



**HIGHER  
GROUND  
AUSTRALIA**

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## HIGHER GROUND NEWSLETTER – September 2023

### WELCOME

This newsletter has been a long time in the making. My apologies for not getting our first newsletter out sooner than this. Perhaps talk of Aspen in October 2023 has given me a gently nudge. Although I tend to keep my ear to the ground, I think I missed the announcement that the Mountain Chalet will be available this year again and that there will be the usual events plus a few more planned for this year.

The year has flown and I'm not quite sure how we got to September so quickly. I have been busy and there is always a lot to do. The year is not yet over and although I am not one for wishing my life away, after a hectic and in some ways, a stressful, year so far, I am looking forward to December 19, when I go on holidays.

Apart from Aspen in October 2023 (see the list of events planned to date) there are lots of John Denver events happening here and across the world. John's 26th anniversary is coming up soon and it never ceases to amaze me how often his name is mentioned through the media, mostly on radio, and how much people enjoy his music.

In our part of the world, Spring has finally 'sprung'. In Victoria, where I live, we have suddenly experienced a whole week of blue skies and relatively warm weather after a long period of wet, cold, and very grey weather. It's certainly nice to get out in T-shirts and enjoy some warmth filtering through our skin. It's also the time of the year to clean up the yards in preparation for the long (I hope) summer.

Lastly, ahead of Australia's referendum, which will be held on October 14, I have never personally felt so disengaged with my country since this was announced. I know I am not the only one who feels this way. I have selected to include John Denver's *Sing Australia* lyrics at the end of this newsletter, because John nailed the true essence of Australia in his song that was written to mark the 200th anniversary since the First Fleet arrived in 1788. I believe that the most important lines in this song are,

*And if we stand divided, divided we will fall,  
But if we stand together, we shall conquer all.*

I hope that by the evening of October 14, we shall remain together, all Australian citizens and residents,

regardless of their race or colour shall remain equal as they are today.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cGIhFtWaiYM>

### RENEE ARMAND IN NEW YORK CITY

Renee Armand is appearing at The Green Room 42 (570 10th Ave, New York, NY 10036) this Wednesday evening, 20 September 2023 at 9:30 PM.

Tickets can be purchased for both live audience and livestream

<https://www.thegreenroom42.venuetix.com/>



Kimberly LaRue is with Renee Armand and 2 others at The Green Room 42.

2 d · New York, NY, United States · 🌐

Renee Armand (hers was the voice heard on the Oscar winning original song 'The Morning After') will be at The Green Room 42 with Mark Hartman, David Ajax Sabella on Wednesday, September 20. Special guest appearance by Leah Kunkel (worked with James Taylor, Carly Simon, Art Garfunkel and more...) Ticket link <https://thegreenroom42.venuetix.com>



### HIGHER GROUND AUSTRALIA

Since COVID-19, we have not had the chance to regroup, particularly to celebrate John's music in October. At this stage, we are not going to organise any formal gatherings going forward. However, our tightknit group here in Australia keeps in regular contact and, where and when possible, catch up. Just recently, Colin Horwell dropped in on the members from the Newcastle area and had a wonderful evening at a trivia event. I think they won a bottle of wine despite the lack of JD questions in the music section. 😊



Beverley from Queensland posted some photos she took of the three trees we planted at the Visitor Centre in Boonah in 2006, soon after the death of Steve Irwin. We had also planted a tree for John Denver and for Meryl Moore, Max (John Denver's Australian tour manager) Moore's late wife.



I caught up with Carolyn recently in Melbourne, where we reminisced over frozen margaritas. During our 2012 road trips in Colorado and later in Nevada/California, where frozen margaritas were quality-tested across the three states, the ladies declared the Woody Creek Tavern as the winners. Unfortunately, I could not participate in this taste-testing because I was the driver and had to abstain from alcohol. However, Carolyn said that our margaritas in Melbourne reminded her of Woody Creek. So, cheers!



### OUR OTHER TREES IN BOONAH

Rhonda Banditt continues to check on the trees we planted at the Outlook in Boonah, Queensland. She advised that they continue to thrive. We appreciate the updates.

### JOHN DENVER TRIBUTES IN AUSTRALIA 2023

A number of Australian tribute artists have been performing over the course of the year.

Keep an eye on **Jason Owen**, who has been performing in regional NSW and the ACT.

<https://jasonowenofficial.com/>

Darren Coggin has a number of concerts coming up in Sydney and in regional New South Wales over the next few months. Check out his website to see whether he is performing his John Denver tribute near you.

<https://www.darrencoggan.com/gig-guide/>

### CLASSIC COUNTRY GOLD

Classic Country Gold is a spectacular symphonic salute to country music legends. Darren Coggin (John Denver and Glen Campbell), Amber Joy Poulton (Tammy Wynette) and Lizzie Moore (Patsy Cline) will be accompanied by a 6-piece band and a 25-piece orchestra to perform country hits everyone loves.

