



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, 1996

Welcome to our fourth and final newsletter for 1996 thus completing our second year of successful operation. Upon reflection, it seems to me I should have designated each issue by volume and issue numbers e.g. our first publication would have been Vol. 1, No. 1; consequently this issue would have been Vol. 2, No. 4. Beginning in 1997, I shall implement this practice. The first issue next year will be Volume 3, No. 1 and when referring to articles in earlier issues, I shall employ this guideline.

JUNE 20, 1996 [AUDIE MURPHY DAY] Greenville, Texas: All of our domestic club members should have received an invitation to attend the Special Pictorial Stamp Cancellation ceremonies at the Fletcher Warren Civic Center in Greenville, Texas. With this mailing, each club member will be receiving three (3) Special Pictorial Stamp Cancellation envelopes. Again, one of the benefits of active club membership. No doubt you immediately recognized the profile of Audie which military artist and club member Don Moore designed and which we utilize on our letterheads. About 10 - 15 club members did show up. This story will be reported separately in the newsletter by club member Melita Toon. Also, the speech given by club member Mike West will be quoted. Also with this mailing are two (2) book markers with a handsome photo insert of Audie from the RIKE MEMORIAL LIBRARY in Farmersville. These are provided with the compliments of club member Craig Overstreet, President of the First Bank of Farmersville.

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

WANTED - The following movies of Audie: "THE WORLD IN MY CORNER", "THE QUIET AMERICAN", "THE GUN RUNNERS", "CAST A LONG SHADOW", "NO NAME ON THE BULLET", "BAD BOY", "APACHE RIFLES", "THE TEXICAN", "TRUNK TO CAIRO", "TEXAS, BROOKLYN AND HEAVEN". I already have 31 titles. I will gladly exchange for your titles or pay for copies. Penny Dangelo - 7505 West Sells Drive - Phoenix, Arizona 85033.

**A REPORT ON THE FESTIVITIES AND CEREMONIES AT THE
FLETCHER WARREN CIVIC CENTER- GREENVILLE, TEXAS - JUNE
20, 1996 by Club Member Melita Toon of Bloomington, Minnesota**

The mailed invitations to this event advised that the Greenville Area Postal Service was honoring Major Audie L. Murphy with a special pictorial cancellation. But to most it was an opportunity for family, friends, and well wishers to celebrate his birthday.

June 20, 1996 dawned hot and muggy, and became more oppressive as the day continued. More than 75 people arrived well before the designated time, availing themselves of the coolness within the Fletcher Warren Civic Center. Beside the entrance, the Postal Service had a table at which to sign in, and they were distributing pins, pencils, and posters as well as selling the special cancellation envelopes. As the crowd moved inside, they were greeted by several display tables.

The Audie Murphy Fan Club table had a picture of Feller Goff, a former resident of Greenville, with Audie. James Fife, who served with Audie in Company "B" also had some pictures and newspapers on display. Clyde Easter, a military friend from the 7th Infantry Regiment, had a shadowbox containing pieces of the plane that Audie was on when he met his premature demise. Stan Smith was busy signing up new members and marketing the Audie bumper stickers. Two very large photos of Audie were displayed on the wall behind the club table. After the festivities, these two photos were donated to the Greenville Library. The Disabled Veterans and the American Legion also had an informative and colorful display. There were numerous other pictures and posters of Audie throughout the room.

The room became filled to capacity shortly before 10 AM. Beverly Loss, Co-Chair of the Postal Customer Advisory Council, greeted all guests as the doors closed. Everyone stood for the prayer invoked by C. L. Lovell, Chaplain of the Greenville American Legion Post 17. David Cain, State Senator, then ordered a presentation of flags and colors. The U.S. Army Honorary escort, on active duty from Fort Hood, did so, assisted by Cub Scout Pack 318. Sonny Donaho, winner of the best male vocalist at the Texas Hall of Fame, sang the National Anthem. He had a fine voice, and the crowd was quite moved with his rendition.

