

# DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT



**COMMAND SERGEANT MAJOR  
JACK GALE JOPLIN**

Inducted 29 May 2008



Command Sergeant Major Jack G. Joplin joined the Army in 1961. After attending basic training at Fort Hood Texas where he trained as an infantryman, he was assigned to the 501st Battle Group (82nd Airborne Division), and the 1st Battalion 503rd Infantry Regt. (173rd Airborne Brigade). Graduating from the Special Forces Qualification Course as a Special Forces Medic, he served with the 6th, 3rd, 5th, 1st, and 10th Special Forces Groups, as well as the Special Forces Operational Detachment Delta. For over three decades (1967-1991), CSM Joplin provided NCO leadership at every level of Special Operations from Senior Medical Sergeant to Battalion Command Sergeant Major. CSM Joplin's career included two tours in Vietnam, as well as overseas assignments in Germany and Okinawa. Noteworthy among a myriad of distinguished achievements were his actions on the night of 21 November 1970, when SFC Joplin was one of the 59 volunteers who were part of OPERATION IVORY COAST when they attempted to rescue American prisoners of war held in the Son Tay prison camp located 23 miles outside of Hanoi. Additionally, in April 1980, MSG Joplin participated in OPERATION EAGLE CLAW, the attempt to rescue Americans taken hostage in the wake of the Iranian Revolution.

Following service as the Battalion Command Sergeant Major of 2nd Battalion, 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne), CSM Joplin retired from active duty in 1991. In 1992 he continued his service as a DOD civilian to Special Forces as part of the support staff for the Special Forces Underwater Operations School (SFUWO), C Co, 2nd Battalion, 1st SWTG (Airborne). CSM Joplin has taught, coached, and mentored several generations of Special Forces Officers and Non-Commissioned Officers. His timely advice and counsel have preserved and passed on decades of hard won experience to thousands of students and cadre at SFUWO. CSM Joplin's tactical proficiency, technical acumen, and patience have been pivotal in fostering the success of a new generation of warriors and combat divers fighting the Global War on Terror. He retired from civilian service in January 2007, having completed 40 years of service to the Special Forces Regiment.

CSM Joplin's awards and decorations include the Silver Star, the Bronze Star, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Republic of Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Palm, the Combat Infantryman's Badge, the Combat Medic Badge, the Special Forces Tab, and the Master Parachutist Badge.