

Byron's Little Helpers

By Jess Ward
FS Intern

There couldn't have been a better pair to lead what Byron called "his most ambitious crew yet." Deva Jebb and Derek Stertz, the crew chiefs for the 2003 summer season, guided the nine of us through Ashley National Forest with blasé confidence. Deva hailed from San Diego, California, where she had been working as a graphic artist for her family's paragliding company. Her ultra-hip west coast style and white Ford thunderbird drew stares of envy from the Vernal youth. Derek's arrival to town was delayed by the mechanical failure of his truck while he was crossing the Rockies on his way back from Colorado. As a private investigator in Denver, Derek had many exciting stories to share about how he liquidated the goods of the recently deceased.

There was hardly a dull moment with Derek and Deva in charge. Stertz kicked off the summer with a reenactment of the sinking of the Titanic during our first week with the BLM. He boldly decided to ford a small stream with the Blazer in order to take a shortcut to a section of BLM property. We stood back and watched as he steered full speed into the deepest, muddiest part of the stream for reasons unknown. The tail end of the truck sank about four feet into the watery depths as passengers frantically exited from every available opening. The truck was miraculously extricated about 20 minutes later following a sloppy tug-of-

war between human and machine. Another one of Derek's encounters with workplace hazards occurred when a bear was sighted within the survey area. Staying true to his "safety first" motto, Stertz gave the bear ten minutes to "wander off," armed Brian with a pick axe and advised us to be light on our toes. We would be fine, he said, as long as we could outrun the other two individuals. It was only until we stumbled upon the second bear that Derek realized only the fastest of the three of us would survive and thus decided a good mauling was not worth finishing the survey.

Deva's more amusing moments took place off the clock. When she wasn't winning the hearts of PIT volunteers and receiving welded gifts in the mail (soil probes from Bryce), she was collecting dead insects to decorate the strip of astroturf she kept on her kitchen counter. One weekend we stopped at her apartment to pick her up for a movie and found three eye patches lying on the landing. After some persuasion, Deva and her band of pirates arrived at the Cinema 5 wearing the homemade disguises. Only Mark was able to maintain the buccaneer accent long enough to order his ticket, though it was obvious to everyone in the theater we had come to see Pirates of the Caribbean. Deva also hosted the midnight chap-making party the day before the Vernal rodeo. On the job, she

suffered from the frustration of having her entire crew fall asleep during the lengthy drives to survey sites. Deva often mocked interns who, through no fault of their own, exhibited a “bob and nod” napping style. (You’ve seen it before, individuals that doze off with their heads down and then quickly snap awake, lifting their chin and resulting in an exaggerated nodding motion.) In the end she wisely replaced her faith in our capability to remain conscious with Devo cassette tapes and her imagination.

Fortunately the summer passed without any life-or-death incidents like those of years past, thanks to the fearless leadership of our two crew chiefs, Deva and Derek.

The results of the chap making party.



A Week in the Life of an Ashley National Forest Intern or How I Managed Not to Die from “Brown Lung” at Finch Draw

**By Alissa Leavitt
FS Intern**

My internship with the Ashley National Forest began as many do – filled with dread and anticipation. Dread about what I had gotten into and the anticipation of spending a rather exciting summer with all sorts of new people. Luckily for me, the summer started right out with an exciting excavation in a dry rockshelter located in Finch Draw near the Flaming Gorge Reservoir.

For those of you who aren’t familiar with it, the Finch Draw site actually consists of two separate rock shelters. One is immense and quite impressive, while the second, smaller rockshelter was nonchalantly tucked away further down the draw. I was very excited to be working on this excavation as I had never worked in a dry cave before and thought of all the neat things

that we could find there including perishable artifacts.

Unfortunately the life of an archaeologist isn’t all as fun as Indiana Jones would make it seem and we did have a mission: to assess the extent of vandalism and looting that might have happened at the site. (We couldn’t help it if we just happened to find cool things as well...and find them we did.)

When we first arrived at the site, Byron did a bit of introduction to the area and gave us an overview of what he hoped to find (corn, pottery, etc) and the methods we would be using (essentially, do what your crew chief tells you). We also discussed some of the dangers of working on the excavation in a dry cave. We had respirators and Byron swore to us that none of us would get Hanta Virus

because sunlight reached all parts of the rockshelter.

The excavation went smoothly (minus the prickly pear spines under fingernails and the endless amounts of dirt inhaled) and soon we had found many exciting things in the units including corn kernels, pieces of hide, a roasting pit in the little rockshelter, 14,000 year old deer dung, several projectile points and a basket bottom. It was a great dig and I learned some important lessons that I shall forever carry with me:

1. Somehow, no matter where you position an excavation screen when you sift it will blow towards the poor people excavating--a very unique phenomenon indeed.
2. Deer dung is a hilarious material to watch people sift through and put into buckets until it shocks you and turns out to be the oldest dated thing on the forest.
3. You probably won't get "Brown Lung" from breathing in all that dust.

