

# BACK FOCUS

The Journal of the Australian Photographic Collectors Society (Inc)  
Incorporation Registration No. A16888V ABN 55 567 464974

Issue No. 76

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*Damien Liew shows how to Colour Your Day.*



*A Mandel-Ette 'While You Wait' Camera from Tom Hellwege is explained.*



*Victor Rider writes of an Interesting Find.*



*Explore the Bedfordflex with Lyle Curr.*



*Alan Elliott takes an Ermanox to the Opera.*



# THE AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTORS SOCIETY Inc.

Incorporation Reg. No. A16888V

ABN 55 567 464 974

## OFFICE BEARERS OF THE SOCIETY

		phone
PRESIDENT	ALAN KING	(03) 5241 2404
VICE PRESIDENT	ANDREW HUNTLEY	(03) 9576 1635
SECRETARY	MARGARET MASON	(03) 9836 3719
TREASURER	BRIAN HATFIELD	(03) 9898 2014
COMMITTEE	IAN CARRON	(03) 9435 5659
	KEN ANDERSON	(03) 9457 1985
	ANDREW KORLAKI	(03) 9870 7354
	LYLE CURR	(03) 5221 3445
	MARKET ORGANISERS	Alan King, Ken Anderson.

**Society Library:** Now kept at MRH and available at Society Meetings.

**BACK FOCUS EDITOR** IAN CARRON (03 9435 5659)

**Editorial Matters & Back Focus Submissions to:-**

Ian Carron. 10 Bicton Street. Greensborough. Victoria. 3088 Australia

Email: [backfocus@apcsociety.com.au](mailto:backfocus@apcsociety.com.au) If in doubt, please request details for article format required for submissions.

Address all **Society** correspondence to:-

Society e-mail address: [secretary@apcs.asn.au](mailto:secretary@apcs.asn.au) Web Site: [www.apcsociety.com.au](http://www.apcsociety.com.au)

Margaret Mason. 159 Canterbury Road. Canterbury. Victoria. 3126 Australia

Meetings are held at Australian Model Railway Association. 92 Wills Street. Glen Iris.

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Send Subscriptions to: Brian Hatfield. 4 Mitta Street. Box Hill North. 3129.

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## Notes from the desk of the Editor:

What better than the first issue of 2010 to welcome some new blood to our writing ranks. Input lately has been great and it is even better to see that some new members have taken the time to put an article together to contribute to our journal. Since then, others have arrived and are in preparation for future issues. Thanks and welcome and let's hope it encourages others to do the same.

Our February auction was very successful with a good attendance (photo report in this issue) and Max Amos passed a vote of thanks to secretary Margaret for the amount of work involved in organising these events. A story from Lyle Curr, 'One Lot Treasures' in this issue will give readers an idea of just what's involved. Max also passed a vote of thanks to myself for the steady improvements I have been striving for in Back Focus. Both brought a round of applause, which Margaret and myself truly appreciated.

Also in this issue is a report on our first Market at Box Hill, having relocated from Camberwell Civic Centre, a move that gave Alan King a sleepless night or two.

With Regards to all till the next issue and thanks to all members who support their journal,  
**Ian Carron. Editor.**

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# Add some Colour to your Collection.

Damien Liew



*Photo 1. A Klutch of Seven Kolourful Kodaks!  
( See cover for full glory!)*

Looking at brightening up your camera collection, why not take a look at the wonderful array of coloured box cameras that are available on the market. Companies such as Kodak, Agfa-Ansco, Coronet and Ensign marketed most in the late 1920's to the 50's. The best one's during the 30's when Art deco style was in fashion such as the Kodak Beau Brownie.

The camera I am writing about from my collection is the Kodak No.2 Portrait Brownie camera. This smart looking model was introduced in 1929 and discontinued 1935. It was the first design and manufactured camera to come out of the newly built Kodak Factory in Harrow

London. It is of the box shape made of metal. Taking 120 film giving a 6x9cm image or 2¼ x 3¼". The lens is a Meniscus with built in portrait lens, in front of a Rotary shutter. Camera has two brilliant finders one each for portrait and landscape

The front of the camera has an angled edge and has a raised round plastic lens surround with white lettered Portrait Brownie at the top and No.2 at the bottom. It has a thin aluminum metal line on front, which joins to an oval around finders. Behind the plastic as mentioned earlier is a built in portrait lens moved in place when taking a photo by pulling a lever on the side.

The body is covered in one of seven colours, Red, Blue, Maroon, Dark green, Grey, Brown and Black of leatherette material. It has a black metal trim and handle. The camera had two different winders 1929-31 a Key winder and 1931-35 a knob winder. Inside is a metal film carrier. Lifting a metal clasp opens the back.

I got my first one about 7 years ago in red. My sister was on a working holiday in London and saw one at an antique market. She knew I was collecting old cameras so she

contacted me by phone told me the condition looked good as far as she could see and she described it. Not having one and taking a punt I told her to get it. It cost about 20 pounds.

The next one was the black one I got for about \$5 at a camera market. The other colours I bought over the years of various prices, the dearest about \$100.



*Photo 2. Knob winder, 1929-31.*



*Photo 3. Knob winder, 1931-35.*



Here's a clever idea: A new model Brownie with which crisp, clear "close-ups" can be made just as easily as ordinary views.

For a "close-up," you just press down a small lever which brings an extra lens into position. This lever springs back automatically when the finger is removed. Simple to use and handsome to look at. One of the first cameras from Kodak's new English works—a quality article all through.

Picture size is 2¼ x 3¼ inches. In black, 19/6  
In red, green, brown, grey or blue - - 21/6

*Photo 4. Original advertising catalogue, c1929 for the new coloured Brownie cameras.*

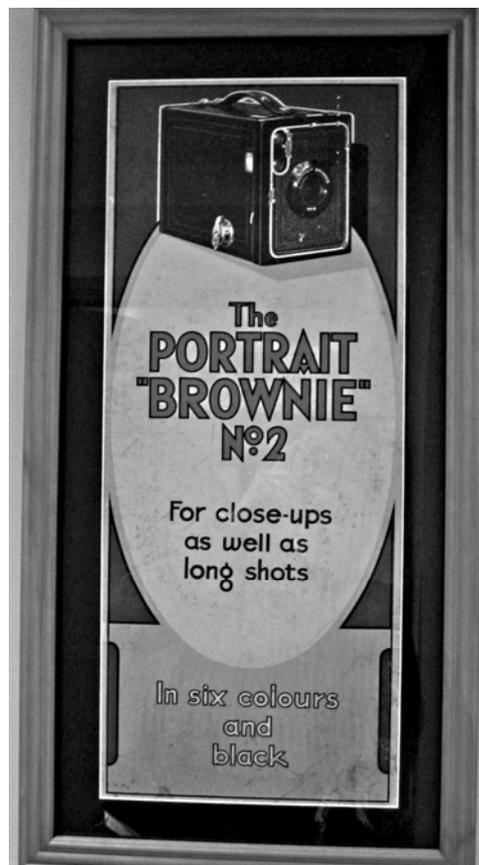
I am lucky enough to have an original advertising poster sign of the camera as well. It came out of an old chemist shop from behind a wall shelf. Not 100% it does have a little bit of mould and a few pot marks but looks great.

When collecting/buying these cameras be aware that they are now between 75-80 years old. Some are found with leatherette shrinking or lifting due to the glue age. The black painted edges sometimes are worn or dented. The top handle can also be dried out or broken. Not much can usually happen to the basic shutter and an airbrush can blow out any dirt. The viewing mirrors can sometimes be loose or losing their silver. These cameras may still be used today as 120 film is still available. (Not sure for how much longer). There are still great examples out there, if you wait.

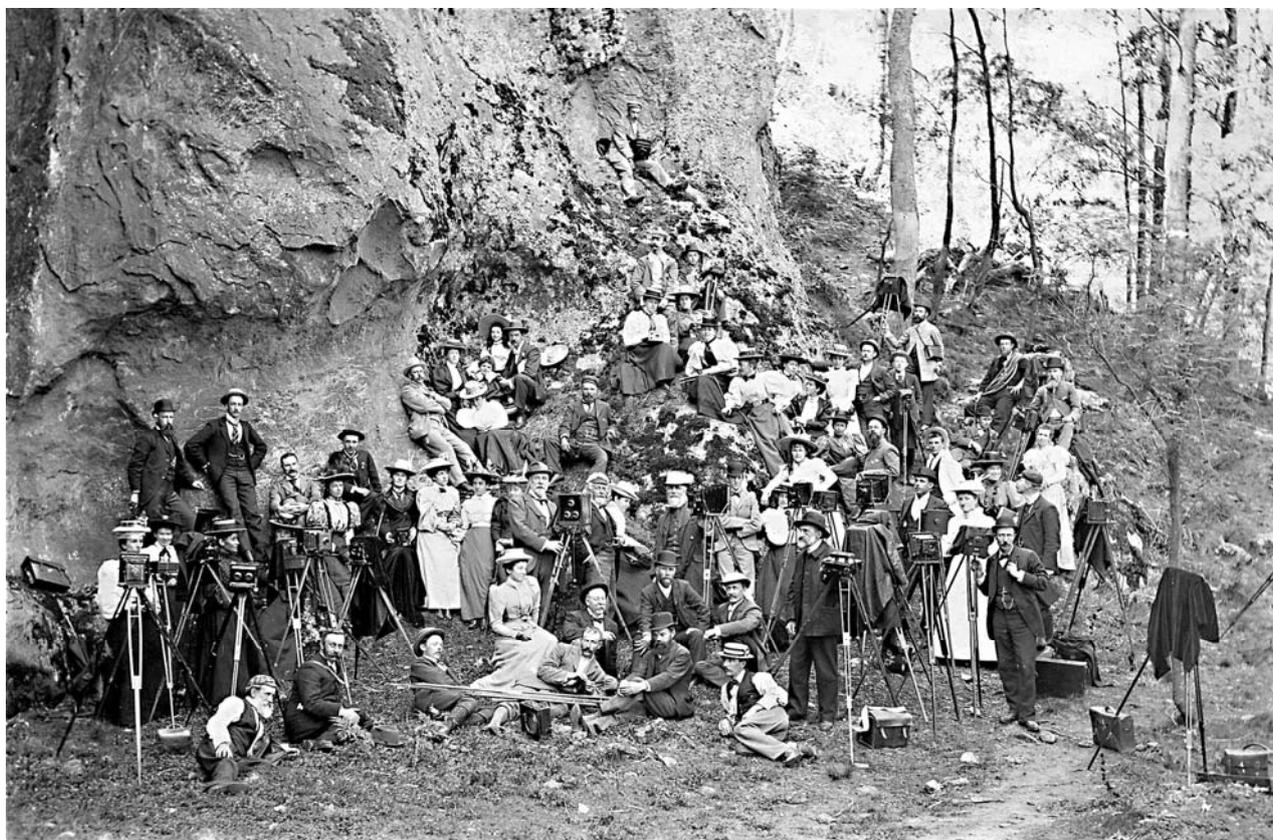
Coloured versions green and brown are hard to find. Black is also as it was made two years less than the others. I do see Red, Grey and Blue a lot on eBay. I have seen one or two with the original yellow package box with Brownie character on them sell for around \$500. One was from Australia I remember; I think it has gone overseas. These cameras were also imported and sold in Australia. Thanks Lyle.

There is also a very rare Black Modernist covering version released in Nov 1930 UK for Christmas in limited numbers. Otherwise compared to your standard box camera these stand out from the crowd and look great on display.

Happy collecting.



