

Albatross IV Decommissioning
Remarks for Dr. Nancy Thompson, NOAA NEFSC Science &
Research Director

Good morning. I welcome you to the house that the *Albatross IV* built.

I would like to take this opportunity to recognize those present who were members of the scientific complement on the first bottom trawl survey cruise aboard the *Albatross IV*:

- Pat Towig
 - Fred Nichy
 - Bob Livingstone
 - Jim Crossen
 - Robert Marak
- and
- Sam Nickerson

Also

From NOAA's Fisheries Service

- Our deputy administrator Mr. John Oliver
- Chief scientist and former Population Dynamics chief here at the Northeast Center—with 48 sea days logged on the *Albatross IV*--Dr. Steve Murawski

- The head of the NOAA Fisheries Office of Science and Technology, and my predecessor as director here— with 12 sea days logged on the *Albatross IV*-- Dr. John Boreman
- We also have here today our director emeritus, with 1 day logged on the *Albatross IV*--Dr. Herbert Graham, who was the director of the Woods Hole fisheries laboratory when the *Albatross IV* was conceived, and was among those who greeted her when she first arrived. In just a few weeks time, Dr. Graham will be 103 years old.

And from the Town of Falmouth, our home these past 137 years:

- Selectman Ahmed Mustafa. Mr. Mustafa knows us well as his wife Helen worked here at the Center from 1970 until 2006 and served as one of our most valued and in-demand managers of international programs

The development of Woods Hole as a marine science center begins with the federal fisheries service in 1871, but is an intertwining history of its major institutions.

I appreciate the participation here today of our colleagues representing two other major Woods Hole research institutions:

- Dr. Joshua Hamilton, Chief Academic and Scientific Officer of the Marine Biological Laboratory, established in 1888
- And Dr. Susan Humphris, Acting Vice President for Marine Facilities and Operations for the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution, established in 1930

I thank you all for attending.

Before the *Albatross IV* arrived in Woods Hole, the research vessels of our science center had been collecting data for nearly 80 years. But the *Albatross IV* ushered in a period during which fishery science matured, largely because of the broadscale, long-time series that this vessel, and later the *Delaware II*, allowed us to obtain.

Eight dedicated vessels have served this center over the past 120 years. Among these, four constitute the *Albatross* line. We are here today to not only retire the last of it, but also the name which has echoed in this village since the

original sail-rigged, steam-driven *Albatross* left this pier in April 1883 to survey the waters off the Northeastern U.S.

Marine fishery research is possible because we send scientists and their instruments to sea. It can be said that the *Albatross IV* was the first of our vessels to be an instrument herself. This was new, but is now a standard on its own, expected in all modern fishery research vessels.

Because of her long life, many of us here at the Center have a special relationship with the *Albatross IV*. We have grown up with her, spent entire careers on her, found remarkable things, and learned more than has ever been known before.

More than 2400 scientific staff have sailed on her and thousands of researchers, teachers, fishermen, and environmentalists have benefitted from her work.

On their behalf, I bid the *Albatross IV* farewell and thanks in the words of Rudyard Kipling from *Captain's Courageous*, writing of another venerable northeast fishing vessel, and I quote : "She was an able packet and we owe her a heap."