

## **Dr. Munk receives Sverdrup Medal from American Meteorological Society (AMS)**

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A University of California, San Diego scientist has been honored by the American Meteorological Society (AMS) "for his outstanding contribution to the dynamics of wind-driven ocean circulations and wave phenomena on the surface of the sea.

He is Dr. Walter H. Munk, 48, professor of geophysics at the University's Scripps Institution of Oceanography, associate director of the University's Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics, and director of IGPPs La Jolla laboratories.

Dr. Munk was presented the Society's Harald Ulrik Sverdrup Gold Medal by AMS President Philip D. Thompson at the Society's annual awards dinner tonight (Wednesday, January 26) in Denver, Colo.

This marks the third honor within two months to be accorded Dr. Munk of La Jolla. Last November he was elected to membership in the American Philosophical Society and received the 1965 Arthur L. Day Medal of the Geological Society of America.

Dr. Munk is only the second scientist to be awarded the Sverdrup Medal, established by the AMS in 1960 for researchers who make outstanding contributions to the scientific knowledge of the interactions between the oceans and the atmosphere. First recipient, in 1964, was Dr. Henry Stommel, professor of oceanography at Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Unlike other AMS awards, the Sverdrup Medal is granted by the Society president at suitable intervals on the advice of an especially appointed international committee on which are representatives of Scripps Institution of Oceanography and the University of Bergen, Bergen, Norway.

Dr. Sverdrup, famed Norwegian polar explorer and oceanographer, served as director of Scripps Institution from 1936 to 1948. Sverdrup Hall, a Scripps campus laboratory building, is named in his honor. He died in 1957.

While Dr. Munk was a Scripps graduate student, he and Harald Sverdrup developed a system for forecasting breakers and surf on the beaches, a system which proved important during World War II. Dr. Munk studied under Harald Sverdrup and they collaborated on several research reports.

During the past 20 years, Dr. Munk has made many fundamental contributions to the understanding of ocean currents and waves. He is considered one of the leading authorities on the reasons why the earth wobbles on its axis and changes its speed of rotation and has made important contributions in the use of high speed electronic computing machines for analyzing geophysical data. In 1963 he and several others collaborated in a global expedition to measure the attenuation of ocean swell; he is now working on the formulation of a new method of predicting tides.

Born in Vienna in 1917, Dr. Munk came to the United States at an early age. He received his bachelor's and master's degrees from California Institute of Technology and his Ph.D. degree in physical oceanography from Scripps Institution of Oceanography in 1947. He has been associated with Scripps since his years as an undergraduate student and his contributions to the University date from that time.

In 1941-42 he was engaged in research on underwater sound for the University of California's Division of War Research and in 1943 he joined the staff of Scripps as research associate in oceanography.

In addition to his membership in the American Philosophical Society, Dr. Munk is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences by which, as co-author with Prof. G. J. F. MacDonald, he was awarded the Academy Monograph Prize in 1959.

(1/26/66)