Section Meetings

Hollywood
April 9, 1996

The Hollywood Section presented a reprise of the Scientific and Technical Awards bestowed by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences earlier this year. The meeting, held at the Samuel Goldwyn Theater and was hosted by Ed DiGiulio, Cinema Products Corp., chair of this year's AMPAS Scientific and Technical Awards Committee. Award recipients described and demonstrated their achievements, and clips were shown from movies nominated for special effects. Donald C. Rogers, Warner Bros., who won the Gordon E. Sawyer Award in 1990, gave a brief talk on his long-term contributions toward the advancement of science and technology in the motion picture industry. Sawyer's energy and efforts are credited for the prestige and recognition that the Scientific and Technical Awards enjoy today. — Ed DiGiulio, Cinema Products Corp.

Napa Valley College
May 2, 1996

The Napa Valley College Student Chapter held elections for the upcoming school year. The 1996-1997 officers are Robert Maniaci, President; Mike McCune, Vice-President; Sandi Wolfe, Secretary; John Peck, Treasurer; and John Kemps, Director of Activities. They will replace President Randy Harvey, Vice-President Joe Piazza, Secretary Jessica Turnipseed, and Treasurer Mike Moore. — Gary P. Vann (Faculty Adviser), Napa Valley College

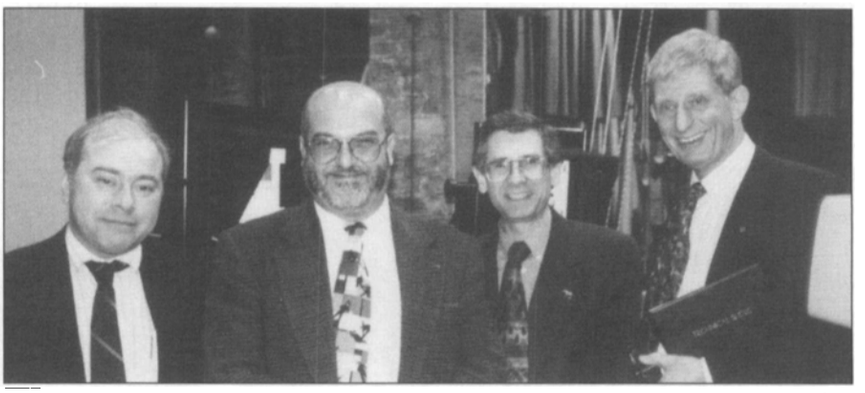
New York
April 10, 1996

Approximately 75 members and guests gathered in NBC Studio 8H for a presentation entitled "Making Better Pictures for Film and Video — An Engineering Approach." David Corley, DSC Laboratories, and Fred Benedikt, Canadian Broadcasting Corp., described the design and user experience of precision film transparencies as a means of establishing reference colorimetry in actual production. Differences in camera transfer characteristics and the numerous factors affecting colorimetry in cameras can be standardized using reference optical signal generators. While originally designed for video use, the authors described recent experience in film-to-tape transfer using these test materials in production. Attendees were able to observe actual use of these patterns for colorimetry, gray scale, and image enhancement on an SK-2600 digital studio camera, courtesy of Hitachi Denshi, Ltd.

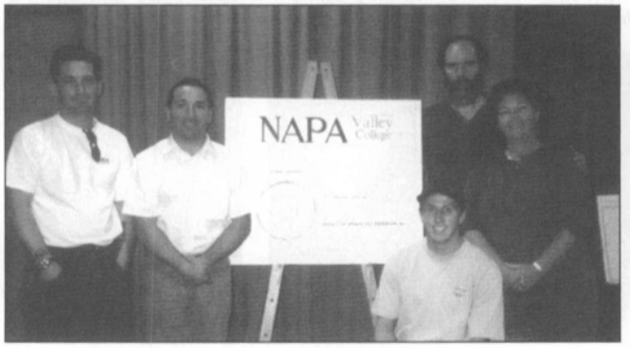
Next, Dan Desmet, BARCO, outlined the problems at the display end and explained how more consistent results are possible using SMPTE-established guidelines. Factors influencing reproduction include ambient lighting, CRT phosphors, and careful attention to monitor alignment. Desmet noted that the computer market is influencing the type of CRT available to the studio monitor supplier, and that tubes designed specifically for broadcast/post-production use may be limited in the near future. — Jay Ballard (Manager), NBC

