ZEISS HISTORICA

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The Zeiss Historica Society of America is an educational, non-profit society dedicated to the study and exchange of information on the history of the Carl Zeiss optical company and affiliates, its people and products from 1846 to the present.

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ON THE COVERS

FRONT COVER: 16mm f8 Hologon fits the new Contax G1. With it comes a special viewfinder and gradated filter.
BACK COVER: Remember when? Montgomery Ward photographic catalog of 1953.

ILLUSTRATION SOURCES

Front cover and Contax G1 photos from Carl Zeiss, courtesy of Andre Surmont. • Woodcuts, courtesy of Kurt Juettner. • European meeting photos by C. Barringer, Nick Grossman, Ulrich Zander and the editors. • Bergedorf aerial view courtesy Hamburger Sternwarte; other photos by the editors. • Golden Age illustrations courtesy Larry Gubas. • Lichtstrahlen: Tenax Town photo by Joe Brown, Contessa shop by Ray Fearn, Zeiss sign and rangefinder harness by the editors.

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

By August it was widely known that Kyocera and Zeiss would introduce a new rangefinder camera at Photokina. The system's existence was certain, but its technical details were still under tight wraps. On September 2nd, 45 participants at the ZHSA meeting got the world scoop on the new Contax G1 system — before the press, before the dealers — a genuine premiere. This all came about because of the excellent working relationship between European Coordinator and meeting host Hans-Juergen Kuc and Yashica/Kyocera's European headquarters team in Hamburg, who have our heartfelt thanks.

In the face of shrinking worldwide sales of complex cameras, including particularly the interchangeable-lens SLR, Kyocera and Zeiss's joint decision to develop from scratch an entirely new line of cameras, lenses and accessories required considerable chutzpah. At a time when the market is dominated by "one-size-fits-all" point-and-shoot cameras, the decision to sell a pricey, elegant and, we expect, technically capable interchangeable-lens rangefinder camera aimed at the sophisticated user seems to buck the trend.

In this day and age, the absence of a zoom lens (even though the details of the finder let us hope a zoom could be accommodated) and the limited range of accessories available would appear to be tantamount to suicide in the market. Furthermore, going head-to-head with one of the most hallowed icons of photography, the M-series Leica, would also seem to be hazardous, however good the Contax is. In fairness, the G1's direct competition (the M6) has some of the same limitations. But the equation is totally skewed when one looks at the huge, loyal user base enjoyed by Leica, while the Contax G1 is a total rookie.

Maybe our perspective is wrong. Instead of thinking of the Contax G1 as a retrograde junior cousin of the RTS system, maybe it makes a lot more sense to think of it as a giant step forward in the line of high-end compact cameras evolving from the Contax T. Kyocera invented this genre, venturing boldly to offer a camera which touted a Zeiss lens and beautiful finish, at a cost higher than most people would spend on a basic SLR outfit, let alone a normal point 'n' shoot. Not only did Kyocera "get away with it" and sell a bunch of cameras; they created a higher standard, and spawned a number of imitators. This took not only courage and investment, but also a willingness to look beyond the obvious. It also reflects Kyocera's high level of self-confidence in their quality image.

Having taken the manual-focus SLR to new levels with the RTS III and RX, they may have decided that their talents would be more productively spent in a new field. Now that the spiritual successor to the Contax of yore is on the market, let us hope that it will also be the commercial successor of its illustrious forebears. Zeiss and Kyocera could use the boost in revenues, and the world's photographers will only benefit from having another top-of-the line rangefinder system to choose from.

Charlie Barringer

ZEISS IKON: THE GOLDEN AGE

Larry Gubas, Randolph, New Jersey

Part I

Some years ago I wrote an article about how Zeiss Ikon came to be. After completing that paper I continued to marvel at the success of this great photographic combine. How did this all come about? Further research was more difficult, but I believe that what I've learned should be shared. Almost no one still lives who experienced Zeiss Ikon's Golden Age.

Zeiss Ikon

An announcement of the new amalgamation in the British Journal Almanac of 1927 carried the major players' names of the new company: Zeiss, for the Carl Zeiss Foundation; I, for the International Camera Aktiengesellschaft (Ica); and CON, for Contessa. Together, Zeiss with Ikon (from the Greek spelling) signified Zeiss picture.

Dresden 1926...Dr. Emanuel Goldberg

With the establishment of the new combine, the predecessor companies offered all their leading figures an opportunity to come to Dresden. Many came while others retired. Emanuel Goldberg of Ica was chosen to head Zeiss Ikon's Board of Management. His challenge was to reorganize a company, whose stock was divided among different shareholders, into the management mold of a Carl Zeiss Foundation (Stiftung).

Like Ernst Abbe, Goldberg was a marvelous scientist/technician with many unique inventions to his credit at Ica since 1917: the spy movie classic (the microdot), a means of microfilm organization and retrieval that would work well with today's computer methodology, cinema camera motors, and other innovative photographic processes for the still camera.

Just as Abbe had to leave his projects to manage and develop the Carl Zeiss Stiftung, Goldberg set his inventive mind toward making Zeiss Ikon consistent with the ideals of the Zeiss organization. With legendary Zeiss innovation, quality and profitability as his goals, Goldberg reviewed consistently all projects, budgets, staffing, finances, etc. So of what little remained of his career with Zeiss Ikon, he had no time, as Abbe had had no time, to sit at the design table. In 1932, he moved to Paris; later to Israel.

Dresden 1929...
Dr. Ing. Heinz Kueppenbender

A young up-and-coming engineer from Carl Zeiss Jena named Heinz Kueppenbender came to assist Goldberg in Dresden. Having spent two years becoming closely acquainted with all major departments of the company, Kueppenbender became the active scientist/technician. In Jena, his revolutionary design, the aerial camera's rotary shutter, had opened a new line of business for the firm.

Dr. Emanuel Goldberg (1881-1970), first a consultant to Carl Zeiss Jena, became a member of the team at their camera subsidiary Ica Dresden in 1917.

When Kueppenbender arrived some innovations had already been started: Two new cameras were in the testing stage. At first Goldberg was not too thrilled by the arrival of the young man from Jena and isolated him in an office located under the enclosed portion of the roof.

Kueppenbender, nevertheless, kept himself busy. By eliminating various duplicate designs and by taking inventory of what was there, he created the first Zeiss Ikon catalog.

Ikonta in Stuttgart

While Dresden reorganized and managed the firm, Eugene Joerg in Stuttgart worked to design a different style of folding rollfilm camera —the Ikonta— that would replace the many earlier designs. It was time for a change, a new

Among Dr. Heinz Kueppenbender's many accomplishments was the creation of Zeiss Ikon's first catalog in Dresden.

look, something special and distinct from all other folding cameras.

The Ikonta's shape and exceptionally strong and well-designed lens supports when open did suggest the Art Deco style, but really, there was no great sales point for another folding camera. Nonetheless, the incumbents Icarette, Heag or the Cocarette could not bring a new image to the market. While the Kolibri was still in the design stage, the Ikonta went on sale in 1929. It was a successful but expensive poor man's camera.

Kolibri...1930-1932

A completely new design, this small format pocketable camera for 127 rollfilm used a metal tube, instead of bellows. By eliminating the creasung and premature aging of leather bellows, this simple uncomplicated system provided a good first step in the redesign of Zeiss Ikon cameras.

Also new and soon adopted by other manufacturers was the Kolibri's 3x4 cm film size. On sale in 1930, this camera, because of a flaw in the process of advancing film, soon failed. Most of the negatives were crimped and ruined. If that weren't enough, sales of expensive Tessar lenses dropped because the flaw produced blurred images that even the Tessar couldn't correct.

Today this camera would work quite well because of thinner more flexible films and stronger thinner plasticized paper backings.

Zeiss Ikon inherited their marketing talent and production quality values from Carl Zeiss. Catalogs and store window displays advertised their new Kolibri, and new business created excitement. But the Kolibri wasn't good enough, even when it worked, to compete with the totally new miniature camera from Ernst Leitz that appeared in 1924.

Adding to Zeiss Ikon's competition was Dr. August Nagel's return to Stuttgart in 1928 with his production of innovative designs. By 1931, when the successful Baby Box Tengor and the Baby Ikonta, both for 3x4 cm film size, reached the market, the competition had become even more keen. Sales for these cameras did not meet expectations.

The Work Team

In Dresden, Goldberg and Kueppenbender stated their common goal: to cover the entire line of camera possibilities from the smallest to the biggest and from the simplest to the most complex. Their watchword for the Stiftung was quality. And this image had suffered with the Kolibri's failure.

Kueppenbender began to reorder the team of designers to implement his program as the problems with Kolibri became known and sales diminished. His task began immediately: to replace the inherited team of designers, men who had worked their way up from shop floor to design table, with talented engineers, who could design and implement new ideas.

Organization of Responsibility

In this period of Zeiss Ikon's development, senior management, designers, and working staff occupied three completely different social levels and work areas.

Goldberg and Kueppenbender each worked on his piece of the action in the executive branch. Goldberg rarely

The Kolibri, designed in 1930, used a metal tube instead of the then common leather bellows.

appeared in the design or manufacturing areas. Kueppenbender, however, made frequent visits to these places, acting as both technician and senior production manager.