*Photo 5. The Advertising Poster obtained from an old chemist shop.*



Tom Hellwege submitted this photograph of an early camera club enjoying an outing. Some interesting pieces, now highly collectable, are shown in use. Note the intrepid photographer posed high on the rock face in the centre top of the photograph.

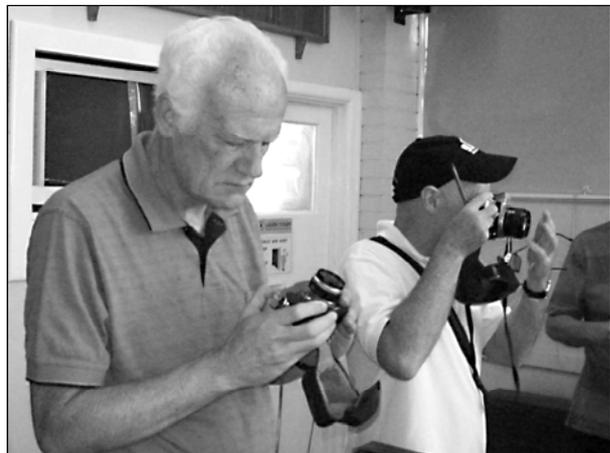
# Auction Day, February 21st.

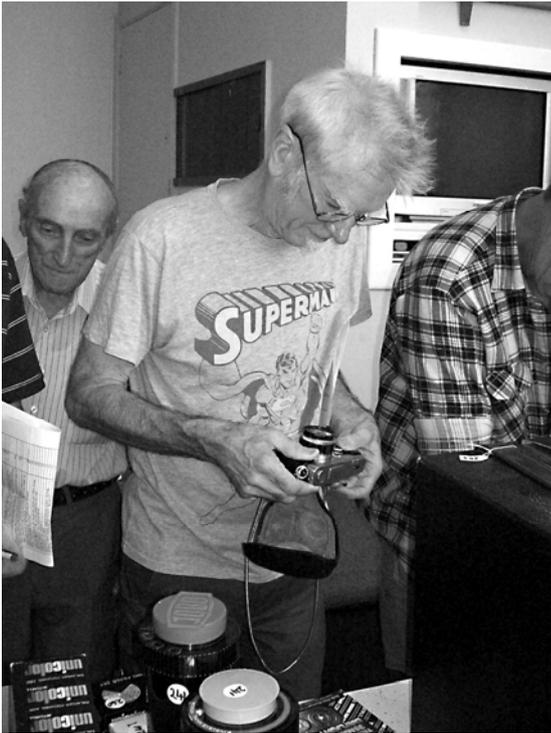
Photos and Report Ian Carron.

Sunday was a typical bright and sunny Melbourne day, (almost too good to spend inside) and the gathering was stamping at the doors when we finished setting up the 360 lots to be inspected, picked over and closely scrutinised before the serious business of bidding began.

Lots ranged from the inevitable 'box of goodies' to press cameras, a Voigtländer Prominent (near mint) with box and all paperwork and just about everything in between. Although I'll stand to be corrected, it looks as though the Agfa Clack market may have dried up at long last, don't recall seeing one!

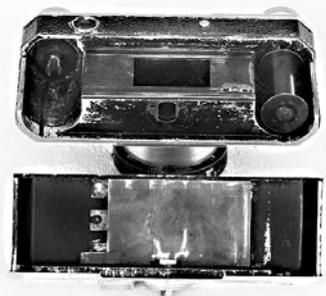
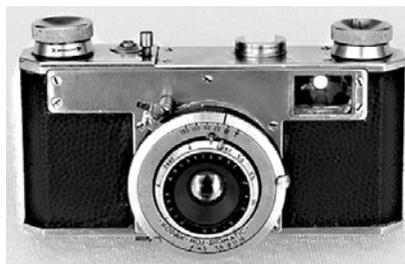
Some items brought spirited bidding, with others, Max had to practice dentistry, almost like pulling teeth. The funny thing was though, and this happened more than once, holding up an item, he'd call for a starting bid of say, "\$15?" Dead Silence. "\$10?" Not even an eyelid batted. Finally at \$1 a hand went up. Then a \$3 bid. Then it went to \$5! Finally, in jumps of \$2 this item sold for around \$27! Funny things, auctions.





## Can YOU help Identify this Camera?

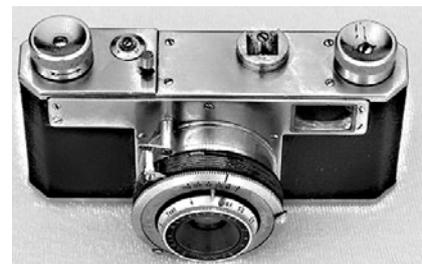
One of our members has recently come by the camera shown below and cannot identify its origins. It looks and feels like a Contax (but obviously isn't) and is not branded in any way. It has a Kodak Anastigmat f4.5/51mm lens in a Kodak No 1 Diomatic shutter.



If

any reader (not just APCs members) can help, please reply to

[backfocus@apcsociety.com.au](mailto:backfocus@apcsociety.com.au) and, in the interest of sharing knowledge, replies will be published and credits given in our next issue.



## On Bakelite and Minicams, Instamatics and an Uncommon Common Agfa, all One Lot Treasures from the Feb. 2009 Society Auction.

Lyle Curr.

The Australian Photographic Collectors' Society Auction, 15<sup>th</sup> February 2009. A pretty typical auction. It goes for half a day; some bidders get a bargain, some just enjoy the social aspects of the day, and generally all have a good time. But...



*Pic 1. Margaret's home before the auction.*

**(Pic 1)** For months beforehand our normally hardworking secretary has her workload doubled, tripled, increased by who knows what factor, as she sees her house overrun by boxes of photographic apparatus that comes in from the four corners of this vast country.

There is a need to catalogue everything, but this is not just adding a number and writing it on a list. OHHH ... NOOO! Everything must be checked and at least cursorily examined, shutters fired, cosmetics looked at, lenses checked, daydreamed about, generally played with, coveted, lusted after, put on the shelf to see how it fits! Enough! Margaret, get back to work!

Now here I must state that I don't think this part bothers Margaret too much. After all, who amongst us would not salivate at the prospect of sitting down – or more to the point, stepping gingerly between countless boxes of cameras, and finally finding a small space to perch - with a house full of cameras to perform the above mentioned operations upon?

But seriously folks, it is a lot of work, and the catalogue produced is usually of the highest standard and is the instrument by which we tune our day in preparedness for the orchestra of bidding that bursts forth melodiously as conductor Maestro Amos coaxes the music from the chorus of voices on the floor.

I must say here- sorry Margaret- but the odd mix up does occur, but when you have the volume of lots, and with some lots containing multiple cameras, or even more than one box in the same lot, there is always the potential for the odd boo boo, and the number of blues we have is astoundingly small given the work involved, so despite the fact I have alluded to the odd missing lot, I must here say to Margaret, HUSAR! HUSAR! A long, tedious and at times positively boring job well done, not just this time, but for year after year, time after time. **THANKS MARGARET!**

Of course the catalogue has to be typed and printed, stapled together and bagged for shipping too.

But that's not all. The stuff- all those **CAMERAS AND BOXES YOU SEE** on the tables at the auction during viewing – doesn't just get there under its own steam. I know there are many lots that move pretty quickly, but that's at the actual auction. They are all slow going prior to the start of bidding. **(Pic 2)**

Recently it has fallen to society members to transport the lots to the auction site. Getting to Margaret's place early on the Sunday morning, our



*Pic 3. Lots are carried into the hall by members of the committee.*

President in his bordering on vintage too (1989 model) Mitsubishi van, loads the many boxed lots with the help of a few committee members with insomnia, then everything is transported to the hall. **(Pic 3)**

Here, a few of the more sleep prone of us meet the gallant early band and set up the tables in the hall.

Then the lots are whisked – huff, puff, wheeze, wheeze- into the hall in a trice??? Well as quickly as we can anyway.)

Fossicking through box after box, finding lots, placing them in numerical order on the tables is actually much harder than you



*Pic 2. The van should be an honorary member of the Society. Here it is seen with President Alan ready to help load.*

would think, as there is a little confusion at this stage of the game owing to the need to put (Pic 4.) large numbers of lots in boxes together, and the fact that lot 1 is a tiny sub mini and lot 2 is 35mm movie film projector three feet high means that not every lot goes into a box in numerical order; it's a matter of fit!



Pic 4. Sorting out the lots can be a time consuming business.



Pic 5. The "Viewing."

But by 10am- usually- everything is prepared and the hard workers can now sit and watch the oglers swarm around the tables and pick out their fancies. (Pic 5.)

As luck happens, yours truly has carted

water in a bucket to the urn and turned it on so we can all have a hot cup of tea, the makings of which have again been gathered and delivered by our secretary- is there no limits to this woman's talents? (Pic 6.)



Pic 6. Playing 'tea lady' is just one more of Margaret's many chores on auction day!

But it's not all over yet. While the mob circles, enjoying cutting out the bargain and branding their catalogue with their mark, our financial overseer, the whiz kid of the figures, our dollar counting treasurer is preparing his trusty computer so he is able to collect the correct amounts of money as the spend fest nears its close. (Pic 7.)



Pic 7. Our 'Bean Counter' getting ready for a busy day.

All this takes place before our general membership- I really wanted to say "You Lot!"- but thought I better put it more "nicely"- so; before our general membership, and bidders, get to peruse the days offering. So next time you sit in the chair and raise your hand to bid, win an item, or stand in that queue at the end to pay your pennies, please spare a thought to what actually went into getting you to that stage (pardon the (pictorial) pun). (Pic 8.)

There is still a fair bit of work goes on behind the scenes after the auction as well, but for now, let's rather have a bit of fun.

One of the items I obtained at the last auction should provide us with an interesting story.

I had checked out the catalogue prior to auction day, and had put a mark next to Lot #314, described thus:



Pic 8. The queue at the end of the auction, waiting to pay.

313	LENS TOKINA AI-X zoom 35-200mm	35	
314	Three bakelite cameras Baby Brownie, KODAK Bullet plus Pickwik (USA) plus KODAK Instamatic and AGFA Rapid Modell	35	25
315	ZEISS IKON CONTESSA Tessar f4.5/45 Good cosmetically Working	125	

This Lot was 5 cameras in total, all pretty innocuous, but the **Baby Brownie** and The **KODAK** – well done Margaret, most people call it a Brownie- Bullet, interested me. Of course technically it is the **Eastman Bullet**, to differentiate from the early line of Kodak Bullet box cameras, but it is commonly known as the Kodak Bullet. The third Bakelite camera, the Pickwik also sounded intriguing. The Agfa Rapid and Kodak Instamatic did not barely even register on my psyche. Now here beginneth the lesson. Always check the catalogue and **READ** what it says.

In this case, the Kodak Instamatic was not identified further, and there are over a hundred different models, most of them of little interest. As for an Agfa Rapid, well they are less desirable even than the humble Instamatic. But here, the Agfa Rapid was described as Modell. Note the **2 Ls.** It was not a misprint in the spelling, but a true representation of the camera listed in the catalogue.

**I missed it!!!!**

So I marked my catalogue with \$25, the amount I was prepared to pay for the 3 Bakelite cameras, and forgot the other two.

Came the day of the auction, and at viewing, the thing that struck me about the little box of cameras that I was interested in was that the Instamatic mentioned in the description and totally dismissed by me, actually turned out to be an Instamatic **S-10**. Now that may not mean much to you, but is actually one of the least common and certainly more interesting of the Kodak 126 cartridge cameras. But it was not enough for me to increase my bidding amount on the box. I did not even look at the Agfa Rapid, other than by glance to confirm it was one of the very common and totally wearisome Iso Rapids that should be thrown out. I know a lot of people think the same about Kodak 126's, so remember, to each his own. But, I should have looked more closely at that little Agfa.

