

Wishbone Ash in 2015

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



Wishbone Ash, Charlotte, North Carolina, US, in 1972 Image credits: Malco23

Long before most of you reading this were born, and more years ago than I care to remember, there was a poster on my sixth form wall. It read *Wishbone Ash's Ted Turner*, and showed a young man with a guitar. Ted Turner is now 64 years young; I know that because we have the same birthday, and he is exactly six years older than me. Now relocated across the Pond, he is no longer a member of Wishbone Ash, but remains one of the most influential guitarists of his or of any generation.

The original drummer of Wishbone Ash, Steve Upton, has disappeared from the scene, but the two other founder members – bass player Martin Turner (no relation to Ted) and guitarist Andy Powell – are still not only writing and performing but touring. For reasons best not discussed here, the two rock icons no longer perform together. Andy Powell owns the name Wishbone Ash, while Martin Turner has his own band called

Martin Turner's Wishbone Ash. Both bands have splendiferous websites, so let's look on the bright side, now we have two for the price of one.



*Andy Powell in Germany 2009
Image credits: Thomas Lieven*

Another guitarist who warrants honourable mention is **Laurie Wisefield**. Although technically not a founder member, Laurie is as good as. In 1974, Ted Turner left the

band for the first time and was replaced by Laurie; these were big shoes to fill, but he did so magnificently. He played *with* Ted Turner at a special one-off event in 2012 – *Martin Turner's Garden Party* – at which Steve Upton put in a non-playing appearance.

What is so special about Wishbone Ash – where to begin? More than any other band they pioneered the twin lead guitar in rock; they were not quite the first, but they influenced *inter alia* Thin Lizzy; originally a three piece, when Eric Bell quit the band, Phil Lynott brought in not one but two lead guitarists to replace him. The New Wave Of British Heavy Metal was also influenced by their twin lead including Praying Mantis and Saxon.

The band is noted for lengthy solos which work best live including the classic *Phoenix*, the dreamlike *Persephone* with Andy Powell taking the lead, and *Living Proof* with that short but beautiful guitar solo by Laurie Wisefield.



Martin Turner in 2011

Image credits: Martin Turner's Wishbone Ash.

So what are they doing now? Well, dates for Wishbone Ash can be found on the [official website](#); on March 28 they will be at Chauny in France, and on April 8 they will be playing the Rickshaw Theatre in Vancouver, Canada. This tour will include the United States.

As for Martin Turner's Wishbone Ash, they are currently [touring the UK](#), and a new album, *Written In The Stars*, is coming out soon.

In addition to the vinyl albums I collected in the 1970s and 80s, I saw Wishbone Ash twice in the 1990s, consecutive years at Catford, with Ted Turner and Andy Powell. On Youtube, you can relive the experience of a band whose existence has spanned more than forty years. You can also read up on the background to some of their songs at the [Songfacts](#) music database.

Song *Warrior* performed by the Wishbone Ash back in 1973 :

