

Hite Ferry & Dandy Crossing in GLEN CANYON...September 1962

Photo by EDNA FRIDLEY

June/July 2014 Volume 26 Number 2

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS



TAKE IT OR LEAVE IT

by Jim Stiles

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IN DEFENSE OF RAVENS (And CROWS)

Recently, the Utah Wildlife Board proposed a hunting season for crows. While they are not particularly tasty and are known for their intelligence, crows have often been blamed by farmers for agricultural losses via crop damage—crows have to eat, after all—and so, next September, crows may be fair game for anyone itchy to shoot something.

Critics argue that the crows do not constitute a significant threat to agriculture and, in Utah, are not as prolific as they are back east. And some are concerned that most people can't differentiate between crows and their larger cousins, the raven. It worries me too.

While a shooting season on crows seems misguided and wrong, I particularly resent the possible assault on ravens. The truth is, ravens get no respect. Wherever they fly, they're ignored or misidentified. Everyone wants to see an eagle. Nobody cares if they see a raven. It's always been like this...

One warm summer night, many years ago, I was a seasonal ranger at Arches National Park, collecting fees at the Devils Garden campground. We went site to site in those days, actually talking to the campers, and while it was a thankless job in some ways, ("We already paid at the gate...

You mean we have to pay again?), there were some advantages to this kind of direct contact. On this particular evening, a woman from L.A. was about to invite me back for a Hibachi dinner, when I was called away by the gentleman in an adjoining site.

"Oh ranger," I heard him call. "You've got to see this." A pair of 7X50 binoculars bounced rhythmically off an ample abdomen as the camper from site 29 lumbered toward me.

"What seems to be the problem?" I asked. I always assumed there was a problem when tourists ran at

me.

"No problem," he explained. "But I think I just saw an eagle flying over there by that big arch."

"No kidding," I said. "Can you still see it?"

"Well, actually the wife spotted it first...Mother! Can you point out that eagle to the ranger?"

She left her dishes and joined us by the road. "Let me see...give me the binoculars, Gil...Yes! There it is!"

High above Skyline Arch I could see the dark soaring outline of the winged figure. It was a magnificent bird alright, but it wasn't an eagle.



"That's not an eagle, ma'm," I said. "That's a raven."

"What? Give me those field glasses, Mother." Gil was not convinced, but the binoculars gave him a sharper and closer view.

"Damn, mother...it's just a big crow."

"Now just a minute," I said indignantly. "It's not just a crow, and it's not just a raven. It is one of the most intelligent, graceful, and fascinating birds you will ever hope to see. If I could come back to this life as any creature on Earth, I would return as a raven."

Gil and Mother failed to be moved by my passion-

ate defense of the raven. "That's fine ranger...real interesting...Honey, do you need any help with the dishes?"

Sometimes spontaneous interpretive talks are an effective way to educate the public about the wonders of nature. This was not one of those times. I was left by myself, on the top of this sandstone fin by the campground road to contemplate the solitary raven.

I wasn't always a staunch defender of the Black Wonder. As a kid in Kentucky, my knowledge of ravens was limited to Edgar Allan Poe, and my grandfather regularly shot his BB gun at the cousin crows that inhabited our neck of the woods (The raven, in this country, is mostly confined to the Western U.S., although they're widely distributed, from Africa and Eurasia, to Australia and Central America.).

But on a trip, many years ago, to a remote section of the Grand Canyon, where the rim plunges more than 2000 feet to the Colorado River, I had my first opportunity to watch the remarkable acrobatic skills of the "Common" Raven. I'd never seen anything like it in my life.

Sometimes in groups of three or four, sometimes in pairs, sometimes alone, the incredible *Corvus corax* performed flying feats that I thought defied the laws of nature. In groups they engaged in furious dogfights and mutual pursuits. They plummeted into the canyon, their wings tucked in to reduce drag, and as they free-fell, they spiraled and spun in perfect harmony with the other. When they caught an updraft, they would reduce direction in a great swooping rush and ride the wind as high as they could go. When they sensed the apex of their ascent, the ravens arched over on their backs, and started the process all over again.

They kept this up for hours, flying and performing, it seemed, for the sheer joy of it. I never forgot the show and, later as a park ranger, I felt it was my job, my duty, to speak in their defense. There is much to say in their defense too. As omnivores, ravens depend upon a wide variety of animal food, supplemented by some plants. They are also scavengers, taking advantage of carrion when it's available (and keeping our highways clean, I might add).

Ravens are believed to mate for life, which is more than a lot of us can say, and some raven watchers report that both parents incubate the eggs (the males must be the apple of raven feminists everywhere). Ravens will fiercely defend their nest against intruders, whether they be raptors or humans. I once read of an incident in Oregon where some nosy ornithologists attempted to examine an active nest. Both parents left the nest when the group approached the nest. But as they were climbing down, the ravens returned. One of the ravens picked up rocks in its beak and hurled them down at the fleeing birdwatchers/annoyers.

But to me, more than anything, these birds seem to have an extraordinarily refined sense of humor.

THE CANYON COUNTRY ZEPHYR Planet Earth Edition

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Years ago, ravens built a nest on the cliffs above the Arches visitor center. When the young birds fledged the nest, they made a bee line for the front yard of the old rock house, then headquarters of the Canyonlands Natural History Association. All three fledglings and the parents congregated on the grassy lawn and awked and squawked and croaked the mornings away, much to the chagrin of the director of CNHA, Eleanor Inskip. Eleanor was unable to concentrate with all that noise and, on several occasions, ran out the door and attempted to chase them away. But the ravens always came back and after two or three days of being harassed by Ms. Inskip, the ravens shit all over her car. There must have been five or six cars to choose from, but they picked hers. Realizing she'd been outwitted, she gave up and bought ear plugs.

And in 1983, when that despicable Secretary of the Interior, James Watt came to visit the park, all the dirty tricks that Earth Firsters! and other ne'er-dowells concocted, could not compare to the almost perfect aim of one raven named George.

The truth is, ravens get no respect. Wherever they fly, they're ignored or misidentified. Everyone wants to see an eagle. Nobody cares if they see a raven.

George was a shameless beggar who spent his days bumming food off tourists and whatever the park maintenance man, Rocky Newell, cared to give him. I used to tell Rocky not to feed all that Wonder bread to George, but Rocky just laughed. "James, my boy, George doesn't take 'no' for an answer," he explained. "It's better to stay on George's good side."

I don't know what Watt did to violate that piece of advice, or perhaps George was just a natural judge of character, but as the Secretary walked across the Windows parking lot to his car after an exhausting 100 yard hike, Jim found himself a slowly moving target. With a great flapping of wings, George took to the air, ignoring an apple core and a piece of baloney, and headed straight for the chrome-domed Man. At the appropriate moment, he released a white incendiary bomb, and almost hit his mark. It was a monumental effort by the Great Black Bird, and what really matters is that he tried. Watt left the park shortly thereafter, never returned to Arches, and a year later, resigned (some say in disgrace) as Interior secretary. I firmly believe that George's symbolic attack was the catalyst the country needed, the statement that had to be made, to confront James Watt, once and for all.

Today, as on any day, I can find great pleasure and joy in watching the ravens. Whether they are performing aerial stunts, and going for maximum aerodynamic efficiency, or lazily flapping from one fin to the next, with their legs dangling freely beneath them, the fact that they are ignored and underrated by most bird watchers may bother me, but it doesn't bother them...they could care less.

They're too cool to care. Or be shot.

For more information on the proposed crow shoot:

<http://www.sltrib.com/sltrib/news/57865547-78/wildlife-utah-crow-region.html.csp>

BONUS FEATURE:

If you doubt the intelligence of the raven...or crow...check out this YouTube video:

"Tool Use in the New Caledonian Crow"

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lcvbgq2SSyc>

I STILL MISS GENE SCHAFER

I'd been away from Monticello for a couple

months, but one evening last week, after a long, hard drive, I pulled into the old elm-shaded driveway and started to unload my bags. Just then, the siren went off. For Monticello-ites, we usually know it's not a fire. It blasts three times a day, but every time I hear it now, I think of Gene Schafer. Once, just after I moved to town, I was at Gene's shop and, when the siren sounded, I said, "It must be six o'clock."

Gene snorted, "Hell, Stiles. That ain't what those sirens are. You think it means 8 AM, Noon and 6 PM, right?"

"Well," I replied. "What else could it mean?"

He said, "First siren, time to get up, second siren, time for lunch. Third siren? One more hour til the liquor store closes." That was Gene.

It's been three years, this month, since our buddy Schafer left us, long before I expected him to. In fact, I was sure he'd outlive me and maybe all of us. I figured he'd still be strutting around his shop and pulling dead junipers out of the ground with his bare hands until he was well past a hundred. Though he only made it to eighty, you'd have to say he got to be Gene, right to the end.

During my decade here as his neighbor and friend, I came to depend on Gene for his kindness and generosity, but also his wit and irreverence. I think he sometimes thought of himself as my caretaker. During one hard time in my life, Schafer came by to check on me. I opened the door, he took one look and said, "Damn...you look like shit...I'm gonna go get you some meat." He always kept a freezer full of beef, thanks to a deal he'd made to help a friend, many years ago. Now he was passing the fruits of his kindness on to me.



He was always working on my truck and there were many times when he wouldn't take my money. So I started buying him Scotch. Gene loved single malt Scotch, especially Glenlivet, so whenever I stopped by the liquor store, Fritz would reach for the good stuff. I'd swing by the shop and show him the paper bag; if he had company (and he almost always did), he'd whisper, "Bring it over to the house later... I don't want to share my Scotch with these guys. Hell, they wouldn't know good liquor if it bit 'em on the ass." Gene was as generous a man as I ever met, but NOT with his ardent spirits!

More than anything, Gene was generous with his time. If he thought you needed his help, he was there. And he was like that because he never knew of any other way to be. He didn't want praise or excessive gratitude for his assistance, because it never occurred to him he was doing anything extraordinary.

The danger in singing Gene's praises, however, is the risk of suggesting he was some kind of a benevolent and saintly do-gooder. Imagine using the word 'saintly' and 'Gene Schafer' in the same sentence! We all know better than that. Gene was as outrageous and outspoken as anyone I ever met. For you who never had the pleasure of Gene's company, here's how it was....we all know how most of us have that little gate in our brains that keeps us from saying the things we think and would like to say, but choose not to. That block between the mind and the

mouth. Gene never closed that gate, or maybe he didn't have a gate. All I know for sure is that, whatever Gene had on his mind, he told us...all of it.

One morning, an emergency erupted in my bathroom, and as always I sought Gene's help. I'd been taking a shower, when suddenly I heard the

I thought he'd live to a hundred. Though he only made it to eighty, you'd have to say he got to be Gene, right to the end.

most godawful noise. It sounded like a water line had burst somewhere under the house. I shut off the shower and the noise continued. I was sure the main line had ruptured. With soap in my hair, I dressed quickly and raced to the shop. Gene was there, of course, and with tools in hand, he jumped in his truck 'Windy,' and followed me back. He shut off the main line at the meter, walked inside and we could still hear the noise. Puzzled, Gene leaned into the shower, paused, and then looked over his shoulder at me and said, "I won't tell nobody."

He reached into the metal accessories rack that hung from the shower head and produced...my electric toothbrush. Still running...

"You want me to turn this damn thing off, or do you wanna do it?"

And despite his pledge to keep this little incident between the two of us, within hours, strangers on the street were stopping to ask if I'd found the 'off' button on my toothbrush yet. Gene couldn't pass up a good story.

I think Gene loved every day of his life and his family and his friends and all the people he encountered each day. He saw the humor in just about anything. And he loved Monticello. Years ago, when I used to make my annual pilgrimage to Australia, he'd admonish me to give up my travels and stay home. "What the hell you going to the other side of the planet for?" he'd complain. "Everything I need is right here. If it ain't here, it ain't anywhere."

If he thought you needed his help, he was there. And he was like that because he never knew of any other way to be.



I'd like to think Gene is rattling about, somewhere nearby, making un-Earthly wisecracks at his non-drinking Mormon friends, or stoking a Heaven-sent woodstove with a hundred feet of old garden hose, or maybe waiting for me to do something stupid (again). But one thing's certain, wherever he is and whatever he's doing, I'd bet Gene Schafer is having a good time.



DOES MY SOUL LOOK GOOD IN THESE JEANS?

It should shock no one that, when I was in school, I often fought with my professors. I was raised by parents who taught me to trust my internal logic, and so when anyone, even authority figures, told me something that felt “off,” I would protest.

In this way, I was well-suited to the English Department. Most of my professors tolerated my disagreements, tiring as they must have been, and a few of them challenged me in turn—forcing me to examine and flesh out my gut feelings into more articulate arguments.

One such “gut feeling” came upon me early in my literature courses, when professors began to define themselves into the “schools” of literary theory—feminist theory, Marxist theory, Queer theory, etc. If you’ve never been an English Major, then you’ve never faced the question of which “critical” school you should choose. And I tested the patience of my beleaguered teachers through each course with my refusal to accept any of them.

“Why,” I would ask, “should I come to a story with a theory? Shouldn’t the story come first, and then my interpretation after?”

I was told a hundred times that this debate had already raged in academia, and that it had been won conclusively by the theory-holders years before my arrival. The decision had been made, by thousands of people more qualified than I.

I was raised by parents who taught me to trust my internal logic, and so when anyone, even authority figures, told me something that felt “off,” I would protest.

And here I should pause to admit that the theory-holders had a point: no reader comes to a story without baggage. Most of the official “readers” throughout history had been wealthy, white men, and they could only pretend they valued the “meaning” of literature above their own personal prejudices because they believed those prejudices were unquestionable truths of the universe. So these wealthy, white readers weren’t surprised when their readings of literature found those same unquestionable truths reflected in every story.

In short, every reader comes to a story with politics, but it’s only feminists, Marxists, and other less powerful voices whose political thoughts are seen as being “outside” the meaning of the story.

It’s a fair argument, but in the end, it dissolves into cynicism. To me, it felt like intellectual atheism—like saying, “There is no real meaning in a book besides what a reader projects onto it, so let’s just go with that.” And I remained Agnostic. Sure, I didn’t have the answers. I could never provide an unbiased reading of a story. But, even if I could never find the inherent meaning of a story, that didn’t prove such an inherent meaning didn’t exist. And it didn’t prove that we should stop striving to find it.

Finally, in my Senior year of college, one professor summarized the “theory” argument in one phrase, recognizable to the point of cliché, written in chalk before our class: “The Personal,” he wrote, “is Political.

And all my “gut feeling” sensors went DING! DING! DING!

Something here is wrong.

This is the point at which my academic debate veers suddenly into the public square.

Firstly, I should acknowledge that the phrase “The Personal is Political” has been used in a number of contexts since its origins in the Second Wave Feminism of the 60s and 70s. Originally, I believe it was an argument that the personal, or domestic, struggles of womanhood were symptomatic of the larger power imbalance between the sexes. I can’t argue with that. But, forty years

after Second-Wave feminism, I’ve also heard that phrase used in reference to animal rights, labor issues, environmentalism, and Fair Trade issues.

It’s a handy phrase, because, on its face, it is undeniably true. Every act, every purchase, takes place within the larger context of society. Your choice of milk, of clothing, your job, what your trash looks like, is all reflective of, and contributes to, a larger society.

So what’s the problem?

Look with me through a window at a family scene—a child’s birthday, the mother turning off the lights, the father alighting the candles on the cake. The child struggles to remain still in his chair, as he silently practices his wish. How would you describe this scene? What is important? The emotions of each person? The The inexpressible magic of youth? The bittersweet passage of time? Or should we focus on the ingredients of the birthday cake—the Fair Trade practices of their countries of origin, the treatment of the animals involved, and the labor conditions under which each ingredient made its way to this particular kitchen? How about the manufacturing of the family’s clothing, their furniture, the energy efficiency of their various lightbulbs?

Would you reduce it to the work-home balance of the two parents—whether their salaries have risen with inflation, or the availability of affordable daycare for the child?

Undeniably, all this minutiae is a part of the scene, and contributes in a way to our understanding.

But, if you asked your child whether he enjoyed his birthday, and he replied by praising the Fair Trade Cake Flour, wouldn’t you be disappointed?

I should explain that I am mainly having this debate with myself. I spend a great deal of my time focused on political matters—the rise of the surveillance state, the destruction of the laboring classes, environmentalism, feminism, etc. I worry over our grocery purchases, over antibiotics in meat, and pesticides in produce, and the rise of factory farming. I spend hours every week reading news articles and analysis, confirming or questioning my political positions until I feel some measure of comfort in understanding, at least, the terms of each political debate.

But then Spring comes. And, when I’m out in the garden, or I’m watching our cats tussle with each other in the grass, or I’m on an evening walk with my husband, I think, “This is what life is about. Not that other crap.” It’s so satisfying to spend my days working with Jim on projects around the house—to relax in the evening with dirt under our fingernails and some ache in our muscles. On those days, the thought of sitting down and typing out an article seems positively wasteful. All that time spent wrestling mentally with policies and unfair practices gives me no pleasure compared to an afternoon wrestling with the rose bushes.

Politics, by nature, are extrinsic. They are outside the self...And what troubles me most about lumping in the “political” with the “personal” is the tendency to stress the former at the expense of the latter.

Politics, by nature, are extrinsic. They are outside the self. Under any definition, “Political” activities have to do with public acts, the organization of large groups of people. And what troubles me most about lumping in the “political” with the “personal” is the tendency to stress the former at the expense of the latter.

To explain what I mean, we’ll have to go back to adolescence.

Psychologically, being a teenager is all about “identity.” A teen is the clumsiest creature in existence because she can only express her “self” via pantomime. I will never forget the look on my father’s face the day I appeared before him, 13 years old, dressed for a trip to the grocery store in knee-high combat boots and about three inches of caked-on makeup.

“You know,” he said dryly, “No one else will be in costume.”

It’s a ridiculous stage of life, and I am overcome with pity for every kid strug-

gling thought it. It's only when you're older that you understand the importance of that time, to teach you that you can't "put on" your identity. You have to grow yourself from inside, and let your choices reflect who you've become. Culturally, I think that's a lesson we've forgotten.

All the attention, these days, is on a person's choices. Do you buy local? Organic? Do you know the difference between an "all-natural" and an "organic" label? Are you using cloth diapers? Did you eat at the new, locally sourced, organic restaurant?

We accrue our identity through our stuff. To become a "free spirit" you need



We know what a meaningful life looks like. It's like a Subaru commercial. ..A meaningful life means feeling really good about ourselves, because we've checked off the laundry list of "good" activities. We've voted the right way.

to have that particular Moroccan-style rug, and this set of Kantha pillowcases. To be an environmentalist, suit up in North Face and Patagonia. It takes the work out of being yourself, doesn't it, when you can order up a full-blown personality from a catalog?

We know what a meaningful life looks like. It's like a Subaru commercial. Or that Eat, Pray, Love book. Or a music video. A meaningful life means feeling really good about ourselves, because we've checked off the laundry list of "good" activities. We've voted the right way. We bought the right laundry detergent. We'd just like to give the world a Coke. In short, we're wearing "goodness," but we've never been asked, "What defines the Good?" "Where does your morality come from, and how do you justify your actions?"

There is a good reason why most people roll their eyes at hipsters. Yes, backyard chicken coops are a good thing. Yes, buying local and collecting vinyl are good things. It isn't the trappings of hipsterdom that bother everyone. It's the way those trappings are fabricated into an "identity." You can have tattoos, or work at a sustainable coffeeshop, or bike everywhere without being a hipster. Hipsterdom comes from wearing those choices like a uniform.

What drives me crazy is seeing how, so often, the political "creates" the personal. We've forgotten that the "personal" self exists, on its own, as an individual life exists, and that the politics come second--either enabling the personal to

flourish or else standing its way. The personal and political are intertwined, but they are not the same thing. You are not what you [fill in the blank.] Yes, you are judged, and judge yourself, for your actions. But your actions are not you. In the same way that a raspberry is not the same as a raspberry bush. First, you cultivate. Then come the fruits.

If you're doing it right, then what you buy, how you vote, how you speak, are reflections of who you are. But we shouldn't confuse the reflection for the reality.

First you develop a self. And then you hope your actions will reflect what is there.

There was a time before the consumerist frenzy--before companies figured out how to confuse a person's desire for freedom with their desire for designer jeans. And, in that time, I think people needed to be reminded that, yes, their personal acts were also political. But now we lean toward valuing our activities as political first, and only "personal" in the fact that we carry them out as a person. So much time is spent doing what looks good, and repeating what sounds good, and so little time is spent developing "goodness" in ourselves. It's simpler to pantomime the actions we see reflected around us--to value the identity granted to us by our lifestyle--but ultimately those values ring hollow.

Maybe here, too, I rely on an agnostic faith in the soul. Maybe we can't each find the inherent meaning in our lives. Maybe we'll always have to rely on the crutch of society to tell us what's important about ourselves. But we should be careful in following that thinking to its cynical end. Otherwise, after a lifetime of posturing and costuming, we may find the undervalued self within us had long ago slipped away.

TONYA STILES is the co-publisher of the Canyon Country Zephyr.



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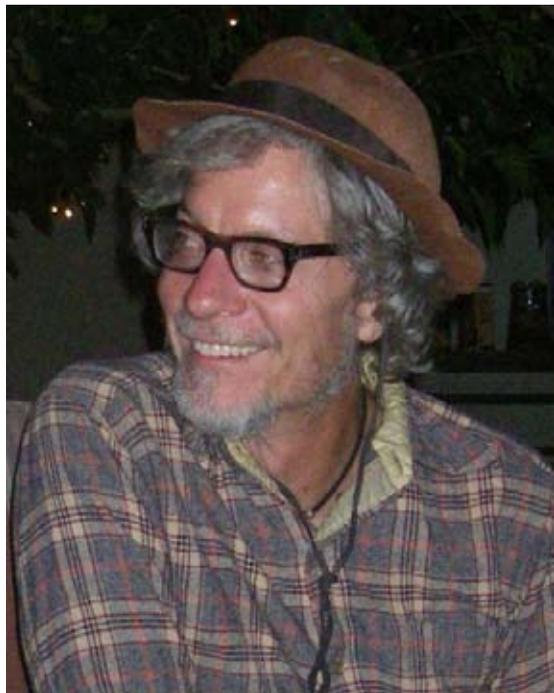
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from the May 1995 Zephyr Archives

‘ABOUT PRICKLY PEAR & POVERTY’

By Daniel Shellabarger (Suelo)

NOTE: For more on Daniel Shellabarger (Suelo) today, almost 20 years after he penned this ‘Letter of the Month’ to The Zephyr, see the update at the end of his essay...



This...is about prickly pear and poverty.

On the one hand, Moab, you give me hope; on the other hand you're pathetic. The good news is hundreds of Moab's hippest show up at every wilderness hearing, where the room is often packed to standing room only. The lame news is only seven folks straggled in to the Poverty Forum of the Southeastern Utah Association of Governments on April 6. Interestingly, the majority of those attending were minorities. And back in March, a whopping six individuals packed the SEUAOG hearing on housing.

Wilderness is cool right now. Poverty is out.

I mix de-wormer in my dog's food in hopes that both will slide down her throat together. Maybe if I mix some Poverty Issues with Wilderness Issues, both will slide down your little pink throat, Moab.

When I speak up for wilderness, my Rush-groupie friends give me some rap about how we damn bleeding hearts care more about trees than human beings. I tell them that's just as ridiculous as saying that I care more about my liver than my brain. But I do concentrate more on my liver than my brain if my liver happens to be sick, and vice versa. My liver and my brain are interdependent, I say, and I'll die if either is snuffed out. I might even throw in something noble-sounding, like, "Give me trees or give me death."

However, since the Poverty Forum, I've reconsidered the words of my conservative friends and family. Maybe we do care more about trees than humans. Maybe we are trying to sever our head from our body. Where are my alternatively-adorned, funky friends these days when it comes to facing directly-human problems like Poverty or Lack of Health Care or Substandard Housing? Of course, if my starched-shirt-God-fearing-Republican buddies, too, had bothered to show up at the Poverty Forum—or if they had protested cutting kids' school breakfasts—I would say their arguments were solid. Instead, I'll say their arguments are squishy—but solid enough for me to give them my ear.

It is true that part of me says, to hell with humans. A sorry lot we are—never seeming to get it together. Poverty shmoverity. It's more refreshing to concentrate on non-dysfunctional things like cryptobiotic soil and collared lizards and bighorns and arches—and cactus, too. After all, these are the things that bring hip people to Moab. Cool folks come here to escape the dysfunctional Race of the proverbial Rat. Sometimes I sense an unspoken attitude in Moab: "Go back to the city ghettos with your grunge and your rage if you're gonna whine about homelessness, domestic violence, and AIDS!" It's all so wearisome.

Weariness. It reminds me of some experiences in Ecuador. I once lived in an 80-house village on a 10,000-foot-above-sea-level mountain in the Andes. I loved hiking through the green patchwork plots planted sideways on the slopes to a rare forest a couple miles away. It was a gnarly-tree-filled fog forest, teaming with dripping plants, tree frogs, exotic insects, birds, and florescent flowers. But after two years, I noticed that it was a much longer distance to my fantastical forest. In the evenings

during those two years, I had seen women burdened under heaps of wood on their backs, slowly gallumping from the forest to the family hearth. No wood, no dinner. No wood, no warmth.

On a non-cloudy day, I could see barren, eroding desert ridges to the south, all the way to the horizon where the snowy volcano, Cayambe, protruded from the equator. Over the years, these once-green mountains had been stripped for firewood, non-terraced farming, and grazing. To the less-populated north, the mountains were still green. To the northwest, in the distance, I could see an uninhabited, lush, terraced mountain—a legacy of the pre-Columbian Shiri Indians on the outskirts of the Inca Empire. Now, the hand-to-mouth living of post-Columbian poverty prevents these Inca and Shiri descendants from even thinking about things like erosion—even when erosion means vanishing farmland and vanishing food on the table. These Ecuadorians' disregard for the environment was a constant fountain of frustration for me and my fellow privileged.

Talking about designated wilderness seems nuts when you're calculat-

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ing the next meal for your kids, especially when your life is firewood. It's kind of hard to think about uranium tailings seeping into the Colorado when you're shivering in a dilapidated trailer on a December night. With the exception of a few pockets of hunting and gathering philosophies outside Civilization's reaches, environmental consciousness, like organic brown rice, is mostly a luxury sprinkled amongst the educated middle and upper classes.

How about we think of environmental consciousness as a right of all classes rather than a privilege? How about we work at dissolving class distinctions? How about we make the environmental cause something everyone can swallow?

Here's basically what I'm trying to say. If you want to save the environment, raise consciousness. If you want to raise consciousness, show up at wilderness forums AND poverty forums. Then get to work. Consciousness runs on good food, health, decent shelter, and healthy environment. The head runs on the body and the body runs on the head. Can you defend the environment without defending human dignity? Can you protect canyons and ignore human poverty? Who's going to stay and speak for wilderness if nobody but robotic money-lovers can afford to live here? Humans are connected to cactus and catfish. The tummy is tied to the heart and the hands, along with the pituitary gland and the gall bladder. And the brain is bound to the butt, which is not just for sitting on.

