

# Tributes paid to Bay City Roller's frontman Les McKeown who has died aged 65

Fans have taken to social media to pay tribute to former Bay City Rollers frontman Les McKeown who has died aged 65.

The news was announced in a statement posted by the McKeown family on Facebook which read: "It is with profound sadness that we announce the death of our beloved husband and father Leslie Richard McKeown. Leslie died suddenly at home on Tuesday 20 April 2021.



Edinburgh Castle. Photo: © 2021, Martin P. McAdam  
[www.martinmcadam.com](http://www.martinmcadam.com)

The singer fronted the 'Rollers' during the 1970s when they were one of the biggest pop sensations in the world with numerous multi million hits and were at the time considered to be successors to the Beatles with 'Rollermania' competing with 'Beatlemania' in terms of popularity.

Their first single was Keep On Dancing in 1971, and they had two number one hits in 1975 with Bye Bye Baby and Give A Little Love, plus chart-topping albums with Rollin' in 1974 and 1975's Once Upon A Star.

The group at that time consisted of Les, bassist Alan Longmuir, the classic line-up also featured guitarists Eric Faulkner and Stuart Wood, with Longmuir's younger brother Derek on drums.

The group were embroiled in a longstanding legal dispute over royalties they claimed they were owed, with ex-manager Tam Paton and their label Sony.

Les left the band in 1978 but toured more recently under the name Les McKeown's Bay City Rollers.

The band's official Twitter account posted to say they were "saddened" by the news and send their prayers to the McKeown family.

Grant Stott posted: "Such sad news about Les McKeown. Hosted a gig and his band were booked to close the event. Soon as they went on stage every single seat at every single table emptied and the dance floor filled and stayed packed through their brilliant set."

Judy Murray posted two pictures: one of her hugging Les McKeown at a concert, and one of her holding a tartan scarf. She captioned them with "Bye bye baby".

Guitarist Andy Scott from fellow seventies band The Sweet posted: "Over the years I got to know Les quite well. We both lived in Central London in the 80s and I would see him sunbathing and Roller Skating in Hyde Park close to our Mayfair office. Les my friend only 65, far too young."

Boxing legend Frank Bruno said: "He was part of the music scene when I was growing up & I remember tartan clad girls all screaming, it was a hysteria era music wise, with The Osmond's David Cassidy & Bay City Rollers, seems like yesterday."

Eighties pop singer Kim Wilde wrote: "I remember line dancing in the school assembly hall to Bay City Roller hits, Les was my schoolgirl crush."

Midge Ure posted: "Dreadful news. A band thoroughly ripped off by everything bad about the music industry. The biggest band in the world for a time and nothing to show for it."