4. You will find the coolest things (like the basket bottom) on the last half of the last day you are working on a site.

5. Touching the walls with petroglyphs on them could get you killed by crew chiefs (not to mention the oils on your hands help it decay quicker).

6. To keep morale up at a portion of the site that is not yielding much, it helps to yell and scream excitedly so that the crew from the other rockshelter comes down to see what you've found and then see the looks on their faces when you tell them you just like to yell randomly.

But when a dig is over, there is still much more work to be done. So, what's happening with the assemblage from the site? Well, I volunteered to clean, catalog and analyze it. I am still working on it and have learned some interesting things especially when it comes to the preservation of perishable items like cordage and corn. Maybe if you are lucky you can have a copy someday when I've finished it, but you'll have to contact Byron and Clay about that.

BLM Surveys

By Rod Swaner

FS Intern

Fire Archaeologist... Prescribed burns... Chaining... Aspen rejuvenation... Timber salvage... Compliance surveys... Tree art (arboglyphs)... Seven foot high sagebrush... If I didn't know these terms in May, I certainly understood what they meant by September 2003. The BLM made sure of it. Our leader, Fire Archaeologist Extraordinaire Marnie Wilson, was fearless (well, except that

one time when she found the tick crawling up her neck) as she piloted us through the rugged outback of Utah.

But, before we could become official BLM employees we all had to pass a rigorous Computer Clearance Test, a very graphic Sexual Harassment Class, have our pictures taken with no makeup, and demonstrate our ability to clearly tell the world what BLM stands for (the acronym not its mission). I am

pleased to report that our entire class passed the grueling exams, were given our official BLM clearance, and were sent off to the BLM hinterlands to fulfill our duties as BLM employees.

Our first project was to tackle the Aspen groves on top of Goslin Mountain. Gandalf gave us all a magic stone to help guide our way. Oh wait, wrong story. The idea for this project was to wade through marsh-like conditions and hurdle large amounts of cattle dung through thick Aspen groves to find remnants left behind from the region's ancestral past. We did encounter historic and prehistoric sites during this project but the thing of interest to me was that both the prehistoric and historic sites seem to occupy the same area. It was as if these temporary campsites were a popular stopping place for many peoples traveling through that region.

Our fearless leader then led us on to our next project in Garder Canyon, located near Nine Mile Canyon in Duchesne County. We conducted compliance surveys for timber salvage and reforestation to ascertain that there was nothing of historic or prehistoric value. I also accompanied "World Renowned" Crew Chief Derek Sterez to survey areas that already experienced fire. Walking in several inches of ash I was amazed to see just how much of an effect erosion has on the landscape after a fire. As we trooped through the Garder Canyon Project we found an occasional historic can scatter and temporary campsites. Our significant accomplishments also included getting the SUV out of the creek and back on dry land and performing minor eye surgery. Although there was a vicious rumor afloat at BLM HQ that Intern Alyssa had dared Intern Jess to poke

herself in her eye with a stick to prove her Rugged Womanliness, the naked truth was that a huge alien object was attracted to that curious ocular feature and lodged itself in her left eye. We were very far from civilization. Thanks to the resourcefulness of the crew, and their expertise with Advanced Optical Manipulation and Hydrotherapy, Jess was able to regain partial vision in her left eye.

The next stop for the hardy BLM Interns of 2003 was The Book Cliffs. The surveys for this project were for areas that would be involved in prescribed burns, chaining and thinning. We were lodged in a BLM cabin while out in the field for weeks at a time. The scenery and wildlife in this area was incredible: hawks, deer, elk, bear, rabbits, snakes, wild horses, and of course the firefighters we had to share the cabin with for a week. Derek had a near death experience with a couple of those female firefighters, but survived. The females always seem to be more aggressive.

Lest you think that this project was glamorous, let me assure you that it was no walk in the forest. We surveyed through dense and tall vegetation. Our socks were filled with stickers by the end of the day. The intense July heat sizzled through our SF 35 sunblock and the ticks burrowed in under our clothes. The days were long, the hikes were steep, and there were still those firefighters to contend with at the end of the day. But we got to see some pretty amazing sites and artifacts. If I remember correctly, we recorded three rock art sites and several historic ranching sites. Despite the impaired vision in her left eye, Intern Jess found an isolate just before beginning a survey through an Aspen Grove. The isolate

was a translucent rose-colored chalcedony point base with dark red veins running throughout it. We were all so proud of her. I believe that Jess found some of the best artifacts during the entire summer. Another famous discovery by Jess was that Shoshoni obsidian knife from Brown's Park. Bravo Jess!

