

GENERAL HENRY HUGH SHELTON BIOGRAPHY

General Henry H. Shelton was born in Tarboro, North Carolina. He received a bachelor's degree in textiles from North Carolina State University and was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Infantry through the Reserve Officer Training Corps.

General Shelton spent the next 38 years in a variety of command and staff positions in the continental United States, Hawaii, and Vietnam. He served two combat tours in Vietnam, the first with the 5th Special Forces Group and the second with the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Also, he commanded the 3d Battalion, 60th Infantry in the 9th Infantry Division at Fort Lewis, Washington; served as the 9th Infantry Division's Chief of Staff for operations; commanded the 1st Brigade of the 82nd Airborne Division at Fort Bragg, North Carolina; and, was the Chief of Staff of the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum, New York.

Selected for promotion to brigadier general in 1988, General Shelton served two years in the Operations Directorate of the Joint Staff. In 1989 he began a two-year assignment as the Assistant Division Commander for Operations of the 101st Airborne Division (Air Assault) at Fort Campbell, Kentucky, where he participated in the liberation of Kuwait during Operation DESERT SHIELD/STORM. After the Gulf War, General Shelton was promoted to major general and assumed command of the 82nd Airborne Division, Fort Bragg, North Carolina. In 1993 he was promoted to lieutenant general and assumed command of the XVIII Airborne Corps. In 1994 during his tenure as Corps commander, General Shelton led the United States Joint Task Force that restored democracy in Haiti. In March 1996 he was promoted to general and became Commander in Chief of the U.S. Special Operations Command.

General Shelton became the 14th Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff on October 1, 1997, and served two two-year terms, retiring on September 30, 2001. Throughout his tenure as chairman, U.S. forces were in heavy demand and participated in numerous joint operations around the globe.

During his tenure, General Shelton worked tirelessly on behalf of service members, their families, and military retirees by championing a number of landmark quality of life initiatives, including the largest military pay raise in 18 years, pay table and bonus reform, and critical improvements in both retirement and healthcare programs. He made great strides in improving the readiness and retention of the current force while simultaneously crafting Joint Vision 2020—the roadmap for the Future Joint Force. General Shelton established Joint Forces Command to consolidate joint experimentation efforts and guide the transformation of the U.S. Armed Forces for the 21st Century.

General Shelton holds a master's degree from Auburn University, and has attended Harvard University, the Air Command and Staff College, and the National War College. He has been decorated for distinguished service by numerous military and civilian organizations in the United States and overseas.

Among his many military awards, General Shelton has received four Defense Distinguished Service Medals, two Army Distinguished Service Medals, the Legion of Merit, the Bronze Star Medal for Valor, and the Purple Heart. He has been decorated by 16 foreign governments. In 2001, he was knighted by Queen Elizabeth II. Highlights of his civilian awards include the Charlotte (NC) World Affairs Council World Citizen Award for 2002, North Carolina's highest Award for Public Service, the Eisenhower Award from the Business Executives for National Security, the American Academy of Achievement's Golden Plate Award, Intrepid Freedom Award, and recognition as National Father of the Year, among others.

For his exemplary service to his country, the 107th Congress bestowed the Congressional Gold Medal on General Shelton on September 19, 2002.

Currently, General Shelton is on the board of directors for Anheuser Busch Companies, Inc, Red Hat, CACI, Ceramic Products Corporation, Robbins-Gioia and CoVant. He is chairman of the O'Gara Group board of advisors and Vice Chairman of the board of advisors for MIC. In addition, he also serves as Executive Director of the General Hugh Shelton Leadership Center at North Carolina State University and as Director of the Hugh and Carolyn Shelton Military Neurotrauma Foundation.