About Dr. Edwin (Ed) J. Deuschle

Edwin (Ed) J. Deuschle graduated from The University of Mississippi’s ROTC program as a Second Lieutenant. Soon after completing his infantry officer basic course, he was assigned to the 101st Airborne Division, 1/506 Airmobile Infantry as the new platoon leader for Alpha Co. 1st Platoon. His first day in the field was on Christmas day, 1969 on Fire Support Base Rakkasan. He spent four months during the monsoon season, learning how to be an effective military leader. He was promoted to First Lieutenant and reassigned to Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 506 Infantry, 101 Airborne Division for the remaining two and a half months that he was in Vietnam. In this war, a platoon leader’s life span after arriving in Vietnam was measured in minutes.

He and his company were engaged in vicious fighting and were heavily outnumbered by the enemy. Casualties were very high on both sides. His company had been flown in by Huey helicopters in what is known as a “hot landing”, meaning that enemy fire is so heavy that the helicopter could not land. The pilot got them as close as possible to the ground, and they had to jump out of the aircraft under heavy fire. Lt. Deuschle’s helicopter was too high for a safe jump, but they had to take a chance and jump anyway. As a result, his knee was jammed to the point he could not walk. However, he had to continue fighting and leading his platoon. As the battle continued, there soon were only two officers left in the company, and that was the company commander and Lt. Deuschle. They were taking on heavy machine gun fire from a hilltop, so the CO ordered Lt. Deuschle to take a couple of troops up the hill to dispel the enemy. As they wormed their way up, he held on to a soldier’s backpack in front of him. When they got into range, the young soldier received a fatal wound. Lt Deuschle threw a hand grenade and blew up the machine gun emplacement.

Due to his serious knee injury Lt. Deuschle had to be medevaced out of the jungle. He was flown to a hospital and back to Ft. Sam Houston, TX. The doctors did all that they could but were not able to repair his knee. He was then sent to a holding unit where he was eventually discharged from the Army under a medical discharge. As a result of this type of discharge, he was not recognized for his heroism on the battlefield. He simply received his orders and was sent home.

After nearly fifty years with no mementos for this chapter in his life, except a very stiff leg, he is finally getting the medals that he so rightly earned and deserves.

Medals awarded to Dr. Deuschle:

- Silver Medal
- Air Medal
- National Defense Medal
- Vietnam Service Medal w/2 Bronze Service Stars
- Combat Infantryman Badge (CIB)
- Republic of Vietnam Campaign Medal w/"60" Device
- Republic of Vietnam Gallantry Cross Unit Citation with Palm Device
- Republic of Vietnam Civil Actions Honor Medal Unit Citation, First Class