

Annual Fall Meeting (p. 4ff)

Our autumn meeting took place at the traditional location, the Wetzlarer Hof Hotel. The evening presentation this year was Dirk Wiezorek's about the "OMA", the lens testing unit that Leitz designed and built in the 1970s, used to evaluate the performance of photographic- and projection-lenses, as well binoculars. The results were published as MTF-diagrams. Besides the unit at Leitz Wetzlar, there was a second one of those devices, at the Technical University in Berlin, in the project which Dirk was involved at the time. Two of our members were particularly

interested in this presentation: Dr. Wolfgang Vollrath and Peter Karbe, both responsible for optical design at Leitz and Leica in different decades. Our Honorary President Georg Mann added some comments about lens field testings at Leitz, in which he got partially involved at the time. The next morning started with the traditional auction by Hans Ploegmakers and culminated in the equally traditional photo competition. Winners this year: Johannes Schuh, Marc Anderegg and Michel Specklin.

Group Travel to Berlin (p. 7ff)

In 2019 the annual group travel lead to Berlin. Monuments, a city tour, the German Museum of Technology, the famous department store "KaDeWe", a visit to Potsdam, the "Classic Remise Berlin" and the Meister Leica Store as well as the "Revueshow Vivid" at the Friedrichstadt-Palast and an original Berlin "Currywurst" were some of the highlights. On

the way home, the group visited Lynow, the village where Oskar Barnack was born 140 years ago. The local Barnack-Museum was presented by Georg Mann with 7 Barnack sketches and – spontaneously – by Norbert Oertel with a Leicaflex Camera. LH would like to thank the organisers of the trip, Lothar Funke and Winfried Schmidt.

Update: Wollensak Lenses, (p. 11ff)

Our member James L. Lager shows several leaflets of the 90 and 127 mm Wollensak

lenses, as an addendum to the Diego Cabassa Wollensak article in VIDOM 113.

Summar, Summitar, Summicron (p. 15ff)

It was common at Leitz to use the name of the predecessor lens to label an early prototype version of the successor lens. One example is the "Summitar*", the predecessor of the later Summicron. Different to that, the shown

lenses illustrate overlappings of lens names and their assigned serial number batches used, from when the old and the new model were still produced parallel for a while.

The rare Leitz ball head by Saroptico (p. 19ff)

The shown ball head is identical to the Leitz FIAKU that was built between 1927 and 1938. It's a useful item since once mounted the camera can be tilted and fastened in many different positions. Similar to the Leica "Monte en Sarre", which bases on the pre-war Leica IIIa, "Saar" ball head is premised on a pre-war design. It is engraved with "Saroptico

- St. Ingbert - Tête-Leitz" in a kind of Condensor-Logo. The reason for this production in the then French-occupied "Saar"-zone was to avoid French import taxes. The "Monte en Sarre" Leicas were produced between 1949 and 1951 in St. Ingbert, thus this ball head dates presumably from that era.

Leica Safari (p. 22ff)

For years collectors have been fascinated with olive-green cameras from Wetzlar. Who had that idea? Cameras and travelling have always been connected, thus the industry started to use for their marketing the term "Reisekamera". Special destinations made special features necessary and the specialized cameras were aimed at travelling trends. The olive-coloured R3 "Safari" was marketed in 1977, matching lenses were made with 28, 50 and 180 mm focal length. A hard shell case as well as a camera bag in matching colour were also available. The Safari versions, though, did not have anything to do with those for the German Army. The true story is that in those years of low camera sales, marketing director Wolfgang Müller had the idea of a special model in green and in cooperation with a PR agency the name "Safari" was born. Mental connections to Africa, adventures, nature, campfires, Hemingway,...etc. were a popular PR tool in the late 70s and TV series like "Daktari" as well as documentary movies by zoologist Bernhard

Project 530: Compact Leica (CL) (p. 36ff)

In the mid-1960s the design of a compact M-camera started. The internal name was "Gerät (device) E 530". Leitz needed to react to the then growing market of compact cameras. The E 530 was supposed to fulfil the following requirements: format 24x36, focal-plane shutter, interchangeable lenses, M-bayonet, TTL light meter and detachable back. The first concept with an external metering was discarded since from the beginning of the project there was the idea for integrating an aperture priority mode into the camera. The beautiful colour photographs in this article show several prototypes of the later Leica CL. The prototype "1" much looks like a mini M" in its silver chrome finish. Others in black paint, still very different from the later black chrome finished version which finally went to market. The early CL prototype "2" already had internal metering by a swivel arm.

Grzimek fuelled those imaginations. A fake message by Grzimek about an all inclusive tour to the African wilderness caused travel agencies to organize exactly those. Numbers of tourists to East Africa went ceiling-high, many different products - from cars to toys - were marketed as Safari-versions. Nonfiction books about Safari photography followed. The Leica R3 "Safari" definitely suited that mood, although there was hardly any advertisement for this version but a pre-printed postcard (p.32) was sent to the German dealers - with great success. Competitors, such as Canon, Zenza Bronica or Werra used the Safari-idea for their cameras. A Leica R3 Safari sells for still good prices today, particularly the Safari lenses.

In 2000 Leica produced 300 specimens of the M6TTL Safari for the Hong Kong Market and (with an exception of the M9) each digital M from the M8.2 on was offered as a Safari version at the end of their production time. Many collectors still are looking for their dream "Safari".

However, the surviving drawing from that time (p. 46) still indicates an external metering system at that stage. The prototype versions differ a lot from each other, sometimes in tiny details, such as a circular rangefinder window in the topplate. Later prototypes were named "MC" (M Compact) or "CM" (Compact M). The very pancake 40 mm Elmarit-C f/2.8 lens was produced in an initial run of 500 pieces only, and went through factory sales to Leitz employees only. Then succeeded by the Summicron-C f/2, which, together with the 90 mm Elmar-C f/4 lens, was officially offered with the Leica CL when it was launched in 1973. The cooperation with Minolta still led to the later "CLE" with electrically controlled shutter AND aperture priority mode. The Minolta CLE also had a better M-compatibility with its larger basis of the rangefinder.

The "MIKAS-250" (p. 68ff)

The ERNST LEITZ company marketed their first simple microphotographic plate camera (format 4.5x6 cm) "Micca" in 1924. The "Macca" and the "Makam" (format 9x12 cm) followed two years later. Other constructions by Dr. hc. Hermann Heine were the "Lukam" and the "Lucca", used for loupe photography. 1926/27 LEITZ offered the "Mifilmca", a camera for microphotography on 35 mm film – an Oskar Barnack design, of which the body built the basis for the model B COMPUR-Leica. From 1932 Leica owners could use their camera (except the models A and B) for microphotography by using the "Mikas" attachment.

Wilhelm Albert and Werner Mohr designed the "IFLEX" mirror reflex device with revolving ground- and clearglass-screens, especially for

micro-photography. Just to name one of the various Leitz microphotographic accessories.

The Leica 250 Reporter, partially used as well for military purposes during WWII, were also used in the field of scientific photogtaphy and and for repro- and microphotography, in combination with special accessories. The Sliding Motion Focusing Copying Attachment GRBOO is one example.

The "MIKAS-250" shown here combines the robust construction of the "IFLEX" with the design of the "MIKAS" (thus called "MIKAS-250" by the author). This surviving specimen came from the Estate of Leitz designer Wilhelm Albert and is the only one unit of this design known to the author. It never went into serial production.

The upcoming **Leica Historica Spring Meeting with AGM 2020** will take place
on **18th and 19th of April 2020**, in Wetzlar.

You are warmly welcome!

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