During the first part of our internship Byron had showed us several amazing rock art sites over the summer that he had encountered during his many years of work in the field. But while working for the BLM the most stunning rock art site that I encountered was in the Book Cliffs: Site 42UN000123. The site sits on tribal land and is located at the north fork of Sweet Water and South Canyon. The site is easily accessible from the east side of the road on a south-facing sandstone ridge. Thanks to my current top-level security clearance at SHPO, I recently discovered that the site was actually first

recorded back in 1983 by Larry Negulesco. It is made of several panels stretching a couple hundred meters or more. Most of the rock art is low enough that it is at eye level. The site contains both Fremont and Ute petroglyphs. In addition to the native rock art, there are historic petroglyphs as well as cattle brands and inscriptions dating to the early settlers, traders and trappers in the area. This site is a regular smorgasbord of graffiti.

As we completed our mission for the BLM, Marnie glowed with pride. I, on the other hand, just glowed — it took weeks for the sunburn to completely heal and peel. When I was accepted to this internship I was very excited and terribly nervous. I had the least amount of archaeological experience compared to the other interns and I was the oldest intern. I had some rough moments, but I would do it again in heartbeat, especially if I had a chance to work with all those wonderful people again.



Brian, Deva, Chad and Rod have just moved Derek out of the mud.

The Brown's Park PIT Project and the Wereduck

By Alissa Leavitt
Forest Service Intern

During the last week of June, 2003, the archaeologists and interns from Ashley National Forest and many intrepid Passport in Time volunteers joined forces with the Bureau of Land Management in the Brown's Park region near the borders of Colorado, Utah and Wyoming. The goal: to survey and discover new sites in this area (large farming villages) and generally have a good time. Brown's Park has had quite a spectacular past. There was much prehistoric use, and the area was also a popular haunt for famous cattle rustlers and outlaws including Butch Cassidy and the Wild Bunch.

The project began on a windy afternoon. After a brief introduction, we thought we would practice a little surveying right near the campground. Imagine our surprise when we located a huge site quite near the developed campground (large sites seem to appear when you do not have a great deal of time to record them). Several volunteers worked off and on all week to record all the features and surface finds at this one site.

On the second and third days of the survey, the weather got rough, and some of the interns nearly drowned in their tents from a torrential downpour one night. However, everyone managed to work well together, and even to get some surveying done.

The Brown's Park survey was particularly memorable in the eyes of many of the interns...as this was the first appearance of some rare and remarkable, little known Ashley National Forest megafauna. Camped along the Green River, I awoke late one night

(around 3:15 AM) to hear an awful sound coming from the area of the tent where our intern, Mark was sleeping. It was some type of unholy sound that resembled what you would expect to hear if a saber-toothed tiger was coughing up a small animal. Never having heard anything like that before, I held very still. When the sound awakened my tentmate Jessica, I told her "don't worry about it, it's only a duck." It really did sound like some sort of demented, sick, large quacking creature.



Artist rendition of the wereduck, drawn to scale with hapless intern trapped in tent.

During breakfast the next morning I casually asked the group if they'd heard anything during the previous night. Victoria and Brian, two other alert interns, also claimed that they'd heard the noise. After much debate, we decided the sound hadn't been Mark, but instead must have been

a creature from the Green River that would from then on be known as the Wereduck. Byron, our leader, tried to tell us it wasn't a wereduck but more likely had a non-supernatural explanation. "Perhaps it was a badger, or a bird, or maybe it really was Mark," explained an annoyed Byron. This statement didn't fool me. I can smell government cover-up from a mile away!

Wereduck aside, the week was quite successful. The volunteers' efforts helped to increase the archaeological

understanding of the area, and enabled the Ashley National Forest Heritage staff to accomplish in a week what would have otherwise taken months. The many interesting finds included a possible metate manufacturing area, slab-lined basins, corn storage rooms, brush structures, never ending lithic scatters and possibly the village sites we had been looking for. All in all, it was a great week, and we hope to see many of the volunteers back on other PIT projects in the future.

WINDY NIGHT ON GOSLIN MOUNTAIN

Cowboy Poetry
By Albert Lannon
PIT Volunteer

It was a windy night on Goslin Hill,
The campfire could not prevent a chill;
The stars shone bright in the summer sky,
When this story was told all mouths went dry.

It began in the bar in Manila town,
Folks were drinking when the action went down;
Ashley Forrest was sitting in the bar
When Tiger Chert saw her from afar.

Tiger'd been around, he was a useful guy,
He sidled up giving Ashley the eye;
His cousin, Dutch John, noticed from across the
room,
He moved in quickly and trouble did loom.

The truth be known both men were flakes,
Both refusing to ever settle in one place;
Though related they were, blood didn't matter,
They might have been strangers on some lithic
scatter.

