

## Hughie Thomasson of the Outlaws is Remembered.

By: Scott Hopeton

On September 9, 2007, Hughie Thomasson, the founder of the legendary southern rock group the Outlaws, passed away of an apparent heart attack. Hughie is yet another southern rock icon who has left us prematurely. Duane Allman, Barry Oakley, Toy Caldwell, Ronnie Van Zant, Steve Gaines, Danny Joe Brown, and others were taken from us long before their time.

Hughie established the Outlaws in the late 1960's and subsequently the band released their first of many excellent records in 1975. As with many southern rock bands, the Outlaws thrived onstage, hence the appropriately dubbed name, Florida's Guitar Army. Songs such as "Green Grass and High Tides", "Hurry Sundown", and "There Goes another Love Song" are all FM and Satellite staples.

While the band changed throughout the years, Hughie took them from one plateau to the next, thus solidifying them as one of the greatest touring and recording southern rock artists ever! Even though the band's earlier material remains their most popular, perhaps their best release, but least known, is "Diablo Canyon" which was released in 1995. With special guests, Billy Powell and Gary Rossington, Hughie composed some of his most inspiring work – "Alligator Alley", Brother Travis" and others will forever remain southern rock classics!

In 1996, Hughie joined his friends in Lynyrd Skynyrd. Hughie, Rossington, Johnny Van Zant, and Rickey Medlocke moved Skynyrd into the millennium with a series of exceptional recordings that more than hold their own when compared to the band's earlier material.

As 2005 approached, Hughie listened to the Outlaws' fan base and reunited the band in time for a 30 year reunion tour. Having seen the band several times since their reformation, it is without hesitation that I say, they were well on their way to establishing themselves as a force to be reckoned with as they had been back in the 1970's and early 80's. The songs they played from their hopefully soon-to-be-released album, "Once an Outlaw..." are fantastic and certainly comparable to earlier classics.

Hughie's friendly demeanor and effervescent smile will never be forgotten. Fly on Freebird! You will always be in our hearts!

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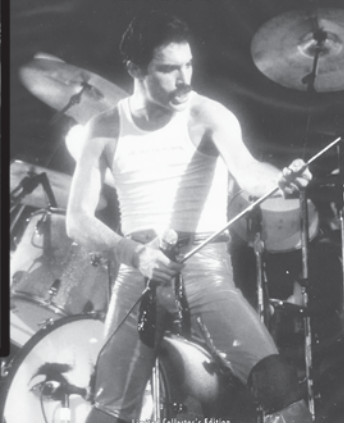
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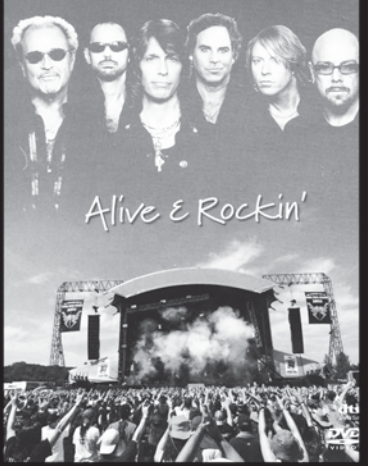
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