

= Ayers Rock (band) =

Ayers Rock were an Australian jazz fusion , progressive rock band which formed in August 1973 . Ray Burton (guitar and vocals) , Mark Kennedy (drums) , and Duncan McGuire (bass) , members of Leo de Castro and Friends , left to form the eponymous trio of Burton , McGuire & Kennedy . They added a guitarist , Jimmy Doyle , changed their name to Ayers Rock and invited Col Loughnan (saxophones and flutes) to join . The group signed with independent label Mushroom Records in December 1973 . Burton left the following March , and was replaced by Chris Brown (guitar , vocals) . With live appearances , coverage in print media and word of mouth the group had a high national profile despite little radio airplay , and journalists praised their musicianship , music , and live energy .

The band 's first album , Big Red Rock (November 1974) , received positive reviews and peaked at number 32 on the Australian Kent Music Report album chart . It featured mainstream rock and three longer , instrumental tracks which introduced progressive styles , including jazz fusion . Label owner Michael Gudinski promoted Ayers Rock in Los Angeles and they signed with A & M Records , the first Mushroom Records artists to sign with an international label . The United States release of Big Red Rock in February 1975 was followed by a tour there , later that year . The band played to large crowds , supporting major international artists (including Bachman ? Turner Overdrive) before 35 @, @ 000 people ? the first Australian band to perform in large US stadiums . Ayers Rock were named 1975 Musicians of the Year on RAM 's " New Year 's Honors List " . Kennedy left before their second album , Beyond (April 1976 , recorded at the Record Plant in Los Angeles) , was released . The album blended a number of music genres and had a positive critical reception , charting at number 50 . The band toured the US again ; Loughnan remained there , and Ayers Rock temporarily broke up in August 1976 .

A year later Doyle and Brown recruited members for a new lineup , including Andy Cowan (keyboards and vocals) and Hamish Stuart (drums) . In 1980 they released their third album , Hotspell , on their own Red Rock Records label . This album had a soft @-@ rock style , with sophisticated arrangements and featured keyboards . It failed to chart , and the group permanently disbanded in 1981 . Although Ayers Rock 's first two albums were successful in Australia , none of their six singles charted . During their early years (from 1973 to 1976) , the group were praised by local media for their music , stylistic diversity , use of technology , and the energy of their live performances . Ayers Rock received positive reviews in Billboard and Cashbox . Late @-@ 1990s music historians recognised the band 's talent but considered their music over @-@ indulgent at times , failing to bridge the gap between artistic and commercial success . Duncan Kimball of Milesago.com wrote " that they never really got the chance to reach their full potential . "

= = Australian music scene = =

Ayers Rock were formed in the Australian pop @-@ music scene of the early 1970s , which included artists in a number of genres : mainstream pop (Zoot and Liv Maessen) , blues rock (Chain) , heavy rock (Billy Thorpe & the Aztecs) , and boogie (Carson) . Bands such as Blackfeather and Madder Lake combined mainstream and progressive rock . Most pop and rock listeners had never heard jazz fusion ; when Ayers Rock incorporated the music into their sets , it was rarely performed by fellow Australian artists .

At that time , the Australian music media expressed frustration that few local musicians were successful overseas . Many artists (such as The Twilights , The Masters Apprentices , The Groop and Axiom) had gone to the United Kingdom with little commercial success , and music papers such as Go @-@ Set regularly addressed the situation . The " third wave " of Australian rock , from 1970 to 1975 , saw an increase in pub rock venues in the southern and eastern states .

= = History = =

== 1973 : Formation ==

Ayers Rock formed in Melbourne in August 1973 . Ray Burton , Mark Kennedy , and Duncan McGuire , members of Leo de Castro and Friends , left in June to form the eponymous trio of Burton McGuire & Kennedy . Burton had played guitar with the Dave Bridge Quartet , the Delltones and the Executives , and co @-@ wrote " I Am Woman " (May 1972) in the United States with Australian singer Helen Reddy . McGuire , on bass , was a recording engineer , producer , and a member of Australian groups since the late 1950s (including the Phantoms , the Epics , the Questions ? which later became Doug Parkinson in Focus ; see Doug Parkinson ? and King Harvest) . Kennedy , on drums , had played in Spectrum , Doug Parkinson in Focus , King Harvest , and Leo de Castro and Friends .

