

**\*brg\* No. 2** is a magazine written and published by Bruce Gillespie, GPO Box 5195AA, Melbourne, Victoria 3001, Australia (phone (03) 419-4797) for the June 1991 ANZAPA mailing, the August 1991 FAPA mailing, and a few other friends.

For ANZAPA, this is definitely a membership-saver. Thanks, LynC and Clive, for allowing me to stay on board. Not that the problem that stopped me contributing last time has gone away. Or rather, Problem No. 1 has just disappeared, only to be superseded by Long-running Problem No. 1.

Problem No. 1 was an enormous secondary textbook editing job I did for Macmillan. It took about eight months of the last year. In between was another large job that I had to finish in February. At times I was working six and seven days a week, which is a bit of a shock to my system. There was actually a weekend I took off. On the Saturday I wrote some *Melbourne Report* reviews. On the Sunday I wrote an article called 'Listomania' for a magazine called *Tirra Lirra* (see Page 2).

Long-running Problem No. 1 is *The Metaphysical Review* 15/16/17/∞. It should have appeared four years ago. It's enormous, which is why I've never quite had the time to publish it. Pretty good stuff, too, except that even the authors will have forgotten what they wrote. *And I should be doing that issue right now.*

ANZAPA obligations are stopping this Great Work. Impressed? No. I didn't think so.

But I feel guilty for not writing proper mailing comments. Apologies to people like Roger Weddall, whose mailing comments I've enjoyed so much during the last year or so.

Thanks to ANZAPA members who voted me a couple of cane toads during the recent Ditmar bunfight in Brisbane.

That's what I assume, anyway. The Philip Dick article appeared only in ANZAPA (potential Ditmar voters), FAPA (non-potential Ditmar voters), and in copies sent to about 50 other people, most of them overseas. Despite all the SMOFing that goes on around Melbourne, now we know that the real power in Australian fandom is ANZAPA. If we realized this, we might become as insufferable as the SMOFs.

Australian fandom has been the occasion of many Amazing Scenes during the last few months, but nothing astonishes me more than the fact that Phil Wlodarczyk liked my article! And there's hardly a rude word in it.

A few weeks ago, Eva Windisch, editor and organizer of *Tirra Lirra*, rang me in desperation. She needed an article. Anything! Anything, I said, is what you'll get. *Tirra Lirra* is an A4-sized little magazine usually aimed at readers in the Yarra Valley. (Eva lives in Yarra Glen.) I couldn't think of any subject matter remotely connected with the Yarra Valley, so I offered the following piece of waffle:

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# LISTOMANIA

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If you had known me when I was fifteen, you would not have suspected that I cultivated a unique vice.

You would have known a tall, demure youth who went to secondary school, did his homework occasionally, and grumped at his parents and sisters. He listened to pop music, and bought records occasionally when he could afford them. He was not quite an ordinary youth, since he hated sport and always carried a book with him. He had taught himself to type at the age of fourteen, and often talked about becoming a writer but did little writing. Not ordinary, but not extraordinary, either.

If you could have moved inside this youth's head, you would have found an unsuspected room. It was full of sheets of paper covered in tiny writing. They were hit parades, which he stuck in a large orange-covered diary. This was his unique vice.

In our household, listening to pop music was not merely sinful; it was downright traitorous. We were an ABC family; we listened only to classical music and 'sacred music' (which could be anything from *The Messiah* to badly sung hymn tunes). Until the age of twenty I could never detect the tunes or catch the beat in classical music. I was a traitor to the cause of purity and sanctity.

I began to listen to pop music in 1959 at the age of twelve, after I received my own radio. For a while I continued to listen to the officially approved programs, such as the ABC's *Children's Hour*. But I twiddled the radio dial in the forbidden direction of the commercial stations. On 3AW I discovered Ralphe Rickman, who was then condemned to play records from the Top 60 every Saturday afternoon. (Rickman was a mellifluous announcer; only much later did I learn how much he disliked pop music.)

In 1960, for most respectable people pop music was 'that dreadful American garbage'. For me, it was freedom. I was always fascinated by the kind of rhythms you could tap your foot to, but I could not find such rhythms in the music my parents liked. I yearned for singable tunes, although I could not sing. Although I did not realize it at the time, pop music was also a counterblast against the suffocating comfortable ordinariness of suburban Australian life of the 1950s. If I am a very different person from my parents, blame those subversive little records I bought during the 1960s. Pop music was an itch in the head, and I scratched the itch.

