

## News from Nan

DICK'S FAMILY HISTORY

# JOHNSON/MOSELEY FAMILY DURING WORLD WAR II

JUNE 7, 2021 | DICK



*Dick with sailor hat*

In this post (written on Memorial Day, May 31, 2021) I describe what my ancestors and relatives in the Johnson and Moseley family did during World War II. The image above shows me wearing my uncle Lloyd Robins' Coast Guard hat in the early 1940s.

## The Johnsons

### Harold Johnson

My father, Harold Johnson, registered for the draft in October 1940. He was called up, but failed his physical exam because of poor vision. During the War he worked at Spaulding Fibre Company in Tonawanda, New York, most likely making parts for the aircraft industry located in the Buffalo area.



*Spaulding Fibre in Tonawanda, NY*

### Kenneth Johnson

My uncle Kenneth Johnson also registered for the draft in October 1940. He was living in San Diego, California, at the time. He spent the entire war working at Consolidated Aircraft Company. During the war, the Consolidated plant, near Lindbergh Field in San Diego, built over 9200 B-24 heavy bombers and 1800 PBV Catalina flying boats. Both airplanes were workhorses during WW II. Consolidated became Convair in 1943.



*Consolidated Aircraft in San Diego 1940*

## **Richard Starr**

My aunt Evelyn Johnson married Richard (Dick) Starr in August 1943 in Buffalo, New York. During the war, my uncle Dick was in The US Navy serving on the Destroyer Escort USS Richey. The Richey patrolled on convoy duty in the North Atlantic.



*Evelyn Johnson and Richard Starr wedding 1943*

## **Lloyd Robins**

Lloyd Robins was my 1st cousin, once removed. As a youth, he lived in the Johnson household, and was almost like a brother to my father. During World War II, Lloyd served in the US Coast Guard. In 2005 Anna and I visited Lloyd and his wife Jean in Tonawanda. During the visit, Lloyd told me he helped transport cargo on Coast Guard ships from Australia to Burma in the war.



*Lloyd Robins and his aunt Eva Johnson*

Here we are together in 2005.



*Dick Johnson and Lloyd Robins in 2005*

## The Moseleys

### Louise Rebmann Moseley

My maternal grandmother was Louise Rebmann Moseley. She is the only woman mentioned in this post. My mother (Lillian Moseley Johnson) once told me that during the war, grandma worked at the Wurlitzer Company in North Tonawanda. Wurlitzer shifted production during the War from making organs to making bomb proximity fuses. A proximity fuse detonates a bomb or artillery shell when it gets close to a target. It was one of the most important technological inventions during World War II. For most of the war, its existence was a closely guarded secret.

My mother once told me that Grandma worked on the Manhattan Project during the war. I used to discount this until recently when I learned that part of the Manhattan Project was actually located in Tonawanda during the war. I'm still doing research on this and I will report more in another post.

### William C Daley

William C Daley was my mother's cousin. The Daleys lived in Auburn, New York. My mother used to call him "Sweet William." His World War II story is tragic. On October 1, 1940, William enlisted in the National Guard. By 1942 he was in the 35th Infantry Regiment of the 25th US Army Infantry Division, where he was a 1st Lieutenant. The division was moved to Guadalcanal, and on January 11, 1943, it attacked a Japanese position (the "Gifu") at Mount Austen. William led his squad into battle and was cut down by machine gun fire. Here is a short description of his death:

## THE ASIATIC-PACIFIC THEATER

### 2.1. DALEY, WILLIAM

#### 1LT, 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division



The Marines began an assault on Guadalcanal on 7 August 1942. In November 1942 the battle for Guadalcanal still raged on land and sea. The Marines after four months of constant combat had secured a lodgment around Henderson Field about six miles wide and five miles deep and were to be relieved by the U.S. Army's XIV Corps under General Patch which included 1LT William Daley's 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry Regiment, 25<sup>th</sup> Division.

The 25<sup>th</sup> Infantry Division's first objective was to secure the high ground beyond the lodgment five miles southwest of Henderson Field known as Mount Austen. The assault began 7 January 1943. Although the Japanese hold on the island had become untenable, they nevertheless continued to fight desperately. 1LT Daley's 35<sup>th</sup> Infantry led the attack on Mount Austen where some of the fiercest fighting (as it was described by one author) of the Pacific took place. Not until 23 January was Mount Austen secured. During this period 1LT Daley was killed in action on 11 January 1943.

1LT Daley, 25, was survived by his parents LTC George Daley on active duty at Camp Crowder, MO and his mother. He was a former member of Co. I, 108<sup>th</sup> Infantry New York State National Guard located in Auburn, NY. He is buried in the Woodlawn National Cemetery, Elmira, NY.

*William C Daley death at Guadalcanal*

These events are described in more detail in a book entitled *Combat Infantry* written by Donald E Anderson.



*William C Daley and girlfriend*

## George W Daley

William's father was George Daley. George was married to Mary Moseley, my mother's aunt. The Daleys lived in Auburn, New York, their entire lives. George had a long military career with the New York National Guard and the US Army. He first enlisted in the Guard in 1904. During World War II he was a US Army Lt Colonel serving at Camp Crowder in Missouri. Camp Crowder was a training camp for the Army Air Force. Apparently no trace of it is left today.



*George W Daley*

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◀ SPAULDING FIBRE COMPANY    ▶ TONAWANDA    ▶ USS RICHEY    ▶ VETERANS DAY    ▶ WILLIAM C DALEY    ▶ WORLD WAR II  
◀ WURLITZER COMPANY