

BACK FOCUS

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VALE ~ John Keesing. 12-02-1932 ~ 21-02-2012

Creator of Back Focus:

Co-Market Organiser: Society Librarian:

Committee Member: Honorary Life Member: Dedicated Contax Collector.

Over the years as editor I've had to write many things, some easy, some difficult. But sitting here working out how to pay homage to one of the greatest friends I've had certainly ranks amongst the latter. As many may know, I first met John as a sales rep when he was at Southdown Press but it was some time before I saw him again in 1991 when he dropped in on Ted Bedggood with a view to joining our group. We immediately struck up a friendship when I guided him through the intricacies of his first auction.

Some time down the track, John suggested to me that we look at the possibility of combining our skills and resurrecting the club journal? Accordingly, in July of 1992 the first issue of Back Focus was sent out to members. Over the years, John and I were to share in many duties, cementing the bond that grew between us.

Off his own bat, when Ted Bedggood retired from the job, John took over as club librarian and instituted a new cataloguing system for our then extensive library and a system for booking the loans in and out.

Somewhere along the way, the Market Organiser then chose to retire and, when the replacement dropped out at short notice, John and I had to fill the gap as Market Organisers, a job we held for many years. Between us, we took these Markets, then at the Camberwell Civic Centre, to what we believe to be the largest of their type in the Southern Hemisphere and, at the \$5 entry fee, extremely profitable for the Society. The last one we ran had 105 tables and we were knocking back late applications. Towards the end, John's illness meant that I was doing most of the work and, combined with Back Focus (on average, three plus hours a week) and Presidency, which was suffering, I just had to back away. When John heard it stated that we were handing over a Market on 'the brink of collapse' I had to restrain him from a violent reaction, a result of his illness.

And it was this illness and the symptoms of it that almost cost us our friendship. John knew there was something wrong and tried in many ways to cover up for it. Duck-shoving responsibilities with weak excuses and loading extra work on me really strained things until finally it came out that he was suffering from Alzheimer's.

What many may not know is that it was John who was a major force in the modern setting up and cataloguing of the current Alan Michael Photographic Museum, a labour of love to which he devoted many hours.

What should have been a highlight for John, an avid Contax and Zeiss collector, was a visit from long-time friend from the States, Charles Barringer, himself a world authority on Zeiss. Sadly, by this stage, John only had at best a vague recollection of Charles and their association. John's compilation of Contax serial numbers and production dates is a valuable record for collectors of this brand.

Mention Alzheimer's and one tends to think of the slightly adorable, dotty and amusing old lady in "Mother and Son" but reality and fiction are far apart. The violent outbursts, both physical and verbal meant that John had to be placed into care, as Joan felt she was no longer capable of looking after him. It was some time before I saw him again and, when I did, he'd changed so much in the intervening time, I didn't even recognise him. I'll openly admit that it shook me up so badly that I had to be driven home. That was the last time I saw John. For his many and outstanding services to our Society, John was granted an Honorary Life Membership in 2008, a recognition that unfortunately came too late for him to realise what he had received.

My final tribute to a great mate will be to carry on with what we started together, as long as I'm able and as long as members want me to do it. And to introduce the improvements we envisaged together, in spite of the attempts of a few to negate these.

We had a lot of good times together and it's those that I'll always remember. The laughter and sweat as John helped me move house with a 6'x4' trailer! Also others too personal to mention here. As I compile each issue of our journal, I think he'll be looking over my shoulder! There are a lot of people out here who will always remember John fondly, and I'm one of them.



Happier days.

At a combined birthday party.

Member Recognised in AUSTRALIA DAY Honours list

Congratulations are extended to Alan Elliott for his award as detailed below:

Medal (OAM) of the Order of Australia - General Division

**Mr Alan Frederick ELLIOTT, Dorcas Street, South Melbourne Vic 3205
For service to photography.**

Current Club Archivist,
Melbourne Camera Club;
President, 1969;
Member, since 1964;
Life Member, since 1989.

Author, *A century exposed: one hundred years of the Melbourne Camera Club*, 1991.

Member, The Royal Photographic Society, Victorian Chapter, since 1989.

Editor, *The Woodbury Papers*, 1996.

Contributor to *Walter Woodbury: A Victorian Study*, 2008.

Associate,
The Royal Photographic Society, Bath, UK, 1991.

Member, Australian Photographic Collectors Society.

Member, Daguerreian Society, USA.

Member Cast Iron Committee, National Trust of Australia (Victoria); volunteer, for 30 years.

Mentor, Final-year Photography Degree Students, RMIT University.

Lecturer in Photographing History, U3A, 2003-2004.

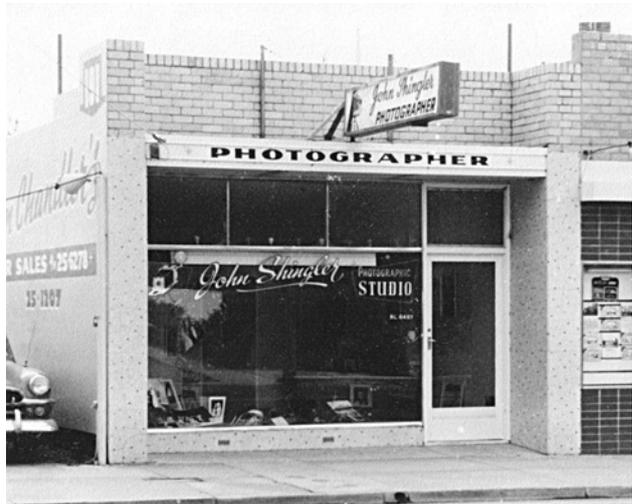
Author, *A Short History of Photography*, 2003.



WEDDINGS, PORTRAITS, ANYTHING!

John Fleming

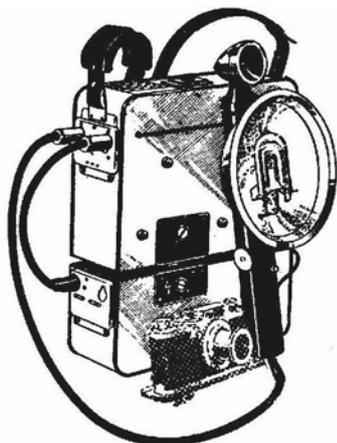
As 1960 drew to a close, and Spring had “sprung”, thoughts turned to finding work closer to home. My first job at Allan Studios was interesting enough, but it was nevertheless a very old fashioned, gloomy place, and unhappy staff moved on quickly. With all that in mind, my father suggested trying some local suburban studios. In those days just about every second suburb had a portrait/commercial studio or photographer...there was a stack of work to be had. Luck was in, the second place we rang suggested I call in and have a chat...and bring some samples of any work I had done. A short bus ride had me at John Shingler Studio at 195 High Street Ashburton, a modern little shop with a nicely sign written display window. **Pic 1** Upon opening the door a distant buzzer heralded my arrival and within a few seconds John Shingler breezed into the reception area and greeted me warmly. After looking at some of my modest early photographs and some 6x8's off my new Lusca 120 enlarger (surprisingly, he seemed impressed with my juvenile efforts) we chatted on and John said “I could do with some help now, it's getting so busy lately, can you start next Monday then?” Just like that!



Pic 1. John Shingler Studio 1961. Photo. J. Fleming.



Pic 2. Aged 16 (in shirt & tie, centre) with Linhof 4x5 and Voigtländer Bessa, Easter promotion 1961. Photo: J. Shingler.



Pic 3. The plywood cased 225 watt second (425 with booster!) Blaupunkt Reporter.

The shop had a front area for reception and sales, a dressing cubicle to one side, and a door led to the main studio. Beyond that was the workroom- cum- lunchroom (overlooking a grassy backyard, even a plum tree), and most importantly, the darkroom. Within months John handed this over to me totally, and aged 16 I was doing all the processing and printing, assisting also in print finishing and framing. On top of this, immediately I was assisting in all manner of photography, more hands-on than Allan Studios too. **Pic 2** Equipment was basic, but best was the nice Linhof Model 3 4x5 Technika. This did all the work at that stage (1960-62) but later a very useful grey Mamiya Press 6x7 came along. The first flash unit was

an early, very powerful Blaupunkt Reporter of the mid 1950's. I was staggered to hear one at least use F: 22 at 10 feet when using the standard Ilford HP3 film. **Pic 3** Unfortunately what resided in the darkroom was a big let down...a half plate HOME MADE ENLARGER! This was truly awful, as most of these things were...hunks of wood as if adzed from a red gum tree, sheets of aluminium bent around a tramways pole and rivetted (lamp house), and, horror of horrors, the bottom half consisted of a decaying Thornton Pickard, secured by bent bits of tin brackets The tracks were worn and focusing resulted in much jamming and tilting. The lens was held on by two rubber bands. This entire contraption ran on a girder array of galvanized water pipe and flanges screwed to the wall, topped off by the monstrosity counterweighted by a great plate of lead about 18 x 10 inches dangling from two sash cords! (I learnt later John and his father had cobbled this thing up in 1950

when John started working from home full time in Malvern. Before that, he had gone straight from Scotch College to Spencer Shier Studios in Collins Street.) I never took any photos of this, but do have a shot showing the pipe framework it ran on and to this day have a few bits of water pipe and pulleys after it was scrapped. **Pic 4, Pic 5** After the first couple of weeks I started to diplomatically suggest a modern enlarger would speed work ...and we ended up with a Japanese 4x5 "Astron". A simple machine, but well made and had faultless beautifully even illumination. I was a happy young lad!

One morning I arrived to the sounds of trills and arpeggios.... John was an accomplished flautist and was "getting his lip in" for a lunchtime concert at the prestigious Austral Music Salon. Many socialites and music lovers attended this. John had won many radio talent quests, and could have been a professional classical musician if not a photographer.

That aside, there was much fun and friendliness with all the work, the happy, younger company (John Shingler and his wife Bette and receptionist/colourist Norma Farley) and the many visitors and local traders etc. Local "rival" photographers all called in, and many an outrageous (usually true) tale was told! Such a pleasant change from the cheerless Allan Studios. **Pic 6** Within the first couple of weeks, lunchtime BBQs on a makeshift scrap of iron plate in the shop backyard were experienced.....



