



SMPTE ALMANAC

By Michael Dolan

In this column we provide interesting historical briefs from the Journal articles of days past. The purpose of this column is primarily entertainment, but we hope it will also stimulate thinking and reflection on the Society's history, how far we have come in the industry, and (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.

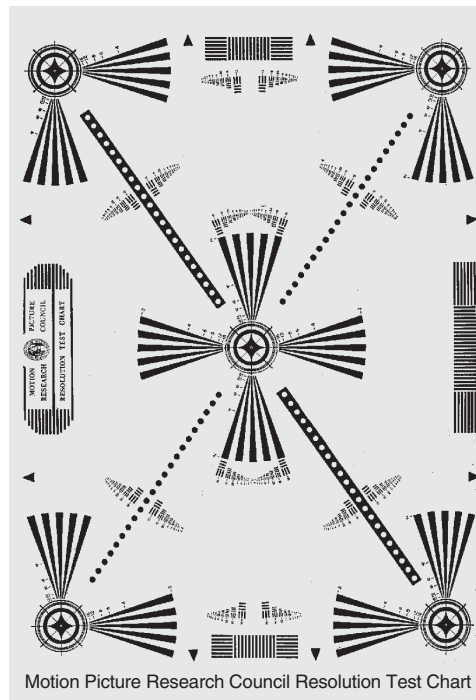
25 Years Ago in the Journal

The May 1977 *Journal* reported in its Progress Committee Report for 1976: "...the Society held its 10th Annual Television Winter Conference in Detroit, Michigan [which] ...dealt exclusively with Electronic Newsgathering (ENG)...The Society's international activities in 1976 included the 12th International Congress on High-speed Photography held in Toronto, Canada. Among other international activities, a delegation from the Society attended the UNIATEC Conference held in Moscow. The Society was also represented at the meeting of the ISO Technical Secretaries in Geneva; at the Photokina in Cologne; and at the International Broadcasting Convention in London...The Society now has members throughout the world, from Australia to Zambia, with some 60 foreign countries listed in between...In the area of legislation, however, Hollywood did not fare so well. Money invested by United States companies formed to produce films can no longer be sheltered from taxation as the result of a recent change in tax laws approved by Congress. As a consequence fewer films are being made in the United States and more in foreign countries."

50 Years Ago in the Journal

The June 1952 *Journal* reported on Resolution Test Chart of the Motion Picture Research Council: "The Motion Picture Research Council has announced the

preparation of a resolution chart designed primarily for the use of studio camera departments. When mounted in front of a 35mm camera lens at a distance in inches equivalent to the focal length of the lens in millimeters, its image exactly fills a standard 35mm aperture (American Standard Z22.59-1947). Resolution test figures in key positions over the field will then indicate limits of resolution directly in lines per millimeter...Although designed primarily for the use with 35mm camera lenses, the chart may be used satisfactorily with any photographic lens...Copies may be obtained for \$3.00 each."



75 Years Ago in the Journal

The Summer 1927 *Journal* reported on Film Care in the Tropics by Herford Tynes Cowling: "...It is a little realized fact, perhaps, that under abnormal conditions of heat and moisture, especially in those hot countries where bacteria and fungoid moulds abound, the latent image is not quite so permanent as we are wont to believe. Little by little as each week passes in the traveler's journey towards home, the latent image may become weaker until by the time the film reaches the laboratory only a very feeble picture can be revealed by development. My own personal experiences in tropical countries, especially during the humid rainy seasons, has shown that there is generally a pronounced fading of the latent image together with much general fog on development unless certain definite rules are followed...Firstly, it is wise to increase the camera exposure so that there is more latent image to with-

stand fading; secondly, a scheme of packing must be employed which ensures protection against these harmful atmospheric conditions...We may divide the life of negative film into four periods; that which elapses: (1) Before opening the sealed unit which comes from the manufacturer; (2) Between opening the unit and placing the film in the camera; (3) While the film is in the camera; (4) Between exposure and development. Negative film is comparatively safe from decay whilst resting in the original metal container in which it comes from the manufacturer. When once this has been opened, even though it be immediately resealed with tape, moisture and bacteria have been admitted and the film's future history becomes a matter of doubt."