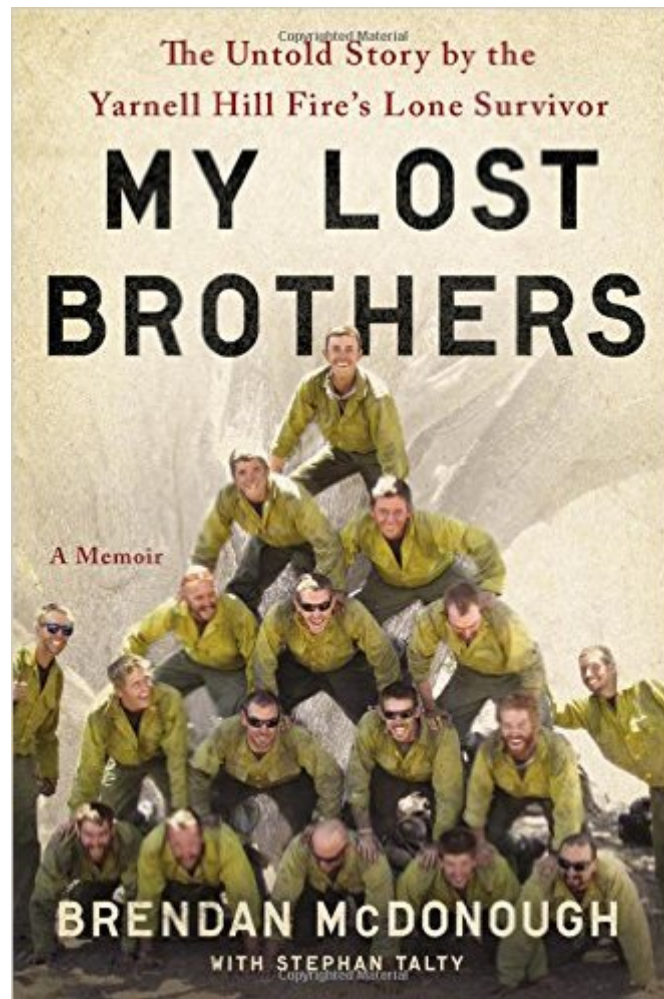


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# My Lost Brothers: The Untold Story By The Yarnell Hill Fire's Lone Survivor



## Synopsis

A gripping first-person account by the sole survivor of Arizona's disastrous 2013 Yarnell Hill Fire, which took the lives of 19 "hotshots"--firefighters trained specifically to battle wildfires. Brendan McDonough was on the verge of becoming a hopeless, inveterate heroin addict when he, for the sake of his young daughter, decided to turn his life around. He enlisted in the Granite Mountain Hotshots, a team of elite firefighters based in Prescott, Arizona. Their leader, Eric Marsh, was in a desperate crunch after four hotshots left the unit, and perhaps seeing a glimmer of promise in the skinny would-be recruit, he took a chance on the unlikely McDonough, and the chance paid off. Despite the crew's skepticism, and thanks in large part to Marsh's firm but loving encouragement, McDonough unlocked a latent drive and dedication, going on to successfully battle a number of blazes and eventually win the confidence of the men he came to call his brothers. Then, on June 30, 2013, while McDonough--"Donut" as he'd been dubbed by his team--served as lookout, they confronted a freak, 3,000-degree inferno in nearby Yarnell, Arizona. The relentless firestorm ultimately trapped his hotshot brothers, tragically killing all 19 of them within minutes. Nationwide, it was the greatest loss of firefighter lives since the 9/11 attacks. *My Lost Brothers* is a gripping memoir that traces McDonough's story of finding his way out of the dead end of drugs, finding his purpose among the Granite Mountain Hotshots, and the minute-by-minute account of the fateful day he lost the very men who had saved him. A harrowing and redemptive story of resilience in the face of tragedy, *My Lost Brothers* is also a powerful reminder of the heroism of the people who put themselves in harm's way to protect us every day.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This was a really personal account of Brendan's life leading up to getting on with a shot crew, and the subsequent relationships that formed thereafter. I found myself laughing and choking up throughout the book. I commend him for having the strength to put it all out there in this account of not only the tragic Yarnell Hill fire, but of the Brotherhood that was forged in blood, sweat, and tears over the course of a few grueling fire seasons and how it transformed his life for the better.

