



**William Forrest "Buck" Dawson, Honor
Administrator, United States of America, 1993**



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William Forrest "Buck" Dawson as executive director of the International Swimming Hall of Fame made major efforts to include open water swimming as integral part of the Hall through displays and written materials maintained in the museum's library. Buck, known as "Mr. Swimming Hall of Fame", supported the AAU and United States Swimming Long Distance Swimming Programs. Buck wrote the Hall's charter and helped grow the Hall from an idea to a shoebox collection and, ultimately, a million-dollar operation as the world's showcase and archives of swimming. His swimming camps also served as training camps for the United States Swimming Open Water National Teams and individuals training for English Channel and other marathon swim endeavors.

Under Buck's leadership, the International Swimming Hall of Fame became the world's first international Hall of Fame when it was recognized by the 96-member FINA Congress in 1968. Buck was also a writer whose books included *A Civil War Artist From the Front*, *When the Earth Explodes*, *Michiganensian*, *All About Dryland Exercises For Swimmers*, *Weissmuller to Spitz—An Era to Remember*, *Age Group Swimming and Diving For Teacher and Pupil*, *Million Dollar Mermaids—America's Love Affair With Its First Women Swimmers*, *Gold Medal Pools*, *We Don't Sew Beads on Belts and Stand Up and Hook Up*. As a result, the International Swimming Hall of Fame created The Buck Dawson Authors Award. Buck founded the annual Fort Lauderdale Rough Water Swim, formerly known as the International Swimming Hall of Fame Ocean Mile, and the Galt Ocean Mile Swims.

Buck was the first president of the International Sports Heritage Association, by 2000 a 136-member organization of Sports Halls of Fame which he founded under the name of International Association of Sports Museums and Halls of Fame.

Buck is as an inductee in International Swimming Hall of Fame (1986) and received The Irving Davids/Captain Roger W. Wheeler Memorial Award from the International Swimming Hall of Fame in 1972 for his contribution to the administration of open water swimming.

[Expanded Biography \(Openwaterpedia\)](#)