Section Meetings

Hollywood, February 6, 1991 — Nearly 400 people attended a special joint presentation of the Hollywood Section and the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, which commemorated the 60th anniversary of the Academy's scientific or technical awards. The retrospective, held at the Goldwyn Theater, was opened by Karl Malden, president of the Academy. Section Chairman Milton Shefter, who coproduced the evening with Joel Gread and Ron Little, narrated the two-hour program. Dr. Rod Ryan and Linwood Dunn presented special sections of the program. In a review of the 60 years of innovation, film clips were used to demonstrate various award-winning technologies. *Star Wars, White Christmas, Bound for Glory, The Birds, Glory,* and Pixar's computer-animated *Knicknack* were among the films shown. This joint effort was a year in the making and is a vivid example of the cooperation between the two organizations. — Milton R. Shefter (Chairman), Paramount Pictures Corp.

Houston, February 20, 1991 — Creative artists are now finding relief from the restrictions of the 3×4 aspect ratio via the multiple monitors of videowalls. This technology in computer control and microchip memory systems allows video images to be displayed in part, in segments, split, enlarged, reduced, or in any combination of normal video displays.

Richard Hoggatt and Lyle Countryman, Stage Directions, explained and demonstrated the technical aspects of the installation and control systems required in creating a videowall. The multiscreen wall allows signals to be directed to individual screens, to any combination of screens, or in any portion of the video signal to any combination of screens. The videowall technology is based on a German-written computer program and microchips digitizing the signal for distribution. Each monitor is capable of storing its own digital memory information and can be retrieved as called on by the computer control operator. Following the demonstrations, the 25 SMPTE members and guests were given a tour of the production facilities at Stage Directions, which is where the meeting was held.

Montreal/Quebec, January 22, 1991 — The January meeting, which was attended by 88 members and guests, featured a tutorial on D-2 technology. Jim Miller, Abekas Inc., spoke on the principles of D-2 and provided information on the improvements brought on by this technology. Carey Preem, Abekas Inc., gave a demonstration and explanation of an all-digital post-production environment. The meeting took place at Groupe Techner. As part of the program Jacques Lachapelle, Groupe Techner, gave a demonstration of the da Vinci Renaissance color corrector, which is used in one of the company's Rank telecine suites. — Paul Bellerose (Chairman), National Film Board of Canada.

Nashville, December 13, 1990 — The December meeting was held at the headquarters of Viacom Cablevision, and George Hale served as host to the 27 attendees. The meeting opened with Past Section Chairman Duane Muir presenting a plaque to outgoing Chairman Buddy Gailey in appreciation of his previous service. This was followed by a presentation by SMPTE President Blaine Baker, MPL Film and Video, Inc., who described the inaugurations of the Nordic Section in Stockholm, the German Section in Munich, and the Soviet Section in Moscow. He noted that the SMPTE has nearly 10,000 members worldwide and pointed out that the Nashville Section is now the second smallest of the SMPTE sections.

David White, Micro-Pace Distributors, gave a presentation on the use of computers in video productions. He discussed the Model 2500 Commodore/Amiga computer and demonstrated the Video Toaster card, which was manufactured by NewTek for the Amiga. — Jim Edwards (Secretary/Treasurer), Tektronix, Inc.

Nashville, January 24, 1991 — Digital audio production and the state of R-Dat were the topics of discussion at the January meeting, held at WKRN-TV Channel 2. Claude Hill, Gary Rosen, and Graeme Goodall, all of Sony Audio Production, gave a slide and videotape presentation that traced the evolution and outlined the current format of R-DAT, including the SMPTE time code for R-DAT. They then demonstrated machine-to-machine editing via the Sony RM-D 7300, PCM 70230, and 7050 units. A question-and-answer period followed.

Scott Conder, Daniel Keller, John Weber, and Steve Smith, all of Studer Revox America, Inc., gave a demonstration of the Dyaxis system. They discussed the use of digitized and hard disk editing with a Macintosh controller that uses special software. The system can be used for video and film post-production applications. It is a four-channel system and can use external or internal SMPTE/EBU time codes. Reader/generator, MIDI, film tach lock, and an SMPTE EDL are standard features of the system. The 44 people in attendance represented both the SMPTE and the local chapter of the AES. — Jim Edwards (Secretary/Treasurer), Tektronix, Inc.

