

# Skynyrd returns to build new Legend

One of the best-loved rock bands to emerge from the Deep South, Lynyrd Skynyrd's career was tragically cut short a decade ago. With the deaths of singer Ronnie Van Zant and guitarist Steve Gaines in a 1977 light plane crash, the group was silenced at its peak. Their stirring R&B and country-flavored rock remains popular ten years later.

The time is more than ripe for a celebration of this classic American rock unit. *Legend*, newly-released by MCA, gathers together little-known and previously-unreleased tracks by the band under the supervision of surviving members and producer Tom Dowd. The LP reaffirms Lynyrd Skynyrd's status as a band of passion, technical excellence and musical integrity.

In conjunction with *Legend's* release, Lynyrd Skynyrd's alumni have regrouped for a nationwide tour. Guitarist Gary Rossington, keyboardist Billy Powell, bassist/vocalist Leon Wilkeson, drummer Artimus Pyle, guitarist/vocalist Ed King and guitarist/vocalist Randall Hall will be reunited on stage once again. Joining them will be singer Johnny Van Zant (Ronnie's brother), along with *The Honkettes*, background vocalists Dale Krantz Rossington and

Carol Bristow.

"This tour is a tribute to the fans and the band's music," says Rossington. "Ten years later, our music is getting a lot of airplay and our catalogue is selling stronger than ever. We decided that if the fans were this loyal for

A pair of tunes, *Sweet Little Missy* and *Gerogia Peaches*, were originally intended for the *Street Survivors* LP. These basic tracks were completed this summer, by Rossington, Powell and Wilkeson. At the same time, the three musicians



so long, we'd do it for them."

*Legend* is a collection of both hard-to-find B-sides and recordings incomplete at the time of the band's demise. Long-time Lynyrd Skynyrd devotees may recognize *Take Your Time* (the flip of the single of *Sweet Home Alabama*), *Mr. Banker* (the B-side of *Gimme Three Steps*) and *Truck Driver* (found on the 45 of *Don't Ask Me No Questions*). All three tunes appear on an LP for the first time.

also overdubbed parts for *Four Walls Of Raiford* (a simple blues tune featuring Ronnie Van Zant with .38 Special guitarist Jeff Carlisi) and *When You Got Good Friends* (written in tribute to Charlie Daniels, first recorded and presented to him on his birthday). *One In The Sun*, with Steve Gaines singing as well as playing guitar, was originally recorded with his pre-Skynyrd group guitar, — Rossington, Powell and Wilkeson kept Gaines'

vocal and guitar and added new parts. Finally a live version of *Simple Man*, recorded at the famous Atlanta Fox Theatre show captured on *One More From The Road*, rounds out *Legend*.

Lynyrd Skynyrd's new album adds a significant extra chapter to a classic rock success story. The nucleus of the group—Van Zant, Rossington and Collins—played together in a number of high school bands in Jacksonville, Florida, in the mid-'60s. Together with drummer Bob Burns and bassist Larry Junstrom, they performed extensively around the South and developed their trademark style. Between 1970 and '72, they recorded an LP at Muscle Shoals. Added to the roster by this time was guitarist Ed King (formerly with the (Strawberry Alarm Clock) and keyboardist Billy Powell. Rick Medlocke, who went on to form Blackfoot, temporarily replaced Burns as drummer for a year of so.

Lynyrd Skynyrd's initial sessions failed to land them a record deal (they were finally released as *Skynyrd's First And...Last* years later). In 1973, the band (now with Leon Wilkeson on bass) were performing in Atlanta when producer/musician Al Kooper caught their act. He signed them to his MCA-distributed Sounds Of The South label. Kooper also produced

their debut LP, *Pronounced Leh-nerd Skin-nerd*. A '73 tour opening for The Who helped launch their recording career as well.

*Second Helping*, released in 1974, clinched the group's reputation—it featured *Sweet Home Alabama*, their breakthrough single. Artimus Pyle replaced Burns on drums for *Nuthin' Fancy*. Lynyrd Skynyrd's popularity on the road and on vinyl continued to rise through *Gimme Back My Bullets* (1976). That same year, the band recorded their live LP at the Fox Theatre in Atlanta, *One More From The Road*. More changes were coming—Steve Gaines replaced Ed King on guitar by the time their *Street Survivors* LP (1977) was recorded.

1977 found the band playing steadily-larger venues and reaching the brink of even greater fame. A plane crash in Mississippi changed all that. Two posthumous releases appeared—*Skynyrd's First And...Last* (collection their Muscle Shoals recordings as well

as later tracks) and the greatest hits package *Gold and Platinum*. By the late '70s, two of the band's guitarists had formed the Rossington-Collins Band, recording a pair of LPs.

A decade has past since Lynyrd Skynyrd rocked in its uniquely Southern way. The music has stayed as fresh and high-energy as ever. With their *Legend* LP and on the road, Lynyrd Skynyrd are back to celebrate old times and share some new excitement.

LYNYRD SKYNYRD DISCOGRAPHY RELEASE RECORD No. RELEASE DATE TITLE CERTIFICATION  
MCA 1685 08/16/73 Pronounced Double Platinum  
Leh-nerd Skin-nerd  
MCA 1686 04/15/74 Second Helping Double Platinum  
MCA 1616 03/24/75 Nuthin' Fancy Platinum  
MCA 1617 02/02/76 Gimme Back My Gold Bullets  
MCA2 6897 09/13/76 One More Triple Platinum  
From The Road

## Pacific University

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