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# SECTION MEETINGS

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**Atlanta, June 13** — Paul Scaglione, Bosch-Fernseh, gave a presentation of the Bosch-Fernseh 1/4-in. Lineplex format, explaining its application to ENG/EFP broadcasting. A series of 35-mm slides was used to illustrate the presentation. Although a live demonstration had been announced, due to a shipping problem, the QuarterCam was not available. It was hardly missed, however, as Scaglione's presentation was quite complete. The meeting was followed by a lively question-and-answer period. — John F. Swanson (Secretary-Treasurer), Cox Communications, Inc., 1601 W. Peachtree St., N.E., Atlanta, GA 30309.

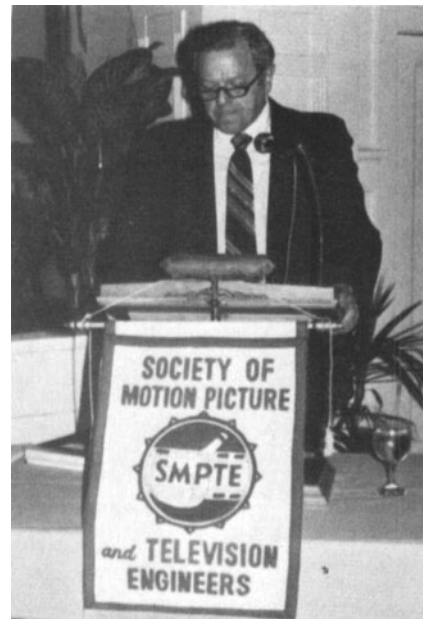
**Chicago, June 14** — John Lolis, laboratory technician, SMPTE, gave an instructive presentation on the SMPTE test materials program and the associated standardization. He included information on availability of the new projection and video test patterns. Among those currently available are the 70-mm Projector Alignment film (70-PAO); the 35-mm Anamorphic Alignment film (35-AT); the 35-mm Theater Sound Test film (ASTR-6); and the new full-width recorded 35-mm magnetic sound test films.

A member of the audience questioned the standardization as far as the level of sound is concerned for television commercials. Lolis pointed out that there are specifications for the alignment of equip-

ment, but due to the variations in response from one piece of equipment to another, the exact volume setting is entirely subject to the taste of the operator.

Considerable interest was expressed in the 30-frame SMPTE film leader which would accommodate material shot for 30-frame television reproduction (transfer-to-tape); however, research on this is continuing.

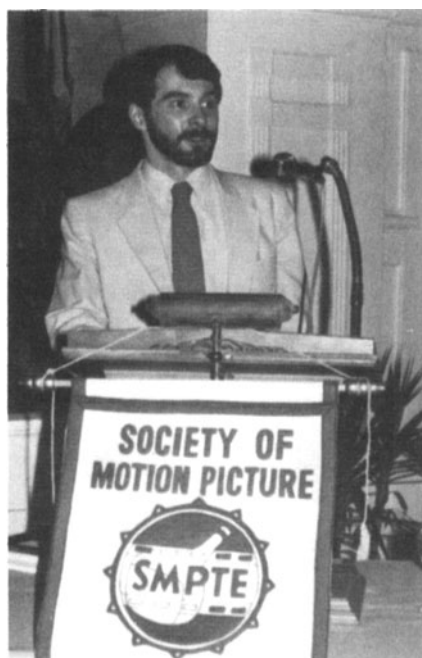
The 1/4-in. videotape format was mentioned insofar as the progress made in standardization; however, due to the differences in video signal processing, tape speed, etc., both of the two currently available systems are non-interchangeable. It was noted, however, that both systems take advantage of higher tape speed, separation of luminance and chrominance



Norman Thelen opening the Chicago Section meeting on June 14.



Members attending the Chicago Section meeting discussed the presentation.



John Lolis told the audience at the Chicago Section meeting about the SMPTE test materials program.



Norman Thelen (L), Bob Churchill, and George Halonen at the Chicago Section meeting.

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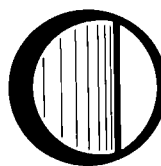
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components, and that both use the compact videocassette (CVC) package.

The meeting was held at the Swedish Club of Chicago. — Norman Thelen (Secretary-Treasurer), Encyclopaedia Britannica Educational Corp., 8513 W. North Terr., Niles, IL 60648.

**Dallas/Fort Worth, June 8** — The first event on the program was a tour of the Warner Amex Qube Cable facility in Dallas, conducted by Larry Kenward, who led the group and explained the new operations, including programming equipment and production-editing studios. In the programming control room, the necessity of computer-redundancy was demonstrated due to the complicated switching assignments required to feed 72 channels. Microwave, fiber optics, hard wire, and satellite equipment are either in operation or under development at the facility.

Michael Kelley, manager, digital audio marketing, Satellite Communications Div., Scientific Atlanta, described the company's digital audio equipment. The presentation was illustrated with slides showing the installation of one of the systems at a radio station for network satellite feed. Kelley explained the company's approach to digital audio transmission including an analysis of frequency response, signal-to-noise ratio, data error, geographic-atmospheric considerations, and cost. — Sam Stallos (Secretary-Treasurer), Spectrum Image Systems, 11034 Dennis, Dallas, TX 75229.

