

The End Of Black Sabbath?

By **Alexander Baron** - Oct 6, 2015



Black Sabbath in 1970

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Way back in 1968, three very special heavy metal bands were formed in England: Led Zeppelin, Deep Purple and Black Sabbath. Although the influential Zeppelin did not stay the course, they played a 5 year reunion in 1985, and three since then, the last in 2007. Deep Purple is extant, only one of its founder members, keyboard maestro Jon Lord having departed this mortal coil. Founder member Ritchie Blackmore has gone on to **even greater things**, but all four founder members of Black Sabbath are alive and well – even if one of them has never been quite sane! – and recently they announced their final tour which is called fittingly *The End*.



This will definitely be the end because as lead guitarist Tony Iommi told *Rolling Stone* last month, it is time for him to if not hang up his guitar then to retire from touring. Three years ago he was diagnosed with a serious form of cancer, but fortunately the Big C is not always fatal nowadays, and he recovered. The trials and tribulations of wild man vocalist Ozzy Osbourne are well-documented, but with wife Sharon's watchful gaze ever upon him, he has come through some scrapes that would have killed lesser men.

Although he is alive and well, drummer Bill Ward is not a happy man, at least not with the current state of affairs; he also has *his own projects*, so will be replaced by American Tommy Clufetos, who although 35 is a virtual baby. At 66, bass player Geezer Butler is the youngest and arguably the fittest of the old crew.



An honourable mention should go to the late great Ronnie James Dio, who took over as vocalist when Ozzy parted company with the band in 1979. The resulting *Heaven And Hell* album was one of their best ever. So where are we now? The final Black Sabbath tour kicks off at Omaha on January 20; Ozzy has lived in the States for some time. After dates in Canada and Madison Square Garden they will be off to Australia then Europe. After playing the Monsters Of Rock Festival in Sweden they will finish their world tour in Moscow on July 12. You can check out the [official site](#) for the latest news, and if this is the band's swansong, there are 19 studio albums and a lot of footage on YouTube for you to play and replay for years to come.

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