

# BRETT HUELEN

(continued)

Another short story....My friend Eddie Harvey's grandfather, Fred Newman, owned a small ranch/farm down on La Sal Creek. Eddie and I would go down there often during the summer months to help out especially during the haying season. Fred was fairly old at that time and worked at the Cash In Silver Mine as a watchman.

We used to go down there and prowl around looking for anything interesting. It was pretty scary going back into the mine and full of who knows what. Our imaginations were running wide open. One time on the way down there, we were driving Fred's old flat hood Jeep pickup. It was an honest to goodness rattle trap and sometime during its hard life, someone had installed a Ford flathead V8 in it. The brakes were pretty much nonexistent and any failing brackets had long ago been replaced by the time honored tradition of baling wire (something which has become a rarity).

As an exception to the baling wire farm rule the steering column was secured to the lower dash panel with what looked like old tennis shoe strings. That was fine with us as long as it could be driven and we were off to the mine.

Since the old jalopy had very low gearing, brakes weren't really all that essential. After we got to the bottom of the canyon I was probably going a little faster than I should have and drifted off to the left a bit too far and started down towards the creek. It was about 10 or 15 feet down the grade. I reached over to try and engage the four wheel drive levers to stay on the road and at that moment the shoe strings broke and I wound up with the steering wheel in my lap and over we went, rolling upside down coming to rest in the creek.

We were unhurt but afraid of what old Fred might do to us. We hiked back to the ranch and drove a little Ford tractor back to the Jeep and tried to roll the Jeep back over onto its wheels. We didn't have enough weight on the front of the tractor so I had Eddie sit on the hood. You should have seen the look on Eddie's face as I turned the tractor into a mechanical bucking bull. After a few unsuccessful tries with the Ford and Eddie's unending screaming, we went back to the ranch for a bigger tractor but couldn't get it started.

My Dad showed up a short time later to take me home and I left Eddie to deal with it. His granddad managed to roll the Jeep over, poured some oil in her and she fired right up and they drove it out of there slightly worse for wear. I always thought it simply added a little more character as those old Jeeps were built pretty tough. I wouldn't doubt that old Jeep is still down on that farm today. The Newman's were a good old time family and I became very close to them as I grew up.

Anyhow I had a wonderful time growing up in Moab, many great memories including filming the block buster movie Blue. Actually it was simply a buster and fizzled at the box office. I have a VHS tape of it just for nostalgic reasons. I got to meet most of the stars and recall botching an action closeup that Yakima Canutt was directing. After screwing the scene up twice I found new work with their kitchen staff. Perhaps that is why I excelled as a KP after I was drafted? The Army must have seen a real pro at work and made extensive use of my skill during basic training.

I still miss the old red rock country. I spent a little over 20 years in the Army retiring in 1989, then another 21 years working on the Trans Alaska Pipeline retiring yet again in 2010. I now live in Olympia, Washington and have returned to the old roots and am raising horses. I guess I have come full circle.

*Brett Huelel moved to Moab in 1955 as a six year old. He attended Helen M. Knight, and Grand County Junior and Senior High Schools, graduating in 1967. Brett worked on Ray Shumway's ranch in Castle Valley, Taylor Ranch in Fisher Valley, and the Dugout Ranch for the Redd Family. He was drafted into the US Army in 1968 and retired in 1989. He returned to Alaska and worked another 21 years on the Trans Alaska Pipeline working at Pump Station #9 and lived in Delta Junction, Alaska. Retired again in 2010, here located to Olympia, WA, where he currently resides with his wife Christine.*



*Hanksville Post Office*



*Dad, me and Jeff at the claim eating breakfast. I remember eating cereal out of those little cereal boxes. You used to open it up and pour in the milk. Looks like we actually had the privilege of using a bowl this time. To this day I still don't care for powdered milk.*

