

In Memoriam

Hans-Joachim Griese, AES fellow and Silver Medal Award recipient, died on September 29, 1999 at the age of 83 in Hannover, Germany. With his death the professional audio industry lost a valuable member, an outstanding pioneer of acoustics and electronics, and a man who was repeatedly stimulated by new ideas and discoveries to create innovative products.

Griese was born on December 27, 1915 in Wismar on the Baltic seacoast of Germany. Even as a schoolboy in the 20s he was able to put together his first radio receivers. After college, his enthusiasm for this new technology naturally led him to major in communication technology, studying under Oskar Vierling at the Technical University in Hannover. After receiving his doctorate in 1942 he was offered a tenured position at the university where Fritz Sennheiser became his advisor/mentor while he worked as the department head in charge of vocoder and long-range wireless communications systems for Feuerstein Laboratories until 1944. Their academic collaboration laid the foundation for a very long and successful teamwork.

When Sennheiser founded his company, Labor W, in Wennebostel, just north of Hannover in 1945, young Griese was a member of the founding team. During the first five years numerous revolutionary products were developed such as the stand microphone with its transducer located in the base. It featured a slender sound tube in place of the microphone stand conducting the audio signal from a transparent inlet disk to the actual transducer. This arrangement resulted in the novel creation of an extremely slender and inconspicuous so-called invisible microphone.

The rapid development of magnetic recording and television technologies in Germany during the early 50s so much intrigued Griese, it led him to take a position in the meteorically rising young company Grundig in Fürth. Many of his patents for receiver circuits and television synchronization



Hans-Joachim Griese
1915-1999

methods were granted during his tenure there. Representative of his creativity is the development of a stereo multiplex scheme, which later became an integral part for the FM-stereo standard still in use today. While at Grundig, Griese collaborated intensively with the newly founded Broadcast Technology Research Institute in Nürnberg. In 1954 he took a full-time position with this organization and became responsible for the technical qualification of commercial broadcast equipment.

Many contacts throughout the broadcast industry, combined with his experiences gained through work, provided an excellent foundation for the introduction of wireless microphone technology at his former—and soon to be new—employer, Sennheiser Electronic. By the time Griese accepted an offer from Professor Fritz Sennheiser in 1956 to head the development department, the humble Labor W had become a well recognized mid-sized enterprise with international operations.

During the next 25 years, until his retirement in 1981, this position enabled him to create essential product lines for Sennheiser Electronic, many of which left their lasting imprint on the face of the organization to this day.

More than 45 patents bear the name of Hans-Joachim Griese as the inven-

tor or co-inventor. Best known may be his contributions to the development and refinements of high quality condenser microphones, particularly toward the realization of RF-biased condenser microphones and symmetrical push-pull transducers for RF-condenser microphones. To date, microphones of the Sennheiser MKH-series developed according to these principles still determine the state of the art in microphone technology.

In 1956, the very first dynamic interference tube microphone MD 82 was conceived, and ultimately became the predecessor of the legendary MKH 416. Expanding on the investigations of Sessler and West, Griese soon translated into reality high quality and long term stable electret condenser microphones. His work in this field contributed to the acceptance of this technology in professional applications.

The successful introduction of wireless microphones as a highly reliable quality transmission link for TV and theatrical productions resulted from intimate cooperation with end users. With his introduction of modern compander technologies, he set new standards for the future of these products as well.

Some of his ideas were far ahead of the time: the very first acoustically and electronically matched amplifier-loudspeaker systems from 1964, which today are commonly encountered as active loudspeakers in studio and hi-fi installations. The realization of the very first practical transmission via infrared light meanwhile has found worldwide application for wireless headphones and interpretation systems. In addition to his considerable professional achievements, including his contributions to national and international standard and safety organizations, Griese is remembered for his willingness to share his phenomenal knowledge and experience and his natural tendency to be a mentor to his colleagues.

His commitment and enthusiasm will remain a permanent example and

In Memoriam

incentive for all associates of the Sennheiser organization.

Jörg Sennheiser and W. Niehoff

We mourn the death of **Hans-Joachim Griese**, who passed away on September 29. We have lost one of the great men in audio technology. With tenacity and untiring diligence in his professional life, he enriched the world of audio technology with products that set standards in the audio world and which brought him the highest admiration. Today's state of the art microphones and wireless sound transmission would not have been possible without his outstanding contribution. The products he developed are used around the world. For his outstanding development work he received a Technical Oscar from the Film Industry of Hollywood.

I remember Hans-Joachim Griese as an amiable man who was liked for his personal magnetism. He actively par-

ticipated in professional meetings and AES events. He would not only share his opinions with others but also give valuable advice. He especially listened with great attention to younger colleagues, and even after his retirement from Sennheiser Electronic supported and advised young specialists.

He so enjoyed sailing in his boat with associates on the Steinhuder Meer, a small lake near his residence. We had intense discussions about new product theories and often became so involved that we even got off our course and ran aground. But the results of the discussion were far more important and helped us advance intellectually. For that, we are very grateful to him.

Our sympathy is with his wife, children and grandchildren. He observed their development with the greatest interest and with the love of a grandfather. We will all miss him.

Hermann A. O. Wilms and
Reinhard O. Sahr

Edward S. Seeley, AES life member, died on June 25 in Los Angeles, CA, at the age of 95. Born in Shamokin, PA, Seeley attended Cornell University in Ithaca, NY, and graduated with a degree in engineering.

During World War II he worked at the Underwater Sound Laboratory in New London, CT, developing Sonar. Later in his career he became director of engineering for Altec Lansing Corp. in New York City. He eventually relocated to Anaheim, CA.

As a consultant, he designed sound systems for the Saratoga Performing Arts Center in NY, Trinity Church in New York City, Newark Airport, the Meadowlands Giants Stadium in NJ, and other venues outside the USA. Seeley was also a life member of IEEE.

He is survived by a son, a daughter, granddaughter, sister, and several nieces and nephews.