The three Bakelite cameras were all very nice, no chips or cracks in the old plastic, so I would go for them.

The auction wore on, I bid on few items, won a couple, lost most of them, then came Lot 314, a box of five cameras.

**(Pic 9.)**

The bidding was slow, until I finally started the bidding at \$5, then it went mad, one dollar at a time, to \$24. I timed my run so I got to make my last bid at my maximum \$25. "Come on Max, knock it down." How come our bold auctioneer knocks down other lots super quickly, but when I bid he searches the room, talks to a couple of people, has a cup of tea, does anything to stall till someone else bids. I must have a talk to that man! But no one else **was** going to bid. The little box of cameras was mine. **(Pic 10.)**



*Pic 9. The Auction is under way.*



*Pic 10. Auctioneer Max in action, and Andrew holding up the current lot for all to see.*

Actually, Auctioneer Max is really another of the stalwart and hard working crew that makes our auctions happen. It must also be pointed out here that those people you see running around and finding the next lot to be auctioned, and holding it up for you to see, is also doing quite a demanding job. So thanks to those who do that too!

When I was forming the outline of this article, this is where I had intended to start. Bringing the box home from the auction and sitting to examine it more closely than is possible either at viewing or during the auction. But, as I got thinking about, thought we should look at what really goes into the auction, and perhaps give you a better appreciation of the work

involved when you next arrive at 10am at the hall wanting to begin viewing of the hundreds of items!

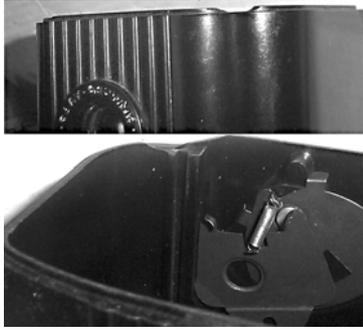
So, let's have a look at what we had in the little box of cameras I bought for \$25.

**(Pic 11.) The Baby Brownie.** A cute little brittle hard plastic camera, not really Bakelite, but covered by the now generic descriptive name given to any early plastic. This tiny camera was the first fully moulded plastic camera, and was designed by none other than that master of the art deco style, Walter Dorwin Teague.

**(Pic 12.)** Usually found with cracks or chips in the "Bakelite" particularly around the light tight flange on the top of the body of the camera where the two halves part for loading. But this camera was perfect.



*Pic 11. THE Baby Brownie.*



**Pic 12.** *Damage to the light-sealing flange. This is internal, and does not show on display.*



**Pic 13.** *THE Eastman Bullet.*

**(Pic 13.) The Eastman Bullet.**

This also was made in the mid 30's, introduced in 1936, 2 years after the Baby Brownie. Again moulded brittle black plastic, not strictly Bakelite but commonly labelled as such. It is a quirky camera, often called "torpedo" shape, a description that I have been unable to embrace over the years. It has a

screw out front to position the lens in the taking position thus keeping the camera body depth to a minimum. The front is a true

circular helix- or helical- as it is commonly called on various cameras. All completely moulded plastic.

It is a relatively common camera, and one of those that is more often than not found with its original box. The one in the auction box did not have the camera box with it. This camera also had no chips or cracks in the Bakelite, again unusual but very nice.

**(Pic 14.) The Pickwik.** A number of cameras came out of various small, usually toy manufacturers in the US in the 1930's. Known as "minicams" they were 1/2 frame 127 cameras, taking 16 pics on a roll instead of the normal 8. Hence the two red windows in the back. You wound the film to the 1st window, took your pic, then wound to the 2nd window. They were all cheaply made, and are thin brittle plastic Bakelite like material.



**Pic 14.** *THE Pickwik.*

This one is called the Pickwik, and is made by the Monarch Mfg. Co of Chicago. Most of these little cameras seemed to come from a group of such manufacturers centered around Chicago.

Usually found with rusted, poorly coated metal parts, and chipped and cracked plastic bodies, this one was in exceptional condition. Only minimal wear to the knobs and clasps, and the faceplate was spotless. The T&I shutter works, and there are no chips or cracks anywhere. It has a 50mm "Graf Lens" with an aperture of about f11. Usually with direct vision (no glass) viewfinders, the Pickwik has plain glass at the rear of the viewfinder tube with an open front.

The mincams are natty little cameras, some would say cute, and make an interesting collection in their own right.



**Pic 15.** *THE Instamatic S-10.*

**(Pic 15.) The Kodak Instamatic S-10.** Kodak introduced the world to a new style of snapshot photography in 1963. The new 126 film cartridge made loading a camera with the now ubiquitous 35mm size film simply a matter of dropping a Kodapack cartridge into the hole in the camera and closing the back.

Always on the look out for ways to simplify photography for the masses, Kodak in the UK introduced the Instamatics in February 1963. That's right, Kodak Ltd London released the first 126 Kodak, the Instamatic 50, in February. The accepted "first Instamatic," the

Model 100, did not appear in the US till a full month later!

The quintessential Instamatic is a small rectangular box with one knob or lever on top and not much else. Almost all models are common, and they are not very attractive to all but a few dedicated to the breed collectors. But the reasons there are a few Instamatic 126 collectors out there are the exception to the rule. Kodak, and to a lesser extent some of the few other manufacturers who entered the 126 race, made the odd (I use the word advisedly) departure from the standard squarish shape. Some of these "departures" were eccentric to say the least, and the S-10 is one of them.

The S-10 came along in 1967. It has a sleek, narrow body with curved ends and edges. It has a streamlined look about it. The clean lines are broken by the fixing of a huge winding knob not on

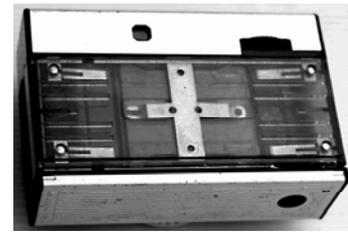
the top of the camera, but **at one end!** You actually wind in the vertical plane, rather than the normal horizontal. Makes sense really.) (Pic 16.)



Pic 16. The winding knob on the end of the S-10. Really easy to use.



Pic 17. THE Agfa Rapid MODEL L.



Pic 18. The Rapid system as seen through the transparent back of the MODEL L

The narrowness of the body is obtained by placing the lens in a rectangular tube that retracts into the body for storage, and pops out at the press of a button for use. The shutter release also retracts upon closing the front, and it too “pops out” when the front is released. As if all this was not enough, the little camera had a dark **green** covering, which appeared like leather, but is probably an artificial substance. It is very thin almost like it was painted on. It’s not, and it exudes a slimy substance over time. If you find one of these cameras that have sat for years in a box, you will have to wipe it off with a damp cloth – and your hands too. I have no idea what causes it.

(Pic 17.) **The Agfa RAPID MODELL.** Probably meant to be MODEL L but a misprint on the **very small run** of these cameras that were made. Of the most common and very uncollectible Iso Rapid type of Agfa camera, this one was a complete surprise. As I said above, I missed the allusion to its better status as I read the catalogue, but even more unforgivable, I did not even bother to examine it during auction viewing, as **I knew** it was a worthless and uninteresting camera. Having committed that cardinal sin, it seems almost unfair that it was still in the box when I got it home!

This is probably considered a rare camera or at least a **rare model** of a simple, not rare camera. This is an Agfa Iso-Rapid Model L. It was a salesman's sample used to explain to prospective customers the new Agfa Rapid 35mm cassette system, introduced in 1964. This camera was made in time to be out in the field in 1964, so is one of the very first Rapid models and is different from the common Iso Rapid with its **red lettering and Agfa logo** on the front, and a **transparent** back to enable the viewing of the Rapid System in place. Not much good for keeping the film light tight though! But transparent and demo cameras are very collectable! (Pic 18.)

This camera is in quite good cosmetic condition, and **had one Agfa Rapid cassette inside.** I added another Rapid cassette, some old 35mm film, and I now had a complete demonstration model of the Rapid system.

Unveiled in 1964, the Rapid system supplied standard 35mm film in special metal cassettes. Easier to load as there was no take up spool, the film end was just placed beside the lip of a second cassette on the other side of the camera. No rewinding either, the take up cassette was just removed and taken for processing.

The Rapid system was Agfa’s answer to the 126 cartridge and actually was technically superior in that the Rapid cameras used a standard pressure plate whereas the main fault of the Kodakpak cartridge was that it did not keep the film perfectly flat. Despite this, the Rapid system did not seem to appeal to the public, and very few quality- read collectable- cameras were made that use the Rapid cassettes.

But here was one of the few of these cameras that are collectable, and I had obtained it merely by chance.

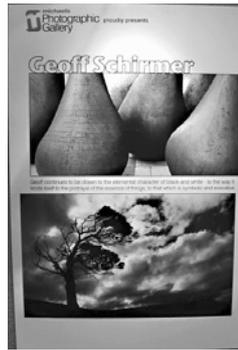
So that’s \$5 a camera I got for my \$25, all of them a little on the unusual side. Did I get my moneys worth? I researched all of these cameras on eBay to get a true indication of their value. Despite what **you** may value these cameras at, here are the real prices that people were prepared to pay.

Baby Brownie, no external cosmetic problems,	\$55	
Eastman Bullet, again no external chips or cracks,	\$50	Pickwik and similar minicams, \$45
Instamatic S-10,	\$25	Agfa Rapid MODEL L, \$30

That’s not bad value by anyone’s estimate. So look in those boxes before you bid! Come along to the next auction, enjoy yourself, and get far more for your money than playing the pokies.

# Public Recognition for Two Members

Ian Carron

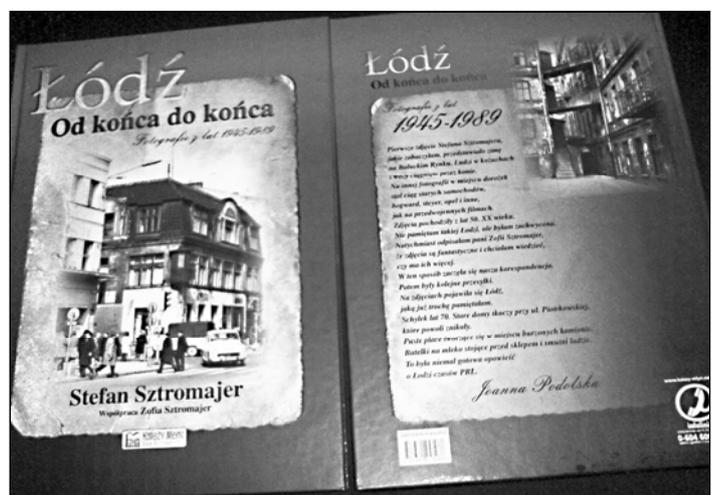


The beautiful Black and White photographic images of **Geoff Schirmer** went on display during January at Michaels Gallery in the CBD. To quote Geoff, the process of being accepted for an exhibition at Michaels Gallery was rather straightforward. I simply wrote to them, including a copy of my photographic CV. They requested a few samples of my work, and accepted me. The curator of the Alpha gallery, Russell Shayer, is a friendly and efficient person. Peter Michael saw the exhibition soon after it was set up, on Dec 31 and was “very impressed”. So, that is a good start.

For quite some time now I have been aware that **Stefan Sztromajer** has been steadily scanning all his older images of his home city, Lodź, (pronounced ‘woods’) to disc and compiling a book on its history, 1945-1989.