Rochester
April 9, 1996

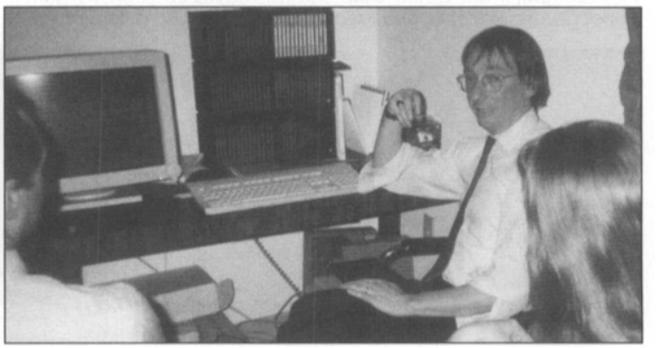
The Rochester/Finger Lakes Film and Video Office was the site for the April meeting. Film Office director Jerry Stoeffhaas reviewed the company's operations and gave a demonstration of a computer system designed to improve the management of images and data useful for location scouting. Digital computer image technology offers the Film Office new powerful tools for the manipulation, management, and distribution of images and location site information. Images and related information can now be shared or browsed over phone lines between the Film Office and clients. Complex panoramic views of local sites can be prepared via the computer working from photo-CD images. The computer offers a new method for storing and managing large databases containing both images and information. Stoeffhaas demonstrated these advanced technologies and gave some insights into what it is like to operate a film office. — Walter C. Snyder II (Acting Chair, Secretary/Treasurer), Eastman Kodak Co.



New York Section Manager Jay Ballard, far left, with the speakers at the April meeting: left to right, Dan Desmet, Fred Benedikt, and David Corley.



Napa Valley's newest officers: left to right, John Kemps, Robert Maniaci, John Peck, Sandi Wolfe, and seated, Mike McCune.



Guest speaker Jerry Stoeffhaas demonstrates the image and information database at the April meeting in Rochester.

San Francisco
March 28, 1996

Seventy members and guests met at Silicon Graphics in Mountain View, Calif., to hear Jim Lindner, Vidipax, and Jim Wheeler, Tape Archival & Restoration Services, discuss the state of the art in magnetic tape preservation and restoration. Millions of magnetic tapes recorded on over 100 video and audio formats represent an important part of our culture, but they also present some problems: tape is organic and all of it will eventually fall apart; preserving original tapes is not an exact science; originals are not always the best archival storage medium; and when we eventually transfer these old tapes, who will own and maintain the many different machines needed to play back all of the old formats? Now we face a new challenge: digital compression of field masters and distribution copies and compression in the nonlinear post-production process. Compared to analog, digital masters may not hold up well over time. Metal evaporated and metal particle tapes may present problems beyond the making of digital-to-digital archival copies from one type of compressed digits to another. Unfortunately, only time will tell.

As for the present state of the art, not all members agree that the Porta-Pac is worth saving; however, many liberals do. The challenge was simply to build a working machine of this format from a dozen dusty relics, get a stable enough playback to digitally time-base-correct the video and transfer the collection to gamma-ferric oxide (regular) BetaCam. The greatest difficulty was getting good sets of video heads. These tapes were not always stored under ideal conditions, so head wear and clogging during playback were problems.

