



# In Search of Eldorado

Day 36  
Saturday

February 9th

Tucson, Arizona

Weather  
60's and cloudy



## Hello to Family & Friends

Today I head over to Old Tucson. Here is the site for more than 400 film and television projects since 1939. Old Tucson is one of the most active filming locations for Western-themed movies, television, cable shows and commercials in the United States.

From the website - 'In 1959, entrepreneur Robert Shelton leased the property from Pima County and began to restore the aging facility. Old Tucson reopened in 1960 as both a film studio and a theme park. The park continued to grow, building by building, with each movie filmed on its dusty streets. Western film legend John Wayne, who soon became friends with studio owner Robert Shelton, starred in four movies at Old Tucson and each production added buildings to the town: "Rio Bravo" (1959) added a saloon, bank building and doctor's office; from "McLintock!" (1963) came the McIntock Hotel; "El Dorado" (1967) left Old Tucson Studios with a facelift on Front Street; and from "Rio Lobo" (1970) came a cantina, a granite-lined creek, a jail and Phillip's ranch house.'



## Eldorado

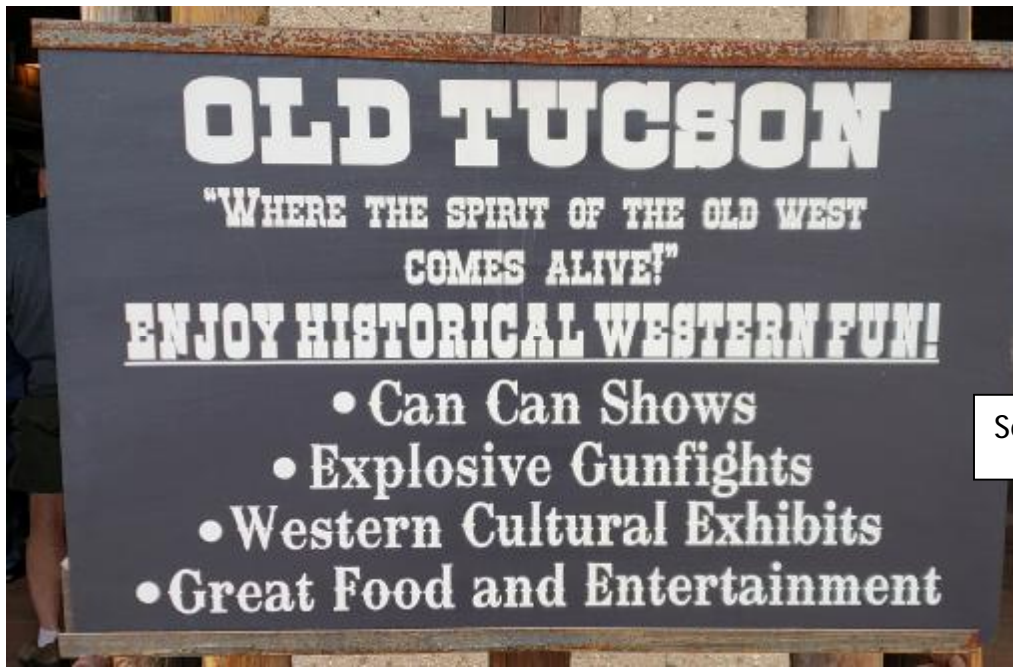
By Edgar Allen Poe

Gaily bedight,  
A gallant knight,  
In sunshine and in shadow,  
Had journeyed long,  
Singing a song,  
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—  
This knight so bold—  
And o'er his heart a shadow—  
Fell as he found  
No spot of ground  
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength  
Failed him at length,  
He met a pilgrim shadow—  
'Shadow,' said he,  
'Where can it be—  
This land of Eldorado?'

'Over the Mountains  
Of the Moon,  
Down the Valley of the Shadow,  
Ride, boldly ride,'  
The shade replied,—  
'If you seek for Eldorado!'



Sounds like my kind of place

Just inside the front gate I joined a 30 minute walking tour led by Theresa, who was excellent, to explore the streets that have been the home for many movies over the past 80 years.



