

# BACK FOCUS

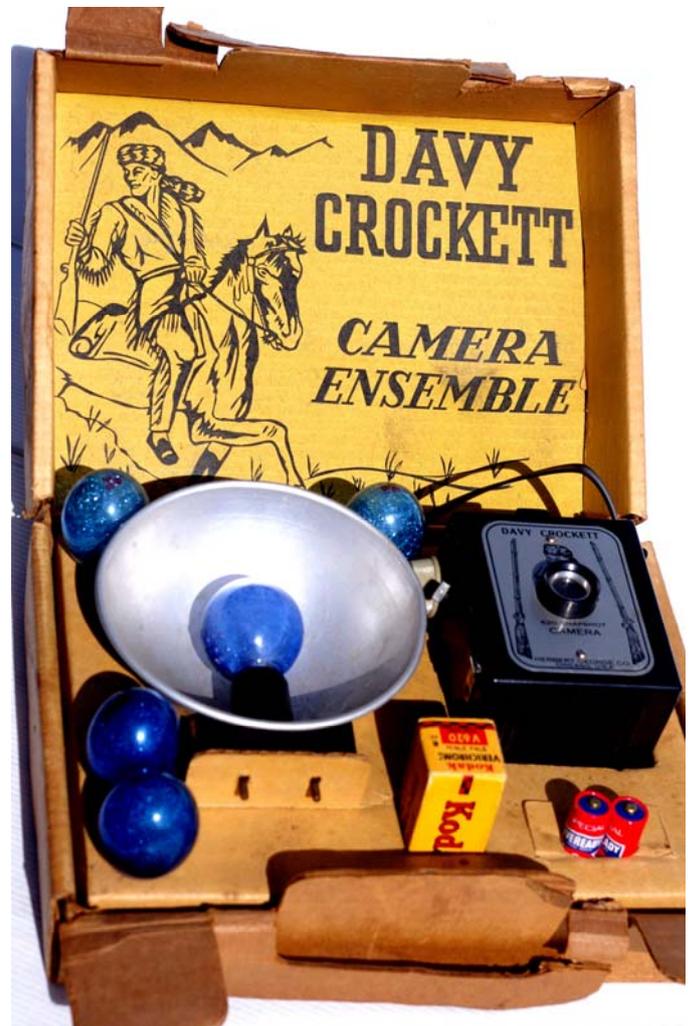
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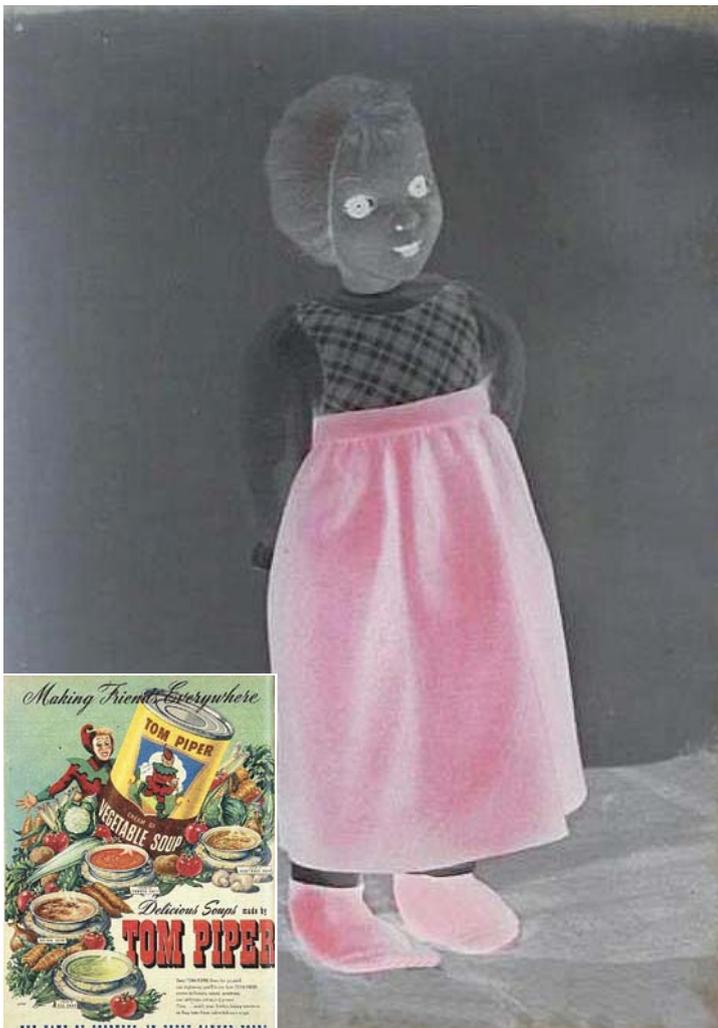
December, 2014



*View-Master Stereo Cameras from Geoff Harrison.*



*Our late, great, Lyle Curr tells us of some Cowboy Cameras!*



*John Fleming discovers some 'Mystery Negatives' with possible links to a famous brand.*



*The DeJur D-1 & D-3 cameras from Geoff Harrison.*



# THE AUSTRALIAN PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTORS SOCIETY Inc.

Incorporation Reg. No. A16888V

ABN 55 567 464 974

## OFFICE BEARERS OF THE SOCIETY

**PRESIDENT:** Paul Ewins (03) 8838 2263  
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Brian Hatfield (03) 9898 2014 Leigh Harris (03) 9898 0483 Kevin Saunders (03) 9808 8692  
**Market Organiser:** Bob Showers. **LIBRARY:** Now held at AMRA Hall.

**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.

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

**Address all Society correspondence to:-**

Margaret Mason, 159 Canterbury Road, Canterbury, Victoria, 3126 Australia. (or P.O. Box 179, Watsonia, 3087.)

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

Hall Open Midday. Meeting commences approx. 1pm.

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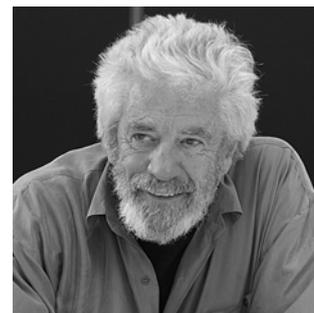
### Vale for another Member-Trade Identity.

It was not the best of news to receive an email a short time back to let me know that Ian had been diagnosed with cancer and I immediately contacted him to wish him all the best in his treatment. We had quite a chat, catching up on old times as we went back a long way, probably to my mid twenties when I first met him as a rep. Ian joined us in 1990, his main interest being 16mm movie, but also extended into other upmarket still equipment. A commercial photographer of great renown, Ian ran a very successful business for many years and was held in high regard by his peers.

Although his prognosis was not good, Ian tackled this obstacle as he did any other, head on and with a positive attitude. It was still a shock when the news came that he'd passed away in early October. Along with fellow member, Geoff Harrison, I was privileged to receive an invitation to attend a Celebration of his Life and learned of his passion for things other than just photography and camera collecting. This included his involvement in open water yacht racing, MG cars and the Victorian Foundation for the Survivors of Torture. Over the years as an industry trade rep, there were two broad areas in which clients fell: those we had to deal with as our job demanded it and are now gladly forgotten, and those who were a pleasure to know and remained as a friend long after I had moved on from the trade. Ian was certainly one of these.

Our sincere condolences to his wife Louise and stepchildren, Robyn, Sue and Damon. Another good friend now gone and a sad close to an otherwise good year.