UPDATE:

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Daniel James Shellabarger (known as Daniel Suelo, or simply Suelo, born 1961) is an American simple living adherent who stopped using money in the autumn of 2000.[1] He was born in Arvada, Colorado, a suburb of Denver, and currently lives part-time in a cave near Moab, Utah when he is not wandering the country.[1]

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Suelo>

also:

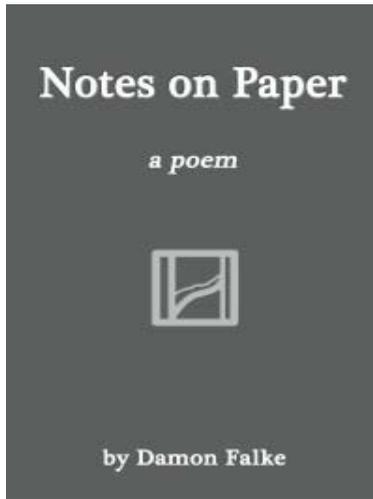
‘MEET THE MAN WHO LIVES ON ZERO DOLLARS’

by Christopher Ketcham

<http://www.details.com/culture-trends/career-and-money/200907/meet-the-man-who-lives-on-zero-dollars>

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NOTES ON PAPER DAMON FALKE

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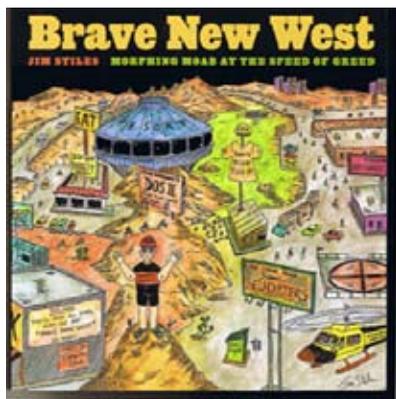


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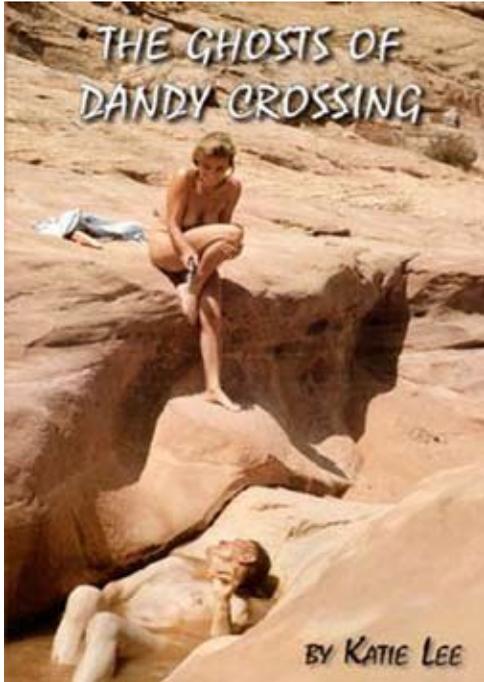
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THE ZEPHYR CHRONICLES...PT 2

A BIG CHANGE & SIGNS OF THINGS TO COME(1996-2001)

JIM STILES

By the mid-1990s, Moab and Grand County citizens—especially voters—were worn out. So was I. Beginning in 1987, with Moab's economy in tatters and its elected officials proposing a toxic waste incinerator at Cisco to boost property taxes, it was one crisis after another.

A forced referendum in 1988 put an end to the incinerator, tossed out the incumbents, and installed a Democrat majority. The lame duck Republicans created an independent special service road district, with its own mineral lease funding, and moved forward on a massive highway project.

Two years later, the Republicans gained the majority on the three-person commission and appeared to be unstoppable for the next four years. But by 1992, Moabites, especially angry tourism-related business owners, were infuriated by an ill-advised Travel Council appointment. They rebelled and gained the momentum and public support, via yet another referendum, to toss out the entire form of government and install a new 7-person council.

In November 1992, the county approved the change and as of January 1, the commissioners who had been elected just two years earlier for four year terms were gone. In February a special election was held to fill the seven vacancies on the new council.

You'd think we were done, but later that year we endured another special election, a recall vote this time to throw out the new councilmen. The recall failed, but in 1994, another election tossed out at least one of the original council and others chose not to stand for election again. Power shifted yet again.

A weary citizenry, by this time, hardly noticed or cared.

In what would be our last year as a monthly publication, the big battles that had dogged Moab for years—the toxic waste incinerator, the Book Cliffs Highway, the Change of Government Vote—were behind us. Now, the effects of tourism began to show, but after a big bump in 1993, when Moab saw seven new motels built in the span of a few months, the changes were slower...more incremental. How did one effectively combat that kind of transformation? More fast food franchises came to Moab and in the spring of 1995, we learned that Wendy's had not only decided to add a franchise on Main Street, they decided to take a good chunk of a Moabite's backyard as well.



'WENDY'S' TAKES ON DAVE LYLE

Longtime resident Dave Lyle owned a home on 200 North, just off Main, and had put great effort and investment into making his yard one of the loveliest in town. But Wendy's believed the historic boundary that separated their property from Dave's was wrong. By over nine feet. Dave tried to settle the dispute without legal action, and several times he thought a resolution had been found. But in late January 1995, Dave discovered a fax on his windshield, advising him to vacate the disputed property in

24 hours. The next day, the realtor handling the Wendy's acquisition, Randy Day, and a backhoe operator showed up and removed Lyle's fence, part of his patio and several 40 foot trees. Dave called his lawyer.

Months later, Judge Lyle Anderson issued a summary judgment in FAVOR of Dave Lyle. Wendy's had to restore the original property line and pay damages. A victory for the little guy (for a change).



'ECO-CHALLENGE,' WILDERNESS & UN-STOPPABLE GROWTH

But those kinds of 'wins' were few and far between. In March 1995 we also heard about "Eco-Challenge" for the first time. A cross-country triathlon-esque extreme NON-motorized sports extravaganza, to be televised on MTV was strongly opposed by SUWA and Scott Groene led the charge. An appeal was filed with BLM to stop the race and among those groups listed on the appeal, in addition to SUWA, were Red River Canoe, Tex's Riverways and this publication.

But the Utah congressional delegation cleared the way for the race and parts of BLM's environmental assessment that discussed the negative impacts were deleted from the final draft. According to Groene, "The good folks at Eco-

Challenge responded to the appeal by claiming they had received telephone calls and electronic mail threats from 'eco-terrorists.' Race promoters accused SUWA of inciting these threats."

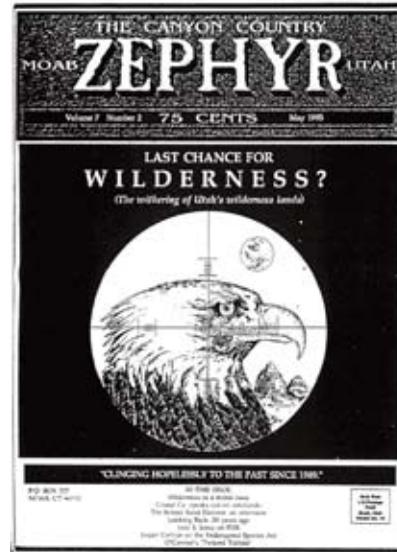
Twenty years later, it's difficult to imagine ANY environmental group opposing ANY event like this, which was promoted, in part, as a way to boost the economic advantages of a tourist/recreation non-motorized economy. But in 1995, SUWA's concerns still included this kind of activity.

Later in the spring, wilderness hearings were held in Moab and a standing room-only crowd turned out at Star Hall. Then, as now, the opinions were as diverse as the com-

munity expressing them. The Zephyr covered the hearing and included long quotations from many of the citizen speakers. In the following issue, I explained my own views on wilderness, noting, "If I had my way with wilderness, I would protect it in ways that would avoid even the possibility of commercial exploitation. I would prohibit any outfitter or guide company from leading tours through wilderness areas for profit. And," I added, "if wilderness lands began to show signs of impacts from overuse, I would support the idea of closing such areas to everyone."

I knew my ideas would not be taken seriously, but it was my hope that at least my readers would understand that 'wilderness' was for more than providing a recreation-based economy—that our real purpose was to save the land for ITS own sake, not ours. At the time, not one member of the mainstream green community took exception. Years later, everything would change.

(For a detailed account of that change, look for Part 3 of this series—"The Fork in the Wilderness Road"—coming in August.)



But the Utah congressional delegation cleared the way for the race ..According to Groene, "The good folks at Eco-Challenge responded to the appeal by claiming they had received telephone calls and electronic mail threats from 'eco-terrorists.' Race promoters accused SUWA of inciting these threats."

But Change was already coming. At Arches NP, we finally saw the paving of the Delicate Arch road, all the way to the overlook. Former Canyonlands superintendent Pete Parry had resisted the asphalt for years, but now Pete had retired. With visitation exploding and the old road frequently closed to flooding at the Salt Valley Wash crossing, monies became available to realign the road, build new bridges and pave the three mile section. The cars and the motorhomes and the tour buses rolled in. Great effort had been made to camouflage the parking lot at the view point. But the vehicles parked there could be seen for miles, their steel and glass glimmering in the desert heat.

In Moab and Spanish Valley, pastures and alfalfa fields began to vanish. For years we had feared the worst and now Reality finally caught up. In the early 90s, local resident Venice Denny had offered to sell some magnificent acreage along Mill Creek, just across from Dave's Corner Market, to Moab City for a relative pittance. I wrote a heartfelt plea in The Z, urging the city council to act quickly, to do something bold, something that we would all be grateful for, years and decades later. It would have been a wonderful addition to the Mill Creek Parkway, a green oasis in the middle of a very busy town. But the city failed to act. Venice finally had no choice but to sell it to private investors. Now, in the late 90s, the land was finally developed as the "Mill Creek Pueblos." All that open space was transformed into condos.

Even with a more 'progressive' governing body, there was the sense that not much could be done to halt what already appeared to be an un-stoppable transformation. The council attended growth workshops and talked about better planning and imposing more "impact fees," but no one seriously opposed the kind of upheaval that awaited us. Years later, in an essay called "A Reluctant Remembrance," outgoing County Councilman Bill Hedden noted, "My four years on the council convinced me that there is very little that can be done to successfully control growth...It is possible, though, to plan for and manage growth, and if we don't do that we are climbing on a greased slide to the worst of all possible worlds."

As I'd note 20 years later: Resistance was Futile.

A LAUGH OR TWO & GOODBYE TO THE MONTHLY

For me, after years of feeling my little rag was making a difference, even if in only some small way, now I felt utterly helpless. A feeling of resigned complacency gripped the town, though to suggest most of us felt 'gripped' is an overstatement. But attendance on public meetings declined and Zephyr interviews with public officials seldom stirred emotions. After all, a relatively 'progressive' bunch of public officials was now directing the future of Moab/Grand County.

I sought refuge in humor. In August, thanks to the morphing mastery of computer genius Dan O'Connor (who had also introduced The Zephyr's "Twisted Tabloids" series, we offered the first "Zephyr Swimsuit Issue," in August 1995.

And we held a contest to create a new Zephyr Slogan. I was bored with our old "Cling-

ing Hopelessly to the Past” banner and proposed to the readership that they come up with some new ideas. The pickings were slim until one day I discovered a passel of brilliant alternatives, each sent separately on its own post card. Their author was Moab’s own Kaki Hunter, Hollywood star and Every Man’s Dream Girl. We received a couple other late entries, but Kaki’s multiple contributions won hands down. Among her gems were:

“Moab, Utah...Looks like Hell, and it’s hot too.”

“Moab, Utah...Where Nirvana is a dirty word.”

“Moab, Utah...No composting toilets allowed.”

“Moab, Utah...Future sandbag house capitol of the world.”

“Moab, Utah...Where 99.999% of everything is absolutely nothing..
So why bother?”

“Moab, Utah...Where everybody is naked under their clothes.”

“Moab, Utah...One billion T-shirts sold.”

and my favorite

“Moab, Utah...We’re all DOOMED!”

But by November, I had lost my sense of levity. In a page 2 essay for that month, I barely managed to put words together. It began with this warning: “What you are about to read might best be described as ‘filler material.’” In that regard, I was true to my word. I was seeking to fill two pages with text, usually about 2500 words, and I ranted about a variety of subjects, from the deadfromtheneck state of politics in Moab, to a brief description of a woman I met on the Upper West Side of New York City, who called me “Mistah Millionaire.” This total stranger had become mad at me in the checkout line of a local market because I failed to heed her advice regarding the availability of a cheaper toothbrush at the Duane Reade pharmacy. I explained that I was a tourist and in a hurry and she retorted, “But it’s just a block away! Sixty-six cents! You’re paying a buck eighty-nine!!! If you’re not a millionaire, then I have to think there is something



WRONG with your HEAD!”

She was right, of course, but for the wrong reason.

In the same issue I even mocked the superintendent of Capitol Reef National Park for creating something called “a web site” on some contraption called the “World Wide Web.” I suggested that the park super “had been dropped on his head at an early age,” and I could not see the value in his offer to post important park documents on their web site. I just didn’t think this internet stuff would catch on. Still, a friend of my pal Restaurateur/Madman Mike Marooney persuaded me to buy the domain name www.canyoncountryzephyr.com. For years, it sat there unused--an utter waste of money, I believed.

By Christmas, I had begun to consider a big change. Though I had great writers and someone to help now with the subscriptions and distribution—all 2000 copies—The Zephyr was still a one-man show in many regards. I did all the ads, most of the stories and interviews—though Ken Davey was a great help to me in those years—and I drew all the cartoons and took most of the photos. I did the layouts, all using a hand waxer, layout boards and a pair of scissors. On press day, always the first Tuesday of the month, I rose at 5 AM to travel 125 miles to Cortez where Larry Hauer and the gang printed the latest issue. I’d get home by 5 PM, drop off the subs and the local distribution-Zs, then, the next day, I’d haul a couple hundred to Grand Junction. I’d rest for three or four days and then start the process again. I was tired.

Finally, I considered my options. I could quit, of course. Or I could hire a staff and try to figure out how to pay them. Everything I considered required a huge increase in revenues which meant charging more for ads and even the cost of the paper (which in 1995 had risen to 75 cents from 50). The problem with depending on newsstand sales was that hardly anybody paid for them in the first place. On the ‘honor stands’ which constituted the vast majority of my distribution, about 75% of the Zephyrs were stolen. I was happy to see them read, but the payback was awful.

I once sat at the Broiler and watched a family at a nearby table. The husband saw the stand and said to his wife, “Honey, get me one of those Zephyrs.”

She walked to the display but saw the price. “But it’s seventy-five cents,” she said.

The man glanced around. He half-whispered, “Just take it.”

“But it’s...” he cut her off.

“Nobody will notice. Just give me a paper. I need something to read.”

So the wife reluctantly pulled a Zephyr from the stand and gave it to her deadbeat husband. He opened the paper to page two and it’s hard to say which of them first noticed that the grainy black and white image in the upper left hand corner bore a remarkable to the man sitting at an adjacent booth. But there was that unmistakable moment of ‘oh shit’ recognition.

The Broiler was a tiny place and of course I could hear everything.

“What should we do? I heard the wife say with just a hint of restrained panic in her voice.

He thought a long while. “Just put it back on the rack. I’m not paying 75 cents.”

They returned the now mustard-stained Zephyr to the stand. I did not press charges.

And so it went. I needed to do something different. Finally, knowing I could not significantly raise ad rates and that I’d never consider hiring a staff and complicating my life with those kinds of employer-type responsibilities, I came up with one viable option...

THE ZEPHYR GOES BI- (NOT ‘BYE’)

I would end the monthly grind of publication. After seven years, I couldn’t keep up the pace. I’d replace it with a bi-monthly version (every other month) and shift the focus from purely local issues to broader themes that would appeal to a wider readership. And

by doing that, I planned to increase the circulation from just 2000 per issue to 15,000. And we’d distribute them not just in Moab, but also in Grand Junction, Bluff, Blanding, Monticello, Salt Lake City, Flagstaff, even my old home town of Louisville, Kentucky.

I’d need to increase ad rates but not enough to drive many of my Zephyr supporters away and, in exchange, their ads would be seen by more than seven times as many readers as had viewed them before. I took a deep breath and proposed the idea personally to each of my advertisers. Incredibly, virtually all of them decided to stay with me. It was a gratifying moment.

I notified my friends at Cortez News where the Zephyr was printed. The chief press man, Larry Hauer, was delighted. Larry was a perfectionist and was always frustrated by our short press runs. He’d shoot a couple thousand copies through his five-web press before he thought the quality was good enough to start counting. All those trees---I used to agonize over the waste. Now, with 15,000 copies to print, he could really get the presses humming. But the larger count meant I also needed to find a better way to transport the Zs. Until now, incredible as it might seem, I hauled all 2000 copies of the old monthly in my 1963 Volvo 544--‘Moby Dick,’ I called her. Now I needed something bigger and my buddy and computer whiz Charlie Peterson agreed to sell his 1986 GMC pickup for \$1500. Finally, I owned a truck and the new ‘Zephyr Transportation Fleet.’

The first bi-monthly Zephyr appeared on newsstands March 15, 1996. What I liked best about the new schedule was that it gave me more time to hone my skills. My writing didn’t feel rushed anymore and even my cartoons improved. I no longer had to capture the essence of a face in 10 minutes. If I had more time, I was less likely to render an unflattering portrait of people I was really trying to please (albeit for money!). Still, complaints from toon victims declined and I was grateful.

I even mocked the superintendent of Capitol Reef National Park for creating something called “a web site” on something called the “World Wide Web.” I suggested that the park super “had been dropped on his head at an early age.” I just didn’t think this internet stuff would catch on.

But they didn’t vanish altogether. One night, I stopped by Back of Beyond Books to take a photo of the woman then working the evening shift (I’ll leave her name out...no sense in causing trouble twice). She was a friend of mine and was actually pleased to learn I planned to cartoon her; she willingly posed for the shot. But each time I took her picture, my friend tended to widen her eyes, as if she had just seen a ghost. I told her I was worried she might look a bit bug-eyed if the photos came out as I feared. But she laughed and said, “Oh who cares? That’s the way I look.” I was relieved and grateful to find somebody who didn’t take my tooning so seriously or think I was trying to be insulting.

But a few weeks later, after the issue came out, she stopped me as I was walking along the street, in tears. “How could you?” she cried. “Why did you draw me bug-eyed?”

I reminded her of the conversation and she admitted she hadn’t been particularly offended when the paper first came out. I realized it was her ‘friends’ who had riled her up. She told me how several of her comrades had “offered their sincere condolences” for the way I had “maliciously” misrepresented her and “embarrassed her before the entire community.”

“We are so sorry,” one friend opined, “for what ‘he’ did to you.”

We had a very long talk and when we were finished, we both concluded it was her friends who’d been malicious, not me. I was glad she’d brought up the issue instead of just seething about it. For once, I got to clear my name.

The slower pace also gave me time to plan issues ahead, reach out to new writers, and best of all, to broaden our themes and the scope of our stories. The next four years were especially gratifying as The Zephyr took on issues that affected all of us in Moab and southeast Utah and across the West. And sometimes around the planet. And we were often able to showcase remarkable individuals who never received the recognition they deserved.

A PLETHORA OF ‘THEMES’

I enjoyed the next few years, though it was clear Moab and the World were rapidly changing. The Zephyr’s bi-monthly issues were built around themes that I had always wanted to pursue. It may be that I’m simply not the best or most organized planner in the world and that I needed more time to put these kinds of topics together than others might. But finally, starting with that first issue, I felt good about the work we were doing.

The first bi-monthly Zephyr included essays about over-population but also offered profiles of local artist/hermit, one-of-a-kind Nik Hougan; writer Barry Scholl celebrated the lives of Glen Canyon legends Cass Hite and Arth Chaffin. And as always and in keeping with our unshakable belief that ALL sides deserve a voice at the table, I introduced a column called “Radical Boneheads,” which offered contrasting views on a variety of subjects.

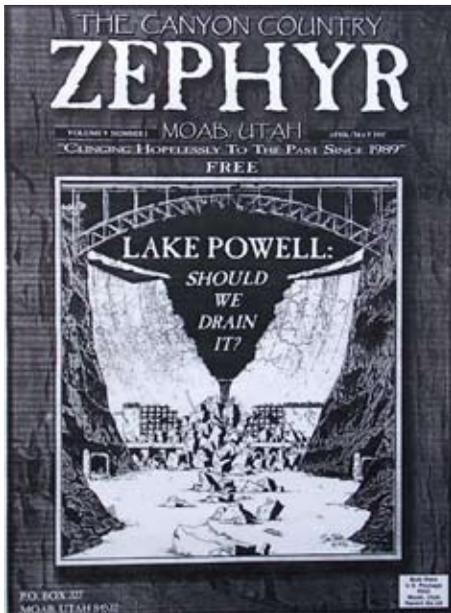
In the premier bi-monthly writers David Swift (on the Left) and longtime Moabite Jerry Stocks (on the Right) took on the issue of federal management on public lands. The views from each might have been predictable but I felt good that we were providing the contrast.

Over the next several years, The Zephyr featured multiple-stories about the future of Glen Canyon Dam and the future of the water-buried canyon that waits upstream for its own return to dry land.

In ‘GLEN CANYON: Can We Restore a Masterpiece?’ I wrote:

next page...

THE ZEPHYR CHRONICLES PART 2 CONTINUED



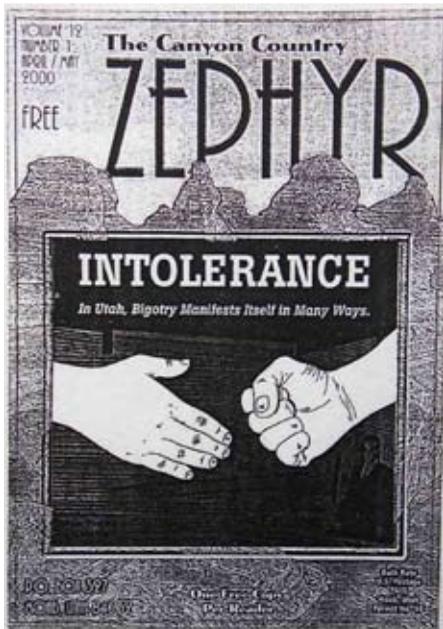
"Glen Canyon is not destroyed. It's all still there, under 27 million acre feet of water. What was it Abbey liked to say? "Glen Canyon still exists; it's just in liquid storage." And "the Colorado River is still there--it just flows under the reservoir." Something like that.

"It's easy to forget but it's true. Staring at the flat expanse of dead water, we can convince ourselves that the world does not extend below the surface of the lake. That places like Hidden Passage and Dungeon Canyon and Cathedral in the Desert and the Crossing of the Fathers and Music Temple have simply ceased to exist.

"But we're deceiving ourselves. Perhaps because it is easier to cope with the loss that way. Perhaps because it is too frustrating to think for very long that the difference between a polluted reservoir and a living canyon is a few hundred feet

of water. But rest assured Glen Canyon is down there in the cold and inky blackness. All those magical and mystical places that I never saw but only heard of are treading water and waiting for salvation."

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/archives/takeit-april-may98.html>



And when an ugly racist incident occurred in Moab—an interracial couple was attacked by a couple of self-proclaimed skinhead racists, we devoted an entire issue to the subject of intolerance.

"If you do not live in Moab, and certainly if you reside outside of Utah, you are probably unaware of an ugly incident that occurred here on New Year's Eve. Two young local men allegedly assaulted an interracial couple with racist epithets and one of them was charged with a third degree felony, based on Utah's new hate crime law...Whether the man is found guilty of the alleged crime is up to a jury of his peers to decide. The fact that the incident underscores a nasty racist and bigoted underside to this community is undeniable. A few weeks after the incident, stories of an underground white supremacist subculture in Moab persist."

INTOLERANCE IN UTAH:

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/archives/takeit-april-may00.html>

BEING GAY IN UTAH:

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/archives/gayinutah.html>

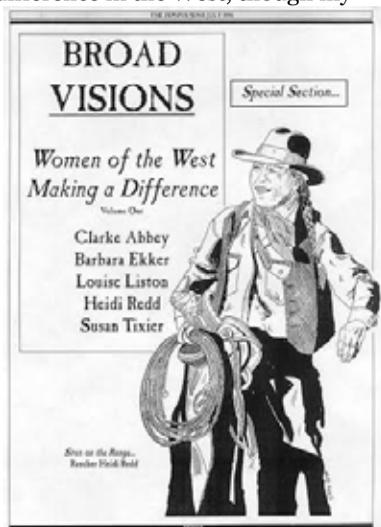
RACISM & THE INDIGENOUS PEOPLES OF THE WORLD

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/promoab/zephyr-editorials/oct-98.htm>

The Zephyr honored women who were making a difference in the West, though my title still drew groans from the politically correct: 'BROAD VISIONS: Women of the West,' including this tribute to San Juan County rancher Heidi Redd, by Anne Wilson. Anne wrote:

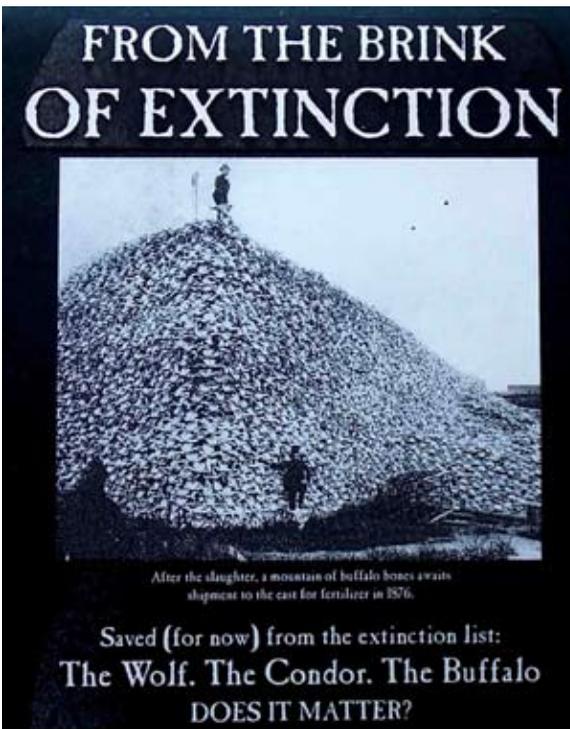
"Heidi is well-spoken about her beliefs and she is polished, but her passion belies any feeling that her words are simply rhetorical. Lest you think she is a closet "tree hugger", read on. During her 31 years in red rock country, Heidi has seen a change in the visitors who come by this place that is the gateway to Canyonlands National Park. She has as hard a time with some of them as she does folk who use the land irresponsibly in the more traditional exhaustive ways. In the early years, days would go by without a car kicking up dust on the dirt road that led to Canyonlands. When they did, tourists would often stop by the ranch to chat or have a drink, and to share delight in the desert. Today, the road is paved and visitation is skyrocketing.

"They don't come for solace anymore," Heidi says. "They are as frantic in their rec-



reation as they are in their jobs." She concurred when I remarked that the land seems like a giant outdoor gym to many "soft" recreationists - mountain bikers, climbers, etc.

- who most probably would self-classify as environmentalists. "It's something additional for them to conquer," she agreed.



And we raised a few pioneer hackles (the white kind of hackle, that is) when we devoted an issue to Native Americans in SE Utah called: "THEY WERE HERE FIRST."

We examined the way we humans have a history of annihilating other species of animal, and whether or why it even matters. It included essays on the North American Wolf, the American Bison, the Condor...

'FROM THE BRINK OF EXTINCTION: Trying to Survive the Follies of Man'

I contributed a story called, 'Where the Buffalo Roamed.'

and recalled this observation from Army general Phillip Sheridan:

"The hide hunters will do more in the next few years to settle the vexed Indian question than the entire regular army has done in the last 30 years. For the sake of a lasting peace, let them kill, skin, and sell until the buffaloes are exterminated. Then the prairies can be covered with the speckled cattle and the festive cowboy, who follows the hunter as the forerunner of civilization."

And in 1996, when President Clinton created Grand Staircase/Escalante National Monument by proclamation, I stuck my neck out a bit, questioning the wisdom of the decision in a piece called, "Taking the Long View." We also offered pro- and con- opinions from SUWA's Ken Rait and The Zephyr's "token conservative" Hank Rutter.

THE NEW MONUMENT...TAKING THE LONG VIEW

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/promoab/zephyr-editorials/dec-96.htm>

And while I've scribbled the same admonition in the last few months, at least I've been consistent. In that 1996 essay, I warned:

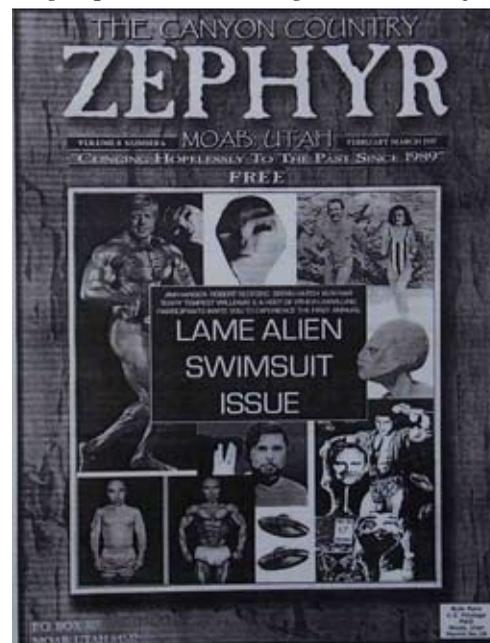
"The people who will profit from such booms, whether they are coal mine-generated or urban exodus-generated fall into two groups. Foremost, they will be the out-of-town investors who will see a profit to be made and will have the resources to exploit the opportunity. They will have the cash and the capital to invest in new business. Second, there is always the small group of local citizens who are already wealthy, who will have the resources to take advantage of the boom.

