

Contact Details:

Janette Frawley

PO Box 8155

Camberwell North VIC 3124

Australia

jfrawley@highergroundaustralia.com



Higher Ground Australia



www.highergroundaustralia.com/

Volume 4 – Edition 12

HIGHER GROUND NEWSLETTER – December. 2007

Merry Christmas

The year is all but finished and as we prepare for the Christmas season.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has contributed to Higher Ground Australia over the past twelve months. Your assistance is greatly appreciated and we hope that you will continue to offer your help and support in the future.

On behalf of us all at HGA, we would like to wish you all a happy and safe Christmas and a new year full of prosperity and nice surprises.

Happy Hanukkah (belated)

We wish our Jewish friends a warm and happy but belated Hanukkah.

Belated Birthday Greetings

Happy Belated birthday to our webmaster, Lynn. I hope that you had a wonderful day on the 23rd November. May the year ahead be full of happiness and love.



A Very Happy Birthday Greeting

Happy Birthday to Anna-Kate who celebrates her birthday next week. May your day be filled with sunshine and love.

Update on Margaret

Margaret is getting stronger each day and she is on the road to recovery. Keep her in your thoughts and prayers.

Fires in California

We hope that all of our Californian friends escaped the fires that ravaged the Los Angeles and San Diego areas. These fires were particularly fierce and although we have not recently heard from some of our Californian friends, we are hopeful that they have survived a very nasty situation.

Paver at Windstar

As reported last month, the paver that was donated by Higher Ground Australia has been included in the brick path surrounding the Spirit

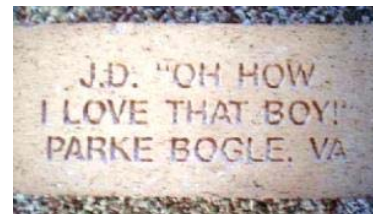
statue. Thanks to all those people who donated money to pay for the paver.

Windstar has sent us a thank-you card and photo of our brick paver.



To view some of the other statue pathway bricks that have been donated, open the Windstar website. <http://www.wstar.org/>

Our friend, Parke, recently donated a pathway brick to Windstar. I think that her brick says exactly what we all think...



Aspen in October 2008

It is official! The Annual Musical Tribute to John Denver will take place on October 10th and 11, 2008 at the Wheeler Opera House.

Karmen Dopsloff of the "Expect a Miracle Now" Foundation will be the producer of the show. As the co-producer of several previous Aspen shows and also producer of the John Denver birthday celebration in Phoenix and Denver, Karmen has a long time relationship with John Denver band members. Her main goal is to retain the Aspen show as close as possible to the first ten year's performances. Start making your plans now!! "The beat goes on". Kenn Roberts

Karmen's website is www.expectamiraclenow.org and it will include information about the annual concerts during the course of the year.

A country boy came calling

By Tim Krohn The Free Press

Ben Martell still runs into many who remember the 40-year phenomena of his family's Holiday House dinner club on the banks of the Minnesota River outside of St. Peter.

But it's been some two decades since it served as the place to go for company parties, special dinners for prom dates, anniversaries and numerous wedding parties.

Fewer people remember the dinner club's and the family's place in local history for one particular wedding party.

In 1966 a young musician named John Deutschendorf was playing the college circuit with The Mitchell Trio and made a stop at Gustavus in St. Peter. After the show, Deutschendorf met college student Annie Martell.

The two were married in the First Lutheran Church in St. Peter on June 9, 1967, with the reception at the Holiday House.

A couple of years later, Deutschendorf would change his name to John Denver and set out on a solo career that would immortalize him — and Annie Martell, for whom he wrote his No. 1 hit, "Annie's Song."

Ben, Annie and two sisters grew up working and playing in the Holiday House, owned by their parents Jim and Norma Martell.

"When my father came out of the service he worked with my grandparents who ran Martell's Cafe in Le Sueur," said Ben. A few years later they scouted for land to build a small dinner club and settled on an inexpensive piece of land off Highway 22 along the river and across the street from a junkyard.

