

## Former actor takes us behind the scenes of Hollywood

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Feature Co-Editor

Acting in major motion pictures and meeting celebrities such as John Wayne, Robert Redford, Elizabeth Taylor and Burt Reynolds, were daily occurrences in the life of 69 year-old Robert Brown, former actor and student at Clackamas since 1985.

Brown was born in Oregon in 1931 during the Great Depression. His family moved to the California coast as his stepfather, who was a commercial fisherman, looked for work.

"We were travelling around for awhile with my mom and my stepfather and finally ended up in a small town called St. Pedro in California where I also went to high school," said Brown.

After graduating from high school, Brown attended a community college close to his hometown and then went on to

California State University, studied biological sciences, and graduated in 1960.

In 1947, as a tall, good-looking young man with broad shoulders, Brown started acting.

"Acting was not really what I wanted to do, but it was an opportunity," said Brown. "You can make some pretty big bucks in a short period of time without being tied to anything."

After attending some of the castings, Brown was soon hired as a part-time actor.

"At first they told me to go away, but I didn't let them scare me. I just showed up at some of the castings and eventually they needed a tall fellow with broad shoulders, lots of

hair and no brain, so they hired me," stated Brown.

He played in several movies including: *The Spirit of St. Lewis*, *Blazing Saddles*, *High Noon*, *Battle Ground*, *Sands of Iwo Jima*, *Wake of the Red Witch* and *Black Board Jungle*. He has worked with actors such as John Wayne, Robert Redford, Jack Elam, Elisabeth Taylor, Kirk Douglas, Burt Reynolds, James Cagney, Walter Matheau, Jerry Lewis, James Dean and Bob Hope.

Acting and working with famous actors and actresses was an inspiring experience for Brown and soon he figured out how to approach a career in the movie business.

"You get to talk to all the famous actors on the set: you go

out for lunch, hang out with them, have a beer with them and go to their parties," said Brown. "If you want to go anywhere in the movie business, you have to find somebody you can

tie your coat strings to in order to get into the movies. That's how you do it. You hang around, you go to castings and your whole day is tied up going to castings until all of the sudden you stumble on someone like John Wayne and you make friends with him."

Brown describes Wayne as a down-to-earth person who had his own beliefs and stood up for them.

"He wasn't near as tough as he was portrayed in most of his movies," explained Brown. "He was a strong character and probably more willing to give somebody a break than anybody else down there."

Although acting gave Brown the opportunity to explore him-

*Some of the demands they made to get a part were a little more than I could handle*

Robert Brown student



Photo contributed by Robert Brown

Clackamas student Robert Brown, who is now 69, played in the movie "Wake of the Red Witch," above, at the age of 18. He has worked with actors such as John Wayne, Robert Redford and Burt Reynolds. Now he works as a broker, owns his own real estate company and takes classes here.

self and assume someone else's identity for a short period of time, he decided to quit due to demands he couldn't fulfill.

"Some of the demands they made to get a part were a little more than I could handle. I'm talking about sexual demands," Brown explained. "People are the same now as they have always been and one of the big motivators in life today is sex."

After quitting his acting job, Brown started a new career in the medical laboratory field, operating medical laboratories. He has also owned taverns and restaurants, driven trucks, worked in wastewater management, dug holes for telephone

posts and currently works as a broker.

"I do real estate consulting. I own my own real estate company," informed Brown.

Regarding his future, Brown wants to enjoy his life, help others as much as he can and visit his daughter Michelle, who lives in Germany.

"My future is probably 30 years, and that being the case, I'm going to live every one of them suckers right to the hilt,

and if I can give a little something to someone else, I will do that," said Brown.

There is just one more advice Brown has to give to all young adults who want to make something out of their life.

"When I went to school, I had a wife and three kids. I had to work two or three jobs at a time. If I can do it, anybody else can do it," Brown said. "If you want to go to college and you don't have the money, then get off your dead butt. Go to work. You can do it."

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