

SMPTE ALMANAC

By Michael Dolan

In this column we provide interesting historical briefs from Journal articles of days past. Its purpose is primarily entertainment, but we hope it will also stimulate your thinking and reflection on times past—how far we have come in the industry, as well as (sometimes) how some things never change. This is not meant to be an authoritative reference, and no attempt is made to correct any past errors or omissions of the Journal. We simply hope you enjoy the material.



Michael Dolan

25 Years Ago in the Journal

The June 1976 issue reported: "The JCIC Ad Hoc Committee on Television Broadcast Ancillary Signals was established: to identify the time and frequency domains within the television program signals that are technically feasible for the inclusion of special signals; to study the unique features and limitations applicable to these domains; to establish the priorities to be assigned the various functions that could be accomplished by these special 'piggybacked' signals; and to recommend to the FCC a set of guidelines against which ancillary signal proposals would be evaluated. Additionally, with respect to the vertical blanking interval—which appears to hold the greatest potential for accommodating ancillary signal requirements—the Committee is considering a 'master plan' for the assignment of vertical interval space to meet all known and projected requirements, in accordance with the guidelines that have been established. The Committee itself has conducted...and...participated in tests by PBS of a program-captioning signal on line 21 of both fields....In its 'Interim Report No. 2 to the Federal Communications Commission' dated 30 June 1975, the Committee summarized the results of its studies to that date..."

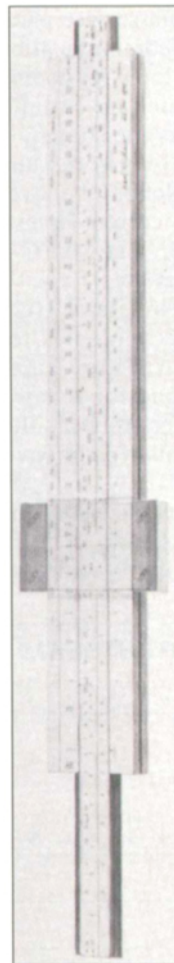
"...the Society's Board of Governors approved two SMPTE Recommended Practices: RP 43-1975.... and....RP 44-1975....Copies of these and other SMPTE Recommended Practices may be purchased from Society Headquarters at \$1.00 per copy."

50 Years Ago in the Journal

In the June 1951 issue, R. V. Bernier wrote on Three Dimensional Motion Picture Applications: "Present grainless motion picture color film is a nearly perfect medium of establishing synthetic images on the retinae which equal the natural ones.... The brain, detecting little difference, forms a synthetic vision nearly as perfect as natural vision. The three-dimensional motion picture camera has been employed with success to capture all of the components of depth perception which are associated with natural vision....A solution to the flicker problem in 16mm, alternate-frame, stereo projection at 24 frames/sec has been provided through the use of the Morgana shuttle movement."

And an article by Karl Maier reported; "In mechanics research, evaluation of high-speed motion picture records involves several basic calcu-

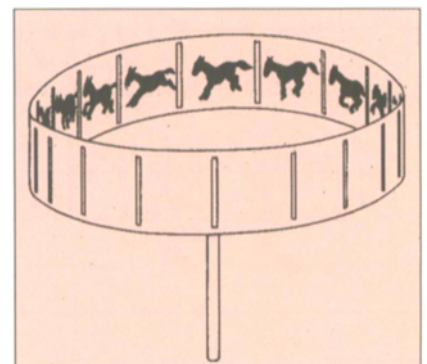
lations which have to be repeated very often. The Springfield Armory has developed a special slide rule which will mechanically perform these computations, as well as some precalculations before taking the picture. It is believed that the proposed slide rule permits more rapid evaluations with fewer errors and with less highly trained personnel."



Model of linear slide rule for analysis of high-speed motion picture films.

75 Years Ago in the Journal

The September 1926 issue reported in an article by J. A. Norling and J. F. Leventhal on Some Developments in the Production of Animated Drawings: "The animated cartoon was the first form of motion picture. The early devices which served to create the illusion of motion consisted of a series of drawings made of individual phases in a cycle of motion....The Zoetrope, described in 1831, was an instrument which established the illusion of movement in a series of drawings....Similar devices have been used from the time of the Romans, so the basic idea is not so very recent."



The Zoetrope.