Four areas comprised the design branch: still cameras, shutters, movie cameras and projectors, and darkroom equipment. Kueppenbender and Martin Nowicki, who headed the design branch, worked with Mr. Schiefer (does anyone know this man's first name?). Schiefer's specialty was shutter design. Actually, Kueppenbender designed the shutter and Schiefer drew the plans and technical realization. Arthur Mende, head of camera design, was responsible for the overall design of their new camera, the Contax.

The Contax

The Contax reflected Carl Zeiss's world of meticulous design. It was really special. Although this camera followed the Leica format using 35mm film, in all other ways it was of a different order. For example, the Contax's focal plane shutter travelled in a vertical plane which in and of itself increased the speed of the shutter by 33 percent. The Leica shutter merely echoed, in a small way, the current larger format focal plane cameras of Ernemann and Contessa Nettel.

The focal plane shutter had been invented by Ottomar Anschuetz in 1882, and was a C.P. Goerz product. Goerz was now part of Zeiss Ikon. The Contax shutter, made of metal and having a unique flexible design, looked more like the Yashica Contax RTS shutter of 40 years later, so little did it resemble the Leica of 1930.

Advertising quoted Zeiss Ikon on the unstable properties of rubberized cloth and how quickly it deteriorated and cracked. Other advertising swiped at Leica's inability to set its shutter speeds both before and after winding by proclaiming the Contax's capabilities in this regard.

Also new to the camera market came the Contax's built-in long base rangefinder, not yet available on the Leica (Leica also introduced a short based rangefinder version of their camera in 1932), and an entire family of Carl Zeiss lenses with which no contemporary firm could even begin to compete. Composed of parts more likely to fit a pocket watch than a camera, the Contax demanded everyone's attention in the photography community.

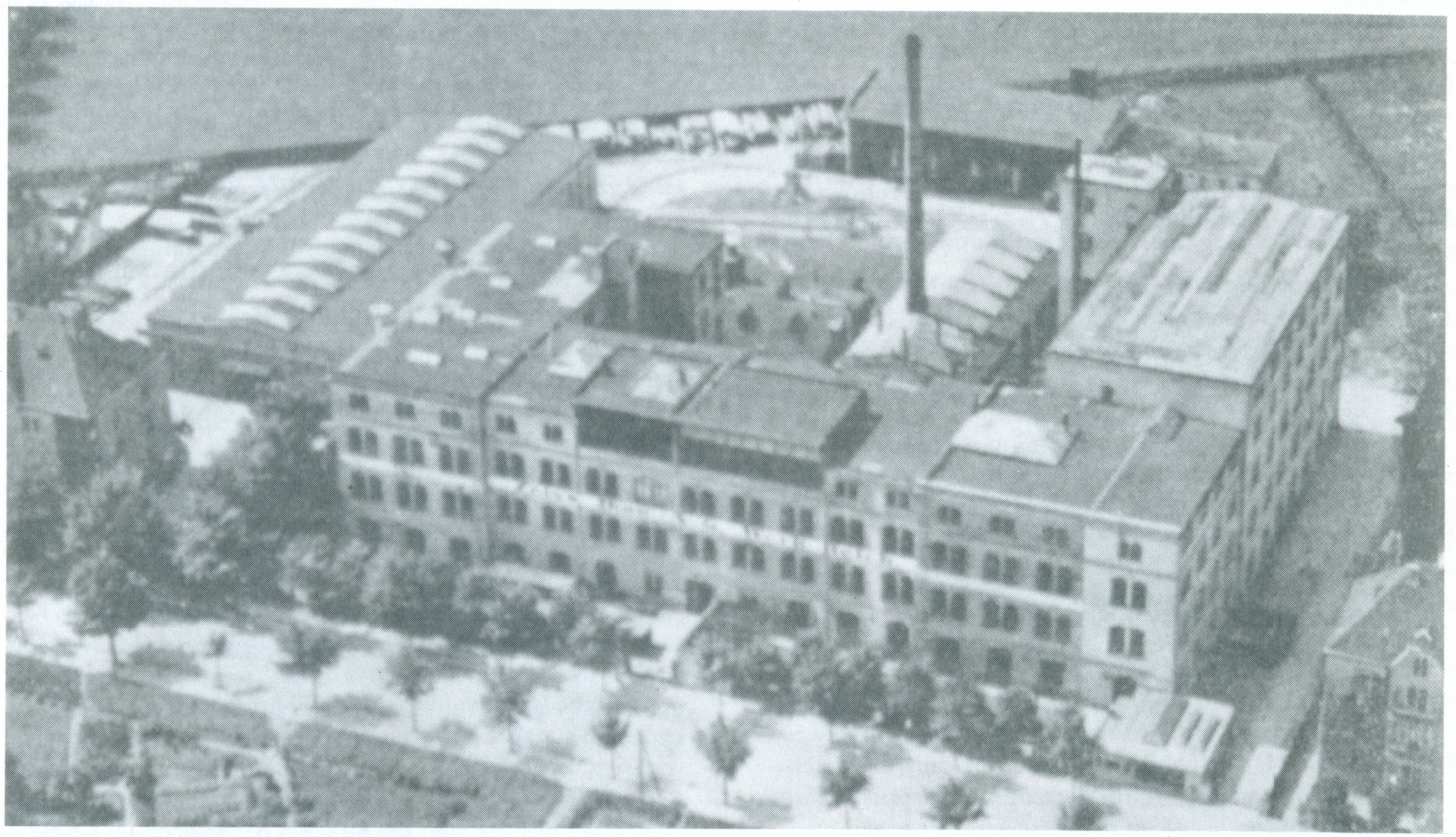
Various design segments were modularized and given out to various members of the design staff. Later, even Professor Goldberg came to the floor to evaluate the design and manufacturing methods.

Hans Padelt

The first engineer that Kueppenbender hired in the late 1920s was Hans Padelt, who stepped in quickly with many good contributions. He knew the problems regarding the Kolibri camera and made adjustments to the design, permitting it to become used as a new small format microscope camera.

While Padelt worked on the Kolibri, the Contax was delayed. In the meantime catalogs and advertising copy proclaimed that Carl Zeiss microscopes entered a new age with their newly designed stand that looked less formidable in its photographic mode with a 9x12 cm film pack on the top.

Martin Nowicki cooperated as well to improve the design features of the Kolibri II. He designed a special walnut-shaped shutter closure, which had to be shelved along with the Kolibri, when the Contax was ready to go.



An aerial view of the Zeiss Ikon Reick-Werk, Dresden.

At the drawing boards in Dresden, where first ideas took shape.

Design and Development Group

Kueppenbender's design and development group sat at their desks and drafting boards in an open area following this order: Padelt, Wachtler, Bergen, Goeckeritz, Stolpmann, Mende, Schiefer.

Padelt was by far the youngest member of this group (he died in 1992) and the most innovative. Arthur Mende, a conscientious man who had moved from shop mechanic to product designer, was project leader for the design and development of all three prewar Contax models.

Oskar Bergen was responsible for the design and development of the Contaflex 35mm TLR. Konrad Wachtler designed the Tenax I, while Hubert Nerwin designed the Tenax II and the Tenax III. The Tenax III never made the production line due to the war. If it had, Nerwin's US patent might have been the first meter-coupled camera.

More contributions came from smaller design and development groups at Stuttgart and Berlin. They received their orders, direction, and management from Dresden.

Three major designers in Stuttgart included Eugen Joerg, Ernst Rall and Heinrich Eyth: In Berlin, only Heinrich Jacob. These men worked primarily on the Super Ikonta and Ikoflex lines, and various 35mm accessories. One of the most complicated patents was the Ikoflex III's intricate film advance and rotating lever-shutter-cocking assembly, number 2,301,956 attributed to Kueppenbender, Joerg, Rall, and Jacob.

Wilhelm Wohlfahrt

Kueppenbender passed some of his original duties to Wilhelm Wohlfahrt, formerly of Contessa Nettel. He became the commercial director for Zeiss Ikon. Wohlfahrt pared the product line and issued the next generation of catalogs that sold Zeiss Ikon's products around the world.

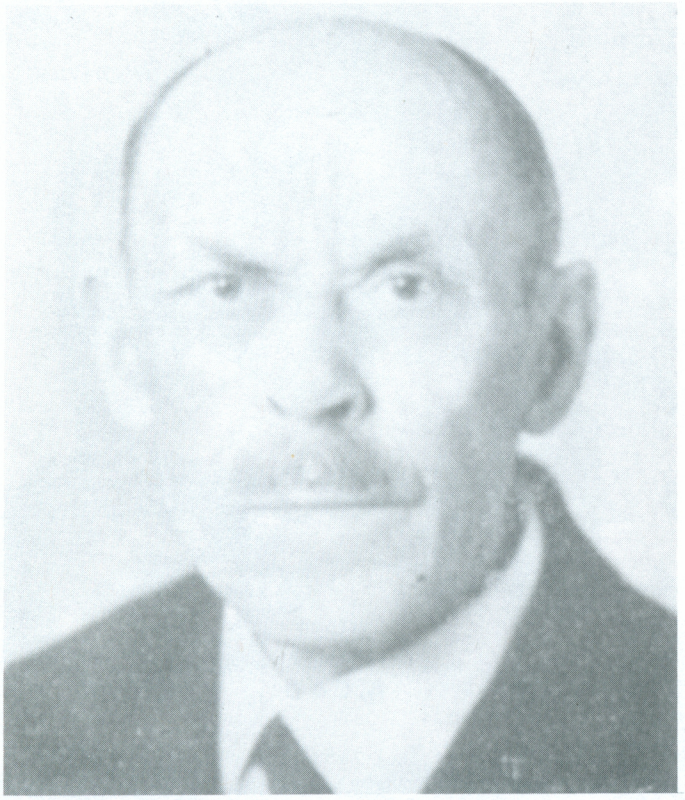
The new catalogs, embodying Carl Zeiss's classy touch looked like small books, supplemented with flyers on individual products or families of products, smaller catalogs, and instruction books. Published in many different languages, these new catalogs reached vast markets worldwide. Wohlfahrt later became President of Dresden's Chamber of Commerce.