"But for the most part, remember this: When the governing body of an economically-depressed community sets a course of action to improve it, the advantages of

those actions will mostly fall upon the citizens of that community's future, not the ones who are struggling to survive in the present.

"One thing is certain. All those millions of displaced/relocated Americans who will move to the rural West in the next century will descend on places like Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument in droves. It may take a while. It may be decades before places like the Kaiparowits start to feel crowded. But it'll happen...someday it's going to happen.

"And so I'm ambivalent about the Monument. I'm grateful for the protection it will offer in the short-term. I hope it puts an end to ridiculous notions like Andalex. But I worry what damage the spotlight of such a designation means when we look a bit farther down the road."

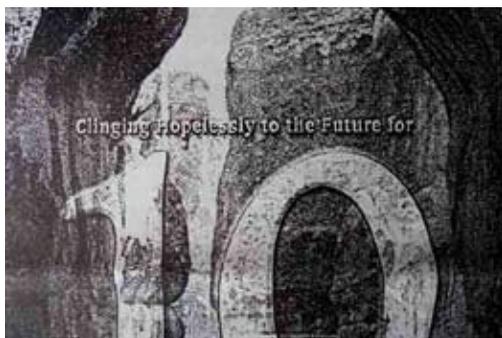


But the issues weren't always painfully serious. We celebrated Moab's tendency to collect 'stuff' when we devoted an entire issue to, 'MOAB'S BELOVED JUNK,' though we still managed to stir up controversy by annoying all the good folks in Moab who wanted to clean up the 'surplus assets' so many Moabites clung to.

We celebrated our great friend Kelly Stelter and his uncanny ability to befriend some of Hollywood's best and beloved celebrities. We called it: 'KELLY STELTER: Mingling with the Twinkling Stars.' Hopefully, in a future issue, I'll re-post that great series of stories about our pal Kelly.

At the end of each year, as we wound down and prepared for our month-long hiatus, we combined several themes that we'd used over the past decade to create the 'LAME ALIEN SWIMSUIT ISSUE.' Once again, our graphics/computer man Dan O'Connor put his magic to work and created some of our funniest/edgiest issues. No one was spared from dan's morphing fingers, but most took the experience in good stride.

And for all our gloom and doom, we even produced an edition called 'THE GOOD NEWS ISSUE.' Some thought I'd had a breakdown or something, but no...that would come later! I seemed inexplicably optimistic for a brief window in time as we approached the New Millennium. In fact, if one looks closely at a few of the covers from that period, a subtle change can be detected....instead of proclaiming, "Clinging Hope-



Some thought I'd had a breakdown or something, but no...that would come later! At the time, I seemed inexplicably optimistic for a brief window of time as we approached the New Millennium."

lessly to the Past since 1989," it reads, "Clinging Hopelessly to the Future. In retrospect, and in light of a string events that began in late 1997, I wonder if I wasn't just trying to create a false hope—for me and my readers.

But while the fun lasted, it was also the Age of Marooney. Mike Marooney came to Moab in the mid-90s to open the "Dos Amigos Cantina." He was like no other. He was larger than Life Itself! Magnanimous! Bellicose! Tender! Vulgar! Crude...Sensitive! Good friend and pain in the Ass!!! Marooney contained Multitudes.

He once got in trouble for allegedly goosing a UPS employee and a representative of the company showed up to investigate. I don't mean to make light of this at all but this is what happened:

The UPS representative asked Marooney if he had indeed acted inappropriately and Mike could only say 'yes.' But, he argued, it wasn't gender-driven. I had just arrived for lunch and stepped into the middle of this confrontation, so I wasn't full aware of what was happening.

"Stiles!" Marooney called out. "Did I goose you yesterday when you were here with Bengé."

I thought a moment. "Yes," I sighed, now that he'd reminded me, "You DID goose me and I wish you'd stop doing that."

"THERE!" Mike proclaimed. "You see? I may be a stupid f*ck and I may do inappropriate things on a daily basis. BUT they are NOT driven by gender bias! I'm merely a non-discriminatory idiot. I goose everybody, even my little buddy Jimmy."

"I hate it when you call me 'Jimmy,'" I added.

The UPS man chuckled, though he struggled to hang tough. "Okay, Mr. Marooney, we'll let you off with a warning this time, but never again. Understand?"

"Yes," Mike said meekly. "No more goosing."

"That goes for me too," I said. "And Bengé has grown a bit weary of it as well."

"Yes," Mike snarled. "But I assume you still want me to provide you special privileges at the 'Big Shots Table' and give you, Bengé, Till and Mulligan great deals on lunch."

"That goes without saying," I said.

Mike's 'right-hand' person in all this, the Rock that Mike needed to counter his Madness, was his chief server/troubleshooter/ voice of reason/salt-of-the-earth and good friend Holly Dinsmore. Imagining the Dos without Holly was never a remote possibility. She kept everything on as even a keel as was possible under the conditions. I could go into the Dos, alone and grumpy, and know that Holly would be there to offer a kind word and a friendly pat on the back. Nobody could feel lonely when Holly was there.

But Holly's life changed forever on the night of November 24, 1997 when her husband, John, was shot to death by a Moab police officer.

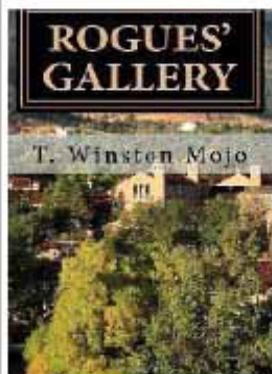
THE DEATH OF JOHN DINSMORE

This is a long and difficult story to tell, even all these years later. At the time, it appeared that no one in law enforcement wanted to talk about it either. John had been depressed, had been drinking, and had expressed thoughts of suicide. Holly called the police for help. Several Moab City officers and Grand County deputies arrived on scene and surrounded John on his own driveway. John confronted the officers and was

I waited for an investigation, heard a variety of stories and wondered which version was true. Or closest to the truth. When it appeared there would be no official investigation, I decided to conduct my own.

wielding a kitchen knife; he alternately threatened himself and the officers. Fifteen minutes later, John would lay dying from the blast of a 12 gauge shotgun.

I waited for an investigation, heard a variety of stories and wondered which version was true. Or closest to the truth. When it appeared there would be no official investigation, I decided to conduct my own. It took me months to review the testimony and



ROGUES' GALLERY

My 27 years at Rocky Mountain University...

T. WINSTON MOJO

In the tradition of literary bureaucrats Kafka, Bukowski and Miller, T. Winston Mojo takes the reader on a journey into the abyss of institutional smallness. Everybody knows that politics at the university are so vicious because the stakes are so small. Mojo's real-life gauntlet of villains at Rocky Mountain University in Big Rock, Colorado, is an exploration into just how small those stakes can be.

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LIFETIME BACKBONE MEMBER

LANETTE SMITH
Basalt, CO

THE ZEPHYR CHRONICLES

PART 2 CONTINUED

re-interview some of the witnesses and participants. Finally, in June 1998, I reported my findings. They appeared in this story and with a page 2 introduction::

AN EDITORIAL COMMENT ON THE DEATH OF JOHN DINSMORE

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/archives/takeit-june-july98.html>

THE DEATH OF JOHN DINSMORE

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/stiles-stories/dinsmore.htm>

And finally, Dirk Vaughan, a Moab business owner, and a 14 year veteran of the Denver PD, weighed in with his own thoughts. He was reluctant at first but when I'd finally gathered all the information available for him to view, and after a visit to the shooting scene, Dirk offered his own take on the shooting. Here is the link:

'HE DESERVED A CHANCE'

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/archives/chance.html>

The officer who fired the fatal round was never disciplined and remains on the force to this day. If there was anything positive that came from the tragedy, the Moab PD did acquire some non-lethal weapons to deal with incidents like this. But while a shorter version of my story appeared in 'Salt Lake CITY WEEKLY' and received a Utah Press Association award, the story was never officially acknowledged by any government entity or elected official in Moab/Grand County. Today, Holly Dinsmore still lives in Moab and is as admired, loved and respected now as she was then.

HERB...

Just a few months later, my dearest of friends, Herb Ringer, began to decline. Since 1994, deteriorating eyesight from macular degeneration had forced herb to give up driving. It was his most cherished pleasure—to hit the road. Herb had lived out of his 1970



In June, Herb experienced something of a breakdown and was placed in state hospital. I headed for Nevada the next day. He was quickly released but, for the first time, Herb started to wear out. He began to lose his most precious gift—his memories.

Ford EconoLine Camper for almost eight months a year. Now, confined to his little trailer in Fallon, Nevada, he had made the best of a bad situation. So instead of Herb visiting me, I went to him, though I could not make nearly the trips I wanted or he needed.

When Herb realized his traveling days were over, we were also able to provide some assistance for him, via the social services people in Nevada, that he didn't know were available. His macular degeneration allowed the government to boost his social security check, and for the first time, herb was able to collect food stamps. With his eyesight almost gone, he needed help maintaining his home and a woman from Nevada Social Services named Becky (sorry to say I no longer recall her last name) came by three or four times a week to cook and help Herb with the cleaning. But more than that, she was somebody to talk to. Herb enjoyed Becky's company immensely and for a couple years, he did well. But when Becky's husband was transferred to another city, Herb never found anyone to fill her shoes.

In June, Herb experienced something of a breakdown and was placed in state hospital. I headed for Nevada the next day. He was quickly released but, for the first time, Herb started to wear out. He began to lose his most precious gift—his memories.

He decided to give up his little house trailer of 46 years and move to a nearby retirement home. Somehow I knew it would be his un-doing; Herb cherished nothing as much as his freedom, but, to Herb it seemed like the only logical next step. I made another

trip to Fallon in late July, to help him move a lifetime of memories from the 'Smoker' trailer. He gave me almost everything he had—the rest of his photographs, his journals, his model trains, his pots and pans and his dishes. Even the wooden spoon that had belonged to his great-grandmother. We sold the trailer to another man who lived at the trailer park and, in early August, Herb said goodbye to his old life and moved to the Silver Rose Manor.

Within weeks he began to decline. They had found a voice-amplified phone for Herb and we struggled through a few calls. But by October, he no longer recognized my voice. In December, he took a turn for the worse. Herb Ringer died on my birthday, December 11.

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/2013/08/>
<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/2013/08/01/take-it-or-leave-it-our-friends-were-dearer-then-herb-ringer-an-introduction-by-jim-stiles/>
<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/2013/08/01/i-can-still-see-everything-herb-ringers-remarkable-life-by-jim-stiles/>

Of all the people I've met, I cherish my friendship with Herb more than just about anyone. Now, more than 15 years later, I still think of him almost daily and, at the very least, his work and his memories and his remarkable life live on in the Zephyr.

CHANGES IN THE WIND (AND NOT ZEPHYR BREEZES)

Earlier in 1998, I finally embraced the internet. I'd purchased the domain name a couple years earlier, but had done nothing with it. But, in April 1998 we finally started posting a limited number of features and images from each issue. The web site was as basic and rudimentary as one might imagine a 1998 page to be, and you'll see for yourself as you follow many of the URLs in this story to the original links. The quality improved only slightly over the next decade, until we finally gave up the print edition in February 2009. Still, I didn't take the web site very seriously at the time, though I wish now we'd posted more of the stories and articles. But I made sure to include my Page Two editorials and the more important essays.

Those archived posts would prove to be handy reference tools, fifteen years later, as I try to piece together the flow of events that shaped The Zephyr's future (and mine). In barely a year, starting just a few months after Herb's death, three events would forever change the direction of this publication. I had no idea what was about to happen...

SIERRA CLUBBED...

In July 1999, I was contacted by environmental activist David Orr, who was interested in forming a Sierra Club 'group' in Moab. It would be called The Glen Canyon Group of the Utah Chapter and its purpose would be to support and embrace the national board's recent resolution to support the restoration of Glen Canyon. Orr was a provocateur, for sure, and had crossed swords with other green organizations before, but I knew, in the beginning at least, nothing of this. And while Orr did seem to rub people in the wrong places, I could find nothing wrong with his premise—that a grassroots group supporting the resolution to decommission the dam was a logical and worthwhile gesture. I thought we were all good, crusading knights of justice, trying to make the world a better place. We were going to do good deeds and save the world....YES. At times I was that stupid.

In an introductory Zephyr/Page Two essay, I wrote about the creation of the Glen Canyon Group and I did express some doubts. "I have often found myself at odds with the Sierra Club," I explained, "who sometimes seems more interested in doing upscale and expensive outings for rich and trendy yupsters than really fighting for issues.... But now," I continued, "all that seems to be changing. With Ken Sleight (here he comes again) as chairman and longtime Moabite John Weisheit as vice-chair, the Glen Canyon Group offers a chance for all of us to get involved in the battle to save the canyon country in a very personal way."

THE SIERRA CLUB COMES TO MOAB

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/archives/takeit-august-september99.html>

I probably should have kept my doubts and 'yupster' references to myself, but it would not have made a difference in the final outcome. Here was the problem—for reasons that were beyond me, the hierarchy of the Utah Chapter had opposed the national board's resolution about Glen Canyon Dam. They were adamant and our efforts to bypass the state chapter infuriated them even more. Even within the Group, opinions varied and tempers frequently flared. Mike and Jean Binyon, recent transplants to Moab from Salt Lake City, supported their friends at the Chapter. Mike even suggested that the resolution to decommission the dam came—incredibly—as the result of a bribe from Sierra Club legend David Brower. (If one thing good came out of all this, it's that I was blessed with the opportunity to speak with Brower himself. He adamantly denied offering a "bribe.")

The rhetoric got hotter and with the group's blessing, I wrote about the growing gap between Salt Lake and Moab.

SIERRA CLUB UPDATE:

A GROUP WITH NO NAME...AND A GAGGED VOICE

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/archives/takeit-october-november99.html>

"It was with uncharacteristic hope," I wrote, "that, in the last issue, I spoke of an opportunity that many believe could make a positive difference here in southern Utah. Briefly, a group of citizens in Moab decided to create a Sierra Club Group...to be called the Glen Canyon Group. Working under the umbrella of the Utah Chapter, this group would become the only grass roots Sierra Club organization in the canyon country"

But then we learned that the Chapter had unanimously passed a resolution, with us in mind. It said:

"...it shall be the policy of the Utah Chapter of the Sierra Club not to initiate public

discussion or debate on the issue of Glen Canyon restoration at this time. 'Public discussion' includes (but is not limited to) press releases, mailings, electronic communications, contacts with media, and events to which the public is invited. Should such public discussion be initiated by the media or other parties, those who speak for the Chapter shall endeavor not to participate in any official capacity. Direct questions from the media may be answered factually."

We called it a 'gag order,' plain and simple. And we all seemed ready to at least go down swinging. One 'canyoneer' wrote, "Let the Chapter know at this time we don't accept this condition and that if an appeal is necessary we are willing to take this to the National Board... Sound like a threat? Well, it is!"

We called it a 'gag order,' plain and simple. My brain had a hard time even grasping language like that; Just the term, 'It shall be,' gets my hackles up. As an environmentalist, I had never experienced anything like this particular brand of authoritarian rule and it was the first time I understood just how bitter, toxic and divisive the mainstream environmental movement could be. They kept trying to say WE were being divisive, but all we were trying to do was DO something.

And we all seemed ready to at least go down swinging. One 'canyoneer' wrote, "We voted at the last meeting (Binyons present) that we would not accept the "gag resolution" or a name change. Now is the time to go the next step. Let the Chapter know at this time we don't accept this condition and that if an appeal is necessary we are willing to take this to the National Board (impending date I believe). Sound like a threat? Well, it is!"

But in November, just before Thanksgiving, the ranks fell apart. According to our story, 'Sierra Clubbed,' that Ken Sleight and I wrote jointly for the April 2000 Zephyr...

"...two members of the Moab Group, John and Susette Weisheit, attempted to break the deadlock by negotiating a compromise with the author of the gag order, Dan Schroeder. Schroeder blamed the Chapter's refusal to proceed on two factors: first, the 'in your face journalism' of The Zephyr, which had criticized the Utah Chapter's tactics and had printed the restrictive resolutions Schroeder had penned for the ExCom.

Second, he was critical of Ken Sleight's inflexible leadership. These, Schroeder claimed, were the major stumbling blocks to group approval."

SIERRA CLUBBED (the story)

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/archives/sierra-clubbed.html>

That was about as hard a day as I can ever recall. I had always asked for the group's blessings before I wrote about the ongoing controversy, and none of my peers, except the Binyons, had ever been anything but enthusiastic when the articles came out. Now suddenly it appeared as if Ken and I were the only obstacles in the way of a smooth and happy bonding between the Chapter and the Group.

From a journalist's perspective, there was no way I could now put a gag on myself. So I resigned. Later, so did Ken. In April, Sleight's and my 'Clubbed' piece appeared and we caught more hell from another Utah Chapter rep, Gordon Swenson:

'SHAMEFUL, INACCURATE AND DOWNRIGHT SHAMEFUL'

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/archives/shameful.html>

The Sierra Clubbed fiasco would be the first of many difficult and disturbing conflicts that pitted me against people I thought were my allies. In the aftermath of Swenson's rant, I learned from Scott Groene that Swenson wanted SUWA to "publicly repudiate" me and end their Zephyr 'Watchdog' column. Groene refused but it didn't make me feel much better. "I told him," Scott explained later, "that we would never repudiate anyone who gives SUWA two free pages in their newspaper."

It wasn't the kind of passionate ethics-based defense of Sleight and me that I was hoping for.

Still, when Sleight and I decided to write about the experience, Scott was supportive. "It's your paper," he noted, "and you should obviously run whatever you want---to have any integrity you should challenge whoever you think needs challenging." It was good advice and greatly appreciated,

As for the Glen Canyon Group, it still exists. While one member, Sarah Fields, has worked tirelessly to oppose the transportation and storage of nuclear waste at the White Mesa Mill in San Juan County, the group has been silent on the issue of Glen Canyon for most of the last 10 years.

CLOUDROCKED...

One of the disadvantages of a bi-monthly schedule, and one of my great worries, was that a 'Big Story' would fall upon us, just after the most recent issue had gone to press. That's exactly what happened in the autumn of 2000.

continued on page 40...

NEW BACKBONE MEMBERS for December 2013/January 2014

Michael Yates
Boulder, CO

Scott Grunder
Boise ID

Chris Carrier
Paonia, CO

Sara Melnicoff
Moab, UT

Becky Morton
Oakland, CA

**ALSO..The Un-Tooned
New Backboners...**

Barbara Brown
Idaho Falls, ID

Keith Harger
Jackson, WY

Garrett Wilson
Sandy, UT

William Dunlap
Lake Oswego, OR

**AND THANKS TO
THESE FRIENDS
AS WELL...**

Lewis Downey
Salt Lake City, UT

Julie Zych
Milwaukee, WI

David Wegner
Alexandria, VA

Izzy Nelson
Moab UT

Michael Bloomberg
Fenton, MO

Lynn Curt
Salt Lake City, UT

Linda Jalbert
GRAND CANYON, AZ

Andrew McGregor
Glenwood Springs, CO

AmeriCandy Co, Inc
Louisville, KY

Catherine Lutz
Aspen, CO

Kelly Rowell
Flagstaff, AZ

Pamilla Bina
St. George, UT

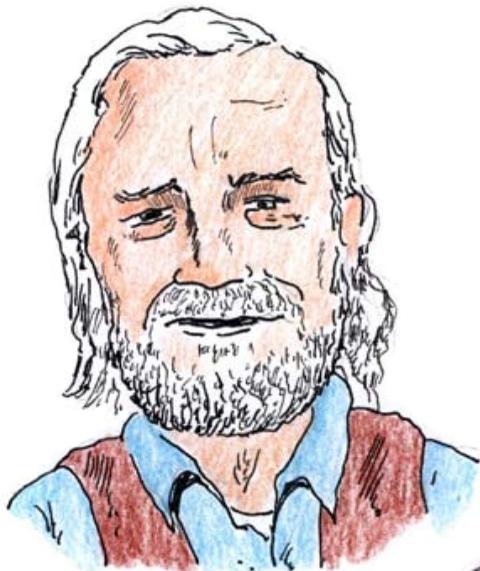
Patrick Flynn
Paradox, CO

Rand Hirschi
Salt Lake City, UT



new BACKBONE MEMBERS for April/May 2014

Bernard Cole Flagstaff AZ



Tim Steckline Spearfish SD

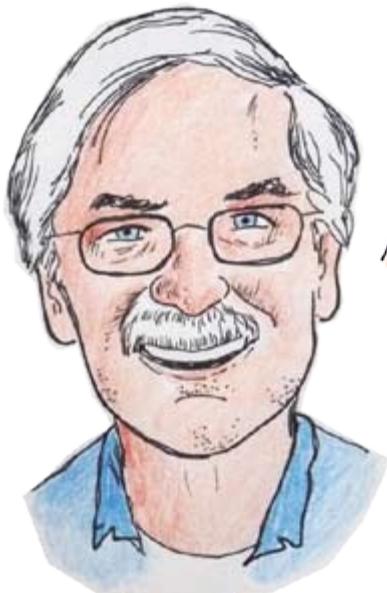


Richard Ingebretsen Salt Lake City, UT



Hope Benedict Salmon, ID

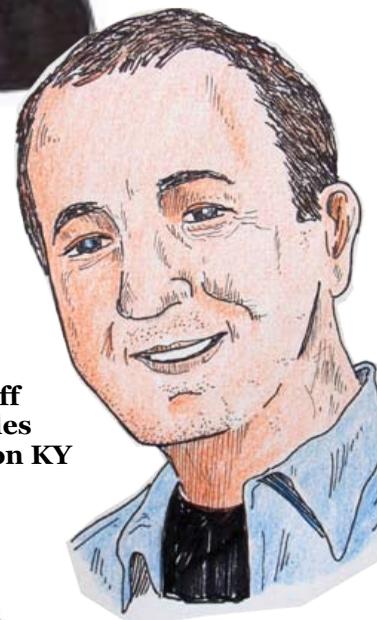
Tim Conrad Ogden, UT



Bill Stokes Saint Petersburg, FL



Jim Case Flagstaff, AZ

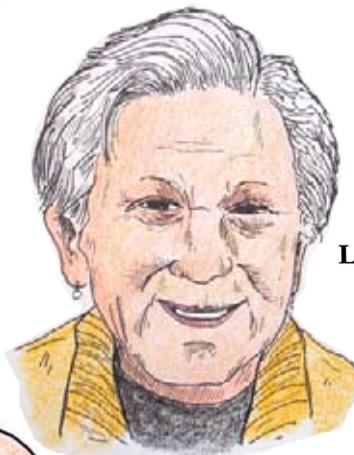


Jeff Stiles Stanton KY

And thanks to UN-TOONED Bill Gassaway Burns, TN



Al Cornett Slade KY



Sue Stiles Lexington KY

THANKS ALSO TO

Omar Tatum AmeriCandy Co, Louisville, KY

Kathleen Raffoul Houston, TX

Justin Bendell Albuquerque, NM

John Feeney Boulder, CO

Karen Kennedy Marlborough, MA

catherine shank Moab, UT

Rex Peters Cottonwood, AZ

Julie Zych milwaukee, WI

John O'Hara Berlin NJ

Wes Shook Bluff UT

Lewis Downey Salt Lake City, UT



Lisa Braddock & Mark Straka Smiling Dogs Acres, IL



Mike Marooney 'on the road'



Steve Jones Chicago IL

BACKBONE #2
April/May 2014

Dale Lee Sandy, UT



LEE'S FERRY 1966



HERB RINGER came West from his home in New Jersey in 1939. Camera in hand, Herb captured the American West, from the Canadian Border to the Rio Grande and from the Big Sur coast to the High Plains.

We believe Herb's collection of *Life in the West* is one of the finest. His work has been published in *The Zephyr* for 20 years. I am pleased finally, to offer Herb's photographs in color. We are also building a new 'album' of his work, elsewhere on this site.

My dear friend died on December 11, 1998...JS

ON PATROL with EDWARD ABBEY

Tom Wylie

The golden light of October cottonwoods in the canyons was as I remembered. The year was 2002, and I had returned to the Utah canyon country for a rendezvous with a crowd of friends. We had been rangers together during the 1970s and 1980s, employees of the National Park Service or the Bureau of Land Management. Our gathering place was Sand Island, not far west of the town of Bluff.

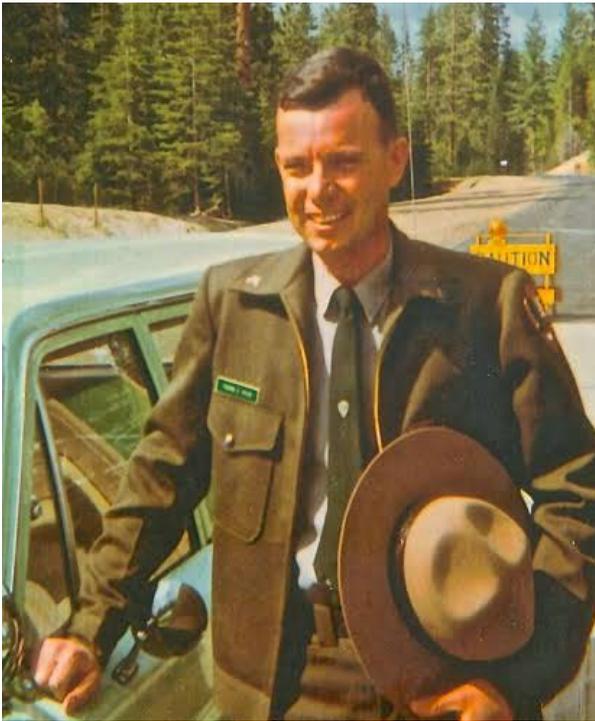
We told stories under the trees, on the trail, and around the campfire. On one of those days, I was talking to Lynell Shalk, a former ranger with the Bureau of Land Management. I said, "This is the most beautiful place on earth, the center of the world."

She said, "You know, don't you, that you just spoke the first line from *Desert Solitaire*?"

"What?"

"This is the most beautiful place on earth."

She was right, but I hadn't read the book in years. I had long ago fallen in love with this country, and I was speaking for myself. Even so, Ed Abbey had much to do with it.



Years earlier, on an April afternoon in Yosemite Valley, I arrived at the ranger office for the evening shift and sorted through my mail slot. A letter was addressed to "Supt; Yosemite National Park" and dated April 4, 1971. The return address was Box 558, Kanab, Utah. No self-respecting secretary could have typed it. The letters on the page were evidence of uneven finger pressure on the keys. The typewriter in question was old, the words on paper indicating typefaces worn and in need of cleaning.

"LIFE Magazine has asked me to write a short article about the problems park rangers have in handling

large crowds during holiday visitations, and in general on the ranger-as-policeman." The writer wanted to "accompany the rangers on some of their patrols" and added that he himself was an ex-seasonal ranger with "a reasonable understanding of the peculiar nature of part of a ranger's work and considerable empathy for his special problems." He would be in the park over the upcoming Easter weekend, April 11th to the 14th. The name of the letter writer—Edward Abbey—meant nothing to me.

Lynell was right, but I hadn't read the book in years. I had long ago fallen in love with this country, and I was speaking for myself. Even so, Ed Abbey had much to do with it.

One of my superiors had written on the letter: "Suggest that our man be Tom Wylie or Don Utterback." My name was framed in red. Did I really want to ride around with some reporter? On the other hand, he had been a ranger himself, and I needed a change of pace.

When I met Mr. Abbey the next day at the ranger office, he was dressed in slacks and a tweed sport coat. He wore no tie, and his shirt was unbuttoned at the collar. His beard was moderately short and neatly trimmed. A hint of gray showed in the beard. His face was weathered, and there was a squint to eyes whose color might have been blue. Polite and soft-spoken, he reminded me of a college professor. We arranged to meet at the afternoon shift change, and he drove away in a blue Pontiac sedan to check in at Yosemite Lodge. A good-looking, well-dressed woman sat beside him.