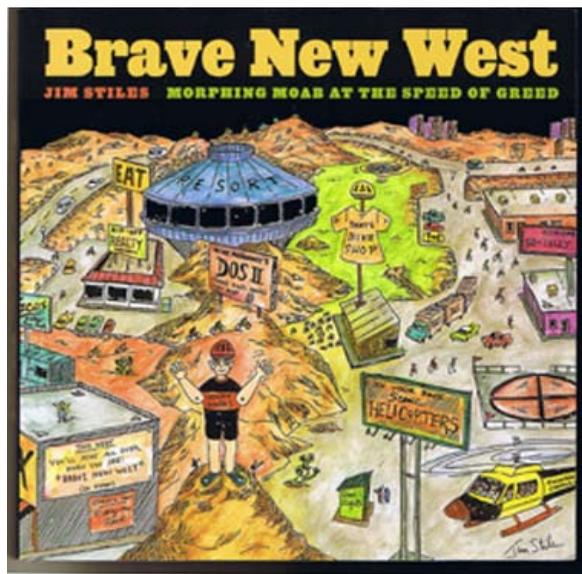


*Our setup over in the Capitol Reefs after they "hit paydirt"*

*A picture of the Hulen's. I'm the little guy in the middle.*



My mother Barbara (with Geiger counter in hand) when she discovered the uranium deposit with Jeff and I.



*“Jim Stiles holds up a mirror to those of us living in the American West, exposing issues we may not want to face. We are all complicit in the shadow side of growth. His words are born not so much out of anger but a broken heart. He says he writes elegies for the landscape he loves, that he is “hopelessly clinging to the past.” I would call Stiles a writer from the future. Brave New West is a book of import because of what it chooses to expose.”*

-- Terry Tempest Williams

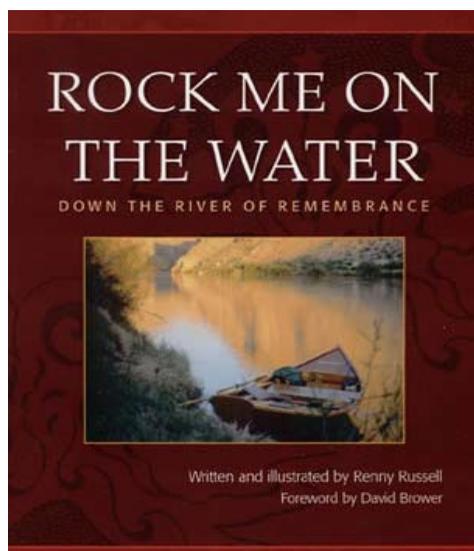
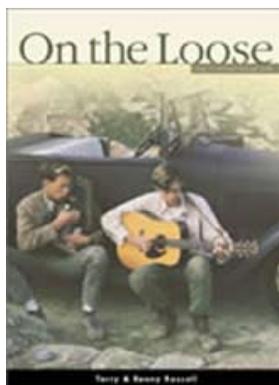
SIGNED COPIES OF  
**Brave New West**

are now available directly from  
**The Zephyr**  
PO Box 271  
Monticello, UT 84535

\$20.00 postage paid  
checks only at this time

[www.canyoncountryzephyr.com](http://www.canyoncountryzephyr.com)

From Renny Russell,  
the author of...



“Renny Russell’s *Rock Me on the Water* is at its heart courageous. To return to the same power of nature that took his brother thirty years previous—to be with it, to confront it, to take solace in it, and to be inspired and healed by it—is remarkable in itself. His book is, as well, a testament to the evocative rhythms of the wilds. In this complicated dance, this profoundly personal journey, Renny Russell also gives us an amazingly spirited tour of one of the truly great landscapes of the American West and a keen understanding of its power to shape a life.”

Robert Redford

order signed copies at:  
<http://www.rennyrussell.com/>

**AL CORNETT**  
Artist - Craftsman - Author:  
Seven Mountains and the Red Star

13378 Campton Rd.  
Slade, Ky. 40376  
606-663-4276  
606-569-5016 cell

alancornette@gmail.com  
[www.asteroidscomets.com](http://www.asteroidscomets.com)

**LIFETIME  
BACKBONER**

**STEVE RUSSELL**  
Moab, UT

