

Pete Way (1950-2020)

The death has been announced of rock musician Pete Way on August 14. He was said to have suffered serious injuries in an accident two months ago, but he was already in poor health and may not have had long to live anyway. He suffered a heart attack in August 2016.



Although he was associated with a number of projects, the big one was UFO. I actually saw Pete with the band at Leeds University on January 19, 1980; they were supported by Girl, who were also superb. Michael Schenker had recently been replaced by Paul Chapman, which was a slight disappointment, though I would shortly see Schenker too, at Bradford, with his own group. UFO played a hundred dates that year.

Pete (pictured above in 2016) is the third member of the band to die within a short space of time; Paul Chapman [died in June](#) aged just 66; keyboard player and guitarist Paul Raymond [died last year](#) at 73.

UFO was formed in October 1969 with fellow Londoner Phil Mogg on vocals, Andy Parker on drums, and man of mystery Mick Bolton on lead guitar. Their first two albums were very different from anything they produced later. *Flying* included two simply mind-blowing songs: the nearly 19 minute *Star Storm* and the [even longer title track](#).

Bolton departed in 1972; Phil Mogg is the only lead vocalist the band has ever had. Andy Parker was absent for a few years, while Pete ended the last of his three tenures with the band in 2008.

Although they have produced an enormous amount of material in their half century, one album that has to stand out is *Strangers In The Night*, unquestionably one of the finest live double rock albums ever made. As well as playing bass, Pete contributed to the songwriting credits including the classic *Lights Out*.

In the 1990s, he released a couple of albums as Mogg/Way, really a slimmed down UFO under another name, and there was also Waysted, again with a UFO influence. In 2004, he released the solo album *Acoustic Animal*.

In 2017, with a little help from a ghost-writer he published his autobiography, *A Fast Ride Out Of Here...* the title being taken from *Shoot Shoot*, a UFO track he co-wrote with Messrs Mogg, Parker and Schenker.

If half the things in that book are true, it's a wonder he lived as long as he did, drugs and alcohol, not necessarily in that order, took a heavy toll. As Phil Mogg [told a journalist](#) in March 2012: "We must have done a lot for Peru!"

Pete's other "vice" was women, he literally collected them; like Henry VIII he was married six times. Henry murdered two of his wives, but two of Pete's predeceased him by natural causes. He also had two daughters; Pete Way died with his wife Jenny by his side. Tributes were not slow in coming including from Geezer Butler and Ozzy Osbourne of Black Sabbath, and American rockers Mötley Crüe.

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