



THE AUDIE MURPHY NATIONAL FAN CLUB
AUDIE MURPHY - HONORARY PRESIDENT



HONORARY MEMBERS

BILLIE MURPHY - MARIETTA, TX
NADENE MURPHY - PRINCETON, TX
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CLUB OFFICIALS

STAN SMITH - EDITOR
SUE GOSSETT - ASSISTANT EDITOR

Vol. 3, No. 4 October, 1997

Dear fellow club members,

Welcome to the final issue for our third successful year of operation. October represents our **MILITARY** bonus issue, thus necessitating the large brown envelope. There always has been much confusion as to Audie's correct military entitlements. Even Audie didn't know what he had earned. This is evident in several photos where you see him wearing the Croix de Guerre with **TWO** palms. He wasn't entitled to two but one palm and one star.

The first part of the bonus is a copy of the Department of the Army's official listing of Audie's awards which was finalized in September, 1979 at the urging of Pamela Murphy. Still, Audie never wore all that he was entitled. So that you may appreciate what his chest of ribbons would have looked like, the second part of the bonus is a color laser generated print of all Audie's authorized awards. This print is so stunning; it is more than suitable for framing. As you see, the ribbon display follows the official document, except for the Outstanding Civilian Service Medal which would not appear with his military decorations but does have an order of precedence or placement when worn.

As many of you know, June 20th 1996 was declared Audie Murphy Day in Greenville, Texas. A special pictorial cancellation was arranged with the Greenville Post Office. The cancellation imprint was designed by our resident artist Don Moore. It basically consisted of the military profile which we use on our stationary. I had purchased over 500 envelopes not realizing how rapidly our membership would be increasing. Needless to say, a number of our newer members didn't receive any as my inventory was depleted several months ago. Postal regulations permit only one special pictorial cancellation per event. Thus, I could not utilize Audie's birthday again.

It was quite easy to show the Chamber of Commerce that Audie's birthday would have no meaning if not for June 2, 1945. It was on this day in Werfen, Austria that Audie received the Medal of Honor. However, this was no ordinary Medal of Honor ceremony. On hand was Major General Mike O'Daniels, Commander of the 3rd Infantry Division and Lieutenant General Alexander Patch, 7th Army Commander. It was General Patch who actually presented both the Medal of Honor and the Legion of Merit to Lieutenant Murphy. With the presentation of these two additional medals, Audie was established as the most decorated combat soldier in World War II. Besides these high-ranking officers, on the reviewing stand were nine U.S. Senators from the Military Affairs Committee and other dignitaries and important military officers. Select Third Division units passed in review as part of the decoration ceremony.

Again our resident artist, Don Moore, designed a new cancellation. In addition, the special pictorial cancellation for June 2, 1997 consists of a special envelope cache designed for club members only. The general public cannot obtain these covers. The third part of your bonus consists of two Audie covers.

Another bonus is a result of an additional interest I have with the military. I am also a member of the Medal of Honor Historical Society, not to be confused with the Congressional Medal of Honor Society which consists of the actual recipients. I have met most of the living recipients who number now only 168. During the last twelve years, I have designed various gifts and tributes for them. This also includes designing their business cards and stationary.

Had Audie not met such a tragic end, perhaps I would have designed Medal of Honor cards for him. The cards were a means to give an autograph to a collector. Therefore, in his memory, I have designed what I believe Audie would have wanted on his own card. Representing part four of your bonuses are three Medal of Honor cards. This is the same quality and the most popular design preferred by the Medal of Honor recipients. Your cards will be found in one of the special pictorial envelopes.

And to complete part five of this military bonus collection, suitable for framing, is a reproduction of Audie's Medal of Honor citation which describes his official recorded deed. I hope all of you will enjoy these special treats, all with the club's compliments.

OLD AUDIE MURPHY FAN CLUB! - A number of our members were previously acquainted with Lillian Bailey's "Audie Leon Murphy Memorial Fan Club" in La Mirada, California. I was an honorary member of her club for several years. Lillian's club became operational on October 21, 1961 and it ceased around the summer of 1991; nearly thirty years of service to the memory of Audie! When it was absolutely obvious that Lillian's club could not continue with its newsletters, I took up the heavy gauntlet and organized the current club.

Club member Wayne Cutshaw of Round Lake Park, Illinois is constantly going to flea markets and book sales. In fact, he probably spends more time at these events than he does with his teenage bride, Margaret. Wayne stumbles on more bargains than there are grains of sands on a beach. He is always calling me and goes into great detail about the incredible finds he makes. He apparently derives great satisfaction in hearing me cry with agonizing jealousy. Truly, Wayne has that mythological "Midas Touch".