I recently received an email excitingly proclaiming the culmination of many years of dedicated work. Here it is in Stefan’s own words:

*Recently we had good time as our book about Lodź at last had been published, sooner than it was previously stated, probably the publisher expected to sell more copies for Christmas gifts. Two weeks ago Zosia very excited called me, she was just at the bookseller’s display and saw our book. Of course I went as fast as possible to meet her, and buy a copy but the shopkeeper refused, and told all the books were sold, while on the display there was only defective copy. I was very glad as it was a prove the book was really accepted by the customers.*



# Photography at the Opera in 1948

Alan Elliott

It is encouraging to read stories about picking up vintage cameras for the proverbial song but this tale is different. I acquired a famous camera for nothing, but then threw it away!



*Ermanox with 10cm f2 Ernostar.*

About 1946 a friend knowing my interest in photography gave me an old camera. It was an Ermanox with a 10cm f2 Ernostar lens with six beautiful VP size (4.5 by 6 cm) single plate holders and its leather case. But there was a catch – the focal plane shutter did not work. I took the camera to Wagner's on an upper floor in a run-down building in Elizabeth Street, Melbourne. Mr Wagner took one look at it, shook his head and handed it back to me.

At that time I had no interest in old cameras, but I could see a use for that magnificent Ernostar lens in its focussing mount. Opera was being revived after a lapse of several years. Inspired by articles in the *Miniature Camera Magazine* I had an ambition to take photos during actual performances, not rehearsals. As I was saving up to buy a car, a Leica or Contax with a fast

lens was way beyond my budget. It occurred to me that if I could adapt that Ernostar to the body of my humble Perfex 22 it might be possible to achieve my aim. The Perfex was not a thing of beauty, nor was it reliable. However, the Scienar lens could be unscrewed from the body, and thus would suit my purpose.

Brushing aside the theoretical niceties concerning the precision needed for this project I went ahead with the confidence of the innocent. I made a housing for the lens from scrap brass, soldered a bracket to it to fix it to the tripod bush of the Perfex, and secured the lens in place. The back of the camera could be removed so it was possible to check the focus with a ground-glass screen made from a microscope slide. Not surprisingly the infinity mark was not correct, so I made a new focussing scale. After fitting a mask to the viewfinder to suit the field of view my cobbled together camera was ready for a trial run. The rangefinder was of course not useable so focussing was by estimation. The fastest films available were Kodak Super XX and Ilford Selo Hypersensitive Panchromatic, which I think were rated at 200 ASA. They were poor films by modern standards.



*The Perfex 22.*

With my camera loaded with Super XX, I attended a performance. Strictly speaking photography was not permitted, but in those days few people were equipped both to take theatre photographs and silly enough to try it, so the ushers were not really alert to what I was doing. By taking care to be as unobtrusive as possible and only to shoot when the music was loud enough to drown the sound of the shutter I managed to get by without any complaints.

There were practical problems. Firstly, during a performance it was impossible to see the camera settings. Secondly, the stage lighting varied enormously. The first film showed that under average stage lighting an exposure at 1/25 of a second at full aperture gave a usable negative and that shots taken during dim lighting were a waste of time. I decided to leave the shutter speed at 1/25 and for those occasions when the lighting was bright I would stop down one or two stops by guesswork.

The problems of camera shake, subject movement, limited depth of field and focussing by estimation combined to make the operation rather hit and miss; yet luckily I did manage to get some reasonably successful shots. In all I took photographs at five opera performances: *Madam Butterfly*, *La Boheme*, *Faust*, *The Barber of Seville* and *The Magic Flute*. The Perflex then developed a shutter problem thus putting an end to my theatre photography. I assembled a small album of the photographs, which is now held by the State Library of Victoria.



*Italian Opera Company production of Madam Butterfly, His Majesty's Theatre, Melbourne, 1948. Entrance of Butterfly (Rina Malatrasi). Photograph taken from the Dress Circle. Ernostar/Perflex, Super XX, 1/25<sup>th</sup> at f2. developed in D76.*

Some years later when moving house I threw out the Ermanox body, the darkslides and the carrying case! Eventually, when I became interested in such matters, I discovered that the Ermanox was a groundbreaking camera in its day and that working examples fetch high prices. Even my camera with its broken shutter would have been worth something. After joining the APCS (I think it was the PCS back then) I sold the lens to a fellow member.

utilise the revolutionary lens designed by that company and was launched in 1924 as the Ernox camera. The name was soon changed to Ermanox. The camera was unique in that its f2 lens was the fastest lens of any production camera at the time and opened up new avenues for instantaneous photography without flash. The company's advertisement "What you see, you can photograph" was not much of an exaggeration. Later, a lighter and slightly faster version with an f1.8 lens of 85 mm focal length was introduced. The most famous Ermanox exponents were Dr Erich Salomon and Felix Man. The lens was discontinued before lens coating was introduced so its full potential was never realised. The Ernemann company was taken over by Carl Zeiss in the late 1920s and the Zeiss Sonnar is said to have been developed from the Ernostar.

A brief word about the Ermanox. The camera was manufactured by Ernemann AG of Dresden to



*National Theatre production of The Magic Flute, Princess Theatre, Melbourne, 1948. Pamina (Barbara Wilson) and Papageno (Stefan Haag). Photograph taken from the Front Stalls. Ernostar/Perflex, Super XX, 1/25<sup>th</sup> at f2. developed in D76.*

The Perflex 22 was one of a range of American-made 35 mm cameras with specifications rivalling the Leica or Contax but made to unrealistically low selling prices. As a result, precision, reliability and quality control were lacking. It was a recipe for disaster and the company eventually folded.

Footnote: For more information on the Ermanox see *Back Focus* for March 1993, and for the Perflex see *Back Focus* for November 2002. If you would like to own an Ermanox just get on to eBay. There is often one available at around \$4000. Better check that the shutter is working!

# March Market

Report and Photos: Ian Carron

This Market was the first at our new venue, the Box Hill Town Hall in Whitehorse Road and, if this event is anything to go by, the move was well worthwhile. With fifty-eight trader tables offering the widest possible assortment of goods to the public, the hall was fully booked and the 9am opening saw a good influx of eager buyers all looking for a bargain.



*Terry Boland proudly displays his knob wind Miranda.*

I personally arrived around 9.30 and already new owners were carrying enlargers, projectors and other pieces out to their vehicles for the journey to a new home. I was greeted at the front steps by long time member and friend, Terry Boland who had come for nothing more than a look and found a camera he'd long lusted after, an early knob wind Miranda in top condition. After a mild bit of haggling, he had it!



*General view of the hall from the stage.*

*Photo courtesy of John Warkentin of [www.yourdigitaleye.com](http://www.yourdigitaleye.com)*



*In the Market for a camera?  
Take your pick!*

On entering the hall one almost needed a baseball bat to clear a path as it was packed. Buyers everywhere. The beauty of this venue is that all the tables are supplied and set up to our plan. A 'walk in walk out arrangement. Just off the main hall is a refreshments room serving tea, coffee and light snacks at very reasonable pricing, a nice change.

One can't say that the fifty-eight tables weren't packed with a wide variety of options for every kind of buyer. From books and images, cameras ranging from pocket money to serious folding stuff, it was all there. And, as always with these events, there was the catching up with old friends that only seem to happen at the Markets. As well as meeting up with old friends from the trade, it was great to take a coffee break and have a good chat with Marcel Safier from Queensland again.



*John Corneille demonstrates a camera to a potential customer.*



The 'silk' department on one of the tables.

Oh how I drooled after a rangefinder Canon with that 'beer bottle' lens on the front, but it always eluded me! (At a price I could afford!)



From little flashes to BIG lenses.

Mamiya RZ II kit. (110mm/120 back)	ML #600	3 month
" RZ 180mm Lens	\$250	
" RZ 100-200 Zoom	\$275	
" RZ 120 Back	\$90	Sold
" RZ 220 Back	\$70	
* " RZ 350/5.6 Apo-tele lens	\$650	
" Twin-Cable Release	\$30	Sold
" Prism AE	\$160	Sold
Fuji S3pro body (Nikon)	\$375	Sold
Nikkor Ai 50mm f2.0	\$90	
" Ai 105mm f2.5	\$200	Sold
" AF 70-210 tele zoom	\$150	* Canon #17,4014
Canon EOS-30 body + grip	\$120	* Canon #17,4014
Canon EX-SR0 II - as new!	\$475	* Canon #17,4014
Gary Fong light sphere II (Cloudy-C3)	\$45	* Canon #17,4014
Bowens Pulsar Radio-trigger x 2	\$375	* Canon #17,4014
Olympus XA Mk I inc flash	\$	Sold
Mamiya 7 panorama-kit	\$140	* Canon #17,4014
Hyundai 1000w Halogen lights x 2	\$220	ea
Voigtlander Bessa "L" with 12mm f5.6 lens	\$550	Sold
Hasselblad A24 Back	\$80.00	

Always nice to see items price ticketed but this huge sign really stated it well.



Come and buy, we don't want to take it home!



A \$ box to get them in? Then hook them with the good items!



Variety here. From cameras to lighting through to darkroom and enlargers!



Trevor Thomas gave me the photo on the right, retrieved by his daughter from the recent firestorm at Kinglake. Hardly a collectable now. So, was the change of venue a good move? With 58 trader plus 2 Society tables and 490 people through the door, without doubt a resounding yes!

# An Interesting Find.

Victor Rider.

A couple of months ago I paid a visit to a local charity shop to see what I could find. Sitting on a shelf was a slightly battered leather case; inside was a camera, covered in dust and grime, which looked like it had been in the bottom of a wardrobe for the last thirty years. All I could tell is that it was a rangefinder camera, which did not seem to work but the light meter did. Taking this as an encouraging sign, I paid my money and took it home.



*Yashica Minister II.*

After cleaning off the accumulated crud, the camera turned out to be a Yashica Minister II; a medium priced camera of 1962 in very good condition. After a bit of research it was found that it belonged to the slightly notorious LVS system (later called EV – Exposure Value) of coupled shutter and aperture setting cameras.

Unlike other EV cameras (mainly German) where the shutter and aperture rings are locked together by a clip or latch of some kind that can be difficult to change quickly, the Minister has an additional ring on the front of the lens barrel.

The way this works is when you want to take a photo you first take a reading from the light meter and match this reading to the same number on the front ring. On turning this ring both the aperture and shutter rings turn independently of each other to the correct LVS setting, they are now automatically locked together to the correct exposure. All you then do is turn the joined rings to the setting appropriate for the photo you wish to take.



*Top deck showing exposure meter and lens controls.*

This system is much easier to use than the latched types on other cameras, especially in changing light conditions. This ease of use is made possible because of the Copal SVL shutter; one of a number of innovative shutter designs Japanese manufacturers produced around this time.



*Close-up of lens controls.*

The rest of the camera itself is fairly conventional, well made and finished (and heavy) with a coupled rangefinder, projected bright frame with automatic parallax correction and an uncoupled selenium meter. The lens is the Yashinon 4.5cm f2.8 – f16 and the shutter range is 1 – 1/500 plus B together with a self-timer.

After a very small amount of fiddling I managed to get everything working. And how much did this clever little gem cost? The princely sum of \$1.99

P.S. I would be interested to know what other cameras used this shutter.

# Big Day Out at Coal Creek

Alan King

Another historical outing for exercising our camera collection, be they recent or old. The forecast for January 17th was wet and windy; on my side of the bay it dawned with a clear sky; what would it be like in the Strzlecki ranges? At least not one of those stinking hot summer 40° C days we can get in January. Collecting the bus at 8:00am (it worked out to be less expensive to hire the bus in Geelong) I set off for the clubrooms in Glen Iris and found no less than 16 souls waiting for me. With a number of first-timers in the group (for field trips, that is!) we set off for the next pickup in Cranbourne, where our Sydney member Philip Ramsden & his wife were waiting.



