



the

Journal



50th ISSUE

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A Publication of the Association of Motion Picture Sound

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP



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COVER: Boom Op, Arthur Fenn, working with Production Mixer Simon Hayes, up to his waist in wintery seas all for the sake of that 'special' wave. The production is *Sixty Six*, a comedy drama from Working Title, that looks at a young Jewish boy's Bar Mitzvah that just so happens to fall on the same day as the 1966 World Cup Final.

WELCOME to this, the 50th issue of AMPS' quarterly publication. As you can see from the feature inside, the first few issues really were newsletters, single-sided A4 sheets, but over the following 15 years it slowly developed into the publication you have in your hands, the fifth edition of the Journal.

We have received a lot of positive comments about the new Journal, which is appreciated. However we would like to hear any ideas you may have for how it might be improved; what you would like to read; what information you would like to see in these pages... and so on.

Even if we were unable to realise your suggestions immediately it would help with future planning.

On behalf of the AMPS Council and the Journal I would like to wish all AMPS members, their families and colleagues, a very Merry Christmas, and (hopefully) a Prosperous New Year.

Keith Spencer-Allen AMPS
Journal Editor

The AMPS Journal ('The Journal') is published quarterly by the Association of Motion Picture Sound

It is distributed to all members and associated organisations. A version of the Journal is also available on-line through the AMPS website at (www.amps.net). The Journal is a forum for discussion and it should not be assumed that all opinions expressed are necessarily those of AMPS.

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NEWS, ITEMS & ODDMENTS

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

CineAsia 2005 (www.cinemaexpo.com)
- December 13-15, 2005 - Beijing, China

VideoForum 2006 (www.videoforum.co.uk)
- February 07-09, 2006 - Earls Court, London
- (with i-deliver Expo and TV Tech)

CSTB 2006 (www.midexpo.ru)
- February 7-10, 2006 - Moscow, Russia

ShoWest 2006 (www.cinemaexpo.com)
- March 13-16, 2006 - Las Vegas, USA

NAB 2006 (www.nabshow.com)
- April 22-27, 2006 - Las Vegas, USA

120th AES Convention (www.aes.org)
- May 20-23, 2006 - Paris, France

Broadcast Live! (ex Broadcast Production Show)
(www.broadcastproductionshow.com)
- June 20-22, 2006 - Earls Court, London

BroadcastAsia 2006 (www.broadcast-asia.com)
- June 20-23, 2006 - Singapore

IBC2006 (www.ibc.org)
- September 07-12, 2006 - Amsterdam, Netherlands

121st AES Convention (www.aes.org)
- October 06-09, 2006 - San Francisco, USA

24th Tonmeistertagung (www.tonmeister.de)
- November 16-19, 2006 - Leipzig, Germany

NAB 2007 (www.nab.org)
- April 14-19, 2007 - Las Vegas, USA

BroadcastAsia 2007 (www.broadcast-asia.com)
- 19-22 June, 2007 - Singapore -

*This is a list of all the forthcoming industry events that have been announced to date. All will be of interest to AMPS members, to varying degrees - check their web-sites for more details. Let us know (journal@amps.net) if we've missed any relevant shows. **Editor***

▶▶ **Stolen Focusrite:** Take care if you are offered any Focusrite (or sister company Novation) products from outside the normal distribution channels. In mid-August they suffered a major burglary and the stolen items included a large amount of stock including classic Reds, ISA and Platinum rack-mount units, Novation X-Station keyboards and the recently launched Safire desktop interface. A full list of the missing units with serial numbers can be found at www.focusrite.com/stolen together with details of the rewards offered for information

▶▶ **Steve Dalby**, former Head of Sound at Ealing Studios, and later at Twickenham Studios, is 95 years old this month. He lives in retirement at Hayes -- if anyone would like to get in touch please ask Peter Musgrave for details on 01895 635010.

▶▶ **CTBF Lottery** : The Cinema & Television Benevolent Fund have launched their own fund raising lottery, with draws taking place every four weeks. Every entry costs £1 and payments can be made by cheque/postal order, standing order or debit/credit card. CTBF Lottery Members will be given a unique number and the winning numbers are randomly selected by computer. Prizes are 1st prize £450, 2nd prize £200 and 3rd prize £100 and every quarter there is a special 1st Prize of £1,000!

Further details can be found at www.ctbf.co.uk/donations/lottery.html; or by calling the Lottery Hotline number: 0870 050 1694

The CTBF supports people facing hardship, who worked 'behind the camera' in the film, cinema, commercial television and affiliated industries and helps improve the lives of thousands of beneficiaries a year.

▶▶ **On-Set Noise** : A version of the AMPS On-Set Noise publication was published in the Spring edition of *Showreel*. It is worthwhile noting that many years after its first publication this influential AMPS report is still hard at work earning its keep!

▶▶ **Broadcast Production Show:** A few weeks ago the organisers of the Broadcast Production Show, an event that AMPS has been supporting for the last five years, announced that the event was being renamed as Broadcast Live!, and the time of the show moved back from May 30- June 01, 2006 to June 20-22, 2006, although still at Earls Court, London. This appears to be an attempt to reposition the event to include a creative element left without a home due to the cancellation of another London trade show with that function, very close in timing. At present no decision has been taken on continuing AMPS support for an event that, with the title Broadcast Live, would now appear to have less connection with AMPS activities although we await further details, and a decision will follow.

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NEWS, ITEMS & ODDMENTS

The Journal received a request to publish a list of the members of the AMPS Council, and so here it is. With the Council elections due in January 2006 there will be changes and this is to be covered in the Journal after the AGM.

THE COUNCIL OF AMPS

Andrew Boulton

Chairman

Graham Hartstone

Vice-Chairman

Patrick Heigham

Membership Sec

Colin Broad

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Colin Chapman

David Humphries

Sandy MacRae

Alan Sallabank

Chris Munro

Ian Sands

Brian Simmons

Co-opted Council Member

Anthony Faust

ampscouncil@amps.net

▶ **DVD MOVES:** There are continued signs of the importance of the DVD market to the US film industry to be found in recent surveys and sales figures. In a poll conducted for the Associated Press news agency and AOL News in the US, 73% of adults said they preferred watching movies at home on DVD, video or pay-per-view to going to a cinema while just 22% expressed a preference for the cinema. Eighty percent said they use a DVD player at home. In parallel the US film business is having a hard time with the number of cinema-goers dropping for the last two years from a high of 1.63 billion in 2002 to a projected 1.34 for 2005. US box office revenues are 6.4% down on the same period of 2004 although last year's returns did show a small increase due to higher ticket prices. Whether the rise of DVD is responsible for this is not clear but the relative sizes of the film and DVD markets for 2004 are an indication - DVD sales and rentals totalled \$21.2bn while movies took \$9.4bn at the US domestic box office, a factor of over two times.

Set against this there were several films that did well at the US Box office such as *Star Wars: Episode III - Revenge of the Sith*, *War of the Worlds*, *Batman Begins*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, and the French documentary film *March Of The Penguins*, by director Luc Jacquet, which follows the penguins' mating season, was a surprise success. This led to an insightful quote from Steven Friedlander, head of distribution for Warner Independent Pictures, commenting on the difficult market.

"In an ideal world, people would say 'OK, we have to think more creatively, we have to think outside the box and come up with new and different things. But I'm afraid what's going to happen is, we're all going to sit in a room and say 'We need more penguin movies!'"

▶ **RAISING THE WURLITZER:** Those who like the idea of theatre organs might be interested in an organ restoration appeal with a slight difference. The Wurlitzer at the Granada Tooting (now Gala Bingo) is apparently in reasonable shape but it is entombed under the stage area. Organist and restoration expert, Len Rawle, who is heading the appeal said that, "I am pleased to say the organ remains completely intact, including Tuned Sleigh Bells, Marimba, Vibraphone and all the usual percussion and silent picture effects." The organ used to make regular radio broadcasts and recordings and is a four manual console with the pipes laid in shallow understage areas that span the width of the building. The appeal is largely for the building work to expose the organ and allow it to rise from the floor and make music in what is a Grade 1 listed Gothic-style interior. The Gala management are supportive and have contributed to the project and English Heritage are due to become involved. Further details can be found at www.lenrawle.co.uk where you learn that Mr Rawle has a long history of restoring large Wurlitzers and also has the Empire Leicester Square's Wurlitzer in his home!

▶ **EUROPEAN CINEMA ATTENDANCE RISING:** A Screen Digest report says that a record number of people visited cinemas in Western Europe in 2004, with admissions reaching 896.6 million, an increase of nearly 50 million on 2003. Ireland, Greece and Austria are predicted, together with the UK, as being the countries most likely to experience largest growth in cinema admissions, with Spain to join the UK, France and Germany with box office receipts over \$1 billion by 2009. And the screens themselves - over 50% of all screens are now in multiplexes in Western Europe.

