



## The Year In Review

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Ferris Davies PRM  
ARIAAwards@ferrisdaviesprm.com.au  
Ph: (02) 9555 5807

## July 2007

An absolutely wild and crazy month in the Australian music business, much of it played out in national newspapers and news bulletins.

But hold the front page: the feel good event this July was, without question, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual ARIA Hall Of Fame event. Once again staged at Melbourne's Plaza Ballroom in front of a who's-who of the local entertainment industry, this year's proceedings saw the induction of another diverse group of legendary homegrown artists: Hoodoo Gurus; Marcia Hines; Frank Ifield; Brian Cadd; Radio Birdman; and Jo Jo Zep & The Falcons. Also honoured was music manager John Woodruff [The Angels, Baby Animals, Savage Garden], who was bestowed a Lifetime Achievement Award for his services to the local music business. Among the night's many emotional and musical highlights was Marcia Hines and Connie Mitchell (from Sneaky Sound System) trading notes on the classic Hines hit, "I Got The Music In Me".

Proving the impact that the ARIA Hall of Fame has, this month saw two of last year's inductees - Divinyls and Daddy Cool - announcing they were officially reforming for shows. Divinyls [who have always claimed they never technically broke up] will headline this year's Homebake festival in Sydney, while Daddy Cool will set off on their first national tour in over 30 years come November. Meanwhile two of this year's inductees, Hoodoo Gurus and Radio Birdman, are teaming up for a national through September.

But the biggest reunion news of this July was the homecoming of Crowded House. The band's comeback album, *Time on Earth*, made it to the top of the Motorola ARIA album chart in its second week of release.

Neil Finn and his band marked their return to Australia by headlining what might go down as the biggest rock concert of all time - Live Earth. Staged on 7.7.07, Live Earth featured over 150 acts performing in 11 locations around the globe [including Antarctica], all in the name of intensifying the campaign to combat climate change. The whole series of rolling international concerts, broadcast and webcast to billions across the globe, kicked off with the show at the Sydney Football Stadium in front of 45,000 local music fans. Those joining Crowded House on the Sydney bill included Paul Kelly, Eskimo Joe, Missy Higgins, The John Butler Trio, Wolfmother and an honorary Aussie muso in Jack Johnson.

In a comeback of a slightly different nature, Jimmy Barnes marked his return to good health by hitting the boards again for the odd live club show, as well as announcing he would soon start a regular gig as a CD reviewer on cable music station, MAX.

Of a less serious nature, Silverchair's Daniel Johns sparked off a genuine political storm early this month when, during a live interview on Triple J, he casually quipped about sharing a marijuana joint with U2's Bono and former Midnight Oil singer Peter Garrett, who now, of course, is a federal MP. Within hours of making the comment, Johns was forced to issue a formal statement swearing it was all meant as a joke - everyone knows Garrett is a legendary straighty-180 and, no, no one ever inhaled anything.

In other news, it was announced this month that singer [and occasional actress] Toni Collette was expecting her first child [Collette and her band also appeared on the local Live Earth line-up], while Wolfmother, Human Nature, Rogue Traders, Bernard Fanning and The 12th Man were the newcomers on BRW magazine's annual list of the top 50 richest local entertainers.

### *Singles*

*Reigning Australian Idol Damien Leith returns with his first new track since winning the competition last year and "22 Steps" debuts at # 11. Also charting at #11 during the month, country star Lee Kernaghan with his new single, the title track from his forthcoming album, "Spirit of the Bush". Kernaghan has pledged all proceeds from the song to the nation's drought-stricken farmers.*

### *Albums*

*"Time On Earth", the first new Crowded House album in 13 years, debuts at #2 but makes it to the top spot one week later. Also debuting at #2 was Grinspoon's "Alibis & Other Lies". Other strong charters this month included Melbourne's Kisschasy, who cracked the big time with their new album, "Hymns For The Nonbeliever" entering the chart at #5. The great Paul Kelly is back in a big way with his new one, "Stolen Apples", coming in at # 8, while Hillsong show their faith is still strong with another top 10 album, "Saviour King" [#6]. Meanwhile, waving the country music flag is Lee Kernaghan, whose new album, "Spirit of the Bush", debuts at #5, and Troy Cassar-Daley, whose "Born To Survive" CD makes it to #18.*

### **Accreditations**

Crowded House - *Time On Earth* - GOLD

## June 2007

A month of leaks, secrets revealed, records broken, memories honoured - and the wedding of the year.

The Australian music industry feels like it's in the thick of a boom time, thanks to the extraordinary success of our homegrown artists.

To prove the point, Powderfinger's brilliant new album, 'Dream Days at the Hotel Existence', the band's first new music in four years, breaks the record as the fastest selling album of the year, moving an incredible 40,000 copies in its first week of release. In fact, four of the top five fastest selling albums of 2007 so far have been Australian, with both Silverchair and Missy Higgins selling over 35,000 copies of their new albums in the first week, and John Butler selling over 25,000.

These stats were part of the reason why news of Powderfinger and Silverchair's plans to tour together caused such a media frenzy this June. Midway through the month the bands held a joint press conference in Sydney to confirm what by then was the worst kept secret of the year - they would be travelling around the country together from August. It promises to be one of the biggest Australian tours in decades.

The month had already started on a high note with the 25<sup>th</sup> Annual APRA songwriting awards being held in Melbourne's famous Town Hall. In what was a wonderfully popular outcome, Augie March and Wolfmother were voted by their peers as the toast of local songwriters. The Augies' Glenn Richards was named Breakthrough Songwriter of the Year, while his band took out the prestigious Song Of The Year award for their anthemic 'One Crowded Hour'. Wolfmother were, unsurprisingly, confirmed as Australian Songwriters of the Year.

In other local awards news, it was announced that this year's 21<sup>st</sup> ARIA Awards would be held at Sydney's Acer Arena on October 28. Meanwhile, the ARIA board also revealed the full list of this year's inductees into the ARIA Hall of Fame. Joining the previously announced Hoodoo Gurus, Marcia Hines and Frank Ifield, are Brian Cadd, Jo Jo Zep & the Falcons and Radio Birdman. All six acts will be inducted at the Hall of Fame event to be held at the Plaza Ballroom in Melbourne on July 18.