Burton McGuire & Kennedy were joined in August 1973 by Jimmy Doyle on guitar . Doyle had worked for the Delltones and Dig Richards , was musical director for pianist Winifred Atwell on her Australian tours , and was a session player in Sydney on Neil Sedaka 's 1969 album Workin ' on a Groovy Thing . In September 1973 Burton McGuire & Kennedy changed their name to Ayers Rock , using the European name for the sandstone rock formation sacred to local indigenous Australians . The group were nicknamed " the Rock " by the Australian press . Since 1993 the sandstone monolith has been called by its Pitjantjatjara name , Uluru .

Doyle had worked sporadically for several years with multi @-@ instrumentalist and arranger Col Loughnan , who joined London @-@ based blues @-@ pop group Kala in late 1972 . Doyle invited his former bandmate to join in October 1973 . With Ayers Rock , Loughnan played saxophones , flute , and electric piano . He had begun his career as lead vocalist for the Crescents in 1958 , joining the Delltones in 1962 . Loughnan diversified into arranging and playing jazz tenor saxophone with the Daly @-@ Wilson Big Band . By December 1973 Ayers Rock had signed with Mushroom Records , which released their first single ? " Rock ' n Roll Fight (Going On) " , one of the label 's early records . Mushroom Records co @-@ owner Michael Gudinski became their manager .

In January 1974 Ayers Rock performed at the Sunbury Pop Festival and " Morning Magic " (written by Burton) appeared on the live album , Highlights of Sunbury ' 74 Part 2 , released by Mushroom Records later that year . In March Burton returned to the US and was replaced on guitar and lead vocals by Chris Brown , formerly of Python Lee Jackson . Loughnan and Brown had played together in London as members of Kala . The band traced their origins to rock or pop bands from Sydney , except for Kennedy (who was from Melbourne) .

== 1974 ? 75 : Big Red Rock ==

In 1974 Ayers Rock began recording their debut album , Big Red Rock , at Festival Records ' 24 @-@ track studio in Sydney . They were dissatisfied with the sound , which failed to capture their music 's " live " essence , and recorded it live @-@ in @-@ the @-@ studio at Armstrong 's in Melbourne that September . Kennedy told Margaret MacIntyre of Rolling Stone Australia , " Doing the album live was an experiment really and it seemed to work . " Big Red Rock , released in November , peaked at number 32 on the Kent Music Report album chart . The album had " a more jazz @-@ rock edge " and its single , " Lady Montego " (written by McGuire) , was a new version of a song originally performed by Leo de Castro and Friends . According to Juke Magazine , " the single lifted to push the album , ' Lady Montego ' ... received three weeks airplay and was then dumped . " " Lady Montego " was Ayers Rock 's most @-@ aired single in Australia , and Kennedy said : " Without AM radio support you can 't sell too well in this country . " Juke called their songs " lyrically banal " but said the group compensated with " sheer talent " , instrumentally and electronically .

A song from Ayers Rock 's live set was a cover of " Boogie Woogie Waltz " , written by Joe Zawinul of Weather Report for the US group 's album Sweetnighter (April 1973) . In November 1974 Loughnan temporarily stopped performing live due to back pain , and the band continued with four members . He returned after surgery , and contemporary photos and video show him playing sitting down during his convalescence .

Manager and label owner Gudinski visited the US in December 1974 to promote his recording artists , including Skyhooks , Daddy Cool , and Madder Lake , to major labels there . At that time only Ayers Rock were successful , with Gudinski signing them to A & M Records within days . He told Tony Wilson of The Sun , " Jerry Moss , the president of A & M Records USA , flipped when he heard it , so A & M will release it (Big Red Rock) world @-@ wide . " This was a surprise to the Australian media , since many other artists were more commercially successful locally than Ayers Rock . Skyhooks were Australia 's most popular band ; their first album (Living in the 70 's , released in October 1974) sold 226 @,@ 000 units , the best @-@ selling album by a local artist in Australia to date . However , Living in the 70 's was rejected by A & M and not released outside Australia . Ayers Rock were the first Mushroom Records artists to sign a recording contract with an international label . From the mid @-@ 1970s , and into the 1990s , Mushroom were successful with many other artists including Split Enz , Kylie Minogue , and Yothu Yindi , turning the label into Australia 's largest independent record company .