**Detroit, June 24** — For several years, SMPTE's Detroit Section has cooperated with the Detroit Producers Association and the local ITVA chapter in hosting the Michigan AV Showcase — a review of AV production during the year — which marks the end of the normal meeting year.

Following a reception hosted by the Detroit Producers Association, some 45 members and guests watched sections of 14 film and video productions made in Michigan during the past year. In 1983, the productions were made by university facilities, in-house production units, and by both small and large independent production companies.

A large-screen video projection system was used, giving a video image about the same size as the 16-mm image. — Charles Nairn (Secretary-Treasurer), Com Tec, Inc., 909 Fisher Bldg., Detroit, MI 48202.

**Hollywood, May 12** — The subject of the meeting was ACES, ELMER, and SPS (Automatic Camera Effects System; Extra Large Miniature Effects Rig; and Scene Planning System). These systems are used extensively in the production of films displayed at the EPCOT Center in Florida, it was explained by David English, chief electronics engineer, Walt Disney Products, in Burbank, Calif. The meeting was

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held at Walt Disney Studios with an attendance of 325 members and guests.

ACES, English explained, was the industry's first truly computer-operated camera system to be applied to film production. ELMER was built for filming the underwater and desert sequences in the finale of the Horizons Pavilion which opens in October at the EPCOT Center. SPS is used by the scene-planning department which serves as liaison between artists and technicians. Their main job is to translate visual ideas into film-production instructions and camera-movement data.

The program concluded on Sound Stage 3 with a demonstration of each system. — L. John Spring, Jr. (Secretary-Treasurer), Eastman Kodak Co., P.O. Box 38939, Hollywood, CA 90038.

**Hollywood, June 9** — The subject of the meeting was high-definition television (HDTV). The speakers were Alan Flaherty, Kalba Bowen Associates Inc., who discussed HDTV from the economic viewpoint, and T. Russell McMurtry, Eastman Kodak Co., whose presentation was entitled, "Today's Photographic Imaging Technology for Tomorrow's HDTV Systems." The two speakers agreed that:

Film and television have been partners for more than 35 years. During this time, great improvements have been made in both media with the public receiving most

of the benefits. With HDTV now possible, film as an originating medium is more important than ever.

Eastman color negative film 5247, the 35-mm motion-picture format, can support HDTV systems up to 1400 lines at 50 MHz, and may support up to a 2000-line HDTV system. It can provide an input signal with an SNR greater than 50 dB (unweighted). High-speed digital image processing makes film an even more valuable origination source because of its wide exposure latitude and the manufacturers' ability to manipulate film speed, exposure latitude, sharpness, and granularity to provide an optimum recording medium for all forms of television and motion-picture production.

With the advent of advanced digital image processing, significant improvements can be made in the final video image from a film original. These include film grain reduction, improved sharpness, and tone scale manipulation. This provides a closer reproduction of the original scene while keeping within the limited dynamic range of a video display. — L. John Spring, Jr. (Secretary-Treasurer), Eastman Kodak Co., P.O. Box 38939, Hollywood, CA 90038.

**San Francisco, June 21** — Jan Van Hemert, Sony Broadcast, gave a presentation on "VTR/Camera Combination and Component Recording," and Tom Hast, Sr.,

Ampex Corp., spoke on "M-Format VTR." Van Hemert provided a detailed discussion of component recording of the BVW-3 recorder and the BVW-10 player.

Tom Hasty gave a well-organized talk on the ENG/EFP system based on the M-format.

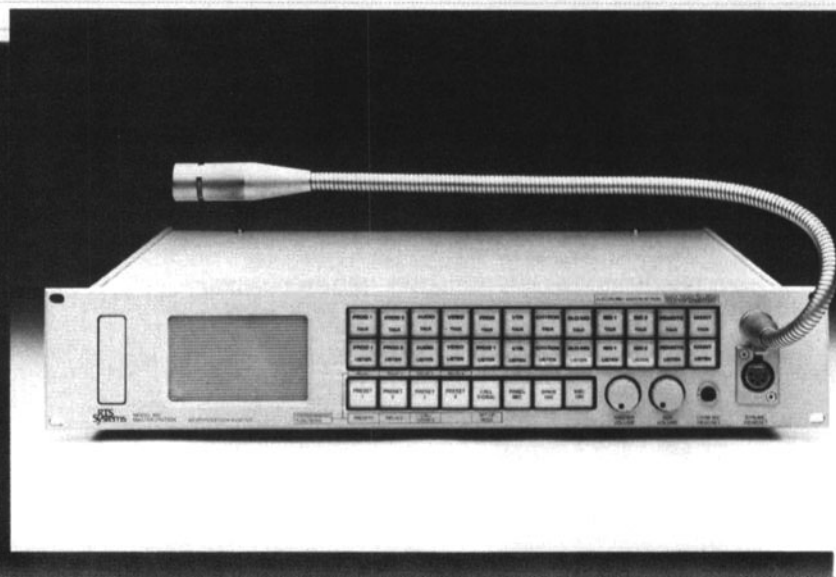
Following the presentations, a hands-on demonstration was provided. — Donna Foster-Roizen (Secretary-Treasurer), Telegen, 1742 Willow Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303.