*From left standing:*

*John Friend, George Scott, Julie & John Young, Neill Smith, Brian Hatfield, Karena Goldsmith, Pat Hibbert, Nancy Houen, Andrew Korlaki, Margaret Mason, Sue Margrave, Bob Showers*  
*In front: Ray Strong, Chi Chan, Charles Hibbert.*

*Not pictured: Philip & Elizabeth Ramsden, Vic Ryder, Greg Branson, Lyle Curr.*



*The DERM 55RM in VR Blue and Gold.*

Set in the foothills of the Strzlecki ranges, our first stop in Loch has a variety of Antique, Bric-a-brac and craft shops and offered a number of photographic opportunities quite apart from scouring the shops for hidden treasure. Too late! Member Vic Ryder was already there, but found nothing of great value. Loch is also one of the stops for the South Gippsland Tourist Railroad, which the entire group decided to take to Korumburra. While I went ahead in the bus, the Diesel Electric Rail Motor (DERM) 55RM in VR Blue and Gold took the group along the scenic route to Korumburra, passing through Bena, which lies at the top of the Railway's longest and steepest climb (the notorious 'Bena

Bank') approximately 8km of almost continuous 1 in 40 gradient.

The Korumburra Station is one of those great looking old red brick railway stations you see dotted about the countryside. It has a heritage listing, having its 100th birthday in January 2008 and is gradually being totally restored by the South Gippsland Railway group. One of the administration rooms has been turned into a railway museum with a great variety of items on display. Lyle Curr and Greg Branson met us there so over 20 of us descended upon the Korumburra Hotel, where the food was excellent but service was so slow I wondered if we should book rooms while we waited.



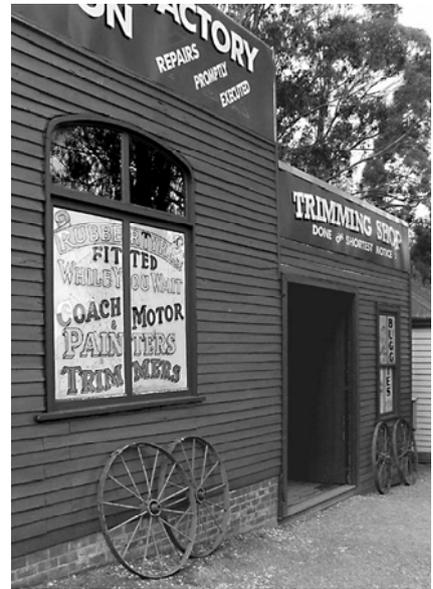
*K169 at the Railway Museum*  
*Alan King – Canon IVSb with 28mm f3.5*

Nevertheless, we finally got to the main destination, the Coal Creek Community Park and Museum with cloudy skies and the threat of rain. Spread over 30 acres with 60 historical exhibits ranging from General Stores to a Hairdresser, Music Studio, Mining machinery and Poppet Head, it needed

more than the couple of hours we had left of the day. Railways were in integral part of the success of the coalmine, the only economical way to transport the coal from the area. In addition to the Railway Museum there is an operational narrow gauge train to link both ends of the park using both steam and diesel powered locomotives. The Museum has also acquired K169 for part of its static display. A 2-8-0 locomotive, the K class was built in the VR workshops in Newport from 1922, this example built in 1941. Complete with tender it could fit on the smaller turntables and the lightest of the VR broad gauge rails, so the K class saw service on various branch lines in Victoria for over 50 years.



*Coal Creek Lake. Sue Margrave.  
Canon D60- Infra Red.*



*Coal Creek Building.  
Charles Hibbert – Panasonic Lumix  
DMC FZ8.*

The sky was even more threatening as we dispersed to various parts of the park to take photographs, when rain it did! The heavens opened with a heavy downpour that lasted for about 20 minutes, but there were plenty of buildings filled with history for us to shelter in. Then it was back to exploring and photographing while dodging the showers that kept chasing us to cover.

Film cameras included Leica M6, Kiev 4m, Minolta XG9, Miranda TM , Fed 2, Rolleiflex, Leica R6, Kodak Stereo, Zeiss Ikonta, Semflex TLR, Canon IVSb, Leicaflex, Pink Fuji Nexia Q1 (APS), Minolta Uniomat



*Neill Smith XG9*

Digital were represented by 3 Panasonic Lumix models, Canon D60 with the sensor converted to Infra Red, Canon G11, Canon A1000, Nikon D70 and a Canon HF20 HD Video camera.



*Andrew Korlaki Semflex.*

I had a lengthy discussion with the Curatorial Officer there about the ongoing development of this Park and Museum. She was very interested to learn of our Society and expressed an interest in having a permanent display cabinet in the entrance area. In addition, she would like to have one of the buildings set up as a photographic studio depicting life as it was in the late 1800's. It would be a tremendous opportunity to publicize the Society activities, especially in the area of disposal of unwanted camera gear that families inherit from their elderly relatives. This project will be the subject of discussion at our committee meetings, but any members interested in helping us pursue the concept should contact Margaret or myself.

We farewelled Lyle Curr and Greg Branson, dropped off Vic Ryder and the Ramsdens at Loch and Cranbourne; then finished up at the club rooms around 6:00pm. A long day but a great time had by all. My thanks to all who participated and especially to Andrew Korlaki for co-ordinating the bodies. I took along a new video camera and captured the spirit of the day, which will eventually be edited down to a bearable but still amateurish few minutes of live action for showing at a future meeting. All great fun!

# A 4X4 TLR meant for the Kids, but these Days it's for Dad! By Lyle Curr

Ever heard of the Bedfordflex? Some of you probably have and are shaking your heads thinking what's he on about now. Others of you may never have heard of it, and are thinking exactly the same thing! It **IS** a camera. It is novel if not a novelty. It never set the world on fire. It is really junk. It looks great. It looks better than it really is. Its performance is limited. It leaks light. It uses 127 film. It is made entirely of plastic. It is a novelty that actually works. It is hard to find any proven information on its origins. It comes in a very colourful box. It was available with many different nameplates on it. It is made in Hong Kong. It is... **the BEDFORDFLEX. (Pic 1.)**

I could end the article here, because that really is all you need to know about this camera, so the rest of this report is for entertainment only. Enjoy!

I did find out it was imported into the USA by the Mellinger Company Import/Export Inc. That piece of information has no bearing on this article whatsoever, but I have to use it as I have virtually no other facts about its origin.

The only other thing we really know is that it was made in Hong Kong. But a few things can be inferred from some of the data we have.



*Pic 1. The Bedfordflex with lens box.*



*Pic 2. The No. 152 on the bottom, as part of the very poor clasp that holds the back sort of closed.*

The Bedfordflex was probably made by the same Hong Kong Company that made the Diana. We can deduce this because on the bottom of the camera is No. 152, and this appears on the box as well. **(Pic 2.)** On the original Diana camera is marked No.151 and that appears on the Diana box too. Not conclusive evidence, but it would seem too much of a coincidence that two companies in Hong Kong would make two junky cameras at around the same time and independently give them consecutive model numbers. So is it enough to make a conclusion?

The Diana is thought to have been made by Great Wall (Optical) Plastic Works Ltd, Kow Loon, but there is some question over this. But if Great Wall made it, it would appear the Bedfordflex

may have been made there too.

Being No 152, it probably came after the Diana, so lets say it's from the mid 60's.

If Si. Roberto Bencini of Italian camera making fame (?) could name the Comet camera after his favourite aeroplane, is it possible the creator of the Bedfordflex named his 127 TLR after his favourite car? And maybe the Diana was named after his girlfriend? The quality of the extrapolation here is about the same as the images produced by the camera in question.

**(Pic 3.)** Designed like a basic TLR, the Bedfordflex takes twelve 4x4 shots on a roll of 127 film. It is much smaller than your "average" 4x4 TLR. The size (4¼" high) couldn't possibly have anything to do with the features- or lack of them- in the Bedfordflex, could it?

Completely made of plastic, one tends to lose a little confidence in its possible performance when you pick it up. It weighs nothing, *including the lens!* AaHH yes, the "lens." Yes there is a lens, probably meant to be a Plasicon, but it's misspelled as "PLASICON Lens" which is written on the taking lens surround. It goes on to say f8, 1/50 Sec.



*Pic 3. The Bedfordflex, finder hood up.*



*Pic 4. The lens and shutter "information."*

Around the viewing "lens" is "Double Lens Reflex." Note; "Double" not "Twin". (Pic 4.)

I would say the labels have been written by one of those people who write present day Chinese instruction booklets in English! (Pic 5.)

Whoops, I just discovered I have made a false claim about the Bedfordflex. There are a couple of brackets, the shutter release lever, and the decoration plates on the winding knobs and the top of the viewfinder hood are actually metal. So it's not ALL plastic. Sorry about that!

One aperture, one shutter speed. It does have a B setting, and that's it- the only feature on the camera!



*Pic 5. The decorative METAL plates on the winding and spool holding knobs.*

The shutter is 1/50<sup>th</sup>, but we have put it over my repairman's tester, just for fun. Sometimes it is 1/60<sup>th</sup>, other times it is 1/30<sup>th</sup>, and just about everything in between, BUT- **NEVER** did it go 1/50<sup>th</sup>!

The Bedfordflex looks cheap... it is cheap, well cheaply made I would say anyway, but it looks a fair copy of "real" TLR. Until you try to use it.

You *can* actually see through the viewing lens, provided you shake the camera till the reflex mirror settles in (Pic 6) the right position. The mirror is loose, and has been on any



*Pic 6. You can see through the finder if you look hard enough, AND the mirror is in the right place!*

Bedfordflex I have had the pleasure of owning or admiring. I found out on the Internet that there are two different version of this camera. One is easy to repair, the other isn't. This one isn't, and looks very difficult to take apart without breaking something. Everything is glued or riveted together. The plastic "ground glass"

viewing screen is a piece of milky white thin plastic, so it's almost impossible to see anything anyway... but it's just a little too thick to lever and spring out of the hood to get at that damn loose mirror... and if you try to lever it out, the thin milky white plastic stresses and goes a completely non transparent bright white!!!



**Pic 7. The rear and other side of the camera.**

Step two on the instruction sheets says, "Look into the viewfinder and what you can see in the ground glass is the exact image you take." Ground glass? Oh well, they know a real TLR has ground *glass*, but forgot the Bedfordflex has plastic, and is certainly not ground!

The other, older (I presume) version, actually had a couple of screws holding the viewfinder assembly in place, and you could take it apart and reglue the mirror. But as long as you are prepared to shake it about, you can get it into "viewing" position anyway.... and you have to keep it there or the finder hood won't close!

The back is not a tight fit, and has no seal... just overlapping plastic. The clasp is not sprung, so the back won't seal tight anyway. It leaks light.

I have not put a film through this camera. I don't have too. There are plenty of images from those toy camera users plastered all over the Internet. You can Google them if you want too.

The lens performs reasonably well, as long as you don't let the camera get anywhere near *facing* the sun, then the flare.... well....

