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Higher Ground Australia



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## HIGHER GROUND NEWSLETTER - October 2010

### Welcome

Welcome to our October Newsletter. October is a busy month for all of us who love the music of John Denver.

We had a successful weekend in Creswick Victoria, and those who went to Aspen also had a great time meeting up with old and new friends and attending the concerts and other events. There seemed to be a lot of new events in Aspen this year, which were all well attended.

### John Denver Weekend Tribute 2010

Our 'John Denver' weekend started on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October as we all made our way to Adekate Lodge in Creswick, Victoria. Many of us made our way by road this time. By the time we all found our way to the lodge, it was cuppa time and time to catch up for a chat and stake out the sleeping quarters! We were also awaiting the arrival of a special guest - Peter, who was head of security for John's tour of 1986 and who had faithfully promised to bring along his personal photos of that tour.

As usual, we had a shared dinner of casseroles donated by the Victorian members. After dinner, another special guest Martin Scuffins of Hawk Haven Raptor Rehabilitation, Education, and Research. Martin brought to us a presentation that discussed the work that he does with injured raptors. He gave us in insight into the raptor world in this area and the challenges they face in a world with ever-changing dangers. Hawk Haven is not funded by the government in any way and we have pledged the total fundraising efforts to Martin so that he is able to continue the work he does.



After Martin's talk, we had our Annual General Meeting, in which we discussed our past year and what we plan to over the next twelve months.

Once all the business part of the weekend was complete, Peter began by telling us stories from his experiences as security for John's tour in 1986. This was the year that John hosted the Logie Awards and first met Cassandra. Peter also came good with his promise and presented us with a great view of his photos taken from the wall of his house. He had photos of Mohammed Ali, Tommy Sands, as well as John. All photos had a special story behind them. The moment we were waiting for was when Peter placed an album of his own photos on the table. These were taken during concerts and during John's leisure time on the Harbour in Sydney. There were photos of the band members and others that were on that tour. Between Max and Peter, we had the best night listening to stories never heard before!

The following day we were up bright-eyed and bushy tailed as many of us wanted to have a look around the local region. Some of the ladies were going to Ballarat to visit Sovereign Hill. Martin, our guest from the previous night works at Sovereign Hill and plays the fiddle in the bush band that performs there each day. Some of the other ladies were taking a trip to Daylesford to look around, whilst others went to Bendigo to visit the woollen mills. We met back at Adekate Lodge in the afternoon to start preparing for our singalong and silent auction.



We had to say goodbye to Peter who had to return to Melbourne, so we sang him a few songs in farewell, with a promise from him that he will

attend next year in Bowral. His parting gifts were also very generous. He donated a jacket from the John Denver One World tour to the auction. He also pledged to donate the money to cover the plaque and stone for 2011. We are most grateful for these kind and generous gestures.

As Peter was leaving, one of our oldest (not in age) members, Helene arrived. She was raring to go and jumped in to help us with the dinner preparation and the silent auction. We also welcomed some other friends who were going to spend the night with us.

Meanwhile, during the course of the afternoon, Jan showed off pictures of last year's Peace Cloth panel, whilst getting us all to sign this year's panel.

After dinner, as for every year, we started our singalong soon after dinner. Colin had set up the amps and mikes and a thoroughly professional setup was made available to us. Melanie, Colin and Alistair provided the entertainment for the entire evening.



(Colin, Melanie and Alistair)

We also conducted the Silent Auction, drew the annual raffle, and the picture book giveaway. Although Max did not manage to draw out his own name this year, he certainly did a great job as usual!



(Alistair, Carmel & Melanie inspect the offerings for the auction)

By Sunday morning, we were ready for the solemn part of our weekend. John and Alistair found the ideal spot for our trees and dug some holes in preparation for our tree planting ceremony.

We all gathered around the spot selected for the tree-planting and nominated Colin, Sandy and Alia to plant John's tree.



(Sandy and Colin plant John's tree)

The second tree was to commemorate Erma and all of our friends and family members who have passed away and this second tree is dedicated to the promise of peace in the world. This second tree was planted by Bev from Queensland. She was most ably assisted by John.