Rick Spathelf, District Manager of the U.S. Postal Service, requested that veterans from all wars stand up and be recognized. Many did. After the applause, Mayor Pro-Tem, Rodney Hood, welcomed everyone to the city of Greenville, and Keith Oakley, from the Texas House of Representatives, spoke about the oil portrait of Audie which hangs there. His office is positioned directly across from it, and he mentioned that he takes great delight in

speaking about Audie to all visitors, but especially to children. He felt that Audie was a role model for them, and shouldn't be forgotten. He read the resolutions that proclaimed June 20, 1996 as Audie Murphy Day in Greenville, Texas. Judge Joe Bobbitt followed with an official dedication of the Audie Murphy Memorial Highway.

After a performance of "Ole Glory" by Chuck Pichard and the E-Z Band, guest speakers were introduced. Clyde Easter, a military friend of Audie's spoke about how distressed he was at the current choices of historical events published in school textbooks, especially those relating to the war. He felt that we needed to continue to remember, and learn, from those events. Instead, they were being omitted in lieu of what he perceived to be superficial priorities. Mike West, an Audie Murphy scholar, followed with insights of his own. A copy of his speech is included in this newsletter. The last to lend her observations was Nadene Murphy, Audie's sister. She said that he (Audie) was fun loving, and kept them laughing. Ending on a serious note, Nadene stated that Audie didn't fight in the war only to come back to church burnings. She was referring to the two burnings that had occurred in Greenville that week. While the crowd nodded in agreement, Rick Spatheif asked if anyone who knew Audie personally would stand up. At least 5 members of the audience did so. With a flourish, he unveiled the framed prototype of the stamp cancellation, designed by club member and military artist Don Moore of Harker Heights, Texas.

After a brief pause, Bud Fisher, of the Country Music Association of Texas Hall of Fame, introduced "Big Bill" Johnson, who had written a song about Audie. The song was quite humorous, talking about how Audie was as tough as a boot, and had quite a temper. He sang of the rivalry between the towns of Celeste, Farmersville, and Greenville in claiming Audie as their native son. The audience roared with laughter, and there were a few knees being slapped in time to the music. After the song was over, "Thank You" gifts were presented to all the speakers, as well as the postal employees who were instrumental in making this day possible. The main moving force behind this event and special cancellation was club member Donna Smith of Quinlan, Texas.

While cake and punch were being served, audience members were given an opportunity to meet and speak with those who knew Audie. Feller Goff was thanked for doing all the work associated with the Audie Murphy Memorial Highway. Nadene and Billie Murphy signed autographs, as did James Fife, Clyde Easter, and Charles Owen of Company "B". While Mr. Fife seemed a bit overwhelmed, Clyde Easter and Charles Owen shared some of their war memories about Audie. All in all, it was a very special day.

The speech given on AUDIE MURPHY DAY, June 20, 1996 in Greenville, Texas by Clyde Easter was so poignant but lengthy, that it would suffer significantly in my attempting to condense it. Since this final issue is filled to capacity, it will appear unaltered in our January 26, 1997 newsletter (Volume 3, No. 1).

SUE GOSSETT’S BOOK SIGNING - MEMPHIS FILM FESTIVAL - August 7 -10, ‘96.
Celebrity guests attending were Jack Elam, Lori Nelson, Kathleen Crowley, Ann Robinson and director Burt Kennedy who wrote Six Black Horses. This event was particularly special not only because of the five stars associated with Audie but also due to the fact that both Billie and Nadene Murphy drove in and were signing my books as well. My sincerest thanks to them for being with me at the signing table. Their good friend, Feller Goff was also enjoying himself and between the four of us, sold many books. Lunch with Jack and Jenny Elam produced many stories about Audie that will be preserved for posterity. The next film festival is in Ashville, NC November 7 - 9, at the Ramada Plaza Hotel. I plan on being there so if there are any fans interested in coming, I will personally autograph your book. These signings have been an awe-inspiring experience and I look forward to all future shows. (Submitted by Sue Gossett)

1996 AUDIE MURPHY PATRIOTISM AWARD - Decatur, Alabama
The recipient this year of the Audie Murphy Patriotism Award is LTC Rhonda Cornum, a former POW and flight surgeon with the U.S. Army. On the final day of the Gulf War, while performing a search and rescue for a downed F-16 pilot, Dr. Cornum’s Black Hawk helicopter was shot down over southwestern Iraq. She suffered two broken arms, a gunshot wound and a serious knee injury. She was captured along with two other survivors. After a week of captivity, she was released on March 6, 1991.

