**Mikey Dee, 40, Musician, Promoter, Friend of Local Bands** - **Boston Globe -** 07/08/2003**//** By Steve Morse, Globe Staff

**Mikey Dee,** a beloved fixture in the Boston music scene as a performer, promoter, radio host, and music critic, died Sunday, following complications from pneumonia. He was 40.

Born Michael Linick, Mr. Dee was ''the heart and soul'' of the local music community, according to Eleanor Ramsay, cofounder of the Boston Rock Opera. He performed in the company's productions of ''Jesus Christ Superstar'' and the Kinks' ''Preservation'' before becoming paralyzed by a stroke following heart surgery in 2000. His medical travails led to a series of concerts titled ''For the Benefit of Mr. Dee,'' which ultimately involved more than 200 bands playing at 16 local venues.

The shows raised nearly $100,000 for the Mikey Dee Musicians Benefit Trust, which will continue in his honor and assist Boston-based musicians in serious need, Ramsay said yesterday.

''He was a guy who brought out the best in people,'' she added. ''That became evident when he got sick and bands were asked to play benefits for him. Many would say, `He gave us our first press, and he always came to our shows,' or `He didn't like our band, but we liked him anyway.' We had so many bands wanting to play the benefits that we finally had to put a cap on
the number.

''And even after the stroke, he was still interested in music,'' Ramsay said. ''We would still get him CDs of local and national acts. The music kept him going.''

Mr. Dee was a voracious fan of music, especially of pop rock, and he went out six nights a week to hear local bands. ''He would joke that the only day he didn't go out was Sunday; that was a day of rest,'' said Adam Lewis of the Planetary Group, for which Mr. Dee did radio promotions.

''He always liked the really good pop hook,'' Lewis said. ''He really liked Letters to Cleo and the Sheila Divine, the Amazing Royal Crowns, the Pills, and countless others. He'd be the first to tell you if your band was any good, but he could also give constructive criticism. He'd say, `You're not quite there yet,' or `Work on this more.' But I never saw anyone who liked
more bands than Mikey Dee.''

''It's a sad day indeed,'' said singer Gary Cherone, who starred in the Boston Rock Opera's ''Jesus Christ Superstar'' (in which Mr. Dee played the role of a policeman). ''First, I'll miss him as a friend. And with Mikey, it was all about the music. He'll always be remembered for his contributions to the local music scene.''

Mr. Dee grew up in Chelsea and then moved to Malden. He graduated from Malden High School in 1980, before attending Suffolk University and the University of Massachusetts at Boston. His mother, Dorothy, who had once been a singer with Artie Shaw's orchestra, helped spark his love of the arts, according to Ramsay.

Mr. Dee later became associate editor of the local fanzine the Noise, host of the radio show ''On the Town'' on Medford-based WMFO (91.5 FM), and director of Triple A radio promotions at the Planetary Group. He was presented with a Boston Music Award Hall of Fame honor in 2001.

As a drummer, Mr. Dee worked with the Carolinas, the Heavy Fruit, Butterscott, the Willard Grant Conspiracy, and Star Crunch. He lent his name to many event promotions at area music venues, including Mikey Dee's Clubhouse at the Kirkland Cafe, Mikey Dee Acoustic at the Middle East Bakery, and various benefits to support rent control in Cambridge and to raise money for Boston Rocks for AIDS.

After his stroke in 2000, Mr. Dee was at Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital and since December of 2001, he was at the Greenery Extended Care Center (now called the North Andover Skilled Care Facility).

He died at Lawrence Hospital on Sunday at 3:50 a.m. in his sleep, according to Ramsay, who was part of the informal ''Team Dee'' support group that visited him steadily in recent years and took him to occasional concerts, such as Boston Rock Opera's 10th anniversary show at the Middle East last month. The team included his former roommate, Tina Bugara, who became his guardian; his former girlfriend, Mary Ricciardi; and T. Max, editor of the Noise.

Mr. Dee leaves his father, David Linick of Malden; a brother, Alan of Revere; and a sister, Shari of Cliffside Park, N.J. A memorial service is planned for next week with details to be announced on the website, mikeydee.com. A concert to celebrate his life is being planned to coincide with his birthday on Sept. 17.
 **This story ran on page D17 of the Boston Globe on 7/8/2003.
© Copyright 2003 Globe Newspaper Company.**