

# Section Meetings

**Atlanta, October 9, 1992** — The October meeting took place at TBS, Superstation Channel 17. The 30 members and guests were given a tour of the facility, which was conducted by Jack Verner, the station's chief engineer, and his colleagues Larry McLendon, Jeff Carlson, and Merrick Ackermans. During the tour the group saw editing suites, including a new digital suite; LMS cart players; and graphics stations. In addition they were treated to a view of TNT, TNT Latin America, The Cartoon Channel, Sports South, and the huge satellite teleport. — Mickey Kroll (Secretary/Treasurer), Video Tape Associates.

**Atlanta, December 14, 1992** — The meeting, which was held at Barco's U.S. headquarters, included a tour of the facility. The group saw the Barcodata 5000, which is a three-LCD, single-lens, color projector with a metal-halide lamp and a full range of video inputs; a new high-definition, large-rear-screen projection; and a 32-in. high-definition monitor. A discussion on CRTs, different phosphors, and the future of monitors and high-definition projections also took place. — Mickey Kroll (Secretary/Treasurer), Video Tape Associates.

**Detroit, November 17, 1992** — The meeting, which was attended by 29 members and guests, was held at the studios of WJBK-TV. The first speaker was David Fleig, director of telecommunications for the Michigan Information Technology Network, Inc. (MITN), who discussed the latest developments in compressed digital technology. The presentation began with an overview of compressed digital video, covering the bandwidth reduction considerations, standards, economics, the principal players, and their current proposals. He also presented current industry views on the future of television from the perspective of those at PBS, the MIT Media Lab, and others. Included in the presentation were demo tapes provided by Compression Labs, Inc., which outlined compression schemes under development.

The second speaker was Richard Strauss of Sony Corp. of America, who explained Sony's past and present strategy and its commitment to digital videotape recording as it applies to broadcasting. He explained that the company believes the digital component VTRs should be the VTR of choice. Sony is committed to supporting all present users of Sony VTRs and provide the means to utilize this new technology. A question-and-answer period fol-



*Mike Swayne, Ampex (second from left), demonstrating the operation of the DCT-700d digital component tape deck during the Houston Section's December meeting.*

lowed each speaker's presentation. — Gene Wilczak (Secretary/Treasurer), WJBK-TV.

**Detroit, December 8, 1992** — The December meeting was held at the studios of WKBD-TV and was attended by 33 members and guests. A presentation was given by Mike Swayne of Ampex Corp. whose topic for the evening was the new Ampex Digital Component Technology (DCT). The first part of his discussion was a slide presentation explaining the various components and benefits of DCT. DCT is a totally new CCIR 601 post-production system built around the Ampex DCT-700d tape drive and includes a switcher, an ADO, a 19mm tape cartridge, an edit controller, and all the necessary interfaces. No field acquisition products are available. During the second part of the presentation, Swayne demonstrated the ease of maintenance by disassembling a scanner assembly to prove the effortlessness of head replacement and interchangeability. The various tape drive components were then passed around for the attendees to examine. Following a question-and-answer session, everyone had an opportunity to examine the tape drive. — Gene Wilczak (Secretary/Treasurer), WJBK-TV.

**Houston, November 18, 1992** — Despite the constant changes in many aspects of motion pictures, television, and computers, basic constants exist that should not be ignored or forgotten. The care and handling of magnetic stock, whether tape or disk, in its historical development, were the topics of a paper presented by Mark Picchan, technical service specialist, 3M Company.

