

SMPTE ALMANAC

By Michael Dolan



In this column we provide interesting historical briefs from *Journal* articles of days past. The purpose of this column is primarily entertainment, but we hope it will also stimulate your thinking and reflection on the Society's history, how far we have come in the industry, and (sometimes) how some things never change. This is not meant to be an authoritative reference, and no attempt is made to correct any past errors or omissions of the *Journal*. We simply hope you enjoy the material.

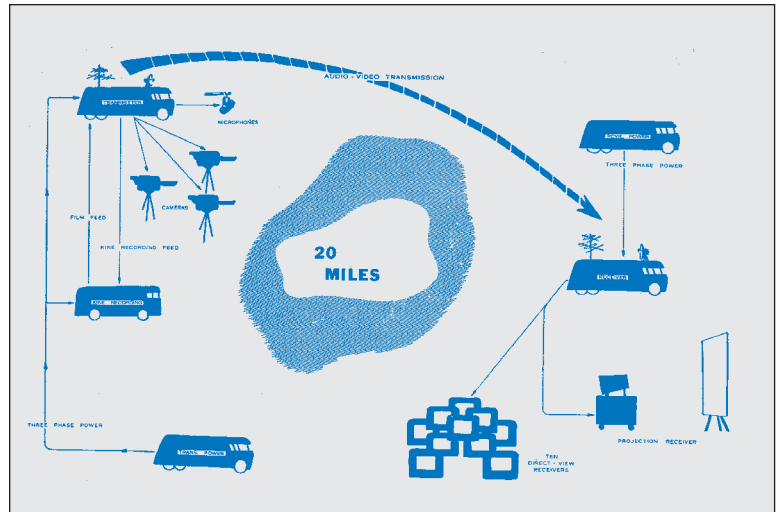
25 Years Ago in the Journal

The December 1977 *Journal* report in *Study Group on High-Definition Television* by F. M. Remley, Jr.: "...they are actively engaged in: (1) defining the need for high-definition television; (2) identifying utilization areas requiring different levels of definition; (3) questioning the potential and degree of utilization of existing NTSC; (4) comparing quality of references of film projection with television displays; (5) examining the bandwidth needs and availability for broadcast television; and (6) seeking knowledge of means of generating pictures and recording higher line rate. The group indicated that there is a need for considerably different line rate for broadcast vs the needs for large screen displays. It was also intimated that there is a need for a wider screen (aspect ratio 1.85:1 or similar, rather than 1.33:1 of NTSC). Future meetings will be held during the early part of 1978 at – (1) CBS Technology Center – at which time the best attainable NTSC broadcast television quality will be demonstrated; and (2) General Electric Company – where the state of large screen displays will be demonstrated."

50 Years Ago in the Journal

The December 1952 *Journal* reported in *Signal Corps Mobile Television System* by John S. Auld: "In 1948, when television began to pass from its embryonic stage, the Army decided that it might be employed to answer some of its tactical and training problems. Television had been used during the latter phase of World War II on an experimental basis, using highly specialized nonstandard equipment, with excellent results....It was decided...to design one complete and self-contained system on wheels. This unit could then travel from post to post stimulating thought, and showing field commanders of the various branches of service (i.e. artillery, infantry, etc.) how television might solve some of their particular problems....The transmit-

ter bus...houses three, RCA Type TK-30A, field camera chains....Behind this operating position, there are five cable reels. Four of these carry 250 ft of camera cable each; the fifth, 1700 ft of microphone cable of various convenient lengths. It may be stated here that all the reels in the vans are power-driven on take-up by an ordinary portable electric drill with a ½-in. chuck. Needless to say that since the system carries 18,000 ft of assorted cable, this is quite a time and labor saver."



Flow Chart of the Signal Corps Mobile Television Systems

75 Years Ago in the Journal

The Fall 1927 *Journal* reported in *Micro-Cinema in Medical Research* by Heinz Rosenberger: "Micro-cinema has been used chiefly for the demonstration of microscope phenomena before an audience....For about four years, the micro-cinema has been used at the Rockefeller Institute for Medical Research for the making of film records of living cells....Many important facts have been revealed by means of the micro-cinema at the Institute....The apparatus used for micro-cinema work is somewhat specialized for the different subjects to be taken, the principle parts being the microscope a with the source of light band optical bench on one table, the camera c with the driving mechanism, timer d, and revolving shutter e on the other table....With high magnifications, the prevention of vibration becomes quite a difficult problem and has to be reckoned with by selecting a proper room for the laboratory. The microscope used has a wide tube to prevent reflections inside, which otherwise would fog the film."