwhelming demand for them. Yet, I believe the likely reason why the most current Nikon S & Contax to Leica adapters failed to sell well to a niche market is not from a lack of potential buyers but from want of proper publicity. A problem with small Japanese artisan companies is that they not only lack funds for advertising but also the English fluency that would help them reach an international market.

If a major company like Cosina / Voigtländer brought out Nikon S and Contax to Leica coupler / adapters they most likely would be better made than the ones I use. They could be even better than the legendary Orions and become bestsellers as niche products.

Above..Boys having fun near Okubo JR Station, Akashi City. Canon 7s + Nikon S adapter + 105/2.5 Nikkor in Nikon mount. Below..Lady & Dog, Kitano-cho, Kobe. Canon 7 + Contax adapter + 135/3.5 Nikkor in a Contax mount.



THE F -- SPOT!

ANOTHER NIKON F SELF-TIMER VARIATION DISCOVERED BY MATTHEW LIN

In the photos (fig. 2~6) are shown the 5 commonly known self-timer levers for the Nikon F. I am sure that most of you are already very familiar with them. If not, you may refer to the excellent article in NHS-53 written by member Richard de Stoutz or the now legendary Nikon F books by Uli Koch for more detailed descriptions.

However, what is not commonly known is the existence of yet another 'production' type self-timer, which I call 'TYPE 1A' from this point on. (See Fig. 1) By production, I am excluding special self-timer levers found on models like 'UPI' or 'High Speed Fs', etc. The TYPE 1A self-timer has diagonal grooves and the horizontal step in the middle, similar to the conventional TYPES 1 and 2. The spacing between the diagonal grooves on the TYPE 1A lever, however, is noticeably wider than either the TYPE 1 or 2. The base of the upper section, just above the horizontal step, of TYPE 1A has round corners. This feature is unique to this type because all the others have a straight flat base extending from edge to edge. The hollow cavity behind the TYPE 1A lever is the same as the TYPE 2's, but not machined like the TYPE 1. (See Fig. 7 for a comparison)

This type of self-timer has actually been reported once in a Japanese camera 'mook' (magazine). Since there weren't any other recorded serial numbers to compare it with, this type of lever was regarded as just an 'odd one out', and had not been recognized as a production type at all.

I have spent much time doing some research about it. Whenever I knew of any Nikon F with a serial number between 6409000 and 6412000, I would try to find out the type of self-timer it was

equipped with. It often meant I needed to obtain a photo from the owner or to inspect the camera in person. I even went as far as visiting a very well-known Nikon dealer in London just to verify what kind of self-timer was mounted on one of their early Fs. Apparently, even the shop was unaware of the unusual self-timer on that particular Nikon F they were selling!

This type of lever seems to exist only within a small range around serial number 6410000. I therefore believe the TYPE 1A was actually a production type used by the Nikon factory as a TYPE 1 replacement. (See the table of numbers)

At around #6410000, Nikon was clearly trying to give the F a

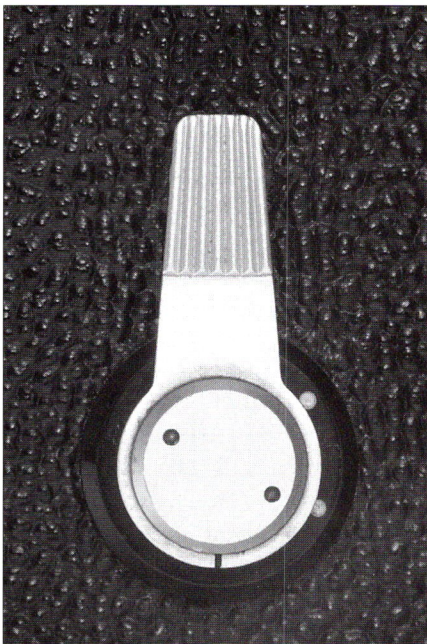
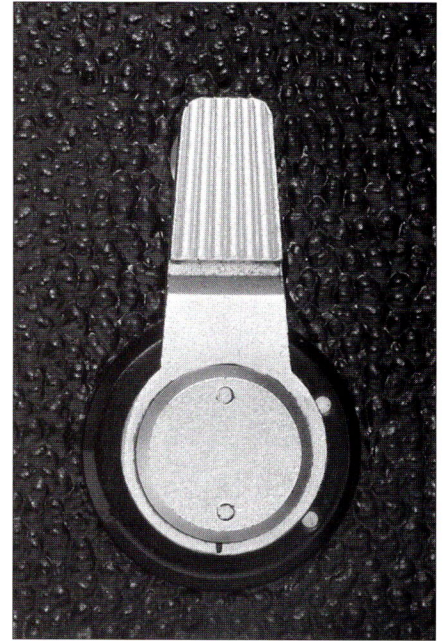
facelift. The self-timer lever, together with the advance lever and film speed reminder, were among the parts being replaced. I guess Nikon initially was planning to replace the sharp-cornered TYPE 1 lever with this new TYPE 1A, but was later unhappy with its looks. They then rolled out the TYPE 2 very quickly. I believe there are only around 1,000 or less Nikon Fs equipped with the TYPE 1A self-timer, making it the rarest amongst the 6 production types. See Fig. 8 for two of my Nikon Fs equipped with TYPE 1A levers.

