

Contact Details:

Janette Frawley

PO Box 8155

Camberwell North VIC 3124

Australia

jfrawley@highergroundaustralia.com

Higher Ground Australia



www.highergroundaustralia.com/

Volume 2 – Edition 7

HIGHER GROUND NEWSLETTER – July 2005

London Bombing

On July 7th, 2005 four bombs exploded in central London, England in quick succession during peak hour. The current death toll is 55. Higher Ground Australia would like to extend our deepest sympathy to the families of those people killed and our thoughts and prayers are with the survivors, their families and friends and to the people of London. No matter where they occur, acts of terrorism affect us all.

Welcome

Hello everyone and welcome to our July newsletter. Sometimes we spend so much time getting through the daily grind that we forget to stop and take stock of our lives. I would like to take this opportunity to stop and publicly thank all the people within this group. You are really special people. There are those ones who email me after the newsletter goes out to simply say thanks. I would like to say thank you to them for taking the time to email their thoughts. It is so important to keep in touch. I would also like to thank the people who email or write to me to let me know about events or to give reviews about things they have read or seen. My life is made so much easier because you cared enough to let me know. I do try to get all of those into the newsletter. This month, we have some really positive feedback from many of our members, so there is much to read. Thanks to everyone for their contributions to Higher Ground Australia.

2005 Gathering – Bateman's Bay NSW

Our 2005 gathering at Mogo, near Bateman's Bay between the 7th – 9th October is shaping up to be our best yet. Our numbers are good and we have got a number of new members coming along this year, so we are going to have such a lot of fun. It is not too late to join us and we welcome all new people who come along. You will certainly go home with many happy memories. For further information about the weekend, please contact Carmel on hifis@bigpond.com.au, who is organising the venue this year. For more information about Mogo's 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).

Mercy Mission to Boonah

Carmel and Alistair went for a little holiday to Moree and Coonabarabran recently, and during the break received an SOS from Helen at Boonah that John's tree was being eaten by kangaroos. Into the ***Almost Heaven Winnebago*** [affectionately known as the 'Lumbago'] they jumped to attend to Mercy Mission Boonah, where they put wire guards around John and Merryll's trees. Here is what Alistair has written....

And you can see that we were the drought breakers they were waiting on, when a beautiful rainbow appeared while we were securing the tree guards, and you can imagine how excited we were when a PAIR of eagles appeared as well. We are hoping that one of the eagles was the one we released and it has found a mate, "how good would that be"



Here is Alistair putting the mesh around the trees. Behind him is the famous Almost Heaven 'Lumbago'. Thanks to Alistair and Carmel and to Helen for letting us know that there was a problem.



Silent Auction 2005

Don't forget about the silent auction when you are trawling through markets and op shops for that John Denver treasure. It is amazing what you can find when you are not really looking. I was able to pick up two brand new books recently that were in a bargain bin and are most appropriate for the auction. All proceeds [that is, 100%] will be donated to an eagle rehabilitation refuge in New South Wales. We have already got a number of items such as stickers, books and CDs. Please email me if you have something you would like to donate. jfrawley@telstra.com

Our silent auction has been very successful in the past and I am sure that it will be a good one again this year. I have received a number of pledges for items and I thank each and every one of you for your participation and your donation. A catalogue will be emailed to you a couple of weeks before the October weekend and bids will be accepted by email from people in Australia.

Eagle/Raptor Rehabilitation Refuge

If anyone knows of an eagle rehabilitation centre somewhere in new South Wales, please contact me. jfrawley@telstra.com Carmel and Alistair have contacted the people at Birdland, which is close to Bateman's Bay, but we would like to know if there are other, maybe smaller ones that would benefit from a donation from us.

Carmel wrote: I have sent a letter off on Monday to the Birdland Animal Park in Batemans Bay, just as a reminder of our donation and to confirm that everything is still in place. I reminded them about the plaque for the eagle's cage would be at their expense so I am just waiting now for a reply from them.

Snow at Barrington Tops

Thanks to Pat of Newcastle for the following report from Barrington Tops, where HGA held their JD weekend in 2002.

Just a short note to say John's tree should be seeing snow at Barrington Tops today I think Barrington Tops received 2 to 3 inches of snow today and last night. It looked so nice there on the news tonight.

Boy its chilly here. You can feel the snow in the air. Wish it would snow here too

Some Days are Diamonds.....

