

Contact Details:

Janette Frawley
PO Box 8155
Camberwell North VIC 3124
Australia
higherground_australia@yahoo.com.au

Higher Ground Australia



www.highergroundaustralia.com/

Volume 12 – Edition 2

HIGHER GROUND NEWSLETTER – April 2015

Welcome

Welcome to our newsletter. It is hard to believe that a quarter of the year has already passed us by and that both here and in Aspen, preparations are already taking place for the October events. Watch this space as more and more events are announced.

BIG BIRTHDAY WISHES

Happy 70th Birthday to Alistair Wilson for today (17th April). We wish you many happy returns and we hope you have a wonderful day today.

CONGRATULATIONA

Congratulations to Stacey Rennison on the birth of her beautiful new baby boy, Phoenix Cruz recently. He is a beautiful boy and big sister Amelia is also very excited about her new baby brother.

PRAYERS PLEASE

James Burton's son, Jeffrey is seriously ill and in hospital. Although he is making a slow recovery, your continued prayers would be appreciated by the family.

2015 JD Tribute Weekend

Our 2015 JD weekend will be held in New South Wales (near Newcastle) on the weekend of 9-11 October. Carmel has been looking at a few places and has sent through some information from Myuna Bay Sports and Recreation Centre <http://www.dsr.nsw.gov.au/myunabay/> and also from Kurri Kurri Tafe.

http://www.hunter.tafensw.edu.au/services%20and%20facilities/campuses/pages/kurri_campus_profile.aspx Both look quite good, but we need some input from you before booking for the weekend.

Please review the websites and let me know what you think.

Rick Price Returns to Australia

We received this information this week from the 'Room 8' company. Rick Price has a great voice, and many of you would know him from the 1970s when he was a pop star.



From the producers of *The Man in Black: The Johnny Cash Story* and *At Last: The Etta James Story*, Room 8's hit show *The John Denver Story* will be returning to stages around Australia this May/June.

The John Denver Story tour will be heading to Queensland, New South Wales and Victoria, finishing up at the beautiful Athenaeum Theatre in Melbourne. Full dates and venues -

<http://thejohndenverstory.com.au/tickets-and-dates/>

Boonah Trees

Rhonda has advised that she has been monitoring the trees. As per the last newsletter, the trees we planted for Steve and Harold and Max sadly did not survive the



summer. Rhonda took the tags home and when she returned to the Outlook this past weekend, found that the trees had been replaced. Nobody



at the Outlook knows whether they were replaced by the maintenance people at the Outlook or someone

else.

Rhonda has replaced the tags and has taken photos of the replacement trees, which are currently looking very nice and healthy.

Thanks to Rhonda for her monitoring of the trees and we thoroughly appreciate the updates and photos.



Anderson: A Man of Peace and Nature

Aspen Times April 9 2015 Paul Anderson

John Denver died in a plane crash on Oct. 12, 1997. He was 53.

I note that date every time I lead one of my Aspen culture tours through the John Denver Sanctuary, a beautiful, amphitheater-like park along the Roaring Fork River.

I'm reflecting on John because his Aspenglow Fund last week pledged a generous gift to Huts for Vets, the nonprofit I founded two years ago. John would have appreciated Huts for Vets because it offers veterans a peaceful respite and healing opportunities by taking them into the wilderness at the 10th Mountain Division huts. John's posthumous donation realizes two of his dreams for humanity — realization of peace and love of natural beauty. By immersing war veterans in wilderness, Huts for Vets soothes the psychological and emotional trauma of the institutional violence they've endured.

Years ago, during the Cold War, John sang a duet with Russian singer and songwriter Alexander Gradsky. The song — "What Are We Making Weapons For?" — cries out for universal peace.

The chorus speaks to it poetically:

"What are we making weapons for? / Why keep on feeding the war machine? / We take it right out of the mouths of our babies / Take it away from the hands of the poor / Tell me, what are we making weapons for?"

John was a great poet. He expressed deep resonance with the natural world through an emotional connection that was visceral and passionate. These feelings are emoted in many of John's most popular ballads, where he channeled his passion through his voice with potent effect. "John was a tireless voice for the environment," EcoFlight pilot Bruce Gordon wrote in his latest "Captain's Log" blog. Bruce and John enjoyed a brotherly love, and Bruce's work defending the natural world was fully in sync with John's spiritual bond with nature.

"John was a voice for the future," Bruce wrote, "and it was a voice that carried far and wide due to his fame and his voice."

