



March 21, 2005 Wyandotte Distinguished Graduate Inductee



William H. Littlewood Class of 1941

William H. Littlewood distinguished himself as a world renowned Oceanographer. His scientific and geologic studies have greatly benefited mankind, and added to our knowledge of the oceans, seas, and polar regions.

In 1941, Bill graduated from Theodore Roosevelt High School. As a student he was active in band, drama, tennis and the Rifle and Philatelic Clubs.

After a year of university study, Bill joined the Army during World War II. Following his discharge, he returned to the University of Florida where he earned a Bachelor of Science Degree. His Master of Science Degree in Zoology from the University of Michigan led to his assignment as Instructor of Biology at Champlain College in New York.

During the years of 1950-1955, Bill Littlewood worked for the United States Navy as Chief Oceanographer. He traveled the world's oceans where he directed a team of over 200 officers and sailors on two of the largest oceanographic vessels. During those five years, his team collected samples of water and geological specimens, and measured oceanic characteristics such as temperature and density. The compiled data provided the first scientific documentation of the North and South Atlantic Oceans, and the Mediterranean and Caribbean Seas.

Recognized for his leadership in Oceanographic work, Bill was awarded a Fulbright Foreign Scholarship. He used the grant to undertake an expedition to Greenland with the Danish Government.

During 1957-1958, the designated International Geophysical Year, Bill served as leader of the American Oceanographic Team in Antarctica. The mission was in conjunction with Admiral Richard Byrd's explorations and Operation Deep Freeze. Bill identified several geological landmarks that are now known as Littlewood Nunataks and Littlewood Volcanics.

Over the years, William Littlewood represented our country in numerous positions and assignments: Science Attache for Scandinavia, Oceanographer for NASA, Diplomatic Leader to the 2nd Oceanographic Congress in Moscow, Science Attache in Japan, and Associate Chairman of the Office of Science & Technology for the U.S. State Department.

Bill's work in Indonesia utilized the technology of the Tilt meter, a sensing instrument used to predict volcanic activity. The device was used effectively to predict the Mt. St. Helen eruption. His efforts have established new building codes that save many lives in underdeveloped countries.

In 1981, Bill retired from the U.S. Foreign Service with the civilian equivalent rank of a three-star general. He is President of the Explorers Club in Washington, D.C. For the past 24 years, he has been a major fund raiser with the "Stamp Corner" for the Associates of the American Foreign Service Worldwide Organization. His efforts support scholarships and many of the charitable endeavors of the club.

In 2004, at age 80, Bill traveled with an Antarctic Expedition as guest of the Argentinean Government. He placed a proclamation and an Explorer's Club Flag at Littlewood Nunataks.

William H. Littlewood is truly an important contributor to the scientific and technological advancements of the 20th Century.