FROM THE MEMBERSHIP DESK

membership@amps.net



Having, in the last issue, admonished those guilty of constructing inaccurate CV's, it's probably now time to remind all members who might get a screen credit, to push for the suffix '**AMPS**' to be added. I caught an episode of a drama series recently on ITV1 which carried this suffix for the Boom Op but not for the Production Mixer. (Although both are currently AMPS members, it's possible that the programme had completed post-production before the latter joined us)

So ask for it! And if successful, let the office know. Ditto if unsuccessful, since we should like to lobby production companies who refuse this acknowledgement.

Having checked through my records, the following members are now entitled to FULL AMPS Membership :

Tom Vandyk

Aaron Coot

Richard Lewis

Darko Mocilnikar

And **Rikki Hanson** moves from Supplementary to Associate Membership.

Congratulations to all.

Pat Heigham AMPS
Membership Secretary

THE NAMES BEHIND THE UNITS · THE NAMES BEHIND THE UNITS · THE NAMES BEHIND THE UNITS



Lord William Thomas Kelvin

KELVIN - Unit of Thermodynamic temperature, symbol K. Named after Lord William Thomas Kelvin (1824-1907). Scottish physicist. He was the first physicist to take notice of Joule's work on heat and press for its recognition. They worked together, discovering the Joule-Kelvin effect. Both also made significant contributions to the science of thermodynamics. In 1848 Kelvin established the temperature of Absolute Zero as that when the motion of particles ceases and suggested a temperature scale now known as the Kelvin scale. In the 1860s he worked on the electrical properties of cables in conjunction with the laying of the first transatlantic submarine telegraph cable. For his contribution to the work he was knighted in 1896 and later that year created a Baron.

Kelvin - SI unit of thermodynamic temperature equal to $1/273.16$ of the thermodynamic temperature of the the triple point of water. (Work that one out!)

Bob Allen

AMPS CHARITY OIVINGDEAN HALL SCHOOL

When this school was adopted as AMPS' new charity, we inquired as to what equipment would be useful to them for which we could set an achievable target.

To go with the refurbishment of their drama and assembly hall, a commercial text titling display was suggested. As mentioned in Issue 47, Stagertext manufacture and install captioning units in theatres and opera venues to enable persons with hearing disabilities to follow the performance.

However, AMPS' own technical wizard, Colin Broad thought that a more versatile system might be engineered using a laptop computer running into a video projector. Within two days, he had written a program and demonstrated this to an AMPS Council meeting.

The extra advantage of this idea is that the projector can also be used to show DVDs or TV programmes on to a large screen. Colin and Pat Heigham took a demonstration kit down to the school just after it broke up for the summer holidays and met up with David King, the Director of Finance and Claire Simons, who co-ordinates fundraising.

We left a written resumé of our ideas for perusal by Deborah Carter, the new headteacher and Amanda Jordan, our original contact at the school.

They are excited about our proposals for the system and we now intend liaising with their architect to discuss projector and screen mountings and cabling to be installed during the refurbishment programme.

A 'shopping list' is being drawn up and at this point the Council would like to appeal to any of our Sustaining Members who might be able to help by obtaining the required equipment at substantial discount, or even donate individual items!

Our donations to the school started in February this year with £322. Thanks to the kindness and co-operation of the participating Guilds, raffles are being run at the film shows and the most recent cheque sent this November brings the running total to over £1,000.

But don't stop! We need at least three times this!

You all enjoy your sense of hearing which enables you to work in Sound, so please remember to fill the blue collecting boxes and to bring them to the AGM, or a cheque for the value of the contents, made payable to Ovingdean Hall School (Please send this via the AMPS office, as we can then track our donations).

In thanking us for the latest cheque, Deborah Carter says: "All is going very well here at the school. In August we received our exam results. On average the students gained 6 GCSEs and 4 Entry Level Certificates. The majority of the Entry Level Certificates are graded 3 which is the highest possible score for this type of exam. We are also delighted that a number of our students have gone on to our Further Education Unit where they have the chance to attend mainstream college and go on work placements.

With thanks and best wishes to everyone at AMPS."



Ovingdean House School's Christmas show last year was Santa's Elf and this image shows Santa and an elf!

MEETING REPORT

DOLBY EVENING : THE JOURNEY OF A MIX

AMPS invited Andrea Bogarto and Graham Edmondson from Dolby along to Pinewood's Theatre 7 in August to talk to an audience of AMPS, APPS and IBS members about multichannel audio and Dolby's vision for the future.

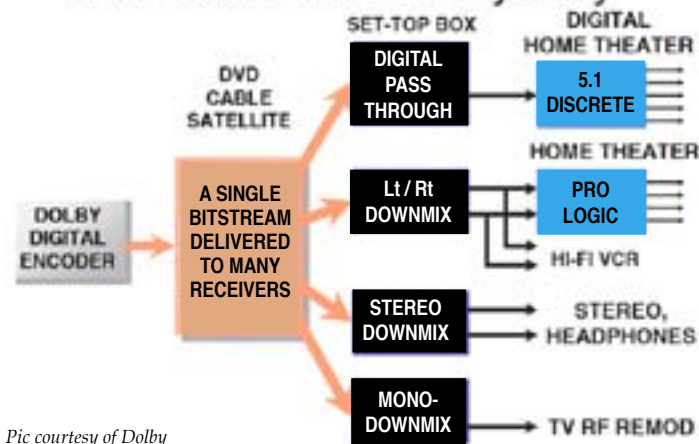
The meeting opened by looking at the current position of Dolby multichannel audio - with Dolby Digital in cinemas, mostly on 35mm, and in homes via DVD; plus the wide existing user base who've installed Dolby Pro Logic around their TVs to enjoy the consumer version of LCRS. In the future they saw D-Cinema replacing film, and even tape, with encrypted HiDef productions being beamed-in via satellite to the cinema's hard drive complete with reams of metadata to control its presentation and handle all the necessary security and licensing issues. And in the home they envisaged HiDef DVDs and HiDef digital television transmissions potentially all with Dolby 5.1 feeding into decoders capable of using the data stream's metadata to downmix the audio component to suit the viewer's equipment and circumstances. This might mean creating a Dolby Pro Logic mix, a straight stereo mix or even a mono mix from the initial 5.1 data stream; while also adjusting the dynamic range and the relative balance between the dialogue and the music and effects so the film can be enjoyed with a variety of systems and listening environments.

One important point made about mixdowns was that the Low Frequency Effects channel (the .1 in 5.1) is not included and so mixers are warned only to use the LFE for optional enhancement and nothing vital. There was some discussion about the practicalities of this and whether or not it was necessary to do a separate stereo mix rather than relying on the automatic downmix

function. The restriction here is that many broadcasters will resist taking up valuable bandwidth with a second audio stream and so the single 5.1 mix has to be the basis for everything.

This is not the case with DVDs where there is probably sufficient space for a separate stereo mix; and also, of course, with cinema sound where the Digital and Matrix mixes are separate and so can be given individual attention – budget allowing). Another interesting point made was that cinema surround speakers are calibrated 3dB

How To Please Everybody



Pic courtesy of Dolby

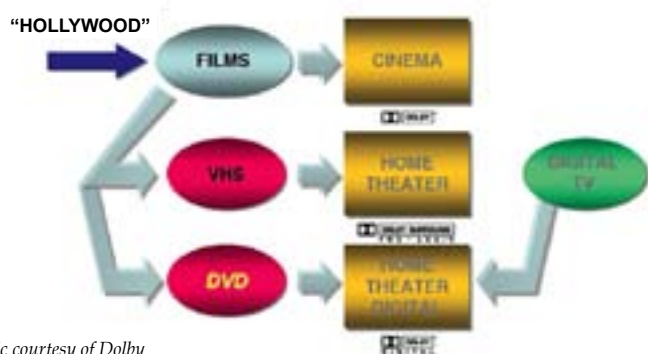
down compared to a domestic system so playing back a DVD in a theatre requires adjustments to be made.

Other topics of discussion included: Dolby Digital Plus – an enhanced form of AC3 (the core technology upon which Dolby 5.1 is based) allowing a variable bit rate including a lower rate to suit broadcast applications. Dolby E – the de facto standard format for transporting up to 8 channels of digital audio on a single AES pair through broadcast production, editing and post. D-Cinema - Dolby's HiDef digital cinema solution, with its potential 16-channels of audio plus metadata, to provide a 5.1 mixdown.

And we got to see and listen to various examples on video via a HiDef projector kindly provided by Max Bell - our thanks to him. Many thanks too to Andrea and Graham for an informative and entertaining evening and to Pinewood Studios for providing a really excellent venue in Theatre 7.