Pic 4. Remnants of homemade enlarger! Photo: J. Fleming.



Pic 5. John and my "on loan" Gilkon 4x5, showing remains of pipe girder-work. Photo: J. Fleming.



Pic 6. Norm Smith's new studio Mini-van 1964. Photo: J. Fleming.



Pic 7. Backyard BBQ, 1960. L-to-R, myself, John Shingler, next door shop keeper. Photo: Norma Farley.

delicious! **Pic 7** Being in the centre of an expanding population and industrial growth then, we had more work than you can imagine. What a fantastic way to learn. After a couple of months, and with Christmas 1960 approaching, John said he and his wife and young son were heading off for most of January, staying at a little beach house he had built at McCrae. As I hadn't been there long enough for him to give me January holiday pay, would I care to have the studio keys and do whatever I liked, my own entire printing etc? I jumped at this, and received the keys...this was sensational! After a hectic run up to Christmas Eve, we all headed off for a break. About a week later I returned, keys in hand, to what was, in effect, "my very own studio". After a day or so, with a few phone enquiries and re-orders and my printing of some of my negatives, lass called in to the shop and asked if she could make an appointment to have her boyfriend photographed...he was going interstate for several months and she wanted a nice framed portrait. I explained the photographer was on holidays until end of January...but, this would be far too late. She was very disappointed, saying "Mr. Shingler takes such lovely portraits; we don't really want to go anywhere else". Oh well, nothing ventured etc, so I suggested I do the portrait sitting, and we made the booking. Fortunately I knew the exposure with the flood lighting setup (1/50th at F:8 on HP3) and had played

with the beautiful Linhof. Only snag was the older wooden tripod having a partially jammed centre column when I did the sitting. Not wishing to waste time trying to effect repairs, I did the best I could and managed to produce the usual 8 negatives. The girlfriend liked the proofs, and one in particular they ordered several of including a 15x12 framed. **Pic 8** Here was learning on the go for sure! I also did a few passports and one small commercial job in the studio, plus a stack of reprint orders taken over the phone whilst folk were home on holidays. I was rather exhausted after having “my own studio” for 3 weeks, and quite relieved to have company again when John and Norma returned from their respective holidays.



*Pic 8. Early portrait effort with floodlights, 1961.
Photo: J. Fleming.*

Norma Farley (married name Norma Neil) was great fun, very talented artist and did all the colouring then as well as reception, and had previously worked with Peter Fox Studios in the 1950's. She was right up with the latest trends and assisted one day when I wanted to test my new found bounce flash technique. **Pic 9** Being the new generation, I thought floodlighting was rather old-fashioned! Early in 1961, still not quite 17, Norma teed up a fashion shoot for me. She loved the new lighting I was trying, and had shown her test photos to a friend with knitwear firm. By now I had managed to buy (on 6 easy payments to dear old Wagner's Camera Store) my own 4x5 Linhof Technika 3 1956 model. Using just a Braun Hobby EF3 bounced with floodlight for background and spot boom, I produced a reasonable set of images. The client was thrilled at the time and very impressed when I did the included lettering beneath the prints. **Pic 10** This is something I had learned well at Allan Studio with their J.C. Williamson theatre printing. With the huge variety of work, John and I travelled all over Melbourne, also a number of times at night to Gippsland towns to cover the many debutante balls then so popular. These resulted in huge print orders...all handled by little me with the mighty old Astron enlarger. To speed things up, and so I could finish early



*Pic 9. Norma models for bounce light tests on Voigtländer Bessa.
Photo: J. Fleming.*



STYLED EXCLUSIVELY BY DAVIDSPARK
Pic 10. My “new” Linhof shoots early fashion. Photo: J. Fleming.

and join everyone for a few beers, I actually lubricated the neg carrier to slide easier and several times, doing a run of over 100 negatives taped 120 roll end to end, used a Braun EF3 electronic flash head in the enlarger. Just imagine how this speeded up printing...not 5-10 seconds per exposure, just 1/1000th! It worked too...I easily was able to stop down to F: 8 with a normal neg. By this stage I had been employing Ilford Hypam rapid fixer, diluted, and always used Kodak Hypo Clearer (Sodium Hexametaphosphate, or “Calgon”) to ensure thorough washing.(This is even more viable today if printing the traditional chemical way.)

After a busy day, especially if it was hot, local traders and visitors tended to call in, bearing bottles of cooling “refreshments”. This was another reason to hasten printing and come out and socialize! Fortunately, the studio also had a rear lane entrance, so many sneaked in that way, including the local constabulary. **Pic 11** We had become great friends after they had investigated a shop burglary (little was stolen) and later, when vandals tossed a bottle

of milk one night through the shop window. **Pic 12**

These afternoon/evening sessions often became quite rowdy and went very late, as you can imagine! Callers included photographers Peter Mendoza, Barry Skelton, Jim Hayes from the SEC photographic unit, Les Townsend from Melbourne Photo and Graphics, Mike Novak, Jack Tuma



Pic 11. A fair cop! The locals and studio regular visitor John Bright. Photo: J. Fleming.

(Hermes Studios), Charlie Wishart (Oakleigh Studios), Norm Smith (Tritex Studio), Bill Gray from Ivanhoe, Ron Moodycliffe (Avon Colour Studio) and even Henry Talbot, who had helped John out once or twice doing a wedding! There were also artists, printers, engineers, musicians and singers.... not forgetting the personalities and dignitaries coming in for portraits etc. A dazzling parade.

One of the regular callers was Bill Cavanagh, the Ilford sales rep. A jovial, cheery fellow, he was helpful and always stayed for a long chat and a cuppa. **Pic 13** Even by the time I joined John in late 1960, I had swung over to Ilford film and papers, and was pleased to find John was an Ilford fan. He was, however, using ID 2 tank developer, reliable enough, but a bit grainy. I had just started using Microphen, and persuaded John for us to give it a go. As expected, results outstanding...finer grain, superb resolution, and best of all, big increase in ASA (ISO as we say today) speed. The old HP3 was automatically raised from 200 to at least 320, and as I demonstrated one day, rated at 650 only required a couple more minutes development...and still superb negs. Given John was now well



Pic 13. Ilford sales rep, Bill Cavanagh 1962. Photo: J. Fleming.



Pic 14. Montage test, featuring the ever-patient Norma! Photo: J. Fleming.

into bounce flash for weddings etc, the extra film speed was greatly appreciated. I had also introduced paper interleaving at all times of negatives once developed, to avoid scratches and dust. Another thing I did was to be daring and go glassless for the enlarger neg carrier. It worked, even with 4x5. You just have to be careful when focusing and watch for any neg "popping" and refocus if so. Spotting by the mid 1960's was almost totally eliminated. All the while I was aiming to match work seen in favourite magazines like the glorious German "Grossbild"/International Photo Technik. Bill Cavanagh once commented our print quality was among the best he had ever seen...a nice compliment. Many experiments were undertaken during these mid 1960's, including trying an elaborate masking idea described in Grossbild where one could place any studio subject to any stock background. It was rather involved I recall, and one made by step-and-repeat high contrast masks and sandwiched it all up



Pic 12. Aftermath of vandalized shop display window. 1964. Photo: J. Fleming.

or something, forget exact details. One result remains...simple studio portrait on white background mated to a streetscape. **Pic 14**

What a far cry from computers, but we gave everything a go and it was always interesting. John Shingler enjoyed life to the full, and this shows through in a candid I shot showing the two of us, bored witless behind the scene of some fashion parade, posing at a little bar we had found in the reception centre. No remote controls, just a darkened room, open the shutter on tripod, fire the flash manually, and rush back and close the shutter! A treasured memory. **Pic 15**

Eventually I refurbished the little Austin 7 coupe and had it on the road, and managed to add a luxurious second car a couple of years later, a Jaguar Mk. 4. This magnificent beast probably came about since I enthused over the Mk.5 Jag. Mr. Le Page had at Allan Studios, and was aided by my father spotting the Mk. 4 with a "for sale" sign in a city street. Emptying every moneybox and starving for weeks, I managed to buy it! Some years earlier, Athol Shmith had chosen a Mk 4/SS Jaguar to be in a photo mural he did for the Victorian Tourist



Pic 15. Flashed! Taken at "Butleigh Wooton", Kew, about 1963. J. Shingler left & J.F. Photo: J. Fleming.

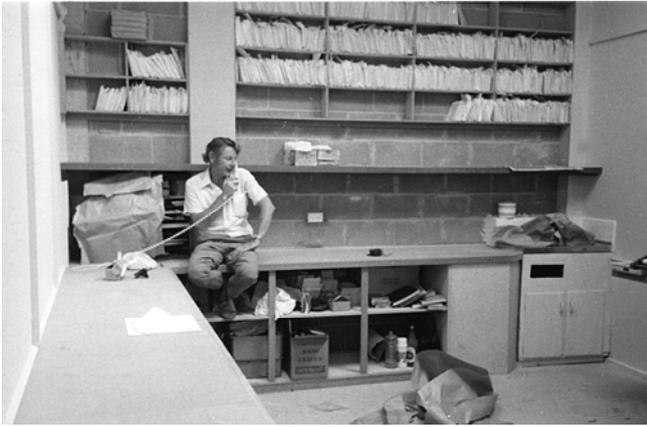


Pic 16. The Jaguar Mk.4 3.5 litre, 1948 model at Chadstone. From Ektacolor 4x5, 1967. Photo: J. Fleming.



Pic 17. Holmesglen concrete wall factory by PF 100 flashbulbs and daylight 1966. Photo: J. Fleming.