Abbey showed up for patrol in old jeans, a khaki shirt, and hiking boots that had seen their share of trails. He had left his professor image hanging on the clothes rod in his room at the Lodge. In the patrol car I asked him about his ranger work. I recall only that he had worked at Arches National Monument. He was friendly enough but didn't talk

much, especially about himself. We didn't have a lot of time to talk anyway, and his job was to ply me with questions. He mostly watched and listened and made notes. In my own notes I jotted down license plate numbers, names and addresses, times of contacts, suspicions, and a few incident details^{3/4}rough work notes. There is no mention of Abbey in them. Not long into the first night of patrol, I realized that having him with me was going to be no trouble at all. He never got in my way, and I appreciated that.

Three nights earlier in Camp 15, I had spotted a man working on the left-front headlight of an old 1955 Porsche with faded yellow paint and a dented left door. He was working under the equivalent of a streetlight. The whole scene seemed out of place. There was a subtle shift in his manner the moment he noticed my patrol car. On foot, I quieted campers, visited at campfires, and worked my way toward the auto repairman. Before I reached him I saw the Porsche leaving. I returned to my car and followed. The driver turned the wrong way onto the one-way road at the campground entrance, and I pulled him over. He said that he wasn't camped there. "I'm just visiting friends," he said.



"LIFE Magazine has asked me to write a short article about the problems park rangers have in handling large crowds during holiday visitations, and in general on the ranger-as-policeman."

I called the dispatcher to run a check on the man and his car. Nothing. Most park visitors would have received a verbal warning from me, but this man had aroused my suspicion. For my part, I had learned to never reveal my suspicions. I wrote a warning ticket and let him go. The information might or might not become part of a case file.

The next morning a man staying at Yosemite Lodge came into the ranger office to report the overnight removal and theft of auto parts and accessories from his 1955 Porsche. A left front headlight and trim ring were among the items taken off the car.

Now, at 9:30 in the evening with Abbey in the passenger seat, there was the yellow Porsche again in Camp 15. We walked into the campsite. With what I knew and what I could see in plain sight there in the campfire light and flashlight beam, I had caught the man with stolen goods. I pulled out my handcuffs. Score one for the "tree fuzz."

The weekend and Edward Abbey came and went. A few days later, Warren White, a fellow ranger, asked me, "Do you know about Ed Abbey? Have you read his book?"

"Yes and no. He's some guy writing an article for LIFE. — What book?"

"Desert Solitaire." Warren said that Abbey had something different to say. He urged me to read it and I did.

Later, when I left Yosemite, Warren gave me a paperback copy of *Desert Solitaire*. The book is old now, the pages yellowed and well thumbed. Inside the cover, Warren had written, "Caution: May cause anarchy — but also love of the desert." Warren was right in his assessment, though I do not admit to any culpable act of anarchy.

When Abbey's story "The Park That Caught Urban Blight" appeared in LIFE's September 3rd (1971) issue at the end of the summer, someone two or three steps above me in rank complained about Abbey and what he had written. As for me, I thought Ed Abbey wrote the truth.

I had never seen the Moab country, but *Desert Solitaire* planted a seed. I wanted to live and work in one of the parks there, but jobs weren't available. I applied to other parks and was fortunately turned down. The following summer a job opening at Canyonlands National Park caught my eye. One year after Abbey's article was published in LIFE, I arrived in Moab with my family and went to work as the district ranger at Island in the Sky. The power of *Desert Solitaire* to draw a person to that corner of Utah had manifested itself. I would learn I was not the only one.

Riding on patrol with Ed Abbey was a chance encounter. It has little real significance except to me, but people who know about Abbey want to hear the story. I was merely a participant in the encounter. It wasn't Ed Abbey in person who influenced me. It was his book *Desert Solitaire* that altered my life. For the curious reader, Abbey's article in LIFE was later published in *The Journey Home* in a slightly expanded form. It is called "Re-

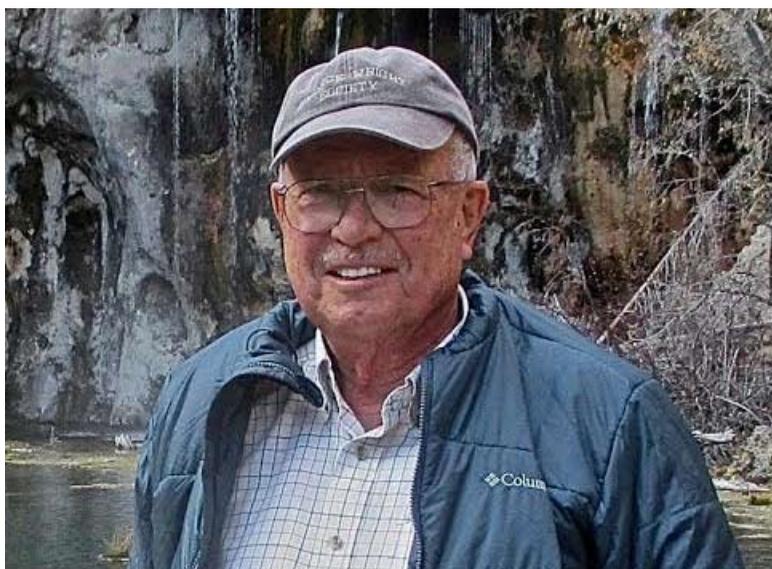
turn to Yosemite: Tree Fuzz vs. Freaks." I am chronicled there as "Ranger Tom Wylie, supervisor of the night shift"—a sort of limited immortality.

became a part of me.

I want to be walking in some wild canyon, or across some plateau or mesa top, or to go adrift down one of the great canyon rivers, communing with ravens, kestrels, and ghosts. Ghosts of ancients who painted and carved on the canyon walls. Ghosts from the sheepherder camps and the cowboy camps. Ghosts of memory.

I return to Abbey's country as often as I can. When I go there, it is most like coming home to the woman I love after a long absence. It is still the most beautiful place on earth. It is still the center of the world.

TOM WYLIE is retired from the National Park Service after a distinguished career and lives with his wife in Centennial, Colorado. On a personal note, I was a seasonal at Arches NP when Tom worked across the road at Canyonlands. He was the guy we all wanted to work for. Tom Wylie has always been one of 'the good guys.'...JS



Certainly I owe Ed something for the best years of my life—12 years and a few months in the canyon country. I am still tethered to this land. It is home even though I have been gone for more than twice those 12 years.

Abbey and I crossed paths again at Island in the Sky. Another time I saw him in Moab with his young daughter at the high-school gym where the Utah Symphony was playing in concert. At Ken Sleight's bookstore, Abbey and illustrator Robert Crumb signed my tenth-anniversary copy of *The Monkey Wrench Gang*. That was it. Sometimes the crossing of paths leads to acquaintance or even friendship, but it didn't happen. I have been one both blessed and afflicted by reticence, and I just didn't want to bother the man.

A year or so after the Sand Island gathering, I read *Desert Solitaire* again. Not only had I used the first sentence in *Desert Solitaire* that day at Sand Island, I also had unconsciously appended to it another phrase from the book: "the center of the world." Ed Abbey speaks from the page and stakes his claim: "I put on a coat and step outside. Into the center of the world, God's navel, Abbey's country, the red wasteland."

More than I had realized, Abbey's book changed how I looked at and lived in the world. Ed Abbey was and is a hot coal in my conscience. I became his "moderate extremist," though assuredly more moderate than extreme.

Certainly I owe Ed something for the best years of my life—12 years and a few months in the canyon country. I am still tethered to this land. It is home even though I have been gone for more than twice those 12 years. I studied and learned the land, not only from the written word but also from wandering to and fro in it, often alone. The place

MATT ROBERTS
Austin TX

THE BACKBONE for OCT/NOV 2013

STEVE PEAKE
Nashville KY

BARNEY McCULLOCH
Louisville KY

ALSO...

BARB WARNER
Kanab UT
KEVIN HEDRICK
Allston MA



DAVE YARBROUGH & BECKY DUNKEL
"DISTANT DUET"
Kentucky/Oregon



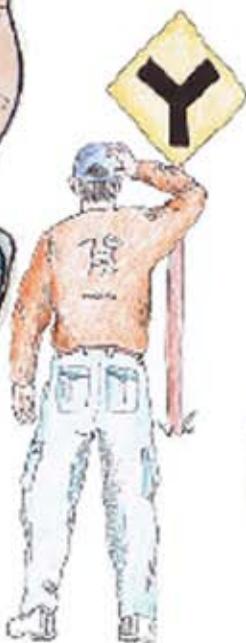
TOM WYLIE
Centennial CO



KAY & TUCK FORSYTHE
Ellensburg WA



LEWIS DOWNEY
SLC Utah



DON BAUMGARDT
El Paso TX



PAUL VLACHOS...NY, NY

Why DID Ed Abbey Throw Those Beer Cans on the Highway?

A Mystery (Partly) Explained

By Scott Thompson

"I tossed my empty out the window and popped the top from another can of Schlitz. Littering the public highway? Of course I litter the public highway. Every chance I get. After all, it's not the beer cans that are ugly; it's the highway that is ugly."

– Edward Abbey

Was this simply a gesture of contempt by a smug writer for the rules of society that ordinary people have to follow? In short, was he just acting like an asshole? That's more or less how one eyewitness took it in this account by Ed's old buddy Jack Loeffler:

"We drove through the late afternoon light northward until we finally reached Green River. Ed and I drank beer all the way. Every time Ed finished a beer, he tossed the empty bottle out the window of the car, spewing glass in his wake. I had grown used to this behavior over the years, but Kath [Loeffler's wife] couldn't stand it...

...
(With Loeffler driving...)

"Quit throwing your bottles out," said Kath.

"Nope. I can throw beer bottles out whenever I want to," said Ed.

"Behind every great man is an asshole," said Kath.

"That got to Ed and me and we both started to laugh uncontrollably, Renee's car weaving through the night on a course of its own." (Adventures with Ed, 2002, pp. 234-235.)

This was an understandable reaction on her part. Trouble is, as an explanation it doesn't quite fit. Because whatever Ed Abbey was he wasn't petty, nor was he given to cheap efforts at self-promotion.

Well, what about alcohol abuse? Does that explain anything here? That Ed drank heavily at times doesn't by itself tell us much. The relevant question is whether he became an alcoholic. And as a professional alcohol and drug counselor I think the evidence in his case is ambiguous (and that in itself is unusual).

The reason this question matters is that practicing addicts lose that sensitive touch which makes emotional intimacy possible. As a result the addict persistently acts in a mean-spirited way that seriously damages close relationships. Recent brain imaging research confirms the importance of this point: the pre-frontal cortex, the part of the brain that processes both verbal and non-verbal relationship cues, is at least somewhat impaired in unrecovered addicts.

But strangely, even though Ed was clearly tolerant to alcohol, I don't see serviceable evidence that he ever lost that touch. In fact, throughout his adult life he maintained close relationships with friends who shared his most serious professional and personal interests. Jack Loeffler would not have written a fine, 290 page biography of Ed if Ed had merely been a co-swallower. They had a much richer connection than that.

More significant still, Ed maintained a continuing relationship of the greatest emotional and spiritual intimacy with the wild landscapes of the American West from the first time he laid eyes on them as a young man. I have never encountered such a phenomenon in a practicing addict.

So no, I don't think Ed threw beer containers on the highway merely because he was



To the contrary, it could be said that he was putting a comic wrapper around an issue that at its core couldn't have been more tender-hearted and relevant. A paradoxical approach that was characteristic of Abbey.

obnoxious or because of his drinking. He was too much in touch with people for that.

To the contrary, it could be said that he was putting a comic wrapper around an issue that at its core couldn't have been more tender-hearted and relevant. A paradoxical approach that was characteristic of him.

First, the comic wrapper. Ed's crack about the beer cans and the ugliness of the highway, reinforced by his inveterate beer tossing, served as an ongoing punch line. It had the classical elements of shock and absurdity, applied with a deft touch. Ed knew as well as anyone that comedy is a subtle art that can hit like a sledgehammer.

Second, what's inside the wrapper. Ed wanted his readers to understand that even a single paved road can be as much a means of destruction as a revolver or a rocket launcher or an AK-47, and he knew this from first-hand experience. And he was more than willing to offend readers who refused to widen their vision enough to see this.

Here is how he got that first-hand experience. In the late 1950s he was working as a seasonal ranger at Arches National Monument in Utah. At that time it was an isolated outpost, accessible only by a washboard dirt road. While sitting in the secluded desert splendor outside his trailer one afternoon near sundown, "It was then that I heard the discordant note, the snarling whine of a jeep in low range and four-wheel drive...

"...the jeep turned in at my driveway and came right up to the door of the trailer. It was a gray jeep with a U.S. Government decal on the side – Bureau of Public Roads...Inside were three sunburned men...and a pile of equipment...

"...I got the full and terrible story, confirming the worst of my fears. They were a survey crew, laying out a new road into Arches.

"...the new road – to be paved, of course – would cost somewhere between half a million and one million dollars...

"...Don't worry, they said, this road will be built... when this road is built you'll get ten, twenty, thirty times as many tourists in here as you get now..."

"As I type these words several years after the little episode of the gray jeep and the thirsty engineers, all that was foretold has come to pass...you will now find serpentine streams of baroque automobiles pouring in and out...in numbers that would have seemed fantastic when I worked there: from 3,000 to 30,000 to 300,000 per year, the 'visitation,' as they call it, mounts ever upward." (Desert Solitaire, 1968, pp. 43-44.)

Indeed, in 2012 the visitation at Arches topped 1,000,000.

Let me take this principle from my work as a counselor: when a person repeatedly says and does something with great depth of feeling that on the face of it seems irrational, there's a good chance that something horrible has happened either to him or to someone he loves. In Ed's case that someone was the delicate wildness and spiritual solitude of

Western lands in which he had immersed himself and which he deeply loved. They were as alive to him as any woman, man, or child with a measurable heartbeat, and they were just as vulnerable to abuse and exploitation.

Indeed, the destruction of the wildness of Arches National Monument (now Arches National Park) by unrelieved vehicular congestion - via that single paved road - was a process that was inexorably repeated on wild lands throughout his beloved West. It decimated one sublime horizon after another. Like the slaughter of the Buffalo in the 19th century, this plethora of paved roads in previously remote places was annihilating what was precious to him.

A defining characteristic of fiercely determined activists, the ones who refuse to be intimidated by people in power, is having suffered a hideous personal loss or degradation. Segregation in the American South was ended by African-American street protesters who were willing to die rather than endure it any longer. And motor vehicle deaths have been substantially reduced by Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), an organization of mothers whose children were killed by drunk drivers.

When it came to protecting his beloved wild lands from degradation, Ed Abbey was an

activist of this kind. The real deal. And something extra.

You can see this in the Introduction to his 1977 book *The Journey Home*, wherein he employed his comic manner to explain that he was not a "naturalist" writer, as establishment critics had ignorantly assumed: "...the only birds I can recognize without hesitation are the turkey vulture, the fried chicken, and the rosy-bottomed skinny-dipper...I'll never make it as a naturalist. If a label is required say that I am one who loves unfenced country." (p. xiii.) And then came his central point: "My home is the American West. All of it..." adding that his book was "in its emphasis an effort to defend that home against alien invaders – as will be shown – from another world." (pp. xiii-xiv.)

A more subdued and less comedic way to say this is that just because in the early 20th century we Americans learned how to pave roads for automobiles doesn't mean we knew how to use those roads. Or that we know now.

That "something extra" was Ed's intuitive vision, and in that he had few peers. Consider the following from his story "The Second Rape of the West" in The Journey Home, the first paragraph of which featured Ed's quote on tossin' beer cans. Bear in mind that he wrote these words almost forty years ago:

"An immediate and required step forward is stabilization of the energy growth rate. This will be forced upon us sooner than expected in any case." (p.184.) As far as I can tell Ed didn't know anything about climate change, but he sure was right about the energy growth rate slamming into a wall called reality. The irony is that we wouldn't be in the climate crisis or in it nearly as deep if our leaders back then had had the wisdom to take what Ed said to heart. We'd probably still be phasing out fossil fuels, but the required pace would be much reduced and our economic system would not be in the mortal dan-

That level of insight is evidence of Ed's intuitive gift: in seeing what was happening to the wildness of the land, the destruction of which most people remain blind to even today, he sensed what was happening to the planet as a whole.

ger it is in now.

That level of insight is evidence of Ed's intuitive gift: in seeing what was happening to the wildness of the land, the destruction of which most people remain blind to even today, he sensed what was happening to the planet as a whole. The intuitive function, if it's strong, goes far beyond what the conscious mind is aware of.

The next quote is from the same story: "If we are driven to manufacture synthetic fuels from coal or to squeeze oil from shale rock – a silly proposition on the face of it – we shall find ourselves expending as much energy as we gain; the net profit becomes marginal. This is the reason the power companies and oil corporations are demanding subsidies from the government." (p.184.) While in Ed's day tar sands weren't being touted by the energy industry, his insight applies equally well to them and especially to the fiasco of the proposed Keystone XL pipeline. Note that in recent years the climate scientist James Hansen has repeatedly said that (1) it is the government's ongoing fossil fuel subsidies that continue to mislead the public into believing that such fuels are inexpensive, and (2) utilizing unconventional fossil fuels has proved to be not only a silly proposition but the pathway of choice to a climate hell.

My last quote is also from that story: "It is time to begin phasing out the auto industry...Put those men to work making things we need: passenger trains; small, lightweight, efficient buses; bicycles that will last a lifetime...." (p. 186.) Again, just imagine the reduction in CO2 emissions over the last few decades if our leaders had listened to Ed. Instead of the gigantic increases in those emissions that our children and grandchildren

will have to cope with.

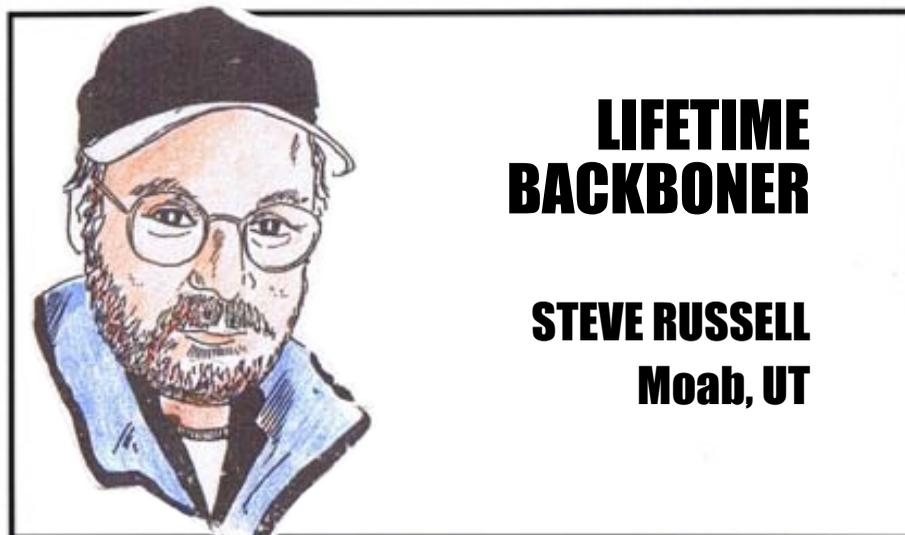
Two points in closing. First of all, I don't want to portray Ed as some kind of seer. I disagree with a number of things he said, sometimes strongly. Also, the guy was an enigma and construing what he wrote often involves more than a little guesswork. Sometimes you end up scratching your head.

And a word for Kath: even though watching Ed throw beer bottles out the window was annoying for you, in truth he was hitting a bulls-eye.

Note: I am in no way advocating illegal littering or driving under the influence of mood-altering substances. I am all for lawful behavior and utilizing the First Amendment.

SCOTT THOMPSON is a regular contributor to The Zephyr.

He lives in Beckley, WV.



LIFETIME BACKBONER

STEVE RUSSELL
Moab, UT

NEW BACKBONE MEMBER for February-March 2014



Toni McConnel
Flagstaff, AZ



Beau MacGregor
Seattle, WA



Judy Fitzgerald
Kirup, Western Australia



Terry Weiner
San Diego, CA



Scott Thompson
Beckley, WV



Karilyn & John Brodell
Jackson WY



Lynn Jackson
Moab, UT



Craig Goodnight
Grand Jct, CO



Michael Cohen

AND THANKS TO:
Laurie Schmidt
Fort Collins, CO

Doug Varn
Oak Park, IL

Curtis Oberhansly
Boulder, UT

Patrick O'Driscoll
Denver, CO

Marilyn Hempel
Redlands, CA

Eric Probasco
Mount Pleasant, UT

Dennis Brown
Telluride, CO

Greg Gnesios
Grand Junction, CO

ALSO NEW BUT UN-TOONED BACKBONE MEMBERS...

Eileen Caryl

Glenwood Springs, CO

Fred Kahrl Woolwich, ME

The Desert Protective Council turns 60-

a bird's eye view by Terry Weiner

How does a small, scrappy desert conservation organization, unheard of by most westerners, funded mainly by membership dues and run by volunteers for most of its 60 years, continue to make its voice heard on proposals for large energy development projects and other misguided ideas for exploitation of irreplaceable natural and cultural resources for private profit on our public lands in the Mojave and Sonoran Deserts?

The Desert Protective Council (DPC) continues to be the longest-lived desert conservation organization in the U.S. for a combination of reasons. First, DPC's educational mission and goal to protect the unique features of the deserts are still extremely relevant. Also, DPC's founders were some of the most respected biologists, educators and conservationists of the day. Perhaps too, the DPC continues to play a role in desert conservation due to the loyalty and support of its long-term members and advisory panel members and because, despite its small size, DPC has for decades consistently "shown up" and participated in important desert land use planning processes and continues to speak out, without compromise, against damaging development proposals such as the rash of current desert-wide large-scale solar and wind development proposals.

Beginnings

The Desert Protective Council was established on October 23 1954 around a campfire in Deep Canyon at the base of the Santa Rosa Mountains in the Coachella Valley of southern California.



The DPC's conception was a bit earlier than that. Former DPC President Harry C. James started an outdoor organization for boys in 1913-14, called the Trailfinders. Several times per year, Trailfinders sponsored a Conservation Forum to which many adult Trailfinders alumni and representatives of other outdoor organizations came to talk about "the many matters connected with preservation of our outdoor heritage." It was at one of these meetings in the early 1950s that attendees

suggested the need for a conservation group whose primary interest would be the desert regions of the Southwest. A small committee of five was set up to verify this need and to figure out how best to get such a group going. Committee members included Randall Henderson of Palm Desert, editor of *Desert Magazine* and Harry C. James serving as Chairman. They invited all the people they knew who were interested in deserts to meet together at a picnic supper. Randall Henderson selected a spot for the supper at the entrance to Deep Canyon. Organizers had decided that if 20 or so people showed up, it would demonstrate sufficient interest to warrant an attempt to establish such an organization. More than 100 persons gathered around that historic campfire at the mouth of Deep Canyon on October 23 1954.

Despite its small size, DPC has for decades consistently "shown up" and participated in important desert land use planning processes and continues to speak out, without compromise, against damaging development proposals such as the rash of current desert-wide large-scale solar and wind development proposals

Some of the most outspoken conservationists of the day were present at that formative meeting, including renowned biologist Edmund Jaeger, Dr. Ernest Tinkham, Dr. Henry Weber, as well as Harry James and Randall Henderson. The initial discussion that day was about how best to protect Joshua Tree National Monument and other desert landscapes threatened by development and exploitation.

DPC founders understood that without a public knowledgeable about and with actual experience of the desert, they would be fighting a losing battle to try to convince land managers and legislators to protect the desert from exploitation. Humans will only stand up for that which they know and love. Thus the heart of DPC's mission is desert education. DPC attempts to educate the public and decision makers by disseminating information of all aspects of the desert. It does this, through informing members of events and lectures about the desert, by encouraging them to participate in DPC meetings and campouts, through the publication of quarterly Educational Bulletins about desert plants, animals, desert soils, land use plans and other desert-related topics. The DPC aims to cultivate appreciation and a sense of wonder and respect and a desire to

protect the unique features, the archaeology and cultural history, the scientific, spiritual and recreational values of the desert.

DPC in a Nutshell:

The rich 60-year story of the Desert Protective Council would require a book to fully relate.



The DPC was incorporated as a non-profit 501(c)(4) membership organization in July 1955. At early meetings, the DPC elected 15 Board Directors, crafted their mission statement and established by-laws. Randall Henderson served as the first DPC president; other Directors included Dr. Henry Weber and biologist Edmund Jaeger. The new directors decided that a desert education organization required an Advisory Panel and they set to work nominating ten well-known people in their fields, including a university professor, a national park service naturalist and a director of a natural history museum. The group had decided that the Desert Protective Council would be membership-dues funded and managed strictly by a volunteer Board and members, which it continued to be for nearly 50 years. They agreed that to incorporate as a c4 would suit their goals better than as a c3 because the organization wanted to be able to speak out on all issues without constraint and involve itself in political lobbying as necessary. Over the decades, the size of DPC's membership and participation has fluctuated, but its scope of interest to protect and preserve unique features and resources of all the southwest deserts remains the same.

Original membership dues were \$1.00 annually, which included the subscription to the quarterly newsletter, the *El Paisano*, the ability to vote on all important policy decisions and on changes to DPC by-laws and an invitation to the DPC Annual Membership meeting. To this day, the DPC continues to publish a quarterly newsletter with the Roadrunner masthead. The charming roadrunner is pervasive throughout the west and early westerners' affectionately called the bird Paisano or countryman.

The DPC began to publish the *El Paisano* in the Spring of 1955. In these fascinating 1950s quarterly volumes, the reader learns that the founders and members of the fledgling organization hit the ground running, immediately forming issues committees, informing themselves about issues related to their particular interest and taking action on controversial plans for the desert across Arizona, California, Nevada and Utah.

There apparently was no scarcity of ill-advised proposals for the desert even in the 1950s. Early newsletters document the political savvy and lack of timidity of the early Board and advisory panel members. Some of the problems DPC tackled in the early years, such as the threat from uranium mining in Joshua Tree and the battle to save the Grand Canyon from a dam, have been solved, but a plethora of new threats to the desert have arisen that could not have been conceived of in the 1950s. The onslaught of bad ideas for the use of our deserts has increased with the growing human population of the southwest. Exploitation of the desert for minerals and desert ground water, military expansion, poaching, rampant resort development, industrialization by massive energy projects and transmission lines, new freeways and the proliferation of off-road vehicles continue to fragment desert habitats.

The desert has been transformed over the past six decades. Many of the desert communities now sprawled across our four great American southwestern deserts did not even exist in the mid-50s.

A few highlights of DPC's major campaigns over the decades:

DPC was an active participant in the work that led to the crafting of the 1976 Federal Lands Policy and Management Act (FLPMA). Prior to the formation of FLPMA, there was no Bureau of Land Management and no organized management or protection of America's vast wealth of public lands. Off-roaders ran rampant, miners dug tens of thousands of mines at will, cities and counties dumped garbage where they pleased and hunting and poaching was out of control. Of course, the "multiple use mandate" of the BLM to manage our resources for a stunning array of "uses" is turning out to be the

Achilles' heel of FLPMA and our federal public lands continue to be coveted for all manner of unsustainable projects, including industrial scale solar and wind.

The Desert Protective Council was an active participant in the creation of the 1980 California Desert Plan. DPC made this a major campaign and through letters and lobbying by DPC members, the final California Desert Conservation Area Plan (CDCA) contained more protective language than was initially included in the bill. The CDCA, by creating use classes for various parts of the desert, added a layer of protection to millions of acres of the California Desert.



Our federal public lands continue to be coveted for all manner of unsustainable projects, including industrial scale solar and wind.

DPC was a major player in the 8-year battle to pass the California Desert Protection Act of 1994. Long-term DPC Advisory Panel Frank Wheat wrote the classic history of the passage of the CDPA: California Desert Miracle, which is a must-read for those interested in learning just what is involved in passing land protection laws in this country.

DPC spearheaded the successful campaign to stop the plan to cut a road from the top of the Santa Rosa Mountains down through Coyote Canyon in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, thereby protecting a beautiful desert riparian area, an important haven for the endangered Peninsular Bighorn Sheep.

Over many discussions and committee meetings and consultations with several agencies and experts, DPC's Anza-Borrego Committee evolved and broke away in the late 1960s and became the Anza-Borrego Foundation (ABF). This successful land trust has worked to purchase and handed over 50,000 acres of private in-holdings in and around Borrego Springs to Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.

