

Obituaries



Alex Quiroga

Alex Quiroga died 5 January 1980 of a sudden heart attack at his home in Studio City, California. He was 62 years of age. A native of Mexico, he was educated in Germany and Switzerland having been graduated from the Realgymnasium Meerstern in Switzerland in 1937 and from the Film Akademie Berlin UFA-Stadt in Germany in 1942. He began his career in his native Mexico as a cameraman and lighting director for Mexican feature films.

He joined ABC-TV in Hollywood in 1949 and in 1954 he was awarded a television graduate fellowship at John Hopkins University, an annual fellowship established by the Baltimore television station WAAM. The following year he joined NBC-TV in New York

engaging in studio and plant planning as well as other engineering projects and, in 1957, he transferred to NBC-TV's West Coast offices.

Widely recognized for his pioneering work in the field of color television and lighting, he was the recipient of many honors and awards including the Herbert T. Kalmus Memorial Award presented to him at the 94th SMPTE Technical Conference in 1963. The purpose of the award is to do honor to the recipient by recognizing outstanding contributions in the development of color films for theater or television.

The citation accompanying the presentation of the medal noted that Quiroga had "established a close relationship between film manufacturers, studios, processing laboratories, and the NBC television network."

The citation also noted his invention of the Quirogascope (also called the television prism), an optical attachment for a television camera to permit the tilting or rotating of a scene. Others of Quiroga's many inventions were a gyrostabilized camera mount, a three-dimensional television system, a videotape editor, and a remote control camera turret. In 1950 he developed a method of adapting motion picture lighting to television. In 1961, in association with Edward Ancona, he conducted research for the purpose of finding a method of balancing color monitors in an objective manner.

A Fellow of the SMPTE, among the professional organizations of which he was a member are the American Optical Society, the American Institute of Physics, and the International Color Council.



Sir Charles Curran

Sir Charles Curran, Director-General of the BBC from 1969 to 1977, died 9 January 1980 at the age of 58 in a hospital in London where he had been since suffering a heart attack at his home during the last week in December.

Sir Charles was born in Dublin on 13 October 1921 and was educated at Wath-on-Dearne Grammar School, Yorkshire, and Magdalene College, Cambridge, where he was graduated with a First Class Honors degree in History. He served in the Indian Army from 1941 to 1945 and remained with the India Office until 1947 when he joined BBC as a Talks Producer. After three years he left the BBC to become Assistant Editor of *Fishing News* in Canada. In 1951 he returned to BBC as a report writer in the BBC Monitoring Service.

In 1953 he was selected as one of BBC's first Administrative Trainees and took over administrative duties in External Broadcasting. Later he went to Canada for three years as the BBC Representative and then returned to Head of External Broadcasting Administration in 1959. He became the Secretary of BBC in 1963 and was appointed Director of External Broadcasting on 1 January 1967. He became Director-General of BBC on 1 April 1969.

Sir Charles took a leading part in international broadcasting activities and was elected President of the European Broadcasting Union three times.

An accomplished linguist, Sir Charles spoke French, Spanish, Italian, and Urdu fluently and could also speak some German and Russian. He became a member of the Executive Committee of the British Council in 1973 and was appointed Managing Director of *Visnews* in January 1978.

Sir Charles's years with the BBC were beset with many problems. For example, the outbreak of violence in Northern Ireland created serious problems in broadcasting. The Annan Report, finally appearing in 1977, was basically favorable to the BBC, supporting as it did the principle of public service broadcasting funded by a license fee and rejecting the concept of an overall broadcast commission. The long awaited report was satisfactory to Sir Charles, vindicating his conception of what broadcasting should be.

A man of remarkable talents and great accomplishments, he is mourned by all who knew him.

A Requiem Mass and Memorial Service were held 14 February 1980 in Westminster Cathedral.

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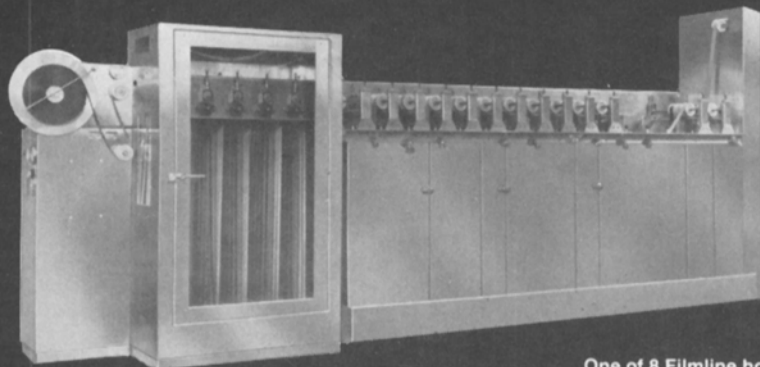
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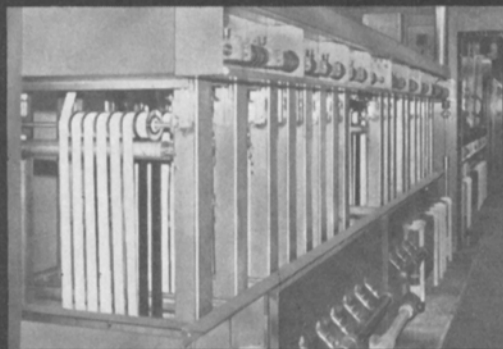
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Freeman H. Owens

