



John Harry Johnson

Sgt. Major
United States Marine Corps
HQ Company, HQ Battalion, 1st Marine Division
Born 17 August 1921
Died while Serving 12 July 1967 - 50years ago today

John Harry Johnson was born in New Britain, CT on Aug. 17, 1921, the oldest and only son of John and Ruby Johnson. Younger sister Lois was born 4 years later. Their father, John passed away when young John was 13. He graduated from New Britain High school in 1941. His mom always hoped that John would go into the family drug store business but Johnson knew exactly what he wanted to be-a United States Marine.

John enlisted into the United States Marine Corps on Feb. 16, 1942. After completing his training at Camp Pendleton, he immediately was sent to war in the South Pacific at Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands. PFC Johnson was only 20.

At the end of the war, John met a girl who happened to also be a Marine, Helen Cragin. Helen had been featured in a Look Magazine article about women Marines in June of 1944. They married in Feb. 1947.

The family moved to our helicopter base in 1948 when John was stationed here. John and Helen's son John was born in 1948, daughter Sandi arrived in 1949. After returning from the Korean War, daughters Wendi and Judi arrived.

On July 12, 1967, Sgt Major Johnson was involved in a night jeep accident. He was killed days shy of his 46th birthday becoming the oldest Orange County soldier to die while serving in Vietnam.

He was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star for his exemplary work as the principal advisor to the Commanding General 1st Marine Division.

His lifelong dream was to become the Sgt Major of the Marine Corps. When he died, he knew he was in line and one of the top 13, according to seniority. The family found out after his death that in fact, he had been chosen.

He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery.