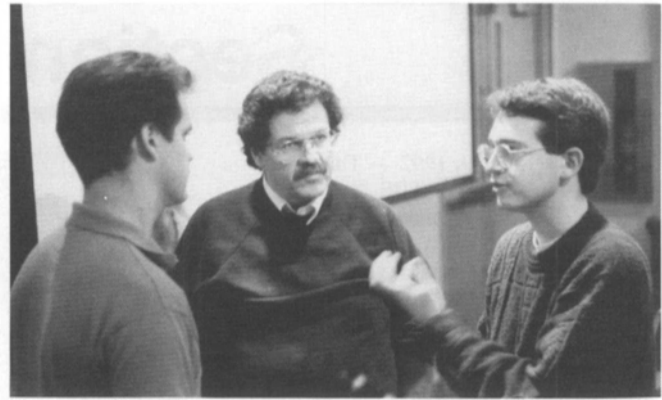
Life of tape stock, particularly videotape stock, depends on format, environment, temperature and humidity, cleanliness, storage and operation procedures, use and abuse, equipment maintenance, and the tape type. A tape should be capable of 1000 to 2000 passes under ideal conditions, but due to ignorance or carelessness tape typically has limited use after 500 passes, and if equipment is poorly maintained, it only takes one pass to destroy the usefulness of the stock. The major problems are physical damage from poorly maintained equipment, contamination from dirt and smoke, and binder breakdown from poor storage conditions, which then causes sticking, clogging, and dropouts.

One helpful hint was the recommendation to always rewind tape before ejecting the cassette. The greatest chances of edge damage or other problems occurs during the loading and ejecting stages. New tape can be used as a head cleaner because as it comes from the plant, new tape is at its most abrasive, yet will not damage heads as some head cleaners may. New tapes used in the editing process are next in abrasive value, and tapes used for repeated play operations are the least abrasive. Following the presentation, tours of the Cannatta Productions facilities were led by Jim Carr of Cannatta. — Robert Musburger (Secretary/Treasurer), University of Houston.

**Houston, December 16, 1992** — Despite some resistance to the proliferation of new videotape formats, the increased requirement for higher quality production, post-production, and distribution systems on videotape motivates manufacturers to fill those needs. Ampex has created an entire CCIR 601 digital component system based



The New England Section's half-day seminar, held in October, was presented by (from left) Michael Brown, Eastman Kodak Co.; John C. Gates, Gates Service Group; and Angie Williams, Eastman Kodak Co.



Michael Brown, Eastman Kodak Co. (left), discussing film stocks with a student from Fitchburg State College during the New England Section's half-day seminar. SMPTe Fitchburg Student Chapter Faculty Advisor Gunther Hoos (center) looks on.

on the DCT format. The system was explained and demonstrated at the December meeting of the Houston Section. The presentation included an opportunity for attendees to handle individual mechanical sections of the tape deck, as well as watch a demonstration of the DCT-700d tape deck. A historical paper was delivered by Shawn Underwood of Ampex and a technical presentation was provided by Mike Swayne.

The second portion of the meeting was a presentation by Henry (Hank) Lam on the Roland audio workstation, a relatively inexpensive but highly flexible digital audio editor. Lam demonstrated and explained the operation of the Roland and then allowed the members and visitors to experiment with and operate the controller. The two presentations dramatically emphasized the rapid movement of media production toward all-digital systems, whether for video, film, audio, or multimedia as a final medium. — Robert Musburger (Secretary/Treasurer), University of Houston.

**Montreal, December 5, 1992** — Montreal Section Chairman Jacques LaChapelle gave an overview of the section's 1992-1993 activities, reviewed the most recent Montreal mini-conference, and discussed new and upcoming technological equipment at a meeting held at Salle Molson. — Jacques LaChapelle (Chairman), Centre de Montage Electronique.

**New England, October 17, 1992** — Over 60 people attended a special half-day seminar, entitled "Film Post-Production Enters the Digital Age," which was held at Boston University's School of Communications. Of note, sign-language interpreters were used throughout the seminar to assist hearing-impaired registrants.

The key speaker, Michael P. Brown, Eastman Kodak Co., began the meeting by presenting a background of the development of the company's 5293 and 7293 film stocks.

The second portion of the program was conducted by Angie Williams, Eastman Kodak Co., who gave an illustrated overview and technical discussion on the company's new Cineon Digital Film System, which is based on Eastman Kodak Co.'s Digital Film Technology Center in Burbank, Calif.

Following a lunch break, Brown continued the analysis of the film stocks with some very carefully prepared exposure tests that were screened from 35mm high-quality release prints.

Portable 35mm xenon-lamp projection facilities, set up, staffing, and truck transportation, were generously provided by Boston Light and Sound. — Paul R. Beck (Secretary/Treasurer), Emerson College.