From your committee and myself to all, Best Wishes for 2015. Ian Carron. (Ed.)



*Ian McKenzie OAM. M.Photos.  
Hon. FAIPP. FAIPP*

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# Hi Yo Silver Awaaaaay..... or Get 'em up Camera.

Lyle Curr.



## CAMERA

*Pic 1. (How we yelled and cheered as we rolled Jaffa's down the aisle.)*

I doubt there is anyone reading this who has not heard of the Lone Ranger (**Pic 1**)..... and there's a new movie featuring Johnny Depp just hit the picture theatres in the last few weeks. I can hardly wait. I grew up in awe of the Lone Ranger; firstly on the radio, and later on television. But it was not just the Lone Ranger. There was Roy Rogers, Gene Autry, Hopalong Cassidy and a whole host of cowboys, singing and otherwise, who would fill our Saturday afternoons at the pictures or a half or hour here and there on TV..... "Whooaaaa there Big Fella".... as the Lone Ranger would command the great stallion, Silver, to stop. I had better stop too. You must think I have got my magazines mixed up, and am writing for Movie Weekly or maybe Cowboys of the Silver Screen, but no, I do realise this is

for a readership of camera collectors.

Now I am a camera collector, but over my lifetime I have collected lots of other things as well. In the spirit of growing older but never growing UP, I have kept my interest in cowboys and Westerns alive with a few little mementos I've picked up along the way. But dear reader, the cross over is very much on here, as there are many "Cowboy Cameras" out there which give me great satisfaction on both counts.

I had a couple of large format magazine ads, in full colour, with Roy Rogers extolling the virtues of Kodak film and cameras. They are still around my house naturally. (**Pic 2**)

I had seen the odd "Cowboy" camera in McKeown's. See; other people know about 'em too. But being an inveterate Kodak collector, had never desired a cowboy type camera, as the odd other artefact relating to the Riders of the Range kept me satisfied. But now I collect what I like, and I noticed on eBay one day a Roy Rogers Camera outfit, complete in its 50s box with binoculars as well. It was for direct sale, and priced at \$US225. (**Pic 3**)

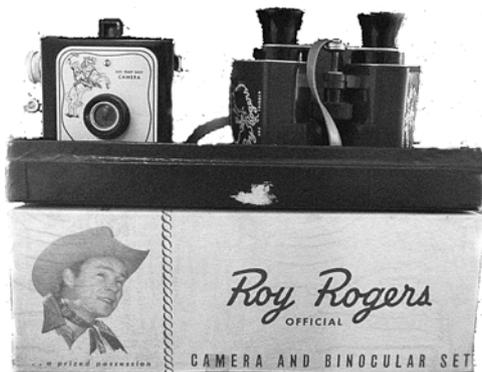
At the time the Aussie dollar was about \$US75 cents, but even at its high of about \$US1.11 I was not paying that amount of money for a crappy plastic camera and even poorer quality binoculars, no matter whose face was smiling at me from them! But it did get me thinking and doing a bit of research on "Cowboy Cameras", and I liked what I found. (**Pic 4**)

So I began to seriously look for some camera that would suit both collections. The Roy Rogers was the obvious one for me to start with, but as with most cameras we are

particularly looking for, there appeared to be none around at that time. I searched all over the place and finally the first one I managed to acquire was a *Hopalong Cassidy (HC)* camera. Hopalong came from a series of books written by Clarence E. Mulford, commencing in 1904. Played on screen and TV by William Boyd, (his real name) Hopalong Cassidy was one of Roy Rogers greatest rivals, and was so often the case with these cowboy heroes, Boyd became totally type cast, and in the eyes of most became Hopalong Cassidy. The **first HC** camera was one of a number of those that came out of



*Pic 2. Roy Rogers selling Kodak.*



*Pic 3. The Roy Rogers camera outfit. A bit pricey at \$US225!*



*Pic 4. Six Cowboy cameras and some other related stuff.*

various small camera, or a lot of times toy manufacturers, in Chicago in the 1930's through to the 50's. They were usually of an art deco design. Known as "minicams" they were half frame 127 cameras, taking sixteen exposures on a roll instead of the normal eight. They were all cheaply made, and most are a thin brittle plastic Bakelite type material. The HC was made by Galter Products in Chicago. Jack Galter had been president of the Spartus Camera Co, another of the Chicago camera makers that specialised in these cheaply moulded Bakelite and plastic models. Galter started in 1950, at about the same time that Spartus were taken over by the Herold Manufacturing Co. owned by Harold Rubin, another ex Spartus executive. They must have taken their designs with them, because they bear a remarkable resemblance to earlier minicams, but I guess this was not really so strange as all these Chicago based toy



*Pic 5. The Hopalong Cassidy camera (bottom) and the Pickwick... or is it the other way round?*



*Pic 6. This is definitely the faceplate of the Hoppy camera.*

and camera makers produced very similar lines; products that were admirably suited to promotional and character usage. (Pic 5)

Check out both the Pickwick and the HC cameras. Just a different faceplate. But the association with the cowboy hero has forced the HC camera's value way above the cheap status of the "ordinary" minicam. William Boyd died in 1972, and all "Hoppy" merchandise has climbed in value particularly since then. (Pic 6) Galter also produced another HC camera, but this one was straight from a Spartus design. It only has a single viewfinder (cheaper) for the HC camera, and Galter Prod. on the bottom of the faceplate; other than that its a Spartus box camera. It has a picture of Hoppy and his horse, Topper, on the faceplate. (Pic 7)

The Roy Rogers cameras (RR) came from the Herbert George Co. You'd never guess where they were based...yes, **Chicago Illinois!** The Herbert George Company was founded by **Herbert Weil** and **George Israel** in 1945. The company's first cameras were Bakelite, but they quickly assimilated more modern, reliable plastic technology, and is probably best known for its use of



*Pic 7. The Spartus and its immediate, if cheaper descendent, the Hopalong Cassidy camera.*

bright coloured plastics to really jazz

up the camera market in the US. But this was not till the early 60s. One of the first cameras they made in 1946 was another of these little thin Bakelite minicams for 127 film. Its body shape was first released with a brightly coloured box proclaiming it was an "Easy to Use" Donald Duck camera. It was a dull olive green but about a year later it appeared in black with a new faceplate indicating it was now a "Roy Rogers Jr." camera. This appears to be the first, 1946, and one of the rarest of the cowboy cameras. The only picture of it I have been able to find is in McKeowns, so look it up. The same camera appeared as a (Pic 8) green then a black Donald Duck, Happi-Times, Herco 12 and probably other name variants.



*Pic 8. The Roy Rogers Jr. and the Donald Duck.*

Herbert George also produced the Roy Rogers box camera. Again a standard pattern box camera that appeared with many name variant

faceplates, but the *RR* one was quite well done. The faceplate had a picture of Roy and Trigger on it, (Pic 9) and, as did most of these cowboy cameras, it came with a trading card type picture of the



Pic 9. The Roy Rogers unsynched camera with box.

hero and his horse. You also usually got an offer to join a club of some sort, in this case the Roy Rogers Camera Club, and of course a letter from the man himself telling you in his hillbilly accented written English that you were so lucky to have the camera and be sure to tell your friends about it! (Pic 10)



Pic 10. Roy's "letter" to the lucky pardner owning the camera.

