

11 February 2008

THE WINNERS in the seven gospel categories of the 50th annual Grammy Awards were announced in LA this week shortly before the live telecast of the major awards across the globe.

The Clark Sisters won three awards:

- o tieing for **Best Gospel Performance** with *Blessed And Highly Favored* alongside Aretha Franklin & Mary J. Blige with *Never Gonna Break My Faith*.
- o **Best Gospel Song** with *Blessed And Highly Favored* and
- o **Best Traditional Gospel Album** with *Live - One Last Time*.

Israel & New Breed was extremely excited to receive the honor for **Best Contemporary Pop Gospel Album** with *A Deeper Level* ahead of TobyMac, Michael W Smith, Mandisa, and Casting Crowns.

Ashley Cleveland won her third gospel Grammy with *Before the Daylight's Shot* beating Skillet and Pillar for the **Best Rock Gospel Album** category. She told the crowd that she just turned 51 a few days ago - one year older than the awards – so winning the 'gramophone' again was the nicest present anyone could imagine.

Other winners were:

- Fred Hammond for **Best Contemporary R&B Gospel Album**, and
- Ricky Skaggs - **Best Southern, Country, Or Bluegrass Gospel Album**

Robert Randolph and Michael W Smith appeared in the pre-telecast as presenters.

DELIRIOUS? IS SET TO RELEASE its final CD featuring drummer Stew Smith in mid April. The CD *Kingdom Of Comfort* is the result of the band's journey over the past few years where they have encountered life and situations so far removed from all we know in the West. Martin, Stu G, Tim, Stew and Jon have been irrevocably impacted by the poverty and deprivation that they have seen, causing them to ask the question have we grown accustomed to our kingdom of comfort? This is the group's 11th CD.

HILLSONG UNITED is set to release its new CD *iHeart Revolution : With Hearts As One*. Lead singer Joel Houston says the new project includes 28 songs recorded during the band's 2006 world tour to Cape Town, Toronto, Chicago, Buenos Aires, and Manila.

WOODLANDS MEDIA this week enters its tenth year publishing *The Rock Across Australia* chart. Wanno - the 17 year old voice who's heard presenting the *InfoZone* segment weekly on *The Reality Zone* - compiles the chart from playlists submitted regularly by more than 20 stations throughout the country. When the first Top 30 was published on 15 February 1999 the number one song was DC Talk's *Supernatural*.

NEWSBOYS WIN HONOURS, READY FOR REZFEST

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Newsboys has been named Australian Christian music's Artist of the Year while its hit *Something Beautiful* has been named Song of the Year.

After scoring international success and fame, Aussie band Newsboys has been named Australian Christian music's Artist of the Year.

The band, which started in a garage in Queensland and played one of its first gigs at a local pub, has sold well in excess of six million records, had four Grammy nominations and scored more than 25 number one hits.

But despite being based just out of Nashville, the Newsboys still consider themselves very much an Aussie band with lead singer Peter Furler delighted to have been given the Australian accolade after so many years.

"It's something we are proud of (being Australian)," he said from his home in the US.

"Aussies have done some fantastic things and from such a small nation there have been so many achievements," he said.

"It's where we cut our teeth and you can't forget your roots."

In recent years, Newsboys has been a regular entry on *Business Review Weekly's* list of top earning Australian overseas artists.

The band is well known for some of the most spectacular shows in music with 33 metre catwalks, drum risers which spin the drummer upside down, and a pod which takes Furler about 10 metres into the air above the crowd.

Three of the band, including Duncan Phillips (drums) and Melbourne guitarist Paul Colman, formerly of the Grammy nominated Paul Colman Trio, are Australian while the fourth member, Jeff Frankenstein (keyboards), is from Detroit.

Newsboys also picked up the award for Song of the Year for *Something Beautiful*, one of three number one hits off the new album *Go*.

The honours were announced by Australia's national Christian music charts, *The Rock Across Australia* (TRAA). The charts report radio airplay from more than 20 Christian stations throughout the country representing more than a million listeners each week.

In March, Newsboys will return to Australia for a national tour which includes the RezFest Festival in Melbourne (March 23-24) at the historic Point Cook Homestead.

Tickets for the two day festival, sponsored by Wyndham City Council and Wyndham Ministers' Network are \$37 per ticket per day.

A **special discounted weekend** ticket is available from February 18 to March 9 only for \$55 (incl GST). Tickets available from Word Bookstores, Koorong, online at lightfm.com.au, or by phone (03) 9741 9400.