

# DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT



**LIEUTENANT COLONEL  
LEWIS H. BURRUSS, JR.**

Inducted September 2010



Lt. Col. Lewis H. Burruss Jr. was born in Richmond, Va., in the early days of America's involvement in World War II, to Capt. and Mrs. Lewis Burruss. As the son of a career Soldier, he was raised at various Army posts around the country and overseas. After graduation from high school, Burruss attended Emory and Henry College in Virginia, where he earned a B.A. with majors in History and English, and a minor in German.

LTC Burruss enlisted in the Army in 1965 and attended the Infantry Officer Candidate School, where he was a distinguished graduate. He was commissioned to the rank of second lieutenant in 1966. He volunteered for the Special Forces and served in the force until late 1970, by which time he had attained the rank of captain and served two combat tours in Vietnam, where he was assigned to the Special Forces' Mobile Strike Force. During this time he was awarded the Silver Star Medal, four Bronze Star Medals, the Air Medal and three Vietnamese Crosses of Gallantry.

After attending the Infantry Officers Advanced Course, Burruss served in Germany for three years, commanding airborne and mechanized infantry companies. He then returned to the Special Forces at Fort Bragg, N.C., as an instructor and faculty adviser in the Special Forces School, teaching in the Special Forces Officers Course, the Operations & Intelligence Course and the Military Freefall Course.

In 1977, he completed the rigorous British Special Air Service Selection Course, and was selected, and served his re by the late Colonel Charlie A. Beckwith to help form and train the 1st Special Forces Operational Detachment - Delta, where he served his remaining time in the Army. He commanded the unit's first operational element and later served as the commander of Delta's Selection and Training Detachment, as the operations officer and as the deputy commanding officer. During this time, he participated in the ill-fated Iran raid, the invasion of Grenada and a number of classified operations in the Middle East, South and Central America and elsewhere. He was commended by the British armed forces for his assistance to the Special Air Service in the Falkland Islands campaign. Burruss retired from the Army on Jan. 1, 1987 to pursue a career in writing. His published works include *Mike Force*, a personal account of his 22 months in Vietnam, four novels, and has written numerous pieces for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*.

Burruss has also served as a professional staff member for the Committee on Armed Services, U.S. House of Representatives; successfully investigated rhino-horn smuggling in Africa; participated in the humanitarian relief effort in Somalia; and was vice president of a small international security firm that provided protection for foreign royalty and other high-profile persons. He is an active supporter of the Special Operations Warrior Foundation and a life member of the Special Forces Association, Special Operations Association and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

Burruss resides in Gloucester County, Va., where he and his wife, Rachele, home-schooled the youngest of his five children, Carmella, who has been accepted to the U.S. Air Force Academy. He is on the Gloucester Historical Committee, is a trustee of St. James Anglican Church and is Chairman of the Victory at Gloucester Committee, responsible for organizing the largest Revolutionary War reenactment of 2008.