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April 2015 Penny McQueen, Editor

*A Penny For Your Thoughts Productions*

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## Meet the Stars

There are lots of chances to meet The High Chaparral Stars coming up so mark your calendar and make your plans.

### [Memphis Film Festival, June 11-13, 2015](#)

Sams Town Hotel and Casino, Tunica, MS

Don Collier, Rudy Ramos, Roberta Shore, Alison Arngrim, Charlotte Stewart, Connie Stevens, Rex Allen Jr, Jeff Osterhage, Buck Taylor, Robert Fuller, Geoffrey Duel, James Darren, Robert Colbert, Lee Meriwether, Julie Adams,

### [Western Legends Roundup, August 24-27](#)

Kanab, UT

Don Collier, Rudy Ramos, Neil Summers, Roberta Shore, Dan Haggarty, Bruce Boxleitner, Kathy Garver, Clint Walter, Darby Hinton, Ed Faulkner, Barry Crobin, Alex Cord, Don Shanks, Cheryl Rogers Barnett, Wyatt McCrea

### [Idaho Western Heritage Festival](#)

September 18-20, 2015

[Leif Erickson/Big John Cannon](#)

[Buck Cannon/Cameron Mitchell Friends and Fans](#)

[Cameron Mitchell Actor](#)

[Linda Cristal/Victoria Cannon](#)



The Boise Stage Stop, Boise, ID  
Don Collier, Robert Fuller, Alex Cord, Dan Haggerty, Roberta Shore

### WILD WEST FESTIVAL

October 23–25, 2015

Glendale, AZ

Don Collier, **Neil Summers**, Dan Haggerty, Peter Brown, Roberta Shore, Mike Moroff, Michael Dante, Dr Buck Montgomery

### Wanenmacher's Tulsa Arms Show

November 14 & 15, 2015

Tulsa, OK

Don Collier, Dan Haggerty

### Williamsburg Film Festival

March 9–12, 2016

Williamsburg, VA

Other Festivals (HC Stars may not be appearing)

### M7 Con & Old West Film Festival

October 23–25, 2015

Los Angeles, CA



Linda Cristal  
Spanish  
Facebook Fans



Billy Blue  
Cannon



Henry Darrow  
/ Manolito  
Montoya



Rudy Ramos  
Friends and  
Fans



Rudy Ramos in  
Geronimo, Life  
on the Reservation

### **Cast:**

Linda Cristal  
Mark Slade  
Don Collier  
Rudy Ramos  
Susan McCray

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## The World Comes Home to the High Chaparral Reunion

By Jane Rodgers

Tucson—Eyes shining, Liverpool, UK, resident John Fitzpatrick summed up his experience at the High Chaparral Reunion simply: “It’s brilliant.”

“I’ve come to the High Chaparral ranch house. I’ve had me picture taken there. I’ve been inside and I met and have shaken hands with Henry Darrow, and he greeted me as Manolito,” said Fitzpatrick of his Saturday at Old Tucson, a “dream come true” which prompted him to fly to Arizona from the UK with his adult daughter Joanne Wallace.

John and Joanne, profiled in depth in this issue by W.J. St. Germain, typify the dozens of international fans who flocked to Tucson in March 2015. We caught up with some of them at Old Tucson and the Casino del Sol.



For Katrin D., a librarian from Leipzig, Germany, her second trip “home” to the High Chaparral Reunion started with a detour by Los Angeles and the Autry Center, where she conducted research on the show’s history, examining original David Dortort scripts and outlines, including Dortort’s description of the characters and back story of “Saguaro.”

“‘High Chaparral’ was first called ‘Saguaro,’ and then they found nobody could pronounce it,” Katrin explained. “I like to dig things up.”

A member of the next generation of THC enthusiasts, Katrin became a fan as a young teen in the 1990s when the series was rerun on German TV. "The translators did a really, really great job. I waited for years for the DVDs to come out and when I finally found them in the store in 2011, I bought them right away."

"I came [to the HC Reunion] in 2013, and I came back to see Henry Darrow smile again," Katrin added.

Like Katrin, Patricia Griffiths of Australia's Central Coast also made her second trip to the High Chaparral Reunion in 2015.

Griffiths said she watched "The High Chaparral" as a kid in the UK. "I absolutely loved it."

Griffiths's trip to Tucson last year was last minute, booked only three weeks before the HC Reunion.

"I'd been through a particularly traumatic time a couple of years before and I saw it on line. It sounds funny, but I burst into tears, left work and went and booked my trip straightaway. It did my soul a world of good."

