Section Meetings

Atlanta, June 9 — The topic of the meeting, held at the Computer Art & Animation Studio (CAAS) in Atlanta, was computer-generated graphics. Bob Walters, Robert Bosch Corp., presented the Bosch FGS-4000 illustrator/animator system and the Aurora 220 paint system, along with associated equipment. He discussed pixel count, the variety of software currently available, and how the equipment is integrated with still stores, film recorders, and production switchers.

Various representatives of CAAS then described how state-of-the-art graphics systems are used, with the aid of a computer, to create, manipulate, and enhance images. These systems combine character generation, digital effects, electronics paint, and 3-D animation. Attendance at the meeting was 45. — Bebe F. McClain (Secretary/Treasurer), PAG America, Ltd., P.O. Box 5813, Asheville, NC 28803.

Chicago, June 10 — Denis Quinn and Mike Taylor, both with Quantel, presented a program on the digital editing suite. A taped demonstration of Harry, a random-access digital recorder for animation and editing, was featured. Thirty SMPTE members and their guests were present at the Marriott Hotel, in downtown Chicago, for the meeting. — Gilbert L. Blew (Publicity), Eastman Kodak Co., 1901 W. 22nd St., Oak Brook, IL 60521.

Detroit, June 10 — The world headquarters of Ford Motor Co., Dearborn, Mich., was the site of the meeting, attended by 35 SMPTE members. Jack Caldwell made a presentation on the Ford Communications Network (FCN).

FCN is a television network that feeds newscasts and other programs of specific interest to Ford's assembly plants, executive offices, and dealerships throughout North America. Caldwell explained that the communications link is made possible via terrestrial microwave to a satellite uplink located at WTVS-TV, Detroit's Public Broadcasting System station. One special service FCN provides to its executive offices is video teleconferencing, referred to at Ford as "business television." Caldwell presented videotapes of sample newscasts and other special programs to fully demonstrate this exciting method of corporate communications. A tour of the television facilities concluded the meeting. — Rudolph J. Kryger (Secretary/Treasurer), CBET-TV, 1139 Eastlawn Ave., Windsor, Ont., Canada N8S 3J1.

Florida/Caribbean, May 20 — The meeting, attended by 35 members and their guests, took place at VTA Technologies, Inc., Hollywood, Fla. Mike Osborne, VTA, discussed and demonstrated some of the special uses of the Da Vinci color-correcting system. Following Osborne's presentation, the Da Vinci was made available to the meeting participants for closer, hands-on inspection. The program concluded with a tour of the VTA facility. — Ralph Bevins (Secretary/Treasurer), FILMS, P.O. Box 1835, Longwood, FL 32750.

Mike Taylor speaking at the June 10 meeting of the Chicago Section.

Hollywood, June 12 — The new M-II video recording format was the subject of the meeting, which took place at the NBC Television Network studios in Burbank, Calif. With about 400 SMPTE members and guests assembled, Phil Livingston, Panasonic, took the podium to present a slide talk focusing on the metal particle tape used in the M-II. Livingston discussed the tape's properties, such as higher coercivity, greater output, smaller particle size, increased frequency performance, and surface durability. He described the links between the tape parameters, the performance of the M-II system components, and the audio/video specifications.

Livingston then demonstrated Panasonic's AU-400 camera recorder, AU-500 field recorder, and AU-650 studio editor recorder. Using slides, he outlined the features and capabilities of the products, emphasizing several of the attributes of the M-II format. Following the equipment demonstrations, Eric Pohl, NBC, Inc., and Herman Schkolnick, Panavision, joined Livingston to answer questions from the audience. — Russell McMurtray (Secretary/Treasurer), Eastman Kodak Co., 6706 Santa Monica Blvd., Hollywood, CA 90038.

Houston, May 24 — Forty-five persons attended the meeting at The Editing Co./Bill Young Productions, where new techniques in video post-production were explained and demonstrated. The program for the meeting included three presentations.