Production Expanded

After the Contax design's initial presentation, Carl Zeiss agreed to support its development with Dr. Ludwig Bertele, who was to work on the design of some of the new lenses for this camera. He produced the Sonnar and Biogon families that lasted well beyond the 30 years of the original Contax family.

Carl Zeiss adapted and provided other lenses for the Contax from its family of lenses: one wide-angle and two normal Tessars, a Tele-Tessar, a Triotar, a Biotar, an Orthometar and a "Fern lens" that looked suspiciously like the old Magnar.

As recognized and dynamic as he was, Bertele worked among the giants of his day once he moved to Carl Zeiss. Other examples of lens giants working at Zeiss were Richter, whose Topogon aerial lens was adapted for the Contax after



Ernst Wandersleb designed Triotar 20 years before he was appointed head of Zeiss Ikon Dresden photo department.

the war; Merte's Biotar was adapted as a wide-angle/normal hybrid; and Wandersleb, who had been Paul Rudolph's assistant, and who developed the Triotar some twenty years earlier, headed the Photo Department.

Development of the Contax Models

Immense pressure to get on with the project forced Zeiss Ikon to begin selling the Contax well before having a frozen design. This tension created constant change and produced at least seven different Contax I models. An early working model taken to the Leipzig Fair in 1931 was stolen or lost. This catastrophe resulted in a scramble to document those new ideas of the disappeared model. To push through the German and American Patent Offices for immediate approval took top priority.

One of the more interesting German patents revealed the location of the shutter and the revolving rangefinder/lens focusing wheel. Zeiss Ikon patented the idea that the middle finger could focus the lens while the index finger could trip the shutter. All without hand movement. The final product was not available for display at the Leipzig Fair in May 1932, yet Zeiss Ikon rushed it out for sale some three months later.

Zeiss Ikon's long base optical rangefinder, successful on a large military scale, did not withstand field use in its miniaturized form. It became a negative for sales and quality.

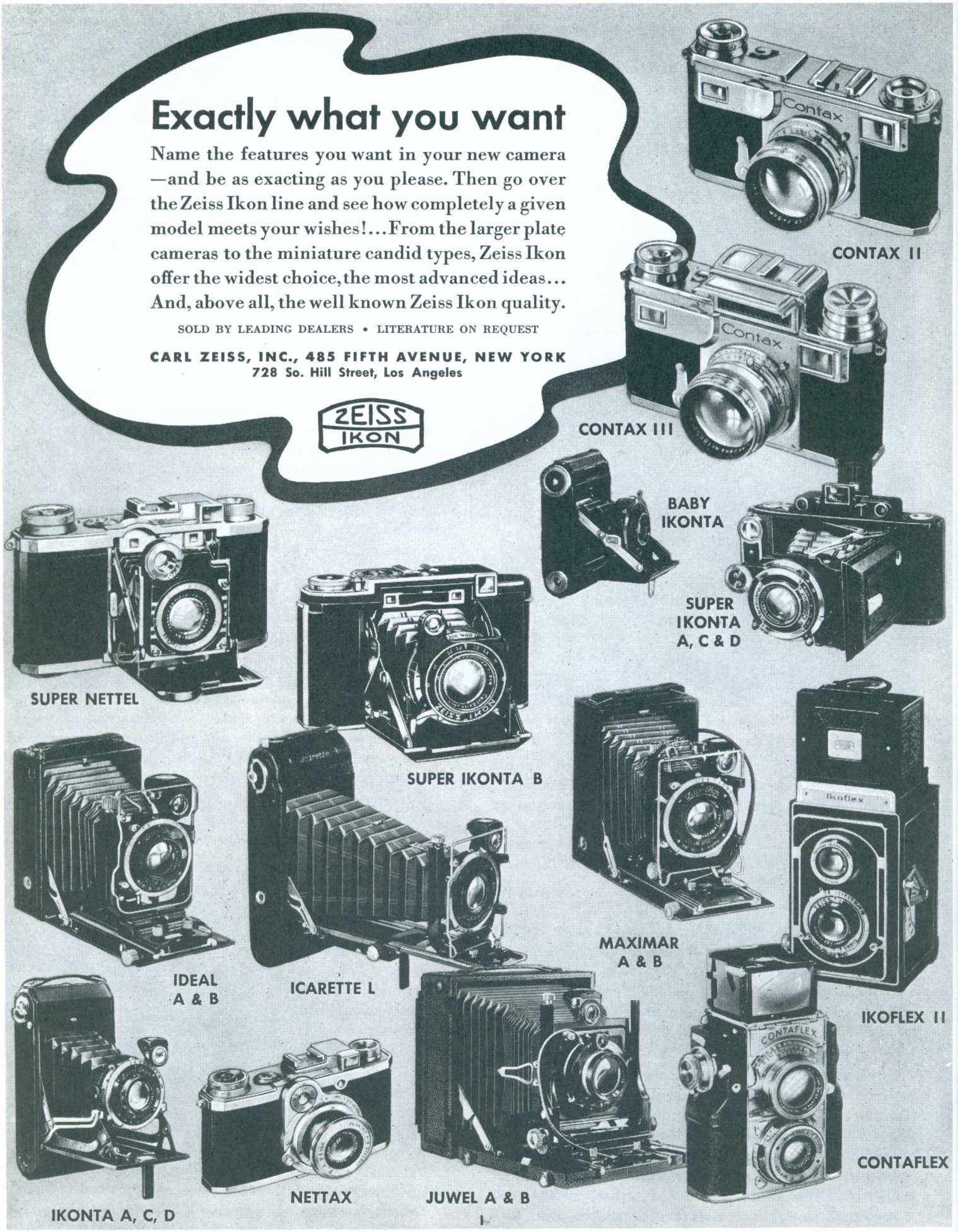
A few examples of the many catalogs published under Wilhelm Wohlfart, commercial director for Zeiss Ikon.

Later, Kueppenbender suggested the solid rotating wedge concept to replace the original design and passed down to his engineers the basic design. They handled the construction and manufacturing details. His idea eliminated the need for the various dimples obvious in the first two models of the Contax I. Among other items changed were the addition of slow speeds to the shutter, and an accessory shoe that was necessary as accessories were designed, and on and on.

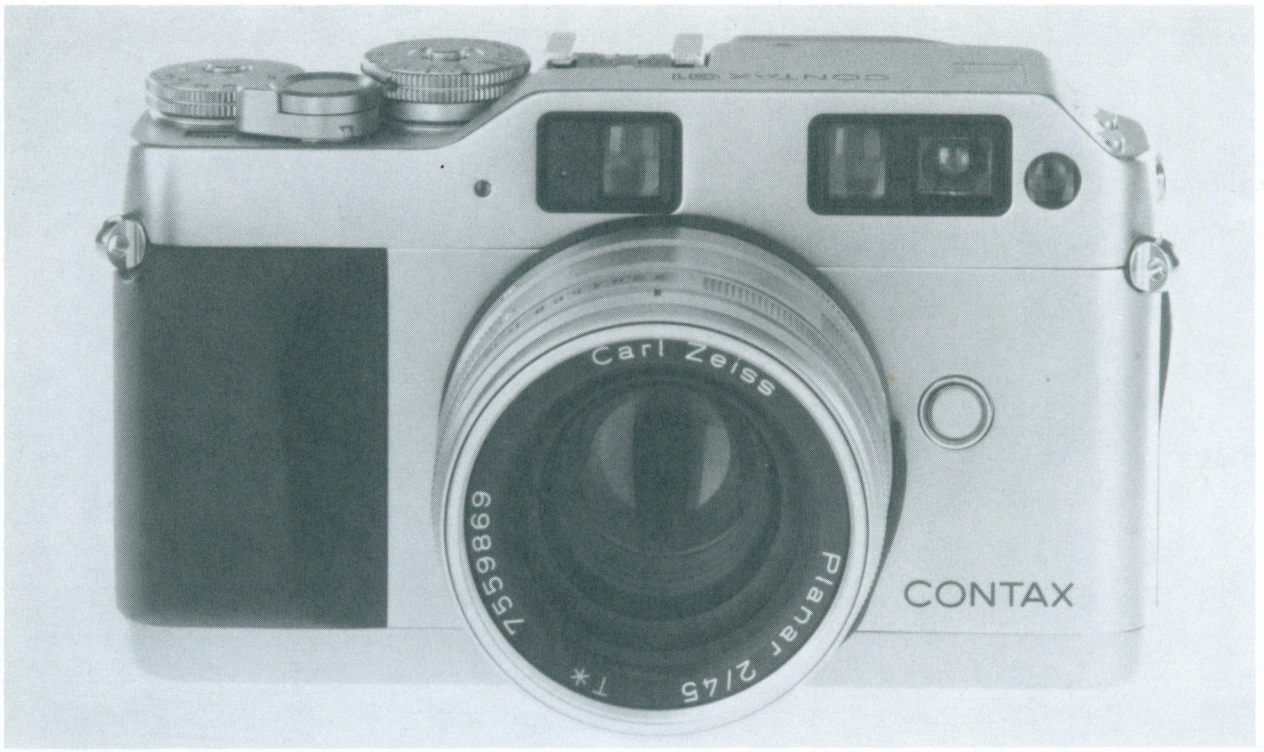
Accessories for the New Shoe

Some of the accessories for the Contax and sister cameras belonged to Zeiss Ikon manufacturing, while others to Carl Zeiss. The Flektoskop, the beautiful universal finders, as well as most of the special optical finders, came from Carl Zeiss: the albada finders, all from Zeiss Ikon. Carl Zeiss's supplementary filters for lenses (two yellow and one green) plus supplementary lenses were available since they appeared in the catalog many years earlier. But the Zeiss Ikon filters and supplementary lenses arrived a year or two after the introduction of the Contax. The Zeiss Ikon line, however, exceeded by far the Carl Zeiss offerings. Cooperation in such matters would have been very close.