Jim Betteridge AMPS

How Multichannel audio came home



Pic courtesy of Dolby



YET MORE BINAURAL IDEAS

"A Device for Controlling the Acoustic Power of the Human Voice or of the Sound of the Sound of a Musical Instrument and the like."

The above illustration and title are taken from a patent specification applied for by a Johanna Blaschke of Vienna in 1930.

The concept is that this device would be worn such that the 'sound catchers', concave fittings either side that were about three times the size of the ear, would be placed in front of the ear. This was to prevent the ear receiving direct sound, just reflected or indirect sound waves *"and thus enable the speaker, singer, musician and so forth to control the acoustic power, power, intonation and the like of his voice or instrument"*

We've assumed, from the patent wording, that this was to be worn by the person who is, or controls, the sound source with the idea being that by not hearing the direct sound they are more able to judge the sound being heard by listeners and react accordingly. Unsurprisingly, the patent was not accepted and the application became void.

Research by Bob Allen

LETTERS

The following letter didn't come directly to the Journal but was part of a correspondence with the Membership Secretary following receipt of a letter of resignation from AMPS. The Mem Sec sent a friendly query to ask why and the following was received. As this letter does reflect a current debate in some sections of the industry we sought Matthew Desorgher's permission to publish, which he generously gave. AMPS wishes him well.

Dear Patrick

I took the decision to leave the industry after approximately 25 years because of the ever increasing demand on technicians within an industry now more concerned with cost than quality!

The hours were getting longer with no increase in payment, weekends became a thing of the past and young production managers seemed more concerned with signing up free trainees than employing quality technicians with many years experience on a sensible deal!

As a result of this I found myself working more often on back-to-back projects in order to maintain my income instead of taking the breaks between projects I had in the past. This in turn, along with the 6 day week and midweek rest days, meant that family life was quickly becoming lost and our life together was suffering.

I am now working as a driving instructor and see my family every single day of the week! It was a major switch but worth it just for the life I have now regained.

I am still in touch with what goes on via John Rodda whom I worked with for many years and will follow with interest the work versus life debate which the industry must have if it is to survive.

Regards to all.

Matthew Desorgher
Red Driving School

Dear AMPS

Well, thanks to our fabulous government's play with the tax rules for film making, I'm doing very little - nothing in fact, and if this working drought lasts too much longer, being a relative newcomer to the industry, I won't survive Christmas. It galls me that it really matters very little, how skilled, talented or committed you are.

All these things count very little in actually getting any work. And since there is a shortage of work out there, I am one of the unfortunate ones who suffer.

Regards

Lauren Walker AMPS

Although setting the industry to rights is beyond AMPS' remit, we are pleased to air opinions that contribute to a wider debate. Ed

DO THE NUMBERS ADD UP...

...To A Good Recording?

John Owens of Nagra Audio takes a practical look at the role of numbers in making a good recording. Does higher guarantee better?

In the days of analogue tape, recordings were not only dependent upon the quality of the recorder, pre-amplifiers and microphones but also on the limitations of the recording tape. Artifacts such as wow and flutter, tape hiss, even print-through, along with limitations of distortion, equalisation and bias had tremendous effects on the quality of recordings, not to mention the alignment of the tape transports, as often tapes were recorded on one machine and played back on another. Today, thanks to digital technologies, all of these media and transport related problems have been removed, and the quality relies more heavily on other parameters, which are often either misunderstood or simply ignored.

For example there is a common perception today that a 'better' recording will result if a recorder capable of making 24-bit 96 kHz recordings is used instead of one operating at 16-bit 44.1 kHz. Without trying to define *a better recording* it is interesting to look at the critical factors behind such a presumption.

The word length 16, 18, 20 or 24-bits can be related to two specific areas of the recording chain: Firstly the word length used by the A/D when digitising the analogue signal, and secondly the word length which is actually recorded on the media. The latter needs to be at least equal to the A/D in the record chain, however it is perfectly reasonable to record a 24-bit word length derived from a 20 or even 16-bit A/D converter. In such a case, the least significant bits (LSB's) will

simply be recorded as zeroes and will serve purely to make the bit stream compatible with other equipment of the same format, having no bearing on the audio quality. Therefore to assume that a 24-bit audio signal was created using a 24 bit A/D converter is purely hypothetical.

Concerning the sampling frequency which is chosen, there have been many studies arguing the virtues of higher sampling frequencies, and without side tracking too much, it is safe to say that the more audio information that is recorded at the outset, the better the chance of restituting the original sound later, becomes. It is perhaps simply preferable to decide which sampling frequency to use depending on each particular recording.

What really influences a good recording?

It should be remembered that sound is generated as an analogue signal and is perceived by the human ear as an analogue signal. Several critical factors such as microphone choice, placement and recording environment are far more important than the word length and sampling frequency or even the recorder chosen. But, assuming these practical factors are well understood, then the last remaining factor, as far as a recorder are concerned, is the audio chain itself in terms of level, frequency response and dynamic range. These factors in themselves have an equally important bearing on the recording and, if misunderstood or misused, can produce poor recordings even with the best recording equipment.

Level is probably one of the most difficult points to discuss as there is no 'golden rule' or formula for setting it, and the setting will have a bearing on the quality of the recorded sound. It is however important to remember that unlike the old analogue days when a signal peaking comfortably at +3 or +6 dB above



maximum level was quite normal, where the gentle progressive distortion introduced gave warmth and depth to the recording. In the digital world this is impossible as digital chains do not allow this approach and therefore level setting is far more critical than in the past. A digital signal cannot get 'louder' than 0 dB or in digital terms '7FFF' for a 16-bit sample, and once this point is reached distortion produced is total. So in principle, one tries to record as close to this point as possible, without going over it, to ensure maximum use of the available dynamic range of the digital system. In reality though, as the generally accepted tone reference is -18dB, the peaks will be around -10 dB at best. This insinuates that the average or mean audio level will probably be some 6 to 8 dB below this i.e. around the -16 to -18 dB point.

Now, as the useable dynamic range in digital terms is calculated at 6 dB per bit, a 16-bit system should have a useable dynamic range of 96 dB (although in reality this equates to about 90 dB), starting from the '0' point, and counting back to -90 dB. If the recording level is peaking at around -10 dB then the maximum available dynamic range is only in fact about 80 dB. In this scenario, with the best will in the world, you are only making a 13 to 14 bit recording.

If we now look at the microphone pre-amplifier stages, a dynamic range of 120 dB can be considered as the best currently available in any audio recorder, and therefore, using this to its absolute maximum ability your digital level is only going to brush the 20-bit mark, so one could argue as to the advantage of using 24 bits, in audio terms is somewhat academic.

This being said, if one looks at a microphone preamplifier stage and sees that its dynamic range is limited to say 85 dB, there seems little point in worrying whether the recording is 16, 18, 20 or 24-bit and it will make absolutely no difference to the 'quality' of the recording.

A frequently heard comment is "Using external 24/96 converters makes it sound so much better"; well in fact this is purely because such external converters are relatively expensive pieces of equipment, and contain high quality analogue stages. Hence the subjective improvement has little to do with the number of bits or sampling frequency.

The sampling frequency and frequency response go hand-in-hand really, and although using the Nyquist theory, 44.1 kHz is sufficient to record perfectly up to 22.05 kHz bandwidth, using higher sampling frequencies does appear to reconstitute the original sound more accurately.



In conclusion, sound recording is a combination of art and science, and many years experience enables the correct choices of equipment to be made for any particular recording, but complicated technical explanations, often imply that better recordings are made using certain technologies. However, the quality and positioning of the microphones, the analogue pre-amplifiers and their usable dynamic range is far more important than the digital word length or sampling frequency. Some manufacturers will encourage the belief that these technical specifications are of critical importance when, in fact, much of the time they are completely irrelevant. This may simply be because it is relatively easy to design circuits using high bit depth converters at high sampling frequencies, rather than designing analogue microphone pre-amplifiers with high gain, wide dynamic range and low distortion. The best way to judge a piece of equipment is to listen to the recording rather than reading the glossy brochures.

John Owens
Nagra Audio, Switzerland



THE JOURNAL REACHES NUMBER 50

Never being one to avoid an occasion to celebrate, on reaching the Issue 50 of the AMPS quarterly publication, it seems appropriate, in a quiet way. Our heading is of course something of an exaggeration because the publication that you hold in your hands is in fact only the fifth AMPS *Journal* in the current form. However when the Journal was launched it was decided to continue the numbering used in the AMPS *Newsletter* that preceded it as the Journal was developed out of its fourteen years of publication.



