

# Singer

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In 1970, the group broke up, pursuing individual undertakings and tending the beginnings of each of their families.

"Then they tried to put a nuclear generator online near the San Andreas fault in California and Peter said, 'Hey, can you come out of retirement and sing with Mary and I?' That was in 1978. And we began work again in our second career. We worked 10 years from '60 to '70 and those really were cataclysmal years for the emergence of music as verbalizing what everybody was feeling about the times in which we lived," Stookey said.

From that point on the trio continued to perform together, but in 2004, Mary Travers was diagnosed with leukemia. She passed in 2009, but still has a presence on stage when Peter and Paul do shows together.

"Sweetly enough, if you confess immediately that you're missing somebody ... the audience responds really warmly and they sing Mary's part. Peter and I do our harmony parts and play guitar. At the end of two hours, there's no doubt that Mary was as important to the sound as she was," Stookey said.

The trio was able to infuse their music with political concerns and Stookey's album reflects that initial ethic, albeit with a contemporary concern for more immediate issues, like immigration.

"The song that I wrote, 'Familia Del Corazon,' which is on the 'At Home' album, is more about the promise that sits out there in New York Harbor to all people who want a fresh start, who believe in equality, who are seeking justice and equity. So it's written from a compassionate point of view," Stookey said.

In 2013 Peter and Paul also returned to Washing-

ton, 50 years after Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech. They were joined at the anniversary performance by Sybrina Fulton and Tracy Martin, parents of teenager Trayvon Martin, victim of a fatal shooting by a neighborhood watch captain, and Mark Barden, father of Daniel Barden, one of the victims killed on Dec. 14, 2012, in a massacre at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Sandy Hook, Connecticut.

For Stookey, music is the best way he can express his ideas. He thinks in terms of tonality, and that has brought him to create more pieces that revive the ideals behind folk music.

As far as the content of the album, Stookey had a simple response when asked if he had a favorite song.

"[Mary Travers] had the greatest answer for that. She said, 'Songs are like children and some behave better sometimes than others.'"

Even as a solo artist, Stookey continues to create with his conscience in mind. From songs on the album like "Nukes R Nuts," which goes, "[N]ukes are nuts, it's a crazy thing /just like squirrels, waiting for the spring / we hide 'em underground; waiting for a day /when some crazy squirrel would try to blow us all away ..." to others like "In These Times," Stookey has dedicated himself to a philanthropy that is conveyed through music. And yet what it has provided him has been equally as rewarding.

"Everything that you participate in that requires you giving something of yourself, inevitably returns more to you than you gave," Stookey said. "I've just been really blessed to have all of that as part of who I am."

"At Home" is available for purchase at Amazon.com and CDbaby.com and is also available for download or streaming on his website.

# Gifts

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Rising in popularity nationally for years, in Maine, "the whole crate idea took off in mid-fall," said Tammy Knight, program manager for the state's Maine Made Program.

"It's a real spin-off on gift baskets. People have done gift bags on made in Maine products; Stonewall Kitchen has done baskets," said Knight, who sees the latest wave as a contemporary Maine catchall. "It's neat that they have popped up. It's pretty exciting."

To Saco native Nielson, who came up with the idea for Seasonal Maine to sate his brother who moved to Los Angeles, "there is a certain mystique about Maine. When people who summer and winter here leave, they miss Maine."

This holiday season, there are a few ways for those pinning for the Pine Tree State to savor its essence.

A few days before Season-

al Maine launched, the Portland-based CrateFull of Maine made its debut. It is backed by John Turner, who turns lobster traps into glasses at Traps Eyewear, Chris Avantaggio, founder of LiveME, and Nathan O'Leary, a "digital maker" and the founder of Mainely SEO. From high-end bait bag pouches from Alaina Marie, to candy lobster from Old Port Candy Co., to GrandyOats granola, it's an updated taste of Maine.

"They are introducing people from away to quality Maine products," said Knight, "It's a new avenue, there has been quite an uptick in the past 18 months or so for e-tailers."

To Knight, boxed gift services is a fresh take on bricks and mortar commerce. Some are "staple products, things that people remember like Moxie," and others are hot off an artisan's bench.

How will they all do?

"It's anybody's guess. Hard telling," said Knight. "Those with business acumen and experience will survive."



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