Roy Rogers was born Leonard Franklin Slye, and died in 1998. The *RR* box camera came in flash synched or daylight version, as did in fact the Hopalong Cassidy camera. The *HC* camera though had a picture of "Hoppy" and his horse on the inside of the flash reflector. (Pic 11) Usually taking B&W pictures, it probably



Pic 11. The Hopalong Cassidy camera and flash combination.

caused some underexposed parts of flash pictures taken with it, but the outfit is a handsome collectors piece. The Herbert George *RR* camera is the veritable tale of the chicken and the egg. A *tall tale* actually, as the synched version was also the Davy Crockett camera



Pic 12. The Davy Crockett camera.

(*DC*). I think the original *RR* camera was a little before Davy's time. We outside the USA (and many IN IT!) had barely heard of Davy Crockett till he was immortalized by Disney and in his own inimitable way by Fess Parker in the mid 50s. (Pic 12) The same camera appeared with many faceplates over a period from 1950 to 1964, including Girl, Boy, Brownie and Cub Scout, Imperial, Savoy Mark II, Royal, and probably others. Those made after 1961 when Herbert George was bought out now bore the Imperial brand.

The *DC* camera came in an outfit, sorry, it was the "Davy Crockett Camera Ensemble". You got the camera, (Pic 13) flash attachment,



Pic 13. You got the lot in the Davy Crockett Camera Ensemble.

flash bulbs, batteries and a Six-20 film; all in a cardboard carry case with Davy and his horse emblazoned on both sides of the top of the box. A lot less colourful than previous cowboycam boxes, and no name for his horse. But as Davy "said"..... "I'm half-horse, half-alligator and a little attached with snapping turtle. I've got the fastest horse,....." so maybe he didn't need a special pardner to ride. .... But now "Return with us to those thrilling days of yesteryear" when "A fiery horse with the speed of light, a cloud of dust, and a hearty, Hi Yo Silver.....The Lone Ranger", and the William Tell Overture took popular culture by storm via radio way back in 1933. Created by radio executive George Trendle, and writer Fran Striker, the Lone Ranger has been played on radio, screen and television by a number of actors, But Jack Carlton (**Clayton**) Moore IS the Lone Ranger. Television is the great educator of the masses, and Moore became the Lone Ranger after over six years on the small screen, and for the rest of his life off the screen. He died in 1999.

The Lone Ranger camera (*LR*) is a tiny Bakelite piece, with the tenuous link to Kodak in that it used Kodak's ill-fated 828 film. The camera instructions, simply printed on the box said **"TO LOAD LONE RANGER CAMERA Use Eastman Kodak Film No. 828 (see instructions with film"** Made in 1951, it too was actually a rework of another camera. The Photo-ette, which appears to be one of the first products made by the Victory Manufacturing Co. of... wait for it... Chicago, Illinois! The company was started in 1951, and is still operating but now fabricates small metal and plastic products such as trophies and display items. Ironically, it appears to NOT use *silver*, Hi Yo, or otherwise in any of its products. I doubt the Lone Range would approve!



*Pic 14. The Lone Ranger Camera, box and 828 film.*

The *LR* camera was simply the Photo-ette with a picture of the Lone Ranger impressed on the top, and sold in a colourful cardboard box. (Pic 14) The camera still had PHOTO-ETTE around the lens, and while it had two ©The Lone Ranger Inc. notations, it has no mention of the manufacturer on the camera. (Pic 15) Despite this, the Lone Ranger does not appear to be wearing



*Pic 15. The Lone Ranger embossed on the little camera.*

the distinctive mask!

But it doesn't end there with the Lone Ranger. Let's journey to New York, where a company called Pathegrams made little Bakelite viewers and films for them. Called the Pathegram Cine Vue Viewer, they are best known for a huge marketing campaign selling a coloured commemorative viewer and the little 36 view films of the 1939 New York World's Fair, but they also produced many Lone Ranger "films" in comic book format for their viewers in the mid 30s. (Pic 16)

Just one more little anecdote to round up, eeerrrr off, this discourse on the crossover between my wild west "interest"

and my camera obsession. A few years ago now, when then members George and June Halls took over the responsibility of our society library, Alan King and I were transporting the books etc over to George's place. What did I spy hanging on the wall as we huffed and puffed by with a bookshelf to place in George's back room? There in all its glory was a superbly made, tooled leather western style holster for a Colt .45. This got George and I talking, and it turned out he was not only interested in cameras, but in Western type stuff, particularly guns, too. He had disposed of his gun collection some time prior to this, but this solid leather holster was left over. "Would I like it?" he asked. Well, he did not have to ask twice. What a prize. So it now hangs on my office wall, with a crappy old plastic gun in it 'cause that's all your allowed to have these days, but it still looks great. (Pic 17)



*Pic 16. The standard Pathegram Cine Vue and two Lone Ranger films.*



*Pic 17. A very nice holster; crappy gun!*

When I started this article, it was to be about Mickey Mouse cameras! I kid you not. You will have to wait enthusiastically for that one however as everywhere I looked I found more *MM* cameras, and then Donald Duck cameras and it just went on and on. So it will be at least a 2-part epic, but this

one was bad enough. As soon as I found one Wild West camera, another appeared, and that's how it goes. Expand your interest; get out there and find some odd items; your friends already think your eccentric because you collect cameras, so you only have extra enjoyment to look forward too.

Happy hunting, Lyle Curr.

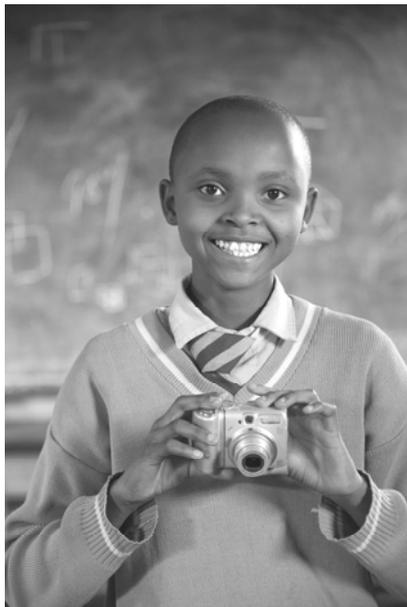
# An Aussie Photographer Doing Great Work With Needy Kids!



*Dianna Snape with her camera.*



*Hendrich, Duma explorer porter, 2014.*



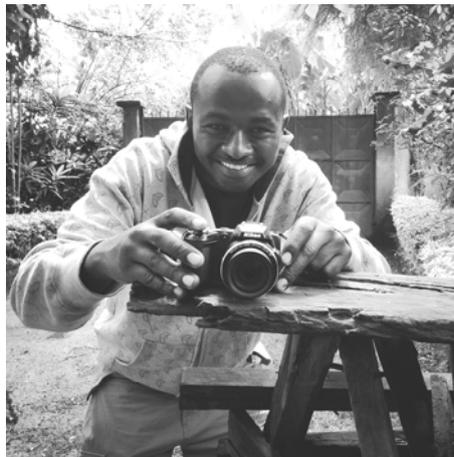
*Damaris, Shika Photo Workshop, 2013.*



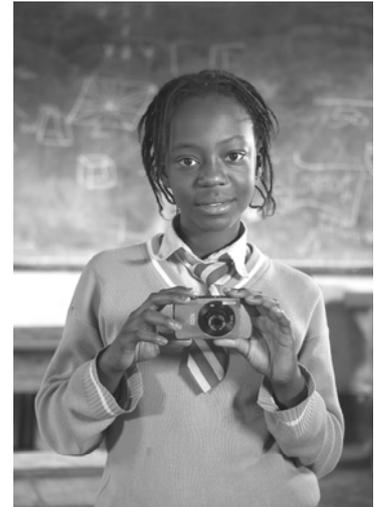
*Lunch Money initiative 2014.*

Having spent a considerable amount of time in Tanzania hiking Mt Kilimanjaro and Mt Meru, as well as photographing much of Tanzania's amazing landscape and people, I felt compelled to give something back. I was introduced to Shika, a UK based charity that supports Tanzania's most vulnerable children. Shika sponsors almost 100 children as well as running an after school support program that uses arts based initiatives to instill a sense of self worth and confidence in the children. With the help of Ted's Camera Stores, my staff and peers, together we secured, tested, catalogued and donated 20 cameras and 2 MAC laptops. I personally had to travel with the cameras, as they could not be posted due to the issue of batteries.

