



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

Volume 3, No. 3 - July, 1997

Welcome to our third issue for this year and your first WARNING. The club continues to expand on a steady basis. Every week brings new members and inquiries for membership. It also brings me a great deal of correspondence and administrative work. That work leaves me less time to devote to the newsletter and the various subject matters. In essence, running the club basically by myself, is becoming overwhelming. I must have a field staff to assist me. Not to come to my home and type or do the bookkeeping, but to seek out stories, interviews with people who knew Audie, poems about him, trivia, up dates on stories or events, summarizing old articles which Audie wrote, etc. In other words, relieve me of the burden of gathering these materials. What I do not want is tabloid, sensationalized junk. At present, I have only a handful of regular members who work closely with me. But I require a larger number to participate in this manner. If I CANNOT obtain greater club co-operation, there will come a time in the future when, regrettably, I will have to shut down this operation. More of you MUST get involved and participate in submitting articles and stories. (Stan Smith)

CLARIFICATION: In our October 1996 (Vol. 2, No 4) issue, we announced the reprinting of "To Hell & Back" One source suggested was Barnes & Noble since that is where my daughter obtained my copy. This publication, for whatever reason is not stocked on the shelves but in their warehouses where they have over 200 copies of the hardbound edition. It must be special ordered. The confusion some of you are experiencing is due to the fact that their computers still show the "To Hell & Back" that was previously reprinted by Tabb Books, which is no longer in print. But it still comes up on their computer screen. It is important that you emphasize that you want ISBN number 56731-116-4. I cannot speak for other book retailers, but I urge you to obtain your copy now (about 8.00) since it is impossible to predict whether it will be reprinted again. Someday, this printing could be as difficult to locate as the original 1949 releases and in its own right become a collector's item. (Stan Smith)

AUDIE MURPHY SONGS

There is a renewed interest in songs attributed to Audie. As you know, perhaps 60 different artists did versions of "Shutters and Boards" and a lesser number did "When the Wind Blows in Chicago". For the most part, in order for you to find those allusive artists and titles, you will need to continue to go to flea markets and yard sales. However, if you desire something right now, you may be interested to know that "Shutters and Boards" is still commercially available on CD or cassette by Slim Whitman and Jerry Wallace both on Curb Records # 77373 and # 77262 respectively. There is also a CD titled Jerry Wallace Greatest Hits by King Records, and distributed by Highland Music in Dearborn, MI # KSCD-1441. It also contains "Shutters & Boards." Also, "When the Wind Blows in Chicago" is available either on CD or cassette by Eddy Arnold on RCA Records # 66046 and by Bobby Bare on Razor & Tie Music # 2043; according to the computer data bases at Barnes & Noble. By the way, don't think I am promoting Barnes & Noble. My daughter is a manager at their Rochester, New York store and gladly assists the club with my inquires. (Stan Smith)

AMERICAN PEN PALS WANTED !

The fan club has a new member in Germany, Tamara Steuer, and she is a devoted Audie Fan. Tamara would like very much to have some American pen pals. Her penmanship is very good and she has excellent command of the English language. She has a talent for drawing and does Audie quite well. Those of you who wish to make a new friend, please write to: Tamara Steuer - Rainhaugasse 20 - 88131 Lindau - GERMANY

TRIVIA NOTE UPDATE -On page 2, in our October, 1995 issue, we reported that there were 9 "Audie Murphy's" listed in the United States. Apparently the name has grown in importance. I can now report that there are currently 22 "Audie Murphy's" with telephone listings in the United States. As previously, one is a member of our fan club. As best as I can tell, none have the middle initial "L". However, one is listed as a Reverend. Perhaps, next year, we will have even more "Murph's." To add to this irony, club member Margaret Markley in Wooster, Ohio sent me the following news clipping from her local newspaper "Audie Murphy, 42, of 222 Henrietta St., Wooster. Charged with unauthorized use of a motor vehicle, he is free on his own recognizance."

RECOLLECTIONS OF COLONEL M. B. ETHEREDGE, USA, (RET.)

