



THE AUDIE MURPHY NATIONAL FAN CLUB
AUDIE MURPHY - HONORARY PRESIDENT



HONORARY MEMBERS

BILLIE MURPHY - MARIETTA, TX
NADENE MURPHY - PRINCETON, TX
JUNE MURPHY - FLOYDADA, TX
EUGENE MURPHY - JACKSONVILLE, TX

CLUB OFFICIALS

STAN SMITH - EDITOR
SUE GOSSETT - ASSISTANT EDITOR

October, 1995

Dear Club Members,

Welcome to our fourth and final newsletter for this year. This is a special issue because of the generosity of club member and military artist, Donald D. Moore. He is the talented individual who designed the Audie silhouettes for our letterhead and club envelopes. Don also created and supplied at his expense, for the club and its members, a color laser print of Audie, which is suitable for framing. He also graciously donated the 9 x 12" brown envelopes to avoid having the prints folded. For those members desiring other Audie Murphy prints and lithographs by Don, he may be contacted at 2501 South W. S. Young Drive - Suite 306, Killeen, Texas 76542 or by phone at (817) 554-8008. We are most indebted to Don for his contributions and for his conscientious efforts for the continued success of the club. (Submitted by Stan Smith)

The Hunt County Commissioners Court agreed to name a stretch of a local highway in honor of Audie Murphy. The Commissioners unanimously passed a resolution in favor of designating that portion of Highway 69 from the north Greenville city limits to the Hunt/Fannin County Line as the Audie Murphy Memorial Highway. Plaques will be created for placement at each end of the proposed highway. This tribute to Hunt County's most famous citizen will coincide with the county's 150th anniversary celebration next year. Source: The Greenville Herald Banner - July 11, 1995

Major Chapter on Audie: In September of this year, Texas A&M University Press will release "The Texas Military Experience: From the Revolution through World War II" compiled by Joseph D. Dawson III, Associate Professor of History and Director of the Military Studies Institute, Texas A&M University. This hard bound book will have one chapter, about 25 pages, specifically on Audie, written by noted historian Roger Spiller. The book will be available only from Texas A&M University Press and will list for \$29.50 plus 4.00 shipping and handling. Since the chapter on Audie has not been reviewed by our staff, we are unable to comment on its content or approach to the subject. Orders may be placed with Texas A&M University Press at 800-826-8911 (submitted by Stan Smith)

There is some confusion among newer members as to the number of newsletters we publish. Newsletters are published four times a year. If you knew how much time goes into the quarterly efforts, you would understand why we cringe at the thought of attempting to print more frequently. Membership runs for the calendar year. If someone joins in October of this year, he or she will receive the three earlier newsletters as well as the final issue for the year. Then, he or she will be required to pay dues again the first of next year. Any new members joining next year will have the option of purchasing the prior years newsletters (four issues). Or they may simply have their subscription begin with the calendar year. It is foolish to think that several years from now when new members join they will be entitled to all previous newsletters for free. (Submitted by Stan Smith)

AUDIE ON A & E NETWORK????? - Sharon Young has made contact with upper management at A & E concerning Audie as a future subject on *Biography*. She was advised on July 17th that they are, “in fact, re-considering the Audie Murphy *Biography*.” Now is the time each of us must act by writing immediately to the following individual and strongly urge that the Audie Murphy story be pursued on *Biography*:

Mr. Michael Cascio
Vice President
Documentary Programming
Arts & Entertainment Network
235 East 45th Street
New York, New York 10017
(212) 210-9006

TRIVIA NOTE - You may be interested to know that there are 9 “Audie Murphy’s” with telephone listings in the United States. In fact, one of them is a member of our own fan club. It would be fascinating to know if these people were indeed named for THE Audie Murphy. (Submitted by Stan Smith)

WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

(First of a series by club member Mike West of Fort Worth, Texas)

Albert L. Pyle was a West Virginian by birth and a member of Company B. Mr. Pyle joined Company "B" in early February, 1944. If you remember your Third Division history, that means Anzio. Though a member of the Second Platoon, Pyle soon learned of Audie Murphy, Third Platoon, and the respect shown to him by the members of Company B.