Bureau as he said it was (then) the most graceful car ever. **Pic 16** I have always been mechanically & electronically inclined, and this led me to become emergency repairer and servicer for all studio and camera gear. Several times whilst out on a job John would return at breakneck speed up the rear laneway and run into the back door pleading could I look at the Linhof's shutter, it was jammed or wouldn't cock etc. Using basic screwdrivers and a few pins etc, I usually managed to get him going and the cream FJ Holden or rattly Falcon would exit the lane with a howl of tyres and cloud of blue oil smoke! He seemed to thrive on mishaps and adventure, pushing everything to the limit. Before the original Blaupunkt Reporter flash died, it had a fault in the high voltage lead to the head. This sometimes shorted with a loud "crack" (accompanied by a whiff of grey smoke) as the two gigantic condensers discharged their lethal voltage. John turned this into a comedy routine during weddings, but I was horrified at the very real danger, and one day dismantled the thing, discharged the condensers with a screwdriver (tip of blade half melted, the receptionist screamed and jumped out of her chair) and then carefully reinsulated the lead and resleeved it safely. Eventually the old warhorse was replaced by Braun Hobby EF3's (very fine flashes, still viable on mains use) and then the first of a long line of Metz's. Of course, we also used PF 60 and PF 100 flashbulbs where massive amounts of light were needed for commercial work, big halls or factories. **Pic 17**



*Pic 18. Moving in, new studio in 1972.
John doesn't look happy.... Photo: J. Fleming.*

since childhood) It was the beginning of the 1970's, and overall the suburban studio boom was winding down. Just why might be a very good subject for a future socio-economist to study, but in my mind it was "all over". What work remained was very much specialized, industrial, technical and commercial mainly. A few also did most of the fashion work which was ongoing through this period. Another reason the old suburban wedding and portrait studio slowed down was the advent of good, semi-automatic 35 mm cameras like the Pentax Spotmatic, Minolta SRT. Keen amateur photographers were often entrusted with covering the family wedding, baby photos etc. Handled correctly, these cameras and the more modern Kodak and emerging Fuji colour emulsions gave beautiful results too. But I just loved the 1960's studio scene and thank goodness I took enough photographs here and there to preserve some of it. **Pic 19**

Thinking back to the various tripods I have used or own, I remembered a photo taken years ago demonstrating how sturdy some were. The shot here shows my old studio colleague using his 1940's wooden and steel heavy-duty stand as a stepping-stone to a much higher viewpoint! I wonder how many modern-day tripods could handle this load?

Coming up to more recent times, I recently came across in a bundle of pro gear a nice Model 055 Manfrotto alloy tripod with centre column. Closer inspection revealed a broken leg-locking wing nut and a fractured upper leg stop casting. Good news about these is I was quickly able to find all Manfrotto exploded view parts lists and part numbers on the Internet. Armed with the part numbers required, I contacted the Australian agents, Adeal Pty. Ltd in North Altona, Melbourne.

Absolutely fantastic, very prompt and professional service. Within 4 days of my email and subsequently mailing a cheque, the parts arrived safely at a very reasonable total cost of \$20.90 including the postage in padded bag. If you need Manfrotto spares, cannot go past that!

Soon the "swinging sixties" was well entrenched, and then ten years passed and I decided time to set out on my own. John had arranged to sell the studio/shop in High Street Ashburton to the nearby service station as they wanted more land. He relocated to a purpose built new studio in Blackburn Road in the suburb of Syndal, near Glen Waverley. Somehow this never seemed the same...dull grey concrete bricks and diffused sky lighting gave the interior a dreary feel, and many of the "characters" didn't seem to call around now. **Pic 18** I sensed, too, John had lost interest, and loved going fishing, (something he had pursued



Pic 19. Self-portraits, Johns Fleming and Shingler, 1963. Photo: J. Fleming.



*Pic 20. Don't try this at home!
John Shingler shows his vintage
"Wagson" tripod could take it.*

John Shingler
Portrait & Commercial Photography

195 HIGH STREET PHONE ASHBURTON, VICTORIA 25-6457

John Robert Shingler. 1929-1999.

Letters to the Editor:

From Geoff Harrison comes a most interesting Internet link for all members to explore. While perusing it, he also found what he claimed to be the best user name ever: 'Dustin McAmara' Well worth a visit as it's very comprehensive. http://camera-wiki.org/wiki/Main_Page

Another site offering great info and pics is at: <http://www.earlyphotography.co.uk/index.html>

B.F. 87. Another great effort. You just get better and better. Where will it all end!
Cheers, **Margaret. (Secretary.)**

Hi Ian, Congratulations. The latest issue of Back Focus was most welcome (and not because it had a photo of me on the back cover!) This issue had not one, but two articles of considerable interest to a photographic historian, firstly the article on Allan Studios and secondly the one on Thornton Richards. I have done research on both the M. J. Allan and Richards & Co studios and possess albums I have assembled with many examples of each of the early studio work of both in carte de visite, cabinet photo and postcard format. I had the pleasure of meeting Hugh Montgomery at the PCANZ symposium in Christchurch 2 years ago. He did his veterinary training in Sydney.
Cheers! -- **Marcel Safier. #348** (Photographic Historian and Collector)



Deja Vu editor Colin Martin with Hugh Montgomery.

Hi Ian, Just read some of B F - lots of reading again mate, well done. **Geoff Harrison. #109.**
(Thanks Geoff, but only possible with the excellent member input. Ian.)

Now and then, my quirky sense of humour takes over! As a change of pace, (just couldn't resist this, via the Internet from a member), one for all you 'brainiacs' out there amongst our readership! Answers can be found on a later page in Back Focus!

1. A murderer is condemned to death in one of three of the following. He has to choose between three rooms. The first is full of raging fires, the second is full of assassins with loaded guns, and the third is full of lions that haven't eaten in 3 years. Which room is safest for him?
2. A woman shoots her husband. Then she holds him under water for over 5 minutes. Finally, she hangs him. But 5 minutes later they both go out together and enjoy a wonderful dinner together. How can this be?
3. What is black when you buy it, red when you use it, and grey when you throw it away?
4. Can you name three consecutive days without using the words Wednesday, Friday, or Sunday?
5. This is an unusual paragraph. I'm curious as to just how quickly you can find out what is so unusual about it. It looks so ordinary and plain that you would think nothing was wrong with it. In fact, nothing is wrong with it! It is highly unusual though. Study it and think about it, but you still may not find anything odd. But if you work at it a bit, you might find out. Try to do so without any coaching!

In these days when we have consumer hotlines and all types of protection for unhappy customers, it's nice to know that good, honest service is still out there and available. Received this from member Geoff Harrison just before going to press!

Hello Yoshi,

Cameras received today and all working nicely. Thank you for your excellent repair work and the price. I appreciate was more work than you or I thought.

I would like to recommend your repair service to any Society members who need camera repairs.

Nagami Camera Service. 17 Woodville Road. Mooroolbark, Vic. 3138

PHOTOGRAPHY IN MY BLOOD.

John O. Friend M.Ph.

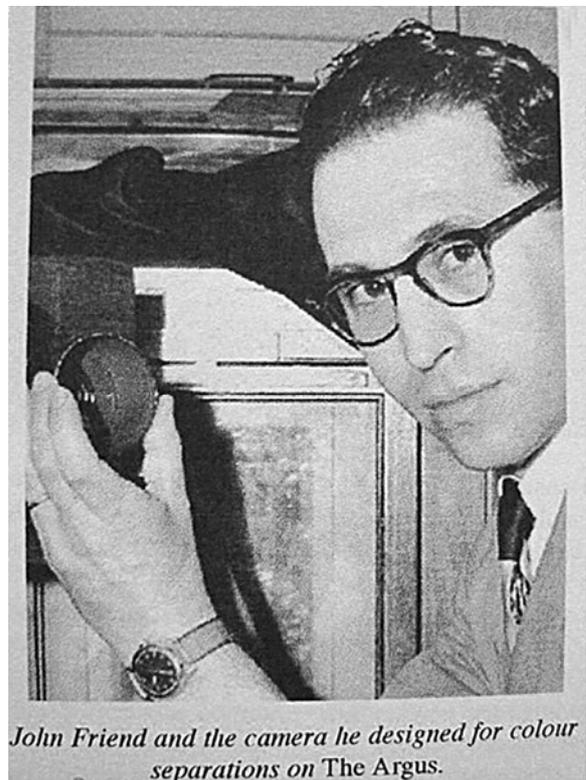
In the country where I came from, Romania, you could just not pick up a camera and call yourself a photographer. I was 26 when I got back after the war and it was too late for me to go to university- I had to earn a crust and my hobby, photography, looked the likely avenue.

For that I had to sit in front of a panel for an oral and practical exam. Luckily I had matric- otherwise it would have been seven years working for a master, before I would be allowed to sit for an exam. This exam was no “chickenfeed” the oral exam included optics, for example: what is a coma aberration in a lens or what is the purpose of a tilt and swing function in a view camera. Other hairy ones were about photographic chemistry- for example: what is the function of monomethylparaminophenolsulphate in a developer. The practical involved taking a portrait in a completely strange (for me) studio- on a camera and lighting I never seen before. At any rate I passed and then managed to get a reporters job in a newspaper. Here I have to recount my unfortunate happening, as I was to photograph the arrival at the airport of a couple of famous people. They gave me a Russian copy of the Leica- and as it (Leica) was a familiar camera to me I just loaded the film and eventually after taking the pictures, I went in the darkroom to develop my film. Opening the camera I had a handful of film bits- it never wound the film properly but just split the perforation. It was not a very happy affair. I eventually opened my own studio and it worked out very well – other than the political situation. Sooner or later they would have closed my studio, as other than state employees, individuals were not encouraged to run their own businesses. My wife and self-ended up in Budapest and there I got a job with the Hungarian Picture service. I shot just about any kind of picture, mostly with a pre-war Rollei and an old Linhof with a Goerz Dagor F:8 wide angle lens on it. My wife did the filing in the system and I believe it is true that I shot around 8000 pictures- quite a few appearing in a book.

It is another story, how we arrived in Australia with a suitcase and penniless. That story can be read in my book “Out of darkness” (available in the Monash libraries). Both my wife and myself, started work at Kodak for which we had to travel from Hampton, where we lived to Abbotsford.

My job was in the paper-coating department, where I had to put sticks in a rack in the drying room. It was not a very demanding job. I was lucky, as the management allowed me to print some of my negatives, which I carried with me all the way from Europe. I entered the London Salon, Philadelphia and Amsterdam International Salon exhibitions and got 4 prints accepted in each. The management asked me for the prints on their return and I believe they were later used to decorate the Coburg management area.

My next job was at the Argus Newspaper at the corner of Elizabeth and Lonsdale Street. I was employed as an indoor Press Photographer and was really tied to the Graphic Department. We printed a number of various magazines besides the Argus Newspaper itself.



