

## **Major General William E. McLeod Class 22-42**

Major General William E. McLeod was born on 25 April 1921 in Granite, Oklahoma. At age 16 he began his military career at McAlester when he enlisted in a "French 75 field artillery battery in the 45th Division, Oklahoma National Guard. His division was federalized in 1940 and called to active duty at Fort Sill. He elected to remain with his unit as a sergeant until he attended the Field Artillery Officer Candidate School and was commissioned 2nd Lieutenant in 1942.

He joined the 333rd Artillery Battalion at Camp Gruber, Oklahoma. As a battery commander during World War II, he was captured during the Battle of the Bulge and, except for two brief periods, was held prisoner by the Germans until near the war's end.

Eighteen years of his service was overseas and he served about 14 years as a troop commander, including two years in command of 24th Infantry Division Artillery in Germany, one year in command of III Corps Artillery at Fort Sill, and two years in command of VII Corps Artillery in Germany.

During 41 years, McLeod served overseas on the Italy-Yugoslavia border and the Free Territory of Trieste. Other assignments included overseas tours of Iceland and Korea. He served as a troop commander, staff officer, and staff member of the Chairman's Special Studies Group for the Secretary of Defense. He became the first graduate of the Artillery OCS to achieve the rank of Major General. On his final tour of duty, he was assigned to Commander-in-Chief Pacific (CINCPAC) with headquarters in Hawaii.

His awards and decorations include the Army Distinguished Service Medal, three awards of the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star with "V" device, the Purple Heart, two awards of the Army Commendation Medal, Joint Service Commendation Medal and the Republic of Korea Cheon-Su Medal (Legion of Merit equivalent).

Following retirement from the Army, he was appointed by Governor George Nigh as a member of the Oklahoma Board of Corrections where he served several years and held the positions of Vice President and President.