

# Don U Johnson

Compiled by Judy Hansen  
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Don Urban Johnson, fourth child of Urban and Emily Wanlass Johnson, was born at American Fork, Utah, February 12, 1923. He had three brothers Richard, Harold, E. Paul, and a sister Mary Jean. While a small boy he moved to Lehi, Utah with his parents. Don Graduated from Lehi High in 1941 where he was a member of the football team. He was active in scouting and his church. He enrolled at Brigham Young University in 1941 attending 1 year and 1 quarter in Dec 1942.

Don enlisted in the United States Naval Reserve the following year on October 27, 1942 and was called to active service July 4, 1943. At that time he was sent to Cadet Training Center at San Luis Obispo, California for his pre-flight instruction. He received instruction in light planes at Ontario, Oregon and pursued his pre-flight work at St. Mary's College in California. He later transferred to Livermore College California for primary training.



Don received his advanced training course at Corpus Christi, Texas where he was later commissioned. At De Land, Florida he took operational training, returning to Corpus Christi for advanced training and first stages of night fighter training. His advanced course in night fighter work was taken at Boca Chica, Florida and at Vero Beach, Florida. He trained in target towing for naval gunnery practice.



After a short leave home, he went to Norfolk Virginia where he was assigned as a VBF (V for heavier-than-air(fixed wing) pilot in the Heavier-Than-Air Bomber-Fighter Group 81 and assigned to the aircraft carrier USS Princeton, leaving aboard the vessel at New York City the latter part of May 1946. As the carrier was passing through the Panama Canal en-route to the Pacific, it received damages on the side plates, and was taken to San Diego for repairs.

Continuing his flight training while the ship was docked, Ensign Johnson left San Diego California alone on July 1 1946 on a routine flight in a Corsair plane over the area. He was reported missing when he failed to return to base. He was discovered 6 months and 9 days later on Dec 17, 1946 on the beach of the Salton Sea, a Salton body of water 100 miles east of San Diego near Pope, California in Imperial County, California. The sea is about 245 feet

## NAVY FLIER OF LEHI MISSING NEAR SAN DIEGO

Ensign Don U. Johnson, 23, a navy fighter pilot and son of Mr. and Mrs. Urban Johnson, 588 North Second East Street, Lehi, has been reported missing during a flight from the San Diego naval air station Monday. Ensign Johnson took off from the station at 2 p. m. and had sufficient fuel to last only until 5:30 p. m.

Assigned to the carrier Princeton, the Lehi flier was due to sail from San Diego Wednesday for Manila as a member of the air group stationed on the carrier's trip to return the body of Manuel Quezon, former president of the Philippines.

The navy is pressing an intensive hunt for the missing plane and is concentrating the search in the area immediately surrounding San Diego as the Pilot was instructed not to fly more than 30 miles from the air station.

Born in Lehi May 12, 1923, the missing youth was graduated from Lehi High school in 1943 and was listed among the honor students of his graduating class. He attended the Brigham Young University prior to enlisting in the navy in 1943.

He has four brothers and sisters, Sgt. Richard Johnson, USMC; Boyd Johnson, Lehi; Mrs. Mary Jean Goff, Clearfield; and S. 1/c Paul Johnson, U. S. Navy, Tennessee.

below sea level. The plane has not been found, and is presumed to be in the sea.

The primary function of Naval Air Station, Salton Sea during World War II was to serve as an operational base for U.S. Navy seaplanes. In addition, it provided target facilities for the area — pile and floating targets distributed throughout the sea were used for torpedo and skip-bombing practice — and serviced sea planes on ferry flights and emergency stops.

Unfortunately, as happened across the U.S. and abroad during military training operations, many fliers lost their lives preparing for war. The Salton Sea has claimed its share of servicemen. In some cases, the inland lake is the final resting place for these men and their machines.

According to AeroQuest, an aviation archeology organization that locates and documents old aircraft crash sites, 25 U.S. Navy aircraft crashed in and around the Salton Sea between Feb. 13, 1942, and Aug. 29, 1945.

Nineteen of these crashes resulted in the death of one or more crew members.

## Military Honors Today For Ensign Don U. Johnson In Second Ward at 2 P.M.

### Hannah E. Bone Dies After Long Illness

Funeral services for Mrs. Hannah E. Webb Bone, 84, who died Tuesday at 5:30 in the Lehi hospital after a long illness, were held Saturday in the First ward chapel, with Bishop Herman C. Goates conducting.

Following the organ prelude, played by Miss Della Carson, Harold Fox sang "Rock of Ages," accompanied by his daughter, Phyllis. Bishop Joseph E. Smith offered the invocation, after which John Southwick, a nephew, read the biographical sketch, which was written by Beth Giles, a granddaughter.

Stake President A. Carlos Schow was the first speaker, after which Ray Shelley of American Fork sang "That Wonderful Mother of Mine." Bishop E. N. Webb was the concluding speaker, followed by brief remarks by Bishop Goates.

The closing musical number was a solo, "Lead Me All The Way," sung by Mrs. Sylvester Evans, accompanied by Miss Carson. Raymond Stewart offered the benediction. The body was laid to rest in the Lehi cemetery, where the dedicatory prayer was offered by John Southwick.