John Friend and the camera he designed for colour separations on The Argus.

I am really writing this article to make it known that we were the first in the whole world to print colour on a Newspaper every day. I believe I was employed since my qualifications and the fact that I did some early colour processing.

Colour printing is a fairly complex process and it was much more so before computers. To be able to print colour, images need to be separated to the 3 primary colours, using “separation” filters such as Red, Green and Blue filters, each transmitting about a third of the spectrum from each in turn. Three photographic negatives recording the red, green and blue components of the image are obtained. In the subtractive colour printing method, a fourth negative is obtained via a yellow filter. The purpose of the latter is to have a source of a grey key image, ensuring that neutral areas remain neutral. From those 4 negatives you print black, yellow cyan and magenta to give you full colour rendition.

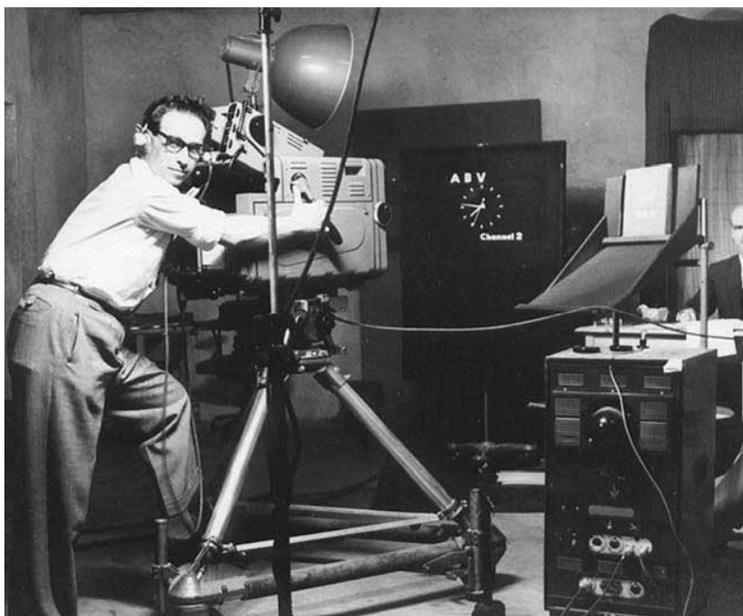
This seems very easy and straightforward – however unfortunately none of the filters are perfect and each colour plate will have some of the unwanted colour. At the Argus, they employed what we called Colour dot etchers-. It used to take 4 men to work on each plate to eliminate by hand the unwanted colour. They worked on a screen image, on the actual plates, which were then used to print the colour.

When I started work at the Argus, I could not believe my eyes, when I saw what was used to separate colour. An old Studio camera on castors with elaborate wood carved legs, an old Ross Xpress lens of some vintage and a copy on a wall under a glass frame. Since the building housed a 3 story-printing machine, when it started up, the whole building used to vibrate. The wooden floor on which this camera stood did not help and the copy vibrated one way while the camera danced the other way. I still do not know how they ever got a sharp image with it.

I was given the facility and managed to get a new camera with a Kodak 18 inch Process lens (with two iris diaphragms) and the camera was on a spring loaded rail, which at least absorbed most of the vibration. It took me some time to realize, that there was a way to eliminate the tedious handwork in correcting colour. The answer was an unsharp mask which contained the measured density of the unwanted colour. What it took 4 men to work on for a week eventually I could do in one morning and present a set-up of corrected colour.

It never occurred to me then to patent the idea, but by the time I woke up, it was too late.

I decided to do an electronic course at the Marconi School of Wireless with an eye on the coming of opening of Television broadcasts. This is how I ended up in October 1976 at the ABC as Senior TV Cameraman. However on my first days there I was asked to identify the problem of the zoom lens, which seemed not to work. Since most of the employees came straight from the then PMG department- few if any had any trainings in the visual arts- let alone in optics. The problem with the most important equipment to be ready for the coming Olympic Games was a simple one- the

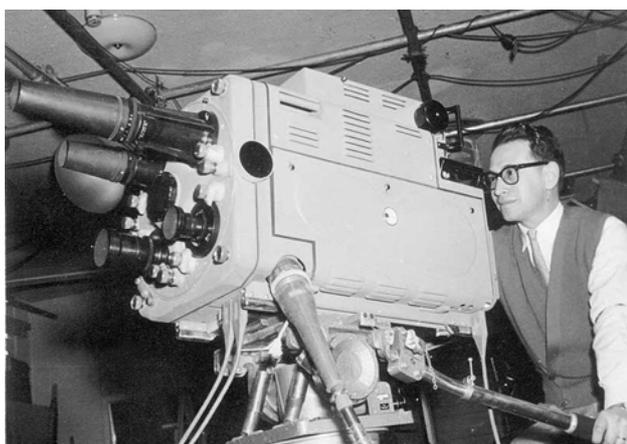


Studio 33 at Ripponlea Studios, with John Royal Newsreader & the Station Clock, December 1956

operators were convinced that it is an autofocus system. It was indeed not- it had to be hand focussed.

But my biggest surprise was when I was asked to see what was wrong with the Telerecording system since no one was able to get it going. I found two Arriflex cameras looking through a system of prisms onto a simple small TV. screen from which it was supposed to shoot a 16mm movie film. I found that the Ariflex lenses were fully closed down, with virtually no light getting through, let alone the weak TV image from the monitor. When I asked what sort of a film was used, I was shown a “can” of 16mm sound recording stock, a film really unsuitable for a continuous tone image. I asked for the real stuff only to be told that one of the engineers has obtained this film with great difficulty and managed to get 300 thousand feet of it. Three weeks before the Olympics I was given the task to fix matters since on my record as a professional, no doubt I should be able. To cut it short- even though this film was not designed for a continuous tone image, I had to find a solution and that was by opening the lenses to a good wide aperture, punch a large amount of exposure to it and develop it in a much-modified soft solution.

I ended up instead being Senior Cameraman at the Olympics, by developing on two Houston-Fearless processors during the whole Olympic Games. I had a motorbike waiting for my films at the outside door of my lab to take the film to then Essendon airport and fly it to Sydney- as a matter of fact Sydney ABC TV opened with my Olympic films.



At the Marconi Studio Camera 1957



At the MCG, PYE TV Camera with Zoom 1958

I will not write about my 22 years in TV. – but let me tell you that it was an exciting but demanding life. On my retirement I decided to teach Photography for some time. I got the idea, when on our trip with my wife in Mackay the TAFE College asked me to teach photography there. That followed by spending quite a few years teaching, amongst others at Swinburne Tech, Monash University and others.

Photography has never left me and I had many exhibitions and some prize winnings- one of the latest a couple of years ago at Probus Australia winning a trip for two to Tasmania.

I enjoy being a member of the Collectors Society and enjoy the markets and some of the auctions. By now I don't really have a collection any more, having given most of it away to people who will still have a joy of it. The only worthwhile camera I still have is my Minox, which I used extensively at the beginning of TV broadcasts. You can see most of them at the ABC historical; site under:

[HTTP://ABCFOOTYTIPPING.com/ABV/index.html](http://ABCFOOTYTIPPING.com/ABV/index.html)

Also you may like to pick up the book I have written: “Out of darkness” which can be obtained at Monash Library, the State Library of Victoria, or The Immigration Museum.

Auction February 2013

Ian Carron

The day was well attended, I'd guess in the high 40s and, with a committee meeting preceding the viewing, set-up and meeting was both accomplished in time.



Table-loads of goodies await the anxious bidders!



Kevin Saunders holds up a current lot.



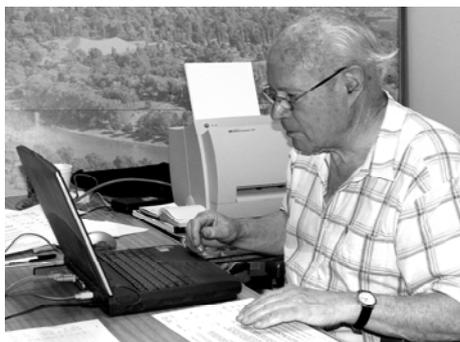
As does helper Rod Reynolds.



Ready to bid when 'that one' comes up!



An eagle eye from Max to keep track of bidders!



Always there working hard in the background, treasurer, Brian Hatfield.

Although the published catalogue listed 92 lots, a number of books ex library and other lots of gear left with Margaret but without adequate identification combined to extend the auction process. The extra-catalogue items have been treated as a donation to the Society and were grouped up by the Treasurer and reduced to 23 to simplify the money handling process.

While a number of items were passed in, (failing to meet reserve) others brought spirited bidding and kept Max waving his hand like a demented conductor! (Think he breathed a sigh of relief when the half way coffee break was called!) By end of day, a total of just over \$5200 in sales had been realised. A successful day and our thanks to all who helped out.

Great Day at Box Hill! March Market.

Ian Carron

Sunday 10th, in spite of being in the middle of a long weekend, (Moomba) marked another successful Market day with full table bookings and just over 500 door entries.

As usual, apart from browsing the many and varied items on offer, one of the best parts of a day at the Market to me is that opportunity of catching up with old friends from the trade and getting all the latest scuttlebutt. Each Market seems to bring a new contact from the past, this time an old employer and even a past workmate. A pleasure too to make face to face contact at last with fellow member and Back Focus writer John Fleming who has some great articles 'in the pot' following continuous and in depth research he has been conducting into the Australian Photographic Manufacturing Industry.

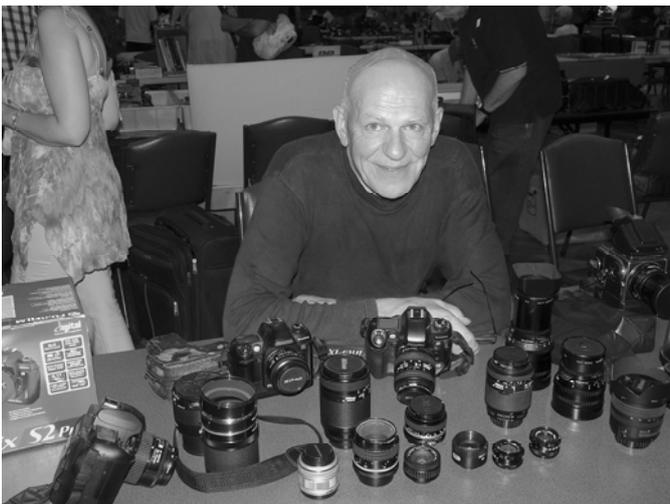


Brian Hatfield shows his new purchase, a Voigtländer Alpine, c1910, to Bruce Mathieson.



