



BY MICHAEL DOLAN



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### 25 Years Ago in the Journal

The October 2000 *Journal* published in: “Revelations on the Coming of Digital Cinema” by Hugh R. Heinsohn, “Digital cinema has finally become a real possibility due to recent advances in electronic projection technology. Various industry organizations, equipment manufacturers and studios are working to develop practical systems that will be used to replace film as the primary distribution medium for feature productions... At this time, there is no general agreement about the central question for digital cinema. Are we trying to: A. Create a system that duplicates or even incrementally improves on the best quality 35mm theatrical film experience? B. Create a system that goes well beyond today’s experience and show movies with substantially improved visual fidelity that provides a much more absorbing, realistic environment for feature films? (Obviously, a system like this might ultimately change the way movies are made and promoted and perhaps even raise the expectations of the audience.) Several people have pointed out something resembling Option B. has been available for about 50 years and yet is hardly ever used: 65mm film.” For the full article, see: <https://tinyurl.com/mwu2b9ax>

### 50 Years Ago in the Journal

The October 1975 *Journal* published in: “Slow-Scan Television System for a Balloon-Borne Telescope” by Noboru Niwa, “A narrow-band television system for space observation utilizing an image-memory tube has been developed and used as a finder system for a balloon-borne solar telescope. Slow-scan video signal from the camera or FM receiver is supplied to a slow-scan monitor. The pictures on the screen are recorded by a motor-driven 35mm film camera. The slow-scan pictures are converted to the standard scanning rate by a scan converter with two memory tubes. This system has been used with 15,000 m3 balloons since 1971 as a finder system for a balloon-borne solar telescope jointly with a group of the Tokyo Astronomical Observatory, University of Tokyo. The image of the telescope is divided by a half mirror. One optical path is for an on-board

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.



Camera with 25mm lens (**Fig. 1** from *JSMPT*, Oct. 1975, p. 84.).

motor-driven film camera. The other is for the television camera. The usefulness of the television system as a real-time finder was proved by the test flight in 1971 using a 48-mm diam solar telescope. In 1972 and 1973, 100-mm-diam and 17-m composite-focal-length solar telescope was used to make photographs of the solar surface.” For the full article, see: <https://tinyurl.com/55c2ycct>

## 75 Years Ago in the Journal

The October 1950 *Journal* published in: “The High-Speed Photography of Underwater Explosions” by Paul M. Fye, “A brief review of the techniques used in photographing underwater explosions at the Underwater Explosives Research Laboratory and the Naval Ordnance Laboratory for the past several years will be given. The Fastax (35-Mm), Eastman Hi-Speed and a rotating-mirror frame camera have obtained pictures ranging in speed from 2000 to 30,000 frames/sec. Explosions of charges

## THE USEFULNESS OF THE TELEVISION SYSTEM AS A REAL-TIME FINDER WAS PROVED BY THE TEST FLIGHT IN 1971 USING A 48-MM DIAM SOLAR TELESCOPE.

weighing up to one pound have been photographed at depths down to two miles. In the very deep water photography the equipment which synchronized the explosion with the flashbulbs, timers, etc., was self-started by means of a pressure switch.” For the full article, see: <https://tinyurl.com/4awvvttd>

## 100 Years Ago in the Journal

The September 1925 *Transactions* published in: “A Museum of Motion Picture History” by T. K. Peters: “...the Society who are far better fitted to take up the task, as for instance, Mr. Jenkins, who has made a beginning in this direction by placing in the Smithsonian Institution some of his first apparatus...in a measure he has brought this condition about, for it was due to my perusal of his book, *Animated Pictures* which I purchased in 1897, that I became fired with the ambition to also make Chrono-photographic pictures, or in other and more modern language become a “movie”...I present the idea to the Society for its earnest consideration as a body or as individuals, with the hope that in the near future it may be a realization. Discussion...Mr. Porter: I suggest that the Society appoint a Historical Committee of the Society of Motion Picture Engineers. Motion carried to appoint a Historical Committee of the Society.” For the full article, see: <https://tinyurl.com/2swm57n9>

DOI: 10.5594/JMI.2025/ZRWB5953  
Date of publication: 1 October 2025