Although I have been calling the type of self-timer lever TYPE 1A to

avoid confusion with the more conventional labeling of the other 5 common types, actually it would be more correct to call it a TYPE 2 and the subsequent self-timers TYPES 3 to 6.

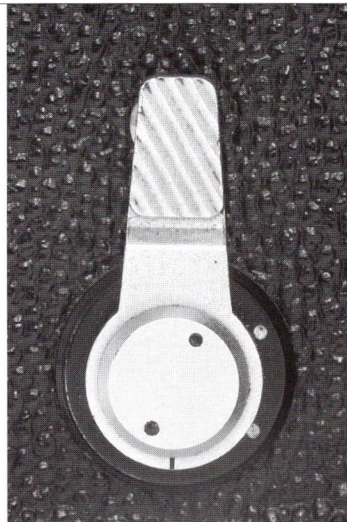
Please email me the type of self-timer on your Nikon F if its serial number is close to 6410000. You may check my homepage, www.matthewlin.com, for the latest update on the table of numbers included in this article.





Figs. 2~6...The '5' previously known production self-timers found on the Nikon F. Top three photos, left to right..TYPE 1, TYPE 2, and TYPE 3. Two photos at left are TYPE 4 (far left) and the TYPE 5.

Fig 7..Bottom photo...The three earliest self-timers are shown, left to right..TYPE 1, TYPE 1A and TYPE 2. The one in the middle is the newly discovered type documented here by Matthew Lin. Note the rounded corners on the bottom edge of the diagonal groove plate just above the horizontal step. Fig 8 at the top of the next page shows two of Matthew's Nikon Fs with TYPE 1A self-timers (cameras #6409436 and 6409900). The bottom photo is a line-up of all 6 known types in chronological order. Maybe at this itme we should dispense with the TYPE 1A name and just renumber them simply as TYPES 1 through 6!





SERIAL NUMBER

SELF-TIMER 'TYPE'

NOTES

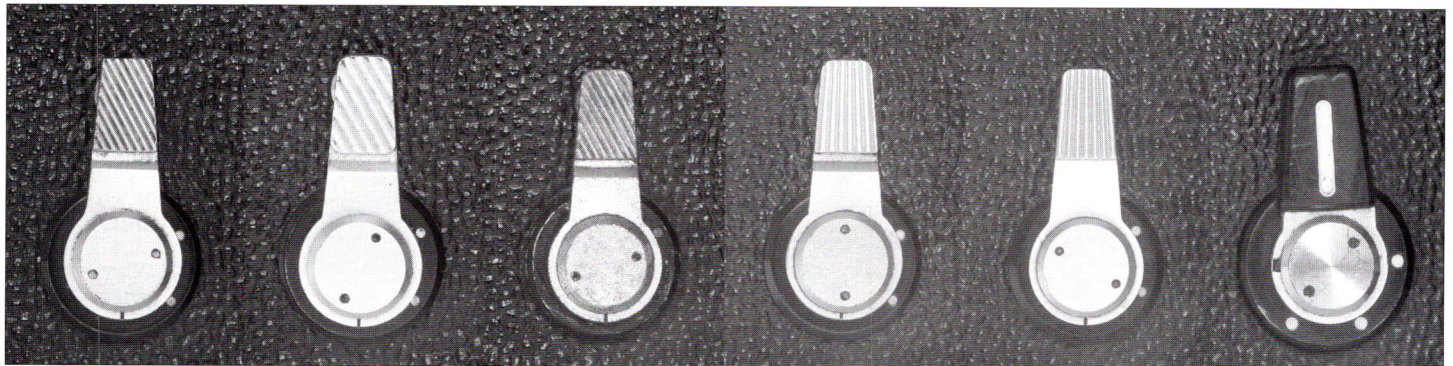
6409045
6409092
6409306
6409436
6409442
6409488
6409599

TYPE 1
TYPE 1
TYPE 1
TYPE 1A
TYPE 1A
TYPE 1
TYPE 2 ??