In May 2013, 10 children attended the workshop for 1 month; their joy, engagement and pride were ample proof of the success of the workshop. In May 2014 I ran another workshop, this time for Mt Kilimanjaro Mountain Guides and Porters. This was a 2-day workshop where the guides and porters got to keep the cameras and have been documenting their



*Peter, Duma Explorer Mountain Guide.*



*Queenie, Shika Photo Workshop, 2013.*

experiences on Africa's highest peak.

I launched a competition that will award a \$500 prize to the best photo at the end of the climbing season. A huge thanks to Duma Explorer who provided support on the ground for

all of these volunteer initiatives—

**[www.dumaexplorer.com](http://www.dumaexplorer.com)**

I would like to run another workshop in 2015 and any good working digital compact or SLR cameras would be greatly appreciated.

**Di Snape.**



*Shika Photo Workshop, 2013.*

***Members who can show their generosity by assisting Di in this great work can contact the editor to arrange dropping off donations at a convenient time / point for on forwarding.***

***All donations will be acknowledged in Back Focus.***

***Ian. Ed.***

The DeJur-Amsco company traded in Connecticut and later New York from the 1920s to 1974. They sold a variety of photographic equipment; some were imported and some they made including enlargers, a rangefinder and exposure meters. They sold at least one US-made camera, the DeJur Reflex, a 120 TLR, which was a re-branded Ciroflex. (There were six models of the Ciroflex and it was continued as the Graflex 22 when Graflex bought out Ciro in 1950.) While DeJur imported some re-named cameras and lenses from Topcon and Petri in Japan, their DeJur D-1 and D-3 cameras were made in Germany.

In 1955 they marketed the **DeJur D-1 (Pic 1)** a solid cast-metal bodied camera made by Neidig Kamerawerk, a German firm that made their 35mm Perlux camera available to other companies. Neidig's original 1949 Perlux camera was later sold as the Adox 35 and the Bower 35. The DeJur D-1 is a minor variant of the 1952 Perlux II camera. It has the DeJur name and was updated with a lever wind instead of a knob wind. Although looking like just a basic viewfinder 35mm camera the D-1 has a perhaps unexpected



*Pic. 1. DeJur D-1.*



*Pic. 2. Cased lens set.*

feature - interchangeable lenses. While in practical use scale focussing is good enough for the standard and wide-angle lens, it may not be exact enough for some users when using the tele lens. But possibly this was a useful marketing feature in 1955.

The standard lens is a 45mm f2.8 Staeble-Kata in a (unbranded) Pronto shutter with speeds of 1/25 to 1/200. Film advance and shutter cocking requires two full strokes of the lever. The body release on the top plate stays depressed after an exposure; it rises again as you wind on. The two accessory lenses offered were a 38mm f3.5 Staeble-Choro and a 85mm f5.6 Staeble-Telon. As a set they were supplied in a nice leather case together with an accessory viewfinder. **(Pic 2)** They are the same M39 thread mount Staeble lenses that were available to fit the Braun Paxette II. The accessory finder, which looks like the Braun finder, shows the wide-angle view; a slip-on mask is used with the tele lens. **(Pic 3)**

rises again as you wind on. The two accessory lenses offered were a 38mm f3.5 Staeble-Choro and a 85mm f5.6 Staeble-Telon. As a set they were supplied in a nice leather case together with an accessory viewfinder. **(Pic 2)**



*Pic. 3. D-1 with lenses & finder.*

The Neidig Perlux II was upgraded in 1953 by having an uncoupled rangefinder built into the top housing and it was named the Perlux IIa. A rotating wheel on the rear of the top housing operated the rangefinder. Later that year Neidig further improved the camera by making the rangefinder coupled and replacing the wind knob with a two-stroke wind lever. So now the Perlux was no longer just a basic 35mm and this camera was then imported in 1957 by DeJur to be sold as

the **DeJur D-3**. (Pic 4) It has the same standard Staebler-Kata 45mm f2.8 lens as the D-1 but the re-designed coupled focussing and lens assembly is larger. The same 85mm tele and 38mm wide-angle lenses were also offered, both now rangefinder-coupled. (Pic 5) The (still unbranded) shutter is now a Prontor-S with speeds from 1sec to 1/300.



Pic 5. Rangefinder coupled 45mm lens (left) uncoupled 38mm lens (right).



Pic 4. DeJur D-3.



Pic 6. D-3 back showing cover piece.



Pic 7. Bases of D-1 (bottom) and D-3 (top).

On the rear of the D-3 you can see a round cover where the uncoupled rangefinder wheel used to be located.

(Pic 6) The small button beside the eyepiece is moved down to disengage the sprockets for film rewinding. The body serial number is stamped into the base covering next to the tripod mount. While the numbers are quite large in size they can be quite difficult to see and read. "Made in Western Germany" is boldly stamped on the bases of both models. (Pic 7)

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# Letters to the Editor:

Ian,

I received my copy of Back Focus. Another nice job, especially with your pitch to help the Quarterly. **Ken Metcalf**, Publisher of the Graflex Historic Quarterly.

## Service to Members:

Want an old meter for your old camera? Can't find or afford one at the auction or a market? Then make your own with this template! Cost you nothing. As long as you know your film speed in one of the four offered in the lower right hand box!

THE AMATEUR PHOTOGRAPHER AND CINEMATOGRAPHER (SUPPLEMENT) MAY 20, 1936

*Instructions for assembling the Calculator are given in this week's issue of The Amateur Photographer and Cinematographer.*

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8	AVERAGE LANDSCAPES WITH FIGURES - WELL LIGHTED STREET SCENES:
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19	HOME PORTRAITS, LIGHT
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9	3	10	4 3 2 1 1 1 1 2 2 3 4 5 7 10 4	10	4
10	2	11	5 3 2 1 1 0 1 1 1 2 3 4 5 5 11 3	11	3
11	1	12	4 2 1 1 0 0 0 0 1 1 2 3 4 4 12 2	12	2
12	3		2 1 0 0 0 0 0 1 1 2 3 4		1

BEND ALONG THIS CENTRE LINE



The KW logo

The German camera industry was concentrated in and near the city of Dresden. A lot of young designers came to this city to start a career in this young industry. One of them was the Swiss Paul Guthe who worked in the camera industry from 1915.



Photo 2. Patent Etui.

But Germany was at war and the army needed all the supplies that they could get, so he had to wait till 1919 when he started with Benno Thorsch in Niedersedlitz, near Dresden at their factory Kamera-Werkstätten Guthe & Thorsch GmbH, or, KW.

They started with a folding camera taking plates: the Patent Etui. (Photo 2.) This folding camera was very thin thanks to some special design. There were two sizes: for 6 x 9 cm and 9 x 12 cm plates. The 6 x 9 cm camera was thin enough to be carried in a jacket pocket or a lady's handbag. These popular cameras offered the Vario, Ibsor or Compur shutter. As lens you

had a choice between Tessar, Radionar, Unofocal and Euryonar.

