



SMPTE President's Message to the Members

What is SMPTE in 1964?

It is partly what it was in 1963 and in the years before, back to 1916.

It is also partly what it will be in 1965 and the years beyond.

The Society exists for engineering and standardization, for science and technology, in motion pictures, television, instrumentation and high-speed photography. The very first paper published by SMPE in 1916 was "Standardization."

The Years Past

A very brief review of nearly fifty years of the Society's activity will indicate much of what the Society is and may be. The Engineering Committees of the Society have worked continually in every technological sector where contributions can be made. Soon after the establishment of the standards program, there came in 1924 proposals for the new 16mm safety film, approved by the American Standards Committee in 1928.

Within another few years, more than a score of standards and reports had been published. Perhaps typical of the Society's aims and accomplishments at that time is "Standard SMPE Visual and Sound Test Reels," published in March, 1934. This was indicative of the technology for sound motion pictures, for which the Society had begun publishing scientific ideas as early as 1923. There were papers presented at Conventions on such subjects as "Servicing Sound Picture Projection Equipment in Theaters," as early as May, 1929.

Publication of scientific principles often precedes the technological developments, for example, H. S. Newcomer's "Wide-Screen Photography With Cylindrical Anamorphosing Systems and Characteristics of Motion Picture Lenses and Images," in the *Journal* of January, 1933. About twenty years later, anamorphosing systems (such as CinemaScope) were being used for feature films.

Similarly, such subjects as film and its dimensions, color, cinematography, production, lighting, processing, acoustics and projection could be cited. There have been papers on stereoscopy periodically since 1919 in *SMPE Transactions* and the *Journal*.

Television has just about always been with us, beginning with "Radio Photographs, Radio Movies, and Radio Vision," in May, 1923. The SMPE added "Television" to its name beginning with 1950.

Since "100,000 Pictures per Minute" appeared in October, 1921, the Society has published hundreds of papers, many of them collected in eight special volumes, about instrumentation and high-speed photography. There has been the sponsorship of a major international

congress on high-speed photography in 1960 and the resulting *Proceedings*, a volume of 604 pages.

Education has never been last; it came early with such papers as "Educational Possibilities of Motion Pictures" in May, 1920. In recent years there have been sessions at our Technical Conferences and special groups of papers in the *Journal*. A recent major Society activity was a U. S. Office of Education/SMPTE Conference on Audio-Visual Apparatus.

"International Standardization" also must be cited before coming to specific activities of the year just past. Since 1952 the SMPTE has made a major contribution to the International Organization for Standardization. SMPTE sponsors the American Standards Association sectional committee on motion pictures, PH 22, and combined video-aural magnetic recording for TV, C98; and also under ASA has been responsible for technical guidance and for the Secretariat functions of ISO/TC 36, Cinematography.

The Year 1963

This was the year that the Society's Headquarters in New York was moved to provide adequate working space for the staff and for committee and executive meetings. Dividends in increased efficiency are already evident.

One of the Society's objectives has been greater coordination of its test film operations. This is being accomplished now that there is space for such within headquarters. Because test films as standard items are so important to industry, the quality-control operations require constant, critical attention.

Late in the year, the Executive Committee authorized an addition to the engineering staff of the Society to provide for increased quality-control procedures at headquarters. New test films were developed and are being introduced, including the revision of several. 8mm sound test films received considerable attention and are in preparation.

The Society's publishing program encompasses besides the *Journal*, occasional technical reference books. This year there were *Principles of Color Sensitometry* and Vol. 2 of Series II of *Instrumentation and High-Speed Photography*. All books are planned and budgeted to pay their own way as far as their direct costs are concerned, with the Society contributing committee and staff work as a service to our arts and industry.

Education has continued to receive Society attention through specially sponsored courses as well as through sessions at the Technical Conferences, two large groups of papers (published in March and April of 1963) and by the publication of tutorial and historical papers and bibliographies.

In 1963, the Society was ruled by the Internal Revenue Service to be a scientific organization exempt under the provisions of Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Two Technical Conferences and Equipment Exhibits were held last year within the metropolitan crescent of northeastern U.S.A., first at Atlantic City, N.J., then at Boston, Mass. Both were highly successful in attendance and interest generated, due to the great contributions of the organizing committees for the papers programs and for the arrangements. That two such successful meetings occurred consecutively in such geographic proximity is a tribute to the interest and viability of the membership.