I did not start by liking rock and roll. Rock and roll was still degenerate stuff in 1959, and not much was played at the time. Instead, I became addicted to a little tune called 'Joey's Song' by Bill Haley and the Comets. This modest instrumental, officially described on the label as a 'fox trot', was almost the last successful record by the group that had launched rock and roll only five years before. It failed in America, but was top of the hit parade in Australia. It was my first 45 r.p.m. single, and I received it for Christmas 1959.

Ralphe Rickman on 3AW told me that 'Joey's Song' was Number 1 on the hit parade. What, then, was Number 2? And 3, and so on, down to Number 60? It was impossible to tell. Rickman did not play the records upward from 60 to 1, but in random order. Sometimes, to my intense annoyance, he played a record but forgot to give its number. The only way to find out the order of the Top 60 was to copy them down myself as he played the records, then reconstruct the list in my diary.

This I did. And I found, to my horror, that there were gaps in the list. Rickman did not play all the Top 60 records on any particular Saturday afternoon. Worse, sometimes he repeated his favourite records while leaving out others. I began shouting at the radio. Poor Ralphe Rickman; he was just doing a job.

Two searches began. One was to find the True Top 60, or at least a complete list. The other was to find a way of correcting the stupidities of other record buyers.

With the exception of 'Joey's Song', all my favourite songs crept up the Top 60 to about Number 35, slumbered there for a few weeks, then quickly disappeared. My favourites should have comprised the Top 10. Records that I hated at the time (including Bobby Darin's inspired version of 'Mack the Knife') should never have reached beyond Number 59. Records I doted on, such as Frankie Avalon's 'Just Ask Your Heart' (is there anybody anywhere else in the world who remembers that song?) should have been Number 1 but instead lasted only a few weeks on the hit parade.

I solved this dilemma by writing down a Top 10 of my own favourite records. This was my first attempt to correct the injustices of the free market.

Eventually I found a complete list of the correct top records. Every Friday, *The Sun* printed the 3DB Top Forty. I cut this out, and pasted it in my diary. There was a slight difficulty. I had not heard about half of the singles on the 3DB list. Which station was lying: 3AW or 3DB? I came to suspect that 3AW's Top 60, which I had regarded as infallible for about a year, was constructed according to the whims of the people in the record library. Probably they took the true lists, and skewed them to suit their own tastes, just as I would have done.

Although 3DB had published its own Top Forty for some years, it still featured few programs of pop music. It was no good listening there to discover the missing items.

Further dial-twiddling revealed the radio program for me: Stan Rofe's *Platter Parade* on 3KZ. His program clashed with the *ABC Children's Hour* (the 'Argonauts' Program', as we called it). Mac and Jimmy and the others said their program was for 'children from seven to seventeen'. It wasn't, not by 1960. Time had already passed them by, and so did I. Childhood ended the night I decided to listen to Stan Rofe rather than the Argonauts.

It is impossible to tell you of the excitement that Stan Rofe gave to his listeners when he was still on 3KZ, although he has been immortalized by Keith Glass in a song called 'When Stan Was the Man'. He had complete freedom to play the records he liked, but he played everything. In his breathless excitement, words falling over each other, he gave the impression that he loved every rock and roll record in the world. (But if he didn't like something, he could be amusingly nasty about it.)

Better still, Stan Rofe knew what he was talking about. He knew all the delicious bits of trivial information about the records. On Monday afternoons he received a copy of the latest American Top 100 singles chart, from which he played the 'red bullet performers' (records rising fastest on the chart). In this way I heard many records that nobody else played; indeed, many records that were never played again on Australian radio. The impassioned shrieks of black performers such as the Isley Brothers hurtled out of the radio. I still remember the afternoon I first heard the Righteous Brothers' 'You've Lost that Loving Feeling' on Stan's Monday afternoon countdown; the Pop Millennium had arrived.

At the same time as he was playing American records that no other Australian station would touch, Stan Rofe was supporting Australian performers. Not only did he play the records, but often he chose songs or arrangements for them. He created the careers of such people as Merv Benton, Normie Rowe and Johnny Chester, and kept Johnny O'Keefe's career bright in Melbourne when it had already faded in Sydney.