Besides black, cameras came with grey, brown, blue or red covering. This successful camera stayed in production till 1938.

In 1928 they moved to another factory, at 30 Baerensteiner Street in Dresden Striesen, near the ICA factory. There they had more space for the 150 employees who produced 100 cameras daily.



Photo 3. Pilot TLR.

It was 1931 when the first roll film camera appeared. It was named: PILOT and all the roll film cameras got that name. The first was the Pilot Reflex, a twin lens reflex for 3 x 4 cm negatives on 127 film. The KW-Reflex box 6 x 9 cm had a Steinheil-Actinar f4.5/105mm lens.

(Photos 3 & 4.)



Photo 4. Pilot.

The single lens reflex camera called the KW-Pilot 6, (Photo 5.) taking 6 x 6 cm exposures, followed in 1936. Later there was the Pilot Super for 6 x 6 cm and 4.5 x 6 cm photos in 1938. The lens could be changed and there was an optical exposure meter placed on the top of the hood viewer.



Photo 5. Pilot 6.

They also produced a tiny episcopo that you could place on a book or picture directly. The 'Praxidos' enlarger had fully automatic focussing and was introduced at the Leipziger Messe (Exhibition) in 1933.

Meanwhile the situation for Jewish people became very difficult in Germany and both Guthe and Thorsch had Jewish families. Paul Guthe sold his shares and went back to Switzerland. Benno Thorsch met Charles A. Noble.

Charles A. Noble, originally born in Germany, went to the USA as a Seventh Day Adventist missionary in 1922. His son, John Helmut Noble, was born in Detroit in 1923. His wife worked as the only photographer in a failing photo-finishing company in Detroit. When the owners abandoned the factory, the bank asked him to take over

the company. The Nobles grew the business to become one of the top ten finishing companies in the United States. However Charles suffered liver and gall bladder problems and was ordered to avoid chemicals for two years. He visited health spas in the US, Czechoslovakia and Germany where he met Benno Thorsch.

After some negotiations Benno Thorsch took over the American firm and brought it to a higher level. He died in California at the age of 105.

Charles Noble and his son John went to Dresden and took over the German KW works. From 1938 Kamera-Werkstätten Charles A. Noble became an American enterprise.

They asked the designer Alois Hoheisel to finish the design of a single lens reflex camera for 24 x 26 mm, that Benno Thorsch had already started. The result was exhibited at the Leipziger Messe in 1939: the PRAKTIFLEX. (Photo 6.) A single lens reflex camera with interchangeable lenses.

To increase production it became necessary to move to a former lolly factory in 56 Bismarck Street in Niedersedlitz.

At the outbreak of World War II they received permission from the Nazi government to leave Germany. But later the German government changed its mind and they could only stay in Dresden. Beside products for the German army they produced 11,000 Praktiflex cameras between 1939 and 1945.

The factory was too far from the centre of the city of Dresden to sustain any damage in the heavy bombing of the town. KW passed the war without damage while 80% of the camera industry in Dresden was damaged or destroyed.



*Photo 6. Praktiflex.*

Then Dresden was in the Russian zone, the enterprise was nationalized and got a new name: VEB Kamera-Werkstätten Niedersedlitz. VEB means: factory owned by the people. The factory was ordered to produce 2,500 Praktiflex cameras but there were no lenses. Charles and John went to Jena, the centre of the German optic industry, to make arrangements about camera lenses. But Jena was situated in the American part of Germany. When they came back to Dresden they were arrested, charged with spying and imprisoned. John Noble was 22 years old at that time.

Charles and John were kept in nearby cells until John was sent to the Soviet Special Prison, formerly the Nazi concentration camp of Buchenwald, when they were separated. Fortunately, John's mother and brother had been released by the Soviets after their arrest. In early 1950, John Noble was sentenced to 15 years imprisonment and transferred to the Soviet Gulag system of Siberian prison camps when the Special Prison in Buchenwald was closed.



*Photo 7. Praktina.*

In the factory they needed new ideas for the Praktiflex and it was Siegfried Böhm, a designer with Zeiss Ikon, who changed the M 40 lens thread to the M 42, which became well known as the Praktica thread. The third generation of Praktiflex cameras acquired the name: Praktica. By making changes in the construction it became possible to produce large numbers of cameras.

Charles was freed from prison and went back to the US in 1952. In the same year the name of the enterprise was changed to VEB Kamera-Werkstätten Niedersedlitz. A thousand employees worked on the

Praktica and the newest professional camera type, the Praktina. (Photo 7.)

This professional camera had interchangeable viewfinders and could be delivered with a 17 m film magazine **that could be operated remotely**. The lenses had a bayonet fitting and could not be used on the Praktica cameras. Later we find this camera back as the 'Stasi-Praktica', used for spying with the name: System SR899.

Meanwhile John was working in Vorkuta, a coalmine in the north of the Urals, far above the arctic circle. Nobody knew where he lived for the Soviets did not give any information. That changed when another prisoner, who had the privilege of sending post, wrote his address to the family. John was born in the US, so he was an American citizen. The family asked President Eisenhower for help. John was released, with other American prisoners, in 1955. In the same year the Praktica FX 2 was introduced.

The whole family lived in the US where Charles, after many years working as **an** adviser to the photographic department of General Motors, passed away in 1983.

In 1959 the name of the factory changed **again, this time to** VEB Kamera und Kinowerke Dresden and changed in 1964 again to VEB Pentacon Dresden.

That continued till 1990 **when**, after the re-union of Germany, John Noble and his brother George went to Dresden to try to get John's possessions back. He was successful with the factory in Bismarck Street, but the brand Praktica stayed with the Pentacon company. He registered the firm as: Kamera Werk Dresden GmbH, and looked for another camera. These became the NOBLEX panorama cameras with a roll film model for 5 x 12 cm exposures and a 135 mm camera for 24 x 66 exposures. (Photo 8.)

KW had good times **then**, but in 1997 it got **into** financial problems. It was nearly caput and John ceased to be the owner. He passed away after a heart attack on 10 November 2007 in Dresden. Kamera Werk Dresden is still on the market. For the latest information **see** <http://www.KameraWerkDresden.de>.



Photo 8. Noblex.

# ENSIGN

**British Films  
FOR  
British People**

THE perfection of the "Ensign" Film is due to the fact that it is made under the supervision of the one man in the world who has specialised on Sensitised Films, Mr. Austin Edwards. Nothing but Film is made at the Austin Edwards factory, and the quality of the product is world famous.

The one and only true test is to try for yourself. If you have tried several kinds without reaching that print perfection which you are after, try "Ensign" Films. We know these films are unrivalled, and we would like you to know as well. They are British made—Austin Edwards made. That spells reliability and efficiency.

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# Roll Films

**GIVE HIM  
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There is no Gift that would be more acceptable to your Soldier Friend than a Vest Pocket Camera. A Camera will enable him to secure a Priceless Record of the War. The following Daylight-loading Roll-film Cameras are small, compact and thoroughly efficient.

## The "ENSIGNETTE"

BRITISH MADE.

THE ENSIGNETTE has been acclaimed the one Camera for the Soldier—thousands of them are already at the Front. Ensignettes are made of rust-proof metal throughout.