Newsletter No 1

The very first issue (March 1990/No 1) was a true 'newsletter', a single-sided A4 sheet, produced by David Old, who was then AMPS Secretary. It carried a report about the Inaugural General Meeting of the newly formed AMPS; advance notice of a Technical Discussion Meeting of the subject of Phraseology - standardisation of terms - and an announcement of the closing date for the original AMPS Logo Competition.

Gradually the size of the Newsletter increased, Bob Allen taking over as Editor from issue No 3; acquiring a recognisable form by issue No 4 and the addition of KSA to the editorial team. Issue No 6 saw us 'printing' on both sides of the paper, an issue size of between 6-8 pages, all b&w, but we'd reached a regular quarterly schedule.

By issue No 17, the design had been modified, the page count was up to twelve and we were running a hybrid production process where Bob would originate 90% of the material. post it down to KSA who would key it into a computer, run out the text in columns suitable for use in the Newsletter, post them back to Bob who would edit them, create a rough layout, add any pictures that



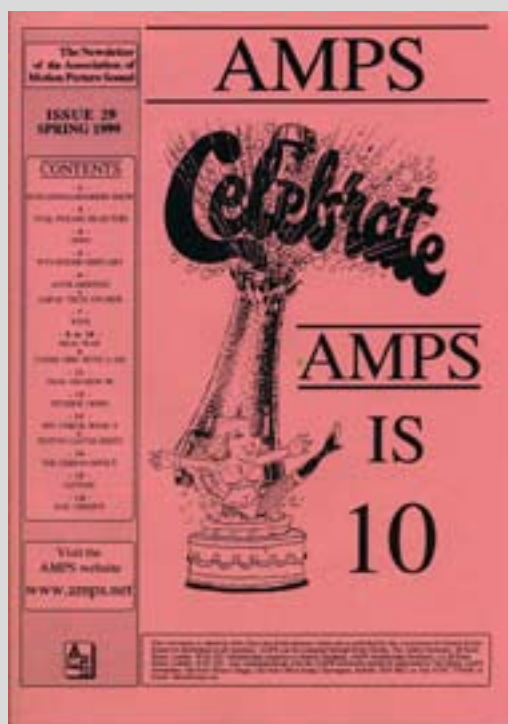
Newsletter No 3

had been painstakingly resized in a friendly local copy shop, and post them back to KSA. The layouts were then recreated on the computer with spaces for the pictures and other artwork, and then all the elements pasted up (with glue) to create the master pages. These were then mailed back to Bob who oversaw the photocopying, stuffed the newsletters into envelopes, added the address label and postage, and delivered the lot to Post Office. The work load for Bob was enormous not helped by the fact that to obtain sufficient numbers



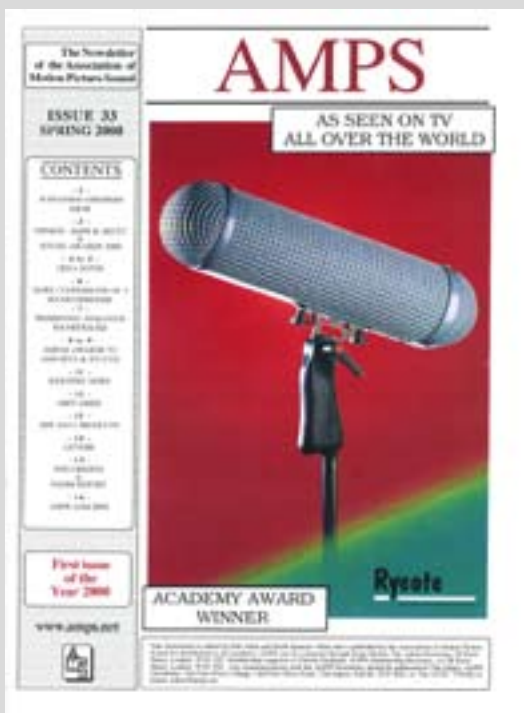
Newsletter No 17

of postage stamps for the Newsletter mailout frequently entailed a journey round several of the small Post Offices in his part of rural Suffolk. Hard work, undoubtedly, and it was the standard mode of operation for around 35 issues.



Newsletter No 29

Issue 21 saw the arrival of colour, or at least coloured paper for the outside wrap but it did add a new flavour to the publication which it was then to continue. Around this time that Bob started experimenting with laser copying rather than photocopies which meant that image quality improved, there was less generation loss



Newsletter No 33

and so we were able to use more illustration as well as small amounts of colour. This didn't become obvious until Issue 33 where we used two sides (four pages) of colour laser printing. The response was very positive and this continued, slowly increasing the colour



The Journal No 46

and the amount of the publication prepped on computer.

Following the announcement that Bob was returning to New Zealand, the Council spent months discussing the publication and its future. The later, more 'upmarket' issues of the Newsletter had received a very positive response so the decision was taken to develop it further by the purchase of a suitable production system and an increase in the budget for printing. The result of this was The Journal (No 46), a completely new design, more colour, totally computer-based, and commercially printed.

While the physical appearance and production processes may have changed, the role that the Journal has, and the way that it approaches its responsibilities is a direct continuation of the way that Bob Allen developed, and edited, the original Newsletter.

So, 50 issues completed. At the same quarterly frequency we hit the 100th issue in 2018. Will there still be the need for a paper version of the Journal or will it just be on-line? It's actually been there on line at www.amps.net for around five years, thanks to Sandy MacRae. Periodically the Council does ask whether there is still a need to print and distribute paper publications - the most costly out-going of the Association? And so far the answer has always been 'yes!'

While an on-line only publication might save AMPS money, you just can't read it in the bath!

KSA

Who's At What

Who's At What

- a listing of member's activities, based entirely on information provided by yourselves.

The productions listed are in no particular order. **AMPS members** are in bold type.

If you would like to let everyone know what you're doing, send a short email with the relevant details to :

whois@amps.net

and you'll be in the next issue. We'd also be pleased to hear any additional technical information such as what key equipment, recording format etc, you were using.

Many thanks to those who've sent pictures - more are encouraged.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

Dave Humphries AMPS

NB: For anyone without ready access to email, send details by post or fax to the usual AMPS office address.

.... **Johan Maertens** is currently working on an American feature film being shot in Belgium called *Curiosity of Chance*. It's directed by Russel P Marleau, the DOP is Jack Messit and stars Chris Mulkey and Tad Hilenbrinck (*American Pie*). Johan says "It's a low budget production with a tight schedule so there's a lot of lavalier mics being used as I was only allowed one boom operator on this job to cover dialogue between up to five characters. I am using Neumann mics on the boom, DPA lavalier mics on the actors, and recording through a Sound Devices 422 mixer with the direct outs patched through to a Sound Devices 744T 4-track Hard Disk recorder with timecode and a Fostex PD4 as backup (which I have never needed yet. Actually I used this setup on a feature in Luxembourg earlier this year in minus 15° C and the DAT froze up while the 744 pleasantly carried on working.)

I am using Lectrosonics Digital Hybrid transmitters which are sometimes a bit hard to get the gain tweaked just right but are otherwise just mind blowing in terms of sound quality - no more companding artifacts - compared to my old analog transmitters. Dailies are being burned onto a DVD every night in BWF format and a sound report is included in PDF format for the editor."

.... **Alan Sallabank** at Basillica Sound has been continuing with Foley, ADR and mixing for *Labyrinth* starring Charles Dance, Directed by Lorne Von Thissen, Sound Editors Tim Lewiston and Richard Fettes; ADR, Foley and mixing *The Moon And The Stars*, a period feature film set in the film making community of Italy at the beginning of World War Two; starring Alfred Molina, Jonathon Pryce and Catherine McCormack, directed by John Irvin for Buskin Films / Creative Partners. Production Mixer - **Giancarlo Dellapina**, Dialogue Editor - Vicky Brazier, FX Editor - Tim Lewiston, Foley Editor - Richard Fettes, Voice casting - **Louis Elman**.

.... **Nick Lowe** is currently ADR Supervisor on *The Decameron* directed by David Leland with Nigel Stone as Supervising Sound Editor, James Boyle as FX Editor; **Gerard Loret** as Dialogue Editor, and Steve Schwalbe, Foley Editor.

.... **Colin Chapman** at Sonic Trax will be Supervising on *Family Man* with Sound Editor, Ross Adams, and Dialogue Editor, **Laura Lovejoy**.

.... Harry Barnes & **Sue Lenny** are working on *Inspector Lewis* at Anvil in Perivale. It is a pilot episode for ITV based on the old *Morse* series with Kevin Whately in the lead role. Harry is editing dialogues and Sue doing effects, supervised by **John Downer**. The Rerecording Mixer is **Gareth Bull**.

.... **Eddy Joseph** reports that he, Martin Cantwell, Colin Ritchie and Alex Joseph are still working on Anthony Minghella's *Breaking and Entering* at Soundelux.

