



# SMPTE ALMANAC

By Michael Dolan

*In this column we provide interesting historical briefs from Journal articles of days past. The purpose of this column is primarily entertainment, but we hope it will also stimulate your 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.*

## 50 Years Ago in the Journal

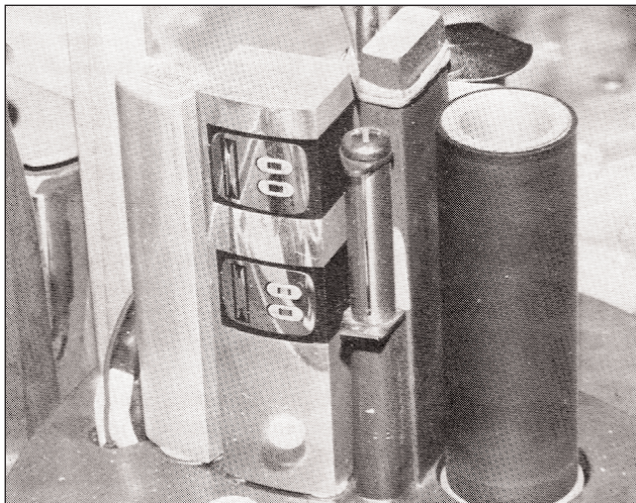
The August 1952 *Journal* reported in A Commercial Binaural Recorder by Otto Bixler: "Present-day sound recording-reproducing equipment is at a very high state of development and, since the benefits of stereophonic recording have been previously demonstrated, it was believed that the next desirable

step in commercial equipment would be the manufacture of a reasonably priced binaural system....After the quality of sound reproduction was brought to its present high fidelity with excellent frequency response, minimum phase shift and good transient reproduction, it was realized that something was still lacking. That something is the normal spatial distribution of original sound. Monaural reproduction of a spatially disposed multiple sound source introduces spatial distortion. The best way to eliminate this distortion is to reproduce sound in a stereophonic manner. True stereophonic sound is quite difficult of technical achievement and is comparatively costly....the theoretical factors involved in binaural sound presentation are aimed at producing, at a later time, the same sound amplitude and phase relationship in each of a listener's two ears as if he had been present originally."

## 25 Years Ago in the Journal

The July 1977 *Journal* reported in A System for Language Conversion of Videotape Programs, by White, Fernande, and Rubio: "Motion-picture dialog post-recording is an art which has gradually matured from early-day looping into various forms of sophisticated 'insert' systems. The objective of all such efforts has been to attack the problems of tedium and material costs associated with mechanical editing. A system known as 'Edimation' is described that deals not only with these problems but with another set of problems peculiar to original videotape programming and international distribution of taped shows....Rather than inserting portions of dialog on a single track, sequential segments of sound are recorded on two operator-selectable tracks. The 'loops' are staggered from track 1 to track 2. Since each such segment represents from 10 to 20 s of real-time recording, the starts and stops overlap and there is no requirement for precision programming. The videotape recorder goes into the RECORD mode (with appropriate SILENCE light alert) and the actors start the dialog in response to logical lip-sync cues: the video image."

Multi-track combination record/play/erase head cluster replaces standard audio head in Ampex VR-7500 modification.



## 75 Years Ago in the Journal

The August 1927 *Journal* reported in Why Expert Knowledge and High Grade Intelligence is Essential in the Theater Projection Room by F. H. Richardson: "...the motion picture projectionist of the future must be at least to some extent a research man; for example, effect lighting is playing a large part in the entertainment now provided by the higher class motion picture theater....save for relatively few exceptions this feature must, in the very nature of things, be largely or wholly provided by the theater projection staff....Another possible field for exploitation by the motion picture projectionist which has been but little developed is what may be termed projection stunts, such as the 'Magnascope' exemplifies. That effect was planned, at least in part, by a supervisor of projection and, in the eyes of Adolph Zukor at least, it represents a very important advance in projection. That other equally effective 'stunts' only await the application of expert knowledge and high grade intelligence is altogether likely, but that they will be discovered and perfected by inexpert projectionists or by those having anything less than high grade intelligence seems, to say the least, highly improbable."