

## 2001 --- 21,000 Miles --- 21 Concerts

**Contributed by: Lannis Ethridge**

Eight was not enough, but I did get a good dose of Heep in 2001. Bobbie and I attended the first eight U.S. Heep Concerts in June and documented this with our report "Eight IS Not Enough." Mac attended the first four concerts with us. Heep was GREAT! Meeting Heep and their crew, and new and old Heepsters, like Bob Dreher, was even greater.

Later in June four members of the Carolina Heepsters contingent, Mac, Ron, Madman, and I, attended the infamous Blind Lemon concert in Cleveland. The term "Walking Distance" was coined here. Got to meet Bob Carruthers and hear his bagpipes. Then it was on to Springfield, VA, for the Jaxx gig. Heep's brilliant performance was broadcast via Internet. An electrical thunderstorm, seeing Hiro and others, made this one stand out. Then on to Pittsburgh. Here, Madman became an honorary member of Heep giving out autographs to the not-so-Heep savvy. Afterwards we had a great little mini-Heepvention. Thanks Ed for the pizza.

In July, Bobbie and I drove to Sioux City, Iowa, for the first gig of the second leg. Slaughter performed as the opening act. Of course, Heep blew them away. Then it was on to Brookfield, IL, for Brookfest. Rick Derringer of "Hang On Sloopy" fame was the opening act. With an ominous sky in the background, Heep put on one of their best performances to an eager crowd of about 2000. The next morning after seeing Heep off at the motel, we hung out with Dave White, Bob Dreher, Muzzy and others until about noon. During our 18+ hours drive home, Bobbie and I saw the sunrise from our car. Once home, being extremely tired, I crashed knowing that I would be leaving for Scranton, PA, with Mac and Ron at midnight. Ron drove through the night and, for the second day in a row, I saw the sunrise from a car on the highway. We arrived about noon. Muzzy and Gail were great hosts, this being their home turf. Another fantastic concert, a flat tire, and a 12-hour drive home concluded a great second installment of Heep.

In August, I was privileged to fly to LA for Dale's 50th birthday party on the 8th. Dave Crookham flew in from PA to make the Three Musketeers complete. Over the

weekend, we took in Heep gigs in Vegas, San Diego, and LA. Thanks to Paul Kubler for his hospitality in sunny San Diego. One of the highlights was meeting the West Coast Heepsters. After enjoying Dale and Helen's hospitality, it was a red-eye flight back to NC, with the satisfaction of knowing I had seen Heep 17 times over the summer and had met so many wonderful Heepsters. Talk about Heep Heaven!

Finally December and the Magician's Birthday Party. Ed, Ron, Mac, Bobbie, and I flew over the big pond to help Heepsters of the World celebrate the continued existence of the world's greatest band, Uriah Heep. We all stayed at the Kensington Hilton. The John Lawton gig on Thursday at the Borderline was just superb. John's new bass player, Steve Dunning was stunning. He played the piano part for "Rain" on his bass, WOW! The Heep Festival events were one of the highlights of the weekend. The events included a press conference with Heep, John Lawton, John Wetton, and Ken Hensley; presentations by Pip Williams and Roger Dean; the World's Greatest Heepster contest; the Heep Auction; and the John Lawton workshop. The MBP with John and Ken on stage with Heep was a dream come true for many of us. Words can't adequately describe this event. Thank goodness for CDs and DVDs. Then as an added bonus the Hensley-Wetton concert topped off the weekend. Some of us stayed on for several days after THE weekend. It was great hanging out with Muzzy and Gail. Bobbie and I took in the Tower of London, the London Eye, and many other sites. On Wednesday night we had supper with Pete, Janine, and kids. Thanks Pete. Then, Thursday the flight back to the States. Bobbie turned 50 on Nov. 23rd and retired Dec. 1st, so this trip was also a birthday celebration and retirement party for us both. Heep and eight nights in London, what a way to celebrate and finish a fabulous year.

In summary, 2001 was an exciting year for Heep and Heepsters. Bobbie and I met many memorable Heepsters and Heep fans. It was great fun and invigorating doing our little bit to help spread the message of Heep.

