



The Bluegrass Truth

with Hamish & Lachlan Davidson



This year we have seen a huge number of international Bluegrass acts making the journey down under. The list includes: Punch Brothers, Peter Rowan Bluegrass Band, Audie Blaylock & Redline, The Roys, Jerry Salley, Mike Compton, Jim Lauderdale, The New Worlds, Whitetop Mountaineers, among others. This is an enormous movement forward for the Australian music scene, increasing awareness of Bluegrass and contemporary acoustic music for the benefit of local acts like ourselves. Also, many new string bands are

Bit of 'Wonderful', while she was away. The 23rd Annual IBMA International Bluegrass Awards were held on the 27th of September.

and Instrumental Group of the Year, while Blue Highway band member Rob Ickes won his 12th Dobro Player of the Year trophy, making Ickes the most awarded IBMA instrumentalist. Russell Moore from IIIrd Tyme Out and Dale Ann Bradley won the Male and Female Vocalist titles respectively. Another standout recipient was Junior Sisk & Ramblers Choice, who took home both Song and Album of the Year. The award show was hosted at Nashville's Ryman Auditorium with fantastic performances, including a fitting tribute to the late Earl Scruggs for the finale. Next year will see the



Junior Sisk & Ramblers Choice

IBMA's World of Bluegrass move to Raleigh, North Carolina for the next three years. The event was held in



Mark Johnson

Music City USA for a total of seven years after leaving Kentucky in 2004. Mark Johnson was selected as the recipient of the third annual Steve Martin Prize for Excellence in Banjo and Bluegrass. The prize includes a \$50,000 cheque and has been previously awarded to Noam Pikelný & Sammy Shelor. Johnson is not a

traditional Bluegrass banjo player, but he has developed his own style which he refers to as Clawgrass. At least partially, it is like the clawhammer banjo style played in a bluegrass context.

Lachie arrived back in Australia recently after an eight week trip across the US where he attended many Bluegrass related events, including IBMA's

World of Bluegrass and the Americana Music Conference. He caught up with Australian singer Karen Lynne while she was in Nashville recording her new Gospel Bluegrass album. The recording took place in Franklin, Tennessee at Tom T. and Dixie Hall's studio, with Jerry Salley sitting in the producer's chair.

Melbourne string band, The Quarry Mountain Dead Rats, have released their first music video from their debut album *Bloodhound Killed My Squeezebox* for the first single, 'Coat Tails'.

Mustered Courage has had a busy year too, appearing at many festivals nationwide. This month the M.C. boys completed the recording of their new studio album to be released early in 2013.

The Pigs have also released their new album, *The Great Bluegrass Swindle*. A spectacular new band, American Drive, have released their debut album through Rural Rhythm.

The band consists of members of JD Crowe & the New South, allowing Crowe to retire from the touring circuit next year. Additional new

albums to look out for are releases from the Kenny & Amanda Smith Band, Ricky Skaggs & Kentucky Thunder, Sleepy Man Banjo Boys (who were brought into the spotlight through YouTube, leading to a performance on David Letterman's Late Show).

Tamworth Country Music Festival always has a fair share of bluegrass

(last held in 2011), Rural Press will be hosting a brand new Bluegrass contest for banjo and fiddle players in Coca-Cola park which will have cash prizes in both the junior and senior sections.

Pete Denahy, a self-proclaimed 'tight-arse,' has released a new album titled *Wishbone Road*. It is a non-comedy, Bluegrass album featuring songs

and tunes about the gold rush days around Yackandandah, Victoria. He recorded the whole album on GarageBand on his laptop and played nearly everything on it himself. Pete be hosting a Comedy and Bluegrass Breakfast Show each morning at Wests during the Tamworth Festival. The Australian Youth Bluegrass Scholarship is heading into its second year in 2013. The recipient of the 2013 scholarship will win a cash prize of \$1,500 and a recording package with Pacific International Music. If you are 25 and under, or know someone who may be eligible, please head to www.davidsonbrothersband.com for more details. Lastly, for those who might be travelling to the USA after they've got Tamworth out of the way, the Society for the Preservation of Bluegrass Music of America's (SPGMA) 39th Annual Bluegrass Music Awards & 30th National



Peter Denahy

imbedded throughout its venues. Although it doesn't look like there will be an Australian Bluegrass Championship in 2013 at this stage

Convention is happening 31 January to 3 February 2013. The event will be held at the Sheraton Music City Hotel, Nashville, Tennessee.

Rob Ickes



The Gibson Brothers took out the major award of the night, 2012 Entertainer of the Year, as well as Gospel Recording of the Year. Blue Highway were awarded both Vocal Group

emerging across our continent this year, especially in the younger and Southern demographics.

While Kristy Cox has been busy over the last two months playing a string of dates across America, she was lucky enough to win the Australian Independent Female Rising Star Award in Mildura for her contemporary Bluegrass song 'Little



Russel Moore & Lachlan