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**HOW PETE PARRY SAVED CANYONLANDS & MY DOGS...**

Pete Parry was superintendent of Canyonlands National Park from 1975 to 1987 and elsewhere in this issue is a story about Pete's decade of service during one of Southeast Utah's most turbulent and politically charged times—the Sagebrush Rebellion. Pete dealt with controversy quietly but forcefully and I hope you'll take the time to read how Pete's legacy lives on, every time you visit the canyon country.

**Imagine an immature 24 year old seasonal with a fondness for quoting Ed Abbey, who drew cartoons for earth First!... Then imagine a park superintendent who would tolerate that kind of dichotomy.**

But I'd like to take just a moment to talk about Pete on a more personal level. Like I say in the main story, I was hired at Arches as a seasonal ranger in my early 20s and over my ten years at the Devils Garden, I seemed to get myself in trouble a lot. Imagine an immature 24 year old government employee with a fondness for quoting Ed Abbey from memory to park visitors and who moonlighted as a cartoonist for the "radical" Earth First! Journal. Then imagine a park superintendent who would tolerate that kind of dichotomy. I lasted ten years at Arches ONLY because of Pete. Time and again, I thought I had cooked my own goose, only to have Pete pull me from the broiling pan at the last moment. For example...

In 1983, James Watt, the controversial Interior Secretary who once said, "I don't like to walk and I don't like to paddle," came to Arches for an inspection tour. He was on his way to Glen Canyon Dam to "celebrate" its 20th anniversary; unfortunately so were a bunch of my pals from Earth First! When I found them waiting for me at the campground trailer the previous evening, I said, "PLEASE...don't tell me why you're here. Don't tell me what you plan to do." They grinned and left.

The next morning my fellow ranger Mike Salamanca and I were assigned, if you can believe this, to provide protection for Mr. Watt (We were both law enforcement rangers). In a previous issue of the

EF! Journal I had doodled a hideous cartoon called, "The Day All the Birds Crapped on James Watt," a hopeful prophesy of the time when the feathered world took their revenge for Watt's insensitivity to Nature. And yet, here I was, offering myself as James Watt's bodyguard.

On the drive down to the visitor center, we discovered that 'someone' had spray painted epithets to the Interior boss. Most of them read, "DUMP WATT." Or "WATT...A NATIONAL DISGRACE." They were mostly the work of my EF! pals (though later I learned that one offering of graffiti had been secretly spray-painted by the Arches chief ranger at 3 o'clock in the morning.). I felt a tad nervous.

When we got to the visitor center, there was Pete. He walked over to our patrol cruiser and I thought I was done for. He leaned on the door and said, "Well,



**Pete in 1978 with Arches Chief Naturalist Jim Capps**

this sure is a mess." He gave me a long Pete Parry Gaze and then said, "Well, all we have to do is get through this day. Let's hope there won't be any more incidents." I nodded. He gave me one more hard look and then went back to entertain the Interior Secretary. Watt made his tour, pointed to the spray painted signs and called the culprits "vandals." And

by noon he was on his way to the airport and a short flight to Page. It was another close call, but I was still wearing my uniform at the end of the day.

There were other moments. Once the trail crew planned to "improve" the Devils Garden Trail to Landscape Arch. Their plan to widen the trail included the use of a five-yard dump truck and a bulldozer. Because the trail makes such hard tight turns and because dump trucks and dozers can't make hard tight turns, the loss of trees and vegetation was going to be significant. Still, somehow, the trail plan was approved and the project was on the eve of being implemented.

But a few of us seasonal rangers were almost apoplectic about the trail project and finally, in desperation, we took it straight to Pete. Going over the heads of immediate supervisors was not just frowned upon in the Park Service, it was condemned and we were sure we'd finally gone a bridge too far. But Pete listened. "Okay, he said. "Give me a better option." We proposed using smaller trucks—S10 pickups—and a Bobcat dozer instead of its larger cousin. Pete argued that it would take far more trips to haul the same materials and that the trail crew didn't have enough workers to do the job that way. We seasonals volunteered to help, especially when it came to hauling and unloading gravel with the S10s.

