

In Memoriam

Editor's Note: *The following obituary of Ken Farrar, AES member, is reprinted with permission from Line Up Magazine, The Journal of the Institute of Broadcast Sound, June/July 2002.*

It is sad to report the death of a man of such stature in the audio industry as **Ken Farrar**. Ken was born in Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire in 1933. After school he was apprenticed to the Yorkshire Electricity Board, during which he achieved his H.N.C. and met and married Joyce, his lifetime companion. After National Service, whilst still with the Y.E.B. he and the other founders of Calrec built expertise, experience, a studio containing the first Calrec Mixer, and a range of capacitor microphones in their "hobby" of audio engineering. (The name derived from the Calder Valley Sound Recording Group).

Ken joined Calrec full-time in 1969 and although a director, he was always



Ken Farrar

"hand-on," being responsible for product design for 30 years. Before long, Calrec products were in use by UK broadcasters, as well as recording companies and universities.

In 1974, the first large (K series) console was delivered and the 700 and 900 series of microphones were in production. By 1978 Ken had

designed the Soundfield Microphone, which was a brilliant concept, permitting full spatial postproduction to stereo after 4-track recording, for which, among other things, he was awarded fellowship in the I.E.E. Later, Ken pioneered the design of Assignable Sound Desks and led the company into the digital environment, which is a major part of Calrec's success today.

Ken was a rare combination. A delightful, unassuming, enthusiastic and sociable person, brilliant raconteur and an exceedingly clever engineer, to whom no problem was beyond reach. He was also an accomplished ocean sailor, having sailed the Atlantic and, for many years, been a member of a syndicate owning the 12 meter racing yacht, Sceptre. Ken died on April 6, 2002. The funeral service (held at St. James Church, Mytholm, on April 12) was very well attended. Our condolences go to Joyce and their children, Steven and Louise.

Jeff Baker