Pyle remembers the daring of Murphy and John J. Fredericks at Anzio as they would patrol at night to capture Germans for interrogation. So dangerous was this activity that few men would go with them.

Later in France, Pyle was only a short distance from Audie when Murphy received his hip wound which put him out of combat from late October 1944 to mid-January 1945. Pyle was impressed by Murphy guarding two German prisoners as he was carried down the hill on a stretcher.

Later in January 1945, near Colmar, France, Pyle saw Murphy again. Shortly after Murphy returned to his unit, the Third Division was to cross the Fecht and Ill Rivers to take the village of Riedwihr, France. On the 24th, Pyle's platoon and others attacked across the rivers but were halted by German tanks. They had to spend the night sleeping in frozen shell craters.

On the 25th, Company B attacked the woods just north of Holtzwihr, France, and it was there that Albert Pyle was wounded in the right ankle by a tree burst. In the words of Mr. Pyle, "This eliminated me from combat." As most of you know, the next day (January 26, 1945) Audie Murphy earned the Medal of Honor.

Albert Pyle returned to the states and, after rehabilitation, became a farmer near Goochland, Virginia. He has farmed a track of land on the James River for a number of years. Mr. Pyle is a testimonial to what a person, though horribly wounded, can do. His mind is very keen and his recollection of events is remarkable.

Postscript to WHERE ARE THEY NOW: Mike West is devoted student of Audie Murphy. He has a keen interest in the people who knew Murph before and during the war. Mike knows that these individuals can be a rich source of insight and recollections invaluable to researchers and fans. He has an incurable passion to locate these people and record their stories. Unfortunately, time marches on and the members of this select group are rapidly decreasing. He has taken it upon himself to locate as many as possible and will share their stories in future issues of our newsletters.

+++++ **MOVIE REVIEW** +++++

THE KID FROM TEXAS - Billy the Kid was scarcely more than eighteen when he rode into Lincoln, New Mexico Territory, circa 1880. The governor of the territory is trying to discourage a range war between the ranchers. Billy is caught up in the middle of the war, and soon becomes a wanted man. It seems preposterous to believe that, before he was twenty-one, he would become the most notorious and dreaded gun killer in the lawless west.

The governor tries to convince Billy to give himself up. Billy refuses. Soon after, he is captured by Pat Garrett, convicted of murder and sentenced to hang. However, he escapes from jail. A \$10,000 reward is posted as a massive manhunt begins. Eventually, Garrett finds Billy again and kills him in a shoot-out.

With 21 notches on his guns, Billy the Kid was just 21 years, four months and five days old when he died. Historians have called him a bandit, ballad makers a “Robin Hood”, but after 70 years, the fairest verdict was probably that of the humble Mexicans who buried him, who called him simply “el chivito”, the kid.

The movie was filmed from May 26, 1949 to June 29, 1949 in the Idyllwild, California area. The running time was 78 minutes and the release date was in March of 1950. It also starred Gale Storm (“My Little Margie”), Albert Dekker, Sheppard Strudwick and Will Geer, better known as Grandpa on the “Waltons” TV show. There were also many character actors in this movie, several of whom became regulars in Audie’s future films at Universal.

When Paul Short gave him the title role in **BAD BOY**, he also put Audie Murphy under a personal, multi-picture contract. This meant that the two would be working as a star-producer team for several movies.

BAD BOY had been a financial success and Hollywood was impressed. Audie and Paul were able to move to Universal Studios for their second picture. This in itself was a major accomplishment. It was an old and powerful studio with excellent distribution facilities. At Universal, the Short-Murphy movies were certain to get wide circulation.

Short was proving himself to be a shrewd, but cautious, showman. For Audie's second starring role, Paul chose **Billy the Kid**. The story of the young outlaw had been filmed many times over the years and practically all versions had made money. In casting Audie as Billy, Short had a new angle. He saw the young outlaw as a victim of circumstances. He called Billy "the original juvenile delinquent" and this was how Audie portrayed the character.

For further insurance, the producer brought in two more key men from the **BAD BOY** production. They were Robert Hardy Andrews and Kurt Newmann. Andrews was given the job of writing the original story and collaborating on the screenplay for **THE KID FROM TEXAS**. Newmann would be the director and once more the cast was loaded with highly competent players to back Murphy and cover his inexperience as an actor and this film was to have a lasting effect upon the Murphy screen career. It led to Audie's long term contract with Universal and he was to star in twenty-six pictures for that studio in the next twenty-one years.

