

Message from the Executive Vice-President

David L. George

Much has been written about the accomplishments of the Society over the past 80 years, as well as about the reasons and rationale for its long and certain history of success. But what of the relevance of the Society in a world that is far removed, in terms of both time and technology, from that of its founder, C. Francis Jenkins, so many years ago? In short, if SMPTE did not now exist, would it be necessary to invent it, as Jenkins did? To me the answer is a resounding yes.

The world of the moving image, the most moving and persuasive of the communication arts, plays an increasingly important role in a modern society in which access to information is of paramount concern. The need has never been greater for unimpeded and



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universal access, enhanced through SMPTE engineering and standardization activities; for satisfying the thirst for knowledge, slaked in part through the dissemination of information through

SMPTE publications and at Society functions and events; and training in the use of tools and techniques for practitioners supported through SMPTE tutorials and seminars. SMPTE provides all of these services and more for its individual members, as well as supports the motion imaging industry at the same time.

In a very much post-Jenkins world now characterized more by rewards generated by individual initiative than by corporate coddling, SMPTE members as individuals need assured access to information that they can obtain as, for, and by themselves. No longer is it sufficient to rely on company or corporate initiatives for educational opportunities, programs, information, or training. We must, to an ever-growing extent, depend on our own resources and sources to provide the continuing education and information we require to understand and

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appreciate our changing technological world and to continue to be successful practitioners in it. New technologies, new forms of communications, accelerated growth, and change are the challenges facing every one of us and facing us on a more personal and individual basis than ever before. If we didn't have access to the individual educational and information resource that is SMPTE, we, like Jenkins, would have to create it.

SMPTE also provides opportunities for personal networking which, to some extent, is compensating for the reduction in opportunities for inter-company socialization and advancement for many of our members. Networking also provides external career and growth opportunities, which takes on a new level of importance in the less permanent and more mobile work force of today, for individual members who participate in SMPTE events and conventions. The Society works on a local as well as

international level, providing local Section meetings and events that focus on the specific interests and needs of local members and generate local opportunities and exposure.

Eighty years ago it was the need for standardization that primarily drove Jenkins to establish SMPE so that the film community and its artists and specialists could develop an industry based on the power of the motion picture. While the need for standards to promote growth is no less in many areas of motion imaging today and is largely an industry issue, the need for information reflects more of an individual urgency than an industry one. Yet the industry is also served, as those who practice its arts and sciences have additional opportunities to be educated and informed through the Society and thus become better trained and more productive in their work. It becomes more cost-effective for companies to support SMPTE and its activities, which serve a large num-

ber of members, than to mount similar programs of their own. Thus SMPTE involvement helps companies, on the most basic of levels, to be more successful and competitive players in the global marketplace.

The contemporary value of SMPTE for members lies in its standardization, education, information and training, activities, and in the opportunities for networking and contact with other members and visionaries of the industry it provides. In this information age, the need for SMPTE as a personal source for information and activities that support our personal growth and development has never been greater. If this had been the case in 1916, Jenkins would have noted that as well and it would have provided the catalyst for inventing SMPE. In today's world SMPTE is as relevant as ever, if not more so. And C. Francis Jenkins would have appreciated that.

—David L. George

Message from the Sections Vice-President

Fung Fai Lam

I started my television engineering career in Hong Kong in 1957 and joined SMPTE the year after, when I had the opportunity to read an issue of the Society's *Journal*. Through the years prior to my departure to North America, I so much appreciated the articles that brought me the latest developments and training in the motion picture and television industries, although no Section had yet been established in Hong Kong.

During the past eight decades, not only have many SMPTE television and motion picture standards and practices been established and employed, countless people have benefited from the dissemination of scientific knowledge by publication and through conferences and meetings. Presently, we have 28 Sections and 15 student chapters worldwide. The Section meetings have been a very



Fung Fai Lam

effective way of providing continuous opportunity for members to keep abreast of new technologies and to exchange ideas and information among their peers. From 24 members in 1916, the Society has grown today to almost 9,000 members around the world. It has become a true international body.

Due to the rapid advancement of the technologies, we have recently had two significant changes: first, the convergence of television and computer technologies; and second, the establishment of a high school chapter. As President Stan Baron stated, "This program represents another mechanism that the Society is exploring to find new and better ways to fulfill our mission to the industries we serve."

Under the leadership of many of the Society's national executives, engineering committee members, Section officers and, last but not least, the Headquarters staff, the Society has been providing the necessary standards, guidance, and practices to the industry and the updated knowledge to our fellow members. Presently we have eight Engineering Committees with hundreds of formidable Working Group members to cover the engineering matters in motion picture, television, and multimedia areas. According to the statistics of our Section meeting activities, this is much more diversified

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