



THE AUDIE MURPHY NATIONAL FAN CLUB
AUDIE MURPHY - HONORARY PRESIDENT



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Dear Club Members,

Welcome to our fourth and final issue for 1998. I hope you have enjoyed the various articles and subject matter. Many thanks to those members who have contributed stories and ideas. Also, many thanks to Sue Gossett who graciously retyped all the materials onto a computer disc for use here.

As I mentioned in Vol. 3, No. 4 (Oct. 1997) there existed an Audie Murphy Fan Club which preceded both ours and the one administered for nearly twenty years by Lillian and Kathleen Bailey. This first fan club operated between May, 1952 and May, 1959 before it was disbanded by Audie when its president became ill. This newsletter will be devoted to select items extracted from the various editions. I am certain you will enjoy their approach to this subject.

No doubt you have discovered the two bonus items for this year. One is the special pictorial cancellation designed by our resident artist Don Moore, for Audie Murphy Day 1998 on an envelope cache chosen for fan club members only. However, the *piece de resistance* is the Audie Murphy medallion, also designed by Don Moore. This handsome medallion can be worn around the neck. Enjoy these 1998 gifts.

A STORY

This is the story of THE KID FROM TEXAS, who went BEYOND GLORY when he went TO HELL AND BACK to win the RED BADGE OF COURAGE.

The fun shots sounded like DRUMS ACROSS THE RIVER as he led his COLUMN SOUTH. He knew that the enemy weren't just KANSAS RAIDERS.

He thought about his past as he led his company through the GUNSMOKE. He thought about the golden SIERRA and the rolling TUMBLEWEED. He remembered he's never been a BAD BOY as he would think about having a DUEL AT SILVER CREEK and of making outlaws RIDE CLEAR OF DIABLO.

Little did he know then that his future held making wonderful pictures like DESTROY and WALK THE PROUD LAND.

If you asked Audie Murphy how his life was now, he'd probably tell you, "I've got the WORLD IN MY CORNER."

By Anne Allison (Circa Christmas 1957)

AUDIE - *Sung to the tune of TAMMY*

**I hear the cottonwoods whisperin' above-
Audie! Audie! It's Audie we love!
The ole hootie owl hootie hoo's to the dove-
Audie! Audie! Audie's our love!**

**Does Audie feel what we feel
When his movies come here?
Our hearts beat so joyfully
You'd think that he could hear!**

**Wish I knew if he knew what we're dreaming of.
Audie! Audie! It's Audie we love!**

By Arlene Andrews (circa Christmas 1957)

A SHORT STORY ON AUDIE

**Audie is a fine young man,
Who helped and fought for Uncle Sam,
When his job down there was done,
He then came back with medals won.**

**Now at home, he is making wonderful movies for us,
In the movie theatres where they are showing, to see them is a must,
A handsome, rugged cowboy is the part he always plays,
"Wasn't he wonderful, terrific, and good?" is what you'll hear the people say.**

**He's written a wonderful book which will be made into a movie story,
Of all the boys who fought for us and who received our glory,
"To Hell and Back" is the title's name,
And to those who read it, the movie is sure to be the same.**

**With Pam and Terry and another on the way,
I'm sure the shining sun will brighten up their days,
All the luck, and good wishes to all of them today,
But remember Audie, we'll never forget you. What more can we all say?**

*By Sonia Safranski
Chicapel, Mass. (circa Jan-April 1954)*

THE DAY I CRIED

A hero dedicated his book to two buddies - and here, for the first time, he tells why.

From a story in the American Weekly - October 31, 1954
THE DAY I CRIED by Audie Murphy

As an infantryman in World War II, I knew hundreds of soldiers, ranging from privates to generals. Among them, I found cowards as well as those courageous to the point of being foolhardy. The average infantryman simply carries out his orders, even though it means death.

War makes an uncommon person of a man who participates in it. There is a gulf between civilians and soldiers. I realized this shortly after returning from overseas. For several years I brooded about the matter. Then I decided to tell the story, TO HELL AND BACK, in an attempt to explain the life of an infantryman. I am still sticking my neck out by playing myself in the film version of the book for Universal International.