The following information will surprise to you as much as it did me. Wayne, with his "golden touch" and one eye shut, picked up (probably for pennies!) an Audie Murphy Fan Club newsletter that predates Lillian's club! This club was officially operational on May 25, 1952. Audie was an active and participating member with a mailing address at Universal Studios. This club was so large that it had eight officers and the club was divided into eight districts throughout the United States. These districts also had responsibility for over 20 countries. The club was dissolved by Audie around May, 1959 due to illness of its president, Margaret Walters.

This newsletter is truly a gold mine. Aside from its existence, it contains many articles, poems, Audie jingles and even crossword puzzles. Our own fan club has three members who also belonged to this long forgotten organization. Future issues of our publication will contain reprints of select articles from this first Audie fan club. I will attempt with my CD telephone directory to locate other members of this club. This will be very difficult, because with the passage over 40 years, many have now joined Audie. The very young members are, no doubt, married and their maiden names are of little search value. (Excitedly submitted by Stan Smith)

OBITUARY: I regret to advise you that Audie's dear friend, Monroe Hackney, passed away on July 19 at the age of 71. Monroe was born in Celeste, Texas on August 26, 1925 and he married Martha Claborn in Greenville, Texas on September 26, 1943. Monroe was an army veteran of World War II. Survivors include his wife Martha, two sons and daughters-in-law, two sisters, five grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE - APRIL

The Knoxville Film Caravan took off on a bright note with a salute to the ladies of the Western movies. In attendance, along with some of the most accomplished actors/actresses from those wonderful Westerns of old, were John Saxon, Dick Jones, Gregg Palmer, Charlie Dierkop, Gene Evans, and Foster Brooks. The ladies included, Lori Nelson, Peggy Stewart, Penny Edwards, Helen Talbott, Grace Bradley Boyd (Hopalong Cassidy's widow), Gloria Henry and Elena Verdugo.

I had the opportunity to ask Lori, Gregg and John what it was like working with Audie on some of the films. Lori said over and over again what a fine person and good actor Audie was. He was very kind and a real gentleman on the set. He was not temperamental, quite shy and stayed to himself a lot. A wonderful guy. She mentioned also that Audie turned out to be a very good actor, never having acted before coming out to Hollywood. She enjoyed making both Destry and Tumbleweed with him.

Gregg Palmer said that Audie was one of his favorites. They became pals. Played poker together. He was quite a guy, deep thinking, a generous man with a big heart. Audie didn't care too much for the executives but loved the workers; he loved the wranglers and they loved him. He kept to himself quite a lot but was loved by the working crew.

John Saxon remembered hearing a story about Audie before ever meeting him. Hugh O'Brien was a fast draw. He put a challenge in the Hollywood Reporter betting \$500.00 for who could draw fastest or similar in nature. The story was that Audie said, "Let's make it \$2500.00 and use real ammunition."

They pretty much all said the same thing about Audie in that he was quiet, shy, liked to stay around the crew and not the shirt and tie executives.

On April 17, I had the privilege of being on a live radio broadcast from St. Louis, Missouri. The interview lasted for 45 minutes and the host of the program did a fine job of mentioning the fan club, the Audie Murphy Research Foundation and most importantly of all, signing the stamp petition. According to Richard Rodgers, webmaster, there were quite a few signers from that surrounding area. (Respectfully submitted by Sue Gossett)

SWOPE

By club member Mike West, Fort Worth, Texas

We know him variously as "Swope," a Cherokee Indian, and as Chief. He is portrayed in *To Hell and Back* as a coffee-drinking, cigarette smoking, cold cunning machine/gunner. Who is this man?

He is James R. Fife, a Seminole (not a Cherokee) born in 1913 near Little, Oklahoma. I had the privilege of meeting the real man described above. I met him and two family members Memorial Day weekend 1995 at his modest home. Mr. Fife was friendly but quiet. He is not prone to talk too much; however, he did share the following with me:

He joined the 3rd Infantry Division in North Africa as a replacement in 1943. Fife, a Browning Automatic Rifleman, met Audie Murphy when Murphy later joined Co. B in February 1943.

In July 1943 during the invasion of Sicily at Licata Beach, Mr. Fife was badly wounded on the second day of fighting. A sniper shot him. The bullet passed through his helmet lodging in his shoulder where it remains to this day. After a month's convalescence, Fife rejoined Co. B during fighting at Salerno, Italy.

As one reads *To Hell and Back*, several incidents involving Murphy, Fife and other members of the 3rd Platoon are recounted. In particular the fighting at the Volturno River and Mt. Rotondo. Later, the 3rd Division, along with other divisions, was removed from the line and given training for the Anzio landing. Murphy and Fife were not to see each other again until March 1948, as Audie did not make the Anzio landing because of an influenza attack.

