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Annette Funicello

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Annette Funicello grew up before America's eyes, first a Mousketeer, then the star and reigning sweetheart of the classic beach party movies of the Fifties. In her engaging, anecdotal autobiography, Annette looks with wit and wonder on a near-charmed life in show business, and candidly discusses her recent battle with multiple sclerosis. Photos.

A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes: My Story Details

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From Reader Review A Dream is a Wish Your Heart Makes: My Story for online ebook

Barb says

I was a huge Mickey Mouse Club fan in the late 1960s. I hurried home from school every day to watch it. The Mouseketeers seemed like my own personal friends. I was absolutely shocked to find out that the Mickey Mouse Club had stopped filming several years earlier, and that I was watching reruns. Nevertheless, I have always had a soft place in my heart for the Mouseketeers. When I saw this book, I decided to read it. It's short, and it's several years old, but I read it in an afternoon, and enjoyed it--no surprises, no major revelations, but it was a quick, pleasant read.

Julie says

I am too young to remember Annette as a Mousketeer. But I do remember her beach party movies being rerun on TV. But who doesn't know Annette? As a Disney fan, I was especially interested in hearing her experiences working for Disney. I even felt I learned more about Walt Disney. That was a bonus. I really felt she did a good job telling people about the things we are most curious about. The last part of her book was an honest and sad look at her struggle with MS. What a lady. Class act her whole life.

Sarah Crawford says

For any of the older people around, this is the story of Annette Funicello, one of the original members of the Mickey Mouse Club and a girl who was the idol of many other girls and the object of a lot of young boy's attentions.

She goes into how she got involved in the group, what happened during her years in that group and, of course, what happened afterwards. What comes across are the memories of a woman who led a quite exciting life and who was not corrupted by that life. Annette didn't get involved in any of the things that stars often do.

Instead, she lived her life by her principles of basically doing the best she could, being nice, and having a strong faith in her religion and in her family. She also reveals her struggle with M.S. and, unfortunately, her situation has become quite a bit worse due to the disease.

She seems to be the kind of person who would be a wonderful person to know and to talk to.

David Cerdà says

Everything in Annette's world is hunky dory. She never seems to question anything. You can't help but love3 Annette if you were exposed to her growing up. I associate her with the beach party movies and she

seems to have a sense of humor about those and no pretenses that she was a great singer or actress. She is a pop culture icon. I just wish she would have been a little more upfront about the behind the scenes situations with Disney. It's so sad to know that MS has stolen the Annette America loves.

Margo Brooks says

This is a lovely book about a lovely person. I was born too late to watch Mickey Mouse Club or to be nostalgic about the campy "Back to the Beach" movie, but even I knew who Annette was growing up. I remember the Skippy peanut butter commercials at the very least. Reading her memoir though was a treat. It was wonderful to know that people with morals and wholesomeness, who value family and friends and kindness exist even in Hollywood. She was such a good person-- although a real person too, one who made mistakes and had regrets.

With her death this week, I wanted to learn more about her and her experience with MS. She had a particularly aggressive form of progressive MS. Thankfully it is not what most people with MS have to struggle with. She also wrote this book relatively early after her diagnosis. I was surprised that she was able to process it as well as she did so quickly, but I appreciated her honesty in discussing how she ignored it at first. MS is a difficult disease to understand, even for those who have it. It is unpredictable and can be easy to ignore--except when it isn't. I hope that she kept her upbeat attitude in the 20 years after she wrote this book. It must have been extremely difficult, but she offers a lot of hope for living a good life despite chronic disease.

Mom says

This book is straight from the heart which I would say you need at least a half a box of kleenex to get through it. Some of the reason that it is so touching is that it reminds us of how old we are getting and mourning our youth. Those truly were the good old days. Sniff Sniff.

Stephanie Downing says

I liked this book, but man do I really NOT KNOW all of the actors/celebrities that she refers to throughout most of the book. It reminded me of reading Leviticus from the Bible. Lots of names with no faces...Really reminds me of my mortality and limited scope of my life. I mainly picked up this book to read about how Annette Funicello lived and dealt with her MS. I took a lot of comfort in knowing that she herself claimed to bury her head in the sand after the diagnosis and deal with it as little as possible...until she felt comfortable in acknowledging it to herself and everyone else-almost 15 years later. I know that this is a disease (MS) that people die with and not of (according to the many doctors I have discussed this prognosis with). MS was the primary cause of her death that the media had messaged, and I just wanted to see what her impression was and possibly in hindsight!? Will never really truly know, but she was loved, had many who loved her, and had a charmed life. Her faith seemed to come through at the end...and that is really what we all are striving to and for.

Mary Chambers says

I loved Annette in Mickey Mouse Club and her beach movies and even her hit songs. This, her story was inspiring and a joy to read.

Eddie Bartlett says

So although I did not grow up with Annette Funicello, I can remember her on the New Mickey Mouse Club in the early 90s as one of their special guests being one of the original Mouseketeers of the 50s, as my interest in the Mickey Mouse Club recently began to sprout I decided to find and get this book. Although I am not done I must say this autobiography is truly a door into the 50s and 60s, how it was like for young Annette to grow up on television even for being quite a little shy Italian girl, I definitely recommend this book for anyone interested in Mickey Mouse Club of the 50s and the life of one of their brightest legends Annette, may she R.I.P.