After this part of the weekend was over, it was time to pack up and to start making our way back to our homes. Some of our friends who had driven down from NSW needed to get on the road as soon as possible, so after a quick lunch, we had to say our goodbyes for another year.

Thank you for everyone who made this weekend the best ever.



(Alistair & Max)

### Annual Donation

As discussed before, our annual donation has been earmarked for Hawk Haven near Ballarat.

The plaque for this year was covered by donations that have been given over the past year, which gave us the opportunity to donate the proceeds of the raffle also to Hawk Haven.

Despite our numbers being lower this year and the expectation that we would not raise a huge amount of money, the total amount that will be donated to Martin Scuffins of Hawk Haven will be **\$1190.50**. This amount is made up of:



Silent Auction	\$715.20
Raffle	\$118.00
Sale of Candles, Soaps	\$ 33.50
Unspent food money	\$105.00
Refund from Alf Boden	\$218.78
<b>Total:</b>	<b>\$1190.48</b>

### Annual Book Giveaway

We had an autographed copy of For Baby (for Bobbie), beautifully illustrated by Janeen Mason to donate to a school this year. It was won by **Glen Orden Primary School, Werribee**. This school was nominated by Gwen Ripper on behalf of her grandson, Aiden, who attends that school.

The second book, **Take Me Home, Country Roads** was won by **Lyrebird Pre-School East Nowra** and nominated by John Comber on behalf of his daughter, Haylee, who works at the school.

### Thanks

I have received the following email from Haylee, whose pre-school was the recipient of **Take Me Home, Country Roads**.

Hi Janette,

**This is John's daughter Haylee and I would just like to say a huge thankyou to you and the Higher Ground organisation on behalf of the staff and children at Lyrebird Preschool for the beautiful book. We have shared the book and cd with the children a number of times and they have responded well and been quite interested in the beautiful pictures and in the words and the song. Thankyou again I'm sure the children at Lyrbird Preschool will continue to enjoy the book for years to come.**

**Many thanks,  
Haylee Comber  
on behalf of Lyrebird Preschool**

### A word about Janeen Mason

The picture book, For Baby (For Bobbie) was purchased in Aspen in 2009, during its official launch. I was lucky enough to meet Janeen Mason when she autographed the books I purchased. Janeen made me faithfully promise that I would email her with the name of the school that won For Baby (For Bobbie), which I have done, naming the school and thanking her for a lovely book and this is her response:

Dear Janette,

**What a treasure! Thanks for your kind words. (Of course I remember you!)**

**I'm delighted to learn you liked the book even more when you had the chance to spend a little more time with it.**

**With your permission, I'd like to forward your email to my publisher. May I? It's likely they would want to post it on their blog.**

**Thank you for the name of the Glen Orden Primary School. How extraordinary that I could google the school, and imagine the children in your corner of the world learning about John Denver's music and message. Delighted to hear from you and I'll look forward to permission from you to send this on.**

**Most Sincerely,  
Janeen Mason  
Author/Illustrator Children's Books**

### Annual Raffle

Our annual raffle was a one-off calendar using photos that I have taken in Alaska and Colorado during the two visits I have made to USA since 2007. The calendar was won by Ann.

I would like to give my heartfelt thanks to all of you who have contributed in any way to the silent auction, to the organisation of the weekend and to those who have willingly assisted in any way. Every contribution – large or small is very much appreciated.

### Official HGA Booklets

I have a few extra copies of our annual booklets. This year's one is a little more special because I have included some photos I have taken over the years. If you would like one, let me know – [jefrawley@optusnet.com.au](mailto:jefrawley@optusnet.com.au) I am happy to post them.

### Tribute to Erma

On the 10<sup>th</sup> October, Ron Deutschendorf gave a moving tribute to his mother, Erma, who died on January 17<sup>th</sup> 2010.