Bill Young, producer and owner of Bill Young Productions, and Mark Chapman, musician, discussed and demonstrated the Emulator II, a device that creates an audio track for a video production. Particularly interesting to observers were the relative ease with which the Emulator II creates various audio effects and the way in which these effects are kept in sync with the video.

The second topic of the evening was on the Cubicomp Picturemaker, a new 3-D graphics system. Cindy Knox and Scott Gray, both with Cindy Knox Marketing Services, demonstrated the unit's capabilities, including the anti-aliasing capability of the system software.

John Morton, The Editing Co., then showed the audience a new switcher and an ADO unit, explaining how the equipment can correct problems created in an original production. According to Morton, his company's new suite is capable of editing between all formats in use today. — Robert B. Musburger (Secretary/Treasurer), University of Houston, School of Commerce, Houston, TX 77004.

New England, April 23 — "New Tools for HDTV Production" was the theme for this meeting, held at the Howard Johnson's Motor Lodge, Newton, Mass. Larry J. Thorpe, director of studio product management, Sony Broadcast, delivered an interesting and thorough presentation on emerging high-definition technologies for some 60 members and guests in attendance.

Thorpe began by outlining his company's efforts to develop 1125-line HDTV technology, which is intended for a host of other applications besides broadcasting. One such application, which evoked considerable interest from the audience, is electronic cinematography. To shed light on Sony's activity in the application of HDTV technology to electronic cinematography, Thorpe showed two short 35mm film reels. These reels depicted examples of HDTV studio production, multi-generation mattes, and low-level HDTV videography, all of which had been recorded on Sony HDTV VTRs, then transferred to film by means of a proprietary Sony laser scanning system. The video-to-tape quality was superb.

In conclusion, Thorpe discussed some of the international standards-setting issues and difficulties various nations and groups are having in coming to agreement

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New England Section Managers pose with Larry Thorpe, (L-R) Charles DiSabatino, Paul Beck, Larry Thorpe, George Teplansky, Karl Renwanz.

on HDTV standards. — Paul R. Beck (Section Chairman), Emerson College, 71 Cross St., Foxboro, MA 02035.

Ohio, June 18 — Creative Technology, Inc., Akron, Ohio, hosted the meeting, attended by 14 members. The firm also provided the three guest speakers: Jeffrey Wooton, chief engineer; Joseph Manfredi, colorist; and Chris Hengeveld, editor.

In a combined presentation, Wooten and Manfredi described the various capabilities and procedures involved in the transfer of film to tape. Wooten began by demonstrating the value of a master monitor set to SMPTE standards via a computer. Manfredi then demonstrated how a film transfer is adjusted while using the master monitor as a true reference. Two tapes were made from both a negative and positive transfer, then played back on a split monitor screen. Manfredi pointed out that the negative transfer showed a greater contrast range, while the positive transfer was marked by greater purity and a higher color level.

Chris Hengeveld demonstrated the 3-D capabilities of the Cubicomp Picturemaker computer. The meeting concluded with a tour of Creative's technical facilities. — John Barak (Secretary/Treasurer), Industrial Video, 1601 N. Ridge Rd., Loraine, OH 44055.

Pacific/Northwest, June 26 — At the broadcasting studios of Kiro, Inc., Seattle, Glenn Nichols gave an overview of fiber-optics technology. The telecommunications specialist at the Grass Valley Group, Inc., discussed some of the television and communications applications for his company's Wavelink™ fiber-optics systems. Nichols also reviewed new product developments in the area of fiber optics. — Robert Plummer (Secretary/Treasurer), RHP & Associates Inc., P.O. Box 22847, Seattle, WA 98122.

Rocky Mountain, June 19 — Thirty-five SMPTE members and their guests assembled at the team headquarters of the Denver Broncos for the meeting. Rusty Nail, the football team's director of video operations, and Peter Dare, Sony Broadcast Products, were the speakers.

