

I first heard of The Big Dish in 1986 but it would take another four years before I actually heard any of their songs. That I did so at all was thanks to a friend of mine who played the band's second album, 'Creeping Up on Jesus', in his car's radio/cassette player whilst we were on a road trip.

For me, it was love at first, er, hearing. I rushed out and bought 'Creeping...' and swiftly followed it up by purchasing the band's first LP, 'Swimmer'. I bought 'Satellites' when it came out in 1991, not realising that it would be their final offering, if you discount the 'Rich Man's Wardrobe' compilation album that followed in 1994.

The Big Dish eventually returned to play a few (three, to be exact) gigs in 2012 and 2014, even unveiling a cracking new song, 'Cherry Blossom Falls', and raising hopes that they might, just might, release some new music. But then silence descended once more.

That's not to say the members of the band have been silent. Far from it. Steven Lindsay released two excellent albums in 2004 and 2007 and returned with some new musical compadres in 2022. Brian McFie has also been active, and you'll currently find him and his six-string in 'Lola In Slacks'. Craig Armstrong, who played keyboards on the band's second and third albums, has scored several big-budget films and released several albums of fine music. And so on; the lads in the 'Dish were – and are – a talented bunch.

That said, I'm not here to wax lyrical about their musical abilities but to list my ten favourite Big Dish songs. And that, let me tell you, is no easy task.

Anyway, here's the list. Save for one song, they're listed in no particular order.

Wishing Time (*Creeping Up on Jesus*, 1988). My favourite Big Dish song from the get-go, this is a wonderful confection of jangly guitars, lush keyboards, and Steven Lindsay's euphonious vocals. Pop songs don't come better than this.

Jealous (*Swimmer*, 1986). A great song about the feelings lost love can engender. So good that the band recorded it at least twice, with the version on 'Rich Man's Wardrobe' differing slightly from that on 'Swimmer'.

Reverend Killer (B-side track to the *Slide* single, 1986). Beautifully crafted pop music meets dark lyrical matter. What's not to like?

25 Years (*Satellites*, 1991) Lovely slide guitar charges headlong towards a singalong chorus. What more do you want from a song?

Prospect Street (Single version, 1985) Another track that comes in more than one flavour, with the 'Swimmer' album featuring a re-recorded version of the song. For me, though, the earlier, poppier rendition is the better of the two. Either way, it's a cracking song.

Burn (*Creeping Up on Jesus*, 1988) Reflective and mature, it's an, ahem, slower burner than some of the other tracks on 'Creeping...' Give it a little time, though, and you'll love it. A lot.

Swimmer (*Swimmer*, 1986) The band's equivalent of 'The Dambusters' March'. The intro reels you in and the rest of the song sticks its anthemic claws into you, never to let go.

Faith Healer (*Creeping Up on Jesus*, 1988) There are several songs (as in pretty much all of them) on 'Creeping...' that warrant a place on my personal list, but the fine keyboard/guitar interplay and hopeful tone of Faith Healer carries it home.

Good Way (B-side to the *Big Town* single, 1991) The Big Dish had a knack of producing B-sides that ought really to have been album tracks (at the very least). This keyboard-driven cracker is one of them.

Shipwrecked (*Satellites*, 1991) If the band's last album saw them move away from out-and-out pop music, the quality of their work remained as high as before, as nicely evidenced by the bluesy licks and sage lyrical observations of this track.

And that's it. My ten favourite Big Dish songs. Or, more accurately, my ten favourite songs as of today. Ask me tomorrow and you might get a different answer. Heck, I might even include 'European Rain' in the list. I know Steven Lindsay's not fond of it but I like it, and it's my list!