

Nib Noise

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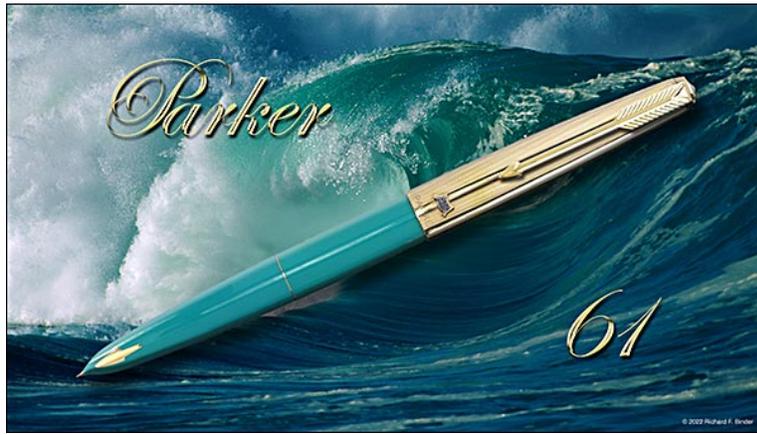
Welcome to *Nib Noise*. I hope you'll enjoy reading this month's issue.

PLEASE DO NOT REPLY TO THIS NEWSLETTER!

The robot that sends *Nib Noise* out refuses to learn to read. If you have comments or questions, send email to:

richard@richardspens.com

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Summer is here with a vengeance, and some of us are enjoying it for all we're worth. The Parker Pen Company was not immune to summer. The capillary-filling Parker 61 was introduced in September 1956, in good time for the Christmas season. Although Parker advertising described the 61 as "Unlike any pen in this world ... or any other," it's obvious that the company's designers were focused on colors drawn from this world, many of them, such as Vista Blue, Caribbean Green, and Surf Green, straight out of summer. Shown here against a monster Hawaiian tube, the Surf Green 61 First Edition typifies the high-style vibrant colors of the mid-1950s, colors that showed up everywhere from automobiles to dinette sets.

Following in the footsteps of the "51" and its now-rare "Watermelon" cap, the 61 debuted with a pair of bicolored metal caps, Heirloom (green and rose gold) and Heritage (silver and yellow gold). To indicate the purity of the precious metal in these caps, which were called Rainbow caps, Parker chose not to apply a simple line of text to the cap band, such as 1/12 14K GOLD FILLED. Instead, the caps received hallmarks like those a jewelry manufacturer would apply. There were two hallmarks, in fact, one for each of the two colors. Here is the hallmark that appears on the green gold stripes of the Heirloom cap on the pen shown above:



This hallmark indicates that the green gold stripes were 1/7 16K gold filled (rolled gold); the rose gold stripes had a different mark because of the amount of copper in them.

The very thin metal washer between the section and the barrel did not hold up as well as anticipated, and in 1962 Parker retired the Mark I 61 in favor of a Mark II version that featured a thicker, more durable trim ring at that point, as shown on this Vista Blue Mark II:



The 61 was a good pen; if cared for properly, it was reliable and an excellent writer. Soon after its introduction, however, Parker began receiving

complaints about it: the pen would clog or dry out. These failures were inevitably traced to a lack of good pen hygiene, but they eventually increased to an unsustainable level, and in 1969 the Parker 61 Mark III made its appearance. The Mark III was visually identical to the Mark II version, but it was no longer a capillary-filler; instead, it had a cartridge/converter filling system. Only two of the original Mark I colors, Vista Blue and Black, made it into the Mark III line, but other colors, more fashionable for the Swinging Sixties, had come along when the Mark II was rolled out, and the Mark III introduced Midnight Blue.

Remaining in Parker's catalog until 1982, the 61 enjoyed a relatively long lifespan for a fountain pen during the era of the ballpoint and the felt tip. There's more about this remarkable pen in my **profile of the Parker 61**.

BROAD STROKES

Some pens are easy to restore, and others are not so easy. Among the not-so-easy ones you will find the Camel. This magical "makes-its-own-ink" pen was born in the 1930s but didn't survive the decade. I acquired a Camel a while back, and I finally got round to restoring it a couple of weeks ago. Because I actually thought ahead and took pictures, you too can now learn **How to Replace the Sac in a Camel Fountain Pen**.