Today was Civil War Re-enactment day. Union and Confederate Troops fired cannons and muzzle loaders. The Yanks are marching to the battlefield.

The Union cannon line

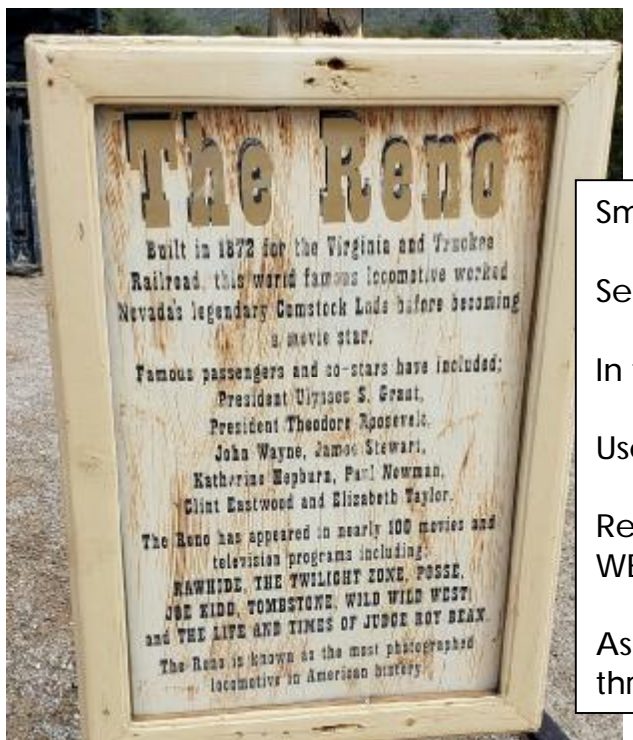


Take cover! Those Johnny Rebs are lightin' up the sky.



The Union returns fire

Musket fire fills the air as troops from both sides take aim and fire



Smashed through a saloon by Clint Eastwood in JOE KIDD

Seen in LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE

In the CBS TV series THE WILD, WILD WEST

Used in THE GAMBLER with Kenny Rogers

Restored, then blown up by Will Smith in 1997 WILD, WILD WEST

As well as many other movies, TV series and commercials throughout its history.