In January 1975 the group performed at the fourth Sunbury Pop Festival , and Big Red Rock and " Lady Montego " were released in the US on 28 February . On 20 April , they performed at a benefit concert for Bangladesh at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl with the La De Das , Jim Keays , AC / DC , Phil Manning , Daddy Cool , Toulouse & Too Tight , the Dingoes , and the Moir Sisters .

From July to September , they promoted Big Red Rock in the US and Vancouver . The band played to an audience of 35 @,@ 000 at a stadium concert in Seattle , supporting Bachman ? Turner Overdrive , on 27 July and opened for Status Quo , the J. Geils Band , Lynyrd Skynyrd , and Nils Lofgren . According to Australian rock music historian Ian McFarlane , " Ayers Rock was the first Australian band to play to massive crowds on the USA touring circuit " , years before fellow Australians the Little River Band , AC / DC , and Air Supply made their first US tours .

= = = 1975 ? 76 : Beyond = = =

At the end of their US tour in September 1975 Ayers Rock recorded their second album , Beyond , at the Record Plant in Los Angeles . The album , produced by the group and John Stronach , received a \$ 60 @,@ 000 advance from A & M Records .

On 18 October , The Sun reported that McGuire had left the band . At a reception when Ayers Rock returned to Australia , he said : " The pressure of the tour was just too much . We were on the road all the time and I guess I wasn 't as strong as the rest of the band . When we got into the studio I had the shakes . I mean I was playing the right notes , but not in the right places . " To finish the album McGuire 's friend Les Young played some of the bass guitar parts , and American Jeff Castleman played bass on " Catchanemu " . Young also briefly played live with Ayers Rock in Australia , including an October 1975 show at the State Theatre in Sydney . McGuire returned to the group at the Dallas Brooks Hall on 21 October 1975 , to warm applause .

In late November Ayers Rock appeared at the final Reefer Cabaret event , at Ormond Hall in Prahran . The performance was recorded for a double album , A @-@ Reefer @-@ Derci (1976) . In January 1976 , Rock Australia Magazine named Ayers Rock Musicians of the Year for 1975 in their " New Year 's Honors List " . Kennedy left to join Marcia Hines ' backing band in February 1976 , and they reportedly married late in the decade . In Ayers Rock , Kennedy was temporarily replaced by Doug Gallacher . In April 1976 Beyond was released in Australia and the US , making the Kent Music Report top 50 . Two singles from the album were released : " Little Kings " (October 1975) and " Song for Darwin " (May 1976) , but neither charted .

The US cover for Beyond features a rock in the distance , which becomes the face of an Aboriginal man with eyes closed when the cover is rotated 90 ° to the right . Artist and Mushroom Records art director Ian McCausland also designed The Rolling Stones ' 1973 Australian tour poster . The album cover illustrates a central principle of Aboriginal spirituality : the deep connection between the land and the Aboriginal peoples . In an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission publication , " Our Land Our Life " , S. Knight described the Aboriginal position : " We don 't own the land , the land owns us . The land is my mother , my mother is the land . Land is the starting point to where it all began . " According to the Australian government webpage , The Dreaming : " Once the ancestor

spirits had created the world , they changed into trees , the stars , rocks , watering holes or other objects . These are sacred places of Aboriginal culture . "

In May 1976 Gallacher was replaced by Russell Dunlop , formerly of Aesop 's Fables , Levi Smith 's Clefs , SCRA , Mother Earth , and the Johnny Rocco Band . In an interview with Greg Kelton of The Advertiser , Loughnan outlined the band 's future : " If Beyond doesn 't make it for us in the States we might as well forget all about Ayers Rock . " From May to July they toured the US again , " only achiev [ing] limited success overseas . " After the tour Dunlop and Loughnan left , and on 25 August Mushroom Records announced that Ayers Rock had broken up after Loughnan decided to remain in the US to study . Brown , Doyle , and McGuire indicated that they would revive the group with new members .

