

Dr. Walter Munk receives 1968 Gold Medal

March 26, 1968

A San Diego scientist has been honored by the Royal Astronomical Society of London for his "distinguished contributions to oceanography and to the study of the variations of the rotation of the earth."

The Society's 1968 Gold Medal has been awarded to Dr. Walter H. Munk, director of the La Jolla Laboratories of the University of California's Institute of Geophysics and Planetary Physics, and professor of geophysics at Scripps Institution of Oceanography, University of California, San Diego.

Dr. and Mrs. Munk left San Diego Sunday (March 24) for London. There, on Friday, March 29, Dr. Munk will give the Society's invitational Harold Jeffreys Lecture of 1908 at Burlington House, and officially accept the Gold Medal. The title of his talk is "Once Again - Tidal Friction."

Following the award presentation and lecture, the Munks will travel to Hamburg, Germany, where, on April 1, Dr. Munk will address the German Meteorological Society, now observing its centennial year.

Dr. and Mrs. Munk will spend the next two weeks as guests of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the Caucasus Mountains. They will visit the Armenian and Georgian Soviet Socialist Republics, in the southern section of Russia, near Turkey and Iran., before returning to the United States.

During the past 20 years, Dr. Munk has made many fundamental contributions to the understanding of ocean currents and waves. In 1963, he and several others collaborated in a global expedition to measure the attenuation of ocean swell and he is currently working on the formulation of a new method for predicting tides.

Dr. Munk was the recipient of the Geological Society of America's Arthur L. Day medal in 1965 and the Sverdrup Gold Medal of the American Meteorological Society and the California Institute of Technology Alumni Distinguished Service Award in 1966.

Born in Vienna, Austria, Dr. Munk received his B.S. and M.S. degrees from CalTech, Pasadena, Calif., in 1939 and 1940, respectively, and his Ph.D. degree in physical oceanography from UCLA in 1947. He has been affiliated with Scripps Institution since that time.

Dr. Munk is a member of the National Academy of Sciences and the American Philosophical Society, as well as a number of other scientific organizations. He currently serves on a Federal committee to study programs in sciences, engineering and services of the Environmental Science Services Administration (ESSA) of the Department of Commerce. He has served as a member of the President's Scientific Advisory Council Panel on Oceanography.