Section Meetings

Australia South, July 25, 1991 – The first official Australia South Section meeting took place at Open Channel Co-op and was attended by 15 people. Mike Krulick, Edit Machines Corp. (EMC), gave a presentation on the EMC^2, a nonlinear editing system. He discussed the concepts of nonlinear editing, the recent technological advancements that make it possible with personal-computer hardware, JPEG and MPEG image-compression schemes, computer-disk image storage, erasable optical disks, and the special techniques adopted by EMC in this leading-edge technology. Ray Holland was the organizer and host of the meeting. – David Parkes (Secretary/Treasurer), Pro-Image Victoria Pty. Ltd.

Houston, September 11, 1991 – The serial copy management system (SCMS), which is devised to prevent wholesale dubbing of audio products while allowing reasonable consumer use of digital audio, was discussed by Michael Ellis, Sony Professional Group. The system allows copying a CD, or other digital source, to R-DAT, but no further dubbing is possible due to a hidden signal embedded in the digital process. He provided a history of DAT audio covering the past ten years and gave an explanation of the differences between S-DAT and R-DAT. Since the differences are in the favor of R-DAT, S-DAT is no longer a practical format and R-DAT is now simply known as DAT.

The 50-person audience learned that the error correction system helps compensate for the slow-moving tape (either 8.15 or 12.225 mm/sec) on the 3.81mm wide metal tape stock. The system includes dual rotating heads in the 90× helical contact system that also provides for confidence recording and a variable speed playback of 12.5% without introducing distortion. Applications for the small, lightweight DAT format include film sound, television news, documentaries, sports, sound effects, field recording, radio production, and on-the-air and syndication distribution. – Robert Musburger (Secretary/Treasurer), University of Houston.

New England, September 18, 1991 – The meeting was held at the Christian Science Broadcasting Center. The facilities, which recently underwent tremendous expansion in preparation for a new cable channel, are very impressive not only for the technical sophistication but also because the project went from design to completion in just a few months. Dave Mazza, project manager, Matt Adams, technical advisor, and Paul Puccio, chief engineer, shared the experience of creating and constructing this state-of-the-art production operation while conducting in-depth tours of this multimedia facility.

The featured speaker of the evening was Aaron Frank, Leitch Video International, who delivered a presentation entitled "Current and Emerging Issues in Multiuser Still Storage, Distribution, and Management." He discussed how still store systems have evolved from simple, single-user, self-contained storage units into large multiuser, multichannel systems. Today a still store must be capable of satisfying a wide variety of needs, from the differing operational needs of users to the incompatibilities of various video standards. The Leitch still store video system has been incorporated into the Christian Science production center and was in evidence throughout the plant. – Edward Dextraze (Secretary/Treasurer), Raytheon Corp.

Pacific/Northwest, September 20, 1991 – Former SMPTE President Charles E. Anderson, who was a member of the Ampex team that developed the VR-1000 and is currently a consultant with Panasonic Broadcast, gave a detailed description of the NHK-developed ½-in. digital tape format. The 34 people in attendance got a detailed look at this tape format. His talk and slide presentation was followed by a lengthy question-and-answer session. – William A. Watt (Secretary/Treasurer), Proline Industries.

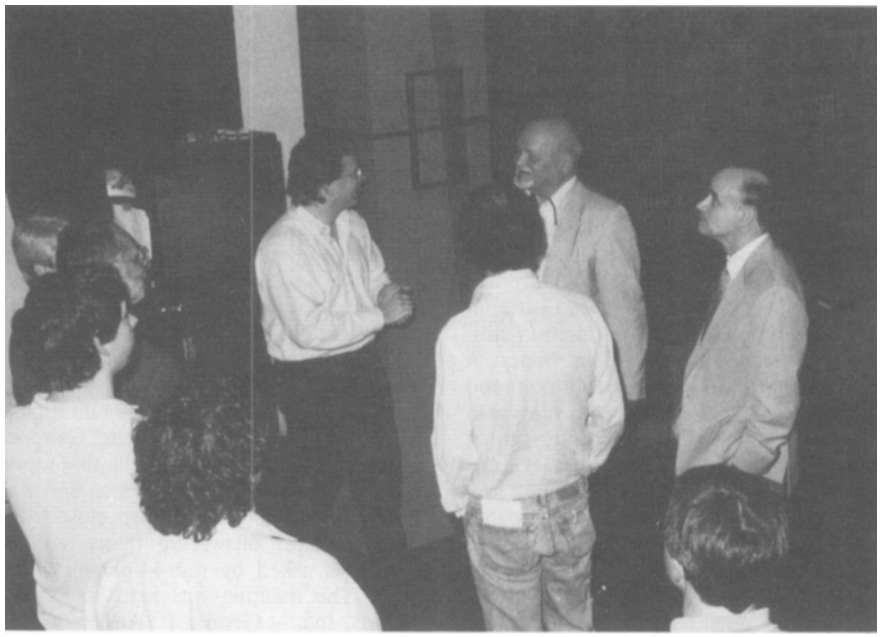
Philadelphia, September 10, 1991 – John Horn, Tektronix, Inc., gave an informative slide presentation covering the basics of parallel and serial interconnect formats, eye patterns, and equalization. He discussed a few possible problems to avoid and a proposal for error detection and handling in serial D-2 transmission.

