

Graeme Edge

Graeme Charles Edge (born 30 March 1941, in Rocester, Staffordshire) is an English musician, songwriter and poet best known as the co-founder and drummer of the English band the Moody Blues. In addition to his work with the Moody Blues, Edge has worked as the bandleader of his own outfit, the Graeme Edge Band. He has contributed his talents to a variety of other projects throughout his career. In 2018, Edge was inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame as a member of the Moody Blues.

Life

The Moody Blues (1964–1966)^[edit]

Graeme Edge is one of the original members of The Moody Blues, alongside singer/guitarist Denny Laine, singer/bassist Clint Warwick, singer/keyboardist Mike Pinder and singer/flautist/harmonica player Ray Thomas. Edge provided a foundation for the original R&B and rock-flavoured band fronted by Laine, playing on all their Decca singles, including the UK chart-topping "Go Now" (January 1965), and other 1965 hit songs; "I Don't Want To Go On Without You", "Everyday", and "From The Bottom of my Heart (I Love You)", which were additionally released in that year.

Core seven period (1966–1974)

After the departure of Laine and Clint Warwick and the later recruitment of Justin Hayward and John Lodge in 1966, the band continued initially to play the R&B style material.

Edge initially was a poet for the band, contributing "Morning Glory" and "Late Lament" to *Days of Future Passed* in 1967 (narrated by Pinder). Edge himself opened *In Search of the Lost Chord* (1968) with his brief poem "Departure", though Mike Pinder narrated his "The Word" poem later on that set. Further poems provided by Edge included "In The Beginning" (co-narrated by Hayward, Edge and Pinder in turn) and "The Dream" (spoken by Pinder) for *On The Threshold of A Dream* (1969). Edge says the reason most of his poetry was recited by Pinder was that he smoked so many cigarettes and drank so much whisky that he had the best voice for it.

Later in 1969, as the Moodies launched their own label, Threshold Records, Edge began contributing songs; his "Higher and Higher" (a spoken lyric over music with a dramatic 'rocket blast off' opening; as usual, it was recited by Pinder) commenced *To Our Children's Children's Children*, which also featured his instrumental composition "Beyond".

Edge whispered the lyrics to his song "Don't You Feel Small" over band-sung vocals (Pinder, Thomas, Lodge and Hayward) on *A Question of Balance* (1970), on which he also contributed a closing poem/song co-written with Ray Thomas, "The Balance" (recited by Pinder).

Edge co-wrote and claims pole position as 'lead grunt' on the unusual band-composed opening track "Procession" on their album *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour* in 1971, on which his song "After You Came" features the four lead vocalists (Thomas, Pinder, Hayward and Lodge) both together and taking brief solo lead lines in turn. Edge's song was later used as UK B-side to the chart hit "Isn't Life Strange?" in 1972. The first electronic drum is said to have been created by Edge in

collaboration with Sussex University Professor Brian Groves. The device was used in the song "Procession" from the 1971 album *Every Good Boy Deserves Favour*.

For their 1972 *Seventh Sojourn* album, Edge co-wrote "You And Me" with Hayward, who took lead vocal. In 2013 Edge said of *Seventh Sojourn*:

I didn't [listen to] that album, because I was going through a divorce at the same time and so it was very, very painful for me. Once it was finished, I didn't play it for years and years and years. *Never* played it. Not that I play our stuff very much anyway, but I never ever played that one. And I hadn't really heard it apart from the [singles] from it, until [2007 when] it came out first time on CD and I had to listen to it digitalised just to sort of say "Yeah, that's fine by me." And I thought, "Well actually, that's not too bad an album!" That's the closest I'll ever be to hearing a Moodies album for the first time.^[2]

Band hiatus

After the Moodies' world tour ended in 1974, the band members took a break, during which, between his two solo albums, Edge sailed on a round-the-world voyage with a small crew in his yacht *Delia*.

Edge returned to recording later in 1974, forming his studio-based The Graeme Edge Band (featuring guitarist/vocalist Adrian Gurvitz) and Paul Gurvitz, which first issued a non-album single, "We Like To Do it", on Threshold (TH 18) in July 1974 (this was later added to his first Graeme Edge Band album as a bonus track on the CD release). The Graeme Edge Band then released two albums in the mid 1970s. The first was *Kick Off Your Muddy Boots* in September 1975 on the Threshold record label, a subsidiary of Decca Records, catalogue number THS 15. It was released as a gatefold with album art by Joe Petagno and featured Adrian Gurvitz and Paul Gurvitz, plus a guest appearance co-drumming with Edge by Ginger Baker (on 'Gew Janna Woman'), and backing vocals by fellow Moodies member Ray Thomas. This first album reached No. 107 in the US on the *Billboard* chart. Their second album was *Paradise Ballroom* in 1977, on the main Decca label, catalogue number TXS 121, and in the US on the London Records label, catalogue number PS 686 The album charted in the US reaching No. 164 on the *Billboard* chart. It was also released as a gatefold with album art by Joe Petagno, again featuring Adrian and Paul Gurvitz. Edge also appeared as himself in the 2016 film comedy *Characterz*.

A single, "Everybody Needs Somebody" (taken from the latest album), was issued on Decca (F.13698) with the non-album B-side "Be My Eyes" in June 1977.

Band reformation (1978–present)

After the Moodies' reunion in 1978, Edge provided "I'll Be Level With You" (sung by the group, led by Hayward) for the album *Octave* on Decca. After the album was released, Pinder declined to tour with the band and was replaced by ex-Yes keyboardist Patrick Moraz.

For *Long Distance Voyager* in 1981 Edge contributed "22,000 Days"—the length of an average human lifespan in days—sung by Thomas, Lodge and Hayward; this was also used as the UK B-side of the single "Gemini Dream".

Edge's "Going Nowhere" (sung by Ray Thomas) was his lone composition on *The Present* album in 1983, and he teamed with Moraz for "The Spirit" (sung by the group's vocalists in harmony) on *The Other Side of Life* album in 1986.

Edge was not featured as a songwriter or poet on either *Sur La Mer* (1988) or *Keys of the Kingdom* (1991) and was not drummer on every track on the latter album; however, he contributed the closing poem/song "Nothing Changes", which was initially narrated by himself and then sung by the Moodies (Hayward featured) on the *Strange Times* album issued in 1999.

Edge has been joined onstage by Gordon Marshall as second drummer for Moodies concerts from 1991 to 2015, and by Billy Ashbaugh since 2016. In addition to drums, Edge has provided varied assorted percussion instrumentation, plus additional piano to the Moodies' works, and featured his electronic drum kit from the early 1970s onwards on Moodies albums, his drumming style being recognisable and distinctive.

Edge participated in the 2011 Moody Blues bluegrass tribute album *Moody Bluegrass TWO ... Much Love*, providing the lead vocal on a bluegrass-tinged version of his poem "Higher And Higher".

Edge once admitted on *Rockline* that his second wife Susan would not marry him because she did not want to be named 'Sue Edge' (sewage).

Edge is a fan of *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*. An article about him said he has "plenty of time for overseeing some rental properties, doing charity work, playing lots of golf and watching *Deep Space Nine* at his Sarasota home on Florida's Gulf Coast".

In 2013 Justin Hayward spoke of Edge's learning Transcendental Meditation in 1967, along with other members of the Moody Blues.

Edge is the only remaining original member of The Moody Blues still performing in the band. However, Justin Hayward and John Lodge, from the best-known version of the band, are also still with the band.

Edge uses DW drums, Zildjian cymbals and Regal Tip drumsticks, namely their 5A model.