**My Mom**

**What can you say about your mom? We all start off incredibly indebted to our moms for just giving birth to us.**

**Bringing us into this world and giving us life. What a blessing that is! And what a terrible ordeal it is for them!**

**They swell up like a balloon, have to watch what they eat, can't drink, or anything else for nine months, and then go through something that can only be described as like taking their top lip and stretching it over their entire head, to give birth, to us. What a, "drag," for them! What a gift to us!**

**My mom was the very best! I know everyone thinks that (or should) but mine was the very best! She defended me against the elements, the antagonist, and all that might be a threat to my perceived happiness.**

**She was always there for me. Even when I was possibly incorrect (I was never wrong, as those of you who know me can attest!) she was on my side! And would stand up for me,**



when no one else would, or could understand me, she was always there, for me! Backing me up!

She was strong, she was passionate, she was giving, she was kind, she was "all," that a "son," could ask for in a, "mother!"

And she had a temper, like you wouldn't believe! She could hold a grudge for eternity! But she never let anyone see that side of her. She was stubborn beyond belief, (I think that is where my brother got it from. Ha) and those of you, who she let in, know that. But it was usually a good stubborn, "a never give up kind of stubborn."

Even after my brother John became famous and she turned her house into what we affectionately referred to as the, "Shrine," I always knew, "She Loved Me!"

Whoopie Goldberg said in speaking of, "her mom's passing," on the, "View," something about her mom, that is so appropriate, I must say it here, as it relates to us all and it is the very best I have ever heard anyone correctly communicate the truth about our relationship with our mothers. She said, and I quote, "I don't think I will ever be loved by anyone as much again!"

And that is the way I feel!

After John's passing, I would speak to her almost every single day, to see how she was, what she was watching on TV, how her day had gone, (If she won at bingo) how any and everything was going. She would ask me about my day, and what was happening. And even when I knew she wasn't really listening, "It was Okay," because she was, "my mom!" And I loved her!

Those of you, who were lucky enough to meet her, and/or get to know her just a little bit, know how truly special she was. She was, "My Mom!"

To say, "I Loved her with all my, Heart," would be an understatement! And I miss her, "Terribly," every day!

After all, "She Was My Mom!"



Cherish Yours!

## **Aspen in October – a journal!**

Thanks to Kathy for passing on this account of their trip to Aspen in 2010.

The ladies sharing my Aspen adventure this year were Gail Denisoff (Schenectady, NY), Judy Boss (Wellington, NV), Julie McClain (Garland, TX), and Pat Feldmeier (Parker, CO)... Gail would send an online blog at the end of each day and since I did not journal this trip, I'm sharing Gail's stories. Hope to share a few pics when I find time to upload them.

**Thursday 10/9** We've been having a wonderful (and busy) time so far in Aspen. I had hoped to write sooner but the hotel internet access was down yesterday into today.

I arrived in Denver Wednesday after uneventful Southwest flights around 10:30am. Pat Feldmeier met Julie McClain, Judy Boss and I at the airport and drove us all to Aspen. We stopped for lunch in Georgetown and walked around a bit but heavy rain kept the visit fairly short. A very cute town though! We did get to the Mercantile, Post Office and Visitors Center as well as drive by the "Kiss House", Conoco station, Christmas tree, etc. Pat was a great tour guide.

We arrived in Aspen at the Limelight around 6pm and met Kathy Lill who arrived earlier in the day. Julie, Judy and I had a short time to get organized before we headed to the Chris Collins concert downstairs. Kathy and Pat decided to go to Basalt to check out a Thrift store and just drive around (the store turned out to be closed). The concert was lots of fun. Chris showed a documentary he did called "Undiscovered Colorado" which was very good and then did a great concert with Kevin and Paul on guitar since he broke both wrists falling off a ladder! Julie went to the Mountain Chalet afterwards but the rest of us tried to get some rest.

**Kathy's comments: After Pat and I left Basalt, we decided to take a night drive up to the Maroon Bells...by that time it was raining and the leaves were falling off the aspen trees as we drove along...instead of the red carpet treatment, we were treated to a carpet of gold all the way to the Bells. It was such a pretty drive in the dark! We were greeted by a beautiful lone deer as we entered the Maroon Bells parking area.**

We were up early yesterday and went to the Meet and Greet at 10am. It was a beautiful day and a good crowd was there. Mark C. and Paul S. played along with a young girl on violin named Amanda who is wonderful. The Perrys weren't here so there was no service. After a quick stop at Carl's Drugs, we went up to Maroon Bells. It was so pretty up there and the temps were mild so no snow except on the mountain tops. When



we got back to town we grabbed some lunch at the Main St. Bakery then went to the Friends with You concert at the Aspen Community church. A good concert as always but they dropped a bombshell telling the audience that this and the Cookhouse concert on Saturday will be their last concerts together. They want to go on to do other things on their own but do plan to return to Aspen. Jim Connors joined them for a few songs.