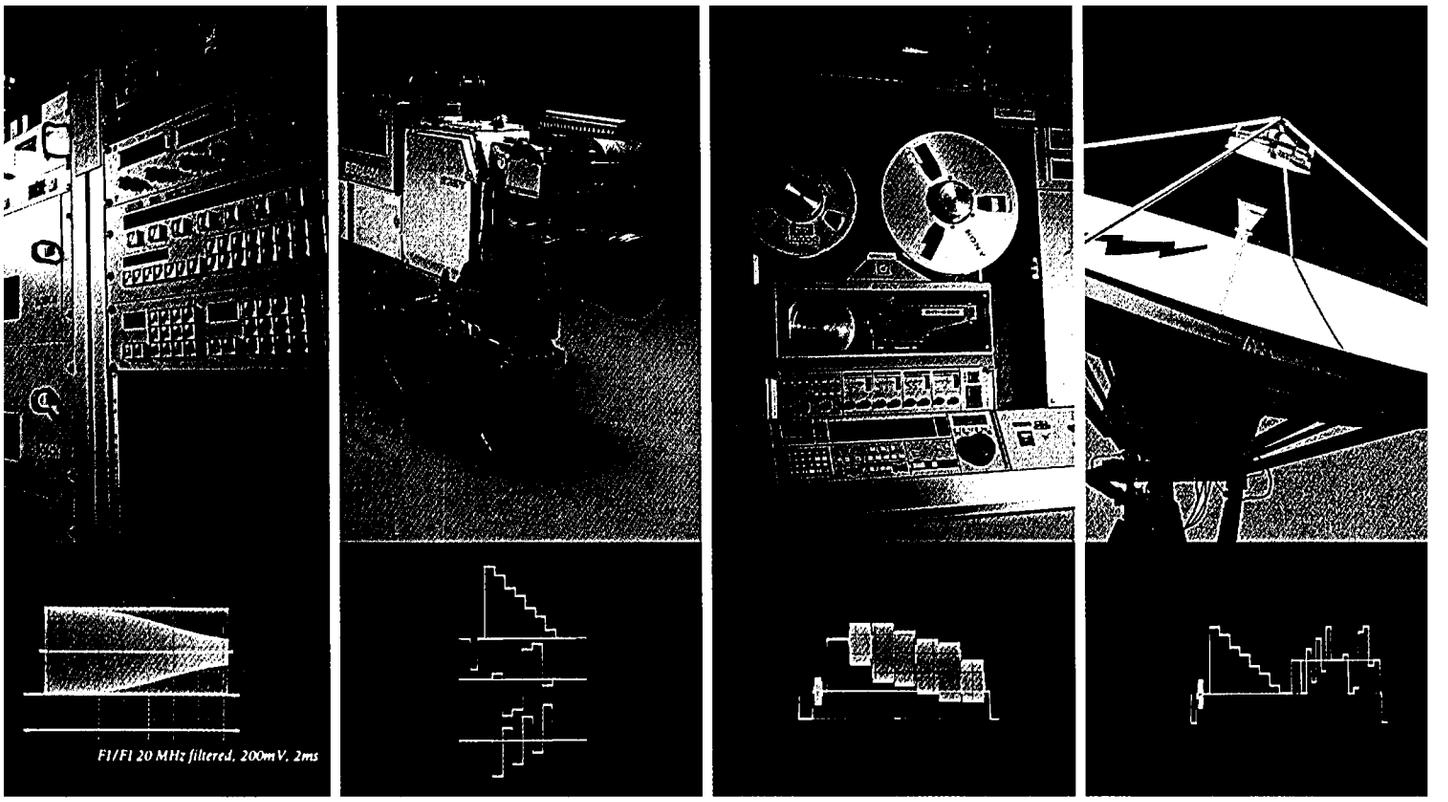
Most, if not all, professional and collegiate football teams have converted from film to Betacam systems to record games and practice sessions. Nail explained that the Denver organization uses specially modified Sony Beta VTRs to evaluate team and individual player performance. The team also has at its disposal sophisticated editing and dubbing facilities to provide coaches, trainers, and key players quick access to the tapes for on-site evaluation.