Colonel Cornum’s military awards include the Distinguished Flying Cross, Bronze Star, Air Medal, Purple Heart, POW Medal, Meritorious Service Medal and the Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster. She is currently a resident in urologic surgery at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. (Source: The Decatur Daily, June 30, 1996.)

“TO HELL & BACK” Available Again! This publication has been reprinted in hard cover by Fine Communications, Division of Fine Creative Media in La Vergne, Tennessee. While there are no photos, the book measures 8-1/2” x 5-1/2” and has 274 pages. It is being distributed by Ingram Book Company (800) 937-8000 and can be ordered through quality book stores such as Barnes & Noble @ \$7.98. ISBN # 1567 31 1164

SPEECH GIVEN AUDIE MURPHY DAY - June 20, 1996 -GREENVILLE, TEXAS

By Club Member Mike West of Fort Worth, Texas

Thank you very much for having me here today. Let me say two things before I start. You are at a degree of risk with me speaking to you today. You are a brave crew when you realize that you have a combination school teacher and Baptist preacher standing before you. When I look out and see a captive audience as I have today, my mind reels with possibilities.

The second I want to share with you - now I have to thank Donna Smith - I have been elevated to the status of historian. That is an awesome title that I do not think I can possibly bear up under. But I shall do my best.

I see myself as a hunter and gatherer of information and I will leave it to those more intellectually gifted than myself to use it in some constructive fashion. I also want to let you know that I am not going to bore you with a litany of facts, data, and events as historians are sometimes prone to do. So - At Ease; Relax!

A couple of weeks ago when Miss Smith called me and asked me to say a few words today, I asked what the guidelines were. She said there were only two - First, you may say anything you want about Audie Murphy. I eagerly anticipated the second one. And with an inflection in her voice so that I got the message - "Be Brief!" So Miss Smith I will honor that second one especially and I will be brief. I wanted to pursue something here that has been alluded to on several occasions so far. I want to speak to you about the modesty of Audie Murphy concerning his military record.

Audie Murphy never regarded himself as a hero. Murphy hated to be called a hero. He never really cared if he was the most decorated soldier of World War II. He is often quoted as saying "I know of no live heroes, all the real heroes are dead."

When asked about his decorations, he would reply, "Every decoration I got belongs to everyone in Company B. Without them I could have done nothing. The medals belong to the unit; I just own a small piece of them." Yet on another occasion in response to a similar question, Murphy said, "I feel as if they handed their decorations to me and said, "Here, Murph, hold these."

I think it is good that we remember Audie Murphy in this way. No soldier so clearly deserves to be so honored. However, let us take on Audie's attitude at this point. When we travel the Audie Murphy Memorial Highway, let us remember him but also the Martin Kelleys, the James Fifes, the Albert Pyles, the Charles Owens' and especially the Lattie Tipton's, the Joe Siejas and the Lester Traveses and a host of others who did not return.

And as we travel along that highway and think upon them, maybe, just maybe we can hear the men of Company B say, "Here, Murph, hold this one for us also!" Thank you.

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A & E 'BIOGRAPHY' - A review by Club Member Sharon Young

On July 1st, A & E aired the long anticipated "Biography" of Audie Murphy. For the time constraints by A & E, it was an excellent production. Since many school children will be using this "Biography" in their history studies, it did capture very well why Audie is an important figure in American history. Nadene Murphy, Audie's sister, and Monroe Hackney, his childhood friend, was interviewed mainly about his pre war life. Albert Pyle, who fought with Audie in Company B, spoke about Audie during the war. Mike West, an Audie Murphy historian from Fort Worth, Texas spoke about Audie during all aspects of his life. Budd Boetticher spoke on Audie's film career. Terry Murphy, Audie's oldest son narrated most of the dialogue attributed to Audie. I enjoyed the still pictures, and the documentary film; the most poignant moment was the Arlington Cemetery service on June 7, 1971. Even though it has been 25 years, the pain is still there when one sees those images.