[The following is a general background of Colonel Etheredge who is now 81 years old. He volunteered for service in the infantry when he was 27 years old. He was discharged from the 4th Army Headquarters in 1946 with the highest efficiency rating of 47.9 out of a possible 50. During his military service he received two battlefield commissions, and earned 3 Silver Star Medals, 2 Bronze Star Medals and 2 Purple Heart Medals. During World War II, Colonel Etheredge also served with Audie in the 3rd Division] -THE EDITOR

“The 36th Division recruited us after the war to help get the 36th back to strength. The general (Ainsworth) wanted Audie in his Hdqs. (*Headquarters*) so he could show him off. Audie wanted to be in my Bn. (*Battalion*) because we had a little in common. So the general put Audie in my Bn., but kept him at Division Hdqs. nearly half of the time. When Audie would have to go to Bn. because the general had called for him – he would say ‘Col. I will be back as soon as I can get loose.’

An amusing thing happen(ed) one time when we were on the firing range. (Audie loved to run the firing range) He had a loud speaker and he called me, ‘Col. See if you can help the man on number 47.’ I went to the kid on no. 47 & started talking to him & found out that he knew the correct sight picture. So I proceeded to teach him the proper trigger squeeze. Then I had him squeeze the trigger of the rifle with no shell in the chamber. After a few practices, I put a shell in the rifle M-1 & he squeezed the trigger & the gun fired to his surprise. I asked him where he thought it hit the target & he said, ‘I believe it was high & to the right.’ I called and the markers marked it & it was a little high & to the right. I explained to the young soldier that he was ready to fire for record.

We proceeded to find a clip of rounds & then I called to Captain Murphy & told him to mark number 47. The young soldier had done real well. Capt. Murphy said over the loud speaker ‘*Col. You must be a good teacher. I know that you cannot shoot that well yourself.*’”
(Source: personal letter from Colonel Etheredge dated 2/11/97)

Club member Sandy Jackson of Princeton Junction, New Jersey has advised me that the “History Channel” has a segment about Audie in the “Year by Year” series. She reports that the 1955 episode shows the Boston opening of “To Hell and Back”. Have any of our members taped any of the Audie portions? I am not familiar with this series. Can any other club members expand on this information? It sounds interesting. Thanks, Sandy.

CRITICS-CHOICE VIDEO has advised me of the official release of **THREE** new **AUDIE** titles effective June 10, 1997. They are as follows: **NO NAME ON THE BULLET** (item # MCA082713); **WALK THE PROUD LAND**(item # MCA082714); **DUEL AT SILVER CREEK** (item # MCA083158). These are normally priced at \$14.95 each. Order all 3 at the reduced price of \$33.95 (item # CCV100607) and receive a *free* leatherette slip case to hold them. Call 1-800-367-7765 or write 800 West Thorndale - Itasca, Illinois 60143

From: Eva Dano
To: Audie Murphy
Subject: What Audie Murphy meant to me.

“In a way one might say that Audie Murphy's influence in my life started before I was born, though of course I didn't realize it at the time. My country, Denmark, was occupied by Hitler's troops during WWII. My father was a policeman and was therefore sent to a German concentration camp. If it hadn't been for Audie and all his brave fellow soldiers of the Allied Forces, who knows when, or even if, my father would have been released. One thing I have in common with the sons and daughters of a lot of policemen is that I was born just about 9 months after their release from the concentration camps. One of my friends as a teenager was a girl also named Eva, also a policeman's daughter and born one day after me.

My first exposure to Audie was at a movie theatre. My mother and I went to a Saturday late night double feature. The second feature was 'Den Vilde Rytter' ('Cast a Long Shadow'). I was impressed with him, so when I had a chance a few weeks later to see him in another movie, I jumped at it. That movie was none other than 'Helvede Retur' ('To Hell and Back'), which was being shown as a limited re-release in one theatre in the center of Copenhagen. That did it for me! Not only was he a good actor, but he was a REAL hero, not just a pretend hero. AND he was also a horse lover like myself. I was determined to find out more about this fascinating person. I searched for information everywhere I could. I haunted libraries, newspapers, news agencies, and the film companies that released his movies in Denmark. One of the results of this search was a pretty substantial collection of pictures, both from the films and otherwise.

