

## East Midlands Keep Fit Association Life Member

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### SHEILA HOWARTH



In awarding Sheila Howarth the Lifetime Achievement Award, The East Midlands Chair commented that Cumbria's loss had been East Midlands gain when in 1971, Sheila and her family moved from Whitehaven to West Bridgford, Nottingham. Since then she has made a huge contribution to the Keep Fit Association locally, regionally and indeed, nationally.

When still in Whitehaven, Sheila met the then KFA President, Jill Harris, who informed her that a move to the East Midlands would be a good one due to the people and KFA development that was taking place at that time – and how true that comment was!

Sheila soon made contact with keep fit activities and undertook teacher training. While her classes in Nottingham flourished, she worked towards becoming a National Tutor Trainer and since qualifying has travelled across the length and breadth of the country, encouraging and inspiring many members to become teachers themselves.

Sheila has been on a number of committees and was Chair of Nottinghamshire KFA 1979/80 and East Midlands 1998/90, but she is best known for being a producer and choreographer without equal.

She served on the Royal Albert Hall production committee for three years, producing the Opening and Finale and then produced the RAH Festival in 2002. In between she produced three major shows at the Nottingham Concert Hall. Nottingham Silver Jubilee, East Midlands Pearl Anniversary and the National Millennium show in 2000.

Sheila's skills in producing wonderful demonstration items with her special gift of wit and humour, has given us a huge list of memorable items, including

- Stay Cool – to the Overture from West Side Story which broke new ground when first performed at the Albert Hall.
- Treadmill - inspired by Northern Ballet's 'A Simple Man' brought to life the pictures of L S Lowry.
- A Keep Fit Chorus – Sheila initiated a National Team with members coming together from every region for this Albert Hall opening which combined apparatus and movement .
- Mascarbon Dawn. Again with the National Team, using materials to emotional great effect. '

She has successfully entered teams in the National Competitions on three occasions, including a winning skipping team.

We in the East Midlands particularly thank her for her 15 years as organiser and producer of the East Midlands KFA regional demonstration team. This was always an informal group of keep fit members who wanted to meet regularly, learn and perfect demonstration items which could be performed at any time, any place, any where! Her efforts have been entirely voluntary and it was due to her inspiration and dedication that the team has flourished with so many members sharing her fifteen years in the team.

Sheila moved from Nottingham to the Lincolnshire coast with her husband, Ian, a few years ago 'to take things easier'. Anyone who knows Sheila realises that she is totally incapable of doing any such thing and now has flourishing classes and members in Sutton on Sea. Her invitation to all members to join them for a day of Keep Fit by the Sea has now become a regular event in our Calendar.

For the past two years. Sheila has continued to travel the winding roads between Trusthorpe and Nottingham or Leicester to meet her demonstration team girls

The citation and presentation of the Lifetime Membership award ended with thanks to Sheila for her wonderful contribution to the KFA in the East Midlands, to the accompaniment of many tears and hands raised in a long and heartfelt standing ovation. .