Nashville, February 21, 1991 — SMPTE President Blaine Baker opened the meeting with a discussion of the benefits of SMPTE membership. He encouraged each of the ten Nashville Section members to recruit one member.

Dancy Jones, State of Tennessee Film, Tape, and Music Commission, told the 20-person audience that the film and video industries were responsible for $69,000,000 income in the state during the fiscal year of 1989 to 1990. During the fiscal year of 1990 to 1991, the Commission will need to be more aggressive because of competition from other states. Local production firms are using the Commission for locating sites, etc. They have received unsolicited Japanese business and are increasing their efforts toward foreign customers. The Commission, through Middle Tennessee University, is also producing an Impact Study. Two *Ernest* movies were shot in Nashville during the past year and one more is planned. Jones wrapped up her presentation by discussing the intern programs and their successes at various institutions.

Duane Muir, Nashville State Technical School, showed a Sony videotape on the use of the SMPTE time code in editing. He gave an explanation of the time code and demonstrated a few problems normally incurred by users. J. Wayne Caluger, J. Wayne Caluger & Associates, spoke on the numerous problems in equipment and the use of time codes. He said that audio creates interesting problems if it is not tracked with a video-synced source. Other problems discussed were phasing, drop field, user bits, 24 versus 29.92 versus 30 frames/sec, 525/60 versus 625/50 SMPTE/EBU, and other complications. A question-and-answer session followed. — Jim Edwards (Secretary/Treasurer), Tektronix, Inc.

New England, February 20, 1991 — The meeting, held at The National Boston Production Center, opened with a demonstration of the Video Toaster by NewTek, Inc. The device, configured on an Amiga computer, will produce real-time geometric manipulation of incoming live

video. A graphical user interface provides control over the digital video effects, character generator, color processor, dual frame buffers, paint system, and production switcher.

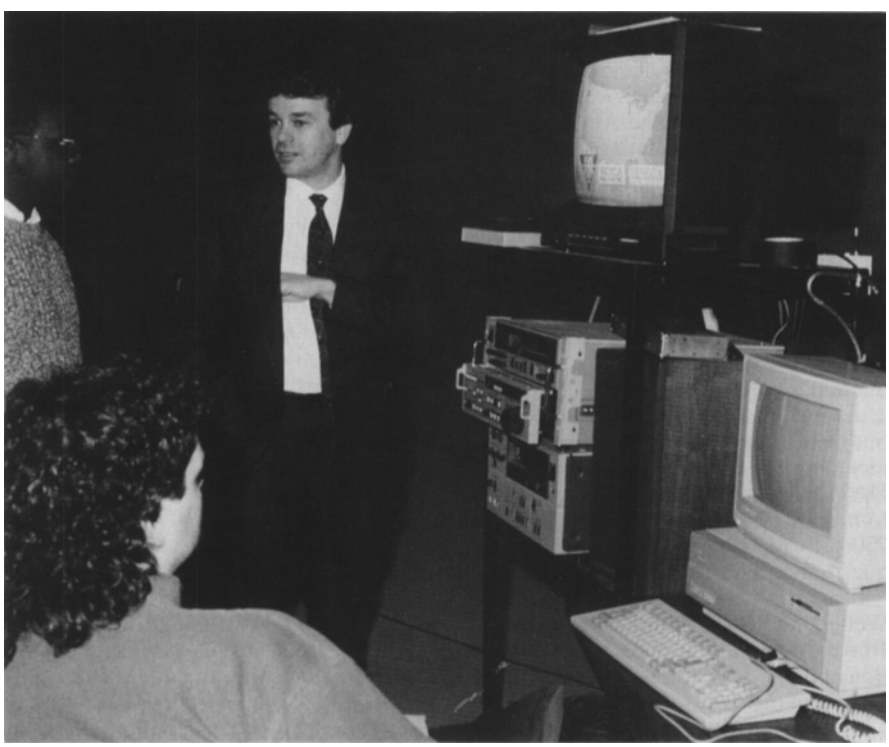
Max Berry, former vice-president of broadcast operations and engineering, Capital Cities/ABC Broadcast Group, was the featured speaker. He presented a paper entitled "A Contrarian View of Advanced Television," in which he offered his opinions of the current evolution of television technology. Although he is not opposed to advanced developments, he made a strong case in favor of a more frugal, realistic approach toward improved television in North America, using upgraded versions of the existing NTSC system. This, he said, will be more affordable and spectrum-use-compatible and will have a far greater benefit-to-cost ratio than the proposed 1125/60 HDTV technologies.