The number top plate has probably been replaced because everything else on this camera is of a much later vintage!

6409627
6409649
6409796
6409900
6409913
6410040
6410447
6410491
6410813
6411757
6411824
6412033

TYPE 1
TYPE 1
TYPE 2
TYPE 1A
TYPE 1A
TYPE 1
TYPE 1A
TYPE 1A
TYPE 2
TYPE 2
TYPE 2
TYPE 2



I am pleased to announce that work continues on my new book on the Nikon Rangefinders 'almost' on schedule. The publishing industry is an inexact science and things seldom come off as originally planned. However, it appears that we will be very close. The initial target date has always been spring 2005, and this was set last May, allowing Hove Books and I approximately one year to put it all together. We were hoping to have all copy in by February 28th, but that didn't quite happen. Here is where we are as I write this article on March 14th.

Original plans called for a book of between 400~450 pages plus approximately 30~36 color pages showcasing the work of our resident photographic artist, Tony Hurst. All photography, except for a very few items in the first book and others that are not personally available to me, was to be completely redone! I am using practically nothing from the 1983 edition in the way of photos (less than 2%) plus I am re-writing the entire book with over 90% of the copy new and revised. Re-shooting everything, plus adding much of what we have covered in the Journal these last 23 years, has been a monumental task. I knew it was going to be a lot of work, but once I got into it and realized what I needed to cover and illustrate I saw that it was going to grow and grow, and it has. Our target is still around 450 pages, which I should get very close to. However, it looks like we will hit approximately 1,000~1,100 photos! This figure includes Tony's work as well as scanned photos of some very rare items sent to me by NHS members from all over the world! The remaining, at least 95%, will be done by me. With digital technology it can be done (I just can't imagine doing it with film as I did in 1983!), but it is still a huge task. Every photo that makes it into the book represents at least 10

that did not! Even after deleting totally unusable shots I still have filled over 8 gigabytes worth of Compact Flashcards using a Nikon D1 and the 60mm/f2.8 Micro-Nikkor. Hours and hours of actual shooting followed by even more hours of bringing them up in PhotoShop, deleting bad ones then choosing amongst the remaining, is still followed by even more hours of laying out the chosen shots around the copy I have written and, finally, writing captions to match those 1,000+ photos! Without digital it would be at least a 2-year project and my film and processing costs would have been thousands of dollars. But we are close.

How close? By the time you receive this Journal, Hove should

have at least 350 or more pages in their hands. The lenses and accessories are finished and bodies nearly so. What remains is history, production facts and information, etc. In other words, a lot of writing. I plan to meet with Ron Clark of Hove in London in early May. If all goes well he will already have had the final part in his possession and I hope to be able to proof it then so printing can begin, Ron tells me that June is a 'reasonable' target at this time, so we are only a month or so late. Not bad for this type of business. Keep your fingers crossed for me.

Hove has a 'proposed' cover price of forty English pounds or approximately \$75~\$80 based on the current exchange rates, which is a very reasonable figure even if we exceed it by 10%.

This is the last Journal I needed to put together while still doing the book (believe me, that hasn't been easy!), so hopefully I will get everything done on schedule. I have spoken to both Hove and their distributor and as soon as I know delivery dates and prices including shipping, I will have it in these pages. For now I give you what the cover will 'probably' be. Thank you, RJR.



Nikon Rangefinder Compendium

Robert Rotoloni
Colour by Tony Hurst

SPRINGTIME IN EUROPE...

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

PLANS CALL FOR A MAY 21, 2006 MEETING

I have just returned from Holland where I was able to speak with NHS-Con10 co-chairman Hans Ploegmakers about plans for the meeting. He and fellow co-chairman Uli Koch will be going to Vienna in May for the Westlicht Auction and will literally walk through and check out the proposed agenda. Here are some of their current ideas for a possible schedule of events for NHS-Con10. (Some items are tentative and yet to be completely verified but the dates are mostly correct. You will not have to participate in every event if you cannot schedule the time off.)

Sunday May 14th...London Photographica Show.

Monday May 15th..Free time in London and Christie's preview.