### **And I Quote:**

**"I never did say goodbye, did I?"**

**Ken Hensley**

## **Ken Hensley & John Wetton on Dec. 8, 2001 at The Forum, London**

**Contributed by: Dana Dyck**

The doors to The Forum opened and another chapter in the amazing "Magician's Birthday Party" weekend started. We had only been inside a short time when Mostly Autumn took to the stage. I thought they were a good band and I would like to hear more but found that I really couldn't get into



**Photo contributed by: Rod Werneck**

their set as they were playing at a painfully loud level. In order to escape the assault on my ears, I was forced to hang around the back of the hall close to the bar :o). Mostly Autumn played a very short set and then the crowd settled in to wait for the main attraction.

Of the three main events of The Magician's Birthday Party weekend I thought this one had the potential to backfire. This time, the crowd were not all Heep fans. Many in attendance were there to see and hear John Wetton play songs from Asia and his solo career. Also, many of the Heep fans were not too familiar with John's solo work. Would the collaboration of these two talented musicians and songwriters still gel after 25 years? How would the other members of the band fit in? It didn't take too long to get the answers and once again, I should have known better.

The set opened up with Ken playing a beautiful musical intro as the rest of the band took their places. Suddenly the band broke into "Easy Livin" and my fears were relieved as they really rocked! Next came the song that I was waiting to hear, "One Way Or Another". I noticed that the drum rhythm seemed to be out of sync on the opening riff but otherwise the song was fantastic. The band followed up with "Return To Fantasy" and "July Morning" performing well and for the time being, satisfying the Heepsters. As July Morning was being played it was obvious that due to a cold, Ken would not be able to reach the high note. I was very much surprised and pleased to hear Dave Kilminster hit the note perfectly!

The band then played a section of "Mostly Wetton" with included Heep's "Confession" amongst several Wetton songs, "Battle Lines", "Emma", "Hold Me Now" and "After All". I had heard much talk about the song/album "Battle Lines" but I had not previously heard it. The song definitely lived up to it's excellent reputation. Battle Lines was followed by "Confession", a song that gets better every time I listen to it and I was delighted to hear it live. One of my favourites from JW's "Arkangel" cd followed - "Emma" was sung superbly. John sang another song from the Battle Lines cd, "Hold Me Now" (which prompted me to later pick up a copy of the disc). The Mostly Wetton set was closed with "After All". John's lead, and the backing vocals on this were incredible!

The show then temporarily got back on the Heep track with "The Wizard" which was followed by a selection of Hensley tunes. These songs were introduced as being on Ken's new "Running Blind" album (with a promise of imminent release ;-)) I had liked "I Don't Wanna Wait" on Ken's "From Time To Time" CD and it was a great song to hear played live. "Out Of My Control" is very powerful, and it is a brilliant live song. It was followed by an absolutely scorching slide solo by Ken that led into "Tell Me"; a rather repetitive rocker that I wasn't too impressed with and thought was a poor choice to close the set.

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**Bernie Shaw and John Lawton exchange vocals at the MBP. Photo contributed by: Rod Werneck**

the best live album I've ever heard outside of Live 73. By now subscriptions to the "Sailing the Sea of Light" DVD were in, so this year was going to be special without any further additions.

In late May details of a USA tour were surfacing. The first US tour in about ten years, for many of us, the first one in over twenty years. With Internet exposure, we have access before hand to what is planned, not after the fact. This time we were ready. I personally had the chance to witness four shows. Not a great amount, but taking into consideration none were closer than a nine hour drive from my home, I can't complain. This year couldn't get better from here, or could it?

We got the "Sailing the Sea of Light" DVD in August. Another notch of greatness, this splendid work documented the history of the current lineup from 1986 to present. This was followed with the release of "Remasters, The Official Anthology" in October, a two CD set of previous released Uriah Heep material, re-recorded by this lineup.

During the making of our final plans for the "Magician's Birthday Party" in London, never in our wildest dreams could we have anticipated what lie in store for us. First the announcements of the Hensley-Wetton concert and a John

Lawton Band concert during the same three day span. The real surprise came with the news of Ken Hensley and John Lawton appearing as special guest on the same stage with Uriah Heep. Adding to the events were the Heep Festival Club and Mostly Autumn opening for Hensley-Wetton.