Dutch John grabbed the seat next to the girl,
He grinned red-faced at Tiger who was cut off at
the curl;
'Mind if I sit with you, little lady?'
He winked at Tiger who thought him quite
shady.

'It's a Fremont Country,' Ashley Forrest stated,
Her tone of voice made Dutch John feel berated;
'Hey there darlin,' Dutch John grabbed her wrist,

Tiger Chert stepped closer and balled up his fist.

Back of the bar pouring drinks was Sandy Loam,
She could pour draft beer without much foam;
She wore tight jeans and a blouse with lacing,
Kept things cool in a slab-lined basin.

Now Sandy didn't want to see a fight,
Didn't much care who was wrong or who's right;
She said to Dutch John with words she thought
sage,
'Hey Dutch, so what are you into these days?'

Dutch John didn't answer, kept hanging on
To Ashley's wrist, he was real gone;
Sandy Loam said to Dutch, 'Now what's the
point?
You don't really wanna scatter this joint.'

Tiger put his arm on Dutch John's shoulder,
"Let's go outside, mano a mano," he was bolder;
Ashley Fremont took a slug of Manila's best,
Said, 'Let's all go out, we'll have a test.'

Ashley Fremont was Vernal-town based,
Rumors had it she was quite bifaced;
She was a good looking woman, some called
her cute,
She liked to say that she was part Ute.

She said, 'Cause with the winner I'm going
home,

Sandy turned to the telephone;
Dutch John said, 'Lady, I'm ready for you,'
'Not so quick, cuz'n,' Tiger Chert was in a stew.

The men stepped outside into the night,
Ashley followed muttering, 'I love a good fight,'
Dutch John pulled out a side-notched point,
Tiger's thumbnail scraper was ready to anoint

With blood this matter could only be ended,
An archaic way, but historically blended;
Both men feinted, looking for advantage,

When a siren sounded like a lion on a rampage.

Art Fremont rolled up, red lights a-flashing,
Said, 'break it up boys, or you'll take the judge's
lashing;
Art Fremont said, 'do I have to paint a picture?
Or maybe you need a ranger's lecture.'
So no one died, things never got gory,
What might we make, then, of this old story?
It could be true, could of got real juicy,
Maybe based on a tale interpreted by Byron, but
loosely.

The Goddess and the Perky Intern

By Grant Sulham
PIT Volunteer

This story is mostly true. If it wasn't, it should be. The story is about the intern and the goddess. Sufficient to say that this heroine was female, polite, energetic, responsible, kind and young. OK, call her "Perky."

Since we have a heroine, we also need villains. There were Spear chucker and Oracle. The former threw atlatis, while the latter, well, he can be found in the film "Hallelujah Trail."

One evening, as the other members of the group sat at Oracle's feet asking, "Oracle, Oracle, tell us why..." the great one looked to the Perky Intern and said "Youser kid, you look all in the dumps! What ails you?" With a sigh and a quick wipe of a tear, our heroine confessed that after days in the hot sun, walking the wide reaches of the dusty sagebrush, she had found nothing of value. She had, but just escaped from an office cubicle and a stern boss. It was her hope to convince the powers above her to let her remain out under the blue sky. Alas, a dishonorable return to a cubicle loomed in her future.

With a belch Oracle took another drink of water (it wasn't, but this is a family story), leaned forward and said:

"Youser kid; the goddess, have you not heard of?"

At that remark Spear Chucker paused from stretching his ear with his foot. "Oracle," said he, "you would burden her with that knowledge?" With another belch Oracle answered "Youser."

Oracle explained to his audience about the Anthro Mountain dig the year before. How he and Spear Chucker discovered the goddess in an ancient quarry and brought her back to the dig. Finally, how having the goddess coincided with their team finding most of the artifacts from that point forward. How even the cries of "Hey I was going to dig there next!" failed before the goddess. "Youser" said Oracle, "I'm not swearing it works, just reporting what I saw."

There then arose the argument between Oracle and Spear Chucker. It centered on the dogma of "The Way Up" for the goddess. That is, one-way she appeared as Marge Simpson; beehive hairdo, bulging eyes and a button nose. Turned over the nose was still a nose but what were once the eyes...anyhow, this is a family publication. Spear Chucker complained that things had

gone fine until Oracle had turned her over. Oracle replied that taking the goddess with his team today and resulted in finding rock shelters, habitation sites and shade. "Youser" said Oracle, "I'm not swearing it works, just reporting what I saw."

At this the Perky Intern broke in. "Where," said she, "is this goddess and how can it work?" At that Oracle motioned to Spear Chucker and off he dashed. Reaching his tipi (used at the Battle of Little Bighorn) Spear Chucker dove in. There followed a period of crashes, yelps and a small explosion or three. Finally, Spear Chucker rolled out holding the goddess.

