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Higher Ground Australia



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HIGHER GROUND NEWSLETTER – February 2005

Welcome

Hello everyone and welcome to our February newsletter.

Members/Contributors

I would like to thank everyone who continues to support us by contributing so generously to our newsletter. It is great to receive emails from people who have something 'interesting' to add to our newsletter. Our membership is also steadily increasing and we welcome all our new friends to our Higher Ground Australia group.

Donation 2004

We have finally given the last of the proceeds of our auction to the Australian Native Animal Care. This money is paying for a high pressure water sprayer for the ongoing cleanliness of the areas in which the birds are held.

2005 Gathering – Bateman's Bay NSW

Our 2005 JD weekend will be held on the 7th – 9th October in Bateman's Bay, NSW. This weekend will coincide with the annual Events in Aspen Co. Our venue has been selected and we are now officially booked in to Old Mogo Town, which is situated only 10kms from beautiful Bateman's Bay. For your information about this lovely setting, their website is <http://www.south-coast-accommodation.com/>. The cost for the weekend (Friday to Sunday) will be \$60 per person for the accommodation and \$30 per person for food. A deposit of \$30 per person is required ASAP (\$15 deposit for accommodation + \$15 deposit for food).

For any further questions regarding the Old Mogo Town accommodation, please contact Alistair and Carmel Wilson on hifis@bigpond.com.au

Gold Rush Theme Park

Your accommodation cost includes entry to the Old Mogo Town Gold Rush Theme Park. For the people who are bringing their children along, this will be a very worthwhile and educational place to visit and I encourage you all to take this opportunity to visit this wonderful park. For more information about the Gold Rush Theme Park please visit their website.

<http://www.oldmogotown.com.au/> If anyone [in Australia] wants any literature from Old Mogo Town, I have some here. Please send me a SAE to the above address and I will forward the information to you.

Travelling to Bateman's Bay

For those people who will be flying from other parts of Australia to attend the weekend, you will need to fly to Canberra, then drive the rest of the way. Travel time between Canberra and Bateman's Bay is approximately 2 hours.

Bateman's Bay is a wonderful holiday destination, and as this annual event coincides with the last weekend of the NSW school holidays, please make your bookings early to avoid disappointment. Please be assured that once your deposit has been made, your weekend accommodation will be secure.

Eagle Refuge

Early investigations of the area around Bateman's Bay for an eagle facility has found a couple of possible places, one of which is Birdland. This facility has just one eagle, but it cannot be rehabilitated and released, so its costs are ongoing.

If anyone living in NSW knows of a place where eagles are rehabilitated and released to the wild, please let me know as part of the proceeds from our silent auction may be donated to such a facility.

Website

Our web address is:

www.highergroundaustralia.com The website is being updated regularly and if you want to leave any feedback, please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you to Lynn for keeping it up to date.

Do you want to sell/buy JD items?

If you have JD-related items that you want to sell, we are happy to advertise them through the website. Email the details to Lynn at webmasterhga@highergroundaustralia.com. Include details such as a description of the item, picture if you have one and the price you would like to sell it for. **OR** If there is something missing

from your JD collection email the details to Lynn at the above address and it will be advertised on the website. Someone out there may have exactly what you are looking for and are willing to sell it.

This is a free service to you and we do not profit from posting this information.

Cook Book

Hurry – Last few copies of the cookbook are available. Thanks to everyone who has purchased a copy as 100% of your money will be donated to raptor rehabilitation in Australia. For any further sales, please contact Genie either through the website or on gbp@almostheavendesigns.com. Thanks to everyone who have contributed and purchased the cook book

Ready Any Good Books Lately?

I think a hero is an ordinary individual who finds strength to persevere and endure in spite of overwhelming obstacles – Christopher Reeve.

Still Me by Christopher Reeve is a candid and honest account of his life. Published in 1998, just three years after the riding accident that took away his mobility, it is an extraordinary book about an extraordinary life. *Still Me* is a brilliant snapshot of Christopher Reeve's life, his achievements, his accident, his survival and the way in which he used his celebrity status to raise awareness and funds for the disabled. This book is surprisingly easy to read and it certainly opens ones eyes to the difficulties faced by a person confined to a wheelchair. The one underlying theme throughout the book was that the love of his family was the one thing that kept him going. This is a truly inspiring book. My rating is 8/10

Heard Any Good Music Lately?

