



Contact Details:

Janette Frawley
 PO Box 8155
 Camberwell North VIC 3124
 Australia
hgavic@gmail.com

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HIGHER GROUND NEWSLETTER – March 2017

Welcome

Welcome to our March newsletter. Already the countdown to Aspen in October has begun and there will be some terrific concerts to attend during the tribute week in Aspen. As well as the usual Wheeler Concerts, which showcase the friends and some of John Denver's band members, the Rocky Mountain Foundation for the Performing Arts (RMFPA) has organised some further concerts, including two at the Wheeler Opera House on the 11th October. Check the Aspen in October Facebook page on our website, <https://www.hgavic.com/aio> for the current schedule. This newsletter has lots of interesting articles, so grab a cuppa, kick off your shoes and read on.

Aspen in October – Student Magazine

I am currently working with a group of Higher Education Design students on a project. Somehow, I convinced them to use the *Aspen in October* theme for a magazine design. In doing so, I have to provide some original articles, stories, biographies, poetry, etc to complete their project, but I am not permitted to write them all myself!

If you would like to submit an original piece of writing related to the Aspen in October theme, please email it to hga.vic@gmail.com. I must stress that the work must be original, as I would not like the students to be done for plagiarism, but all John Denver/Aspen-related piece will be included. At the end of the project and before October, I will email a PDF version of the magazine to all on our distribution list and anyone else who would like a copy. You will be acknowledged for your contribution. So please sharpen your pencils and get something to me as soon as possible.

Thanks to those who have contributed to our project so far. Your contributions are much appreciated. We would love to receive more poems, photos, thoughts, suggestions about places to see, anything that is applicable
Higher Ground Australia Website

Our new web address is <https://www.hgavic.com/>. It belongs to all of us, so please do not hesitate to let me know if you have any thoughts or items of interest that you think should be included. As part of the site, we will include many tribute artists, many of whom we know personally. Please check

the links I have added and advise if they are incorrect or need to be updated. The site will be maintained often and links checked periodically. Our aim is to keep our information current and to provide information for the widest audience possible. Feedback on the site is always welcome. Please contact me on hga.vic@gmail.com with your comments.

2017 JD Tribute Weekend

Our 2017 JD weekend will be held somewhere in NSW (near Newcastle), in line with the official dates for Aspen in October. More details to come soon.

Jimmy Fong in Melbourne

Jimmy Fong will be appearing at Albert Park Port Lounge – 5 Aquatic Drive, Albert Park on **Friday, 9th June at 7:30pm**. Tickets are \$25 and are available from

<https://www.trybooking.com/book/event?embed&id=270982>

Jimmy Fong in Aspen

Jimmy Fong will be performing his My Time with John Denver show in Aspen on Saturday 14th October at 7:30pm. Jimmy performed with John Denver at a private function for the Malaysian King in 1994. This is the story of a young Chinese boy growing up amidst civil unrest and turning to music to conquer the challenges of living in politically unstable times. It is the story of later not only meeting his hero, but having the opportunity to play and sing with John Denver under extraordinary circumstances. Tickets are available from www.rockymountainfpa.org

Virginia. After all, the song begins with “Almost Heaven, West Virginia.” In one of the strange quirks of music, he had never even been to the state when he recorded this hit.

In late 1970, the singer had an engagement singing in a club in Washington, D. C. Just after Christmas, Denver broke his thumb in a car accident. As he was recovering, two of his musician friends sang him a little song about driving on winding roads through Maryland. John loved the tune, although they all felt that setting it in West Virginia was better somehow. Why they thought this is a mystery because neither John nor his friends has ever been to West Virginia. The three musicians stayed up until 6 a.m. changing words and tweaking the melody. John knew he had a hit on his hands, and when he sang “Take Me Home, Country Roads” at the same club on December 30, the audience gave him a five-minute ovation.

Of course, West Virginians love the song. One could hardly imagine a better tribute to their state, even if it originated in Washington, D.C. and was about Maryland roads. It is now the theme song of West Virginia University and has been performed before every home football game since 1972. Like in Colorado, West Virginia legislators have attempted more than once to replace the current state song, “The West Virginia Hills”, with “Take Me Home, Country Roads,” but unfortunately the resolutions have not yet passed.

This article originally appeared in Greensboro, North Carolina’s News and Record on November 8, 2009.

<http://inmozartsfootsteps.com/983/john-denver-composer-of-two-state-songs/>

FROM THE ARCHIVES

John Denver: An Environmental Legacy Remembered

The Aspen Times - Hillary Stunda, October 7, 2011
ASPEN – Back when the Hyman Avenue Mall was dirt and the check-in gate at the Aspen airport looked more like a casting call for one of Bob Rafelson’s movies, Aspen was rife with dreamers, renegades, drop-outs, PhD taxi drivers, artists and vision seekers. They came for the love of the landscape, if not freedom from corporate America, and they spoke of change and environment and how to improve the world.