The goddess was handled to Oracle, then to the sighs of those attending, to the Perky Intern. Holding it the Perky Intern's first words addressed the dogma of "The Way Up" She said "I'll get some marking tape and cover her up." Oracle said "Youser" while Spear Chucker howled.

The next day the Perky Intern lead Spear Chucker and the rest of the team out of the sagebrush and into the canyon. Somehow the powers that be had taken note of the hard work of the team and rewarded them by changing their assignment. (Either that or the goddess was already working overtime.)

Deep into the canyon the team found rockshelters, artifacts, a huge habitation site and more. Spear Chucker found a bear's den but that's another story. Finally the team with the Perky Intern meets up with Oracle's team. Unfortunately, it was also in the middle of the huge site. Perhaps the goddess was trying to please everybody. To this was heard from Oracle, "Youser." Spear Chucker just belched.

After a bit of dignified discussion (i.e., "It may be your area but they're MY artifacts!") it was agreed to share. That day and the next were spent recording the many items, artifacts and features found. "I'm not swearing it works, just reporting what I saw." Said Oracle.

That evening the Perky Intern was introduced to the way of the Atlatl. She used it to strike the Tardis that had recently appeared on the vast expanse of sagebrush. (In truth, it was the potta-potty) Descending further to Oracle and Spear Chucker's level she decided that the goddess really didn't need the marking tape. Thoughts of a return to the cubicle were far away.

Thus it came to pass that the Perky Intern discovered the goddess and the way of the Atlatl. To all of this was said by Oracle "I'm not swearing it works, just reporting what I saw." Spear Chucker just scratched.



Grant displays the Goddess effigy.

Ute Tower PIT Project 2003

Nanette Gamble

Forest Service Interpreter

Ute Fire Lookout Tower was painted and repaired in August of 2003. This is a project that we have been working towards for quite some time and we are thrilled to see it looking like new again.

The week before the actual PIT Project the Daggett County Prison Crew worked with a lift truck operator, using high power water pressure to remove the loose paint. Scrapers and wire brushes were used on the legs and bracing of the tower to remove paint. Footings on the legs were repaired and refinished with concrete, then sealed to keep out moisture. The legs, bracing and structure underneath the cabin were painted first. The tower is 40 feet high and presented many challenges when

trying to paint the legs and underneath structure.

The following Monday, Passport In Time volunteers recruited for this project arrived ready to work and began working on the tower above the deck. All the windows were removed, scraped and painted. Handrails and stair steps were repaired, scraped and painted. The cabin itself was painted inside and out. Leaks in the roof were repaired, glass window panes were cleaned and anchor cables were tightened. The shed, outhouse and fence around the old weather station were also painted and repaired, and new shingles were put on the outhouse. The tower has been given a new lease on life and everyone felt good about what was accomplished.



Joe George, a retired school teacher from Germantown Maryland, paints around the many windows on the tower.

Swett Ranch PIT

By Mel Bashore

PIT Volunteer

In early September 2003, fifteen PIT volunteers showed up at Swett Ranch — triple the number that organizers expected. I was there the previous year and that year there were only four of us. That was the norm at the ranch. Organizers were used to people having a change of plans and not showing — so they decided to overbook to achieve a workable crowd of willing workers. The 2003 bunch broke the pattern. They came from Washington, Oregon, California, Illinois, South Dakota, Colorado, Texas — my wife and

I the only home-state attendees from Utah. And, oh yes, there was Izzy — a PIT legend — who claims to be homeless. With this anxious crowd — the task planned to last an entire week was polished off in 1½ days. The plan for this year's project was to replace an aging dairy barn roof. A crew of a dozen hard-working prisoners sporting green Daggett County Jail T-shirts had been prepping the barn for our assault.

On Day 1 when we were having lunch at the ranch house and making introductions, we could hear the prison

crew ripping off old roof boards and trying to square up the sides of the old barn. They had already built over a hundred yards of good-looking pole fence and bridged an irrigation ditch on the path to the circa 70-year-old barn. Day 1 was strictly planned to help us get acquainted with people and place. We took a walking tour of all the structures on the century-old homestead ranch situated on the south side and hundreds of feet above beautiful Flaming Gorge reservoir in northeastern Utah. What Byron Loosle, the Ashley NF archaeologist, characterized as a mile walk down to the cow shed and calf barn, was thought by some to be a conservative estimate. Oscar Swett liked to situate his ranch out-buildings at some distance from each other. Nonetheless, we were intrigued with the remnants of an early ranger station and enthralled with the story of early-day Ranger Bill Green. In about 1917, his horse and canoe were found tethered on the banks of Green River just north of the ranch. He had disappeared and was never found — presumably drowned. On the heels of hearing about this mystery, we visited puzzling and intriguing pre-historic and Fremont sites.