The saddest news in Australian music this June was the death of former Warumpi Band lead singer, George Burrarrawanga. Co-writer of classics such as 'Blackfella, Whitefella' and 'My Island Home', Peter Garrett paid tribute to Burrarrawanga by describing him as charismatic a frontman as Mick Jagger, James Brown or Michael Hutchence.

The recent death of the great Billy Thorpe was also honoured this month when he was posthumously appointed a Member of the Order of Australia (AM) in the Queen's Birthday Honours list. His wife Lynn Thorpe released a statement saying: "I am proud to accept this prestigious award as recognition of Billy's long and dedicated service to the music industry."

In other music news this month, new Kylie Minogue songs were leaked on the internet. Meanwhile, model-turned-singer Erica Baxter married the richest man in the country, James Packer, in a little do on the French Riviera. The wedding singer was Canadian crooner Michael Buble.

### *Singles*

*Melbourne rockers Kisschasy move up a gear with their first Top 10 hit 'Opinions', while Crowded House return with 'Don't Stop Now', their first single in over a decade, coming in at #34. Evermore's new one, 'Never Let You Go', gives them yet another Top 30 hit.*

### *Albums*

*Powderfinger rules this June with 'Dream Days At The Hotel Existence' coming in at #1. Xavier Rudd isn't too far behind with his new album, 'White Moth', giving him his highest ever chart position (#6). Also waving the flag for our unique singer-songwriters is Brisbane's Kate Miller-Heidke, entering the charts at #11 with her brilliant debut, 'Little Eve'. Meanwhile, another ex-Idol star makes it big with Dean Geyer's debut album, 'Rush', coming in at #7. Undoubtedly the most unexpected hit of the month is the self-titled debut album from Melbourne's Choir Of Hard Knocks. It peaks at #21.*

### **Accreditations**

Choir of Hard Knocks - Choir of Hard Knocks - GOLD  
Belinda Emmett - So I Am - GOLD  
Sneaky Sound System - Sneaky Sound System - GOLD  
Billy Thorpe and The Aztecs - Live Jailhouse Rock (DVD) - GOLD  
Powderfinger - Dream Days At The Hotel Existence - 2 x PLATINUM

## May 2007

May 2007 was, by any measure, one of those landmark months in Australian music where almost all that glittered was gold, multi-platinum and, most impressively, home-grown. Nowhere was this better demonstrated than at the end of the first week of the month when an extraordinary seven locally-produced CDs dominated the Top 10 of the Motorola ARIA album charts.

May had everything - awesome live comebacks and highly-anticipated new local releases. It began with Missy Higgins playing a sold-out national tour in support of her new No. 1 album, 'On A Clear Night', then saw Keith Urban come home for a large-scale arena tour, and ended with the on-stage return of one of the country's biggest rock bands, Powderfinger, after an absence of over two years.

Powderfinger was back with a new hit single, 'Lost and Running', the first taster off their sixth studio album, 'Dream Days At The Hotel Existence', to be released at the start of next month. But their return wasn't all sweet dreams when it was revealed that another track off the new album, a song called 'Black Tears', might have the band in some legal strife over its apparent lyrical reference to an on-going murder case in their home state of Queensland. The matter was settled when the band agreed to change the contentious line in the song prior to the album's release. Lead singer and lyricist Bernard Fanning released a statement explaining that: "The song 'Black Tears' was written to bring attention to the plight of Aboriginal people in Australia. It was originally inspired by a trip that I took last year to Uluru. Whilst we firmly believe that the song would have no bearing upon the legal process, in the interests of removing even the slightest suggestion of any prejudice, we have included an alternative version on our album." The issue was long forgotten by the time Powderfinger set out on a quick national run at the end of the month to perform showcase album launch shows in each state.

Also playing hard around the country throughout the first half of May was a rejuvenated Silverchair, fresh from dominating the top spot of the album and singles charts for a month. It coincided with the news that the band had locked in a two-month world tour starting in July, which would coincide with the new album, 'Young Modern', being released in the US through Warner.

Other locals announcing North American releases for their recent albums included Augie March, whose celebrated 'Moo, You Bloody Choir' will be coming out in the US in August through Jive Zomba, while Thirsty Merc's latest, 'Slideshows', will be out through Atlantic. Meanwhile, across the big pond, Universal will release The Cat Empire's 'Two Shoes' in Europe.

The first three new inductees into the ARIA Hall of Fame were revealed during May. Hoodoo Gurus, Marcia Hines and Frank Ifield - plus three more still to be announced - will be inducted in the annual glittering ceremony to be staged in Melbourne in July.

Meanwhile in Melbourne, the legendary Don Burrows was inducted into the Australian Jazz Bell Awards Hall of Fame.

There was also confirmation in this month that Sydney would kick off the global Live Earth concert, scheduled for 07.07.07. A reformed Crowded House will headline the bill, also to include the likes of Missy Higgins, John Butler, Eskimo Joe, as well as international guest - and part-time Aussie - Jack Johnson. Opening the show is Melbourne-based newcomers Blue King Brown. Anyone asking "who?" would have had that question answered a few weeks later when the band's \$200 video clip for a song called 'Water' was featured on the front page of YouTube around the world.

Also featuring on the local Live Earth bill are Grammy-winners Wolfmother, who added the title of Best Live Band to their mantle this month courtesy of the Jack Awards. Other winners at the publicly-voted Jacks, staged at Sydney's Luna Park, included Daniel Johns (Best Male Performer), Katy Steele (Best Female and Best Dressed) and Sydney's Red Riders.

In other news, tickets for the annual Splendour in the Grass festival in Byron Bay sold out in five hours, while over in Adelaide, the Hilltop Hoods played to a sold-out hometown crowd at the local entertainment centre, with 7000 fans cramming in to watch the hip hoppers perform with the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra. All around, by any measure, an amazing month in local music.