I recently bought the Peter Paul & Mary DVD called ***Carry it On – A Musical Legacy***. It is a chronicle of how they started out together through to the present day. Included are clips from their appearances at the Newport Folk Festival and the peace rallies in Washington. There are some powerful words spoken and sung during this film. The DVD also includes PP&M singing 'Leavin' on a Jet Plane and For Bobby (For Baby).

Another random purchase recently was the Chieftains DVD – ***Down the Old Plank Road – The Nashville Sessions***. Anyone who knows the work of the Chieftains would wonder what they are doing in Nashville. "The record paired the world's most famous traditional Irish band with some of the greatest pickers, troubadours, country stars and American favourites in Nashville". The DVD shows the progression of the rehearsal, the

studio recording and the concert performance of many of the stars involved in this project. Included in these sessions are some well known names such as John Prine, Emmylou Harris, Nitty Gritty Dirt Band, Patty Loveless and more. There are also two CDs (sold separately) that compliment the DVD.

Emmylou Harris's ***Duets*** is also an absolute delight. Yes – it does include Wild Montana Skies, and the haunting Gulf Coast Highway with Willie Nelson – no need to tell you what I have on 'repeat' in my car at the moment – at full blast... and I am singing it.

What are some of your favourite songs or CDs at the moment?

Windsong

The wind is a twister of anger and warning

Melbourne and Sydney were recently lashed with some horrendous storms. The clean up is still going on two weeks later

In Melbourne, after 8 years of drought followed by a cooler and wetter summer than usual, hundreds of trees – some as old as 120 years were completely uprooted. One park lost 30 alone. All our beach areas and rivers have been adversely affected by these storms. A huge amount of rubbish and debris is being cleaned out of the Yarra River. There are portable booms installed to collect the rubbish before it gets to the bay. Plastic bags and plastic bottles are the main offenders. We really need to clean up our act on a day to day basis – not just wait for events like Clean Up Australia Day to pick up garbage.

Concert in Cuba

Cassandra Delaney visited Cuba last December where she performed for troops at Guantanamo Bay. The newspaper story about this concert is available from the following site.

http://www.malibutimes.com/articles/2005/01/27/life_and_arts/art2 prt

Latest John Denver News

The Lord's Prayer

One of our members wrote this...

I took my video of JD 'doing' the Lord's Prayer to the submariner's Christmas break up and played it for them. Everyone thought it was terrific but one man (an American member living here) came to me and said 'you don't know how much that means to me'. I said that I was glad he enjoyed it and he then proceeded to tell me he was 1/4 American Indian and he hadn't seen that 'spoken' since he was a child! It brought tears to his eyes

(and mine). Just goes to show JD's spirit is still working!

Grammy Awards

Queen Latifah will both host and perform at the 47th Grammy Awards this Sunday. She is also nominated for the Best Jazz Vocal Album, making her the first entertainer to receive this threefold honour since John Denver in 1979

Nobel Peace Prize Winner Dr. Maathai

"Calling humanity a threat to the planet, Kenyan environmentalist Wangari Maathai urged democratic reform and an end to corporate greed after becoming the first African woman to collect the Nobel Peace Prize on Friday. Maathai founded a campaign that has planted 30 million trees across Africa in a bid to slow deforestation. Maathai collected a gold Nobel medal and a diploma to a standing ovation. (She separately receives a check for \$1.48 million).

Her tree-planting movement, led mostly by women, aims to produce firewood, building materials and to slow deforestation. Kenya has lost about 90 percent of its forests in the past 50 years.

The movement also works for women's rights, democracy and peace. Maathai said a stream where she used to see frogs and tadpoles as a child 50 years ago had dried up. "The challenge is to restore the home of the tadpoles and give back to our children a world of beauty and wonder," she said.

In an interview with Reuters, Maathai brushed aside her past suggestions that the deadly AIDS virus might have been the result of a laboratory experiment gone awry."

"I really don't know. I really don't have any idea. I'm not an expert in this field," she said. She also denied suggesting that scientists might have created the virus as a biological weapon against Africans.

Harlean Peterson, a dedicated worker and member of Windstar added the following information about Mrs. Maathai. Read on.