John Denver and his two buddies, Tom Crum and Bruce Gordon, were three such kindred spirits. Denver was singing at the Leather Jug in Snowmass when Crum pulled into town, having left behind the “security” of being a systems analyst in Denver. He was heading to Jackson, Wyo. They met one evening in a funky A-frame house across the street from the Weinerstube restaurant, where Denver was in the back of room, guitar in hand. Another guy was there, a pilot by the name of Bruce Gordon, and by the end of the night, they were outside laughing, trying to “stuff” Gordon’s dog into his back pack for his motorcycle ride home.

Crum never made it to Jackson. “He was like a brother,” said Crum of the friendship that spanned nearly three decades before Denver’s death on Oct. 12, 1997, when the experimental plane he was flying crashed into Monterey Bay.

What began with Denver learning Transcendental Meditation from Crum later turned into years of touring.

“It was the first time that any entertainer of his caliber was in front of such crowds,” recalled Crum. “Madison Square Garden. Two shows a night. 40,000 people. John would be on a revolving stage that wasn’t very high. People could get at him at all angles. He said, I need somebody to keep my head together and take care of all the security.”

Denver was persistent: “Just give me three weeks,” he said. “It’s not a lifetime.”

Three weeks turned into six years.

By the mid-1970s, Denver became the biggest-selling singer in the world. In 1973 he sold more than a million copies of the single, “I’d Rather be a Cowboy.”

“It wasn’t just, let’s be rock stars. It was more like let’s take care of ourselves,” said Crum. “John wanted to make a difference; to be a compassionate human being. And he was incredibly generous. He had an amazing creative spirit. Boundless energy. He really wanted the world to work,” he said.

Late-night sessions about the state of the world, the Arctic refuge, global hunger, AIDS, poverty, anti-weapons; space, ocean conservation. “We talked about how the world needs a place that can be a demonstration center and an education center; a place where people could come and dialogue. John always wanted deep thinkers to come together and talk about major issues,” said Crum.

Serendipity favors the dreamer. The Snowmass Monastery was in financial hard times and there was a piece of land for sale – 1,000 acres.

“We walked the land. It was magical. From an aerial view, it was shaped like a whale,” recalled Crum. “There was this immediate identification

because of John's relationship with Jacques Cousteau. That was the catalytic moment for him." It was 1976. The Windstar Foundation was born, giving co-founders Denver and Crum the ideal venue to attract the world's most fascinating and powerful people to promote sustainable living and discuss ways to help solve the world's problems. Ecological-design researchers such as Buckminster Fuller and Amory Lovins, the Cousteaus, and Ted Turner. For many years, seminars were held. Lives changed. Buckminster Fuller once said, "Find what it is that is needed and wanted and go do it."

Denver took heed.

"He was extremely brave and courageous," said Crum. "He would be at a hearing in Washington D.C. over something like the Alaska oil spill and he might not have all the facts. Even though he might not be the person to best articulate his position, he would stand up and speak from the heart."

Not only was Denver committed to preserving the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, he was committed to world hunger, helping found the World Hunger Project in 1977. Other focuses included the AIDS crisis in Africa, homelessness, the Chernobyl disaster. He was steeped in environmental conservation projects with the Cousteaus, space exploration. Denver was the first person to introduce the idea of sending a citizen up in space. In 1986, he passed NASA's taxing physical exam and was in line to be the first citizen on the space shuttle until President Reagan decided to send a teacher instead.

After the Challenger disaster with teacher Christa McAuliffe aboard, John dedicated his song "Flying for Me" to all astronauts.

His passion and commitment took him all over the world, to Africa, Russia; China. "He was ahead of the curve," said Crum. "John really was an environmentalist before there was a word for that," said Ron Deutschendorf, Denver's brother.

"John loved being able to associate with people who could make a difference," said Crum. "He was never as happy as when he was onto a project when significant numbers could be influenced in a powerful way. That's where he had a lot of juice. That magic continued through the '80s but everything has its run. The spin-off effects are still there."

But being human, cast into the role of a megastar with 14 gold albums (eight platinum), being "famous" wasn't easy.

"Being a celebrity you get caught up in that lifestyle," Crum said. "John was an artist with great highs and great lows. He'd go through those lows. It's also where he got motivated to write music. It's interesting that sometimes artists get caught in that conscious pattern of thinking they need the low in order to get creative again. That's

different. John lived an amazing life and died doing what he wanted to do."

John Denver learned to fly from his father, who was the consummate pilot, an Air Force lieutenant colonel, and who set three speed records flying a B-58.

"Flying brought us together, we shared a love for it," said Bruce Gordon, who founded Aspen's EcoFlight, an organization that has been flying to protect America's public lands for more than 25 years. He has logged more than 2,500 miles flying in more than 10 countries around the world, while offering clients a bird's-eye view of the state of the planet.

"John learned how to fly small planes, then experimental planes; aerobatic planes. He was talented with everything. He was an excellent stick," Gordon said. "John and I did an aerial educational tour of the forests of the Pacific Northwest; Vancouver Island where enormous clear-cutting was going on," said Gordon. "We did it in his Learjet. We put the flaps down and flew very slowly with some notable dignitaries, which enlightened everyone to how rampant the clear-cutting was. The aerial perspective puts it all together. It lets the land speak for itself. That's what got John so motivated to help out."