This will be performed at Hamer Hall, Melbourne on 1 November 2023 at 7:30 PM. For information about tickets, click on this link.

<https://www.artscentremelbourne.com.au/whats-on/2023/contemporary-music/classic-country-gold>

### MILTON OKUN TALKS ABOUT JOHN DENVER

This YouTube video is of Milton Okun talking about what makes a great artist. His story about how John describes how Placido Domingo 'colours' the words and allowing the music to make the emotion more real.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8gIDjvpvOE>

**THERE'S A FULL MOON OVER INDIA AND GANDHI LIVES AGAIN...**

Kusum Chadda June 19 2010.

There has been a lot of discussion in the media about Gandhian methods and their efficacy. There have also been references to Gandhiji's fads and quirks — especially his ideas about sex and continence.



I was attending a workshop in Kuala Lumpur. It was ostensibly about how to run a business and earn more money. The programme was interspersed with music and short experiential exercises. At one such session, the trainer played the famous American singer John Denver's song 'It's About Time', which began with the lines "There's a full moon over India and Gandhi lives again/ Who's to say you have to lose for someone else to win?"

The inspiration behind this song was Denver's visit to India in the 1980s to pay respects to his spiritual guru Swami Muktananda as also his chance encounter with the members of the film fraternity who were on board and were going to Delhi to launch the film 'Gandhi'. As the plane neared Delhi, Denver looked out of the window and saw the full moon in its pristine glory shining over India. The song writer in Denver was overwhelmed that nature conspired to make him empathise with the humanity at large through the prodding of a great soul, Gandhiji.

The powerful words of the song, coupled with Denver's mellifluous singing, cast a spell on the participants who had gathered from different corners of the world. Joining hands and forming a circle of 500-plus, they sang in unison — "Who's to say you have to lose for someone else to win?"

Gandhiji taught us this truth in so many ways. He was the master of non-violent communication that led to win-win situations. He was against class war because it had the seeds of violence in it and the potential for hate on the part of those who lose. He suggested that the rich act as trustees of their wealth and see to it that the last man gets a decent life before enjoying what they have in excess. Though a lawyer, he did not

support litigation. Rather, he promoted out-of-court amicable settlements. He propagated 'heart unity' to solve the communal question.

The communal divide was sought to be closed by understanding each other's religion better and accommodating one another. The crux of his campaign against untouchability was directed towards the heart of those who practised the evil because even if one is convinced that one is doing the wrong, it takes a long time to emotionally accept that and change one's behaviour.

Gandhiji ruled out violence because it denigrated the practitioner; it was irreversible and, therefore, not to be practised by fallible human beings; because once practised, its threshold would increase with every successive attempt; also, it overlooked the fact that every human being is capable of love. Besides, violence did not lead to the resolution of conflicts because it always led to a win-lose situation — "For the first is just the last one when you play a deadly game. It is about time we find out it is all of us or none" (Denver).

He tellingly conveys Gandhiji's thoughts when he croons — "There's a man who is my brother, I just don't know his name/ But I know his home and family because we know we feel the same/ And it hurts me when he is hungry and when his children cry/ I too am a father, and the little one is mine." When Gandhiji felt sad over the London bombings during the Second World War he was echoing these very sentiments. It is 'about time' we recognised the truth of Gandhiji's words and act on them.

<https://www.thehindu.com/opinion/open-page/Theres-a-full-moon-over-India-and-Gandhi-lives-again%E2%80%A6/article16259637.ece/amp/>

**MR JOHN DENVER**

The stuff one finds when they go down the YouTube rabbit hole. This one is good....

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yFzXeroPmb0>

**JOHN ADAMS BAND**

John Denver: The Tribute concert will be held on October 7 2023 at 7:30 PM at the Newman Centre in Denver Co. Tickets are available from

<https://newmancenterpresents.com/events/john-denver-tribute>

**MARK CORMICAN**

Mark Cormican will be performing at Castlewood Canyon State Park on Sunday October 8 at 5:30 PM. Also he will be appearing on October 2 on Denver's morning show 'Colorado & Company' on Channel 9 for an interview and to sing a song or two.

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

**RADIO PROGRAMMES – WILLIE HOEVERS**



Willie Hoovers of the Rocky Mountain Foundation for the Performing Arts has worked tirelessly to promote John's music through the foundation and through his regular radio programmes.

In 2013, Willie launched his fortnightly online show, 'The Music of John Denver' for American Veterans radio, which is available globally on [www.avradio.org](http://www.avradio.org)

The next show is on Saturday **September 30** at 2pm Mountain Time.

