



# Bluegrass Truth

with Hamish & Lachlan Davidson



Melbourne alt-bluegrassers **Mustered Courage** recently won their first Australian Country Music Award for Best Instrumental with a tune called 'Candle Creek', the 'B side' of a digital single released in September 2014. Their fans will be pleased to hear that they have been in the studio for the past few months working madly on their third album, which will be their first since signing with Lost Highway records. Although Paddy Montgomery features on their award winning track, he has recently moved on to other musical endeavours and we are getting a sense that 'Muz Cuz' may be moving in an entirely new direction musically. The inaugural Bluegrass Golden Guitar at the Awards went to Kristy Cox for her song 'One Heartbreak Away'.

**Pete Denahy** worked double time spreading bluegrass cheer across the Tamworth Country Music Festival. Denahy hosted a daily breakfast show with **Arron McLean** and **Montz Matsumot**, showcasing many guest pickers during the event. He also

hosted the first ever Bluegrass Jam to encourage your country musicians to try their hand at jamming on bluegrass. We admire this man's vision!

**The Rambling Rooks** have renamed themselves '**The Band of Ruhks**' and



The Mid North

released a new single 'Coal Minin' Man' with 87 year old bluegrass icon **Ralph Stanley**. The Ruhks are Kenny Smith, Ronnie Bowman and Don Rigsby. These stellar musicians and singers rose

to fame in the **Lonesome River Band** in the 1990s, and have reincarnated once again. Their music is second to none and they have risen to the status of bluegrass royalty. The trio will release its self-titled debut album in March, via 101 Ranch Records.

**Ralph Stanley** has also just released a new all-star album. *Ralph Stanley and Friends: Man of Constant Sorrow*, was released in late January through Cracker Barrel Old Country Stores. Co-produced by **Jim Lauderdale** and **Buddy Miller**, the 13-track album features guest appearances from an impressive array of Stanley's many musical disciples, including **Dierks Bentley**, **Elvis Costello**, **Robert Plant**, **Ricky Skaggs**, **Lee Ann Womack** and **Josh Turner**.

**Scott Collins** is a name you're going to hear a lot more of when it comes to original Australian Bluegrass. He's the front man of NSW group **The Mid North** who've just released their second album *Tales from a Mountain*. The album has a real Aussie hillbilly bluegrass flavour. It has a live feel and energy, yet it is polished. The bluegrass tracks have a bit of a Stanley Brothers



The Band of Ruhks

feel and the folksy ballads are reminiscent of **Norman Blake** and make you want to dust off your Deadwood DVDs.

We'd like to introduce **Catgut**, a string trio from Sydney's inner west. Catgut consists of **Kieran Owens** on banjo, **Nick Street** on guitar and **Miriam Jones** on fiddle. The band has grown from the seeds of Appalachian old time traditions, playing tunes and singing together in parks, backyards, lounge rooms, festivals and parties. While the foundation of that tradition is strong, Catgut is a musically open entity, drawing inspiration from country to new improvised music. They have just released their second album titled *Flying Spiders Over Texas*, recorded in Sydney with Gary Brown.

**Nine Mile Creek** are a new band on the Victorian bluegrass scene. Featuring **Mark Pottenger**, **Andrew Barcham**, **Tanya Balka**, **Kevin Parsell** and **Colin Weight**, they play traditional and original bluegrass, with a touch of swing and Americana. The band is building a strong repertoire and is a

regular contributor to the Mountain Pickers Association's monthly night at **Burrinja Café** in Upwey.

Gippsland's own **Strzelecki StringBusters** have a new album out titled *Old No.4*. The album is full of old acoustic standards played in a style somewhere between traditional string band music, alt-country and Americana. Lead vocal duties are shared around virtually all the band members as usual and instrumentation is thick and varied and tasteful.

**The Gold Coast Folk Festival** is happening on 19-20 September. You can expect an exciting array of acoustic music, food, jam sessions and workshops, set in the beautiful Gold Coast Hinterland. The festival brings together legendary folk artists and emerging talents from across Australia for two days of folk, blues and bluegrass.

basic ground rules across all aspects for musicians wanting to learn how to jam on bluegrass music.

Another jam camp that has popped up for budding pickers is hosted in **Delaney's Creek**, just north of Brisbane Queensland. This year's camp will be held April 24-26. Tutors include Kay Armstrong, Gary Vann and The Company.

**The International Bluegrass Association** is still searching for a new Executive Director after the announced departure of long-term staff member Nancy Cardwell shortly after the 2014 World of Bluegrass event in Raleigh, North Carolina.

If you haven't already checked it out, 'Inside Lewyn Davis' is the latest film by the famous **Coen Brothers** (O' Brother Where Art Thou, Burn After



Mustered Courage



Catgut

**Jamcamps Australia** are now accepting bookings now for their second camp in Manjimup, Western Australia. The camp will run May 29th to June 1st and will be based on a group tuition method developed by **Pete Wernick** (**Hot Rize**) to teach the skills and

Reading, The Ladykillers). It follows the life and reality of a struggling folk artist through New York City in the 1960's. Once again the film contains an outstanding soundtrack produced by the renowned T Bone Burnett which features the **Punch Brothers**, **Mumford & Sons**, etc.