Tuesday May 16th..Christies Auction..in PM fly to Vienna for NHS welcome reception.

Wednesday May 17th..Castle tour in AM..Theater/Opera in PM.

Thursday May 18th..Train to Kloster Melk, return by boat on the Danube River.

Friday May 19th...Vienna Horse Show and sight seeing. Then evening viwing of Auction and party.

Saturday May 20th..Auction and a special program for the ladies.

Sunday May 21st..NHS Convention!! Special program for ladies.

Monday May 22nd..To be determined.

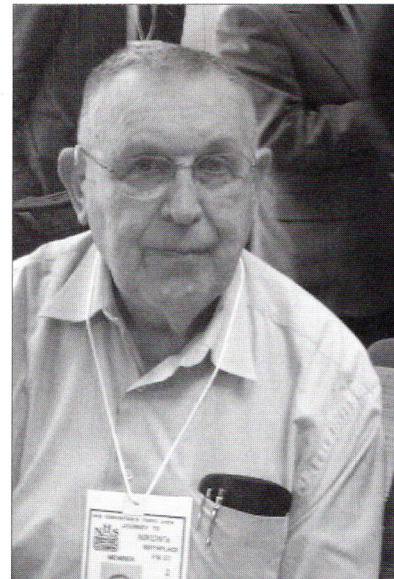
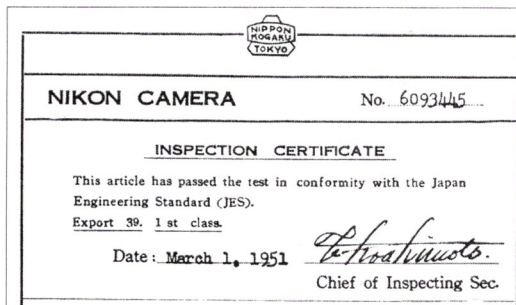
As you can see, Hans and Uli have a very special week planned for us. They will produce a 4-page pamphlet describing everything once all have been finalized and we will get this into a Journal as early as possible. But for now please try to set these dates aside. Hans and Uli will know more after their May visit. They will also determine how long each event may take and decide from there just how to schedule things. Although it is a long list of events, not everyone will want to participate in the entire selection because of time constraints, so each event will be voluntary. It is hoped that most members will be able to be with us the entire week, but it is understandable that some cannot. But now you have dates to help you make your plans. A Convention Fee has not yet been determined since some costs need be investigated, which is what Hans and Uli will do in May. They will also check out nearby hotels for the best deal they can find. Once the pamphlet is assembled I will get it out to you as soon as possible. Those who at this time feel they will 'probably' attend should contact me so I can put you on my list and keep you up to date with the latest information as I learn it.

IN MEMORIAM

And yet again I have this issue to report the loss of another gentleman intimately involved with the rangefinder era at Nikon. Anyone who collects early Nikons will quickly become familiar with a signature often found on the inspection slips for the bodies. I have reproduced one below. The signature is that of Mr. Takateru Koakimoto, who passed away on December 20th at the age of 91. I have included a photo taken during NHS-Con5 in Tokyo where Koakimoto-san spent the day with us along with his life long friends Shigetada Fukuoka and Masahiko Fuketa, all of whom are now gone! We must consider ourselves fortunate to have been able to learn many things from these gentlemen before they left this world. I remember how much Koakimoto-san smiled and laughed that day.

Another piece of Nikon history is gone.

Those of you who attended NHS-Con8 and 9 remember Mark Gehlar. He holds the record for the oldest member to attend a meeting. In Tokyo he was a month shy of his 88th birthday, yet he kept up with everyone and had a great time. Mark passed way March 4th, four weeks short of his 89th birthday. Mark was a friend and a real inspiration. God bless him!



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 Mar. 31, 2005.

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'NHS' eBAY LIST!!

In NHS-85 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. 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
 Lester Lampman.....cdorydusty
 Jim Leatham.....Nikonsrme
 Enzo Mazzeo.....arriholmes
 Bud Presgrove.....budbudwatch
 Bill Pringle.....BigChips
 Robert Rotoloni.....6091
 Roger Swan.....cygnet98
 Mike Symons.....NIKMIKE
 Peter Walnes.....arri888
 Mel Wilner.....rfnikon

'NHS' RED DOT F LIST

PLEASE ADD THE FOLLOWING NIKON F RED DOT BODY SERIAL NUMBERS TO OUR COMPLETE LIST PUBLISHED IN NHS-82. ALL BUT ONE # COURTESY MATTHEW LIN!

