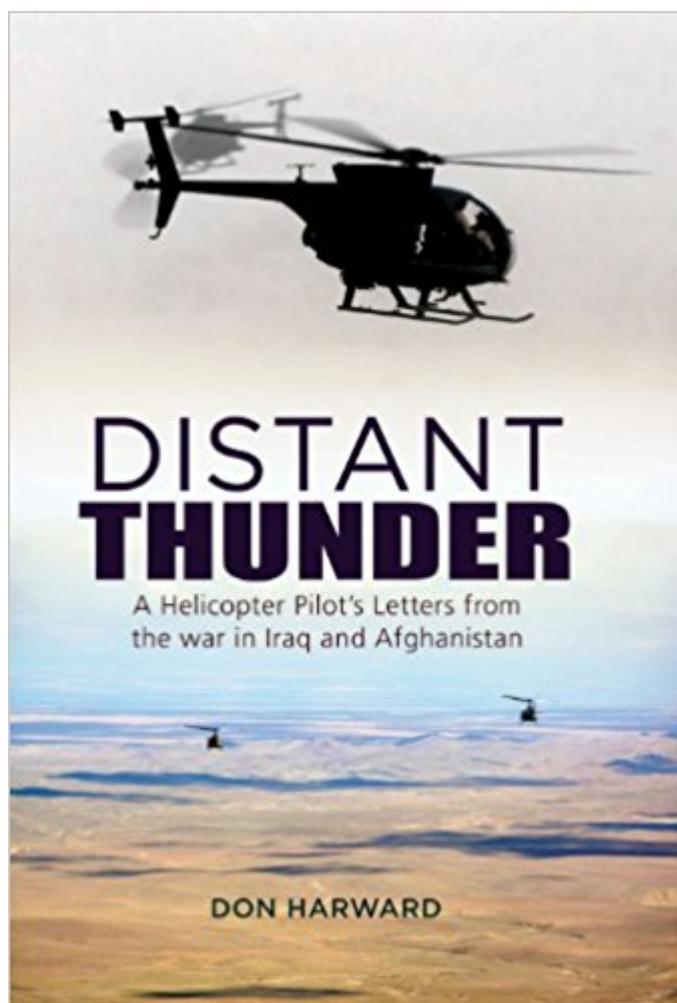


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# Distant Thunder: Helicopter Pilot's Letters From War In Iraq And Afghanistan



## Synopsis

Distant Thunder details the engrossing experiences of a helicopter pilot—his tales of war told through letters that come straight from the heart. Often the author labored well into the night after a mission still wearing the dusty flight suit which bore witness to the events he penned. Don Harward was torn between two worlds; his loyalty to his family and to his country. Like so many other soldiers, even on leave, he can always hear the dim roar of guns, the distant thunder of war, and is always summoned towards the sound. *Pacific Wings*, a prestigious New Zealand-based magazine, has previously published some letters which have been praised by a growing readership, both aviator and non flyer alike, for their ability to transport the reader into the world of war. Includes superb action photographs from Don's personal collection. A twenty-five-year veteran of the US Army, he details action over Panama, Saudi Arabia, Iraq and Afghanistan, including Operation Desert Shield and Desert Storm, drawing also from his days in Army Special Ops, operating with 2-2 SAS. As a 160th SOAR pilot for a lot of his military career, this is a story that goes above and beyond the normal military lifestyle. An inspiring read.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

— Too many stories of past wars and the lessons we could have learned from them have been lost to history because they were never told. Harward's *Distant Thunder* does a great job of capturing some of the stories and their important lessons from recent conflicts, which

serve to remind us of the fragility of peace and how much we owe to our men and women in uniform. (Pacific Wings Magazine) "For an airborne warrior, he is incredibly grounded. The reader is left in no doubt of the pain shared by both soldier and family when he has extended stays in sandy places. His love for Country, Family and Comrades (in no particular order) resonates from every page. Uplifting. (Sky and Bullets Blog) "All 29 of his essays letters, he calls them are quick, breezy, and gripping, but equanimous and Philosophical. Harward writes of hauling clueless politicians around on inspection tours and of his contempt for a non-combatant superior who accosts him after a long mission to lecture him about his grimy flightsuit. There is also a goodly portion of actual war stories: taking fire and returning it, dropping soldiers into battle and risking everything to pull them out. When I think about soldiers being wounded or worse or it always gets me into a knot, he writes. "I feel deeply for them, because I know I can never match their heroics and selfless sacrifices. Even as he's flying directly into withering enemy fire. (Air and Space Magazine)

Dan Harward specializes in military history.

