



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 January 1998 *Journal* published in “An Engineering Perspective” by William C. Miller: “By any measure, this has been an extraordinary year for SMPTE Engineering. Our Technology Committees wrote, revised, or reaffirmed 66 engineering documents... [which] include 20 American National Standards, 38 Recommended Practices, and eight Engineering Guidelines...the EBU/SMPTE Task Force on the Harmonization of Standards for the Exchange of Program Material as Bitstreams,...whose 80 members include representatives from all of the industries involved, hailing from three continents...the co-chairmen of the Task Force are Horst Schachlbauer, IRT, and S. Merrill Weiss, SMPTE’s Engineering Director for Television...making SMPTE’s Standards, Recommended Practices, and Engineering Guidelines available on CD-ROM and I am pleased to report we will do so during the first half of 1998...The Society is in the process of setting up a Registration Authority, which is an organization that registers identifiers for a particular purpose so

that the same identifier is never used twice within a certain context. We have been designated to act as Registration Authority for ATSC Unique Program Identifiers (U-PIDs), SMPTE-administered Universal Labels, and MPEG Format Identifiers. The latter designation has been ratified by the Joint Technology Council JTC-1 of ISO and IEC...I want to thank particularly the more than 700 volunteers who actively participate in our Technology Committees and their subgroups.” For the full article, see <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/7243979>

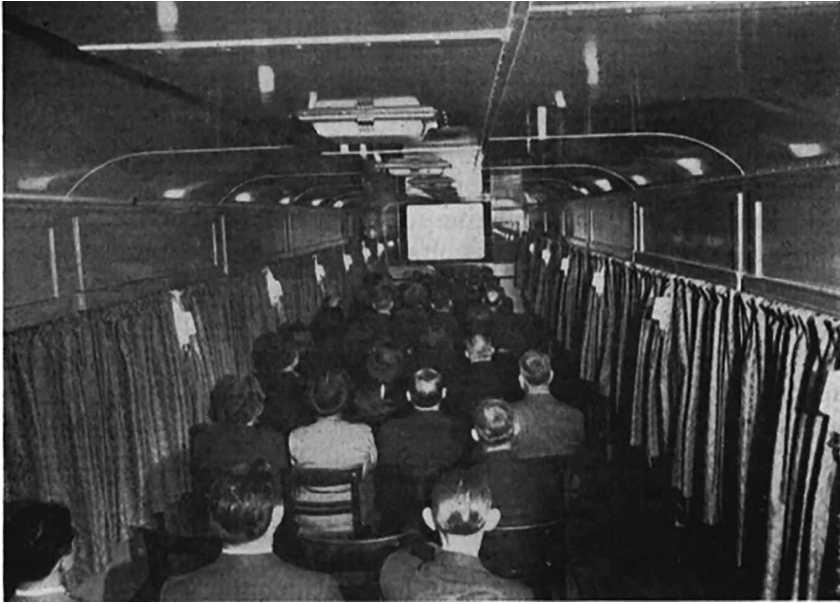
50 Years Ago in the Journal

The January 1973 *Journal* published in “Metrication—Publication Policy—Metric/English System:” “At the Editorial Meetings on 3 May 1972, a general policy of providing metric units in journal texts was approved, with alternate system units shown parenthetically for what an author has supplied. This policy is to be followed as closely as possible to be consistent with that for SMPTE Recommended Practices and American National standards as adopted by the SMPTE Standards Committee: ‘All nongeometric specifications in SMPTE-sponsored American National Standards and

SMPTE Recommended Practices shall be in terms of SI (International System) units with conversion to the English system according to ISO practices or standards where needed. For geometric dimensioning, however, that is, those specifications of the plane angle, length, and area, the English or inch system shall remain as primary (with conversion to SI units) unless the basic design is certified in SI units by the proposer of the standard. When such certification is obtained, the committee may adopt SI units as primary for all specifications and characteristics.” For the full article, see <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/7233370>

