

Lieutenant General Orren Ray Whiddon (Class 7-57)

Lieutenant General Orren Ray "Cotton" Whiddon was born March 10th, 1935 in Joaquin, Texas. He graduated from Stephen F. Austin University with a BA in Chemistry in 1955 and was drafted into the US Army as a Private. Upon completion of Officer Candidate School, he was commissioned a Second Lieutenant, Field Artillery. He also holds a Master of Science degree in Management from the University of Southern California. His military education includes completion of The United States Army Command and General Staff College and the Naval War College, Newport, RI.

General Whiddon served in a variety of career building assignments including Ft. Sill, OK; Vicenza, Italy; and Ft. Leavenworth, KS. His first tour in Vietnam was as a Subsector Advisor in the Mekong Delta and later as the Intelligence Briefing Officer to General Westmoreland. Upon returning to the US, he was the Operations and Plans Officer, Joint Reconnaissance Center, Operations Directorate, J3, Organization of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Washington, DC. In his second tour in Vietnam, he served as the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, G2, 101st Airborne Division and later commanded 3d Battalion, 82d Artillery, 196th Infantry Brigade. Upon return to the United States, General Whiddon served as a staff officer in the Current Operations Division, Operations Directorate, Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans, United States Army.

Following his studies at the Naval War College, General Whiddon commanded the 2nd Battalion, 92nd Field Artillery, 42nd Field Artillery Group in Giessen, Germany. He then served as a Special Assistant to the Chief of Staff, Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe (SHAPE) in Mons, Belgium. General Whiddon commanded the Division Artillery, 5th Infantry Division, Fort Polk, LA, after which he served as the Deputy Director of Training in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff of Operations and Plans, United States Army, Washington, DC.

Other key assignments include Assistant Division Commander, 3rd Armored Division in Europe; Commanding General, United States Army Training Support Center, Fort Eustis, VA.; Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Intelligence, Allied Forces Central Europe (AFCENT), The Netherlands; Commanding General, 8th Infantry Division, United States Army Europe, Bad Krueznach, Germany; and Deputy Commander in Chief for Joint Plans and Operations Forces Command, Fort McPherson, GA. General Whiddon retired in 1990 as Commanding General, Second United States Army, Fort Gillem, GA.

General Whiddon's decorations include the Distinguished Service Medal (two Oak Leaf Clusters), Defense Superior Service Medal (one Oak Leaf Cluster), Legion of Merit (three Oak Leaf Clusters), Bronze Star Medal (two Oak Leaf Clusters), Meritorious Service Medal (four Oak Leaf Clusters), Air Medal (five Oak Leaf Clusters), Army Commendation Medal (two Oak Leaf Clusters), Army Good Conduct Medal (one Oak Leaf Cluster), National Defense Service Medal (one Oak Leaf Cluster), Vietnam Service Medal (three Oak Leaf Clusters), Army Service Ribbon (one Oak Leaf Cluster), Overseas Service Ribbon (five Oak Leaf Clusters), Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross with Unit Citation, Vietnamese Staff Honor Medal, Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry (with Palm), Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry (with Gold Star) and Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry (with Silver Star). General Whiddon is authorized to wear the Combat Infantry Badge, Parachutist Badge, Joint Chiefs of Staff Identification Badge, and Army General Staff Identification Badge.