



## **Dr. Doolittle's Epic Road Trip**

### **CCIL Honours the Father of the Trans-Canada Highway**

Question: Who was the first Canadian to do a "road trip" across the country?

Answer: Dr. Perry Doolittle in 1925.

As the first President of the Canadian Automobile Association (CAA), Dr. Doolittle was a tireless advocate for the construction of a national highway. To promote this goal, he undertook a coast-to-coast automobile journey, travelling an all-Canadian route.

Driving a brand new Model T, he left Halifax on September 8, 1925, and reached Vancouver 39 days later. The 7,715-kilometre excursion was mostly over dirt roads, and in some areas the Tin Lizzie had to be driven on train tracks because there were no roads.

It was an amazing feat, and it captured the imagination of Canadians. While Dr. Doolittle didn't live to see it, he was certain that his dream of a cross-country highway would be fulfilled. Today he is credited with being the Father of the Trans-Canada Highway.

In recognition of this visionary, nation-building effort, the Canadian Council of Independent Laboratories (CCIL) has announced that this year – to mark the country's 150<sup>th</sup> birthday – it will be honouring Dr. Doolittle with its Leadership Award.

**A special presentation will be held in Halifax, where the 1925 road trip began.**

**WHEN: Monday, July 17, 2017  
Luncheon 12:30 p.m., Presentation 1 p.m.**

**WHERE: Westin Nova Scotian  
Harbour Suites AB  
1181 Hollis Street, Halifax**

**Three of Dr. Doolittle's great grandchildren will be attending** – Meredith Ingraham of Margaree Valley, Nova Scotia; Ruth Young from Pennsylvania; and Nathaniel Thomas from New York. Together with officials of the CAA, they will be present to accept the award.

**Also attending will be Nova Scotia's Transportation and Infrastructure Renewal Minister Lloyd Hines.**

In addition, historic film footage of the 1925 road trip will be screened at the awards event.

Dr. Doolittle foresaw that a national highway system built to uniform standards would increase commerce and tourism, open up new regions of the country, speed goods to market, and bring Canadians closer together.

Officially opened in 1962 and finally completed to standards in 1971, the TCH was a remarkable engineering achievement. Constructed over some of the world's most challenging terrain, it took 20 years and \$1 billion (more than \$8 billion in today's dollars) to build.

Over the years, many of CCIL's members have worked – and continue to work – on portions of the national highway. They provide laboratory testing and consultation services to ensure that the design, materials and construction methods meet standards.

“We feel a special connection to Dr. Doolittle,” notes CCIL President Gordon Leaman. “It is therefore with great pride that we honour him and celebrate his legacy.”

### **About CCIL**

CCIL represents the independent, private-sector laboratories in Canada. With more than 330 facilities across the country, our members provide a broad array of testing services that help safeguard Canadians from structural collapses, product failures, environmental degradation and many other threats.

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Video of Dr. Doolittle's 1925 road trip, as well as photos and background materials, can be downloaded at [www.ccil.com/dr-doolittle](http://www.ccil.com/dr-doolittle)

To learn more about CCIL, visit us at [www.ccil.com](http://www.ccil.com)

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