"Doom has gone and there's not much taking it's place," he says, "although Oliver Tarney and Simon Chase are involved in a French animation called *Renaissance* which Tim Cavagin is mixing at **Twickenham**, and Alex Joseph is Sound Designing on a series of Adidas commercials. We're more hopeful for the New Year; there seem to be quite a few movies being talked about."

.... **Nico Louw**, Production Sound Mixer, has just finished 15 weeks of shooting a 6 x 1 hour part series for ITV called *Wild at Heart*. It was shot on HiDef at 25P and recorded on a Aaton Cantar with Lockit boxes on the cameras. He went to **De Lane Lea** to sit in the dialogue pre-mix of the first 3 episodes.

"The post people were very happy and pleased with the auto-conform", he says. Nico supplied the Dialogue and FX Editors with a 250GB external hard drive with all the sound files, both mixed down and discreet.

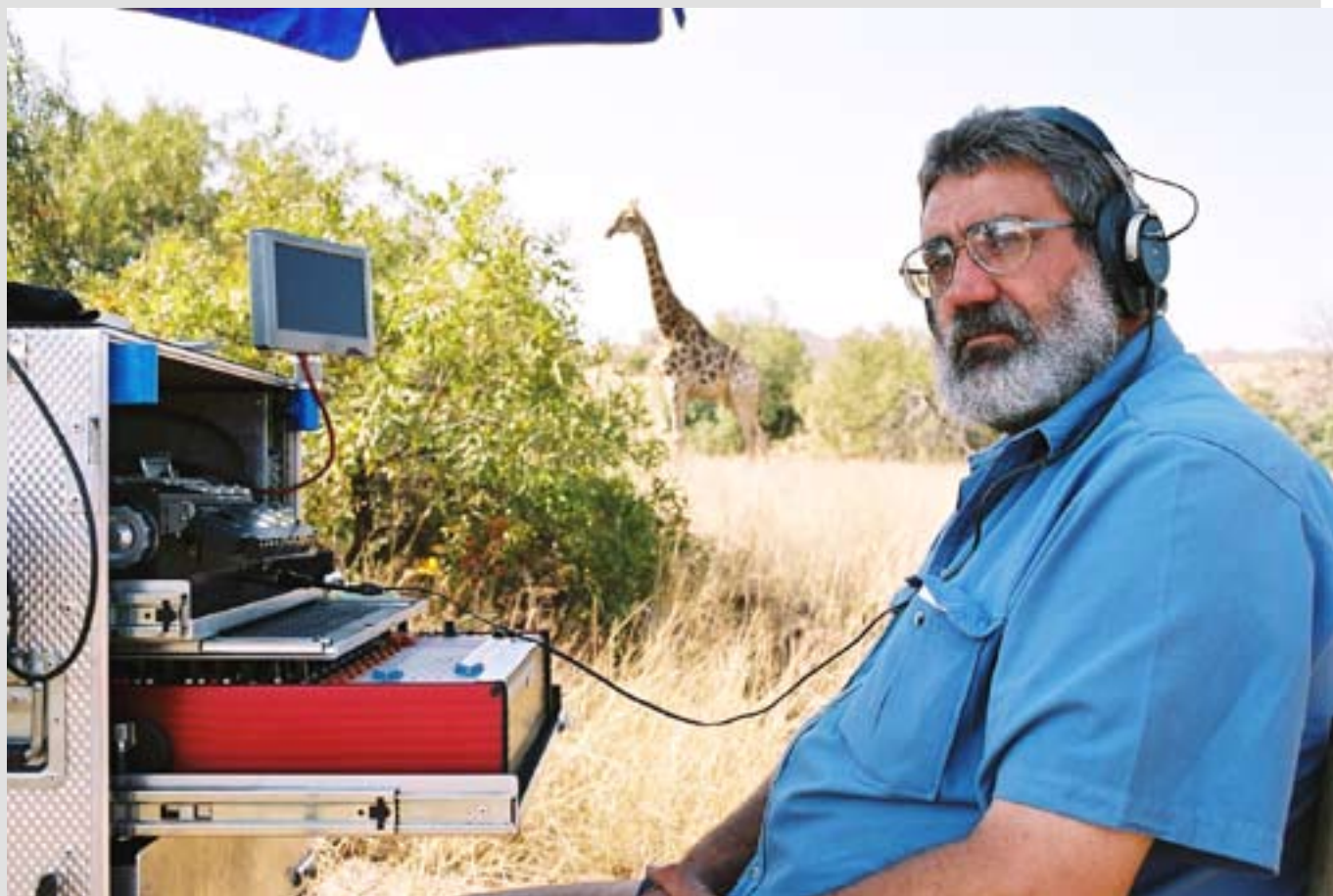
Who's At What

.... **Roger Slater**, Production Sound Mixer, currently on the third of 4 x 2 hour films for the BBC series *Dalziel And Pascoe*. He says that he is very ably assisted by Boom Operator Jason Devlin and FT2 trainee assistant Esther Asiedu-Ofei. They are on location around Birmingham and the Midlands, shooting on Super 16mm and recording on Deva and Nagra V.

.... **Dave Humphries** has been recording more ADR on location for Series 3 of *Shameless* in Manchester, under his 'LoopSync' guise. He has also been Foley Supervisor for feature films *Checkmate* starring Jeremy Northam, *The Kovac Box* starring Joanne Whalley and *Second In Command* starring Jean Claude Van Damme. All mixing at Future Post with **Peter Maxwell** and **Richard Lewis**.

.... **Zound's** sound design credits for features and commercials include the current Post Office campaign and the recent Honda FRV, Premier, Siemens, Mercedes, Toyota and BMW commercials. Their musical composition work has apparently recently attracted press

Pics: (right) **Roger Slater** with trolley on set of *Dalziel And Pascoe*; (below) Giraffe poses with **Nico Louw** during shooting *Wild At Heart*.



Who's At What

attention, following **Srdjan Kurpjel's** contribution to Brian Sewell's series *The Grand Tour*.

Their current sound project is *Land of the Blind* starring Ralph Fiennes, Donald Sutherland, and Lara Flynn Boyle with Sound Supervising by Patrick Dodd, and Sound Designer Samir Foco is due to begin work on *Razor Edge*, a high-octane action film directed by Po-Chih Leong which is currently shooting in Europe.

Further projects also include the scoring and recording of the soundtrack for the first ever MTV movie *Transit* which was internationally premiered on 1st December for *Staying Alive* HIV / AIDS awareness campaign. The complete soundtrack was scored and recorded at Zound in collaboration with the hip-hop rock artist Steve Wellington and featuring the Cuban Rap artist Kid Afrika. Zound's North London ADR and Foley Stage is currently working on *Border Post*. Zound has recently established a USA branch in central Los Angeles, with Patrick Dodd as a Vice President.

.... **Simon Hayes** is the Production Sound Mixer on *Sixty Six*, a film for Working Title (filming from October to December) about a young Jewish boy's Bar Mitzvah preparations, and the effect that the 1966 World Cup Final has on them, falling as it does on the same day. It's a comedy drama, based on the real life experiences of the Director, Paul Weiland, whose Bar Mitzvah fell on the feted day. It stars Helena Bonham Carter and Eddie Marsan plus a talented youngster named Gregg Sulkin to play the main character, Bernie.

Simon has a four-man team for this film, a working practice he tries to always have these days, budget willing. His main boom op, Arthur Fenn, has been with him since *Lock, Stock...* and there's second boom op, Robin Johnson, who joined them a year later. Two boom ops are almost obligatory, especially as the main unit is shooting everything with two cameras; they are ably backed up by trainee, Tim Surrey, who is proving to be extremely useful!

Simon is recording on a 10 track Deva V and running a Nagra V safety copy. He says he likes to give the editors preferred boom tracks but sometimes radio mics can't be avoided and the Deva V has proved very useful and reliable in the field to cover all eventualities, being fed direct from his AD149 mixer.

The story behind our cover shot ...