We walked around the shops in town for a while after the concert then I headed back to the hotel to catch the last couple innings of the Yankees playoff game (they won!!). The Wheeler show last night was "Doin their own Thing" and they dedicated it to Erma. Not a huge crowd - maybe half full. Pete Huttlinger and Chris Noel weren't there although Chris is in town and we've been seeing him at our hotel. Jim Salestrom wasn't supposed to be there but he was. He looks very thin and drawn. Karmen said they almost lost him this summer. We found out later he had diverticulitis but seems to be doing okay.

**Kathy's comments: Jim Salestrom had a colon resection and appeared to still be recovering from that...he appeared weak.**

**...and you know Pete's story...had to have surgery for an internal defibrillator and pacemaker this summer so was unable to make it to Aspen this year due to the altitude. He commented on Facebook that he is optimistic that he'll be able to return to Aspen in the future though...good news! His wife, Erin was in Aspen to help produce this year's concerts and we spoke to her at the Limelight. She said Pete is doing well and was really missing his friends in Aspen.**

**He sent out an email saying he was selling his Larrivee guitar that he won in Winfield in Sept of this year to help defray some of his medical bills...I learned on Monday that he did sell it for \$4000!**

**I got a nice surprise when looking through Judy's Wheeler program at the Friday night concert...a picture of me with John was included! Erin had sent out an email for anyone having personal pics to please send them to her...so I did. I didn't know exactly how they were going to use them, but was thrilled to see mine included in the program! So, on Saturday I had to buy one for a souvenir.**

We just finished breakfast and will be going to the Aspen Meadows concert this morning. Mark Cormican is doing a show this afternoon and the first Wheeler tribute show is tonight. Mary and Bill Schott got here in time for the Meet and Greet yesterday and are also staying here. We made

some plans with them to go to Windstar together and have dinner at the Woody Creek Tavern.

**Friday 10/8** Well, it's after midnight and I just returned from the sing along at the Mountain Chalet. Tons of people there tonight. Jim Connors sang Grandma's Feather Bed and Julie did her two tribute songs. It was another crazy busy day of non stop music and fun.

At 10am we went to the Aspen Meadows concert at the Community Church. That's the band led by Jake Love and they were great. They sang a lot of songs that you don't usually hear and it was nice to hear those. When that was over, we went to the Thrift store in town and found a few bargains then some to the Hickory House for lunch. In the afternoon, we went to Mark Cormican's concert for Vital Ground at the Limelight. Jim Connors and Steve Weisberg joined him for a few songs and it was another enjoyable show.

**Kathy's comments: Jake Love is the young (22 yrs old!) man who turned his life around after hearing John's music. He was on the road to destruction (drugs/homeless) and says he probably would have wound up dead if not for finding John's music and message! He sings from the heart and brought many of us to tears during his concert at the church.**

**I told him at intermission that I think John would have been very proud of him.**

As soon as the concert was over, we headed to the Explore Book Store for a conversation and book signing by John St. Augustine. He wrote a couple of books about influential people - one has a chapter about John. Annie Denver introduced him and Zach was there too! John S. also has a radio program and has been on Oprah. The place was mobbed and Annie was very friendly and gracious. She looks great too.

**Kathy's comments: I learned that Zach and his wife, Jennifer have started a business called, "Flabby Labby's"....selling gourmet dog treats. I guess they were present at the Art and Street Market in Aspen on Saturday selling their products.**

From there it was dinner at Bentley's and then on to the first Tribute Show. It was a wonderful show. Pete H. and John Sommers weren't there but the rest of the gang was as well as Jim Curry. Very well done. Looking forward to tomorrow's show. After the show we headed to the Chalet. Scott Smith was there with his new wife - they were married last Saturday. He said he was going to try to get his JD collection on display for next year.