In August of 1989 Wangari Maathai travelled to the United States to receive the 1989 Windstar Award at the annual Windstar Choices Symposium. Dr. Maathai was presented the award by John Denver.

"Mrs Maathai is a profound representative of the kind of individual Windstar seeks as an example of what one person-with vision, insight, and inspiration-can be and do" said Windstar co-founder John Denver when the award was announced.

Windstar News



The Australia Connection of Windstar is currently working on a square for the John Denver Memorial Peace Cloth. The center is an eagle, members are putting their creative pieces together, and it will be sent to be added to the Peace Cloth in the next few months. Look for pictures on the website

[\(www.windstaraustraliaconnection.com/\)](http://www.windstaraustraliaconnection.com/)

March 6th is Clean Up Australia Day. Windstar has reserved an area to clean up along the roadway. If you are living in the Brisbane area, come join us! Help us to get the Windstar name out to Australia. You need not be a member of Windstar to come help spread John Denver's Windstar mission!

More info can be found at:

<http://www.cleanup.com.au/Main.asp?RequestType=CUA&SubRequestType=Detail&SiteID=40289> There has been some discussion of a clean up site being reserved for Melbourne, but details have not been announced as of this printing.

The Australia Connection is planning another meeting in June in Melbourne. Also a second event is planned for Tree Day on July 31st all round Australia. Windstar Australia Connection will be registering their sites in March. Come join us! Again, you need not be a member of Windstar to help us plant trees! For more info, go to <http://www.planetark.com/campaignspage.cfm/newsid/3/story.htm>

If anyone living in Australia would like to become a member of the Australia Connection, you must first be a global member of Windstar (www.wstar.org) for \$35 USD, then membership to the Connection is free. For more information, email: info@windstaraustraliaconnection.com or visit the website www.windstaraustraliaconnection.com/.

Environmental News

What is Sustainable Energy?

Sustainable energy is about using energy wisely and using energy generated from clean sources and clean technologies.

Wise energy use is the first step to ensuring we have sustainable energy for present and future generations.

Being efficient with our energy will reduce our household and business energy bills, reduce the amount of energy we need to produce in the first

place and cut energy related greenhouse pollution.

What is Non-Renewable Energy?

Non-Renewable energy is an energy source that cannot be replenished in short periods of time, such as coal, natural gas, oil and uranium.

What is Renewable Energy?

Renewable energy is clean energy produced from sources such as solar, wind and hydro power.

The 5-star Energy Rating System

The Victorian [Australia] government has introduced a new 5 Star energy rating system for residential housing. From July 2004, all new homes in Victoria must achieve a 5 Star rating. This will be enforced from July 2005. Five Star does not apply to renovations or alterations to existing homes. However, existing homes can benefit from incorporating energy efficient design features, which will lead to energy and cost savings.

The 5 Star rating is flexible and can be achieved using a range of energy efficient design features. Building, design and construction professionals can advise you on how you can meet the 5 Star standard. An accredited house energy rater can also help you achieve 5 Stars.

Five Star homes are more affordable and can save their owners around \$210 per year on energy bills.

If you have central heating or air conditioning or you have a large home you can save even more.

Even without using any heating or cooling, 5 Star homes are up to five degrees warmer in winter and up to ten degrees cooler in summer than the average (2 Star) new home.

Environmental benefits

The 5 Star rating system will reduce greenhouse pollution in Victoria. Within five years, 5 Star homes will be saving more than 200 000 tonnes of greenhouses pollution annually. This is equivalent to removing 45 000 cars from our roads, or planting 750,000 trees.

Water reduction measures and energy efficient appliances will dramatically reduce the water consumed in household kitchens, laundries and bathrooms.

Economic benefits

Five Star homes will benefit the Victorian economy. Annual energy savings in Victoria are estimated to be worth \$30-40 million within five years. Over the next 20 years, the introduction of the 5 Star standard will mean increased economic growth of up to \$570 million and the creation of 1100 new jobs. Less will be spent in the energy

sector and more will be spent on energy efficient building products and services.

Home Building and Design

Energy efficient homes incorporate simple design features and maximise the use of natural energy sources to achieve the highest degree of comfort with minimum energy use. Any style of home can be designed to be energy efficient and any existing home can improve its energy efficiency. Energy efficient design can enhance the appearance of your home, both inside and out.

