

## **Nashville Country Music Scene:**

Nashville news for August 2010 (by Walt Trott)

... Final Curtain:

Singer-songwriter-guitarist Larry Jon Wilson, 71, died June 21, in Roanoke, Va., following a stroke. Last year, Wilson had a self-titled CD released on Drag City Records, and labeled “a comeback album.” It was indeed his first collection in three decades.

In the 1970s, Wilson recorded four albums for Fred Foster’s Monument label, his first being “New Beginnings,” and scored performing in a 1981 acclaimed documentary film titled “Heartworn Highways.” Three follow-up albums were: “Let Me Sing My Songs” (1976), “Loose Change” (1977) and “The Sojourner” (1979).

His writer’s night appearances here at the Bluebird Cafe were well-attended. Noted publisher Bob Beckham, who signed Wilson to Combine Music in 1975, has noted: “He was pretty different. He doesn’t fit the image, whatever the image is. Back then, unique characters came along with the song.” He had toured the UK, hung out with indie rockers and developed elliptical poetic songs suggestive of the “Outlaw” pack of artists. Among the Georgia-native’s best-remembered songs: “Ohoopie River Bottomland” and “Sheldon Church Yard.”

More renowned songwriter-peer Kris Kristofferson described underrated Larry’s eclectic writing and sandpaper vocal style thusly, “He can break your heart with a voice like a cannonball.” Wilson had lived and toured with friend Townes Van Zandt. Another admirer Charlie Gillett said, “Just when you think you’ve heard it all, you hear Larry Jon.”

Survivors include three children Kimberley, Chatham and Tyler; four grandchildren; brother Billy Joe; and Elizabeth Dalenberg, a foster daughter he raised. Services in Georgia were conducted June 27 in Augusta ...