

Journey home ignites music career

ROB MELLETT discovers how Laura Frank's return home to the Scenic Rim has signalled the beginning of a new life as a rising country music star.

SPEAKING from her self-built, DIY property in the bush, country singer-songwriter Laura Frank reckons she's not the confident type.

Others might beg to differ.

The born and bred Scenic Rim musician returned home to Moogerah three years ago after her life began to unravel in Brisbane.

"People might describe me as a self-assured person, but I don't feel like that," Frank said.

"I do have a huge desire to challenge what is considered the normal way of doing things, like the idea that you get a \$700,000 mortgage and end up in debt for the rest of your life.

"My reaction to that is, 'Hang on a minute, there must be another way of doing things'.

"It is important to find your own path - that is how I live my life, to make things happen."

In the big smoke, Frank opened a martial arts and fitness joint and a café, poured beers at a brewery, and volunteered in a theatre company.

But when a long-time relationship hit the rocks, the businesses closed, and life grew darker.



Singer-songwriter Laura Frank will launch her new single Leavin' on June 30 with shows in Toowoomba, Ipswich, Boonah and Tamborine Mountain.

Add to the mix the rowdy goings-on of a next-door neighbour and her decision to return to

the family bosom in the Scenic Rim looks like a no-brainer.

That it turned out

to be the best decision Frank has ever made is simply a bonus.

There she built a home with new partner Nick Morrissey using recycled and salvaged materials. Her dad lent his skills on the tools, too, and the dream home became a reality.

Joined by pet cat Kevin Bacon, dogs Dennis and Winnie, and goats Stanley and Ebony, Frank began crafting heartfelt ballads and ballsy country rock-pop at her new arcadian location.

"We write about the ups and downs in my life, the things I went through, the tough times," Frank said.

"I used to build castles around myself as protection from disappointment, failure and mistakes and I wanted to address that.

"As a country musician, I want to be authentic; to trail-blaze a new path for emerging

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Rather Do and Leave It All Behind making the Top 10 and, in January, she took home the most promising future star award at the Australian Country Music People's Choice Awards in Tamworth.

"I am not a traditional, straight-down-the-line-country artist," Frank said.

"I love left-field country musicians like Brandi Carlile and Jason Isbell but mainstream stars like Lady Gaga, too - her album Joanne is a favourite of mine.

"Bruce Springsteen and Bob Dylan as well; lyrics are so important to me."

Frank is not one to do things by halves - she has teamed up with ARIA and Golden Guitar winning engineer/producer Jordan Power and recruited crack musicians to join her and Morrissey, comprising onetime members of Thirsty Merc, Wolfmother and The John Butler Trio.

Her six singles have all gained chart status, with her next single, Leavin', due for release on June 30.

Frank, apparently the last baby born at Boonah Hospital, and a former Boonah High pupil, said the Scenic Rim community has embraced her fledgling country music career.

"Everyone has been so incredibly supportive of my journey.

"It's not just Laura Frank now, it is Laura Frank and the entire Scenic Rim - everyone seems to be gunning for my success.

"By helping one person, we all succeed together.

"Okay, so I might have to drive a lot more now, but that it is a small price to pay to live among the gum trees, looking at Mount Greville and Lake Moogerah."

Frank and her band play at City Golf Club at Toowoomba on June 30, Ipswich Civic Centre on July 8 and Cauldron Distillery, Tamborine Mountain on July 16.

She will also perform an acoustic cover show at the Vue Restaurant in Boonah on July 14.



Laura Frank at home with her partner, musician Nick Morrissey.

artists, and to break the rules."

The former dancer of 20 years has already made her mark with hit singles Things I'd