

# Charles Guggenheim, Filmmaker, Dies at 78

By WOLFGANG SAXON

Charles Guggenheim, an Oscar-winning documentary filmmaker who focused on American life and who was an early producer of advertisements for political campaigns, died on Wednesday in Washington. He was 78.

The cause was pancreatic cancer, his family said.

In a career of nearly 50 years, Mr. Guggenheim made everything from feature documentaries to advertisements for political campaigns. He was nominated for Academy Awards a dozen times and won four.

He opened a studio in St. Louis in 1954 and took home his first Oscar 10 years later with "Nine From Little Rock," about the 1957 integration of Central High School in Little Rock, Ark.

His film biography of Robert F. Kennedy, "Robert Kennedy Remembered," made just after Senator Robert F. Kennedy's assassination, was an emotional high point of the 1968 Democratic National Convention and won him his second Oscar. He also won for "The Johnstown Flood" (1989), about that flood in Pennsylva-

*He became disillusioned after making political ads.*

nia in 1889, and "A Time for Justice" (1994), about the civil rights movement.

Mr. Guggenheim made his first political advertisements for Adlai E. Stevenson, in the 1956 presidential race. They were early contributions to what became the expensive political wars that have been fought with paid advertising since then.

He moved his operations to Washington and produced miles of film for scores of campaigners, mainly Democrats whom he served as media adviser. His clients included the presidential candidates George S. McGovern and Walter F. Mondale, and Senators Ernest F. Hollings and Joseph R. Biden Jr.

In the mid-1980's he abruptly quit this successful career, saying that American political campaigning had turned "sick." It had become over-

simplified and too negative, he declared, and often paid for by unidentified backers.

"These 30-second and 60-second inquisitions are becoming more and more a part of the electoral process," Mr. Guggenheim said at the time. "It doesn't take much ability or judgment or ethical restraint to use the 30-second spots to slander someone, to make an inference, to hit, to run, to oversimplify."

Charles Eli Guggenheim was born on March 31, 1924, in Cincinnati, served with the Army in World War II and graduated from the University of Iowa in 1948. He worked as a producer for children's television shows at CBS and then at the public television station in St. Louis until he formed his company, Guggenheim Productions, in 1954.

After his life in politics, he continued to make films with political, social and historical themes, winning more awards along the way. His films included "D-Day Remembered" (1994) and "The Making of Liberty," shown on PBS on the 100th anniversary of the Statue of Liberty's dedication in 1886.

Most recently he finished a film



Paul Hosefros/The New York Times

Charles Guggenheim in 1986

about American soldiers imprisoned in a German labor camp, "Berga: Soldiers of Another War," which is scheduled to be shown on PBS in May.

Mr. Guggenheim is survived by his wife of 45 years, Marion Streett Guggenheim; a daughter, Grace S. Guggenheim of Washington; two sons, P. Davis of Nyack, N.Y., and Jonathan S. of Los Angeles; two brothers, Jack, of Wyoming, Ohio, and Thomas, of Cincinnati; and four grandchildren.