

On Tuesday evening those who attended the convention were guests of WGN-TV Television Station and were escorted through the Tribune Tower Studios at 435 N. Michigan Ave. The studios have been under construction for some time and members who are familiar with studio design and the solution of architectural and acoustics problems were tremendously interested in the choice of materials and their application to this impressive arrangement of combined television and radio facilities. The Society extends its enthusiastic gratitude to Carl Meyers, Director of Engineering, and F. R. McNichol, Engineering Department, WGN TV.

On Wednesday evening, the semiannual Cocktail Hour, Banquet and Dance were held in the Gold Coast Room of The Drake hotel. Bill Kunzmann was as always the Society's genial host and provided a most entertaining evening for all.

On Thursday evening, Wilding Picture Productions was host to Society members who visited the studio at 1345 Argyle St.

The Convention closed late Friday afternoon, April 28, with a few encouraging words from Mr. Kunzmann, who reports that in all respects the Convention was more than a modest success. Papers presented will begin to appear in the JOURNAL beginning in the late summer and will probably continue until about the first of 1951.

Theater Carpeting Manuals Available

The Theater Engineering Committee has for some time contemplated publishing a report on theater carpeting that would be a generally useful guide to theater owners and operators who purchase fairly large quantities of carpeting. It would necessarily have to be quite comprehensive in presenting recommended practices for the selection, maintenance and care of theater carpet based upon actual theater experience. After considerable work in this direction had been undertaken, in the form of a survey, it was decided that certain publications already available adequately covered the major questions on theater and hotel carpeting. The SMPTE has, therefore, made arrangements to secure for interested persons a package of the following two publications:

Handbook for Carpet Layers, The Carpet Institute, Inc.

Carpets and Their Maintenance, prepared for The American Hotel Association by The York Research Corp., in co-operation with The Carpet Institute, Inc., and The National Institute of Rug Cleaners, Inc.

The Committee feels that with this information at hand, and with his personal experience, the average theater man will have available *nearly* all that he needs to know about the subject.

In reviewing these documents, however, various members of the Committee agreed that there are a few additional points unique to theater work that should be added. Pattern selection, for instance, should depend not only on the theater motif, but on the size of the floor areas involved. Large areas usually demand a larger pattern, and the trend has been toward larger patterns with repeats as great as 60 in. Matching background designs are also available without the large pattern, so that the over-all pattern can be used in a foyer and standee area, and the stairways can carry the matched background only. In this way, the large

pattern cannot camouflage or confuse the outlines of the stair treads and risers, and so a higher safety factor can be maintained.

Many theater operators create a much more favorable maintenance schedule by using 54-in. widths rather than 27-in. widths in aisles and standee areas, on stairways and in other heavily traveled areas. This eliminates extra seams which are always a problem as the carpet wears.

Color selection should be studied in every installation. Bright colors that soil "gracefully" and still retain a live look are desirable. Reds and golds especially fall into this class. The manufacturer can give valuable guidance in this instance. Consideration must also be given to color mixing. The problem here is like mixing oil colors in a pot. Green lighting on red carpeting will result in a dead, black effect. Rose or flame-tint lighting, on the other hand, will enhance and soften the effect of red carpeting. A definite trend, however, has been the utilization of low wattage concealed down lighting that *suffuses* the carpeted areas with white light of proper intensity. Wall and carpet areas then reveal their true colors.

Experience has shown that greatly increased carpet life on stairs results when a nosing radius of $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ in. is used. Theater architects prefer, for the most part, a $\frac{3}{4}$ -in. radius. The Committee's suggestion for stair lining, in addition to the radii outlined above, is a $\frac{1}{4}$ -in. layer of sponge rubber across the tread and over the nosing. The sponge rubber should end at a point just under the nosing, against the riser. Over the sponge rubber a layer of regular 40-oz lining should be used. The nailing strips should be countersunk, if possible, on the flat tread where the riser begins. The 90-degree pulling force against the carpet nails has proved more satisfactory than that against a wood corner strip.

Aisles should be countersunk approximately $\frac{5}{8}$ in. in all new construction. This allows a 54-oz lining plus a good grade of carpeting to fall almost flush with the floor. Here again, nailing strips should be countersunk in the depressed aisle when the concrete is poured. A beveled edge on the strip, with the widest edge buried in the concrete, will prevent pull-out. Plywood strips have been found best because of their greater retention of the carpet nail and because the resins in plywood resist termite infestation.

Determination of quality in purchasing carpet can be confusing to the uninitiated. Experts determine quality by the density of wool per cubic inch. The durability of any carpet varies as the square of density and pile height. Competing samples of carpet should be compared as to pitch, pile height and wire count. These terms are explained in the publications offered. A very important factor in durability is the blending of wool yarns. The larger the proportion of coarse, long staple wool used in a blend of yarn, the greater the durability. Since blends of yarn cannot be specified, the purchaser in this instance can depend only on the reputation of a manufacturer as well as the past performance of his product.

"On location" cleaning is discussed in *Carpets and Their Maintenance*, described above. Careful use of this information will indicate the safest and best cleaning methods available. Particular attention should be paid Part II of this booklet.

The Theater Engineering Committee sincerely hopes that this report of the Theater Carpeting Subcommittee will find acceptance with interested members of the Society and with theater owners and operators everywhere, and that the publications offered herewith will fill a need of long standing. A package of these two publications is available from the Society at \$3.00, plus \$0.25 for handling and mailing.