= = = 1977 ? 81 : Hotspell = = =

In 1977 Brown and Doyle re @-@ formed Ayers Rock with Bermuda @-@ born Keith Caisey on percussion , Joe Tattersall (formerly of Healing Force and the Barry Leef Band) on drums , and John Young (formerly of Leo de Castro 's eponymous group) on bass guitar . By 1978 Brown , Caisey and Doyle were joined by Andy Cowan (formerly of Madder Lake) on keyboards and vocals , Steve Hogg (formerly of Bakery) on bass guitar , and Hamish Stuart on drums . In March 1980 the band released another single , " On the Avenue " , followed in May by their third LP ? Hotspell ? on their own Red Rock Records (distributed by RCA Records) . Recorded at the Music Farm in Byron Bay , it was engineered by former member Duncan McGuire .

In The Canberra Times , Luis Feliu noted the " new @-@ sounding " Ayers Rock and their " laid @-@ back " style . There had been a major change in songwriting , with Brown contributing less ; Cowan was the most active (writing five tracks) , and Stuart and Doyle co @-@ wrote two . Doyle , with no writing credits on previous albums , wrote " On the Road " (which was included in the band 's live sets from 1978) . Jillian Burt of Juke Magazine described it as " reminiscent of the cool , calm , collectedness that typifies Steely Dan " . Hotspell featured soft @-@ rock songs with sophisticated , keyboard @-@ centred arrangements .

According to Feliu 's review of the album and a July 1980 performance in Sydney , Ayers Rock were " once Australia 's hottest progressive rock " group . Feliu wrote that most of the audience seemed to appreciate the band 's new direction : " the capacity audience showed hearty approval ... probably old allegiance , and only a few comments of dissatisfaction , like ' boring ' , were heard , then that was at the bar up the back " . Hotspell did not reach the Kent Music Report album top 100 , and has not been released on CD . In July 1981 the group released a final single , " Lies " , before disbanding later that year .

= = Other projects = =

In late 1974 Ayers Rock members Brown , McGuire , Kennedy and Loughnan played on several tracks of Jim Keays ' debut solo album , The Boy from the Stars . At the January 1975 Sunbury Pop Festival Keays performed most of the album live , with three Ayers Rock members (Brown , McGuire and Kennedy) joining the ensemble to record " Nothing Much Left " and " Urantia " . Returning to the US , Burton was a session player for Billy Joel and Jimmy Webb and wrote " Best Friend " for the film Airport 1975 (1974) . In 1976 , he formed the Ray Burton Band with Rex Bullen , Terry Gascoine , Steve Hogg and Tim Piper . From 1977 to 1980 , McGuire was bass guitarist for the Southern Star Band with Doug Parkinson on vocals , Tommy Emmanuel on guitar and Kennedy on drums . In 1978 Burton released a solo album , Dreamers and Nightflyers , which spawned the singles " Too Hard to Handle " and " Paddington Green " . After touring with Crossfire in 1979 , he returned to the US as a songwriter .

Cowan was later a member of Kevin Borich Express , Ian Moss Band and Renée Geyer Band before pursuing a solo music career . Georgie Fame 's album No Worries (1988) included Ayers Rock alumni Loughnan , Doyle , and Dunlop . McGuire died in July 1989 of a brain tumour . During the late 1980s , Hogg formed The Rhythm Snakes with Clayton Black on drums , Howie Smallman

on harmonica , and Bob Thorne on guitar . In 1989 , Hogg assembled a studio band to record a solo album with Thorne , Mark Alderman on harmonica , Ian Ironside on drums , Bob Patient on piano , and Bernie Payne on saxophone . Steve Hogg died on 20 July 1990 and his album , Various Fools & Vices , was released in 1992 .

