

Former director of Waikiki Aquarium dies

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Spencer W. Tinker, former director of the Waikiki Aquarium and zoologist, teacher and writer, died yesterday in Maunalani Nursing Center. He was 90.

That he had a fish named for him symbolizes his impact in marine research.

"The Tinker's butterflyfish was named in his honor," said Bruce Carlson, present Waikiki Aquarium director. "It's a very strikingly beautiful butterflyfish and highly valued. It's found here in the Hawaiian Islands, but it's found in other Pacific Islands too, but only in deep water.

"An era has passed," Carlson said. "It's very interesting that the aquarium has just celebrated its 95th anniversary, and Spencer Tinker was the director a good



Spencer W. Tinker

had been director of the old aquarium that opened in 1904, also in Kapiolani Park, Carlson said.

Born in Anamoose, N.D., Tinker graduated from the University of Washington in 1931 and came to the University of Hawaii in 1932 as a teaching fellow in the zoology department. In 1934 he received a

third of that period. He was real instrumental in building the present Waikiki Aquarium."

The aquarium was constructed in 1954 and opened in 1955. Before that, Tinker

master's in zoology and remained at UH, serving as an instructor for one year in zoology and five years in education.

He became director of the Waikiki Aquarium in 1940, later serving in the Army quartermaster corps from 1941 to 1946, rising to the rank of captain.

An author, his works included "Animals of Hawaii," 1938 and 1941 editions; "Stories of Hawaiian Animals for Boys and Girls," 1940; "Hawaiian Fishes," 1944; "Pacific Sea Shells," 1952 and 1958 editions; "Pacific Crustacea," 1965; "Sharks and Rays of Hawaii," 1972; "Fishes of Hawaii," 1978 - the definitive work on Hawaii fish species; and "Whales of the World," 1988.

He is survived by his wife, Gwen; son, George; and two grandchildren.