Last year's pilgrimage to Tucson did Griffiths so much good that the office and project administrator determined to return in 2015, this time rooming with new buddy Patricia Jacoby at the Casino del Sol.

"Everybody is just great. To walk back in and have people recognize you, it's definitely coming home. It's like family. It's absolutely brilliant."





Brenda Greenwood of Southampton, UK, echoed Patricia Griffiths's sentiments. "It's the third time I've come, and each time it's different. It's exciting. It's a family. I like being with people I know and meeting new friends, too. Each time I've come I've extended my stay."

Extending her stay this year meant a visit to the Alamo. She met up with HC Reunion friend Ginger Kullman in San Diego and they drove in together.

Greenwood has been a "High Chaparral" fan since her teens. "I watched it as a kid in the UK and I used to say to my mum that one day I wanted to go to America and see these people. She used to say to me, 'Don't be so stupid. These people wouldn't want to see you.' Travel to America mostly wasn't happening back then. Little did she know!"

When Brenda was a teen, her favorite was Blue. Now it's Buck. "I like Buck's sense of humor. It suits me. I like Sam and Wind. I guess I like them all. 'Ride the Savage Land,' where Buck and Mano go off, is my favorite episode."

Greenwood works for a UK charity which operates in the Ukraine. She first heard rumors of an impending HC reunion in 1993 when she visited a Navajo Indian school in Sun Valley in Holbrook, Arizona. "I told them this was always my favorite show as a youngster. They thought someone was putting together a reunion."



Greenwood kept checking and the reunions did begin in 2003; she came in 2009. "I brought my daughter. It was the first one here in Arizona. I came in 2011 and here I am again a third time."

At Sunday's cowboy church, Greenwood explained her work in the UK and its ties to Britain's best loved hymn, "How Great Thou Art," whose English lyricist, Stuart K. Kline, was a missionary in the Ukraine. Royalties from Kline's hymn benefit ministries in the Ukraine to this day.

Blanca Gonzalez Cantu and her husband, Mariano, journeyed north from Cuernavaca, Mexico, for the Chaparral event. Blanca explained that she had been "fanatica" regarding "The High Chaparral" as a girl and while she originally adored Blue, she loves John Cannon, Buck, and Manolito as well. Like so many others, Blanca ran across news of the HC Reunion while searching the Internet.

Plinio Orellana Romero and his wife, Luisa, hail from Chile and came to Tucson for "many reasons." Most notably, Plinio recalls watching "The High Chaparral" as a child with his family. He treasures the memory of his father whistling the theme song. The values of the show resonated with Plinio as well, especially its emphasis on the worth of all people. However distinct their cultures, they could live together in harmony. "It is an excellent and beautiful way of life."



This year's reunion marks the third for Plinio, who also attended in 2009 and 2011. [Author's note: my interviews with Blanca, Plinio, and Luisa were hampered by my sub-par Spanish. Lo siento, Blanca, Plinio y Luisa. Gracias por sus paciencia!]

One HC Reunion guest who has no trouble translating from Spanish to English is Lars-Erik Wikberg of Haparanda in northern Sweden, one hour south of the Arctic Circle. Wikberg combined a business trip to the U.S. with a holiday in Arizona, fulfilling a long-time dream and also serving as a translator for Penny McQueen and crew.

Wikberg watched westerns on television in his youth and remembers "very well" when Swedish television executives dropped "Bonanza" from the line up in favor of "High Chaparral" during its original run in the 1960s.

"During the 60s when I was young, I watched 'High Chaparral' and I liked it very much. I fell asleep many times and missed the end." That problem has been remedied as Lars-Erik owns all four seasons of THC on DVD. In fact, he is at least partly responsible for the fact that the DVDs have been released by a Swedish distributor.

"I emailed all the Swedish distribution companies to ask about 'High Chaparral.' I was told, 'Impossible, impossible!' I bought the German version. Then the Dutch version came out. I contacted a Swedish company and told them that the Germans had released it and the Netherlands had released it. It cannot be impossible. Two weeks after my email, the Swedish version came out!"



For Sally McKegg of Auckland, New Zealand, who attended the HC Reunion with her husband, Donald, “The High Chaparral” evokes memories of a childhood spent riding horses and pretending to be Buck Cannon.