The previews I read about Audie's "Biography" were very positive, especially the TV-Guide. My only problems with the production were: (1.) Because of time constraints, none of Audie's co-stars from his movies were able to talk about what it was like to work with him. And (2.) were inappropriate comments by Budd Boetticher who wrote and directed "A Time for Dying." For any of you, who order the tape, mute the sound for Budd's third appearance on the tape so it doesn't leave a bad taste in your mouth. This folks is the kindest thing you'll hear me say about Budd Boetticher. Overall, this "Biography" is definitely worth having for your collection. It will be shown several more times over the next year and will be sold in the Barnes & Noble bookstores. For those who want to order it from A & E, the price is \$19.95 plus \$3.95 shipping and handing. (No C.O.D.'s) You can call 1-800-423-1212 or write:

A & E (Arts & Entertainment) Network
235 East 45th Street
New York, New York 10017

Scheduled for our January 1997 newsletter is an additional extensive listing of new sources for Audie Murphy movies and stills. You don't want to miss this issue. Dues notice for 1997 will go out the first week of December, 1996. As promised, the yearly rate of \$14.00 remains unchanged. (Stan Smith)

RECOLLECTIONS by Colonel John J. Tominac, USA (Ret.) [*Editor's Note: Colonel Tominac, also a 3rd Division Medal of Honor recipient, was present on 2 June 1945 at Audie's Medal of Honor ceremony in Salzburg, Austria and has been gracious enough to share this amusing story with me.*]

“On 7 May our division headquarters - 3rd Infantry Division - was established on the outskirts of Salzburg, Austria in a palatial estate that the Nazis used to entertain foreign diplomats and dignitaries. As a liaison officer for the 15th Infantry Regiment, one of my duties was to periodically update the status and whereabouts of all 15th Infantry units for the War Room of Division Headquarters. So, on 8 May, VE Day, I set out to contact the 15th Infantry Regimental Headquarters which I learned was located on Himmler's estate in Salzburg. On arrival at the HQ, I noticed that a few soldiers were putting up communications wire outside of the building and doing other chores usually required for setting up a new HQ. I did not notice any activity inside the building which gave me the opportunity to browse around. After browsing a few moments on the second floor I had the urge to use a bathroom. I found a bathroom quickly and proceeded to use the toilet after first hanging my Thompson sub-machine gun on the inside door knob. I was about to finish my need of the toilet when a loud gun shot rang in the building. Instinctively, I lunged for my ‘Tommy Gun’, slipped the safety catch off, and pulled back the bolt to be ready to fire while still sitting there. In a split second two stupid thoughts coursed through my mind; one, that I was about to encounter one or more S.S. fanatics bent on dying for the Nazi cause, and two, the prospects that the toilet that I was using was booby-trapped. After chasing the Germans through two continents and several countries, I decided that I was not about to meet such an ignoble end, particularly since the war in Europe officially ended on that very day. It took only a few seconds to secure my trousers, conduct a cursory inspection of the toilet, flush it, and with ‘Tommy Gun’ at the ready, cautiously ventured out into the hallway. While I was engaged in the foregoing, two or three more loud gun shots were fired.

I proceeded cautiously around each corner as I worked my way toward the stairway. After some tense moments I came upon a large room that apparently was used for meetings and conferences. A beautiful mahogany table about 25 to 30 feet long with 15 to 20 chairs surrounding it caught my eye. Seated near the center of the table was a young, boyish looking US, 2nd Lt. leaning back in his chair with his feet propped on the table. In his right hand he held a .45 caliber pistol which he was using to take pot shots at a large portrait of Adolph Hitler that was hanging on the opposite wall. Needless to say I breathed a sigh of relief and was happy to meet for the first time 2nd Lt. Audie Murphy of Company ‘B’, 15th Infantry. This seemed to be Audie's unique way of celebrating VE Day. Audie was one of the most highly decorated soldiers of World War II and went on to become a successful movie actor during the post World War II years. Unfortunately, his life was cut short in an airplane crash about 20 years ago.” (Signed “John J. Tominac” - 29 April 1996)

A Visit to Arlington Cemetery
By Club Member Linda Ruiz of Vista, California.

