

## John Stewart – Bio

John Stewart was born on September 5<sup>th</sup> 1939 in San Diego, California and was raised in Riverdale and Pasadena. His father, John S. Stewart, was a racehorse trainer. By the mid nineteen-fifties, like countless American teenagers, Stewart fell under the spell of rock'n'roll. Elvis became an early hero. John's first show business venture was the comedy duo, The Handkerchief Brothers, with boyhood pal, George Yanok. A Pomona High School contemporary, the late Frank Zappa, taught Stewart the chords to "The Streets Of Laredo." John's first high school band, The Furies, cut one single for Vita Records, "Rockin' Anna"/"Lorraine." The late fifties saw Stewart attend Pomona's Mount San Antonio Junior College, by which time his interest had turned to folk music. Pete Seeger and Burl Ives were his new heroes. A contemporary at Pomona College, Kris Kristofferson was working on his Ph. D. in English Literature, but they didn't meet till years later.

Formed in 1957 The Kingston Trio became another firm favourite with Stewart and he offered them his songs. They recorded John's "Molly Dee" and "Green Grasses." Having graduated from College, Stewart formed a duo with a college buddy, John Montgomery. They played L.A.'s Cosmo Alley, and supported the up and coming Smothers Brothers at the Kerosene Club in San Jose. When the Kingston's manager, Frank Werber, told Stewart that Roulette Records wanted to sign a folk group, he formed the Cumberland Three with Montgomery [guitar] and his old high school choir teacher, Gil Robbins [bass]. The trio cut three albums and the pair of "**Civil War**" was reissued by Rhino Records on a single CD in 1991. Mike Settle [later in The First Edition] then replaced Robbins, and when Dave Guard decided to quit the Kingston's following an Australian tour in 1961, Stewart became his replacement.

Although the Kingston's recorded more contemporary material once Stewart was aboard, as the sixties evolved their popularity began to wane. John recorded twelve albums during the six years that he was a Trio member. The Highwaymen, which featured John Phillips and Scott McKenzie, were contemporaries and when the groups met in Sausalito, the two John's composed "Chilly Winds" and "Oh Miss Mary." At one stage Messrs. Phillips, McKenzie and Stewart planned to work together, but the plan never came to fruition. Returning from the Virgin Islands with the songs "California Dreaming" and "Monday Monday," Stewart was in Werber's office when the latter had Phillips & Co. ejected from the building after hearing those future hit songs. Lou Adler later signed Phillips and the legend of the Mamas And The Papas was born. At one stage Stewart and the late John Denver planned to work as a duo [Denver was in the Chad Mitchell Trio], and they cut some demos including "Leaving On A Jet Plane" but then cited musical differences. Another plan involved a trio featuring famed music photographer Henry Diltz, then with The Modern Folk Quartet, and a girl singer, Buffy Ford. Diltz decided to concentrate on his photography career, and yet another plan fell by the wayside. Stewart made his final appearance with the Kingston's on, June 15<sup>th</sup> 1967, the eve of the Monterey International Pop Festival. The following morning Stewart drove to Monterey to see his old buddy and co-organiser of the festival, John Phillips.

The Monkees included Stewart's composition "Daydream Believer" on their "**The Birds, The Bees And The Monkees**" album, and when it was released as a single it made # 1 in the US Pop Charts for the month of December 1967. Signed to Capitol Records by Trio producer Voyle Gilmore, Stewart's first post Kingston's recording was a duo album with, Buffy, titled "**Signals In The Glass.**" During that year the Stewart's campaigned with Robert Kennedy, until his 5<sup>th</sup> July assassination in L.A. For his debut solo album, "**California Bloodlines**" Stewart travelled to Nashville and the project was directed by the late Nik Venet. In an adjacent studio, Dylan was recording "**Nashville Skyline.**" Stewart finally met Kristofferson, who was a janitor in the building, while making the album. Three years later Stewart was screen tested for Sam Peckinpah's "**Pat Garrett And Billy The Kid,**" and was offered the part of "Alias." Dylan eventually played "Alias." "**Willard,**" Stewart's final Capitol recording was produced by Brit, Peter Asher. Moving on, Stewart cut two albums for Warner Bros. and followed it with a quartet of albums for RCA [incl. a British only "*Best of...*"]. Along the way, John was reunited in the studio with Venet, and having built a loyal local following in Arizona, the double vinyl set "**The Phoenix Concerts**" was recorded there.

John signed next to Robert Stigwood's RSO label, and his second album for the imprint "**Bombs Away Dream Babies**" featured "Gold," a song that became a US # 5 Pop hit when it was issued as a single, while on the album chart "**Bombs...**" peaked at # 10. Stewart self-produced, "**Dream Babies Go Hollywood,**" his final album for RSO featured vocal contributions from Ronstadt, Wendy Waldman and the late Nicolette Larson.