A couple of years later I had a chance to move to the United States. Through an agency I found a job as a mother's helper for a family in Whittier, CA. who had 3 boys aged 3, 4, & 6. Because of the waiting list it took 10 months for my visa to clear, but FINALLY, just before Christmas 1964, I was standing on American soil. Thus it started. Now I was actually in the same city as this fascinating person. All I had to do was to find him. "Maps of Movie Stars' Homes" didn't help. SAG didn't help. Universal Studios didn't help. All I had was a picture of Audie and his two boys outside their home that happened to show the street number. Not the street name, only the number. Every week, on my day off, I would take the bus to a different area in Hollywood or Beverly Hills, walk through the streets looking for that house number and checking whether the house that bore that number looked anything like the corner of the house in the picture.

At one point I wrote a letter to one of Audie's co-stars that DID have his home listed in the "Maps of Movie Stars' Homes", Dan Duryea, asking if he could help me in my quest. He sent back an autographed picture and a very nice letter, saying that he didn't have Audie's address, but believed he lived "somewhere in the Toluca Lake Area". This gave me a place to focus on. Finally, one day, I found it! The house had changed a lot; there was now a brick and wrought iron fence around it, but the corner of the neighbor's house still looked identical to the one in the picture. I went back home feeling pretty good, and determined to come back the next week when I wasn't all tired and dusty.

Finally the big day came. You wouldn't believe the butterflies in my stomach. I had come 7,000 miles for this, walked I don't know how many miles for this, but the hardest of all was those last few feet up to that front door. I don't know where I got the courage, my knees were shaking. I told myself that he probably wouldn't be home. I told myself that he had probably moved since the picture had been taken. I knocked on the door, and THERE HE WAS! After stammering a bit I finally got up the courage to talk to him. This gracious person invited me into his home, introduced me to his family and the dog, showed me around the house, talked to me just as if I was his equal. I had brought a couple of small presents for him from Denmark. He seemed pleased. He asked me how I had found the house, so I showed him the picture and told him about all the walking. We talked for a while, and then I decided I'd better head for home before I wore out my welcome. He gave me his phone number and told me I was welcome to come back any time. I visited from time to time. Not really often, I didn't want to be too pushy. Sometimes he was out of town, so I visited with Pam. I remember one time I was there and he had left his saddle on the railing by the stairs. He was in Israel at the time, I believe working on a movie. (Hindsight tells me it must have been 'Trunk to Cairo'.) Pam had just left the saddle where he'd put it, not realizing that it was NOT an appropriate place for a saddle for any long period of time, the skirt was getting all bent up. Funny what sticks in one's mind. The saddle was tan and with a basket weave pattern.

When I had been in Whittier for close to 5 years, the family I was working for decided that their boys were old enough so they no longer needed a live-in babysitter housekeeper / jack-of-all-trades. I don't REMEMBER mentioning it to Pam, but I must have, because Audie called and told me that some horsey friends in Ontario was looking for someone. He came up to the house to pick me up and we drove out to see the people. It was a big Thoroughbred farm. They said I could bring my 3 horses, they could use my Arab stallion as a teaser stallion. I didn't like that much, I don't think it is fair to a stallion to ask him to get all excited over a girl, only to see her walk over to fool around with another guy. Therefore, after some soul searching, I didn't take the job. That was the last time I saw Audie.

Soon after, I found a temporary job with some other horsey people, room and board only for helping with their horses. I had to take a factory job to feed my OWN horses. I struggled for a while, had no time or energy to go visiting. It was a rough period of my life. One evening, after I had been out riding, my mare wouldn't eat her dinner. I sat in the car with the radio on, keeping an eye on her. That was when I heard that Audie's plane was missing. We all know how that came out. I clipped the notices in the papers, but I never read them, just packed them down with all the other stuff. I pushed everything away, refusing to face the fact that this man was gone forever. My pain was such that I couldn't even face his wife, so I never sent my condolences to her or the boys. How utterly, utterly selfish of me! I was thinking only of my own pain, rather than that of his family, who must have been suffering so many times worse.

I bummed around for a few years before I finally found a good profession and was able to stabilize my life again. The horses were always cared for though. I'd live off pork and beans and later rice and potatoes just so they could eat. I dragged the boxes with Audie's pictures and other stuff with me wherever I moved to, but I never opened them. For many years I couldn't even bear to watch his movies when they were shown on TV. Finally, the last 8 years or so, I've been able to, and I now tape his movies any time I get the chance. It still hurts. I have a big box of kleenex right next to me as I'm typing this, and it's being used.”