It's late and we just returned from the Mountain



Chalet. The sing along is still going strong but we pooped out! Time for bed, for sure!

**Saturday 10/9** This morning was bittersweet. We all went to the JD Sanctuary along with Mary and Bill to scatter the ashes of Denny Feldmeier (Pat's husband who passed away earlier this year) by the rock inscribed with the lyrics to Perhaps Love. Mary and Kathy read poems and Pat also spoke. We were all teary eyed but we were all happy to be there with Pat. I think this was a first for all of us.

**Kathy's comments: What a special moment to share! It was Denny's request that some of his ashes be scattered at the JD Sanctuary....some were scattered in RMN Park as well.**

**I met Denny last year while he and Pat were staying at the Limelight. He was very weak from his chemo treatments and unable to attend any events. The Limelight upgraded their room to a 4th floor room with windows that wrapped all around ...so when he was resting in bed, he could still see the beauty of the mountains.**

**He loved John Denver and conveyed that during our short but memorable visits at the Limelight.**

**I told Pat at the Sanctuary that I only met Denny last year, but could tell he was a gentle soul.**

From there we headed to the Pine Creek Cook House for the lunch event. It was a packed house as always and the food was delicious. The Friends With You Band played and a couple who did an environmental film with John back in the 90's were there. They showed part of it and it was available for sale. It sounds like Jennifer isn't going to do this event again but the Peaceful Blue Planet group said they will be doing something to take it's place. John Wilcox said "We'll Talk!" when he heard that, sounding like he would really like an event to continue there at the Cook House. We stopped briefly at the Ashcroft ghost town on the way back. It started to snow just a little on the way back but we quickly drove out of it but now we can say it snowed while we were in Aspen!

**Kathy's comments: John Wilcox told us that he came real close to getting Annie to come to the Cook House this year....and said maybe it will happen next year!**

**It's one of Annie's favorite places...her 60th birthday was celebrated there!  
The food was just fantastic as always!**

No dinner after that great lunch so we came back to hang out at the Limelight. The second Wheeler Tribute show was even better than the first. They were pretty much the same but the audience

tonight was much more enthusiastic. I just saw Mack Bailey come in as I'm typing and told him how much we enjoyed the show. He said that they all had a lot of fun tonight.

Tomorrow we're going to go out to breakfast at the Weinerstube and then go out to Windstar. They're going to dedicate a bench to Erma and have a campfire too in the afternoon. We're planning to go to dinner at the Woody Creek Tavern with Bill and Mary and then on to the John Adams concert.

**Sunday 10/10** Well, today was our last day full in Aspen. I just got back from the sing along at the Mountain Chalet. A smaller crowd was there tonight. Still a lot of wonderful music though. We started the day with breakfast at the Weinerstube. Denny Brooks was there with a woman - not sure if it is a wife or girlfriend. After that, we headed to Windstar. It was another nice day so we didn't even need jackets. Aspen Meadows and Mark Cormican were performing there today as well as a talk by John St. Augustine who we heard the other day - we didn't go to that. They had the wolves there again and had a nice crowd.

After the mini-concerts, everyone headed to the Spirit statue for a special tribute to Erma. Bubbles, Ron and his wife were there. Ron wrote a nice tribute to his mom that he read. After that, they unveiled a bench with a plaque in memory of Erma that faces the statue. Jake Love sang "Yellowstone Coming Home" and they had the wolves howling at the right times in the song - it was far out!! He also sang Back Home Again which was Erma's favorite song. We saw Zach there earlier in the day and after the presentations he came down to talk to Bubbles. Nice to see him there.

Julie, Pat, Kathy and Bill headed to the meditation platform and Mary, Judy and I went to the campfire. Some people performed that were in Aspen for the first time. It was a fun and warm too! The meditation crew got back for part of the campfire.