In 1993 , Kennedy drummed for The Blazing Salads with Brian Cadd , Glenn Shorrock , Rex Goh , and Kirk Lorange . Hamish Stuart played drums on Chris Abrahams and Melanie Oxley 's 1998 album , Jerusalem Bay . Doyle died on 5 May 2006 , and on 28 May the Jim Doyle Tribute Concert was played at the Basement in Sydney . Musicians included Renée Geyer , Billy Field , bandmate Loughnan , and Barry Leef , with proceeds benefiting Doyle 's family . Dunlop died on 16 May 2009 ; he had collapsed after drumming at his son 's wedding in Sydney . As of 2015 , Loughnan is a lecturer in jazz saxophone at the University of Sydney 's Conservatorium of Music and has been a member of its Jazz Faculty since 1978 . In 2007 he released a solo album , Ellen St.

= = Musicianship = =

= = = Genres = = =

Although Ayers Rock 's music is described as jazz @-@ rock , this is a simplification . In the 2011 radio documentary " Rare Collections " , presented by David and Jordie Kilby on Jazz @-@ Rock in Australia for 666 ABC Canberra , Loughnan described other Mushroom Records artists as playing pop rock styles and Ayers Rock playing some jazz : " We were a bit of both " . Critics called Big Red Rock 's side one its " song " side and side two its " jazz " side . " Lady Montego " , " Talkin ' ' Bout You " , " Goin ' Home " and " Nostalgic Blues " are rock songs ; the first three were written by McGuire , and the fourth by Brown .

Loughnan 's " Crazy Boys " highlighted the band 's larrikin side , with working @-@ class men talking at a hamburger shop ; each used local slang or spoke in a stereotypical ethnic accent , poking fun at Australians from a variety of backgrounds . At one point " Hey , listen mate , give me one ' Gudinskiburger ' , please , hold the bacon , please " is heard ; Michael Gudinski , whose parents are Jewish immigrants , does not eat pork and went along with the joke . Another voice mentions " Dr. Hopontopovus , the Greek gynaecologist " . More slang is heard later in the track , including " Who yer sayin ? that to , yer drongo ? "

Although " Crazy Boys " has two lines of lyrics , most of the track is instrumental . Described by a Juke Magazine reviewer as " free form jazz " , it features solos by Brown , Doyle , and Loughnan and heavily @-@ processed guitars , electric saxophone , and vocals . Asked about the group 's use of electronics by Eloë Fanouche of RAM , Loughnan answered : " You 've got to be able to use them well in order to sound good . We use them to colour the sounds as much as possible . "

The title track , Loughnan 's " Big Red Rock " , is an eight @-@ and @-@ a @-@ half minute instrumental described by Juke Magazine as " expertly capturing the stark loneliness and cosmic tranquility one gets standing before their namesake rock " . According to Loughnan , the atmosphere they wanted to create was " that spacey sort of feeling ? like desert [...] and we wanted to get the sound of the didgeridoo ? which we did electronically " . Doyle imitated a didgeridoo by playing guitar with a wah @-@ wah pedal . Tony Catterall of The Canberra Times praised " Big Red Rock " , saying that it " suggests the huge expanse of the outback , then takes you [...] to the Aboriginal secrets [...] [and evokes] the power surrounding the area [of Uluru] in a burst of truly inspired musicianship " .

Gil Wahlquist of The Sydney Morning Herald called the album " heavily accented towards jazz . " It has changing moods , with quiet moments which are " eerie , euphonic , and evocative . " Aboriginal clapsticks and the imitation didgeridoo allude to the indigenous character of Uluru and the surrounding area . Another section is double @-@ tempo jazz fusion with guitar and saxophone solos , complemented by a rhythm section driving to a crescendo . The section concludes with a rapid rallentando (slowing of tempo) to another gentle phase . Changes in tempo and volume are heard throughout the title track , in contrast to disco (featuring one tempo and volume , which was

becoming more popular) .

Like Big Red Rock , the vastness of rural and outback landscapes were reflected in the artwork and music of Beyond . According to a review by Forester in The Age , the band and album have " titles to suggest space , time and distance " and some tracks had an " indigenous appeal " . The lead track 's title , " Moondah " , translates into English as " beyond " . In April 1976 Loughnan , who wrote the song , said in a TV Times interview : " The aborigines have had a raw deal in the past . The song expresses the hope that they get better treatment in the future " . " Moondah (beyond) " begins with clapsticks , log drum , imitation didgeridoo , and sounds evocative of indigenous singing .

