



***In grateful memory of
Private Rosamond Johnson, Jr.***

*RA 14 289 828, Infantry
Who died in the service of his
country in the military operations in
Korea on July 26, 1950*

*He stands in the unspoken line of
patriots who have dared to die that
freedom might live, and grow, and
increase its blessings.*

*Freedom lives, and through it, he
lives - in a way that humbles the
undertakings of most men.*

*He crossed the 38th parallel three
times. The first two times, he
carried back wounded. The third
time, he got killed before he could
make it back.*

May 18, 1933 - July 26, 1950

*From permanent monument at
Johnson Beach
~[Link to source](#)*

History of Rosamond Johnson Beach
now part of Gulf Islands National Seashore . . .

Rosamond Johnson

Army Private Rosamond Johnson, Jr. was the first Escambia County resident to die in the Korean War on July 26, 1950. He had successfully carried two wounded soldiers to safety and was returning with a third when he was fatally wounded. He had joined the military at age 15 and died at 17. He posthumously received the Purple Heart August 21, 1950 and several veteran groups are still working to see if Johnson deserved additional military honors. During the early days of an integrated military it was not uncommon for recognition to be overlooked for black troops.

Pensacola beaches were racially segregated at the time of Johnson's death; the Gulf beach area was a popular area for blacks. After the Korean Conflict the county-owned recreational area was renamed to honor its fallen hero at the suggestion of the Sunset Riding Club, Inc. The club leased the land in 1950 from the county for the sole use of bathing, beach and recreational facilities for "colored citizens." Although the lease was canceled in 1956 the name Rosamond Johnson Beach remained. The area became part of Gulf Islands National Seashore May 8, 1973.

A permanent monument in Johnson's honor was erected at Johnson Beach on June 10, 1996. Guest speaker, retired Army Maj. Gen. Mike Ferguson of Pensacola and the Veterans of Underaged Military Service, said the real heroes of the war - those who make the ultimate sacrifice - can never receive enough recognition. "There is no medal that signifies hero. You couldn't invent a medal to signify hero."

More Information:

- [Gulf Islands National Seashore](#)
- [History of Johnson Beach](#)