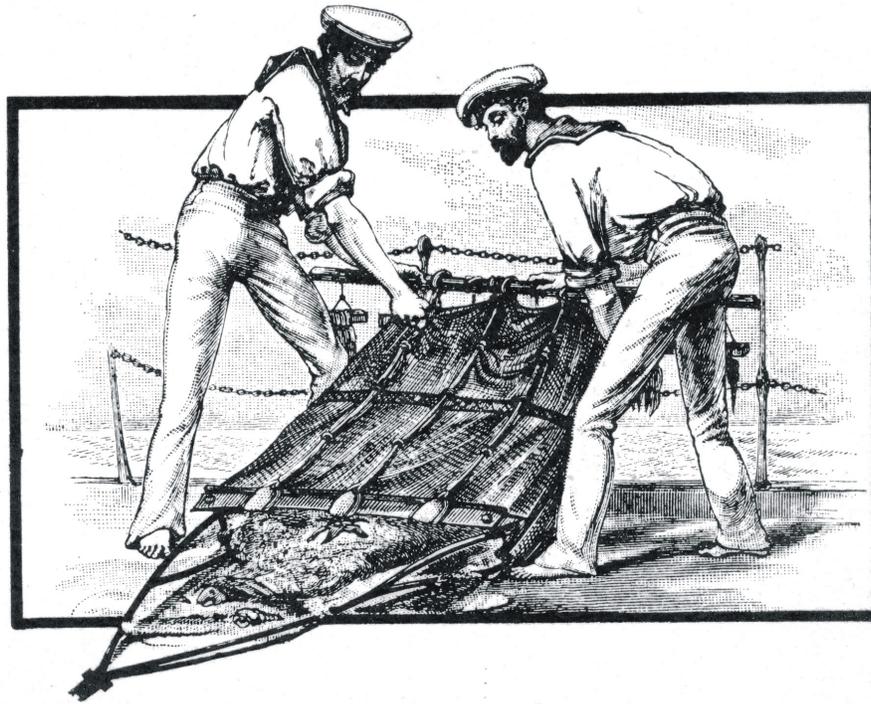


International Marine Minerals Society



MOORE MEDAL 2008 CITATION

The International Marine Minerals Society (IMMS) would like to present J. Robert Woolsey, Ph.D., with *The Moore Medal**, which is given in the name of Professor J. Robert (Robby) Moore for distinction in the development of marine minerals. Professor Moore conducted marine minerals research at Cardiff University in Wales, Great Britain and the Universities of Harvard, Wisconsin, Alaska, and Texas in the United States. He was committed to the intelligent integration of government, industry, and academia to address the development of marine minerals.

Robby founded the Underwater Mining Institute and IMMS, and he committed his research and many other considerable personal efforts to the multidisciplinary development of marine minerals. *The Moore Medal* is not awarded on any regular basis, but is reserved for those rare occasions when the career of an eminent figure in marine mining and minerals activities warrants such an honor.

**Robert W. Cooke earns a living designing and making monumental sculptures for many customers, mostly in the Northwest. Before becoming a full time artist, Bob was the Exploration Manager for the International Nickel deep seabed mining consortium. He attended many UMIs and became a good friend of the Institute and many of its participants. He designed and made the Moore medal when IMMS decided to initiate the award.*

International Marine Minerals Society

J. Robert Woolsey

Bob Woolsey was born in 1936 in the state of Georgia and grew up to be a man of great integrity, vitality, wisdom and charm, totally neutral on matters of race, gender, and religion. A true Southern Gentleman in every sense of the word. His passing on July 9, 2008, the victim of an automobile collision, left an empty space in the hearts of his family, and his many friends and colleagues throughout the globe.

The posthumous award of the Moore Medal of the International Marine Minerals Society, to Dr. J. Robert Woolsey for Excellence in the Development of Marine Minerals, is a well deserved tribute to this man who spent the last 30 years of his professional career heavily involved in research and development of marine minerals on an international basis. He first came to my attention in Burma in 1979 where, as a newly appointed technical advisor to the United Nations Development Program Offshore Exploration for Tin, I had to fill the shoes of an almost legendary figure "Dr. Bob", who accompanied by his wife Maxine had spent the previous two years initiating the program. Bob had planned to completion the construction in Singapore of a unique drilling vessel the RV *Sea Drill*, a spud anchored, twin-hulled barge, mounted with a Becker Drill, and designed for sampling alluvial tin deposits in the coastal waters of the Mergui Archipelago in the Andaman Sea, off Tenasserim. He had also designed and built, with the help of his side -kick Bruce Jernigan, a barge mounted dressing plant for reducing and concentrating the drill samples. The adventures of Dr. Bob in transporting the equipment to the drilling site in monsoon weather and the transfer of the drill barge from the Malaysian port of Ranong across the strait to Victoria Point in Burma with a mutinous crew will remain in the hearts and minds of his Burmese colleagues for many a long year.