Pete thought a moment. "Let's go out and take a look." The next morning we met Pete at the trail-head and walked the one mile trail to Landscape Arch. We showed him where a cluster of oak trees would have to be removed or a magnificent stand of serviceberry would be hacked up. Finally Pete nodded. "Alright. We'll give this a try. But if we get behind or this doesn't work, we'll have to go back to the bigger trucks."

Today, the Landscape trail looks the way it does because Pete intervened.

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Finally, there is the matter of my dogs. When I came to Arches, I brought my two dogs with me, Muckluk and Squawker. We were inseparable and in those days, the backcountry of national parks was still open to dogs. Park managers had the good sense to know that, with ever shrinking predator numbers, rabbits and squirrels and lizards NEEDED to be chased, in order to stay fit and keep their reflexes sharp. What better substitute than my dogs, who chased everything and caught nothing. They were full of enthusiasm and short on wits. The chipmunks outwitted them every time.

But going into my third season, a new administrative officer came to the park with a bad attitude toward both seasonal rangers and dogs. She may have placed both us grungy seasonals and our dogs on the same social strata. So she sent out a memo that declared seasonal rangers could no longer have pets of any kind. There would be no exceptions.

Naturally, I went to Pete. "But your dogs are so big," Pete complained. "And they shed a lot." He remembered the time he'd come by the Arches campground and Muckluk, a Husky mix in full molting mode had sidled up to Pete and coated him in a layer of dog wool.

"Well," I pleaded. "It was hot out there. You'd shed too if you were Muck."

Finally Pete agreed to create a grandfather clause for my dogs and they got to stay. For years I was the

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only seasonal that still had pets. The administrative officer was convinced I'd never leave. As it turned out, I outlasted her.

I left the Park Service just a few months before Pete retired. I had arrived in Moab just a few months after Pete took over at Canyonlands. So I never really knew what it was like to serve under any superintendent but Pete Parry. As it turns out, for once in my life, my timing was perfect.

Thanks, Pete.

**THE HISTORY (AND LOVE!!!) THAT LIVES IN MY FRIDGE.**

Being married has brought me more happiness than I deserve but it's also been revelatory. I was a bachelor for most of my life and apparently, according to my wife, I have a few quirky traits that until now I thought were normal. I won't begin to try and list all of them (there's not enough room for a list like that, even in cyberspace) but let me relate one of them. I don't share this information because I think it's particularly interesting; I'm hoping that maybe someone out there shares my same quirk.

One day, a while back, I peered into our refrigerator and realized there wasn't enough room for even one more item. For one thing our vegetable garden is producing monster zucchinis at a rate much faster than we can eat them, and so we appear to be stockpiling them for the Apocalypse. Tonya saw me trying to wedge leftovers into the fridge and wisely suggested that we take stock of the contents and see what we could throw out. I nodded warily.



"Okay," she said. "First of all, there's a can of maple syrup in the back. It's been in there as long as I've known you. Maybe we should use that up or toss it."

"Well," I said, "I'm not sure you'd want to use that...It's been in the fridge since 1984."

Tonya looked at me. "1984? You were still a ranger at Arches."

"Yeah...that's right."

"This isn't even the same fridge. You moved it from one fridge to another?"

"Actually I moved it from...let's see...I moved it from one fridge to another, to another, to this one. It's moved three times in 28 years."

"But you're not even sure it's edible."

"Yes...that's right. You see, honey...it's historical."

"The maple syrup is historical."

"Yeah. Mike Salamacha, my ranger buddy at Arches, brought that syrup back from Vermont in 1984. We both forgot it was there and when I moved to town, I brought it with me. I've been traveling with that syrup ever since."

Tonya seemed amused, but not really. "Okay, so the syrup stays. What about this?" She held up a jar of jelly. "Surely I can throw this away. It looks sort of disgusting."

I grabbed the jar out of her hands. "No way. That's jelly from Lil McCormick. I could never throw that

jelly away."

"But honey," Tonya pleaded, "There are strange things growing in that jar. Look at it."