Trainee Tim Surrey and Boom Op Arthur Fenn discuss the shot with production mixer **Simon Hayes**



The recipient of the short straw



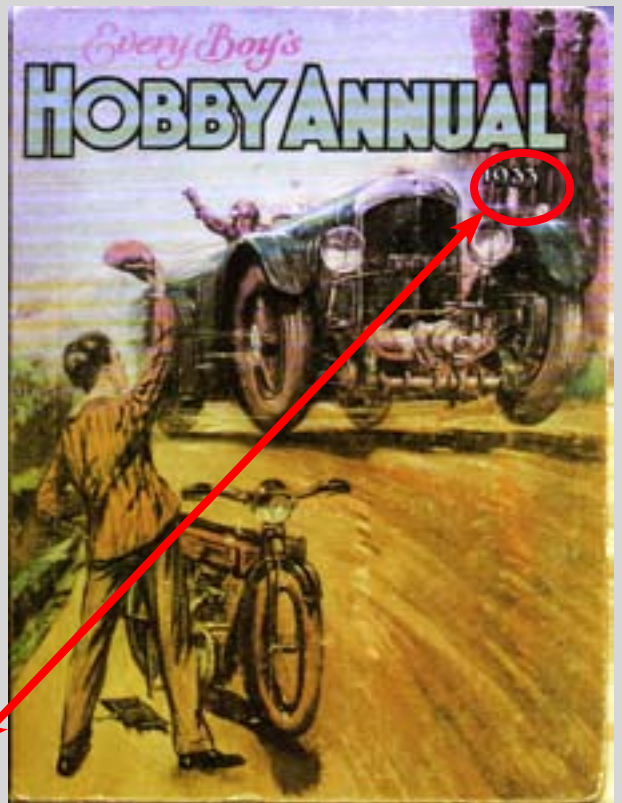
And **Simon Hayes** (left) retreats to the warm and dry sound van !

Who's At What

Some images of the studios of AMPS' Sustaining Member **Zound** and their very striking design. More info at www.zound.co.uk



WITH THE WISDOM OF HINDSIGHT...



Comparing current practice and discipline with that of the past can be very instructive. With that thought in mind we have included the article that follows, *Mike - The Electric Ear*, taken from the *Every Boy's Hobby Annual 1933* - which makes it at least 72 years old.

This was still the early days of sound but even then there are the discussions of the problems of location noise even if being pre-commercial air travel and motorways, it was all a little simpler. However note the references to strict on-set discipline.

But consider how long ago this was. Any eleven-year old boy who, having been inspired by this article to enter the film industry, would now have been long retired!

Thanks to Nigel Woodford of Richmond Films who drew this article to our attention. He also supplied another article from the same edition 'Behind the scenes in a Modern Talkie Cinema' which we may publish at a later date.

THE NAMES BEHIND THE UNITS · THE NAMES BEHIND THE UNITS · THE NAMES BEHIND THE UNITS



William Gilbert

GILBERT - Unit of Magnetomotive force - symbol Gb. Named after William Gilbert (1544-1603), English physician to Queen Elizabeth I. He published a treatise with the title of *De Magnete Magnetisque Corporibus et de Magno Magnet Tellure* translated as *Of The Magnet And Magnetic Bodies And Of The Great Magnet Earth*. He demonstrated, with a compass needle, the magnetic field of the earth. Through other experiments with amber, he speculated that there must be an underlying principle between static electricity and magnetism. He was responsible for many new terms including electricity and magnetic pole.

Gilbert - equal to the magnetomotive force produced by a current of 40 amperes passing through a single coil.

Bob Allen

Mike—the Electric Ear

Putting the talk into "talkies" has given film makers many a tough problem to tackle

How many picture-goers know that every time they hear a revolver shot in a talking picture they are not listening to the sound of a cartridge exploding, but to the noise made by a studio worker swiping a wooden box a hefty smack with a long cane? It's a fact!

When the first talking pictures were made and the sound-recording experts tried to get their microphones to record the sound of a real shot, they found the delicate instrument couldn't do it; the mike got "indigestion," so to speak, because the sound was so short-lived and so loud that it could not gulp it down in time.

But recording revolver shots is only one of the everyday problems of the talking film-maker.

All sorts of other complications have arisen from the fact that cinema studio microphones have to be so sensitive to obtain a satisfactory recording that they pick up all manner of superfluous sounds and echoes as well as the speech that they are intended to record.

Many of these sounds are so minute that they are practically inaudible to the human ear, and many more are so faint that we cannot catch them at all. Yet it is fatal for them to reach one of the new super-sensitive microphones that are now being used in the studios, for they would be passed on to the huge recording amplifiers and magnified to a volume that would half drown the actual speech in the finished film.

To avoid this the film people have had to take the most complicated precautions.

Just before they make a recording a technician blows a whistle and red danger lights are switched on everywhere near the sound stage. Everyone stops work. All movement ceases. The chattering, clattering noises of the place die, and, in a moment,

"Shooting" an outdoor scene for an early talking picture with a camera fitted with padded cover to prevent the sound of its whirring mechanism reaching the recording mike.



THE FILMS

absolute silence reigns. Producer, director, script girl, electrician, and crowd worker become as statues; mute emblems of the all-powerfulness of the microphone.

High overhead, a vivid red captive balloon of the studio flaunts its message to passing airmen, warning them to detour lest the noise of their powerful engines should reach the interior of the hermetically sealed sound stages below.

The studios have changed tremendously since the coming of the "mike." The old hangar-like buildings of the silent days were found hopelessly inadequate to house the new £15,000 recording systems, and have now given way to marvellous buildings consisting of two entirely separate concrete shells, one inside the other, with an air space about a foot wide between them. The walls have no windows and are lined with felt.

The idea of this air space is to prevent any outside vibrations from penetrating to the interior. This would be impossible if there were any contact between the two shells. As it is, even their foundations are separate, those of the inner shell being set in a huge bed of sand.

Such buildings are, of course, perfectly airtight, and the huge lights that they carry make the inside unbearably hot.

Recently it was discovered that working in this intense heat was having a very bad effect on the health of the film people, so the new studios are now

fitted with expensive machinery which keeps the air cool and fresh.

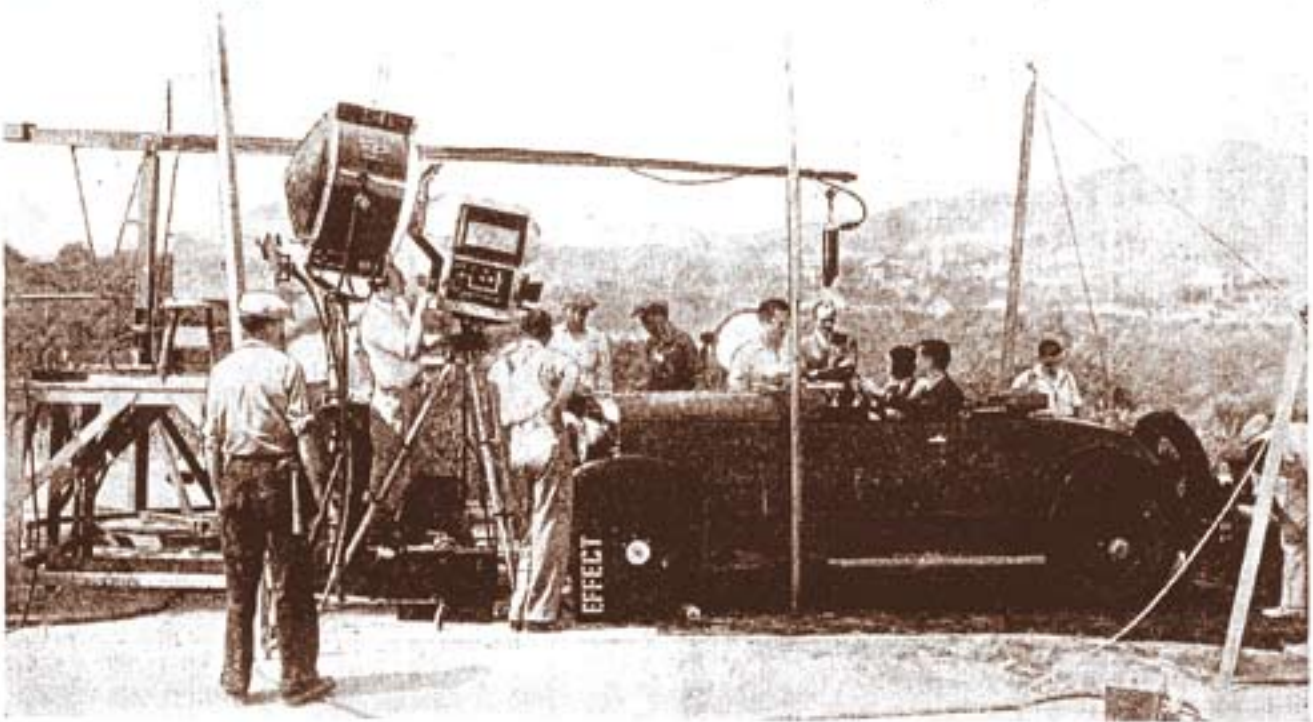
With the coming of talkies, cameras have changed, too. The whirring noise made by the high-speed mechanism of old-fashioned cameras proved an impossible handicap to successful recording, so the cameramen and their instruments were banished to the interior of a padded, sound-proof booth and forced to take their photographs through a sheet of glass set in the front.