The plane Denver flew on this last flight was an experimental plane.

"He had just gotten the plane a day or two before," said Gordon. "He should have filled the tanks at the start because he didn't know the plane well enough," he said.

Fourteen years after his tragic death, his friends can only muse.

"He was a major voice for the environment," said Gordon. "Right now Congress is in the process of dismantling laws that we've had since the '90s that are a network for clean health, clean air and clean water. We need a voice like John's because there's nobody carrying that banner right now."

"You don't have to be all that special to do something very special," said Crum. You just have to find something you love and live a life that shows it. "John found music. He turned it into a vehicle to make a huge difference."

Crum and Gordon still live in Aspen. Crum is an author and teacher, traveling the country teaching his Aikido principles for conflict resolution, managerial development, and sports performance. Gordon just returned from his annual "Flight Across America" program, where he took students on an aerial tour over national parks in Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona and Utah to learn about the environmental pressures being imposed upon them, such as the air-quality degradation caused by the adjacent San Juan and Four Corners coal-fired power plants – two of the most polluting coal power plants in the country – and natural gas drilling of the San Juan Basin.



Gordon and Crum have their memories. Each laughs when recalling Denver's childlike, boundless enthusiasm for life.

Years ago, Gordon was invited on a trip with the band in Puerta Vallarta. They were having dinner at a restaurant perched on a cliff.

"We're having a couple of beers and the next thing you know, John appears in his bathing suit, gets up to the edge. The whole band freaks out and he lays out a perfect swan dive. Nobody even knew he could do that," he smiles. "That was cool <http://www.aspentimes.com/news/john-denver-an-environmental-legacy-remembered/>

Legendary Session Man Jim Horn On Working with John Denver and getting inside the 'Genius' of Brian Wilson

Matt Wardlaw April 19, 2013

At 72 years of age, there's not much that Jim Horn hasn't done. While his name might not be immediately familiar, you've definitely heard a lot of his work over the years. The session vet got his start playing sax and flute as a key member of Duane Eddy's band in the late '50s (in fact, Eddy once turned down an appearance on the Grand Ole Opry, because they didn't allow saxophones – which they called the "instrument of the devil"). His work with Eddy was merely the starting point of his professional career. From there, he would become one of the most in-demand session players (and a member of the well-known "Wrecking Crew") during the '60s, '70s and '80s. He got the chance to work with all four Beatles. What else needs to be said?

Okay fine, here's more: You'll find his work on songs like "Good Vibrations," "God Only Knows" by the Beach Boys, "Running on Empty" by Jackson Browne, "You've Lost That Lovin' Feelin'" by the Righteous Brothers, music for the movie Shaft, "Strangers in the Night" by Frank Sinatra and the list goes on and on and on.

In the midst of all of that, Horn also spent a number of years playing and recording with John Denver, beginning in 1978, an association that would continue until Denver's death in the late '90s.

Earlier this year, Horn took part in John Denver: A Rocky Mountain High Concert, the new officially sanctioned tribute to the legacy of Denver and his music. We spoke with Jim about the tour and he shared his memories about playing with John and also some great stories from his legendary career.

MW: How did you get involved in this tour? It's an interesting kind of gig for you.

JH: I worked with John for a good 15 + years. I was with him the longest of anyone in the band. So when John died they decided to have "John Denver Week" up in Aspen 15 years ago. So we'd all go up there in October on the anniversary of his death and perform some shows. We've done that for 15 years, just keeping his music alive. The

fans were still out there, flying over from all these different countries just to hear John's music again. This is the first time that they wanted to try having real footage of him up on a large screen with some of his band members playing along with him, kind of like the Elvis show I guess.

This is primarily just for the fans that would still like to see John perform again. Not in a crude or morbid way but more in a celebratory way, hearing him sing and watching him play and then we'll be playing onstage along with him, like we did [back in the day]. There are a couple of guys in the band that weren't with John, but [musical director] Jim Salestrom had met him and knew him. There are three of us that actually worked with John, Allen Deremo, Chris Nole and me, so we do have some original band members on stage.

MW: What was your preparation like getting ready for the shows? Was there a good amount you were able to retain from having previously played with John?

JH: Yeah, and when they play this old footage, it's interesting to see him up there. I'm mainly playing the same thing I played with him all those years. That part of it comes fairly easy. The hardest part is playing along to the video because it's like playing with the record, you know? You have to keep time and everything and it's a little harder. But it's coming together really nicely. I normally play concerts where everything's live and stuff, and the singers are there. This is a different presentation and so you have to prepare yourself for that and really listen.