"Everybody said they were crazy building next to a junkyard, but they said it made it look like their parking lot was always full," said Ben, who lives in Le Sueur.

The little cottage-like dinner club, looking out over the river and dedicated to quality food and service, was an instant hit.

"They were outside the city limits so they couldn't have a liquor license for the first 20 years they were there. So they made it a private bottle club," Ben recalls. People paid a nominal fee to join and have their bottles of liquor kept at the Holiday House and pay a "set-up" price for mixes to go with the liquor.

The Martells kept adding on until the Holiday House was a long maze of connected dining rooms and bars. (Today, part of the building is a

residence and much of the rest of it has been torn down.)

Jim and Norma retired when the business closed. They now live in Arizona and are both 84.

"Dad was philosophical about it closing. He said we had a good run but the white table-cloth dinner club era has gone by the wayside."

Ben says it was a unique experience having John Denver as a member of the family and watching his and Annie's lives become the stuff of legend.

"It's strange watching someone you know become famous. But at the time we first knew him, he was just a guy that liked my sister."

"He was like my big brother," Ben said. When Ben and his wife, Kelly, were married in 1981, Denver sang the solo at their wedding. "Not too many people get to have John Denver sing Annie's Song at their wedding."

In 1969, Denver released his first album. It wasn't a hit, but it contained a Denver-written song, "Leavin' on a Jet Plane," which became a No. 1 hit for Peter, Paul and Mary the same year.

Denver soon became an international superstar. A 1972 concert in Washington D.C. was attended by President Richard Nixon and China's premier. Denver's song, "Take Me Home, Country Roads," would become the first western music legally played in Communist China.

In 1986, Denver was the first American to perform in the USSR since the Cold War began. It was also a time in which Denver had an increasingly high profile as an environmentalist.

In the mid '80s, Denver and Frank Zappa joined to testify before Congress on the dangers of censoring music.

Through the 1970s and early '80s, 15 of Denver's albums made it into the Top 40 charts. In 1974 "Annie's Song" went to No. 1.

John and Annie, who lived in Colorado, adopted two children.

The couple divorced in 1982. He remarried in 1988 and was divorced in 1993.

In the years after his second divorce, he and Annie reconciled their friendship.

Denver died while piloting an experimental aircraft on Oct. 12, 1997, at the age of 57. His ashes were spread over the Rocky Mountains.

Annie Denver lives in Aspen where she has a psychology practice. While her fame is just a normal part of the celebrity-rich Aspen community, Ben said his sister is a private person who rarely does interviews.



Ben Martell said the family's ties to celebrity are something they long ago became comfortable with, although it comes as a surprise to those unfamiliar with it.

"Some people where I work find out Annie was married to John all those years and they say, 'Why didn't you tell me.'

"What am I going to do? Walk up to people and say, 'Hey, did you know John Denver married my sister.'"

John Denver Memorial Peace Cloth

The John Denver Peace Cloth has a new web address!

The John Denver Peace Cloth, a Windstar Foundation Connection, has gone through some reorganization and is now operating via our new domain at <http://www.johndenverpeacecloth.org> Our website is back up after being down for a bit, although a few links are missing due to changes that still need to be done. We are truly sorry for any disorder and inconvenience. We hope you will bear with us as we go through this reorganization and make any necessary changes. We hope to have everything running normally as smoothly and quickly as possible.

We hope you will visit us at our new domain name <http://www.johndenverpeacecloth.org>, and if you have problems with any links or need assistance, please email us at

mail@johndenverpeacecloth.org

--- The John Denver Peace Cloth Connection Board of Directors, a John Denver Windstar Foundation Connection --We dedicate the John Denver Peace Cloth in loving memory of John Denver; to John's family - without whom we could not have come this far; and to the many people who sewed and dreamed and gave it life.