**New England, October 21, 1992** — Digital video systems was the topic of discussion at the October meeting, which was held in conjunction with the Boston Chapter of the Society of Broadcast Engineers. This meeting will have a follow-up session on digital video workstations and desktop video in January 1993.

The first presentation was given by Chuck Higgins, VGV Corp., who showed a demonstration tape about his company's

DX300 D-2 format composite video switcher. Higgins detailed the signal path advantages and the very creative digital effects that are possible with the product.

A second presentation, which was provided through Video Solutions, was from Pinnacle Systems, and featured the Flash File still store system. The presentation included an actual working demonstration, provided by John C. Duffy.

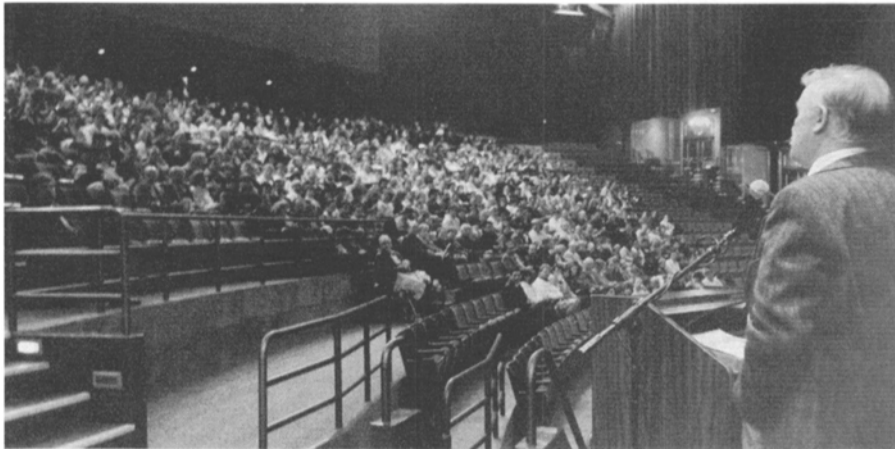
Paul St. Pierre, Avid Technology, gave the third and final presentation. He explained the philosophical concept behind the multiyear industry cooperative for the efficient exchange of digital media through standardized open-framework platforms and files.

The evening concluded with refreshments provided by Video Solutions, and a tour of the video editing suites at National Boston. — Paul R. Beck (Secretary/Treasurer), Emerson College.

**Nordic Section, November 26, 1992** — Sweden's first commercial television station, TV 4, was the site of the November meeting. The station is one the major players in the country's commercial television world; commercials in terrestrial transmission have only been allowed there for two years.



Members and guests on a tour of Sweden's TV 4, site of the Nordic Section's November meeting.



William C. Shaw, Imax Corp., addressing a joint meeting of the San Francisco and Sacramento Sections held at the Imax Theater of Paramount's Great America Theme Park.

Seventeen members and guests attended the meeting, which included a tour of the premises, led by Olle Mossberg, head of the technical operations. The station's in-house production facility has been set up for newscasts and small talk shows. All other programs will be bought or co-produced. The station has a very high level of automation and a full day of transmission instructions can easily be programmed into its Sony LSL system; if used to its extreme, the five-rack unit can hold 350 hrs of taped program while a single person monitors the actual distribution of programs. — Lars Jevbratt (Secretary/Treasurer), Kodak Sweden.

**Pasadena City College, October 27, 1992** — Joe Keane, who has 22 years of experience in television station operations, was the guest speaker. Keane has worked as a director, producer, and production manager on such programs as "Hollywood A Go-Go," "Real Don Steele," and "9th Street West."

He aimed his presentation at students entering the program of study at Pasadena City College, who are dreaming of working in the industry in the future. He offered many inspirational tips and suggestions, which were followed by a question-and-answer period. — Janna Nava (Student Chairperson), Pasadena City College.