When the book was completed, somebody suggested that it should have a dedication. I immediately thought of two friends: Joe Sieja and Lattie Tipton. Both were privates killed in the line of duty. I did not think of rank. As far as I was concerned they could have been generals, so long as they were the men they were.

Since starting the picture, I have been asked who Lattie and Joe were and why I dedicated my book to them. There are many reasons. Both were unusually good soldiers. Each had much to live for. But both gave up their lives in the name of a common cause.

Sieja was a company comic with unfailing good humor. In his squat, gnarled figure was recorded years of heavy toil. Growing up on a farm in Poland, he had been in America only five years when we got into the war, but he fought fiercely for his adopted country. He had an uncanny instinct for the presence of the enemy. He used to say he could smell them when he couldn't see them. Though a peaceful man by nature, he hated Germans passionately and killed every one he could.

Joe had a small gasoline stove, which he carried on his belt no matter how heavy his pack might be. It provided hot coffee whenever we had a break. Once, when we were in a tough fight, the stove, still on Joe's belt, was caught in some bushes, holding him back when he should have been running. The Germans spotted him when he began to shoot. It was a comical, if horrifying, situation, because Joe stood there loudly cursing the enemy, who were trying to kill him while he frantically to free himself and save that stove.

Joe asked little of life. As a civilian he worked in a steel mill in America. But after the war he hoped to save enough money to get married and buy a farm. He had a simple love for the land.

The shattering of his dreams was ironic, considering what he'd been through. I was not present, but Jim Fife, an Indian machine gunner with nerves of steel, told me how it happened after the war. I was in the hospital in Naples with a malaria attack when my division, the Third Infantry, invaded Anzio. At first, fighting was light, Joe and Jim were drinking some coffee behind a house when an 88 millimeter shell dropped on them, blowing Sieja to bits and seriously wounding Fife. Joe was one of those fellows who never believed that he could be killed. It was such soldiers as Joe who bought our freedom with their blood.

When I went into the army, I swore to myself that the war would never make me cry. But when Tipton died I sat by his side and bawled like a baby. Unlike Joe, Lattie was not very talkative. But one could sense a quiet strength in his presence. Perhaps he got the quality from the Tennessee mountains from which he came. Lattie had no personal hatred for the Germans. But he was given a job to do, and this he did most efficiently. When Lattie was by my side, I felt safer.

On D-Day in southern France, my platoon got pinned down by heavy fire from a German strong-point on a wooded hill. In attempting to probe the spot, I managed to crawl up a gutter bordering a vineyard. The Germans discovered me and I began to duel with a carbine. Suddenly somebody was beside me. Thinking it was a German, I wheeled to fire and met the grinning face of Lattie.

He soon had part of an ear shot off and I used that as an excuse to send him to the rear for medical treatment. He only laughed at my arguments. "We're supposed to go forward, not backward", he said, tossing me one of his clips of carbine ammunition.

We could have retreated, but either Lattie or I would have been ashamed to make the suggestion to the other. Laying down a path of fire, we charged the hill to the first foxholes, where two Germans were cowering.

We shot the Germans and dived in on their bodies. Had we hesitated a second, almost certainly we would have been killed.

The hill was already rattling with fire. Some Germans yelled, "kamerad", which I did not trust. In war, the shout of "surrender" is often used to get an opponent to stick his head up in the firing line. But Lattie was out to get that hill out of the way of our company's progress.

"They've had it", he said. "One of them is waving a white handkerchief."

I urged him to stay down, but he crawled out of the foxhole to take the prisoners. Scarcely had Lattie got to his feet when a slash of German machine gun fire toppled him back on me. He just had time to mutter "Murph", like a child that had done something wrong and thought I could do something to make things right.

Then he died.

Though I knew Lattie was dead, I pulled him out of the hole as if he needed fresh air. A machine gun cut loose on me. Jumping back in the hole, I threw a grenade that knocked out the gun crew without damaging the weapon. Using it to fire from the hip, I went back down to see Lattie. I took off his pack and made a pillow for his head. Then I broke up.