**Kathy's comments: While we were enjoying the beautiful surroundings from the meditation platform, Ellen Stapenhorst (singer/songwriter/spiritualist) showed up with three of her friends and before leaving the area, we joined her group for a little Tai Chi to honor Mt Sopris!...it was very special experience!**

We went for dinner at Woody Creek after Windstar and had a nice meal. It's always fun there. We came back to the hotel to pack then went over to the Wheeler for the John Adams concert. He had a sting quartet backing him up for part of the concert and Steve Weisberg played for a few songs too. His flight was cancelled so



he and John Adams were both glad he could be there. Another good show. From there to the Chalet and now back to the Limelight.

We are all leaving tomorrow. Pat's driving Julie, Judy and I to the Denver airport - we're leaving here at 8am so our wonderful Aspen time is almost over!

Monday 10/11 We had a beautiful ride back to Denver. The weather was nice and we could see snow capped mountains and pretty canyons along the way. Pat gave us several photo ops including a stop to see the Blue River with someone fly fishing to add to the photos! We stopped in Silverthorne for lunch at Smash Burger which Judy said is even better than In n Out Burger. Really good - I want them to come here! We also got to look at some property in that area - beautiful homes. Pat showed us where a friend of hers lives. Pat ran in a market to get us each some real estate magazines to look at in the airport so we can plan our moves! Oh... what a few million would buy! We stopped in Georgetown again to get more pictures since it rained on our way to Aspen and shopped around a little.

Pat dropped us right at the terminal for outside check-in... and that is where I left Judy as I had to wait for Southwest to give me the status of the delay and my flight from Chicago home. Thanks Pat, for the use of your car, your chauffeuring and all the great sightseeing commentary!

**Kathy's additional comments: I flew out of Aspen back to Denver on the 11th...was worried about getting off the ground since they had canceled flights the day before due to radar problems.**

**On the flight from Denver to Aspen on the 6th, the United pilot got on the speaker and told us they would attempt to land in Aspen but due to radar problems there, may have to abort the landing and fly back to Denver. Thank goodness we were able to land that day!**

**While waiting at my gate for the flight back to Wichita on the 11th, I saw Drew Carey (Price is Right) as he was exiting a gate in Denver. There was a Tom Hanks sighting at the Denver airport upon arriving on the 6th...I missed that one! Darn!**

**Rode the elevator at the Limelight with Steve Weisburg (in his white lounging robe! :) He's such a nice/friendly guy!**

**The band members were staying at the Limelight this year and we saw/spoke to many of them as they came and went each day. It was another great year in Aspen!! The weather cooperated despite forecasts of rain each day...we did have light showers and the wind/snow at Ashcroft, but all in all, it was perfect. The aspen's even cooperated and**

**retained their leaves a while longer just for us! FAR OUT!**

### **Aspen in October**

This is from Barb Stevens:

**Hi everyone Dick and I got home last night--late--and had to work today. It was a wonderful week in Aspen --the weather cooperated better than the weather men made it sound and I got my face and arms sunburned--NOT what I expected in Aspen in October. LOL Dick admitted that he had a nice time and he seemed very comfortable with everyone. He already knew Paul Swanton (at a NH event--people teased him that he looked like Paul's father!! Not old enough for that--but not too far impossible! LOL) so that made him more comfortable to know at least one guy. No bears seen downtown--kind of a disappointment for me--but when I asked a few people why, they said it had been quite rainy at times over the summer so there was lots of food available in the high places for the animals and they didn't have to come into town to eat. A lot of the stores in Aspen were closed--out of business and empty. Several of the eating places we had used in the past were gone too. The Mt Chalet staff as usual--treated us like family and turned the place over to us--some nights til 4 am or later (I must admit--I never made it past 1:45 am! Must be getting old! LOL ) We were very lucky that Jim Connor was out and around the entire week and he showed up at the Mt Chalet a few times and sang and played with us. He was everywhere and very approachable and funny. I told him about how Victoria loves Grandma's Feather Bed and that she calls it John's song, though I had told her all about Jim--and he told me it WAS John's song since he had given it to John after he had the hit. He signed a picture for Victoria but I haven't unpacked fully yet so she doesn't know it yet.**



(Dick & Barb Stevens at the Pine Creek Cookhouse event)



## **Aspen Times 8/10/2010**

13th Annual Tribute to John Denver

When: Friday and Saturday, Oct. 8 and 9, at 7:30 p.m.