Concert Celebration of the 64th Birthday of John Denver – December 31st 2007

At the Denver Civic Theater 721 Santa Fe Drive, Denver at 8pm. Tickets are \$100.00
Tickets are available from the Denver Civic Theater Box Office or through Ticketswest on 1-866-464-2626 or online through Ticketswest <http://ev2.venue.net/cgi-bin/ncommerce3/SEGetEventInfo?ticketCode=GS:TWMT:KDCT07:KDEN1231:&linkID=twmt> or tickets can be purchased at King Scoopers.

Performers include Bill Danoff, Mack Bailey, Mollie Weaver, John Sommers, Jim Salestrom, Jim Horn, Denny Brooks, Pete Huttlinger, Chris Nole, Don Grove, Alan Deremo.

This is a benefit for 'Expect a Miracle Foundation and Plant-it-2020

Sweet Dreams – Linda's Christmas Song Page



This is the link to Linda's latest page. She has used the song Noel 1913 for her theme this year. Please follow the link to see it!

<http://www.sweetdreamsplace.com/noel1913.html>

New Video Clip – Dutch Site

New clips have been added to the Dutch website by Michiel Ten Brug.

<http://www.higherground.nl/tenbrug/JohnDenver/>

Keep checking the Dutch site each Wednesday, as new ones are put up each week.

Almost Heaven – Songs of John Denver

The stage show of Almost Heaven – songs of John Denver will be at the Cultural Arts Center at Glen Allen, Henrico County, Va on January 26th and 27th, 2008.

Here is the link for the website for all bookings.

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

Also there is news of a Christmas concert by the producers of Almost Heaven. For more information

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

John Adams Update

**** December 22, 2007 - SPECIAL EVENT *****

A Rocky Mountain Christmas

Father Dyer Church - 310 Wellington Road, Breckenridge, Colorado . Concert starts at 7:00 PM. With Diane Ireland (Flutes), Jerry O'Malley (Piano), and Willie Hoeffers (Bass)

Tickets \$15.00 (or \$18.00 at the door) [click here to order your tickets!](#) Or go to the [John Adams website](#) and order through the home page!

Part of the proceeds will benefit **Father Dyer's Food Bank and Special Assistance Fund**. Non-Perishable and Canned Foods will be received by Father Dyer's Food Bank volunteers. Baby items like diapers, canned powder milk, toys etc. are very much appreciated as well. **Send your monetary donations to:**

Father Dyer Church, P.O. Box 383, Breckenridge, Colorado 80424



Please write on your check: "Special Assistance Fund/Food Bank"

Donations will also be accepted at the door by food bank volunteers.

December 24, 2007

Father Dyer Church - 310 Wellington Road, Breckenridge, Colorado

With Lori Schneider (Piano), Mike Schneider (Bass) and Willie Hoevers (Percussion)

Christmas Eve Service at 10:00 PM

Rev. Tracy Hausman

Christopher Westfall Update



Chris has a NEW CD out, in time for the holiday season, called HEADIN' TO THE MOUNTAINS" (makes a perfect gift for your music-loving friends!). Chris sings: Brown Eyed Girl, Head to the Mountains, Garden Party, Howl at the Moon, Come Monday, Sweet Baby James, Let Your Love Flow, Leader of the Band, Mother Nature's Son, By the Time I Get to Phoenix, I'd Rather Be a Cowboy (Lady's Chains), Wildfire, and Alaska, (The Last Frontier). Its DYNAMITE! Chris Nole is the producer, and sings and plays in it along with Pete Huttlinger and Jim Horn. For more info on Chris: www.chriswestfall.com

Christopher Westfall appearances coming up: Please invite your friends!

22nd Dec 2007 – 7.30pm:

Sounds of the Season!" Please join Chris for an intimate evening of music in Collingswood! This is in a beautiful little church nestled in historic West Collingswood. This will be Christopher's second time playing there. The show will include holiday favorites, some unknown holiday tunes and some of Christopher's original songs. Christ Episcopal Church 501 Comly Ave. (intersection of Grant and Comly) West Collingswood, NJ 08107. \$10 Donation at the door. Contact: Nick Watts 1-609-706-7012 or nickwatts@comcast.net Merry Christmas!!!