But **THE KID FROM TEXAS** also typed Audie as the star of small-budget action movies, mostly westerns and although he made strenuous efforts to break the type-casting, he was not very successful. Had his screen career been handled correctly, he might have become a super-star.

With Universal ready to put him under a long-term contract, Audie bought the multipicture agreement he had with Paul Short. They never worked together again and Short stayed in Hollywood to work as a writer. He was criticized for casting the young war hero as a juvenile delinquent and a notorious outlaw. But, much to his credit, Paul was the individual who got Audie his first big screen break and established him as a movie name. Apparently nobody else in Hollywood was interested. World War II had been over for four years when Audie starred in **BAD BOY**. The public adulation with which Audie had been practically smothered upon his return from the European battlefields had vanished.

A little bit of additional information regarding THE KID FROM TEXAS -- When he was selected to star in it, an expert was hired to teach Audie the fast draw. It was not long before Audie was outdrawing the expert. Wanda Hendrix said that Audie constantly practiced the fast draw before a mirror so that he could correct his faults. (Audie Murphy - American Soldier)

Also, it seems that on the first day of shooting, Audie's double broke his collarbone and Audie had to do his own riding throughout the picture. Audie did most of his stunt work even in dangerous situations and used two stand-ins during his movie career.

Another interesting piece of information is about the house that the studio used in this film. The construction crew built an eight-room, two story mansion on the back lot for a climatic scene. The home was so well designed the movie stars inspecting the residence said that they would like one much like it. The life of the building was short-lived, however and went up in flames in about twenty minutes. The house served as a fortress for "Billy" when he was surrounded by the posse. (Submitted by Sue Gossett)

On Friday May 5th, the Audie Murphy VA Hospital in San Antonio rededicated the area known as the Audie Murphy Memorial Room. However, after extensive remodeling, the memorial room no longer exists. The pertinent memorabilia is now displayed in modules where visitors to the hospital lobby will be find three built-in wall units containing artifacts relating to the three phases of Audie's life: boyhood, military and Hollywood. These units are positioned on the right, center, and left side of the lobby. The center unit which is his military period is really four connecting units. They contain the captured German sniper rifle, an M1 Carbine, Colt 45, steel helmet and assorted citations. A second wall unit contains a large map of Europe. Audie's miniature medals are mounted on the geographical areas where he earned them. Another unit contains a full size mannequin wearing Audie's dress uniform with the Medal of Honor draped around his neck. Also on display are a huge poster from "To Hell & Back", cowboy boots, spurs, hat and shirt, the American flag which draped his casket, letter from Richard Nixon, original issue of July 16, 1945 Life magazine, his shotgun, as well as various photographic images. (Submitted by Stan Smith)

MONUMENT TO AUDIE? Ohio club member Dave Graham is working with club member Patrick Baumann who lives in Holtzwihr, France. Together, they are attempting to convince the officials of Holtzwihr to erect a monument to Audie. Your help is needed in this effort. Take a few moments and write a letter of support and address it as follows:

**Monsieur Le Maire
Maire de Holtzwihr
68320 Holtzwihr
FRANCE**

However, in order to maximize their impact, mail your letters to: Mr. David Graham 7121 Davis Road - Hilliard, Ohio 43026. All the letters will be bundled and mailed at one time by David. This will also save you the cost of postage for foreign mailing. Do your part in this club and make it both effective and productive in keeping Audie's name alive. This will be your best .32 cent investment. Let's see a completed monument for 1996.