From 1960 to 1965, the most exciting thing I did each week day was turn on my radio at 5 p.m. to listen to Stan Rofe. I was supposed to be doing my homework while listening. I managed to avoid a lot of homework. I had no social life; I was too timid to make approaches to girls. Ordinary life was a boring round of schoolwork and compulsory tasks. My real world was inside my radio, and inside my diary, which held the hit parades I collected. Which is another way of saying that the only real world is inside one's head.

Collecting the 3DB Top Forty did not satisfy me. Every Wednesday night I wrote down the Top Eight that Peter Smith used to broadcast on the ABC. His Top Eight was very different again from 3DB's. In its dying years, a national children's magazine called *Chuckler's Weekly* published the Top 40 of Sydney station 2UE. Sydney rocked and rolled to a different beat. Records we had never heard in Melbourne were Number 1 there. Australia's first national pop magazine, *Go Set*, appeared. Not only did it publish a national Top 40, but also the Top 10 lists for each state!

The passion for lists increased. At the end of the first week of February 1961, I made up the first of my own hit parades. I gave one point to Number 8 on each chart, two points for Number 7, and so on. I gave more weight to the national charts. And I skewed the chart slightly by adding the Top 10 of my own favourite records. From the weekly lists, I made up monthly and then yearly lists. I kept continuous cross-references to both my chart and the 3DB Top Forty. I constructed a world: detailed, structured and above all, passionate.

What is the fascination of hit parades? After all, they merely record other people's tastes, and I usually disagreed with those tastes. Hit parades fascinated me because they were unpredictable. I gained the same enjoyment from watching the relative movement of the positions of particular records as novelist Gerald Mumane gains from perusing the results of horse races. In the early 1960s about sixty new records were released each week, and most of them were played at least once. It's true that radio stations promoted certain records, but different stations promoted different records.

There were always surprises. I still remember the week in 1961 that Elvis Presley's 'Wooden Heart' became the first pop record to go straight to Number 1 on its first week of release. And in the fourth week of January 1964 the Beatles' 'I Wanna Hold Your Hand' leapt from Number 43 to Number 1 on the American Top 100, officially beginning the 'Beatles Era'. 'Chains', by the Cookies, hung on to position Number 40 for four weeks before it eventually slipped off. And Lesley Gore watched her record 'You Don't Know Me' stay at Number 2 in America in early 1964 while it was beaten every week by a different Beatles record. True history unfolded.

More importantly, there was no limit on the type of music that might become successful on the hit parade. 'Wooden Heart' itself was a little German folk song used by Presley in the film *GI Blues*. Jazz had some popularity on the charts in the early 1960s. (Remember the Dave Brubeck Quartet's 'Take Five' and all those bossa nova records?) Country and western singles regularly reached the Top Ten, although today country music is dismissed from air play. There were lots of instrumental hits; now the instrumental single has disappeared.

What was so enjoyable about my secret vice? Its secrecy. My parents knew, of course, and were entirely unsympathetic. Wasn't I supposed to be doing my homework? Two sympathetic aunts tried to understand. A friend of mine became interested for a few years, but he was the only person who knew what I was talking about. During 1961 I published the chart in a magazine of 26 issues, 20 copies per issue, that Ron Sheldon and I printed and sold to classmates at Oakleigh High School in 1961. That's hardly wide distribution.

But it never occurred to me that anybody else in the world was doing exactly the same thing. If I had realized, I might have stopped immediately. Only much later did I learn that the omnipresent Glenn A. Baker in Sydney and a bloke called Joel Whitburn in America were also collecting hit parades at the same time. Using the information he has collected, Baker has made himself into an all-purpose pop historian, gleefully quoting his hit parade statistics which are, unfortunately, based only on Sydney charts. Whitburn collected all the hit parade charts from America's *Billboard* magazine, and now fills very useful books with cross-referenced material from these charts. I was not thorough enough. If I had raided the offices of *The Sun*, I might have put together the complete 3DB Top Forty charts from early in the 1950s.

But I wouldn't have. If I had found there was the slightest possibility of making money from my secret vice I would have abandoned it immediately. You must have an entirely personal world; it's not good enough to make mundane use of something of entirely personal value.

Why did I abandon my secret vice? By 1970 there was no point to collecting hit parades. The excitement was no longer there.