Between 2000 and 2004, the DPC participated as a member in the California State Park's Department of Parks and Recreation Division's OHV Stakeholders' Roundtable, the task of which was to review all the regulations governing the CA OHV Program. This effort resulted in the group crafting legislation improving the OHV Program regulations. AB 2274 passed both CA congressional houses unanimously because of the support of the legislation by a wide range of stakeholders.

The recent decade:

In 2001, big changes occurred in the organization when DPC, along with two other conservation organizations, settled a lawsuit against the Gold Fields Mining Corporation on an inaccurately appraised land exchange to create a huge landfill in eastern Imperial County CA. Each organization obtained \$1.6 million dollars from the settlement, with the stipulation that the funds would be used specifically for the protection of the environment and the public health in Imperial County. This lawsuit settlement heralded an opportunity for the DPC to become engaged in major desert protection and education efforts in this eastern corner of the California Desert. In 2004, the DPC Board decided to hire its first-ever full-time staff person to coordinate the expenditure of the "Mesquite Fund" for worthy conservation and education projects in Imperial County.

Over the past decade, the DPC has funded many major and minor projects in Imperial County, including donating \$86,000 to finish building the interior of the Imperial Valley College Desert Museum in Ocotillo, CA. Through the Mesquite fund, the DPC granted \$150,000 over three years to the Center for Biological Diversity for an Imperial County legal desert advocate. DPC supported several desert educational artistic projects, including Andrew Harvey's Algodones Dunes traveling photographic exhibit and Christina Lange's Visions of the Salton Sea photographic exhibit and Portraits of the Salton Sea book featuring the human residents and visitors of the Salton Sea area and their reasons for loving and living around the Salton Sea.

In 2007-2009, DPC contributed major funding to the Sierra Club to hire an organizer to develop a coalition and campaign against the building of a 500kv transmission line, the notorious Sunrise Powerlink, across Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. This campaign was successful in defeating the line through the state park, although sadly the Sunrise Powerlink has been strung instead over 100 miles through the desert and through San Diego's wild backcountry, impacting the Cleveland National Forest and rural communities.

Between 2004 and 2014, DPC has been a major donor (over \$140,00) to the Anza-Borrego Foundation's Camp Borrego overnight environmental "tent" camp for fifth graders in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park. DPC's funding has enabled over 900 Impe-

next page...

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DPC..continued

rial Valley fifth-graders to attend the two-night overnight camp during which time the Camp Coordinator and her staff teach lessons about the plants and animals of the Colorado Desert. The students sleep in Mongolian yurts, view the stars through a telescope, take a hike in Palm Canyon, uncover fossils and learn about the career of paleontologist at the Paleo Lab and have a “scavenger hunt” at the State Park visitor center.

DPC’s legacy project in Imperial County is the Salton Basin Living Laboratory Field Trip Curriculum (SBLL). In 2008, DPC contracted with a desert scientist/educator to create place-based science curriculum about the geology, ecology and the human history of the Salton Basin that supplements Imperial County’s 4th through 6th grade general science curriculum. The SBLL Program is a model for place-based elementary school science education, which is sadly lacking in this country. Between 2008 and 2012, more than thirty Imperial Valley teachers took our SBLL teacher-training workshops and incorporated some of our materials into their science lessons. The curriculum has been introduced to more than a thousand 4th through 6th grade students and their parents. The field trip to Anza-Borrego Desert State Park is an integral part of the Salton Basin Program. The students have produced a variety of interesting reflections and projects based on the field trip experiences.

What has not changed over six decades?

The desire by corporations and interest groups to exploit the desert for its unique resources has not changed, although the type and magnitude of proposed projects have changed and, in view of the cumulative impacts from past and ongoing deleterious impacts, are much more menacing threats to what is left of the integrity of our southwest desert.

What has changed?

What stands out about the activism and ability of the early DPC to be effective was an on-the-ground intimate knowledge of the desert. Many of DPC’s early members lived in desert cities, but most of them joined the Desert Protective Council because they were avid desert campers and hikers and naturalists who ventured out into the desert regularly to explore and camp out under the stars. They knew the desert from personal experience and could testify with credibility to the values of its terrain, plants and animals and unique geological features. Some of the DPC regular general meetings included a campout or a naturalist-led hike, Annual Membership meetings, held in October of each year to celebrate the DPC’s anniversary, were traditionally held at some wonderful desert state park or national monument and included an overnight desert campout.

Today many sincere and committed desert activists and conservation organizations and their Board directors are urbanites. The large, well-funded national environmental organizations are mostly based in large cities, far from the desert. Too many conservation organization executive directors and staff have never spent time in the desert. Additionally, traffic patterns, work loads, information overload and technological distraction contribute to the fact that today’s conservationists and would-be land protectors do not have time nor do they make time to indulge in weekend camping trips or steep themselves in the experience of wild places. This lack of direct experience of the desert and disconnection from nature in general contributes to the lack of passion and will to fight the battles to protect our irreplaceable, wondrous deserts.

In view of the above circumstances and the urgent need to educate the public and our representatives about the importance of the desert, DPC recently spearheaded a campaign to raise seed money for an educational desert documentary. By the end of 2013, the DPC had successfully raised \$25,000 seed money with which to engage award-winning filmmakers, Backcountry Pictures www.backcountrypictures.com to embark upon research and development of a desert documentary for television about the beauty, wonder and fragility of the Mojave and Sonoran deserts. The filmmakers, Sally Kaplan and David Vassar, finished initial desert scouting for filming locations this spring and are now working on the creative treatment. The next step will be to raise major funding from foundations and large donors that will be essential to the film production. This desert documentary, if picked up by PBS or the Nature Channel, could awaken a new interest in broad swaths of the nation-wide TV-viewing population.



To learn more about the Desert Protective Council and its current and past projects, or to join or donate: www.dp-cinc.org or call or email DPC’s Conservation and Projects Coordinator, Terry Weiner at (619) 342-5524 or terryweiner@sbcglobal.net.



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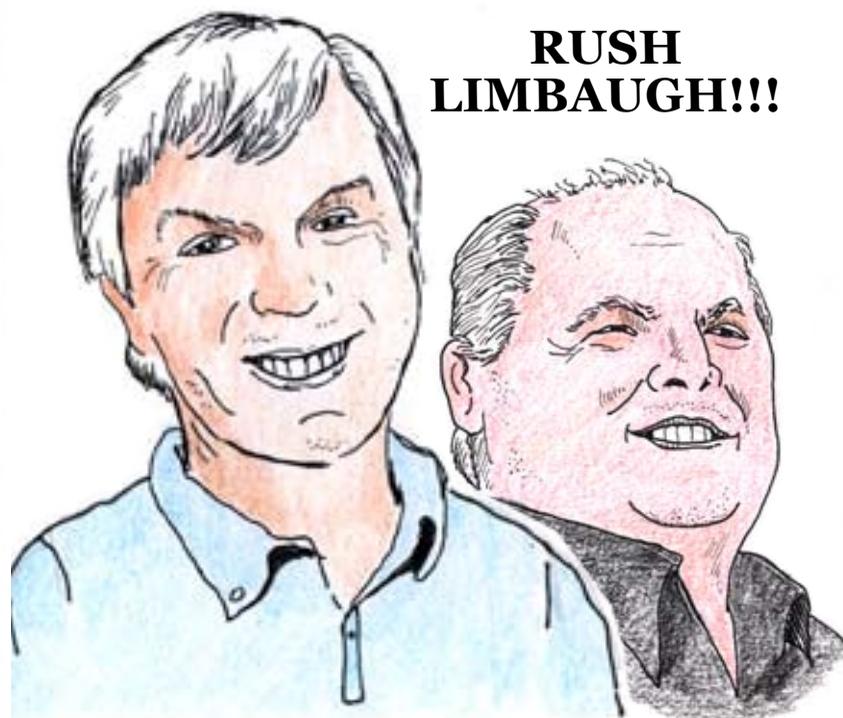
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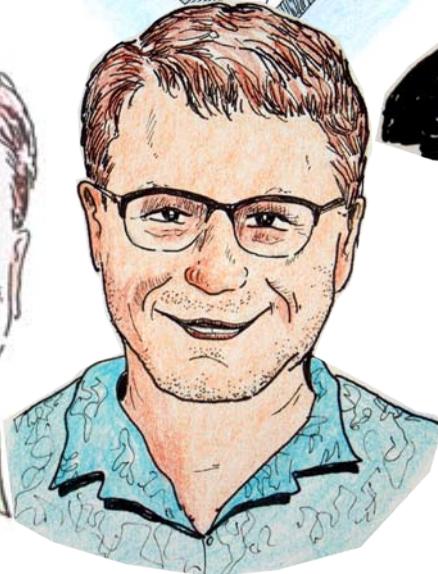
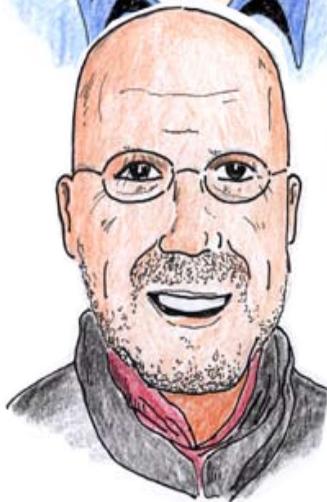
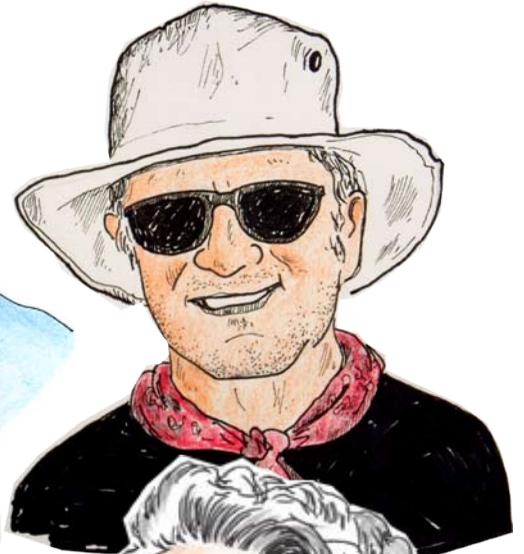
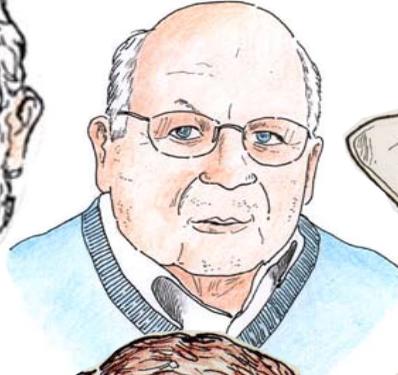
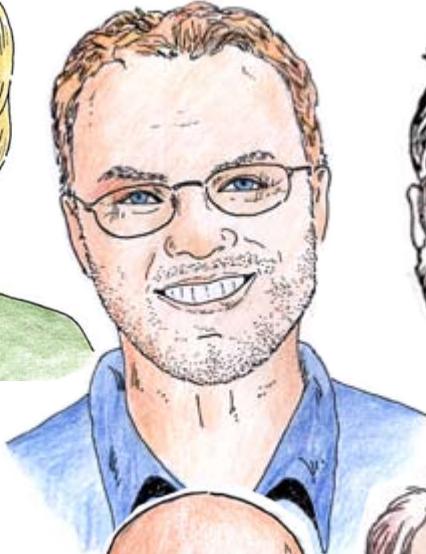
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From the August 2000 Archives...An Interview with DR. RICHARD INGEBRETSSEN President of the Glen Canyon Institute

EDITOR'S NOTE: A Physician, a physicist, a devout Mormon, and an unbridled optimist, Dr. Richard Ingebretsen also wants to drain Lake Powell. In this July 2000 interview, he explains why...JS

Zephyr: Rich you're a very enthusiastic and passionate environmentalist and a devout Mormon in one of the most conservative and, some might say, anti-environmentalist states in the country. In light of all that, how do you remain so darn optimistic?

Rich: That's actually an easy answer. I have a very good feeling about people in general. I believe they'll do the right thing and the right thing is to protect and restore the environment. The LDS Church's views and doctrines, even though it doesn't actually take a political stand, are towards the environment and to protect God's creations. I was brought up in a home and a church environment where I believed that was correct. So I have a very positive feel that things will happen.

Zephyr: But in terms of the reality of it all, for instance, the entire Utah congressional delegation opposes a good wilderness bill. Congressman Hansen thinks the idea of draining Lake Powell is ridiculous. If you venture into southern Utah, wilderness is considered a four letter word. So how do you reconcile your activism with so many Mormons who consider such issues a threat to their lifestyle and culture?

Rich: Good will win out. Good is life and preserving life I really think people will see this. Politics is a different thing--politics is money. It's evil and corrupt. But people have good hearts and they know what's right. They'll see it. Even Jim Hansen will see it. He has an obligation as a politician to protect money. When he said that the fish of the Colorado River are trash, he was just being stupid. Honestly I don't look at those guys as real bright, so I don't worry about them. They're politicians.

But people know what's right. Honestly people are willing to make sacrifices if we give them good alternatives. It'll work.

Good will win out. Good is life and preserving life I really think people will see this. Politics is a different thing--politics is money. It's evil and corrupt. But people have good hearts and they know what's right. They'll see it.

Zephyr: Okay...look at the people in Garfield County. I don't think, for the most part, it's greed that drives their opposition to environmental issues as much as the perceived threat of an assault on their lifestyle. How do you turn them around?

Rich: You're asking a question about education. My experience is, people are afraid of change, they're afraid of the future, of the unknown. That's the problem we have with Lake Powell. We have to teach people that these are correct and righteous principles and if we can do that, people will listen. Almost everyone I speak to about draining Lake Powell, afterwards supports it. There are always some people who will oppose things like this, but I guarantee you, if you can sit down with an opponent and have a rational conversation with them and show them that jobs will be preserved and still restore the river, most people aren't afraid. In this state, in particular, draining Lake Powell is a huge change and I don't blame people for being scared by it. I don't even mind Jim Hansen opposing it. As a politician he should oppose it--as a politician, maintaining the status quo is what politicians do. What I do object to is when people won't listen to the other side. That is a problem but we don't find it too often.

Zephyr: Let's go back to the origins of your interest in the reservoir.

You're the president of the Glen Canyon Institute. But your love for this place goes back to when you were a kid.

Rich: When I was a Boy Scout, we took a trip down to the new reservoir. It had barely begun to fill. We put in at Wahweap and went up the canyon. You could see that the reservoir was coming up, but most of the side canyons were untouched and lined with trees. The scoutmaster kept pointing as high up as you could see to where the lake would fill. I remember hiking up Forbidding Canyon to Rainbow Bridge. It was a long and hot hike and around each bend we hoped we'd see the bridge. Finally it came into view and it was just awe-inspiring. We climbed up on the bridge--it was scary as it could be--and then we came back down and splashed in the pools. Even then, I remember feeling sad that all this was going to be under water.

Later, we crossed the river and spent some time in an alcove and again I was reminded that all this would be under water too. My scoutmaster said, "Enjoy all this now, because next year it will be gone." That was hard.

I didn't go back for years, when the reservoir was full and I remember being in the boat, staring down into the water, trying to remember what was there. In the early 1990s, while I was in med school I became interested in the river and started reading about it. I heard about David Brower and the Sierra Club's tradeoff on Glen Canyon (In 1956, the Sierra Club agreed to not oppose a dam in Glen Canyon, if the Bureau of Reclamation would drop plans to build a dam on the Green River at Echo Park...JS).

In 1995, I founded the Glen Canyon Institute (GCI) and created a list of eleven or twelve goals. One of them was to raise the issue of draining Lake Powell, but another was to meet Brower. I had never even seen a photo of Brower and then a friend of mine lent me a book that had a likeness of Brower

in it. Here was this dynamic looking man with the white flowing hair. In the book was also a photo of Brower holding a 16 mm camera and I was determined to track down that film and publish it for everyone to see. I called the Sierra Club and they had no idea where the film was. They gave me Brower's number and this all led ultimately to a debate that GCI put together between Brower and Floyd Dominy, the former director of the Bureau of Reclamation. I got Floyd's address from the Bureau and sent him a letter and he accepted.

So they both came and I spent three days with them which was a wonderful experience. I can't tell you how neat that was. As for the film, Brower didn't know where it was. He sent me Phil Pennington's slide show on tape of "The Place No One Knew," and I have to say it was one of the few films I ever cried over. But I still wanted the Brower film. I got a call from John Elles, who was making a documentary of Marc Reisner's Cadillac Desert and he actually tracked it down. We debuted it in October 1996 as "The Lost Films of David Brower;" it was then that I looked at the last goal on my list and decided it was time to go after it--to drain Lake Powell.

When I was a Boy Scout, we took a trip down to the new reservoir. It had barely begun to fill. We put in at Wahweap and went up the canyon. You could see that the reservoir was coming up, but most of the side canyons were untouched and lined with trees. The scoutmaster kept pointing as high up as you could see to where the lake would fill.

Zephyr: Others have dreamed of draining Lake Powell, but for most of us, it's always been the ultimate lost cause. What makes you think this is a goal that can actually be achieved?

Rich: I didn't know if it could be achieved. I didn't even know it was realistic. My girlfriend at the time pleaded with me not to use the words "drain Lake Powell" because she thought I would sound stupid. She said I'd lose all credibility.

I decided that instead of announcing that we wanted to drain Lake Powell, that we'd get everybody together and ask if it was possible. Is there a reason? Can we do it? So I invited everyone in the world I could think of who was associated with Glen Canyon to



a meeting in Salt Lake City. I invited environmentalists, I called the Bureau of Reclamation and asked them to send someone--they sent seven. At this gathering I stood up front and said, "I want to go after Lake Powell; is there a good reason to?" And this one guy from the Bureau stood up and said, "Yes...let me tell you some problems with Lake Powell." He told us the one big problem was the 18 million acre feet of water that had been absorbed by the reservoir's sandstone banks and the evaporative loss. In addition, efforts by BuRec to restore the beaches in the Grand Canyon through a controlled flood had evidently failed. And he said, "We're going to lose the Grand Canyon as well."

That night we had our press conference and announced we were going after Lake Powell. We had our ammunition and 1800 people showed up at Kingsbury Hall...standing room only. And they gave Brower a five minute standing ovation. It was wonderful. Then someone asked if any big environmental group supported us and Brower proposed we go to the Sierra Club board of directors. And they voted by acclamation to support us...of course that's after the big bribe and the...what was it? Half a million dollars? (Rich refers to a recent accusation by a Sierra Club member that David Brower offered the board \$250,000 to support a resolution to drain the Powell Reservoir. He thinks the accusation is as funny as it is ridiculous...JS)



I feel very good about the future and I can almost assure you that in 25 years, the draw-down of Powell will be during that period of time. And the Glen Canyon Institute is going to do everything in its power to see that it's restored. I look forward to the next 25 years...

Zephyr: Tell us about your relationship with Floyd Dominy.

Rich: I am a friend of Floyd Dominy and I'm happy to say that. As an individual he's far more colorful than Brower. David Brower is the visionary and his literary skills are overwhelming. Dominy has none of those skills. Dominy is nuts and bolts, he's a bureaucrat, but he's a funny guy. You would love to be around him. He told me a lot about his life and his heart. He's a distant man. He has no close friends. He won't even let his dog inside. He lives alone in this cold house that reminded me of a mausoleum. The dog came to the door with me and I said, "Mr. Dominy, do you want me to let the dog in?" and he said, "The dog's not allowed in. You can try but he won't come in."

And yet I have a good relationship with him and I keep in touch. I admire him, not for what he did, but for believing in what he did. You can't fault a man for taking his views to other people. He and Brower had a wonderful three days. They argued, especially about the Grand Canyon. Every time the topic came up, Dominy started screaming and pounding the table. After the debate one night, he accused Brower of lying about dams in the Grand Canyon. "You said they were going to be built inside the park and they weren't!" I remember Brower staring straight ahead while Dominy, on his right, was screaming in his ear. Brower didn't flinch.

Once I went back to Virginia to visit Dominy at his house. We watched an advance copy of the documentary film Cadillac Desert and he said, "You're not going to like what I say about Brower...I call him a sanctimonious bastard." Later during the film, Barry Goldwater gets on there and talks about how, if he could change one senate vote, he'd change his vote for Glen Canyon Dam. And Dominy said, "The only difference between that old man and me is that he's lost his mind." That's what he said.

Then I asked him a question, "David Brower makes the claim that you took delight in flooding Glen Canyon...is that true?" And he said, "I took absolute delight." But then he asked me how serious this effort was to drain Lake Powell and I told him it was quite serious. Dominy said, "Well you're doing it all wrong." We were at dinner now and he takes a napkin and draws the dam the side walls. He says, "It's 300 feet of reinforced concrete on those diversion tunnels. You can never drill them out. Just drill new ones around them. It's never been done before but it'll work...I've been thinking about it." And then he said something very stunning. He said, "I'm sorry about the destruction in the Grand Canyon. But is it so bad to have a trout stream down there?" And we said, "Yes."

Zephyr: One of the first times I saw you speak was a couple years ago in Moab. I remember someone asked if you really thought the lake would be drained and you replied, "Absolutely. There's no doubt in my mind." You were so confident, you didn't even pause. Why are you so confident?

Rich: One thing that I don't think people realize is that trends mean absolutely every-

thing. In medicine, stocks, our personal lives, our relationships...it's not where we are, but which way we're going. There is a huge trend toward the environment. We're doing more now than ever in history to preserve the lands. Now there is a huge trend toward restoring ecosystems, not just here in the U.S., but all over the world.

Now specifically, with Glen Canyon Dam, the sediment will do that...when is the question, not if. My opinion is, even without this movement to drain the reservoir, when there's enough sediment in there that the justification for the reservoir no longer exists, then it will go.

Zephyr: Just to clarify that comment, sediment doesn't have to fill the reservoir to render it useless?

Rich: It originally held 27 million acre feet of water. When the sediment reduces the capacity of the reservoir and can't meet the needs of the lower basin, then any argument to keep the reservoir will be gone. As for power, that structure never existed for power. So because of the huge trend to drain it and the sediment, it's an absolute inevitability.

Zephyr: What are some of the other economic and scientific and political reasons why the lake should be drained?

Rich: The reservoir is there for a SINGLE purpose and we need to remind ourselves the way Los Angeles reminded us last November when they said, "Please drain it. We need the water." It is there as a reservoir to hold water for the Lower Basin States. The Upper Basin States don't use the water and they'll never use it. When it no longer meets the needs of the Lower Basin, it will go and that's what will drain Lake Powell.

As for economics, once that happens there are no economics and it will go. Evaporation? In water year 1995 they measured a loss of 667,000 acre feet of water lost to evaporation. I asked to Dominy about that; they knew it would happen. Then there was another 225,000 acre feet lost to bank storage.

But the other thing that will happen, when they can no longer assure the Lower Basin that the reservoir can provide water during a drought, they'll just say, "Just give us the water." Why lose a million acre feet of water when it isn't providing us any benefits?

Zephyr: Who exactly in Los Angeles is asking for the reservoir to be pulled down?

Rich: The commissioners of the Lower Basin. It happened at the Colorado River Users' Meeting in October.

Zephyr: Do you think you'll see this in your lifetime?

Rich: Oh absolutely. Our effort will provide a sound economic and scientific basis that will argue forever that there is a reason to drain it, rather than just saying, "I want to see Glen Canyon again." That accounts for something but you have to give to them numbers and logic. As long as you're applying pressure and you have the numbers, you can look for the weak moments. Look at L.A. wanting the water...believe me, we're going to emphasize this in the fall.

We spoke at a meeting in Las Vegas where the seven Basin commissioners were in attendance. That was historic. They asked us to speak on why we should drain Lake Powell. The commissioners of the Upper and Lower Basin states were there. These are THE water users and they came up afterwards and made some very telling comments to us. They want to see our document (the interim draft release of the citizens' environmental assessment) in the fall and they said this was going to help them manage the Colorado River in a different way. This is a huge step for them to say that an environmental group is going to help manage the Colorado River by the work we're doing.

Zephyr: How consistent is wanting to drain Lake Powell with early Mormon teachings about stewardship of the lands.

Rich: It's not just consistent with early Mormon teachings, it's consistent with current Mormon teachings. We are taught from a very early age that God's creations are sacred. What people always have to weigh in the balance is, what we're doing is destroying God's creations. We are stewards of the land. It's true that it says we're given "dominion" over the land, but if you look at the word, it doesn't mean power, it means stewardship over it. At the Mormonism and the Environment Symposium, (former SLC Mayor) Ted Wilson got up and said, "I'm a Mormon and I'm an environmentalist." I'd alter that to say, "I'm a Mormon; therefore I'm an environmentalist." The teachings are that consistent. There is nothing in the teachings of the Latter Day Saints that would give you the opinion that anything else is true.

Zephyr: You just came back from Alaska...

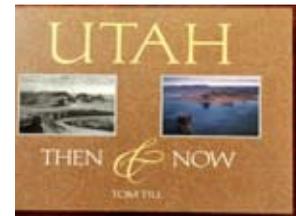
Rich: Alaska is pristine. You know, I have a view that we should preserve land for animals and not even let people in. Alaska has that. They call them preserves and people can walk in there, but it's like walking on tundra for 300 miles. There are no roads and just huge places where there's nobody but the animals. And that's the way it should be. It was just stunning. Absolutely wonderful.

Zephyr: What do you think Utah will look like in 25 years?

Rich: I can remember back 25 years. You know what? I'm not disheartened over the last 25 years. I've seen a lot of good happen. Life has its ups and downs. I would make some changes but I think life is good. We have to fight for the earth. We have to drain Lake Powell. We have to save wilderness. But the people will do that. We'll make things happen. I think the state is going to grow in the metropolitan areas. Moab is going to grow. The Zephyr will become the state's largest newspaper...I feel very good about the future and I can almost assure you that in 25 years, the draw-down of Powell will be during that period of time. And the Glen Canyon Institute is going to do everything in its power to see that it's restored. I look forward to the next 25 years...I think it's going to be fun. Don't you?

POSTSCRIPT: Dr. Ingebretsen is still the president of the Glen Canyon Institute and still believes he will see Glen Canyon, or at least part of it, restored in his lifetime.

from TOM TILL “THEN & NOW”



If I could have one wish, it would be to float the Colorado River through the sinuous gorges of Glen Canyon. I've found in Edward Abbey's Desert Solitaire the best description of such a trip and the heartbreaking beauty found there: "The great Colorado River, wild and free, surging past the base of the towering cliffs, roaring through the boulders below the mouth of Forbidden Canyon..."

Others lucky enough to have visited Glen Canyon before the river was dammed include the late Barry Goldwater, also a photographer, who chronicled his trip in the book Delightful Journey. Goldwater considered his Senate vote to create Lake Powell one of his biggest mistakes.

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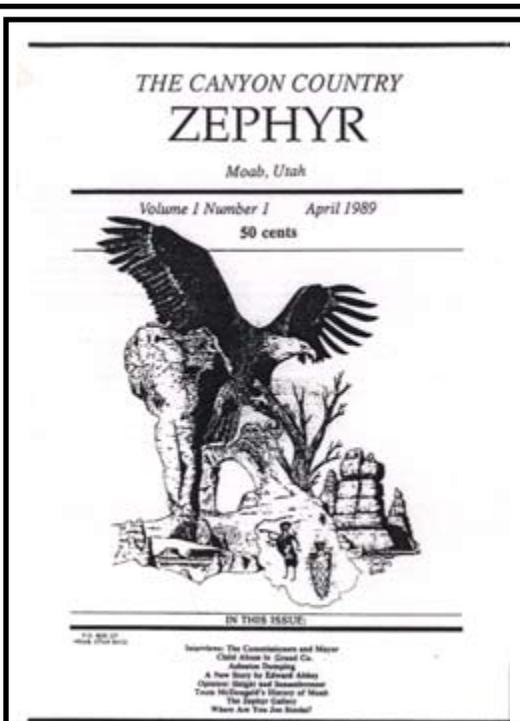
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July 4, 1994

FINAL SUMMARY REPORT

Lake Powell Disaster Congressional Commission

By Thomas S. Budlong

EDITOR'S NOTE: As historic drought shrivels the American Southwest and the Powell Reservoir, it's difficult to imagine a time when TOO MUCH water threatened the very integrity of the massive Glen Canyon Dam. But it did happen, in the spring of 1983. A few years later, Tom Budlong wrote this account of its 'collapse. Still a brilliant, thought-provoking read...JS

The Lake Powell Disaster Congressional Commission was authorized by Congress on November 15, 1992 to investigate the causes and effects of the Lake Powell disaster of July 4, 1992. Approximately 200,000 investigative man-hours have been expended, involving twenty-three different government agencies, thirteen independent contractors, and testimony from over 500 witnesses and experts. It is the opinion of the commission that all currently available data relevant to the event has been recorded. This is a summary of the investigation. All material collected, in formal reports and raw data, is in the custody of the Library of Congress. The Commission members wish to thank all those who have worked on this massive undertaking, with special thanks to the individual members of Congress who have been instrumental in providing avenues for collection of information and testimony. This report is dedicated to the estimated 1300 people who lost their lives in the disaster.

