

The Worthing Society

Conserving, Preserving
and
Safeguarding our Heritage

Heritage Leaflet No: 13
Keith Noel Emerson



This is one of a series of leaflets being produced by the Worthing Society to accompany the plaques erected throughout the Town to commemorate notable people, buildings, and events in the town's history. For more information about the Society and its activities go to our Web Site at:

www.worthingsociety.org.uk Reg. Charity No.286899



KEITH NOEL EMERSON (1944-2016)



Keith Noel Emerson an English keyboardist, songwriter and composer was raised in Worthing and retained a connection and home in the local area throughout his life.

Worthing Assembly Hall was the very first place Keith played in public, competing in Worthing Music Festivals's piano sections as a child. Throughout his school days he recalled being taken there to see various classical concerts, which he readily admitted had an impact on his future career. He went on to perform there himself with a number of bands in his youth and his first steps into a professional career. Growing up in the town and having close family local, Keith never lost touch with his roots.



He played keyboards in a number of bands before finding his first commercial success with THE NICE in the late 1960's and he became internationally famous with them.

After leaving THE NICE in 1970, he was a founding member of Emerson, Lake

& Palmer, one of the early progressive rock supergroups. ELP were exceptionally successful through much of the 1970's, becoming one of the best-known and iconic progressive rock groups of the era.

Following ELP's Break-up at the end of the 1970's Keith pursued a solo career, composed several film soundtracks, notably Inferno for Dario Argento, and formed the band Emerson, Lake and Powell and 3 to carry on the style of ELP. In the early 1990's Emerson rejoined ELP, reuniting them for two more albums and several tours until the late 1990's. He also reunited THE NICE in 2002 for a tour.

During the 2000's Keith Emerson resumed his solo career, including touring with his own Emerson band, initially featuring guitarist David Lilminster and latterly featuring Marc Bonilla, collaborating with several orchestras. He reunited with ELP bandmate Greg Lake in 2010 for a duo tour, culminating in a one-off ELP reunion show in London to celebrate the band's 40th anniversary. His final album, "The Three Fates Project", with Marc Bonilla and Terje Mikkelsen, was released in 2012.

When he heard that the Assembly Hall might lose its wonderful Wurlitzer Organ he offered his Gieger print of "Brian Salad Surgery" signed by himself, Greg Lake and Carl Palmer to Councillor Alan Rice as a donation towards saving the magnificent instrument.

Keith's family are all nearby, with eldest son Aaron, wife Jo, and sons living in Shoreham and youngest son Damon and his family living in Brighton



Keith and his family- his ex wife, two sons, their wives and Keith's grandchildren

His long-standing connection to Worthing Music Festival continued as his cousin, Mandy, took over as Principal of her mother's school Glendale, the dance school where Keith had earned his first money as a pianist, by playing for his beloved Aunty Wendy !

Mandy, a committee member of Worthing Music and Arts Festival (as it is now known) assisted in setting up the Sussex Band Awards held in 2010 at The Assembly Hall. Keith Emerson came back as a judge, cementing his lifelong affiliation with this wonderful venue. It seems only fitting that it is the location to display his blue Plaque with pride.



Keith judging the Sussex Band Awards with Mandy Chapman

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