This universal finder — a rare version for the 16mm Movikon — was one of many accessories for the Contax and her sister cameras from the Carl Zeiss shop.



Advertisements of Zeiss Ikon's product line stimulated sales worldwide. This selection appeared in 1937.



CONTAX G1: RETURN OF THE RANGEFINDER

William Stone, New York City

Yashica calls its new baby the G1. But if you think of it as a Contax IIIb, you won't be far off the mark. It's the first rangefinder camera with interchangeable lenses to bear the Contax name since the demise of the IIa and IIIa nearly 35 years ago.

Yes, it's a rangefinder, but with stepless autofocus as well. Four lenses are offered, all carrying familiar famous names. The "normal" lens is a 45mm f2 Planar. For an image twice the size of that delivered by the 45mm, you can mount a 90mm f2.8 Sonnar. Wideangle coverage is produced by a 28mm f2.8 Biogon. All three of these are autofocus; all automatically change the viewfinder's field of view when bayoneted into place.

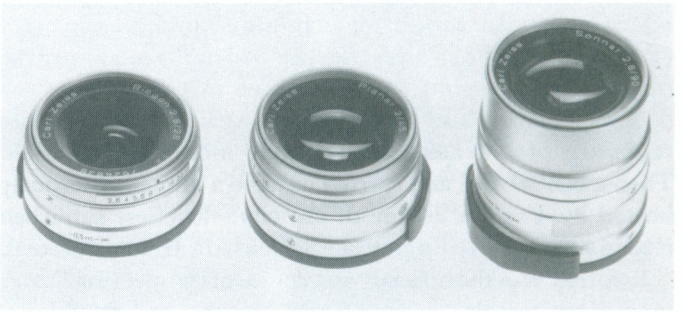
The fourth lens is the most remarkable: a 16mm f8 Hologon. Like other Hologons, it's supplied with graduated filter to eliminate light fall-off at the corners of the frame, and with a separate viewfinder containing a built-in level.

An adapter is available to mount some — but not all — of the Contax SLR lenses. These must be manually focused.

The G1 boasts all the modern features you'd expect: TTL metering, 2 fps sequence shooting, the ability to read DX-coded film, automatic loading and rewind. Exposure control can be either manual or aperture-preferred.

The G1's body is die-cast alloy, its covering is titanium. In the opinion of those members who previewed it in Hamburg, it's a true beauty, with a look and feel to it that compares with, perhaps even exceeds those of an M-series Leica. It's smaller than an M6, but large enough to get a solid grip on. And perhaps most appealing to Zeiss Ikon enthusiasts, it bears a neat family resemblance not only to the Contax SLRs, but to the last of the rangefinder Contaxes from Zeiss Ikon.

If the G1's features seem attractive, so does its price. One Contax dealer is already advertising a price of $1395 for the body, $320 for the 45mm lens, and $495 for the 28mm and 90mm. The Hologon's price tag is $2295.



Lens lineup: 28mm Biogon, 45mm Planar, 90mm Sonnar.

Is the G1 the start of a whole new system? Time will tell. An AF zoom lens of modest focal length — 35 to 70mm — would be nice to have. Perhaps we shall see one. But building a whole new system around a rangefinder camera seems less than sensible today. There are some tasks for which an SLR is clearly better suited.

But for the many jobs that a rangefinder camera does best, the new G1 seems just about ideal. Better get in line now.

At the home of Ursula and Willy Schelong, there was brunch and an opportunity to see Willy's vast collection.

FIREWORKS IN HAMBURG

If you couldn't attend this year's European Meeting in Hamburg, you missed a truly spectacular event. As it happened, the event coincided with a city festival. Hamburg lit up the sky each evening with fireworks, giving us what seemed to be an extravagant welcome indeed.

Site of the meeting was the Hotel Baseler Hof, right in the center of the city. Early arrivals gathered in the hotel's wine bistro on Thursday night for an informal dinner, and a bit of catching up on the two years which had intervened since the last European meeting in Oberkochen in 1992.

Most members arrived on Friday. Again, there was more renewing of old acquaintanceships, more show-and-tell. Then a bus arrived and carried us all to a dinner generously hosted by Yashica at one of the city's loveliest suburban restaurants, the Mellingburger Schleuse in Hamburg-Sasel.

Saturday was the official centerpiece of the meeting. More than forty people — members, spouses, and friends — attended. They came from Belgium, Canada, France, Germany, the US, and Japan.

The meeting started with Juergen Kuc's eulogy to a man much missed and mourned by the Society, Dr. Joachim Kaemmerer of Zeiss. Dr. Kaemmerer's death earlier this year left the Society bereft of one of its best friends in Oberkochen.

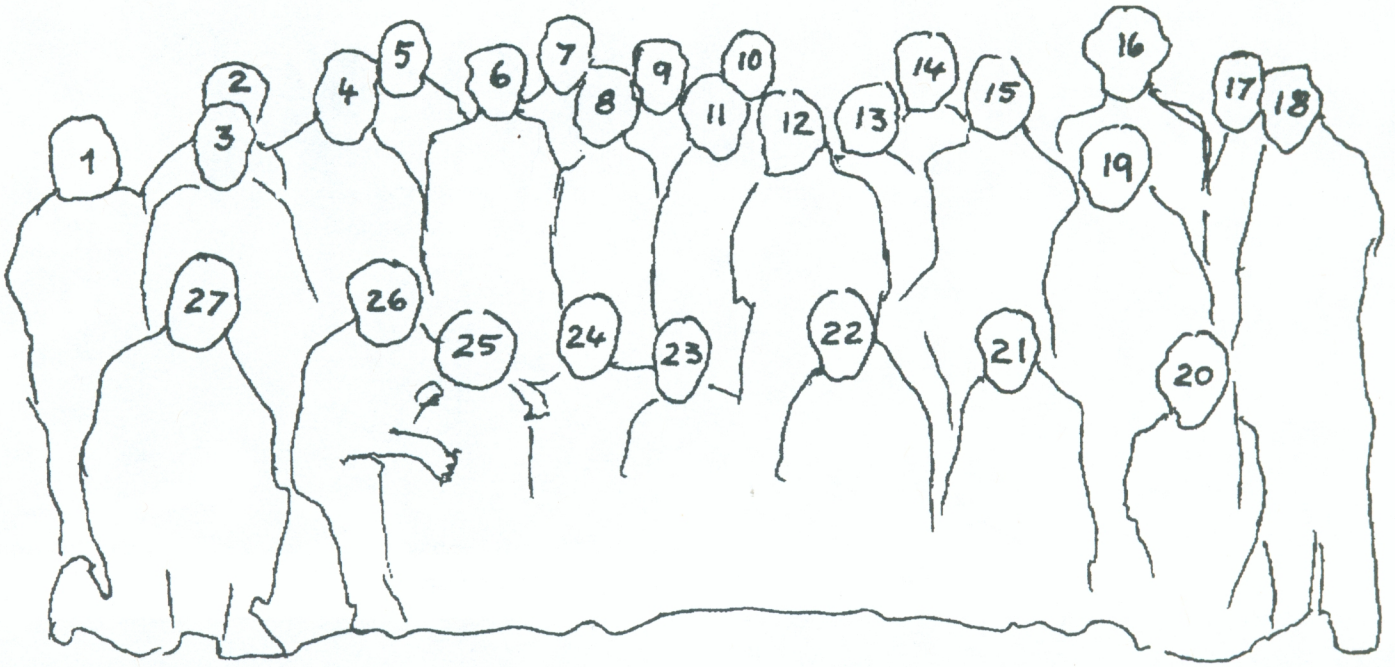
Five speakers gave presentations which reflected not only the breadth of the Zeiss product line, but the depth of knowledge among the speakers as well. Wolfgang Frank dealt with an often overlooked aspect of Zeiss: its movie cameras, prewar and postwar, from East to West. Juergen Kuc revealed new information on the postwar Contax and showed rare cutaway drawings of Contax lenses. Dr. Wolfgang Pfeiffer, who until recently headed the Optical Museum in Oberkochen, traced the evolution of microscopes over the decades. From binocular collector and author Dr. Hans Seeger came an overview of 100 years of Zeiss binoculars. (Dr. Seeger's new book on military binoculars is soon to appear).

