

DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT



**LIEUTENANT COLONEL
GEORGE D. HEIB**

Inducted June 2011



George D. Heib was born in Detroit, Mich. At the age of 15, he altered his birth certificate and enlisted in the Army. After completing basic training at Camp Wolters, Texas, he attended Airborne School and the Parachute Demolitionist Course at Fort Benning, Ga., at the age of 17, with a follow-on assignment to Company H, 504th Parachute Infantry Regiment, in Europe. He turned 18 during the Battle of the Bulge, while serving as a machine gunner with Company H. He also took part in the battles on the Rhine and Elbe rivers. He was next assigned to the 11th Airborne Division at Fort Campbell, Ky., where he served in the Pathfinder Platoon as a battalion communications chief, first sergeant and battalion operations sergeant, and as an instructor in the jumpmaster and parachute schools.

In 1954, as a master sergeant, he transferred to the 77th Special Forces Group (Airborne). He became an instructor in foreign weapons, clandestine intelligence and airborne operations. He attended the Army Language School studying Russian and then transferred to Detachment A in Berlin. He later assumed responsibility of a rifle company in the 6th Infantry and was promoted to first sergeant. In 1960 he was assigned to the 7th Special Forces Group (Airborne) at Fort Bragg and was promoted to sergeant major. In 1961, he was commissioned as a captain and became the allied liaison officer and assistant headquarters commandant of the Special Warfare Center, or SWC.

Heib served two tours in Southeast Asia, serving first as an adviser to a Vietnamese Infantry battalion and then as a Special Forces company commander. In his next assignment, he was the head of the Field Training Exercise Branch for SWC, and he later became head of the Operations Division. His last active-duty assignment was with the 82nd Airborne Division, where he served as the Army ground-liaison officer with the 317th Tactical Airlift Wing at Pope Air Force Base. Lt. Col. Heib retired in 1972.

His awards and decorations include: the Legion of Merit; Bronze Star Medal with "V" device and two oak-leaf clusters; Meritorious Service Medal; Army Commendation Medal with four oak-leaf clusters; Air Force Commendation Medal; Good Conduct Medal (sixth award); American Campaign Medal; European Campaign Medal with three bronze stars; World War II Victory Medal; Army of Occupation Medal; National Defense Service Medal with oak-leaf cluster; Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal; Vietnam Service Medal with one silver and two bronze stars; Armed Forces Reserve Medal with hourglass device; NCO Professional Development Ribbon with numeral 3; Combat Infantryman Badge (second award); Expert Infantryman Badge; Master Parachutist Badge; Glider Badge; Pathfinder Badge; Special Forces Tab; Presidential Unit Citation; Meritorious Unit Award; Air Force Outstanding Unit Award; Vietnamese Campaign Medal; Vietnamese Training Service Medal; Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry; Vietnamese Civic Action Medal; Vietnamese Parachutist Badge; Belgian Fourragere; Thai Master Parachutist Badge; and British Parachutist Badge.

In 1968, Heib became a member of the Special Forces Association, and he has been a member for more than 42 years. As a member of Chapter 1-18, he wrote the chapter newsletter for six years and twice served on the national convention committee. He also designed the chapter patch and coin, as well as the patch and coin for the 50th anniversary of Special Forces. As the secretary of the JFK Special Warfare Museum, he was awarded a second award of the Department of the Army Outstanding Civilian Service Medal.

Following his retirement, Lt. Col. Heib started the JROTC Battalion at South View High School in Hope Mills, N.C., where he served as the senior Army instructor for 21 years.

Lt. Col. (R) Heib has seven children. Five of his sons and one daughter entered military service, and four are now retired. Lt. Col. Heib's family has a total of 210 years of military service, beginning with his grandfather's service in the Spanish-American War.