EcoFlight's student program, Flight Across America, educates young adults by giving them a bird's-eye view of landscapes they would not experience otherwise. Seen from the air, things on the ground — like resource extraction — can become clearer and more distinctly in focus. Flight Across America is dedicated to John, for whom a locally produced documentary is currently under production.

"The filming," Bruce wrote in a recent interview, "filled me with nostalgia and also an exuberance and enthusiasm to keep on keeping on and raise awareness wherever and whenever possible. In John Denver, we lost not only a great aviator and a great friend but a voice for the environment."

But that voice carries on. It is heard in dozens of John's songs, many of their lyrics etched on huge boulders at the sanctuary in Aspen — words that reflect his life experiences. These lyrics are heard in the minds and hearts of those who share John's sensitivity to peace and nature.

Thanks to the Aspenglow Fund, peace and nature will be felt by war veterans looking for solace, quiet, safety and beauty in the natural world. Where war is described as a place of no beauty, the wilderness at our doorsteps is resplendent with it.

Wilderness provides a dynamic life system that is our deepest source. As a species, we lived in wilderness a thousand times longer than we have lived in fast-paced, industrialized civilization. These wild lands, which John and Bruce championed together, are repositories not only of biodiversity and habitat but of health, vitality and healing.

Exploring wilderness equates with exploring our deepest memories, and from those shared memories comes mutuality. The source that gives succor to myriad animals, fish and insects is the same source of origin for all of humanity. Life is the link.

John Denver knew this innately, which is why nature figures so prominently in many of his ballads. For John, nature was a connective energy between us and all of existence, a healing balm and a source of spirituality.

John Denver died when his plane plummeted from the sky, but his spirit still soars, touching other spirits with words of healing and acts of love that live beyond him so that others may live in peace. *Paul Andersen's column appears on Monday. He can be reached by email at andersen@rof.net. <http://www.aspentimes.com/opinion/15826962-113/andersen-a-man-of-peace-and-nature>*

American Veterans Radio

Have you ever wanted to go to Aspen in October but couldn't? Well, check this out....

Willie from Dillon and Hoovers Music LLC in partnership with American Veterans Radio will be inviting one lucky John Denver fan and a guest to join him in Aspen CO, during Aspen in October week! Two airline tickets from a major airport in the lower 48 States will be provided along with a four night stay at the famous Mountain Chalet! To be considered, you will need to call the John Denver Hotline during specific dates and times yet to be announced. At that time, tell us why you want to go to Aspen and what it means to you to be there during this time when we celebrate the life and music of John Denver. The best story will be decided by John Denver fans from all around the world who tune in to www.avradio.org. A special page will be created for everyone to pick their choice! More information will be available soon, so start thinking about making that phone call.



Willie's fortnightly radio show featured live performances from Brad Fitch, Paul Swanton and others. If you enjoy listening to John's songs, tune in for the next show, or listen to last week's podcast. <http://www.avradio.org/rewind---podcasts.html>

Next 'Music of John Denver' Radio Show Second Anniversary Show

Willie has advised that the next John Denver Radio Show scheduled for the 25th April is the second anniversary of this show.

I recently sent Willie a couple of John Denver tribute CDs by Australian artists Trevor Knight and Stephen Cheney to further extend his repertoire of tribute artists that he regularly plays. Please listen in as I am sure that something from one of those CDs will be played during this special show. Willie's co-hosts for this show on the 25th April will be the Italian **John Denver Project Band**. Many of you who attended the Aspen in October events in 2014 would have listened to or met the members of the **John Denver Project Band**.

Gallipoli – 100 years

On 25th April, 2015, we join with our friends from New Zealand to commemorate 100 years since the first major military action fought by Australian and New Zealand forces during the First World War. ANZAC Day is Australia's most important and significant national occasion.

The ANZAC Story

On the morning of 25 April 1915, the Anzacs set out to capture the Gallipoli peninsula in order to open the Dardanelles to the allied navies. The objective was to capture Constantinople (now Istanbul in Turkey), the capital of the Ottoman Empire, and an ally of Germany.

The Anzacs landed on Gallipoli and met fierce resistance from the Ottoman Turkish defenders. Their plan to knock Turkey out of the war quickly became a stalemate, and the campaign dragged on for eight months.

At the end of 1915, the allied forces were evacuated. Both sides suffered heavy casualties and endured great hardships. Over 8,000 Australian soldiers were killed. News of the landing on Gallipoli and the events that followed had a profound impact on Australians at home. The 25th of April soon became the day on which Australians remember the sacrifice of those who had died in the war.

The Anzacs were courageous and although the Gallipoli campaign failed in its military objectives, the Australian and New Zealand actions during the campaign left us all a powerful legacy.

