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ANNOUNCEMENT

During World War II, Dr. Coolidge invented many life saving devices, including chemical shark repellents and a signalling mirror for downed airmen. He was awarded the US Legion of Merit in 1945.

After the war he began to concentrate on long-term conservation issues. In 1947 he became Director of the Pacific Science Board of the US National Academy of Sciences, a post he held for 23 years. In addition to his illustrious work for IUCN and WWF, Coolidge also provided leadership to many other leading international organisations.

Indeed, it is impossible to think of the field of conservation without thinking of Harold Jefferson Coolidge, not only because his own initiatives, but also due to the assistance and encouragement he has given to many others. As Sir Peter Scott notes:

“Hal Coolidge was an amazing man. He made an immense contribution largely because of his dogged energy and drive. He never took no for an answer and never seemed to rest but was working away on ten fronts at the same time.... We owe him an enormous debt of gratitude for all that he did for IUCN and WWF over a very long period.”

During his lifetime, Hal Coolidge earned more than fifty major academic and community leadership awards. Among the awards and prizes he received are: the US Legion of Merit 1945; the Garden Clubs Hutchinson Medal 1963; the Albright Medal 1968; the Gold Medal New York Zoological Society 1969; Commander Order of Golden Ark 1972; Silver Medal of International Achievement Award, US National Park Service 1972; Edward W. Browning Conservation Award, Smithsonian Institution 1978; John C. Phillips Medal, IUCN 1978; Member of Honour, World Wildlife Fund International 1979; J. Paul Getty Wildlife Conservation Prize 1979. He also held honorary doctorates of science from several universities, including George Washington University and the Seoul National and Brandeis Universities.

In 1983, the Coolidge Center for Environmental Leadership was established to honour the life, work and ideals of this remarkable man. Located in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the Center works with developing country graduate students, mid-career professionals and industry interns, providing training in environmental management, international law, economic development, and government.

The long list of honours and achievement, however, does not fully reflect the many lives of conservation professionals that were profoundly marked by Hal's encouragement and support over the years. He was also highly influential in bringing women scientists into international conservation research; a domain previously reserved for men only. Hal Coolidge was a genuine pioneer on many fronts.

Hal Coolidge's paramount concern was the responsible care of Earth's environment. He believed in the causes he espoused and worked long and hard to achieve the important goals of conservation and sustainable development. In his own words: “as we confront the often troubled relationship between Man and Nature, we must be ecologically and economically realistic and we must take into consideration cultural restraints. That requires effective and creative environmental leadership,” he said.