As you know, Audie is credited with writing at least three poems, all of which can be found in Colonel Simpson's comprehensive biography "Audie Murphy - American Soldier." Audie's poems are very profound and reflect great sensitivity. As a special bonus to the club membership I have prepared the three poems and I am enclosing them in this mailing, with my compliments. You will find the quality and format suitable for your memorabilia album or for framing. (Submitted and donated by Stan Smith)

-----**CLASSIFIED**-----

WANTED To Purchase: LOOK MAGAZINE May 10, 1949 (must be in excellent condition) and THE SATURDAY EVENING POST September 15, 1945. Will pay for copies of the following titles in VHS format: Beyond Glory; Texas, Brooklyn & Heaven; Trunk to Cairo; Apache Rifles; Battle at Bloody Beach; Whispering Smith. Ms. Jade Krug - PO Box 1960 - Midland, Texas 79702

Several members have asked about the possibility of us having novelties such as Audie bumper stickers, membership cards, commemorative plates and private stamps like Christmas Seals, just to mention a few. Of course we would like to offer such items. But you must remember that we are a very small club, and less than one year old. There are numerous obstacles in achieving these goals. First and foremost is the fact that our modest dues structure does not allow for such extras. Even with a planned dues increase, such amenities are not feasible until the club accumulates surplus funds. Another problem is the added expense of purchasing larger envelopes for special items. Also we had a problem concerning the slowness in collecting dues; many of you took 2-3 months to pay. Club dues are expected to be paid within 30 days of the announcement. It is assumed that any special payment for novelties would meet the same collection problems. In working with such a limited budget, prompt payments allow me more flexibility and make my job easier and more productive for the club.

Another realm of difficulties deals with producing a custom item. Artists Don Moore and Bill Leftwich will not charge us for designing and providing camera ready art. In any event, let's say that 100 members agree to purchase a commemorative plate for which we already have the necessary artwork. Throwing out a random figure, let's use \$29.00 as the retail cost, not including shipping, to each club member. Obviously, any amount will hopefully include a small profit margin for the club. Furthermore, 10% of such sales will be set aside in a special fund in order to pay for floral arrangements on Audie's birthday and on Memorial Day. However, to complicate our efforts, we may be required to collect various state sales taxes. Such fragile items must be mailed via UPS, a major expense based on your distance from the mailing point. All of this is also dependent upon the Franklin Mint, The Hamilton Collection or The Bradbury Exchange accepting such a small order. I don't know what their minimum run is. Aggravating all of this is the basic fact of slow collections. If so, this is not an obligation I wish to be involved with nor do I have the time to spend with. When time does permit I hope to contact the plate companies and convince them to consider an Audie plate in their normal distribution program. However, this task must be placed on the back burners right now for me.

While I am advised that the military image of Audie is “public domain”, common courtesy dictates that Mrs. Pamela Murphy be kept appraised of our intentions. The foremost concern in her mind is that any project undertaken be done in good taste. I shall personally oversee that the image of Audie is handled accordingly. Unless we have a millionaire benefactor in the club, we welcome your suggestions, comments and donations (submitted by Stan Smith)

For personal reasons, I will be stepping down as editor of the newsletter after this issue. I have enjoyed seeing the rebirth of an Audie Murphy Fan Club from its infancy with Stan Smith and Sue Gossett. It has gone beyond our expectations when we started putting this together last December. I will continue being a paying member. The new editor is Patty Lane of Island Park, New York. I’m certain you will give her all the support you have shown me. I thank all of you for your support and enthusiasm for this fan club. We should remember that the success of this club is not due to the result of any one individual but rather a collective effort to honor the life and memory of Audie Murphy.

In parting, I have a few matters to relate to you as members. If any paying members have not yet received the 1st, 2nd or 3rd newsletters, please let me or Stan know and we’ll see that you are taken care of. I tried to make certain that no one was overlooked but you know how someone might fall through the cracks and be missed. I want everyone to have a copy of all the newsletters.

Coy Prather, our member in Oklahoma City said our letters were working at the Cowboy Hall of Fame. Please write so we can see Audie inducted next year! I was unable to attend the ceremony on August 19th at the Dayton V.A. Hospital but Sue Gossett was assisted by our member Dave Graham of Hilliard, Ohio. The results of the Audie display will be discussed in our January newsletter. David has made several trips to Europe, including Holtzwihr, France to visit where Audie’s Medal of Honor action took place. He met with our member, Patrick Baumann of Holtzwihr.

Again, thank you for being members of the Audie Murphy National Fan Club and for making its first year such a success. I, along with all of you, hope to enjoy the newsletters for many years to come.

**Sharon Young,
Editor**

“The real heroes of the war are those who never came home”