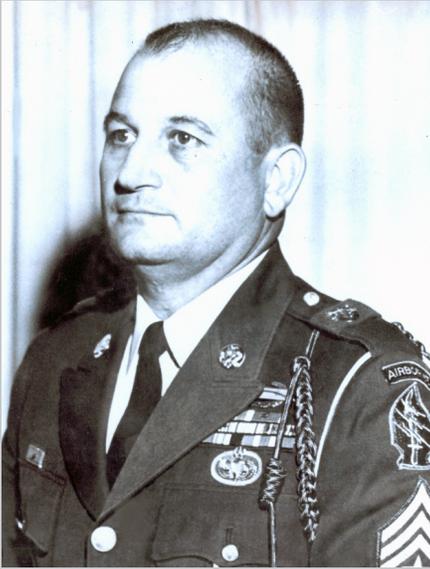


DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT



**COMMAND SGT. MAJ.
RALPH G. KING**

Inducted November 2009



Command Sergeant Major Ralph G. King was born 15 August 1924 in Dowling, South Dakota. Upon early graduation from Lead High School, Lead, South Dakota he was inducted in the United States Army on 30 January 1943 at Camp Dodge, Iowa and was sent to Fort Knox and Fort Campbell, Kentucky for armor training. He then volunteered for airborne training and was assigned to the 541st Parachute Infantry before joining the 101st Airborne Division in England. He participated in Operation Market Garden, the airborne jump into Holland on 17 September, 1944, where he received the first of two wounds. CSM King was wounded again near the town of Foy, Belgium, on 21 December, 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge.

CSM King was discharged from the Army on 3 January, 1946, but fifteen days later, he rejoined the Army, volunteering for the 82nd Airborne Division. He then joined the 508th PIR in Frankfort, Germany, serving as a member of Eisenhower's Honor Guard, until reassigned to the 504th Parachute Regiment as a Platoon Sergeant. During the Korean War, CSM King rejoined the 508th RCT at Fort Benning as a First Sergeant.

CSM King volunteered for Special Forces in 1952, becoming one of the "Originals." He attended several specialized schools including the Smoke Jumpers School in Montana. After serving as a team sergeant in Bad Toelz for four years, he returned to Fort Bragg and was assigned to the 77th Special Forces Group (Airborne).

Now a MSG and looking for new experiences, CSM King volunteered for Missile School at Fort Bliss, Texas, training on the Ajax and Hercules Missiles.

In November 1960, he returned as a SGM with 7th Special Forces Group, deploying to Laos from September 1961 to March 1962 as part of Operation White Star. In August 1962, he was assigned as Command Sergeant Major of the 8th Special Forces Group in Panama, a post he held until his retirement in January 1964.

During his retirement, CSM King continued to tirelessly serve the military community. He set records as the Honor Guard Commander, VFW Post 2278 in Arkansas, participating in 185 military funerals in 2003. He also held critical positions as the Arkansas walk leader on two national walks: in 1993, in a walk from North Little Rock, Arkansas to Washington D.C. for the Vietnam Nurses Memorial Dedication where he served with the Honor Guard at the dedication; and, again, in 1997 when he participated as one of the chapter leaders with the Bank to Bank walk from Pier 18, Los Angeles, California to Wilmington, North Carolina. This latter walk of 2,640 miles across eight states in 65 days raised \$130,000.00 for the JFK Special Warfare Museum.

During his 21 years of active service he received the following decorations and awards: Combat Infantryman Badge; Bronze Star Medal; Purple Heart (1 OLC); Good Conduct Ribbon (5th award); Army Commendation Medal (2); American Theater Ribbon; European Theater Ribbon w/4 Bronze Stars and one Bronze Arrowhead; Victory Medal; Distinguished Unit Badge (1 OLC); National Defense Service Medal; Army Occupation Medal (Germany); Army of Occupation Medal with Germany Clasp; Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal Basic Missile Badge; Expert Marksmanship Badge (Pistol, Carbine and Rifle); US Army Special Forces Tab, Master Parachute Badge w/Star. CSM King also received the Military William Order (unit award) and the Belgian Croix de Guerre for his World War II service.