When I dedicated TO HELL AND BACK to Lattie and Joe four years ago, I said, "If there be glory in war, let it rest on men like these". Today I see no reason to change it.

*Submitted by Lois Ann Witmer
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania (circa May-Dec 1955)*

A TRIBUTE TO AUDIE MURPHY

BY BILL MAULDIN

I worked with Audie Murphy in a movie once, and a scene called for me to stand beside him...we were playing Civil War soldiers...and accuse him of cowardice. For obvious reasons, this was hard for me to do. There's something incongruous about saying, "Watsa matter, ya skeered?" to a scrappy character who had in real life clobbered a fair-sized portion of the German Army. The script was even harder on poor Murph. Every time I sneered that awful taunt at him, the back of his neck dulled, and his hands began to curl into fists. After several unsuccessful retakes he whirled on me and said, "Listen, you rear-echelon ink-slinger, I know we're only play-acting, but you don't have to say that like you meant it!"

Soldiering and bravery are very serious personal matters to Audie, and when I heard he was working on a movie about his army career, I wondered what caliber machine gun he'd use to scare off the slapstick-and-cheesecake artists who cluster around most war pictures. Apparently he did all right. **TO HELL AND BACK** is by far the best think I've seen about World War II. The story is touching, yet always honest, and the light touches are true war humor, not just gags, because they are set against fear and tragedy. It is no small feat to keep hokum out of a commercial success to convince its maker that they did right in playing ball with Murphy.

Always for Audie,

Lou Ellen Soles

Alliance, Ohio (Circa Oct-Dec 1955/ Jan-May 1956)

A MESSAGE FROM MURPHY

Well, a lot has happened since we last got together. As you've probably heard, I've done considerable travelling this past year.

The trip to Japan for **JOE BUTTERFLY** was very interesting because most all of it was shot in Tokyo. Soon after we got back, I went on location for **NIGHT PASSAGE**, but luckily Pam and the children were able to join me in Colorado. After a brief rest, I was off to Saigon for **THE QUIET AMERICAN** and I'd like to tell all of you at this time how much I appreciated your get-well cards and good wishes. I'm feeling find now and fully recovered from the operation.

From Saigon we went to Rome to shoot the interiors of **THE QUIET AMERICAN**. Joe Mankiewicz directed it and I believe it's an unusually fine film and think that you'll enjoy seeing it when it's released.

Pamela joined me in Rome when we'd finished shooting and we went on to Paris together for a vacation. It was her first trip to Europe, and we had one of the best times there. All the sights were a new experience for her, and sharing them together made it real wonderful for both of us.

We took the leisurely way home--on the S.S. United States to New York, then the train to Los Angeles. But as happy as we were on the trip, it was good to be back. Needless to say, I'd missed Terry and Skipper very much, and those two rascals stuck pretty close after my return. For the first few weeks, it was a hassle getting out of the house even to go to the studio.

I took it easy for a bit before starting work on **THE WAY BACK**, the sequel to **TO HELL AND BACK**, which covers the period from the end of the war to the present time. Spec McClure, my close friend, is working on the screenplay, based on mountainous notes and journals gathered over a period of years.

The decision to make **THE WAY BACK** was not prompted by any desire to tell my individual story. There are millions of ex-G.I.'s in this country today; some of them have found their place and others have not. When they returned, they had problems to straighten out, and were confronted with new ones at home. The change from military to civilian life is not an easy one; the shift is not made in the split second that a voice yells, "The war's over!"

If there is any purpose in writing **THE WAY BACK**, it is simply to reveal the experiences of one G.I. with the hope that it will in some way help the others who see it; to show the other guys and their families that their problems were shared by many, that they were not alone.

I am not certain at this time, but it looks now as if we'll go into production at the end of this year. During the beginning of this month, I filmed a one hour television show at Revue Productions called **THE FLIGHT**. It will probably be shown some time in the fall, and I play the part of a pilot. It is a suspense drama and those of you who see it will be glued to your seats, I think. At least, I was when I read the script.