Barbara Radisavljevic says

I confess to having been a fan of Annette since her Mouseketeer days. In the course of my work as a Stephen minister at my church I had occasion to help my care receiver find this book which she had heard about and wanted to read. When she finished it, I decided to read it to satisfy my curiosity about the adult Annette.

I was glad to see that her experience as a child actress, and later as an adult in show business, did not corrupt her as it has some. She seemed to have held on to her family's values, in spite of her divorce and remarriage. She seemed to have raised good kids and, at least until the end of this book, maintained a close relationship with them. (I don't know what happened past 1994, but I have no knowledge that anything changed since then.)

She seems to nearly idolize Walt Disney, which I found interesting in light of what many others who have worked for him have said. Perhaps he had a special place in his heart for children and treated his Mouseketeers differently than the adults who worked for him.

Although I thought the focus of the book was going to be Annette's diagnosis and management of her MS, not much was said about it until the second half of the book. She kept it a secret at first, not wanting to worry her father, but letting her mother, children, and husband know. She was finally forced to tell her business associates when it began to affect her ability to perform.

If you start to read this book because, as I did, you are curious about Annette and what working with Disney was like for her, you won't be disappointed. If you are reading primarily for information on MS, you might be.

Melissa says

Art by Amy Mebberson on Tumblr

Annette Funicello

Oct. 22, 1942 - April 8, 2013

RIP Pineapple Princess

I've read this book at least once before, but this is the first time I've read this book since her death. She was an absolute sweetheart, the true epitome of a Disney Darling. She had a whole fandom and franchise. When she was on the Mickey Mouse Club, she would receive thousands of fan mail a month.

She was even marketed with the early Disney Princesses and Alice. She was truly Disney royalty.

From what I understand reading the biography, young girls loved her because she wasn't exceptional at one thing, rather, she was more of a jack-of-all-trades. She wasn't a prima donna ballerina, but she could go up en pointe. She wasn't a chanteuse, but she could carry a tune. Little girls would watch her on TV and they'd say, "I can sing and dance just like Annette!" She was the girl next door, the daughter of Italian immigrants who pursued the American Dream to the fullest.

It must have been so hard growing up. She was scrutinized for her figure and that must have been really awful. Puberty is awful enough. I can't even imagine.

I loved reading about her interactions with Mr. Disney and the Mouseketeers.

I really appreciate Annette being unflinchingly honest throughout her book, even including the part where she slapped her son. Annette doesn't shy away from the pain, she describes the sad parts of her life with as much detail as the happy parts.

Reading her account of MS helped me, as I myself struggle with a chronic illness.

When she passed away two years ago, I remember crying. I was so, so sad. But her MS was severe, towards the end she was in terrible pain.

She's up in heaven right now, with Jimmie Dodd and Walt Disney, she's singing and dancing and laughing.

Melanie Jacques says

As a kid I remember watching old reruns of her on the Mickey Mouse Club and old cheesy beach movies made during the time my parents were kids. I always thought she was so beautiful with her dark hair and pretty smile. I chose to read this book out of interest in her career/life and to educate myself on people living with MS. Of course this book is dated and so much has changed in the medical world of MS, which I feel differs the way people currently living with MS would feel. I still liked reading about her life and career. Celebrities are brought into our own lives via movies/tv, so I am always curious of their true lifestyle and/or personality.

I enjoyed reading about her background on career and lifestyle but the book wasn't helpful on current education of people living with MS. However, interesting on the take of the disease back when this book was written in the 90's. Not to leave a spoiler, I did find it ironic or interesting her telling about her meeting with Ozzy Osbourne and his son Jack.

Kait's Bookshelf says

I love stories about Hollywood in the '50s and '60s and especially if they have to do with the early days of Disney. Ms. Funicello's story was fascinating and inspiring. She describes herself as an extremely shy person, so I could relate to her on a personal level that way. What a brave woman to share her story of her battle with MS. Great read for anyone who loves Disney or is battling MS.

SouthWestZippy says

Heartwarming book with a touch of surreal. It is hard to understand why someone so beautiful inside could be handed such ugly at times. Wonderful book. One I would read over and over.

Pia says

So I got this memoir from Books for Less (a thrift bookstore in Metro Manila where I live) and it's the first and only book about The Mickey Mouse Club that I have in my possession so far. Being a fanatic of this show - which is sort of interesting considering it is an old program that many aren't familiar with - as well as being fascinated about the life of the famed original Mouseketeer, I read it to know whether Annette truly shows as a person who lived a great life amidst the struggles she faced in many instances. The result: her own person shone at many points throughout the autobiography, but the point of views related are rather inconsistent to the point that some parts don't seem it's Annette explaining things and there are some missing facts or incorrect recollections that made her more idealized than in reality.

It's not meant to be a criticism of Annette as a person, but how the book is presented. Also, this is just my personal opinion and it's not meant to be taken as gospel.

Actually, I was going to write a longer review that's more of an analysis than a usual review, but rather than summarize the whole book with critical asides, let me just focus on parts that felt less natural. Probably it's due to having a co-author write whatever Annette says (since this was written when her MS was gradually worsening and her state then was having her body shaky and be mobilized in a scooter or wheelchair) or make this be more in line to how Disney sees her, but there are times when facts are shown in other books and websites yet an *autobiography* gets them wrong. It's quite odd.

Stay tuned for more... I need to get my thoughts straight before writing 'em down. Till later...
