



# Kicker

*R. Grey Hoover*

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## **Kicker** R. Grey Hoover

Based on the actual experiences of American soldiers during World War II, KICKER features the lives of those who fought in the China, Burma and India Theatre, also known as CBI. Written by R Grey Hoover, this book showcases one of the most unheard of forces that fought in conjunction with British and Chinese Allied air and land forces during the Second World War.

Compelling, insightful and moving, this book tells the story of a family caught in the throes of war. It pays tribute to the bravery of a family with a 165 year tradition of service to their country. It reenacts the understated heroism of valiant men who were sent off fourteen thousand miles from their homeland to battle all the harsh elements of nature and the life-threatening attacks of hostile enemy forces. In the hopes of reminiscing his father's life in the military, Grey writes this historical novel to bring to light the significant efforts of war veterans whose struggles may not have been recognized by many.

Little is known about the CBI Theatre. This was even referred to as the Forgotten Front due mainly to the fact that the men who fought in this zone had received very little amount of supplies and support from the government. The soldiers did not have enough provisions and had limited supply of rations. A man named Sam Huber was a part of this group. In his son's effort to bring to life his father's accomplishments not only as a soldier, but also as a family man, Sam's story is told in this powerful work that will inevitably stir readers.

KICKER inspires readers to appreciate and honor the courage, strength and endurance of war veterans who risked their lives and the welfare of their families in order to fight for the very freedom that is now being enjoyed by millions.

## **Kicker Details**

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Author : R. Grey Hoover

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# **From Reader Review Kicker for online ebook**

## **Lazlo Ferran says**

Left me speechless in places

It is with great pleasure that I review the biography Kicker, and it's not often I can say that!

I pride myself on knowing a lot about WWII but I knew nothing about 'Kickers,' the brave men who kicked the supplies out of American transport aircraft in the Far East Theatre, during the War.

Into this chaotic, dangerous and inhospitable world comes Private Sam Huber. He applied himself to the task at hand without complaint and soaks up the help of veterans around him and the exotic sights that surround him.

The book is full of lovely vignettes of life in places like Calcutta and Casablanca and contains some of the most harrowing scenes I have yet come across in any war book.

I don't want to give too much away but the native in Burma who risked everything to help Huber left me speechless; I have never read of a greater act of bravery.

The War certainly brought out the worst and the very best in the human race. If you want your dose of stories from the font of truth and not fiction, read Kicker. If you like films like Too Late the Hero and Merrill's Marauders but you want to get beneath the surface of these guys, then read Kicker. And if you want to know how the wives and children suffered at home, read Kicker.

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## **John Dolan says**

"Kicker" is a well-researched and fascinating novel about the 'Forgotten Front' namely the China-Burma-India (CBI) Theatre of War during WWII.

Although this is a work of fiction, the whole work has a real feeling of authenticity about it as we follow the adventures of Sam Huber, a country boy from Central Pennsylvania, as he is plunged into the largest war in the history of mankind.

This is a great read which will please history buffs and action readers alike.

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## **Larry says**

A great read! I have read about the Burma- India- China theater before, but this my first acquaintance with the supply planes. A wonderful story with a touch of home as well.

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## Frank Kusy says

I came to this book with some expectation - my own Polish father served with the British army in Burma though I never knew where because he died young and told my mother virtually nothing - and was not disappointed. This is the gritty, sometimes harrowing, story of Sam Huber, based in no small part on the author's father, who joins the army at a young age and soon finds himself in the dangerous but critical position of flying in supplies to some of the 700,000 Allied troops fighting the Japanese in Burma. So bad were conditions on the ground, the hot, moist climate of the Burmese jungle hastening the process of slain and decomposing bodies and producing an almost unbearable stench, that the men defending one particular little piece of a ridge began calling it Maggot Hill. Drinking water that tastes like stagnant mud, barricading themselves behind a wall of bodies stacked three or four high, they soon come to the conclusion that this place must be worse than hell. Small wonder then that the veterans who served in this most distant of WWII operations were, just like my father, reluctant to talk about it. But it's not all doom and gloom, in between all the horrors of war, there are some lighter moments. I particularly enjoyed when one of the 'kickers' of the book's title - the supply guys in the air - kicked out some rations including 3 French novels and an English language manual titled Symposium on Gynaecology. "This is great," says the Yank on the ground who retrieves it, "they sent us a secret weapon. We'll just show the Japs what the army sends us to read, and they'll laugh themselves to death."

Something else I enjoyed, and this is the gift of Mr Hoover's effortless prose, was the heart-stopping chase of the Japanese patrols when Sam, shot down over enemy territory, has to negotiate days of tortuous travel through the jungle, assailed by snakes, spiders, blood-bloated leeches on his body, and an army of red ants running up his left leg. This episode is thrill-a-minute stuff; the heroics of the Naga warriors will remain long in my mind.

Read this book if you have any interest in the "forgotten generation" of CBI (China-Burma-India) Theater veterans who fought seventy years ago to preserve the life we have today.

You won't regret it.

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## Rebecca says

I love this type of read! Great author and great person.

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## B.R. Snow says

R. Grey Hoover's, Kicker, is a terrific read and testament to the efforts of members of the Greatest Generation during WW II. Kicker, a term used to describe aircraft members who literally would lie on their backs and kick supplies to soldiers on front lines is a strong work of historical fiction. It's authentic and paints a great picture of what life was like during those difficult years.

Like countless others of our Greatest Generation, Sam is torn between his love of family and his sense of duty to his country. His decision takes him from rural Pennsylvania to the jungles of Burma and as he struggles to survive the terrors of war, back home, his family struggles with shortages and rationing. Sam finds himself in a wide variety of locales and Mr. Hoover brings these multiple settings to life through the eyes of his main protagonist.

