

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 January 1978 *Journal* reported in "Preserving Color Television Programs on Black-and-White Film by Electronic Video Recording," by A. Maekawa, H. Iino, T. Shigesawa, and T. Tsutada: "Electronic Video Recording (EVR) is a system for recording encoded color television signals on black-and-white motion picture film....More than twenty years have passed since the first color motion-picture films were shown and color television programs were broadcast. It is now time to consider how to store or preserve a large number of the color television films and color motion-picture films which were produced at substantial costs and have a cultural and historical importance...There are several kinds of medium able to store color television signals, for example, videotape, color motion-picture film and the videodisc....The granularity of the recorded master and print films, if normalized by the image area, was found to be no worse than that of 35mm motion-picture color negative films. The signal-to-noise ratios of both the recorded films were 44 dB at medium density. The loss in frequency response of the recorded master film was less than 2 dB at 4.2 MHz."

50 Years Ago in the Journal

The January 1953 *Journal* reported in "Royal Photographic Society Centenary": "The Royal Photographic Society of Great Britain celebrates its

Centenary in 1953 and will hold an International Conference on the Science and Applications of Photography in London from Saturday, September 19 to Friday, September 25, 1953. The Conference will cover many aspects of the science, technique and applications of photography and will be divided into sections dealing with: I. Photographic Science (including theory of latent image and development, sensitization, sensitometry, resolving power, granularity, properties of photographic materials). II. Cinematography and Colour Photography. III. Technique and Applications of Photography (including industrial radiography, photomicrography, spectroscopy, aerial photography, photogrammetry, high-speed photography, nuclear track recording, and other physical chemical and biological applications; photocopying, apparatus, process, manipulations). IV. Photomechanical Processes. V. History, Literature (including abstracting and documentation) and Training in Photography."

75 Years Ago in the Journal

The April 1928 *Journal* reported in "Motion Picture Directing," by Cecil B. DeMille: "A motion picture director in many respects occupies a position analogous to the leader of an orchestra. The leader has to wave a baton in order to get the right tempo. He has to see that the bassoon does not come in while the violin is playing its solo. Likewise, a motion picture director has to hold together all the departments, he has to see that they all function on time, and that everything meets on the little set where the camera is going to turn for a few minutes....I was shooting a scene in the *Little American* and we were firing a line of guns, supposedly French 75's. As they were using the real ones over in France we had to use imitations. In the middle of this scene the breech-block blew out of one of these guns and one man had a portion of his anatomy torn

away, another had a great splinter go through his mouth and tear out his cheek; that whole gun crew was shot to pieces. But there wasn't one of those men that stopped acting. There wasn't a man on either side that turned to those fellows. They glanced at them as you would if it had been a real shell that struck and went on with their own guns until that scene was played through and the whistle blew. Then they went to these men. Men will give their lives, gentlemen, to carry through. Nothing will stop them. They will do anything."

