

## Appendix A Biography: Andy Devine

*There is an abundance of information on Andy Devine on the internet which includes Andy Devine's film, radio and TV career. This section is not designed to be all inclusive of his history but merely a short synopsis of his life before and after his Big Bear presence. The major part of this section deals with Andy Devine's activities while in Big Bear from 1945 to 1960.*

Andy Devine was born on October 7, 1905 and grew up in Kingman, Arizona where his family moved when he was a year old. Devine was an able athlete as a student and actually played semi-pro football under a phony name (Jeremiah Schwartz, often erroneously presumed to be his real name). Devine used the false name in order to remain eligible for college football. After being a successful football player at St. Mary & St. Benedict College, Arizona State Teacher's College, and Santa Clara University, Devine went to Hollywood with dreams of becoming an actor. Devine had a number of small roles in silent films, (several of which were in Big Bear).



Devine met his wife-to-be, Dorothy House, in 1933 while filming “*Doctor Bull*” at Fox Studios. They were married on October 28, 1933, in Las Vegas, Nevada. They had five children: Andrew Devine, Jr. (born 1934), Patrick Gabriel Devine (born 1935), Susanna Rachel Devine (born 1937), Arthur Matthew Devine (born 1938) and Deborah Catherine Devine (born 1941). Andy, Jr. and Patrick are actors while the rest of his and House's children have other careers.

Although it was first thought that his peculiar voice would prevent him from moving to the talkies, it became his trademark. Devine told people that his speech resulted from a childhood accident. He said that he had been running with a curtain rod in his mouth at the Beale Hotel (which is father owned) in Kingman, and when he fell it pierced the roof of his mouth. When he was able to speak, he had a wheezing, duo-tone voice. However, a biographer explains that this wasn't true, but was one of several stories about his voice fabricated by Devine.

Devine appeared in more than 400 films. His most notable roles included ten films as sidekick "Cookie" to Roy Rogers. . He is also well-remembered for his role as "Jingles", Guy Madison's

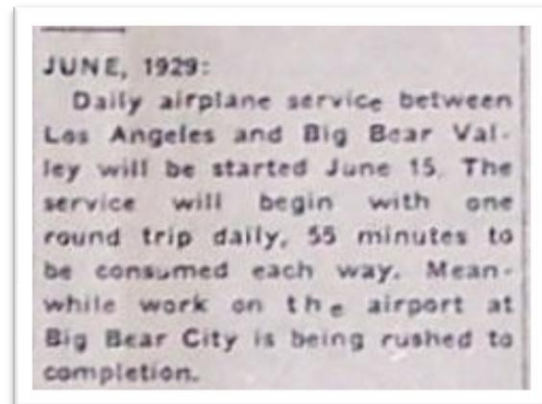
sidekick in *The Adventures of Wild Bill Hickok*, which Devine and Madison reprised on television at a later date.

Most of his characters were characters that were reluctant to get involved in the action but always remained faithful to the main character. He was there when the “chips were down”. John Ford picked him to play Buck, the stagecoach teamster in “Stagecoach” (1939) because he had actual experience driving a six horse team. (*Devine displayed this ability fairly often over the years in Big Bear where he would drive a horse drawn stagecoach for the pleasures of locals and tourist during “Old Miner’s Day’s” celebrations.*)

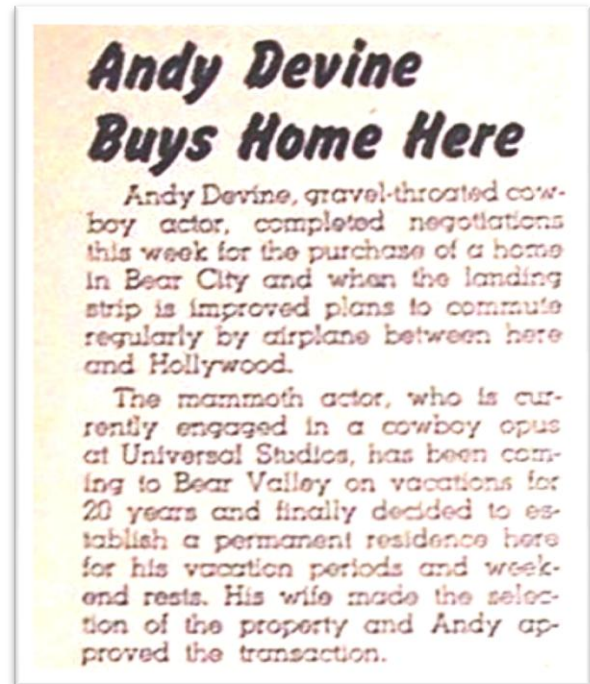
It was in 1941 just before World War II that Devine met and became friends with Dick Probert (see attached biography on Dick Probert) when Devine became interested in flying. At the end of the war, Probert and Devine started a flying school that was based out of Whiteman Air Park in San Fernando Valley.

