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# REMEMBERING DR. ROBERT (BOB) H. COOK – NSIS COUNCIL MEMBER AND AQUACULTURE SPECIALIST EXTRAORDINAIRE

Dr. Robert (Bob) Cook, a former very active NSIS Council member, passed away recently (January 2026). He had a very successful career as a federal government marine scientist and administrator, and a long and active retirement from his home at Portuguese Cove on the outskirts of Halifax.

Post retirement, Bob served the NSIS Council in various roles. He was a full Council member, coordinator of the student writing competition from 2008-2012, a member of the NSIS 150th Anniversary Committee, 2010-2012, and a member of the Hall of Fame Nominations Committee 2011-2012 (M. Paon, pers. comm.). Bob was also an active member of the BIO-Oceans Association (BIO-AO) in its early days, contributing to its meetings and Newsletter (Cook 2008). He is remembered as being an energetic and pleasant person, always with a smile and a great sense of humour, and always with a positive contribution to the programs of both organizations.

I (pgw) personally knew Bob while we both worked for the Environmental Protection Service (EPS), Environment Canada (EC), in Dartmouth, NS. He interviewed and hired me back in 1973 while I was completing my Ph.D. research at the St. Andrews Biological Station (SABS) and the newly formed Huntsman Marine Laboratory. He was my senior EC manager for three years (1974-77), overseeing our marine pollution control programs (aquatic toxicology, microbiology, analytical chemistry) at the Bedford Institute of Oceanography during

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the early years of EC. He was very supportive of our pollution programs and efforts in those days.

Although primarily a program manager, he was very active in our field water monitoring, as he was an expert and experienced scuba diver. He obviously loved marine field work. He had obtained one of his graduate degrees at Dalhousie, an MSc. in oceanography (1963 to 1965) and later a Ph.D.

After working for EPS, in 1977 Bob moved on to positions in the federal Department of Environment and Fisheries, and the newly formed (1979) Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), serving as Director of SABS from 1977 to 1992. Hubbard (2016) summarized his many contributions to the conduct of SABS and importantly to marine aquaculture in Atlantic Canada. He was very engaged nationally and internationally in promoting the open pen (sea cage) salmon aquaculture industry in the Bay of Fundy region and was responsible for the Salmonid Demonstration and Development Farm Project in the 1980s. He was the first President of the Atlantic Aquaculture Fair. Bob also served on the St. Croix International Joint Commission (IJC) Water Quality Committee from 1979 to 1992 and on the Atlantic Fish Habitat Task Force (Wells 2016). He was a long time contributor to the Mariculture Committee of ICES (International Council for the Exploration of the Sea) (Cook 2016).

After St. Andrews, Bob moved in 1992 to Nova Scotia and was director of aquaculture coordination at DFO in Halifax until his retirement in 1998 (Hubbard *et al*. 2016). Besides being involved in the NSIS and the BIO-OA, he gave a fine overview of the salmonid aquaculture industry at the 2008 SABS centennial event (Cook 2010) and contributed to the book on the history of SABS – *A Century of Maritime Science* (Hubbard *et al*. 2016.).

Our Maritime coastal community and the NSIS have lost yet another fine scientist and contributor. He will be greatly missed but much remembered – his service to the NSIS, his scientific contributions, and his smiles and endless positivity will last a very long time.

*Acknowledgements* Dr. Jennifer Hubbard's 2016 book was invaluable in retrieving "nuggets" about Bob's career, pointing once again to the huge value of having scientific histories. Thanks are also due to Michelle Paon (of the NSIS) and Jennifer Mudge (of the BIO Oceans Association) for assistance finding some key information for this article.

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