6579590	6587335	6587832	6589842
6590025	6590163	6590261	6590319
6590676	6592879	6593306	6594226
6594766	6596373	6597337 (black)	6598456
6600417	6600595	6601450	6602155

BLACK & BEAUTIFUL!!

PLEASE ADD THE FOLLOWING NIKON RF BLACK BODY SERIAL NUMBERS TO OUR UPDATED AND REVISED 'NHS BLACK LIST' LAST PUBLISHED IN NHS-77! MANY OF THE NUMBERS THIS ISSUE WERE REPORTED TO ME BY BELGIAN MEMBER CHRISTOPHE SAP FOLLOWING A RECENT TRIP TO TOKYO.

6157529	6180954	6194281	6210739
6215343	6215369	6218949	6223620
6320516	6320616	6320755	6321106
6321111	6321426	6321691	6321838
6322024	6322137	6322289	6322349

THE FOLLOWING NUMBERS ARE THOSE OF 'FAKES'!

6104999	6142929	6149997	6174103
6176398	6188635	6189680	6192630
6196932	6202185	6203296	6203750

THE AUCTION SCENE

Only one auction with Nikon RF items to report on this issue. I mentioned in NHS-86 that Stan Tamarkin was to have a sale on December 5th in New York. Here are some of the hammer results.....

35mm/f1.8 Nikkor with original hood.....	\$850.00
Nikon S2 w/35mm/f2.5 Nikkor.....	\$500.00
Nikon S2 Black Dial w/1.4 & 105/f2.5 lenses.....	\$600.00
Nikon SP w/50mm/f2.0.....	\$1,670.00
Nikon SP w/50mm/f1.4 and foil shutter.....	\$1,500.00
Nikon SP w/50mm/f1.4 and box.....	\$1,600.00

Stan's next sale will be held on June 3rd in New York City. I have just received a flyer from Stan announcing this auction. For those of you interested in consigning equipment for the June 3rd sale, the deadline is April 10th. If all goes according to plan, you should have this issue in hand before then. You can contact him at (877) 842-6441 or (203) 397-9191 if you wish to consign.

Peter Coeln will be holding his 7th Auction on May 21st in Vienna, Austria. As usual he will have some very exotic items from various makers. In Nikon RF he so far lists a really nice black SP and a very desirable '906' type Nikon M with an f1.5 Nikkor. For those of you considering attending NHS-Con10 in Vienna next year, keep in mind that it now appears likely that the 2006 Auction will take place on Saturday May 20th. Now that we have a date those who plan on attending can more accurately schedule their time. See page 17 for NHS-Con10 details.

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CLASSIFIED ADS

FOR SALE...Nikon F5 50th ANNIVERSARY CAMERA..This camera is new, in presentation box, with outer jacket, strap, IB and everything a new 50th F5 should have. Serial #3116667. This limited production camera was recently discovered in our lay-away dept. When they were first offered, we sold all we could get for \$3495.00. Now that they are even rarer they should be worth more, but I offer it to fellow NHS members at that same price. The outer box shows slight scuffs, but the presentation box and the contents are pristine, like new. **Paul Comon, Paul's Photo, 23845 S. Hawthorne Blvd., Torrance, CA 90505. (310) 375-7014.. mark@paulsphoto.com**

FOR SALE...A large collection of Nikon literature including the following items: Original copies of the NHS Journal from #1 thru #61 in a loose leaf binder. These are not copies!; the precursor 'NSCN' newsletter by John Schrader from the late 70s' plus correspondence with John; Many 1950s' magazines dealing with Nikon RF by the late Simon Nathan. Many are autographed by Simon, who was a friend of mine. I have photographed everything for your information. I can ship this 'very heavy' selection via UPS ground to the USA. However, shipping overseas will be considerably more expensive. I am asking only \$250 for everything listed and shown in my photos. Shipping is additional. I can email photos if desired, or you can call me. Thank You. **Mel Wilner, 212-535-2431 or email me at dplmd@nyc.rr.com**