Eva

(Source – E-mail received Thursday, 25 February '97)

Club Member Don Meyer, Consulting Editor, THE CREST saw to it that an ad for club membership was placed in their Winter 1996-97 newspaper. Such extra publicity is most welcome and needed. In his article Don points out that his union sent over 1200 signatures to club members James & Diane Thomason of the American Legion Post # 17 of Greenville, Texas. They are the co-ordinators of the Murphy Stamp Committee. They have labored long and hard on this project. Their efforts have resulted in well over 11,350 signatures for an Audie stamp have been forwarded to the U.S.Postmaster's office with more arriving in Greenville every day. *[If and when a stamp honoring Audie becomes a reality, it will be mainly be due to the resolute and conscientious efforts of James and Diane Thomason– Stan Smith]*

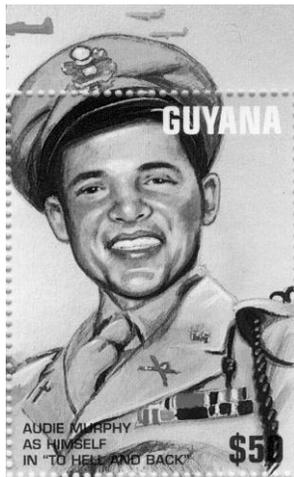
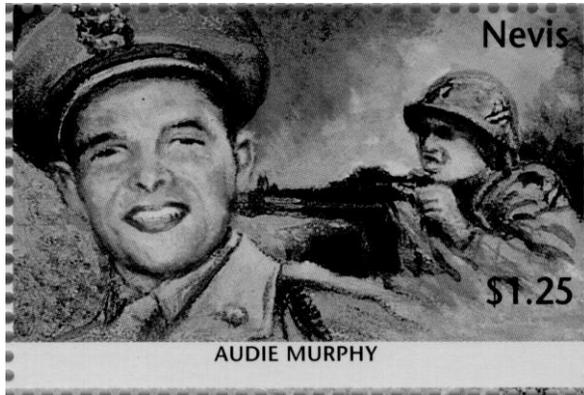
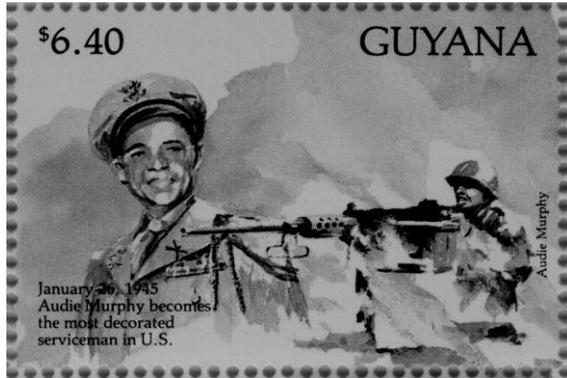
“STAMPS NOT GREAT INVESTMENT” This is an article submitted by club member Coy Mac Prather in Oklahoma. Its author, Robert E. Lee, suggests that stamps should be collected “for pleasure and not for profit.” In the same article Coy expressed his displeasure with the postal service which issues “stamps with Elvis Presley, Marilyn Monroe, and cartoon characters,” but has not issued one honoring the late Audie Murphy. Coy believes that a lot more people will purchase Elvis, Marilyn and cartoon stamps than Audie Murphy stamps. Lee points out that “in 1995, the best selling stamp was the Marilyn Monroe, but in a national survey, serious stamp collectors voted it the least-important stamp of that year.” However, people purchase sheets of Monroe stamps considering it an investment. The fallacy here is that so many stamps are printed today it is unlikely they will ever be worth more their face value. While Coy didn’t say it, I suppose his point is that an Audie Murphy stamp is not an investment, but rather a means in which to pay tribute to an individual who went beyond the call of duty in serving his country. So let us collect Audie Murphy stamps for the pleasure of keeping his name and memory alive. Let Walt Disney studios keep the cartoon characters alive on video tapes and in the movies. (Source: The Daily Oklahoman 2-28-97)

