



## The Forgotten Eagles

Two of the four founding members of the Eagles quit just as the band was peaking in the mid-Seventies. Both have remained out of the spotlight ever since.

### Bernie Leadon

**INSTRUMENT** Guitar **YEARS IN BAND** '71-'75

**CONTRIBUTIONS** Leadon co-wrote "Witchy Woman," the group's first Top 10 hit. A member of the Flying Burrito Brothers, Leadon was responsible for the country-rock sound of the band's early records.

**DEPARTURE** By 1975, Leadon was exhausted. "I wanted time off to regroup," he says today. "The others weren't excited about that." Tensions began to mount, and during a fight, he told Frey to "cool out" before dumping a beer on his head. Leadon quit soon after. "I don't regret it," he says.

**WHERE IS HE NOW?** In 2004, he released *Mirror*, his first album in 27 years. "The Eagles' *Greatest Hits* goes platinum every year," he says, explaining why he feels little need to work. "I get royalties just like it was a new album." He's contemplating posting new music on his Website.

### Randy Meisner

**INSTRUMENT** Bass **YEARS IN BAND** '71-'77

**CONTRIBUTIONS** Meisner co-wrote and sang lead on the 1975 hit "Take It to the Limit." His high tenor was an integral part of the Eagles' harmony.

**DEPARTURE** His influence dwindled as Henley and Frey solidified control. "I felt like a member of the group, not a part of it," he says. Conflicts between him and Frey boiled over, and he quit after a backstage fistfight between the two.

**WHERE IS HE NOW?** Meisner lives in Studio City, California, and plays occasional gigs. Royalties have kept him very wealthy, but he'd like to perform with the band again. "Last time they came to town, I asked if I could sing 'Take It to the Limit,'" he tells RS. "I didn't get a response. I'm not bitter. I got my house, a great wife, two Chihuahuas and five-foot tomato plants. I'm happy. How much money do you need?"

ANDY GREENE