31st Dec 2007 – 6.45pm, 9.45pm, 11.00pm

First Night Haddonfield 2008! Happy New Year! This will be Christopher's fourth appearance on the Haddonfield stage! There were sell out crowds at all the shows last year and this year will be no different. This is the 10th anniversary of

Haddonfield First Night concerts. And John Denver's 64th Birthday! Haddonfield's First Night is a fun evening for the whole family. Please stop by and catch one of Christopher's shows! Evening show-times are; 6:45, 9:45, and 11:00. Website: www.firstnighthaddonfield.org Haddonfield, NJ.

Roy Rivers Update

Happy Holidays All! Just received Roy River's most recent newsletter. There are a couple of things that most of you will really enjoy hearing and seeing.

First he has some great photos from the Aspen Concert at which he presented the German American Country Music Hall of Fame Award that he received on behalf of John's Family in 2005. Erma is simply glowing in them. He also has a video of him receiving the award in Germany. <http://www.royriver.s.com/aspenaward.html> <http://www.royriver.s.com/media.htm>

Also, be sure to visit the following link to his Newsletter site. Go toward the bottom of the page where you can load a new song that he has recently written for Christmas called "Bethlehem." I'm so impressed with it. It's just simply so good that it should become an American Christmas Classic - IMHO it's really that great! Roy sings this song so beautifully. <http://www.royriver.s.com/news/2007/december/> Dave

Some Christmas Fun – JD and His Elf Friends

This is cute [4 Of Santa's Sweet Helpers](#)

The Christmas Gift

The Christmas Gift will be on the Hallmark Channel on Friday, Dec. 21, at 11p.m. and Sat., Dec. 22, at 1 p.m. I believe these are Eastern times, so check your local schedule early on those days. Thanks – it is never shown in Australia, so you guys are the lucky ones!

The Christmas Gift will also be shown on UK television – channel 5 at 10am on Christmas Eve.

Encore Performance on XM

Hi, Folks, I received this message from Connie Reeder about the interview that she and Roger, along with Ron D., Milt Okun, Annie Denver, and others had with John St. Augustine back in October. John has had a radio program in Chicago for many years, and he is now a producer with Oprah's XM radio network. He spoke at several Choices Symposi(a)-ums for JD, and he's always loved and admired JD. So anyway... this program is being rebroadcast on JD's birthday as well as Jan. 1st, but you have to subscribe to XM. He's mentioned that a free 'trial' for three days is being offered, so if you're so inclined, check out this opportunity! Hugs... Linda

In a message dated 12/10/07 5:56:48 PM, JStAugustine@harpo.com writes:
John Denver The Man and His Music Encore Performance! On The Village XM 15
Eastern Time: Mon Dec 31, 6 AM Pacific Time: Mon Dec 31, 3 AM- Eastern Time Tues Jan 1, 12 noon Pacific Time Tues, Jan 1, 9 AM

A decade after his passing folk legend John Denver is profiled by his friend, award winning talk host John St. Augustine through stories and memories from Annie Denver, Michael Martin Murphey, Ron Deutschendorf, Connie Reeder, Roger Nichols, John Berry, Milt Okun and many others. Includes the first ever public airing of "Annie's Song" sung by Denver in Russian from his historic Soviet tour in 1985. The tribute concludes with a one hour "virtual" concert of Denver's best live performances. A stunning tribute to one of the world's best loved performers. For those of you that are not XM subscribers you can get a three day trial online at the XM site- and listen on the above dates/times on your computer. John St. Augustine Producer
Oprah&Friends Harpo Radio Inc.
110 N. Carpenter Chicago, IL 60607
(312) 633-1601-Office (312) 433-0406-Fax

City of New Orleans

There has been quite a lot of controversy about John's version of the Steve Goodman song *City of New Orleans*. The author took issue with John's re-working of the lyrics and his co-writer credit on the *Aerie* version. A columnist, Tom McNamee, has now updated his story with information about John's re-recording of the song (with original lyrics and composer credit) on *All Aboard*. See:

<http://www.suntimes.com/news/mcnamee/688970.CST-NWS-mcnamee10.article>

Also for more information about Steve Goodman, there are some interviews with Steve's biographer on YouTube.