Denverdag – Apeldoorn, The Netherlands

For our European friends, The John Denver Project Band (from Italy) will be playing live at the Denverdag 'Jubilee of the World of John Denver (40 years)' on Sunday 31 May, 2015. Willie Hoovers will be attending this for the first time.

Willie – we want an update sometime in June please!

For more details please follow this link;

<http://allevents.in/apeldoorn/jdjb-at-the-denverdag-jubilee-of-the-world-of-john-denver-40-years/763944853725854>

Denver Made Knopfler's wish Come True at Sebel Townhouse

We have not heard from Peter McCall for some years. If anyone knows where we can contact him, please let me know.

Spin Doctor Iain Sheddon (Music Writer) The Australian March 14 2015



Last week in Review former Dire Straits head honcho Mark Knopfler waxed lyrical about his new album Tracker and a broad variety of topics, an interview that landed a surprising array of correspondence in the SD inbox from fans of the veteran English musician.

However, I'm indebted in particular to one Peter McCall for passing on a delightful tale about Knopfler when he was in Australia at the height of his band's fame in 1986. McCall was a security adviser for Australian promoter Kevin Jacobsen at the time and had been charged with looking after one of Jacobsen's acts, American country troubadour John Denver. The former policeman recalls how he took Denver on a shopping trip in Sydney before returning to their hotel, the famed rock 'n' roll Sebel Townhouse.

On entering the hotel's restaurant Denver noticed Knopfler sitting in the corner and was eager to make conversation. Soon the two musos were swapping stories. Knopfler, at Denver's prompting, volunteered that his two musical heroes were guitar legends Django Reinhardt and Elvis Presley's guitarist James Burton. He had met the former, he said, but his biggest wish was one day to meet the latter. What Knopfler didn't know was that Burton was playing in Denver's band at the time. The Rocky Mountain High singer then subtly dispatched McCall upstairs to fetch his famous sideman.

As McCall remembers: "Twenty minutes later James entered the coffee lounge and was beckoned by John Denver to quietly move in and stand behind Mark Knopfler, which he did. John D. then leaned over the table to Mark, referring to their previous conversation about Burton. Knopfler reiterated his respect and wish, with John inviting him to turn around and see who was standing behind him. Knopfler turned, then stood up; he



was shaking and his eyes welled up with tears. He hugged Burton and after much general discussion it was suggested that they excuse themselves because, in Knopfler's words, they had 'a bunch of pickin' to do'.

This incredible scenario might never have happened if, 30 minutes earlier, Denver's invitation to have coffee with him hadn't been knocked back by one of the hotel's other guests, Lauren Bacall.

SYDNEY band the Preatures are killing it in Europe on the back of their debut album *Blue Planet Eyes*, with shows in the past few weeks that have taken them from Stockholm to Prague to London, ahead of a US tour that begins on March 23. Away from the busy playing schedule singer Isabella Manfredi has been attracting attention in other ways.

On Tuesday Izzy was one of the models at Chanel's fashion show in Paris, invited to do so by designer Karl Lagerfeld. She joins a privileged few female rock stars such as Florence Welch and Cat Power who have modelled for him in recent years. Here's Manfredi, modelling the black-and-white number after lunch near the Eiffel Tower. I think the leather jacket is her own. The Preatures will be back in Australia for a series of dates next month.

spindoc@theaustralian.com.au

The Irreparable Insult: John Denver Does Not Star on Broadway as Will Rogers

Posted on 20th September 2010 by David Boles
<http://bolesblogs.com/2010/09/20/the-irreparable-insult-john-denver-does-not-star-on-broadway-as-will-rogers/>

Few people know that when "The Will Rogers Follies" was readying itself for Broadway, John Denver was supposed to play Will Rogers. The role was originally written for him: The book (the script) and the music and the lyrics were sculpted to fight John Denver's sense of humor and singing range.



Both John and Will had a supernatural, folksy, charm that wowed audiences around the world. The fact that John looked so much

like Will was an uncanny benefit for the casting.

I was [Peter Stone's associate](#) on the Broadway show, and he told me the story about John Denver and "The Will Rogers Follies" because it gnawed at him and there was nothing he could do to set it right.



It all started, Peter told me, as the writing of the show was coming to a close. Peter was writing the book, and [Cy Coleman](#) was writing the music and Betty Comden and Adolph Green were writing the lyrics.

The creative team were meeting with John to discuss the construction of the show and to review the songs with him.