### Singles

*The mighty Powderfinger celebrated their comeback with another Top 10 single when 'Lost and Running' debuted at #5 on the Motorola ARIA singles charts. Meanwhile, dance hit-makers Sneaky Sound System added to their growing reputation when 'UFO' gave them yet another Top 20 hit, peaking at #16. Also making an impression, Dean Geyer's debut single 'If You Don't Mean It' came in at #11. But most impressively this month of May, Thirsty Merc's '20 Good Reasons', which has already spent two months in or around the Top 10, reaches a new peak of #4.*

## Albums

May kicks off in the biggest possible way for Missy Higgins when, as expected, her new album, 'On A Clear Night', debuts at the top of the Motorola ARIA album chart, suggesting it's a worthy successor to her multi-platinum debut, 'The Sound Of White'. Also making an impact near the top of the charts is Kate Ceberano who, fresh from her win on TV's Dancing With The Stars, sees her new album of covers, 'Nine Lime Avenue', peak at #4. Belinda Emmett's posthumous debut, 'So I Am', reaches #8, while The Beautiful Girls see their new one, 'Ziggurats', come in at #21. The Hilltop Hoods crack the Top 10 again with their remix album, 'The Hard Road Restrung', featuring the Adelaide Symphony Orchestra, coming in at #8.

## Accreditations

Thirsty Merc - 20 Good Reasons (single) - GOLD

Missy Higgins - Steer (single) - GOLD

Sara Storer - Firefly - GOLD

Troy Cassar-Daley - Long Way Home - GOLD

Kate Ceberano - Nine Lime Avenue - GOLD

Thirsty Merc - Slideshows - GOLD

Augie March - Moo, You Bloody Choir - PLATINUM

Human Nature - Reach Out: Live At The Capitol Theatre (DVD) - PLATINUM

Missy Higgins - On A Clear Night - 2 x PLATINUM

Slim Dusty - Very Best Of - 3 x PLATINUM

Eskimo Joe - Black Fingernails, Red Wine - 4 x PLATINUM

## April 2007

April starts out with the John Butler Trio's new album, *Grand National*, racing straight to the top of the Motorola ARIA album chart, the band's second straight number one album.

A week later, it's Silverchair on top with their highly-anticipated new long-player, *Young Modern*. A year in the making, nearly five years on from the outfit's last studio recording, *Young Modern* sets all kinds of new records. It immediately becomes the fastest selling album of 2007 so far. It also makes the 'Chair the first local band to achieve five No. 1 albums. Even more impressively, it's five No. 1 albums in a row [the band's entire catalogue], each debuting at the top of the chart.

Later in the month, Missy Higgins, Silverchair's Eleven/EMI label-mate, is back to her own record-breaking ways. "Steer", the first single off her second album *On A Clear Night*, debuts at the top of the Motorola ARIA singles chart, while the album - due for release at the end of the month - sets a new record as the most pre-ordered release ever through Australian iTunes. Higgins national tour sells out in an instant.

Also on the comeback trail this month, Powderfinger play their first show in yonks as part of ANZAC Day celebrations in Queensland. The band recently returned from the US where they finished recording the album that will be the follow-up to *Vulture Street*.

In sad news, the local industry loses another legend when the great guitarist and producer Lobby Loyde, 66, succumbs to his long battle with cancer. Loyde was best known for his much-loved '70s outfit *Coloured Balls*, as well as his stints in Billy Thorpe's *Aztecs* and as a bassist in *Rose Tattoo*. He was inducted into the ARIA Hall of Fame last year.

A few big shows this April draw national attention. In Byron Bay, as always, there's the annual and ever-expanding East Coast Blues and Roots Festival. In Sydney that same Easter long weekend, a newer three-day event called *The Great Escape* is headlined by Wolfmother and features a rejuvenated *The Vines*. In other music-related news this April, the local edition of *Rolling Stone* magazine turns 35, while the ABC's seminal late-night music program, *Rage*, turns 20. Also celebrating a 20th anniversary is TV host Richard Wilkins, who joined the Nine Network as host of a show called *MTV* back in 1987.

Over in UK, Melbourne singer Daniel Merriweather appears as a guest vocalist on the No. 2 hit, "Stop Me", while another Melbourne ex-pat, Dannii Minogue, announces she is moving forward in her new career as a celebrity TV star by joining the next series of the British show *X-Factor*, sitting alongside Simon Cowell and Sharon Osbourne. Meanwhile, there's a rumour that sister Kylie has signed on to star in the new series of *Dr Who*. Time will tell whether that's fact or science fiction.

### Singles

*Missy Higgins returns just where she left off with her new single Steer topping the chart, while Dannii Minogue scores a Top 40 hit with her cover of the disco classic He's the Greatest Dancer.*

### Albums

*April is a monster month for new albums. Aside from chart-toppers by Silverchair and John Butler Trio, Thirty Merc's Slideshows debuts at #4 and The Beasts of Bourbon return with Little Animals (#44). One of the month's biggest releases is the Cold Chisel tribute album, Standing on the Outside, which comes in at #2. Two posthumous releases also make a mark: Slim Dusty's Pubs, Trucks & Plains reaches #20, while Billy Thorpe's The Last Record comes in at #22.*

### Accreditations

Silverchair - *Straight Lines* (single) - PLATINUM

John Butler Trio - *Grand National* - PLATINUM

Various - *Standing On The Outside: The Songs Of Cold Chisel* - PLATINUM

Human Nature - *Reach Out: Live At The Capitol Theatre* (DVD) - PLATINUM

Silverchair - *Young Modern* - 2 x PLATINUM

Cold Chisel - *Vision* (DVD) - 2 x PLATINUM

## March 2007

This month in Australian music is bookended by a public outpouring of grief and ends with a public outing.

Within days of Billy Thorpe's untimely death on the last day of February, over 7000 friends and fans gather at the Sydney Entertainment Centre to pay their final respects in a moving and star-studded service, televised live on TV, with Thorpe's coffin centre-stage surrounded by his favourite guitars. Thorpe's great mate Olivia Newton-John flew in from LA to perform an acoustic version of "Somewhere Over The Rainbow" - a song Thorpe made his own early in his career - while another lifelong friend, Max Merritt, sang "Slipping Away". The congregation came from all walks of life with eulogists including Little Pattie, Michael Chugg, George Negus, Bryan Brown and Jack Thompson.

