

OTTAWA HIGH SCHOOL HALL OF FAME

2009



DR. PHILLIP HEEMSTRA Class of 1959



Dr. Heemstra has become one of the world's foremost ichthyologists, a branch of zoology that deals with fishes. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Zoology from the University of Illinois in 1963, his M.S. degree in Marine Biology from the University of Miami in 1968, and his Ph.D. in Marine Biology from the University of Miami in 1974. Dr. Heemstra is the Curator Emeritus of the South African Institute for Aquatic Biodiversity (SAIAB). He co-edited the comprehensive Smiths' Sea Fishes with Margaret Smith and is widely recognized as a leading international authority on marine fishes. He has published numerous other papers and scientific treatises in the field. His latest book, produced with his wife Elaine, is entitled Coastal Fishes of Southern Africa. The scientific efforts of Dr. Heemstra and Elaine Heemstra to understand, illustrate, and explain the fishes of the Indian Ocean to scientists and the general public have been recognized by naming an entire fish species heemstraorum in their honor. Dr. Heemstra received the J.L.B. Institute of Ichthyology Council Award for Exceptional Accomplishments by an Institute Employee in 1988, the Bill Venter Book Award in 1990 for his work on Smiths' Sea Fishes, the South African Foundation for Research Development Special Merit Award for Museum Scientists in 1993, and in 2000 the Director's Award of the JLB Smith Institute for exceptional achievement, among other professional accomplishments.