Where: Wheeler Opera House

ASPEN — By the late '70s, Jim Horn must have thought he'd seen most everything, and added the woodwind part to almost all of it. From the first hit record he played on — Canned Heat's 1968 folk-blues "Going Up the Country," which featured his prominent flute solo — Horn stayed firmly at the center of the popular music realm. He played on the Beach Boys' "Pet Sounds" and albums by Steely Dan, Jackson Browne and José Feliciano. Horn didn't exactly have a niche — his contributions were too widespread for that — but if he did have one, at least in the early '70s, it would have been "saxophonist to the English Invasion." He toured on Joe Cocker's notorious Mad Dogs & Englishmen romp around the world; played on the Rolling Stones' "Goats Head Soup"; and recorded with all of the Beatles, but had a particularly close relationship with George Harrison, playing on the "Dark Horse" album and in the Concert for Bangladesh in Madison Square Garden. "They just wanted to hit the American sound, and use American musicians," said Horn, who had grown up in Linwood, outside of Los Angeles. But the offer Horn got around 1977 represented something new. Renee Armand, Horn's girlfriend at the time (and later his wife), was singing in Aspenite John Denver's band. Armand introduced her boss to her boyfriend, and Denver invited him to join the group. Folk was not exactly Horn's thing, just as it would be somewhat foreign terrain for most saxophonists; Horn had gotten hooked on sax as a 12-year-old, listening to Fats Domino and other r&b and early rock acts. Denver had something very different in mind. "I'd been playing all the pop stuff. I was playing baritone sax on Motown records, so this was a different kind of music. When John told me what he wanted me to do — emulate the sounds of the rain and wind and the water — I saw it was something different for me," Horn said Thursday morning at the Wheeler Opera House, just before rehearsal for the 13th Annual Tribute to John Denver concerts, on Friday and Saturday, Oct. 8 and 9. The concerts include Bill Danoff, co-writer of "Take Me Home, Country Roads" and "I Guess He'd Rather Be in Colorado"; comedian/musician Gary Mule Deer, who opened shows for Denver in the late '70s and early '80s; former Denver bandmates Alan Deremo, Chris Nole, Herb Pedersen, Jim Salestrom, Richie Garcia and Denny Brooks; and Mack Bailey, Jim Curry and Mollie Weaver. Also appearing as guest banjoist is Jim Horn's son, James.

Being with Denver seemed to become a surprisingly comfortable fit. Horn — yes, he swears that horn is the name he was born with —

stayed in Denver's band for 17 years, a musical bond matched in depth only by Horn's relationship with Harrison. (Horn would go on to play on the late Harrison's 1987 solo album, "Cloud Nine," and also on both albums by the Traveling Wilburys, Harrison's side project with Bob Dylan, Tom Petty and Roy Orbison.)

Being in Denver's band was like being thrown one big curveball for Horn; it required close attention to subtleties. "I said, I'll listen to the lyrics and go from there. I just played things I thought would work on the songs," Horn, who has made annual appearances in the tribute concerts dating back to 1998, the year after Denver died, said. "You have to adapt yourself to the feel of a song, what it's about, and go with it, decide which instrument — flute, sax, recorder — would sound best."

Horn knew he was getting comfortable when, during a performance of "Sunshine on My Shoulder," he pulled out the soprano saxophone. Horn's acknowledgment was a big smile from Denver; it was the introduction of saxophone into Denver's sound.

Still, the artistic challenges kept coming. And after a few years in the band, Denver told Horn that he wanted to do a tour of Europe that would include just a trio of Denver, percussionist Richie Garcia, and Horn. "That was a little harder," Horn recalled. "With just Richie and me backing him up, you couldn't make any mistakes."

The close, long-lasting partnership with Denver didn't prevent Horn from compiling an enormous list of other collaborators. He had recorded with Toto and Garth Brooks, U2 and Warren Zevon, Billy Joel and Christopher Cross. And while he remains busy — for the past several years, he has led the horn section for country star Kenny Chesney's band, and also does frequent session work in Nashville, his home for 25 years — it can't be anything like the '60s, when Horn was being called in for three or four sessions a day in L.A. studios.