In 1970 *The Sun* stopped publishing the 3DB Top Forty every week. Now a teacher, I found myself exiled to a Victorian country town that did not have a record shop from which I could pick up any other station's Top 40 list.

1970 was the first year when, worldwide, album sales surpassed those for singles. It was also the year when the play-list consultants moved into Australian radio stations. No longer

did individual managers and disk jockeys choose the records they wanted to play. Instead they handed the decision to outside consultants, who were usually advising the nation's other radio stations. Each week a small number of new records would be chosen for air play. They became the records that sold copies. When hit parades became predictable, I lost interest in them.

And somewhere in 1969 or 1970, the world of the hit parade lost meaning because it no longer reflected the tastes of record buyers. 'Underground music' had arrived. Groups like Jethro Tull, Jefferson Airplane and the Grateful Dead were already selling vast quantities of albums without being played on radio or having their records listed on the album hit parades. Their record companies did not bother to issue their music on singles. The singles hit parade became the repository of all those laughable little ditties that are sometimes referred to as 'seventies music'. Radio-station-approved pop music became unlistenable.

There was not even any point in constructing my own compilation hit parade. The record companies, shops and radio stations began to issue a weekly chart that reported total Australian record sales each week.

Yet I feel no regret about putting vast amounts of energy into my adolescent secret vice. It's still the most valuable legacy of those years, apart from reading *Les Miserables* at the age of twelve and *Wuthering Heights* at the age of thirteen, and worshipping beautiful girls from afar. My hit parade years form a room in my mind. It's a bit dusty now, and I need to return to my diaries to brush up on the details. In that room I see before me a vast map of the 1960s in pop music, a map of vast struggles and tiny triumphs, of great innovation and inevitable failures. Such maps make life worthwhile.

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## Appendix: THE CHARTS

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Okay, here's the bit that will drive Roger Weddall crazy — the charts that I mention in the article above. Not all of them, and not the cross-indexing. But enough to drive Roger Weddall crazy:

### The very first chart

When I go back to my diary for 1959, I'm surprised to find that I didn't attach a chart to the diary until the week ending 5 September. I'm pretty sure that I was writing down items from the 3AW Top 60 chart for some time before that. Was I really only twelve years old at the time? Yes. My reading for the week included *Biggles Cuts It Fine* and *Billy Bunter's Bank Note*. I was just about to discover my first Philip K. Dick novel.

As I mention in the article, I could never catch an entire 3AW chart on any particular week:

1. 'Lonely Boy' (Paul Anka). 2. 'My Heart Is an Open Book' (Carl Dobkins Jr). 3. 'Waterloo' (Stonewall Jackson). 6. 'Sweet Sugarlips' (Kalin Twins). 9. 'Ring-A-Ling-Alario' (Jimmie Rodgers). 10. 'The Battle of New Orleans' (Johnny Horton). 15. 'A Teenager in Love' (Dion and the Belmonts). 16. 'Forty Miles of Bad Road' (Bruce Clarke). 17. 'Dream Lover' (Bobby Darin). 18. 'Here Comes Summer' (Dennis Gibbons). 19. 'Along Came Jones' (Coasters). 25. 'Lavendar Blue' (Sammy Turner). 28. 'Sorry (I Ran All the Way Home)' (Impalas). 33. 'The Three Bells' (Browns). 35. 'Personality' (Lloyd Price). 40. 'Bye Bye Baby' (Col Joye). 43. 'Only Love Me' (Steve Lawrence). 44. 'The Happy Organ' (Dave 'Baby' Cortez). 46. 'Tallahassee Lassie' (Freddie Cannon). 52. 'Cap and Gown' (Marty Robbins). 58. 'So Fine' (Fiestas). 59. 'Thank You Pretty Baby' (Brook Benton).

3AW's prejudices can be seen in even this small sample. For some years, W&G records of Melbourne issued cover versions of American hit records, and sometimes did well. Even so, I had quite forgotten that 3AW had at one time played local jazzman Bruce Clarke's version of 'Forty Miles of Bad Road'

rather than the million-selling Duane Eddy version. 3AW would not play Johnny O'Keefe's records, but welcomed the first successful record by Col Joye, O'Keefe's main rival from Sydney. 'Here Comes Summer' by Dennis Gibbons? At the time Gibbons worked as an announcer (*not* as a mere disk jockey) on 3AW.