75 Years Ago in the Journal

The January 1948 *Journal* published in “Sound Motion Pictures for Passenger Trains” by John G. Bitel: “The postwar plans of many industries have led the public to expect unique developments. In line with this thought, the Chesapeake and Ohio Railway Company decided, among other innovations, to present motion pictures as a form of relaxation for passengers on their deluxe passenger trains. The long backlog in the railroad car building program has delayed the building of a special theater car. Instead, it was decided to convert existing dining cars for the dual purpose of showing full-length feature films and still retain the use of the car for restaurant service. The 60-foot twin-unit diner car, The George Washington, was selected... A total of 343 square feet of floor area is provided for 50 chairs and a two-foot aisle for through traffic... For continuous performance, dual 16-mm projectors were installed... the new RCA Model PG-201 and



General view of a diner, showing passengers seated for presentation (Fig. 1 from *JSMPE*, January 1948, p. 65).

the Natco Model 3015.” For the full article, see <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/7236203>

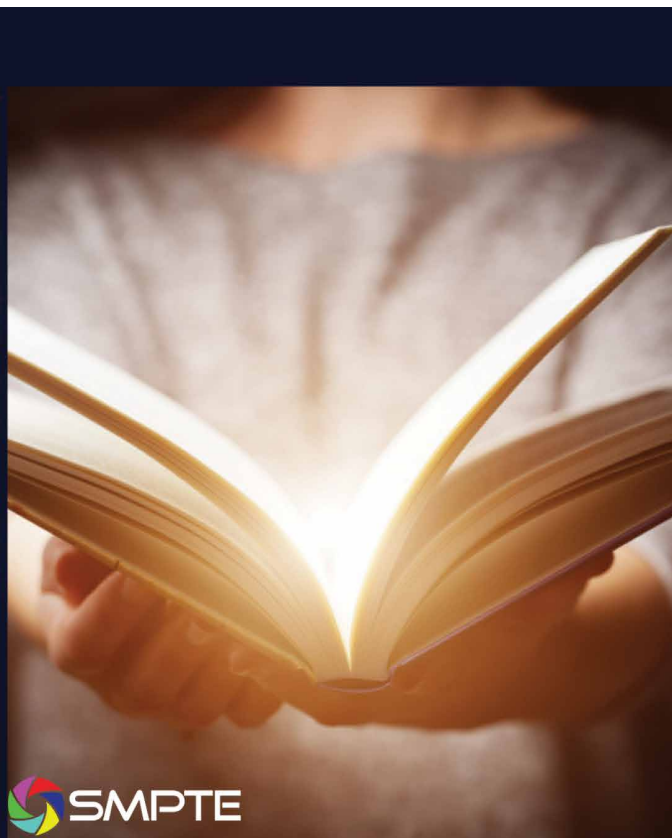
100 Years Ago in the Journal

The May 1923 *Journal* published in “Radio Photographs, Radio Movies,

and Radio Vision” by C. Francis Jenkins: “to send pictures electrically, and to see by wire, that is, ‘television,’ are very old, dating back well-nigh a 100 years. And as radio differs from wire only as a means of carrying the picture characteristics over

the intervening distance between stations, with the advantages in favor of radio, it is quite natural that the early workers should immediately begin the adaptation of their apparatus to radio as soon as radio was available... Perhaps, the very age of this scheme, and also that there are no patents thereon to prevent anyone from using it, explains the reason it has been employed so often by so many... All these workers have adopted the cylinder method of sending and receiving, and all have arrived at approximately the same stage of development, stopped by the physical limitations of the scheme itself. Quite obviously, it is not with the cylinder and-dot-and-dash schemes that we will ever get television. Development toward ‘television,’ or as I prefer to call it, Radio Vision, contemplates the sending from a flat surface and receiving on a flat surface, and a modulation which will give not only the highlights and shadows of photographs, but the half-tone values also.” For the full article, see <https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/document/7230090>

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