

Planting for the Future

On the opposite page is a message from Bill Clinton acknowledging 80 years of contribution by the members of the SMPTE. In an anniversary year it is common practice to trace the course of progress from a nearly forgotten beginning through periods of struggle to the present level of accomplishment and then to rest comfortably, assuming that all that needs to be done has been done. But that is neither appropriate to the Society's traditions or to the challenges of the times we live in.

Role of the Society

As I have stated in an earlier message, the Society's role is to act as a bridge between the providers of technology and the creative users of the technology. . . providing a fertile field that supports the continuous development of that technology. . . seeding the practical implementation of the technology as a tool for communicating to a mass audience through the development of standards. . . educating the providers of the technology as to the needs of the users. . . educating the creative community on the practical uses of the technology. . . and educating future generations so that the growth and economic health of the industries we support is assured.

Education

Of these roles, perhaps education is the most important. Walt Disney, in remarks written for the *Journal of the SMPE* in 1941, saw training and education as an important part of the work of Disney: "Over at our entertainment factory we are training hundreds



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of brilliant youngsters to carry on the job far beyond where we old-timers must leave off. They will train other youngsters. There is no knowing how far steady growth will take the medium, if only the technicians continue to give us new and better tools."

Walt Disney considered himself "happy in the job of building [the industry's] foundations." As members of the Society, each of us should be involved in contributing to strengthening the foundation and educating the coming generations of technologists. We have an individual responsibility to assist new members of our community of technologists in understanding both the technology and the artistic environment in which we work. We have an individual responsibility to encourage others to build upon the existing technology to develop the new and better tools that have kept our community at the forefront of the motion imaging arts and sciences.

Participation in Society Activities

The Society provides you with an easy means of exercising that individual

responsibility through participation in the Society's activities. You can make your individual contribution to the *Journal* in the form of papers on advances in the technology . . . or on your experiences in the practice and application of the technology. You can contribute your efforts to programs at the local section level. You can participate in the Society's conferences, adding your perspectives to the dialogue on the latest issues. You can comment on the development of standards by adding to the dialogue on the documents, accessing the work through the Society's page on the World Wide Web (<http://www.smpte.org/>). You can encourage your peers to become SMPTE members, so that they can benefit from the work of the Society. You can encourage your employer to become an SMPTE Sustaining Member and support the Society's work on standardization and education.

I would be happy to answer any questions you might have on how to submit papers to the *Journal* or how to participate in any of the Society's other activities. (The best ways to reach me are by e-mail at stan.baron@nbc.com, or by fax at +1-212-664-5219, or by snail-mail at SMPTE.)

Building for the Future

On behalf of the members of the Society, I thank President Clinton for his kind remarks and accept those words as a challenge to continue the progress we have made. In memory of Walt Disney, one of our industry's giants, I challenge each of you to dedicate part of your efforts to the job of building for the future.

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