A typical assortment!

Wandering around the various tables and chatting with the vendors, all reported very good trading and there seemed to be a steady procession of buyers carrying larger items out of the hall, including an assortment of enlargers that I noticed. Gives one hope that the bromide and chemical process is not quite dead yet!



Rod Reynolds, tired but happy from a good day of trading.



Tony Hilton with.... Rollei. (What Else!)



Stereo 3D Breakfast Cereal, with Cup of Tea, and 3D TV in the 1960's!!!

Lyle Curr



Pic 1. We all know the feeling.



Pic 2. Ramp walking ducks from a cereal packet.

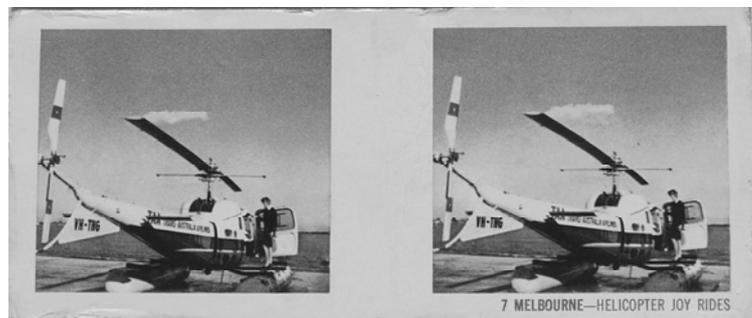
coloured *stereo cards*, and these cards not only had nice 3D scenes on them; on the back they had the information that enabled you to get your own little plastic **photographic stereo viewer**.

No, none of these Stereo Viewers came in the cereal packet but once you had a card from the packet you had the means to obtain the viewer, sent direct to your house through the (Pic 4) post. (Sounds a bit like buying on-line

“Where did you get your licence...from a Weeties packet?” (Pic 1) The great colloquial sarcasm but, as with most of these clichés, they grew from a reality. The toy in the Weeties box was junk, and (usually) so easy to get, that... well you know the rest of the story..... Where did YOU get your licence etc etc....

But remember those days, when we got what are now called “Cereal toys”, actual plastic toys that were in the bottom of the Weetie or Cornflake box. A tiny cowboy or Indian, a little ramp walker you had to put together yourself, (Pic 2) a sheriff’s badge, the list was endless. The fun we had, fishing around for them when mum and dad had finally stopped telling you to wait till the packet was empty... yeah, like that was going to happen. Isn't this a great way to start a story for **Back Focus**; what in the devil has any of this to do with photography.

Well, if you ate Weet-Bix for breakfast, or drank Lipton tea, from a packet of actual leaf tea, (no teabags then!) at some stage in the early 1960s the cereal toys in these packets were (Pic 3) little



Pic 3. A card from a Weet-Bix packet.

You must get a LIPTON 3-D VIEWER
Magically transforms these cards into 3-dimensional living realism.
Simply send 2/6, plus 1 Lipton end label*, with your name and address, to Lipton's, Box 557D, G.P.O., Melbourne.



Only 2/6

Save 4th Series of 16 (Nature)

Pic 4. How to get your viewer.

doesn't it?) So while waiting for our viewer to arrive, eat more Weet-Bix and drink more Lipton Tea we did, because the stereo cards came in a various and seemingly unending series. Usually 16 to a set, and it was always very difficult to get a whole set. There was a trading system, whereby you could send in 2 of your duplicate cards and get one card back that you desperately needed, but really, how many Weet-Bix and cups of tea could you ingest?

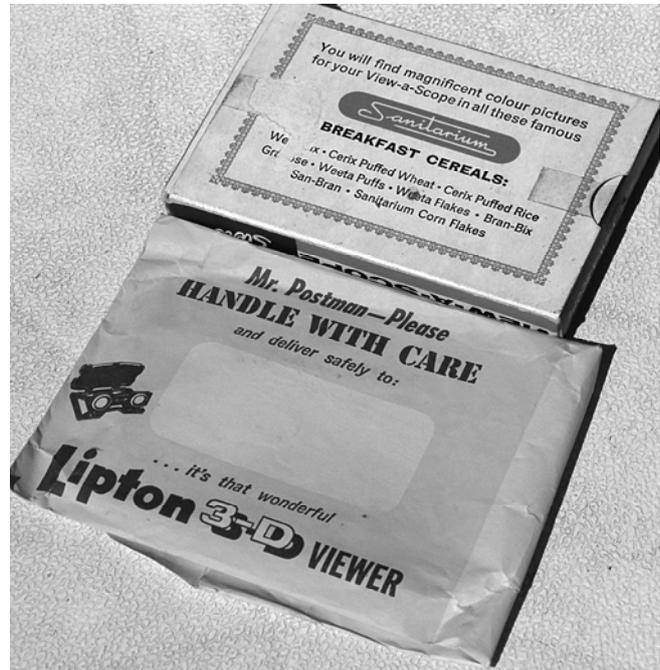
But wait, is that the postman I hear, **TWEEEEET!!!!?** No, its not the ubiquitous #tag tone of Twitter on your mobile phone, in those days the postie used to ride a (silent) push bike and blow a whistle as he deposited your mail in the letter box. Blowing the whistle disappeared from the postie’s repertoire about the same time as he was delivering these little stereo viewers, but today I can still hear when my posties coming, as he

now rides a motor bike along my footpath, cleaning up the stray cats and the odd little old lady along his way, but at least he, or she these days, is again audible!

.....And here is my Stereo Viewer; now my collected cards will transform into colourful, **(Pic 5)** amazing , full 3D images, jumping out of the viewer at me!

The viewer came either in an envelope from *Lipton's* or in a little box from the *Sanatarium Health Food company*. The viewers were plastic folding gadgets, with poor quality plastic lenses and no focusing mechanism. But they were brightly coloured, easy to use, and they worked. Many of us got our first taste of the 3D image from one of these most basic of stereo implements.

While they were cheaply made, they were well designed. The viewers were also **(Pic 6)** aesthetically quite attractive being brightly



Pic 5. Delivered by the Postie in one of these.



*Pic 6. The Lipton Tea Viewer.
Needs to be seen in colour!*

The viewers came in different colours; the Lipton Tea promos were yellow, and there are 2 distinctly different yellow colours in these. The Weet-Bix viewers were red, and there are 2 distinct versions of the red model.

One of the Weet-Bix red viewers you could get was actually called a **View-A-Scope**. It only had “View-A-Scope” on the viewer, both at the back, and in the filigree base. The Sanitarium Weet-Bix cards also asked you to claim your “True-To-Life 3-D View-A-Scope”. This viewer was a direct copy of a **Vistascreen** viewer, which was made in England at the same time. The Vistascreen is clearly marked “Made in England” and was made by the Vistascreen Company Ltd. (16 Soho Square, London). They were manufactured in either red or ivory coloured plastic. They had rectangular lenses, which gave minimum distortion when viewing. The Vistascreen was also used as a promo in the UK for

coloured, with either the name of the promoting company, or the actual viewers name in a filigree style base. **(Pic 7)** Both the cardholder, and the twin lens holder folded into the centre quite neatly, making a compact, flat package.



Pic 7. The (bright red) Weet-bix Viewer.



Pic 8. The Weet-A-Bix Vistascreen Viewer.

Weetabix, a company that has been producing cereals since the 1860's and has a very pronounced history of merchandizing through promo schemes, (Pic 8) and given the fact that they produce -and sell -over 3 BILLION WEETABIX biscuits each year, they have been very successful at it!!! (Pic 9) The red View-A-Scope that arrived at your house in the Sanitarium company box was *exactly the same*, so one can only deduce that those red View-A-Scopes were either imported directly or made here under licence by..... someone?

Vistascreen viewers and boxes of real photograph cards were available commercially in the UK, and did appear here briefly. The better quality Vistascreen viewer was a little more expensive at 1/6d (one shilling and six pence) sterling, but the Vistascreen pictures came in lots of 10 in a booklet type wrapping housed in their own little box... and they were 2/6d sterling a pack, well over the cost of any of the viewers.

There is no identification marks to indicate where any of the red or yellow viewers were made or by whom.



Pic 9. The Weetabix View-A-Scope version.



Pic 10. A Lipton Viewer with a full set of cards.

(Pic 10) The other red Weet-Bix viewer, and the Lipton's yellow one were similar in style, but had round lenses which appeared to be of inferior quality, and gave much more distortion of the stereo view. Both these viewers had the promo company's name on both the rear of the cardholder, and in the filigree base.

There was a third viewer in the group here in Australia. It was the same as the round lensed Lipton and Weet-Bix models, but was **blue** plastic and was a promo for the national television program and gossip sheet, TV

WEEK. The TV Week viewer is very hard to find, as are the cards that went with it. Apparently the people who bought TV Week were more interested in their viewing habits vis-a-vis the black and white box in the corner, and very few of the them seemed to have survived.

The red and yellow viewers appear to be relatively plentiful on the collectable scale, and a regularly seen at around the \$30 mark, complete with their original postal packaging. The more cards there are with them, the dearer they become, but \$1 each would be pretty

expensive for the cards. Some of the Australian city scenes are a little higher in price, and any complete set would rate a premium. (Pic 11)

These small plastic pieces of 3D photographic history may not be the world's most sought after collectable, but they do make a nice, colourful collection, and they do evoke memories of some times passed, when the world was a quieter place, particularly in 3D.....



Pic 11. The rear of a Sanitarium card.

***From Daguerre to Digital: 150 Years of Classic Cameras* by John Wade**

ISBN: 9780764340260

Published 2012 by Schiffer Publishing, Atglen, PA 19310 USA

Reviewed by Michael Parker

John Wade is a prolific author of books and articles on collectible photographica and to date, most of his books have been soft cover offerings of fewer than 100 pages covering specific areas including hidden cameras, cine cameras, clockwork cameras and photographic technique. This time, Wade has produced a 300-page hard cover coffee table size book. The book contains 522 photographs of cameras which can be said to demonstrate a major landmark; epitomize a certain era; be rare or a prototype; contain something different or unusual in the design; and/or be especially weird or strange.