They've put a lot of work in with the videos and putting all that together for us too and the interviews with people. And I'm going to tell a couple of stories about John and me and stuff. I flew with him in his biplane and that's a pretty good story. I was the only one that went up there with him. We had a great time one morning, flying around over his farms in Kansas City. He let me fly and take the stick. It's a good story and we're just going to mix in stuff like that. Hopefully everybody comes out to see it. If this whole tour flies we'll probably catch all the rest of the cities and states and go to Europe, Australia and Japan. It's a start to see how it's going to work.

MW: I spoke with Nate [tour drummer Nate Barnes] about this show, he was saying that one of the challenging things has been the fact that there's no metronome, no click track. The impression he got when talking to guys like you was that John kept things loose on stage as it was, so this really isn't too different in comparison to what it would have been like playing with him on stage. It keeps you on your toes just as you would have been on stage back in the day.

JH: That's true. When I first joined up with John he sat me down and said "I want you to just play



anything you hear on my songs, where there's holes or a place you can fill in. If I'm singing about water or the birds or the wind or sky, whatever makes you want to emulate those sounds feel free and just take your freedom and surprise me" and I said, "OK." So I get up there the first night and we're at Madison Square Garden and that was a very big night for us — It was packed.

It was the first time I played live with him. I heard him singing about calypso, so I tried to get some ocean or bird sounds, a seagull or whatever — arpeggios and stuff. Arpeggios are sounds like the wind; you go up and down on your notes on the flute and [there are] flutters and things. He'd turn around and smile at me, put his thumbs up and wink at me. So I knew I was doing the right thing. I had my freedom every night. I didn't have to play the same thing every night, so it was a very enjoyable job. I enjoyed playing with John every night.

MW: Did you first work with John back in your Wrecking Crew days? How did you connect with him?

JH: I met him at RCA. I was working on a Jose Feliciano record next door and I ran into John. Somebody introduced me to him; I think the producer Milt Okun, and he said, "This is Jim Horn, flute player, sax player." He said, "Oh yeah, pal, I've heard your name and boy, I sure hope you can come play on one of my records." So I worked with him on a record after that and played flute, piccolo and recorders.

Later on when we got out there I used to play flute on "Sunshine on my Shoulders" and I decided to pick up the soprano sax and play it. He turned and smiled and after the show he said, "man, you got to play that saxophone on 'Shoulders' from now on." So I kind of introduced that sound, updating his music with the saxophone and the alto saxophone as well. "My Sweet Lady," all those kind of songs. So he gave me a lot of freedom and I kind of stretched out. We played some rock and roll with Johnny and the Sharks when he started that whole rock and roll segment on our shows. I was playing baritone sax so we were really playing some rock and roll out there, "Johnny B Goode" and all those kinds of songs. He had a lot of fun.

So I got to see the full spectrum of John, because his music in the beginning was love songs, like "Annie's Song" and stuff like that and "Take Me Home, Country Roads" and everything. He got into the environmental situation where we did one whole tour called "Plant A Tree", so he would make the announcement every night trying to convince the audience to plant a tree the next day. That's when they were cutting down the rainforest. He was very conscious of everything that was going on around him. Even his flying, he was a great pilot but he just made an error, he

was trying to switch over the gas tanks up there and only had 500 feet before he plunged into the ocean. I was real sad when I heard that news.

MW: The years you played with John, I'm going to assume at the same time you were also doing a good amount of session work. How did you balance those two worlds?

JH: I was doing like three sessions a day and he would tour in the summer. Sometimes in the summer, the session work would diminish a little bit because a lot of people were out touring, all the artists that you'd normally record with, so they wouldn't be in the studio. So I was doing stuff like with the Beach Boys, Pet Sounds and sessions like that and they could wait until you were available, which worked out good for me. I was able to work with John and we'd fly back home for a few days and I'd do sessions and then get back out on the road. So it worked out real good for me.

MW: Can you talk about that experience of working with the Beach Boys on those Pet Sounds sessions? Were those lengthy sessions for you?

JH: No, what Brian did [was he] worked on eight bars at a time [on songs like] "Good Vibrations." He knew each eight-bar section what he wanted to do. So he worked on eight bars on a three hour session. Then we'd take a break and work on the next eight bars and it just went like that. Then he would edit all of that together, so if you ever sit down and listen to "Good Vibrations," you'll see where he actually edited one section into the next, because they were different tempos and stuff. It was very interesting — he was a genius.

Paul Tanner was there, who invented the machine [the Electro-Theremin] that made that weird sound on "Good Vibrations". So he stood there and played that melody on there. [Imitates sound]

There was a big metal ring on top of a box and it was an oscillator and when you put your hand up close, the note would go higher and when you pulled your hand away it would go lower. So he knew how to play melodies on it. Brian tried to do it but it wouldn't work for him very well. So he said, "You have Paul Tanner standing there, let him do it" — so he stood there and played that melody while we worked on that one section. [Tanner unfortunately passed away a few days after this interview was conducted.]

MW: I wanted to ask about that, because that particular song is legendary for having a lengthy recording process. I wondered how much of that you were part of, because there were so many sessions and studios involved in making that record.