**FLARES.** Flares like you have never seen before. (Pic 7.)

Some more hints for using the Bedfordflex from the Internet

*\*The plastic body of the camera does not securely close, allowing light to leak into the camera.*

*\*Some taping suggested to avoid excess light leaks*

*\*Spool may become loose or out of place when clicking the shutter release button.*

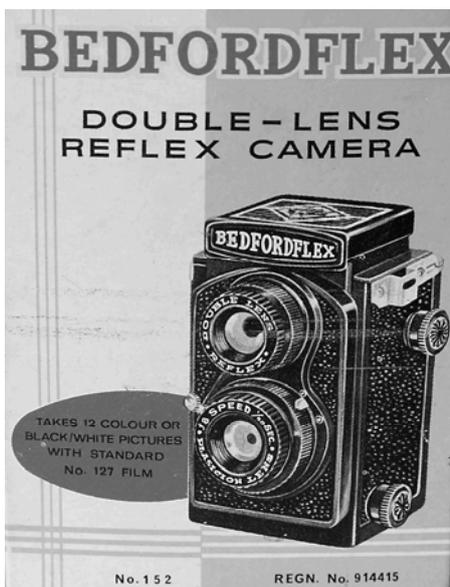
*\*The viewing mirror **may** ???!!! become loose or out of place when clicking the shutter button.*

*\*Not all images are guaranteed to be exposed properly or good in quality.*

*\*Keep in mind that black electrical tape can leave residue; gaffer tape, used by professionals in many industries, may provide better results. (We wouldn't want to leave residue would we?)*

*\*Keep in camera bag when not in use if loaded. This stops the film fogging completely!*

*The Bedfordflex appears variously as throughout the world as the Wonderflex, Splendidflex, Stellarflex and probably lots of other "...flexes" as well. Unlike Diana clones, these name variants are just that. They are all exactly the same camera with only a different name plate.*



**Close up of the box showing No. 152.**

I am not sure if the makers of these plastic fantastics from Hong Kong really expected people to use these cameras, or if they were actually meant as toys. But there is a growing cult of users all over today's world who love the unpredictable results delivered by these types of camera.

Good luck to 'em I say! Who is taking one on the next Society photo shoot?

OH.... and I forgot, it comes with a lens cap!

Left and right, a couple of additional photos to those included in the text.



**Another METAL part. The decorative plate on the top of the viewfinder hood.**

Happy Hunting, Lyle Curr.

# A WHILE YOU WAIT CAMERA: THE MANDEL-ETTE.

Tom Hellwege



The Mandel-ette Postcard Camera was manufactured by the Chicago Ferrottype Company of Chicago Illinois USA and was introduced about 1915, having been patented in 1914. It had an Instantaneous Speed Shutter, which was tripped by a Non Removable Cable Release, with a fixed Aperture, Fixed Focus, and a Meniscus Lens. It was designed for outdoor use whilst mounted on a Tripod.

Made of Leatherette covered wood it had a Developing Tank and Print Lifter fitted to the bottom and a Black Cloth Light Tight Sleeve at the rear. The Camera was used to make Positive Postcards Photographs 2 1/2 X 3/12 Inches.

It was a direct positive Camera, which had its own Developing Tank and was primarily marketed for the Street and Itinerant Photographers, for While You Wait type Street Photography, and was popular at Amusement Parks, Country Shows, and similar types of entertainments.

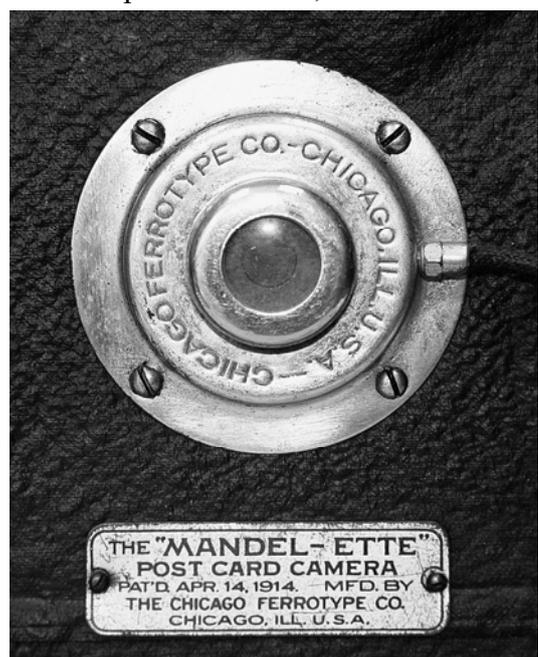


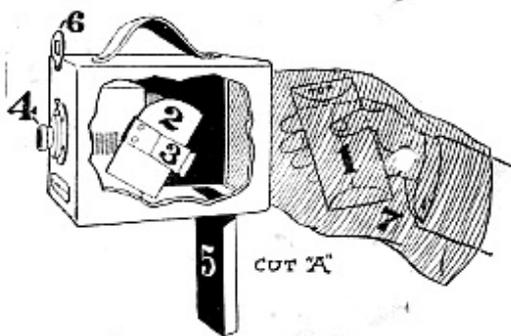
To use the Camera a stack of unexposed positive postcards was inserted into the Magazine Postcard Holder through the Light Tight Sleeve. The developing tank is then removed from the camera and filled with developer, making sure the Print Lifter was also inserted into the tank. It is then replaced into the Camera. The protective piece of Cardboard, which was in front of the Unexposed Postcards, is then removed.

This then allowed an exposure to be made on the front Postcard.

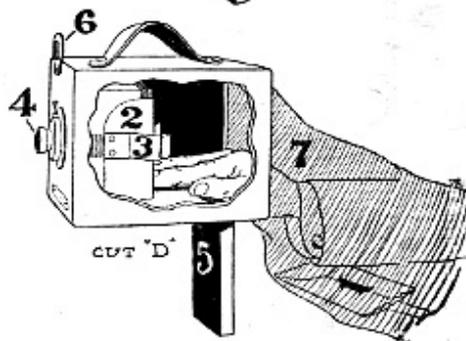
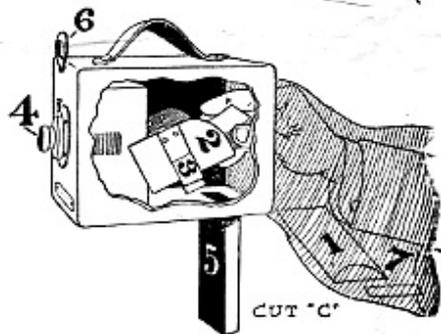
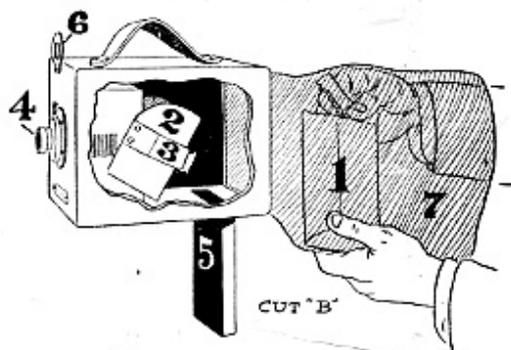
Having made an exposure this Postcard would be removed by using the light Tight Sleeve and placed into the Developing Tank. When developed in about one minute the photo would be withdrawn from the tank using the Print Lifter and then withdrawn from the Camera through the sleeve. It was then apparently not necessary to use a fixer; simply washing the photo in water was all that was needed.

The Camera could also be loaded with a Special Tintype and also known as Ferrottype, Plates. After exposure the plate was placed into the Developing Tank and the photo was finished within a minute, then washed in Water.





1. Package of Post Cards.
2. Magazine Card Holder.
3. Ears or Clamps.
4. Lens and Shutter.
5. Developer Tank or Cup.
6. View Finder.
7. Armet or Sleeve.



¶ Prepare the magazine of the camera for receiving the post cards, by inserting your hand in the camera through the sleeve (7). Open the magazine card holder (2) with your right hand, by pressing the two ears (3) together and pulling them towards you. Remove your hand from camera, take the package of post cards (1) in your right hand (right side up), and insert it about half way into the sleeve (7). (See Cut A).

¶ Take hold of the package firmly from the outside with your left hand. Tear off the top of envelope with your right hand (See Cut B). Now be careful not to turn the package around but keep the front of the envelope facing the front of the camera.

¶ Take the post cards out of the package with your right hand and place the cards into the magazine card holder (2). Be sure that the sensitized side of the post cards faces the lens [See Cut C]. The sensitized side of each card faces the front of the envelope and if you accidentally turn the cards around and put the backs toward the lens, you will get no pictures as the cards will come out of the developer entirely black or blank.

¶ After the cards are placed in the card holder (2) you will find that the first card is a piece of thick brown cardboard. Take this out and throw it away.

¶ Push the magazine card holder (2) forward as far as it will go. (See Cut D).

¶ The post cards are now loaded and ready for exposure and you may throw the envelope away as you will have no further use for it.

¶ Post Cards for the "Mandel-ette" Camera are also put up in boxes of 50 and are loaded as follows: Break the seal of the box of post cards. Then take the box of post cards in your right hand (right side up) and insert it about half-way up the sleeve (Figure 7). Take hold of the box firmly with your left hand from the outside of the sleeve. Remove the cover of the box with your right hand (on the inside of sleeve). Take the post cards out of the box with your right hand and place them into the magazine card holder (Figure 2). Be sure that the sensitized side of the post cards faces the lens.

## "MANDEL" POSITIVE POST CARDS

are manufactured only by

# THE CHICAGO FERROTYPE COMPANY

Congress & Laflin Sts. Chicago, Ill., U. S. A.

# Mandel-ette One Minute Camera

Entirely Self-Acting from Start to Finish

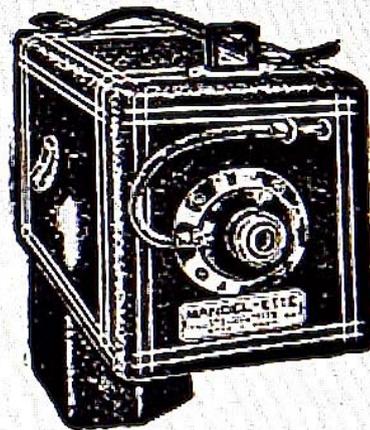
## A Complete Photograph in One Minute

NO SKILL or KNOWLEDGE NEEDED

NO DARK ROOM NO FOCUSSING NO MESS NO TROUBLE

**PRICE ONLY \$9.50 POSTPAID ANYWHERE**

A child can take a good picture at the first try. A source of real joy for amateurs and their friends. Just think what a marvelous advance this is in the art of photography. You have simply to hold the Camera, aim at the subject, press the trigger, and the picture is taken. No apparatus ever devised can compare with it for convenience, cheapness and rapidity. There is no trouble, no delay, no focussing, no developing, no fixing, no printing, no toning, no dark room, no mess. In one minute you really deliver an excellent portrait, all complete. The camera does it all. You have but to let it work. It cannot go wrong.



Takes Pictures Size  $3\frac{1}{2} \times 2\frac{1}{2}$

**WE GUARANTEE IT FOR A YEAR.** All that is required is the Camera and a few positive post-cards, and a little 3-in-one Developer. Nothing else. The pictures are finished right within the Camera itself and at the very spot where they were taken. No previous experience of photography is necessary. There are **NO FAILURES**. Photos can be taken at any distance, far or near. It measures  $4\frac{1}{2} \times 6 \times 4$  inches, is no heavier than any other camera, and easily carried about from place to place. 16 Cards or more can be loaded in the Camera in broad daylight at one time, and can be taken in rapid succession. The Cards are always in the right position to be photographed. The developing chamber is a part of the Camera itself and is so arranged that the exposed Post Cards may be developed in rapid succession. A number may be developed at the one time. It is impossible to over-develop. After developing simply place the Post Cards in clear water and they are positively permanent. It is a rattling good money-maker. 25 cents a minute. At shows, race meetings, bazaars, fetes, picnics, excursions, in fact wherever a crowd gathers the Camera is fairly rushed by people eager to have their portraits taken, for which they readily give from 15 cents to 25 cents each, and often take three or four at a time. It is the fastest money-maker in existence, and it is being successfully operated by men, women, boys and girls who have had no experience in photography.

