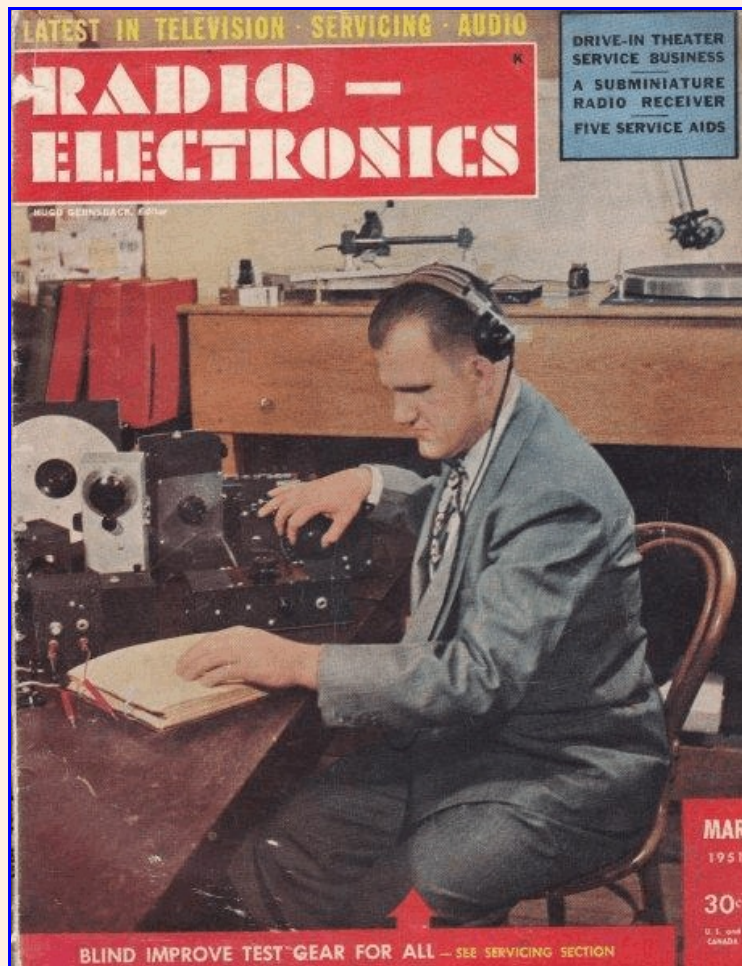


Robert W. “GUN” Gunderson W2JIO - *1919–1987* Born to Charles and Freda Gunderson - Madison New Jersey, a brother age 3 and a sister Helen age 13. The true “Sunshine Station.” Editor, author, teacher and design engineer of the Bronx, NY. Blind since birth, Gun was described as cheerful, upbeat about life and particularly happy about ham radio. He was one very unusually gifted individual that didn’t allow his condition hinder his life style. Gun W2JIO was known to have said “There is no handicap so great as a closed mind.” Lillian Gunderson was in Bob’s life 1909-1976.



In Gun’s own words; “As a boy, I was fascinated by the idea of communicating and that fascination still persists. The tin can thing with a thin string conductor perhaps was my earliest telephone. Then came the earphones connected between houses by a double wire or even a single wire, with the ground serving as the return leg. Battery powered transmitter and receiver came later and I can well remember the bicycle frame connected to a Model -T Ford generator by means of a rope. I literally pumped my heart out trying to keep the battery charged.

Pictured below at his ham equipment HF and VHF. Of course on the J38 key during a QSO. A member in good standing of the Bronx NY Amateur Radio Club.

Robert was revered by Hollywood and appeared on the NBC Corp. Show “This Is Your Life” a Ralph Edwards Production. There seems to be audio

available of the program through the UCLA archives. We are attempting to order the CD to review for this story. It is still pending because of copyrights.

W2JIO didn’t pass his home problems to anyone else, he would tackle them himself! Joe W3GMS said “ I remember the time when Gun put a new roof on his house in the dark and the neighbors would kid him and ask him to wait for daylight hours so he could see!” Gun and his wife Linda K2LY would travel by motor home and visit us and enjoy the country side, Joe said.

Philip Petersen W2DME wrote; “I have learned much more about Bob. He went on to become one of our very knowledgeable radio amateurs. He was guest speaker at many radio clubs and hamfests. He was a technical consultant on radio communications, publisher of the Braille Technical Press and a highly valued leader at the New York Institute for the Blind. He helped many others overcome their handicaps and achieve their dreams. Gunderson tribute continued on page two.



Among one of the things that amazed your author about Gun's life was being a 3 day a week consultant and advisor at Manhattan's Radio Row at one of the better electronic establishments "Hudson Radio."

He would roll up his sleeves work at the counter and answer technical questions from the faithful. In 1969 Bob worked together producing with Radio Shack, a Morse Code course with manual and code record LP album. The course was prepared for sale for beginners under the Archer brand. An Edison Award recipient in 1955 was one of his main accomplishments.



Frank Casey was impressed so much with Gun that he obtained "W2JIO" and said; "I now have a new call sign W2JIO!" In September 1962, I became a student of the New York Institute For the Education of the Blind (now known as NY Institute for Special Education.) in the Bronx. My electronics instructor was a knowledgeable gent by the name of Robert Gunderson. Gun, as we called him, held the amateur radio call W2JIO. He was responsible for me and several other blind students obtaining their amateur tickets. Unfortunately Gun became a silent key winter of 1987.

Since that time Casey said, I always wanted 2JIO. I applied making the big move and on Oct 11th 2003, the FCC granted my request for W2JIO. Casey gave appreciation to his wife Kathy and KM2O for assisting in the filing. He continued; "Yes WB2HQU served me well for many rich years of enjoyment but the time came in its appropriate place, W2JIO was in operation again for someone who has an enormous amount of respect for "Gun," the fine gentleman who blazed the trail for so many blind amateur radio operators, regards - Frank Casey W2JIO – excerpts NT2Y dot org. Valuable pictures and help by Bill NA2M, much appreciated plus ancestry work by Chuck Johnston.