These booths were only a makeshift, however, and it was not long before the camera manufacturers started to analyse the whirring noises of their products to try to make a silent camera.

Their experiments produced some strange results. They found, for instance, that the ball bearings were chiefly at fault. Ordinary bearings put in their place produced much less noise. Then they replaced the metal cog wheels with ebonite ones and covered the sides of the metal film containers with felt. Finally, they housed the whole instrument in an easily-detachable, sound-proof case called a "blimp."

These new silent cameras can be used within two feet of the microphone without causing any interference whatever.

New complications demanding new remedies are constantly springing up around the mike, and all sorts of silencing problems crop up when the microphone is taken into the open air. Basil Dean, the well-known British producer, found this out when



A film scene in the making, with a microphone suspended over the actors in the car and a high-power lamp and silent-action camera directed at them.

he was directing his film "Escape" on Dartmoor.

On one occasion they were working on a Sunday, and the noise of the bells of a little church some distance away was worrying the sound experts. This was

~~~~~  
Seated on top of a camera booth, a film-director is here "fishing" with the microphone on a pole for a whispered aside spoken by one of the actors in a talkie.

~~~~~  
not all, for a waterfall near by was adding to the din.

A tactfully worded request to the vicar was all that was necessary to silence the church bells; but the waterfall proved more difficult, and it was not until vast quantities of sacking had been collected and the stream scientifically dammed that work could continue.

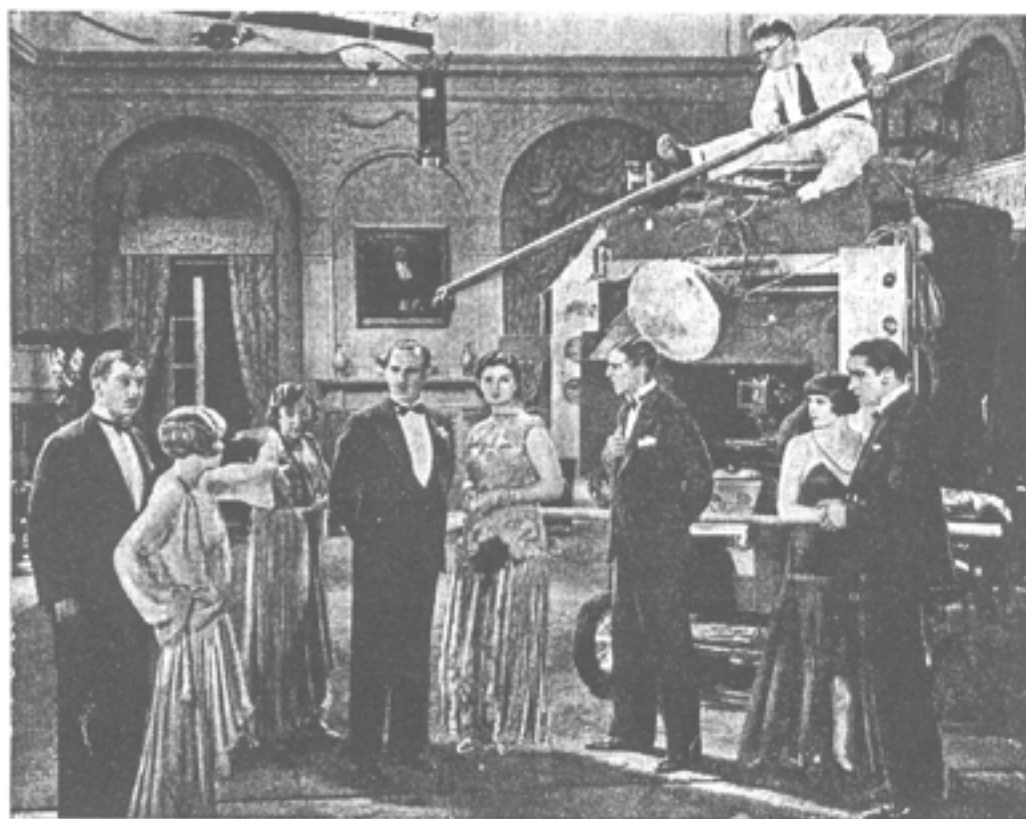
On another occasion it was frogs that upset the microphone. Some night shots for an American film were being taken in the gardens of a private estate. Unfortunately, there was a pond in the vicinity, and the frogs in it insisted on keeping up a continuous barrage of croaks.

Assistant directors and others splashed and threw stones—all to no purpose. The frogs wouldn't stop.

Eventually some electricians hit on a brilliant idea. They turned several powerful floodlights on to the water. The frogs, thinking perhaps that dawn had come, gave up serenading the night and got on with whatever frogs do get on with during the daytime.

So great were the difficulties of early outdoor recording that for a considerable time after the advent of the talkies films were made entirely in studios. Owing to the unlimited space outside, the sound spread out so much that very little reached the microphone, and this made the speech sound thin when recorded.

Strangely enough, it was a shot of some sizzling bacon over a camp fire in a talkie called "In Old Arizona" that first convinced the sound experts that they could return to the wide open spaces.



Now every company has its fleet of sound vans carrying recording equipment ready to accompany the film people when they go on location.

The microphone is often hoodwinked into a faked recording. The noise of an aero-engine, for instance, is exactly reproduced if the mike is held quite close to the studio vacuum cleaner; and the characteristic lapping noise of the water beneath the prow of a rowing boat can be recorded with uncanny reality by taking a match-box containing a couple of matches between the finger and thumb and shaking it slowly near the "electric ear."

On one occasion when the necessity arose for a shot of a man gargling porridge, it was recorded perfectly by pouring water from a jug into a tumbler.

Although the talkie system now universally used was invented by a Frenchman and exploited by Americans, it is a heartening thought that the first real talkie was made by an Englishman.

It was made by a small British company working in a tiny studio under a railway arch just after the war, and its director was Mr. Miles Mander, the British film actor and director.

He made his film under unheard-of difficulties—in fact, about half of the shots attempted were ruined by the untimely passing of trains on the track overhead!

AMPS SHIRTS 'n' CERTS

All profits to AMPS' adopted charity ...

... Look Good, Do Good !

Ovingdean Hall School near Brighton aims to provide severely and profoundly deaf children with the skills, qualifications and confidence to succeed in the hearing world.

Earlier this year, after successfully raising sufficient funds to build a training kennel for *Hearing Dogs for Deaf People*, AMPS chose Ovingdean as its next 'adopted charity' and has since been busy looking at ideas to support its efforts. This time we've identified as a target, the purchase and installation of a new video projection system incorporating an innovative text display facility conceived and implemented by AMPS Council member and all-round technical whiz, Colin Broad.

The aim is to help the school with its live theatrical performances by projecting the lines of the script on to a screen above the stage as they're being performed. The 'surtitles' can be created in any word processor, imported as text files and manually triggered for projection, line by line, as the play proceeds. The details are yet to be finalised but all at the school are enthusiastic about the concept, especially as it can also be used as a standard projection system for DVDs etc.

In support of this project we've decided to donate all the profits from the sale of AMPS polo shirts and AMPS membership certificates. So now you can look good and do a bit of good too.



AMPS Polo Shirts are available in Black or Grey with or without left breast pocket and will be two or three button style Premium grade 'Fruit of the Loom' with the AMPS logo discreetly embroidered on the left sleeve.

Price: £15.00 per shirt inc p&p



Grey



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Sizes

Mens	S	M	L	XL	XXL
Chest (to fit)	36	38	40	42/44	46/48

To order complete the form opposite and send with your remittance to the AMPS office

An AMPS Membership Certificate for your wall!



Printed on high quality Archive paper with parchment style, the certificate is personalised with your date of joining and signed by the Chairman and Secretary.

NB: ARTISTS IMPRESSION OF HOW AN AMPS MEMBERSHIP CERTIFICATE WOULD LOOK WHEN FRAMED.

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Cheques should be made payable to the Association Of Motion Picture Sound
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(If you don't wish to cut out this page please photocopy, or write an order including all this information)

*We would like to welcome Total Audio Solutions
as a new Sustaining Member of AMPS*



Total Audio Solutions Ltd
Smiths Way
Saxon Business Park
Hanbury Road
Bromsgrove
Worcestershire B60 4AD

Tel: 01527 880051
Fax: +44 (0) 1527 880052
Email: sales@totalaudio.co.uk

Total Audio Solutions was founded in 1996 by a group of experienced BBC Sound Supervisors, and is Europe's largest distributor for Sony Professional Audio, most notably its radio mic systems and digital audio products. It is also UK distributor for Merging Technologies' Pyramix audio workstation products, and Cooper Sound location mixers.