In a few days, we'll begin shooting on a new Borden Chase western called **MIDDLE OF THE STREET**, or **BROKEN STAR**. My role is that of a bad man, disguised as a sheriff, who turns good towards the end. The people of the town and the duties I perform while I'm waiting to rob a bank, convert me to the straight and true path. Walter Matthau, a fine actor, has one of the feature parts, and the girl is played by Gia Scala.

Well, I think that catches you up on all the current activities...I feel as if I've been talking to each and every one of you.

Last I'd like you all to know how very much I appreciate all your letters and kind wishes that have come during the year. It's a good feeling to have such wonderful friends.

All the best.

Audie Murphy (Christmas Edition 1957?)

**His hair is reddish-brown
His eyes are grayish-green
He's sweet and gentle
Also very keen.**

**Pam is his wife's name,
Terry and Skipper are his two sons.
His hobby is skin-diving;
He also likes guns.**

**His occupation is an actor;
Place of work--U-I.
He's the brightest star in heaven
God's greatest gift to you and I.**

**His favorite color is blue,
Which suits him just fine.
So why wait to wonder,
Audie Murphy is our guy!**

*By Gail Wheeler (circa Christmas 1957)
Knoxville, Tennessee*

"THE SOLDIER"

**I saw a certain soldier,
And I wondered what to say,
As this soldier passed before me,
And continued on his way.**

**Many things I wished to tell him,
Thoughts I'd had for quite a spell,
Of many boys just like him,
Though their names be Jim or Mel.**

**But the mist enveloped the figure,
His step soon died away,
And in the darkness of the shadows,
Only the vision of him stayed.**

**That vision was a symbol
Of a soldier brave and true,
Of a young man born to greatness,
And of deeds that he did do.**

**Perhaps you've seen this soldier,
And you've wondered what to say,
As Audie passed before you
And continued on his way.**

By Donna Contant

**Audie Murphy is one of the best,
And now I can see why
Through all the other reasons
The name Murphy shall never die.**

**Audie is always as busy as a bee
And Pam is always beside him
And now we can plainly see
Why everyone likes him so.**

*By Joan Gibbons (circa Jan-April 1954)
Glasgow, Kentucky*

**A is for Audie who we adore
U is for Universal-International
for whom Audie works
D is for dearest which we know he is
I is for intelligence which we know he has
E is for earnest which Audie is.**

**M is for Murphy, the one and only
U is for understanding which Audie is
R is for raving which we all do about Audie
P is for Pam whom Audie loves
H is for handsome, no doubt about it
Y is for youth which Audie has.**

*By Marilyn Jaeck (circa Christmas 1957)
Detroit, Michigan*

MY OPINION OF AUDIE

**A is for actor, our favorite.
U is for undaunted, he was in the war.
D is for dream, without any doubt.
I is for idol, he's mine.
E is for enjoyment he brings us in movies.**

**M is for modest, which he is through and through.
U is for unrivaled, he has no match.
R is for rate and he rates high with us.
P is for proud that we are his fans.
H is for handsome, our members all agree.
Y is for young, the way he will always be to us.**

*Always for Audie;
Doris Wright - Penns Grove; New Jersey
(circa Sept- Dec 1954 / Jan- April 1955)*

MY SECRET LOVE

His eyes are blue, his will is free,
And I like to dream
That someday I may be
Just half as great as he seems to me.

I seem to see it all so clear.
Perhaps you do too.
A handsome, sensitive, quiet boy
And a dream he holds so dear.

He stands so still, neath the hot noon's glare,
The sun bringing gold to his soft, brown hair.
He pauses slightly, the sun goes up.
His aim is true, not freakish luck.

The boy goes home and his family eats,
Though peppered molasses isn't a treat.
His last shell is gone, but there is food that night,
For rabbit stew now graces their sight.

It's hard to believe how the boy feels.
It's all he can do to provide the meals.
His father has left and his mother is sick,
But the hardships, he tries the best to lick.

He fights the weeds and then the Krauts,
Soon his name and fame plainly stand out.
He has earned his place in all our hearts.
In the mind of man he's made his marks.

His smile is friendly,
It is gentle and kind.
For he has found the contentment
He's fought so hard to find.