### **Time in Big Bear**

Devine and Probert had an idea of using Big Bear as a stopping off point for their students as well as having an air service for many of the “movie people” that Devine knew. The idea of having air service from Los Angeles to Big Bear was not a new one as seen in the *Limelight News* article that is a reprinting of a June 1929 article. In the past the cost of building an air port did not meet the demand, thus the air service never came to be.



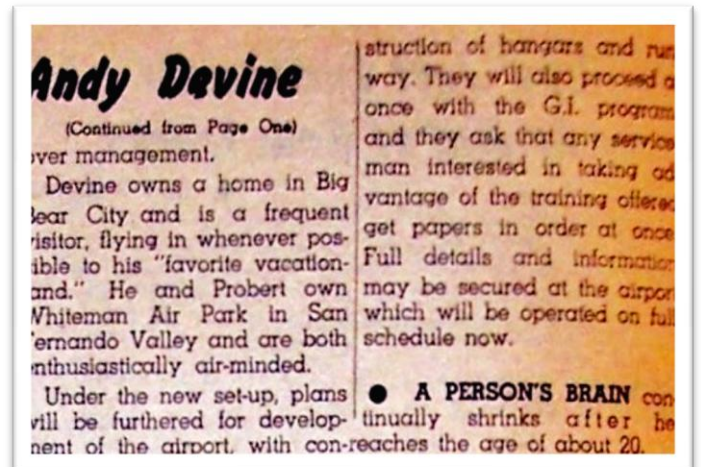
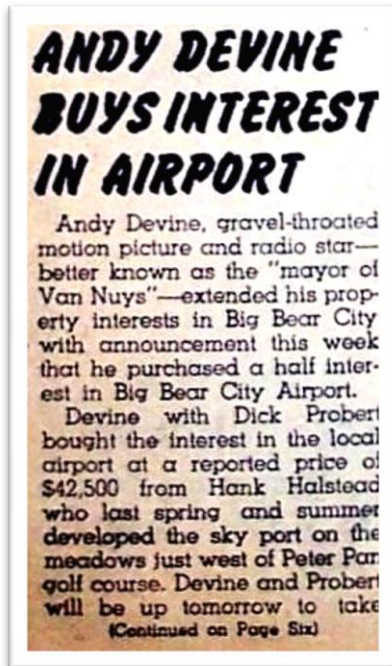
In May of 1946 Devine commits himself to creating a life in Big Bear by buying a home. It was not a large extravagant home like those Hollywood types of today would buy. It was located near the airport on Barker Blvd. in Big Bear City.



In 1946 Hank Halstead and Etienne Noir held the lease on the airport and had grand ideas on it's expansion. They were getting pressure from officials in Big Bear City as well as those people that were involved with air service and money was getting tight.



Probert and Devine were most likely approached by Hank Halstead to see if they wanted to buy into the airport. Although there is no mentioning of Noir, he most likely sold out at this time. After this announcement on March 28, 1949, Noir's name does not appear to be mentioned in any local newspaper articles.



From left to right Hank Halstead, Andy Devine and Dick Probert look over some building plans at the airport.

