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 Australian Photographic Collectors' Society, Inc.
 www.apcs.asn.au

AGM - John Keesing Life Member

The 32nd AGM had a small agenda, namely the Election and the changes to the Society Rules. While John Keesing retired, the remaining team has returned. At the last committee meeting it was moved to offer John a Life Membership in recognition of the long and dedicated service he has given to the Society. Ian Carron has accepted the position to continue as Editor of Back Focus. The changes to the Society Rules were to bring the document into line with what we were actually doing, rather than impose change for any other reason. The annual reports and fi-

nancial statement from the Officers will be included with the next Back Focus. *Photo - Ian Carron*



Who made the Bulk Film Back? by Paul Ewins

One of my favorite collectibles is the "Bulk Film Magazine" for the Pentax MX. It takes a cartridge that holds up to 250 frames of film and was used in conjunction with the MX motor drive or could be connected to the regular wind crank. Like the LX, the back of the MX is removable so the user simply replaced the regular back with the 250 shot back. The other part of the system was the loader, which transferred the film from ordinary 100' bulk rolls into the special magazines.

This is where it gets interesting. Naturally enough Nikon, Canon, Olympus, Minolta and even Topcon each had their own version at some stage, after all the bulk backs had been around since the early Leica days. What is unusual is that they all appear to have come from the same source. Obviously the backs are different, but the canisters and loaders all appear to be much the same.

In fact the loader for the Pentax, Nikon and Olympus systems appear to be identical apart from the brand names. The canisters are also

visually very similar and are functionally interchangeable. This leads to the conclusion that somewhere in Japan there was a third party manufacturer that made the systems for any one who was interested. I'd love to know who actually made the bulk film back. The only vague lead is that the ordinary (i.e 36 frame) reloadable cassettes for the Topcon system were made by Arco Photo Industries.

Further Notes:

Pentax: Bulk Film Magazine MX and Bulk Film Magazine LX are the same basic unit. The early versions for the Spotmatic series, ES/ES II and KM/KX were options for the special order motor drive versions and appear to be the same unit



reworked for each camera. The 250 shot back was first offered for the Spotmatic in 1969. The film cartridge doesn't have a specific name.

Nikon: The Nikon F had the F250, the F2 had the MF1/MF11 (and 750 shot MF2!) while the F3 had the MF4. The introduction date for the F250 is not known (by me!). The cartridge is the MZ-1.

Canon: The F1 had the "Film Chamber 250", while in the new F1 this dropped to the 100 exposure "FN 100"

Olympus: "250 Film Back" (for OM1/2/3/4) and "250 Film Magazine"

Minolta: A bulk film back was available for the XK/XM.

Topcon: Known as "Bulk Film Magazine 250" presumably for the RE Super. The RE Super had a motor drive available from its introduction in 1963 but when the bulk film magazine became available is not known.

Others: A prototype also exists for the Soviet Almaz 103 although no motordrive is known to exist for that system.

Diary Entries



September 18

Extra Auction at AMRA Hall
Bids current members only!

October 12

Market at Camberwell Centre
Alan King (03) 5241 2404
market@apcs.asn.au

October 26

Perth Market
Bob Halligan (08) 9364 5905

November 16

Xmas Social at AMRA Hall
Margaret requires bookings
secretary@apcs.asn.au
or 03 9836 3719

Meetings & Auction

Australian Model Railway Hall
92 Wills Street, Glen Iris (59 H7)

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APCS AUCTION - July 20

The colour pages for the photos in the catalogue you received set the stage for a great day. Our sincere thanks to Margaret Mason, our organiser, Max Amos, our auctioneer, Sue Margrave for the colour printing... and those members who helped make it all happen. The day got off to a bad start with the transport of the items being delayed when our driver slept in! However, we finally got under way with 330 lots to go under the hammer. It was one of the best attendance for some time, with 63 coming along to the day. It was good to see

some new faces amid the familiar ones.

Only 3 items were passed in, the rest sold with a few surprises. As



Margaret has remarked, it is difficult to put estimated prices on so many items these days. In general, SLR film cameras and lenses are simply not bringing anything like the prices they did only last year. Medium format still sells and an outstanding item, such as the Rolleiflex in 'as new' condition and in the original box... well, it is highly collectible. Item 284, the Rochester Premograph brought an excellent price, as did the Stereo cameras, Margaret at left holding the Monobloc. Full details, pictures and results will be in the next Back Focus.

A NIGHT AT THE AUCTION

The catalogue description was cryptic: Lot 393 Balance of camera assortment. Ho Ho I think, the leftovers of the backroom junk. "C1900-1950" Ah! old and new junk. Wood and brass camera, back plate holders (2)??? Hold on! Wood and brass? That's me...but camera back....? Oh well it's the only photographic lot in the whole auction: might as well go and look. At the viewing I opened a large box not knowing what to expect. There were two cameras, A movie camera and sundry bits and pieces looking like things from the attic everyone had forgotten since the death (deaths) of the owner (owners).

The Bolex was in its own decrepit case, though on opening, the camera looked pretty good even to me who knows nowt of movie gear.

Immediately recognizable was the half plate Lancaster as one of their earliest, having unusual hinges and lens support brackets. Hm! Worth adding to my collection.

The other camera was a blackened, filthy wood thing with grotty brass and minus all knobs but the bellows was intact. Ah! At least that's one thing less to make. Closer inspection showed many queer features, octagonal nuts, ½ BA screws and hooked back fasteners. I was perplexed. Would it be worth the near 90km round trip from home to the auction house? The loss of a whole evening?

"You know cameras Professor. What is that ugly black one? We didn't know how to value it." The auctioneer asked of me. I had to confess, "I have never seen anything like it Charles. The other one is common" I lied. It was a rare Lancaster but I learnt long ago not to display too much knowledge to an auctioneer else he airs it and the price goes up.

I had a glass of wine whilst waiting during the auction. (CLA is a civilized house), during which I heard successful bids of early lots:

\$1900, \$1800, \$1000, \$13,000 then \$32,000. The limit I had set myself was pennies compared with these.

I studied the crowd looking for any potential bidders for Lot 393. Saw no one who looked even remotely photographic, but who would bid on line. PING The auction sped along, only dragging when there were on line bidders. Lot 389, slow; 391 quick; 392 slow (like a dance step we used to do at the Palaise de Dance. 393 was next. I grasped my bid card.

"Lot 393. I can open at \$...." Chanted the auctioneer, his eyes on me. I nodded. He paused. No one else signaled. Was there to be an O...L...bid.

"SOLD"

I had been very patient, coming for this one lot and I had it!

Member 412

"Come on 412. Put us out of our misery. What was the grotty black thing? What did you pay for it!"