Shortly after the Anzio landing, Fife and Joe Sieja, one of the two men to whom Murphy dedicated *To Hell and Back*, were near a haystack when a German mortar shell struck. Sieja was killed instantly and Mr. Fife was badly wounded in the leg and hand. He did not lose his leg as portrayed in *To Hell and Back*. In Mr. Fife's words, "This was my last combat."

The following months were to witness a series of medical treatments in various military hospitals both overseas and stateside. Just before Christmas 1944, Fife was in Charleston, South Carolina. While still wheelchair bound, he rolled backwards and fell from the wheelchair breaking his badly injured leg. He was eventually discharged and returned to Oklahoma.

In 1948, Mr. Fife, along with several other war buddies and acquaintances of Audie Murphy, were involved in the radio broadcast of "This Is Your Life" with Ralph Edwards. This was the last time Fife and Murphy were together.

Mr. Fife, a widower, has lived near Seminole, Oklahoma, since the end of the war. He is currently involved in the Wewoka Indian Baptist Church where he is the associate pastor.

A final note, if you please. James Fife is a quiet man with great dignity. It would be uncharacteristic for him to say anything self-serving or that might draw attention to his war record or his wounds, so permit Audie Murphy in *To Hell and Back* to say it:

But I also believe in men like Brandon and Novak and Swope and Kerrigan; and all the men who stood up against the enemy, taking their beatings without whimper and their triumphs without boasting. The men who went and would go again to hell and back to preserve what our country thinks right and decent.

I agree!

A TRIP WITH AUDIE'S SISTER TO HIS BOYHOOD HOMES

By club member Coy Prather - Oklahoma City, OK

I'd like to share a wonderful experience my wife and I had on Audie Murphy Day, June 2, 1997 in Greenville, Texas. I've been friends for close to twenty years with Bea (Billie) Murphy Tindol, Audie's youngest sister. In addition to being a close personal and family friend, my wife, Elaine and I consider Bea our "*second Mom*" (and you couldn't pick a better Mom if you tried). I've often told Bea that Audie was special and he was lucky to have a sister who is so special.

We made plans to meet Bea in Greenville in the morning before the ceremony for Audie. We had breakfast and Bea asked if we would like to drive through the country and visit the sites where she, Audie and their family lived. I lived in Paris, Texas for years and had been through "Audie Country" many times, but never with a guided tour, so I was thrilled.

We first left Greenville and started north on U.S. Highway 69, "*Audie L. Murphy Memorial Highway*". Approximately a half mile out of Greenville there is a sign marking this highway, which was officially designated "*Audie Murphy Memorial Highway*," from Greenville to the Red River north last year.

Bea first took us to Kingston, about 16 miles north of Greenville. In Kingston (You have to look fast or you will miss it!) there is a historical marker on the east side of the road marking Audie's birthplace, about 400 yards east of the road. The house where Audie was born no longer exists. There is, according to Bea who visited the site with her mother, a house a metal barn/shop in the exact spot where their house once stood.

Next we drove north to Celeste, Texas which is about 20 miles north of Greenville, still on Highway 69. Bea told us that the family was very poor but very happy in Celeste. On the south end of town is another historical marker honoring Audie. There is a lovely flowerbed around the marker which is well cared for. In Celeste, Bea took us to the street and showed us a lot where the Murphy family house once stood. That house too no longer exists.

It was very hard to keep a dry eye when Bea told us about their mother dying. Bea said her mother died of consumption (tuberculosis) and she also thought she had diabetes. Several feet from where the house stood is the home of the Cawthon family. This house is still standing. Mr. and Mrs. John Cawthon lived next to the Murphy family and were very good friends. Audie and Bea called Mrs. Cawthon "Mom." In fact Bea was named for "Mom" Cawthon (Willie Beatrice or "Billie"). The Cawthons were very fine people, neighbors and life-long friends of the Murphy family. Bea said "Mom" Cawthon was the "salt of the earth" and Audie loved her pumpkin bread.

We next drove to Farmersville, off of Texas Highway 78 just north of U.S. 380, which runs east out of Greenville. Bea took us to the house where she lived with her sister Corinne. Audie bought the family a large house after the war, but they later moved to a smaller one. Bea took us by this smaller house that was very neat and nice even today. In the center of town is a marker dedicated to Audie and Veterans. It is very nice and worth seeing if you are ever in the area. The street next to where Audie's sister Corinne once lived is also named in honor of Audie (Farmersville).

Bea told us many stories about the real poverty the family had to endure. Last year Bea and Audie's sister Nadene (also a wonderful person) stayed at our home in Oklahoma City before attending Audie's induction into the National Cowboy Hall of Fame. When you hear the stories about the extreme poverty, orphan's home and all the troubles these fine people suffered, it really makes you appreciate even more what outstanding individuals they became. A person would have to go a long way to meet nicer people!

