

2011 Reunion in Norfolk, VA



**Capt. Rowan & wife being piped into the room
for the Reunion Banquet.**



Capt. Danelle Barrett, Commander NCTAMS LANT, presented a gift to Capt. Rowan for his lifetime of service and groundbreaking work in Naval Communications while aboard AGMR-1.

NCTAMS LANT Hosts Crew of the Navy's First Communications Major Relay Ship

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NORFOLK, Va. (NNS) -- Naval Computer and Telecommunications Area Master Station Atlantic (NCTAMS LANT) hosted 44 members of the USS Annapolis (AGMR-1) Association Oct. 14 for a tour of the Navy communication facility during the association's 2011 reunion in Norfolk, Va.

Annapolis, commissioned in 1964, was the first communications major relay ship to successfully transmit communications ship-to-shore using satellites in 1966 without the need for ground-based communication facilities. The Association consists of Sailors who served aboard Annapolis between 1964 and 1969.

NCTAMS LANT Commander, Capt. Danelle Barrett welcomed and thanked veterans for pioneering naval communication while under the leadership of the ship's first commanding officer, retired Capt. John Rowan.

"We wouldn't be able to do what we do today if it were not for the work done on the Annapolis breaking new ground in communications," said Barrett.

Barrett recognized the former crew members as instrumental in passing operational orders during the Vietnam conflict, relaying critical command and control information back to Pacific Fleet headquarters.

"None of that would be possible without Capt. Rowan's earlier leadership, preparing the ship for later combat support operations," said Barrett.

Rowan recalled his vision, serving as the AGMR-1 commissioning commanding officer.

"The Annapolis was perfect then, it was perfect through the years and in my mind one of the best I have ever seen in the Navy," said Rowan.

Veteran crew members of the first relay ship saw how communications capabilities had evolved from 1960 to the present.

"While the concepts are the same as when I served on active duty, there have been lots of changes that are totally mind boggling in the communications world," said assistant communication officer Lee Hallman. "During my service as a Radioman, we went from Morse Code to teletype to satellites. To see how far communications has come since then is just amazing."

During a reception the following evening, Barrett presented Capt. John Rowan, the ship's first commanding officer, a gift from the Sailors and officers of NCTAMS LANT to thank him for his groundbreaking work in naval communications. Rowan led the Annapolis crew from 1964 through 1965.

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