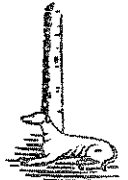




The Kerryman

Ireland's best selling regional newspaper

KILLARNEY & SOUTH KERRY



Wednesday, April 6, 2011

www.kerryman.ie

€2 (Stg £1.85)

Jack Hardy – songwriter and honorary Kerryman

OBITUARY

NEW York-based singer/songwriter Jack Hardy, who has died at the age of 63 following a short illness, was a lover of Irish language and culture, and an adopted son of West Kerry. An influential figure in the world of acoustic and folk music, his work helped launch the careers of several prominent musicians. He was also a prolific recording and performing artist, who released more than 20 albums on his own record label and toured extensively in Europe and the USA.

Jack Hardy was born in Indiana on Nov. 23, 1947. He grew up in New York City, Colorado and Connecticut and graduated from the University of Hartford, where he studied opera and literature. For a number of years he worked as a cowboy on ranches in the American mid-West, before moving to New York in 1973, where he was to become a pioneer of the post-60s acoustic music revival.

For over 30 years, Jack

hosted weekly songwriters' workshops at his apartment in Greenwich Village and, in a recent tribute, singer-songwriter Nanci Griffith said he was to New York folk music what Harlan Howard and Chet Atkins were to Nashville country music.

In 1997, Jack Hardy was awarded the Kate Wolf Memorial Award from the World Folk Music Association, as "an artist who makes a difference through his music".

Writing of his first visit to Kerry in 1977, Jack recalled how he found himself in Tralee, headed for Dingle. "With no buses that day, I was picked up by a priest who had me singing songs all the way to 'shorten the road'. I sang him my song 'The Three Sisters' and he said I was headed in the right direction, as there were mountains called the Three Sisters at the end of the peninsula. In Dingle he took me to 'the right pub for yourself and bought me a pint'.

Thus began a long association with West Kerry for

Jack and his family, who returned regularly to holiday in a rented farmhouse near Ballyferriter. Jack was a familiar figure in the area around Clogher beach and, with his flat cap and quiet countryman's ways, he blended easily into the locality, enjoying a pint and browsing the bookshops of Dingle.

During his time in West Kerry, Jack immersed himself in the Irish language, attending classes, listening to Raidió na Gaeltachta and learning sean nós songs by heart, which he performed at venues such as the 'Siar Ó Thuaidh' singers' club in Ballyferriter. In January 2011 he received a special commendation from adjudicators for his rendition of two sean nós songs at the 'Duibhneach' singing competition. His concert in Dingle just three weeks later was, sadly, to be his final public performance. Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis.

*John Studebaker Hardy.
Born South Bend, Indiana,
Nov. 23, 1947. Died
Manhattan, Mar. 11, 2011.*

- Translation: Ar dheis Dé go raibh a anam dílis – May his gentle soul rest at God's right hand.