The meeting's grand finale was delivered by Yashica executive Akasaki. It was a sneak preview — hands-on — of the first rangefinder Contax with interchangeable lenses since the demise of the IIa and IIIa. The camera, the remarkable new G1, would not be officially introduced until Photokina in Cologne a few weeks later.

That evening, members gathered for dinner, this time at a picturesque Italian restaurant just a block away from Juergen Kuc's "Die Kamera" shop on Muehlenkamp.

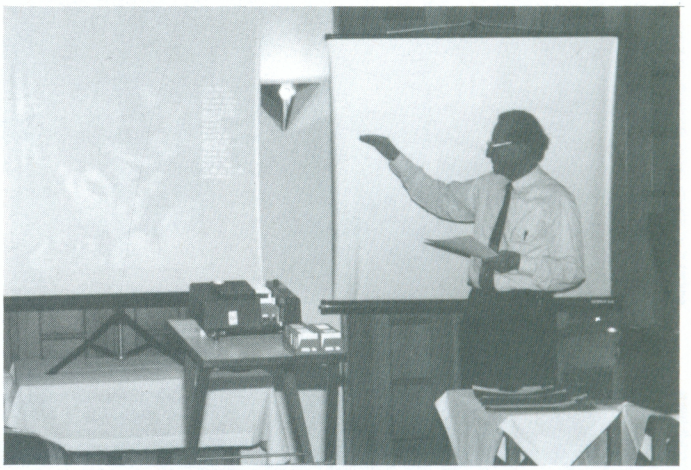
Sunday was hardly a day of rest. It began with a sumptuous brunch hosted by Ursula and Willy Schelong at their suburban home in Vierhoefen. Here, members had the unique oportunity to see and touch Schelong's unmatched collection of Zeiss rarities. And for a final wrap-up, Jutta and Juergen Kuc invited all for a late evening dinner at their new apartment in Hamburg-Lemsahl.

The Society owes much to the Kuc's for their flawless organization of the meeting. They arranged everything but the fireworks...and the city itself took care of that.



1. *Ursula Schelong*
2. *Dr. Jean-Jacques Rault*
3. *Nick Grossman*
4. *Kurt Juettner*
5. *Dr. Gerhard Hobberg*
6. *Dr. Hans T. Seeger*
7. *Rudolph Hillebrand*
8. *Caterine Rault*
9. *Siegfried Schaub*
10. *Joachim Arnz*
11. *Rosemarie Arnz*
12. *Rosemarie Zander*
13. *Inge Boebler*
14. *Hans-Juergen Kuc*
15. *Franz P. Boebler*
16. *James E. Cornwall*
17. *Charles M. Barringer*
18. *Ron Walker*
19. *Regina Cornwall*
20. *Irene Grossman*
21. *H. Kurioka*
22. *Ulrich Zander*
23. *Ilona Juettner*
24. *Allen K. Numano*
25. *Marion Husid*
26. *Bill Stone*
27. *Willy Schelong*

Hans-Juergen Kuc, Charles Barringer. Kuc holds his gift from the Society: the new Jim Lager book on Leica.

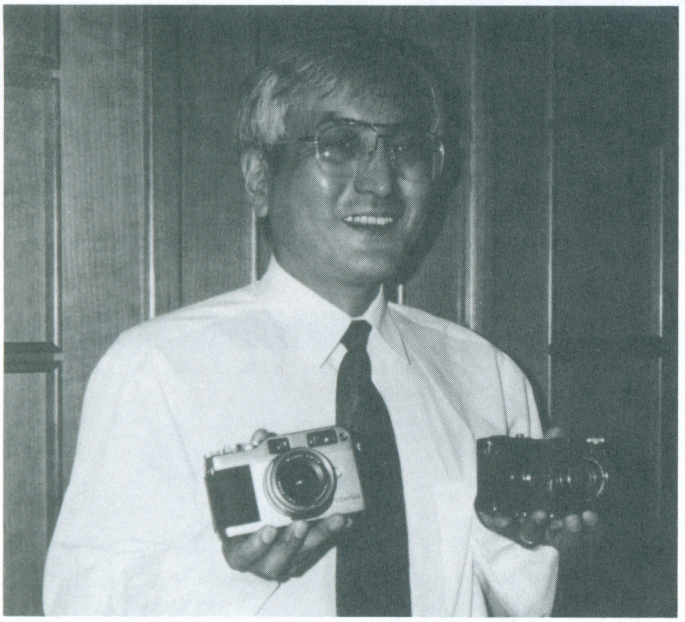


Dr. Wolfgang Pfeiffer leads group through a century of microscopy.

Bill Stone, Willy Schelong, Siegfried Schaub.

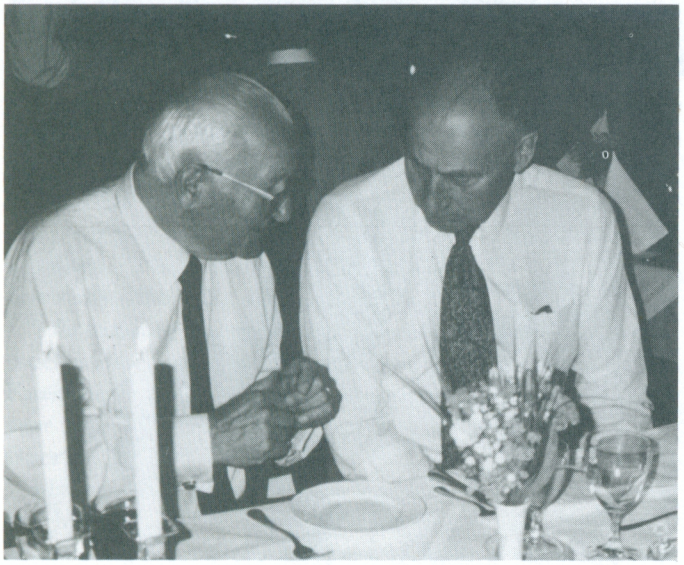
Dr. Hans Seeger speaks on historic Zeiss binoculars.

A few of the attendees at the European meeting.



Yashica's Morihiro Akasaki shows both the latest and the first of the Contax line.

Zeiss Ikon movie cameras are Wolfgang Frank's topic.



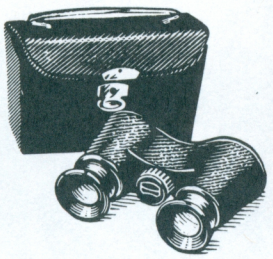
Siegfried Kessler and Ron Walker.

Allen Numano with double-eyepiece Zeiss binocular.

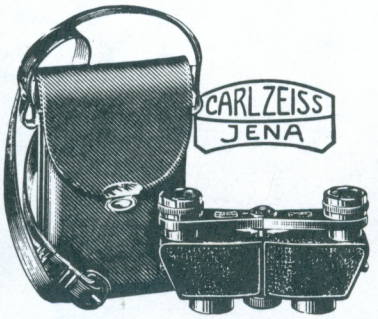
DRUCKSTÖCKE
VON FELDSTECHERN NACH HOLZSCHNITTEN

in 1/4 natürlicher Größe

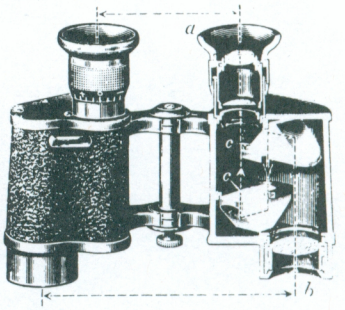
DELTRINTEM Nr. 5828
mit Behälter



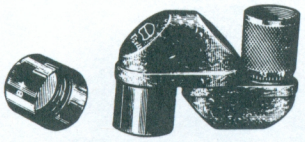
GALAN Nr. 5407



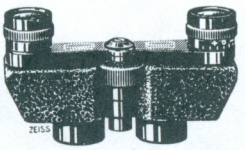
TELITA Nr. 5605



Strahlengang im Feldstecher
Nr. 3938



TURMON Nr. 8657
mit Vorsatzlinse



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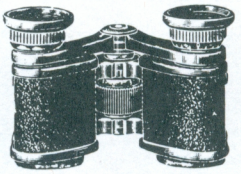

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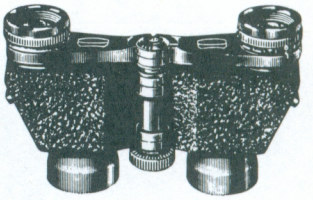

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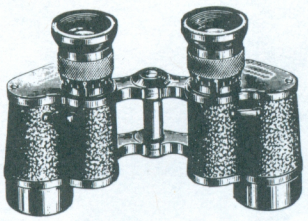

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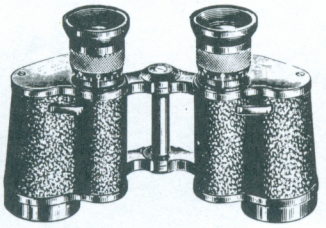

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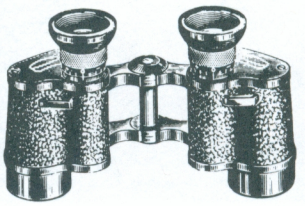

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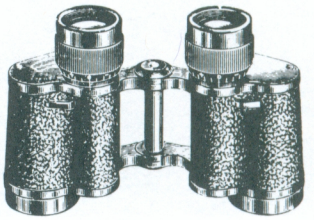

