

# NASA JOHNSON SPACE CENTER ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

## BIOGRAPHICAL DATA SHEET

**NAME:** Ralph Stanley Sawyer

**ORAL HISTORY:** 7 October 1999

**EDUCATIONAL BACKGROUND:**

BS in Electronics and Physics, Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts, 1944

**MILITARY EXPERIENCE:**

Aviation Electronics Technician Mate - 2<sup>nd</sup> Class (AET 2/C), USN (Ret). (1944-1946)

**PRE-NASA CAREER:**

Tufts University, Medford, Massachusetts

Research Assistant, Piezoelectricity & Instructor, Physics (1946-1947)

National Advisory Committee for Aeronautics, Langley Memorial Aeronautical Laboratory, Hampton, Virginia

Research Engineer, Instrumentation (1947-1948)

Minneapolis-Honeywell Regulator Company, Minneapolis, Minnesota

Electronics Engineer, Industrial Instrument Division (1950)

Hastings Instrument Company, Hampton, Virginia

Electronics Engineer, Communications (1950-1951)

United States Naval Weapons Station, Yorktown, Virginia

Supervisory Electronics Control Engineer (1951-1953)

United States Naval Underwater Ordnance Station, Newport, Rhode Island

Head, Range Data & Homing Test Section (1953-1954)

United States Naval Weapons Laboratory, Dahlgren, Virginia

Head, Ballistics Instrumentation Branch (1954-1959)

Consultant, Special Projects Office (Polaris), USN Bureau of Weapons (1957-1959)

**NASA CAREER:**

Space Task Group, Langley Research Center, Hampton, Virginia

Head, Communications Section (1959-1961)

Manned Spacecraft Center (MSC) / Johnson Space Center (JSC), Houston, Texas

Chief, Electrical Systems Branch, Flight Systems Division (1961-1962)

Chief, Instrumentation and Electronic Systems Division (1962-1968)

Chief, Space Electronics Systems Division (1968-1969)

Chief, Telecommunications Systems Division (1969-1973)

Chief, Tracking and Communication Development Division (1973-1989)

**CURRENT OCCUPATION:** Retired

**PROFESSIONAL & HONORARY SOCIETIES:**

- Associate Fellow, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA)
- Chairman, Aerospace and Electronic Systems Group
- Fellow, Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE)
- Member, National Honor Society for Physics
- Member, National Technical Committee for Communications of AIAA

**AWARDS & CITATIONS:**

- Sigma Pi Sigma (National Honor Society for Physics)
- Project Mercury Group Achievement Award, 1962
- Sustained Superior Performance Award, 1964, 1976
- Outstanding Contribution to Development of Space Flight Test Facilities at MSC, 1964
- NASA Exceptional Service Medal (2), 1969
- Television Academy Award - "Outstanding Achievements in Engineering Development - Color Television from Space," 1969-70
- Group Achievement Award, Space Shuttle Program Definition and Preliminary Design Team, 1972
- Group Achievement Award, Lunar Landing Team, 1973
- Skylab Achievement Award, 1974
- Group Achievement Award, ASTP (Apollo-Soyuz Test Project) Communications Verification Team, 1974
- Sustained Superior Performance Award, 1976
- Special Award, Approach and Landing Test Program, 1980
- JSC Director's Award for Outstanding Contribution to Manned Space Flight, 1981
- STS-1 Award, 1981
- NASA Medal for Outstanding Leadership, 1981
- Group Achievement Award, Orbiter Vehicle Systems Design and Development Team, 1981
- Certificate of Merit, American Radio Relay League, Inc., 1983
- IEEE Centennial Medal, 1984

**SELECT PUBLICATIONS:**

Sawyer, R. S., "On-Board Tracking and Data Systems for a Manned Lunar Spacecraft," Aerospace Engineering, January 1962.

Sawyer, R. S., "Manned Spacecraft Center Laser Program," Laser Symposium sponsored by Office of Advanced Research and Technology, NASA Headquarters, 1962.

Sawyer, R. S., "Interplanetary Mission Communications Systems," National Space Electronics Symposium, 1963.

Sawyer, R. S., "Mars-Venus Communication Systems," Lewis Research Center Mission Technology Conference, 1963.

Sawyer, R. S., "Apollo Data Systems," Session Chairman National Telemetry Conference, 1964.

Sawyer, R. S., "Apollo Information Systems," Session Chairman, ITC, 1970.

Sawyer, R. S., "Apollo Lunar Communications," published volume VI, ITC Proceedings, 1970.

Sawyer, R. S., "New Apollo Lunar Communications," International Space Communications Conference, Head, Exterior Ballistics Instrumentation Branch, Paris, France, 1971.

Sawyer, R. S., "Space Shuttle Integrated Electronics Technology Conference," Session Chairman for Communications, 1971.

Sawyer, R. S., "NASA Space Shuttle Technical Conference," Session Chairman for Communications and Tracking, 1983.

**BIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES:**

American Men and Women of Science, 1998-99, 20<sup>th</sup> Ed., (New Providence, NJ: R. R. Bowker, 1998), s.v., "Sawyer, Ralph Stanley"

NASA Biographical Data Sheet (May 1985), Ralph S. Sawyer Key Personnel File, Awards Office, Lyndon B. Johnson Space Center, Houston, TX.

Who's Who in Aviation and Aerospace, 1983, 1<sup>st</sup> Ed., Compiled with the assistance of Jane's Publishing Company, Ltd. (New Providence, NJ: National Aeronautical Institute, 1983), s.v. "Sawyer, Ralph S."

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