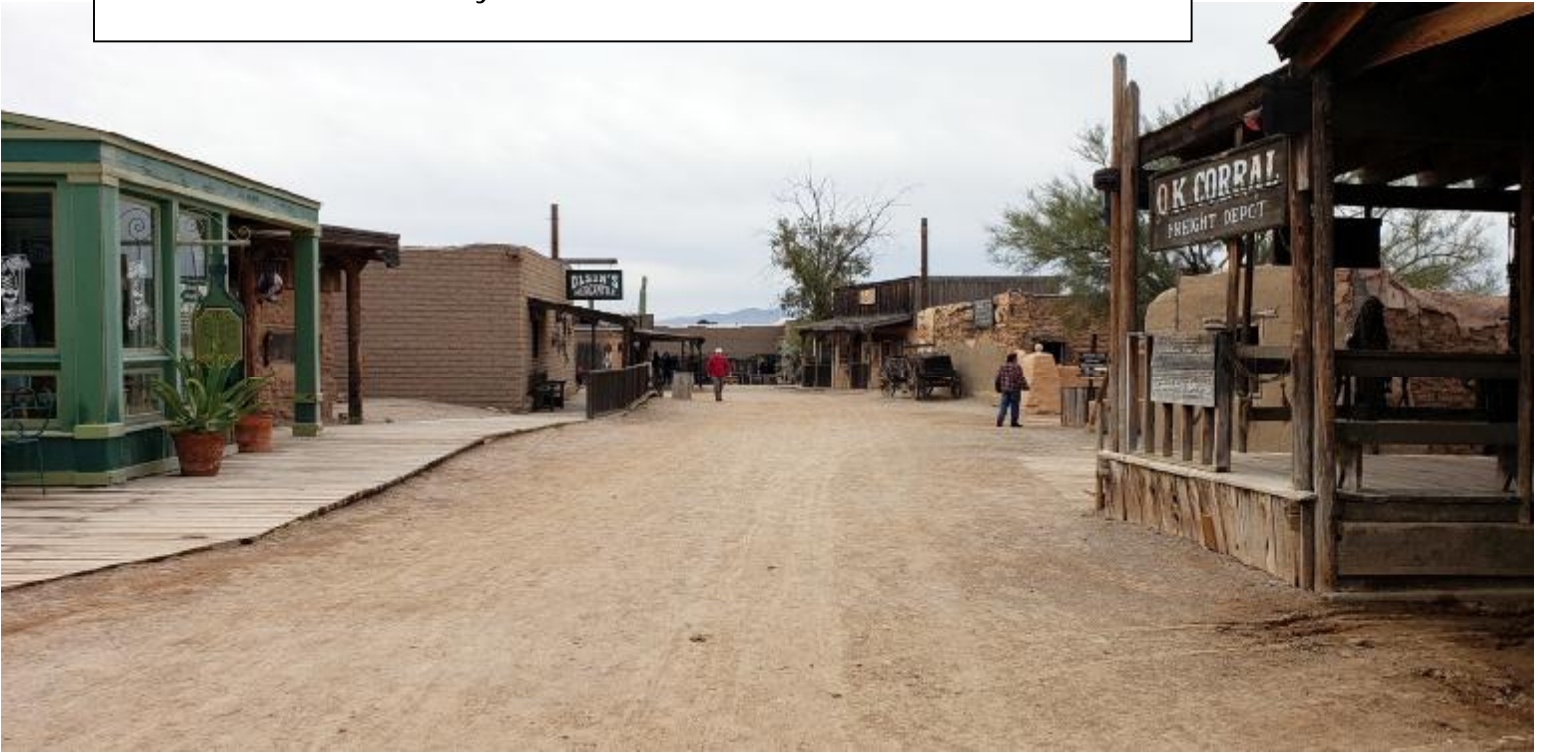


The Union Army encampment



Some young girls (in costume) meeting the stage

From the 1959 John Wayne western RIO BRAVO with Dean Martin



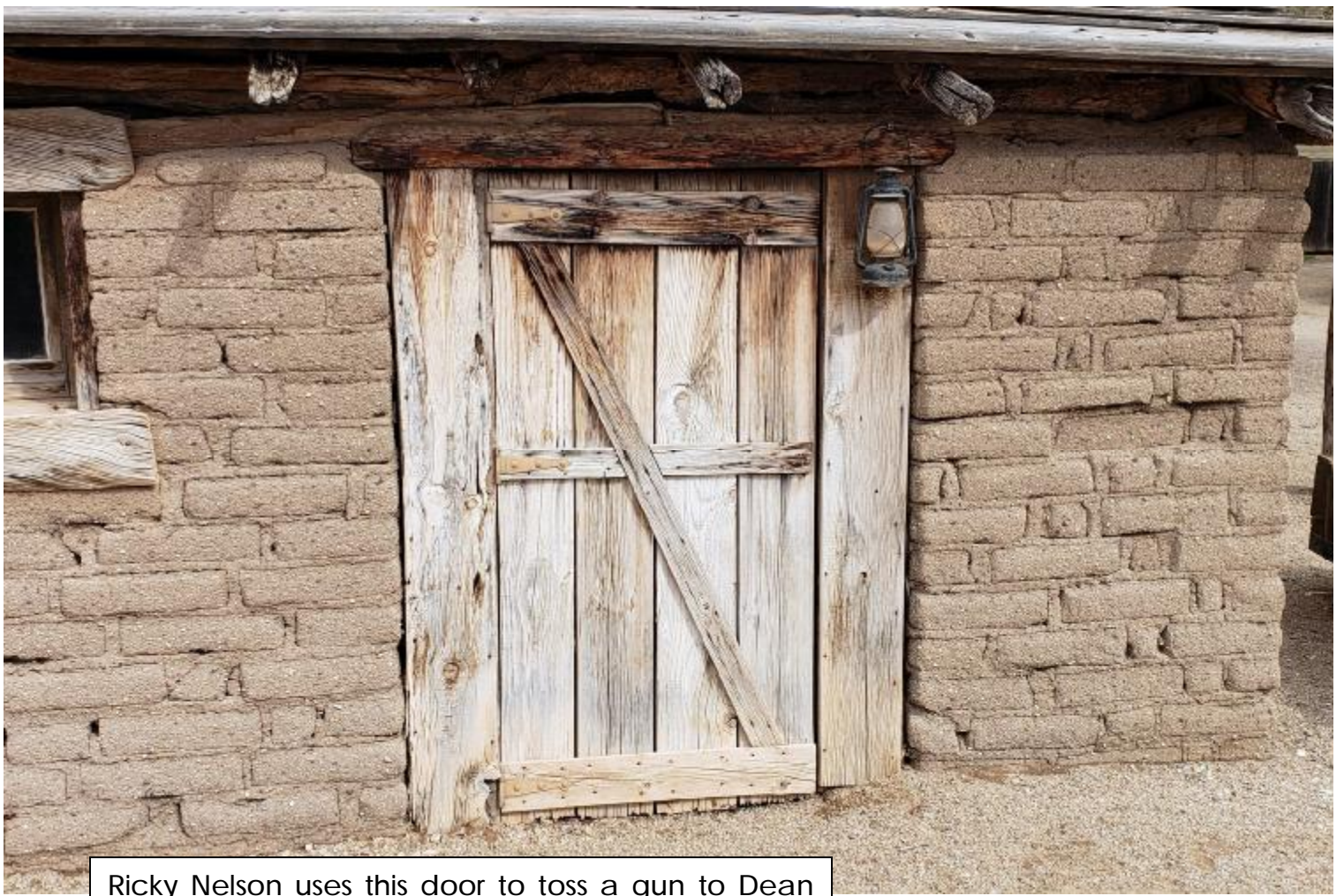
Above is the photo I took today. Below is the capture from the movie. In the far distance up top is the entrance building. That building was not there in 1959 and the vista of the mountains was.