Immediately at the close of the Boston Technical Conference three of the Society's leaders left for the U.S.S.R. on a visit made as a return of the visit made here by Russian engineers in 1962. Their trip was briefly reported in the December, 1963, *Journal*; they have already reported on phases on the Russian industry at SMPTE Section Meetings, and a full session of a report in three phases with slides and motion-picture film is planned for the 95th Technical Conference in April.

During the year the number of Society Sections was increased to 16, with the addition of groups at Cape Canaveral and Denver and with the division of the large Canadian Section into those now labeled Montreal and Toronto. Important to the members of the Society were also the quality and extent of activity within the Sections: In Canada a meeting almost as wide as the continent was held by closed-circuit television (*Journal*, August); and there were special all-day meetings such as those held by the Chicago Section in Minneapolis, the Toronto Section and the Washington, D. C., Section. A major aspect of the Section Meetings was the frequent practice of holding meetings jointly with the SPIE (Society of Photographic Instrumentation Engineers) and the SPSE (Society of Photographic Scientists and Engineers). This has been a strong omen in favor of an activity in which SMPTE has participated this past year — study of the desirability and possibilities of consolidating the memberships of these societies into one organization.

As is known by those who are members of SMPTE and also of either or both SPSE and SPIE, there are differences among these three societies but many believe that the common and currently overlapping interests and activities are such that a very serious and detailed study was worth pursuing in 1963.

The Year 1964

During 1964, in cooperation with the other organizations, we will continue to pursue a detailed study of the possibilities of consolidation of the membership and the activities of these societies.

This year there will be two major Technical Conferences and Equipment Exhibits: in Los Angeles this spring and in New York in the fall. There will be important papers, programs and exhibits reflecting their locations in the two great motion-picture and television production centers.

In the later pages of this *Journal* is a special feature about the International Papers Committee activities which have been more obviously important in recent years. It is important for the membership at large to know how the international aspect of the Technical Conferences and the *Journal* is accomplished. There will

continue to be the fullest possible news and advertising coverage of developments in the arts, sciences and engineering in our areas of interest. One book is to be published this year: *Special Effects in Motion Pictures — A Study of Some Methods of Producing Mechanical Special Effects*, from a thesis by Frank P. Clark, of the Department of Cinema, University of Southern California.

Besides the continuing activities and efforts forecast by the report above for 1963, some general reflection is in order. We know much of what will be the basis for our continued service and sound activity within our field but we must be constantly preparing ourselves for new emphases or influences, which may be technological, economic, artistic or international. To this end the Society has a relatively new organizational arrangement of four advisors to its President. During the past year they have been very helpful in channeling intelligence which otherwise would not so readily have reached the Society's policymakers and planners.

It is not certain, however, that the Society's members have availed themselves of these channels. These advisors are: *Motion Pictures*: Norwood L. Simmons, Eastman Kodak Co., 6706 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood 38, Calif.; *Television*: W. T. Wintringham, Bell Telephone Laboratories, Murray Hill, N. J.; *Education*: Steve Knudsen, Film Production Unit, Alice Norton House, Iowa State University, Ames, Iowa; *Instrumentation and High-Speed Photography*: Max Beard, 10703 East Nolcrest Dr., Silver Spring, Md.

The Years Ahead

This message is addressed to each member. It is *you* the individual member who makes and supports the Society. You should strengthen the Society by contributing to it, knowing about it, and advising what it might be in the years ahead. And you can bring into the Society as members all those you know who should also be supporting and contributing to your profession, your art and your industry.

Your Society officers, Board of Governors, and the many committeemen are dedicated to bring to the Society the latest engineering practices, and approved administration of our scientific and engineering Society. But we need added help from our 6,000 members to enlarge, promote, and improve the services provided your profession.

In this issue of the *Journal* you will find a reprint of "THIS IS SMPTE," which should give you renewed pride in what your Society brings its members. See whether there is any news for you in "THIS IS SMPTE" and look for those about you who should be brought in as new members.

So, with personal thanks to all who have contributed to the Society in 1963 and best wishes to all for a successful and healthful year in 1964.

Sincerely,