Background

Glen Canyon is located in northern Arizona and southern Utah. At its southern end the canyon is approximately 700 feet deep and 1400 feet wide. It terminates at Lees Ferry, Arizona, where it abruptly exits the Navajo Sandstone geologic formation into a relatively level area. Through the years, numerous dam site suggestions near the end of Glen Canyon have been made; the first was by Major Powell during his historic 1871 voyage down the length of the Colorado River.

After decades of study and negotiation, Congress authorized the Glen Canyon dam in 1957. Sited approximately four and one half miles below the Utah/Arizona border and sixteen river miles upstream from Lees Ferry, it was completed in 1964. The original constructed height was approximately 710 feet, with a width across the top of the dam of 1560 feet. The closest town is Page, Arizona, two miles east, which was created to support the dam. In 1963 the gates of Glen Canyon Dam were closed, restricting flow on the Colorado River to begin forming Lake Powell. In subsequent years the lake filled, creating a reservoir of twenty-seven million acre-feet by 1980. Lake Powell represented one of the major water control features of the Colorado River Storage Project. Turbine generators at Glen Canyon Dam created four billion kilowatt-hours of electricity annually.

Over one million visitors used the lake as a major recreational facility as recently as 1991. On July 4, 1992 a partial collapse of the upper part of the dam released more than one third of the water in the reservoir in a little over three hours. The resultant flood was unprecedented in historic times and is classed as the worst peacetime disaster ever recorded. It took over 1300 lives and caused approximately twenty-eight billion dollars worth of damage to capital facilities downstream. Irrigation, flood control, electric power generation and recreational facilities for all western states were affected permanently.

The Trigger Event

This description is reconstructed from witness reports and is believed to represent the most probable sequence of events. The actual facts, if different, would not be sufficiently different to be of consequence.

The vicinity of Lake Powell experiences occasional violent thunderstorms and flash flooding in mid summer. Thunderstorms during the three or four days preceding the disaster were exceptionally frequent and violent, probably a result of the extra moisture from the previous winter, which was unusually wet and resulted in filling Lake Powell to its historic high level of 3708.4 feet. It is almost certain that the sandstone formations bordering Lake Powell had been saturated with this unusual amount of moisture and therefore weakened. The afternoon of July 4, 1992 experienced continuous thunderstorms and associated heavy downpours.

At approximately 4:32 of the afternoon of July 4, 1992 a massive piece of the western sandstone perimeter of Lake Powell, weakened by subsurface immersion during the twenty-four year life of the lake, the immediately previous wet winters, the continuous rain during the preceding days, and immediate flash flooding, collapsed into the lake. The displaced volume of material has been estimated to be 17.6 million cubic yards. This created a "tidal wave" radiating upstream, across the lake, and downstream from the collapse point. The upstream wave caused no major damage. The lake width was about 0.5 miles at this point.

When the cross-lake wave arrived at the opposite side, it caused collapse of that wall, which had been weakened by the same forces responsible for the initial collapse. This slump is estimated at eight million cubic yards. This caused a second radiating tidal wave, closely following the first.

Effects of the Event

Effect on Glen Canyon Dam

Glen Canyon Dam is 7.4 miles downstream from the wall collapse point. It took approximately ten minutes for the downstream wave from the initial collapse to reach the dam. Due to the depth of the lake bottom at this point the behavior of the two leading waves from the two collapses was similar to deep water ocean tidal waves. A tidal wave in deep water causes a small, placid, vertical displacement of the water surface. When the wave reaches shallow water, the shore water is

sucked outward, followed by inundation as the wave crest reaches the shore. After inundation, the water returns to normal level. The depth of Lake Powell simulates ocean geometry. The dam, however, presents a vertical boundary, exactly the opposite of the sloping boundary of an ocean shore.

Simulating ocean mechanics, the first wave caused a drawdown against the upstream side of the dam. The drawdown depth is unknown. This was followed by inundation, which undoubtedly spilled over the dam. Unlike shallow, sloping shores in ocean conditions, the near-vertical wall of the dam would cause a series of drawdown/inundation cycles at the dam. The first inundation was therefore followed by another drawdown. The second wave, caused by the collapse of the east wall, arrived approximately coincident with the second inundation of the first wave. The effect of the combination was an even larger breach of the dam. The top section of the dam was destroyed, releasing a massive wall of water and dam debris, a flood vastly larger than any known to recorded history. Actual drawdown depths and breach volumes cannot be determined with any precision. The effects, however, are known. After the waters had calmed, between ten and eighty

feet of the top of the dam had been torn loose and carried downstream. The turbine bays and machine shop below the dam were washed away. The highway bridge immediately below the dam remained intact but was battered by debris. One single concrete boulder weighing eighteen tons with rough measurements of eight by four by five feet was deposited on the bridge roadway. Approximately eleven million acre-feet of water were released during the three hours immediately following the event. This brought the lake to the 3619-foot level, the lowest point of the break in the dam.

Upstream Effects - Lake Powell

The lake level lowered approximately eighty feet in three hours, the majority of the elevation change and water discharge taking place in the first thirty minutes.

Approximately 200 boats, mostly rented houseboats, containing over 700 people, were swept over the dam in the rush of water. A much larger number were stranded on newly formed shore or remained floating on the lowered lake. Since the current during the initial drainage varied from extremely fast near the dam to mild 200 miles upstream, survival depended on distance from the dam and proximity to shore. Those some distance from the dam were able to motor upstream faster than the current caused by the draining. Those near shallow, sloping shores were able to ground themselves as the water receded. Boats moored at shallow slopes were quickly beached. Boats moored to vertical walls broke their mooring lines as the water level fell. Most occupants were able to scramble to safety in the few minutes available as the water level rapidly dropped.

The most tragic were those near the dam who could not reach shore or motor against the current and were swept into the flood almost immediately.

Approximately one half the floating facilities at the Wahweap marina were lost. Six people were lost; all others on the floating marina facilities, warned by the

initial wave swell travelling toward the dam from the slump, had sufficient time to get to shore. Due to their distance from the dam, Dangling Rope Marina (forty miles upstream), and other facilities further from the dam saw no loss of life.

Downstream Effects - Marble Canyon

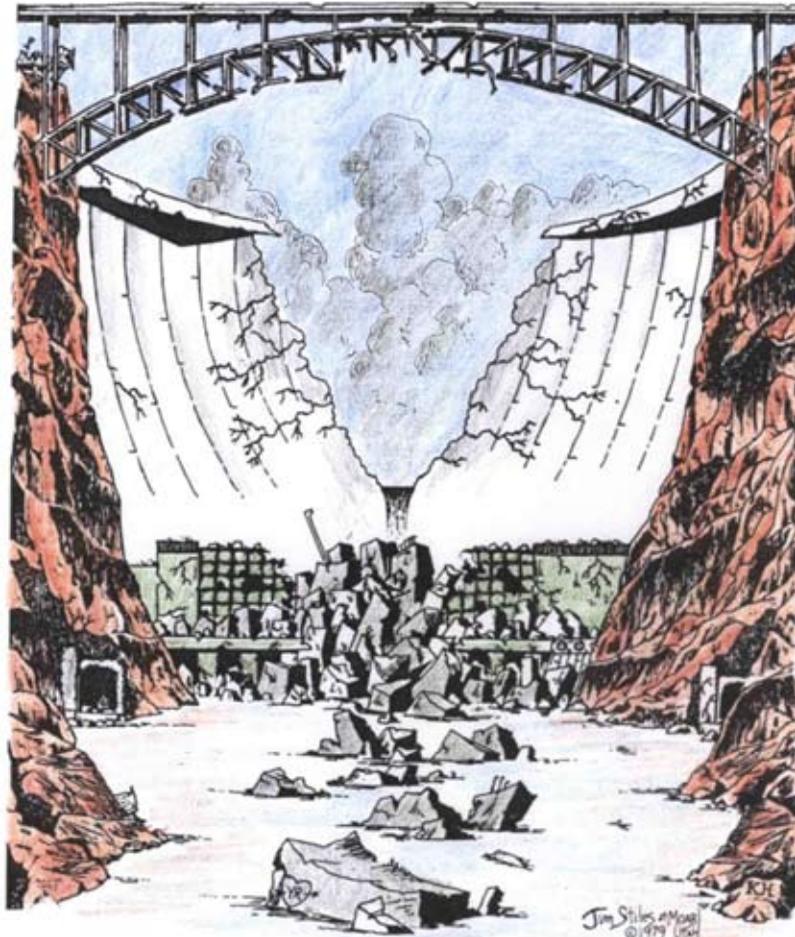
The narrow gorge of Glen Canyon continues sixteen river miles below the site of the dam, ending abruptly at Lees Ferry and the Paria River. This gorge continues the typical convoluted, twisted path of original river bed above the dam site.

Average depth is 600 feet, average width is 1,000 feet. During the first moments of the flood, this almost square channel carried the full flow of the breached dam, plus the debris from the dam and rock dislodged from the canyon walls. At each river bend, rock and concrete pieces carried by the flood made gouge marks, some of them 350 feet above the channel bottom. Debris deposits and water marks indicate that the straight sections of the channel were half filled during the flow. At abrupt changes in channel direction, the water overflowed the canyon, spilling onto the surface of the plateau into which the canyon cuts. Unnatural rock and concrete debris fields on the canyon rim are remaining evidence. An estimated seventeen boats with an estimated sixty-five people were in this section, upstream of Lees Ferry. All are assumed to have perished in the flood.

Other than detail surface changes in the walls of this section of the canyon, there was no major damage. There was no permanent human habitation in the canyon, and no improvements. Other than the loss of life mentioned above damage was therefore minimal. Debris from the dam and from some partially collapsed canyon walls have created several new rapids in this section of the river.

Downstream Effects - Lees Ferry

The site of Lees Ferry was sixteen river miles downstream from the dam, where the river channel exits Glen Canyon. John D. Lee, an early Mormon settler and pioneer said to have been fleeing federal prosecution, originally settled this remote site. In the past twenty-five years, Lees Ferry had become the launching point for numerous raft trips through the Grand Canyon. Mid summer was the most popular time for such expeditions, and Lees Ferry was filled with commercial rafters and their clients at the time of the disaster. Lees Ferry was completely destroyed; no evidence of it remains. Water marks, mud flats, and dam debris cover an area averaging 1.5 miles from the river channel center and some distance upstream along the Paria, a tributary at Lees Ferry. Most of the large pieces broken loose from the dam were found near the site of Lees Ferry, where the canyon



walls did not restrict the flood. Several large pieces of concrete (fifty feet high) were deposited approximately 0.5 miles up the Paria river channel. Remains of two of the dam's electrical generators now rest just downstream of the end of Glen Canyon, just above Lees Ferry. Magnetometer readings have located two more buried in silt approximately 0.2 miles downstream. Debris identified as coming from Lees Ferry has been found in the Gulf of California near Cabo San Lucas. Due to its proximity to the dam, Lees Ferry received minimal warning of the flood. Casualty estimates for the Lees Ferry site are twenty-seven permanent residents and 320 temporarily at Lees Ferry associated with rafting. The only survivor was a lone hiker who was on the western bluff above the town near Dominguez Pass. Substantial loss of life occurred at Jackass Wash, approximately eight miles below Lees Ferry. This is a short, narrow tributary of the Colorado, cutting through the normally precipitous wall containing the river. In the years before the disaster, it had become a popular access route for fishermen, drawn to the trout living in the clear, cold water below the dam. Approximately seventy-five people were at this site; all but eight were swept away by the flood.

Downstream Effect, Grand Canyon

The first helicopter in the air after the breach was operated by the National Park Service and was prepared for a survey of boating on the lake. The pilot realized the danger to river rafters and was airborne approximately ten minutes after the event. Within the next two hours approximately twenty others joined her helicopter, all flying the canyon announcing warnings. Undoubtedly these

**When the cross-lake wave arrived at the opposite side,
it caused collapse of that wall, which had been weakened by
the same forces responsible for the initial collapse.
This slump is estimated at eight million cubic yards.
This caused a second radiating tidal wave,
closely following the first...**

pilots and crews saved many lives due to the early warning. Of the approximately 650 rafters on the total length of the river at the time of the flood, approximately sixty are confirmed casualties while seventy are missing and presumed lost. Most of the casualties were close to Lees Ferry and did not have time to get to high ground before the flood arrived. That no one who was caught by the flood survived attests to the massive flow. The only permanent habitation between Lees Ferry and Lake Mead, approximately eighty-eight river miles downstream from Lees Ferry, is Phantom Ranch, at river level in the middle of Grand Canyon National Park. The facilities of Phantom Ranch are between 200 and 1000 yards from the river, at elevations from twenty to two hundred feet above the river. The ranch had telephone service, and therefore received notice about ten hours in advance of the flood. Most residents escaped to higher elevation on the Clear Creek trail immediately behind the ranch. Casualties were limited to four people. Some livestock, corralled near the river channel, and all livestock facilities were lost.

Downstream Effects, Below Grand Canyon

Lake Mead, formed by Boulder (Hoover) Dam, lies 275 river miles below the Glen Canyon dam-site. Operators of Boulder Dam had approximately thirty hours warning before the flood arrived. During that time, they released water at the maximum rate. When the flood reached Lake Mead the leading crest had subsided to about two feet in height. No sudden wave reached the dam. The flood filled the lake, swamped the spillways and, approximately forty-eight hours after the event, spilled over the full width of the dam. The overspill lasted approximately twenty-six hours and eroded a foot of concrete from the top of the dam. At no time was Hoover Dam in danger of failure. Flooding below lake Mead was classed as severe, although it was mitigated by the volume absorbed by Lake Mead, its damping (plenum) effect, and the leveling effect on the crest caused by the distance from Glen Canyon. There was no visible crest of the flood below Lake Mead. Flooding in the Needles, California area was approximately double the flooding that was seen in the previous record high flows of 1984. Out-of-channel depths were approximately twice those of 1984, and approximately twice as much area was inundated. One earthen dam in the Lower Colorado was destroyed. The desalting plant below the Mexican border was not damaged.

Warning was adequate and at the request of the Gobernador of the Mexican state of Baja California Norte the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers built an earthen dam around the facility. Erosion of the river banks in the channel close to the outlet at the Gulf of California caused closure and ultimate collapse of the single-lane combination road and rail bridge there,

Subsequent Condition Of Lake Powell

Approximately eleven million acre-feet (450 billion cubic feet) of water were released during the three hours following the breaching of the dam. This brought the lake to the 3619-foot level, the elevation of the lowest point of the breach in the dam. The Bureau of Reclamation, which had responsibility for the dam, realized that it would be some time before the detail causes of the disaster were determined. To minimize the possibility of a recurrence, it immediately ordered further reductions in the level of Lake Powell. Continuous releases through outlets just below the 3400-foot level lowered the lake surface to 3500 feet as of April, 1994. It is anticipated that this release rate will continue until engineering and political solutions are attained. At the current rate, Lake Powell will be effectively drained, returning the Colorado River to free flowing, by January 1995.

An Analysis of the Causes

Sandstone Porosity

The walls forming Glen Canyon are almost entirely sandstone. Due to the relatively large granularity of sandstone, it is more porous than shale and limestone rock structures. During the twenty-four years prior to the event the walls of Lake Powell were exposed to water from the lake resulting in water absorption and migration into the walls. Tests since the event have been conducted to determine the amount of water absorption. The tests show that absorption increases dramatically with the pressure of the water against the sandstone surface. At depths of 400 feet, the approximate depth of Lake Powell at the event site, water absorption rates are approximately 100 times greater than at the surface of the lake. Prior to the event no absorption studies were performed, and there were no attempts during the life of the lake to inspect the condition of the underwater canyon walls. Since the low water absorption at the surface was balanced by evaporation in the semi-desert environment, there was no noticeable weakening of the visible rock. It is estimated that over ten million acre feet of water were absorbed by the sandstone perimeter of the lake during its lifetime.

Sandstone Strength and Mechanical Integrity

The extensive sandstone water absorption tests were accompanied by tests of compression strength of sandstone at various moisture levels. A near linear relation between water content and strength was observed. At maximum saturation, the minute layers of bonding material formed over long time periods and high pressures weaken and can no longer hold the sandstone together. When

this occurs, the sandstone loses all strength. One critic of the damsite before its failure compared submerged sandstone to slowly dissolving sugar cubes. The commission has discovered several independent sources of evidence of sandstone weakening under high moisture conditions. None were studied during design of the dam and behavior predictions of the subsequent lake, though all were available at the time. It is instructive to review them.

Canyon Alcoves

Throughout the Colorado Plateau, the parent geography of Glen Canyon, numerous sharp canyons have been cut by erosion into the underlying sandstone formations. The walls of these canyons are often vertical, from several hundred to a thousand feet high. Surface drainage courses that have not cut as deeply as the canyon form waterfalls where they intersect the deep canyons. These flow only during flash storms, or with rare extended storms. During the rest of the time continuous water seepage along the drainage occurs, which has the effect of keeping the surface of the vertical wall at the waterfall continuously wet. Over long periods the saturated surface sandstone loses strength entirely and gradually falls to the floor of the canyon as grains of sand, to be carried away by the flash floods. The erosion of the walls is faster near the bottom of the wall, where temperatures are cooler and lower evaporation keeps the sandstone saturation level higher. Water absorption in this situation is much slower than took place at Lake Powell due to the lack of water pressure. Over geologic time, however, the effect is to form erosional alcoves under the intersections of the surface drainage courses with the canyons. This mechanism has been known for some time and reported in numerous geologic periodicals. It was ignored in the design of Lake Powell.

The Sphinx

Slow erosion of the shoulders of the Sphinx at Giza in Egypt has been reported for over 150 years. Tests in the 1950s showed that the rate of erosion had accelerated in recent years. The cause of the erosion is the recent growth of Cairo, which brought the edges of the city to within several hundred yards. This in turn raised the humidity of the area, and raised the water table due to leakage from the city's water supply and sewage system. This increased moisture changed the balance of water absorption and evaporation at the site of the Sphinx. The approximate three percent increase in the moisture content of the rock forming the Sphinx, a rock similar to the sandstone forming the walls of Glen Canyon, has caused unintended erosion of the vertical and overhanging portions. The phenomenon was extensively studied and reported in the 1950's. The mechanism was not used for analysis of the integrity and stability of Lake Powell's walls.

Slickrock Formations

Returning to the Colorado Plateau, a study of slickrock formations is instructive. Where sandstone is exposed to surface elements, it erodes. The sharper surfaces erode more rapidly, causing a general smoothing effect. After long periods of exposure, the result is large, pillow-shaped formations with relatively smooth surfaces. "Slickrock" is the descriptive term applied to these. The mechanism of slickrock formation has been studied. Almost all erosion occurs when the sandstone is wet, due to rain or melting snow. Moisture penetration is low since the surface is wet for very short periods. Each wetting cycle is only enough to penetrate a small distance into the geologically formed cement holding the surface grain of the sandstone. The water saturation is enough to weaken the cement. If the saturation occurs during a rain shower, the force of raindrops is enough to carry away small cement particles. If the mechanical force of the rain does not remove the cement, it dries after a period of time, leaving a weakened cement that can be carried away by wind or the next rain. Eventually enough of the cement holding a sandstone particle is removed to free the particle, which exposes the next particle beneath to the same process. This mechanism is the same that occurred to the walls of Glen Canyon, although on vastly different scales of time and dimension. The process had been known as much as seventy years before the dam was constructed. The knowledge was not used to estimate the effect of immersion of the walls of Glen Canyon.

High Water Level

Lake Powell was almost at full capacity at the time of the disaster. High Colorado River flow rates had been experienced due to the preceding abnormally wet year. Meteorological long-range forecasting predicted an end to this wet cycle. It had therefore been decided to retain water rather than

The Glen Canyon Dam Disaster ranks as one of the major engineering failures in history. It has served to point out the limits of current technology with respect to controlling natural forces.

discharge it rapidly, and gradually reduce the water level as the drier part of the year progressed. This decision was primarily due to two factors. There was heavy political pressure from victims of the 1984 downstream flood, who did not want the experience repeated and were willing to accept the long-range forecast. Additionally, there was mounting ecological concern for erosion of beaches in the canyons downstream of Glen Canyon. Excessively high flows in previous years had substantially reduced the total beach area and had changed the ecological balance in the canyons. Additionally, commercial river-runner's concern about adequate camping spots, almost always beaches, for their tours, was a third but less-important factor in the decision.

Conclusion

The Glen Canyon Dam Disaster ranks as one of the major engineering failures in history. It has served to point out the limits of current technology with respect to controlling natural forces. In the few short years since the event it has had profound effects on almost every proposed and in-progress environmentally sensitive project. Emergency reviews of all water storage projects have been undertaken, with the result that over ten percent of previously flooded rivers have been returned to their natural state, with the prospect that an additional fifteen percent will be returned in the next two years. The effect on other countries has been similar, though not as pronounced. One cannot escape the conclusion that nearly everyone in the country has been affected, and that our attitude toward modification of natural features has been changed. Nature has taught us a lesson, a hard one, which should not be repeated.

TOM BUDLONG developed guidance systems for the aerospace industry and later made desktop and early hand-held calculators, word processors and graphics software. Now an environmental activist and a lifetime member of the Desert Protective Council, he scrutinizes impacts from off-highway vehicles, mining and alternative energy projects. Tom spends as much time lost in the backcountry as possible.

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Drought, Up Close and Personal

Toni McConnel

All photos by author unless otherwise noted.

I moved to Dead Cat, Arizona, in the spring of 1995. Dead Cat occupies about one square mile of land completely enclosed by the Coconino National Forest at an altitude of 7000 feet. I didn't know it at the time, but in 1994 this area had almost 40 inches of rain, dramatically higher than any year since 1950 - the average annual rainfall for this area is about 21 inches. The year I arrived rainfall was again unusually high, almost 30 inches. As a result, my first spring and summer here the forest was having an exuberant wildflower bloom, and trees of every kind were green and glowing. Having immigrated from the red rock desert of Southeastern Utah, I was enthralled by the tumescent blooms of forest plants and trees. I enjoyed being so close to the sky, thunderstorms scarily close to the ground and creating extravagant sunsets. I assumed this was typical and would continue year after year. Ha.



This ponderosa is hermaphroditic, with both male and female 'organs' tumescent. Is that sexy, or what?

The following year, 1996, we had only five or six inches of rain, another drastic record since 1950, but this time on the dearth side of things. The wildflower bloom was sparse and by September, the grasses and wild plants in the forest had all dried up, and everything except the ubiquitous ponderosa pines and their Gambel oak companions had turned varying shades of brown. The dryness, the brownness, was about all I noticed. But dry years happen, right? Not a big deal. It would take a few years for me to learn to see not the wide-screen brown landscape, though that alone was enough to be depressing, but the relentless desiccation that killed millions of living things in the world around me. And I did not foresee that 18 years later the drought would be the new normal, with no foreseeable end, according to the people who study such things.

The drought gets personal

Along one of the many dirt roads that meanders through the national forest surrounding my home in Dead Cat, Arizona, there is a ponderosa pine who is a special friend of mine. I have known her for 18 years. Many decades' accumulation of shorn pine needles around the base of her trunk offer a relatively soft cushion to sit or lie on, so I often stop to rest with her on my way back from a walk in the forest, leaning back against her thick trunk.

She is bigger by far than any of her neighbors, perhaps because she sits apart from the other trees in her part of the forest and her water supply and nutrients have not been sapped away by other trees growing too close. Her trunk is huge - I measured it once and the circumference is 163 inches or 4.14 meters. That means she could be several hundred years old, although it's impossible to know for sure without taking a core sample and counting rings. All that is certain is that she's been around a long time, like me. That's what we have in common. I'm 82. Perhaps by using some sort of equation to convert human years into ponderosa years, we are about the same age. Because she towers over all the other trees in her neighborhood, and because she is obviously so much older than any of them, I call her Mother Ponderosa.

A few years ago I noticed that one of her branches had snapped off and fallen to the ground. The branch was huge, a major one, from high up. It looked healthy, robust, covered with bright green needles, not a single dead one that I could see. I had seen this in



Mother Ponderosa and her children

the forest before, several years back during a year that I seldom took a walk in the forest without seeing healthy looking Ponderosa branches lying on the ground. My drought education began when I went looking for an explanation for why branches were falling all over the forest. I found out that trees can selectively sacrifice branches to conserve their resources for the rest of the tree. What disturbed me about this is that the branches that fell were never unhealthy looking. They were lush with green needles and looked no different to me than their healthy branches still on the tree. What this translated to for me was that a tree can look perfectly healthy when in fact it is sick, perhaps dying.

Each year there have been new manifestations of drought damage. A couple of years after the Year of Falling Branches, old growth ponderosas started toppling over, their weight too much for their desiccated, brittle roots to hold up anymore. That was the



Branches like this one were a common sight during the Year of Fallen Branches

year I began to fully realize how serious the situation was. A tree can grow new branches; a fallen tree snapped off at the roots will never revive. The chilling thing about the falling of the old growth trees is that they have all survived many droughts in the past, evidenced by tree ring studies of trees known to be many hundreds of years old. This might mean our current drought is more devastating to the forests of Northern Arizona than any drought of the last X hundred years, perhaps because of the length of it, perhaps because of the severity, or both.

You can see that the desiccated roots simply snapped. I took this picture soon after it fell. If you look closely at the top of the trunk where it disappears into the underbrush, you can see that the needles on the branches look fresh and healthy.

Ponderosas are known to be drought resistant. It's the bark beetles that finish them

off. Bark beetles feed on the inner phloemcambial layer of bark that carries nutrients to the rest of the tree, but healthy trees are able to keep them at bay; the beetles need dry spaces to lay their eggs and under normal conditions the tree has enough sap to prevent them from doing this. That's why the beetles flourish in drought years. The bark beetles bring fungi with them, which also weaken the tree. Some trees will try to survive by distributing nutrients selectively, cutting off food to one or more limbs in the hope of saving the rest. This is what happened to my friend, this is why the branch snapped off and fell.

When I first saw the fallen branch, I thought of bark beetles and looked closely at her trunk, and there they were - hundreds and hundreds of bark beetle bore holes. Why had I not seen them before? Simple. Because I had not looked.



The drought measured by disappearances

I live in a tiny house on approximately 10,000 square feet of dirt, rocks, weeds, and trees in a tiny community surrounded entirely by a National Forest. I used to think that I owned this land because I paid somebody money for it, but I don't. Over time, I have shared it - sometimes willingly, sometimes not - with snakes, woodpeckers, coyotes, wasps, cats, blue jays, porcupines, beetles, crows, Abert's squirrels (a species specialized to thrive in ponderosa forests), a peregrine falcon, raccoons (lots and lots of them), nuthatches, bees, skunks, bandnecked doves, lizards, butterflies, Oregon Juncos, mice, grasshoppers, an infinity of spiders, rabbits, ants (several species and lots and lots of them), a solitary Mexican iguana, and pocket gophers who have a taste for cultivated flowers. Of these, the only ones I expressly invited were several cats, some of whom started out feral.

Not all of them could be persuaded to stay outside. Raccoons, especially, specialize in nighttime burglary, and used to come in through the cat door when I forgot to lock it at night. I would find four or five of them in my kitchen, systematically raiding cupboards and the trash can. Getting them out again was an exercise comparable to an episode from the Keystone Kops [optional link for people who don't know who the Keystone Kops were- your choice to include or not: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RWZD_bkNK-c] - when I tried to shoo them out they would go anywhere at all but out the door.