In much happier news, March saw the long-overdue return of the almighty Silverchair. Their single "Straight Lines", the band's first new material in almost five years, shot straight to the top of the Motorola ARIA singles chart. On the last day of the month, the trio officially launched their new album, *Young Modern*, with an ear-splitting show in Sydney.

On another comeback front, the recently-reformed Crowded House announced they had enlisted the services of a new drummer, American Matt Sherrrod, and would soon be returning to the world's stage. A new album, entitled "Time On Earth", was due mid-year.

As has become something of a tradition at this time of the year, one of the biggest events in local music this March took place way over the other side of the world. Over 30 local acts, their entourages and industry types headed for Austin, Texas, for the annual global music convention, South By SouthWest. This year, alongside the usual novice artists looking for their big break, a bunch of our slightly more established acts also made the trek, including Hoodoo Gurus, Beasts Of Bourbon, You Am I and Dallas Crane.

Also Stateside, a trio of our most popular contemporary acts all signed international deals this month that will see their material released in North America. The Rogue Traders signed with Universal, Eskimo Joe with Ryko, and Augie March with Jive/Zomba. Back home, Augie March also claimed the Australian Music Prize for their platinum album, *Moo You Bloody Choir*. The title for most creative Australian album release of 2006 also comes with a cheque for \$25,000 from the Phonographic Performance Company of Australia (PPCA). PPCA is the organisation that collects broadcast and other royalties and pays them to record labels and directly to Australian recording artists.

In other notable music news and gossip this month, British metal bible Kerrang! declared AC/DC's Angus Young to be the greatest rock icon of all time. The sibling of another icon, Michael Hutchence's brother Rhett, won no friends when he put some of Michael's personal belongings up for auction on eBay, including a personal fax to his one-time lover, Kylie Minogue. It wasn't a great month for Kylie on the gossip front [again] with reports that another ex, Jason Donovan, had signed a £1 million book deal in the UK to write a kiss-and-tell biography.

Also having his private life splashed all over the tabloids this March was Anthony Callea, who was inadvertently "outed" on radio by a traffic reporter. To his credit, the pop star decided he'd take the opportunity to set the record straight, so to speak, about his sexuality.

### Singles

*Silverchair return with the biggest single of their career, Straight Lines, debuting at #1 and staying there. Thirsty Merc were also back with a new hit, 20 Good Reasons, peaking at #7. On the pop side of things, TV Rock got to #15 with The Others, and Neighbours star Stephanie McIntosh's So Do I Say Sorry First reached #35.*

### Albums

*Australian Idol runner-up Jessica Mauboy debuts at #4 with The Journey, as does Josh Pike with Memories & Dust.*

### Accreditations

Silverchair - *Straight Lines* (single) - GOLD

Jessica Mauboy - *The Journey* - GOLD

Shannon Noll and Natalie Bassingthwaite - *Don't Give Up* (single) - PLATINUM

Silverchair - *Young Modern* - PLATINUM

## February 2007

The Australian music industry was rocked to its core this February by the sudden death of one of its most legendary figures, the great, irrepressible Billy Thorpe.

Thorpe, 60, died in the early hours of the last day of the month. Emergency services were called to his Sydney home just after midnight and he was immediately rushed to St Vincent's hospital, but Billy suffered a massive heart attack and passed away a couple of hours later.

Both the music industry and wider Australian community were left shocked by the passing of the fit, cheeky and always hard working Thorpe. Leading the thousands of tributes from around the world was Prime Minister John Howard, who described Thorpe as "an accomplished guitarist with an unmistakable voice." Perhaps though, his fans will remember him for one thing above all else, the ear-splitting volume of his concerts.

Thorpe was simply the biggest name in Oz rock throughout the 1960s and early '70s, and forever remained a genuine and passionate supporter of Australian music. One of the first inductees into the ARIA Hall of Fame and an honourable elder statesman of the local music scene, he was a constant presence at major events such as the ARIA and APRA awards and a presenter at the first two ARIA Hall of Fame events.

An incredible musician, a wonderful raconteur, there will never be another Billy Thorpe.

Thorpe's death obviously overshadowed all else in Australian music in February 2007, a month otherwise punctuated by Grammy Awards, break-ups and operating tables.

The ever-growing Wolfmother-mania hit a new international peak in the middle of the month when the frizzy-haired Sydney fuzz trio took out the Grammy for Best Hard Rock Performance, whipping the likes of Nine Inch Nails, System Of A Down and Tool to claim the prize. In turn, Wolfmother became the first Aussie band to get a Grammy since Men At Work 25 years ago. "We're blown away" said singer Andrew Stockdale as the entire music world watched on via satellite. "This doesn't happen very often at all, in Australia, to any band." The trio later released a further statement to clarify their mood. "A Grammy was the last thing on our minds today. We really thought that was reserved for the permanent residents of the USA. We're honoured and we're overwhelmed. It's enormous."

Meanwhile, The Cat Empire had a fifth life on the US tour circuit, including a guest spot on the David Letterman Show.

Not having such a good time was our pop princess Kylie Minogue. Minogue had to endure a very messy and public break-up with long-time boyfriend, Frenchman Olivier Martinez. The British tabloids put Kylie and her ex-beau through the wringer. He was a cad, they claimed. Not so, said Kylie, it was all mutual and amicable.

Another Aussie music legend had an even worse time of it this February. Fifty-year-old Jimmy Barnes, a protege and close friend of the great Billy Thorpe, booked himself in to get his chest split open to fix a faulty aortic valve. No, apparently it had nothing to do with Jimmy's old lifestyle - it's a genetic condition.

### Singles

*Anthony Callea scores yet another Top 20 hit with Addicted, while Eskimo Joe's latest single, New York, reaches #26.*

### Albums

*No big Australian album releases yet this year, but Kylie Minogue's live Showgirl CD makes a brief appearance in the charts at #28.*

### Accreditations

Wolfmother - Joker and the Thief (single) - GOLD  
Little Birdy - Hollywood - GOLD  
Lee Kernaghan - Big Ones Greatest Hits - PLATINUM  
The Living End - State of Emergency - PLATINUM  
Hilltop Hoods - The Hard Road - PLATINUM  
INXS - I'm Only Looking (DVD) - PLATINUM

## January 2007

January 2007 - we're officially moving into what history will look back on as the late-noughties, and what a golden era it is in Oz rock. But don't start waving those Australian flags just yet.

