Section Meetings

Atlanta—January 2008

The January meeting, hosted by Turner Broadcasting, was titled "Eat More Fiber." The presentation, sponsored by ADC, was given by Atlanta Section Manager George Wicker, senior account manager for Broadcast Products at ADC and Ron Kleclowski, ADC product manager for fiber optic products. Both gave an enlightening perspective on the technology of fiber. Kleclowski's presentation covered some of its history, the current state of the technology and, most important, its application in today's broadcast workplace. He also discussed expected future developments.

One of the interesting advantages of fiber, noted by Kleclowski, is that a broadcast signal in packet form traveling on a fiber is not subject to the traditional interferences from EMI/RFI-type interference. Other relative benefits and differences between fiber and copper infrastructure and their associated costs were also discussed. After the meeting, Wicker and Kleclowski provided a demonstration of the new "bendable" fiber that defies the current rules of bend radius and showed the new hybrid fiber connector for cameras, which is being submitted to SMPTE for standards approval.

The Atlanta SMPTE chapter holds its meeting on the second Monday of each month, so if you are ever in the Atlanta area, consider this an open invitation to attend.—*T.J. Scott, Section Chair*

Detroit—January 2008

On January 8, the Detroit Section held its meeting at Grace & Wild HD Studios in Farmington Hills, MI. Twenty-five members and guests were in attendance for an informative and interesting presentation titled, "The Many Facets of Up, Down, and Cross Conversions," by Virgil Lowe, chief technology officer, Fortel DTV.

Lowe, a video industry veteran for more than 40 years and founder of Fortel DTV, discussed problems usually encountered in converting video from one form to another, and offered insights into solutions that preserve video quality during these processes. The presentation also included a slide demonstration, which was followed by a Q & A session.—*Harold Miller, Secretary/Treasurer*

Virgil Lowe of Fortel DTV at the Detroit meeting in January.

Hollywood—December 2007

Thirty members and guests attended the last meeting of 2007, which was held at the Academy's Linwood Dunn Theater. In the first half of the meeting, SMPTE President Bob Kisor presented the plaque for "Outstanding Service to the Society" to Section Chair Dick May and a Fellow certificate to John T. Hurst. Both were supposed to receive their honors at the Fall Conference in Brooklyn, NY, last October, but were unable to attend the event.

Linda Harris Mehr, director of the Academy's Margaret Herrick Library, followed with a fascinating description of the holdings of the library, which included slide illustrations. A DVD was also shown, illustrating the assembly and preservation of an original 24-sheet (billboard sized) poster for Cecil B. DeMille's 1926 production of King of Kings.—*Richard May, Section Chair*

Margaret Herrick Library Director Linda Harris Mehr showing image of original "Pinocchio" sheet music.

Hong Kong—December 2007

Hong Kong has entered a new era of digital broadcasting with the official launch of digital terrestrial television, allowing viewers to enjoy HD programs. Oonagh Chan, Secretary/Treasurer of the Hong Section and head of broadcasting services, attended the ceremony, which was held on New Year's Eve.

Donald Tsang, China, Hong Kong special administrative region chief; Frederick Ma, executive secretary for commerce and economic development; Rita Lau permanent secretary for commerce and economic development; and representatives of Hong Kong's two free domestic television stations officiated at the event. Ma stated that digital broadcasting would bring viewers a wider array of quality programming and entertainment, as well as a brand-new audiovisual experience.

Hong Kong is the first in South East Asia to launch a DTTV service with dedicated HD channel and capability of interactive TV through the required middleware. The two local free-to-air TV operators TVB and ATV will simulcast their existing four television channels in digital format, and launch new free channels in SD and HD. It is expected that by mid-2008, 75% of the population will have digital

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transmission and will be able to watch the Beijing Olympics in HD.—*Oonagh Chan, Secretary/Treasurer*

Ohio—January 2008

The Section meeting on January 31, held in the main video auditorium at the Industrial Video Corp. offices in Columbus, was combined with the central Ohio area local SBE Chapter 52. Ohio Section Chair John Owen, Sprint/Nextel Corp., delivered a presentation on the new U.S. government mandated, digital TV converter box coupon program, launched at the beginning of this year. Discussions included the procedures for ordering coupons via phone or online, and their value per coupon in relation to the actual retail costs of the boxes and the differing features to be offered on some of them. Owen also discussed the remaining low-power terrestrial TV stations that will still be left on the air without a digital channel carriage, after the shutdown of analog TV service. Several members inquired about the actual number and type of TV viewers who will be viewing their programs exclusively, from either a rooftop or rabbit ears-type antenna, after all full-power over-the-air analog TV service has been discontinued. A lively Q & A session followed the presentation.—*Gene L. Batey, Secretary/Treasurer*

Mike Janes, director of engineering for the Portland Trail Blazers explains the processing needed to provide an HD signal feed to the new large arena screens in the Portland Rose Garden Arena.

Pacific Northwest—October 2007

The Pacific Northwest held its meeting on October 19, at the Portland Rose Garden Arena, with approximately 20 members in attendance. Host Mike Janes, director of engineering for the Portland Trail Blazers, began the presentation by explaining the initial goal of installing a very large screen for highlight viewing inside the arena.

Janes stated that his team quickly discovered that sending a SD signal to the screen processor does not provide the desired image quality, even though the screen resolution is very close to that of SD resolution. The solution was to provide a HD signal to the screen processor, which then down-converted the signal to its native format. The results met expectations of the engineering team and the fans.

To get an HD signal to the screen, the control room had to be completely re-equipped. Switchers, routers, highlight equipment, graphics generation, and other sundries all had to be HD capable. Given the amount of equipment to be changed, and the short timeframe and limited budget allocated to the project, Janes and his team made choices similar to those that might have been made by a broadcast station in a smaller market. Value was a driver in all decisions, as well as availability. Things had to work, given the short time available to make the switch.

