



By Mia Chamberlain @missmiafaith

Charlotte, NC | Singer-songwriter **Jim Sharkey** is an Irish and Americana folk musician. Jim grew up in County Roscommon, Ireland, and came to the US in 1982 when he joined the US Navy in London, England.

Jim eventually ended up in San Diego, California on a sub tender and spent five years as the ship's photographer. He went to school at night for Film and Television production, and continued when he got out of the Navy. After graduating Jim worked for the City of San Diego making training videos. Eventually, Jim moved east and settled in North Carolina where he began working at **WFMY** in Greensboro and later **WXII** in Winston-Salem as a photojournalist. During this time, Jim made documentaries on several North Carolina potters while he lived in the area (www.folkfilms.com). He has received numerous awards for his work including 3 Regional Emmy nominations.

Next stop for Jim and his family was Maine. At the time, the TV market was so small and the pay was low so Jim looked for work elsewhere. He produced video documentaries of his own and volunteered a lot at his children's schools and thought teaching would be something he might like to do.

"I told my wife one morning that it would be nice to teach a film class and from that notion I ended up earning a degree in social studies and special education and taught for several years," Jim shared.

He taught children with special needs in Westbrook, Maine; Roanoke, Virginia; and at The Arts Based School in Winston-Salem, North Carolina.

After visiting family in Ireland in 2014, Jim returned more eager than ever to play music.

"That was my original goal when I came to America - to get my footing and bearings while in the Navy for those first five years and then concentrate on music. But that didn't happen. Such is life, and that's okay because my wife and I raised our two daughters and now that they are grown I have the time to do it."

Today, Jim continues to play two or three times a month in Virginia, North and South Carolina, Maryland, and Washington D.C., accompanying himself on guitar, harmonica, and sometimes bodhrán. He also plays as part of a trio with Bill Moore, bouzouki/guitar and Andrew Nemchik, accordion/whistle/harmonica around the Triangle area of North Carolina. Jim's original songs blend Celtic traditional ballad influences with contemporary issues that are often set in the area he resides.

"Now I am building up my gigging again and working on the details of getting the new Album released."

The 14 original songs on "A Lovely Day" are diverse but all are rooted in the Irish traditional heritage Jim grew up with in Ireland. "The Old Piano" is the story of an Irish immigrant music teacher who finds herself fleeing the Oklahoma Dust Bowl in 1935. She ends up in California and continues to teach children familiar songs and songs from her past such as "Skibbereen" and "The Homes of Donegal". "Mother Jones" recounts the story of Cork-born Mary Harris who grew into the labor leader known as Mother Jones. "The Beautiful Game" is a more contemporary song about the Women's World Cup of 2019. It features Derek Hickey on button accordion who provides a French cafe feel to the song. The musicians on the album are top class with Colin Farrell producing and playing fiddle and whistles. His brother Shane provides banjo and mandolin; Alan Murray is brilliant as ever on bouzouki and guitar; Nuala Kennedy sings subtle and beautiful harmony on three songs; Will MacMorran plays accordion on five or six tracks, Cillian Vallely plays pipes on two tracks and Anna Colliton plays bodhran on two songs. Local North Carolina musicians Luke Boudreault, trumpet; Destiny Stone, piano; and Kelly Siske-Dunworth, vocals; round out the talent featured on this, Jim Sharkey's fourth, album.

A Lovely Day, Release Date - December 21st, 2019.

Produced by: Colin Farrell & Jim Sharkey

Fun Fact: One of Jim's songs from a previous album was recently included on the **North Carolina Gold Album** which is a collection of songs about North Carolina to benefit the Gold Trail. The song is "Nothing in Particular" off the "Misty Morning Rain" CD.

Jim is planning an Album Release Party for his new music on December 21st at The Workman's Friend here in Charlotte.