“When I was young, I always had ponies. I was mad about riding. I cannot remember when ‘High Chaparral’ was first shown in New Zealand, but I think it was about 1968 or 69. It immediately became my favorite, that and ‘Mr. Ed.’ We’d reenact scenes on our ponies. I was always Buck. My friends were Blue and the others. The Apaches would come and we’d race across the paddocks. All my friends loved Blue, but I was in love with Buck.”



Unlike Sally McKegg, Isje Bos–Dalijati is a more recent convert to “The High Chaparral,” although her husband, Fred, remembers it fondly from his teens. Isje and Fred live in Papendrecht, Netherlands. Fred found season one of THC on DVD in the nearby town of Dordrecht and immediately bought it so Isje could see it, too.

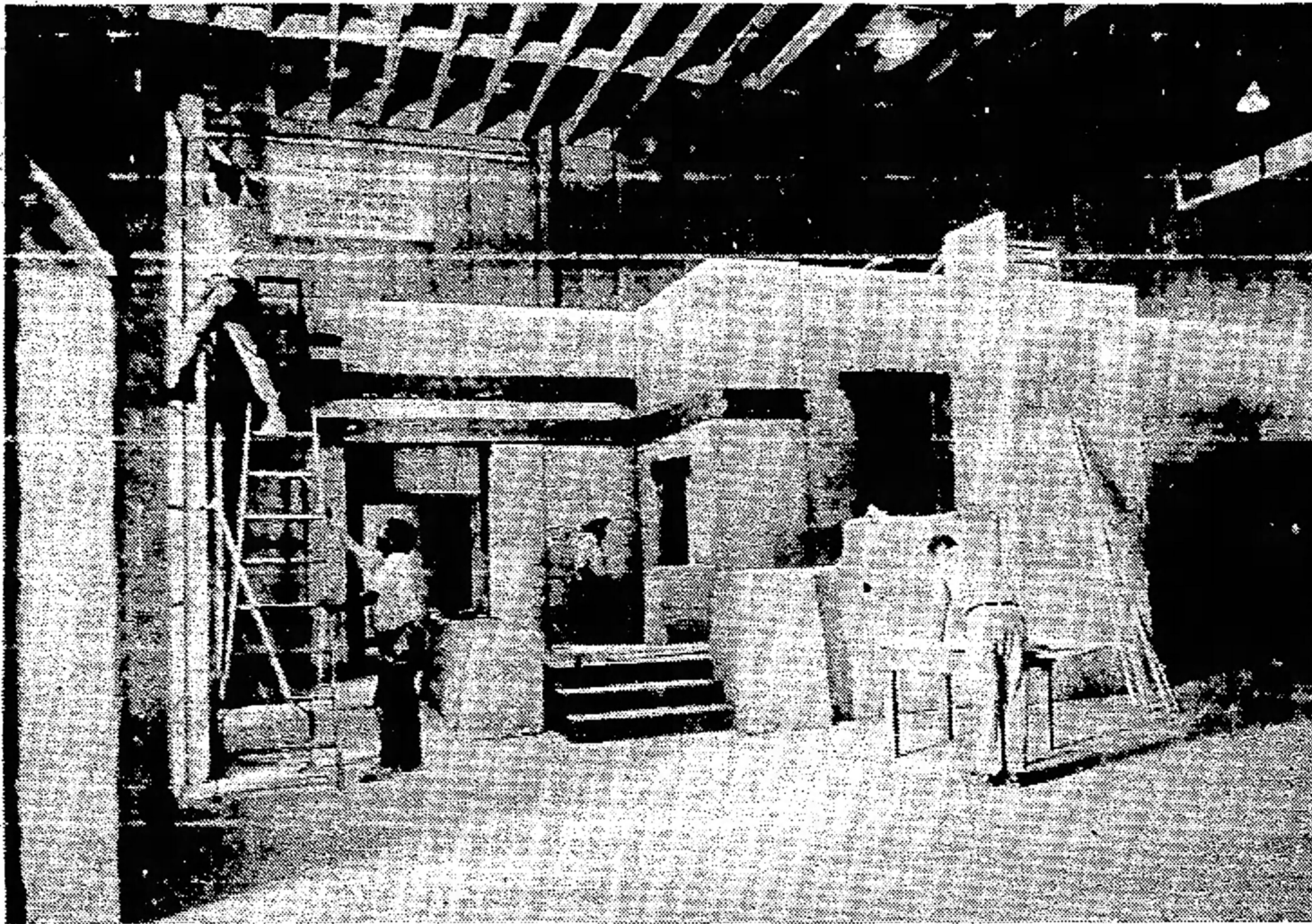
“I was fascinated by the story that [involves] every walk of life. With every episode, I was getting into the story,” Isje recalled. “I was curious to find out more. I searched in Google. I found it on Facebook. I posted a friends request and about two weeks later, Jan Pippins welcomed me as a member [of Henry Darrow Friends]. Jan told me about the reunions. So Fred and I registered.