This is a very amazing book. I feel that any of you that have been in the armed forces, will be able to have a real connection with this book. I have never experienced the armed forces, so there was a lot of things that I had no idea about. It was a very productive learning experience. This book bounces around a lot, from different personal stories, and I feel that is what gives this book character. It doesn't follow the grain, but takes a different route altogether. Once I began reading, I didn't want to put it down. I wanted to hear the next story! I would highly recommend everyone read this book, if that's your thing. It gives an honest insight to what really happens over there, while we are safe over here, away from all the dangers. Don is not here to make everyone happy. He lays it all out, honest as can be, just like life is supposed to be. He doesn't make the events better than they should be or make anymore of them than what they were. It's exactly as it says, "an honest story of a helicopter pilot's tales in war." It is inspiring, and honest. Don has a very down to earth view of life, and he knows where he came from, and where he is going. He believes in miracles, and performed a few as well. To wrap this up, if you need inspiration, then by all means pick this book up and read it. After hearing what these heroes have to go through everyday, I can not look at my life and be down. We have it made here, and we take so much for granted. Don has done an incredible job with this book. I'm grateful, and proud, that he shared his experiences with us. It will give you a new, better look on

life. It gives you that feeling of gratitude, of confidence, to know that there are real people out there giving it all to protect our freedoms. Very good read. Highly recommended. 2 Corinthians 5:7 For it is by faith that we walk and not by sight. ...To walk by faith, is to live in the confident expectation of things that are to come; in the belief of the existence of unseen realities; and suffering them to influence us as if they were seen. Amen.

The author manages to combine the grittiness of a military life and the reality of a man at war living with his family. Forget the glorified authors with their Hollywood tinted view of war, this is the real deal. A true American hero who can also compose his thoughts in a way that reaches the heart and the mind. If you like super hero and armchair commando kind of novels this is not the one for you. However, if you value those that give everything for our freedom then this you need to read this book. War can be cold and cruel, but the author manages to capture the fact that those that fight the wars for us are also human. I for one salute the author for his service to our country, and for his ability to remain human, and not least for writing this compelling read of the life so many are willing to adopt to serve their country, and in turn, us.

Not a lot of books out there by helo pilots because of this being a ground pounders war. Mr Harward is a civilian (company unknown) doing contract work for USA and/or somebody else. He really never gives a clear understanding of who he works for or how he gets there. 75% of what he writes about is Afghanistan 20% US Army time and 5% other. He does jump around a lot. What makes this book good is the flying stories. And is enjoyment of what he is doing. It reads very fast and is entertaining. Many great color photos. But no maps. He does put some of his political and religious beliefs but not much.

Great read that gives insight into the laughs, struggles and sacrifices that our men and women in our armed services make on our behalf every day. The elements of daily life that we as civilians take for granted and often overlook are precious touch stones that keep these warriors grounded; Don does a wonderful job putting into words, those feelings that most would never know of otherwise.

Thanks Don. Thanks alot !!. Now all the other books on this subject pail in comparison. Your book was thought provoking. And gave me a new in site of how things really are. You showed the greatness of the American soldier and sacrifice they and their family deal with everyday. I hope you

will keep on writing and telling stories that both make me laugh and cry. You are a true hero in my book.

This book was a good informative book about the pilots who do the commonly ignored and very important work to keep our country safe. It does not represent itself as anything made up or untrue. The author is one of those guys you would appreciate sitting with cause you know the stories are true and so many things are still in his mind. The best!

I admire his service. The book was kind of rambling, but I'm glad I read it.

Very believable and very well written! A must read for helicopter/military enthusiasts and professionals alike. A definite 5 stars from me!

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