There was one particularly beautiful song called "Lucky Kid" that everyone loved. The melody was touching. The lyric was tender. It fit the mood and the glow of the storyline by elevating the experience to the ethereal.

Except there was one problem.

John Denver didn't like the title, "Lucky Kid." He thought it was insulting to call a child a "kid" — he'd never call his son that — and he wanted the title changed to: "Lucky Boy." John felt that small change would really help make the song better. Cy and Betty and Adolph didn't mind making the change. There might have to be a revision to the rhyme scheme — but that was common and expected in the writing of a new hit musical. If that change made John, happy, they'd be happy to do it.

Before anyone could agree to the change, Peter Stone spoke up and stopped the room.

"Listen, John," Peter said in his infamous, stony, staccato, way, "When we write 'The John Denver Follies' — we'll write a song for you called 'Lucky Boy' — but this is 'The Will Rogers Follies' and we're staying with the 'Kid.'

The room took on an irrevocable chill.

Cy and Betty and Adolph froze.

Stone puffed on his cigarette waiting for John's reply.

John Denver stood there in stony silence.

"So let's move on," Stone said.

John shook his head and silently left the room.

The creative team were alone.

The meeting was over.

In the speaking of a single Peter Stone sentence — John Denver was out of the show. Years of writing the show and hundreds of hours of wooing John were washed away in the span of a stony five seconds.

Peter told me he didn't understand at the time how — what he'd innocently said — would quickly ruin everything. He thought they were all having a discussion about making changes and he was simply expressing his opinion — even though he wasn't the one who had to make the change.

Changing a song was the responsibility of Cy and Betty and Adolph, not Peter. "The Will Rogers Follies" was Peter's idea, though. He brought in Cy and Betty and Adolph, and felt, as the original inspiration, that he was the show's "protector."

In the weeks that followed, John Denver permanently fell out of touch — Peter tried to call and apologize and he wrote John a heartfelt note, but all attempts at reconciliation were met with an



icy silence — and the entire show was in jeopardy of never happening.

“The Will Rogers Follies” was built to be a star vehicle and they’d just lost their star.

If lesser talents other than Peter Stone and Cy Coleman and Betty Comden and Adolph Green had been writing the show — it would’ve been dead the day when John Denver walked out — but the creative team were stars on their own accord, and while they couldn’t sell tickets on their names alone for very long, they could still entice investors with the promise of making big money back on their investment.

Money raising continued as the show was continually written and rewritten. Tommy Tune came on as the director and choreographer for the show, and that helped the “star power” meter to peg a little more on the creative team side.

The show still needed Will Rogers as its centerpiece. After tossing around several names, it was decided to cast Keith Carradine as Will.

Keith could sing, and he was funny, and he came from a famous acting family, and he was willing to kill himself doing eight live shows a week.

Investors were initially wary of Keith — he certainly wasn’t as big a star as John Denver — but the creative team convinced the money people that Keith would be a fine choice in the long run.

Windstar



Rory Young was recently in Aspen and took a trip out to the property formerly known as Windstar. Rory, as most of you know, is a professional photographer and has taken some superb photos of his home state of Colorado. During his most recent trip to Aspen, he posted this photo of the spot where the ‘Spirit’ Statue once stood.

A rock with a plaque sporting a verse of ‘The Eagle and the Hawk’ now marks this sacred spot. The bench that was dedicated to Erma is in the background. This photograph has been published with permission from Rory Young.

Aspen in October

Willie has been organising the various artists that will be appearing this year in Aspen on October 8 – 10.

Here are some of the artists who have been locked in already for October:

9th – Ron Matthews

10th – Mark Cormican

10th – Chris Collins and Boulder Canyon

We also know that the Colorado-based Brad Fitch will be appearing, as will The John Denver Project Band, and Wolfgang Adolf. More information will be divulged when it comes to hand, or you can check out the Aspen in October community on Facebook.

<https://www.facebook.com/AspenInOctober>

Jim and Anne Curry

Please check out Jim and Anne’s website for their forthcoming concerts around America.

<http://www.jimcurrymusic.com/john-denver-tribute-concert/>

They will be on a cruise to Alaska on the 8th June.

If you are planning on cruising to Alaska on Holland America this year, check out this cruise

<http://www.jimcurrymusic.com/events/460/jim-and-anne-curry-present-the-music-of-john-denver-on-holland-america-cruise/>

Christopher Westfall

Christopher Westfall is looking forward to an Earth Day concert on Saturday 18th April at Silver Lake Nature Centre.