The biggest controversy of the year so far - not only in pop music but right across this great sunburnt country of ours - occurred when Big Day Out organiser Ken West called on punters to leave their Australian flags at home when attending this year's event in Sydney. The flag, said West, had become the equivalent of gang colours. Well, all hell broke loose. From the Prime Minister's office down, not to mention media networks who milked the controversy for all it was worth, it seemed the whole country made West out to be the most unAustralian thing since toast without Vegemite. But the punters still came to this year's Big Day Out in greater numbers than ever, and they brought their flags with them to enjoy a line-up which included Jet, Eskimo Joe, The Vines, John Butler Trio, and Evermore.

In fact, Evermore took to the stage at the Queensland show just after receiving the news that their single 'Light Surrounding You' had finally reached the top spot on the Motorola ARIA Charts after being released 14 weeks earlier.

Meanwhile, Australian acts totally dominated the annual Triple J Hottest 100 poll, taking out the top three spots. Filling the podium were Augie March with 'One Crowded Hour', Eskimo Joe' 'Black Fingernails, Red Wine' and Hilltop Hoods with 'The Hard Road'.

Also doing his fair share of dominating was Lee Kernaghan, who again swept the Country Music Awards in Tamworth, winning another four awards. This brings Kernaghan's overall total to 24, second only to the late, great Slim Dusty, who accumulated an incredible 37 trophies throughout his extraordinary career.

January also brought a late Christmas present with the unexpected but totally awesome news that one of Australia-stroke-New Zealand's greatest ever bands was set to reform. After saying farewell to the world in the biggest possible way a decade ago, Neil Finn announced this month that he and bassist Nick Seymour were reviving Crowded House. The pair had started irregularly performing together again following the death of drummer Paul Hester a year-and-a-half earlier. Fresh off the back of a successful reunion tour last year with his other ex-band, Split Enz, Finn decided to shelve plans to work on a new solo album and now he and Seymour are auditioning drummers both here and in America and are well into recording a new album. They've also got their first official comeback gig booked, in California in April. Keyboardist Mick Hart has also signed on for the revival.

In other news and gossip throughout this eventful January, Delta Goodrem's fans held their breath when it was revealed she was rushed to hospital in Ireland - it turned out to be a stomach bug, and John Farnham's manager announced that he would soon be fronting court over alleged tax offences.

### Singles

*No new charting local releases during this holiday month.*

### Albums

*No new charting local releases during this holiday month.*

### Accreditations

Guy Sebastian - Elevator Love (single) - GOLD  
The Young Divas - Happenin' All Over Again (single) - GOLD  
Guy Sebastian - Taller, Better, Stronger (single) - GOLD  
The Grates - Gravity Won't Get You High - GOLD  
Sneaky Sound System - Sneaky Sound System - GOLD  
Xavier Rudd - Good Spirit: Live At The Enmore (DVD) - GOLD  
TV Rock - Flaunt It (single) - 2 x PLATINUM  
Young Divas - Young Divas - 2 x PLATINUM  
Rogue Traders - Here Come The Drums - 4 x PLATINUM  
Wolfmother - Wolfmother - 5 x PLATINUM

## December 2006

Another grand year in homegrown Oz rock and pop draws to a close. What does the holiday spirit bring? In Sydney, at least, the answer is, believe it or not, rain.

Even in the middle of the worst drought the country has known for centuries, it manages to pour on the annual Homebake festival, headlined by the reformed and revitalised Silverchair. Despite the weather, over 20,000 fans gather to officially launch the summer festival season and watch a line-up of 41 bands including Something For Kate, The Vines, Hilltop Hoods, Eskimo Joe and You Am I.

Meanwhile, the local charts witness another epic comeback with the return of The 12th Man and 'Boned!', his first album in five years. It's Billy Birmingham's seventh album and, incredibly, becomes his seventh album to top the Motorola ARIA charts. That puts him up there with Farnsey and Barnsey in terms of number one albums.

Also making a major splash on the charts this month is the latest Australian Idol, Damien Leith. His debut album, 'The Winner's Journey', sells over 100,000 copies in a week to top the charts, while his debut single, 'Night of My Life', also makes it to the top.

Making a bit of history of their own this December were Wolfmother, Tommy Emmanuel and Keith Urban, all of whom received nominations for next year's Grammy Awards. Urban, of course, won one of the trophies last year in the Best Male Country Vocalist category, which is what he's back up for this time around.

Closer to home, Hilltop Hoods took out Triple J's J Award for album of the year with The Hard Road. The ARIA Award-winning band exclaimed that the J Award is probably more important than any other award we've won.□

This December, national broadcaster ABC also staged a national vote - to find out Australia's favourite album of all time. Unfortunately, the answer wasn't Australian. While Pink Floyd's 'Dark Side of the Moon' won the poll, the highest rating local entrant was Midnight Oil's '10 to 1', which came in at a lowly 23.

While Kylie's Showgirl tour finally made it home to Melbourne, an ex-friend from her Melbourne days, Jason Donovan, was looking at reviving his own music career following a profile-raising stint on the British reality show, 'I'm A Celebrity Get Me Out Of Here'□. Filmed here in Australia, the show draws an average audience of nearly nine million viewers per episode back in the UK. Donovan came third in the show.

Back in the real world, Kasey Chambers announced that she's expecting her second child; Delta was back in Australia and made an appearance at Carols By Candlelight; while on Christmas Day, former Bardot singer and now LA resident Sophie Monk got engaged to her American boyfriend, Benji Madden from US rockers Good Charlotte.

