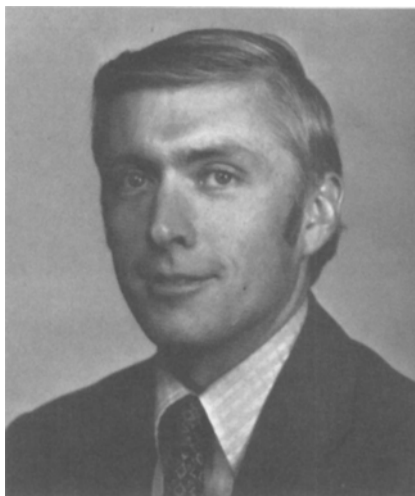


## Biographical Sketch

L. Merle Thomas  
SMPTE  
Vice-President  
for Television Affairs  
1982-1983



L. Merle Thomas, who is Engineering Manager at WJZ-TV, Group W, Westinghouse Broadcasting Corp. and Cable Co., Inc. in Baltimore, Md., a wholly owned subsidiary of Westinghouse Electric Corp., is the SMPTE Vice-President for Television Affairs. Thomas joined WJZ-TV in December 1981 as Assistant Engineering Manager and was appointed to his present post of Engineering Manager in April. Before joining WJZ-TV he was Associate Director of Engineering De-

velopment for Public Broadcasting Service in Washington, D.C. He joined Public Broadcasting in 1970 after serving as Videotape Supervisor for Logos Teleproductions. In his present post at WJZ-TV he supervises a staff of 47 persons and is responsible for technical operations and systems design.

Thomas joined the Society in 1971 and he was made a Fellow in 1978. He has served on a number of SMPTE Committees and has made many important contributions to the development of national and international standards. He is a member of the Video Recording and Reproduction Technology Committee, of which he was chairman (1978-1980), and he was chairman of the Standards Committee until he was elected Vice-President of Television Affairs. He was also chairman of the SMPTE Working Group on One-Inch Segmented Helical Scan Video Systems. The efforts of this Working Group led to the development of the standards specifying the one-inch type B format. He is currently a member of the SMPTE Educational Advisory Committee, the Papers and Publications Advisory Committee, the Fellow Membership Committee, and the Progress Medal Award Committee.

Thomas is an SMPTE representative on the Standards Committee of the IEEE, and he also represents the SMPTE on the International Electrotechnical Commission Subcommittee 60B on Video Recording and on the International Organization TC/36 on Cinematography.

Thomas believes that SMPTE's influence in standardization activities cannot be overestimated. In the burgeoning areas of the new technologies

the Society is in the forefront of what might be termed a struggle to achieve world-wide compatibility of new equipment and processes. The acceptance of digital television and the achievement of making the transition from analog to digital is an area in which the Society played an impressive part. Thomas emphasized that, ever since it was founded in 1916, the Society has continued to grow in size and prestige. He mentioned the recent appointments of international governors of the Society as an example of the growing extent of the Society's membership and activities throughout the world. "There is no question in my mind," Thomas said, "but that in the years to come the Society will continue to be recognized as one of the most (perhaps the most), important and influential organizations functioning in the field of motion picture and television technology."

### Hobbies

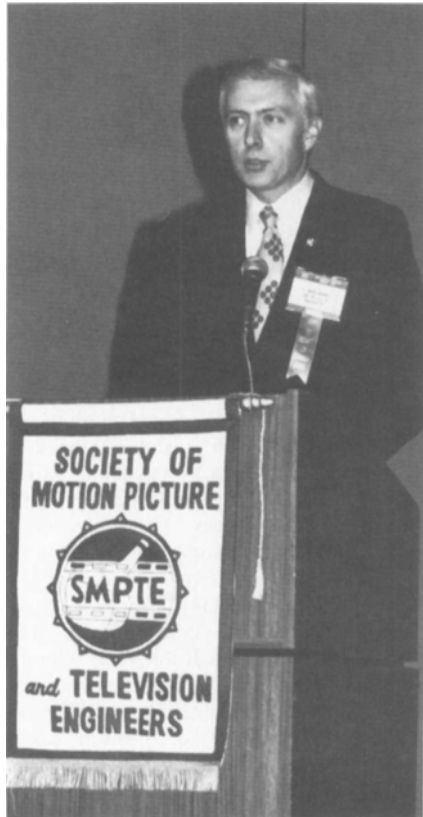
Thomas has two main hobbies — photography and boating. At one time photography was more than a hobby; that was in Washington, D.C., when, for seven years, he engaged in commercial photography including portraiture, wedding pictures, and sports, including Little League baseball teams, among other assignments. As of now, however, his professional responsibilities and Society activities leave him little time to indulge that particular hobby.

His number one hobby is boating. He owns a 30-foot ocean-going power boat, and on weekends he and his family (wife and three children) can frequently be seen cruising on the Potomac or Chesapeake Bay. Occasionally he and his family live aboard the boat from Friday to Monday. The name of the boat is the Ava Dec (named in honor of Thomas's wife, Ava D. Thomas).

Besides Merle and Ava there are three children in the Thomas family — daughter Tammy, 17, and sons Bryan, 13, and Andrew, 9.

### Main Interests

Thomas's main interests are his family, his job, the SMPTE, and the Ava Dec. Obviously he has a broad interest in the entire field of the Public Broadcasting Service. He pointed out that a challenge faced by anyone in public broadcasting is that of trying to get a proper job accomplished with limited funds.



Merle Thomas making the opening address to the delegates at the 16th Annual SMPTE Television Conference in Nashville, February 1982.