



Michael Dolan

In this column, we provide interesting historical briefs from the 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 column is sponsored by Television Broadcast Technology, Inc., since March 2001: <http://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/7257346>.

25 Years Ago in the Journal

The August 1997 *Journal* published in “Automated Video Indexing of Very Large Video Libraries” by H. D. Wactlar, A. G. Hauptmann, M. A. Smith, K. V. Pendyala, and D. Garlington: “The Informedia” Project at Carnegie Mellon University has established a large online digital video library, incorporating video assets from WQED/Pittsburgh, BBC-produced content from the Open University (U.K.), and broadcast news. The project is creating intelligent, automatic mechanisms for populating the library and allowing for its full-content and knowledge-based search and video segment retrieval. The library retrieval system can effectively process natural language queries and deliver relevant video data in a compact, subject-specific format, based on information embedded with the video during library creation. The approach described here utilizes several techniques to enable content-based searching and segment retrieval. Content is conveyed in both the narrative (speech and language) and the image.” For the full article, see <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/7243870>

50 Years Ago in the Journal

The August 1972 *Journal* published in “Metrication” by P. M. Clifford

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MA, C. Eng. MIEE, FBKSTS: “Metrication is a word now often heard and usually referred to with disgust as one of these revolting foreign ideas that we get foisted on us nowadays. I hope to show that this is not so and that except in a few cases, the only merit of the units which we are now using is that we are familiar with them—or are we? Who can define a bushel? Or a peck?... The length standards of the Imperial system were originally independent. The inch was the length of the first joint of the thumb (the French for ‘inch’ is ‘pouce’ which means ‘thumb’). The foot, as its name implies, was the length of a foot. The yard was a pace. It was eventually found desirable to inter-relate these independent measures, and convenient round numbers were taken to express the relationships. Hence, 12 inches to the foot and three feet to the yard... I think that eventually, America will not hold out for very long against the metric rest of the world... I think it is worthwhile, and even if I did not, the decisions have already been taken and the wheels of change are in motion.” For the full article, see <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/7233920>

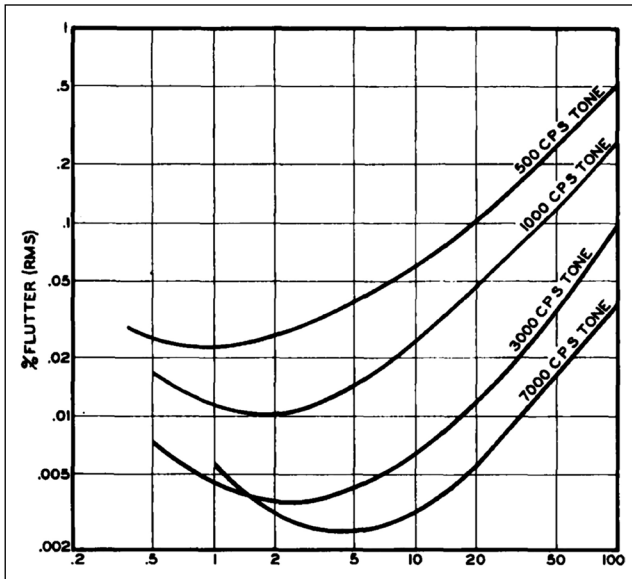
75 Years Ago in the Journal

The August 1947 *Journal* published in: “Proposed Standard Specifications for Flutter or Wow as Related to Sounds Records Report of the SMPE Committee on Sound:” “Distortion

caused by speed variation in recording or reproducing has long been a serious source of quality degradation in sound recording. ‘Flutter’ is the term most generally used for this type of distortion by the motion picture industry, while the broadcast recording field knows it as ‘wow’... For service work, a simpler, portable device was needed in which a direct meter reading of flutter or wow was easily obtained. Such instruments, called flutter bridges, were originally developed by RCA and Western Electric... The term ‘flutter’ relates to any deviation of frequency, which results, in general, from irregular motion in the recording, duplication, or reproduction of a tone, or from deformation of the record. The term ‘wow’ is colloquial and usually refers to deviation of frequency occurring at a relatively low rate as, for example, ‘once-a-revolution’ speed variation of phonograph turntables... The standard flutter test frequency for 35-mm film and for disk records shall be 3.000 ± 15 cps... Curves summarizing the percent flutter, at the threshold for various rates and signal frequencies, which are the result of extensive tests at Bell Telephone Laboratories, are shown in **Fig. 1**.” For the full article, see <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/7251538>

100 Years Ago in the Journal

The October 1922 *Journal* published in “Motion Picture Work in the Philippine Islands” by O. S. Cole: “I wish to thank you for the honor accorded me in admitting me to membership in this Society... I have been asked to make a few remarks about conditions in the Philippine Islands... I can say that we have a very appreciative public among the Filipinos, who are enthusiastic



Minimum perceptible percent flutter for oscillator tones in a small auditorium (Fig. 1, *JSMPE*, August 1947, p. 147).

picture fans... and their tastes in regard to moving pictures run along the same lines, more or less, as among the American people, with the exception perhaps, that in the towns and villages of the provinces, the majority of

the uneducated classes still prefer the blood and thunder serials which were formerly so popular over here. The first moving pictures were shown in Manila in 1899 or 1900, although at that time, they were of course in a very

crude state. A number of small theaters were built and were run intermittently until about 1903, when most of them were forced to close their doors, as the public had become tired of looking at pictures that meant nothing and had no story to tell other than to record motion in photography... But in 1909, moving pictures were revived, and I then entered the game permanently, together with my present partners, although I had had two or three years' experience, commencing in 1898... A film, a hundred meters, or a little more than three hundred feet, was considered a great feature, worthy of special advertisement... For the last five or six years, we have been showing the very best American films... For a number of years, the censoring of films has been in the hands of the Chief of Police of Manila, but usually, he did not exercise his authority as Chief Censor unless a direct complaint was made about a picture." For the full article, see <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/7230069>

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