### My very first 'favourites' chart

My heading for the first of these charts was 'Hits That Should Be Top'. I still believe there are hits/books/films that *should* be top. And the rest, which everybody else buys.

On 5 December 1959, out of impatience with the items on the actual Top 10, I wrote a Top 4 of my own favourite tunes:

1. 'Just Ask Your Heart' (Frankie Avalon).
2. 'Oh, Carol!' (Neil Sedaka).
3. 'Woo Hoo' (Rocketeers).
4. 'Oh Yeah, Uh Huh!' (Col Joye).

Um. Did I really . . . ?

I still think Col Joye's 'Oh Yeah, Uh Huh!' is one of the best singles ever recorded in Australia. I've heard Frankie Avalon's 'Just Ask Your Heart' precisely once in the 32 years since it left the chart. Despite the fact that Frankie Avalon sang flat, I still found it a pleasant little ballad. I always liked instrumentals, and the Rocketeers' 'Woo Hoo' had one of those basic rock and roll riffs that is still copied. 'Oh Carol', 'Oh Carol'? Really. At least Neil Sedaka did better records in later years.

### The first 3DB Top Forty Chart that I collected

Why did I leave collecting the 3DB chart until well into 1960? I can't remember. I was still prejudiced towards 3AW, because that was the only station on which I could actually hear the newly released singles. I was just discovering 3KZ. But the 3DB chart, unlike 3AW's, was actually based on record sales. More importantly, 3AW became an unreliable station when it broadcast football on Saturday afternoons during the winter season. I began to twiddle the dial, and eventually found 3KZ's week-night programs.

On Friday, 6 May 1960, for the first time I cut out the 3DB Top 40 from the pages of *The Sun* and pasted it in my diary:

1. 'Beatnik Fly' (Johnny & the Hurricanes).
2. 'He'll Have to Go' (Jim Reeves).
3. 'Starlight Starbright' (Lonnie Lee).
4. 'What in the World's Come Over You' (Jack Scott).
5. 'Cradle of Love' (Johnny Preston).
6. 'Little White Bull' (Tommy Steele).
7. 'Stuck on You' (Elvis Presley).
8. 'Handyman' (Jimmy Jones).
9. 'The Village of St Bernardette' (Andy Williams).
10. 'It's Too Late' (Johnny O'Keefe).
11. 'Little Boy Lost' (Johnny Ashcroft).
12. 'Wild One' (Bobby Rydell).
13. 'Teen Angel' (Mark Dinning).
14. 'Hippy Hippy Shake' (Chan Romero).
15. 'Marina' (Rocco Granata).
16. 'Bad Man' (Col Joye).
17. 'What Do You Want to Make Those Eyes at Me For?' (Emile Ford).
18. 'Footsteps' (Steve Lawrence).
19. 'My Old Man's a Dustman' (Lonnie Donegan).
20. 'Tonight You Belong to Me' (Elvis Presley).
21. 'Shazam' (Duane Eddy).
22. 'Let It Be Me' (Everly Brothers).
23. 'Lucky Devil' (Carl Dobkins Jr).
24. 'I Want That' (Crash Craddock).
25. 'Rockin' Little Angel' (Ray Smith).
26. 'Harlem Nocturne' (Viscounts).
27. 'Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport' (Horrie Dargie Quartet).
28. 'She's My Baby' (Johnny O'Keefe).
29. 'Well Don't You Know' (Crash Craddock).
30. 'Cathy's Clown' (Everly Brothers).
31. 'Reveille Rock' (Johnny & the Hurricanes).
32. 'Too Much Tequila' (Champs).
33. 'Sink the Bismark' (Johnny Horton).
34. 'Bad Boy' (Marty Wilde).
35. 'Way of a Clown' (Teddy Randazzo).
36. 'Peter Gunn' (Henry Mancini).
37. 'Delaware' (Perry Como).
38. 'Pretty Eyed Baby' (?).
39. 'White Silver Sands' (Bill Black Combo).
40. 'A Star is Born' (Mark Dinning).