The ceremony at Greenville was really wonderful, but the highlight for me was getting to tour Hunt and Collin County to see *Audie Murphy Country*. It's nice in a way the Murphy family lived in so many places because everyone in the area got to meet Audie and his family. People speak about how nice the Murphy family is, and how wonderful Audie was, even to this day. If you are ever in Northeast Texas, be sure to visit "*Audie Murphy Country*"!

AMC ADDS MORE MURPHY MOVIES! In reviewing this years tribute to Audie's birthday by AMC on June 20th, it a thrill to see that they have added seven new titles to their inventory. It has been customary during the last several years that in tribute to Audie's birthday, his movies are shown the entire day. This progress was a direct result of fans writing in requesting more movies of Audie and no doubt due in large part to the success of Audie's BIOGRAPHY. The seven titles are as follows:

No Name on the Bullet
Drums Across the River
Gunsmoke
Posse from Hell
Sierra
Walk the Proud Land
The Wild & the Innocent

One special title was "The Wild and the Innocent." So many of you have asked "Does Audie ever sing?" While I thought he sang a duet with Sandra Dee, I understand he only sings during the opening credits. I hope those of you with video recorders seized upon the opportunity to increase your own movie inventory during this special day. (Stan Smith)

A STAR FOR AUDIE? Club member Mary Ferguson of Eden, North Carolina wanted to know whether Audie had a "Star" on the Hollywood Walk of Fame. After some research and investigation, I can confirm that Audie does have a "Star" and it is located in front of 1601 Vine Street in Hollywood. However, it is in desperate need of polishing! Do we have any club members in the immediate area that can clean Audie's star on a regular basis? If the same club member(s) can lend me a good close up photo of Audie's star, I shall be glad to scan the image into my computer and print it in a future newsletter.

I also learned that Audie DOES NOT have the equivalent marker for the Walk of Western Stars in Santa Clarita. Their symbol is designated by a golden saddle. When contacted and informed of this fact, they were surprised by what must have been an oversight. However, the governing committee has a limited budget and each golden saddle costs them \$4,000. At present, the committee has thirty approved names but they can only financially justify three or four new members each year. This can be a doable project for us, but it must involve all members writing letters to urge the committee to give Audie Murphy his rightful place in their walk of western stars and to move his name to the top of their list of candidates. Direct your letters of encouragement to the following address:

SANTA CLARITA VALLEY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
ATTN: WALK OF WESTERN STARS COMMITTEE
22565 PARAGUAY DRIVE
SANTA CLARITA, CALIFORNIA 91350
(213) 469-8311

CLASSIFIED

HELP PLEASE - I would like to obtain the following Audie Murphy movies: "World in My Corner" & "Trunk to Cairo". I will pay for copies or make one from your master tape. Thank you. Barbara A. Koziol - 354 12th Avenue - Columbus, NE 68601-7700

WANTED: This movie buff is looking for "The Quiet American" and "The World in My Corner." Please contact Sandy Jackson - I will pay \$50.00 for both titles! (609)799-0116

MOVIES WANTED! I will trade or pay for copies of "Joe Butterfly", "Battle at Bloody Beach", "World in My Corner", "The Quiet American", "Beyond Glory"& "Trunk to Cario." MARY G. FERGUSON - 1009 Klyce Street - Eden, NC 27288 (910) 623-8251

PEN PALS WANTED!!!! If you are as enthusiastic and dedicated about Audie as I am, I want to be your pen pal. THERESA RAINES EDGE - 2213 Wainwright Court - Longview, Texas 75603 (903) 759-8583

TRIVIA By club member Jacky Dunn, Vista, California

Update on people named after Audie Murphy - John Winchester was the ranch manager of Fred Astaire's Blue Valley Ranch in Northridge, California. He had a horse trainer/breaker working for him named Chubb Wilcox, and he named his son Audie Murphy Wilcox. The boy was born sometime between 1960 and 1961.

Also, her uncle, Captain Charles B. Dunn, heard Audie Murphy speak at Mariners Night on April 15, 1971 in Long Beach, California. He said that Audie, the guest of honor, was a good speaker and that he agreed with the speech. (*My files indicate that 500 people attended this event by the Los Angeles and Long Beach Harbor Masons at which time they honored "The Men of the Sea." Foster Brooks, star of television, radio and screen, himself, like Audie, a 32 degree Mason, was one of the featured entertainers that evening - Stan Smith.*)

NOTICE: I have been advised that VIDEO-WEST in Albuquerque, New Mexico is "temporarily" out of business due to "re-organization" but they hope to be operational again toward the end of 1998. Members' best look to alternate sources for Audie's movies.