### Singles

*Damien Leith's debut single, Night Of My Life, comes it at #1 on the Motorola ARIA singles chart and stays there all month, while a couple of other ex-Idols also get some love with Guy Sebastian's new single, Elevator Love, reaching #11, and Shannon Noll's duet with Rogue Traders' Natalie Bassingthwaite, a cover of the Peter Gabriel/Kate Bush hit Don't Give Up, makes it to #2. Other notable releases include the John Butler Trio's Funky Tonight (#15) and Sneaky Sound System's Pictures, which peaks #19.*

### Albums

*The top of the album charts in the rush to Christmas are dominated by Damien Leith's The Winner's Journey and The 12th Man's Boned!. Anthony Callea's A New Chapter debuts at #9, and Sneaky Sound System's self-titled debut slowly works its way up to #19.*

#### Accreditations

Shannon Noll and Natalie Bassingthwaighte - Don't Give Up (single) - GOLD  
Anthony Callea - A New Chapter - GOLD  
Adam Brand - Built For Speed - GOLD  
Melinda Schneider - Family Tree - GOLD  
Hillsong Church - Look To You - GOLD  
John Williamson - The PLATINUM Collection - GOLD  
Sarah Blasko - What The Sea Wants, The Sea Will Have - GOLD  
Adam Brand - Built For Speed: Live In Concert (DVD) - GOLD  
The Ten Tenors - Here's To The Heroes (DVD) - GOLD  
The Living End - Live At Festival Hall (DVD) - GOLD  
Guy Sebastian - Closer to the Sun - PLATINUM  
Keith Urban - Love, Pain and the Whole Crazy Thing - PLATINUM  
Adam Brand - Adam Brand - PLATINUM  
David Campbell - The Swing Sessions - PLATINUM  
Young Divas - Young Divas - PLATINUM  
Damien Leith - The Night of my Life (single) - PLATINUM  
The Ten Tenors - Larger Than Life (DVD) - PLATINUM  
Various - The Countdown Spectacular Live (DVD) - 2 x PLATINUM  
The Veronicas - Exposed...The Secret Life Of The Veronicas (DVD) - 2 x PLATINUM  
Crowded House - Farewell To The World (DVD) - 3 x PLATINUM  
Eskimo Joe - Black Fingernails, Red Wine - 3 x PLATINUM  
Human Nature - Dancing In The Street: The Songs Of Motown II - 3 x PLATINUM  
The 12<sup>th</sup> Man - Boned! - 4 x PLATINUM  
Damien Leith - The Winner's Journey - 4 x PLATINUM  
Kylie Minogue - Showgirl: The Greatest Hits Tour (DVD) - 4 x PLATINUM  
Kylie Minogue - Ultimate Kylie - 4 x PLATINUM  
Bernard Fanning - Tea and Sympathy - 5 x PLATINUM  
John Farnham - Whispering Jack - 24 x PLATINUM

## November 2006

It was a month of superstars in November, both homegrown and imported. The biggest music event of the month? That's easy. Finally, the long-awaited return of our pop princess, Ms Kylie Minogue.

After a delay of 18 months, Kylie was completely healthy again and back home to perform her 20 sold-out shows around the country. Fans held onto their tickets that whole while, and during one of the early euphoric gigs in Sydney, they were majorly rewarded when Kylie was joined on stage by fellow tourist Bono to duet on her hit 'Kids'. While in the country, Kylie also took the opportunity to launch her own fragrance, Darling.

Meanwhile, Bono wasn't pushing his own perfume but whilst in Australia U2 took the opportunity to do some filming for a clip in Melbourne's legendary Corner Hotel.

But it could be argued that November belonged to another Irish singer. Folkie Damien Leith was crowned the new Australian Idol and the format seemed to be enjoying something of renaissance. After a couple of disappointing years in the TV rating stakes, 2.2 million Australians tuned in to watch this year's final.

For the youngest Aussie music fans, there was only one story that mattered this November - who would be the new yellow Wiggle? It was announced late in the month that Greg Page would have to forgo his driver's seat in the Wiggles juggernaut due to a health condition called orthostatic intolerance. He would be replaced by his understudy, Sam Moran.

Meanwhile, still suffering his own health issues, Keith Urban released his new album, appropriately entitled 'Love, Pain And The Whole Crazy Thing', while still in rehab. But that didn't seem to affect his international popularity in the slightest. The album debuted at No. 3 on the US album charts, the same place it reached on Australia's Motorola ARIA Album Chart.

Also still making waves overseas, Delta Goodrem was back in the top 10, this time in Japan with a hybrid version of her 'Innocent Eyes' album.

In the saddest news of the month, Belinda Emmett - singer, actress and wife of regular ARIA Awards host Rove McManus - tragically lost her long battle with cancer. Belinda was 32.

### Singles

*Young Divas score another Top 10 hit with Happenin' All Over Again, which peaks at #9, while Keith Urban makes his return with his new single, Once In A Lifetime, coming in at #18.*

### Albums

*A huge month for new local albums. While Human Nature hold down the No. 1 spot virtually all November with Dancing In The Street, female singing quartet Young Divas come in at #4 with their self-titled debut. It's also a great month for David Campbell who is back in the charts with The Swing Sessions (peaking at #7). Meanwhile, Guy Sebastian makes it three Top 10 albums in a row with Closer To The Sun (#4), and Keith Urban's aptly titled Love, Pain & The Whole Crazy Thing comes in at #5. With Kylie back in the country, a new best-of, Ultimate, reaches #7, and Midnight Oil's induction into the Hall of Fame helps their new compile, Flat Chat, make it to #21.*

### Accreditations

Bindi Irwin - Bindi Kidfitness with Steve Irwin and The Crocmen - GOLD

Guy Sebastian - Closer To The Sun - GOLD

Keith Urban - Love, Pain and the Whole Crazy Thing - GOLD

David Campbell - The Swing Sessions - GOLD

Adam Brand - What A Life - GOLD

Pete Murray - A Year In The Sun (DVD) - GOLD

Various - Australian Idol: The Final 12 2006 (DVD) - GOLD

Various - Two For The Show: Rockwiz Duets (DVD) - GOLD

Various - The Countdown Spectacular Live (DVD) - PLATINUM

Adam Brand - Good Friends - PLATINUM

Evermore - Real Life - PLATINUM

Kylie Minogue - Ultimate Kylie - 3 x PLATINUM

Paul Kelly - Songs From The South: The Best Of - 4 x PLATINUM

Wolfmother - Wolfmother - 4 x PLATINUM

## October 2006

What a month in Oz Music as the ARIA Awards celebrate its 20th anniversary. Yes, 20 years since the first ever ARIA Awards were staged in a hotel ballroom in Sydney, untelevised, hosted by Elton John. Back then, INXS was named our best band, Crowded House was our best new act, and John Farnham had just regained his throne as King of Pop, winning six ARIA awards on that very first night.