A Song's Best Friend: John Denver Remembered DVD has been released

The PAL version was meant to be released in Australia on 4th July. However, when mine did not turn up in the post a couple of days later from Sanity, I contacted them to find out where it was. Apparently, the new release date is Monday, 18th

July. I had ordered it through the Sanity website, so I am reasonably sure that this will be available from the regular stores like Sanity and JB HI FI on July 18th, but if you would like to pre-order it, you can either click the link on our website or order it through the Sanity website <http://www.sanity.com.au/product.asp?intProductID=622933&intArtistID=4472> This DVD is AUD\$24.55.

I have had a lot of feedback about this wonderful DVD and I would like to share them with you.

I've already bought the John Denver DVD 'A song's best friend' And I'm really very thrilled about it.

It is a very beautiful insight documentary about John's life and career as singer and songwriter.

Annie Denver, Pete Huttlinger, Milt Okun, Hal Thau, Lee Holdridge and John Martin Sommers tell about their relationship with John.

This John Denver DVD will put him back in the positive spotlights by the people who love him so much.

I've always very upset that some people wrote about his D.U.I. even after his death.

I hope that even those people will remember that John Denver was also a human being with ups and downs. And even John has his sins. This DVD will make that clear at all

Love and peace, Bob & Shirley



When I was growing up, John Denver was as much a part of my life as my mom and dad were. His music could be heard coming over the little am/fm radio in my bedroom. His songs were sung around the fire when I was off camping with the Girl Scouts. He was everywhere. And,

with good reason. Denver had the ability to turn a simple song into a warm embrace. A song meant comfort and home. It was a connection to nature or to a sense of being.

Remarkably, his songs stand the test of time. The DVD, A Song's Best Friend, John Denver Remembered, captures the singer-songwriter at his best. With loving words from Annie Denver, producer Milt Okun, manager Hal Thau, and many others, we are led on an enchanting tour of his world. Vintage footage and voice overs from Denver himself are included, making for a very intimate stroll down memory lane.

The sound quality of the DVD is exceptional, as is the video production. It's a real treat!

After watching the DVD many times over, I couldn't help but think of what John Denver might have contributed to music had it not been for the tragic accident that claimed his life. While we will never be able to realize that dream, this loving tribute is here to remind us that Denver brought us sunshine, beauty, and a passion for life with every song. Whether you're a fan of John Denver's music or not, his legacy is collection of rich music with heart unlikely to be recreated by any of today's artists. (Joan Hunt <http://blogcritics.org/archives/2005/06/28/072034.php>)

This review is by Jean Kendle of USA

I just thought I'd tell you that after I recd. my DVD from Amazon, I thoroughly enjoyed it. It has many scenes from his TV specials, and live concerts (many of which I have copies of on VHS - even tho some are poor quality), and then the comments from his family and friends were very appropriate, except listen to the one Annie says about "Perhaps Love": that he wrote it when they were separated and contemplating divorce? Anyway, I think it is a nice effort to bring John's music to the attention of other people who aren't familiar with it, in hopes that they will go out and buy some of the other albums. There was a little separate paper in it, showing about 10 album covers.

It occurs to me, that if "they" the family or Windstar, have all those live concerts on film, they should be putting them out for the public to obtain.

Thanks to everyone who has sent their thoughts on this DVD. I loved it and I thought it was interesting to hear the way John's voice matured over the years. I must say that my favourite part was the duet with Johnny Cash - two wonderful performers together.

.....**Some Days are Stone**

The Girls Behind the Famous Songs

As published in the [Melbourne] Sunday herald Sun, June 19, 2005. The article, written by **Ray Connelly** of the **Daily Mail**, goes in search of the girls behind those famous songs and songwriters. Here is an excerpt. Unfortunately this is the type of idiotic garbage that is published in newspapers. All correspondence should be directed to the Daily Mail in London....

Annie's Song (John Denver)

The trouble with expressing eternal devotion when you're young is that you may live to regret it. And though John Denver will have enjoyed the royalties from Annie's Song, this was another relationship that was to end in tears. Denver, an architectural student met Ann Martell during a college tour when he was in his early 20s. They fell out, but soon got back together, whereupon he wrote his great hit, Annie's Song, in 1974, telling her how she filled up his 'senses like a night in the forest'. The song was, it is said, written in 10 minutes, but the break-up of their marriage took 17 years, after which Denver sawed their marriage bed in half. He was killed while flying solo in 1997. It is not know what happened to Annie. What The????

And Now for Something Nice

I was recently surfing the internet and found this really nice Olivia Newton John US website. The following link has some nice pictures from the Rocky Mountain Christmas Special from December 1976, the guests included Olivia, Steve Martin, Valerie Harper. For all those people who have seen this wonderful special, I hope it brings back some happy memories.