JH: I played on "God Only Knows" and I played alto flute on that, on the intro and throughout the song. Brian used to tell me to bring everything I owned and that was a lot of stuff. So I'd have to



set everything up and he'd look at the instruments and say "let me hear that" and I'd play it for him and he'd say "yeah, lets use that one." I'd sit there and use either a tenor sax or a flute or a bass sax — I didn't know what I was going to be playing and the other guy next to me, Jay Migliori, he would have his flutes and saxes and he'd have Jay play something.

He'd tell us what he wanted [us] to play, the melodies or whether we were going to play. Nothing was written out. It was all arrangements [that he was doing in his head and] it really stayed with you. That was a different way of recording; it was kind of unique because you wouldn't forget those parts. You could play them with a lot more ease rather than sitting there reading your parts.

MW: With the Beach Boys; it sounds like you were actually able to enjoy that experience. But with the nature of your work, I'd guess that there were records that you played on where you were just in and out. Are there groups that come to mind that you wish you would have had more of an experience with, as legendary as some of those songs became?

JH: When I did "Goin' Up The Country" for Canned Heat, just Alan Wilson and I were in the studio, putting that flute on — and then he put on a second one and then a third one. I said "are you sure you want all these flutes on there?" He said, "yeah yeah I'm going to mix them left, center and right." So I'm driving down the freeway a few months later and I hear "dah dah dah" and there's my three flutes, jumpin' out of the speaker at me. I thought wow, [because] he had them mixed right up there in front.

I wish I could have played more with Canned Heat and hung out with those guys more. I know the bass player today, he's still alive.

With Brian, it was just another session. It was Brian Wilson of the Beach Boys but you didn't think much of it. Elvis Presley, you walked in and thought "oh that's Elvis that's cool." Then you'd leave and you'd go walk in with Sinatra or somebody [like that] the next time around. I actually worked with Jimi Hendrix, but didn't know who he was at all. You hear about these things in later years and you say "man I wish I had stayed longer and talked with these guys, got to know them a little better." I did get to work in a couple of movies with Elvis later on when he did all of those movies, I sidelined with him and we hung out a lot and jammed and stuff — he was a great guy.

MW: When you look at the slate of material that you've played on in your career are you happy with the amount of credit that you've gotten for what you've done over the years?

JH: Yeah, I really am, because like someone once said, "they may not know your name, but they've heard you." So I am glad to know that there's a lot of records I've played on. If you go to

Allmusic.com and punch in "Jim Horn," you'll see every artist I've recorded with and worked with. It's a long long list and I'm real proud of it.

I was actually there at the right time, you know? Because today it's real hard for studio musicians to break into that occupation. It's just not there like it used to be. But I'm real proud of all that. Getting to work with the [Rolling] Stones over in England, I spent a couple of months over there. Bobby Keys and I would drive around and work with the Who and you know, George Harrison, I worked with him quite a bit, and Ringo [Starr]. After a while you become jaded — it's a strange thing to say but, "oh there's Ringo, I'm going to work with him today, that's cool." And then you walk out the door and you don't realize, like with John Lennon, I worked with him and George and now they're gone and you go, "oh man."

Those were the Beatles and only two of them are left. It's those kind of things that remind me that "you were a part of history with these guys." And with John Denver, it couldn't be any better than him. He left his mark big time and people are still listening to his music. He's a great guy, he took care of me [and we] always traveled first class. We always had a great time with him.

MW: How did you end up going down this road, where you did both full time work as a band member and also session work? It seems like a lot of times, players either go one way or the other. Either they're a session guy or they're in a band. You did both. How did you end up going that route?

JH: Well, I got busy.. I started out with Duane Eddy in high school when I was 17. I was out there for five years with him. I met contractors, as they call them. They're the guys that hire musicians for sessions in Hollywood. I met one through Duane Eddy. He heard me playing saxophone and said, "Do you play any doubles? Do you play like flute or clarinet or any other saxophones?" And I said, "yeah I play flute and clarinet and I have a couple of more saxes." So he said, "If I were you, I'd study as many instruments as you can." So I learned how to play oboe and the English horn.

I played all of the oboe and English horn on the Carpenters records later on. The more instruments I played, the busier I was. So, I was asked to join bands and go on the road — even Van Morrison asked me to go out on the road. But they weren't paying very well, you know? I would love to have toured with him. That would have been one of my dreams because I love his music. I just had to stay in the studios or I would have lost that, something that I had started, my dream, you know? That was a big part of my life was to pursue that dream of being a studio musician and playing on all those records, I guess.



MW: You were certainly a valuable commodity, because of your diversity. You had a huge arsenal of instruments at your fingertips.

JH: Yeah. There were only a few guys in town that were doing what I did. There were a few that specialized [in certain things] like, Plas Johnson, he played on “The Pink Panther” and the [Henry] Mancini records, but he was mainly a soloist on just tenor [saxophone] and they came and saw me play flute and oboe and saxophones and clarinet. So I was more diversified and it paid off to study those other instruments and practice. My mother taught me how to practice. When I got my saxophone, she said, “here’s this saxophone for you, if you promise you’re going to practice.” I was 12 years old and I said, “I promise.” I started practicing so much that they had to stop me every once in a while. I was driving them crazy. When dinner was ready, I had to stop. You have to really practice and be determined and have a dream if you’re going to pursue anything in life, I think.

