

PAUL HENREID . . . A Daughter's Request

While I was in Vienna, January of 2008, I discovered that the FilmArchivAustria would do a two week retrospective of my father's work. I was very pleased that his homeland still remembered him and was willing to honor him in this way AND by celebrating what would have been his 100th birthday with a lovely party at the Rathaus.

This then developed into another idea...to do a complete and honest book and documentary about him, separating what was his "real life" at home and what was his "reel life" on the stage and screen.

I have spent the past two years gathering stories, information, celebrity memories, news footage and family photographs both here and in Austria.

Paul Georg Julius Hernried Ritter von Wasel Waldingau was born into the Austrian 'Belle Epoch' and became Paul Henreid, the international movie star.

His life reads like a Hollywood movie. Aristocrat, bon vivant, starving artist, free thinker, freedom fighter, Nazi escapee, blacklist victim, stage star, movie star, blacklist victim again, victorious comeback as television director, well admired and respected in his community, passionate family man, haunted by a life he didn't have, depressed, self exiled and alone. A man of beauty and grace, intellect and arts, always looking to the highest standard, demanding good manners and the 'old rules' of duty.

He was surrounded by the beautiful people of Hollywood but for the most part preferred the European literati, the ex-Pats either in political or artistic exile who had found their way to the movies. Ironically, his two simultaneous performances as Nazis - one on film, one on stage - brought him to the role of suave, continental leading man and star in Hollywood.

Our home life was warm and fulfilling. Everyday there was music wafting through the air...Mozart, Schumann, Strauss...the music of old Vienna, the music of his youth. Everyday there was discussion...art...academics...socio-politics. Everyday there was sport...tennis, swimming, riding. Everyday there was dining...fine dining. Everyday there was love ... and passion for life.

Everyday there was duty.

But it was never as perfect as he wanted it to be. He set very high standards for himself and for all of us. He was a perfectionist and a task master always in charge. This made him a wonderful, respected director but in personal life it was very difficult for him and for family and friends. By the end of his life, he had alienated himself from almost all who cared about him.

He brought talent and professionalism to his colleagues. He brought happiness and joy to his fans. He brought love and challenge to his family. I am glad that I had the opportunity to spend time with him before he died. We talked about life and choices and responsibility and duty and love and friendship. We cried. We laughed. We understood each other better.

He will always be remembered as the suave, romantic man who lit two cigarettes in *Now Voyager* with Bette Davis and as the tall man in the white suit who defied the Nazis and

led the 'Marseillaise' in *Casablanca*. ...And for that I am grateful.
All in all, he had an amazing life...one that should be honored and remembered. With love, I accept this as my responsibility and duty.

I ask anyone who knew him to please contact me. I would so appreciate your stories and memories.

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