The ARIA Awards have grown up a little since then. This year, nearly 1.3 million music fans across the country tuned in to watch the live broadcast of the show on Network Ten, making it one of the year's highest rating TV specials. Meanwhile, down in the ring in Sydney's Acer Arena, there was no one big winner at this year's awards. Rather, the spread of prizes perfectly reflect the popularity, brilliance and diversity of the current crop of young Australian talent.

To no-one's surprise, Wolfmother, the world's favourite afro-topped hard rock trio, took out the trifecta of the *Best Group*, *Best Rock Album* and *Breakthrough Artist - Album* awards. Wolfmother's ARIA success coincided with the band's debut album celebrating a year in the Motorola ARIA Album Charts, as well as preparing to cross the 1 million sales worldwide.

Also sharing the limelight of the 20th ARIA Awards was every Aussie's favourite lead singer-gone-solo, Bernard Fanning, who took home the prizes for Album of the Year and Best Male Artist. Another double winner was Adelaide's Hilltop Hoods (Best Urban Release and Best Independent Release), while first time winners included Clare Bowditch (Best Female Artist), The Audreys (Best Blues and Roots album), Youth Group (Breakthrough Artist - Single), Cat Empire (Best World Music Album) and, finally, Human Nature (Highest Selling Album).

But the highlight of the night was made up of two legends of Oz rock. Anyone who saw the 20th ARIA Awards won't soon forget the newly reformed Silverchair help induct Midnight Oil into the ARIA Hall of Fame with a rip-roaring interpretation of the Oils' classic, Don't Wanna Be The One. The 'Chair's Daniel Johns ends the performance by vandalising the set with a can of spray paint: "PG 4 PM".

Sadly, the Australian music family loses Ian Rilen, the great guitarist of Rose Tattoo and X, who loses his battle with cancer aged only 58. Rilen's ailing health had brought special significance to Rose Tattoo's induction into the ARIA Hall of Fame earlier this year. Benefit shows in Melbourne last month featured a bill of friends and fans that included Rose Tattoo, Hoodoo Gurus, Beasts of Bourbon, Don Walker, Tim Rogers, Billy Thorpe and Chrissie Amphlett.

In other local music news this month, The Whitlams' Tim Freedman changes microphones to become a part-time radio jock every Sunday for Sydney radio station, Nova, while Jet's comeback world tour is interrupted when singer Nic Cester suffers throat problems, causing a bunch of European shows to be rescheduled.

### Singles

*Wolfmother celebrate its ARIA Awards success with the release of a new single from their debut album, and "Joker and the Thief" proves to be the band's biggest hit yet, debuting at # 8 in the Motorola ARIA Singles Chart. Also making a top 10 debut, at # 8, is Evermore with their latest hit, "Light Surrounding You". Other notable releases include Keith Urban's new single "Once In A Lifetime" (#18) and Girlband's "Party Girl" (#43).*

### Albums

*Human Nature release the sequel to their multi-platinum album Reach Out: The Motown Record, and Dancing In The Street proves another instant hit debuting at # 1. October's other big local releases include the second album from Sydney songstress Sarah Blasko, What The Sea Wants The Sea Will Have (#7), the return of Marcia Hines with Discotheque (#7), a third hit album from Guy Sebastian in Closer To The Sun (#4), and Perth's Little Birdy enjoying top 10 success with Hollywood (#9).*

### Accreditations

Matt Tilley - Cereal Pest: The Gotcha Calls 2 - GOLD  
The Ten Tenors - Here's To The Heroes - GOLD  
Hillsong Church - Mighty To Save - GOLD  
Eskimo Joe - Black Fingernail, Red Wine (single) - PLATINUM  
Human Nature - Dancing In The Street: The Songs Of Motown II - PLATINUM  
Jet - Shine On - PLATINUM  
Eskimo Joe - Black Fingernails, Red Wine - 2 x PLATINUM

## September 2006

September saw the local music scene gear up for the business end of 2006. Spring is here - the sun's out, time to hit the road. Bring out the big guns. The 20th ARIA Awards are just around the corner.

Of course, a strange shadow was cast over all aspects of Australian life throughout September 2006 as the nation grappled with the deaths, within a matter of days, of two cultural icons: Brocky and the Croc Hunter. At Steve Irwin's memorial service in Queensland, local country music legend John Williamson paid tribute to his friend by performing the Croc Hunter's favourite all-time song, True Blue. The service was watched by hundreds of millions of the Croc Hunter's fans across the globe.

As for happier memories, September saw the joyous return of some old familiar faces. The Countdown Spectacular, headlined by Sherbet and Hush, featured over 20 classic Australian acts from the '70s and '80s in a three-hour show that played in arenas around the country.

Also back from the past for a new national tour were INXS with, that's right, their new leader singer. They played to 70,000 fans across Australia, and that's not including their performance at the rugby league grand final. Meanwhile, one of this year's ARIA Hall of Fame inductees, Daddy Cool, launched a new album, The New Cool, their first in 35 years.

But back to the future: September saw the announcement of nominations for this year's ARIA awards. Sharing the honours for most nominations - five each - were Bernard Fanning, Eskimo Joe, Wolfmother and the Hilltop Hoods, while the Rogue Traders got four and the Veronicas three. How's that for diversity? The 20th ARIA Awards will be held in Sydney on October 29.

In other notable moments from September, 6000 unsigned local acts signed up for the return of Triple J's UnEarthed competition, while 600,000 viewers tuned into Foxtel to watch Melbourne singer Toby Rand compete in the final of the TV talent quest, Rock Star: Supernova, live from Los Angeles. The show set a new ratings record for Australian subscription TV. In the end, Toby lost, but he also won: His own band, the Melbourne-based Juke Kartel, signed a US record deal.