No. 1 Ensignette ... Price 27/6 Takes Pictures 2 1/2 x 1 1/2  
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Both the above Cameras are sold complete in Leatherette Case, and with Book of Instructions.

**THE VEST POCKET KODAK.**

Vest Pocket Kodaks take Pictures 2 1/2 x 1 1/2. PRICE, complete, 30/-

SEND FOR A COPY OF OUR NEW CAMERA PRICE LIST.

*Harringtons* LTD

Photographic and Cinematographic Merchants,  
SYDNEY, MELBOURNE, BRISBANE, ADELAIDE, AUCKLAND and WELLINGTON (N.Z.)

William Gruber, an organ maker and keen photographer, who lived in Portland, Oregon, USA, devised the familiar round View-Master reel of seven stereo images. The product came into being as a result of two happenings – the introduction of Kodachrome film and a chance meeting between Gruber and the president of Sawyer's Inc. Harold Graves. Sawyer's factory in Portland was printing picture postcards at the time and Graves recognised that these little stereo reels could be a useful addition to the souvenir scenic postcard market. The View-Master reels of scenic views were first shown at the New York World's Fair in 1939. Their market was firstly scenic attraction gift shops. They became so popular that they then expanded sales into other retail outlets and production of the reels soon took over the postcard business at Sawyer's.

## *The first camera*

In 1952 Sawyer's marketed the **View-Master Personal** stereo camera, manufactured in the USA by the Stereocraft Engineering Company who were also located in Portland. It was part of a kit to enable amateurs to produce their own View-Master reels, a decision probably helped by the growing user market for 35mm Kodachrome film. The other items in the kit were a film cutter, a film inserter and blank reels. The whole kit is a well thought-out system and the solid die-cast metal camera has many clever design features. The quite detailed instruction book, while it has several typos, very clearly explains the operation of the camera with excellent diagrams; three of them are reproduced here. The camera was offered in a choice of two colours, either black enamel or a smart brown & beige finish (**Pic. 1**). It has a pair of View-Master Anastigmat 25mm f3.5 fixed-focus lenses located behind the front shutters. There are adjustable speeds from 1/10 to 1/100 plus B. There is a cable release socket next to the shutter button. The lenses each have a screw-out, Series V, retaining ring to hold accessory close-up lenses and filters.



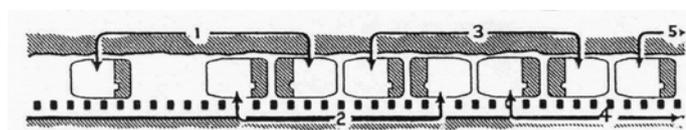
*Pic. 1. View-Master Personal camera in brown & beige.*

As the stereo frame size is only 12.9 x 11.9 mm you can fit a lot of pictures on a 36-exposure film: 69 stereo pairs in fact. With a 20-exposure film you can take 37 pairs. This is accomplished by winding the film through twice, in this sequence: first you set the shift knob on the front to position 'A' (**Pic. 2**).



*Pic. 2. Lens shift knob.*

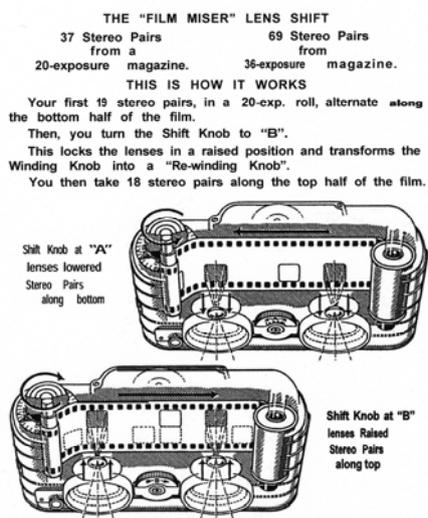
With the film counter set to 36X and the film length indicator set on the mark, you turn the wind knob counter-clockwise and advance the film with three winds and shutter clicks ready for the first exposure. A small red dot in the base shows that a film is loaded and a small red cross indicator on the top rotates to confirm that the film is moving. Each wind advances the film by eight perforations. You can make 35 pictures before coming to the end of the film, when the counter will be on number 1. All 35 frames have been exposed in a row along the bottom half of the film's width. The sequence is shown in **Pic. 3**.



*Pic. 3. How the frames are exposed.*

After taking a picture at 1 the winding knob locks and you have to move the front shift knob to position 'B'. This raises the lenses so they will now

expose frames along the top half of the film (**Pic. 4**). The pair of film gates have also risen into position (**Pic. 5**). The winding knob has now become, in effect, a rewind knob and it turns clockwise. You then take another 34 stereo pairs and the counter will have returned to the length indicator mark. Turn the winding knob and click the



**Pic. 4. Movement of the lenses.**

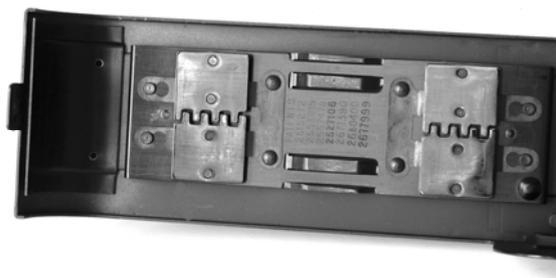


**Pic. 5. Film gates in position B.**

shutter four times and your film is wound back into the cassette. A summary of the sequence is helpfully printed on the bottom of the camera (**Pic. 6**). The pressure plate on the back has been cleverly designed with separate sprung sections for each frame position together with rails for holding the film against the sprockets (**Pic. 7**).



**Pic. 6. Instructions on the camera base.**

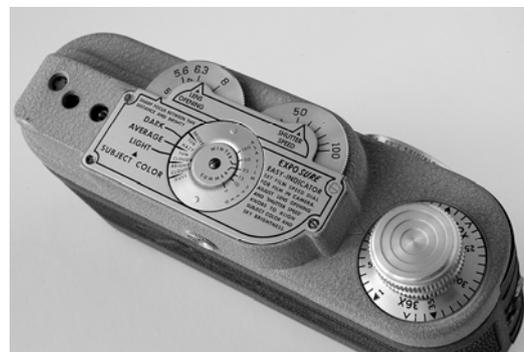


**Pic. 7. Pressure plate design details.**

Although the camera has built-in double-exposure prevention, it is possible to override it. This can be done in the following seven steps with the shift knob between the two lenses of the camera set in position 'A'.

1. Make the first exposure
2. Wind film (advances the film and cocks the shutter)
3. Cover both lenses and release the shutter
4. Turn the shift knob from position 'A' to position 'B'
5. Wind film (rewinds the film and cocks the shutter)
6. Turn the shift knob from position 'B' to position 'A'
7. Make the second exposure (the double exposure)

