



## **The Brave Ones: A Memoir of Hope, Pride and Military Service**

*Michael J. MacLeod*

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How does the US Army mold a video-game generation with its thumbs on the joystick into a proud fighting force with its fingers on the trigger—and lives on the line—in America’s War on Terror? Michael J. MacLeod, already an accomplished professional photographer and journalist, decided to find out the hard way: by enlisting in the armed forces at age forty-one. What he observed and experienced as an embedded reporter and a serving soldier makes for an unflinching and inspiring portrait of endurance, sacrifice, discipline, and courage.

From the trials of basic training on the home front to the ranks of the legendary 82nd Airborne Division to taking fire in the hot zones of Iraq and Afghanistan, MacLeod chronicles the soldier’s evolution as only one who’s been in those boots can. Candid, wise, and powerful, his memoir takes readers on an unforgettable journey through war and allows them to witness bravery firsthand.

## **The Brave Ones: A Memoir of Hope, Pride and Military Service Details**

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## **From Reader Review The Brave Ones: A Memoir of Hope, Pride and Military Service for online ebook**

### **Joel M. Gartenberg says**

#### **Great read**

As a combat veteran of Vietnam, I can relate to much of what Michael MacLeod writes. He is an excellent writer who relates his experiences very well. His book is also very informative and provided insights I didn't previously have about military operations in Afghanistan. I recommend his book to anyone interested in learning more about military operations in Afghanistan.

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### **Jeanette says**

Excellent memoir. Service beginning at 41 and each stage he experienced from the horse's mouth. Very rare to have such language skill for this level of detail in any real life past experience- let alone the war "eyes" of the last portions of the book.

I happened to hit this book the very same month I watched Ken Burns' Vietnam - all 5 multi hour parts shown so far. Surprised myself to do that. Very much. Learned far, far more than I knew although living through that period and losing much because of it.

Incredible sensibility exists now for returning vets that was not at all there in the past. Thankfully.

But adjustments to individual lives are so difficult. It's not only the team "group think" either. This book may help you understand the Afghanistan dilemma.

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### **The Max says**

#### **Belongs on the shelf with D-Day by Ambrose**

Amazon sent an email, one of those we thought you'd like it deals. Based on the cover art thought it was a WWII novel. Grabbed it. Besides it came with free narration, I'm a sucker for that. My only thought at the time was the hope that it wasn't one of those tragic romances where the paratrooper falls for the English girl, jumps into Normandy etc.,etc. Apparently missed the word memoir in the title, I really am brighter than I sometimes appear.

MacLeod had earned a master's in wildlife biology, taught some college, started photography and publishing businesses, and was a home builder. Methinks that last one was integral to his ability to so successfully write about his fellow paratroopers. Knowing, understanding, and appreciating blue collar is special.

At age 40 he decides to enlist. Becomes a paratrooper in the 82nd Airborne serving as a combat correspondent. Wanting to tell "the soldier's stories". He has done so magnificently.

The memoir spans the five years of his enlistment. From basic training to jump school, a tour in Iraq, garrison duty, and a tour in Afghanistan. He had previously mastered the craft of writing. Concise and complete descriptions of places and things, just the right amount of information on Army customs, norms, and mores.

His mastery of the art of writing is demonstrated in his conversations with the soldiers, his descriptions of the actions and events, the feelings he and they have. You end up knowing these guys. Who they are and why they do what they do.

This is a first person narrative with significant elements of an oral history. Not many could have carried it off as well. The 1st person was a participant, not an observer.

I have long thought that Ambrose's D-Day should be required reading in high school. To know and understand what those men did is vital to our own views of ourselves and this country. I would say the same regarding the men and women MacLeod writes about.

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### **John W. Carlton says**

#### **Realistic memoir**

Rough language but this is the way soldiers talk. Very realistic. Good reading if you like military history. I recommend

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### **Dennie Fugitt says**

#### **The meaning of Serving Your Country**

Outstanding depiction of a soldier's life in today's Army as an 11 Bravo and the bonds forged in the heat of battle. These men and women protect and defend the pursuit of the American Dream . Freedom is NOT free; God Bless men and women such as these who shoulder the burden and pay the cost.

