

DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT



**COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR
CALVIN J. THOMAS**

Inducted 10 July 2008



Command Sergeant Major Calvin J. Thomas was born December 15, 1931 in North Carolina. He joined the U.S. Army in 1950 where he served with the 187th Regimental Combat Team in Korea.

He volunteered for Special Forces in 1953, assigned to the 77th Special Forces Group (Airborne). He was then hand picked, three years later, to be part of the 32 member cell establishing Detachment "A" in Berlin. In 1961, he participated in the Bay of Pigs as well as deploying to Laos as part of "Operation White Star."

From September 1963 to December 1971, he served at numerous levels and with Special Forces including the US Army School for Special Warfare, the 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in the Republic of Vietnam, and the 8th Special Forces Group (Airborne) in Panama. CSM Thomas was appointed to command sergeant major in 1971, serving with both the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) and the 10th Special Forces Group (Airborne). In 1975, CSM Thomas retired from the Army.

His military awards include Meritorious Service Medal, Bronze Star w/"V" Device (1OLC), Purple Heart, Army Commendation Medal (1 OLC); Campaign medals include the Army Occupation Medal, Korean Service Medal, UN Service Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, and American Defense Service Medal, Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal with 60 device, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry w/Palm, Good Conduct Medal (7th Award), Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal; Presidential Unit Citation; Combat Infantry Badge (2nd Award) and Master Airborne Qualification Badge.

CSM Thomas was one of the founding members of the Decade Association that later became known the Special Forces Association and served as its president between 1986 and 1988. From April 1986 through May 1992, CSM Thomas served as the first Honorary Sergeant Major of the 1st Special Forces Regiment.

CSM Thomas died on July 20, 2006 and is survived by his wife, Freda and two daughters.