

Notes on the Songs:

For the West

This song sets the scene for the album, with the full band and some great interplay between Tim Ball on violin and Rich DePaolo on electric guitars. A song of leaving home, inspired by the death of a friend's mother at an early age. **For the West** words and music © 2025 George Mann.

That Sweet Plaintalkin' Country Girl

The first song Mick wrote, about 20 years ago. Sad love songs seemed to be a constant in a lot of the stuff he was listening to at the time. A tried-and-true formula but upbeat, not a pitiful dirge this one! It's been revamped and getting another airing to a wider audience this time around. **That Sweet Plaintalkin' Country Girl** was written by Michael Coates.

Ghosts of the Old West

George wrote this song at Beluthahatchee, the artist's retreat near Jacksonville, Florida where Woody Guthrie once hung out with author Stetson Kennedy. While "Ghosts of the Old West" is not a concept album, the story behind this song came to George as he was beginning to plan the album, and the magic of Beluthahatchee, which has yielded a half-dozen songs during George's recent visits, brought it to life. It features fine fiddling from Tim Ball, and Alice Saltonstall and Rich DePaolo on harmonies. **Ghosts of the Old West** words and music © 2025 George Mann

In Irons from Limerick City

The first 60 odd years of Australia's colonization involved the usual English cruelty. Poverty-stricken petty criminals were transported en masse for a minimum of seven years, firstly to ease overcrowding in the British penal system and secondly as cheap labour for the ill-gotten wealth of the land-stealing squattocracy! A DNA test a few years ago unlocked Mick's paternal family tree, and to his delight, he found two convicts in his lineage from the early 1820s. **In Irons from Limerick City** was written by Michael Coates, Thomas & Cathey Ryan.

They Call Her "Dolly Parton"

Yes, the woman in the song exists, and is still alive as this album goes to press. George sings for dozens of nursing and veterans' homes in upstate New York and on the road, and occasionally finds songs among the many fascinating, and often forgotten, people living out their lives in these facilities. A quiet song with lovely piano by Molly MacMillan. **They Call Her "Dolly Parton"** words and music © 2025 George Mann.

The Ghosts of the Old West

The original inspiration for this album was George's idea that both he and Mick write a song each of the same name. This sure suited Mick, as he's been performing classic western songs for over 20 years. Over the last 15 years he's scoured the southwest of the USA visiting many of the famed landmarks of legendary outlaws. Having a margarita or two in Rosa's Cantina while Marty sang "El Paso" on the jukebox took care of half the song. Climbing the stairs at the Lincoln County jail where

Billy the Kid made good his escape after disposing of two deputies inspired the rest! **The Ghosts of the Old West** was written by Michael Coates and Kenneth Barber.

The Reverend Mr. Black

The classic story of a man standing up to a bully, and a chance for a group chorus singalong! George first heard The Kingston Trio sing this as a toddler, and it's always been one of his favorite Kingston Trio songs. **The Reverend Mr. Black** was written by Mike Stoller, Billy Edd Wheeler, and Jerry Leiber.

Ballad of Ira Hayes

George first met Mick at the Maldon Folk Festival, where Mick was doing a set of Johnny Cash tunes on the festival's closing night. That deep baritone, delivered with an Aussie accent, got George's mind thinking, and when they began talking about making this album, this song was an obvious choice. Not one of Johnny Cash's better-known songs, but one of his most important. **Ira Hayes** was written by Peter La Farge.

Anymore

Harry Stamper was a union longshore worker and musician in Oregon who also wrote and recorded many great union and worker songs, including "We Just Come to Work Here, We Don't Come to Die." This song, though written almost 40 years ago, speaks volumes in today's political climate. All acoustic guitars, with George and the beautiful harmonies of SingTrece! **Anymore** was written by Harry Stamper.

The Lonesome Plains

A good friend of Mick's, fellow Victoria-based singer/songwriter Charlotte Le Lievre, wrote this one "specifically for Mick's dulcet tones." They have spent many hours together with guitars, beers and whiskey around campfires in the remote deserts of western New South Wales. Told from the perspective of an old cowboy reflecting upon his life of endless droving and his desire to return to the open plains and his final resting place. A common theme found in many songs of the old west! **The Lonesome Plains** was written by Charlotte Buckton.

'Til the Cows and 'Roos Come Home

While both George and Mick are grounded in folk music, when you have access to such fine musicians, why not use them? George was still working on this song as they went in to record the basic tracks, and the words took some time. This often happens when, as in this case, the singalong chorus arrives in one piece... and yes, whiskey was involved. Michael Wellen on drums and Doug Robinson on bass, with Molly MacMillan on grand piano and Rich DePaolo on guitars, all shine on this closer—with a creeping, sinister feeling to it, but in the end, all will be fine. **'Til the Cows and 'Roos Come Home** words and music © 2025 George Mann.