Over on the other side of the world in the UK, Kylie Minogue, rehearsing for her comeback Australian tour at the end of the year, took time out to launch a new book, a semi-autobiographical children's book called The Showgirl Princess, as well as her obligatory 2007 picture calendar.

While Bernard Fanning and Jet spent much of the month on the road in the US, Wolfmother had to cancel their final six US dates when bassist Chris Ross made a dash home for the birth of his first child, a boy. Also on daddy duties, for a third time, was Shannon Noll, who added a new baby daughter to the clan.

With September out of the way, that means October is here. And October means one thing - the ARIA Awards, the 20th ARIA Awards. See you there.

### Singles

*New daddy Shannon Noll forged a bit of history this month when his new single "Lonely" made it to #8 on the Motorola ARIA singles chart. That means all eight singles that Nollsy has released so far have made it into the Top 10, a first for any male Australian artist. Towards the end of the month, Nollsy's old Australian Idol buddy, Guy Sebastian, proved he's still a pop force too, with his new single, "Taller, Stronger, Better" coming in at #3. Other singles of the month included Little Birdy's "Come On Come On" [#18], Jet's "Put Your Money Where Your Mouth Is" and Eskimo Joe's "Sarah" [both peaking at #14].*

### Albums

*The biggest new local release of the month was Tightrope by soap/pop starlet, Stephanie McIntosh, entering the Motorola ARIA album charts at #4. Representing home-grown rock this month, Dallas Crane's new one, Factory Girls, entered at # 30, while the powerhouse duo of Tex Perkins and Tim Rogers - better known as T'N'T - appeared at #31 with their debut joint effort, My Better Half.*

### Accreditations

Soundtrack - The Boy From Oz - GOLD  
Stephanie McIntosh - Tightrope - GOLD  
Shannon Noll - Lift - 3 x PLATINUM  
The Veronicas - The Secret Life Of... - 4 x PLATINUM

## August 2006

Without doubt, the music event of the month was the ARIA Hall of Fame ceremony, held in the ballroom of Melbourne's Regent Theatre on August 16. What an amazing night, a magical blend of local music legends and the young'uns that carry on the legacy they helped forge.

Inducted into our Hall of Fame this year were Rose Tattoo, Daddy Cool, Divinyls, Helen Reddy, Lobby Loyde and Icehouse. Now that's what you call a band of local legends. On the night itself, Divinyls reformed, Icehouse was back and Daddy Cool opened the show. Also jumping on stage were Jet, honouring the Tatts with *We Can't Be Beaten*, along with The McClymonts and Vanessa Amorosi paying tribute to Helen Reddy. Lobby Loyde himself jumped on stage as Billy Thorpe and The Aztecs performed in his honour. Also present, making the induction speeches, were Hugh Jackman, Toni Collette, Tim Finn, Sarah McLeod and Tim Freedman. How's that for a roomful of homegrown talent? But the most startling event of the evening? Seeing those Tatts boys in their suits, accompanied by their mums.

August also saw some of our other relative young'uns continue to spread their wings across the world's stages, as well as our TV screens. Wolfmother continued their quest for world domination through the US and Europe [including a support slot with Pearl Jam], while The Living End spent a month with the Warped Tour across the US, before returning home for a month of headline shows across our own great land. Meanwhile, Bernard Fanning set out on his lonesome for showcase shows in Europe and the US, where his debut solo album *Tea and Sympathy* has been released. On his return, he'll be straight back to Brisbane to finish the new *Powderfinger* album. And while we're talking contemporary Aussie supergroups, those Silverchair lads were back together in LA for most of the month, finishing off their first album in four years.

Also in the US, Keith Urban continues to make country music history. Mr Kidman's latest single, *Once in a Lifetime*, came in at number 17 on the mainstream Billboard charts. That's the highest ever debut for a single by any country music artist, ever.

Closer to home, Jet came out of their studio hibernation to perform a surprise show at Melbourne's Prince of Wales Hotel as part of the launch of the local branch of what's become the world's most popular virtual music hub, MySpace. The website already claims 1.2 million local subscribers.

While we're on music things that draw millions locally, Network Ten launched its fourth season of *Australian Idol*, and viewer numbers were immediately up on last year. Another emerging pop star, *Neighbours'* star Stephanie McIntosh, also got her own reality TV show to document her rise up the pop charts. And it worked, with McIntosh's debut single, *Mistake*, entering the Motorola ARIA singles charts at No. 3. In more traditional forms of music TV, Ten's *Video Hits* - a certified star maker in its own right - turned 20 this month.

Going by statistics alone, it would appear that, so far, it's been a great year for everyone in the music biz. Latest official figures released by ARIA showed that the local music industry had grown by 5.8 per cent in the first six months of 2006.

But, of course, we all know music isn't about numbers. And we were reminded of that in Melbourne at the end of the month when over 2,000 fans and 50 musicians gathered to pay tribute and help raise money for one of our latest certified ARIA icons, Lobby Loyde. The gathering helped raise close to \$100,000 for the 65-year-old star, who is battling lung cancer. Now, right there, that's what music and the music community is all about.

### Singles

*It's a singing television starlet who claims the biggest local single of the month with Stephanie McIntosh's debut, "Mistake", entering the Motorola ARIA singles chart at #3. The Veronicas continue their unbroken run of hits with the sisters' latest single, "Revolution" cracking into the Top 20. Dannii Minogue also scores another hit with her latest, "So Under Pressure", peaking at #16.*

### Albums

*Somewhat of a quiet month in local albums. The notable exception being Kasey Chambers' fourth solo album, Carnival, which debuts at #1. Also of note, Hugh Jackman's revival of The Boy From Oz in arenas around the country sees the soundtrack of the show reach #14, and counting.*

### Accreditations

Stephanie McIntosh - *Mistake* (single) - GOLD  
Kasey Chambers - *Carnival* - GOLD  
The Butterfly Effect - *Imago* - GOLD  
Various - *Countdown: The Wonder Years* (DVD) - GOLD  
The Young Divas - *This Time I Know It's For Real* (single) - PLATINUM  
Wolfmother - *Wolfmother* - 3 x PLATINUM