Rick Schuler

Looking like entertainment icon John Denver is one thing. Sounding like him, too, is – well, comparable to a “Rocky Mountain High” for the incomparable singer-songwriter Rick Schuler. Rick has assembled a band and show that capture the essence of the legendary musician in every respect.

Louisiana-born and Missouri-raised, Rick Schuler was a mere 13 years old when comparisons to the then wildly popular Denver began. When researching his “superstar” body double, Schuler discovered he could sing like him, too, and soon taught himself to play guitar. The first piece he mastered was Denver’s melodic and widely revered “Sunshine on My Shoulders.” His first public performance came three years later at age 16 in a talent show featuring Six Flags amusement park employees. While only a chicken cook at the time, Schuler’s rendition of “Rocky Mountain High” garnered a standing ovation from the crowd of thousands.

At 18, Rick was featured on a TV show, *Incredible Kids & Co.*, on CBS (KMOX) which ultimately aired on numerous network affiliates across the country. After a subsequent featured radio performance on *The Jack Carney Show* starring as “the John Denver guy,” Rick eventually moved out to California to pursue his own Americana songwriting career while continuing to perform Denver’s music at a variety of venues across America.

Rick’s Denver-inspired country roads lead him to Aspen, Colorado, where he attended his first John



Denver tribute (the 13th annual) in memory of the popular entertainer's life and music. During the course of the two-day event, Rick met several of Denver's former band mates and close friends who were nothing short of astonished by the similarities the two shared in look, sound and musical talent.

Whether you're a Denver devotee or not, you'll want to catch one of Rick Schuler's upcoming performances. Rest assured you'll leave singing his praises and Thanking God for this Country Boy's truly amazing talent

<http://www.countryroadsjohndenvertribute.com/>

John Adams

John Adams is appearing at **Tri-Lakes Center of the Arts** on **Friday, 24th April at 7:00pm**

Tickets for TCLA members are \$15-\$17 and \$18-\$20 for non-members. Please call **719-481-0475**.

<http://www.icontact->

[archive.com/Tub_aP0QaQmjMh-SdDR3UIRhUU8NTXVt?w=2](http://www.icontact-archive.com/Tub_aP0QaQmjMh-SdDR3UIRhUU8NTXVt?w=2)



Chris Collins and Boulder Canyon

Here is Chris Collins concert schedule for 2015:

Please contact Chris at

www.bouldercanyonband.com for more details about the concerts, new shows and events, tickets sales, the latest news, and for booking information

Month	Day	Location/Venue
April	25	The Stadium Theatre, Woonsocket, RI Tickets
June	13	Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Antonito, CO
June	26	The Egyptian Theatre, Park City, UT Tickets
June	27	The Egyptian Theatre, Park City, UT Tickets
July	10	The SteamPlant Event Center, Salida, CO
July	25	Cumbres & Toltec Scenic Railroad, Antonito, CO
Sep	5	Seven Points Amphitheater, Raystown Lake, PA
Oct	8-11	Aspen, CO
Nov	6	The Mishler Theatre, Altoona, PA
Nov	14	The Norwood Theatre, Norwood, MA

Some material included in this newsletter has been derived from the public domain, such as the internet and printed media. Articles and reviews are the opinion of the individual writer and as long as the content is of a reasonable nature and it is appropriate, it will be included. Organisations mentioned or featured in this newsletter are included to educate and inform people of their role and purpose. HGA does not profit from including the names of any organisation in this newsletter.

This newsletter is only emailed to those people who have individually contacted HGA and expressed a wish to receive it. Please do not hesitate to let me know if you no longer wish to receive the HGA newsletter.



Sing Australia

*I come to Australia as many people do
To see the old koala, hitch a ride on a kangaroo
To hear somebody call me mate and call somebody blue
To hear the Aborigine play a didgeridoo*

*Some of you came as prisoners two centuries ago
Some of you come as kings and queens your blessing to bestow
Some of you stand all swelled with pride, some with shattered wings
But all of us come with open hearts to hear Australia sing*

*In the desert, in the city, in the mountains and in the sea
In the stories and in the people, I can hear Australia sing*

*Waltzing Matilda, the men of Gallipoli
Clancy of the Overflow, Crocodile Dundee
The myth of all creation, the teaching of baiame
The legends of a dream time for all eternity*

*And in this celebration of a brief two hundred years
The cost to build a nation in blood and sweat and tears
And if we stand divided, divided we will fall
But if we stand together we shall conquer all*

*In the desert, in the city, in the mountains and in the sea
In the stories and in the people, I can hear Australia sing
Sing Australia, sing Australia, sing Australia, sing Australia
In the sails on Sydney harbor, I can hear Australia sing*