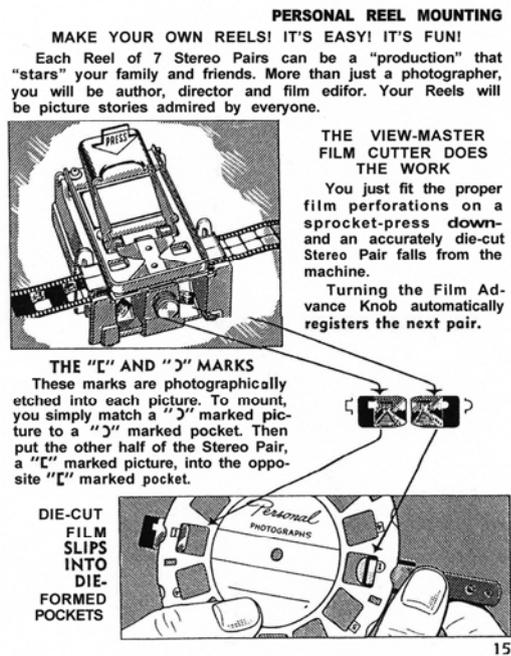
Now let's look at the top of the camera (**Pic. 8**). Is that a built-in exposure meter? Well, sort of. In fact it's a clever, easy to use, coupled exposure calculator--the 'Expo Sure Easy-Indicator'. As you will be using only reversal colour film (Kodachrome) proper exposure is important. So, after matching your film ASA against 'summer' or 'winter' and setting your shutter speed, you rotate the lens opening (aperture) dial. This moves the top dial to match the appropriate three subject colours (dark, average, or light) to the four lighting conditions (bright sun,



**Pic. 8. Camera top details.**

hazy sun, cloudy bright or cloudy dull) that you are working with. Almost perhaps an early form of auto exposure? Also, on the aperture scale there are numbers to show ‘*Sharp focus between this distance and infinity*’ an easy to understand depth-of-field scale.

The two holes nearest the dial are for flash synch and mounting the View-Master Flash attachment. This bulb flash accessory incorporates a rangefinder, which, when aligned, displays the aperture to use; another helpful feature. The rather small optical viewfinder shows a tiny little bubble level to assist in keeping the horizon level.



*Pic. 9. Cutting and mounting the images.*

was the first design to allow a reel to be inserted from the top and was so well made that most of them still work efficiently today.

Although the camera was priced at US\$149 in 1952 and therefore quite expensive (a **Retinette** cost \$59.50 that year and the later **Kodak Stereo** \$84.50) the cost per picture was very cheap. Sawyer's printed on some of their scenic reel sleeves: ‘*Take pictures like this for less cost than snapshots*’. They sold many more cameras than cutters (at \$19.50), because a lot of buyers preferred to have their dealer or Sawyer's do the reel mounting. Production of the **Personal Camera** ended in late 1955. By that time the **Kodak Stereo**, **Realist Stereo** and **Stereo Colorist** were on sale. They all produced a larger stereo image with the added advantage of the films being returned from Kodak's processing labs already mounted in stereo pairs.

### ***The second camera***

Sawyer's had been looking to expand their View-Master system sales into Europe, so they had a prototype camera made in 1954 by Apparate & Kamerabau GmbH in Friedrichshafen, Germany. This camera used a unique diagonal film path. It had a coupled-rangefinder and a pair of Schneider Radionar 22mm f3.5 lenses but it never went into production. A coupled-rangefinder would have been a quite unnecessary feature, as would focussing at all, because a fixed-focus 22mm lens would give a sharp image from about 7ft to infinity.

As the film images are so small they are nearly impossible to cut correctly using a blade or scissors and the reel pockets are a snug fit. The well-designed View-Master film cutter (**Pic. 9**) made the job quite easy. As there is a blank space between stereo pairs the cutter punches out some of that with each image. In this way the film ‘chips’ (as View-Master called them) can be handled safely without scratching the image area. One edge of each film gate in the camera has a small cut-out that leaves different shapes on each of the pair of images. You match the shapes with the ones printed on the reel as you insert the pictures. This gives you the correct left/right orientation for stereo viewing.

Concurrently available with the **Personal** camera was the **View-Master Viewer Model C** (**Pic. 10**), a Bakelite viewer that was made from 1946 to 1955. The previous two viewers were round in shape and opened up like a clamshell to take the reel. The plastic used was prone to distortion and most Model A viewers seen these days have some warping. The sturdier Model C



*Pic. 10. Model C Viewer.*

A second prototype was designed by Sawyer's and Stereocraft but production did not proceed since AkA went bankrupt in 1960. Manufacture was subsequently moved to Regula-Werk King KG in Bad Liebenzell. Eventually the only other View-Master stereo camera, the **Stereo Color Camera** was introduced in Europe and USA in 1962. It looked quite different from the first camera and was

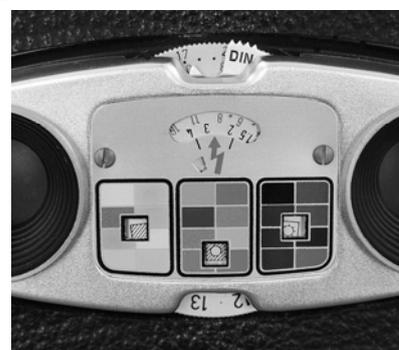


**Pic. 11. View-Master Stereo Colour Camera Mark II.**

less complex in design and operation. It also had a larger viewfinder, with bright frame-lines. Stamped into the baseplate is *Made in Germany for SAWYER'S, EUROPE S.A. BELGIUM.* Some minor differences were made during production in the style of name engraving, the shutter release and the model name 'Mark II' (**Pic. 11**). A pair of Rodenstock Trinar 20mm f2.8 lenses were again fixed-focus and this time the shutter had only three speeds: 1/30, 1/45 and 1/60, with B being set by a lever on the front below the left lens. There was a cable release socket on the top next to the winding trigger. Also on the top were X and M flash sync

sockets and an accessory shoe.

The simplified exposure calculator that is positioned in the front panel between the lenses again determines exposure. It is viewed and set when looking down from the top of the camera. Film speed can be selected in either ASA or DIN. Once more a choice of four weather conditions and three subject brightness symbols are used for setting exposure. You rotate a wheel, which changes the weather symbols that move behind the three windows in the coloured blocks on the front representing subject brightness. **Pic. 12** shows the exposure set for an average subject (the centre block) with the hazy sun symbol positioned there. Aperture and speed are not set separately but are selected by the exposure value dial giving these combinations:



**Pic. 12. Exposure setting.**

<b>Exposure Value</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>8 1/2</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>f stop</b>	2.8	2.8	2.8	4	5.6	8	11	16	22
<b>Shutter Speed</b>	1/30	1/45	1/60	1/60	1/60	1/60	1/60	1/60	1/60

A small window on the front panel is marked with a blue flash symbol. It has distance scales in black for metres, green for feet. Here you set your camera-to-subject distance to give the correct exposure when using blue PF1 or similar flashbulbs. If you are too far away a red signal appears in a small window to the left of the blue symbol. Film is advanced by a pushdown 'trigger wind' which remains down when wound and pops up when the shutter lever is pressed and released. Holding the winding trigger down and firing the shutter as many times as needed before releasing it allows multiple exposures.



**Pic. 13. Diagonal film path.**

A small window on the front panel is marked with a blue flash symbol. It has distance scales in black for metres, green for feet. Here you set your camera-to-subject distance to give the correct exposure when using blue PF1 or similar flashbulbs. If you are too far away a red signal appears in a small window to the left of the blue symbol. Film is advanced by a pushdown 'trigger wind' which remains down when wound and pops up when the shutter lever is pressed and released. Holding the winding trigger down and firing the shutter as many times as needed before releasing it allows multiple exposures.

A rewind button and a rewind knob with a fold-out crank are located on the top plate. Because of the clever diagonal film path that made the View-Master size images (**Pic. 13**) the film needed to be wound through only once. This simpler and more efficient arrangement also yielded more exposures; you could now take 75 stereo pairs on a 36-exposure film or 40 stereo pairs on a 20-exposure film. Because the exposed images are positioned differently on the film from those of the **Personal Camera** a new film cutter was designed.

