



MIT MUSEUM PRESS RELEASE

Date: August 16, 2007

Contact:

Deborah Halber

617/513-5291

dhalber@writingreality.com

Josie Patterson

617-253-4422;

josiep@mit.edu

MIT Museum Exhibition Celebrates Ocean Engineer Jerry Milgram

CAMBRIDGE, Mass.—The innovative career of an MIT ocean engineer who designed the last US winner of the America’s Cup, pioneered oil spill cleanup and investigated dozens of notorious marine accidents as a “sea-going Sherlock Holmes” is the focus of a new exhibition opening in the MIT Museum’s Compton Gallery Aug. 31.

The multimedia exhibition is a celebration of the long and storied career of MIT alumnus Jerry Milgram, William I. Koch Professor of Marine Technology, who will retire this fall after more than four decades on the MIT faculty.

For more than a century, MIT has been a key player in ocean engineering. MIT research has advanced US naval technology, created submersible vehicles capable of withstanding the harsh deep-ocean environment and innovated offshore energy production. MIT graduates’ impact spans ship design and building, ocean transport, security, energy, safety, salvage, marine science and archaeology.

“The hydrodynamics of what happens at or near the surface of the sea is one of my main categories of expertise,” Milgram said. This applies to many aspects of his wide-ranging career as naval architect, computer-aided sail designer, entrepreneur and educator of more than a generation of naval officers and ocean engineers. Among the first to apply advanced scientific technology to yacht design, he is probably best known for his work on sail and hull design for every America’s Cup boat since 1968.

As an ocean accident expert, Milgram investigated, among other disasters, the 1982 sinking off Newfoundland of the mobile offshore drilling rig Ocean Ranger, killing its entire crew. He testified before Congress on how to reduce the impact of oil spills such as that of the Exxon Valdez.

Milgram's life work is closely entwined with that of fellow MIT 1962 alumnus Bill Koch. Koch, a contributor to the Milgram museum exhibition, was skipper and syndicate manager for *America3*, the last winning US entry in the America's Cup competition.

The America's Cup, the oldest sporting trophy in the world, represents the pinnacle of yacht design. When Koch, a businessman and scientist, became involved with yacht racing in the early 1980s, he teamed up with Milgram to build the world's fastest boat.

"When I was introduced to Jerry Milgram, I knew I had finally found someone who understood how to apply the scientific method to sailing," Koch said.

The multi-media exhibition, *Jerry Milgram: an exceptional ocean engineer*, includes models of world-famous racing yachts, a replica of the America's Cup trophy, hundreds of stunning images and interviews with Milgram and colleagues presented in interactive video displays.

The Milgram exhibition will run in MIT's Compton Gallery, Building 10-150, 77 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge, Mass., through Feb. 3, 2008. For information, see <http://web.mit.edu/museum/exhibitions/compton.html>.