Wade rightly cites as a reference (and to some extent replaces) Brian Coe's seminal 1988 work *Cameras from Daguerreotypes to Instant Pictures* and inevitably invites comparison with recent commentaries on the history of the camera. In particular Todd Gustavson, curator of technology at the George Eastman House has released two books in recent years with very similar titles and layout and based on the undeniably huge George Eastman House collection.

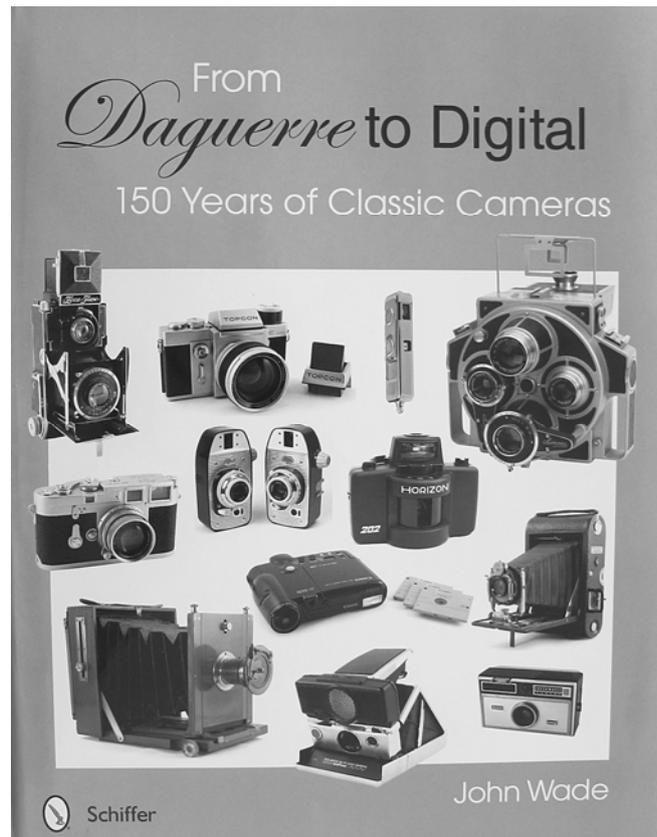
Wade works on a broader canvas still, drawing on research for his portfolio of 30 books, his close association with the collector community in the UK and internationally and his time as editor of the *Hove International Blue Book* camera price guide. As a result, this book presents a particularly broad spectrum of cameras from around the world. The rare typo or minor inaccuracy (eg, the Narciss on p. 144 came with an eye-level prism, not a waist-level finder) reminds us that this reference book has been produced by an enthusiast drawing principally on his own resources and not by a large organisation with photographers, editors and writers on tap.

The book begins with a short history of the camera and then divides the world of photographic apparatus into 12 categories: Snapshot, Folding, Rigid body, Rangefinder, Single lens reflex, Twin lens, Stereo, Instant picture, Wide angle & panoramic, Miniature, Disguised & spy and Clockwork motor drive. Each category is preceded by a short overview and illustrated with appropriate cameras set out in date order. Each illustrated camera is accompanied by a detailed discussion. The colour photographs generally two to a page and occasionally whole page, are clear and detailed with due acknowledgement for those which are not part of Wade's own collection or picture library.

Often, the second or third model camera in a production series will be presented because it more closely fits the category under review. The associated discussion uses plain language to clarify the sometimes arcane inner workings of some cameras and often concisely addresses earlier & later versions. This latter neatly clears the way to move along the timescale with different cameras rather than with model variations of those already covered. Of necessity, some choices have been made about categorisation, particularly with what might usually be termed miniature or subminiature cameras. Several of the more sophisticated of these are reviewed in the categories of Single Lens Reflex, Twin Lens Reflex and Panoramic.

In this book, Wade has assembled an exceptional set of cameras that illustrate the avenues, paths and sometimes dead ends that make up the history of photographic apparatus. This is a book that will appeal to the enthusiast collector and the casual photographica historian alike. Its value rests not only with the excellent photographs and the straightforward, informative discussions but especially with the wide range of cameras used to illustrate the various categories.

From Daguerre to Digital: 150 Years of Classic Cameras is available from *Schiffer Books* for \$US59.99 plus shipping and is also available on line from a variety of retailers. I bought my copy from *The Book Depository* and it arrived from Gloucester UK in just over a week.



They Don't Make 'Em Like They Used Too. A story about a flashgun, and a BATTERY!

Lyle Curr

When I “let go” my Kodak collection some years ago now, all I kept was my extensive collection of Retina stuff. Naturally, I sometimes get duplicate bits so I sell them on eBay. (Doesn't everyone these days?) Just now I was preparing an old 1950's Retina Kodablitz Flash gun to list for on line auction. I like to sell things like that with at least one bulb to go with it, purely for display purposes. I hunted around, found an old AG 1 bulb, put it in the flash, and set the thing up to photograph. Pictures done, I prepared to list it on the auction site. **(Pic 1)**

I wrote it up as a GENUINE Kodak Retina accessory, told its story, and noted that I included an unused flash bulb, for display only, as the flashgun used an old, long since discontinued Eveready #404 15V Zinc Carbon battery.

I was removing the flash from the camera I had it mounted on as I was finishing my listing, and I knocked it on the shelf my computer monitor sits on. The damn thing (the flash that is!) went off right in front of my face. Blinded, **(Pic 2)** I cursed a bit, then marvelled at the fact that it had fired, albeit obviously from a short as it was not connected to a camera. As my sight slowly returned, about 10 minutes later, I kid you not; I connected the flash to the camera again, put a new bulb in, and fired the shutter. Poof, it went off again.



Pic 1. The flash sits innocently on an old Retina Reflex III.



Pic 2. I must have looked like this!

The battery must be at least 20 years old, probably more. This particular flash has been in my collection at least that long. There is no leakage; the battery looks as new as the day it left the factory, whenever that may have been. Will it accumulate enough power to fire another bulb if I leave it sit for a few days? I will try that, but in the meantime, I find this a fascinating little cameo story of our wonderfully unpredictable hobby!

Twenty-four hours later, no joy, it's finally gone to battery heaven.

Happy Hunting. Lyle Curr.

I took the battery out and put a meter on it. It was as dead as a doornail. There must be some fluky power left in the capacitor I thought, so left the battery out of the flash, put a new bulb in, and tried again. This time.... nothing! Putting the DEAD battery back in the flash, I fired the camera shutter again. POOF, another flash! Alas, that was the last one. I accidentally fired one bulb, and deliberately fired 2 more, now it IS dead. **(Pic 3)**



Pic 3. The battery and the capacitor. It WAS the battery that fired the 2 bulbs.... after at least 20 years!

Previously I've written about two 35mm cameras with interchangeable film magazines – the Adox 300 and the Mamiya Magazine 35. **Zeiss Ikon** also made two cameras offering the same convenience of using just one camera body with different film types. Unlike both Adox and Mamiya the Zeiss cameras were both SLRs and their backs were accessories rather than requirements. The two were the **Contarex** and the **Contaflex**. The Contaflex backs fit some Rapid, Prima and Super models. (Pic 1)

The interchangeable backs are beautifully made, as you would expect from Zeiss, and match the quality of the cameras they fit. The first line in the instruction book is: *“A series of interlocks enforces a definite sequence of operation to protect the film against fogging and double exposures – Never use force!”*

Loading a film is a bit fiddly, as the film leader must be fed through runners on the spring-loaded pressure plate and then into the take-up chamber. (Pic 2) This is necessary as the darkslide has to pass easily over the film. The darkslide is then inserted and a cover shell is placed over the cassette. (Pic 3) The open cover over the take-up spool will rotate into closed position when the back is locked onto the camera. This stays in place and keeps the exposed film light-tight enabling the back to be exchanged at any time. The back has its own frame counter located on the baseplate and it shows the number of unexposed frames remaining. A hole in the cassette chamber allows you so see the plastic cassette spool end, so know positively when a film is present.



Pic 1. Back in position on a Contaflex S.



Pic 2. Showing the film guides.



Pic 3. Darkslide is inserted.

The magazine back can only be removed or attached when the shutter is tensioned and it cannot be unlocked from the camera unless the darkslide is in place. A small catch on the back is pressed in to unlock the darkslide so it can be removed. It may be conveniently stored on the back by sliding it into the two retaining strips. (Pic 5) When a film has been completely exposed it is rewound via the crank on the camera in the usual way.

The magazine back is fitted in place of the normal detachable camera back. But first you have to remove the plastic insert and take-up spool from the body. (Pic 4)



Pic 4. Camera with spool removed.



Pic 5. Darkslide stored on the back.

Contaflex” which is a bit misleading. The Contarex backs measure 14.75cm wide and the Contaflex backs measure 13cm. Another way of identifying each is by the spaces between the chrome reminder plate and the sides – the Contarex backs have a 1cm space, the Contaflex have none. (Pic 6) The dark slides also have different widths.

The **Contaflex S Automatic** came onto the market in 1970 and was the last in the Contaflex series. Most



Pic 7. Contaflex S Automatic with black finish.

Also there were only three convertible front-element lenses available, the **Pro Tessars**, in 35, 85 and 115mm focal lengths. (Pic 8) These two factors at least would have been a definite sales disadvantage in the 1970s and confined the camera’s appeal solely to the amateur market. Zeiss Ikon ceased camera production in 1972.

THE ANSWERS TO ALL FIVE OF THE RIDDLES ARE BELOW:

1. The third room. Lions that haven’t eaten in three years are dead. That one was easy, right?
2. The woman was a photographer. She shot a picture of her husband, developed it, and hung it up to dry (shot; held under water; and hung).
3. Charcoal, as it is used in barbecuing.
4. Sure you can name three consecutive days, yesterday, today, and tomorrow!
5. The letter “e” which is the most common letter used in the English language, does not appear even once in the paragraph.