“The show captivated us so that we were interested about the actors behind the characters. We said to each other that we really did not want to miss meeting the actors and fans. This is a nice way to get to know them.” Isje’s favorite character is Manolito, while Fred’s is Buck.

Coming home to the High Chaparral means different things to different folks, but a common thread for all is the national and international community that continues to embrace the show we all love. If reunions are for families, the High Chaparral world is indeed that: family.

As John Fitzpatrick, in his best Liverpudlian accent, put it, “Anyone who is dithering about coming should come. I’ve heard people say it’s great, that everyone is friendly. It isn’t. It’s better than that.”





— Citizen Photo

## High Chaparral Moves Indoors

Out at Old Tucson yesterday crewmen were busy reconstructing the interior of the High Chaparral ranch house which the Old Tucson Development Corp. recently acquired from the Paramount Studios in Hollywood. The NBC series now will be able to shoot interior as well as its outdoor scenes here.

When not in use for the High Chaparral television show, the set will be open to tourists at the Tucson Mountains movie location site 17 miles west of the city. The 1970-71 season will be the fourth for the popular David Dortort-produced show, which stars Leif Erickson and Linda Cristal.

## Limp Cured

Vintage Reprint

Tucson – Cameron Mitchell, featured as Buck in “The High Chaparral” series, turned up with a limp for the first day’s filming but the problem was solved with scissors. Leather fringes attached to the sides of his boots were too long and Mitchell was stepping on them.

## Mitchell Dons Latest in Old West Wear

Vintage Reprint

Hollywood – Cameron Mitchell, a star of NBC-TV’s upcoming “The High Chaparral” series, will display the latest in western wear when the series premieres: Boots with leather fringes around the sides, leather jacket that resembles a long vest, and a cartridge arm band, reported to be the first ever seen on television.



Mitchell favors the cartridges in the arm band over the traditional gun belt.

“When you’re in a fast fight and lying on the ground, you simply can’t get to bullets in your belt,” he said.

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## From Liverpool With Love

By W.J. St.Germain

John Fitzpatrick might have used the word "brilliant" when describing his thoughts on the 2015 High Chaparral Reunion to Jane Elliott Rodgers, but all I've heard is, "It was boss!" For those of you who are not up on the Liverpool vernacular, "boss" means "outstanding" or "excellent," providing yet another adjective to describe the event.



John is a good friend of mine and I spent many happy years living only streets away from him as a child. He is a man with a heart of gold who is now retired from a career that involved caring for people when they came out of hospital. It's the kind of person he is. John attended the reunion with his daughter, Joanne. Joanne and her sister Jennie are two more people I am proud to call friends. As Jennie just had a beautiful new daughter, Emmie, she was unable to attend but hopes to do so next year, maybe even bringing little Emmie along! Joanne too, found the whole event, "boss!"

"I've been a fan of High Chaparral since I was about 13 or 14," said John, "Ever since it was first aired in the UK in the late 60's. I've been a fan since the first episode I watched. I got the DVDs for Christmas a few years ago. I was chuffed. I've got favorite episodes of course, 'Buffalo Soldiers' for one."

I asked John how he found out about the reunion.

"I first heard about it after I joined the Facebook fan page. I didn't know anything like this existed so I can't tell you how determined I was to attend the reunion when I found out about it. It's been me dream to come and see 'The House.' To see where the Cannons lived, to fulfill that, you can't imagine what it meant to me."

John and Joanne arrived in Tucson 24 hours after leaving Liverpool. Joanne landed, "feeling like a zombie... but it was worthwhile." It wasn't their first trip to America. John had been to Florida in 1997 then to Vegas in 2005 while Joanne has visited New York three times! But the reunion topped them all. It was a magic holiday where father and daughter got to spend some quality time together. Not something adult children get to do with their parents very often.

I asked them about their first impressions of the reunion venue and what they thought of Tucson.

"Tucson was a lot bigger than I'd imagined," he went on. "I think they're trying to attract more tourists. The reunion will certainly be an attraction worth attending."

