

PTTI DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD

Presented to
Roger L. Easton
U.S. Naval Research Laboratory (Retired)
ROBARCO

by
Dr. Joseph D. White
U.S. Naval Research Laboratory

Captain, thank you for the opening remarks. I am the Chairman of the PTTI Executive Committee, and mostly what I get to do in that job is delegate things to others and stand back and watch things happen. But every now and then, I find a good job that I like to keep for myself, and this is one of them.

The PTTI has its Distinguished PTTI Service Award. We award this sometimes annually, sometimes less. It kind of depends on how we feel and whether we feel we have good candidates. In this case, this year we have an exceptional person that we're honoring, a man that I've been honored to work for and to know for 20-something years now. Roger Easton will be our award winner this year.

Most of you have known Roger at one time or another during his career, which has been quite long and distinguished. Some of you knew him before I have met him. I worked for him from 1973 to 1980, I guess it was. He's done a number of other things since he retired. And I thought I'd just take a minute to go over briefly some of Roger's accomplishments, and there are a lot; I'm reducing them to just the big ones here today.

Roger worked for NRL and the Navy continually from World War II up to 1980. Among his accomplishments there were the design and the construction of the first Vanguard satellite. An outgrowth out of that was a system called "Mini-Track," which was developed to track Vanguard and later expanded to do other things. Mini-Track grew into a system that became known as the "Naval Space Surveillance System." That all started around 1960 or so. "SpaceSur" is not well known in the community, but in fact if you look at NORAD's list of what's flying around in space today, most the items on that list, I think something like 75 or 80%, come out of SpaceSur. It's a system that's still going, still growing, and Roger is one of the people that made SpaceSur happen.

Roger also, shortly after SpaceSur, invented a one-way ranging concept that became a Navy program that was known as "Timation." For those of you that know the history of GPS, Timation was one of two programs, that and the Air Force 621B project, which became GPS. That's about the time I went to work for Roger. The things that make GPS work so well, the clocks, the orbits, a lot of the concepts all came from Roger. We owe him a great debt of

gratitude for the work he did there.

As I say, Roger retired from NRL around 1980; however, that was by no means the end of his career. He did a number of other things after that, including politics. Roger was elected twice to the New Hampshire General Court, which I believe is roughly the same thing as the State Assembly. And in 1986 he actually ran for Governor. He was beaten by an upstart by the name of John Sununu, and we understand that it had to do with the irregular voting in the southern part of the state and dimpled ballots. But he came close.

Roger has also received a number of awards over the years. I would like to list a few of those: in 1960, back in the SpaceSur days, as that started up, he won NRL's Distinguished Civilian Achievement Award. Roger was one of several people involved in the Collier Award, which is shared between NRL, Aerospace, the Air Force, and Rockwell for GPS.

Another award that I thought was very interesting was the Magellanic Premium Award from the American Philosophical Society. And I'll read the description to you of what this is: "a medal to be awarded from time to time to the author of the best discovery or most useful invention relating to navigation, astronomy, or natural philosophy." Roger is also a Fellow of the Institute of Navigation.

Sometimes, though, as you look through the list of people, a lot of people have won awards. One of the things that kind of gets your attention, as to how well recognized they are, is how many awards have been named after them. I know there are at least two in Roger's case: There's the Roger L. Easton Science and Engineering Award, which was out of Naval Space Surveillance, and the NRL Roger L. Easton Award for Engineering Excellence. I'm particularly interested in the NRL award because NRL, like most laboratories, is a hard science laboratory, but we have a group that does engineering. In hard science groups, the engineering people often get ignored. So it's very nice to see that award came for Roger and recognized not only his achievements, but also the achievements of the people who have followed.

So Roger, if I could you up here please, I'd like to make the award. You have to be aware of boxes that tick. I don't know how you are going to get this back on the airplane. This is the clock that is awarded as the PTTI Distinguished Service Award. It's inscribed "Distinguished PTTI Service Award 2000 to Roger Easton."