**Pasadena City College, November 10, 1992** — Valerie McMichael, a senior editor at ABC and an alumna of Pasadena City College, spoke on her education and how it prepared her to work in the industry. She addressed some of the special challenges she faced as a woman breaking into a major network, which occurred approximately 17 years ago. She showed clips of her work and reviewed specific aspects of each piece. Students received a cut sheet from one of her pieces, which was then viewed. She elaborated on the importance of cutting action to music and emphasized the critical eye an editor must

have in finding shots to make promo pieces jump out and capture the viewer's attention.

The differences between on- and off-line editing were explained briefly for the benefit of those not yet thoroughly familiar with each. The meeting concluded with McMichael discussing the successful career paths taken by some of her colleagues. — Janna Nava (Student Chairperson), Pasadena City College.

**Rochester, November 17, 1992** — In a joint meeting with the Society of Broadcast Engineers, the 26 attendees were given a guided tour of the recently extended studios of the Rochester PBS station WXXI-TV, led by Ed Wright and Tim Stoeffel, WXXI. The tour was followed by a demonstration of the capabilities of the Sony DFS-500, a digital effects device with a sophisticated array of features, presented by Joe LoGrasso of Sony Business and Professional Group. — Alan J. Masson (Secretary/Treasurer), Eastman Kodak Co.

**Rochester, December 8, 1992** — The annual Family Night of the SMPTE Rochester Section featured a special showing of the 70mm film *Far and Away*, starring Tom Cruise. More than 150 SMPTE members and their families came to Eastman Kodak Co.'s Theater on the Ridge for this event. SMPTE is grateful to MCA/Universal City Studios Inc. for the loan of the print. — Alan J. Masson (Secretary/Treasurer), Eastman Kodak Co.

**Rocky Mountain, December 17, 1992** — The meeting, which was held at Teleport Denver, featured a presentation by Dick Lawrence, C-COR Comlux Inc., who discussed "Digital Video Transmission Over a Fiber-Optic Network." Lawrence gave a detailed presentation about how video and audio channels can be multiplexed into one fiber-optic cable, describing how with

certain techniques up to eight or more video channels, including multiple audio channels, can be placed on one fiber-optic cable. He also discussed a method of dropping and inserting, as well as running full duplex, over the same single cable. The meeting concluded with refreshments provided by Teleport Denver. — Jeff Grazi (Manager), Grazi Communications.

**San Francisco, October 2, 1992** — The October meeting took place at the Turbo Tour Theatre, the first of its type outside of a theme park, for a demonstration of the Iwerks 870 system. This new system uses 70mm, 8-perf film at 30 frames/sec. The Turbo Tour simulation ride requires seat belts for its hydraulically activated seats, synchronized with the large-screen action. The effect is that of an indoor roller coaster ride, taking an animated underwater ride from San Francisco to Tokyo. The projector, computers, and CD drives are all off-the-shelf equipment combined to create this proposed neighborhood theater of the future. Over 170 members and guests were in attendance, with several student groups well represented. — Richard LeForge (Secretary/Treasurer), Consultant.

**San Francisco, November 19, 1992** — The San Francisco and Sacramento Sections met at Paramount's Great America Theme Park for a demonstration of Imax® 3-D large-format film technology. Since the theater seats over 700, the sections were able to hold a joint session, filling the house with members, family, and guests.

Bill Shaw, Imax Systems Corp., explained the 3-D process used to record and project the feature film, *The Last Buffalo*. The process required two Imax cameras (70mm 15 perf/frame), precisely mounted with lenses spaced at the distance of human eyes; a new, single 3-D projector had been developed that allows the two films to be projected through lenses with polarizing filters. Viewers wear 3-D glasses with polarized lenses so that each eye has its own isolated image. Seeing the feature through this huge, clear, steady window truly mimics the real world. The production also included six-track Imax CD sound.

David Keighly of David Keighly Productions Ltd./70mm Inc., which are subsidiaries of Imax, explained and showed demo footage of the 3M protection coating/restoration process and new Kodak I/N and I/P film he is currently working with for release prints. The processes were demonstrated and the improvements are impressive. Finally, the attendees were given a surprise "sneak preview" of a new Imax feature, *Fires of Kuwait*. — Richard LeForge (Secretary/Treasurer), Consultant.