It did look sort of gruesome. "But Lil was a dear friend of mine. She was a school teacher in Moab for decades and back in the late 80s, when I was having one of my crises, she was a wonderful friend. Read the label on the jar. It says, 'To Jim..from his ever lovin' Lil.' How could I throw something like that away? Lil died quite a few years ago and when I see that jelly I think of her. I like that the jelly triggers good memories."



**"But Honey... that food is... historical."**

Tonya put the jar back on the shelf. "Next? What's this?" She held up a small bottle of white wine. "Surely we can toss this. It looks like it's been opened."

I smiled at the sight of that bottle. "Oh yes..Mohammed Tabouch."

"Who?"

"I was riding Amtrak from San Antonio to L.A. It was January 1989. They let me board early because the train was going to leave in the middle of the night. But I boarded the wrong train, fell asleep and wound up on a siding at 3 AM. When I woke up and realized what had happened, I ran into the station almost in tears. They put me on a plane to El Paso and I met my own train when it came through the next afternoon. After that, the AMTRAK people wouldn't let me out of their sight, for fear I'd get lost again. They assigned a guy named Mohammed Tabouch to watch me. He gave me this wine in hopes I would get a buzz and sit still."

"But you didn't drink it."

"I drank a little...But I wanted to save it as a memento."

Tonya had a look of resignation on her lovely face. "And this?"

"Ahhh...my bottle of 'Night Train Express.' Bengé brought that back from Gallup, New Mexico. Horrible stuff."

"But you want to keep it."

"Of course."

"So, in order for you to maintain this historical connection to your past, we need to reduce the capacity of our refrigerator by about 15%."

"I'd guess it's no more than 10 to 12%."

Tonya sighed. "I don't know if I've ever known anyone who had a historical fridge until I met you. And now I am married to him." My wife was about to close the door when she spied one more item, in the far rear left corner. It was a bottle of Kulmbacher beer.

"Now this...this rings a bell."

"Oh yeah! That's the beer that Ed Abbey gave me in 1987."

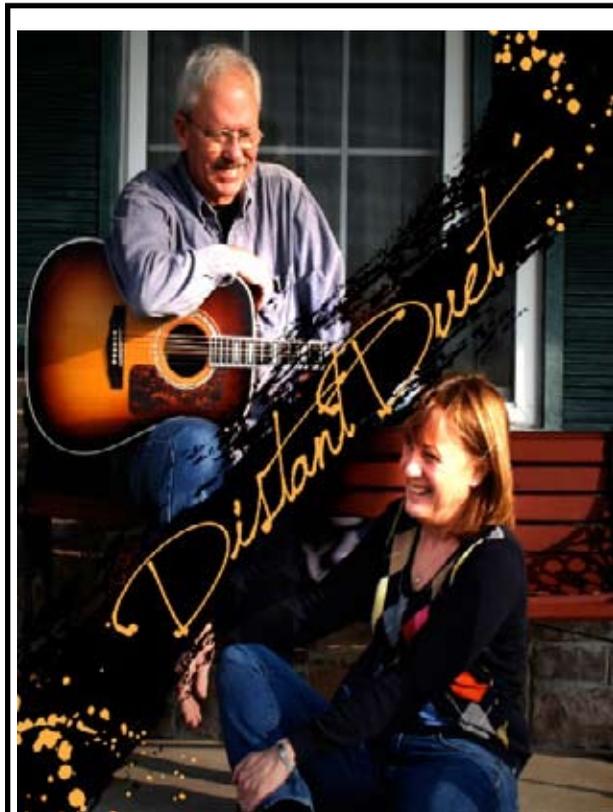
Tonya pounced. "Yes! I knew it sounded familiar. You mentioned it in 'Brave New West.' But in your book you DRANK the beer. How can it still be in our fridge?"

"I can explain. Actually Ed gave me two Kulmbachers. He said if I ever met my soulmate I'd be ready to celebrate."

Tonya smiled. "But you drank one of them and I'm your soulmate. Technically this beer belongs to me." She grinned menacingly.

Then she took the Kulmbacher and put it back in its rightful corner. "If it means that much to you, we'll leave it right where it is...right where it belongs." She kissed me and went outside to pick more zucchinis.

Just then, I knew I was the luckiest man on the face of the earth.



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