In the second presentation, Peter Dare compared the technical specifications of various videotape formats, including 1-in., Type C, Beta, Beta SP, and M-II. Following Dare's talk, Nail conducted a tour of the Broncos' technical facilities. — Kent Gratteau (Secretary/Treasurer), KWGN-TV, 4714 S. Fraser St., Aurora, CO 80015

San Francisco, May 29 — Over 250 SMPTE members and guests crowded into the Ampex Museum of Magnetic Recording, Redwood City, Calif., to participate in the celebration of the 30th anniversary of the Ampex videotape recorder. Charles P. Ginsburg, Charles E. Anderson, Ray M. Dolby, and Alex Maxey, four of the original six-man VTR development team, were the featured speakers.

Ginsburg, who headed that team, and who later became known as "the father of the videotape recorder," showed slides of

Commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Ampex Quad VTR at the special May 29 meeting of the San Francisco Section are (L-R) Charles E. Anderson, Alex Maxey, Donna Foster-Roizen, Ray M. Dolby, Charles E. Ginsburg, and Peter Hammar.



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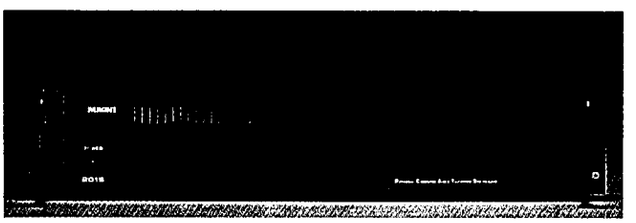

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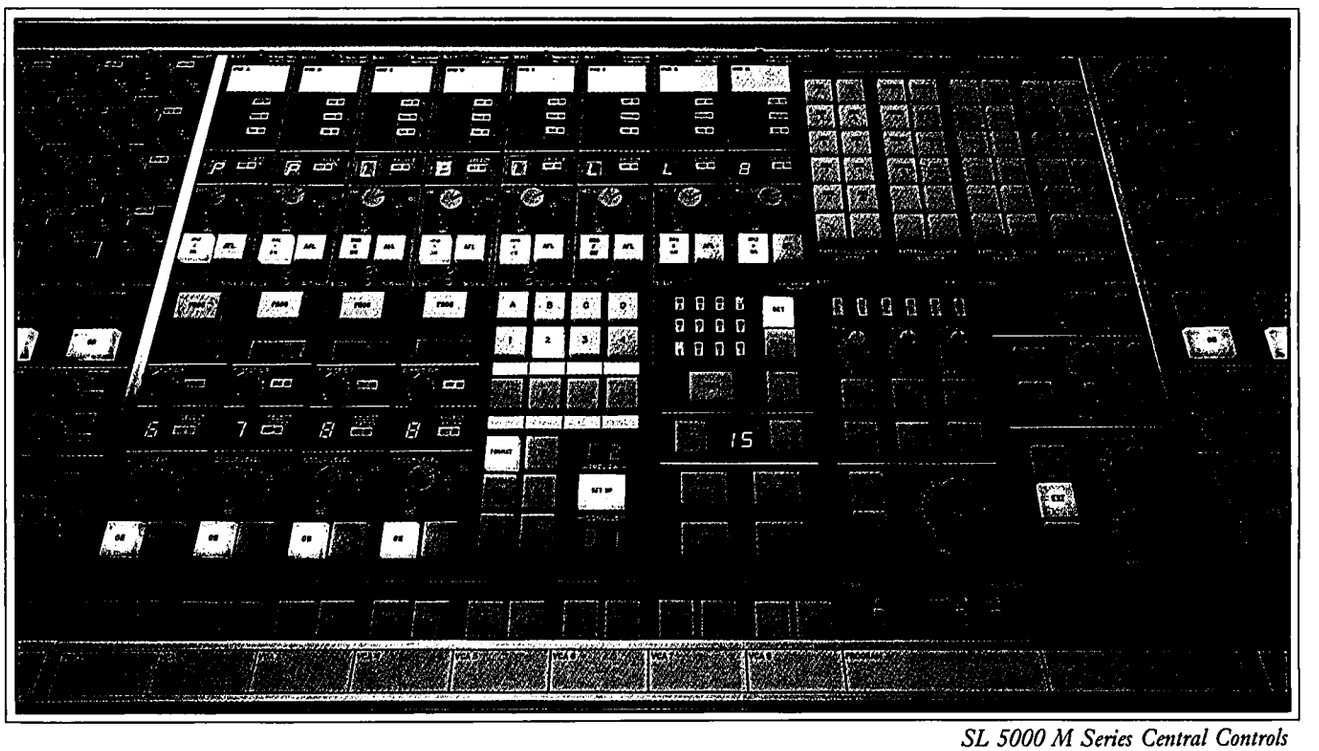

