

The Timberbound Project: Reviving Old Songs *continued from page 10*

explains Seamons. "I can't help but acknowledge that I have a deep nostalgia for these songs. Part of that is the story of the songs and part of that is my relationship to them, having grown up in the area, in the same kind of setting that they were written in. So I'm attracted to the place."

Together with Sandgren and Duffy, the three of them formed The Timberbound Project and began performing the music live, Seamons on banjo and vocals, Sandgren on vocals and Duffy on guitar. Seamons likes to mix in a few Hobe Kytr and Dave Berge songs as well.

Sometimes other musicians join Seamons when Duffy isn't available. At the Grand Lodge show Ben Hunter played fiddle and Max Kutzman played stand-up bass; both are members of the Renegade Stringband. "One of the great things about these songs is I can play them with any solid musician," says Seamons. "Any good musician can pick them up real quickly because the chord changes are pretty straight forward and I don't do any real razzle-dazzle arrangements. It's always evolving and I find the musicians to fill it out. That's kind of a fun, fluid thing about it, because I'm sharing the music with even more people-the musicians and the audience, which has been really exciting."

While bringing to life the music of Kim and John Cunnick, Seamons also has a lot of respect for Kytr and the music he has created. "Hobe is an amazing resource," says Seamons. "You ask him a question and you learn more information than you knew was available. He has always been a very unique and interesting person to me."

There is also the historical aspect of the songs that Seamons finds intriguing. "The story of logging in Oregon is very complex and interesting," says Seamons. "So that part of these songs attracts me as well. There are all of these layers beneath the music."

*I lived on Fell and Baker,
Lord, I loved that slender town,
It seemed to be the misty past,*

*I took the long way round,
I've seen circle squared in cedar
and the saw go spir'ling round
As I waited by the carriage
with my mind on Timberbound.*

John Cunnick left a small but powerful body of work. It's really just a handful of words. But he certainly had a way with those words. Many of the songs in the Timberbound Songbook are unfinished. Some are John's words put to a traditional tune. Some are certainly rough around the edges. But there are also some real gems. Having seemingly found his voice, some inspiration and a great collaborator in Kim, who knows what he could have done, given even just a little more time.

Watching Joe Seamons and The Timberbound Project bring the songs to life in a live performance is certainly a thrill. Seamons also makes their performances a sort of history lesson, sharing some of the notes John wrote to help the listener better understand the story behind the songs, as well as insights he has learned from talking with Hobe Kytr, his parents, Kim Cunnick and others that knew John.

"There is a very rich and powerful feeling around this music, made all the more poignant by John's early demise," says Seamons' mother Vandais. "To have this small body of work that really represented, for Paul and I and our friends that were living here at that time, our life style. John got it! That's what gives you a catch in the throat every time

you hear the songs. He was a poet. His words grab you. I've watched Joe take these songs around and I first noticed when he started playing them at Lewis and Clark-people, and especially the young kids at the college, were just transfixed. And I realized these songs have meaning beyond my personal connection to them.



I see people really listening intently to the story, to the sound. There is something great here."

Before the Timberbound reunion that happened in Keasey in 2010, Seamons was performing some of John and Kim Cunnick's songs with his band. Inspired by the gathering of friends and the reunion of musicians, Seamons took it a step further and formed The Timberbound Project.

The Timberbound Project hopes to record a CD of their music. Joe Seamons also hopes to someday create a new edition of the Timberbound Songbook, and bring the music to a whole new generation of music makers.

"John really bridged this world of the loggers and fisherman," says Vandais. "Instead of emphasizing that we're hippies and environmentalists, somehow he expressed that we were all having this experience together, and that's how it felt, we didn't feel divided."

"I like to do this music because it draws together a closely knitted community of people, that is surprisingly large, of people that were either touched by John or are old friends who have heard the story of John and Kim," says Seamons. "There are a lot of people who are really intrigued by the story," says Seamons. "Playing the songs is a way of bringing those people together. And that is what music is all about."

*I've waited by some breakdowns
when I did not have a tool,
I've lived my life from hand to hand
and been a harp short as a rule,
I've spoken to musicians,
shit I've listened to the blues,
But the boy that's down without a song
is a boy that's payin' some dues.*

So there you have it, musicians separated by time and death but brought together by a sense of community. Brought together by a sense of history and place. Brought together because the sheer joy of sharing a good tale is too hard to resist. Brought together because the songs are just plain good.

It would only be fitting to allow John Cunnick the final word in this story, because, well... he started it.

*I been snowbound, I been water bound,
I been bound by travel too,
I been binded in the bands of love/
I loved it a time or two.
I been bonded in the firmament,
I been bonded to love the blues,
And I swear to god my friends there's times
I been timberbound like you.*

~"Timberbound"
words by John Cunnick



Joe Seamons at the Grand Lodge.



The cabin where John and Kim Cunnick lived is still standing in Keasey.

Vernonia Lake House Vacation Rental



Cute & comfy cottage right on Vernonia Lake. Sleeps 6. \$75 per night/\$450 per week Views! Adjacent to linear trail-bring your bike. Gas BBQ available. Fenced yard and pet friendly with a \$15 deposit. TV w/ DVD (no Dish Service) <http://www.flipkey.com/p514350/> or Call Brian or Vici at 503-429-0327

House for Rent



For Rent: 1780 sq.ft, 5 bdrm, 3 bath home on 1 acre. Entertainer's kitchen, gas fireplace, quiet street, beautiful partially timbered lot with a great open play space. Recently remodeled, 2 decks, hardwood floors & carpet. \$1200 per month, \$500 Security deposit. Available April 20th Call Brian or Vici at 503-429-0327

Mariolino's Pizza & Grill

**Serving
breakfast, lunch & dinner
Ice cream - cones, shakes & sundaes
Daily Specials**

Family owned and operated for over 40 years.
721 Madison Avenue, Vernonia (503) 429-5018