

# Toussaint And Taylor Pass On



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By Alexander Baron



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Two fairly big names in music passed on last week; Allen Toussaint was an accomplished composer who although ostensibly a rhythm and blues man refused to be pigeonholed. Phil Taylor was a rock drummer who looked and acted the part.



Toussaint was born in Louisiana on January 14, 1938, and in his youth recorded with among others the legendary Fats Domino (who although still around appears to have retired). Toussaint recorded on his own account – including more than a dozen albums – but was better known as a songwriter. If you are of a certain vintage you may be familiar with *Working In The Coal Mine*, recorded initially by Lee Dorsey; the unashamedly commercial *Here Come The Girls*, which charted twice in the UK after it was used by a major pharmaceutical company in its TV advertisements; and arguably his biggest hit, *Southern Nights*, a US chart topper for Glen Campbell, although originally Toussaint recorded it himself.



*Allen Toussaint performing in Stockholm in 2009*


Allen Toussaint died with his boots on; he was on tour in Spain when he succumbed to a heart attack aged 77. At the time of writing his [official website](#) has not been updated with the news of his death, although it will surely continue to be maintained. He was married and divorced twice, and is survived by a son and daughter. Yesterday, a previously unreleased Toussaint song – *Isn't Life Great?* – was revealed by National Public Radio.

At the other end of the spectrum (and the Universe) was Phil Taylor, or Philthy Animal Taylor as he was playfully styled. Born at Chesterfield on September 21, 1954, Taylor joined Motörhead shortly after its formation. Bass player and front man Lemmy Kilmister had previously been with Hawkwind, (its his voice you hear on the classic *Silver Machine*). On the departure of drummer Lucas Fox, the classic line-up was formed with Fast Eddie Clarke on lead guitar.



Although Phil Taylor played with other bands, it is his two stints with Motörhead, 1975-84 and 1987-92, for which he will be remembered. Most fans would agree that the band produced their best work during these times; they were, as the late Tommy Vance used to say, over the top. Phil Taylor was a bachelor, but was married to the music. He died November 11 having been ill for some time, probably due in no small measure to his legendary intake of alcohol. You will find plenty of footage of him and the band on YouTube, and if you don't mind strong language, there is an extended interview with them in the documentary *Motörhead: The Guts And The Glory*.

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I enjoyed Toussaint's collaboration with Elvis Costello, about Hurricane Katrina 'The River in Reverse'.

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