

Biographical Note



Albert Narath

(*Edit. Note:* Prof. Dr. Albert Narath is the author of "Oskar Messter and His Work" which appears in the earlier pages of this issue of the *Journal*. The paper is an important addition to the historical record which SMPTE Editorial Vice-President Glenn F. Matthews and the Society's policy through its Historical and Museum Committee have been building. The following has been translated and adapted from *Photo-Technik und -Wirtschaft*, vol. 11: no. 2, pp. 55-56, 1960.)

Prof. Dr. Albert Narath, Director of the Institute for Applied Photochemistry and Film Technology (Institut für angewandte Photochemie und Filmtechnik), President of the German Technical Motion Picture Society (Deutsche Kinotechnische Gesellschaft), observed his 60th birthday, on January 29, 1960. Son of Professor (ordinarius) A. Narath, he was born in Utrecht, in 1900. He attended the Gymnasium in Heidelberg, and at the University there he studied chemistry, physics and mathematics. In 1925, the degree of Doctor of Philosophy was conferred upon him. In the same year, he accepted a position as assistant to Privy Councillor Miethé, at the Institute for Photochemistry of the Technical University of Berlin-Charlottenburg (Institut für Photochemie der Technischen Hochschule Berlin-Charlottenburg). From 1927 on, he worked in the field of sound film, in the AEG research laboratory. He continued with this work in the sound film laboratory of Telefunken, from 1931 to 1941. During this time, he published a large number of technical articles in various fields dealing e.g. with the Kerr Effect, the determination of the Kerr Constant, and the distortions caused by the Kerr cell. For the first time, the photographic transfer (of information) was represented by a general and mathematically exact theory which is valid not only for sound film but also for every photographic system. The various types of sound film recording were investigated (by him) theoretically and experimentally, and a number of new measuring instruments were developed, among which are those for the measurement of the rectifying effect, and those for the photometry of small surface elements. Other work deals with the UKZ (ultra-short time) effect, with resolving power, graininess, methods of diminishing noise, and with the measurement and theoretical interpretation of spectrum distribution. Up to the end of the war, he directed the Research Laboratory of Klangfilm GmbH.

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In 1936, he became a member of the faculty of the Technical University of Berlin (Technische Hochschule Berlin) and in 1939 he became lecturer there.

After 1945, he was appointed provisional director of the Institute for Applied Photochemistry at the Technical University of Berlin. At the same time, in the capacity of chief engineer, he built, in Babelsberg, the Research Institute for Cinematography, Sound Film, Photo-Technology and Optics (Forschungsinstitut für Kinematographie, Tonfilmtechnik, Lichttechnik und Optik). In 1948, he was called as associate professor (extraordinarius) and acceded to the chair for Applied Photochemistry and Film Technology. After a full professorship was restored to the chair, the rank accorded it under Privy Councillor Miethe, Dr. Narath became, in 1957, professor and Director of the Institute.

Thereafter, he expanded his field of endeavor and turned also toward the preparation of photographic emulsions, especially those used for nuclear research. But he also carried out in his Institute a number of interesting investigations into plastic emulsions, gelatin, and related problems. Together with H. Lichte he wrote, in 1941, *Physics and Sound Film Technology (Physik und Technik des Tonfilms)*. The fourth expanded edition of this standard text will appear shortly.

section reports



The Atlanta Section met October 3 at WSB-TV with an attendance of 23. Bill Craig, Southeastern District Manager, Ampex Data Products Co., addressed the group. His subject was: "The Magnetic Recorder as an Instrumentation Device."

During the evening basic magnetic recording theory was discussed and some of the elements of a recording system were illustrated. Differences in design between recording and playback heads were shown. The need for tape of higher quality than that necessary for audio and visual work was emphasized.

Different methods of encoding information and a discussion of the advantages of each were presented. Of particular interest was a description of the various methods used to record multiple signals simultaneously.

Several applications of magnetic tape-recording equipment were shown. The presentation was well illustrated with color slides. A question-and-answer session was held after the meeting.—W. R. Sandell, *Secretary-Treasurer*, c/o Kodak Processing Lab., 4729 Miller Dr., Chamblee, Ga.

The Canadian Section met at the Main Studio of Robert Lawrence Productions in Toronto for the September 15 meeting. Eighty-three members were present.

The leading topic of a two-part program for the evening was a description of the new Thermoplastic recording technique by Peter E. Pashler of the Electron Physics Research Dept., General Electric Co., Schenectady, N.Y. The fundamentals of the process and the equipment involved, were illustrated by the showing of slides, followed by projection of two samples of film which had been pre-recorded at the GE Laboratory in Schenectady. Interesting comparisons were made between photographic film, magnetic tape and thermoplastic film, as to their relative abilities for information, storage and playback.

During the coffee break (Courtesy of Braun of Canada Equipment, Ltd.) Dr. Pashler was kept busy re-running his demonstration films and answering questions.

Following the coffee break, A. Kustuk and Leslie Holmes, both of the Ryerson Institute of Technology in Toronto, collaborated in presenting a description of the facilities and curricula at Ryerson for those preparing to enter the broadcasting or motion-picture industries. Teaching facilities of broad scope have provided Canada with many valuable graduates to these industries since the courses were initiated in 1948.

A pleasant pre-meeting dinner with the speakers and several of the Toronto SMPTE executive group was enjoyed at the Town and Country restaurant.—R. B. MacKenzie, *Chairman*, Program Committee, Toronto Group, Canadian Section, MacKenzie Equipment Co., 433 Jarvis St., Toronto 5, Ont.

The Chicago Section met Tuesday evening, September 20 in the auditorium of the Portland Cement Assn. The meeting was opened by Philip E. Smith, *Secretary-Treasurer* of the Section, who requested Jack Behrend, *Program Chairman*, to give a brief indication of the year's programs. After Mr. Behrend's report, the meeting was turned over to the staff of the Portland Cement Assn.

G. T. Kennedy, *President*, gave a description of the Association and explained how the Educational Film Bureau fits in with the overall work of the organization.

Carl Ziegler, *Director* of the Educational Film Bureau, described the work and organization of the bureau and its general mode of operation.

Art Mandler of the Film Bureau discussed the details of the various productions made by the Bureau including such phases of work as scene writing, dialogue, settings, emotional audience reaction, etc. His talk was illustrated by some excellent excerpts from various productions made by the Bureau.

Phil Walusek, engineer for the Bureau, described various technical problems and methods relating to sound production, titling, special effects, etc.

The meeting was concluded with an orientation film, prepared by the Bureau, which contained many humorous overtones. All who attended the meeting agreed that it was highly informative and entertaining.—Philip E. Smith, *Secretary-Treasurer*, c/o Eastman Kodak Co., 1712 S. Prairie Ave., Chicago 16, Ill.