Kicker works on many levels and I highly recommend it, especially to fans of great historical fiction.

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### **Christoph Fischer says**

"Kicker" by R. Grey Hoover is an extraordinary read about air force life in Burma during WWII.

It focuses on Sam Huber (and his wife Eleanor home in Pennsylvania) from his first days of training through his various stops on the way to armed conflict in Burma.

Sam and his friends illustrate the regular soldier's life, not just the super heroes as featured in Hollywood films about the time. They have embarrassing moments during the physical exams, they run out of petrol and have a huge variety of close calls and successes, too. It made them much more realistic and likeable.

The story is not just limited to Burma; Sam stops in Africa and India on the way and with him we also get to know a lot about the situation for soldiers in these areas.

With much research and an amazing amount of factual knowledge about flying, aircraft technology and weather conditions as perceived by air force personnel this book is packed with amazing information and moving insight and worth reading for many reasons.

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### **Books On Fire Tours says**

How can you not love a book like this? There are so many books and movies about WWII, but hardly any like this. This is a refreshing take on the war from the perspective of those who dropped supplies down to the forces, and those on the ground who needed it most.

I'm such a huge fan of the Author now that I've read this book. You can feel every emotion and hardship the characters endured. It is clear that the Author drew great knowledge from his extensive research, from not only his own father but other veterans too. Even though the book is set in a time and place not many of us are familiar with, everyone can relate to the fundamental basics of love, loss, fear and joy that this story evokes. This is more than historical fact/ fiction. There is action, comedy, drama, suspense and some heartfelt moments that will bring tears to your eyes. I would give this book more stars if I could, but alas, the limit is 5.

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### **Trebonius Octavianus says**

Great Story!!!

My heart goes out to the Greatest Generation of all time! WWII, they saved our planet from slavery under Japan, and NAZI Germany. Hats off to R. Grey Hoover's outstanding read, Kicker. Thank You Again! 5 stars!!!

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## Jordan says

to read

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## Candi Silk says

An outstanding and honorable military story!

R. Grey Hoover took on a bold challenge when he sat down to write *Kicker*. Anytime an author undertakes a piece of almost forgotten history, with the mission in mind to recapture fast-fading events, and turn it into a heart-rending novel, is brave. But that's what Hoover did, and did it well.

The CBI (China-Burma-India) Theater of World War II, although the largest in battle-zone area, did not command the spotlight of history as some other aspects of WW II. With Hoover's in depth research, he pulls together the essential ingredients, and builds a fine piece of military historical fiction for the reader.

But Hoover takes his work a major step further; he links the misery of the CBI experiences of soldiers with the anxiety and anguish of citizens back home waiting day by day for their loved ones to return home. Some did, but many didn't. It was the era of a Gold Star banner hanging in the windows of the families that had lost loved ones to the war.

Hoover takes the reader deep into the war zone and lets you feel up close the beast of war. He takes you deep in the jungles where you'll meet more wildlife than you'll find in any man-made zoo. And you'll pay any price for a ticket out. But there's a different kind of scalper to deal with. And they ain't "scalping" tickets to a rock concert.

*Kicker* is not a hyped version of military fiction bloated and dependent upon the coarse, salty language of soldiers under war-time stress. For me that was a unique feature that I greatly appreciated, and makes *Kicker* G-rated and suitable family reading. Hoover demonstrates that an authentic story can be told with civil language.

As I read *Kicker*, I could feel the tearing and shredding of emotions between loved ones in the CBI war zone and the families back home. While bullets and bombs delivered the war, the author lets the raw human emotions of his full-sized characters carry his story all the way to the end.

Hoover leaves nothing out. He shows the sacrifices made on the battle front, as well as sacrifices made on the home front. He introduces the reader to shortages of raw goods, foods, and materials experienced by American citizens. Ration stamps were more important during WW II than any trendy gadget. Jobs became war-oriented; citizens' thoughts searched for meaning in a world aflame.

When you read *Kicker*, you'll discover just how significant the word "kicker" was in the war effort. You'll come to realize that any job, task, AFSC (Air Force Specialty Code), or MOS (Military Occupational Specialty) is of equal importance. Remove one, and the mission is threatened.

For most individuals war is remote, but Hoover fulfills his mission admirably. He brings the reader a spell-binding and enlightening story that should long be remembered, and he does it with the fire-power of good

writing style, “top-notch brass” pacing, and with full-colors flying. And he does it with sterling word-choice, one page at a time.

I commend Hoover for delivering his story with a perfect “kick.” I gladly award Five-Stars, brightly polished gold stars, for recapturing an important time in the human experience. Kicker has a permanent place on my reading shelf.

“Front and center, Mr. Hoover. Honorable work! Five-Stars and more for your contribution to the writing world, and your service to your country!”

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### **Kathleen Rowland says**

Author R. Grey Hoover’s authentic story centers on a kicker. During WW II the CBI Theater was a huge expanse of land from Manchuria to India with extreme weather conditions. This nickname was given to aircrew members who literally laid on their backs and kicked supplies off an aircraft carrier to soldiers on front lines. Kickers also picked up supplies. As the hero lets the reader in on the dangerous experience, we learn and gain appreciation. R. Grey Hoover has combined both historical facts about the CBI theater during WWII and an excellent narrative to weave a story that is at once educational and entertaining. The reader will instantly become involved in the plot, and its accurate rendering of war history will leave you feeling like you lived it yourself. Definitely a must-read!

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