My Lost Brothers: The Untold Story by the Yarnell Hill Fire's Lone SurvivorExcellent book. It was a quick read for me and completely captivating. Brandon writes about how the Granite Mountain Hotshots "Brotherhood" literally changed his life and his willingness to write candidly of his experiences; the good and bad. I remember when this terrible wildfire event occurred and could not imagine the sense of loss that Brandon has endured.

To Brendan, If you should read this you did everything you could have done for your crew and their families. Thank you for all you have done and I'm sorry for your losses. I have thought about you and the Granite Mountain Hotshots with a heavy heart since the tragedy happened and sadly again about the crew in Washington on the Twisp Fire. I too feel that new fire shelters need to be developed, better use of technology for locating firefighters is needed, more air support is needed. Using planes that are from the Eisenhower administration is just unimaginable. Not having enough resources in our country to fight the fires that are increasing in size needs to be solved. When I hear politicians thinking kids working at fast food restaurants wanting salaries to be \$15 an hour for serving a burger and my son is a wildland firefighter working in dangerous and smoky hazardous health conditions, I wonder what in the world are they thinking? Wildland firefighters are making less than that. Thank you for writing the book, it helped me understand the tragedy and I hope your book helps to improve technology and resources available for firefighters, as well as, firefighter benefits.

As a resident of the Prescott AZ area, our hearts go out to the families of the 19 fallen Granite Mountain Hotshots heros every day, and to Brendan every day. Brendan is also a hero. It is a miracle that he survived. I found his book well written, and enjoyed reading on how he grew up, then his troubled ways, and how he overcame his shortcomings with the help of his fellow brother Hotshots. His accounts of the Yarnell firestorm allow us to imagine in our minds just what happened

the day of the tragedy, and the preceding days leading up to the tragedy. And also to learn just how much training (and pain and exhaustion) all Hotshots go through, and just how brave they are to fight any fire to save our lives and our property.

Brendan McDonough did a excellent job writing this book. As hard it was for him to re-cap the loss of his Brothers, he shared what happened on that awful day in Yarnell and how it affected the lives of us who live in Prescott, Arizona.

I worked on a Type II Handcrew for a season coincidentally the same handcrew one of the Granite Mountain Hotshots Christopher Mackenzie started on; the Tahquitz crew in California in San Bernardino National Forest. And just from my one season fighting wildfires it made every page just that more intense and vivid and understandable. I managed to get to chapter 29 before i started crying from the detail and how real McDonough depicts every aspect of his brothers and his feelings P.S..If you're thinking about being a hotshot this is definitely the book you should read 10/10. Thank you for this.

At the time of this review there were some fifty odd other reviews all saying pretty much the same thing. Interesting. I bought this book looking for answers. Specifically why would the Granite Mountain Hot Shots leave the relative safety of a burned out area to traverse an unburned box canyon in the path of the fire to another safe area where they could also hopefully reengage the fire. Brendan tries to answer this question with a philosophical argument pitting self preservation against the concept of duty. That question is answered on page 220 when Brendan states concerning a radio transmission from Eric Marsh (Crew Superintendent) that he had never heard Eric's voice like this - panicked and anguished. If that doesn't affect you, you had better check your pulse. At this point, I would like to introduce Standard Fire Fighting Order #2; "know what your fire is doing at all times", and Watch Out Situation #12; "You cannot see the fire and are not in communication with anyone who can". The Granite Mountain Hot Shots had disregarded this valuable advice. If you go outside this book, however, and interview other experienced wild land fire fighters, you will almost invariably find their answers to be that they too have engaged in reckless behavior and may in fact have done the same thing that the Granite Mountain Hot Shots did. This begs two questions: 1. Will there be more wild land fire fighter fatalities and 2. Will the Gates of Heaven be required to open up to receive them. The answer to the first question is "more likely than not". The answer to the 2ond question is: "How could they not?".Mark JohnsonStanislaus Hot Shots (1984-1989)

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