

Thomas Charles Pullen, OC, CD, RCN (Retd)
Arctic Explorer, Navigator, Surveyor, Ice Master, Author,
Lecturer and Naval Captain

Captain Pullen is ranked by the Geographical Society with Larsen and Amundsen as one of the great pathfinders of Arctic seas, and was the recipient of their Massey Medal in 1984. He is often referred to as the western world's foremost authority on Arctic navigation and icebreaking, and has been involved in marine and industrial projects spanning the North from Greenland waters to the Bering Strait.

Member of an Anglo-Canadian naval family involved in Arctic exploration and surveying since 1849, Captain Pullen was the central figure in three dramatic, trailblazing Arctic voyages: those of the first naval icebreaker, HMCS *Labrador*, in 1956-56; the 150,000-ton icebreaking tanker S.S. *Manhattan* in 1969; and the 3,000 mile tow to the central Arctic in 1981 of *Arvik II*, a complete lead-zinc ore processing plant. More recently he acted as ice advisor and lecturer aboard the *Lindblad Explorer*, the first ship to travel through the Northwest Passage.

Born in Oakville, Ontario in 1918, he attended Lakefield College and then joined the RCN as a cadet. Throughout World War II he served at sea, both in the North Atlantic and the English Channel commanding HMCS *Iroquois*, HMCS *Huron* and later HMCS *La Hullose*. Just after the Korean War he was senior Canadian naval Officer in that theatre, where he again commanded HMCS *Huron* and was Commander Canadian Destroyers Far East.

Subsequently he held various senior staff positions, attended the Imperial Defence College, and commanded HMCS *Labrador*, HMCS *Provider*, the Naval Air Station HMCS *Shearwater*, and the training Base HMCS *Comwallis*. He also was Director of Maritime Operations at Canadian Forces Headquarters (Ottawa) prior to his retirement from active service in 1965.

Captain Pullen also achieved many firsts while commanding HMCS *Labrador* during 1965-57. In addition to conducting an extensive hydrographic and oceanographic survey, he discovered a safer, easier channel to Frobisher Bay, now used by all ships going there. He made the first survey and assessment of winter ice conditions in the Gulf of St. Lawrence to find out if year-round shipping would be practicable. To the great benefit of Qu6bec and Canada as a whole, his favourable report resulted in the Gulf becoming a navigable sea in wintertime. In the same period he led a U.S. naval task group which proved the existence of a usable deepwater channel through Bellot Strait, between the northernmost tip of the continental mainland and Somerset Island. This provides an escape route for ships trapped by ice in western Arctic waters.

Ladies and gentlemen, I present to you today Thomas Charles Pullen for the degree of Doctor of Science *honoris causa*.