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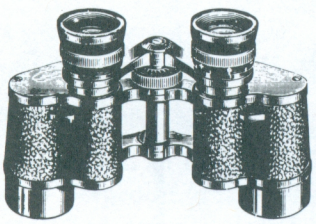

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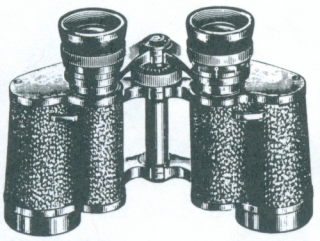

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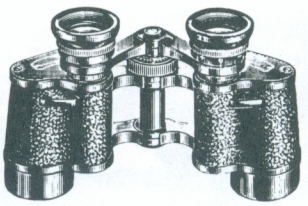

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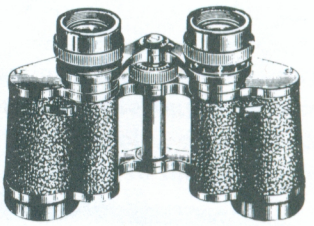

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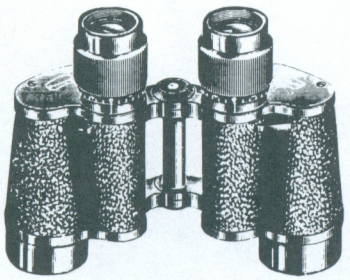

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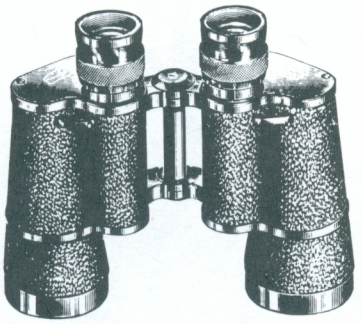
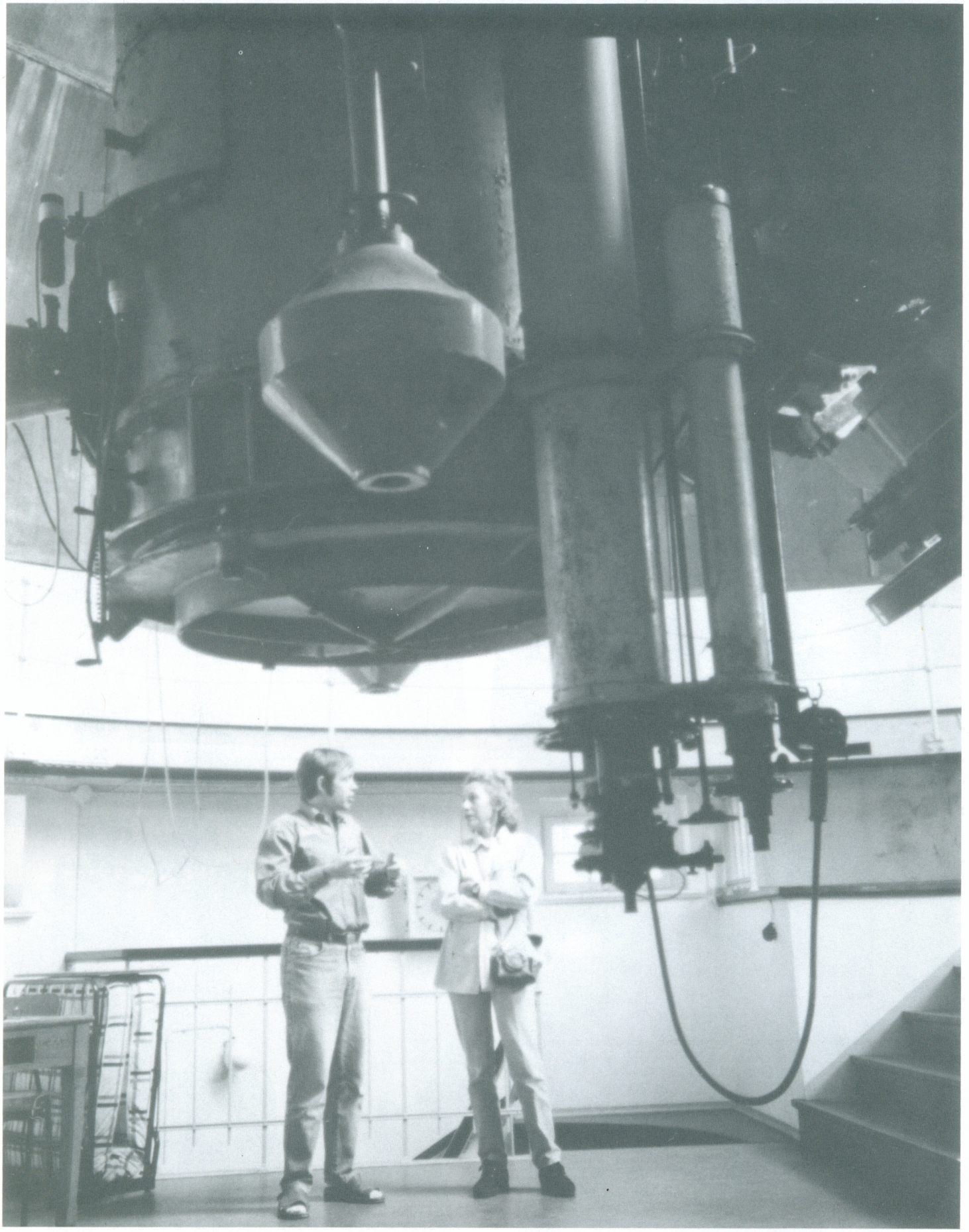


BINOCTAR Nr. 5830

TELONAR Nr. 5268

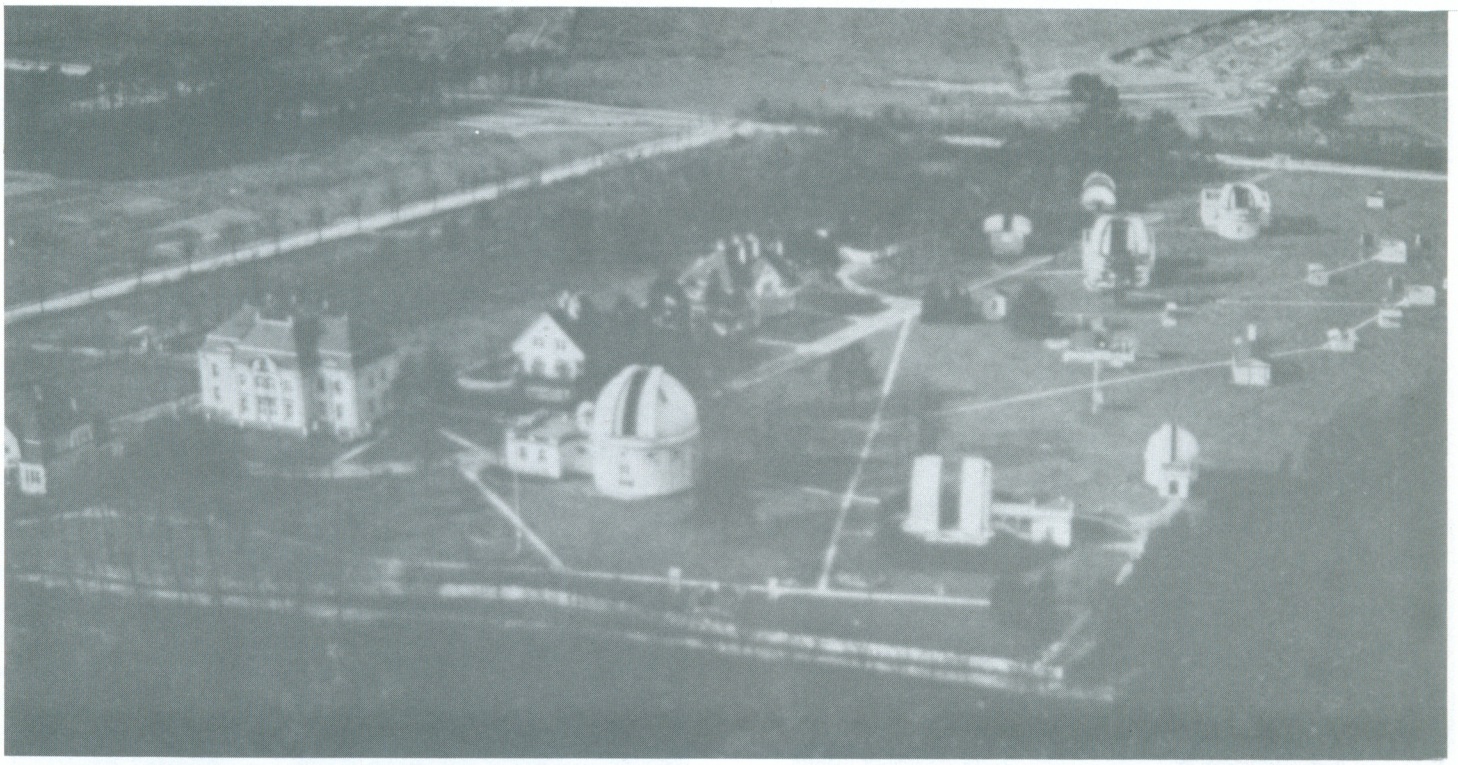
A page from 1929. Zeiss provided copies of woodcuts like these to dealers for use in their retail ads.