There is nothing I can lock up or block that will keep mice out of the house. I never deliberately kill anything (although I regularly do so by accident, but that's another story), and because word of a safe harbor has spread throughout the mouse world, the

I'm 82. Perhaps by using some sort of equation to convert human years into ponderosa years, we are about the same age. Because she towers over all the other trees in her neighborhood, and because she is obviously so much older than any of them, I call her Mother Ponderosa.

mice take gross advantage of me. I don't mind them shredding toilet paper and Kleenex to make nests, I keep food closed up so they don't rob my larder, and sometimes I am charmed by mouse ingenuity, such as finding a nest in a snow boot lined with fuzzy wool. But they piss and shit more or less continuously, always in a place that is hard to clean, like under the refrigerator, or where cleaning up the mess is tedious and unpleasant, like every single utensil in my silverware drawer. Getting rid of them involves setting live traps and then carrying them off to establish homesteads elsewhere, not very convenient in mid-winter when the roads are ice-covered. And I no sooner get rid of one than another arrives, sometimes bringing three generations of relatives.

Fortunately the wasps do not come inside my house. They have a preference for my storage shed, which shelters their nests from weather and gets extremely hot in the spring and summer, excellent for hatching new generations. They are beautiful creatures, and go quietly about their business. Mostly we coexist peacefully. I have been stung a couple of times when one of them misinterpreted some move I made as aggressive, but after all it's their job, second only to pollinating flowers and reproducing, to sting people. And anyway, by that time I had understood that they have as much right to occupy this plot of land as I do. The fact that I was stupid enough to pay somebody money for the illusion that I owned it was my problem, not theirs.

Besides, they taught me something important. One spring day a few years ago the new wasps hatched the same morning we had a freakish late spring cold snap. Outside early, I came across a clutch of seven wasps on the door frame of the shed. Having emerged from the nest inside where it was warmer, they were immobilized by the cold before they could fly away. Most were either barely moving or completely motionless, but two of them had gained some mobility, and they were massaging the others with their foremost pair of legs, tapping on the bodies of the immobile ones from one end to the other, over and over again. At first I didn't quite believe what I was seeing, but I stood there staring long enough to remove any doubt. No interpretation seemed reasonable except that the active ones were taking care of the others, trying to rouse them. The wasps are not mindless automatons, as many people want us to believe. I have greeted them more warmly every spring since then.

What does all this have to do with drought? It's that I haven't seen a raccoon for at least five years. There is simply not enough food for them; they have been starved out.

The mice are doing fine, though, and a skunk wintered underneath the house as usual this winter. But the other day I realized I have not seen but one bee over the last several years. This spring I've spotted only one butterfly so far. Bird populations are way down; the Oregon Juncos that normally winter here did not show up at all. I haven't seen a single wasp; I looked for nests in the shed and there are none.

It is estimated that more than 20 million Ponderosa pines died in Arizona and New Mexico between fall of 2002 and summer of 2003, primarily because of bark beetle attacks, but it's the drought that makes the trees vulnerable to the beetles. It's the sap that keeps the beetles out. When there's not enough water, the trees can't produce enough sap to maintain the barrier. Millions of trees make dramatic photos and it was widely covered by the media. But the death of millions of birds, animals, and insects is not only next to impossible to quantify, you can't send a news crew out to video things dying when you can't even find them in the first place. I don't see the dead bodies on my tiny plot of ground, either, but I know who are missing by their absences. And it matters; I have relationships with these beings.



That's because I live in contact with Nature; the majority of people in this country do not. 80% of Americans live in urban areas where, when they turn a faucet on, water comes out. If it doesn't, it's because they forgot to pay the water bill. If they are fortunate enough to live in a house with a lawn, if it doesn't rain they turn on the sprinkler and the grass stays green. Wild animals and insects are not neighbors and friends; people poison the grasshoppers in their gardens and kill mice with traps or poison.

On the Web or in the news, urban Americans might read stories with photos of farms and ranches ravaged by drought, or they might see this photo of the Colorado River:

From a TV or computer in urban Chicago or New York, it might as well be a photograph of the Kalahari Desert in Africa. We are bombarded with words and images about events so violent and tragic that we become desensitized to them; if we didn't we'd go



Colorado River delta

mad. Not only that, but there is less and less distinction between fact and fiction on the Web, in the movie theater, and on TV. The real merges with the invented, so it becomes easy to dismiss anything we don't want to believe, such as global warming.

So we throw the photo of the Colorado River drying up into a dark corner of the brain with photos of headless corpses in Mexico, news of the abduction of 300 Nigerian schoolgirls, a landslide in Afghanistan that buried 2000 people alive, a thousand other things we are helpless to do anything about. Compared to those events the photo of the dried up Colorado doesn't have much impact, even though in the Southwest we face water rationing and power crises because of it. The drought, like all the news, is an abstraction, not 'real', when you know of it only via the media and not by personal experience. You turn on a faucet and water comes out. That's your real experience.

That's where we are. That's the state of the nation. But here in Dead Cat, Arizona, the drought is not an abstraction. I pass the decaying trunks of the fallen old-growth trees every time I walk in the forest. I grieve for my wasps and the little flock of Oregon Juncos who come no more.

I don't know if Mother Ponderosa is dying or not. She hasn't lost any more limbs and her crown looks healthy and robust, but as I've already pointed out, that doesn't mean she isn't sick. She was affected enough by the bark beetles and the lack of water that she had to sacrifice that limb. In the years since then, the drought has worsened. Her bark is already so riddled with bark beetle bore holes it's impossible for me to determine if there are any new ones.

And it's the bigger trees that fall over, so heavy that their dry and brittle roots can't hold up their weight anymore. This is what I worry about. I worry about myself too. I have one hip that's gone bad and it gets worse every year, but unlike Mother Ponderosa, I can't just get rid of it. We aren't designed with that kind of adaptive strategy; it's a significant advantage these big trees have over us.

If Mother Ponderosa is dying, she is going slowly. At 82, there is no question that I too am dying. It's a process that starts for all of us decades before we even think of ourselves as old. But by the time you're 80, that process has speeded up considerably, and I don't know how many more years I'll last. It's pretty certain that I'll be gone long before she is, though, unless, like so many other old growth trees, she just topples over one of these days. But in the meantime, we keep each other company.

This article is excerpted from Old Woman Walking, a book in progress. Other excerpts from the book can be read at OldWomanWalking.com.

MY FAVOURITE TOURISTS #1

JEFF WOODS...the Welsh Hitchhiker

Jim Stiles

The first time I met Jeff Woods of Swansea, Wales, I was a ranger at Arches National Park. Most of the time I worked out of the Devils Garden, 18 miles inside the park. But today, I'd been called down to the visitor center to cover for another ranger on sick leave. The questions were easy to answer, but consistently the same. After awhile I could answer before they asked: "Two hours, if you don't want to get out of your car" (How long does it take to see this place?) and "Outside and to the left" (Where's the bathroom?).

Most of the tourists looked the same... a lot of polyester and doubleknit shirts out there. But when this one particular visitor shuffled through the double plate glass doors, I sensed instantly that my day was about to be changed. The man stood barely five and a half feet tall (at 5'8" I towered over the little fella), and he sported a scraggly, fiery red beard that actually made him look more elf-like than ferocious. But mostly, I noticed his pack. His pack, a giant red nylon monstrosity with about thirty zippered compartments clinging to every square inch of it, towered over all of us. It barely cleared the doorway as he passed through. Red beard headed directly for the information county and me.

Meanwhile, a gentleman and his wife had approached me for information and advice. They had hoped to see 13 national parks in six days and there wasn't a moment to lose. They figured they had about 90 minutes to devote to the Arches and they wanted me to budget their precious time for them. The man with the red beard and enormous pack muscled his way beside them, eager to ask a question of his own.

But the couple was not about to leave. Stylishly attired in his and her matching Mickey and Minnie Mouse royal blue, zippered, jumpsuits, the man asked about the condition of the road.

"Not that it matters," he explained. "Our motorhome may be 36 feet long, but it can go darn near anywhere."

Suddenly a muffled explosion split the conversation in half. Minnie, with a look of absolute horror, buried her face in her hands and turned away. Her husband, angry and offended, turned to the hairy elf next to him and confronted him -- man to man.

"Excuse me!" he said with self-righteous indignation, "But you farted in front of my wife!"

"I'm terribly sorry," the accused replied with British aplomb, "but I didn't know it was her turn."



Mr. Mouse turned shakily to me. "Ranger! I demand that you do something! This man's behavior is OUTRAGEOUS!"

"Well, sir," I replied. "I'll have to check the Code of Federal Regulations. That would be CFR 36. I'm not real clear on just what the law is regarding flatulence, but I'll be glad to find out."

His wife shrieked again and ran out the front door and he was right behind her. The air cleared, so to speak, and activity in the visitor center resumed a semblance of normalcy. My gaseous friend remained standing by the counter.

"Well, I must say," he began, "you Americans are a bit sensitive at times. And what was that bloody costume they had on? Do you people always dress in pairs?"

"We Americans are truly a diverse people," I explained, "as well as sensitive..... and who might you be?"

"Geoffrey Woods. Call me Jeff... I'm hitching around the world, and I thought I'd drop in for a few directions."

Jeff was looking for Canyonlands National Park. He planned on taking an extensive backpacking trip, he said, and also wanted to spend some time on the river. I showed him the maps, which he studied at length, and gave him the names of some rangers at Canyonlands that could help him, if he needed any. We shook hands and he said goodbye.

And that was that. I told a few of my friends about the incident with Jeff and Mickey and Minnie, but it soon faded from my memory. A couple weeks later, I left Moab for a trip to the Maze District of Canyonlands. I'd managed to put five days of annual leave together and I wanted to see this stone labyrinth first hand, after only reading about it for so many years.

Although the Maze itself is only forty miles southwest of Moab, as the crow flies, the rest of us have to take a more circuitous route. Just to reach the Hans Flat Ranger Station, you have to travel north on US 191 to Crescent Jct (30 miles), then west on I-70 past Green River to the junction with State Route 24 (36 miles), then south on SR 24 to the junction with a dirt road (26 miles), then 60 miles east on a sandy, washboard dirt track that leads to Hans Flat and beyond. The plan was to meet my friend Mike Salamacha, a seasonal at the Maze, and stay the night at the Hans Flat residence. The next day, we planned to head downcountry.

After a long dusty ride from the pavement, I reached Hans Flat at sunset, just ahead of a wicked thunderstorm that was moving in from the southwest. I found Salamacha and after moving some gear from my car, we sat down with a beer to study the topos and plan the next day's trip.

We had barely settled in to our chairs when the doorbell rang. At Hans Flat, no one rings the doorbell. At the time only three or four rangers lived at Hans Flat. They were the only human inhabitants in an area that spanned millions of acres. I got up to open the door. I couldn't believe it. It was that Limey again.

"Hello mate," he said. "Fancy meeting you again way out here."

I looked around for his car and then remembered he was hitching. Still I'd neither seen nor heard any vehicle at all.

"How did you get here," I asked.

"Oh... walked up from the river," he explained.

"The river? Which river?"

"Oh, you know, mate...the Colorado."

By now, Salamacha had joined us and knew the distances better than I. He was amazed.

"That's a good thirty miles," Mike said. "You came all that way in one day?"

Jeff shrugged. "Well it was a bit up hill, wasn't it?"

We brought Jeff inside, and he told us his story. Here's what he had accomplished in a matter of a few days. After charming a woman ranger with his tale of adventure, she loaned him the use of her two-man rubber raft. He floated down the river and after several days had reached Spanish Bottom last evening.

This morning.... this morning, he'd strapped his pack and the rubber raft (deflated)

"Excuse me!" he said with self-righteous indignation, "But you farted in front of my wife!"

"I'm terribly sorry," the accused replied with typical British aplomb, "but I didn't know it was her turn."

to his back and hauled this enormous load to the Doll's House, two thousand feet about the river. There, he hid the raft behind some rocks, and with only his fifty pound pack to slow him down, managed to walk another 32 miles and end up mooching a beer off Salamacha just a few minutes after sunset. Mike and I studied the Limey closely as he took a last gulp of Budweiser.

"Awfully weak, this American beer," he grumbled. "Mind if I have another?"

Mike uncapped one more and handed him the bottle.

"Aren't you exhausted?" I asked.

"No," he replied. "I am."

I was confused, "What did you say?"

"I said," he explained, "No, I am."

“No, I am?” What kind of answer is that?” I asked.
 “Well,” he explained, “You said to me ‘Aren’t you exhausted?’ and I replied, ‘No, I am.’ What is so difficult about that?”
 I looked at Salamacha. He shrugged and went outside. Salamacha was a lot wiser than I’ve ever been.
 “So,” I continued, “Are you tired or not?”
 “Yes and no,” he answered.
 “Yes and no? Can’t you make up your mind if you’re tired or not?”
 “Of course, I can. I’ve answered your question as honestly and directly as I know how.”
 “Isn’t that just like the British to make something simple into something complicated?”

Mike and I studied the Limey closely as he took a last gulp of Budweiser. “Awfully weak, this American beer,” he grumbled. “Mind if I have another?” Mike uncapped one more and handed him the bottle.

“Yes,” he groaned, “it’s not!”
 I almost hit him with my beer bottle. “What in the hell are you talking about?” I roared.
 “Let me explain this to you, yank. You said to me ‘Aren’t you tired?’ That is to say ‘Are you not tired?’ Well, of course, after walking 32 miles in twelve hours, I’m very tired indeed. So my answer, properly phrased, should be:
 ‘No, I am.’ Do you understand?”
 “Well, not exactly. Aren’t you turning everything backwards?”
 “Yes..... I’m not.”
 Salamacha walked over. “Here Stiles.... Have another beer.”

The next day, Mike and I headed for the Maze Overlook, and Jeff came along. He still needed to recover the raft, cached somewhere above Spanish Bottom. We reached the overlook in the afternoon, and the next morning, Jeff took a route via Pete’s Mesa to the Dolls House, while Salamacha and I explored the Maze. Twenty-four hours later, he’d rejoined us. When we saw him come around a bend in the canyon, he looked like a giant duffle bag with feet.

That afternoon, as we trudged through pools of quicksand in a beautiful, deep side canyon, the Limey pulled up next to an old cottonwood tree and opened his pack. Mike and I stopped, and came back to the tree.

“Why are you stopping?” Mike asked.
 “Tea time, mates,” he said.

Sure enough, he pulled out his stove, a pot, a canteen, and a tea bag. Jolly good show. He advised us to get out our cups, so the three of us did the civilized thing and had our cup o’tea at four.

It was pretty much like that for the rest of our time in the Maze. I started wishing I had a crumpet, and I didn’t even know what a crumpet was. Two days later, we were back on top. From Hans Flat, Jeff drove with me back to Moab, where he immediately re-packed and took off again. A few days later, I heard a ranger report on the park radio that he’d issued a warning to a hiker without a permit. Some crazy guy trying to walk the White Rim. What’s a hundred miles or so?

Jeff’s next trick was to walk the Colorado River to Spanish Bottom. When I later asked Jeff how he’d intended to perform this particular feat, he explained that he’d heard it was a “low water year.”

In the months and years that have passed since our first meeting, Jeff Woods has come and gone many times. He helped me build a cabin and used up all my tea bags. He drove my ex-wife’s car off a cliff. He ran over a cow in a VW bus on the road to Hanksville. (It was, he said, a black cow, on a black road, on a black night.) He went around the world. Twice. He got mugged in Albuquerque, but chased down his attackers and single-handedly disabled their pickup truck. Today, Jeff Woods rails against our materialistic society and the apartheid policies of South Africa at an all girls’ Catholic College in Scranton, Pennsylvania... I hate Jeff Woods.



The last time my little buddy came to town, I introduced him to some friends of mine. Jeff told them about the hikes, the black cow, the mugging, the ex-wife’s car.... nobody believed him. When he’d left, I heard someone say, “Isn’t he the most outrageous person you’ve ever met?”
 “No,” I replied. “He is.”

NOTE: For an update on Mr. Woods, check the Word-Press version of this story.



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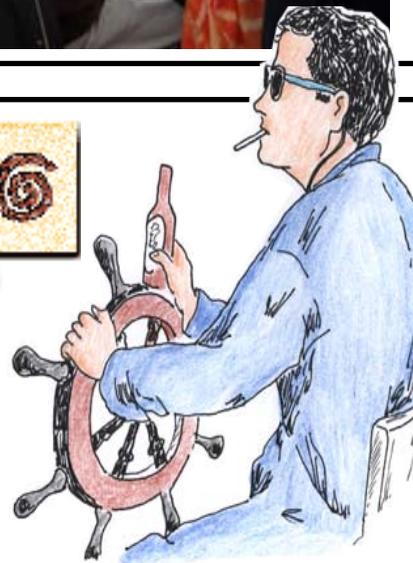
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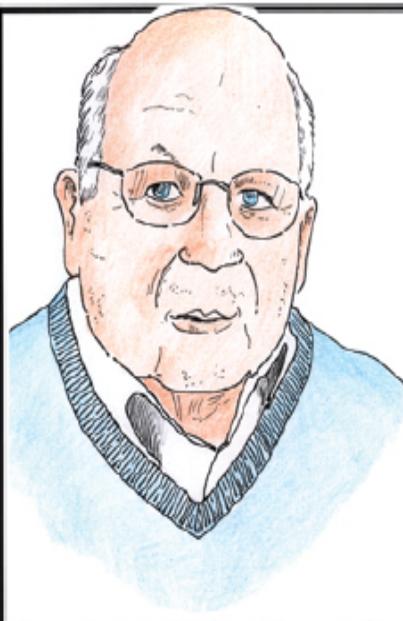


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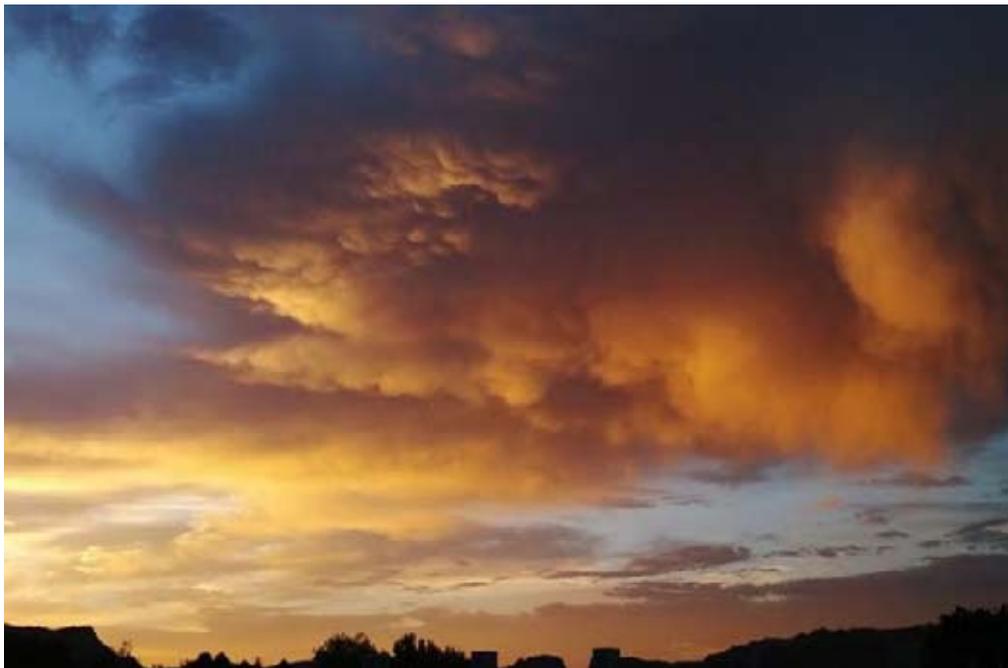
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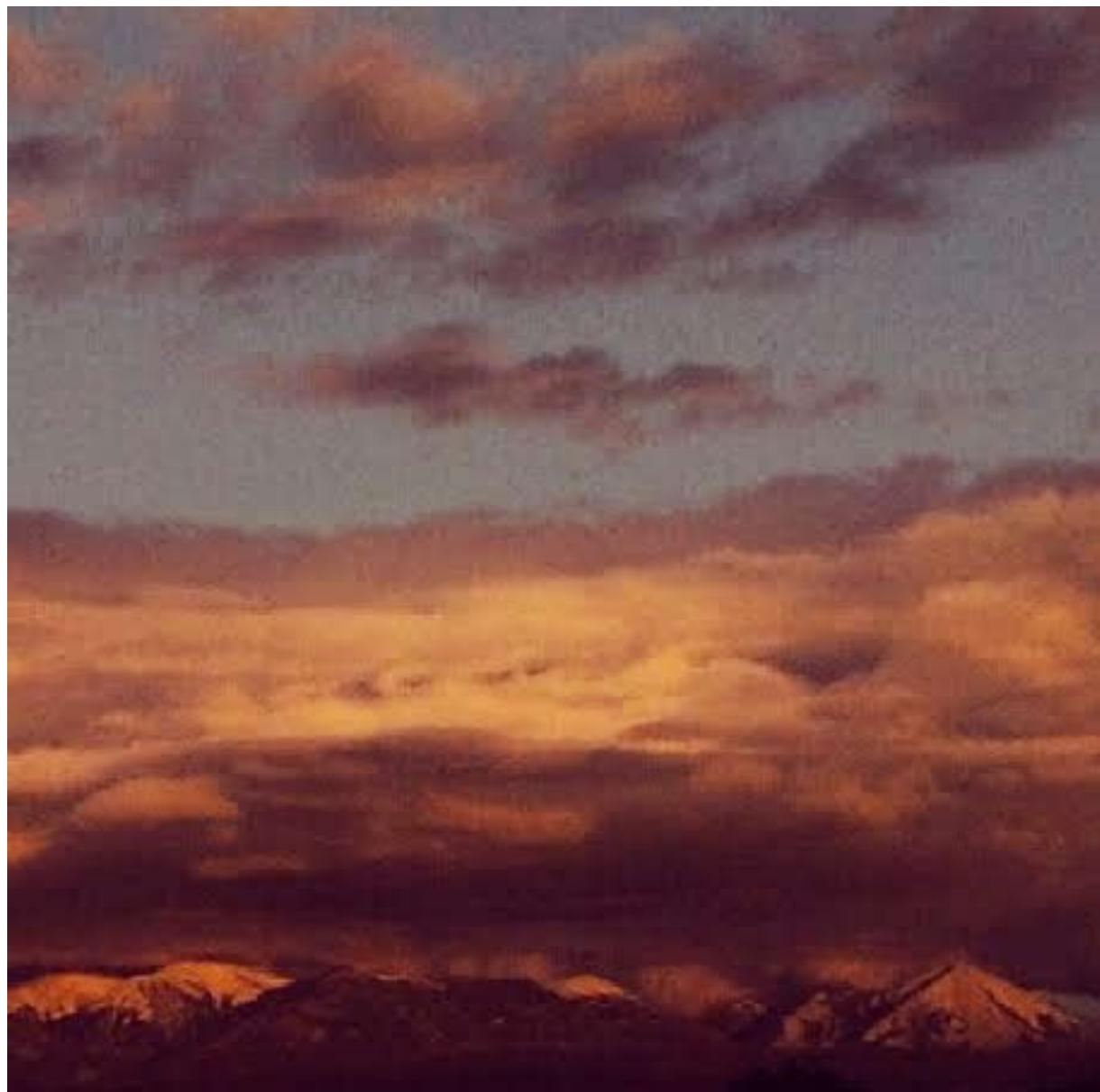
Valley virga



Front-door sunset

clouds....

Mysterious v-shaped cloud, Green River Desert



“do,do,do, lookin’ out my back door”



Kelvin-Helmholtz wave cloud

Terry Knouff has been loving the Canyonlands country since 1979, and living in it since 1987... You can find his photography online at:

<http://www.flickr.com/photos/tknou>





TOM TILL

PHOTOGRAPHY

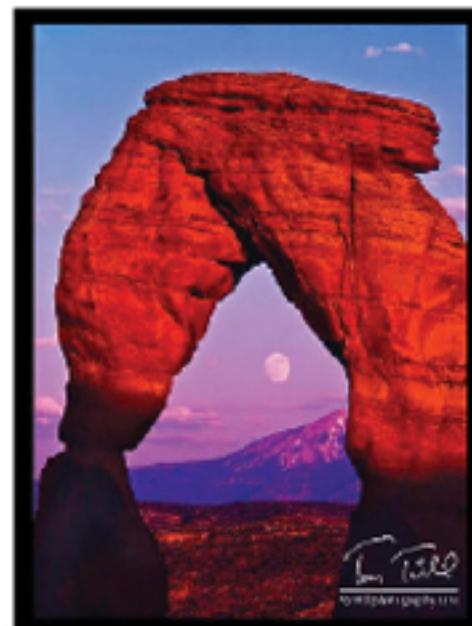


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THE GHOSTS of DANDY CROSSING

KATIE LEE

Dandy Crossing, September 1962

They clattered up Farley Creek a half mile, slid to park and went into the store. Windy, very importantly and methodically, sorted the mail into little pigeon holes behind the wired window which represented the Post Office. There were about eight letters and cards, a few newspapers and a tin of boat parts for the six inhabitants of Dandy Crossing.

White and Farley canyons entering together on the left bank of the river comprised one settlement; Cass Hite's ranch and orchard on the right bank, the other. Old Cass had named his crossing 'A Dandy' and the river people kept it that way. To the rest of the world it was Hite... if you could find it on a map.

Jason walked to the freezer and got an ice cream bar. He laid a quarter on the counter and leaned there, looking out at the only gas pump within a hundred miles. A hum from the generator and a creaking of roof beams in the midday heat were all that broke the silence.

It hadn't always been this tranquil at Dandy Crossing. Windy's had been the Upper Store, Fred Bennett's, the Lower Store. There'd been some fifty families living at the confluence, where a copper processing mill had run full tilt in the forties. The sound of little kids screeching at play, the thrugging of big trucks in low gear, the banging of tailgates and the thumping of the mill had echoed through the canyon all day long. After dark, the cottonwood trees rustled, a steady spring gurgled beside the cliff wall and a lively river sang its song up-canyon.

Jason snapped his mind away from something he didn't want to think of—a thing the three of them had written about during the winter. On this, their last trip down the Glen—while it was still a living river canyon—they were going to proceed as if nothing about it would ever change. Nothing was to mar this final adventure. No talking about the river's misbegotten future.

Windy's voice pulled him from his thoughts. 'Ain't nuthin' here from Step; reckon he's comin' with Shan?'

'I don't see how,' Jason said, taking half the ice cream in one bite. 'They're coming from different directions. Oh say, before I forget, I need a couple more cans of oil. I'll toss them in the back of the truck. Don't let me go off without them.'



slammed the icebox door and started to whistle. Each sound seemed isolated, pointing up the fact that all sound here would soon be terminated.

Jason walked the grassy plot, entered the trailer and crossed the threshold with caution. Since the flood, a loose board, when stepped on, made loud, bawdy sounds and he was sure it hadn't

been fixed. Windy set peanut butter and jam sandwiches on the booth table, uncapped the pickle jar and poured cold milk into jelly glasses. Sliding in opposite Jason, he bit right into his sandwich and the subject Jason and friends had elected not to discuss.

'Who ya think's gonna git the concession at Rainbow? They shore by God better give this'n here to me—I run this goddamn ferry fer more'n six years.' He took a big gulp of milk and followed it with a generous burp. 'I ain't seen no indication the one down to Wahweep's goin' to nobody but ol' Art. You still workin' on the one down t' Hoxie Crossin'?'

Jason chewed slowly. 'The County commissioners and BuRec will decide. I'm involved only because the law says a river man must run the marina.'

'Naw, it's the Park Service that'll have the final say, an' I gotta lotta pull with them guys. I been takin' damn good care of the tourists here at Dandy—the Bureau boys too. They know goddamn well I kin handle 'er.'

Jason reached into the pickle jar, avoiding the man's eyes. It depended on which day you listened, what Windy was for and what he was against. He'd been cursing the Bureau along with the rest of them for the past seven years, but now that the dam was nearing completion and flooding a reality, he was kissing up to them for a concession

on the reservoir.

Jason altered the subject. 'What's Buck going to do with his cabin?'

'He ain't figured it out yet—whatever'll giv'um the most trouble. They offered t'pay him for it, y'know—wanna use it fer some kinda storage shed up to the new Hite Marina—gonna name it after Cass, I guess—said they'd come an' git it when the water starts backin' up.'

