

PROFILI DEI GRANDI MAESTRI DI IDRAULICA

Willi H. Hager*

ARTHUR T. IPPEN

Arthur Thomas Ippen was born on July 28, 1907 in London UK of German parents. He spent his early years in Aachen Germany where he attended the Gymnasium and the Technical University and there graduated as a civil engineer in 1931. Ippen moved in 1932 as an Exchange Fellow to Iowa State University and then transferred in 1934 to the California Institute of Technology in Pasadena CA. His teachers were Robert T. Knapp famous in cavitation research and Theodor von Karman, the famous mechanical engineer. Ippen investigated there sedimentation mechanics and high-velocity free-surface flows. He was awarded in 1935 the MSc and in 1936 the PhD degrees.

In 1938, Ippen joined the staff of Lehigh University in Bethlehem PA as an Instructor and one year later was appointed Assistant Professor of civil engineering. In 1945, he went to the Massachusetts Institute of Technology MIT as an Associate Professor of civil engineering, and from 1948 was professor of hydraulics and fluid mechanics. Ippen revitalized the MIT hydromechanics laboratory and developed a worldwide reputation among civil engineering experimentation. The laboratory was particularly known for studies in the estuary and coastline hydraulics, the speciality for which Ippen has been one of the international experts for the following two decades. In 1965 Ippen was appointed Ford Professor of Engineering and in 1970 saw the culmination of many years of efforts in the doubling of his Laboratory for Water Resources and Hydrodynamics. Ippen retired in 1973.

During his career, Ippen has received many honors and awards, such as Fellow of the American Academy of Arts and Science, Boston, in 1949, and the National Academy of Engineering in 1967. He received Honorary Doctorates from the Universities of Toulouse in 1963, Karlsruhe in 1967, and Manchester in 1968. He was awarded the Karl Hilgard Award from the American Society of Civil Engineers ASCE in 1963. He was an Honorary Member of the Japanese Society of Civil Engineers JSCE, the Venezuela Society of Civil Engineers and Honorary Researcher of the National Laboratory of Civil Engineering LNEC in Lisbon. These decorations reflect Ippen's respected and effective activity as a consultant on engineering applications of hydraulics, both in America and internationally.

Ippen was a member of the International Association of Hydraulic Research IAHR for almost 25 years. He was elected Council Member in 1955, then was a vice-president from 1956 to 1959 and finally served as IAHR president from 1960 to 1963. During his term, the IAHR's Journal of Hydraulic Research was initiated, today one of the main journals in hydraulic engineering. Ippen also initiated the today's IAHR Regional Divisions, particularly the Latin-American Regional Division, of which the first Congress was held in Brazil in 1964. Ippen was awarded Honorary Membership from IAHR.

Ippen was in addition interested in international technical education and exchange of technical information and experiences. His many international lectures and study tours and his continuous alertness to help in the organization of opportunities for professional exchange were his expressions in this interest. According to his colleague Hunter Rouse, Ippen was not only an international hydraulician but a great human too. He passed away in Belmont MA on April 5, 1974.



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