On Day 2, we began — and almost finished — work on the barn. With the large number of PIT volunteers and prison crew, it was not without frustrations and a few heated confrontations. Everybody wanted a piece of the action. Some experienced volunteer carpenters voiced impassioned (and sometimes conflicting) opinions about how the structure should be reconstructed. (PIT people are simply passionate people!) That's when Tex, wielding the voice of reason, entered the fray. He kind of raised his voice (at least that's how I

remember it) and punctuated his sentences with a few carefully chosen words to make it perfectly clear how the barn was going to be restored — and who the boss was of this ragtag outfit. Was that an apology of sorts we heard the following morning? After the rafters were pulled back into a semblance of straightness, collar ties affixed, and new roof boards nailed on — the barn started to look pretty dang good.

Tex Leflet is head carpenter honcho for Ashley NF. He directed all of the restoration work conducted on Swett Ranch. He's good — and he's real funny. One of Izzy's prime reasons to return to the project for a second go-around was to hear more of Tex's jokes. Mine too. Tex is a big part of the Swett Ranch project experience — only I can't relate 90% of his jokes because it might jeopardize the continuation of the Swett project. I may be risking things, but the target and butt of many of his jokes are the nearby Utah town of Manila and the Swetts.

On Day 3, a new work plan was put into effect. Byron and Tex divided us into small groups to work on various ranch projects. There are always plenty of jobs to do on this old ranch. Gene repaired a few hanging gates. The prison crew dug a diversion ditch above the root cellar. Some of the PIT crew set forth to finish the barn roof.

The old walk-in root cellar, dug in to a north facing slope, became the focus of some serious attention by the remainder of both prison and PIT crews. It was the third root cellar built by the Swetts (earlier ones had deteriorated) and featured double doors that formed an airlock to help keep the cellar an even cool temperature. It had been closed to public access for a few years because tunneling marmots and sluffing

dirt had weakened the interior walls. The crews shored up the roof and began hauling out dirt and rocks. After knocking off for lunch, with an approaching cold front and rain approaching, Tex and Byron gave us the afternoon off to visit some of the nearby sites. Many toured the Flaming Gorge Dam while others drove to the Ute Fire Tower, Sheep Creek geologic feature, or an impressive petroglyph site near Vernal.

Before venturing off, the prison crew distributed their classy green Daggett County Jail T-shirts to each of the PIT crew for a group photo. Izzy broached the idea to them the day before and the guys came through. The PIT crew put them on backwards so it would show the jail identification on the front. They also showed us some gang signs to use in a few photo shots. Camaraderie between the crews was developing — a first for the prison crew who said they had never been permitted to work with outside civilians before. Even the prison crew went off on a field trip to the Red Canyon Visitor Center.

On Day 4, the weather improved after a wet night. The workers were

again distributed to varied jobs. I spent the entire day in the “rat hole” — er, root cellar. A few of us put up stringers and framing for a wood interior wall while others built a solid, cemented rock wall. After a few hours working underground, it got to feel almost like home. We stopped short of finishing to get ready for the evening Dutch oven dinner. For some, it was their first taste of Dutch oven cooking. Everybody contributed something to the pot-luck tasty feast. On our final day, we finished off the root cellar walls and did all the odds and ends to clean up the place. My wife, Karen, and daughter Sarah (who met us from her home in northern Colorado for her first PIT experience), and I gave watercolors of ranch scenes we had done during the week to Tex, Byron, Nan (FS volunteer coordinator), and to our new prison pals — Big Dog, Rudy Roo, Steve, Valdez, and Chris. We told them that next year we hoped to see them there as PIT volunteers rather than wearing their prison greens. Julie (from northern California) expressed our sentiments when she sorrowfully screamed, “I don’t want to leave!”



PIT and prison crew pose in their matching duds.

The RMAC Heart Attack

**By Derek A. Stertz
Crew Chief**

The RMAC is the Rocky Mountain Anthropology Conference. This conference is a biannual event that has been conducted in some of the most amazing parts of the Rocky Mountains. The 2000 conference was held in Alberta, Canada. The 2003 proceedings were in Estes Park, Colorado, which is just east of Rocky Mountain National Park.

The Ashley National Forest Heritage Department held a half day symposium on the Uintah Mountains. Byron Loosle and Clay Johnson hosted the symposium and coordinated his whole staff and former staff members to present papers and research. Dr. Loosle presented his research on the May 2003 excavation of his Finch Draw Rock-shelter along with further information on

Summit Springs. Clay Johnson gave several informative talks on his research into archaeology site rehabilitation after fires. Michelle Knoll gave a speech on her research at Deadman Lake that was fresh from the acceptance of her thesis at BYU. Shelia Goff had to wait patiently before some technical issues were solved so she could present the ceramic analysis she had conducted at CU Boulder.