## **Hensley & Wetton Review**

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The crowd enthusiastically called for an encore and we all sang, once again, "Lady In Black" this time with John Wetton on bass (finally). One last time, we gave it everything we had – the band never does this one alone ;-) The final number of the night was the Asia classic "Heat Of The Moment" which was played and sang brilliantly. I can't help but think though, that the order of the encore numbers were backwards. Heepster that I am, I would have preferred to end the concert, and The Magician's Birthday Party weekend, with a Heep song. On the whole though, it was another great concert in an incredible weekend celebrating the music of Uriah Heep.

After returning from London, with the memories of what we had taken in, I thought of all the activity from this past year. The CD releases, the DVDs, the tour, the MBP week, how can that be topped next year? This isn't counting the Salisbury video from Hensley - Lawton or Ken's new CD "Running Blind" being edited for release. Many fans consider this the best year to have been a Heepster in over twenty years. Myself being one of them.

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## **Can 2001 Be Topped?**

**Contributed by: Ron Mann**

As I sit and reminisce about the past year, I can't help but wonder how, as a Heepster, is it possible for 2001 to be topped. We started the year with all the memories of the "Acoustically Driven" show from the previous December, then we followed that with the release of the CD and DVD in February. Many bands might tour an entire year just to support a project of this proportion and let the fans stew over it for quite some time.

This didn't happen in Heep's case. In May they released "The Official Bootleg, Electrically Driven" from the London Astoria gig. I still recall when I first heard this, as good as Future Echoes was, this one had a special sound to it. I rank this as

## Can 2001 Be Topped?

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Then I looked at what next year holds. Starting with finally getting "Running Blind" in January, we will soon follow that by getting our copies of "The Magician's Birthday Party" on CD and DVD. Then the Hensley - Wetton DVD and a new John Lawton Band recording. Uriah Heep plan to record a new studio album this spring, that may be soon followed up with another promised USA tour (with Lee telling me a few shows were planned for the southern part of the country). This is what we know about now, and we haven't heard the real surprises yet, and there are always plenty of those in store these days. After all, just read Dave's Teasers on the front page.



Mick Box and Ken Hensley reunited on stage at the MBP.  
Photo contributed by: Rod Werneck

## Unplugged For All



Source: *E-Heep* / January 13th, 2002 Edition

### JOHN LAWTON UNPLUGGED

John Lawton and Steve Dunning's acoustic set at the Hilton Hotel was undoubtedly one of the highlights of the Magician's Birthday Party weekend. Following on from its enormous success, a brand new "Lawton Unplugged" studio CD is now in the making! This exclusive Classic Rock Legends project will feature John's outstanding vocal talents as well as Steve's magical guitar - and bass - playing talents. The CD will include classic Heep tunes as you've never heard them before, as well as original material..... and some surprising twists are in store! Recording commences 18th January.

### KEN HENSLEY UNPLUGGED

Ken Hensley will be also recording an acoustic album! He will be taking 15-18 songs and doing them in the studio in an "acoustic" mood with just himself on guitar, vocals and piano and Dave Kilminster on guitar and background vocals. They'll go out and do some low - key, intimate shows later in the year or as opportunity arises. The album's working title is "Ken Hensley..... Acoustic Reflections", and they will start work on it on January 21st. Ken is presently compiling the song list but there will be at least two brand new songs on it!



Photo contributed by: Bram Van Belzen

## Heep And Beer Memories

### TREVOR & STELLA UNPLUGGED

Last but not least... as reported here, the acoustic CD by Trevor and Stella Hensley is recorded, and final details are being sorted out before it's available! For those of you who asked us who are Trevor and Stella, no they are not "Ken's kids", in fact Trevor is Ken's brother and Stella is Trevor's wife!

Details also at: <http://www.ken-hensley.com> soon...

# URIAH HEEP

## Carolina Heepsters Association

### The 2001 Heepsters of the Year Award

*Presented to:*



### Lannis Ethridge & Bobbie Hinson

**For their outstanding efforts which define the term Heepster:**

They were represented at 21 Uriah Heep concerts in 2001 and personally helped make it possible for other Carolina Heepsters to attend shows out of reach. Had Uriah Heep Live t-shirts printed for sale during the summer US tour, as well as helped run the merchandise booth at many shows. They were responsible for hundreds of new subscribers to E-Heep.

Lannis is even known to take names of eBay bidders of Heep merchandise and contact them about the websites, the Heeplist and current releases.

**If you have never met them, keep an eye open.**

**I'm sure you'll spot them at a Heep show near you soon!**