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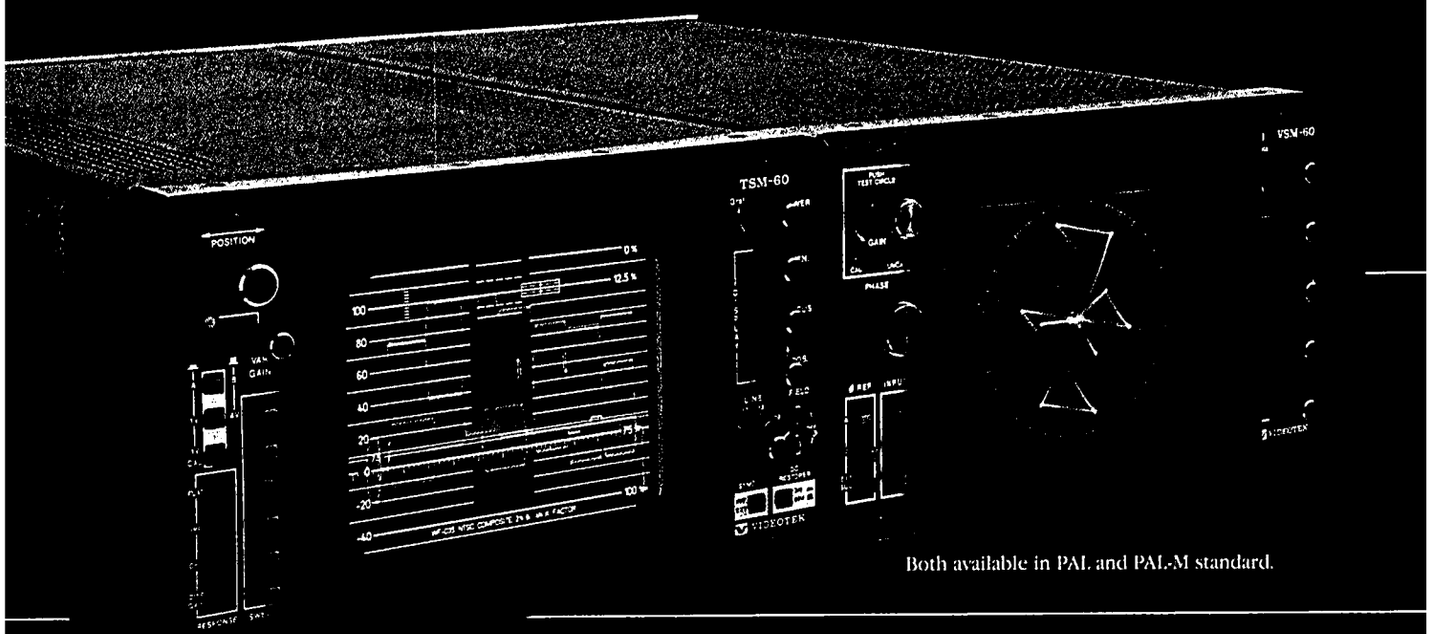