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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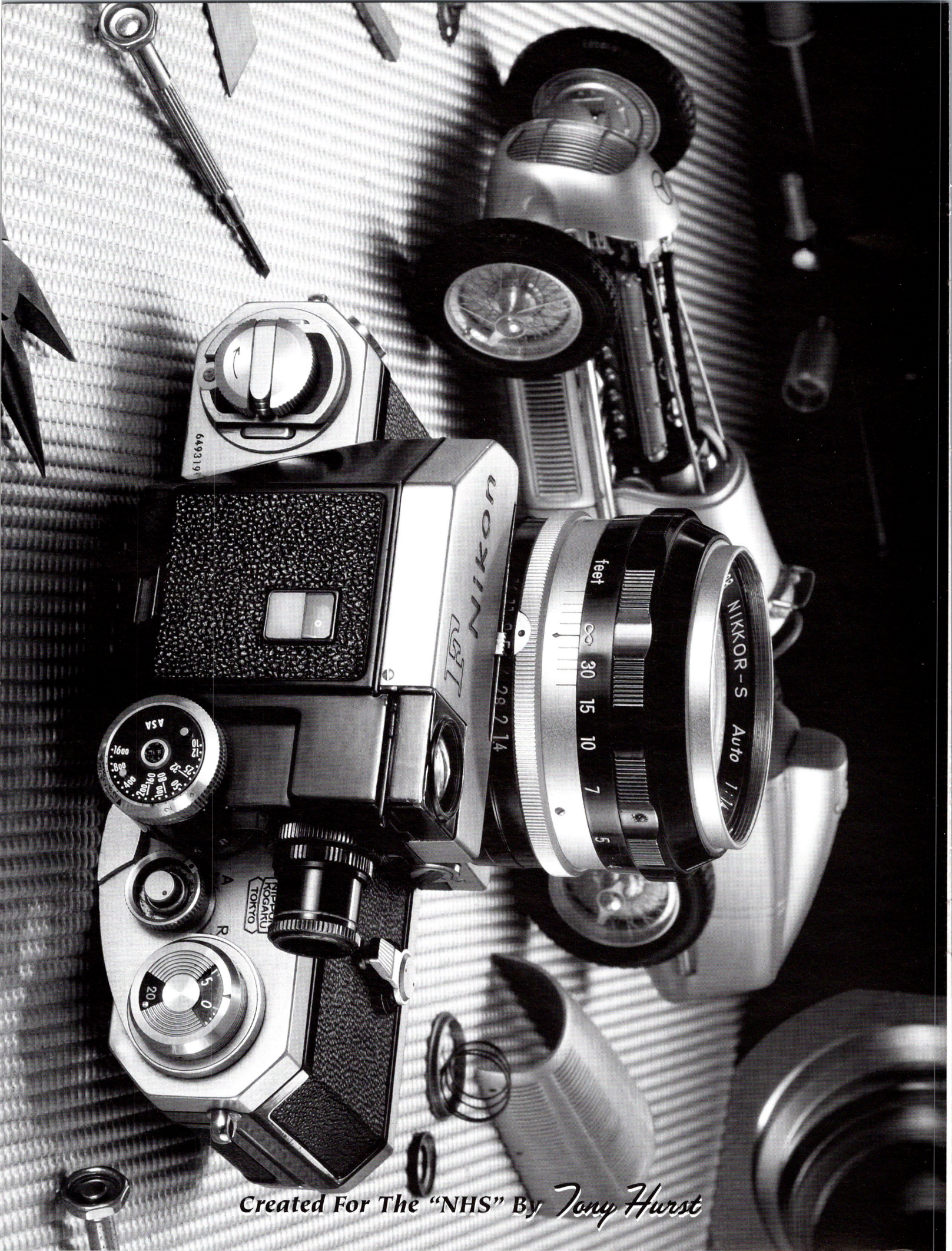
odds 'n ends

THOSE TINY LITTLE FILTERS!

BY BILL KRAUS



One of the hardest little accessory items to find today are the tiny screw-in filters that were made for the early 50mm/f3.5 Nikkor-QC lens. This lens was amongst the first optics available for the new Nikon One in mid 1948, but its actual production history goes back to the Hansa Canon of 1935. Looking very much like a Leitz Elmar, this least expensive Nikkor normal is actually much more common in the Leica screw mount than the Nikon bayonet, but that's another story. All types took the same accessories, including these tiny filters illustrated here. Bill Kraus sent me these photos of a set of yellow and red filters for the 50/f3.5. Above is the yellow and note the etched words 'Nikon Y3' at about 11 o'clock. At left the red filter has 'Nikon R0' at about 1 o'clock. This etching of the filter type right into the glass is something Nippon Kogaku only did in the very early years. It appears that they ceased doing this by 1950 or so. But these little filters are very rare today and easily missed on a seller's table if you are not looking close enough.



Created For The "NHS" By *Tony Hurst*