Palbearers were all grandsons of Mrs. Bone: J. T. Richard, Ray and Don Bone; Glen Giles and Floyd Erickson.

#### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

The close of the year, also marked the passing of one of Lehi's life-long residents, Hannah Eltrath Webb Bone, who passed away Tuesday evening, December 31st, at 5:30 p.m. in the Lehi hospital following an extended illness.

Hannah, the daughter of John S. and Hannah G. Webb was born November 10, 1862 in Lehi. She was married to John Bone in the Lehi with the exception of two years spent in Magrath, Canada.

The couple was blessed with twelve children, four of whom have preceded her in death namely, Hazel, Gladys, George Ray and Annie. Her husband passed away twenty-one years ago on the 8th day of this month.

Lizzie as she was known by so many, was active in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. She had been a faithful Temple Worker and at one time she with her sister Rachel had the record of doing the most Temple work in Lehi Stake. She also served many years as a teacher in the Relief Society.

She was a great lover of beautiful things and as a hobby spent many happy hours in her flower garden, cultivating beautiful flowers which she would give to others to brighten their homes. She was a thoughtful and loving mother and was never happier than when her children were with her. The love and faith she installed in the hearts of her children and grand-children will be carried forward into generations.

Surviving are eight sons and daughters: John R.; Isaac E.; Mrs. Myrtle Erickson; Rachel and Idella of Lehi; Leon V.; and Mrs. Leslie Giles of Salt Lake City and Warren W. of Huntington Park, California. Twenty-four grand children and twenty-four great grand children and two sisters, Mrs. Harriet J. Smith and Mrs. Rachel

Funeral services for Ensign Don U. Johnson, U. S. Navy Reserve, will be held in the Second ward chapel today at 2 p. m. with Bishop Cecil L. Ash presiding. A guard of honor from the local American Legion post will attend, and military rites will be conducted at the graveside under the direction of Post Commander Glenn E. Smith.

Ensign Johnson left San Diego, California, alone last July 1 on a routine flight, in a Corsair plane over the area and was reported missing when he failed to return to his base. He was discovered last Thursday on the beach of the Sargasso Sea, a salton body of water 100 miles east of San Diego near Pope, California. The sea is about 100 feet below sea level. The plane has not yet been found, and is presumed to be in the sea.

Born in American Fork Feb. 12, 1923, he was a son of Urban and Emily Wanlass Johnson. Moving to Lehi with his family when a small child, he received his early education in the Lehi schools, graduating from high school in 1941, where he was a member of the football team. He was active in scouting and Priesthood work in the Second ward, and enrolled at the Brigham Young university in 1941, where he attended one full year, completing another full quarter in Dec., 1942.

He entered the U. S. Naval Reserve the following summer, and was called into active service July 4, 1943, when he was sent to the Cadet Training Center at San Luis Obispo, Calif., for his pre-flight education. He received instruction in light planes at Ontario, Oregon, and pursued his pre-flight work at St. Mary's College in California. He later transferred to Livermore College, Calif., for primary training.

He received his advanced training course at Corpus Christi, Texas, where he was later commissioned. At De Land, Florida, he took operational training, returning to Corpus Christi, for advanced training and first stages of night fighter training. His advanced course in night fighter work was taken at Boca Chica, Florida, and at Vero Beach, Florida, he trained in target towing for naval gunnery practice.

After a short leave home, he went to Norfolk, Virginia, where he was assigned as a VBF pilot in the Heavier-Than-Air Bomber-Fighter Group 31, and assigned to the aircraft carrier USS Princeton, leaving aboard the vessel at New York City the latter part of May, 1944.

As the carrier was passing through the Panama Canal enroute to the Pacific, it received damages on the side plates, and was taken to San Diego for repairs. Continuing his flight training while the ship was docked, he left on his last routine flight July 1, 1944.

He is survived by his parents of Lehi, three brothers, M/Sgt. Richard W. Johnson of the U. S. Marine Corps, stationed at Bremerton, Washington; Boyd Johnson of Clearfield, recently released from the U. S. Army with the rank of Corporal; and E. Paul Johnson, Aviation ordnance Mate 2/c, stationed at the Memphis, Tenn., naval air station; and one sister, Mrs. Marvin (Jean) Goff of Clearfield.

### Retiring Fifth

Born 12 Feb 1923  
1 July 1946 Imperial, California, United States  
Ensign US Naval Reserve  
Enlistment date 29 Oct 1942  
Service #5594039  
Serial # 438203  
Bombing fighting squad 81  
Naval Aviation Cadet Selection Board, Ferry Building, San Francisco, Calif.

This story is a combined effort of the Lehi Historical Society and the Stories Behind the Stars project, a national effort of volunteers to write the stories of all 400,000+ of the US WW2 fallen on Fold3. Related to this, there will be a smart phone app that will allow people to visit any war memorial or cemetery, the fallen's name and read his/her story.

Navy Muster Rolls <https://www.fold3.com/search?full-name~=don+johnson&military.conflict=World+War+II&offset=120>

United States Headstone Applications for U. S. Military Veterans

Deseret Sun Aug 29, 1915 <https://www.desertsun.com/story/news/veterans/2015/08/25/military-salton-sea-part-ii/32376187/>

Lehi Free Press July 5, 1946 page 1.

Lehi Sun Jan 9, 1947 page 1.