The presentation was followed by a demonstration of the TEK 1730D digital WFM and the TSG-170D digital composite generator with the serial digital output option. The demonstration included the proposed EDL system. Horn closed the meeting after answering many serious questions asked by the 44-person audience. The meeting was held at Peirce-Phelps, Inc. – George F. Anderson, III (Secretary/Treasurer), Ampex Corp.

San Francisco, September 21, 1991 – Dennis Muren, Industrial Light & Magic (ILM), attracted an audience of about 600 people, who came to hear his discussion on computer graphics (CG) and ILM's participation in creating the special effects for *Terminator 2: Judgment Day.*

Initially, a limited number of CG personnel were assigned to work on key elements of the special-effects project. To guide these personnel, artists drew storyboard panels to provide an architectural rendering of special effects as they evolved and developed. Muren commented that while some producers rely on computer-generated storyboards to serve this function, he does not believe that they offer the subtle nuances required by the CG artists.

The inaugural meeting of the Australia South Section.



SMPTE Fellow C. Robert Paulson conversing with Matt Adams, Christian Science Broadcasting, during the New England Section's September meeting.

Paul Puccio, Christian Science Broadcasting, describing the company's state-of-the-art studio facilities to New England Section members and guests.

These artists must transform an outline of an effect into a dynamic and exciting sequence that will electrify the viewer with its imagery. However, the imagery must be believable; therefore, elements of reality must be present.

He noted that ILM approached several skilled special-effects personnel and offered them an opportunity to participate in creating the advanced special effects that the movie required. However, some of these specialists declined because they believed that the desired effects were impossible to produce.

To insure natural movements by the character of Terminator 2, a grid pattern was placed on the body of the actor who portrayed him. During the film, Terminator 2's body form continually changed from a formless glob into a silver-surface robot and into human forms. The actor was filmed from frontal and side views and his movements were analyzed and graphed. Since each individual moves in a unique fashion, the computer created images that had the style of movement that was characteristic with the actor. This made the images appear natural.

Videotapes were employed extensively during production of the film because they helped to compress production time and stimulate the creative momentum. Considerable time and effort were spent on the reflections of the surface of Terminator 2's mirrored exterior. As the contours of the surface of the character changed, the reflections had to simulate the new images resulting from the altered reflective surface. The standard tools used in the film's special effects were rotoscoping, masks, and compositing.

Some of the outstanding effects in the film include a scene where Terminator 2 moved through a wall of iron bars and an instance where it rose through a checkered floor. This was a particularly difficult scene because the floor pattern conformed to the contours of Terminator 2's head. The presentation was followed by a lively question-and-answer session. – Vernon L. Kipping (Chairman), Consultant.

Soviet Union, September 18–19, 1991 – A two-day meeting held at NIKFI attracted an audience of 180 people. The speakers were J. Bole and B. Menu, Kodak-Pathé, France, who discussed EON process peculiarities, EXR film identification, and ecological aspects of Eastman Kodak Co. film processing; and D. Wait, Kodak Ltd., who spoke on motion-picture film in the epoch of HDTV, Keykode™ application, and cinema digital sound. – Valery S. Yershov (Secretary/Treasurer), NIKFI.

Washington, D.C., September 19, 1991 – Over 125 people attended a meeting held at the new facility constructed by CNN for their Washington news bureau, which is the newest and largest of all CNN bureaus. Many of the attendees were students from the communications departments of American University and the University of Maryland at College Park, who were participating with the section's education committee. The committee has been promoting the availability of such resources and their value in broadening students' perspectives on broadcasting and related media.

The highlight of the meeting was an appearance by two of CNN's reporters, John Holliman and Frank Sesno. Each made introductory remarks about the direction of journalism and the difficulties in being able to cover stories with supposedly insurmountable technical handicaps that were cleverly overcome.

A tour of the new facilities showed the attendees the high level of activity and versatility supported by the studios and control rooms, from which such programs as "Larry King Live," "Crossfire," and "World Today" are produced. – Paul R. Markun (Secretary/Treasurer), Capitol Video Communications.