

13-17 May 1979

SPSE 32nd Annual Conference, Boston Park Plaza Hotel, Boston, Mass. Info from Society of Photographic Scientists and Engineers, 1411 K St., N.W., Suite 930, Washington, DC 20005.

20-23 May 1979

National Cable Television Association Convention, Las Vegas, Nev. Info from Robert A. Luff, NCTA, 918 Sixteenth St., N.W., Washington, DC 20006.

21-23 May 1979

Television Measurement Conference, Commonwealth Institute, London. Info from Conference Secretariat, IERE, 99 Gower St., London WC1E 6AZ, England. (See *Journal*, p. 527, Aug. 1978.)

14-15 June 1979

Microprocessors, Hardware, Software and Applications, Seminar, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, Mass. Info from Ginny Bazarian, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Worcester, MA 01609.

2-6 July 1979

Film 79, Royal Lancaster Hotel, London. Info from Bill Pay, Conference Coordinator, BKSTS, 110-112 Victoria House, Vernon Pl., London WC1B 4DJ, England.

17-20 July 1979

Cranfield International Conference on Mechanized Information Storage and Retrieval Systems, Cranfield Institute of Technology. Info from Cyril Cleverdon, INSPEC, Station House, Nightingale Rd., Hitchin, Herts. SG5 1RJ, England. (See *Journal*, p. 527, Aug. 1978.)

21-25 July 1979

Photographic Industry Council (Australia), Third South Pacific Photographic Convention. Info from PIC Office, 161 Clarence St., Sydney, N.S.W., Australia 2001.

24-27 July 1979

Video and Data Recording International Conference, University of Southampton, England. Info from Conference Secretariat, IERE, 99 Gower St., London WC1E 6AZ, England. (See *Journal*, p. 527, Aug. 1978.)

28 July-1 August 1979

International Exposition of Professional Photography and National Industrial Photographic Conference, Chicago. Info from Professional Photographers of America, Inc., 1090 Executive Way, Des Plaines, IL 60018.

10-13 September 1979

4th International Colloquium of Research and Educational Cinematography, Ostrava, Czechoslovakia. Info from Mrs. L. Zimmerová, Zemědělská 1, 662 65 Brno, Czechoslovakia.

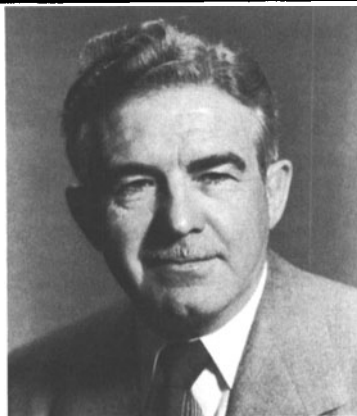
21-26 October 1979

SMPTE Technical Conference and Equipment Exhibit, Century Plaza Hotel, Los Angeles. Info from SMPTE Headquarters.

5-8 November 1979

Photolab Expo, Alexandra Palace, London, England. Info from British Information Services, 845 Third Ave., New York, NY 10022.

Biographical Note



William A. Mueller

The Samuel L. Warner Gold Medal Award of the Society is offered annually to an individual who has made an outstanding contribution to the recording of sound for motion pictures. The Society owes a great debt to William A. (Bill) Mueller who, while serving on the Board of Governors, persuaded Jack Warner, the manager of the Warner Bros. Studios, to put up the funds for the annual presentation and guarantee in writing to continue it in perpetuity. Considering that there have been four changes of ownership of Warner Bros. since that time, the original subsidy has been strictly adhered to.

There are very few sound engineers around today who have had a longer experience in sound recording for motion pictures than Bill Mueller. Now retired and living at Newport Beach, Calif., he joined Bell Labs in 1922, immediately following graduation with a B.S.E.E. degree from the University of Nebraska. Starting there in September 1922, he was soon assigned to a group developing the electric phonograph, a project which the BTL had undertaken for the Victor Talking Machine Company.

This project was immediately successful, and the same group then turned their attention to developing a talking-picture system using the same system of recording and reproducing but now synchronized with the corresponding motion-picture action film. This system was first used for the musical score of the otherwise silent film, *Don Juan*, with John Barrymore in the lead and was previewed in New York on 6 August 1926 to a wildly enthusiastic audience.

Encouraged by this success, Warner Bros. formed the Vitaphone Corporation with Major Nathan Levinson in charge of the Western Division. Levinson recruited Mueller from BTL to be his chief engineer in September 1926. Bill's job was to install the disk sound systems in all the major cities west of Denver. Upon completion of this task, he built the first sound studio in Hollywood to record vaudeville shorts.

This effort culminated in the production of *The Jazz Singer* with the first dialogue recording of a motion picture. Bill Mueller was in charge and responsible for that recording of this historic movie. He recounts many interesting tales of the reaction of some of the Hollywood movie moguls to this new form of entertainment — Louis B. Mayer saying it was just "a toy" and Zukor calling it a "gimmick." Bill also recounts the trials and trib-

ulations of the old silent stars trying to adapt to the new sound medium. Bill told Corinne Griffith that she had to move her lips if she was going to be heard. The cameraman countered by saying that such movement would cause wrinkles. Corinne got so upset she walked off the stage and never made another movie.

Bill was chief engineer of the Warner Bros. Sound Department for 26 years and, upon the death of Levinson, became Sound Director in 1952, retiring in 1958. During his tenure at Warner Bros., he was the studio representative at the Motion Picture Research Council, serving as Vice-Chairman for many years. Among his many awards was the Academy sound award for *Sayonara* in March 1958. He also won the Academy's award for distinctive achievement for his method of re-recording, in which the level of the dialogue automatically controls the level of the accompanying music and sound effects. This invention was universally adopted by the industry.

Following his retirement in 1958, he headed a task force for Hughes Electronics, Inc., on the dehumanizing of the individual in manufacturing assembly operations. He was selected by the State Department to go to Indonesia to build and install a motion-picture studio and train the native Indonesians to operate it. He also served as a consultant to President Sukarno. He spent two years in Indonesia, leaving in 1961.

On his return to Hollywood, the U.S. Air Force asked him to take over the Sound Department in their studios in Mount Hollywood. In this activity, he made many trips to Japan, the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, etc. One of his major projects was making a monthly progress report on Vietnam for President Kennedy.

During his career, he was awarded fourteen patents, including one on the parabolic reflector microphone. Among his inventions are the use of companders and expanders in sound recording and reproduction, a microphone boom with rotating microphone, a method of inserting foreign dialogue in place of the English soundtrack, and many others.

Now 78 years old, Bill is in perfect health and plays golf regularly near his home in Newport Beach. His son, Bill, Jr., is a scientist at the Jet Propulsion Labs in Pasadena, California. His two daughters, Madeline and Claire, live close by in Orange County. He keeps in close touch with his old associates who unfortunately are a steadily diminishing number. He was very prominent in the affairs of the Society in the past and is now a Life Fellow. — *John G. Frayne*

Deadline for News Releases

Releases and other material intended for use in any of the columns of the *Journal*, especially for the Meetings Calendar and the Forthcoming Professional Meetings column, must arrive at SMPTE Headquarters at least six weeks before the month of the issue in which it is to appear. For example, announcements for the May issue must arrive no later than 15 March. We regret that when information arrives too late it cannot be used. — *Edit.*