MW: What was the most challenging session you recall?

JH: It’s really hard to say because I think Hugo Montenegro, he did an instrumental record in Hollywood and he had me play all the instruments. He wrote for oboe, English horn, flute and clarinet, saxes and a lot of them were [in] very hard keys. He didn’t put them in easier keys for me to play in. It was so hard I was sitting there sweating, playing some of these melodies. Here I am surrounded by strings and other horns and the rhythm section. It was probably one of the hardest sessions I ever did. He just assumed that keys didn’t matter. But it would have been nice for me to have sat down and said, “A flat? Can we do this in F or G or something?” I got through it — I struggled through it, but it wasn’t easy. That was probably one of the hardest ones — I think there was four sessions we had to record. It was a long day.

MW: I figured there’d be sessions where maybe you were giving them a flute part that’s not exactly what they want, and you’d have to tangle with it a bit.

JH: Well, with Steely Dan they tried three saxophone players on one song. I think I played baritone and then they tried tenor and they tried alto. They kept the guy that played tenor [because] they liked that sound better. I did play on a solo for them but it wasn’t the sound they wanted. But it wasn’t miserable — I had fun playing it. There really weren’t that many sessions that were that difficult. I’ll tell you, the hardest ones like Shaft — I did that. You do these movie calls and the bell rings, the lights all go out and just the lights on the music stands come on and then you have eight clicks and then the music starts. You just can’t make any mistakes, you have to come in

on the right places and you really have to be on your toes.

You go in from nine in the morning until probably four or five in the evening. You worked all day under a much more rigorous schedule and [found yourself] having to concentrate all day long on reading and not making mistakes. You’ve got a whole lot of people in that soundstage who do films — all of the strings and horns and woodwinds, it’s incredible. We sat down, Bud Shank and I, we played the flutes on the intro on Shaft. The very first part was our flutes and when we heard those clicks, I had to come in. [imitates flute line] and it had to be perfect. So I learned with the best guys. I sat next to some of the best players and they’d always help you out if you have any questions and that was the one thing that helps you through something like that as well.

MW: I have to ask one more here. Your memories of working on those Traveling Wilburys records. What was that like?

JH: That was a lot of fun. They’d have the tracks already cut, so I would go in there and put on parts for them and they would double everything that I did. So sometimes I’d put anywhere from 10 to 12 saxophones on a song and they would double everything. One time they had me sit on a toilet and play my soprano sax out into the hallway and the microphone would be down at the end of the hall. I thought they were joking with me, when they told me to go sit on the toilet and play my soprano.

[There was] just crazy stuff like that. One night they had to finish a song, so [Bob] Dylan and Tom Petty and George and Jeff Lynne were all in the studio. They gave me some beer to drink and invited me to come in while they finished writing the lyrics to this one song. So I said “man, I would love to, that would be great.” But you didn’t film it, or take any pictures you just kept all of that in your head. It was a great night, watching them finish the lyrics on the song.

MW: You are a walking piece of history.

JH: Well thank you. I’m writing a book right now and hope it’s done by the end of this year.

MW: Let’s go back to John Denver for a moment. What’s the one thing you took away with playing with John all those years? What’s the one thing you remember best?

JH: I realized that he had perfect pitch and that he had a photographic memory. That’s why John could come on stage and hardly ever miss any lyrics to a song. If he did, he’d stop, giggle and laugh in the middle and say “take two.” He was always ready. He was probably one of the best entertainers I’ve ever worked with out there. Great guy. He always meant well, [but] he kept to himself. He and I would have dinner late at night after the shows because nobody else wanted to hang out. So I’d go hang out with him and have



dinner. We had some great evenings, just the two of us. We got real close. I miss him a lot. He was just a really good guy.

MW: How did you see yourself growing as a player, working with John? What do you think got added to your overall style. Did you see yourself change as a player during the time you were working with John?

JH: When I had to emulate those sounds for him, like birds and water and stuff, those are just some ideas I had and then I embellished on them and made them really sail into the air and made more out of them. He loved it, the more I did it. Then I started playing flute a little more classical on some things. So I'd get a real pretty sound on melodies for him on "Annie's Song," on some of the background parts and "Poems, Prayers and Promises." It would be just his guitar and me on the flute. I learned how to control my flute sounds and change them to his songs. I learned a lot while I was out there with him. Playing the saxophone, you play it differently with John. I was playing real pretty and [adding] happy or sad [inflections] when I played those songs with him on my saxes. I did learn a lot playing his music.

<http://popdose.com/jim-horn-2013-interview/>

TRIBUTE ARTISTS

We will feature some tribute artists in our newsletters this year. Please provide me with relevant information if you would like to be included in our next newsletter.