The leather eveready cases for both cameras have a shape moulded into the rear panel so that they accept a camera with or without a magazine back fitted. A bottom insert is removed and then a hole in the base allows you to see the film counter. The backs were also supplied with their own leather cases, which was handy for storing the original camera back and pieces.

A point to watch out for if you are seeking a back for the Contarex or the Contaflex - while they might look the same they are slightly different sizes and so they cannot be interchanged. The Zeiss instruction leaflet is titled “*Interchangeable Backs for Contarex and*



Pic 6. Film reminder plate and retaining strips.



Pic 8. Pro Tessar lenses: 35, 85, 115.

were chrome but a small number were finished in black paint and they look quite handsome. (Pic 7) Back then it was some ten years after cameras like the Nikon F and the Pentax had been available and the Contaflex still did not have an instant return

mirror. Also there were only three convertible front-element lenses available, the **Pro Tessars**, in 35, 85 and 115mm focal lengths. (Pic 8) These two factors at least would have been a definite sales disadvantage in the 1970s and confined the camera’s appeal solely to the amateur market. Zeiss Ikon ceased camera production in 1972.

You Find It in the Most Unlikely Places.....

Lyle Curr

Finding information about your collection is one of the most satisfying parts of any collector's hobby, whether it be barbed wire, matchboxes or cameras they collect. *We all* want to find out as much as we can about the last camera we added to our collection. For most of us in the Society, the means by which we go about this has probably changed over the years. We used to use books - you know, those things usually with hard cardboard covers and paper "pages" in them that you can thumb through and usually get the information you want at a leisurely pace. **(Pic 1)** I know. I have built quite a reference library (that's what they call a collection of books!) over the years, and it all still serves me well, and gives great peace as you quietly peruse the pages.



Pic 1. Part of my reference "library".

If the information we wanted was not readily available from a book, we used to sit down and write to a friend or even someone we didn't know, but whom we *did* know might have had the information we wanted. These "letters" as they were known, were sent all over the world by boats and planes and were actually placed in the hands of the people for whom they were intended. They would read them, and reply, that is, send a "letter" back to us; telling us what they knew about the item we specifically requested information about. (They usually included some pleasantries and friendly small talk as well, and it was a way we got to know people all over the

world, it just usually took a few weeks!)

Of course today, we all use the internet, the mighty World Wide Web, and all things information wise are available to us immediately, in "real time" and in most cases so much information is available its called "information *overload*". There are many other sources of information concerning our beloved cameras, and it is one that is often overlooked that I want to make the subject of this little discourse.

How often have you browsed through an antique shop, and come across a box full of, usually old photos, maybe some postcards, and few *old* pieces of paper advertising or promotional pamphlets etc. Mostly we just give it a cursory scratch through, and even if there is the odd photographic piece, just glance passed it and continue on in our search for the elusive Leica Luxus for \$5 or a Ming Vase. In fact, if you actually saw a Leica Luxus for \$5 - or indeed a Ming Vase - you would probably assume it was a fake and pass over it too! If you saw the four pamphlets in Pic 2 you would probably just pass them by as common, expensive bits of paper, and continue on your quest. **(Pic 2)**

Photographic pamphlets, usually from Kodak, but many were produced by other manufacturers too, need to given a little more attention, as some of them contain wonderful information, sometimes way off the "just camera stuff" and they may produce something much more unusual; something that never enters your head at the time.... and it may be years later it hits you!



Pic 2. Four photography as often seen in antique shops.

When I was photographing one of these pieces of paper for this article, I got much closer than I normally would. I have had this pamphlet for probably 30 years,

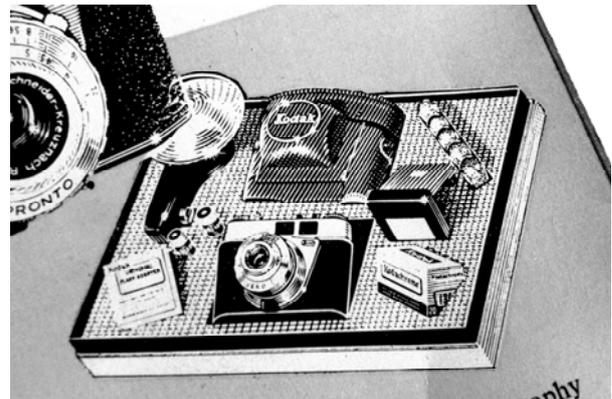
and I had never noticed before the picture of the Brownie Starflash camera on the front. The pamphlet, ostensibly about flash photography, contains a wealth of information on the Kodak cameras of the day, (Pic 3) and illustrations that are hard to find anywhere else. The line drawing picture of the Kodak Retinette 1A outfit, (Pic 4) a local Kodak Australasia only packaging of this camera, is the only picture of the outfit I could find for years, and it helped me complete the one of these rare outfits I have in my collection.... and what about the array of cameras depicted on this innocuous piece of promotional material.



Pic 3. Camera pics in these pamphlets help with dating and other information.

Another international favourite for flash work is the Brownie Starflash Camera. As the illustration shows, this camera has an inbuilt flashholder.

TO TAKE A FLASH PICTURE:
Firstly: Ensure that the flashholder is set batteries, that the camera shutter is set at "I" (instantaneous), and that your flashbulb is firmly seated in the socket. Many a good shot has been wasted because of incorrectly inserted flashbulbs.



Pic 4. The Retinette 1A outfit, pictures of which are VERY hard to find!

But, (Pic 5) as I said above, I had never noticed the Starflash camera being used to make the flash light starburst on the front of the pamphlet, but when I looked again I found something else; a GEELONG Grammar banner hanging on the wall. Now I'm NOT an old collegian, but I do live in Geelong, and the connection just seemed to make this little piece of Kodak collectable paper that little more personal to my collection. (Pic 6)



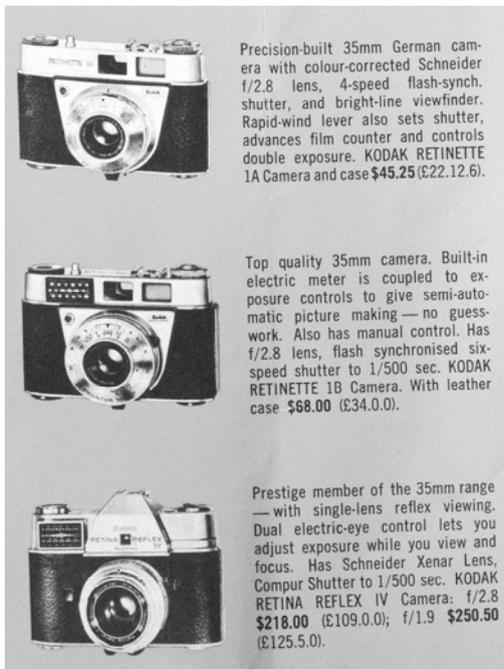
Pic 5. These pictures give you an insight you cannot get anywhere else.



Pic 6. You never know what is going to appear unless you look closely enough.

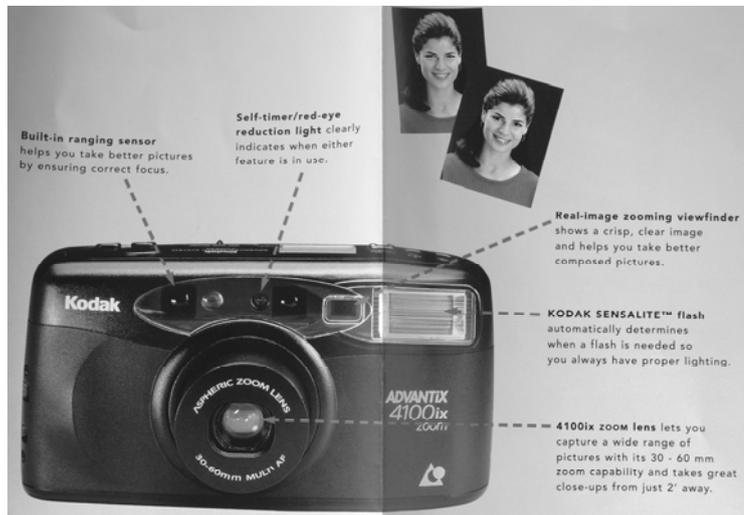
The other two promo folders contain great illustrations and detail about cameras (Pic 7) as well; and even the more modern ones are interesting, (Pic 8) and get more helpful as camera models - and systems!!! - come and go.

But the "little boy" pamphlet, (Pic 9) which I acquired probably well over 30 years ago, has always been one of my favourites. It contains many helpful illustrations of Kodak cameras from the early 60's, and has that lovely picture of the little boy on the front. It's a nice photograph, enough to make anyone want the leaflet anyway. But, the photographic gods move in mysterious ways, and this little piece of paper has become one of my most loved bits of Kodak ephemera for reasons which are only covered by the what we have come to call serendipity.



Pic 7. Even the more modern promos are interesting, and get more so as time passes.

Most of us know about “The Kodak Girl” who through various guises from the 20’s to the 50’s was used to promote anything Kodak. (Buy anything reasonably priced with a “Kodak Girl” on it. Art deco, artistic, Kodak and general photographic collectors seek them these days.) (Pic 10)



Pic 8. More great illustrations and information.



Pic 9. My favourite pamphlet.



Pic 10. The Kodak Girl from the 30s.