<http://www.olivianewtonjohn.us/captures/jd/jd-fly.html>

Nice Website

Here is a lovely website dedicated to John Denver. If you do not already know Linda's wonderful work, this will be a lovely surprise for you. Linda is constantly updating this page, so call in often

<http://www.freewebs.com/sweetdreamsplace/>

New CD to be Released Soon

Wonderful news from Linda

According to KO's website, Kris has finished John's 1987 solo concert at Cedar Rapids which will be released as a new CD by BMG soon. Keep your eyes peeled for this one.

Here is the link to Kris O'Connor's website and big hugs to him for being able to keep John's music alive. Thanks also to Linda for letting us know.

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

Arctic Dance

One of our American friends sent the video **Arctic Dance - The Mardie Murie Story**. I finally got to sit down and watch this wonderful documentary recently and I was just blown away. Narrated by Harrison Ford and featuring John Denver, this is a wonderful synopsis of the life of Mardie, who

dedicated her life to the preservation of wilderness areas. It traces her life from birth through to the acceptance of the President's award in 1998. There is some wonderful imagery and through the use of Mardie's own photos and Olaus' drawings this documentary is well worth viewing. For those who have read Mardie's autobiography – Two in the Far North, Arctic Dance will have special significance. The scenes of John Denver talking to Mardie and later singing **A Song for all Lovers** are really special.

Thanks to Jean, who has given me the opportunity to watch this wonderful documentary.

The Murie Ranch in Moose, Wyoming conducts tours for the public between May 1st and October 31st. Reservations are required. To find out more about the Murie Ranch, please check out the following link. <http://www.muriecenter.org>

John Denver Gold Collection

I recently purchased a CD from ebay, possibly released for the Japanese market, but was most surprised to see that the cover picture was not of John Denver at all. Anyone know anything about this CD?

Take Me Home Country Roads

This is the title of the third book of songs illustrated by Christopher Canyon. Although I tried very hard order Sunshine on my Shoulders through Angus and Robertson in Melbourne, I was unsuccessful, so last year I ordered Ancient Rhymes directly from Amazon.

I have it on good authority that there were some copies of Ancient Rhymes in Musgroves Music and the New Edition Book Store in Perth Australia. So if you are looking for a copy of this beautiful book, please contact either one of those stores.

Perhaps we should all troop down to our local Dymocks (they seem to be the best) store to see if they will get some copies of Take me Home Country Roads. HGA will be donating a copy of this book to a school or kindergarten in October.

Read any Good Books Lately?

Nicholas & Micah Sparks

“Three Weeks with my Brother”

Nicholas Sparks (author of Message in a Bottle, The Notebook et al) tells a story of a trip he took around the world with his brother in a period of three weeks. Unlike the normal travelogue-type story, this is an autobiographical memoir. Sparked by the experiences Nicholas and Micah have as they travel around the world the memories of their childhood through to the present day are poignantly written. This book, like all of the other ones Nicholas has written is a

must. Funny in parts, yet sad in others, I think it is a book well worth reading.

Here is a quote from the book, which I am sure that will be familiar to you....

... At the same time, I'm always struck by how similar people are, no matter where they live. Throughout the world, people not only want to have the chance to improve their own situation, but want their children to have more opportunities than they have.

My score is 9/10

Almost Heaven comes to California

"Heaven" California-sent

The Denver Center Theatre Company's "Almost Heaven: Songs and Stories of John Denver," has landed a September tryout near San Francisco before its planned off-Broadway run in October. The powerhouse cast will include Jim Newman, currently starring in the Arvada Center's "The Full Monty," and Lee Morgan, who starred in "Brooklyn" in its 2003 pre-Broadway run at the New Denver Civic Theatre.

The production, retitled "Almost Heaven: John Denver's America," opens Sept. 8 at Center REP in Walnut Creek, Calif., about 25 miles east of San Francisco. It again will be directed by the DCTC's Randal Myler.

"Almost Heaven" premiered at the DCTC in March 2002, and was brought back for five months in 2003-04. Newman, a ringer for John Denver (well, with a haircut) is the only member of the DCTC cast to return. The new cast also includes Broadway veterans Teresa Burrell (Lorrell in "Dreamgirls") and Jennifer

Hopefully some of our Californian friends will have a chance to see this production and send us a review. As San Francisco is one of my favourite cities, I would gladly go over and review it on behalf of HGA. Just gotta win Powerball first!

Aspen events - 2005

Singing Skies Foundation presents....