This combination creates sounds similar to indigenous Australian music , which later segues into a European style before returning to its original theme . The overall effect is a fusion of indigenous Australian music , rock , and improvisational jazz by European Australians , before indigenous rock artists Yothu Yindi and No Fixed Address created their own fusions of indigenous and rock music .

Beyond featured a 23 @-@ piece string section , arranged and conducted by Loughnan , on " Place to Go " , " Song for Darwin " and " Angel in Disguise " . Loughnan had originally written " Angel in Disguise " years before for his wife , expanding it into an instrumental . According to Derek Johnson 's RAM review , " The violin tones and guitar sounds are particularly well produced , dissolving into each other one moment , separating and circling around each other the next . "

= = = Airplay = = =

Ayers Rock 's treatment by Australian radio stations during the 1970s was related to the popularity of AM . Unlike the US , which had a vibrant FM radio scene , in 1976 Australia only had ABC FM and a few community FM stations which primarily played classical music . Commercial AM stations , playing pop and rock music , dominated the local airwaves . The group established their reputation with live performances , exposure in print media , and word of mouth , with minimal Australian radio promotion .

Kennedy told a Juke interviewer , " Radio airplay has never happened for us here ? except 2JJ and the occasional Album Shows " . Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) youth @-@ oriented AM radio station 2JJ was limited to Sydney during the 1970s , with poor reception in some areas . The US attitude toward the band 's music was different ; according to Greg Kelton of The Advertiser , Beyond had " been played by about 50 radio stations in the (U.S.) . ' It is being played on two [stations] in Australia ' , said Jimmy Doyle . "

= = = Live performance = = =

Ayers Rock began incorporating rock @-@ jazz fusion into their sets , increasing the jazz aspect of their music . In his review of a concert on 19 October 1975 , Paul Gardiner wrote for Rolling Stone : " Big Red Rock was still tied quite closely to existing American styles . " According to Gardiner , at the State Theatre " evidence " of jazz @-@ rock " came through loud and clear " . This was their first major Australian concert after their first US tour and recording sessions .

The group were fundamentally a high @-@ volume rock band . In the smoke @-@ filled bar of Martinis in Carlton , Juke Magazine collected a vox populi of the " packed to the rafters " audience . One person said , " I don 't mind a bit of volume with my improvisation but this is so goddamn heavy . " Gardiner 's review described the group 's live show :

The band ... have cut their teeth on pure rock and roll and have , [as of] Ayers Rock , moved on to what amounts to a rock @-@ jazz fusion . The inversion of the term is becoming important ; unlike the bands to which they are compared in America , which have all lived and breathed jazz in its purer , more traditional forms , ... [the] Rock is made up of rock musicians .

In a Rolling Stone interview by Margaret MacIntyre , Kennedy explained : " Ayers Rock was getting a live response that , to speak for myself , I hadn 't seen happen with a crowd ... for a long time " . In the same interview , Doyle described the key to their success : " This band is going somewhere ... it 's not the same thing every night , unlike many bands , the arrangements change . " Reviewers were

enthusiastic about the band 's performances ; according to Gardiner , " The impression they now generate on stage is one of total energy ... energy which sets them apart . " Juke Magazine called them " a band that could reward its audiences with (the) sheer exhilaration of seeing real master musicians ... taking their audiences to virgin territory that other explorers had only dreamed about . "

Eloe Fanouche of RAM focussed on another aspect :

Unlike many groups they were able to capture the ethereal quality of their recorded sound on stage ... On being asked how live gigs compared to studio work , they all declared that the straight atmosphere of the studio was too clinical .

= = Critical reception = =

= = Contemporary (1973 to 1981) = = =

Big Red Rock received positive reviews in Australia and the US . The Canberra Times quoted a Cashbox review praising their music which ended : " It was something different and something beautiful . " Billboard magazine gave the album a good review , saying that it featured " excellent sax work throughout and top @-@ notch lead guitar and drum work " . Australian reviewers called the album " an extremely good record , well worth owning " , " a classic record in Australian rock " and " an inspiring success " .

