

# R.I.P. Keith Wilder



Keith Wilder, a member of '70s' disco/funk band Heatwave died Sunday at age 65. Heatwave was one of the premier bands of the '70s because of hits like "Boogie Nights," "Always And Forever" and "The Groove Line." The band was started by Wilder's brother Johnny who was stationed in Germany and formed the band after his discharge from the Army. He called Keith over from their native Dayton, Ohio to finish the lineup. It was during Johnny's relocation to the United Kingdom that he was able to meet the great songwriter Rod Temperton who became the group's organ player. By 1976, their first album, *Too Hot To Handle* was released and the Heatwave legend began. Temperton eventually left the group to focus on songwriting but he wrote all of the songs on their first two albums except "Happiness Together" and "Mind Blowing

Decision" which were written by Johnny Wilder Jr. *Too Hot To Handle* was followed by *Central Heating* in 1978 and they were well into their stardom. At the height of their career, they sold out Madison Square Garden. The band's luck changed in 1979 when Johnny was paralyzed in a car accident and could no longer use his falsetto that drew fans and made "Always And Forever" an essential wedding and Quiet Storm classic. They had their last popular success with the single "Gangsters Of The Groove" before disbanding in the '80s'. Rappers like Big Daddy Kane who sampled "Ain't No Half-Steppin'" started to keep their name alive. The Wilder Brothers recorded the gospel album *Sound On Soul* after the breakup of Heatwave. Keith restarted the band in 1991 the same year that a remix of "Mind Blowing Decision" reignited their popularity in the UK. Johnny Wilder Jr. died in 2006 and Rod Temperton passed last year.

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