### PRICES:

- No. 2531. Mandel-Ette One Minute Camera. Price ptd. to any address....\$9.50
- No. 2534. Positive Post Cards for same. Price per Packet of 16 Cards.... .50
- No. 2532. Developing Solution for same. (Powder form). Price Postpaid.. .45
- No. 2533. Developing Solution for same (Liquid form). Price per can.... .50

## Letters to the Editor:

**Hi Ian**, Congratulations on the new look Back Focus - it looks most professional. I've enjoyed the articles from Stefan Sztromajer and his insights into Cold War cameras.

Cheers, **Colin Martin, Editor, Deja View,**  
**Journal of the Photographic Collectors Assoc New Zealand.**

**Hi Ian**, yet another tour de force - a great issue with lots of interesting reading, particularly the Exakta article which forced me to go back to McKeown to check the age of the ones in my collection. Keep up the good work, and have a great Christmas and a very Happy New Year!  
Best Regards, **Ian McKenzie. #223.**

**Dear Ian**, thanks for the great job you did on the P6-outack article: my wife and children were most impressed. Hope that you have a beaut Xmas. Cheers, **Paul Boon. #188.**

**Hi Ian**,

Many thanks for the Back Focus, both for the presentation of the articles on Ihagee and self, as well as sending me an extra copy to send to Bob Locke. He was tickled pink to hear that the Back Focus was on its way to him in Massachusetts.

I am delighted with how the Ihagee articles and personal photographic journey turned out. A very satisfying record of what a bloke has been up to. The pictures looked great, and sure gave the readers plenty to look at. Again, all the best, **Geoff Schirmer. #370 (Added since.)** I have heard from Bob Locke in Massachusetts who was very affirming of the Exakta article as well as the high standard of the publication.

**Dear Ian**,

I received Back Focus nr 75 and there is only one word to say: PERFECT.

Cheers, **Han Fokkelman. #440**

### **That Newman & Guardia Shutter.**

Was there ever an article (B.F. No 74) more evocative than that on Mr. Samuel Cocks's Newman and Guardia camera? Called up from the dead indeed to elicit this response.

Cocks's camera mounts its shutter assembly in a very strange manner indeed; clearly N & G wanted to use the shutter they already designed for the Special B magazine camera; the viewing lens got in the way so they inverted the shutter. This meant tying a string to the cocking rod to pull it up and forcing the photographer to turn the whole thing upside down to set the apertures and the shutter speeds. He would have to grope for the shutter release on the bottom and push it UP.

In its originally intended position the shutter assembly made more sense; the fascia panel with the aperture setting lever and the shutter speed setting dial are at the top, easily seen and manipulated; the cocking rod pulls DOWN to set the shutter which is released by pressing the button on the fascia.

The shutter assembly in my collection, serial No SB 236, has the original 12 leaf iris diaphragm between 1½" diameter X 40 TPI flanges for the fitting of front and rear elements of symmetrical lenses. The aperture setting lever, with click stops, traverses scales f8 to f45 marked for 13¾" and 11" focal length lenses with additional markings f12.5 to f45 compensating for the longer focal lengths when but one of the lens elements is used; a reminder pointer is provided.

Both Mr. Cocks' s and my shutters have speeds ½ second to 1/100 second (this is clear in the B.F. picture, erroneously stated as 2 seconds to 1/100 in the article script) selected by a sweep lever to markings on the fascia panel and set by pulling the setting rod two clicks; one click sets for 'Time'.

I venture that with the lens fitted by Mr. Cocks the bellows racking facility was never used; 140mm focal length is simply too short. The viewfinders would be unusable when the front panel was retracted enough to focus the short lens. I wonder too whether the original iris is still there or did he remove it when fitting the Carl Zeiss lens?

**Keith Baker. #412**

As a follow-up to Keith's letter regarding the article from Graham Harmer on the Kiama Photographers and cameras of Samuel Cocks, I passed on to Graham his comments regarding the "erroneous" reporting of a shutter speed range of 2-seconds to 1/100<sup>th</sup> second.

Graham replied that he is incorrect and the camera does in fact have the stated shutter speed range! If the illustration is inspected closely, you will see that there are two white dots above the ½ second marking. Setting to these dots will give speeds of 1-second and 2-seconds respectively.

It is possible that (a) this may impart something that was unknown to Keith about his camera or (b) his camera may not have this slow speed feature as Graham stated that there is a *possibility* that some features may have varied in production from time to time. Graham's full letter follows: **(Ed.)**

**Dear Ian,**

After you contacted me regarding the possibility of an error in my text in the article on the Newman & Guardia Universal plate camera (B.F. 74), I checked my notes and also again borrowed the actual camera from Samuel Cocks' grandson. I can confirm that a further two steps exist beyond the engraved ½ second mark (indicated with dots along the selection lever arc) which give speeds of 1 and 2 seconds respectively. Therefore if the T setting is included, 10 shutter speed settings are available on this camera. Interestingly Cocks himself has written in pencil *1 sec.* and *2 secs.* alongside each respective dot which is impossible to pick up in any photograph of the panel.

This shutter was in effect the first between the lens type and was renowned for its accuracy and reliability. As I indicated in my original article, I actually tested it using my shutter speed tester and all marked speeds were either + or – 10% of their stated values. There is also a beautifully click stop operated 12 leaf iris diaphragm behind the shutter. The front lens element is screwed into a flange of 1<sup>13</sup>/<sub>32</sub> inches dia. using what was colloquially known as the Instrument Makers vee thread that is 40 threads per inch. This thread type, designed for thin wall tubing was used extensively in a wide range of instruments, binoculars, telescopes, lens barrels and the like and was a constant 40 threads per inch over a relatively wide range of diameters.

In discussion with the Cocks family recently, it is estimated that upwards of 4000 plates were exposed through it, with the camera still being used by an uncle of the current owner until the mid 1950's. Some 600 of these plates still exist in various archives. The fact that the camera is still operable and reasonably accurate is a remarkable testament to its maker after 60 years of steady use. I wonder how many of our digital masterpieces will be still usable 100 years after construction?

For readers interested in further detail of the operation of this unique Arthur Newman pneumatic shutter I would suggest reading pages 86-88 of Holmes' *Age of Cameras* (Fountain Press 1978). Brian Coe also deals with N & G cameras in his tome *Cameras, From Daguerreotypes to Instant Pictures* (Marshall Cavendish 1978). A line drawing of the above camera is shown on page 151 of this book along with a discussion on the Universal Plate Magazine.

Keep up the great work in a fascinating and informative magazine.

Best Wishes, **Graham Harmer #106**

# The designer Z E H

Han Fokkelman



Dresden was from the beginning the cradle of the German Photo industry. Many inspired designers started to produce by themselves and those who had a good eye for business to sell off over production survived. If not, the brand disappeared or was taken over by a college.

In the beginning of 1900, more than twenty camera factories worked in Dresden and all those factories had one thing common: a shortage of money. To produce all the parts in house needed a lot of investment that they were not able to pay by themselves with the result that the production of parts mostly was done by others.

Specialist furniture makers mostly produced the wooden camera bodies.

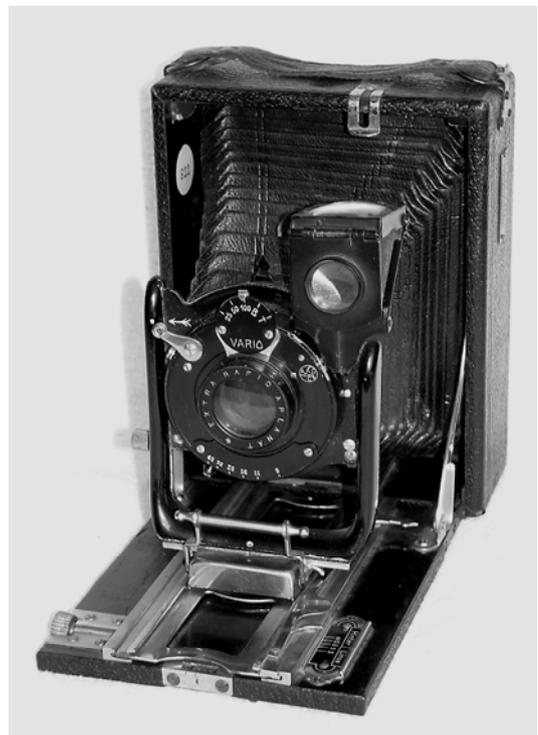
Master-instrument maker Paul Zeh opened his instrument factory in 1902 specializing in photographic instruments and shutters. These were the wooden boxes with a curtain shutter that were used with the wooden travel cameras. In the English speaking countries they got the nickname "Mouse traps". This construction could be improved and it was Paul who entered the market in 1905 with the "Zeh-blind shutter" that brought him a good reputation. He started with production of cameras in 1913 and the firm got the name: Fabrik Photographischer Apparate Paul Zeh. The name ZECA was born.

We will not find many Zeca cameras from the beginning. During the Great War the factory would not produce many cameras. After 1918 it would cost much time to build up their own sales organization. To deliver cameras to other enterprises was easier. Many of these cameras are not to be found anymore for they came under another name in the shops.

This way of working was not unusual, in the seventies of the last century, Zeiss Ikon delivered the Ikomatic 126, which was designed and produced by Bilora. The Voigtländer Vitessa 126 was completely a Balda product.

While he had experience with producing shutters, we saw that all his cameras had shutters of Gauthier and Deckel. The lenses were also bought from well-known factories for many amateurs had more confidence in a Rodenstock Radionar or Zeiss Tessar than in a Zecanar. (Photo 2.)

The first cameras we met were the folding plate cameras. Mostly with a wooden, leather covered, body. They got the name "Primus". If they were delivered to others they had no name. Mostly they were simple cameras for 9 x 12 cm and 6 x 9 cm pictures. The shutters were: Pronto, or under his own name: Zeca, and the Compur. The lenses were: Zecanar, there was a Radionar, Tessar and Cassar.



*Photo 2. An early, unnamed model from Zeh. This plate camera has the Vario Shutter.*

When the firm existed twenty years they had already twenty employees. Paul did not like to grow fast for in that case he had not enough time to design. It was a real family enterprise, beside Paul there was his brother, who was a master-instrument maker by himself, as designer and many other members of the family took part in the production.

In 1922 the factory name was changed in: Zeh-Camera-Fabrik Paul Zeh and was situated on the Deubener Strasse 29, Dresden 28A.

From 1922 Paul Zeh had his own stand on the Leipziger Messe. The great break through came in 1928 when he introduced a lot of new folding plate cameras. First the "Astro-Leichtmetall". This camera had a total metal body. The bed could double extended. With the lenses you could chose between: Zecanar, Eurynar, Xenar, Tessar f4.5 with the focus 13.5 and 15cm.

Beside the possibility to focus on the ground glass you could also use the fold up waist level viewfinder or the window viewfinder.

Also came the Zeca-DUPLO series that means that the bellows could double extended. The 6½ x 9 cm and the 9 x 12 cm camera had as lenses the Isconar, Helioplan, Eurynar or Tessar. The shutters were: Pronto, Ibsor and Compur. All these bodies were of metal. But the Zeca-Duplo 10 x 15 camera had a covered wooden body with the lenses Helioplan and Eurynar f6.8. The shutters were the same.



*Photo 3. The Goldi.*

Then came the Zeca-Junior models in 6.5 x 9 cm and 9 x 12 cm. Here a wooden body with a single bellows. The lenses were: Periscop f11, Trinar and Radionar f6.3. As shutters, the Vario and Pronto were offered.

The Zeca Radial 6.5 x 9 cm and 9 x 12 cm had a single bellows but now the body was of metal. The lenses were the Radionar f6.3, Trinar and the Zecanar. As shutter you had the choice between: Ibsor, Pronto and Compur.

