

## R.J.W. Douglas Medal Award

DR. RAYMOND THORSTEINSSON

Dr. Raymond Thorsteinsson, Fellow of The Arctic Institute of North America, was awarded the R.J.W. Douglas Medal (1982) for his many contributions to Canadian geology and in particular the geology of the High Arctic.

Dr. Thorsteinsson was born in Winyard, Saskatchewan. He studied geology at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Toronto, and was awarded the Ph.D. at the University of Kansas in 1955. As a student, he spent several summers as a field assistant with the Geological Survey of Canada. One of his assignments included a geological reconnaissance in the centre of the largely unknown arctic region in 1950, when he made an epic canoe trip around Cornwallis Island with Dr. Y.O. Fortier.

He began a lifelong career with the GSC in 1952. Most of the subsequent years were spent on arctic studies. Initially, his field work was done on foot and by dogteam, but soon he pioneered the use of small aircraft, equipped with oversize tires, which could be landed virtually anywhere on the Arctic Islands. This advance resulted in a rapid increase in the geological knowledge and understanding of the Canadian Arctic.

It was the work of Dr. Thorsteinsson and his fellow geologists at the GSC which led to extensive land acquisitions by many oil and mining companies in the region during the late '50s and early '60s. Their work still forms the broad base for present exploration.

Ray Thorsteinsson made significant contributions in the fields of structural geology and biochronology, as well as in regional stratigraphy. He supplemented his predominantly stratigraphic work by paleontological studies, making fundamental advances in the knowledge of graptolites and of the extinct ostracoderm fishes. He has also established the most complete succession of faunal zones in Pennsylvanian and Permian rocks in the Arctic based on Upper Paleozoic foraminifera, the Fusilinacea.

He is Head of the Arctic Islands section of the Geological Survey, and has published more than fifty maps and articles. His maps cover an area larger than the British Isles.

Dr. Thorsteinsson's merits were recognized in 1981 when he was presented with the Massey Medal for geographical contributions. The Douglas Medal is awarded to individuals to recognize major contributions to the regional geology of Canada.

*Canadian Society of Petroleum Geologists  
and the Editors*



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