'I would have thought they'd do it the easy way: just let the cabin get buried in silt and water.'

'Naw. Nelson says they got some preference 'bout the buildings.' Snorting, he added, 'Tough titty. Buck'll do what he wants with that

Jason snapped his mind away from something he didn't want to think of—a thing the three of them had written about during the winter. On this, their last trip down the Glen—while it was still a living river canyon—they were going to proceed as if nothing about it would ever change. Nothing was to mar this final adventure. No talking about the river's misbegotten future.

'Okay.' Windy came from behind the Post Office cage, put Jason's quarter in the register and yelled, 'Sale! I'll go slap up some lunch—sam'itch okay?'

'Sure, anything's fine, Windy.' He licked the ice cream stick clean, stuck it in his shirt pocket and walked out of the store. At the foot of the steps he picked up two cans of oil and tossed them over the tailgate—the clatter echoing down canyon. Windy, in his trailer next to the store,

place; took'um a long time g'ttin' the gas heater 'n stove in there and then buildin' onto the back. He ain't jist gonna quietly move out and let'um take over.'

Licking milk from his upper lip, Jason asked, 'Where'll he move to, do you know?'

'Prob'ly to the mine. Says he don't know fer sure yet; might move up t'his claim on the Green, or mebbe he'll stick around here t'work on the

White Canyon bridge when they start it.’

Jason looked Windy in the eye, pert-near sure Buck had not even thought about working on the bridge, and said, in view of the man’s integrity, ‘Unless he’s thinking sabotage, I doubt he’d do that.’

Jason felt a twinge of conscience. If he wanted to stay anywhere near his hard-earned profession as guide, boatman and owner of Glen Canyon Expeditions, he’d have to do the sort of things Buck didn’t. He had a big family—six kids and a wife—a house, responsibility, things he couldn’t neglect. How far would his conscience let him go? Swallowing the last of his milk he smacked his lips and stood, wishing he were Buck, a loner, a younger man; one that local gossip held to be a man who did what he wanted, when he wanted and how he wanted to do it.

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Windy was breezing: ‘Ol’ Bennett’s lots more philosophical ‘bout it than Buck. Hell, he’s been minin’ here fer goddamn near thirty years. His boat dock goes, his house, his mines, the whole shootin’ match goes. Know what he said t’other day when the BuRec tol’um how much they was givin’ him fer his house n’land? Tol’um, ‘Well, that’s fine, fellers, never thought I’d make so much off a defunct operation. Think I’ll pick out the next place you bastards is gonna build a dam and get some more property that don’t cost nuthin’—that way I can go to m’grave makin’ a buck offa you, instead of the other way around!’ Windy shook his head. ‘Boy, they must have a special breed of rat comes ‘round t’places like this for the cleanup job. S’a wonder some of ‘em don’t git kilt!’

‘They’re a special breed, all right.’ Jason wrinkled his nose.

‘Can’t wait till Shan gits here t’ tell ‘er what Bennett said ‘bout them Bureau dimwits.’

Jason wanted to ask him not to mention things like that, but instead he said, ‘It’s time I got down to the boat and finished with my tinkering on the Johnson.’

The two stepped out of the trailer with toothpicks working at their gums, and cottonwoods whis-s-shing in the early afternoon breeze.

‘What’cha tinkerin’ with?’

‘Nothing much, just sputters a little on the high-speed jet.’

‘I’ll take ya down.’

Before Jason could say he’d rather walk, Windy ambushed him with a practicality. ‘What about yer oil? Gonna leave it in my truck?’

‘Whoa! Thanks for reminding me.’ He reached for his wallet, but before he could take it from his back pocket, Windy pulled open the cab door. ‘Aw, fergit it, Jason—you spend more money here ‘n anybody ‘n you never even let me buy ya a beer.’

Jason grinned. ‘Next time try ice cream.’



Katie Lee is an Arizona icon who began her career as a stage and screen actress before becoming a fixture in coffeehouses and cabarets throughout the U.S., Canada and Mexico as a folksinger. She has emerged as one of the Southwest’s most outspoken environmental activists, using her music and feisty eloquence to both entertain and educate.

“The Ghosts of Dandy Crossing,” from Dream Garden Press, is available in Moab at Back of Beyond Books.

**LIFETIME
BACKBONE
MEMBER**

**SEDONA,
ARI-
ZONA**

**ANNE
SNOWDEN
CROSMAN**

**THE FOOTPRINTS
‘TOP 10’ LIST**

**Top 10
Memorable Numbers**

10. **Pi = Ratio of the circumference of a circle to its diameter. Also a leading cause of obesity.**
9. **C = Speed of light, as in E = mC². Also, how fast your personal information goes from Google to the NSA.**
8. **42 = The answer to life, the universe and everything.**
7. **∞ = The amount of money the Koch brothers are allowed to spend to buy elections.**
6. **666 = Ann Coulter’s PO box.**
5. **0 = The number of times you get to whine if you don’t vote. Also, the net effect if you do.**
4. **i = The imaginary square root of -1. Also the chances in 100 that SCOTUS is not politically motivated.**
3. **1 = Is its own square, cube and factorial. Raised to any power, it’s still the same. Also the number of times we get to go around in life.**
2. **2 = The only even prime number. Also the number of gays required to make a couple. Ironically, the same number of heterosexuals required.**
1. **97 = Percent of climate scientists who believe global warming is human caused - which, according to wackos and idiots, is not a majority.**

from the author of ‘On the Loose’

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VLACHOS' VIEWS

America through the lens of PAUL VLACHOS



Another early-dawn shot. I had just begun to pick up speed on my way from west Texas up into New Mexico. This trip was really an excuse to leave New York so that I could fall apart and then let the desert put me back together again. Along the way, I hoped to find some peace with my cameras and Elko, the desert dog. I had covered the ground I had wanted to cover in West Texas and was heading to Las Vegas, New Mexico to soak in a hot spring, via US Route 285, a venerable route goes straight up from Fort Stockton. I saw this old soldier and had to shoot it - who doesn't like an ancient school bus? - but it was a little early. The sun was just peeking over the curvature of the horizon, and I waited a few minutes, but I should have waited longer. It would have been a much better shot. There was just enough light to paint it on the gray, fracked-out haze in the distance, but not enough to make it glow. I hope to pass by there again soon and I hope this bus is still there.

Hattiesburg, Mississippi, just as dawn is breaking and I'm starting the third day of a road trip. It is so difficult to break gravity usually, and get away from the comforts of home, the insidious comforts that lull and dull us. I am usually uneasy until I have actually crossed the Mississippi. In this case, I went far south before I crossed. I am usually drawn to the oasis of light from a nighttime gas station. In fact, I rue one from the end of this particular trip that I passed by because I was in such a rush to get home and it would have involved doubling back on a dicey piece of interstate. In this case, though, I was on the outbound leg and was a bit more introspective.



After you have traveled for another hour and a half past Roswell, you will come to Vaughn, which is a major crossroads, although it doesn't seem to exist for much anymore beyond offering services to travelers. Because cars travel fast now than they once did, my guess is that people don't stay at the old motels in Vaughn as much as they used to. They do stop for gas and to hit the mini mart, but that's about it.



Artesia, New Mexico. I'm backtracking a town or two, but I'm allowed to do that, whether it's in real life or simply in the pages of the Zephyr. I love handmade signs and like to just look at this photo and think about the maker's initial plan, then the execution. How he or she cut out the plywood arrows, painted the words, and then fixed the three boards to the two upright pieces of galvanized steel pipe. I like how the "Sales" placard is NOT an arrow, although I'm not sure why it's not. I might have made it an arrow had I been making the sign for Clyde. This is one issue over which Clyde and I would have had a friendly argument.



I headed back through Pecos again, which is where I shot this old disco. I had been meaning to hit Pecos for years. From the viewpoint of someone who shoots old American ruins, you could see that Pecos was a potentially rich subject just by looking at a map - three highways intersected here, it's more than a speck, meaning it's a bigger dot on the map than most in West Texas and, significantly, it's a little bit off of the Interstate. For whatever reason, that usually means a town has been better preserved than most. Or, from another angle, you could say it's been able to decay more gracefully. Anyway, Pecos did not disappoint and I planned my return east around it. I was going to head another few hundred miles south after this so that I could get another meal at Nora's Tacos, in Sabinal, but the tornado activity in the forecast made me ditch that plan and just head due east, trying to thread the needle between weather fronts. In retrospect, I should have gone south for the huevos ranche-ros

To see more images and commentary, check out the WordPress version of The Zephyr...

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The mission of Moab Solutions is to reduce and eliminate the waste of materials and human potential while nurturing the well-being of the natural world. We protect and restore natural areas, help the homeless help themselves, and promote the benefits of Respect, Rethink, Reduce, Reuse and Recycle practices. At our core is a deep respect for and love of the natural world and all lives that depend upon it.

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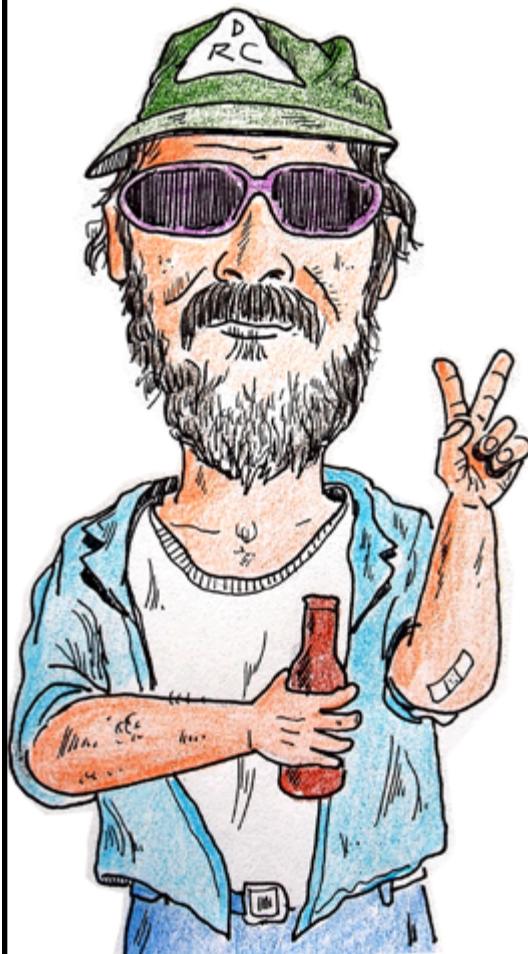
<http://www.moab-solutions.org/index.html>

WHY READ THE ZEPHYR?

"If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, it expects what never was and never will be...The people cannot be safe without information. Where the press is free and every man able to read, All is safe."

Thomas Jefferson

from THE DESERT RAT COMMANDO



Humanity proves, once again, to be engage in a rush towards de-evolution:

A Japanese beverage company has an out-of-this-world advertising idea. Otsuka Pharmaceutical Co. said it's going to shoot a can filled with its beloved beverage Pocari Sweat and embossed with its logo to the moon. It will be the first commercial product ever sent there as a marketing stunt. Set to launch in October 2015, the can will be filled with a powdered version of the popular drink along with the dreams and wishes of 38,000 children from Asia etched inside.

<http://theweek.com/speedreads/index/261677/speedreads-japanese-beverage-company-unveils-plan-to-put-first-ad-on-the-moon>

ZEPHYR CHRONICLES..pt2

continued

It was called 'Cloudrock.' Though I still can't identify my 'deep throats' after all these years, a Moab couple had surreptitiously discovered and then copied a remarkable document. We subsequently obtained a copy of the Mesa Land Company's Development Proposal to the State Institutional Trust Lands Administration. It was amazing and, in their own words...

The Proposal.

"Our intention is to create a world-class wilderness destination resort community in the American Southwest for people who enjoy the natural beauty and cultural legacy of this region...The centerpiece of this community is Cloudrock Desert Lodge, an intimate luxury wilderness lodge that will set the tone and standard for the entire development. Our initial marketing efforts will focus on establishing an international awareness of Cloudrock and its location in Southeastern Utah...We expect our guests to return time and time again, finally deciding that this is they want to own a second or third home (sic). The high-end positioning of the lodge and its associated service amenities will serve to deliver top prices for the homesites and condominiums...We plan to spend the time, money and creative energy necessary from the inception to create real estate development that will deliver top prices."

The developer promised that Cloudrock, "will be marketed as a vacation community for affluent families and individuals. The Moab real estate market does not currently serve this segment well, with most developments targeted to a somewhat lower economic bracket."

They added, "the client base of Butterfield & Robinson represents an impressive cross-section of high-net-worth individuals, including corporate CEOs and executives, lawyers, bankers, entrepreneurs, entertainment executives and a growing number of Silicon Valley professionals."

I was so eager to get this information out there that I bought a full-page ad in the weekly 'Advertiser,' and called it a 'Zephyr Extra.' It would be weeks before I could pen anything in my own paper. But I was happy to spend the money and inform my fellow citizens what was happening behind their backs.

LINKS TO ZEPHYR CLOUDROCK STORIES

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/dec2000-jan2001/takeit-jim-dec2000-jan2001.html>

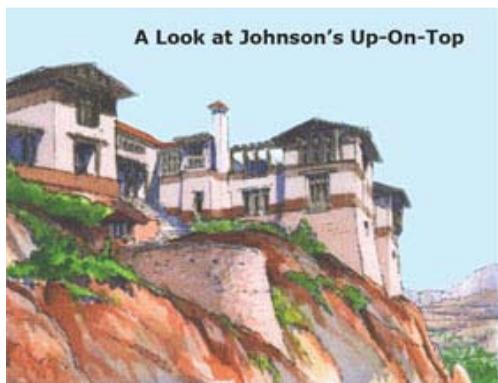
<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/dec2000-jan2001/cloudrot-advertiser-proposal.html>

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/dec2000-jan2001/moab-junk-cloudrot.html>

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/feb-march2001/takeitorleaveit.htm>

<http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com/oldzephyr/dec2000-jan2001/takeit-jim-dec2000-jan2001.html>

The developer promised that Cloudrock, "will be marketed as a vacation community for affluent families and individuals. The Moab real estate market does not currently serve this segment well, with most developments targeted to a somewhat lower economic bracket."



For once, the response of the community was loud and passionate. Many Moabites expressed concern about the project and what it might do to property taxes. A group of mostly young and relatively new Grand County residents formed the Moab Citizens' Alliance. They were particularly comforting to me. I still remember going to their first meeting. I think Howard Trenholme, the owner of the Red Rock Bakery, was moderator. Other leaders included Mark Sundeen and Matt Gross. Matt especially assumed the role of spokes-

person for the group and I had high hopes. I sat quietly in my seat, watching these new young activists; it was like looking at the future, I thought. I was encouraged and later several of the MCAers commented that they'd never seen me smile before. One insisted that previous to that evening, he never knew I had teeth.

For the most part, I felt it would be better if I stayed out of the process they were working their way through. My job was (and still is) to provide information and sometimes offer an opinion. How that information is used...that's completely up to the readers. But I was grateful for their enthusiasm and their intelligence and hopefully, their persistence. It was one piece of advice I offered freely: Be ready for the long haul. This issue wasn't going to be resolved overnight.

It was wintertime and I was on my hiatus, away from all things Moab. But I left town with high spirits. When I returned, something felt different. The MCA leaders spoke cautiously, warily, and without the kind of fire I had seen two months before.

On a web site called 'believermag,' MCA activist Mark Sundeen describes the work he and Gross did to fight Cloudrock. They had been involved in the 2000 presidential campaign but with Bush in the White House, they wondered where they might next exercise their skills. Here are a couple excerpts:

"...a New York company announced plans to build a thousand-dollar-per-night luxury hotel on a mesa just outside of Moab. The developers were allied with rich investors and with the state of Utah, and they arrived in town with a team of powerful lawyers... It was to be called Cloudrock, a name that dripped with fake Native American spirituality and back-to-the-earth opulence. Here was Big Money incarnate.

"In a small town like Moab, Utah, the levers of power are within the grasp of just about anyone willing to reach for them. Matt and I got ourselves appointed to something called the County Board of Adjustments...Matt discovered that the Board of Adjustments existed to hear appeals of land-use code decisions. For instance: the Cloudrock decision...We formed the Moab Citizens Alliance. We held meetings and hung fliers....We were a team. Matt had the ideas, and I had the words. Our press releases were picked up by papers in Salt Lake City and Colorado. Cloudrock was mentioned unfavorably in the New York Times. Matt was interviewed on the local news. We had an audience. My vanity, wounded by the tiny readership of my book, sprang to life. We fancied ourselves like Robert Kennedy or César Chávez, standing up for the little guy, staring power in the face and giving it the finger...But the town elders did not applaud our civic enthusiasm. The Moab Citizens Alliance was roundly denounced....

"We were defeated. (But) Matt quickly moved past our Cloudrock bruises."

'THE CLOUDROCK ANGER REDIRECT

http://www.believermag.com/issues/200710/?read=article_sundeen

I never doubted their passion, while it lasted, but their persistence failed them early on. And my memories of the early MCA Cloudrock Days differ from Sundeen's. To me, by April, it seemed the fire was waning for the new activists; I sat at a public meeting one evening, to hear Gross explain again and again, in effect, 'It's not that we are against this project. We just want to be sure it's done properly and according to the law.' I think the MCA folks were intimidated by the opposition and failed to understand what a long fight this would be. Had the MCA movement caught on, I believe it might (might!) have altered the direction of the town. The problem with Cloudrock was, it would be all or nothing. Often there is some room for compromise, but here, either you supported this massive development or you didn't. It was that simple. They were not going to down-

For once, the response to the Cloudrock story was loud and passionate. Many Moabites expressed concern about the project and what it might do to property taxes. A group of mostly young and relatively new Grand County residents formed the Moab Citizens' Alliance. They were particularly comforting to me.

scale the project to reach out to the middle income people. This was supposed to be an exclusive high-end resort community and, if built, that's what we would get.

A Great Debate, of sorts, was planned for the public radio station in Moab, KZMU, between Matt Gross and pro-Cloudrock (and anything else that can be promoted) supporter Rex Tanner. The program was moderated by fellow MCA supporter Howard Trenholme. I had just pulled into my driveway when the program came on the air. For the next 30 minutes, I sat quietly in my car, with my head and arms draped around and buried over the steering wheel, as Gross and Tanner somehow managed to agree on practically every aspect of the Cloudrock plan. It was all very civil and cordial.

Even Trenholme was surprised and I can still recall his words. Howard said, "Well, I expected there to be a lot of fireworks for this interview today, but you have both managed to find far more common ground than I would have imagined."

It sounded as if he was congratulating them.

As Sundeen notes in his narrative, "Matt quickly moved past our Cloudrock bruises," but the issue lingered for years. MCA, as a broad-based citizens group faded into history, almost as quickly as it came. But the group name was adapted by a handful of Moabites, mostly from the environmental group Living Rivers, and including Sundeen, who pursued Cloudrock in court. MCA lost its bid to stop the annexation of the state owned lands into the Spanish Valley Water and Sewer Improvement District in 2005. But efforts to thwart the project continued into 2008. Finally, the Great Recession of 2009 did what no one else could accomplish: it stopped Cloudrock in its tracks. For now, at least.

Other environmental opposition was negligible. Early on, as the Cloudrock development became better known and was required to submit itself to governmental and public scrutiny, my old friends at Glen Canyon Group of the Sierra Club weighed in on the issue.

On behalf of the group, Jean Binyon addressed its concerns to Michael Liss in a February 2001 letter. Binyon made it clear that, "It is our consensus that the best thing for Johnson's is no development at all."

Having said that, however, it was also obvious the Sierra Club had no intention of putting up a fight. "We realize you are making efforts to ensure that Cloudrock meets standards above and beyond Grand County's.... We realize you are well on your way to completing the preliminary plan, and incorporating changes becomes more difficult with the passage of time. Nevertheless, we hope you will be receptive to our concerns..."

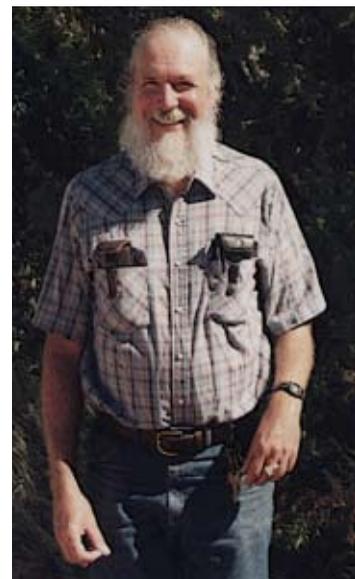
What kind of concerns did the Sierra Club have and what were their requests? Besides setting structures farther back from the rim of the canyon, Binyon made the following demands: "coloring roads to match the surrounding soil...parking lots colored to match the surrounding soil...utilizing medium to darker earth-tones, and non-reflective materials on all structures...outdoor lighting should be kept to a minimum..." They were literally cosmetic in nature.

Binyon also encouraged restrictions on OHVs..."Next to cows, (this is) the most damaging thing currently happening on the mesa. Please be explicit in not permitting their use on the mesa." Apparently, keeping out cows and OHVs was an acceptable trade-off for a massive multi-million dollar "wilderness" resort lodge and scores of condos and homes built on \$600,000 lots.

Liss's reply could not have been more accommodating, "I would be happy to discuss our project with you and members of your Chapter," and added enthusiastically, "I am a member of the Sierra Club and greatly respect the work being done around the country." No other environmental group in Utah even chose to express an opinion.

I was grateful that eventually Cloudrock faded from view, hopefully forever, and whether it was due to the Recession or the work of a handful of devoted Moabites, well, you can argue amongst yourselves. What discouraged me was the lack of wide-spread, broad-based participation in the process. The 'Moab Citizens' Alliance' failed to live up to its own expectations. Its young leaders discovered how difficult it was to rub against the grain of conventional thought. Difficult and time consuming. And discouraging.

Moab had dodged a bullet, but years later, longtime resident Lance Christie and sometime Zephyr contributor noted the changes that had occurred in five years without Cloudrock. In a letter to the Times-Independent, Lance wrote, "People who opposed Cloudrock have had their fears about land and housing price inflation come true without



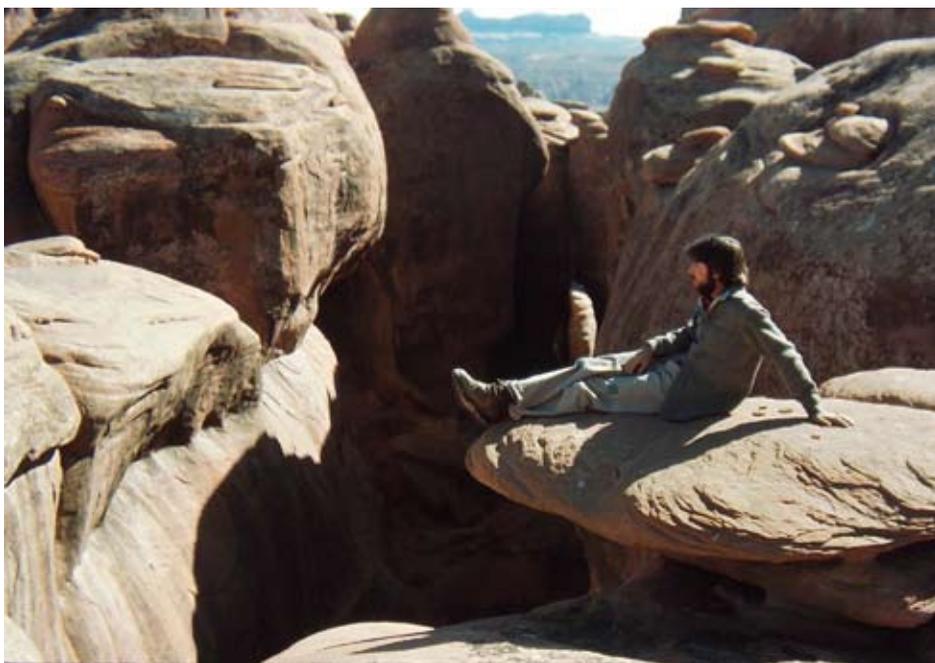
any help from Cloudrock. In 1998, there were an estimated 399 houses in the county which were not owned by or occupied by Grand County residents. By 2005 we added 1,199 residences in the county, an average rate of increase of 4.6 percent per year, 55 times as fast as the county resident population and number of households, both of which increased by 0.84 percent per year. In 2005, about 1,029 residences, 20.8 percent of our total housing stock, is not owned or occupied by Grand County residents."

In the same letter, Lance praised Cloudrock's point man Michael Liss and suggested, "we should invite Mr. Liss and his associates to help us address the moderate-income housing problem in Grand County. They might well turn out to be able and willing to help us address a housing affordability problem they did not cause but which Cloudrock could make worse."

Lance was right about the price rise and the growing number of absentee owners, but I began to wonder if just the idea of Cloudrock with its promise of \$600,000 lots and \$5 million homes had created its own pork belly boom effect. It was in that short period, from 2000 and 2007, that housing prices in Moab went insane. If Cloudrock wanted to come here, others would too. And they would pay whatever price. It would become a purely speculative market. Moab was for sale to the highest bidders.

AND FINALLY...CANYONEERED

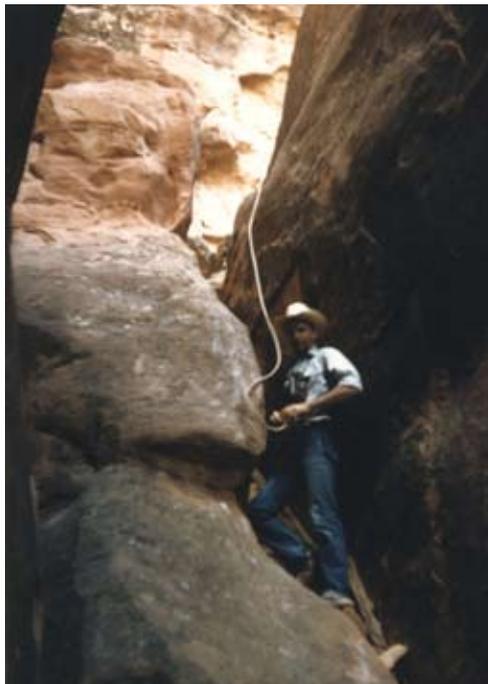
Just a month before the Cloudrock development plans came to my attention, I was having coffee with a friend of mine at the Red Rock Bakery. She'd just been on a complimentary 'canyoneering tour, a commercial cross-country outing at my old stomping grounds in Arches National Park. She told me that a new business in town was offering one day tours into the Arches, to a remote part of the park and the edge of a deep narrow canyon. The trip leader had then set up belay points and the group rappelled to the canyon floor. Arches had been my home for a decade and I knew its backcountry like an old friend's smile; what she was describing sounded familiar. Was there also an arch there, right on the edge of this canyon? Yes! She said.



Stiles near Abbey's Arch in the late-70s.

My heart sank. I knew instantly she was referring to one of those 'secret places' that a few of us knew of, but had pledged an oath of silence to protect. All the official protective designations the government can place on a cherished natural feature can help, but if nobody knows it exists at all...well, that's the best protection of all (and thus I also loathe backcountry guide books).

This was the arch that Ed Abbey had discovered in 1957. He had even referred to it in the old monthly reports and had named it. Twenty years later, my friend Reuben Scolnik and I would find it again. For the next 20 years we did our best to keep it as anonymous as this little corner of Arches had been before. But a book listing all the arches in the park went to press in the late 1980s and we knew, sooner or later, that our secret canyon



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would be visited by others. Still, as late as 1989, Abbey's arch was untouched. A couple months after Ed Abbey died, we put together a memorial service on the mesa above the park's west boundary. Among the speakers was Earth First! Founder Dave Foreman. After the service, I took Dave to the arch and we spent a long hour on the canyon's edge, remembering Abbey and wondering what was coming next to our beloved West. The canyon was as pristine and untouched as it had been a decade earlier. Not a footprint.

Foreman's life would change dramatically. Just two weeks later, he and other Earth First! leaders were busted in a long-planned FBI sting. Lawyers and long trials and plea bargains and prison awaited them. The timing could not have been more chilling—the end of an era in so many ways.

But I was sure Abbey's Arch would stay safe. That its remoteness would at least spare it from the crass world of commercialism. I turned out, yet again, to be very wrong. And none of my allies saw a problem. The strategy for 'saving' wilderness was changing...

NEXT TIME: "The Fork in the Wilderness Road"

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