

SMPTE ALMANAC

By Michael Dolan



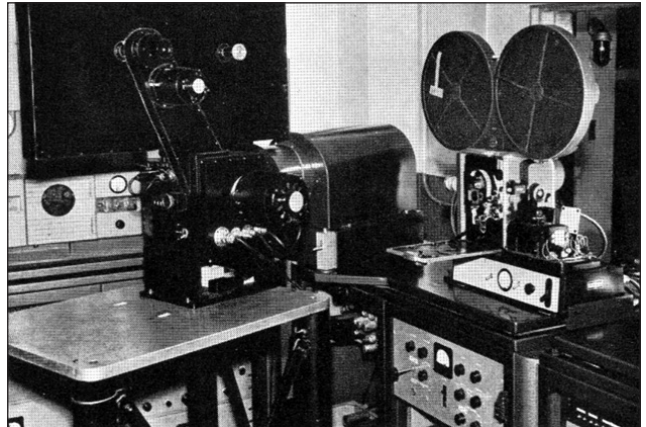
In this column we provide interesting historical briefs from Journal articles of days past. The purpose of this column is primarily entertainment, but we hope it will also stimulate your thinking and reflection on the Society's history, how far we have come in the industry, and (sometimes) how some things 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 March 1978 *Journal* reported in "CBS' New-Technology Station, WBBM-TV," by David Horowitz: "WBBM-TV, the CBS station in Chicago, has recently been rebuilt utilizing new technologies and modern system techniques. The major features of the station are: installation of a Media Room; complete conversion to ENG; a News Control Room; an automated program-continuity system; and a remotely controlled transmitter system....the separate telecine and videotape areas were eliminated. In their place CBS built a Media Room. The News Room was expanded to occupy what were Studios 3 and 4 with 25% of the space devoted to ENG. Likewise, the old PC or Program Continuity Room was combined with Master Control and became Central Control....The Media Room contains most of the station's playback and record devices regardless of the actual storage medium: reel-to-reel tape, cassette tape, disk packs for the Electronic Still Store, core memory and tape for the character generators, and film....the invention of the quadruplex cartridge and cassette machines has virtually eliminated the broadcasting of commercials with telecine equipment....the ENG revolution has eliminated news film from many stations...[and] there is an increasing use of videotape for the production of situation comedies like "Maude" and talk shows like "Dinah."

50 Years Ago in the Journal

The March 1953 *Journal* reported in "Time-Zone Delay of Television Programs by Kinescope Recording," by Ralph E. Lovell: "In television, as in radio, the matter of a three-hour time difference between the east and west coasts of the United States creates a serious problem in releasing programs at a time which will reach the desired audience at all points through the country. In radio, the problem has for years been solved by disc or tape recording with appropriate hours of delay in playback to compensate for the time-zone differential. The opening of the coast-to-coast television network in 1951 created a similar challenge to



A portion of the kinescope recording room at NBC Hollywood. On the right is a 16mm single-system camera, on the left a 16mm sound recorder, and in the center a 35mm camera.

kinescope recording of television programs....The terms, "Quick Kine" or "Hot Kine" have been coined to describe such three-hour delay recordings, the techniques for accomplishing which are new and rather complex, and depend upon close coordination between recording, processing, editing, projection and messenger personnel. Figure 1 shows a portion of the kinescope recording room at NBC Hollywood. In the center is one of the three 35mm cameras installed about a year ago to accomplish the three-hour delay recording....equipped with a 3000-ft magazine, permitting a running time of 33 minutes. The 35mm cameras used thus far have been of the "silent" type."

75 Years Ago in the Journal

The 1928 *Journal* reported on a new product, "Kodalite": "The Eastman Kodalite Company has recently announced a lighting unit which permits the use of Cine-Kodaks indoors at $f/3.5$ without overloading the ordinary house lighting circuit, which is fused at 10 amperes. Two of these lights, placed to meet the requirements of the individual user, are sufficient to illuminate the Cine-Kodak field up to a distance of 10 or 12 feet. The designing of such a lamp necessitated the extremely efficient use of the available wattage. The reflecting surface is laid out on two paraboloids with their foci both at a point in the plane of the 500-watt lamp filament....The reflectors are manufactured by a patented process in which silver is coated on a master mold either of glass or of a highly polished metal. The silver is backed up with pure copper by an ordinary copper-plating process."