Energy efficient homes can be up to 5°C warmer in winter and up to 10°C cooler in summer. Substantial savings can be made on the running costs of heating, cooling and lighting and household energy use can be reduced by 60–70%. Energy savings can be as much as \$800 each year, or \$20 000 over the average 25-year home mortgage. Energy efficient homes don't have to cost more to design and build, and lead to significant cost and energy savings in the long term.

Energy efficient housing design and appliances minimise greenhouse pollution by reducing the use of non-renewable energy (coal, oil and natural gas).

Achieving Comfort and Energy Savings

Comfort and energy savings are achieved through:

Design - appropriate siting, correctly oriented and sized windows, selection of building materials, correct levels of insulation, ventilation and draught proofing

Selecting and installing energy efficient appliances, lighting and heating, cooling and hot water systems

Good household practices – selecting appropriate thermostat settings for heating and cooling system, closing doors and windows in heated areas, switching off appliances when they are not in use

Choose an appropriately sized home. It is more costly to heat a 40 square than a 20 square home.

Water Saving Practices

Much is being said at the moment about saving water and new advertisements have been launched through the print and television media to highlight and educate people about saving water. After 8 years of drought in Victoria, we have some recent heavy rain, which has made a difference to the water levels in our water storage dams, which are now at approximately 50% capacity. Water collection tanks or other recognised methods of recycling water will give you points toward your

energy rating. However, it is imperative that we all try to use less water in the home.

My recent trip to Mexico certainly opened up my eyes to the importance of conserving water, so that our taps will yield clean water that is suitable for drinking.

A running tap uses 9 litres of water per minute. Simply placing the plug in the sink when washing vegetables or dishes will save water.

Turning off the tap whilst brushing your teeth will save 4,000 litres of water a year.

Turning off the tap whilst shaving will save 3500 litres of water a year.

Reducing your shower from seven to four minutes will save up to 25,000 litres per person per year and replacing your old shower head with one of the newer water-saving ones will save an additional 30 percent of water usage.

Clean Up Australia Day

Clean Up Australia day will be held on Sunday March 5th 2005. Schools Clean Up Day will be held on Friday March 4th and Business Clean Up Day will be held on Tuesday 1st March.

If you are able to participate in this worthwhile activity, please register by visiting <http://www.cleanup.com.au> and following the instructions under the **Get Involved** section. If you are going to participate, it would be nice to get a group of people together and clean up your area under one banner, such as your local school, scout group, or even under John Denver's name. If any of you get involved in this great day, please take some photos to be included in the website (and a special mention in our next newsletter).

Important:

After registering your group, please read and understand the Clean Up Site guide that Clean Up will send you.

Contact your local council to inform them that you are organising a Clean Up event and to make arrangements for the collection of the rubbish.

Prior to Clean Up Day, conduct a thorough inspection of your site. This is to ensure the safety of you and your volunteers.

Have Fun

Australian Conservation Foundation (ACF)

There is some excellent conservation information included on this site. It includes a state by state Biodiversity Assessment. This is a short appraisal of each of the states, which is good for bringing people's attention to some of the more serious environmental issues we have.

For further information refer to the website <http://www.acfonline.org.au/asp/pages/home.asp>

Windsong

(John Denver/Joe Henry)

The wind is the whisper
Of our mother the earth.
The wind is the hand
Of our father the sky.
The wind watches over
Our struggles and pleasures.
The wind is the goddess
Who first learned to fly.
The wind is the bearer
Of bad and good tidings
The weaver of darkness
The bringer of dawn.
The wind gives the rain,
Then builds us a rainbow,
The wind is the singer
Who sang the first song.
The wind is a twister
Of anger and warming,
The wind brings the fragrance
Of freshly mown hay.
The wind is a racer,
A wild stallion running
And the sweet taste of love
On a slow summer's day.
The wind knows the songs
Of cities and canyons,
The thunder of mountains,
The roar of the sea.
The wind is the taker
And giver of mornings,
The wind is the symbol
Of all that is free.
So welcome the wind
And the wisdom she offers,
Follow her summons
When she calls again.
In your heart and your spirit,
Let the breezes surround you.
Lift up your voice then
And sing with the wind.

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.