

# DISTINGUISHED MEMBER OF THE SPECIAL FORCES REGIMENT



**BRIGADIER GENERAL  
JOSEPH S. STRINGHAM**

Inducted 8 July 2010



Brigadier General Joseph S. Stringham retired in 1992 after serving more than 31 years in the U.S. Army. He served at all echelons of command from platoon through brigade with general purpose forces, the U.S. Army Special Forces and the U.S. Army Ranger Regiment.

Commissioned a second lieutenant in the Infantry, from the U.S. Military Academy in 1961, then Lt. Stringham volunteered for duty in the Republic of Korea, serving initially as executive officer and then as commander of the 7th Infantry Division's Extended Ground Reconnaissance Detachment, and as commander of Co. B, 1st Bn, 17th Infantry.

Stringham volunteered for duty with the U.S. Army Special Forces and in April 1963 was assigned to Co A, 7th Special Forces Group (Abn), Fort Bragg, N.C. While attending the Unconventional Warfare/Staff Officers Course, Stringham was granted an early release from the school and awarded the Special Forces 3 prefix, and was assigned to Detachment A -725 then going into mission training for deployment to South Vietnam. His detachment arrived in South Vietnam in December 1963 and was deployed in a remote area in the Central Highlands as part of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group program with the Montagnard Tribes.

In 1964 he returned to Fort Bragg, to the 5th SF Group (Abn) and another operational detachment preparing for deployment to South Vietnam. In December 1965, he was promoted to captain and assumed command of Detachment A-301 at Ben Cat, which was under heavy pressure from insurgent forces. The fight for Ben Cat has been historically chronicled in books, publications and in the media. The performance of A-301 is legendary. On May 22, 1965, A-301 and its CIDG Strike Force was neutralized by a large insurgent attack with only part of the detachment and one of the original three companies of the Strike Force surviving. Stringham was then given the mission of recruiting, training and deploying a special mission mercenary force under the control of the J2/J3: COMUS MACV, code named Mike Force, and with a pathfinder/ special reconnaissance force code named Apache Force. Stringham used the Chinese Nung company that survived the attack at BEN CAT, recruited and trained three additional Nung rifle companies and two recon/pathfinder detachments in a period of six weeks. On the afternoon of July 20, 1965, Capt Stringham and the Mike Force were deployed in relief of two CIDG camps, BU DOP and BU GHIA MOP, then under siege by a large North Vietnamese Force. The operation would later be featured in the John Wayne movie, *The Green Berets*.

In 1966, CPT Stringham was again assigned to South Vietnam and the 196th Infantry Bde. Stringham rotated from Vietnam in 1968, and served in two exchange officer assignments, as a tactical officer, Royal Military Academy in the UK and later at the Brazilian Army Staff College.

In 1975 MAJ Stringham assumed command of the 2d Bn, 21st Infantry, 24th Infantry Div. In 1978, then LTC Stringham assumed command of the 1st Bn, 75th Infantry (Ranger). In 1981, he was assigned to the Department of Army Staff, Strategy, Plans and Policy, Latin America. COL Stringham assumed command of the U.S. Military Group in El Salvador in 1983. He later moved from El Salvador to assume J-3, Joint Special Operations Command. In 1985, he assumed command of the recently activated U.S. Army 75th Ranger Regiment where he made significant contributions to standards, training and procedures, concurrently responding to national contingency requirements. In 1987, he was assigned to 1st Special Operations Command at Fort Bragg, where he planned and coordinated the special-operations response to the deepening crisis in Panama. At the end of his tour at 1st SOCOM, he was tasked with the staff responsibility of establishing the United States Army Special Operations Command. BG Stringham became the first deputy commander of the USASOC.

In 1989, BG Stringham was selected by the Secretary of the Army to be the Senior Defense Representative to Brazil. In 1991 he was assigned to Mexico with the same responsibilities. In December 1992, Stringham retired from active duty; however, he continues to support the special-operations community and the U.S. Armed Forces. He is a senior fellow and guest lecturer at the Joint Special Operations University, and a visible supporter of veterans and veteran organizations. He is a member of Chapter 92, Special Forces Association, and the 75th Ranger Regiment Association. General Stringham and his wife, Sandy, reside on their farm in northeastern AL.