Alissa Leavitt, one of the heritage interns from Weber State, made just enough of her own additions to put her name on a Uintah Spanish Gold research paper written in 2002 by Chris Bailey and Tammy Merkle. Eric Carson took some time from his busy schedule to enlighten the audience with his study of Glacier and Paleo-Environments.

Brian Storm, another 2003 intern from the University of Nebraska, was our on-deck speaker in case Eric couldn't make it to the symposium. Dr. Bonnie Pitblado summarized the Utah State field school which worked near Antelope Flat. I rounded out this cast with my discussion on the public's involvement in the assessment of cultural resources. This presentation enabled me an additional kudos for my grad school applications at Univ. of Colorado, Denver. As a result the Ashley National Forest has a full count of over-achieving, under-organized heritage specialists. All a person has to do to witness this phenomenon is to walk into Dr. Loosle's office on a summer morning.

Our RMAC expedition to Estes Park was in late September 2003. Snow was just starting to dust the peaks of Rocky Mountain National Park. The animals were becoming disgruntled by the falling temperature. The Cubs and the Red Socks were headed to the MLB playoffs, which had the potential to usher in the prophesized apocalypse.

It has been reported in many Speech Communication courses that the large amounts of the human population experiences moderate to extreme anxiety concerning public speaking. The newer, less experienced members of the Heritage staff, me included, experienced some of this extreme anxiety. It was brought about by our overactive imaginations about the critical eye of our unacquainted colleagues and the devastating blow that might be inflicted upon our psyche. This turned out to be similar to some things in life like quitting smoking or giving up drinking, or even picking up trashy women. The anxiety one feels anticipating an event can be greater than the event itself. Alissa expressed to

us that she thought she was going to die, however she expressed this same idea about changing a tire, walking up a hill, and purchasing convenient store snacks.

The reality of the event was drastically different from what I and others had been half joking about for weeks. The number of attendants at the symposium was smaller than imagined because it was the last afternoon of the conference. The room was littered with about twenty or so smiling folks. The atmosphere was receptive and cozy.

Outside of the symposium I was able to talk with some folks whom I only knew through their books. I spoke with others in my occupation as well as, teachers, speculators, and caterers. Almost all of them were responsible for the outstanding time we had. After the conference Brian Storm expressed to me that he wished that he could have spoken. I told him that there is always the next conference. Byron left early that afternoon. Clay bought a round at dinner. I drank a couple more and there was closure.

Estes Park is a magical place if you have never been there. For me it is a gold mine of memories. Some of my youth was spent fifty or so miles to the north in Red Feather. From Estes Park I could see the same peaks that I knew well as a kid. My mother's brother has a memorial plaque dedicated to him at the local fire station for his thirty years of service.

In Estes there is no more magical place than the motel where we stayed. The Discovery Lodge, formerly known as the Hobby Horse Motor Lodge beats all rest areas in the town, even the Stanley, most notably known in The Shining. It is operated by some of the healthiest looking Russians I've ever

seen. The main attraction was the multitude of elk that migrated from the forest, through the parking lot, to the golf course. In late September many of them bugled into the early morning hours. They created a melodious natural chorus that startled sleepers to wake.

Plenty of quality experiences happened and will continue because

there is a store of research to be done in the Heritage Department. The 2002 Great Basin Conference was held in Elko, Nevada. It is also a biannual conference. The summer of 2004 is going to provide another page of research to present at the Great Basin next fall. The Ashley National Forest Heritage Department will be there again.

Bison in the High Country By Brian Storm FS Intern



Brian on the Gilbert Peak trail, Kings Peak (highest in Utah), is to the right of his head.

The day started with a 4 am wake up call. At 5am, Byron, Darlene, and I left the office for our little expedition. It was seven thirty when we arrived at the trailhead, ~9,400 ft. We were to meet Mike and Nick at the trail-head, they arrived around 8 am. Five years before, Darlene, Mike, Nick, and a few others came across a bison skull near Gilbert Peak. Our goal for the day was to retrieve this skull. To do so we'd have to hike about nine miles, find the skull

somewhere on the mountain which peaks at 13000 ft, and then hike back to the truck before nightfall. Hence the early start.

The smell of fall was in the air and the whisper of thunder was in the distance. It was turning out to be a very pleasant day for this time of year; jackets were shed and retired to our packs. The first part of the journey was a casual five mile or so hike through the Wasatch-Cache Forest. I had recently

read *Into Thin Air*, by Jon Krakauer, so parts of that book kept popping into my head, particularly the part about getting caught on the mountain by a freak storm. Conversations about work, school, the summer, etc. helped pass the time.

