Obituaries

K. Blair Benson

K. Blair Benson, a Life Fellow of the SMPTE, is dead at the age of 71. His career as an electrical engineer spanned almost every phase of television broadcast engineering.

After graduating from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in 1941, Benson was employed by the Radio and Television Receiver Division of the General Electric Co., where he worked as a staff engineer, radio and television receivers, and a project manager, projection television receivers. In 1948 he joined the CBS Television Network Engineering Department, where he remained for 24 years. He began as a senior project engineer, working on the development of a videotape that would fulfill the need for high-quality recordings that would provide the programming need to fill the delay that occurred during refeeds of the network's Central and West Coast time zones. On April 14, 1956, he and Charles Ginsburg, Ampex, unveiled the first videotape recorder, using rotating heads, which was suitable for broadcast service. They shared the acceptance of the Emmy for Best Engineering in 1957.

From 1961 to 1966, as manager of special audio/video systems at CBS, Benson was responsible for the engineering design and installation of the CBS-New York

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Broadcast Center. The building, which was originally a milk processing and delivery facility, was converted into the most modern and technologically advanced TV studio of its time. It is still in operation today.

He joined Goldmark Corp. in 1972 as chief engineer and became interested in widescreen high-definition television to be transmitted via cable or microwave. He later held positions at Video Corp. of America, a videotape production house in New York City. In 1980 he founded his own consulting firm, based in Norwalk, Conn.

An SMPTE member since 1959, Benson became a Fellow in 1961 and a Life Fellow in 1984. He served several terms as an SMPTE Governor and held the titles of Vice-President for Television Affairs from 1970 to 1973 and Editorial Vice-President from 1976 to 1980. He was also Program Chairman of the 101st SMPTE Technical Conference in 1967 and had been a member of the SMPTE Board of Editors since 1974. He was a member of several SMPTE engineering committees, including the Television Committee and the Subcommittee on Color Temperature Monitors, and served as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Monochrome Test Patterns for Television, the Cable Television Application Engineering Committee, and the Videotape Subcommittee on Helical-Scan Recording. From 1969 to 1975, as chairman of the JCIC/SMPTE ad hoc Color Television Study Committee, he initiated and encouraged the development of the VIR signal.

Ray R. Scoville, a Life Fellow of the SMPTE, is dead. A long-time member of the Society, Scoville joined as an Associate Member and became an Active Member in 1945. He received the Fellow Award in 1948, and in 1972 he became a Life Fellow. He held positions at Electrical Research Products, Inc., Bell Telephone Laboratories, Western Electric Co., and Vector Electronic Co. during his career.

Books, Booklets, Brochures

Modern Optical Engineering, The Design of Optical Systems, 2nd ed., by Warren J. Smith, has been greatly expanded and updated to reflect a wide range of developments and advances in the field. Emphasizing today's techniques and current applications, the book features more than 1200 additions, changes, and clarifications, as well as new material on everything from lasers to anamorphic systems, from fiber optics to the Schmidt telescope, and from automated lens design to such fabrication techniques as replication, high-speed processing, and diamond turning. Detailed discussions are devoted to such topics as prisms and mirrors, image formation, radiometry, photometry, and optical computation. This illustrated 524-page volume is available from McGraw-Hill Publishing Co., 11 W. 19th St., New York, NY 10011. The price is $59.50

Pre Press Definitions, an Introduction to Electronics in Print, is a 56-page booklet containing an alphabetical explanation of virtually every relevant term from A/D (analog to digital conversion) to Zoom (the ability to examine image detail without mathematical interpolation). The free booklet can be ordered from Melissa Holmgren, Quantel, Inc., 655 Washington Blvd., Stamford, CT 06901.

A Production Managers Guide to Gels for specifying and purchasing light control filters describes what the filters do and how they work. It lists the major categories of filters and explains how they are used in film and video. Details on the use of the filters with different light sources including fluorescent, tungsten, HMI, and daylight are provided. The eight-page, full-color booklet is available at no cost from Rosco Laboratories, 1135 N. Highland Ave., Hollywood, CA 90038.

A new Lowel parts booklet containing exploded-view drawings of Lowel lights, control systems, and mounting equipment with part numbers and prices will simplify the ordering of parts and the repair of equipment. It contains warranty and repair policies as well as lamp-life tips. The free booklet can be ordered through Lowel-Light Manufacturing, 140 58th St., Brooklyn, NY 11220.

Other New Books

The Art of Digital Video, J. Watkinson, 1990, Focal Press, 80 Montvale Ave., Stoneham, MA 02180; ISBN 0-240-51287-1.

Coding for Digital Recording. J. Watkinson, 1990, Focal Press, 80 Montvale Ave., Stoneham, MA 02180; ISBN 0-240-51293-6.

Tapeless Sound Recording, F. Rumsey, 1990, Focal Press, 80 Montvale Ave., Stoneham, MA 02180; ISBN 0-240-51297-9.