For Monday, 10/10: NEW FRIENDS TO FIND: 2:00 PM (new time!) Concert downstairs in the Mt. Chalet Ballroom, featuring Steve Brook from both England and Spain (www.stevebrook.com), Rene

Wingelaar and Arno Cornelissen from Holland (www.nickels-and-dimes.com) and Tim Durnan from Sacramento (www.timdurnan.com) For fun, there will be a JD Trivia Contest. Event produced by Singing Skies Foundation. For more info and to order \$12 tickets, please email jht@spamarrest.com

Peace Cloth Presents

PEACE CLOTH CONCERT AND SILENT AUCTION

Please join us in Aspen, Colorado on October 7, 2005, to celebrate the music and legacy of John Denver, in support of the John Denver Memorial Peace Cloth. Our afternoon will include:

Music by Chris Collins and the Bolder Canyon Band, Mark Cormican, Ken Dravis, Tim Durnan, Presentation of the 2005 Vision Award, Special auction items, Unique hand-made gift items,

▪ **Please no video taping**

You won't want to miss it!

ATTENTION: Silent Auction Items Needed!

Where: the ballroom at the Mountain Chalet, 333 East Durant, Aspen Colorado

When: Friday, October 7, 2005, 1-4 PM

How much: \$20; tickets payable by check (cheque), money order or PayPal. Email Eve Kleinfeld at Eve@Johndenverpeacecloth.com to purchase tickets, discuss silent auction items and/or for more information.

Let This be a Voice Concert/Auction & Lunch

Just another reminder about our event on 10/8: Let This Be A Voice concert/lunch/auction. Mt. Chalet Ballroom from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. with registration beginning at 10:00 a.m. Auction

beneficiaries: Aspen Camp School For The Deaf and Hawkquest. Cost is \$25 auction/concert/lunch; \$15 auction/concert. Overseas attendees, e-mail PAM but you can pay at the door. Send check/money order payable to Pam Beasley along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope and include ALL names of people in your party to: 721 Ravencroft Dr., Garland, TX 75043. Volunteers e-mail MARY (eagleshorses@yahoo.com); Registrations e-mail BOTH Mary and Pam (pamela.beasley@airmail.net).

The performers will be: Mack Bailey, Chris Nole, Pete Huttlinger, Mark Cormican, Kevin Demolino, Roy Rivers Keeper Koplinger and Jim Salestrom.

We will also have a brief presentation from Christopher Canyon on the new book "Take Me

Home, Country Roads" along with a quick preview of the new book for next year. He will also be doing a book signing. We will be having a presentation by a representative from Hawkquest. They will be bringing at least three birds.

Join us for a wonderful afternoon of music, information and friendship-

Mary K. Ledford (EaglesHorses Productions)

News from the Netherlands

Concert

Here is some information from Netty in the Netherlands. Our European friends may be interested in this concert

Perhaps some of you have heard about Steve Brook. He is a wonderful singer/songwriter and wrote some lovely tribute songs in memory of John Denver. Next to that I still think that his own written songs are so beautiful!

Steve was our guest on the Denverday and now he will come back to our country to give a concert!

The date: Sunday the 18th of September 2005, Grote Zaal "Driehoorn", Uranusstraat 34, 2402 AG, Alphen aan den Rijn.

If you like to know more about Steve then here is his website: <http://www.stevebrook.com>

His concert is also announced on Radio 227 and on the website of this radiostation <http://www.radio227.nl>

Bearforest

In our June newsletter, we included a story about the Dutch group that is raising money for the Bear Forest. Netty has now informed us that they now have enough money to purchase another parcel of land in the Bear Forest. I am sure she will follow this announcement up with pictures as they become available.

Congratulations Netty and Michiel.

International Whaling Commission

As you probably know by now, a return to commercial whaling was ruled out by the International Whaling Commission recently. It was a victory for the whales, but it will be short-lived as the Japanese intend to move forward with its push to re-introduce commercial whaling in the future. It must also be brought to attention that the international and Australian waters in the Antarctic are not recognised as such by the Japanese. Tonight (18/7/2005) there was a program on the Australian ABC Four Corners programme that dealt with the recent IWC meetings. This information has been posted on the website of the ABC. Please check out both

this site and the IWC site through the following links.

<http://www.abc.net.au/4corners/content/2005/s1413252.htm>

<http://www.iwcoffice.org>

Meanwhile, please read the following:

The Whale Wars

Reporter: Matthew Carney

Broadcast: 18/07/2005

It was billed as a "victory for the whales". Last month's International Whaling Commission meeting in Korea had fended off Japan's push for a return to commercial whaling. A triumphant Australia had led the opposition.

But Japan has warned that it is far from beaten. It insists that it will press ahead with plans to dramatically increase the number and species of whales it kills under the loophole of "scientific research".