"The first day we were there, it was raining," said John with his cheerful smile. "We thought we'd left all the bad weather behind us in the UK."

"We're generous," said Joanne showing she's inherited her dad's humor. "We must've brought it with us to share!"



"Unfortunately the Casino del Sol was fully booked when we registered so we had to stay at a hotel by the airport. So the message here is, don't delay booking! I won't make that mistake again," said John, "When we arrived at the venue I thought, 'Wow! How grand is this!'"

The people didn't disappoint either.

"Where to begin?" asked John. "Everyone was so welcoming. The first people we met were Ginger Kullman and fellow Brit, Brenda Greenwood."

"They were lovely people," said Joanne, agreeing.

"Then we met Kathryn Phipps, another Brit who now lives in the States," said John, "Oh and the fabulous 'Butler Sisters' Janet and Liz!"

"We had so much fun with these two," said Joanne, "They were boss."

Of course one of the key attractions is meeting the cast.



"Don Collier was much bigger in real life," said John, "and an even bigger personality to go with it. He was so much fun and he had time for everyone. If you wanted to chat, with him he had time. If you wanted a picture or autographs, you got it. I think I was the only person at the reunion that Don didn't kiss. Maybe next year, Don?" John laughed. "But I did get a kiss from the lovely Penny."

"I think Don enjoyed himself nearly as much as my dad," said Joanne.

What about the events, I asked. Did they have a favorite?

"I didn't get to see Don's 'Confessions of an Acting Cowboy' as we had to travel home on the Sunday, which was a pity. I would've loved to have seen it. So for me, it was Rudy Ramos's 'Geronimo, Life on the Reservation.' It was just spellbinding, like Geronimo was there in the room with us. It sounds like Cowboy Church would have been great too, but I couldn't attend."

"My favorite event was the sponsor's dinner," said Joanne, "I loved the boys choir."



"You know," said John, "we didn't really have much free time. If we were ever on our own for longer than a couple of minutes, everyone was so friendly that someone would come over to us and ask us if we were ok then you'd get to chatting."

I reminded John that he posted a picture of himself on Facebook standing outside the Cannon Ranch with the caption, "A dream come true." Again, he tried to express just how much the reunion meant to him.

"As I said, it's always been a dream of mine to visit the real High Chaparral, where the show was filmed, where all the people once walked, laughed. Knowing you are actually walking on the ground where it was filmed, standing at the sites where people came and went. It's amazing and unforgettable. When I got to that famous site in the picture, I sang the theme tune in my head to myself. That moment will stay with me for the rest of me life. That moment was just for me. The world vanished and I was there, back in time, with them all. The other big moment for me was to go inside the house. But it's a lot smaller than it looks on TV!

"I can't express how special that day was for me. Though I loved all the characters in the show, me favorite was Mano. I didn't want to meet Henry at Casino del Sol, I wanted to meet him as Mano at the Cannon house. And what a magical moment it was."

I think John summed up how everyone else felt when he said, "Me dream's come true. I've come to the Cannons' ranch and I've had me picture taken there. And I've been over, I made it!"

The much quieter Joanne did leave us with some lovely thoughts about the reunion that say it all.

"My dad really loved it there. I think seeing the ranch was the highlight of his trip. And it got better. That's where he wanted to meet Henry Darrow and he did. Henry was so kind to my dad. Dad asked him if he could call him Mano and he said of course. He asked Henry if he would speak to him in Mano's voice and Henry was only too glad to do so. He was so kind to my dad because in that sense, dad did get to go back in time to the Chaparral when he got to talk to Mano.

"I would also like to say that I met too many wonderful people to mention here. And I made so many lovely



friends that I wish we could've stayed longer. Since I've been back, some people have said that they wished they'd gone. It was the most amazing experience, so if you are unsure about going next year then don't be. You will love it. Before I went to the reunion I was not a fan of 'High Chaparral.' I hadn't really bothered with it. But having met some of the stars and so many lovely people, when we got home I joined the Facebook page. I have made friends with some of the people we met at the reunion. I am watching the DVDs with dad and I am a true fan now!"

Don't forget to Like Wendy's Author page! It's at <https://www.facebook.com/WJSTGERMAINWRITER?ref=hl>

## Some Dirty Dog Put Glue In My Saddle

*Vintage article from 1971*

Back in the days when records came in one speed – 78 RPD – comedian Morey Amsterdam recorded an amusing ditty titled "I Can't Get Off My Horse," the idea being that "some dirty dog put glue in my saddle." Cameron Mitchell is thinking about revving the old tune as his theme song.