He pointed out that while in past situations new technologies have cost less than the technologies they replaced, this would not be the case for HDTV. He said that the public votes with its pocketbook and that program content is much more important than picture quality. As an example he cited that VHS videotape rentals have prospered while technically the picture quality is inferior to that of broadcast television. He compared HDTV technology to the Concorde supersonic jet, "which is magnificent but has been totally impractical financially and is still in trouble today."

The program concluded with a spirited audience discussion. The entire meeting was videotaped by students from the newly formed SMPTE Student Section at Fitchburg State College. — Edward Dextraze (Secretary/Treasurer), Raytheon Co.

Pasadena City College, February 26, 1991 — Because of an overwhelming response to his previous presentation, former student Steve Chris made a return appearance as guest speaker. Chris has held positions at Bell & Howell, RCA, Instant Replay, and CBS-TV. He currently works for Modern Film Video, a highly respected post-production house, which is currently building a new facility in Burbank.

During the meeting he said that most problems that occur in editor transfer sessions are due to operator error. He encouraged the audience to enter the industry for love and not money, but advised the 34 members and guests in attendance to pay attention to the bottom line. He provided an intensive presentation stressing the work ethic and the importance of congeniality and positive thinking. The meeting was followed by an enthusiastic question-and-answer period that continued during a post-meeting session held in the hallway. The response to his presentation was so enthusiastic that he was invited to return during future semesters as a regular guest speaker. — Anthony Lacy (Student Co-Chairman), Pasadena City College.



Chairman Brian Lay discussing the Video Toaster during the New England Section's February meeting.

Rochester, February 19, 1991 — "Design of an HDTV Telecine" was the topic of a joint meeting of the SMPTE and IS&T, which attracted more than 70 attendees. Arthur J. Cosgrove and Andrew Kurtz, both of Eastman Kodak Co., presented a historical background of the evolution of today's CCD and CRT telecines. Cosgrove presented an overview and status report of Kodak's telecine development program. Via a slide presentation, he showed the breadboard prototype telecine and the scanner subsystem at the research facilities in Harrow, England. Kurtz discussed the illumination system design. His talk covered the selection of a light source, filtering, integrating, and optics. Both speakers emphasized that the most important design goal is to translate the image quality of today's fine-grain films to any of the HDTV signal formats. The presentation ended with an HDTV videodisc demonstration. — Paul G. Kanerva (Secretary/Treasurer), Eastman Kodak Co.

San Francisco, November 29, 1990 — Seventy-five members and guests met at Ampex Corp. to hear Lincoln Endelman, consultant, provide insight on how the Hubble space telescope was designed, its different systems, and its problems and requirements. The telescope was named for Edwin Howell Hubble, whose major contributions were the "big bang theory" and Hubble's Law, which states that the more distant a galaxy is from earth, the faster it moves away.

Perkin Elmer was responsible for the design, development, and fabrication of the optical telescope assembly. Lockheed Corp.'s Missiles and Space Division was responsible for the design, development, and fabrication of the telescope's support system and for the assembly and testing of the major telescope components.

The space shuttle was launched from Cape Canaveral on April 24, 1990, and placed into orbit 380 miles above the earth. The telescope is approximately the size and weight of a city. Its overall goals are to attempt to understand the origin of the universe, the laws and physics governing the universe, the birth of the stars, and the advent of life. Endelman described several of the telescope's parts, including the 96 in. diameter primary mirror and the planetary camera, which is the component most affected by a manufacturing error in the mirror.

Marvin Marshall, consultant, closed the meeting with a description and discussion of a remarkable collection of photographic apparatus owned by Jack Naylor. The collection consists of some of the earliest examples of cameras. Naylor is planning to dispose of this collection, and Marshall is trying to find a

suitable individual, company, or agency to acquire it and keep it in the U.S. — Vernon L. Kipping (Chairman), Consultant.