Dean Martin fights Claude Akins at the prisoner exchange. Above is a capture from the movie. Below is my photo from today. The employee in the store thought this was the same adobe, but he was not positive. I thought so at first, but when you compare the two, I don't think it's the same





Ricky Nelson uses this door to toss a gun to Dean Martin. You never actually see Nelson in this scene in the movie, he stays behind the wall.







An uncanny likeness, don't you think?



## McLINTOCK MERCANTILE

BUILT IN 1958, THIS BUILDING APPEARS IN MANY FILMS. IT WAS A FEATURED STRUCTURE IN ALL FOUR OF THE FILMS THAT JOHN WAYNE STARRED IN AT OLD TUCSON STUDIOS, "RIO BRAVO" - 1958, "McLINTOCK" - 1962, "EL DORADO" - 1965, AND "RIO LOBO" - 1970. PICTURED ABOVE, JOHN WAYNE, RICKY NELSON (IN WINDOW) AND CLAUDE AKINS APPEAR IN A SCENE FROM "RIO BRAVO." IN "RIO LOBO" IT WAS THE BAD GUYS' HIDEOUT DURING THE CLIMATIC SHOOTOUT.



## McLINTOCK MERCANTILE

BUILT FOR 1958's "RIO BRAVO" STARRING JOHN WAYNE, DEAN MARTIN RICKY NELSON AND WALTER BRENNAN, THIS STORE WAS USED FOR A BARN. IT WAS ALSO USED IN "McLINTOCK" AND "EL DORADO". IN "EL DORADO" IT WAS THE GUNSMITH SHOP WHERE JAMES CAAN BOUGHT HIS HANDHELD SHOTGUN FROM A GUNSMITH PLAYED BY WORLD FAMOUS WESTERN PAINTER OLAF WEIGHORST. PICTURED ABOVE IS A SCENE FROM "YOUNG BILLY YOUNG" STARRING ROBERT MITCHUM AND ANGIE DICKINSON, FILMED IN 1968.

From El Dorado 1965



Between John Wayne and Olaf Weighorsts heads you can see the top of a window. That is the same window in today's photo below.





A screen capture of the mission from the movie, and my photo from today.