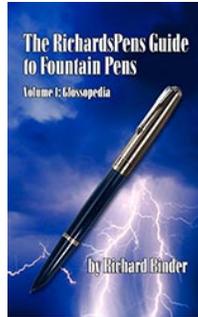


PEN WORLD and Me



It has just occurred to me (thank you, Barbara) that I've been missing an opportunity to share more goodies with you. You might or might not already know this, but since early 2011, I've been writing for *PEN WORLD* Magazine. The June issue just arrived a few days ago; see above for thumbnails of the cover and the first page of Part III in my current series, "World War II and the Fountain Pen," which started in the February issue. If you don't already subscribe to *PEN WORLD*, I recommend it as good reading and an excellent way to keep abreast with what's going on in the (pun intended) pen world. Print and digital editions are available by subscription or on newsstands, and back issues are available to get you up to speed and ready for Part IV in August.

My Books



I invite you to visit my website's Books page. It has a complete listing of all my books, with direct links to the vendors' pages where you can buy them for your own library. To better show you what each book looks like, I've updated all the cover images on the page to the larger size you see above.

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By Don Fluckinger

August 2004: The Big Ripoff

Twice in the last month, it's happened. I bought new-old stock (NOS) pens on eBay, destickered those babies, and put them to work.



NOTE: The topic of destickering NOS pens remains controversial today (2022). Don's article includes a link to an opposing view written by David Isaacson, and Don revisited the topic in February 2007. I encourage you to read both of those articles as well.

From the *Glossopedia*

With more than 1,600 entries comprising (with subentries) more than 1,750 individual terms, more than 1,000 illustrations, more than 200 patent citations linked to their respective patent documents at various archives, and extensive cross-references, the RichardsPens *Glossopedia* is the most comprehensive resource of its kind anywhere. Each month, *Nib Noise* includes a randomly chosen *Glossopedia* entry.

Equi-Poised (also seen in later references as *Equipoise* or *Equiposed*) A pen model introduced in 1929-30 by Wahl; the company's first design to break away from the straight cylindrical "flat-top" mold of the previous decades. The Equi-Poised line featured some of the same celluloids and, at the higher end, the Personal-Point nib and Gold Seal trademark that had appeared a couple of years earlier. Shown here is a Gold Seal Personal-Point Equi-Poised in Kashmir green. See also [Gold Seal](#), [Personal-Point](#).



If you would like to suggest an entry for the *Glossopedia*, I invite you to send an email to me at richard@richardspens.com with your proposed entry. If you don't have a definition for your entry, I'll do my best to find one. And if you don't think you can wait more than 133 years (note how this number keeps growing as new entries are added) to see the whole *Glossopedia* here, one entry at a time (if I don't slip up and repeat an entry or three), you can easily jump the gun by purchasing your own copy in ebook form. When I release the next edition, your ebook vendor will notify you (or make the update silently).

To help you find reference articles on my site that have been edited recently, there is a handy heading right at the top of the reference index, listing the five most recently added or edited reference pages. For edited pages, there are brief descriptions of what was changed.

The Pen Doctor

The Pen Doctor is a regular visitor to the Nashua Pen Spa, and every so often he puts a few prescriptions up on my site. Each month (except when I forget), I'll be reprinting one of his past prescriptions here. This particular script comes from 2007, so Rotring Newtons are pretty thin on the ground, but the principle still applies.

Q: I recently wanted to purchase a Rotring Newton, but alas, there are no Rotring converters available here (Philippines); while Rotring converters seem available online, I cannot afford the costs due to the dollar exchange rate (more than 50 local currency to a dollar). Are converters interchangeable between brands? Parker is one of the (if not the only) brand that has converters that are readily available.

R: There are some swaps that work; for example, many Italian pens can use an off-the-shelf Schmidt converter, but in general, converters are not universally interchangeable. Unfortunately, Parker converters don't fit Rotring pens. Do you have a correspondent in Europe or the USA who could buy a converter for you and send it in a personal mail?.



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