



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.

25 Years Ago in the Journal

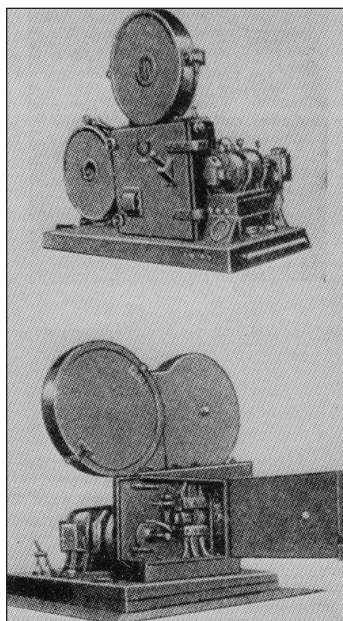
The September 1977 *Journal* reported in "Union of Soviet Socialist Republics—Cinematography" by Vladimir Trusko and Victor Komar: "...The year 1918 marked the beginning of a national motion-picture industry in the Soviet Union. Film studios, laboratories, film stock factories, cine equipment plants and research and training schools were built. In 1919 the Soviet industry commenced manufacturing motion-picture projection equipment, and the manufacture of film stock began in 1931. In 1928 the Soviet motion-picture sounds systems were developed. Soviet specialists showed interest in color many years ago. S. Eisentein made his well known historical film *Battleship Potemkin* with the red flag in the final scene painted by hand....In 1956 the first Soviet wide-screen feature film, *Ilya Muromets*, was filmed using an anamorphic lens....70mm films with stereo sound have been produced in the USSR since 1960, e.g., *A Story of Flaming Years*."

50 Years Ago in the Journal

The September 1952 *Journal* reported in "Explosive Argon Flashlamp" by C. H. Winning and H.E. Edgerton: "The photography of detonations by means of an ordinary single exposure camera has been difficult for two reasons. First, either the light from the detonation of high-temperature explosives is so actinic as to fog the film; or the light from the detonation of relatively low-temperature explosives such as those of the permissible, coal-mining type, for example, is insufficient to affect the film in the brief exposure time required to stop the motion. Second, although conventional short-flash electronic flash-

lamps might be considered for some purposes, their use is expensive because the lamp is destroyed by the explosion....A relatively inexpensive, expendable, flash-producing, explosive-activated lamp is described here....Successful photography of self-luminous subjects may be accomplished by the use of Kerr cells, Faraday-effect shutters, and by image-converter tubes....In

1937 Michel-Levy and Muraour published a series of pictures which illustrated that rapidly occurring events...could be photographed at the desired instants during the process through proper use of the short, intense luminosity of the shock wave generated in argon gas by a small amount of a brisant explosive."



The first photographic sound recorders developed in 1928 by A. Shorin and P. Tager.

75 Years Ago in the Journal

The Fall 1927 *Journal* reported in "An Experiment in the Development of Classroom Films" by T. E. Finegan: "There are three chief reasons why motion pictures have not come into general use as an agency in classroom instruction: 1. Few motion pictures adapted to classroom service have been produced. 2. The cost of the necessary equipment and the cost of production and distribution have rendered motion pictures prohibitive for classroom service. 3. Teachers generally are unfamiliar with the use of motion picture apparatus and

with the use of film, and there is more or less feeling on their part that some embarrassment might follow an attempt to use them. The production of a type of film for classroom use is purely an educational or professional problem. The cost of producing the necessary equipment and the cost of making and distributing films is purely an economic or business question. The training of teachers to use and to appreciate the value of films is a simple question of good school administration....In 1922 the National Education Association created a committee on visual education to develop plans which would extend the use of visual aids in the schools...Mr. George Eastman believed projectors on the market and the narrow width film would afford a solution to the economic aspects of the problem...and would produce a number of classroom films closely correlated with selected courses of study."