The appearance of US [Allegiance] and Swedish [Polydor] versions of **"Blondes"** in 1982, containing marginally different tracks, marked the opening gambit in a trend that has marked Stewart's recording career ever since. Midway through the eighties John began releasing *special* cassette only collections when undertaking US and UK tours. 1984 saw Stewart launch his own label, Homecoming with the *new age* styled instrumental disc, **"Centennial."** The label also publishes a newsletter, The Finger. Rosanne Cash took Stewart's song "Runaway Train" to # 1 on the Country singles chart in the fall of 1988. Over the last two decades John Stewart albums have been reissued/released by Bear Family [Germany], Affordable Dreams [UK], Polydor, Line [Germany], Feegie, Shanachie, Takoma [his reunion with Bob Reynolds], Folk Era, Laser Light, Cypress, Wrasse [UK] and Appleseed.....and doubtless more. In the late nineties Stewart's *special* cassettes gave way to a wave of CD-R releases [via Homecoming], a number of which subsequently, with revised track listings, became official releases on labels such as Appleseed. Stewart has also self-released a number of videos and DVD's. For copious details visit <http://www.chillywinds.com/> [States] and <http://members.aol.com/clackclack/> [Europe]. Signed by Appleseed Recordings in 1999 John has, to date, recorded four albums for the label – **"Darwin's Army"** [1999], **"Wires From The Bunker"** [2000], **"Havana"** [2003] and **"The Day The River Sang"** [2006].

**Discography :** [only includes some John Stewart solo career compilations]

with Cumberland Three : **"Folk Scene U.S.A."** [1960] ; **"Civil War Almanac – Vol. 1 (The Yankees)"** [1960] ; **"Civil War Almanac – Vol. 2 (The Rebels)"** [1960] ;

with Kingston Trio : **"Close Up"** [1961] ; **"College Concert"** [1962] ; **"Something Special"** [1962] ; **"New Frontier"** [1962] ; **"#16"** [1963] ; **"Sunny Side"** [1963] ; **"Time To Think"** [1963] ; **"Back In Town"** [1964] ; **"Nick Bob John"** [1964] ; **"Stay Awhile"** [1965] ; **"Something Else"** [1965] ; **"Children Of The Morning"** [1966] ;

with Buffy Ford : **"Signals In The Glass"** reissued on CD in 2004 [1968] ; **"Live At The Turf Inn, Scotland"** [1995] ; **"Way Too Much Fun"** [1999] ;

with Nick Reynolds : **"Revenge Of The Budgie"** [1983] ;

Solo : excludes reissues of original albums on new formats **[EDITOR – PLEASE NOW DELETE THIS RED TEXT]**

**"California Bloodlines"** [1969] ; **"Willard"** [1970] ; **"The Lonesome Picker Rides Again"** [1971] ; **"Sunstorm"** [1972] ; **"Cannons In The Rain"** [1973] ; **"The Phoenix Concerts"** double lp [1974] ; **"Wingless Angels"** [1975] ; **"Fire In The Wind"** [1977] ; **"Bombs Away Dream Babies"** [1979] ; **"In Concert"** single lp from **"The Phoenix Concerts"** with unrel. cuts [1980] ; **"Forgotten Songs Of Some Old Yesterday"** [1980] ; **"Dream Babies Go Hollywood"** [1980] ; **"Blondes"** US version [1982] ; **"Blondes"** Swedish version, different tracks. Combined version of US and Swedish albums issued on CD 2003 [1982] ; **"Trancas"** [1984] ; **"Centennial"** [1984] ; **"The Last Campaign"** CD version 1996 [1985] ; **"Secret Tapes 1"** cassette, CD version 2002 [1986] ; **"Secret Tapes 2"** cassette [different UK and US versions], CD version 2002 [1987] ; **"The Trio Years"** cassette, CD version 1996 [1986] ; **"Punch The Big Guy"** [1987] ; **"American Sketches"** CD version of **"Centennial"** [1990] ; **"Neon Beach"** [1991] ; **"Deep In The Neon"** [1991] ; **"Bullets In The Hour Glass"** [1992] ; **"Savanah"** cassette, CD version 2002 [1992] ; **"Teresa And The Lost Songs"** cassette, CD version 1998 [1992] ; **"Escape To Arizona"** cassette [1993] ; **"Chilly Winds"** CD reissue of **"The Trio Years"** and **"Revenge Of The Budgie"** [1993] ; **"Rocket Roy In The Real World"** cassette, CD version 1999 [1993] ; **"Bandera"** cassette [1994] ; **"Bandera - Live At The Turf"** [1995] ; **"Airdream Believer"** [1995] ; **"The Best Of John Stewart"** both **"Dream Babies"** albums on 1 CD plus unrel. [1995] ; **"An American Folk Song Anthology"** [1996] ; **"Rough Sketches"** cassette, CD version 1997 [1996] ; **"Havana"** cassette, CD version 2003 [1998] ; **"One Night In Denver"** [1998] ; **"Darwin's Army"** [1999] ; **"Buster"** [2000] ; **"Wires From The Bunker"** [2000] ; **"Waltz Of The Crazy Moon"** [2000] ; **"Front Row Music : Before The War"** [2001] ; **"The Runner"** [2002] ; **"The Americans Plus"** two versions issued [2002] ; **"A Night At Jimmy Duke's"** [2002] ; **"Songs To Drive By"** a CD compilation of previously released recordings. In 2003 Stewart issued recordings with two different track listings bearing this title [2003] ; **"The Ballads"** a CD compilation of previously released recordings [2003] ; **"Earth Rider"** Australian CD compilation of previously released recordings [2003] ; **"Tanforan"** [2003] ; **"Even The Band Had Fun [Jimmy Duke's Dark Thirty Show]"** [2003] ; **"The Day The River Sang"** [2006] ;

on DVD (All self-released) : **"Secret Videos 1"** [2001] ; **"Front Row Moonlight"** [2001] ; **"Punch The Big Guy"** [200?] ; **"A Trip Down Route 66"** [200?] :

**Arthur Wood**

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