You've no idea the research that I had to put into completing this list. The 3DB Top 40 chart printed only the name of the song, plus Position Last Week and Number of Weeks In. If I hadn't heard the song, it sometimes took a lot of radio dial-flicking to discover who actually performed it. Some tunes on this particular list remain unheard to this day. Some of the items on this particular week's chart surprise even me. I had forgotten, for instance, that Mark Dinning ('A Star is Born' at No. 40) had any hit other than 'Teen Angel' and 'Top 40, News, Weather and Sport', or that the original Duane Eddy version of 'Shazam' was quite successful. (The later version by the Shadows, in 1963, seemed like a

new song when I first heard it.) 'Marina'? I can't remember hearing it. An instrumental, I presume.

As on 3AW's charts, there was actually a prejudice towards Australian cover versions of overseas songs. In this case, Melbourne's Horrie Dargie Quartet had the hit version of 'Tie Me Kangaroo Down Sport', beating out the version recorded overseas by Rolf Harris, Britain's professional Australian.

Some of my favourite songs of all time are on this chart. Why is it now impossible to get any 'Greatest Hits' package by Lonnie Lee? He had quite a few successful records in Melbourne, especially 'Starlight Starbright' and 'Yes Indeed I Do'. Perhaps he was not as successful in Melbourne as in Sydney. Perhaps Glenn A. Baker doesn't like his records. (Baker seems to be chosen to compile most of the 'Greatest Hits' records.)

Other records from 1960 are constantly chosen for 'Six O'Clock Rock' nostalgia radio programs, but not I suspect, the novelty songs ('Little White Bull' and Australia's own (incredibly) successful 'Little Boy Lost' by Johnny Ashcroft) and most of the instrumentals (although Julian Warner did lend me a record of the greatest hits of the Bill Black Combo; 'White Silver Sands' was probably the most successful of them). Jimmy Jones' athletic-larynxed 'Handyman' starred in 'Landscape With Artist', a story by Gerald Murnane, but try as I might, I cannot track down the name of the performer of 'Velvet Waters', featured in Murnane's most recent story.

On this particular chart, Johnny O'Keefe's 'She's My Baby' is descending after spending 18 weeks on the chart, many of them at No. 1. It's still my favourite Australian record, and probably the most successful Australian single (it had another run to No. 1 in 1969). A pity to say that it was not recorded in Australia, but in the Liberty studios, California, during one of O'Keefe's ill-fated trips overseas.

At last:

#### **The first Gillespie-generated combined chart: the 'Australian Cashbox' Top 10**

On 4 February 1961 I produced the first of my own charts, based on all the hit parades I could put my hands on. I called it the 'Australian Cashbox' chart because Stan Rofe took his American Top 100 from the American *Cashbox* record trade magazine instead of from *Billboard*, then as now the industry's standard magazine.

1. **'Wonderland by Night'**  
Bert Kaempfert Orchestra (Polydor)  
Anita Bryant (London)  
Louis Prima Orchestra (London)
2. **'Sway'**  
Bobby Rydell (HMV)
3. **'Are You Lonesome Tonight?'**  
Elvis Presley (RCA)
4. **'Milord'**  
Gaynor Bunning (W&G)  
Edith Piaf (?)  
Caterina Valente (?)
5. **'North to Alaska'**  
Johnny Horton (Coronet)
6. **'Goodness Gracious Me'**  
Sophia Loren and Peter Sellers (Parlophone)
7. **'Last Date'**  
Floyd Cramer (RCA)
8. **'Doll House'**  
Donny Brooks (London)
9. **'Peter Gunn'**  
Duane Eddy (London)
10. **'Fools Rush In'**  
Brook Benton (Mercury)

There it is — about as nice a summary of what was happening in pop music in the pre-Beatles 1960s as you can get: three instrumentals (Floyd Cramer's piano mini-masterpiece 'Last Date', Kaempfer's jazz-trumpeted 'Wonderland by Night' and the raunchy sax-dominated Duane Eddy version of the theme from the 'Peter Gunn' TV show), one novelty hit (Loren and Sellers hamming up a routine from *The Millionairess*, a then-popular British movie), two ballads (Presley and Benton), and 'Milord', an indescribable Continental blockbuster, now known through Edith Piaf's astonishing version, but in fact a No. 1 hit throughout Europe in 1960 because of Caterina Valente's version. For once, W&G's policy of making Melbourne cover versions paid off, since local TV star Gaynor Bunning's version was the most successful version in Australia.