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### **Matthew says**

MacLeod's memoir on service to country as an older enlistee is superbly enlightening, eloquently gritty, and as authentic a read on war, service, and the limits of leadership could be. His frank, no-nonsense approach to story telling makes this a page turner worth having, especially for those that want to have any understanding about what it really means to serve.

MacLeod may not receive the accolades that he should for this book. But readers will not be disappointed. And that's the best any author can hope for.

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## **Sandra says**

Very good book. I purchased as audiobook and the narrative was engaging and powerful. The author was respectful and truthful about the service . Various stories of the emotional and physical upheaval of the soldiers brought me from tears to a few times. I am a member of a military family and I thank the author for his insight during this time in our history.

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## **Peggy Pancherz says**

### **Good book**

Read all of the books in order to really enjoy. Characters are realistic and get better and better. Storyline continues to grow and develop.

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## **John says**

### **Wow, what a read**

Wow, I have read a lot of military books both novels and biographies and this has to rank up with the best I have read

It was an amazing view of life as a grunt in the 82nd I really enjoyed it

Thank you for sharing your memories and those of your friends that you lose

Thank you for your service

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## **Scott Schnabel says**

### **A story that needs to be told**

Not enough positive information in the news about our fighting men and women. Thanks for putting your experience to paper, and for your service.

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## **Berlinsd says**

The Brave Ones is the best war memoir published in at least three decades. I have read the major memoirs published since the 60s and none come close to this. MacLeod does not just tell a story with amazing storytelling and humility - he weaves a tapestry of the of the human geography of Afghanistan, with an intense tactical picture of the conflict, while introducing the reader to the diverse cross-section of society that makes up the less than 1% who serves in America's armed forces.

People often ask what they can do to thank Soldiers for their service. I suggest people become informed concerning world events and be best able to be part of our democratic process. MacLeod's book is a darn good primer to do so.

First, this is a story of the modern American Soldier. The book gives the reader glimpses into the diverse makeup of the U.S Army. There are stories of privates through a now-general. You will see Soldiers' lives, loves, and motivations. It is an eye-opening portrayal of individual struggles and triumph. It will make you proud and cry all in a matter of minutes.

Second, this is a story of what is happening in Afghanistan at the tactical level. Readers will be better informed on the difficult execution of US policy and why there are no quick solutions. One will also learn about the complex environment that Afghans, and likewise deployed U.S. Soldiers, face while fighting an amorphous enemy.

In sum, buy *The Brave Ones* and read it. Then buy a copy for a retired Soldier, a policy wonk, a teacher, those who want to join the service, or anyone who wants to better understand how to thank a Soldier.

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### **John William says**

#### **Best Military Book Ever**

Having spent 45 plus years in and around US Military, Marine and Civil Service, found this an absolutely spot on analysis of the Officer/Senior NCO/enlistee relationship, as well as the problem of implementing women in combat. Things I've seen, but never had words for. Realistic modest combat stories, by a really special man. This book really should be required reading for every 2nd LT and E-7.

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### **Hud says**

#### **Spectacular account of paratroopers at war in the modern era**

i have read a lot of god books about our soldiers at war in Afghanistan and Iraq, but had yet to find a good account of my old division the 82nd Airborne.. This was excellent, the author became one of the best to chronicle and write this book about the best. Respect and gratitude to this author and the 1/82 BCT and the 504. PIR as well as the rest of the division. Would enjoy a read like this about the 325 AIR.

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### **Malola says**

Good enough.

The technical terms were somewhat annoying, though.

The author has a good use of the language.

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**Arlie P. Anderson says**

**Excellent, just Excellent...**

I am just a E\_5 US Navy guy 68 to 72, but this book seemed like the same BS that I saw and felt when I was in, less the danger & combat!! Excellent book!

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