And in my heart, I'm sure in yours too,
There's set aside, hidden from view,
A part all alone for someone quite dear.
That person is Audie, I'm sure is quite clear.

*By Donna Contant
Tonawanda, N.Y. (circa May-Dec 1955)*

ABOUT MURPHY

I'd like to tell a story
About a certain guy,
Who rates a lot of glory,
And he often wonders why.

He doesn't seem to realize
Why he's become so famous
It won't be hard for you to surmise
Exactly what his name is.

He is what you'd call a "Good Joe"
He'd rate in any crowd
If you saw him then you'd know
Why this Fan Club is so proud.

He's got a smile that captivates,
A laugh for every joke
His voice you should appreciate
He develops it on coke.

His faithful spouse is Adorable Pam,
The girl with the lovable nature
She's sure to do the best she can
That's one of the virtues God gave her.

Her friendliness and kind attention
Stretch beyond the longest measure
It's really hard for me to mention
All her charms which bring such pleasure.

The newest addition is their son Terry,
A little fella with great ambition
I'm sure he'd eat all he can carry
If Pam gave him her permission.

He may not always compromise
On everything that's done,
But on every single enterprise,
I'll bet they have a lot of fun.

*By Jo Gaski
Cleveland, Ohio (circa May-August 1953)*

Hi Gang!

So many things have happened to me since the last time I wrote you in the Journal that I just don't know where to begin. I guess I had better start with the most important event, and the most thrilling--the arrival on March 23 of James Shannon Murphy. Naturally, Pam and I are very happy, but I think the one who enjoys him most is Terry, and it's like a comedy for us to watch him react to his little brother's antics. At first we had to impress upon him that little "Skipper" (our nickname for James) was a bit more fragile than his older brother. I remember one day when Terry was eating an ice cream cone he insisted on making Skipper take a bite. He's always trying to kiss and hug him, and not too gently, so we finally convinced him that the way to "love" the baby is to stand at the crib with his hands behind his back and that just a "peck" will do. When we first brought Skipper home from the hospital he had a shock of black hair like I have never seen on an infant. In fact, I thought he reminded me of a wild Indian. I taught Terry to say "My brother looks like Sitting Bull", and he would make this announcement every time we had guests, much to their amazement and amusement.

One Sunday afternoon Les Hilton and I decided to enter Flying John in a cattle cutting contest at Wild Bill Elliott's Ranch. However, we almost didn't make it because John shied away from the trailer and refused to enter it. I don't think there's a thing Les doesn't know about horses, though, and it wasn't long before we were on our way, with John contentedly riding along behind us. John didn't win any prizes in the contest, but he showed remarkably well and Les and I are both encouraged and feel that it won't be long before he's got a few trophies to his credit.

I went wild boar hunting up Santa Barbara way last week and come home with an empty sack but loads of laughs. Willard Willingham and Hy Hunter went with me. I know you know who Willard is, but you may not be familiar with Hy Hunter. He owns a gun shop in Burbank and is Joel McCrea's brother-in-law. He's one of my favorite hunting companions and I spend many hours browsing around his shop among the rare pistols and old rifles he has on exhibit.

Another thing that happened is that Pam and I bought a new car. It's a 1954 Oldsmobile half white and half blue. A real beauty.

Do you remember "Destry Rides Again" a picture made a few years ago with Jimmy Stewart and Marlene Dietrich? Well, U-I is going to do a remake of this and I will play the role Jimmy did before. Mari Blanchard and Lori Nelson will also be in it with me. We'll start shooting on this in about four more days, which means that "To Hell and Back" will go before the cameras in about June or July. We'll probably shoot a good deal of the war picture at Fort Bragg in New Jersey or Camp Carson in Colorado. Aaron Rosenberg, the producer, and I will take about a week's trip to scout location sites before production begins.

I think I've rambled on long enough, although when I start writing for the Journal it's as if I were speaking personally to each and every one of you and I enjoy it so much I'm like a man who came to dinner.

Just a word of thanks to all of you for sending the cards for James Shannon and remembering our anniversary. You're swell people and I'm proud that you are members of my club.

As ever,

Audie *(circa Oct-Dec 1955 / Jan. May 1956)*