In 1930 appeared the Zeca-Luxus Mod.7, a camera for the 10 x 15 size with a wooden body. As lens you could choose between: Zecanar, Eurynar, Xenar, Ysar and Tessar f4.5/13.5 cm. The shutter was the Compur. To focus you had the possibility with the ground glass, waist level viewfinder and the window viewfinder.

The Zeca 6 x 9 cm plain film cartridge got its own camera. It had a double bellows and the lenses: Periccop f11, Trinar and Radionar. The shutters were the Vario and the Pronto.

The 9 x 12cm model came out around 1935 and was the same camera with the Xenar f2.9/13.5 cm lens and the Compur shutter only. After all these folding plate cameras it was over and they started to produce cameras for the roll film.



*Photo 4. Goldi opened for loading.*

Vario shutter. It was delivered around 1930. This little folding camera, with impressed name, used 127 film and made 16 exposures of 3 x 4 cm.

This camera took the attention of Rodenstock, which brought it to the market under the name "Ysella". The lens was the Trinar f2.9 and f4.5/50 mm, the shutters were: Vario, Pronto and Compur. Rhaco sold this camera under the name "Rhacofix". The lens was the Zecanar f2.9 or f4.5/50 mm and as shutter the Prontor or Compur. With the same lenses and shutters you could find this camera as "Ralikona" of the Ralik firm. On the US market Burke & James sold this camera under the name "Weston".

In the firm Zeh they were very happy, they understood that this camera could become a best seller. After a little adjustment they brought this camera with a new name onto the market, they called it "GOLDI". (Photos 3 & 4.)

The first roll film camera was the "Coloprint" with the Coloprint Anatismat f4.5/50 mm in a

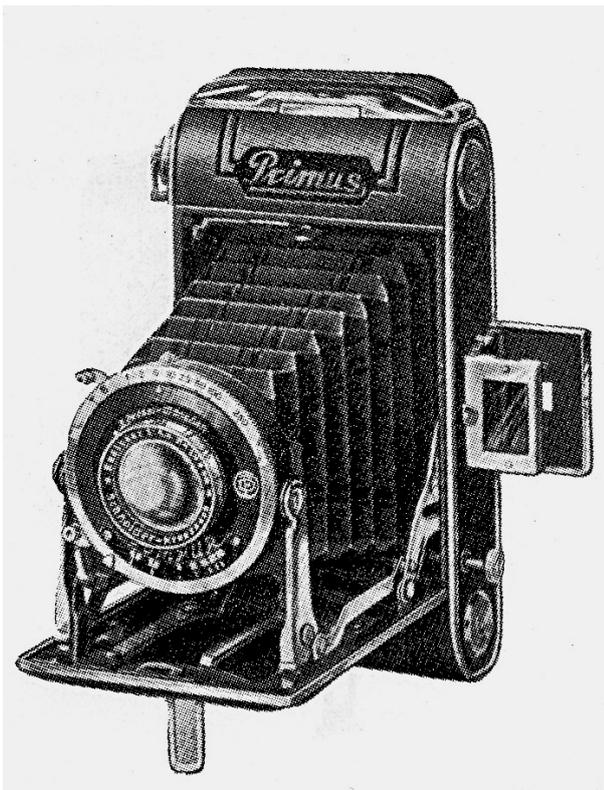
The name Goldi was impressed in the front of the camera. By pressing in the little knob beside the fold up viewfinder, the bottom came down. This bottom had no sled for the lens. This was changed into two conductors that were placed on the side of the bottom. The lens went forward by a scissor construction. If you would close the camera you had only to press on the little knobs beside the shutter and all went soundlessly back.

At the rear were two red windows. You had to place first the number in the lower window and later in the higher window. In this way the film was divided in 16 exposures 3 x 4 cm exactly. In that time this camera was called a "small size" camera. With this name you had to look to the developing of the camera size from the beginning. In the beginning of the twenties, the 6 x 9 folding plate camera was also called: small size. In the thirties was the 135 mm camera mostly indicated with: Leica size. That disappeared after 1945 when the 135 mm cameras became popular.

The Goldi was delivered in many variations. The lenses were: Zecanar f2.9-4.5/50 mm, Radionar f2.9-4.5/50 mm, Tessar f3.5-4.5/50 mm, Leitz Elmar f3.5/50 mm, Cassar f2.9/50 mm. The shutters were for the Zecanar and Radionar: Vario, Pronto and Compur. The Elmar, Tessar and Cassar got the Compur only.

There was a Goldi 4 x 6 cm with the Xenar f3.8/70 mm in Compur but after a short time that was over.

That the Goldi became popular was to see on the Japanese market where the firm Prou a copy introduced under the name "Baby Rosen" in 1936. Also came the 4 x 4 cm version as "Rosen 4".



*Photo 6. The Primus of 1937.*

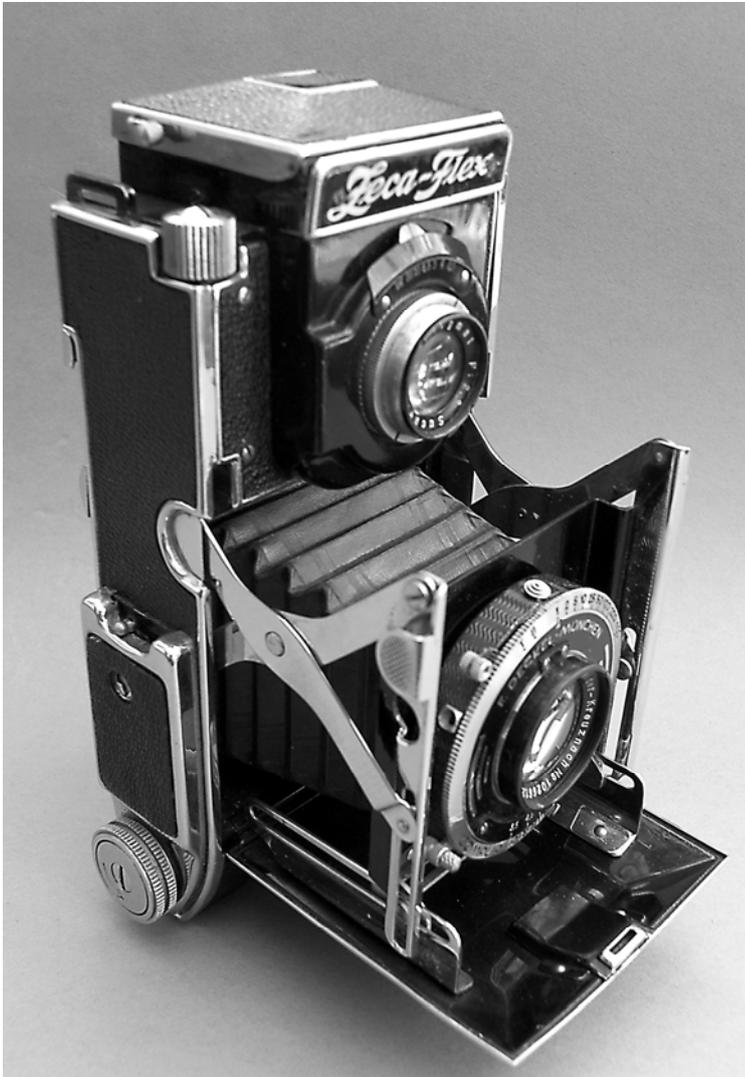


*Photo 5. The Bettax of 1934.*

In 1934 appeared the 6 x 9 cm roll film cameras. They got the name: "Bettax". (Photo 5.) Of course the well known series of lenses like: Radionar f4.5 in Vario, Pronto, or Prontor (and that was new), Zecanar f6.3 in Single or Pronto, Trinar f3.8 and f4.5 in the Vario, Pronto, Prontor, Xenar f4.5 and Tessar f4.5 in Compur. They were simple 6 x 9 cm cameras with a folding viewfinder.

The Sport 6.5 x 9 cm was introduced in 1935, logic for in 1936 were the Olympic Games in Berlin. The difference with the Bettax was the waist level viewfinder, while a glass free sport viewfinder replaced the normal viewfinder. The name Sport 6.5 x 9 cm was in the beginning the name of a metal folding plate camera that could use roll film as well. Both cameras got the Zecanar Anastigmat and the Pronto shutter.

Beside the Bettax appeared in 1937 the Primus line. Instead of a plate camera this name was used now for a roll film camera that could make 8 exposures 6 x 9 cm and 16 exposures 4.5 x 6 cm. That was possible as you used the lay in mask in combination with the two red windows. This mask mostly is disappeared if you buy the camera for your collection. The viewfinder had a valve extra inside, to make the ocular smaller. This camera had, for a very short time, the name: "Doppelformat". But soon it was changed in to Primus. The lenses were the Radionar f2.9 and f4.5, Zecar Anastigmat f6.3, Trinar f3.8 and f4.5, Xenar f4.5 and Tessar f4.5. As shutters: Vario, Pronto, Prontor and Compur. (Photo 6.)



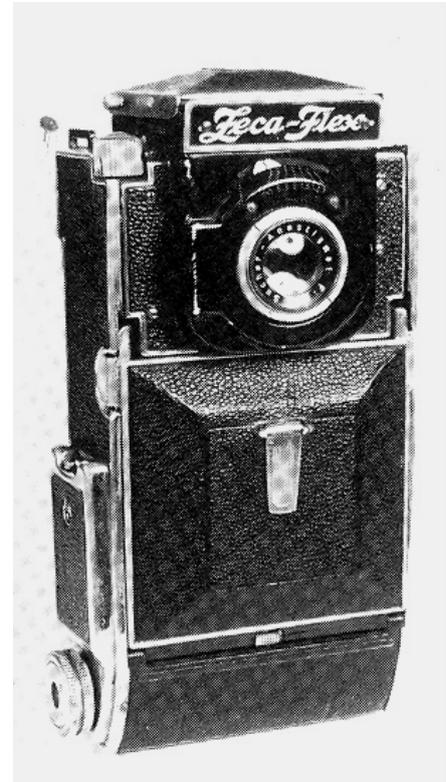
*Photo 7. The Zeca-Flex Folding TLR.*

It was a Twin Lens Reflex that could be folded. If folded it was like a 6½ x 11 cm folding camera that took less space than the Rolleiflex. (Photos 7&8.)

The lens was the Xenar or Tessar f3.5/75mm. The shutter was the Compur Rapid that had 1/400 sec. as fastest speed.

Like as with the Goldi two conductors in the bottom replaced the sled. The front of the camera came out thanks to the scissor system, but the viewfinder lens, the "Sucher Anastigmat f2.9/75" still stayed on its place.

Never the less the viewfinder gave exactly the same picture as the taking lens. There were more camera factories that made folding 6 x 6 cm twin lens reflexes but nobody had success. The amateurs preferred the Rolleiflex model without bellows. After the beginning of World War 2 the production was stopped. The bombing on Dresden at the end of the war gave very heavy damage. After that the DDR government nationalized all the firms. The firm was officially closed in 1948.



*Photo 8. The compactness of the Zeca-Flex when folded.*

With the Trinar f4.5/105 mm in Pronto or Compur was the camera delivered under the name: Bettax 4.5 x 6 – 6 x 9. The name of this camera was to be found in the grip.

Paul's brother designed the Zeca-Flex that was produced from 1935 till 1940.

## *Faces and Photos from the Auction*



*Auction time when Margaret's home is taken over by a flood of incoming items. Read the full story of the work that goes in to preparing for an auction in this issue. The blood, the sweat, the tears and frustration to bring it all together.*