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Fung Lam, Past-Chairman of the Toronto Section, makes opening remarks at the June 10 meeting.

the original 2-in. machine, then reviewed the series of events that led to the refinement of the unit. He talked about Ampex's efforts to market the product, and quoted the company's sales projections, which were quite conservative, considering the VTR revolution that was to follow.

Dolby's commentary centered on the need for improvement in the quality of VTR manufacture, while Anderson shared with the group the anecdote that Alex Maxey invented the helical recorder using a toilet paper roll as a model. The program also included a videotape showing Fred Pfost comparing the size, speed, and overall quality improvements seen in videotape recording over the last 30 years. Pfost, another member of the development team, could not be present at the meeting.

After a question-and-answer session and informal tour of the museum, Donna Foster-Roizen, Section Chairman, presented plaques of appreciation to the four men. — John A. Carlson (Secretary/Treasurer), Monaco Labs, 234 Ninth St., San Francisco, CA 94103.

Toronto, June 10 — Peter Bartlett and Sid Dodd, from host VTR Productions Ltd. in Toronto, presented technical papers at the meeting, attended by over 150 members and their guests.

Bartlett's paper covered the use of SMPTE time code in relation to film-to-tape transfers and conforming. Two methods of finishing film productions on videotape were described. The first employs largely film techniques, with the transfer to videotape left for the later stages of production. The second method employs videotape techniques early in the production sequence; an off-line VTR is used to make the edit decisions, and final conforming, as well as color-correction, use original material with a time-code reference. Bartlett indicated that the Bosch CCD film scanner and an XL-60 frame-by-frame color corrector have brought about a greater than ten-to-one improvement in conforming time.

The Sony DXC-3000 CCD camera was the subject of Dodd's presentation. He first showed a videotape describing the features of the camera, which utilizes three solid-state image sensor arrays. The camera was on display, allowing appreciative meeting attendees the opportunity to closely examine and evaluate its performance. — David L. George (Secretary/Treasurer), Imagineering Ltd., 95 Barber Green Rd., Suite 112, Don Mills, Ont., Canada M3C 3E9.

Washington, D.C., June 7 — A tour of the Six Flags Power Plant in Baltimore, Md., provided 145 SMPTE members and their guests with an evening of entertainment and education. John Troxtel, plant manager, led the tour through the 127,000 ft^2 facility which, during the early 1900s, provided electricity for Baltimore's streetcars. Now the plant is a theme park attraction, a laboratory offering light and audiovisual shows.

The SMPTE group's first stop on the tour was the Power Core, an animated light and sound exhibit. The Power Core and all the other light/audio exhibits in the lab are controlled by a single 16-track 1-in. audio tape containing SMPTE time code interfaced with a computer. The various commands that control the operation of the Power Core are digitally stored on discs. During the presentation, the floor and walls vibrate from an audio rumbling produced by low-frequency amplifiers and speakers.

Troxtel then led the group to the Sensorium, a theater replete with special effects. While a person views a 3-D film, his sense of smell is literally bombarded with the aroma of oranges, apple pie, and 17 other odors, each of which is blown from a vent in a unit attached to the back of the seat directly in front of him. The scents are expelled by air pressure in sync with the film through SMPTE time code on the audio tape.

The Sensorium offers other simulated effects. Every seat in the theater contains a 5-in. speaker which vibrates the seat during certain parts of the film; thus the viewer feels as if he is actually riding over a rough road or sledding downhill at the time he sees those pictures on the screen. — David A. Cmeyla (Secretary/Treasurer), U.S. Information Agency, 601 D St. NW, B/TVF/FSL, Washington, D.C. 20547