

## IN LOVING MEMORY TO CLIFFORT LEE BURTON gestorben 1986

Es ist nun 15 Jahre her, daß der legendäre Bassist von Metallica, bei einem schrecklichen Autounfall starb !!!

Born: 10th of February 1962

Died: 27th of September 1986

"When a man lies he murders some part of the world

These are the pale deaths which men miscall their lives

All this i cannot bear to witness any longer

Cannot the kingdom of salvation take me home"

- Cliff Burton: "To Live Is To Die" -

Wollen wir hier an dieser Stelle Cliff Burton gedenken, der vor 15 Jahren bei einem schrecklichen Unfall um´s Leben kam.

Hier noch ein Text im englischen Original, was sich mit seiner Geschichte befaßt.

Who was Cliff Burton??

Cliff Burton was Metallica's legendary second bass player. He was born at 9:38 p.m. on February 10, 1962 in Castro Valley, California. He died tragically in a bus accident in Ljungby, Sweden at 6:15 a.m. on September 27, 1986. He was 24 years old. He was an amazing bass player at 24, and if he would have been alive today, he would have been playing bass for over 20 years - I cannot even begin to imagine how amazing he would have been today.

The Metallica of today has many newer fans who did not even get to know Cliff or get to see him play live in concert. It's funny, but even though I met him only once after a show, I feel like I knew Cliff and I miss him even today.

Cliff was often referred to as the "soul of Metallica," and he was an integral part of their innovative sound and approach during a particularly important period in their development.

Cliff's death remains one of the most regrettable tragedies in the music world.

In fact, even today, more than ten years since his death, Jason Newsted is still considered Cliff's replacement. Sadly for Jason, he will never truly be accepted by those who knew the band when Cliff was around.

But who was Cliff Burton?? Cliff was a cross between Clint Eastwood and E.F. Hutton: didn't say much, but when he did, people listened. Especially Hetfield and Ulrich, who were puppies with peach fuzz and acne when they relocated Metallica to the Bay Area to be closer to Cliff.

According to Ross Halfin, Metallica photographer from 1985 to 1994, Cliff was the band's heart and soul. He was absolutely uncompromising. "Cliff ran that band; absolutely nothing happened without his okay. People don't realize how important he was..."

Cliff Burton had flavor: he wore bell-bottoms, read H.P. Lovecraft, studied piano, and even went to junior college. He drove a green 1972 VW stationwagon, affectionately referred to as "the grasshopper." He was the son of Jan and Ray Burton.

For three and a half years Cliff worked hard to take Metallica to the top. After replacing Ron McGovney in late 1982, Cliff instantly made a name for himself with his classic windmill style of thrashing onstage, with his hair flying out in all directions, and with his outdated, completely "unfashionable" image: with his hair hanging straight down from his head, he seemed eternally clad in a pair of bell-bottom jeans and a faded denim jacket. If it was cold, he wore a flannel shirt underneath and those cool black fingerless gloves.

He even wore a black felt "cowboy" type hat once in a while.

Offstage, Cliff was the ultimate laid-back Californian, a total opposite from his wild, aggressive onstage attack. His sense of humor was great, as were his bass solos and everything about his stage presence. He was the most visual of all the band onstage, he would just go wild. Cliff's surreal solos and general onstage dementia was quickly established as an essential component of any Metallica show. His freakish, improvisational style added a degree of spontaneity to the band's stage routine which set them apart from many of their contemporaries, and his space-cadet delivery made him a firm favorite with the fans.

More importantly, Cliff was one hell of a nice guy and a much-loved figure in the Metallica camp. He always went out of his way to talk to the band's fans - no matter how tired he was.

He was certainly the most unanimously appreciated by the band members as well as by the public. In fact, many original fans of the band maintain that the true free spirit of Metallica died with him.

How did Cliff die?

It was approaching dawn on Saturday, the 27th of September 1986 and Metallica's two tour buses were making their way along a deserted road that lies somewhere between the Scandinavian cities of Stockholm and Copenhagen.

Suddenly, for no apparent reason, just before 6:15 a.m., one of the coaches swerved violently to its right and started careening wildly down the wrong side of the road.

The bus's brief but horrific excursion came to a halt some 60 feet further up the tarmac. By this time, though, the vehicle was on its side and lying in a ditch by the side of the road near the small Swedish town Ljungby.

Tragically, in the short space of those dreadful seconds on that lonely Swedish road, Metallica's world was turned upside down.

The bus went off the road out of control. Cliff was sleeping in an upper bunk bed next to a window. As the bus slid off the road, the window apparently opened or gave way, throwing Cliff out of the bus. The bus tilted and fell over on top of Cliff, killing him instantly.

"I saw the bus lying right on him. I saw his legs sticking out. I freaked. The bus driver, I recall, was trying to yank the blanket out from under him to use for other people. I just went, "Don't f\*\*king do that!!" I already wanted to kill the guy. I don't know if he was drunk or if he hit some ice. All I knew was, he was driving and Cliff wasn't alive anymore." - James Hetfield, 1993

Swedish police arriving on the scene of the crash immediately arrested the driver as a matter of routine, but later released him without charging him after further investigation revealed that the cause of the crash was black ice on a nasty bend in the road.

The gap left by Cliff's death yawned across the pages of tributes run by the music press the week after the tragedy. In Kerrang!, for example, advertisements were taken by friends and fans alike; a bleak, black double page spread ran messages from the Zazulas ("The Ultimate Musician, The Ultimate Headbanger, The Ultimate Loss, A Friend Forever"). Music for Nations simply took out an a one page ad that read:

"Cliff Burton 1962-1986."

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