Janes took the group on a tour of the control room, as well as other technical areas of the facility, including post-production rooms. The studio was of particular interest. Space was a primary concern, with the new HD sets designed to move around to accommodate different needs. Janes' team had to think in three dimensions, not just two. Basketball players are slightly above average height, so the studio had to be designed to allow players to fit in shots without interfering with overhead lighting. Most attendees had never seen a green screen quite that tall. The meeting immediately preceded a pre-season game, so Janes was unable to take the group into the arena to see the new screen.

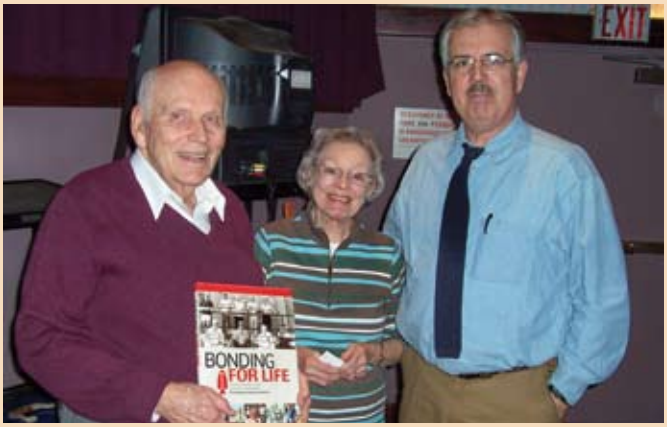
In closing, Janes expressed support for SMPTE and its goals and offered his facility to host future meetings.—*Stephen Burnside, Section Chair*

Rochester—January 2008

On January 9, Tom Hope, a Life Fellow of the Society, spoke to an audience of 40 in the Curtis Theatre at George Eastman House. Hope recounted experiences as a young officer in charge of a photographic unit, with responsibility for both still and cine photography in France and Germany during World War II. Stills were mostly shot using a Speed Graphic 4 x 5 news camera and developed and contact-printed in the unit's own mobile lab. For most cine work, the Bell & Howell silent 35mm Eyemo camera was used with 100-ft rolls of film. A smaller number of 16mm Kodak Cine Special and B&H 16mm cameras were also used. Cine film processing was done in commercial laboratories in London and Paris.

Hope described the photographic training of his group members and making army training films including one on parachuting technique. By the use of high-speed (64 frames/sec) filming it was demonstrated that far fewer leg injuries could be incurred by landing with the feet together, rather than apart, which had been the standard procedure taught to parachutists.

Many stills of war situations were shown—gutted European cities; submarine pens; meetings of U.S., British, and Russian generals; and the surrender of German generals. Hope and his unit were witnesses to the horrendous aftermath of the murder of 1,000 Polish slave laborers in Germany, taking photographs, which are now in the United States Holocaust Museum in Washington, D.C.



L-R: Tom Hope, holding his book *Bonding for Life* about the post-war experiences of U.S. troops, with his wife, MayBeth Hope, and Dr. Patrick Loughney of George Eastman House.

Tom Hope answers a question after his presentation.

The presentation was followed by a lengthy Q & A session. Attendees were able to examine a number of Hope's photographic albums and other WW II artifacts. A very well-illustrated paper on this subject by Tom Hope appeared in the *SMPTE Motion Imaging Journal*, July/August 2007 issue.—*Alan J. Masson, Section Chair*

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Toronto—February 2008

Snowy winter weather did not stop the February meeting titled "Service-Oriented Architecture (SOA)." Four speakers took the stage to discuss what it is and where it is going.

Michael Martin, senior managing consultant, media and entertainment practice, Global Business Services, IBM Canada Ltd., presented a paper, entitled "Linking Content and Business Systems Through a Services-Oriented Architecture–Introduction to the Media Hub Solution Framework." SOA is a strategy that has been in use by banks and hospitals for a long time, but is only recently entering the broadcast world. It treats every request as a service. No single company offers it or owns it. What many broadcast engineers consider an IT responsibility is becoming more and more an area that will involve their input.

Dan Todor, general manager, global technical support, Masstech Group, presented "Broadcast Workf ow Solutions" to address three aspects of SOA roadmaps—past, present, and future. In the past, functions were isolated islands that each provided a service. Currently, a service bus added to the model hides the complexity of the interactions of the functions. In the future, the addition of third-party applications will allow business architects to express creativity without worrying about the intricacies of connecting software and hardware from different suppliers. Todor ended his presentation with three reasons to choose SOA—semantic integration, loose coupling, and managed evolution.

Brian Campanotti, P. Eng, CTO, Front Porch Digital, presented "Content Storage Management: Enabling Advanced File Based Media Workf ows." Even though Canadian broadcasters are quite advanced with the adoption of file-based workf ows (some are in their fourth and fifth generation of servers), operational silos still exist within the IT-centric operations. Before moving to SOA, however, a strong file-based foundation must exist. Using advanced content storage management (CSM) to provide internal "micro" services, SOA can be used to cover the "macro" services to support your workf ows.

Marv Nolan, engineering consultant, AZCAR, presented "SOA-Systems Integrator Perspective." Using the analogy of a house as the SOA, with each room representing a service, every house is going to be different, depending on the family that lives there. Every family member, each representing a different workf ow, will use the rooms differently. When family members are simultaneously using a room, there may be collisions. To move to SOA, therefore, careful consideration is needed for what services are required, what workf ows will utilize them, and how to handle collisions. As with selecting a home, implementing SOA needs to be a phased, methodical approach to ensure success.

The presentations were followed by a Q & A session.—*Marlene Graham, Section Manager*