Jimmy Fong

Jimmy Fong launched his new website late last year. Here is the link <https://www.jimmyfong.net/> Contact Jimmy through his contact page <https://www.jimmyfong.net/contact> for information about forthcoming performances. You can also purchase his CDs through this website. Jimmy has announced his first show in Melbourne, which will be on the **9th June**. Tickets are available from <https://www.trybooking.com/book/event?embed&id=270982>

Mark Cormican

Mark Cormican has a wonderful website; easy to navigate and includes lots of information about him and his band. Check it out for forthcoming shows, CD sales and bookings. <http://markcormican.com/>

Chris Westfall

Check out Chris' website. Chris performs his own interpretations to the music of John Denver and others.

<http://www.chriswestfall.com/home.html>

Mack Bailey

Mack Bailey, an Aspen resident and well-loved musician, will be performing at the Wheeler Opera House in October. Check out his website.

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

Jim Curry's Newsletter

Jim Curry's newsletter has been posted (click link below) Jim and Anne put together an excellent newsletter regularly. It also includes a link to Anne's blog, which is always fun to read, plus a full listing of where they are appearing in concert. Great news again – Jim and Anne will be cruising to Alaska on July 24. There are still some cabins available. Please click the link for information about the cruises and for Jim's current newsletter. <https://mg.mail.yahoo.com/neo/launch?.rand=398107kcobo3m#71947190>

American Veterans Radio

American Veterans Radio is honored to feature the wonderful music of John Denver. Please join Willie from Dillon on his regular Music of John Denver radio show. Here is a link to the podcast of the last show.

<http://www.avradio.org/rewind---podcasts.html>

This show airs fortnightly at the following times

4:00 - 6:00pm Eastern time

3:00 - 5:00pm Central time

2:00 - 4:00pm Mountain time

1:00 - 3:00pm Pacific time

12:00 - 2:00pm Alaskan time

6:00 - 8:00pm Chilean time

9:00 - 11:00pm UK time

10:00 - 12:00Mid European time

Next Morning

6:00 - 8:00am Japan/South Korea time

8:00 - 10:00am Australian time

10:00am - 12:00Noon New Zealand time

Forthcoming Event

Chris Collins and Boulder Canyon

April 22 – 2pm & 8pm The Strand Theater, Zelenople, PA. Tickets available from www.strandtheater.org

September 11 – 6pm Derby Dinner Playhouse
Tickets available from 812-288-8281

December 9 – 7:30am Norwood Theater, Norwood, MA www.norwoodstage.com

Chris Westfall

May 20 – 7:30pm Silver Lake Nature Center.
1306 Bath Road, Bristol

<http://silverlakenaturecenter.org/>

July 15 – 7pm Raystown Lake

https://www.facebook.com/events/583154151875473/?acontext=%7B%22ref%22%3A%2222%22%2C%22feed_story_type%22%3A%2222%22%2C%22action_history%22%3A%22null%22%7D&pnr_ef=story

Mark Cormican

May 27 – 7pm Kenton County Library (Durr Independence, KY. More information on (859) 962-4000

June 10 – 8pm Dickens Opera House 300 Main St. Longmont CO. Admission \$15. More info on: (303) 834-9384

Check Mark's website for more events

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

Darcey Anne

July 21 – 7pm Annual John Denver Potluck Dinner in Upstate NY 19 Roosevelt Ct, Saratoga Springs, NY 12866-9011, United States. For information

https://www.facebook.com/events/241693136295805/?acontext=%7B%22ref%22%3A%2222%22%2C%22feed_story_type%22%3A%2222%22%2C%22action_history%22%3A%22null%22%7D&pnr_ef=story

ASPEN IN OCTOBER 2017

The following concerts and events have been announced. Many more will be added to the list as the year goes on. Check the HGA website for updates www.hgavic.com/aio

11th October:

10am – Meet & Greet at John /Denver Sanctuary.

1pm – JDPB and Chris Liebig A tribute to John Denver. Tickets available

<https://www.rockymountainfpa.org/show-tickets>

4pm – Mark Cormican & Starwood at Aspen Chapel 77 Meadowood Drive, Aspen. Tickets \$25. Contact Sharon on alaskanchild@yahoo.com

4pm – The Aspen Meadow Band Mountain Chalet

7pm – The New Christy Minstrels at Wheeler Opera House. Tickets www.aspenshowtix.com.

8pm – Sing-a-Long at the Mountain Chalet

12th October:

11am – All of My Memories Pitkin County Library <https://www.facebook.com/events/203233473421025/> for more information.

1pm – All of My Memories Pitkin County Library <https://www.facebook.com/events/203233473421025/> for more information.

4pm – The Aspen Meadow Band Mountain Chalet

7:30pm - In Memory of John Denver: Rhymes & Reasons at Wheeler Opera House Tickets \$50. Tickets are available from Aspen Showtix www.aspenshowtix.com

8pm – Sing-a-Long at the Mountain Chalet

13th October

12pm – Susan Kay Burke Luncheon and Concert. Mountain Chalet, Tickets \$40. More information <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/john-denver-tribute-concert-and-luncheon-featuring-susan-burke-tickets-31979459424?aff=efeventix>

1pm - 2nd Annual AIO Singer/Songwriter Event Venue to be advised.

