

Williamson, Sonny: Ain't Love Wonderful? ^[1]

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Sonny Williamson: Ain't Love Wonderful?

by David Cecelski. "[Listening to History](#) ^[2]," *News & Observer*. Published 7/20/2008. Copyrighted.
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One of the great pleasures of my life has been getting to know Sonny Williamson and his wife, Jenny. Born and raised in Sea Level, a remote fishing village in Carteret County, Sonny had a short career as a fisherman, a long career in the Air Force, and then discovered his real calling as a storyteller and fibber. He has enthralled audiences from the local fish house to the Smithsonian Institution's National Folk Life Festival in Washington, D.C. Above all, he has always held onto his belief that one should never let the truth get in the way of a good story.

Here, with Sonny's permission, is a brief excerpt from his new memoir, "Salt Spot for Breakfast." This story which even Jenny says is true involves Sonny's Outer Banks ponies, Pal and Sonny Boy, and the first time that he met Jenny.

In Sonny Williamson's words:

I recall the day Miss Jenny first entered my life. I was hanging out in front of Doc's Pool Hall with the guys when the Sea Shore Transportation bus passed. Almost immediately, the brake lights came on. This got my attention, because I thought "Must be the sister of Clifton's new wife," I thought. But I couldn't get her off my mind and was determined to meet her.

The next day, I took Pal and Sonny Boy to graze on a small patch of grass beside the post office. By chance, this took me by Ms. Lydia's house and on the way back I spotted Jenny sweeping the back porch. I went on about my business, but I quickly formulated my plans. I would first ride Pal back to the pasture (about 400 yards from the post office), walk back and return with Sonny Boy. Remember that I was without saddle or bridle, just a loop around his nose.

As I attempted to turn into the path, Sonny Boy naturally balked and we ended up going round and round in the middle of the road. Pretty soon a car approached, horn blaring, which spooked Sonny Boy to bolt. Lucky for me, he was headed i

As we approached the house, Jenny had stood up with the dripping paintbrush in her left hand. Sonny Boy must have thought the brush was a treat and up the freshly painted steps he went, slipping and sliding on that wet paint and I, not wanting to be bailed out over the porch railing. Sonny Boy finally spotted Jenny, who had dropped the "treat" during her escape. When we were finally on solid ground, Sonny Boy soon observed that the treat was gone and wandered off calming gra

A lot of words were exchanged, mine being, "yes, ma'am" "yes, ma'am, " whenever she took a breath. I really don't remember much of the conversation, except there was a lot of it. I was worse off than being in a scrape. You can sometimes get out of a

I turned on all 120 pounds of my charm and Down East BS and pretty soon I had talked myself into something that I've still not been able to get out of.

To my credit, I helped redo the messed-up paint job and cleaned the brush.

It took a long time getting on good terms with her, but for the last week before she had to go back to school, we had a lot of fun. We'd lie in the hammock and listen to country music, play croquet, ride Pal, etc. (In fact, we did a lot of the etc.).

Ain't love wonderful?

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