**Toronto, June 23** — Brad MacDonald and Frank Daller, Computer Music International, explained the development background and demonstrated the features of the Fairlight, a computerized musical instrument which was designed and built in Australia. It was designed for operational simplicity together with flexibility of the video graphics display terminal and lightpen. One of the main features is its ability to "sample" the sound of any instrument. Then, after digitally recording the characteristics of the sound, it enables the player/operator to recall that sound at any pitch. The result is that anyone operating the keyboard can "play" any instrument once a sample has been "read" by Fairlight. It can play eight "instruments" at once, and up to 30 minutes of continuous music can be stored and recalled.

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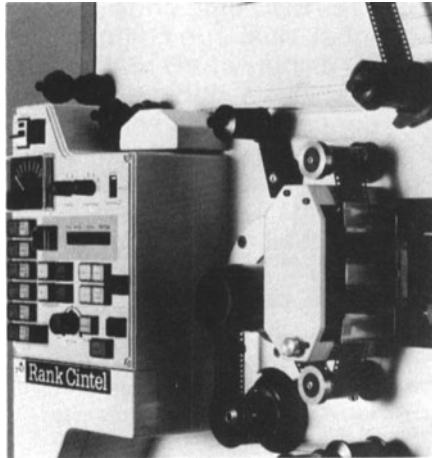
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individual harmonic curves, and the sound's waveform is automatically computed. The library facility (storage) keeps track of about two thousand sounds and musical sequences. Software comes on floppy disks. Hardware includes one or two music keyboards with live controls, a video-control console with lightpen, and the main cabinet.

After a coffee break, Akira Tomizawa presented a paper on Sony Beta HiFi. For the video signal, there is no difference from conventional recording, but the HiFi audio is FM-modulated (AFM) and recorded on the same video track, while standard monaural audio track is recorded for full compatibility with all other Betamax equipment. The modulated FM signals are located between a converted color subcarrier and the video FM band. Four independent carriers are used for both channels ( $L_A L_B R_A R_B$ ) to avoid crosstalk between video tracks and to improve signal-to-noise ratio.

Dropouts in the FM carrier are compensated by a pre-hold type circuit. Frequency response of 20-20 kHz, harmonic distortion of less than 0.3%, and dynamic range better than 80 dB are obtained by the AFM system.

The presentations were followed by a demonstration and a number of questions from the audience. — Fung F. Lam (Secretary-Treasurer), Sony of Canada Ltd., 411 Gordon Baker Rd., Willowdale, Ont., Canada M2H 2S6.

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## OBITUARY

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### Frank G. Back

Frank G. Back, a scientist and inventor of the Zoomar lens, which revolutionized cinematographic techniques by allowing cameramen to change focus without changing lenses, died July 6, 1983, in San Diego, Calif., at the age of 80.

Born in Vienna, Austria, Dr. Back received the M.E. degree in 1925 and the Sc.D degree in 1931 from the University of Vienna. After graduation, he was a consulting engineer in Vienna and, later, in Paris. He came to the U.S. in 1939 and became a citizen in 1944. He was a long-term resident of Long Island, N.Y., where he established and was president of Zoomar, Inc., a research and development firm specializing in optics. Following his retirement in 1978, he moved to La Jolla, Calif., where, in 1981, he formed the Back Optics Manufacturing Corp. Dr. Back held more than 50 patents and was a prolific author of technical papers.

Among many honors and awards, he received the Gold Medal Annual Award of the Television Broadcasters Association in 1947, and the Friedrich v. Voigtlaender Gold Medal Award of the Photographic Society, Vienna, in 1960. He was made a Fellow of the Royal Photographic Society

in 1949, a Fellow of the Photographic Society of America in 1952, and he was President of the Society of Photographic Scientists and Engineers in 1958.

In 1961, he became a Fellow of the SMPTE. He was awarded the SMPTE Progress Medal in 1962.

In accepting the Progress Medal Award, Dr. Back said, "We always think of something spectacular when we talk of a breakthrough. Actually, a breakthrough can always be pinpointed to a very small but significant discovery, though it always radically changes the whole concept."

Beginning in 1945, Dr. Back authored seven papers, published in the *Journal of the SMPTE*, describing the problems he encountered during his development of the Zoomar lens and the solutions he arrived at. One of his "small but significant discoveries" was how to develop a zoom lens which, while changing its focal length would maintain its transmission value. "The simple solution," he said, "was to place the iris diaphragm behind all movable elements of the zoom lens."

Known in his lifetime as the "father" of the zoom lens, his more than 50 U.S. and foreign patents covered the field of vari-focal and catadioptric lens design.

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