After crossing a “bridge”, a couple logs thrown across a river a few feet above the water, we stopped for brunch. We were out of the trees now, and hiked another couple of miles through grasses and small shrubbery in a very picturesque basin. We now had to leave the trail, at about 11000 ft, and begin the toughest part of our hike, the climb up towards the peak. After traversing a brutal incline which got my blood pumping profusely throughout my body and in which I had to make frequent stops after short distances of travel to catch my breath, the mountain leveled out somewhat and I could once again walk continuously without needing to pause for air.

We were now over 12,000 ft, we'd been awake for about nine hours, and hiked over eight miles. I had acquired a nuisance of a headache from the climb, was starting to wonder if we would ever find the skull, and wanted severely to drop my pack and take a nap. Shortly thereafter, around 1:30 pm, the bison skull was found near the borders of the Ashley and the Wasatch-Cache at about 13,000 ft. The point was GPSed and we became aware of a storm approaching us from the west. Almost instantly the wind picked up to a strong gale and the temperature dropped to possibly near-freezing. Realizing that we couldn't make it off the mountain before the storm hit, we decided to stay put. The storm was directly above us; hail, thunder, lightning, all of which is quite horrible

when you're stuck above tree-line with no shelter. So we did the ol' duck and cover on the rocks so as to not get struck by lightning.

I always enjoy a good lightning show, but unfortunately for me I was unable to watch this one, getting pegged in the eyes by hail every time I attempted to do so. Crouching uncomfortably on the rocks, having a headache, and not being able to feel my fingers made this a not so great time. My muscles started to stiffen and become sore to boot. After about twenty minutes the hail turned to snow, another ten minutes and the storm was pretty much past, so we gathered our bags and the skull and proceeded down the mountain.

The weather had returned back to how it had been much of the day, and the snow was already melting on the rocks, making the hike down a bit slippery. Once down the mountain we stopped for lunch. I attempted to take a nap on a large boulder, but my headache didn't allow me to do so. The fact that my face was now wind burnt didn't help either. So the journey back to the vehicle was somewhat miserable, the majority of my body in some sort of pain. But I did have a turkey sandwich and a bottle of Gatorade waiting for me in the truck, so that kept me going. Once back in the trees, we got a little bit of rain which felt very good. We returned to the vehicle around 7 pm, after what seemed like an eternity on a trail that would never end, and moments before darkness set in.

I returned to my apartment around 10 pm, putting an end to the 16 hour day that included 18 miles of hiking up and down a mountain. I, of course, took the next day off to recover and slept until 5 pm. So that was the end of

one adventure, and the beginning of a new one.

The skull ended up on a desk, under plastic bags, in the office for two and a half months. Then as luck may have it, the skull journeyed with me back to Nebraska where it now sits on a desk, on a foam pad, in a National Park Service office two blocks from my University, waiting to be analyzed.

Since recovering the skull, there have been several other reports of bison skulls in that area, as well as a historic cabin site. This summer Byron and others will return to the high country for a Passport In Time survey project. Will more evidence of the bison phenomena be discovered? Will another trip to Gilbert Peak need to be made? Only time will tell.



Old pinyon tree on site south of Duchesne.



Part of historic horse corral. We will revisit this area again this summer.

New Resources

Michelle Knoll Thesis. PIT crews helped Michelle excavate material at Deadman Lake in the High Uintas in 2002. She had completed her thesis and graduated. If you would like to look at her thesis go to: www.lib.byu.edu/online.html. Check the box that says "Electronic Theses and Dissertations" and type "Knoll" in the search box. It should bring up the thesis so you can download it.

Goslin Mountain PIT. Grant Sulham, Ashley PIT veteran, has created a website of the 2003 Goslin Mountain Survey. <http://hometown.aol.com/awasiechu/goslinmain.html>

Notes

If you would like to participate in any of these project or hear what we have going on call Byron at 435-789-2843 or Clay at 435-781-5138. Byron can also be reached at bloosle@fs.fed.us.

PIT Projects:

Carter Road Survey - July 12-16th: Metal detectors, and others, will search for remains of the Dodds Hollow Way Station and Government Park Sawmill that were along the Carter Road. In addition to individuals with metal detectors, we'll need volunteers to help map, clean, and draw artifacts. We will car camp on this project.

Swift Creek Survey – July 26-30th: We return to the High Uintas Wilderness. More prehistoric lithic scatters and historic sheep camps a wait. It will require an 8-mile backpack trip into the area. We also choose this area because of rumors there might be the remains of additional high elevation bison.

Swett Ranch – Aug. 30-Sept.3rd: We moved the project ahead of Labor Day because the holiday was so late this year. Tex will tell the same jokes, but it takes a while to hear all of them. We plan to work on both of the blacksmith roofs.

Other Activities:

Little Hole Excavation – June 21-25th. We will excavate one or more sites as part of our investigation of sites that burned during the Mustang Fire of 2002. We will probably explore suspected brush structures identified before the fire. We will need help on this project, so call us if you'd like to participate.

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