



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

AT&T/Bell Film Collection

NMAH.AC.0684
Archives Center Staff

Archives Center, National Museum of American History
P.O. Box 37012
Suite 1100, MRC 601
Washington, D.C. 20013-7012
archivescenter@si.edu
<http://americanhistory.si.edu/archives>

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Collection Overview

Repository:	Archives Center, National Museum of American History
Title:	AT&T/Bell Film Collection
Identifier:	NMAH.AC.0684
Date:	1942-1978
Extent:	39 Items
Creator:	American Telephone and Telegraph Company Information, Technology and Society, Div. of (NMAH, SI).
Language:	English

Administrative Information

Immediate Source of Acquisition

Collection donated by Division of Information, Technology and Society, National Museum of American History.

Ownership and Custodial History

These films, along with numerous others which were dispersed to different collections, were transferred to the Archives Center by the Division of Information, Technology and Society in 1999.

Preferred Citation

AT&T/Bell Film Collection, 1942-1978, Archives Center, National Museum of American History.

Restrictions on Access

Collection is open for research.

Restrictions on Access

Researchers must view videotape copies.

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Scope and Contents

Thirty-nine 16mm films on various subjects relating to telephone systems and communications, such as pole worker safety; party line etiquette; the transition from silent film to sound film; and the application of satellites, lasers and transistors to sound communication.

Arrangement

4 series: Series 1, Promotional Films; Series 2, Scientific/Educational Films; Series 3, Corporate/Technical Training Films; Series 4, Acquired Films.

Names and Subject Terms

This collection is indexed in the online catalog of the Smithsonian Institution under the following terms:

Subjects:

- Industrial safety
- Lasers
- Satellites
- Sound film
- Transistors
- telephone

Types of Materials:

- Motion pictures (visual works)
- Training films

Container Listing

Series 1: Promotional Films, 1942-1978

- Reel OF 684.1 Party Lines, circa 1942
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 575 ft.)
How to behave on party lines. Animated with Bill Baird's Marionettes, probably shown in theaters before feature films. Also probably shot in 35mm Technicolor and transferred to 16mm Kodachrome. Eddie Albert Productions, Western Electric Recording Systems.
- Reel OF 684.2 Now You Can Dial, circa 1954
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 365 ft.)
Demonstrates the transfer from operator dialing to personal home dialing, includes party line instructions. Charles E. Skinner Productions.
- Reel OF 684.3;
Video RV 684.3 Behind Your Telephone, circa 1955
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 575 ft.)
How the telephone system works, with some animation for demonstration.
- Reel OF 684.4 The Big Flood of 1955, circa 1955
1 motion picture film (16mm black and white composite optical track print, 700 ft.)
- Reel OF 684.5 Family Affair, 1955
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 1,000 ft.)
Family calling each other on telephone. Some animation. Western Electric Recording.
- Reel OF 684.6;
Video RV 684.3 Highways for the Telephone, circa 1955
1 motion picture film (16mm black and white composite optical track print, 400 ft.)
Long distance telephone communications: microwave radio relay, beaming of microwaves across the U.S., building an "electronic skyway." Caravel Films, New York, Western Electric Recording Systems.
- Reel OF 684.7 Career Day, 1956
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 800 ft.)
Presenting young women's vocations as telephone operators. Technicolor, Western Electric Recording Systems.
- Reel OF684.8 Once Upon a Honeymoon, 1956
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 500 ft.)
Film is on poor condition.
- Reel OF 684.9 The Case of Jim Cannon, 1959

1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 600 ft.)

Features (characters?) "Jim Cannon" and his wife, his work with telephones. Jamieson Film Co., Dallas. Southwestern Bell Telephone Systems.

Reel OF 684.10

Tom, Dick, and Harriet, 1960

This film features several semi-famous actors: Jim Backus (Thurston Howell from Gilligan's Island), Ellen Corby (Oscar Nominated actress), and others, includes "The Sportsmen Quartet." The film has something to do with them talking on the telephone to each other.

Film is in poor condition.

Reel OF 684.11

Incredible Machine, 1971

1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 550 ft.)

Promotional film about computers, and soundtracks. YCM Labs, AT&T.

Reel OF 684.12;

Reel RF 684.1

Smithsonian Institution Phone Philm, circa 1976?

1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 275 ft.)

Promotional film about the telephone and its uses, highlighting many clips from well known feature films starring James Cagney, Patricia Neal, Gene Kelly.

Reel OF 684.13;

Reel RF 684.2-3

Listen to This, circa 1978

1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 550 ft.)

Promotional film about the transition from silent to sound film. Various clips from old movies (e.g. The Jazz Singer). NOTE "The historic segments of this film have been made from the original picture and original disc and film soundtracks."