Sawyer's was acquired by GAF in 1966 and View-Master blank reels continued to be made up to the early 1990s until a part of the machine that made them wore out and the then owners, Fisher-Price, decided not to repair it.

# MYSTERY NEGATIVES

John Fleming

Found on offer in a Melbourne city secondhand shop recently were seven half-plate (6½ x 4¾ inches) black-and-white negatives of considerable interest. The photographs show charming little puppet figures in various dress and activities. **(Pic. 1.)** A professional, or at least, a very competent amateur has obviously shot these. The sheet film is Kodak and the I.D. notches are (from left to right with emulsion facing you) 1 notch-, long space-, 2 close notches-, space-, square notch. According to old Kodak literature this code would be Tri-X, 1938 up to 1950 and, after that date, Tri-X Panchromatic. These negatives are still quite flat but well aged with the 'silvering' effect of latent hypo reaction becoming evident. For this article I have chosen to print them as positives.



*Pic. 1. Could this be intended for Tom Piper tinned foods?*

Upon first inspection the images seemed vaguely familiar, particularly the knave or jester with the tray of pastries or cakes. Ah! Could it be 'Tom Piper', a logo used for a well-known early brand of Australian canned foods, plum puddings and Christmas cakes? A search of old magazines unearthed a full-page colour advertisement from 1947. **(Pic. 2.)** Some evidence then to



*Pic. 2. Tom Piper advertisement, 1947. From: 'Woman's Weekly' magazine.*



*Pic 3. Off to school!*

suggest a connection. (As an aside, the late Hal Todd used to appear on television dressed as the impish 'Tom Piper' in regular live-to-air advertisements during Channel 9's variety show 'In Melbourne Tonight'. It was hilarious.)

The remaining half-plate negatives represent quite a puzzle, although obviously intended for advertising. A clue to the age of the photographs is revealed by the schoolbags as, in Australia (or Victoria at least) in the 1940s and early 1950s, primary school children wore exactly this style around both shoulders. **(Pic. 3.)** An alternative was a long strap over

one shoulder, just like an early two-piece electronic flash. The group of three children also imparts more clues from the clothing. The little boy could be straight out of 1950. Perhaps that is his older sister on the right? **(Pic. 4.)**

Another photograph shows a young woman attending to her makeup with hand mirror and a powder puff exquisitely depicted. Delightful touches are the fluffy slippers. The undergarment also hints at circa 1950. **(Pic. 5.)** Being an eagle-eyed commercial photographer, I also spy the traces of a prop used to hold the figure in place.... to the right of her left leg! This would have been retouched out in the final print. Now it may be this series was shot for the purpose of advertising various brands



*Pic. 4. Schoolchildren are dressed typical 1940-50s styles.*



*Pic. 5. Powdering the nose.  
Note the fluffy slippers!*

of products because another scene shows a typical gardener mistakenly watering a fashionable young lady's large flower hat. A low fence divides the figures and in the left background we have one big flower in a pot plant. **(Pic. 6.)**



*Pic. 6. A gardener waters  
Madame's flower hat.*

Continuing our quest to date these negatives, a set-up, apparently taken for travel goods or suitcases, shows a smart young woman attired in what could be the current 1948 fashion. **(Pic. 7.)** There are snapshots of my mother from the 1940s wearing similar styles. **(Pic. 7A.)** The photographer shows here that he or she was well experienced since the



*Pic. 7. Very stylish... could this  
be advertising travel goods?*

lighting (probably tungsten floods and spots) has glancing, multiple angles and the table corner easily crops out under the suitcase. Also noteworthy is that all the exposures are nicely framed to utilize most of the available negative area, allowing a small cropping margin for printing.

Next we have the interesting negative of a small girl where delicate transparent pink dye is brushed over the long frock and slippers. **(Pic. 8.)** At first I thought this might be blocking-out opaque, but this is normally quite dense, so the negative prints white on the bromide paper, which is insensitive to red light. Closer inspection leads me to believe this negative has been coloured in a similar way to theatre slides for some sort of single colour on black-and-white printing process in a magazine, or even newspaper. As early as the 1940s the Melbourne *Argus* ran multi-colour weekend supplements.



*Pic. 7A. Tom & Elva Fleming circa  
1940, by unknown street photographer.*



*Pic. 8. The dress & shoes have  
transparent pink dye on this  
negative. (See also cover.)*

Finally, a plea to all our readers and experts who might be able to further identify which brand names or products these photographs were used for and also perhaps help find the studio or photographer (probably based in Melbourne) and an approximate date. There are a lot of clues evident. All correspondence from our expert sleuths is very welcome.

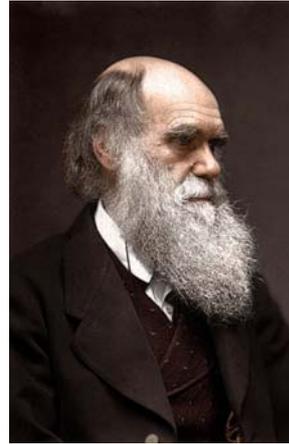
**When old historical photographs, modern technology and the Internet meet, the end result can often be a photographic treat.**



*Helen Keller meets Charlie Chaplin, 1918.*



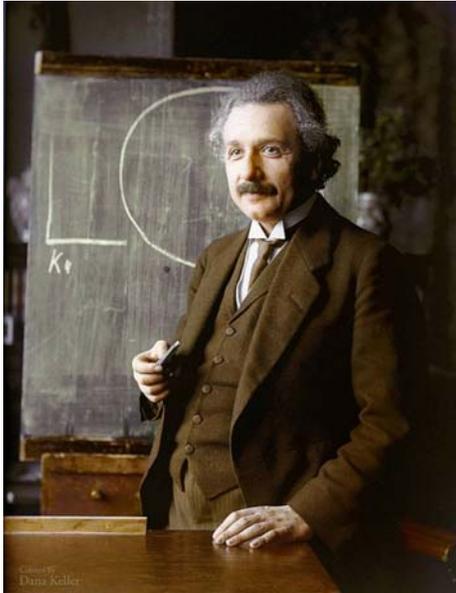
*Alfred Hitchcock.*



*Charles Darwin.*



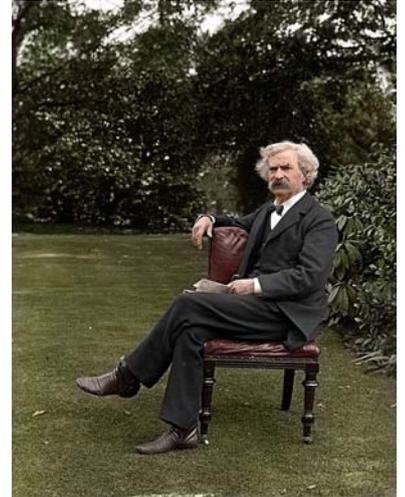
*Country store, North Carolina, 1939.*



*Albert Einstein, 1921.*



*Joan Crawford on set of Letty Lynton, 1932.*



*Mark Twain, 1900.*



*Samurai training, 1860.*



*President Lincoln with Major General McClenand and Allan Pinkerton, 1862.*

*Amongst the many emails I receive, a recent one was of 53 old, historic monochrome images, which had been colourised. A small selection has been reproduced above. Ian Carron. Ed.*



*Aussie Photographer, Di Snape, is doing great work helping needy kids abroad. But she needs our assistance. See inside for how you may be able to help.*



*At the October Auction: Bob Showers up close and personal with a DALKA. (No Bob, it's not digital!)*