What's left? No real rock and roll. Two lightly rocking songs, 'Sway' and 'Doll House' are here. Neither could have been recorded before the advent of rock and roll, but each carefully avoids offending listeners. 'North to Alaska' is a countryish historical ballad, still played on radio from time to time. The only real rock and roll record is the Duane Eddy version of 'Peter Gunn', with its electrifying saxophone solo. In 1961 there was still no sign of the British-led rock and roll revival. For a couple of years, the only real rock and roll singer in the world was Johnny O'Keefe, which is why he failed in America.

This chart shows up an aspect of pop music that has now disappeared — the multi-version hit. An instrumental song like 'Wonderland by Night' might be covered by anyone who could blow a trumpet or raise an orchestra. Later in 1961, 'Theme from "Exodus"' was released in at least six versions, three of them vocal and three instrumental. I presume this practice has now disappeared because pop performers usually write or commission their own songs. When most songs were written by professional writers and flogged by publishing companies, the more versions the better. For this reason Australian performers could gain a quick success by whipping out a cover version before the overseas versions were released here.

### Chart after chart

Collecting and creating hit parade charts became my mania during 1961 and 1962. Like my first fanzine (called, for reasons you will now appreciate, *Cashbox and Chatter*), hit parade lunacy fell victim in 1963 to the dreaded homework. (In 1963 I had to study for the Leaving examination, and in 1964 for my Matriculation.)

1962 was the worst, or best, year. My friend David went with his parents to Sydney during the second half of the year, and he sent me back all the Sydney charts. Soon I was putting together about 15 charts, and generating a Top 60 each week. Writing the charts into my diary and doing the arithmetic took all weekend. If I had as much energy or enthusiasm today, I could produce an *SF Commentary* every week and a *Metaphysical Review* every other week.

So, a few final charts — the songs that were actually successful in their era:

**TOP HITS 1961:** 1. 'A Scottish Soldier' (Andy Stewart). 2. 'I'm Gonna Knock on Your Door' (Eddie Hodges). 3. 'Hello Mary Lou' (Ricky Nelson). 4. 'I'm Counting on You' (Johnny O'Keefe). 5. 'Theme from "Exodus"' (Ferrante and Teicher) (Pat Boone) (Eddie Harris) (Mantovani Orchestra) (Edith Piaf) (Ernest Gold Orchestra). 6. 'Runaway' (Del Shannon). 7. 'Michael' (Highwaymen) (Dennis Gibbons) (Lonnie Donegan). 8. 'Rubber Ball' (Bobby Vee). 9. 'Wheels' (Stringalong) (Billy Vaughan Orchestra). 10. 'Wooden Heart' (Elvis Presley).

**TOP HITS 1962:** 1. 'Stranger on the Shore' (Mr Acker Bilk) (Andy Williams). 2. 'Wolverton Mountain' (Kevin Shegog) (Claude King). 3. 'Can't Help Falling in Love' (Elvis Presley). 4. 'Silver Threads and Golden Needles' (Springfields). 5. 'Roses Are Red' (Bobby Vinton). 6. 'I Can't Stop Loving You' (Ray Charles). 7. 'Midnight in Moscow' (Kenny Ball Jazzmen) (Jan Burgess) (Lana Cantrell). 8. 'I Remember You' (Frank Ifield). 9. 'The Stripper' (David Rose Orchestra). 10. 'Dream Baby' (Roy Orbison).

**TOP HITS 1963:** 1. 'Painted Tainted Rose' (Al Martino). 2. 'Move Baby Move' (Johnny O'Keefe). 3. 'From a Jack to a King' (Ned Miller). 4. 'Come a Little Bit Closer' (Delltones). 5. 'In Dreams' (Roy Orbison). 6. 'Tamoure' (Bill Justis Orchestra). 7. '55 Days at Peking' (RobEG). 8. 'Blame It on the Bossa Nova' (Eydie Gorme). 9. 'Hey Paula' (Paul and Paula). 10. 'Lovesick Blues' (Frank Ifield).

Make what you like of that! Count the number of songs that have never been played on radio since they hit the top. Count the number of songs you *hope* are never played again on radio. (I don't really pine for 'Painted Tainted Rose' or Kevin Shegog's Australian cover version of 'Wolverton Mountain'.) Wonder at the peculiarities of yesteryear. They're all in my diaries.

— 18 May 1991