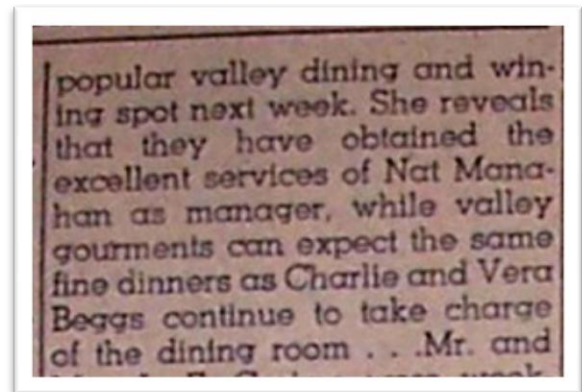
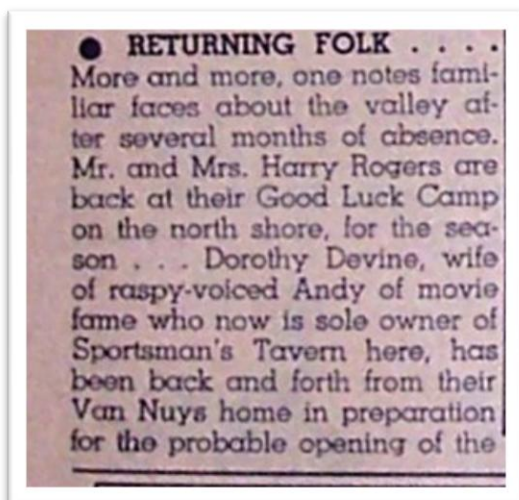


Shortly after this time period this trio from the airport contact or are contacted by Paul Parish and Perry Warren who had already started to develop the Sportsman’s Lodge, Sportsman’s Hardware and Sportsman’s Village. They needed financial help. A deal was struck and the Sportsman’s Tavern was now owned by the five men.

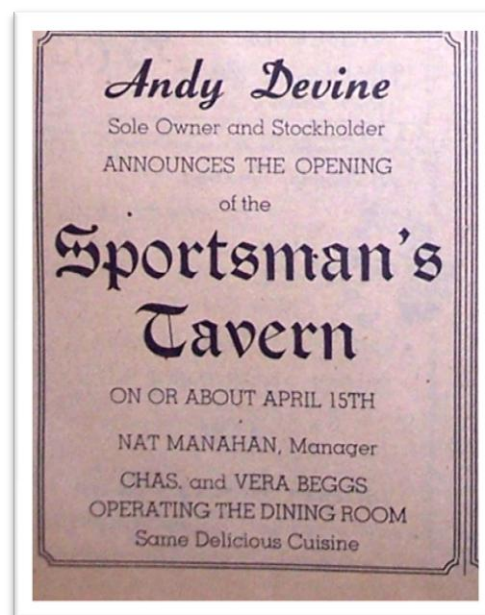
In 1947 the restaurant being launched and managed by Hank Halstead, Devine spent most of his time with airport, flying school, and film industry. The chart below shows the number of films that Devine was involved with during those early years.

Year	Number of Films
1945	4
1946	1
1947	7
1948	8
1949	1
1950	2

Thus Devine may have lost touch with the financial situation in 1947 and 1948 since he was busy filming. In 1949 problems may have been noticeable. Then there was the series of articles in the LA Daily News (first one printed on March 30, 1949) that focused on the corruption and gambling in San Bernardino County (see section on Gambling in Big Bear) which listed the Sportsman’s Tavern having slot machines. This may have been all too much for Devine and required that he take more personal attention to the situation by buying out the other four partners. By April 8, 1949, a newspaper article and ad had that Andy Devine was the sole owner of the Sportsman’s Tavern.



Advertisement that shows Andy Devine as being the “Sole Owner and Stockholder” of the Sportsman’s Tavern.



In an telephone interview with one of Devine’s relatives, this financial move cost Devine a lot of money. Several pieces of property in Big Bear and in Los Angeles had to be sold to cover these losses.

The restaurant continued to struggle at that time with Devine bringing in different managers and entertainment in attempt to keep the place in positive cash flow position. See the section on Sportsman’s Tavern Time Table of Employees which shows the high number of changes at the restaurant. Part of the issue still had to do with Big Bear still being considered a fishing and hunting community with many businesses closing down in the off season. Winter sports such as skiing did not become available in the area until the mid to late 1950s.

Devine had become so disgusted with the business that he handed off responsibility to his wife Dorothy to run. The restaurant remained closed for many years as Devine moved on with his flying adventures and his radio, movie, and TV career.

Devine died of Leukemia in Orange, California in 1977. The main street of his home town of Kingman was renamed "Andy Devine Avenue" in his honor. His career is highlighted in the Mohave Museum of History and Arts in Kingman, and there is a star in his honor on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.