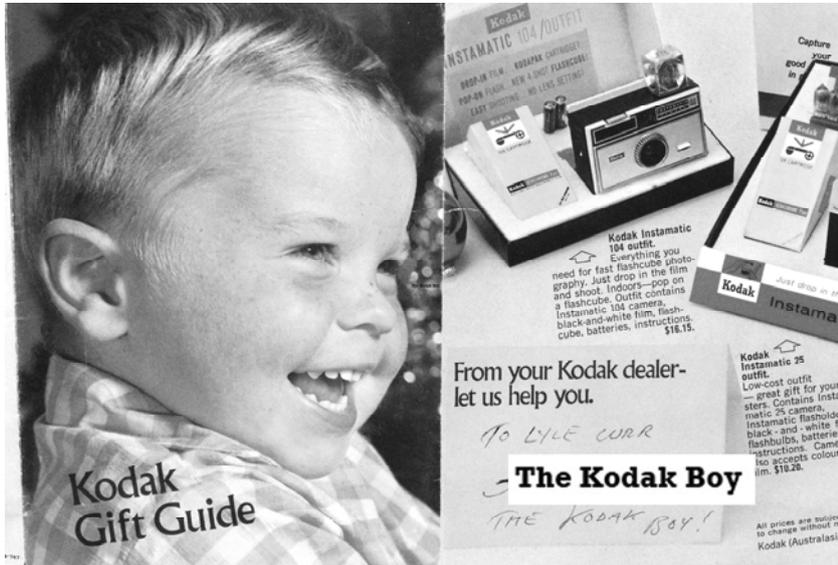
We managed to keep the Kodak Girl alive at my place till 1988, when I managed to snap her in my backyard still wielding her folding Kodak! A homegrown Kodak Girl, my daughter Elizabeth, who by the way happens to have the initials E.K.C (Don't know how that happened!) Her mother made the dress and we had a lovely time recreating the Kodak Girl. (But I digress again!.... (Pic 11) Although perhaps it is pertinent as the whole episode was inspired by Kodak promotional ephemera!



Pic 11. The Mildura Kodak Girl.

In early 60’s Melbourne, we had Jim who had been know as “The Kodak Boy!” Just after I came to Geelong in 1993, I was working in an office in the city. Throughout my working life,

it became well known in the organization for which I laboured that I collected old cameras and all things Kodak. (Can't understand how everyone knew, but there you are). In fact, my *place de travail* was over the years quite a lucrative source to me of photographic related items that to their owners were well passed their use by dates. One of my new workmates here in Geelong told me a story of how, many years ago, his son was used as a model for a large Kodak display portrait in the then "professional" La Trobe St. Kodak store, and that the picture in question had been used on those freestanding point of sale cardboard posters, and on a number of promotional pamphlets that Kodak had produced at the time. The next day I took my copy of the pamphlet in to work, and it was confirmed that this was indeed young Jim grinning at me from the front of the promotional brochure. I loaned the document to my workmate, who took it away for a week and bought it back



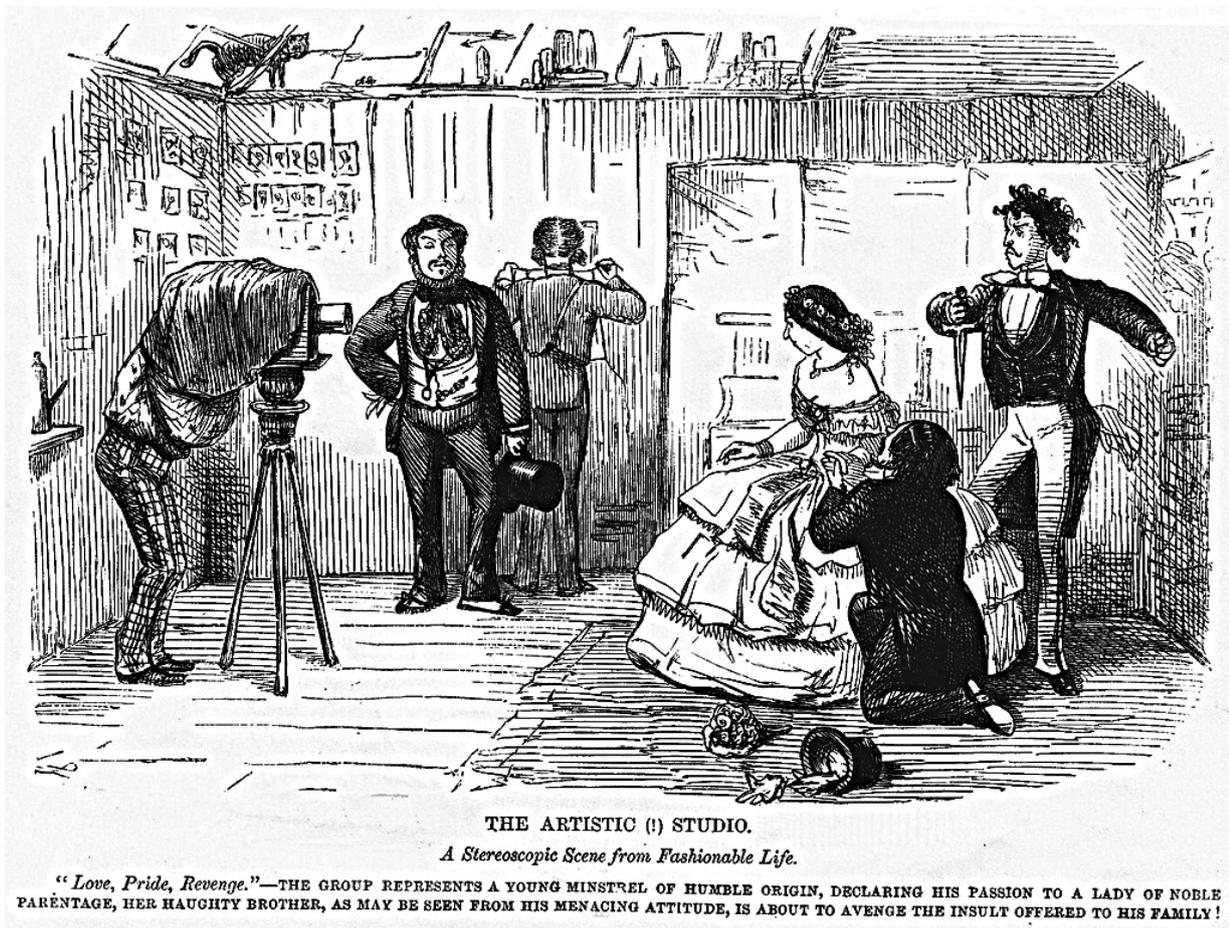
Pic 12 The Kodak Boy.

autographed by the now adult "Kodak Boy". All because of grabbing a little piece of paper from I cannot remember where, I have what I consider to be a unique piece of Australian Kodak history. (Pic 12)

So there you have it. Do not just pass over the basket or box of odd papers in the next antique shop you are in, because who knows how much information that will be useful to you is contained in one or more of the pieces; or what gem of photographic history might just

be lying there waiting for you to discover it!

Happy hunting, Lyle Curr.

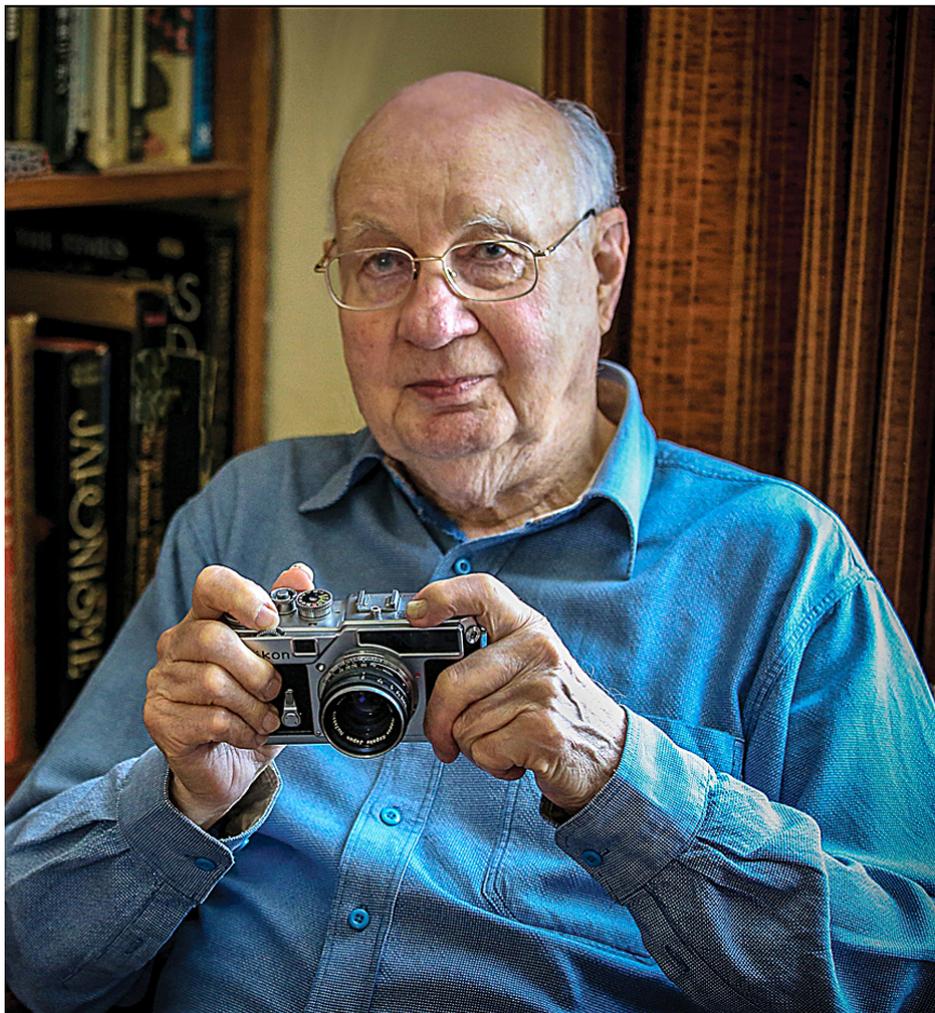


THE ARTISTIC (!) STUDIO.

A Stereoscopic Scene from Fashionable Life.

"Love, Pride, Revenge."—THE GROUP REPRESENTS A YOUNG MINSTREL OF HUMBLE ORIGIN, DECLARING HIS PASSION TO A LADY OF NOBLE PARENTAGE, HER HAUGHTY BROTHER, AS MAY BE SEEN FROM HIS MENACING ATTITUDE, IS ABOUT TO AVENGE THE INSULT OFFERED TO HIS FAMILY!

A Photo Studio from 'Punch'.



Proud to announce that Member Alan Elliott has been awarded OAM in Australia Day Honours List for Services to Photography.



The 'Shingler Studio' in 1969 by John Fleming. A test shot on the short lived Ilfochrome slide film. (Doubt it threw Kodak or Fuji into a panic!)



Contaflex + interchangeable backs from Geoff Harrison.



What has Lyle Curr so shocked? The answer is inside!



Lyle Curr finds the Kodak Boy.