Mitchell, who makes a nice living trundling around the Old West on The High Chaparral, would like the world to know that he's a lot more than just a cowboy.

"I refuse to knock TV," he says, "because it's been too good to me. But there are all kinds of people around who don't remember that I was pretty good in the original version of 'Death of a Salesman' on Broadway. No, I'll take that back – I was damned good."

Even though he has a couple of hundred movies to his credit – some of them good, some of them not so great – and that nice steady salary coming in from The High Chaparral, Mitchell decided to stick his neck out last year and came back to Broadway to costar with James Ear Jones ("Jimmy is the greatest actor alive," says Cam, "he's a black Jesus") in "Les Blancs."

It folded, causing Mitchell a lot of grief and costing him a nice hunk of money, since he paid his own expenses in New York when it became evident that the show was in trouble – which was the morning after the first night.



"Well, O.K.," says Cam, "the show closed. I still think it was one of the great plays of all time and I'm glad I did it. Not that I'll come back to Broadway again. But now I have a new goal in life – I want to personally axe murder Clive Barnes, the critic for the New York Times."

Otherwise Mitchell is really quite a happy guy. Really. He even likes recessions and would like to see the return of the Depression.

"It was a happy time," he remembers, or thinks he remembers.

"There wasn't much crime, because nobody had anything so who could you rob? I used to spend 10 cents for breakfast and 15 cents for lunch and I always managed to get it. Things are all out of line now. Hell, I made one Western a few years ago where we hired horses, then we hired Indians to be extras. We had to pay some guy \$9 a day for each horse, but all we had to pay for the Indians was \$3 a day. Something's wrong when horses are worth more than people."

And so saying he hitched on his six gun and rode off into the sunset.

## Two Ways to Join Uncle Buck!

Come join us on Facebook on the [Buck Cannon \(Cameron Mitchell\) Friends and Fans group](#) and the [Cameron Mitchell, Actor](#) page Doris Ni Langain posts some wonderful Cam/Buck pics rarely seen before as well as some classics, and some of Cam's family members chime in with interesting stories and insights. The Cameron Mitchell, Actor page explores more in-depth aspects of his long and wonderful career.

So get a double dose of Cameron/Buck—that be a invite!



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## The HC Reunion

By Marc Mitzell

I recently attended my third High Chaparral Reunion, and, yes, the third time was truly the charm. I felt I was back among friends this year. I got to meet and know so many warm and friendly HC fans during the previous two HC Reunions that I really feel that they are friends, almost like attending my high school and college reunions. Not only is the cast and crew very gracious and friendly, but the fans of the HC seem to be especially dedicated to the show, maybe not quite in the same manner as Trekkies are to Star Trek, but I would say, almost the same in spirit and loyalty.

During my first HC Reunion, I frankly didn't know what to expect, but I was really looking forward to the experience, admittedly with some nervousness. I did not know anyone. Henry Darrow and Don Collier were the only two stars I recognized when I entered the Friday evening cocktail soiree late, utterly exhausted after a long 10-hour trip from winter-weary Pennsylvania. I had not yet had the chance to meet Kent and Susan McCray, or Steve DeFrance, or the DeWaays, or Neil Summers, or Bob Shelton, and other people originally associated with the show. Penny McQueen extended me a warm welcome after strongly encouraging me to attend during a previous exchange of emails.





Later on, I was touched by what appeared to me as a groundswell of interest and support for my late Uncle Cameron in his role as Buck Cannon in the show...and this kind of interest after over 40 years!! I know Uncle Cam would have been thrilled to have seen this sincere interest in both Uncle Buck and the High Chaparral. He could be quite sentimental, and I suspect he would have had an ecstatic reaction upon seeing his old colleagues and the loyal fans. His response to the fans would have been quite rousing and he would have regaled them with lots of stories about filming the High Chaparral.

It was great seeing Henry Darrow, Rudy Ramos, Don Collier, the McCrays, Bob Shelton and all the previous people I encountered at the previous reunions. I also enjoyed meeting a host of new HC fans and new guests, as well as experiencing new activities and watching tweaked versions of Don Collier and Rudy Ramos' one man shows, and even hitting a bucket of golf balls on the new golf club's driving range. I am definitely looking forward to seeing everyone again at next year's reunion, as well as a host of new attendees, not to mention spending some time in warm, sunny, welcoming Tucson.

Marc Mitzell





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