



Robert Dowling, Honor Swimmer, United States of America, 1970



Personal Website (None known)

Robert Dowling, at age 18, became the first person to swim the circumference of Manhattan Island in 1915 in 13 hours and 45 minutes. His swim paved the way for this to become one of the world's icon marathons and part of the desired Triple Crown of Open Water Swimming. He was followed shortly afterwards by IMSHOF Honoree Ida Elionsky - the first female to complete the swim. In 1917, he competed in a 64 km (40-mile) upstream river swim in the Hudson River, New York USA. Robert was a successful businessman, real estate principal, Tony award winning theatre owner, philanthropist and leading citizen. His gifts help establish Downing College (gift of \$3 million in 1968 to Adelphi University) and he was president of the National Urban League and a director of the Negro College Fund.

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

[Long Swims Database \(Marathon Swimmers Federation\)](#)