And in the fading minutes of the forum, Japanese representatives declared defiantly that they would not back off on commercial whaling. They would be back in greater force next year - with more votes from more pro-whaling countries. "The reversal of history, the turning point, is soon to come," one delegate told the meeting.

The warning underlined Japan's determination to grind out victory in a long-term campaign to return to full commercial whaling - even if that means coping with embarrassing setbacks and international odium along the way.

At the heart of Japan's strategy is its courting of small, impoverished nations - mainly in the Pacific, the Caribbean and Africa - to win their support at the IWC.

For years Japan has been accused by conservationists of bribing these minnow states for their pro-whaling votes. Rarely, however, have these accusations been backed

by solid evidence. Japan has denied the charge.

Now Four Corners can reveal the specific detail of some of the favours handed out to countries to sign up for IWC membership and to support Japan.

In one case, an official letter has surfaced to show that Japan has been making payments to the IWC on one country's behalf.

In another case, a former IWC commissioner confirms that Japan has been paying all his country's IWC costs and associated expenses. In yet another, a disgusted politician tells how his country was bought off.

"I don't think the international legal community has yet come up with a term to describe this blatant purchasing of small country governments by Japan," he tells Four Corners.

In this report, filmed in the Pacific, the Caribbean and the lobbies of the IWC meeting in Korea, Four Corners also exposes the farcical rules of the IWC and how it is open to manipulation and abuse.

Matthew Carney reports on "The Whale Wars" – Four Corners, 8.30pm, Monday 18 July, ABC TV.

This program will be repeated about 11pm Wednesday 20 July; also on the ABC2 digital channel at 7pm and 9.45pm Wednesday

National Tree Day – 31st July 2005

It's that time of the year again – time to gather a group of friends together and join one of the many tree planting groups that will be operating in your area on Sunday 31st July. Plant a tree for John and watch it grow by visiting it from time to time.

You can also win five nights at Olivia Newton John's eco-resort. All this information is available through the Planet Ark site.

<http://www.planetark.com/campaignspage.cfm/newsid/18/newsDate/3/story.htm>

Please let us know if you were able to join in on one of the many groups operating in your area. Some photos would also be welcome.

Thank God I'm a JD Fan

In 1985, Patty Peavey and friends contributed the following:

Well life as a fan gets a lot of flack
Aint much an old pen pal like me can't hack
It's "Sunshine" to rise and "Eclipse" in the sack
Thank God, I'm a JD fan

A collector's kind of life never did me no wrong
Fillin' up my scrapbooks and listenin' to the songs
My days are all filled with singin' along
Thank God, I'm a JD fan

(chorus)
Well, I got me an album, I got me old photos
When the sun's comin' up I got shows on the video
Life aint nothin' but a song on the radio
Thank God, I'm a JD fan

When my works all done and it's gettin' kinda late
I pull out my recorder and I pop in a tape
The music in my ears is all that it takes
Thank God, I'm a JD fan

I'd play my records all day if i could
But my kids and my hubby wouldn't take it very good
So I listen when I can and work when I should
Thank God, I'm a JD fan

(chorus)

I wouldn't trade my tickets for diamonds or gems
I never was one to want money anyone sends
I'd rather have my camera and my telephoto lens
Thank God, I'm a JD fan

Yeah, I've seen John many times up on stage
Alotta sad people think that's mighty strange
Well folks, let me tell you now, I'll never change
Thank God, I'm a JD fan

(chorus)

Well, I'll stick with my friends til the day I die
They take me by the hand and hold me close to their sides
We say "live a good life and cheer for John with pride"
And Thank God, we're JD fans

My pals taught me early how to collect and how to share
They taught me how to save and how to give and to care
Taught me how to love and how to show I'm there
And... waaa Hooooo!!
Thank God, we're JD fans !!!!

The Peace Poem

(John Denver)

*There's a name for war and killing
There's a name for giving in
When you know another answer
For me the name is 'sin'
But there's still time to turn around
And make all hatred cease
And give another name to living
And we could call it 'peace'*

*And peace would be the road we walk
Each step along the way
And peace would be the way we work
And peace the way we play
And in all we see that's different
And in all the things we know
Peace would be the way we look
And peace the way we grow*

*There's a name for separation
There's a name for first and last
When it's all for us or nothing
For me the name is 'past'
But there's still time to turn around
And make all hatred cease
And give a name to all the future
And we could call it 'peace'*

*And if peace is what we pray for
And peace is what we give
Then peace will be the way we are
And peace the way we live
Yes there still is the time to turn around
And make all hatred cease
And give another name to living
And we can call it 'peace'*

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.