"You might work with Frank Sinatra in the morning and afternoon, then the Beach Boys in the evening, and then the Mamas & the Papas would call you to come in real late, maybe midnight," he said. "It was different every day. Sometimes you'd walk in and not know who you were going to work with."

The Denver years were marked by a mellower predictability. Horn said that touring with Denver was always a first-class experience, and that Denver was easy to please — those smiles for surprising musical choices were a frequent occurrence. After the concerts, when some of the entourage went in search of nocturnal activity, Horn was Denver's regular companion in searching out the best curry in the vicinity. Horn said that part of Denver's slide in popularity in the later part of his career had to do with the



subject matter of the songs.  
"He was writing songs about, Why are we making weapons — that turned people off," Horn said.  
"His songwriting changed, and I think that hurt him a little bit. People wanted to hear his love songs. 'Annie's Song.'"

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### **A Moment Frozen in Time!**

We were fortunate to meet Peter McCall this year. Peter was the head of security for John's 1986 Concert tour and has enthralled us with a number of stories (not to mention photos) of the 1986 One World tour. I hope that this story does justice to Peter, who, incidentally is a wizard storyteller!

**Sometimes the planets align and an occurrence so bizarre happens, leaving all those in attendance awestruck. One such event happened at Brisbane airport. John Denver and his band arrived in Brisbane for their next concert. As they stood on the travelator moving in one direction, Dick Kniss spotted a group of people travelling in the opposite direction. Quick as a flash, Dick started singing a popular song. John joined in, as did the party travelling in the opposite direction, led by Mary Travers, followed by Peter Yarrow and Paul Stookey, who had performed in Brisbane the previous night as part of their 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary tour. Like ships passing in the night, in a moment that could not have been otherwise orchestrated, the songwriter and the group who made the song Number One worldwide were performing an impromptu rendition of 'Leavin' on a Jet Plane' in the middle of Brisbane airport.**

### **HGA Past Weekends**

Hello Janette,  
Carmel has already told you about our 180 degree turn around on our way home from Creswick and we took the liberty of calling in to "Old Mogo Town", which has now had a name – changed to "The Original Gold Rush Colony".

We were made very welcome by Janeena Woodville and invited to go and have a look at the progress of the tree's we planted in 2005.

I have often wondered how the trees and plaque have fared that we have left in many area's up and down the east coast of the country.

What a pleasant surprise we got to see the five healthy trees still growing strong, one of the guides informed us that the Blueberry ash trees had buds that would be bursting out very soon.

Just to give you all an idea of the size of the tree's, Carmel took a picture of me with John's tree which was about my height (approx 6 foot) and the tree that Max planted for Merryl which now towers over me.

There is also a 4 wheel drive group who have planted a "Lone Pine" tree which has come all the way from Gallipoli and it is thriving well.

It is the company's intention to make the area a memorial garden, so more plants and trees are bound to be joining ours.

Thanks to the Victorians who gave us a wonderful weekend, Glad Peter McCall was able to join us for an evening as well. Love  
Alistair and Carmel



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.



## Yellowstone, Coming Home

Oh-ooo oh-ooo oh-ooo oh-ooo  
Oh, the Yellowstone, Oh the buffalo free  
Oh, my brother the wolf, my lover the moon  
Oh, the little one, oh, the joy that I feel  
Oh, the love in my heart, a wilderness song



Oh-ooo Oh-ooo oh-ooo oh-ooo

Oh, the waterfall, Oh the river that runs  
Oh, my brother the wind, my sister the sea  
Oh, the ocean shore, oh the castles of stone  
Oh, the mountain top calling to me

Oh-ooo oh-ooo, oh-ooo oh-ooo

Returning, forever returning, coming home  
Belonging, forever belonging, never alone



Oh, the mystery, Oh the dreaming of dreams  
Oh, my brother my own, my sister my own  
Oh, the tenderness, Oh, the longing for love  
Oh, the beautiful way, the sweet coming home  
Oh-ooo oh-ooo, oh-ooo oh-ooo  
Oh-ooo oh-ooo, oh-ooo oh-ooo  
Oh-ooo oh-ooo oh-ooo  
Oh-ooo oh-ooo, oh-ooo oh-ooo