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=awLWOQH6jzQ>

Oil Painting on Ebay

[John Denver Oil Painting - \(eBay item 140189961880 end time Dec-19-07 21:30:19 PST\)](#)

HEY FRIENDS,

Above is a link to ebay. I am selling the painting I bought a few years ago. If you could pass this link around to other JDers I would sincerely appreciate it. If anyone is on a JD newsgroup, would you mind sending the link along into the posts?

Thanks you guys, Merry Christmas!!!!

Love MEL

Put an End to Whaling

Each year, the Japanese ravage Australian waters and kill many whales – all in the name of

research. This is not for research, it is commercial whaling. Japan's whaling fleet plans to hunt 935 minke whales, 50 fin whales and, for the first time in 40 years, 50 humpback whales for research over the Antarctic summer. The fleet is already on its way south followed by anti-whaling activists.

After seeing the Humpback whales up close and personal in Prince Rupert, BC in September, I am asking that you please sign the petition to stop whaling. <http://www.whalesrevenge.com/> or you can access this link through our webpage: www.highergroundaustralia.com

Australia's new government have planned to send the Australian navy down to investigate. That remains to be seen. Read the full story by clicking this link:

<http://www.reuters.com/article/latestCrisis/idUSSYD66537>

What's on YouTube?

Songs and videos by Mel Trondson

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z9gxNazkSBk>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FWeVez8nfM&feature=related>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B6tP2AnK6So>

Memories of Aspen 2007

One of the most touching parts of Aspen in October for me was the service of remembrance held at Snowmass Chapel. The speaker, who came from Sydney Australia, talked about John in his sermon, and I have found that you can hear it online. Rev Sanderson does also talk of Christian matters so if you prefer not to hear this, please don't click on the link.

<http://snowmasschap.el.org/lan101407.mp3>

I don't know if you need any special software to hear it; I went to the site and after a pause it just started playing.

After the sermon those who had lost a family member in the past year were asked to stand and mention the name; both Tom Fleetwood and I stood and said our dads names. When Mack Bailey played "Just Because" after this, I couldn't help but cry, the song is beautiful and fit so perfectly. My heart to yours, Mary in Michigan

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.



Christmas For Cowboys

Tall in the saddle we spend Christmas Day
Drivin' the cattle on the snow covered-plains.
All of the good gifts given today,
Ours is the sky and the wide open range.

Back in the city they have diff'rent ways,
Football and eggnog and Christmas parades.
I'll take the blanket, I'll take the reins,
Christmas for cowboys and wide open plains.

A campfire for warmth as we stop for the night,
The stars overhead are the Christmas tree lights.
The wind sings a hymn as we bow down to pray,
It's Christmas for cowboys and wide open plains.

It's tall in the saddle we spend Christmas Day,
Drivin' the cattle on the snow-covered plains.
So many gifts have been opened today,
Ours is the sky and the wide open range.
It's Christmas for cowboys and wide open plains.



And for the Aussies!!!

Christmas Like A Lullaby

Christmas like a lullaby steals across the land
A breeze upon the waters, rainfall on the sand
We celebrate a baby born from spirit into man
And christmas like a lullaby steals across the land

It's morning in australia; in fact it's christmas day
And colorado never seemed so very far away
Back where night has fallen and it's still christmas eve
And snow is in the mountains that where I always hate to leave

But here i am down under with a brand new family
And Christmas bells are ringing and there's presents 'neath the tree
I know that it's been said before and now I know it's true
That home is where the heart is
And christmas lives there too
And on this morning peace on earth
Is still your fervent prayer
And I can feel it being
Whispered softly everywhere

And guns are are called to silence
And anger called to still
And brotherhood and sisterhood
Surrounded by goodwill

Christmas like a lullaby steals across the land
A breeze upon the waters, rainfall on the sand
We celebrate a baby born from spirit into man
And christmas like a lullaby steals across the land