Freeman H. Owens, a prolific inventor, holder of some 200 patents in the field of motion picture technology and, for many years, a member of the SMPTE, died 9 December 1979 at his home in Pine Bluff, Arkansas, where he had been born on 20 July 1890.

He had come full circle during his life, having left Pine Bluff in 1910, first for Chicago where at considerable risk to himself, he filmed the great stockyard fire in 1911. He lived for a number of years in New York City, was a Marine Sergeant in World War I, traveled in Europe where, it is said, he made the first talking picture of George Bernard Shaw, and spent a summer in Alaska where he made a film for the Canadian Pacific Railroad. Following World War I, while he was still in service, he was sent to Brazil where, he once said, he "made a lot of scenics but always had Marines in the picture."

During the 1920s he was a freelance cameraman. His well known association with Lee De Forest apparently came about through the influence of Hugo Reisenfeld, music director under S. L. "Roxy" Rothafel who, aware of Owens's interest in motion picture technology and talent as an inventor, introduced him to his friend Lee De Forest who was working on sound motion pictures. Owens became De Forest's cameraman and it was his (Owens's) Bell & Howell camera that was modified to hold the Case Aco light and that was used to make the Phonofilm eventually patented by De Forest.

From the time he was very young, Owens was constantly occupied with ideas for inven-

tions — improvements on existing equipment and for new equipment that undoubtedly advanced the art and science of motion picture technology.

Kenneth C. D. Hickman

Kenneth C. D. Hickman, a versatile and internationally known inventor, died 3 November 1979 at his home in Rochester, N.Y., at the age of 83. Born in Woodford, England, in 1896, he studied Chemistry at the Royal College of Science in London. In the early years of World War I, he developed smoke bombs and poison gases, devices so important to the war effort that he was made a Member of the Order of the British Empire by the British government.

At the end of the war he returned to the University of London where he was granted the degree of Doctor of Science in Chemistry. Shortly thereafter he came to the U.S., and in 1925 he joined the staff of Kodak Research Laboratories.

While with the Research Laboratories in the 1920s and '30s he worked closely with Glenn Matthews who confided to us, "Hickman once told me he considered the day wasted when he failed to come up with at least one new idea."

Hickman held more than 200 patents ranging from a method of recovering silver from film, to a self purifying high vacuum condensation pump, to the development of commercial sources of vitamins A and E.

One of his early interests was the washing of photographic film during processing, and his research led to a patent (in 1919) covering

an automatic system of washing prints which is still being marketed (as of 1976) by Eastman Kodak as the Kodak automatic tray syphon.

A former member of the SMPTE, he was very active in the 1920s and '30s and he contributed a number of technical papers to the *Transactions* and (after 1930) the *Journal*. Listed below are some of the significant papers of that period authored by Hickman.

"Washing Motion Picture Film," Oct. 1925; "Syphons and Measuring Devices for Photographic Solutions," Nov. 1926; "Display Enlargements From Single Frame Motion Pictures," Sept. 1926; "The Future Policy of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers," Feb. 1927; "Hollywood and the Motion Picture Engineers," July 1927; "Automatic Silver Recovery Control," Oct. 1931; and (with W. Weyerts) "The Argentometer: An Apparatus for Testing for Silver in a Fixing Bath," Oct. 1935.

Hickman joined the faculty of the Rochester Institute of Technology in 1960 as a research professor, and in 1976 he joined the staff of the Chemical Engineering Dept. of the University of Rochester as a research professor.

During his long years of scientific and technical achievements he received many prestigious honors and awards, among them, Best Scientific Apparatus Award, *Review of Scientific Instruments* (1930 and 1931); Wetherill Medal, Franklin Institute (1950); Welch Gold Medal Award, American Vacuum Society (1973); Inventor of the Year, Rochester Patent Law Society (1976); and the Williamson Award, Royal Photographic Society.

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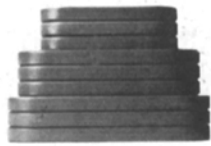
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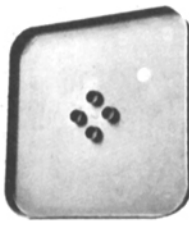
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