Critical response to their second album , Beyond , was generally positive . Sean Hanrahan wrote for the Melbourne Sunday Press : " Beyond to me stands as something of a crowning achievement for a band that has already been described as the high @-@ water mark in Australian rock . " According to Pat Bowring of the Melbourne Sun , " it is one of the best records from an Australian band " and " better than ... Big Red Rock . " The band emphasised that their music was " essentially Australian " , despite being recorded in Los Angeles , and critics noted their music 's Australian character . Tony Catterall of The Canberra Times wrote that the group " has absorbed its influences so well that they 're almost unrecognisable in the final product . And into this synthesis the band has infused some things peculiarly Australian . "

= = = Later (1999 to present) = = =

In February 1998 Billboard 's Christie Eliezer interviewed Gudinski , he recalled that signing Ayers Rock had " allowed the band to tour the US and record their second album there . " He explained that they " were a fantastic jazz @-@ fusion band , a real muso 's band , but ultimately they didn 't have that something unique to cross over . " In his 1999 encyclopaedia Dreams , Fantasies , and Nightmares From Far Away Lands , American author Vernon Joynson called Big Red Rock " an excellent example of jazz rock fusion Australian style . The musicianship is of high quality although it tends to become a little over @-@ indulgent in places " . According to Joynson the album had " radio friendly " material and three tracks " filled with fine virtuoso guitar and saxophone " , but despite being " quite a popular live act , [Ayers Rock 's] recordings were hampered by a dilemma over whether to opt for a more serious pursuit of expanding the horizons or for a commercial sound " .

On MilesAgo.com in 2006 , Duncan Kimball wrote : " The group 's relatively short lifespan and small catalogue meant that they never really got the chance to reach their full potential . " According to Ian McFarlane in his 1999 Encyclopedia of Australian Rock and Pop , the members of Ayers Rock " were seen as ' musician 's musicians ' . The band issued a series of technically proficient recordings , but in the long run any quest for commercial acceptance was marred by the seriousness of the music " . In December 2011 , Jordie Kilby called Big Red Rock " a great record ; quite an influential (album) ... now one that 's held in quite high regard . "

= = Members = =

Ray Burton ? guitar , vocals (1973 ? 74)
Mark Kennedy ? drums (1973 ? 76)
Duncan McGuire ? bass guitar (1973 ? 76 ; died 1989)
Jimmy Doyle ? guitar , vocals (1973 ? 81 ; died 2006)
Col Loughnan ? saxophones , flute , piano , percussion , vocals (1973 ? 76)
Phil Stone ? guitar (1974)
Chris Brown ? guitar , vocals (1974 ? 81)
Les Young ? bass guitar (1975)
Doug Gallacher ? drums (1976)
Russell Dunlop ? drums (1976 ; died 2009)
Joe Tattersall ? drums (1977)
Keith Caisey ? percussion (1977 ? 81)
John Young ? bass guitar (1977 ? 78)
Andy Cowan ? keyboards (1978 ? 81)
Steve Hogg ? bass guitar (1978 ? 81 ; died 1990)
Hamish Stuart ? drums (1978 ? 81)

= = Discography = =

= = = Albums = = =

Big Red Rock (Mushroom Records (L 35354 , MUSH32017.2) , November 1974) AUS No. 32
Beyond (Mushroom Records (D 19762) , February 1975) AUS No. 50
Hotspell (Red Rock / RCA Records (RRM 6321) , May 1980)

= = = Singles = = =

" Rock ' n Roll Fight " (December 1973)
" Lady Montego " (November 1974)
" Little Kings " (October 1975)
" Song for Darwin " (May 1976)
" On the Avenue " (1979)
" Lies " (July 1981)

= = = Other appearances = = =

" Morning Magic " (live) , on Highlights of Sunbury ' 74 Part 2 (Mushroom Records (L 25123) , 1974)
" Gimme Shelter " (live) , " Boogie Woogie Waltz " (live) on A @-@ Reefer @-@ Derci (Mushroom Records (L 45657 / 8) , 1976)