Toronto, January 15, 1991 — The January meeting marked the Section's fifth consecutive satellite-delivered program. The proceedings were made available to viewers across most of North America through the generosity of the Global TV Network, which provided the Studio 2 facilities of its main Toronto studio complex and the Anik D-1 satellite channel. Remote viewers could telephone questions to the meeting for direct, on-air responses by the presenters. Television production was organized by Ed Holmes, Global TV Network. SMPTE Governor David George, Imagineering Ltd., was host of the program.

Patrick Whittingham, Sony of Canada Ltd., gave a presentation on "Digital Television — Today and Beyond." Using a tutorial approach, he outlined some historical aspects of user experience with digital recording in the component and composite domains and introduced issues that will be involved in systemizing at a digital level. He then described some of the proposed digital serial distribution standards and examined some of the key issues that led the CBC Broadcast Centre group to design their Toronto plant around a serial digital routing switcher.

Andy Sheldon, Abekas Video Systems, presented a paper on "Digitation Processing in a Production Switcher," which focused on the technical aspects of the signal processing path in a composite digital switcher. He described Abekas' modular networking approach toward the assembly of its digital production switcher and provided the audience with a vision of the future of digital switching electronics. The meeting closed with questions from the floor and from distant viewers. Among the downlinks were locations in Illinois, Florida, and California. — C. Peter Laidlaw (Secretary/Treasurer), Imagineering Ltd.

Toronto, February 12, 1991 — The program, held at George Brown College, focused on the combined and related topics of nonlinear video and audio editing. The first presentation, by Seth Haberman, Montage Group Ltd., included a demonstration of additional video editing technology that has been employed in this application and a discussion of the new equipment offered by his company. The equipment uses compressed video technology operating with standard computer equipment.

Haberman compared the two technologies, showing the audience the values and features of compression video editing. The attendees were able to see and compare the tape-based editing system and the new system using compressed video techniques. They were also able to see that a standard computer, equipped with these additional boards and Montage's proprietary software, is capable of carrying out functions that have traditionally been done with approximately 17 Beta-format video players. Haberman noted that the hardware employed by Montage took advantage of Intel Corp.'s Digital Video Interactive (DVI) chip sets, which provide edit-quality pictures within a personal computer environment. He also demonstrated "backwards sound," which makes it possible to edit video while shuttling forward and backward and to maintain intelligible audio in both directions.

Steve Zaretsky, New England Digital, spoke during the second half of the program. He described his company's technology for nonlinear audio editing, demonstrating that the computer-based digital audio workstation is capable of effectively editing and developing audio track while maintaining synchronization to lock the video signal. He discussed the company's product offerings and demonstrated their capabilities by carrying out sample edits for the audience. He also described the company's products in digital direct-to-disk systems and showed that the "tapeless studio" is rapidly becoming a practical reality. — Peter Laidlaw (Secretary/Treasurer), Imagineering Ltd.

Lincoln Endelman speaking at the San Francisco Section's November meeting.

Washington, D.C., February 21, 1991 — Approximately 125 people attended the meeting, which was held at the University of Maryland. The event was sponsored by the Educational Committee of the SMPTE Washington, D.C., Section and the University of Maryland's Radio, Television, and Film (RTVF) Dept. John Nash, Communications Engineering Inc., delivered a tutorial on videotape formats. He provided a history of the 40 years of videotape development. The talk, which was accompanied by historic slides and technical reference material furnished by various manufacturers, compared the advantages and disadvantages of various formats throughout the evolutionary process.

Following the formal presentation the group toured Studio A, where several manufacturers displayed a variety of state-of-the-art equipment. Ampex, JVC, Panasonic, and Sony had technical and marketing representatives on hand to provide an interactive exhibit area panel discussion. More than 30 pieces of equipment were on display, including U-matic, Beta-SP, D-1, D-2, and VHS videotape machines. Also, SMPTE members and guests were given tours of the university's RTVF Dept., which included visits to production studios, control rooms, central control areas, off-line editing suites, and electronic graphics suites. — Raymond C. Benedict (Secretary/Treasurer), Westinghouse Communication Services, Inc.