<https://www.facebook.com/events/415320008855942/>

4pm – Ron Matthews Mountain Chalet. Tickets at the door \$20.

7:30pm – Roy Rivers Aspen Community Church Tickets \$35. More information

<https://www.rockymountainfpa.org/show-tickets>

7:30pm – 20th Anniversary Musical Tribute to John Denver at Wheeler Opera House

Tickets from \$50-\$130. Tickets are available from Aspen Showtix www.aspenshowtix.com

8pm – Sing-a-Long at the Mountain Chalet

14th October

1:30pm – Great Voices Sing John Denver at Wheeler Opera House at Tickets \$25

www.aspenshowtix.com

4pm – Aspen Meadow Band at Limelight Hotel

4pm – Wildlife Concert Viewing Party Aspen Community Church. Tickets \$5

<https://www.rockymountainfpa.org/show-tickets>

7:30pm – Jimmy Fong MTWJD Aspen Community Church. Tickets \$35

<https://www.rockymountainfpa.org/show-tickets>

7:30pm – 20th Anniversary Musical Tribute to John Denver at Wheeler Opera House. Tickets from \$50-\$130. www.aspenshowtix.com

8pm – Sing-a-Long at the Mountain Chalet

11th October:

8pm – Sing-a-Long at the Mountain Chalet

** Pine Creek Cookhouse event has not yet been confirmed ***

Preparing for Aspen in October, 2017

Over the next few months, I will include some articles and links about visiting Colorado to help you maximise your experience in October. Here is the first one, which gives you some options for driving into Aspen from different parts of Colorado and the things you are likely to see.

Things to see near Denver

COLORADO HALL OF FAME

The Colorado Music Hall of Fame is a museum located in the Trading Post at Red Rocks Amphitheatre. **17900 Trading Post Rd, Morrison, CO 80465, USA**

The Colorado Music Hall of Fame inducted its first honorees in 2011, with songwriter John Denver and the Red Rocks Amphitheatre as its first honorees. Memorabilia includes the John Denver "Spirit" statue, donated by the Windstar Foundation.

<http://cmhof.org/exhibits/john-denver/>

<http://www.bsccsigns.com/blog/item/117-project-spotlight-john-denver-statue>

RED ROCKS AMPITHEATRE

Whilst you are in the vicinity, visit the Red Rocks Amphitheatre at **18300 W. Alameda Parkway, Morrison, CO 80465**. Take a walk through the visitor centre to see the artists who have performed at this iconic venue. Stand on the stage and sing a John Denver song – just because you can!

<http://www.denverpost.com/2016/06/03/10-most-memorable-concerts-in-red-rocks-history/>

GEORGETOWN

You will take a trip back in time when you visit Georgetown, which is on the highway just 72kms (44 miles) from Denver. Many people driving from



Denver make a quick detour off the highway to visit this old mining town, which is famous for being the location for movies such as *Every Which Way but Loose* starring Clint Eastwood, and *The Christmas Gift*, starring John Denver. Whilst there, visit the Hotel de Paris, and the Post Office, or just walk down the main street to absorb the atmosphere of this beautiful town.

<http://www.5280.com/magazine/2016/11/day-trip-georgetown>

COLOUR

Aspen in October falls in the Autumn, but you are never sure of what you will see until you get there. My last visit in 2015 was most beautiful for fall colour due to the warmer weather that year.

<https://www.aspenchamber.org/explore-aspen/trip-highlights/fall-foliage>



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.



Poems, Prayers, & Promises

I've been lately thinking about my life's time,
All the things I've done and how it's been.
And I can't help believing in my own mind,
I know I'm gonna hate to see it end.
I've seen a lot of sunshine, slept out in the rain,
Spent a night or two all on my own.
I've known my lady's pleasures, had myself some friends,
Spent a time or two in my own home.

I have to say it now, it's been good life all in all,
It's really fine to have a chance to hang around.
And lie there by the fire and watch the evening fire
while all my friends and my old lady sit and pass a pipe around.
And talk of poems and prayers and promises
And things that we believe in.

How sweet it is to love someone, how right it is to care.
How long it's been since yesterday, what about tomorrow
and what about our dreams and all the memories we share?

Days they pass so quickly now, the nights are seldom long.
Time around me whispers when it's cold.
The changes somehow frightens me, still I have to smile.
It turns me on to think of growing old.
For though my life's been good to me there's still so much to do.
So many things my mind has never known.
I'd like to raise a family,
I'd like to sail away and dance across the mountains on the moon.

I have to say it now, it's been good life all in all,
It's really fine to have a chance to hang around.
and lie there by the fire and watch the evening fire
while all my friends and my old lady sit and pass a pipe around.
And talk of poems and prayers and promises
And things that we believe in.
How sweet it is to love someone, how right it is to care.
How long it's been since yesterday, what about tomorrow
and what about our dreams and all the memories we share?