McLintock! - 1963 - John Wayne (Full Movie / 1080p HD)



This saloon and hotel was built for MCLINTOCK. Follow the arrow to the window behind John Wayne as he jumps into a wagon full of hay.





FANDANGO  
MOVIECLIPS

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Scroll for details

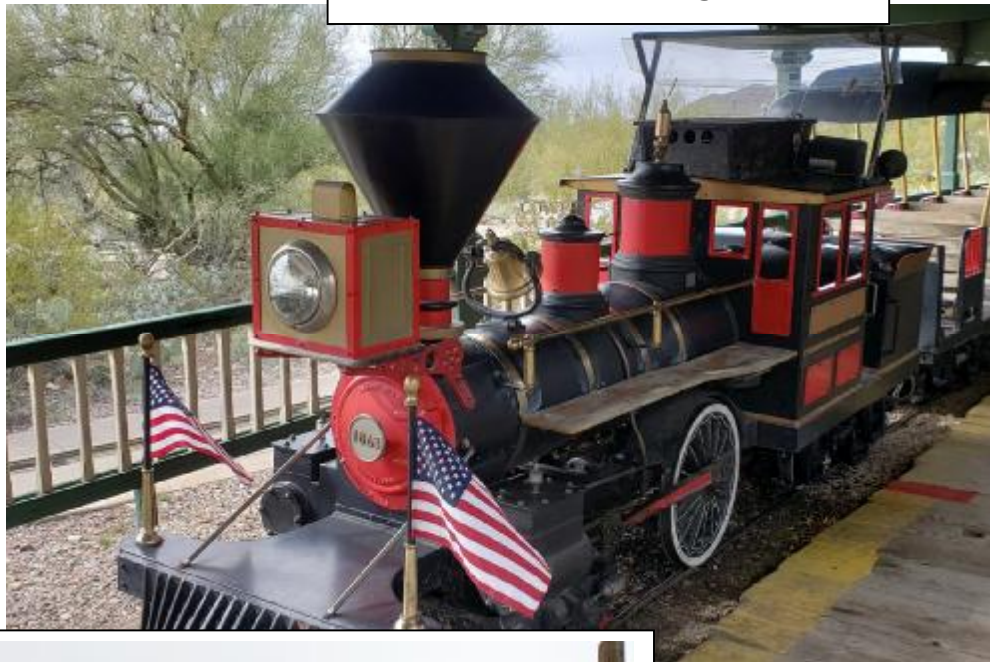
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My take on the final shot of the John Wayne movie THE SEARCHERS. Just so you know, THE SEARCHERS was not filmed here, it was shot in Monument Valley, the site of my first GAA horseback adventure. I just saw this as an opportunity.



Outfit worn by  
**CHARLES INGALLS**  
played by  
Michael Landon

The scale steam engine that  
circles the Old Tucson grounds



The backside of the Mission





I always wondered how they supported the roofs of the adobe huts. Now I know.



The Rules of the Lawless West – Some frontier lawmen had one foot on each side of the law, often times reaching their own verdicts and imposing their own sentences – this is one such story (Today's Old Tucson flyer)



The sheriff guns down an unarmed man in front of his deputy – note the smoke in the middle of the photo





The deputy complains to the sheriff



The sheriff is served some of his own brand of justice. The guys were too far apart to get in one photo.



The last show of the day was a comedy stunt show put on by these professional stuntmen (although they thought they were comedienne). I completely forgot to take pictures, probably cause my hands were in my pockets. It got cold out.

I spent the whole day at Old Tucson and enjoyed it very much. It was great to stand where John Wayne stood and see the actual buildings from many movies. The music playing through the loudspeakers was from the movies and theme songs from the westerns that were filmed here like BONANZA, THE HIGH CHAPARRAL, HAVE GUN WILL TRAVEL, WAGON TRAIN, DEATH VALLEY DAYS, GUNSMOKE, LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE, THE WILD, WILD WEST and many others.

I saw everything there was to see, walked through all the shops, bought no souvenirs, and had a really good time.

Tomorrow I explore downtown Tucson and maybe Saguaro National Park

Until next time.....