Other challenges the speakers have faced include recordings made on out-of-spec machines, on prototype machines, and on rare machines like the MV-10000. As a result, the expense of restoring rare but valuable cultural material may inhibit the process and lead to the loss of a significant part of man's history. — Charles Hintz (Secretary/Treasurer), KTVU/Fox

Toronto
April 9, 1996

The April meeting was held at Ryerson's Rogers Communications Centre and was attended by more than 50 members. KeyKode and its uses, the first presentation, delivered by Tony Meeraker, Magnetic North, who referred to KeyKode as one of the staples of his company's business. He started by generically defining the machine-readable code located on professional motion picture film as barcode; KeyKode is a Kodak trade name and is only one form of barcode one could find on a film stock. He cited other forms of code such as Mr. Code, Fuji Corp.'s barcode, Post Code and Sky Code, and AatonCode. Meeraker went on to explain that barcode is generally found on the edge of the film; the actual barcodes themselves are spaced a half-foot apart on the film stock, while the traditional edge numbers are spaced a foot apart. While barcode is generally placed on the film at time of manufacture, AatonCode is actually SMPTE time code recorded on the opposite edge of the film where the traditional barcode is placed. AatonCode is recorded at the time the film is being shot.

The advent of barcode in the editing process of film has dramatically changed the process of film editing over the past half-dozen years. Meeraker identified six methods commonly used in the editing of film in the professional post-production environment. These six methods, and the steps involved in them, depend upon how the film originates and in which medium it will be delivered.

Jeff Dewolde, International Image Services, discussed the state-of-the-art systems involved in standards conversion. He started by noting that three-quarters of the material produced for television will be converted for display on TV systems of a different standard, and that most conversions require the transformation between PAL and NTSC systems. Dewolde also outlined advances in standards conversion. Indicating that general-purpose converters have been replaced by specific or dedicated converters, he outlined how these converters differ. Their use is dependent upon the origination of material to be converted. Dewolde then described three types of dedicated converters: linear interpolating conversion technology, motion-compensated conversion technology, and 3:2 pull-down conversion technology. — Brad Fortner (Promotions Adviser), Rogers Communications Centre, Ryerson Polytechnic University; and Peter Laidlaw (Past Chair), Imagineering, Ltd.

Calendar

August

Siggraph '96, New Orleans Convention Center, New Orleans, La. Info: Exhibition Management, Hall-Erickson, Inc., 150 Burlington Ave., Clarendon Hills, IL 60514. *August 4-9, 1996.*

IESNA Annual Conference, Renaissance Cleveland Hotel, Cleveland, Ohio. Info: The Illuminating Engineering Society of North America, 120 Wall St., 17th Fl., New York, NY 10005-4001. *August 5-7, 1996.*

Eurographics '96, Futuroscope Poitiers, Poitiers, France. Info: Conference Secretariat, Eurographics '96, INRIA Rocquencourt/Relations Extérieures, B.P. 105-78153, Le Chesnay Cedex, France. *August 26-30, 1996.*

September

IBC96, RAI Exhibition and Congress Centre, Amsterdam, The Netherlands. Info: Sarah Campbell, IBC Office, Savoy Place, London, WC2R OBL. *September 12-16, 1996.*

Photokina '96, Cologne Fairgrounds, Cologne, Germany. Info: KölnMesse, Messe-und Ausstellungs, Ges.m.b.h. Köln, Messeplatz 1, D-50679 Köln, Germany. *September 18-23, 1996.*

November

The 4th IS&T Color Imaging Conference, The Radisson Resort, Scottsdale, Ariz. Info: IS&T, 7003 Kilworth Ln., Springfield, VA 22151. *November 19-22, 1996.*

June 1997

Montreux International Television Symposium and Technical Exhibition, Rue du Théâtre, Montreux, Switzerland. Info: P.O. Box 1451, Rue du Théâtre 5, 1820 Montreux, Switzerland. *June 12-17, 1997.*

SMPTE Activities

NEW ORLEANS, LA. — SMPTE at Siggraph '96, *August 4-9, 1996.*

COLOGNE, GERMANY — SMPTE European Imaging Conference on Imaging Media, Cologne Fairgrounds, *September 19-21, 1996.*

LOS ANGELES, CALIF. — 138th SMPTE Technical Conference and World Media Expo, Los Angeles Convention Center, *October 8-12, 1996.*

NEW YORK, N.Y. — 31st SMPTE Advanced Motion Imaging Conference, Crowne Plaza, *February 6-8, 1997.*

For more information on these and other SMPTE activities contact SMPTE Headquarters:

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