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Series 2: Scientific/Educational Films, 1955-1970

- Reel OF 684.14 Transistors, 1955
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 1,000 ft.)
How transistors work, how they are used, includes "evolution of the vacuum tube," and lab demonstrations.
- Reel OF 684.15 The Bell Solar Battery, 1956
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 450 ft.)
- Reel OF 684.16 Principles of the Optical Maser, circa 1962?
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 1,000 ft.)
Bell Telephone Laboratories technical demonstration, includes illustrated simulations. With Dr. C.G.B. Garrett.
- Reel OF 684.17 The Thinking Machine, circa 1968-1970
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 575 ft.)
Bell Telephones film about computers, with some animation.
- Reel OF 684.18 The Conquest of Light, undated
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 500 ft.)
Men in lab coats demonstrating "light" experimentsBprisms, lasers, beams. Written by Marc Siegel. Composer: Bernardo Segall. Photography: Michael Livesey. Editorial: Eric H. Lawrence. Art: Ted Lowry. Narrator: Norman Rose.
- Reel OF684.19 Gateways to the Mind, Part i, undated
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 875 ft.)
"The Story of the Human Senses, Produced Under the Personal Supervision of Jack L. Warner." Educational film shown to high school students, according to note on film can. With Dr. Frank C. Baxter, written by Henry F. Greenberg, directed by Owen Crump. 1960s? [NOTE: no Part II]

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Series 3: Corporate/Technical Training Films, 1956-1970

- Reel OF 684.20 No Title, circa 1955
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 700 ft.)
AT&T safety film, with some animation. A John Wolfe and Company Production, "Sponsored by Your Interdepartmental Safety Committee," all players were telephone employees.
- Reel OF 684.21 Safe Work on Poles, circa 1957
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 700 ft.)
Demonstrates work on telephone poles, safety instructions.
- Reel OF 684.22 Safe Work on POles, Part II, circa 1956 (mid to late 1950s).
1 sound tape (16mm color composite optical track print, 800 ft.)
Demonstrates safety while working on telephone poles.
- Reel OF 684.23 Up From the Ground, circa 1956
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 1,000 ft.)
Corporate film about underground telephone wires. Filmed by Joseph J. Harley.
- Reel OF 684.24 Four Steps to Sales, 1957
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 1,000 ft.)
Instructional film on telephone sales. A Bell System Presentation, Henry Strauss Production, Western Recording System. YCM film lab.
- Reel OF 684.25 Modern Dustless Sweeping, 1959
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 700 ft.)
Bell System industrial training film, something about how to apply "modern dustless sweeping" to maintenance of telephone laboratories.
- Reel OF 684.26 Telephone Relays Type U and Y, Part 1, circa 1959
1 motion picture film (16mm black and white composite optical track print, 675 ft.)
Bell Telephones of Pennsylvania.
- Reel OF 684.27 Telephone Relays Type U and Y, Part II, circa 1959
1 motion picture film (16mm black and white composite optical track print, 875 ft.)
- Reel OF 684.28 The New Arts, 1961
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 550 ft.)
Bell Telephone Laboratories film, "A Story of the Operating Engineers' Training Program," produced by "Class of 1961." Cinematography by Thomas Musca.
- Reel OF 684.29 New Lab at Holmdel, 1962
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 450 ft.)
Bell Telephones, footage of the new lab.

- Reel OF 684.30 Operation Sky Lift, circa 1963
1 motion picture film (16mm black and white composite optical track print, 550 ft.)
Demonstration of helicopter delivery of satellite or radar of some sorts on to top of building. A joint project of Ohio Bell Telephone and Long Lines.
- Reel OF 684.31 Lasers Unlimited, circa 1970?
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 450 ft.)
Industrial film about lasers, AT&T.
- Reel OF 684.32 A Visit Behind the Lines, undated
1 motion picture film (16mm black and white composite optical track print, 1,000 ft.)
A visit behind the lines at Long Lines Headquarters in New York City.

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Series 4: Acquired Films, 1960-1962

- Reel OF 684.33 Partners in Production, circa 1932-1946
1 motion picture film (16mm color composite optical track print, 475 ft.)
Industrial film regarding health care/health insurance, produced by Aetna. Motion Picture Bureau of the Aetna Life Affiliated Companies, in Hartford, CT Shown to Bell Telephone Labs Employees, (copyright 1946).
- Reel OF 684.34 Project Echo: A Special NBC News Report, 1960
1 motion picture film (16mm B/W composite optical track print, 1,100 ft.)
NBC Television Films, presented by Bell Telephone System. Features Atlantic Missile Range GM Assembly Plant M, assigned to Douglas Aircraft Co. Produced by Reuven Frank, directed by Jack Sughrue and George F. Murray, graphic arts by VIZMO. "This program was reproduced by the Kinephoto process."
- Reel OF 684.35 NBC Telstar, Part 1, 1962
1 motion picture film (16mm B/W composite optical track print, 1,400 ft.)
NBC film, perhaps in Spanish. "Emission Experimentate par Satellite," "M. Marete Ministre de Postes et Telecommunications will speak to you." NOTE: labeled as "reel 2"
- Reel OF 684.36 NBC Telstar, Part II, 1962
1 motion picture film (16mm B/W composite optical track print, 550 ft.)
NBC film. NOTE: labeled as "reel 3"
- Reel OF 684.37 NBC Telstar, Earth Station, 1962
1 motion picture film (16mm B/W composite optical track print, 2,000 ft.)
NBC film, "Earth Station for Communication by Satellites." Possibly an American translation. NOTE: labeled as Apart I, reel 3"
- Reel OF 684.38 NBC Telstar, Part III, 1962?
- Reel OF 684.39 4 Dimensions TV Show, undated

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