The Key Members Of The Manson Family

The Manson Family, an American quasi-commune and cult who referred to themselves as members of a family were infamous for being responsible for several gruesome deaths in the 1960s. Although decades have passed, the blood of the innocents who were murdered leaves a permanent stain in the history books of America. Who are these Manson Family members? What became of each one and where are they now? Find out here.

Who are the Manson Family Members?

Their leader, Charles Milles Maddox alias Charles “Willis” Manson, born on November 12, 1934, in Cincinnati, Ohio, had lived about half of his life in and out of prison by the time the “family” started to form in 1967.

The family members committed various crimes including petty theft, assaults, and murders. Their most popular murders being that of the heavily pregnant actress wife of film director, Roman Polanski, Sharon Tate and four others perpetrated by Susan Atkins, Charles “Tex” Watson, Patricia Krenwinkel and Linda Kasabian, following their messiah’s order to kill everyone in the actress’s 10050 Cielo Drive home on August 8, 1969.

The following night, August 9, two more family members — Leslie Van Houten, Steve 'Clem' Grogan joined the four from the previous night to kill wealthy supermarket owner Leno LaBianca and his wife Rosemary.

Here are some of the key members of the Manson family including those convicted for the Tate, LaBianca and other deaths.

Dennis Wilson

Born as Dennis Carl Wilson in Inglewood, California on December 4, 1944. Wilson was one of the founding members of the American rock band, The Beach Boys. He was introduced to Charles Manson by Patricia Krenwinkel and Ella Jo Bailey who told him about their talented guru in 1968.

Wilson introduced Manson to some people in the music industry including producer Terry Melcher who lived in the Tate house before them, Wilson was also the one footing the bills of all the members staying in his household until he moved out of the house, after a falling out leaving the Family members there in late 1968.

Susan Atkins

Atkins was born on May 7, 1948, in San Gabriel, California to alcoholic parents. Her life became disrupted when her mother died of cancer in 1963, Atkins went from being a middle-class girl who sang in the choir to a criminal convicted of eight murders after she met Manson who she thought was Jesus.

Tex Watson

Born as Charles Denton Watson Jr. in Farmersville, Texas on December 2, 1945. Watson was an editor, athlete and honor student in high school before he was introduced to Manson by some of his women in 1967. Watson led the group responsible for the Tate and LaBianca murders.

Patricia Krenwinkel

Krenwinkel was born in Los Angeles on December 3, 1947. She was often bullied and teased in high school for being excessively hairy and overweight which resulted in low self-esteem. She received validation for the first time in her life when she met Manson in 1967. She eventually became one of his most devout followers and one of the perpetrators of the Tate – LaBianca murders.

Mary Brunner

The first recruit in the Manson Family, Brunner was a 23-year-old Ph.D. student when she met Manson. He started the family in her residence in 1967 after he left prison. Soon, over 20 people were living in Brunner's apartment in San Francisco with Manson until they moved to Spahn Ranch. She had Manson's son on April 15, 1968, and named him Valentine Michael. She was not involved in the group's murders but was arrested for a series of offenses like armed robbery and credit card theft.

Bobby Beausoleil

Born in Santa Barbara, California on November 6, 1947. Beausoleil was sent by his catholic family to a reform camp for juvenile delinquency at age 15. Afterward, he moved between San Francisco and Los Angeles and took an interest in music. He joined the family through his roommate, Gary Hinman whose life he later took on Manson's orders.

Leslie Van Houten

Born in California in 1949, Leslie started taking drugs as early as age 15 and was forced to have an abortion at age 17 by her mother. She joined the family when in 1968 and was charged for the murder of the LaBiancas the following year, at age 19.

Other known members are Gary Hinman, Steve "Clem" Grogan, Bruce Davis, Linda Kasabian, Lynette 'Squeaky' Fromme, and Catherine Share.

Where are they now?

All the Manson Family members that were involved in the murders were sentenced to death until the death penalty was abolished in 1972 by the California Supreme court. Their sentences were then converted to life sentences.

Atkins was still in jail when she died of brain cancer in 2009, Wilson drowned in 1983, Watson is

now a born again Christian in prison, Van Houten is eligible for her 21st parole attempt in 2020, Hinman was killed, Beausoleil sells art and creates music in prison, Brunner was released from prison on parole in 1977 but her whereabouts today is unknown.

Krenwinkel who is still serving her life sentence holds the record of the longest-serving female inmate in California, Grogan was released on parole in 1985, Share found the real Jesus too and is now a Christian who often speaks against cultism.

On November 17, 2017, Charles Manson succumbed to colon cancer at age 83 after serving 48 years in California State Prison.