On his return to the States he joined, in 1980, the faculty of the University of Mississippi (UM) as assistant Professor of Geology and Geological Engineering. His prior experience in private industry and the United Nations had focused on marine mineral resources and related environmental engineering projects in Africa, South America, the Mediterranean, the South Pacific as well as south east Asia, working with dredges, mining for alluvial tin, gold, diamonds and industrial minerals. He continued to work in the area of marine minerals at UM, making a name for himself as Director of the Mississippi Mineral Resources Institute (MMRI).

In the ensuing years Dr. Woolsey worked closely with the University of Hawaii, the University of Alaska, the US Bureau of Mines, the Minerals Management Service, and the US Congress, in developing the Marine Minerals Technology Centers (MMTCs). The Centers were recognized by the Department of the Interior as Minerals Research Centers for the Continental Shelf, the Ocean Basins, and the Arctic Seas, respectively. On a change of direction

towards environmental issues at UM, and the closure of the Ocean Basins Division at the University of Hawaii, the UM's Continental Shelf Division was renamed the Center for Marine Resources and Environmental Technology (CMRET), a title that it retains today.

UM Chancellor Robert Khayat said of Bob, "He was an exceptional researcher and administrator, and his vision helped focus MMRI's mission and attract support from governments and private industry. He brought together the best minds in the world to explore Mississippi's mineral resources, and his work to develop these resources responsibly will benefit the people of this state for generations."

Woolsey's research included projects to develop better underwater drills, explore for mineral resources on the ocean floor and develop oil and gas reserves. His primary work over the past decade has involved studies of gas hydrates formed when hydrocarbon gases blend with seawater and freeze beneath the sea floor, with the goal to develop them as a major energy source. Bob helped organize an international consortium of scientists and engineers to study the hydrates in the Gulf of Mexico and hosted a conference on the work at Ole Miss. More recently he helped guide efforts to produce biodiesel from cooking oil and other plant sources to power MMRI's equipment and vehicles. He was active in advising the US Congress on appropriate legislation for the sustainable development of marine minerals, including the Marine Minerals Technology Development Act of 1986 (Check this), and the Marine Hydrates Development Act of 1996.

US Senator Thad Cochran said "Dr. Woolsey was a bright and enthusiastic researcher. His tireless work on behalf of the MMRI and the Department of the Interior (DOI) brought notoriety to the University of Mississippi. He will be missed by the scientific community and the Old Miss family, but his legacy and work will be enduring reminders of his contributions to our state and nation.

In his earlier life Bob was an anti-submarine warfare (ASW) patrol plane commander and a test pilot for the US Naval Reserve where he worked primarily in ASW, flying the Bering Sea between Alaska and Kamchatka. A 1959 graduate of Mississippi State University, he studied ocean science and engineering at the US Navy Postgraduate School and earned his doctorate in Geology in 1977 from the University of Georgia.

He pursued field operations overseas and he would often entertain his many friends and acquaintances with stories of work in the jungles of Africa and South America. He had an amazing ability to converse with people from all walks of life and was as comfortable chatting with people on the front porch of a house in Belize as he was teaching his students, or advising the politicians in Washington DC.

"He had an extraordinary ability in bringing people together to address important problems " stated Alice Clark, UM vice chancellor for research and sponsored programs." It was obvious to all who knew him that he loved his work and the people he worked with." He was remembered fondly by so many of his colleagues. Many folks paid tribute to him on learning of

his passing including Jesse Hunt of the US Minerals Management Service in New Orleans who was a fellow graduate student at Monterey in 1977 and Terry Panhorst a fellow professor at UM who had worked with Bob since 1996. The University of Mississippi initiated the J. Robert Woolsey Geology and Geological Engineering Memorial Scholarship Fund to which many are contributing, including the Board of the International Marine Minerals Society (IMMS).

Bob was also an Eagle Scout, a Free Mason, and a member of Oxford University United Methodist Church

Dr. J. Robert Woolsey was a founding member of the IMMS and a frequent attendee and contributor to the Underwater Mining Institute (UMI) being hosted this year by UM and MMRI. It is with mixed joy and sadness that we meet here without him to celebrate his distinguished life and the award to him of the Moore Medal.

Michael Cruickshank

Bob's Friend and Colleague
IMMS Board Member (emeritus)
November 2008

Akira Usui, President

Charles L. Morgan, UMI Chair