The experienced team has specialists in all areas of professional audio but aims primarily at broadcast, corporate A/V and studio applications. The company has a strong reputation for product support, and runs its own hire department and TARDiS, a 48-track mobile recording and OB facility.

www.totalaudio.co.uk

amps

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(so you will not be discouraged from cutting out the coupon on the reverse)

SONY PCM-D1

Sony have introduced an intriguing portable audio recorder that probably doesn't have an immediate application to our readership but is a little unusual. The PCM-D1 Linear PCM Field Recorder is a 96kHz / 24-bit portable recorder with 4GB internal flash memory, removable Memory Stick Pro high-speed storage and a built-in USB 2.0 port for Macintosh and Windows/PC operating systems, and .wav recording file format capability. Unique feature is the integral stereo mics in an X-Y configuration. With no internal moving parts there should be no mechanical noise transmission. It is supplied with 4xAA Nickel Hydride rechargeable batteries which have a life of about four hours at 96kHz. There is a suggestion that it is relatively robust with a 1mm pressed titanium case. It is expected to be available at the end of 2005 - the only cost quoted so far is a US price of \$2000. See www.sony.com/professional for more info.



AMS NEVE NEW POST CONSOLES



MMC 300

AMS Neve launched two new MMC digital post production consoles at the recent AES Convention. The MMC 300 and MMC 400 both benefit from increased processing power and Encore Plus automation but the main change over previous models is a new central panel giving engineers total control over monitoring, source and surround mixing as well as eight assignable faders that can be used as group, stem, aux or master faders, or additional input channel faders. The MMC 400 is fitted with conventional channel strips while the MMC 300 utilises a knob per function assignable channel while both feature touch sensitive controllers. Encore Plus automation integrates control of Pro Tools, Nuendo and Pyramix workstations through HUI and Oasis protocols, complementing the integrated multi-machine control system. More info from www.ams-neve.com

MMC 400



FIRST SSL C300 IN EUROPE

SSL has announced its first European sale of a C300 digital post production console to leading French facility Creative Sound, following the console's launch in September. For the last five years Paris-based Creative Sound has been providing post facilities for TV and DVD clients using its main Avant Plus equipped theatre. The C300 will be installed in Studio C and will form part of a workflow aimed to speed production.

The C300 Creative Sound specified has 152 inputs and outputs and is equipped with SSL's new Timefreeze automation, along with a powerful 128x8 monitoring matrix. It will be installed in January 2006.

JOHN MITCHELL MBE, AMPS Hon

John W Mitchell has died aged 88. He spent a lifetime in the British Film Industry as a leading Sound Mixer/Recordist, and he continued to act as a volunteer ambassador for the BFI during his retirement. Apart from the autobiographical account of his career in his book *Flickering Shadows*, he has made many appearances on TV, film, radio and at private functions recalling working in the film industry.

John Mitchell entered the film industry in 1933, working as rewind boy in the projection theatre at Ealing Studios, just five years after the advent of the 'talkies'. Over the course of the next sixty years he rose to become a prominent sound mixer and recordist for such films as Olivier's *Hamlet*; and David Lean's *Great Expectations* and *A Passage To India*, both with Alec Guinness. His microphones found their way into all manner of exotic locations throughout the world - on top of the Great Pyramid for *Death On The Nile*; two miles underground in an African mine for *Gold*, but probably the most memorable, Marilyn Monroe's cleavage in *The Prince And The Showgirl*.

Among his earliest films was *Love, Life & Laughter* and *Sing As We Go* with Gracie Fields; and for his first location film he travelled to the TT Races with George Formby. After transferring to the new Denham Studio sound department in 1936, he went on location to the palaces of Queen Victoria with Anna Neagle and Herbert Wilcox. Several years later he was sent to his first foreign location in the Sudan, just before the Second World War, on Alexander Korda's film *The Four Feathers*. This was closely followed by *Goodbye Mr Chips* with Robert Donat, and *The Thief Of Baghdad* with Sabu, featuring the giant Genie filmed on Pendine Sands in South Wales during the early weeks of the war. John was probably the last survivor to have worked on the 1937 film *I, Claudius* with Charles Laughton - the film that was never completed.

After five years in the Royal Navy his wartime experiences with submarines were later to contribute in the making of *Morning Departure* and *Above Us The Waves* with John Mills, followed by the early James Bond movies, with Sean Connery, George Lazenby and Roger Moore; including the infamous spoof Bond played by David Niven in *Casino Royale*. Among the hundred or so films he worked on were classics such as *Doctor In The House*, *Doctor At Sea* with Dirk Bogarde; *Genevieve*, *Reach for the Sky*, *Our Man In Havana*, *Those Magnificent Men In Their Flying Machines*, *The Spy Who Came In From The Cold*, *Billion Dollar Brain*, *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, *Le Mans* with Steve McQueen, *Jesus*

Of Nazareth, *Valentino* with Rudolph and *The Bounty* with Anthony Hopkins.

Having spent ten creative years at Pinewood Studios in the fifties, John was one of the first of his contemporaries to turn freelance and was much in demand over the next 25 years by such directors and producers as Carol Reed, Stanley Donen, Cubby Broccoli, Franco Zeffirelli, Ken Russell, Steven Spielberg, David Lean etc. In June 2001 he was awarded an MBE by the Queen for his contribution to the British Film Industry.

During retirement, whilst talking and writing about his career, John Mitchell was able to recall the eccen-



tricitities, the pressures and the personalities of film and film making with refreshing warmth and honesty. He was very proud of his achievements and had this pioneering spirit and ability to keep up with changing technology. Always testing the latest Nagra tape recorders and the Todd-AO innovations, or experimenting with his famous parabolic microphone. He was ever grateful to have worked at a job he enjoyed, especially if it included world travel and location filming. He showed particular interest in encouraging and promoting new young talent and with this in mind acted as sound consultant in the making of *The Dance Of Shiva* in 1998 for Jamie Payne's first film as producer and director.

John was nominated for an Oscar on *Diamonds Are Forever* and *A Passage To India*, and a BAFTA nomination for *Gold*. He received an Emmy for *The Scarlet And The Black*.

John Mitchell died in November 2005. He married in 1949 and his wife Jean died in 1991. His only surviving relative is his daughter Anne Bickerton.

John Rowe

CHARLIE McFADDEN AMPS

1939 - 2005

I'd like to share a few words about my old friend Charlie McFadden. I say *old friend* because I first met Charlie when I started work at Pinewood, over 44 years ago, in August 1961. Charlie was already a seasoned Boom Operator's Assistant in the Sound Department with one year's experience.

He took me under his wing and showed me the ropes, or should I say cables, for we were known as Cable Monkeys. Our principal job was to cable up and test the heavy, and not very portable, Sound Mixer, the Boom and the Camera, each morning. Then we'd move the equipment and re-cable for each subsequent set up, wrapping it all up at the end of the day. More importantly, we had to make sure Mixer and Boom Operator got their tea and the choicest slices of bread and dripping, ahead of the Camera Crew.

We soon became friends, sharing the same sense of humour and political opinions, as well as the occasional pint of Guinness. We both married German girls and have fine sons of a similar age.

It wasn't long before Charlie was promoted to Boom Operator, and I was made a Sound Camera Operator. We worked together on many films and TV Series with Pinewood Mixers Bob McPhee, CC Stevens and Danny Daniel, as well as such prominent freelance mixers as Peter Davies and Jock May.

Filming was a lot more fun in those days, and hardly a day went by without Charlie and I devising elaborate pranks or practical jokes, many of which we recounted every time we met. As for telling jokes, Charlie had an endless supply to entertain the crew between set ups.

But all the fun was never detrimental to the production. Charlie always maintained his skill and professionalism. He learned from the best, and honed his talent to become one of the industry's most respected Boom Swingers. Any film unit was enriched by Charlie on the boom.

When Pinewood had to shed its resident sound crews in the seventies, Charlie went freelance, first with Danny Daniel, and later found his niche with regular work on prestigious TV series such as *Dempsey & Makepeace* and *London's Burning*, where he continued to charm and amuse his friends and colleagues.

When he was nominated to serve on the Council of the Association of Motion Picture Sound, the overwhelming majority of votes cast for Charlie reflected his popularity.

I'm sure I speak for all whose life was ever touched by Charlie when I say that the world is a poorer place without him. I am grateful for his friendship, his warmth and generosity - I shall miss him, I have such fond memories, and I can still hear his laughter.

Graham V. Hartstone AMPS



Charlie McFadden, 1968



Charlie with grand-daughter, Orla, 2004

CORRECTION

In Peter Davies' piece on Charlie McFadden in the previous edition of the Journal, there was a mention that Charlie had worked with Dudley Plummer in his early days at Pinewood Studios. This was an error on the part of the Journal. It should have read Dudley Messenger. Our apologies.