While on the subject on stamps, I have just obtained the 1997 stamp program from the post office which I view with mixed opinions. There are several interesting souvenir sheets, especially on The World of Dinosaurs. Also, as a former philatelist, the first two triangular stamps have finally become a reality. There are several designs which are military and patriotic in nature: commemorative stamps for General Benjamin Davis and George C. Marshall; one recognizing “The Stars and Stripes Forever” and another for the fiftieth anniversary of the first supersonic flight in 1947. The Air Force has one recognizing their fiftieth year transition from the Department of the Army to the Department of the Air Force. Finally, there is a handsome souvenir sheet of “Classic American Aircraft.” But then we end up having a stamp to “Bugs Bunny!” There are several issues which lack detail, quality, and questionable justification for inclusion into the US stamp program: the Lunar New Year of the Ox (plain & ugly); Helping Children Learn (no facial details); holiday celebrations in Kwanzau(Africa)[looks like a water color] and finally commemoratives to Thornton Wilder and Humphrey Bogart! This is just a summary. But, doesn’t something seem terribly wrong with postal priorities, perhaps conceived and approved under the effects of a hallucinogenic? (Stan Smith)

In the uphill battle to obtain a commemorative stamp for Audie, we must be aware of several postal regulations and guidelines. First, any commemorative stamp must be issued in conjunction with an anniversary date such as fiftieth or seventy-fifth. (We have already missed the 50th anniversary of Audie's Medal of Honor action of January 26, 1945 and we have also missed the 50th anniversary of his birth June 20, 1924); once a stamp subject is approved by the omnipotent Post Master General, it requires THREE years for it to become a reality. This time frame is apparently necessary and standard in order to obtain renderings from pre-approved artists; the reviewing and evaluation process plus the bureaucratic waste of time to bring them to fruition. This seems to indicate that we will also miss the seventy-fifth anniversary of Audie's birth for June 20, 1999. Our resident artist and club member Don Moore has applied to the postal officials to be included in their list of authorized artists. I am relieved to have young people in the club because it seems that only you will be here to outlive the current Postmaster and will have the window of opportunity for Audie's 100th birthday! The flame of hope will soon pass to your hands to complete this crusade. (Stan Smith)

Club member Diane Bates Thomason of Quinlan, Texas is sticking it to the Post Master General! (*personally speaking, there is only ONE real place to stick it to him!*) Diane is also associated with American Legion Post No. 17 in Greenville, Texas. With the assistance of club member Richard Rogers of Copperas, Texas and his award winning massive web site, a total of 10,808 signatures requesting a commemorative stamp for Audie have been directed to his holyness, the Post Master General. Her untiring and relentless dedication to obtain a stamp honoring Audie is to be highly commended. But 10,808 signatures is not enough. If any of you belong to clubs, groups, associations etc. see what you can do to gather signatures. To have any chance of this dream of becoming a reality, we must think and aim in numbers which exceed 100,000 ! Diane, keep on sticking to him where it hurts! (Stan Smith)

***ANOTHER STAMP FOR AUDIE !* Great news! On February 21, 1997 the country of Guyana issued another stamp honoring Audie. The stamp is part of a set honoring movies about World War II. This stamp is but one in a souvenir sheet of 9 stamps. It's a small world, but one of the other stamps pays tribute to James Cagney in the movie "The Gallant Hours". Cagney starred as Admiral "Bull" Halsey. Other celebrities include Burgess Meredith, Gary Cooper, James Mason, Robert Taylor, and John Garfield. Not bad company? I am currently seeking a more dependable source for the various foreign Audie stamps. I will advise you accordingly in a future newsletter. Page nine reflects pictures of the four foreign stamps issued thus far. (These are enlarged for better legibility.) Stan Smith**



A Visit with Audie

From those of us left here on earth,
We live with memories of all your worth.
You whisper softly - "Please don't cry;
I'm only on a trip. I did not die.
I love you all for keeping my memory alive,
And watch over you while on this stamp drive.
Yes, I would be grateful for a stamp in my name.
But, what I did while on earth was not for fame.
I fought side by side with my fellow comrades;
To see freedom for all and pride for our flag.
Defeat belongs to cowards - not to us who fought.
March on comrades - your goals will not be for naught.
Your pleas will fall on Statesmen's ears;
and God will be with you - so have no fears."
"I didn't"

By club member
Diane Bates Thomason
Greenville, Texas 1996