Lars Winter, assistant to the director, explains and demonstrates the superiority of the mirror telescope. Today, as a part of a worldwide network, the telescope both gathers and transmits information.

BERGEDORF'S HAMBURGER STERNWARTE

Marion Husid, New York City



An early (possibly 1912) aerial view of the Sternwarte shows several installations on 18 almost treeless acres.

"For decades, huge Zeiss telescopes have searched the skies from these two buildings of the Hamburg Observatory at Bergedorf," were pictured in Zeiss Historica, spring 1994, page 14. Do they still exist? Have they changed? Remained the same?

These questions were answered when the Hamburg meeting provided an ideal time to explore the Sternwarte, located in Bergedorf. Easily accessible by car or S Bahn (Bergedorf Sud) from the Hamburg main train station, the town lies approximately 7 miles (11 km) south from the center of the city.

History of the Sternwarte

A postcard's aerial view of the Sternwarte (with an approximate date of 1912 provided by Lars Winter, student assistant to the director) indicates the early stage of an eighteen acre (7.5 hectares) compound that became in 1968 the home of Hamburg University's special division devoted to the science of astronomy. Two centuries earlier, in 1721, Hamburg citizens had already begun an observatory for their port city on the Elbe River, which eventually led to this one in Bergedorf.

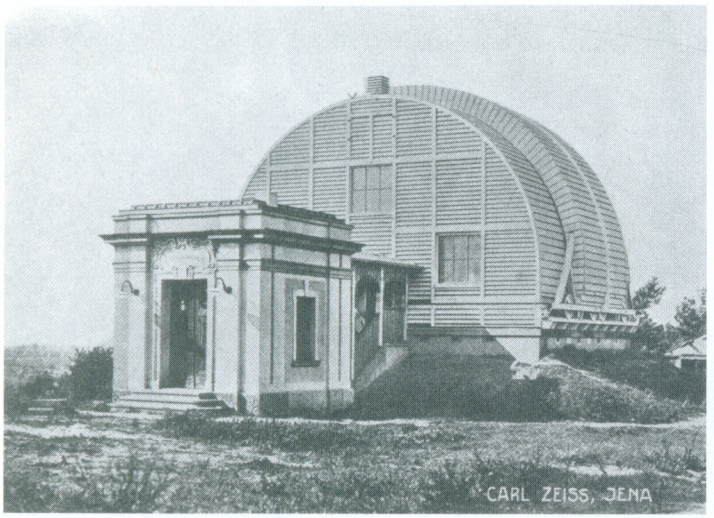
One of the largest European ports since the twelfth century and member of the Hanseatic League, Hamburg's dependence on the skies for navigation led to early developments in this science. By 1825, the citizens of Hamburg petitioned the Senate to erect an observatory within the lands of the Hamburg Museum of History.

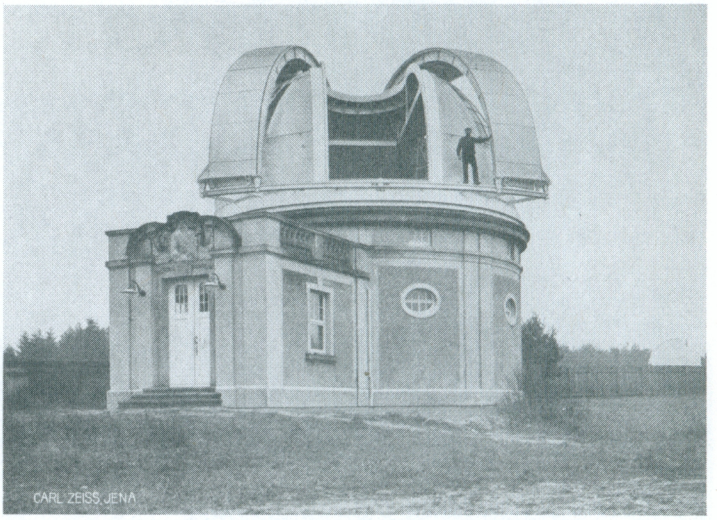
At that time, the supplier of the observatory equipment, a Hamburg citizen named J.G. Repsold, who had led the petition, willed the entire collection to the Society for the Hanseatic City, after his death in 1830.

In October 1863, the Hamburger Sternwarte became a State Institution. Under the direction of R. Schorr (1899-1941), a State University of Scientific Research and Development, with emphasis on physics took root in 1919. Not until 1968 did the Sternwarte become a division of the University of Hamburg.

Zeiss at the Sternwarte

In late summer 1994, the once bare landscape abounds with trees, green grass and quiet solitude: an ideal site for peaceful study. No longer operative and almost engulfed, stood the arched roof shelter of the early Zeiss telescope. In the lower right corner of the early photograph, the arch is opened and ready for the telescope to function. Notable is the nineteenth century's stick-style stepped porch, a





During the first quarter of the twentieth century, two Carl Zeiss Jena telescopes, the Meridiankreis and the Spiegelteleskop, began their service at the Hamburger Sternwarte in Bergedorf.

Today, Mother Nature dominates the large meridian circle of the arched roof.

The classical style entry and rustic stairway to the telescope's housing reveals 19th century interest in "gesamtkunstwerk" (a complete artwork), even for an Observatory.

transition to the simple classic entry, that formed a picturesque unit in a pastoral setting.

For the University, the cost of dismantling the building far outweighed the cost of letting nature take over, according to Dr. Christian de Vegt, present director of Hamburg University's Sternwarte. Munich's Deutsches Museum houses the telescope now. This early 1912 photo suggests that the Zeiss telescope might have been delivered about the same time. (Fig. 72, p. 78 in Felix Auerbach's The Zeissworks, also shows this building, but gives no date.)

For Zeiss's 40 inch (1 meter) mirror telescope, also in Auerbach on the same page as the other, life and excitement continued. Since the Hamburger Sternwarte's Annual Report of 1914-15 carried a photograph and report of the Spiegelteleskop building under construction, the installation of this "built-to-last-forever" Zeiss-Qualitaet product should have followed soon after the building's completion.

Today, the apparent differences in the original building include an additional small office and the conversion of the original window to an entry portal.

Lars Winter, who spoke fluent English and who has used the equipment, acclaimed the telescope's consistent tracking record. Said Winter, "We can always count on its reliability." All the machinery, the platform, the reflecting mirror, the housing, comprise the original installation that has been carefully tended for decades.

Soon after Hamburg University moved its departments of Physics and Astronomy Sciences to the Hamburger Sternwarte, they further updated and modernized their equipment. Now connected with a worldwide network of astronomers and astrophysicists who study outer space, they added a spectroscope for measuring the distances between stars from their vantage point on Earth. This has been the one and only addition to the mirror telescope...plus several coats of paint.

Original building protects its Spiegelteleskop. Changes include a small office and a window that became a door.

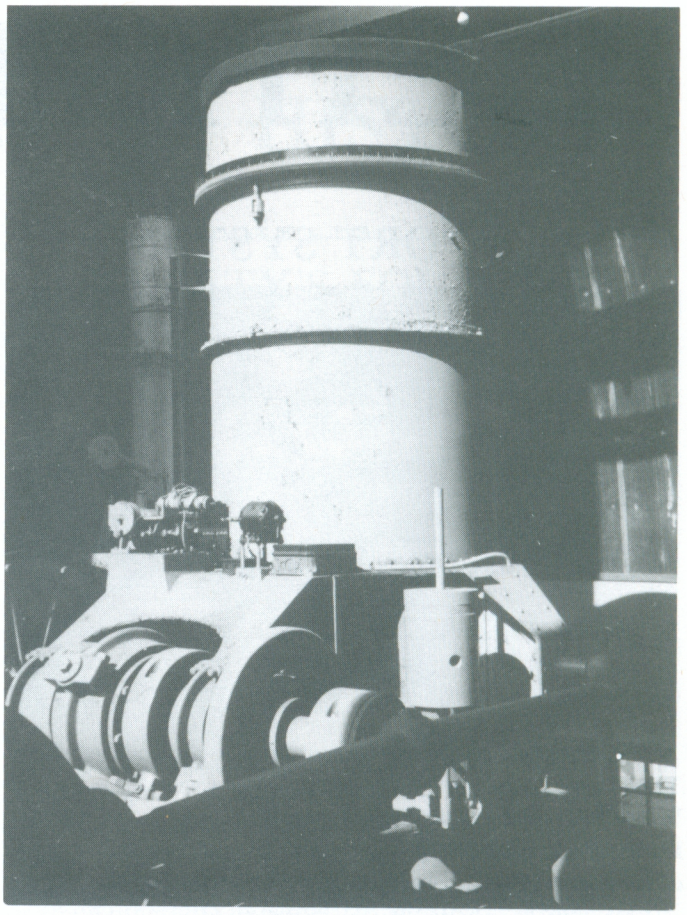
Schmidt Telescope

An especially important contribution to the Hamburger Sternwarte, before its association with Hamburg University, was from Bernhard Voldemar Schmidt (1879-1935), who delivered "...his first mirror to Bergedorf Observatory in 1918." An Estonian by birth, although he lived mostly in Germany, he was given the use of a basement workshop at Bergedorf in 1926. "In 1932 he made his first telescope with a spherical mirror and an aspheric corrector plate, although he did not reveal how it was made. He died in 1935 with the secret still intact." (Rudolph Kingslake, A History of the Photographic Lens, Academic Press, Inc., Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1989, p. 277.) On exhibition in a small museum at the Hamburger Sternwarte rests the prototype of the first Schmidt telescope.