On June 26, my husband, dad and my sister took me to Arlington Cemetery to visit Audie’s grave. It was decided that we would take the tour bus. It was only \$4.00 each. We had a beautiful warm day. The bus stops at the Kennedy’s, then on to the amphitheater where the Tomb of the Unknown lies. The bus parks directly across Memorial Drive where Audie lies. The tour guide makes announcements as you approach each famous person. He said that Audie was a hero, most decorated of World War II, Congressional Medal of Honor winner. He said that “Audie wanted a simple service and that’s why his headstone is plain.” The headstone reads, Audie L. Murphy - Texas - Major Infantry - World War II. June 20, 1924 - May 28, 1971 - Medal of Honor - DSC - SS & OLC - LM - BSM & OLC - PH & 2 OLC.

Audie’s grave is under a tree next to a walk. Behind him, next to him and across from him are uniform rows and rows of white marble markers. The grass is emerald green, the sky so blue. It’s so quiet and peaceful but sad. I remember him as a daring man of action, so full of life. I’m sorry that I never got to meet him. Touching his tombstone, a wave of awe and sadness washed over me. It is hard to have a quiet moment alone with your late hero, when my father is taking pictures and my husband is taking a video! Maybe one day I could go alone or with another fan for a moment of thought.

HELP - PLEASE! I am working on a chronological bibliography on Audie from 1945 to the present. I have two complete and original articles but I lack sufficient identification. Can any of the membership assist me by identifying the following?

“Mooning over Murphy” by Jules Saltman - MOVIE TEEN MAGAZINE. pp. 22-23, 64-66. I NEED TO KNOW THE MONTH & YEAR.

“The Story Behind the Tragedy of Audie Murphy” by Bob Shields. pp. 22, 25, 48-49, 52,54. I believe this article appeared in SAGA MAGAZINE, but I am not certain. If so, I NEED TO KNOW MONTH & YEAR.

May I hear from you? Stan Smith - 8313 Snug Hill Lane - Potomac, Maryland 20854.

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

AUDIE MURPHY T-SHIRTS! ONLY THE MONTH OF OCTOBER! The design is a SIX color portrait of Audie on an ash gray shirt by renowned military artist and club member Don Moore. There are no color choices or special requests. Standard sizes will be MEDIUM, LARGE AND EXTRA LARGE only. Absolutely no smalls! The cost is only \$15.00 plus \$5.00 shipping and handling. For each additional shirt, add \$1.00 extra postage. For example, two shirts would be \$36.00. For sizes of XXL and XXXL, the cost is only \$17.00 plus the above postage.

It is strongly recommended that you order the next size up from what you normally wear. Full payment in check or money order must accompany your order. The open dates for ordering are 1 October '96 through 31 October '96. Any order received after the closing date will be returned. Since Don's supplier has a minimum order of THIRTY assorted T-shirts, if the minimum is not obtained, all orders and payment will be returned.

Being optimistic that an enthusiast club our size can and will exceed the suppliers minimum, shirts will be shipped approximately 3 weeks after the closing date of 31 October '96. This would be an opportune time to order for family, friends and the special holidays that are rapidly approaching. I thank you for your interest and I hope that we can make this a success, so that I may seriously consider making the same offer in the October 1997 newsletter.

Send your sizes, number of shirts ordered along with full payment to:

Don Moore, Illustrator
2501 South W.S. Young Drive
Suite 306
Killeen, Texas 76542

NOTE: THIS OFFER HAS EXPIRED AND WILL NOT BE REPEATED AGAIN! THE NAME AND IMAGE OF AUDIE MURPHY HAS BEEN TRADEMARKED AND COPYRIGHTED. ONLY MEMORABILIA AUTHORIZED BY THE FAMILY WILL BE PRODUCED. DO NOT ATTEMPT TO CONTACT DON MOORE FOR T-SHIRTS AS ALL INVENTORY WAS DEPLETED. OTHER ITEMS ARE BEING DESIGNED FOR FUTURE DISTRIBUTION TO MEMBERS.