



→ “Think about how many live events happen in Perth,” he said. “Things where the audience can turn up and watch a live show being made. Telethon once a year is the only time that this happens.” And, he thinks, the stars love it too, a chance to catch up with their peers in what is, after all, a pretty relaxed affair.

As well, the program is a chance for the behind-the-scenes crews to work on a live program which isn’t news, and which might include music, dancing and the like. And, of course, it gives local performers a rare chance to appear live on television.

This year Telethon had 117 acts and about 80 of them were local. That meant that perhaps 200 children from local dance schools, for instance, had a chance to appear on TV. As a production, Mr Crilly said, it was constantly evolving, from the early years of panel-based fun and games to the present form, which increasingly was more of a “tonight” show. “Every year is different,” he said, though the basic planning was the same.

Telethon has also grown beyond a 24-hour event held over one weekend with fundraising events spread throughout the year. **7**



1: Telethon cracked the \$1 million mark in 1980.

2: Sir James Cruthers cuts a seven-tier cake at the opening of Telethon 1980.

3: Dame Edna Everage and Stuart Wagstaff, Telethon 1986.

4: John Farnham sings live at Telethon in 1989.