The Sternwarte Today

Visible in the photo of 1912 and still in use today are several dome on drum buildings that hold small and large telescopes: each serving a different and specific purpose. Their library, which appears as a large mansion about five stories tall, contains sixty thousand books: one of the most comprehensive astronomical libraries and still growing.

In addition to their archival collection of negatives and



Maintaining its utility, the 40 inch mirror telescope (Spiegelteleskop), installed about 1915, continues to serve.

photographs of their work, modern measuring devices in their laboratories evaluate and interpret the information collected. There's a special work area set aside for the maintenance, repair, and development of machines for research. About twenty scientists with their technical and administrative assistants, most of whom are working toward their diplomas and doctorates live and work on this idyllic campus.

Presently, the Hamburger Sternwarte research also includes studies of the sun's rays, new astronomical phenomena, the components of the universe's superstructure, development of stars, components of interstellar material, structure of our Milky Way, galaxies, and the gravitational effects on all of these elements. Clearly, the Sternwarte has expanded its vision.

Only six years more will mark the beginning of the AD third millenium. For almost one hundred years at the Hamburger Sternwarte at Bergedorf, Zeiss's Spiegelteleskop has remained the same and has continued to serve, even in its changing environment. And from its record so far, it appears likely to serve "tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow."

The Hamburger Sternwarte is open to visitors from May through September, every first Wednesday of the month. For an appointment, please write: Hamburger Sternwarte, Gojenbergsweg 112, 21029 Hamburg. Telephone: 040 7252 4112 Fax: 040 7252 4198.

Editors note: To our esteemed Nick Grossman, many thanks for his always welcome critique.

LICHTSTRAHLEN

SUPPORT SYSTEM

The German Army's one meter stereoscopic rangefinder of World War II may be familiar to collectors of Zeiss militaria. But not often seen is the one-man support harness for the device shown here.

This one is on display at the German transportation museum in Sinsheim, Germany, about 15 miles southeast of Heidelberg off the autobahn to Heilbronn. It's a huge museum, rivalling the Smithsonian's Air and Space Museum in Washington, DC.

GERMAN MAGAZINE FOR COLLECTORS

PhotoDeal is a quarterly magazine devoted wholly to collectible cameras and those who collect them. It's handsomely printed, with many pages in full color. While the text is in German, the illustrations and specifications are easily decipherable by non-German-speaking readers.

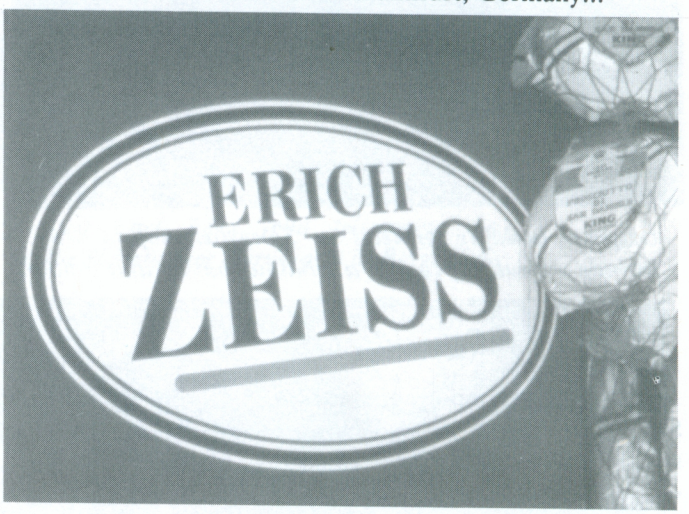
In recent issues, Editor/publisher Rudolph Hillebrand has featured such subjects as Robot history, a table which links cameras produced in East Germany before reunification with their trademarks and manufacturer's locations, a report on the Nikon Collectors Club meeting in Utrecht, features on dealers who specialize in collectibles, Juergen Kuc's interview with Wolf Wehran on the demise of Zeiss Ikon (previously published in the Autumn 1993 issue of the Journal) and much more of interest to collectors in general.

Particularly useful to those who travel to Europe are the notices of forthcoming European photo shows and auctions. While collectors' magazines come and go, PhotoDeal is now in its second year with a circulation of over 5000, and seems firmly established.

A one year airmail subscription to PhotoDeal is $55, most of which is attributable to the high cost of German postage. To subscribe, write to Rudolph Hillebrand, Kiefernweg 21, D-41470 Neuss, Germany.

FAMILIAR NAMES IN UNEXPECTED PLACES

On a delicatessen counter in Frankfurt, Germany...



at a fashion boutique on England's South Coast...

and over a laundromat in San Antonio, Texas.

LIGHT RAYS: NOTES OF INTEREST ABOUT ZEISS AND ITS HISTORY

CONTAX REPAIR MANUAL MODELS II AND III

This book by Peter Tooke will fill a great need among those who love the Contax II and III, and are not inclined to have them repaired professionally.

All one needs, with this 95-page book, is a modicum of mechanical skill, a few tools, and good helping of nerve. The chapters are arranged in a logical order; they cover disassembly, shutter repair, self-timer repair, rangefinder repair, servicing the focusing mount, and the reassembling of all these components.

Zeiss Contax Repair Manual is written very clearly and is easily understood. You feel as if you were at a workbench with a consummate expert looking over your shoulder, directing your every move. Even unforeseen problems are not overlooked, such as added-on synch. You are told what is possible to do and what is not practical to attempt. The print is large and clear, and the illustrations are very helpful.

This book is published by Hove Collectors Books, and is available from the following sources:

USA: The Saunders Group, 21 Jet View Drive, Rochester, NY, 14624-4996, Phone: 716-328-7800, Fax: 716-328-5078.

UK: Hove Collectors Books, 34 Church Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 2GJ, England.

No prices are given. However, a phone call revealed that the USA price is $29.95 plus $3.50 postage.

Maurice Zubatkin

WHO REPAIRS YOUR ZEISS EQUIPMENT?

One recurring problem among all who collect Zeiss equipment is the repair of equipment that can no longer be factory serviced. Those of us who own aging binoculars, microscopes, and telescopes — even cameras as recent as the Contarex — are wholly dependent on independent repair people to service, repair and restore their treasures.

At the suggestion of Maurice Zubatkin, the Society would like to seek out and establish a list of repair people who are equipped and able to do such work. To that end, a questionnaire is included in this issue of the Journal. You could do nothing more helpful for fellow collectors than fill it out and return it to the secretary. With your help, the Society will shortly publish a list of repair shops which might be able to restore your favorite Ermanox or realign your prized ANSALVENLO. Such shops do exist, and we ought to share their names. Perhaps you yourself do such work, either professionally or on an amateur basis.

The Society cannot recommend or endorse any particular shop or repair person. But publishing such a list should provide a valuable service to members old and new.

SOCIETY'S FOUNDER, THOMAS SCHREINER, DIES

On April 15, 1994, Thomas R. Schreiner, founder of the Zeiss Historica Society, died in North Tonowanda, New York at the age of 69. At the time of his death, he was a retired photography/art teacher in the Niagara Falls City School District in western New York State.

Tom Schreiner had a vision. After World War II, camera collecting became an increasingly popular hobby. His vision: to establish a not-for-profit educational society linking those who were interested in preserving the history, people, products and technical achievements of the Carl Zeiss companies.

To realize this goal, Schreiner set out to locate those who shared his interests. To broaden and expand his circle of acquaintances, he searched the advertisements in "Shutterbug" magazine to locate and contact individuals whose ads contained the words "Carl Zeiss," "Zeiss Ikon," or could otherwise be associated with Zeiss. After a year of correspondence Schreiner augmented his activities by periodically mailing information and fact sheets to a growing number of interested individuals. These activities culminated — not surprisingly — with an invitation to join in a meeting of kindred spirits and establish the Zeiss Historica Society.

The meeting was held in Toronto, Canada in May 1979. It was at this gathering that most of us met Tom Schreiner for the first time. He was well-prepared, and had in hand everything fom the proposed by-laws to all the formalities and legalities needed to bring to life a society that would be worthy of the name Zeiss.

The participants voted to establish the society he visualized. By acclamation, Tom was elected the first president of the Zeiss Historica Society. In addition to his work as president he also published our first newsletters, the forerunner of our present journal.

The by-laws specified that an annual meeting would be held in the fall. The first annual meeting was set for the fall of 1980. At that meeting, held in Rochester, New York, Tom Schreiner — a modest and private individual — relinquished his official duties and withdrew from the limelight. No doubt, he felt that his dream had materialized, and by withdrawing he would encourage others to become active participants. Tom Schreiner had a right to feel proud, because in that short period the Society had grown to over 100 members.

Tom lived to see a reunited Zeiss. Unfortunately, his departure has prevented him from fulfilling another dream: to visit Jena and walk in the footsteps of Carl Zeiss, Ernst Abbe, and Otto Schott.

Nick Grossman

Gracing the cover of the 1953 Montgomery Ward photographic catalog: the Contax IIa. Price? With f1.5 Opton Sonnar, $488. With f2 Opton Sonnar, $444. Catalog also offered Zeiss Ikon Contessa at $164.