4 - 6 pm Eastern time

3 - 5 pm Central time

2 - 4 pm Mountain time

1 - 3 pm Pacific time

12 - 2 pm Alaskan time

2100 - 2300 UK time

2200 - 0000 European time

Next Morning – Sunday May 9

4 - 6 am Japan time

6 - 8 am Sydney, Australia time

8 - 10 am New Zealand time

Additionally, Willie hosts the show in the UK on Ridge Radio at 6pm UK time [www.ridgeradio.co.uk](http://www.ridgeradio.co.uk)

Here is a time zone conversion chart:

6:00pm - 8:00pm UK Time

7:00pm - 9:00pm European Time

4:00am - 6:00am Sydney Australia Time

5:00am - 7:00am Auckland New Zealand Time

2:00am - 4:00am Tokyo Time

1:00pm - 3:00pm Eastern Time

12Noon - 2:00pm Central Time

11am - 1:00pm Mountain Time

10:00am - 12pm Pacific Time

9:00am - 11:00am Alaskan Time

Watch this space for other syndicated shows. For more information, please contact Willie

[willie@rockymountainfpa.org](mailto:willie@rockymountainfpa.org)

<https://rockymountainfpa.org/home>

### **ASPEN IN OCTOBER – 2023 EVENTS**

I've collated the list of events planned to date for Aspen in October 2023. If I have got something wrong (dates and times) or if I am missing something, please let me know [hga.vic@gmail.com](mailto:hga.vic@gmail.com). The following have been taken from the Aspen in October Facebook Page.

Please check the Facebook page for events and tickets.

[www.Facebook.com/aspeninOctober/events](http://www.Facebook.com/aspeninOctober/events)

### **WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 4, 2023**

**Meet & Greet** 2:00 PM John Denver Sanctuary

**Singalong** – Mountain Chalet

**Campfire, Cookout, Singalong** 5:30 PM Maroon Bells.

Email [Co1717@wmconnect.com](mailto:Co1717@wmconnect.com) for details.

### **THURSDAY OCTOBER 5, 2023**

**John and Mardie – A Special Friendship.** 10 :00 AM

Mountain Chalet

**Ron Matthews Concert** 6:30 – 9:00 PM Mountain Chalet \$20 pay at the door

**Singalong** – Mountain Chalet

### **FRIDAY OCTOBER 6, 2023**

**Ellen Stapenhorst with Steven Stapenhorst** 3:30 PM Mountain Chalet Cash donation

**Singalong** – Mountain Chalet

**The Music is You: Songs of John Denver with Mack Bailey and Chris Nole** Wheeler Opera House 7:30 PM

Tickets available from [www.aspenstix.com](http://www.aspenstix.com)

### **SATURDAY OCTOBER 7, 2023**

**The Music of Dave Stratford – A Tribute to JD:** 2:00 PM Mountain Chalet

**Spirit of the Rockies: Chris Collins and Boulder Canyon**

Wheeler Opera House 7:30 PM

**Singalong** – Mountain Chalet

### **SUNDAY OCTOBER 8, 2023**

**Singalong** – Mountain Chalet

### **MONDAY OCTOBER 9, 2023**

**Goodbye Again:** 2:00 PM John Denver Sanctuary

**Singalong** – Mountain Chalet

The list will be updated with confirmed times and ticketing information as information comes to hand.

### **TRIBUTE ARTISTS**

Check out your favourite tribute artists.

### **CATHY GIANFALA CARRIERE**

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

### **MARK CORMICAN**

<http://markcormican.com/schedule/>

### **JIM CURRY**

<https://www.jimcurrymusic.com/future-concerts/>

### **BACK HOME AGAIN**

A tribute to John Denver.

*Tom Becker is a former member of the Legendary Folk Group, The New Christy Minstrels, and has gone on to appear with Grammy Winners and Music Legends including Ray Charles, Jerry Lee Lewis, Willie Nelson, Gregg Allman and Jerry Jeff Walker.*

<http://www.johndenvertribute.net/schedule.htm>

### **CHRIS COLLINS AND BOULDER CANYON**

Chris Collins & Boulder Canyon has scheduled shows in August and September. Please check the website for details. <https://bouldercanyonband.com/concert-schedule>

### **CHRIS WESTFALL**

<http://www.chriswestfall.com/inConcert.php>

### **JOHN ADAMS**

[HTTPS://WWW.JOHNADAMS.BAND.COM/CALENDAR](https://www.johnadamsband.com/calendar)

### **CHRIS BANNISTER**

<http://chrisbannisterthemusicofjohndenver.com>

**BRAD FITCH**

<http://www.cowboybrad.com>

**WILL KRUGER**

<http://www.willkruger.com>

Check out Will's forthcoming performances at

<https://www.willkruger.com/schedule/>

**RICK SCHULER**

<http://www.sunshinerick.com>

**TED VIGIL**

<http://www.tedvigil.com>

**JOHN DENVER PROJECT BAND**

<http://johndenverprojectband.it>

**RON MATTHEWS**

<http://www.ronmathews.net>

For more information about tribute artists around the globe, check out our website; [www.hgavic.com](http://www.hgavic.com)

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

(John Denver)

*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 Harbour  
I can hear Australia sing*